

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> October 2019, 2-4pm</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Anna McGowan</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT</b>

			<b>Paper Number</b>
1.	14:00	Welcome, apologies and housekeeping	
2.	14.05	Minutes of previous meeting	<b>LAF 19/22</b>
3.	14.10	Declarations of interest	
4.	14.15	Annual Report	<b>LAF 19/23 - DF</b>
5.	14.20	PRoW in the planning process – Presentation by East Suffolk Council	<b>BW</b>
6.	14.45	Next Regional Access Forum Meeting	<b>Verbal - AW</b>
7.	14.50	Sizewell C Stage 4 Consultation	<b>LAF 19/24 LAF 19/24A LAF 19/24B - AW</b>
8.	14.55	A14 Severance	<b>LAF 19/25 - AW</b>
9.	15.05	Sunnica Solar Farm	<b>Verbal - AW</b>
10.	15.15	The England Coast Path	<b>LAF 19/26 - AW</b>
11.	15.25	Network Rail – Public Rights of Way and Level Crossings	<b>LAF 19/27 - AW</b>
12.	15.35	ROWIP	<b>LAF 19/28 - DF</b>
13.	15.40	Public Question Time	
14.	15.50	AOB	
15.	15.55	Dates for Meetings in 2021	

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Minutes of Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>25 July 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Anna McGowan</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Main Hall, The Riverside Centre, 6 Great Glemham Road, Stratford St Andrew, Saxmundham IP17 1LL</b>

### 1. Welcome, apologies and housekeeping

Present: Barry Hall (BH) Gordon Merfield (GM), Monica Pipe (MP), John Wayman (JW), Roland Wilson (RW), Anthony Wright (AWR), Margaret Hancock (MH), Susan Mobbs (SM), Suzanne Bartlett (SB), Claire Phillips (CP)

**SCC Officers Present:** Anna McGowan (Minutes), Andrew Woodin (AW), David Falk (DF)

**Guest Speakers:** Tom McGarry (TMG) EDF, George DiMascio (GDM) EDF

**Apologies:** David Barker (Vice Chair) (DB), Derek Blake (DBL), Jane Hatton (JH), Cllr Jane Storey (JS),

**Members of the Public:** none

### 2. Minutes of previous meeting (LAF19/16)

The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019 were approved, with the following updates.

6. ROWIP – this has already been seen by the Head of Services, Informal Cabinet and the Conservative Group and the consultation has been extended and will run for 11 weeks to the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019. There have already been 150 feedback responses so far.

10. New Councillor needs to be appointed. DF making enquiries through District Councils; and also awaiting a reply from the PA to Chris Bally (Director). There could be a freshly appointed SLAF Cllr member by next SLAF meeting in October.

**Action: To appoint new SLAF Cllr member by next meeting.**

### 3. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4. Feedback from Regional Access Forum Meeting

BH presented the RLAF Minutes. The meeting was held in Peterborough.

BH said that Hertfordshire did not come because of distance and the Broads' Chair was too ill to attend. The Peterborough Chair has passed away. Essex spoke about their relationship with their Local Authority and lack of dialogue with officers. Norfolk have a large membership with 22 members. It was stated Natural England need to ensure engagement with all regions and support from their respective officers.

Regarding the 2026 cut-off for Definitive Map Modification Orders, Worcestershire JLAF will push for a postponement of the CROW cut-off date. BH will draft a letter to the Chair of the regional group in support of a postponement till 2031.

SM asked if historic PROW were on the OS maps. AW explained not. RW stated more resources were required to meet the 2026 cut-off date.

SCC make approximately 8-9 Orders per year, which takes up approximately 50% the Definitive Map Team's workload.

DF to draft Annual Report

**Action: BH to draft letter to the Chair of the regional group.  
DF to draft Annual Report.**

## 5. Sizewell C

AW explained that EDF are in the locality for SZC 4<sup>th</sup> Consultation which was focusing on a small number of areas with the intention to submit a Development Consent Order by the end of the year. The DCO would enable works to commence and would address changes to the PROW network but would not cover the legacy of improvements.

SCC Officers have recently attended meetings and workshop on access and recreation, to discuss with EDF consultants the impact of SZC on Lovers Lane (Kenton Hills) Bridleway 19, road crossings and the coast path. Diversions during construction will be very circuitous with 3 controlled road crossings and any coast path closures would add up to 2 hours to a journey. Disruption is being kept to the minimum. EDF have acknowledged that the request for a strong legacy package for the access network is legitimate i.e. a direct cycle route from Aldeburgh to Minsmere (including Bridleway 19) and this will be tracked as a specific improvement request. SCC to concentrate on this as well as Section 106 requests.

Aldhurst Farm has been bought as a compensatory habitat for the loss of heathland. Part of the diversion of Bridleway 19 will be around the edge of the field.

Rules under the CROW Act need to be checked to see if dogs are allowed, if areas were to become open access.

### Stage 4 Consultation – EDF

The Chair BH welcomed Tom McGarry (Communications Manager), and George DiMascio (Environmental Planner) from EDF. They provided a verbal update alongside the Stage 4 pre-application Consultation Summary Document.

TMG said there was regular contact with SLAF and that they had received SLAF's response to Stage 3 consultation. He introduced the SZC Stage 4 Consultation saying that the findings from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Consultation were being addressed in this one.

He summed up the Stage 3 Public Consultation that concluded in March 2019, which ran for 12 weeks, during which 110 external events/roadshows were held, and 11,311 responses received – of which 7,000 were from anti-nuclear campaigners' petitions.

EDF is not looking specifically at the number of responses received but the actual quality of responses which are seeking detailed evidence, i.e., from SCC, DCs, Schools and Community Groups.

Negative feedback was less than 10%.

The RSPB needed more information rather than being outrightly opposed.

EDF will use this Consultation to make the case for the viability of the site for such a development, providing feedback on the impact to the local environment and transport infrastructure.

Work will commence in 2022-2024 with mitigation carried out first.

The concerns that were raised in Stage 3 will be addressed in Stage 4, as follows:

HGV usage will be reduced as much as possible.

The campus will not be split using lessons learnt from Hinckley C.

Environmental litigation will be carried out as instructed by Environment Agency.

Delivery options are being examined in an integrated option with less than originally anticipated sea deliveries, and an integrated delivery option of rail and road.

There was a preference from EDF for a rail priority delivery option and there is an expectation of 3 trains and 100 HGVs per day with 325 HGV during the peak time of development. Ultimately a decision has to be made on the preferred means of delivering materials.

There will be a direct route onto the site with a link road which will exist after the development.

The ROW affected have been recognised as concerns eg. Bridleway 19.

