

From: [Ian I'Anson](#)
To: [Roberts, Ali](#)
Subject: Proposal to extinguish level crossing off Oldfield Road.
Sent: 04/06/2025 10:24:18

Good morning,

I note that Network Rail has proposed to 'extinguish' the level crossing on Oldfield Road. The reasons why this would be wholly unacceptable are essentially stated within the text of the proposal, i.e.:

- It is a very frequently used Public Right of Way;
- A detour of ca. 1 km to reach the opposite side of the crossing is an unacceptably long detour, particularly for the same 'vulnerable and encumbered' users that this application is supposedly meant to protect.

It would essentially cut off pedestrian access to the new development by any route other than Amazon Way- a particular hindrance for anyone venturing there from the south of Westbury.

Practical considerations aside, I also strongly object in principle to the fact that Network Rail believes it is entitled to obstruct a widely used Public Right of Way:

- The use of a fairly ordinary level crossing falls well within the bounds of my personal risk appetite, and that is ultimately my decision- not Network Rail's.

- If Network Rail believes that it is creating an undue hazard because it chooses to run trains across a Public Right of Way, then the onus is squarely on Network Rail to propose risk-mitigating measures that do not obstruct the latter. The text of the proposal explicitly states that 'without the construction of a bridge, no additional mitigation can be provided- so why is Network Rail not proposing to construct one?

To digress slightly- the original planning application for the new development off of Amazon Way notably included a bridge across the railway line. Why has the developer been permitted to proceed with the development without having installed the bridge? In any case, since- for whatever reason- there still is no bridge, I would suggest that it behooves Network Rail to propose (and pay for) one if it wishes to mitigate a risk to public safety.

It is my opinion that Network Rail favours simply closing the Right of Way- regardless of the practical inconvenience to the public- in order to avoid having to resource a proper solution. In so doing it is quite wilfully seeking to disregard its broader social obligations, under the guise of 'safety'.

The local authority would similarly be disregarding its own social obligations if it were to cooperate with Network Rail's wholly unreasonable proposal.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Ian I'Anson