

**The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle
(Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order**



TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992

**Transport and Works (Applications and Objections
Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006**

**THE NETWORK RAIL (STALYBRIDGE TO DIGGLE
(SADDLEWORTH) ENHANCEMENTS) ORDER**

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The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order*NR04 Statement of Aims**November 2025***1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An application has been made by Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (“Network Rail”) to the Secretary of State for Transport under section 6 of the Transport and Works Act 1992 (the “1992 Act”) for the Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) (“the Order”) under sections 1 and 5 of the 1992 Act.
- 1.2 This Statement provides a brief overview of the aims of Network Rail’s application for the Order. The purpose of the application for the Order is to provide Network Rail with powers for the construction, maintenance and operation of works on the Transpennine line between Stalybridge and Diggle (Saddleworth), including works for the electrification of the railway between Stalybridge and Diggle (Saddleworth).
- 1.3 The principal works which will comprise “the Order Scheme” to be authorised by the Order are:
- Construction of a new relocated station at Mossley;
 - Installation of Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) on the railway, including on the Uppermill Viaduct, which will include portals and gantries as well as overhead cables to enable the electrification of the railway;
 - Reconstruction and modification of existing bridges to facilitate the electrification of the railway and the ability to operate larger freight containerisation on the railway;
 - Closure of Stockport Road level crossing and the diversion of the existing public right of way (“PROW”) over that crossing;
 - Closure of the Moorgate Halt level crossing with the provision of enhancement works to the existing footpath network;
 - Associated railway works at Greenfield Station to support the upgrade and electrification of the railway.
- 1.4 The purpose of the Order Scheme is to increase capacity, improve journey time and reliability performance of railway services on the Transpennine route both between Stalybridge and Diggle (Saddleworth) and between Manchester, Leeds and York. In addition, by closing two existing level crossings the Order Scheme will also improve safety on the Transpennine route both between Stalybridge and Diggle (Saddleworth) and between Manchester, Leeds and York.
- 1.5 The Order Scheme forms part of the wider Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements Scheme (“the Scheme”). In addition to the delivery of the works which comprise the Order Scheme, Network Rail will also be delivering a series of associated works to the railway between Stalybridge and Diggle

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(Saddleworth) under permitted development rights which are conferred on Network Rail by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order) 2015 (“the GPDO”). In summary the principal elements of the Scheme, that do not form part of the Order Scheme, by virtue of being permitted by the GPDO include:

- Track upgrade works within Network Rail’s existing operational land, including track alteration works and track lowering works in the Stalybridge and Scout Tunnels;
- Installation of OLE structures and wiring, signalling equipment and other railway plant and equipment on Network Rail operational railway land;
- Decommissioning of the existing Mossley station including the demolition of the existing platforms and station footbridge; and
- Platform extensions and new footbridge works at Greenfield Station, including the demolition of the existing platforms and station footbridge.

2. ORDER SCHEME DESCRIPTION**2.1 Order Scheme Overview**

- 2.1.1 The Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) section of the Transpennine route is the route section subject of the Order Scheme (“the Scheme Route”). The purpose of the Order Scheme is to increase capacity, improve journey times, and improve the reliability and resilience of passenger train services that serve both the Scheme Route and the Transpennine route between Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and York as shown in Figure 1 below. To achieve this purpose the Order Scheme comprises a number of interventions which are described in section 2.2 below.

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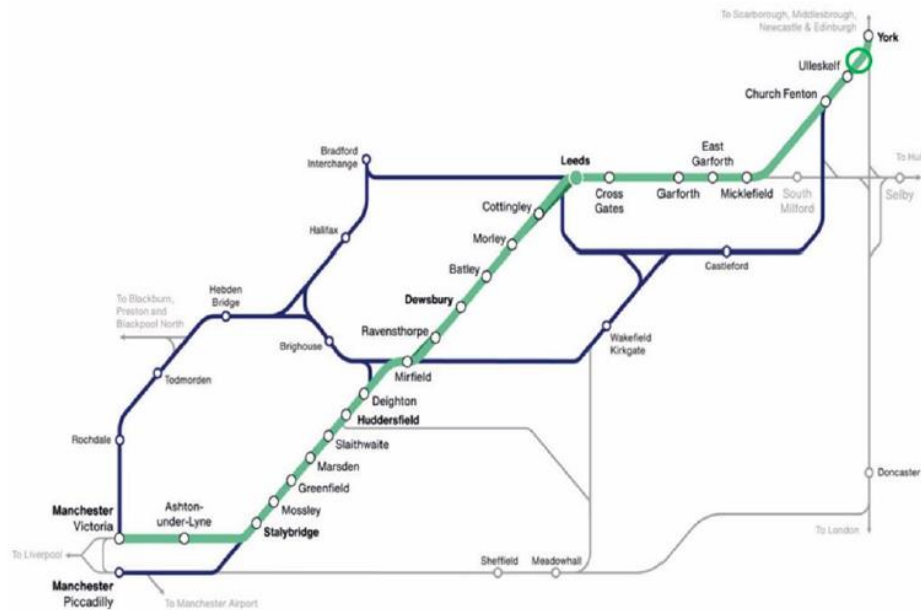


