

Great Bentley Parish
Level Crossing Closure Proposal
E45 – Great Bentley Station

1. This crossing is convenient to the residents of the hamlet of Aingers Green (to the south) where the footpath starts (or finishes), with views across attractive farm land through to the railway and then onwards into the entrance to Birch Avenue, finally emerging onto the edge of the village green. Over the entire distance, its route crosses a bridleway, the railway and Birch Avenue and is otherwise clear of any roads.



From Aingers Green looking towards the Village (E45)



Station End (of E45 taken from P316) looking towards Aingers Green



Station Field (on E45 taken from P317) looking towards Great Bentley Station



Station Field (on E45 taken from P317) looking West along the proposed diversionary route (through land under Parish Council Ownership)



View on (first) gate into Parish Council Allotments being proposed exit/entrance to diversionary route, taken from P319



View East from E45, taken from P320



View West from E45



View of Footpath emerging onto Birch Avenue, taken from P312



View of footpath on North side of Birch Avenue cutting through onto the Village Green



View of Footpath emerging onto Village Green

2. If this crossing were to be closed, residents would have to make a de-tour out onto Plough Road along roads that have busy traffic and a much less attractive prospect. The section of the footpath proposed for closure is some 225 metres. The diversion is some 475metres, and thus 100% longer.

Another nearby crossing was initially proposed for closure (E44). It has been withdrawn from the plans, the reason given being an unacceptable lengthening of the diversionary route ('diversionary route too long') Two diversionary routes were proposed for that crossing, one 33% longer the other 26% longer. If 26% is too long an extension on what basis is over 100% acceptable?

Part of the diversionary route for E45 takes it along roads that have no footway including the area around the station and the route into the carpark where commuters and others maybe hurrying to get their vehicles parked in time for the train.

The route across the railway at the vehicular crossing has no safe provision for pedestrians. The areas where walkers are encouraged to cross is simply marked out of the vehicular carriageway with nothing more than a white line offering no protection at all.



Footway at vehicular level crossing, the proposed alternative to a country walk.

3. The sightlines at E45 are not limited but give good views in both directions. It is a quiet area and trains are readily audible. No accidents have been recorded at this crossing in the 150 years of its operation. Network Rail of course have the option of installing Miniature Warning Lights, as they have at E44, which would render this crossing a Protected Crossing.

Great Bentley Parish Level Crossing Closure Proposal E46 – Lord’s Nr 1

1. This crossing is convenient to the residents of Pine Close, Birch Avenue and connected roads. This is a significant enclave of the village, comprising some 200 plus dwellings. Some have views across the railway line of attractive farmland and distant woods, and all are within easy walking distance of paths taking them to the south, clear of any roads.



Pine Close, adjacent to Lord’s Nr 1 crossing (E46)



View of fields from garden of house adjacent to Lord’s Nr 1, taken from P322

2. (a) If this crossing were to be closed, the residents would have to make a most significant detour to reach the open countryside that they can see so closely, and which is otherwise immediately accessible. This detour takes them along several roads, and would be a much less attractive prospect.
- (b) The new distance is about 1.8 km (1.125 miles) as opposed to 580 metres as at present. In other words it is more than *three times* as far, an increase of 212%.
- (c) Another nearby crossing was initially proposed for closure (E44). It has been withdrawn from the plans, the reason given being an unacceptable lengthening of the diversionary route ("*diversionary route too long*") Two diversionary routes were proposed for that crossing, one 33% longer, the other 26% longer. If 26% is too long an extension, on what basis is 212% acceptable?
- (d) Part of the diversionary route for E46 takes it along roads that have no footway, including the area round the station and the route into the car-park, where commuters and others may be hurrying to get their vehicles parked in time for their train.
- (e) The route across the railway at the vehicular level crossing has no safe provision for pedestrians. The area where walkers are encouraged to cross is simply marked out of the vehicular carriageway with nothing more than a white line, offering no protection at all.



Footway at vehicular level crossing, the proposed alternative to a country walk.

3. The sightlines at E46 are not limited but give good views in both directions. It is a quiet area and trains are readily audible. No accidents have been recorded at this crossing in the 150 years of its operation. Network Rail of course have the option of installing Miniature Warning Lights, as they have at E44, which would render this

crossing a Protected Crossing.



MWL protection at local crossing E44



The view west from E 46



The view east from E46



The attractive view of open farmland across E46 from the enclave around Birch Avenue and Pine Close, giving ready, but perfectly safe, access for walking. Taken from P323.