

Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan

allotments

greenspaces

where
you
live

the
shops
you
use

play
areas

cycle
paths

Workshop Report
12th April 2016

*Produced by Place Studio for
Ross Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*

engage • design • deliver

place

INTRODUCTION

This is the full report of the first Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan workshop held at the Larruperz Centre on 12th April 2016. The aim of this event was to bring together a wide range of people – primarily representatives of local groups and organisations - to:

- add to, widen and broadly agree the list of issues already known,
- offer a medley of ideas/actions to address these issues and
- draft and agree (for now) plan-ready objectives to deliver relevant actions.

Invitations were sent to around 45 groups and organisations from Ross itself and 8 Parish Councils in areas around the town. The response was slightly disappointing, probably to some extent our responsibility for advertising just before and after the Easter break but also because two other significant events were booked for the same evening. The final participants list, which includes some apologies, is in Appendix 1.

The overall format of the event was as follows:

- On arrival, people noted questions about Neighbourhood Plans generally and the one for Ross specifically.
- Following an introduction there was a 'walkabout' for people to comment on, add to and elaborate local issues.
- Following a break, people divided into Topic groups to develop possible plan Objectives based on what had emerged as the key issues.
- A short final 'where next' session looked ahead in particular to next stages for the Plan.

Each stage is described more fully, and the full results are listed, in the sections that now follow. Apologies if we misread any place/street names!

Everything recorded at the workshop is included in this report. All text as here, in italics, is explanation and description, everything in plain text is as noted by participants themselves.

Most importantly, though we may have been disappointed by the numbers, we could not possibly be disappointed by the commitment of those who attended – that was remarkable, greatly appreciated and bodes well for next stages. Thank you all!

Jeff Bishop and Katie Lea, Place Studio

THE ROSS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

Most participants had been asked in advance to look at the 'Frequently Asked Questions' (and the answers) on the Plan website and were then asked to think of further questions they might wish to raise. On arrival participants noted their questions on post-its that were then grouped around similar themes. Any questions already addressed on the website are not included here unless there were further related queries. The notes that follow are therefore very simple: questions raised and answers given. Because of limited time, not all questions were answered on the night but answers are provided here. (Most of what follows will also be used to update the FAQs on the website.)

- Q: What is the Plan timetable, how long will it take?
- A: The aim is to have it 'made' by summer 2017. This is challenging but achievable. It will however depend on the finally agreed scope of the plan; for example, adding in allocations for several sites could well extend the timetable.
- Q: How can Bridstow get involved?
- A: Any future success with reinvigorating the town centre will depend as much on doing so in a way that engages those in communities around Ross (its 'catchment area') as Ross residents themselves. To that end all surrounding parishes were asked to send representatives to the workshop. Despite an invitation and a reminder, none responded. We will keep pursuing this.
- Q: Who can vote in the referendum?
- A: Only those on the electoral roll in the Ross Town Council area.
- Q: What is being done to address education and health provision, especially given another 900 homes?
- A: We asked Herefordshire for information on both topics; none has yet arrived so we will chase this. The mention of the £15m initiative on school sites and buildings sounded interesting, important and timely. It may well be possible to link this to the Neighbourhood Plan – we will check that.
- Q: When does CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) money start coming in?
- A: Developers have to pay it to Herefordshire when they start on site (which may however be just for a first tranche of, say, 40 houses). Even now, before the Plan is made, the Town Council will receive 15% of any sum. Once the Plan is made, that rises to 25%.
- Q: How do I fit in?
- The aim of the neighbourhood plan team is to engage with as many people as possible through a variety of interesting and even fun ways! We would like to arrive at a plan that will reflect local aspirations. Only local knowledge and understanding of challenges and opportunities for Ross and the local area can inform and shape a truly local plan.

We know that some people will have the time and opportunity to get involved in things like working groups, or to come along to the steering group, but others may only have time to complete a survey or pop into one of our open events to ask questions and contribute ideas. We will be working with a wide a range of groups including the local primary and secondary school pupils – the future community! Find out more and keep in touch via the website: rossplan.org.uk, or drop in to the library where we have a permanent display.

