

The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) – 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: Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) – 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 follows the Tame Valley from Stalybridge to Diggle, and 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 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) (NHLE 1452409). This bridge is located in Saddleworth (NGR SD9810704133) Oldham. A location plan is provided in Appendix A.
- 1.1.7 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) lies c. 130 m north of the Wright's Mills Conservation Area. The Historic England list description (included in full in Appendix B) names the listed building as "Railway Overbridge MVL3/23, Wright's". Throughout this Heritage Statement the structure is referred to as "Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23)" in accordance with Network Rail's naming of the structure.
- 1.1.8 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, revised 2025) specifically paragraph 207, which seeks an assessment proportionate to the assets' importance and 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, 2024 and the Oldham Local Development Framework, 2011.

1.3 Current Conditions

- 1.3.1 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) (Insert 1-1) is a mid to late 1840s masonry overbridge, designed by Alfred Stanistreet (A. S.) Jee for the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway. The overbridge is situated on the western edge of the village of Friezland, c. 6 km east of Oldham and comprises a single segmental-arched bridge, currently carrying a footpath over the Transpennine route.
- 1.3.2 The structure was subject to a detailed examination as part of Network Rail's maintenance regime in April 2017, which identified it to be in fair condition; a more recent visual inspection undertaken in April 2023 identified no change in the overall condition of the structure since the detail inspection was carried out. A number of small defects were identified, including:
- The low mileage parapet to be out of plumb to 25 mm (Insert 1-1) and
 - Vegetation present along the inside face of the parapets.



Insert 1-1 View north across the west elevation of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) showing parapet out of plumb

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 bridges, including Wright's Bridge Overbridge (MVL3/23) to accommodate OLE, higher line speed and increased freight trains. Following optioneering, it has been determined necessary to remove Wright's Bridge Overbridge (MVL3/23) to enable implementation of the Order Scheme.

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 LPA 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.

- 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'*.
- 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'*.
- 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 This Heritage Statement aims to address relevant policy within the NPPF in relation to Section 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' which includes guidance on assessment of

significance of the heritage assets and their setting that may be affected by the proposed works and how to consider potential impacts on significance.

2.2.4 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.'*

Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.2.5 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).
- 2.2.6 The PPG states that in relation to setting, a thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into 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).

- 2.2.7 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.
- 2.2.8 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).
- 2.2.9 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 Joint Core Strategy and 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.*
- 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 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). 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 27 August 2024, including observation from surrounding vantage points and informed by appraisal and observation derived from close working with other disciplines within the project team.

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. 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 the NPPF as historical interest, archaeological interest, artistic interest, and architectural interest.

3.2.2 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 of the proposal in relation to Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). Initial meetings were held periodically throughout 2021 and resumed in 2024 to discuss the overall route and design development for all structures along Route Section W2B.

4.1.3 The design development of the Order Scheme in relation to Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) was discussed during meetings with the statutory stakeholders on the dates outlined in Table 4-1 below:

Table 4-1 Consultation for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23)

Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
15 February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenge of electrifying the route introduced alongside an overview of the structures within OMBC area was presented. • MVL3/23 was introduced as a structure requiring intervention and arrangements made for a meeting to discuss in detail the optioneering for this structure.
02 March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introduction to the heritage significance of the structure was given, alongside various details of the

Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England 	<p>bridge and its surroundings (confirmation that there are no utilities on the bridge deck, details of existing parapet height, overview of required drainage works).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of options to stakeholders comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Track Lower and retention of bridge with raised parapets; ○ Bridge reconstruction; and ○ Removal of bridge and re-routing footpath. • Track lower identified as the preferred option for both Historic England and OMBC, due to the limited impact required to the listed structure. • Historic England suggested considering standardising detail of works to structures where there would be comparable scope in order to better retain group value (e.g. similar approach to parapet raise) • Historic England raised the potential for establishment of a historical trail including interpretation in order to maintain or enhance understanding of the group value of the structures in the area.
26 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England • OMBC • Kirklees Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the structures along Route Section W2B which are of historic interest, including the grade II overbridges and underbridges which are noted for their inherent significance, particularly as essential railway structures. The group value of the bridges was identified as a key contributor to significance.

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 designs.¹ • Early-stage recommendations to minimise harm to significance against the requirements for justification of proposals and opportunities to pursue sensitive design and compensation. • Reassurance was provided to the councils that they will be involved in the GRIP 3 design process which will be used within the detailed design development of GRIP 4 (Single Option Development). Clarification was also provided on the sustainable heritage initiatives. • Historic England stated that 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"> • Details of the challenges of the electrification of the route in relation to listed overbridges were presented. Design measures under consideration for addressing these challenges noted to include: • Reduced voltage clearances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of scheme-specific pantograph, reducing electrical clearances to a minimum. ○ Site specific risk assessments of bridges due to reduced overhead wire heights • Electrical protection works

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 and GRIP 4 (Single Option Development). This has since been replaced by PACE (Project Acceleration in a Controlled Environment).

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risk-based approach to raising parapets. Where safe to do so, 1.5m height parapets may be employed, rather than standard 1.8m height. ○ This approach has been embedded in designs for Route Section W2B. • Example images of recently installed steeple copers were shared, and the potential for colouring of the concrete copers was noted. • The design approach for electrification across / under existing railway bridges was noted as having already been agreed in principle by Network Rail following consultation with the Local Authorities & Historic England at the preceding design stage.
5 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the optioneering undertaken for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) and the rationale for the change in preferred option to Bridge Removal. • Historic England were asked what supporting information would be expected to accompany an application to remove the bridge, this was summarised as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview of considered options and rationale for proposed works; and ○ Details regarding change in historic use as an access and of its current level of use. • Network Rail confirmed the re-routing of the Public Right of Way would need to be explored further with OMBC and local ramblers' groups.
22 April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of proposed works to the structures within Oldham, in which the proposal for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) is to be confirmed.

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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 requirement for the removal of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). Proposals for the removal of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) is the preferred option due to the limited use of the structure, construction constraints in its location and the carbon investment required. The local authority are in support of the proposals presented and further consultation with the stakeholders is ongoing.
25 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-application advice letter from Historic England identifies the substantial harm to the significance of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) arising from the total loss of historic form and all original fabric (Appendix C.1). Historic England also identified that the proposal would diminish the group value of the historic bridges on the railway. The removal of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) was identified as the element of the Order Scheme resulting in the highest level of harm to a heritage asset.
27 August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification was provided to Historic England that the proposed removal of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) would involve the removal of the entirety of the structure, including the abutments. The retention of isolated sections of abutment would preserve little of the bridge's significance, while requiring ongoing maintenance of freestanding masonry structures next to the railway.