The feedback for the Stage 4 Consultation needs to be submitted by 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019. EDF will subsequently submit their proposal in 2020 and the news of the decision will be revealed late 2021. Construction to commence in 2022.

AW asked what the main headings for the Stage 4 would be.

TMG responded by saying these would in the summary document provided: ecological impact, visual impact, PROW, access, Bridleway 19 diversion, transport and rail/road strategy, sports and facilities in Leiston.

SB asked how many trains would be using the integrated route and would these interfere with passenger trains. TMG responded 6, with no impact on passenger train service because of passing loops and a branch line which could provide holding space.

GDM pointed to page 7 of the summary document and outlined the principle changes on the diversionary route of Bridleway 19 which will be circuitous. TMG advised the Kenton Hills public car park will be improved with increased capacity and signage.

AWR asked if there would be vehicular movements on the PROW and would construction allow for all users such as in a 5m wide corridor, eg. for mobility scooters.

GDM advised there was an on-going conversation on surface types.

AW asked to see details of the rail crossings.

AWR asked where rail deliveries to the site would be marshalled. TMG explained options were being looked and could not speculate at this moment.

TMG also explained beach landings would be for large infrastructure.

BH asked about access to Aldhurst Farm and requested SLAF is consulted on this.

GDM said that this is in hand and part of the application.

BH emphasised that SLAF were very interested in the legacy.

BH thanked TMG and GDM for coming.

## 6. Sunnica Solar Farm

AW gave a handout to show the solar renewable energy scheme, which will be the biggest in the country. It is a conglomeration of a number of interested companies. There will be two sites: Mildenhall in Suffolk, and second in Cambridgeshire with cabling in between. The Mildenhall site will have up to 500 MW of power lines and because of its scale it will have a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) planning application (the same process as for Sizewell). The timescale for this development is 2019-2022. The formal consultation process will start in the winter of 2019.

AW handed out maps showing the impacts on PROWs. Because there are so few PROWs in this particular area, that makes them even more important.

AW met with Claire Dickson - ROW Officer covering this area, and AECONs Consultants, to explain the impacts of the development on the PROW. The proposal is for a 20m corridor for each PROW allowing 10m each side. SCC would seek further improvements to PROW to accommodate cyclists.

AW raised this development with SLAF because of the scale of the development and that suggested a working group to look at it in more detail.

RW questioned the visual impact of this development on the PROW and need pleasant routes which are hedged or tree lined, and not just chain-linked fenced.

BH suggested the Sizewell working group could look at this too.

AWR suggested SLAF need to work with partners in Cambridge LAF.

JW remarked how much more green countryside would be lost for green energy!

MP asked for AECON to be invited to a future SLAF meeting.

**Actions: AW to get more information from AECON and advise of SLAF's interest.**

**BH to email Mary in CLAF**

**BH to discuss at next Sizewell working group**

## 7. The England Coast Path

AW gave updates on the ECP and noted that it is speeding up with NE under pressure.

The proposals for each stretch are expected to be published by Autumn/Winter except for the Bawdsey to Aldeburgh stretch, whose proposals will be published in Spring 2020.

AW expressed concern that the path construction is SCC responsibility, and bunching of work may occur with reports being so close together.

There is an issue with the Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry section, which includes the Orwell Bridge crossing, with Highways England expressing safety issue concerns as the bridge is noted as a suicide location. It was pointed out that the crossing was already a promoted trail as the River Stour and Orwell Walk.

## 8. Network Rail – Public Rights of Way and Level Crossings

SK gave the following updates:

Needham Market Gypsy Lane – the Public Inquiry commencing on 4 June was rescheduled after its first day until 24-27 September due to Proofs of Evidence not being properly circulated in advance of the Inquiry, so it will be reconvened due to this administrative failure.

Further discussions with WSP – NR’s consultants, have since taken place concerning the alternative footpath route requested by the landowner with a fence corridor diversion alongside the railway boundary fence. SCC need a guarantee that a high hedge will not be put in as this is regarded as an issue.

#### Felixstowe Branch Line Improvements – Transport and Works Act Order

There are problems with the works being delivered on site. It has been escalated with NR with Steve Day.

BH said that SLAF will take action if there is no satisfactory outcome reached.

#### Countywide TWAO

This is still waiting for the Inspectorate’s decision with the Secretary of State.

### **9. Ipswich Northern Route Consultation Paper**

AW stated that this is still at the very early stage of the consultation albeit at a superficial level. The Ipswich Northern Bypass will need a lot of funding.

### **10. Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the public.

### **11. Any Other Business**

#### **Waterfront – question from MH**

MH wrote in to the SLAF Secretariat earlier to enquire about status of the new riverside walkway created during flood barrier installation which was completed late last year which seems inaccessible and overgrown with weeds. Her main concern is that the area is still fenced off. The reason given in a newspaper article some months ago was that Network Rail needed to install a safety fence between the public walkway and the railway line, which appears to be rarely used.

SK said that this is a Restricted Byway from the Northern Quays to Coprolite Street, owned by ADP and IBC. There were issues related to cycling with accidents between cyclists and pedestrians and motorbikes also posed a problem. This has resulted in signage going up. ADP has a commercial contract of 1,000 tonnes per year.

MH also noted this year’s 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the East Suffolk Lines, and has done some of the walks along the route, finding these pleasant to do.

### **12. Date and venue of next meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019, venue tbc**

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: SLAF Annual Report</b>
<b>Meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact: David Falk</b>
<b>Venue: Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT</b>

The 2018-2019 Suffolk Local Access Forum Annual Report was sent to all forum members on 5<sup>th</sup> September for comment with the draft previously edited by Barry Hall, Chair.

The annual report focuses on the forum's key activities between July 2018 and August 2019 and includes:

- Sizewell C;
- Network Rail;
- The Rights of Way Improvement Plan;
- The England Coast Path;
- Walberswick Bailey Bridge;
- The 2019 Suffolk Walking Festival.

The report was presented to Cllr Mary Evans, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, and then presented to Informal Cabinet on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October. It will be presented by Barry Hall, Chair, to Full Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

END – DF/SCC October 2019

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: Sizewell C Stage 4 Consultation</b>
<b>Meeting Date: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact: Andrew Woodin</b>
<b>Venue: Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT</b>

### An Update

The Sizewell Stage 4 consultation finished on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019, and the county council's and East Suffolk Council's joint response can be found [here](#). The response is 119 pages long hence not attaching it as an appendix.

SLAF stage 4 response is attached as appendix A.

SLAF's response to the discharge of EDF's condition 25 attached to the planning consent associated with Aldhurst Farm is attached at Appendix B.

