

Meetings to discuss the Steaming Bay Project.

General meeting at HQ on 3/11/23

Site meeting at Tyttehanger on 5/11/23

The objective of the meetings was to seek the views of club members on the original 2011 design and to answer the basic question; is the original scheme still supported and if not, what changes members would like to see in any revision of the original proposal.

The chairman outlined the original design which encompassed the area occupied by both the Ground level railway and the raised track steaming bays and associated buildings.

At the HQ meeting the Chairman was able to use the overhead projector to list the requirements of the 2011 plan that were complete and those yet to be completed. At the Tyttehanger meeting the Chairman summarised these. Of the original list all items listed for the GLR were now complete together with other items such as the new toilet block, machine shop, general access (dirty) workshop and RT locomotive storage.

The Chairman stated that the next stage will be to complete the RT steaming bays in accordance with the 2011 requirements as reproduced in the October 2023 news sheet, page 5, and the scheme plan which was also enclosed with that edition as a single page colour supplement. (This can all be viewed on the NLSME website version).

The Chairman then opened the meeting to members to comment on the merits of various features of the 2011 proposal (Scheme plan) and its associated list of requirements.

The discussions at both meetings are incorporated in the notes summarised below;

NOTE. Many topics raised and comments made at both meetings were similar and indeed sometimes the same. For the accuracy of the notes and to benefit of members present at either meeting, both sets of comments are included even though there is duplication.

Topic - The new traverser.

General Meeting at HQ

- There is an additional safety risk introduced into the railway operating system with the provision of a new traverser which needs to be assessed and the risks identified
- There is a proposed solution to interlock the new traverser with the signalling to ensure it cannot be moved once a train has entered the section between signal 2 and 4.
- Signals 2 and 4 will show a red aspect once the traverser is moved.
- The view was expressed that it would be much better if the new traverser was opposite the station. It's a good design but in the wrong place.
 - This provided improved sighting for drivers
 - The need for assistance / Steward to operate the traverser would be difficult to provide at the proposed location. We always have difficulty getting enough stewards. By relocating the station stewards could assist. Thus, avoiding the need to provide an additional steward.

Site Meeting at Tyttehanger

- The safety risks introduced into the railway operating system with the provision of a new traverser
 - Assessment of all the new risks must be identified
 - Gradient from proposed location. Risk of runaways back towards steaming bay.
 - Concern expressed as to how movements along proposed link line would be controlled. Risk of conflicting movements. i.e., someone coming off main line and running towards steaming bay when another is departing steaming bay. This was not a risk of collision but just getting in others way.
 - Physical movement of new traverser will need more than one person to operate.
 - Remote location for additional steward on public running days difficult to resource

- If we decide to adopt an option with a new traverser it would be much better if it was opposite the station.
- This provided improved sighting for drivers.
- There are more people or stewards at the station on public days who could help with operation

Topic - Assemble a train off track

General Meeting at HQ

- This requirement was supported by all.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- This requirement was supported by all.
- This requirement could be defined as connecting loco to passenger carriage OR connecting loco to bum truck (a number provided by NLSME) and pick up coach at station.

Topic -Storage of carriages at steaming bay

General Meeting at HQ

- The problem with obtaining coaches from the station was recognised as a less than ideal arrangement and proposed relocation of coach storage to the area of the steaming bay was supported.
- The existing proposal to utilise container 2 was briefly discussed. No conclusion other than to consider viability of alternative arrangements for coach storage in the steaming bay area.
- Alternative storage arrangements for coaches at the steaming bay to be investigated as part of any proposed alterations to the 2011 scheme
- Alternative methods of moving coaches other than the proposed traverser to be investigated

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- The problem with obtaining coaches from the station was recognised as a less than ideal arrangement Passenger coaches should be available at the steaming bay
- Storage arrangements and on/off arrangements for coaches at the steaming bay to be investigated further as revised options for the whole scheme are developed.

Topic - Alternative proposal to provide bum trucks

General Meeting at HQ

- There was an idea that by NLSME providing bum trucks to allow drivers to access the line and travel round to the station was put forward. The driver would then abandon the bum truck and attach a coach from the existing or any future coach storage located at the station.
- When leaving the RT the driver would detach any passenger coach and reattach a bum truck for the short journey back to the steaming bay
- There was some question of how many trucks would the club need to provide but no conclusion reached.
- If viable than this solution would avoid the need to relocate passenger coaches.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

A very similar discussion to the 3/11 on this subject so the text is repeated

- There was an idea that by NLSME providing bum trucks to allow drivers to access the line and travel round to the station was described. The driver would then abandon the bum truck and attach a coach from the existing or any future coach storage located at the station.
- When leaving the RT the driver would detach any passenger coach and reattach a bum truck for the short journey back to the steaming bay
- Design of the trucks was discussed and agreed needs further investigation.
- There was some question of how many trucks would the club need to provide but no conclusion reached.
- If viable than this solution would avoid the need to relocate passenger coaches.

