The Social Anatomy of a Beeching Railway Closure

A Case Study of Goathland and the Whitby Area 1963-65

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Abstract

This dissertation is a micro-history of the impact of a Beeching Report railway closure. It documents the powerful but unsuccessful campaign of the villagers of Goathland against the closure of their local railway. This campaign was strongly led and orchestrated by the local newspaper, the *Whitby Gazette* and community leaders. This orchestration emphasised the hardship that people would experience and was a catalyst for people's negative perception of the closure and the alternative bus services. These perceptions of an adverse social impact proved not to reflect reality. The perceptions and the impact of a Beeching closure have not been widely studied by historians. However, for Goathland a wealth of archival material from the *Whitby Gazette* and the letters of protest written by the villagers have survived to form the basis of this study. New tools using the power of HGIS databases and analysis are applied to this material to portray a people-centric view of a closure. These tools are used to model how, in 1963, the railway had an emotional rather than practical value for the local community. From this starting point it shows that local perception of the impact of the railway closure was always going to be at variance with the reality. To the villagers the perception was important, not the reality. Bespoke accessibility models bring an objectivity to the role of public transport in villagers' lives. These villagers were isolated after closure, but objectively they were isolated before, they just did not perceive that they were.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as references*.*

1 "Children would be exposed to the very certain risk of death" - Approaches to the study of local railway closures[1]

The history of British Railways (BR) in the 1960s and railway closures as a result of the Beeching Report has been widely studied. There has been less study of the impact on the people and communities affected by the report.[2] "The loss of the railway could mean the death of any of us due to being deprived of medical attention at a critical moment".[3] Thus John Bateman a resident of Goathland made his strong antipathy to the proposed closure of Goathland's railway service known in his letter of protest to the Transport Users Consultative Committee (TUCC). These were not the isolated eccentricities of individuals, Goathland Parish Council (GPC) wrote in even more dramatic terms to the government. "The villagers of Goathland cannot believe that it is the policy of Her Majesty's Government that to save the very small cost of four miles of railway between Grosmont and Goathland the schoolchildren in all normal winters will have their schooling ruined and to be exposed to the very certain risk of death from exposure."[4] This dissertation studies a railway closure through the people impacted by the closure as expressed in their writings and reflected in their local newspaper the *Whitby Gazette*. Why did the local railway closure provoke extreme feelings, how these were reflected in the campaign against closure and, when the railway was closed, were these fears realised?

The railway first reached Goathland and Whitby in 1836 making it one of the oldest in the country.[5] The local reaction to the 1963 report the Reshaping of British Railways, popularly known as the Beeching Report, recommending the closure of all of the railways in the area, was of profound shock. "Beeching holds out little hope for places like Whitby", wrote the *Whitby Gazette*.[6] The local people thought the consequences of closure would be catastrophic, a local councillor stated it was "an iniquitous and almost godless thing to do."[7] Local railway historian Bairstow summarises, "The moment the Beeching Report was in print there was as much chance as saving the railways to Whitby as there was stopping the tide coming in."[8]

They were encouraged in these views by the local newspaper the *Whitby Gazette* and community leaders, and thus began a vigorous two-year campaign to oppose the closure. The editorial in the *Whitby Gazette* reflected; "If it is the intention of the government to throttle life in isolated communities, then railway closure would be a

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[1] Goathland Parish Council, "Closure of the Whitby to Malton Railway Line, Report to Ministry of Transport," (File ZRZ 15, NYCC Archive, Northallerton, Sep 24, 1964), 6.
[2] British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways," (London: HM Stationery Office, 1963). This was known as the Beeching Report after the Chairman of British Railways, Dr. Richard Beeching.
[3] John Bateman, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 27 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[4] Goathland Parish Council, "Closure of the Whitby to Malton Railway Line, Report to Ministry of Transport," 6.
[5] G. W. J Potter, *History of the Whitby and Pickering Railway* (London: S. R. Publishers, 1969), 27.
[6] British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways," 103 and 21. "The Axe Is Poised," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 29, 1963, 1.
[7] "Whitby Rural Council and Railways Strong Protest About Closure Proposals," article, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 11, 1963. "United Opposition to Beeching Plan - Action Committee Will Express Whitby District Views," article, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 5, 1963.
[8] Martin Bairstow, *Railways around Whitby: Scarborough-Whitby-Saltburn, Malton-Goathland-Whitby, Esk Valley, Forge Valley and Gilling Lines* (Halifax: M. Bairstow, 1989), 78.

first step. We must make the government realise that the very life of our community is at stake".[9] Yet two years later the railways to Malton and Scarborough had closed, Goathland had lost its rail link to the outside world, the protest was a memory, and the *Whitby Gazette* reported, "Alternative Services Largely Fulfilling Need".[10]
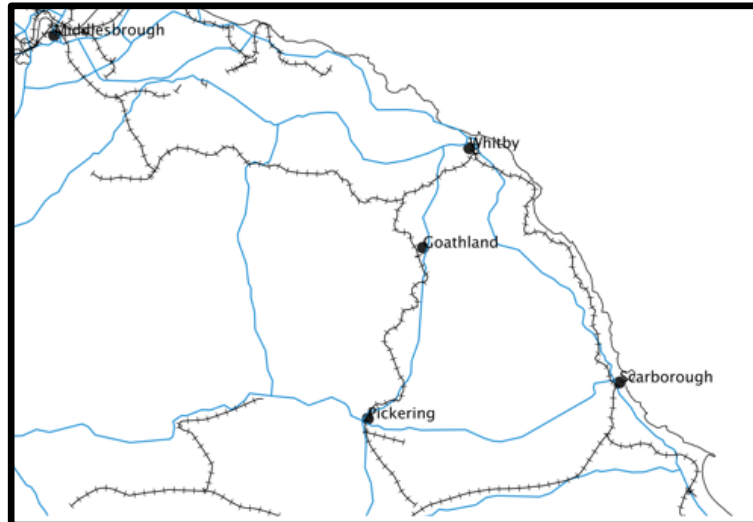
Map 1. *Whitby Area Railways before Beeching Closures*
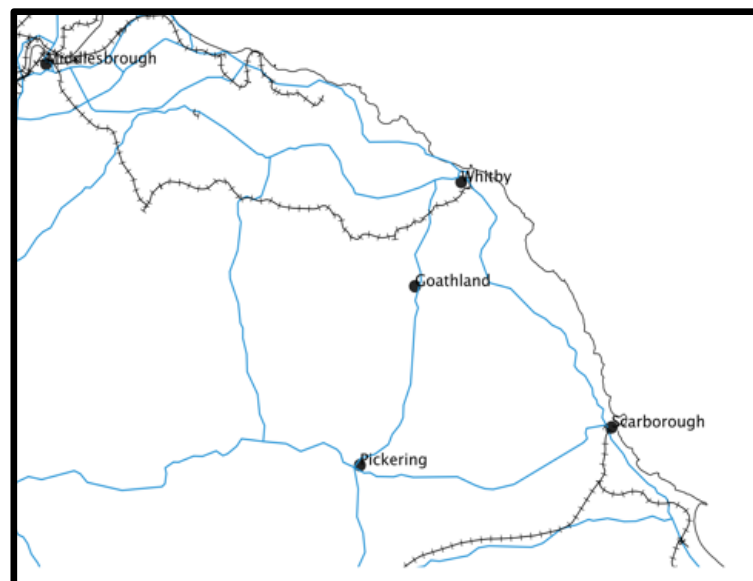
Map 2. *Whitby Area Railways after Beeching Closures*

Structure

The introduction places the dissertation in the context of the publication and implementation of the Beeching Report.[11] The existing writing is reviewed particularly with regard to micro-historical and analytical studies of the impact of railway closures. This is placed in the context of the 1962 Transport Act to show how that Act positioned hardship at the centre of local campaigns against closures, particularly the campaign

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[9] "Preparing for Railway Action," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 31, 1964, 1.
[10] "Inquiry into Transport Problems," headline, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 30, 1966, 1.
[11] British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways."

in Whitby and the village of Goathland.[12] The *Whitby Gazette* was at the forefront of the campaign. An examination of its reach, analysis of its language, policies, and its roots in a conservative rural community is used to explain how despite the vigour of its campaign it failed to reverse the railway closure. Counter-intuitively the campaign might have contributed to that closure.

The vigour of the campaign was exemplified by the inhabitants of the village of Goathland. The villagers of Goathland were very animated against the closure of their railway, however for most of them the railway played a peripheral role in their lives. The railway was a much loved and established part of the social fabric, rather than a necessary form of transport. The impact of the Beeching Report is understood from the perspective of the villager, their community, and their institutions. They wrote almost one hundred letters, all of which are preserved, of protest against the closure of their local railway service. These are the foundation of a micro-history to show how the villagers used public transport, and why they felt so strongly about the closure of the local railway. The methodology to examine such rich but analogue resources is discussed. The letters are examined linguistically to show the writer's concerns and how their everyday lives might be impacted by the closure. The recurrent theme is one of an emotional response to the closure, one that was not necessarily reflected in actuality. The paradox that the removal of one form of public transport did not lead these fears being realised is shown by use of population analysis, mobility and accessibility indices. The merits of each form of analysis will be considered, concluding that the optimum tool is a bespoke measure of accessibility. Case studies show the objective as against the perceived impact of the closure on individuals. The perception of the impact of closure will be shown as being as important as the reality.

The dissertation contributes to the understanding of the social effects of the Beeching Railway closure on individual people in a rural community, and how these effects were as much perceived as real. It explains why the campaign against closure was ineffectual despite the support of a campaigning newspaper. The reality was that people's lives would not be much effected by the closure of the local railways and that this led to a fundamental disconnect between the campaign and reality.

Methodology and Sources

Historians have examined the Beeching Report from the perspective of government legislation, railway finances and the actions of BR, particularly studying the personalities involved. The colourful and controversial Ernest Marples (Minister of Transport 1959 to 1964) contrasting to the technocrat, Dr. Richard Beeching (Chairman of the British Railways Board 1961 to 1965).[13] This approach explained the place of the railway nationally but neglects its impact on people's lives. To understand this as it applied to the village of Goathland the dissertation takes a micro-historical perspective rooted in the people of the area, their travel habits, perceptions, and their

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[12] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz."

[13] Marples financial corruption David Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy: The Fall and Rise of Britain's Railways since the 1950s* (Hawes: Leading Edge, 1994), 126. Use of prostitutes Richard Lamb, *The Macmillan Years, 1957-1963: The Emerging Truth* (London: John Murray, 1995), 482. Beeching -"He gives the impression above all of striking intellectual honesty and the political shibboleths about nationalisation seem to dissolve in his presence" Anthony A. Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1962), 544.

doomed campaign to save their railway service. A campaign that was orchestrated by community institutions, particularly the *Whitby Gazette.* This "fine campaigning newspaper" that led a conventional, conservative, and ultimately ineffective campaign against closure.[14]

Fifty-five years after the Beeching Report undertaking such a social history is challenging. Detailed information about Goathland in the 1960s is difficult to find with statistics either being collected at a regional, national level or not being collected at all. For example, before 1970, it is impossible to find car ownership rates for either of the two Whitby local authority areas. Plowden produces a table showing car registrations in the United Kingdom increasing by approximately three million between 1964 and 1969. Such nationwide statistics are indicative but of little use to the micro-historian studying the villagers of Goathland.[15] In this example the best indicator available is the response of residents who stated in their letters of protest whether they had access to a car, see Table 6. The author considered using proxies as indicators of individual behaviour for instance, those provided by property values as recorded in the property adverts of the *Whitby Gazette*, or rateable values recorded in the local authority rating books. Property adverts displayed a sale price, but do not allow for unique identification of the property and any comparison of prices was dependent on a similar property being advertised at a later date. Rate books provide a comprehensive valuation of properties, however rateable values only changed when there was a rate review, rare, or a substantive change made to the property, random. Property values were an ambiguous indicator as on one hand, Wiggins states that they have an inverse relationship to isolation while locally Walton thinks that Whitby's isolation was critical to its revival in the late twentieth century.[16] More esoteric proxies were researched, the receipts from Whitby Urban District Council's (WUDC) leisure activities were examined, and although complete records were found before 1965, thereafter they were not available. It was felt that the variations in the number of people using a putting course or playing tennis were too far removed from the effects of railway closure to be of value.

Time is a twin edged sword for the railway historian examining the Beeching Report. The living witnesses of the closure were children at the time, observers rather than participants in the process, their abiding memories were those of holiday journeys to the seaside at Whitby or the almost party-like atmosphere on the last day of railway operations between Scarborough and Whitby.[17] In the intervening years, techniques and tools have developed. Micro-history using the individual to build a larger historic picture has become a recognised discipline, Historic Geographic Information Systems (HGIS) allow the analysis of behaviour over time and space, while measures of accessibility and mobility have developed as objective quantative tools. In the Whitby area and Goathland in particular there is a depth and range of material that allow the

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[14] Charles Loft, *Last Trains: Dr Beeching and the Death of Rural England* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2013), 221.

[15] William Plowden, *The Motor Car and Politics, 1896-1970* (London: Bodley Head, 1971), 456.

[16] David Wiggins and Mayer Hillman, "21. Railways, Settlement and Access," in *Town and Country*, ed. Anthony Barnett and Roger Scuton (London: Vintage, 1998), 248. John K Walton, "Port and Resort: Symbiosis and Conflict in 'Old Whitby', England, since 1880," in *Resorts and Ports: European Seaside Towns since 1700*, ed. Peter Borsay and John Walton (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2011), 143.

[17] Richard Coulson, interview by Nigel Sheppard, Jul 30, 2018. Stuart Baines, interview by Nigel Sheppard, Oct 17, 2019.

application of these multiple techniques to show the impact of the railway closure. The archival records of the local authorities, Whitby Rural District Council (WRDC), WUDC, and GPC document the local response to the railway closure. In these archives, the author discovered ninety-six letters from householders in Goathland, a village on the Whitby to Malton railway line, to the Secretary of the North East Transport Users Consultative Committee registering protest against the proposed closure of the railway service.[18] The letters refer to 176 inhabitants of Goathland over the age of eleven, thirty-seven per cent of the total population. The validity of this sample is discussed in chapter 3. To augment this the complete archive of the local paper the *Whitby Gazette,* between 1963 and 1965, provided a detailed record of the railway closure, a substantive commentary in its editorials, and a lively debate in its letter's column.

The availability of such rich archive material in one area was a prime reason for its study. This material was not readily accessible for analysis, was not digitised and so had to be painstakingly read. For the *Whitby Gazette* 1800 pages from which over 400 articles were extracted. The GIS database of information from the letters of protest contained in excess of 7,000 cells all which could be cross-referenced to each other and public transport provision.

Using this material, the dissertation provides an insight into the perceived and actual impact of the Beeching Report on the people of a rural area. It is a microhistory of a railway closure using multiple methodologies on a diverse and rich archive. This enables an understanding as to how people perceived the utility of public transport before and after the closure of their local railways, and how this might have affected the dynamics of their protest. The limited real impact of the Beeching Report on the individual is understood. The dissertation concentrates exclusively on public transport, consideration was given to the role of the car in Goathland. The evidence from the letters of protest was that most people (sixty per-cent, see Table 6) had no access to a car, only eight people (four per-cent) reported being able to use a car. Although car ownership would increase in Goathland, in the mid-1960's car use was peripheral at best for most of the population whereas public transport was their main source of their mobility. This is the focus of this dissertation.

"History remembers the Black Death, not the other plagues" - The Impact of the Beeching Report in Perspective[19]

The Beeching Report is one of the most discussed subjects in British Railway history. In the fifty years following the publication of the report well over one hundred books and academic papers had Beeching in their subject line, Gourvish describes it as "One of the most important single publications on transport in the post-war period."[20] It was divisive, some view it as progressive, "Beeching jolted a hidebound industry out of morbid introspection into an aggressive confrontation with its competitors, to have trimmed it down to ideal fighting weight", while others think it to be a backward step for the railway industry even comparing it to the plague. "History remembers the Black

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[18] Goathland Residents, letters to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[19] G. Freeman Allen, *British Rail after Beeching* (London: Ian Allan, 1966), viii. Terence Richard Gourvish and Neil Blake, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 436.

[20] *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 401.

Death, not the other plagues".[21] Gourvish's book is the foundation for discussion of organisation and history of British Railways (BR) in this era; it provides a comprehensive comparable set of operating/financial metrics for the post-war period. These underpin a strong discussion of the organisational aspects of BR and the relationship it had with the Ministry of Transport (MoT). Gourvish's focus is internal to the railways, largely ignoring the wider societal impact of BR's policies, concentrating on its declining operating performance and the reasons for that. Nonetheless, it provides the national and economic background essential for an understanding of the local railway history.

Nationally the Beeching Report was an evaluation of historic transport demand flows, future plans, and a consequent network that maximised the value of the railways to the national economy.[22] The report did not purport to be an analysis of the railway's place in, or impact on the wider economic and social environment.[23] Concerning rural areas it comments, "public transport is fighting a losing battle against private transport", and therefore it considers that the social impact of closures should only be considered in urban areas.[24] Emphasising that the bus was a more than adequate replacement for the railway it did not address why rural public transport was in decline.[25] It follows that there was limited discussion of the effect of the Beeching Report in rural areas like Whitby. While historians show the impact of the report on British Railway's financial results, discuss the national political background to the report, catalogue closures in minute detail, and provide before and after photographic records of closed railways, with a few exceptions they have not discussed the impact of the report on people.[26] This omission has been identified by several authors, Whitelegg writes "very little research has been conducted into the social consequences of state disinvestment in rural areas" and Hillman and Whalley state that there was no evidence as to the social effects of rail closure, "surprising given that almost twenty years have passed since the Beeching Report".[27] Moseley concludes "what is in doubt – perhaps because it has not excited much interest hitherto – is the impact of retraction rather than expansion of transport provision."[28] This dissertation addresses this through a study of the Whitby area and the village of Goathland in particular.

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[21] Allen, *British Rail after Beeching*, viii. Gourvish and Blake, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 436.
[22] Richard Hardy, *Beeching: Champion of the Railway?* (London: Ian Allan, 1989), 69.
[23] Derek H. Aldcroft, *British Railways in Transition: The Economic Problems of Britain's Railways since 1914* (London: Macmillan, 1968), 186. Richard Faulkner and Chris Austin, *Holding the Line: How Britain's Railways Were Saved* (Hersham: Oxford Publishing Company, 2012), 8.
[24] British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways," 16 & 56.
[25] Andrew Grantham, "Privatisation and Reorganisation: Case Studies in Rail Policy Implementation" (Thesis, University of East Anglia, 1998), 215.
[26] Gourvish and Blake, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 389 to 468. Geoffrey Dudley and Jeremy Richardson, *Why Does Policy Change?: Lessons from British Transport Policy 1945-99* (London: Routledge, 2000), 19. Julian Holland, *Dr Beeching's Axe 50 Years On: Illustrated Memories of Britain's Lost Railways* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 2013), 172. Mac Hawkins, *The Somerset & Dorset Then and Now* (Newton Abbott: David & Charles, 1995).
[27] John Whitelegg, "Rural Railways and Disinvestment in Rural Areas," *Regional Studies* 21, no. 1 (1987), 62; Mayer Hillman and Anne Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures* (London: Policy Studies Institute, 1980), 115.
[28] Malcolm J. Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, vol. 1 (Norwich: University of East Anglia, Centre of East Anglian Studies, 1977), 41.

Such detailed local studies of Beeching Report closures tend to be the subject of occasional papers, lectures, or dissertations.[29] Divall studies the closures of two railways of East Dorset in a detailed exposition of a closure process using national and local sources.[30] He recounts the TUCC hearing process discussing the parts played by the main protagonists and quoting from individual submissions. By using individual letters of protest and commenting on their emotional content it is a forerunner of the analysis in this dissertation. He is handicapped by having no records of what was submitted to the TUCC Inquiry, reliant entirely on the documents provided by BR and correspondence with ministers.[31] Divall deconstructs the various submissions to a TUCC Inquiry in Dorset, however, his is very much a snapshot of the Inquiry. While conceding "National politicians arguably got it wrong", he does not discuss the impact of closure on letter writers before the inquiry and the changed activities of the writers after the inquiry.[32] Divall's sample of letters is considerably less than those available in Goathland, and because of this the analysis is discursive. This dissertation using a larger sample is able to analyse the letters using multiple analytical tools.

In 1967 the BBC filmed a thirty-minute documentary about the *Whitby Gazette* that has survived in the Yorkshire Film Archive.[33] In this the owner, editor, and oldest reporter were interviewed. They stressed that the task of the paper was to be a comprehensive "mirror of the community", and that every event in the Whitby area will be reported no matter how small.[34] The documentary is a unique insight into the workings of a local paper in the 1960s. Knowing this background, the content of the *Whitby Gazette* was an excellent indicator as to how the local community viewed the demise of local railways, and is a record of the minutiae of the process of railway closure. It explains gaps in the official archives, particularly regarding the Inquiry into the railway closure, the deliberations of which are not available. Longworth provides a model for this through study of the local newspapers in New South Wales (NSW) that is both a narrative and analysis of railway closure not available from official sources.[35] The language used by the paper, and by its contributors helps to establish the community perception of the closure. Such reporting should not be accepted uncritically, however from the evidence of the documentary the *Whitby Gazette* has a conservative, cautious agenda and it needs to be considered whether this agenda contributed to the closure of the railway lines. Examination of the role of local newspapers in the implementation of the Beeching Report contributes to an understanding of the dynamics of protest and its impact.

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[29] See for example Andrew Grantham, "How to Save a Railway," *Back Track* Feb 1995. James Cecil Buckman, "The Locational Effects of a Railway Closure: A Case Study of the Withdrawal of Passenger Services from the Steyning Line in March 1966" (University of Bristol, 1972). G A Griffiths, "Aspects of Transport Rationalisation in South West England" (Durham University, 1968). John Arlott, "Transport through the Looking Glass," article, *The Guardian* 28 Nov 1967.

[30] Colin Divall, "Do You Really Call That Progress, Mr. Marples? The Politics of Railway Closures in East Dorset" (paper presented at the Lost Tracks: Remembering East Dorset's Railways, Priest's House, Wimbourne, 2014).

[31] "Do You Really Call That Progress, Mr. Marples? ", 10.

[32] "Do You Really Call That Progress, Mr. Marples? ", 20.

[33] David Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday," in *BBC Look North* (York: Yorkshire Film Archive, UK 1967).

[34] "Something'll Happen by Friday."

[35] Jim Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure: Destabilising a Social Exchange Relationship between Country and City in New South Wales" (PhD Thesis, Charles Sturt University, 2013), 52.

Loft recognises the importance of the *Whitby Gazette*, describing it as a "a fine display of campaigning journalism."[36] He believes that the Beeching Report was the product of Marples zeal to modernise Britain tempered by Beeching's subservience to financial constraints.[37] He thinks railway closures were never popular but that government policy was correct, indeed maybe not enough rural railways were closed.[38] He recognises the impact on seaside resorts like Whitby but believes that the government had identified that they were already in decline, something that railway provision could not effect.[39] Loft, starts from the perspective of national policy but is weaker on local detail, and the nuances of the local closure process. Although he recognises that abandoning any public service was unpopular, he did not develop this theme by comparison with what happened to the community after closure. Loft examines multiple closures in discursive histories, and in such a context he is unable to examine individual closures. His approach of focusing on individual closures to illustrate a policy issue, (using Wells-by-the-Sea as an example to illustrate the impact of Beeching rail closures), is a model for this dissertation.[40] His is a summary of local material, so although this dissertation builds on Loft's bottom-up approach to the impact of closures it does so by using a breadth and depth of local source material impractical for Loft in a national study.

This develops Loft's approach as micro-history, which Robisheaux describes as "one of the most creative ways to tackle the difficulties of writing history in our time."[41] Such an approach starts with the individual and the place in which they live, in Brewer's words we "treat the individual as the subject rather than the object of history" and as Longworth comments "people are more interesting than closed railway lines."[42] This dissertation focusses on individuals, specifically the 176 villagers of Goathland referred to in the letters of protest against the railway closure. None of the letter writers are now available to interview, but in Cohen's view, micro-history is the ideal tool to get into the minds and habits of the dead.[43] The ambition of this dissertation is to establish how transport was used and perceived by the people of Goathland. They represent a village, which was itself a microcosm of the wider area impacted by railway closures.[44] This approach is extended to the individuals who contributed to the *Whitby Gazette*. Brewer is clear that this "does not excuse us from seeking to establish some perspective on the phenomenon we study."[45] He encourages critical examination of the individuals writing, so this work examines individual written perceptions of the

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[36] Charles Loft, *Government, the Railways, and the Modernization of Britain: Beeching's Last Trains* (London: Routledge, 2006), 109.
[37] "One Big Row: Government and the Railways, 1951-64" (Queen Mary College, University of London, 1999), 287.
[38] "One Big Row," 291.
[39] *Last Trains*, 291.
[40] *Last Trains*, 196.
[41] Thomas Robisheaux, "Microhistory and the Historical Imagination: New Frontiers," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47, no. 1 (2017), 1.
[42] John Brewer, "Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life," *Cultural and Social History* 7, no. 1 (2010), 89. Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," vii.
[43] Thomas V. Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47, no. 1 (2017), 57.
[44] Alison K Smith, "A Microhistory of the Global Empire of Cotton: Ivanovo, the 'Russian Manchester'," *Past & Present* 244, no. 1 (2019), 172.
[45] Brewer, "Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life," 101.

railway closure compared to reality. This is a different approach to that used in most histories of Beeching Report railway closures.

There are two substantive works considering the effect of railway closures in post-war Britain, by Thomas, and Hillman and Whalley. Thomas, in "The Rural Transport Problem" published just before the Beeching Report, discusses for the first time the "problems of communication in rural Britain".[46] After a summary of rural transport issues, he researches four railway closures pre-dating the Beeching Report. His methodology is to conduct structured questionnaires amongst a sample of those who had previously travelled by rail. Although this shows their post-closure travel habits, it does not illuminate the wider societal impact amongst those who did to travel by railway. Hillman and Whalley in "The Social Consequences of Rail Closures", the most extensive study of the social effect of railway closures in Britain yet published, develop Thomas's approach.[47] They analyse ten railway lines that were closed in the 1970s. Starting with Whitelegg's premise that the railway closure process has been little studied and that there is a dearth of empirical evidence to judge the impact of closures, they develop a questionnaire approach that mirrors Thomas in interviewing a sample of those who previously travelled by train.[48] They identify a failure to foresee the social consequences of closure, particularly that a parallel bus service was not necessarily a viable alternative to rail.[49] Their conclusion is that the principal impact is on the social and non-essential journeys previously made by train whereas more essential journeys are re-orientated to other modes principally the private car. Though Hillman and Whalley have been criticised for restricting their questionnaire to those who previously travelled by train, it is a model for how to undertake such analysis.[50] However both authors undertake their questionnaires after closure, but have no corresponding survey of what people thought before the closure and whether these views were justified. Although we can no longer question those who lived in rural areas in the early 1960s, the letters of protest from Goathland are a proxy to address this gap. This dissertation treats the letters as a response to a questionnaire, the respondents were asked some standard questions, of basic identity, what train services did they use, what for, and what would be the hardship be if these services were discontinued. By comparing the actual situation for people after closure this dissertation attempts to address the criticisms of Thomas, and Hillman and Whalley.

There are limited studies of the impact of passenger railway closures outside of Britain. Of note is Longworth's approach to closures in NSW.[51] He asks the question, "Why do New South Wales country communities react so strongly to railway closure when their supposedly objective interests are not threatened?".[52] He views the railway closure in terms of a social exchange relationship between the government represented by the city and the "countrymindlessness" of the rural areas. To examine

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[46] David St John Thomas, *The Rural Transport Problem* (London: Routledge, 1963).
[47] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*.
[48] *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*; Whitelegg, "Rural Railways and Disinvestment in Rural Areas," 62.
[49] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 67.
[50] See the lively debate at The Policy Studies Institute, "The Future of Rural Railways" (paper presented at the Proceedings of a Conference held at Policy Studies, Institute, London, 1981).And comment by Nutley "questionnaires tell us about the mobile not the disadvantaged" Stephen Nutley, "Rural Accessibility and Transport," *Applied Geography, London: Routledge* (1999), 477.
[51] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure."
[52] "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 6.

this, he analyses clippings from local newspapers, to show that these are a mirror of the rural community, reflected in their use of, and tone of language. Longworth claims that this methodology was also used in Britain by Henshaw.[53] There is no evidence of this in Henshaw's book, rather it concentrates on proving that "the Beeching Report was essentially unnecessary" and has no detailed case studies using local media.[54] Longworth's archive of newspaper clippings is limited compared to the complete archive of the *Whitby Gazette* available to the author. Nevertheless, his question is equally relevant to Goathland and can be paraphrased as, "why do the villagers of Goathland react so strongly to railway closure when their supposedly objective interests are not threatened?"[55] The use of language in the *Whitby Gazette* and Goathland's letters of protest are an indicator of people's feeling about the railway closure. The language reflects the real feeling about the railway's closure showing that its loss was emotional rather than physical. It was a symbol of the changing countryside, changes that were seen as troubling to the conservative inhabitants of Goathland and the readers of the *Whitby Gazette*.

Two studies of the Whitby area in the late 1950s and early 1960s provided the historic, economic, and social backdrop against which the Beeching Report was implemented. A survey of Whitby in 1958 was commissioned from Newcastle University by a local landowner, The Marquis of Normanby, "to provide the evidence on which an integrated and intelligent plan can be constructed for Whitby".[56] This comprehensive academic survey includes papers on its growth, economy, its position as a resort, communications, and the harbour.[57] Intended as the basis upon which to recommend a future growth strategy, it presents a snapshot of activity in the area in 1958 from a team of academic geographers and historians. It had an accurate statistical base, but events quickly meant that some of the Daysh's observations become out-dated only five years later. Sand's 1967 thesis aims to "show the economic and social implications for Whitby, of the proposals made under the name of Dr. Beeching".[58] The thesis is a contributor and forerunner to a genre of socially responsible studies of rural transport. Sands does not hide his partiality against the Beeching Report, but this does not detract from his exploration of how Whitby might be affected by the closure of its railways. Despite being published in 1967, two years after closure it does not address whether Whitby was affected in the manner predicted. It concentrates on what people thought would happen not what did happen. This highlights a problem for the historian of the Beeching Report closures, the lack of comparison of circumstances before and

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[53] "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 56. Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy*.
[54] *The Great Railway Conspiracy*, 232.
[55] Paraphrases Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 6.
[56] George Henry John Daysh, *A Survey of Whitby and the Surrounding Area* (Eton: Shakespeare Head Press, 1958), intro.
[57] E. Allan, "The Economic Position of Whitby," in *A Survey of Whitby and the Surrounding Area*, ed. George Daysh (Eton: Shakespeare Press, 1958). J. H. Appleton, "Communications," in *A Survey of Whitby and the Surrounding Area*, ed. George Daysh (Eton: Shakespeare Press, 1958). M R G Conzen, "The Growth of Whitby," in *A Survey of Whitby and the Surrounding Area*, ed. George Daysh (Eton: Shakespeare Press, 1958). J W House, "The Population of Whitby, Recent Growth and Prospects," in *A Survey of Whitby and the Surrounding Area*, ed. George Daysh (Eton: Shakespeare Press, 1958). "Whitby as a Resort."
[58] Nigel Sands, "An Examination of the Social and Economic Implications of Dr. Beeching's Proposals for Railway Closures in the Scottish Highlands North of Inverness and at Whitby in the North Riding of Yorkshire" (Thesis, Durham University, 1967), 1.

after closure. Were the hardships that were so vividly described at TUCC inquiries, and predicted by Sands in Whitby, realised?[59]

There are some studies of railway closures in the rest of the world. In North America these concentrate on the closure of freight lines and depots.[60] Fruin reviews fourteen studies of freight line abandonment in the United States. As these are freight lines inevitably the concentration is on the economic rather than social impact of the closures. The economic effect is often marginal but he finds that the biggest impact is often psychological, "loss of a railroad was a psychological not necessarily an economic blow".[61] This echoes Parolin who finds that the closure of freight lines had little impact on the communities that they served.[62] Further Parolin in a study of bus substitution concludes that the majority of public transport users adjust easily to the substitute bus services.[63] By contrast, Taylor's study of the closure of a Polish railway station, using a survey of two hundred households near that station concludes that the closure's main impacts are the difficulties of accessing employment, healthcare, shopping, and leisure opportunities.[64] These are the same concerns expressed by the villagers of Goathland. The challenge, which most writers do not address, is to find a methodology that retrospectively surveys the actual impact of closure, and whether it is real or imagined.

Some early analysis of closures in the 1960s concentrate on the empirical impact using the then new tool of Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). These attempt to quantify the qualitative approach to hardship of the TUCC inquires. Two papers by Sugden apply CBA techniques to the closure of the Whitby to Scarborough railway line.[65] Sugden is a significant figure as he is now Professor of Economics at the University of East Anglia. Sugden attempts to calculate the net social loss caused by the closure. He is implicitly critical of the narrowness of the TUCC approach, and in particular the lack of a quantifiable definition of hardship. The CBA approach relies on being able to place a value retrospectively on a population's interactions with transport before and after closure. This is an attractive idea as the transport provision in Whitby is known through the study of local timetables, however small variations to the values applied to that

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[59] "Vital Transport Inquiry," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 7, 1964.

[60] See for example Dean A Bangsund, Joel S Honeyman, and F Larry Leistritz, *Economic Impact of Railroad Abandonment: Carrington-to-Turtle Lake Rail Line* (Fargo, North Dakota: Department of Agriculture and Economics and The Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, North Dakota State University, 1996). Benjamin J. Allen and John F. Due, "Railway Abandonments Effects Upon the Communities Served," *Growth and Change* 8, no. 2 (1977). W Frederick Cottrell, "Death by Dieselization: A Case Study in the Reaction to Technological Change," *American Sociological Review* 16, no. 3 (1951).

[61] Jerry E Fruin, "A Summary of Research Studies on the Community Impacts of Rail Abandonment in the Midwest," (St. Paul, Minnesota: University of Minnesota College of Agriculture, 1992), 27.

[62] Bruno Parolin, Steve Filan, and Arthur Ilias, "Spatial and Economic Effects of Rail Freight Line Closure: Conceptualization and Case Study," *Impact Assessment* 10, no. 1 (1992), 45.

[63] Bruno Parolin, "Effects of Rationalization of Rural Passenger Services on Travel Activity Patterns," *Transportation Research Record* 1557, no. 1 (1996), 48.

[64] Zbigniew Taylor, "Railway Closures to Passenger Traffic in Poland and Their Social Consequences," *Journal of Transport Geography* 14, no. 2 (2006), 141.

[65] The principle of Cost Benefit Analysis and transport is extensively discussed in J Michael Thomson, *Modern Transport Economics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974).
Robert Sugden, "Closure of Whitby-Scarborough Railway" (University of York, 1970). "Cost Benefit Analysis and the Withdrawal of Railway Services," *Bulletin of Economic Research* 24, no. 1 (1972).

interaction like time and congestion can substantially change the outcome of a study.[66] These weaknesses and the author's correspondence with Professors Sugden and Divall suggest that CBA is not a suitable vehicle for a retrospective study of the Beeching closures.[67] The challenge is to find a methodology that can provide a valid analysis using such evidence that is now available.

Other authors attempt to link population and railway provision. This has its origins in studies of many European countries that correlate the building of railways in the nineteenth century to population change.[68] Schwartz is particularly even-handed he concludes that the railways opened up the countryside to in-migration but also allowed outward migration.[69] His approach correlates population to the provision of stations but includes no qualitative link to the level of service provision at those stations, a small halt having the same weighting as a major junction. This is a common weakness repeated by Flores and Whitely in their study of the electoral impact of the Beeching Report.[70] Gibbons updates this approach specifically to link the Beeching closures to population change.[71] He acknowledges his debt to the historic approach but claims that his work is the first to examine the impact on the population of a massive transport disinvestment. He concludes that a ten per-cent reduction in rail access over the 1950-1980 period results in a three per-cent fall in population by 1981.[72] This conclusion is caveated to recognise that in some areas the population might have been in absolute decline anyway and hence is the cause, rather than the effect of the withdrawal of railway provision. Moseley and other studies contradict this conclusion.[73] Specifically Moseley states that there is no model to explain population change in rural areas because it is too complex.[74] In any case population comparison in the Whitby area is hampered by a change in enumeration districts in 1973, thus any long-term analysis of the trends after this date is thwarted. For this reason, the methodology used in this

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[66] Ken Richards and G Richards, "The Economics of the Cambrian Coast Line," *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy* (1972), 309.

[67] Robert Sugden, Email Jul 22, 2017. Colin Divall, Email Jul 22, 2017.
Other examples of CBA approaches can be found in, David H S Foot and David Nicholas Martin Starkie, "Ashford-Hastings Railway Line: Cost Benefit Appraisal," (Reading: Reading University, Department of Geography, 1970). J S Dodgson, "Cost-Benefit Analysis, Government Policy and the British Railway Network," *Transportation* 6, no. 2 (1977).

[68] For Scandanavia Kerstin Enflo, Eduard Alvarez-Palau, and Jordi Marti-Henneberg, "Transportation and Regional Inequality: The Impact of Railways in the Nordic Countries, 1860–1960," *Journal of Historical Geography* 62 (2018). For Turkey Sedef Akgüngör et al., "The Effect of Railway Expansion on Population in Turkey, 1856–2000," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 42, no. 1 (2011). For Prussia Erik Hornung, "Railroads and Growth in Prussia," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 13, no. 4 (2015). For France Thomas Thévenin, Robert Schwartz, and Loïc Sapet, "Mapping the Distortions in Time and Space: The French Railway Network 1830–1930," *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History* 46, no. 3 (2013).

[69] Robert Schwartz, "Railways and Rural Development in England and Wales, 1850-1914," in *Frontères, Contacts, Échanges: Hommages À André Palluel.* (Chambery: Presses de l'Université de Savoy, 2013), 241.

[70] Alejandro Quiroz Flores and Paul Whiteley, "The "Beeching Axe" and Electoral Support in Britain," *European Review of Economic History* 22, no. 3 (2018), 361 to 79.

[71] Stephen Gibbons, Stephan Heblich, and Edward Pinchbeck, "The Spatial Impacts of a Massive Rail Disinvestment Programme: The Beeching Axe," (London: LSE, 2017), 1.

[72] "The Spatial Impacts of a Massive Rail Disinvestment Programme," 12.

[73] For instance, Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, 1. and the authors own research into population change in Dorset Nigel Sheppard, "Is It Accurate to Say That the Social and Economic Impact of the Beeching Cuts on Rural Communities Was Far Less Than It Has Been Perceived in Popular Memory?," (Unpublished: University of York, 2016).

[74] Malcolm J. Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge* (London: Methuen, 1979), 29.

dissertation uses a micro-history approach with the individual as the focus of study rather than population.

In addition to the archives regarding the closure of Whitby's railways, there is comprehensive information about public transport in the area between 1963 and 1967. The timetables of the bus and railway operators are available, from which can be derived measures of frequency, time (planned rather than actual), and cost.[75] BR publishes substantive information about local transport in its submission to the TUCC Inquiry.[76] None of this information is digital so to apply the analytical models used in this dissertation it is captured in a bespoke database. When this is allied to the information in the letters as to where people wanted to travel and for what purpose, the actual quality of public transport provision before and after railway closure is measured together with its relevance to individual needs. The methodology to analyse these sources needs to be objective and comparable over time so that the impact of the Beeching closures can be assessed.

Such methodologies have developed from studies of rural deprivation in the latter part of the Twentieth Century, fuelled by a realisation that the "rural idyll" is a myth and that the countryside is subject to as many problems as urban, industrialised areas.[77] Higgs concludes that lack of public services particularly transport is linked to deprivation, but that there is a lack of study into the relationship between public transport provision and rural wellbeing.[78] Moseley concludes that rural deprivation is not synonymous with population decline, but rather with the access that a rural population had to services and facilities, framing the problem as one of rural accessibility.[79] Accessibility is "the ease with which people can reach distant but necessary services".[80] Moseley reviews three basic models of accessibility; indices of population potential,[81] comparative measures of the number of opportunities available within a time or distance dimension,[82] and a time-geography approach.[83] This work is developed by Nutley into five basic accessibility models, like Moseley he concludes that a time-space or time geography model might be most appropriate to measure both the economic and social benefits of accessibility.[84]

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[75] United Automobile Services Ltd, "Time-Table Durham Teeside and Yorkshire Area 1st June to 30th September 1963," (Darlington 1963). "Time-Table Durham Teeside and Yorkshire Area 17th June 1968 to 9th September 1967," (Darlington 1967).

[76] British Railways Board North Eastern Region, *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town)* (File ZRZ10, Northallerton, NYCC Archive June 1964). *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments* (File ZRZ10, Northallerton, NYCC Archive June 1964).

[77] For instance Alun Howkins, *The Death of Rural England: A Social History of the Countryside since 1900* (London: Routledge, 2003).

[78] Gary Higgs and Sean D White, "Changes in Service Provision in Rural Areas. Part 1: The Use of GIS in Analysing Accessibility to Services in Rural Deprivation Research," *Journal of Rural Studies* 13, no. 4 (1997), 441.

[79] Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 33.

[80] A Daly, "Measuring Accessibility in a Rural Context" (paper presented at the Seminar on Rural Public Transport, Transport Studies Group, Polytechnic of Central London, London, 1975), quoted in. Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 89.

[81] E.g., R. J. Johnston, "An Index of Accessibility and Its Use in the Study of Bus Service and Settlement Pattern," *Tijdschft Voor Economischeen Social Geografie* 57 (1966).

[82] At the time of writing Moseley concluded that this had not been applied in a British rural context.

[83] E.g, Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, 1.

