

The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) Heritage Statement
October 2025

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

DOCUMENT: Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) - Heritage Statement

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Transpennine Route Upgrade

- 1.1.1 The Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) is a major, multi-billion pound program of improvements to increase capacity, improve journey time and reliability performance of rail services on the Transpennine Route.
- 1.1.2 The TRU will aim to deliver:
- An improved journey time for Leeds – Manchester Victoria of 42-44mins;
 - An improved journey time for York to Manchester Victoria of 65-67mins;
 - Capability to operate four ‘express’ and two ‘semi-express’ services an hour;
 - Capability to operate up to two ‘local services’ an hour on the route;(subject to future operating timetables);
 - Performance of the Transpennine Route to be 92.5% or higher each period;
 - Larger freight containerisation capability (W12 gauge);
 - Freight paths/rights to be retained as existing; and
 - A contribution to Network Rail’s Decarbonisation Strategy and climate policy.
- 1.1.3 The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order extends from Stalybridge Tunnel, in the west, through to the western portal of Standedge Tunnel (the “Order Scheme”). This section of the Transpennine route is referred to hereafter as Route Section W2B
- 1.1.4 The TRU programme in Route Section W2B involves a variety of works including the electrification of the railway (installation of overhead line equipment (OLE) and associated infrastructure); reconstruction and modification of existing bridges to facilitate electrification of the railway, construction of a new station at Mossley, closure of Stockport Road Level Crossing and Moorgate Halt Level Crossing, railway works at Greenfield Station to support the upgrade and electrification of the railway track reconfiguration works and track lowering works through Stalybridge and Scout Tunnels.
- 1.1.5 Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, consent is required from the local planning authority for any proposed works that would affect the character of a listed building.

The Transport and Works Act 1992 introduced section 12(3A) into the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the effect of which is to "call-in" for determination by the Secretary of State applications to the local planning authority for listed building consent where such consent is required in consequence of proposals included in an application for a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo). The procedures in the Transport and Works Applications (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Ancient Monuments Procedure) Regulations 1992 then apply to the call in of such listed building consent applications.

- 1.1.6 This Heritage Statement has been compiled in support of an application for listed building consent by Network Rail in respect of the proposed works on the grade II listed Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) (NHLE 1068120). This bridge is located in Uppermill (NGR SD 99579 06310), Oldham. A location plan is provided in Appendix A.
- 1.1.7 The preparation of this assessment has been informed by the Statement of History and Significance: West of Leeds (Alan Baxter Associates 2024) and the Route-wide Statement of Significance (Alan Baxter Associates 2019).

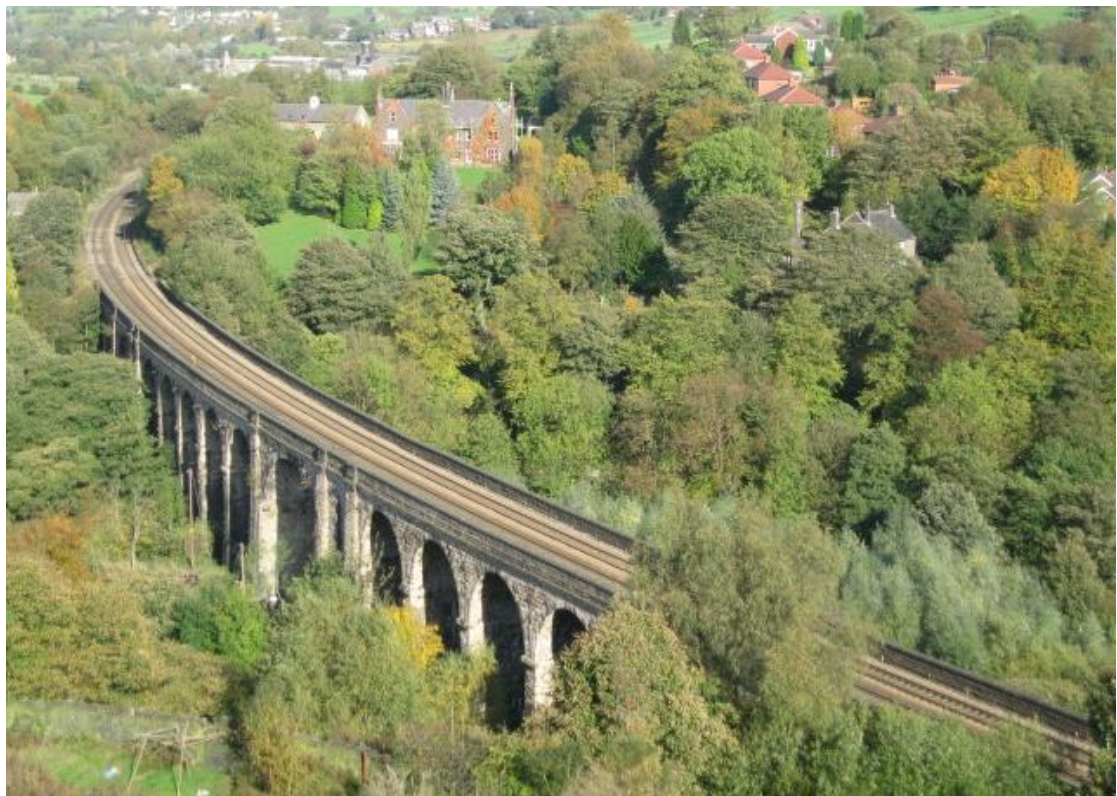
1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 The requirement for assessment and its scope is guided by policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2025) specifically paragraph 207, which seeks an assessment proportionate to the importance of the affected heritage asset sufficient to understand the potential impacts of development. The specific scope of this assessment is determined by Network Rail's requirement to provide an objective assessment of the heritage value of assets that may be affected by the Order Scheme, and to appraise the nature and extent of any impact upon setting and significance.
- 1.2.2 This Heritage Statement will:
- Identify and discuss the heritage significance of the listed structure, including the contribution of setting;
 - Present the design requirements of the Order Scheme at the structure;
 - Present the process of development and optioneering which has led to the design proposal for the Order Scheme in relation to the structure;
 - Identify the impacts of the design proposal on the significance of the structure, in the context of current national and local planning policy and guidance;

- Discuss any mitigation recommended in relation to the structure; and
- Consider the public benefits to be gained from the Order Scheme weighed against the impact on the significance of the structure, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, 2025 and the Oldham Local Development Framework (2011).

1.3 Current Condition

1.3.1 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) (Insert 1-1) is a mid to late 1840s masonry viaduct of 23 spans, designed by Alfred Stanistreet (A.S.) Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway. It carries the Transpennine railway across the River Tame valley to the north-west of the settlement of Uppermill, located c. 7km east of Oldham, Greater Manchester. The structure spans the A370 High Street, Den Lane and Brownhill Lane, as well as the watercourses of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the River Tame.



Insert 1-1 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), viewed from the south.

1.3.2 The structure was subject to a detailed examination as part of Network Rail's maintenance regime in November 2011, which identified that the viaduct is in an overall fair condition. A more recent visual inspection in March 2020 identified no change in the overall condition

of the structure since the detail inspection. A number of small defects were identified, including:

- Open joints in the masonry elevations;
- A number of small vertical and transverse fractures in piers and buttresses (Insert 1-2);
- Vegetation infiltrating through spandrel walls and parapets (Insert 1-3);
- Isolated examples of displacement or dropped masonry in some arch barrels and buttresses; and
- Minor corrosion of pattress plates.

1.4 Summary of Proposal

- 1.4.1 In order to achieve the TRU Programme objectives, electrification of the Route is required. This would require the alteration of a number of existing structures, including Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), in order to accommodate OLE, higher line speed and increased freight trains. It has been determined to be necessary to undertake works to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) in order to accommodate provisions for OLE portals. These works will therefore enable implementation of the Order Scheme.

Insert 1-2 Example of a typical vertical fracture in one of the arch piers.



Insert 1-3 Example of typical vegetation around one of the downpipe hoppers.

2. LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the “Act”) governs the designation and works to listed buildings in England.

2.1.2 The Act states in s.1 (5):

‘In this Act “listed building” means a building which is for the time being included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under this section; and for the purposes of this Act—

- a. any object or structure fixed to the building;*
- b. any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948, shall be treated as part of the building.’*

2.1.3 Under the Act, no one is permitted to undertake or cause to be undertaken any works that would affect the character of a listed building unless the works are authorised. Section 16 of the Act identifies that whether such works can be carried out is determined by the local planning authority or the Secretary of State:

- 1) ‘Subject to the previous provisions of this Part, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State may grant or refuse an application for listed building consent and, if they grant consent, may grant it subject to conditions.*
- 2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*
- 3) Any listed building consent shall (except in so far as it otherwise provides) ensure for the benefit of the building and of all persons for the time being interested in it.’*

2.1.4 In relation to the granting of listed building consent, Section 17 of the Act stipulates that conditions attached to listed building consent may include those with respect to:

- a) ‘the preservation of particular features of the building, either as part of it or after severance from it;*
- b) the making good, after the works are completed, of any damage caused to the building by the works; [and]*

c) *the reconstruction of the building or any part of it following the execution of any works, with the use of original materials so far as practicable and with such alterations of the interior of the building as may be specified in the conditions*’.

2.1.5 It is also defined in s.17 (2) that a condition *‘may also be imposed requiring specified details of the works (whether or not set out in the application) to be approved subsequently by the local planning authority or, in the case of consent granted by the Secretary of State, specifying whether such details are to be approved by the local planning authority or by him*’.

2.1.6 The Act also states in s.66 (1):

‘In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’.

2.1.7 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) also governs duties of the local planning authority relating to conservation areas, particularly Sections 69, 72 and 74.

2.1.8 Section 69 requires local planning authorities to define as conservation areas any *‘areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*’.

2.1.9 Section 72 confers a general duty *‘with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area... special attention shall be paid to the desirability or preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*’.

2.1.10 Section 74 defines that demolition of a building in a conservation area is not permitted *‘without the consent of the appropriate authority*’.

2.2 National Policy

2.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2025) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, supported by the Planning Practice Guidance (updated July 2019) (MHCLG, 2019).

2.2.2 Section 2 of the NPPF outlines the principles of achieving sustainable development including, in Paragraph 8, an environmental objective *‘to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment*’. Paragraph 9 sets out that these objectives should be delivered

through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies within the NPPF. Section 16 of the NPPF deals specifically with the historic environment. Where changes are proposed, the NPPF sets out a clear framework to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance

2.2.3 The following paragraphs as set out in the NPPF include key provisions considered of particular importance to this application:

- Paragraph 207 – *‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.’*
- Paragraph 212 – *‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss, or less than substantial harm to its significance.’*
- Paragraph 213 – *‘Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*
 - a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
 - b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.’*
- Paragraph 214 – *‘Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:*
 - a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*

- b) *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
 - c) *conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
 - d) *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.'*
- Paragraph 215 – *'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*
- Paragraph 216 – *'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'*
- Paragraph 219 – *'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.'*
- Paragraph 220 – *'Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.'*

Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.2.4 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (MHCLG, 2019) provides further advice and guidance that expands the policy outlined in the NPPF. It expands on terms such as 'significance' and its importance in decision making. The PPG clarifies that being able to properly assess the nature, extent and the importance of the significance of the

heritage asset and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals (paragraph 008 Reference ID: 18a-008-20190723).

- 2.2.5 The PPG states that in relation to setting, a thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take in to account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it (paragraph 009 Reference ID: 18a-009-20190723).
- 2.2.6 The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which an asset is experienced in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.
- 2.2.7 Paragraph 013 of the PPG recognises that the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public right or the ability to experience that setting. When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may also need to consider the implications of cumulative change (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20190723 Revision date: 23 07 2019).
- 2.2.8 In relation to substantial harm, the PPG states that 'it is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed' (paragraph 017). Harm to heritage assets can be avoided or minimised if proposals are based on a clear understanding of the heritage asset and its setting (paragraph 008 Reference ID: 18a-008-20190723). The NPPF indicates that the degree of harm should be considered alongside any public benefits that can be delivered by development.

2.3 Local planning policy

Oldham Local Development Framework

- 2.3.1 Local planning policy for Oldham is provided by the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies of the Oldham Local Development Framework, adopted in November 2011, and a small number of retained policies from the Unitary Development Plan (2009).
- 2.3.2 Policy 24 of the Local Development Framework relates to the Historic Environment and is reproduced in full below:

Policy 24 Historic Environment

‘Oldham has a rich historic environment with many significant and valuable features, structures and characteristics. The council will protect, conserve and enhance these heritage assets and their settings which adds to the borough’s sense of place and identity.

