

Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade

Heritage Statement for Railway Viaduct MVL3/61 Slaithwaite Viaduct

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support the application for listed building consent (LBC) for works required as part of the Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU). TRU is a major, multi-billion-pound programme of improvements to bring more frequent, faster and greener trains between York, Leeds and Manchester on a better, cleaner, more reliable railway.

The TRU project involves a variety of works including the electrification of the railway (installation of overhead line equipment (OLE) and associated infrastructure) and the removal, re-modelling and replacement of bridges and structures to accommodate OLE. Due to the historic nature of the route, this includes works to listed bridges. This document forms part of the LBC application for works to the Slaithwaite Viaduct. These involve the strengthening of existing parapets with pre-cast concrete units on their track side; the replacement of a short section of bridge deck and parapet with a precast concrete unit faced with natural stone facing to the external parapet; and brackets to the outside of piers to support OLE portals to carry the overhead electrified lines.

The Slaithwaite Viaduct was built in two phases. The structure supporting the first two lines was built c1847 and the viaduct was widened to carry another two lines c1884. It is Grade II listed as Slaithwaite Viaduct (NHLE 1224049).

1.2 Scope

This Heritage Statement presents a statement of significance for the Slaithwaite Viaduct, taking into account its architectural and historic interest, as well as placing it within the wider context of railway heritage. It goes on to provide an assessment of the impact of the proposed works on that significance in terms of harm caused in line with current planning policy. This document also provides a background to the development of the project, including decisions in relation to avoiding, minimising and/ or mitigating the impacts through options explored and design evolution. Finally, the heritage public benefits are set out in brief in order to understand the harm reported and enable the scheme to be weighed in the planning balance.

This document is submitted alongside the following supporting information and appendices:

- Listed Building Consent Cover Letter;
- Location Plan (including red line application boundary);

- 167037-TGP-55-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-166102-P02: Proposed Plan and Elevations;
- 167037-TGP-55-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-166103-P03: Proposed Elevation and Section;
- 167037-TGP-55-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-166104-P03: Proposed Elevation and Section;
- 167037-TGP-55-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-166106-P01: Existing Plan and Elevations (Works over Bank Gate);
- 167037-TGP-55-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-166105-P02: Proposed Plan and Elevations (Works over Bank Gate);
- Appendix A - Listing Description Text;
- Appendix B - Extract from; TransPennine Route Statement of History and Significance: West of Leeds (January 2017 Draft), Alan Baxter and Associates.

2. PLANNING LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) is the principal statutory instrument that must be considered in the determination of any application affecting listed buildings and conservation areas.

Under Section 16 of the Act, listed buildings are protected against unauthorised works, being those works not authorised by the local planning authority or the Secretary of State. This process is embodied within Listed Building Consent (LBC). The Act further states that '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' (Section 16 (1)). Furthermore, '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 the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' (Section 16 (2)).

Section 17 of the Act deals with conditions attached to a Listed Building Consent, including the preservation of particular features, making good after completion of the works and use of original materials. Of relevance to this application, Section 17 (2) states 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'.

In considering whether to grant planning permission which affects a listed building, Section 66 (1) of the Act requires that the local planning authority, or the Secretary of State 'shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

2.2 National Planning Policy

2.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) 2025)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Section 16 of the NPPF sets out a series of policies that are a material consideration to be taken into account in development management decisions in relation to the heritage consent regimes established in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The NPPF describes the importance of being able to assess the significance of heritage assets that may be affected by a development proposal. 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. Furthermore, they should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset (paragraph 208). Significance is defined in Annex 2 as 'the value of an asset because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic and can extend to its setting'. The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (paragraph 207).

In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 210).

Paragraphs 212 to 216 of the NPPF introduce the concept that heritage assets can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction or development within their setting. This harm ranges from less than substantial through to substantial. With regard to designated assets, paragraph 212 states that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Distinction is drawn between those assets of exceptional interest (e.g. grade I and grade II* listed buildings), and those of special interest (e.g. grade II listed buildings). Any harm or loss of heritage significance requires clear and convincing justification, and substantial harm or loss should be wholly exceptional with regard to those assets of greatest interest (paragraph 213).

In instances where development would cause substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated asset, consent should be refused unless that harm or loss is 'necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss' (paragraph 214). In instances where development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including its optimum viable use (paragraph 215).

2.2.2 Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment (MHCLG 2024)

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG; MHCLG 2024) is a government produced on-line document that expands on national policy presented 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).