[84] Nutley, "Rural Accessibility and Transport." and "Accessibility, Mobility and Transport-Related Welfare: The Case of Rural Wales," *Geoforum* 11, no. 4 (1980), 335.

Examples of accessibility models that study transport problems in a particular area are instructive in suggesting an appropriate methodology for this dissertation. Jordan and Nutley apply such a model to rural accessibility in Northern Ireland, they develop the theory that it was not transport provision that is important but the activities that transport provision facilitates people to undertake.[85] For instance, to the worker public transport is only of value if he can arrive and depart his place of employment at a time commensurate with its start and finish. Jordan and Nutley develop seven tests that they apply to public transport and, by assigning each test a points weighting they produce a comparative index of accessibility.[86] Buckman applies such an accessibility index to a Beeching closure in West Sussex. This could be a model for this dissertation, but its ambition is too narrow and too bespoke to West Sussex.[87] The plethora of accessibility models strongly suggest that no one model fits all circumstances. This dissertation develops a bespoke accessibility model for Goathland and surrounding villages. Application of this model measures the economic and social impact of railway closure in Goathland. It has the advantage that it can be used to compare Goathland with other villages and possibly in future other areas.

In Goathland there is a historic questionnaire, which is the letters detailing travel patterns for a cross-section of the community before the closure of the railways. If this is allied to the public transport timetables and facilities for which access was needed, then pre-closure measures of accessibility can be calculated. Further as it is known what villagers wanted to access then the situation before and after railway closure can be compared. In Goathland, through their letters of protest, the accessibility of 179 people is analysed in 1964 before closure and in 1967 after closure. It was a relatively isolated village community and therefore any external influences are easier to identify.[88] This is an innovative approach to the impact of railway closures, as it provides a definitive historical analysis of change, and one that could be used to compare Goathland with other areas.

What has not been available until recently is a tool that explains the complex relationships between time, space, and events. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) were initially developed by physical geographers who wished to merge cartography, statistical analysis and database technology. Bodenhammer documents the initial development from being a niche component of physical geography to a mainstream tool applicable more widely to the humanities, "The power of GIS for the humanities lies in its ability to integrate information from a common location, regardless of format, and to visualise the results in combinations of transparent layers on a map of the geography shared by the data."[89]

It is only more recently that historians have developed the use of GIS into Historic Geographical Information Systems (HGIS). Within the last fifteen years the increase in personal computing power makes the use of such tools practical for a historian

[85] Connor Jordan and Stephen Nutley, "Rural Accessibility and Public Transport in Northern Ireland," *Irish Geography* 26, no. 2 (2015), 120.
[86] "Rural Accessibility and Public Transport in Northen Ireland," 125.
[87] Buckman, "The Locational Effects of a Railway Closure," 173.
[88] Alice Hollings, *A History of Goathland* (Helmsley: North York Moors National Park, 1990).
[89] David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris, *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship* (Bloomington Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), 1.

without access to a mainframe computer. Gregory provides a basic primer for the historian using HGIS, he writes that it allows "change to be studied geographically and by time".[90] He thinks that the use of HGIS creates a discipline of "Spatial History".[91] Atack refers to the impact of HGIS on transport, "it is not too soon to claim that historical GIS transportation databases will change our interpretation of American economic history."[92] This matches the ambitions of this dissertation to measure accessibility changes over time and space with HGIS allowing the comparison of multiple apparently unrelated factors and showing the possibility of interrelationships. This is most appropriate when examining the impact of one event, a railway closure, on the socio-economic environment of the Whitby area. Gregory cautions though that HGIS is not a panacea and that the user must be aware of its limitations and pitfalls.[93]

Do these limitations and pitfalls mitigate against the use of HGIS in this study? Higgs and White specifically examine HGIS methodology and review its use with accessibility studies.[94] They conclude that HGIS can "Illustrate how changes in services compare to demographic characteristics", and significantly allow different studies to be measured against each other.[95] This unification of time and space is potentially appropriate for a study of the impact of railway closures, as illustrated by the work of Felis-Rota et al, who digitises the complete British railway network and its changes from 1851 to 2000, using Cobb's historic railway atlas as its source.[96] Comparing this data to a set of consistent census areas they relate the provision of stations to population change, and find a positive correlation between the two. This work has the same weakness as Flores and Gibbons discussed previously, the analysis at the macro level does not account for the quality of railway provision, something this dissertation attempts.[97] The dissertation extracts quantitative and qualitative data from the archived letters of protest and local transport timetables. From this, a HGIS database is developed that allows multiple factors such as age, sex, employment etc. to be compared with individual accessibility. For instance, could a teenager using public transport go to the cinema, or a pensioner attend the local hospital? This builds on the use of HGIS in understanding railway development and disinvestment as used by Flores and Felis-Rota. [98] It develops a HGIS database as a

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[90] Ian Gregory and Robert M Schwartz, "National Historical Geographical Information System as a Tool for Historical Research: Population and Railways in Wales, 1841–1911," *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing* 3, no. 1-2 (2009), 1.

[91] Ian N Gregory and Alistair Geddes, *Toward Spatial Humanities: Historical GIS and Spatial History* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2014), xv.

[92] Jeremy Atack, "On the Use of Geographic Information Systems in Economic History: The American Transportation Revolution Revisited," *The Journal of Economic History* 73, no. 2 (2013), 332.

[93] Ian N Gregory, *A Place in History: A Guide to Using GIS in Historical Research* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2003), 84.

[94] Higgs and White, "Changes in Service Provision in Rural Areas. Part 1," 446 to 47.

[95] "Changes in Service Provision in Rural Areas. Part 1," 447.

[96] Marta Felis-Rota, J Jordi Marti Henneberg, and Laia Mojica, "A GIS Analysis of the Evolution of the Railway Network and Population Densities in England and Wales, 1851-2000," (Madrid: Autonomous University of Madrid and University of Lieda, 2012), 180 to 81. MH Cobb, *The Railways of Great Britain: A Historical Atlas. 2 Vols* (Shepperton: Ian Allan, 2003).
This digitised database is the source of the railway network in the maps in this dissertation.
For methodology see Mateu Morillas-Torné, "Creation of a Geo-Spatial Database to Analyse Railways in Europe (1830-2010). A Historical GIS Approach," *Journal of Geographic Information System, 2012, núm. 4, p. 176-187* (2012).

[97] Quiroz Flores and Whiteley, "The "Beeching Axe" and Electoral Support in Britain." Gibbons, Heblich, and Pinchbeck, "The Spatial Impacts of a Massive Rail Disinvestment Programme."

[98] Quiroz Flores and Whiteley, "The "Beeching Axe" and Electoral Support in Britain."

tool to analyse the impact of the changes in Whitby's railway network after the Beeching Report. The quality and detail of the local data available and the limited area of study means that more subtle changes and relationships should be evident than found in national studies. It is suited for a historic study comparing individual behaviour over time and scaling this to the behaviour of a community. The dissertation studies a Beeching closure combining accessibility measures and HGIS tools.

This dissertation is a people centric local social history of the impact of a Beeching Report closure combined with a narrative of a closure campaign as reflected in the language and dynamic the local newspaper. It develops previous work on the relationship between railway closures and socio-economic changes.

"That hardship would result from the closure is obvious" - The Closure Process and Hardship[99]

In 1963 the only means by which a railway passenger station or service could be legally closed was under the provisions of the 1962 Transport Act.[100] This was enacted to replace the ad-hoc process that had existed before, primarily to alleviate previous contentious closure cases (Westerham to Dunton Green in 1962 is an example)[101] and to make the closure process less onerous.[102] An understanding of this Act's provisions is critical to the process of closure in Whitby. Under the Act, BR had to give six weeks' notice of its intention to close a service in at least two local newspapers.[103] In Whitby, this notice appeared in the *Whitby Gazette* of January 31, 1964.[104] Any objections to the closure have to be made in writing to the TUCC for the area, in the case of Whitby, the North East Area by April 4, 1964.[105] If there were objections the closure cannot be proceeded with unless the Minister (of Transport) gave consent.[106] (In practice only two closures of the era received no objections, so almost all closures were subject to an inquiry and ministerial assent).[107] The Area TUCC was mandated to report to the Minister on the hardship caused by the closures and any proposals to alleviate that hardship.[108] In practice they held inquiries into closure to develop these reports. The Act then states that "the Minister may give his consent subject to such conditions as he sees fit".[109]

There are three important points. First, given the centrality of hardship as the only grounds for the protest against closure, it was surprising that it was not defined.[110] This was to present problems for TUCCs and objectors alike. Following comments by

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[99] "Railway Closures," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Aug 28, 1963, 1.
[100] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz."
[101] Gourvish and Blake, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 441.
[102] M Howe, "The Transport Act, 1962, and the Consumers' Consultative Committees," *Public Administration* 42, no. 1 (1964), 50.
[103] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz," part iv, 56 (7a).
[104] "British Railways - Notice of Withdrawal of Railway Services," advert, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 14, 1964.
[105] "Fighting Railway Closure Proposal," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 14, 1964, 1. "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz," part iv, 56 (7b).
[106] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz," part iv, 56 (8).
[107] Robin Jones, *Beeching: 50 Years of the Axeman* (Horncastle: Mortons Media, 2011), 60.
[108] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz," part iv, 56 (9).
[109] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz," part iv, 56 (9).
[110] Peter Nicholas Brown, *A Review of Railway Closure Procedures* (Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic, 1987), 3.

the Welsh TUCC in 1962 BR subsequently provides an outline financial justification for the closure.[111] BR's response to claims of hardship caused by closure was often perfunctory. Further, the required approval of a closure by the Minister of Transport usually did not address hardship sympathetically.[112] Objectors were not allowed to comment on this, as illustrated by this dialogue at the Whitby Inquiry.

> "Calvert "You refuse to hear comment on figures submitted by the Railways Board"
>
> Chair "You mean financial figures"
>
> Calvert "Yes"
>
> Chair "We cannot listen to these". "I cannot allow discussion of financial figures".
>
> Calvert "Then you refuse me permission categorically and without equivocation. I should warn you that we may take the case to the high court.""[113]

The Minister made the ultimate definition of hardship in any locality before approving any closure, Loft quotes this "as being able to get to work or school without an absurdly long journey and not being cut-off otherwise".[114] In Goathland as most journeys were not for work and those for school could be accommodated on a contract bus most grounds of hardship were mitigated.[115]

Second, there was no requirement to hold a public inquiry or, by extension, how such an inquiry was to be conducted. Adley thought that it was to "allow the public to give vent to its wrath", or in Grantham's view to legitimise the closure process.[116] Finally, these two points are irrelevant as ultimately it was the Minister who made the decision, the TUCC's role was advisory, and the Minister did not have to justify any decision.[117] This politicisation of the ultimate decision was not understood in Whitby.

The people of the area and the *Whitby Gazette* grasped that hardship was central to their case against closure of the railways, they failed to grasp that in the main this was the fear of isolation, an emotional hardship that was very difficult to prove. Even then they were dependent on the interpretation of the Minister.

[111] Howe, "The Transport Act, 1962, and the Consumers' Consultative Committees," 52.

[112] M Howe and PK Else, "Railway Closures: Recent Changes in Machinery and Policy," *Public Administration* 46, no. 2 (1968), 130.

[113] Roger Calvert, "Report of Hon Sec of NCIT into the Whitby Enquiry," (Doncaster Council Archives: National Council for Inland Transport, 1964).Calvert was the secretary of the National Council for Inland Transport a lobbying organisation against railway closures.

[114] Loft, *Last Trains*, 213.

[115] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 52.

[116] Robert Adley, *Out of Steam: The Beeching Years in Hindsight* (Wellingborough: Patrick Stephens, 1990), 166. Grantham, "Privatisation and Reorganisation," 279.

[117] Loft, *Last Trains*, 165. Allen, *British Rail after Beeching*, 14.

2 "A fine display of local campaigning doomed to failure" - The *Whitby Gazette*.[118]

The campaign against the closure of the local railways was the dominant story in the in the *Whitby Gazette* for two years between 1963 and 1965. Despite the volume of newsprint devoted to it the impact of the campaign was weak and ineffectual. The objective of the paper according to its editor in 1963, Tom Barker was to "act as a mirror reflecting the life of the community".[119] The most important event it reflected in Whitby in the early 1960s was the proposal in the Beeching Report to close its three railways, railways that had served the town since 1836, longer than even the *Whitby Gazette* which first appeared in 1854.[120] Both were part of the fabric of the town. The breadth and extent of the coverage of the *Whitby Gazette* reflected the perceived impact of the railway's closure on the town. The role of the *Whitby Gazette* in the campaign against the railway closure is shown through analysis of the leading articles, letters, and editorials published between January 1962 and July 1965. The language it used was bellicose, but its impact was weak, the newspaper actually contributed to the failure of the campaign, despite the overwhelming support that it gave to it.[121] Loft recognises this in his studies of the Beeching Report; "In a fine display of campaigning local journalism the *Whitby Gazette* gave front-page prominence to the case on an almost weekly basis for the rest of the year".[122] After closure, he comments, "Gradual erosion of optimism in the *Whitby Gazette* makes for sad reading".[123]

The first editorial following the publication of the Beeching Report stated, "Poising of Beeching axe must not be contemplated with docility."[124] Editorials continued in this vein until the eventual closure of two of the three railway lines in March 1965. The campaign was unsuccessful, and it is argued that the inherent conservatism of the *Whitby Gazette* contributed to that failure, via a campaign waged within the constraints of the Transport Act of 1962.[125] Critical to the criteria for closure was the definition of hardship caused to local people; the *Whitby Gazette's* definition of that hardship was very different from that of the government. The government was deliberately vague while the *Whitby Gazette's* was precise, it wrote, "Hardship that would result from the closure is obvious from the Goathland case, and once the Councils get down to serious effort…they will be concentrating on hardship".[126] The trenchant language of the paper gave the impression that the local people were doing all they could to avert closure. In reality through the *Whitby Gazette,* they were expressing an emotional hardship rather than mounting an effective protest.

The *Whitby Gazette* was the main source of news and opinion about the railway closures for the people of Whitby. It reflected the views of the local population while

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[118] Loft, *Last Trains*, 109.
[119] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[120] Potter, *History of the Whitby and Pickering Railway*, 27; British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways," 121. Alan Appleton, *Whitby Timeline: Significant Dates in the History of Whitby and Its Hinterland* (Whitby: Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, 2011), 1854, 6 July.
[121] Loft, *Government, the Railways, and the Modernization of Britain*, 101.
[122] *Government, the Railways, and the Modernization of Britain*, 109. *Last Trains*, 221.
[123] *Government, the Railways, and the Modernization of Britain*, 117.
[124] "The Axe Is Poised," 1; "Farewell to Two Lines – Beeching Axe on Whitby Railways," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 12, 1965, 1.
[125] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz."
[126] "Railway Closures."

fulfilling their needs by being a "campaigning newspaper" against railway closure.[127] The campaign of the people and the newspaper were umbilically linked, the emotional fear of isolation expressed by the paper, "Under existing conditions and without industry to absorb its sons and daughters, Whitby finds it difficult to maintain its present population, and under the new order proposed by British Railways the outlook would be really bleak", and its readers, Norman Sugden wrote that closure would be "Frightening prospect for old people, the railways… were essential for hospital visits…. roads blocked in winter."[128] In spite of the dominance of the campaign, it failed, and this was through the complicity, inadvertent or otherwise, of the *Whitby Gazette*. This section examines the coverage of the newspaper and why its campaign to prevent the closure of the railways failed. The *Whitby Gazette's* coverage of the railway closure was not objective, it was mediated by its conservative ownership, hidebound editor, and a deferential attitude to authority.

In 1963 the *Whitby Gazette* was embedded in the local community. It was locally owned by the fifth generation of the Horne family.[129] The editor, Tom Barker, had held the position since 1936 when he had succeeded his father, William Barker who in turn had worked for the paper since 1890. The editor's brother, William, was a director of the paper. The Senior Printer, Wood worked for the *Whitby Gazette* in every department retiring as deputy editor in 2004.[130] A BBC documentary showed these families as pillars of the local community, as church sidesmen, churchwardens and choir members of local churches.[131] When the proprietor Lionel Horne was asked in 1967 about the role of the newspaper, he does not stress its campaigning credentials or indeed accuracy but rather "the paper is part of people's ordinary lives, they would miss it if wasn't there".[132] It provided conservative continuity in an isolated rural community increasingly at odds with the "clamour for change" in the Britain of the 1960's.[133]

In 1963 the *Whitby Gazette* reflected the minutiae of life in the rural Whitby area. Barker, the editor, states that "it was not interested in anywhere else, our job is to serve the community that buys our newspaper", and his proud boast is "that everything would be reported."[134] A typical edition would publish front-page news that a "hen lays a purple egg", of a heifer falling in a river, or a leading article about a multi-storey hen-house.[135] As its oldest journalist, eighty-five-year-old Fairfax-Blakeborough states, "the paper has its finger on the pulse of country people. It understands what interests them. It is part of the warp and weft of country life."[136] In this context, the potential closure of Whitby's railways was a very significant event and compared to the lucky

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[127] Loft, *Government, the Railways, and the Modernization of Britain*, 109.
[128] "Have British Railways a Case? ," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 19, 1964, 1. "Frightening Prospect for Old People," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 20, 1963.
[129] "Tributes to Wife of Last Private Owner of Whitby Gazette," article, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 1, 2006.
[130] "From Errand Boy to Deputy Editor in 50 Years," article, *Press Gazette* Mar 11, 2004.
[131] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[132] "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[133] Christopher Booker, *The Neophiliacs: A Study of the Revolution in English Life in the Fifties and Sixties* (London: Harper Collins, 1969), 177.
[134] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[135] "Hen Lays Purple Egg," article, *Whitby Gazette* May 3, 1963, 1. "Heifer Fell in River," article, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 5, 1962. "Multi-Storey Hen House," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* May 4, 1965, 1.
[136] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."

hen it was not surprising that it was given such prominence in the paper. As the primary source of local information for the inhabitants of the Whitby area, the proposed closure of Whitby's local railways would inevitably be reflected prominently in its pages. The *Whitby Gazette* for all the editor's claim to reflect local life was a partial source of reporting and comment. It was embedded within the community, particularly the conservative influencers and leaders of Whitby. It reflected that group and its social commentary is from their perspective. There is no way of knowing what was not reported on, what letters were not published, and the degree of partiality it exhibited. That said it is a valuable resource through which to examine the closure of the local railway and the role that the *Whitby Gazette* played in that.

Between the publication of the Beeching Report in 1963, reflected in the headline "Threat of Complete Railway Closure" to the closure of two of its railways almost exactly two years later, lamented as "Farewell to Two Lines", it published 228 articles and fifty-four editorials concerning the campaign to save the area's railways.[137] Editorials characterised the Beeching Report as the "Axe is Poised" commenting, "the obvious effect will be a decline of those living in rural England".[138] This theme continued after the closure of the railway, under the headline "They Served us Well" the writer commented that "no walk of life will escape the detrimental consequences of closure".[139] The BBC documentary confirms that the writer was the editor, Tom Barker.

Table 1. *Whitby Gazette Railway Articles Jan 4, 1963 to Jul 23, 1965*

Type	Total Published	In Issues	Percentage of Issues
Article	195	79	53
Leading Article	33	33	22
Editorial	54	54	36
Letters	116	62	40
None		19	13
Total	398	131	

Notes: Authors research from the physical archive of the *Whitby Gazette*.

Table 1 and Figure 1 analyses the *Whitby Gazette* archive, there were almost four hundred published items in the paper about the closure of the local railways from January 1963 to July 1965. (For a complete analysis see Appendix Table 20). In a substantive study linking local newspaper coverage to a railway closure in New South Wales Longworth collects ninety-five articles and 164 clippings from multiple newspapers for analysis.[140] The *Whitby Gazette* was a more consistent and extensive chronicle of the closure process than Longworth's multiple sources. The closure of the local railways dominated the paper; only nineteen out of 131 published editions in this period did not mention the railways. In the edition of 10 July 1964 under the headline

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[137] "Threat of Complete Railway Closure Dr. Beeching's Recommendations for Whitby District ", leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 29, 1963; "Farewell to Two Lines – Beeching Axe on Whitby Railways."
[138] "The Axe Is Poised," 1.
[139] "They Served Us Well," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 12, 1965, 1.
[140] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 237.

"Vital Transport Enquiry" three complete pages were devoted to the subject.[141] Such expansive coverage was not unique to that edition. It would be easy to dismiss the paper as a biased purveyor of local news and gossip, so why is its coverage of the railway closures worthy of detailed study?

In 1963/4 the *Whitby Gazette* had an audited weekly circulation of 10,447, distributed in an area that corresponded to the boundaries of Whitby Urban and Whitby Rural District Councils.[142] In 1961 the combined population of these two districts was 23,062.[143] Vermeer's studies of local newspapers in the United States suggests that their reach is as high as ninety per-cent of the population.[144] Bogart finds that some ninety per-cent of the population obtain their news from a newspaper.[145] Using a ratio of two readers to every copy, it is reasonable to assume the majority of the adult population in the Whitby area read the *Whitby Gazette*. The BBC documentary commented, "The whole world does not wait for the *Whitby Gazette*, but Whitby does". With some justification it was known as the "bible of the Dales."[146] The paper was exclusively local in its news reporting, so there was little danger of national news and railway closures from elsewhere confusing its coverage.

It is evident from Map 3 that some copies circulated outside of the Whitby area, either through subscription or copies being sent to remote readers by friends and relatives. For example, A. Hillman wrote from Cardiff protesting at the decision to close the local railway and F. Walker from Dorking wrote, "Wishing everyone in the town and district every success in their fight against this act of folly."[147] Approximately one-third of the 116 letters published by the Whitby Gazette on the subject of railway closure originated from outside of the Whitby area.

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[141] "Vital Transport Inquiry."

[142] "Audited Circulation 1963/4 to June 30th," article, *Whitby Gazette* Aug 8, 1964.

[143] University of Portsmouth, "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Whitby UD through Time, Population Statistics, Total Population," accessed Aug 9, 2019, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/1017354/cube/TOT_POP. "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Whitby Rd through Time, Population Statistics, Total Population," accessed Aug 10, 2019, URL: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10136386/cube/TOT_POP.

[144] Jan Pons Vermeer, *The View from the States: National Politics in Local Newspaper Editorials* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 8.

[145] Leo Bogart, "The Public's Use and Perception of Newspapers," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (1984), 719.

[146] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."

[147] "Monstrous Decision," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 25, 1964; "Letter of Protest," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 3, 1964.
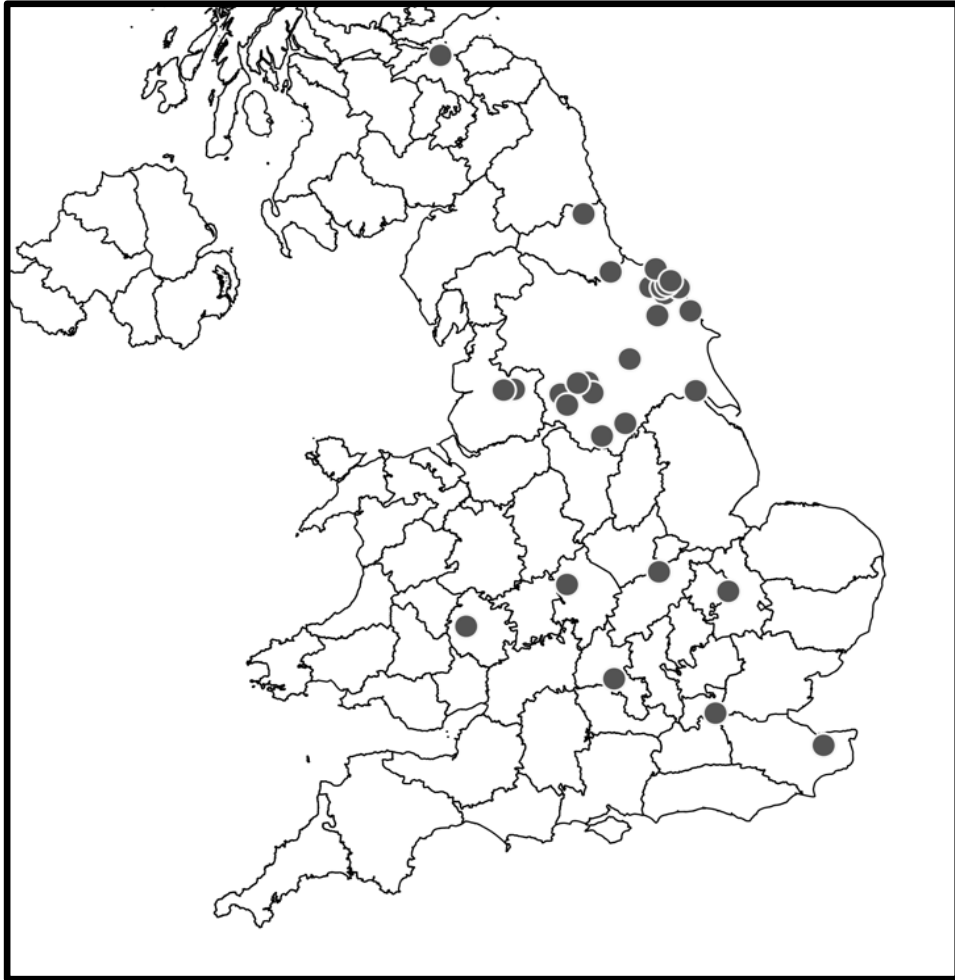
Map 3. *Origin of Letters to the Whitby Gazette concerning railway closure 1963 to 1965*

Notes: Authors research. The origin of the letters to the *Whitby Gazette* was recorded in a GIS database.

Judging from the quotations in the paper and the authors of letters influential members of the local community read it. It frequently quoted local Member of Parliament, Sir Alexander Spearman (Conservative MP for Scarborough and Whitby 1941 to 1966). (There is little written about Spearman, Porion describes him as a "champion of the free market ideas", reflected in his initial support for the Beeching Report as - "a striking example of this government's courage and energy".[148] Procter describes that he did not always toe the party line as he was a rebel during the Suez crisis).[149] Spearman claimed that his support for Beeching as an MP of the ruling Conservative Party was positive for the campaign as it gave him creditability and contacts with the government ministers in particular the Minister of Transport.[150]

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[148] Stéphane Porion, "Diana Spearman's Role within the Post-War Conservative Party and in the 'Battle of Ideas' (1945–1965)," *Women's History Review* 28, no. 2 (2019), 259. "Acute Anxiety in Whitby," article, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 4, 1963.

[149] Harvey Procter, *Credible and True: The Political and Personal Memoir of K. Harvey Proctor* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2016), Chapter 2.

[150] "Threat of Complete Railway Closure Dr. Beeching's Recommendations for Whitby District ", 1.

Letters between Spearman and the MoT were certainly effusive and suggest a mutual respect.[151] However, it is shown that his views did prejudice his ability at least at the outset to lead the campaign against closure that was against the policy of the Conservative government. The leaders of the two local councils, Mollet and Cowey, use the *Whitby Gazette's* letter columns to publicise their views.[152]

The complete archive of the *Whitby Gazette* is available although it has not been digitised but is stored on microfilm at Whitby Public Library. Analysis of its content was made through reading the entire content of the newspaper between 1962 and 1965, recording and categorising its content in a database, to enable thematic and qualitative analysis. The *Whitby Gazette* was the only publicly available record of the TUCC Inquiry into the railway's closure. Official records of these inquiries are not generally available in public archives; however, the *Whitby Gazette* reported the proceedings of the Inquiry in detail, over two issues and more than six pages.[153] The reports were a verbatim account, although from another source, recording a statement by the Secretary of the National Council for Inland Transport (NCIT) to the Inquiry, it was evident that the newspaper tended to highlight local contributions to the detriment of those made by national organisations.[154] This illustrates how news was edited for local content.

The in-depth study of local newspapers can provide a local perspective and insight into a railway closure. In Britain it is an area of study that has been neglected. The only study of a railway closure using local newspapers as a primary source is Longworth's examination of the closure of rural railways in NSW. He believes that "Local newspapers are products of local interpretation, a community voice with a country focus, providing a window onto local culture."[155] Longworth concludes that local newspapers reflected the views of local people in their use of language, through terms like "axe" and "cut".[156] The newspapers reflected the bond between the people and their railway, and how they mistrusted a remote government. They acted as a catalyst for protest against closure and as a record of events around the closure.[157] This dissertation studies the role of *Whitby Gazette* in the closure of Whitby's local railways.

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[151] Ernest Marples, letter to Sir Alec Spearman, Sep, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[152] "Proposed Railway Closure Thanks to All Those Who Have Objected, and to Those Who Assisted," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 10, 1964. "Members View on Beeching Plan," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 6,1963, 1.

[153] "Vital Transport Inquiry," 1. "The Railway and Esk Valley," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 17, 1964.

[154] Calvert, "Report of Hon Sec of NCIT into the Whitby Enquiry."

[155] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 57.

[156] "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 172. "The Axe Is Blunted," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Aug 21, 1964, 1.

[157] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 100. "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 133. "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 266.

"A fair representation of the life of Whitby and District" - The *Whitby Gazette* and Railway Closure[158]

Before January 1963, there was little coverage of Whitby's railways in the *Whitby Gazette*. Articles tended to be complaints about the service, for example the lack of a morning train between Scarborough and Whitby, or about the impact of the weather on the railway.[159] The main focus of this dissertation is on the period January 1963 to July 1965 during which the *Whitby Gazette* was published 131 times, a period that corresponds with the publication of the Beeching Report through to the ultimate closure of two of the three railways serving Whitby, see Appendix Table 20.
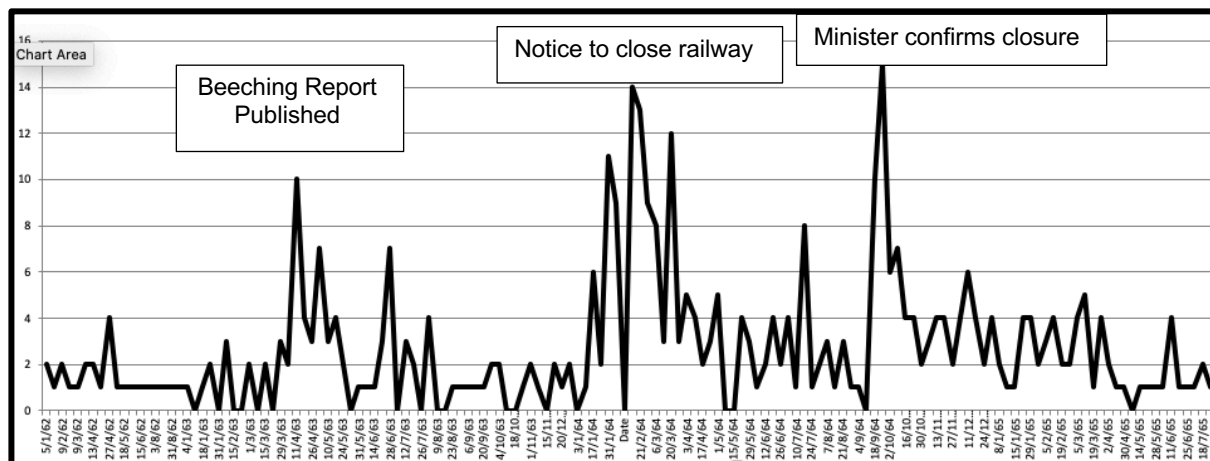
Figure 1. *Incidence of railway content - Whitby Gazette 1962/5*
Note: From the authors reading of the paper

Of the 131 issues, only in nineteen was there no reference at all to the local railways. There were three marked peaks of publishing activity, during which there could be as many as fifteen railway related items published in one edition, see Figure 1. First, in April/May 1963 after the publication of the Beeching Report recommending Whitby's railways for closure, this was also after the severe winter on 1962/3 which would have heightened the local fear of isolation in bad weather without the railway, (see Figure 14 and subsequent discussion of the perception of winter weather). The second was in February/March 1964 after the publication of the notice to close the railways, and third in October 1964 after the results of the TUCC Inquiry were published.[160] A caveat is that the number of occurrences in the paper was indicative as it does not reflect the volume of these occurrences, it is a simple count. The poor quality of both the micro-film and micro-fiche reader constrained the author from measuring column inches to reflect the volume of the coverage.

The paper was reactive, reporting events and the actions of local people like Margaret Goodberry of Sleights who organised a petition of 2,143 signatures against the closure, or the local public schoolchildren who walked to York to hand in their protest

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[158] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."

[159] "Scarborough Train Services," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 29, 1961, 1. "Arctic Weather in Whitby," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 5, 1962, 1.

[160] "Threat of Complete Railway Closure Dr. Beeching's Recommendations for Whitby District ". "British Railways - Notice of Withdrawal of Railway Services." "The Railway Decisions Were a Bombshell," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964, 1.

to the TUCC.[161] The people of Whitby also did not anticipate events but instead reacted to them. With the notable exception of the villagers of Goathland there was little activity between the publication of the Beeching Report in 1963 and the formal notice of withdrawal of railway services a year later. Two editorials in June 1963 highlighted the campaign in Goathland. They criticised the perceived lack of action elsewhere, "Goathland and Castleton have prepared petitions, but what the people of the Whitby District would like to know is what is being done to collate local evidence, and when will it be ready."[162] The following week, "Has not the time come where action should replace mere words".[163] Exceptionally the paper was trying to lead and provoke local action. The closure of the area's railways dominated the *Whitby Gazette's* pages for two years after March 1963, apart from the regular reports concerning the fortunes of the town's football team, particularly its progress to a Wembley final.[164]

"Rail Closure a Bitter Blow" - The Importance of Headlines[165]

Between January 1963 and July 1965 there were 228 articles published in the *Whitby Gazette* that referred to the railway closure. These articles recounted the campaign to save Whitby's railways. The front-page leads were the most influential part of the *Whitby Gazette*. They were immediately visible amongst the newspapers for sale in the newsagent, to customers who may not have been purchasing the *Whitby Gazette*. As the paper was weekly, the newspapers were in the shop on display for seven days. Further, the headlines were published on billboards displayed outside of the newsagents and around the town. Johnson, studies billboards in London, he believes that they were so influential that they determined a mayoral election result, the key elements being a greater reach than just newspaper purchasers as well as repeated viewing.[166] In Whitby the billboards also reached the transient holidaymakers who may not have bought the newspaper. They would have seen the headlines about the railway reflected on billboards as they made their way from the railway station to the beach and back. The billboards were provocative as their purpose was to entice the passer-by to purchase a newspaper. The headlines were keeping the progress of the railway closure at the forefront of the Whitby public and people visiting the town.

For twenty-two weeks in 1964 Whitby would have been dominated by headlines about the railway. Local people did not need to purchase the paper when the headlines and billboards framed the decision of the Inquiry as a "bombshell" and the closure as a "bitter blow". They were they left in no doubt as to where the responsibility for this lay, when the Prime Minister's, (Harold Wilson 1964 to 1970), response was described as "unsatisfactory".[167] The headlines while reflecting public opinion also had a critical role in influencing it.

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[161] "2143 Signatures to Petition," article, *Whitby Gazette* May 10, 1963; "Protest March to York," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 13, 1964.

[162] "The Beeching Axe," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 21, 1963, 1.

[163] "Goathland's Lead," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 28, 1963, 1.

[164] "And Now for Wembley," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 4, 1965, 1. "Glorious in Defeat," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 30, 1965, 1.

[165] "Rail Closures a Bitter Blow," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 5, 1965.

[166] Joy Johnson, "Billboard Jungle," *British Journalism Review* 19, no. 3 (2008), 9.

[167] "The Railway Decisions Were a Bombshell," 1. "Rail Closures a Bitter Blow," 1. "Prime Minister's Letter on Railway Policy Explained but Reply Considered Unsatisfactory," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Dec 31, 1964.

"The paper has its finger on the pulse of country people" - Letters to the paper reflect its readership[168]

The Letters Column of the *Whitby Gazette* reflected its readers' overwhelming opposition to railway closure. It was a weekly feature comprising up to half a page of letters on a wide variety of subjects. From January 1963 until July 1965 the *Whitby Gazette* published 116 letters about the local railways. Most concerned the closure. There is no record of how many letters were received on the subject and therefore what percentage was published. The editor does not state in the television documentary what the criteria was for selecting letters for publication although in February 1964 he gave a hint of the editorial policy, which suggests some letters were rejected. In the letter's column, he wrote "on the subject of railway closure there is an inclination of many letters to take up the political inference. This will not be allowed by the editor".[169] In practice, this seems to mean that it does not publish letters critical of the local MP, Alexander Spearman. The only letter overtly critical of him dates to the publication of the Beeching Report, stating that Spearman "should have abstained" during the report's debate in Parliament.[170] Otherwise, the letters published were in defence of the MP, "By all means criticise, but let it be constructive criticism, and in this case let us deal with the appropriate authority which made these closures possible".[171] Given the feeling displayed against the MP at meetings, such a unanimity of support seems unlikely. It was reported that he faced a hostile reception at a meeting in Castleton and a stormy meeting in Whitby.[172] It would have been expected that the newspaper would have received letters critical of the MP and chose not to publish them.

The published letters reserved their political criticism for the Minister of Transport (1959 to 1964), Ernest Marples, the titles of four letters in the edition of 25th September, 1964 represent the strident views of letter writers, "Flagrant Injustice", "Monstrous Decision", "Dictatorship – Pure and Simple", and "Economic Strangulation".[173] Letters in the previous edition had been more specific, "Marples has made a serious error of judgement', "one cabinet minister….set back the economy and communications of a large district for over one hundred years", and "Marples… murdered our struggling community".[174] The criticism of national policies rather than the local MP reflected the editor's policy not to attack prominent local people. On camera, he states, "you know them, they know you, and you will need them again."[175] He framed the railway's closures as a battle between the underdog, Whitby and the uncaring politicians in central government, rather than implicating the local MP. The lack of symbiotic leadership between the *Whitby Gazette* and the local MP was at least

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[168] Major Fairfax Blakeborough the oldest correspondent of the *Whitby Gazette* quoted in Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[169] "Editorial Note on Policy," article, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 21, 1964.
[170] "Spearman Should Have Abstained," letter, *Whitby Gazette* May 17, 1963.
[171] "Rail Closure Inquiry," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 24, 1964.
[172] "Members Views on Beeching Plan – Critical Audiences at Castleton and Whitby," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 21, 1963, 1.
[173] "Flagrant Injustice," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 25, 1964. "Monstrous Decision." "Dictatorship - Pure and Simple," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 25, 1964. "Economic Strangulation," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 28, 1964.
[174] "Error of Judgement," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964. "Prompt Action Appreciated," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964. "Marples V People," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964.
[175] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."

at the outset of the campaign against closure a handicap. It precluded representation of Whitby at a national level, and locally neutralised a key and powerful organisation in the town, the Conservative Party. A speech to the Whitby Luncheon Club where Spearman stated that buses were an adequate replacement for trains and that "hills are the safest part of roads" exemplified this position.[176] Spearman may have been more effective and animated if he had represented a constituency with a smaller majority, Loft cites the reprieve of the Ayr to Stranraer line as related to the small Conservative majority in the constituency of Dumfries.[177] If the *Whitby Gazette* had publicly disagreed with the local MP then its leadership of the campaign against closure would have been clearer, less nuanced, and had a greater chance of success.

If the letters published reflected local opinion, and that is what the editor professed to do, that opinion was overwhelmingly against the closure of the railways. Of those published during this period, there were a small number written on general railway matters such as the "dismal state of the Booking Office" at Whitby Station.[178] There were only two letters that were at best ambivalent to closure, both published in early 1964 one commenting on the Jack Report into the future of rural buses that more provision should be made for people to give lifts in private cars.[179] The other supported the conversion of closed railways to roads.[180] The latter can be explained as it was written by A. Prudom from Loftus, a town which had seen its railway link to Whitby closed in 1958.[181] All the other letters published supported the protest against the closure. The only pro-Beeching articles in the *Whitby Gazette* were those reporting the comments of the local MP who said, "I have no doubt that the principles of the Beeching Report are right".[182] He conflated this support with the ability to lobby more effectively for Whitby. Comments critical of the railways were rare, Norman Crumble's being exceptional "rail was not often used because they did not provide services at the time people wanted them".[183] There was no evidence of any anti-railway feeling in the town being reflected by the *Whitby Gazette*.

Not all of the letter writers were from Whitby or the surrounding area. About one-third of the letters came from outside of the town. These tended to be from former residents, who wrote, "Keep up the Fight from an "Exiled Whitbyite"".[184] From holiday makers such as R. Siddall from Colne who commented that he would not visit Whitby if he had to change to a bus at Malton, or from lobbying organisations such as the Railway Development Association (RDA).[185] This reflected a wide geographical spread of interest in the closure of Whitby's railways.

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[176] "Sir Alexander Spearman MP Reviews the Situation," headline, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 26, 1963.
[177] Loft, *Last Trains*, 216.
[178] "Constant Traveller," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 6, 1963.
[179] Jack Committee, "Rural Bus Services, Report of the Committee," (London: Ministry of Transport, 1961). "Jack Report," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 17, 1964.
[180] "Railways as Roads," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 21, 1964.
[181] The closure of this railway to Whitby is discussed at length in Michael Aufrere Williams, "'A More Spectacular Example of a Loss-Making Branch Would Be Hard to Find': A Financial History of the Whitby-Loftus Line 1871-1958" (University of York, 2010).
[182] "Threat of Complete Railway Closure Dr. Beeching's Recommendations for Whitby District ".
[183] "Vital Transport Inquiry." This is an interesting quotation because almost nobody from Whitby spoke in favour of closure at the Inquiry.
[184] "A Holidaymakers Views," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Dec 11, 1964.
[185] "Keep up the Fight," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 6, 1964. "Birmingham Experience," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Oct 9, 1964.

