



Network Rail
Freedom of Information
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Robert Whittaker
By email: request-419302-90bad734@whatdotheyknow.com

7th August 2017

Dear Mr Whittaker

Information request
Reference number: FOI2017/00857

Thank you for your request of 18th July 2017. You requested the following information:

I am writing to you for some information about a road known as "Station Lane" in Thetford, which runs from the north side of the railway line at grid reference TL86738369 to the A1066 at TL86658390, and provides access to the west-bound platform at the station, along with some industrial and residential properties.

I understand that this route is not an adopted highway, and I've been told that ownership / responsibility may be shared between Network Rail and some of the adjoining properties. I would like to get some definitive information about the route's status. So would you be able to provide some details for me based on your records? In particular, do you know who owns the route and who has responsibility for maintaining it? Also, is there any public access along it to reach the west-bound platform (either permissive, implied or otherwise)? Presumably this route used to be a Public Highway with a level crossing over the tracks, so do you have any information about how/when it was closed / stopped up?

The appropriate legislation

I have processed your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) as the information requested is environmental according to the definition in regulation 2 of the EIR (section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) exempts environmental information from the FOIA, but requires us to consider it under the EIR).

I can confirm that we hold the information you requested.

Please find attached a land ownership map for the area around Station Lane in Thetford labelled "FOI2017_00857 Network Rail Land_Redacted". Please note that land owned by Network Rail is coloured in green.

I have also attached another plan labelled "2011-07-18 - Plan of Station Lane" with the roadway edged in red. References to 'Station Lane' below are to this land.

Do you know who owns the route and who has responsibility for maintaining it?

I can advise that neither Network Rail nor its predecessors have ever owned any of Station Lane. In addition to this, we do not hold responsibility for maintaining it. We have searched our files and I can confirm that we do not hold any information regarding the ownership of Station Lane or who has the responsibility for maintaining it.

Presumably this route used to be a Public Highway with a level crossing over the tracks, so do you have any information about how/when it was closed / stopped up?

The Act of Parliament that authorised the section of railway through Thetford was the Norwich & Brandon Railway Act 1845. The roadway of Station Lane was numbered 14 in the Parish of St. Peter Thetford and was referenced as Public Highway in the ownership of the Surveyor of Highways. Authority was given in the Act for the railway to cross the road on the level. Under powers obtained in Section 7 of the of the Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Act 1885 Network Rail's predecessors were empowered to divert the public roadway and upon opening of the diverted roadway were permitted to stop up the roadway between the level crossing gates. No reference was made to the stopping up of any public rights of way other than where they crossed the railway. I can advise that we do not hold any information regarding the status of Station Lane after this date.

To assist you, I have attached copies of both Acts.

Is there any public access along it to reach the west-bound platform (either permissive, implied or otherwise)?

I can advise that we do not hold any information detailing public access rights along Station Lane. Section 7 of the Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Act 1885

requires us to maintain the station footbridge and to allow people on foot to cross it, or such altered footbridge as might be made.

I am sorry I could not have been of more help but to you may be interested to that information regarding public rights of way in Norfolk can be found at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/public-rights-of-way/about-public-rights-of-way>.

If you have any enquiries about this response, please contact me in the first instance at FOI@networkrail.co.uk or on 01908 782405. Details of your appeal rights are below.

Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in all future communications.

Yours sincerely

Anisha Pandya
Information Officer

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Appeal Rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the FOI Compliance and Appeals Manager at Network Rail, Freedom of Information, The Quadrant, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes, MK9 1EN, or by email at foi@networkrail.co.uk. Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House

Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF