

## Newly discovered 172-year-old siding gives glimpse into trains gone by...

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There's always a lot of talk about cutting edge technology, digital railways, next-gen working.... But sometimes, a glimpse into history can be just as exciting.

A team working on the Transpennine Route Upgrade in Huddersfield has just uncovered a long-forgotten railway siding, dating back to the 19th Century!

The siding at Hillhouse - used for harbouring off-duty trains - was unearthed while teams studied maps from 1850 to help inform a multi-billion-pound rail upgrade set to transform the region.

Hannah Lomas, principal programme sponsor at Network Rail said: "This is an amazing insight into what the siding would have looked like over a century ago. Understanding the history and makeup of the railway along the Transpennine route is key to delivering a better, more reliable railway capable of running faster, more frequent trains in the future.

"Working closely with ASWYAS (Archaeological Services WYAS) has allowed us to carefully excavate the site at a much faster speed while also providing useful information about the origin of the materials used

and how the sidings helped transport goods around the UK.”

Delicately extracted samples of the brick and mortar, carried out with support from the Archaeological Services WYAS, will now help the team of experts to learn as much as they can about the site.

It is thought that the siding, which composed of train sheds and railway turn tables, was used to house and maintain trains, as well as transport cattle, coal and other materials across the UK when the line formed part of the Manchester & Huddersfield Railway.

Over the last three months, Network Rail has been carefully uncovering the historic site, near Alder Street, to ready the route for twice as many tracks in the future. This will unlock the ambitions of the Transpennine Route Upgrade, making way for faster, more frequent trains running along a greener, electrified railway.

The results confirmed that the foundations of the old sidings were buried just below the surface, spurring the specialists to bring the area back to how it would have looked over 172 years ago.

Kevin Moon, project manager at ASWYAS said: “As part of the planned development of Hillhouse Sidings, ASWYAS investigated the remains of the mid-19th century railway sidings underlying the modern industrial buildings on the site.

“During the project, the team of archaeologists uncovered two train turn tables and a series of brick-built engine sheds, providing valuable information on the early development of the railway system in Huddersfield.”