Some organisations and prominent local citizens used the letter columns to promote the views of those bodies. The local Labour and Liberal Parties and their prospective parliamentary candidates, at the 1964 General Election, wrote multiple letters on the subject of the railway closure. Peter Hardy, the Labour Party candidate wrote "There is enough death on the roads without murdering necessary railways".[186] No letters were written by the sitting MP, he may have thought that his majority of 14,467, correctly as it turned out, made such activity unnecessary.[187] His activity was however widely reported by the paper sometimes given the prominence of a front-page lead. The opposition parties needed to gain additional publicity in the runup to the 1964 General Election to offset the advantage of incumbency, hence the need to write letters to the paper to balance this disparity.[188]

After the announcement of the results of the Inquiry, the headmasters of the two secondary schools wrote that the schooling of the children from Goathland would be adversely impacted by the closure of the railways.[189] The letter was given front-page prominence and linked to the editorial that was published alongside it. The editorial echoed the headmaster's concern, "There is very deep and understandable concern about the future of Goathland school children".[190] The paper was directly emphasising the content of a letter in an adjacent editorial. It was reflecting the views of prominent citizens, and as these views were aligned against closure, this was also the paper's position.

From Goathland, John Bateman, had five letters published in the *Whitby Gazette* between June 1963 and March 1965. Bateman was a retired bank manager who was a leading light in the Goathland campaign against the railway's closure. He was an assiduous record keeper, in particular maintaining a weather diary which he linked to the number of times the bus service to Goathland failed to operate. In his letter of protest, he wrote: "I have kept a diary since I took up residence here covering the years 1955 to date".[191] He uses this to challenge the bus company's statistics of bus operation, while adding a little colour, "On a bleak day, with a freezing wind blowing, there are no bus shelters in which to take refuge."[192] We know from his letter of protest that he used the train to travel south for the winter. Thus the relevance of his letter to the *Whitby Gazette* headlined "The train never fails to turn up" complaining about the increase of two and half hours in the journey time to London.[193] He wrote that he used the train to shop in Whitby, thus in his letter to the *Whitby Gazette* entitled "Travellers Experience" he used this trip to illustrate the shortcomings of any substitute bus service, "On Monday 31 August and Tuesday 1 September the 11:43 from Goathland consisting of six carriages was standing room only. What would have happened if this number of people had wanted to catch the bus. The company could not have provided an adequate number of buses".[194] Finally using his work experience he criticises the economics of BR operations, "Is it a case of a national body ignoring the public

[186] "Protest against the Closure of the Railways," letter, *Whitby Gazette* May 22, 1964.
[187] "Election Result," article, *Whitby Gazette* Oct 23, 1964.
[188] "Members View on Beeching Plan."
[189] "Dramatic Moves to Save Our Railways," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 25, 1964, 1.
[190] "The Battle Is On," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 25, 1964.
[191] John Bateman, 27 Feb, 1964.
[192] "Buses Not Maintained," Letter, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 28, 1964.
[193] "The Train Never Fails to Turnup," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 3, 1964.
[194] "Travellers Experience," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964.

requirements".[195] John Bateman was a prominent campaigner who was prepared to do more than just write a single letter of protest. He was atypical, there was only one other example of a Goathland resident writing to the *Whitby Gazette* on the subject of railway closures.[196] This cannot be explained given the strength of feeling in Goathland.

What is also noticeable was how after the closure of the railways in March 1965 articles and letters published about the railways decline dramatically, the campaign was over, the results were accepted, "Now that the fight for the railways is over effort should be concentrated on improving the roads."[197] The news cycle had moved on from the railway closure. The newspaper returned to reporting railway service deficiencies, rather than the reinstatement of those services.[198] Letter writers complained about the new services. It reflected the acceptance of the railway closure by its readers and was indicative that any hardship caused was more perceived than real. Had there been real hardship, the *Whitby Gazette* would have reflected it, fulfilling its role "to mirror the life of the community."[199] The community thought that the railway closures would be catastrophic but as the *Whitby Gazette* was to report, in reality little changed after the closure, "Fears of a decline in the number of holidaymakers due to railway closures will not be fulfilled."[200]

"It is up to you" - How editorials led the public campaign against railway closure[201]

The editorials of the *Whitby Gazette* were the catalyst for encouraging public action. This was where expression of the newspaper's proprietor and editor were found. Editorials provide "opinion leadership" to the public, if Schaefer is correct, the volume of editorials in the *Whitby Gazette* show how it led the fight against the closure of Whitby's railways.[202] The closure of the two railways represent the failure of that leadership.

The *Whitby Gazette's* editorial was prominent, under the heading "Viewpoint", it was always published in the right-hand columns of the front page. After the headline article, they were the most widely read, influential, and visible part of the paper. Every edition in the early 1960s published an editorial, most of these concentrated on one topic. The paper's editor Tom Barker wrote the editorials, and in his own words he believed in "campaigning to right local injustices".[203] He quoted the campaign to provide road access to an isolated community in the Esk Valley, which involved the local MP. Its success was a "public service, definitely started in this office."[204] He claimed that he was prepared to criticise prominent local people citing the example of a councillor who

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[195] "Rail Closures," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 5, 1965.
[196] "Prompt Action Appreciated."
[197] "Better Roads Needed," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 25, 1965, 1.
[198] "London to Whitby Via Newcastle," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 2, 1965, 1.
[199] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[200] "Holiday Traffic," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* May 28, 1965, 1.
[201] "It Is up to You," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 14, 1962, 1.
[202] Todd M. Schaefer, "Persuading the Persuaders: Presidential Speeches and Editorial Opinion," *Political Communication* 14, no. 1 (1997), 98.
[203] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday." In this film he is seen writing the editorial and states that they are always written by him.
[204] "Something'll Happen by Friday."

claimed that Whitby was not reliant on tourism. "This was a stupid argument" he wrote.[205] A reading of the *Whitby Gazette's* editorials of the time show however that such personal criticism in the editorials was rare.

The content and tone of the editorials about the railways closure was evidence of the dynamics of the local campaign. The changes in editorial tone, demonstrated the critical influence of the *Whitby Gazette* in the reaction to, protest against and eventual acceptance of railway closure. The tone of the editorials evolved from violent opposition to acquiescence. The change in the language of the editorials is an indication why the protest was so vociferous, deferential to authority, and ultimately unsuccessful.

Between January 1962 and July 1965, the *Whitby Gazette* published fifty-nine editorials on the subject of the railway closure. In 1962 these editorials occurred sporadically, but from the publication of the Beeching Report in March 1963 the frequency increased such that thirty-six per-cent of all issues included an editorial about railway closure, see Appendix Table 20.[206] This subject dominated the editorial columns of the *Whitby Gazette* for two years until the railway's closure in March 1965; no other subject had even five editorials devoted to it. With such prominence, the editorials would have been key to influencing public opinion in Whitby. Examination of the editorial's common phases, themes, and how they developed show how the *Whitby Gazette* influenced public opinion, public action, and ultimately the public's acceptance of the closure of the railways.

Before 1963 the rare *Whitby Gazette* editorials concerning railways focused on the quality of service and complaints. In 1962 the lack of a railway service on Good Friday was a particular concern.[207] In April 1962 came the first hints that the area's railways might be under threat, "As no service to the area would pay, do BR not have an obligation to provide transport?"[208] This editorial reflected the complacency in Whitby that Bairstow identifies, "complacency was in the air right up to the publication of the Beeching Report".[209] Before the publication of the Beeching Report the local population thought a vital service to the town safe from closure. The paper made the public aware that there could be changes, or worse, closure of the area's railways and by June 1962 this was explicit, "but we will not be as fortunate if the knife of Dr Beeching falls on our railways".[210]

The language used to describe the proposed closure was violent, using the image of Beeching wielding a knife and an axe. So when the Beeching Report was published in March 1963 the editorial was explicit, "Poising of Beeching axe must not be contemplated with docility".[211] Here the metaphor of the axe was used as a call to action, and marked the beginning of the campaign against railway closure. The next editorials all referred to the "axe", and this was the way that the *Whitby Gazette* framed

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[205] "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[206] British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways."
[207] "Good Friday Train Service," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 30, 1962, 1.
"British Railways," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 20, 1964, 1.
[208] "British Railways," 1.
[209] Bairstow, *Railways around Whitby*, 65.
[210] "Future of Railways," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 29, 1962, 1.
[211] "The Axe Is Poised," 1.

the closure, as a violent action against the area.[212] The theme continued throughout the *Whitby Gazette's* editorials to March 1965 and closure, "Farewell to Two Lines – Beeching Axe on Whitby Railways".[213] The rural population of the Whitby area would have been equally aware that an axe cut out dead wood, which of course was Beeching's objective.[214] In this context "axe" was ambiguous. Cutting out dead wood or unprofitable railway lines would allow the rest to grow and thrive. For local people however, it would have represented an arbitrary, perhaps violent act of mutilation. In setting the tone for its coverage and by extension the attitude of its readers these first editorials were crucial.

The use of "axe" to describe the Beeching Report was common. Bradley comments on "Beeching's vigorous axe work", while Flores sees that the "Beeching Axe was not well understood". Others such as Jones and Gibbons include "axe" in the title of their works.[215] Hollings a published local historian in her history of Goathland describes the closure as a "railway axed".[216] Longworth describes this imagery as symbolising violence and the unequal or unfair relationship between the government and the country area whose railways were under threat.[217] The clerk to WUDC quoted at the Closure Inquiry reflected this, "Is Whitby to be sacrificed and murdered because British Railways cannot balance their books".[218]

The imagery of the violence of the axe was the catalyst for local action. In Goathland action against closure developed organically from the actions of the Parish Council and community leaders such as Arthur Knott. They mobilised the villagers to oppose closure collectively through reports written by the Parish Council and individually by letters of protest written to the TUCC.[219] The protest needed a catalyst, that was provided by the leadership of the *Whitby Gazette*, prompting action through an editorial campaign.[220] Brown believes that "well-organised action can be an important element in preventing the loss of rail service".[221] The *Whitby Gazette* did not go so far as using its resources, particularly its town centre office, to co-ordinate the protest, it always exhorted others. This could have been prompted by a desire not to identify the *Whitby Gazette* to a losing campaign so that it was in better position it to report on life after the closure of the railways.

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[212] "Railway Axe Opposition," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 5, 1963, 1. "The Beeching Axe," 1.
[213] "Farewell to Two Lines – Beeching Axe on Whitby Railways," 1.
[214] Dudley and Richardson, *Why Does Policy Change?: Lessons from British Transport Policy 1945-99*, 31.
[215] Simon Bradley, *The Railways: Nation, Network and People* (London: Profile Books, 2015), 413. Quiroz Flores and Whiteley, "The "Beeching Axe" and Electoral Support in Britain," 362. Jones, *Beeching: 50 Years of the Axeman*. Gibbons, Heblich, and Pinchbeck, "The Spatial Impacts of a Massive Rail Disinvestment Programme."
[216] Hollings, *A History of Goathland*, 114.
[217] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 172.
[218] "Vital Transport Inquiry."
[219] Goathland Parish Council, "Letter to Ministry of Transpor Protest on Closure of Railway," (Northallerton: NYCC Archive June, 1963). "Proposed Closure of Whitby to Pickering Railway," (Mar 4, 1963).
[220] Arthur Knott letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, "Whitby to Malton Line," (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton 27 Feb, 1964).
[221] Dennis Brown, "When Rural Communities Lose Passenger Rail Service," *Rural Development Perspectives* 12 (1997), 15.

The initial call for action, after the Beeching Report had been debated and approved by parliament, recognised the role of community leaders but stressed that it was only by the united action of all of the area's population that the railway closures would be successfully opposed. "Goathland Parish Council has set a notable example….It will take a united effort by all residents in the area to retain our railway lines, the challenge of the Beeching Report will have to be met with a unity of purpose."[222] A month later this was emphasised again, "Has not the time come where action should replace mere words".[223] There was a lull in the second half of 1963, only two editorials discussing the local railway closures. One of these was significant as it served to focus the community on the subject of hardship. It quoted a railway closure tribunal in West Yorkshire where the chairman had refused to hear any objections that did not on refer to the potential hardship that the objectors would suffer after the closure of the threatened railway. The *Whitby Gazette* led "That hardship would result from the closure is obvious from the Goathland case, and once the Councils get down to serious effort……they will be concentrating on hardship."[224] The *Whitby Gazette* had correctly identified that hardship was the critical component of the closure process. It could not be expected to understand how the MoT defined hardship and the nuances of transport economics. At this time, the intention to close Whitby's railways had been published in the Beeching Report, but the actual process to close the railways had not yet started. Neither the newspaper nor the public had a target to focus their protest on as the closure was still hypothetical. Indeed, they might have hoped it would not happen.

This corresponded with a dearth of articles concerning the railway closure in the *Whitby Gazette.* This was not because there were other major news stories or campaigns to cover. Typical headlines of the period covered developments in the harbour and the new supply of natural gas.[225] The paper recognised that until the closure was actually announced there was no incentive or purpose in calling people to action. Once the closure was announced in February 1964 it was imperative for the paper to mobilise opposition quickly.[226] Time was short because the closure process mandated that there were only six weeks after the announcement for objectors to make their objection to the TUCC.[227]

The *Whitby Gazette* editorials now encouraged protest, though a constrained written protest, "You will do a serous disservice to the town if you have not sent your protest letter…. So, if you have not made your protest about the proposed withdrawal of rail services, do it now!"[228] Within this short period in the Spring of 1964, there were nine editorials on the subject with two common themes. First an emphasis that this was a fight or a battle and to emphasise its importance headlines such as, 'fight to retain the railway", "it will not be an easy fight", "The battle is joined" and "We shall fight, win or

[222] "The Beeching Plan Accepted," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* May 3, 1963, 1.
[223] "Goathland's Lead," 1.
[224] "Railway Closures," 1.
[225] "Brighter Days for Whitby Harbour," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Nov 8, 1963, 1. "Whitby Gas Is Non-Toxic," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Nov 29, 1963, 1.
[226] "British Railways - Notice of Withdrawal of Railway Services."
[227] Howe, "The Transport Act, 1962, and the Consumers' Consultative Committees," 50.
[228] "One Week to Go," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 27, 1964, 1.

lose on the protests that have been made. It is up to you" were prominent.[229] Second to identify an adversary, which was clearly the government, "If it is the intention of the government to throttle life in isolated communities, then railway closure would be a first step" and "The government is acquiescing in a policy of the small man (and the small community) going to the wall for no other reason than it is small."[230] The *Whitby Gazette* was leading the protest against the closure of the railways while framing it as a battle between the small community of Whitby and the bemouth of government in remote London. The secondary impact of these editorials in the action period was to galvanise the efforts of public officials, through example, usually, the exemplary activities of Goathland compared to elsewhere.[231]

For all the evocation of war and battles, the actions proposed by the *Whitby Gazette* editorials were constrained to letter writing. There was no call to demonstrate or to perform acts of civil disobedience as would happen during the closure of the Waverley line, or "fears of physical repercussions" documented by a member of Beeching's team when he attended a TUCC Inquiry on the south coast.[232] In this the Whitby Gazette was reflecting events and public opinion in Whitby. As previously explained, it was conservative in outlook and never sought to be out of step with its readership. It did not provide transformational leadership in Whitby but reflected the lack of local action. Goathland where there was active protest featured prominently in the paper, the lack of direct action in Whitby meant that it did feature. The paper could only editorialise around actual events.

During the whole period of the railway closure only two local demonstrations were recorded. A group of public school children who walked to York to deliver a petition to BR and a small protest march after the arrival of a charter train in Whitby.[233] The lack of protest reflected the conservative demographic of Whitby and the lack of a sizeable middle-class to organise a protest outside of a traditional prescribed institutional structure.[234] The *Whitby Gazette*'s editorials promoted the language of war, but this was to be a civilised war on the battleground of the government's choosing. What the editorials never made clear to its readers was the advantage this gave to the government who were fighting a political battle while the inhabitants of Whitby continued a logical battle through written objection, a battle which they had little ability to influence.[235]

The centrepiece of the battle was the TUCC Inquiry held over two days in July 1964 in the largest hall in Whitby. The *Whitby Gazette* reported that 2,260 letters of

[229] "It Is up to Individuals," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 7, 1964, 1. "It Is up to You," 1. "The Battle Is Joined," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 28, 1964, 1. "Final Day for Objections," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 3, 1964, 1.

[230] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 243. "Preparation for Opposing Railway Closures," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 31, 1964, 1. "It Is up to You," 1.

[231] "Preparing for Railway Action," 1.

[232] Loft, *Last Trains*, 254-55. Robin Jones, *Beeching: The inside Track* (Horncastle: Mortons Media, 2012), 53.

[233] "Protest March to York," 1. "Train Used for 'Save Rails' Tour," article, *Whitby Gazette* May 1, 1964.

[234] Roger King and Neill Nugent, *Respectable Rebels: Middle Class Campaigns in Britain in the 1970s* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979), 2.

[235] Grantham, "Privatisation and Reorganisation," 264. Dudley and Richardson, *Why Does Policy Change?: Lessons from British Transport Policy 1945-99*, 59.

objection were received and that "The moment of decision is approaching, and the maximum weight of opposition will no doubt be brought to bear at this vital enquiry."[236] An inquiry was mandated by the Transport Act of 1962 after receipt by the TUCC of written objections.[237] The *Whitby Gazette* editorial highlighted the centrality of the inquiry to the consideration of the railway closure, "The moment of decision is approaching".[238] In preparation for the inquiry the *Whitby Gazette* repeated the theme of battle reminding its readers that it was a David and Goliath fight with the government, "Let us fight on a united front to ensure that from the complacency of their city offices, those in authority do not forget to look at the problem of our area as it really is and not as seen from a long distance."[239] After the Inquiry the *Whitby Gazette* seemed self-satisfied, it praises the contribution of the principals particularly the council officers and local MP, exhorting that "unity is strength" reflecting on a battle well fought.[240] These people were the pillars of the local establishment, and thus a conservative paper rarely challenged their views. Access to the local MP would have been important to the paper and reflected the previously quoted attitude, "you know them, they know you, and you will need them again", critical in the case of the MP.[241] This optimism continued when the Inquiry reported that closure of two lines to Whitby would cause "severe hardship", and the other "grave hardship".[242] Interpreted incorrectly by the *Whitby Gazette* to mean that the "Axe is Blunted".[243] The paper did not appreciate that the term hardship was subjective and could be interpreted and manipulated by the government to its advantage.[244] In practice it meant "being able to get to work or school without an absurdly long journey and not being cut-off otherwise".[245] The lack of specialist expertise at the *Whitby Gazette* handicapped its campaign.

It was not surprising that when the result of the Minister of Transport's decision to close two of the railways was made public that the *Whitby Gazette* wrote of it as a "Crushing Blow".[246] The editorial pulled no punches describing the Inquiry as a "waste of time" and the result "a blow to small communities".[247] It marked the belated realisation by the *Whitby Gazette* expressed in its editorials that they had been part of a process, that they framed as a battle, one where they were ineffectively fighting the wrong enemy. It was a bitter blow for the paper and by extension, the readers that it had unwittingly misled through editorials. Logically this might have led to the newspaper exhorting extra-legal protest or at least demonstrations. But apart from suggesting that the people of Whitby write more letters there was never rallying call for direct action. The way the *Whitby Gazette* responded to the "The Crushing Blow" suggested that the public's protests were muted. It wrote "Small communities are considered by the government expendable. Our own district has experienced a

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[236] "Railway Objections Total 2,260," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 10, 1964, 1; "The Railway Enquiry," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* May 29, 1964.
[237] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz."
[238] "The Railway Enquiry," 1.
[239] "Have British Railways a Case? ," 1.
[240] "The Railway Inquiry," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 17, 1964, 1.
[241] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."
[242] "Result of the Whitby Inquiry," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Aug 21, 1964, 1.
[243] "The Axe Is Blunted," 1.
[244] Loft, "One Big Row," 259.
[245] *Last Trains*, 213.
[246] "A Crushing Blow," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964, 1.
[247] "A Crushing Blow," 1.

setback from which it will take a long time to recover. It is a gloomy outlook we should demand many thousands of pounds on improving the highways".[248] Despite the setback and gloom, the answer was to improve the roads! The Government had shown that in the case of Whitby, it could ignore a conventional protest and the *Whitby Gazette* did not have the knowledge to challenge this.

After the Minister's decision to close two of the local railways, editorials continue to emphasise the battle and the harshness of a decision taken remotely in London. There was an effort to seek a villain or scapegoat for the decision, and the identification of the new Labour Government, after the General Election of October 1964, as that villain was a recurring theme of editorials. It reflected the paper's conservative leanings, there was still no criticism of the local MP, Spearman, even though he had voted in support of the Beeching Report. His justification, "the report was a striking example of this government's courage and energy", and had encountered a "stormy reception" locally for doing so.[249] Spearman may have thought that with a majority of over 14,000 in the 1959 General Election that he did not have to compromise his free market approach. He was proved correct as his vote at the 1964 General Election, when locally the closure of the railway had been an important issue, was only reduced by 2,644.[250] (It should be noted that over half of his constituency was the town of Scarborough, which was much less effected by local railway closures). The paper was not reflective of this criticism; only one editorial was mildly critical of Spearman, writing that it was surprising he did not address concerns over his support for the Beeching Report in a speech.[251] The paper took a pragmatic view, Spearman would have an impact on the *Whitby Gazette* until his retirement in 1966, the railway whether closed or not would be forgotten. The MP was more critical to the paper than the railway. This compromised the effectiveness of the *Whitby Gazette's* campaign against the railway closure. After the 1964 General Election the editorial was optimistic, "the issue is back in the melting pot", based on an election promise by the Labour Party to reprieve Whitby's railways from closure until a national transport plan was completed.[252] Optimism was soon dashed with the Minister's decision to close the two lines.

One week after the announcement of the minister's decision and after time for consideration the editorial was a rallying call, "The Battle is On…the result from this drastic step will affect every person living in our district", while acknowledging the difficulties of the fight, "the Minister of Transport has "never relented when he planned to close a line".[253] Then the editorials found a political scapegoat, which for a paper with conservative leanings circulating in an area that returned a Conservative MP was conveniently the newly elected Labour Government. It was also a recognition as Faulkner and Austin write that in this period "Few closure proposals attracted the degree of political attention granted to Whitby".[254] The *Whitby Gazette* recognised that the new government gave "no encouragement to our district that the closures could be halted", a week later for the first time the editorial stated that the closure was a

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[248] "A Crushing Blow," 1.
[249] "Acute Anxiety in Whitby." "Members View on Beeching Plan," 1.
[250] "Election Result."
[251] "Railway Axe Opposition," 1.
[252] Faulkner and Austin, *Holding the Line: How Britain's Railways Were Saved*, 38. Philip Benham, *An Illustrated History of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway* (Hersham: Ian Allan, 2008), 37. Jones, *Beeching: 50 Years of the Axeman*, 77.
[253] "The Battle Is On," 1.
[254] Faulkner and Austin, *Holding the Line: How Britain's Railways Were Saved*, 38.

political issue, "Fraser (the incoming Minister of Transport) acts as if he is no longer interested in Whitby's transport difficulties. He has not replied to a meeting request from the councils nor a telegram from the local Labour Party. The time has come for straight speaking".[255] This was backed up by the publication of a rare political letter, "the Prime Minister could have acted to reprieve railways. He did many other things to swell cabinet ranks. Did I vote for a dictatorship?".[256]

It was not coincidental that the *Whitby Gazette's* editorials have a political dimension after a change of government. The scapegoat of a remote socialist government betraying the remote conservative country dwellers then became a predominant theme, something Longworth identifies in the relationship between country and city in Australia.[257] Editorials reflected "indignation" that the government had broken their election promises to reprieve the closure of Whitby's railways, and that they would not enter into a dialogue with Whitby's representatives.[258] In Longworth's terms, they had "broken the bargain between country and government. The state would compensate people for remoteness, the country would provide agricultural goods and space."[259] In Whitby this was, agricultural produce, fish, and somewhere to holiday.

In the months before the closure there was no appeal to the people of Whitby to protest, the *Whitby Gazette* had accepted the rules that the government had established for the closure process and did not challenge them.[260] This could also have been reflective that there were no demonstrations or acts of civil disobedience in Whitby.[261] Such actions may have had little impact anyway, as Barnett comments that they serve to relieve stress and are rarely effective.[262] Although Woods thinks such action in the 1960s was the progenitor of more militant protest from 1990 onwards, Whitby reflects his view that in the 1960s rural areas were not politicised.[263] One of the reasons for the lack of unconventional protest in Whitby was that the editorials in the *Whitby Gazette* never encouraged it or provided a lead. As previously stated, it would have been out of character with its conservative viewpoint, and out of step with its readership. Instead in the period immediately preceding closure, the *Whitby Gazette* seems to be seeking a scapegoat for that closure, a reflection that the

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[255] "Railways Future," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Nov 6, 1964, 1. "Time for Straight Speaking," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Nov 13, 1964, 1.

[256] "Sad and Delusioned," letter, *Whitby Gazette* Nov 13, 1964.

[257] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 218.

[258] "A Question of Fact," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Nov 20, 1964, 1. "Up against a Problem," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Dec 4, 1964, 1.

[259] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 18.

[260] "Still Continuing the Railway Fight," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 22, 1965. "The Battle Is Still On," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 5, 1965.

[261] Contemporary examples of unconventional protests were in East Suffolk, the Somerset and Dorset Railway and the Waverley line in Scotland see; Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy*, 178., Christie Banks, Collet, Garrod, & Ogilvy, "Can Bus Replace Train?; or, Will They Never Learn?," (London: Railway Invigoration Society, 1977), 15. , Grantham, "How to Save a Railway," 90., Branch Line Reinvigoration Society, "Unprofitable Lines?: A Financial Study of Certain Railway Passenger Services in Somerset, Dorset and Hampshire," (London: Branch Line Reinvigoration Society, 1963). Loft, *Last Trains*, 254.

[262] Ross Barnett and Pauline Barnett, ""If You Want to Sit on Your Butts You'll Get Nothing!" Community Activism in Response to Threats of Rural Hospital Closure in Southern New Zealand," *Health & Place* 9, no. 2 (2003), 65.

[263] Michael Woods, "Deconstructing Rural Protest: The Emergence of a New Social Movement," *Journal of Rural Studies* 19, no. 3 (2003), 310.

editor had concluded that closure was inevitable, and perhaps that it would not be as catastrophic as originally thought.

The *Whitby Gazette* marked the closure of the Malton and Scarborough railway lines with an editorial. The battle analogy was not now appropriate rather the editorial states that the people of Whitby closed ranks, implicitly attempting to fight something imposed upon them. "No question has aroused so much comment in our town and district, nothing has ever made us close our ranks to try to avert a blow which many consider will be serious to our area."[264] This was the last editorial published on the subject of railway closure. However, there are four editorials on the subject of railways published during the summer of 1965, none of which seek to reverse the closure. At that time no railway closure had been reversed, so logically any editorial campaign would have been doomed and the *Whitby Gazette* recognised this by refocusing its readers on the actual, or lack of impact of the railways closure. Reviewing the 1965 Whitsun Bank Holiday the editorial comments, "Fears of a decline in the number of holidaymakers due to railway closures will not be fulfilled."[265] Was this a recognition by the *Whitby Gazette* that the campaign was based on a false premise, the closure of the railways would not, as stated in the editorial after the publication of the Beeching Report cause the "decline" of Whitby.[266] People used the substitute bus services, private cars or travelled less. It was the paper's role to reflect the local community, and that community had accepted the closure. The impact was not as drastic as feared. The people of Whitby had protested within the law of the time, that protest had been unsuccessful, they now had new concerns that the paper would reflect. "We must not only accept the inevitable but do all we can to overcome just one more hazard imposed by the people of London who seem to be completely out of touch with what regular communications mean to a rural community."[267] The railway was no longer newsworthy, it was not until the 1967 that a society, led by a small group of enthusiasts, to restore the railway was formed, so the *Whitby Gazette* reflecting the news cycle moved on.[268] It reflected that perhaps after all the people of Whitby were not as dependent on public transport as was perceived.

Conclusion

The editorials in the *Whitby Gazette* between 1963 and 1965 had been dominated by the issue of opposing the closure of the area's railways, showing that it was the campaigning newspaper that Loft describes.[269] The editorials used the language of war both to galvanise the local population in opposition to the closures and to frame it in terms of a battle. It reflected the divergence of country and town that Longworth finds in NSW, of the rural area reliant on its railway against a remote government who would take it away. The different phases of the editorial reflected this analogy of the battle. However, this was a battle of the pen and process rather than one of

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[264] "Farewell to Two Lines – Beeching Axe on Whitby Railways," 1.

[265] "Holiday Traffic," 1.

[266] "The Axe Is Poised," 1.

[267] "Facing Realities," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 12, 1965, 1.

[268] John Hunt, *The North Yorkshire Moors Railway: A Nostalgic Trip Along the Former Whitby & Pickering Railway and through to Malton* (Kettering: Past & Present, 2001), 8. Stephen Chapman, *York to Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale* (Todmorden: Bellcode Books, 2008), 23.
The formation of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway Trust reflected an objective to preserve a heritage railway rather than to provide a public service to replace the closed railway.

[269] Loft, *Last Trains*, 221.

demonstration and innovative action as practised elsewhere. The paper took a conservative view of opposition reflecting its roots in a conservative rural community as a traditional family owned and family-run local newspaper. The *Whitby Gazette* worked within existing rules, it did not challenge the status quo. By not doing so it handicapped local protest. In the words of its oldest journalist, "Yorkshire people, hear all and say nowt."[270]

The *Whitby Gazette* grasped that hardship was the only ground for protest against railway closure. The legislation was clear on this, however just as the legislation was ambiguous as to the definition of hardship the paper incorrectly viewed hardship in emotional terms. This was evident from the language of battle, it failed to realise that Whitby's hardship had to be demonstrated in terms, economic and political, understood by the Ministry of Transport.[271] It is difficult to know how a local paper with little or no specialist expertise in transport policy could have had this knowledge. Like its readers it feared closure, but fear was abstract that could not be balanced against the costs of a loss-making railway.[272] The emotional element of the closure became dominant, as demonstrated through analysis of the letters of protest in Goathland. The paper was not a vehicle for rational consideration of the closure, for if it had examined the reality of its reader's reliance on public transport it would as this dissertation demonstrates have found that it was peripheral at best. To take such a position prior to closure would have meant that it "was not reflecting" its readership.[273]

What was striking was how the defeat in battle was accepted, the campaign and editorials abruptly end. The editorial after closure stated, "no question has aroused so much comment in our town and district, nothing has ever made us close our ranks to try to avert a blow which many consider will be serious to our area…no walk of life will escape the detrimental consequences".[274] It did not evolve into positive action to re-open the closed railways. This would be achieved in 1973 without the leadership of the paper by a group of railway preservationists rather than campaigners to restore a public service. For the *Whitby Gazette* and the people of Whitby the battle had been fought honourably, it had "performed a public service" and had failed. The consequences would be gracefully accepted. The paper was led by events and reverted to publishing leading articles reflecting life in the town, "Jubilee Certificate for Ambulance Division".[275]

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[270] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."

[271] Dudley and Richardson, *Why Does Policy Change?: Lessons from British Transport Policy 1945-99*, 32.

[272] Gourvish and Blake, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 441.

[273] Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."

[274] "They Served Us Well," 1.

[275] "Jubilee Certificate for Ambulance Division," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* May 14, 1965, 1; Bean, "Something'll Happen by Friday."

3 "The loss of the railway would mean the death of many of us" - The Goathland Letters[276]

The villagers of Goathland were emotional rather than rational about their railway service. The railway mitigated isolation and their fear of isolation. They felt the closure of their local rural railway would by isolating the countryside change the nature of rural life forever. Such were the views of the villagers of Goathland who wrote to protest against the closure of their railway line. A letter writer in Goathland linked the closure of the railway with death.[277] In the same way that Loft links railway closure with the death of rural England.[278] Others feared that closures would "relegate an area to the nineteenth century."[279] A town or village would no longer be on the map, and those without access to a car, particularly the elderly, the young and housewives would no longer be mobile with all the benefits of access to services, social interaction and general wellbeing that such mobility brought.[280] To them, a substitute bus service was not an alternative.[281] The railways were there for them in times of emergency such as bad weather but were otherwise little used on a regular basis.[282] The closure of the railway was an emotional event in the countryside, this chapter examines how the reaction to the closure of Goathland Station was emotional rather than rational.[283] It is limited to the emotions expressed in the letters, which as will be shown were mediated via a template, and therefore is a reflection of the collective response of the villagers to closure. The sources do not allow the individual psychology of the villagers to be examined and explained.

Emotional opposition to railway closures promoted the feeling of the underdog, the plucky villager pitted against the bemouth of the state; Divall quotes a spinster unable to visit her sister without a railway service and the *Northern Echo* published a quotation from a headmaster in Whitby worried about the moral probity of his pupils on a school bus.[284] As the Beeching Report closure process took place over several years, the theme of the individual versus the government machine increasingly became part of the national consciousness, through television, song, and journalism.[285] To the inhabitants of rural England their local railway was more than a means of transport, it was about the preservation of their way of life, a bastion against the forces of change that threatened their rurality. "The railway of memory and dreams, deeply loveable

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[276] John Bateman, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 3 Jul, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[277] 27 Feb, 1964.
[278] Loft, *Last Trains*, title page.
[279] Branch Line Reinvigoration Society, "Unprofitable Lines?," 59.
[280] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 105. Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 45. Nutley, "Accessibility, Mobility and Transport-Related Welfare," 335.
[281] Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy*, 156.
[282] Jones, *Beeching: The inside Track*, 154. "The Railway Outlook," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Oct 23, 1964, 1.
[283] "The railway of memory and dreams, deeply loveable because it is not entirely real" Ian Marchant, *Parallel Lines: Or Journeys on the Railway of Dreams: Or Every Big Girl's Book of Trains* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), 307.
[284] Divall, "Do You Really Call That Progress, Mr. Marples? ", 10. "A Wayward Bus," article, *Northern Echo* July 10, 1964.
[285] John Betjeman, "Branchline Railway," in *Lets Imagine* (BBC Enterprises, 1963). Michael Flanders and Donald Swann "Slow Train" quoted in Ian Carter, "'The Lost Idea of a Train' Looking for Britain's Railway Novel," *The Journal of Transport History* 21, no. 2 (2000), 132. Arlott, "Transport through the Looking Glass."

because it is not entirely real," this nostalgic memory of the rural railway reinforced the theme of hardship. [286] The railway myth was infantilised in the Wilbert Awdry's books, in the race between Thomas the Tank Engine (good) and Bertie the bus (bad) reinforcing the evils of modernisation and prejudice against bus travel.[287] Carter emphasises that cultural references very much eulogise the rural railway and characterise Beeching in extreme terms as a "slaughterer", by the time of the Beeching Report they had become objects of nostalgia.[288] Carter writes at length about the railways as an emblem of modernity, almost entirely in the context of the Nineteenth Century or the first fifty years of the Twentieth, ignoring that for many by 1964 the railways had become an anachronism.[289] Similarly he shows that the British have a "peculiar love of trains' and that the railway has assumed a "place in British society without parallel in the rest of the world."[290] He produces no evidence of rural dwellers embracing that modernity rather that they embraced the continuity represented by the rural railway. Although the leader of the Labour Party Harold Wilson promised "the white heat of technology" in a speech made in Scarborough only twenty miles from Goathland, the villagers saw the railway as providing continuity, the bus as being unreliable, while the car was for the majority unattainable.[291]

Norah Duggleby protested that the government had encouraged her to invest in a guest house and was now reneging on this bargain by depriving her visitors of the means to travel there.[292] Longworth identifies a similar disillusionment in Australia, where the railways form a contract between the rural inhabitant and the government. The rural communities expected the government to uphold that contract, not to break it by the closure of their local railway.[293]

There are many books, academic studies, magazine articles, and photographic records about the closure of railways in the 1960s.[294] By contrast, there are very few studies of the impact of the closure of a railway on rural communities.[295] Social historians like Howkins tend to concentrate on wider changes to rural communities with the impact of the railway closures in the 1960s either a footnote or ignored

[286] Marchant, *Parallel Lines: Or Journeys on the Railway of Dreams: Or Every Big Girl's Book of Trains*, 307.

[287] Wilbert Awdry, *Tank engine Thomas again*, (London: Heinemann Young Books, reprinted 1998). The original story was published in 1949 and would have been popular in the early 1960s.

[288] Ian Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain : The Epitome of Modernity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 254.

[289] *Railways and Culture in Britain : The Epitome of Modernity*, 7 to 23.

[290] *British Railway Enthusiasm* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), 6. Also quoting Ken Taylorson, *The Fun We Had : An inside Look at the Railway Enthusiast Hobby* (London]: Phoenix, 1976), 6.

[291] Harold Wilson, "The White Heat of the Technological Revolution," (speech, Labour Party Conference, Scarborough, United Kingdom Oct, 1963).

[292] Norah Duggleby and Ruby Taylor, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[293] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 207.

[294] For example, P Butterfield, "Beeching Was Too Late," *Journal of Railway and Canal History Society* 200 (2007). David N. Clough, *Dr Beeching's Remedy: A Cure for a Century of the Railway's Ills* (Hersham: Ian Allan, 2013); Quiroz Flores and Whiteley, "The "Beeching Axe" and Electoral Support in Britain." Ivo Peters, *The Somerset and Dorset Railway in the Sixties Vol3 1960 to 1962* (Oxford: Oxford Publishing Company, 1982).

[295] Whitelegg, "Rural Railways and Disinvestment in Rural Areas," 60.

altogether.[296] There are few surviving eye-witnesses to the impact of railway closure in the 1960s, so study is challenging without a source of primary information.

The author discovered a resource that facilitates a retrospective social survey of the closure of railways in the 1960s in the Whitby area. These are letters written to protest against the closure of their local railway service by the villagers of Goathland. The letters present a picture of life in the village before the closure of the railway in relation to the accessibility of necessary services, and the impact on that of the railway closure. The homogeneity of the letters is such that they are a proxy for interviewing the residents of Goathland in 1964 and can explain the impact of the railway closure on the villagers. The language and phrasing of the letters reflected their emotional attachment to the railway. These letters enable earlier pioneering work to be developed, for example that of Thomas, and Hillman and Whalley who use face to face surveys with those impacted by railway closures in the early 1960s and 1970s, as well as Parolin's more recent work in Australia.[297] This chapter examines the letters, the background to them being written, and their structure, to show the emotional though often not entirely rational feelings that the villagers of Goathland had for their local railway. It is recognised that the sample of letters could be self-selecting, the validity of the sample and its potential limitations is discussed in this chapter.

A methodology to analyse the Goathland Protest letters

The challenge of analysing the letters stored in the archive was considerable. A methodology was devised that balanced the overhead of undertaking data capture with the required power of analysis. The objective was to be able to analyse all elements of each letter and be able to examine them as a whole. Any element that had a location, e.g., house address, or destination of travel, needed to be captured precisely.

The records of GPC are stored in the North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Archives in Northallerton. As well as minute books, correspondence files regarding the railway are preserved in file ZRZ1 entitled Railway Closure. This file contains official Council correspondence regarding the closure of the Malton to Whitby railway line. The letters were found in this file. The letters with one exception were typed, typically on a semi-transparent paper, and were stored in one large envelope. The letters are in good condition, legible and can consist of multiple pages. The TUCC published a complete list of written objections by origin, running to twenty-one pages, in advance of the Inquiry into the closure of the Malton to Whitby railway.[298] The number of letters received by the TUCC from Goathland corresponds precisely with the letters in the NYCC Archive, so the archive is considered complete. Each letter was photographed and indexed by the originator. Consideration was given to scanning the letters so that digital textual analysis could be undertaken, however as the letters could not be removed from the Archive this was impractical. The only alternative would have been

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[296] Howkins, *The Death of Rural England*.

[297] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*. Thomas, *The Rural Transport Problem*. Parolin, Filan, and Ilias, "Spatial and Economic Effects of Rail Freight Line Closure."

[298] Transport Users Consultative Committee North Eastern Region, "Proposal to Withdraw Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). List of Objectors Who Have Submitted Written Objections to the Proposal," (York: Transport Users Consultative Committee North Eastern Region, 1964), 1 to 21.

to transcribe the letters manually, this was also rejected as being too time-consuming, costly, and disproportionate to the likely benefits to be gained.

Each letter was read and deconstructed so that the elements (see Figure 2) could be entered into a database. Figure 2 is an example of a typical letter annotated with its key elements. Table 2 translates these elements into database fields, with a description of each. Each person is a row and each field a column in an Excel worksheet. Three additional fields were added at this stage;

Postcode – derived using the online postcode finder tool.[299]

Longitude, Latitude – Using a combination of the postcode and the address of each house their exact latitude and longitude was captured by pinning the location to a custom Google Map, and transcribing the results to the database. A master file of the latitude and longitude of British locations was cross-referenced to all United Kingdom locations mentioned in the letters.[300]

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[299] Royal Mail, "Postcode Finder - Find an Address," accessed Aug 11, 2019, https://www.royalmail.com/find-a-postcode.
[300] Geo Names, "Country Downloads," accessed Jan 9, 2019, http://download.geonames.org/export/dump/.

The Secretary,
Transport Users Consultative Committee
for the North Eastern Area,
Toft Green Chambers,
Toft Green,
YORK.

RAYMOND BURTON Chef and OLIVE MARJORIE BURTON his wife of
Holmlea, Oakfield, Goathland

We wish to protest against the proposed closure of the Whitby
to Malton Railway line on the grounds of hardship.

