OBJ/32

Caroline O'Neill

From: Chris Purllant <Chris.Purllant@Brown-co.com>
Sent: 25 April 2017 15:17
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Subject: Network Rail Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order - Land at Littleport, Ely, Cambridgeshire - A L Lee

Importance: High

Dear Sirs

I am instructed to act on behalf of Mr Anthony Leonard Lee trading as A L Lee Farming Company of Whitebridge Farm, Ely Road, Littleport, Cambridgeshire, CB6 1RT with regard to the proposals under the Network Rail Cambridgeshire Level Crossing Reduction Order.

Having been provided with 34 notices with differing plots, plans and rights required under the various notices with limited details as to the exact proposals my client considers the consultation process has been extremely limited in detail and that individual meetings onsite should have been provided as part of the order process.

My client is affected by the proposed works and would comment as follows:-

1) C24 – Cross Keys, Ely Parish. Plot Numbers 6,7,8,9, 10, 12,13 & 39
The order proposes to affect my client by the closure of the pedestrian crossing over the railway line and thereafter the diversion of Footpaths 50 & 15 onto agricultural land to the west, crossing the drainage ditch with a new footbridge and thereafter passing underneath the railway line and re-joining Footpath 15 on the river bank. Having inspected the property we note that the visibility splays available at Plot 40 are extensive being approximately 2.75 miles to the North and 0.62 miles to the South where slow rail speeds would be expected at the curve point of the track and shortly after leaving the Ely station. The closure of this crossing is therefore considered excessive if we consider the proposal is to divert pedestrians off the picturesque river bank to a low lying area of agricultural land for a length of over 850m. The route of the proposed diverted footpath on my clients land is stated within the order to be field margin which is incorrect. The land is arable land which has been entered into environmental stewardship for the past 12 years providing a diverse habitat which we consider will be lost as part of the proposals.

   The existing route of Footpath 15 along the adjacent river bank ensures pedestrians are kept away from the intensive cultivation, fertilisation and spraying operations associated with arable crop production and the agrochemicals associated therewith. The continued use of Footpaths 50 & 15 with the existing pedestrian rail crossing is therefore considered the most appropriate route to enable crop production and pedestrian use of land to remain distinctly separate.

   The order proposes under Ely Civil Parish Plot 12 to acquire rights of access over a private farm track for a distance of circa 980m. The notice and the book of reference does not state whether such rights are proposed to be pedestrian or vehicular and therefore my client wishes to raise an objection to such additional rights being created without the full details of such rights being made available. My client also considers such rights to be excessive and would not be required if the existing footpath route across the railway line was maintained.

   The order proposes to create additional rights of access over arable fields shown as Ely Civil Parish Plots 9 & 10. Again these field margins are arable land which has been entered into environmental stewardship for the past 12 years and such rights are considered to be detrimental to then environmental benefits that have been created over this period. The order also fails to state whether such rights are pedestrian or vehicular in nature and our clients therefore object to the creation of this right as a result of the lack of information provided.

2) C26 & C27 – Poplar Drove & Willow Row, Littleport Parish. Plot Numbers: 1, 2,3, 5,7 8,9,13, 13A, 13B & 14.
The order proposes to close the Poplar Drove & Willow Row level crossings and create a bridleway across land adjacent to the railway line. The existing railway crossings are unmanned and as such my client is of the opinion that such crossings have been unutilised by such traffic as are permitted to pass over bridlepaths in recent years due the nature of operating such a crossing and therefore the creation of a circular route

between the two proposed closed crossings is considered excessive. To encourage equestrian activity immediately adjacent to a high speed railway would in my clients opinion be reducing the proposed increase in rail safety. Closure of the crossings without the creation of the proposed bridlepath would therefore appear to be the most suitable option whilst improving rail safety.

Your confirmation of receipt of these objections would be appreciated by return.

Chris Purllant BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV
Land Agent, Partner

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