

Date: 10 February 2017
Our ref: 206811
Your ref: TWA 2/2/140 (Suffolk)



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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Mr Fox

**TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992 –
PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL (SUFFOLK LEVEL CROSSING REDUCTION) ORDER:
REQUEST FOR A SCREENING DECISION**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 20 January 2017 and received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Environmental Impact Assessment

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species are concerned, that there are no potential significant impacts.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that a few of the proposed level crossing closures are located either adjacent to, or in close proximity to, one or more of the following sites:

- Breckland Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA
- Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar site
- Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Stour Estuary SSSI
- Cattawade Marshes SSSI
- Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Based on the material provided it is our view that the proposed closures are not likely to significantly affect the interest features for which these sites are notified.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this proposal is likely to affect such populations to an extent sufficient to require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It remains the case, however, that the proposer must provide information supporting this application sufficient for you to assess whether

protected species are likely to be affected and, if they are, whether sufficient mitigation, avoidance or compensation measures will be put in place.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result this application may raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an EIA.

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your own ecological and/or landscape advisers, and the local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this proposal before determining whether an EIA is necessary.

Should you determine that an EIA is not required in this case, you should still ensure that the application is supported by sufficient biodiversity and landscape information in order for you to assess the weight to give these material considerations when determining the application.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on this proposal beyond this EIA screening opinion, should your authority seek our views on the planning application. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Louise Oliver on 020 8026 4893. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Louise Oliver
Sustainable Development
Norfolk and Suffolk Team