

HS2 IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY GROUP - 1 March 2021

MINUTES

- Present:** Councillors: D Cole, T Diccico, T Hodgson, D Howell, T Richards OBE, A Rolf and K Thomas
- Officers:** Derek Lawlor – UK Central Group Delivery Manager
Joe Suffield – Democratic Services Officer
Paul Tovey – Head of Highways Management
- Representatives:** Nicholas Cuming – Stakeholder Engagement Manager (BBV)
Andy deBell – Head of Stakeholder engagement (BBV)
Katrien Goossens – Community Engagement Lead (LM)
Matt Hadlington – Senior Business Engagement Manager (HS2)
Jonathan Lord – Senior Community Engagement Manager (HS2)
Melanie Ryan – Community Engagement Manager (LM)
Fiona Woolston – Engagement Manager for the Interchange Area (LM)

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

Ms Sheila Cooper presented a deputation on behalf of the CPRE Warwickshire in relation to the construction of the Kenilworth Greenway diversion. The Senior Community Engagement Manager noted that the temporary Greenway was subject to a 'bringing into use' planning application, and therefore could prejudice the planning process. They did note that an update would be circulated on the Greenway and shared with the Group. There had also been positive comments on the scheme shared with the Senior Community Engagement Manager.

Mr Richard Lloyd made a presentation on the archaeological status of the Kenilworth Greenway, as well as about the impact of fencing on wildlife on the route of the temporary Greenway.

In relation to the archaeological and historical importance of the route, the Senior Community Engagement Manager explained that he would provide a substantive response by email and explained that the route had been thoroughly investigated. There was not considered to be any requirement for additional surveys or archaeological work on the route. The Chairman noted that there was a hope that when the Kenilworth Greenway reopened it would be

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fit for purpose and main features were retained as far as possible, and the Group would continue to monitor the progress.

Ms Cooper queried what would happen to the Victorian bridge and features during the construction process. The Head of Stakeholder Engagement (BBV) explained that during the construction phase, the Kenilworth Greenway would be removed and upon completion, it would be reopened. There would be some changes, and there would not be the reinstatement of the bridges and tunnels that had been removed. It was requested that further clarity on the reinstatement of the Kenilworth Greenway would be shared with the Group.

The Group Development Manager responded to Mr Lloyd's points on fences on the temporary Greenway and stated that it was a permissive route managed by the Kenilworth Greenway Trust rather than a Public Right of Way. As the planning application was to be considered, only general comments on fencing could be provided. The Senior Community Engagement Manager noted that stock proof fencing was used and a response on the appropriateness of this had previously been circulated.

Ms Cooper made a personal deputation which outlined concerns about the construction phase of the project on local residents. The Chairman concurred that it would be important for HS2 Ltd to retain the confidence of local residents during the construction phase. The Senior Community Engagement Manager explained that they had to abide by the Code of Construction Practice and any issues should be reported to the HS2 Helpdesk.

A Member stated that contractors were not using the B4118 designated route from Water Orton through Castle Bromwich, instead they have used B4114 to get to the M6. They also asked about the route to link the Water Orton depot to the HS2 link road. The Head of Stakeholder Engagement explained that Highways England were in the process of removing the Smart Motorway Technology connections, which would take place until April. At this point, the alterations could be made to the hard shoulder which would prevent the B4118 being used. The Head of Stakeholder Engagement also requested that any details about contractors who used the incorrect route were recorded with, if possible, vehicle registrations and shared through the HS2 Helpdesk.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th December 2020 were presented to the Board.

The matters arising from the previous meeting were considered:

- The Senior Community Engagement Manager updated Members on footpath diversions. The footpaths impacted would look to be imputed on to an online interactive map which would outline the location of works. An update would be provided to the Board on how this would progress.
- The Senior Community Engagement Manager would share updated air quality reports when available.

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- Councillor Rolf would get more clarity on which section of the design process Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council wanted more information about.
- The Senior Community Engagement Manager explained that they were in the process of responding to queries raised by Mr Blanche at the previous meeting.
- The bottles which were found in land cleared by LM had been cleared up as a matter of goodwill and Solihull Council would look at potential enforcement action.
- The Senior Community Engagement Manager had responded to Councillor Thomas' query about A45 and cycle lanes. In addition, they outlined that they would continue to look to incorporate cycle provision into the main works design in line with instructions from the Department for Transport.

