

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> July 2020, 2 -3.15pm</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>David Falk</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Online</b>

			<b>Paper Number</b>
1.	14:00	Welcome, apologies and housekeeping	
2.	14.05	SCC PROW update	<b>Verbal - DF</b>
3.	14.10	Network Rail	<b>Verbal - SK</b>
4.	14.15	Sizewell C/Friston Sub Station/England Coast Path	<b>Verbal – AR – Screenshare</b>
5.	14.25	OA Restrictions	<b>Verbal – DF - Screenshare</b>
6.	14.35	A14 Severance	<b>Verbal -DF</b>
7.	14.45	Environmental Land Manager Scheme	<b>Verbal - DF</b>
8.	14.55	Regional LAF Meeting 15 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Verbal - BH</b>
9.	15.10	SLAF Annual Report	<b>Verbal - DF</b>
15.	15.15	AOB & Date of Next Meeting	

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Minutes of Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Anna McGowan</b>
<b>Venue: SALC Offices, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon IP6 0AJ</b>	

### 1. Welcome, apologies and housekeeping

Present: Barry Hall (BH) (Chair), David Barker (DB) (Vice Chair), Monica Pipe (MP), Roland Wilson (RW), Margaret Hancock (MH), Derek Blake (DBL), Susan Mobbs (SM), Suzanne Bartlett (SB), Claire Phillips (CP), Gordon Merfield (GM), John Wayman (JW), Anthony Wright (AWR), Cllr James Mallinder (JM)

**SCC Officers Present:** Anna McGowan (Minutes), Andrew Woodin (AW); Steve Kerr (SK), Annette Robinson (AR)

**Guest Speaker:** Stephanie Walsh (SW) RAMS

#### Apologies:

Cllr Jane Storey (JS), Jane Hatton (JH), David Falk (DF)

**Members of the Public:** Ken & Katherine Hawkins (KH), Mary Shipman (MS), Liz Thomas (LT)

### 2. Minutes of previous meeting (LAF19/22)

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2019 were approved with the following updates:

9. Sunnicar Solar Farm is in progress and viewpoints are being sought for landscaping purposes.

### 3. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4. Annual Report

BH gave updates of the meeting on the Annual Report presented to Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> November and the Cabinet Minutes were noted.

**Action: SCC to provide budget details for Rights of Way and Access at next SLAF meeting on annual changes.**

## 5. Regional LAF

BH and DB attended on 16 January. DB commented that it was felt there was too much discussion on a wide range of LAF's activities, and surprise expressed that SLAF reports were sent annually to Cabinet!

It was noted that the Norfolk Trails bring in £50m to tourism.

The Natural England Report showed lack of funding generally for access. The Herts LAF noted the County Council is swamped with the 2026 lost-ways and directions to determine modification order applications.

### A14 Severance

BH updated that there was discussion regarding the trunk road severance and the impact of the new A14 in Cambridgeshire.

## 6. England Coast Path

AW updated the forum that this was going 'full steam ahead'. Three new reports have been published, and this will tie up SCC Officers time and that SLAF will need to use their Working Group.

AW highlighted the press release on coast path visits and economic return.

There is no 'decision' on Deben as such on the estuary discretion.

JM said he wants to see an estuarine route for the public to experience the beauty of the estuary.

RW said that bird breeding locations elsewhere are very much used by visitors without much detrimental affect and that direct interference, especially dogs, was the actual problem.

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

### Needham Market Gipsy Lane and FP6 Needham Market

SK reported on the Public Inquiry in September, with Order confirmed in November.

SK thanked BH for his attendance and support at the Public Inquiry.

The Diversion route is now closed to allow works to be carried out.

SCC have met with Network Rail and discussed progress on works, emphasised the need for the culvert works to be as resilient to flooding as possible. There is a lot to do.

### Countywide TWAQ

There is no decision but SCC is working with Network Rail on those sites that will be closed on day one – should they be confirmed.

## 8. Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)

SW gave a presentation on the Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS), what it is and how it is used, especially in planning.

The habitats affected are the SPA, and SACs. Developers can pay into a RAMS Fund, or do their own thing, towards mitigating impact of development on nature.

RAMS applies to any development. SPA etc often have nesting birds or special vegetation types.

SW talked through the timelines and tariffs ie. £121 -£321 per dwelling, depending on the zone. This will fund delivery, including staff and rangers to work on or near habitats, including improving footpaths.