Figure 1 The Transpennine Route footprint

2.2 Description of the Order Scheme Works

2.2.1 In summary the Order Scheme works will include the following principal works:

- Work No. 1. The reconstruction of Heyrod Hall overbridge (MVL3/7), including works to construct a temporary bridge over the existing railway, upgrade an existing private access road served by this overbridge up to its junction with Printworks Road and associated utilities diversion works.
- Work No. 2. The reconstruction of Manchester Road footbridge (MVL3/10A).
- Work No. 3. The construction of a new Mossley Station to be located west of Manchester Road approximately 300 metres north of the site of the existing Mossley station, comprising the construction of station platforms, station entrance building (with ticketing and staffing facilities), station footbridge and lift shafts and associated station parking areas. These works will also include the provision of access to the new station from Manchester Road, a new pedestrian access route between the existing Mossley Station and the new relocated station and the re-location of bus stops on Manchester Road.
- Work No. 4. The reconstruction of Roughtown Road footbridge (MVL3/18).
- Work No. 5. The reconstruction of Wright's Mill overbridge (MVL3/20).
- Work No. 6 The reconstruction of Royal George underbridge (MVL3/25).
- Work No. 7. The construction of a new footbridge at Oldham Road (Oldham Road footbridge (MVL3/28/B)) over the existing railway.

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- Work No. 8. The reconstruction of Oldham Road overbridge (MVL3/28).
 - Work No. 9. The reconstruction of Ward Lane overbridge (MVL3/36), including works to construct a temporary bridge over the existing railway.
 - Work no. 10. The partial reconstruction of Station Road overbridge (MVL3/39), including the construction of a temporary utility bridge over the existing railway.
- 2.2.2 The Order Scheme will also make provision for the construction, operation and maintenance of railway electrification works (including the provision of OLE) on the Scheme Route (including within the work areas described above and on the existing Uppermill Viaduct) for the purposes of the electrification of the Scheme Route.
- 2.2.3 In addition to the principal works described above the Order Scheme will also provide for:-
- The closure of the Stockport Road level crossing and works to provide a diversion route for the existing PROW that crosses the Stockport Road level crossing; and
 - The closure of the Moorgate Halt level crossing and works to enhance the existing PROW network between Oldham Road and Ladcastle Road, which passes under MVL3/29 Wickens Underbridge, to provide an alternative footpath route following the closure of the Moorgate Halt level crossing.
- 2.2.4 In addition the Order Scheme will authorise the construction of temporary works across the Scheme Route, including temporary construction compounds, temporary accesses and other temporary works which are required to support the construction of both the Order Scheme and the Scheme.
- 2.2.5 Also, Network Rail will be seeking powers through the Order to acquire land, the subsoil and airspace of land, interests in land (including the imposition of restrictive covenants) and to temporarily acquire and temporarily use land for the purposes of the works to be authorised as part of the Order Scheme and for the provision of the works to delivered as part of the Scheme.

3. ORDER SCHEME AIMS AND BENEFITS

3.1 Current operation

3.1.1 The Transpennine route is a key strategic rail route across the North of England with the core route linking Manchester and York, via Huddersfield and Leeds.

3.1.2 More people travel on the railway today than ever before. Demand for passenger and freight services is high and is expected to rise significantly in the future. The

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Transpennine route is a key strategic route and is one of very few routes to have recovered in terms of passenger numbers, to pre-covid levels. It is one of the busiest lengths of rail at peak times on the national rail network and is identified for significant passenger growth in the future. In addition, with a significant move, post-Covid, to leisure travel increased passenger demand is also being seen on the Transpennine route across the day and throughout weekends. The Transpennine route is also identified as a key transport corridor for providing connections between cities in the North of England so to support the delivery of economic growth and “levelling up” opportunities across the North of England.

