

Footnote to the Pilning Footbridge Saga

Network Rail have said in a response to an FOI request that improvements at Pilning station *will* require the costly GRIP process! Yes, for the replacement of a bridge. (You couldn't make this up).



Although Chris Grayling has told Jack Lopresti that funding will be available if there is a positive case in the future, we need this in writing. We also need local decision makers to ask Chris Grayling to tell Network Rail not to insist on the GRIP process to replace a bridge they have removed.

I am happy to discuss this further with local decision makers and media, and to forward a copy of Network Rail's response.

To summarise:

- **Network Rail will save £658,000 by not replacing the footbridge.**
- **The estimated cost of a new bridge (like for like) is £1,064,000 and equalities compliant bridge "in the region of £2m"**
- **To replace it at a later date would require the applicant to follow Network Rail's project management ("GRIP") process (£3-5m) plus the cost of the bridge:**

"In order to assess the costs of installing a new bridge at Pilning Station, a full station survey would need to be carried out to assess the volume of works required. We have considered other stations/footbridges within the Greater West Programme and would estimate this to be in the region of £3-5m, depending on the alterations to platforms and any other works that would be required at the station (i.e. lighting/fencing)"

In other words Network Rail have saved £0.6 million and would charge others (i.e. local taxpayers) between £5 and £7 million to replace the bridge they removed. This really illustrates the foolishness of the local authorities' passive acceptance of Network Rail's action.

Being on the mainline between North Bristol and South Wales, Pilning has great potential to allow access to adjacent Severnside industry - unlike Severn Beach, and for South Glos residents to more easily access the North Fringe. FOSBR want to see Pilning station included in the final Joint Spatial Plan/Transport Study.

Rob Dixon

FOSBR Chairman