We have no car.   We are dependant on public transport to
go to Whitby and Pickering and York for visiting Dentist and
Bank and Chiropodist and purchasing necessities.   We have
relatives in South Yorkshire.   Without rail service we cannot
visit them or they us.   The bus service is totally inadequate.
We have a son at school at Whitby.   He will be deprived of
much schooling if the rail service is discontinued.   Our elder
son left school four years ago.   He was at school at Whitby
for six years and we know the hours of schooling he lost when
he was required to go by bus and return in the same way.   Under
winter conditions in normal winters our younger son would lose
at least most of each spring term if he had to travel by bus.
By rail he can be sure of attending for the full proper hours.

DATED this 21 day of February 1964.

(Sgd) O.M. Burton
(Sgd) R Burton

1 CHILD — 8.20 am TRAIN TO WHITBY RETURNING 4.22 PM

Mr + Mrs Burton once a week to Whitby.
11.45 or 1.20 p— Train to Whitby
Returning 4.22p—

Figure 2. *Model Goathland Letter of Protest*
Source: NYCC Archive
Note: Based on the letter of protest from Raymond Burton[301]

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[301] Raymond Burton, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

Table 2. *Database fields for Goathland Protest Letters*

Note	Field	Description
1	Christian Name Surname Sex Age Status Job Place of Employment Address 1 Address 2	Name of the writer(s) with occupation and address. Status such as retired; widow etc. can be substituted for occupation. In a small number of cases, age is also given. **Note:** Although the place of employment is not given this can be derived, the writer in this case, has no car, and does not travel by train more than weekly so it is assumed that he works in Goathland.
2	Not used	Standard sentence summarising letter as a protest against the closure of the Whitby to Malton railway line, **always** giving the reason as hardship.
3	Car	Ownership or not of car.
4	Destination 1 Destination 2	Primary and secondary destinations for which the writer uses public transport.
5	Reason 1 Reason 2	The primary and secondary reasons for travel by public transport.
6	Hardship	The consequence of the railway closure to the writer.
7	Bus Service	Commentary on the adequacy of the bus service.
8	School	Identifies a child at secondary school in Whitby.
9	Weather	Does the writer mention winter weather.
10	Signature	Not used
11	Outbound Outbound 2 Inbound Inbound 2 Frequency	Trains used by correspondents and frequency of use. Frequency was defined as number of single journeys per week.

Source: Author
Note: Notes refer to annotations in Figure 2.

Note 11 in Table 2 details the fields used to capture the railway usage of correspondents. For each letter where railway usage is detailed the trains used outbound from Goathland and inbound to Goathland were captured. Where the writer details more than one the second is also recorded. No writer recorded more than two outbound and inbound trains. This is multiplied by the weekly frequency of use. Some interpretation is used, for instance if the record is for a schoolchild (note 8) and they used the train it is assumed that they caught the 08:20 departure from Goathland as this was the only feasible train for children who attended secondary school in Whitby.

As a quality check usage was cross-referenced to the survey data published in the BR submission to the TUCC Inquiry.[302]

The resultant Excel database formed the core tool for the analysis of the Goathland letters. Native Excel capability was used to analyse, tabulate, and graph the data. The database was exported to the IBM SPSS Statistics programme for more sophisticated statistical analysis and reporting.[303] A simple example is the ability to extract the number of schoolchildren travelling to school in Whitby. A more complex example is being able categorise the letter writers by demographic and cross-reference that to any other factor, so addressing the hypothesis that retired people were more likely to quote the fear of isolation as a reason for retaining the railway service.

Qualitative Analysis and the HGIS database

The metadata of the letters stored in the database allowed analysis and reporting in-depth. The weakness of this methodology is that it did not account for what the writer was expressing, particularly whether there were common threads of language in multiple letters, and whether these were related to other characteristics of the writers. This exposed the underlying meaning of the letters.[304]

The analysis of the letters was assisted by the similar form that each of them has as illustrated in the example in Figure 2. If each letter corresponded exactly to this common format with an identical structure and language, then any analysis could have been undertaken directly. Although the metadata for each letter was identical the content, while similar, was unique. The challenge was to devise a methodology to undertake the qualitative analysis of the content.

There are software tools such as NVivo that enable the digital analysis of the text, which enable the researcher to "see the big picture from large and diverse volumes of data".[305] However such tools rely on digital data to work, and it was impractical to digitise the Goathland Letters. Thus, an alternative manual method was used.

it was evident that there were common phrases and themes in the letters, fifteen of which were identifiable.

Common Phrases
"We wish to protest….. on the grounds of hardship"
"We have no car"
"We are dependent on public transport"
"Without public transport we cannot visit relatives or them or they us"
"The bus service is totally inadequate"
"Will be deprived of much schooling"

[302] British Railways Board North Eastern Region, *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town)*, Appendix B.
[303] Andy Field, *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*, Fifth ed. (London: Sage, 2017).
[304] Ian Dey, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A User Friendly Guide for Social Scientists* (London: Routledge, 2003), 3.
[305] NVivo, "Getting Started," accessed https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo/free-nvivo-resources/getting-started.

Common Themes
Winter Bus service unsafe
In Summer the bus services are mainly full
In Winter the bus services cannot run
Farm Animals
Cannot get supplies out
Tourism
Against government policy
Medical/Visiting
Work

The phrases in quotations were repeated exactly in multiple letters. The themes were expressed by the writers in more general yet identifiable terms. For instance, the category of "work" was where the writer wrote that the absence of the railway service would cause them difficulty or indeed prevent them from travelling to their place of employment. For each letter, the fifteen categories above are identified as present or not present. This follows Dey's methodology for qualitative analysis which is to read and annotate the letter's content, to categorise the content and link it to the letter's metadata, examining the resultant analysis for patterns and significance.[306] The frequency of phrase use and themes could then be analysed by any other field in the database, for instance, were parents more likely to write that the bus was unsafe in winter?

The Goathland letters identified the author and the other inhabitants of the household. In some cases, the letters ascribe to a dependent a characteristic, "Mrs. Grayson is entirely dependent on the railway to do vital shopping in Whitby".[307] The database has a row for each household member, 176 individuals in total. Fields for the fifteen phrases and theme were added to the master Excel database as separate columns to facilitate analysis. In total the database contains in excess of 7,000 data points.

Most of the data in the letters had a locational component, the villagers of Goathland give an address, they travelled via the bus stop or railway station to another location for multiple purposes. Each location was assigned its precise geolocation. These locations are all interrelated, and they would change over time. GIS could capture these interrelationships over time and space.[308]

QGIS 3.4 (Madeira) was used as a GIS tool, selected because of the comparative ease of use and availability as shareware.[309] A base map of the Whitby area was created by uploading Ordnance Survey data, which could be filtered to include and exclude features, e.g., roads, civil boundaries etc.[310] Although the Ordnance Survey data includes railway lines and stations concurrent with the maps publication, it does

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[306] Dey, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A User Friendly Guide for Social Scientists*, 272.
[307] John Grayson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[308] Bodenhamer, Corrigan, and Harris, *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship*, PX.
[309] QGIS, "Documentation for QGIS 3.4," accessed 2018 to 2019, https://docs.qgis.org/3.4/en/docs/.
[310] University of Edinburgh, "Digimap Online Mapping," accessed Jan 9, 2019, https://open.ed.ac.uk/digimap-geography-mapping/.

not include dates of opening and closure. I am deeply indebted to Jordi Marti-Henneberg and his team for providing me with the railway network GIS data digitised from the Cobb Railway Atlas of Britain. This atlas depicts the rail network at a scale of 1 inch to 1 mile (1:63,360) and includes a topographic map as a reference. It details the opening and closure dates of every station and railway line.[311] This simplified drawing railway networks for any date. Place names for the United Kingdom were derived from the Geo Names Gazetteer.[312] The composite GIS database was the basis for all subsequent analysis.

The Excel database of the Goathland letter data was converted to a GIS compatible format and uploaded to the GIS database, which contained in excess of 7,000 cells all which could be cross-referenced to each other. Where additional information was required such as the location of the bus stops in Goathland or the origin of the letters of protest to the TUCC Inquiry into the closure of Whitby's railways in July 1964, these were uploaded individually from discrete Excel files. The master GIS file could be filtered by date to give it HGIS capability.

The tools native to QGIS were used to interrogate the database. An example being the requirement to find the distance from a letter writer's address to the nearest bus stop or the railway station. QGIS native tools can measure the distance between two points through any network, in this case the road network derived from the Ordnance Survey. Thus, it is possible to find whether the bus stop or railway station was more convenient for the writer.

QGIS has excellent mapping tools and these were used to present suitable data in a map format, with a comparison of factors such as public transport frequency by type of transport before and after the closure of the railways.

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[311] Universititat de Lleida, "Historical GIS of Europe, British Railways - Data Particulars of Great Britain," accessed Jan 19, 2019, http://europa.udl.cat/projects/british-railways/.
[312] Geo Names, "Country Downloads".

"A useful living community…a mixed lot of people who thought they made a sensible contribution to the life of the country" - Goathland[313]

Map 4. *Goathland Village 1958[314]. See also* Map 5
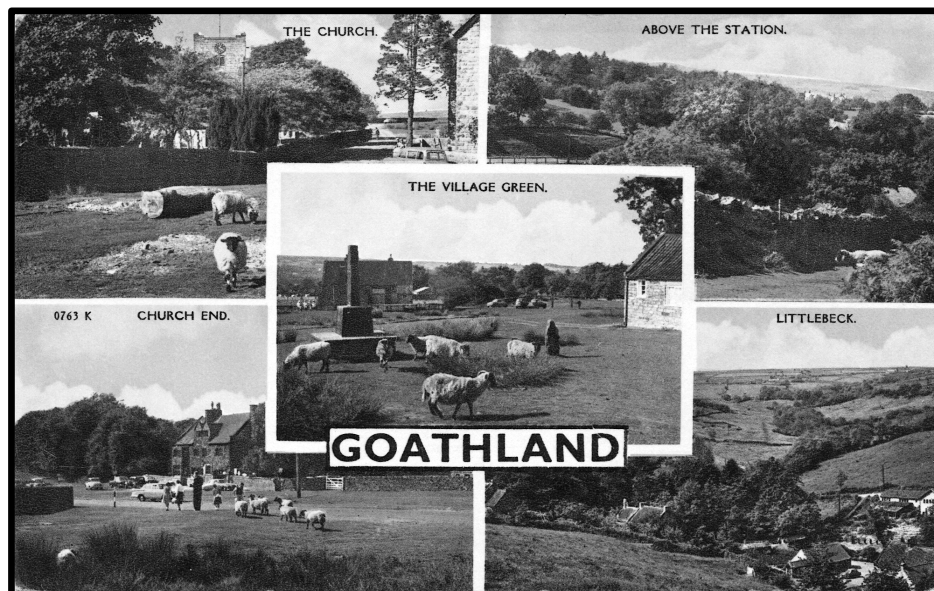
Image 1. *Postcard of Goathland in 1960s*
Source: Author's collection

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[313] "Vital Transport Inquiry - Goathland Case," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 7, 1964.
[314] National Library of Scotland, "NZ80SW - Aseries: Ordnance Survey, 1:10,000 Surveyed / Revised: Pre-1930 to 1957," accessed Jul 27, 2020, https://maps.nls.uk/view/188154774.
Reproduced with permission from the National Library of Scotland.

Goathland is situated on the North Yorkshire Moors fifteen miles from the port and seaside resort of Whitby on the North East coast of England, and before the coming of the railway, was a self-contained, upland isolated agricultural community.[315] The Whitby and Pickering Railway was opened on 26 May 1836 with a station at Goathland. In June 1847 it became a through route from Whitby to York.[316] The station at Goathland was a substantial stone building with two platforms situated to the east of the village centre. The North Yorkshire Moors Railway, a heritage steam organisation, has preserved it, so the station today is substantially unchanged from the buildings in 1963 (see Image 3). In 1963 most of the village's houses were within a kilometre of the station.[317] Whinstone for road building had been mined near Goathland station and transported by rail, but this had ceased in 1951. The freight, facilities at the station consisted of four sidings and a goods shed.[318] The railway transported agricultural produce to market from Goathland and brought essential supplies into the village. In 1959 Diesel Multiple Units (DMU) replaced steam haulage on all but peak holiday trains, so modern, comfortable and efficient trains provided the core railway service.[319] See Map 5 for the location of Goathland and the place of work of the villagers relative to the railway network.
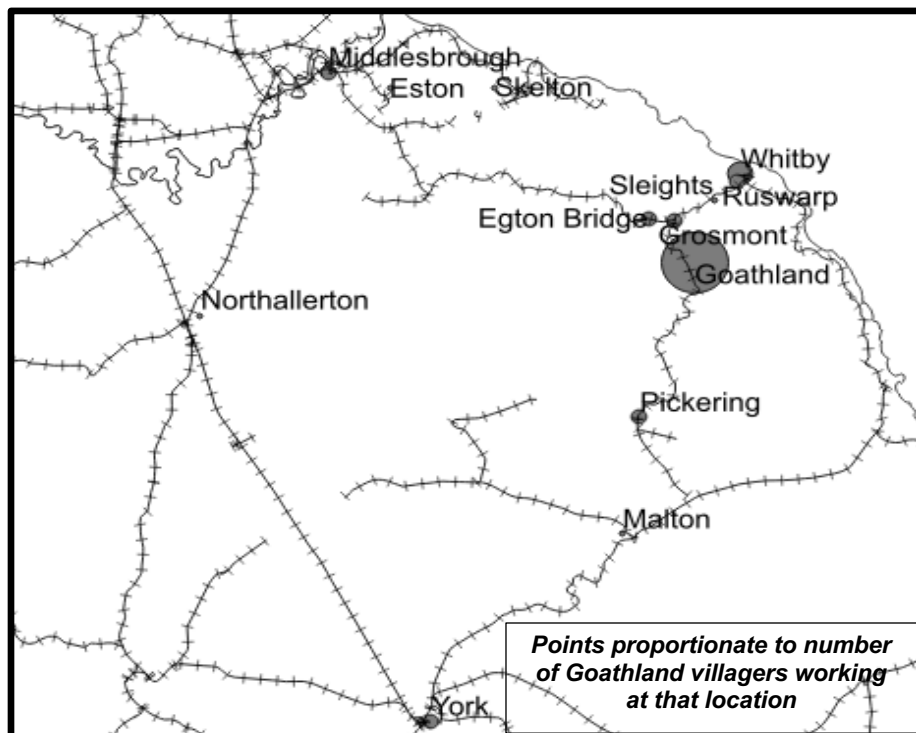
Map 5. *Goathland - Location and inhabitants place of work 1963*

Source:[320]

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[315] Hollings, *A History of Goathland*, 8.

[316] Potter, *History of the Whitby and Pickering Railway*, 27 & 43.

[317] Computed from a nearest neighbour analysis using Ordnance Survey files processed through a GIS database.

[318] W. G. East, "The Historical Geography of the Town, Port, and Roads of Whitby," *The Geographical Journal* 80, no. 6 (1932), 497.

[319] S. Mason, *Goods on the Whitby to Pickering Line - a Brief History* (Pickering: A Levisham Station Group Publication, 2013), 12 & 25. Chapman, *York to Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale*, 33.

[320] Goathland Parish Council, "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland," (Northallerton: NYCC Archive, 1964).

The 1963/64 winter train service ran for ten months of the year from early September to early July, so for Goathland, this was the standard service, and as such is the one analysed in this dissertation. The weekday service comprised; two trains to York, via Pickering and Malton, three trains to Malton, via Pickering, with connections to York, and seven trains to Whitby in each direction. There was no Sunday service.[321]

There was a bus service provided by United Automobile Services Ltd. (United).[322] Again the winter timetable was the standard service operating between mid-September and mid-June. The weekday service comprised; two buses to Leeds, via Pickering and York, three buses to Whitby, and one other, which ran four days a week in both directions. There was a Sunday service comprising two buses to Leeds and two to Whitby.[323]

BR published its intention to withdraw the passenger service between Malton and Whitby including Goathland station by notice in the *Whitby Gazette* of 14 February 1964, recorded by the front-page headline.[324] The notice fulfilled British Railway's statutory duty to give six weeks' warning of any railway closure, by an advert in at least two local papers.[325] If after six weeks, in the case of the Malton to Whitby railway expiring on 4 April, no objection was received then British Railways could cease passenger services on the railway from 4 October 1964.[326] The notice was interesting because it stated that if objections were received then there would be an inquiry into the closure of the railway. "Such a meeting will be held in public and any persons who have lodged an objection in writing may also make oral representations".[327] The actual Inquiry restricted the number of people who were able to give oral evidence, and only one person was able to represent Goathland.[328] This is further evidence that the detailed procedures of a railway closure would be dictated by the authorities within a deliberately vague frame of legislation. (See Chapter 1, Hardship).

Community leaders were instrumental in orchestrating Goathland's protest against the railway closure. This was reflected in how active the people of Goathland were in opposition as exemplified by the disproportionate number of letters of protest that they wrote. Goathland had prepared for this notice of closure, and the *Whitby Gazette* anticipated it with the front page headline of 17 January 1964 "Whitby Rail Services Closure".[329] In the same edition Councillor Pierson representing Goathland on WRDC was quoted as saying that his council was "well advanced in their preparation of the case against closure".[330] They had followed the advice of the NCIT to make

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[321] British Railways Board North Eastern Region, *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments*, Appendix A, 10.

[322] David Holding, *A History of British Bus Services: North East* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1979).

[323] United Automobile Services Ltd, "Timetable 1963."

[324] "Fighting Railway Closure Proposal," 1.

[325] "Transport Act 1962, 10 & 11 Eliz," c46, s58, 7.

[326] "Withdrawal of Passenger Services," advert, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 22, 1964.

[327] "Withdrawal of Passenger Services."

[328] "Vital Transport Inquiry - Goathland Case."

[329] "Whitby Rail Services Closure," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 17, 1964, 1.

[330] "Opposing Rail Closure," article, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 17, 1964.

representations to the TUCC before the official notice of closure was received.[331] Already the villagers of Goathland had started to mobilise to fight the railway closure.

Since the Beeching Report of 1963 had named the Malton to Whitby Railway and Goathland Station as a candidate for closure, GPC had been active in opposition and the preparation of a case against closure.[332] Already it had gathered evidence "from individuals who consider that they will suffer hardship by the withdrawal of train services".[333] A notice posted in the local Post Office after the publication of the Beeching Report asked for facts and information supporting the protest to be forwarded to the Clerk of the Council.[334] GPC held an open meeting on 22 January 1964 to co-ordinate action to oppose the closure.[335] At this meeting volunteers were nominated to collect statements from villagers. The *Whitby Gazette* reported that these volunteers were "giving up their free time on Saturdays and Wednesdays, for this work".[336] These statements were added to the thirty-eight collected before the meeting.[337]

There was no formal record as to how the campaign was run, other than a statement in the Brief to Counsel prepared in advance of the TUCC Inquiry, that residents of the three old people's homes in Goathland were not approached "on the grounds of the worry that it might cause them". Several people who were away or ill at the time were also not canvassed.[338] The *Whitby Gazette* recorded how in Whitby Town Centre an Advisory Centre had been established at the Tourist Information Bureau, where volunteers would help people who had difficulty in writing letters of protest.[339] As the *Whitby Gazette* reported that Goathland was a model for the organisation of protest it seems probable the Whitby campaign used Goathland's strategy.[340] In Goathland the village hall, which was also the GPC office, was the central co-ordination point, with volunteers also calling on individuals.

In total 1,312 letters from 227 different United Kingdom locations were received by the TUCC objecting to the closure of the Malton to Whitby railway, see Map 6.[341] Additionally, a small number were received from outside of the United Kingdom, probably from servicemen or relatives of serviceman serving abroad as the writer's locations correspond to British overseas military deployments in 1964. Places directly served by the Malton to Whitby railway line generated the most letters; Whitby alone

[331] National Council for Inland Transport, "Rail Closure Procedure – Preparing a Case for Objection," (London: National Council for Inland Transport, 1963).
[332] British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways," 103.
[333] "Preparing for Railway Action," 1.
[334] "Proposed Closure of Whitby to Pickering Railway."
[335] "Proposed Closure of Whitby to Pickering Railway," (Jan 22, 1964).
[336] "Preparing for Railway Action," 1.
[337] "Preparing for Railway Action," 1.
[338] Knott & Lewis Solicitors Cochrane, "In the Matter of the Enquiry by the Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area into the Proposed Closure of the Malton to Whitby Railway Line - Brief for Goathland Parish Council and 161 Residents against the Proposal," (File ZRZ11: NYCC Archives, Northallerton 1964), 2.
"The Battle Is Joined," 1.
[339] "Helping Railway Objectors," article, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 28, 1964.
[340] "Preparing for Railway Action," 1.
[341] Transport Users Consultative Committee North Eastern Region, "Proposal to Withdraw Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). List of Objectors Who Have Submitted Written Objections to the Proposal," 1 to 21.

was the source of 274 letters. The Ministry of Transport when framing the closure process under the 1962 Transport Act never expected this level of objections.[342] The volume reflected the strength of the campaign against closure in Whitby by the local councils and the *Whitby Gazette*. The paper warned one week before the 4 April 1964 deadline for submitting objections, "You are doing a serious disservice to the town if you have not sent your protest letter".[343]
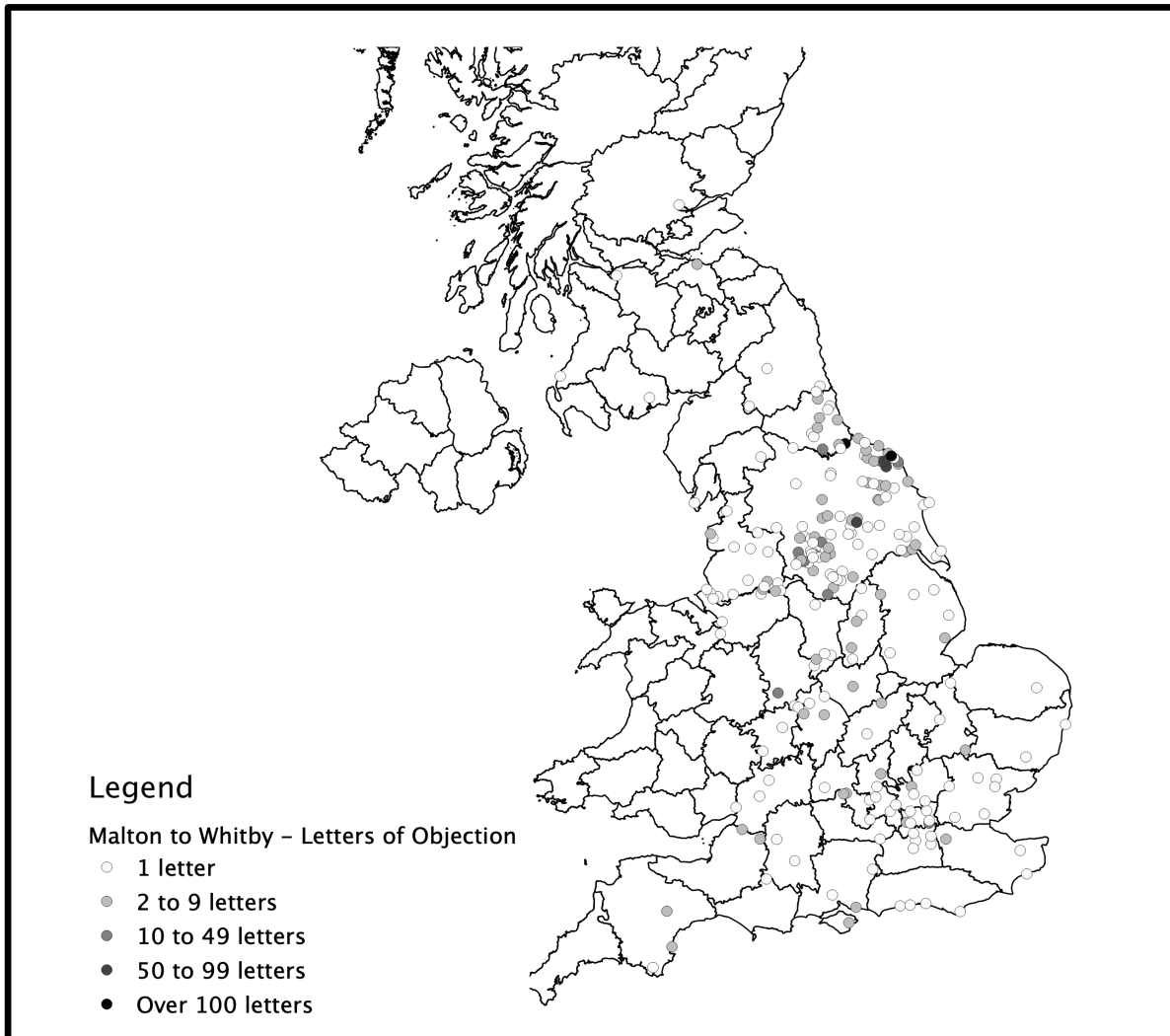
Map 6. *Malton to Whitby TUCC Inquiry - Origin of letters of objection*
Note: Source[344]

Most letters came from Yorkshire particularly from locations such as Leeds and York, both places with a direct railway link to Whitby and from where Whitby was a popular holiday destination.[345] There was an east/west divide reflecting the fact that it was simple to connect with the service to Whitby at York from the main East Coast London

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[342] Grantham, "Privatisation and Reorganisation," 259.

[343] "One Week to Go."

[344] Transport Users Consultative Committee North Eastern Region, "Proposal to Withdraw Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). List of Objectors Who Have Submitted Written Objections to the Proposal," 1 to 21.

[345] James Walvin, *Beside the Seaside: A Social History of the Popular Seaside Holiday* (London: Allen Lane, 1978), 46.

to Scotland railway, in contrast journeys from the west of the country were lengthy. There was a campaign in Whitby to obtain letters from holidaymakers to the region, so the distribution of remote objectors reflected the origin of visitors to the area.[346] This campaign was successful and was contrary to national trends that Jones identifies, where seaside railway closures attracted less protest because most of their passengers originated from distant places.[347] The number of letters decreased in relation to the distance of the writer from Whitby, with the exception of London.

The letters from Goathland with one exception were all typed. Working with the minutes and correspondence of GPC, it was probable that the letters held in the GPC Archive were not the first iteration but subsequent correspondence. They were all signed and dated in what appears to be the same handwriting using the same colour of ink and were dated between the 20 February 1964 and 1 March 1964. They are well preserved and as they are typewritten are all completely legible. Although the content was similar, the style varies. Most were written in the first person; however, some were written in the third person, or a combination of both. This means that in their entirety or at least in part they were probably written by somebody other than letter's signatory. The letter of Stephen Raine is an example of the first and third-person style in one document. Initially, written in the first person, "we wish to protest" the writing changes to the third person "Mr Raine is a taxi-driver".[348] The letter of William McNeil is even more convoluted, in the second paragraph it discussed his daughter's education, "We have a daughter aged 17 who attends Whitby Grammar School", while in the final paragraph it reverted to the third person, "Mr McNeil is employed by".[349] The language suggests that the letters were an amalgam of their author's own words, and the results of conversations or interviews by a third party added into a template. The identification of this third party can be narrowed down by further analysis of the source material.

The later annotation of the letters reflected the communication received by Arthur Knott from the TUCC requesting that GPC provide details of the trains that objectors used.[350] The TUCC felt that the objections of regular railway users carried greater weight. The chairman of one inquiry had found that of the attendees only a minimal number used the railway service under consideration of closure.[351] The co-ordinator of Goathland's protest wanted to avoid this accusation and given his previous correspondence with the TUCC suggests Knott as this co-ordinator.

In 1963 few inhabitants of Goathland would have possessed a typewriter, so why are the letters typed? The available evidence is that Arthur Knott was responsible for the collation of the letters because as a partner in a firm of solicitor's he would have had the office resources to type such a volume of letters.[352] Alternatively the clerk of the Parish Council could have typed the letters. Knott was an articulate member of the

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[346] "Helping Railway Objectors."

[347] Jones, *Beeching: 50 Years of the Axeman*, 60.

[348] Stephen Raine and Christine Raine, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 22 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[349] William McNeill and Mildred McNeill, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 27 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[350] Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area letter to Cochrane Knott & Lewis, "Malton to Whitby," (21 Feb, 1964).

[351] Loft, *Last Trains*, 6.

[352] Arthur Knott was a partner in the Middlesbrough solicitors Cochrane, Knott and Lewis.

community of the type that Grantham identifies as being attracted to objecting to railway closures.[353] Some of the correspondence with the TUCC from GPC has the reference "AOK" strongly suggesting that it originated from him.[354] Many of the letters contained hand-annotated details of the trains that the writers used, and the handwriting is similar using the same colour ink. Comparison of annotations to the letters with an example of Arthur Knott's handwriting in the Marriage Register of West Acklam Parish Church are inconclusive as to whether he was the author. The sample in the register was limited to a signature, was thirty years older than the letters, and was written in different coloured ink, with presumably a different pen. However, the likelihood remains that Arthur Knott was the originator and/or co-ordinator of the letters. He was the community leader who acted as the catalyst to the writing of a disproportionate number of letters from Goathland.

The letters followed a similar format, the example in Figure 2 was typical, and varied in length dependent on the complexity of a writer's life, a widow's letter was relatively short, conversely, a family comprising two working parents and children would be longer.[355] Some letters from bigger households with many concerns ran to multiple pages.[356] The formatting originated from the work of Allan the Clerk of WRDC. Allan was a key participant in the organisation of the protest in Whitby. In the Archive files of WRDC for 1963 there is a copy of the Handbook about Transport Users Consultative Committees and the pamphlet "Rail Closure Procedure – Preparing a Case for Objection".[357] These documents, one published by the Government and the other by the NCIT, a campaigning organisation against railway closures, detailed the process for closing a railway passenger service together with the methods and grounds for objecting to such a closure. The TUCC document was specific that any representation to the TUCC should advise the hardship, "which in the objector's view would result from closure", it did not define that hardship.[358]

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[353] Grantham, "How to Save a Railway."

[354] Arthur Knott letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, "Whitby to Malton Line."

[355] Frederick Hogger and Sylvia Hogger, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 28 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
Kathleen Tinley, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 26 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[356] Arthur Knott and Mary Knott, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 27 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
Arthur Knott, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, undated 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[357] Central Transport Consultative Committee for Great Britain, "Handbook on Transport Users Consultative Committees," (London: Central Transport Consultative Committee, 1962).
National Council for Inland Transport, "Rail Closure Procedure – Preparing a Case for Objection."

[358] Central Transport Consultative Committee for Great Britain, "Handbook on Transport Users Consultative Committees," 6.

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3.  Your letter of objection should be reasonably brief and to the
    point, and it is suggested that the following example will be
    useful :-

    'John Smith, Farm Worker, and Edith Smith his wife, Windyridge,
    Castlehill.

    We wish to protest against the proposed closure of the Whitby
    to Middlesbrough Railway on the ground of hardship.          '

    Then state your case of hardship in simple terms, such as :-

    'We have one child now going to school in Whitby'
    'I have no car and rely solely on the railway for transport to
    work'
    'The road blocks for long periods in most winters'

    If possible give details of road blockages over as many years
    as possible.

    When quoting the trains you use, please give times and
    destination and compare that with alternative transport, if
    any.   If not, say that no alternative transport is available.
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Figure 3. *Template for Letter of Objection to Railway Closure*

Source: Whitby Rural District Council[359]

With the knowledge of these documents Allan wrote a report that detailed how WRDC should respond to the railway closure.[360] This document included a template for a letter of objection against the railway closure, see Figure 3. The Goathland protest letters were based on that template. If that template in Figure 3 is examined with the actual letters another possible reason for the mixing of tenses emerges. The letters were possibly copied from this template and subsequently amended with the writer's own comments and experiences.

The minutes of GPC record Allan as being present at the meetings of the Council, and it was he who proposed the format of the letters at the meeting of January 22, 1964.[361] Indeed Allan reported to a meeting a WRDC in February 1964 of the considerable cooperation that he has received from Knott and Turner (a barrister), in Goathland.[362] The standardisation of the letters is invaluable, as it is possible to extract common information from each letter and aggregate this information in a database. In his document, Allan recommended that a copy of the letter be passed to the local action committee, in this case, GPC.[363] This use of GPC as a co-ordinator together with that Council's meticulous record-keeping explains why these letters have survived.

The NYCC Archives contain two other sources to supplement the information found in the Goathland Protest Letters. GPC wrote to the TUCC with details of the people

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[359] Whitby Rural District Council, *Notes on Proposed Railway Closure* (NYCC Archive, Northallerton, 1964), 6.
[360] *Notes on Proposed Railway Closure*.
[361] "Proposed Closure of Whitby to Pickering Railway."
[362] "Special Meeting - to Discuss Railway Closures," (NYCC Archive, Northallerton Feb 3, 1964), 13/58.
[363] Whitby Rural District Council, *Notes on Proposed Railway Closure*, 6.

working outside of the village in 1964, their place and type of employment.[364] Cross-referencing this list with the Goathland Letters, these were people who have not submitted letters of objection. If these people are added to those included in the letters, then this comprises a complete record of villagers employed outside of Goathland in 1964.

Secondly, North Riding County Council (NRCC) wrote to the TUCC with the details, including addresses, of all children of secondary school age who travelled to Whitby from Goathland.[365] This list was verified by cross-referencing to the Goathland letters. Any children that had been omitted were added to the letter database. For instance from his letter George Bonas wrote that he has two children attending school in Whitby and he omitted any other details but using the list, the sex and age of his children can be added.[366] The amalgamation of the two sources means that the travel patterns of all of the secondary school children who were resident in Goathland in 1964 are known.

The strength of feeling about the closure of their railway station combined with strong community leadership meant that the villagers of Goathland were very active in opposing the closure. This was shown by the number of letters that were written in opposition to that closure.

"The individual as the subject rather than the object of history" - The protest letters as micro-history[367]

Most social studies of a railway closure research the impact on a community, but hardship affects the individual and the household to which the individual belongs. A micro-history approach of aggregating individual hardship, or of course lack of hardship, demonstrates the true impact of railway closure on that community. Logically people would have been more likely to write a letter of protest if the railway service that they were to lose was essential or perceived to be essential to them. This might have been as a means to shop, and travel to work or school. Without the railway those activities would become more difficult so they would have had more incentive to write. Recognition of such potential bias is important as the source data has to be representative of the community, in this case, Goathland. If it is, conclusions concerning the impact of the railway's closure on the village are valid.

This disproportionate volume of letters of objection from Goathland was evident by comparison with those originating from Whitby, see Table 3. Letters of protest were written from half of all households in Goathland representing 176 inhabitants. At the 1961 Census the population of Goathland was recorded as 472, the letters, therefore, recorded the objections from thirty-seven per-cent of the total population.[368] If children

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[364] Goathland Parish Council, "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland."

[365] North Riding County Council, "Particulars of Children Attending Whitby Grammar School and Whitby Secondary Modern School Travelling from Goathland Station," (Northallerton: NYCC Archive, 1964).

[366] George Bonas and Lily Bonas, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 26 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[367] Brewer, "Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life," vii.

[368] University of Portsmouth, "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Goathland Ch/Cp, Population Statistics, Total Population," accessed Aug 9, 2019, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10428440/cube/TOT_POP.

under the age of eleven and the residents of retirement homes are excluded, then the response rate was near fifty per-cent Goathland's population.[369] The response corresponded to Hillman's estimate of the proportion of the rural population who travelled by train.[370] Hillman and Whalley's study of written protests to the TUCC inquiries into the closure of ten railway lines in the 1970s find a response rate of only four per-cent.[371] Locally and nationally Goathland was an outlier in terms of the response to a local railway closure. The letters of objection written by the inhabitants of Goathland are important in understanding the volume of protest, what the organisation was behind it, and the substance of the protest against the railway closure. These letters were read in their entirety and analysed in detail.

Table 3. *Letters of Objection to Malton to Whitby Railway Closure*

Origin	Letters	% Population	% Households
Goathland	96	20%	51%
Whitby	274	2%	7%

Sources: Letters[372], population[373], households.[374]
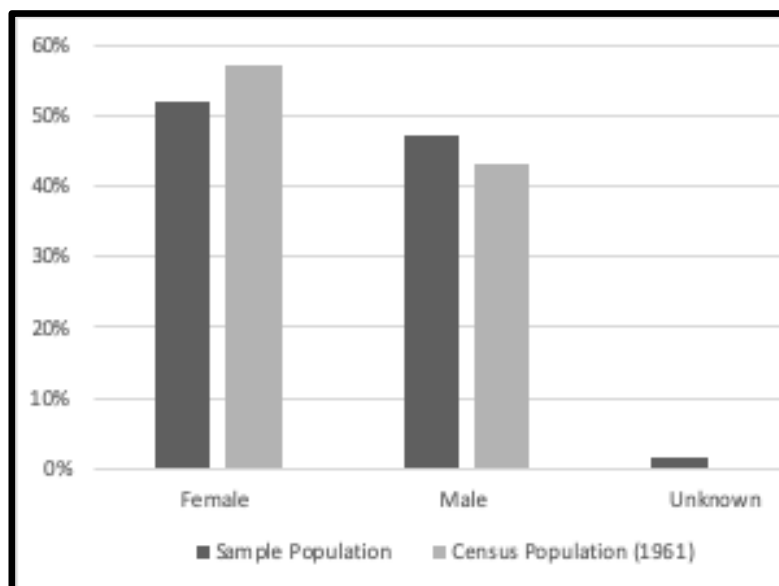
Figure 4. *Goathland - Comparison of sample population with total population*
Source: 1961 Census

[369] Cochrane, "In the Matter of the Enquiry," 2. This letter sheds some light on the methodology around the collection of the letters.
[370] Wiggins and Hillman, "21. Railways, Settlement and Access," 245.
[371] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 108.
[372] Transport Users Consultative Committee North Eastern Region, "Proposal to Withdraw Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). List of Objectors Who Have Submitted Written Objections to the Proposal."
[373] University of Portsmouth, "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Goathland Ch/Cp, Population Statistics, Total Population". "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Whitby UD through Time, Population Statistics, Total Population".
[374] "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Goathland Ch/Cp, Housing Statistics, Total Households," accessed Aug 9, 2019, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10428440/cube/HOUSEHOLDS. "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Whitby Urban District through Time, Housing Statistics, Total Households," accessed Aug 9, 2019, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/1017354/cube/HOUSEHOLDS.

There is the potential that the letters were a biased and unrepresentative sample. Compared to the population of Goathland as recorded at the 1961 Census the sample population is over-representative of males and under representative of females, see Figure 4. This is to be expected, as the sample comprised all the people working outside Goathland, a group that in 1964 was disproportionately male. If an allowance is made for this then the sample closely aligns with the gender split of Goathland's population recorded at the 1961 census. We know from the report of NRCC that the sample includes all of the children between eleven and eighteen attending secondary school in Whitby.[375] None of the letters referred to children under the age of eleven. Hillman and Whalley interview 1,796 people for their "Social Consequences of Railway Closures". However, these interviews are spread over ten locations, some considerably larger than Goathland. Their average response of 179 per location is comparable to the sample size in Goathland.[376] This sample size is considered valid.

Car owners were probably less likely to use their local railway and write a letter of protest. An overwhelming majority of households in Goathland (eighty-three per-cent) wrote that they have no access to a car. While figures for car ownership in rural areas in the early 1960s are not available comparison with later sources would suggest that this was a very low level of car ownership atypical of rural areas.[377] However, Hibbs finds rural areas with good public transport provision like Goathland had lower levels of car ownership.[378] In 1975 Moseley finds that household car ownership in rural Norfolk comprised seventy-three per-cent of households, Hillman reports that in rural Oxfordshire in 1973 sixty-eight per-cent of households had access to a car.[379] Cloke finds that in rural areas car ownership was prioritised against other expenditure to preserve mobility.[380] Even allowing for growth in rural car ownership in the ten years after 1964, it is likely that the letter writers were less likely to own a car than the overall population of Goathland.

Forty-seven per-cent of correspondents detailed the weekly frequency of their railway use and the trains that they used. These journeys are shown in Table 4, column two and were verified by comparison to the survey of passenger travel on the Malton to Whitby railway undertaken by BR, in column three.[381] This document published in June 1964 surveyed travellers joining and alighting from trains from all of the stations, including Goathland, between Malton and Whitby during one week of the winter timetable. BR could only have assumed that there was going to be an Inquiry after the deadline for the receipt of objections on 4 April 1964. The large numbers catching the

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[375] North Riding County Council, "Particulars of Children Attending Whitby Grammar School and Whitby Secondary Modern School Travelling from Goathland Station."

[376] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 120.

[377] Stephen Nutley, *Transport Policy Appraisal & Personal Accessibility in Rural Wales* (Norwich: Geo Books, 1983), 110. Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, 1, 78.

[378] John Hibbs, "Maintaining Transport Services in Rural Areas," *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy* (1972), 16.

[379] Mayer Hillman and Anne Whalley, *Personal Mobility and Transport Policy*, ed. Irwin Henderson and Anne Whalley (London: Partnership for Economic Policy, 1973), 39.

[380] Paul Cloke, "On 'Problems and Solutions'. The Reproduction of Problems for Rural Communities in Britain During the 1980s," *Journal of Rural Studies* 9, no. 2 (1993), 117.

[381] British Railways Board North Eastern Region, *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments*, Appendix B.

08:20 departure from Goathland must include school children travelling to Whitby so the survey could only have been undertaken during a week in the first half of the school summer term. In 1964 this would have run from mid-April to late May. At that time of year there would have been few visitors to the area, so the survey represented the travel patterns of the local population.

Table 4. *Goathland Railway Journeys per week – Spring 1964*

Goathland Journeys per week			
Dep Time	Letter Writers	Heads of Information	Difference
06:12	6	0	6
07:26	25	37	-12
08:20	121	124	-3
09:23	5	25	-20
11:47	40	13	27
12:01	2	21	-19
13:20	23	47	-24
15:05	0	35	-35
16:22	0	20	-20
16:48	20	34	-14
19:10	0	0	0
19:23	0	0	0
Total	**242**	**356**	**-114**

Source: Goathland Letter Writers,

Table 5*. Status of Goathland Letter Writers*

Status	Letter Authors	%	All	%
Employed	53	55%	69	39%
Retired	36	38%	52	30%
School	0	0%	23	13%
Housewife	2	2%	21	12%
Other	5	5%	11	6%

Source: Goathland letters of protest.

