

Proposal:

The proposal is for listed building consent for the dismantling of the Crawshaw Wood Overbridge, raising of the abutments by 1.4m and the replacement of the refurbished cast iron superstructure at the higher level.

The works form part of the wider Transpennine Route Upgrade which will electrify the route to improve journey times and reduce carbon emissions. The replacement of this bridge is required due to the additional height needed for the trains and cabling.

Site and Surroundings:

The application site is a Grade II Listed Overbridge which crosses the Transpennine railway line and forms part of the Definitive Footpath & Bridleway (LEEDS 124). It lies equidistance between William Parkin Way to the west and the M1 Motorway to the east.

The surrounding area is predominantly open fields with sporadic housing and farmsteads. To the south-west is "The Springs" which is a retail and leisure destination. A recently constructed housing development is located to the west, on the southern side of the railway. There are levels differences on the land either side of the Listed Bridge.

Background:

The listing description for the bridge states.

*Crawshaw Woods Bridge, HUL 4/20, of c1830-34 designed by James Walker of Walker & Burges and constructed by Stanningley Ironworks for Leeds & Selby Railway, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: *Historic interest: as a cast iron overbridge built between 1830 and 1834 on the pioneering, first phase Leeds & Selby Railway, believed to be the earliest cast iron bridge in the world still in-situ over an operational railway, and used as the main access bridge to Barnbow Munitions Factory during the First World War; * Engineer: designed by James Walker, a renowned C19 engineer, who constructed the line with an extra wide four-track bed with single-span overbridges mainly built in stone; * Architectural interest: as a relatively early cast iron, single-span, segmental-arched bridge with wrought iron railing balustrades and curved mushroom-top stone piers; *Intactness: the bridge remains intact.*

Relevant Planning History:

None relevant

Consultations:

Historic England	Do not object to the proposals
Conservation	Proposal results in the total loss of the historic significant and would have substantial harm. However, the public

benefits of the proposal are considered to outweigh this harm

West Yorks Archaeology Whilst regrettable, the case made is accepted subject to conditions relating archaeological recording

Public/Local Response:

The application was publicised by a site notice which was posted adjacent to the site on 27th July 2023. To date, no comments have been submitted.

Legislation and Planning Policies:

Conservation area: Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area of any functions under the Planning Acts, that special attention shall be had to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Listed Building: Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Development Plan:

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act states that for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises of the Core Strategy, adopted in November 2014, saved policies of the UDP (2006).

Leeds Core Strategy:

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 12th November 2014. The following policies contained within the Core Strategy are of relevance to this development proposal:

P10 - Design
P11 - Conservation

Unitary Development Plan Review (saved policies):

The most relevant saved policies from the Leeds Unitary Development Plan are outlined below.

BC7 - Refers to the use of materials in conservation areas.
N14 - Presumption in favour of listed buildings

N17-22 - Refer to the preservation of listed buildings.

National Planning Policy Framework:

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Appraisal:

Impact on the Historic Character of the Listed Building, and Conservation Area

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings.

The Leeds Core Strategy includes a number of policies relevant to conservation and design which are relevant. Policy P10 outlines a number of key principles which fall under the wider objective of ensuring new development delivers high quality inclusive design, policy P11 looks to conserve and enhance the historic environment and policy P12 looks to protect the character and quality of Leeds townscapes.

A number of saved UDP policies are also relevant including policies GP5 and BD6 which encourage good design and policies N14 and N17 which amongst other things set out a presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings.

The NPPF sets out national planning policy in relation to heritage matters.

The Crawshaw Woods Overbridge will be significantly altered as part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU). The heightening of the abutments and the reconstruction of the deck will involve permanent physical changes to the structure; however, this would be balanced by the restoration of the ironwork which is considered to be beneficial to its heritage significance, alongside the removal of the unsympathetic sheet steel parapets. Taking this and other heritage benefits into consideration, it is agreed that there will be a "less than substantial harm" to the heritage asset.

The NPPF says that "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the assets conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance" (paragraph 199). The NPPF goes on to say that "Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification". It highlights that substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.

The proposal includes various mitigation and compensation measures such as designing new elements to mirror or complement the historic aesthetic and archaeological recording of heritage assets which do not remove the less than substantial harm to the heritage asset.

The NPPF says that "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use" (paragraph 202)

The public benefits of TRU are set out Statement of Aims in the TWAO application which can be summarised as a faster and more energy efficient trains contributing to the UK Governments climate change targets. It has been established through the optioneering referred to above that without works to the listed structure then the TRU Programme cannot be delivered and the benefits of the TRU Programme will not be realised. The Heritage Statement concludes that the substantial harm caused to the listed bridges will, therefore, be outweighed against the substantial public benefits delivered by TRU which have been recognised at public inquiry by the Huddersfield to Westtown Inspector and confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Whilst Crawshaw Woods Bridge will be significantly altered as part of the scheme, the works are necessary in order to deliver the electrification of the line. The applicant has gone through a process of optioneering to ensure that the most appropriate and least harmful solution to adapt the structure was pursued.

The heightening of the abutments and the reconstruction of the deck will involve permanent physical changes to the structure; however the works will result in the retention and restoration of the key historic ironwork element of the structure. Subject to conditions set out by the applicant relating to materials regarding the re-use of stone in the abutments which will help ensure that the overall aesthetic of the structure is maintained, no objections are raised.

A condition will also be required regarding the need for a Conservation Implementation Management Plan (CIMP) which has been suggested by the applicant especially given the particularly high heritage significance of the bridge and the fact that historic engineering is a core aspect of its heritage significance and due to the bespoke structural approach being taken.

As such the proposal is considered to be in-keeping with the wider aims of Core Strategy policies P10, and P11 and saved UDP policies GP5, BD6, N14, N17 and the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework in these respects. The proposal also satisfies the relevant legal tests in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Conclusion

Approval is recommended