



PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS



The East Lancashire Railway welcomes people to come and take advantage of some of the fantastic and unique photo opportunities our railway provides. The railway offers great photo locations from publicly accessible areas. Most of the bridges along the line have been given geographic grid reference points; these are listed at the bottom of the page after the location spots.

We would ask all of our visitors to please respect the railway and its environment: please do not trespass on the railway line or any of the private property adjoining the railway.

Ambient Light

The Bury to Heywood section runs West to East, with the ambient light generally keeping to the South side of the line.

The line from Bury up the valley to Rawtenstall runs South to North, with varying light throughout the day as the prevailing light swings from East to West, being potentially overhead by midday.

- Rawtenstall Station, (OS Grid Ref, SD 809 225) (53.698885,-2.290338)
- Line Side Path to Rawtenstall Crossing (53.696948, -2.29566)
- Townsend Fold, Crossing and Signal Box, (OS Grid Ref, SD 803 219) (53.693101,-2.300826)
- Ewood Bridge and Edenfield, (OS Grid Ref, SD 797 208), (bridge number 8), (53.683095,-2.308969)
- Irwell Vale station, (OS Grid Ref, SD 793 201) (underpass bridge number 5), (53.677398,-2.315261)
- Stubbins Station, (OS Grid Ref, SD 792 181), (subway bridge number 1), (53.658853,-2.317069)
- Great Eaves Road, Paper Mill, 'Georgia-Pacific' crossing, Stubbins, (53.652822,-2.314564)
- Ramsbottom Station and area, BL9 9AL, (OS Grid Ref, SD 793 168), (53.647805,-2.314569)
- Brooksbottom (bridge number 41), and Nuttall tunnels (bridge number 42), and area, (OS Grid Ref, SD 795 157)
- Summerseat station and area, (OS Grid Ref, SD793146), (bridge number 39), (53.627583,-2.312826)
- Springside Farm under-bridge, (OS Grid Ref, SD 797 136), (bridge number 37)
- Burrs Country Park, (OS Grid Reference: SD 799 127), (53.607608,-2.30223)
- Bury Bolton Street Station, BL9 0AE, Bury Bolton Street Tunnel, (bridge number 30), (OS Grid Ref, SD 802 107), (53.593581,-2.299914)
- Buckley Wells and Baron Street, (Grid Ref, 53.588378,-2.304162)
- Car Park near Bury South Junction, off Manchester Road
- Bury over-bridges, locations listed at the end of the document
- Roche Viaduct (bridge number 13)

- Heap Bridge Junction, Spout Bank Farm Bridge (bridge number 11)
- Moss Hall Road Bridge (bridge number 10)
- Broadfield, Heywood (OS Grid Ref, SD 848 100)
- Pot Hall overbridge (bridge number 5)
- Pot Hall Playing Fields (Heywood)
- Heywood station, OL10 1LX (OS Grid Ref, SD 865 095)
- Castleton section

Rawtenstall Station Area, BB4 6DD, (OS Grid Ref, SD809 225), (53.698885,-2.290338)

The station has been extensively rebuilt by the East Lancashire Railway, as nothing was left of the original buildings at closure. Since the closure of the line up to Bacup, Rawtenstall has been rebuilt as a terminus station for the ELR. The station itself offers some excellent opportunities for photography, engines can be seen at the far end of the platform watering up and running round trains ready for the southward journey. The original station was opened by the East Lancashire Railway in 1846 (the route later being extended PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS beyond here to Waterfoot in 1848 and Bacup by 1852), it was closed to passenger traffic on the 3rd June 1972 and used as a coal depot, finally closing completely by 1980.

Line Side Path to Rawtenstall Crossing (53.696948, -2.29566)

This can be accessed by turning left at the station exit and continuing left adjacent to the station building and track. Follow the path along the line, and this will lead to another popular photography location with access to the offside platform area. Continue to follow the path until you reach the Signal cabin and crossing which again offer excellent photographic opportunities of trains departing from Rawtenstall and trains approaching the station. Photographic opportunities of trains approaching from the south across the River Irwell (bridge number 14). Continuing on the public footpath by the side of the former textile mill, access can be gained to New Hall Hey bridge (bridge number 13), an over bridge below a rock cutting which again offers some excellent photographic opportunities. Returning to Rawtenstall Station via New Hall Hey road, a gap between the garages offers views of engines turning round and watering on the water tower.

