

# KINGS BROMLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017 commencing at 7.30pm at Kings Bromley Village Hall.

Note – corrections to these minutes will be recorded in the minutes for the following month.

**Present:** Cllrs. A. Howard (Chairman); S. Browne; C. Cole. Mrs. J. Higgins; I. Pritchard.

HS2 representatives: Tahir Ahmid, Engagement Manager on Phase 1 of HS2 (liaison with public on Phase 1 and where it joins on to Phase 2a), Liz Davies, Stakeholder Engagement Manager for Phase 2a Fradley to Colton Area, Neil Hodgson, Area Engineer Phase 2a, Richard Johnson HS2 Area Manager.

**In attendance:** Members of the public present: Approximately 40.  
The minutes were taken by Cllr. Howard.

**Public Session:** Liz Davies stated that she would send written answers to the questions that had been raised by the Council.

**1. Apologies and approval of absence.**

Cllr. N. Lee; Mrs. M. Gair. Parish Clerk Ian Colclough.

**2. a) in accordance with Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011, members to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in items on this agenda.**

Cllr. Browne on HS2.

**b) Clerk to report any written requests for dispensations in respect of items on this agenda.** None received.

**3. To receive an update on HS2.**

There was considerable informed comment from the floor on the various questions. The following is a broad outline of the various areas of concern and the response of the HS2 representatives.

**The Height of the Embankment and Viaduct and its Effects.**

It was pointed out that the proposed height of the track – 17m, has not altered since the plans were changed to take the line under the A38. This could mean the height to the top of the pantograph being as much as 35m. The higher the line 1) the more material is used in its construction and the more sand and gravel is needed from the borrow pits 2) the more its eventual visual and noise impact, 3) the higher the 275KV national grid wires have to be raised to cross it. Parishioners to the south of the village have received letters letting them know that their land might be used either for access or even purchased compulsorily.

Neither Neil Hodgson or Richard Jones could give an answer as to why the track should be so high still, but Richard Johnson did make the point that it is in the interest of HS2 to make it as low as possible. Liz Davies has or will write to individual householders on the potential need for access or mitigation planting. However, until such time as the issue of how the power line will cross the HS2 line is firmed up, it seems she cannot have a clear idea of how parishioners living in this area will be affected. This uncertainty will cause blight.

**The Borrow Pits.**

The question was asked as to why Kings Bromley Parish had to provide so much of the sand and gravel through the four proposed borrow pits. The reassurance was given that the material extracted would only be used locally. However, HS2 do not know how much material is required because it is not known how high the embankment / viaduct will be. They also do not know to what depth each pit can be extracted until boreholes are completed. The proposed area of the four pits therefore seems to be what they consider to be the maximum that might be required.

The pit BP191 is outside of the Staffordshire County Council's Mineral Plan (2015 – 2030) Area of Search – the area where they would consider applications for extraction. Neil Hodgson will

consider the implications of this in his discussion with the County. He will also investigate whether the County Council's commitment to no quarrying in the Area of Search until the existing mothballed quarry (Manor Park) has been restored, and whether HS2 will conform to the County's environmental impact policy (Minerals Plan Policy 4). He could confirm, however, that workings on the borrow pits (and construction in general) would only be within normal working hours (except in exceptional circumstances). Asked how this could be policed, Neil Hodgson stated that they would have to follow the Code of Construction Practice and if they failed to do so they would be breaking the law. The contactors' hours of working would be written into the contracts and controlled by HS2, the County Council and HSE.

HS2 confirmed that vehicles taking construction material from the borrow pits will be on haul roads constructed along the side of the railway line, however the infill material, Mercian mudstone from further down the line, would be largely carried on public roads up to 89 lorries a day – to be confirmed.

### **The Closure of Common Lane**

This is a major concern to the Parish. It has been raised repeatedly with HS2 planners and yet the plans still show no 4m underpass under the embankment. No explanation has ever been given as to why such an underpass cannot be constructed.

