

**VISUAL IMPACT PROJECT  
NEW FOREST STAKEHOLDER REFERENCE GROUP  
Abbreviated Meeting Notes 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018**

**Attendees – National Grid, Camargue, Natural England, Verderers, National Trust, NFNPA, Alaska and HPC**

**Project update**

The haul road will now be 5.5 metres wide with passing places but this won't affect the overall width of the works.

Target completion date is March 2022.

Four crossing points. 5<sup>th</sup> pedestrian only access from Mays Firs also agreed.

1.2 metre high fencing.

7m wide for livestock with an additional 1.5 metres for pedestrians.

Tower removal likely to be a combination of crane, felling and dismantling. Will try to avoid use of crane as this will require a gravel pad.

Now considering buried link boxes. Possibly 12 each 2m x 1.2m. 4 at each cable joint. No fences.

Tunnel option 50% more expensive. Discussed at previous Stakeholder Advisory Meeting and all present agreed to proceed with direct burial. Not discounted and may revert to it if unable to proceed to planning with direct burial. Would need a tunnel approx. 5m diameter and increased lorry movements to take spoil away. Potential cost and ecological savings when maintaining and replacing cables in future were discussed.

HPC have unanswered questions 1) soil temperature at root level and 2) eventual breaking down of plastic membrane contaminating hydrology.

- 1) NGRID response that temperatures at 5cm and 10cm depths are being calculated and will be available soon.
- 2) NGRID response – the plastic should last as long as the cables. A decision will be made when the cable life has expired whether to dig up the plastic and concrete, depending on circumstances at the time.

A concern was raised about an increase in temperature of the headwater of the mire system. Ground investigation works along the route and at the SECs are nearly all done and will continue next spring. The results may answer these concerns.

5 test pits have been completed with an archaeologist present who has no concerns. The analysis is underway and no problems have been found.

A planting plan to minimise visual impact of the western SEC has been put forward.

**IROPI**

National Grid now has to make a case which is being built. This is the first time IROPI is being used on the basis that it involves temporary disruption to protected species and habitats.

This has not been tested previously.

Other options were discussed, primarily tunnelling and an alternative route through the Hamptworth Estate that had been suggested early on to avoid the SSSI, but involved too many landowners.

## **TIMEFRAMES**

Public Consultation – Village Halls – May 2019

Planning Submissions – July 2019

Planning Consents – early 2020

Contract Award – Q1 2020

Start – Q4 2020

Commissioning – H1 2022

Towers Removed – H2 2022

## **PREVIOUS CONSULTATIONS**

### **Hale Village Hall and Woodgreen Village Hall**

90 feedback forms completed

17 supportive

64 against

### **New Forest and Ellingham Shows**

24 comments

16 supportive and 3 against

## **MEETINGS PLANNED FOR 2019**

**January 2019** – Commoners' Meeting

**Early 2019** – Community Liaison Group and all of HPC

**ALASKA** - presentation and visit to recently restored site

Site included turf translocation, soil transfer and regeneration, concrete removal over last two years. Some of the areas had been restored 18 months ago. Worked with top 300mm of soil. At Hale Purlieu it will be top 150mm because the rooting zone is 125mm.

A meeting will be arranged soon for HPC, Alaska and National Trust to discuss restoration of Hale Purlieu.