



Ardersier Community Liaison Group

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 26 September 2018

Location: PACE Café, Station Road, Ardersier

Present:

Chair	Kevin Reid (KR)
Ardersier and Petty Community Council	Valery Kirby (VK) Christine Wood (CW)
Scottish Water (SW)	Gavin Steel, Corporate Affairs Manager (GS)
ESD (WWTW project)	Graeme Campbell, Project Manager (GC)
aBV (Outfall project)	Sam Neill, Project Manager (SN)

Apologies:

Cllr Trish Robertson, Cllr Roddy Balfour, Paul Morley



Community Liaison Group Objective

'The aim of the community liaison group is to minimise any negative impact and maximise the positive impact on the local community.'

The group will provide feedback and guidance on Scottish Water's programme of engagement and communication with the local community, elected representatives and other stakeholders throughout the construction element of the approved projects. This will facilitate feedback and enable informed debate that will help Scottish Water identify areas of concern, explore solutions, aid communication and progress the projects.'

Minutes

1. Welcome & introductions

Kevin Reid welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Review of previous minutes and actions

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and no amendments were made. Actions were reviewed as follows:

- 1) *SW to carry out further reinstatement work where required to improve grassed areas in the vicinity of the Pocket Garden / car park*

GS indicated that further work had been carried out and there had been improvement, but the site would continue to be monitored in the remainder of the growing season.

Action 1: SW to continue monitoring success of reinstatement work in the vicinity of the Pocket Garden / car park and carry out further work as required

- 2) *ESD to arrange for sign to be displayed encouraging traffic to turn at the cemetery when the road is closed*

GC confirmed this had been done.

- 3) *SW and ESD to proceed with volunteering day at the Pocket Garden on Friday 31st August*

GS confirmed this had gone ahead and thanked Cllr Robertson, Mari Reid and Dawn Mackenzie for their help with the arrangements. He also thanked GC and his team for arranging the supplies and coordinating the team on the day.

- 4) SW to liaise with JAPES and agree basis for joinery work at Pocket Garden to be carried out

GS confirmed that this had been completed and noted that GM Forestry had completed the work very promptly, in advance of the volunteering day.

3. Scottish Water update

(a) Waste Water Treatment Works

GC gave an update and shared some photographs showing the progress of work at the WWTW site.

The main focus was carrying out the main excavations. Currently excavation was underway for the aeration lanes, where air would be used to settle out the heavier elements in the waste water. This would be followed by excavation for the final settlement tank.

Some groundwater had been encountered in the course of excavations and this was being removed via a settlement system to filter out silt and sediment. This was working well and producing clean water which could be drained back into the ground.

GC noted that the aeration lanes were the excavation nearer the site entrance, with the final settlement tank excavation was on the shoreward side of the site. The excavations were to a significant depth in order to keep the profile of the tanks above ground as low as possible.

In the week ahead, the first layer of blinding concrete would be poured.

VK asked what would be done with spoil from the excavations.

GC explained that this would be used for backfilling around the tanks and for forming the final bunding around the site as part of the landscaping plan. The intention was to recycle as much material as possible within the site in order to minimise vehicle movements on the C1005.

VK asked whether the tank construction would require piling.

GC indicated that piling was being avoided by using open excavation. This involved a bit more work within the site, but reduced noise. VK commented that noise from earlier work that had been carried out at a pumping station in the village had been very noisy and explained that sound echoed off the hill behind the village. GC agreed that it was often challenging to screen noise effectively.

VK asked if the C1005 was always closed currently – and noted that some concerns had been raised with her about the impact of this.

GC explained it is closed on days when HGV convoys are scheduled, and this was typically from 9am to 5pm on most weekdays. The road was being opened as often as was possible under the terms of the agreement with Highland Council's roads department. Efforts would continue to reduce the total number of convoys, but this was challenging when supplies were coming from many different locations.

CW asked if may people had been held up while deliveries were taking place.

GC indicated that he wasn't aware of any significant problems. He explained the operation of the convoy and escort system, which meant that delays for road users were limited to a matter of 2-3 minutes, waiting for a convoy to pass.

