**Darley Abbey Village Hall**

**Discussion with Residents on Temporary Bridge for Darley Mills**

**Minutes held on the 27th July 2022, Starting 5pm**

Amanda opened the meeting and thanked residents for coming along and thanked the village hall management team for letting residents and Amanda use the facility.

Amanda introduced Nigel to the floor who was at the previous meeting. Nigel talked about the difficulties of the bridge particularly the poor state it is in. Nigel discussed the complications on legality, technicality and financially of the bridge itself.

Nigel then went on to say that works for a temporary pedestrian has passed to a cabinet paper and thanked Cllr Hassall as Portfolio holder. Nigel said that it is likely as we move forward the council is likely to become the principal ‘responsibility’ of the bridge, which comes with some issues.

Work to get to this stage has been exhaustive and has taken many hours of officer’s time to get to this temporary conclusion. Nigel apologised to residents on how it has taken this long, but it was the right thing to do, being diligent and weighing up all the options.

Nigel said that the current bridge does not require any partial demolition or any more works whilst it is closed off which does mean that a bridge over the old bridge is the most practical option and solution. Whilst the temporary bridge is installed it gives the technical officers the chance to look at those options for a permanent solution or replacement project. Again it is probably likely the council will have to make this decision on the bridge and its financial position of it.

Nigel passed over to 2 technical officers Lincoln Smithers and Phil Massey.

Lincoln explained how it has been a priority for the structures team since the closure of the bridge and has not been on the back burner. Lincoln has explained that he understands there is questions around some of the technical nature and if any resident does not get an answer during the Q&A then they can approach him and phil after the meeting. They are also happy to give their contact details to residents if they have any post meeting follow up questions.

Phil Massey explained the temporary bridge that will sit on top of the current bridge. The bridge is 2.1 meters wide internally and it will be 3.5 meters externally, it will be skewed in to the constraints of the current bridge layout. The bridge will be 0.75 meter above the original bridge and is 45.7 meters long, it will not touch any part of the existing bridge or its structure. The mill side will have a ramp to go down but comes with a caveat that it will displace parking due to the nature of those ramps.

Phil Massey showed a video of the structure going in place which will weigh 40 tonnes. Lincoln has re-empahsised those technical questions on the installation can be asked at the end of the meeting.

Phil Massey was honest in saying that there will be heavy disruption for 3-4 days for major closures and as much detail will be given that once the crane is in situ it could create vehicle access problems for residents nearby.

Week commencing 19th the bridge should be coming in with a secured slot time and that the contractor has all the materials to make the bridge given the constraints of supply chains and delivery of certain materials. The view is that toward the end of September it should be opened.

Q&A

1. Resident: Would having this temporary bridge hinder a long-term solution by thinking this temporary solution becomes the permanent solution, and what will council do to protect St Mary’s bridge from issues?

Nigel: Council Cabinet Report states that it will be in for 12 months whilst it looks at the solutions to repairing the original bridge or replacing it and that the council may have to reassess if the financial implications are astronomical. There is a lot of traffic on St Mary’s Bridge but since the closure the the council has been monitoring St Mary’s and there been no increase in the current analysis.

Amanda: Can’t stress enough that this was about quickest solution to get it open at the desire of residents and that long term solutions will be forthcoming.

1. Resident: Is there any provision to prevent people from jumping off it into the river like the old bridge?

Phil: We are looking at that provision to stop the ability for people to use it as a diving board, we understand the residents’ frustrations on this as it was the same with the original bridge.

1. Cllr Martin Repton: It would be a fine push for the council to afford a completed final scheme and that government needs to step in.

Amanda: Continued contact with various departments have been ongoing as you know, but what we do know is we can rule out The Crown estate from financially getting involved.

Nigel: Crowd funding is a good start to get heritage lottery involved along with the government. More partners involved in the contribution towards the final goal the easier it can be achieved. There is a real desire to get this bridge to its former glory because it is in a world heritage site. The council will ultimately have to lead on the issue. Then there is the long-term ownership issue, does it go into a trust? Does it become a community asset? Does the council take all or none of it? These are all options that will need to be pursued. We can also rule out OCOR (Our City Our River) funding to be used in any funding agreement for the bridge.

1. Resident: Concerns around Haslam’s lane ownership and the flooding issues around it. Is the council going to take ownership of it?

Nigel: At the current moment and in its current condition the council would not take on Haslam’s Lane. It is part of the estate. But the council can take leadership and ownership on the bridge. There is a need to pick the bridge up to make it flood resilient in the future.

Lincoln: Emergency planning meetings have taken place and that a lot of conversations have gone on to make sure warning alerts are being designed and sent to when Haslam lanes become at risk to flooding to allow residents to make a decision on if they need to leave their homes or area. A Multi Agency Meeting has been arranged August and then we plan to host a residents meeting in September to discuss this.

1. Resident: Can the bridge not be shifted up stream either temporary or new?

Nigel: This was one of the first things we looked, and it really is a case of the technical constraints of the banks, workspace and stable ground. They looked at building it in small parts in the mill area and moving it over but then it became really complicated. This current method is the quickest and most efficient method.

1. Resident: What are the definitive timelines?

Phil: Work will start 19th September looking at 10 working days to get everything completed. They are looking at weekend work to shorten that delay.

1. Resident: If the bridge is going to be higher then could the bridge be wider in the permanent solution?

Phil: That’s a debate on the long-term solution and residents will feed into the debate, it will also need to be weighed up against some issues around the cost as well, anything bigger will of course increase in value.

1. Resident: Am I Presuming the gas main turned off that runs underneath the current bridge?

Nigel: The gas main has not been turned off, but it has been turned down, so if there is any damage then the leak would be small and, in enough time, to section off if needed. The gas main is a lower risk then it was a couple of weeks ago after continuous inspections. Utilities are continuing to monitor this.

1. Resident: Professional fundraiser being employed?

Nigel: There has been some encouragement in this, and another council officer Tim Bagshaw is looking at this to see if we can pull together these funding streams from various sources. It maybe there is a multiple approach of Council, World Heritage, Lottery, Public Fundraising that brings it over the line. All options to be explored.

1. Resident: Is there a waterpipe cut off on as some as used as a springboard for diving just like the bridge.

Phil: This becomes the council ownership if that’s the case and believe it sits with Severn Trent, which we can take up with them.

1. Resident: At the last meeting I discussed Levelling up funding and why hasn’t it been done? Compared to London Underground stations which billions get spent on.

Amanda: We all as a group keep taking this forward to various departments and the new leveling up Minister. A lot of conversation is taking place and we keep pushing this forward. I can assure you that this pressure is applied daily.

1. Resident: Bridge was used as a rat run to avoid adjacent roads. What is the advantage of restoring this moving forward?

Nigel: Any new bridge can be built for access control, which would be a debate for the future. It is an option which residents will need to engage in.

Amanda: The temporary solution can help form that view as we get used to of this new change.

1. Resident: What parking measures will need to be in place if the temporary bridge is used to park on one side and then walk over to the other, this could happen.

Nigel: We would have to deal with that, and it could be we have to put a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to stop inappropriate parking, this would be engaged with Cllrs and community. There is a lot of trade offs with this bridge some we can plan some we will have to see until its in place, human behaviour is hard to model.

Amanda: Thanks to everyone for attending and the officers are staying behind to answer any questions for the time being. We will keep residents updated. Remember to vote for Derby on the GBR.

**Meeting closed 5:59pm**