Notes: The retired category is a combination of those who state they are retired, spinsters, and widows. The latter categories are small and for this purpose have the same travel characteristics as the retired population. Where possible the age of the spinster or widow is used to verify that they are retirement age.
School only includes children attending a secondary school.

The comparison in column four of Table 4 shows that for every departure except the 11:47, the number of passengers surveyed by BR exceeds that derived from the travel habits detailed in the letters. (The 11:47 departure is an anomaly probably caused by writers recording more than one departure that they used for shopping trips in Whitby and not distinguishing between an afternoon or a morning trip). The BR figures included non-residents of Goathland using the train to visit or work in the village. It also counted residents of Goathland who did not include train usage on their letters, or who did not write a letter of objection. It suggests that the letter writers did not

exaggerate their rail travel, that it was an accurate and representative record of the railway travel made by the residents of Goathland.

The sample was representative of the overall population of Goathland in 1964, although it overrepresented train users and those who did not have access to a car. It is not a random sample but if its bias is accounted for it is valid to draw conclusions from it. The logic was that people would be more likely to write a letter of protest if the service that they were to lose was essential to them, as it was perceived as their primary means of going shopping or their children travelling safely to school. It cannot be assumed that those who did not write letters of protest did not use the train, only that they were less likely to do so, or they perceived the railway service was less important to them.

"I do not believe that most of the fears you expressed on behalf of your constituents will be realised in practice" - The reality of railway use in Goathland[382]

For many of the villagers of Goathland the railway service was very important, however this importance was exaggerated and reflected a perceived fear of how isolated life would be without the railway. Their actual railway usage derived from the letters of protest was evidence that the importance of the railway for most people was exaggerated.
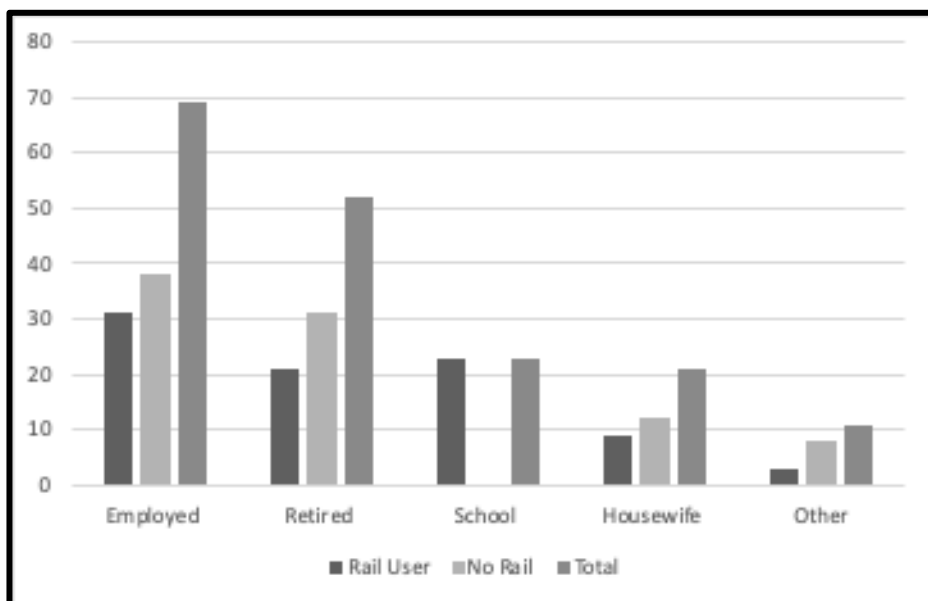
Figure 5. *Goathland railway users compared to non-railway users*
Source: Author's analysis from Goathland Letters of Protest.

Figure 5 and Figure 6 illustrate railway use by demographic from the people who noted the train departure and arrival times and the frequency of railway use in their letters. It was a reliable indicator that they used the railway at least once per week.

Except for secondary school children, rail users were a minority of the population. All of the secondary school children resident in Goathland used the railway primarily

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[382] "MoT Decision," article, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964.

because if they attended state secondary schools in Whitby, they were provided with concessionary rail passes by NRCC.
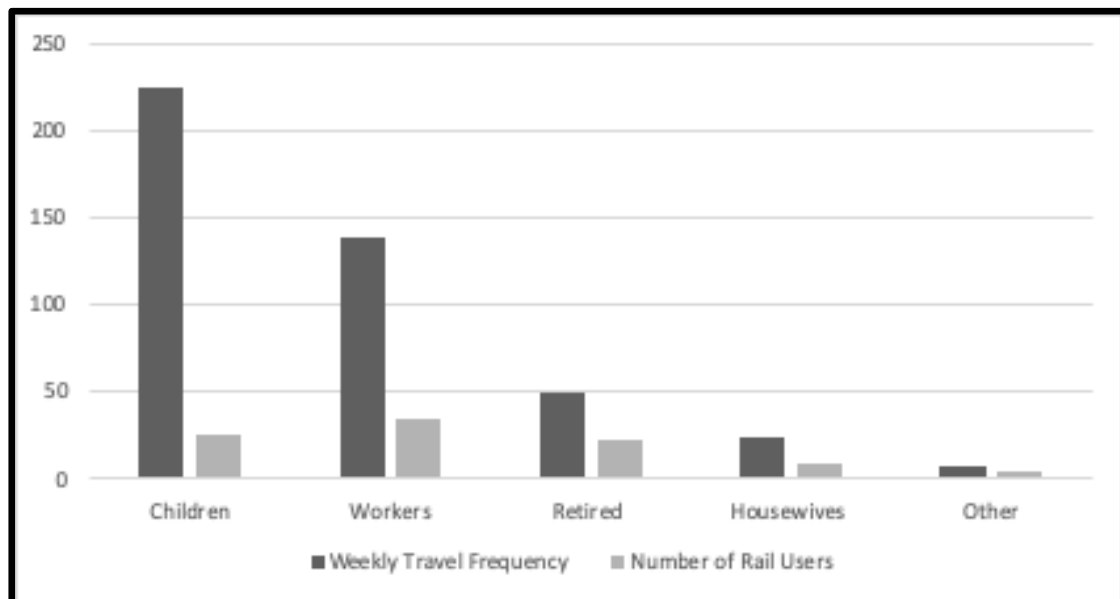
Figure 6. *Goathland Rail Journeys Winter 1963/4*
Source: Author's analysis from Goathland Letters of Protest.

A very small number of villagers make a disproportionate number of railway journeys. The total number of railway journeys in a week made by Goathland residents (Figure 6) was 466 of which around eighty per cent were accounted for by children or workers. Schoolchildren were overrepresented because the entire population of secondary schoolchildren was recorded, and they travelled five days a week to school. Even though children represented only thirteen per cent of the population, they accounted for almost fifty per cent of journeys made to/from Goathland. If the journeys are compared to the whole population of Goathland, this dominance would be even more evident. The population of Goathland at the 1961 census was 471, so the twenty-five children of secondary age comprised five per cent of the village's total population yet accounted for almost fifty per cent of the journeys made through Goathland Station. The children are the only demographic where more than half the sample used the railway.

The workers who used the train fell into two groups, firstly those who used it daily to commute. Like schoolchildren, because of the frequency of use these passengers generated the highest number of journeys. The other group of workers worked away from Goathland during the week, typically in more distant locations such as Northallerton, returning at weekends. The journeys of the working population need interpretation as it is not possible to differentiate between journeys made to and from work and those made for other purposes such as shopping or personal business. If it is assumed that a worker who caught the train daily was using it for the purpose of travelling to work, there were nine villagers who used the railway for this purpose.

The retired like Mary Milligan "must use the train to shop and attend to personal business in Whitby" and housewives like Mildred McNeil "travel weekly to Whitby"

using the afternoon trains for shopping, were regular users of the railway.[383] They typically only made one journey a week, most often to shop or attend to personal business. Railway use by retirees, although regular was low but for them, important.
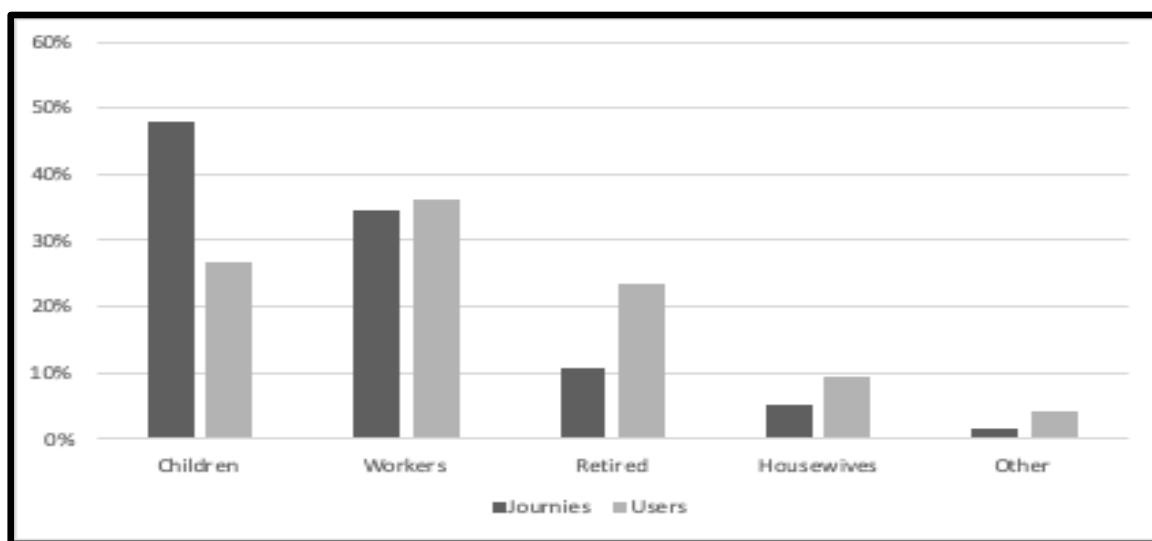
Figure 7. *Goathland Rail Users Weekly Journeys Winter 1963*

Source: Author's analysis from Goathland Letters of Protest.

The daily journeys made by twenty-one children and nine workers comprised seventy per cent of the total use of Goathland railway station. Thirty people from a village population of 471 made most of the railway journeys. The retired population and housewives were comparatively irregular users of the railway; however, this minimal use should not be conflated with these villagers not expecting to experience hardship after the closure of the railway.

"They do travel by train" - Where did people travel by railway?[384]

The villagers used the train for short distance local travel. The overwhelming number of journeys made by inhabitants of Goathland, shown in Figure 8, were to Whitby, with Pickering a secondary destination. More than seventy-five per-cent of journeys were less than twenty miles in length and could be made by direct train. A direct train could also reach York, although more often it was necessary to make a connecting change at Malton. There was little evidence that the people of Goathland were using the railway to access the wider BR network, people who travelled to other places on the network were most frequently travelling to villages and towns between Whitby and Malton. Even travel to the major regional centre of Leeds was the exception. For all destinations see Table 22 in the Appendix.

Hillman and Whalley find that eighty-four per-cent of their survey respondents used the railway to travel to the town at the end of the line, corresponding in Goathland's case to Whitby.[385] The dominance of Whitby for Goathland was similar, accounting for

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[383] Mary Milligan, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).. William McNeill and Mildred McNeill, 27 Feb, 1964.

[384] "They Do Travel by Train," article, *Whitby Gazette* Jul 31, 1964.

[385] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 20.

over fifty per cent of all journeys. Pickering and York were secondary destinations for the residents of Goathland, Pickering as an alternative to the business and retail services of Whitby, and York the most accessible nearest major centre.
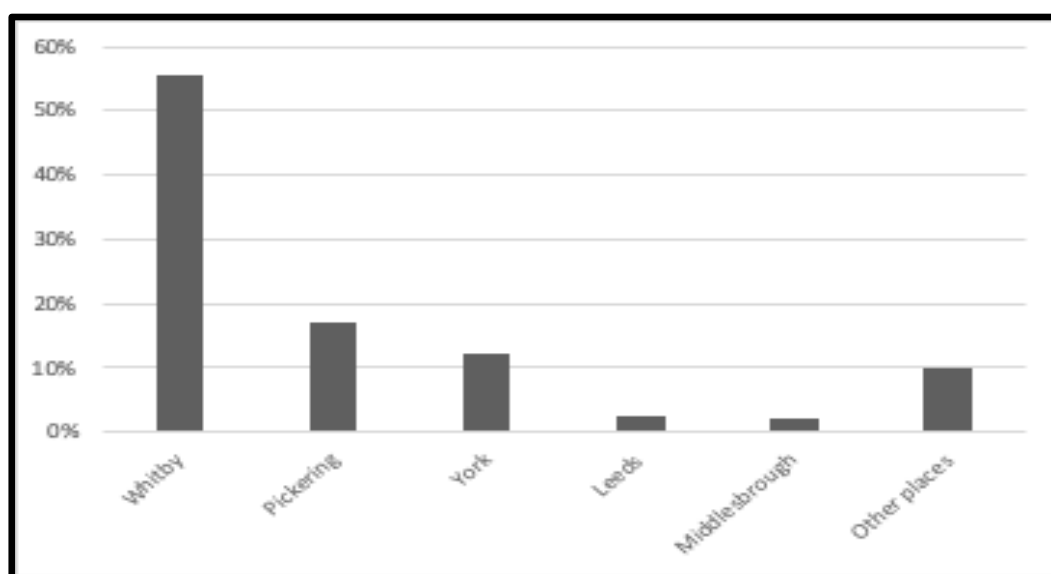
Figure 8. *Destinations of Railway Journeys from Goathland in 1964*
Source: Goathland letters of protest

Hillman and Whalley report a network effect which was not evident in Goathland, seventy-six per-cent of their respondents travelled to national destinations.[386] Henshaw and Patmore see one of the Beeching Report's weaknesses that it does not account for the benefit to the national network of users from branch lines.[387] In further analysis of the letters, the authors frequently cited holidaymakers, friends and family who travelled from all over Britain to visit them, like Frank Grayson's relatives who would be unable to visit him from Barnsley.[388] The origin of the letters of protest submitted to the TUCC was evidence that the area was a railway destination from all over Britain. People who wrote to the *Whitby Gazette* from outside of the area almost always describe visits and the potential difficulty of making these after the closure of the railway. R. Siddall of Colne in Lancashire comments that he likes the Whitby area but will not visit if he has to catch a bus from Malton.[389]

In Goathland some residents seemed to travel widely but infrequently; the Sherwin family used the railway to visit relatives, in Dorset, Essex, the West Riding, Worcester, and Hull.[390] There is of course a consideration that longer journeys have been under-reported. The letter writing template called for details of regular railway journeys,

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[386] *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 20. also Wiggins and Hillman, "21. Railways, Settlement and Access," 241.
[387] Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy*, 133. J. Allan Patmore, "The British Railway Network in the Beeching Era," *Economic Geography* 41, no. 1 (1965), 75.
See also comments about network revenue failing to transfer to substitute buses in P. A. Keen, "Rural Rail Services," in *Rural Transport and Country Planning*, ed. Roy Cresswell (Glasgow: Leonard Hill, 1978), 143-44.
[388] Frank Grayson and Winifred Grayson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[389] "A Holidaymakers Views."
[390] Cecil Sherwin and Kathleen Sherwin, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

longer journeys tended to be more irregular, but important to those making them. The network effect of Goathland's railway service was more important for incoming rather than outgoing journeys. For the villagers the railways were used for local journeys, principally to school, rarely to travel nationally.

"I wish to protest….on the grounds of hardship" - The concerns of the inhabitants of Goathland[391]

The villagers of Goathland thought that the closure of the railway would isolate them, making access to employment, school, services and healthcare difficult, if not impossible. It would prejudice the survival of the village as a viable rural community. This concern was disproportionate among the older villagers.

The community before 1963 saw the railway as a part of the fabric of rural life, it had been serving Goathland since 1836 and been recently modernised.[392] From 1960 until the publication of the Beeching Report in 1963 the minutes of GPC do not record any concerns about the closure of the railway. The main village issue was the provision of public conveniences, with two special meetings of the Council in 1960 and 1961 convened to discuss that.[393] In March 1960 the Parish Council even considered the provision of public conveniences more important than building a bus shelter.[394] In the local area this sense of the railway's permanence was reflected in the *Whitby Gazette*, in 1962 when there were only three articles that discussed any threat to local railway services, none of which referred to Goathland. Only one article directly discussed the threatened closure of the area's railways.[395] Then, after the publication of the Beeching Report the villagers had to confront the closure of their local railway and how life might change for the first time.

All of the letters of objection reflected the writer's concern about the loss of railway services. As the letters are structured, it is possible to analyse these concerns for patterns. There are certain key phrases that writers used that are common in multiple letters that enable such analysis. For instance, thirteen writers like Dorothy Bailey use the phrase "The bus service is totally inadequate".[396]

With one exception the letters started with the phrase, "I wish to protest against the proposed closure of the Whitby to Malton Railway Line on the grounds of hardship".[397] This phrase was the standard opening to the template letter circulated by Allan the Clerk to WRDC to all of the local Village Action Committees, including Goathland.[398] Each phrase was quantified to produce a ranking of relative importance. The phrasing was further analysed by demographic, see Table 6.

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[391] Goathland Residents, 1964.

[392] Chapman, *York to Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale*, 33.

[393] "Special Meeting to Discuss the Siting of Public Conveniences," (Jun 6, 1961); "Special Meeting to Discuss the Siting of Public Conveniences," (Sep 1, 1960).

[394] "Provision of Public Conveniences," (Mar 25, 1960).

[395] "Deputation Meets Member of Parliament," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Aug 3, 1962, 1.

[396] Dorothy Bailey, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[397] Goathland Residents, 1964.

[398] Whitby Rural District Council, *Notes on Proposed Railway Closure*, 7.

This commonality of structure and phrase is further evidence that a third party could have authored the letters, or at least have provided a template to use. However, the letters still display much originality of thought and expression, as for instance Dorothy Tayler who declared she was "completely allergic to bus travel".[399]

Table 6. *Use of common phrases on the letters of objection*

Common Letter Phrases	Total	% of letters	Rank All	Rank Retired	Rank Workers
"We wish to protest… on the grounds of hardship"	95	99%			
"We have no car"	56	58%	1	1	2
In Winter the bus services cannot run	41	43%	2	2	4
"Without public transport we cannot visit relatives or them or they us"	34	35%	3	2	5
In Summer the bus services are mainly full	31	32%	3	4	5
Work	28	29%	5	9	1
Tourism	23	24%	6	9	3
Against government policy	16	17%	7	7	5
Medical/Visiting	16	17%	7	5	13
"Will be deprived of much schooling"	15	16%	9	11	8
Cannot get supplies out	14	15%	10	11	5
"We are dependent on public transport"	13	14%	11	6	11
"The bus service is totally inadequate"	13	14%	11	7	9
Winter Bus service unsafe	11	11%	12	13	11
Farm Animals	2	2%	13	13	14
Total letters	96				

Source: Author's qualitative analysis of letters of objection

The concerns of the villagers were related to why they used the railway. For each individual, a primary and secondary reason for travel is recorded. An example is a letter from George Bonas who travelled to Malton for work, his wife Mildred used the railway for shopping and visiting relatives, while their children Jean and Valerie attended school in Whitby.[400] Figure 9 summarises why people used the railway.

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[399] Dorothy Tayler, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[400] George Bonas and Lily Bonas, 26 Feb, 1964.
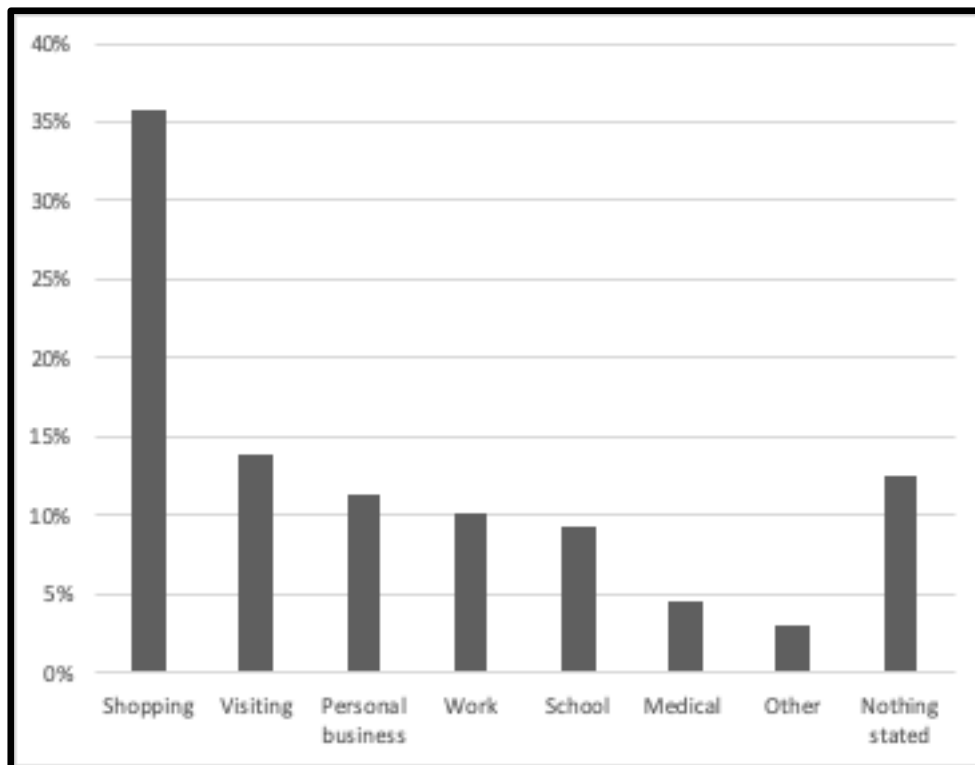
Figure 9. *Goathland - Reason for Railway Use (%)*
Source: Author's analysis from Goathland Letters of Protest.

Hillman and Whalley use a different classification for journey purpose and do not provide the raw figures of their research, only a ranking. Like Goathland the prime use of the ten railways they studied before a closure was for shopping followed closely by "social visits".[401] Clayton and Rees show that on the Central Wales Line in 1965 holidaymakers were the prime users of the railway, however, their survey was of all travellers so in summer would include tourists to the area. If tourism is discounted then shopping and social were the main reasons for travel for the local people of Central Wales.[402] Tourists using the train to travel to Goathland were discussed, notably by owners of holiday businesses, but numbers were never collated. This was either an astute recognition that it is difficult to prove the hardship attributable to a holidaymaker, or an omission from the campaign against closure. As the information was collated in early 1964, there would have been few if any holidaymakers in Goathland to canvass, so it is more likely to have been an understandable omission.

Goathland reflected these studies, the railway was used for activities where the train timetable was not a constraint to the reason for travel. In Goathland the train timings were not conducive to using the railway for work, whereas shopping trips where departure and arrival were flexible were easier to undertake. Indeed, a villager could choose to visit Whitby for half a day's shopping or business on a weekday morning or afternoon. Shopping could take place anytime between 09:00 and 17:00, but in general attendance at the workplace had to be between those hours.

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[401] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 19.
[402] George Clayton and John Rees, *The Economic Problems of Rural Transport in Wales: The Results of Two Case-Studies of Transport in Mid and West Wales* (Cardiff: Wales University Press, 1967), 12.
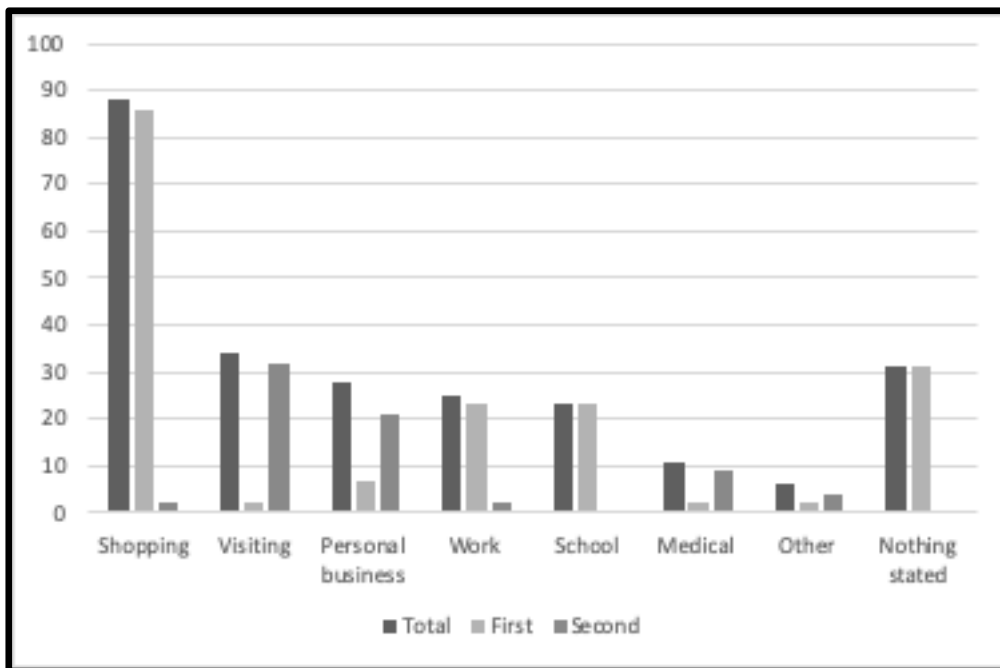
Figure 10. *Goathland - Reasons for Railway Use by Preference*

Source: Goathland letters of protest

Notes: **Other –** There were few other reasons given for train travel, only two for business purposes the Woods who are the joint managers of the local Youth Hostel, "who have to attend meetings and conferences in York".[403] One other couple Henry and Margaret Lightwing who own the Goathland Stores "rely on the railway for our bread and all perishable supplies".[404]

Nothing Stated – Thirty-one respondents do not detail any use of the railway, and there is no later annotation of specific railway use on their letters. Henry Atkinson, a farmer, wrote at great length about the hardship that will follow if the railway were to close, though neither he nor his wife use the railway for any purpose.[405] He also does not state that he had any access to a car, so perhaps his car ownership is the reason for this. It is not possible to infer that these writers did not use the railway but given that the incentive from GPC was to be specific about railway travel, it was most likely that they did not.

Shopping is the most common purpose for travel by train. In 1964 Goathland possessed a general "Village" Store and a Post Office. Therefore, to undertake anything other than basic shopping people had to travel to nearby towns, the nearest Whitby having a full range of shops. Villagers like Joseph North refer to doing "necessary" shopping in Whitby or Frank Grayson shopping for "necessities".[406] The repeated use of "necessary" was meant to convey the criticality of the railway for essential shopping journeys. Only one correspondent, William Peirson, mentioned travelling to any other location than Whitby to shop.[407] Often, in conjunction with a shopping trip, villagers also undertook personal business like visiting the bank or chiropodist. These were often multi-purpose visits, so Norah Duggleby combines

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[403] Brian Wood and Eleanor Wood, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 22 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[404] Henry Lightwing and Margaret Lightwing, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 26 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[405] Henry Atkinson and Ivy Atkinson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 28 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[406] Frank Grayson and Winifred Grayson, 19 Feb, 1964. Joseph North and Annie North, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 20 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[407] William Peirson and Margaret Peirson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

banking with visits to the optician and chiropodist, while Annie Richardson also visited the hairdresser.[408] They all stress the use of services not available in Goathland, and specifically services, which in terms of time were flexible to use, or where an appointment could be made to fit in with the train timetable.

The train service was well timed for children travelling to school in Whitby, enabling them to be there before the start and to leave shortly after the school day finished. The comment was made that travel by train enabled children to attend after-school activities. Jameson, the headmaster of Whitby Secondary Modern School, stated that "after-school activities will cease" if the railways closed. As there was no departure from Whitby for Goathland between 15:58 and 18:54, this does not seem to be the case.[409] There was no challenge to this assertion throughout the closure process.

Most villagers did not have access to a car and thought that the bus service was not a viable substitute for the railway. Sixty per-cent of writers mentioned this, see Table 6. Their lack of access to a car rendered people immobile and isolated. Typical is Lilian Richardson who wrote, "I have no car. I rely on public transport. The bus service is not suitable for me."[410]

While the letters have a formal structured core, each also have unstructured elements that reflected the personal circumstances of the writer, or their experiences. There was frequent emphasis of a lack of personal mobility as a reason for needing the railway service. John Turnbull wrote, "due to a very severe war disability rail travel is essential".[411] Henry and Ivy Atkinson recalled at length watching the bus carrying their daughter slide out of control down a steep bank.[412] Although such writing was unstructured, Dey recommends through Qualitative Analysis that such data is classified and common themes identified.[413] Additionally, the classification can in turn be analysed by the demographic of the writer. Except for the farmer worried about increased traffic, causing the death of his animals, the theme underlying all of the statements was the fear of isolation.[414] Helling finds that isolation was the significant impact of public transport cuts, and in Goathland thirty-four respondents feared that without a railway they would be unable to visit friends or to travel to school.[415] They would no longer be on the national railway map. The severe winter weather compounded the fear of isolation. The villagers thought that without a railway service they would be cut-off in winter such that normal life would be impossible, perhaps without emergency medical provision.

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[408] Annie Richardson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton). Norah Duggleby and Ruby Taylor, 21 Feb, 1964.1

[409] "United Opposition to Beeching Plan - Action Committee Will Express Whitby District Views."

[410] Lilian Richardson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 29 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[411] John Turnbull and Margaret Turnbull, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, undated, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[412] Henry Atkinson and Ivy Atkinson, 28 Feb, 1964.

[413] Dey, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A User Friendly Guide for Social Scientists*, 48.

[414] Henry Atkinson and Ivy Atkinson, 28 Feb, 1964.

[415] Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 34. quoting R Helling, "The Effect of Public Transport Service Cuts" (paper presented at the Seminar on Rural Transport, London, 1976). Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 105.

Goathland was a moorland village situated predominantly five hundred feet above sea level with the surrounding moorland being between nine hundred and a thousand feet high. The roads accessing the village have prolonged steep gradients, including Cow Wath (Image 2) and New Wath Banks with gradients of one in four, emphasised in detailed maps prepared by the Surveyor of WRDC, G. Leach, for use in Goathland's protest.[416] Even a website emphasising the attractiveness of visiting Goathland describes the climate as "bracing".[417] A letter writer to the *Whitby Gazette* described the experience of waiting for a bus in Goathland "On a bleak day, with a freezing wind blowing, there are no bus shelters in which to take refuge".[418]

Image 2. *Cow Wath Bank (although a modern picture it illustrates the severe gradient)*
Source: Author

Throughout the campaign against the closure protagonists emphasised the severity of the winters in Goathland and the impact on the bus services. They contrasted this with the reliability of the railway service. Sugden, in his study of the neighbouring Scarborough to Whitby railway, believes that the ability to use the railway in winter was the most important factor for local users, as does Taylor's Polish study.[419] In Goathland it underlaid all other concerns.

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[416] G. Leach, "Road Routes out of Whitby and Goathland High Land and Roads," (NYCC Archive, Northallerton: Whitby Rural District Council, June, 1963).
[417] Welcome to Yorkshire, "Discover Goathland," accessed Aug 30, 2019, https://www.yorkshire.com/places/north-york-moors/goathland.
[418] "Buses Not Maintained."
[419] Sugden, "Closure of Whitby-Scarborough Railway," 19. Taylor, "Railway Closures to Passenger Traffic in Poland and Their Social Consequences," 146.
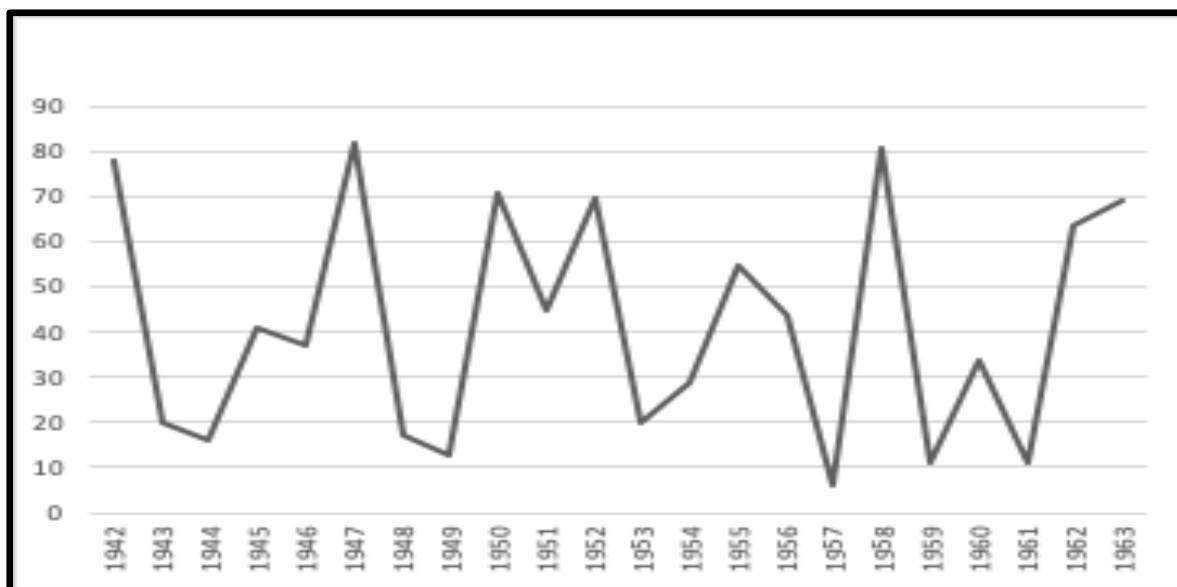
Figure 11. *Number of Days Bus Services were unable to reach Goathland*

Note: "to such an extent as to make the operation of buses impossible or subject to great risks and much delay" – Allan WRDC[420]

Source: GPC archive

Forty-one per-cent of writers used the phrase, "in winter the buses cannot run". It also reflects that the most recent winter was one of the worst for cancellations, this was the winter fresh in the minds of the villagers of Goathland (see Figure 11). There was no reliable method of the bus company informing people in Goathland that buses would not be able to reach the village.[421] Nor was there a shelter from the winter weather in which bus passengers could wait. In fact, GPC in 1960 thought that provision of public conveniences was more important than building a bus shelter.[422] The evidence from Devon was that the lack of shelter was the biggest single complaint of bus users, this was certainly evident in Goathland.[423]

The contrast with the railway service was marked; even during the severe winter of 1962/3, there was no record of a cancelled service. In January 1963 after reporting severe snow in the area, the *Whitby Gazette* commented "To the credit of British Railways the majority of trains have run".[424] Later in the month, they published a comment from the Whitby Stationmaster that the railway services were very well maintained.[425] If the trains were delayed, Goathland Station (Image 3) had a waiting room with a warm fire and staff to keep passengers informed. The contrast with the bus service could not be more pronounced. Loft quotes the MARPLAN Report with a more objective view, "daily travellers complained about nature of bus travel, this constituted inconvenience, not a hardship. Increases in cost and time were small."[426]

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[420] "Goathland Meeting," article, *Whitby Gazette* Oct 2, 1964.
[421] "Meeting between Whitby Rural District Council and United Automobile Services Ltd," (NYCC Archive, Northallerton Dec 21, 1964), 1.
[422] "Provision of Public Conveniences."
[423] Thomas, *The Rural Transport Problem*, 113.
[424] "Severe Snow and Weather in Whitby Area," article, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 4, 1963.
[425] "Fylingdales Airlift," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 25, 1963.
[426] Loft, "One Big Row," 100.

Image 3. *Goathland Station (taken after preservation but the buildings are substantially unchanged from 1964)*

Source: Author

Some writers go further than merely complaining about winter bus travel; they claim that the buses were dangerous in winter. George Grayson quoted an incident where a school bus slid out of control down Cow Wath Bank; he wrote that his daughter was terrified.[427] Further, Christina Jozefowice stated that the unreliability of the winter bus service caused her mother to contract rheumatoid arthritis when she had to walk two and a half miles across the Moors after the bus could go no further because of snow.[428] Both the incidents were verified in a report of GPC.[429] Eleven writers emphasised the safety of the winter bus service. Safety was perceived as a powerful argument for the retention of the railway. Writers conflate this with the unsafe conditions for school children, from them having to walk two and a half miles across the moors in a "raging snowstorm", to being terrified when their bus slid down Cow Wath Bank (see Image 2). This emphasised the impact of the closure on children.[430]

For many the railway service was a bulwark against winter weather Richard Hutton was one who could not use his car to travel to work in winter so caught the train.[431]

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[427] George Grayson and Daisy Grayson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb 28, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[428] Christina Jozefowice, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 28 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

This was a typical exaggeration linking two unrelated events.

[429] Goathland Parish Council, "Letter to Ministry of Transpor Protest on Closure of Railway," 2.

[430] George Grayson and Daisy Grayson, 19 Feb 28, 1964.

[431] Richard Hutton and Elizabeth Hutton, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

During the severe winter of 1963 in January and February train travel to and from Goathland more than doubled, 8,800 railway tickets were sold at Goathland Station in those months, as villagers were forced to abandon their cars and bus services were cancelled.[432] Similarly, fourteen writers were concerned about essential supplies reaching Goathland in winter, and the ability, of farmers to transport agricultural produce to market. The owner of the village store wrote that the railway "enabled us to be supplied with bread and perishable supplies vital to villagers".[433] Henry Atkinson, a farmer, stated that when the roads were impassable milk had to be sent by railway, "without the railway it would be wasted."[434] Both of course used road vehicles for transport for the majority of the year. The *Whitby Gazette* in October, 1963 was prescient in its editorial, "the people were thinking of the rail services as a sort of insurance against severe winter weather".[435] The railway was for insurance, it was there for them in a time of need, defined by the villagers as during periods of winter weather. Fresh in their memory was the severe winter of 1962/3. It was for potential rather than actual usage.[436] For much of the year the railway was not used.
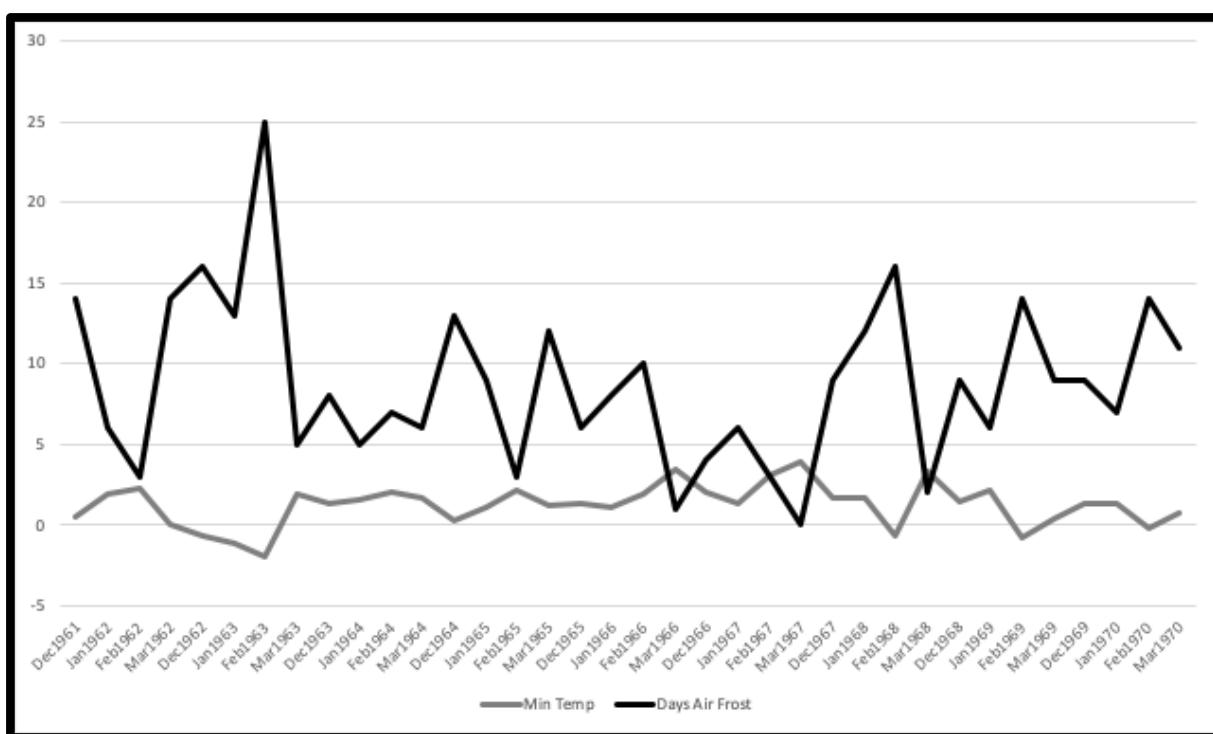
Figure 12. *Winter Weather Data - Whitby 1961 to 1970*

Source: [437]
Note: Whitby is the nearest reporting station to Goathland. It is assumed that conditions in Goathland would have been more severe as it was situated at 500 feet, Whitby was at or near sea level.

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[432] Whitby Rural District Council, "Tickets Collected at Goathland," (File DC/WHR 13, NYCC Archive, Northallerton Apr, 1963).
[433] Henry Lightwing and Margaret Lightwing, 26 Feb, 1964.
[434] Henry Atkinson and Ivy Atkinson, 28 Feb, 1964.
[435] "The Railway Outlook."
[436] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 207.
[437] Met Office, "Historic Station Data - Whitby," accessed Jul 28, 2020,
https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/stationdata/whitbydata.txt.

