

Minutes of the Ironbridge Power Station Redevelopment Liaison Group

Meeting Wednesday 13th March 2024

1. Present and Apologies

Present:

Claire Wild –Shropshire Councillor (Severn Valley Division). Chair
of Liaison Group

Sue Jones – Leighton and Eaton Constantine Parish Council

Tim Hurdiss – Director of Midland operations, Harworth

Soraya Hemming – Apprentice surveyor, Harworth

Paul Davies –Wroxeter and Uppington Parish Council

Rachel Mythen – Development Planner, Harworth

Gemma Lawley – Developing Highways Manager, Shropshire Council

Louise Evans – Principal Planning Officer

Victoria Todd – Cressage, Harley and Sheinton Parish Council

Simon Heath – Buildwas Parish Council

Apologies:

Mark Thorn – Leighton and Eaton Constantine Parish Council

Jill Grainger – Buildwas Parish Council

2. Introduction by Chairman

Cllr Claire wild welcomed all to the meeting

3. Approval of the Minutes of the July 23 Meeting

The Group was asked to approve Minutes of the last meeting on July 25th 2023

Action – All agreed

4. Matters arising from the July Minutes

- Gemma Lawley was to organise a review of hedges to see who was responsible for hedge cutting on Buildwas Road, A4373 towards Ironbridge – Gemma reported that Shropshire Council would keep an eye on the hedge growth and act as necessary.
- Gemma Lawley was to look at road safety around the Buildwas Bank junction with Rod Lake – There has not been a meeting yet with Rod Lake. Gemma was monitoring safety reports to help decide what is required for the new junction. Simon Heath is providing information when accidents occur at the junction.

5. Highways /Traffic

- **Phase 2 Speed reduction**

Claire Wild asked about putting in speed reduction along A4169, Much Wenlock Road to reduce traffic speeds before any construction takes place on the Main Site and Construction Access opposite Crossing Cottage. Mobile VAS signs could support temporary speed limits. There would need to be agreement where the signs are to be placed with Harworth and Shropshire Council Highways. The mobile signs could have different messaging as required.

Tim Hurdiss stated that the main North Site Access will also be used for construction traffic and the Bridge Access would be used for public use only. If the river is flooded preventing traffic using the Bridge, the new entrance will help traffic get on and off the Site. The main Site Access will be just one wider junction situated where the current access is close to the JPE quarry. Final design is yet to be agreed. Once approval for the new wider Junction is given, hopefully by September/ October 2024, then work will go out to tender.

Work on the Southern roundabout junction on the A4169 would mainly take place on Site and link up to the road system at a later date.

Action – Gemma Lawley would work with Harworth to implement and site the mobile speed VAS signs as soon as possible.

Tim Hurdiss would speak to local residents when he has details of timings for the construction of the Junction.

- **Buildwas Bank Junction**

Gemma Lawley told the Group that the construction of the Buildwas Bank junction should take place in 2026. This still needs clarification with Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Council's rolling programmes of work. It is hoped that the Mill Farm Junction will be built at the same time to reduce disruption. Gemma also stated that due to the complexity of the Buildwas Bank Junction she has passed the plans onto a specialist office in roundabout design. A road safety audit also needs to be done. It may take at least 6 months to confirm the final design, but she will update the Group at the next meeting.

Gemma Lawley also told the group that there are proposals to extend the 40mph speed limit from Buildwas up Buildwas Bank. The extent of the speed limits and signing are yet to be decided.

Simon Heath pointed out that once the new roundabout for the Buildwas Bank Junction is constructed, traffic coming from Much Wenlock on the A4169 was not going to be allowed to turn right down the Buildwas Road towards Ironbridge. Traffic would need to go all round the new roundabout first then turn left along the Buildwas road. This would lead to higher volumes of traffic using the new roundabout. He is concerned that the increased volume of traffic may cause long queues at peak times.

Claire Wild pointed out that the Buildwas Bank Junction is a very frightening junction. She suggested that driver behaviour needs to be changed before any construction of the new roundabout takes place to reduce the risk of serious accidents. She suggested that a 40mph speed limit, enforced with cameras, be installed as soon as possible.

