

## ADDENDUM – LJ665G

### 1) Comments Received From Keele Parish Council – No Comment

07/09/20

Upgrading of Footpath 67 and 68 Madeley and Footpath 15 Keele to bridleway consultation. The Parish Council had no evidence or comments to make on this application.

Clare Withington

Parish Clerk

Keele Parish Council

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### 2) Comments Received From Madeley Parish Council – Supported In Past -No Further Comment

13/09/20

Dear Mr Adkins,

thank you for giving Madeley Parish Council the opportunity to comment on the above application.

The Parish Council notes that the application is 20 years old and that the Parish Council at the time supported the application.

The Parish Council is unable to supply any further evidence to the panel that would either support or negate such an application.

Therefore, it has no further constructive comments to make.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Simpson

Madeley Parish Clerk,

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**3) Comments Received From Whitmore Parish Council – No Objection**

13/08/20

Dear David

Regarding PROW Consultation: 3966873 - Appendix B - Application Plan 1

Whitmore Parish Council has no objection in relation to the section lying within the boundary of Whitmore Parish, re PROW Consultation 3966873 Appendix B - Application Plan 1

**Mrs Debra Powell**

**Parish Clerk and RFO**

**Whitmore Parish Council**

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**4) Comments Received From Landowner (WR & FM Ford) – Objections Relating to Health and Safety Concerns, Utilisation of Land, Compensation**

07/09/20

Ref: LJ665G

Dear Mr Adkins

Further to your letter dated 17 July 2020, please find attached document detailing our objections to the above upgrade for which we would be grateful of your consideration

If you have any queries or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us

Please confirm that you have received this email

Kind Regards

Ann Ford

For & On Behalf of

WR & FM Ford

Stoney Low Farm

Attention David Adkins Ref: LJ665G – Upgrading Footpath 67 & 68 Madeley and Footpath 15 Keele to Bridleway Further to your letter dated 17 July 2020 we are writing to submit our objections to the application to upgrade the above footpath. We are the landowners of part of Footpath 67 & all of Footpath 68 and have to access our land and properties via Footpath 15. We are an active dairy farm and therefore we have to utilise the land we own as part of Footpath 67 for grazing our cattle. These are mainly dairy cows but may include youngstock and a stock bull. Currently there are 3 styles on Footpath 67 and we are concerned that these would need to be replaced with gates which could easily be left open or blow open if left unlocked. Our cattle could then escape and subsequently gain access to residential properties, neighbouring fields, the Stoney Low access lane, the busy Three Mile Lane or even the M6 Motorway via Keele Services where they could endanger not only themselves but oncoming traffic. Cattle can easily be spooked by horses or cyclists entering their fields which may become a welfare issue for the cattle and/or a health and safety hazard for the public. All cattle and especially freshly calved cows can become unpredictable and aggressive if challenged by unsuspecting members of the public. We are unhappy about accepting the responsibility of injuries caused as a result of our cattle stampeding following interference by horses or cyclists. During periods of prolonged rainfall our heavy clay land becomes wet and waterlogged. We are concerned about the damage to the soil structure and loss of crops which may be caused by horses and cyclists accessing our fields in unsuitable weather conditions. We would also be worried that horses and cyclists may not stick to the specified pathway of the bridlepath and may therefore cause additional crop and soil damage. Are we entitled to any compensation from Staffordshire County Council if this occurs? The access lane from Three Mile Lane up to Stoney Low is a single track pathway with limited access for passing oncoming vehicles especially at the end leading onto Three Mile Lane. There is a sharp blind bend and other stretches where it is difficult to see oncoming traffic. The volume of traffic using this access lane has increased considerably during the last 20 years as there are now 6 dwellings and 2 business's using it, including our dairy farm. We are concerned that horses and cyclists will add to the existing difficulties experienced when meeting oncoming traffic along the lane. As a working dairy farm it is necessary for us to carry out numerous daily tasks with tractors and machinery which invariably involves us using them on the access lane. This is exacerbated during harvest times when there can be several large tractors and trailers repeatedly turning onto the lane. Once again it will become very hazardous if there is the additional likelihood of horses and cyclists also using the lane. We would be grateful if you would consider our objections to your proposed footpath upgrade and keep us informed of your subsequent decisions. Kind Regards FM Ford, RW Ford & AM Ford For & Behalf of WR & FM Ford

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**5) Comments Received From Landowner – (S Rushton) – Objections Relating to Heath and Safety Issues, Traffic Concerns**

30/07/20

Dear Mr Adkins

Please find attached our objection to the proposed upgrade.

