

Hinkley Point C Project: Transport update

Lead Officer: Andy Coupé (Strategic Manager – Infrastructure Programmes)

Author: Alastair Higon (Service Manager – Major Energy Programmes)

Contact Details: ARHigon@somerset.gov.uk

Cabinet Member: Councillor David Hall, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

Division and Local Member: Councillors Ann Bown (Bridgwater West), Mike Caswell (Cannington), Hugh Davies (Watchet and Storgursey, David Hall (Bridgwater East and Bawdrip), David Loveridge (Bridgwater North and Central), Leigh Redman (Bridgwater South), Bill Revans (North Petherton).

1. Summary

- 1.1. The importance of Hinkley Point C (HPC) and its transformational potential is reflected in the County Council Business Plan as a key priority. It is therefore critical to the delivery of the County Council's future aspirations.
- 1.2. The opportunities for Somerset are set against the need to ensure that the negative impacts from the developments upon communities, the environment and infrastructure in the County are minimised, managed and mitigated.
- 1.3. In 2012 EDF Energy, New Nuclear Build Generation Company and the local authorities (Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council, and West Somerset Council as was) signed a Section 106 (S106) Agreement in connection with the Development Consent Order to construct the new power station. This was in addition to a S106 Agreement relating to Site Preparatory Works at the site. The S106 agreements describe a range of obligations and financial contributions to mitigate impacts expected to arise from the project.
- 1.4. Delivery must be managed effectively and for the mitigation to be provided on a timely basis so that the impacts of the development upon communities are minimised.
- 1.5. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the work being done by the County Council and EDF Energy to mitigate the transport impacts of construction of HPC. It will also outline EDF Energy's responsibilities and activities regarding transport and travel.
- 1.6. There are two HGV routes to the site where the most significant impacts are expected: from Junctions 23 and 24 of the M5 through specific corridors in Bridgwater and westward along the A39 and C182 to the HPC site. These corridors represent the geographical focus of the mitigation activity.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are asked to note this update.

3. Background

Somerset County Council Activities and Responsibilities

3.1. Somerset County Council's approach to delivering the mitigation set out in the S106 agreement covers a range of projects, grouped under three broad headings. Financial contributions have also been secured for traffic control and highways maintenance.

3.2. Corridor Improvements

Somerset County Council received significant funds to provide new and improved physical infrastructure around the HGV Corridor routes.

This funding, and the improvements outlined below, are intended to mitigate:

- Safety
- Delays to non-motorised road users
- Reduced amenity Severance

The County Council's objectives in using this funding are to ensure safety and encourage 'modal shift' i.e. using alternative modes of transport in preference to travelling by car. Other considerations when developing and implementing projects include levels of local support, benefits to the local economy, environmental impact, the impact of construction of any scheme, movement of HPC workforce, and cost.

Works delivered to date

- C182 Cannington to Combwich cycle route
- Cannington to Sandford cycle route
- Zebra Crossing on Wembdon Rise
- A38 Toucan crossing, linking Stockmoor and Marsh Lane
- A39 Speed Review between Cannington and Nether Stowey

Works underway

- The Drove in Bridgwater including work at Quantock Terrace and Union Street

Works planned (all in Bridgwater)

- Safety Schemes on Taunton Road
- Broadway Safety Scheme
- Northern Distributor Road Safety Scheme
- Safety Schemes on Bristol Road
- Wembdon Road to Victoria Road cycle route
- Colley Lane cycle/walking link to connect the new Colley Lane Southern Access Road to South Bridgwater including Hamp and Stockmoor/Wilstock
- Dunball to Express Park cycle infrastructure

Designs under way

- River Parrett to Town Centre: a major scheme to create an off-road walking/ cycle route between Express Park and Bridgwater Docks
- Woodlands to Express Park walking/ cycle infrastructure
- Bath Road cycle improvements

Designs completed and on hold

- Quantock Road Roundabout
- Puriton to Dunball walking and cycling infrastructure

- Huntworth Business Park to Marsh Lane cycle route
- Canal to West Street / Broadway walking and cycling improvements

Designs on hold

- Brantwood Road to Quantock Meadow walking and cycling improvements
- Meadow Park to Wembdon Rise walking and cycling improvements

3.3. Behaviour change

This programme aims to manage demand along the HGV corridor routes to reduce congestion and deliver reliable, consistent journey times for traffic, by:

- Maximising the opportunities for behaviour change, in particular to encourage a shift to increased walking and cycling; and
- Dealing with road safety risks, in particular for non-motorised users such as pedestrians and cyclists.

The programme supports usage of new infrastructure as it is completed, and comprises three elements:

- Business
Working with businesses in Bridgwater to develop travel action plans and increase take-up of walking and cycling in preference to driving to and from work.
- Education
Working with primary and secondary schools in Bridgwater to help children and parents develop the skills and confidence to walk or cycle to school rather than travel by car.
- Communities
A pilot project in North Petherton parish to test how communities can be encouraged and supported to reduce car use during off-peak periods. Learning from this project will be used to develop an approach for Bridgwater.

3.4. Access to timely information

Ensuring that the travelling public have the information they need to plan their journeys and avoid congestion is a key component of mitigating the impact of additional traffic along the corridor routes.

- New Variable Message Signs have been provided at strategic locations in Bridgwater to facilitate improvements in journey times that provide enhanced driver information to better inform decision making and improve the implementation of traffic management plans to operate diversions. Additional VMS are planned at 4 further locations.
- A new digital interactive walking and cycling route map for Bridgwater has been developed to replace the out of date paper version. It highlights key arterial routes into and across Bridgwater and the surrounding areas and shows off-road routes, safe signed cycleways and footpaths. It is an essential part of the Bridgwater Way website which incorporates travel and roadworks.
- Signage Strategy. An update and improvement of cycling signage in Bridgwater to connect the town in terms of cycling routes, encourage confidence to cycle and promote existing and new infrastructure.

