

**Pedestrian Level Crossing E54 – Bures  
on the Marks Tey to Sudbury Branch Line**

**Level Crossing E54**

The Parish Council does not support the closure of crossing E54 for the following reasons.

1. For reasons quoted under 'Rail Underbridge No.891' below there is no suitable diversionary route for pedestrians to cross safely between The Colne Road and The Paddocks.
2. The pedestrian crossing is located on a straight section of single line railway (see photos 1&2). Visibility in each direction is good.  
In the up direction towards Marks Tey all trains stop at Bures. It takes a train leaving the station between 25-30 seconds to reach the crossing.  
In the down direction towards Sudbury there is a sight time of 55 seconds.  
All trains in the down direction other than the early morning empty stock and the 07.39 train from Marks Tey stop at Bures.  
Trains passing the crossing therefore do so at less than permitted line speed on approach to or leaving Bures Station. Pedestrians are therefore well aware of any approaching trains and their safety is not compromised.



**Photo 1 -Towards Marks Tey 55 secs. sight time**



**Photo 2 - Looking towards Bures Station and Sudbury  
25-30 secs. sight time**

### **Rail Underbridge No. 891 (SUD)**

The proposed diversionary route is using the existing rail underbridge No. 891 (SUD) at Station Hill, Bures.

This is unsuitable as a diversion to Footpath No.30 for the following reasons (see photos 3&4).

1. The approaches to the bridge shown on the photographs below clearly indicate the visibility through the bridge for drivers is limited.
2. The span of the bridge is 7.63m. There is an existing footpath against the northern abutment of width 1.2m. The proposal by Network Rail is to construct a new footpath against the south abutment. Construction of a second footpath will severely restrict the width of the carriageway and will render the road unsafe for two-way traffic. At this location because of the bends on approach to the bridge it will greatly increase the risk of collisions, which may cause damage to the rail bridge.
3. There is a road junction (Colne Road) close to the bridge which affords only limited visibility through the rail bridge. Colne Road is used frequently by 40ton tipper trucks that also pass beneath the rail bridge.
4. Network Rail had suggested during the consultation that traffic light control may be a solution. This would cause unnecessary congestion around the rail station area and on the west side the proximity of the bend on Lamarsh Hill and junction of Colne Road would not be acceptable. However, it is noted that traffic lights are not included in Network Rail's Transport & Works Act submission.



5. Traffic along this Class 'B' secondary road has increased in recent times and it carries a number of large vehicles, some of which fail to negotiate beneath the low bridge. There has been considerable damage caused to the arch rings. The occasions of damage to the bridge may increase if a new footpath is constructed, and danger to pedestrians will increase also, especially if vehicles mounted the pavements to avoid collision. Vehicles colliding with the bridge structure can cause delay to rail traffic because the bridge needs to be examined by a competent person before rail traffic can resume. The question arises as to whether consultations regarding these proposals have been addressed to Network Rail's Structures Engineer.



**Photo 3 - Drivers eye view from east approach  
(Station side)**



Photo 4 – Looking west Colne Road on left  
and right hand bend behind sign

#### **Bures Hamlet Parish Council's Conclusions**

Our response to the requirements raised by Network Rail's Consultants remain as our letter to the Secretary of State dated 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017, namely.

**Improve the safety of level crossing users.** The alternative routes proposed would considerably increase the safety risk to pedestrians.

**Deliver a more efficient railway, which is vital in supporting the regional and UK economy.** Abellio Greater Anglia has advised previously that the Gainsborough Line has a very good punctuality rating. The closure of this pedestrian rail crossing would have no effect on the efficiency of the service.

**Reduce the ongoing operating and maintenance cost of the railway.** The crossing remains in good condition, and maintenance cost for this type of crossing is minimal. Temporary removal for track maintenance probably would not incur any additional cost.

**Reduce delays to trains, pedestrians and other highway users.** Here the only concern is pedestrian safety. There have been no reported incidents on this crossing. Visibility in both directions is excellent, the crossing is properly signed. All down trains are slowing when passing the crossing to stop at the station. Up trains are accelerating but not up to line speed when passing the crossing. The exceptions to this are early morning empty trains and the 7.39 Marks Tey to Sudbury weekdays.

**Improve journey time reliability for all railways, highway and other rights of way users.** Since this is pedestrian use only, closure will have no effect. The pedestrian crossing is considered to be a safe route to cross the railway, therefore it has no effect on journey time reliability.



## BURES HAMLET PARISH COUNCIL

*Clerk:*

*Mrs Jenny Wright*

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*CO8 5DF*

*Tel:*

*Email:*

Anglia Level Crossing Proposals  
Network Rail  
One Stratford Place  
Montfitchet Road  
London  
E20 1EJ

5th July 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Level Crossing Proposals E54 Bures, Bures Hamlet Parish EX/70/30**

Please find below the parish council's comments on the closure proposal for the above listed pedestrian rail crossing.

Network Rail is currently proposing one option to replace the pedestrian rail crossing at Bures, with a route along The Paddocks and underneath the railway bridge in Station Hill.

The existing rail crossing has excellent visibility in both directions whereas the underbridge does not. Pedestrians will be in constant danger from road traffic. In addition train speeds are predictable, road traffic is changeable and speeds are variable. We also understand that traffic calming under the railway bridge has been suggested but traffic light control would be totally unacceptable to the parish council.

Network Rail's proposal handout lists a number of benefits perceived in closing or modifying level crossings that can help to bring about a number of benefits.

Listed below are comments to those perceived benefits in relation to E54:

**Improve the safety of level crossing users.** The alternative routes proposed would considerably increase the safety risk to pedestrians. Note the comments stated earlier.

**Deliver a more efficient railway, which is vital in supporting the regional and UK economy.** Abellio Greater Anglia has advised previously that the Gainsborough Line has a very good punctuality rating. The closure of this pedestrian rail crossing would have no effect on the efficiency of the service.

**Reduce the ongoing operating and maintenance cost of the railway.** The crossing remains in good condition, and maintenance cost for this type of crossing is minimal. Temporary removal for track maintenance probably would not incur any additional cost.

**Reduce delays to trains, pedestrians and other highway users.** Here the only concern is pedestrian safety. There have been no reported incidents on this crossing. Visibility in both directions is excellent, the crossing is properly signed. All down trains are slowing when passing the crossing to stop at the station. Up trains are accelerating but not up to line speed when passing the crossing. The exceptions to this are early morning empty trains and the 7.39 Marks Tey to Sudbury weekdays.

**Improve journey time reliability for all railways, highway and other rights of way users.** Since this is pedestrian use only, closure will have no effect. The pedestrian crossing is considered to be a safe route to cross the railway, therefore it has no effect on journey time reliability.

We trust that the parish council's concerns particularly on the safety of pedestrians, if Network Rail continues with its current proposal for E54, will be thoroughly considered and investigated before any final decision is reached.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Jenny Wright  
Clerk to Bures Hamlet Parish Council

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Anglia Level Crossing Proposals  
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Montfitchet Road  
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E20 1EJ

5<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Level Crossing Proposals E54 Bures, Bures Hamlet Parish EX/70/30 - Phase 2 Consultation**

Bures Hamlet Parish Council is extremely disappointed that closure of the above is still being pursued following the initial consultations carried out earlier this year.

We remain opposed to this proposal for the reasons set out in our letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016 (see copy attached) and we consider that the points made have not been properly taken into account.

In particular, the proximity of this crossing to the station, meaning that trains approaching in either direction are travelling at a low speed where there is good visibility; and the added danger to pedestrians of diverting the footpath under the existing roadbridge where there is no pavement and bad visibility.

We would therefore challenge the high ALCRM rating given of "D".

We also find it difficult to accept that public opinion has been taken into account when your report states that 82% of those who responded were against the proposal with only 9% in support.

As requested by the Parish Council Chairman at the second consultation on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016, we would like to arrange a meeting where the issues that we have raised can be explained at first hand. As discussed, we would be quite prepared to meet with your representatives at a time when they already have a site visit arranged.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Jenny Wright  
Clerk to Bures Hamlet Parish Council



## BURES HAMLET PARISH COUNCIL

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The Secretary of State for Transport  
c/o Transport and Works Act Orders Unit  
General Counsel's Office  
Department for Transport  
Zone 1/18, Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

10<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Network Rail Essex and Others Level Crossing Reduction Order  
E54 Bures - In the District of Braintree – In the Parish of Bures Hamlet**

We attach our two previous letters of objection (5/7/2016 and 5/10/2016) and ask that the contents be carefully considered to prevent the unnecessary closure of this important village asset.

We wish to particularly draw your attention to the danger to pedestrians of having to cross under the railway bridge where there is currently no footpath on the Colne Road side, a far greater safety hazard than crossing the railway line where there is one train per hour in each direction travelling at slow speed on the approach to or departure from the station platform.

Bures Hamlet Parish Council does not consider that constructing a footpath under the railway bridge on the Colne Road side is a viable option because it would severely limit the road width and lead to an increased risk of traffic accidents and potential for vehicle damage to the low headroom arch bridge.

We respectfully suggest that the rail infrastructure authority is consulted concerning these particular matters.

We trust that the Parish Council's concerns particularly on the safety of pedestrians will be thoroughly considered and investigated before any final decision is reached.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Jenny Wright  
Clerk to Bures Hamlet Parish Council