



11 October 2017

Network Rail – Anglia – Crossing Closure public consultation
Ref TWA/17/APP/04/OBJ/34
Statement of Case Crossing S08

The claimed driving initiative behind the many crossing closures proposed is the safety of the public.

If safety is the key issue it must follow that the alternate path for pedestrians to be used following a crossing closure should be at least as safe as the crossing being closed.

About 120 metres of the alternate route proposed for crossing S08 will place pedestrians on a footway just 1.2 metres wide between a high bank and a heavily trafficked, fast road at a point where vehicle drivers already have the hazards of the road narrowing and the crest of a hill to occupy their attention. This cannot be as safe as the existing path which is totally separate from any road traffic.

It is clear to see that options for a safer path, away from the traffic, are available.

Why has Network Rail not selected a safer alternative?

The likely pattern of usage of the footpath being diverted has not been adequately considered. Pedestrian visitors to a significant, “accessible” wild life area formed by the already flooded gravel pit and currently under development have not been taken into account. The wildlife site is immediately beside the existing footpath and railway line, and is separated from the B1113 by the railway line. The B1113 offers a parking layby within a short distance which is, by far, the closest vehicle access point. Access from the other side of the railway is by foot alone, or involves a private road and crossing private land. This does not appear to have been taken into account, adequately, if at all. A further gravel pit, also beside the existing footpath and railway and currently being worked, will be flooded and will become an accessible wildlife resource in the next few years further increasing usage of the crossing or its replacement.

The diversion path route alongside the B1113 at the north west extent of the proposed route is inherently unsafe for able bodied pedestrians, and all the more so for people with children and people with mobility issues. The path beside the road is very narrow, with HGV vehicles forced by weight and height restrictions to use this “national speed limit” section of the B1113 to access the nearby industrial estate, the Army Air Corps base at Wattisham and to access villages further afield.

It is perfectly possible to route the alternate path along the south west side of the railway across open land that is well away from traffic, maintaining the connectivity between the parking area on the road and the River Gipping Valley together with the emerging wild life areas with a far higher level of safety, albeit with some inconvenience.

Gordon Crosby