

APPENDIX 1 – LOCAL MEETING NOTES 15/11/2022

Councillor Eva Kestner

Welcomes participants to the meeting and explains running order for the night. Introduced the panel and asked Darren Ashley (BAM Design Delivery Manager) to provide a short presentation on the scheme.

Antigoni Gkiza

Informed everyone that the meeting is being recorded in order to take notes for the minutes.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Thank you so much and I will hand it over to Darren.

Ashley Darren

It says he is sharing his screen. Is anybody seeing?

Councillor Eva Kestner

Yes.

Attendant

Councillor Kestner, I'm really sorry to interrupt you. I'm getting messages from my neighbours saying that they're trying to join the meeting and it's saying that the link is invalid.

Councillor Eva Kestner

I'm going to turn around to Antigoni. Sorry about that. No, no, it's absolutely fine.

Attendant

Is it possible to resend the link out? I've sent them the link on our WhatsApp group for our street from the one that I was emailed. I don't know. Antigoni, very kindly e-mail me the letter and I forwarded it to my neighbours.

Antigoni Gkiza

Yes, of course. I can see a lot of people have joined the meeting, so I don't think the link is invalid. OK, great, I will send it to you again now.

Attendant

Thank you so much. I'm so, so sorry again for interrupting.

Ashley Darren

Ashley Darren shares screen showing 'Hither Green Station Access for All' presentation.

We are all here tonight to discuss the Hither Green Station 'Access for All' project that BAM Nuttall will be delivering on behalf of Network Rail. And for those that haven't seen this before, a brief background to the project and what access for all means, which is basically an obstacle free, unobstructed accessible route from drop off points near the station entrance to and from each platform and in between each platforms. Currently, that there are no Network Rail managed blue badge bays nor designated drop-off points at the station. So

for the rest of this presentation, the drop off points will be considered as the street parking facilities in either Fernbrook Road to the north of the railway or Spring Bank Road to the South of the railway.

You may have heard that this scheme has been in the off in for many years now. Network Rail first had this scheme to deliver in CP5, which is our control period 5 years, of 2014 to 2019. But unfortunately no ideal solution could be found for funding and constructability reasons. Some of those reasons being the existing footbridges. The easiest option perhaps would have been to attach lifts to the existing footbridges but the footbridges themselves are very old. They need a lot of repairs, strengthening and modifications to accept new lifts. The footbridges on platforms 5 and 6 don't even lend themselves to have lifts attached because they're hipped style.

There was talk about perhaps taking out the existing footbridges and replacing them with the new AfA structure. But again, you'd have to take out the existing footbridges first, put in a temporary scaffold passenger footbridge to get people up and over between platforms in the interim, and then install the new footbridge. But unfortunately there's insufficient funding and possession access to do that in the CP6 control period, at the moment. Opening up of the existing ramps, I think historically you could come from the subway between Maythorne Cottages and Fernbrook Road and get up to each platform. But the 'Access for All' standards say that no ramp should exceed 2 meters in total height and from street level up to the platform levels is about 4 meters. So, it's non-compliant. Plus, unfortunately, in those ramps now we've got a lot of signalling equipment and lots of other railway operational equipment, which would prevent such. So basically there's been lots of lots of ideas over many years, none of which came to fruition. All were given the task of looking at a potential solution to deliver 'Access for All'. The heads of engineering at BAM Nuttall and Network Rail came together to come up with a solution that fitted the possession strategy that you get on these railway lines, the funding that was available. The solution that we are presenting is honestly the only solution that is viable.

So jumping back to the station, currently there are two access points. You've got the subway between Maythorne cottages and Fernbrook Road. There is a steep ramp to get up to the subway from Fernbrook Road in the first instance. And once you're in the subway there's another steep ramp which gets you up to the platform, in between platforms 4 and 5. There is a second entrance which is stepped, which is at the far country, as we call it, the eastern end of platform one in Springbank Road, neither of which as say the steep ramps nor the steps um afford 'Access for All' criteria. So, in summary, the station hasn't got 'Access for All' facilities and, as I mentioned earlier on, to get from platform level to street level without going more than two metres in height means the only option out there is to install lifts and to get people from street level to platform level via lifts mean that you need new entrances, basically, and the reasoning behind that is that we did look at is there any possibility of putting lifts anywhere near the existing subway. Unfortunately, the platforms are very narrow. We have lots of signalling equipment. There's no way of widening the platforms or moving the traps across. There's just insufficient funds and possession access to do that sort of thing. Plus with the existing domain access coming through the subway, anything in this red area is basically too difficult, too costly and insufficient access to construct.

