



HOUSE OF COMMONS

30th April 2017

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP LONDON SW1A 0AA
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

Our ref: tf/PagetRoadCrossing

Dear Chris

I am writing regarding the proposed closure of the Paget Road railway foot-crossing in Wivenhoe, Essex by Network Rail.

You will be aware of Network Rail's plans to close crossings across Essex in a bid to improve the safety of the public. The proposed closure of this particular crossing is a contentious one, and the way Network Rail have approached the closure has caused a great deal of local upset.

It is important that I make clear the uniqueness of this particular crossing compared to others in Essex. There is a clear split, made by the railway, through the heart of Wivenhoe. There are five methods of crossing between the top and bottom half of Wivenhoe. This is a restrictive amount for a town with a population above 7000. The closure of this crossing would enforce and underline the divide in the town and goes against the vast majority of public opinion.

This is a well utilised crossing, which historically has not seen any incidents, and which is relied upon by many members of the community. There has been a distinct feeling in the town that Network Rail have approached the proposed closure with a view that the crossing was to close, no matter what the outcome of the public consultation, and that the intention of Network Rail has always been to secure public support for a suitable and convenient alternative. These efforts have failed, and the public, including their local representatives and public organisations, remain overwhelmingly against the closure.

I enclose a copy of concerns from Peter Hill, which reflect the views of the majority of the town. As you will see, there is a lack of any consensus with Network Rail, and there is little public trust that a fair consideration is being given to the impact a closure would have on the town. For the reasons stated, I would be most grateful if you would give me your assurances that the proposed closure of this crossing will be subject to a public inquiry to ensure the impact on the town and the level of public concern is taken fully into consideration before any decision is reached.

Encl.

cc. Peter Hill Esq

Local interest groups, representatives and media outlets

*Yours sincerely
Bernard Jenkin*

WORKING FOR HARWICH & NORTH ESSEX