

From: [Grace Lewis](#)
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Subject: Hungerford Neighbourhood Development Plan
Date: 20 May 2025 15:39:52
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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

Date: 20th May 2025

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended)
PROPOSAL: Hungerford Neighbourhood Development Plan

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for consulting us on the Hungerford Neighbourhood Development Plan. This email forms for the basis of our response.

Network Rail is a statutory undertaker responsible for maintaining and operating the country's railway infrastructure and associated estate. Network Rail owns, operates, maintains and develops the main rail network. This includes the railway tracks, stations, signalling systems, bridges, tunnels, level crossings and viaducts. The preparation of development plan policy is important in relation to the protection and enhancement of Network Rail's infrastructure.

Action G: Traffic Impacts in Hungerford

Under this action Hungerford wish to work with local train operators to improve the rail services and facilities at Hungerford Station.

The railway industry, would welcome discussion with the Town Council and other parties on their proposals and this would require provision of funding for these. The Town Council should contact [REDACTED] to discuss further.

Level Crossings

Any development of land which would result in a material increase or significant change in the character of traffic using rail crossings should be refused unless, in consultation with Network Rail, it can either be demonstrated that the safety will not be compromised, or where safety is compromised serious mitigation measures would be incorporated to prevent

any increased safety risk as a requirement of any permission.

There are a number of level crossings within the plan area that will be affected:

1. Standers Public Footpath Level Crossing
2. Hungerford CCTV level crossing

Network Rail has a strong policy to guide and improve its management of level crossings, which aims to; reduce risk at level crossings, reduce the number and types of level crossings, ensure level crossings are fit for purpose, ensure Network Rail works with users / stakeholders and supports enforcement initiatives. Without significant consultation with Network Rail and if proved as required, approved mitigation measures, Network Rail would be extremely concerned if any future development impacts on the safety and operation of any of the level crossings listed above. The safety of the operational railway and of those crossing it is of the highest importance to Network Rail.

Level crossings can be impacted in a variety of ways by planning proposals:

- By a proposal being directly next to a level crossing
- By the cumulative effect of development added over time
- By the type of crossing involved
- By the construction of large developments (commercial and residential) where road access to and from site includes a level crossing
- By developments that might impede pedestrians ability to hear approaching trains
- By proposals that may interfere with pedestrian and vehicle users' ability to see level crossing warning signs
- By any developments for schools, colleges or nurseries where minors in numbers may be using a level crossing
- By any development or enhancement of the public rights of way

It is Network Rail's and indeed the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR) policy to reduce risk at level crossings not to increase risk as could be the case with an increase in usage at the level crossings in question. The Office of Rail Regulators, in their policy, hold Network Rail accountable under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and that risk control should, where practicable, be achieved through the elimination of level crossings in favour of bridges or diversions.

The Council have a statutory responsibility under planning legislation to consult the statutory rail undertaker where a proposal for development is likely to result in a material increase in the rail volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway:-

- (Schedule 4 (j) of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order, 2015) requires that "*...development which is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway*" (public footpath, public or private road) the Planning Authority's Highway Engineer must submit details to both the Secretary of State for Transport and Network Rail for separate approval.

We trust these comments will be useful in the preparation of the forthcoming plan documents.

Yours Sincerely,

Grace Lewis MRTPI
Town Planner
Network Rail

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