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10/11/18

case # :-18/110 000047



Railway neighbour
Ref: RDG1 35m 73ch
Railway Neighbour
135 Gypsy Lane
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 2BW

- distance from crossing?
- # of trains
- # of horns

Community Relations
Basingstoke Campus
Gresley Road
Basingstoke
Hampshire
RG21 4FS

07 November 2018

T 03457 11 41 41

Dear neighbour

Introduction of whistle boards – Smiths level crossing, Wokingham

We are writing to inform you that Network Rail will be undertaking safety critical work near your property.

We will be installing whistle boards to protect Smiths level crossing which is located just off Gypsy Lane.

The level crossing provides access to a private residence and land, and is in daily use. It is not safe to cross due to poor sighting which does not give the user enough time to cross safely when a train is approaching. Whistle boards will warn the user that there is a train approaching.

The installation of the boards will take place on Monday 26 November from 06:00hrs to 00:00hrs. Throughout this period, you will see an increased presence of our operatives in the area. Our staff are fully briefed on working responsibly in the local community.

Once in place, it is a requirement for trains to sound their horns at the whistle boards and this will be ongoing until the boards are later removed (when the crossing is permanently closed). Please note, the sounding of horns is a national requirement that we cannot change. However, this work will lift the current speed restriction in place, allowing trains to run at their normal speed.

Please refer to our questions and answers below for further information on this safety critical work.

What else have Network Rail done to protect the crossing?

Network rail have tried several ways to solve this issue in the past. We looked at installing a red/green light system, setting up a system to contact the signaller, appointing an attendant, and investigated closure. These have not yet provided a solution although we are still investigating some of them. Currently, all trains over the crossing are slowed down by a speed restriction to give appropriate warning time. As mentioned above, the introduction of whistle boards will allow the trains to return to their normal speed.

When will the whistle boards be removed?



They will remain in place until such time when the crossing can be accessed from the south by the new housing development, after which the crossing can be permanently closed.

Is there a better way to protect the crossing?

Network Rail have tried many ways to reduce the risk. We are still in discussion with the users to close the crossing which will allow the whistle boards to be removed. This will take the risk away completely. However, until we can close the crossing, the whistle boards are critical to ensure the safety of users.

We hope this information is helpful and we apologise for any inconvenience these essential works may cause. If you have any questions or concerns, please telephone our 24-hour helpline on 03457 11 41 41.

Yours sincerely
Community Relations, Wessex Route