



# **Much Wenlock Town Council**

## **Planning & Environment Committee Meeting**

**6<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

**Supporting Papers**

Summary notes for Town Council on presentation on 6th February 2024

Context: one of the main aims of Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) is Nature Recovery and this includes restoring landscapes and habitats to promote biodiversity; the national aim is for 30% of the land to be managed for nature. Another objective of SWT is to promote the connection with nature for people.

We believe that we could better fulfil these objectives if we worked in partnership with Town and Parish councils and groups whose aim is also to promote Nature Recovery.

The Bridgnorth Branch of SWT covers a large area of Shropshire and Much Wenlock is home to three of our committee members. Hence our invitation to the Town Council to see if we could together work more effectively on Nature Recovery.

**Shropshire Wildlife Trust Bridgnorth Branch, in the first instance, are proposing that, with the Town Council's endorsement and support:**

1. That we map areas where wild flowers are already growing and areas where there is potential to further seed wild flowers. In addition this would include shrubs that also attract bees and other insects.
2. Working with other active groups where wildflower planting and shrubs already exists, such as: Gaskell fields, Windmill Trust Nature Reserve, churchyard of Holy Trinity Church and at the Old Cemetery.
3. If it were possible to get these groups together and design a plan - a member of Middle Marches Land and Community Trust have offered support in doing this.
4. The next stage we would be to map verges and hedgerows in and adjacent to the town with a view to developing and enhancing wildlife corridors and so encourage nectar rich sources for bees and other insects.
5. The resulting maps and resources could be collated for local people and visitors via Information Boards that map these wildlife trails and provide information about local species of flowers and shrubs that flourish in this limestone rich area.

**We are requesting that the Town Council can help by:**

1. Identify local nature recovery goals where Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) could assist.
2. Goals identified from the Verges, Hedges & Watercourses conference held by Middle Marches Land and Community Trust
3. Identify a named counsellor with whom we could liaise re: nature recovery. This would also facilitate sharing with our members, other like-minded groups and large groups in the town such as U3a, and The Civic Society. Collectively this would help support the Town Council's goals on Nature Recovery and the progress all parties are making towards the national targets.
4. A notice board for posting SWT activities.
5. An Information Board on the local Wild Flower Trail (once this is mapped).
6. Include progress on Nature Recovery in the minutes of the Town Council and in The Herald.

**Both Town Council and SWTBB: to work towards:**

- showing people how they can help to make a difference in nature recovery and conservation – so for example a house with a bird box, a green space with an apple tree, a verge with wild flowers etc

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# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**  
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock

**Present:** Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick (in the chair), Wilf Grainger, Dan Thomas, Chris Tyler, Linda West

**In attendance:** Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, two members of the public

## 1. Apologies

None – all Councillors were present.

## 2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

## 3. Dispensations

None requested.

## 4. Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

## 5. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

## 6. Planning Applications

Members considered a response to the following planning applications:

23/05131/FUL Brooklands, Farley Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of two storey rear extension, alterations to front elevation. <b>Members noted that the decision to grant permission for this application had been notified by Shropshire Council earlier in the day.</b>
23/05114/LBC 54 High Street, Much Wenlock	Alterations to an existing window to create a new doorway to the side of the property. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>
23/05212/FUL and 23/05213/LBC 48 High Street, Much Wenlock	Alterations to gates and boundary wall. <b>It was RESOLVED to support both applications.</b>
23/05388/TPO Lime Grove, Smithfield Road, Much Wenlock	Pollard down to a 7 metre pole 1no Lime (T1) protected by the Bridgnorth District Council (Smithfield Road, Much Wenlock, Salop) TPO 1978 (Ref: BR/TPO/28). Members noted that the reason for pollarding the tree was unclear. <b>It was RESOLVED to defer to the opinion of the tree officer with the comment that Members would have liked more information on which to base a decision.</b>

## 7. Planning Decisions

It was **RESOLVED** to note the following planning decisions:

