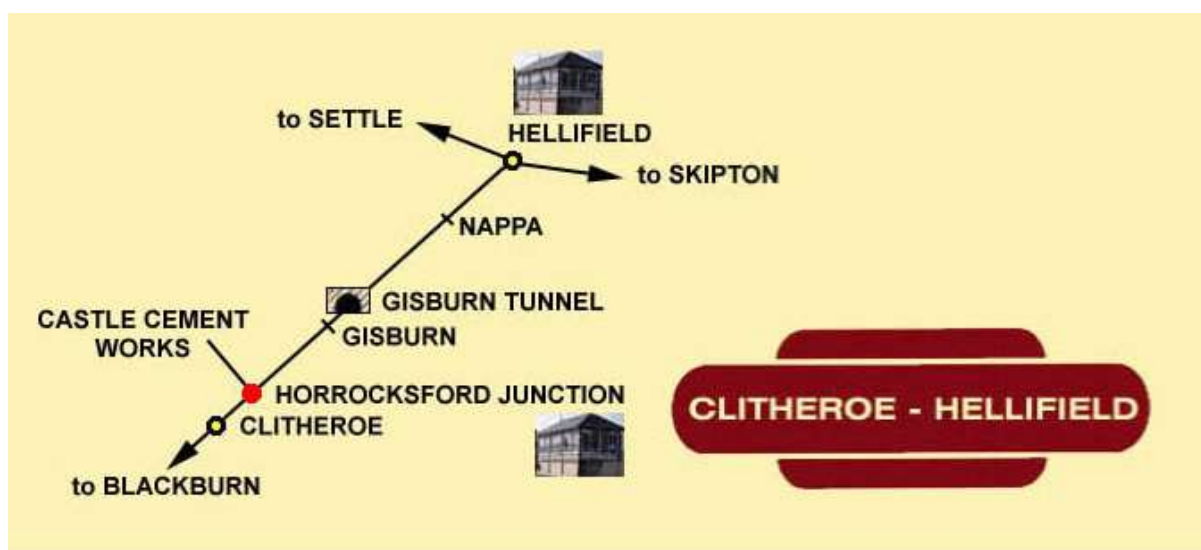


Restoring Your Railway Fund

Ideas Fund

March 2020



Ribble Valley
Borough Council
ribblevalley.gov.uk

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THE OPPORTUNITY

The Ribble Valley is the largest Borough in Lancashire, covering 583 square kilometres, with a growing population. The Council considers that without public transport improvements the residents ability to access employment, education and the wider area is severely hindered with over-reliance on the car.

This is exasperated by the fact that since 2008 nearly 3000 new homes have been constructed within the Ribble Valley with a further 3500+ with planning permission.

Taking into account the above factors Ribble Valley Borough Council have identified key opportunities for restoring lost rail connections to communities and we believe that our proposals accord with the aspirations of the fund and can be delivered quickly and easily whilst significantly enhancing access to opportunities within and around the Ribble Valley and the North West.

Additionally the Ribble Valley attracted over four million tourist visitors 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 as a tourist destination in accordance with the socio-economic aspirations of the fund.

SPONSORSHIP AND PROMOTION

Nigel Evans MP has been the Member of Parliament for the Ribble Valley since 1992. Mr Evans is fully supportive of the Council's proposals to improve rail services into and out of the Borough and submitted the attached Expression of Interest Registration Form, in support of the Council's proposals, on 26th February 2020 (please see Appendix 1).

Ribble Valley Borough Council is the lead promoter for the proposed improvements working with the following key partners:

- Lancashire County Council
- Lancashire LEP
- Community Rail Lancashire
- Network Rail
- Transport for the North
- Transport for Greater Manchester
- Northern Trains Ltd.
- North Yorkshire County Council

Various letter of support for the proposals are attached at Appendix 1

The following possible future partners have also been identified to support the project:

- Leeds – Lancaster – Morecambe Community Rail Partnership
- Settle and Carlisle Development Company
- Rail Freight companies
- Charter Train Operator West Coast Railways

HISTORY

The original train station serving Clitheroe town centre opened in June 1850 as part of the extension of the rail network in East Lancashire between Blackburn and Chatburn. By 1893/4 this was replaced by another station building approximately 200m to the north. Passenger and goods trains would serve the town from this station for a number of years until normal services ceased on 10 September 1962, although the line remained in use for special services until 7 February 1971.

Clitheroe station re-opened for special DalesRail services in 1978 at a cost of £2,800. In 1993 Clitheroe station was refurbished at a cost of £170,000, (largely met by Lancashire County Council) in advance of train services from Manchester being restored north of Blackburn to serve the Ribble Valley following years of local campaigning. On 30th May 1994, after a gap of 32 years, a regular train service was restored between Blackburn and Clitheroe calling at new or refurbished stations at Ramsgreave & Wilpshire, Langho and Whalley. Today there is generally an hourly service daily from Clitheroe to Rochdale via Blackburn and Manchester Victoria with some extra trains during weekday peak hours. Used by hundreds of commuters and leisure travellers every day this inter-urban line passes through some of the most scenic parts of Lancashire and forms a vital transport corridor supporting local economic and social objectives.

In 2000 Clitheroe station formed the heart of the award winning Clitheroe Interchange - supporting the terminus for bus connections bringing passengers from towns and villages in the Ribble Valley area to the train service to Blackburn, Manchester and beyond.

In March 2007 the service from Clitheroe to Manchester was designated by the Department for Transport as a community rail service. A Community Rail Partnership was subsequently formed and this is now managed by Community Rail Lancashire whose work with local schools, businesses and the community is further supported by volunteers of the Ribble Valley Rail User Group.

Whilst passenger demand for rail services on the Ribble Valley line have continued to increase, unfortunately, due to funding constraints the ticket office at Clitheroe Interchange, which was managed by Lancashire County Council, was closed in February 2020. However, access to the station platforms, ticket vending machine and shelters remains open to the general public.

North of Clitheroe the Ribble Valley line continues towards Hellifield. Terminating trains from the Manchester 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.

At Hellifield the Ribble Valley Line joins the Leeds to Morecambe Line. There are daily services from Hellifield to Leeds, Carlisle and Lancaster. There are fourteen services southbound on weekdays and fifteen on Saturdays (of which one runs only to Skipton). Northbound there are eight trains each trains to Lancaster and to Carlisle plus one evening service to Ribbleshead – these run about every two hours. Five of the Lancaster trains run through to Morecambe. On Sundays there are six trains to Carlisle, five to Lancaster and eleven to Leeds, one of which continues to Nottingham.

Currently the only direct rail service from the Ribble Valley to Hellifield and the Settle Carlisle line is provided by DalesRail. This service is operated by Northern and supported by Community Rail Lancashire and operates between Blackpool North and Carlisle via Clitheroe and the Settle Carlisle line. In 2019 it operated on 17 Sundays, provided 75 guided walks and carried nearly 2000 passengers. Most of these alighted at destinations in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Eden Valley or through to Carlisle. During the winter timetable period a service operates between Blackpool North/Preston and Hellifield via Clitheroe providing connections onto the Settle Carlisle line. For 2020 Community Rail Lancashire is extending the reach of DalesRail and will be supporting bus links from Kirkby Stephen to Ribbleshead via Swaledale and Settle to Malham. It is anticipated this will grow the market by a further 10% and is evidence of what can be done to provide car free access to this

sensitive area. This project is looking to expand this even further by providing more frequent services and from a wider catchment area.

Both the above services formed part of the train service requirement previously operated by Arriva Rail North Ltd (Northern) and it is assumed will continue to be operated by Northern Trains Ltd.

IDEAS

This project seeks to make increased use of the line, and also reinstate rail connectivity north of Clitheroe to Hellifield. As previously noted the only passenger services to use the line between Clitheroe and Hellifield operate on Sundays. These are part of the train service requirement now operated by Northern Trains Ltd.

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

1. To extend the Rochdale - Manchester - Blackburn terminating service to Clitheroe and onto Hellifield; or
2. To introduce a new service between Preston – Blackburn – Clitheroe and Hellifield. This service would also complement the existing Preston to Colne all stations service between Preston and Blackburn; or
3. To extend services beyond Hellifield to Carlisle.

To successfully deliver the above project the following complementary improvements are also proposed:

1. Extend the half hourly service from Manchester to Blackburn through to Clitheroe;
2. Provide a direct service between Clitheroe and Preston to support greater connectivity to West Coast Main Line services and in the future HS2 services, as well as employment, training, education and leisure opportunities in Central Lancashire.

The Council consider that such improvements will support economic growth in the Borough and the wider region through:

1. Connecting People: creating faster transport connections to improve job opportunities, to give access to education, leisure activities and to support tourism.
2. Connecting Businesses: improving national and international connections in, out and across the region.
3. Moving Goods: improving links across the north to enable freight and goods to move efficiently.

