



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England  
**West Midlands Region**

41A Smith Street  
Warwick CV34 4JA  
Tel 01926 494597  
mark@cprewarwickshire.org.uk

Chandrika Shah  
Legislative Development  
Office of Rail Regulation  
1 Kemble Street  
London WC2B 4AN

12 July 2010

[chandrika.shah@orr.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:chandrika.shah@orr.gsi.gov.uk)

Dear Mr Shah

### **ORR Consultation on Policy on Level Crossings**

The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (West Midlands Regional Transport Group) has the following response to the consultation on Level Crossings.

We believe that the policy must make provision for restoration of level crossings on line which are reopened. To prevent lines reopening because this would include 1 or more level crossings being installed where they used to be would be retrogressive and hamper important and sustainable transport development.

Para 2.3 of the ORR consultation states: "Except in exceptional circumstances, ORR does not support the creation of any new level crossings, of any type."

This should not apply to restoring lines. There will be a number of situations in urban and suburban areas where trackbeds exist which are crossed by existing roads. These trackbeds are typically formally protected for 'future transport use' as at Stratford-upon-Avon; in many cases the reopening of the line is proposed or possible in future years.

The level crossings which existed before the line's closure will generally have performed perfectly well. Their sites will typically be in confined urban locations, where an over- or underbridge is not physically possible due to proximity of residential or commercial property. Rail speeds in such reopenings will generally be moderate or low. In these situations a case for restoring the level crossing at its original location, in a modern form controlled by CCTV etc, should be able to be made by the promoting body.

There will also be some rural locations where a reopening of a line would restore a level crossing in attractive countryside, but where a new bridge would be harmful to the landscape or could only be built at very high cost. It would be contrary to the principles of a sustainable transport policy if restoring level crossings was not permitted in reopening of lines, and the result was to render the reopening impossible.

The policy should be that a restored level crossing on a reopened line should be able to be considered where it would have no different safety risk from that recorded for comparable existing level crossings

Railway reopenings have positive environmental and safety benefits, as they create a modal shift of trips from car to train. The overall road safety benefit to the area served from reopening the railway in such cases can be expected in such situations to outweigh any safety risk at a restored level crossing.

Yours sincerely

MARK SULLIVAN MRTPI CMILT

*Chairman, CPRE West Midlands Regional Transport Group*