

THE NETWORK RAIL STALYBRIDGE AND DIGGLE (SADDLEWORTH)

TRANSPORT WORKS ORDER ACT (REF DPI/G4240/25/18)

Traffic Management and Highway Issues relating to the
TransPennine Rail Upgrade Construction

Proof of Evidence

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1.0 Qualifications and Experience

1.1 I, Daniel Keith Meadowcroft, currently work as Highways Lead and Monitoring Officer at Oldham Council having held this role since 2021, and being employed by Oldham Council (and / or one of its partner organisations) continuously in a highways role since 2016. for I have 19 years' experience working in various roles in highways, 11 years of which have been in a managerial / senior role. I have a Higher National Certificate and Bachelor of Engineering degree in Civil Engineering.

1.2 I submit this Proof of Evidence on behalf of Oldham Council. I confirm that the evidence I have provided for this inquiry in this proof of evidence is true and that the opinions I have expressed are my true and professional opinions.

2.0 Background and Context

2.1 As part of the Transport Works Act Order (TWAO) Network Rail (NR) have proposed to carry out significant works across Oldham which will have a significant impact affect the layout and operation of the highway for the duration of the works, and in the future where permanent modifications to the highway are proposed.

3.0 Station Road Overbridge

- 3.1 NR is proposing to reconstruct the Station Road Overbridge. Station Road although a minor road in nature, it is a key link to the residents that live on the west side of the bridge. The works also require parts of Harrop Court Road to be closed to vehicular traffic whilst the works are underway.
- 3.2 NR proposes to maintain access for residents and businesses on Harrop Court Road by creating a new temporary access road and proposes to divert traffic down the new temporary road and Boat Lane.
- 3.3 The proposals also include a temporary walkway/cycleway for the use of non-motorised users, except in localised areas where it is not possible to provide one due to constraints.
- 3.4 The proposals also include improvement works to the sections of Boat Lane and Harrop Court Road that will form part of the diversion route, which will include improvements to drainage, signage, road surface and the provision of passing places.
- 3.5 NR has advised that the details of the temporary diversion will be included in the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), which will require approval by Oldham Council.
- 3.6 The temporary link between Boat Lane and Harrop Court Road will be over a privately owned field.
- 3.7 NR has also advised that they will set up a Traffic Management Working Group.
- 3.8 Oldham Council maintains its objection, due to the lack of detail to date, and due to concerns regarding the Council's ability to negotiate a solution which is satisfactory to the Council should the TWAO be granted prior to the CTMP having been received and approved by the Council, and/or the Working Group not being able to agree a solution.
- 3.9 Oldham Council is also concerned that the condition of the proposed diversion route is in poor condition and that vehicular traffic would be diverted onto a bridleway. NR has advised that they intend to carry out localised repairs, however due to the poor condition of the existing surface the Council considers that more extensive repairs are likely to be required.

4.0 Greenfield Station

- 4.1 NR is proposing significant modifications to the highway outside Greenfield Station. These include a reconstruction of the bridge, a new pedestrian footbridge and a proposed pedestrian crossing point.
- 4.2 At present Oldham Council has not seen a detailed design and has been advised that the detailed design stage would not take place until 2027.
- 4.3 Oldham Council agrees that a pedestrian crossing point is preferable, however there are concerns that its proximity to the bus stop would cause visibility issues.
- 4.4 The new station proposes an access on A670 Oldham Road. This is a busy route into Uppermill and has double white lines in the centre of the carriageway due to restricted visibility. Oldham Council is concerned that vehicles would park on A670 Oldham Road to drop passengers off which would cause a highway safety issue.

5.0 Impact of Construction on Events

5.1 The Saddleworth Area holds many events, particularly through the summer months which can be well attended. Some of the events hold national significance, such as the Whit Friday Band Contest which attracts contestants and spectators from all over the country.

5.2 Competitions are held across many of the villages in Saddleworth and the bands move from village to village throughout the day to participate in the various contests, including villages where there will be significant works are proposed, such as Diggle and Greenfield.

5.3 Other prominent events across multiple villages include:

- Saddleworth Rushcart Festival, usually held late August, and again involves travel between various villages, including Greenfield and Uppermill.
- Saddleworth art trail, usually held early May Bank Holiday Weekend, including Greenfield, Uppermill and Diggle
- Saddleworth Santa Dash covering Greenfield and Uppermill, although the route can vary

5.4 Many of the events are carried out on the highway itself in the village centres and therefore require the roads to be closed to traffic, and as they are carried out across various villages require travel between those villages

5.5 Events that are held on the roads events require those roads to be closed to vehicular traffic. Oldham Council's concerns are that NR's works and diversions could impact on the events themselves, the public's ability to travel between events, or the ability of other highways users (i.e. people who are not attending the events) circumnavigating the events to travel around Saddleworth.

5.6 Oldham Council is confident that NR will work to reduce the impact on events, however to date Oldham Council has not received detail of diversion route to address Oldham Council's concerns regarding the impact on the events

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 Oldham Council welcomes NR's offers to set up Working Groups, to provide plans and detailed designs and Oldham Council officers will work productively with NR to agree solutions that address Oldham Council's concerns as far as can be reasonably practicable.

6.2 The Working Groups etc. in and of themselves however are not sufficient for Oldham Council to withdraw its objections, it is the outputs of the Working Group which are required. Oldham Council's position is that the Working Groups etc are the vehicle through which outputs can be achieved which Oldham Council hopes would address its concerns.

6.3 Oldham Council has concerns that the TWAO being granted prior to the outcomes that Oldham Council desires having been achieved would weaken Oldham Council's position in those future discussions, and thus negatively impact Council's ability to achieve its desired outcomes once the TWAO having been granted.