

Caroline O'Neill

From: Hilary Gurner <town.clerk@newmarket.gov.uk>
Sent: 30 March 2017 16:52
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Cc: Louise Morgan; Kylie Uney; Amy Starkey; Andrew Appleby; Andy Drummond; Bill Sadler; Chris O'Neill; Dave Hudson; David Wright; Janet Clarke; John Berry; John Morrey; Justin Wadham; Michael Anderson; Mick Jefferys; Peter Hulbert; Philippa Winter; Rachel Hood; Warwick Hirst
Subject: Network Rail Anglia Level Crossing Reductions TWA Order
Importance: High

To: Secretary of State for Transport
 c/o: Transport and Works Act Orders Unit

Dear Sir,

Newmarket Town Council strongly object to the closure of the Wetherby Rail Crossing at Newmarket for the following reasons:-

1. It would split Newmarket into two.
2. Elderly residents currently using the crossing would not be able to walk to Town as their journey (currently taking 5-10 minutes) would take at least 30 minutes.
3. The retailers in Town would suffer due to the lack of customers being able to get to Town (as above).
4. Parents of children attending All Saints School would also have a longer journey to take and collect their children from school.
5. Residents who have lived in the area for over 60 years have advised us that they have never had a problem using the crossing and it therefore begs the question as to whether a prescriptive right of way may have been established, which would prevent Network Rail being able to close the crossing. This should be addressed and looked into.
6. Network Rail's statement that 'if the crossing remains open it would slow down the rail traffic at that point, since due to the close proximity of the station and the fact that the crossing is within the Newmarket Curve there is a maximum speed limit imposed of 40 mph in force' should be challenged.
7. As to Network Rail's risk assessment that keeping the crossing open would be dangerous, this is refuted as there have only been 2 fatalities at the crossing (both of which were self-inflicted suicides) during the last 60 years.
8. It is a disgrace that Newmarket residents have not had the opportunity of attending a meeting/consultation with Network Rail and our MP (Matt Hancock) in Newmarket, despite Cllr. Peter Hulbert and Matt Hancock asking for this to be done, on more than one occasion.

Newmarket Town Council has made the following Resolution along with other comments in connection with this closure:-

16/09/1 **TO DISCUSS THE CLOSURE OF THE NETWORK RAIL WETHERBY CROSSING**
 Cllr Hulbert advised that Network Rail's reasons for closing the crossing were based on an increased risk with the introduction of half hourly services. However it was noted that there were no half hourly services and that installing flashing lights and a buzzer would allow the crossing to stay open. Members were advised that residents had started a campaign to keep it open and the following was agreed:

16/09/24.01 Resolved

That NTC support the resident's campaign to keep the crossing open and write to East Cambridgeshire County Council and Woodditton Parish Council to request their support.

28th Sept 2016

16/09/2 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Hudson had given his apologies and the Mayor read out a report from SCC Cllr Robin Millar which included the following:

- Railway crossing closure – A reply to a letter sent to Network Rail had been received which indicated that an alternative diversion route for pedestrians was too expensive. A further meeting would be held to explore other options.

28th Nov 2016

16/09/3 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE WETHERBY RAIL CROSSING

Members were advised that Network Rail still wanted to close the crossing however MP Matthew Hancock had taken the issue to the Minister of State. A meeting was also due to be held between MP Matthew Hancock and the CEO of SCC but this would not be open to the public. FHDC had not yet confirmed if the crossing was a public right of way and the Acting Town Clerk advised that she had followed this up but a response was still awaited.

27th Feb 2017

16/09/4 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE WETHERBY RAIL CROSSING

Members were advised that MP Matthew Hancock had received correspondence from Network Rail which he was not happy with and had sent a response back. News of the rights of way were still awaited along with the meeting to be held between MP Matthew Hancock and the CEO of SCC.

The Mayor waived protocol and allowed a member of the press to advise that the correspondence MP Mathew Hancock had received was confirmation from Network Rail the crossing would be closed. Comments on the proposal must be submitted by 24th May 2017. It was noted that some crossings in Suffolk and Cambridge that were due to be closed had been reprieved.

27th March 2017

Please register Newmarket Town Council's objections to this closure.

Please confirm safe receipt of this email and it's contents.

Kind Regards,

Hilary A Gurner

Acting Town Clerk



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