Another option we did look at was to put the 'Access for All' structure in this sort of this orange band, which is replacing existing footbridges, which were discussed earlier, which is impractical. This triangle is the station building. So, any kind of civil engineering work and construction work in that area would just be too problematic, too much of an interface with the station operations and existing access arrangements to and from the station and to and

from each platform. So, the only alternative that we could think of was to put a new access rule structure in this sort of this area bounded by green. Now obviously, as I said before, you've got to get from the street to the platforms and being in this green area, there's no option apart from putting a new access point somewhere along sort of this green belt here and green belt there. Brightside Road offers a sort of a blank face as such. So, it's the start or the entrance of the new structure and its positioning is offset Brightside Road and the flank walls of a few houses. The structure it's a continuous straight bridge across all platforms offering access to and from each platform to the street. Unfortunately, we haven't got like a side road on Fernbrook Road we can offer.

So, the solution is a straight bridge. Going across all platforms and access to and from each platform and access down to the street. And the scheme will maintain the existing access points, so the existing subway will be used by those approaching from the West or the North and able to get up the ramp. The staircase will still be in place for those, again, that are able to come from the east and can use the staircase. But those that cannot use the stairs or steep ramp have got the new step free access points, which is the new street entrances with lifts at these two points here. So we've gone from having just two station entrances to four and you can see, by the introduction of yellow arrows, it just gives some more widespread flow of passengers to and from, in and out of the station.

Here is a visual of what's the new structure will look like and say this is the Springbank Road and Brightside Road entrance now. So, we presented this all many months ago. Thought all of the feedback as best as we could. We tried pivoting this point, which is somewhat fixed because we're trying to be offset Brightside Road. There's the existing footbridge, is not shown here, but there's an existing footbridge that we need to keep open and operational. So, we left the smallest gap possible for passengers to safely navigate around the platforms and a bit of construction space. So, the bottom of that staircase is somewhat fixed. So when you draw a straight line through, that's where we ended up. Now, we tried, we looked at pivoting as much as we could but if we start pivoting from this point then we start clashing with the existing staircase over here. We start clashing with the station building over here. So we've tried our best to pivot and move the Fernbrook entrance as close as we can to the subway but unfortunately we are where we are. If we moved Brightside Road's entrance further up here then the structure will be like a 'banana' shape or it would pivot and actually make the Fernbrook Road entrance up here if we were to stick with the straight bridge concept. We hope that a straight bridge gives a much better passenger experience, better and clearer sort of way-finding through the station.

Some more visuals of what it looked like from Fernbrook Road side. That's the Springbank Road side offset Brightside Road.

I think one of one of the questions that we had from the previous presentation was '*Had any pedestrian flow analysis being carried out to determine sort of like the anticipated or possible increase in passenger numbers to and from Fernbrook and Springbank Road?*' So, Network Rail undertook an analysis, findings don't read any increase just because we put some entrances to the station. There is no reasoning why there would be an increase in passenger flow. The only increase in passenger flow that we foresee would be those that need the step free or those that are in wheelchairs or perhaps buggies or luggage etc. Yes, there may be an increase but we're talking minimal and those, as I say, with perhaps blue badges or those being dropped off with heavy luggage or buggy. So not a not a huge amount. People, as I say, that they're used to their normal commute to and from work. We don't envisage too many people changing their routes. People will still get off trains at the same position if they're able to. They're carrying walking down the subway and out as they normally go. So

currently we're not predicting much of an increase to passenger flow using the new entrances.

I think there was discussion previously about the sort of the materials and the colour of the scheme. Network Rail spent a lot of time, I think it was a six month period, and a lot of money talking to the Design Advisory Panel, which consists of local architects and I think it says Lewisham planning representatives that may be Lewisham design representatives, and they were asking for this structure. Yes it's on the Greenbelt, so we try to make this structure as green or as living as possible so whether they're talking about browns and creamy colours and greens. So we've taken on board exactly what they were sort of hinting at and suggesting so the colour schemes are as discussed with the local architects. There's use of perforated weathering steel for the brown colouring and the fact that it's perforated and folded is to stop the overlooking of the neighbouring properties. Any glass on the exterior faces of the structure will all be obscure so there's no threat of overlooking. The central spans will be clear glass to enable the overlooking of the, I think it's known as the nature reserve or the Hither Green Reservation Area, in the centre. But the potential for overlooking on the extremities will be removed by having the obscure glass and this perforated weather in still.

