

RT HON SAJID JAVID MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Richard Arrowsmith
Chair - Romsley Parish Council
84A Dark Lane
Romsley
Halesowen
B62 0PJ

5th May 2016

Dear Richard,

Further to my recent correspondence with you about the Severn Trent Water development project in Romsley, I thought you would be interested to read the enclosed letter I have received from Liv Garfield, the Chief Executive of Severn Trent.

I hope this will be reassuring for you and local residents, but if there is anything further you would like me to raise with her, please do get back in touch.

Kind regards,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a single continuous stroke that forms a large 'S' shape.

BROMSGROVE

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Severn Trent Water Limited

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14 April 2016

Dear Sajid,

Thank you for getting in touch – we're very happy to let you know about what's happening on the Birmingham Resilience Project so you can reassure your constituents.

As you may know, the proposed work at Romsley is just part of this hugely significant infrastructure project to secure water supplies for over a million people in Birmingham. As part of the project, we're planning to take a new water supply from the River Severn near Stourport-on-Severn then pump that water some 25km to Frankley Treatment Works in Birmingham. The route of the underground pipeline passes around ½ mile to the south of Romsley and enters the proposed 'Break Pressure Tank' before heading away from the village toward the M5.

I'd like to reassure you that the project is being designed with the utmost regard for the environment and those living in the communities nearby. What we are proposing at Romsley is not, in fact, a 'water treatment works' but an underground storage tank together with two adjacent silos that we use for storing activated carbon which we dose into the water at this point.

We're really keen to make sure the local community has all of the information they need about the work we need to do and we absolutely want to work with them to make sure we can do that with the minimum disruption.

Some residents and the Parish Council have requested that we form a 'liaison group' to discuss matters relating to the development – we do this elsewhere and have confirmed we're very happy to send representatives from Severn Trent and our contractor partner. It remains our intention to maintain meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders impacted by these important works.

To answer your specific questions on the project, we've prepared a fact sheet which is attached. I hope that this provides the level of information you require to reply to your constituents, but if you have any more questions please do come back to us. We'd very much like to explain more about the project to you and my Project Manager, Simon Hinsley, would be pleased to meet with you, either within your constituency or in London. Simon can be reached directly at simon.hinsley@severntrent.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liv Garfield".

Liv Garfield
Chief Executive

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Coventry CV1 2LZ

Environmental impact

The pipeline route has been deliberately selected to avoid encroaching on any ancient woodland and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). We're aware that a SSSI exists to the north of the Break Pressure Tank site and have been in discussion with Natural England to make sure they're comfortable with our proposals. As part of our Environmental Impact Assessment we've also conducted extensive habitat and wildlife surveys all along the pipeline route. We've found bats in some locations along the route but none in the vicinity of the Break Pressure Tank. We've proposed various measures to mitigate any potential adverse effects on bats including the provision of artificial tree roosts and pre-construction checks of all trees with potential for roosting bats. A European Protected Species licence from Natural England would be required for any works, such as felling, affecting confirmed tree roosts.

Operational deliveries and traffic

Aside from an emergency, the system is only intended to operate for brief periods (typically 50 days every 2 years, during the winter months) to allow the temporary closure of the nearby Elan Valley Aqueduct. We'd only need to use and deliver the 'activated carbon' for these brief periods of operation (a delivery 3 or 4 times a week would be likely). Delivery vehicles will access the site from Bromsgrove Road and – apart from the first few metres of Putney Lane to the site entrance – have no need to enter narrow country lanes.

Lighting

We will be installing permanent lighting on the silos and alongside site roads but it'll be angled downward to illuminate the road and working areas and only be used should it be necessary to access the site during the hours of darkness. The site will be unmanned and no lights will be on when no-one is there.

During the construction period the site will be lit to maintain safe working conditions but not left on when no-one is there.

Visual Impact

We do need to install silos (hoppers) to store the carbon. However, their foundations will be well below the current ground level and the top of the hoppers will be obscured from view from the south by the brow of the hill. Views from the west (Bromsgrove Road) will be significantly mitigated by the existing trees and hedgerows, but we are looking at what can do additionally (in terms of positioning, design and landscaping) to further reduce visual impact.

Concrete production

We're not planning "on-site concrete production", but we will need to bring in deliveries of ready-mix concrete to construct the underground tank. This is typical for this sort of construction.

Noise levels

Our Environmental Impact Assessment examines the potential for noise pollution, during both construction and operation of the Break Pressure Tank. We've also looked at the potential for noise impacts from the construction of the pipeline itself. Our assessments demonstrate these impacts to be within normal background noise levels. However, we're planning to undertake noise monitoring during construction and will keep the situation under review.

Public exhibitions and images of the site

To date we've held three public exhibitions within Romsley itself, the first (in November 2014) was held on a Saturday (with 41 recorded attendees) and including an early design visualisation of the Break Pressure Tank. The second (in November 2015) was held on a Friday afternoon (although we had some 60 attendees) and included more detailed imagery of the Break Pressure Tank. The same visuals were subsequently used in our planning application submitted in January 2016. The most recent exhibition, held following concerns expressed by the Parish Council, included this same imagery plus additional photo-visualisations of the finished works. We've recently commissioned some more visualisations and will be looking to further refine the design where we can to address the concerns of residents.

