

Suggitt's Lane Frequently Asked Questions

1) Bridge Proposal

Q1: Why are you planning on building a footbridge over the railway at Suggitt's Lane?

A: We've listened to feedback from the local community since Network Rail closed the level crossing in April 2019.

Due to the unique circumstances at Suggitt's Lane, including the high level of usage there was of the crossing, there is a strong case to provide an alternative access over the railway.

The last census Network Rail carried out showed an average of 570 pedestrians and cyclists used the crossing at Suggitt's Lane every day. This means we expect a new footbridge to be well used and be important to enable local people to access the seafront.

Q2: Why can't we just reopen the level crossing for people to cross the railway?

A: Network Rail took the decision to close Suggitt's Lane in April 2019 for safety reasons. If the crossing reopened it would reintroduce the risk of misuse which was the reason the level crossing was closed.

North East Lincolnshire Council and Network Rail have worked closely together on plans for an alternative access over the railway, and are now proposing a new footbridge to provide this access.

2) Bridge Design

Q3: What will the bridge look like and will it be accessible?

A: Some 3D images of the bridge are included on our engagement portal.

The footbridge is a standard design which is used across the rail network and has both stepped and ramped access. It will be accessible and will comply with the Equality Act 2010.

There will be regular rest points included along the length of the ramps, and dual height handrails provided along the steps and ramps.

Sensor activated lighting is included in the design so that the bridge can be used when it is dark. The footbridge will be made of steel which will then be painted to protect it.

Q4: Why does the bridge need to be the proposed size it is?

A: The ramps on the footbridge need to have a certain gradient to comply with the Equality Act 2010. On this bridge the ramps will be a 1 in 15 gradient. The ramps and steps also have to be a minimum width – at least 2 metres – so that users can safely pass one another.

The footbridge also needs to be a minimum height above the railway for safety reasons. At Suggitt's Lane this height is 4.68 metres to allow trains to pass underneath.

The design which has been selected allows enough space under the footbridge for a second track to be installed to Cleethorpes Station if this is ever required in future.

Q5: Couldn't we just have a bridge with steps like the Council-owned footbridge on Fuller Street?

A: The existing footbridge on Fuller Street is not accessible to everybody in the local community as it only has stepped access.

We carried out a Diversity Impact Assessment which concluded that ramps needed to be included at Suggitt's Lane so that the footbridge is accessible to all.

We've also had consistent feedback from the public since the level crossing closed that any new access over the railway needs to be designed so that it is accessible.

Q6: Why has this bridge design been chosen?

A: The bridge is a standard railway footbridge design. Using this design enables us to reduce the cost of the project by benefiting from a standardised approach to design and construction. It also has future benefits as we can better predict what maintenance might be required.

Our work considered various alternative options to the footbridge, including constructing a subway and upgrading the existing bridge on Fuller Street.

Building a new footbridge at Suggitt's Lane was selected because it can be built entirely on Network Rail and Council-owned land, it will not compromise the sea defences, it will offer the shortest journey distance to users, and we are confident we can construct it quickly.

3) Bridge Funding

Q7: How much is this project going to cost?

A: It is expected that the bridge will cost £3.6 million to build.

Q8: Who is paying for the bridge?

A: Due to the unique circumstances surrounding the closure of the level crossing at Suggitt's Lane, funding is being provided for this project by Network Rail (£2 million) and the Department for Transport (£1.6 million).

This funding has been allocated solely for the delivery of a new accessible footbridge at Suggitt's Lane and cannot be used for any other project in the borough.

4) Community Engagement

Q9: Why is the window for community engagement only 2 weeks long?

A: The engagement window we are holding will run from Thursday 11 March until the end of Friday 26 March.

Views on the proposed bridge are very welcome from anybody in the local community and we will respond directly to anybody who gets in touch with us about the plans.

You can respond by using the questionnaire on the Council's engagement portal, by emailing suggitts@nelincs.gov.uk or by calling us on 01472 324249 to provide feedback or request a paper copy of the questionnaire.

This engagement is to introduce our plan to the local community. After it has concluded there will be a full planning process where residents can submit their views about the project more formally.

Q10: What will follow the end of the community engagement on 26 March?

A: At the end of the engagement window on Friday 26 March we will take onboard the feedback we've received, and respond to everybody who has contacted us about the project.

Depending on that response we will then decide how to proceed. A formal planning application is the likely next step in the process and will be submitted by Network Rail and then considered by North East Lincolnshire Council.

5) Building The Bridge

Q11: When will construction of the bridge start and when will it open?

A: We aren't able to confirm a construction timetable at the moment because it depends on the outcome of the public engagement and the subsequent planning process.

We will be able to confirm these dates if the planning application is approved. We expect it will take around 22 weeks to build the bridge once planning permission is granted.

Q12: Who owns the land the bridge will be built on?

A: The bridge will be built primarily on land which is owned by Network Rail. A small section of land on the Eastern side – the side adjacent to the sea wall – will be affected. That is owned by the Council.

The bridge has to be built on this footprint adjacent to the old level crossing because it is the only place there is enough land to fit it on.

Q13: How will you manage the impact of construction, and the longer-term visual impact of the new bridge, on people living nearby?

A: We recognise how important it will be to minimise any disruption there is as part of the project. We will do as much work as possible on the bridge offsite, and then look to install it as quickly as possible.

There is likely to be a requirement to carry out some piling to put in place foundations for the bridge, but we will provide as much notice of possible of when we need to do this to the houses nearest to the site.

Network Rail and North East Lincolnshire Council will develop a plan which enables the majority of construction work on the bridge to happen over a short number of closures of the railway rather than disrupting the community for extended periods.

We will be engaging directly with the households immediately adjacent to the site who are likely to be most affected by the visual impact of the new bridge.

Q14: Will the railway have to close during the construction of the bridge? If so, for how long?

A: We will be fabricating the bridge off-site to reduce the disruption to local residents and passengers.

There will be times when the railway has close later in the year to allow the bridge to be installed safely. We will provide advance notice of those periods, look to avoid peak times during the summer holidays, and always look to minimise disruption from the work.

6) After the bridge is built

Q15: Who will own the bridge once it opens?

A: North East Lincolnshire Council will own the bridge and will be responsible for access over the railway here. The Council will carry out any future maintenance which is required on the bridge.

Ends