

Meeting record

Regarding:

Magna Park Lutterworth Community Liaison Group (CLG)

Date:

6pm, Tuesday 31st January 2023

Location:

GLP Offices Lutterworth, Mere Lane, Bittesby, Lutterworth LE17 4JH

Attendees:

Iain Millington – Bitteswell and Bittesby PC (IM)
 Tony Hiron – Lutterworth Town Council (TH)
 Bill Woolliscroft – Monks Kirby PC (BW)
 Alison Wright – Willey Parish Meeting (AW)
 Cllr Tony Gillias – Rugby Borough Council (TG)
 Margaret Wild – Cotesbach Parish Council (MW)
 Jo-Ann Allcoat – Claybrooke Magna PC (JA)
 Bill Zilberts – Lutterworth Town Council (BZ)
 David Wright – Harborough District Council (DW)
 Sarah Spink – Midlands Connect (SS)
 Gwyn Stubbings – GLP (GS)
 Angela Jeffrey – Magna Park (AJ)
 Richard Allington – GLP (RA)
 Scott Harker – SEC Newgate UK (SH)

Item	Minutes	Actions
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Scott Harker (SH) welcomed everyone to the first in-person meeting of the CLG in almost three years.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Nigel Chapman.</p> <p>SH noted that he had been in touch with Samantha Pinnock, who is the new area contact for National Highways. SH said that if any members have enquiries for National Highways, he can share Samantha's contact details with them or raise the enquiry on their behalf. SH added that National Highways have said that they are open to attending future meetings of the CLG on a case-by-case basis.</p>	
2	<p>Agree minutes of Monday 17th October 2022 meeting</p> <p>SH read and noted the actions from the previous minutes. Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting.</p>	

3 Planning update

Gwyn Stubbings (GS) welcomed attendees and gave some background to the offices and the area of Magna Park where the meeting was taking place. This area of Magna Park North is based around Bittesby House. The GLP offices were previously farm buildings which have been refurbished.

GS drew members' attention to the displayed Masterplan. This plan showed a roundabout located at the northern end of Magna Park North on the A5. This is yet to be built and plans for this will be coming forward in the near future. Updates will be provided at future meetings of the CLG.

GS noted that GLP is expecting planning applications for units MPS10 and MPS11 to be determined in the near future. An application for MPS9 was being prepared and was due to be submitted in the coming weeks.

In relation to HGV parking, the earlier outline application for the Mere Lane site (which focussed on a petrol station and associated services) that GLP submitted in 2020 has been approved (application reference: 20/02075/OUT). The revised outline application that GLP submitted in late 2022 is still being considered by Harborough District Council with a decision expected in April (application reference: 22/02002/OUT). If consent is granted, GLP intends to submit a reserved matters application to complete the development to the operator's specification. Pending the relevant planning consents, GLP would then build the facility and lease the site to the operator.

Bill Woolliscroft (BW) asked whether GLP had progressed plans for any other HGV parking sites at Magna Park in addition to the Mere Lane site. GS said that GLP were not presently looking at additional sites. GLP wish to bring forward the Mere Lane site first and then assess patronage. GS added that GLP would like to avoid laying down hard standing surfaces before assessing the demand profile.

Bill Zilberts (BZ) noted that there had been discussions at the previous meeting about the quantity of HGV parking spaces to be provided. He asked whether there was any update on this. GS said that the current outline application allowed for two options (134 and 90 HGV parking spaces respectively). At present, the potentially operator has indicated that it would favour a scheme orientated towards the lower figure.

Discussion moved on to whether the Mere Lane site could be expanded to provide additional HGV parking spaces in the future. GS said that constraints on site make this difficult, particularly a high-pressure gas main running underground through the site. This means that any additional HGV parking would need to be provided on other land at Magna Park. Land is available but will only be brought forward subject to demand.

BW noted that there had been proposals to provide HGV parking at Magna Park South. GS said that this was the case but that GLP now preferred to provide this facility centrally at Magna Park and accessed from the A5.

