

From: Julian Sykes <Julian.Sykes@greatercambridgeplanning.org>
Sent: 26 September 2022 23:01
To: TRANSPORTINFRASTRUCTURE
Cc: Charlotte Burton; Jonathan Dixon
Subject: FW: THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992 - PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL (CAMBRIDGE RE-SIGNALING) ORDER - 'DEPOSIT OF COPY APPLICATION ETC. WITH OTHERS' – RULE 13 (1)
Attachments: Appendix 1 C3R TWA Consultation Rep 09.09.2022.pdf; enc 1 public consultation April 2021.pdf; enc 2 EIA consultation July 2021.pdf; enc 3 copy Shepreth PC.pdf; enc 4 and 5 parish council comments.pdf

Dear Sir/Madam,

Apologises for the delay in sending this through which I appreciate is after your deadline. I'd like to emphasis this is not new representations, but rather clarification on the existing ones.

One of our Councillors had some points of clarification on our representations and in particular enclosure no. 4. He has asked that they be sent through to you:

1, that the Follow Up comments in Enclosure no.4 were made after receiving and reading this Level Crossing Study which provides context for those additional comments

[Level Crossing Study - Performance Report \(windows.net\)](#)

MG0172 – Level Crossing Study.

2, to request a slight revision to the wording of the Follow Up comments in Enclosure no.4 to replace “Anna is in discussion with Campbell Ross-Bain at CCC”, with “County Cllr Anna Bradnam is in discussion with Campbell Ross-Bain at Cambridgeshire County Council Highways department”.

I trust these points of clarification are acceptable for you to receive.

Kind regards,

Julian

Julian Sykes | Principal Planner (Project Manager)



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From: Julian Sykes
Sent: 23 September 2022 16:42
To: transportinfrastructure@dft.gov.uk
Cc: Charlotte Burton <Charlotte.Burton@greatercambridgeplanning.org>; Jonathan Dixon <Jonathan.Dixon@greatercambridgeplanning.org>
Subject: THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992 - PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL (CAMBRIDGE RE-SIGNALING) ORDER - 'DEPOSIT OF COPY APPLICATION ETC. WITH OTHERS' – RULE 13 (1)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am attaching the representations of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service on the above draft order, with associated supporting documents and other consultee comments, for your consideration.

Please acknowledge receipt.

Kind regards,

Julian

Julian Sykes | Principal Planner (Project Manager)



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Secretary of State for Transport
c/o Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit
Department for Transport
Great Minister House
33 Horseferry Road
London, SW1P 4DR

By email only

Our references: 22/03819/TWA & 22/03628/TWA

23rd September 2022

Dear Secretary of State,

THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992 PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL (CAMBRIDGE RE-SIGNALING) ORDER

This letter is a joint representation on behalf of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council ('the Councils') to the application made by Network Rail Infrastructure Limited ('Network Rail') to the Secretary of State for Transport under sections 1 and 5 of the Transport and Works Act 1992 for the proposed Network Rail Cambridge Re-signalling Order ('the Order'). The Councils received notification of the application on 05 August 2022. This representation has been approved by the Councils in accordance with their respective constitutions.

Overall, while the Councils support the aims of the scheme to improve the reliability and performance of the network and recognise the intended safety enhancements, the Councils place a **holding objection** to the application for the reasons set out in this letter. In summary, these relate to the concerns that the Councils raised with Network Rail in the earlier public consultation which have not been satisfactorily addressed, and further information that is required from Network Rail to address site-specific issues raised by Ward Councillors and Parish Councils as set out in this

letter. The Councils welcome further engagement with Network Rail to resolve these matters.

Proposal

The draft Network Rail (Cambridge Re-signalling) Order relates to the Cambridge Re-signalling Relock & Recontrol Project to upgrade the re-signalling of the Cambridge station interlocking area and relevant level crossings, and any other works and operations incidental or ancillary to such works. The stated aim is to upgrade the re-signalling system to a 35-year life and improve the reliability and performance of the network.

The draft Order would confer powers for Network Rail to compulsorily acquire land and rights in land and take temporary possession in connection with the works required for project and stop up the public highway. The application does not include a request for deemed planning consent and as such no detailed plans for the works have been submitted. The Councils have therefore commented only on the deposited land plans and the accompanying description of the works to follow.

It is understood from the submission that the works would be carried out under the applicant's permitted development rights, prior approval or following the granting of express planning permission. As stated in the Listed in List of Consents, Permissions or Licences under Other Enactments (Required by Rule 10(2)(f)) (NR-07), the applicant would submit further applications for prior approval or the granting of express planning permission for works at Six Mile Bottom, Shepreth and Little Shelford. The Councils make no comment on whether or not the works fall within permitted development and reserve its position with regard to the need for planning permission or any other permissions.

