

Caroline O'Neill

From: Guy Bettley-Cooke
Sent: 15 March 2017 14:50
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Subject: Network Rail Anglia Level Crossings Reduction TWA Order.

Dear Sirs,

Re - The Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order / The Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction Order (Network Rail Anglia Level Crossing Reductions TWA Order).

I wish to complain in the most serious terms about the proposed stopping-up of Public Rights of Way and other level-crossings in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk, using the above orders.

My objections are -

- i) That the Transport and Works Act is not intended for this purpose and it is therefore not the appropriate Act with which to legally stop-up foot-crossings over *long-existing railway lines*. The TWA is intended as an enabling Act for NEW infrastructure projects - mainly relating to large areas of land, such as for HS2 - and *not minor revisions to existing ones*. This NEW projects purpose is clearly expressed within the text of the TWA Act itself.
- ii) That Network Rail has misrepresented the reasons for crossing closures as being primarily for Health and Safety concerns, whereas it is clear from internal NR documents that the closure programme is actually about reducing on-going costs to Network Rail and shifting them elsewhere, such as to the County Councils involved. The public have been misled on this vital point.
- iii) That the stopping-up of the heavily used (600 people a day) Weatherby's foot-crossing, in Newmarket, Suffolk, will sever the town in half - not least the access to the town football ground, which is right next to the crossing. Furthermore, a case of discrimination could be put forward in relation to the under-rail subway constructed in the town of Royston, Hertfordshire, in 2012. The exact reason for this being constructed is stated as being that the railway and old footpath crossing had acted to sever the town in half. Exactly the same case could be made for Newmarket. Furthermore, Network Rail have been less than fully open about their exact reasons for not proposing a footbridge or tunnel in Newmarket. Recent short-sighted, sale of railway land nearby may have been a significant factor? The proposed long diversion around the railway adds greatly to the division of the life and business of the town, at little financial saving to Network Rail.
- iv) That exact ownership of land and the existence of a Public Right of Way at Ely North Junction PRoW foot-crossing, Cambridgeshire, have not been confirmed, according to Folder 01, NR Cambs TWAO Application file, NR9 Book of Reference, page 37, and thus the closure of a footpath that may not legally exist cannot take place until its existence is legally confirmed and the owner of the land consulted. This relates to the parcel of woodland numbered 69 on Sheet 18 in Folder 02 of the NR Cambs Reduction Order file. Furthermore, the same Sheet 18 notes that parcel of land 69 is only required for 'Temporary use of land'. 'Extinguishment' is not mentioned at any point. I might add that the reasons why Network Rail should wish to block this short section of much-appreciated local woodland - which is not on Network Rail land - remain obscure - it has no rail implications whatsoever.

These are my views, as an academic researcher and as a regular user of both of the above mentioned crossings *and many others* in the counties of Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,

Guy Bettley-Cooke

15-3-2017

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