The PPG discusses how to assess if there is substantial harm. It states that what matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the asset. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723).

The NPPF indicates that the degree of harm should be considered alongside any public benefits that can be delivered by development. The PPG states that these benefits should flow from the Proposed Development and should be of a nature and scale to be of benefit to the public and not just a private benefit and would include securing the optimum viable use of an asset in support of its long term conservation (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723).

2.2.3 Historic England Advice

Historic England has published a series of Good Practice Advice (GPA) notes and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs), of which those of most relevance to this appraisal are GPA2 - Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (March 2015) and HEAN 12 - Statements of Heritage Significance (Oct. 2019).

GPA2 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).

Advice Note 12 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 Advice Note 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: Glossary); namely archaeological, architectural and artistic, and historic.

2.3 Local Planning Policy

Kirklees Local Plan was adopted on 27 February 2019 (Kirklees Council, 2019). Relevant policies include Policy LP19 Strategic Transport Infrastructure, and Policy LP35 Historic Environment.

The justification for Policy LP19 states that efficient transport is especially significant given the district's strategic position on the national motorway and rail networks.

The Policy states that: "Proposals will be encouraged where they assist to bring forward strategic transport infrastructure." Upgrades to the Trans-Pennine rail line is specifically referred to within the Local Plan as a strategic opportunity and is referred to in the justifications for Policy 19.

The justification for Policy LP35 Historic Environment reiterates the strategies of the NPPF. It states that the council recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should aim to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Amongst other points, it states that the strategy takes into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.

The policy justification states that some historic assets are less sensitive to change than others and can be altered without damaging their significance: “Alterations and extensions to historic buildings should in the main make use of traditional materials and craftsmanship. However, in some cases, where there is less significance, modern innovative design should not be disregarded.”

The viaduct falls within Slaithwaite Conservation Area. There is no appraisal or management plan for the conservation area. The conservation area extends across the valley bottom, south of the railway line, excluding the northern residential areas of Hill Top and the reservoir. It extends slightly north to include the Slaithwaite Viaduct, but does not include the station or the Crimble Viaduct.

Its character is defined by the many multi-storey stone mills with their regular fenestration by the river and canal; and the contemporaneous stone civic, commercial and religious buildings. This Victorian expansion surrounds the much smaller original historic core immediately north of the canal and south of Slaithwaite Viaduct. This is described further below in the description of the viaduct and its setting.

The viaduct, which is a significant part of the major Victorian growth of the town, forms part of the boundary of the conservation area, and the historic core of the town. It is a gateway to the conservation area through Bank Gate and Holme Lane. Though outside the main commercial area, it forms part of the backdrop of the town through glimpsed views up Nabb Lane and Church Street. It is also visible across the valley and the conservation area from the A62 Manchester Road.

There are also significant views of the town and the conservation area from passengers travelling over the viaduct itself. These new views over the town were described by journalists when the viaduct first opened (Leeds Intelligencer, 1849), and they are still noteworthy today.

3. HERITAGE ASSET AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Location

Slaithwaite Viaduct lies west of Huddersfield, carrying the railway line which extends east towards Huddersfield and Leeds, and west to the Standedge Tunnel and Manchester. At this point, the line follows the course of the River Colne and its parallel canal. Figure 1 shows the location of MVL3/61 relative to the other locations where LBCs are proposed as part of the Trans-Pennine Upgrade.

