

TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992
TRANSPORT AND WORKS (INQUIRIES PROCEDURE) RULES 2004
PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL
(STALYBRIDGE TO DIGGLE (SADDLEWORTH) ENHANCEMENTS) ORDER

Proof of Evidence

-of-

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Canal & River Trust

1. INTRODUCTION

Qualifications and Experience

1.1 My name is Stuart Catterall. I have a Class 2:1 Civil Engineering degree from Imperial College, University of London and am a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. I am a Chartered Civil Engineer with 33 years' experience, eleven of which have been working on the canal network. My role with Canal & River Trust is as a Principal Asset Engineer within the Infrastructure and Programmes Directorate. I have held this role for four and a half years. In this role I am responsible for the management of assets across my area including delivering the annual asset inspection programme and scheduling works to improve asset condition.

1.2 I will provide evidence on the following Canal & River Trust (**Trust**) assets and works proposed by Network Rail under the Order scheme which could impact upon them:

- Diggle & Brunclough Feeders.
- MVL3/39B Bywash underbridge (Brunclough Feeder).
- MVL3/39 Station Road Overbridge (Diggle Feeder interface).

This evidence addresses item 5 of the revised Statement of Matters dated 27 April 2026.

2. Scope of evidence

2.1 In my evidence I will describe the need for the Diggle and Brunclough canal feeder channels and why they are important to the continued operation of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal (**HNC**). I will also set out my concerns regarding the proposed bywash underbridge structure (MVL3/39B) that may affect the Brunclough discharge into Standedge Tunnel and how the new foundations for Station Road Overbridge (MVL3/39) may affect the underground, culverted Diggle Feeder.

3. Diggle Feeder and Brunclough Feeder

3.1 Diggle Feeder and Brunclough Feeder each supply water to the HNC at points within Standedge Tunnel. They are supplied from Diggle and Brunclough Reservoirs respectively and also collect surface water run-off from the adjacent hillsides. They provide a critical water supply to the canal which feeds westwards down the Diggle Lock Flight; eastwards down the Marsden Lock Flight and onwards to the wider canal network. It is important that this water supply is not impacted by the works relating to the Order scheme and that water supply to the canal is not interrupted.

