

Minutes of the Ironbridge Power Station Redevelopment Liaison Group Meeting Friday 3rd March 2023

1. Present and Apologies

Present:

Tim Hurdiss, Director of Midland Operations (Harworth)
Gemma Lawley , Developing Highways Manager (Shropshire Council)
Stephanie Spear, Project Surveyor (Harworth)
Rachel Mythen, Development Planner (Harworth)
Claire Wild , Shropshire Councillor (Severn Valley Division)
Sue Jones, Chair (Leighton and Eaton Constantine Parish Council)
Paul Davies, (Wroxeter and Uppington Parish Council)
Victoria Todd, Chair (Cressage, Harley and Sheinton Parish council)
Matt Timmins, Project Director (Harworth)
George Bagley, Development Manager (Harworth)
Lorraine Pratt, Chair (Buildwas Parish Council)
Simon Heath, Vice-Chair (Buildwas Parish Council)

Apologies:

Grahame French, Principal Planning Officer (Shropshire Council)
Dan Thomas, Councillor and Shropshire Councillor (Much Wenlock)

2. Introduction by Chairman

Claire Wild welcomed all to the meeting and asked the Group to agree the minutes of the last meeting on December 6th 2022.

Action : All agreed . The Minutes are to be placed on the local Parish Council websites.

3. Highways / Traffic Management

• Update on request for VAS signs on A4169 and B4380

Gemma Lawley updated the group. She apologised for failure to deliver the VAS signs in January 2023. Harworth have been pursuing the implementation and were not to blame for the delays. The money is ready to deliver the signs. Richard Wynn from ADC Infrastructure has drawn up plans for the positioning of the VAS signs.

Sue Jones asked if there could be a meeting in Leighton village to discuss the positions of the proposed VAS signs.

Action – Gemma Lawley, David Gradwell and Jason Hughes from Shropshire Council’s Highways Department would meet with Claire Wild and Parish Councillors the following week to finalise positions for the VAS signs.

Claire Wild asked that a ‘deadline for action’ be implemented with an email being sent to all on the Liaison Group by the middle of the following week giving an update on what is happening regarding the VAS signs.

Action – This was agreed and a follow up email will be sent out.

- **Update on the request for speed limits on roads surrounding the Site**

Gemma Lawley confirmed that a speed reduction for the A4169 and B4380 would be implemented before construction begins on the Site.

Gemma told the Group that there are no proposals to reduce the speed limit along the Buildwas Road in Ironbridge from the entrance to the Site to the junction with the A4169 Wenlock Road.

Simon Heath told the Group that this road is dark and narrow and very dangerous to walk along particularly at night. It will remain a 60 mph limit which he feels is too fast for the road conditions. Gemma took on board the comments but reminded the Group that if Shropshire Council take on the current bridge to become a public bridge, access to the Site using this bridge will be for pedestrian, cycle and bus use only thus reducing the amount of traffic.

Gemma informed the Group that the design of the new road junction from the A4169 Wenlock Road and the Buildwas road towards Ironbridge will make it difficult for traffic from Much Wenlock to turn right towards Ironbridge. This is to encourage the use of the Buildwas Bank route rather than increasing traffic through Ironbridge town.

Simon Heath was sceptical about the success of this. He told the Group that the traffic monitoring done by ADC infrastructure is flawed as not all scenarios were studied.

Action – Gemma Lawley suggested that Shropshire Council will monitor the situation and respond to any issues that develop.

- **Update on highways matters concerning Buildwas Parish**

Matt Timmins discussed the designs being progressed by WSP involving technical reviews and road safety implications for two junctions:

1. The Buildwas T Junction with Buildwas Bank and the A4169 Wenlock Road . The proposal is that this would be a roundabout.
2. The junction of Buildwas Road from Ironbridge with the A4169 Wenlock Road.

The designs are with Shropshire Council and they are awaiting feedback. The process is a lengthy one involving technical approval and legal agreement before tendering for contractors. He asked the Group whether the construction of these junctions should be done separately or together to reduce the time of disruption. The benefit of doing both together is that the same contractor will be used for both projects. The contractor can double up the gangs to speed up the work. As diversions have to be put in place a long lead time has to be put in place. The work will not start for at least 18 months and avoid July and August. If all goes well work would probably start in the middle of September 2024.

It was pointed out by Claire Wild that dates for re-surfacing works on the A4169 have been published but these do not extend to Buildwas village which is in need of repair.

Action- Gemma Lawley would organise a meeting as soon as possible with Buildwas Parish Council to discuss implementation of Traffic Calming Measures in Buildwas. An update from the Capital Works Team on the road repair programme is required and Gemma will come back with the required information.

