

Our ref: CRS-770015
Your ref:

Graeme Bickerdike

Sent via Email

David Parker
Historical Railways Estate
3rd Floor
37 Tanner Row
YORK
YO1 6WP

Direct Line: 0771 443 1547
7th May 2019

Dear Mr Bickerdike

Freedom of Information Request – Queensbury Tunnel Letter to Bradford Council

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed our search for the information, which you requested on 5th April 2019.

A copy of the information that you requested is attached.

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If you are unhappy with the way that we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review within 2 months of the date of this response for Freedom of Information requests and within 40 days for Environmental Information Regulations requests.

Our internal review process is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail info@highwaysengland.co.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 770015 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely



David Parker
Historical Railways Estate
Email: dave.parker@highwaysengland.co.uk

Our ref:
Your ref:

Kersten England
Chief Executive Officer
City of Bradford MDC
City Hall
BRADFORD
BD1 1 HY

Dave Parker
Historical Railways Estate
3rd Floor
37 Tanner Row
YORK
YO1 6HP

Direct Line: 0771 443 1547
30th August 2018

Sent via Email

Dear Kersten

Queensbury Tunnel – Notice of Advance Works

I am writing further to previous correspondence with the Council on this matter, including the letter from the Department for Transport (DfT) dated 1st August 2018.

In December 2016 I indicated that Highways England should be in a position to commence the proposed safety works to Queensbury Tunnel in the summer of 2018. I can now confirm that those safety works have now been designed and a methodology and a programme have also been agreed with our recently appointed contractor for the safety works.

As you will be aware, progress on the parallel matter of the related planning application for the safety works is very slow and still remains in its early stages. A direct consequence of this lack of progress is that the identified long-standing risk to the local community, caused by the tunnel's known poor condition, continues to remain un-mitigated. That is not a position that Highways England or the DfT consider to be acceptable any longer.

Discussions with our appointed contractor have identified the need to phase their works. Phase One will take 6 – 8 weeks and includes the installation of a system called RAM Arch directly underneath each of the seven ventilation shafts, within the Holmfield portal and at other locations where the tunnel lining is vulnerable to collapse. The main purpose of installing the RAM Arch is to provide safe working areas for our contractors and their workforce during Phase Two of the works at the most vulnerable locations.

If we had appointed contractors to undertake Phase One as a stand-alone project then we do not consider that project would have necessitated a planning application.

One additional benefit from the delivery of Phase One is that it also provides some partial and short-term strengthening to the tunnel at the most vulnerable locations and so offers a level of protection for the local community by partially mitigating both the risk and consequence of any future collapse at those locations.

For the avoidance of doubt, the completion of Phase One must not be viewed as the long-term solution to the risk that the current poor condition of the tunnel presents to the local community. That will only be addressed by delivery of Phase Two of the safety works which involves the infilling of the ventilation shafts and both portals.

Both Highways England and DfT are of the view that these Phase One works must now be progressed. So please note our intention, purely on public safety grounds, to commence the works included in Phase One in late September 2018.

We are aware of the ongoing survey work and analysis, in respect of the tunnel, being undertaken by AECOM on behalf of the Council. As we will be handing the tunnel to our contractors as a construction site in late September 2018 it is important that all activities within the tunnel by the Council and AECOM must be completed by that point.

It is our view that the delivery of Phase One of the works will not be prejudicial to the completion of the Council's ongoing considerations in respect of taking ownership of the tunnel. The Council's engineering team and their consultants may wish to know more technical detail about the installation of the RAM Arch system. Please encourage them to contact my team at any point should they wish to know more.

Yours sincerely



David Parker
Historical Railways Estate
Email: dave.parker@highwaysengland.co.uk

cc: Mark Mathews – DfT
Richard Marshall – Highways England
Fiona Smith – Highways England
Julian Jackson – City of Bradford MDC
Richard Gelder – City of Bradford MDC
Aaron Okorie – City of Bradford MDC