

ELAF revert to matters that have been raised in previous submissions where the PROW network is still negatively affected – due to new severance / re-routing in this proposed draft DCO or due to historic severance. National Policy requires the mitigation of these matters – NPPF paragraph 100, Highways Act 2008 section 136 and National Policy Statement for National Networks (2014) 5.184. Assurances were also given in the pre-lockdown forums hosted by Jacobs & National Highways.

1. Boreham Main Road B1137 – mitigation measures

In January at ISH1, ELAF supported Essex County Council proposal that one of the ways of narrowing Boreham Main Road is to widen the off carriageway non-motorised user provision to 3 metres. [ECC Local Impact report 8.3.15 refers REP2-056 & ELAF REP3-038].

This proposal was referenced again by ELAF at ISH5. ELAF wish to see such a 3metre wide off-road WCH provision included in the draft DCO. This would both narrow this wide straight road so making it seem less like a “main” road and also provide a safer active travel and leisure route.

2. Historic severance between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel

As noted in ELAF’s August 2021 consultation response, there are some PROWs that join up with the north or south side of the A12 which can legally, although not practically, be crossed by WCH users.

- (i) just north of the new Paynes Lane WCH bridge, Boreham PROW 24 is on the north side and Boreham PROW 25 is on the south side. The new Paynes Lane will provide a good WCH crossing of both the railway line and the A12 near to these paths.
- (ii) Boreham footpath 21 [PROW 213-21]: this passes under the railway through a tunnel & ends at a lay-by on the north side of the A12 – see sheet 3 of the NH plans. Before the A12 was widened, the route used to continue across the A12. There is now a housing estate on the south side but no house where the old path used to run.
- (iii) **Chantry Lane:** the road and bridge over the railway line still exist on the north side but there is no bridge continuation over the current A12. The stub end of Chantry Lane still exists on the south side connecting to the B1137 Boreham Main Road opposite Damases Lane. It is understood that the landowner on the south side is willing to have a WCH connection across the stub end on his land – see REP3-025.

The north west arm of Boreham PROW 20 [213-20] is incorrectly labelled as Terling Hall Road on sheet 4 of the NH plans.

The reconnection of Chantry Lane with a WCH bridge is requested which would mitigate historical severance and provide a useful off-carriageway WCH link from the B1137 (Boreham) Main Road.

3. Hatfield Peverel FP 29 [PROW 90_29], the demolition of the Woodend A12 sliproad Bridge and navigating Junction 21

As noted in ELAF’s August 2021 consultation response and at ISH1 [REP3-038], the demolition of Woodend Bridge severs a direct route from the west end of Witham to Hatfield Peverel FP29. Under the current draft DCO plans, people from Witham will be required to walk west to the new Junction 21, cross four slip roads and then head back east to connect with footpath 29– a total detour of about 1 mile/1.6km, about 20 minutes walking. Crossing slip roads is a fraught experience and no controlled crossings are shown on sheets 6 and 7 of NH’s plans. The 1 mile/1.6km detour compares with a current distance of about 0.15mile/ 250 metres, a 3minutes walk across the Woodend Bridge.

Many new houses are being built on the west side of Witham. The railway line forms a barrier to the north so it is important that easy links to the south are retained and not severed. **ELAF repeat the request that a footbridge connection is provided in the DCO across the A12 to replace Woodend Bridge to mitigate this proposed new severance.**

4. Duke of Wellington junction – and cyclists

Many parties have expressed concern about the busy Duke of Wellington junction. ELAF expressed concern in their August 2021 consultation response and at ISH1 [REP3-038] about what cyclists will do at this junction especially when travelling west from Witham / Wellington Bridge when they will have to cross the traffic stream (sheets 5 and 6 of National Highways plans).

Hatfield Peverel station is the nearest railway station to the extensive new housing on the west side of Witham. The National Highways DCO Order limits extend north to the railway line between the west side of Witham and Station Road Hatfield Peverel, with one narrow section. An east -west WCH route on National Highways land would also provide a direct off-road connection to Hatfield Peverel footpath 2 [PROW 90-02] which connects north over the railway line on a footbridge.

In the interests of safe active travel, ELAF request that the draft DCO includes a direct off-road WCH route (on National Highways land) between the west side of Witham and Station Road, Hatfield Peverel.

5. Gershwin Boulevard Bridge and WCH connections

Many parties have said that they wish to see Gershwin Boulevard WCH bridge moved slightly west – see also ELAF’s comments at deadline 5 and 6 [REP5-035 and REP6-111]. ECC in their REP4-075 included a plan – see below - showing the bridge moved slightly west but STILL entirely on land within the draft DCO Order limits with the direct connection to Howbridge Hall Lane, a public road, and a link on National Highways land to Witham FP 95 [PROW 121_95]. This would facilitate a link south to James Cooke Wood and east to Witham FP95 and, via the replacement open spaces land, to Maldon Road.

ELAF request that the ECC proposal is included in the draft DCO.



It is noted that a section of the Blackwater Rail Trail, plots 8/3a and 8/6m [Book of Reference REP6-042 pages 2460 & 2461] are shown as Crown Land on sheet 8 [REP6-016]. However the land comprising the Blackwater Rail Trail, the old Witham to Maldon railway line, from Witham to just north of Oliver's Nursery is Essex County Council land not Crown Land.

6. Rivenhall footpath 36 [PROW 105_36] – severed by the new off-line A12

ELAF repeat the request made in their August 2021 consultation response and in more detail at deadline 6 [REP6-111], that the severance of Rivenhall footpath 36 by the new A12 is against National Policies and National Highway's own objectives. As noted by ELAF at deadline 6 **a clear span ridge under the new A12 suitable for both wildlife and human animals would mitigate this severance** and should be included in the draft DCO. This would also provide a non-culverted river crossing as required by the Environment Agency.

7. Prested Hall and & severance of Feering FP 15 [PROW 78-15]

ELAF have expressed their concern at the severance by the new A12 of Feering footpath 15 and the direct wide tree-lined driveway to Prested Hall. ELAF contend that the severance of this north-south connection between the north-east end of Feering (London Road & New Lane & the strategic growth location on both sides of London Road) and facilities at Prested Hall and the footpath link to Messing introduces a new severance of the PROW network and so is against National Policies and National Highway's own objectives of... "improving accessibility for walkers, cyclists, horse riders, and public transport users."

A footbridge over the new A12 in the general location of Feering footpath 15 & Prested Hall Drive is requested to be included in the draft DCO. This would all be inside the DCO Order limits.

8. De-Trunked A12 and sustainable transport

ELAF support ECC's proposal for the use of one carriageway of the to-be-detrunked A12 as a greenway / an active travel and leisure route. Whatever is decided on this matter, **ELAF request that, as part of the handover, National Highways re-instate bus stop flags and bus stopping points on the to-be-de-trunked sections** (i.e. Witham-Kelvedon and Feering-Marks Tey) – in particular at Rivenhall End, at the Fire-and-Rescue centre and by Domsey Chase / new Easthorpe Road connection. People at these locations have been unable to make use of the bus along the A12 for many years as it was deemed too dangerous for buses to pull out from bus stops into the A12 traffic stream.