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th December 2020 were approved.

5. KEY ISSUES TRACKER

Updates were provided on the following items of the Key Issues Tracker:

Item 2 - Chelmsley Wood public space – potential mitigation for loss of land at Heath Park

The Head of Stakeholder Engagement (BBV) explained there had been steps to maximise the space available for local residents at Heath Park and would continue to engage with stakeholders on this to try and retain one of the pitches.

Councillor Rolf explained that she had spoken to Councillor Williams and HS2 Ltd representatives about proposals for the park. There were positive steps moving forward, which included a suggestion for a skateboard park.

The Group Delivery Manager outlined that as part of the undertakings and assurances within the HS2 Act in relation to Heath Park, HS2 Ltd were required to identify how they could mitigate the impact of construction and the permanent works. He suggested that the Council could come back with some proposals from the community which HS2 Ltd could then consider for delivery in relation to the undertaking.

It was agreed by the Board for Councillor Rolf and Councillor Williams to work with the community to produce some suggestions for HS2 Ltd. The Board would continue to be updated on this through the Key Issues Tracker.

Other items:

- Item 9: As soon as possible, tree planting would be restarted. A focus of this would be to invite schools to participate.

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- Item 12: No work had taken place which required the noise monitoring to take place. This continued to be monitored and the Board would be updated should work require this monitoring.
- Item 18: An award was announced for Marston Green Scout Group. Other projects were being assessed.

A Member asked whether HS2 Ltd could work with Solihull Council to support their aim to plant 250,000 trees, to create the new Arden Forest, to link up the Green Belt and on the production of the Net Zero Green Paper. In response, the Senior Community Engagement Manager explained it would be good to link with existing projects, and that they would consult with Solihull Council Environmental Officers and report back to the meeting.

Mr Lloyd asked about whether tree canopy cover could be used as the parameter to compare how many trees had been planted and lost as a result of the HS2 project. A response would be provided to Mr Lloyd outside of the meeting.

6. HIGHWAY SERVICES UPDATE

The Head of Highways Management gave an update which covered the following points:

- A Schedule 4, Part 3 application had been made and consented for permanent works in Area B (the roundabout over the trace); which now included traffic signals as a result of cooperation with the Urban Growth Company.
- Some major Schedule 4, Part 3 applications which should be submitted soon:
 - The A45 Stonebridge Island
 - Lavender Hall Lane realignment
 - A45 service road
 - A452 realignment north of Bradnocks Marsh Lane
- An understanding and assurance between HS2 and Solihull Council that related to four rural lanes in the Borough was to be considered. This could lead to the introduction of traffic calming measures on Diddington Lane, Waste Lane, Lavender Hall Lane and Park Lane funded by HS2 and as part of the HS2 Road Safety Fund programme.
- The Commonplace portal would be launched soon and a recruitment process was ongoing for someone to lead on this programme.

7. PROGRAMME UPDATE FROM HS2 LTD

Local Businesses and Jobs

The following information was provided by the Senior Business Engagement Manager:

- They would identify opportunities for businesses within local areas to get involved with the HS2 project and to build links with these businesses. There were already 33 businesses in Solihull involved in the HS2 project.

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- Tier one contractors for BBV were mostly in place, which would now mean that SME's would be more likely to be involved in the process. Businesses could get involved through high and low complexity methods, from framework contracts through to regular purchase orders. Also, as they would have a significant workforce, there will be a need for these staff to be able to access facilities and outlets.
- Over the course of 2021 there would be a number of engagement events with local businesses. They would then use their knowledge of local businesses to support them into contract opportunities.
- HS2 Ltd had launched its Job Brokerage model which aimed to create around 22,000 jobs throughout the supply chain. It would provide a central point for all of the jobs available for HS2. Partners involved with the scheme included local employment support organisations who met HS2 Ltd criteria, such as Solihull Council. These partners sit on a regional steering group, which involved HS2 Ltd representatives and contractors to discuss specific vacancies.

The Head of Stakeholder Engagement also advised Members that a materials testing laboratory would be set up on Coleshill Heath Road with a number of new recruits, which included 3 apprentices from Solihull. There were also supply chain frameworks which had gone out and targeted SMEs in civil engineering and ecological and vegetation.

