



THE RADYR AND MORGANSTOWN ASSOCIATION



GENERAL MEETING

Via Zoom on Monday 16th November 2020 at 7.30pm

Present: David Silver (Chair), Tom Evans Vice-Chair), Nick Hawkins (Secretary), Allan Cook, Bob Roberts, Ian Thomas, Richard Wales, Huw Jones, Cllrs Helen Lloyd Jones, Rod McKerlich, Clive Morgan, David Suthers & Kieran Webster, Stephen Cunnah (guest), and 48 members.

Apologies: Robert Owen Griffiths

Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was again being held electronically due to the COVID Pandemic. He particularly welcomed the four speakers from Transport for Wales (TFW), Kelsey Barcenilla, Andrew Galt, Ceri Taylor and Karl Gilmore, and also Stephen Cunnah, who was attending on behalf of the office of Mark Drakeford MS.

The Metro - what it means for Cardiff and what it means for the R&M Community

Kelsey Barcenilla introduced the topic and the speakers. She is the Community Engagement Officer for TFW: Ceri Taylor, the Stakeholder Manager; Andrew Galt, the Project Manager for the Morganstown Compound; and Karl Gilmore, the Rail Programme Director. Kelsey said that her aim was to ensure that all communities understand what is happening regarding TFW and the Metro and have an opportunity to ask questions. She set out the purpose of TFW - keeping Wales moving by delivering customer-focused services, expert advice and infrastructure investment - and explained that it is a company wholly owned by the Welsh Government. It has been set a number of targets covering the Wales & Borders Rail Service. However, the current reduction in passenger numbers arising from the Covid pandemic will result in some short term changes.

Karl Gilmore said he was responsible for the delivery of the Metro, which is not just trains; it covers bus rapid transport, active rail, interchanges, heavy rail, light rail and smart ticketing. The impact on the Radyr line is that frequency of trains will increase from 6 to 12 per hour and there will be increased passenger capacity (71% increase in the morning peak). The task involves a large amount of construction - engineering and infrastructure to upgrade the rail network ready for the Metro, electrifying 170Km of track, upgrading stations and signalling, and building at least five new stations. The project started in 2018 and is expected to last five years. It is being managed from the Metro Infrastructure Hub in Treforest and the Taffs Well Depot, a £100M maintenance facility.

Andrew Galt then took over the presentation. He explained that, to complete the project, TFW needed to establish a number of 'strategic compounds' which allow safe working, a place to store and transport materials, and with good access. 20 access points had been identified across the core valley lines, and it had been a complex task to find them. A decision had been taken to establish one at 'Pentyrch/Gelynis', in Morganstown, for which he was the project manager.

He set out some of the methodology. All HGVs will be directed first to the Treforest Depot, where they will be held at 'peak times', and then sent on to Morganstown (8-10 minute travel time) 'as appropriate'. The operation will be carefully monitored via a logistics system designed to prevent any non compliance (e.g. HGVs going to Morganstown without permission).

What would be happening at Morganstown? It is a busy railway line (there will be a train every 4-5 minutes) and a bridge is required to get safe and predictable access to both sides of the track. The design for the bridge is still at the draft stage but it will provide space for both the road traffic and a segregated space for pedestrians and cyclists. There will be a significant impact on the area for the projected two years of this phase of the project. The pitches used by Radyr Rangers will need to be repositioned and the changing rooms relocated. The skatepark may need to be removed temporarily. Public access to Pugh's and the associated businesses will be safeguarded. The work on the railway will mainly be done at night but noise will be monitored and Andrew gave his assurance that the site would be compliant with Section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. Lighting would be solar powered (minimum use of noisy generators) and there will be no light pollution. TFW were working with CADW to ensure the Motte & Bailey itself is protected and the aim

is that, when the project is complete and the site returned to the community, it will be enhanced by increased orientation material.

Andrew said that more information is available on the TFW website.