Notwithstanding that the current application for the draft Order only confers powers to acquire land and does not consent the works to be carried out, the Councils consider it material to assess the impact of the intended works when commenting on this application. This is because the compulsory acquisition of land must be justified by the need for the works, and because the acquisition of land facilitates the use of permitted development rights and prior approval consents to carry out the works. Thus the impact of intended works is intrinsic to the assessment of the acquisition of land which cannot be considered standalone. It is on this basis that this representation is made.

Finally, it is stated in the application that the draft Order would authorise Network Rail to compulsorily acquire land and rights in land and take temporary possession of land in connection with the works, all within the Cambridgeshire County Council area for relevant works. Therefore, Cambridge City Council property services team has

not been consulted on the site to the south of Long Road bridge. Should this not be the case, then further consultation is required with the authority.

Public consultation

The Councils submitted representations to Network Rail's public consultation in April 2021 and to the consultation on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening request in July 2021. These have been summarised by Network Rail in the Consultation Report (NR-05). However, the Councils are concerned that Network Rail has not given proper consideration to all the issues raised. Therefore, copies of the representations are enclosed for completeness. The issues raised by the Councils in those representations are summarised as follows:

1. Strongly support the proposed signalling upgrades and the safety improvements to the level crossings.
2. Further assessment is required of impact of barrier down time on traffic within the locality and the wider highway network including avoiding unforeseen impacts, and the resulting potential reduction in air quality and carbon emissions.
3. Further assessment is required of barrier down time and behavioural responses including additional risk taking, to ensure that improvements in rail safety should not result in a reduction in road safety.
4. Consider accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians as well as those with reduced mobility affected by the proposed level crossing changes.
5. Further assessment of the impact of the conversion at Shepreth from half barrier to a full barrier on vehicles queuing in the village is required, including the combined impact with the existing full barrier within 500 metres on traffic.
6. Consider future upgrades to ensure passive provision is provided, including at Six Mile Bottom level crossing.
7. Diversion of the Definitive Line of the Public Footpath Waterbeach 21 should be regularised.
8. Consultation with Natural England is required on the potential impact of the works at Shepreth on the L-Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and at Dimmock's Close (East Cambridgeshire) on Cam Washes SSSI.
9. Consultation with Historic England is required on the potential impact of works at Milton, Waterbeach and Little Shelford on Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
10. The potential impact of the proposed development on protected species, listed buildings, Air Quality Management Zones, works within Flood Zones 2 and 3 should be assessed through information submitted with the appropriate consent applications.

The representations below are made with reference to these issues previously raised and new matters which have come to light.

Representation

In preparing this representation, the Councils have engaged with Ward Councillors, Parish Councils and the Highways Authority, and have consulted with technical officers for the Councils. A copy of the representations received from Ward Councillors and Parish Councils are enclosed.

- **Principle of development (item 1)**

The Councils remain supportive of the aims of the scheme to improve the reliability and performance of the network which will enhance connectivity and thereby support economic growth within the Greater Cambridge area and promote the use of sustainable transport modes. Thus, the principle of development is supported. However, the Councils consider that this should be balanced against the potential impacts of the scheme in terms of transport, access and safety, air quality and carbon emissions, and other environmental impacts, which are discussed further below.

- **Transport (items 2, 5, 6)**

Network Rail has submitted Traffic Modelling Report and a Level Crossing Study with the application (reference documents). At the time of writing (08 September), the Councils have not received assurance from the Highways Authority that the applicant's modelling and the predicted impacts are supported. Therefore, the Councils place a **holding objection** until Network Rail has confirmed support from the Highways Authority. This must specifically address the issues raised in items 2, 5 and 6, and include a satisfactory response to the concerns raised by Ward Councillors and Parish Councils summarised as:

| | |
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| Waterbeach | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Under the 2018 traffic scenario, queues in the morning will reach back to the village green. Assessment of the impact of this on the village is required.• Modelling doesn't take account of the development of the Waterbeach New Town therefore traffic growth is potentially too low.• Barrier down times and specifically concerns that Waterbeach Station will become unusable for passenger during peak times, resulting in additional car or cycle trips to North Cambridge or choosing not to travel by train. |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future shuttle bus from Waterbeach New Town to the station intended to reduce traffic levels will get stuck in queues discouraging uptake. |
| Meldreth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal will increase congestion in the village through substantially increased downtimes and increase the difficulty of traffic flow. • The data underlying the conclusion that the effects on the village will be “minimal” is seriously flawed, being either contradictory, based on averages from other areas or inaccurate. As a minimum, consistent data specific to the Meldreth Road and Shepreth crossings should be collected, analysed and presented in a transparent and accessible manner. |
| Six Mile Bottom | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The land outside the old station is being acquired compulsorily (cars are currently parked here for Station House and 1 Station Cottages). • The VISSIM model suggests there will be significant increased queue possibly justified (p39) because the longer barrier down time ‘allows multiple trains to pass at once’, but this is single track, with one train each way each hour. |

