



LEVEL CROSSINGS ACT 1983

THE NETWORK RAIL PLESSEY ROAD LEVEL CROSSING ORDER 2024

Made on 29th July 2024

Coming into force on 5th August 2024

The Secretary of State for Transport, having been requested by Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (“the operator”) to make an Order under section 1 of the Level Crossings Act 1983¹ (“the Act”) makes the following Order in exercise of his powers under the Act and of all other enabling powers, in accordance with the draft Order which accompanied the request subject to those modifications the Secretary of State thought fit to make.

1. This Order may be cited as the Network Rail Plessey Road Level Crossing Order 2024 and shall come into force on 5th August 2024.

Interpretation

2. In this Order:

- a. “the operator” means Network Rail Infrastructure Limited or any person who succeeds Network Rail Infrastructure Limited as the person responsible for operating the level crossing;
- b. “the local traffic authority” means Northumberland County Council or any person who succeeds Northumberland County Council;
- c. “the specified road” means the road (including any footways) which crosses the railway at the crossing;
- d. “the carriageway” means the carriageway of the specified road (excluding any footways);
- e. “the crossing” means the level crossing described in Schedule 1 to this Order;
- f. “the Regulations” means the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016² and its successors;

¹ 1983 c.16

² (Part 1 of S.I. 2016/362)

- g. “road users” means anyone required to have regard to the Highway Code, including pedestrians, mobility scooter users, cyclists, horse riders, vehicle drivers and motorcyclists;
- h. the expressions “left-hand side” and “right-hand side” means how they would appear to a person approaching the crossing along the specified road;
- i. where this Order specifies that the operator or local traffic authority must use a sign prescribed in the Regulations, if there is any amendment to the Regulations and the sign specified by this Order retains its status under the amended Regulations, its continued use is required by this Order and this Order should be read as if the amended Regulations and/or diagram number applies (if applicable).

Application

- 3. The following provisions, being provisions which in the opinion of the Secretary of State are necessary or expedient for the safety or convenience of those using the crossing, apply in respect of the crossing:
 - a. the operator shall provide, operate and maintain the protective equipment specified in Schedule 2 and Schedule 4;
 - b. the local traffic authority shall provide and maintain the protective equipment specified in Schedule 3;
 - c. the operator and local traffic authority shall observe the conditions and requirements specified in Schedule 5.
- 4. The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 shall apply to any traffic sign specified in this Order as they would to a traffic sign caused or permitted to be placed by a local traffic authority.
- 5. The British Railways Board (Blyth and Tyne Railway) (Plessey Road Level Crossing) Order 1972, the British Railways Board (Blyth and Tyne Railway) (Plessey Road Level Crossing) (Amendment No.6) Order 1991 and the British Railways Board (Blyth and Tyne Railway) (Plessey Road Level Crossing) (Amendment No.7) Order 1991 are revoked.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State on 29th July 2024



Thomas Wake
Head of Mainline Inspection North, Railway Safety
Office of Rail and Road

Schedule 1 - The crossing

The level crossing known as Plessey Road, where Plessey Road is crossed by the railway between Newsham and Blyth Bebside Stations.

At Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference NZ 300 798.

At Unique Street Reference Number 3204243.

Schedule 2 - Protective equipment provided by the operator

Audible Warnings

1. Audible warning devices shall be provided, suitably located and of the appropriate volume, taking account of local requirements, to warn users of the activation of the crossing.

Barriers

2. A lifting barrier shall be pivoted as close to the railway as practicable on both sides of the specified road on each side of the railway.
3. The barriers shall be kept fully raised except when any train crosses the specified road or for the purpose of maintenance or testing. The electric lights on each barrier shall be lit except when the barriers are fully raised.
4. When lowered the barriers shall be as nearly horizontal as possible and shall extend across the full width of the carriageway and any footways.
5. When lowered, the barriers and skirts shall be of sufficient height to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, access to the railway, either over or under the barriers.
6. When in the fully raised position the barriers and skirts shall not obstruct or interfere with users of the crossing.
7. The barriers shall be as light as possible but shall also be strong enough to prevent foreseeable distortion or fracture likely to be caused by wind pressure.
8. The barriers shall be easily visible to road users. This shall require the use of:
 - a. alternate red and white bands to the full depth of the barriers to clearly indicate the position of the barriers to approaching road users. The bands shall be either 500 or 600 millimetres long approximately;
 - b. retro-reflective strips that are the same colour as the band on which they are placed; and
 - c. non-flashing red lights evenly placed along the length of the barrier.
9. Suitable guards or other protection shall be provided for each barrier machine to prevent danger to persons from the operating mechanism of the machine.