ISSUES AND IDEAS

Previous work by the Plan Steering Group had raised a number of 'issues' for the Neighbourhood Plan to address. Place Studio used their experience from other similar plans to develop and extend this list. The issues were also divided into 5 Topics, also as suggested by the Steering Group:

- Housing
- Working and Shopping
- Getting Around
- Leisure and Well-being
- Environment

A1 sheets were placed around the room listing (numbered) issues per topic and participants were asked to tick any they agreed with, place a cross if they disagreed, elaborate any if appropriate and add any they felt were missing. They could also add ideas and suggestions for things they felt would improve Ross and any completely different issues not fitting under the given topics.

The notes that follow below, per topic, show (a) the ticks and crosses per issue, (b) any elaborations (by reference to the issue number) and (c) any added issues. The items in all capitals refer mainly to the town centre but, for this exercise, they were kept under their topic heading.

HOUSING

NB. Herefordshire Council allocated 900 new homes to Ross. 880 have already either been built or have permission. That might mean the Plan only needs to look for another 20 but targets are still going up so – for our own protection – it would be good to look for sites for more.

1. Lack of affordable housing for local people	6✓ 1X 1?
2. Not enough variety of house sizes, types, prices in new developments	4✓ 1X
3. LACK OF HOUSING IN/NEAR THE TOWN CENTRE	1✓ 1X
4. Too many very large developments	2✓ 2X
5. Development spreading into the countryside around the town	2✓ 1X
6. No houses planned to enable people to work easily from home	4✓ 1X 2?
7. TOO FEW HOUSES FOR THOSE WITH LIMITED MOBILITY	1✓ 1?
8. Houses poorly insulated, few use renewable energy etc.	1✓ 2X 1?
9. Nowhere for people who want to build their own homes	5✓ 1X
10. No appropriate local properties for older people to downsize to	2✓ 3X
11. Developers don't also provide green spaces, footpaths, play areas etc.	8✓

Notes/Additions

- 1+2+3+4 et al. build more houses and stop prices rising- in fact build enough to make prices fall.
- 4 - New developments need variety of styles to fit in with Ross. Don't want a sea of sameness. (1✓)
- 6 – Look at other market towns – Crickhowell.
- 9 – Issue of housing – opportunity to think differently about housing. Use more 'continental' cooperative open 'pod' living...build COMMUNITIES not build more houses where people don't talk to each other!

- 11- They do but always space for more
- 11- Planning policy states open space in developments of a certain size – developers know all the loopholes to avoid providing this!
- New housing developments need parking space. (1✓)
- Local style should be encouraged / vernacular style.
- Convert shops to live /work, workshops / studios.
- More houses = more people= gives shops more customers.

WORKING AND SHOPPING

NB. It is currently very difficult under planning law to stop offices being converted to housing.

1. Loss of employment premises/opportunities in and around the town	2✓ 1?
2. Not enough good quality, new employment premises	3✓ 1?
3. LOSS OF JOBS IN THE TOWN CENTRE	1✓ ?X
4. Lack of higher quality/better salary jobs	3✓ 1?
5. Not enough jobs linked to visitors and tourism	1✓ 2X
6. Not enough overnight accommodation for visitors/tourists	3X
7. TOO MANY EMPTY TOWN CENTRE PROPERTIES FOR BUSINESSES	9✓ 1X
8. KEEPING LOCAL SHOPS IN THE TOWN CENTRE	8✓
9. NEED MORE NATIONAL CHAIN SHOPS IN THE TOWN CENTRE	4✓ 5X
10. Loss of small shops in our neighbourhoods	7✓
11. Not want another large supermarket store	2✓ 4X

Notes/Additions

- 2+4 - Release land to build factories and offices and jobs will be created.
- 5 - Lack of 'paid' work around tourism...all traders, those who work in Ross are 'marketeters'
- Too many charity shops (better than empty ones though) – No!
- 5 - More guides required.
- 7 - But what to do about it?
- 7 – Think that work is in progress behind the scenes often in sorting out 'legals'
- 7 – More working together with landlords – directory so Town Council knows who landlords are.
- 8 - need for better quality shops
- 8 – Celebrate 'independents' however also BRAND Ross...attract more people, tourists, visitors...plus more shops (independents etc.).
 - Brand for Ross than can be used to market the town, develop its identity and find a USP.
 - Could convert some of the empty shops back into housing - Gloucester Road?
 - Charity shops limited in number in town? (classed as a service?) Converting shops into residential properties
- 9 - No!
- 11- Need another supermarket to provide competition and to draw in more punters.
- 9 - Need to encourage Ross' uniqueness. Not to encourage a street scene that mirrors others
- 10 – Greedy estate agent landlords.
- 11- Disagree – need balance of national + local shops. Some in the town do want!
- 11 - We need another supermarket etc – agree.