3.1.3 The Transpennine route currently handles a mix of fast express, local stopping services and freight, but has not seen significant infrastructure investment in enhancements to increase capacity for many years. Therefore, the Transpennine route network is increasingly becoming crowded and congested, journeys are slow and unreliable and due to the current infrastructure provision being relatively dated there is limited existing capacity to accommodate growth on the existing rail infrastructure.

3.2 Existing constraints on the Scheme Route

3.2.1 The existing Scheme Route includes 11km of track and two stations at Mossley and Greenfield. The Scheme Route currently experiences a number of constraints which contribute to adversely affecting the capacity and reliability of the Transpennine route as a whole and which, without address, would prevent the modernisation of the Transpennine route and the realisation of the full benefits of the wider Transpennine Route Upgrade (“TRU”) programme. The key constraints on the Scheme Route are:

- Line speed: Currently the Scheme Route is operated with line speeds of between 50-65mph which are not sufficient to significantly contribute to improvements in journey times across the Scheme Route that is required to support the delivery of the wider TRU benefits.
- The current Mossley station affords only stepped passenger access to the rail network which is not aligned to the TRU outcomes of step free access to stations, including longer platforms and wider platforms where required. Due to the current station location, (built within a rock cutting), the resultant engineering challenges make modernisation of the station aligned to the wider TRU outputs cost prohibitive.
- Existing bridge structures that cross the Scheme Route create a physical impediment to the installation of the OLE required for the electrification of the Scheme Route and the ability to operate larger freight containerisation on the Scheme Route. This therefore limits the train rolling stock that can operate on the Scheme Route to diesel trains only and also limits the container size that can be carried by freight services that operate on the Scheme Route.
- PROWs intersect the railway at two existing level crossings on the Scheme Route which allow access across the railway for pedestrians. However, the continued presence of these level crossings acts as a continual constraint on

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the future operation of the Scheme Route in terms of both safety and performance. In particular these two existing level crossings act as constraints to the stated aims of the Order Scheme to increase capacity (more frequent trains) improve journey times (faster trains) and improve reliability (through electrification), on the Scheme Route as is required to support the delivery of the wider TRU benefits. Moreover, with the delivery of the Order Scheme, and the wider Scheme, the existing risk to level crossing users would increase to a level that would be intolerable for Network Rail to accept without mitigation, e.g. closure of the level crossings and alternative provision to traverse the Scheme Route. In addition, where there is reasonable opportunity, Network Rail, in accordance with national policy will pursue the removal of level crossings from the rail network to improve the safety of the railway by eliminating the direct conflict between pedestrians and trains.

- The Moorgate Halt level crossing is, as of the date of the application for the Order, temporarily closed (through a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order due to recent infrastructure changes to the track and signalling on this part of the Scheme Route, which could result in a train straddling the level crossing during times of perturbation.
- The Scheme Route, along with the Transpennine route as a whole has historically suffered from limited investment. Therefore, interventions are required to renew and modernise the existing railway assets on the Scheme Route so to enable the Scheme Route to operate at the increased capacity and with the improved performance and reliability that is required to support the delivery of the wider TRU benefits.

3.2.2 As currently operated, the Scheme Route is a non-electrified section of the railway network. Switching from diesel trains to bi-mode and full electric rolling stock has benefits for the environment and will assist Network Rail in achieving its decarbonisation objectives, electrification also has benefits to train performance, with faster acceleration and more efficient braking being made possible, which also brings additional benefits with regards to safety.

3.2.3 The key constraints that exist on the Scheme Route, as explained above, currently adversely affect the performance, safety, reliability and capacity of train services serving the Scheme Route. Therefore, the realisation of the full benefits of the Order Scheme and the wider Scheme are required both to improve train services serving the Scheme Route and train services serving the entire Transpennine route.

3.3 Order Scheme Aims and Benefits

3.3.1 The Scheme Route is a bottleneck on the Transpennine route where significant capacity and performance issues are currently encountered. Therefore, the Order Scheme, together with the wider Scheme works, is a key contributor towards the delivery of the wider TRU programme and the full realisation of the aims of the overall TRU programme of works, being the programme which provides the TRU framework for investment and network management, to better meet capacity requirements.

