

Basic layout – basic scenery and backboard

The original layout was stripped back to the basic bones of just track and wiring as can be seen in the photograph below.



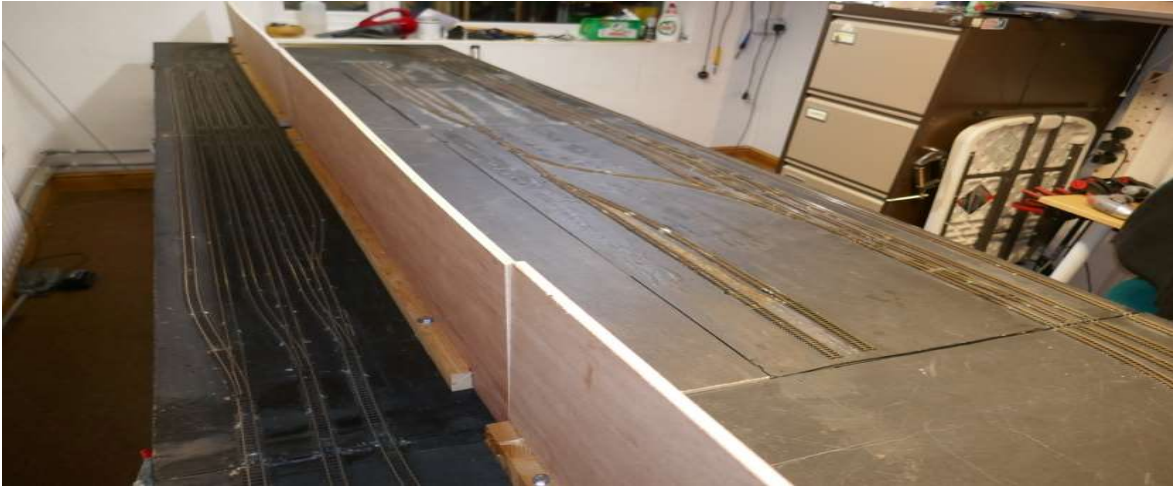
The gap in the middle has been filled with a “drop in” board on to which will be built the main street with both houses and shops.



The next photograph shows the drop in board in position.



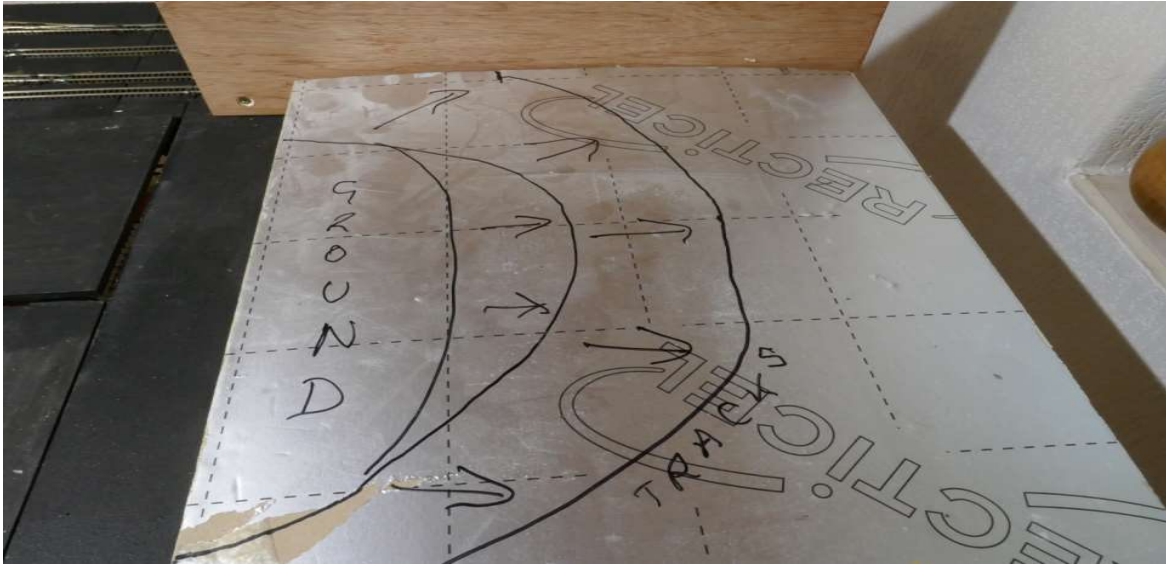
The background boards were the next to be installed, just leaving the rear tracks out of public view.



The Bolts were attached to Tee nuts in the baseboard and the space was maximised with a narrow support, screwed to the upright and bolted to the base with the use of four screwdriver extension shafts due to the proximity of the bolts to the uprights.



