

Improving connectivity to New Pudsey railway station transport interchange



Summary

This document proposes the upgrade and creation of new paths to improve access to New Pudsey railway station transport interchange as an option for the £173.5m allocated to Leeds for transport improvements.

Current situation

New Pudsey railway station is located on the railway line serving Leeds and Bradford Interchange. The station is served by eight trains per hour to destinations including Leeds, York, Manchester Victoria, Blackpool North and Huddersfield. The station has a large free car park, which is usually filled towards the end of the morning peak hour. The car park, several employment sites and high housing density have encouraged usage of this station. A number of bus routes serve bus stops nearby (including the 72, 508 and X6).

New Pudsey railway station has fairly poor access to most of Pudsey if a traveller is not accessing it by car. Many residents have to walk a substantial diversion of up to one mile (via Thornbury Barracks) compared to a direct route, which impacts on how desirable the railway station is for many residents and travellers to use.

There are no buses to connect west Pudsey with New Pudsey railway station. Links from central Pudsey are not much better with only the extension of the 14 during the day and a very small number of 8/8A services that operate during peak hour. The only frequent alternative is to use a 72 bus between New Pudsey and Stanningley bottom plus a 16 bus between Stanningley bottom and Pudsey bus station. This option is expensive if the traveller does not hold a train+bus ticket.

The existing access is also poor. The path accessing New Pudsey railway station from the east is narrow, poorly lit and requires regular maintenance to clear weeds. It then opens into a car park which has no dedicated pedestrian route across the section by M&S. Beyond M&S, the path runs alongside school grounds and a retaining wall for the bypass. The section from the subway to Richardshaw Lane north of the A647 is also poor, with a pedestrian safety barrier making the path narrow. Whilst the path up Richardshaw Lane to central Pudsey is satisfactory, there are two busy roads that would benefit from zebra crossings to assist pedestrians with crossing the road.

The impact of this poor accessibility can be demonstrated with the house prices in this area. There is a marked reduction to sale prices through west Pudsey, particularly along Waterloo Road, Uppermoor and Chapeltown. The walking distance to New Pudsey railway station could be a contributor to this.

Options - Do nothing

Existing links are maintained in their current formats. Additional pressure placed on road infrastructure and congestion increases particularly as further development occurs in Pudsey. Additional parking required at New Pudsey railway station (managed via expansion of car park or the introduction of parking charges) and potentially a requirement is created for the creation of a bus based park and ride serving A647 around Armley.

Options - Do something

Improving access from central Pudsey

Widen and straighten the path between New Pudsey and Owlcotes centre to a path/cycle lane.

This narrow path runs between a line of trees and undergrowth, and the Leeds to Bradford Interchange railway line. It connects New Pudsey railway station with the Owlcotes centre.



These photos show the path suggested for an upgrade from the eastern and western ends. Note the width, curvature and substantial vegetation either side of the path

The route is well used but it is not suitable for cyclists, and prams can struggle to pass each other. It has two gentle curves and dense undergrowth either side, which leaves some users feeling that the route is not safe despite the number of people using the path.

- Reduces maintenance requirements (Leeds City Council have had to undertake substantial work to cut the undergrowth back)
- Straightening the path would provide a clear sightline through most of the path and make it feel safer
- New/upgraded lighting makes the route more established.

Work with Owlcotes centre to upgrade the path crossing their land

Potentially investigate the removal of circa 20 car parking spaces to create a dedicated safe zone for pedestrians near to their Marks and Spencer store. The alternative route around the back of the Owlcotes Centre is not a suitable alternative route due to steps.

Upgrade the paths serving the northern end of the subway under the bypass

Add a zebra crossing and raised road surface to Cemetery Road and Thorpe Road where they meet B6155 Richardshaw Lane

Improving access from west Pudsey

A right of way (bridlepath) currently exists running from New Pudsey station across the bypass to Owlcotes Lane. It is currently poorly maintained and not lit. It also requires users to cross an NSL D2 bypass just after the Owlcotes eastbound slip begins. The road curvature gives users crossing the A647 around two seconds warning of a vehicle approaching.



The photo on the left shows the view for pedestrians trying to cross the A647. The photo on the right shows the start of the current bridlepath to west Pudsey

There are three options available for a proposed crossing of the A647 (page 5).