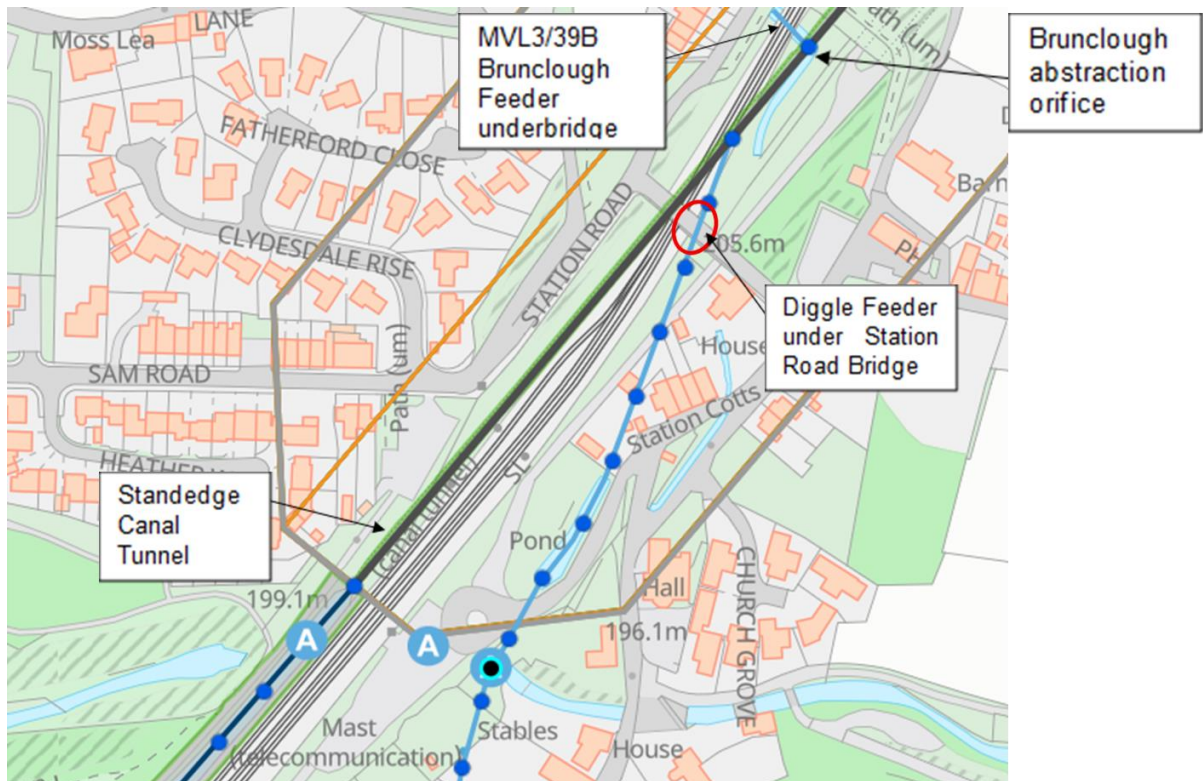


Fig. 1 - GIS Extract of Diggle Feeder route to Standedge Tunnel (assumed) beneath Station Road Bridge, Brunclough Feeder & Brunclough abstraction orifice.



Fig. 2 - Brunclough feeder structure (abstraction orifice and continuation weir)



Fig. 3 - Brunclough abstraction orifice

4. MVL3/39B Bywash Underbridge (Brunclough Feeder)

4.1 The new underbridge i.e. the proposed reinforced concrete culvert under the rail tracks, appears to be acceptable in principle. However, I am concerned that the reduced cross-sectional area (Drawing refs. 167037-TGP-22-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-163950 and 163951) compared with that of the existing channel under the tracks, will trap sediment on the upstream side of the new structure. This could impact the canal by restricting the supply to the abstraction orifice and therefore to the canal. (See GIS extract and annotated photos in paragraph 3.1 above). It will be crucial that Network Rail maintains the channel, i.e. the underbridge and keeps it clear of any sediment or vegetative material so that it does not cause a blockage of the supply to the canal or flooding of the rail tracks.

4.2 Also of concern is that during the works relating to the Order scheme, silt and sediment will be allowed to fall into Standedge Tunnel via the feeder abstraction orifice causing siltation of the canal which would reduce the available draught for navigation. There is also a risk that, due to restricted working space and its close proximity, the feeder structure may become

damaged by construction plant whilst constructing the underbridge. In order to avoid this, it is necessary that the feeder structure/weir apron should be cleared of all debris and silt in order that pre-construction and post-construction dilapidation surveys can be carried out. As set out at section 11 in the evidence of Tim Bettany-Simmons (OBJ211/TBS/1) this matter could be addressed by a suitably worded condition.

5. MVL3/39 Station Road Overbridge (Diggle Feeder interface)

5.1 Diggle Feeder is culverted underground from an open channel to the south of Station Cottages to a point where it discharges directly into Standedge Tunnel (the exact location of the outfall to the tunnel is unknown). The assumed alignment is shown in the GIS extract at Fig. 1, above. This shows the culverted feeder passing directly beneath Station Road overbridge (MVL3/39) and will potentially be affected by the proposed foundation works for the proposed Overbridge due to its potential close proximity.

5.2 It is therefore imperative that the actual alignment of the culvert is traced and that a pre-works internal condition assessment is carried out of the Diggle culvert in order to ensure that the permanent works design of the new Station Road overbridge foundation does not adversely affect the existing feeder culvert. A post-works internal condition assessment is also required to confirm that the culvert has not been damaged during the course of the bridge construction work. As set out at section 11 in the evidence of Tim Bettany-Simmons (OBJ211/TBS/1) this matter could be addressed by a suitably worded condition.

5.3 I am concerned that there is a possibility, which based on my understanding of the Order scheme I cannot rule out, Network Rail may need to block or divert temporarily the Diggle Feeder channel or culvert at some point during the authorised works in order to complete either its temporary or permanent construction work. This would be necessary if there is a clash with the new overbridge foundation and the existing feeder or if construction plant were to overload the culvert for example. If a temporary blockage or diversion is required, then the flow will need to be managed in order to maintain the supply of water to the HNC. This may take the form of over-pumping using temporary pumps to pump water from the feeder channel, past the proposed works and back into the feeder so that it discharges to the canal. My understanding of an attempt by Network Rail in 2024 to over-pump the Diggle Feeder was that it was not successful, due to the pumps that were provided being under-sized. Therefore, any attempt to over-pump as part of the Order scheme would need to be carried out by agreement with the Trust. Such an exercise would need to maintain appropriate flow rates in order to ensure that a satisfactory supply of water is provided to the HNC. More details about the feeders' supply required for the HNC is provided at sections 3.2 and 3.3 in Dr. Comerford's proof of evidence (OBJ211/AC/1).

Declaration: The evidence that I have prepared and provide for this inquiry in this proof of evidence is true and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

Signed: 

Stuart Catterall BEng (Hons) ACGI CEng MICE

Dated: 12 May 2026