Members made comments and asked the following questions:

- A Member asked whether support would be given to businesses during the procurement process, as many would typically not have had experience working with businesses similar to HS2. The Senior Business Engagement Manager explained that they recognised this challenge and were keen to support businesses, as it was a mechanism to restart the economy and encourage innovation.
- A Member queried whether the scheme was in place to encourage candidates who faced increased challenges, or to encourage as broad a range of people to apply for HS2 related jobs. The Senior Business Engagement Manager responded that they aimed to positively impact on equality, diversity and inclusion, which often did not happen in the construction industry.
- A Member questioned whether two years would be long enough to train an apprentice. The Senior Business Engagement Manager stated that apprentices would tend to stay within the businesses at the culmination of their programme but would get further information.

Archaeology Update

The Community Engagement Lead for LM provided an update on the archaeological work that had taken place since the last meeting. A number of virtual engagement events had taken place, which over 2000 people had engaged with. The events included an event to consider the restart of the young archaeologists club. LM remained in contact with the Core in Solihull about potential future collaboration.

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Kenilworth Greenway Update

The Community Engagement Manager for LM gave an overview of the status of the temporary Greenway. This included:

- The construction of the temporary Greenway was not finished. Work was still required before it could be brought into use. Minor problems in relation to the surface of the Greenway and drainage were resolved or in the process of being resolved. Stakeholders would continue to be kept informed of the progress.
- The design and implementation of the temporary Greenway had been limited by health and safety requirements, the available land standard programme, environment and ecology requirements as well as the site conditions. It was built according to the approved design.
- Conversations had taken place with stakeholders to support community projects along the temporary Greenway.
- The clearance along the Kenilworth Greenway was almost complete, and LM was in the process of handing it over to BBV.

Interchange Area Update

The Engagement Manager for the Interchange Area (LM) provided the following information about the latest works in the Interchange Area:

- Since the last meeting, there had been a number of activities which had taken place to support organisations within the Borough, such as surplus site equipment had been provided to Tile Cross Academy to help with their vegetable patch.
- Most of LM's construction work related to the highways bridges installed in 2020 in the Interchange Area. These were almost complete, with snagging work or final steps in the process of being completed. There had been several weekend closures to support the highways development programme and connect sections of the remodelled and improved road network to the existing network. These closures had been completed earlier than planned and the networks reopened ahead of schedule. LM have sought to maximise opportunities to close roads while traffic movements remain low in the area to minimise disruption.
- LM were in the process of asset and land handover to BBV over the course of 2021, and traffic measures would continue to be carried out on and around Northway Island to further remodel and improve the road network in this area. A number of steps were to be taken to minimise disruption during this process, which included gathering and acting on feedback, engagement events and communications and phasing traffic measures.

Main Works Update

The Head of Stakeholder Engagement provided the Board with the following update:

- There had been a lot of work which had taken place in the Burton Green area. This included trial holes on Waste Lane, a satellite compound off Waste Lane and a compound on Cromwell Lane.
- On Hallmeadow Road there had been two applications submitted to address the transport haul route which would pass through Balsall

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Common. This change would mean that the construction traffic would impact fewer residents than the original route detailed in the HS2 Act. The new proposals would still consider how to protect local properties from noise and to minimise the visual impact.

- There would be earthworks which would take place from Park Lane to the A45, as the drainage would need to be in place before the temporary and main compound works were in place. Alongside this, access points were being created to help to stockpile aggregates and materials on the A45.
- Traffic management would be in place on Meriden Road to allow survey work to take place. The notifications for this had taken place, and would lead to five days of potential disruption.
- A Construction compound had been created on Park Lane, and it was ready to be occupied. This would mean a significant presence at the site in the future.
- There would be Key Design Elements to be agreed for the Balsall Common Viaduct in the summer and afterwards at the River Blythe Viaduct.
- The final details were to be confirmed for the A45 and Bickenhill HWRC, in relation to service roads. These would require consent.

A Member asked how BBV could mitigate their impact on local areas affected by construction and how they could be a good neighbour. The Head of Stakeholder Engagement explained that they would maintain strong dialogue between the engagement teams, construction teams and the local community. The operating practices would be followed and would be sensitive to local needs and concerns. As construction continued, they would learn to find out which practices worked and respond to any problems raised.

The meeting finished at 8.35 pm