STRATEGIC CASE

OVERVIEW

The various improvements which will be included within the project have been identified previously as options for improving rail services and connectivity in the north. It is considered that the work done to date demonstrates that the ideas included within this project are realistic and with the development of a suitable business case could result in a 'quick win' for rail improvements.

RIBBLE VALLEY ADOPTED CORE STRATEGY 2014

The Council's Adopted Development Plan supports sustainable forms of development and transport opportunities. The Plan was adopted in 2014 and includes the following Policies which support the ideas for rail improvements included within this bid:

KEY STATEMENT DM12: TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS

New development should be located to minimise the need to travel....In general, schemes offering opportunities for more sustainable means of transport and sustainable travel improvements will be supported.

Sites for potential future railway stations at Chatburn and Gisburn will be protected from inappropriate development.

POLICY DMG3: TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY

.... all major proposals should offer opportunities for increased use of, or the improved provision of, bus and rail facilities.

..... the council will protect land currently identified on the proposals map from inappropriate development that may be required for the opening of stations at gisburn and chatburn....

...the council will resist development that will result in the loss of opportunities to transport freight by rail.

RIBBLE VALLEY HOUSING AND ECONOMIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2019 (SHENA)

The Council's Development Plan was adopted over 5 years ago now and as such the Council are currently undertaking an update to the plan. Last year the Council commissioned a SHENA to support its emerging update to the Local Plan which objectively identified the intrinsic strengths of the Ribble Valley economy, including the borough's strategic location; the established manufacturing base; the growing aerospace cluster, anchored by BAE Systems; the growing visitor economy; and the buoyant and growing economy, in terms of its output.

It also identified opportunities to:

- Support growth and investment in highly productive sectors;
- Capitalise on a growing aerospace industry, and its advanced manufacturing supply chain;
- Grow the local supply chain;
- Develop sectors with growth potential;
- Enable more business start-ups;
- Grow the local skills base; and
- Directly or indirectly benefit from investment in the Northern Powerhouse

It is clear that with improved rail and transport links the Borough's economic base could be strengthened.

INCREASING PASSENGER TRAFFIC BETWEEN CLITHEROE AND HELLIFIELD

The track from Clitheroe to Hellifield already exists but it is not used to its full capacity and could quickly and easily be utilised to restore lost rail connections to communities in Lancashire and Yorkshire. This route will directly link Lancashire to Yorkshire and would generate significant tourism opportunities. The following documents/ studies support the above improvement which could be secured with minimal infrastructure intervention in a relatively short period of time.

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK: TRENDS IN TOURISM IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES 2016 TO 2017

Services to Hellifield will provide the opportunity to connect into the Leeds Settle Carlisle and Leeds Bentham Morecambe lines. Both lines serve the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP) and thus residents in the Ribble Valley and the North West will have improved access to this major attraction using a sustainable form of transport. Complementing bus links provided by Northern and the Settle Carlisle Partnership enable visitors to reach points in the National Park but some distance from the rail lines a good example being the link from Garsdale to Hawes. The 2017 visitor survey showed that only 1% of visitors to the travelled by rail with over 87% travelling by car. Improving rail services to the National Park will ensure that more people are able to use rail as an alternative means of accessing the National Park and thus reduce congestion on often narrow roads.

Extract from Trends in Tourism in the Yorkshire Dales 2016 to 2017:

“Trends for the Yorkshire Dales National Park In 2017, the Yorkshire Dales National Park received 3.85 million visitors, made up of 3.3 million day trippers and 0.52 million overnight visitors. Between them, day and staying visitors combined to produce 5.06 million tourist days. These visitors brought in £263 million to the region's economy and provided employment for 3,623 full time equivalent (FTE) posts. Between 2016 and 2017, there was an increase of 1.7% in tourist days, 2.4% in tourist numbers, and 4.5% in tourism revenue. This builds on increases in both 2013 and 2014 followed by the slight dip in 2015. This is a very positive picture with good levels of growth.”

It is clear that by expanding the reach of the National Park to the Ribble Valley and North West it will help support the local businesses that rely on visitors.

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019 – 2024

The Plan includes a series of objectives. Of relevance to this project are objectives E3 and E5 in the Plan as set out below:

Objective E3: Promote the National Park as a leading sustainable tourism destination, including enhancing the locations of four National Park Centres to create 'visitor hubs' that promote local distinctiveness and assist destination promotion for local activities, accommodation, food and itineraries.

Objective E5: Support the development of rail services and related economic uses along the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle Railway, and measures to reinstate other lines to and within the National Park, including the reinstatement of the Wensleydale Railway to Garsdale, starting with the stretch from Redmire to Aysgarth by 2024.

This clearly shows that the Yorkshire Dales National Park sees the development of rail services as part of achieving its sustainability objectives which can only be enhanced by increasing connectivity at Hellifield with the Ribble Valley line and the development of additional through services from the Ribble Valley, Lancashire and Greater Manchester onto the Settle Carlisle line.

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL A STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PROSPECTUS FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE

The Plan identifies improvements to east-west connectivity as a priority. Improving these transport links and the east – west connectivity will both boost the local economies of these regions and contribute towards the vision of a single Northern economy.

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2016-2045

The Plan identifies the aspiration to improve east-west connectivity including cross Pennine connectivity.

CRAVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN

The current Local Plan was adopted on the 12th November 2019.

Policy INF7 states, inter alia, that

Working in partnership with the local highway authority, other authorities, local enterprise partnerships, transport providers, developers and local groups to

- i. promote a sustainable and improved transport system which is safe, reliable, and convenient,
- ii. improve transport connectivity with the rest of North Yorkshire, the wider Leeds City Region, Lancashire, Cumbria and Greater Manchester

The policies of Craven District support the development of rail services to/from the area and are in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. This is no more clearly stated than in paragraph 8.60 of the Plan which says that:

The Council will continue to work closely with all relevant stakeholders to maximise opportunities to travel by non-car modes of transport and secure a safe and efficient transport network for the benefit of local and regional businesses, tourism and the community as a whole.

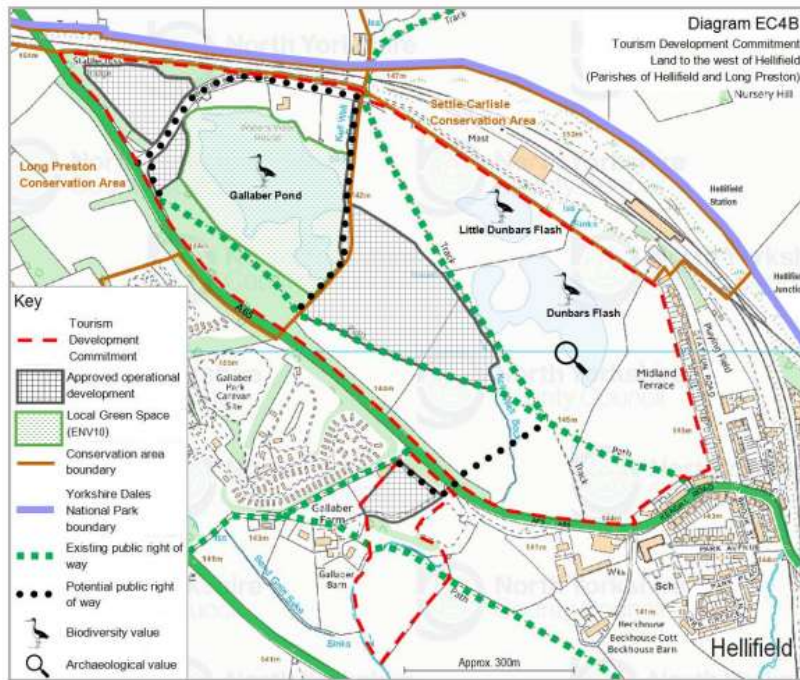
Policy EC4: TOURISM, states, inter alia, that:

Tourism will grow in a sustainable way, so that it helps to improve the economy, environment and quality of life. Such growth will be achieved by:.....

g) Supporting, in principle, proposals for tourism development and for achieving synergies of co-location, in the following key locations for tourism development identified on the policies map:.....

- Hellifield – railway station area

Policy EC4B: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT AT HELLIFIELD, supports alternative sustainable tourism development will be supported on land at Hellifield (see below diagram). This land benefits from extant planning permission for construction of a rural environmental centre comprising tourism, exhibition, training, equestrian and livestock buildings, a hotel and nature conservation area. The land is designated as a Tourism Development Commitment within the Adopted Local Plan which recognises the extent of operational development already approved and sets out the Council's approach to proposals for alternative development. This policy seeks to promote sustainable tourism which is clearly linked to the relationship of the designation and the railway station and the Plan notes that in this key location, appropriate proposals to develop facilities and services and to enhance linkages and relationships with the surrounding area will be supported in principle.



