

by email to [crwest@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:crwest@networkrail.co.uk)

To Network Rail Western  
From CPRE Berkshire

Railway Electrification - Landscape Impact

3 Nov 2015

Dear Sirs,

CPRE Berkshire is very concerned about the serious impact the current overhead railway electrification will have on the landscape, particularly the North Wessex Downs AONB and Chilterns AONB through which it is passing. In particular, the massive, dense steel gantries being erected between posts. Seen perpendicular to the line they may not notice a great deal, but seen obliquely it is quite a different matter. Local people were expecting the power lines to be supported on cables between posts, as has been done at the extensive Reading sidings.

Also it seems Network Rail did not do any early consultation which any reading of the Countryside Act would surely deem necessary, as pointed out by the Goring Gap Railway Action Group. Beside that area of concern, we are concerned about the route in AONB to Hungerford and beyond in due course, where a better design is a must.

A separate issue, the cost of these gantries, of various sizes and construction patterns, must be very great and many times the cost of cable support, and take much longer to resource. The question of long-term maintenance costs was mentioned at the South Stoke meeting, but surely support using the right cable will last a very long time: cables supporting suspension bridges do not get changed frequently. We also point out that cable support is used on many existing lines in the UK and across France.

Yours sincerely,

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