

TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Severn Ham Committee meeting

Remotely via Zoom on 4th March 2021 at 10.00am

Present: Cllrs P Aldridge (Chair), J Raywood, C Cody, S Raywood, Ms C Corsie, Mr J Lucas, Mr A Purkiss, Mr T Parry, Mr M Cluley, Mr S Kerr (Severn Trent), Mr O Fielding (Dalcour Maclaren), Mr N McGovern (Geda Construction), Mr J Coalter (Geda Construction), Mr J Urbanowicz (Dalcour Maclaren), Mr S Pullen (Severn Trent Ecologist)

In attendance: J King (Assistant Town Clerk)

SH 20/064 To receive apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

SH 20/065 To record declarations of interest

Mr Purkiss – Clerk to the Commoners

SH 20/066 To consider requests for dispensations

None received.

SH 20/067 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2021

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2021.

Proposed by Cllr J Raywood, seconded by Cllr Cody.

SH 20/068 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

SH 20/069 To receive an update on the Severn Trent pipeline works

Reinstatement

Use of green hay – The original plan was to spread green hay along the working area following completion of the works this year. However, due to timescales provided by the contractors (primarily due to connection dates), Severn Trent will miss the window to effectively spread green hay in 2021, therefore an alternative plan is required to create green cover before the winter.

75% of the working area will be ready for reinstatement by mid-August, with the remaining 25% being required for ongoing access for connection and testing works.

This will then be available for reinstatement in October-November. These dates could be subject to change depending on the weather.

Following completion of the work this year, the plan is to plant oats, which will hopefully be very fast to establish and can be sown late in the year with an increased seed rate. 75% of the area will hopefully be planted by late September. The remaining 25% of the area will be sown by mid-November. In early summer of 2022 after consultation and with an ecological walk over survey to mark bird nests, the oats will be cut and removed from the working strip. Natural England are happy

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with oats as a cover crop. Priority is to provide a cover to hold the soil together, not a crop.

The green hay spreading will then be instigated along the whole of the working area no later than 15th August 2022 after the oats have been cut and bales removed. The actual timing of the green hay will depend upon the phenology of the donor crop, the ability of the Ham as the recipient site to accept the green hay and the contractor being available to do the work. The timing of this will be in consultation between Severn Trent, Natural England and the advisors of the Severn Ham Committee. Other measures such as brush harvested seed and ongoing weed control are also being considered in addition to this, in consultation with Caroline Corsie.

Haul Road

It has become apparent that a stone haul road along the working area will be necessary to allow safe movement of machinery during the works. Other alternatives have been considered in detail but ultimately dismissed as not suitable due to ground conditions and type of machinery required. The stone haul road is a significant expense and would not be used if other options were suitable.

Due to the adverse ground conditions, sensitive nature of the area and significant & frequent loading, a bespoke haul road design is required. The proposed design consists of the following:

- A geotextile layer to form a barrier between the subsoil and the temporary haul road
- A geogrid layer to reinforce the road, preventing rutting.
- A layer of 6F2 stone, a coarse aggregate which forms the main structural layer designed to support the loads imposed by the required plant, including piling rigs.
- A layer of Type 1 stone which forms a safe working platform suitable for vehicle traffic.

The haul road will be laid on a geotextile membrane, extending wider than the road and weighted at the sides and ends with scaffold poles, which will enable the road to be wrapped ahead of any flood event to prevent stone being washed out. This membrane will also enable the stone to be completely removed following completion of the works.

Due to the ground conditions encountered on the Ham, track matting does not provide adequate support for frequency of use (delivery of pipe sections/materials/movement of plant and machinery within the working area etc) nor the heavy loads that will be imposed by larger plant. For example, the 750mm diameters CFA piles require an accurate installation to ensure the correct construction of the pile capped thrust restraint. This can only be guaranteed with a suitably designed piling platform.

Further to this, with repeated use the access matting would become uneven and would open at the joints which would cause a H&S issue – hence requirement for a stone sub-base to them which would defeat the objective.

