

Bengeworth Road Community Liaison Group

Minutes of the meeting

Overview

On Tuesday 19 October 2021, the fifth Community Liaison Group (CLG) meeting was held to discuss the works at Bengeworth Road, as part of National Grid's London Power Tunnels project (LPT). All residents who previously signed up for the CLG were invited to attend the meeting. Emails were also sent to all ward (Herne Hill) councillors, as well as local MP, Helen Hayes. Seven residents attended the session.

The CLG follows four previous CLG meetings held in February, March, April, and September 2021 and three public information sessions, two held on 7 December 2020 and one held on 20 January 2021.

Meeting called by: National Grid

Date: Tuesday 19 October 2021

Time: 6.00pm – 7.00pm

Venue / format: Zoom

Speakers and panel members (5)

- Mark Farmer, Project Manager, National Grid
- Sarah Harris, External Affairs Manager, National Grid
- Kate Tomos, Consents Officer, Arcadis
- Farhan Nomani, Project Manager, UK Power Networks
- Joe Cawley, Director, Grayling

Technical Support and notetakers (2)

- Priya Shah, Grayling
- Mary Lee, Grayling

Helen Hayes MP and Cllr Dickson sent their apologies ahead of the meeting.

Residents and members of the local community (7)

Presentation

Joe Cawley (JC) opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and explained that Helen Hayes MP could not join the meeting due to an urgent matter.

JC then handed over to the project team to introduce themselves. Mark Farmer (MF) introduced himself as the Project Manager for tunnels and shaft work; Sarah Harris (SH) introduced herself as the Regional External Affairs Manager; Kate Tomos (KT) introduced herself as the Consents Officer, taking over Georgie Grant's role now that she has left the project and Farhan Nomani (FN) introduced himself as Project Manager from UK Power Networks. Finally, Joe Cawley introduced himself as a Director at Grayling and ran through the housekeeping for the meeting. JC also mentioned that the meeting would be recorded for internal purposes only.

JC then ran through the meeting agenda, confirming that the following points would be discussed:

- Current works on site
 - Welfare deliveries to site
 - Air quality monitoring

- UK Power Networks update
- Site building design, engagement, and timescales
- Community Grant Fund update
- Questions and AOB
 - Questions from Loughborough Junction Action Group

Current works on site:

JC handed over to MF to discuss the current works on site. MF provided an update with reference to a recent aerial photograph of the Bengeworth Road site (slide 8). He explained that the circular object in the photo is the shaft that National Grid has been sinking – National Grid has been digging down one metre at a time, followed by underpinning the concrete segments to the shaft ring shown in the photograph. He went on to point out the location of the grout plant which is to the north of the shaft and stated National Grid has been pumping grout behind the shaft rings to fill any void. This process is then repeated all the way down to the shaft's full depth of 33 metres. MF continued that National Grid has currently constructed 21 rings and they are digging out the next ring, making good progress overall on the shaft. MF then showed the location of the large crane, stating that this is used to service the shaft and the long arm grab machine, also shown in the photograph, which picks up the clay from the bottom of the shaft.

MF continued by explaining that all HGVs and muck away lorries would come in from the Kings College Hospital (KCH) area to the site for deliveries and muck away. He also pointed out the wheel wash on site, noting that National Grid has been using the wheel wash to ensure all HGV vehicles leave in a good, clean condition and muck is not carried out onto the roads. MF then stated that the remainder of the site is used for storage and laydown. A 3-metre hoarding, located north and west of the shaft, is used to help contain any noise in the area.

Welfare deliveries to site:

MF then noted an area towards the top of the photo, explaining it is where the project team are currently installing its long-term welfare units. He noted that while the order was placed some time ago, due to Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain shortages, the units finally arrived in the last week. As such, MF went on to mention that abnormal load deliveries are scheduled to come to site but that National Grid will stay mindful and keep the vehicles off the road early in the mornings. MF stated two convoys of deliveries have been received so far and another two deliveries are arriving on the 21st and 26th of October respectively. MF explained the welfare units will then replace the temporary containers on site, which are currently used as site offices and changing rooms.

