



SUBMISSION

To

Land Transport NZ

on

Draft Level Crossings Guideline

a voice for kiwi cyclists

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1. Introduction

The Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN)¹ is pleased to present this submission on Level Crossings.

The national Executive of the group has prepared this submission, with feedback from CAN members. We have based our submission on examination of the relevant documents. Some of our local member groups may also be making separate submissions. If you require clarification of any of the points raised by us, please feel free to contact us as detailed at the end of our submission.

2. Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN)

The Cycling Advocates' Network Inc. (CAN) is New Zealand's national network of cycling advocate groups. It is a voice for recreational, commuter and touring cyclists. CAN works with central government and local authorities, on behalf of cyclists, for a better cycling environment. CAN has affiliated groups and individual members throughout the country, and links with overseas cycling organisations. In addition, many national, regional and local government authorities, transportation consultancies, and cycle industry businesses are supporting organisations.

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1. **Parallel access (2.8)**

When access for walkways and cycleways is granted along the rail corridor, it is stated that "In general these types of accesses are required to be fenced and the fence to be 5 m from the nearest track centre line.". We note that in most of the level crossing drawings the signage, barrier arms and fencing is shown 3 m from the track centreline. The exception is drawing A11 where the barrier arm is shown 2.5 m from the track centre line.

There is need for the distance from the path fence to the rail centreline to be considered very carefully. The benefits to the public of rail-side pathways are high and a lesser fence offset than 5 m would make it more likely that there is enough room for such pathways.

2. **All level crossings.**

The drawings should show or note that space for on-road cycle lanes will need to be allowed for when a cycle lane is required by a local cycling strategy.

3. **Level Crossings where the track is at right angles to the road.**

These crossings present no unusual hazards to cyclists. Regular maintenance is required to ensure the rail tracks are preferably not significantly higher than the surface supporting the cycle wheel.

4. **Level Crossings where the track is angled to the road**

Rail tracks can be safely crossed at an angle when dry. It is essential they are maintained such that the rail tracks are not significantly higher than the surface supporting the cycle wheel if angled crossings are to be made safely.

However, to ensure safety, wet tracks and dry poorly maintained tracks need to be crossed by cyclists at right angles.

In low traffic areas cyclists will use the traffic lane to achieve this.

In high cycle and traffic areas a special cycle lane is required to enable cyclists to make a safe rail crossing manoeuvre (at right angles to the rail) without encroaching into the traffic lanes.

The Dutch CROW manual recommends a maximum crossing angle of 45 degrees and a minimum cycle lane width of 2.5 m so that cyclists have room to take a safe line.

The Cyclist Beware sign (PW8-12) is useful to warn cyclists of the danger. The crossing angle for new crossings of not less than 60 degrees (Ap C, 3.2) is preferable to 45 degrees.

5. **Cycle facilities (9.2)**

Where barriers are used to orientate cyclists to face oncoming trains sufficient space must be allowed so that cyclists can turn to cross tracks at right angles.

6. **Footway and cycleway construction (9.3)**

The Dutch CROW manual recommends a maximum crossing angle of 45 degrees. A minimum cycle lane width of 2.5 m will give cyclists room to take a safe line and cross (slowly) at 90 degrees if the tracks are wet or raised above the cycling surface.

7. **Pedestrian mazes (9.4)**

Mazes are not necessary for cycle paths or combined foot and cycle paths. The dimensions through a maze would need to be large to allow cyclists enough space. A straight through route, treated the same as road crossings, (9.1.1) should achieve the same safety more simply.

End of submission