

Accrington Locomotive Shed 1899 – 1972

Shed Code C22 until 1935, 24A 1935 – 1961, then 10F until closure in 1972

The East Lancashire Railway built a 2-road locomotive shed in the triangle between the platforms at Accrington which opened with the railway. The first shed was closed by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway in 1873 and was immediately replaced with a 6-road shed on the Preston line west of Accrington station close to Grimshaw Street and Charter Street (see map). This closed in 1899 and was converted into a carriage shed in 1904 and was still standing in the 1960s. A third 8-Road shed was opened in 1899 close to the second shed. This was reduced to six roads around 1837 and closed to steam on 6th March 1961 when it became a DMU depot. The shed was completely closed on 1st October 1972 and demolished within two years.

In 1936 a new coaling and ash handling plant was built. The building was very large and could be seen from many parts of Accrington. The unit had two 75-ton bunkers and an electrically driven hoist. Coal could now be loaded onto the locomotives more efficiently without the need for hard grafting by many men. The ash was processed and disposed of here also.

Accrington gained the shed code, C22. In 1935 this was changed to 24A when there was a reshuffle and depots were being re-designated. Accrington became quite important and was virtually the head office for the region. Indeed, disciplinary hearings against staff were heard here. Also, training was carried out here. The sheds in Burnley, Bury and Blackburn all came under the jurisdiction of Accrington. The District Locomotive Supervisor resided at Accrington

There was a turntable provided to the rear of the locomotive shed. There were a number of accidents here when locomotives overshot the turntable and ended up in someone's backyard. One train overran the buffers in the siding of the depot and fell down between the two bridges on Lonsdale Street. The turntable was used to get the engines facing the right way but as stated earlier many engines were turned in Accrington Station.

The allocation of locomotives fluctuated over the years and Accrington could boast as many as fifty at its peak. However, all good things must come to an end and the shed was to see a decline. In 1961 the last steam locomotives were transferred to Rosegrove, Burnley. The only thing that remained was an allocation of Craven's diesel multiple units. Many of the drivers from Accrington transferred to Rosegrove as they were not keen to drive the very unpopular diesel units.

Very little remains now but the area where the shed and sidings were, can be seen from the Hyndburn Greenway on the right-hand side as you walk from Church & Oswaldtwistle towards Accrington.

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November 2024

