



Department
for Transport

Restoring Your Railway

Ideas Fund Registration

Registration Form – March 2020

Registration Details	
Proposed Scheme:	Clitheroe to Hellifield
Name of main promoter: (this could be a Local Authority, community group or Local Enterprise Partnership)	Ribble Valley Borough Council
Sponsoring MP (s)	Nigel Evans
Date Submitted:	26 th February 2020

DfT use only:

Date Received		Reference	

Please complete the following:

Scheme Promoter Contact Information	
1.1 Applicant organisation name:	Ribble Valley Borough Council
1.2 Applicant contact name:	Nicola Hopkins
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1.4 Telephone No.:	01200414532
1.5 Address:	Ribble Valley Borough Council, Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 2RA

Brief description of proposed development work
Re-introduce passenger services between Clitheroe and Hellifield and explore options for increasing freight along this route

Project Overview	
2.1 Location	<p>Clitheroe Station, Railway View Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire (Grid Ref: SD 741420)</p> <p>To</p> <p>Hellifield Station, Station Road, Hellifield, Skipton. North Yorks BD23 4HN (Grid Ref: SD 851572)</p> <p>PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PLANS</p>

2.2

Train Service

This project seeks to make increased use of the line between Clitheroe and Hellifield. Currently the line is only used by franchised passenger services on Sundays throughout the year.

The project will evaluate two options for increasing passenger traffic between Clitheroe and Hellifield:

- a. To **extend** the Rochdale - Manchester to Blackburn terminating service to Clitheroe and Hellifield; or
- b. To **introduce a new service** between Preston – Blackburn – Clitheroe and Hellifield.

The line between Clitheroe and Hellifield is mainly used by freight with the exception of franchised passenger services on Sunday and the occasional charter service. The existing franchised passenger service comprise DalesRail which operates during the summer timetable between Blackpool North and Carlisle via Clitheroe and during the winter timetable a service of 2 trains a day operates between Blackpool North/Preston and Hellifield via Clitheroe.

Looking at the proposed services in turn:

Option a:

Extending the Blackburn terminating service to Clitheroe and Hellifield.

This currently operates on an hourly frequency and interworks with the Clitheroe to Manchester/Rochdale via Blackburn service to provide a half hourly frequency between Blackburn and Manchester/Rochdale.

This proposal would extend the service to Clitheroe and Hellifield with at least an hourly service to Clitheroe with extensions to Hellifield at hourly or two hourly frequencies depending on the forecast demand.

The extension to Clitheroe would require one additional DMU and an hourly extension to Hellifield would require at least 2 additional DMUs. Paths for the proposed service exist between Blackburn and Clitheroe/Hellifield although any proposed timetable would need to be validated by Network Rail.

Option b:

This would be a new service and complement the existing hourly Preston to Colne service operating as far as pathing constraints permit on the opposite half hour.

The service would operate at least hourly to Clitheroe with extensions to Hellifield operating at least every two hours.

The service to Clitheroe would require a minimum of 2 additional DMUs and to Hellifield at least 3 additional DMUs.

The exact number of units required would be determined by an evaluation of the service and would depend on pathing, demand etc. The timetable would need to be validated by Network Rail.

In addition, new freight flows could be attracted to the line subject to pathing constraints and the origin and destination of any new flows especially if they need to use the already heavily trafficked West Coast Mainline.

Benefits

The benefits of either passenger service option can be summed up as follows:

- Greater connectivity to Manchester Airport
- Access from Lancashire, Manchester and Bolton to the Yorkshire Dales for tourists, visitors and employment purposes.
- Connecting Settle and Hellifield to Clitheroe, Manchester and Preston for shopping, entertainment and work.
- Connect Lancashire to the London North Eastern Railway to increase accessibility options to London.
- Connect Clitheroe to Skipton and Leeds for leisure, tourism and employment purposes.
- Relieve pressure on the West Coast Mainline by routing freight trains via Clitheroe and Hellifield and along the Settle-Carlisle Line to Carlisle.
- Look at increasing freight opportunities such as an alternative for getting biomass from Liverpool to Drax.