If you could please keep me informed of any decision it would be much appreciated.

Kind regards

Sarah Rushton

David Adkins  
Director of Corporate Services  
Staffordshire County Council

18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Mr Adkins

**Ref: LJ665G – Upgrading Footpath 67 & 68 Madeley and Footpath 15 Keele to Bridleway**

I am writing regarding the above application and despite not being contacted by you directly I would like to formally submit the comments below to support your report. We are not named on the original application as we only moved to Barn View, Stoney Low, Three Mile Lane, Keele, ST5 5HQ in 2016 but as we now own land that is crossed by the route we feel that our objection to the upgrade must be considered.

Mr Reay's claim was based on Historical Evidence and having reviewed the report it is clear that the evidence that has been submitted by Mr Reay up to this point is not "significant enough to determine that a route existed" and fully support your recommendation not to accept the application but are concerned that the panel may consider the other option outlined in point 52 based on the apparent support on the original application.

I would like it noted that the lack of evidence submitted by the landowners on the original application was down to the fact the Mr Reay failed to contact the main landowner Mr Ford who was against the application for upgrade and subsequently submitted a form stating that in his opinion this right of way suitable for a public footpath only.

My objections regarding the possible upgrade as outlined in point 52 is that since the original application there have been numerous changes to the section of path from Three Mile Lane to Stoney Low that would have implications for the residents and users of the path if upgraded.

On a personal level, the current footpath is less than 6 metres away from the front of our property and runs alongside the area restricted on our plans for parking and

could potentially pose a risk of damage to our property, the path also runs through our main garden area where our children aged 4 and 6 currently play and the introduction of the bridleway could pose a safety risk for them and access to the garden would need to be restricted so that they could be supervised.

A shared concern for all residents at Stoney Low is the access along the drive, 20 years ago the traffic along this single track road was limited but this has increased significantly over this time with 6 properties and 2 businesses along the track meaning significant amounts of traffic. There are several passing places on the upper end of the drive but the lower end is far more precarious with a blind bend and approx. 200m with no allowance for passing and should a horse come it would mean a vehicle having to reverse blindly onto Three Mile Lane which is extremely hazardous due to the speed and limited visibility of the junction which could result in a serious or life threatening accident. This would also be hazardous for riders should current speed restrictions remain in place.

Should further evidence be submitted by Mr Reay to support the existence of a bridleway as outlined in the Deposited Railway plan of 1858 then I would ask that you consider that this only relates to a limited section of this path and should not be extended to the whole path, including our path without conclusive evidence being submitted.

I would ask that you consider this objection along with the other landowner objections and reject the application based on lack of historical evidence. As an interested party I would really appreciate correspondence following the panel to advise of your final decision.

Kind regards

Sarah Rushton

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**6) Comments Received From Landowner – (T Emery) – Objections Relating to Health and Safety and Modern Development Along the Route**

07/10/20

Hello David,

I hope you are well.

Following on from our phone call regarding the Upgrading Footpath 67 & 68 Madeley and Footpath 15 Keele to Bridleway: Ref LJ665G: I have now attached my objection.

I also know that my neighbour living in Barn View and the owner of Stoney Low Farm will also be contacting you regarding their concerns over this matter.

Thank you for taking the time to discuss this matter with me and I look forward to your response.