Carriageway and any footways

10. The carriageway and any footways over the crossing shall be wide enough to safely accommodate road users.
11. The surface of the carriageway and any footways over the crossing shall be maintained in a good and even condition and, with the co-operation of the local traffic authority, kept consistent with the surface of the carriageway and any footways on each approach to the crossing.

Lighting

12. Lighting shall be provided at least to the same standard as the lighting of the carriageway on the approaches to the crossing.
13. Sufficient lighting shall be provided for the whole crossing to be visible when under local control.
14. Where operation of the crossing from the control point requires a clear view of the whole crossing, there shall be sufficient lighting to enable this.

Railway signalling

15. The level crossing shall be controlled from the control point that controls the protecting signals for the crossing.
16. Visual indicators and audible alarms shall be provided at the control point to indicate the condition of the crossing.
17. Facilities shall be provided at the control point to lower and raise the barriers, release the protecting signals and stop the lowering or raising of the barriers.
18. A means of visually monitoring the crossing from the control point shall be provided.
19. Facilities shall be provided at the crossing to operate the barriers and other protective equipment under local control when required.
20. A system shall be provided to confirm that the crossing is clear of obstruction before a train is signalled over it. This system shall be signaller-operated CCTV.
21. If the system normally operates the crossing automatically, facilities shall also be provided to allow the signaller to take manual control at the control point.
22. Protecting railway signals shall be provided. These shall be interlocked with the barriers so that it shall not be possible to raise the barriers after the protecting signal has displayed a proceed aspect unless any approaching train has passed over the crossing or sufficient time has elapsed to allow a train to have come to a stand. When the barriers are raised it shall not be possible to clear those signals. Minor barrier movements caused by wind, for example, should not result in signals reverting to a restrictive aspect.
23. All protecting signals mentioned above shall be provided with suitable approach locking controls.

Road Markings

24. A stop line to Diagram 1001 in the Regulations shall be provided in a suitable position on each side of the railway, from which vehicle drivers can clearly see the traffic light signals.
25. Road markings to Diagram 1012.1 in the Regulations shall be provided along the edges of the carriageway and any footways over the crossing.
26. The centre line of the carriageway shall be marked on the crossing between the stop lines with a road marking to Diagram 1013.1 version A in the Regulations.
27. The carriageway over the crossing shall be marked with a road marking to Diagram 1045 in the Regulations.

Traffic signs and traffic light signals

28. Traffic light signals to Diagram 3014 in the Regulations shall be provided at each corner of the crossing, and shall be suitably located, configured and aligned to warn road users that a train is approaching. Additional traffic light signals to Diagram 3014 shall be provided on the left-hand side of the carriageway on the western side of the railway, suitably located, configured and aligned to face traffic approaching from the south. The lights of the traffic light signals shall be provided with hoods, as necessary, to reduce the effect of sunlight glare.
29. A traffic sign to Diagram 775 in the Regulations shall be provided beneath the traffic light signals at the corners of the crossing.
30. A traffic sign to Diagram 785.1 (including any permitted variant) in the Regulations shall be provided beneath the left-hand side traffic light signals.
31. Light signals for pedestrians to Diagram 4006 in the Regulations shall be provided and shall be suitably located, configured and aligned to warn pedestrians and other footway users that a train is approaching.

Trespass prevention

32. Anti-trespass guards shall be provided adjacent to both sides of the crossing surface to deter trespass onto the railway. The guards shall extend the full distance between the fences on each side of the railway.

Schedule 3 – Protective equipment provided by the local traffic authority on the approaches to the crossing

Carriageway and any footways

33. Tactile paving of a type specified in and located according to published guidance shall be provided in each footway on each approach to the crossing.
34. Taking into account the applicable speed limits and road conditions, the road surface on each approach to the crossing shall be constructed and maintained to reduce the risk, so far as is reasonably practicable, of vehicle drivers losing control of their vehicles.

35. The vertical profile and surface of the carriageway and any footways approaching the crossing shall be maintained in a good and even condition.
36. The vertical profile and surface of the carriageway and any footways approaching the crossing shall, in co-operation with the operator, be kept consistent with the surface of the crossing and any footways to enable safe passage of road users over the crossing.

Road markings

37. The centre line of the carriageway shall be marked with road markings to Diagram 1040 in the Regulations for a distance of approximately 5 metres on both sides of the railway measured along the centre of the carriageway from the stop lines.
38. On the western side of the railway, a road marking to Diagram 1038 in the Regulations shall be provided after the road marking to Diagram 1040 in the lane for traffic turning into Plessey Road. The road marking to Diagram 1040 shall then continue for a further 16 metres approximately.
39. On the eastern side of the railway, a road marking to Diagram 1038 in the Regulations shall be provided after the road marking to Diagram 1040 in the lane for traffic turning into Phoenix Street.

