

Liaison Group Forum

Minutes of meeting: 11 July 2017, 1.00 – 2.30pm

Venue: Bede Hall, Sneaton Castle Centre, Whitby, YO21 3QN

Present:

Gareth Edmunds (GE) – Sirius Minerals (Meeting Chairman)
Matt Parsons (MP) – Sirius Minerals
Simon Carter (SC) – Sirius Minerals
William Woods (WW) – Sirius Minerals
Duncan Smith (DS) – Sirius Minerals
Heather King (HK) – Sirius Minerals
Mark Hill (MH) – North York Moors National Park Authority
Rob Smith (RS) – North York Moors National Park Authority
Cllr Guy Coulson (GC) – Scarborough Borough Council
Cllr Gerald Dennett (GD) – Scarborough Borough Council
Cllr Joe Plant (JP) – North Yorkshire County Council
Cllr Sandra Turner (ST) – Scarborough Borough Council
Cllr Noreen Wilson (NW) – Whitby Town Council

11 members of the public

1. Introduction

GE opened the meeting, welcomed members of the public in attendance and asked each LGF member to introduce themselves.

2. Apologies

Cllr Jane Mortimer, Briony Fox, Cllr Derek Bastiman, Cllr Barry Truman, Cllr David Chance.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were accepted with no comments.

4. Matters Arising

MP confirmed that the following matters had been actioned since the last meeting:

- The lighting at Woodsmith Mine around the drilling rig had been altered in response to comments at the previous meeting about the lighting glow from the site. Feedback had been positive.
- A member of the public who said at the April meeting that she had not been kept informed about the Project has been visited and given an update.

5. Construction Update

DS delivered a presentation giving a general update of construction activities at Woodsmith Mine and the intermediate shaft site at Lockwood Beck. This covered construction activity since April and what is scheduled to take place over the next few months.

Highways improvements

The highways works in Whitby had been completed, together with the new site entrance. DS also reported that the white lines at the A171 / B1416 junction would be completed in the next few days following additional work to improve the resurfacing.

Woodsmith

DS explained that the next phase of construction would be a continuation of the site preparation works in readiness for diaphragm walling (D-walling). This would include further drainage management measures, acoustic fencing, the creation of construction welfare and parking facilities and the installation of a concrete batching plant.

DS gave an overview of the equipment required for D-walling and an outline of the D-walling process. This would involve the construction of a reinforced concrete wall to -60m below ground level at each of the three shafts.

Lockwood Beck

DS reported that the new site access works were progressing well and that site preparation would continue drainage and soil storage measures and the construction of the shaft platform.

- JP asked when the proposed improvements of the Helredale Road parking laybys were likely to take place.
 - WW responded that the detailed design was currently being discussed with North Yorkshire County Council Highways Department and that an Autumn start was possible.
- GC asked about the depth of D-walling.
 - SC stated that initially D-walling would be to a depth of -60m below ground and then up to a maximum of -120m.

GE invited members of the public in attendance to ask questions, which included:

- What is the scale of the D-walling equipment?
 - DS responded that the rigs would be at a height of approximately 26m. SC added that the cranes accompanying the rigs would be slightly taller.
- How would the bentonite used in D-walling be dealt with?
 - SC explained that the bentonite, used as a support fluid in D-walling, would be de-sanded and recycled.
- What are the plans for bringing an electric power supply to the site? If this was the case would it be a 11kv cable?
 - WW confirmed that Northern Powergrid would be installing a power supply from Whitby using an 11kv cable. The long-term power requirement of the mine once it was operational would be served by a 66kv supply installed in the mineral transport system

- tunnel. DS stated that the need to have diesel on site during construction would largely disappear as a result and that this would help to reduce emissions.
- What route would the cable take and would it be underground?
 - WW responded that, closer towards the site, the cable was likely to come up Raikes Lane, follow the B1416 and enter the site at the old farm entrance. DS confirmed that the cable would be underground except at one single midway switch location.
 - Is Sirius still intending to recruit local people?
 - SC stressed that Sirius considers itself to be a local company and that it does intend to employ local people where possible, whilst some specialist positions for construction were likely to be sourced from elsewhere. DS added that a high proportion – almost 80% - of current Sirius staff were recruited from within an hour’s commute.
 - JP asked how many apprentices Sirius was planning to take on?
 - MP responded that five apprentices had been recruited to date and that all were progressing well with their careers at Sirius. Over the next five years Sirius would be taking on at least fifty apprentices, mainly in engineering. TTE has been selected as the preferred training provider and the programme is likely to start in September 2018.
 - NW asked whether there was an age limit with respect to the apprenticeships?
 - MP replied that there would be opportunities for older people into their twenties and above, although the focus was predominantly on younger people.
 - How high were the buildings on site going to be?
 - There was a misunderstanding that a building on the slide giving an example of a D-walling rig was associated with the mine site. WW stated that welfare facilities on site during construction would be the height of two portacabins and screened by existing trees. A slide showing Woodsmith Mine once construction had been completed was presented. DS explained how buildings on the site would be screened by excavated material, which would be landscaped.
 - ST stated that she was impressed by the approach that Sirius was taking in order to comply with planning conditions.