The county council thanks the forum for its commitment to protecting and improving public access over the different consultation stages for Sizewell C and looks forward to working with members in the lead up to, and after, the submission of the Development Consent Order by EDF.

### Further Progress

Since the last SLAF meeting, officers attended the last access and recreation workshop on 3<sup>rd</sup> September with EDF's consultants. Again, much of the discussion focussed on Lovers Lane and Bridleway 19 (the main north south linear route), and the road crossings. Other discussion points included the nature of barriers; surfacing specifications; frequency and duration of closures of the coast path; implementation of road safety assessment recommendations; commuted sums and legacy.

Officers of both councils will continue to meet to ensure as many as possible of the many outstanding issues are resolved prior to the submission of the DCO to the Planning Inspectorate.

END  
AW/SCC October 2019



<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Sizewell C Stage 4 Consultation</b>
<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Andrew Woodin</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP121QT</b>

**Appendix A  
Stage 4 SLAF Response**

**SLAF**  
**Suffolk Local Access Forum**

Jim Crawford  
Sizewell C Project Development  
Director  
EDF Energy  
90 Whitfield Street  
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W1T 4EZ

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Web:  
<http://publicrightsofway.onesuffolk.net/suffolk-local-access-forum/>

Your Ref:  
Our Ref: BH/AM/250919  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Dear Mr Crawford

**Re: Sizewell C Stage 4 Pre-Application Consultation**

Thank you for giving the Suffolk Local Access Forum (SLAF) the opportunity to comment on your latest plans for the construction of Sizewell C and for briefing its members at our July meeting. Whilst we feel that the responses that we made to the previous consultations are still valid and that these should be taken into account by EDF prior to the submission of the Development Consent Order we feel that there are further points that we would wish to make in relation to the latest consultation.

## Transport of Construction Materials

In our response to the previous consultation we expressed concern about the closure of the large number of footpath crossings on the East Suffolk rail line in order to provide a rail-led strategy. From SLAF's perspective there was not enough detail given by Network Rail and from our involvement with previous crossing closures proposed by them in Suffolk we were sceptical about their ability to deliver in the tight timescale for Sizewell C. Although a rail-led strategy would have been preferable, given our previous concerns we therefore now support the Integrated Strategy with the upgrading of the Sizewell branch with the improvements to the footpath crossings and the use of the green route. As part of this new route we would support a gated level crossing on Bucklewood Road rather than a road closure with a footbridge.

## Road Improvements

SLAF notes that with an Integrated Freight Strategy the proposed Theberton by-pass would be part of a new Sizewell Link Road between the A12 south of Yoxford and the B1122 and the red line has been extended to provide more flexibility and allow better non-motorised traffic safety. We welcome the ongoing discussions with Suffolk County Council's rights of way team regarding that where public rights of way cross the proposed road, safe crossing points are provided for pedestrian, equestrian and cyclists and that the use of Pretty Road footbridge is part of the proposals.

For this route and the proposed two villages by-pass we would expect that where there are public rights of way crossing these new routes the following principles should be applied:

1. Continuing liaison with SCC rights of way and highways teams
2. Road safety audits are carried out at all proposed crossing points
3. Adequate sight lines with dropped kerbs at crossing points
4. Level entry at all crossing points, not direct off steps. Where this is likely, a diversion should be made to a safe crossing point
5. Any stopped-up road should be retained with bridleway status
6. All changes need to be in place before construction begins
7. All surfacing, signage etc. should be agreed with the highway authority and routes should not be made available until signed off.

With regard to the Farnham bypass we welcome the proposed new bridleway bridge by Farnham Hall and the upgrading of the St Mary's church to Barn Farm as a bridleway.

## Public Rights of Way and Bridleway19

As you are well aware, the role of SLAF is to advise the local highway authority and other organisations on access issues and that has been our focus during each stage of consultation. We welcome the amendments proposed to the proposed Bridleway19 diversion which will be used during the construction phase, particularly the reduction in road crossing points, the split surface shared route for equestrians, pedestrians and cyclists, also the new link to the proposed worker's caravan site. However, we would like to see the off-road bridleway route to be extended further north towards Eastbridge itself

before it meets Eastbridge Road. The safe crossing points to be constructed as part of the Bridleway19 should be retained post construction.

However, we still have concerns regarding some other rights of way issues.

We are especially concerned about the soon to be England Coast Path. As SLAF understands it, during the construction of the new sea defences in front of Sizewell C the path may be diverted down the beach towards the sea. This raises safety issues, for instance if there is a high spring tide. We would also expect any such diversion to be accessible to all users with matting or something similar laid over the shingle to provide a level surface. Once the sea defences are in place, we would like to see the definitive legal route of the public right of way moved to the top of the defences which should be of sufficient width to accommodate this. This would future-proof the route against any long-term erosion issues.

With the possibility of closures of the Coast Path to enable beach landing of construction materials, these should be kept as short as possible and the frequency and duration notified well in advance to all interested parties. SLAF is still concerned that proposed long diversion route could cause problems to people who are walking to a tight schedule and the extra time taken for that this route could cause them accommodation problems at the end of the day. We therefore would see the provision of a shuttle minibus between Sizewell and Dunwich as an alternative of great benefit.

At Kenton Hills, whilst we welcome the new connection route to the permissive path network we would like to see post construction the link between Bridleway19 and the Coast Path become a definitive route as part of the legacy.

With regard to Valley Road which is very narrow. If this was downgraded to a bridleway it could provide a useful cycle route from the worker's caravan site to the construction site.

### Habitat Compensation Land

SLAF notes that additional areas of land have been suggested for habitat creation as part of the mitigation measures. We ask what consideration has been given on the impact to nearby rights of way? For example, the construction of the lagoon off Sandy Lane could impact on the use of this narrow track by walkers if used to remove the spoil.

### General points

SLAF would expect that a programme of regular meetings should be held during the construction phase with representatives of the local community and stakeholders so that any issues arising can be speedily resolved. We would also like to have regular updates at our meetings. As we already stated, SLAF would like to see a Community Liaison Officer funded by EDF in post before construction begins, as a link between them and the local community and businesses to address day to day problems that might arise.

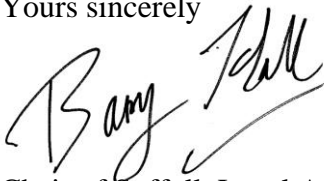
Wording of the Section 106 agreement should be flexible as to how it can be used to deliver improvements. We would expect that it would be agreed between the relevant

bodies prior to the submission of the DCO. SLAF is concerned about the amount of SCC rights of way staff time that has been expended on the project so far and will continue as it progresses and therefore feel that the agreement should allow for the funding of an extra staff member for at least two years as other work has suffered.

