



Network Rail
1st Floor
Bristol Temple Point
Bristol
BS1 6NL

My Ref: P/TP21/
Your Ref: P/2019/0923

Date: 7 May 2024

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended)

APPLICATION NO: P/2019/0923

PROPOSAL: Outline Application for residential development and detailed means of access with other matters reserved

LOCATION: Land either side of Chain Road, Stansty, Wrexham, LL11 4YF

Dear Matthew Phillips,

Network Rail previously wrote to the Local Planning Authority in 2021 on the progress of the investigations relating to level crossing risk at both Stansty and Forge Level Crossing as a result of the development P/2019/0923, Land either side of Chain Road, Stansty, Wrexham, LL11 4YF.

Within that letter it was concluded that subject to appropriate controls contained within a S106 agreement to secure a full financial contribution before the commencement of works for the installation of a Meerkat System to proportionately mitigate risk at the level crossings, to enable Network Rail to remove the objection to the above planning application.

It is noted within the local authority's committee report that the development is recommended for approval subject to the contribution for the Meerkat System coming forward. Network Rail appreciate the local authority's support in securing this important contribution to mitigate the risk to health and safety and the level crossings.

Given the passage of time since the original consultation responses, Network Rail have undertaken a review of the mitigation strategies initially proposed to ensure these are still appropriate and deliverable in order to meet the relevant CIL tests..

At the time of the initial planning application consultation and subsequent objection, based on evidence from similar developments, it was agreed that both Stansty and Forge public footpath level crossings required improvements to mitigate additional health and safety risks due to expected uplift in use.

The closure of the public right of way via diversion and the installation of a Meerkat system were proposed outcomes of an optioneering workshop undertaken with the applicant due to its relative low cost and ease of integration with the wider railway network. During these discussions with the LPA and developer, the Meerkat system was in its trial phase, aimed for

product approval for railway integration shortly. However, the system subsequently failed to meet the required standards, halting its further development. This has left us with limited technological solutions to mitigate the expected rise in risk due to the number of housings in close proximity to these level crossings. This has triggered the requirement to review the solutions proposed to overcome the risk at these crossings.

It is therefore our Level Crossing Managers expert opinion that the next best option for this development is the installation of Overlay Miniature Stoplights (OMSL). Over the 2019-2024 control period, 25 Overlay Miniature Stop Lights (OMSL) have been installed on our route, providing pedestrians with red/green light warnings and audible alerts at level crossings. Despite their effectiveness, the requirements of OMSL installations are very different to the Meerkat system, with installation costs averaging £250,000.00 per site, subject to factors like access to power and potential ground preparation works required for installation, as well as the proximity to stations or stop signals.

Recognising the potential financial implications of the change in mitigation strategy, our Level Crossing Manager has advised that as a compromise, we propose upgrading only one location rather than both locations, in this instance Stansty would be the level crossing put forward for upgrade due to it being the closest to the development. Following this we could then work with Wrexham Right of Way to potentially divert both footpaths over the enhanced location at Stansty.

We appreciate this change in circumstance may have implications for the drafting and signing of the S106 application, and we would therefore welcome a meeting with your authority and the applicants to determine an agreeable route forward. Following this meeting we can undertake an initial Development Assessment to indicate an accurate cost for the required intervention.

We hope the above solutions proposed are suitable to both the Council and the Developer. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Yours Sincerely,

Grace Lewis

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