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Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ambition of reclaiming masonry from the demolished structure for use on other works on Route Section W2B was also outlined by Network Rail.
06 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. The change from the initially preferred track lower to a proposed bridge removal was presented, alongside the constraints and justification for this change in position. Historic England recognised the drivers behind the change in preferred option and requested that justification be clearly set out in the heritage statement.
29 November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal pre-application advice letter received from Historic England following the circulation of draft listed building consent drawings and the follow-up discussion (Appendix C.2). The letter re-iterated the substantial harm that would arise from the proposed demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). The requirement for thorough justification to be presented in the documentation supporting the application for listed building consent was outlined.
2 April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OMBC (including heritage professionals from Growth Lancashire) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of overview of the aims and objectives of TRU, with emphasis on the historic context of Route Section W2B and the 12 listed building consents applications which are being prepared for the various

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Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
		<p>works to the grade II listed bridges and viaduct along the route section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network Rail requested for the draft Heritage Statement to be reviewed by the Council for comment and feedback. • 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 reconstruction of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). Network Rail explained that the current structure is not clear for electrification or freight, and track lower is not viable at its location, as such the removal and reconstruction of the structure is the preferred option.
4 April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to go over the draft Heritage Statements with Historic England. • 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 (including heritage professionals from Growth Lancashire) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals and justification for demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) were presented to OMBC Heritage officers and the loss of the structure was identified to be clearly justified. Historic England were satisfied with the approach to the assessment of significance,

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Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
2 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following receipt of the draft heritage statement for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) Historic England confirmed that sufficient justification was provided for demolition of the structure.
24 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OMBC (including heritage professionals from Growth Lancashire) 	<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 removal of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) would result in the total loss of significance of the bridge, through the removal of its historic and architectural significance. 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.
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

Date	Stakeholder in attendance	Key agreements/items discussed
		<p>alternative options to reconstruction and for the opportunity for Historic England to feed into design plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 under Wright's Bridge Overbridge (MVL3/23) 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 2017). 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 the railway's 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 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) 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 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 (Institution of Civil Engineers: Obituaries, 1859). 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

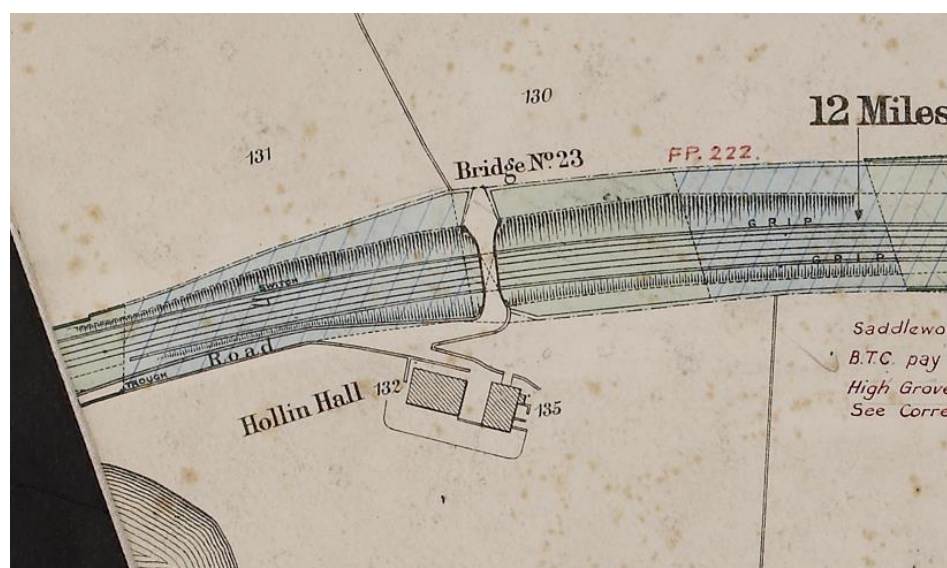
this station. However similarly to the Micklehurst loop, the additional lines diverged from the main Huddersfield line, running westwards at its intersection with Shaw Hall Bank Road Footway (MVL3/26). The railway was also widened to the east of Diggle to accommodate additional tracks serving new bores 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, 2019). This was produced to characterise the overall heritage significance of the Transpennine route as a whole.

5.2 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23)

History

- 5.2.1 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) was constructed between 1845 and 1849 during the Heroic age of railway building. The single-span bridge was designed by A.S. Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway. Labelled as Hollin Hall Bridge on the 1st edition 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey map of 1854, the bridge provided access across the railway line to and from Hollin Hall. Hollin Hall is depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map as a square-plan building located directly to the south-west of the railway bridge. The bridge may have been constructed as an accommodation bridge for Hollin Hall, providing access to land on the opposite side of the railway line. Now known as Wright's Overbridge, the name may indicate a historic connection with the nearby Wright's Mill, located c.450 m to the south-west, however no firm evidence for this association has been identified in the course of this study.
- 5.2.2 The line plans held by Network Rail (Insert 5-1) show the historic relationship between Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) and Hollin Hall. This access between the hall and route over the railway bridge no longer exists.



Insert 5-1 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) from the historic line plans held by Network Rail (1905).

Description

- 5.2.3 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) comprises a single segmental-arched bridge with battered abutments and slightly curved wing walls (Insert 5-2 and Insert 5-3). The railway crossing is aligned north-west to south-east, sloping downwards towards the south-east due to the gradient of the local topography, and spans the two-track railway line which is set within a cutting with sloping sides.
- 5.2.4 The footbridge is constructed in regular-coursed, quarry-faced buff sandstone and features large sections of unadorned stone walling within the north-eastern and south-western façades. Of architectural interest, the arch piers and voussoirs have tooled margins, with the keystone breaking the line of the arch both above and below, a common design feature with A. S. Jee's bridges on this route. An impost band, sloping string course and parapet with chamfered coping rise above the arch of the bridge and are also faced with coursed ashlar stonework, the parapets terminating in slender piers with pyramidal caps. The bridge deck has vegetation growing to either side of a central path, surfaced with roughly compacted stone (Insert 5-4).
- 5.2.5 The setting of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) has evolved since the bridge was first constructed. Originally known as Hollin Hall Bridge, the bridge provided access from Hollin Hall across the railway to the land to the north. Fencing now prevents access between the hall and the bridge. Residential development took place on the land associated with Hollin Hall in the late 20th century, with rear garden fencing bounding the footpath on the south-east side of the bridge. Vegetation growth along on the approaching footpaths and on the

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bridge deck limit visibility of the of the bridge from the wider area and create a sense of wildness, with the historic connection with Hollin Hall not readily apparent when approaching or crossing the structure.



Insert 5-2 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), south-west elevation.



Insert 5-3 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), north-east elevation.



Insert 5-4 View south-west across the deck of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23).

