

REF: TWA/17/APP/03/SUPP/4

TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992N(TWA): APPLICATION FOR THE
PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL (CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEVEL CROSSING REDUCTION
ORDER

STATEMENT OF CASE – LYNN PARNELL

I am writing this statement of case in support of Network Rails proposal to close several crossings in the Cambridge region but in particular crossing C02 – Nairns No 117 (Stretham Parish), Cambridgeshire at postcode CB6 3LG.

This TWA was submitted on 3rd March 2017, Under section 6 of the transport and works act 1992 for an order under sections 1 and 5 of that act.

As the Network Rail submission states C02 – Nairns No 117 level crossing is on private land used for commercial use. The current crossing has no automatic barriers and relies on crossing users calling to check that the track is clear; therefore this only requires a lapse of judgement from a crossing user and there is an incident between a passenger train and a vehicle or pedestrian. Network Rails own data shows that there have been several incidents at this particular crossing.

The last Network Rail assessment of the crossing was in August 2016 and this reported there have been 7 incidents at this crossing in the year from August 2015 to August 2016, and a further 2 incidents since August 2016. These incidents include 6 reports of misuse, 2 Near misses and 1 Accident.

(reference attached and found at

<http://archive.nr.co.uk/Transparency/LevelCrossingItemDetail.aspx?lcid=8935&name=Nairns%20No.%20117&View=onList&postcode=CB6%203LG&radius=20>(

These 9 incidents in less than 2 years are on a crossing that has an average of only 2 vehicles and 3 pedestrian or cyclists per day. But these individuals are crossing a line with 186 trains a day travelling at 75 miles per hour. As the land adjacent to the crossing is a commercial premises, then there will be additional pressures for individuals to avoid waiting too long at the crossing and delaying commercial activities. In most commercial environments you would expect the management to have a duty of care to prevent a lapse in judgement at work being able to result in injury to the employee or other individuals and property.

I think it is important that the inquiry are aware that the statistics above all include real people being put at danger by the level crossing. The accident or crash mentioned in the statistics took place on August 12th 2016. It was a hot sunny day and I was on that train along with my husband and about 113 other passengers. I was in the front carriage heading for a night out at the Royal Albert Hall Proms, and we were relying on Network rail and Great Northern trains to get me there safely. This was not achieved through no fault of either company.

Our train was hit by a Land Rover on Nairns No 117 level crossing, and the car hit the side of the train and damaged the train so it just careered along the track to a stop quite a distance away from the accident. It was one of the most

terrifying moments of my life, and I would prefer not to go into too much detail of the moments after hitting the land rover and the train eventually sliding to a halt. I will never forget the shaken face of the driver as he came out of his cab to tell us a car had hit the train on a crossing. It is amazing how fast he managed to recover and act to ensure trains were stopped on both tracks to prevent further accidents. The air ambulance landed to treat and transport the land rover driver to hospital, but all passengers had to remain on the train for several hours, on a very hot day, for an investigation to take place and for another train to be provided for us to be taken to the next station.

I have since been informed by the British Transport Police, that this crash was not an accident but was caused by the driver deciding not to call ahead and driving across the line unauthorised. Luckily the train was not full and the cars impact did not de-rail the train, otherwise the crash could have been much worse.

But the result was still a severely injured driver of the land rover, a very shaken and distressed train driver, 155 passengers considerably shaken with plans ruined and an impact on thousands of commuters whose journeys were disrupted. We were lucky we only missed a night at the Proms and were not hospitalised, but you can't help thinking what could have happened if the train arrived a few seconds earlier or later with the Land Rover in the middle of the crossing. We understand the Land Rover driver is now being prosecuted for endangering the safety of passengers on the railway.

If we are to have a safe and reliable railway, it should not be possible for people to easily cross a railway line with a train approaching, at risk not only to their own lives but to all of those travelling on the railway. The horrible crash we were involved in has clearly shown that manual procedures are not a fail safe way to ensure the safety of passengers and rail employees. Network Rail had already identified this crossing for closure before the crash happened. If only the process had been shorter the train driver, train passengers and land rover driver would have been saved injury and trauma.

I know the landowner is opposing this closure but surely the lives of his workers, friends, rail passengers and staff are more important than the time taken to drive to the next crossing which has barriers?

Please help Network Rail maintain the safety of the railway by upholding their request and closing this crossing and any others like this. We only had an evening ruined but allowing this crossing to remain open puts all rail users, on this line, and Nairn 117 crossing users at risk of serious injury and possible fatalities. This risk can be removed by closing the crossing and the crossing users driving to the next gated crossing. No commercial pressure should be accepted as making this risk acceptable when the solution is so simple.

Nairns No. 117

Private User worked Crossing with Telephone no whistleboard

Ranging from full barrier crossings to ones that have no barriers at all. Our [online guides \(/level-crossings/using-level-crossings/\)](#) cover the potential dangers such as distraction when using a crossing and explain the safety warnings.

[Back to results \(/Transparency/Level-crossings/?View=onList&postcode=CB6 3LG&radius=20\)](#)



Location (#) Use and mis-use (#) Managing the risk (#)

Crossing name	Nairns No. 117
Crossing type	Private User worked Crossing with Telephone no whistleboard
Latitude co-ordinates	52.32426
Longitude co-ordinates	0.233499
Location	Stretham CP
Nearest postcode	CB6 3LG



Related information

Network Rail helpline

If you would like to report a mis-use incident or damage to a crossing, please contact our [National Helpline \(/aspx/2709.aspx\)](#).

We are improving the presentation of level crossing risk information and will make narrative risk assessments available in due course. In the meantime if you have a request for level crossing risk information please send this to the [Freedom of Information \(FOI\) Team \(/FOI/\)](#)

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Location (#)	Use and mis-use (#)	Managing the risk (#)
Types of trains	Passenger & Freight	
Line speed	75 mph	
Approx no of trains per day	186	
Census results per day	2 Vehicles 3 Pedestrians or Cyclists	
Recorded incidents		
Misuse	5 incidents in year prior to assessment date (Aug-2016), - 1 incident since.	
Near misses	1 incident in year prior to assessment date (Aug-2016), - 1 incident since.	
Accidents	1 incident in year prior to assessment date (Aug-2016), - Nil incidents since.	



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Location (#)	Use and mis-use (#)	Managing the risk (#)
Current assessment date	August 2016	
Next assessment due date	November 2017	
Individual risk letter	B	
Collective risk number	2	
Key risk drivers	Large Numbers of Users Sun Glare Frequent Trains	
Risk Control Plan	contact us for details using submit suggestions link (/transparency/suggestions/)	



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