

From: Mssrs E Hudson Baker <ehudsonbaker@atlasframgroup.co.uk>
Sent: 04 May 2017 11:09
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Cc: Mssrs E Hudson Baker; Paul Baker ag; mabel.baker@atlasframgroup.co.uk
Subject: Network Rail Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction Order : Objection.

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Transport and Works Act 1992

The Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006

Proposed Network Rail (Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction) Order

After preliminary consultations with Network Rail's Agents and after receiving 18 Formal Notices of the above order:-

We object, due to the potential impact of the proposals on our agricultural business that requires the movement of large agricultural vehicles in the vicinity of the crossings covered by the Order and the imposition of unnecessary new public rights of way over land within our tenancy.

We also object as we have not had the opportunity to fully discuss the current design (GEN 005) and its implications with Networks Rail's Agents.

Impact on large agricultural vehicle movements of crossing closures and footpath diversions.

After preliminary discussions with Network Rails agents, Network Rail agreed to retain our private vehicular use of S12 Gooderhams and Cow Creek [sic] crossings. But due to the width restriction of the private crossings some wider and/or higher harvesting machinery still has to be escorted via very long alternate routes to access various parcels of land in the vicinity.

We are concerned about the reduction of the width of road under the bridge on Pound Hill to allow pedestrian access. [Sheet 20, Parcel 38] It is unclear from the order as insufficient detail has been included to gauge what impact this could have on our vehicle movements.

Also it is unclear what the remaining width of the access track will be once the proposed footpath furniture (signs and bridges) are installed on Pulhams Lane [Sheet 21, Inset -A work 3 Area] for S69 proposals.

Poorly laid out pedestrian protection measures could prevent access or cause long diversions via alternate routes, with financial and amenity impacts on us and other road users.

The potential impact is exacerbated by one of the alternate routes (C406 between Haughley and Old Newton) being currently under consideration for a 7.5t weight limit forcing even more vehicles via the signed Pound Hill low bridge diversion route (U5109 Turkey Hall Lane). That in itself is very narrow, single track with passing places, or even longer routes with the hazard of adding more agricultural slow vehicles on major trunk routes (A14).

These points need particularly to be considered as we understand this is only the first stage of crossing rationalisation. Improvements need to be made on the existing private right crossings to allow increased width, height and design weight of vehicles to mitigate other rail crossing rationalisations.

Impact on increased interaction between public and livestock risk.

- Direct physical risks
- Sanitary risk of dog fouling. (Particularly *Neospora caninum*).

Extra lengths of diversion footpaths are proposed where there is very little current public use of foot crossings and alternative routes are already available. The order appears to increase the amenity value disproportionately, while generating the public interaction risk to hazards on working farmland at our and others' expense. This is without reducing the public interaction with trains as they are just being diverted to another un-signalled foot crossing at Cow Creek [sic].

People using these extra non-metalled footpaths are more likely to allow their animals to run free and foul the footpath and surrounding farmland, creating an elevated sanitary risk to our business. Particularly of concern to us as dairy farmers is *Neospora caninum*. The only control measure available to us for this parasite is the culling of infected animals and exclusion of contact with potentially contaminated land, feed or animals for the prevention of transmission.

Proposals for S69 Bacton. [Sheet 21, New footpath route P070, P071, P072, P073] The diversion for this closure will divert more people via Bacton footpath 14 across our forage and grazing land. Why is this even necessary when there is a metalled path that runs parallel 125m to the north of the proposed new route? If solely for diversion the proposed route under via Pound Hill Bridge is much shorter.

The proposed new footpath to west of the railway between S13 Fords Green and Cow Creek [sic] [Sheet 19, Parcel 11, P064 to P060] is unnecessary as there is already an alternative route in place via Bacton footpaths 14, 18, 23 and 22.

The increased amenity from these proposed new paths is disproportionate to the recorded low usage of S13 Fords Green, or S69 Bacton. There are already numerous circular routes west of the railway without the addition of these new paths and using some of these circular routes does not require pedestrian crossing of the railway at Cow Creek [sic]. Thus reducing the risk of injury due to unnecessary crossing of the rail line.

There are similar effects of the Order proposals to us and other land owners and tenants to the east of railway for the S13 and S69 crossings. Any consultations are only fully pertinent to the TWO design proposals at the point of time of that consultation. The "design freeze" we were last shown was GEN 004 and significantly different to the current order.

To remove our objection we would welcome

- The rationalisation of the public rights of way in the vicinity of the proposed crossing closures as part of the Order. Minimising the length of new rights of way for the diversions but particularly the potential of removal or relocation of cross field paths to the edge of fields.
- The consideration of increasing the available width of the private vehicular crossings at Gooderhams S12 and Cow Creek[sic] to mitigate the impact of this and further orders. (At the same time as the proposed removal of the public footpath furniture?) With further consideration of also raising the maximum height restriction on these imposed by the overhead power lines.

Both would reduce the potential 1st and 3rd party risks to our business. The second would remove the need for very long detours for some large vehicles and agricultural machinery through narrow lanes that would be welcomed by other road users.

We have not been impressed with the communication of Network Rail's Agents throughout the Order process, particularly dealing with the Landowner and tenant potential statutory objectors.

Objectors.

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