ASSESSMENT OF THE MARKET POTENTIAL FOR REGULAR SERVICES BETWEEN GREATER MANCHESTER AND LANCASHIRE AND THE SETTLE CARLISLE LINE VIA CLITHEROE (1996)

Notwithstanding the age of this study the conclusions do demonstrate the following in support of the proposed projects:

- The phase one results suggest that more regular services from the Lancashire and Greater Manchester areas may appeal to a niche market - 4.2% of respondents are travelling from these areas some already using rail. An analysis of journey purpose for these respondents' shows a high proportion making leisure trips either for sightseeing or walking purposes. None of these respondents gave 'visiting friends and relations' as a reason for making the journey.
- The results suggested the need for a service, suitable for a similar leisure market as that served by the existing DalesRail service.
- The DalesRail service has demonstrated it is successful enough to warrant an examination of the potential for an enhanced service, perhaps extending to run on a Saturday as well as a Sunday. This view is supported by the high percentage of DalesRail passengers (34%) travelling from areas such as Preston and Blackburn, compared with only 15% of 'non rail' respondents.
- There appears to be no major infrastructure investment required in order to run a service along the proposed route.

The conclusions of this assessment were that there was an opportunity to develop DalesRail from Greater Manchester and Lancashire on more days of the week building on the leisure market and enabling more tourists to travel around the area.

EXTEND THE HALF HOURLY SERVICE FROM MANCHESTER TO BLACKBURN THROUGH TO CLITHEROE

The following documents/ studies support the above improvement which could be secured with minimal infrastructure intervention in a relatively short period of time.

EAST LANCASHIRE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT MASTERPLAN (2014)

Whilst several years old now the Plan identified that there was a need to operate a more reliable half hourly service between Blackburn and Manchester to improve connectivity between the Ribble Valley, Blackburn and Manchester. This would also complement the work already carried out on the Blackburn to Hellifield line and identified that higher speeds are now possible which, if implemented, would reduce journey times for Clitheroe to Manchester passengers.

The Plan identifies the Clitheroe to Manchester Rail Corridor capacity improvements as a priority schemes for infrastructure improvements in Central Lancashire. The Plan identified the following improvements to improve connectivity between the Ribble Valley, Blackburn and Manchester as follows:

- To improve the standard and frequency of rail services between Blackburn and Manchester- the selective double tracking of the railway line between Bolton and Blackburn. The Blackburn to Manchester route is the busiest serving Manchester without a core two trains per hour service. By extending the length of double track railway line, service frequencies will be increased to a half-hourly service throughout the day, with an increased frequency at peak hours. Reliability will also be improved.

At the time the Plan was produced the market study recommendations confirmed that the conditional outputs for East Lancashire should:

- improve the service offering between Clitheroe, Blackburn and Greater Manchester
- improve the service offering between Blackpool, Preston and Leeds and
- improve journey times on rail routes in East Lancashire.

Since this report's publication investment from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and the Lancashire LEP provided the necessary infrastructure to support the introduction of a half hourly service during the inter-peak between Blackburn and Manchester Vic /Rochdale which was introduced in the December 2017 timetable change. Lancashire County Council are currently in the process of drafting the next version of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) which is still in draft form and as such the 2014 masterplan is still the most recent source of information available and is still relevant to transport issues within this part of Lancashire.

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH- A STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PLAN FOR THE NORTH OF ENGLAND (STP)

Transport for the North have produced a Strategic Transport Plan (STP) which makes the case for pan-Northern strategic transport improvements which are needed to support transformational economic growth identified in the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review. The Review highlighted that if the economy of the North is transformed by 2050 we could witness a £100bn increase in GVA and 850,000 additional jobs.

The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review identified four areas where the North is highly skilled and globally competitive. These are called 'prime capabilities' - Advanced Manufacturing, Digital, Energy, Health Innovation.

Having a reliable, resilient transport network for journeys to, from and within the North is essential in supporting economic growth. To plan transport infrastructure to support the Northern Powerhouse, it is important to identify where growth will occur and the impact it will have on our roads, rail, ports and airports.

Transport for the North have identified seven strategic development corridors within the region where transport infrastructure improvements will be focused to improve connectivity within these important

economic centres (Connecting Energy Coasts, West and Wales, Central Pennines, Southern Pennines, North West to Sheffield City Region, East Coast to Scotland, Yorkshire to Scotland).

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH- STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR (SDC)

TfN, through its Strategic Development Corridor (SDC) work, have identified the need to extend the service frequency improvements of the Rochdale/Manchester Victoria to Blackburn service through to Clitheroe. This is endorsed by Lancashire County Council and work is now taking place to update TfN's Investment programme and develop a sequenced pipeline of transport improvements across the North.

An approach to sequencing was agreed at TfN's Partnership Board in January 2020 and an update on the work will be taken to the TfN Partnership Board in the summer.

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH- LONG TERM RAIL STRATEGY (LTRS)

The STP also includes an update to the North's Long Term Rail Strategy (LTRS) which explores the network improvements required to support a growing economy, environmental sustainability and improved quality of life, considering both passenger and freight needs across the region.

The baseline for the Long Term Rail Strategy is the North of England's rail network in 2017. It identifies the network's potential economic, social and environmental benefits, as well as its weaknesses and opportunities. The strategy sets out these weaknesses as a series of 'strategic gaps' – the gaps between the capabilities of the current network and what must be delivered to achieve the vision

The main gaps identified include, amongst other things,

- Poor journey times and low service frequency
- Inadequate integration with other modes of travel
- Services for rural and economically deprived areas which do not always meet local needs
- Capacity and capability constraints for rail freight services
- Restricted uptake of rail freight as a mode of transportation
- Poor attractiveness of rail to passengers, businesses, and freight

The LTRS identifies opportunities to close gaps with connectivity being one of the key themes. Desirable minimum standards have been identified setting out potential targets as follows (the proposed project could contribute to the highlighted standards):

1. All passenger routes to be served by a minimum two trains per hour
2. Long-distance services to achieve average journey speeds of at least 80mph
3. Inter-urban services to achieve average journey speeds of at least 60mph
4. Local and suburban services to achieve average journey speeds of at least 40mph
5. The North's rail network to accommodate the evolving needs of the freight market - supporting longer, heavier trains, increased path availability and enhanced infrastructure, ensuring additional room between freight trains and clearance of structures on the network (also known as gauge clearance)
6. Direct connectivity between economic centres and Manchester Airport
7. Rail to directly serve each of the North's airports, with direct services to economic centres within the airport's catchments
8. Direct connectivity between tourist destinations and economic centres in their catchments
9. Infrastructure to be available to enable a weekday inter-peak level service on Sundays and public holidays
10. Capacity provision aligned to demand patterns during holidays and for events

11. Major ports in the North to be served by a railway that will support movement and future growth of rail freight
12. A 50% improvement in the average speed of freight services by 2028.

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH (TFN) - TRAIN SPEED PILOT

In support of the desirable minimum standards within the LTRS Transport for the North have identified the Clitheroe to Manchester service as one of a small number of services to be included in a pilot scheme to investigate the speeding up of train services. TfN have confirmed that they will be progressing this work as quickly as possible.

BLACKBURN TO MANCHESTER BUSINESS CASE

In 2015 Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council commissioned a Blackburn to Manchester Rail Scheme Business Case funded by the LEP which facilitated a half hourly train service from Manchester to Blackburn.

When the study was undertaken the Ribble Valley Line (from Manchester to Clitheroe) was used by over 1.9m passengers per annum which is considerably heavy relative to service provision. Passenger demand for the service was growing steadily and the study estimated that growth was expected to continue on the line to the extent that by 2024, 78% of the 0800-0859 peak services will exceed capacity. At the time of the study the most obvious method to increase capacity on the line is to increase the number of services per hour. As the half hourly service from Manchester to Blackburn has been in place since 2017 now is the opportune time to investigate an extension to this service to Clitheroe to deal with the increased demand.

PROVIDE A DIRECT SERVICE FROM CLITHEROE TO PRESTON

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH- LONG TERM RAIL STRATEGY (LTRS)

The details are set out above.

LANCASHIRE GROWTH DEAL

The Lancashire Growth Deal is a £320 million allocation from Government's Local Growth Fund, secured by the LEP, which aims to realise the growth potential of the whole of Lancashire, building on key local economic assets including education and research centres, the Enterprise Zone, the Preston-South Ribble-Lancashire City Deal and other high-value business clusters across the county

The LEP state that the deal will help to create up to 11,000 jobs, deliver 3,900 new homes and attract £1.2 billion of new private sector investment to Lancashire.

A number of key priorities are identified, which are generally pan-Lancashire in scope, and are rooted in maximising the area's competitive economic strengths. These include:

- Releasing Growth Potential – through transport improvements to motorway junctions and railway lines as well as building new roads to support job creation and enable the release of more land for homes and businesses;
- Growing the local skills and business base - with a £10m 2015/16 skills allocation, including £400k revenue to support Lancashire's Business Growth Hub; and
- Innovation and Manufacturing Excellence - maximise the economic value of Lancashire's centres of research and innovation excellence and globally competitive business clusters. Such clusters include those within the Lancashire Enterprise Zone, such as BAE Systems' operations at Samlesbury in Ribble Valley.