It was noted that better communication between departments at Shropshire Council is needed.

- **Update on highways matters concerning Leighton and Eaton Constantine Parish including Traffic Calming Measures for Leighton**

Gemma Lawley, Dave Gradwell and Jason Hughes are to meet with Leighton Parish Councillors the following week in Leighton to discuss positions of VAS signs.

- **Update on highways matters concerning Much Wenlock**

A meeting has been held with Much Wenlock Town Councillors and Shropshire Council to discuss the Gaskell Arms Junction. We were told Much Wenlock Councillors were happy with the outcome of the meeting.

- **Update on highways matters affecting Wroxeter and Atcham Parishes**

An email from Shropshire Council will be sent to all on the Liaison Group by the middle of next updating what is happening.

- **Update on highways matters concerning Cressage, Harley and Sheinton Parish – not on Agenda**

Victoria Todd, chair of Cressage Parish Council, told the Group of her concerns over the safety of Cressage Bridge, which is in need of repair, and the increase of traffic through Cressage due to the development at Ironbridge. She also told of concerns with Ironbridge traffic heading to Shrewsbury wanting to avoid the Gaskell Arms junction may use the unsuitable Sheinton road as a short cut/ rabbit run.

Claire Wild told the Group that repairs to the Cressage Bridge are in hand.

Claire Wild suggested that traffic monitoring should be done to pick up data to watch traffic flows.

Action - Shropshire Council will do the traffic monitoring and respond to issues as they emerge.

4. Planning Update - Shropshire Council and Harworth

In Grahame French's absence Gemma Lawley updated the Group on planning issues:

- There is a new Planning Services Manager at Shropshire Council – Tabitha Lythe. She will oversee the Planning Department.
- There are two main conditions being discussed at present regarding the Ironbridge Site :

1/ Design Code – This sets the standard code for the whole site so is very important.

The Harworth group are keen to get going as they have already cleaned up ground for the first 2 phases of the development.

Tim Hurdiss told the Group that the phase 1 design code is still in discussion. An application from a building company has been formally received for phase 1. As Phase 1 properties will be key properties with frontages on view, further enhancement of the design code needs to be done to be in keeping with the World Heritage status of Ironbridge. The design code will set the standard for the whole development and will hopefully be confirmed in the next couple of weeks.

Gemma Lawley told the Group that the Design Code Document will be the key document to refer to over the Development. As standards change over the years, the document may be refreshed at a later date.

2/ Phasing – Phasing the building of the development, including access and landscaping.

Tim Hurdiss told the Group that the Phasing Plan includes areas of open space around the developed areas. As soon as Phase 1 development takes place and people move into properties, then landscaping will be done to include trees around the Site. The golf course area up to the bridge will also be open to the public.

Action -Once the Design Code and Phasing Plan have been approved, an item should be added to the next Agenda so the Group will get an overview of the documents and content. A presentation on the phasing

was thought to be helpful. Harworth also agreed to put together a newsletter to keep local communities up to date.

Pumping Station – There is a Planning Condition that the Pump House has to be made water tight by 16th September 2023. BNP are looking into the scope of works to make the property water tight. At the moment the basement is filled with 10m water. This has to be pumped out to be able to look at the building structure. Once this work is done the ‘cold shell’ could be utilised by the public. Access to the building will be via the grassed area and there are no plans at present to put in a road to the property. However, there are lots of potential uses for the property and it is hoped that these will evolve over time. e.g. in the long term it could be possible to be used for a restaurant/bar, pop up shops, art gallery. It is hoped a use will naturally morph as time goes on.

5. Update on Sand and Gravel Works

- Harworth now own JPE Quarry and are leasing the Quarry Site back to JPE on a three month notice to withdraw contract.
- Network Rail has delayed works to the Albert Edward Bridge until 2024-2029 which means transport of sand and gravel using rail is delayed. The amount of sand and gravel that can be removed from the Site by road is limited to 100,000 tonnes per year. Harworth are looking to use some of the extracted sand on site to negate taking it on the road and also may put some sand and gravel product in the JPE Quarry.
- There will not be any houses built on the JPE Quarry site. It will be used to create a green buffer to reduce the visual impact of the Development Site and may be used to create a car park to service the Sports Club and Abbey.

6. AOB

- A site walk and hopefully a ride on the train to be organised for the next meeting.
- Tim Hurdiss to draft a newsletter for the wider community on what is happening on the Site.
- Lorraine Pratt has asked if the Church Parishioners at Buildwas could look at religious provision on the Site. This was agreed.

- Harworth would welcome school visits to the site. It was agreed Harworth would contact local schools and offer site visits.

7. Date of next meeting

To be decided