I then moved on to making the two ends from roofing insulation. Firstly marking it out with a felt pen, and then making the basic cut with a serrated kitchen knife, followed by shaping of the hillside into finer slopes.









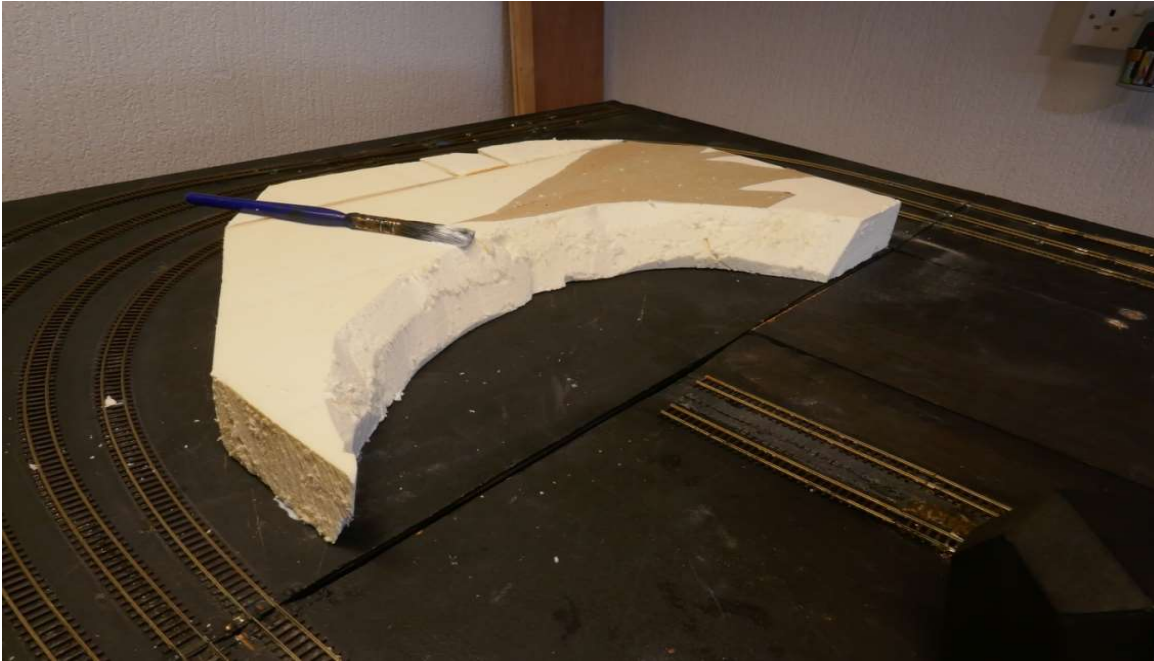
Next remove the tinfoil.



Leaving the basic shape



Using kitchen weights to hold it down, PVA is used to glue this to the baseboard.



Similar shaping was undertaken at the other end.



A second layer (which will be removable) is also put in place. Note that as this is creating a tunnel, the underside is supported by 6mm plywood and the top and the bottom boards are separated by greaseproof cooking paper which will maintain separation between the two layers when the papier mache layer is applied.

Next is the Papier Mache. Shredded newspaper soaked in wallpaper paste.



Following overnight soaking, much of the wallpaper paste is squeezed out by hand and the remainder is subjected to a considerable battering by a (MINE not LYN's) blender. The black colour is the ink from the newsprint. It is like a paste with no evidence of the individual shredded paper. If it is too dry I add back some of the paste and blitz it again until I get the right consistency. It spreads easily and smoothly into any shape, just like putty.





Note the greaseproof paper to keep the removable layer separate.



Likewise the other end of the layout is treated in a similar way but with the tunnel starting at the back rather than at the end.

This all has to dry and it took about 3 days in my conservatory, near to the radiator, before it was ready for the next stage.

Whilst drying I moved on to the next stage, turning the removable board into the main street.

The biggest problem during lockdown had been the supply of Metcalfe kits. Part of the stock came from a demolished layout, several were in my new stock, and several properties were purchased by scouring the UK for shops with stock. Some came from Whitby, some from Lincoln, and some from Cornwall.

Two local shops had odd ones but with them charging full price plus an extremely high postage and packing rate, they were left in the shops.

The biggest problem has been that Metcalfe has withdrawn ALL its brick houses, apart from a low level set and plan to replace them “during 2021”. All the shops have sold out, and I am not the only one who wants brick houses. It seems incredible that a company can make such changes during a pandemic without having the replacement ready to go! My high street has seen one or two dramatic replannings as a result.