LEP- PRESTON RAIL STATION HS2 HUB - ASSESSMENT OF WIDER ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Last year the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership commissioned consultants to produce a report to analyse and identify the potential economic benefits that might arise from the transformation of Preston Station in order that it is 'HS2 ready' by 2026.

Whilst there are a number of key issues that need to be addressed in order for Preston Station to become 'HS2 ready' by 2026 it is considered that there is an opportunity in Preston to create a high quality transport hub with enhanced passenger and commercial facilities will enable the station to better serve people and businesses.

The report identified that the Hub has the potential to support benefits throughout Lancashire and across the North West, encouraging economic growth in support of the Government's Industrial Strategy (locally and nationally) whilst stimulating housing and economic activity across a range of 33 locally served stations.

In summary, an HS2 Hub has the potential to generate up to 7,140 net additional Full Time Equivalent jobs by 2050 within Lancashire linked to growth at the HS2 Hub and in and around 33 served stations locally, generating £10.3bn in additional GVA and wider business efficiencies (£5.5bn at present values). This could include major new commercial development and housing at sites in close proximity to the HS2 Hub and within Preston city centre.

CONCLUSION

This bid consists of various improvements and as demonstrated above a lot of background work has already been undertaken which would support this project going forward. The improvements can be undertaken relatively easily and quickly and will support the economy of the wider region.

Increasing passenger traffic between Clitheroe and Hellifield would increase connectivity between Lancashire and Yorkshire with extensive tourism opportunities and the associated economic benefits. This element of the project would accord with the aspirations of North Yorkshire, the Yorkshire Dales, Craven as well as the Ribble Valley.

Investment in the local railway infrastructure opens up the possibility of carrying more local and long distance freight in a more sustainable way, potentially removing more lorry based traffic from local roads.

Extending the half hourly service from Manchester to Blackburn through to Clitheroe would accord with the aspirations of Transport for the North and improve connectivity between Ribble Valley, Blackburn and Manchester.

The provision of a direct service between Clitheroe and Preston to support greater connectivity to West Coast Main Line services and in the future HS2 services, as well as employment, training, education and leisure opportunities in Central Lancashire.

All of the improvements identified have extensive associated socio-economic benefits which accord with the aspirations of the fund.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

BACKGROUND

The Economy within the Borough is thriving. Between 2013 and 2018, the local economy grew by approximately £229.1 million, with this 15.9% rate of growth outstripping that seen in the Functional Economic Market Area, the LEP area, the North and England as a whole. The £172.9 million (37.2%) growth in the output of the manufacturing sector contributed to this significantly, accounting for more than half of overall growth in GVA in the borough. Across the Lancashire LEP area, the economic output from extraction and mining more than doubled over this five year period, with an even greater rate of growth of 320% being estimated for the sector in Ribble Valley.

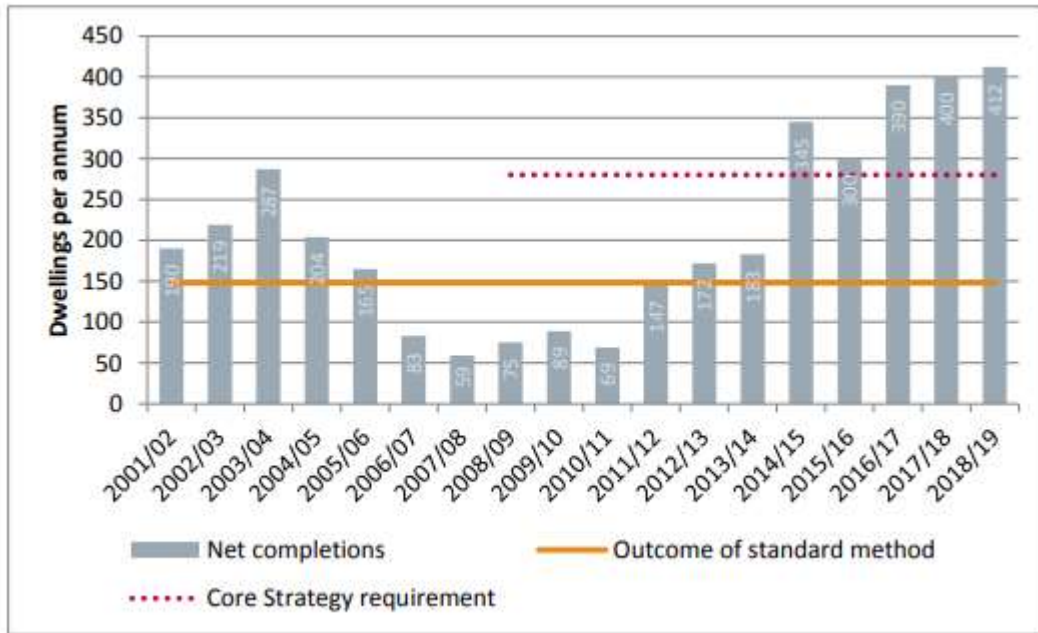
Economic activity and employment are higher in Ribble Valley than in the comparator geographies. Of the borough's economically active residents, the unemployment rate is extremely low. This is supported by ONS claimant count data, which shows that circa 0.5% of Ribble Valley's population are claiming job seekers allowance in March 2018, a rate which is less than half of that which was recorded for all wider geographies.

In May 2018 the Council commissioned an update to its economic evidence base which identified that in the 2 years preceding the study 68% of the businesses surveyed that tried to recruit experienced difficulties. In the context of an ageing workforce, the baseline report equally identified: "...a risk that the labour market will not be of a sufficient scale to support and maximise economic growth. A lack of young and skilled people will also result in businesses finding it increasingly difficult to attract and/or retain the right calibre of staff. As one of the key factors that attracts and retains businesses, ensuring that the full potential of the labour market is realised and the supply of labour is able to meet demand arising from new and growing businesses represents a key issue for future strategy"

This experience has not changed since the survey in 2018. Ribble Valley Borough Council have recently formed a new Economic Partnership with a range of businesses from across the Borough. One of the concerns raised at the partnership meetings is a labour shortage in Ribble Valley which relates to both skilled labour and the employees for the lower paid positions.

HOUSING DELIVERY

Housing delivery in Ribble Valley has consistently exceeded the minimum annual housing need now generated by the standard method (as set out within the 2019 National Planning Policy Framework) over the past seven years. The past five years have seen delivery at an average rate of around 370 dwellings per annum which is more than double the standard method figure, and has provided circa 32% more homes than were planned through the housing requirement of the Adopted Core Strategy. An average of 235 dwellings per annum have been completed since the start of its plan period, in 2008.



Net Housing Completions Relative to Standard Method and Existing Requirement

Ribble Valley’s housing stock numbered 26,650 homes as of 2018, having grown by 1,140 houses (circa 4%) since 2015. This is a higher rate of growth than recorded in Lancashire, the wider North West region and indeed England as a whole.

Analysis shows that Ribble Valley’s housing stock is orientated towards larger, most likely higher-value properties, and that housing delivery over the past three years has continued this trend.

The Borough’s infrastructure requirements have not matched the speed of house building and this issue urgently needs to be addressed. 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 and increasing reliance on the private car.

TRAVEL TO WORK

The location of Ribble Valley and the dispersed nature of the population result in the bisection of Ribble Valley in respect of travel to work area with the neighbouring authorities drawing labour from the Ribble Valley. Suitable transport links are essential to enable people to access employment particularly in a rural borough like the Ribble Valley.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for economic growth within the Borough include the growth of the Northern Powerhouse, with plans for significant investment in transport infrastructure in particular to address this recognised barrier to transformational economic growth.

The following journey and economic opportunities have been identified for each element of the project.

INCREASING PASSENGER TRAFFIC BETWEEN CLITHEROE AND HELLIFIELD

This improvement would assist in contributing to the following desirable minimum standard contained within the Transport for the North Long Term Rail Strategy (LTRS):

- Direct connectivity between economic centres including Manchester Airport
- Direct connectivity between tourist destinations and economic centres in their catchments

It would also support the following Conditional Output contained in the LTRS:

Increase the population within 90 minutes rail journey time of one or more of the North's major rail-connected tourist destinations.

GROW THE VISITOR ECONOMY

The visitor economy is a growing industry and has been identified key strength of the borough. The sector supports significant levels of employment in the accommodation and food sector in particular, with this sector alone accounting for a 14.3% share of all employment in the borough, second only to manufacturing.

One option the project could consider would be a service from Carlisle via the Clitheroe line to Manchester. The ability to offer a direct rail service to Settle and beyond would undoubtedly attract inbound overseas tourists which links to the desirable minimum standard of direct connectivity between tourist destinations and economic centres in their catchments.