Development proposals must have regard to:

- *National and local guidance and policies on the historic environment.*
- *Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Heritage Assessments.*
- *Greater Manchester and Oldham Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Study.*
- *Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, where appropriate.*

When allocating sites and determining applications for planning and advertisement consents, the council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance the architectural features, structures, settings, historic character and significance of the borough’s heritage assets and designations including:

- *Listed buildings.*
- *Conservation areas.*
- *Registered parks and gardens (their historic character and setting).*
- *Scheduled ancient monuments (their archaeological value and interest).*
- *Significant archaeological remains.*

a. Locally significant buildings, structures, areas or landscapes of architectural or historic interest (including non-designated locally significant assets identified in the local lists compiled by the council).

The council will support heritage-led regeneration, including the reuse of historic buildings such as mills, to achieve economic, community and regeneration objectives, where appropriate.

Listed Buildings

Development to, or within the curtilage or vicinity of, a listed building or structure must serve to preserve or enhance its special interest and its setting. There will be a strong presumption against proposals involving the demolition of listed buildings or structures. Proposals which would lead to the loss or cause harm to grade I and II listed buildings should be wholly exceptional. Development proposals for a building incorporating a historic shop front should make provision for its retention, restoration and repair.*

Conservation Areas

Development within or affecting the setting of a conservation area, including views in or out, must serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Proposals for all new development, including alterations and extensions to buildings and their re-use, must have a sensitive and appropriate response to context and good attention to detail. Proposals must not adversely affect important architectural or historic features or distinctive local features or structures unless it can be demonstrated that the development brings substantial benefits to the community. Proposals for the demolition of a building in a conservation area must demonstrate that it is unrealistic for the building to continue in its existing use and a suitable alternative use cannot be found, or the building is in poor structural condition and the cost of repairing and maintaining it would be disproportionate to its importance and value and the demolition would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. In exceptional circumstances, the fact that a demolition would bring substantial benefits to the local community may outweigh the balance in favour of the preservation of the building.

Registered Parks and Gardens

Development which would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, the historic character or setting of any part of registered park and garden will not be permitted.

Scheduled Monuments

Development which would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, scheduled ancient monuments should be wholly exceptional.

Local Designations

Development which would affect the following designations will only be permitted in cases where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development brings substantial benefits to the community which outweigh the preservation of the heritage asset:

Significant archaeological remains.

Locally significant buildings, structures, areas or landscapes of architectural or historic interest'.

Places for Everyone

- 2.3.3 Places for Everyone (Greater Manchester Combined Authority 2024) is a joint development plan covering nine Greater Manchester districts including Oldham, setting out a framework for sustainable development. Policy JP-P2 concerns Heritage and is of relevance to this assessment:

Policy JP-P2: Heritage

We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct character, identity and sense of place.

Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district's identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for conserving and enhancing in the future and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This

knowledge should be used to inform the positive management and integration of our heritage by:

- 1. Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making;*
- 2. Ensuring that the heritage significance of a site or area is considered in accordance with national planning policy in the planning and design process and opportunities for interpretation and local engagement are optimised;*
- 3. Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place;*
- 4. Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and*
- 5. Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.*

Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings, and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and/or historic value. Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy. Where heritage assets have been identified as being at risk, Local Plans should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use. Development proposals which will help safeguard the significance of and secure a sustainable future for Greater Manchester's

heritage at risk will be supported in principle, provided they are not contrary to national policy or other policies in the development plan. Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process.

Historic England Guidance

- 2.3.4 Historic England has published a series of Good Practice Advice (GPA) notes and Advice Notes (AN) of which those of most relevance to this appraisal are GPA2 – Managing Significance in Decision-taking (Historic England, 2015), GPA3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017), and AN12, Statements of Heritage Significance (Historic England, 2019).
- 2.3.5 GPA2 – Managing Significance in Decision-taking emphasises the importance of having a knowledge and understanding of the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by the development and that the ‘first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant the contribution of its setting to its significance’ (paragraph 4). Early knowledge of this information is also useful to a local planning authority in pre-application engagement with an applicant and ultimately in decision making (paragraph 7).
- 2.3.6 GPA3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets provides advice on the setting of heritage assets. Setting is as defined in the NPPF and comprises the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Elements of a setting can make positive or negative contributions to the significance of an asset and affect the ways in which it is experienced. Historic England state that setting does not have a boundary and what comprises an asset’s setting may change as the asset and its surrounding evolve. Setting can be extensive and particularly in urban areas or extensive landscapes can overlap with other assets. The contribution of setting to the significance of an asset is often expressed by reference to views and the GPA in paragraph 11 identifies those views, such as those that were designed or those that were intended, that contribute to understanding the significance of assets.
- 2.3.7 AN12, Statements of Heritage Significance outlines a recommended approach to assessing the significance of heritage assets in line with the requirements of NPPF. It includes a suggested reporting structure for a ‘Statement of Heritage Significance’, as well as guidance on creating a statement that is proportionate to the asset’s significance

and the potential degree of impact of a proposed development. The AN also offers an interpretation of the various forms of heritage interest that an asset can possess, based on the terms provided in the NPPF Glossary (Annex 2); namely archaeological, architectural, artistic, and historic.

3. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research

- 3.1.1 In accordance with Historic England guidance and as determined by policy requirements, this assessment identifies the baseline heritage interest of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). The historical narrative informing the baseline has been derived from a review of various resources including maps and other cartographic and photographic sources. Statutory information in relation to the designated assets has been obtained from the National Heritage List for England maintained by Historic England and the Historic Environment Record maintained by Greater Manchester Archaeology Advisory Service.
- 3.1.2 Additional information concerning the assets, their condition, use and setting has been obtained from a survey undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced heritage specialists on 21 and 22 May 2024, including observation from surrounding vantage points and informed by appraisal and observation derived from close working with other disciplines within the project team. A site visit was undertaken on 1 July 2024 with a Landscape and Visual specialist to assess potential visual impacts of electrification across the viaduct.

3.2 Significance and setting

- 3.2.1 Assessment of the significance of heritage assets and their setting has been undertaken in consideration of guidance issued by Historic England. A methodology for the assessment of significance of heritage assets is outlined in Advice Note 12 (Historic England, 2019) whilst Historic England GPA3 (Historic England 2017a) provides the basis of a methodology for the assessment of setting.
- 3.2.2 Significance is often established by statutory designations such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments and conservation areas. More particular advice as to what makes up significance is set out in AN12, which establishes a method for thinking consistently about the heritage values that can be ascribed to a place. When making an assessment of significance, numerous aspects are considered including architectural interest, historic interest, group value, social value, former uses and local distinctiveness. These aspects are grouped into four values defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as historical

interest, archaeological interest, artistic interest, and architectural interest.

3.2.3 In assessing whether the setting of an asset contributes to its significance, and in assessing the effect of development, Historic England GPA3 provides a checklist of attributes that may affect setting and significance under five broad categories comprising:

- The location and siting of the development;
- The form and appearance of the development;
- Additional effects (change to skyline etc.);
- Permanence; and
- Consequential effects.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1.1 Historic England and Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC) have been involved in ongoing stakeholder consultation with Network Rail through the development of Route Section W2B of TRU.

4.1.2 Regular meetings with Historic England and OMBC have been held to discuss design development in relation to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). Initial meetings were held periodically throughout 2021 and resumed in 2024 to discuss the overall route and design development for all listed structures within Route section W2B.

4.1.3 The design development for Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) was presented and discussed with the historic environment stakeholders on the dates outlined in Table 4-1:

Table 4-1 Consultation for Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31)

Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
12 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TMBC • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of detailed structures along Route Section W2B. • Network Rail addressed the requirements for OLE to be attached on the outside of the viaduct due to limited clearance on the trackside of the viaduct.

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Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
16 February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TMBC • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation overview of the Order Scheme, objectives and its scope which included the full electrification and works to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). • Works to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) to help achieve the objectives of the overall Order Scheme, works to install Overhead Line Electrification (OLE) gantry fixing to the pier locations along the viaduct.
16 March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of early optioneering for Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) and overview of the grade II listed viaduct including its location, historic background and problem statement. • Decision to install OLE portals was required in order to accommodate the electrification of the railway over the viaduct and increase the line speed from 65mph to 80mph. Gauge constraints on the existing deck and the need for a slight track slew would result in insufficient clearance to install the portals on the inside of the deck. However, given the concrete strengthening measures which were installed in 1919, these would provide ideal areas to attach these portals. • Presentation of OLE portal locations adopting a red, amber, green rating system based on natural viewpoints and surrounding vegetation. The following was determined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Piers 0-4: Preferred (green)

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Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Piers 5-7: Preferred (green) ○ Pier 8: Acceptable (amber) ○ Piers 9-10: Unfavourable (red) ○ Piers 11-12: Acceptable (amber) ○ Piers 13-14: Preferred (green) ○ Piers 15-16: Unfavourable (red) ○ Pier 17: Acceptable (amber) ○ Piers 18-20: Preferred (green) ○ Piers 21-22: Acceptable (amber) ○ Pier 23: Preferred (green)
26 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMBC • TMBC • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the structures along Route Section W2B which are of historic interest, including the grade II viaducts which are noted for their inherent significance, particularly as essential railway structures and their shared common themes, significance and group value with each other. Acknowledgement that these are monumental examples of 19th century engineering and prominent elements of local townscape and landscape.

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Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the purpose of Heritage Statements and their assessment of impact with the emerging GRIP 3 designs¹. • Early-stage recommendations to minimise harm to significance against the requirements for justification of proposals and opportunities to pursue sensitive design and compensation. The proposed OLE on the viaducts were presented and included the recommendation for feasibility and optioneering around location of portals taking into account setting and how setting of the viaducts contributes towards its overall significance. The viaducts were flagged as amber on a RAG scale. • Reassurance was provided to the council that they will be involved in the GRIP 3 design process which will be used within the detailed design development of GRIP 4. Clarification was also provided on the sustainable heritage initiatives. • Historic England stated how they expect to get an understanding of significance at this stage and that they anticipate options to be shared for comment. Also stressed the importance of minimising harm.
6 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Historic England to discuss the approach taken to significant interventions to designated structures, including Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).

¹ At the time of consultation in 2021, the delivery of railway investment programmes was managed by Network Rail as a staged process through use of the GRIP (Governance for Railway Investment Projects) process. GRIP 3 comprised option selection. This has since been replaced by PACE (Project Acceleration in a Controlled Environment).

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Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrification is required across the grade II listed viaduct and increase in line speed from 65mph to 80mph. The design consideration for the OLE portals were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The restricted width of the viaduct which would necessitate the siting of OLE masts on the exterior face of the parapet; ○ The 1920 concrete saddle has the potential for anchoring the OLE; and ○ Key views of the viaduct will inform the proposed siting of the OLE Masts. • At this stage, the concept designs for OLE brackets have been shared with Historic England.
22 April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of proposed works to the structures within Oldham which included the OLE portal attachments to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).
7 May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement in principle with Historic England on the principle of attachment of OLE across Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). • Justification for design of location for OLE which has been devised to avoid Den Lane, Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the High Street, and other locations would be hidden by vegetation or obscured • At this stage the development of the OLE support brackets was still being developed however these are expected to be to standard Network Rail design.

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25 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-application advice letter from Historic England for the OLE attachments to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) on the exterior of the viaduct would result in less than substantial harm to its significance (Appendix C.1). Historic England summarised that less than substantial harm would arise from the change in the physical appearance on the elevations of the structure from the brackets. Historic England conclude that harm can be lowered by following the architectural rhythm of the viaduct to lessen the visual impact.
6 November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft listed building consent drawings were shared prior to the meeting, with feedback requested from Historic England on the works shown in the drawings. Discussion also took place regarding the justification for proposed works. Confirmation from Network Rail that the works to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) will be primarily in the inclusion of OLE Gantries and their locations have been chosen to maximise the current viewing corridors near larger spans over the road or canal, in which Historic England was in agreement with the approach and did not express any concerns.
29 November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In their formal pre-application advice letter (see Appendix C), Historic England confirmed that proposals for Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) would result in '<i>a low level of less than substantial harm</i>'

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was acknowledged that the design adhered to the rhythm of the viaduct spans to minimise visual impact and the patress plates would not be affected (see Appendix C.2).
2 April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of overview of the aims and objectives of TRU to OMBC heritage officers, with emphasis on the historic context of Route Section W2B and the 12 listed building consents applications which are being prepared for the various works to the grade II listed bridges and viaduct along the route section. Presentation of overview of electrification challenges caused by the existing arch profile of a number of existing bridges and have developed bespoke solutions for these to achieve the required clearance. Overview of the current status of each structure within OMBC's jurisdiction, including the installation of OLE brackets to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).
4 April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of draft comments from Historic England. Request to draw out the heritage interpretation in the reports as part of the heritage benefits. Historic England were content with the assessment of significance for all structures, and noted that the optioneering tables were helpful. Historic England request for further details on the heritage interpretation as part of the heritage benefits.
12 May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of proposals for Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) to OMBC heritage officers. Low level of harm to listed buildings noted with minimal physical impact to structure and arrangement of OLE portals to avoid key viewing corridors.
24 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-application advice letter received from OMBC outlining local planning authority advice following review of the draft listed building consent application material. OMBC found that the alteration of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) would result in a low level of less than

Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
		<p>substantial harm arising from the physical intervention, the impact of which is limited by the considered placement of portals to maintain key views.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMBC highlight that clear and convincing justification will be required for any harm arising to designated heritage assets, with substantial benefits required to outweigh substantial harm. • A high level of harm was also found to the group value of the bridges designed by A.S Jee on the TransPennine Route, due to the proposed demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) and reconstruction of four other bridges, and a limited level of harm to group value arising from the alteration of three other structures (including Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31)).
18 July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-application advice letter received from Historic England providing overarching feedback on proposals affecting listed bridges between Stalybridge and Standedge Tunnel (see Appendix C). • Acknowledgment given to the collaborative approach taken at pre-application stage, to fully explore alternative options to reconstruction and for the opportunity for Historic England to feed into design plans. • The heritage statements adjudged to be well considered with clear justification having been provided for the substantial harm identified to those structures proposed for removal or reconstruction. • The inclusion of interpretation at Greenfield Station is welcomed by Historic England.

5. HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 History of the W2B Transpennine Route

- 5.1.1 The railway connecting Stalybridge to Huddersfield, which runs over Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) in Uppermill, was constructed by the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway Company between 1846 and 1849. The mid-1840s was a period of commercial confidence and massive expansion in the railway network across England, known as 'Railway Mania' which has been described by Historic England as the

Heroic Age of railway building (Historic England, 2017b). Between 1845 and 1852 the railway network expanded from 2,345 miles to 7,272 miles (3774km to 11,703km) (Alan Baxter Associates, 2019). Constructed at the height of this boom, the Stalybridge to Leeds line was a product of this trend. Traversing a challenging landscape through the Pennines, the line was planned to follow the route of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal for much of its length, with the canal acquired by the Railway Company the year after its authorisation (Alan Baxter Associates, 2019). These difficult landscape conditions resulted in the need to build several major viaducts and tunnels. These included Standedge Tunnel through the Pennines, which was constructed alongside the 1811 canal tunnel and is 'indisputably significant as a major engineering achievement' (Alan Baxter Associates, 2024).

- 5.1.2 The development and expansion of the railways during the 19th century transformed the landscape and settlements through which they passed, fuelling industrial growth and settlement expansion. The impact of improved communications, first with the arrival of the canal in 1811, and then the railway in 1849, provided valuable links with Huddersfield, Manchester and Leeds, enabling import of raw materials and export of manufactured goods. This fuelled the gradual industrialisation and settlement expansion along the Tame Valley. This can be seen on historic Ordnance Survey maps dating from the 19th and early 20th century where industrial development including mills, dyeworks, printworks and quarries, is shown to have been present along the route of the railway and extending into the more upland areas around Saddleworth and Harrop Dale, whilst settlements such as Mossley and Dobcross gradually expanded.
- 5.1.3 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) was constructed for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway Company in the mid to late 1840s. The principal engineer for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway was Alfred Stanistreet (A. S.) Jee (1816–1858), who was assisted by the more renowned engineer Joseph Locke (1805–1860). Jee's work on the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway represents, arguably, his greatest achievement. This can be seen particularly in the construction of the Standedge Tunnel, which at over three miles long was one of the longest and most difficult in England, but also through the various large-scale viaducts along the route. In the 1850s, he worked internationally on the Spanish line from Alar-del-Rey to Reynosa where his skill in design, his accuracy and his completeness of the details earned him high praise. He died in a fatal accident upon the opening of the second portion of that line.
- 5.1.4 In 1847, prior to the opening of the line, the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway Company was taken over by the London and North Western Railway (LNWR). As part of the LNWR network, the

Huddersfield & Manchester Railway formed part of a direct route from Manchester to the West Riding, enabling the LNWR to access the textile and coal industries of West Yorkshire. By 1851, the LNWR was the most prominent railway company of the period, with over 800 miles of track and was the largest joint-stock concern of its time, capitalised at £29 million. The line was acquired by the London Midland and Scottish Railway in 1923, before being nationalised in 1948.

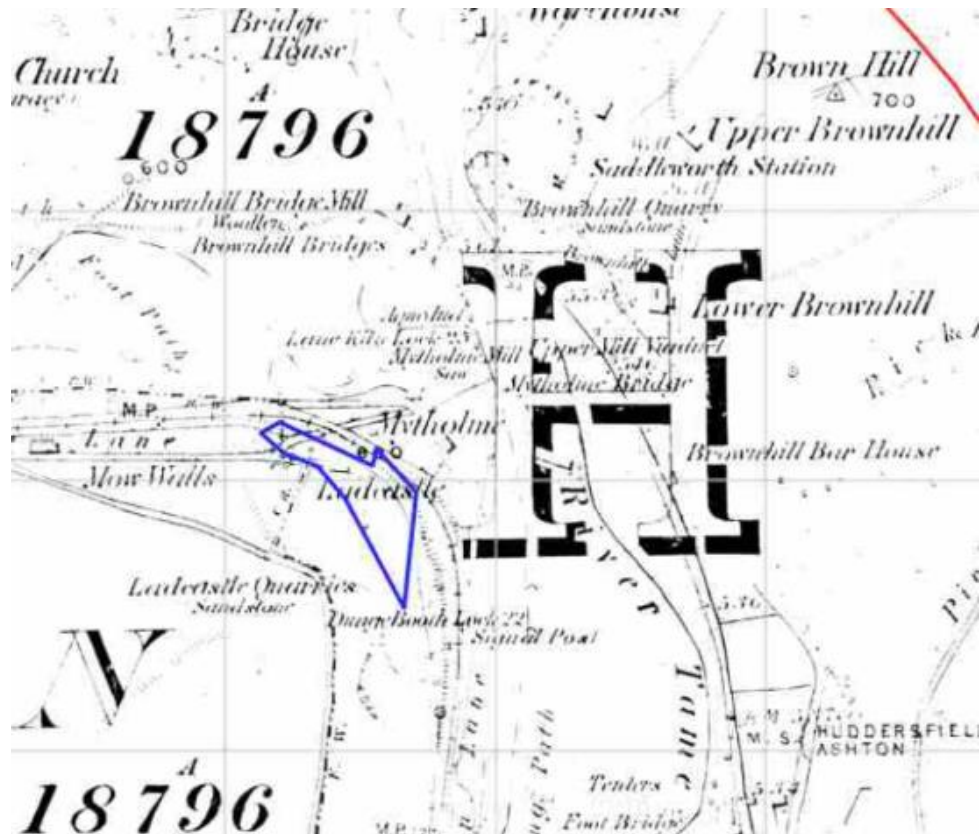
- 5.1.5 Whilst other parts of the Transpennine route were subject to significant alterations, the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway between Standedge Tunnel and Stalybridge was subject to relatively limited alteration. The Micklehurst Loop was constructed from 1881-85 to provide additional capacity, and diverged from the existing railway to the east of the Tame Vally, avoiding physical interaction with the majority of its alignment. A new junction to the south of Greenfield Station is shown on historic maps from the early 20th century as additional tracks toward Oldham were established from this station. However similarly to the Micklehurst loop, the additional lines diverged from the main Huddersfield line, running westwards at its intersection with Shaw Hall Bank Road Footway (MVL3/26). The railway was also widened to the east of Diggle to accommodate additional tracks serving new bores for the Standedge Tunnel which were added in 1868-71 and 1894, necessitating widening of bridges to the east of the route.
- 5.1.6 Piecemeal change has occurred on the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway, most notably with the closure of a small number of stations along the route, such as Diggle and Saddleworth Stations. The route today forms part of the wider Transpennine route between York, Selby and Manchester, which comprises sections of rail line developed by different railway companies.
- 5.1.7 The history and significance of the Transpennine route is discussed at more length in the Route-Wide Statement of Significance (Alan Baxter Associates, 2019). This was produced to characterise the overall heritage significance of the Transpennine route.

5.2 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31)

History

- 5.2.1 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) was constructed between 1845 and 1847 during the Heroic Age of railway building (1841-1850). The 23-span viaduct was designed by A.S. Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway. The viaduct was built to carry two railway tracks over the Pennine valley, and passes over A670 High Street, Den Lane, Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the River Tame and Brownhill Lane.

- 5.2.2 Uppermill developed as a centre of textile production during the post-medieval period. Evidence of this can be seen in the survival of textile workshops within the town, as revealed by the presence of multi-light mullioned windows across the upper floors of some buildings of 18th century date, used to light weaving workshops. The 1828 County Map of Yorkshire (not reproduced here) shows pre-industrial Uppermill before the arrival of the railway and shows scattered buildings along Mow Halls Lane, Den Lane and the current A670 High Street extending to Knowl Top Lane and Gellfield Lane to the east. This was a dispersed settlement of farmsteads and domestic workshops were established around a central nucleus, which remains the core of Uppermill in the present day.
- 5.2.3 The mechanisation of the textile industry from the later 18th century onwards led to the development of larger-scale mills within the village, powered by the River Tame. The opening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal in 1811 further fuelled industrialisation, enabling the import and export of raw materials and goods with Manchester and Huddersfield. The role of the canal was, however, superseded by the arrival of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway in the late 1840s, further unlocking connections between the village and the industrial and trading centres of Manchester, Leeds and Huddersfield. Historic Ordnance Survey maps show this progression, with a shift from small-scale woollen mills and tenter grounds, as shown on the County Series Map of 1854, to larger-scale cotton and woollen mills by the time of the 2nd edition 25-inch map of 1893 (not reproduced here).



Insert 5-1 Ordnance survey County Series 1854 Map

- 5.2.4 The arrival of the railway resulted in significant and highly visible change to Uppermill, namely the construction of the 23-span Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). The presence of the viaduct crossing the river, canal and roads in the north-west of the village formed a dominant new element and became a conspicuous symbol of Uppermill's connection to the wider north of England. The impact of the viaduct can be seen in James Carse's painting of the River Tame Valley from 1859 which shows the viaduct as a dominant element within the landscape (Insert 5-2). Other changes in Uppermill instigated by the railway included rerouting existing roads which forced the extension of High Street to pass underneath the viaduct as well as the construction of New Dobcross Road. A railway station was also constructed to the north of Uppermill and the viaduct and operated from 1849 to 1968. A second station was located to the east along the Stalybridge & Diggle Loop Line to the east of the settlement. The County Series map of 1890-92 (Insert 5-3), development, particularly to the north of the viaduct underwent some growth and expansion, as well as along the High Street in Uppermill.



Insert 5-2 Landscape painting by James Carse (1859) of the River Tame Valley, featuring Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).



Insert 5-3 County Series Map 1890-92

- 5.2.5 Into the 20th century, Uppermill and Dobcross developed with an industrial character as can be seen in the presence of quarries, textile mills, sawmills and dyeworks on historic mapping of the period. The immediate environs of the viaduct, however, was largely surrounded by open land, the road network and some scattered buildings.
- 5.2.6 Since the mid-20th century, industry throughout the Pennines had slowly declined and, whilst the character of Uppermill recalls its industrial heritage, the area has developed with a more residential and commercial character. However, the viaduct is amongst the structures which help to recall the industrial heritage of Uppermill and remains a

landmark feature in the area which can be appreciated in views from the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Den Lane and the High Street.



Insert 5-4 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) viewed from the canal to the north-west with Lock 23 of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal visible in the foreground.



Insert 5-5 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) viewed from the canal from the south-east.

Description

- 5.2.7 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is comprised of 23 semi-circular arched spans and extends approximately 265m across the River Tame Valley. It runs on a slightly curved alignment with a north-east / south orientation. The viaduct carries the railway over three public roads: Den Lane (span 9), the A670 High Street (span 21) and Brownhill Lane (span 22), as well as the watercourses of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal (span 15) and the River Tame (span 18). The remaining spans accommodate the wooded open land of the River Tame valley sides and floor. Both ends of the structure have abutments buried into the valley sides and railway embankments.
- 5.2.8 The viaduct is constructed in rock-faced gritstone with dressings in ashlar and quarry-faced gritstone. The viaduct arches are semi-circular, with three broader skewed spans which traverse Den Road (span 9), the Huddersfield Narrow canal (span 15) and A670 High Street (span 21). The arches have rusticated v-channelled voussoirs with picked surfaces and tooled edges, which spring from squared ashlar impost bands. Two of the skewed arches, spans 15 and 21, feature corbels which would have supported wooden centres used during construction of the structure (Alan Baxter Associates, 2024).
- 5.2.9 The rectangular piers and spandrels of the viaduct are topped by a squared projecting string course and parapets. The piers on either side of the skewed arches feature flat pilasters, articulating these wider arches. In each case, the pilasters on the northern pier of each

of these spans essentially form double buttresses (visible in Insert 5-4).