Tony Gillias (TG) asked whether GLP had surveyed any of the occupiers at Magna Park as to the level of demand for HGV parking. GS said that the operator will have carried out its assessments prior to entering into a contract with GLP.

TG said that there was an expectation that parking provision should be provided on the Magna Park side of the A5 as traffic movements were generated by this side. GS reiterated the commitment to provide HGV parking at Magna Park however there was currently uncertainty regarding whether more HGV parking would be approved under the planning appeal for HGV parking at the Cross in Hand site.

Sarah Spink (SS) asked whether any of the operators at Magna Park currently use biomethane-fuelled HGVs. GS said that there were none at present but Gasrec (who would provide this facility at Magna Park) operate a facility at the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) and see demand in the region for such services. Also that ASDA were looking to transition away from diesel HGV's.

GS asked if the planning inquiry for the Cross in Hand application had now concluded. BW and Alison Wright (AW) said that it had on 12th January. GS noted that it could be another two months before a decision was reached.

GS moved on to talk about work at the country park at Magna Park. As the site was around 240 acres in total there will be plenty of further work to do. In addition to this, recently constructed units MPS6 and MPS7 have now been leased. Unit MPS5 is unoccupied at present but it's expected that this unit will soon be let as GLP is continuing to see plenty of demand.

TG asked whether GLP's lease agreements with occupiers specify that vehicles must avoid local villages when travelling to and from Magna Park. GS said that the leases do specify this and also require that occupiers prepare travel plans for vehicles associated with their operations.

Iain Millington (IM) noted that there had been discussions at past meetings about providing signage in different languages so that HGVs avoid using local roads and asked whether there was an update on this. Angela Jeffrey (AJ) said that this was being explored and that it had been determined that visual signage would work better than a message delivered in multiple languages. GS added that the signs will be provided at strategic locations on land owned by GLP.

AJ said that she was in regular contact with Pailton Parish Council about HGV movements through the village and there has been an improvement recently. GS added that not all of the vehicles will be related to Magna Park but that the team on site were working to stop this from happening. This was an ongoing effort as new occupiers move into Magna Park.

David Wright (DW) noted that it was very difficult to identify the source of Amazon vehicles as there are so many operating in the area.

TG added that some were now travelling in private cars but that there would soon be barriers provided out of hours to limit such movements.

<p>4</p>	<p>Highways update</p> <p>GS reiterated the proposals for a future roundabout to the north of Magna Park. Further details relating to a construction programme and any related closures will be provided in due course.</p> <p>GS moved on to talk about potential improvements to the Gibbet Hill Roundabout noting that he had a meeting the following day with the local highways authorities. GS understood that Jacobs were working with National Highways to review an interim improvement scheme for the roundabout. GS would use his meeting with the authorities to check on this before updating the CLG.</p> <p>GS noted that it was apparent that National Highways wants a wider improvement scheme to be carried out to the roundabout as part of the Government’s Road Investment Strategy (RIS) 3. SS said that National Highways was currently managing expectations but RIS3 is being progressed and Midlands Connect is working with them to develop the strategic case for road improvements in the region. GS offered GLP’s assistance in making this case.</p> <p>SS gave an overview of Midlands Connect’s work with regard to the A5.</p> <p>BW noted that National Highways had carried out survey activity locally relating to the A5 but was now prioritising improvements further north along the route towards Nuneaton, he struggled to make sense of this. SS said that she was unsure if only this part of the A5 had been prioritised, but that the surveys do help to keep the issue of improvements relevant locally and with decision makers.</p> <p>TG said that the A5 has always been an important route but funding for improvements has been a long time coming. He noted that the prosperity of Rugby depends on having good access to the A5.</p> <p>SS said that the importance of logistics to the region is being recognised by decision makers, and that a strategic approach is required. Midlands Connect is working to bring people together to shape this.</p>	<p>GS to share an update with CLG members following his meeting with the local authorities.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Update on construction</p> <p>GS noted that he had given the bulk of the updates relating to this item under the planning update. GS noted that there has been some works carried out at one of the small units adjacent to the A4303, outside of the Magna Park boundary and ownership. AJ noted that the team was regularly removing promotional signage put up around Magna Park.</p> <p>GS said that works to complete an extension to the footpath along Mere Lane to the north of Magna Park were now complete.</p>	

