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nature
a home



Environment
Agency



The Moors at Arne Project, Stakeholder Liaison Group 24 February 2020, 17:00 – 18:30, Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Project Team

Simon Humphry – Environment Agency Project Manager
Catherine Farrugia - Environment Agency Advisor (Flood & Coast Risk Management)
Neil Watson – Environment Agency Coastal Engineer (Wessex)
Hayley Hills – Environment Agency Community Engagement Officer
Greg Chuter – Environment Agency Senior Archaeologist
Josh Olney – Environment Agency
Heather Coutts – Atkins Global Principal Environmental Consultant
Peter Robertson – RSPB Senior Sites Manager, Dorset Reserves
Ian Alexander – Natural England
Matt Phillips – Kier Project Manager

Chair – Neil Watson chaired this meeting.

Representative of Birds of Poole Harbour
Representative of Ridge Moors Action Group
Representative of Dorset Wildfowlers Association
Representative of Dorset Bird Club
Representative of Arne Parish Council
Representative of CPRE
Representative of Open Spaces Society
Representative of Dorset Council
Representative of Ridge Residents Association
Three Ridge and Arne Residents

Welcome

Welcome and introduction by the Chair.

Review of notes from last meeting

Notes from last time agreed-

Brief project update including Archaeology (Heritage)

The project team updated the group with the progress working towards the completion of the detailed design including updates on ecological surveys, ground investigations and archaeological trenching. Through the ground investigation work a decision on the embankment construction has been made to be able to build the embankment through site won material in order to be able to reduce the amount of material and construction traffic being brought onto site. The presentation included the approximate locations of borrow pits

within the site which have been sized to gain the material needed to build the embankment. This will be transported within the site to the locations needed. The features won't be prominent within the site but will be landscaped and, in the intertidal area, will be areas where sediment would likely settle. The project team also shared the make-up and dimensions of the embankment and explained that the construction will include a creation of impermeable core within the embankment with a cement-like material.

A survey was undertaken by hovercraft to sample some of the mud below reed beds along the existing embankment. There will be further ecology surveys undertaken in the coming weeks to accommodate the further development of the detailed design. A construction sequence programme is being progressed and the project team are in conversation with Dorset Council understand implications of the detailed design.

Greg Chuter reminded the group of the archaeological (heritage) work done to date. Further commencement of Archaeological works will be around May 24th. This will be to complete some of the trenching not possible within the previous stage last Autumn due to weather conditions and to include some further trenches that will be where some borrow pits for the material for the embankments will be located. Up to four teams of archeologists will be working on site.

- A question was asked to whether any archeological finds had been uncovered in the initial phase of trenching? Not a huge amount of finds across the site. There were some medieval and post medieval drainage ditches in the southerly part of the site and there is some evidence of some Iron Age activity in the north east area of the site which may be indicative of some salt making in this area. The geo-archeological work undertaken does give a picture of the changing landscape within the site.

Traffic Update

Matt Phillips, Kier project manager, gave an update on the construction project traffic and the proposed construction traffic routes and impacts for the project.

- A question was asked about the total number of HGV's over the entire project? Over the main construction period of the project it is estimated about 1300 HGVs roughly split two-thirds in the first year and one-third in the second year.
- Another question was asked to whether there would be any steps to reduce impact to any protected species in the verges along the construction traffic route? The HGV's would need to take precedence along the route and these would be escorted with other traffic using the passing places. There currently some passing places that would need some improvements and these would be improved as part of the project including any ecological surveys and mitigation that might need to be undertaken.
- A further question was asked to whether the number of 1300 was for the traffic in and out of the site? The 1300 was for one way traffic, this would be 1300 in and 1300 out. When you split that over the construction period there would be on average four HGV's per day, this would differ due over the construction period and the detail would be worked into the construction plan.
- A question was asked whether there was a plan for the timing of the vehicles that would be travelling along the proposed construction traffic route? This would be developed with Dorset Highways. Typical restrictions would avoid peak local

traffic times, would expect a spread of traffic during a day. If there was a need for certain times to be avoided this could be worked into the logistics plan.