- **Access and safety (items 3, 4, 7)**

The applicant has provided risk assessments for each of the existing level crossings in Appendix A of the Consultation Report. However, the methodology and conclusions of these risk assessments is unclear. Furthermore, while it is accepted that the project aims to increase safety, no acknowledgement has been made about the potential increase in risk from users seeking to cross before the barriers come down to avoid the longer wait times. Therefore, the Councils place a **holding objection** until Network Rail has provided satisfactory explanation of the risk assessment and the potential increase in risk resulting from the longer barrier down times, and until Network Rail has provided satisfactory responses to the concerns raised by Ward Councillors and Parish Councils including:

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| Waterbeach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The crossing is used by Waterbeach residents to access the river. Safety concerns as increased barrier down times could lead to passengers crossing the barriers out |
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| | |
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| | <p>of frustration. Alternative provision is required for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the railway line.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a half barrier with obstacle detection has not been considered as an alternative which would improve safety but not increase barrier down time to the same extent? |
| Meldreth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant's flawed analysis of the safety record means that safety benefits of the scheme have been overestimated. • There are potential highway safety implications if speeding vehicles trying to cross before the barriers come down enter the residential area which needs to be considered. |

In regard to item 7, it is understood from the List of Consents Permissions or License under Other Enactments (NR-07) that no diversion of the Definitive Line of the Public Footpath Waterbeach 21 will be sought. The Councils defer to the Highway Authority on this matter, which is understood to relate to regularisation rather than access issues.

- **Air quality and carbon emissions (item 2, 10)**

The applicant has not provided any assessment of the potential impact on air quality or carbon emissions, contrary to the request made by the Councils. While the Councils anticipate the challenges of assessing localised and short-duration impacts from increased queue lengths of idling vehicles, nonetheless Network Rail should recognise the potential impact and consider the suitability of potential traffic management measures to mitigate any potential impact and the feasibility of any monitoring that could be put in place. Therefore, the Councils place a **holding objection** until Network Rail has provided a satisfactory response including addressing the site-specific concerns raised by Ward Councillors and Parish Councillors including:

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|-----------------|---|
| Meldreth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reality of significantly longer queues means there will be increased pollution and deteriorating air quality. There does not appear to be an assessment of the impact of this on the surrounding environment. |
|-----------------|---|

- **Other environmental matters (items 7, 8, 9, 10)**

The Councils defer to Natural England regarding the potential impact on SSSIs (item 8) and Historic England regarding the Scheduled Ancient Monuments (item 9). None of the land identified for permanent or temporary acquisition, nor that required for access to the identified sites within either South Cambridgeshire or Cambridge City has any statutory or non-statutory protection. Nonetheless, each site will require individual ecological assessment for protected species. Regarding item 10, no assessment of the potential impact on protected species, listed buildings, Air Quality Management Zones, works within Flood Zones 2 and 3 has been provided with the application. Therefore, the Councils place a **holding objection** until Network Rail has provided satisfactory information to demonstrate the scheme would have an acceptable impact.

In addition to this, the site to the south of Long Road bridge in Cambridge is within an area covered by a tree preservation order. Works within this area must avoid impact on trees which would require consent from the local planning authority. The Councils note that this area is the same as would be permanently acquired under the draft Network Rail (Cambridge South Infrastructure Enhancements) Order, still under consideration by the Secretary of State. The Councils question whether the schemes are compatible or are competing for the use of this area, which could put further pressure on works affecting trees. Therefore, the Councils place a **holding objection** until Network Rail has provided more information about the works in this area and an acceptable impact on protected trees.

I trust that these comments will be taken into account and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Dr Tumi Hawkins

Lead Cabinet Member for Planning,
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Cllr Katie Thornburrow

Executive Councillor for Planning
Policy and Infrastructure,
Cambridge City Council

Enclosures -

1. Representation to consultation April 2021
2. Representation to EIA screening request July 2021
3. Copy of comments from Shepreth Parish Council
4. Comments from Ward Councillor for Milton and Waterbeach
5. Comments from Councillor for Little Wilbraham and Six Mile Bottom Parish Council

