

From: [REDACTED]
To: [TRANSPORTINFRASTRUCTURE](#)
Subject: Network Rail Stalybridge to Diggle TWA Order - Objection to Footpath 209 Closure (Moorgate)
Date: 14 December 2025 17:35:56

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

Objection from: Norma Alexander [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I wish to object to the closure of Footpath 209 (Moorgate crossing). I object on the following grounds:

Footpath 209 in Saddleworth is an ancient highway of high local historic significance. It forms part of a network of inter-regional routes, which dates from at least Saxon times, but most likely older. We should be protecting our ancient pathways for historic interest and generations to come.

In addition to being an ancient highway, the footpath cuts through a beautiful conservation area. The path leads up to Ladcastle quarry and Moorgate quarry, where there is a site of special biological interest. Both quarries are popular destinations for walking and picnicking, where visitors can stop and take in the views across Saddleworth. Without the footpath, it will become difficult to access these areas and they may be lost to visitors.

The current footpath (209) is wide and good underfoot. It is popular with both locals and visitors to the vibrant village of Uppermill (the footpath was shown to have a very high pedestrian usage in a survey conducted by Network Rail). I use this path regularly, both as a lone walker and with friends. The footpath is well used by walkers, runners and cyclists. When exiting down the footpath it gives safe and immediate access to all the facilities in the village of Uppermill. The businesses in Uppermill contribute in a very positive way to the economy of the Oldham area.

Originally, a footbridge over the railway at the top of Dark Lane was favoured by Network Rail, which would keep Footpath 209 open and in use. NR sought planning permission to install a footbridge and it was approved by Oldham Council in 2022. Everyone thought the idea of the Footbridge was an acceptable compromise but it was abandoned by NR in 2024. The reason for this was due to cost (an increase from the original £1.2 million to a giant hike of £4.5 million). The current costing of the bridge is unsubstantiated by Network Rail but it is way in excess of the costs of other bridges currently being built. This should be looked at again.

The alternative Footpath 244, which is being suggested by Network Rail is not fit for purpose. It is very rarely used as it is steep and extremely slippery when wet (which is very often). It's unstable under foot, with steep steps, and it comes out directly on to the A670, the extremely busy main road from Greenfield to Uppermill. There is no pavement in one direction and only a narrow pavement in the other direction, where the exit from the footpath meets the main road. I have lived around the Saddleworth area for 35 years and can attest to the fact that this path is rarely used because it is considered by those who know it, to be unsafe.

Even spending money on the path to try and improve it will only work to a small degree, as the landscape is steep and this cannot be easily altered.

There was no discussion between Network Rail and the public about using Footpath 244 as an alternative route. It would be dangerous for people using it, especially the young and elderly in the Community. In addition, it is much less convenient to access the village amenities, such as shops, library, sports facilities, bus stops, car parks, doctors, etc. It is not a safe or realistic alternative route.

I suggest that in the absence of a viable, safe, alternative, pedestrian route over the railway, a foot bridge would be the ideal and only remedy. This would ensure line safety and would provide the much-needed direct, access route to and from Ladcastle Road into Uppermill. In addition, it would preserve our ancient highway and continue to provide important access to an area of outstanding beauty, conservation and special biological interest, for current and future generations.