

**The Kent County Council (Public Footpaths CW80 and CWX40) Rail Crossing
Extinguishment Order
KCC ref PROW/CW80/10/NR**

Statement of Case

Michael Parsons
[REDACTED]

June 25, 2020

1. I object to the closure of the footpath without provision of an alternative means to cross the railway.
2. I recognise that the existing crossing has a poor safety record, but action should be taken to improve the existing crossing or provide a safer alternative, not to close it.
3. I understand that the County Council intend to remain neutral at the Inquiry and to rely on Network Rail to make the case for the scheme.
4. I have not seen any evidence that Network Rail has fully explored options to improve the existing crossing, including
 - Speed restrictions
 - Improved signage
 - Automatic gate locking
 - Enhanced visual warning systems
 - Alternative bridge designs and locations
5. Network Rail has unreasonably discounted the option of providing a footpath to the existing footbridge to the west. The Disability Impact Assessment from Network Rail shows that by a large majority (nearly 50% of respondents to the consultation exercise in October 2015) this was the favoured option amongst the public.
6. The arguments advanced by Network Rail for closure of the crossing are unconvincing. Without further evidence from Network Rail regarding alternative options to improve the existing crossing or provide an alternative route to the existing footbridge, I don't believe the case for closure has been established.
7. I have not seen any evidence that either Network Rail or the County Council have given proper consideration to the effect of closure on the wider footpath network. To get to the seafront or town centre I and other users will be required either to take a longer diversion to the bridge to the west of Glebe Way or to pass under the railway crossing at the traffic lights. Both routes involve walking alongside the busy Canterbury Road, which itself is unsafe. Stretches of the pavement are poorly defined, narrow and poorly maintained.