

Meeting minutes

Chiltern AONB Review Group Meeting # 25

Meeting date Wednesday, 17 November 2021
Meeting location Teams Meeting
Meeting time 10:00am-12:30pm

Members (those who make the quorum of the forum)	Attendees (presenters/additional attendees)	Apologies
Review Group Chair RGC	HS2 Main Works Civil Contractors Align	Simon Railton
Buckinghamshire Council BC	HS2 Main Works Civil Contractors EKFB	
HS2 Ltd HS2		
Chiltern Conservation Board CCB		
Natural England NE		

Signed
Chair Tom Hinds
Date

Attendees:

(TH) - DfT	(MB) - HS2	(JB) - Buckinghamshire Council (BC)
(SM) - EKFB	(LB) - Natural England	(MThom) - CCB
(NJ) - Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB)	(JW) - Align	(LC) - Align
(OM) - BC	(MTay) - Natural England	(GK) - BC
(JP) - Natural England	(DM) - Align	(CP) - Align
(LL) - BC		

1 Introductions

- 1.1 Head of Major Projects, Buckinghamshire Council (taking over from Ifath Nawaz who has now left Buckinghamshire Council)
- 1.2 Project Manager, Buckinghamshire Council
- 1.3 Senior Project Manager, Natural England

1.4 HS2 Consents Team Leader, Buckinghamshire Council

2 Review of Minutes & Action Tracker

- 2.1 Minutes for April 2021 meeting were approved and the action tracker updated.
- 2.2 Agreed that in future the action tracker should include extra context from the minutes.
- 2.3 Agreed that as an ongoing action minutes will be circulated to the Group for comment and approval well in advance of next meeting, but minutes will be officially signed off at the next meeting.

3 EKFB updates

3.1 Main works update

- 3.1.1 SM provided a construction programme update. This included update of works in South Heath, Grimms Ditch, Small Dean and Nash Lee.
- 3.1.2 There now will be a weather-break until March for planting in South Heath and around Grimms Ditch.
- 3.1.3 Demolition works are taking place around Durham Farm, Wendover Dean, piling should start in January.
- 3.1.4 Small Dean – removal of protest camp has caused some delays in excavation to the piling
- 3.1.5 Design for the temporary bridge around Nash Lee will begin towards the end of the year, with construction beginning mid-2022.

3.2 Design update

- 3.2.1 Planned submission dates shared on presentation
- 3.2.2 Design updates included in presentation
- 3.2.3 LB asked about the open views over Jones Hill Wood that there currently are around the South Heath Cutting noise barrier and asked if this could be considered as part of the design. NJ also shared concerns about a 4m barrier being put on top of the bund.
- 3.2.4 There was a query about the design of overbridges. JB said as per BC policy, all overbridges should seek to replicate the current surroundings.

Action: HS2 to circulate EKFB presentation.

Action: SM to speak to BC design team and provide response to concerns about views over Jones Hill Wood.

4. Align updates:

4.1 Programme

4.1.1 JW, CP, LC and DM shared details on the S17 design of the Chesham Road headhouse – no fans and no basement on this vent shaft.

4.2 TBM and vent shaft

4.2.1 JW provided an update on the TBM progress and shared drone footage from earlier this year.

Action: HS2 to circulate Align update.

5 Wendover Link access proposal

5.1 LB explained that these proposals to create an additional public access route as part of the HS2 works were mentioned in the Chilterns DDPs, to develop green infrastructure and support connectivity.

5.2 SM explained that this is part of a wider discussion about cycling and walking infrastructure in the area.

5.3 Wendover link appeared to be deliverable within current plans

Action: HS2 to circulate slides.

Action: SM to provide further update on Wendover Link access proposal at next meeting.

6 Update on Committed Additional Projects

6.1 Landscape & Biodiversity Connectivity Project

6.1.1 NJ provided an update on surveys carried out within the Project Area

6.1.2 Also looking at further match-funding opportunities

6.2 Wendover Arm Canal Towpath

- 6.2.1 Funding Agreement is being finalised between BC and CRT
- 6.2.2 Weed clearance and emergency bank repair took place in September
- 6.2.3 Remedial works to continue through the rest of this year, with main works due to start Q2 2022, with an aim to be completed by the end of 2022.

6.3 Ridgeway Connectivity Project

- 6.3.1 Resurfacing RoW up Bacombe Hill was completed at the end of the summer and improved footpath, bridleway and cycle path, as well as allowing access for disabled ramblers.
- 6.3.2 Audit carried out that identified gaps in the provision – plan to work with local Wendover community to identify opportunities for further cycling provision.

6.4 Project updates

- 6.4.1 Noting that NJ had taken on role of tracking progress and providing updates on additional projects by default, there was a discussion about whether HS2/contractors might be able to take over this responsibility and sharing information on what projects are being funded as a legacy benefit – Victoria Lee/Comms/Green Corridor representative? NJ would continue doing this in the meantime.
- 6.4.2 MT asked whether there would be benefit in a strategic meeting of all Review Groups to discuss what sort of projects, updates etc are happening in different patches. TH/JF commented that the Green Corridor Implementation Group was intended to be such a meeting. Was also noted that the Chilterns AONB Review Group had chosen to distance itself from the Green Corridor Implementation Group.

Action: HS2 to circulate updates.

Action: MB/JF to speak to HS2 colleagues (raise in Green Corridor Implementation Group) about Project updates and Comms.

Action: NJ to speak to internal colleagues about website etc and sharing project updates.

7 Call-out for Additional Project Proposals

- 7.1 JF said he would speak to NE colleagues with local area knowledge who might have ideas
- 7.2 MT added that the Chilterns Conservation Board and NE have been discussing an idea of extending the Chilterns AONB (may include land to the SE of the current AONB designation)

Action: JF to speak to NE colleagues about potential project ideas

8 Budget updates

- 8.1** LL just taken over from IN. MB/LL will speak and try to sort out budgets, possible including TH and LL to speak to NJ about projects he is leading on.

Action: MB to collate information and arrange meeting with LL to sort out Panel finances

9 AOB

- 9.1** MB's last meeting but she will ensure that things are in place for a smooth handover and share new contact's details as soon as is feasible.

Next meeting

Wednesday 9 February 1000-1230 (tbc)