

Objection by the Open Spaces Society to closure of bridleway level crossing at Tackley Station, Oxfordshire

1. The Society includes in its membership walkers, horse-riders, and cyclists. Our objection is made in the interests of all three categories of user of the right of way concerned.
2. The alternative route offered by Network Rail is unacceptable. It runs on a line immediately adjacent to the railway and will therefore subject users to repeated noise and disturbance. The British Horse Society (BHS) has, we understand, already pointed out the risk this route poses for riders and horses, a concern which we fully endorse. We have examined the routes proposed by the BHS and would be willing—subject to further examination on the ground and the satisfactory outcome of the enquiries referred to in paragraph 4 below—to accept them
3. We note that the new Tackley Station footbridge is offered to walkers and cyclists as a permissive route. This is unsatisfactory since such permissions can at any time be withdrawn without notice and without an alternative being offered. Such a limited route cannot serve as a substitute for a right of way, and excludes horse-riders. Dedication of a right of way over the bridge is the proper course.
4. This society has not yet seen the details of rail traffic movements (frequency and speeds) on this section of the railway, and on which Network Rail presumably relies to justify the proposed closure. We are currently seeking this information and in the light of it may write again to the Secretary of State.

Chris Hall

Local Correspondent (Oxfordshire), the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society