23/04509/FUL The Stables, Victoria Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of standalone photovoltaic array comprised of 2No. rows of 11No. panels each. <b>Decision: Grant Permission</b>
23/03985/FUL Proposed Barn Conversion Barn 6 At Hill Farm, Bourton, Much Wenlock	Conversion of existing traditional single storey cow byre into a two bedroom dwelling with a courtyard and parking area <b>Decision: Grant Permission</b>

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<p>23/04840/TCA The Gables, Racecourse Lane, Much Wenlock</p>	<p>Reduce height by approx. 30% and overhanging branches (See Correspondence) of group of Bay (T1), 1no Lime (T3), 1no Acer (T4), 3no Silver Birch (T5,T6 &amp;T7), 1no Scotch Pine (T8) and 2no Leylandii (T9 &amp;T10), thin Hazel cluster (T2) &amp; reduce height by approx. third of 1no Beech (T11) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area</p> <p><b>Decision: No Objection</b></p> <p>It was noted that the tree officer had expressed concerns about the extent of height reduction proposed to the mature beech and Scots pine, both of which could be damaged by overly heavy or insensitive lopping, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the work. Councillors were pleased that their comments in this regard had been taken into account.</p>
<p>23/04843/TCA Mary Way House, 7 St Mary's Lane, Much Wenlock</p>	<p>Reduce back branches overhanging property (See Photo) of 1no Leylandii (T12) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area</p> <p><b>Decision: No Objection</b></p>

#### 8. Draft Shropshire Local Plan Review 2016 - 2038

- a. There appeared to have been no recent developments with the Local Plan review as the latest posting on the Examination website was 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- b. Members noted that no date had been announced for the submission of representations for Stage 2 of the Examination in Public. Councillors considered the draft representation prepared by the Town Council's Associates and proposed for submission on behalf of the Town Council and Associates. They agreed that the document was very well written and had clearly taken a lot of work. However, they were minded that there had been no call so far for representations for Stage 2 of the Examination and that further information might come to light before that time which could necessitate an amendment to the content. They also expressed concerns about some of the wording relating to potential development sites.

**It was RESOLVED to circulate the draft to all Councillors and to present it for consideration at a forthcoming full Council meeting when the submission date for representations for Stage 2 of the Examination in Public was known.**

#### 9. Neighbourhood Plan

- a. Members reviewed discussions held with the Council's Neighbourhood Plan consultant, Alison Eardley, on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The meeting had been positive and the consultant had agreed to prepare a project plan to help move the review forward. It had been agreed to arrange a meeting with members of the Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group and Civic Society to discuss the scope of the review. Following this, a launch event would be organised to seek views from the community and engagement with the review process. The Clerk was asked to check the availability of the consultant and make arrangements for the meeting with representatives of the Refresh Group/Civic Society.
- b. Some Councillors had already provided comments on the draft of the Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines prepared by AECOM. Any further comments should be passed to the Clerk by the end of the week. Councillor Thomas had been pleased to see how closely the new document aligned with the Much Wenlock design statement from 2000.

#### 10. Telford & Wrekin Draft Local Plan

Members considered a response to the Telford & Wrekin Draft Local Plan consultation by the extended deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. The Transport Working Group recommended that a formal objection should be submitted due to concerns about increased traffic through the Gaskell corner arising from development plans. The Council's transport advisor had undertaken modelling which demonstrated that the developments proposed would increase vehicle movements through the Gaskell corner by 40-50 during peak hours. Members noted that contact had been made with Buildwas and Leighton Parish Councils to ask whether they would like to submit a combined objection.

**It was RESOLVED to submit an objection to the Telford & Wrekin Draft Local Plan due to concerns about the increased traffic which would be generated through Much Wenlock.** The Transport Working Group would prepare a draft for circulation and approval prior to submission.

#### 11. Wah Lai Chinese Takeaway

The Clerk had written to the owner of the Wah Lai premises in the High Street on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 but no response had been received to date.

It was understood from another source that matters were moving forward with occupation of the premises.

