

RVLR

RVLR April 2012 News Letter

Permanent Way

Well, we just managed to get the new section of track completed in time for the Open Days over Easter. It was touch and go with the last bolt going in just as it got dark on Friday evening. It was a great effort and I am very grateful to everyone who helped out. This photo shows the new section of track before final levelling and before the fishplates went on. I think you will agree it looks great.



Open Days Easter 2012

The overall attendance was slightly disappointing but this is the first time we have held an open day over the Easter Weekend and I suppose it will take time for the word to spread. We had more visitors on the Sunday than the Saturday so maybe next year we should consider opening on the Sunday and Monday instead. It was really good to see several friends and family members and overall we had a very good fun weekend.

Thanks go to all the volunteers who helped run the railway over the weekend and to get it ready in advance. You're help is really very much appreciated.

If anyone has any photos of the Open Weekend that they would like to share then please send them to me and we will get a gallery created and put on the web site.

There are some great photos and videos on our Facebook Page.

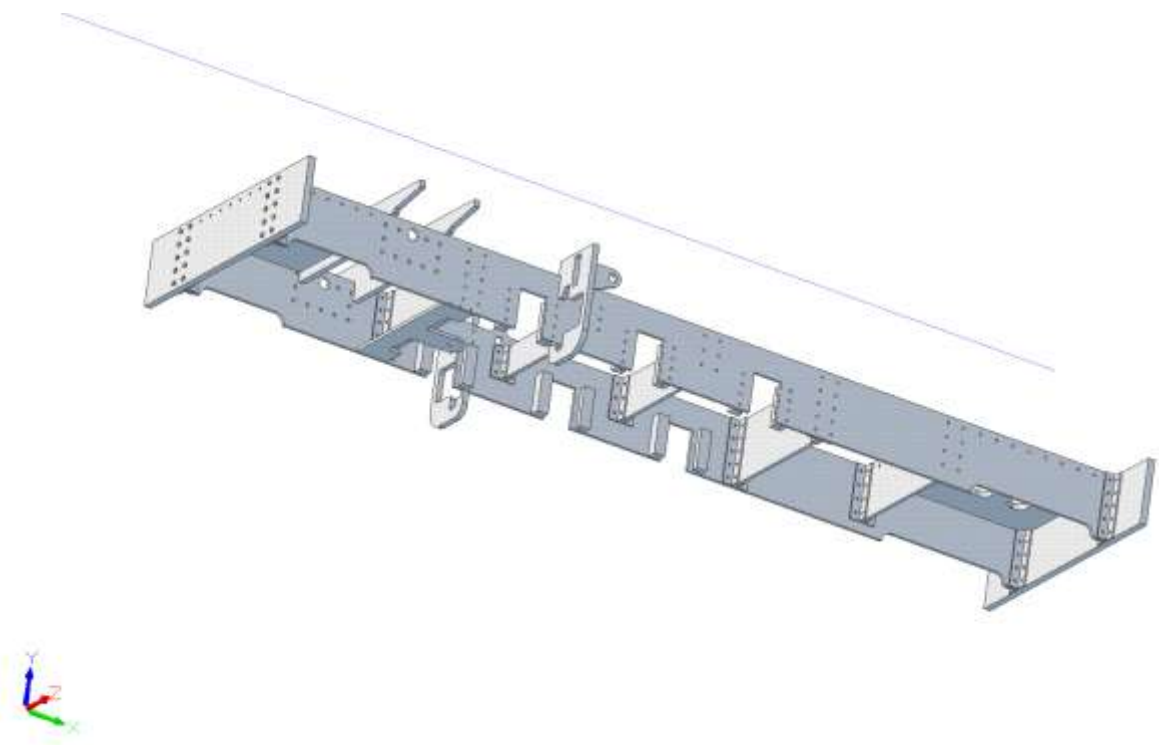
We had a couple of minor derailments with one of the four wheeled coaches. This was discovered to be due to a section of track having gone out of gauge. This was quickly repaired by the permanent way crew. While the repairs were being carried we operated with one engine at either end of the coaches so that at no time were the coaches being pushed by the locomotive. A first for the RVLR I think.

The whistle valve on Powys has been leaking slightly for some time. On Saturday the valve was leaking more than usual and towards the end of Powys's first run the boiler pressure dropped to a very low level and the engine had not got enough steam pressure to get up the bank in to the station. The decision was taken to withdraw Powys from service, drop the fire and try to repair the whistle valve in time for Sunday running. Once the whistle valve had been removed it became clear that the problem was a ball bearing not seating properly in the valve. After a good clean we managed to get it to seal, but not consistently, so we decided to run Powys on the Sunday without a whistle. This proved to be successful but we do need to get Powys's whistle valve properly overhauled before we steam again. I think a quick visit to Mr. James is called for !!!

Rhiw

The design of Rhiw continues and we are now ready to go out to tender for the steel for the frames.

Here we have to make a tricky decision. The main frames are 3993mm long and this creates a problem. We want to get the frames laser cut but most machines will only cut up to 3m. The ones that cut over 3m will not cut holes the size we need. So the dilemma is do we get the frames made in two pieces with all the holes cut for us and then get them welded together or do we get them cut in one piece with all the holes marked and then drill them ourselves. There are a lot of holes as you can see in this drawing.



Change of Development Plan

During the recent Open Weekend the problems we had with the old track served to highlight the fact that we need to replace all of the old track as quickly as possible and to that end I have revised the railway development plan.

Instead of going across the river at this stage I am seriously considering continuing straight along the river bank up to the top of the farm and then building a run round loop. We can then disconnect and lift the section that runs closest to the road and then add the lower extension. This would give us 1500m out and back. A total run of 3000m which I think will make a good run.

It should mean that we will be running on much better track far more quickly than with the current plan and we won't have to get involved with all the problems associated with crossing the river.

I have attached an aerial plan view to show the proposed route and the current track.



The sleepers for the next section of track to be replaced have already been ordered and are due for delivery in time for the August working weekend.

Well I think that should bring you all up to date and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our working weekends and open days.

All the best for now

Mike

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