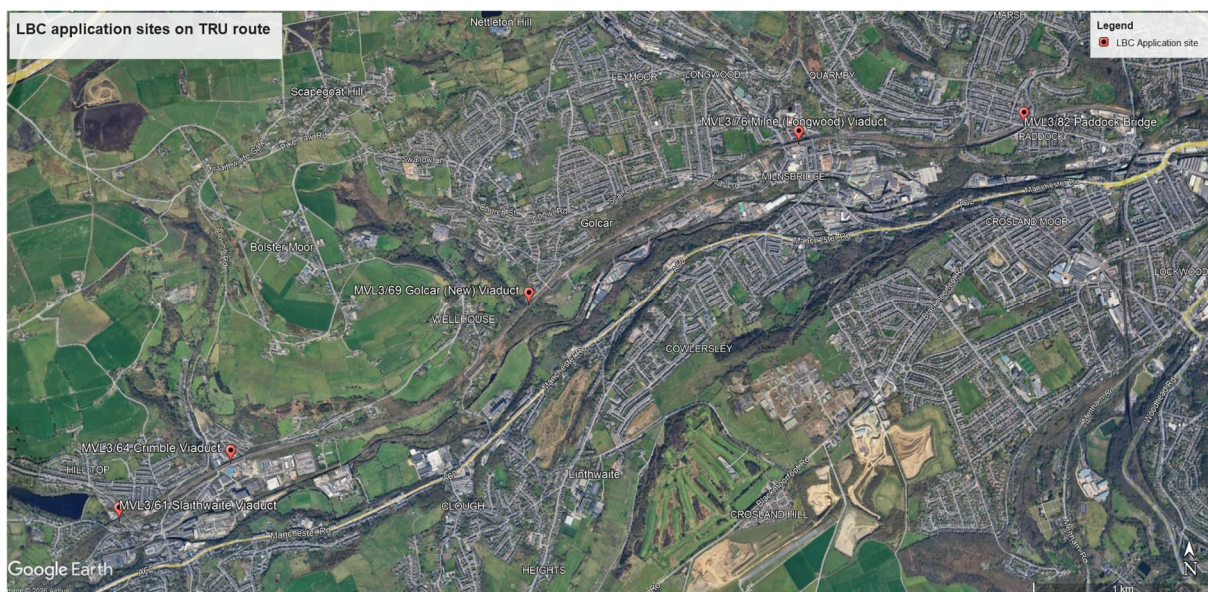


Figure 1: Location of Slaithwaite Viaduct in relation to other listed structures requiring LBCs as part of electrification works. Map Data © 2026 Google, Airbus.

The viaduct crosses a small side valley which enters the main river valley from the north. The viaduct, which curves slightly, lies at the western edge of the settlement of Slaithwaite. It straddles Nabb Lane at the west, and Bank Gate at the east. It originally straddled the drain from Slaithwaite reservoir to the north, but this is now culverted just prior to passing beneath the viaduct.



Figure 2: Slaithwaite and its viaducts. Map Data © 2026 Google, Airbus.

3.2 Heritage Baseline

3.2.1 Historical Background

The Trans-Pennine route overall reflects the agricultural development of the landscape until the arrival of the industrial age in the late 18th and 19th century. This had a striking effect on the landscape.

The Huddersfield & Manchester railway forms an important part in this industrialisation, cutting through the rural landscape to link the industrially burgeoning towns. The railways took over from the canals in transporting goods and people across the country. The canals were focussed around the existing waterways, linking the industrial towns of the midlands and northwest. The railways provided the opportunity to link more rural areas and smaller towns to encourage a larger movement of people, and thus a workforce, as well as goods.

The Stalybridge to Leeds line, 35 miles long, is the core component of the main Trans-Pennine railway route. It was built through some exceptionally difficult terrain, involving numerous viaducts and tunnels. It was constructed at the height of the railway boom of the mid-1840s, and was essentially the work of three railway companies: the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway; the Leeds, Dewsbury & Manchester Railway; and the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway.

This site is included in the section built by the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway, authorised in 1845. It was planned to follow the route of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal for much of its length. The engineers appointed to survey and design the line were Joseph Locke and Alfred Stanistreet Jee, who had already been working together on a major project to link Manchester and Sheffield. It appears to have been Jee who took the main responsibility for the new line to Huddersfield, assisted by resident engineers including his brother Moreland Jee (until 1848) and Herbert F. Mackworth.

In August 1847, engineer Herbert F Mackworth made a report to the Directors of the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway, stating that the building of the viaducts was already underway, and that 4,000 men were at work on the line (Railway Times, 1847).

The line was opened in July 1849. The Leeds Intelligencer reported: *"We approach the Crimble Viaduct of 19 semicircular arches, of 30 feet long, spanning altogether a distance of 233 yards, and 60 feet high from rail level, on a 60 chain curve for 16 chains to the left. Here we have an extensive view of the Crimble vale on the right, and the Slaithwaite vale on the left. The scenery, as on the previous points of the line named, is both picturesque and romantic. Passing through a slight cutting on a reversed curve of 40 chains for 17 chains, we approach the Slaithwaite station in course of erection, 54 miles from Huddersfield, sat completely above the village of Slaithwaite, the approaches to which from the railway lie down a very steep incline. Leaving the Slaithwaite station, we pass by a reversed curve over to Slaithwaite viaduct, 182 yards long, and numbering fourteen 30-feet arches, the highest of which is 75 feet high ... From this viaduct we command an extensive view of the Slaithwaite valley on the right, when we see the large reservoir from which the canal is supplied with water, and apparently on a level with the line of railway. We also have a commanding view over Slaithwaite on the left."*

The most conspicuous subsequent change on this line was the widening from two to four tracks (known as quadrupling). A notice of an application to Parliament was made by the London and North Western Railway Company in 1877 for an Act to empower them to make a large number of improvements, including the widening of the Huddersfield-Manchester Railway (Leicester Journal, 1877). The structures along the line were widened in 1881-9 in a variety of ways. Although the line has been largely reduced to two tracks, including at this site, the changes are still evident.

