



1 Eversholt Street
London
NW1 2DN

E: [REDACTED]
T: [REDACTED]

28 July 2020

Neighbourhood Planning Officer
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Chart Way, North Street
Horsham
WEST SUSSEX
RH12 1RL
By email: planning@horsham.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

Billingshurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Regulation 16 Consultation

Thank you for consulting Network Rail on the Draft submission version of the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Development Plan. On behalf of Network Rail, please accept the following comments.

Car parking at Billingshurst Station

Network Rail and GTR the Train Operating Company welcome discussions with the Council around car parking at Billingshurst Station. However, there is no funding identified for this currently and there is minimal land available for this. Therefore, third party land would likely need to be bought.

Safety around level crossings

Network Rail would like to highlight the issues of the safety of level crossings within the Parish area. It is noted that the barrier-operated crossing on Station Road has been mentioned as an issue within the draft Neighbourhood Plan, but there are also several other level crossings where there is a high risk and Network Rail are seeking to have these closed. We have informed Horsham Council of this in response to their Local Plan review and the proposed site allocations which will impact on level crossings. However, these could also be taken into consideration within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Level Crossing safety is one of Network Rail's key priorities. We are required to manage risk so that it is as low as reasonably practicable at level crossings while keeping communities safe and connected. Closing level crossings is the only way to fully eradicate the risk. However, it is not always possible or practicable to immediately close all level crossings. Aside from financial and practical constraints, user convenience still needs to be a key consideration. A broad range of targeted interventions and initiatives are therefore needed to manage safety at crossings which remain open.

A level crossing of particular concern is Daux footpath level crossing which lies in the centre of the Land East of Billingshurst – Little Daux which is a proposed site allocation in the Local Plan (SA118). It is a

lightly used footpath with poor sighting and is reliant on trains blowing their horn to warn users of approaching trains at this location. With the proposed site allocation which comprises 475 new homes surrounding the level crossing, usage will go up significantly and given the poor sighting, the increased risk at this crossing will be too great.

Network Rail are hoping to work with Horsham Council and the Parish Council if of interest, to close this crossing as part of this development via the most cost-effective means. The option for which this could be carried out is to stop up the footpath WSCC 1933 on the north of the railway between footpath WSCC 1938-1 and Daux Crossing. A diversion could be created that follows footpath WSCC 1938-1 westwards to Broomfield Drive. It would then run along Broomfield Drive and into Birch Drive to connect with footpath WSCC 1939. The route would follow Station Road to the junction with Daux Road. It would follow Daux Road and connect with footpath WSCC 1935 before re-joining footpath WSCC 1933 on the south of the railway. The diversion route is shown in figure 1 below in blue, with the stopped-up footpath shown in yellow.

