

**APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED NETWORK RAIL
(SUFFOLK LEVEL CROSSING REDUCTION) ORDER**

APPENDIX 3 TO

PROOF OF EVIDENCE:

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Anglia Level Crossing Reduction Strategy



Diversity Impact Assessment - Scoping Report

RPT018 Revision D

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Extract 1.4 from p.4:

1.4 Purpose of the scoping report

The purpose of this scoping report is to identify potential issues related to the closures and gather evidence on the potential impacts on people with different protected characteristics in order to make an assessment about which crossings require further consideration through a full DIA.

Extract 2.3 from P.7:

Red: Further, detailed assessment required to proceed

- Red level crossings require a full DIA and include sites where the following apply:
 - An unequally accessible solution is proposed and where no other solutions are available (e.g. removing an accessible level crossing and diverting users to a less accessible crossing point).
 - An unequally accessible solution is proposed where other solutions are available (e.g. stepped footbridge which could be a ramped footbridge).
 - Proposed changes may result in community severance and/or pedestrian inaccessibility.

Action: Consider a full DIA evidence gathering process to support completion of the Network Rail pro forma.

Extract 3.1.3 and 3.1.4 from p. 9 and 10:

3.1.3 Walking distances

Walking distances are an important consideration for people with certain protected characteristics, and schemes that can affect existing walking distances may result in disproportionate impacts on some groups – such as disabled people and older people. For example, Inclusive Mobility – a key document to support inclusive design of the pedestrian environment – found that of people with a disability who are able to walk, around 30% can walk no more than 50 metres without stopping or experiencing severe discomfort and a further 20% can only manage between 50 and 200 metres.²⁰ Similarly, older people are also more likely to have difficulties walking long distances than the general population.

The study also found that disabled people tend to find standing to rest difficult and/or painful and therefore it is important for the provision of seated resting points where walking distances are increased for users.

3.1.4 Community severance

Level crossings provide a means of traversing the rail network and can act as an important point of access for the communities in which they are situated. The removal of level crossings therefore has the potential to cause issues related to community severance. Although there is not one agreed definition, community severance is generally understood to be comprised of three key dimensions:

- Physical barriers - such as the introduction of new or removal of existing infrastructure
- Psychological or perceived barriers - such as traffic noise or road safety fears
- Social barriers - such as the disruption of 'neighbourhood lifestyle' or inhibition of social interaction

The safety risks associated with existing level crossings could act as both a real and as a perceived barrier; however the removal of level crossings and the replacement with new infrastructure such as bridges and underpasses may potentially act as a physical barrier. There is recognition that some social groups are more vulnerable to the effects of community severance than others; including people with restricted mobility; older people and disabled people, and school children (younger people).²¹ As identified above, older people are more at risk of social isolation which can be compounded by transport barriers. The effects of community severance also have a disproportionate effect on disabled people who also experience higher rates of social exclusion²² and existing barriers to transport.

Extract from results table p.94

<p>Name: Weatherby</p> <p>Type: Public footpath</p> <p>Location: 52.240283 0.411098</p>	<p>Approximately 34 trains travelling at 40mph use this part of the network daily. In the twelve month period prior to June 2014, one near miss and no incidents of misuse were recorded at the site. Due to the risks of sun glare, user misuse and the high number of users, Weatherby level crossing has acquired a risk rating of D2. Safety features of the crossing include signage and a gate.</p>	<p>On the northern side, the crossing is accessed via Granary Road. There is a pedestrian crossing linking the level crossing to the pavement on the opposite side of Granary Road. On the southern side, the level crossing is accessed via Willow Crescent, with a pavement leading up to the crossing. On both sides, the approach is paved, level and accessible for any users with mobility issues and people with pushchairs or in wheelchairs/mobility scooters.</p>	<p>The level crossing at Weatherby is a pedestrian crossing point in the town of Newmarket, Suffolk. The crossing is in an urban area, with houses, a football club and allotments within 150m. Consequently, the crossing is frequently used (on average 454 pedestrians a day) and it is likely that people from different equality groups use it to access employment, education and community resources frequently.</p> <p>There is a high density of equality groups in the area. The nearest alternative crossing is a pedestrian and vehicle level crossing approximately 150m south of Weatherby, at New Cheveley Road.</p>	<p>The proposal is to extinguish the level crossing completely due to the amount of users and risks. There is an alternative road crossing 150m south. Network Rail will explore, consult on and take all actions that are possible to mitigate against the potential negative impacts that closing the level crossing may have. Safety is especially relevant as children, older people, disabled people and men are more likely to be involved in accidents at level crossings than other groups in society.</p> <p>However, given the number of users and the location of the crossing further exploration into alternative solutions to the closure is recommended.</p>	
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