Townsend Fold, Crossing and Signal Box, (OS Grid Ref, SD 803 219), (53.693101,- 2.300826)

Arriving by car and driving across the crossing, then turning left, visitors will be able to park at the roadside next to the line, please be aware of HGV movements when parking; this is also a known and excellent spot for trains travelling south. By continuing along the Irwell Valley trail, you can gain access to the foot crossing South of Townsend Fold, to Duckworth Hall footcrossing, both the crossing areas and the river bank at this point again offer excellent photographic opportunities for trains travelling both North and South. To the North of Townsend Fold crossing lies New Hall Hey Cutting, and a stone footbridge, New Hall Hey/Hardmans Bridge (bridge number 13) crosses the line here offering opportunities for photography both North and South. Photographic opportunities from the Irwell Trail with views available across the fields towards Wharf Cattle Creep under bridge (bridge number 10, and the former sites of bridges 11 and 12, removed occupation bridges, before the curve towards the former site of Holme Mill and Horncliffe siding, also removed, and once occupied by a 3ft industrial railway).

Ewood Bridge and Edenfield, (OS Grid Ref, SD797208), (bridge number 8), (53.683095,- 2.308969)

Located on the Blackburn Road (B6527), the former station site at Ewood Bridge and Edenfield is another popular spot with some limited parking available road side. Although the buildings have long since been demolished (save for a few of the original goods buildings that remain standing in the private yard opposite) the station platform is still in situ, though these are within the railway fence and out of bounds, so please don't trespass! However, this spot offers excellent views for approaching trains from the South through the old station bridge parapet and field looking towards Hardsough bridges (bridge number 6) and Ashenbottom (bridge number 7), and a public footpath gives access to these areas. In addition it is also possible to take a few good pictures of trains travelling from the north looking towards the A56 Bridge (bridge number 9A), this is a new bridge occupying the site of an older bridge. The station opened on 25th September 1846 and was closed on 3rd June 1972.

Irwell Vale station, (OS Grid Ref, SD 793 201) (underpass bridge number 5), (53.677398,- 2.315261)

A purpose built station by Rossendale Council and the ELR, opened on the 27th April 1991. Irwell Vale is another well known photo spot, offering excellent views of approaching trains from both directions. Once over the crossing from the station, via the underpass, public pathways head in both directions giving some excellent scenic shots. South of the station part of the Irwell Trail passes below the railway at Lumb Footpath underbridge (bridge number 4), and again gives opportunities for photography, while a large area of fields enroute to Strongstry also offers some excellent photographic opportunities. By following the footpath South towards Strongstry, the visitor will have the opportunity to photograph Alderbottom girder bridge (bridge number 3), with the disused Alderbottom Viaduct in the background, which used to carry a line to Accrington via Helmshore and Baxenden. Access to Irwell Vale Village is from the Manchester to Blackburn Road (B6527) into Irwell Vale Road, leading directly into the village. There is a small car park adjoining the station.

Strongstry, (OS Grid Ref, SD 791 187)

At Strongstry hamlet on the east side of the line adjacent to bridge number 2 a public footpath commences. The overall footpath is unusable at the river but the first ¼ mile affords good views of the line.

Stubbins Station, (OS Grid Ref, SD7918), (subway bridge number 1), (53.658853,-2.317069)

The former station site at Stubbins, junction of the ill-fated Accrington line offers a location from the car parking area. Much of the original platform area and an underpass are still in situ and of interest, however these are inside the railway fence and therefore out of bounds. The station was opened by the East Lancashire Railway in 1846 and closed to passengers in 1972.

Great Eaves Road, Paper Mill, 'Georgia-Pacific' crossing, Stubbins, (53.652822,- 2.314564)

Photographic opportunities are available at the crossing gates with trains from both directions being viewable.

Ramsbottom Station and area, BL0 9AL, (OS Grid Ref, SD 793 168), (53.647805,-2.314569)

The station itself has been lovingly rebuilt to capture the era and being the centre of the town offers excellent facilities for cafes, pubs, restaurants and shops. The station lends itself to some excellent photographic opportunities, particularly from the station footbridge (rescued from Dinting station) giving views of trains approaching in both directions and across the sidings to the North. A short walk has been created alongside the part of the railway to the North of the crossing which again offers excellent photographic opportunities of both the siding and signal box area with trains arriving and departing. To the south of the station lies Nuttall Park Bridge (bridge number 43), accessible from Nuttall Lane, (53.637889-2.311943), and Square River Bridge (bridge number 45), accessible via Waterside Road, (53.633306-2.313652). These locations also offer side views of passing trains. The station originally opened on the 28th September 1846 and closed to passengers on 5th June 1972. The present station was rebuilt by the ELR and opened on 25th July 1987.