2.3

Infrastructure

The railway between Clitheroe and Hellifield is double track throughout and was recently upgraded as part of the Strategic Freight Network. Intermediate block signals were also installed as part of the project to increase capacity.

For a service to be able to terminate at Hellifield will require the reinstatement of the south facing bay platform. Without this terminating trains need to continue to Settle Junction to enable them to operate back to Clitheroe. This takes up time and cuts into train paths on both the Leeds Morecambe and Settle Carlisle lines. With more intensive services now operating on both lines along with freight traffic this would make timetabling quite problematic.

No estimate has been obtained for this work and will form part of the project development.

In addition, this project will also examine the scope for new or improved park and ride facilities to encourage more people to use the rail service for the main part of their journey.

Another option would be a crossover to enable terminating trains at Clitheroe to cross to the departure platform without the need to go to Horrocksford. This combined with other initiatives could save a DMU and thus provide one of the units required above. No estimate has been obtained for this work and will form part of the project development.

The strategic overview

You should consider the objectives of the re-instatement and why is considered the best way of meeting local transport objectives and addressing transport issues in the area. This should be short – not a full repeat of the document in the formal submission.

Please also consider if light rail, trams or bus routes might be a more appropriate way of restoring local connections.

Strategic Case	
<p>3.1 Current transport issues and challenges</p>	<p>Since 2008 nearly 3000 new homes have been constructed within the Ribble Valley with a further 3500+ with planning permission. The Borough’s infrastructure requirements have not matched the speed of house building and this issue urgently needs to be addressed.</p> <p>At the time of the Beeching cuts there was the option to travel by bus. However, over the last few years there have been significant cuts to the bus network in rural areas like the Ribble Valley reducing transport choices.</p> <p>As a consequence, the rail line provides a strategic link in the Ribble Valley since regular passenger services were restored between Blackburn and Clitheroe in 1994. This proposal seeks to extend this benefit throughout the Ribble Valley by providing a service between Clitheroe and Hellifield. The existing service between Clitheroe and Blackburn attracts circa 450,000 passengers per annum. The link to Bolton and Manchester is particularly important in attracting commuters. At the same scholars use the service to access schools in Clitheroe.</p> <p>Residents within the Borough seeking further education opportunities have to travel outside the Borough due to the lack of such facilities within the Borough. Businesses within the Borough struggle to attract highly educated employees. Greater accessibility to the north west’s further education facilities would enable the residents to continue to live and work in the Borough-retaining a highly skilled workforce within the area.</p> <p>The Ribble Valley is the largest Borough in Lancashire covering 583 square kilometres with the smallest population. The dispersed nature of our settlements means that the lack of public transport opportunities severely reduces our resident’s ability to access employment, education and the wider area.</p>

	Additionally the lack of public transport is hindering the ability of our businesses to attract staff, including in the lower paid positions. The Ribble Valley has a large hospitality sector which is severely restricted in respect of the staff it can attract due to the limited transport options.
3.2 Target population	<p>Tourists: The Ribble Valley attracted over four million last year which generated over £260m for the Ribble Valley economy. Greater linkages with the wider area including the Yorkshire Dales would increase the attractiveness of the wider area.</p> <p>Commuters: increasing accessibility to the city regions of Preston and Manchester. Journeys to the Leeds City Region would be reduced.</p> <p>Residents: increasing access to wider employment, education and leisure options</p> <p>Scholars: enabling train travel to be a viable option for students travelling around and out of the Borough</p>
3.3 Local Support / Promoter	Ribble Valley Borough Council Community Rail Lancashire Nigel Evans MP Lancashire County Council

Other useful information to support the Strategic Case

Further Rail Improvements

Ribble Valley Borough Council are investigating other rail improvements which would complement the opening of the Clitheroe to Hellifield line to passengers. The Council have met with representatives from Network Rail, Northern Rail, Transport for the North and Lancashire County to begin investigations into the following improvements:

1. **Provide a half hourly service from Clitheroe to Manchester**- which aligns with Transport for the North's aspirations and should include decreased journey times for this route increasing its attractiveness for commuters.
2. **Provide a direct service from Clitheroe to Preston**- the infrastructure exists however the requirement to change at Blackburn increases journey times and reduces the attractiveness of this as an option for commuters and residents.

