

Network Rail

Your Ref

Email only:

TranspennineEngagement@networkrail.co.uk

Our Ref IPP-222

22nd October 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

Transport and Works Act 1992 – Proposed Transport and Works Act Order for the TransPennine Route Upgrade – Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth)

Waterway: Huddersfield Narrow Canal

Thank you for your consultation

We are the charity who look after and bring to life 2000 miles of canals & rivers. Our waterways contribute to the health and wellbeing of local communities and economies, creating attractive and connected places to live, work, volunteer and spend leisure time. These historic, natural and cultural assets form part of the strategic and local green-blue infrastructure network, linking urban and rural communities as well as habitats. By caring for our waterways and promoting their use we believe we can improve the wellbeing of our nation.

The proposed works are to upgrade a section of railway between Stalybridge and Standedge Tunnel, the proposed works, construction route and construction compounds have the potential to impact on the waterway infrastructure which is owned and managed by the Canal & River Trust (the Trust). The Huddersfield Canal runs roughly parallel to the trainline, but towards the southern extent of the route into Stalybridge the River Tame is on the intervening land between the railway and canal.

Based on the Book of Plans we have the following comments to make on the information available. These are our initial comments on the works associated with the project, and we would require further details to fully understand the implications for our assets and infrastructure and how these would be mitigated within the Order as part of a suite of protective provisions for the Canal & River Trust.

MVL3/23 Wrights Overbridge Demolition Embankment Works

The first interface with the canal is shown as an indicative temporary site compound (orange hatched), just north of the listed Royal George Aqueduct on the offside of the Huddersfield Canal. According to our records the canal may be on a non-principal embankment here and as such may be slightly elevated. We would want to ensure a minimum of 2m stand off to the toe (bottom) of the embankment from any plant or machinery or storage within the compound. We would also want to retain access to maintain, repair and inspect the canal infrastructure here. We would also want to ensure that the canal is protected from any pollution from the compound be that dust, debris or runoff, this would need to be addressed as part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Canal & River Trust Planning Team

Canal & River Trust, National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port South Pier Road Ellesmere Port Cheshire CH65 4FW
T: 0151 355 5017 E: nationalwaterwaysmuseum@canalrivertrust.org.uk W: canalrivertrust.org.uk

MVL3/28 Oldham Road Bridge Reconstruction

An indicative temporary site compound (orange hatched) is shown, albeit slightly offset from the canal on a parcel of land at the Rugby ground between Bridge 81, Shaw Hall and Bridge 80, Frenches Bridge. We would want to ensure that all construction material and waste associated with the compound is contained within the site. This would need to be addressed as part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

MVL3/29 Wickens Underbridge Repairs

The plan here shows a drainage outfall to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal in the proximity of Lock 21. The canal is also recorded as being within a principle cutting at this point. The plan also shows a *'temporary land take here for the construction of the outfall'*. A new surface water outfall would require the separate consent of the Trust and associated commercial agreement. The Trust is not a land drainage authority and such discharges to our waterways are not granted as of right and where they are granted, they will be subject to a formal agreement. Any use of land within our ownership should be agreed voluntarily and we would seek to object to any compulsory powers or rights over our land.

In terms of the construction of the drainage outfall to the canal, we would want to ensure the large trees on the cutting are not damaged. The trees may be promoting stability of the cutting slope and in turn the structural integrity of the canal infrastructure. Further details would be required in relation to the works here.

MVL3/31A – Saddleworth Viaduct Mows Hall Vehicle Access Point

The railway crosses the canal here via the listed bridge 76 Saddleworth Railway Viaduct. The Trust own the listed Bridge 75 Mytholme here. The canal is also carried on a principal embankment just beyond this crossing. As shown on the plan there are various temporary construction access points shown here and temporary land required to install the overhead lines. There will likely be a visual impact of the overhead lines on the listed viaduct when viewed from the canal and we would want to comment further on this as the details emerge. Any overhead lines/gantry should be aligned to limit the visual impact on the canal corridor.

The plan suggests the use of canal / towpath for access, and we would welcome clarification on this matter. We would seek to avoid any loading of the towpath / washwall due to the implications for the waterway's structural integrity.