Significance

5.2.6 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) was designated as a grade II listed building in March 2018. The Historic England List Entry description (Appendix B) identifies the bridge to be of special interest for the following principal reasons:

- Historic interest:
 - Constructed during the heroic age of railway building and a little-altered example of an 1840s overbridge on what is now one of the main railway lines in northern England;
 - Designed by the notable railway engineer Alfred Stanistreet Jee.
- Architectural interest:
 - The bridge is well-detailed with ashlar impost bands and string course, and piers and voussoirs with tooled margins, that lift its design above the purely functional.
- Group value:
 - With the other listed structures designed by Jee on the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway line.

- 5.2.7 The bridge's original construction between 1845 and 1849 places it within the Heroic Age (1841-50) of railway development and links it to the period of 'railway mania' which marked a time of commercial confidence and expansion in the railways. The bridge'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 bridge 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.
- 5.2.8 The bridge derives significance from the quality of its architecture and construction, a characteristic feature of Jee's work for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway. The considered use of features such as rusticated voussoirs, impost bands and stringcourses, as well as the quality of craftsmanship seen in its detailing elevate the bridge above a purely functional design. The bridge survives in its original form, with no evidence of significant intervention or alteration, and continues to provide access across the railway. The structure still reveals Jee's original design intent, and this is a strong contributing factor to its significance.
- 5.2.9 The setting of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) makes a minor contribution to the significance of the structure. Its intrinsic relationship with the railway is a key component of its setting given that the bridge continues to span the railway cutting, retaining a close physical and functional relationship with the railway. Views from the bridge north-east and south-west along the railway evidence this relationship. However, there is very limited visibility of the bridge elevations, due to its position within the cutting. The historic connection between the bridge and Hollin Hall is no longer immediately evident due to intervening fencing, rerouting of the historic approach and limited visual link between the structures.

Group value

- 5.2.10 As identified in the list description, Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) is recognised to be of group value with other structures designed by A.S. Jee on the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway². These comprise:

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

- 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 Mill Overbridge (MVL3/20) (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);
- Uppermill Viaduct (MVL3/31) (grade II listed, NHLE 1068120);
- 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);
- Huddersfield Viaduct (MVL3/92) (grade II listed, NHLE 1223531);
- Hillhouse Lane Underbridge (MVL3/94) (Willow Lane East) (grade II listed, NHLE 1432641); and

2021/91337). This is likely to result in de-listing. As such its contribution to group value has therefore been excluded from this assessment.

- B6118 Colne Bridge Road Overbridge (MVL3/107) (grade II, NHLE 1450265)³.

5.2.11 Of these bridges, four are of particularly similar form, comprising segmental arched bridges of stone construction, which are similarly detailed architecturally. These overbridges comprise:

- Heyrod Hall Overbridge (MVL3/7) (grade II listed, NHLE 1449242);
- Springbank Lane Overbridge (MVL3/9) (grade II listed, NHLE 1449241);
- Roughtown Road Overbridge (MVL3/17) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452405); and
- Wright's Mill Overbridge (MVL3/20) (grade II listed, NHLE 1452406).

5.2.12 The group value which Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) 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 (1841-1850) of railway building 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.

5.2.13 Masonry railway bridges across the historic Huddersfield & Manchester Railway route have been characterised as being of local or regional interest, depending on their architectural quality, contribution to wider historical interest of the route, and their group value. It has been noted however that, as a group, they are not of substantial national interest due to their dating from a period of railway development when thousands of similar structures were erected (Alan Baxter Associates 2019).

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.

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.

Designated heritage assets

- 5.3.2 There is one listed building within a 250m study area surrounding Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). This comprises the grade II listed Royal George Canal Bridge (NHLE 1390053), a canal bridge constructed in 1798 as part of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which is located c. 200 m south-east of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). The intervening distance, undulating topography, vegetation and development prohibits any spatial relationship between the canal bridge and Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). Moreover, the lack of direct historical association further diminishes any interrelationship between the two bridges.
- 5.3.3 The Royal George Mills Conservation Area is focussed to the south of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal centred on Royal George Mill to the west of Well-I-Hole Road (B6175). The conservation area is characterised by the historic industrial development of the Royal George Mills within a rural landscape between the canal and the River Tame, being located within the low-lying ground of the valley, with largely uninterrupted views towards the Pennines. Despite the location of the conservation area within 150m of the overbridge, intervening modern development, undulating topography and vegetation prevents any visual relationship between the two assets. The assets do not enjoy any historic or visual relationship and therefore do not contribute to each other's significance.

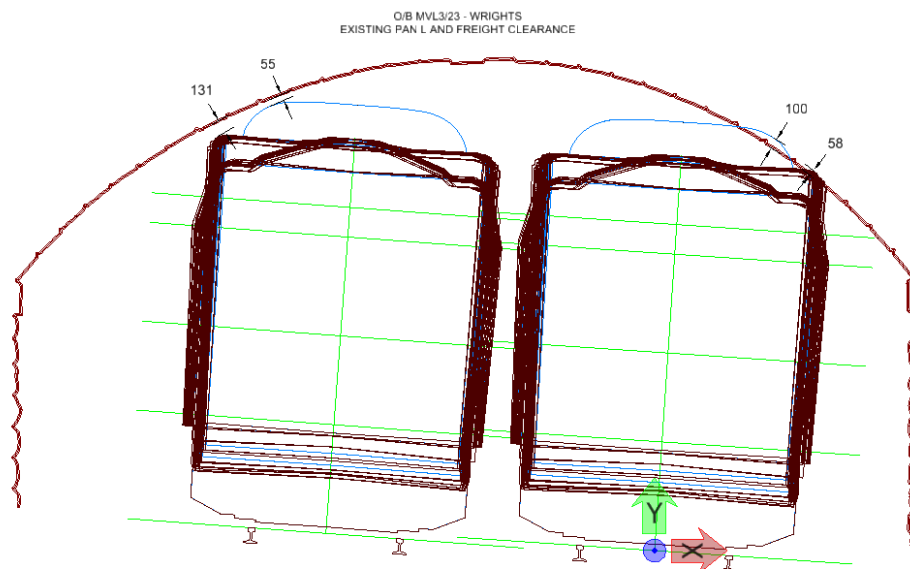
Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 5.3.4 The local Historic Environment Record (HER) records four non-designated heritage assets within the 250m study area, comprising:
- The location of the former Royal George Mills site (6046.1.0);
 - Canal Lock 18W (19033.1.0);
 - Canal Lock 19W (19034.1.0); and
 - Friezland School (19058.1.0).
- 5.3.5 With the exception of Friezland School (19058.1.0), these assets are located between c. 150 m and 250 m east of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). As with the related conservation area (see above), the locks, mill site and railway bridge do not enjoy a historic or visual relationship and do not contribute each other's significance. The remaining non-designated heritage asset, Friezland School (19058.1.0), is sited c. 230 m north-east of the overbridge and similarly does not share any historic or visual relationship with Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), with no shared contribution to the significance of either heritage asset.