The project will explore the option of an extension of the line north of Clitheroe to a more regular pattern than just through the existing seasonal Dales Rail service. Linking Blackburn and Clitheroe direct to Yorkshire Dales and Eden Valley during the week would increase the ability for tourists to travel into the Valley.

The project will investigate options to link the major towns of Bolton (connections in the Wigan/Southport direction and to Manchester Airport) and Blackburn (connections towards Preston and Blackpool) with the market towns and tourist areas along the Settle-Carlisle section of the main line from Leeds to Carlisle.

This project will look at extending services to Hellifield and beyond which will support the aspirations of the Yorkshire Dales National Plan by reducing car based tourism and promoting the National Park as a leading sustainable tourism destination.

In respect of the potential for increased freight usage of this line this is an important route for aggregates to and from the Quarries in the Yorkshire Dales National Park particularly for those on the Settle & Carlisle to access Manchester and the North West. National Park policies are to significantly reduce the number of lorries in the National Park and rail freight is the only answer. Additionally the Rylstone Quarry near Skipton has also been growing in recent years.

EXTEND THE HALF HOURLY SERVICE FROM MANCHESTER TO BLACKBURN THROUGH TO CLITHEROE

The project will work with and develop the pilot scheme currently being undertaken by TfN to speed up services which could facilitate a second train per hour between Blackburn and Clitheroe.

This improvement would assist in contributing to the desirable minimum standards contained within the LTRS and as such improve connectivity are as follows:

- All passenger routes to be served by a minimum two trains per hour
- Local and suburban services to achieve average journey speeds of at least 40mph
- Direct connectivity between economic centres and Manchester

A BUOYANT AND GROWING ECONOMY

Ribble Valley's economic output, measured in GVA, has increased steadily since 1997, and recently at a fast rate than wider comparator areas. It is notable, that the manufacturing sector has contributed significantly to this growth, and in 2018 is forecast to account for 38.2% of the borough's estimated £1.67 billion GVA. Although growing in productivity terms, the economy remains comparatively small in the wider Lancashire context, with the latest forecasts indicating that borough will account for just over 5% of Lancashire's total £31.6 billion GVA output in 2018.

Whilst previous business case work undertaken to provide a 30-minute frequency between Clitheroe and Manchester Victoria failed to achieve a strong enough benefit cost ratio this work was undertaken over a decade ago. Since then there has been significant passenger growth on the line during this time supported by extensive housing development in the Ribble Valley (since 2008 nearly 3000 new homes have been constructed within the Ribble Valley with a further 3500+ with planning permission) and in North Blackburn within the catchment for Ramsgrave & Wilpshire station.

Additionally the infrastructure and service is now also in place for the 30-minute frequency improvement as far as Blackburn (since Dec 2017) and as such it appears to be an opportune time to test whether a stronger case for investment can be made

Options to increase line speed along the Clitheroe line and upping average speed from the current 29/30 mph will be explored as part of the project.

Manchester Airport is the third busiest in the UK by passenger numbers, with over 25 million passengers in 2016. Whilst an economic centre within the LTRS is defined as having a population over 50,000 and as such Clitheroe would not fall within this definition it is considered that there is an opportunity for a direct service from Blackburn which, with an improvement in service frequency between Clitheroe and Blackburn, would greatly improve access to the airport for residents and businesses.

PROVIDE A DIRECT SERVICE FROM CLITHEROE TO PRESTON

This improvement would assist in contributing to the desirable minimum standards contained within the LTRS and as such improve connectivity are as follows:

- Inter-urban services to achieve average journey speeds of at least 60mph
- Local and suburban services to achieve average journey speeds of at least 40mph
- Direct connectivity between economic centres including Manchester

HIGH RATES OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The borough is characterised by high rates of economic activity, with corresponding high rates of employment and low levels of unemployment amongst the local working age population. The borough's economically active workforce is also highly skilled and well paid, with the latest data showing that nearly half (46.5%) of those aged 16-64 possess a degree, or higher level qualification.

The project could explore an enhanced service from Clitheroe serving Preston for employment/commuter trips and to connect with West Coast Mainline services to the Midlands, London and Scotland and future HS2 services.

The LTRS also sets out to achieve an increase in the Norths population with access to two or more of the Norths major cities within a 60 minute rail journey –supported through proposals for the Northern Powerhouse Rail scheme (the east -west high speed service for the North which seeks to reduce journey times between the core cities of the North) improvements in journey times across East

Lancashire will also support access for employment, training and leisure trips for passengers boarding at Ribble Valley stations.

The LTRS includes a conditional output which states *Enable all passengers to expect a seat on off-peak services, and within 20 minutes of boarding peak services* – this would be beneficial for passengers boarding at Blackburn heading south on the peak services into Manchester or on the peak services departing Man Vic heading north back to the Ribble Valley.

CHALLENGES

OVERVIEW

When the number of jobs in Ribble Valley is compared to the size of the working age population, it shows that the area has a higher job density than the national average. Although this is generally a positive trend, the evidence of commuting patterns indicates that over half of Ribble Valley's residents (56.6%) commute outside of the borough for work. Additionally whilst resident earnings in Ribble Valley are higher on average than in the sub-region and North as a whole workplace-based earnings are higher still (and above the national average), indicating that people commute into the Borough for higher-paid jobs.

The continued contraction of the borough's working age population means that there is a risk that Ribble Valley will undersupply labour, ultimately constraining business growth and investment whilst the extent of inward and outward commuting already within the Borough supports the need for enhanced rail connectivity this could also encourage more out-commuting, compounding the issue and leading to worsening levels of self-containment. This is an acknowledged risk that needs to be taken into consideration.

Whilst the population of the Borough has grown, so has the proportion of in older age groups. This is a key issue for two reasons. Firstly, there is a risk that the labour market will not be of a sufficient scale to support and maximise economic growth. A lack of young and skilled people will also result in businesses finding it increasingly difficult to attract and/or retain the right calibre of staff.

This is exacerbated by the fact that there are no further education facilities within the Valley which results in residents moving out of the Valley to attend University. This results in knowledge loss to the Borough.

Connectivity from this part of Lancashire to and from Yorkshire is poor with the private car being the preferred choice. This increases car usage within rural, tourist areas where roads are often narrow and increased car usage/ congestion has an adverse impact. It is noted that the Settle & Carlisle Development Company have lobbied for several years now for improved access to/from the S&C- to/from the North West / Manchester. The improvements would support these aspirations.

The challenges associated with each of the elements of improvement the project will investigate is as follows:

INCREASING PASSENGER TRAFFIC BETWEEN CLITHEROE AND HELLIFIELD

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.

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.

Another option which would need to be considered would be to terminate trains at Long Preston or Settle as this may be a cheaper and quicker option.

The project would explore the most favourable, quickest and cost effective option for this element of the scheme.

In respect of potential for increased freight travel particularly from Liverpool this will be dependent on suitable paths being available on the West Coast Mainline. It is also important to ensure that any increased usage by passenger does not impact on the availability of this line for the current freight movements.

Whilst journeys the Leeds City Region would also be slightly faster on this route the connections at Hellifield may be less predictable than the current route:

- Currently journeys to Leeds from Clitheroe require one change at Blackburn on to an hourly service which takes approx. 2hours.
- Not all services on the Settle & Carlisle Service call at Hellifield leaving gaps in the timetable.

EXTEND THE HALF HOURLY SERVICE FROM MANCHESTER TO BLACKBURN THROUGH TO CLITHEROE

Previous studies into extending the half hourly service between Manchester and Preston has not shown a positive business case however since the last time this option was considered considerable house building has occurred within the Ribble Valley increasing the population with the potential to access train services in Clitheroe.

PROVIDE A DIRECT SERVICE FROM CLITHEROE TO PRESTON

This improvement would involve timetable changes and would need to link into the proposed extension into Hellifield. Further work including understanding the need for additional DMUs would be needed for this improvement.

SERVICES PROPOSED

INCREASING PASSENGER TRAFFIC BETWEEN CLITHEROE AND HELLIFIELD

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; or
- c. To extend services beyond Hellifield to Carlisle.

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

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 two 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 two additional DMUs and to Hellifield at least three 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.

The extension of the Manchester-Clitheroe service to Hellifield will require some infrastructure changes with all options to be evaluated as part of this project. Currently track and signalling

constraints at Hellifield mean that trains terminating from Clitheroe have to proceed to Settle Junction in order to be able to return to Clitheroe. This project proposes that Network Rail should evaluate options for trains to be able to terminate at Hellifield and return southwards without needing to proceed to Settle Junction which eats into train paths on this relatively busy section of railway and potentially costing additional resources. A possible option would be the reinstatement of the south facing bay platform at the station.