GC noted there had been challenges previously with the barriers and recent removal of sandbags from all road signage. The sandbags were not high value, but it had caused nuisance and there was a safety aspect. The police had been informed and extra supplies were in place just in case of further problems.

GC indicated that he would be happy to arrange a visit to the site later in the construction programme if it would be of interest to CLG members.

(b) Outfall

SN reintroduced himself and explained that amey-Black & Veatch (aBV) were dealing with the outfall project, which involved installing a 310m outfall from the WWTW, located behind the firing range area east of Fort George.

aBV had been in discussions with the MoD who own the adjoining land about the window of access for construction that had previously been allowed between January and March. There was now agreement to extend this window to run from January until the end of May, which gave greater contingency in the event of any unforeseen challenges or bad weather.

A tendering process had been completed and a marine contractor, ABCO Marine had been appointed. They would carry out offshore work using jack-up barges, likely to be based from Inverness Harbour, and also onshore construction work.



SN outlined the installation process, which would involve excavation of sections of trench over a sequence of tide cycles. The pipe would be floated into position then sunk into the trench using pre-attached weight collars. The trench would then be backfilled. A diffuser would be fitted at the end of the pipe. This would be fitted with a non-return valve which is designed to close at high tide. Some rock armour will be installed to protect the diffuser from scouring during storms.

Vehicles accessing the site via land would operate via the established Traffic Management Plan, starting with deliveries of materials to the site early in the new year. Traffic via the C1005 would then be quieter until a busier period at the completion of the work to demobilise from the site.

SN indicated that there was a small amount of piling still involved with the work, but piles would be vibrated into the seabed rather than using impact piling in order to reduce noise.

VK asked whether there was concern about potential for unexploded ordinance in the area.

SN noted that surveys had detected some metal objects. The MoD had advised that it did not believe these were ordinance, but specialist support had been put in place as a precaution and the identified objects would be dealt with carefully.

KR and CW noted that wartime ordinance does occasionally appear around the coast. CW also noted that there had been a golf course in the area historically which had opened in 1908.

SN asked how CLG members felt signage would best be displayed around the site for walkers using the area.

CW indicated that she felt the area was used as much by residents from Nairn as by people from Ardersier and that signage on routes around the site would be important.

VK asked how potential impacts on bottlenose dolphins would be avoided.

SN indicated that the work was planned to avoid disturbance during breeding season for dolphins. A Marine Mammal Observer (MMO) would be in place to ensure work stopped if dolphins were close to the site and that soft start-up processes were used when appropriate. The extension of the outfall would improve the depth and dispersion of the treated effluent, in addition to the improvements to the treatment process. The was expected be beneficial to the dolphin habitat.

(c) Scottish Water Horizons

GS noted that the only continuing element of the Scottish Water Horizons project was monitoring the final reinstatement near the Pocket Garden, which had already been discussed.

4. Discussion

Leaving a legacy

GS noted that the work previously discussed at the Pocket Garden had been carried out since the last meeting and feedback on this had been very positive. He indicated that it was still proposed to assist the History Group with reprinting the local heritage walk leaflet; and to install new interpretation boards at Ardersier Common. He hoped it would be possible to make progress with both points over the winter months.

VK asked about the possibility of life-saving equipment being installed around the bay. CW agreed that there was greater use of the sea than in the past for watersports.

GS explained that the current focus was on delivering the things which had originally been identified by the community and prioritised by Scottish Water in consultation with the CLG. In some of the discussions there had been about the new benches and proposed interpretation boards, he had understood that some residents were keen to avoid new vertical structures on the coast which could detract from the landscape. It might also be worth considering whether buoyancy aids were likely to be beneficial to people taking part in watersports as well as maintenance, security etc. CW suggested the wall of the Pocket Garden could be a possible location.

Newsletter

GS indicated that there was an option to do a further newsletter around the turn of the year if members felt it would be useful. Communication with residents on the C1005 would be issued ahead of the outfall work starting. KR commented that he was not sure it was necessary to do another newsletter at this stage. It was agreed to review this at the next meeting.

5. Any other business

There was no other business.

6. Future meetings

The next meeting would therefore take place in the PACE café at 5:30pm on:
Wednesday 28 November 2018

2019 meeting dates would be discussed at the November meeting.