Response to Network Rail's Consultation on Cambridge re-signalling

Response to be sent to: CambridgeC3R@networkrail.co.uk by 11 April 2021 at the latest

| | |
|----|--|
| 1. | What is your name? |
| | <p>Julian Sykes</p> <p>Please note that this response is send on behalf of the Greater Cambridge Planning Service (Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council) and is aligned with the Cambridgeshire County Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council and Greater Cambridge Planning Service (Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council) response.</p> |
| 2. | What is your email address? |
| | localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org & julian.sykes@greatercambridgeplanning.org |
| 3. | What is your postcode? |
| | CB1 0JH and CB23 6EA |
| 4. | How do you feel about our proposals to upgrade the signalling in the Cambridge area? |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly support • Support • Undecided • Do not support • Strongly do not support <p>No response</p> |
| 5 | How do you feel about the safety improvements to the proposed level crossings? |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly support • Support • Undecided • Do not support • Strongly do not support <p>No response</p> |
| 6 | Do you have any other comments you wish to make about the C3R proposals? |
| | <p>We are strongly supportive of any improvements to the rail network and those that benefit Cambridgeshire and Peterborough residents. Whilst we note that this scheme is a renewals rather than improvement project we wish to highlight the need to make sure that anything that is proposed caters adequately for future demand and that every opportunity is used to increase capacity and improve reliability. Several key projects in the area need to be considered within this context namely, Ely Area Capacity Enhancement, East West Rail and Cambridge South Station.</p> <p>Level Crossings</p> <p>We are supportive of improving safety at level crossings for all users but have several points below. There is a need to take a holistic view of transport safety to ensure that improvements to rail safety do not result in a reduction in road safety. Attention to should be paid to the vision zero partnership, https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/communities/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-vision-zero-partnership/ Consideration should also be taken as to how people will behave towards the increased barrier downtime. It</p> |

is possible that with increased barrier downtime people may take more risks to avoid being delayed and this may lead to greater issues with trespass and crossing misuse.

There is not enough detail regarding the level crossing upgrade to provide details comments. No information is provided on barrier down time now compared with what it is predicted to be in the future. No information regarding the impacts on traffic and pedestrian flows is provided. A full level crossing census with barrier downtime now and in the future would be needed to make a more detailed assessment. Quantifiable information on the relative level of risk at all the level crossing before and after the proposed improvements would be useful.

There is also a need to consider accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians as well as those with reduced mobility affected by the proposed level crossing changes and their needs have to be catered for. Through negotiation and in accordance with its Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the County Council will seek to protect and, where possible, achieve enhancements to the public right of way and non-motorised user network in the affected area. The County Council will be pleased to enter discussions with Network Rail to secure positive outcomes for local residents and rights of way user groups affected by the scheme.

When making improvement to level crossing it is important to considered both the potential change to air quality of potentially and carbon emissions. With the potential for more vehicles to be queuing these could get worse.

From the drawing provided it is hard to tell how the level crossing proposals will impact on future rail infrastructure improvements, but it is key to ensure that none of these proposals will jeopardises other future improvements. Consideration of future upgrades is required to ensure passive provision is provided.

Meldreth Road, Shepreth Level Crossing

It is noted that the Meldreth Road, Shepreth crossing is included in the list of crossings to be replaced by a full barrier. This particular crossing is about 500m west of another in the same village which was recently converted from half to full barrier. The conversion of that crossing caused significant issues on the highway network within the village of Shepreth due to the very significant increase in downtime of the barrier. This led to queuing in the village which resulted in the blocking of properties and a junction. At its worst, the barrier was observed to be down continuously for some 17 minutes.

Regarding the proposal for the conversion of the Meldreth Road crossing to full barrier, it is not clear from the information and data provided firstly, what the impact of this will be in the immediate vicinity of the crossing and secondly, what the combined impacts of both barriers will be on the village of Shepreth and neighbouring villages in terms of the redistribution of traffic.

The number of properties is fewer in the vicinity of this crossing than the Station Road crossing meaning that the impact of queuing traffic is likely to be a less of an issue. Signing and lining should be included from the outset as part of this upgrade to ensure that properties aren't blocked by queuing traffic, however, a lack of traffic data provided in the consultation combined with no information on maximum barrier downtimes makes it impossible to advise on how far into the village this needs to be extended.

Of greater concern is the combined impact on the village of both barriers being down at the same time. With two barriers affecting the village, the severance already affecting the village

is likely to be exacerbated, especially as Shepreth looks to its neighbouring villages of Meldreth and Barrington for some services, schools, for example. Again, a lack of data provided as part of this proposal makes it impossible to quantify the scale of this.

Finally, there is a concern about what and where the impacts of any redistribution of traffic are likely to be felt on the wider highway network. Traffic bound for Cambridge from the eastern end of Meldreth is likely to currently pass through Shepreth before joining the A10 either at Frog End or at the Fowlmere crossroads. If the current proposal causes a marked increase in downtime at the barrier as was seen at Station Road, then this could cause traffic to travel back to the Melbourn junction to join the A10, causing issues within that village, or to take a more circuitous route through Malton and Barrington in order to avoid all the level crossings including Foxton. Without an effort having been made to quantify the scale of this in drawing up this proposal, it is difficult to understand whether this is likely to be a problem and whether further mitigation measures are required to offset this.