GETTING AROUND

NB. There are limits to how much a Neighbourhood Plan can do about some of these – which does not mean they should be left out (as we will explain).

1. Danger of losing current bus and coach services	12✓
2. Poor signage for foot and cycle paths around the town as a whole	4✓ 2X
3. Town paths don't link to the wider area network for locals and visitors	1✓ 1X
4. TRAFFIC CONGESTION HOT SPOTS IN THE TOWN CENTRE	9✓ 2X
5. NOT ENOUGH CAR PARKING FOR THE TOWN CENTRE	5X
6. Poor signage for drivers into and around town	8✓
7. POOR SIGNAGE FOR PEDESTRIANS AROUND THE TOWN CENTRE	5✓ 2X
8. Unsafe junctions and stretches of roads around the town	5✓ 1?
9. New developments have poor pedestrian links to the town	7✓ 1?
10. NO PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY AREAS AROUND THE TOWN CENTRE	4✓ 2X
11. NO FULLY PEDESTRIANISED PARTS OF THE TOWN CENTRE	5✓
12. Parking provision in new housing is never enough	8✓ 1?

Notes/Additions

- 1 - Public transport must be better used to ensure its viability. Ditto!!
- 2 – No / poor cycle paths – poor signage, poor driving / respect for cyclists.
- 3 – Opportunity to have more trails that link town centre to areas within 3 to 5 miles.
- 4 - Traffic congestion in Ross is not bad – try going outside HFSH
- 5 – Some car parks are empty during the day
- 5 - Parking is cheap compared to elsewhere.
- 5 – Parking is good providing you can walk (a bit)
- 5 – It's PRICE not SIZE
- 8 - Unsafe junctions and stretches of road
 - To provide pedestrian crossings at high street / EDDE Cross junction, and Copse Cross street plus Alton Street where pedestrians need to cross for the hospital and GPs.
 - Copse Cross Street and High Street should be made one way to improve safety.
 - Parking signs upgraded to encourage use of car parks rather than on road.
 - Open up the railway line for walkers plus Cyclists from Kerne Bridge via Walford, Tudorville to the existing cycle path aka town plus county trail.
 - Pedestrianise the area around the market house to improve both safety and footfall into shops and cafes.
- 8 – Crossing at top of high street / Edde's Cross (very dangerous)!! – agree plus Copse Street plus Alton Street
- 9 – Historically access is terrible in other towns
- 9 – Chase Walk View example – only access down Tanyard lane - no lighting.
- Slip road from Star Bucks to roundabout to left to by-pass
- 13 – Have we already lost our bus service?
- 12 – Every lane should have two off street spaces.

ENVIRONMENT

1. The design of new developments, conversions and shopfronts is not sympathetic to the character of Ross	11✓
2. The landscape setting of Ross is threatened by development	8✓ 1X
3. THE QUALITY OF THE CONSERVATION AREA IS DECLINING	8✓
4. Historic sites, listed buildings etc. are at risk	8✓ 1X 2?

5. Flooding	7✓ 1X
6. There is getting to be less wildlife and biodiversity	6✓ 1X
7. Too few more renewable energy projects by residents and businesses	3✓ 1X 1?
8. PUBLIC AREAS IN THE TOWN CENTRE NEED IMPROVING	9✓ 1X
9. Too many house front gardens are becoming hard parking areas	9✓ 1X
10. Lots of different forms of pollution	1✓ 1X

Notes/Additions

- 1+2 - Corporate image is making all towns homogenous- to maintain tourism need to be distinctive(ly) good!
- 3 - Expense for owners of listed buildings / responsibility of Herefordshire council.
- 3 - Conservation area has achieved a declining town – maybe to try removing the deadening hand?
- 4 - Historic buildings....? Why are they at risk?
- 4 - Lack of incentive to maintain?
- 5 - Effects on local sports teams
- 5 - Flooding not an issue
- 5 - Flooding now more controlled – if maintained
- 7 - Not so much about renewables...more about people using less energy. Hear, hear!
- 8 - Public area- make more wild meadows – plus pollinators – plus more colour! YES!
- 9 - More risk of flooding!
- 9 - Hard surfaces – less biodiversity – less pollination = less hedgehogs
- 10 - Street lighting
- 10 - Pollution? Noise? Light? Dust