We would not want any construction vehicular access over Bridge 75 Mytholme, if this cannot be avoided then we would require pre and post inspections of the bridge and any damage caused would need to be made good. We would also want to maintain access to our assets here throughout the construction phase for maintenance, repair and inspection purposes.

MVL3/32 Underbridge Repairs and Embankment Works

Minor works are shown to the bridge over the railway just south of the listed Bridge 69, (Alice footbridge) over the canal. It would appear that access to the railway bridge is intended from network rail land (as opposed to via the canal footbridge). Subject to this being the case, it would be unlikely that there would be any impact on our assets here, but we would welcome clarification on the intended works here.

MVL3/36 Ward Lane Overbridge

Temporary construction access and temporary site compounds are shown related to an overbridge (MVL3/36 Ward Lane). This may have implications for listed canal Bridge 66, Ward Lane and listed lock 31 here. The canal is also in a principal cutting here. We would welcome further details in relation to the works to ascertain what the impact may be on our assets. It is also unclear what the implications may be for the Ward Lane Feeder here and the Ward Lane Splitter Wier. More details will be needed.

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As mentioned, the temporary access is shown adjacent to the canal cutting slope which should avoid being loaded. Depending on the nature of the works here a geotechnical stability assessment may need to be undertaken.

Bridge 66, Ward Lane is a public road bridge carrying Ward Lane over the navigation. The carriageway narrows to 4.47m (single lane) over the bridge and the approaches are steep with a slight humped profile. It may not be suitable for long vehicles or those with a low ground clearance. Further details in relation to the construction access and vehicles would be required.

In terms of the Ward Lane Feeder this is partially blocked within the culverted section that runs under the railway, which has impacts on our ability to keep the west side in water during dry spells. Given the works it would be advantageous to unblock the feeder here and ensure that the feeder is protected during the works.

MVL3/39 – Station Road Overbridge and MVL3/39B Bywash Underbridge

The plan shows numerous work in vicinity of the listed Standedge tunnel southwest portal (Diggle), with various temporary construction routes shown. There are also construction works indicated here. These works may also have implications for the Diggle Feeder and the overflow weir Kilngreen; Brunclough Inlet, Brunclough abstraction weir and Brunclough Continuation weir. More details will be needed here.

Notwithstanding the need for further detail, we would advise that to allow for the safe operation and passage of boats through Standedge tunnel each boat that passes through the tunnel requires a chaperone from the Trust to be onboard the boat to assist with navigating the tunnel. In addition to this prior to the boat travelling through the tunnel the Trust place safety equipment and lighting on each boat. The Trust utilise the existing public car park and access to the canal towpath adjacent to the southwest portal (Diggle) for this. We have a storage container sited here which contains some of the safety equipment needed to be carried on the boats that pass through the tunnel. The safety equipment and lighting are then taken off the boat once the tunnel has been navigated. Having clear access to enable boats to navigate safely through the tunnel is crucial part of the operation here and to allow us to fulfil our statutory duties. It can take up to 2 hours for a boat to travel through the tunnel and all passage need to be prior booked. Based on the plans, access to the south end of the canal tunnel will undoubtedly be affected by the works, however the Trust's continued access to enable safe navigation of the canal will need to be unhindered by the works. The general public also utilise the public car park to access/egress the canal towpath and a suitable temporary diversion will need to be allowed for. As well as having the safety equipment on the boats and a Trust volunteer onboard, a shadow vehicle also escorts the boats through the tunnel, by utilising the 'dead bore tunnels' adjacent to the tunnels. Access to tunnel for the shadow vehicle is crucial to the ongoing operations and safe navigation. We would welcome further discussions in relation to these matters.

We would welcome clarification on what works are required to the Station Road overbridge (MVL3/39), the Trust use this bridge as part of the route the shadow vehicle takes to access the 'dead bore tunnels', as well as for general access to maintain our assets.

In terms of the bywash underbridge (MVL3/39B) carrying the railway over the feeder channel. We would need to ensure that the feeder is not impacted in anyway. It is understood that the proposal is also to replace the underbridge with a twin box culvert. The flows to the canal here would need to be retained throughout the works. It will be critical that the Trust are engaged in the design of these works so that we can ensure minimal impact on the canal infrastructure and our users during the works and in the long term and especially in terms of water management.

