

EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY

East Lancashire Railway Conservation Statement

January 2023

Our Charitable Purpose

To preserve, restore and operate the railway lines, together with such lands and buildings adjacent thereto in Greater Manchester and Lancashire and in particular the East Lancashire Railway line, for the advancement of technical, historical and general education and for the permanent preservation, of steam and other railway locomotives, rolling stock, road vehicles, equipment and relics.

Key actions to achieve our purpose:

- To maintain the East Lancashire Railway and Bury Transport Museum as a working museum.
- Illustrate the history and development of transport along the Irwell valley.
- Restore and maintain buildings and structures appropriate to the history of the ELR.
- Develop a core museum collection of working and static rolling stock/ structures that illustrate the history of the East Lancashire Railway. These will include the following:
 - Locomotives
 - Carriages
 - Wagons
 - Road Transport
 - Stations
 - Lineside Structures
 - Signalling structures and equipment.
- Be open to the public to view the work of the charity and education.

History of the ELR

The East Lancashire Railway opened in 1846 and was amalgamated with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in 1859. There after the design of the buildings and structures followed that of the rest of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

The line was axed in the Beeching cuts from the 1960s. Passenger services between Bury and Rawtenstall were withdrawn by British Rail on 3 June 1972. Coal services to Rawtenstall ended in 1980 and formal closure of the line followed in 1982. At closure the site was cleared of buildings and signalling equipment with only the track, 1 platform at Ramsbottom and 4 signal boxes that remained. The ELR that is visible today is a careful reconstruction of buildings and structures that are in keeping with the historic railway.

Through the dedication and commitment of a group of railway enthusiasts the track bed was then handed over to the Trust with the Preservation Society and company later re-opening the line to provide passengers with the opportunity to travel behind historic locomotives and carriages. The ELR has since built period station buildings at Rawtenstall and Ramsbottom in keeping with the design of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway era. The line has been extended to reach Heywood in the Borough of Rochdale and the full length of the Railway is 12 miles.

Significant historic structures that survive today

EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY

- Castlecroft shed – Now the home of Bury Transport Museum built 1846. Grade 2 listed.
- Buckley Wells Carriage Shed – Built 1862. Grade 2 listed.
- Bolton Street Station platforms built 1890
- Bolton Street Station building – built 1952
- Tunnels x 3 with the earliest built 1847
- Bridges x 30 significant structures that cross the River Irwell.
- 4 Signal boxes

Rolling Stock collection

- 140 wagons in ELR ownership and one loans
- 40 passenger carriages
- 17 Diesel locomotives with combination of ELR ownership and Private owner groups.
- 8 Steam locomotives with a combination of ELR and private ownership.

Statement of historical significance

The Buckley Wells Carriage shed remains the oldest standard gauge locomotive engineering works that remains doing the purpose that it was built for.

How we go about Conservation and our work

The aim to recreate a working museum that illustrates and educates the public in the history of transport in the Irwell Valley and the history of the East Lancashire Railway. Every aspect of our work focuses on how we tell the story of the following topics:

- History and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway
- Passenger transport in the Irwell Valley
- Conservation of lineside structures and equipment
- History of the Industrial revolution and the prosperity that this brought to the area
- British Railways in the 1950s through to 1980s
- History of the East Lancashire Railway

The restoration of any passenger carrying vehicles and locomotives must comply with standards suitable for the purpose. These are outlined in our Safety Management System. Overalls of locomotives pay particular attention to the braking systems, pressure vessel regulations and competency of people completing the work. Principles that apply to historic restorations for carriages is that we will endeavour to restore these to meet with modern regulations but sympathetically to their historical origins. For example we have a fleet of Mark 1 carriages that the youngest of these is now 60 years old. It is important that the historic nature of the vehicle is retained but where we are mindful of the needs of modern passengers such as the provision of baby changing facilities in one of the two toilet cubicles within the TSO Mark 1.

Restoration of buildings and work standards

The ELR is mindful of the we are the custodians of the collection for the enjoyment of future generations. Any undertaking of building and maintenance work will comply with processes

required for listed buildings and the consents necessary. Building repairs and maintenance will be completed to the standard that exhibits the very highest standards of appearance and wherever authenticity for the period.

Rolling stock restoration will be completed to the highest safety critical standards to comply with our Safety management System but also preserve the historic nature of the vehicle. Any changes of modifications will be done with consideration and consultation with the Head of Carriage and Wagon and the Traction and Rolling Stock Manager.

Further Developments

The ELR is committed to the development of a Core Collection policy for:

- Locomotives
- Carriages
- Wagons
- Road Transport
- Stations
- Lineside Structures
- Signalling structures and equipment.

The ELR remains mindful that our collection needs to be accessible and available for the public to enjoy.

January 2023