LEISURE AND WELL-BEING ISSUES

1. Concern about being able to keep all our current community facilities (eg. pool, halls, sports pitches etc.)	10✓
2. Some new facilities are needed because of new development	9✓
3. Need to protect, retain and improve all our public parks and open spaces	12✓
4. New developments should contribute properly to extra school places, health provision etc.	12✓
5. Can we retain, improve and add as necessary to allotment provision (including in new developments)?	4✓
6. We need to retain, improve and add to play space provision (including in new developments)	7✓
7. Not enough places, spaces and attractions for tourists/visitors	2✓ 1X 1?
8. NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION ABOUT PLACES OF INTEREST IN THE TOWN CENTRE FOR VISITORS/TOURISTS	5✓ 2X 1?

Notes/Additions

- 3+7 - Make more of the riverside (2✓)
- 4 – Medical centre / play group etc
- 4 - The builders must provide – social centers (medical, children, etc)
- 4 – Should support other infrastructure plus amenities. Libraries, leisure facilities, GPs, footpaths etc.
- 5 – Make more 'wild' – more about getting people outdoors! ...more 'preventative' measures...open air tai chi, etc...
- 7 - More ideas, more events eg picnics, more people doing pop-up activities, more opportunities to use area around band stand...how to make it easy for people.
- 8 - Signs on buildings giving age and any historic connection

- 8 - Market House needs to play a central role as a sign post
- 8 - Who says this?!
- 8 – More guides.
- 8 – Recently improved due to tourism plan.

OBJECTIVES

On arrival at the workshop, participants were asked to choose a first and second choice topic (topics as above) to work on after the break. Each topic group was then given, relevant to their topic, (a) some draft objectives prepared by the Steering Group and (b) some additional ones prepared by Place Studio.

The task was to look at what had emerged as the most important (most ticked) issues in the first main session and agree as a group some objectives based on them. Some guidance was offered about the way to draft formal plan objectives and about what can, cannot and might be tackled through a Neighbourhood Plan. This was a difficult task – it always is! - and the beginnings of objectives and associated notes drafted by each group follow below. This does however provide a strong base from which we ourselves can develop 'planner-speak' objectives

HOUSING OBJECTIVES

- 40% is in current CIL proposal. No live / work (so redundant in NP?)
- Need affordable rental units
- Respect character of location
- Houses on Tesco site? (A caravan park? - disputed)
- Good quality innovative building

WORKING AND SHOPPING OBJECTIVES

1. A more concentrated and thriving town centre

Achieved by: Greater communication between the Council, landlords and estate agents.

2. Attracting businesses and employment suitable for this town, ie. a county market town

Achieved by: A cohesive branding and expanding policy:

- Any development deemed as 'large' is required to have a 'corner shop'. Those 'very large'
- Allowing new mixed use development so appropriate businesses can operate from homes
- More industrial jobs

Achieved by: identifying land for industrial development so appropriate development strengthening and supporting economic activity - can we bend policy on model farm?

GETTING AROUND OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the meaning or interpretation of "the character of Ross"
'Character' - only historic town in AONB (*that is a*) Conservation Area

Issues!

- Enforcement action on planning?
- What is 'at risk' and why?
- What are the current boundaries of the planning/ design of new developments, conversions and shop fronts?

- Canoeing - canoeists - no cheap accommodation.
- Launch site - no parking for vans.
- Launch site - canoeists have to walk canoes to the river.
- Infrastructure - joining the dots.

ENVIRONMENT OBJECTIVES

1. To green the open spaces with local, appropriate, indigenous species of plants that encourage and attract pollinators and wildlife to create wildlife corridors taking into consideration access and amenities of open spaces.

2. To ensure all development and renovation takes account of the historic and natural environment of the town through the use of building materials in sympathy with the unique character of Ross-on-Wye and its distinctiveness.

LEISURE AND WELLBEING OBJECTIVES

Vision

There should be vibrant comprehensive leisure and health services within the town, and in the town centre where possible, encouraging a fulfilling and healthy lifestyle for residents and reducing the need to travel to other centres.

Objectives

The plan will support (see A1):

1 - To maintain and promote existing indoor and outdoor activities through the provision and development of suitable amenities (go to Library for evidence)

2 - Facilitating better provision for the elderly and those with families and young people.