It is intended that these improvements will be developed concurrently with the works to investigate the reintroduction of the Clitheroe to Hellifield route.

Further Potential Opportunities

Opening up the line to passenger services could result in further rail enhancements along the route. A number of stations along the line were closed as a result of the Beeching Report including:

- **Chatburn Railway Station.** The line was doubled up from 1872 to 1874, and work on the line onwards towards Gisburn and Hellifield began in 1874. The station closed to passengers in 1962.
- **Gisburn railway station** served the small village of Gisburn-the station closed to passengers in September 1962 when passenger trains were withdrawn from the route.

However it is noted that these would be very costly projects and would need to be considered in detail from a cost/ benefit perspective. For example the Chatburn station would need to be relocated due to site constraints.

The intention would be to reintroduce passenger services and let the service bed in before any future such projects are considered.

Other useful information

Clitheroe Train Station

The original station opened on 22 June 1850. It was replaced in 1893/4 by another approximately 200m to the north. The station closed to normal services on 10 September 1962 but remained in use for special services until 7 February 1971. The special services resumed on 14 May 1990, and the station was fully reopened on 29 May 1994, when passenger services began again from Blackburn.

The line from here continues northwards towards Hellifield. Terminating trains from the Blackburn direction run empty up to Horrocksford Junction to the north (where the former Ribble Cement (now Hansons) factory branch diverges from the main line) and use the crossover there to reverse and change lines prior to returning to the station.

The station is an award-winning bus and train transport interchange. The bus station, known as the Clitheroe Interchange, is the terminus for bus connections bringing passengers from towns and villages in the Ribble Valley area to the train service. The Ribble Valley Line is a community railway line.

Hellifield Train Station

The station is 36.25 miles north west of Leeds on the Leeds to Morecambe Line towards Carlisle and Morecambe. The Ribble Valley Line from Blackburn also meets the Leeds to Morecambe Line at Hellifield.

The first Hellifield station was opened by the “Little” North Western Railway in 1849. It was a modest structure sited 400 yards to the south of the present one. A much larger replacement (the current station) was built by the Midland Railway and opened on 1 June 1880, immediately to the north of the junction of the line from Leeds and the newly completed Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway route from Blackburn via Clitheroe. It soon became a busy junction (as it was now located on the Midland Railway’s main line from London to Scotland), with trains going to:

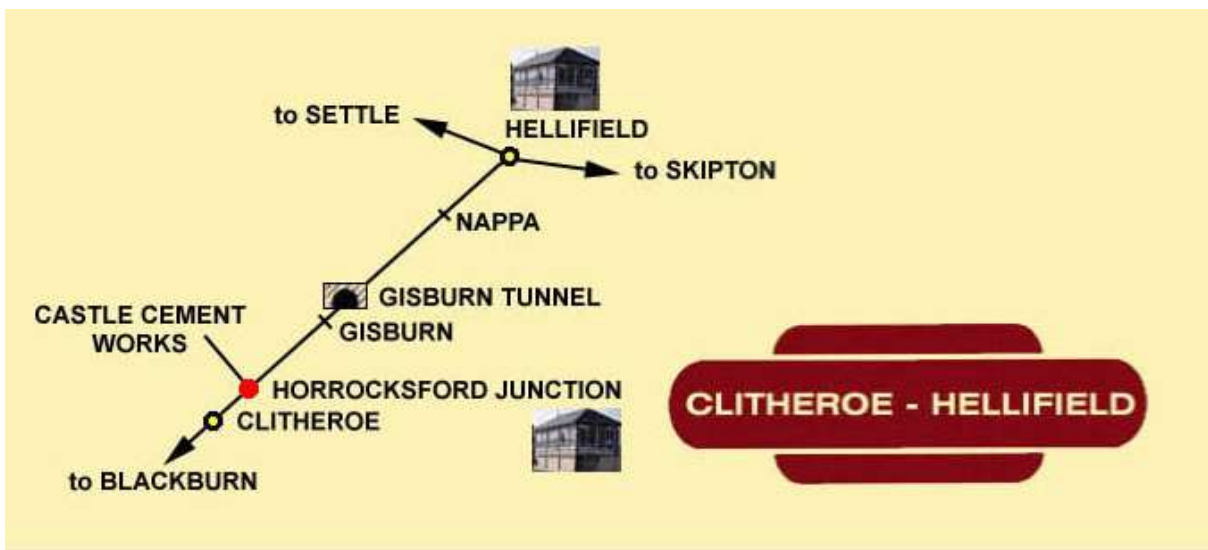
Clitheroe, Skipton, Leeds, Blackburn, Settle, Carlisle, Manchester & Morecambe. It was also the location of a busy locomotive depot and a large goods yard.

