

## NETWORK RAIL LEVEL CROSSING REDUCTION (ESSEX & OTHERS) TWA ORDER INQUIRY

I regret I am now unable to attend the Inquiry tomorrow 11<sup>th</sup> nor the 12<sup>th</sup> October. Please give my apologies to the Inspector.

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

I would like to have asked Network Rail (NR):

1. Why it has not been possible to provide all the necessary information: eg details of planned diversions, before the Inquiry resumed;
2. Why NR thinks it is in the public interest to transfer costs to local authorities when they are having their budgets cut by the Government;
3. Why NR feel the Government is forcing NR to reduce the number of LCs open to the public in those cases where private rights will remain. If that is the case, the risks at each of those LCs will remain;
4. Why NR feel that increasing the length of paths (to circumvent LCs that are to be closed) should be of benefit to users. If so, would NR expect passengers to enjoy going on detours on the railways and paying extra for the privilege?
5. Why NR feel that adding detours to paths is the right way to enhance the PROW network.

### Re E38 BATTLESBRIDGE

I would like to have asked NR:-

1. What is the height that users will have to climb up from the LC?
2. If there are, at present, only 3 trains an hour during the interval between morning and evening rush hours, how many trains per hour during this period does NR have in mind ie what improvements in frequency are NR planning?
3. Can NR give some indication of the expected cost savings of their proposal? (This is a question I would like asked re each proposed LC closure)

I have walked from The Hawk PH along the Footpath (FP) across this LC and as far as the western boundary of the field west of the A130. The noise of traffic on the A1245 is intolerable and I would not want to have to climb up the bank to walk along the A1245 to cross the railway. I would rather cross over the LC – I would have plenty of time. No-one is likely to want to put themselves at risk along the verge of the A1245 road bridge, but there they would endure more noise and pollution than if they were allowed to use the LC.

When I reached the LC I was able to see a long way along the railway in both directions: I could not see Battlesbridge station from this LC but felt most people would find the crossing easy to manage.

If there is a 20 minute gap between trains at this LC, there would be sufficient time to cross safely. Even if frequency were increased to 4 trains an hour I would still have 15 minutes to cross this LC. This makes me think the reason NR wish to close this LC is not to remove the very slight possibility of anyone having an accident there, but to save costs. Saving costs, as NR have shown, makes it more likely funds would be provided by the Government in the future. The pressure Government is putting on NR is unfair and I hope the Inspector will make that clear in his report. NR were saddled with the problem of risk at LCs and if the Government want to encourage people to walk more then funds should be made available to provide bridges where required. The Government should not expect NR to shove the risk onto local authorities in the way NR propose.

Malcolm Lees  
Open Spaces Society  
Local Correspondent for Essex

10 October 2018