6	<p>Update on the Community Fund</p> <p>SH shared a slide on the Community Fund which GS spoke to. GS said that there had been recent promotional work to raise awareness of the Fund through an advert in The Swift Flash. GS added that the Fund had been used to supply a wide range of materials including defibrillators, tablets and contribution towards sports pitch provision. Applications were continuing to come in.</p> <p>Tony Hiron (TH) asked whether social media could be used to promote the fund, through Facebook advertising for example. GS said that this was something that GLP could look into.</p> <p>AJ asked if members could suggest funds for individuals requiring wheelchairs and mobility support as the Magna Park Community Fund is focused on community projects rather than individual ones. TH suggested that AJ contacts the Clerk of Lutterworth Town Council who will be able to check whether they are aware of any suitable initiatives. DW added that AJ could contact his team who can use a grant finder tool to search for appropriate schemes.</p> <p>BW updated members on the use of Section 106 funding available for local traffic measures. He had previously been informed that Warwickshire County Council (WCC) had been unable to trace the funds but this has now been resolved and the application that he had made was progressing. GS offered to assist if any further discussions were required as GLP had made the required payment to both WCC and Leics CC.</p> <p>DW asked if anyone was aware if the funds paid to Leicestershire County Council had been used yet. No one in the room was able to update on this. DW asked if there was a time limit on the funding, GS said that this was usually specified.</p> <p>Margaret Wild (MW) asked whether the authorities informed GLP when the funds were used. GS said that this was not standard practice and that the funds were only being promoted through forums such as the CLG. MW added that the A426 could make use of such funding as it's dangerous to cross given the speed of the vehicles using it. MW had previously enquired about measures being put in place but this had not been taken up by the highways authority.</p> <p>DW asked if information about the Section 106 funding could be shared with members, GS agreed.</p> <p>On the matter of the Community Fund, DW said that there had been talk of competing projects requesting funding for sports pitches and wondered whether this had progressed. GS said that the Fund had received multiple applications and wanted to make sure that the funds allocated to this would be best spent. GS added that Lutterworth Athletic received funding towards a 4G pitch and extension to their clubhouse but had now made a further application owing to the increased costs of carrying out the works.</p> <p>GS said that it was important to look at the whole picture when assessing projects, including how accessible the facilities will be to everyone in the community.</p>	<p>GS to share clauses relating to the relevant Section 106 agreement with members.</p>
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	<p>IM updated on Bitteswell with Bittesby Parish Council's application for funds to install a footpath along the side of Woodby Lane, it had been decided that Leicestershire County Council would apply rather than the Parish Council given their ownership of the road. GS recommended that the Parish Council make the application given the geographic scope of the Community Fund.</p> <p>IM also noted that the Parish Council was looking at applying for funds to make improvements to a footpath running into Lutterworth.</p> <p>DW suggested that IM contacts his County Council division member to help progress discussions with Leicestershire County Council on the Woodby Lane footpath.</p>	
7	<p>Future meetings and speaker suggestions</p> <p>SS gave an overview of Midlands Connect and its work locally. Midlands Connect recently held the A5 Conference and is looking to improve east/west connections in the region. Among its priorities are the A5, A46 and A50/A500. Midlands Connect's work is not restricted to roads and the organisation also works to improve rail connections and to support local authorities in strategic transport planning matters. SH thanked SS for attending and said that he would continue to keep SS updated on the timings of future meetings.</p> <p>BW asked if National Highways could attend a future meeting of the CLG to update on its plans for the A5, particularly the Gibbet Hill Roundabout. SH said that he would contact National Highways about this ahead of the next meeting.</p>	<p>SH to contact National Highways about attending a future meeting of the CLG to update on the A5.</p>
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>SH said that future meetings of the CLG will alternate between being in-person and remote meetings held on Zoom.</p>	
9	<p>Date of next meeting (April/May 2023)</p> <p>The next meeting of the CLG is due to be held in April or May 2023.</p>	