

**From:** Jonathan Stiff <jonathan.stiff@cheffins.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 20 April 2017 13:40  
**To:** TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT  
**Cc:** F.C Palmer & Sons  
**Subject:** Network Rail Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order  
**Attachments:** 200417 SOS for Transport.pdf; F C Palmer & Sons - Estate Plan.pdf

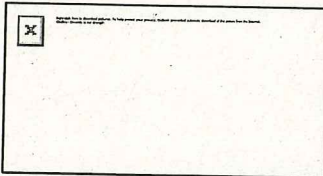
Dear Sirs

We attach a copy of a letter and plan which we are today sending you on behalf of our clients, F C Palmer & Sons and their subsidiary companies, Fenland Farmers Limited, Fenland Farming Limited, Fields 9,10,11 Limited, Fields 16-17 Limited and Fields 71-72 Limited objecting to the Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order.

We should be grateful if you would acknowledge safe receipt of this email and attachment.

Yours faithfully

**Jonathan Stiff** MRICS FAAV  
Director



**Cheffins Rural Professionals**  
25 Market Place Ely CB7 4NP  
**Tel:** 01353 654915 **Mobile:** 07770 976182 **Fax:** 01353 666339

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**Caroline O'Neill**

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**From:** Jonathan Stiff <jonathan.stiff@cheffins.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 24 April 2017 10:03  
**To:** TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT  
**Cc:** F.C Palmer & Sons  
**Subject:** Network Rail Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order  
**Attachments:** 240417 SOS for Transport.pdf

Dear Sirs

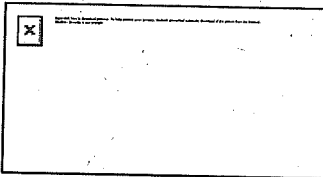
Our clients have just pointed out that our letter of objection dated 20 April 2017 incorrectly referred to the closure of the level crossing at C01 – Chittering when it should have referred to the closure of the level crossing at C33 – Jack O'Tell (Adam's Crossing).

We therefore enclose an amended copy of our letter and should be grateful if you would substitute this for the letter of objection dated 20 April 2017.

Would you please acknowledge safe receipt of our amended letter.

Yours faithfully

**Jonathan Stiff** MRICS FAAV  
Director



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Secretary of State for Transport,  
c/o Transport and Works Act Orders Unit,  
General Counsel's Office,  
Department for Transport,  
Zone 1/18, Great Minster House,  
33 Horseferry Road,  
London,  
SW1P 4DR.

Our Ref: JAS/GRB

Your Ref:

24th April, 2017

Dear Sirs,

**Network Rail Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order**  
**F. C. Palmer & Sons – Stowbridge Farm, Stretham**

We have been instructed by F. C. Palmer & Sons to respond to the various notices which have been served on them and their subsidiary companies, Fenland Farmers Limited, Fenland Farming Limited, Fields 9, 10, 11 Limited, Fields 16-17 Limited and Fields 71-72 Limited to acquire compulsory powers to close the level crossings referred to as C34 – Fysons, C33 – Jack O'Tell (Adam's Crossing) and C02 – Nairns in the Proposed Network Rail Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order.

Our clients farm approximately 3,150 acres of land in a single block which straddles the Cambridge to Ely railway line. Of this area, our clients own 2,288 acres as shown hatched in red on the enclosed plan. They rent a further 146 acres on a Farm Business Tenancy as shown cross hatched in blue on the plan and contract farm a further 716 acres as shown hatched in green. All of this land is served by a range of crop storage buildings which are located at Chittering Farm as shown marked on the plan and the farm office and main workshops which are located at Stowbridge Farm as shown marked on the plan.

Currently, the main farm roadways which link the buildings to the land on the east side of the railway are along the lines shown coloured in pink on the plan which utilise the crossings at C33 – Jack O'Tell (Adam's Crossing) and C02 – Nairns. In addition to the 1,753 acres of land on the eastern side of the railway line which would be severed by the closure of these crossings, there is also a further 240 acres of land to the north of New Farm which would be severed by the closure of these crossings.