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**12. Flooding Issues**

- a. Members of the Strategic Flood Working Group reported that a further meeting with Philip Dunne and others regarding flooding matters had been proposed for Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 2.30pm.

It was noted that the capital drainage work planned for Stretton Road had been postponed from the scheduled January start date until later in the year in response to concerns from the businesses along Wenlock Edge. Councillors were disappointed that the work would need to be rescheduled. A new date was awaited.

- b. Members considered information received from Severn Trent Water in relation to the sewerage system in Much Wenlock and sewage escape. It was noted that CCTV investigations had been carried out in July 2023 in Sheinton Street and the Bull Ring. Further CCTV investigations were planned to check more of the network. There were proposals for work between 2025 and 2030. Councillor Thomas agreed to seek clarification on some of the points raised.
- c. A response had been received from the Environment Agency (EA) regarding a potential environmental incident at Quality Liquid Feeds and contingency plans to deal with any such incident, including the effects of a possible breach at Shadwell Quarry. The EA had responded: "Our technical officer has checked their permitting database and we do not appear to regulate this site and we have no permit/licence records for the site at all."

Replies were awaited from Severn Trent Water and Shropshire Council.

- d. Members considered the response to correspondence to the Reservoir Safety Team at the Environment Agency regarding potential risks from collapse of the boundary at Shadwell Quarry. The Reservoir Safety Team had advised that this was not a large raised reservoir and so they could not help. They recommended referring the query to the Health & Safety Executive.

**It was RESOLVED to pass on the response from the EA to the Flood Action Group for them to consider reporting the concerns to the Health & Safety Executive.** It was acknowledged that the Flood Action Group had more evidence of the potential risks associated with the quarry than the Council. Councillor Benbow agreed to contact the Flood Action Group.

- e. It was noted that the recent heavy rain had not resulted in any flooding in the town, and that regular clearing of drains in the town had helped. It was understood that Much Wenlock was now scheduled for frequent drain clearing by Shropshire Council, although it had not been possible to obtain a copy of the timetable. It was noted that the Shropshire Council drain gulper was not permitted to go beyond the 30mph speed limit without traffic management, which affected the frequency of cleaning on parts of the Bourton Road and Oakfield Park.

**13. Transport and Highways Matters**

Members considered a report from the Transport Working Group. It was understood that proposals for the Gaskell corner were still under discussion by Shropshire Council and WSP. The parking proposals for the town were awaiting further amendment.

**14. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies\***

- a. Members noted information on new local authority guidance from Buglife, an invertebrate conservation charity, and an invitation to an online launch event on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024. **It was RESOLVED that Councillor Linda West should attend, as the Council's 'Climate Champion'.**
- b. Members noted an invitation to attend an online workshop on putting together a climate change plan for towns and parishes on 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

**15. Consultation\*****16. Street Lighting**

It was understood that the street light in Southfield Road that had been uncovered following the cutting back of trees was now working. The light had been added to the Town Council's inventory.

Councillors noted that the Shropshire Council street light outside 42 Barrow Street had been flickering for months and had been reported frequently on FixMyStreet. Councillor Thomas was asked to follow this up.

**17. Street Naming \*****18. Footpath Issues\***

Members noted that the kissing gate at the entrance to the Bull Ring footpath had been replaced with a gate that was accessible for pushchairs and that 12 metres of stone had been laid on the path. This area of the path was much improved. Shropshire Council and the landowner had no objection to more of the path being stoned, although there was no funding available for this at present.

**19. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders\***

**20. Footpath Diversion Orders\***

Members noted the response from the Rights of Way officer at Shropshire Council to the Town Council’s objection to the diversion of footpath 177 in Barrow parish.

**21. Road Closures\***

It was noted that signs had now been displayed for the 24 hour High Street road closure for electrical work between 15<sup>th</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> February. The A4169 from William Brookes school towards Buildwas would be closed for patching between 12<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> January, between 9.30am and 4pm on weekdays, and residents along the road had been notified by letter.

