



Graham Edwards
20 March 2018 12:23
Brenda Taplin
Re: Weatherby Crossing Closure
Weatherby Press Coverage.pdf

Hi Brenda,

My original objection was sent by email sometime between 5-13th October 2016 but unfortunately my computer crashed last year and I lost all of the copies of my emails. I was able to recover messages in my inbox from my ISP but sadly they do not keep copies of sent emails on their server. Regrettably I did not keep a paper copy of our objection.

I did however send a copy to the Newmarket Journal and they covered the story quoting the wording of my objection. I attach a copy of the article.

Sorry I can't be of more assistance.

Regards.

Graham

Graham Edwards

Hon Secretary

Newmarket Town FC

On 20/03/2018 11:06, Brenda Taplin wrote:

Hello Mr Edwards

Thank you for the copy of your email to Ms Noonan. Before any further action, you mention in your final paragraph that you have already objected to the Weatherby closing on behalf of the football club. Are you able please to provide me with a copy of that objection? This would be most helpful when taking forward consideration of your email.

Many thanks.

Brenda

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From: Graham Edwards
Sent: 19 March 2018 16:05
To: Brenda Taplin
Subject: Fwd: Weatherby Crossing Closure

Dear Ms Taplin,

Please find below a copy of a self explanatory email which I sent to Sara Noonan at West Suffolk Councils earlier this afternoon.

As you can see from the final sentence of my email I would be happy to speak in person when the Inquiry resumes. Can you please let me know if this is possible and, if so, when I will be needed?

Regards.

Graham Edwards

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: Weatherby Crossing Closure

Date: Mon, 19 Mar 201 +0000

From: Graham Edwards

To: Sara Noonan <sara.noonan@westsuffolk.gov.uk>

CC: Rachel Wood Kevin Grainger

Dear Ms Noonan,

I understand from Rachel Wood that the use of our stadium was raised as an issue during the Public Inquiry last week into the planned closure of the Weatherby level crossing. I am writing to clarify the situation as I gather that the Inspector may not be fully aware of the extent of our activities and the adverse impact that the closure of the crossing would have on our members and users.

It is true to say that our average paying attendance at first team games is about 100 people. This does not however include the players, officials and match day volunteers who add about another 50 people to the attendance. In total there are about 7,500 person journeys to and from our stadium per year for first team games alone.

However this is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of use of our stadium as we also operate 4 other adult male and female teams and 20 youth teams for boys and girls aged 6 to 16 who train and play almost all of their home matches on our 3G artificial pitch. Prior to 2016 our youth teams trained at other venues in the town and played their matches on grass pitches at a site near the village of Dullingham. This necessitated parents driving their children to football activities each week. One of the motivations for us investing £750,000 in a state of the art 3G pitch was to enable young children to walk or cycle to football in Newmarket itself rather than be driven several miles out of town. Our 3G pitch is also hired out to both Cambridge Utd FC and Ipswich Town FC who run weekly outreach training sessions for other youngsters living in Newmarket.

Our stadium is therefore used intensively every evening from Monday to Friday and in the mornings and afternoons every Saturday and Sunday during the football season which runs from August to May annually. The only exception to this pattern of use is during the school holidays when youth training is largely suspended in favour of daytime out of school

activities.

As a result of all of the activities described above up to 1,000 or more players, parents, spectators and officials pass through our stadium each week. This results in about 60,000 or more person journeys to and from our stadium per annum. Without a full survey of our users I do not have an accurate assessment of how many of these people use the Weatherby crossing to arrive at and leave from our stadium. I would imagine however that a significant minority do use this route to and from the venue. I have also used the crossing many times myself when I have been attending to the Club's business in the town. I'm not sure if all of these crossings will have been picked up by Network Rail's own usage surveys bearing in mind that nearly all of the visits to our stadium take place either in the evenings or at weekends.

In June of this year we are investing a further £15,000 in our Clubhouse to turn it into a Sports Bar with a pool table, darts board and big screen televisions showing live football and other sports. We plan to market these facilities to residents in the surrounding area later this year. Our largest catchment area will be in all of the neighbouring residential streets on the other side of the railway line and this will result in even more people needing to use the Weatherby crossing to gain access to our stadium.

Finally I should point out that the land currently owned by our Club together with the allotments over the road was originally leased by His Grace the 6th Duke of Rutland in the nineteenth century for the benefit of the people of Newmarket. Unfortunately there is currently no public access to the original documents in the archives at Belvoir Castle to prove the point but I would imagine that His Grace would surely have wanted the railway crossing kept open in perpetuity in order to allow access by foot from the town to the new sporting and recreational facilities on the other side of the railway.

I have already objected in writing to the closure of the Weatherby crossing on behalf of our Club as this will have a detrimental effect on some of our users who will be forced to make a lengthy detour to get to our stadium. I would be happy to give oral evidence to the Inquiry when it resumes if necessary.

Honorary Councillor Graham Edwards B.Sc
Secretary
Newmarket Town FC



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

www.avast.com

NEWS

News ... Newmarket Town secretary said potential dangers had been exaggerated by Network Rail

Jockeys join the campaign to keep town's rail crossing open

BY ALISON HAYES
alison.hayes@newmarketjournal.co.uk
@AlisonHayesNJ

Newmarket Town Football Club has thrown its weight behind the campaign to save the foot crossing over the town's rail tracks.

Network Rail has just completed a consultation with residents over its proposal to close the long-used crossing, which is close to the club's Ridgdon's Stadium in Cricket Field Road and provides an important town link for pedestrians.

"I personally use this level crossing on a regular basis when I'm at the club and many of our players, supporters and staff also use it to access our stadium on a daily basis," said club secretary Graham Edwards. "We are

very concerned about the effects of the proposed closure on our football club. We are particularly worried that the proposed alternative route along New Cheveley Road is far too long for some of our

elderly supporters and much too dangerous for our younger players who come by bicycle - it carries a lot of fast moving motor traffic and it is not suitable for young cyclists who currently are able to use safe

and quiet backstreets to come to our stadium."

Mr Edwards said he felt the dangers of the crossing had been exaggerated by Network Rail. "There has only been one casualty here in the

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Graham Edwards. 'Proposed diversion route is far too long for some of our elderly supporters'

last five years and that sadly was a suicide and not an accident," he said. It's far less dangerous to cross this railway line than many of the main roads in Newmarket. There are very few trains using this line compared to thousands of cars driving through the town every day of the week. Pedestrians are far more likely to be injured crossing the road than crossing the railway.

"Nobody would ever seri-

ously suggest fencing off the roads through the town so why on earth should we completely fence off the railway line? It makes no sense whatsoever and it will seriously inconvenience both the football club and the public at large."

A spokesman for Network Rail said no decision had yet been made over the future of the crossing.

■ See Letters page 10 for more views.

JUNIOR JOURNAL

The winner of the £5 voucher to spend at Moons Toymanter in Newmarket is Phoebe Brown.

Many Happy Returns to all Junior Journal readers who celebrate their birthdays this week.

St George, Icewell Hill, Newmarket (12).
Wednesday: Mia Humphries, George Lambton Avenue, Newmarket (12).

Tomorrow: Phoebe Brown,