

ENVIRONMENT



The Environmental Statement (ES) will include assessment of the following topics:

Ecology

Ecological surveys were undertaken throughout 2010 to identify any protected species that might be disturbed by the new rail link. No Great Crested Newts were found, however some relocation of reptiles from the railway corridor may be necessary. Two badger setts were found and bats are confirmed to be present along the route. The ES will identify any likely significant effects on ecology and outline suitable mitigation for them.



Noise and Vibration



The design of the rail link will seek to reduce the impact of noise and vibration on the local area. The rail link will be served by the new S Stock trains which are in the process of being introduced into service on the Metropolitan line. These are significantly quieter than the old A60 trains currently running on the Metropolitan line. However some increase in noise and vibration is likely to be unavoidable.

Base line noise and vibration monitoring is currently being conducted at potentially sensitive sites along the perimeter of the whole route. This data will be used to create a model to establish what the relative increase in noise will be as a result of the rail link. Once the model has been created and potential noise levels identified, any noise mitigation measures required will be designed and included in the ES.

Any sites subject to an increase in noise that cannot be mitigated and exceeds the statutory thresholds will potentially be eligible for noise insulation. There may also be entitlement to compensation. It is, however, not possible at the current time to quantify any increases in noise level until background noise measurements and predictive noise modelling have been completed.

Visual and Landscape

It is recognised that the construction of the viaduct, stations and introducing trains back on to the disused Croxley Green branch line will have a visual impact. The designs of these elements of the scheme are being carefully considered to reduce the effects. Again the ES will identify any measures proposed to lessen any significant effects.

The construction of the viaduct will involve the closure of the children's play park off Watford Road. We are working closely with Three Rivers District Council to identify how the site can be altered to retain the play park in the same location or if a potential replacement site can be provided in the local area. This site would need to be of a similar size and style to the existing play park.

A further public information event planned for Autumn 2011 will provide more details on the contents of the Environmental Statement.