

Leicester City Council: Planning  
(via planning portal)

14 June 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**Ref 20240888: Infilling of Ulverscroft Road bridge, Leicester**

We are writing with regards to the above planning application, to infill one span of the disused railway bridge carrying Ulverscroft Road, Leicester.

In principle, The HRE Group does not object to the proposed development as infilling would appear to have few ecological impacts and the possibility of future repurposing is maintained via the west span. The structure dates from the fourth phase of railway construction, somewhat diminishing its heritage value.

However, the following issues should be considered.

*Ecology*

We note that in §3.2 of the Planning Statement (PS), it is stated that the Ecological Survey Planning Report recommends that if works are not completed within 18 months of 5 September 2022 (i.e. 5 March 2024), an additional ecology review and more surveys in specific seasons may be required.

The Council is invited to confirm that this work has been undertaken, noting that §1.2 of the PS suggests that it has.

*Risk of settlement*

Given the stated intention that the bridge's capacity will be "increased to comply with modern highway loading standards" (see §1.7 of the PS), the Council is invited to consider whether the proposed infilling methodology delivers sufficient confidence that no voids will form as a result of the construction of the superstructure (see appended photo), i.e. the creation of multiple square 'compartments' separated by the longitudinal and transverse beams.

The foamed concrete represents a new load on the trackbed which will respond over time, potentially opening a gap between the infill and the existing structure. If such a gap developed after the 12-month investigation/top-up, the infill would not result in increased capacity. When the girders deflect under traffic, load can only be transferred into the infill if there is firm and permanent contact between the two.

Yours faithfully



**Graeme Bickerdike**

on behalf of The HRE Group

The HRE Group is an alliance of walking, cycling and heritage campaigners, engineers and greenway developers who regard the Historical Railways Estate's 3,000+ structures to be strategically valuable in the context of future rail and active travel provision.



*Photo: National Highways (Public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0)*