Our clients grow a rotation of wheat, sugar beet, potatoes, turf, carrots, beetroot, leeks, celery and lettuce on all of this land. With the exception of wheat, all of these crops are high yielding root and salad crops which involve intensive operations and irrigation which considerably increases the number of vehicle movements utilising the crossings. All produce harvested from the 1,753 acres of land on the east side of the railway line and the 240 acres to the north of New Farm has to be transported back to the farm buildings at Chittering Farm for grading and storage.

Depending on the rotation, our clients estimate that they transport approximately 12,000-15,000 tonnes of produce across the C02 and C33 crossings each year using tractors and trailers. Assuming a 100 day harvest window for the range of crops which are grown and a 12 tonne load, this would equate to approximately 12 tractor and trailer movements each way over the crossings equating to 24 crossings in total or 12 movements across each crossing for 100 days per year.

**Partners**

M W Hamilton Ltd, E W Lee Ltd, J G L Law Ltd, M Walshe Ltd, P G M Claydon Ltd, N R Harris Ltd, W King Ltd, S J Lewis Ltd,  
C M B Ashton Ltd, W E Pepper Ltd, P M Woolner Ltd, M O Peck Ltd, J A Stiff Ltd, R W Freshwater Ltd,  
S P C Gooderham Ltd, B Goodsell-King Ltd.

Offices at: CAMBRIDGE SAFFRON WALDEN NEWMARKET HAVERHILL ELY SUTTON LONDON



In addition to the harvest movements, there would be a significant number of movements of staff during harvesting and a significant number of movements for cultivations, drilling, fertilising, spraying and irrigation. Our clients therefore estimate that both crossings are used up to 50 times per day during peak times and 20 times per day during normal operations.

There are only two possible alternative routes of access from the farm buildings to the 1,753 acres of land on the east side of the railway line and the 240 acres to the north of New Farm as follows:

1. Via the A1123 and the level crossing at Dimmocks Cote as shown coloured in green on the plan, or
2. Via the A10 Trunk Road and the village of Waterbeach as shown coloured in blue on the plan.

There are two major drawbacks to the first alternative, the first of which is road safety and the second of which is the fact that our clients do not have a formal right of way through Little Farm as shown cross hatched in blue on the plan. During the last two years, our clients have had three road traffic accidents when turning right off the A1123 onto the farm roadway shown coloured green on the plan and for this reason, they only use this means of access when it is essential to do so. Since our clients only rent Little Farm on a short term Farm Business Tenancy and there is no guarantee that this tenancy will continue, our clients cannot rely on this alternative route of access even if the road safety issues could be overcome.

This therefore leaves us with the second alternative which is even worse in that it would mean a huge increase in agricultural traffic on the A10 Trunk Road which at peak times is already severely congested. It would also mean a right turn for all agricultural traffic travelling north, a huge increase in the volume of agricultural traffic through the village of Waterbeach and an additional journey time of approximately 1 hour per movement.

Our clients fully understand the reason why Network Rail wishes to close these level crossings and would be prepared to agree to Network Rail closing C34 – Fysons and C02 – Nairns provided that Network Rail automates the crossing at C33 – Jack O'Tell (Adam's Crossing). Whilst Network Rail was originally prepared to consider automating the crossing at C33- Jack O'Tell (Adam's Crossing), we understand that they ruled out this option on the grounds of cost.

The principle of the Compulsory Purchase legislation is to put the claimant back into the position as if the scheme had never been implemented. Therefore, it cannot be reasonable to rule out the automation of the C33- Jack O'Tell (Adam's Crossing) on the grounds of cost when the impact on our clients' business and the impact on the local road network will considerably outweigh the cost of automation of the crossing.

Therefore, our clients object in the strongest possible terms to Network Rail being granted compulsory powers to close all three level crossings and we would very much hope that Network Rail engage in meaningful discussions to overcome our clients' objections.

Yours faithfully,



Jonathan A. Stiff, MRICS, FAAV  
Cheffins