The effects of the closure are:

- 1) Traffic to and from premises and businesses on Crawley Lane will be forced to use Crawley Lane itself – this will involve heavy vehicles and potentially emergency vehicles. The access past the Richard Crosse School is already narrow and dangerous – especially at the beginning and end of the school day, as is the junction onto the A515 – now opposite the entrance into the Co-op. This area is already considered by many as an accident waiting to happen.
- 2) The Crawley Lane/Common Lane loop is used extensively by walkers, runners, dog walkers and cyclists; it forms part of the only circular route usable by villagers. Its removal constitutes a considerable loss of amenity.
- 3) The Kings Bromley Show, held on the Crawley Lane showfield, which is about to celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> year, uses Crawley Lane as its entry and Common Lane as its exit. On Show Day hundreds of cars, show vehicles and horse boxes use this one-way system between 8am and 5pm. It would not be possible for the Show to continue if all this traffic would have to use Crawley Lane.
- 4) The owner of Common Lane Farm estimates that the closure of Common Lane would add thousands of pounds per annum to her costs.
- 5) The owner of the cattery on Common Lane believes the use of Common Lane as a construction route and the closure of the route through to Crawley Lane would bankrupt her business.

Local farmers said that they had pointed out the seriousness of the Common Lane closure to HS2 any number of times, indeed one had actually taken Richard Johnson on her tractor to show him the problems and received reassurances (this has already been petitioned on Phase1) – and yet nothing had happened. His response was that it was now a parliamentary process and that it was our responsibility as individuals, councils and MPs to make sure that our concerns were made clear through the consultation process, which finishes on the 30<sup>th</sup> September. After that there might be some scope for change 'We are always open to good ideas'. This does not explain how, given the concerns previously expressed, the closure of Common Lane is still in the Plans that HS2 has presented to Parliament. The overwhelming concern is that words and actions have not corresponded so far.

### **Effect on Local Services**

A question was raised about the effect of the Construction Work on local services such as Doctors and Health Staff, the local Co-op and construction workers using the local roads at starting and finishing times, meal breaks etc.

Richard Johnson respond that the satellite accommodation sites would have provision for health care and canteen facilities and so the impact on local services would be minimal. These sites would be temporary and would be removed at the end of the Construction phase.

### **Traffic Through Kings Bromley**

A commitment was made that no HS2 and HS2 contractors traffic will go through Kings Bromley. This requires that all HS2 traffic can be clearly identified. Tahir Ahmid stated that on Phase 1 they have set up 'Traffic Liaison Groups'. For instance there is one for Staffordshire, the idea being that all stakeholders get together to create a 'local traffic plan'. The Parish Council would have to feed into this plan through District and County Councillors. Once the plans are developed they should be available for everyone to view. This should lead to the identification of restricted routes with temporary signage saying 'no access' etc.

### **Timescales**

Richard Johnson 'We anticipate the parliamentary process taking us the next two and a half years. The current plan is for Royal Assent by the end of 2019. Now as a general rule if you look in the construction programme it is showing the bulk of the main construction starting around 2021. Now in 2020 we would be looking to start on early works ... on the roads, but it will generally be a lot of the environmental stuff that we need to do. Don't forget we will have a massive schedule of environmental and ... archeological works. So, over the next couple of years we will be planning those early moves and generally ... we will have to clear the footprint of all those various things before we can physically start the heavy civil works... We anticipate completing the construction of this section ... by somewhere between 2025/2026 and then probably about a year's commissioning to get the railway running ... we hope to open in 2027, that is our current plan... Phase 1 opens in 2026'

### **Use of Local Businesses and Labour.**

Richard Johnson stated there will be a plan to incentivise contractors to use local businesses.

### **Blight.**

A parishioner, who wished to move in the near future, was concerned about effect of HS2 on house prices and how it would affect her. Liz Davies has provided copies of the documentation on which to register a claim (the 'need to sell scheme'). This document will be put on the Parish Council website.

### **Responses & Further Actions**

**The online response form is available at.**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2a-west-midlands-crewe-hybrid-bill-environmental-statement>

The Parish Council will hold workshops on how to complete this form. It was clear from the response from the HS2 representatives that the more forms that are received the more impact that they will have. The responses have to be completed by the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept, but need to be sent in earlier or else they will be considered null and void.

The Parish Council will make its own representations and liaise with other Parish Councils, the District, County Council and our MP.

The HS2 Phase 2a plan website will be made accessible through the PC website. Paper plans are held at Lichfield library, but are also held by Charles Cole and viewable by appointment 07768 465044.

A further EGM meeting with HS2 will be held in the large village hall within the next four weeks.

A digital recording of the meeting was taken. This will be made available on the PC website.

There being no further business the main meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed ..... (Chairman) Date 9<sup>th</sup> August 2017.