- 5.2.10 On either side of the deck of the structure, parapets of squared and coursed rock-faced gritstone sit atop the projecting string course (see Insert 5-7). The parapets are relatively low, with only four and five courses of stonework visible above the ballast level on either side. A pitched ashlar coping runs across the parapets with recently installed GRP black handrail. The handrails are of dark colour and positioned slightly inbound of the centre of the coping of each parapet to minimise visual intrusions from ground level. Due to the partially buried arches of the southernmost spans (see below), the parapet on the western side of the structure commences between spans 2 and 3.
- 5.2.11 The viaduct does not feature wing walls at each end, with the structure instead being buried into the hillside on each approach. The topography of the surrounding valley sides defines the sub-structure of the viaduct in these locations, particularly at the southern end, where spans 1 to 4 are partially buried into the hillside on the western side of the viaduct. At the northern end, span 23 is also partly buried on both sides of the structure into the hillside.
- 5.2.12 The deck of the viaduct carries two tracks along its full length, supported on a track bed of ballast. In 1919, the viaduct deck was strengthened with a concrete saddle installed over the arches. The saddle was installed below the string course within the spandrel walls, sitting above the arches (Insert 5-8). This intervention was undertaken to improve the structural integrity of the viaduct, and is not visible externally. Evidence of earlier strengthening works can also be seen in the form of tie bars and pattress plates which were installed along the viaduct at the same time and remain in place today (Insert 5-7). Further pattress plating is also visible on the insides of the piers of the viaduct on a number of spans. Drainage downpipes are present between a number of the spans, some of which appear to have been later replacements or additions.



Insert 5-6 Deck of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), viewed from the southern end of the structure, showing parapets

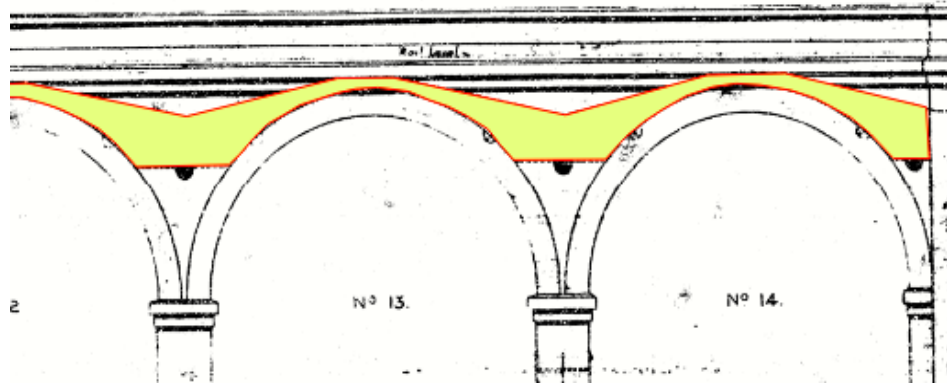
- 5.2.13 The setting of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) contributes to the asset's significance. Uppermill Viaduct spans the Tame Valley, to the north of the village of Uppermill, crossing the watercourses of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and River Tame, as well as the roads of Den Lane and High Street (A670). The surroundings of the viaduct are characterised by the presence of mature tree cover along the river, canal and flanking hillsides, restricting views of the structure principally to corridors along the canal, Den Lane and High Street. Whilst visibility is increased during the winter months due to lack of foliage, views towards the viaduct continue to be filtered by trees, preventing clear views of the structure outside the corridors of the canal, Den Lane, and the High Street. There are no views of the viaduct from the core of the settlement along High Street to the south of the viaduct. Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is visible as linear element in longer-range views from the hillsides above Uppermill or around Dobcross, however, it is not possible to appreciate the full monumental scale of the viaduct to in these views.
- 5.2.14 Views of the Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) along the canal, Den Lane and the High Street/Wool Road are channelled towards and under the structure by the surrounding woodland, with the viaduct gradually being revealed on approach to it. These views enable the scale and grandeur of the viaduct to be appreciated, and allow understanding of its architectural and historic interest and the quality of Jee's design (Insert 5-6, Insert 5-10 and Insert 5-11). Even in close up views of the structure, visibility of the viaduct is limited by the presence of mature

trees, and it is not possible to view the structure in its entirety (Insert 5-11).

- 5.2.15 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) enjoys strong group value with Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the grade II listed Lock 23 and adjoining tailbridge No.75 (NHLE 1356719) (Insert 5-12 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) and tail bridge No.75 (NHLE 1356719) on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal showing their close relationship and use of skew arch. (Insert 5-12). Views north and south along the canal enable appreciation of this relationship and contribute to the historic, architectural and aesthetic value of the viaduct (Insert 5-4).
- 5.2.16 Those traveling by train over the viaduct are also afforded views of the surrounding landscape and villages, which evidence the historic character of Uppermill village and its association with the canal, and the Pennine landscape and this contributes towards its setting. Such views from the railway characterise the experience of passengers on the Transpennine route passing through the Tame Valley. These views allow the impact of the railway in the development of the area during the 19th century to be appreciated, with former mill buildings, chimneys and settlements characterised by gritstone and sandstone terraces visible along the valley floor.



Insert 5-7 View of typical span detailing on the western elevation of the Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31)



Insert 5-8 Placement of Concrete reinforcement added in 1919 to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) from an archival drawing held by Network Rail.



Insert 5-9 View of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) from the Brownhill Nature Garden to the north, showing an example of a restricted view of the structure.

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Insert 5-10 View of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) from Wool Road.



Insert 5-11 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), eastern elevation viewed from Den Lane.



Insert 5-12 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) and tail bridge No.75 (NHLE 1356719) on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal showing their close relationship and use of skew arch.

Significance

- 5.2.17 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is of significance as a largely unaltered example of an 1840s viaduct, dating from the Heroic Age (1841–50) of railway building and the period of ‘railway mania’ which marked a time of commercial confidence and expansion in the railways. The viaduct’s direct historic relationship with historic railway companies of the period, comprising the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway and LNWR, and the notable railway engineer A.S. Jee, who also designed similar structures along the route, give the structure historical value from which it derives significance. The viaduct remains in use as a part of the operational railway network and together with surviving contemporary structures, evidences the historic infrastructure of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway.
- 5.2.18 The viaduct derives significance from its architectural quality, evident in its design, detailing and monumental form. A.S. Jee’s use of architectural elements such as the rusticated voussoirs and monumental pilasters, and the quality of detailing and construction, together with the quality of the craftsmanship, help to elevate the expression of the viaduct and raise it above the purely functional. The architectural interest of the viaduct is enhanced further by its presence within the landscape and the ways in which its monumental scale, architectural quality and engineering achievement can be appreciated in views towards and through the viaduct as it spans the valley.
- 5.2.19 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) has undergone some alterations including strengthening works and the attachment of modern handrails, all of which have been undertaken to ensure the ongoing

use of the structure for its original purpose. These works have not detracted from the historic and aesthetic interest of the structure. Jee's original design intent and the historic function of the structure continues to be understood and form key aspects of the structure's significance. The corbels along the string course on spans 15 and 21 reveal the construction techniques used by Jee to construct the complex arrangement of skew arches required to traverse the watercourses below. As a surviving component feature along the wider railway network, the design of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) contributes to the legibility of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway in the contemporary landscape.

- 5.2.20 Historic Ordnance Survey maps show the setting of the viaduct formerly to have been characterised by the presence of quarry workings to the south-west and enclosed land along the base of the valley and dispersed development to the north, with only pockets of tree planting in this area. This would have afforded extensive views of the structure from the surrounding landscape. The setting of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) today, however, is more localised and screened due to extensive mature planting. Despite this, the setting of the viaduct contributes towards its overall significance. Spanning the River Tame and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the viaduct forms an imposing structure which, although visible in localised views only, forms a landmark structure within the settlement of Uppermill. The viaduct's position over and adjacent to local roads and waterways enable appreciation of its design and function (with the addition of the frequent movement of trains atop it), defines it as an element of the historic industrial and transportation network within the area. The close relationship of the viaduct and canal, and particularly views of the viaduct along the canal corridor, and its spanning over Lock 23 and tailbridge No.75 (NHLE 1356719) illustrate the close historic connection between the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. The engineering achievement of the viaduct is also vividly illustrated by the way in which the viaduct crosses over the tailbridge with a wider skew span. Experiencing the viaduct by passing under the spans on Den Lane and High Street, or along the canal, enables appreciation of the quality of its design and skill in construction. Views from the viaduct can also be appreciated by train passengers, with expansive views of Uppermill to the east and its setting within the Pennines. To this effect, the setting facilitates a different appreciation of the significance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) not just as a mode of transportation but as a feature within a landscape characterised by the juxtaposition of its natural and industrial history.

Group value

5.2.21 As identified in the list description, Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is recognised to be of group value with other listed structures by A.S. Jee on the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway². These comprise:

- Heyrod Hall Overbridge (MVL3/7) (grade II listed, NHLE 1449242);
- Springbank Lane Footbridge (MVL3/8) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452382);
- Springbank Lane Overbridge (MVL3/9) (grade II listed, NHLE 1449241);
- Manchester Road Underbridge (MVL3/10) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452392);
- Roughtown Road Overbridge (MVL3/17) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452405);
- Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/20) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452409);
- Wright's Mill Overbridge (MVL3/23) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452406);
- Royal George Underbridge (MVL3/25) (grade II listed, NHLE 1451848);
- Shaw Hall Bank Road Footway (MVL3/26) (grade II listed, NHLE 1451852);
- Oldham Road Overbridge (MVL3/28) (grade II listed, NHLE 1451853);
- Wickens Underbridge (MVL3/29) (grade II listed, NHLE 1451854);
- Slaithwaite Viaduct (MVL3/61) (grade II listed, NHLE 1224049);
- Golcar Viaduct (MVL3/70) (grade II listed, NHLE 1276344);
- Milne Viaduct (MVL3/76) (Longwood Viaduct) (grade II listed, NHLE 1220121);
- Church Street (MVL3/82) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452083);

² Wheatley's Overbridge (MVL3/103) (grade II listed NHLE 1450537) was designed by A.S. Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway. The Overbridge was granted consent for extensive change as part of the Huddersfield to Westtown (Dewsbury) Order section of the Transpennine Route Upgrade, and will be demolished and replaced with a new structure (ref 2021/91337). This is likely to result in de-listing. As such its contribution to group value has therefore been excluded from this assessment.

- Huddersfield Viaduct (MVL3/92) (grade II listed, NHLE 1223531);
- Hillhouse Lane Underbridge (MVL3/94) (Willow Lane East) (grade II listed, NHLE 1432641); and
- B6118 Colne Bridge Road Overbridge (MVL3/107) (grade II, NHLE 1450265)³

5.2.22 The route is notable for the succession of viaducts, required due to the hilly terrain which it navigates. Along the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway there are four other viaducts designed by A.S. Jee. These comprise:

- Slaithwaite Viaduct (MVL3/61) (grade II listed , NHLE 1224049);
- Crimble Viaduct (MVL3/64) (grade II listed , NHLE 1233737);
- Golcar Viaduct (MVL3/70) (grade II listed, NHLE 1276344);⁴ and
- Milne (Lockwood) Viaduct (MVL3/76) (grade II listed , NHLE 1220121).

5.2.23 The viaducts at Slaithwaite (MVL3/61), Crimble (MVL3/64) and Milne (Lockwood) (MVL3/76) have similar design language to that at Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) and are all of considerable scale with 17, 19 and 20 arches respectively. Golcar Viaduct (MVL3/70) is not as large in scale with only four arches but it is similar in style and construction. In each case, stylistic motifs are employed such as rusticated dressings and string courses which add architectural quality to the functional structures. Each viaduct also forms a prominent element of its surrounding landscape or townscape. Slaithwaite (MVL3/61), Crimble (MVL3/64) and Milne (Lockwood) (MVL3/76) Viaducts form a legible group with Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), evidencing Jee's common approach to the engineering of these structures. That all four have been little altered adds to their group value. Though the similar aesthetics and scale of the viaducts place them in close relationship with one another, Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is also part of a wider group of structures constructed by Jee for the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway, which also includes underbridges and overbridges of both cast iron and masonry construction as well as the Standedge Tunnel.

³ B6118 Colne Bridge Road Overbridge (MVL3/107)) (grade II, NHLE 1450265) will be partially demolished and rebuilt with a supplementary structure replacing its spans over the railway. Listed building consent has been granted for this considerable intervention (ref: 2021/91330), and as a result may limit the contribution that this bridge makes towards the group value with the Jee bridges.