RAMS is steered by a working group and a Board.

RW asked if walkers were represented on the working group. SW said that they were working on this.

RW noted that more spending on ROW maintenance would help prevent users and dogs from straying.

SW emphasised the intention is not to stop people accessing the coast, but doing it sustainably.

BH asked if RAMS was in contact with Parish Councils yet. SW responded that this had only been done in East Suffolk.

SW welcomed the members' input.

MH asked when do contributions come in and SW explained up front and in the development staffing.

AW asked about the value of contributions and SW responded it would be about £3.5m over 15 years.

AW noted the value of improving ROW in steering people away from sensitive sites.

JW noted that RAMS' principles, whilst coastal, could be applied elsewhere.

## 9. Agriculture Bill

DB gave a verbal report on progress. Access is mentioned, but this is the biggest legislation for farming for many years and will affect payments in agriculture.

DB stressed this is an opportunity for SLAF to send letters to MPs, as done previously, and suggested writing to MPs and Lord Gardiner again. Members could also write individually to MPs.

DB noted that equestrians, especially, get a poor deal. MP noted Lord Deben saying that 20% of land being taken out of production.

**Action: DB to draft a letter from SLAF to MPs and Lord Gardiner and Lord Deben. DB/BH. SCC to send this out and liaise with DB.**

**Action: All members are encouraged to write to MPs, based on DB's letter.**

KH commented that the Norfolk Coast Path has generated £17m return in income per year. AW noted the South West Coast Path estimated a return of £400m/year.

## 10. EA1 & EA2 – Scottish Power

AW explained that SCC/ESC is making a full response which ROW have contributed, and their comments are covered in the SLAF paper. The deadline is 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

JM commented on the impact and size of this scheme. LT offered to send guidance on how to respond.

Comments were made about lack of SLAF consultation. AWr noted SCC could have done more but it is also up to members to be proactive in picking up schemes and using working groups to respond.

**Action: BH to respond to the consultation directly. MS to provide any input, direct to MP.**

**11. ROWIP – Green Access Strategy**

This has already been covered in item no. 4. AW thanked members for their input in ensuring the Green Access Strategy remained green, and thanked members once again for all the help given over the years in contributing to it.

**12. Correspondence: insight report 258732, Footpath Access;  
Regional LAF Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

1. Contact was made to SLAF regarding footpath access in Halesworth and Blythburgh. SCC has already responded to this.
2. Trunk Road Severance – KH (NLAF) has raised this with his forum and CLAF. The topic came up at the RLAF but ran out of time. DB noted that a co-ordinated LAF response would have more weight.

**Action: BH/DB to consider adding severance as a priority item to the next RLAF. BH and KH to liaise.**

**13. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

**14. Any Other Business**

SK updated members on the Waterfront question, regarding the situation with the barriered-off new cut west byway in Ipswich in that it is with ABP to get the barriers removed.

**15. Date of next meeting**

30th April 2020. Venue to be arranged.

**END**

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: Network Rail – Public Rights of Way Level Crossings</b>
<b>Meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020</b>
<b>Author/Contact: Steve Kerr</b>
<b>Venue: Online</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 23 January 2020, SCC officers held an online progress catch up meeting with NR representatives on 31 May. In advance of the meeting SCC had requested NR undertake a review of the culvert design to ensure it was as flood resilient as possible.

At the meeting NR and their appointed contractors, Taziker Industrial, advised that subject to all the necessary consents being in place, work was scheduled to start on site on 30 June and confirmed the following:

- that a further ecological survey at the culvert was necessary, due to the length of time since the last survey was undertaken
- a legal agreement (for access and a site compound) was being finalised with the landowner south of the railway corridor
- work on the s278 agreement was to be progressed immediately
- a construction programme was being finalised and would be shared with SCC once available

- a communications strategy was being developed to advise all landowners and stakeholders of the scheme and would be shared with the Council
- a site visit would be undertaken to confirm whether a ramped structure was required where the diversionary route left the agricultural track and re-joined Gipsy Lane, north of the railway; and
- that no flood resilience review of the culvert design had taken place as the original consultants were no longer engaged on the project. NR did, however, confirm that further bank erosion measures had been included in the design, in order to protect the landowner's private bridge

NR subsequently confirmed they were not in a position to begin work on site at the end of June. SCC is currently awaiting further updates.

