Consultation on the proposed mine water treatment schemes in Nentsberry

Summary of the consultation responses received in response to the proposed Haggs Site, January 2018

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the individual consultation responses received for the engagement event held on 25 January 2018.

The opportunity to provide comments ran from 25 January to 9 February 2018. It started with a one-day ‘drop in’ style event, held on Thursday 25 January from 8 am to 8 pm at Nenthead Village Hall. The event was staffed by personnel from both the Coal Authority and the Environment Agency, with comments and attendance recorded by Wilson Sherriff. Wilson Sherriff are the independent facilitation and engagement specialists engaged by the Coal Authority to support the engagement activities for the proposed mine water treatment schemes in Nenthead and Nentsberry.

This event focused solely on the proposed Haggs scheme. Proposals for the Caplecleugh scheme are still be considered and an update will be provided later in the spring.

Feedback forms were available to complete during the event or return via post or email. The feedback form was also made available on-line. Nine responses were received to the consultation. Of these, eight were submitted during the public drop-in sessions and one was received by post following the event.

The public were also encouraged to provide additional observations, suggestions and to share their views. These comments were captured on post-it notes, either by members of the public or by members of the project team. The notes were left on display on flip charts.

39 people were recorded as attending the drop-in session on 25 January 2018.

Consultation Responses

This summary of responses includes the information from feedback forms received at the public drop in sessions or submitted electronically as well as any points that were captured on post its.

Question 1 - site selection

- Against
- No problem
- Site seems to be better than the previous ideas
- I do not believe our undoubted strengths on Alston Moor are shown best by splitting us up into little groups. We have fought many battles, for schools, ambulances, hospital etc. We get the strong feeling that historically we are a nuisance! Making a living is very
hard. You are making it harder. The independence is precious and you can’t put a price on it.

- My impression is that the Coal Authority has ridden roughshod over the concerns of local residents and businesses. They have decided that this water treatment scheme trumps the consideration of local environmental impacts – such as bad odours. The scheme, if it was deemed essential could have involved placing the treatment sites on the fell – away from local communities.
- It is well thought out and not intrusive on residents. It will be interesting to see it up and running.
- No objection.
- Much Improved to initial plans. Site selection away from residential - good. Not on a main road - good. Improved compost composition and odour abatement - good.
- Pumping station artist impression - acceptable, needs to be Alston moor Drystone not Lake District.

Question 2: How did you find out about this event?

- Someone told me about it – 2
- I saw an article in the newspaper – 1
- I received a letter – 2
- Contacted by the Coal Authority – 2 (mailing list)
- Poster – 1
- Information on the website – 1

Question 3: How effective have you found the engagement process over the last 18 months?

- Better informed than none.
- Most effective.
- Helpful.
- Very positive and effective – impressed that changes have been made.
- You do throw your younger ones into the teeth of the battle don’t you?
- I have found that the Coal Authority has simply decided there needs to be water treatment centres along the river Nent from discussions with local friends and colleagues. Considerations of local folk, businesses that might be affected have not caused a major re-think; it’s still going to happen! This is evidenced by their digging on the field near Nentsberry and in the River Nent, at Nent Hall at the time of consultation.
- Everyone is very helpful and answer questions well. The initial meetings were confusing and difficult to understand, but it all got clearer, and views were taken on board and adjusted schemes came forward.
- Very effective.
- Much improved from the initial meeting in Nenthall [April 2016] when we were told that the scheme was planned.
Question 4: If planning approval is given for the scheme, would you like to be kept informed during the construction phase?

- Yes – 7
- No – 1
- No response - 1

If yes, how would you like us to keep in touch with you? (Respondents were able to select more than one option)

- Paper newsletter – 5
- Email newsletter – 2
- Local newspaper – 1 (Westmorland Herald)
- Local newsletter – 1 (Parish)
- Update on the website – 1

Comments from post-its written during the drop-in event

- Traffic during dredging
- Would be good to see the water voles return – used to have them here.
- Footpath over little bridge, along river → mud from dredging has been smeared over the footpath. Can’t walk along there anymore.
- What’s the chemical consumption, power consumption of the process? Will any waste removal/product removal be necessary?
- Construction pipe – can it go on the north side of the road?
- Impact on tourism
- If you can help sort the flooding on the road by the site, that would be great
- Odour during dredging
- Liaise with local population re: flooding at Nentsberry
- Speak to Highways when laying the pipe to check if the existing pipes have enough capacity.
- Feeling positive. You have listened and feel our views have been considered.
- Concerns re: behaviour (speeding/litter) of contractors doing the dredging work. Will the fence be reinstated? Mud left on the road; speeding on the track; mud smeared on path.
- Please fix the Highway drainage issue to stop the flooding.
- Looking forward to seeing bigger fish in the river.
- Sediment traps – complaints of how the area has been left.
- Sediment traps – remediation work needed – destroyed two outfalls; trashed path.
- Still have concerns about odours affecting the local area. Don’t think these can be eliminated. Could they not have joined the treatment sites up on the fell and pumped the water up to there to treat?
- Really important that contractors/anyone involved in the scheme/construction knows the key facts /information community have provided over the last two years. GI contractors said ‘they hadn’t been told anything.’
- The workshops were useful – all good stuff.
- What’s the roof of the pumping station going to be?

Wilson Sherriff
February 2018