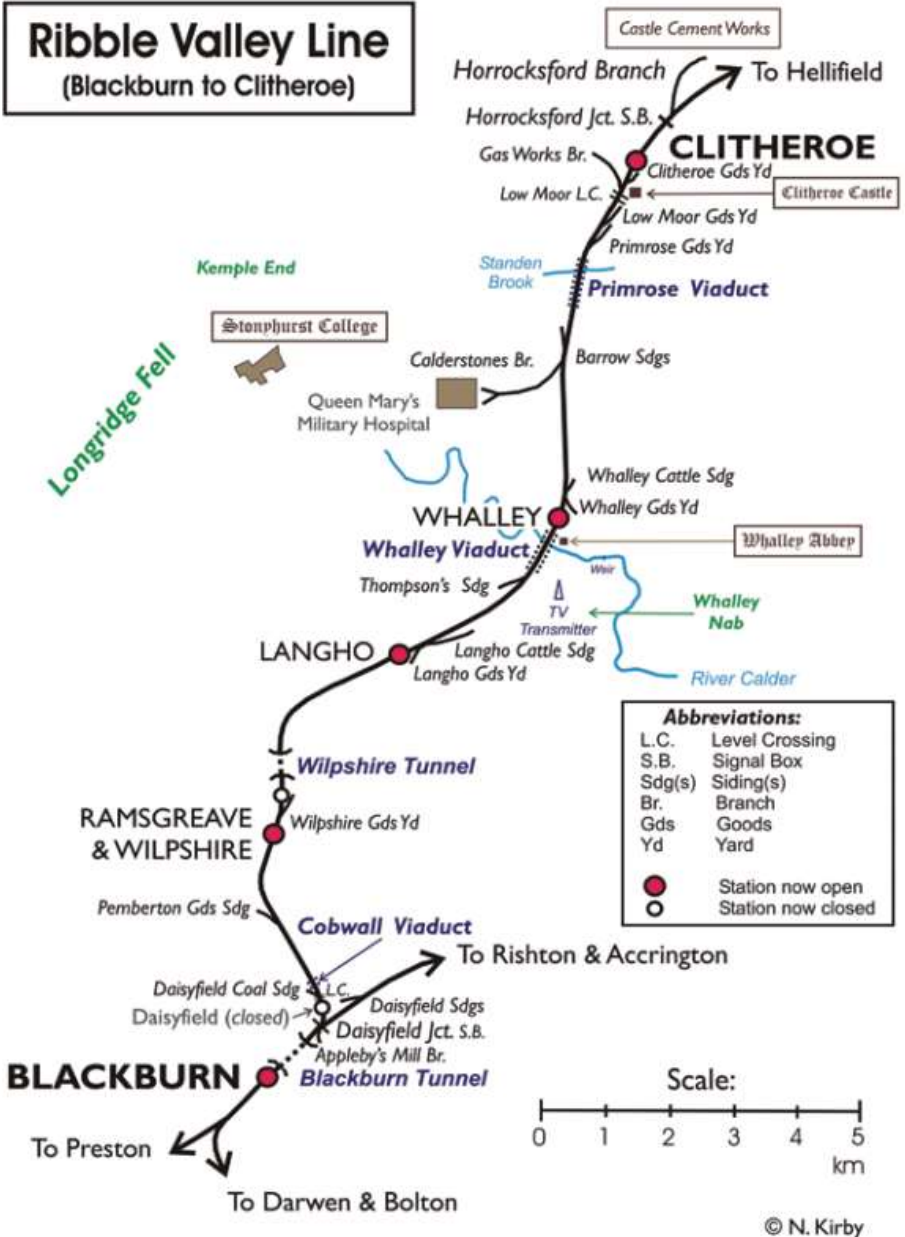
The line from Blackburn had its passenger service withdrawn on 10 September 1962, but remains open for freight and periodic diversions when the West Coast main line is closed north of Preston for engineering work. The adjacent locomotive shed closed the following year and local trains from the station to Carlisle ended in May 1970, although it continued to be served by expresses to and from Glasgow until 1975. Thereafter it was downgraded to unstaffed halt status.