6. PROPOSALS

6.1 Background to 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. Works to the underbridges along the route are required to accommodate the resulting additional loadings on the structures resulting from increased line speeds and increased train loading.
- 6.1.2 Inadequate clearances to safely install OLE has been recognised as a challenge across much of TRU, preventing the installation of overhead lines below some existing overbridges. To reduce the requirement for intervention into structures along the route as far as possible, a scheme-specific pantograph has been developed which enables the use of reduced overhead line wire height under structures, subject to a site-specific risk assessment. A number of structures along the route also do not provide adequate gauge clearance for the required freight trains on the route, the requirement for which has been considered as part of the design development process.
- 6.1.3 Insert 6-1 shows that even with use of the scheme-specific pantograph, there would still be a clash between OLE and Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). Similarly, the bridge does not have the required freight gauge clearance. A process of design optioneering to identify the optimal solution has been undertaken.



Insert 6-1 Drawing showing the clash between existing structure and proposed pantograph level

6.2 Design development and justification

- 6.2.1 Design development for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) has taken into consideration a number of factors including the significance of the listed structure, operational requirements and constructability. The design development process has also involved 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.

ES3 optioneering

- 6.2.2 Based on Network Rail's extensive experience delivering comparable schemes, five options were identified for further consideration at the ES3 design stage in 2021⁴. As introduced in Section 6.1, the option of retaining the structure without undertaking any works would prevent the delivery of the Order Scheme. This option was therefore discounted at an early stage. The remaining four options considered at ES3 comprised:
1. Track lower - Lowering the height of the track to achieve the required headroom while retaining existing bridge;
 2. Bridge jacking - Increasing the height of the bridge through structurally lifting the arch barrel up from the abutments. This would require diagonal cuts to be made to separate the arch barrel from the abutments, lifting of the arch, infilling of the resulting gaps and refacing;
 3. Bridge reconstruction – Removal of the bridge arch and replacement with a deck providing sufficient clearance; and
 4. Bridge removal – demolition of the existing bridge, making good the embankments and re-routing of the existing footpath.
- 6.2.3 A summary of the ES3 optioneering process is summarised in Table 6-1 below.

⁴ The delivery of railway investment programmes is managed by Network Rail through the use of PACE (Project Acceleration in a Controlled Environment). This provides a flexible control framework for the delivery of rail projects. Under PACE, ES3 comprises optioneering and identification of a single design option, whilst ES4 is approval of design in principle.

Table 6-1 Optioneering for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23)

Option	Key Considerations	Advantages	Disadvantages	Preferred
1) Track Lower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient clearance needs to be achieved to enable electrification of the line and allow freight gauge clearance. Time required working within the railway corridor is required to be minimised as far as possible to reduce risk to construction staff and the length of line possession (closure of the railway) and resulting disruption to railway service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowering of the track would enable retention of the bridge with raising of the parapets undertaken prevent access to OLE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve the required clearance, the track would have to be lowered by 115mm for 210m on the east-bound line and 135mm for a distance of 320m on the west-bound line. Due to the shallow depth of rock at this location, this is a substantial engineering operation. The feasibility of the track lower relies on a reduced electrical clearance, which would be subject to a site-specific risk assessment The required drainage works at this location would have to be undertaken through bedrock should the track be lowered. 	<u>Y</u>
2) Bridge Jacking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The bridge spans a railway cutting, is not readily accessible from the highway network and is in a relatively isolated location. This restricts the accessibility of construction vehicles and the delivery of materials / components getting to the site. Ground Investigation has revealed rock to be present at shallow depth within the railway cutting. There is currently no functional track drainage at this location. The foundation depths of the bridge and cutting retaining walls are a consideration in the development of proposals for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). Lowering of ground level within the cutting has the potential to undermine these foundations or necessitate significant engineering works to ensure their stability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would enable the retention of the listed bridge. The abutments, deck and parapet would be retained, although in altered form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge jacking for masonry arch bridges is a relatively untested methodology, having been delivered on very few historic structures to date. The feasibility of jacking masonry arch structures relies on optimal site conditions, where a high level of control can be achieved and long timescales allowed for implementation. The long-term viability of this option is currently unknown. Bridge jacking would incur extensive disruption to railway users, requiring all works to be delivered on site and little scope for off-site construction. The location of the bridge over a cutting with severely limited access has significant limitations for execution of a bridge jacking operation. Jacking of the bridge would raise the level of the footpath across the bridge and require a greater intervention to parapet height across the structure. Raising of the bridge arch would impact the form and appearance of the structure, interrupting architectural features such as the stringcourse and the stone coursing across the parapets, detracting from its architectural value and integrity. 	N
3) Bridge Reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The designation of the bridge as a grade II listed structure places a requirement on Network Rail to have special regard for its preservation under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconstruction of the bridge would enable the preservation of some elements of the historic structure, through the retention and reuse of the bridge abutments in conjunction with the new bridge deck. Historic masonry could potentially be reclaimed from removal of the bridge arch and parapets for reuse on the reconstructed structure, aiding integration of historic and modern fabric and reduce the visual impact of the reconstruction works. Reconstruction of the bridge could be delivered substantially from track level. This would minimise the need for construction access by road at this constrained site. The installation of a preconstructed deck would minimise railway possession time and disruption to the railway network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconstruction of the bridge would result in the loss of the bridge arch and a portion of the parapets and abutments. This would result in the removal of a significant proportion of the historic bridge, substantially altering its form and appearance, and negatively impacting the integrity of the structure. Due to site topography and no access by road, construction activities would be very restricted resulting in additional cost, programme and disruption to the locals to create a suitable route to the structure to enable a reconstruction. It is expected that temporary land take and disruption to the nearby residents rear gardens would be required. 	N
4) Bridge Removal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of the bridge would minimise disruption to the railway network and provide a cost effective solution. Removal of the bridge and re-routing of the footpath represents a constructable solution at a severely constrained site. Historic masonry can be reclaimed from removal of the bridge arch and parapets and reused at other sites on Route Section W2B. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would result in the complete removal of the bridge and the loss of a grade II listed structure. Demolishing the bridge would require the re-routing of an established public right of way. 	N

- 6.2.4 Option 1 Track Lower, was progressed as the preferred option primarily because it would allow the retention of the listed structure in an altered form. Option 2 Bridge Jacking was discounted due to the difficulty of delivering a novel engineering intervention at this constrained site and the as yet unproven long-term viability of this structural intervention. Option 3 Bridge Reconstruction and Option 4 Bridge Removal were discounted because the less impactful option of track lowering was considered to be feasible.
- 6.2.5 After the ES3 design process, Option 1 Track Lower was progressed as the preferred option. Further detailed analysis of the proposals would be undertaken as part of the ES4 design process, informed by additional survey, ongoing design input from each of the relevant engineering disciplines and incorporating feedback from a partnered construction contractor.
- 6.2.6 During the ES3 development for MVL3/23 the requirement for freight clearances was not part of the Order Scheme remit. Freight clearances were introduced at a later stage in ES3 which resulted in an increase to the magnitude of track lower to 170mm. The conclusion of the ES3 option development was not changed but site investigation was procured to investigate the level of rock and drainage provision at the site.

