

## **Public Footpath Closure Request Bundle**

Site: Darcy's Place, Church Lane, Wormley

Prepared by: John Croke

Date: 15 May 2025

## 1. Closure Request Letter to Hertfordshire County Council

John Croke

56 Wheatlands

Stevenage

SG2 9RX

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

15 May 2025

Public Rights of Way Team  
Hertfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
Pegs Lane  
Hertford  
SG13 8DE

BY EMAIL AND POST

Re: Request for Temporary Closure of Public Footpath – Darcy’s Place, Church Lane,  
Wormley

Dear Rights of Way Officer,

I am writing as the landowner of Darcy’s Place, located on Church Lane, Wormley, to formally request the temporary closure of the public footpath which crosses my land. This is due to significant health and safety concerns posed by the current condition of the ground.

The footpath in question traverses a site that was formerly a sand and gravel pit and is currently the subject of enforcement restoration requirements. The terrain contains unstable and uneven surfaces, sharp rubble, embedded wire, voids, and other hazards that pose a serious risk to pedestrians. The site has not yet been restored to safe agricultural condition as originally required under Hertfordshire County Council Enforcement Notice ENF/HCC/145 (1981).

Due to the unsafe nature of the land, I am concerned about the possibility of injury to members of the public and potential legal liability. I therefore request the immediate initiation of a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) under section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or alternatively an emergency closure if deemed appropriate.

This request is made in the interest of public safety. I am prepared to submit photographic evidence and a brief risk assessment showing the hazards on site. Warning signs have already been installed, and fencing may be deployed as necessary to mitigate immediate risks.

Please advise urgently on the necessary process to enact this closure. I am committed to working with the Council to ensure the safety of the public while restoration works proceed under lawful planning and environmental procedures.

Yours faithfully,

John Croke  
Landowner – Darcy's Place, Church Lane, Wormley

## 2. Risk Summary

Risk Summary – Darcy’s Place, Church Lane, Wormley

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### Background

The land at Darcy’s Place is a former sand and gravel extraction site, currently in the process of restoration under an historic enforcement notice issued by Hertfordshire County Council (ENF/HCC/145, 1981). The land has remained in a blighted, unrestored state for decades.

### Public Footpath Safety Hazards

A public right of way currently crosses the site. Due to the condition of the land, the following risks have been identified for path users:

- Uneven terrain with sudden changes in level
- Exposed rubble, stone, and sharp debris
- Embedded wire and fencing remnants
- Overgrown areas concealing trip hazards
- Areas of subsidence or soft ground from past excavation
- No formal waymarking, barriers, or route clearance

### Risk Level

These hazards pose a moderate to high risk of injury to members of the public, particularly those unfamiliar with the site. Risk is increased during wet weather and reduced visibility. The site is not currently suitable for recreational or pedestrian use without appropriate hazard control.

### Mitigation and Proposed Action

The landowner has installed warning signage at access points and intends to place fencing to discourage trespass. However, these are insufficient without formal legal closure of the public footpath. A Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO), or emergency closure, is requested to ensure public safety while restoration is planned and undertaken.

### Conclusion

The current condition of the land presents a clear and foreseeable hazard. Temporary closure of the public footpath is a proportionate and necessary response to reduce the risk of injury and avoid liability while lawful restoration works proceed.

### 3. Photo Appendix – Hazard Documentation

#### Photo Appendix – Hazard Documentation

Site: Darcy's Place, Church Lane, Wormley

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[Image Photo 1 – Sloped terrain with embedded materials and new fencing. Trip and debris hazard visible. could not be inserted – [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/mnt/data/XyuRoiGYvkjAwpraDZDXq.jpeg']

[Image Photo 2 – Deeply rutted and uneven ground with scattered rubble and embedded wire. could not be inserted – [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/mnt/data/AcgkHfMZthFhQPrQ3k2yAb.jpeg']

[Image Photo 3 – Active restoration area with exposed waste and construction debris along likely footpath alignment. could not be inserted – [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/mnt/data/JbQ7VY7CL3fut9Hc3fsg4H.jpeg']

[Image Photo 4 – Overgrown central site zone with historic materials and low visibility hazards. could not be inserted – [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/mnt/data/8wEc4LhUe91pvWUy6CLR8z.jpeg']

[Image Photo 5 – Wider site view showing containers and vegetation growth over unstable ground. could not be inserted – [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/mnt/data/7m8nmSrm1Vj7TAsYhutjng.jpeg']

[Image Photo 6 – South-east area of site showing dense undergrowth and concealed ground hazards. could not be inserted – [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/mnt/data/Be2fmsxHDCrFQ8K7ySvAL.jpeg']