Your Sincerely

Tanya Rowley

To David Adkins Ref: LJ665G – Upgrading Footpath 67 & 68 Madeley and Footpath 15 Keele to Bridleway I am writing regarding the above application and despite not being contacted by you directly, I would like to formally submit the comments below to support your report. We are not named on the original application as we moved to Oakridge Barn, Stoney Low, Three Mile Lane, Keele, ST5 5HQ in 2010 but as we now own land that is crossed by the route we feel that our objection to the upgrade must be considered. I have spoken to David Adkins regarding this objection. For your reference I have managed to gain a copy of the application sent to Mr Ford. I have highlighted on the diagram below where my property and Barn View (next door) are situated. Using the Ordnance Survey map in the application titled L5665G Sheet SJ 74 SE The area not marked in red is where Oakridge Barn and Barn View are situated. The area inside the green oval is where the bridle/cycle route will pass through our garden, parking area and drive. Since the original application there have been numerous changes to the section of path from Three Mile Lane to Stoney Low that would have implications for the residents and users of the path if upgraded. My objections regarding the possible upgrade are outlined below:

1. Since the original application the area around Stoney Low has changed considerably. There are now 6 dwellings and two businesses that use the single one-mile lane (Stoney Low Lane) which will form part of the bridleway/cycle upgrade. The impact this has had on the traffic using the lane is considerably higher than it once was when the original application was submitted. This upgrade would only put more strain on this single lane. The Lane has four blind bends and approx. 200m with no allowance for passing and should a horse come it would mean a vehicle having to reverse blindly onto Three Mile Lane which is extremely hazardous due to the speed and limited visibility of the junction which could result in a serious or life threatening accident. Also, there is a 60 mph speed limit on this lane, hence the erection of several speed bumps leading to the residential dwellings; to prevent an accident. (Photos for evidence on Appendix A.
2. The bridle/cycle route will run through the front of my garden. I have three children (age 8, 12 and 17) and a dog that use our garden freely and my main worry is the health and safety of my family when using the garden. When the application was originally submitted this dwelling was not a residential dwelling. Now the pathway will run through my garden very near the front of my house. It will also run through my parking area where we will be turning and parking our cars. Upgrading this route could potentially damage my garden, home, cars and possibly endanger my children. This is a considerable concern to my family and my neighbour (Barn View) who has also put in an objection. We have no choice but to constantly cross over the bridleway to access our house, cars and garden. (See Appendix B)
3. This pathway is currently a public footpath and upgrading this would require gates leading from the Mr Fords fields into our garden. Currently, there are styles. If the gates were left unlocked cattle could access my garden, this would include heifers which are very unpredictable young cows, cows who can be aggressive

when present with a calf and bulls that are frequently put into these fields. The winds we have here could easily blow open the gates if they are not properly locked after each use. The chances of this are high considering the public would be required to get on and off a horse or bike to lock the gate. (See Appendix B) 4. There is a considerable lack of evidence in the application to state that this was once a bridleway. Mr Reay's claim was based on Historical Evidence and having reviewed the report it is clear that the evidence that has been submitted by Mr Reay up to this point is not "significant enough to determine that a route ever existed". I would ask that you consider my objection along with the other landowner objections and reject the application based on lack of historical evidence and in light of the new evidence which highlights the unsuitability of this upgrade. As an interested party I would really appreciate correspondence following the panel to advise of your final decision. Yours Sincerely, Mrs Tanya Rowley.

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**7) Comments Received From Applicant – Disagrees With Officer Recommendation Due to Below Points.**

01/08/20

Dear Mr Adkins

**Reference: Draft Report Produced For Definitive Map Modification Application LJ 665G**

Thank you for your letter of 17<sup>th</sup> July and attached draft report for bridleway claim LJ665G. I totally disagree with the conclusions and recommendations contained within the draft report - that an order should not be made to modify the application route from footpaths to bridleways on the definitive map of rights of way. Your draft report misinterprets what the evidence for the claim concludes. It also contains a number of misleading statements, some of which include misinformation or missing information that is very likely to confuse readers and leave them poorly informed to make a decision for the application. My following response to the draft report is by reference to the numbered sections contained within it:

**1) Section 1**

The report refers to the application route comprising: "**Public Footpaths 67 & 68 in Madeley and Footpath 15 in Keele**". There is no Footpath 15 in Keele recorded on the definitive map of rights of way. The route being referred to was recorded as **Keele 15 Road Used as a Public Path** but has been modified and renumbered, by Staffordshire County Council, and is now shown on the definitive map as Whitmore Footpath 24.