There were discussions about antisocial behaviour, security, etc. Roller shutter doors, remote control that is by the station staff, quiet closing will be introduced at the entrances to close the station off when it's not in use. There will be, obviously, adequate and soft lighting, so we're not illuminating people's bedrooms or front rooms. It would purely be aimed at illuminating the access to and from a station. There'll be discreet CCTV looking after the station and not overlooking people's private properties. I think we even talked about noise last time. It's soft closing, very quiet. There were no PA speakers down at street level. The lifts are hydraulic types that are very quiet, very discrete and there's no fire alarm system. So there should not be any loud noises at all. If there's a problem with the lift, it's a call button that goes through to the Control Centre. So, that is our presentation of the scheme. We believe we've taken on as many comments as we could from the previous presentation and developed this slightly amended proposal. So, back to you Eva.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Thank you very much. So I will ask you to stop sharing your screen and I'll just quickly highlight the main areas of the key themes for tonight's evening. So, the first one is around design, so the scale; the height; whether it's out of character; overbearing. So, it covers all of those issues. And the second one is ecological, greenery removal; basic loss of biodiversity and the nature reserve, and some of these things have been touched on in the presentation. Transport and highways. So vehicle and pedestrian traffic; impact on the neighbourhood and amenities. So things like sunlight; overlooking; noise disturbance; the increase in traffic, parking issues; disruption from the construction and anti-social behaviour. And then lastly, community consultation. So, engagement with the local community. As I said at the beginning of the meeting, we have been given quite a lot of written submissions, as has been asked for. So we'll kind of go through those.

I will ask a question and I will ask the panel to respond. So, we'll go straight into it. The first question is 'Could Network Rail state categorically whether it would be impossible to engineer a design solution whereby the new bridge and entrance on Fernbrook Road was located closer to the existing entrance - say in the location of the existing bridge between platforms 5 and 6? If it is not impossible, could then Network Rail set out why it thinks it would not be reasonable to adopt such a design solution, given the only practical

impediment would appear to be it would require the erection of a temporary footbridge to allow the prior removal of the existing?'

Ashley Darren

Yes, it is possible to put the entrance or new lift structure closer to Fernbrook subway. We did look at that. Unfortunately, I think I've mentioned earlier on, there is insufficient funding and possession access to do such work. And it would involve an additional lift to get from street level up to platform level and then people would have to walk along the platform to then get another lift further along the platform to get up and across to all the other ones. So it would actually introduce an additional lift, which is obviously more money and the scale of the work we're doing on the embankment, we'd still have to do all the sheet piling and cut into the embankment to get the lift shaft further down the platform, would have to do it twice, tell the truth, one at Fernbrook ends and one at the other end. So everything is possible if you've got the access and the funding. But this scheme is all about 'Access for All'. So we've taken that on board and we've engineered the best solution. The Heads of Engineering and Heads of Design have worked on this. It's not just been put on a piece of paper and said 'right that's what you're getting'. We've had a lot of time and money spent. The panel, they were taken to site and walked around and I think most agreed that this is, for what we've got moneywise and access wise, the best solution.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Thank you. And then the next question 'Would the existing entrances on the south side of the station (the tunnel at Nightingale Cottages and the stairs opposite the shops on Springbank Road) be retained as permanent entrances even after any new access point were to be opened for use?'

Ashley Darren

Yes, there are two existing access points. They stay in place throughout construction and they stay in place after construction. So we go from two to four.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Thanks. And then going kind of looking what the proposed vertical clearance and the depth of the bridge deck is. So question three was 'What is the maximum slope that could be introduced here under Building Regulations and/or Network Rail guidance to reduce the height of the structure of Fernbrook Road and therefore its impact? Could this be achieved and if not, why not?'

Ashley Darren

The clearance height from the running rail to the soffit of any new structure is 5.2 metres. It's obviously the safe structure gauge as we call it kinematic envelope. And plus it also allows for future proofing, should the railway ever decide and get funding to bring in overhead line electrification. So, 5.2m is the guideline which is what we set above platform 1, because platforms 1 to 4 are similar levels, give or take up sort of 100 millimetres. Platform 5 and 6 are about a metre lower. So when we set the bridge soffit at 5.2m above platform 1, it becomes 6.2 above platform 6, which is this issue about 'can we lower platform 6'? Yes, you can introduce sort of slopes and gradients on those structures, but obviously, this is quite a long bridge span between the central span of platform 4-5 going over to 6. It's a long span. Continuous gradient would be a danger to sort of roll away buggies and wheelchairs. That is one thing.