ES4 review

- 6.2.7 At the commencement of the ES4 design stage in 2023, a comprehensive review was undertaken of the preferred options identified across the whole Route Section W2B as part of a validation exercise. This review identified a number of issues around constructability, access and disruption to the railway network in the area.
- 6.2.8 As part of this process, additional survey of the track bed at Wright's Bridge (MVL3/23) was undertaken to inform the progression of detailed design. The result concluded the rock level was higher than anticipated. Survey of the existing track drainage revealed routes provided by channels dug into the rock in both cesses, comprising inflows from springs and the former High Grove Mill reservoir and an outflow to the former Lower Grove Mill reservoir.
- 6.2.9 An ES4 site inspection and point cloud survey of the bridge identified that both bridge parapets were leaning significantly, this is likely due to the dense vegetation on the structure. The parapets would need to be broken down and rebuilt vertical to allow them to be raised to provide electrical protection.

- 6.2.10 The conclusion of this reappraisal was that the previously designed track lower would not achieve the minimum required track formation without significant excavation of rock along the length of the track lower. In order to provide adequate drainage, the channels in the cess would need to be dug deeper. These findings necessitated more detailed examination of the optioneering and preferred option for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23).
- 6.2.11 This assessment found that track lowering would significantly increase the cost of construction and extend the duration of the line closure, resulting in unacceptable disruption to railway users.
- 6.2.12 To inform this process and to ensure the deliverability of the preferred option, input from a construction contractor was sought. This highlighted the difficulties of reconstructing the bridge in this location due to limited access via road and limited access adjacent to the structure to enable off track construction works. Temporary land take was highlighted as a requirement with a proposed access route through a housing estate and properties driveways/gardens. This would have resulted in significant disruption to locals, and increased construction costs and programme duration. Reconstruction was also found to significantly increase the duration of line possession (closure of the railway line) required for construction, resulting in unacceptable delay and disruption to railway users.
- 6.2.13 A survey of pedestrian usage of the existing footpath was undertaken to provide an understanding of the public benefit currently afforded by the bridge and the degree of impact likely to arise from a temporary or permanent re-routing of the public right of way. This survey found the bridge to be very lightly used on a daily basis with only 11 individuals crossing the bridge on the day of the survey.
- 6.2.14 A whole life costing exercise was undertaken to understand the relative cost to public funds of Option 3- Reconstruction and Option 4 – Bridge Removal. Comparison of these options revealed between the approaches shows a significant difference in the whole life cost of construction, inspection and maintenance over the anticipated design life of a reconstructed overbridge. This assessment identified that Option 3 - Reconstruction would cost c. £3.1m to reconstruct and maintain an overbridge at this location. This was compared with the estimated cost for Option 4 – Bridge Removal, which was assessed to cost c. £400,000. This cost allowed for site setup and track possession, removal of the bridge, diversion of the public right of way (including drainage requirements), making good the embankments and ongoing inspections and maintenance over 125 years. Overall, it is estimated that the whole life cost of removing the

structure would be approximately £2.7m less than if it were to be reconstructed. This assessment demonstrated that Option 4 Bridge Removal would bring considerable benefits in terms of future public spending compared to the cost required to maintain and eventually replace a reconstructed bridge.

- 6.2.15 Based on consideration of this more detailed information, Option 1 Track Lower was found to be unfeasible from an engineering and cost perspective. Option 3 – Reconstruction was found to result in high levels of disruption to railway users and a high level of cost for a structure which is lightly used by pedestrians with suitable alternative routes nearby. Option 4 - Bridge Removal was found to bring considerable benefits in terms of future public spending compared to the cost required to maintain and eventually replace a reconstructed bridge. Option 4 - Bridge Removal was therefore identified to be the preferred option. The increased impact on the significance of the listed building was, however, recognised.
- 6.2.16 Comparison of Option 3 Bridge Reconstruction and Option 4 Bridge Removal on the significance of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) found both options to result in substantial harm to the structure.⁵ Option 3 Bridge Reconstruction would result in the reconstruction of the majority of the structure, retaining a small amount of historic fabric as part of a reconstructed bridge and the continued legibility of a historic access route across the railway in this location, whilst Option 4 Bridge Removal would result in the complete removal of the structure.
- 6.2.17 Considered on balance, the substantial harm to Wright's Bridge (MVL3/23) arising from Option 4 Bridge Removal was found to be justified due to:
- The site-specific constraints limiting constructability;
 - The limited use of the structure as a public right of way for which an alternative route can be provided; and
 - The high level of public spending which would be required for reconstruction.
- 6.2.18 Option 4 Bridge Removal was therefore selected as the preferred option following the ES4 design.

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance identifies that the substantial harm includes total loss of significance (paragraph 18a-018-20190723). The tests outlined in National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 214 apply for substantial harm or total loss. It is therefore considered that reconstruction and removal of the bridge would both result in substantial harm, with the level of harm being marginally greater in the case of removal.

