

Ironbridge Power Station Branch may be Reopened as part of Housing Development



Impression of the finished development on the site of the former Ironbridge Power Stations (Shropshire Star).



The undeveloped site after the demolition of the four cooling towers (Shropshire Star)

The developers of the former site of Ironbridge power station is looking to build 1,000 new homes and keep the railway that brought in the coal so as to start passenger services. Harworth Group acquired the 350-acre site in June 2018 and is planning its regeneration into a mixed-use scheme,

creating a new community at the heart of the region's industrial heritage – the site is just 1.4 miles along the river from the famous Iron Bridge.

The site, which the Group purchased from Uniper plc, includes the former power station, former social club (redundant sports pitches, timber pavilion and golf course), borrow pits, Pulverised Fuel Ash (PFA) landfill waste tips and a rail siding, which was historically used to transport coal to the site.

Ironbridge 'B' power station was constructed in 1963 and ceased electricity generation in 2015. An earlier power station, Ironbridge 'A', opened in 1932 and ceased generating in 1981. Harworth's masterplan, submitted for outline planning at the end of 2019, shows a mixed-use scheme for 1,000 new homes in addition to a range of commercial, leisure and community uses including a park and ride facility, a school and public open space. Before development of these areas, the site will need to be prepared by the removal of industrial waste from its days as a power station.



The Albert Edward bridge, which carries the railway over the River Severn, was designed by Sir John Fowler. (Shropshire Star)

Talks are also ongoing with National Rail to bring the existing rail sidings on the site back into operation, which will require strengthening of the Grade II-listed Albert Edward rail bridge that crosses the river. This 200-foot-span cast-iron bridge was opened in 1864 and was designed by Sir John Fowler, who also is credited with the design of the iconic Forth Bridge and London's Metropolitan Railway.

The planning application, as submitted to both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council on 19 December 2019, includes:

- 1,000 new homes;
- A new local centre with a mix of leisure, commercial, retail and health uses;
- A primary school;
- Nature corridors;
- Public open space;
- Re-use of the site's pump house to support either retail, community or river-based uses.

The Ironbridge scheme is likely to take between 10 and 15 years to fully develop.