In addition to having a better indication of the likely downtime, it would also be helpful to better understand how the operation of the crossings can be improved, given that this will be undertaken manually and remotely. It is understood that some of the issues currently experienced at the Station Road crossing stem from priority being given to Foxton level crossing in an effort to minimise traffic build up on the A10. With another crossing in close proximity being added into the mix, there is a danger that the adverse effects seen in Shepreth will be exacerbated. Consideration should be taken as to the overall risk particularly if a vehicle takes an alternative trip using the A10 to avoid increased delays at this level crossing.

Meldreth Road is the boundary of L-Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest has the environmental impacts. It is important that the correct organisation are consulted on this change.

Waterbeach Level Crossing

On the eastern side of the railway line, the Definitive (legal) line of Public Footpath Waterbeach 21, will be permanently obstructed by the proposed changes to upgrade the level crossing. It will be necessary to regularise the actual footpath route used, which is outside the works area, by diverting the Definitive line of the Public Footpath to the route used. Network Rail will need to apply for a Public Path Order under Highways Act 1980, section 119. It should be noted that the Definitive line is already obstructed by existing railway fencing and infrastructure so a TTRO should be applied for from the Streetworks team to manage the issue of the obstruction at present.

Six Mile Bottom Level Crossing

Although it is hard to tell from the material provided it look as though the proposals at this level crossing may impeded future track doubling in this area. Passive provision for this should be included at the very least.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways Authority Role

As the Highways Authority the County Council will have to be fully engaged. As it is likely that proposals will affect highways, various teams at the County Council will have to be involved and there will be a requirement for Network Rail to cover costs through this process.

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| | <p>Team included but are not limited to are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management • Transport Management • Transport Strategy • Transport Assessment • Rights of Way • Bridges (if applicable) • Historic Environment Archaeology • Street lighting • Street works • Floods and Water • Traffic signals (if applicable) • Highways Development Engineering <p>As Highway Authority, the County Council will require that it is consulted upon any changes to the existing highway network. If there are any resultant increased highways maintenance liabilities imposed upon the Council as a result of changes to the existing highway network or the adoption of new highways infrastructure, the Council will require appropriate compensations, via the provision of commuted sums and/or other means.</p> <p>Public Health Implications</p> <p>There is a requirement that the Public Health Team are involved in the scoping of the Environmental Impact Assessment to ensure the health impacts are adequately addressed and mitigated.</p> <p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Comments</p> <p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning would like to reiterate the comments it submitted in response to your Consultation Strategy, namely that Network Rail should seek pre-application advice, and provide detailed information to the service under the works that require planning consent.</p> |
| 7 | Are you happy for Network Rail to contact you via email to find out more about your views? |
| | <p>The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service is very happy to work with Network Rail on this project going forward and there several teams that will need to be involved as the project progresses.</p> |

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Network Rail
c/o Andrew Deacon
WSP
Aldermay House
10-15 Queen Street
London
EC4N 1TN

By email only

27 July 2021

Our Reference: 21/03205/SCRE & 21/03253/SCRE

**Environmental Screening Opinion- The Town and Country Planning
(Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) Regulations 2017**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Proposed Development:

Request for EIA screening opinion for Cambridge Re-Signalling, Re-Lock and Re-Control Project (CR3)

At:

**Milton Fen, Waterbeach, Six Mile Bottom, Meldreth Level Crossings,
Cambridge Station**

Further to your request for a screening opinion under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (2017) received on 7 July 2021, this letter provides the formal response on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council.

I understand that you have also requested screening opinions from East Cambridgeshire District Council, West Suffolk Council and Breckland District Council for the parts of the scheme within those administrative areas.

Proposal

As per your covering email, the proposed works within the administrative boundaries that have been considered in this request are as follows:

- South Cambridgeshire – Upgrade of Milton Fen, Waterbeach, Six Mile Bottom and Meldreth level crossings and associated resignalling works. The works are to be consented through a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) or an application for full planning permission.
- Cambridge – Works associated with the resignalling works at Cambridge Station. The majority of the works are likely to be permitted development.

Consultation

Whilst there is no statutory requirement to consult on screening requests under the relevant EIA regulations, the Local Planning Authority undertook consultation of key consultees. The responses have been summarised and can be found in *Appendix 1* attached to this letter. The full consultation response can be accessed online via the website below:

<https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application>

Assessment

The Councils agree that the proposed works do not fall under Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations 2017, because in relation to part 7 (1) for railways, the works do not include the construction of a railway over 2100m.

In relation to Schedule 2 development, the Councils agree that the scheme could fall under part 10 for infrastructure projects, specifically (d) for the construction of railways if the area of the works exceeds 1 hectare and is likely to have significant environmental effects. The works would not exceed 1 hectare, however the site is located in, or partly in, sensitive areas, therefore requires assessment.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

The sensitive areas relating to the proposed development in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City are:

- L-Moor SSSI, Shepreth
- Cam Washes SSSI, Upware

It is necessary to judge whether the likely effects on the environment of that particular development will be significant in that particular location. Natural England has advised that the proposed development has potential likely significant effects on the above SSSIs.