### Legacy

SLAF has been highlighting in previous consultations the disruption that the construction phase of Sizewell C will cause to the public right of way network which will be wider than in just the immediate area. We would therefore expect EDF to provide a post-construction mitigation package which will enable a more accessible and joined up rights of way network that will bring positive benefits to the whole of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty including an off-road cycle route between Aldeburgh and Dunwich.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bang Hall', written in a cursive style.

Chair of Suffolk Local Access Forum

cc: FREEPOST SZC Consultation

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Sizewell C Stage 4 Consultation</b>
<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Andrew Woodin</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP121QT</b>

## Appendix B Aldhurst Farm Letter

### SLAF Suffolk Local Access Forum

Tom McGarry  
Head of Stakeholder Engagement  
Sizewell C

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Suffolk Local Access Forum  
Aldhurst Farm  
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Web:  
<http://publicrightsofway.onesuffolk.net/suffolk-local-access-forum/>

Your Ref:  
Our Ref: BH/AM/1209  
Date: 12 September 2019

Dear Mr McGarry

#### **Re: Aldhurst Farm – Recreational Access Strategy and Proposals**

Thank you for giving the Suffolk Local Access Forum (SLAF) the opportunity to comment on the suggested public arrangements suggested for Aldhurst Farm in order to discharge EDF's condition 25 attached to the planning consent.

When SLAF had a site visit in 2017 it was work in progress, but we were able to offer some suggestions as to how we saw future public access and we welcome that some of our suggestions have been taken on board in the proposals.

Whilst the primary purpose of the scheme was as habitat mitigation to provide both wetland, grassland and heathland, we welcome the inclusion of public access to the southern part of the site particularly the proposed new public right of way linking the existing E-363/010/0 west of the B1122 to the existing E-363/018/0 public right of way running from Valley Rd to Lovers Lane which if Sizewell C goes ahead would link to the proposed off-road route on the Aldehurst Farm side of Lovers Lane.

We also welcome the southern areas which are suggested as open access with stock proof fencing separating them from the wetland habitat. Within these areas we note that there is provision for dog walking and recreational use by the local community.

We would expect the new public right of way to be surfaced to a standard agreed with the local highway authority but would ask for clarification as to who would be responsible for the fencing, path mowing and maintenance of those open access areas.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Hall', with a checkmark at the end.

Barry Hall  
Chair of Suffolk Local Access Forum

Providing independent advice on access to the countryside in Suffolk

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: Severance of PRow by the A14 Trunk Road</b>
<b>Meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact: Andrew Woodin</b>
<b>Venue: Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT</b>

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to update members on how one of their priorities, being PRow severance, is being taken forward in respect of the A14.

Construction of the A14 in Suffolk in the 1970s and 80s severed many PRow, without making proper provision for alternative routes or grade separation. Some PRow appear to have been stopped up by order, others are shown on the definitive map as crossing the A14 at grade. At some locations signing and furniture, eg a stile in the highways fence, is present. At other locations there are no accommodation works, and on the A14 there may or may not be a break in the safety barriers.

### **Impact**

Apart from the obvious inconvenience of non motorised users having to make circuitous detours on the PRow and county road network, this severance has two more serious implications:

1. Safety. It is known in some locations, for example at Whitehouse in Ipswich, that pedestrians cross the A14 where there are onward routes, and it has been observed that cyclists also cross the road,
2. Diversion of Suffolk County Council resources. The county council receives periodic reports, queries and complaints about the lack of access across the A14, which take staff resources to respond to for a problem that is not of the council's making. Frustration on the part of the public is compounded by the county council's statutory duty to signpost PRow where they leave the metalled road and, as the routes are severed, the low priority given to other maintenance requirements for those PRow. In other words a user may find a PRow signposted at from the local road, encounter difficulties using the path, only to find there is no crossing of the A14. The subsequent report or complaint is then made to the county council rather than Highways England.

### **Policies**

Highways England and the county council both have a range of policies and strategies to improve and encourage walking and cycling. The Dept for Transport's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, published in 2017, addresses and seeks to reduce the impact of the strategic road network on non motorised users. Inter alia,

under the section on Strategic Road Network, the strategy states “Highways England is also committed to upgrading and increasing the number of safe crossings on the network in the interests of the safety and convenience of more vulnerable road users, as well as ensuring they integrate with other networks, including local roads, and existing and emerging rail links.”

### **Suffolk Local Access Forum**

One of Suffolk Local Access Forum’s priorities is to see PRoW severed by railways and major roads addressed through safe and accessible diversionary routes to nearby grade separated crossings, and the provision of new infrastructure, including grade separation.

### **Current Work to Address Severance by Suffolk Highways**

The county council holds regular, strategic level liaison meetings with Highways England. Due to a number of queries from the public over the last year which relate to A14 severance, officers have put this item on the agenda for the next meeting, which is taking place the same day as SLAF’s meeting.

Officers will seek to engage Highways England on addressing these issues, and taking more responsibility for the problems severance causes non motorised road and PRoW users. Members will be kept advised of progress at their January meeting.