⁴ MVL3/69 Golcar New Viaduct (constructed by the LNWR in c.1890) and MVL3/70 Golcar Viaduct are both Listed together under one designation. <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1276344>

5.2.24 The largely contemporary construction of a number of individual railways which combined to form the wider Transpennine route mean that historic structures derive significance as part of wider groups across these various historic lines. As noted above, large-scale viaducts are a feature of those constituent historic railways which make up the Transpennine route today. In particular, a number of the viaducts engineered by Thomas Grainger for the Leeds, Dewsbury and Manchester Railway demonstrate similarities in scale and architectural detailing to Jee's viaducts on the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway, including Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). Three examples from Grainger, in particular, demonstrate these similarities and form a legible group alongside Jee's viaducts:

- Batley (Union Mill) Viaduct (MDL1/27) (grade II listed , NHLE 1134650);
- Dewsbury Viaduct (MDL1/19) (grade II listed , NHLE 1313659); and
- Churwell Viaduct (MDL1/40) (grade II listed , NHLE 1451053).

5.2.25 The group value which Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) derives from these relationships provides an understanding of the wider trends and engineering achievement which characterise both the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway and the Heroic Age of railway building (1841–50) more generally. This group value is enhanced by the structures continuing to form part of the operational railway; as a collective group of assets, they are experienced by those following the rail line (traveling on it, or near it) as coherent features of a single historic route.

5.3 Surrounding heritage assets

5.3.1 The location of the designated and non-designated heritage assets discussed below are shown in Appendix A.

Designated heritage assets

5.3.2 A total of four listed buildings are present within 250m of the Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). These comprise:

- Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Lock No. 23 (Lime Kiln Lock and adjoining Tailbridge No. 75 and Aqueduct No. 74) (grade II, NHLE 1356719), a lock, tail bridge and adjoining aqueduct over the River Tame built by Benjamin Outram between 1794-99, located directly below and to the west of the viaduct.
- Huddersfield Narrow Canal Lock No. 22W (Dunge Booth Lock) (grade II, NHLE 1163263), a lock built by Benjamin Outram in 1794-99 for the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, located c.180 m to the south.

- Brownhill Bridge Mill (grade II, NHLE 1309426), a water-powered woollen mill built in 1722, located c.160 m to the north.
 - Lower Brownhill House (grade II, NHLE 1309706), a late 18th century vernacular stone house, located c.120 m to the east.
- 5.3.3 Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Lock No. 23 (NHLE 1356719) is situated directly to the west of the viaduct, the ramp for the tail bridge extending beneath span 15 of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). Whilst the lock predates the construction of the railway by c. 50 years and its significance is focused on its association with the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the relationship of the lock and viaduct contributes to their significance, evidencing the development of transportation and communications through the Tame Valley in the 19th century. The viaduct forms a prominent feature in its setting of the lock, framing views of the lock and the canal.
- 5.3.4 Due to the curve of the canal and the presence of mature trees on its west bank, views towards Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) from Huddersfield Narrow Canal Lock No. 22W (NHLE 1163263) are more oblique and filtered. The dominance of the viaduct is however understood when moving along the towpath to the next lock and contributes to the understanding of the historic interrelationship between the canal and railway.
- 5.3.5 Whilst filtered oblique views towards Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) are possible from Brownhill Bridge Mill (NHLE 1309426), these views are incidental to the building and make limited contribution to its significance due to the lack of historic relationship between the structures.
- 5.3.6 The principal elevation of Lower Brownhill House (NHLE 1309706) looks south, parallel to the viaduct, with views west towards the viaduct constrained by mature tree planting. Dating from the 18th century, the building does not enjoy a significant historic relationship with the Uppermill Viaduct which does not make a notable contribution to its significance.
- 5.3.7 Uppermill Conservation Area (DGM3166) is located south-east of the Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), which lies within its northwestern extent. The conservation area is characterised by the presence of post-medieval domestic and industrial buildings, dating principally from the 18th and 19th centuries. Within the historic core of the village along High Street, buildings are typically of two to three storeys in height and constructed in local stone. These include vernacular houses, some with weaving workshops on their upper floors, 19th century terraces and shops, villas, former mills, churches and pubs. The river and canal are located to the west of the conservation area and separated from the High Street by mature tree planting and

intervening buildings. Despite this, the viaduct forms a key element in the conservation area, forming a large-scale feature within the designated area and evidencing the contribution of the railway to the history and development of the settlement. Views from the canal are channelled along the towpath, with Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) forming a landmark feature within the canal corridor. Views of the viaduct are possible from a small number of locations to the west of the conservation area. These views are generally constrained by surrounding planting, enabling only a few spans to be viewed simultaneously. Views of the viaduct from the canal towpath, and movement towards and under the viaduct form an important aspect of the conservation area's character and contribute to its significance. Views of the viaduct and conservation area from the surrounding hills also contribute to this significance, enabling its scale and form to be understood.

Non-designated heritage assets

5.3.8 The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) records 10 non-designated heritage assets within 250m of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), four of which duplicate the listed buildings identified in paragraph 5.3.2 above. The remaining assets comprise:

- Buckley (New) Mill (6098.1.0), c. 240 m south-east of the southern end of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), which was subject to a field investigation in 2003 (EGM3497);
- Mytholm Mill (site of) (16625.1.0), located c. 55 m west of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31);
- Saddleworth Station (former) (173.1.0), located c. 160m north of the northern end of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31);
- Barrow on Brown Hill (site of) (1096.1.0), c. 190 m north-east of the northern end of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31);
- Woolroad Canal Warehouse (site of) (13851.0), located c. 190 m north-west of the northern end of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31); and
- Woolroad Canal Warehouse (at Stone Bottom Mills) (13850.1.0), located c. 240 m north of the northern end of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).

5.3.9 Saddleworth Station (former) (MGM291) was constructed contemporarily with the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway to serve the village of Uppermill. Now in residential use and privately owned, this is a two-storey building with gable and bay window, ornamental rood, veranda with cast-iron pillars. The former station retains a historic relationship with the railway viaduct given that they both

served the operation of the railway and helps to communicate the Huddersfield & Manchester route.

- 5.3.10 Woolroad Canal Warehouse (13850.1.0) is a modest canal-side warehouse dating to the early 19th century. The setting of this structure on the Huddersfield Canal is the key aspect of setting which contributes to its significance, and it does not enjoy any visual relationship with Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).
- 5.3.11 Buckley (New) Mill (MGM7146), Mytholm Mill (MGM18723) and Woolroad Canal Warehouse (site of) (13851.1.0) are the former locations of mills, the setting of which does not contribute to their significance.
- 5.3.12 Barrow on Brown Hill (site of) (1096.1.0) comprises the possible site of a barrow or cemetery, destroyed in the mid-19th century. It was probably of late Neolithic or Bronze Age date and shares no historic or visual relationship with the railway or Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) which therefore does not contribute towards its significance.

6. PROPOSALS

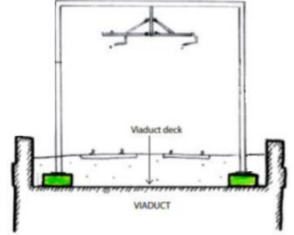
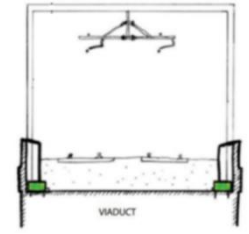
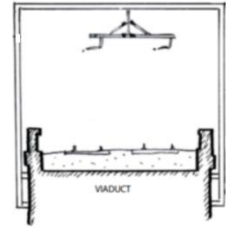
6.1 Background of proposals

- 6.1.1 In order to achieve the TRU Programme objectives of improving journey times, capacity, overall reliability and resilience, and delivering environmental benefits, the electrification of the railway line and achievement of increased line speed is required. This necessitates the installation of overhead line equipment (OLE) along Route Section W2B, and the installation of OLE across Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).
- 6.1.2 Due to the length and curve of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) and the required distance between OLE portals, it is not possible to span the OLE wires across the viaduct with portals only at either end. As such, it has been determined that portals need to be installed on the viaduct itself. These requirements have been considered as part of the optioneering process which has sought to minimise the visual presence of the portals on the structure. As part of this process, electrification across other historic listed railway viaducts was reviewed to inform the design and siting of proposed OLE across Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).

6.2 Design development and justification

- 6.2.1 Design development for the installation of OLE at Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) has taken into consideration a number of factors including the significance of the listed structure, operational requirements and constructability. The design development process has been undertaken with engagement with Historic England and OMBC (as detailed above in Section 4). This iterative and robust process ensures the rigorous exploration of available options, incorporating multi-disciplinary review and ongoing engagement with the heritage consultees.
- 6.2.2 The design development process included optioneering to determine the position of the OLE portals on the structure. This process was undertaken to determine the most appropriate location, form and type of OLE structure that would accommodate the needs of TRU whilst also minimising impact on the fabric and views of the grade II listed viaduct. Three options were examined, as set out in Table 6-1:

Table 6-1 OLE placement optioneering for Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).

Option	Considerations	Assessment	Preferred	Illustration
Option 1: trackside installation of OLE	Sufficient clearance required between tracks and parapet. No modification required to the viaduct deck, parapet or deck structure. Minimal impact to viaduct fabric and appearance.	Narrow deck width across Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is insufficient to accommodate OLE within parapets and provide necessary clearance to track alignment.	N	
Option 2 – install OLE in line with the parapet.	Localised reduction in width of parapet required to accommodate the OLE within the parapet thickness. Localised reconstruction of parapet required to accommodate OLE.	Narrow deck width across Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is insufficient to accommodate OLE within the parapet thickness and provide necessary clearance to track alignment. Parapet width insufficient to accommodate OLE foundations.	N	
Option 3 - fix the OLE portals to the external elevations of the viaduct	Viaduct piers required to be of sufficient strength to support OLE portals and may require strengthening to accommodate. Greatest visual impact of all three options.	Good structural condition of viaduct provides sufficient strength to accommodate installation of OLE portals to exterior elevations. External placement of portals provides suitable clearance and can accommodate freight gauges.	Y	

- 6.2.3 The minimum lateral clearance from the rail to parapet would require at least 3000 mm in order to fit the portal base adjacent to the track. The western side of the structure would require a clearance of 1470 mm and the eastern side of the structure would require 1600 mm. Option 1 trackside installation of OLE and Option 2 installation of OLE in line with the parapet were therefore discounted due to insufficient clearance between the tracks and parapet.
- 6.2.4 Option 3 fixing the OLE to the exterior of the viaduct was therefore identified as the preferred option and progressed for the design stages. This was recognised to be the most feasible option which would achieve the required clearance from the track alignment, although resulting in the greatest impact upon the appearance of the listed structure. Further consideration was then given to ensuring the proposed works would be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the historic structure.

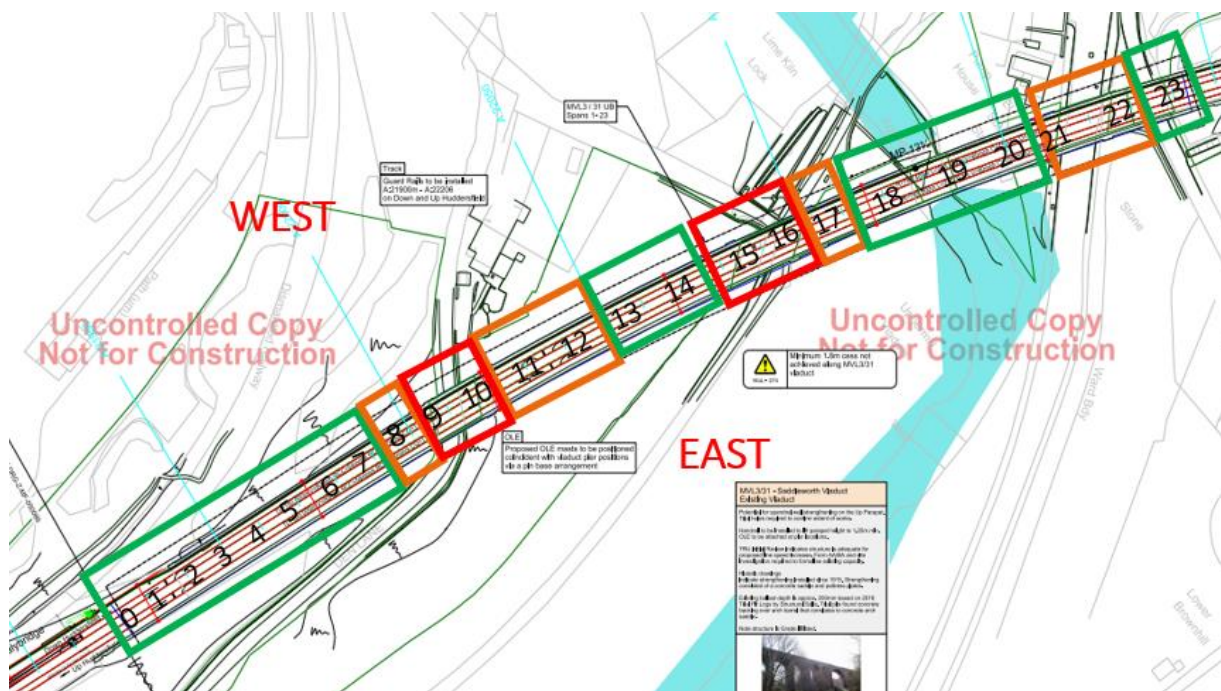
6.3 Development of Preferred Option

- 6.3.1 Design development was subsequently undertaken to mitigate the potential impact of the OLE portals on the significance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) as far as reasonably practicable and to develop a sensitive design solution which would ensure the structure complies with Network Rail safety standards.
- 6.3.2 Optioneering was undertaken to determine the preferred location of the OLE portals. The objective of this exercise was to minimise visual impacts where possible, taking into consideration the architectural interest of the viaduct and its setting. This process took into consideration a range of factors including:
- The curve of the structure and the space of masts along this;
 - The historic significance of the viaduct;
 - The architectural rhythm and features of the viaduct;
 - Views of the structure;
 - Its prominence within its setting; and
 - The structural requirements for the OLE portals.
- 6.3.3 The identification of suitable OLE locations was informed by analysis of the architectural form of the viaduct and its irregular span arrangement, as well as key views of the structure. The findings of this process are set out in **Table 6-2**.

