SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION TO FORM 1A

CLOSURE OR DIVERSION OF PUBLIC PATH: S.257 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Diversion of Public Right of Way at Lady Ann Level Crossing, Batley

Background and justification

The Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU) programme is a rail enhancement programme established to increase capacity and improve reliability/journey times between Manchester Victoria and York, via Huddersfield and Leeds. Enhancements between Manchester and Leeds will be delivered by the TRU West of Leeds Alliance ('TRU West') of which Network Rail (NR) is a part.

NR is proposing the following track and civils works around and to the north of Batley Station:

- Signalling;
- Various civils works;
- Electrification;
- Telecoms; and
- Works to the section of railway line from the northern edge of Batley to the northern end of Morley Tunnel (trackworks).

Approximately 900 metres to the north of Batley Station is the Lady Ann Level Crossing, which crosses over two tracks of the MDL1 line (Manchester-Leeds). It is at the same location as MDL1/33 (a disused bridge (which used to carry the Batley-Bradford railway line over the Trans-Pennine route until closure in 1964) with only the abutments still standing). The Crossing currently provides access over the line from Rutland Road/Stoney Lane on the west to Howley Street/Primrose Hill on the east, via Public Right of Way (PROW) BAT/20/20.

Lady Ann level crossing is currently a Manned Gated Crossing (MGC), with gates for vehicular use and a segregated footway with lockable wicket gates. Both sets of gates are controlled by the Signaller in the signal box located adjacent to the crossing. The vehicular and pedestrian gates at the crossing are normally locked and therefore closed to the public. The pedestrian gates are controlled from the signal box on a 24-hour basis and are unlocked as a pedestrian approaches the Crossing if the Signaller deems there is sufficient time to enable them to cross safely.

Level crossings represent one of the principal public safety risks on the railway. It is Network Rail (NR) policy to seek removal of level crossings wherever possible for safety reasons. In addition, the modernisation of the railway line, as described above, means that the crossing needs to be closed and removed. This is because the signalling, which is currently operated from the signal box at the level crossing, will be taken over by the York Rail Operating Centre as part of the TRU programme. Therefore there will be no Signaller situated at the crossing to operate it. As the upgrade will introduce faster, longer and a greater number of trains along the route, including the introduction of 25,000 volts of Overhead Line Equipment (OLE), this would increase the risk at the crossing to an unacceptable level with no means of making the current crossing sufficiently safe. The potential for an additional 97 houses in the vicinity from the allocated development site adjacent to the rear of properties on the east side of Primrose Hill would also unduly increase risk to public use.

Therefore NR is proposing to close the level crossing and divert the current PROW over a new footbridge in close proximity to the crossing, to the south. A separate planning application for the new footbridge is currently pending determination (application reference: 2021/62/93311/E).

Alternative options considered

The TRU West design process initially considered five different options for the footbridge and associated PROW diversion, which went through a formal assessment and scoring process. A summary of these options is as follows:

Option 1

Option 1 proposed a new footbridge to the south. The new footbridge would provide level access from Rutland Road to Howley Street / Primrose Hill and would be ramped from Rutland Road crossing the railway to another ramp system discharging pedestrian flow to Primrose Hill. There would also be a stepped access from the ramp system to Primrose Hill.

Option 2

Option 2 proposed a new footbridge crossing the tracks at the same location as the level crossing, with access from Rutland Road in two places: level access 50 metres south of the footbridge location on Rutland Road via a ramp, and one stepped access via the footbridge at the existing level crossing location. Access from Howley Street would be gained from two points both at the existing level crossing location: level access via ramp to the north at the existing level crossing location and another access via steps to the footbridge on the south side of Howley Street.

Option 3

Option 3 proposed a new footbridge approximately 75 metres to the north of the level crossing. Access would be gained by new path leading to the footbridge from Sunny Bank Road, to stepped and ramped access at the footbridge location. The footbridge would provide a main span to cross the railway onto the parallel ramp system on the other side, with a stepped access leading to Howley Street via a new path following the railway.

Option 4

Option 4 proposed a new subway at the existing location of the level crossing. Access from Rutland Road would be gained either by stepped access or via a ramp which heads to the south, dropping down into an opening in the ground. The stepped access would take people towards the position of the signal box, then directly through, under the railway and up to Howley Street. Once the railway had been passed there would be another ramp system to take users to Howley Street, sited on third party land.

Option 5

Option 5 proposed a new footbridge crossing the tracks at the same location as the level crossing, at a skew using the existing disused abutments of the former Batley-Bradford railway line.

It would provide access from Rutland Road in two places: level access 50 metres south of the footbridge location on Rutland Road via a ramp, and one stepped access from the footbridge at the existing level crossing location by the existing signal box.

Access to Howley Street would be gained from a footpath traversing the existing railway embankment, with a series of stairs also joining at the same access from Primrose/ Howley Street position.