At Slaithwaite, Crimble and Longwood, the viaducts were extended, with the engineers making every effort to match the older work. The only significant difference to these viaducts is the brick soffits used for the extensions.

1.1.1 Map Regression

In the below map of 1828 (Figure 3), prior to the arrival of the railway the area was largely rural. The Huddersfield canal and feeder reservoirs are notable features. The settlement of Slaithwaite is shown, with its church marked.



Figure 3: 1828 map by Teesdale & Bingley. Copyright National Library of Scotland under Creative Commons licence.

The first Ordnance Survey map of the area, Figure 4 below, which has is updated after original surveying of 1838, shows the new railway marked with Slaithwaite viaduct, west of the station. East of the station, the Crimble viaduct, which is smaller, is not marked. Dwellings are still scattered, and the reservoir is now visible.



This is a detailed historical map of Slaithwaite, showing the town layout, surrounding fields, and industrial sites. Key features include the Slaithwaite Reservoir, the Slaithwaite River, and several mills including Bank Gate Mill, Black Moor Holme Mill, and Corn Mill. The map also shows the Slaithwaite Station and the Slaithwaite Carr Lane. The map is oriented with North at the top.

Figure 5: Ordnance Survey map, surveyed 1848 to 1851, published 1854. Copyright National Library of Scotland under Creative Commons licence.

This is a detailed historical map of Slaithwaite, showing the town's layout, surrounding fields, and industrial areas. The map includes labels for various landmarks such as Slaithwaite Reservoir, Crimble Mills, and the town center. The title 'Slaithwaite' is prominently displayed in the center.

By the 1960s, in Figure 7 below, further rows of terraced houses have appeared north of the viaduct and station, with a more recent housing estate of semi-detached houses north of the reservoir.



Figure 7: 1967 Ordnance Survey map. Copyright National Library of Scotland under Creative Commons licence.

Today, in Figure 8 below, the biggest change is the extension of modern industrial units east of Crimble viaduct, south of the railway line. There are some additional residential streets both north and south of Slaithwaite viaduct.



Figure 8: Slaithwaite Viaduct, 2026. Copyright Google Earth under Creative Commons licence.

3.2.2 Slaithwaite Viaduct MVL3/64 Description

This slightly curving viaduct of 15 semi-circular arches was built in two phases c1845 and c1886. It is of coursed slightly rock faced stone, large squared and coursed ashlar and rusticated dressings. The piers are slightly battered. The arches spring from a large ashlar string course, and there is a continuous parapet on an ashlar string course with ashlar coping. The original arches have stone soffits, the later portion has brick soffits.

The viaduct was widened to accommodate a further two lines, taking close account of the earlier design. The main deviation in their design and construction is the use of brick for the arch soffits. The most westerly arch has a date and inscription on the keystone “WS 1886”.

The arches are not in use, though a garage has been built in one of the central arches. Some are fenced and used for storage.

Three roads pass under the viaduct: Nabbs Lane to the west, Bank Gate to the east, and an unnamed track to an industrial development in the centre. The stream carrying overflow from Slaithwaite Reservoir (also known as Hill Top Reservoir), passes through a narrow culvert next to the unnamed track.



Figure 9: South elevation of Slaithwaite Viaduct, with Bank Gate, from Ivy Mount road.



Figure 10: North entrance from Bank Gate, showing the later viaduct in front of the original arch.



Figure 11: North elevation of viaduct from Nabbs Lane, looking south into conservation area.



Figure 12: North elevation of Slaithwaite Viaduct and Bank Gate Mill, looking south east from Slaithwaite Reservoir dam.

To the north are 20th century small industrial developments, parking and storage yards, with Bank Gate Mill (NHLE 1231005) and the Slaithwaite reservoir beyond.

To the south is the historic core of the town, including many listed buildings, with the canal and river beyond.



3.2.3

Figure 13: A garage built under one of the central arches.