**22. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)\***

**23. Stopping Up Orders\***

**24. Speed Limit Orders\***

**25. Prohibition Orders\***

**26. Date of next meeting**

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7pm at the Guildhall or Corn Exchange (tbc), Much Wenlock.

**PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it was **RESOLVED** that the public and press should not be present.

**27. Planning Enforcement**

Members noted an update on the following enforcement issues: 22/09018/ENF, 23/09619/ENF and closed case 23/09833/ENF.

The Clerk was asked to query the situation with enforcement issues 23/09961/ENF and 23/09704/ENF.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed.....(Chairperson)

Date.....

Thursday, January 25, 2024 at 12:13:39 PM Greenwich Mean Time

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**Subject:** Shropshire Planning Enforcement  
**Date:** Wednesday, 24 January 2024 at 16:32:02 Greenwich Mean Time  
**From:** Emma Green  
**To:** Planning Enforcement  
**Attachments:** image001.png, Shropshire Enforcement Protocol - Final October 2023.pdf

Good Afternoon Councillors and Clerks,

I am writing to you all to raise awareness of our updated planning enforcement protocol, which sets out the Councils powers and priorities in dealing with enforcement enquiries. We have been undergoing a transformation of our processes over the last 2-3 years, with a move to a dedicated enforcement team, supported by wider planning and technical specialists, in investigating potential planning breaches. These changes have resulted in swifter determinations of whether a breach has occurred, and if so, it is a matter which causing sufficient harm that intervention is required.

Some of the key principles are as follows:

The thrust of the legislation seeks to put the onus for compliance with planning legislation on property owners, and that they should be afforded the opportunity to seek to remedy and address planning breaches. This can and often does include submission of retrospective planning permission. However, if development is considered to be acceptable in principle, then we can not insist that an application is submitted. Another solution can be to alter or change development to meet a planning consent or permitted development rights.

If there is significant harm arising from unauthorised development, or there is a need for controls by planning conditions, and there is no consent in place, and no commitment from owners to seek to address, then formal action may be the necessary response to seek to resolve the concerns.

Your participation on the process:

As part of our investigations and as committed in the protocol, we seek to engage with Parish and Town Councils, as having knowledge and local information which could be of assistance in considering matter. To that end we consult you on cases raised, with an automatic alert. Enforcement investigations are a confidential process, to ensure that complainants have no fear of coming forward with concerns. To that end, our consultation process with you is confidential, and we would expect that you should not disclose that an investigation has been lodged, or produce in any public meeting, documents or part of any public discussion the enforcement references or property addresses. It has come to our attention on a number of cases that this process is not currently occurring, and some parishes agendas and minutes include confidential details, and there have been allegations to Shropshire council that we are disclosing confidential information in breach of data protection legislation.

Consequently, can I urge you all review and consider your processes of dealing and handling our enforcement notifications, to ensure you and your organisation, are not open to claims of breaching data protection legislation. If it is of assistance, when we need to discuss these matters with planning committee, this is an end of agenda item, and is a closed session discussion, once the public have left and live streaming has ceased.

There are limited occasions when enforcement investigations move from being confidential to matters of public record, and this is when a formal enforcement notice is served. The case will then be displayed on our public access website, and includes details of the breach and the notice served and timescales for compliance. If the notice is appealed, then this is also a public process, and again information is available on our website.



I note that there is an ongoing concern that whilst we notify you of cases being opened, there is not a similar closing of case alert produced. This is due to our systems not allowing this, and there is a project being undertaken to assess how we can best address this. However, if there are cases of particular interest to yourselves, then on receipt of the details, you can contact the team and be added to the case as an interested party, so we can inform you as the matter progresses.