MF continued by stating that the shaft should be sunk down to full depth by January 2022, possibly before Christmas, depending on the ground conditions. He noted that National Grid intend to take a 2-week break over the festive period. He confirmed National Grid will then begin works to prepare for the arrival of the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) and a dividing wall will be put up in the shaft as a permanent fire wall to separate the two sets of circuits which will be coming from National Grid substations at Wimbledon and New Cross.

Moving on to slide 10 on welfare deliveries, MF reiterated the timeline of the upcoming abnormal load deliveries and explained the delivery process, stressing that the units will only be offloaded during working hours.

Air quality monitoring:

MF then moved on to slide 11 to discuss the ongoing air quality monitoring. He noted the current location of the air quality monitor (located between the works area and the nearest residential properties, attached to a lamp post as shown in the photograph on slide 11) and explained that an air quality management plan was developed by environmental consultants, RSK, via our contractor Hochtief-Murphy Joint Venture (HMJV), and the approach has been agreed with Lambeth Council. He noted that the monitor was installed in March 2021 and has since been actively monitoring and measuring

indicative concentrations of dust in the air (known as PM 10). National Grid receive monthly summary reports on the monitoring.

With reference to the map in slide 12, MF showed the location of the monitor relative to the site and the nearest residential homes.

MF continued by explaining how the monitoring system works – the monitoring system notifies National Grid if they exceed the site's threshold, which is also agreed with Lambeth Council. He stated that if National Grid were to exceed this threshold, actions would be taken, and these instances would be logged and investigated. MF also noted site activities and dust control measures would then be reviewed and if the exceedances are likely due to site activities, additional mitigation measures would be applied as soon as possible. Exceedance reports are then submitted to the council on the next working day.

MF reiterated that National Grid receive monthly summary reports on air quality and pointed to the August report as an example, which showed that the PM10 hourly mean concentration levels were far below the threshold of 190. He then explained the PM10 24-hour concentration levels which were below the threshold of 50 and stated that National Grid intend to keep the levels low.

UK Power Networks update:

JC then passed over to FN to provide an update on UK Power Networks' activities. FN began by noting the feedback and complaints they have received from residents so far and stated that UK Power Networks has begun to make some further changes around the site and the Bengeworth Road depot. FN shared that UK Power Networks has removed some of the loud and noisy items to an area on site that is further away from residential properties. FN noted that he hoped the change has had a positive impact on residents in terms of noise.

FN then confirmed that UK Power Networks has been looking into staff attendance, ensuring that all staff are logging in and the Bengeworth Road area manager is aware of the operatives that are attending site. FN stressed that this has been monitored since the last meeting and there should have been a reduction in terms of noise. He also shared that a noise survey was carried out by UK Power Networks' noise consultants, who advised them to put up some acoustic attenuation barriers in the coming weeks to mask noise when operatives are using clunky equipment. FN mentioned baseline measurements are also being taken to track and see if the barriers are making a difference on noise levels.

Addressing another previous discussion point, FN noted the UK Power Networks customer care team contact details. He stated their call centre will direct callers to the Bengeworth Road team and area managers on site.

Site building design engagement and timescales:

JC then handed over to SH to explain the site building design engagement plans and timescales. SH acknowledged the residents' concerns on the designs of the substation buildings, and she noted that National Grid is keen on keeping residents involved in the design process.

SH then provided an update on the design process, stating that National Grid is appointing architects to start looking at the design and appearance of the substation and initial designs of the buildings will be ready for public feedback in the New Year. She explained that an in-person event will give residents the opportunity to see the designs first-hand and share any questions and feedback directly with National Grid. SH also acknowledged the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and as such, online engagement events and channels will be provided. SH mentioned that residents will also be kept informed in the upcoming CLGs over the next few months and they are encouraged to contact the London Power Tunnels community relations team for any concerns and queries. She also confirmed that National Grid will continue to work closely with UK Power Networks on their timescales and the designs of their buildings.

