

From: Zeni Cepian
Sent: 22 April 2017 20:20
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Subject: ESSEX LEVEL CROSSINGS ORDER.



22-APR-2017

ESSEX LEVEL CROSSINGS ORDER.

Dear Sir,

I am objecting to the proposed closure of the Paget Road crossing Wivenhoe.

Wivenhoe Town Council is preparing a detailed objection explaining the reasons why the crossing is not dangerous as trains are slow either approaching or leaving Wivenhoe station which is 700 yards away. The removal of the crossing will not allow trains to travel faster.

The crossing is the only safe road traffic free pedestrian route from the housing estate built on the old shipyard to the only local supermarket.

The proposed alternatives to the crossing expose pedestrians to greater risk than rail crossing.

Closing the crossing will have no effect in reducing unauthorised access to the trackway. The crossing is overlooked by a vigilant and active residents association. The station which is not manned late evenings and nights provides unrestricted access to the tracks.

The public have attempted to engage in consultation but have been completely ignored.

On the 17th June 2016 along with a number of other Wivenhoe residents I attended a consultation briefing at St John's Community Centre Colchester. The location entailed a 40 minute journey by two buses from Wivenhoe.

The Mott MacDonald specialists retained by Network Rail to carry out the consultation exercise were polite and concentrated on their brief to find alternatives to the proposed closed crossings. They would not be drawn into reasoned arguments for retaining crossings that do not necessitate trains to run slowly or present undue risk.

The Network Rail representatives seemed less enamoured with the process and were keen to advance their vision of a future where no level crossings existed to obstruct a modernised "digital railway".

I spoke in some length with Steven Day Network Rail Liabilities Negotiations Advisor about Paget Road. He stressed that this is only the first stage of consultations and described the multiple stages and processes that have to be followed. He explained that at the end of the day if it were officially determined that the Paget Road crossing was dangerous it would be closed so we would be sensible to look for a realistic alternative now as Paget Road had already been pre-assigned special status.

The process sounds a little like Catch-22 if there are little used paths in the countryside they will be closed as they are not needed. I asked about the special status and Mr Day told me that Paget Road has been identified by Mr Daniel Fisk, crossing manager for the area, as a special case since it is so heavily used

and so represents a greater risk. They also believe, incorrectly, that low cost safer alternatives exist. He would not be drawn on details of how the risk and traffic are assessed.

The widespread concern and flawed consultation process which has not adequately considered the specific issues of the Paget Road crossing and has ignored the local information provided by the users warrants the matter being subject to public enquiry.

Yours sincerely

Mr Daryl Williamson

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