EDF Activities and Responsibilities

3.5. EDF Energy activities broadly cover construction traffic, workforce travel, and arrangements in case of an incident.

3.6. Construction traffic

A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) deals with the management of all freight traffic during construction including Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs).

A key element of the CTMP is to manage freight movements effectively, safely and within agreed limits. To this end HGV movements are strictly controlled, with caps on numbers.

- Daily limits apply to maximum movements on each of the two HGV routes through Bridgwater and between 07.00 – 10.00 and 16.00 – 19.00. No movements on these routes are allowed between the hours of 22.00 and 07.00 or on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- From January 2018, EDF Energy were permitted to temporarily increase the limit on the quarterly average of 500 HGV movements per day in any given quarter, to 750 movements per day (Monday to Saturday) in any given quarter from January 2018 until the end of September 2019, when the jetty at the HPC site is expected to be fully operational. Additional financial contributions were secured to mitigate the impacts of the increase in HGV movements. Average daily movements are currently around 350 HGVs.
- Freight Management Facilities at Junctions 23 and 24 have been constructed by EDF to hold and release HGVs to manage traffic flow and congestion, and comply with movement caps. They also act as a holding area in case of incidents on the highway network.
- A Delivery Management System regulates movements through an online booking system. Monitoring of HGV movements, including breaches or non-compliance with the limits set out above, is carried out using automatic number plate recognition, with replacement by a new GPS system due to be implemented potentially during 2019.
- Compliance rates are exceptionally high, with non-compliances being actively managed by EDF Energy to reduce the risk of reoccurrence.

Jetty

The jetty adjacent to the HPC main site will enable 80% (by weight) of materials required for concrete production (e.g. aggregates) to be brought to the site by sea rather than by road. It is expected to begin limited operations during May as part of its commissioning process. This will dramatically reduce the number of HGV movements from local quarries.

Combwich Wharf

The largest Abnormal Indivisible Loads – oversized material that cannot be broken down or transported on the road network, such as Tunnel Boring Machines - will be delivered through Combwich Wharf rather than through Bridgwater and Cannington. The wharf will be redeveloped and is expected to begin operations during 2020.

3.7. Workforce travel

A Construction Workforce Management Plan (CWMP) deals with the management and movement of people during the HPC build. Its purpose is to manage the daily movement of the construction workforce in a sustainable, safe

and resilient manner whilst minimising impact on communities. A range of measures are in place to reduce vehicular traffic on the road network:

- Park and Ride facilities with a focus on bus transport from those facilities to and from the HPC site (as well as direct services from particular communities and from the Campuses). 94% of workers currently arrive at site using the HPC Bus Service across 23 bus routes. The HPC bus routes and workforce accommodation locations are reviewed by EDF Energy on a monthly basis to extend or introduce new bus routes to enable more passengers to walk to a nearby bus stop to reduce journeys to Park and Ride sites by car and provide a shorter journey time for bus passengers.
- Campus facilities for over 1,500 workers are now available across the HPC site and in Bridgwater, served by direct buses
- Promoting sustainable travel including walking and cycling, and car sharing amongst EDF employees.
- The Park and Ride sites (Jct 23, Jct 24, Cannington, Washford Cross and Quantock Lakes) were 51% utilised in the last quarter.
- Only limited numbers of parking spaces exist at the HPC site, with only around 125 workers currently travelling to site directly with around half of these car sharing.
- The HPC Community Bus commenced on the 6th February 2017 providing a free community bus service between Minehead and Bridgwater (the service was in place for 12 months and extended another 24 months until February 2020). As part of this, there was an agreement that a midi bus could be used on the HPC bus services which passes through Stogursey.
- The majority of complaints refer to fly parking. Fly parking monitoring is ongoing and there remains a focus by the dedicated EDF parking team.

3.8. Incident Management

EDF Energy's Traffic Incident Management Plan (TIMP) outlines how HPC traffic will be managed in case of an incident.

- It outlines roles and responsibilities of primary stakeholders throughout an incident.
- It states what EDF has or will put in place to manage HPC HGVs and buses should an incident occur, whether diversionary routes are required or not.
- Additional measures include holding buses at park and ride facilities, HGVs at Freight Management Facilities, and varying hours and movements within overall vehicle caps.

3.9. The Transport Review Group is responsible for monitoring implementation and compliance of the CTMP and CWTP, including considering and approving amendments. It is chaired by Somerset County Council.

3.10. EDF Energy-led infrastructure projects

EDF have delivered several schemes to provide new or improved infrastructure to mitigate the impact of construction and workforce traffic, and includes

- Washford Cross Roundabout
- Sandford Corner Roundabout
- Cannington Bypass
- Taunton Road / Broadway, Bridgwater
- Wylde Road/ The Drove, Bridgwater
- Bristol Road/ The Drove, Bridgwater

- M5 J23

A further scheme at Bristol Road/ Wylids Road is also planned but is yet to be programmed.

3.11. Other EDF Energy obligations

- Noise Insulation Scheme, providing double/ secondary glazing for householders on the HGV Corridors particularly affected by traffic noise.
- Air quality contributions to Sedgemoor District Council and West Somerset (now Somerset West and Taunton) Council for air quality monitoring and action planning.

4. Background papers

4.1. Hinkley Point C - Deed of Development Obligations (Section 106 Agreement)

4.2. Cabinet Member decision on 18 December 2017: Hinkley Point C - Variation to Construction Traffic Management Plan and New Deed of Development Consent Obligations (Section 106 agreement):

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=609>

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author