

Consultation response - 23/04387/LI - Railway Bridge HUL4/21 Austhorpe Lane, Crossgates, Leeds

This application relates to proposed works to electrify the Leeds to Selby Railway line which will impact on some heritage assets along the route. The proposed electrification of this line is a major construction exercise and there has been a programme of assessment of the impact of the proposed works on the heritage of the line and consultation between Network Rail, Historic England and the Local planning authority (Leeds City Council). In September 2014 English Heritage (EH) conducted a designation survey of all the undesignated railway structures on the railway line between Leeds and Selby. The application has been supported by documentation including a general report on the railways historic significance and a Heritage Statement specific to the bridges that will be impacted. Network Rail, 2014. *NTP-E Statement of History and Significance: East of Leeds Revised Draft Prepared for Network Rail*

Network Rail, 2023. *The Network Rail (Leeds To Micklefield Improvements) Order, Heritage Assessment For Roman Ridge Road Bridge, (HUL4/14), Brady Farm Bridge (HUL4/15) and Austhorpe Lane Bridge (HUL4/21)*

These reports provide details on the heritage assets along the line and details on the bridges that will be impacted by the development. The majority of the bridges will not be significantly impacted by the proposed works but 4 bridges will suffer significant impact

The original Leeds to Selby Railway is one of the earliest railways in the world. Built shortly after the completion of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. The Leeds and Selby was constructed to provide improved connections from Leeds to the port of Selby as the Leeds Textile industry grew in the early 19th Century. This railway was also envisaged as a section of a Liverpool to Hull Railway that was being proposed at the time. The Leeds and Selby Railway Act received royal assent in 1830 and James Walker was appointed the resident Engineer for the lines construction. In total 43 bridges were originally built along the full length of the line, of which 13 semi-elliptical 'basket' arch bridges survive. These bridges are a unique features of the Leeds to the Leeds to Selby line.

Austhorpe Lane Railway Bridge

The Austhorpe Lane Railway Overbridge dates from 1830-34 and is a semi-elliptical 'basket' arch bridge built by James. It is constructed of sandstone ashlar and Bramley Fall gritstone. Single-span carrying a road over the railway which has provision to accommodate four tracks. The bridge is built of squared, coursed and tooled stone blocks. The basket arch of Bramley Fall gritstone has stepped, tooled and inscribed, v-jointed voussiers springing from a wide, horizontally-tooled impost band. The arch soffit is constructed of large, stone blocks. The outer walls of the abutments and wing walls are formed of long, narrow blocks of tooled, v-jointed sandstone ashlar, now weathered. The inner abutment walls are heavily tooled with v-joints. The parapets are of larger blocks of Bramley Fall gritstone with pronounced horizontal tooling and terminate in characteristic oval piers. They are set on square-cut, tooled and inscribed string courses and have asymmetrically-curved coping with horizontal tooling.

The bridge is nationally significant as a Grade II listed building.

Proposed works

For Austhorpe Bridge the proposed works comprise demolition of the bridge and its replacement. This decision is based on the consultation between Network Rail, Historic England and the Local Planning Authority

The demolition of the Austhorpe Lane Overbridge will result in substantial harm to its significance and cause harm to the historic interest of the Leeds to Selby line as a whole. The demolition of the bridge is necessary to allow the TransPennine Route Upgrade which will electrify the route to improve journey times and reduce carbon emissions.

Recommended Course of Action

It is to be regretted that the bridge is identified for proposed demolition but the case made for public good is reasonable and a proposed condition has been included in the planning application that relates to the Bridge.

Schedule of proposed conditions for LBC application PP-12294434 (Re construction of Austhorpe Lane overbridge (HUL4/21) in association with the Network Rail (Leeds to Micklefield Improvements) Order

Condition 4. (Historic Structures Recording) No works of demolition shall take place until an approved methodology for full structure recording including the appropriate level of recording has been approved in writing. Subsequent recording will take place prior to demolition and be deposited with the West Yorkshire Archive Service and West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record.

Reason: In recognition of the architectural and historic significance of the Listed Building and in accordance with Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

As the proposed works include the demolition of the bridge the recommendation for full structure recording is appropriate. This record should include a drawn and photographic record along with a written description of the structure and its relationship to the wider railway.

In addition during the demolition works there will need to be site access and a compound for the contractors demolishing the bridge and installing the new bridge. The impact of the access and the compound on the heritage of the railway and other heritage assets will need to be assessed and a programme of archaeological works undertaken if there is significant archaeology present.

In order to deal with this either the proposed condition should be amended to cover the impact of the compound and access or a second condition should be added to cover the assessment and mitigation of the impact of the access and compound construction.

Recommended Condition

"No development to take place within the area indicated until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological recording. This recording must be carried out by an appropriately qualified and experienced archaeological organisation or consultant, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority."

Or, as an alternative to the above model condition, which was first introduced in 1990, the following condition is suggested by Historic England in their Historic Environment Good Practice Advice, Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment, 2015 paragraph 37:

"No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a written scheme of archaeological investigation (WSI) has been [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and

- The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works
- The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI”

Detail of Archaeological Work

Details of the necessary archaeological work, in the form of a specification, will be provided to the developer, on written request, by the WY Archaeology Advisory Service in our capacity as Leeds Council’s advisors on archaeological matters. The WY Archaeology Advisory Service will also be responsible for monitoring the work of the archaeological contractor commissioned by the developer to undertake this work, on behalf of the Planning Authority. From the 1st of April 2011 in accordance with the agreement of the Council Committee that oversees our work the WY Archaeology Advisory Service will charge the developer for these and concomitant services. Please note that the production of a specification may take up to three working weeks from receipt of a written request. It is in the applicant’s interest that they be made aware of this likely timescale.

The WY Archaeology Advisory Service can also provide a list of archaeological contractors who may be available to tender for the work. In order to aid the developer to meet the requirements of the above condition I would suggest that it might be helpful to add the following as a note to the planning permission:

“For further information please contact: Glyn Davies, West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service: 0113 3782249.”

We would strongly suggest that the developer is advised that a reasonable period of time for the execution of the necessary archaeological work must be allowed for within the overall site timetable. Any commencement of work on site prior to the approval and implementation of an archaeological specification, and/or any failure to schedule work properly that results in inadequate archaeological recording, should be deemed by the Planning Department to be a breach of the planning condition.

Yours

Glyn



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