Figure 14: Glimpsed views of the viaduct looking north from the A62 Manchester Road.

3.3 Significance of Asset

According to the TransPennine Statement of History and Significance: West of Leeds (Alan Baxter (2017), Slaithwaite Viaduct (MVL3/64) is of special interest as it was designed by A S Jee, placing it within the heroic phase of railway construction. It has group value as part of a sequence of similarly-designed viaducts in the Colne Valley.

The viaduct has historical value as part of the overall railway. The widening of the 1890s is of interest in demonstrating the great changes brought about by the original 1840s railway in terms of industrial growth and population change.

The viaduct also has architectural value as a high quality structure, and evidential value in showing the evolving techniques and the increasing availability of brick as a material during the 19th century.

The viaduct is a landmark on the north western side of the town, including from such popular viewpoints as the canalside area next to the Shoulder of Mutton, and from the Slaithwaite reservoir dam. It contributes to the character of the town and the landscape, and as such has communal value.

It contributes to the significance of the conservation area as whole.

There are many listed buildings in the immediate surroundings of the viaduct, and their significance is considered further below.



Figure 15: Looking north west from the canal up Church Street to the viaduct with St James Church and the Shoulder of Mutton pub.



Figure 16: Looking north west to the viaduct from the Manor House.



Figure 17: Looking north east to the viaduct from listed 11 Nabbs Lane.

Further up Bank Gate is the Grade II listed Bank Gate Mill (NHLE 1231005). This substantial four storey mill was built in the mid 19th century, in the same period as the original viaduct, and represents part of the same industrialisation of the valley. The mill has evidential and architectural significance. Although outside the conservation area, it relates to many of the mills and other mid-19th century structures within it. The viaduct and mill form part of each other's setting. The setting, and the viaduct, contribute to the mill's significance.

Beyond Bank Gate Mill are a Grade II listed group of earlier weavers' cottages: 129 to 133 Royd Street (NHLE 1267185) and 135 Royd Street (NHLE 1267176). Their value is architectural and evidential as examples of an earlier type of domestic industrial architecture. The setting has changed due to later residential development, including modern dwellings. There is some intervisibility between the cottages and the deck of the viaduct. However, neither the viaduct nor the setting contributes to the cottages' significance.

To the south is the historic core of Slaithwaite, including several listed buildings. This older core includes the Grade II* listed 16th century Manor House (NHLE 1233457); its associated Lock Up (NHLE 1233459, Grade II) and Sundial (NHLE 1233460, Grade II); an early 18th century school, now Lawson's Funeral Parlour (NHLE 1221740, Grade II); the late 18th century Church of St James (NHLE 1233461, Grade II); and late 18th or early 19th century Shoulder of

Mutton pub (NHLE 1233564, Grade II). It also includes several Grade II listed dwellings: the late 18th century Ivy Mount (NHLE 1233455); and the early to mid-19th century 11 Nabbs Lane (NHLE 1275083) and 17 and 19 Nabbs Lane (NHLE 1275176). The significance of this group is evidential, as demonstrating the earliest history of the settlement, and architectural. Their setting contributes to their significance. The viaduct forms part of the setting of the historic core. Although later in date than these earlier buildings, it makes some contribution to their significance, as part of the evidential value of the development of the town.

4. DETAILED PROPOSALS

4.1 Description of Proposals

The programme of works is to realign the tracks for line speed increase and install overhead electrification (OLE) infrastructure.

At Slaithwaite Viaduct these works consist of; installation of three OLE portals fixed to the outside of pier spandrels via six brackets, and the creation of three new downpipes connected to existing outflow pipes. Reinforcement of the north parapet with precast concrete L units, and rebuilding the north side of the eastern terminating span over Bank Gate, including replacement of the bridge deck, parapet, and reconstruction of the flanking pilasters, is also proposed. The existing handrail will also be replaced to the north parapet at this same location only. The alterations to this eastern span over Bank Gate is detailed in drawings 167037-TGP-55-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-166106-P01 (existing) and 167037-TGP-55-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-166105-P02 (proposals).

Early stage proposals were developed through a pre-application consultation meeting on 24th July 2025 with Kirklees Council's Conservation Officer and Historic England's Inspector of Buildings and Areas, and latterly between Engineers at Tony Gee Partnership (TGP), Heritage Specialists at AECOM, and with the client Network Rail.