Traffic signs

40. Traffic signs to Diagrams 770 and 773 (including any permitted variant) in the Regulations shall be provided together in a suitable position on the left-hand side of the carriageway on the eastern approach to the crossing along the specified road, and in suitable positions on the left-hand side of the carriageway in Newcastle Road and Delaval Street on the western side of the railway.
41. Traffic signs to Diagram 770 and 773 (including any permitted variant) in the Regulations shall be provided in a suitable position on the left-hand side of the carriageway in Carr Street to face traffic approaching from Winship Street.

Schedule 4 – The operation of the crossing by the operator

42. The protecting signals shall be controlled from the control point.
43. Signalling controls for the level crossing shall result in the crossing being clear of road users and obstructions before a train arrives.
44. The signaller/controller shall have a clear view of the whole crossing area. If the crossing is viewed by its signaller/controller through technological means, the crossing area shall remain visible until the barriers are fully lowered, the crossing is confirmed clear and the crossing-clear control is activated.
45. The visual indicators at the control point shall show when:
 - a. standby power is in use;
 - b. all the barriers are fully raised;
 - c. all the barriers are fully lowered;

- d. at least one of the intermittent red lights of the traffic light signals on each side of the railway is showing along the carriageway.
46. The audible alarms shall sound if:
- a. any barrier is horizontally dislocated when in the fully lowered position;
 - b. the main power supply fails;
 - c. all the red traffic light signals facing in one direction fail.
47. Under normal operation, when a route is set from the protecting signal over the crossing and a train is approaching, the sequence of events shall be:
- a. the barriers shall lower either automatically or manually;
 - b. the signaller/controller shall monitor the crossing during the closure sequence and to take appropriate action to ensure road users or obstructions are not struck by a lowering barrier and do not become trapped on the crossing;
 - c. the protecting signals shall be cleared only after the barriers are fully lowered and the signaller/controller has confirmed that the crossing is clear.
48. The crossing barriers shall rise automatically and simultaneously after the train has traversed the crossing unless the protecting signals have been cleared for another train.
49. If a train passes any protecting signal at danger and the barriers have not already lowered, the red lights in the traffic light signals shall immediately illuminate, bypassing the amber phase. The barriers shall not lower.

Closure sequence

50. When automatic barrier lowering is initiated or the 'lower' control is selected, the sequence of events to close the crossing to road users shall begin. The normal sequence shall be:
- a. the amber lights shall immediately show and the audible warning for road users shall begin. The lights shall show for approximately 3 seconds;
 - b. immediately the amber lights are extinguished the intermittent red lights of the traffic light signals shall begin to flash and, if provided, the pedestrian light signals shall show at the same time;
 - c. 4 to 6 seconds later the left-hand side barriers shall begin to descend and take a further 6 to 10 seconds to reach the lowered position. The right-hand side barriers shall then begin to descend and take a further 6 to 10 seconds to reach the lowered position;
 - d. the audible warning shall stop when all the barriers are fully lowered.

Opening sequence

51. The intermittent red lights of the traffic light signals and, where provided, the pedestrian light signals shall be extinguished before the barriers have risen to their fully raised position.

52. If any barrier fails to rise from the lowered position the intermittent red lights of the traffic light signals and, where provided, the pedestrian light signals shall continue to show.
53. Should automatic lowering or raising take an abnormally long time an audible and visual warning shall be given at the control point.
54. The operator shall periodically monitor the duration of closures of the crossing to road traffic and shall take action to ensure that the closure times are minimised effectively.

Schedule 5 - Collaboration

Responsibility of operator

55. The operator shall have in place effective arrangements to provide the local emergency services with up-to-date information about the operational status of the crossing to enable those services to plan their response to an emergency without unexpected disruption caused by the crossing.
56. The operator shall give notice in writing to the Secretary of State as soon as the provisions of Articles 3a and 3c of the Order have been met.
57. The operator shall periodically check the legibility and visibility of traffic signs and road markings on the crossing approaches and inform the local traffic authority of any action required.

Responsibility of local traffic authority

58. The local traffic authority shall take appropriate action when informed by the operator that work is required to maintain the legibility and visibility of traffic signs, including road markings, on the crossing approaches.
59. The local traffic authority shall consult the operator before any traffic signs, including road markings, or other road equipment other than those specified in this Order are placed or caused to be placed on the road in the vicinity of the crossing.