Topic - Gradient on proposed link line between steaming bay and traverser

General Meeting at HQ

- The need for some method of slowing or stopping runaways down the gradient was considered desirable.

Topic - Old workshop building

General Meeting at HQ

- A number of members expressed the view that the building should be repurposed in preference to demolition.
- Some suggestions were;
 - Use one end for carriage storage
 - Provide a larger dirty workshop. Container 6 for storage of general equipment e.g., cement mixer
- It was agreed that the details of how it might be used should be provided in more detail by those advocating retention.
- Some members stated that the building should be removed.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- A number of members expressed the view that the building should be repurposed in preference to demolition.
- Some suggestions were;
 - Use one end for carriage storage the other end for a larger workshop.
 - A method of storage and how coaches could be moved within the steaming bay area was described
 - Provide a larger dirty workshop. Container 6 for storage of general equipment e.g., cement mixer
 - Insulate the building properly
 - Put additional steaming bay lines each end of existing workshop
- It was agreed that the details of how it might be used should be provided in more detail by those advocating retention. A proposal was available but would be considered in detail as part of the reassessment of the scheme options.
- There were however a number who were of the view that the building should go
 - The building was in poor condition
 - Retaining it only provided more opportunity for a secure dumping ground
 - By clearing the area, it would release a significant area for the new steaming bays
 - We should employ a contractor to remove the building

Topic - Access to the G1 railway.

General Meeting at HQ

- Any proposed changes to the steaming bays must incorporate provision for access to the G1 at least as good as what is currently provided.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

Any proposed changes to the steaming bays must incorporate provision for access to the G1 at least as good as what is currently provided

Topic - Number of steaming bays

General Meeting at HQ

- Following some discussion, it was the general view that 14 steaming bays in total would meet the club's needs.
- Several expressed the view we should expand the existing steaming bay area rather than add a new steaming bay area. Key benefit all under one roof.
- The spacing between existing bays should be widened
- All bays should be 5" gauge with some fitted with drop in 3.5" gauge rails

- The facility to stand one 2.5" gauge loco should also be provided
- There was a view that the green fence around the steaming bay could be moved out to allow for respacing of bays and possible additional bays. Concern expressed on the impact to already restricted car parking.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- Following some discussion, it was the general view that approximately 14 steaming bays in total would meet the club's needs.
- Several expressed the view we should expand the existing steaming bay area rather than add a new steaming bay area. Key benefit all under one roof.
- The storage of coaches could be easily managed here if the option to provide a link line is perpetuated.
- All bays should be 5" gauge with some fitted with drop in 3.5" gauge rails

There was a view that the green fence around the steaming bay could be moved out to allow for respacing of bays and possible additional bays. Concern expressed on the impact to already restricted car parking

Topic - Roof over steaming bays

General Meeting at HQ

- With very little discussion this was considered to be a key improvement to be incorporated within any proposal

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- With very little discussion this was considered to be a key improvement to be incorporated within any proposal

Topic - Storage of coal

General Meeting at HQ

- Then need to relocate the existing storage of coal from the shed behind the tunnel was expressed

Topic - A number of alternative steaming bay layouts were discussed.

General Meeting at HQ

- A proposal to curve the link line round in front of the old workshop was suggested.
 - It was agreed the viability and pros & cons of such an arrangement should be investigated as part of any redesign.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- A very similar suggestion to the one expressed on 3/11 to curve the link line round in front of the old workshop was suggested.
 - It was agreed the viability and pros & cons of such an arrangement should be investigated as part of any redesign.

Topic - Area for engine repair

General Meeting at HQ

- There was a generally held view that facility for working on or repairing an engine should be provided in any amended scheme.
- This would be of great benefit to new members without the facilities at home.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- There was a generally held view that facility for working on or repairing an engine should be provided in any amended scheme.
- This would be of great benefit to new members without the facilities at home.

- Would encourage younger members to get involved in maintenance or repair of engines in a suitable environment

Topic -A number of alternative steaming bay layouts were discussed.

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- A very similar suggestion to the one expressed on 3/11 to curve the link line round in front of the old workshop was suggested.
 - It was agreed the viability and pros & cons of such an arrangement should be investigated as part of any redesign.

Topic -Commence refurbishment of area of steaming bay to be started this winter

Site Meeting at Tyttenhanger

- Some of the existing steaming bays are unaffected by any of the proposals. Can we refurbish these now whilst the rest of the scheme is developed? This was generally agreed to be a good idea but we need to define the area to be worked on which can be easily done and avoids any risk of reworking.
- All proposals retain the existing steaming bays. There was a view that we should stage any work to sort out the existing steaming bays before starting construction of any additional facilities.

This general meeting closed at 10pm. The Tyttenhanger meeting closed at 12.30.

Following these meetings the views expressed by club members will be considered at the next council meeting. The council will decide how any proposed changes to the original scheme are to be progressed and makes its recommendations/proposal to the membership.

END
