

Witness: Chris Weller  
Made: 15 August 2020

**Witness Statement in relation to Glebe Way Level Crossing**  
**PINS REF: 3226477**

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**Witness Statement of Chris Weller**

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I, Chris Weller by occupation a Senior Building Surveyor at Assent Building Control.

I live in [REDACTED] Forge Lane, Whitstable CT5 4HR and have lived in **WHITSTABLE at this address for 23 years.**

I make this statement because I object to the proposed extinguishment of the Glebe Way Level Crossing.

I live opposite Glebe Way. For 23 years I have used the off-road pedestrian route to the beach. This is a short 15-minute walk along Glebe way, over the level crossing then along West Cliffe road across the Public footpath of the Golf Course to the Beech.

I use the Glebe Way Railway Crossing most days to access the Beech including dog walking all year and Sea swimming in the summer. And to visit friends in the surrounding area.

It also provides a safe and short pedestrian route into Whitstable town centre for shopping and leisure.

All without the use of a car, reducing congestion and pollution and providing a sustainable way for us to shop taking account of my husbands limited mobility.

I also strongly object to the closure of the Crossing as I do not accept closure for Safety Reasons.

This is a well-used crossing by the whole community and visitors, and is accessible to all whereas the inconvenient foot bridge is not accessible for people with limited mobility, or with young children. Or anyone carrying heavy shopping and loads.

The limited deaths in recent years appear to be intentional and not accidents.

Network Rails own Survey determines that the crossing is well used by hundreds of people daily with no accidents, injury or fatality.

Different routes are twice as long from our home and I am prevented from using the footbridge access with my husband due to his poor mobility.

The level access route of the crossing is traffic free, nearer, and a more accessible route to the beech than any other route from our home.

I note that in the First Glebe Crossing Consultation only 7 out of 362 respondents wanted closure and yet this is the favoured proposal.

In my view Safety of the crossing can easily and cheaply be improved by measures such as

- Automatic closure of gates with an automatic lock when trains pass.  
With allowance for adequate space.
- Flashing lights and bells when the trains pass

The right of way has been there long before the railway hence why there is a pedestrian level crossing. To shut the crossing now on safety grounds after over 150 years of public use seems perverse.

The level crossing serves hundreds of Households in this area of Whitstable and will detrimentally affect all our amenity of access to the beach, visiting Friends and shopping in the town if this crossing is closed.

Please reconsider.

I am prepared to attend the forthcoming inquiry to give oral evidence.

#### **STATEMENT OF TRUTH**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

**Chris Weller**  
**BSc (Hons), FCABE, C. Build E, MRICS, MCIQB, DMS**

**Senior Building Control Surveyor**

15 August 2020