

# SOUTH FYLDE'S HISTORICAL COMMUNITY STATIONS

## SQUIRES GATE HISTORY



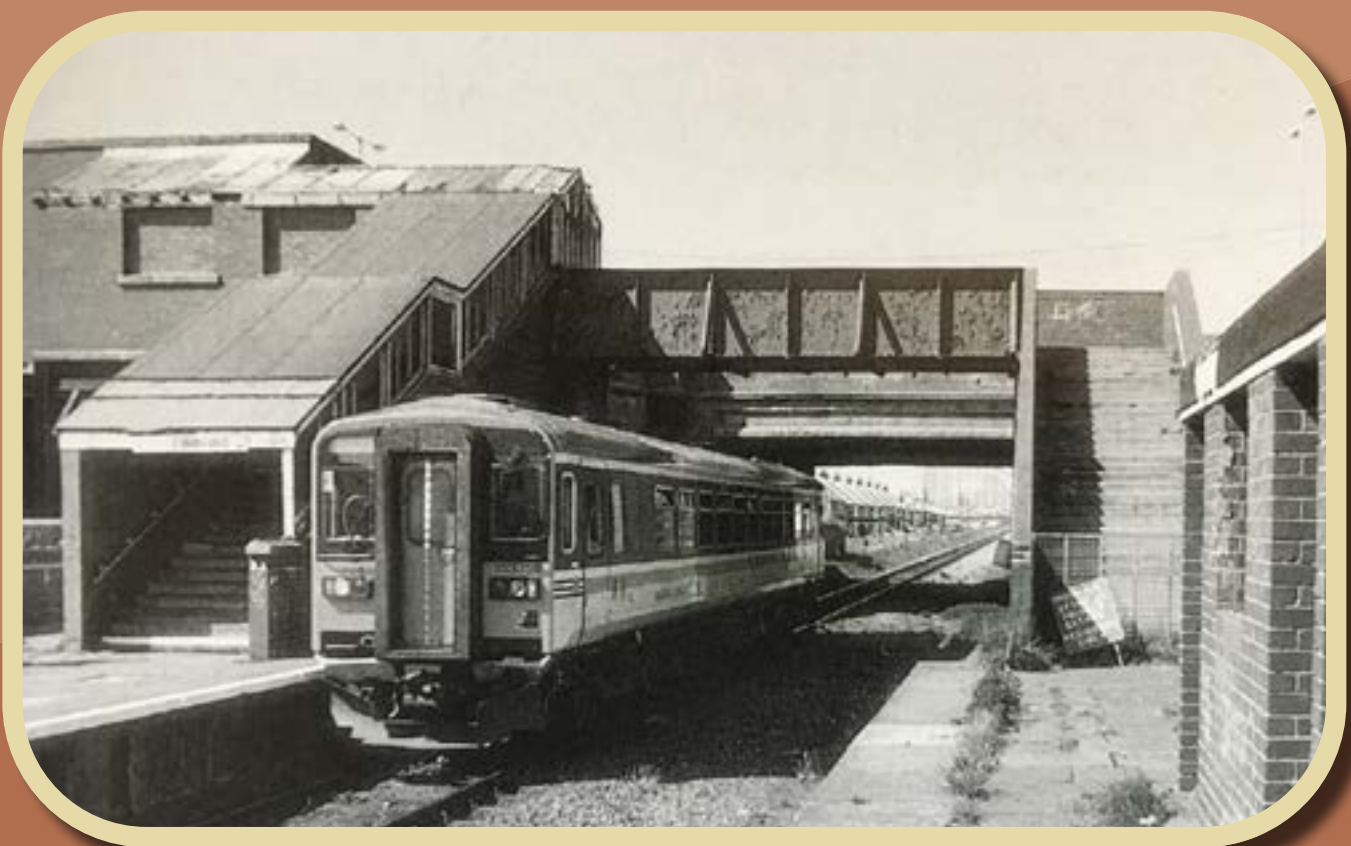
LMS Dreadnought 10464 built Horwich 1924 at Squires Gate mid 1930s —  
Photo: Peter Fitton collection