3 - Promoting the natural resource of the town to enhance the visitor experience. (See note below).

3a - Protect, retain, improve, our town's natural resource*.

5 - Ensure new developments contribute properly to the enhancement of educational leisure and recreational facilities.

* Natural resource: public parks / open spaces / river (historic buildings / woodlands... etc.

The group also liked the following objective in the Draft Ross list: Encourage novel, environmentally friendly and sympathetic construction techniques – as well as self-build zones.

NEXT STAGES

A broadly similar list of issues together to the above will be shared at the open events. The open events took place over two days on Saturday 30th April (at the Market Hall) and Sunday 1st May (at the River Festival). This open events present an opportunity to share the work to date on issues for the plan – further refining with a wider audience of residents and visitors.

After those two days, and once the feedback from a questionnaire is received then a final draft version of the issues and objectives will be shared, once again for comment, over two weeks at the end of May. This will be via an exhibition in the library and information on the rossplan.org.uk website.

It was also suggested - and those present agreed in principle – that some Topic Groups should be set up, one on each of the five main topics as introduced above but also one specifically on the town centre.

Mid June will see us arrive at a final set of issues of objectives to start taking forward into policy for the Plan.

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANTS AND APOLOGIES

Participants

1 st name	Surname	Organisation	Topic group
Chris	Bartrum	Ross Town Council	Housing
Neil	Bennett	Ross Baptist Church	Leisure/Well-being
Christine	Cherrington	Tudorville District Community Association	Getting Around
Nick	Critchley	Wye Valley AONB	Environment
Elinor	Greenacre	Everybody fitness	Leisure/Well-being
Tina	Hogg	U3A and Mental Health	Getting Around
Belinda	Jones	Ashfield School	Leisure/Well-being
Colin	Leggatte	St. Mary's and Proross	Working/Shopping
Vic	Lockley	Visitor information	Getting Around
Antony	Lowther	TDDC and EnviroAbility	Housing
Jan	Nesaratnam	Ross Library	Leisure/Well-being
Melvin	Reynolds	Chair, NDP Steering Group	Housing
Sarah	Robson	Town Clerk, Ross Town Council	Environment
Amanda	Smith	Neighbourhood Plan Clerk	Working/Shopping
Caroline	Utting	ProRoss	Working/Shopping
Debbie	Wareing	Greytree Residents Association	Housing
Yolande	Watson	Hedgehogs	Environment
Sue	Williams	Association of Ross Traders	Working/Shopping

Apologies

Caroline Bennett, Ross Town Council
 Colin Davies, Ross Roadies
 Hayley Knapper, John Kyrle School
 Ed O'Driscoll, Gig Club
 Mandy, Ross Voice
 Jo Scriven, Ross Gazette
 Jenny Symington, Leos

Workshop Leaders

Jeff Bishop, Place Studio
 Katie Lea, Place Studio



WORKING GROUPS WORKSHOP REPORT
14th July 2016

*Produced by Place Studio for
Ross Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*

engage • design • deliver

place

INTRODUCTION

This event was the first for the newly formed Working Groups for the Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan. Although two groups had been formed - one for the Town Centre, one for the Wider Town – it was decided to have one event for both together because some of the material was common.

The main aim of this first workshop was for group members to check and refine the emerging Aims/Objectives for the Plan. Given that some of those attending were relatively new to the Neighbourhood Plan, its content and processes, it was decided to do a short 'updating' session at the start. The Plan was also at a key stage in terms of the need for some further community evidence collection, so the final short session sought volunteers for that work. (* This request required a slight apology because everybody had been told that they were required for 2, perhaps 3 meetings only!)*

This report includes notes on all three sessions – updating, aims/objectives and evidence collection. The list of those attending is also included. All text as here, in italics, is explanation and description, everything in plain text is as noted by participants themselves.

We would like to thank all those who took part for their obvious commitment and hard work (and to apologise again for the added request about evidence collection). This was a key stage for the Neighbourhood Plan and, along with other things falling into place, it helped enormously for everybody to begin to see the all-important end-point – the Neighbourhood Plan itself.