**2) Section 21**

Section 21 the draft report refers to the application being for: “**one continuous route to Whitmore Road in the east**”. This is misleading as the eastern end of the application route adjoins Three Mile Lane and **not** Whitmore Road. Three Mile Lane is the name that Staffordshire County Council has assigned to the road concerned, as displayed on the National Street Gazetteer and its statutory section 36(6) Highways Act list of roads and streets maintainable at public expense. This misnaming of the road within the draft report, repeated elsewhere within it, introduces confusion for readers. This is because in some sections of the report the road concerned is referred to (correctly) as Three Mile Lane and in others it is referred to as Whitmore Road.

### 3) Section 23

In this section you state: “**Firstly, the Finance Act 1910 shows the eastern point of the claimed route between Three Mile Lane and Stoney Low Farm as separate from taxable holdings. The associated Field Book entry for the hereditament numbered 203 shows the annotation “right of way across farm” and given that there is only one-track crossing plot 203 this could refer to the claim route**”. These statements are confusing. The eastern end of the application route is, as stated, excluded from adjoining hereditaments on the 1910 Finance Act Plan. This, in isolation, is good evidence of user rights that are greater than just a public footpath. The eastern end of the application route is not within hereditament 203 as your statement seems to imply. As you will see from the attached copy of the 1910 Finance Act Plan, the abutting hereditament numbers to the **eastern** end of the application route are 926 and 284 with no hereditament number assigned to the application route. This is because it was excluded from assessment for incremental duty tax purposes over the three quarter mile section between Three Mile Lane and the railway bridge where hereditament 203 commences. Hereditament 203 is contained on a separate Finance Act Plan with a reference number of IR 132 6 35 assigned by the National Archives at Kew. It also crosses hereditament number 142 which I will comment on separately. This **western** section of the application route is not excluded from the adjoining hereditaments for assessment of incremental duty tax. There is, therefore, a clear and concise division of evidence for the application route that lays to the east of the railway bridge where Keel Park Station was once located and the western side of the railway.

### 4) Section 34

Section 34 your report leaves readers in confusion regarding which section or sections of the application route were recorded as Roads Used as Public Paths under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. For the elimination of doubt over where the former Roads Used as Public Paths were located, which your report has failed to identify, these were over the section of the application route between Three Mile Lane and Stony Low in the area where the railway bridge is now located.

I will firstly deal with and comment on the evidence of public bridleway rights over the eastern section of the application route from Three Mile Lane to where Keele Park Station was once located. The evidence for bridleway rights as a minimum over this section of the application route are extremely compelling and include the following:



A) The eastern end of the application route, between Three Mile Lane and the railway bridge where Keele Park Station once stood, was recorded under the terms of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act as Keele 15 Road Used as a Public Path and Madeley 68 Road Used as a Public Path. Copies of the survey cards are attached confirming this and providing concise location details. As part of a review of Roads Used as a Public Path these two routes were reclassified to public footpaths by Staffordshire County Council. Keele 15 was also renumbered at some point to Whitmore 24. However, a court judgment in 1975 concluded that Roads Used as a Public Path, based on the wording of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, could not simply be reclassified to footpaths. In December 1977, as a consequence of this judgement, the Department of Environment was directed to distribute the attached circular to all order making authorities, explaining the implications of the judgement. When the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act came into force and replaced the 1949 Act it robustly recognised the judgement conclusions, within section 54, by legislating that a Road Used as a Public Path could not be reclassified as a footpath unless bridleway rights could be shown **not** to exist over it. Evidence of a route having been recorded as a Road Used as a Public Path is, therefore, admissible evidence that at least bridleway rights subsist over it – unless evidence is found to conclusively show that bridleway rights **do not** exist. The Secretary of State considered this matter in an appeal against Staffordshire County Council deciding not to make a bridleway order for former Roads Used as Public Paths in Alton Parish that it had reclassified to footpaths. Attached is an extract from the appeal decision which directed Staffordshire County Council to make the bridleway order applied for in the application.