Option	Summary	Description
1	Traffic Light Pedestrian crossing	Reduce the speed limit of the A647 to 50mph and install a split pedestrian crossing where the existing bridlepath meets the ring road
2	Footbridge over the bypass	A footbridge is installed over the bypass at a similar point to where the bridlepath currently crosses the bypass
3	Footbridge over the railway line	Users of the proposed footpath would use the pedestrian crossings at Dawson Corner and a footbridge would be installed over the railway line to the west of the A647

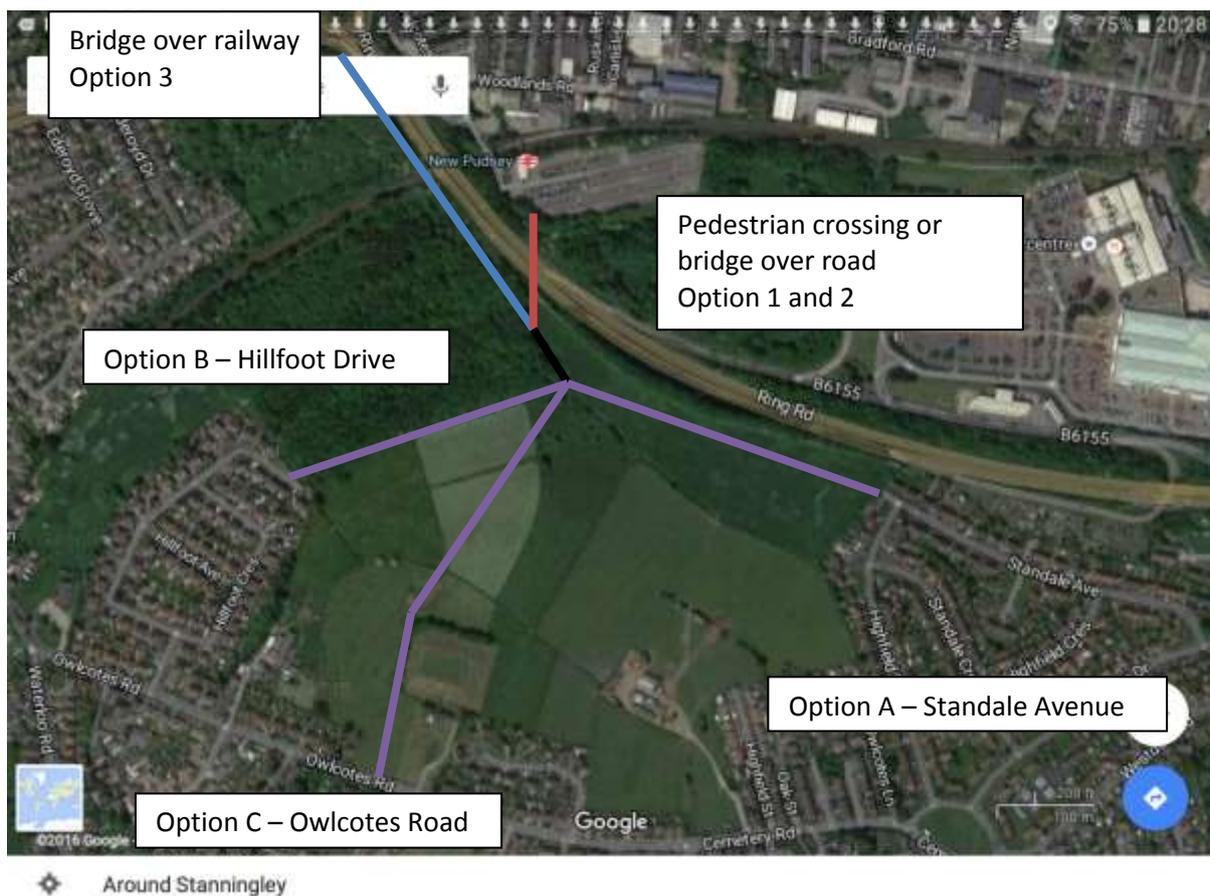
All of the options would need to be risk assessed. Both footbridges (particularly the footbridge over the railway line) could constrain any work planned to upgrade the junction at Dawsons Corner. Both footbridges may need to be of a higher standard to meet the requirements of a bridlepath.

The preference considering value for money would be a traffic light pedestrian crossing, unless the footbridge could be effectively delivered within the budget. The footbridge over the railway line is not recommended. It adds further distance and would require working with Network Rail to be delivered. This could extend the timescale for delivery substantially

Footpath options

- A. Run a footpath parallel to the bypass to Standale Road
- B. Run a footpath parallel to tree line to Hillfoot Drive
- C. Run a footpath direct to Owlcotes Road near the Yorkshire Water plant

The first two options are preferred to minimise land take and provide the maximum benefits to the occupants of west Pudsey. Existing landowners may also oppose a footpath crossing direct across the land due to potential security issues (runs between the two clusters of farm buildings and next to the Yorkshire Water plant).



Conclusion

The £173.5m fund offers an opportunity to improve connectivity to existing transport interchanges. The options outlined above provide a very visible and cost effective solution to improving access to New Pudsey railway station with low ongoing costs to maintain and operate them. They encourage active travel and sustainable transport use.

These options are not mutually exclusive and together they could be very complementary by reducing the number of road trips to the Owlcotes Centre.

Further development work to New Pudsey railway station could make the area more desirable for further public transport services particularly in the evening. It would add

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further support for further trains on the Leeds to Bradford Interchange railway line and help to reduce road congestion driven by short trips accessing this area.

Glossary

Acronym	Definition
D2	Two lane road in each direction, usually separated by a central reservation.
M&S	Marks and Spencer
NSL	National Speed Limit. 70mph on D2 and above roads