

Farnborough North and The Hatches Level Crossing Upgrade Proposal- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

General

1. What are the estimated costs:

- a. The Farnborough North bridge and lifts (and any land purchasing) – Costs for Farnborough North in October 2021 were in the region of three million pounds, and so if inflation of approximately 20-25 % is included then costs reach the £3.7M mark. Also note that additional scope has occurred such as footpath and equipment moves which will increase the price.
- b. The Hatches replacement bridge (and any land purchasing) – Costs for the Hatches in October 2021 were around three million pounds, and so if inflation of approximately 20-25 % is included then costs reach the £3.7M mark. Again, further additional scope for ramp changes and footpath design will affect the price.
- c. A MSL at the existing Hatches crossing – Without detailed plans this is difficult to predict for this site, however based on other locations with similarly complex solutions and tying in with the cost in the NRA, this is predicted at £800,000 but similar the other options, there would be inflation to factor in.

2. What are the plans for the land to the south of the proposed Hatches replacement bridge i.e. where the Sturt Road Chord used to be? Will the chord be reintroduced or will the be used for development?

NRIL has confirmed it won't be reintroducing a chord therefore the land could be used for other purposes.

3. How will Network Rail teams deal with wild animals found during the works ?

In early late 2020 and August 2021, Preliminary Ecology Assessments (PEAs) were carried out around the areas of Farnborough North and Hatches. This was to assess the wildlife and the need to incorporate the correct and appropriate mitigation measures around the area.

In terms of what was discovered within these areas, and the suitability of deciduous woodland and bramble scrub habitat to support nesting birds, clearance works would be carried out outside of the nesting season, which is defined as running from March to August, inclusive. If this is not feasible for any reason, a nesting bird survey would be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist shortly prior to the start of works to ensure no active nests are present. In the event that any active nests are found during this survey or at any point during the works, a suitable exclusion zone should be put around the nest, with no work taking place in this area until such time as the nest can be confirmed as no longer active. For all other wildlife such as Hedgehogs, snakes, etc. Network Rail have a strict policy on how

these are handled safely and appropriately. Site clearance would be carried out in a precautionary manner in relation to these animals. If any are encountered at any time, they would be carefully moved to a safe location away from the works or be allowed to move off of their own accord. Any trenches or other excavations created during construction works should be covered overnight or provide a means of escape for any nocturnal wildlife, such as hedgehogs, that may become entrapped. A suitable means of escape would comprise a ramp with adequate grip, at least 30 cm wide and set at an angle of no greater than 45°.

4. Will the proposed pathway from the westside of the bridge to the Hatches pathway be fenced off either side?

There is currently a railway fence in between the proposed new pathway and the railway and will be fenced off from the west (Fisheries). It is also a heavily built up area with Trees surrounding the pathway.

5. What is the current & proposed legal position concerning horse use of the right of way?

The current legal position of the level crossing is a bridleway with a Temporary Traffic Order in place prohibiting equestrian use. This was agreed with Surrey CC and a local committee in June 2014 when the crossing telephones were removed and the signage adjusted to reflect no use of equestrians at the time and for several years previously.

6. Could you clarify the proposed planning application options i.e. single / individual / involving the Secretary of State? What are the benefits to a single application?

Planning applications for Farnborough North and the Hatches can either be made as one application or as two separate applications. The benefits of applying for a single planning application means that Network Rail can use the umbrella legislation referred to as the Transport & Works Act Order for both sites. This allows one process to run and saves time and money.

7. Could you provide the formula to calculate the benefit cost ratio in the narrative risk assessment please?

This is a complex formula that takes into consideration many aspects so there is no simple formula that summaries the process. The cost-benefit ratio, in its simplest form, sets the cost of the proposal, e.g., a bridge, against the safety benefit that it provides, which in the case of the bridge would be the total removal of the risk at the level crossing. The safety benefit is based around the Value per Fatality (VPF) which is set by the UK Treasury at approximately £2 million. Other factors that are considered are the lifespan of the mitigation, savings from current work and predicted cost of work associated with the new option which are discounted for every year of the lifespan of the mitigation.

The Hatches Level Crossing

1. What data can be provided to support the safety figures and cost : safety ratio for bridges vs MSL?

Please refer to the Hatches Narrative Risk Assessment, sections 5.8 and 5.9 for MSL details and also the options table at the start of Section 6. In summary, MSLs reduce the risk at level crossings by approximately 50-60% , whereas bridges compared to level crossings is a harder comparison. There isn't the same level of catastrophic risk and level of injury at a bridge compared to a level crossing. Statistics for bridges are occasionally gathered but the level of maintenance tends to mean that the structure is safe. Accidents are likely to be in the category of slips/trips/falls or between users. They are similar to pavements although our standards for maintenance are more stringent.

2. Will the train horn stop at the Hatches on the bridge is installed?

That is correct, the only reason a train will sound the horn is to warn that it is approaching due to not having any safety precautions at the Hatches. Once a bridge is installed the train will only need to use its horn if there are track workers nearby (which would be rare).