In addition to this the Diggle Feeder enter the canal along this stretch, the exact location is not known as the feeder enters the canal under water. We would need to ensure that the feeder is not impacted by the works and safeguarded throughout.

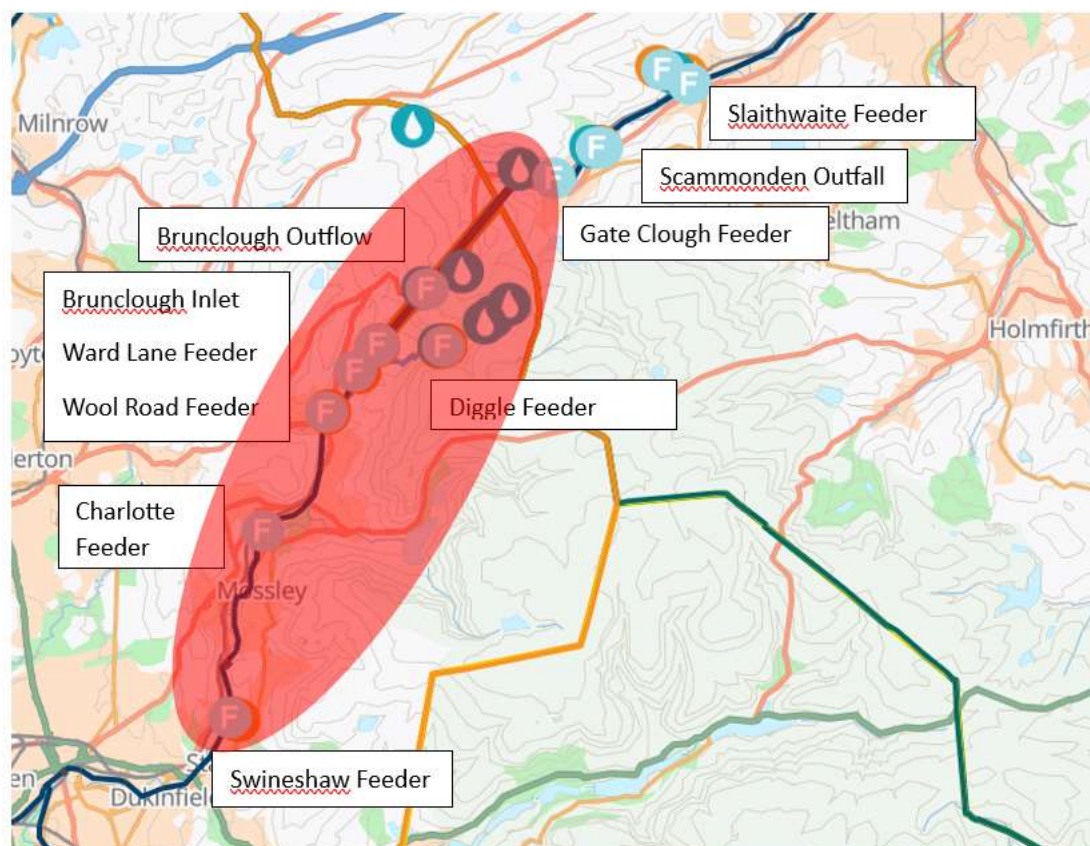
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As set out above, we manage and operate some critical waterway infrastructure within the corridor of works, this includes canal feeder channels. These are critical to enable us to manage our water resources and they are also important in terms of the operation of the canal and our ability to maintain and protect the local ecology. There are several feeders in the area, and various stream courses which also interact. We consider it essential that you work with us and base your plans on the feeders / flows being maintained at all times. You also need to be aware of our water control assets, such as weirs and sluices, and that any outfall and channel must be kept clear as these can operate at any time.

