

Council Policy - Underpass Requirements

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define those circumstances in which parties causing animals to cross roads within the Otorohanga District will be required to make use of an underpass (or bridge) for such road crossing purposes.

Policy Objectives

The objective of this policy is to ensure that activities requiring animals to cross roads are not likely to result in ongoing unacceptable levels of damage to road surfaces, creation of unsafe driving conditions, excessive delay to road users and general nuisance, including contamination of vehicles.

It is believed that for lesser stock crossing activities it is realistic to expect that these objectives can be achieved through use of an 'at grade' crossing, operated in accordance with relevant provisions of Council's Stock Movement Bylaw.

As the scale of the crossing activity (or the level of traffic on the road) increases it does however become less likely that these objectives can be achieved through use of an 'at grade' crossing, and it is therefore prudent to establish requirements for use of underpasses or bridges in some circumstances.

General Policy Principles

The policy is intended to address its objectives by imposing requirements for construction of a Council approved stock underpass or bridge (hereafter collectively referred to as 'underpass') where the use of an 'at grade' stock crossing is judged to be unsatisfactory in respect of the potential adverse effects described under the Policy Objectives.

It is considered that the extent of these potential adverse effects of an 'at grade' stock crossing is largely dependant upon the following factors:

- Volume of vehicular traffic on the road being crossed;
- Number of animals crossing the road;
- Frequency of crossing use.

Requirements for installation of underpasses will be based upon evaluation of an 'Assessment Index' for each crossing calculated as follows:

$$\text{Assessment Index} = A \times B \times C / 365, \text{ where}$$

A = Assessed average daily traffic count on road being crossed (based on Council's traffic count data).

B = Maximum number of animals in herd crossing road. If the herd is moved across the road in a number of separate movements this is the sum of all animals in those separate movements.

C = Maximum number of days in any one year during which the herd will be crossing the road.

The following rules shall apply:

1. An underpass shall be immediately required for any new stock crossing (not currently holding a valid crossing permit) that has a calculated Assessment Index of 30,000 or more. Applications for stock crossing permits for such crossings shall be declined.
2. If the calculated Assessment Index is greater than or equal to 10,000 but less than 30,000 then an underpass will be required to be installed within a specified period.

The length of this period will be calculated as follows:

Underpass Requirement Period (Years) = 2 + (80,000 / Assessment Index)

and the period shall commence from 31 August 2006, this being the date on which provisions to this effect were first implemented through the Otorohanga District Council Stock Movement Bylaw 2006.

3. To be granted a permit for an 'at grade' stock crossing the crossing must be able to satisfy all of the relevant general conditions of the Bylaw and the crossing permit, regardless of whether or not an underpass may be required at some time in the future.
4. If a first application for a permit for a new crossing activity is made (or was made under the Otorohanga District Council Stock Movement Bylaw 2006) after the date calculated for underpass installation in respect of that activity has either already been passed, or if the calculated date for underpass installation is less than eighteen months after the date on which the crossing permit becomes effective, then a period of two years from the date of this first application will be provided for installation of an underpass, if the Assessment Index for that crossing activity is equal to or above 10,000 but less than 30,000. If the Assessment Index is 30,000 or above an underpass will be required immediately.
5. Once a requirement for an underpass has been set under this Bylaw (or the previous Stock Movement Bylaw 2006), the date by which this underpass is required to be installed shall not be changed as a result of any further applications for crossing permits in respect of this activity, unless there is, in the opinion of Council's Engineering Manager, clear evidence that the extent of the crossing activity has significantly changed relative to that for which the initial application was made.
6. Where a requirement for an underpass is set, the holder of the crossing permit shall be responsible for the cost of establishing such an underpass, excepting the subsidy component provided by Council as described in Appendix 1.
7. Periodic inspections will be used to check the continuing validity of the data contained in the initial crossing permit application. Should significant differences be observed between the actual crossing activity and the details contained in the application Council may, at its discretion, revise the permit conditions or revoke the permit.

Example

A herd with a maximum of 300 cows crosses a road with an assessed traffic count of 120 vehicles per day. The crossing will be used on a maximum of 200 days per year.

$$\text{Assessment Index} = 120 \times 300 \times 200 / 365 = 19,726$$

As this value is greater than 10,000 an underpass will be required. The period within which the underpass is required to be installed is calculated as follows:

$$2 + (80,000 / 19,726) = 6.05 \text{ years (2209 days)}$$

This period commenced on the 31st August 2006. In this case the underpass is required to be installed by not later than 6.05 years after this date, which would be 18 September 2012.

This date has now passed. If an application had previously been made for this crossing well before this date and a permit for an 'at grade' crossing issued, the permit would have expired on this date.

If however this was a new crossing activity, then rule 4) above would apply, and a period of two years from the date of application for the crossing permit would be granted for the required installation of the underpass.