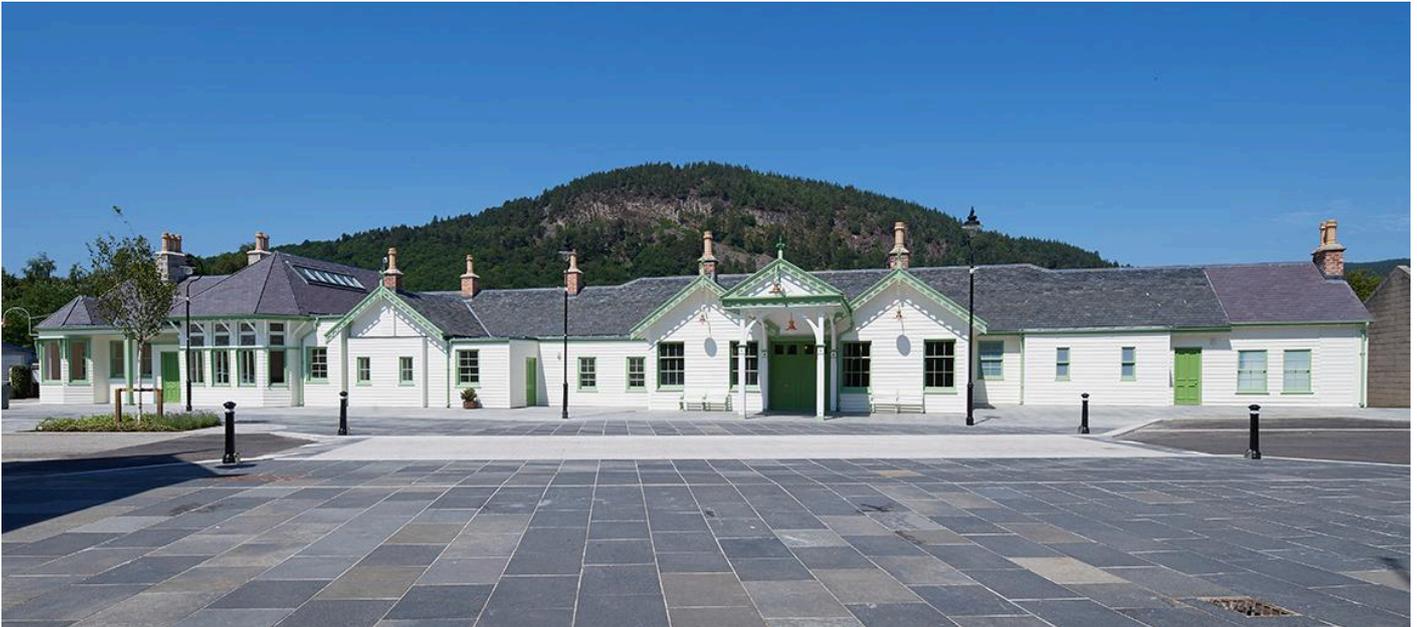


# Ballater Old Royal railway station



**TOTAL COST** £3.4M  
**COMPLETED** 2018  
**DURATION** 1Y4M

## RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS



### Sectors

- Leisure

### Project profile

- Restoration of a listed railway station building

### Client

- Aberdeenshire Council

### Stage

- Complete

### Highlights

- The start of work on site was marked by a traditional turf cutting ceremony. The ceremonial spade and wheelbarrow was originally used to start the construction of the station by the Great North of Scotland Railway Company in 1865
- Once the enclosure of The Royal Carriage was rebuilt following the fire, it was moved at the start of the job and stored at the corner of our site. When

### Project Description

In May 2015 the Ballater Old Royal Station in Aberdeenshire was almost completely destroyed by a fire. Morgan Sindall Construction was thrilled to be awarded the restoration contract to be able to put this exciting piece of heritage back on track.

The listed building, located near Balmoral Castle, was historically used by the Royal Family during their visits to the area. Although the station ceased operations in 1966, for the last 15 years it has been leased to Scotland's national tourism agency, VisitScotland, for use as a tourist information centre and a museum celebrating the station's history.

Attention to detail was a must on this project to ensure as much of the damaged building could be restored to its former glory, including the very grand, wood-panelled Royal Waiting Room, which was once used by Queen Victoria.

We used 3D laser scanning and modelling to capture the exact size and proportions of timber mouldings and fretwork, to allow any new timbers to be as accurate as possible and reduce waste. In addition, as part of the repair and conservation work, as much of the original fabric as possible was retained.

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the relevant works were complete, the Grampian Transport Museum then positioned the carriage back onto the decommissioned platform.

#### Location

- Scotland

#### Project key facts

- The rejuvenated attraction features a restaurant (run by the Duke of Rothesay's charitable trust), a tourist centre, and a library
- Specialist workshops worked with the building's timber mouldings, panelling and stained glass in order to salvage and restore as much as possible. Any new materials were matched as closely as possible to existing ones, such as flooring, while old stained glass panels were used as a basis to form the templates for their replacements
- An access chamber was discovered on the platform adjacent to the Royal Waiting Room which led to an underground shelter. It was suggested that it could have been used as an air raid shelter.

#### Project contact

**Patrick Johnson**

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Contact

#### Related news

Morgan Sindall Construction begins work at Paddington Village hotel

Handover at new £7 million West Midlands sports campus

Construction appointed to £5 billion London programme

#### Related Links

Leisure and community

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#### Responsible business



##### Enhancing communities

Efforts were made to ensure the historical significance of the station were not lost in its restoration. A raft of old plans and photographs were used as guides during the project.

The building's exterior has been rebuilt to look identical to how it was before the fire – however, following a public consultation, the red features used on external mouldings such as windows and doors have been changed to green, a shade of which was commonly used at the GNER railway station in the 18th century.

We also worked on the following community projects:  
**Dee Valley Sweet shop:** we fitted new guttering and downpipes, front door tiles and a gas track was excavated for the new gas pipe.

**Local primary school:** pupils took part in site tours, educating them on the build process and the importance of health and safety on site.

**Local community:** we provided firewood to the elderly on a weekly basis, and assisted with snow clearance in winter months. We also donated some materials to local businesses and organisations to support their own building maintenance programmes.

**Ballater Lego Club** set themselves the ambitious task of building the station in Lego. We provided a site tour, building plans and elevations so that they could visualise what they were building.

**Ballater Victoria Week 2017:** we arranged site tours for the public, which gave the community the chance to visit the station, ask any questions, see progression of the works and view the remnants of the Royal Waiting Room. The feedback was very positive – the visitors were amazed at how much of the original building would be restored.



### **Improving the environment**

The building has been restored to welcome tourists to the area. The space will include a VisitScotland visitor centre, a Prince's Trust Foundation-run bistro, and a library, which will be run by Aberdeenshire Council.

As much of the material that remained at the station was used to maintain its historical significance. This included slates, cladding, windows and stained glass, timber, bricks, granite and stone from the chimneys.



### **Working together with our supply chain**

All project materials were delivered from within a one hour radius.

We maintained communication with our supply chain on delivery times, due to the live environment and the proximity of the site to community buildings and organisations.



### **Developing people**

A fourth year student joined us on work experience to gain an insight into the design and build process on site through various aspects of the job. We also welcomed apprentices to site who were working with our subcontractors.

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## **Challenges**

The initial build of the roof was the main challenge with various different angles, hips and attention to detail which was directed by Historic Scotland and Cairngorms National Parks.

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## **Testimonials**

*"Thank you from me for your effort on this project - it needed someone like you as your approach and your attention was second to none."*

***Craig Matheson, principal architect  
Aberdeenshire Council***

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