

**From:** Steve Mulvey  
**Sent:** 09 May 2017 09:31  
**To:** TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT  
**Subject:** Network Rail Essex and others Level Crossing Reduction Order - Objection to closure of E32 Woodgrange Close Crossing C2C line.

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.

Dear Secretary of State,

I have very recently become aware of the scheme to close my local foot crossing over the C2C line between Southend East and Thorpe Bay stations, known by Network Rail as E32 Woodgrange Close.

As a frequent user of this crossing I find this decision extraordinary and would like object. I object on the grounds that the crossing has not been a notable hazard or cause of disruption for as long as I have used the railway line, as a daily commuter for over 35 years.

I became aware of this plan as a result of recent improvement works to this crossing carried out just a few weeks ago in March 2017. I enclose photos of the improvements works which have replaced the old crossing relocating it about 15 meters further along the track and away from the bend towards Shoebury. There entire crossing has been renewed along with all gates and surrounding fences. It looks very nice indeed. Network Rail must have spent thousands of pounds on these improvements. Hence my question as to the intention to close it which appears ludicrous after all this expenditure.

I have a local paper every day and although the paper evidently briefly reported on the intentions last year I was completely unaware of these public consultations as are many of my neighbours who use this crossing. Why have these intentions only very recently (March 2017) been placed adjacent to the crossing and footpaths after the public consultations have concluded? Surely everyone in the local community should have been written to for comment. I request a proper Public Enquiry be held where local people can have their views properly considered or is Network Rail afraid that they may not be able to push their own agenda through at the expense of local collaboration?

This footpath and crossing have been in place for many decades and I use it regularly to walk my dog to my son's house just across the crossing. I understand in fact that it was there before the railway. I accept that there is a risk of death *should the crossing not be used responsibly* just as there is risk in crossing any road. However if someone wants to kill themselves I suspect they will find a way. The answer is not to close all the roads and ban all high buildings surely!  
From a safety point of view I think there is a case for limiting the crossing to day light hours as night times must be a greater risk for train drivers not seeing pedestrians on the crossing. Simple technology is available to make the gates operate in day light hours only. If the argument is that they want to run more trains and faster where is the evidence for this. In fact since C2C won the franchise and newer, safer trains have come into use journey times have increased by around 10 minutes on the journey from Southend to London. This is the one aspect that has not improved over all the years and has more to do with the 'safety' required 30 second break whenever stopping and moving off before the train doors open and close. If the argument is operating cost why has Network Rail recently spent all this money upgrading the crossing? If this crossing is causing delays, which I very much doubt, where are the statistics? I repeat that I used this line to commute to London for 35 years and there were never delays caused by this crossing. The arguments presented on the Network Rail web site are " *make the railway safer by removing the point where people can come into contact with trains. The changes will also help improve reliability and may enable separate future developments for faster and more frequent train services.*

Mr Secretary, if this is the intention what is next, close all the stations as people might come into contact with trains? Respectfully, and in my view these arguments are simplistic, general and do not stand up to reasonable question! Why is it that only now after many decades of use it is only now deemed necessary to close?

Just to show an alternate view please take a look at this recent video clip shot in Amsterdam a few weeks back. It shows trams, pedestrians, cyclists (without helmets) in very close proximity, all using the same shared space in the City Centre with no barriers, gates, lights, lines and restrictions. It seems to work well for the Dutch! I wonder where they would be if they chose to 'make the trams safer by removing the point where people come into contact with trams'

I urge you to reconsider this request from Network Rail.

I would very much appreciate your comments as a matter of urgency as the review is pending in May.

Yours faithfully,



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Mr S R Mulvey



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