In accordance with British Standards and Network Rail standards concerning protective provisions relating to electrical safety for fixed installations, electrical safety signs are to be installed on the inside face of each parapet near the ends of the new mesh screen. The location of these signs are shown on the proposal drawings.

5. IMPACT OF PROPOSALS

5.1 Impacts to Heritage Assets

5.1.1 Slaithwaite Viaduct

The significance of the viaduct is principally derived from its architectural and historic value, with some communal value as a landmark within the town. The proposed alterations will result in a small degree of impact to the architectural interest of the viaduct through changes to its visual appearance, and alterations to the physical fabric of the bridge.

Changes to Visual Appearance

The new OLE portals will create a small degree of visual clutter, detracting from the otherwise simple architectural silhouette of the viaduct within the townscape. However, given the utilitarian nature of the existing viaduct, its industrial and railway corridor setting, and the utilitarian appearance of the new railway infrastructure, this change in the appearance of the viaduct will have a limited impact on the experience of the architecture of the viaduct from viewpoints within the town, and from the railway itself as a railway user.

The impact to long-range views such as from the A62 Manchester Road and Slaithwaite Reservoir will be limited as the portals are relatively slender and are unlikely to represent a noticeable change to the appearance of the viaduct from a distance, or when seen against the hillside and the backdrop of vegetation and surrounding houses which flank the bridge.

Alterations to Physical Fabric

Physical alterations to the historic fabric across much of the viaduct will not result in a change in architectural appearance. Holes drilled for bracket mountings of OLE portals, potential cutting down of gulleys on the upper side of masonry arches, and fixing of concrete L units to the internal face of the north parapet will not be externally visible.

The design and detailing of the mounting brackets enables the OLE portals to be erected proud of the parapet string course, rather than flush to the face. The bracket fixings are also detailed to be positioned within the spandrels at a minimum 200mm clearance from the edges of the voussoirs forming the viaduct arches. This string course and arch voussoirs will therefore not be damaged by the installation of the OLE portals.

Alterations to the easternmost span over Bank Gate will result in a change to the architectural appearance of this part of the viaduct. However, the visibility of this area of the viaduct is very limited due to the viaduct's curvature and the topography of the adjacent valley slopes.

The existing masonry and iron structure dates from the later phase of the viaduct's construction and makes a limited contribution to its special interest and significance of the viaduct as a whole. The proposals in this area will result in a loss of historic fabric and a change in appearance to this isolated part of the viaduct.

The physical impact and visual changes to the overall appearance, and experience of the viaduct from the structure itself, and in views of it, will result in a small degree of less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed viaduct in NPPF terms.

There will be significant positive impacts to the viaduct itself in terms of its long-term survival and ongoing use as a viaduct carrying the railway. Assets which remain in regular use are more likely to survive than those which become obsolete. The modernisation of the rail network will ensure long-term maintenance of the viaduct.

5.1.2 Slaithwaite Conservation Area and its listed assets

The works will result in some minor changes to the view of the viaduct from the Conservation Area and from listed buildings within it. However, this will not materially impact their settings or special interest.

5.1.3 Bank Gate Mill

The works will make a minor change to the view of the viaduct from the mill. However, this will not impact the setting and significance of the Mill.

5.2 Mitigation

The detailing and finish of the alterations over Bank Gate will largely replicate the existing stonemasonry finish through the use of natural stone cladding to the external (north) side of the precast reinforced concrete parapet units.

New downpipes on the south elevation will ensure adequate drainage of the structure following its refurbishment and have been designed to avoid interference with the OLE portal fixing brackets. These downpipes are specified to be cast iron to preserve and enhance the character of the listed viaduct and mitigate their impact.

5.3 Public Benefits

In the case of a working structure such as this, unknowingly used by thousands of people every day, its survival is of great public benefit, as is maintenance to the structure which ensures the structure's ongoing use. This is in line with the heritage benefit included in PPG

paragraph 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723, of “securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation”.

The wider public benefits which will result from the electrification of the line are considerable, and have been outlined in the cover letter, submitted with this application.

The proposed works enable the structure to remain in its optimal viable use consistent with its conservation as a railway viaduct. This is in the public benefit as it will allow the continued appreciation of the architectural and historic special interest of the heritage asset by the public. The proposed works are therefore compliant with PPG paragraph 020, NPPF paragraph 215, and Local Plan Policy LP35. Approval of this application would be consistent with decisions taken in respect of other listed viaducts on the W3/4 sections of TRU in Kirklees Council's jurisdiction, namely at Huddersfield, Dewsbury, and Union Mill (Batley) viaducts.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The TRU project will bring benefits to the transport network in the form of faster and more energy efficient trains and will contribute to the UK Government's climate change targets. To facilitate this, works are required to the historic railway network, including physical works to a number of designated structures. Works to Slaithwaite Viaduct fall within these required works.

