



Ms Rachel C Griffin
H M Assistant Coroner, Manchester West,
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Mark Carne
Chief Executive
Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
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15 September 2015

Dear Madam

Inquest touching the death of Adam Lee Connelly

I write in response to your report dated 17 July 2015 concerning the inquest into the death of Adam Lee Connelly who sadly died when he was struck by a train and was found at the side of the railway tracks on 10 March 2015.

Your report outlined your concern that:

“Due to the height of the walls of the steps which are used to access footbridge 57 on the railway line between Walkden and Atherton train stations, a person of reasonable athletic ability could gain access to the railway track which could lead to future fatalities at this location on the railway.”

You considered that urgent action should be taken to prevent future deaths and wrote to Network Rail as the party with the power to take action.

I wish to assure you that safety is a core value for Network Rail. We are committed to continuously seeking to reduce risk and improve safety across the railway network. We will always seek to learn all the lessons we can from tragedies such as the death of Mr Connelly.

I thought it may be helpful to provide some detail in respect of the bridge structure and measures we currently have in place to prevent entry onto the operational infrastructure:

- The bridge is estimated to have been constructed around 1900. It is a 30m single span which carries a footbridge over two non-electrified lines. The main span is supported from two engineering brick and stone masonry stair trestles.

- On the structure itself a parapet 1.4 – 1.5m high is in place to prevent access from the upper and lower flights of the downside stair trestle. There are 2m high trusses/edge beams on the bridge deck to prevent access.
- A palisade fence approximately 1.8m high is in position on both sides of the track on either side of the structure.

The bridge is not known to Network Rail as being used by members of the public to gain access to the infrastructure. However, as a consequence of this event, I can confirm that we intend to undertake the following works:

- Lower Flight – install shorter palisade pales to connect into the existing boundary fence line. The additional pales are to be installed flush with the internal face of the existing parapet and will raise the overall height of the parapet to a minimum of 2m; and
- Upper Flight – raise the height of the stepped parapet with engineering brick, capped with bull nose units to remove the potential to scale the wall at this level and climb down behind the lower flight palisade up stand.

We expect to have completed the works by the end of October 2015. The time frame for undertaking the works is driven by site access which is extremely limited due to the remote location of the structure. The materials required will have to be delivered by rail under possession (i.e. closure of the railway) and installed lineside during the week.

I hope that this response provides you with adequate information and assurance that the issues you have identified have been properly considered and are being addressed. If I can be of further assistance, or if you would like any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mark Carne
Chief Executive