
From: Mark Cathcart
Sent: 13 August 2020 11:04
To: David Gillett
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: RVR Salehurst Bridleway crossing

Dear David,

[Informal planning enquiry; Proposed bridleway bridge at Salehurst, East Sussex.
Rother Valley Railway.](#)

Thank you for your email of 4 August 2020 together with the attachment illustrating the type of structure that would be constructed to form a bridge for horses and riders over the approved line of the heritage railway (RR/2014/1608/P).

I would first wish to confirm that planning permission would be required for this development.

A principal planning issue in considering the proposal would be the impact of the development on the appearance and character of the countryside landscape, which is within the designated High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Government's planning policies and how they should be applied are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states at paragraph 172 that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The Council's own development plan policies as contained in the Core Strategy (2014) at EN1 and the adopted Development and Sites Allocation Plan (2019) at DEN2 accord with the NPPF and are consistent with this approach. With respect to the proposed development, the railway sits within the broad flat landscape of the Rother Valley at this point and there are long views over the Weald. It is a very attractive rural landscape. The significant scale of the proposed bridge, combined with its very urban character and appearance, would result in it appearing an intrusive and incongruous feature in the countryside landscape. It would be harmful to the character and appearance of the AONB and contrary to the afore-mentioned national and local planning policies. In the circumstances, it is my informal view that a planning application would not be supported by the local planning authority.

I feel as though the proposed bridge to accommodate a bridleway/footpath crossing is a disproportionate response to an issue that is addressed by alternative and rather more sympathetic solutions at other locations along the route of the existing heritage railway line and they appear to function satisfactorily. I would therefore ask that you investigate alternative proposals for a bridleway crossing that would be more appropriate to conserving the AONB countryside setting of the railway.

Regarding the suggested proposal to close the bridleway; to me, this would appear an unnecessary response to the issue, however, it may well be something on which the Rights of Way Team at East Sussex County Council may be better placed to advise you. In this regard I am taking the liberty of copying-in Matthew Harper of the RoW Team on this email.

Thank you for consulting me on this matter.

Kind regards, Mark

Mark Cathcart BSc MA MRTPI

Principal Planning Officer

Strategy and Planning

rother.gov.uk



From: David Gillett
Sent: 04 August 2020 17:07
To: Mark Cathcart
Cc: 'Gardner Crawley'
Subject: RVR Salehurst Bridleway crossing

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Dear Mark,

As mentioned in our phone call yesterday, ORR have asked us to explain why a bridge would not be appropriate for the bridleway crossing at Salehurst.

Bridleway bridges for horses have to have long shallow approach ramps, with level platforms at prescribed intervals. I attach a photograph of one recently installed by Network Rail at Trimley over the rail line to Felixstowe. You will see that it is a very large structure, taking a lot of land, quite unsuitable and very intrusive for the peaceful country area around Salehurst. The Trimley bridge and approaches apparently cost over £1m. As the bridleway at Salehurst may be utilised by local tractors and farm machinery, the bridge would probably need to be even more substantial than the one in the picture. A bridge could also impact on the privacy of nearby houses in Salehurst.

A safe at grade crossing as presently planned, (as used on many Heritage Railways), and as discussed and agreed with the Horse Society, would cost around £30,000.

We would appreciate your initial planning opinion on the bridge option.

The ORR also asked if the bridleway could be closed, and it would be helpful if you could confirm your initial view that this would not be acceptable.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course, but do feel free to contact me if you need any further information.

Kind regards

David

RVR/TWA Project Manager

COVID - 19 pandemic

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