B) The exclusion of the eastern end of the application route from adjoining hereditaments, for incremental duty tax assessment under the 1910 Finance Act, carries much greater evidential weight than your draft report concludes. Attached is a broad summary of the 1910 Finance Act implications related to routes that are excluded from adjoining hereditaments and allowances for rights of way over land. This was written by the British Horse Society related to another definitive map modification application but its content is informative. Their position on the evidential value of routes that were excluded from adjoining hereditaments, under the 1910 Act, is supported by both case law and Secretary of State appeal decisions in similar circumstances to the application route for claim LJ665G.

C) Between 1895 and October 1906 there was a railway station located next to the application route. This was known as Keele Park Station and was opened to enable the public to commute to and from Keele Park Racecourse. It was closed when a decision was taken to shut the racecourse in Keele and move it to Uttoxeter. Attached is a copy OS map from the period showing its location and the distance from it to the entrance of Keele Park Racecourse along the application route. It seems more likely than not that access to and egress from the station would have been exercised by the public in carriages and by other transport as well as on foot. This is particularly the case as some race meetings were two day events so visitors with baggage would have been very unlikely to have simply carried it to the race meeting and their lodgings. Also attached is a recent photograph of the bridge that carries the application route over the railway. The platforms were located on the southern side of the bridge on both the east and west side of it, because it was a double track line at that time with the platforms directly exiting onto the application route on either side of the bridge. This can clearly be seen in the attached copy OS map. As section 33 of

your draft report correctly concedes, a bridge of such substantial structure is unlikely to have been built to accommodate just a footpath.

D) The 1858 Newcastle, Silverdale and Madeley Junction Railway Plan, created for statutory legal process to build the branch line, records the application to be: “An Occupation Road **and Public Bridle Road**”. This plan was noted to be copied to the Surveyor of Highways for Madeley, as required by law, and is included as an appendix to your draft report. The railway plan records the application route for this claim to be an Occupation Road and **Public Bridle Road on both sides** of the railway crossing where the bridge over the now closed railway line is located. The plan only shows a short section of the application route, annotated Occupation Road and Public Bridle Road, within a “**Deviation Limit**” marked on the plan which the railway was required to limit any works within. An informed viewer of the plan will readily accept that the status of the route, beyond the “Deviation Limit” for the railway line to be positioned within, would enjoy the same legal user status as the section depicted on the plan and noted as route 28 with Public Bridle Road rights subsisting over it. There would be no purpose or value for the railway company to concern itself with depicting the status or line of the route outside of the area affected by its plans, for which it was required to provide suitable crossings for any user rights that existed which would become cut off. Further, no evidence has been found to show that the Surveyor of Highways challenged the Public Bridle Road rights asserted for the route shown on the railway plan, to either the east or the west of the bridge.

E) The 1834 Highway Bridleway Diversion Order, referenced in section 24 of the draft report, confirms that the eastern commencement point of the application route, named as Ram Lane on the Order Plan, is described as leading to Madeley. In the absence of any subsequent legal event having been found to stop up the highway, this again provides good evidence of public bridleway rights over the application route. The legal maxim is, of course, once a highway always a highway unless stopped up by legal process. Although the 1834 diversion plan only shows a short section at the eastern commencement point of the public bridleway, larger area maps from the period confirm its continuity follows the application route. Attached is a copy 1833 first edition OS map for the area depicting and confirming that the application route was contiguous with and part of Ram Lane - which is designated as the bridleway within the 1834 Order and on the Order Plan.

