

HS2-BBV-Balsall Common & Berkswell Meeting

13th October 2021

Meeting Notes & Actions

Balsall Common & Berkswell representatives confirmed that they had received a significant number of complaints from residents in relation to the ongoing LGV movements due to the expectation that the maximum number of vehicles would be 24 over 24 hrs.

The current number of movements has resulted in lorry counts being undertaken by the community and complaints being submitted to both HS2 Ltd and SMBC.

Consequently there was a need to understand why the numbers exceed what was expected and how these have been calculated to manage local expectations and improve messaging about the delivery of HS2 to rebuild trust.

Moreover, there is an assumption that the Hallmeadow Road proposal would negate the need for construction vehicles to use these roads and this is not understood locally.

Whilst representatives thought most drivers were very good compared to other non HS2 lorries on the same road, concerns were raised about alleged driver behaviour, including exceeding speed limits, and complains have been submitted directly to both HS2, SMBC and the two parish councils.

HS2 representatives explained that the current situation is as a result of SMBC's recent refusal of the Schedule 17 submission which would have resulted in a shorter, more intense period of use of these roads.

Regarding the calculation of the numbers, there are 5 sites and operational locations served by Kenilworth Road-Waste Lane and the 24 number is per site and not overall. In addition a 6th site (off Truggist Lane) is also served which is restricted to 10 movements over 24 hours resulting in a maximum number of 130 per one 24 hour period.

BBV have received the community's lorry count data and these have been reconciled against BBV's site vehicle logs. In recognition of the local sensitivity, HS2 has also carried out its own count as part of the assurance process to ensure compliance with the maximum number permitted.

From a site management perspective, when vehicles are received on site DAMs (Duty Access Manager who control access to site) are in place to check. The behaviour of drivers is being monitored and the need to be a good neighbour in such a sensitive location is part of the induction process and is reinforced. It is not always easy to respond to complaints without details but timings and vehicle names would be helpful to assist investigations.

The timetable for delivering the Hallmeadow Rd haul road extension was presented together with the anticipated engagement milestones. It was explained that there are more discussions to be had with SMBC as the highway authority and it was agreed that a sub group be formed to discuss the delivery of previously submitted mitigation proposals.

A group representative offered positive feedback regarding how BBV responded to concerns in Baulk Lane and emphasised the need for such issues and complaints to be responded to quickly to build trust with the community.

A discussion took place regarding opportunities for BBV/HS2 to improve their local communications including engagement and communications collateral, channels and content including widening engagement with local schools.

BBV representative offered an update on local school engagement including the recent community investment project with Balsall Common Primary School and confirmed that STEM related engagement had taken place but other opportunities were impacted by Covid related restrictions. Contact has been made with the Heart of England School and the planned engagement on the Balsall Viaduct will create an opportunity to engage.

Actions:

- Request for BBV to consider using handheld speed cameras as part of monitoring and confirm when monitoring is being carried out with local representatives
- Ensure lorry movements are minimised at sensitive times with schools
- Request for the need to get this phase of works completed as quickly as possible whilst minimising community impacts
- BBV agreed to produce and circulate a note for residents of Kelsey Lane & Waste Lane to offer an update on the current vehicle movements. It was agreed to share a copy with the group in the first instance.
- Maximise opportunities to engage and work with local schools including the Heart of England School and primary school
- Suggestion for BBV to include an article in the Balsall Bugle to focus on reasons for vegetation clearance and include mitigation sites including Beechwood and other examples
- BBV/HS2 to consider how do we align opportunities with SMBC to deliver Green Corridor including with local schools as part of climate change mitigation
- Clarification on what has happened to the cleared wood
- Request for BBV/HS2 to share videos via local Facebook pages circulate other updates
- Confirmation on carbon neutral ambitions; what is HS2 working to on removal of carbon and how it is aligning with SMBC's ambitions
- BBV/HS2 to ensure the wider project benefits are part of the communications narrative and consider focusing on a number of themes over time using multiple communication channels
- BBV to establish a Hallmeadow Hall Road subgroup
- BBV to ensure that the concerns of Ridings Hill residents are taken into account in particular future vehicle related noise impacts
- BBV/HS2 to distribute copy of slides to the group and amend programme lookahead to add 'drilled piling' and 'near Lavender Hall Lane' along with confirming when the Park Lane roundabout will be operational **(Update-confirmed April 2022)**
- Berkswell PC to invite BBV to a community event to present the explanation for the current works, vehicle numbers and monitoring.