6. Planning

Conditions

MH reported that there had been an outstanding issue raised by Natural England regarding hydrogeological modelling, but this had been addressed and Phase 3 conditions were likely to be discharged within days. Phase 4 condition documentation has been received from Sirius, which covers most of the works coming up over the next twelve months.

Section 106

RS explained that the S106 payments provide a package of mitigation and that the three main elements of the S106 agreement are tourism promotion, landscape / ecology contribution and tree planting. RS provided examples of the types of projects that the landscape and ecology contributions would support including upgrading a stretch of the Coast to Coast Walk, repairs to St Stephens Church in Fylingdales and improvements to Harwood Dale Forest.

RS reported that a Woodland Creation Officer was being recruited by NYMNPAs to take the lead on the tree planting element of the S106. RS added that agencies including Welcome to Yorkshire, Visit England and Visit Britain had been engaged regarding tourism promotion.

MP outlined other S106 contributions Sirius had made to North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council (RCBC). NYCC had received over £800,000 towards enhancing local rail services and promoting science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) in schools. RCBC had received over £200,000 for tourism promotion and school STEM initiatives.

Section 73 application

RS reported that NYMNPA were expecting to receive a S73 application from Sirius within the coming days. This would cover minor modifications to the scheme that have arisen as the design has been refined. The application would be available for public consultation.

7. Complaints and Correspondence

MP reported that there had been a total of ten complaints since April. Eight were associated with Woodsmith Mine. Six of these were traffic issues involving HGVs using prohibited routes. Additional control measures had been put in place. In three instances, individual drivers had been taken off the job.

There were two complaints at Woodsmith related to noise issues. One had been addressed by ensuring site vehicles were fitted with 'white noise' reverse beepers and the other by reviewing and amending working practice after 7.00pm.

MP added that there had been one complaint related to Lockwood Beck about noise, and another regarding traffic management on Swindale Lane. Both have been resolved.

GC commented that this did not amount to many complaints.

8. Community Engagement

MP provided an overview of community engagement activities since the last meeting including attendance at parish council meetings, newsletters and press releases and ongoing visits to site neighbours. MP added that Sirius is continuing with its education outreach programme and had taken part in sixteen events since January 2017.

MP reported that the first Sirius Minerals Foundation grant programme had been launched. The Foundation has so far received 70 applications and the deadline for this first round is 31 July 2017.

9. A.O.B

- NW stated that Whitby and District Tourism Association (WDTA) had been in contact with Whitby Town Council and were concerned that tourism research figures that had been used to calculate the S106 funding for Whitby were incorrect.
 - MP responded that tourism research data had not been used in determining the S106 £50,000 annual contribution for promoting Whitby. MP added that he was happy to engage with WDTA directly to discuss their concerns.
- A member of the public asked MH about the hydrogeological issues that Natural England had raised and also requested that clear information is provided about the upcoming S73 application.
 - MH explained that the approved application modelled hydrogeological effects in relation to the proposed grout curtain, whilst the amended D-walling approach had a more

narrow focus. Natural England wanted to make sure that the modelling is appropriate to ensure that the long-term impact was considered.

- MH added that a non-technical summary of the environmental assessment would be available as part of the S73 application.
- Charles Forgan from the Captain Cook Museum in Whitby introduced himself and thanked Sirius for its contributions to tourism. He expressed concern, however, that NYMNPA had told Scarborough Borough Council and the Coastal Tourism Advisory Board that the S106 funding of £50,000 to promote Whitby could not be used for market research purposes. He requested that this decision was reconsidered.
 - MP said he would discuss the matter with NYMNPA.
- NW asked when the proposed increase in train services on the Whitby to Middlesbrough line would be operational.
 - MP explained that there was a process of feasibility work and detailed engineering design to be undertaken, before any scheme could be implemented. MP estimated that it could take two to three years for services to be operational, but that he would ask NYCC who were leading the project.