### **Attachment**

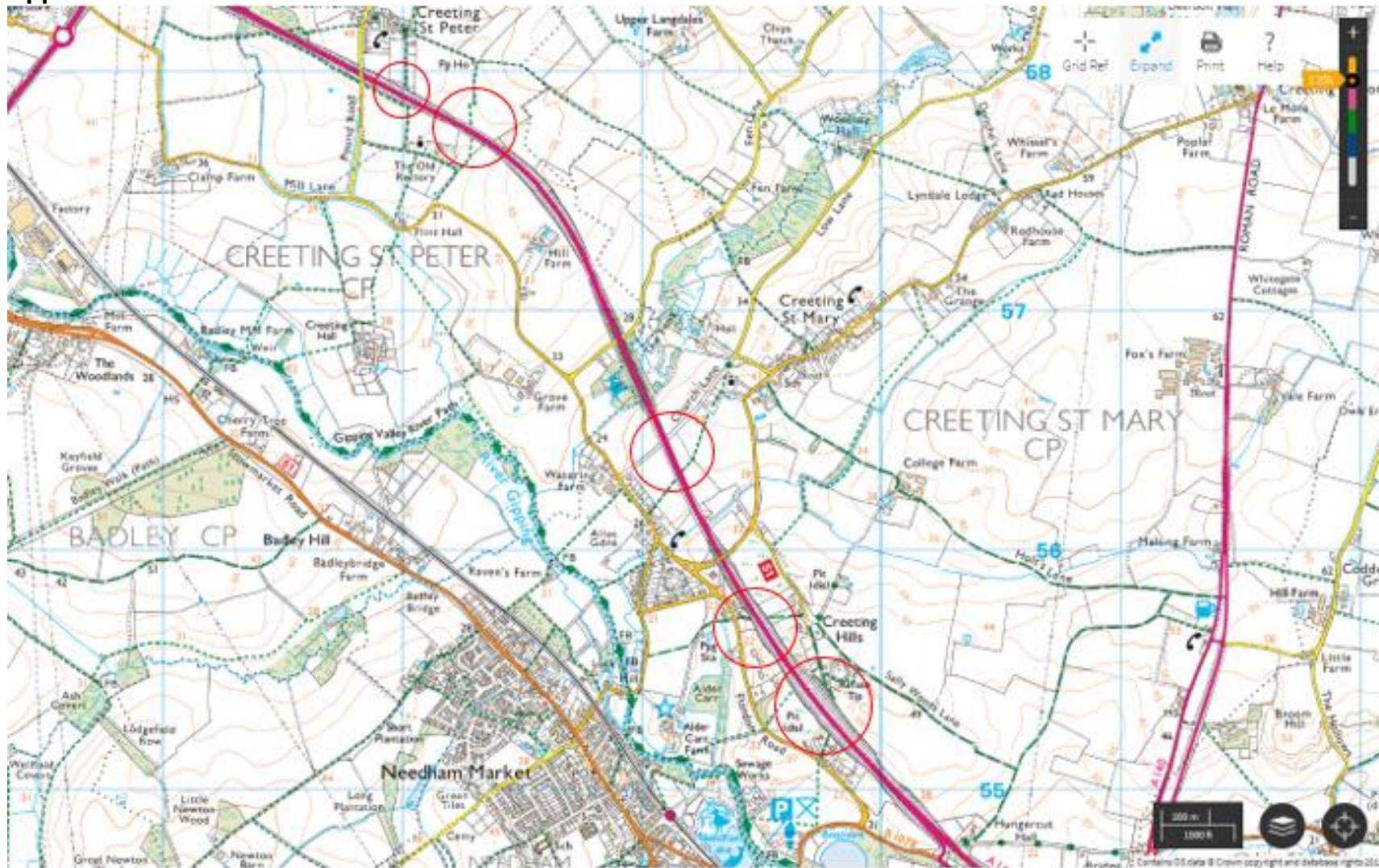
A map extract is attached as appendix 1 and demonstrates one location where there are multiple cases of severance.

END

AW/Suffolk Highways  
Oct 19



### Appendix 1



○ Examples of A14 Severance of Public Rights of Way      - - - Bridleway      — Footpath

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: The England Coast Path</b>
<b>Meeting Date: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact: Andrew Woodin</b>
<b>Venue: Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT</b>

### 1. Progress on Establishing The England Coast Path (ECP)

Of greatest interest to members will be the news that Natural England intend to publish their first report for the England Coast Path in Suffolk towards the middle of next month. This will be for the stretch around the Orwell estuary, and more of the five stretches are expected to be published over the autumn and winter period. Natural England will be meeting Cllrs Reid (the new Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs) and Rout towards the end of this month, to brief them on the Orwell stretch. As it is the first report to be published in Suffolk, Natural England and the county council will publish some joint publicity on this good news story.

The reports will be available to members online.

The latest information from Natural England's (NE) on its progress for the ECP in Suffolk and Norfolk is shown on their website. The website was last updated for the Suffolk stretches between May and June 2019.

<b>Stretch name</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<a href="#">Harwich to Shotley Gate</a>	Stage 2 and 3: Develop and Propose
<a href="#">Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry</a>	Stage 2 and 3: Develop and Propose
<a href="#">Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey</a>	Stage 2 and 3: Develop and Propose
<a href="#">Bawdsey to Aldeburgh</a>	Stage 2 and 3: Develop and Propose
<a href="#">Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea</a>	Stage 2 and 3: Develop and Propose
<a href="#">Hopton-on-Sea to Sea Palling</a>	Open to the public

The stages to establish Coastal Access are as follows:

#### **Stage 1: Prepare**

Initial preparations will begin for the implementation of a new stretch. Natural England will:

- define the extent of the stretch
- ask key organisations about their ideas or concerns about the stretch
- consider the current public access use and the options for the route

#### **Stage 2: Develop**

At this stage, Natural England will:

- speak with local landowners and other legal interests on land that may be affected to:
  - ask for views on where they think the route should go
  - offer to ‘walk the course’ and explain initial ideas
  - discuss any local issues that might need to be addressed
- speak with relevant organisations to make sure that any important sensitive features are protected

### **Stage 3: Propose**

Natural England will finalise proposals for the England Coast Path on this stretch and publish them in a report to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

### **Stage 4: Determine**

After the report has been published, there’s an opportunity to comment on the proposals. At this time:

- anyone who wishes to comment can make a representation on the report
- owners or occupiers can submit an objection relating to particular aspects of the proposals

See the guidance about how to comment for more information.

Once the period to comment on the proposals has ended, the Secretary of State will decide whether to approve the proposals in Natural England’s report. When making a decision, any representations or objections that have been submitted will be considered along with the recommendations from the Planning Inspectorate.

### **Stage 5: Open**

The Secretary of State approves the route of the England Coast Path on this stretch.

Preparations are then made on the ground and the necessary legal paperwork is completed. Once complete, the new public rights of access will come into force on the stretch.

The the link to the relevant part of website is [here](#) (updated 26 June 2019)

## **2. The Stretches in More Detail**

Natural England has provided the following updates around the Suffolk coast stretches. Expected publication dates have been highlighted in yellow, and as reported at SLAF’s July meeting this bunching may put county council officers

under pressure when it comes to responding to the reports, and implementing the new routes once confirmed.

Work is progressing well on the England Coast Path in Suffolk- part of a new National Trail around all of England's coast.

A European court judgement in April 2018 affected how Natural England should assess the impact of England Coast Path proposals on environmentally protected sites. Progressed slowed as a result. However, we have now adjusted our approach to ensure compliance with this judgement, and are working hard to ensure as much of the England Coast Path as possible is open by 2020.

### **Suffolk Stretches**

**Harwich to Shotley Gate** – Kim Thirlby, Patrick Welsh & Sally Fishwick. Last updated 08.10.19

Stage 3 (Propose)

The Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the stretch has been reviewed by senior Protected Sites colleagues and will be signed off shortly.

The Nature Conservation Assessment (NCA), which deals with sites not covered by European legislation, is about to be reviewed/ signed off by senior Protected Sites colleagues.

