



Department
for Transport

Consultation outcome

Ravensthorpe railway station closure: summary of responses

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/ravensthorpe-railway-station-closure/public-feedback/ravensthorpe-railway-station-closure-summary-of-responses>

We have reviewed responses to the consultation and have decided that the closure should proceed.

The [Office of Rail and Road \(ORR\)](https://www.orr.gov.uk/rail-guidance-compliance/network-access/station-depot/closures) must then be satisfied that the closure process has been followed (<https://www.orr.gov.uk/rail-guidance-compliance/network-access/station-depot/closures>). If the ORR is satisfied that it has, it will issue a closure ratification notice allowing the closure to proceed.

Network Rail has outlined that the station will close at either the end of service on 13 December 2025, or 4 weeks after ORR's ratification: whichever is later.

Introduction

The Department for Transport (DfT) carried out a public consultation on the Network Rail (NR) proposal to close Ravensthorpe station as part of the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU). DfT has followed the closure process as set out in the [Railways Act 2005](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/14/contents) (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/14/contents>) and DfT's [Railways closures guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/railway-closures-guidance) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/railway-closures-guidance>).

The proposed date for closure of the station was on or after 28 September 2025, now confirmed by NR as after the end of service on 13 December 2025. A new, improved and relocated Ravensthorpe station is planned to open in summer 2028.

Responses to the consultation have been considered by DfT. Following this consideration, DfT has decided that the closure of the station should proceed as proposed.

Summary of responses

We received 15 responses to the consultation from a range of

respondents, including:

- Northern (operator of Ravensthorpe station)
- TransPennine Trains (operator of train services to Ravensthorpe)
- TransPennine Express (trading name of TransPennine Trains)
- Transport Focus (independent watchdog for transport users)
- Transport for Greater Manchester (public body responsible for coordinating transport services throughout Greater Manchester)
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) (partnership of local authorities in West Yorkshire, role in responding to the consultation, advisory and strategic, not operational)

Including all responses from organisations, 13 respondents were in favour of the closure, one individual did not answer and one individual did not agree with the closure.

Of those who were in favour of closing Ravensthorpe station, 8 respondents raised the following points relating to the proposal:

- 3 organisations (Northern, WYCA and Transport Focus) raised the point about the rail replacement bus service proposed between closure and opening of the new station
- TPE said the automatic door selective opening systems (C-ASDO Beacons) would need to be removed to prevent doors being energised at the station
- WYCA encouraged the TRU programme to work with Northern to be able to provide accessible toilet facilities through installation of a toilet 'pod' at the new station
- Transport Focus brought up how rail users will be notified and if financial compensation (or some other benefits in kind) will be provided, if the planned opening date is pushed back

From individuals, the following points were raised:

- one respondent mentioned there would be a disruption to journeys for students with alternative stations costing more and being too far away
- one respondent said a solution was needed for the impact on

current passengers

- one respondent said that new trains to Wakefield would be welcomed
- one respondent did not say whether they were or were not in favour of the closure and commented that the station should close the day before the new station opened
- one said whether additional track improvements could be included by 4-tracking between Ravensthorpe and Dewsbury, or at least through Dewsbury station, 2-tracking the Deighton to Brighouse curve or re-opening (as 2-track) the Horbury West curve to connect Calder Valley to South Yorkshire

Rail replacement bus

Between closure and reopening, as set out in the consultation, NR proposed to fund a rail replacement bus operation – subject to ongoing demand – running once an hour between Ravensthorpe and Dewsbury and Ravensthorpe and Mirfield, as per the current rail service.

Due to the considerable construction work in the existing station area affecting Calder Road, this would operate from Huddersfield Road (A644) in Ravensthorpe, as is currently the case for all rail replacement buses.

Signage would help passengers to find the rail replacement bus stops, which are also served by frequent local bus services between Leeds, Dewsbury, Ravensthorpe, Mirfield, Deighton and Huddersfield up to 4 times per hour Monday to Saturday and twice per hour on Sundays.

The NR proposal received differing views from the 3 organisations that responded to it.

Northern

Northern is fully supportive of the closure to provide the TRU works, but does not believe the operation of a rail replacement bus service is a viable or pragmatic option. Northern proposes

engagement with WYCA and local bus operators to facilitate the use of existing local bus services.

Better value for the taxpayer would be provided by a degree of ticket acceptance with the frequent local bus services, which would offer similar journey times and prices to those of a rail replacement bus.

