

Formal Statutory Objection

Secretary of State for Transport
C/o: Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit, Department for Transport
transportinfrastructure@dft.gov.uk

19 December 2025

Christopher Jones



Reluctant Statutory Objection: Network Rail (Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements)
Order – Plot 12-029

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing to you today as a concerned property owner in Greenfield, Oldham regarding the proposed TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU).

Firstly, I would like to stress that I am not someone who wishes to stand in the way of progress. I recognize the immense value this project brings to our region and the benefits of improved rail connectivity. However, as the owner of Plot 12-029, I find myself in a position where I feel somewhat out of my depth and, quite honestly, a little worried about what the future holds for my properties.

I have been advised that to protect my simple right to have my concerns heard, I must submit this formal objection by the 19th of December 2025. I do so with a heavy heart and a sincere hope that I can withdraw it very soon once I have a bit more clarity.

My concerns are as follows:

1. Lack of Practical Detail

I have been told the work involves "fencing works," but as a layman, I don't know what that actually looks like in practice. Will there be heavy machinery on my land (access, parking area and garage) for days, weeks, months or years? Will my tenant (8 West Cottages) and my sublessees (2-10 West Cottages) still be able to get to their buildings safely? Because the draft Order doesn't specify these details (working hours, duration, or access plans), I feel I have no choice but to object until these practicalities are ironed out.

Network Rail's agents, particularly Mr. Collins-Jones, have been very communicative, but the promised full details and discussions on mitigation haven't quite happened yet. (I understand the agent is waiting for further information from his client). Again, with the deadline for representations

looming, I felt I had to write because I didn't want my silence to be taken as me being "fine" with everything, when in reality, I just don't yet have enough information to be comfortable.

2. Protecting the Building's Condition

The notice mentions "protective works to buildings." This sounds quite serious to the uninitiated. Does this refer to my home, or garage? I have concerns about the immediate impact on my properties during such large-scale works. Also, the longer-term potential impacts, such as noise and vibration, that I assume will be unavoidable with increased rail capacity (more frequent?), faster, heavier trains and overhead line equipment? (Which I have read are known to "buzz" particularly in inclement weather – the default for my valley!)

My research suggests I would be sensible to request that the Order requires a Schedule of Condition report to be done before work starts, just so we both have a record of how things are now. Perhaps this is standard practice and I'm pushing against an open door? I simply don't know at this point.

3. Maintaining the Beauty of our Area

Living in Greenfield, we are very fortunate to have unobstructed views of the countryside. Since the project involves "Overhead Line Equipment" (OLE) and new fencing, my AI companion informs me I should have concerns about "**Injurious Affection**". In my words, I'm worried that an "ugly" or unsympathetic industrial fence might be erected, or that the new overhead lines will spoil the character of the area and outlook from my home. I would like to encourage that whatever is built, is sympathetic to the surrounding area, and that we get a say in how it looks. Again, my robot researcher informs me "you should **demand** "Aesthetic Consultation" rights be written into the Order to ensure the fencing is sympathetic to the local Greenfield/Saddleworth character". I suggest I might **request** that.

4. My Responsibilities to Others

I am not just a homeowner; I am also responsible to a very litigious freeholder, and to the sub-lessees who use my land through complex tenures and easements. I have concerns that I might end up in a dispute with them if their access is blocked or their "quiet enjoyment" is disturbed. I would like to be reassured that if the project causes me to break my obligations to my tenants, I won't be left to face any legal consequences alone.

Conclusion

I am a supporter of the TRU, not an opponent. I would be more than happy to withdraw this objection the moment I have a simple, plain-English agreement that addresses how my property will be protected, how my tenants will maintain access, and how the character of our area will be preserved.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Christopher Jones

P.S. I have recently asked a specialist firm, Roger Hannah, to help me understand the "surveyor-speak" of this process, as it is all very new to me. My very newly appointed professional advisor (4pm yesterday) has not had the opportunity to advise or contribute to the content above, I mention this because if my representations are naïve, perhaps silly, this is no reflection on Mr. Quilliam. My words are my own, with a little AI assisted research. He did, however, suggest it would be prudent to include the text below.

I confirm that I have appointed James Quilliam AssocRICS of Roger Hannah to act as my professional adviser and representative in relation to this case and any subsequent negotiations or matters arising from the proposed temporary use of land affecting my property.

All future correspondence in relation to this matter may be copied to James Quilliam as my appointed representative.

I note that my appointed representative previously worked at Bruton Knowles (Network Rail's agent) and, during that time, undertook work on a Network Rail project. They no longer work for Bruton Knowles, have no ongoing involvement with Network Rail, and were not involved with the TransPennine Route Upgrade or the Rule 15 Notice affecting my property. In accordance with the RICS Global Professional and Ethical Standards, this represents a manageable potential conflict only. My representative has disclosed this matter to me, and I have provided my written informed consent for them to act on my behalf, and no further action is required unless Network Rail and/or their agents consider otherwise.