The Trans-Pennine route has evolved from an historic network of railways. It represents a significant heritage asset in its own right. Its significance is increased by the involvement of pioneering railway engineers including Alfred Jee, responsible for designing many of the structures along this section of the route.

In this case, the installation of OLE portals and alterations to the viaduct over Bank Gate constitutes a small degree of less than substantial level of harm to the significance of the listed asset. The proposals will not result in harm to the significance of Bank Gate Mill, Slaithwaite Conservation Area or the listed assets within it.

The small level of less than substantial harm that would be caused to the significance of the listed viaduct by these proposals should be weighed against the public benefits delivered by the TRU project. NPPF paragraph 215 should therefore be considered in weighing this public benefit.

In accordance with the NPPF paragraph 213, justification for this less than substantial harm has also been set out within this heritage statement, with the alterations being necessary to

achieve electrification of the line, and the ongoing use of the listed structure as a railway viaduct.

The heritage benefits of retaining the optimal viable use for the structure as a railway viaduct, as described in PPG paragraph 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723 and by NPPF paragraph 215 have also been set out in this heritage statement.

The Kirklees Development Plan consists of the Kirklees Local Plan (Adopted 2019) and, in applicable areas, the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan is not applicable to this site. The tests set out in Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan regarding the historic environment are also considered to have been met. The proposals also align with Policy LP19 of the Kirklees Local Plan.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - LISTING DESCRIPTION TEXT

Slaithwaite Viaduct

Listed on the National Heritage List for England. **Search over 400,000 listed places**

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>)

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1224049**

Date first listed: **11-Jul-1985**

List Entry Name: **Slaithwaite Viaduct**

Statutory Address 1: **SLAITHWAITE VIADUCT**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](#)

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

[Corrections and minor amendments](#)

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

Location

Statutory Address: **SLAITHWAITE VIADUCT**

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

District: **Kirklees (Metropolitan Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **SE 07721 14054**

Details

SE 01 SE SLAITHWAITE

5/448 Slaithwaite Viaduct

-

- II

Built in two halves, c.1845 and c.1886. Date on arch keystone: WS 1886. Railway viaduct. Large coursed slightly rock-faced stone. Some rusticated and some ashlar dressings. Ashlar string course at springing of

arches. 15 semicircular arches built in two halves, each carrying two tracks. Also, smaller arch at west end. Southern half has stone vaults. Northern half has brick vaults. Piers are slightly battered. Three piers at each end. Continuous parapet on ashlar string course, with ashlar coping. Most westerly arch (north side only) has date and inscription on keystone: WS 1886