In this scenario a stone haul road will cause less damage to the existing ground than the matting as there would be less loading on the subsoil.

There is a comprehensive environmental management plan in place regarding contamination and biosecurity. There will be an ecological clerk of works based on

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site in order to make sure that all of the protocols are followed. There are also management plans regarding the checking of machines before entrance to the site and specific refuelling protocols. The management plans will be shared with the Town Council and submitted to Natural England. Mr Cluley reminded the Committee that Severn Trent are entering the site under notice and therefore the liability remains with Severn Trent for any issues along the working strip.

There will be daily visual checks of the road, to check if the stones getting displaced and ecological clerk of works will note monitor. The Committee raised concerns about the removal of the road and were advised that the geotextile will be spread either side of the road (approximately 3 – 4m) as a buffer zone. All stones will be removed at the end of the works.

The Committee asked about the safeguards for the gas main and fuel pipe, as well as the current water pipe. They were advised that for each of those elements, Severn Trent have been in contact with the Statutory Bodies and permissions to cross have been submitted. The crossing points on the haul road have been designed with a concrete slab to protect the pipelines and has been sent to each of the asset owners for approval.

The trial holes revealed that there is up to 300mm of topsoil. This will be removed and kept separate to the sub soil. The sub soil will be reinstated as soon as possible when works are completed on an area, the top soil will be reinstated in the 75% / 25% split when the reinstatement works are ready to take place. The haul road will sit a little higher than the rest of the Ham. There is a material management plan for excess material and where possible, any excess will be used on site. However it is noted, that there will be material that will need to be removed from the site.

De-watering

Throughout the works, water may need to be pumped from the open sections of trench. When working at the northern and southern ends of the working area, this can be discharge straight into the river, but when working in the middle of the Ham, the proposal is to discharge onto the ground outside of the working area. Water will first pass through a sediment tank prior to being discharged into the river (when within 100-150m of the river) or onto the Ham. There will be daily inspections of the water discharged. Mr Purkiss expressed concern at water being pumped into the middle of the Ham.

At present, the volume of water that will be pumped is unknown, and discussions have been had with Mike Cluley regarding the possibility of certain areas being too wet to cut for hay. Should this prove to be the case, compensation can be paid for any loss of revenue experienced as a result. The grass will also need removing later in the season, and Severn Trent will consult with Mike Cluley regarding this, with Ben Perry being the preferred contractor to do this work.

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Ecology

Penny Anderson Associated Ltd have been appointed as the Ecological Clerk of Works for the scheme. They are overseeing the bird dissuasion works to mitigate against ground nesting species being disturbed during the works.

A small amount of vegetation needs to be cleared on the boundary with the Borough Mills site. This work will be carried out before the 15th March, as Natural England usually take this as the cut-off date when hedges or trees should not be cut down because of the risk of birds nesting. This is on the basis that if they do build a nest early, they are unlikely by that date to have eggs and can rebuild. This clearance is required to create a new access point on to the Severn Ham, which will be used solely for the works. This has the advantage of the current access being available as usual for farm traffic. This has been agreed with the owners of Healings Mill and the fence will be reinstated at the end of the works.

The security of the site was discussed and the Committee were advised that it will be monitored 24/7 by mobile camera towers. These have the advantage of being portable and providing 360 degree coverage, as well as closely monitoring key entrance points.

The traffic management process for how materials will get to site was discussed. It will be required to shut Quay Street for short periods when the large machinery is being transported to site, due to the weight restrictions on the bridge. This has been agreed with GCC Highways.

SH 20/070 To consider and agree any actions regarding the Severn Trent pipeline works and reinstatement on the Severn Ham

It was RESOLVED to agree the proposed actions from Severn Trent regarding the reinstatement, haul road, de-watering and ecology, as detailed in SH 20/069. Proposed by Cllr Aldridge, seconded by Cllr J Raywood.

The meeting closed at 11.00am.

Next meeting: Thursday 22nd April at 9am

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the minutes22nd April 2021