

Milldale OO Gauge

by Geoff

Milldale represents an industrial town on the Midland and North-Eastern lines north of Leeds. Operations take place in the heyday of steam, the 1930's, and therefore the trains are predominantly LMS (London Midland and Scottish Railway) and LNER (London and North Eastern Railway), but there are often visitors from other areas and time periods.

The layout comprises two "OO" gauge double track circuits. The Midland (low level) line has two stations on the main line and three branch lines. In the town of Milldale there is a small marshalling yard, a goods yard and coal depot, loco shed, carriage sidings, and four separate industrial sidings, so there is good potential for railway operations with quite a bit of shunting as well as plenty of express and suburban passenger trains. Branch lines lead to four country towns and a coal mine, while the industrial sidings serve several mills, a brewery and an oil depot.

As with most model railways, Milldale is under a continuous state of development (and will probably never be finished!). Work on the layout began in late 1996 and by mid 1998 most of the trackwork and some of the scenery was complete and operating sessions were started.

During 1999 the branch line to the coal mine was built. The branch line is nearly 8 metres long (a third of a scale mile) and most of it is on a grade that requires banking for long coal trains. It includes a country station and a quarry before reaching the coal mine.

In late 2000 I started on the high level circuit and this was quite an engineering challenge as the viaducts had to be built over an existing built up area (just like the prototype). This is based on the LNER Leeds to Harrogate line and imagines that this line runs closer to the Midland line than in reality. The high level tracks are all modular, to the Arun Valley railway standards (with some liberal interpretation!) and include two stations, a goods yard and loco shed. The branch line to the coal mine was extended to from a link between the LMS and LNER lines. Being compatible with the Arun Valley Railway these sections of the layout can be easily removed and transported for exhibition with other Arun Valley modules.

The four branch lines are still under scenic development. To add a southern dimension, one of them is based on the Westerham Valley Railway, in Kent, and this will be exhibitable as a stand alone model of the branch line and its three stations.

Timetable operating sessions are held on the first Tuesday of each month. Anyone who would like to join in, or just observe, is welcome to come along, and to bring a train to run.



View looking along Milldale, with the Brewery in the foreground, behind the Midland main line. Beyond the brewery is the goods yard and Midland Station, and the LNER line can be seen running at a higher level on the right. In the distance is the industrial area



In contrast to the more industrial and urban scenes this module represents one of the branch lines passing through rolling hills. This section can be easily removed and transported for exhibition with other Arun Valley Railway modules



Milldale loco shed, with the main lines and Milldale Midland station beyond, and the LNER line above

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Oakwoodhill Station, midway along the single line branch between the Midland and the North Eastern lines. The station serves a small village and the facilities provided are a passing loop, and a single siding for goods to be delivered to and from the surrounding area.

The station building is made from a “Prototype” kit that has been adapted to suit the curved station layout. This section can be easily removed and transported for exhibition with other Arun Valley Railway modules.

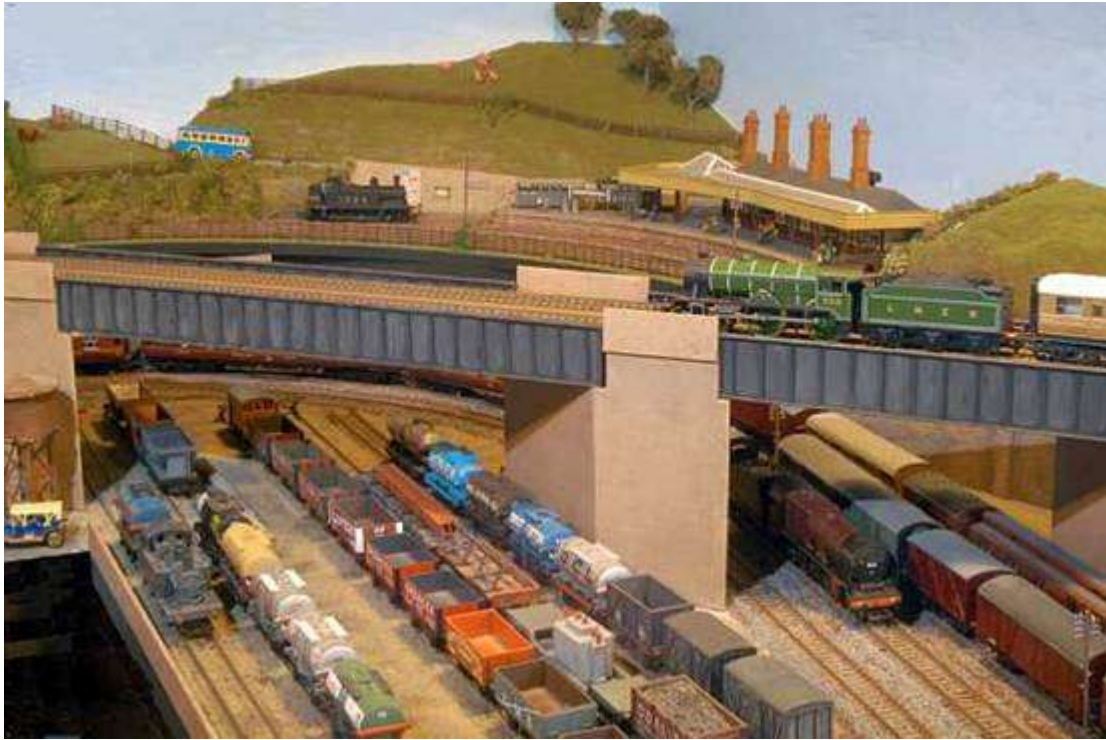


This scene depicts an area of warehouses typical of those found near railway junctions and used to receive, store and despatch a wide variety of goods

The two warehouses are based on actual buildings. The four-storey warehouse on the left is based on a grain warehouse. The projections of the front of the building are grain elevator shutes. The smaller warehouse in the centre of the module is based on a Railway Bonded Store.

The two warehouses have direct access from the railway siding in the front of them, and vehicle access from the other side. The other sidings are for wagons waiting to be loaded or unloaded, and for sorting of wagons bound for different designations.

These “half-relief” buildings are scratch built using card and commercially available brick papers. This section can be easily removed and transported for exhibition with other Arun Valley Railway modules.



The small marshalling yard at Milldale Midland is crossed by the LNER line on a viaduct, and beyond Oakwoodhill station on the branch line that connects the Midland and North-Eastern lines

