

Update Letter to Residents about EWR

Recently the Parish Council secured an on- site meeting with a Project Engineer and an Environmentalist from East/West Rail. From the outset we made clear that the Parish Council continues to object to the principle of the railway coming through our parish, but if it does we are determined to mitigate the impact on our community and countryside as far as possible. During that meeting, Steve Arnold, Alison Myers and myself spent time explaining details of the planned rail route through Ravensden that were less than acceptable and would require a much higher quality of design solution that is currently proposed.. We then took them on a visit to the sites that were the most controversial – Graze Hill Lane, Wood End, Sunderland Hill and Green Lane. During the visit we discovered some changes that EWR have been considering since the Non- Statutory Consultation in January. These changes are NOT fixed, but what EWR is currently thinking. More details will come out at the Statutory Consultation, probably early next year, but in the meantime the Parish Council wants to keep residents- especially those who could be most affected- up to date with what we know.

- 1) The proposed railway cuts across Graze Hill Lane. The new proposal does not include a bridge spanning the rail line. This means that Graze Hill lane will become 2 'dead end 'roads, one end starting from Ravensden Park and ending approximately at Graze Hill Farm and the other from Wood End to approximately, Outfields Farm. This is a change that the Parish Council will be objecting to as there are implications for emergency services, dustcarts, post and delivery services access, as well as for residents.
- 2) The proposed crossing of Thurleigh Road was going to be a huge embankment which would in effect cut off Wood End from the rest of the village. This has now changed and there will now be a viaduct in part which will cross Thurleigh Road and Ravensden Brook. There will still be some embankment. This is a change that the Parish Council asked for in the last Consultation and so we welcome it.
- 3) Another proposal that the Parish Council objected to was the cutting across Green Lane and diverting the path downhill to the B660, so that any walkers, horse riders etc, who would normally cross the B660 and continue on their way using the public ROW, would now have a significant diversion and have to walk along the busy B660 to continue their walk /ride. The Parish Council suggested that the historic Green

Lane should not be cut short but that a Green Bridge be built over the line. A Green Bridge is one that has vegetation growing on it, and means that Green Lane is not cut short and so any disturbance of wildlife, as well as to those who use Green Lane will be minimised. EWR have not agreed to a Green Bridge but the Parish Council will be putting pressure on them to change their mind.

There are several other details that we discussed – such as the size and number of construction sites, and how they will be accessed but EWR were not in a position to give us any more answers. The design work is still in process, but in our opinion is clearly underfunded.

Whenever we do have new information, we will let you know.

Bernadette Russell

Chair of Ravensden Parish Council