

From: [REDACTED]
To: [TRANSPORTINFRASTRUCTURE](#)
Subject: Network Rail Stalybridge to Diggle TWA Order
Date: 19 November 2025 21:18:15

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm writing to register my objection to Network Rail's proposal (as part of their Stalybridge to Diggle TWA Order) to close Footpath 209 SADD rather than build a footbridge.

Although I'm not a Saddleworth resident, I have for 15 years been a member of a monthly walking group based there, so hold the footpaths of the area in great affection. My objections are on the grounds of safety, inconvenience, and unreasonableness.

1. Safety. It is demonstrably the case that FP244 (onto which Network Rail wishes to divert walkers from FP209) is a much less safe walking route than FP209, even after taking into account the modifications to FP 244 recently proposed by Network Rail. In particular, the route is steeper, and disgorges onto a main road (Oldham Road) at an unsafe location where the footway is narrow.
2. Inconvenience. The length of diversion involved would be likely to discourage many casual walkers from crossing over the railway at all.
3. Unreasonableness. The proposal by Network Rail to:
 - a. go against its own evidence from as recently as 2022
 - b. abandon its own 2022 conclusion that a footbridge was the correct solution, and the resulting grant of planning permission to build it
 - c. apply a solution to FP209 that is manifestly less favourable than that adopted for two much less used footpath crossings in neighbouring Tameside only eight years ago
 - d. substitute a rarely-used and dangerous route for what it admits is a heavily used one (based on its own 2024 census figures), and
 - e. increase the estimated costs of the footbridge nearly fourfold in three years with such transparent contrivance

– all point to blatant contravention of the Wednesbury principles (as derived from *Associated Provincial Picture Houses Ltd v Wednesbury Corporation* 1948). My own career-long experience as a senior public official leads me to the conclusion that a court would in all probability strike the Order down as 'Wednesbury unreasonable'.

Yours faithfully,

John Schultz, CBE, MRTPI (Retd)

