

Southwest Scotland – Transport Mitigation Forum

5 May 2015 – Dumfries Arms Hotel, Cumnock

In attendance – David Elliot (Cumnock Community Council)

Beth Griffin (Ochiltree Community Council)

Alex Baird (Ochiltree Community Council)

Ian Howat (New Cumnock Community Council)

Jerry Mulders (New Cumnock Community Council)

Christine Morris (EAC – Planning)

Keith Gordon (IEC)

Brendan Tinney (SPEN)

Colin Wylie (SPEN)

Denis O’Kane (SPEN)

Apologies - Craig Isles (EAC Planning)

Karen MacGregor (SPEN)

DoK thanked all parties for attending and due to new attendees present introductions were made confirming involvement in the group.

DoK confirmed that everyone had received minutes from the previous meeting and the content was accepted as accurate. BG asked that in future minutes the use of acronyms be minimal. BG also asked for confirmation of future meeting dates.

Action Points

DoK confirmed the action points detailed in the previous minutes had been progressed –

- DoK and JM confirmed explanation re connection costs had been provided by KM.

- KG explained that approximately 30 % of the work force were from the local community.
- KG stated that a phone number has been provided in relation to traffic issues.
- KG confirmed that information regards Security Companies and site contact details had been provided to the Police.
- DoK stated the date of the next meeting would be 4 August 2015 at the same venue.

Matters Arising

There were no matters discussed.

Project Update

DoK delivered a presentation providing an update in respect of project activity.

Any Other Business

JM sought confirmation of when work started on the New Cumnock Sub Station. KG confirmed September 2013.

IH stated that had been made aware of a problem with dirty water at a specific location. KG confirmed he was aware of the issue which had been at the early stage of the project. This had been monitored on a daily basis and was now resolved.

JM asked when the overhead line work had started. DoK explained this work had commenced in August 2013 at the Coylton end of the project.

JM asked about routes for future deliveries of transformers with IH seeking clarification about abnormal loads. DoK explained there would be three such deliveries for this part of the works. KG added that the vehicles would be travelling via the A713 and the journeys would take place over the course of entire weekends, through both day and night. CM further added that the route had been assessed.

JM asked if the intention was still to remove the access roads. DoK confirmed that the consent given for the project required removal to be undertaken unless landowners apply to keep them. JM asked if any such applications had been made. CM explained that as far as she was aware no such applications had been received at this stage.

JM enquired as to why it had taken so long for Clawfin Quarry to be involved in stone supply. CM explained that it was probably due to environmental assessments having to be carried out before permission was granted. DoK added that in addition to the necessary

assessments and other conditions to be discharged with this consent, putting in place arrangements with contractors has built in timescales.

JM sought clarification as to what is involved in the commissioning of a substation. KG explained that this was basically the standard tests carried out prior to the substation going live.

IH asked how many wind farms New Cumnock Substation could cope with. KG stated that it was capable of supporting all the applications for wind farms which were in place at the time the project being granted permission.

DE asked if the Sanquar side wind farms had been taken into account. BT explained that the current project is only able to provide for the needs of the contracts in place prior to each application being submitted. BT added that any subsequent windfarms would need to apply for connection at the appropriate time. DoK commented that Scottish Power is required by legislation to provide connections and that future requests for connection can only be addressed as they are submitted and that this may include considering alternative connection routes. KG added that facilitating future demand can depend on the existing equipment in situation, which would be considered for reconfiguration, or if needed, upgraded by using higher capacity cables or bigger transmission towers.

BG enquired if all wind farms will be connected into the current project hopefully keeping disruption to a minimum. BT responded that only the wind farms identified at the outset of the South-west Scotland Renewables Connection Project would be connected by the current project, subject to them gaining planning permission. CM added that the consenting process can take a number of years. BG asked what size the substation will eventually be as further wind farms are connected. DoK explained that if demand continues to increase the possibility of substation expansion could not be ruled out to ensure needs are met. BT added that as equipment and materials technically advance, the size of substations may well be reduced in the future.

DE asked if all the windfarms in the area have applied for connection. BT again explained that this depends on what stage the windfarm applications are at, which either allows or prevents application for connection.

JM asked if the ground work and area covered at New Cumnock substation is likely to get bigger. KG explained that if the transformers and equipment need to be upgraded this may be the case, however as mentioned, technology continues to advance often reducing the size of equipment and the area required.