Community Grant Fund update:

SH continued, moving on to update everyone about National Grid's Community Grand Fund. She explained the fund's purpose and availability to attendees, stating the scheme is available for local charities, who can apply for funding up to the value of £20,000, particularly in areas where National Grid are carrying out construction projects. SH stated that applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis and encouraged attendees to reach out to National Grid for any guidance throughout the application process. She added that the appropriate contact details can be found on the London Power Tunnels website once the CLG presentation has been uploaded online.

The presentation concluded and JC kickstarted the Q&A session by addressing questions shared by Loughborough Junction Action Group prior to the meeting.

Questions

Please note that this is a summary of the questions and responses and there is a separate document with all questions and answers for your reference. For ease, we have grouped questions under themes.

HGV traffic:

JC began the Q&A session by addressing questions shared by Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) prior to the meeting. Regarding the HGV movements in and out of the Bengeworth Road site through KCH, JC explained that the direction of the HGV traffic is split, with vehicles leaving and coming in from the east side of KCH, as well as going and coming in from west side. MF also explained the typical route HGVs would take to leave the site, with vehicles leaving KCH via Coldharbour Lane and typically turning east or northeast from there.

On the point about collaboration between developers raised by LJAG, JC explained that National Grid has been in contact with Peabody, following the latter's meeting with LJAG. He shared that a meeting was being set up between National Grid, HMJV and Peabody's transport consultants to see whether any coordination is required.

A member of LJAG then shared their concerns about the HGV traffic in the wider community and roads, noting that none of the roads in the area are suited for the amount of HGV movements coming through. They requested National Grid provide the routes and timings of the HGV movements in and out the Bengeworth Road site.

Another LJAG member shared their experience of living on Loughborough Road, stating that they have noticed an increased number of HGV vehicles coming in and out of the neighbourhood. They reiterated the question from the other LJAG member, asking National Grid to share the routes of relevant HGVs and mentioned that some HGVs are using smaller, residential roads in the neighbourhood.

JC responded that National Grid will take away the questions and examine the routes and timings of HGVs in and out of the Bengeworth Road site. JC also noted that National Grid is happy to get in touch with other developers in the area for similar conversations if LJAG could share any contacts.

The LJAG member responded that one of the developers in the area is Bellway Homes, which has just received planning permission. The LJAG member also stated that they will try to establish contact in the next couple of weeks.

Another resident later responded to the issues raised by LJAG members and stated it is down to Lambeth Council to coordinate and monitor the HGV traffic in the area. They noted that recognition from Lambeth Council on the seriousness of the amount of HGV movements is crucial to setting up monitoring measures and failing that, residents may not receive the protection they need. They suggested that LJAG should raise the issue with Lambeth Council instead.

MF responded to the LJAG members by informing them that National Grid is currently operating at what is expected to be the peak daily number of HGVs for the whole construction period – up to 36 daily HGV movements, with 18 HGVs going each direction on average. As the movements have been put into operation in the past few months, MF expressed that he hopes the local community has not experienced too much disturbance.

Spoil:

LJAG members asked for the final destination of the spoil from the sites and whether they are disposed of responsibly. They also asked for confirmation of whether HGVs carrying the spoil are only going through roads that have the capacity to take these vehicles out of the neighbourhood safely.

MF clarified that due diligence checks are conducted on the spoil, which is recycled instead of being disposed of in landfills.

Spotlight on site:

The query on this issue came from a resident who shared that a bright spotlight has been placed on the roof of a building on site, shining strongly throughout the night directly into the resident's windows.

FN thanked the resident for the question and for bringing the issue to his attention, noting that he was not aware of the spotlight. FN shared that previously UK Power Networks have turned off some spotlights causing inconvenience to residents and he will speak to the area manager to understand why the spotlight has come on. He deduced that it could be because of the shorter days as winter is approaching.

The resident thanked FN for his response and mentioned they would share a photograph of the location of the spotlight for FN's information.

Noise:

A resident asked for more detail about the proposed noise barriers from UK Power Networks and whether the barriers will be set up in National Grid's or UK Power Networks' portion of the site. They also mentioned that they have noticed a reduction in noise disruptions and that in particular there have been fewer incidents of flatbed trucks arriving on site in the evening. They also asked why the trucks have been coming onto the site outside of normal working hours.

