



THE NETWORK RAIL (SUFFOLK LEVEL CROSSING REDUCTION) ORDER

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND BETWEEN NETWORK RAIL (NR) AND SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL (SCC)

Rule no.	17
Document Reference	
Author	Network Rail
Date	21.2.18

**Network Rail (Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction)
Order – Statement of Common Ground**



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Contents

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Matters agreed**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (**SOCG**) has been prepared in respect of Network Rail Infrastructure Limited's (**NR**) application to the Secretary of State under the Transport & Work Act (the **Act**) for powers to close or downgrade a number of level crossings across the county of Suffolk as part of a Network Rail programme to reduce risk on the railway (the **Application**).
- 1.2 The proposed works refer to the works that would be authorised by the Network Rail (Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction) Order (the **Order**) as drafted at the time that this SOCG is entered into. The proposed works in this Application are within the County of Suffolk.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Order is to close or re-designate the status of a number of level crossings.
- 1.4 This particular SOCG is focused on the works proposed at the 23 level crossings that interface with the highway and fall within the administrative boundaries of Suffolk County Council (**SCC**). This SOCG sets out agreed matters only.

2 Matters agreed

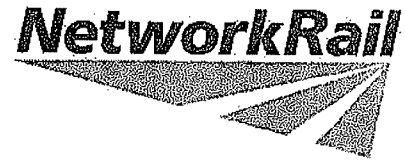
- 2.1 **IT IS AGREED** that NR has consulted with SCC during all phases of the project development of the Order through to the TWAO application. The consultation process has both informed SCC of NR plans as well as provided NR with an opportunity to consider concerns raised by SCC during the development of the project.
- 2.2 **IT IS AGREED** that in so far as it relates to consultation with SCC NR has complied with the statutory requirements for consultation under the Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006.
- 2.3 **IT IS AGREED** that NR has sought to reduce the impact to users of the Public Rights Of Way (**PRoW**) network through the provision of alternative routes or through the provision of other routes to complement existing routes and SCC does not object, in principle, to the proposed works that NRIL is seeking powers to carry out at the following 15 level crossings, as set out in the draft Order on the date that this SoCG is entered into:

S24	Higham Ground Frame
S28	Grove Farm

S11	Leggetts
S12	Gooderhams
S13	Fords Green
S16	Gislingham
S17	Paynes
S18	Cow Pasture Lane
S21	Abbotts
S29	Hawk End Lane
S30	Lords No.29
S03	Buxton Wood
S04	Island
S07	Broomfield
S08	Stacpool

SCC nevertheless maintains objections to 8 level crossings on the basis that the proposed alternative routes are not suitable and convenient replacements for the existing rights of way.

- 2.4 **IT IS AGREED** that NR's plans, for the provision of alternative routes, have been developed through all stages of consultation, prior to application for the Order in March 2017.
- 2.5 **IT IS AGREED** that SCC supports the overall principle of closing level crossings where this has been sufficiently justified in the public interest and where SCC agrees suitable and convenient alternative routes are capable of being provided.
- 2.6 **IT IS AGREED** that the Order forms part of an overarching strategy by NR to reduce the number of level crossings across its network and that this overarching strategy has the potential to deliver railway and public benefits, where the Secretary of State is satisfied a suitable and convenient alternative route has been provided or is not required to enable closure of a level crossing.
- 2.7 **IT IS AGREED** that the Order would result in an increased maintenance burden on the Highway Authority through the provision of new and improved PRow.
- 2.8 **IT IS AGREED** that NR will pay a commuted sum, the details of which are to be agreed between NR and SCC, to compensate the Highway Authority for the additional maintenance costs associated with the provision of the new and improved PRow.
- 2.9 **IT IS AGREED** that NR will pay SCC the relevant commuted sum for a particular crossing, within 12 months from the date on which the works for that crossing have been certified as satisfactorily completed by the highway authority.



- 2.10 IT IS AGREED that the current status of the crossings detailed within the Order plans is correct. In relation to S22 Weatherby, the Council's position on the status of the crossing is set out in the Council's note, "Submissions on behalf of Suffolk County Council on the Rights of Way Status of S22 Weatherby".

Approved for & on behalf of Network Rail

Infrastructure Limited (NR)

E Uane Algaard
Director Route Safety and Asset Management

Signed: E Algaard

Date: 21/02/2018

Signed for & on behalf of SCC

Jonathan Lockington
Solicitor for Suffolk County Council

Signed: JL

Date: 22/02/2018