The Coastal Access Report, setting out the proposals for improved access to the coast, has been reviewed by national Coastal Access colleagues and final amendments are being made.

**We expect to publish our proposals in November this year.**

**Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry** – Araminta Adams & Darren Braine. Last updated 08.10.19

Stage 2 (Develop) and Stage 3 (Propose)

Letters showing indicative proposals have been sent to owners and occupiers and responses received.

Key local stakeholders have been contacted regarding our draft proposals for the exclusion of access under section 25A (salt marsh and mudflats) to ensure these are correct.

The indicative route has been shared with statutory stakeholders.

The Coastal Access Reports, setting out our formal proposals for improved access to the coast, the HRA and the NCA have all reached final drafts ready for internal NE management sign off.

**We are publishing our proposals on 14th November 2019.**

Laura Chellis who was the Lead Adviser who developed much of the proposal has moved to another role within NE. The report will be taken to publication by Darren Braine and Araminta Adams.

**Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey** – Araminta Adams, Giles Merritt & Sally Fishwick. Last updated 10.10.19

Stage 2 (Develop) and Stage 3 (Propose)

We are now drafting the Coastal Access reports and overview. We are liaising with nature conservation colleagues as well as gathering external advice and opinion to help inform route alignment in terms of nature conservation features. The HRA and NCA are now underway and scheduled for completion by early January 2020.

**We expect to publish our proposals in February 2020.**

**Bawdsey to Aldeburgh** – David Waldram, Fiona Taylor, Jonathan Clarke & James Lamb. Last updated 11.10.19

Stage 2 (Develop) and Stage 3 (Propose)

We are investigating issues and potential alignments arising from Walking The Course.

85% of the route has been mapped using GPS device.

We're working on the letters that will go out to owners and occupiers with our initial proposal and asking for their comments.

The HRA and NCA are underway.

**We expect to publish our proposals in spring 2020.**

**Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea** – Fiona Taylor, David Waldram & Sally Fishwick. Last updated 03.09.19

Stage 2 (Develop) and Stage 3 (Propose)

The Overview and Report chapters of our proposals have been drafted and are currently being reviewed by national Coastal Access colleagues.

Legal restrictions, exclusions and dedications have been finalised.

The HRA is being drafted.

The NCAs have been drafted and are currently being reviewed by local and national Coastal Access colleagues.

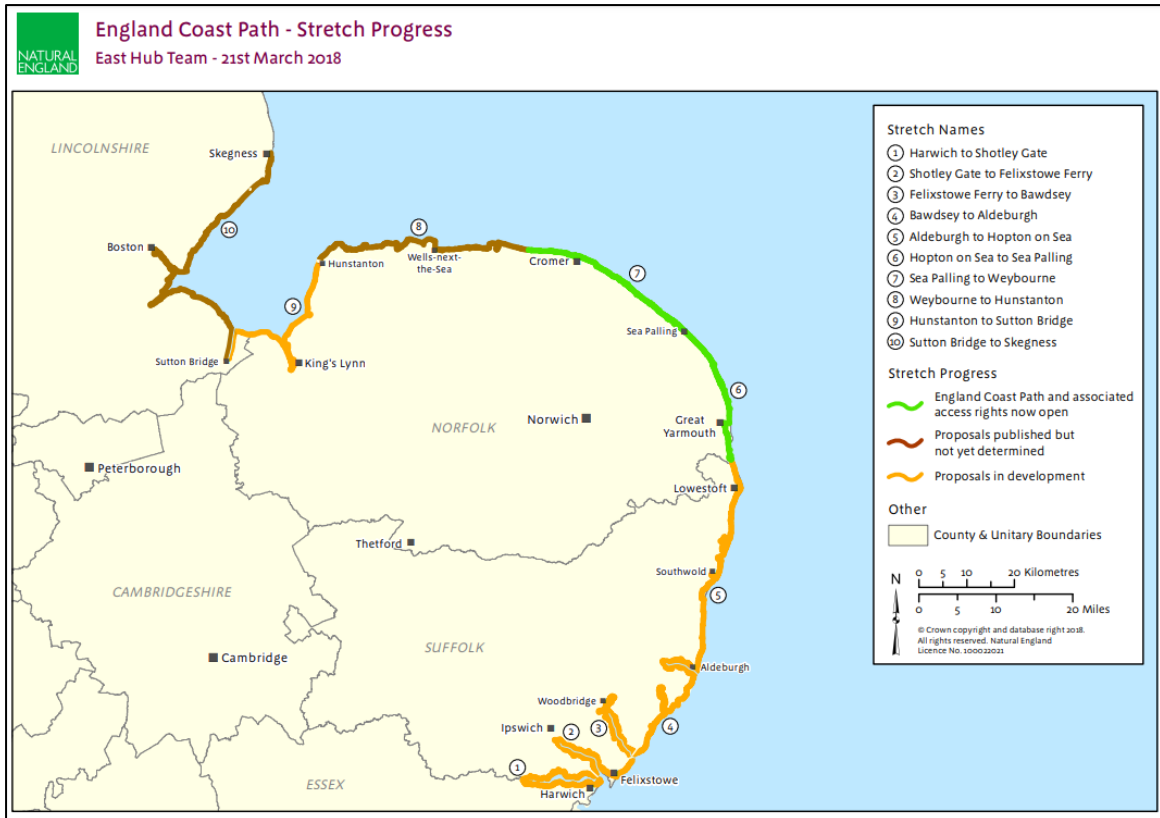
**We expect to publish our proposals in January 2020.**

### 3. Future Management of the England Coast Path in the East of England

Officers from Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex met in September and compared notes on progress of the England Coast Path in their respective counties. As at previous meetings it was felt it was too early to commence work on managing and promoting a regional route.

### 4. England Coast Path – Progress Map for the East

The latest regional map shows a date of March 2018, but the national map is dated October 2019 and shows the same state of progress for Suffolk.



END  
 AW/SCC October 2019

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: Network Rail – Public Rights of Way Level Crossings</b>
<b>Meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact: Steve Kerr</b>
<b>Venue: Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT</b>

### Introduction

This paper updates the Forum on the main level crossings being addressed by Network Rail (NR) and Suffolk County Council ('the Council' or 'SCC'), and progress on their Transport and Works Act proposals.

### Needham Market Gipsy Lane and FP6 Needham Market



Further to the update provided at the Forum's meeting on 25 July 2019, the adjourned Public Inquiry reopened at 10am on Tuesday 24 September at the Diamond Jubilee Hall, Creeting St Mary.

