

RAILWAY LINE

19/01/1981 'It was suggested that since the rails are removed the old railway line would make a good country walk or even cycle track to Egremont. Clerk to write to BR asking if they are willing to sell and for how much. Also to write to Copeland and adjoining Parishes to see if they are interested.'

16/02/1981 'BR have asked Copeland and County Council if they are interested in the line and will keep us informed. No reply from other Parishes or Copeland recreation and Amenities Committee.'

18/05/1981 'Railway line - Mr Lowrey had asked landowners if they were interested in land, those above Thornhill were keen on buying so it appears that only part likely to be available is adjacent to Thornhill and down to Egremont. To ask Mr Threlfell exactly which land he will be buying to see if there will be access to Thornhill stretch from Cop Lane. Clerk to ask BR to confirm that some of the land is already sold also to write to Copeland to ask if they could organise a joint effort with other PC's and buy Thornhill /Egremont stretch and to point out we are keen on acquiring Thornhill part if only to stop it becoming a rubbish tip.'

20/07/1981 Railway line - 'BR replied that none of the land had actually been sold but offers had been received, also stated that any purchaser would be responsible for the upkeep of fences etc. concern expressed that if Mr Threlfell did buy all the line adjacent to his land there would be no easy access to the piece behind Thornhill. Meeting to be arranged with Recreation and Amenities to discuss subject.'

21/09/1981 'Clerk had written to BR declaring an interest in Thornhill section of disused line, also to district Valuer for valuation. BR replied that County council had improvement scheme for Cop Lane - this would be laying back bridge abutments (but this has been shelved). District Valuer gave value as approx. £800. Mr Roberts reported on Copeland BR meeting, BR rep seemed keen on preserving lines as walks and cycle ways and Copeland also keen on this idea. BR also said that if re-fencing was needed then total cost would probably be provided by manpower Services commission. It was then agreed that Clerk should write to BR declaring interest in Thornhill to St Thomas Cross section (providing purchase price accepted) also to clarify intentions of A595 to river section which might also be of some use.'

19/10/1981 BR acknowledged our interest in Thornhill - A595 section but said that A595 - river section was subject of discussion with county council on road improvements. Copeland Recreation Officer advised contact with County Planning and Countryside Commission -latter had sent several useful booklets on grant aid etc. county Planning advised that one scheme to reclaim disused line was about to start near Arnside and our stretch could well be next. Also said that Copeland had declared an interest. To ring Copeland and ask about this as we have no knowledge of this interest.'

16/11/1981 'County Planning said that Copeland had expressed an interest nothing more definite. No further correspondence from BR Clerk to write asking for some idea of price with view to including in our next financial budget.'

18/01/1982 'letter from Copeland stating "no official interest" since BR are waiting response from them Clerk to ask Copeland to tell this to BR, valuation from BR £250 per acre, members thought this was high, clerk to ask BR how much longer we must wait for decision to sell.'

15/02/1982 'BR replied that nothing could be done until lines were removed but that Copeland had replied stating definite interest, letter produced from Copeland confirming this interest. Clerk to write to them explaining that we would like to do something with the land before it becomes a tip etc, also to ask if statement of Copeland's intentions could be made at the Liaison committee meeting on 10th March.'

15/03/1982 'letter from Copeland stressing that they were interested and would look favourably on the use of this stretch of line. Also mentioned at Liaison meeting and assurance given that they would give matter serious consideration.'

17/05/1982 'Copeland had written asking for area in question to be marked on map, Mr Wilson had been approached by householder on Wodow Road concerned about proper fencing at the end of the garden. Mr Wilson reminded members that fencing will be a major item when considering the financing of this venture.'

14/06/1982 'railway line mentioned as part of footpath scheme in Egremont District Plan, stated that a fence had recently been erected right across the line near the OAP bungalows. Clerk to write to BR asking if this piece of land has now been sold and to whom and pointing out that we had expressed an interest in that area for access to the rear.'

19/07/1982 'BR stated that no sale had taken place and they noted our and Copeland's claim to this stretch. No authority had been given for any fencing (the fence had since been broken down).

19/09/1983 'Railway Line- Letter received from BR advising that they are now ready to dispose of the land, however an adjoining landowner had asked to buy the stretch leading up to the bridge under the main road at St Thomas Cross. This landowner is Mr Caddy who wants to buy to protect his land from people who may be using it as a footpath. The whole stretch measures approx. 11 acres and in 1981 BR advised they would expect approx. £250 per acre. Members thought this was ridiculous for this type of land. Mr Gray to ask CALC if any other PCs have had experience in buying ex railway lines and what prices they have paid. Clerk to write to district Valuer to ask for a valuation on the land. Also to write to Copeland quoting their policy in the Egremont Plan and asking what their intentions are now that the land is for sale. A letter to be sent to BR saying that we are definitely interested in the stretch from Dent Road to Cop Lane but we may have to thin again about the rest of it if they sell a piece to Mr Caddy.

17/10/1983 District valuer has inspected the land and is now making enquiries from Copeland, he asks if PC is applying for grant to cover part of cost. Clerk to

enquire about grants from County council, Playing Field Association, Northern Council for Sport and Recreation and Copeland (also to remind Copeland to reply to district valuer to avoid further delay)’. Copeland replied that subject will go before committees in the next cycle of meetings. They would not be interested in remainder of line if Mr Caddy bought part. District valuer advises offering £150-200 per acre. Clerk to write to BR making an offer for the whole of the stretch also to enquire acreage of section behind Thornhill.’

21/11/1983 ‘reply from BR our offer noted and they will write again when replies received from other landowners, Thornhill stretch amounts to 3.81 acres.’

19/03/1984 ‘ British Rail now ready to sell the land and have offered Thornhill stretch to us for £380 (land north of Thornhill being sold to adjoining land owners) Members to consider matter and decision to be made next month.’

21/05/1984 ‘It was finally agreed that since we had taken on the purchase of the playing field and there was no longer a possibility of a footpath to Egremont along the line we were not now interested in the land behind Thornhill. Clerk to write to BR advising them of our decision.’