

THE WHITTLESEY CHARITY

Registration No. 1005069

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Telephone 01832 273085

**The Highways Officer
Cambridgeshire County Council
Shire Hall
Castle Hill
CAMBRIDGE
CB3 0AP**

26th September 2017

Dear Sir or Madam

**NETWORK RAIL PROPOSED LEVEL CROSSING CLOSURE – BRICKYARD DROVE
EASTREA – AND YOUR POSSIBLE INVITATION TO JOIN THEIR SURVEY.**

This Charity owns land known as Lattersey Field Farm, which is adjacent to the railway line near Brickyard Drove Level Crossing, Eastrea, Cambridgeshire.

Because a public footpath that goes over the crossing will be cut off, Network Rail proposed to create a new footpath following the route of the existing ROW as far as the crossing, and thence running south along our headland to then bear east along Messrs E C Brown & Sons headland to the B road back towards Eastrea..

We objected to any new footpath as with an abundance of paths north of the railway line (the Eastrea Village side) we do not think it would be used. After we objected, Network Rail changed the proposed route to run diagonally across our field! This would be an unnecessary hindrance to our tenant farmer. Apart from loss of land, it is likely we would have to reduce his rent, which is part of the income for our charitable works.

We still do not think a new path is necessary, but if it has to be, then it would be far better around the headland as originally proposed. I cannot for the life of me, see why anyone would take it across grade 1 agricultural land when there are alternative options.

Network Rail have not tried to resolve this problem and their agents, Bruton Knowles, merely say they will pass on our concerns. A site meeting at the start could well have sorted things out.

The reason why I am writing to you is that we have received a Notice that Network Rail intend to enter our land in October, to carry out a survey for the proposed new footpath. This they can perhaps do by right, but they have also enclosed a licence for us to sign giving our consent to them coming onto our land. They ask that when signing the licence agreement we

agree to Local Authority Planning and Highway departments being able to enter the land to make their own inspections.

Now, we have decided that we cannot sign the licence agreement as it would then appear that we were happy with the proposed new footpath. Whether or not you enter our land with them to make your own inspections is not an issue, but we want you to be made aware that whilst we have never opposed the closure of the level crossing, **we object most strongly to Networks Rails proposals for our land and feel that their intention to take the path across our field is most unreasonable, bordering on the vindictive.** In fact, we would like to think that we can rely on your support when you discuss this with Network Rail.

One more point. The Public Enquiry by the Secretary of State for Transport has been set for November and in all probability decisions will not be forthcoming until the New Year. With that in mind, is it sensible to spend Public Money on a survey a month before the Enquiry when the decision might well go against Network Rail in our case?

Thank you for listening to our concerns. At least now if you do become involved you will have the full picture.

Yours sincerely



P S Gray
Clerk to the Trustees

Cc Mrs S A Pollard (Maxey, Grounds & Co) Our Agents