

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

SOUTHERN GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BRUNEL HOUSE, BISHOPS LYDEARD THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER 2015 AT 11.30

PRESENT:	WSR PLC	S Williams (SW)	Chairman
		R Auger (RA)	
	TDBC	Cllr. J Adkins (JA)	
	WSST	C Austin (CA)	Note taker
	WSRA	J Green (JG)	
	FoBLS	K Sandford (KS)	

024. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Geoff Evens (GE), Peter Chidzey (PCz), Paul Conibeare (PC)

Action

025. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 02 JULY 2015

1. Minutes approved

026. MATTERS ARISING

1. Minute 017, item 1. PC and GE had met Adrian Fox from Taylor Wimpey on 26 October about the enabling works. They had made clear that the delayed works should not be allowed to interfere with the main operating season next year. SW expressed concern at the delay, but noted the Taylor Wimpey point that the A 358 works had been delayed awaiting SCC advice on the pedestrian subway.

027. WSRA/WSSRT PLANNING BRIEF

1. Confirmation from WSRA that the trustees were happy with the brief was awaited and it was agreed that JG and CA would go through the document following the meeting to resolve any outstanding points, following which JG would seek their endorsement.
2. RA said that the increased use of platform 1 proposed remained to be discussed with the Operating Department.
3. At the July meeting, a subway had been suggested as an alternative to a footbridge at the Taunton end of the station to give access to the developments on the Station Farm site. RA had looked at this, but it was not feasible because of a lack of space for approach ramps, and would be significantly more expensive than a bridge.
4. Once agreement had been reached, SW indicated that the next stage would be to merge this document with the PLC planning brief to produce a single document as a basis for producing the master plan.

JG/CA

028. INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

1. SW reported that the Parish Council had endorsed the railway's proposals at their meeting of 9th September which he had attended with PC, GE, RA and CA.
2. A meeting with the residents of Station Green was being arranged through parish councillor John Collier, possibly on 26 November.
3. SW reported on a very positive meeting with the Leader of TDBC.
4. SW and PC had also met the Chairman and Deputy Leader of SCC in the previous week, who had been supportive of the objectives.

5. Following discussion, it was agreed that the proposals should be known as the Southern Gateway project, in order to reflect the importance of Bishops Lydeard and its role as access to the railway. **All**

029. BRUNSWICK GREEN CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

1. RA reported on the meeting with TDBC on this. It was rather downbeat, and a number of problems with relocation, in relation to the regulations governing the siting of such facilities near housing. The railway had offered to accommodate part of the play area on its land, but there were problems too in the council accepting private land for this purpose.
2. It was unfortunate that TDBC had failed to consult with the Railway or with local councillors about the proposals for the existing play area, but it was agreed that it should be left to TDBC and the Parish Council to resolve this matter. In the interim, the scope for a play area for the children of railway passengers would be considered, and this might potentially be made available also to the children of Station Green residents.
3. Additional car parking spaces were proposed next to the current play area, with the suggestion that the railway might contribute to the cost of these. SW made it clear that this would not be possible.
4. JA asked if there had been discussion on the current car park and toilets, and SW indicated that he would be taking this forward. **SW**

030. BISHOPS LYDEARD USER GROUP; SHORT TERM PROPOSALS

1. Three proposals had been made by the user group (cover for ramp to up platform, lower car park flooding mitigation and interim accommodation to replace Brunel House, and all were endorsed by the Group for development of a business case. JG offered to use the store proposed as part of the ramp cover to allow the PLC use of the more convenient platform store for servicing the trains. **RA**
2. Rexquote plans to redevelop the whole site and there was an urgent need to plan for this by the end of the current lease in March 2017. RA had prepared outline plans for replacement facilities on part of the Station Farm site, with temporary buildings (ten-year life) while a permanent solution was found through the Master Planning process. The focus had been on covered storage and workshop accommodation, and at this stage, to reduce costs, a meeting room was not included. JG would check on work the WSRA might have done on a possible alternative site. **JG**
3. It was agreed that a temporary building, location no 3 on the plan tabled, near Station House, would be preferred and would be unlikely to conflict with longer terms plans which would take a decade or more to implement. This would leave the sites nearer the Gauge museum and downside station building available for commercial or heritage development.
4. RA would develop plans on this basis and SW would submit them to the PLC Board on 14 November. RA advised that the planning application could be quite quick, but JG underlined the need for time to plan and execute the move which would be a significant task. CA asked about stakeholder consultation, and SW indicated this would be through the User Group. **RA SW**

031. TDBC DISCUSSIONS

1. Apart from those referred to above, a broader ranging strategic discussion with TDBC, linked to other developments along the line at Williton and the Minehead “vision” would be taking place on the 24th November.

032. PHASED PROJECT PLAN

1. The paper tabled was discussed and SW asked for further input within a week of the meeting and it would be taken to the November PLC board. Hard standing for coaches, at a notional cost of £30,000 would be included. This would be a living document, and would represent a commitment by each organisation to undertake the work they had agreed to do.
2. The plan would be overseen by SDG, and each phase monitored against the agreed timescale. CA suggested that time should be given to allow iteration as plans crystallised and implementation started, and this was agreed. There would be further consultation on the programme during 2016.

All

033. SITE MASTER PLAN

1. RA indicated he would need full agreement to the project brief before inviting bids for the Master Plan. SW considered that the basic building blocks were now there and, together with the current drawings should be enough to make a start on the specification.

034. INWARD INVESTMENT

1. SW would seek advice from HRA on inward investment and prepare a paper for this Group on the options available. Apart from HLF, he was aware, for example, of the Hinkley Point Mitigation Fund. The approach proposed to HLF was that an overall approach would be made on behalf of the whole railway, leaving it to project leads to take forward their own elements of the project. CA referred to the discussions that had already taken place between Chris Bolt, on behalf of the Trust, and HLF and the expertise thus built up.

023. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. JA suggested that a bus service from the Silk Mills Park & Ride might help to alleviate the lack of parking at Bishops Lydeard. RA suggested that this might be addressed through the Masterplan.

DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Thursday 10 December, 11.30 Brunel House Bishops Lydeard