Gemma Lawley told the group that Traffic Regulation Orders only work for a limited time. She would need to look at timings to see when this could be applicable. Normally 6 weeks before construction starts the 40mph speed limit would be introduced. Cameras have different criteria which she does not have expertise in.

Action – Gemma to update the Group on the possibility of having a camera enforced speed limit. Simon Heath to continue to pass on accident data to Gemma as this could help in the design of the junction.

- **Confirmation of position and timing of the new Construction Access**

As reported under Phase 2 Speed reduction, the Main North Much Wenlock Road Site entrance will also be used initially for construction traffic. It will be a wider junction, utilising the train track next to the current site entrance opposite Crossing Cottage. Once the design has been approved, work on this junction will take place as soon as possible, hopefully October time. It will be a signalised junction.

Claire Wild asked whether there will be need for full road closure.

Tim Hurdiss stated that he hoped not and by using weekend, overnight closures and maybe one lane closure, it may be possible to keep the road open. However, there will be need to close the road when re-surfacing takes place. Hopefully this won't take long.

- **Construction Management Plan and the routing of vehicles**

Sue Jones queried the routing of construction traffic to and from the Site. The CMP only stated that traffic was not allowed to turn right towards Ironbridge from the Bridge Access Junction. It did not confirm what we are initially told that HGV construction traffic would not be allowed to use the B4380. The removal of Pulverised ash (condition 58) was also discussed and the routing of HGV vehicles for this.

Louise Evans told the Group that Harworth have agreed to have a routing agreement with hauliers to route construction traffic up Buildwas bank and not along the B4380. Cameras will be placed to enforce this.

Simon Heath asked whether a large sign could be placed on the Buildwas Bank Junction to remind all HGV traffic from the Harworth Site to only turn right up Buildwas Bank. All thought this was a good idea.

Action – Gemma Lawley to follow up and have sign installed.

6. Planning Update

Discharge of Conditions and current Application.

- **Update from Shropshire Council**

Louise Evans updated the Group. Monthly meetings are taking place between the Planners and Harworth to discuss progress. Wording around some conditions and amending certain trigger points on some conditions enables some enabling work on the Site to take place.

The design code is now approved. There is a Design Review Panel of Schemes which provides parameters with which to work to make sure designs are acceptable.

Phase 1A, the Barratts scheme, is likely to be re-submitted hopefully within the next month.

The design code needs a contemporary take on the traditional to be appropriate to the Site. Historical context is taken into account. Barratts have been advised to get heritage advice for their designs.

Phase 2 enabling works are still outstanding. A house builder is now on board for this part of the development.

Simon Heath asked that capacity to take larger vehicles into the housing developments, such as delivery vehicles, is taken into account.

The Group was told that the design Code sets out parking parameters.

The Group was also told that sustainability was considered and although solar panels are not part of the house design, there will be possibility for owners to add solar panels at a later date. Air Source Heat Pump heating will be installed in all properties.

- **Update from Harworth**

Tim Hurdiss –

The Train Minister visited the Harworth Site last month and this was a very positive meeting. There are on-going discussions with Network Rail to possibly upgrade the track and Albert Edward Bridge to take a light self-contained passenger railway. As the VLR is light, there will not be such a need to upgrade the railway to such a large extent.

The Pump House is now water tight.

Sports Clubs are coming forward keen to use the facilities. Harworth will provide some ground-works and modular building for a clubhouse to start the facilities being utilised. Ways at getting people to and from the sports pitches safely are being looked into.

Sue Jones and Claire Wild thanked Harworth for paying for the new VAS along the B4380. Much appreciated.

7. Update on sand and gravel work

No new information

8. Any Other Business

- Leighton Traffic Calming Measures.

Sue Jones to speak with Gemma Lawley after the meeting and look at plans for Leighton.

9. Date of next meeting

Wednesday June 12th 2024 at 10am at Harworth Site