

Please reply to:

Andrew McCallum
Thames Valley Branch Secretary
38 Lapsley Drive, Banbury,
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thamesvalley@railfuture.org.uk

15th January 2024

Dear Sir,

Transport and Works Act Order: Application for Network Rail (Tackley Level Crossing) Order.

I write on behalf of Railfuture* regarding the above TWAO application. We wish to register our strong support for this application.

We do not consider it to be within our remit to make comments on the details of the design or layout of the replacement bridge and associated works at this former level crossing location other than to welcome the plan for the bridge to be of a "heritage" design in keeping with the rural location on the edge of the village of Tackley. However, we welcome and support the replacement of level crossings with bridges and we consider that this work should be expedited and completed at the earliest opportunity for the following reasons.

The elimination of risk is, of course, a key benefit. However, the wider benefits also justify the works. The elimination of this crossing, as well as others nearby at Sandy lane and Yarnton, will allow for additional capacity on the already busy Thames Valley - Midlands rail route which will be very welcome in enabling increased connectivity in the future.

Additional paths for freight, especially intermodal services to and from Southampton, will be essential to relieve capacity on the congested A34/M40 roads and for future de-carbonisation of freight.

Additional passenger services on this route will also be enabled by the removal of these crossings. There has been talk in recent years of an additional hourly service between Birmingham and Oxford (or beyond) to cater for increased demand and to reduce the current levels of crowding on existing services on this corridor. This has been demonstrated in Network Rail's Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study published in June 2021. In particular, the Banbury - Oxford travel market would benefit from a more frequent train service. Other comparable towns serving the Oxford employment sector such as Bicester and Didcot enjoy at least half hourly trains all day which is not the case for Banbury, resulting in suppression of latent demand. Additional trains on this route will result in modal shift to rail by making rail a more attractive option for travelling to Oxford whether for work, study, health or leisure reasons. Replacing Tackley level crossing with a bridge is a necessary precursor to these enhanced services and should thus be undertaken as a priority.

We trust you'll be able to take our points into consideration when determining the application.

Yours,

Andrew McCallum

Secretary
Railfuture Thames Valley Branch

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