JM enquired as to the new bulk movements from Clawfin Quarry and the stone being removed from the substation. DoK confirmed that the consent for the project includes the stone to be removed and that SEPA require this to be carried out to a standard which meets the legislation, primarily to prevent contamination. IH enquired if there had been any

contamination. KG explained that contamination includes mud and dirt on the stone and that SEPA are very proactive in overseeing the process.

JM asked if the stone could be recycled and used in later stages of the project. KG responded that the various costs, including transport for achieving this would be prohibitive.

JM and IH asked regarding the source of stone for later stages of the project and voiced concerns regarding suitable roads and routes. BT explained that planning permissions were still to be approved, however it was hoped to use two local quarries with the related traffic management arrangements still to be agreed. DoK added that these are being proposed to minimise movement on the roads network.

DE enquired regarding the access roads being utilised as cycle paths in the longer term. DoK again advised that the consents in place stipulate the removal of the roads and they could only remain in place if the landowners sought permission to retain them.

JM asked if landowners that apply to keep access roads would be required to maintain them. CM responded that these roads would be on private land as opposed to under the oversight of the council. DoK reminded those present that the roads are only constructed to the standard required for temporary access roads with CM adding that any applications from landowners would obviously need to be assessed.

BG enquired regarding stone removal from Coylton overhead lines. DoK again confirmed that the consent includes the stone being removed.

JM enquired about what happens to the stone when removed. CM and KG explained the conditions require the stone to be treated to avoid potential contamination which makes reusing the stone difficult. CM added that SEPA oversee this process and the legislation has changed in recent years.

BG explained that she had concerns about the stone removal not being completed due to similar circumstances with coal in recent times in East Ayrshire. CM, KG and DoK again explained that there is a requirement to remove the stone. CM added that projects such as this are overseen by the Government and the Council with DoK further commenting that as a regulated business, SPEN would ensure its commitments in respect of consents were fulfilled and the land restored.

JM asked when plans regarding the stone removal around the overhead lines due to be completed in Autumn 2015 would be available. DoK responded by stating that detailed plans had still to be made and that he would endeavour to have information available by the next meeting in August 2015 (**ACTION 1 – DoK**).

IH asked what volume of rock would be removed. KG suggested that in the region of 200,000 tonnes would be removed, however he would confirm at the next meeting (**ACTION 2 - KG**).

JM asked if the stone which was sourced from Tappet Hill Quarry was to be returned there for restoration. DoK noted that the project received stone from the supplier but was not aware of any agreement to return materials. The site may have a restoration condition attached to it, but it would be for the applicant themselves to ensure compliance.

JM enquired as to the volume and haulage arrangements for parts B and C of the project as mentioned in DoK's Presentations. BT confirmed that applications to five quarries to supply stone were in the process of being made, however if at all possible the Forrest networks would be used again for transportation with no stone passing through Dalmellington.

IH sought confirmation regarding the existing line to Kendoon being renewed. KG confirmed the line is due to be renewed. JM asked if additional access roads would be required with DoK explaining that such work would be kept to a minimal with existing access roads being used where possible. DoK added that the project would continue to seek to use local quarries for the stone required.

IH and BG asked regarding potential funding for local initiatives. DoK explained this was not his remit, though he was aware there had been limited funding provided for the Dalmellington Triathlon and that Karen MacGregor would be the best person to confirm the position **(ACTION 3 - KM)**.

JM suggested that a site visit would be of benefit to the group members. DoK explained that due to extensive Health and Safety requirements and inductions this may not be achievable. If there was a significant desire from group members, a tour of local public roads may be possible. Group members did not express a desire to visit site. KG added that a time lapse camera is in situation and a film would be produced in the future which may be of interest to group members.

JM stated that the timescales for stone delivery in the figures he had been provided with did not appear to tally as stone appeared to have been delivered before July / August 2014 prior to the conclusion of agreement on stone movements. CM explained that discussions on the project details may still have been ongoing at that time with agreement reached to allow deliveries to progress. DoK noted an agreement was in place for initial movements and will provide figures for this to EAC **(ACTION 4 - DoK)**.

JM asked for confirmation that a road levy had been paid and that the council had a sum of money for road repairs. KG and BT confirmed that this was the case. BT confirmed that similar agreements were likely to be put in place for parts B and C of the SWS project.

DoK again thanked everyone for their attendance and interest and confirmed the date of the next meeting as being 4th August 2015 at the same venue.