Jeff Bishop and Katie Lea: Place Studio

UPDATING

Jeff started by outlining the national picture for Neighbourhood Development Plans, often just termed NDPs. Around 1,000 are now on their way, approaching 120 completed (formally 'made'). They have proved their value already in delivering appropriate projects and preventing inappropriate ones although, as with any plan, this is never absolute. In that national context, the decision to advance an NDP for Ross was entirely appropriate.

Katie then ran quickly through work to date on the Ross NDP and the overall programme to completion. The website has been up and running since March and that, together with the Facebook pages and press releases to the Gazette and the Voice, has been central to raising awareness. We have also produced leaflets and posters and have a permanent display in the library. Our main events so far have taken the form of a workshop in April and a 'pop-up' or drop-in stall at the Market on the last Saturday in April and a gazebo at the River Festival. We also held a week-long exhibition at the library and will again be at the Riverside on the 6th August at the Ross Carnival. Based on the responses we've had from people to date we have narrowed the plan issues down to look at the Town Centre and the Wider Town and have now arrived at a long list of objectives or aims – which is what we asked you to look at in the workshop.

*Jeff's second contribution was to give a picture of what a successful NDP might look like. The example was the recently, and successfully, examined NDP for Stroud town centre, highly relevant to Ross. Sample sheets from the Stroud plan were handed out, to illustrate Vision, Objectives, main Policies, Development Briefs, support (Promotional) statements, Projects and how it all fits together. **This NDP is very well worth looking through generally, including pages not handed out.** It is available at: <http://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2223/ndp-submission-draft-web-version.pdf>*

At this point Katie introduced Andy Hough from Herefordshire Council who is managing a 'Schools Capital Investment Strategy' for Ross and its surrounding area. Given that this is likely to result in physical changes to local schools, perhaps needing a new one on a new site, there are obvious links to be made with the Ross NDP. Andy will produce a note about the initiative and we will send this on to you.

Finally, Jeff outlined what is a rapidly changing picture about new housing for Ross. Of the 900 new houses allocated by the Local Plan, some 880 are already built or have permission. However, housing targets across Herefordshire will be going up so it would seem sensible for the Ross NDP to manage this. Those present agreed with this. The only potential large site (yet to be confirmed technically) would be the old Somerfield warehouse north of the A40. That site might accommodate c.100 houses. (The site behind Morrisons is still in Flood Zone 3 so generally not appropriate for housing.) Beyond that, some 12 suitable but very small sites were identified a few years ago, several in the town centre. In total they might accommodate c.100/150 houses. Work will now start on site selection and assessment but it was recommended that the NDP should not attempt to formally allocate sites because of the considerable extra time and cost involved. Instead, the NDP would introduce general principles, design criteria and perhaps development briefs for key sites (eg. Somerfield) as was done successfully for Stroud.

AIMS/OBJECTIVES

This was the main session. To make it manageable, those signing up to the Town Centre group and those for the Wider Town group were each divided into two smaller groups. The task was very simple. People had been sent, in advance, the full list of emerging aims or objectives. They were asked to work as a group to (a) show where they supported any on the list, (b) to amend, elaborate, query, subdivide or even remove any aims, and perhaps (c) add some. It was made clear that this was the long list and that any NDP would group these together into a far smaller number, even if there were the specific policies for each. For practical reasons, each small group looked at around 50% of those on their overall list.

The results follow below, although it was also stressed that this was not a final list; new ideas, further evidence and so forth could add or change the list as work proceeds. (NB. Jeff and Katie have added occasional comments, and an explanation of Community Land Trusts is included in Appendix B.)

TOWN CENTRE

Supported:

- TCA5: Protect views out to and in from the surrounding countryside.
- TCA6: Encourage appropriate renewable energy initiatives (such as solar/photovoltaic panels).
- TCB1: Encourage housing development on currently empty, derelict or underused land.
- TCB2: Optimise opportunities for people to live over town centre shops.
- TCB3: Design new housing to enable people to work from home.
- TCB4: Encourage development of self-build new housing.
- TCC1: Support existing and welcome new independent businesses, including shops, cafes and market traders.
- TCC2: Encourage a creative approach to the evolution of the town centre, and support changes of use where this adds to vitality.
- TCD1: Promote and encourage a range of ways to get easily into and around the town centre by all modes of transport.
- TCD2: Provide safe, well connected, convenient routes, well signposted to car parks.
- TCD3: Improve the usability of the town centre by pedestrians, cyclists and those facing mobility challenges.