Brooksbottom (bridge number 41), and Nuttall tunnels (bridge number 42), and area, (OS Grid Ref, SD 795 157)

Public footpaths give access above both tunnel portals, again offering our visiting photographers some first class opportunities to record our events. From the Northern tunnel portal the public footpath continues over both tunnels giving access into the village of Summerseat via Starling Street. Between the tunnels lies Nuttall Cutting with views down onto the line.

Summerseat station and area, (OS Grid Ref, SD 793 146), (bridge number 39), (53.627583,-2.312826)

The station itself offers some good opportunities for photographs, particularly of the cutting directly to the south of the station, Summerseat Cutting. At the end of the cutting a foot crossing is located (Chest Wheel foot crossing, Wood Road Lane), (53.625194,-2.311061), which again proves to be a popular spot for trains in both directions from both sides of the crossing. Returning back to the village past the station, the waterside and Brooksbottom viaduct also offer some of our most popular photographic locations with river views from both (bridge number 40), (53.632034,-2.313416). Part of the Irwell Valley Trail follows the line between Summerseat and Burrs Country Park offering a few locations for photos from the footpath. Summerseat station opened in 1846 (see the 1846 poster on the notice board), before being closed by BR in 1972, and reopened by the ELR in 1987.

Chest Wheel Farm (OS Grid Ref, SD 795 144)

At this location public footpaths converge and there is a pedestrian controlled hand gate. Sylvan view up and down the track are possible here.

Springside Farm under-bridge, (OS Grid Ref, SD 797 136), (bridge number 37)

This location is accessible by the Irwell Sculpture Trail, some nice bridge shots are available here of trains above the footpath crossing a typical rural farm bridge.

Burrs Country Park, (OS Grid Ref: SD 799 127), (53.607608,-2.30223)

Probably one of our most photographic locations and enhanced by the new halt (which opened in 2016). As well as views north into Touchill cutting, the public footpath immediately opposite the halt

affords dramatic views of the trains. The Burrs Country Park area has ample parking and a cafe, visitor centre and the Brown Cow pub add to the amenities.

Bury Bolton Street Station, BL9 0AE, Bury Bolton Street Tunnel, (bridge number 30), (OS Grid Ref, SD 802 107), (53.593581,-2.299914)

The main hub of our activities, when visitors can relax between trips in the Trackside (our own Real Ale Pub), our tearooms on Platforms 3 and 4, or visit our museum and the various shops and stalls located on the station. There are plenty of excellent photographs to be taken from the station, both on the platforms and the higher pathways which surround the station environs. The Jubilee Way road bridge, bridge number 28, replaced an earlier bridge, Tenterden Street bridge (1848), and occupies the southern exit of Bury Bolton Street station. The car park at Belle Vue Terrace gives views over the signal box junction and leads to bridge number 25, which has views up/down the sidings. The new car park on the site of the former Bury Knowsley Street Station (to the South East of the ELR station) also gives the opportunity to view trains climbing up the infamous “ski jump” Metrolink bridge. Bury Bolton Street Station was originally opened by the East Lancashire Railway as Bury Station in 28th September 1846, renamed Bury Bolton Street Station in 1866 and closed on the 17th March 1980 by British Rail, before being re-opened by the ELR on 25th July 1987.

Buckley Wells and Baron Street, (OS Grid Ref, SD 799 103) (53.588378,-2.304162)

Access is presently restricted to the yard and shed areas at the present time, apart from at special photographic events. However plans are afoot to redevelop this location to include a visitor’s centre, diesel depot, engine shed and museum complex over the coming years. But, some good shots can be found at the Baron Street crossing itself as locomotives leave and return the depot and yards, particularly at the start and end of the running day.

Car Park near Bury South Junction, off Manchester Road

A local authority car park South of the station is another popular location for photographers giving access to trains leaving and arriving at the station and also locos arriving and leaving the shed, a footbridge is located at the west side of the car park on Belle Vue Terrace (bridge number 25), giving views of the Buckley Wells carriage sidings, carriage and wagon sheds, and distant views of the yards and depot areas across Baron Street Crossing, with Bury South signal cabin clearly visible to the north.

Bury over-bridges, locations listed at the end of the document

Where the line sweeps east on the Bury on the Heywood section through Manchester Road bridge, passing under the A56 (bridge number 20), it would be time well spent for photographers to check out the various overbridges which the line passes under in the Bury suburbs. Some excellent shots can be had from these locations, particularly of the “ski jump” spanning the Metrolink which is built on the former Bury Knowsley Street station site, the former station footbridge number was inherited by the “ski jump”, which is now bridge number 18.