Please return this completed form along with supporting information to the following e-mail address: Restoringyourrailway@dft.gov.uk

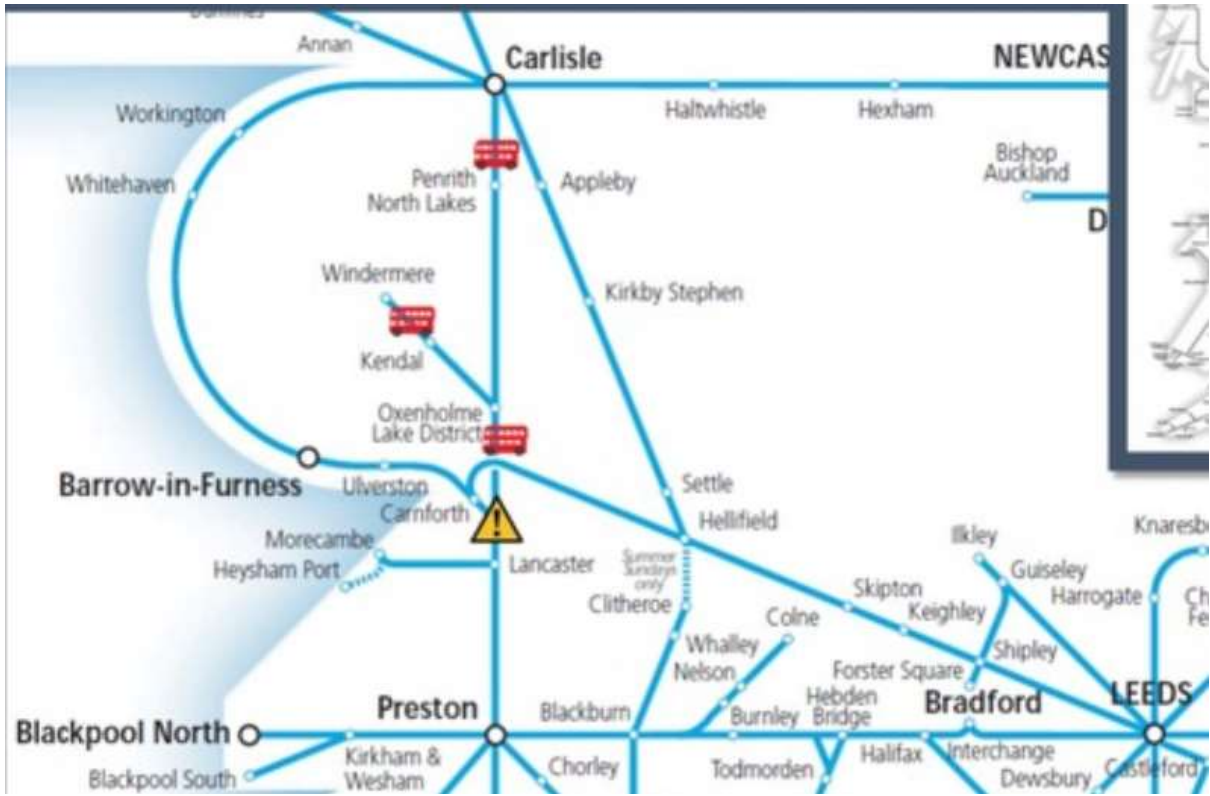


Map of Route





Ribble Valley Line



Leeds to Carlisle including section of line the subject of this bid