

PUBLIC INQUIRY

APPLICATION BY NETWORK RAIL UNDER TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992

PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEVEL CROSSING REDUCTION ORDER

OBJ/12-CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROOF OF EVIDENCE

CHRIS POULTNEY

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY MANAGER

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Chris Poultny. I am employed by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) as Transport and Infrastructure Strategy Manager. I have been in my current position since March 2017. Prior to this I was Eastern Highways Alliance Manager. Overall I have 19 years' experience working in transport in a range of roles covering policy, strategy, and project management.
2. I have a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science.

POLICY

CCC Vision and Priorities

3. The CCC vision is: Making Cambridgeshire a great place to call home.



4. The Strategic Priorities are:
- Developing the local economy for the benefit of all
 - Helping people live healthy and independent lives
 - Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

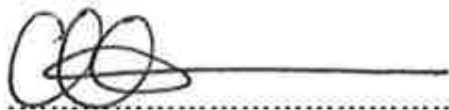
5. Cambridge County Council has been working with Network Rail and other partners for a number of years on a variety of projects and groups, some examples are provided below:
- Ely Area Taskforce
 - Ely Area improvements
 - Cambridge North Station
 - Soham Station
 - Local Community Rail Partnerships
6. The common aims of the above projects are to help support and make the case for investment in railway improvements, to increase rail capacity to improve rail services and provide improved access to rail services and reduced journey times.

7. The underlying principles of the Anglia Level Crossing Reduction are broadly in line with CCC's Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Long Term Transport Strategy (LTTS) objectives that include:
- enabling people to thrive, achieve their potential and improve their quality of life (LTP)
 - managing and delivering the growth and development of sustainable communities (LTP)
 - meeting the challenges of climate change and enhancing the natural environment (LTP)
 - ensure that the transport network supports sustainable growth and continued economic prosperity (LTTS)
 - to encourage sustainable alternatives to the private car, including rail, bus, guided bus, walking and cycling, car sharing and low emission vehicles (LTTS)
 - to make the most efficient use of the transport network (LTTS)
8. CCC has a statutory responsibility under sections 41 and 130 of the Highways Act 1980 to protect and maintain the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and the highway network to ensure it is accessible and safe for users. The PRoW network provides invaluable connectivity and using the network has many health benefits, including increased levels of activity and the associated physical benefits this brings and contributes to improved mental health. The PRoW network contributes to the local economy providing access to the countryside and long distance footpaths as set out in the ROWIP. Moreover the PRoW network has massive benefits for the local communities for whom the network provides vital connections, as set out in CCC's Statement of case and other evidence
9. CCC has to balance the numerous different responsibilities and duties it has. It is understood that there are certain level crossings where a closure may benefit CCC's strategic aims but note that there are other level crossings that are important as part of the PRoW network or have such value to the local community that outweighs any outright closure without a high quality acceptable alternative being in place.

SUMMARY

10. As set out in CCC's Statement of Case and supporting evidence, CCC is objecting to the closure of level crossings at specific locations where the closure of the crossing has significant negative impacts on the PRow network or on the local community and where the proposed alternative is not considered to be appropriate and suitable.
11. CCC is aware that in some locations the proposed closures pass risk and cost from Network Rail to CCC. This needs careful consideration- as sometimes a proposed closure has the potential to increase risk and cost to a greater level than if the crossing remained opened. This is particularly the case when a PRow which is currently only used by non-motorised users is diverted to a road level crossing and crossing a busy road may be involved.

Signed



.....

Dated31/10/2017.....