Knowsley Street bridge (bridge number 19) offers some interesting views, and Market Street Bridge (bridge number 17) gives some first class views of the ski jump and towards what was once the junction connecting to Buckley Wells, part of which is now occupied by the tram lines as they

approach the Interchange. Parkhills Road (B6291) bridge (bridge number 16), offers an extended view up towards the Ski jump looking in the Bury direction, while Alfred Street bridge (bridge number 15) offers an easterly directional view, towards the Roche viaduct.

M66 Underbridge

Although not accessible, passing under bridge 12A as a train crosses it is spectacular.

Roche Viaduct (bridge number 13)

One of the main structures of the Heywood section, some first class photographs can be taken from the public footpaths which surround this excellent viaduct. A brick built seven arched structure dating from 1862, standing on a stone base, a point of interest is the piers which stand closest to the river were built with rounded stone blocks that were designed to ease river flow.

Heap Bridge Junction, Spout Bank Farm Bridge (bridge number 11)

Site of the former signal box and branch down the 1 in 80 incline to the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway's Heap Bridge Goods Depot, with an industrial extension to Yates Duxbury, formerly Heap Bridge paper mills.

From this location above Heap Bridge next to the M66 motorway roundabout, a public footpath path leads from the village to the line high above, this area signals the start of the 1 in 85 Broadfield Bank. This location offers some excellent photo spots looking west across the M66 Motorway (bridge number 12A and the underpass bridge number 12), Water Fold Lane, and Roche viaduct (bridge number 13) towards Bury, or looking east towards Heywood from Spout Bank Farm Bridge toward the farm bridge (bridge number 11). By following this public path up towards the Spout Bank Farm, you can also gain access to a lovely stone country-style three arched occupation bridge which overlooks the line.

Moss Hall Road Bridge (bridge number 10)

Other good vantage points are either from the bridge itself or a pathway to the disused ballast quarry to the south of the line. Views can be obtained from both sides of the bridge parapets, including looking east into Darnhill Cutting (Bridges number 8 and 9 were occupation bridges that were taken out when the new estates were built).

Broadfield, Heywood (OS Grid Ref, SD 848 100)

The overbridge directly to the south of the former Broadfield station site, Pilsworth Road Bridge (bridge number 7, with bridge number 6 being the original footbridge on Broadfield station) lies at the top of the 1 in 85 Broadfield Bank. From road level, there are side view shots of trains crossing the Pilsworth Road to be had here. Broadfield station opened in 1869 and was closed in 1970. The station platforms are still in situ beyond the boundary fence and can be seen from passing trains.

Pot Hall Overbridge (bridge number 5)

Again photographs are also available at this location, although mainly side on views of passing trains.

Pot Hall Playing Fields (Heywood)

A number of playing fields on the approach to Heywood offer some good opportunities for photography from both sides of the line here. The playing field to the south of the track is accessed via Royal Avenue.

Heywood station, OL10 1LX (OS Grid Ref, SD 865 103)

Arriving at our present Eastern terminus, Heywood station and the surrounding area offer plenty of photographic opportunities for visitors. Trains also run round the stock and water up ready for the return journey, the water tower being at the East end of the platform. For trains arriving and leaving, as well as shots from the station platform, there are over bridges to the West of the station, where you can get a view looking down on to the train. These two excellent stone over-bridges are on Manchester Street and Schofield Street respectively (bridge numbers 3 and 4). Bridge number 4 also has a steel pedestrian only bridge section which was erected in the 1970s. The original station was opened in 1841 and closed on 5th October 1970 by British Rail. The present station, in a slightly different location to the original, was opened on 6th September 2003 by the ELR. Please note the above postcode is for SatNav purposes only and is used with the express permission of Precision Components & Equipment Ltd, thanks go out to Mr Derek Killen for his cooperation.

Castleton section

While there's no regular ELR service beyond Heywood today, locomotives and trains do on occasion use this section to access and leave the railway, with longer term plans in development to operate regular ELR services through to Castleton. At Castleton there will eventually be an ELR station designed for connection with main line services. But for now, this section is only used when trains visit the ELR, or one of the locomotives based at Bury go out to or return from working on the mainline. For those who are aware when these movements on and off ELR metals are due, there's the opportunity to photograph a train using the non-gated Green Lane crossing, or by following a public footpath from Green Lane, a foot crossing can be accessed on the Castleton section (Hopwood crossing), which also offers views of this section of line.

ELR Bridge numbers with grid references

Castleton section, as listed under the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

1. Green Lane footbridge, since removed (386527, 410197).
2. Heywood Station footbridge since removed
3. Manchester Street (386131, 410310).
4. Schofield Street (386013,410257).
- 4A. Schofield Street Pedestrian Bridge (380614, 410257).
5. Pot Hall over bridge (385502,410123).
6. Broadfield station footbridge, since removed (384888,410069).

