

Linhay Hill Quarry Local Liaison Group

Notes of Site Visit

Date and Time:	7 November 2023 @ 10am	Location: On site, see opening paragraph
Present:	B Wilson Cllr Don Distin Cllr Huw Cox Phil Townsend Toby Ball Scott Riddell Steve Hellier Chris Tregidgo Hannah Moon Steve Couch-Finnemore Stuart Cock Kate Rhodes Malcolm Smith Helen Staddon Wendy Couch Anthea Hoey	Glendinning, Managing Director Ashburton Town Council, TDC DCC Highways DCC Highways DCC Highways National Highways SDCC Operations Manager Life Chance Neighbour. Waye Neighbour, Caton Atkins Atkins Westcountry Rivers Trust Exeter University for Westcountry Rivers Trust Trust Glendinning, Project Coordinator

1. Venue

The arrangement was to meet in the car park at Glentor and combine into as few cars as possible and then travel in convoy to the car park near the quarry workshops from where we could walk up to view progress to date with construction of Waye Lane. On the way to the quarry, we stopped briefly at the south end of Waye Lane to look at the recently widened Balland Lane.

Here is a photograph taken at the start of the walk.



2. Balland Lane

Balland Lane has been widened to allow school coaches to use it as they leave the school after dropping off pupils or collecting them at either end of the school day. This is done following an informal one-way arrangement. Phil Townsend said that was how DCC had hoped it would turn out and he was pleased to hear that this was working well.

Here are photos of the widened Balland Lane.



Barry explained that the verge on the quarry side had been covered in turves to stabilise them and would be planted with trees and hedging over the next few months.

3. Waye Lane

Barry explained that Waye Lane was being constructed in three sections: We first visited the lower section from chainage 0m (at the Balland Lane end) to approx. chainage 350m. This is the trickiest part because of drainage and geological considerations, and was therefore being done last. The road was in the relatively early stages of construction, although the base layers have already been laid. The drainage is still being installed in the lower parts of this section, although the junction with Balland Lane is completed.

This lower section is shown in the next photo.



The middle section of Waye lane, from approximately chainage 350m to 820m, is the most advanced, with all kerbs, drainage and surfaces now in place save for the final layer of asphalt as plant is still tracking along it.

Work is now focussing on building the footpath, which will run alongside Waye Lane, either directly adjacent to the road or behind a hedgebank. This is the diverted route of Ashburton Footpath no 16, moved to allow Waye Lane to be built. Barry explained that a special no-dig method of construction was being used to minimise disturbance to the ground. The only material removed was the grass and topsoil.

This is shown in the photos below.



Work has recently started on building the hedgebanks, which have been hydroseeded with a special hedgerow seed mixture and will be planted with hedging plants, and occasional hedgerow trees in the next few weeks.

The hedgebank can be seen on the right-hand side of the road in the photo below.



Anthea said that in addition to the nearly 5,000 trees that have been planted to date, a further 2,250 woodland trees, plus 2,750 woodland edge trees and 16 individual hedgerow trees are planned to be planted this coming season, together with nearly 8,000 hedgerow whips. This is a little less woodland planting than was originally anticipated because, at the request of the DNPA, we are following a different approach for the woodland areas either side of Waye Pond. This different approach is to rely more on natural regeneration from the adjacent woodland areas, with a reduced amount of planting simply to help nature on its way here.

We paused to look at the detention basins at Place and Brownswell. Barry described how they had filled with rainwater in the recent rains, demonstrating how they are acting to hold the water back in heavy rainfall events.

These basins are shown in the photos below.



Place Basin



Brownswell Basin

Fencing is being put in place alongside the footpath. This is a different specification from stock fencing as it doesn't have barbed wire, in order to be more 'walker friendly'.

The photo below shows the higher part of this middle section of Waye Lane, with the completed footpath and fencing alongside. The curved alignment is designed to slow traffic down and also to assist in giving the road a more rural feel.



We next walked along the top section of Waye Lane, from chainage 850m to the top at approximately 1350m. Much of this section is alongside, or even dug into, the existing quarry spoil tip. This has required more complex construction techniques because of the interplay of natural and 'made' ground, particularly in the lower parts of this top section.

The photo below, taken in August, is of the gabion wall used here showing the extent of the stone foundations against the sides of the tip.



We then followed the road up towards Waye Pond, where the hedgerows have already been completed and hydroseeded.



Barry explained that the area to the northwest of the road here was where the DNPA had suggested the natural regeneration approach to woodland creation would be followed, and that the land on the other side of the road (behind him in the photo below) would be restored to field once the works were completed.



We then climbed up the embankment of Waye Pond to see the result of the clearance and restoration work carried out to provide greater surface water storage and attenuation. Barry pointed out that the water level had reached the top of the upright outflow pipe during the recent heavy rains over the weekend, demonstrating that the pond was operating as intended.



The Group also viewed the footpath being laid alongside this higher section of Waye Lane, which will become a new footpath in due course.



Finally, the group viewed the top part of Waye Lane, where it joins Alston Lane. This is the last part of Waye Lane to be started. The vegetation and trees have only just been cleared, as under the terms of the Natural England Licence, all clearance had to be done before the end of October, but the licence had only been issued a few days earlier. The actual position of the road had been tweaked to minimise the amount of clearance required. A separate track will be provided alongside to enable the farmer to move his cattle from one side of the farm to the other.



The Group then returned to the quarry cars along the same route.

4. Outline of the proposed Project Programme

The next steps in the Project Programme for Stage 0 are as follows:-

- The final surface of Waye Lane will be laid along the whole length on completion of all three sections. The intention is that the road will be opened in Summer 2024.
- Alston Farm Access – final completion by end of 2023
- SWW water main diversion – now planned for summer 2024.
- Improvements to Caton Cross – Currently now being undertaken, by night working only. Planned for completion by mid December 2023.
- Further landscape planting and hedgebank creation over autumn/winter 2023.

2. Date and format/venue of next meeting

We hope to arrange for the Group to be able to see other parts of the Stage 0 works at the next meeting of the Local Liaison Group which will be in Spring 2024. The date and actual venue/format will be decided nearer the time.

Many thanks to all who attended. We hope you found it interesting and useful.