The vulnerability of the villagers to winter weather was emphasised when many parents protested about the impact of railway closure on their children's schooling. Here there is good comparative evidence, before January 1963 the United Bus Company provided contract buses to convey the children of Goathland to the secondary schools in Whitby. An NRCC report stated that this contract had been curtailed in January 1963 because of complaints of unreliability and the safety of the winter bus service.[438] The Chairman of NRCC Education Committee stated "we had to abandon road transport from Goathland. Only in that way was it possible to get children to school in the worst of the weather".[439]

Many people wrote in great detail about their children's schooling and the possible detriment to it through the closure of the railway.[440] Three children attended private boarding schools in Scarborough and Fylinghall and used the train to travel to and from Goathland but only at weekends.[441] There is a high degree of confidence that the travel habits of all of the secondary school children living in Goathland in 1964 are captured. There was a primary school in Goathland. However, the letters do not mention children under eleven, except in the case of a child of the Pearce family who would be of secondary age in September 1964 and would be using the train to travel to school from that date.[442]

As well as complaining about safety the writers emphasised the amount of schooling village children would miss due to buses not running in winter. This would have a detrimental impact on their education. William McNeill wrote of his daughter, "that in a normal winter she would be deprived of at least the Spring Term and be in no position to take her exams".[443] The apparent exaggeration may have been compounded by the memory of the recent severe winter weather in 1962/3. As the protest progressed the schoolchildren and the impact of the weather on their schooling became dominant and the strongest element of the protest. Sir Alec Spearman the local MP stated, "There is very deep and understandable concern about the future of Goathland school children".[444] This importance of school travel is not reflected in other studies, Thomas does not distinguish it as a reason for rural railway travel, while Hillman and Whalley's surveys do not differentiate between work and school journeys.[445] In Goathland, it was an emotive concern seen as central to its survival as a mixed community. The continuity of education in winter developed into the most potent and emotional argument made against the closure of the railway. It became central to the campaign and continued to cause concern even after the closure of the railway.

[438] North Riding County Council, *Whitby Rail Closure* (Northallerton: NYCC Archive, Sep 23, 1966), 1.
[439] "Railways and Local Education," article, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 6, 1964.
[440] William Hugill and Mary Hugill, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 29 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
Frederick Hogger and Sylvia Hogger, 28 Feb, 1964.
[441] Thomas Storey and Ethel Storey, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[442] Albert Pearce and Marie Pearce, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 22 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[443] William McNeill and Mildred McNeill, 27 Feb, 1964.
[444] "The Battle Is On," 1.
[445] Thomas, *The Rural Transport Problem*, 101. Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 18.

The villagers of Goathland did not regard the bus as a viable alternative to the railway service. It was difficult for people to manage, particularly with prams and luggage.[446] In summer, the problem was not that the bus service did not run but rather that villagers could not board the bus, as it was already full of passengers. Leonard Hodgson having complained that the buses often did not run in winter added, "in summer they are often full".[447] The bus company made some acknowledgement of this at a meeting with WRDC stating that they had run "forty duplicate buses into Whitby during the summer of 1964". However, it was not reported as to over what period this refers.[448] What the villagers ignored was that the trains were also frequently full in summer, but as this letter to the *Whitby Gazette* states, people could always stand on the train.[449]

Villagers thought that the bus as a means of transport was inadequate, and in the winter conditions prevailing in Goathland unreliable, particularly for those such as schoolchildren who were reliant it. In this, they are directly refuting the Beeching Report, which had stated that buses could replace trains and would contribute to the economic viability of rural areas.[450] The wider evidence supported the villagers. At the TUCC Hearing into the closure of the Maiden Newton to Bridport railway the bus company itself only expected twenty per-cent of railway travellers to transfer to the alternative bus services.[451] The respondents to Hillman and Whalley find, "It is clear that the replacement bus is to all groups not an adequate alternative to the former rail service."[452] The critical consideration is Thomas's observation that if rural people had found buses more convenient, they would already be using them.[453] Also, they were perhaps aware that the government thought "suitable and adequate" bus services could replace a railway.[454] The villagers of Goathland could not be more definite; for them, the bus service was not a replacement for their railway it was not "suitable and adequate" but rather an uncertain alternative to the train.[455] It was uncomfortable, and unreliable lacking the permanence of the railway, whose closure by contrast "generated a sense of loss".[456]

The villagers were concerned about access to emergency medical treatment, but were more relaxed about day to day healthcare, despite there being no resident doctor in Goathland. This was substantiated in the *Whitby Gazette* by John Bateman, a village resident, "there was no doctor in the village".[457] The nearest hospital was the Memorial Cottage Hospital in Whitby, for any serious cases patients were treated in Scarborough, or more exceptionally Middlesbrough and York. Given this and the fact

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[446] Alan M Voorhees, *Public Transport in Bedfordshire: Facts, Views, Issues, Options* (Alan M. Voorhees and Associates, 1974), 72.quoted in ; Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, 1.

[447] Leonard Hodgson and Lena Hodgson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 28 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[448] "Meeting between Whitby Rural District Council and United Automobile Services Ltd," 2.

[449] "Travellers Experience."

[450] British Railways Board, "The Reshaping of British Railways," 20.

[451] Banks, "Can Bus Replace Train?," 4.

[452] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 67.

[453] Thomas, *The Rural Transport Problem*, 168. See also Hibbs, "Maintaining Transport Services in Rural Areas," 16. As to how buses have replaced railways.

[454] Loft, "One Big Row," 260.

[455] Roy Cresswell, *Rural Transport and Country Planning* (Glasgow: Leonard Hill, 1978), 145.

[456] Brown, "When Rural Communities Lose Passenger Rail Service," 15.

[457] "Traffic Commissioners at Whitby - Rail Never Failed," article, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 5, 1965, 1.

that a significant proportion of the Goathland's population was elderly, it was surprising that concern about accessing medical provision was not more prominent in the letters. Only eleven writers mention it as a reason to use the train. Kathleen Geary writes of having to attend Whitby Hospital for medical treatment and says that without the train she would not have been able to do this, similarly George Storey has to see a specialist in Leeds and must travel "when the specialist can see me".[458] Associated with using the railway for medical reasons was the need to visit friends and relatives in hospital. Alfred Keyes was an exception, he had to visit the hospital professionally in his role of Goathland's, parish priest.[459] No correspondent wrote about using the railway to travel to see their General Practitioner (GP) who was located in Sleights near Whitby and directly accessible by rail. Probably the doctor, although not resident in Goathland, held surgeries there.

There was more concern about the doctor being able to visit patients in Goathland in an emergency. The local GP based in Sleights; Dr Arthur Cross summarised the problems of providing medical emergency care to Goathland in a letter to the Ministry of Transport. "In the winter of 1962/63 there were five occasions when the only way to meet commitments was to travel by rail…and carry out visits by foot".[460] For elderly residents who needed care in winter the ability of the doctor to visit by train was portrayed as a lifeline.[461] If it was difficult to provide routine medical care, then emergency care presented significant life and death challenges recounted by the letter writers. The outlook for the elderly residents of Goathland was portrayed as bleak, through lack of medical care and food shortages.[462] Again, as in the examples of bus mishaps in winter, these take on a mythical status. Arthur Knott refers to an interview with a previous GP, Dr. English, who was on one occasion provided with a rail trolley to reach the village.[463] Knott recalls his own near-death experience with a burst appendix when he was saved by being able to access emergency care through the doctor travelling by railway.[464] Although such emergencies were rare, the letters reflect their seriousness and the fears of residents as to what would happen should they need medical care when roads were impassable. In the case of a medical emergency in winter, the railway was perceived as the difference between life and death.

Without tourists arriving by train many of Goathland's businesses would potentially suffer loss of trade. Twenty-three letters were concerned that after the closure of the railway fewer tourists would visit the village and that would impact their business. These include hoteliers ("without rail service…. the tourist business will suffer a severe setback"),[465] shopkeepers (with no rail service, "it would cause us financial loss due to

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[458] Kathleen Geary, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 March 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton). George Storey, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 26 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[459] Alfred Keyes and Mary Keyes, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[460] Arthur Cross letter to Minister of Transport, Sep 8, 1966.

[461] John Waldron and James Waldron, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 22 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[462] Sands, "An Examination of the Social and Economic Implications of Dr. Beeching's Proposals," 77.

[463] Arthur Knott and Mary Knott, 27 Feb, 1964.

[464] 27 Feb, 1964.

[465] John Exley and Margaret Exley, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 29 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

reduced purchases from visitors"),[466] and owners of self-catering accommodation ("most of our guests have no cars and rely on rail services").[467] Sixteen of the letter writers who are concerned about the impact of the railway closure on tourism in Goathland link the closure as being contrary to government policy, which they thought was to encourage tourism. "The government policy was to increase the number of visitors. The closure of the railway would ruin this", wrote Edith Schofield.[468] This echoes Longworth's view that a railway closure broke the relationship and trust between government and the rural community.[469] The villagers of Goathland had been encouraged to invest in tourism with the implicit bargain that the railways would bring tourists to realise that investment, here the government was reneging on that agreement.

The retired were more concerned about the factors of isolation after the railway closure, because of their dependency on public transport, (Table 6). They were critical of the bus service and its unreliability in winter. As might be expected, they were not worried about the impact of the closure on getting to work or tourism. What was more surprising was that the retired were only marginally more concerned about access to doctors and hospitals than the overall population. The retired and older villagers used the railway to visit family and relatives, this railway use was regarded as important benefit of living in Goathland. They thought it essential to maintain close ties with friends and relatives, and the railway enabled this both for local and long-distance friendships. Ella Patterson, a spinster aged seventy-nine wrote, "My relatives are in London and Scotland. At my age, it is vital that I can be in touch with them and them with me".[470] Others like William Headlam regard it as essential to keep in touch with friends more locally in Glaisdale.[471] For those recently retired to Goathland; the railway allowed them to keep in touch with their previous friends. They might have retired elsewhere if they had thought the closure of the railway would have isolated them. Of course, the potential to travel by train was not always realised, but the possibility was there, and importantly if the retiree became infirm, their friends and relatives could visit them by train. Moseley shows that in North Norfolk it was this isolation that was the principal concern of the elderly.[472] This was clearly reflected in the letters from the retired population of Goathland. The railway mitigated the isolation and the fear of that isolation amongst the elderly living in rural North Yorkshire, even if they did not use it.

The villagers exaggerated the importance of the railway as a means of travelling to work. Most either walked to their employment or, if more remote, used other forms of transport. The work location of the villagers of Goathland in 1964 comes from two sources, the letters of objection, and a document provided to the TUCC by GPC listing people employed outside of the village who had not submitted letters of objection.**[473]**

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[466] Henry Lightwing and Margaret Lightwing, 26 Feb, 1964.

[467] John Grayson, 19 Feb, 1964.

[468] Edith Schofield, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 28 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[469] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," viii.

[470] Ella Patterson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 24 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[471] William Headlam and Alice Headlam, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 27 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[472] Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 45.

[473] Goathland Parish Council, "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland."

There was no explanation why these people did not submit letters of objection or how the information about their work was obtained.

This list demonstrated the cohesiveness of the community and effectiveness of the co-ordination of the local campaign. Somebody would have to have read all the letters, analysed them for place of work and deduce who worked outside of the village had not written a letter. This shows the strength of the community bonds and intelligence of the protest, underlying why Goathland produced such a strong campaign against the railway's closure.

The GPC travel to work list does not state whether the people in it used the train to travel to work, nor if they had a car. From the cross-referencing the list with the survey carried out by BR in Table 4, it would seem unlikely that there was significant railway use amongst these people.[474] If they are added to the numbers using the train, then it would suggest that BR was understating train usage, something that some commentators did accuse them of, by undertaking the census at unrepresentative times of the year.[475] As the numbers of people who caught the train from Goathland is known from the letters, there is no evidence of such under-reporting. People using the railway for a daily work journey contribute disproportionately to the number of weekly journeys, so if those in the GPC report were using the railway then the Heads of Information figures would have been higher. The first daily bus did not leave Goathland for Whitby until mid-morning so the only practical means for people on that list of travelling to work in Whitby was by car. As car owners these fourteen residents were less likely to be inconvenienced by the railway closure and hence write a letter of protest. In turn, this would mean that Goathland's car ownership rate should be increased bringing it more in line with other rural areas.

Analysis of the letters, in Map 5 and Table 7 shows that the majority of workers, seventy-five per-cent of those in employment, worked in Goathland, predominantly in the agricultural sector, activities related to tourism, or other service industries. The only other significant place of employment was Whitby. It was inconvenient to work fulltime in Whitby and use the train to travel from Goathland. Although there was a train that would enable someone to arrive in Whitby before 09:00, there was no return service leaving from Whitby to Goathland for almost three hours between 15:58 and 18:54.[476]

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[474] "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland."

[475] DL Munby, "The Reshaping of British Railways," *The Journal of Industrial Economics* 11, no. 3 (1963), 167. British Railways Board North Eastern Region, *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments.*

[476] *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments*, Appendix A, 10.

Table 7. *Place of work of Goathland villagers*

Place of Work	Letter		Supplied by PCC		Combined	
Goathland	49	74%	0		49	60%
Whitby	5	8%	4	27%	9	11%
Pickering			4	27%	4	4%
Egton Bridge			2	13%	2	2%
Grosmont			2	13%	2	2%
Middlesbrough	2	3%	0		2	2%
Ruswarp	1	2%	1	7%	2	2%
York	2	3%			2	2%
Eston	1	2%			1	1%
Malton	1	2%			1	1%
Newcastle	1	2%			1	1%
Northallerton	1	2%			1	1%
Roving	1	2%			1	1%
Skelton			1	7%	1	1%
Sleights	1	2%			1	1%
Unknown			1	7%	1	1%
York/Whitby	1	2%			1	1%

Source: Letters of objection, and Goathland Parish Council[477]

Of the people who work in Whitby, three have access to a car and only use the train exceptionally usually in times of bad weather.[478] One, Brian Lane, was a schoolteacher so could return to Goathland on the 15:58 train from Whitby. "I normally travel to school by car, but when there is ice or snow on the road, I cannot do this on account of the road conditions. It is imperative that there is an alternative public service".[479] Only Eleanor Syrett uses the train every day to travel to employment in Whitby, returning to Goathland on the 15:58 departure from Whitby.[480] This early departure would suggest that she was in part-time employment or worked a reduced day. The bus service provided limited alternatives. The first daily bus to Whitby did not depart from Goathland until 12:30, however, there was a return service leaving Whitby at 17:05.[481] Some people may have used the train to travel to Whitby and the bus to travel back, however, the railway census figures do not show a surplus of people departing Goathland Station as against arrivals that would be evidence of this.

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[477] Goathland Parish Council, "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland."
[478] Brian Lane, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
Stephen Raine and Christine Raine, 22 Feb, 1964.
[479] Robert Headlam and Kathleen Headlam, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[480] Barry Syrett and Eleanor Syrett, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[481] United Automobile Services Ltd, "Timetable 1963."

Of the people who worked in other locations, only four used the train daily. Both Graham Filburn and John Dodsworth have just completed secondary education and have trainee/apprentice jobs in York.[482] Both stated in identical phrases that they need to catch the train as, "I could not afford lodgings at my present wage". Despite York being further than Whitby it was possible to use the train to work in York between 9:00 and 17:00. George Bonas was a public health inspector working in Malton and William McNeill a traveller based in Pickering.[483] For these people the railway is essential, should the railway close they would have to change employment, move, or purchase a car as potentially there would be no alternative bus service. The proposed, post-closure substitute bus service would not have enabled them travel to Pickering, Malton, or York during working hours. The type of employment that they undertook was not available locally to Goathland. As a group they would suffer demonstratable hardship.

All of the other people who worked outside of Whitby commuted weekly. Typically like Sheila Dodsworth they were in their first jobs and still lived at home at weekends, or in the case of Ruth Rishworth returned to Goathland at weekends to look after an elderly relative.[484] From the letters of objection, there is no evidence that people in Goathland were using the train to travel to work with one or two exceptions. The inhabitants did however regard the railway as a public service, available should the weather and dangerous road conditions prevent them from driving to work. Villagers like Brian Lane a schoolteacher in Whitby regarded the railway as essential during winter weather when he could not use his car. "I have had to travel by rail for varying periods due to the roads being impassable".[485] Again the recent severe winter may have influenced their view.

GPC in their submission to the TUCC claimed that "many people travel outside of the area to York and Teesside to work", but from their own evidence this was questionable.[486] Indeed there is only evidence of two people travelling to Teesside regularly to work. One is Arthur Knott, the Coroner of Middlesbrough who travelled twice a week, and the other Sheila Dodsworth, a young teacher who returned home to her parents in Goathland every weekend.[487] In the main the people of Goathland worked locally, and where they worked outside of the village, they did not use the railway for that purpose. Examination of the railway timetable showed that the railway was never practical for those working away from Goathland, except for people, particularly young people, commuting weekly to work, or people working to the south of Goathland. The lack of commuting reinforces Hillman and Whalley's later finding

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[482] John Dodsworth, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 27 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton). Graham Filburn, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 29 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[483] George Bonas and Lily Bonas, 26 Feb, 1964. William McNeill and Mildred McNeill, 27 Feb, 1964.

[484] Sheila Dodsworth, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 29 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton). Ruth Rishworth, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 22 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[485] Brian Lane, 19 Feb, 1964.

[486] Cochrane, "In the Matter of the Enquiry," 2.

[487] Arthur Knott letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, "Whitby to Malton Line," 1.
Sheila Dodsworth, 29 Feb, 1964.

that "few respondents used the railway to get to work".[488] The villagers' concerns that they would be unable to access employment were exaggerated and was not evidenced by regular use of the railway to travel to work.

Conclusion

The letters of protest written by the villagers of Goathland are a starting point for the development of a micro-history of the village in 1964. They were the evidence of a well-orchestrated campaign against the closure of the village's railways, a campaign that was rooted in the community. The campaign and by extension the letters were the result of the leadership and dynamism of a local professionals. Their experience of the law and local government gave the campaign structure and purpose. This structure is invaluable to the historian to examine the concerns and fears of the villagers of Goathland.

Amongst the villagers there was a foreboding that the demise of their railway would isolate them. There was a sense that the viability of Goathland as a village was threatened by the closure of the railway. This was inter-generational, education would be prejudiced, people would be no longer able to go to work, housewives would have difficulty shopping, and the elderly would not be able to access essential services. Isolation would not only prejudice their children's education, but could also be potentially life-threatening, as vital supplies would run low and emergency medical care might become problematic. Not only will the villagers be isolated from the outside world, but the outside world will be isolated from them. Tourists, friends, and relatives would no longer be able to visit. The railway was a lifeline that could operate when the roads were impassable. It enabled villagers in winter to attend school, do their shopping, receive medical attention, and travel to work. The railway has a sense of permanence in village life that was not reflected in usage and certainly not in the economics of providing the railway service. This reflects Calvert's comment "Many of the rural lines had become ingrained into the communities that they served".[489]

The reality of these concerns was tempered by the actual use of the railway services, most villagers did not use it, instead the railway closure became an emotional issue over the future of their village, they thought of themselves as "a useful, living community. They were a mixed lot of people and thought that they made a sensible contribution to the life of the country".[490] Their fear in 1964 was that the closure of the railway would change their community for the worse. The railway represented a continuity of 128 years, while its closure represented radical change. The Government's answer that the bus service would provide a more than adequate or even superior alternative to the train, was derided again in emotional terms.

The letters of protest are a valuable insight into the reaction of Goathland to railway closure, however they should be examined critically, it was possible that they reflected the perception of the impact of the railway closure rather than the reality. The next section analyses that reality to show that Goathland was an isolated community in

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[488] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 46.
[489] Roger Calvert, *The Future of Britain's Railways* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1965), 181.
[490] "Vital Transport Inquiry - Goathland Case," 1.
This was a quote from the barrister representing the village at the TUCC Inquiry.

1964 and that counter-intuitively the closure of one mode of public transport, the railway would have little impact on that isolation.

4 "The railway was not often used because they did not provide services at the time people wanted them" – Accessibility and Change[491]

Studies of the impact of the Beeching railway closures usually concentrate on the period before a railway line's closure, taking a snapshot of people's views and expected behaviours after services cease. There is less research concerning the relationship between changes in rural service provision and transport.[492] Parolin comments, "There has been no assessment of how rural residents respond and adapt their travel patterns to changing levels of rural transport provision".[493] Both of the major studies of post-closure behaviour concentrate on transport choices rather than what transport was used for. Hillman and Whalley, and Thomas finds that about one third of rail travellers transferred to alternative bus services. This is ambiguous as they both find this only applies to areas where the alternative bus service was not a viable alternative to the train.[494] Loft dismisses the social consequences of closure as a "government problem", or in the case of Hillman and Whalley as too difficult to study because "there was little evidence of the consequences of closure".[495]

This was reflected in Whitby through the news cycle of the *Whitby Gazette*.[496] After the closure the railway becomes a memory; life was unchanged, protests moved to other issues and the railway was forgotten.[497] The closure of the railway was a binary event, no Beeching closure was reversed until more recent times, local agitation quickly found another cause. The complexities of the countryside were such that it quickly became impossible to separate the effect of the closure of the local railway from the impact of other events or long-term trends such as the growth of car ownership.[498] This chapter addresses the social consequences of closure using a micro-history approach to model what the villagers of Goathland could and could not do prior to and after the closure of their railways.[499]

Through analysis of the *Whitby Gazette* and the letters of protest we know that the villagers of Goathland feared the closure of their local railway. John Bateman a resident wrote "the loss of the railway would mean the death of many of us", while the *Whitby Gazette's* editorial stated, "the result from this drastic step will affect every person living in our district".[500] The railway was perceived as critical for the village, summed up by a local councillor "Goathland does not accept the loss portrayed by the minister but did not have the opportunity to challenge it…They cannot say that we are

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[491] "Vital Transport Inquiry."
[492] Higgs and White, "Changes in Service Provision in Rural Areas. Part 1," 444..
[493] Parolin, "Effects of Rationalization of Rural Passenger Services on Travel Activity Patterns," 48.
[494] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 31 & 35. Thomas, *The Rural Transport Problem*, 113.
[495] Policy Studies Institute, "The Future of Rural Railways", 115; Loft, "One Big Row," 236.
[496] For example "Fighting Railway Closure Proposal," 1. Details the following impacts - Adverse effect on trade, Fishing will be hit, hoteliers fears and The effect on Seamen.
[497] "Better Roads Needed."
[498] Sharon Cullinane and Gordon Stokes, *Rural Transport Policy* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1998), 22. Whitelegg, "Rural Railways and Disinvestment in Rural Areas," 61 to 62. Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 115.
[499] Loft, *Government, the Railways, and the Modernization of Britain*, 89.
[500] John Bateman, 3 Jul, 1964. "The Battle Is Still On."

a village of 500 to 600 people and we don't just matter."[501] It transported its children to school, "There is very deep and understandable concern about the future of Goathland school children".[502] It transported its workers to their employment, about which the Parish Council was unequivocal about the substitute bus service, "they could not get to their place of work by bus".[503] This proved to be an erroneous statement. The retired were able to shop and undertake the necessities of life "people needed to get to Whitby for shopping".[504] Tourists travelled by railway to the village to sustain the local economy, "one-fifth of the visitors to my hotel come by rail."[505] It provided a lifeline when winter weather frequently blocked road access to the village, "the railway is vital in winter".[506]

Based on this it might be expected that after closure the villagers of Goathland would be isolated and unable to go about their daily lives. The *Whitby Gazette* and GPC do not reflect such a change. Mention of the railway closures declined to almost nothing by the summer of 1965, the emphasis was on how life remained unchanged. The *Whitby Gazette* confirmed this in a headline - "Alternative Services Largely Fulfilling Need."[507] This chapter demonstrates how local villages were physically unaffected by the railway closure, there was little change to what could be accomplished by public transport, but there was however an emotional impact. This was driven by the well-orchestrated campaign against closure, which emphasised its dire consequences for the villagers of Goathland. As an example of this hyperbole the clerk to WRDC was quoted at the TUCC Inquiry - "We believe that is a matter of life and death for people".[508] The villagers were not encouraged to appreciate that they were isolated before the closure of the railway, and that the closure would not impact that.

The study of the impact concentrates on three indicators, population, mobility, and accessibility.[509] These methodologies are used through the knowledge of the village of Goathland obtained from the letters of protest against the local railway closure, and the archives of the local council.[510] The general availability of Historical Geographic Information Systems (HGIS), allows multiple comparisons of individual circumstances to be made over time and space.[511] HGIS has been extensively used in this research. This chapter demonstrates that changes in population cannot be isolated to the impact of the railway's closure. Mobility is a good measure of public transport availability over time, but that it is only by measuring villager's accessibility that the impact of the railway's closure can be fully assessed. Alternative measures of accessibility are considered, and in the case of Buckman's indices applied to Goathland.[512] It is argued that existing accessibility measures are unique to the particular areas and the circumstances studied so that only a bespoke index enables accessibility in Goathland

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[501] "Come and See Village Difficulties," article, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 18, 1964.
[502] "The Battle Is Still On," 1.
[503] Goathland Parish Council, "Draft Protest on Closure of Railway," (Northallerton: NYCC Archive, 1964).
[504] "United Opposition to Beeching Plan - Action Committee Will Express Whitby District Views."
[505] "MoT Decision."
[506] "The Axe Is Poised."
[507] "Alternative Services Largely Fulfilling Need," leading article, *Whitby Gazette* Sep 30, 1966.
[508] "Vital Transport Inquiry."
[509] Parolin, Filan, and Ilias, "Spatial and Economic Effects of Rail Freight Line Closure," 38.
[510] Goathland Residents, 1964.
[511] Gregory, *A Place in History: A Guide to Using GIS in Historical Research*, 11.
[512] Buckman, "The Locational Effects of a Railway Closure," 173.

to be measured over time. The development of a bespoke measure of accessibility and its application to Goathland and other local villages is pivotal to demonstrate the social impact of the closure of the railway.

The analysis of accessibility concludes that the physical impact of the railway closure was minimal, indeed in the case of Goathland, the increased substitute bus services improved accessibility. Contextually this is related to fears about winter weather, and access to schooling. Goathland is the prime focus of study because of archival material collected concerning the demographics and behaviour of the village's population (see chapter 3). Public transport provision in Glaisdale and Robin Hoods Bay is also analysed. These were two local villages of similar population the latter where the railway was closed at the same time as Goathland and the former where the railway service was reprieved. They demonstrate that the impact of railway closure on the villagers of Goathland was representative of the area.[513]

Methodology

Public transport provision throughout the Whitby area is published in rail and bus timetables, which are readily available in archives.[514] These sources have been used to compile an analysis of the public transport serving Goathland, and for comparison Robin Hoods Bay and Glaisdale. For each village, a spreadsheet was built detailing connections to neighbouring towns and the regional centres of Leeds, Newcastle, and York. The timetables were for both bus and train in the winter of 1963, and bus only in the winter of 1966/7. Winter timetables have been used as they were operative for the majority of the year, (usually forty-four weeks) and are more representative of public transport in the area than the augmented summer timetable. Similar spreadsheets have been compiled for the villages of Glaisdale and Robin Hoods Bay for comparison. Glaisdale was not served by bus at all, so only train timetables were analysed. Timetables represent planned timings rather than actual or perceived journey times. There is some evidence of the unreliability of the bus service derived from the letters of protest in chapter 3, but apart from newspaper articles praising the railway's performance no source of actual performance. It might be reasonably assumed that if bus was unreliable in winter then travel by private car might be equally as problematic.

The frequency and timings of public transport connections to neighbouring towns were manually calculated from the spreadsheets and uploaded to the base GIS database. The advantage of having this in one database is that public transport provision can then be analysed in combination with the data derived from the Goathland letters. An example is the calculation as to whether a person from Goathland who worked in Whitby was better or worse off after the closure of the railways. The GIS database allows for multiple comparisons over time and space and the display of those in the most suitable format.

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[513] Gerald David Daniels, *Passengers No More*, ed. Leslie Alan Dench (Shepperton: Ian Allan, 1980), 93.
[514] The Omnibus Society maintains an archive of British Bus timetables and the author was able to purchase those relevant to the Whitby area in the 1960s.

"An area rich in speculation with little real evidence" - Population[515]

Many studies have examined the links between population and railway provision, a relationship that Bolton characterises as "rich in speculation with little real evidence".[516] Most examine the relationship between the building of railways rather than their closure, with population change in rural areas. There is no consensus as to the impact of the railway on population. Schwartz concludes that the coming of the railways causes depopulation by facilitating outward migration and the opening up of rural areas to commerce, while Glyn-Jones thinks that the railway enabled rural dwellers to escape poverty.[517] Alvarez finds that access to a railway in Britain facilitates population growth.[518] There is less emphasis on the relationship between population and the contraction of railways, perhaps because the proportion of the population living in the British countryside had increased in the second half of the Twentieth Century despite the closure of much of the rural railway network.[519] Glyn-Jones concludes that public transport provision has no impact on the growth of Ivybridge, in rural Devon, also the case for the Whitby area.[520]

It is challenging to analyse population change at the village level in the Whitby area after 1971 because local government reorganisation in 1973 changed enumeration boundaries, Goathland was subsumed into a larger area so any comparison is problematic. Table 8 shows the population of the three villages in 1961 and 1971. Between these years Goathland's population hardly changed. In Robin Hoods Bay the population was also unchanged while the village of Glaisdale, which retained its railway station had a marked decline in population over the same period.

Table 8. *Village Population 1961 and 1971*

	1961	**1971**	**% Change**
Goathland	462	474	2.5%
Glaisdale	879	818	-6.9%
Robin Hoods Bay	1351	1358	0.5%

Source: Decennial census[521]

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[515] Nicola Bolton and Brian Chalkley, "The Rural Population Turnround: A Case-Study of North Devon," *Journal of Rural Studies* 6, no. 1 (1990), 29.

[516] "The Rural Population Turnround: A Case-Study of North Devon," 29.

[517] Schwartz, "Railways and Rural Development in England and Wales, 1850-1914," 241; Anne Glyn-Jones, "The Repopulation of the Countryside in Devon and Cornwall," *Local Population Studies*, no. 46 (1991), 24.

[518] Eduard Alvarez, Xavi Franch, and Jordi Martí-Henneberg, "Evolution of the Territorial Coverage of the Railway Network and Its Influence on Population Growth: The Case of England and Wales, 1871–1931," *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History* 46, no. 3 (2013), 189.

[519] Wiggins and Hillman, "21. Railways, Settlement and Access," 231.

[520] Anne Glyn-Jones, *Village into Town: A Study of Transition in South Devon* (Exeter: Devon County Council, 1977), 59.

[521] University of Portsmouth, "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Goathland Ch/Cp, Population Statistics, Total Population". "GB Historical GIS, a Vision of Britain through Time, Goathland Ch/Cp, Population Statistics, Total Population". ,also Glasidale and Robin Hoods Bay

There is no causality between railway closure and population change in these three villages. This confirms the consensus of other studies, Clout finds that there is no correlation between bus service provision and population in Norfolk, while a University of East Anglia study of rural railway closures in East Anglia concludes that public transport provision only has a weak impact on population.[522] Dickinson concludes that there is a relationship between population and bus service provision in East Yorkshire, but his methodology takes only a snapshot in1951 and does not discuss whether bus services follow population growth or cause the growth.[523] The author's research in Dorset with a more extended population sample analyses settlements of a comparable size, where the local railway station was closed, remained open, or where there was never a railway station, see Figure 13. It shows that all of the villages display similar rates of population change regardless of the status of their local railway station.[524]
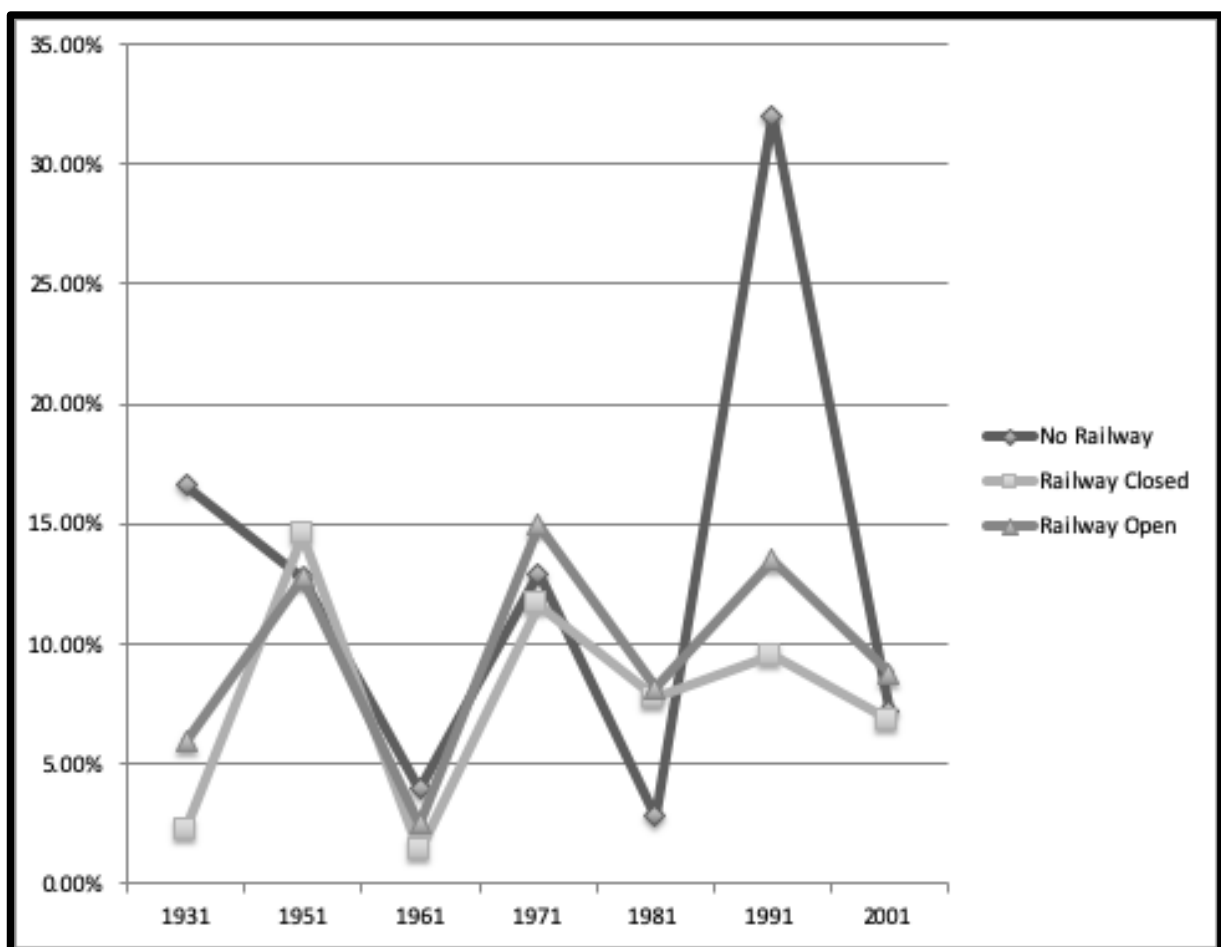
Figure 13. *Population Change in selected Parishes of Dorset 1931 to 2001*

Source: Authors research
Note: 1991 is an unexplained outlier

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[522] HD Clout, GS Hollis, and RJ Munton, "A Study of the Provision of Public Transportation in North Norfolk," *Department of Geography, University College, London,* (1972). Quoted in Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, 1, 33, 37.

[523] G. C. Dickinson, "Buses and People Population Distribution and Bus Services in East Yorkshire," *The Town Planning Review* 31, no. 4 (1961), 301.

[524] Sheppard, "Is It Accurate to Say."

In the Nineteenth Century, the building of railways was a watershed, changing the rural perspective from what was accessible by foot or horse to that accessible by a steam train travelling at thirty miles an hour. By contrast in Goathland at the time of the railway closure, villagers had three means of mechanised transport, the train, bus and, increasingly, the private car. It could no longer be considered an isolated community. Population change was not determined by railway closure and is a poor indicator of its impact.[525]

"The capacity people have for getting around" - Mobility[526]

For the villagers of Goathland, their mobility and accessibility reflected their opportunities to travel and why they wanted to travel. By measuring changes in mobility and accessibility before and after railway closure the impact of that closure can be assessed. The population of Goathland was of a comparable size to those used in the surveys undertaken by Thomas, and Hillman after a local railway's closure.[527] Recent work by Felis-Rota using GIS, uses data aggregated at a national level, the information in the Goathland letters allows the analytical techniques that they develop to be applied to individuals and groups locally.[528]
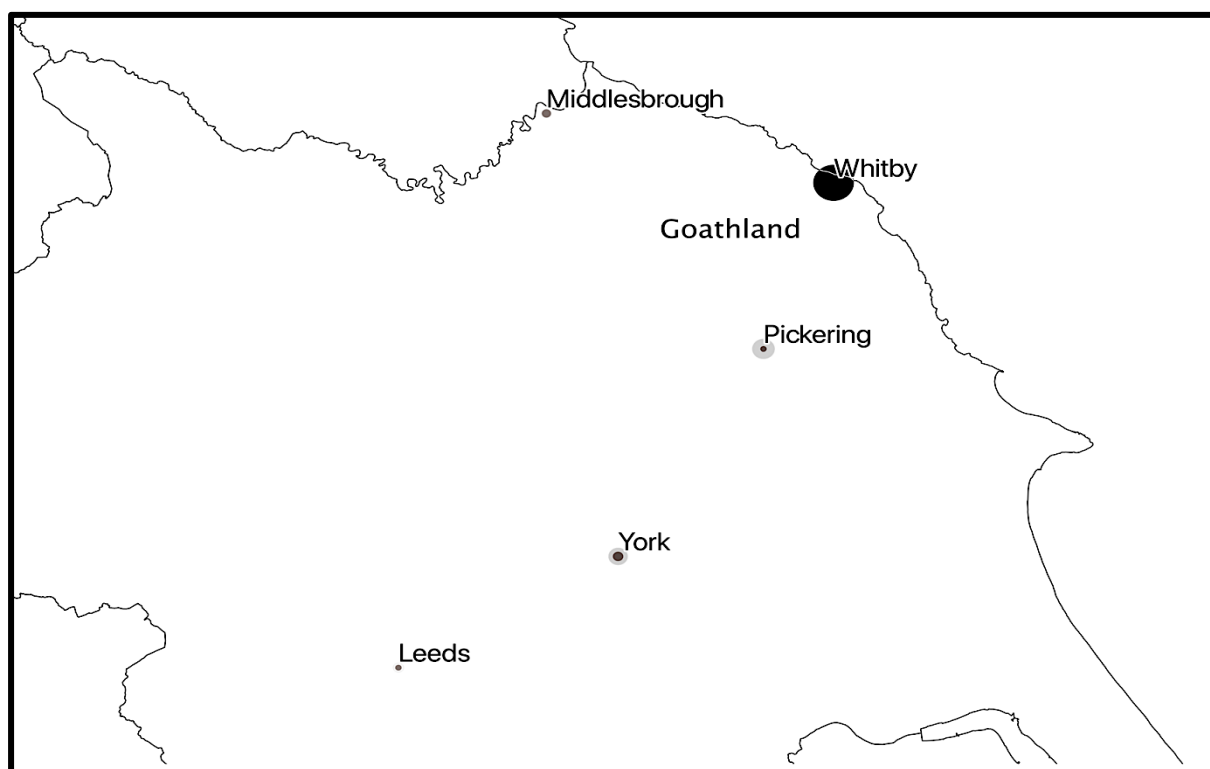
Map 7. *Destinations of Railway Journeys from Goathland in 1964*

Note: First preference black. Symbols are proportionate to the number of journeys.
Source: Author's research of Goathland letters. [529]

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[525] Gibbons, Heblich, and Pinchbeck, "The Spatial Impacts of a Massive Rail Disinvestment Programme," 1.
[526] Cullinane and Stokes, *Rural Transport Policy*, 59.
[527] Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 12; Thomas, *The Rural Transport Problem*, 89. Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, 1, 41.
[528] Felis-Rota, Jordi Marti Henneberg, and Mojica, "A GIS Analysis," 7.
[529] Goathland Residents, 1964.

Map 7 and Figure 8 illustrate that the overwhelming number of journeys made by the inhabitants of Goathland were to Whitby, with Pickering very much a secondary destination. For a detailed list of destinations see Tables 21 and 22 in the Appendix. Although Scarborough was not recorded as a significant destination many writers wrote of the necessity to visit friends and relatives in hospital. The template for the letters specified that only regular journeys should be recorded, hospital visits which by their nature were irregular, though necessary, would not have been included. As the nearest general hospital was in Scarborough it is included as a destination analysed to reflect this. All of the destinations in Map 7 above could be accessed by bus after the closure of the railway. This does not mean that the quality of the bus service was actually or perceived to be equivalent to the train.