WYCA

In support of the replacement bus, WYCA would like to see:

- suitable signposting at the station and to the Huddersfield Road stops, in addition to signage at bus stops
- services being timed to connect to rail services at Mirfield and Dewsbury
- advance information on the closure and replacement services provided to allow informed journey planning decisions
- a staff presence at the station on initial closure to assist customers
- clear messaging of ticket purchasing options
- those not purchasing online or via an app may have to travel without first purchasing a ticket
- 'promise to pay' for ticket purchase at Mirfield/Dewsbury or other options provided
- monitoring of use to ensure sufficient capacity is provided

Transport Focus

Transport Focus asked several questions and made points, including:

- how ongoing demand will be measured and at what level may NR propose to stop running the bus replacement
- there should be careful consideration with public consultation before any decisions are made on withdrawal
- users should not be paying rail fares when they are using the bus and a new fares structure should be in place
- what will be the measures to allow ticket purchase on the bus, including for digitally excluded travellers, for onward rail services

from Mirfield or Dewsbury

- supporting the operation of the bus on Huddersfield road
- will the buses be accessible and will real-time information be provided at bus stops
- examining whether the combination of existing bus services would provide better use of money spent on the bus and an improved local service

DfT response

We have discussed with Northern and WYCA whether a degree of ticket acceptance and signposting to local bus services could provide an alternative to a rail replacement bus. These discussions also included how information could be provided on these services through railway systems, such as National Rail enquiries.

Northern's view was that providing and maintaining the accuracy of information on public bus services in rail industry ticketing and journey planning systems would not be practicable due to the differing planning timescales between rail and bus services and the resources that this would require.

In addition, there would also be no way of providing real-time information for passengers on delays, cancellations, or short-notice amendments to buses. Without putting service buses into rail industry systems, it would not be possible to provide 'through-ticketing' with a detailed journey itinerary on local bus services.

WYCA's view is that relying solely on local bus services, particularly without coordination or targeted intervention, may not provide an adequate alternative for passengers and would not be an acceptable starting point.

We have considered these points and we believe the best option for passengers and taxpayers would be to:

- provide a rail replacement bus between Ravensthorpe and Dewsbury
- not to provide a bus replacement between Ravensthorpe and Mirfield

Our rationale is that:

- Dewsbury is a staffed location and the buses depart from/arrive outside the station. Staff will be able to assist passengers as required, including by providing information on the bus.
- Dewsbury is routinely used as a rail/road interchange during TRU planned upgrade works, so wayfinding is already in place between the bus stop and the railway station and customers on this route are familiar with the arrangements.
- Service buses operate to/from Dewsbury bus station, which is 0.2 miles, a 5-minute estimated walking time, from Dewsbury railway station. The service bus stops on request at all bus stops on the route, so it would take longer than the rail replacement bus, which would operate without stopping.
- The service bus from Ravensthorpe and the rail replacement bus will both operate from the same stop on Huddersfield Road. This stop, which is in a more central location in the village, is already routinely used for rail replacement bus operation as part of TRU works, so it may be familiar to some future users already. Information on service buses is provided at the bus stop, and it has been agreed in principle with the shelter owner, WYCA, that information on the rail replacement bus will also be shown there.
- The rail replacement bus can be timed to connect at Dewsbury into the east and westbound local Northern stopping service between Bradford Interchange (via Brighouse) and Leeds, as well as providing the opportunity to connect into intercity services towards Huddersfield and Manchester.
- Only one rail replacement vehicle is required to cover services between Ravensthorpe and Dewsbury, which results in cost savings compared to connecting at 2 stations.
- Mirfield accounts for a very small level of demand at Ravensthorpe (1%). The demand for connectivity between those 2 stations is likely to migrate to more frequent local bus services and other modes.
- It is not possible to operate rail replacement buses to/from Mirfield station due to height restrictions (railway bridges), so these would stop on Huddersfield Road, which is 500 metres away.

- The platforms at Mirfield are split, with the route to the westbound platform a further 200 metres.
- Mirfield station is currently undergoing significant transformation as part of TRU, which means it is subject to regular road closures and changes to pedestrian routes. It is not currently accessible, although it will be later in the TRU programme.

Given this, we have agreed that a rail replacement bus will be operated for a trial period covering the complete December 2025 to May 2026 timetable: from 14 December 2025 until 16 May 2026.

Northern Trains Limited have supported the consultation process and is planning to support by operating the rail replacement bus. This arrangement is to be formalised. Northern will record demand for the rail replacement bus to ensure that sufficient capacity is available.

Some passengers, including those making longer journeys, may – depending on where they live in Ravensthorpe – find it more convenient to start or end their rail journey at either:

- Mirfield station, which is approximately 1.5 miles west of Ravensthorpe station
- Dewsbury station, which is approximately 1.5 miles east of Ravensthorpe station

Some passengers may – depending on where they live in Ravensthorpe – also find that they prefer to use the local bus services between:

- Dewsbury
- Ravensthorpe
- Mirfield
- Deighton
- Huddersfield

The higher frequency of these, the number and location of bus stops in Ravensthorpe, will give greater choice to passengers compared to the current station, which is located to the south of

the village.

We will work with NR, Northern and WYCA to ensure that information on the rail replacement bus between Ravensthorpe and Dewsbury is communicated to passengers.