SCC officers raised two further issues. The first, was to advise that the landowner north of the railway had appointed Savills to assess the compensation due resulting from the diversion. Savills are in the process of undertaking that assessment and a valuation report is awaited.

The second was to request that NR vary the signed costs agreement, to allow the highway authority further time to scope and deliver local PROW improvement works.

This costs agreement, dated 9 January 2019, currently allocates £300K for the improvement of the local PROW network. This figure was agreed as mitigation for the Council's acceptance of a sub-standard 'tunnel', as the height of the culvert deviates from the minimum standard for this type of structure.

The agreement states that the improvement works need to be completed by January 2021, which SCC considers is wholly unrealistic. The Council emailed NR on 9 June setting out the following reasons in support of its request:

1. Whilst the Agreement was signed in January 2019, the Planning Inspectorate did not confirm the Rail Crossing Diversion/Extinguishment Orders until November 2019, over 10 months later. It is noted clause 2.2 of the Agreement confirms that payment will be made to SCC once the Orders have been confirmed and a certificate of works has been issued for the satisfactory completion of the necessary works.
2. There has been limited opportunity to scope, evaluate and cost any network improvements since the Agreement was entered into and the Orders were confirmed. A previous network improvements feasibility study was undertaken in the summer of 2016, but is now out of date, and will require a wholesale review. It is not realistic to expect SCC to progress and deliver a package of improvements within what could be a period of 6 months or less, from the time all works relating to the diversion order have been satisfactorily completed and signed off.
3. Any improvement schemes would need high level landowner engagement, including potential compensation negotiations. There would also need to be extensive consultations with local parish councils, users and residents.
4. Any capital works schemes are likely to have to go through a further competitive tendering process, and subsequent work commissioned to Suffolk Highways or another provider is likely to take many months from order placement to delivery.
5. The current and future impacts of the current Covid-19 pandemic, making meaningful public engagement, including meetings and site visits, difficult.

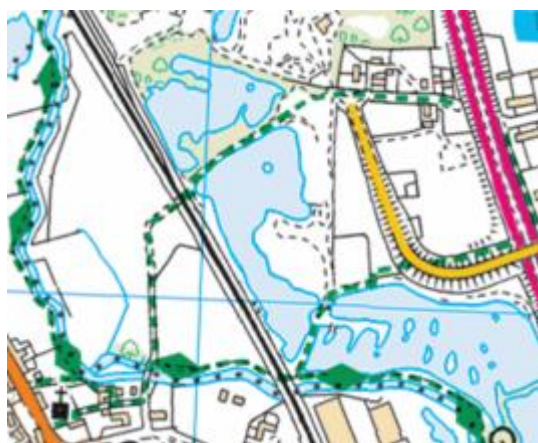
SCC now seeks to extend the time period for delivery from January 2021 to the end of NR's Control Period 6, which is understood to be in 2024. SCC has also requested that the Agreement is varied to allow the monies to be drawn down in phases, as and when local PROW improvements are scoped and delivered.

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



NR and SCC will continue monitoring the condition of the new routes and if there are any defects to address, these will be undertaken by NR during the 12-month maintenance period, which is due to terminate in early September 2020. After this time the maintenance responsibility will be transferred to the highway authority in perpetuity.

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



The Council is unaware of any further progress on the request to divert FP12 Barham and is still to receive an update 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 Council has still not received any communication advising when a decision is likely to be forthcoming. Although it has not been officially confirmed, officers understand the Inspector's report for Suffolk has been issued and is with the Secretary of State for Transport (SoSfT) for consideration.

END – SK/SCC July 2020

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Title: Severance of PRow by Trunk Roads</b>
<b>Meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020</b>
<b>Author/Contact: Andrew Woodin</b>
<b>Venue: Online</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 trunk roads.

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.

### **Developments This Year**

Since the local access forum's meeting in January this year, there have been two meetings between Andrew Woodin and Highways England, in January and May. Officers from Highways England advised they expect new funding to come forward this year for Highways England's designated fund programmes, including for Cycling, Safety & Integration, and that they were interested in working with the county council to reduce the number of grade PRow crossings in the county.

This would require the county council to undertake a piece of work to identify priority crossing sites, check the side roads orders for those sites, to see how those crossings were treated and ensure they are still legally at grade, and ground truth the crossings, and possible options to close the crossings (mainly to divert to existing over and under bridges). This work would be unfunded, but if Highways England believed the options identified to close grade crossings merited being taken forward they would use their designated funds budget to commission the county council to undertake the work.