Jordan defines mobility as the "behavioural response to the opportunities available".[530] Ninety-four households in Goathland wrote that they were reliant on public transport.[531] Their capacity to "get around" and behavioural response was a function of their ability to access public transport, its frequency, where they could travel to, how long it took them, the cost, and reliability. For the villagers of Goathland the closure of the railway, contrary to popular perception can be shown not to diminish their mobility.
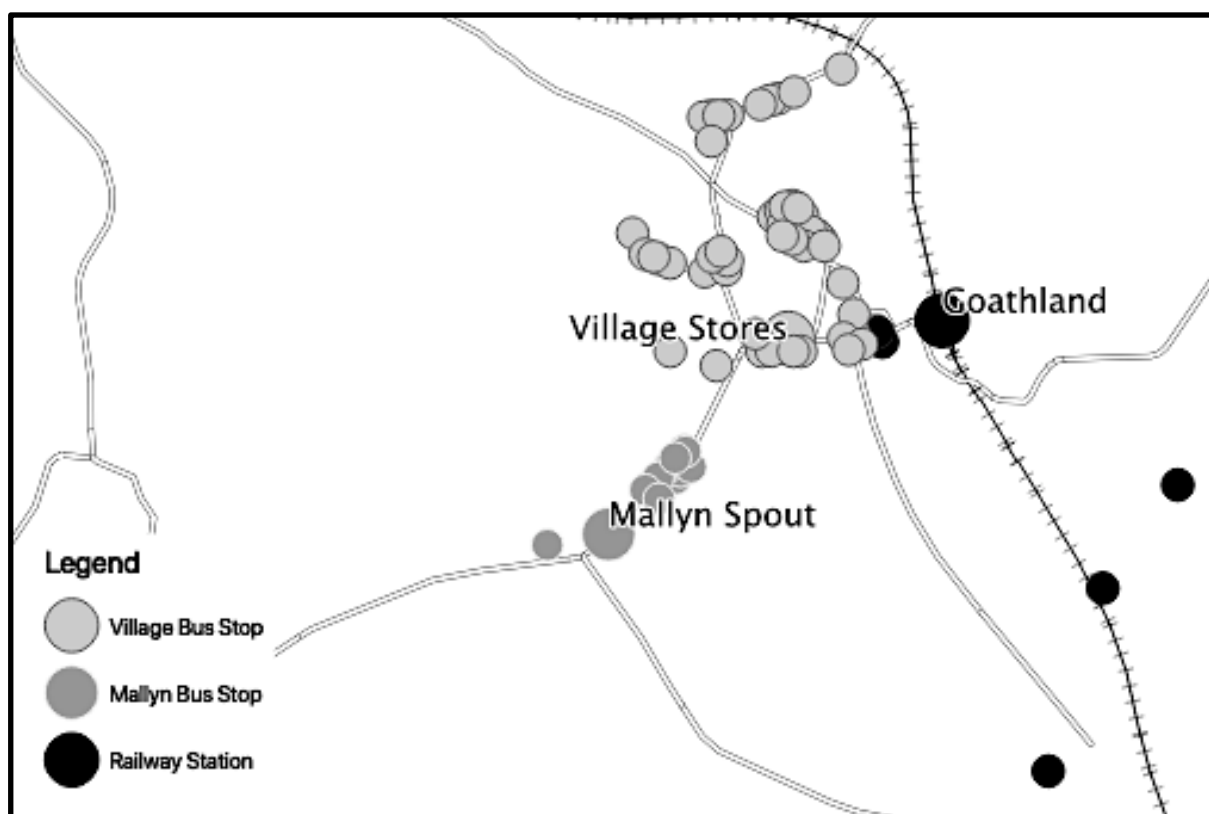
Map 8. *Goathland Letter Writers location relative to Public Transport*

Note: Some roads and outlying addresses omitted for clarity.
Source: Author

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[530] Jordan and Nutley, "Rural Accessibility and Public Transport in Northen Ireland," 121.
[531] Douglas Reay, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

Public transport in Goathland was accessed via the two village bus stops and the railway station. The locations of the Goathland letter writers are known so it is possible using GIS, to compare relative access to the bus stops and railway station (Map 8).

Despite the two bus stops being closer for most villagers they preferred to use the more distant railway station. Map 8 shows the village of Goathland in 1964, with the location of the railway station and the two village bus stops, at the Village Stores and Mallyn Spout. The bus stops were central to the village while the railway station was on the periphery. Using the GIS database, a nearest neighbour analysis was calculated for the distance to the bus stop or the railway station for each letter writer. These are coded so that the writer's address location corresponds to its nearest transport node. All but nine of the residents lived closer to a bus stop than the railway station. For more than twenty residents it was almost two kilometres further to the railway station than their nearest bus stop, see Table 9.

Table 9. *Goathland Distance to Public Transport Access*

	Number closest	Ave Dist. (metres) to the nearest access point	Ave Dist. (metres) to the railway station
Railway Station	9	794	794
Mallyn Spout	20	210 (910)*	2025
Village Store	50	464	937

Note: * the lower figure is calculated after removing remote addresses in Beck Hole.
Source: *Author*

If the bus stops were more convenient, why were the villagers so opposed to using the bus? The reality was that the railway station was a solid structure, with a waiting room and staff. By contrast, the bus stops were just that, an exposed section of road with no shelter.[532] The railway station had been part of the fabric of the village for over one hundred years, the bus was impermanent (see Image 3). One viewed nostalgically, the other was used.[533] Goathland resident John Bateman's views in a letter to the *Whitby Gazette* were typical, "On a bleak day, with a freezing wind blowing, there are no bus shelters in which to take refuge."[534] For Margaret White, there were no staff to assist the elderly with their luggage at the bus stop, unlike at the station.[535] It was not until nine months after the closure of the railway that two bus shelters were built in Goathland.[536] The bus stops might have been more convenient than the railway station, but it was not as desirable to wait there exposed to the weather. The warm station waiting room was a social hub that the bus stop could not match.

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[532] Goathland Railway Station has been preserved by the North Yorkshire Moors heritage railway and looks today as it might have in 1965 at the time of closure.
[533] Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain : The Epitome of Modernity*, 254.
[534] "Buses Not Maintained."
[535] Margaret Wright, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 26 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[536] "Bus Shelters at Goathland," article, *Whitby Gazette* Jan 29, 1965.
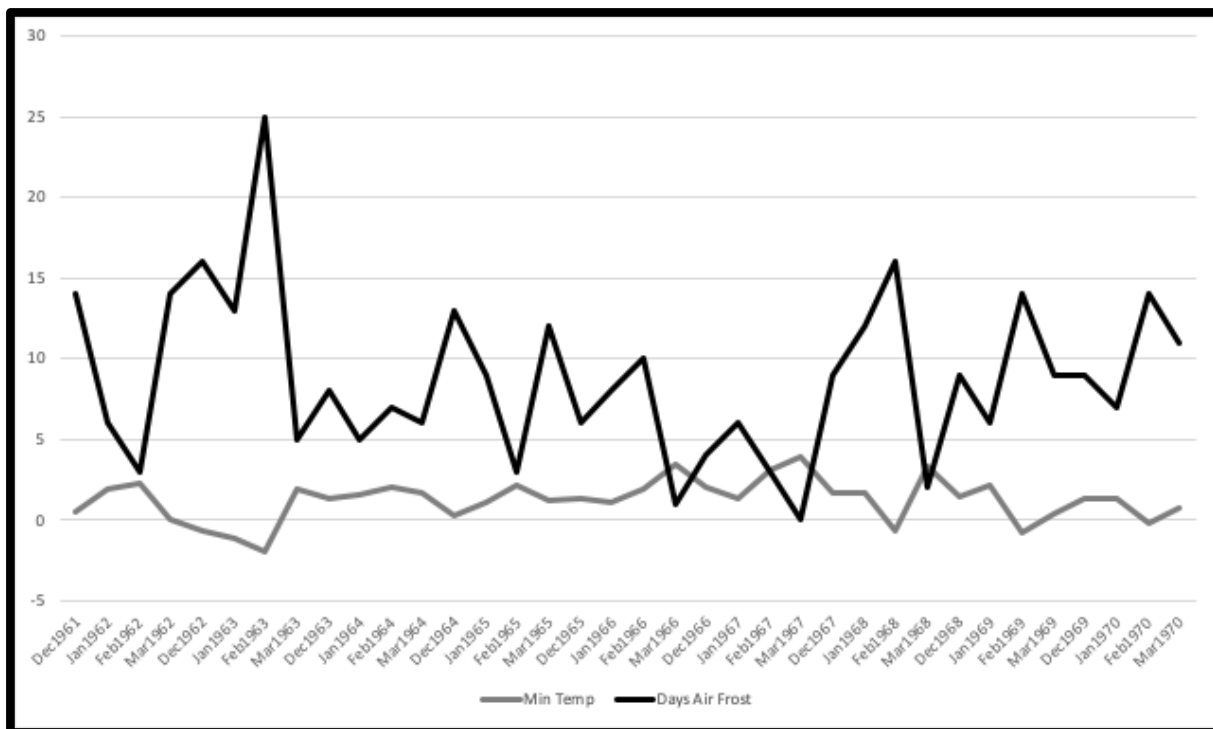
Figure 14. *Winter Weather Data - Whitby 1961 to 1970*

Source: [537]

The bus service was not reliable, although the extent of this may have been exaggerated, particularly as the severe winter of 1962/3 was a recent memory. Figure 14 shows that the winter of 1962/3 was an outlier for its severity. This exaggeration was reflected by a few incidents that acquired mythical status. Although severe these may not have been typical. Forty-one per-cent of writers used the phrase, "in winter the buses cannot run".[538] The *Whitby Gazette* recorded these days from 1942 to 1963 (Figure 15). One particular journey in 1959 when bus passengers were forced to walk two and a half miles in a raging snowstorm was mentioned by multiple letter writers. "Many times, the buses do not come down the bank and the people walk down two and a half miles from the moor top".[539] This event may have been so severe that it stands out in the collective memory and was not typical of the winter bus service. The evidence of John Bateman who kept a diary of the weather and the instances when the bus service did not run to Goathland, was that in some winters there was considerable disruption to the service.[540] There was a lively debate about this at the TUCC Inquiry, with the villagers accusing the bus company of manipulating the data by not counting services that left Whitby but failed to reach Goathland because of the weather.[541]

There is no comparable data available as to the reliability of the railway service, the only source of information were occasional articles in the *Whitby Gazette* as in the severe winter of 1962/3 praising the reliability of the railway. "To the credit of British

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[537] Met Office, "Historic Station Data - Whitby".
[538] Goathland Residents, 1964.
[539] Christina Jozefowice, 28 Feb, 1964.
[540] John Bateman, 3 Jul, 1964.
[541] "Vital Transport Inquiry."

Railways, the majority of trains have run".[542] Later that year it published a comment from the Whitby Stationmaster that the railway services were very well maintained.[543]
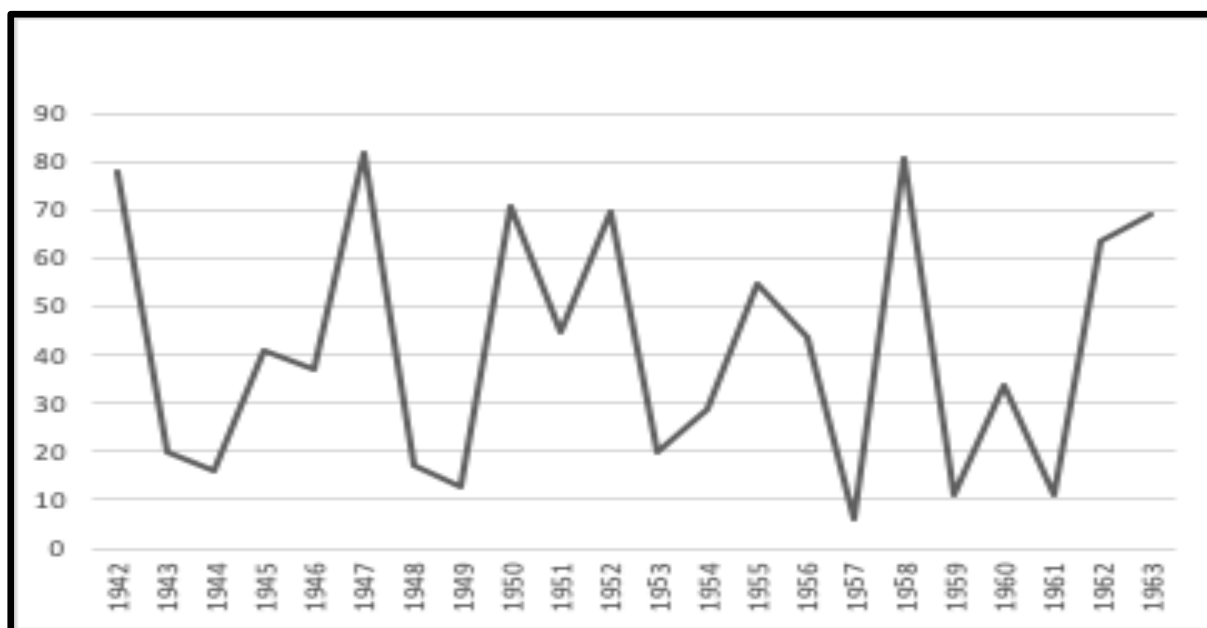
Figure 15. *Number of Days Bus Services were unable to reach Goathland*

Note: "to such an extent as to make the operation of buses impossible or subject to great risks and much delay" – Allan WRDC[544]

After the closure of the railways, there was limited evidence about the reliability of the bus service. During the winter of 1965/6, a weather diary in the archives of GPC recorded that either the entire or part of the daily bus service did not run to Goathland on seventeen days.[545] It is probable that winter reliability was unchanged and dependent on the severity of the winter weather continued to be a deterrent to catching the bus. A few, albeit serious, incidents would always be exaggerated in the collective memory of the villagers, as would the severity of the winter of 1962/3.

The better the frequency of public transport, the more useful it was to the consumer. For those dependent upon public transport small changes in frequency could be critical, the difference between one and two services a day was enormous to those who perceived those services as essential. Public transport frequency after railway closure declines, but because of the spread of timings over the day improved this did not impact potential use. Map 9 displays the frequency of public transport from Goathland. The frequency was the number of weekly departures by public transport to each destination by bus and train in 1963 and by bus only in 1967 after the closure of the railway. Between these years public transport frequency declined to all destinations except to Middlesbrough and Scarborough, by an average seven per cent. The most significant decline (twenty per cent) was to the most popular destination, Whitby. This superficially suggests a significant loss of mobility, in reality,

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[542] "Severe Snow and Weather in Whitby Area."
[543] "Fylingdales Airlift."
[544] "Goathland Meeting."
[545] Goathland Parish Council, "Representation in Respect of the Problems Caused at Goathland by the Closure of the Whitby to Malton Railway Line," (File ZRZ 19, NYCC Archive, Northallerton undated, assumed to be 1966), 3-4.

this was not important to the villagers. Whitby had been the best-served destination by railway with seven services in each direction including two terminating trains. However, the majority of passengers to Whitby were school children attending secondary schools for whom some trains had been retimed in 1963.[546] These schoolchildren travelled on contract buses after the railway closure which were not published in the public bus timetables. If these frequencies are added it would mean that the frequency of public transport from Goathland to Whitby was unchanged in 1967.
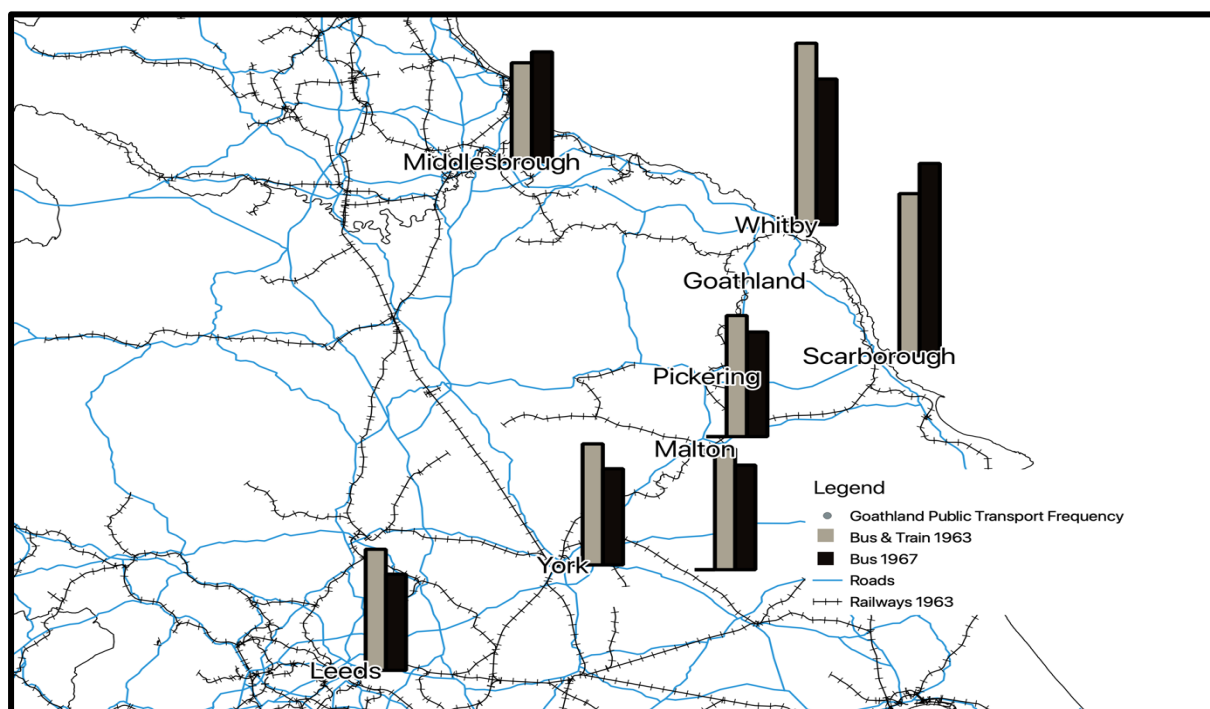
Map 9. *Public Transport Frequencies from Goathland 1963 and 1967*

Source: Author's analysis of bus timetables[547]

Table 10 shows that Glaisdale had no change in public transport frequency because its railway service was reprieved from closure and there was no bus service in either 1963 or 1967.[548] Robin Hoods Bay in 1963 had fifty-eight bus services a week to Whitby, compared to twenty-four railway services. There were only a small number of additional bus services added after the railway closure because the existing bus service frequency was considered adequate and most bus timings already duplicated those of the railway service.

For Goathland and Robin Hoods Bay, where the railway stations were closed in 1965 public transport frequency declined. This was not detrimental to the local residents because in Goathland contract school buses more than made up the shortfall and there had been no duplication of bus and train service timings. In Robin Hoods Bay there had been duplication, for example when the 15:29 train to Whitby was followed by a bus at 15:40. The bus stops and railways stations in both places were co-located,

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[546] "Re-Timing of Trains for Schoolchildren," article, *Whitby Gazette* Feb 8, 1963.
[547] United Automobile Services Ltd, "Timetable 1963."; "Timetable 1967."
[548] "The Railway Decisions Were a Bombshell," 1.

so the reduction in frequency by the cancellation of the 15:29 train after closure had little impact.

Table 10. *Village Public Transport Frequency 1963 and 1967 compared*

| To | Percentage Change in Public Transport Frequency 1967 v. 1963 | | |
	Goathland	Glaisdale	Robin Hoods Bay
Whitby	-20%	No Change	-3%
Pickering	14%		
Malton	-14%		
York	-20%	No Change	-13%
Leeds	-20%		-13%
Scarborough	24%	No Change	-13%
Middlesbrough	11%	No Change	-14%
Average	-7%	No Change	-10%

Source: Author

There was less public transport overall but its spread throughout the day remained the same. Frequency as a measure of mobility and wellbeing was a poor indicator for the villagers of Goathland and Robin Hoods Bay. Frequency declined but public transport by bus was no less useful after the closure of the railway. Where railway services were not duplicated by bus services the bus timetable after closure replaced these. Villagers had the same spread of public transport and hence mobility before and after railway closure.

For the majority of journeys there was no significant increase in timetabled journey time after closure.[549] However, because each journey also comprised waiting time the perception was that journeys would be longer. To this was added the time spent waiting for buses that did not arrive in winter or were too full in summer. When waiting time was added the perceived journey time by bus was much longer than the actual time. A caveat is that both the bus and train timetables publish planned not actual journey times, This is a weakness in most historic accessibility studies as there are few if any available resources showing actual journey times. In the case of Goathland there are only the letters and the *Whitby Gazette*. These are at best anecdotal and probably biased against the bus.

Hillman quotes that the average person spent eight per-cent of their waking hours travelling.[550] In Sugden's analysis of the impact of the closure of the Scarborough to Whitby railway time lost by rail passengers is considered a social disbenefit as it is time they could have spent doing something else.[551] If this time was remunerative it was easy to measure as average earnings are known, if it merely provided more

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[549] Both railway and bus journey times are derived from the timetables. There are no statistics as to actual journey times. Anecdotal evidence from the letters suggest that in winter bus journey times were increased, with no corresponding evidence regarding actual journey times. However frequently individual letters detail the same delayed journey, so while these were important in the collective memory they do not represent normal conditions.

[550] Hillman and Whalley, *Personal Mobility and Transport Policy*, 20.

[551] Sugden, "Closure of Whitby-Scarborough Railway," 12-13.

leisure time, it was challenging. Travel time using public transport from Goathland to nearby towns and regional centres has been calculated from the timetables of 1963 and 1967. In each case, average planned times have been used.
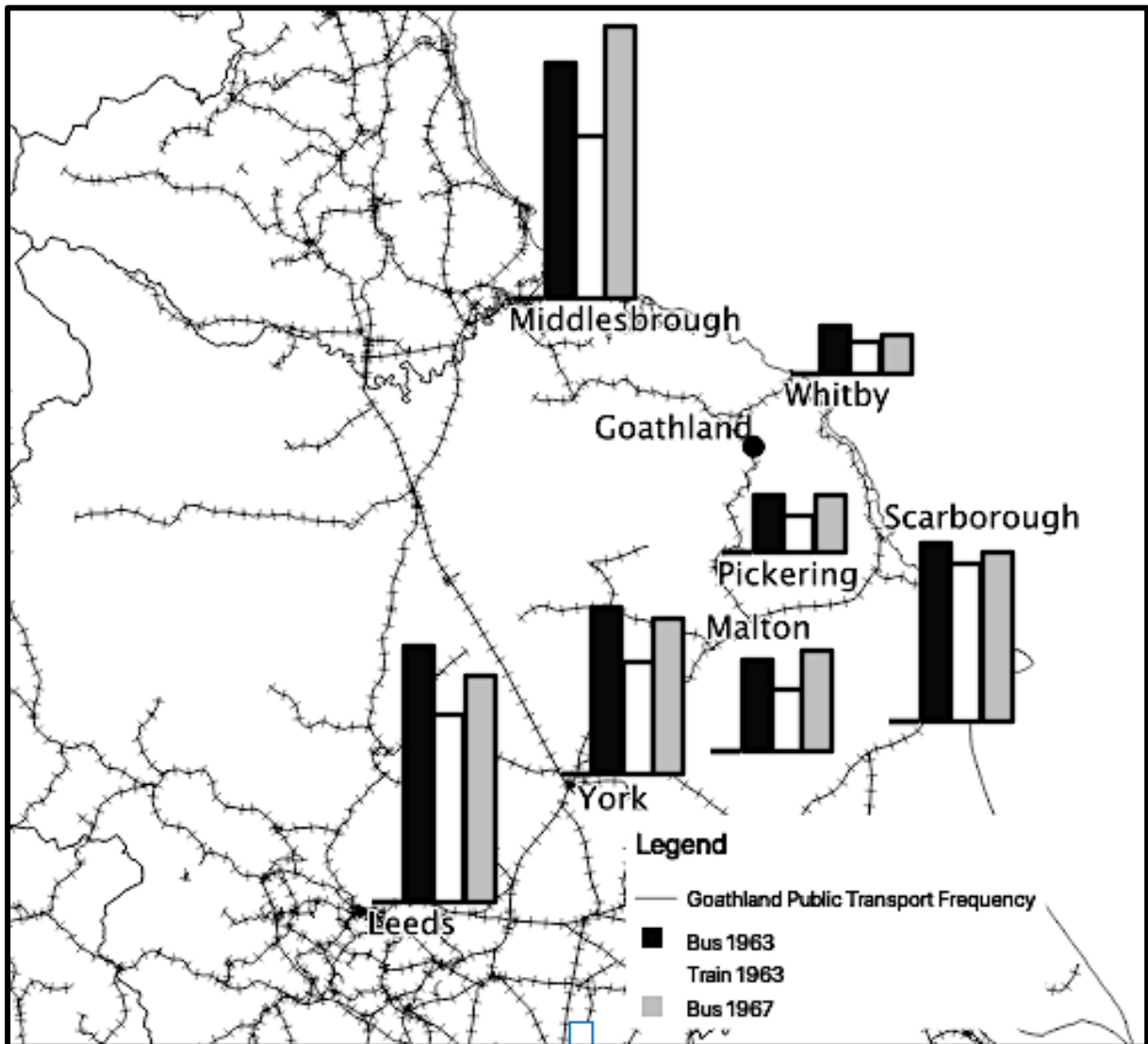
Map 10. *Journey times using public transport, 1963 and 1967*

Source: Author's analysis of bus timetables[552]

Map 10 and Table 11 show that for every destination the railway in 1963 was a quicker means of transport than the bus, the difference being more significant the longer the journey length. By 1967 some bus services had improved, notably to Leeds, however, the bus service was still slower in 1967 than the corresponding train service in 1963.

Whitby, overwhelmingly the most popular destination from Goathland was a twenty-seven per cent slower journey in 1967. However, because this was a short journey this only represents an average increase of six minutes which was insignificant for most travellers.

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[552] United Automobile Services Ltd, "Timetable 1963."; "Timetable 1967."

Table 11. *Village Public Transport Time to Destinations 1963 and 1967 compared*

To	Time Change (mins) in Public Transport 1967 v. 1963		
	Goathland	Glaisdale	Robin Hoods Bay
Whitby	6 (27%)	No Change	3 (13%)
Pickering	16 (58%)		
Malton	29 (64%)		
York	32 (37%)	No Change	17 (14%)
Leeds	29 (20%)		21 (14%)
Scarborough	8 (7%)	No Change	16 (39%)
Middlesbrough	83 (69%)	No Change	47 (42%)

Source: Author's analysis of bus timetables[553]

The increase in journey time for catching the bus rather than the train from Robin Hoods Bay in 1967 was small. To the most popular destination, Whitby it was only three minutes. As the bus service was more frequent than the train, it was unlikely that many people experienced this increase as most would have been already catching the bus. There was no change in 1967 for the villagers of Glaisdale with its retained railway service.

For the villagers of Goathland and Robin Hoods Bay, travelling by public transport would take marginally longer after the closure of their local railways. This time increased with the length of the journey. A short journey to Whitby had a negligible increase while a longer journey to Leeds might mean almost thirty minutes extra each way spent travelling. This was inconvenient and if the Ministry of Transport's value for leisure time of three shillings (fifteen pence) per hour published in 1968 is used it represents a monetary equivalent of fifteen new pence for a return journey to Leeds.[554] This was sixty-two per-cent of the average hourly wage in 1968, a considerable amount.[555] However, few people travelled to Leeds, while many travelled to Whitby experiencing a negligible journey time increase. The villagers of the area would probably have identified the increased journey times after railway closure for rarely made longer journeys, but for the most frequent short journeys it made little difference to them.

This was not perception of the villagers of Goathland. They thought that journey times were much longer due to difficulties boarding buses in summer because they were full, as Doris Hammerton wrote: "the buses are usually full in summer".[556] The perceived unreliability of the bus service was also reflected in complaints that waiting times at the bus stop were often excessive. Eighty-three-year-old Malcolm Broadbent "could not stand waiting around for buses at my age".[557] In theory, journey times were

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[553] "Timetable 1963."; "Timetable 1967."

[554] Sugden, "Closure of Whitby-Scarborough Railway," 12.

[555] "The Cost of Living," accessed Nov 30, 2019,
http://thedesignlab.co.uk/costofliving2015/ukupdate.php?uid=69

[556] Doris Hammerton, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 19 Feb, 1964. (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

[557] Malcolm Broadbent, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 20 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

not a significant factor for the residents of Goathland, in practice, their perception was that they would be considerably lengthened, mainly through time spent waiting at the bus stops. In other words, the perception of longer journeys by bus was more important than reality. It may also reflect that actual journey times were longer than those published in the bus timetable. There is no record of the railway service punctuality.

Although the bus was more expensive than the train this was not an issue. The only source of fare data is the Heads of Information published by British Railways before the Inquiry into the closure of the Malton to Whitby railway line in June 1964. Appendix F published a table of bus and rail fares for travel between points on the Malton to Whitby railway line.[558] There is no comparable fare information available for 1967.

Table 12. *Comparative Bus and Railway Fares (new pence) from Goathland 1963*

Goathland to	Return Railway Fare	Return Bus Fare	% difference
Whitby	12p	17p	41%
Pickering	20p	24p	20%
Malton	30p	32p	6%

Source: Author's analysis[559]

Table 12 reproduces the fares relevant to Goathland from that table converted to new pence. A caveat is that, due to the information in the table it is not clear whether the fares for bus and train travel are comparable in validity, it would be misleading to compare a promotional fare with the standard fare. Using this limited sample bus travel was more expensive than the same journey by railway, the differential decreasing by distance. Proportionately the additional cost of travelling by bus on the most popular journey to Whitby was more than forty per cent. However, the available evidence was that this was not of importance to villagers. In the letters of objection from Goathland, not a single writer mentioned cost in their otherwise extensive complaints about the bus service. Additionally, the school children using the contract bus service, who were the majority of passengers to Whitby, would have had their travel paid for by the education authority.

Safety was highlighted by WRDC quoting two accidents on Blue Bank, a notorious steep hill between Goathland and Whitby, due to the increased volume of goods traffic in the year since railway closure.[560] This was inconclusive as there was no comparison to previous years. Sands records 291 accidents in the Whitby urban area in 1963 but as two-thirds of these were in the summer months it would suggest that accidents were a function of traffic volume rather than winter weather. He provides no post-closure comparison to substantiate this.[561] Hillman thinks that safety and comfort were critical elements of mobility.[562] The villagers of Goathland agreed the bus was less

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[558] British Railways Board North Eastern Region, *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments*, Appendix F.
[559] *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments*, Appendix F.
[560] Whitby Rural District Council, *Problems Arising from the Closure of Whitby/Malton and Whitby/Scarborough Line* (File ZRZ19, NYCC Archives, Northallerton, 1966), 2.
[561] Sands, "An Examination of the Social and Economic Implications of Dr. Beeching's Proposals," 91.
[562] Hillman and Whalley, *Personal Mobility and Transport Policy*, 27.

comfortable and safe than the train. As Dorothy Tayler wrote that she "is completely allergic to bus travel".[563]

There was no evidence in the *Whitby Gazette* of any accidents involving buses post-closure, but two lorry accidents on Blue Bank near Goathland were linked with the railway closure by the *Whitby Gazette*.[564] The perception of the villagers was damming. The consensus was that catching the bus, particularly in winter was hazardous and unreliable.[565] An incident when a bus allegedly ran out of control was mentioned in multiple letters of objection, "the driver tried to get the bus to climb Cow Wath Bank (one in four) in icy conditions with all the village schoolchildren in it. It slid down three times, our daughter was terrified by the experience".[566] Summer incidents were also recalled, "the passengers were required to dismount from the bus and walk up Cow Wath Bank as the crew thought there was too much weight on the bus for a safe journey up the hill".[567] Objectively the bus was no less safe and probably only marginally less comfortable than the train, but the perception of the local population was that it was dangerous, unreliable, and uncomfortable.

Through analysis of available archives, there is a comprehensive view of "people's ability to get around" and how this changed after the closure of the railways in the Whitby area.[568] For the villagers of Goathland and Robin Hoods Bay, public transport by bus was less frequent, took longer, cost more and was less reliable. It would appear that the fears of the residents of Goathland like Frank Grayson "the bus service is inadequate in summer and in winter does not run due to the roads being impassable", were realised.[569] Their mobility was impaired, in Hillman's words, they suffered from "mobility deprivation" by the closure of their local railway.[570] Mobility was not however, an end in itself as few people used public transport in the 1960s purely for pleasure instead they used it to travel to something, a service, or to visit someone. Mobility gave the individual the potential to travel, it did not measure whether that potential was useful to them or was realised. A villager in Goathland who wished to work in Whitby in 1963 was able to travel to Whitby, he had mobility, but because of public transport timings it was impractical for him to be employed in Whitby between 09:00 and 17:00. The fact that the frequency of public transport to Whitby decreased after the closure of the railway was irrelevant to this worker as the schedule, of the enhanced bus service now allowed him to attend work between 09:00 and 17:00. His mobility had decreased but the utility of public transport had increased for him making his employment accessible using public transport. Mobility changes were indicative of the potential impact of the railway's closure on individuals perceived need to travel, it did not reflect the worth of that public transport.

The villagers perceived that the elements of mobility would be adversely affected by the railway closure but in fact there was little change and for some an improvement.

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[563] Dorothy Tayler, 19 Feb, 1964.
[564] "Call for Action," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* May 14, 1965, 1.
[565] Arthur Knott and Mary Knott, 27 Feb, 1964.
[566] George Grayson and Daisy Grayson, 19 Feb 28, 1964. And William McNeill and Mildred McNeill, 27 Feb, 1964.
[567] Leonard Carr and Mary Carr, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[568] Cullinane and Stokes, *Rural Transport Policy*.
[569] Frank Grayson and Winifred Grayson, 19 Feb, 1964.
[570] Hillman and Whalley, *Personal Mobility and Transport Policy*, 134.

The crudeness of mobility as a measure means that to understand the social dimension of the railway closure the change in villagers' opportunities or their accessibility after closure are examined.[571] As Norman Crumble proprietor of the Crumble Theatrical Agency stated to the Inquiry into closure, "rail was not often used because they did not provide services at the time people wanted them".[572]

"The ease with which people can reach necessary services" - Accessibility[573]

For the villagers of Goathland their accessibility improved after the railway closure, contrary to their perception that the closure would deprive them of the means to access the essentials of life. Their letters of protest did not concentrate on issues of mobility, instead they described what the writers used the railway for, and hence what they would potentially be deprived of. As Velaga states, "Access to health care, education, work and other services (e.g., shops)" was of prime importance to the villagers of Goathland.[574] Margaret Turnbull was "obliged to visit the oculist in York", Arnold Atkinson's children "will be severely handicapped in their schooling", William McNeill "would be unable to continue in employment", and Kathleen Headlam "relies on the railway….for her necessary shopping".[575] Nutley defines such accessibility "as a measure of spatial opportunity" or in the context of Goathland the ability of the residents to access facilities and services such as health care, education, work and shops.[576] Through comparison of their accessibility in 1964 with that in 1967 the social impact of closure can be measured. It would be untrue to suggest that before the railway closed public transport in Goathland was perfectly aligned to the needs of its inhabitants and that those needs were prejudiced by the closure.

Accessibility measures are particularly suited to "limited study areas with intensive study", and have the benefit that questionnaires are not required.[577] Goathland was a small area and there are extensive archives about its inhabitant's interaction with public transport at the time of railway closure. By these criteria is well suited to an accessibility study. Accessibility measures are not well suited to incorporate access to or ownership of a car, as this enables the owner to access all services at any time. Thus, most accessibility studies concentrate on public transport. Post-war studies of the car in Britain make little reference to the countryside and when they do like Jeremiah the concentration is on the harm that the car will do to the countryside rather than the improved opportunities it will give to the rural dweller.[578] Similarly Plowden writes about the problems caused by the increasing incoming traffic to rural areas, he

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[571] Jordan and Nutley, "Rural Accessibility and Public Transport in Northen Ireland," 121.
[572] "Vital Transport Inquiry." This is an interesting quotation because few people from Whitby spoke in favour of closure at the Inquiry.
[573] Daly, "Measuring Accessibility in a Rural Context", 75.
[574] Nagendra R. Velaga et al., "Transport Poverty Meets the Digital Divide: Accessibility and Connectivity in Rural Communities," *Journal of Transport Geography* 21 (2012), 102.
[575] John Turnbull and Margaret Turnbull, undated, 1964. Arnold Atkinson and Edith Atkinson, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 22 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton). William McNeill and Mildred McNeill, 27 Feb, 1964. Robert Headlam and Kathleen Headlam, 21 Feb, 1964.
[576] Nutley, "Rural Accessibility and Transport," 476. Daly, "Measuring Accessibility in a Rural Context", 75.
[577] Nutley, *Transport Policy Appraisal & Personal Accessibility in Rural Wales*, 77.
[578] David Jeremiah, *Representations of British Motoring* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 134 to 39.

does not write about outbound opportunities it allows.[579] Access to a car allows the rural dweller infinite mobility, they are able to access any service at any time, however it is the availability of the car to the individual that is critical, "The car has brought benefits to majority of rural households but has produced accessibility problems to those without a car."[580] Frequently in the 1960s where a household owned a car it was used to travel to and from work. So, it was not available to the housewife to shop in the local town. In 1964 the majority of the villagers of Goathland did not have access to a car, for them this increased mobility would not become ubiquitous for many years, hence it is not considered in the accessibility models considered in this section.

This section demonstrates how the accessibility of Goathland's residents changed after the closure of the railway, with comparison to the neighbouring villages of Glaisdale and Robin Hoods Bay.[581] While measures of mobility such as frequency, time and cost are easily definable absolutes, accessibility is a much more "slippery notion".[582] Alternative measures of accessibility and their relevance to Goathland are reviewed in the context of being able to link accessibility not only to place, but also to the individuals who wrote the letters of protest. These demonstrate that accessibility measures need to be bespoke to both area and the era under study, if they are to describe the social impact of the railway closure.

Buckman's analysis of the closure of the Beeching closure of the Steyning railway line in West Sussex uses an accessibility index to understand its impact.[583] He defines accessibility as "the differences in frequency and time between two modes."[584] This is expressed in the formula

$$A = (f^1 \div t^1) - (f^2 \div t^2)$$

where A equals accessibility, f^1 frequency of train services, t^1 average journey time by train, f^2 frequency by bus, t^2 average journey time by bus. This model was adapted to Goathland, modified such that; f^1 frequency of bus and train combined in 1964, t^1 average journey time by bus and train in 1964, f^2 frequency by bus in 1967, t^2 average journey time by bus in 1967. A further index was calculated taking just bus frequencies and timings between the two years. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. *Buckman Accessibility Index applied to Goathland before and after Railway Closure*

Destination	Buckman Accessibility Index	
	Bus 1964 v.1967	Bus & Rail 1964 v. Bus 1967
Whitby	0.40	-0.15
York	0.6	-0.05

Note: A positive number signifies an improvement in accessibility, a negative number a decline.
Source: Author

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[579] Plowden, *The Motor Car and Politics, 1896-1970*, 413.
[580] Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 19.
[581] Nutley, "Accessibility, Mobility and Transport-Related Welfare," 336.
[582] Peter R Gould, "Spatial Diffusion, Resource Paper No. 4," in *Commission on College Geography* (Washington: Association of American Geographers, 1969), 64.
[583] Buckman, "The Locational Effects of a Railway Closure."
[584] "The Locational Effects of a Railway Closure," 172.

The comparison in column two shows an increase in accessibility by bus, accounted for by the increase in bus frequency after the railway closure. When total public transport provision is compared in column three, then there was a small decrease in the index, because the overall frequency of public transport to Whitby and York had now reduced. From this analysis, it is clear that the Buckman index does not measure accessibility, but mobility, as frequency was the prime factor in the change of the index. It is difficult without comparison to a large number of cases to understand the significance of the changes in columns two and three. It is an excellent comparative measure of mobility but is not an indicator of accessibility and the consequent social impact of railway closure for a village like Goathland, and as such was discounted as a tool.

Moseley identifies three alternative categories of accessibility measure.[585]

Composite Measure – this examines places in the context of the transport provision to a range of destinations. Johnston a pioneer of this approach applies points to settlements in North Yorkshire, including Whitby, based on the quality of their bus service.[586] Such an approach if applied to Goathland would again reflect frequency change but not the social impact of changing public transport provision.

Time – or the measurement of the number of services accessible by time. This is a more sophisticated version of a mobility measure; it assumes that all the villagers had perfect access to public transport. It ignores people who were time poor such as housewives with school-age children who could only travel during school hours or whose needs were defined by arrival time at the destination rather than departure time like workers. Accessibility for a villager in Goathland was dependent upon their availability to use public transport, and then what it enabled them to do at the destination. For example, a service departing Goathland for Whitby between 8:00 and 10:00 could be used by a retiree who needed to attend a medical appointment. A service departing in the early morning or late evening was not suitable for this.

Time-Geography – this introduces the element of access to the time model, and Hagerstand argues measures opportunities rather than predicted behaviour.[587] In the example of a Goathland villager in full time employment, public transport was only of use if it arrived at his workplace before 09:00 and leaves after 17:00, otherwise It was not a means of him travelling to work.

None of these techniques are ideal to measure the social impact of accessibility in Goathland. The accessibility of the groups of villagers, workers, retirees accessing healthcare, shoppers and schoolchildren identified in the introduction to this section need to be individually assessed. A composite measure that reflects the opportunities that public transport facilitated for these groups has been developed by the author.

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[585] Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 59.
[586] Johnston, "An Index of Accessibility and Its Use in the Study of Bus Service and Settlement Pattern." Note the author was unable to obtain this article but refers to extracts most notably in Moseley, *Accessibility: The Rural Challenge*, 63.
[587] Torsten Hagerstrand, "Impact of Transport on the Quality of Life" (paper presented at the 5th International Symposium on Theory and Practice in Transport Economics, Transport in the 1980-1990 Decade, Athens, Oct, 1974), 93.

Nutley in a study of rural Wales addresses this by assigning each location a number of points according to the quality of its bus service, accounting for service provision, a work service, shopping service, evening and Sunday services as well as access to the major regional centre, Cardiff.[588] Cullinane develops this points-based time/geography approach for rural areas, placing more emphasis on the frequency of bus service by time of day and week.[589] Both indices would improve on Buckman's accessibility measure as applied to Goathland but neither would reflect the diverse requirements and multiple destinations of Goathland's inhabitants. Jordan and Nutley calculate a composite index that compares the access to services of multiple locations in Northern Ireland with multiple towns that provide those services.[590] This is more suited to the villages of North Yorkshire where accessibility needs to be quantified between multiple origins (Goathland, Glaisdale, Robin Hoods Bay), and multiple destinations (Whitby, York, Leeds etc.), to consume multiple services (work, shopping, medical).