6.3 Preferred option design development

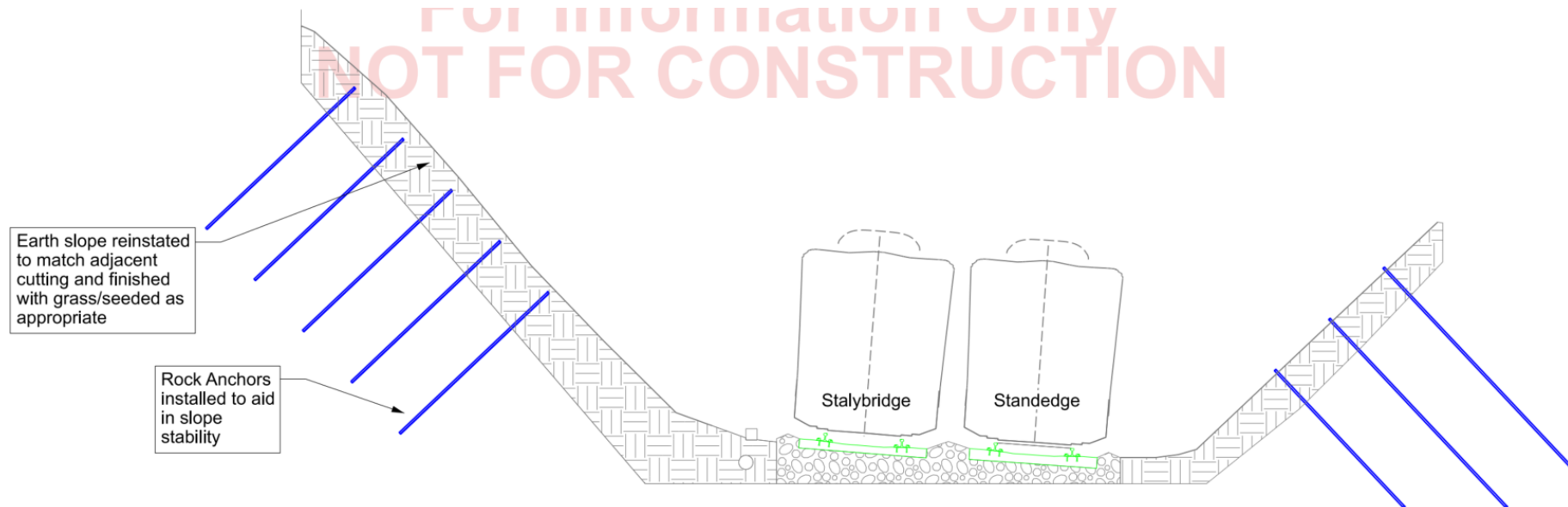
- 6.3.1 Following identification of Option 4 Bridge Removal as the preferred option, design development was subsequently undertaken with the aim of mitigating the potential impact of the electrification of the line on the heritage significance of the structure as far as reasonably practicable.
- 6.3.2 Consideration has been given to the feasibility of retaining and consolidating the abutments *in-situ* following the removal of the arched span. This option would retain sections historic fabric *in situ*. However, the limited amount of historic fabric remaining would not retain any of the historic structure's significance and would incur an ongoing maintenance and safety liability presented by a freestanding masonry structure adjacent to an electrified railway line. This would pose an ongoing risk and would require regular structural condition assessments and maintenance, and the attendant costs of this, for structural remains with no practical function sited in proximity to the railway corridor. The delivery of surveys and maintenance of the abutments would also result in safety risks to Network Rail staff to undertake these works and require periodic line possessions to enable safe working. The retained abutments would also present a risk as a potential point from which the railway corridor could be accessed. It is likely that security fencing would need to be introduced to any retained section of the abutments, impacting the degree to which any residual architectural interest could be appreciated. For this reason, the option of removal the bridge in its entirety and reprofiling the embankments was selected as the preferred option.
- 6.3.3 It is anticipated there will be an opportunity to reuse masonry from the demolished structure for works on the wider route. During demolition of the bridge, retention of historic fabric will be maximised as far as possible. Any suitable masonry reclaimed from the removal of bridges along the Route Section W2B will be used for cladding.

6.4 Description of proposals

- 6.4.1 It is proposed to demolish grade II listed Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). The structure would be broken down to 500mm below ground level. Reprofiling works are then proposed on both sides of the railway to tie in with the existing embankments to either side of the existing bridge (Insert 6-2). The public right of way would be re-routed under nearby Hobbe Hole Underbridge (MVL3/22), requiring minor surfacing works and vegetation clearance which lie outside the scope of this application for listed building consent.

Construction Methodology

- 6.4.2 Due to the limited space at track level and lack of highway access, the proposed methodology would require all plant to arrive on track. Road rail vehicles would be used to remove arisings from demolition. Reclamation of historic masonry would be undertaken as far as possible with transportation and secure storage at the site construction compound. Stone will be subject to preliminary rapid assessment for potential reuse and then palletised ready for transportation to sites along the wider project route where it will be redressed and used as appropriate.
- 6.4.3 The proposed works to Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) are shown in the following drawings which accompany this application:
- Existing and Proposed Plan (167037-TGP-25-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-162312); and
 - Existing and Proposed Elevation and Section (167037-TGP-25-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-162313).



Insert 6-2 Proposed reprofiled railway cutting following removal of Wrights Bridge Overbridge (MVL3/23)

7. IMPACT OF PROPOSALS

7.1 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23)

- 7.1.1 As identified above; in order to construct the Order Scheme, demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) is proposed. This would result in the total loss of the structure. The proposed works would remove the historic and architectural value of the structure.
- 7.1.2 The loss of this asset will mean the removal of a historic bridge that is part of the physical infrastructure associated with the Heroic Age (1841-50) of railway construction. It is not only a loss in its own right, but also detrimental to the historic character and group value that this structure contributes to as part of the Transpennine railway line.
- 7.1.3 The proposed demolition of the structure would have an impact on the group value of the bridges designed by A.S. Jee on the Transpennine route. The loss of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) would remove one element of this group of 18 designated bridges designed by A.S. Jee (see paragraph 5.2.10) and one of the five bridges which share a common design language (see paragraph 5.2.11). The other bridges designed by Jee derive part of their value from their group relationship. The significance of each of the other bridges will therefore be slightly diminished by the removal of one of their number. The impact of this demolition would amount to less than substantial harm to the retained structures arising from a weakening of the extent to which group value contributes to their significance.
- 7.1.4 These proposals would therefore result in the total loss of the asset and substantial harm to the significance of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). As discussed in paragraphs 6.2.7 to 6.2.15, detailed consideration has been given to the option of reconstructing the listed overbridge. However, this would still result in substantial harm to its significance. The issues of site-specific topography constraining potential construction methodology, demonstrated limited use of the structure with a viable alternative public right of way to be provided, and high whole life cost were felt to outweigh the minor benefit of retaining a small portion of historic fabric *in-situ*.

7.2 Other heritage assets

- 7.2.1 The proposals would have no impact on any other surrounding designated or non-designated heritage assets.

7.3 Mitigation

- 7.3.1 Proposals to reclaim and reuse masonry from the grade II listed Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) have been embedded as an integral part of the proposed Order Scheme. This fabric would be utilised for reuse as cladding of structures elsewhere on the Route Section W2B as far as possible. The reuse of this fabric would partly compensate adverse impacts arising from the work.
- 7.3.2 During construction of the works, toolbox talks would be implemented. These would disseminate best practice for reducing potential impacts in relation to construction activity associated with Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), for example to ensure the approach taken to maximising masonry for reclamation is communicated.