There are regulations about gradients. There are standards in the Department of Transport, standards like the maximum going is 10 meters with a maximum gradient of 1 in 20, say 500 millimetres. So with the length of that span, you could potentially drop the bridge 600 to 700 millimetres on Fernbrook Road side, but you're introducing a ramp, which is what we're trying to get away from. We're trying to give people a level playing field. It's safer by not having a ramp and on the grand scheme of things, 600 to 700 millimetres, which is just over 2 foot, I don't know if you could notice it over such a wide span anyway. If it was a 2 metre drop or 1.5 metre, I'd say that you would definitely notice it, but you can't have that sort of gradient over that span that we've got. Hopefully, that makes sense.

Councillor Eva Kestner

The fourth question is 'Could the depth of the bridge deck be reduced to that shown on the previous application (3.4m) and if not, why not?'

Ashley Darren

The original concept drawings, because we knew we had to put out for planning, we don't spend months in full design submit only for perhaps the application to get retracted or withdrawn or rejected. So it was concept drawings only. Most bridges that we design, because we have to collect the rainwater, normally there's a pitched roof. You have a peak in the centre and it flows out to the side. The architects looking at it said that there would have been a huge peak in the centre, so they were looking at perhaps an integral valley gutter, and not knowing how deep that was going to be, they did show a deep roof section to make sure we had the depth for falling towards the central gutter. The latest drawings that I do have now, which have just come in from the architect, shows that the height of the bridge is about 3.5 meters. So it isn't a 4.4 meters, it will be around a 3.5 metres as per the original. They've been planning about how the guttering will work on the bridge, so we can confirm it won't be 4.4 meters, it'll be around 3.5 meters.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And then the last question around the vertical clearance and the depth of the bridge deck is 'What is the minimum vertical clearance required at these points (platforms 1 and 2; 3 and 4; 5 and 6) and is this being achieved? If not, why not?'

Ashley Darren

Yes, the 5.2 meters is the minimum, which is what we've gone for. We've gone for the absolute minimum and then we've carried that bridge, the level across in a straight line, as I mentioned earlier, to prevent putting gradients on the bridge.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And then the last question in this section is around 'How have Network Rail and its agents considered the characteristics of Hither Green (a very predominantly Victorian and Edwardian area in terms of architecture) in the design scheme?'

Ashley Darren

The very first options we came out with were very chunky and clunky, typical railway structures. The Network Rail architect said 'all that's that doesn't look very pretty. We need to sort of consult the local authority.' So we took it to DAP the design advisory panel and it was from that that we came with this idea of the brownie creamy brick structure, the green roofs to continue the fauna and flora across the embankment, living walls. So we're adding in vegetation over the concrete facing to try and make it blend in a bit more with the local

structure. Appreciate that we've got yellow bricks and red bricks and all types of different things. We've got render. There's so many different features in the area, it would be impossible to match. So we went with what the design advisory panel suggested, which is the browns and greens to tie in with nature, which is what I hope comes across in the CGIs.

Councillor Eva Kestner

I'm just going to take a moment for a little bit of housekeeping. As I said at the beginning of the meeting we've got quite a lot of questions to get through that have been pre submitted. So I'm not going to be taking anything from the floor until to see if we've got time at the end. Just to make sure that everyone who did take the time to submit questions, get them answered. So I'm not ignoring the handout but again if you wanted to put that question in the chat that would also be fine and I can pick it up from there.

Moving on to the next point, which is around the ecology and the biodiversity. So the first question around this is 'What ecological surveys have taken place and when?'

Ashley Darren

We've carried out some preliminary ecological surveys, I think that was in June this year. And so we've had the experts out there looking for all the different types of fauna and flora. There's been a PEA which is a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal carried out and it hasn't identified any protected species of any kind. That's on the embankments ending the triangle in the centre and biodiversity count has been carried out and calculations have been done in the background and the report that will come back to us soon would tell us what we need to put back in to make sure that any losses kept on absolute minimum. We do need to cut down vegetation and trees on the embankments. We can't plant trees on completion because those said trees, their roots will damage and undermine the new street entrances we're putting in. So it will be green, it will be vegetated, but it won't be trees on the embankment.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Anuk, did you want to add anything to that?

Anuk Perera

Not really. I think Darren has covered it alright.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Excellent. Thanks. So, the next questions is 'Why has Network Rail already begun to cut down trees further along Springbank Road?'