I hope this information is of assistance, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

**Emma Green MRTPI**

Principal Enforcement Officer (Team Leader)  
Planning Services – Planning Enforcement Team  
Economy and Place  
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Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 4:31:50 PM Greenwich Mean Time

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**Subject:** Stretton Rd, Much Wenlock Drainage Improvement  
**Date:** Monday, 22 January 2024 at 11:00:37 Greenwich Mean Time  
**From:** Laura Howells  
**Attachments:** Drainage - Stretton Road, Much Wenlock - Road Closure A1 (1).pdf

To whom it may concern,

**Stretton Rd, Much Wenlock Drainage Improvement Works** has been identified as needing essential improvement to tackle flooding concerns. The site forms part of a countywide programme of drainage schemes, scheduled to deliver the work in the most efficient and cost-effective way. We are currently planning work for next financial year (2024-2025) and as part of our improved engagement process, we wish to make you aware of essential drainage work that is programmed to take place in your area.

The work will include the construction of a new highway drainage system which will divert water into the Shylte attenuation basin, constructed by Shropshire Council in 2017. The connection of the highway drainage system to this basin will ensure flows generated by the Highway are attenuated and the project will reduce flooding around Havelock Crescent and High Street during intense rainfall events.

To ensure the works are delivered as efficiently and safely as possible, a 24hr road closure will be necessary for most of the works and a signed diversion route will be in place (see attached plans). Access will be maintained for properties within the closure.

Unfortunately, the planned drainage works on the B4371 were initially planned for the January 22nd 2024 but were postponed for various reasons. We are now looking at pencilling this scheme in from mid-June 2024 to mid-September 2024. Once details have been agreed with our supply chain and permits have been granted, we will be in touch with more robust dates. The purpose of this email is to give you advance notice and time to share your thoughts.

Rest assured that we are working with our supply chain to find efficiencies where possible. Unfortunately, due to risks to our site staff, there will need to be some road closures. We are looking at options of combining road closures with other traffic management measures, to minimise disruption to local residents and businesses. Once we have more information on this, we will let you know of our proposals.

A later closure allows plenty of time for our fantastic local businesses and residents along Stretton Road to make proper plans to deal with the pressure this road closure will cause; it's crucial that we support them during any disruption. This means additional opportunities to optimise detours, improve signage and implement mitigation measures to reduce traffic congestion.

Therefore, we would like to know of any concerns, queries, or any local issues such as farming activities and school times, that we will need to take into consideration when planning these works.

We would be grateful if these could be sent to Shropshire Highways via email:

[Highwaysconsultation@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Highwaysconsultation@shropshire.gov.uk)

Please note that the delivery of these schemes are subject to budgetary and programme constraints

Please see our webpage for more details on upcoming works. <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/road-network-management/large-scale-project-works/>

Kind regards,

Laura Howells,  
Communication and Engagement Officer,  
Shropshire Highways.

Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 4:34:04 PM Greenwich Mean Time

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**Subject:** Stretton Rd, Much Wenlock Drainage Improvement Works  
**Date:** Tuesday, 23 January 2024 at 10:55:11 Greenwich Mean Time  
**From:** Laura Howells  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg, Drainage - Stretton Road, Much Wenlock - Road Closure A1 (1).pdf

Good Morning,

### **Stretton Rd, Much Wenlock Drainage Improvement Works**

We are now looking at pencilling this scheme in from mid-June 2024 to mid-September 2024. Hopefully that gives you sufficient time to plan for this. Thank you for your patience and support in this matter.

As you can appreciate, we are trying to balance the needs of the community that urgently need these drainage improvements, whilst trying to mitigate as many queries from local stakeholders/businesses such as yourselves.

All this with the backdrop of trying to deliver the works without compromising on safety.

The majority of these works will be delivered under a road closure but not all – phasing will be advised later, once we have confirmed a few details with the contractor.

As previously discussed, we are looking towards having, an informal one way system, (as below) along with the temporary rescinding of the weight restriction on the B4378. However, there are some checks that are needed from our side before these can be approved – so please do not assume these will be in place until you receive formal communication from the Council. Naturally, there are concerns that if traffic from a busy road is diverted to a lesser used and narrow back lanes, then it could open up other issues, which need other mitigation measures.