## 5) Section 42 and 43

Based on the above summary of evidence I strongly refute the commentary in the draft report at section 42 and 43. The comment in these sections, related to the overall application, state:

- ***“The evidence in this case is limited to the Deposited Railway Plan of 1858”***
- ***“The other submitted evidence is either not directly relevant to the claimed route or is evidentially weak and of limited supporting value”***

These comments demonstrate a lack of understanding or misunderstanding of public rights of way law, related precedents created by legal judgments and historical Secretary of State

decisions for opposed orders referred for confirmation and appeal decisions where orders have been refused by an order making authority. Also, these comments totally contradict your statement within section 34 of the report (your comments on the evidence related to the 1834 bridleway diversion order) that: “**This provides strong evidence that Ram Lane was a bridleway**”. From the attached 1833 OS map you will see that there can be no misunderstanding that the application route, in 1833 and by legal order in 1834, was part of what was then named Ram Lane which follows the application route.

It is absolutely clear that, collectively, the above evidence I have summarised **exceeds** the test threshold required, to conclude that on the balance of probability public bridleway rights exist over the application route between Three Mile Lane and the bridge crossing the railway where Keele Park Station was once located – and beyond. Your comments at section 42 and 43 of the draft report, verbatim quoted above, can only be interpreted as misleading at best for the Panel who decide whether an order should be made or not.

Turning to the western section of the application route and other sections of your draft report my observations are as follows:

A) The western end of the application route, from the bridge where Keele Park Station was once located to the junction with Netherset Hay Lane in Madeley, comprises wholly of what is recorded on the definitive map of rights of way as Madeley Footpath 67. For ease of reference attached is a plan of the route recorded on the definitive records. This route crosses hereditaments 203 and 142 on the 1910 Finance Act records, which are covered by two separate Finance Act Plans numbered IR 132 6 35 and IR 132 6 136 which are National Archives reference numbers. A copy Plan of IR 132 6 136 is attached which you do not have a copy of. Inspection of these plans confirm that:

- Madeley Footpath 67 follows the **precise route** depicted on the 1910 Finance Act Plans.
- It is the **only** path shown on the 1910 Finance Act Plans crossing hereditaments 203 and 142.

So, there can be no doubt or ambiguity that Madeley Footpath 67 **is** the route for which a deduction in duty value was applied for and granted for **a public right of way** over the land recorded in the Field Book. At section 33 you state that the deduction in duty value expressed for a right of way over hereditament 203 “**could refer to the claimed route**”. Introducing doubt that the route shown on the Finance Act Plan may not be the application route is not justified and again is likely to mislead readers. Large scale Ordnance Survey maps, for a range of many years before and after the 1910 Finance Act survey was undertaken, all confirm that there are no other possible routes depicted on the ground that could be confused with the route for which a deduction in duty value was granted. The **only** route depicted is the application route which corresponds exactly with Madeley Footpath 67.

B) The only references in your draft report, related to the assessment value shown on the 1910 Field Book for hereditament 207 is: “**The associated Field Book entry for hereditament number 203 shows the annotation “right of way across Farm” .... this could refer to the claimed route.**” A more concise explanation of the Field Book entries is that a reduction in duty value of £20.00 was allowed for an accepted public right of way over

hereditament 203. It is unfortunate that the entry does not specifically use the words "Public Footpath" or "Public Bridleway" as a description. It is, however helpful that the 1858 Newcastle, Silverdale and Madeley Junction Railway Plans throws light on and clarifies the public user rights subsisting over the route - which are clearly Public Bridle Road rights.

C) As explained for the eastern end of the application route, the 1858 Railway Plans, created by statutory requirement and copied to the Surveyor of Highways, records that the route both to the east and west of the bridge to be built is an: "Occupation Road and Public Bridle Road". The Railway Plan, taken in context with all the other evidence, again shows that on the balance of probability a Public Bridleway exists over the application route to the west of the railway line.

This communication does not introduce any new evidence - it merely sets out what I strongly believe is a correct interpretation of the evidence and conclusions to be drawn from it. Accordingly, as you have stated in your communication of 17<sup>th</sup> July, please place your report, unaltered from the version you have sent to me, before the Countryside and Rights of Way Panel together with this communication in full with all its attachments. It is then for the Panel to make its own decision on the matter and for me to appeal that decision, if it is negative, and let the Secretary of State decide whether an order should be made or not.

Please kindly confirm safe receipt of this email and the date of the Countryside and Rights of Way Panel meeting that will be determining this application.

Regards

Martin Reay