

The new access creates a crossroads with Pennshannel opposite and, being located on the inside of a bend in the road, is in highway terms not a form of access which would be acceptable other than in the extreme circumstances the residents are facing in Goshen Park. Moreover, such an access will undoubtedly have short-term impacts on the amenity of the occupants of the properties to either side were these to be occupied while the temporary access road was operational. Therefore, such an access can only be accommodated on a temporary basis. The Coal Authority is currently designing a scheme to cap and stabilise the mine shaft which is located close to the junction between Goshen Park and Drummau Road as well as designing a more permanent mine water scheme to capture the water which is currently discharging from the blowout hole within the driveway of No1 Goshen Park. It is anticipated that these works will take approximately three to six months to complete respectively. The temporary access road will be required for the duration of this period.

Because of the urgency associated with the post-flooding circumstances on the ground, i.e. the need to return residents back to their homes, the Coal Authority has already undertaken these access works, which are therefore technically unauthorised. The Council and its Highway Officers however are aware of such works, with the latter monitoring the access to ensure it does not have unacceptable impacts. The constructed access is shown on the photographs below.





The purpose of this report is therefore to advise Members of the extent of unauthorised works that have been undertaken, and to seek their approval of a decision that it would not be expedient for the Authority to take any enforcement action against this temporary access. It will however, be essential that such works are removed and land, gardens and boundaries etc. are fully reinstated once the access is no longer required.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members resolve that it would not be expedient to pursue any enforcement action in respect of the unauthorised access works identified in this report, provided the Coal Authority reinstate the land to its former condition once the original access into Goshen Park is available for pedestrian and vehicular traffic.