

# David Moore: Are these new railway stations a reality or fantasy?



construction of a new railway station was an integral part of the development.

It was always known that if a new railway station was to be built at Kilnwood Vale, one of the existing stations between Horsham and Crawley would be closed and the likely candidate was Faygate.

Horsham District Council holds its meeting in public this evening to take ten questions on its Preferred Strategy from the public, listen to three presentations by experts, allow councillors to question the experts and then discuss the comments made by the public on the Preferred Strategy during the consultation period.

We'll probably find that the proposed development north of Horsham will dominate

much of the discussion on this last and probably most important item on the agenda.

One of the key elements of any development north of Horsham is the construction of a new railway station. Presumably this will be an important part of this evening's discussions. Without a guarantee that a new station will be built, the proposed development must fail.

Can we really have two new railway stations built between Horsham and Crawley? It seems unlikely. One may be possible with the resultant closure of an existing station but not two.

So which one, if any, should be built, North Horsham or Kilnwood Vale? Let's start with the Kilnwood Vale development, which is well

underway. Would it be fair to the people currently buying the properties, presumably on the basis of the provision of a railway station at some time in the foreseeable future, to find out in a few years' time that the promise was a myth?

If the proposed development north of Horsham ever comes to fruition, do we want the same uncertainty about a railway station, which may never be built, to exist?

Would it be fair on the people, who buy the houses?

We spend a great deal of time talking about the need to provide the correct infrastructure to support new developments but too often we pay lip service to the real needs of people.

The only reason one talks

about building railway stations in this area is because it's believed that many of the new residents will be commuting to London or other locations.

It's about time we moved into the real world.

If someone wants to build and pay for a new railway station, the starting point is to produce a business plan.

As far as I'm aware, no business plan exists for either of the proposed stations and, even if they do exist, they have not been submitted for approval.

The approval process is lengthy and involves consultation with many bodies such as Network Rail, DfT and the Treasury.

A new railway station is an integral part of the proposed north of Horsham

development, so let's see an approved business plan, which guarantees that it will be built, before the development is given any further consideration.

Let's also think what explanation we offer to the people, who've bought homes at Kilnwood Vale.

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