7. Pilsworth Road Bridge (384828,410055).
 8. occupational bridge since removed.
 9. occupational farm access bridge since removed.
 10. Moss Hall Road Bridge (382941,410035).
 11. Spout Bank Farm Bridge (382332,410067).
 12. Water Fold Lane underpass public footpath, (382105,410081).
 - 12A. M66 Motorway bridge (382020,410080).
 13. Roch Viaduct (381689,410118).
 14. Pimhole: School Street underpass (381481,410145).
 15. Alfred Street bridge (381217,410182).
 16. Parkhills Road (B6219) (380975,410211).
 17. Market Street bridge (380606,410240).
 18. Ski Jump over Metrolink (bridge number 18 replaces the Knowsley Street Station footbridge) (380339,410306).
 19. Knowsley Street bridge (380231,410351).
 20. Manchester Street bridge, this was a two portal bridge the other portal being infilled, on the former Bury to Bolton line (380176,410394).
- Bury to Stubbins section, as listed under the East Lancashire Railway Company.
25. Belle Vue Terrace footbridge (380042,410393).
 27. Jubilee Way bridge, replaces an earlier bridge Tenterden Street bridge (1848) (380124,410558).
 28. Bury Bolton Street south footbridge, since removed (temporary bridge).
 28. (possibly original ELR numbering), Bury Bolton Street north footbridge, replaced by present station buildings.
 29. Present footbridge and station buildings (380241,410780).
 30. Bury Bolton Street Tunnel (380256,410819).
 - 30A. Peel Way bridge (380312,410953).
 31. Tanpits Lane underbridge (380333,411008).
 32. Chamberhall Street bridge (380389,411277).
 33. Park Road bridge (this was also the site of an earlier wooden footbridge) (380352,411562).

34. Calrows Viaduct (River Irwell) (380193,412477).
35. Burrs Bridge (River Irwell) (380102,412677).
36. Touchill cutting occupation footbridge, long since removed although the abutments are still in situ (379829,413105).
37. Springside Farm underbridge (379641,413669).
38. Hall O`th Hill, footpath, underpass, since infilled (379519,414353).
39. Summerseat twist bridge, Railway Street (379402,414576).
- 39A. Summerseat footbridge, since removed (379391,414609).
40. Brooksbottom Viaduct (31 feet span 6 arches) (River Irwell & Waterside Road), (379316,415109).
41. Brookbottom Tunnel (423 yards) (379358,415243-379470,415602).
42. Nuttall Tunnel (115 yards) (379473,415731-379456,415831).
43. (Original ELR bridge number) Nuttall Old Goit, (379368,416081).
44. Nuttall Park Bridge, over the River Irwell (steel girder 102 foot span) (379340,416169).
45. Square River Bridge over the River Irwell (steel girder 54 foot span) (379303,416455).
45. (Original ELR bridge number) Square Reservoir Bridge, since removed (379295,416575).
46. Ramsbottom station footbridge, replaces earlier bridges numbers 47 for the station and number 48 for the crossing bridge (379284,416828).
54. (Original ELR bridge number), Ramsbottom and Stubbins Gas Works Mill Goyt, since infilled (379252,417549).
46. Stubbins Lane Bridge, listed in earlier times as bridge 55 (379175,417924).

Numbering continues for the Accrington line from here Stubbins to Rawtenstall section, as listed under the East Lancashire Railway Company.

1. Stubbins Station underpass (379164,418039).
2. Strongstry Road (379096,418727).
3. Alderbottom Bridge, River Irwell and public footpath (379008,419159).
4. Lumb footpath under bridge (subway)(379031,419716).
5. Irwell Vale, Aitken Street underpass (379283,420176).
6. Hardsough bridge, River Irwell (379408,420381).
7. Ashenbottom Viaduct, River Irwell (379568,420596).

8. Ewood Bridge and Edenfield Station (379692,420785).
- 9a. A56 bypass bridge, but replaces an earlier bridge (379895,421105).
10. Wharf Cattle Creep under bridge (380028,421324).
11. Occupation bridge demolished
12. A second occupation bridge before curve towards Holme Mill and Horncliffe siding, since demolished
13. New Hall Hey/Hardmans bridge, stone footbridge (380386,422129).
14. River Irwell bridge, Rawtenstall (380523,422269).
15. New Hall Hey Road subway, since infilled (380583,422327).

This information was compiled by Nick Melling & revised by Ian Nicholson 1.3.2017