

Oldfields Farm
Grindon
ST13 7TT

26th September 2021

Dear Ms Tichener

Your ref 008996

Application to upgrade PF34 Grindon to a restricted byway

In reply to your letter of 31st August, I and others would like to express our strongest possible objection to this proposal, on the grounds that any upgrading to allow horse drawn carriages through would require the widening of lengths of the path which would be damaging both environmentally and ecologically.

In this letter I am attempting to show the character of FP34, starting at the Waterfall end, to explain its unsuitability for upgrading. I have also enclosed pictures of the lane FP34 1 – 14 to illustrate my points.

The application uses evidence from a previous proposal submitted in 2014, which was refused. We are anxious that, if this present application was passed, the path would have to be widened to allow horse drawn carriages through. As well as the damaging effect of this, upholding the application might form a precedent and lead the way to further upgrading and the use by motorbikes and 4x4s.

The path lies within the Peak Park and is used by locals for exercise and recreation, and also by tourists, as it is part of a very pleasant circular walk with views over the Manifold Valley and as part of the footpath network leading to Grindon and Thor's Cave. It is also frequently used by school children as part of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and it would be dangerous for them if they met horses on the route. There is a picnic bench situated near the Waterfall end of Slade Lane for the use of walkers (FP34_14).

The beginning of FP34 or Slade Lane, at its lowest end in Waterfall, is broad to start with. It is accessible by tractor and is used to move stock through a field gate further up on the right hand side of the path. (FP34_1)

The path here is surfaced in concrete which is very slippery when wet and treacherous in frosty conditions (FP34_2). In fact several walkers have broken bones on this stretch. For this reason it is rarely used by horses. The bridleway, according to the modern OS map also does not extend the complete length of FP34 thus making it a one way trip for horses. If horses and riders were allowed to use the whole length of the route it might mean that their more frequent usage would totally degrade the surface of the path, making it difficult for walkers.

After the field gate on the right of the path the concrete surface goes and the lane becomes very narrow, steeply banked and not wide enough for two people abreast (FP34_3, FP34_4, FP34_5). There is a large badger sett on one side and lots of evidence of animal movement up and down the banks (I have trailcam videos of the badgers). We have also seen foxes and owls here. In spring there are large clumps of primroses, the only place locally where they can be seen in large numbers. The trees lining this part of the path are a rich habitat for birds. The floor is also littered with stones fallen from the old walls and tree branches. This part would be heavily disturbed if a way was forced through for carriages (FP34_6, FP34_7).

The path then goes through a narrow, rather decrepit gate (FP34_8). It then runs up the side of the right hand field fence with trees bounding the path on the field side (FP34_9). It rises up a steep bank and comes on to the field where the path route becomes uncertain (FP_10). Then it passes a tumulus (Grubb Low) (FP_11), and up to a gate leading to field ref no O465, the beginning of Oldfields Farm. According to the modern OS map, at this point the designation of FP34 changes from bridleway to footpath, and then runs across open grazing land. These fields are under Highleave/environmental protection and it would be a serious breach of these rules should they be damaged in any way (FP12). Finally it passes through Oldfield farmyard where it meets the public road (FP13).

We are anxious that FP34 remains a public footpath, as it has been within living memory. It provides a rich habitat for wildlife, and over much of its length it is not wide enough to allow walkers to go two abreast. If the map "*is capable of revision in all kinds in order to ascertain the true state of affairs on the ground*" (Lord Purchas, point 42 of your comments) we believe that upgrading FP34 would be detrimental to the nature of the path and its environment.

Yours sincerely

Alan Simpson, Oldfields Farm

Sue and Alan McGilveray, Brookhouse Farm, Back o th Brook, Waterfall

Jacqueline Langford-Mycock, Back o the Brook Farm, Back o th Brook, Waterfall

Ian and Julie King, Brooklyn, Back o th Brook, Waterfall