- A further question was asked to the speed the HGV's would be travelling along the Arne Road? HGV's would be under escort and the typical speed that they would be escorted would be around 15mph.
- A question was asked about the types of HGV's that would be used? A combination of vehicles, 8 wheelers bring stone/aggregate, concrete wagons, low loaders bringing excavators and articulated lorries carrying site set-up equipment.
- A further question was asked around the weight of the HGV that would be bringing in aggregates? 32 tonnes
- A question was asked to whether the HGV's would be travelling further down Arne road past the compound site? There is no intention of this happening, the HGV's would enter the compound site unloaded and then distributed through the site.
- A question was asked around concrete? There are a few structures that would be needed to be built, in particular the Furzebrook outfall structure. This would require some concrete but within the scale of the project this would be very minimal.
- A further clarification was asked whether the structure would be permanent. Yes this is a permanent structure to manage the main fluvial flow along the Furzebrook.
- A question was asked to if the Ridge Residents Association contacted to share their preferences over timings of traffic in the morning, for instance after 7am, would this be taken into consideration. Yes, there would be some staff that would be onsite early but these were just in cars. With other projects if there have been fetes or sponsored walks for example these have been taken into account so site works don't impact.
- A question was asked whether the traffic would be over the course of 7 days in the week? No the intention would be for 5 days a week, there is a caveat in the planning that there may be a potential for some Saturday working. If the programme of works fell behind there may be the option to ask to extend to 7 days but this would have to be with the agreement of Dorset Council.
- A further question was asked how long would the project take and would it be for 12 months of each calendar year? The construction programme is currently for 2/3 years for summer seasons (April – end of September).

Biting Insects (Mosquito) Update

Heather Coutts, Atkins Principal Environmental Consultant, shared a presentation based on some survey work that had been undertaken as part of the project on the impact for the project.

- A question was asked whether there is a proposal to monitor the situation after the scheme has been created? There is no proposal to monitor the situation as the conclusion from the work undertaken is that there will be a reduction in habitat and the scheme will create habitats that are unsuitable for mosquitoes.

Public Access Update

Peter Robertson, RSPB site manager, shared an update on the public access proposals for scheme and how the public access links to current public access routes.

- A question was asked about access to some Open Space land situated within the site, the current proposed path is quite near to some of these spots. Would there be access allowed onto these open spaces? There are three areas: One of these is a mire system, this is a protected system and we would not wish to encourage access onto it. The other two maybe accessible although they would not necessarily be desirable locations as they are in wet parts of the site. It would be able to organise a site visit to discuss with open spaces the locations and accessibility to them.
- A question was asked how the disabled accessed would be enforced? There are no plans to provide any formal enforcement, we would provide signage to their nature and would envisage they are used respectfully by people.
- A question was asked whether there would be access for cyclists to be able to use the new access paths? We are not proposing cycle access routes to the site, the cycle access will continue to be along the Arne Road. There are bicycle racks at the Sunnyside carpark, the Arne carpark and the Middlebere carpark for those wishing to cycle and visit the site.
- A question was asked regarding the decision not to allow dogs on leads within the site? Dogs on the site are more likely to increase disturbance to the birds and the types of birds that would be encouraged onto the site with the proposed scheme. Through assessing the type of buffer that would be required it was decided that it would cause too much disturbance to allow dogs on the site as birds in wetland habitats are particularly sensitive to disturbance from dogs.

Open Forum

- A question was asked if there were any plans to limit the number of visitors to the site, and are there contingency plans should there more visitors than expected? No there are no plans to limit visitors, the project is considered to be for a particular audience and we do not foresee a large number of visitors wishing to use the site. The project team have used comparative sites at Middlebere and Lychett Fields to gauge the number of visitors. On a rare occasion when there may be a particular bird of note we expect there to be enough parking at Sunnyside and cars outside of this space would have to comply with the Highway Code. Natural England are starting discussions with the tenant farmers within Sunnyside farm to accommodate an emergency overflow carpark should there be an occasion where this might be necessary.

Next Steps

The project team suggested May /June for the public exhibition.