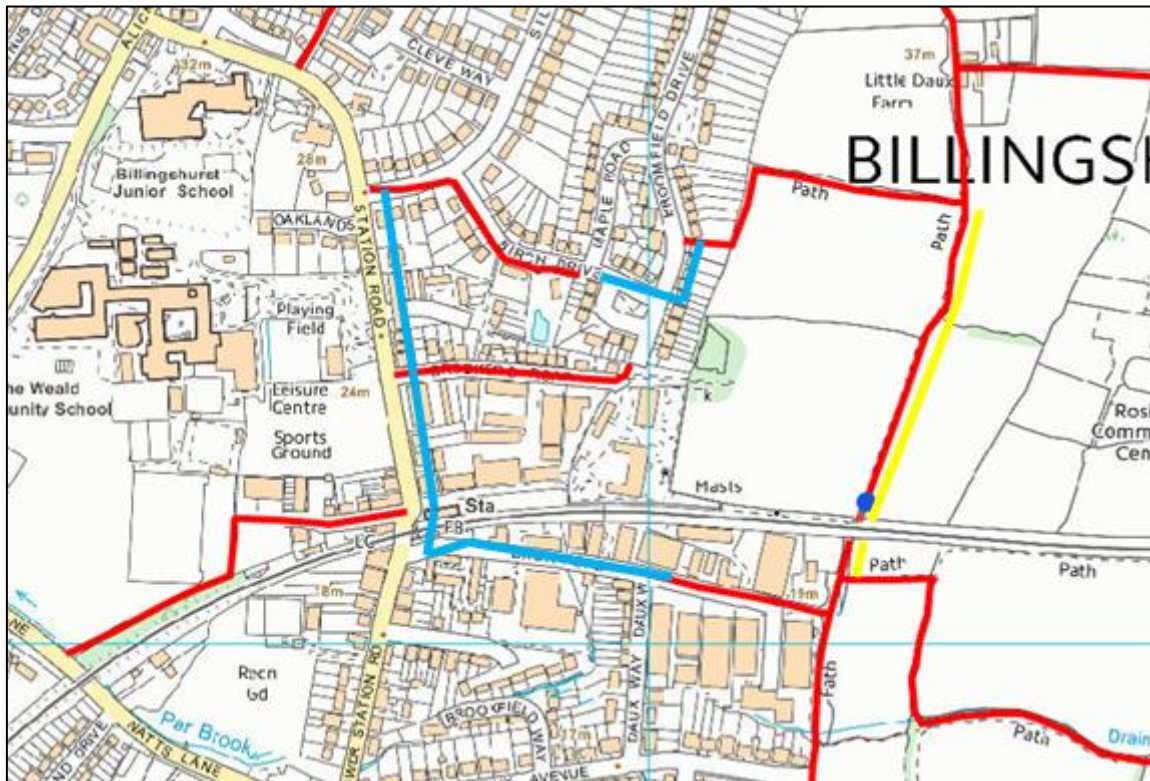


Figure 1: Map showing potential diversion route for footpath

This diversion would result in pedestrians traversing the railway in a much safer manner. There would also be an amenity benefit to the local community (both existing and proposed) as the trains will no longer be required to blow their whistles in this area.

This proposed site allocation in the draft Local Plan will also have an impact on several other footpaths. Those which would likely be impacted the most are shown in figure 2 below. These are Daux (the central red dot), Rosier No. 2 (the red dot to the east) and Billingshurst (the red dot to the west). Rosier No. 2 is a private user worked crossing. These would need upgrading due to the increased risk from the proposed development.

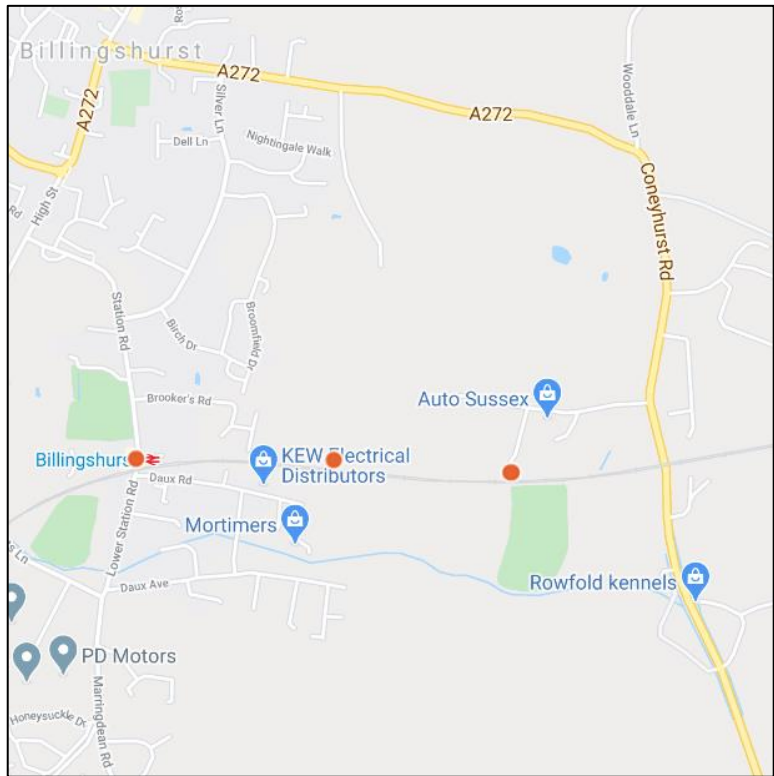


Figure 2: Map showing all of the level crossings likely impacted by SA118

Network Rail are keen to work with both of the Councils and the Developer to discuss ways to reduce the risk to users at these level crossings and how to fund these. The proposed development from SA118 will result in an unacceptable level of risk at Daux level crossing.

If you require any further information or have any queries relating to anything contained within this letter at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
Network Rail
[Redacted]