Ashley Darren

Obviously, this scheme entails quite a lot of work. Construction-wise, there's lots of surveys that need to be carried out. There are high voltage electrical cables, the cables that actually supply the electricity for the trains to run. They actually sit on the embankments on both sides of the railway which we were unaware of to tell the truth until we started doing our survey work. Further investigation has led to find out that there's a leak, believe it or not. The oil feeder somewhere on that Springbank Road side. So some trees and vegetation have been cleared all the way along at the sort of the middle of the bank and the top of the bank to try and expose that HP route and let the survey and any potential repairs to be carried out.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Those were the two questions in that category. And then moving on to around 'Transport and Highways'. So looking at 'vehicle and pedestrian traffic' 'Have Network Rail carried out or commissioned any impact studies in respect of vehicle traffic and foot flow on the basis of the new development proposals? If so, when, and what were the findings?'

I know you covered that a little bit in the presentation.

Ashley Darren

Pedestrian flow and foot flow that Network Rail team has carried out and there were findings showing that there won't be much of an increase. Yes people will use that. Those able bodied that want to go East will use that new staircase. But the numbers are minimal, according to that report. The increase will be those that need the lift, i.e. those holding blue badges or in buggies. So we don't expect a massive influx of those that are in wheelchairs to come to the station. So we're not talking thousands, we're talking sort of a minimal number that perhaps live in the area, go to a different station and they will now come to the Hither Green Station.

There is no blue badge parking so they will, at the moment and unless things change with local authority and parking bays, just turn up and park in Springbank Road or Fernbrook Road in the street parking and then make their way to the lifts on either side.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And the next question 'How would vehicle traffic and foot flow be managed along Springbank Road? For example, would there be conditions imposed on any permission to Network Rail which require traffic control measures to be put in place (such as pavement widening, pedestrian crossing points, traffic islands, speed bumps, and speed limit enforcement including cameras)?'

Ashley Darren

We're not anticipating more people turning up at the station apart from those that need the lifts. There's no reason why there should be more people turning up at this station than what they're currently is, unless you need to use lift. Those numbers expected to be minimal. How you currently get to the station? Yes, there's two new entrances. Will it change their behaviour of where they cross the road and how they cross the road? It shouldn't do. There's no designated parking, so it's still the same parking to the station. You park in Springbank Road and walk either to subway or the steps. Now you're parking at Springbank Road and you might use that central access point. We would say that on Fernbrook Road there is a new footpath going in that runs along. At the moment, the cars park up against the railway fence, so if you're parking there you actually get out into the road and so you have to cross the road to get to somewhere safe. With our proposal, there's actually going to be a footpath running alongside there. So if you park, you can now get out more safely onto a footpath and head off towards either the subway or into the station entrance.

I think our original application had separate crossings and some blue badge parking bays, but that was indicative because that hadn't been agreed with local authority. That's perhaps something that will be discussed at a later date and if it is agreed then all the better. But at the moment, we do not envisage the need for any sort of traffic calming or traffic management because as I say there's no increase in or major increase in passenger flow and how they use that station.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And the next question is 'Would station users who make their incoming and/or onward journey by motor vehicle be prevented or discouraged from using nearby quiet residential roads (such as Brightside Road) for station access (including rat running, idling and parking), and, if so, how?'

Ashley Darren

Just because we've increased the number of entrances, I don't see why that's going to increase the number of people that use the station apart from those that need the lift. So there might be a dozen, might be two dozen extra people a day in wheelchairs or buggies that use it. There's typically ample parking in the streets, Fernbrook and Springbank Road, so do not envisage any increase in running on the side streets other than what you've currently got.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Just before we move on, is there anyone else from the panel that wants to add anything around that issue? No?

The next topic we'll be looking at is the impact on neighbouring amenities. So the questions that we've got here are around kind of noise disturbance and usage levels. So, 'Have Network Rail carried out or commissioned any noise impact studies? Have Network Rail and/or its agents considered: the effects of proposed station speaker locations; noise from equipment such as security shutters; and, noise from station users late at night etc? How would noise impact of the proposed scheme be mitigated?'

Ashley Darren

Sorry, I cut out there. I was talking about other schemes. Did anybody hear that or did I've lost connection?

Councillor Eva Kestner

Yes, we lost you there.

Ashley Darren

Sorry. It was the previous response to sort of the traffic etc. So BAM and us we've delivered about 12 'Access for All' schemes now in Kent and Sussex over the last few years. Some never seen an issue, I mean a lot of these are at stations with 3 or 4 Blue Badge parking bays in the car park. The level of passengers and the number of parking bays, all that, all that sort of stuff, haven't seen any increase whatsoever in any of those situations by introducing lifts. I say typically you go there and there's one car in the four blue badge bays, now you might see two, as an example.

Then I cut out, so I don't know where we're up to now.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Don't worry, that's fine. I will get us back to go but you finished on the last question around that? There's nothing more that you want to say?

Ashley Darren

Okay, thank you.

