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Via email: programmeofficer@horsham.gov.uk

14 October 2026

Dear Sir,

NETWORK RAIL NOTE TO PLANNING INSPECTOR IN RESPECT OF HEARING MATTER 6C

This note is provided to the Examination in Public (EiP) to aid the Inspector in considering the view of Network Rail Infrastructure Limited ('Network Rail') regarding matter 6c: Strategic Policy HA4: Land East of Billingshurst (including the proposed southern extension). The note is submitted to the EiP to address questions arising in relation to Strategic Policy HA4 and its impact on the railway and principally deals with point i:

i The footbridge or underpass: the need for the facility, and its funding and implementation triggers.

The note is provided in lieu of Network Rail (NR) being able to attend the session covering matter 6c (Friday 16th October). I trust the note is of use in assisting the Inspector in relation to this matter.

Background

NR owns, operates, maintains and develops the railways in England, Scotland and Wales. NR is a public sector company, sponsored by the Department for Transport. NR is responsible for providing a safe, reliable and efficient railway while growing and upgrading the network to better serve passengers and freight.

NR has previously submitted representations to the draft Horsham Local Plan ('the Local Plan') concerning Strategic Policy: HA4. These representations were submitted on the basis that the

Policy allocated land to the north of the railway. However, as now included within the main modifications for the Local Plan, the Policy now also includes land to the south of the railway.

Level Crossing

NR's primary concern regarding the Policy is the impact of increased use of Daux Level Crossing ('Daux') and the resulting increased risk to the safety of users and future occupiers. Daux is a public footpath level crossing, is located a short distance from Billingshurst station and is in a central location of the land proposed to be allocated under the draft Policy. The most recent census at Daux (2024) identified an average of 21 users of the crossing per day. Most users were dog walkers, who use the existing fields north of the railway to exercise their dogs, and runners. Both user types are vulnerable users, as dog walkers are encumbered by ensuring themselves and their dog(s) use the crossing safely whilst runners are often wearing headphones/earphones and can be distracted when crossing the railway.

The introduction of development near to Daux will increase the numbers of users significantly. This is especially prevalent should attractors such as local facilities or schools be included within the proposed development. The use of Daux by vulnerable users, such as school children, would increase and occupiers of the development (especially to the north) may consider Daux to provide a quicker route to Billingshurst station rather than using alternatives to the north, which are already considered to be longer routes than using Daux.

Mitigation

Given the scale of development proposed as part of Policy HA4, it is NR's view that the only safe way of managing the increased risk driven by more users, especially vulnerable ones, is to close Daux as this would eliminate the risk. As a Public Right of Way (PRoW) footpath, it is likely that the PRoW will need to be retained at or close to Daux. Therefore, in the event of closure, an alternative means of safely crossing the railway is expected to be required. Policy HA4 makes specific reference to a footbridge or underpass to provide this alternative crossing. NR is primarily concerned that Daux is closed rather than the specific type of alternative crossing.

An underpass was provided near to Hassocks which allowed the closure of Woodside level crossing costing £4m (2021 costs). This was a major undertaking and may not be a suitable option for this location owing to the fairly at grade nature of the railway and possible vulnerabilities of the railway embankment. The Hassocks underpass also facilitates part of the cycle network.

A footbridge is considered deliverable at this location. In most circumstances, a stepped footbridge can be delivered within the land owned by NR however there may be circumstances where additional land is required. This would especially be the case if a ramped structure was to be provided. Given that the main users of the crossing currently are dog walkers and runners, it is likely that a stepped footbridge would be sufficient to provide suitable access. Surveys at Daux have shown there to be no cyclists using the crossing. A stepped footbridge is also relatively inexpensive to deliver compared with other interventions and there are comparable schemes nearby.

The main such comparable is the delivery of a footbridge over the railway as part of planning ref: DC/21/2321¹ for 170 dwellings near to Pulborough in Horsham District. This is a stepped footbridge which is expected to be delivered by March 2027. The final costs are yet to be confirmed, however it is expected to be around £1.6m - £1.8m. Accessible/ramped footbridges are delivered less frequently than stepped and would be expected to cost c£5m (potentially higher) owing to the greater size of the structure, more land being required and more complex delivery. However, it should be noted that final costs for either a stepped or accessible/ramped

¹ [Documents for reference DC/21/2321: Public Access](#)

footbridge cannot be confirmed at this point without design work being undertaken. To undertake the design work, NR would have to be in contract with the developer to be funded to do so.

Shared Value

NR is expected to pursue shared value where 'third parties require use of, or rights over NR land'. Through this, the shared value policy² states 'NR may expect to receive a share of this additional value as consideration for its own disposal of land, grant of rights, or the use of its land'. The shared value policy is a public document and shared value itself is considered an additional source of income that can be re-invested back into the railway. The setting of shared value for NR is through the Office for Rail and Road (ORR), the regulator for the railway.

The value of any rights to be released would be determined by an independent valuer appointed to provide a clear position on shared value. At this stage, NR is unable to provide an indicative cost of what, if any, shared value may be payable in relation to an alternative crossing of the railway. NR recognises the value of closing Daux however and therefore any shared value position would consider the mitigation/interventions to achieve closure. Therefore, should a shared value payment be needed, it is expected that this would be less than the total cost of the interventions at Daux.

Summary

In conclusion, NR maintains its view that Daux level crossing must close to enable Policy HA4 to come forward. This is due to the expected increase in users of Daux resulting from the development including in vulnerable users such as children and young people. The provision of local facilities such as schools, to the north of the railway would be an attractor that would likely bring users from the south of the railway over Daux.

NR is committed to working with the developer/site promoter and the Council to achieve closure and allow development to come forward safely. NR is supportive of the wording at chapter 10 paragraph 10.114 put forward as part of the previous main modifications consultation. In respect of timing, NR's preferred position is that a pre-commencement planning obligation be secured to enable the alternative means of crossing to be delivered and facilitate the closure of the crossing. This would enable the site allocation to come forward safely.

I trust the above is of assistance to the Inspector and the EiP and NR welcomes consideration of its position in relation to Strategic Policy HA4.

Yours sincerely

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Senior Town Planner

Network Rail Infrastructure Limited

² [Shared Value Policy](#)