- TCD5: Encourage appropriate charging (or no charging) for town centre car parks.
- TCE1: Ensure existing community services and facilities, such as the library, are retained and enhanced.
- TCE1: Ensure existing community services and facilities, such as the library, are retained and enhanced.

Comments:

- TCA1: Make the town centre a welcoming, safe and secure place where people are encouraged to spend time.
- Should it include a reference to accessibility – this could include good signage?
- *(NB. Should be picked up later but also important that the eventual plan highlights key links between issues.)*
- TCA2: Improve the appearance of the town centre by maximising the historic character and using a high standard of design for any new development.
- Add 'by referencing local historic building styles'.
- *(NB. Good to add 'referencing' to avoid requiring pastiche - something an Examiner would not like.)*
- TCA3: Improve the appearance of the town centre through the design of shopfronts.
- Add 'through the creation of guidelines'.
- TCA4: Improve the appearance of the town centre through the introduction of 'greening'.
- Add 'and the promotion of public art'.
- *(NB. Great – we forgot that and it is important!)*
- New TCA7: To reduce the number of empty retail units.
- TCC4: Support the development of a further small supermarket within the town centre.
- Remove, not support.
- TCD6: Introduce centre-wide traffic management to reduce congestion.
- Remove, not support.
- *(NB. We might come back to this with you because it is often objected to because people assume speed bumps etc., but there are so many other forms of traffic management now.)*
- TCE3: Encourage the development of a full time cinema within the centre.
- Not keen on cinema, prefer an arts centre.
- *(NB. Arts centre with cinema?)*

WIDER TOWN

Supported:

- WTA2: Protect existing wildlife and ensure appropriate provision in new developments.
- WTA3: Discourage the hard-surfacing of house drives and front gardens.
- WTA4: Ensure high standards of locally distinctive design and construction in all new developments.
- WTA4: Ensure high standards of locally distinctive design and construction in all new developments.
- WTA6: Protect and enhance historic and heritage assets.
- *(NB. Mention of Market House taken out – did not belong there!)*
- WTA8: Protect and reinforce the setting of the town in the landscape.
- WTA9: Protect key views into and out of the town.
- WTA10: Encourage appropriate renewable energy initiatives (such as solar/photovoltaic panels).
- WTA11: Introduce initiatives to work towards a 'carbon neutral' town.
- WTB3: Encourage development of self-build new housing.
- WTB5: Control over-developments in residential gardens.

- WTB6: Set standards of locally distinctive design, layout, access etc. specifically for new housing.
- WTC2: Encourage starter units, shared serviced accommodation etc. for new businesses.
- WTC4: Encourage and support home-working.
- WTC5: Retain existing employment except where inappropriately located.
- WTC7: Resist proposals for major out of town shopping.
- WTD2: Introduce appropriate forms of traffic calming in residential neighbourhoods.
- WTD3: Provide clearer signage into and around the town from main roads.
- WTD4: Introduce clear 'gateways' to welcome people to the town.
- WTD5: Improve walking and cycling access around the town.
- WTD6: Improve walking and cycling access into and from the surrounding countryside.
- WTD7: Ensure new developments maximise the ease of walking/cycling access into the rest of the town.
- WTE1: Designate Local Green Spaces of significant community value.
- WTE2: Improve existing and develop new allotment areas.
- WTE4: Improve existing and develop new play areas.
- WTE5: Ensure play areas within any large new housing development.
- WTE6: Diversify town-based events for residents and visitors.
- WTE7: Retain existing social/community facilities.