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3.3.2 The Order Scheme will provide a fully accessible, and compliant station at a new relocated Mossley station, which, will include new modern passenger facilities, step-free access, longer and wider platforms, improved drop-off arrangements, the availability of additional blue badge and non-blue badge parking. Stations within the Order Scheme limits currently do not have step free access capability. Relocating Mossley Station has linked benefits to the wider TRU scheme allowing the track position to be optimised for the proposed higher line speeds and the ability to introduce an earthed section of the overhead line equipment, adjacent to Mossley Cottages as an additional level of risk control.

3.3.3 A number of existing bridge structures that cross the Scheme Route will be replaced as part of the Order Scheme to enable the clearances required to allow the installation of railway electrification works (including the provision of OLE) on the Scheme Route that is required for the electrification of the Scheme Route so to improve the reliability of the Scheme Route and the train services operating on it. In addition, the replacement of these bridge structures will improve clearances on the Scheme Route so to enable the capability to run larger freight containerisation on the Scheme Route.

3.3.4 The Order Scheme, together with the wider Scheme works, will deliver a fully electrified section of the Transpennine route, with train fleet changes being made to allow bi-modal trains to make use of the benefits of an electrified route. This accords with Network Rail's Decarbonisation Strategy ("the Strategy") that seeks electrification of routes, and areas, where appropriate. TRU was identified specifically in the Strategy and so the Scheme Route being electrified supports that aim. Electrification also assists with journey time and performance by allowing trains to accelerate faster, and brake more efficiently.

3.3.5 The Order Scheme will deliver a safe way of passage across the Scheme Route for existing users of the two level crossings located on the Scheme Route through the provision of alternative routes across the railway. This will remove key conflicts between trains and the public and provide 24/7 access across the railway. Closing the two level crossings will, by reducing these key conflicts between trains and the public, also provide for improved capacity on the Scheme Route, by allowing an increase in line speed enabling faster journeys for passengers. Closure of the level crossing will also lead to a more resilient railway. Incidents at level crossings are often vehicle or pedestrian collisions, and result in significant time impacts for investigation and preparation of the train line to be opened again. The closure of the two level crossings will reduce the number of incidents of this type; this will help to greatly mitigate performance and disruption to passengers. The closure of the level crossings will also result in the removal of assets from the Scheme Route that need to be inspected, maintained and operated. It is also an absolute requirement that the two existing level crossings are closed before the new timetable to be facilitated by the Order Scheme, and wider Scheme, is in operation on the Scheme Route as a combination of new line speeds, electrification, and additional capacity would increase the risk to users of these level crossings to unacceptable levels.

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3.3.6 The Order Scheme will also deliver new track, drainage, signalling and electrification equipment, which will be more reliable than the older rail assets which currently exist on the Scheme Route so improving the resilience of the Scheme Route and the train services operating on it.

3.3.7 The Order Scheme, together with the wider Scheme, will facilitate the provision of modernised signalling on the Scheme Route which will mean shorter headways between trains, meaning they can run closer together through more effective digital controls in place, and this in turn will allow for increased capacity in the number of trains that can be on the Scheme Route at any one time.

3.3.8 Currently the Scheme Route has various speed limits. The Order Scheme, together with the wider Scheme, will allow for faster line speeds (80mph throughout). This will improve journey times across the Scheme Route and will increase the flexibility to timetable more train paths on the Scheme Route and the wider Transpennine route.

3.3.9 The Order Scheme, together with the wider Scheme, will enable the installation of new track and electrification equipment, which will be more reliable and resilient than the older rail assets which currently exist on the Scheme Route so improving the reliability of the Scheme Route and the train services operating on it.

3.3.10 The improved efficiency and capacity on the Scheme Route to be delivered by the Order Scheme, and the wider Scheme, will incentivise a modal shift with fewer heavy vehicles on the highway network causing traffic issues and contributing to air pollution. An effective railway means more freight trains will be able to operate which in turns brings about economic and environmental benefits.

3.4 Aims of TRU

3.4.1 To address both the current challenges on the Transpennine route and to support aspirations to support economic growth and “levelling up” opportunities across the North of England the Order Scheme and the wider Scheme works are being delivered as part of the wider TRU programme. TRU is a series of projects between Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and York with the objective being to improve journey times and capacity between key destinations on the Transpennine route, improve overall reliability and resilience on the Transpennine route, and provide environmental benefits from a modal shift to rail and electrification of the Transpennine route. TRU, of which the Order Scheme and the wider Scheme are an important part, proposes investment now to solve today’s challenges, plan for future growth, and contribute to decarbonisation.