The proposed development at Shepreth is to upgrade the level crossing, install relocatable equipment building (REB) with associated fence, REB compound, new

vehicular parking, and new road signs. The works would be located 200m to the north of the L-Moor SSSI.

The part of the Cam Washes SSSI within South Cambridgeshire is approximately 3.3km from the proposed works at Dimmock's Close which are outside the administrative boundary and within East Cambridgeshire.

Following the assessment above based on the nature of the works and the proximity to sensitive sites, it is considered that the effects on SSSIs can be assessed through the submission of an ecological impact assessment with the TWAO or full planning application. Proposals should be submitted to deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)

There are a number of SAMs located in close proximity to the works. However limited intrusive below ground works are proposed. From your submission, it is noted:

- Milton Fen Level Crossing (Works Area No. 1) - The level crossing lies 190m south-west of the Hill Close 'Multi-phased settlement east of Milton' which is a Scheduled Monument (List Entry Number: 1457437);
- Waterbeach Level Crossing (Works Area No. 2) - The level crossing is located approx. 95m east of the Waterbeach Abbey Scheduled Monument and 620m east of the Car Dyke Scheduled Monument. The railway line passes through the Car Dyke Scheduled Monument approx. 840m to the south of the level crossing.
- Hauxton REB (Works Area No. 8) - The Hauxton REB will be located approx. 250m south-west and south of the two designated sites which make up the Settlement NW of Little Shelford Scheduled Monument.

As no works within the boundary of the designated sites are proposed, the works would not have a significant impact on SAMs. However you should consult Historic England prior to submitting any applications which could have an impact on SAMs to secure appropriate mitigation.

Other sensitive areas

In certain cases, local designations which are not included in the definition of "sensitive areas", but which are nonetheless environmentally sensitive, may also be relevant in determining whether an assessment is required.

I note the proximity to listed buildings, Air Quality Management Zones, works within Flood Zones 2 and 3, however the effect of the proposed development on these could be assessed through information submitted with the appropriate consent applications. This should include protected species surveys and mitigation.

Cumulative impact

The nature and scale of the proposed works and the localised impact is such that the cumulative impact across local authority boundaries and any other development within the vicinity is not considered to have a significant environmental effect.

Summary

In summary, the Councils have concluded that the proposed development would not require the submission of an ES. I enclose a copy of the Councils' full screening matrix for your information and records.

This screening opinion is based on the scheme described in the documents submitted with this screening request. However, should the scheme change significantly, then a further screening request must be submitted.

You are recommended to seek formal pre-application advice from the Councils to discuss the proposals and any necessary mitigation further before submitting your applications. More information on our pre-application process and charges can be found here: <https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/planning-applications/pre-application-advice/>.

If you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Charlotte Burton MRTPI

Principal Planner – Strategic Sites

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

Enclosure: Screening Matrix

Appendix 1- Consultation Responses

- 1.1 The local planning authority formally consulted the following and a summary of the consultation response is provided:

Natural England

Potential likely significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes and further assessment is required. The proposed development is located within/partly within or has the potential for adverse effects on the following designated nature conservation sites or designated landscapes (in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire:

- L-Moor, Shepreth SSSI
- Cam Washes SSSI

Recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the proposed development.

Should you determine that an EIA is not required in this case, you should ensure that the application is supported by sufficient biodiversity, landscape and other environmental information in order for you to assess the weight to give these material considerations when determining the planning application.

Environment Agency

No opinion provided.

Highways Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council)

No comment from Highway Engineer.

Health Development Officer – South Cambridgeshire District Council

The degree of works in South Cambridgeshire is relatively minor and the impacts to human health will not be significant or long term. Health Impact Assessment not required.

- 1.2 The local planning authority also consulted the following but received no reply at the time of issuing this decision:

- Environmental Health Team – South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Ecology Team – South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Planning Policy Team – Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
- Conservation Team – Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
- Historic England
- Archaeology Team – Cambridgeshire County Council
- Transport Assessment Team – Cambridgeshire County Council



Shepreth Parish Council Objection to Proposals for the Meldreth Road Level Crossing September 2022

The Parish Council wishes to record its objection to the planned conversion of the half barriers at Meldreth Road Level Crossing to full barriers. The proposal will increase congestion in the village through substantially increased downtimes, increase the difficulty of traffic flow and the risk of speeding in the of the most densely populated parts of the village. There will also be a deterioration in air quality. In our opinion, the risks of such change outweigh the minimal safety benefits that will accrue.

