



To:
FAO
Planning
Rochdale Council
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From: Diane Clarke
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Date: 25th September 2026

Dear Majid Mir

Rochdale Council	PL/2026/0372	35A SMITHY BRIDGE ROAD, LITTLEBOROUGH, OL15 8QF	Change of use and conversion of outbuilding (Use Class C3) to takeaway coffee stand (Use Class E) and alteration to fenestration with associated works including alteration to boundary treatment and bin storage area
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Thank you for consulting Network Rail on the above screening opinion.

Network Rail is a statutory consultee for any planning applications within 10 metres of railway land (as set out in Article 16 of the Development Management Procedure Order) and for any development likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway (as the Rail Network Operators, set out in Schedule 4 (j) of the Development Management Procedure Order).

Network Rail is the statutory undertaker for maintaining and operating railway infrastructure in England, Scotland and Wales. As the statutory undertaker Network Rail is under licence from the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for Scotland (TS), as well as being regulated by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) to maintain, enhance and operate the railway and its associated infrastructure. Consequently, any third-party proposals that impacts Network Rail's ability to deliver a safe operational railway will need to be carefully considered.

Following a review of the information provided within the above application by Network Rail's level crossing team, we wish to make the following comments.

The proposed coffee shop, located approximately 24 metres from the level crossing and adjacent to Smithy Bridge station, raises significant railway safety concerns.

The proximity to the station is likely to encourage additional pedestrian movements across the level crossing as passengers seek to purchase refreshments before boarding trains. This creates a foreseeable risk of individuals rushing, becoming distracted, or attempting to cross after warnings have activated to avoid missing a train.

The development therefore has the potential to increase both distraction and risk-taking behaviour in a safety-critical area, adversely affecting the safe use of the level crossing and increasing risk to railway users and the operational railway.

Network Rail would therefore like to **object** to the planning proposal.

From

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