

PUBLIC INQUIRY
APPLICATION BY NETWORK RAIL UNDER TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT
1992
PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL (ESSEX AND OTHERS LEVEL CROSSING
REDUCTION ORDER

OBJ/195/W5 – ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

REBUTTAL

ROSS CORBYN & LAWRENCE SEAGER

ROAD SAFETY ENGINEERS

In addition to Proof of Evidence already submitted by Lawrence Seager, we have both reviewed the evidence submitted by Network Rail to compile this rebuttal. This statement deals with a number of points grouped by crossing, and the statement to which they refer is noted.

Following the original site visits, seven of the sites have been revisited and walked by four members of the Essex Highways Road Safety Engineering Team. There have been no safety issues raised following these visits to the existing routes.

E38 – Battlesbridge

Proof of Evidence – Susan Tilbrook
paragraph 2.31.15 onwards page 75 & 76

Proof of Evidence – Andrew Kenning
E 38 – page 62, 63

The information provided by Susan Tilbrook and Andrew Kenning states that any alterations to the existing Vehicle Restraint System (VRS) will be in accordance to DBRB TD 19/06. However, the parapet for the structure is high containment and so there will be significant lengths of VRS to transition to the parapet and therefore on the approach to the structure.

The audit team believes that until a RRRAP assessment is undertaken it will be difficult to ascertain the exact length of VRS system needed. There is also concern as to whether a suitable overlap of systems is possible due to the location of statutory undertakers' apparatus and the available verge width. Any VRS will need an offset clearance of 700mm from the kerb edge and will have a working width of between 1.0m to 1.5m. A secondary barrier stem will need at least a similar working width and suitable gap of a minimum of 0.6m to allow pedestrians to safely walk

between the two sections of VRS. It remains unclear if this can be achieved within the existing verge available.

E51 – Mount Bures

Proof of Evidence – Susan Tilbrook
paragraph 2.38.17 onwards page 85

Proof of Evidence – Susan Tilbrook
Mount Bures E51 – paragraph 2.38.17 onwards page 85

The information provided by Susan Tilbrook states that, with reference to the E51 plan contained within the Essex County Council RSA, it is noted that the nomenclature on the supplied plan does not relate to the issue raised. Consideration was given to the road walking and use of road bridge on Jankes Green Lane. Actual speed data shows that the drivers travel at speeds significantly lower than the posted speed limit of 40mph. The ATC data shows the mean speeds of 20.3mph (eastbound) and 21.3mph (westbound). The 85th percentile speed was not recorded due to the very low speeds.

The audit team agrees that the data provided suggests that vehicle speeds are below the posted speed limit, however the speed limit is 60mph not 40mph (there is a 40mph limit on Chapel Road further north on Network Rails proposed diversion route). However, the key safety issue is that vulnerable road users are unable to step off the carriageway out of the path of oncoming vehicles and, regardless of speeds, conflicts will occur. If this route is to be used, then suitable opportunities to step off the carriageway will need to be provided. The audit team recommends its original view as conveyed in the Safety Assessment that if this route is to be used that the headland around the adjacent field is used rather than the carriageway.

E52 Golden Square

Proof of Evidence – Susan Tilbrook
Mount Bures E 52 – paragraph 2.39.14 onwards page 87

The information provided by Susan Tilbrook states it is considered that the use of rural road walking as undertaken at present within the area is a suitable diversion route and that the Automated Traffic Count figures shown in the Appendix do not indicate that traffic issues are likely to require mitigation measures. ATC data (shown in Document NR32/2 at Tab 1; located on the road east of bridge over rail line west of Jupes Green) showed an average 2 way daily traffic flow of 52 vehicles and an 85th percentile speed of vehicles of 21.3mph where the speed limit is derestricted. ATC data (shown in Document NR32/2 at Tab 1; located on Fordham Road south of Sergeant's Farm and north of Ball's Chase, south of Mount Bures) showed an average 2 way daily traffic flow of 116 vehicles and 85th percentile speed of vehicles of 37.8mph where the posted speed is 60mph. Verges are available for use along significant parts of the route but it was considered that road walking would be indicated at design freeze to show the 'worst case'. From an examination of the public footpath network, it is noted that pedestrians already use Fordham Road as

part of the interconnectivity of the network. On this basis it is considered that amendments to the proposals are not required.

The audit team agrees that the data provided suggests that vehicle speeds are below the posted speed limit. However, the key safety issue is that vulnerable road users are unable to step off the carriageway out of the path of oncoming vehicles and, regardless of speeds, conflicts will occur. If this route is to be used, then suitable opportunities to step off the carriageway will need to be provided at regular intervals.

Signed

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L Seago', written over a horizontal line.

Dated 04/10/17