Furthermore, the Parish Council is of the opinion that the data underlying the conclusion that the effects on the village will be “minimal” is seriously flawed, being either contradictory, based on averages from other areas or inaccurate. As a minimum, the Parish Council requires consistent data specific to the Meldreth Road and Shepreth crossings be collected, analysed and presented in a transparent and accessible manner before any final decision is made. Our objection is based on the following:

1. Downtime

A reading of a separate document “The Performance Report-Level Crossing Study” of 14 June (which appears not to figure on the list of documents submitted with the planning application) illustrates the data problem. On page 11, we read:

“A set of absolute minimum barrier closure times for each crossing, with the exception of Meldreth where the times are proposed to be in line with the Shepreth crossing.”

Yet on page 12, we are told:

“For the Meldreth level crossing, as no other data is available, the barrier down time has been based on the average time from all of the other level crossings.”

We are further told on page 44 of the Consultation Report of 26th July 2022:

“Network Rail undertook Traffic and Transport modelling for each of the seven no. level crossings”

Another separate document entitled “The Local Model Validation Report” of 11 August (which also appears not to figure on the list of documents submitted with the planning application) contains a cursory one-day study of both the Meldreth Road and Shepreth level crossings. The data derived from this study appears to have been ignored. It is doubtless coincidental that this data points to longer downtimes than forecast and thus undermines the conclusion of a “minimal” impact on traffic. The

single point of clarity in this proposal is that its conclusions are based on confusing and conflicting information and there is no detailed site-specific data on which to make a proper evidence-based evaluation.

The current average downtime (based on those figures derived from other sites) quoted in Table 1.6 on page 12 of the Performance Report is 169 seconds. The actual data in the Local Model Validation Report suggests an average downtime of 50 seconds. This difference means that the maximum incremental delay of 65 seconds as quoted in Table 9.1 on page 57 of the Performance Report is severely understated and should on this basis be 184 seconds. This renders much of the modelling of traffic queues inaccurate, underlines the need for site-specific data and certainly undermines the conclusion that the impact of the proposal is “minimal”.

Data for Shepreth LC shown in the Local Model Validation Report suggests an average downtime of 208 seconds, with a maximum of 409 seconds.. If the assumption on page 11 is to be used, the incremental downtime would likely be 158 seconds, with a maximum of 359 seconds, which is certainly not “minimal”.

The above again reinforces the need for in-depth (ie more than a single day) accurate, site-specific information for both the Meldreth Road and Shepreth crossings. The failure to do so calls into question the integrity and validity of the proposal's conclusions.

The Parish Council further notes on page 27 of the Consultation Report that:

“In response to comments from the Highways Authorities (Cambridgeshire and Norfolk County Council) and Highways England, the Project has undertaken traffic surveys and modelling to assess the potential impacts of longer barrier down times at the upgraded level crossing works areas. Further engagement with these authorities has been undertaken to discuss the outcomes and findings of this modelling.”

This is curious as we are told above that data for Meldreth has not been collected. The data that has in fact been collected seems to have been discarded. We would like confirmation that the views of the various Transport Officers at District and County Council level have been sought as part of this consultation.

2. Safety

The Consultation Report states on page 7 that the outcomes of the All Level Crossing Risk Model are shown in Appendix A. This is indeed true in that Meldreth Road LC is assigned a “D2” rating. There is however no explanation of how this evaluation is reached and no safety history of the crossing. Furthermore, we are told on Page 42 that:

“Information based on the findings of the ALCRM for each of the seven no. level crossing was made available on request and could be viewed via Network Rails Level Crossing Safety page on their website”

Other than the vague and unsupported rating described above, this is simply not the case and there is no source of, for example, historic incidents at Meldreth Road. The Parish Council is however grateful to a determined resident who has, under Freedom of Information legislation, winkled out some safety data on the Meldreth Road LC

from Network Rail. Somewhat inevitably, this is poorly presented, poorly compiled and misleading.

The spreadsheet provided suggests there have been 46 incidents on the level crossing since March 1997. A rather painstaking analysis gives a completely different picture, suggesting that of these 46:

19 were attributable to other crossings in the area;
17 involved equipment failure; and
4 were not relevant to the size of the barrier.

On this basis, there have been six relevant incidents since 2002. Four involved individuals on the track (of which one was recorded as a near miss), though the narrative is inexact and it might be argued that at least three (including the near miss) may not have been prevented by a full barrier. The fifth was a marginal obstruction, and the sixth was an incident of a car zigzagging the crossing in 2018.

Thus there has, in the last 25 years, been only one incident that could definitively have been prevented by a full barrier and this was not classified as a near miss. The Parish Council does not believe that this proposal can be justified on the grounds of a poor safety record at the Meldreth Road level crossing. It would be good to know whether or not the "D2" rating was derived from this inaccurate information.

