

Closure of FP 209 Uppermill

I am writing to oppose the plans to permanently close the FP 209 rail crossing at Dark Lane in Uppermill. I am an Uppermill resident and regular user of the footpath until it was cordoned off.

This historic right of way has been a part of the walking routes round our village for centuries.

I understand that in 2022, Network Rail agreed to replace the track level crossing with a footbridge, so I am perplexed that within a couple of years the company has decided that this is no longer a viable alternative to the crossing.

The route leads from the main part of the village up to Ladcastle Road and the Moorgate Quarry which is a valuable amenity for the area.

I am a regular user of the footpath, both as a walker with groups in the area and with my family. It has been a treat to take my grandchildren up to the quarry in different seasons. They go pond dipping, climbing, eating picnics and viewing the peaceful scenery of the Tame Valley. The children learn to appreciate the glorious area that we live in. Learning about the local flora and fauna will foster an interest in our ecosystem and ensure they care for the environment as they grow.

The proposed alternative route is indistinct {several people have failed to find it} and is unsafe. Any wet weather {and we do get more than our fair share in the Pennines} renders the path slippery underfoot and leaf fall in the autumn exacerbates this problem.

The steps are uneven and treacherous at the top and further down into the clough the tree roots branches and rocks make for a very uneven surface.

Once a walker has negotiated the path through the clough and into the garden, it issues onto a busy road. The road at that point

has a 30 mph speed limit. The pavement is non existent here making a very unsafe exit for walkers to get into the village.

I note that the crossing has already been shut on a temporary basis before any upgrade has been made to the alternative FP244. This means that anyone trying to get to the upperpart of the area on the Wharmton Hill side must go via a different village of Dobcross or Greenfield. These route are not suitable for walkers as they are in most places single track with no pavement or suitable refuges for pedestrians.

I urge you to reconsider the proposal and follow the 2022 plans by erecting a footbridge at Dark Lane in Uppermill.

Sue Greenhalgh

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