OPTION C

This would build on the existing DalesRail service to provide a more frequent service beyond Hellifield to Carlisle. Careful evaluation of the market for travel from Greater Manchester/Lancashire to Carlisle and vica versa would be required. The analysis would look at different operating scenarios including services operating every day or targeted to certain days of the week.

This option would not require any additional infrastructure but will require additional diesel units. The number of units will depend on the market analysis.

FREIGHT SERVICES ON THE RESTORED RAILWAY

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

According to Transport for the North, freight growth on the railway in the north is predicted to increase by 2-3 million tonnes by 2050. The project would explore the option of this route be used for the transportation of the renewable wood pellets, imported from the Southern US and Canada, which arrive at the port of Liverpool and are transported to Drax Power Station in Selby.

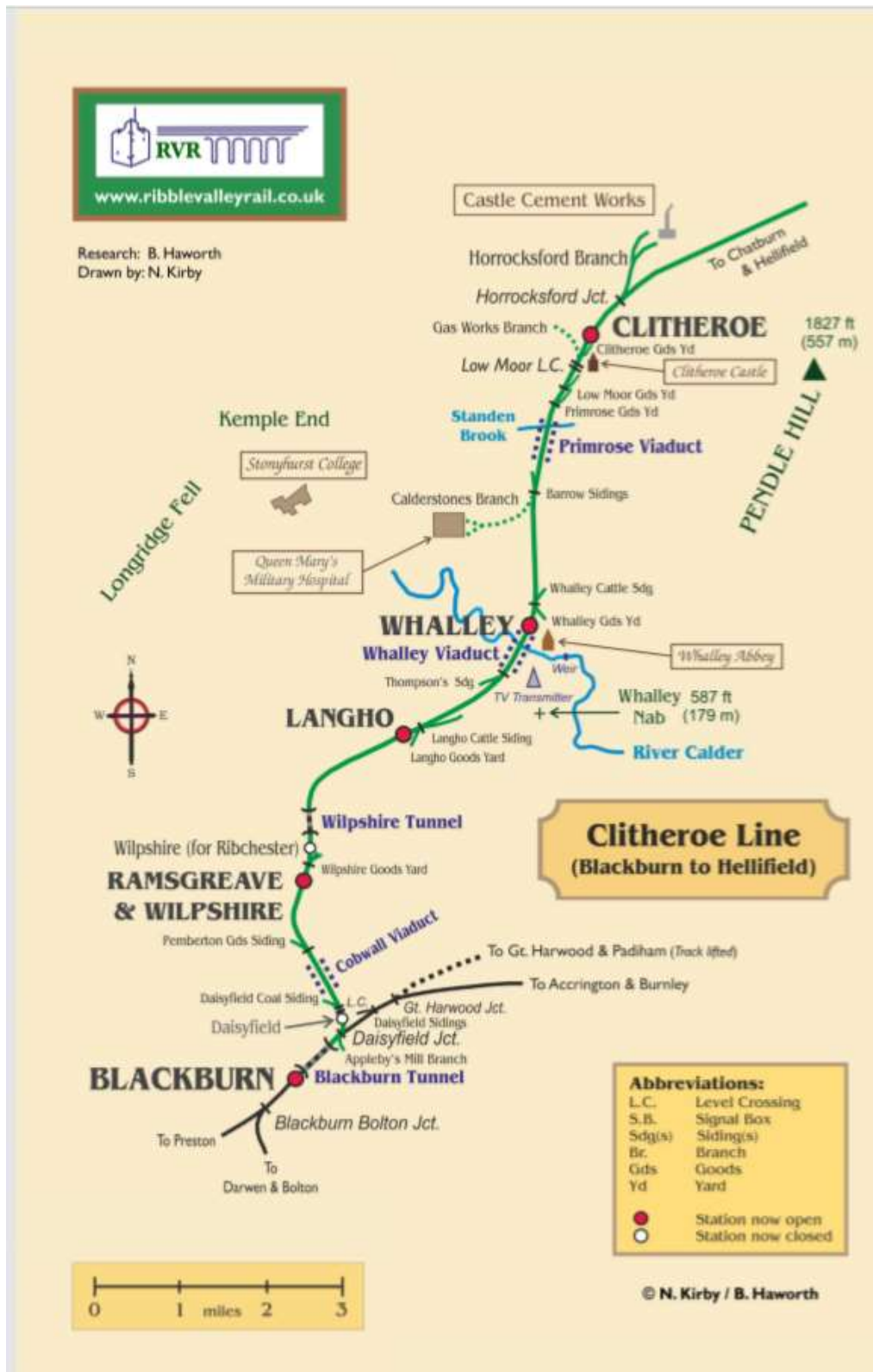
EXTEND THE HALF HOURLY SERVICE FROM MANCHESTER TO BLACKBURN THROUGH TO CLITHEROE

Clitheroe could be served by 2 trains per hour throughout the day -extending the 30-minute service frequency experienced on the line between Blackburn and Manchester Victoria. This service was made possible due to the extension of the passing loop at Darwen which was funded by the Lancashire LEP, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Lancashire County Council.

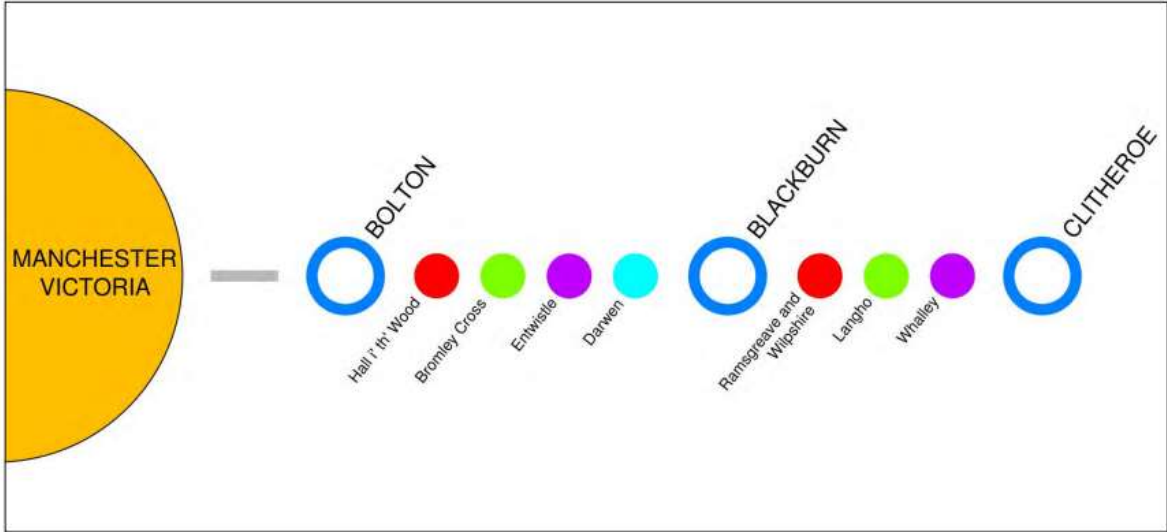
PROVIDE A DIRECT SERVICE FROM CLITHEROE TO PRESTON

To access Preston via train from Clitheroe there is a requirement to change at Blackburn. A direct route from Clitheroe to Preston already exists however the project will explore what infrastructure is needed to remove the need to change at Blackburn. The timetable would need to be validated by Network Rail.