In the intervening period since the original Inquiry was adjourned, WSP (consultants acting on behalf of NR) spent a considerable amount of time investigating the alternative diversion proposal put forward by the landowners. The investigation revealed that for the majority of the route, a 3-metre-wide path was feasible, but that there was a length of approximately 50 metres where the width was restricted to 2.45 metres. The county council was subsequently consulted and asked to confirm whether, in its capacity as highway authority, it considered the alignment and width acceptable. It responded that it did, but that this was also conditional on the landowner entering into a legal undertaking not to erect any fence or other barrier higher than 1.2m within 5m of the proposed footpath, or do anything to prevent or impede the drainage of the proposed path onto adjoining land. NR also attached other

conditions to their time limited offer, but the landowners were ultimately unable to confirm its acceptance.

As a result, NR, WSP, SCC and the SLAF Chairman proceeded to present their evidence in support of the current Order route. The supporters' case was ably coordinated by Counsel.

Despite receiving several other objections to the Gipsy Lane diversion when the Order was advertised, only the Fayers and Mr Crosby attended the Inquiry and presented their evidence against the Order being confirmed.

The first two days were mainly taken up by SCC/NR/WSP's oral evidence and cross examination by the landowners, whilst the third day was largely devoted to the landowners' evidence and that of Mr Crosby's. This included, amongst other matters, the view that the applicant had not given adequate consideration to the need for a Flood Escape Plan (FEP), the Order route's impact on the landowners' agricultural operations, and the reliability of WSP's (and the Environment Agency's) hydrological and flood risk modelling.

Other issues raised by the objectors included the accuracy of the Definitive Map and Statement nomenclature for the order routes and connecting paths, the height and positioning of the Notices erected onsite, the safety and security of the culvert and the optioneering consultation process and outcomes.

The Inquiry closed at approximately 4:15 pm on Thursday 26 October, and was then followed by an accompanied site visit, attended by the Inspector, the landowners and representatives from NR and SCC.

The parties now await the Inspector's report, which could take up to 3 months to be released.

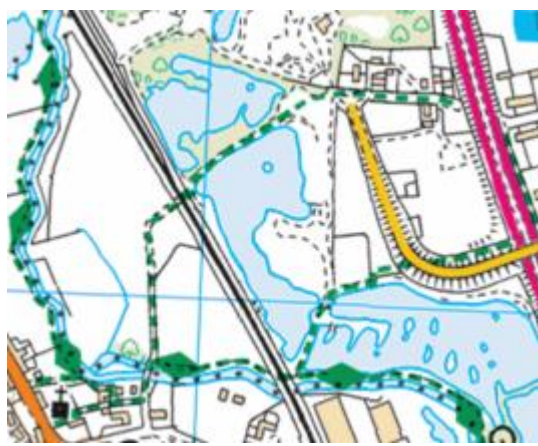
### **Felixstowe Branch Line Improvements – Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)**





Further to the Forum's update at its July meeting, some further rectifying surfacing works where required during the month of August but on 2 September SCC inspected and certified the new routes and the ramped bridleway bridge surface were satisfactory for public use. There is now a 12-month period during which NR will maintain the newly constructed routes and address any emerging defects, after which time the maintenance responsibility will be transferred to the highway authority in perpetuity.

### **Footpath 12 Barham (Broomfields)**



On 10<sup>th</sup> June NR emailed the county council, requesting it process a rail crossing diversion order for the above path, under the provisions of s119A of the Highways Act 1980. This particular crossing was originally also included in the Suffolk TWAO but withdrawn during the Inquiry itself, due to a change of land ownership and subsequent lack of agreement with the new landowner.

SCC responded on 11<sup>th</sup> June, requesting further information on the public safety risk affecting the level crossing and this information was supplied in early August. SCC advised NR that it would need to table the request at its next casework prioritisation meeting, to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September. The request was evaluated and scored in the medium priority category range. The county council then contacted NR advising that due to other higher priority order making work and current rates of progress, this would take between two and five years to address. It also advised that, in its view, their proposal could be significantly improved. However, it also indicated it would have no objection to NR either applying to the Secretary of State (SoS) to exercise his powers to make the order, or to engage the services of a reputable public rights of way consultant.

The justification for this recent request, as provided by NR, is set out in Appendix A. This follows the s119A prescribed form headings.

The council has yet to receive a response from the railway operator confirming how it intends to proceed.

## **General/Countywide**

### **NR's Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction Strategy - Transport and Works Act Order**

Further to the Forum's last update, the county council has not yet received any communications advising when a decision is likely to be forthcoming.

END – SK/SCC October 2019

## **Appendix A**

### **The risk to the public of continuing to use the present crossing, and the circumstances that have given rise to the need to make the proposed order**

The railway at this location comprises 3 lines of rails, being two running lines (London to Norwich) and a freight siding.

The maximum speed on both the Up (London-bound) and Down (Stowmarket-bound) running lines is 100mph. These lines are not reversible. On an average weekday approximately 179 trains pass over the level crossing.

The siding is used for freight trains reversing into Barham sidings on the east side of the crossing. Barham sidings serve a quarry site that is owned and operated by Tarmac. The portion of this siding over and to the south of the crossing is temporarily out of use. The siding immediately to the north of the crossing remains in use. Level crossing users are separated from trains by a sleeper bolted across the rails and a wing fence. Train movements on the siding take place at walking pace. Buffer stops are provided only to the south of the crossing. It is not possible to provide buffer stops to the north of the crossing as this would leave insufficient length for reversing trains. In any event, it is not permitted to walk directly behind buffer stops where they are not, for example, surrounded by a platform.

This level crossing is a passive crossing with stiles in the railway boundary fence. Users must decide for themselves whether it is safe to cross the line. Signage placed 2 metres from the nearest running rail on either side of the running lines instructs users to Stop Look Listen: Beware of trains.



Trains on this line travel at up to 44.7m/s. The current traverse distance is 9m, which at a walking pace of 1.2m/s requires 7.6 seconds to cross. For users of the level crossing to have sufficient time to cross, it is necessary for them to be able to see a train when it is at least 338m away. Available sighting from the current decision points exceeds this in all

aspects. Were the full length of the freight siding to come back into use and the crossing to encompass all three lines, there would be inadequate sighting for users to enable them to cross safely, even when no train was stabled in the siding. If a train were present sighting would be significantly worsened. Vulnerable users have not been identified, but if they were, the sighting deficiency would be exacerbated.

The most recent Network Rail risk assessment was undertaken in January 2019. It assigns the level crossing an ALCRM score of C6 with a fatalities and weighted injuries (FWI) figure of 0.000375726027.