Ravensthorpe is an unstaffed station with no ticket purchasing facilities. Northern has confirmed that, in line with normal industry policy, staff will not be present when rail replacement bus services cannot be operated from within the immediate vicinity of a station.

Therefore, the Huddersfield Road stop in Ravensthorpe will be unstaffed. It will not be possible to provide real-time information from this stop.

Dewsbury station, which is operated by TransPennine Trains, is staffed and colleagues will be able to assist passengers with information.

Passengers seeking to travel on the rail replacement bus must purchase a valid ticket for their journey. For services departing Dewsbury, passengers may choose to purchase from the ticket vending machines or staffed booking office at the station.

As ticket buying facilities are not provided at Ravensthorpe, staff will be available to sell tickets on the bus. If staff are not available, passengers will need to purchase their ticket at the soonest opportunity, which would be on arrival at Dewsbury. Alternatively, passengers can purchase tickets online.

Normal rail fares will apply for travel on the rail replacement bus in line with industry policy. The rail replacement transport used and how the needs of customers with accessibility requirements are met will be for the provider of the replacement buses (assumed to be Northern) to manage, in line with the other replacement services they operate.

The rail replacement bus is intended to provide a means for Ravensthorpe passengers to connect to/from Dewsbury with the national rail network. It is not our intention to divert from this core purpose by also exploring integration with local bus service provision.

The ORR estimate 35,926 entries/exits were made at Ravensthorpe for the year between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, which is approximately 100 per day.

If we find that the ongoing demand for the rail replacement bus is low, we will discuss its continued operation with WYCA, Northern, NR and Transport Focus before any decision is made on its future.

This is may be because passengers could be using:

- local buses services between Dewsbury, Ravensthorpe, Mirfield, Deighton and Huddersfield instead
- alternative stations such as Mirfield and Dewsbury

It is important for NR not to be required to spend taxpayers' money on providing a rail replacement bus if it serves no useful purpose for passengers. The decision-making process will include consideration of NR's public sector equality duty, if change is proposed, ensuring that any negative impacts are effectively managed.

NR is accountable for the completion of the diversity impact assessments and other associated documentation. Northern will support these, but cannot be held accountable for them and the subsequent mitigation actions. If the bus is not planned to continue beyond May 2026, alternative options would be fully communicated to passengers in advance.

Door opening systems: DfT comment

NR have confirmed that the automatic door selective opening system (C-ASDO) beacons will be removed on the closure of the station and will be re-provided at the new station on opening.

Impact on students and local journeys: DfT comment

The rail replacement bus will provide passengers with connections to/from train services at Dewsbury.

Local buses services between Dewsbury, Ravensthorpe, Mirfield, Deighton and Huddersfield will also provide alternative options which may be cheaper than using both the rail replacement bus and train.

These local bus services may also be more convenient than using both the rail replacement bus and train, depending on where users live in Ravensthorpe.

Additional track improvements: DfT comment

NR have advised that:

- immediately east of Dewsbury station is a listed viaduct that cannot be widened due to the proximity of other listed buildings
- Dewsbury station does not have enough space for 4-tracking or enough room to transition from a 4-track to a 2-track railway between the station and viaduct
- 2-tracking the Deighton-Brighouse curve was descope due to funding challenges, as it offered very little benefit, and timetable modelling shows the single track could be managed through timetabling without a detrimental impact to performance
- Horbury West is not within TRU scope nor on the core route, so has not been examined

Gap between station closing and opening: DfT comment

The closure of Ravensthorpe station is necessary to facilitate delivery of parts of the TRU, including overhead electrification and a flyover to separate the slow and fast lines.

NR have advised that closure is planned to take place with the end of service on 13 December 2025. The new station is planned to open in summer 2028.

Provision of toilet facilities: DfT comment

Toilet facilities are currently out of scope for the upgraded Ravensthorpe station.

NR and Northern remain committed to providing a new station that is accessible to all and fit for future demand and the designs will not preclude the future inclusion of toilet facilities.

Service frequency including trains to Wakefield Kirkgate: DfT comment

The train service frequencies, including their destinations, are not a matter for the consultation. We recognise that there are a number of stakeholders and passengers who are keen to see more frequent train services at Ravensthorpe.

The end state timetable is currently in development, based upon the requirements of DfT. Once the rail industry has completed development of the timetable and DfT has approved it, the industry will consult on the service pattern and timetable that is proposed to be in operation across the route in the future.

This is a complex process involving several organisations, including DfT, train operating companies (TOCs) and NR. DfT will provide an update in due course once the timetable is developed and approved. DfT will also advise on the consultation process.

Arrangements if the planned opening date is

delayed: DfT comment

The new improved station is planned to open in summer 2028.

If this date is delayed, NR will communicate this to customers and work with TOCs to manage the implications for passengers.

Conclusion

The responses to the consultation have been considered by DfT.

Following this consideration, DfT has concluded that the closure proposal for Ravensthorpe station should proceed and be submitted to the ORR for ratification.



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