Councillor Eva Kestner

So we're moving on to the impact on neighbouring amenities and looking at noise, disturbance and usage levels. And we have three questions on this. So, the first one 'Have Network Rail carried out or commissioned any noise impact studies? Have Network Rail and/or its agents considered: the effects of proposed station speaker locations; noise from equipment such as security shutters; and, noise from station users late at night etc? How would noise impact of the proposed scheme be mitigated?'

Ashley Darren

For this scheme at present we haven't carried out such formal exercise. Previously there was an exercise. The public announcement speakers on the platforms and up in the station, they're on two different zones, day and night because of the problems with noise affecting. So that study was used and with this new scheme with a new bridge, there are no speakers down at street level, there are no speakers on the new staircase going up. So the existing speaker and the announcement system is unchanged. That's all the noise. The lifts are hydraulic type which are very, very quiet. I think I mentioned previously there's no alarm system. If it breaks down, then you press the help button within the lift itself. The roller shutters, they will be the soft closing type, not a heavy corrugated metal thing that just slams down and makes the earth shake. It will be the soft closing automatically controlled roller shutters. We have CCTV, there is lighting near the entrance to help with security and try to prevent any antisocial behaviour as best as we possibly can. I'd say that especially on the Fernbrook Road side, the introduction of the footpath on that far side with obviously lighting, we feel it improves the sort of the ambience or security of the area because at the moment it's pretty sort of excluded and dark down that side of the of the road. By putting in a footpath with lighting we believe that's an improvement.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And the next question is 'Could Network Rail provide information on the likely levels of usage of the Fernbrook Road entrance during different times of the day, the levels of nuisance/disturbance that might occur; and, if this is exceeded, what binding mechanisms they will put in place to reduced such nuisance?'

Ashley Darren

I've already covered about the usage like the pedestrian flow analysis that was carried out. Levels of nuisance and disturbance. If the entrance is shut and it's secured and you have lighting and CCTV, who knows, is all I can say. I mean that it could change on a daily, nightly basis. You don't know who, who lives there, who moves in, who moves out, who travels through at the moment. At the moment we don't anticipate anything because there's nothing there. It's just a wall, it's an entrance which is closed off. So whatever you can do there, you could do elsewhere in the street or at the far end where all the shops are and there's more to do for those that wish to be a bit of a nuisance of a night time.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And then the next question around the impact of neighbouring amenities and is around the disruption from the construction. So 'How would the safety and security of local residents and station users be ensured during any construction phase? How would Network Rail ensure that that there is no adverse impact upon the structural integrity of nearby buildings during the construction phase?'

Ashley Darren

Let's say, it's construction work. We do this on a day in, day out basis. Working all around the world everywhere in a safe controlled manner. So all working areas will be secured with hoarding. There might be security and CCTV actually monitoring our sites to make sure that or try to reduce any vandalism and theft. Entering and exiting out works area, there will be marshals that traffic marshals, there'd be designated walking routes and traffic routes. There will be noise screening blankets. We're limiting the work to daytime wherever we can. Obviously, there will be some disruptive, what we call possessions, which are the night time or weekends where we have to work to do the lifting in of structures and like over the track.

Probably the main course of concern for the residents would be the piling activities. We've got to basically cut into the railway embankment an 8 metre depth. So we've got some big sheet piling to install. We've already chosen what we consider to be the least noise and least vibration, which is that sort of pre-ordered geek and type which is the pressing type piling. I wouldn't say most complex, it is definitely the most expensive type of piling but we've taken on board that it's better to try to appease the neighbours and keep the noise and vibration down. So we've gone with the prerogative geek and type piling pushing, type piling. Yes there will be some noise, it's a construction site but we will do everything within our means. Obviously, carry out work to acceptable levels agreed with the appropriate authorities. We're a considerate contractor. We will do whatever we can to minimise noise and disruption, thus suppression. The best part and equipment, everything we possibly can.

There will be sort of monitoring going on. We'll have tabs, we would like to do condition surveys of people's houses and properties because what we wouldn't want is a year down the line being accused of causing cracks in the ceiling or perhaps already there. Not saying that that will happen, but we just want to cover everybody and our client and ourselves that we are and have done the best we possibly can during this work.

Anuk Perera

Just to add that if there are any activities that will be a nuisance, we'll carry out a letter drop prior to the event so that anyone who's affected will be notified in advance before we do anything.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And we've got to the last section which is about community consultation. So it runs quite nicely on the back of that question, which is 'Could Network Rail explain why it has failed to follow its own stated principles of good design and properly engage with the local community and Lewisham Council (we are told there was no pre-application process followed) in bringing forward these proposals?'

