

**Public Engagement Meeting to discuss the Planning application on behalf of Mayday Saxonvale Development Ltd – Q&A**

**Q1: Why is there a bridge over the river at the bottom of the riverside park? Why is this there? The river is not part of the old SV area? What impact will that have on the flow of traffic to that part of the town i.e. North Parade near the Museum?**

The bridge from Willow Vale is a reinstatement of an arched bridge and access route across the river demolished following the tragic death of five children during an extreme flooding event in 1932. Saxonvale has not flooded since 1975 when flood prevention measures were introduced at Welshmill. Reinstating this bridge will have many benefits. It will connect Saxonvale to eastern destinations of the town centre, (Bridge Street, Market Street, Market Yard and the Cheese & Grain) and bring this central green corridor back into the recreational life of the town. It will be reserved for pedestrians and cyclists however, not for traffic.

**Q2: To a certain extent it's being answered now but in my experience these ponds still overflow meaning the spill will have to be caught and having back up ponds down hill near the river as the river would also be in flood at that time would not work BUT sounds as if this has been tackled before but still like some reassurance please**

The drainage strategy has had some quite tight parameters to be worked within - contaminated land, flood zone and attaining greenfield runoff rates. The drainage engineers have run calculations to make sure this is viable. Furthermore, there are control valves on the drainage systems to make sure the 'backing up' effect is mitigated.

**Q3: Is it correct that access to and from the car parks behind Iceland & M&S will only be through the centre of the development?**

Routes currently from the town centre will remain open to car-parks at the Irongates although the M&S car park will be replaced by a two-deck stacked car-park. Drivers will be able to access Vicarage Street in the way that they currently do where a one-way system will operate so that you can only turn left at the end of Church Street. Heavy delivery lorries and goods vehicles will redirect away from Vicarage Street, down Garsdale Road and then along Merchants Avenue.

**Q4: There seem to be only two pedestrian access points at the river end of the site, a bridge and walkway, both of which are "subject to feasibility studies". Could you expand on that, please, as those do seem pretty essential if the proposed park area is to be fully integrated with the centre of town.**

Before any bridge reinstatement can be built, permission is required by the water authority which is a feasibility exercise. Mayday is fully committed to a new river crossing and to exploring a cantilevered walkway to the rear of the Blue Boar which has been talked about for many years. The location of these access points will be identified at the detailed planning stage and in consultation with landowners and the river authorities. Funds have been allocated for a new bridge to the riverside park and will form part of the s.106 Agreement.

**Q5: There's some great ideas there and well done from all us in Frome THANK YOU. "BUT" danger there of it becoming like the development where Slipps Nurseries was, start of the Butts of becoming a free carpark for workers / shoppers in town, parking permits to residents perhaps??**

Thank you for your support and we are aware that many new housing developments have restricted parking arrangements leading to on-street parking at the perimeters. Because this is a mixed-use scheme and not a high density housing development, less traffic will be generated overall. Residents parking permits and parking schemes will operate from both of the main site car-parks.

**Q6: What are the chances of overturning the current chosen developers and how can we help get this over the line? So how can Mendip/new unitary authority be persuaded!!**

Through Mayday's outline application, and the support it is receiving, it will become ever more difficult for Mendip to reject a scheme that Frome supports, and continue with a scheme that Frome overwhelmingly rejected. The greater the support that Frome expresses, then the greater the chance that Mendip will be persuaded to change course. Elections for the new unitary authority will take place in May next year and we hope that Councillors putting themselves forward will have a red and white parachute somewhere in their rosette.

**Q7: Fully support the scheme. One of the key principles is re-use and refurbishment of existing buildings. Are there any measures in place that would restrict Mendip, as landowner, from clearing the site?**

The applications to demolish existing heritage structures on the site have been subject to legal challenge and it is not likely that this programme will be commencing in the short term. Historic and heritage buildings in Saxonvale remain at risk however.

**Q8: Can someone on the team talk a little about connectivity and integration with the town... the site's context. How can Frome benefit from the project and vice versa, i.e. increasing footfall, people staying longer and spending money!**

In a mixed-use scheme, Saxonvale would increase the area of the existing town centre by approximately 25%. Since the first silk mill arrived on the site in 1785, this has been Frome's employment base with 100's of workers streaming into the engineering and fuse making factories during the mid-twentieth century. The Mayday plan reopens these historic access routes into the site and once the redevelopment has completed, the term 'Saxonvale' will no longer have the prominence it does now and will be fully integrated into the town centre.

Different zones of the plan will all become destinations in their own right and in the way that Stoney Street or Cheap Street are referred to for example Bow Exchange, Hill Village or Merchants' Avenue. The range of community assets also include destinations for visitors such as the Merchant's Barton Spa, lido, boutique hotel and riverside park. These offer considerable new leisure and recreational facilities attracting people into the development.

**Q9: What impact do you think the new Unitary Authority will have on these plans?**

Community participation is a priority as the process for the new Unitary Authority gets a head of steam. Somerset County Council has launched and is launching extensive consultations throughout the region. This new authority has to show that amalgamating the functions and duties of the District Councils does not mean any overall diminishment of local representation. We hope the objectives of community-led masterplanning are aligned to the aims of the new unitary structure.

**Q10: What is the estimated time to build the full site?**

We would estimate that it would take between 5-7 years to complete.

**Q11: Please can you ask how close this plan is to being accepted/passed? And what else can interested people do to help.**

Currently the application has seen the support of over 700 people writing in to the District Council's planning portal. Frome Chamber of Commerce, one of Frome's local consultee bodies has also recommended the scheme. Frome Town Council and Frome Civic Society are still considering their response after which it will go to a full meeting of the Planning Board at Mendip early next year. There is a standard 3-month period for planning applications to be considered, but there is a significant backlog in the system at the present time. This did not prevent Mendip bringing back the Acorn scheme for a second determination at lightning speed however. Since the public event at the Town Council Chamber, we have received many offers of help and are creating a resource page for the Mayday web-site to provide updates and news for anyone who wants to get more involved.

**Q12: Has the cost of the construction of the individual elements for example the new build commercial space been assessed, to ascertain what rents would need to be charged to ensure that it is financially viable for Mayday and affordable for the occupier**

All aspects of the construction have been independently costed. Rental rates for commercial space have been assessed in line with our viability model. We believe these would be affordable for businesses we expect to use the space available. Through the commercial space owned as community assets, we will be able to set rates, terms, and flexibility to encourage the businesses that the community values, whilst operating within commercial viability.

**Q13: How will the cigarette ends and bits of plastic and particles be filtered out before the rainwater re-enters the river?**

Adopting and implementing the Sustainable Urban Drainage systems that we are planning, rainwater that flows from the streets and roofs of buildings will be directed to 'soft planting beds' and tree systems to infiltrate and hold water in the landscape. With these systems where the water is inlet from the street there are interceptor features that will 'catch' bits of plastic and cigarette butts. In some instances, the surface water may carry cigarette butts from the street into planting beds - this would be cleaned by horticultural practice/management. The soil and growing medium in these planting beds would act as a biological filter to prevent and intercept any finer particulate matter from entering the waterways further downstream.

## **Comments**

Having now re - seen the river side park area I'll back off A BIT on building near the river but we all know plans can AND DO change like the Retreat.

Although I realise that the lido is a tiny question in the whole scheme of things. Impressed by the thought that has go in to produce a vibrant scheme that Frome deserves

Well done team! A very informative and professional presentation... compelling. We really want this for Frome !!

You guys could/should be speaking and writing to every single MDC meeting.