The Chairman thanked the presenters for the comprehensive information and then opened the meeting for questions and answers. There were many questions, which can be summarised as follows:

Why does the Hub need to be located in Morganstown?

As explained in the presentation, 20 access points needed to be identified to allow the efficient upgrading of 170Km of track. They are the centre points of the operation with work taking place in both directions (up and down the line). Moving an access point away from the centre point or making a section bigger will delay the work. When that is added to by considerations such as access and existing infrastructure, it was deemed necessary to use this site. The purchase of the site by the Welsh Government is in its final stages.

What work will be done at the Hub and what will be the local impact?

The work on the railway track involves upgrading the actual track, improving the signalling system and introducing electrification. The nature of the work means that most of it will be done at night although deliveries to the Hub site will happen during the day. However, the initial construction of the bridge will be done during the day. There will be additional traffic, including HGV movements, but this will be managed to minimise the impact. Likewise, noise will be kept to a minimum. There is considerable experience of doing similar work elsewhere so problems are not expected. The recreational use of the Mound Field will be restricted for the period of occupation.

Given that Morganstown is bearing the brunt of the problem, what benefits are proposed?

The Mound Field will be returned to its original state at the end of the construction period and there should be enhanced facilities for Radyr Rangers. The ancient Motte & Bailey will also be enhanced. The bridge over the railway will be a much safer crossing than the existing level crossing. The possibility of constructing a new station for Morganstown was suggested. This is not in the current plan but residents could petition for one.

What assurance is there that things will go to plan and what can residents do if they don't?

The bridge is a known construction and there is much experience of doing the same upgrade work elsewhere. All planning work and controls are being done in accordance with Cardiff Council procedures. If things do go wrong and issues arise, there will be a telephone number to ring 24/7 to speak to someone about them.

How will trains be commissioned?

Again, there is a lot of experience of what is admittedly a complex process. The necessary processes have been defined, partly based on the experiences of Translink in Northern Ireland, and independently reviewed. The trains will initially be commissioned on local track and need to be proven for a specified number of 'track hours' before being brought into operation. Drivers will be selected and trained professionally.

Will a new halt be constructed at Cardiff Edge (the old GE Health site), where major development is planned?

The answer to this was unknown and a promise given to research it.

At the end of the question and answer session, the Chairman again thanked the presenters for answering the questions so fully.

Minutes of the last meeting (5th October) and matters arising

The minutes were accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising.

Treasurer's Report

In the absence of the Treasurer there was no specific report offered although it was noted that, as there had been no significant activity, the financial situation was the same as at the previous meeting.

Festival 2021

The Chairman confirmed that it was still the firm intention to go ahead with a May Festival on the usual dates, although the content was still to be defined. The Festival Committee had met the previous week and reviewed the potential content in the context of what could be arranged, either at the various locations or on-line. A decision would then be made at the end of January in the light of the then prevailing or forecast conditions. Aspects such as the production of a professional 'glossy programme brochure' would probably have to be scrapped as there would be insufficient time for its production.

Christmas Tree Lighting, 4th December

As notified elsewhere, it had been necessary to make the sad decision to cut down the lighting ceremony to the bare minimum. The normal trees would be put in position in Lychgate Gardens, Morganstown Granny Park and Windsor Gardens, and there would be (enhanced) lighting in Station Road and Heol Isaf. The Station Road lights would be switched on by Cllr Rod McKerlich in his then role as Lord Mayor of Cardiff. That short ceremony would be broadcast live on YouTube and people were specifically requested not to attend in person. Father Christmas would then be touring the local streets in his sleigh. Mickey & Minnie Mouse would be touring the streets on 16th December.

Entertainment

Nothing noted.

Any other business

The Chairman again thanked Ian Thomas and Richard Wales for setting up the technology for the meeting.

Next Meeting

No date was set for the next meeting. A suitable topic was being researched and members would be notified when things were in place.