Jordan applies seven tests, which were as follows (the author's adaptions for this dissertation in brackets);[591]
1) Public transport frequency.
2) Work Service – Bus to an urban centre arriving between 07:00 and 09:00 and departing between 17:00 and 18:45.[592]
3) Shopping and personal business – Access six days a week to an urban centre allowing a four-hour stay.
4) Leisure and Evening service – The ability to return from a town after 22:00 on at least three days a week.
5) Leisure – Sunday Service. Any return journey allowing a two-hour stay.
6) Access to Belfast – Allowing a four-hour stay on at least one day a week. (This was changed to access to Scarborough allowing a hospital visit).
7) Access to Londonderry. (Not used).

For each of the villages public transport to Whitby, Scarborough, Middlesbrough, York, and a major regional centre Leeds or Newcastle has been analysed. Additionally, services to Pickering and Malton from Goathland were considered, as they are the prominent destinations in the protest letters. Personal transport by car or motorbike is excluded, see introduction. Each destination was then allocated points according to the tests above. The results are displayed in matrices for Goathland, Glaisdale, and Robin Hoods Bay for the following:

1) Bus Service, winter 1963/4.
2) Train service, winter 1963/4.
3) Combined bus and train Service, winter 1963/4.
4) Bus service, winter 1966/7, and for Glaisdale the train service in winter 1966/7.

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[588] Nutley, *Transport Policy Appraisal & Personal Accessibility in Rural Wales*, 129.
[589] Cullinane and Stokes, *Rural Transport Policy*, 67.
[590] Jordan and Nutley, "Rural Accessibility and Public Transport in Northen Ireland," 121-23.
[591] "Rural Accessibility and Public Transport in Northen Ireland," 125.
[592] This ignores people who worked outside of towns, however, in Goathland, there was no evidence of this.

(Note these are planned services and timings from published timetables rather than actual journey times, which are not available. The exclusion of the car is discussed previously in this section).

The matrices were then uploaded into the HGIS database to allow for comparison and hypotheses testing. The full results are reproduced in Table 25 through Table *36* in the appendix.

The six elements of the accessibility index are explained in the context of the three villages in 1964 and 1967. When combined they define a comparative accessibility index for the three villages in the two years.

Frequency - For the accessibility index, the weekly frequency of public transport was factored by 0.25. If this factor had not have been applied, frequency would have had a disproportionate influence on the whole index, it would have distorted the result similarly to the results from Buckman's index of accessibility. Frequency was a contributor to individual accessibility; it was not the dominant factor. The impact of frequency on the villages is discussed in more detail in the section concerning Mobility. Other elements were binary and were assigned the value of twenty as being present or zero for not present.

Work Service – Public transport to a town arriving between 07:00 and 09:00 and departing between 17:00 and 18:45.

Table 14. *Work Accessibility*

	Goathland			Robin Hood Bay			Glaisdale		
	1964	**1967**	**Diff**	**1964**	**1967**	**Diff**	**1964**	**1967**	**Diff**
Whitby	0	20	20	20	20	0	20	20	0
Pickering	20	20	0						
Malton	20	20	0						
York	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leeds	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Scarborough	0	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Middlesbrough	20	0	-20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newcastle							0	0	0
Total	80	100	20	20	20	0	20	20	0

Source: Author
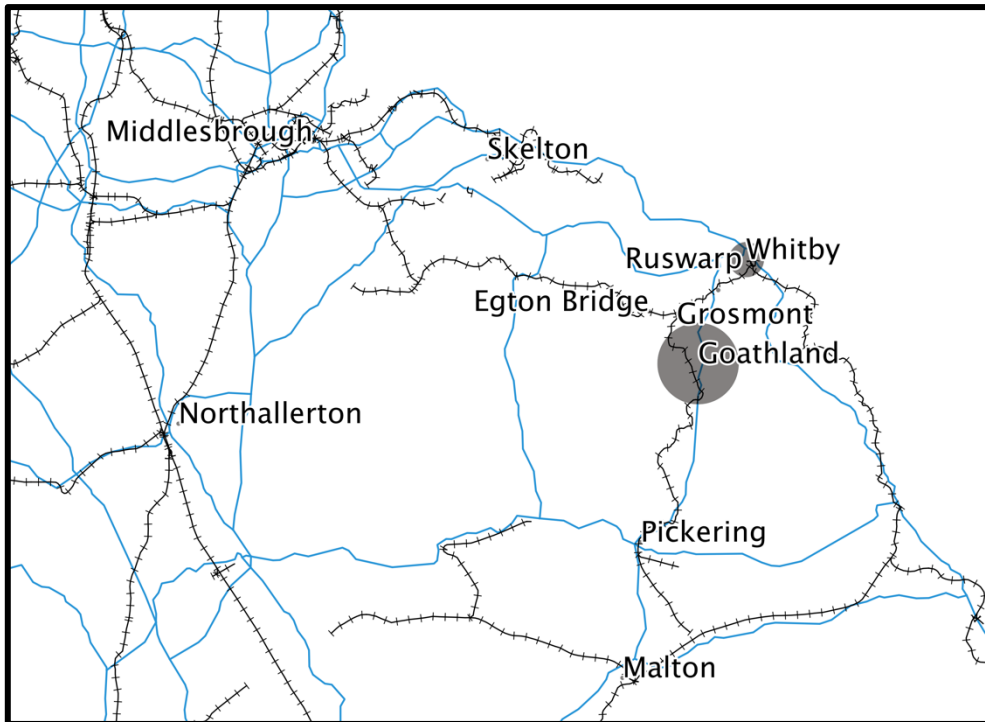
Map 11. *Goathland Residents: Location of Work February*

Note: Circles are in proportion to the number of people working in a location, York (2 people) and Newcastle (1 person) omitted for clarity.
Source: Author from[593]

Accessibility to work was improved after railway closure. In 1967 a resident of Goathland could use public transport to travel to full-time employment in all of the towns within a forty-mile radius, with the exception of Middlesbrough. Previously a villager who wished to work in Whitby, the nearest centre of employment, could not return to Goathland by public transport between 17:00 and 18:45, see Table 14.

From the letters of protest and the other sources it was known that only twenty-seven people worked outside of Goathland in 1964 (Map 11).[594] The majority of working residents, forty-nine worked, in the village presumably within walking distance of their homes**.** Only nine people worked in Whitby, although it was probable that from reading the letters at least some of these may have worked part-time and so potentially been able to use public transport. (Eleanor Syrett stated that she works full-time in Whitby but also that she returns to Goathland on the 16:22 train, suggesting that she works less than a full eight hours, while Stephen Raine was a taxi driver so likely to have more flexible hours).[595] There were two changes after the closure of the railway. The more important was the improved bus service that allowed a full working day in Whitby. The other it was no longer possible to travel to Middlesbrough for work. However, as only two people claimed to work in Middlesbrough in 1964 and both commuted weekly or occasionally this was insignificant when balanced against the increased

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[593] Goathland Residents, 1964. Goathland Parish Council, "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland."
[594] Goathland Residents, 1964. Goathland Parish Council, "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland."
[595] Barry Syrett and Eleanor Syrett, 21 Feb, 1964. Stephen Raine and Christine Raine, 22 Feb, 1964.

employment opportunities accessible in the nearest town, Whitby.[596] Information from the letters of protest and the archives show that the majority of the Goathland's working population walked to work. These people were unaffected by the railway closure, but they now had the potential of using public transport to work in Whitby.

In the Robin Hoods Bay, the railway service was of little use for employment outside of the village. The first train departure in either direction was not until 9:17 to Scarborough and 12:30 to Whitby and the railway was little used for travel to work. For Glaisdale the 1967 railway timetable allowed villagers to access Whitby and Scarborough (with a change to a bus), but not Middlesbrough for work.

Shopping and personal business – Access six days a week allowing a four-hour stay.

Table 15. *Shopping Accessibility*

	Goathland			Robin Hoods Bay			Glaisdale		
	1964	**1967**	**Diff**	**1964**	**1967**	**Diff**	**1964**	**1967**	**Diff**
Whitby	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	0
Pickering	20	20	0						0
Malton	20	20	0						0
York	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	0
Leeds	20	20	0	20	20	0			0
Scarborough	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	0
Middlesbrough	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	0
Newcastle							20	20	0
Total	140	140	0	100	100	0	100	100	0

Source: Author

The prime role of public transport in 1964 was as a means to shop in local towns and regional centres, which was very important for villages with few local services, see Table 15. The closure of the railway had no impact on villagers' ability to shop and access services in local towns.

Leisure and Evening service – The ability to return from a town after 22:00 on at least three days a week.

Table 16. *Last evening departure to villages from the nearest town*

	1964	**1967**	**Notes**
Goathland	18:54	18:30	From Whitby
Robin Hoods Bay	21:05	21:35	In 1964 there was a Saturday only 22:15 bus from Whitby but not in the 1967.
Glaisdale	18:00	18:00	From Middlesbrough

Source: Author

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[596] Arthur Knott and Mary Knott, 27 Feb, 1964. Ruth Rishworth, 22 Feb, 1964.

Villagers could not enjoy an evening out in any of the surrounding towns, using public transport either in 1964 or 1967, see Table 16. The nearest Whitby had several cinemas, theatres and other places of entertainment, scant consolation to local villagers who could not frequent them in the evening. In 1967, the villagers of Robin Hoods Bay could not even make use of the previous late bus departure from Whitby on a Saturday. The closure of the railways had no impact on the ability to access leisure facilities. For the teenager who wrote to the *Whitby Gazette* not much had changed, "Whitby is dead enough without losing all its visiting trade as well…….Buses are cold, infrequent and you end up catching pneumonia".[597]

Sunday Service - any return journey allowing a two-hour stay.

Table 17. *Sunday Accessibility*

	Goathland			Robin Hoods Bay			Glaisdale		
	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff
Whitby	0	20	20	20	20	0	0	0	0
Pickering	20	20	0			0			0
Malton	20	20	0			0			0
York	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leeds	0	0	0	0	0	0			0
Scarborough	0	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Middlesbrough	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	0	0
Newcastle							0	0	0
Total	60	40	-20	40	40	0	0	0	0

Source: Author

For the majority of the year during operation of the winter timetable there was no Sunday service on any of the local railways, so closure has no impact on this, see Table 17. In 1967 changed timings meant that it was now possible to travel to Whitby and Scarborough by bus from Goathland on a Sunday. For the inhabitants of Robin Hoods Bay who wished to visit friends and relatives on a Sunday by public transport, opportunities were limited. In the case of Glaisdale they were non-existent in both 1964 and 1967.

Medical - access to Scarborough allowing a hospital visit

All the villagers could access Scarborough hospital to attend medical appointments or to visit friends and relatives on six days a week before and after the closure of the railways.

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[597] "Teenagers Reflections on Whitby," article, *Whitby Gazette* May 1, 1964.

Table 18. *Composite accessibility excluding frequency*

	Goathland			Robin Hoods Bay			Glaisdale		
	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff
Whitby	20	60	40	60	60	0	40	40	0
Pickering	60	60	0			0			0
Malton	60	60	0			0			0
York	60	60	0	20	20	0	20	20	0
Leeds	20	20	0	20	20	0			0
Scarborough	40	80	40	40	40	0	40	40	0
Middlesbrough	40	20	-20	20	20	0	20	20	0
Newcastle							20	20	0
Total	300	360	60	160	160	0	140	140	0

Source: Author

If the measures of accessibility are combined and the situation in 1967 after closure compared to 1964 Table 18, there is very little change. The exceptions were improved access from Goathland, for work and Sunday travel, to Whitby and Scarborough. If the frequency is added to complete the accessibility index the table changes marginally, see Table 19.

Table 19. *Composite accessibility including frequency*

	Goathland			Robin Hoods Bay			Glaisdale			Total		
	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff
Whitby	53	87	34	101	97	-4	54	54	0	208	238	30
Pickering	82	79	-3							82	79	-3
Malton	82	79	-3							82	79	-3
York	82	78	-5	39	34	-5	32	32	0	153	143	-10
Leeds	42	38	-5	39	34	-5				81	71	-10
S'boro	70	117	47	64	55	-9	54	54	0	187	226	39
M'boro	58	40	-18	58	47	-11	35	35	0	151	122	-29
N'castle							29	29	0	29	29	0
Total	469	516	48	299	266	-33	204	204	0	972	986	14

Source: Author
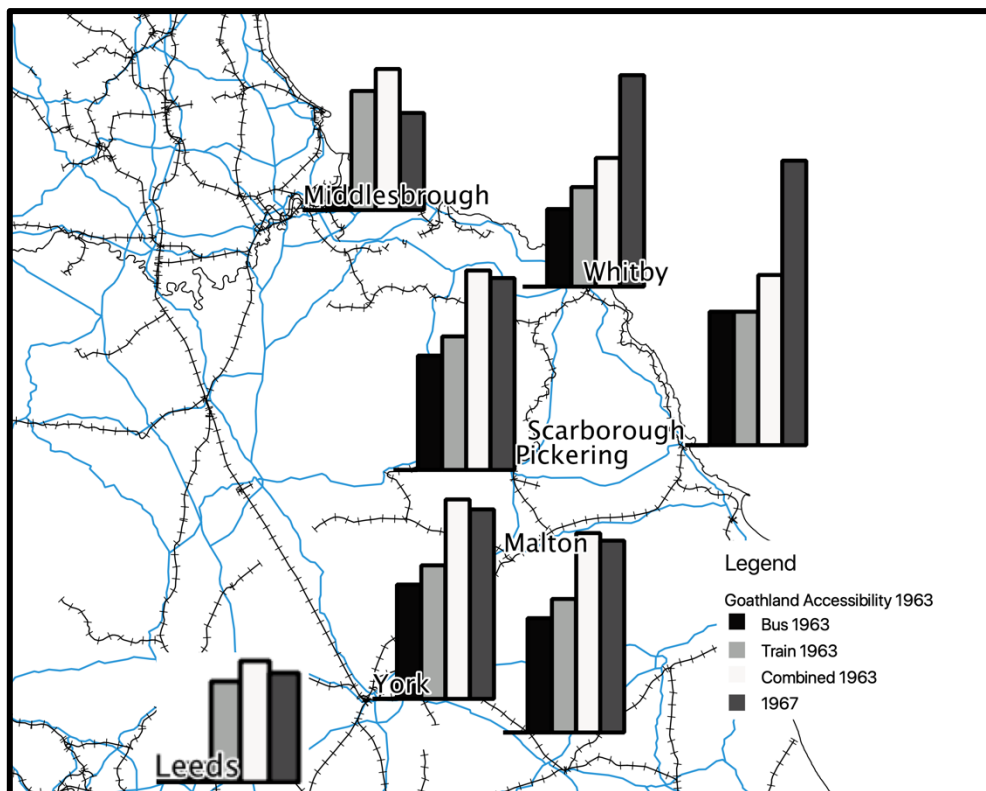
Map 12. *Goathland Accessibility to local towns 1964 compared to 1967*

Source: Author

This was because, in Goathland (Map 12) the improvements to the bus timetable replaced almost all of the railway services, with a better spread of timings through the day. If the contract school bus to Whitby was included, then accessibility had improved. Scarborough was now more accessible, while to the other destinations with the exception of Middlesbrough accessibility was unchanged. Robin Hoods Bay was already served by nine buses a day to and from Whitby, so its railway service was always only of minor value, and largely duplicated the bus timetable. Overall it was marginally less accessible, but this was only a factor of frequency. Glaisdale with no bus service was unchanged.

The accessibility measures applied to Goathland do have some important omissions. This study ignores long-distance travel, which was an occasional requirement; the Deakin's wrote that they need to travel to see their family in Birmingham.[598] Only five letter writers mention long-distance travel to the south and west, more mention the impact of closure on incoming visitors. Long distance travel was essentially a one-off event that would still be possible by public transport in 1967 but would involve using the bus or car/taxi to the railhead at Malton. For a long journey this would be an inconvenience rather than a deterrent.

There is no available source of the volume of goods and parcels traffic handled at Goathland Station in 1964. It was served by a regular goods train, while parcels were carried on passenger services. While historically the goods train carried minerals, livestock, and coal to/from Goathland, by the 1964 it principally carried incoming

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[598] William Deakin and Beatrice Deakin, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 20 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).

domestic coal supplies.[599] In its first petition against closure GPC highlighted the security of these coal supplies.[600] The only other freight mentioned in this document was foodstuffs. BR gave notice that that the goods train and goods facilities would be withdrawn in March 1964, however coal deliveries would be concentrated in Whitby and goods traffic was collected and delivered by an agent in the Goathland area.[601] The villagers were concerned about the security of coal supply in winter from Whitby fearing "empty grates", however there is no anecdotal evidence or reporting of shortages in the *Whitby Gazette* that this occurred.[602] Likewise there was concern about the security of foodstuff supply in winter, Mrs Sleightholm (Chair Goathland Women's Institute) was quoted by the *Whitby Gazette* "The trains have always been essential and have never let us down with supplies of milk and food".[603] In a letter from the proprietor of the village shop it states that supply was normally by road but that "with roads blocked by snow or dangerous with ice we must rely on the railway for bread and perishable supplies".[604] It is likely that these fears were exaggerated by the severe winter of 1962/3 (see Figure 14), which was an outlier, and that in most normal winters disruption would be minimal. Supplies of goods and coal would be delivered by road after the closure of the railway.

Few of the letter writers mention the transport of parcels for which the station would have been a convenient location for despatch to and from the whole of the United Kingdom. It is likely that this would have been the main freight traffic passing through the station for carriage by passenger train. The letters detail larger items that were despatched from Goathland station, Douglas Reay sent small livestock breed for medical experiments to Leeds University.[605] Henry Atkinson a farmer sent milk by rail in winter when the roads were blocked.[606] Transport of such items by bus was impractical, however BR state that they will provide alternative facilities. Again, the fear of winter blockages was conditioned by the previous severe winter.

The effect of closure on visitors to Goathland while mentioned in many of the letters was not recorded. Edith Schofield licensee of the Birch Hall Inn complained that she would lose the custom of those who used the train to visit and walk in the area.[607] These expectations may not have been realised as visitors would come instead by car and bus, and the fame of Goathland as a television and film set would soon eclipse any impact of the railway closure.[608] The *Whitby Gazette* wrote "The first real indication as to how railway closures would affect the holiday season came with the Whitsuntide weekend. The number of visitors exceeded expectations."[609]

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[599] Mason, *Goods on the Whitby to Pickering Line - a Brief History*, 43. This may have been related to the historic monopoly of coal that station masters enjoyed. Originating from the North Eastern Railway this custom survived until the closure of local coal facilities.
[600] "Goathland's Dependency on Railways," headline, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 28, 1963, 1.
[601] British Railways Board North Eastern Region, *Proposed Withdrawal of Passenger Train Services between Malton and Whitby (Town). British Railways Comments*, 2. "Coal Supplies," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Mar 20, 1964, 1.
[602] "Future Coal," editorial, *Whitby Gazette* Apr 17, 1964.
[603] "MoT Decision."
[604] Henry Lightwing and Margaret Lightwing, 26 Feb, 1964.
[605] William Deakin and Beatrice Deakin, 20 Feb, 1964.
[606] Henry Atkinson and Ivy Atkinson, 28 Feb, 1964.
[607] Edith Schofield, 28 Feb, 1964.
[608] T Mordue, "Heartbeat Country: Conflicting Values, Coinciding Visions," *Environment and Planning A* 31, no. 4 (1999), 629.
[609] "Thousands of Visitors to Whitby District," headline, *Whitby Gazette* Jun 6, 1965, 1.

Villagers no longer were able to choose between the bus or train, but this did not impact on what they could access though, as has been demonstrated it effected the perception of the quality of that access.

Conclusion

For the villagers of Goathland the closure of the railway had only a marginal material impact. They had written in protest that the railway was essential to their well-being and the survival of the village. In fact, the railway was of limited utility for villagers in the 1960s, it was only used for a limited number of purposes, principally shopping and attending secondary school. The dire emotional warnings of the letter writers reflected in a nostalgic view of the railway as supporting a golden age of a diverse village, and a deep prejudice against the use of the alternative bus services. Both warnings were very far from the truth.

Establishing this truth is challenging even with a substantial body of archival evidence, particularly the letters of protest. This perhaps explains why there have been limited studies of the impact of a Beeching railway closure. The link between population and railway closure is too coarse and difficult to substantiate for Goathland. Measures of mobility are too narrow, failing to recognise that public transport was not an end in itself but used to do or access something. A micro-history approach of using the actual lives of individual villagers as expressed through their letters of protest, linked to bespoke accessibility measures has proven more effective. This indicates that actually people's lives were marginally enhanced after the closure of the railway. Villagers could have course been using cars. It is believed that in 1967 such use would have been limited given the emphatic statement "we have no car" in the letters. It is recognised that in the longer-term increased car availability would revolutionise the accessibility of Goathland. It had not had an impact by 1967 so is excluded from the scope of this dissertation. Much of their writing which reflected a fear of isolation after the closure, was proven to be unfounded. The author is unable to find significant post closure evidence of villager's attitudes towards public transport. The headlines in the *Whitby Gazette* that "Alternative services were largely fulfilling needs", suggest that the villagers had reconciled themselves to the bus service and that it did fulfil their needs.[610]

The introduction to the Accessibility section outlined the fears of four representative villagers. These villagers too were unaffected by the railway closure. Margaret Turnbull was "obliged to visit the oculist in York" and this was still possible.[611] Arnold Atkinson's children "will be severely handicapped in their schooling", the argument here being about the reliability of the service. Based on the previous history, this undoubtedly would be the case but by how much is impossible to estimate.[612] William McNeill "would be unable to continue in employment" and would still be able to travel to and from Pickering by bus at the beginning and end of the working day.[613] Others would be able to work in Whitby for the first time. Kathleen Headlam could undertake

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[610] "Inquiry into Transport Problems," 1.
[611] John Turnbull and Margaret Turnbull, undated, 1964.
[612] Arnold Atkinson and Edith Atkinson, 22 Feb, 1964.
[613] William McNeill and Mildred McNeill, 27 Feb, 1964.

her shopping in 1967 as she had in 1964.[614] The only fear that was realised was that of isolation during winter weather. The hilly roads of the area continued to be blocked with snow and ice, and even when passable presented challenging driving conditions. WRDC reports to the Ministry of Transport. "This last winter (1965/6) was not severe in the district, but whenever snow appeared bus transport was an inadequate substitute".[615] Winter weather data from the nearest weather station shown in Figure 14 confirms that the winter of 1962/3 was an outlier in severity. (Note the weather data is for Whitby taken at or near sea-level conditions would have been more severe in Goathland 500 feet above sea-level). The railway was no longer there as an insurance emotional or actual in the winter, but in all other circumstances the bus was a viable alternative.

Goathland had not passed after railway closure from "the golden age of train travel", to an isolation imposed by a spartan bus service.[616] Rather the villagers had as many, if not more travel opportunities as before, their dependence on public transport had been perceived rather than actual. As Hibbs writes "country people have never been as dependent on public transport in quite the same way as towns-people".[617]

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[614] Robert Headlam and Kathleen Headlam, 21 Feb, 1964.
[615] Whitby Rural District Council, *Problems Arising from the Closure of Whitby/Malton and Whitby/Scarborough Line*, 1.
[616] Steve Barry, *The Golden Age of Train Travel* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014).
[617] John Hibbs, *The History of British Bus Services* (Newton Abbott: David & Charles, 1989), 237.

5 "Alternative Services Largely Fulfilling Need"[618]

This dissertation has addressed the politics and social impact of a Beeching Report railway closure. The study is a micro-history, researching a closure as it affected the people of the Whitby area and the villagers of Goathland in particular. The dissertation concentrates on the motivation and orchestration of the campaign against railway closure and what people feared would be its consequences, comparing these with the actual social and economic impact. Local people, the villagers of Goathland, have been placed at the centre of a study into Beeching Report railway closures.

The dominant local media the *Whitby Gazette,* led the campaign against closure and in doing so was key to forming the opinion and perceptions of the local population. It was these perceptions, expressed by the villagers of Goathland in their letters of protest, that established the narrative for the campaign, a narrative of hardship that has dominated the subsequent discussion of Beeching closures. The *Whitby Gazette* although a "campaigning newspaper" ironically through its conservatism and roots in the local establishment contributed to the failure of that campaign. Through in-depth analysis of the opportunities that public transport provided in Goathland the dissertation has shown that the popular perception of a "golden age" of public transport in the early 1960s was misaligned with the reality. This misalignment was expressed through concerns that the railway closure would be the "death" of the community.[619] The reality was that people's mobility and accessibility by public transport was little effected by the closure of the railway. It was indicative that if they were isolated before they remained isolated afterwards.

The dissertation was facilitated by the use of multiple tools to support the micro-history approach through the analysis of planned opportunities derived from timetable information. The area of study was chosen because of the availability of a rich archive, notably the *Whitby Gazette* and letters of objection written by the villagers of Goathland. This archive contains a considerable volume of unstructured writing that has not been digitised. Structuring this archive into HGIS databases, to which tools of quantative and qualitative analysis could be applied, enabled the establishment of a cohesive narrative of the local closure. These gave insights into individual attitudes and circumstances not previously possible. They facilitated these at multiple levels; individuals, groups, villagers and their demographic amongst others. This shows that a micro-history approach can be a new, successful method to research a people-centric history of the Beeching Report.[620]

The research is indicative of a perception of the consequences of closure at variance with the reality. This comes from understanding the perceptions of local people towards their railway and why the fear of losing it contributed to the strength of their

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[618] "Alternative Services Largely Fulfilling Need."

[619] The Clerk to WRDC was quoted by the *Whitby Gazette* "We believe that is a matter of life and death for people" "Vital Transport Inquiry."

[620] The paucity of writing in this area is commented on by the following from the perspective of those interested in rural development, social attitudes, rural accessibility and in the context of the relationship between the countryside and the state
Whitelegg, "Rural Railways and Disinvestment in Rural Areas," 62. Hillman and Whalley, *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures*, 115. Moseley, *Rural Transport and Accessibility: Main Report*, 1, 41. Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," vii.

campaigning. The *Whitby Gazette* and the villagers had a firm grasp of the mechanics of the closure process, they realised that a demonstration of the hardship that would suffer after the railway closure was critical to their campaign. The orchestration of the campaign against closure was focussed on this hardship and the *Whitby Gazette* emphasised it; "That hardship would result from the closure is obvious".[621] The villagers of Goathland were encouraged to stress the hardship that would suffer in their letters ("state your case for hardship in simplest terms").[622] Key community leaders like Arthur Knott reinforced this by specifically collating the hardship experienced by the villagers. This continual emphasis on hardship drove the concerns about closure and naturally in turn made people fearful of the results of that closure. The villagers were continually asked to concentrate on the hardship that they would experience, so it was unsurprising that for many this became the focus of their concern. Hardship for them became self-fulfilling. The reality of that hardship was rarely questioned locally, the only contrarian being the Minister of Transport in his decision to close their railway.

For the villagers this was another example of a remote government failing to understand rural life. To them the railway was a nostalgic symbol of their village, of its permanence and as a means to combat their isolation, particularly during the harsh winter weather. Longworth finds in NSW that, by providing the railway, the state negated people's rurality, hence why many letters saw the closure of the railway as a breaking of the contact between government and rural community.[623] The villagers of Goathland felt they would be isolated physically, mentally, and politically, a message central to their campaign against closure. They considered that they would be more isolated and peripheral to the rest of the country; they would not have access to life or death medical services and their children's education would suffer. The bus would not be an alternative to the railway. The government had abandoned them as the *Whitby Gazette* editor wrote, "small communities are considered by the government as expendable".[624] Although increasing access to a car would revolutionise the mobility of the villagers this would substantially occur after 1965 so is outside of the remit of this dissertation. Before then the evidence is that only a minority of villagers had the benefit of access to a car.

The development of a bespoke accessibility model made it possible to relate this social and economic perception of closure to its actual impact. This is an extension of the use of such models. By combining the findings with qualitative models of language and HGIS databases, a spatial view of the social and economic impact is possible. The results showed that the mental perception of the closure was as important as the actual impact; an impact that was emotional rather than physical. Most villagers' lives would be unchanged by the closure of the railway, something reflected a *Whitby Gazette* headline in the summer after closure*, "*Alternative Services Largely Fulfilling Need".[625]

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[621] "Railway Closures," 1.
[622] Whitby Rural District Council, *Notes on Proposed Railway Closure*, 6.
[623] Longworth, "'Countrymindless' Rural Railway Closure," 20. Marjorie Bartram, letter to Secretary Transport Users Consultative Committee for the North Eastern Area, 21 Feb, 1964 (File ZRZ1, NYCC Archives, Northallerton).
[624] "Vital Transport Inquiry."
[625] "Alternative Services Largely Fulfilling Need."

The dissertation has advanced the understanding of the real consequences of Beeching Railway closures, through the study of the impact of a railway closure on individuals' lives. The impact of closures is studied beyond the physical changes on the landscape, but rather as the actual and perceived effect on people and communities. The voice of the people of Goathland was clear. For them the closure of their local railway was a catastrophe, but unfortunately for them the government thought otherwise. This dissertation argues that the government's view was closer to reality. By using a wealth of local data and innovative tools it has contributed to an understanding of the impact of the Beeching Report on rural communities.

Appendices

(All tables are the work of the author unless referenced).

Table 20. *Analysis of* Whitby Gazette *1962 to 1965 - Railway Content*

Date	Article	Editorial	Headline	Letter	None	Total
5/1/62	2					2
12/1/62	1					1
9/2/62	2					2
2/3/62	1					1
9/3/62	1					1
30/3/62	1	1				2
13/4/62				2		2
20/4/62		1				1
27/4/62	4					4
4/5/62	1					1
18/5/62	1					1
1/6/62		1				1
15/6/62	1					1
29/6/62		1				1
3/8/62	1					1
10/8/62		1				1
31/8/62				1		1
5/10/62	1					1
4/1/63	1					1
11/1/63					0	0
18/1/63	1					1
25/1/63	1	1				2
31/1/63					0	0
8/2/63	3					3
15/2/63					0	0
22/2/63					0	0
1/3/63	2					2
8/3/63					0	0
15/3/63	1			1		2
22/3/63					0	0
29/3/63		1	1	1		3
5/4/63		1	1			2
11/4/63				10		10
19/4/63	2			2		4
26/4/63	2			1		3
3/5/63	6	1				7
10/5/63	3					3
17/5/63	1			3	0	4
24/5/63			1	1		2
24/5/63						0
31/5/63	1					1
7/6/63	1					1
14/6/63	1					1
21/6/63	1	1	1			3
28/6/63	3	1	1	2		7
5/7/63					0	0
12/7/63	2	1				3
19/7/63	2					2
26/7/63					0	0
2/8/63	3	1				4
9/8/63					0	0
16/8/63					0	0
23/8/63		1				1
30/8/63				1		1
6/9/63				1		1
13/9/63				1		1
20/9/63	1					1
27/9/63	1			1		2
4/10/63	2					2
11/10/63					0	0
18/10/63					0	0
25/10/63		1				1
1/11/63	2					2
8/11/63	1					1
15/11/63					0	0
22/11/63	2					2
20/12/63	1					1
27/12/63	1	1				2
3/1/64					0	0
10/1/64				1		1
17/1/64	3	1	1	1		6
24/1/64	2					2
31/1/64	8	1	1	1		11
7/2/64	3	1	1	4		9
14/2/64	11	1	1	1		14
21/2/64	5		1	7		13
28/2/64	6	1		2		9
6/3/64	4	1		3		8
13/3/64			1	2		3
20/3/64	8	1		3		12
27/3/64	1	1		1		3
3/4/64	3	1		1		5
10/4/64	1	1	1	1		4
17/4/64	1	1				2
24/4/64		1	1	1		3
1/5/64	4	1				5
8/5/64					0	0
15/5/64					0	0
22/5/64	2	1		1		4
29/5/64	2	1				3
5/6/64	1					1
12/6/64				2		2
19/6/64	2	1	1			4
26/6/64				2		2
3/7/64	2	1		1		4
10/7/64			1			1
17/7/64	5	1	1	1		8
24/7/64				1		1
31/7/64	1		1			2
7/8/64	2	1				3
14/8/64	1					1
21/8/64		1	1	1		3
28/8/64	1					1
4/9/64				1		1
11/9/64					0	
18/9/64	1	1	1	7		10
25/9/64	3	1	1	10		15
2/10/64	3			3		6
9/10/64	4		1	2		7
16/10/64	1		1	2		4
23/10/64	3	1				4
30/10/64	2					2
6/11/64	1	1	1			3
13/11/64	1	1	1	1		4
20/11/64	1	1		2		4
27/11/64	1			1		2
4/12/64	2	1		1		4
11/12/64		1	1	4		6
18/12/64	3	1				4
24/12/64			1	1		2
31/12/64	1	1	1	1		4
8/1/65	2					2
8/1/65				1		1
15/1/65	1					1
22/1/65	2	1	1			4
29/1/65	3	1				4
29/1/65				2		2
5/2/65	1	1	1			3
12/2/65		1	1	2		4
19/2/65	1			1		2
26/2/65	2					2
5/3/65	1	1	1	1		4
12/3/65	1	1	1	2		5
19/3/65				1		1
26/3/65	3			1		4
2/4/65	1			1		2
23/4/65				1		1
30/4/65				1		1
7/5/65					0	0
14/5/65		1				1
21/5/65	1					1
28/5/65		1				1
4/6/65		1				1
11/6/65	1	1	1	1		4
18/6/65				1		1
25/6/65				1		1
2/7/65		1				1
18/7/65	1	1				2
23/7/65		1				1

Table 21. *Top Destinations stated in Letters of Objection*

Destination	Total	Preference First	Second	%
Whitby	126	123	3	56%
Pickering	39	1	38	17%
York	28	6	22	12%
Leeds	6	1	3	3%
Middlesbrough	5	4	1	2%
Other places	23	13	10	10%

Table 22. *All Destinations stated in Letters of Objection*

Destination	Total	Preference First	Second	%
Whitby	126	123	3	56%
Pickering	39	1	38	17%
York	28	6	22	12%
Leeds	6	1	3	3%
Middlesbrough	5	4	1	2%
Glaisdale	4	2	2	2%
Scarborough	3	3	0	1%
Ruswarp	2	2	0	1%
Barnsley	2	0	2	1%
Birmingham	2	0	2	1%
Surrey	2	0	2	1%
Fylinghall	1	1	0	
Grosmont	1	1	0	
London	1	1	0	
Malton	1	1	0	
Northallerton	1	1	0	
Sleights	1	1	0	
Newcastle	1	0	1	
Nottingham	1	0	1	
Nothing stated		26	99	
Total	227	174	176	

Table 23. *Public Transport Frequencies per week - 1964 v. 1967*

	Goathland			Robin Hoods Bay			Glaisdale		
	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff	1964	1967	Diff
Whitby	33	27	-7	41	37	-4	14	14	0
Pickering	22	19	-3						
Malton	22	19	-3						
York	22	18	-5	19	14	-5	12	12	0
Leeds	22	18	-5	19	14	-5			
S'boro	30	37	7	24	15	-9	14	14	0
M'boro	18	20	2	38	27	-11	15	15	0
Newcastle							9	9	0
Total	169	156	-12	139	106	-33	64	64	0

Table 24. *Goathland Residents Place of Work 1964*[626]

Place of Work	No	%
Goathland	49	60%
Whitby	10	12%
Pickering	3	4%
Egton Bridge	2	2%
Grosmont	2	2%
Middlesbrough	2	2%
Ruswarp	2	2%
York	2	2%
Eston	1	1%
Malton	1	1%
Newcastle	1	1%
Northallerton	1	1%
Roving	1	1%
Skelton	1	1%
Sleights	1	1%
Unknown	1	1%
York/Whitby	1	1%
Total	81	

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[626] Goathland Parish Council, "List of Residents Working Outside of Goathland." Goathland Residents, 1964.

Key to Accessibility Tables

1) Public transport frequency
2) Work Service – Bus to an urban centre arriving between 07:00 and 09:00 and departing between 17:00 and 18:45.
3) Shopping and personal business – Access six days a week to an urban centre allowing a four-hour stay.
4) Leisure and Evening service – The ability to return from a town after 22:00 on at least three days a week.
5) Leisure – Sunday Service. Any return journey allowing a two-hour stay.
6) Access to Scarborough Hospital allowing a visit.

Goathland Accessibility

Table 25. *Goathland Accessibility by Bus Winter 1963/4*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	12	0	20	0	0	0	32
Pickering	7	0	20	0	20	0	47
Malton	7	0	20	0	20	0	47
York	7	0	20	0	20	0	47
Leeds	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
Scarborough	15	0	20	0	0	20	55
Middlesbrough	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
Total	64	0	100	0	60	20	244

Table 26. *Goathland Accessibility by Train Winter 1963/4*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	21	0	20	0	0	0	41
Pickering	15	20	20	0	0	0	55
Malton	15	20	20	0	0	0	55
York	15	20	20	0	0	0	55
Leeds	15	0	20	0	0	0	35
Scarborough	15	0	20	0	0	20	55
Middlesbrough	9	20	20	0	0	0	49
Total	105	80	140	0	0	20	345

Table 27. *Goathland Accessibility by Bus & Train Combined Winter 1963/4*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	33	0	20	0	0	0	53
Pickering	22	20	20	0	20	0	82
Malton	22	20	20	0	20	0	82
York	22	20	20	0	20	0	82
Leeds	22	0	20	0	0	0	42
Scarborough	30	0	20	0	0	20	70
Middlesbrough	18	20	20	0	0	0	58
Total	169	80	140	0	60	20	469

Table 28. *Goathland Accessibility by Bus 1967*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	27	20	20	0	20	0	87
Pickering	19	20	20	0	20	0	79
Malton	19	20	20	0	20	0	79
York	18	20	20	0	20	0	78
Leeds	18	0	20	0	0	0	38
Scarborough	37	20	20	0	20	20	117
Middlesbrough	20	0	20	0	0	0	40
Total	156	100	140	0	100	20	516

Table 29. *Goathland Accessibility Comparison between 1967 and 1963 combined*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	-7	20	0	0	20	0	34
Pickering	-3	0	0	0	0	0	-3
Malton	-3	0	0	0	0	0	-3
York	-5	0	0	0	0	0	-5
Leeds	-5	0	0	0	0	0	-5
Scarborough	7	20	0	0	20	0	47
Middlesbrough	2	-20	0	0	0	0	-18
Total	-12	20	0	0	40	0	48

Robin Hoods Bay Accessibility

Table 30. *Robin Hoods Bay Accessibility by Bus Winter 1963/4*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	29	20	20	0	20	0	**89**
York	7	0	20	0	0	0	**27**
Leeds	7	0	0	0	0	0	**7**
Scarborough	12	0	20	0	0	20	**52**
Middlesbrough	27	0	20	0	20	0	**67**
Total	81	20	80	0	40	20	241

Table 31. *Robin Hoods Bay Accessibility by Train Winter 1963/4*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	12	0	20	0	0	0	**32**
York	12	0	20	0	0	0	**32**
Leeds	12	0	20	0	0	0	**32**
Scarborough	12	0	20	0	0	20	**52**
Middlesbrough	11	0	0	0	0	0	**11**
Total	**59**	**0**	**80**	**0**	**0**	**20**	**159**

Table 32. *Robin Hoods Bay Accessibility by Bus & Train Combined Winter 1963/4*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	41	20	20	0	20	0	**101**
York	19	0	20	0	0	0	**39**
Leeds	19	0	20	0	0	0	**39**
Scarborough	24	0	20	0	0	20	**64**
Middlesbrough	38	0	20	0	20	0	**78**
Total	**139**	**20**	**100**	**0**	**40**	**20**	**319**

Table 33. *Robin Hoods Bay Accessibility by Bus 1967*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	38	20	20	0	20	0	**98**
York	14	0	20	0	0	0	**34**
Leeds	14	0	20	0	0	0	**34**
Scarborough	15	0	20	0	0	20	**55**
Middlesbrough	27	0	20	0	20	0	**67**
Total	**106**	**20**	**100**	**0**	**40**	**20**	**286**

Table 34. *Robin Hoods Bay Accessibility Comparison between 1967 and 1963 combined*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	-4	0	0	0	0	0	**-4**
York	-5	0	0	0	0	0	**-5**
Leeds	-5	0	0	0	0	0	**-5**
Scarborough	-9	0	0	0	0	0	**-9**
Middlesbrough	-11	0	0	0	0	0	**-11**
Total	**-33**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	-33

Glaisdale Accessibility

Table 35. *Glaisdale Accessibility by Train Winter 1963/4*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	14	20	20	0	0	0	**54**
York	12	0	20	0	0	0	**32**
Newcastle	9	0	20	0	0	0	**29**
Scarborough	14	0	20	0	0	20	**54**
Middlesbrough	15	20	20	0	0	0	**55**
	64	40	100	0	0	20	**224**

Table 36. *Glaisdale Accessibility by Train 1967*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Whitby	14	20	20	0	0	0	**54**
York	12	0	20	0	0	0	**32**
Newcastle	9	0	20	0	0	0	**29**
Scarborough	14	0	20	0	0	20	**54**
Middlesbrough	15	20	20	0	0	0	**55**
	64	40	100	0	0	20	**224**

Abbreviations

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation
BR – British Railways
CBA – Cost Benefit Analysis
DMU - Diesel Multiple Units
GIS – Geographic Information Systems
GP – General Practitioner
GPC – Goathland Parish Council
HGIS – Historic Geographic Information Systems
IBM – International Business Machines
MoT – Ministry of Transport
MP – Member of Parliament
NCIT - National Council for Inland Transport
NRCC – North Riding County Council
NSW – New South Wales
NYCC - North Yorkshire County Council
QGIS – Quantum Geographic Information System
RDA – Railway Development Association
SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TUCC – Transport Users Consultative Committee
United - United Automobile Services
WRDC – Whitby Rural District Council
WUDC – Whitby Urban District Council

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