The map below identifies all of the feeders in the area of works. All of these feeds will need to be maintained throughout the project. In particular the works may potentially interrupt the feed from the Brunclough Feeder. It is important that any works recognises the requirement for overpumping of water to maintain the feed to the canal. It is critical that a flow is maintained during construction and when operational. Details of changes to the flow etc will need to be detailed and assessed by the Trust's Hydrology Team. We will also need to enter into discussions regarding the sizing of the pumps and the timing of the pump requirements.

We would also need to be satisfied that the flow to the canal from the Diggle Feeder will remain unaffected, this is the same for the Scammonden Feeder at the eastern end of the tunnel. These are key feeders which need to be considered and assessed as part of the works.



In respect to flood risk, there are various culverts under the canal, and these must be kept clear of debris that could restrict or prevent operation. If the works were to adjust or alter the paths of any water course, even temporarily, then it is critical that we must be made aware of this in advance. Any additional flows directed to an existing culvert could limit the functionality and capacity, and possibly lead to flooding issues.

General comments

The proposed works, in particular the construction routes would require the crossing of the canal. The potential impact on the bridges should be assessed as part of any assessment. We would wish to comment further in

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relation to this matter depending on the construction routes and the bridges that may be used and their associated weight limits.

Based on the route of the project it would appear that most road bridges are not owned by the Trust, with the exception of the following:

- Bridge 77, Clogger Knowle Bridge – this is Trust owned and listed and would be too small for construction traffic.
- Bridge 75, Myholme – this is Trust owned and listed, located at Lock 23 and adjacent to Saddleworth Railway Viaduct. It is used by boaters using locks and it is no through route but may be required for access to the base of viaduct. Further details would be required on its intended use.
- Bridge 73, Brown Hill Road Bridge – partly Trust owned and carries A6052, route likely to be needed for construction access
- Bridge 66, Ward Lane Bridge – is Trust owned and listed, close to west end of Standedge Tunnel. Further details would be required on its intended use.
- Bridge 59, Station Road Bridge – the ownership of this bridge is unclear, but it is listed. It is outside the scope of works but gives access to eastern end of tunnel. Further details would be required on its intended use.
- Saddleworth Railway Viaduct, Uppermill - Access to the base of the viaduct is possible via Mow Halls Lane and Bridge 75, Myholme but the bridge must be kept clear for boaters' use. It appears that the bridge has a loading capacity of 10 tonnes. The bridge is listed and must be protected during any construction works.

We will require full details of the proposed access routes and site compound locations for the scheme.

Given the nature of the works and construction compounds it is likely that vegetation clearance would be required. The removal of vegetation would need to be mitigated. Any location where vegetation clearance is required would need to be checked for protected species and works should be planned outside of nesting bird season. The canal is over 200 years old and not built to modern engineering standards. Any works in close proximity to the canal infrastructure, including tree removal could adversely impact the structural integrity of the canal infrastructure. We would need to comment further on this as details of the scheme emerge.

It is unclear if the works to electricity lines would require increased or improved security fencing. The visual impact of these could have an adverse impact on the canal corridor. The introduction of overhead lines may also have implications for anglers using the canal.

Works in close proximity to the canal infrastructure, new surface water outfalls or works to existing canal infrastructure on our land would be required to be carried out in accordance with the Canal & River Trust Third Party Works Code of Practice. Further details on this process can be found here

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/business-and-trade/undertaking-works-on-our-property-and-our-code-of-practice>

Any proposed works affecting the canal should be scheduled to fit within our winter stoppage period to limit impact on navigation. Any stoppages or temporary canal closures need to be agreed through the Third Party Works process and programmed well in advance.

Please note that as a Statutory Undertaker, the Trust would seek to challenge the use of any compulsory purchase powers to acquire property rights over any of our land. Accordingly, to avoid unnecessary delay and the incurrence of excess costs, any acquisition of Trust land should be arranged voluntarily.

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The above comments are given as guidance solely in our capacity as a statutory consultee and are based on the available details and do not prejudice any further comments or matters that may be raised by the Canal & River Trust at a later stage as more details emerge.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Bettany-Simmons MRTPI

Senior Planner – Major Projects & Infrastructure

Tim.Bettany-Simmons@canalrivertrust.org.uk

07342 057926

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/specialist-teams/planning-and-design>

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