**The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) Heritage Statement
October 2025**

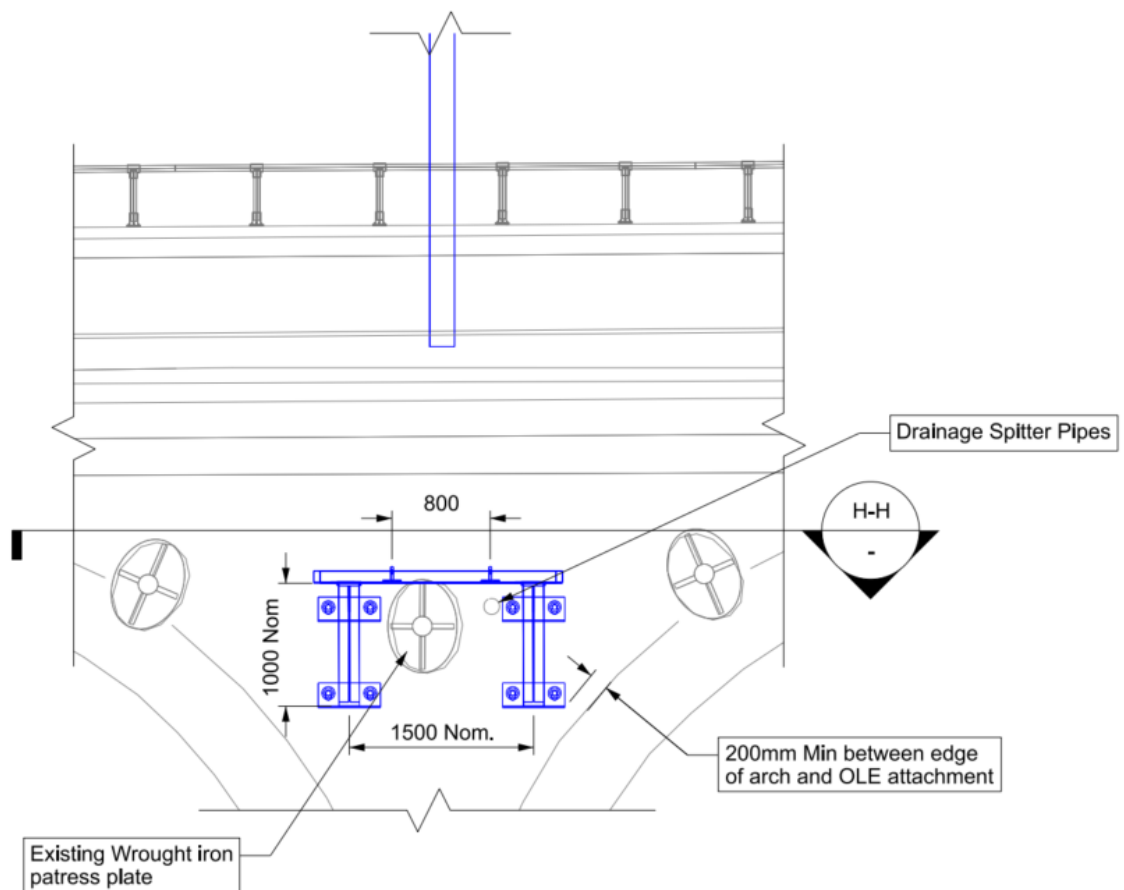
Table 6-2 Optioneering for placement of OLE portals

Pier (south to north)	Suitability for OLE	Reason
0-4	Preferred	Viaduct buried on west, trees shielding on east.
5-7	Preferred	Trees shielding on both sides.
8	Acceptable	Span above Den Lane, however tree shielding views on both sides slightly.
9-10	Unfavourable	Avoided larger spans including Den Lane to minimise intrusion in views of the viaduct.
11-12	Acceptable	Trees shielding only on east.
13-14	Preferred	Trees shielding on both sides.
15-16	Unfavourable	Avoided larger spans including Huddersfield Narrow Canal and towpath to minimise intrusion in views of the viaduct.
17	Acceptable	Trees slightly shielding views of viaduct on both sides
18-20	Preferred	Trees shielding on both sides
21-22	Acceptable	Carriageway, trees shielding on both sides
23	Preferred	End of viaduct, trees shielding on both sides



Insert 6-1 Pier location and location Optioneering for placement of OLE portals

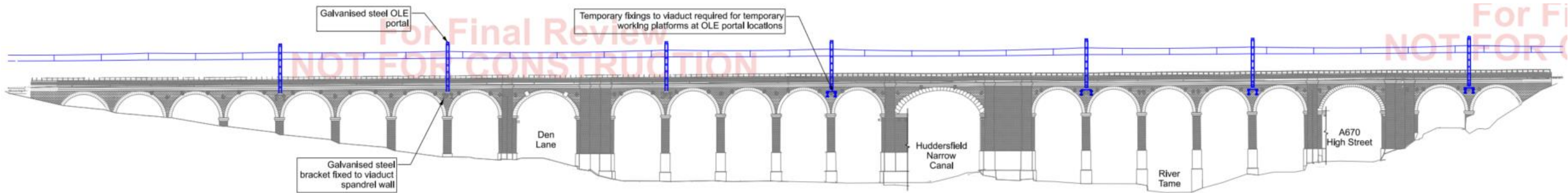
- 6.3.4 Based on this assessment, it was determined that the OLE portals be placed over piers 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 25.
- 6.3.5 Further design development was then undertaken of the wall brackets attached to the viaduct spandrels. This took into consideration factors including:
- The structural requirements of the OLE brackets;
 - Attachment into the concrete saddle;
 - The presence of pattress plates and drainage pipes on the viaduct spandrels; and
 - The form of the viaduct and its architectural features.



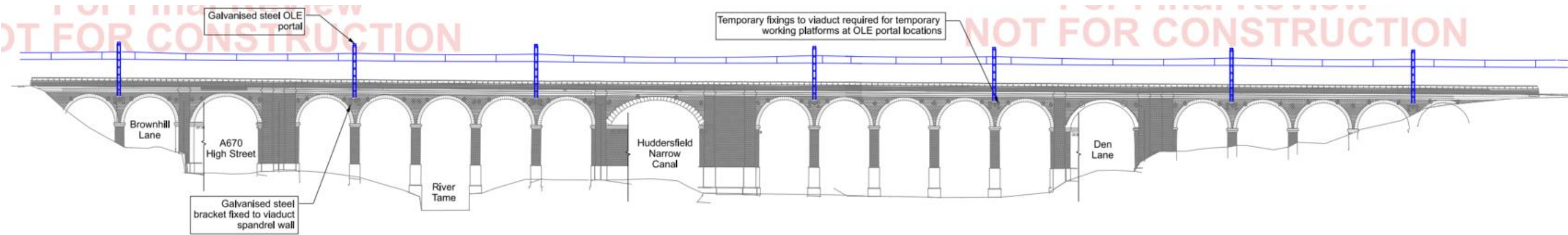
Insert 6-2 Detail of typical OLE fixing bracket showing avoidance of pattress plate and drainage pipe.

6.4 Description of proposals

- 6.4.1 It is proposed to install seven OLE portals along Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) which would support the overhead wires along this section of the route. This would require the attachment of OLE portal brackets on the exterior of the viaduct on the spandrel walls.
- 6.4.2 The OLE portals would be placed over piers 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 25 (Insert 6-3 and Insert 6-4). Each portal would be supported on galvanised steel wall brackets installed into the masonry spandrel walls above the piers. This would require holes to be drilled for insertion of anchors into the concrete saddle and attachment of the bracket steelwork on to these anchors. Bespoke bracketry has been proposed to avoid any clash with the viaduct's existing pattress plates and drainage downpipes on the face of the spans.



Insert 6-3 Proposed east elevation of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) showing the proposed spacing of OLE.



Insert 6-4 Proposed west elevation of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) showing proposed spacing of OLE.



Insert 6-5 Visualisation of OLE portals at Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) from pedestrian perspective



Insert 6-6 Visualisation of OLE Portals at Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) from an aerial perspective

Construction methodology

6.4.3 The proposed works to install the OLE portals to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) would comprise the following works for each bracket:

- Set up temporary working platform;
- Core eight holes 80mm wide through the viaduct face;

- Install eight M40 stainless steel ribbed Macalloy bars within the core holes and secure with grout;
- Attach bracket; and
- Remove the temporary working platform.

6.4.4 The proposed works to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) are shown in the following drawings which accompany this application:

- Existing and Proposed Plans (167037-TGP-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-163103);
- Existing and Proposed Elevations (167037-TGP-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-163104); and
- Existing and Proposed Sections (167037-TGP-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-163105).

7. IMPACT OF PROPOSALS

7.1 Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31)

- 7.1.1 The attachment of OLE infrastructure to the grade II listed Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) is in order to deliver the electrification of the Transpennine route as part of the wider TRU Programme. These works would result in some minor physical intervention into the structure comprising the attachment of seven OLE portals to the viaduct and resulting alteration of its appearance, however due to the considered and sensitive approach to design, the proposed works would have limited impact on the overall significance of the viaduct.
- 7.1.2 Attachment of the OLE brackets would require the coring of eight 80mm holes into the spandrels each side of the viaduct over piers 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 25, the insertion and grouting of stainless steel bars into these to enable attachment of the brackets and OLE portals. This would result in very minor impacts to the fabric of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) and would not impact any architectural features, being set below the level of the stringcourse and avoiding the arch voussoirs.
- 7.1.3 The presence of the OLE portals and bracketry would introduce new elements on the viaduct, altering its appearance, however, the extent of this impact on its aesthetic value is limited. The OLE portals are proposed to be sited to avoid the wider spans over Den Lane and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and High Street (A670), being set back from these by a single, narrower span to either side (Insert 6-3 and Insert 6-4). This would minimise intrusion from the presence of the OLE portals in views of the structure along these important viewing corridors.

- 7.1.4 The architectural features, form and massing of the viaduct would continue to be appreciable following the installation of the OLE portals, and whilst the portals would form a modern intervention into the structure, they are proposed to be placed to respond to the architectural rhythm of the viaduct thus not detracting from its form. The significance which Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) derives from its aesthetic value would therefore be maintained.
- 7.1.5 The proposed OLE portals would be installed in less visible locations where vegetation would largely obscure visibility from the setting of the viaduct. These measures would also ensure that the presence of the OLE portals would not be intrusive to the experience and views of the viaduct. The relationship of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and particularly Lock 23 and the tailbridge would continue to be understood and appreciated in views along the canal. OLE bracketry would be visible in the limited oblique views along the elevations of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), however, these would be located up to c.15 m above ground level, forming a minor element in appreciation of the viaduct as a whole.
- 7.1.6 The proposed works would not affect the historic value of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) resulting from its association with the engineer A.S. Jee, the railway companies of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway and LNER, and the Heroic Age of railway building (1841-1850). The features which contribute towards these associations namely the overall form, massing, architectural features and monumental presence of the viaduct in Uppermill would remain wholly legible following the installation of the OLE portals.
- 7.1.7 The group value of the structure with other bridges designed by A.S. Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway would be maintained. Whilst the establishment of OLE portals and bracketry would result in changes to the appearance of the viaduct, A. S. Jee's original design would continue to be understood, maintaining the group value of the succession of Jee viaducts along this section of the Transpennine route. The installation of OLE portals is required to enable the modernisation of the railway line through its electrification, and forms part of the ongoing use and modernisation of the historic railway network and the next chapter in the story of the railway's development and improvement.
- 7.1.8 The proposed works would therefore result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).