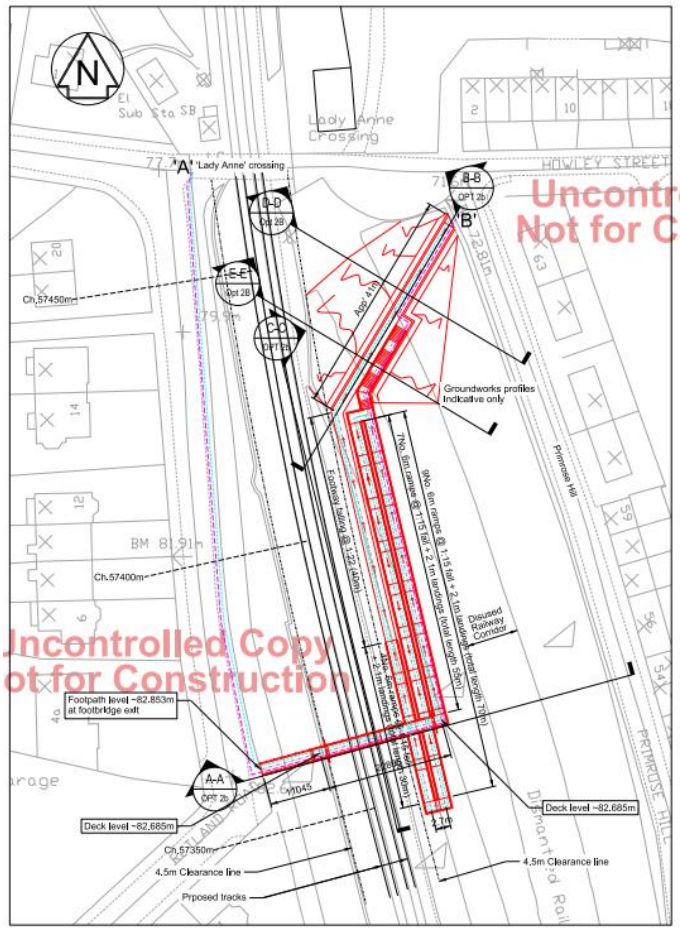
Following the assessment of these five options, the recommended option to be taken forward was Option 1 – a footbridge to the south of the existing crossing. A further four sub-options for the design and alignment of a footbridge to the south were then considered, and are summarised as follows:

Option 1a

As shown in Figure 1 below, the deck of the bridge is located at the southern corner of Rutland Road (western side of the rail corridor) and is proposed to be at the same level as the road at this location. All subsequent sub-options have the deck in the same place and at the same level.

Steel ramps, supported on piers, are utilised to allow step-free access down to the level of Primrose Hill / Howley Street on the eastern side. This option requires a 40 metre long, 10 metre deep cutting through the disused embankment adjacent to the old abutments to exit at Howley Street.

Figure 1 – Option 1a



The diversion length from points ‘A’ to ‘B’ (as shown on the ‘Plan Showing Diversion Routes’ submitted with this application) would be:

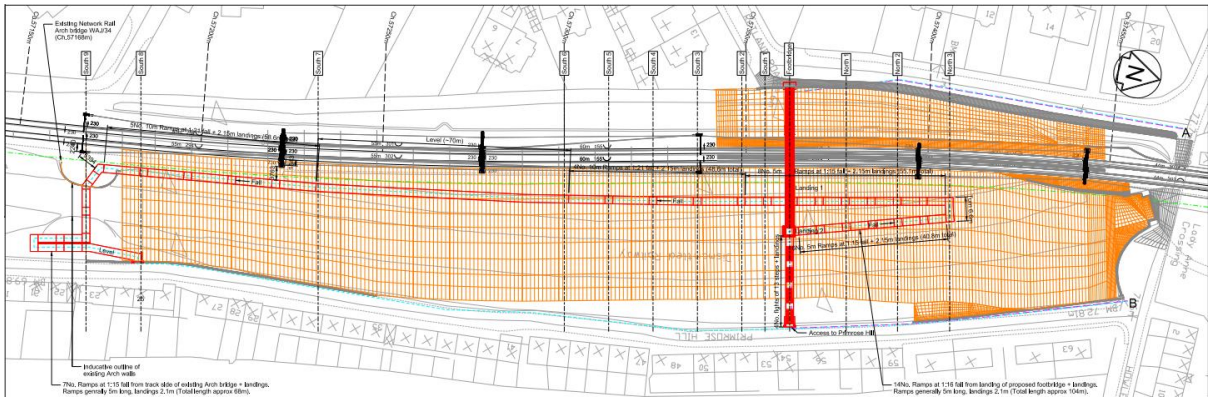
- Footbridge, partial ramp and steps = 246 metres

- Footbridge and full length of ramps = 394 metres

Option 1b

As shown in Figure 2 below, ramped access would be provided from Primrose Hill approximately opposite number 23, and stepped access would be from approximately opposite number 54.