I'm just going to add to that question as Jeremy Taylor put into the comment chat that they don't feel that Network Rail has engaged properly with the Community and also there was another comment saying that they live near the station but they haven't actually received any correspondence about this meeting. So I think that's one for Network Rail and one for the Council officers. Can I ask Network Rail to go first, please?

Ashley Darren

That's for Andrew or Hodan or somebody.

Hodan Hassan

Of course we were always planning to hold an engagement with the local community. Of course, the first engagement was back in April this year. Of course, we've submitted the

planning application. Of course the application was quashed back in July of this year. So during that time, we've been amending the design and adding more details including the surveys and the reports we've been carrying out, following the feedback we've received from the community and from the engagement we've carried out in April but yeah, so until we were really called for this meeting, our plan was always to hold a follow up meeting with the local community and engage and do briefing sessions just like this and for this month and in December. So, yeah, the Council beat us to it.

Councillor Eva Kestner

And then can I ask for a response from the Council as well?

Antigoni Gkiza

Regarding today's Local Meeting, those who have made representations regarding the application have been invited with an e-mail address/postal address. So we have sent the invitations for this meeting to everyone that has submitted representations for this application. It's in line with the Council process regarding local meetings.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Thank you very much for that clarification. We've got a couple of minutes, I'm going to try and wrap up any questions. I know that 'Attendant' and 'Attendant' have been waiting very patiently to ask a couple questions. So if I can ask you, very short questions because you've only got 5 minutes. But 'Attendant', if you could quickly ask question now and then I'll ask 'Attendant'.

Attendant

Hi, Eva. Please let 'Attendant' go first. It's absolutely fine. 'Attendant' should be priority.

Councillor Eva Kestner

'Attendant', if you could ask your question that would be great.

Attendant

Just to follow it really quickly, I gave my e-mail at the last meeting. I haven't received any correspondence at all. So just to kind of make that clear and I think that I'm not alone in that because the last meeting was packed and this hasn't been. I didn't know this meeting was happening apart from the fact that 'Attendant' let me know. So just to kind of flag that. So, I think that something has gone wrong in terms of how it comes along the way and consulting local residents. I think it's evident in the fact that we only have, you know, a few people here. I came in late, so apologies for that. So these questions may have been asked, so do you let me know if they have been.

My biggest concern is lighting. I think we have spoken about it, but the current lighting opposite Alamo is kind of stadium. So it's like stadium level kind of light at night time. You walk past there, if you're kind of the flats opposite, it's just kind of beaming out. So just to clarify that the lighting for this will be different to the lighting currently used because I would find that really difficult to live opposite.

Ashley Darren

I can tell you that the lighting down at street level is to local authority standards. I think it is 15 lux at level. So it'll be the same as the existing street lighting. It will not be flood lighting

because we've taken on board the comments about not illuminating your properties by this new structure.

Attendant

So just to clarify, it won't be as bright as the existing lighting opposite Alamo?

Ashley Darren

Sorry, where is that lighting? Is it railway lighting?

Attendant

Yes, it's railway lighting and currently at the entrance on Springbank Road.

Ashley Darren

Right, by the stairs?

Attendant

That's it.

Ashley Darren

That's a different scheme. I don't know who did that. They would have done that to Network Rail standards which obviously the lighting requirements for step to access for railway passengers is a lot different to local authority general users. So 15 Lux is minimal. It's exactly the same as what you've got up typically out on the streets.

Attendant

Great. And then super quickly I know in the last meeting we talked about there was a request to have a green wall rather than that kind of expansive brown? Has been any change in that design at all?

Ashley Darren

Not at the moment because it's weathering still the green wall or the living wall as we call it. I say you are talking about natural plants on the embankments growing over the concrete. Not an issue. Putting the living plants on a functioning roof and traipsing down, the structure itself becomes a maintenance. You don't have to maintain the concrete, but you do have to maintain the steel works. At the moment there's no plans to trap vegetation over the upper structural bridge.

Attendant

Apologies, I probably used the wrong terminology. I meant green colouring of that wall rather than that expansive brown. I think many of the residents felt that it would blend better into the trees if it were green rather than brown. So not a green living wall but a just a green colour.

Ashley Darren

At the moment we're proposing weathering still because there's no maintenance to it. Once it weathers down, it gets that lovely brown colour. If you start looking at 'greens' then we get on to sort of painted or powder coated type structures, which means a maintenance issue, a bit more of a problem for Network Rail, but that's something that can be considered. The colour palette and materials somewhat will be led by the local authority.