3. Road Safety

The Meldreth Road level crossing is barely 200m from John Breay Close and the most densely populated area of Shepreth. The Parish Council does not accept the downtime modelling of the Performance Report-Level Crossing Study of 14 June for the reasons outlined above, believing these to be materially understated. We believe typical downtimes will be similar to Shepreth, where delays of up to 7 minutes are common, and a 10 minute wait is by no means unusual. This will lead to much longer queues than those forecast in the model and chaos as long lines of traffic try to negotiate a narrow residential street with many parked cars.

Furthermore, we believe that is inevitable, once drivers are aware of the new extended downtimes, that a minority will accelerate rapidly to try and beat the barrier descent and enter the residential area at high speeds. The proposal is thus designing in a severe risk that does not currently exist.

4. Environment

The Parish Council has no confidence in the traffic model and believes that the derived maximum queue length of 51m is woefully understated. Queues at Shepreth crossing have on occasion exceeded 300m. Yet again the absence of relevant data is potentially leading to a misinformed decision.

The Council further notes that the proposal is adjacent to a residential area on one side and a Site of Special Scientific Interest on the other. The reality of significantly longer queues than anticipated in the model means there will be increased pollution and deteriorating air quality. There does not appear to be an assessment of the impact of this on the surrounding environment. We would like to see the views of the relevant Environment Officers.

Conclusion

The Parish Council finds that this proposal is under-researched and misleading and that a conclusion that will have a wide-ranging impact on the village is based on flawed data barely relevant to the Meldreth Road Level Crossing. It believes that the risks occasioned by the proposal, notably those involving road safety and air quality, far outweigh any benefits that may accrue. The Council objects in the strongest possible terms and calls for a transparent and proper analysis of site specific information for both Meldreth Road and Shepreth level crossings before any final decision is taken.

Ward Councillor for Milton and Waterbeach

Initial comments

Residents in Waterbeach have expressed concerns about the time for which the barriers will be down. The frequency of trains in the morning peak period could mean that the road is closed for a significant period of time under this scheme. The impact on traffic on Station Rd, station users and those accessing the area to the east of the railway could be significant.

As far as I know we have not been provided with any detailed information about the duration for which the barriers will be down and the frequency of closure. I received one suggestion that the barriers might not be raised at all between 7.53 and 8.25 in the morning due to frequency of trains and duration of closure. This would also mean that passengers could not cross to the railway to access the platforms during this period which is clearly not acceptable.

If the closure duration and frequency is significant then foot passengers walking or cycling to the southbound platform would cross the railway at the manual (UWB) crossing at Burgess Rd and walk along the footpath east of the railway line. This type of crossing is regarded as a less safe crossing. Furthermore, under a separate scheme Network Rail have been considering closing the Burgess Rd crossing altogether.

Under these circumstances, Waterbeach railway station would become unusable for passengers during peak times. They would instead choose to drive or cycle to Cambridge North or not use the train altogether.

I would be surprised if it is Network Rail's intention to make the station unusable during peak periods but I have not seen any information that provides me with an understanding of the implications of longer barrier closure times.

In addition, the crossing is used by residents to access the river. Many people use the river path for leisure or as a commuter route by bicycle into east or central Cambridge. It is also used to access Cow Hollow Wood a popular place for walking dogs and exercise.

Extremely long barrier closure times might also result in frustrated passengers climbing the barriers.

If the barriers are to be closed for extended periods of time at peak times then provision should be made for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the railway.

I understand that there is an alternative crossing type (AHB+) which is half barrier with obstacle detection which would result in a shorter period of closure but it's not clear why Network Rail have not considered this type of crossing instead.

Follow-up comments

Under the 2018 traffic scenario queues in the morning will reach back to the village green. This could lead to extremely chaotic scenes in the village.

As far as I could see the modelling doesn't take account of the development of the New Town with first occupation early next year. This means that the traffic growth figures are probably too low. However, it does consider the relocation of the station and the effect this might have on car travel to the station car park. On one hand it assumes an upside (no car park traffic) but not the downside (traffic travelling to Cambridge from the New Town on Clayhithe Rd)

There is going to be a shuttle bus service from the New Town to the station so that New Town residents can access the current station without adding to the traffic levels. However, the bus stops are currently proposed to be either side of the station. This will add to the traffic congestion. Anna is in discussion with Campbell Ross-Bain at CCC about the possibility of using the car park for bus drop off and pick up but it's uncertain at this time whether this will be a possibility. In any case this shuttle bus is going to get extremely caught up in the traffic at peak times.

Councillor for Little Wilbraham & Six Mile Bottom Parish Council

The linked documents are somewhat baffling: it appears that all the land outside the old station is being acquired compulsorily (cars are currently parked here for Station House and 1 Station Cottages), and the VISSIM model for SMB suggests there will be significant increased queue with the Do Something model, possibly justified (p39) because the longer barrier down time 'allows multiple trains to pass at once' - but this is single track, with one train each way each hour.