3.4.2 Due to the size, differences, and complicated nature of the works required to upgrade the existing rail infrastructure between Manchester and York, TRU is being designed as a phased programme of interventions with those interventions being delivered as separate projects, alongside each other. The Order Scheme and the wider Scheme are referred to as TRU Project W2b. The package of TRU projects are listed

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in Appendix 1 by reference to the latest Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline decision gateway which they have passed, Decision to Design or Decision to Develop. In combination these TRU Projects will deliver the overarching TRU benefits detailed further below, but individually they will also realise their own benefits. The individual benefits of the Order Scheme and the wider Scheme are set out in the section above.

3.4.3 TRU will aim to deliver:

- An improved journey time for Leeds – Manchester Victoria of 42-44mins;
(This Order Scheme contributes to this journey time improvement by facilitating increased running speeds of 80mph by providing for the electrification of the full extent of the Scheme Route and by providing for the closure of the two existing level crossings on the Scheme Route);
- An improved journey time for York to Manchester Victoria of 65-67mins;
(This Order Scheme contributes to this journey time improvement by increased running speeds of 80mph by providing for the electrification of the full extent of the Scheme Route and by providing for the closure of the two existing level crossings on the Scheme Route);

note: the improved journey times represent the latest Client Development Agreement 4, April 25, TRU programme outputs.
- Capability to operate four ‘express’ and two ‘semi-express’ services an hour on the route;
(This Order Scheme contributes to this capacity improvement through the scheme order works. It also delivers on this capacity improvement aim by improving the capacity (platform lengths) at Mossley and Greenfield Station);
- Capability to operate up to two ‘local services’ an hour on the route;(subject to future operating timetables)
(This Order Scheme contributes to this capacity improvement through the scheme Order works.)
- Performance of the Transpennine Route to be 92.5% or higher each period;
(This Order Scheme delivers on this reliability aim by providing for the electrification of the full extent of the Scheme Route, by providing for the closure of the two existing level crossings on the Scheme Route and by providing upgraded modern railway equipment throughout the Scheme Route);
- Larger freight containerisation capability (W12 gauge).

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(The Scheme delivers on this aim through the provision of greater clearance distances through the modification of existing structures that cross the railway throughout the Scheme Route);

- Freight paths/rights to be retained as existing.

(This Scheme delivers on this freight capability aim by providing for the electrification of the full extent of the Scheme Route and by providing upgraded modern railway equipment throughout the Scheme Route);

- A contribution to Network Rail's Decarbonisation Strategy and climate policy.

(This Scheme contributes to Network Rail's strategy and policy by providing for the electrification of the full extent of the Scheme Route).

3.4.4 Whilst the TRU benefits above are realised with the delivery of each of the individual projects, it is important to note, that without this Order Scheme, and all of its component parts, the aims of TRU could not be achieved.

4. SUMMARY

4.1. The Order Scheme will contribute to fulfilling the TRU Programme's objectives of journey time improvements, capacity improvements, reliability and resilience of services, the closure of two level crossings, facilitation of electrification equipment by bridge changes and replacements and the provision of a new station at Mossley. Network Rail also believes the Order Scheme will provide a safer railway for those existing users by the closure of the two level crossings.

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APPENDIX 1 GROUP PROJECTS

Group 1 – Decision to Deliver

W1 – Manchester Victoria-Stalybridge: Junction Speed improvements, line speed increases and electrification

W2a – Stalybridge: Key capacity enhancements around Stalybridge station which facilitate better performance, also with line speed benefit

W3 – Huddersfield-Ravensthorpe: Electrification and major project to quadruple lines and provide a grade-separated junction at Thornhill, near Ravensthorpe

W4 – Ravensthorpe-Leeds: Various line speed, signalling, station and electrification work

W5 – Morley: Work at Morley station to ease curvature and enhance the line speed

E1 – North of Church Fenton-York: Electrification and line speed increase

E2 – Leeds Departures: Development of final scheme scope

E3 – Crossgate-Micklefield: Development of final scheme scope

E4 – Micklefield-Church Fenton: Development of final scheme scope

Group 2 – Decision to Design

W2bc – Stalybridge-Huddersfield: Development of final scheme scope

Stations: There are 11 stations on the route that will require a review of the options available regarding step free access and other enhancements