FN thanked the resident for their questions. Responding to the first question, he explained that barriers will be put up around UK Power Networks' equipment and the area where UK Power Networks is storing items that are known to generate a lot of noise. FN explained that reducing noise generated on site is not an easy task as they could not build an enclosed substructure to contain the noise, but they are hoping the barriers will limit the noise levels and their impact will be monitored. FN stated that feedback from the residents in the coming weeks would also be welcomed to help UK Power Networks understand the effectiveness of the barriers.

FN said that he is glad to hear that the resident has been experiencing a decrease in noise disruptions but reassured them that UK Power Networks is continuing to monitor the activities on site as best as it can. Regarding the flatbed trucks and subcontractors coming to site after hours, FN confirmed that the number of incidents has gone down as the resident has noted and UK Power Networks will continue to limit these events as well as they can. FN reiterated that the winter months are approaching, and days are getting shorter. He stated that the network that UK Power Networks operate on also comes under a lot of stress during this time due to additional demand. As such, FN stated additional traffic may result from this, but he reiterated that UK Power Networks is committed to managing the traffic and that these vehicles should not arrive at abnormal hours. FN also encouraged the resident to contact him if there are any further questions and issues.

The resident followed up by asking FN for a reasonable explanation as to why UK Power Networks operatives are coming to site during the evening.

FN explained that the site is an operational site and operatives are working on emergencies such as open excavations and cable failures that can take place at night. He further explained that operatives are dispatched according to set shift patterns and they must ensure they offload their equipment at the end of their shift and not store them at their own homes. FN reassured the resident that UK Power Networks is monitoring the activities of the operatives and a different shift pattern has been adopted at the Bengeworth Road site, so some of the operatives are only returning their equipment during normal

working hours. FN shared that this issue cannot be completely mitigated, but UK Power Networks is trying to minimise disruptions as much as possible.

Building designs

A resident asked which architects National Grid has appointed for the designs of the substation buildings.

JC explained that an appointment has not been made yet, but architects will be appointed for the design of the substation headhouse in the near future.

The resident also asked what factors are considered in regard to the appointment of architects.

JC passed over to MF to provide more information. MF responded that National Grid would hire architects that are familiar with developments similar to the London Power Tunnels 2 project and those who have experience designing similar buildings, whilst taking the local area into consideration in their designs. JC added that National Grid will be coming to the residents for feedback on the design of the headhouse and substation.

The resident followed up again and stressed the headhouse design they have seen from another substation was so unappealing that they would prefer National Grid to appoint a different architect for the Bengeworth Road substation headhouse.

JC responded that he is familiar with the design the resident was referring to and it is a basic box standard design. He expressed that National Grid should be able to appoint an architect with better design ideas and local residents will have the opportunity to provide feedback.

The resident relayed their concerns and responded that once an architect has been appointed there is no going back.

JC reiterated that if the designs are not up to standard, it is up to the community to share their feedback and National Grid will respond accordingly.

Another resident asked in the chat whether architectural practices will be involved in the design process.

MF responded that National Grid will be appointing an architect to provide consultancy on the visual appearance and materials of the buildings. He also noted that a contractor was appointed last month regarding the construction and design of the headhouse and the contractor has previously worked with different architects on similar projects. JC summarised that both engineering and architectural practices will be appointed by National Grid.

Air quality monitoring

A resident raised the question on whether it is possible for the monthly reports to be published online for public access and for National Grid to publicise their availability to the community.

JC responded that it should not be an issue, but he will double check and confirm in the CLG Q&A document. He stressed nevertheless these results will be shared with CLG attendees in upcoming meetings. MF added that he does not see any issues with the community relations team sharing that information with residents.

Welfare units

A resident asked whether the addition of new welfare units will be taller than those currently on site.

MF responded that while more units will be placed, they will remain two storeys high.

Closing remarks

JC remarked that National Grid will take away the discussion point around appointing an independent architect for the building designs and drew proceedings to a close, thanking everyone for their time. He reminded residents the next CLG will be held next month and the minutes and Q&A document of this CLG will be shared online.

MEETING ADJOURNED