3. If a MSL was installed at the Hatches, would the train horn still be required?

No, the lights would be the primary mechanism of identifying a train approaching, and whistle boards would be removed.

4. How tall would the proposed Hatches replacement bridge be (to its highest point)?

The highest point (the top of the railings on the highest deck) is at the is 8.1 metres high, including the parapet height of 2.1 metres from the top deck level.

5. Are there any tree preservation orders at the Spencer Close location?

No trees have preservation orders at the proposed location of the bridge.

6. Approximately how many trees would need to be removed for the proposed Hatches replacement bridge?

For the Hatches footbridge, 763m² would need to be cleared, roughly 16 trees at 50 m² per tree. The access path along the NR boundary would need 420m², about 9 trees cleared / cut back. Both these options would consider how to limit this to as few as possible.

7. How will the bridge solution be made suitable and safe for bikes and mobility users?

The ramps would be built as per the Network Rail standard, with slope gradients to the DIA standard to ensure that slopes will be to the safest gradient (1:15) and flat areas regularly spaced to allow resting between climbs. Cyclists and mobility-constrained users would be encouraged to use the ramps, with cyclists being encouraged to dismount.

8. What measures will be put in place to ensure the privacy of neighbouring houses and gardens?

Measures such as tree walls surrounding the bridge on the residential side would be put in place. Privacy parapets would be installed on the bridge so that overlooking of neighbouring houses is prevented. Lighting will be provided throughout the night, being triggered by motion sensors to prevent light pollution during these hours.

9. What measures will be put in place to prevent cars parking on Spencer Close (i.e. Fishermen)?

The project is in early discussions of making Spencer Close a permit parking only area to help stop non-residents parking in the street.

10. What measures will be put in place to prevent travellers from accessing the land between Spencer Close and the Railway line?

The area around the bridge will be appropriately fenced off so there is no access into surrounding areas. Fences will also separate the new pathway back up to the existing pathway to prevent access into the fisheries and the railway.

11. Will Spencer Close still be an access point for Network Rail maintenance - how will that work?

Spencer close will not be an access point. The access point for maintenance will remain at the Hatches.

12. What measures will be put in place to prevent / reduce littering?

As per the guidance provided by the British Transport Police, the bridge parapets put in place will be high enough to prevent people from littering (2.1 metres).

13. Are there any existing sites with a similar bridge design to the proposed Hatches replacement bridge?

There is a similar bridge at Gomshall station in Surrey on the North Downs Line. It is not the same as it is not stacked but similar in design.

14. How will the proposed Hatches replacement bridge affect the speed of the trains traveling through the Hatches area?

The proposed bridge will not affect the train speed on this line.

15. If the proposed Hatches replacement bridge goes ahead, what would be the estimated duration to install the bridge?

The Spencer Close bridge construction team would on-site for approximately 40 weeks. The production team is working on lessening these timescales.

16. How was the location for the Hatches level crossing bridge chosen?

The location at Spencer Close was decided based on it offering the shortest distance back to the pathway plus the availability of land to construct the bridge. Grenville Gardens and Gloucester Close options are north of the existing LC at the Hatches. They provide very little space for bridge construction and have environmental issues such as bodies of water that would make it difficult to re-join the pathway. The option of using Chartwell does not offer the existing natural access point to the land to the west that Spencer Close does. At Chartwell there is a ransom strip in place which is not the case at Spencer Close. Also, the distance travelled by the user would be greater.

17. Has there been any consideration to moving the bridge a further 100m (approx.) to the south (keeping Spencer Close as the entry point) where it would be more than twice as far away from any existing housing and much less of an impact on residents?

Yes, and this has always been a balance of land take and lengthening of the alternative route as well as the distance from residences.

18. At one of the first meetings, residents were told an electronic gate would not be feasible because the existing signalling system was not reliable. Either in June or July this year we had a letter from Network Rail saying there would be overnight work being carried out on the railway line to remove the redundant signalling equipment, as a new system was being installed, which went back to the main control centre at Basingstoke. Would this new system not make this option feasible?

The upgrading of the signalling would have no effect on an electronic gate option. As seen at Farnborough North, this option is usually accompanied by a person to operate the gates so no-one is trapped and even then the system is fallible.

Farnborough North**1. What will be the height of the lift shaft at Farnborough North Station?**

The highest point of the structure is the lift shaft, from ground to the top is 8.8m. From the platform to the top of the footbridge is 7.6m.

2. What will happen when a lift breaks down?

In the event a lift breaks down, there will be a control panel within the lift that will call directly to a control room. You will then be able to listen to instructions whilst they rectify the issue.

3. What is the current and proposed legal position concerned horse use of the right of way?

The current legal position of the level crossing is a bridleway with a Temporary Traffic Order in place prohibiting equestrian use. This was agreed with Surrey CC and a local committee in June 2014 when the crossing telephones were removed and the signage adjusted to reflect no use of equestrians at the time and for several years previously.