

Front View - (2007 view available online at historicengland.org.uk)



From Wikipedia.org

“**Thurston station** was opened by the Ipswich and Bury Railway in 1846. The main building was designed by Frederick Barnes in the Jacobean style using decorative brickwork. The building required three stories to reach the platforms from ground level owing to the station's location on an embankment. The building is Grade II listed (in 1988) and is no longer in railway use. Adjacent to the station building is an original bridge over the road”

There was a tunnel linking both sides of the rail track but this has been filled in. At present, passengers have to walk over the rails on a Barrow Foot Crossing to reach the platform for trains on the Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds line. The perilous nature of this pedestrian crossing is constantly under discussion by all stakeholders.

Frederick Barnes of Ipswich was also the architect for Ipswich Stoke Hill (demolished), Needham Market (restored 2000 and now commercially tenanted), Stowmarket (in use by Greater Anglia), Elmswell (demolished 1974), Woodbridge (might be partly tenanted?), Bealings (closed 1956, now run privately as The Mallard Business Centre), and Bury St Edmunds stations (in use by Greater Anglia GA).

Thurston Station has been unoccupied for years now. Greater Anglia (GA) maintain it to a basic standard. Alan Neville of GA wrote:- “This building, which is leased from Network Rail, is surveyed on a regular basis by ourselves as part of the stations portfolio”. The roof* looks to be in good condition but the windows and brickwork are in a poor state. GA would like to let it at a rent of £1,500 per year + VAT with the tenant responsible for all refurbishments. It is now in need of restoration.

*In July 1999, MidSuffolk Planning Ref: 0098/99/LB - new roof and chimney stacks.

The 2019 **Thurston Neighbourhood Development Plan** stated on page 77:-

“Provision should be made for the exploration of possible further uses (for the Railway Station Building) including community uses, for this building which occupies a prominent setting in the village”. Email contact this month with the Parish Council included the following:- “The Parish Council is aware of the condition of the building and will continue to monitor the situation.” They do not have the means to do more than this.

Access to the building is limited. It is either through the barrier control of the private car park at the front of the building or via an overgrown narrow area which runs off Barton Road. Access is also possible from the Bury St Edmunds-to-Ipswich platform.

Car parking is very limited for the building. Apparently there are two allocated spaces at the front of the building. Next door, in The Thurston Granary Development, there are about 30 spaces in front of the new shops where the costs are £4 for all day, £2 for 2 hours, free for 1 hour. Beyond the shopping area there are about 20 more spaces where charges still apply. Separately, there are 8 spaces that are designated for station use only, at a cost of £4 per day.

The station's footfall is about 70,000 (according to the rental listing for the station) This will rise with the number of new residents moving into the 1200 or more new houses that are now under construction.

The population of Thurston will rise over the next few years from 4,000 to about 7,000. The largest of the housing developments are already underway.

Thurston Village is a thriving community with the railway station at its heart. It has a new primary school and a large secondary school to which students travel from the surrounding areas. This includes some students using the railway network.

From www.thurstonparishcouncil.org.uk:-

“The New Green Community Centre, the Cavendish village hall, the library, as well as open spaces and sports facilities, are well used village assets. There are over seventy businesses in the village, mostly small in scale. Two church groups in the village... are active in the community”. There is also the centrally-located and popular Fox and Hounds pub - built about 1846 and listed in 2001.

In the foreseeable future changes might be coming as outlined in

The Great British Railways government white paper of Feb 2022 which states:-

(Item 14) “Dedicated station management teams will be created locally within regional divisions of Great British Railways to manage stations, land and assets.” and

(Item 15) “ Reusing existing rail buildings for services such as training, community hubs and education, as Network Rail has already done in Bolton, could reduce costs for the voluntary sector and improve services for local residents”.

Contacts regarding the Thurston Station Building:-

Thurston Parish Council info@thurstonparishcouncil.gov.uk Mrs Vicky Waples

Greater Anglia Alan.Neville@greateranglia.co.uk
contactcentre@greateranglia.co.uk
(reply awaited about releasing floor plans and photos of the building)

The Railway Heritage Trust Anna.Jipps@networkrail.co.uk>
Andy.Savage@networkrail.co.uk
(interested in helping but need a sustainable business proposal)

The Victorian Society connor@victoriansociety.org.uk
(reply awaited)

The Suffolk Building Preservation Trust piers@piers-hart.co.uk
(Helping in taking forward plans for the future of any/all redundant stations)

The Suffolk Society sps@suffolksociety.org Fiona Cairns
(recommended the two following contacts)

Architectural Heritage Trust ahfund.org.uk
(not contacted yet)

Bury Trust burystedmundstowntrust.org.uk
(not contacted yet)

Suffolk County Council Conservation & Listed Buildings Mid Suffolk District Council 131
High Street Needham Market Ipswich IP6 8DL For the attention of Paul Harrison (01449 724529)
paul.harrison@midsuffolk.gov.uk
(emailed - reply awaited)

Community Rail Partnerships Over 70 community rail partnerships, plus hundreds of station friends
and other groups and social enterprises, make up the **community rail movement**. It's a growing
movement delivering a range of activities that bring people together and help communities get the most
from their railways. communityrail.org.uk
(Contact made with Lowestoft group - no group covering Thurston)

Other contacts:-

BSE Station restored 2022 by Greater Anglia/Railway Heritage Trust collaboration

SAVE Britain's Heritage - Marcus Binney (not contacted yet)

Bury Town Trust -to be contacted- burytedmundstowntrust.org.uk

Historic England (English Heritage) customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk
(not contacted yet) eastofengland@HistoricEngland.org.uk
Amendment to listing for Thurston Station sent to Historic England - done.

For the attention of the Principal Heritage at Risk Adviser (01223 582700)
john.ette@english.heritage.org.uk - to be contacted

[The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings \(SPAB.org.uk\)](http://www.spab.org.uk) publishes a list of
historic buildings in need of repair or new use that are for sale or lease. The list is
available to SPAB members.
info@SPAB.org.uk

From The Heritage Funding Directory:-

Adnams Community Trust

AHF

ASDA Foundation

CAF Bank CAF Venturesome

Sainsbury Family Charitable Trust

National Lottery Community Fund

National Lottery Heritage Fund

THURSTON STATION PLATFORM VIEW



Thurston_Station-geograph.org.uk-1410822.jpg by John Goldsmith from commons.wikimedia.org about 2009



Two blocks of flats have been built in front of and closer to the road, one on each side of the station. They do not obscure the view of the station building. Chester House and Lathom House comprise rented flats which are managed by Mac Estate in Brandon (01892 552994)

