

Rugeley Miniature Railway Society
Presentation before Full Council on 1st March 2023

Three representatives attended a session before Full Council in order to bring Cllrs and the community up to date with the situation around their base on the Power Station site.

The Rugeley Miniature Railway Society (RMRS) have been on this site for 35 years. In that time the group have created a ride on railway approx. 2,000ft long. The railway passes through landscaped areas, through a tunnel, has two stations and work yards.

The railway is regarded as one of the best tracks in England with visitors from the UK and abroad.

The track and site are in an L shape and cover 0.6 hectares. The site has mature trees and established ecosystems.

The site (which lies in Lichfield District Council – Armitage with Handsacre Parish) has been included in the outline planning permission for the redevelopment by Engie. Engie have proposed that half of the RMRS site is to be sold for housing development. Engie have identified that land adjacent to the current site could be given as a land swap. However, this would mean that the railway would have to be dismantled, the grounds re landscaped and then the railway reinstalled at a smaller scale to accommodate the sharper turns required to fit on the compressed site.

The RMRW are seeking for support from individuals and councillors to lobby Lichfield District Council to ensure that the exiting site remains allocated to the RMRS.

Site visits have been undertaken with prominent Cllrs in the LDC and CCDC and members of parliament will be visiting the site next week.

The society are keen to remain on the site and build links with the proposed All Through School. The site could be a hub for practical engineering experience which is currently lacking in practical application in the curriculum.

At present the restrictions placed on the society by Engie mean that the site can only open at weekends. It is anticipated that should the site be saved, once the surrounding site has been fully developed, the society can open its doors to the general public at weekends some weekdays and for key calendar events.

The society requested that the Town Council write a letter of support to various Councillors and MPs, asking that the site is preserved in its current form.