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 3 standards in accordance with Historic England guidance (Historic England 2016). This would provide a permanent record of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) in its current form and be lodged with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record. This building recording would help to compensate for the harm to significance resulting from the reconstruction by providing the opportunity to document the structure which will be largely lost as a result of the proposed works. The historic building recording would include:
 - Drawings;
 - Photography; and
 - Written account.
 - 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 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). 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 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) are required to ensure the realisation of the substantial public benefits of the Order Scheme, in accordance with paragraph 214 of the NPPF.
- 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 demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) would directly facilitate the achievement of these aims by resolving the insufficient clearance beneath the bridge to accommodate electrification and the use of larger gauge trains, thereby allowing increases in line speed to be delivered, and capacity and resilience to be enhanced.
- 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 the demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), 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 demolition 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.

- 7.4.7 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.
- 7.4.8 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.
- 7.4.9 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 demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23).
- 7.4.10 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.
- 7.4.11 To this effect, the proposals at Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) are therefore essential in achieving the overall substantial public benefits of the Order Scheme and wider objectives of the TRU Programme, 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 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) lies primarily in its historical and architectural interest. The bridge is a largely unaltered example of an 1840s overbridge, dating from the Heroic Age (1841–50). The high quality of the bridge's architecture, including segmental arches with rusticated voussoirs and keystones, together with the high-quality workmanship of its construction is characteristic of A.S. Jee's work for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway. The bridge also 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 Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) makes a minor contribution to the significance of the structure, it also possesses group value as one of a number of A.S. Jee structures on the Transpennine route which share a common design language.
- 8.1.2 A number of design options were pursued to achieve the clearance required for the OLE. The OLE is a fundamental part of the Order Scheme to deliver a faster service (reduced journey time) and to make provision for electrification and the operation of a 'greener' transport solution. The development of a scheme-specific pantograph which enables the use of reduced overhead line wire height under structures, subject to a site-specific risk assessment, has not resolved the clash between proposed OLE and the listed structure.
- 8.1.3 A full and robust optioneering process was undertaken in consultation with the LPA and Historic England to develop proposals for Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23). This reviewed options comprising track lowering, bridge jacking, bridge reconstruction and bridge removal, and considered these against a range of factors comprising:
- Local geology including the shallow depth of rock within the railway cutting;
 - The topography of the site;
 - Accessibility for construction;
 - Buildability within the constraints of working on an active railway network;
 - Safety requirements;
 - Use of the structure as a public right of way; and
 - Comparative whole life costs of reconstruction and demolition.
- 8.1.4 Removal of the bridge was identified, on balance, to deliver substantial public benefit, in terms of delivering a feasible and cost-

effective design solution, reducing disruption to rail users and the railway network, and in achieving the aims of the Order Scheme. Whilst this option is recognised to result in the total loss of the structure and substantial harm to Wright's Bridge (MVL3/23), it is considered that the substantial public benefits of the Order Scheme outweigh this harm, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 214 of the NPPF.

- 8.1.5 The loss of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), which is a grade II listed building, should be considered exceptional. This will mean the loss of an irreplaceable piece of railway infrastructure, dating to the Heroic Age (1841-50) of railway building. It is also a loss to the collection of A.S. Jee bridges that are located along this section of the Transpennine route.
- 8.1.6 The design process has been undertaken in a strongly collaborative manner and has sought historic environment professional support from the outset. The desire to maximise heritage benefits and limit harm was the primary position. Every effort was made to retain this historic structure as part of TRU. However, this was unachievable with the operational parameters set. Regular consultation with historic environment stakeholders and the design team were held throughout the design development process. Historic England and OMBC have accepted that the approach of demolishing the structure is necessary to deliver the proposed Order Scheme, and that the justification for this harm is clear and convincing. The design development process, including engagement with historic environment stakeholders, resulted in compensation measures being agreed, to be secured as conditions of the LBC (see Section 7.3).
- 8.1.7 With the demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), the Order Scheme can achieve 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 (with the public right of way rerouted under Hobbe Hole Underbridge (MVL3/22)).
- 8.1.8 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.
- 8.1.9 Whilst the demolition of Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) is regrettable, its loss would be outweighed by the substantial public benefits that accrue from enabling the Transpennine programme to be achieved. The proposals would therefore meet the requirements of paragraph 214 of the NPPF in relation to the justification for substantial harm and provide sufficient justification to outweigh the strong presumption against demolition of listed buildings outlined in policy 24 of the OMBC local development framework and Policy JP-P2 of Places for Everyone.

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**The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) – Heritage Statement
October 2025**

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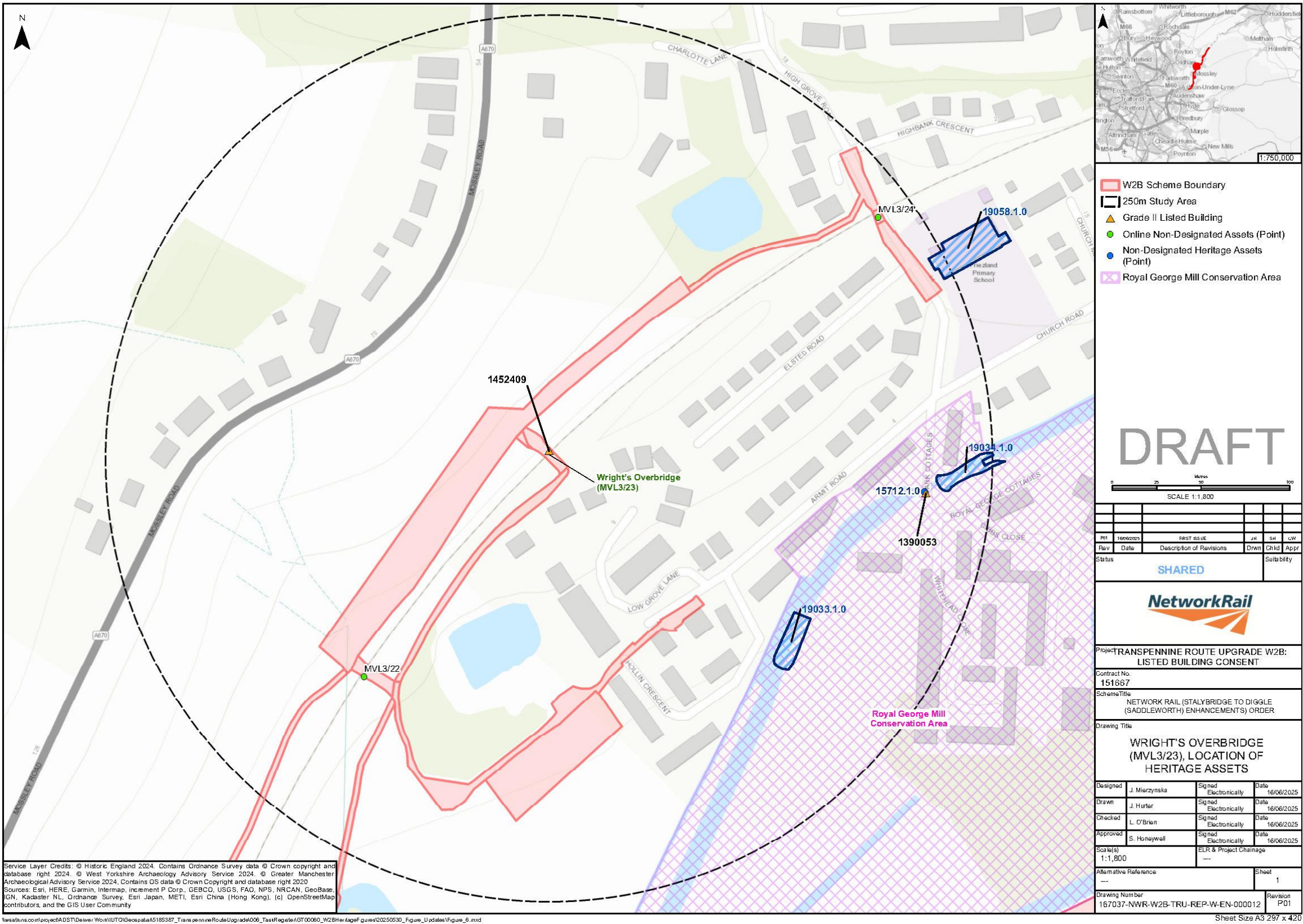
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APPENDIX A – LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX B – NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST DESCRIPTION