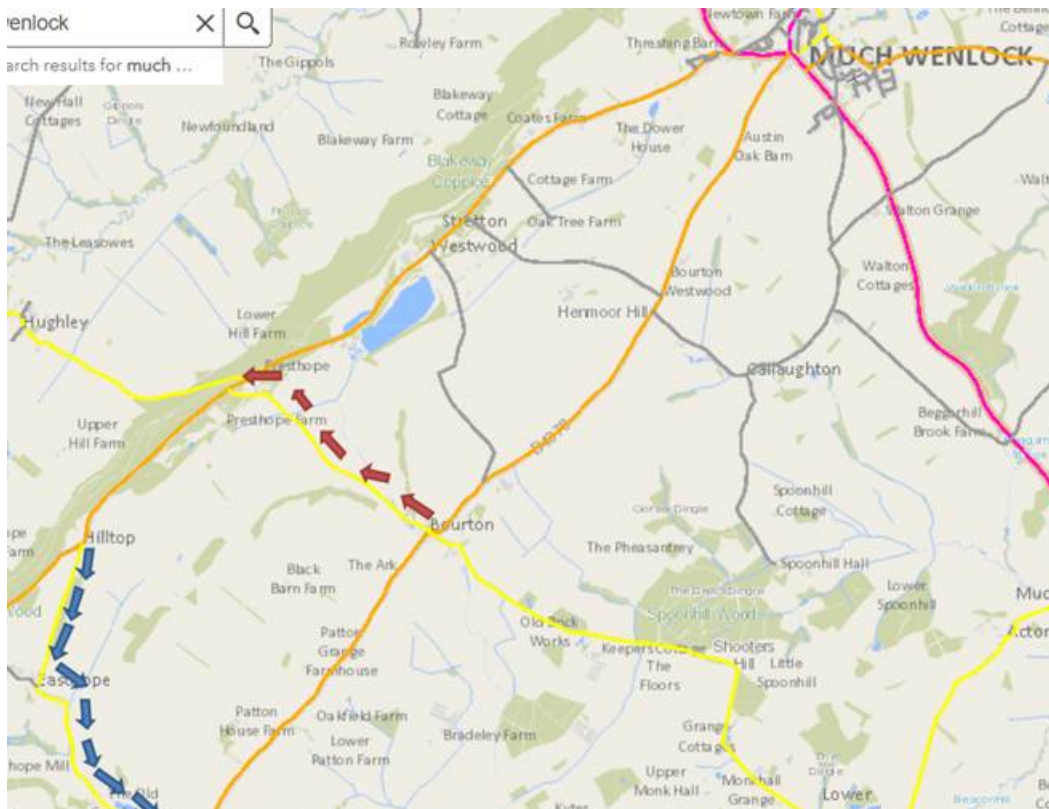
To help with the planning of this scheme, we are asking for your thoughts on the following please: could you kindly respond **by Friday 26 Jan 24**

1. Have your commercial vehicles used the Bourton and Brockton link roads in the past? Is there anything else apart from the 1 way system the council need to be aware of? This will be an informal one-way system (with signage at each end) that won't be advertised to the wider public, as there will be a signed diversion route already in place.
2. For the duration of the works, is there a possibility of using only Class 2 HGVs rather than Class 1 HGVs? As this will reduce the risk of further complications arising from the use of larger Class 1 (40t HGVs)
3. How many HGV deliveries/ commercial vehicle movements per day would you expect during these works? Between June to Sept 2024 (with and without) a temp yard setup.
4. Is there anything you can do from your side to reduce the amount of commercial traffic using the B4371 / B4378 from the A458 (i.e. Use another temp location/ another yard for deliveries etc) whilst the works take place. The council will not be in a position to contribute towards this unfortunately. It is felt that reducing the number of commercial vehicles will improve safety for all during the works. Note that access to your business will be available from Church Stretton.
5. Are there any further considerations to take into account that will help (whilst the works will be taking place)?

Once we have your feedback, we can then progress consultations and look to propose mitigation measures.

Kind regards,

Laura Howells,  
Communication and Engagement Officer,  
Shropshire Highways.



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