Due to work pressures and vacancies, the preliminary scoping work is not a priority use of county council resources, and Highways England have been asked whether it has any funding it can commit to employing a consultant for this preparatory work, either from existing designated funds or elsewhere. A response is awaited.

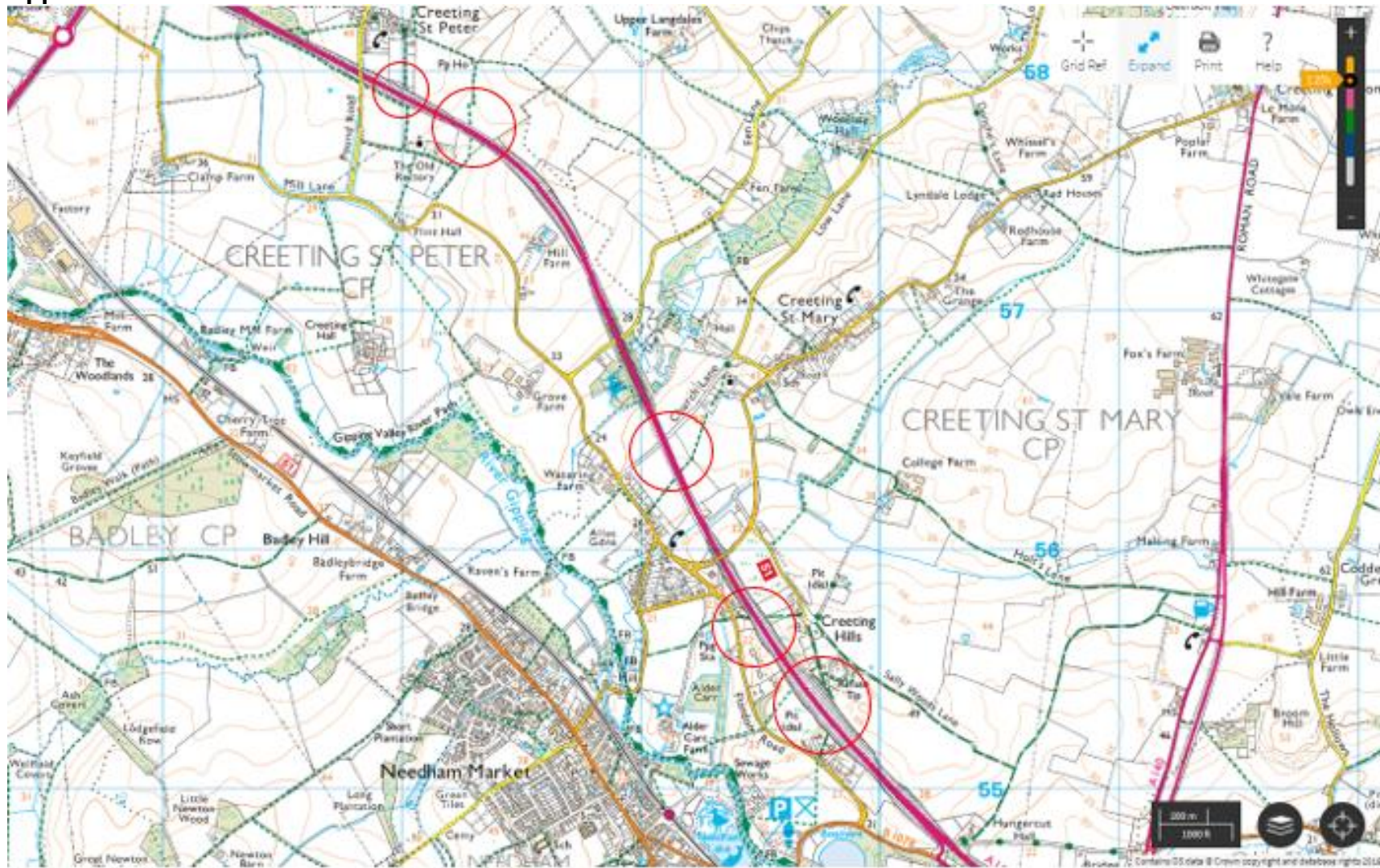
**Regional Meeting of LAFs**

The regional LAF meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July is expected to discuss Highways England and PRow severance, and Barry Hall will feed back any items of interest to members at their meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July.

END

AW/SCC  
Jul 20

### Appendix 1



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

