

# Living Streets Aotearoa



## Submission from Living Streets Aotearoa on draft level crossings guidelines

**Organisation:** Living Streets Aotearoa  
**Contact person:** Gay Richards  
**Address:** 20A Roberts Avenue  
Bayswater  
Auckland 0622  
**Email:** [gay.richards@livingstreets.org.nz](mailto:gay.richards@livingstreets.org.nz)  
**Phone:** 09 445 6568 021 1747 066  
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### About Living Streets Aotearoa

Living Streets Aotearoa (LSA) is a national organisation with a vision of “More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places – young and old, fast and slow, walking, sitting and standing, commuting, shopping, between appointments, for exercise, for leisure and for pleasure.”

The objectives of LSA are:

- to promote walking as a healthy, environmentally-friendly and universal means of transport and recreation
- to promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities
- to work for improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners e.g. walking surfaces, traffic flows, speed and safety
- to advocate for greater representation of pedestrian concerns in national, regional and urban land use and transport planning.

For more information, please see: [www.livingstreets.org.nz](http://www.livingstreets.org.nz)

## Submission

Living Streets Aotearoa welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the draft guidelines for Level Crossings.

As a national walking advocacy group, the focus of this submission is on the impact of these guidelines on pedestrians' use of level crossings. The safety of pedestrians with mobility, vision and hearing impairments are of particular concern.

- 2.6.1 The statement that the “provision of new level crossings is not encouraged” particularly as this would apply to pedestrian only level crossings, is supported.
- 2.8 The concept of parallel access to rail lines where this would facilitate the provision of walkways and cycleways, thus encouraging active transport, is supported. These should be fenced. However the need for the fence to be 5 metres from the rail centre line is questioned. It is suggested that a lesser distance, allowing for the maximum overhang of rail traffic, could be feasible and achieve the same level of safety.
- 9.1.1 The provision of a continuous and clearly defined footway is supported. This should also be designed to allow smooth and safe crossing for those using wheelchairs or mobility scooters. The provision of a white limit line is not adequate warning for the blind and vision impaired. Yellow hazard markings as described in RTS14 should also be placed in line with current standards.
- 9.1.2 As above – a white limit line is not sufficient to provide a safe waiting point for the blind and vision impaired. RTS14 should be followed and required at all stand alone pedestrian level crossings.
- 9.1.3 The provision of bells and lights, and the appropriate maze alignment should not be considered additional features. These should be a requirement for all pedestrian level crossings to ensure the safety of vision and hearing impaired pedestrians, particularly when these crossings provide access to or from a railway station. Rail travel is a preferred method of public transport for many blind and vision impaired people because of the certainty of its destinations, but safe access to and from platforms is essential. It should be noted that electric trains are remarkably quiet, and may not be heard in a noisy urban environment.

The provision of barriers would further ensure the safety of pedestrians.