Official list entry

Heritage Category:	Listed Building
Grade:	II
List Entry Number:	1452409
Date first listed:	23-Mar-2018
List Entry Name:	Railway overbridge MVL3/23, Wright's
Location Description:	Footpath from Mossley Road to Hollin Hall, Greenfield.

Location

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

District:	Oldham (Metropolitan Authority)
Parish:	Saddleworth
National Grid Reference:	SD9810704133

Summary

Railway overbridge, 1845-1849, by AS Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway.

Reasons for Designation

Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23), constructed in the mid-late 1840s by AS Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Historic interest:

- * constructed during the heroic age of railway building and a little-altered example of an 1840s overbridge on what is now one of the main railway lines in northern England;
- * designed by the notable railway engineer Alfred Stanistreet Jee.

Architectural interest:

- * the bridge is well-detailed with ashlar impost bands and string course, and piers and voussoirs with tooled margins, that lift its design above the purely functional.

Group value:

* with the other listed structures designed by Jee on the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway line.

History

In contrast to the main trunk lines of the late 1830s that were constructed by single railway companies the route from Stalybridge to Leeds had fragmented origins and was the work of three different railway companies: the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway, Leeds, Dewsbury & Manchester Railway, and the Manchester & Leeds Railway.

The Huddersfield & Manchester Railway was authorised in 1845 and followed the route of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal for much of its length, including a railway tunnel through the Pennine hills set alongside the earlier Standedge Canal Company tunnel of 1811; in 1846 the railway company also acquired the canal. Joseph Locke and Alfred Stanistreet Jee were appointed to survey and design the new line, the two engineers having already worked together on a major project linking Manchester and Sheffield. Jee became the lead engineer for the Huddersfield line, which passed through challenging terrain, assisted by resident engineers that included his brother Moreland Jee (until 1848) and Herbert F Mackworth. Construction of the line was divided into various contracts, with many contractors being only responsible for a single cutting, viaduct or tunnel portal. The largest contract for the Standedge Tunnel between Diggle and Marsden was let to a single contractor, Thomas Nicholson in 1847. The tunnel's completion in 1849 marked the opening of the line.

The Leeds end of the route, which was also authorised in 1845, was constructed by the Leeds, Dewsbury & Manchester Railway. The engineer was Thomas Grainger who had previously largely worked in Scotland, and the line was completed in 1849.

A short three-mile section of the route between Heaton Lodge Junction and Thornhill Junction near Mirfield was developed by the Manchester & Leeds Railway and was constructed in 1837 to 1840, with George Stephenson as the chief engineer. The structures on this line were designed by Thomas Gooch under the oversight of Stephenson. In 1847 the railway company changed its name to the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway.

In 1847 the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway and the Leeds, Dewsbury & Manchester Railway were acquired by the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) so that the company could access the city of Leeds and the textile towns of West Yorkshire. This pitted them as rivals to the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway, although at points on the route the two companies had to work together. By 1851 the London & North Western Railway had an overall mileage of railway track of 800 miles, and it became the most prominent railway company in the country and the largest joint-stock concern in the world in the late C19. Although the LNWR had a general manager, Captain Mark Huish, the lines of the Stalybridge to Leeds route still managed their own affairs. LNWR later carried out expansion works, including the widening of tracks and bridges, the construction of additional tunnels, and station alterations. In 1923 the line became part of the London Midland & Scottish

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Railway, and subsequently part of the nationalised British Railways in 1948. The line, its structures and track are currently (2018) owned by Network Rail, and the passenger services operated by TransPennine Express and Northern Rail.

This overbridge was built to carry the footpath from Mossley Road to Hollin Hall over the railway. It was designed by AS Jee (1816-1858) and dates from the line's construction from 1845-1849. It remains as built.

Details

Railway overbridge, 1845-1849, by AS Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway.

MATERIALS: buff sandstone.

DESCRIPTION: the bridge carries the footpath from north-west to south-east across the railway. Due to gradients it slopes down towards the south-east. The bridge comprises a single segmental-arched span recessed between battered abutments to either side of the steep cutting, with a parapet.

The stonework is regular-coursed and quarry-faced. The stone of the arch piers and the voussoirs has tooled margins, the keystone breaking the arch above and below. The impost bands, sloping string course above the arch and the chamfered-and-weathered parapet copings are dressed. The abutments curve outwards slightly at all four corners and terminate in slender piers with shallow, pyramidal caps. The arch soffit is narrow-coursed masonry with tooled detailing. The road surface was much overgrown at the date of survey (2017).

Sources

TransPennine Route Statement of History and Significance: West of Leeds V3.1. Prepared for Network Rail, March 2017. Alan Baxter Ltd.

APPENDIX C - HISTORIC ENGLAND PRE-APPLICATION RESPONSE LETTER

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



Historic England

Ms Kate Berry
AtkinsRéalis
3100 Century Way
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LS15 8ZB

Direct Dial: +447990339949

Our ref: PA01200823

29 November 2024

Dear Kate

Pre-application Advice

TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE - STALYBRIDGE TO STANDEDGE

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 patress 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
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**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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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
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**The Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements) Order
Wright's Overbridge (MVL3/23) – Heritage Statement
October 2025**



Historic England

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Our ref: PA01200823
18 July 2025

Dear Sarah

Pre-application Advice

TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE - STALYBRIDGE TO STANDEGE

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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**TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE - STALYBRIDGE TO STANDEDGE
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