

Lancaster Civic Vision

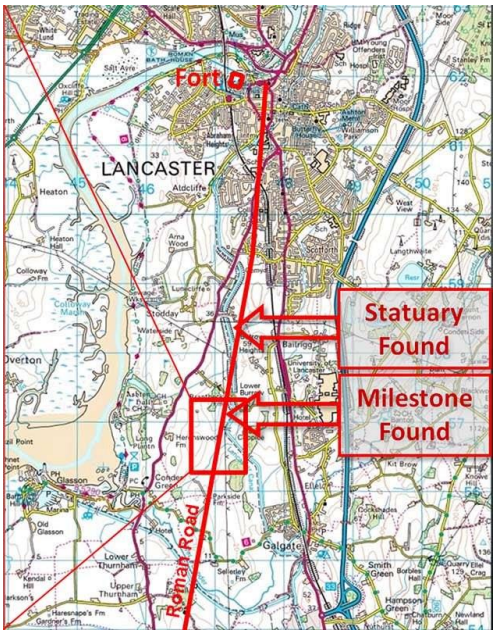
Celebrating our Heritage – Enhancing our Environment – Shaping our Future

LANCASTER'S PINCHPOINT

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With Morecambe Bay and the Irish Sea to the west and the Forest of Bowland and the rest of the Pennines to the east, it is unsurprising that the Lancaster area has always been a gap or pinchpoint for north – south routes. The crossing of the River Lune north of Lancaster has required bridge building over the millennia, as Guide No. 22 in this series explains. South of Lancaster, around Galgate, the pinchpoint is very obvious.

The first road through the pinchpoint that we know of was the Roman road from Preston. This took a more south-westerly approach to Lancaster than the A6, passing east of Thurnham and just west of Burrow Heights. Its route can be seen using LiDAR imagery, but very little of the road is easily visible above ground. The map below shows the route.



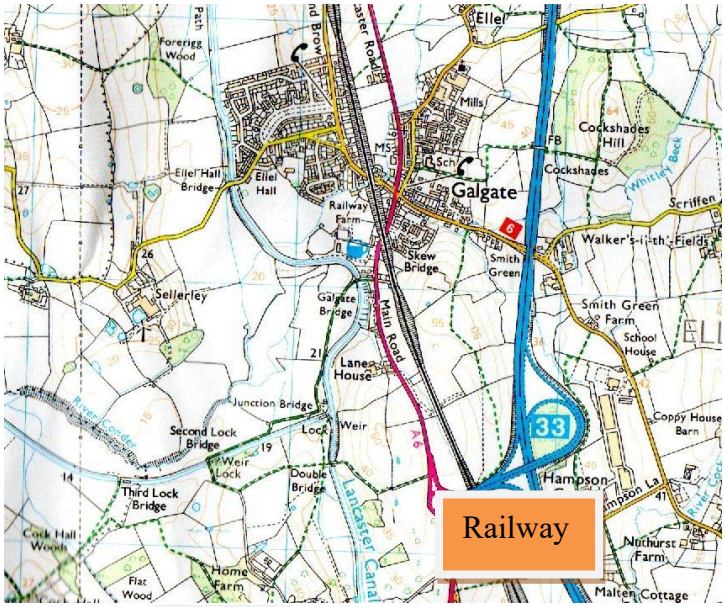
Source: Roman Roads Research Association, https://romanroads.org

The map below shows the sequence of modern north-south routes through the pinchpoint. From west to east, there is:

- one of two lines of pylons taking electricity from the Heysham nuclear power stations to the south, operational from 1983, and shown on the map below as a dashed line running north-south to the west of the Lancaster Canal;
- the Lancaster canal, opened in 1797;
- the A6, its current route past Lancaster University and into Galgate being a flatter and straighter alignment in 1824 of an earlier, slower line;
- the railway, now called the West Coast Mainline, opened in 1840;
- the M6 motorway opened around Lancaster in 1960.

There is less than two kilometres between the pylon line and the M6 south of Galgate.

A little to the east of the M6 are several underground pipelines for water, gas and chemicals and a second National Grid line of pylons.



Sourc e Survey Explorer map 296

Other Guides of interest

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