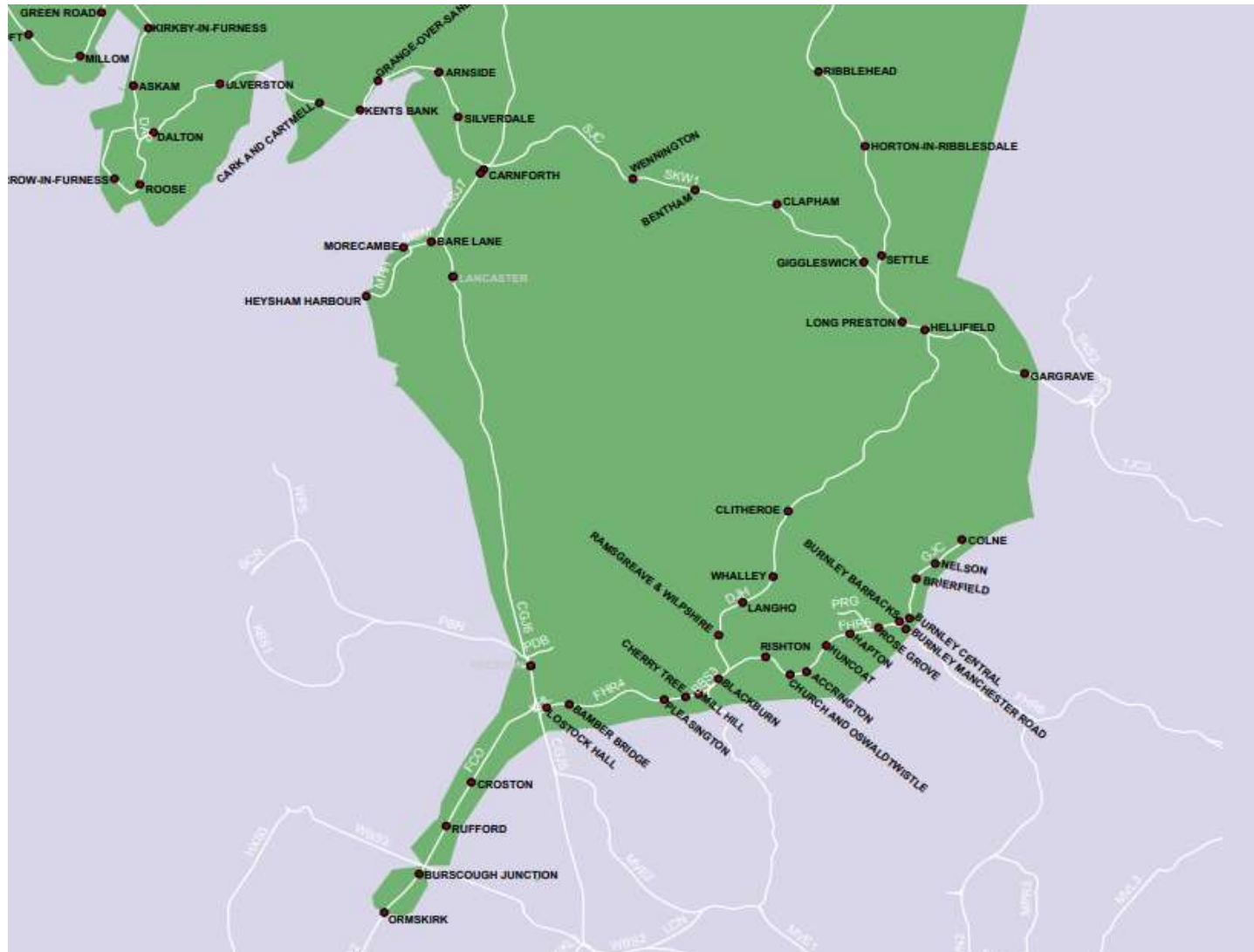
MAP OF ROUTES



Blackburn to Clitheroe



Manchester to Clitheroe



Blackburn to Hellifield

APPENDIX 1

Expression of Interest



Department
for Transport

Restoring Your Railway

Ideas Fund Registration

Registration Form – March 2020

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	
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Please complete the following:

Scheme Promoter Contact Information	
1.1 Applicant organisation name:	Ribble Valley Borough Council
1.2 Applicant contact name:	Nicola Hopkins
1.3 E-mail:	Nicola.hopkins@ribblevalley.gov.uk
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

Clitheroe Station, Railway View Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire (Grid Ref: SD 741420)

To

Hellifield Station, Station Road, Hellifield, Skipton. North Yorks BD23 4HN (Grid Ref: SD 851572)

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PLANS

<p>2.2 Train Service</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The project will evaluate two options for increasing passenger traffic between Clitheroe and Hellifield:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. To extend the Rochdale - Manchester to Blackburn terminating service to Clitheroe and Hellifield; or e. To introduce a new service between Preston – Blackburn – Clitheroe and Hellifield. <p>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</p> <p>Looking at the proposed services in turn</p> <p>Option a:</p> <p>Extending the Blackburn terminating service to Clitheroe and Hellifield.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Option b:</p>
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	<p>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.</p> <p>The service would operate at least hourly to Clitheroe with extensions to Hellifield operating at least every two hours.</p> <p>The service to Clitheroe would require a minimum of 2 additional DMUs and to Hellifield at least 3 additional DMUs.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Benefits</p> <p>The benefits of either passenger service option can be summed up as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.
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<p>2.3</p> <p>Infrastructure</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No estimate has been obtained for this work and will form part of the project development.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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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</p> <p>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> <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.</p>

<p>3.2</p> <p>Target population</p>	<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>
<p>3.3</p> <p>Local Support / Promoter</p>	<p>Ribble Valley Borough Council</p> <p>Community Rail Lancashire</p> <p>Nigel Evans MP</p> <p>Lancashire County Council</p>

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.

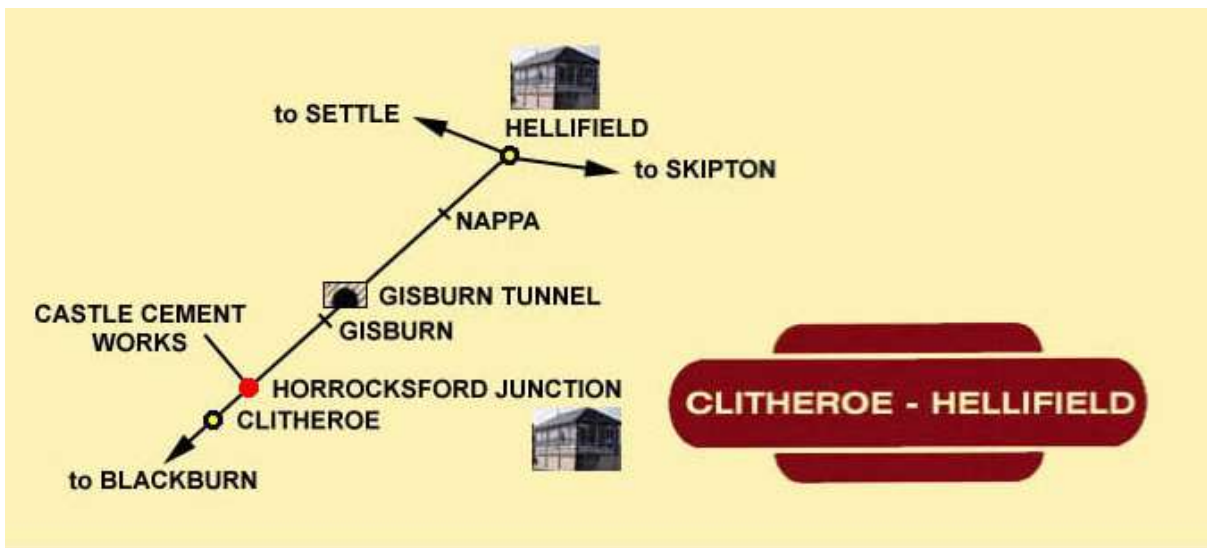
The first Hellifield station was opened by the "Little" North Western Railway in 1849. It was a modest structure sited 400 yards to the south of the present one. A much larger replacement (the current station) was built by the Midland Railway and opened on 1 June 1880, immediately to the north of the 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.

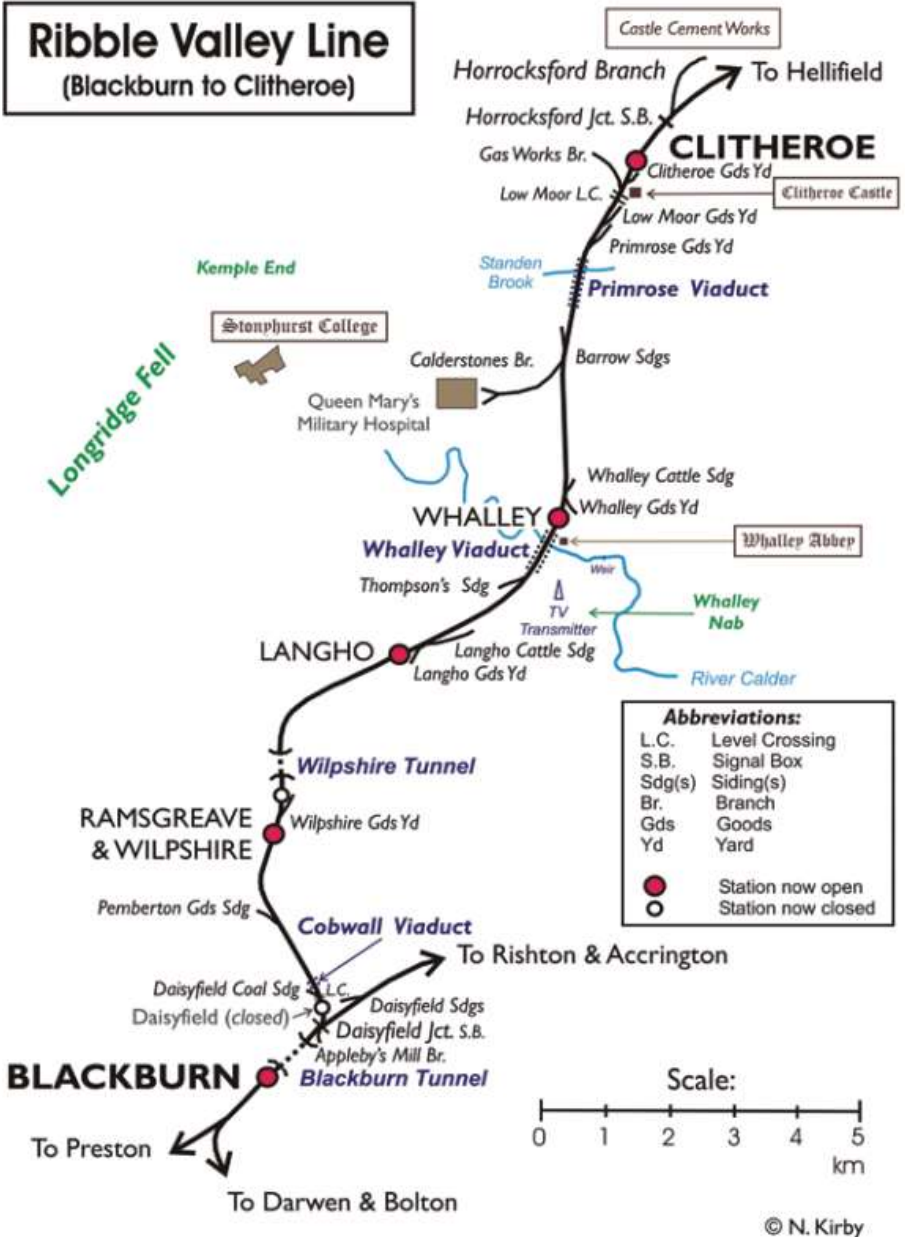
The line from Blackburn had its passenger service withdrawn on 10 September 1962, but remains open for freight and periodic diversions when the West Coast main line is closed north of Preston for engineering work. The adjacent locomotive shed closed the following year and local trains from the station 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