Attendant

OK. And will we be further consulted about that?

Ashley Darren

Over to my Network Rail colleagues and the Local Authority.

Hodan Hassan

'Attendant', just to clarify of course we held that meeting back in April and I did share my e-mail address in the chat. I was hoping you would contact me on my cell phone and have been trying to find your e-mail to contact you directly. I know you raised some questions but all the questions that have been raised by all the residents, we have responded to them via Network Rail's community relation e-mail. Just to clarify another aspect, this meeting was called by the Council. Network Rail were invited, so we didn't know obviously until about two days ago but of course we will be holding further meetings to just go through the construction methodology and discuss the other works in detail.

Attendant

OK. I've just replied to the e-mail that I sent you back in April, on the 20th. Just to be clear, it maybe sounds as if some resident's emails have gone away. I think 'Attendant', who's also on the chat now, said that she didn't hear about this meeting either. I want to kind of pass everyone to you, 'Attendant'. I don't want her to miss out on her questions. So thank you.

Councillor Eva Kestner

We've got a couple of minutes, so if you can be really quick.

Attendant

I'll go super quickly. It's a bit of a composite question, leading on from the fact that after the meeting in April, a request was made at that meeting for an in person, face to face, event for the residents on the south side of the proposed scheme. And Network Rail at the time seemed really positive about it and I followed up in writing afterwards. Very sadly we didn't get a substantive response to that and there's been a really quite significant passage of time since April and we could have had a face to face meeting and I think what Network Rail might not appreciate is that, actually, the local residents have quite a lot of important things that they can share with Network Rail about the proposed scheme, which will actually assist Network Rail, and that by missing out on face to face community engagement, they're missing out on that wealth of information and a case in point.

One example. Network Rail don't think that there will be an increase in traffic flow and foot flow. On the local Facebook groups, I've noticed a couple of comments which have said along the lines of it 'oh, the station entrance will be within my parking zone, so I can drive up to the station and leave my car and the surrounding residential roads and use the new access point.' To my mind, that is going to increase usage of the new station entrance. It's things like that that I think Network Rail and the local authority need to take account of and give more opportunity for local consultation with neighbouring residents, please. This is a plea from lots of people in the local area and hopefully Councillor Kestner in particular, and Antogni, you'll take this on board because I know you've been very much involved in this scheme and we're not trying to be obstructive, we're trying to help, but ultimately we love Hither Green, we love living here and we want what's best for the local area and for our neighbours. So please, please, please don't ignore us. We'll be really helpful and friendly if

you help us to get involved in a positive and proactive way but we don't feel we're being listened to and I hope that you understand why we say that. Thank you everyone so much.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Thank you so much 'Attendant'. As I said, I feel there wasn't an exact question there. It was more of a point but um I'm sure both Network Rail and the Council officers will follow up and I just wanted to check that any email addresses that would be needed have been shared as well.

Just from the panel, from Network Rail's point of view, you said that the best way for people to contact you and I'm assuming that's OK to be shared.

Hodan Hassan

Yes, we will share that.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Perfect. Excellent. Well, as I said, thank you so much for everyone to attend as we'd say, we kind of went through the main points of the meeting that we really kind of looking at the design issues and we went in quite a lot of detail around that and the presentation. Looking at the biodiversity and we had a kind of discussion around kind of footfall and the impact on the local area and both in terms of what happens after the construction, but also during the construction process. And I think at the end we very much brought up the points around kind of local engagement and the importance of that both from Network Rail and from the Council side. And now I'm going to pass over to Antigoni to summarize and to tell you what's going to happen in the next steps. Thank you so much.

Antigoni Gkiza

Thank you, councillor Kestner. So, I will provide the minutes from this meeting and they will also be included as an appendix with the committee report. Thank you everyone for joining the meeting. I think it's been very helpful for everyone.

Michael Forrester

And just one further point from the Council. The application is only sort of one step but we will speak with Network Rail about sort of the continual engagement building on the promise that they've made. And so people who are attending this meeting will receive an invite to the planning Committee when that has a date. So we should have everyone's emails from here. If you haven't corresponded with the Council previously, please email planning@lewisham.gov.uk so we have your e-mail address so we can invite you to the planning committee as well when that's got a date.

Councillor Eva Kestner

Thank you, Michael. Unless there's anything else from the Council side. Is that the housekeeping? Excellent. Well, I just want to say thank you everyone for taking the time this evening and I hope that it was really informative and as everyone said please do make sure that you follow up with your e-mail addresses so that you can make sure that you can get invited to the next steps and keep a breadth of the process as it goes forward. Thank you so much and I will close the meeting now.