The New East Anglia Trains (NEAT) programme is currently working to deliver new trains and an increase in the train service between London Liverpool Street, Ipswich and Norwich, which services pass over the crossing. This is proposed to be delivered in two phases. In connection with the programme Network Rail commissioned external consultants Sotera Risk Solutions Limited to undertake a risk assessment of the crossing dated 3 April 2019 (attached), including a 9-day census of usage. This assigned the crossing an ALCRM score of C5 with a FWI figure of 0.00094. (The variance with the January 2019 Network Rail risk assessment is attributable mainly to differences in recorded pedestrian usage of the crossing.) Without mitigation measures the increase in train service will lead to a percentage increase in risk at the crossing of 5% for Phase 1 and 17% for Phase 2 when compared with the current level of risk. For Phase 2 the ALCRM risk score of the crossing would increase from C5 to C4. It is accepted by our regulator and the Department for Transport that it is not possible to deliver either phase without mitigation of the risk increase. Network Rail understands that Suffolk County Council is supportive of the proposed train service increase and we are currently seeking confirmation of this from the Council's Transport Planning function.

**The opportunity for taking alternative action to remedy the problem such as a bridge or tunnel in place of the existing crossing or the carrying out of safety improvements to the existing crossing**

As set out above, the level crossing would be affected by a proposed increase in the passenger train service frequency on the line as part of the NEAT programme. Network Rail has investigated whether a gate-to-gate enhancement of the crossing would provide sufficient risk mitigation to allow the Phase 1 timetable to run and has concluded that no gate-to-gate enhancement could provide sufficient mitigation.

Network Rail has considered the feasibility of installing red/green miniature stop lights (MSLs) to warn users of approaching trains. The Network Rail company standard NR\_L2\_SIG\_11201\_ModX40 - Signalling Design: Module X40 – Level Crossings: Miniature Stop Lights states that “1.1.3 New crossings shall not be installed over more than 2 rail tracks”. This means new MSL crossings, which includes installation of MSLs at existing level crossings (new level crossings per se are not allowed barring exceptional circumstances). At present the crossing traverses 3 rail tracks. The portion of the freight siding is not recorded as out of use in the Network Rail Sectional Appendix and Hazard Directory and is therefore considered open to traffic for the purposes of this standard. Installation of MSLs would therefore contravene the standard.

It is not possible to formalise the current arrangement and permanently close this portion of the siding as this would require a buffer stop to be provided to the north of the crossing,

which would truncate the siding so as to render it unusable by full length freight trains. This would constitute a regulated network change which would be unlikely to be approved through the regulatory network change process. Therefore it is not possible to provide MSLs at the crossing on its current alignment.

The risk assessment process also considered relocating the level crossing to the two track section to the south of the siding. There is a set of points immediately to the south of the level crossing. Since it is not possible to have a level crossing over a set of points it would need to be moved at least 75m to the south, which would itself require the diversion of the footpath over third party land. Further, since the railway is on an embankment at that point, stairs or ramps would be required to carry the path up to track level. Realignment of the crossing would allow installation of MSLs. Owing to signalling constraints the MSLs would need to be fully integrated with the signalling system, which considerably increases the complexity and cost of the installation. While MSLs would provide sufficient risk mitigation to allow the NEAT Phases 1 and 2 timetables to run, they would not eliminate the risk to users crossing the railway.

A bridge or tunnel may be physically possible at this site, subject to design and consultation.

#### **The estimated cost of any practicable measures identified above**

The cost of relocating the level crossing to the south (including civil engineering, consents and land acquisition costs) and providing MSLs is estimated at a minimum of £1,000,000, subject to design and consultation.

A footbridge, whether stepped or ramped would require the acquisition of third party land. Network Rail has assumed a cost of £1,500,000 for the provision of a stepped footbridge, £3,500,000 for a ramped footbridge, and £6,000,000 for the provision of an underpass. These are high level estimates based on costs at other locations, and are subject to design and consultation. Under HM Treasury's Managing Public Money principles Network Rail has a responsibility to achieve value for money. Network Rail does not consider that the provision of a bridge or tunnel would achieve value for money when diversion of the public footpath to an existing grade-separated crossing of the railway is possible.

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: Suffolk Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)</b>
<b>Meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Author/Contact: David Falk</b>
<b>Venue: Deben Room, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT</b>

Consultation on a new Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) started in 2016 with an online questionnaire which attracted over 800 responses. This resulted in further engagement with community groups and a draft ROWIP. Consultation on the draft ROWIP ran for 11 weeks between Monday 8th July and Friday 20th September 2019, a total of 11 weeks.

290 people responded to the consultation making 357 comments: 170 were individuals (86%); 28 represented organisations (14%) of which 24 were parish councils.

The consultation contained 13 questions:

- Q1-4 were based on the Delivery Plan's 4 aims and objectives, asking to which extent they agreed or disagreed the plan would deliver that objective:
  - managing green access: 80 comments, 73.6% agreed or strongly agreed;
  - developing green access: 66 comments, 71.2% agreed or strongly agreed;
  - promoting green access: 49 comments, 71.8% agreed or strongly agreed;
  - developing healthy and sustainable communities: 56 comments – 78.7% agreed or strongly agreed.
- Q5 asked for further comments – 106 comments.
- Q6-7 asked if the respondent represented an organisation
- Q8-13 were demographic questions

Each comment was categorised by type, aligned with the relevant action in the Delivery Plan, and any necessary edits to the plan identified. Many comments were general, but the following themes emerged:

- accessibility, and the needs of people with physical disabilities;
- budgets, and concerns actions could not be delivered;
- cycling, and creating more safe cycling routes;
- developments, and the impact these could have on the countryside;
- equestrians, and the lack of safe horse riding routes;
- health and wellbeing, and the importance of green space for mental health;
- maintenance of routes, and overgrown paths;
- promotion, and ensuring people know where to go.

Key issues included:

- Specifically highlight how the strategy will help people with disabilities – this was not spelt out sufficiently in the draft plan.
- Address the use of Byways and anti-social activity – this is addressed by the PROW team but was not spelt out in the draft plan.
- Importance to engage with communities on rights of way projects – consultation is integral to PROW activities and schemes such as Walkers are Welcome illustrate a proactive approach to engage communities, but this was not fully spelt out in the draft plan.
- Work in partnership with adjoining local authorities – this happens with regional meetings and joint projects but was not spelt out in the draft plan.

In response to the consultation 15 edits were made to the plan, strengthening wording of the introduction and editing a number of actions within the Delivery Plan. The plan was presented to Informal Cabinet on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October and will be presented to Full Cabinet on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November. It is hoped to be able to publish it by the end of November.

END – DF/SCC October 2019