7.2 Other heritage assets

- 7.2.1 Whilst the proposed overhead lines would be visible above the viaduct deck in views towards Lock 23 and tailbridge No.75 (NHLE 1356719), these would not form a prominent or intrusive element. Oblique views of the OLE portals and brackets would be possible on the approach to the lock and tailbridge, however, these would be at considerable height above the listed structures and would not detract from understanding of the historic relationship between the canal and railway.
- 7.2.2 OLE portals may be visible in views towards Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) from Huddersfield Narrow Canal Lock No. 22W (NHLE 1163263), Lower Brownhill House (NHLE 1309706) and Brownhill Bridge Mill (NHLE 1309426), these would not form prominent or intrusive elements within these views and would be filtered by mature vegetation. This would result in no impact upon the contribution of setting to the significance of these assets.
- 7.2.3 The addition of OLE portals to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) would not result in any appreciable impacts on the Uppermill Conservation Area. Whilst the proposals would alter the appearance of viaduct to a limited extent, the extent of this impact would be limited due to the considered placement of the portals to maintain key views along the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Den Lane and High Street (A670). The landmark status of the viaduct within the conservation area would be maintained, as would understanding of the role of the railway in the development of the settlement and its inter-relationship with the canal. Its significance would remain wholly appreciable in the conservation area and as would the contribution that the viaduct makes to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.3 Mitigation

- 7.3.1 The design proposals have been developed to minimise impacts on the fabric, form and appearance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). This has been achieved through a robust process of optioneering, undertaken in consultation with Historic England and OMBC. This has informed the proposed placement of the OLE portals and brackets to reflect the architectural rhythm of the viaduct and to minimise physical intervention into the historic structure
- 7.3.2 During construction of the works, toolbox talks to disseminate best practice for reducing potential impacts in relation to construction activity associated with Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) would also be delivered, for example to help avoid accidental damage.

Recommended compensation

- 7.3.3 In addition to these embedded measures, additional mitigation secured through the use of listed building consent conditions is recommended comprising:
- A scheme of historic building recording to Level 1 standards in accordance with Historic England guidance (Historic England, 2017). This would provide a permanent record of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) in its current form and be lodged with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record.
 - A scheme of permanent heritage interpretation would be developed and installed adjacent to Greenfield Station. This would provide the opportunity to engage members of the public with the heritage of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway including the historic structures designed by A. S. Jee, such as Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). Further engagement with stakeholders with respect to the content of the interpretation would be undertaken during the detailed design phase.

7.4 Public benefit

- 7.4.1 The works proposed to be undertaken to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) are required to ensure the realisation of the substantial public benefits of the Order Scheme.
- 7.4.2 As part of the wider TRU Programme, the Order Scheme would directly and indirectly play a role in improving regional connectivity and enhancing of some of Britain's busiest rail network, in turn realising economic, social and environmental objectives of the programme. The Transpennine route is identified as a key transport corridor, providing connections between cities in the North of England. The improvements in connectivity delivered by the TRU programme will support aspirations for economic growth and "levelling up" opportunities across the North of England.
- 7.4.3 The key objectives of the TRU programme are to achieve the part electrification of the Transpennine Route, improve journey times and capacity between key destinations, improve overall reliability and resilience of the route, and provide environmental benefits from modal shift from road to rail freight reducing the number of heavy vehicles on the highway network and associated air pollution. The completion of the proposed works at Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) would contribute towards this, delivering electrification of the railway line across the viaduct, thereby delivering increases in line speed, capacity and resilience.

- 7.4.4 Electrification would deliver faster journey times and improved performance by allowing trains to accelerate faster, and brake more efficiently. The Order Scheme will deliver faster line speeds (80 mph throughout), improving journey times along the Transpennine Route, aiming to provide an improved journey time from Leeds – Manchester Victoria of 42-44 minutes and York to Manchester Victoria of 65-67 minutes. Works to the track and structures along the Route, including Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), are required to accommodate this increase, and without these changes the Scheme would be unable to go ahead.
- 7.4.5 As a vital constituent part of the Order Scheme, the proposed works at Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) would also facilitate indirect benefits associated with the wider programme of works, including station upgrades, track renewal and signalling improvements.
- 7.4.6 The reliability and resilience of the route and services operating on it will be improved by replacement of existing infrastructure with electrification equipment, new track drainage and signalling. Modern signalling equipment will reduce the headway between trains, allowing them to run closer together which will in turn provide increased capacity. The Scheme will provide the capability to operate four ‘express’, two ‘semi-express’ services and up to two local services an hour on the Route and will provide increased flexibility to timetable more train paths.
- 7.4.7 Electrification of the Scheme would provide substantial environmental and sustainability benefits and is an investment in ‘greener’ energy technology. This supports Network Rail’s Decarbonisation Strategy and is bolstering national targets for reducing harmful emissions that cause climate change, which are set out in Government legislation for achieving net zero carbon by 2050.
- 7.4.8 The Order Scheme will also deliver improved safety through measures including replacement of two level crossings, installation of additional safety measures on existing bridges; enhancements to the local highway networks and new pedestrian crossing points at locations including Greenfield and Mossley Stations. Accessibility of the railway network will also be improved with the provision of fully accessible stations at Greenfield Station and the relocated Mossley Station. These measures are being brought forward as part of the wider TRU Scheme to electrify and modernise the Route, as facilitated, in part, by the works to Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).
- 7.4.9 Significant residual beneficial effects arising from the operation of the wider TRU Scheme have been previously identified in the Huddersfield-Westtown TWA Order Inquiry from December 2021.

These included recognition of improved journey times, reliability, and capacity at the Local Authority area and in turn the sub-regional and regional level. These improvements will bring direct significant benefits to local businesses and the labour market through improved access to the local regions along the section of the route from Stalybridge to Diggle.

- 7.4.10 To this effect, the proposals at Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) are therefore essential in achieving the overall substantial public benefits of Route Section W2B and wider objectives of the Order Scheme, and without these interventions, the Order Scheme would not be able to be safely and successfully implemented. Alongside these substantial public benefits, the delivery of heritage interpretation adjacent to Greenfield Station would enable public engagement with the heritage of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway, its architecture and significance.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1.1 The significance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) lies primarily in its historic and architectural interest. The viaduct's dates to the Heroic Age (1841-1850) of railway building and demonstrates the high-quality design and craftsmanship of A.S. Jee's work for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway, of which notable features include the monumental scale, quality of its architectural detailing and construction and integration of skew spans over Den Lane, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and High Street (A670). The viaduct therefore derives significance from this direct historical relationship with notable railway engineer A.S. Jee and the historic railway companies namely the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway and LNWR. The setting of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) contributes to the significance of the structure, and particularly in its relationship with the canal. It also possesses group value as one of a number of A.S. Jee viaduct along Transpennine route which share a common design language.
- 8.1.2 The proposals to erect seven OLE portals and bracketry across Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), will result in some localised changes to the structure, however, these have been developed through a robust optioneering process, undertaken in consultation with Historic England and OMBC and designed to minimise impact on the significance of the listed building as far as possible. These works would result in minor alteration of the structure, although the design measures have sought to preserve key aspects of its significance including its architectural quality, detailing and construction. Whilst the proposals would introduce modern materials into the fabric of the structure, these works are limited in extent and would be developed to be as visually unobtrusive as possible. The group value of Uppermill

Viaduct (MVL3/31) with other viaducts designed by A.S. Jee for the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway would be maintained.

8.1.3 The proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31), as defined under the NPPF in paragraph 215. These impacts are deemed necessary in order to deliver the TRU programme, and would enable the achievement of key improvement objectives as outlined in Section 7.4. It would also support the achievement of substantial public benefits related to:

- Improved efficiency and reliability of the railway (in journey time saving and increased capacity);
- Reduction of delays to trains and other highway users (improved efficiency of the railways means fewer heavy vehicles on the highway network causing traffic issues and contributing to air pollution);
- Supporting sustainable transport development in line with Network Rail's Decarbonisation Strategy; and
- Improving public health and safety in providing safe routes across the railway.

8.1.4 In addition to this, the delivery of a programme of heritage interpretation at Greenfield Station would provide the opportunity for engagement of the public with the heritage of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway.

8.1.5 These substantial public benefits would outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31). The proposals therefore meet the requirements of the NPPF (paragraph 215) in relation to the justification for less than substantial harm. The proposals would also satisfy the requirements of Policy 24 of the Oldham Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2011), in relation to the impact on the character of the listed building, and preservation of its architectural style and features. It would also satisfy Policy JP-P2 contained within Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Places for Everyone (2024). The proposals therefore satisfy both national and local policy requirements in relation to the justification for harm to significance of Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31).

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Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) Heritage Statement
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APPENDIX B – NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST DESCRIPTION

Official list entry

Heritage Category:	Listed Building
Grade:	II
List Entry Number:	1068120
Date first listed:	02-Jul-1986
List Entry Name:	UPPERMILL VIADUCT
Statutory Address 1:	UPPERMILL VIADUCT, 31, UPPERMILL

Location

Statutory Address: UPPERMILL VIADUCT, 31, UPPERMILL

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: Oldham (Metropolitan Authority)

Parish: Saddleworth

National Grid Reference: SD 99579 06310

Details

SADDLEWORTH UPPERMILL SD 9906 9/342 No. 31 Uppermill Viaduct (also known as Uppermill Arches and Saddleworth - Viaduct) G.V. II Railway viaduct. 1849. By A S Jee Huddersfield and Manchester Railway Co. Rock-faced stone. Total of 23 arches. Each arch is semi-circular, has rusticated voussoirs, and is supported on a rectangular pier with projecting plinth and springing band. 3 of the arches are skew and flanked by flat pilasters; they are Nos. 9, 15 and 21 (counting from the south). This was already part of the LNWR before completion.

Listing NGR: SD9957906310

APPENDIX C - HISTORIC ENGLAND PRE-APPLICATION RESPONSE LETTER

**The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) Heritage Statement
October 2025**



Historic England

Ms Kate Berry
AtkinsRéalis
3100 Century Way
Leeds
LS15 8ZB

Direct Dial: +447990339949

Our ref: PA01200823

25 June 2024

Dear Kate

Pre-application Advice

TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE - STALYBRIDGE TO STANDEDGE

Thank you for arranging the pre-application meetings over the last five months. These have been extremely useful in explaining the significance of the heritage assets, the design team's approach, and in exploring issues and constraints associated with electrifying the track.

This letter covers our advice regarding proposals for change to eight listed railway structures between Stalybridge and Standedge Tunnel, within the Metropolitan boroughs of Tameside and Oldham in Greater Manchester. This section of the railway is referenced as W2B.

Significance

The section of railway between Stalybridge and Standedge Tunnel was constructed in stages between 1844 and 1849. This was at the height of "railway mania"; an intense period of activity when many competing companies formed and were racing to complete sections of railway. The Stalybridge and Standedge Tunnel railway eventually became part of a wider network of sections of track that extends from Selby and York to Manchester Victoria via Leeds.

The W2B route has considerable heritage value. It traverses areas of dramatic landscape and varied geology, and has remained well preserved and largely unaltered since its opening in the 1840s. The wider railway network from the Yorkshire cities to Manchester contributed hugely to the economic and urban development of the North and was a major factor in the industrial revolution and in the development of towns.



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The tricky geology and terrain of the W2B route presented challenges to the engineers of the 1840s, and many of the most notable surviving features of the railway are the impressively engineered bridge and viaduct structures. These structures are predominantly built from locally sourced stone, meaning they harmonise with the landscape and contribute to local views, adding to the aesthetic value of the route. The significance of the structures also lies in the fact that they survive well and in large numbers. There have been few alterations to bridges, mainly because this section of the line has not been widened as other parts of the wider route have been.

There are eight listed railway structures that will be affected by the proposed electrification works between Stalybridge and Standedge Tunnel; these are:

- Heyrod Hall Overbridge - MVL3/7
- Heyrod Footbridge Overbridge - MVL3/8
- Spring Bank Lane Overbridge - MVL3/9
- Roughtown Road Overbridge - MVL3/17
- Wright's Mill Overbridge - MVL3/20
- Wright's Overbridge - MVL3/23
- Oldham Road Overbridge - MVL3/28
- Saddleworth Viaduct - MVL3/31

All eight of the listed structures were designed by notable railway engineer Alfred Stanistreet Jee, lead engineer for the railway between Huddersfield and Manchester. They were built in the mid-late 1840s and share many architectural characteristics, adding to their group value and enhancing their significance.

Bridges MVL3/7, MVL3/9, MVL3/17, MVL3/20, MVL3/23, and MVL3/28 are all very similar in design. All are made from coursed local sandstone and have segmental arches formed from tooled voussoirs, with larger keystones. Each has dressed ashlar impost bands, sloping string courses above the arch, and parapet copings, with shallow pyramidal caps to the slender piers. They have considerable group value and are easily identifiable in the landscape as bridges associated with the original construction of the railway. The bridges are all well designed and adapted to their individual locations, some being skewed or sloped. High quality workmanship and



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details such as picked and tooled ashlar voussoirs elevate their design above what is purely function, enhancing their significance further.