APPENDIX 2

Letters of Support



**North Yorkshire
County Council**

Nicola Hopkins
Director of Economic Development and
Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
CLITHEROE
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

Our Ref: M11CR001.BM
Contact: **Barrie Mason**

Date: 13 March 2020

Barrie Mason
Assistant Director
Highways and Transportation
County Hall
NORTHALLERTON
North Yorkshire
DL7 8AH

Tel: 01609 532137
Email: barrie.mason@northyorks.gov.uk
Web: www.northyorks.gov.uk

Dear Nicola

Re: Restoring your railway fund

Having discussed this matter as officers and with our Executive Member with responsibility for transport I can confirm that North Yorkshire support in principle your bid to undertake a study to investigate the feasibility of re-opening the Clitheroe to Hellifield line to passengers to provide direct links to Yorkshire. However at this stage the County Council is not in a position to make any financial contribution towards the costs of the study.

Notwithstanding the above we are able to provide officer support and input to any study work should your bid be successful.

Yours sincerely


BARRIE MASON
Assistant Director – Highways and Transportation



Nicola Hopkins
Director of Economic Development and
Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council,
Council Offices,
Church Walk,
Clitheroe,
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

Phone: (01772) 535842
Email: keith.iddon@lancashire.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref: KI/AEA
Date: 13 March 2010

Dear Nicola

Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund

Lancashire County Council supports the Restoring Your Railways Ideas Fund proposals for the Clitheroe to Hellifield line, sponsored by Nigel Evans MP and promoted by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

The proposal, to evaluate two options for increasing passenger traffic between Clitheroe and Hellifield are welcomed, creating a link from Manchester into Ribble Valley and North Yorkshire and introducing a new service to Preston from the area. A direct link to Preston has been an aspiration for greater connectivity to the West Coast Mainline, which will also benefit the local economy by giving better access for visitors and to key employment centres for local residents.

An additional benefit would be the potential to increase freight opportunities on the line for services such as an alternative for getting biomass from Liverpool to Drax.

Ribble Valley Borough Council are also investigating other local rail improvements including the provision of a half hourly service from Clitheroe to Manchester, in line with Transport for the North's aspirations, and a direct service from Clitheroe to Preston, seen as an important link for the local business community in the Ribble Valley. It is the intention to develop these proposals concurrently with the works to investigate the reintroduction of the Clitheroe to Hellifield route.

Cont/.....



These are exciting projects being led by Ribble Valley Borough Council, with support from the county council, and I look forward to seeing the successful development and implementation of the proposals in the future.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction covers the signature of Keith Iddon. A faint circular stamp is visible behind the redaction.

County Councillor Keith Iddon
Deputy Leader of Lancashire County Council
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport



Nicola Hopkins
Director of Economic Development
and Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council, Council
Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe,
Lancashire BB7 2RA
Nicola.Hopkins@ribblevalley.gov.uk

Transport for the North
2nd Floor
4 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BN
Tel: 0161 244 0888

13th March 2020

Ribble Valley Borough Council - Restoring Your Railway Fund Application

Letter of Support from Transport for the North

Dear Nicola,

As a supporter of sustainable transport interventions, Transport for the North is keen to see, wherever possible, practical and affordable, the restoration of railways in the North of England to enhance connectivity across our Region and ensure we can benefit from a thriving economy which promotes an excellent quality of life.

Transport for the North recognises that rail is, for the most part, a carbon-friendly way of moving people and goods. However we also recognise that, despite the urgent need to move to more carbon-friendly transport options – ultimately what can be achieved will be determined by both the availability of financial support and human and other resources.

In principle, where appropriate, TfN believes that everything possible should be done to encourage modal shift to rail where it presents a more environmentally friendly solution than what may be currently available. We therefore, in principle, support Restore Your Railway Fund applications across the North and encourage local authorities and local communities to drive forward such initiatives wherever possible.

For our own part having developed a Strategic Transport Plan we are now in the process of determining a Long Term Investment Plan geared to providing the North with a pipeline programme of investment which will transform connectivity across the region – but which must take account of the current status of infrastructure provision, the funding available for change, environmental considerations and logical prioritisation aimed at securing the most effective forward progress.

As a statutory authority we are committed to ensuring the North has the connectivity it needs to be a thriving and productive regional economy – but one which develops its transport infrastructure in way that is environmentally responsible – restoring railway connections can play a significant role in fulfilling this ambition.



Yours sincerely,



Salim Patel
Strategic Rail Programme Manager

On behalf of

David Hoggarth
Strategic Rail Director
Transport for the North

□

Nicola Hopkins

From: Richard Watts <communityrailancashire1@gmail.com>
Sent: 13 March 2020 07:54
To: Nicola Hopkins
Subject: Restoring Our Railways - Ribble Valley Line

EXTERNAL - This email originated from outside of Ribble Valley Borough Council . Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir or Madam

Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) and the Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership (CLCRP) fully support the application being made by Ribble Valley Borough Council for the development of services on the Ribble Valley Line and to restore regular services between Manchester/Blackburn, Clitheroe and Hellifield.

CRL and the CLCRP have for many years supported the development and marketing of DalesRail, the seasonal service between Blackpool North and Carlisle. We promote the service jointly with Northern and maintain a dedicated website for it www.dalesrail.com. It has long been apparent to us that there is considerable scope to develop more leisure and tourist based journeys to the Settle Carlisle corridor which this application will address. Apart from that with the improved level of service now calling at Hellifield other journeys become possible and this will improve connectivity from the Ribble Valley to places such as Skipton and the Leeds City Region.

CRL and the CLCRP not only support this application but have offered to help co-fund the resultant study into the development of services along the line with RVBC.

We hope this application is successful and look forward to taking this project to the next stage.

Yours faithfully

Richard Watts
Chair
Community Rail Lancashire Ltd
Accrington Railway Station
Eagle Street
Accrington
BB5 1LF
T - 01254 386579
M - 07487 699341
email - communityrailancashire1@gmail.com





Lancashire Enterprise Partnership

Nicola Hopkins
Director of Economic Development & Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

16th March 2020

Dear Ms Hopkins

Re: Ribble Valley Restoring Your Railways Expression of Interest Submission

On behalf of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership I am pleased to support Ribble Valley Borough Council's Expression of Interest submission to the Restoring Your Railways Fund.

The submission, which is sponsored by Nigel Evans MP, includes proposals to enhance the connectivity of the borough between key economic centres. This will be achieved by increasing passenger traffic between Clitheroe and Hellifield, the provision of a half hourly service from Clitheroe to Manchester, and a direct service from Clitheroe to Preston.

The proposals not only align with the ambitions of the Transport for the North, but also those of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership which seeks to release the growth potential in the region through improvements to Lancashire's transport infrastructure. This project would contribute to this aspiration and it is considered that the improvements identified will have associated economic benefits for the Ribble Valley and the region as a whole. These are exciting projects being led by Ribble Valley Borough Council, with support from the LEP, and I look forward to seeing the successful development and implementation of the proposals in the future.

Yours Sincerely

Steve Fogg



Chair
Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Ltd

www.lancashirelep.co.uk

Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited is a company under the control of Lancashire County Council with the meaning of Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 registered in England and Wales under No. 1308833, registered office: County Hall, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 3BU.