Figure 2 – Option 1b



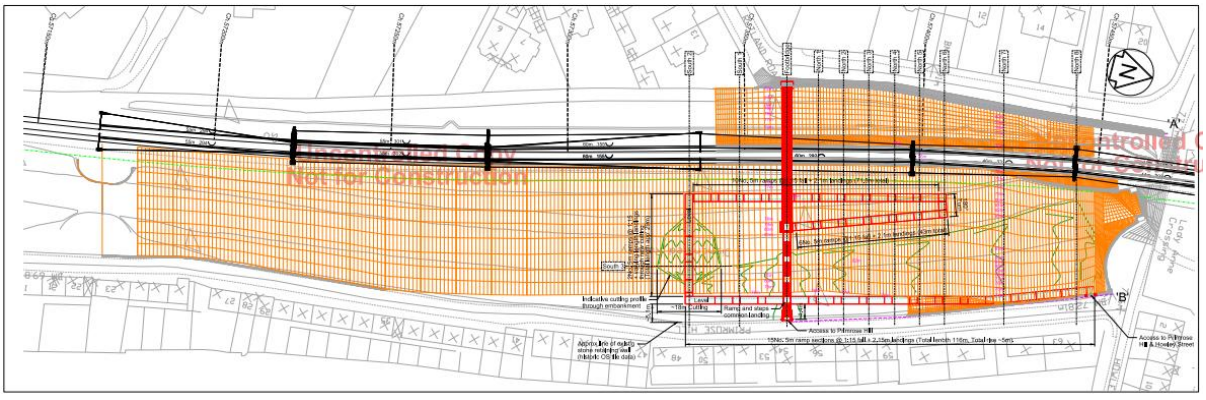
The diversion length from points 'A' to 'B' (as shown on the 'Plan Showing Diversion Routes' submitted with this application) would be:

- Footbridge and steps = 267 metres
- Footbridge and ramps = 773 metres

Option 1c

As shown in Figure 3 below, ramped access would be provided down to Primrose Hill just south of the deck requiring a cutting 20 metres long and 4 metres deep through the disused embankment opposite approximately number 54 Primrose Hill and remodelling of the embankment north up to Howley Street.

Figure 3 – Option 1c



The diversion length from points 'A' to 'B' (as shown on the 'Plan Showing Diversion Routes' submitted with this application) would be:

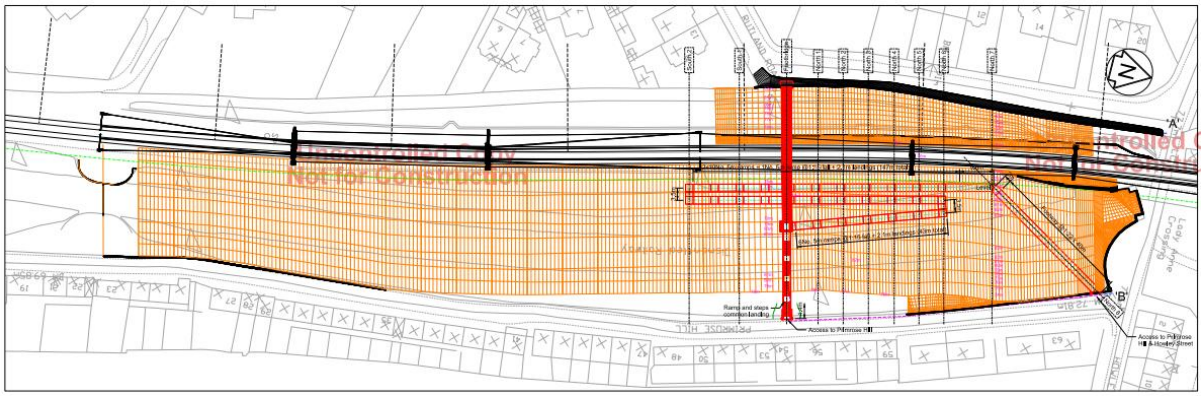
- Footbridge and steps = 267 metres
- Footbridge and ramps = 417 metres

Option 1d

This option is similar to option 1a (requiring a 40 metre long and 10 metre deep cutting through the disused embankment adjacent to the old abutments to exit at Howley Street) but also with access through a cutting as in Option 1c from opposite approximately number 54 Primrose Hill.

Figure 4 below shows this option.

Figure 4 – Option 1d



The diversion length from points ‘A’ to ‘B’ (as shown on the ‘Plan Showing Diversion Routes’ submitted with this application) would be:

- Footbridge and steps = 267 metres
- Footbridge and ramps = 405 metres

Following assessment of these sub-options by TRU West, none were deemed to provide a satisfactory solution for reasons including safety/appeal of the new route due to access through cuttings (all options), diversion length (Option 1b), and impact on Primrose Hill (Options 1b, 1c an 1d). Further design work was undertaken and a fifth option was developed which address all of these issues. This fifth footbridge option is the subject of the current planning application pending determination and will carry the proposed PROW diversion.

Prepared by [redacted] (Atkins) on behalf of Network Rail
22 September 2021