Heyrod Footbridge (MVL3/8) and Saddleworth Viaduct (MVL3/31) are clearly recognisable as part of the same scheme of work but differ in their form. Heyrod Footbridge features a flat span, and retains its cast-iron edge beams and brick parapets, while Saddleworth Viaduct comprises 23 sandstone arches spanning the River Tame and Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

The structures are all Grade II listed in recognition of their special architectural and historic interest at national level. Saddleworth Viaduct was listed in 1986, while all seven overbridges were listed in 2017 or 2018 after a comprehensive review of the line.

Impacts

The proposals involve demolition and reconstruction of three structures, total removal of one structure, and modifications to four structures. These works are deemed necessary to achieve the clearance required for the OLE (overhead line equipment) and to ensure safety for bridge users. The impacts of proposed works at each structure are discussed below.

Bridges requiring demolition works:

Heyrod Hall Overbridge MVL3/7 carries a short section of private road over the railway to Heyrod Hall. This bridge is in a rock cutting with very hard rock beneath the track, prohibiting track lowering.

Wright's Mill Overbridge MVL3/20 carries the public footpath and bridleway over the railway where it passes through a steep-sided rock cutting. Options to lower the track at this bridge have been investigated but discounted due to the location on the bridge in a rock cutting with very hard rock beneath. Track lowering would also have a knock-on effect to a nearby underbridge.

Oldham Road Overbridge MVL3/28 is a skew overbridge located on the north-east side of Greenfield Station and carries Oldham Road over the track below. There will be



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the addition of a new footbridge alongside the reconstructed road bridge. Options to lower the track at this bridge have been investigated but would be difficult to achieve due to the proximity to the station.

Proposals at these three bridges involves the complete dismantling of each bridge and reconstruction to create a raised, flat deck with sufficient clearance for OLE. Stone would be reclaimed and used to clad the inside faces of parapet walls; however matching stone is likely to be needed to clad the external sides of the parapets. New copers would also be needed to ensure parapets were the correct height.

The demolition and reconstruction of these bridges will cause substantial harm to their significance through the total loss of historic form and loss of much of their original fabric. The proposals will also diminish the group value of the historic bridges on the railway.

Wright's Overbridge MVL3/23 is a footbridge that carries a public footpath from north-west to south-east across the railway. The railway here is in a steep cutting and due to gradients, the bridge slopes down towards the south-east. Proposals involve the total removal of this bridge and diversion of the public right of way across the railway at another point.

The removal of Wright's Overbridge will cause substantial harm to its significance through the total loss of its historic form and all original fabric. Its removal will necessitate the re-routing of a historic public footpath, which is part of a network of paths in the area connecting mills and farms with workers' housing, and contributes to the landscape character of the area and to the setting of the bridge. The proposals will also further diminish the group value of the historic bridges on the railway.

Bridges requiring modifications:

Heyrod Footbridge Overbridge MVL3/8 carries a footpath running east-west over the railway, with steps on the eastern side down to a path running south-east towards Spring Bank Lane which are also listed.

Spring Bank Lane Overbridge MVL3/9 (also known as Heyrod Bridge) carries Spring Bank Lane over the railway. Due to the lie of the land the bridge slopes down towards the east. The splayed projecting wing walls are also covered by the listing.



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Roughtown Road Overbridge MVL3/17 carries Roughtown Road north-south across the railway, to the east of Mossley Station. Due to gradients the deck slopes down towards the south. The projecting wing walls are also covered by the listing.

Minimal interventions are proposed at these three bridges, the most significant changes being the introduction of new triangular copers to ensure the correct and safe parapet heights.

The introduction of triangular copers to raise the parapet heights to 1.5m will result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the bridges through the changes to their appearance and the loss of original copers. This harm could be further lowered by using stone copers instead of concrete, and by undertaking any other restoration works required such as replacing the recently rendered section of parapet copings in the south-west corner of Roughtown Road Bridge.

Saddleworth Viaduct MVL3/31 (also known as Uppermill Arches and Uppermill Viaduct) carries the railway over a series of roads and lanes, and the River Tame and Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Due to the lack of space available on the viaduct deck, proposals here involve attaching brackets to the exterior of the viaduct for the OLE supports.

The proposed works at Saddleworth Viaduct will result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the structure through the change to its appearance and in the physical impact on the elevations of the viaduct from the brackets. This harm could be further lowered by ensuring the spacing of the masts responds to the structural and architectural rhythm of the viaduct to lessen their visual impact.

Policy

National policy relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is articulated in section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023). These policies state that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations (NPPF para 195). Also, when considering the impact of a proposed development, great weight should be given to an asset's conservation (NPPF para 205).



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Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification (NPPF 206).

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. In practice this means that less harmful alternative solutions should be explored through the pre-application and application processes.

In addition to section 16 of the NPPF, we refer you to Section 12 'Achieving well-designed and beautiful places' when considering the design for replacement bridge structures. Para 132 states that being sympathetic to local character and history is important, along with a consistent and high-quality standard of design (para 133).

Position

The proposed works to upgrade the W2B section of the Transpennine route network will be the first major programme of work since its construction in the 1840s. The wider public benefits of the upgrade work to this key transport network will be vast and will have positive knock-on effects across the region. The challenging geology and hydrology across the route still present issues to engineers today, and we welcome the work that has gone into investigating alternative options to demolition and reconstruction for the bridges affected.

The proposals will result in substantial harm to the significance of bridges MVL3/7, MVL3/20, MVL3/23, and MVL3/28, with the highest level of harm to bridge MVL3/23 which will be dismantled and not reconstructed. The proposals will cause harm through the loss of the form of the arched bridges and through the loss of historic fabric. There will be the additional harm to the group value of the bridges.

We agree that the bridges are predominantly experienced from the bridge deck, and that re-use of original fabric should be focussed on the inside faces of the parapet walls to ensure the look of the bridge when crossing it is not unacceptably altered, however this re-use of materials does not lower the harm to less than substantial levels. It will be for decision takers to weigh the balance of this substantial harm against the public benefits of the scheme.



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Works to bridges MVL3/8, MVL3/9 and MVL3/17 is largely limited to raising the parapets to ensure they are the safe and correct height. We acknowledge that Network Rail has a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to prevent people from coming into contact with the OLE by ensuring parapets cannot be climbed or walked on. We appreciate the work undertaken to investigate various options for different types of pantographs to limit the height at which the parapets need to be raised to. The use of triangular copers will introduce a change in the appearance of the bridges and cause a low level of less than substantial harm to their significance, but the impact can be lessened by use of stone rather than concrete copers which will be less visually obtrusive. Parapet design should be tailored to the individual circumstances of each bridge to ensure the least harmful solution is used.

There will also be a low level of less than substantial harm at Saddleworth Viaduct from the introduction of brackets to the structure to support the OLE. This can be further lowered by thoughtful spacing of the brackets.

We welcome the detailed options appraisals undertaken during the design of the proposed works to listed structures on the W2B route. We recommend that details are finalised using bespoke designs that respond to the particular character of each structure and its setting.

Next Steps

Thank you for involving us at the pre-application stage of this project. The above advice is the response that we would give if the same proposals were put forward unamended for statutory approval.

Yours sincerely

Louise Davies
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: louise.davies@historicengland.org.uk



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**The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) Heritage Statement
October 2025**



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**The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
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October 2025**



Historic England

Ms Kate Berry
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Our ref: PA01200823

29 November 2024

Dear Kate

Pre-application Advice

TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE - STALYBRIDGE TO STANDEGE

Thank you for arranging the meetings on 6 and 21 November 2024 to review the proposals for bridges MVL3/9, 10, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29 and 31. As before, it was helpful to see the drawings in advance and then talk through the proposals with the team.

The impacts of the proposed changes and our comments are detailed below:

Proposals at *Manchester Road underbridge MVL3/10*, *Shaw Hall Bank Road underbridge MVL3/26* and *Wickens underbridge MVL3/29* will involve minor works, consisting of renewal of railings and strengthening of parapets with reinforced concrete. Visually, there will be only a minor impact, as the replacement railings are similar to the existing and the concrete strengthening will be hidden from view by the parapets. There will be a very low level of less than substantial harm to the physical fabric of the bridges due to the new railings being grouted into cored holes in the masonry parapet blocks. We do not have concerns over the works at these three bridges and recognise the efforts to maintain the visual appearance on the bridges.

The proposals for *Spring Bank Lane overbridge MVL3/9* and *Uppermill Viaduct MVL3/31* have been discussed at previous meetings, and it was helpful to see further details of the works at these structures. There will be a low level of less than substantial harm to *Spring Bank Lane overbridge* due to the introduction of raised copers, however the use of colour-matched concrete here will help to mitigate some of the harm caused by the visual impact of the new copers. Works to *Uppermill Viaduct* will likewise lead to a low level of less than substantial harm due to the introduction of brackets to support the OLE portals which will have an impact both physically and visually. We appreciate that care has been taken in the spacing of these portals so the rhythm of the bridge arches is not unduly interrupted, and so that the patters plates are not affected.

More considerable impacts will result from proposals at *Wright's overbridge MVL3/23*, *Oaklands Road underbridge MVL3/25* and *Oldham Road overbridge (Greenfield)*



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Station) MVL3/28, all of which will result in substantial harm to the significance of the designated assets.

As mentioned in previous letters, the removal of *Wright's Overbridge* will cause substantial harm to its significance through the total loss of its historic form and all original fabric, and through the re-routing of a historic public footpath. Thorough justification will need to be presented in the supporting documentation to provide the reasoning for the total loss of this bridge.

The proposed reconstruction of *Oldham Road Overbridge* has also been discussed previously. This is a skew overbridge located on the north-east side of Greenfield Station which carries Oldham Road over the track below. The bridge currently has a masonry arch which will be dismantled, along with much of the approaching wing walls, resulting in very little historic fabric being retained. The works will also necessitate the removal of the ornate historic iron railway footbridge. There will be substantial harm to the significance of the listed asset due to the severity of changes to its physical appearance and the loss of historic fabric. We recognise that some fabric will be retained for reuse as cladding material, however this will need to be carefully managed to maintain the look of the structure. The stone coursing in the existing bridge runs through the parapets into the wing walls. We would like to see care taken to replicate this effect within the reconstructed bridge to avoid a disjointed appearance to the new structure, which could arise from using mismatched stone-cladded panels. The existing bridge features flat masonry pilasters that project slightly from the bridge to either side of the arch. These have not been articulated in the proposed design and we would like to see further investigation into whether they could be incorporated into the design. This location would be suitable for display of permanent interpretation materials which could help to mitigate some of the harm by informing the public about the history of the route and the upgrade works.

Oaklands Road underbridge MVL3/25 is a skew girder bridge carrying the two-track railway line over a bend in the road below. The angled abutments have distinctive semi-octagonal piers, and the parapets are ornate balustrades of decorative cast-iron panels of Gothic arcading. The craftsmanship of the stonemasonry and attention to architectural detail lifts the design of this bridge above the purely functional and it has considerable architectural interest. There will be substantial harm to the significance of this listed bridge resulting from the proposals to reconstruct and widen the bridge deck and to rebuild the octagonal piers. In order to minimise the harm, the design of the rebuilt piers and abutments will need to be carefully managed to ensure there is meaningful articulation of the distinctive shape of the piers. This includes the contrasting shape and dimensions of the piers where they extend through and above the parapet. We are comfortable with the proposals to replicate the decorative cast-iron panels to minimise the visual impact of the loss of the original fabric here.

Next Steps



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We look forward to our continued involvement in the pre-application discussions for this scheme.

Yours sincerely

Louise Davies
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: louise.davies@historicengland.org.uk

**TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE - STALYBRIDGE TO STANDEGE
Pre-application Advice**

Information Provided

Draft LBC drawings, October 2024

MVL3/25 Presentation, November 2024



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Historic England

Sarah Coward
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Direct Dial: +447990339949

Our ref: PA01200823
18 July 2025

Dear Sarah

Pre-application Advice

TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE - STALYBRIDGE TO STANDEDEGE

Thank you for arranging the recent meetings to review the draft Heritage Statements that will be submitted for Listed Building Consent applications for changes to bridges on the proposed Transpennine Route Upgrade line.

The Heritage Statements are well considered and it is clear that alternative options to reconstruction have been investigated in each case, which are helpfully set out in tables in the reports. The proposals will result in substantial harm to listed bridges along the route, however clear justification for this has been set out in the Heritage Statements.

We very much welcome the inclusion of heritage interpretation at Greenfield Station. This is a significant early rail route and there is notable educational potential in the material that has been generated from the research into the railway structures as part of this project.

Regarding Oaklands Road underbridge MVL3/25, we are comfortable with the design of the proposals for the reconstruction of the parapet and stone turrets. These have been carefully considered to minimise the visual impact.

Next Steps

We appreciate having been involved at pre-application stage in this important project, and value being able to feed into design plans. If you require further pre-application advice please get in touch.

Yours sincerely



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