Listing NGR: SE0772114054

Legacy

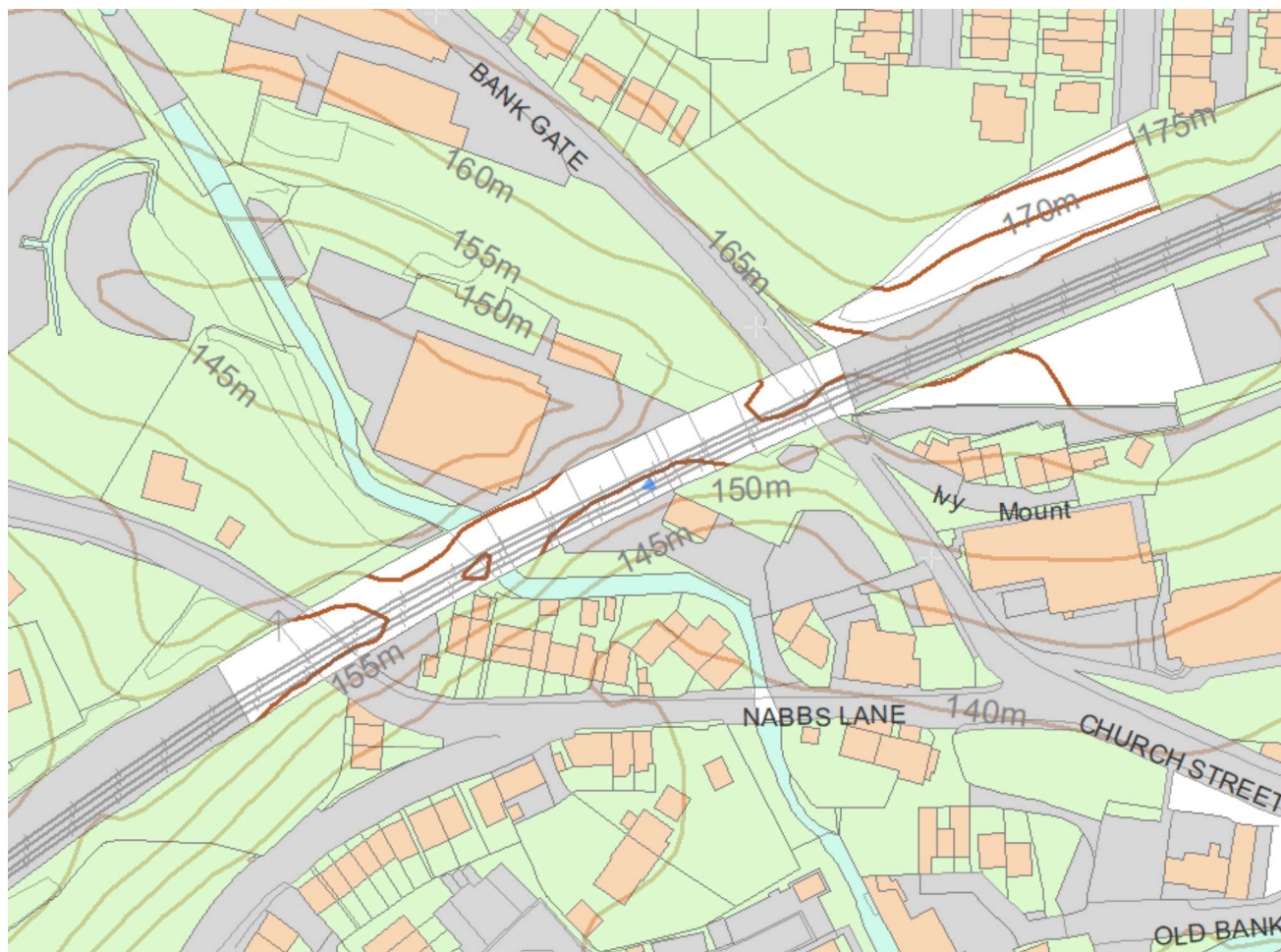
The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **420016**

Legacy System: **LBS**

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. This copy shows the entry on 14-May-2026 at 11:30:36.

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End of official list entry

APPENDIX B – EXTRACT FROM; TRANSPENNINE ROUTE STATEMENT OF HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE: WEST OF LEEDS (JANUARY 2017 DRAFT), ALAN BAXTER AND ASSOCIATES

Structure Number: MVL3/61

Slaithwaite Viaduct

ELR:	MVL3
Miles:	21
Chains:	7
Easting:	407721
Northing:	414054
LPA:	Kirklees Council
Designation:	Listed Grade II and in a Conservation Area
List Entry Number:	1224049
Date of Designation:	11/07/1985
Structure Type:	Viaduct
Design Type:	Arch - semi-circular
Primary Material:	Shale Grit/Kinderscout Grit/Millstone Grit
Secondary Material(s):	Brick
Construction date:	Huddersfield & Manchester Railway (1845-9)
Major alteration phase(s):	London & North Western Railway (1886)



Description of structure:

Slaithwaite Viaduct consists of 15 semi-circular arches built in two halves, each carrying two tracks. Constructed as part of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway (1845-9), it was then widened c.1886. The structure is constructed of large coursed slightly rock-faced stone, with some rusticated and some ashlar dressings. Ashlar string course at springing of arches. Also, smaller arch at west end. Southern half has stone vaults. Northern half has brick vaults. Piers are slightly battered. Three piers at each end. Continuous parapet on ashlar string course, with ashlar coping. Most westerly arch (north side only) has date and inscription on keystone 'WS 1886'.

Assessment of Significance:

This fine, curving viaduct dominates the village of Slaithwaite through which it passes. It may possess special interest for the following reasons: it was designed by A.S. Jee for the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway. Its construction date of 1849 places it within the heroic phase of railway development, and despite its alteration it has group value as part of a sequence of similar bridges.

Significance Rating:

Special interest

Sources:

NR examination report, site visit, Biddle, list description



 **TRANSPENNINE
ROUTE UPGRADE**

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