Squires Gate entrance 1930s — Photographer: Unknown



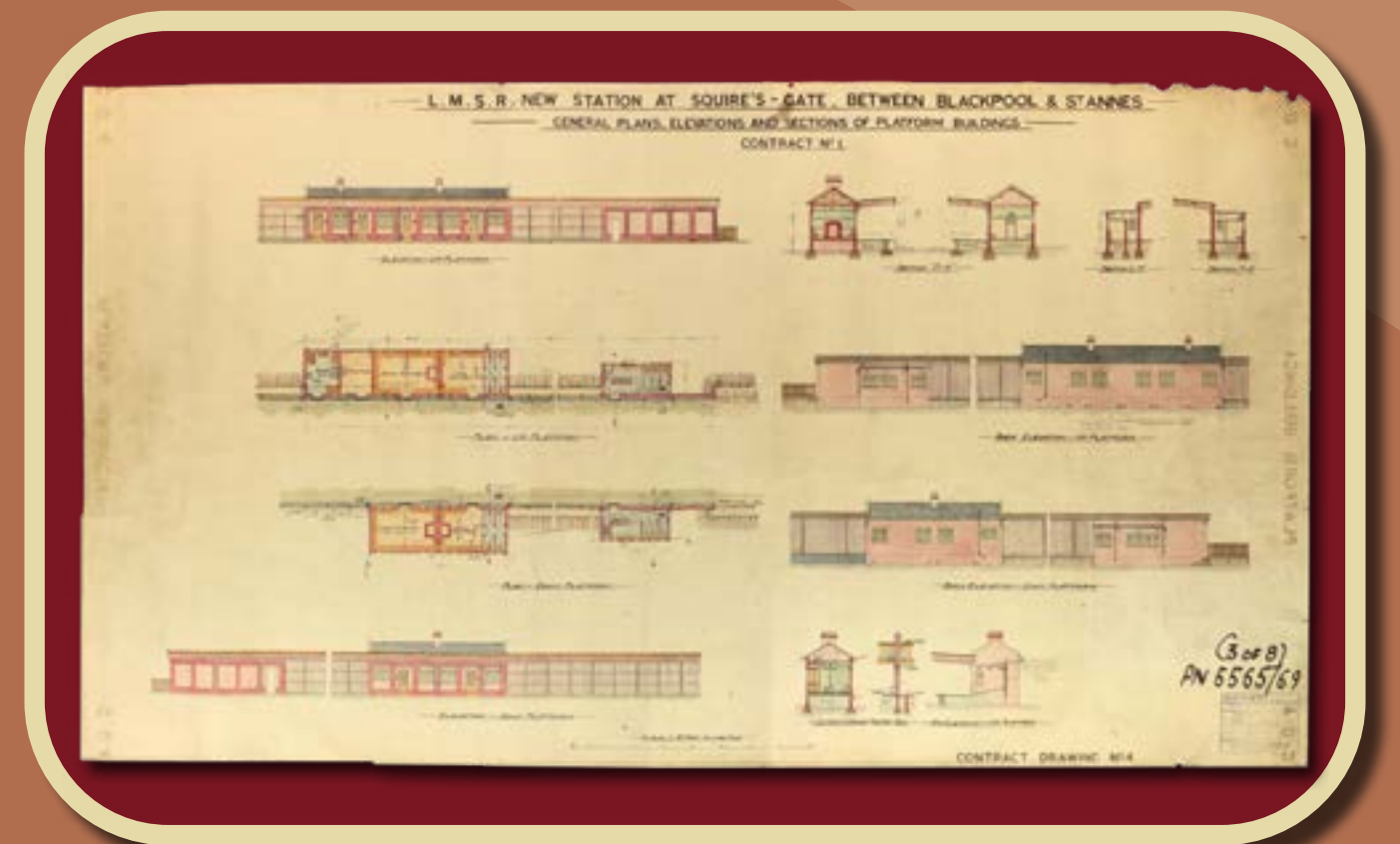
Camping Coaches 1966 — Photographer: Unknown



BREL unit 153359 calls at Squires Gate 1980s — Photographer: Unknown



142020 calls at Squires Gate station July 2020 on its way to Blackpool South.  
This was one of the last Pacer units to be seen on the South Fylde line —  
Photo: Paul Nettleton



Squires Gate Station original plans — Barrie Russell collection

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF SQUIRES GATE STATION

The Blackpool and Lytham Railway Bill of 1861 saw work start to construct a railway line between the two towns. The line was completed by autumn 1862, but didn't open until spring 1863 and it wasn't until 1865 a halt was installed originally called Stony Hill that served the area.

The original halt closed in 1872, but on 14th September 1931 the London, Midland & Scottish Railway opened a new station called Squires Gate. It contained a bank branch, Café and long-playing record library in a Classical Music shop run by Ivan March, author of the Penguin guides and key player in the British Recording Industry.

The station was built to serve this developing area of Blackpool, although located quite close to the Lytham St. Annes boundary. It lies on the Blackpool South (and once Central) to Preston line and is the nearest station to what was Blackpool International Airport. The station is located about 350 yards from Starr Gate tram stop on the Blackpool Tramway.

The platforms were accessed by flights of steps on either side of the main entrance, but there were also lifts which were used primarily for goods purposes. The station housed a Porters' Room, Station Master's Room, General Waiting Room, a Ladies' Waiting Room, Toilets, Shops, a Bookstall and Tobacco Stall.

The station was also host to several camping coaches (converted from obsolete rolling stock) which were located in the sidings at the station and were used in the Summer by many holidaymakers.

Rail and air transport co-existed very closely in Blackpool, but the railways have remained the core element. The railway was linked to a huge wartime aircraft manufacturing base, but now the only visible evidence of that is the tracks that remain in what are now warehouses, but were originally hangars.

The station buildings were demolished in 1997 and this left the station as an unstaffed single platform only accessible by steps from the road above. The station is adopted by the Friends of Squires Gate Station, and they have started working on the now abandoned platform 2 under a licence from Network Rail, to bring it back to some of its former glory and to display colourful planting.

More recently, the former Pontins Holiday Centre, which lay adjacent to the station, has become a major housing development and work is progressing to create step free access to make the station more accessible to all rail users.

