

Statement: 11 July 2018

Tempest Ford comment

Statement for Lichfield Live & Lichfield Mercury

The Birmingham Road site has only ever been a temporary location for the Tempest Ford garage as the site has been earmarked for redevelopment, and the company only had a temporary lease.

Because of this, Lichfield District Council has been working with Tempest Ford since 2006 to help them find a long-term permanent home. Over the years this has included identifying a number of relocation sites, supporting them through the planning application process, and signposting possible sources of funding.

While a longer term relocation site had been identified, it became clear it was not going to be ready in time, and the Tempest Ford management team recognised they needed to find an interim site.

Cllr Mike Wilcox, Leader of Lichfield District Council, commented: “On Friday 21 April 2017, as the deadline for vacating the Friarsgate site approached, Brian Carruthers, Managing Director of Tempest Ford, sent myself and U+I, the Friarsgate developers, a very positive email. In it he told us he had identified a temporary premises in Shenstone and was set to work with the council’s planning team to apply for a change of use. He also asked the council and developers to look into any other support we could give.

“He suggested we could discuss the opportunity further during an already planned conference call arranged for Tuesday 25 April with U+I, myself and the council’s Friarsgate director.

“However we received notice before the planned conference call that the Tempest Ford board had met over the weekend and decided to put the company into liquidation. At the same time Brian Carruthers requested to cancel the Tuesday conference call.

“While we are saddened that the business closed, this was a decision made by Tempest Ford. Had they been able to put together a viable relocation plan, we would have continued to work with them to support this.”

The council and U+I have not had to pay contractor penalties as a contractor has not been appointed.

Ends

Media enquiries

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Approved by Diane Tilley, Richard King & Cllr Pritchard in person and Mike Wilcox over the phone