



Department  
for Transport

Sue Holden  
Chief Officer  
Chilterns Conservation Board  
sueholden@chilternsaonb.org

Henry Oliver  
Director  
North Wessex Downs AONB  
henryoliver@northwessexdowns.org.uk

From the Parliamentary  
Under Secretary of State  
Claire Perry MP

Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000  
E-Mail: [claire.perry@df.t.gov.uk](mailto:claire.perry@df.t.gov.uk)

Web site: [www.gov.uk/df](http://www.gov.uk/df)

Our Ref: ~~M0/153022~~

26 FEB 2016

Dear Sue and Henry

Thank you for your letter dated 9th December 2015 inviting me to discuss the matter of the design of the rail electrification equipment being installed through the two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: the Chilterns and the North Wessex Downs AONBs.

Although I acknowledge that the Department considers that the overhead line equipment (OLE) is the only system that can effectively deliver the electrification programme (for the reasons stated in Nicholas Woodbridge's letter), the actual design of the OLEs for the Great Western electrification programme is a matter for Network Rail. Also, as stated in Nicholas Woodbridge's letter, the Department expects Network Rail to discharge their statutory obligations.

It would not be appropriate for me to express a view as to the design of the OLEs particularly as the Department is aware that legal challenges may be brought to the use of permitted development rights here. There would be a possibility therefore if such challenges were successful that Ministers may ultimately be called upon to determine a planning appeal.

CLAIRE PERRY