Comments

- WTA1: Link existing green assets and areas into a coherent 'green infrastructure'.
- Does this mean a physical connecting corridor or a cohesive management plan? Either way we support but clarify.
- *(NB. The overall principles will be in the county plan. Corridors do not have to be bluntly physical; for example, a series of back gardens can sometimes serve the purpose.)*
- WTA5: Refresh those parts of the Conservation Area not in the town centre.
- What do you mean by 'refresh'? Maintain, enhance, improve?
- *(NB. Yes, all of those!)*
- WTA7: Consolidate and expand information, services and facilities for visitors.
- Visitor facilities, eg. toilets, lockers for walkers? Can this be a core land use?
- *(NB. You are right – toilets will be built facilities so core land use, but not lockers.)*
- WTB1: Deliver a small amount of new housing over and above the 900 homes allocated.
- Add word 'appropriate'?
- WTB2: Ensure 40% social/affordable housing in all new developments.
- More work to be done on local choices for affordable housing.
- WTB4: Encourage new housing through models such as Community Land Trusts.
- *(NB. Community Land Trusts are explained in Appendix B.)*
- WTB7: Ensure appropriate parking standards in all new housing.
- *(NB. Many NDP groups wish to do this but we are not aware of any NDP that has managed to change county highways parking standards in new housing. We will come back to this.)*
- WTB8: Encourage development on previously used land.
- Change to 'consider suitable development on appropriate previously developed land'.
- WTC1: Encourage employment developments to provide higher quality jobs.
- Query use of the term 'higher quality jobs'.
- WTC3: Provide more higher grade employment in tourism.
- Perhaps should be about providing more higher quality tourism opportunities.
- WTC6: Retain small shops and shopping areas in town neighbourhoods.
- 'Encourage the retention of small shops in town neighbourhoods'.
- WTC8: Develop a detailed brief for the Model Farm development (if not agreed yet).
- Part of LEP plans. Find out their view.
- *(NB. Yes but no action for a long time so we suspect there is still scope to contribute in some way through the NDP.)*
- WTD1: Support, promote and develop local bus and coach services.

- Focus on smaller, ecologically friendly vehicles.
- WTE3: Ensure allotments within any large new housing development.
- Remove, not needed.

NB. Given limited time, a few aims were not evaluated so are not in the lists above.

EVIDENCE COLLECTION

A lot of the necessary evidence to support emerging aims and then policies already existed before the NDP started, more has emerged and several community groups are underway with further specific evidence collection work – for which many thanks.

Having looked in detail at the emerging objectives, several small and two large evidence collection tasks remain. These were outlined to the participants and they were then asked to fill in a sheet with their initials for some task for which they would take responsibility. It was stressed that this did not necessarily mean actually doing the work themselves. The aim is in fact more about finding others to do any of the actual work because this helps to widen awareness of the NDP. The chart with tasks and initials follows below, but only where offers were made. The tasks are explained here more fully than in the shorthand used for the workshop. NB. Some of this is only to top up or update existing information.

Smaller Tasks

Task	Initials
Space over shops: The aim is to make an estimate of how much space is used for what and how much is empty. Note on access also useful (to suggest whether more use or conversion is possible). Chat to agents?	IM/CU
Traffic incidents: Some basic information ought to be available from the police although they may not be able to pick out the town centre as we define it. If so, get information for all of Ross.	AW
Pedestrians in the centre: An audit of easy, difficult, dangerous, comfortable places, features etc. around the centre. Map provided.	CB/VL/IM
Cyclists in the centre: As above, an audit on cycling.	HS/SP
Limited mobility issues in the centre: As above, an audit of issues (and good features) for those with mobility challenges: wheelchair users, zimmer frame users, buggy pushers, blind people etc.	NG
Traffic congestion and danger spots: Informal sounding of local people plus conversation with police and traffic wardens. Maybe quick look at any particularly bad locations.	VL/AW
Signage and gateways into town: Checking what signs exist to direct people (individuals, visitors, deliveries, HGVs, through traffic etc.) into and to avoid the town and the town centre and signs nearer the centre, especially to car parks.	MP/NC
Public transport information: Contact with the bus company/companies to establish current usage, recent usage and any projected (noting trends), also triggers to adding or removing or extending/changing any services.	HS
Facilities audit: We have a good list though it needs checking. Then all this needs is a note on what rooms etc. are provided and for whom, at what cost etc.	CLW
Broadband coverage issues: What is coverage and speed like now in various parts of the town. Just a matter of asking key people?	WW
Empty/charity shops: Note of these and location, ideally how long empty or charity shop. Chat to agents?	CU
Centre footfall: Several people have suggested that the centre is too	EK

strung out. Quick check at few key times of footfall.	
---	--

Larger Tasks

Task	Initials
Town Centre Character Assessment: There is a county 'Rapid Townscape Assessment, but it was rapid. There is also only a draft Conservation Area Character Assessment. Both need topping up with an Assessment linked to the now emerging aims. Several people out in 2s/3s to do a 1 hour or so assessment with a form and maps provided. Photos taken.	CU/NC/AW/CLW
Site Search and Assessment: This will be mainly for housing sites. It may include employment sites and even perhaps a primary school site. This uses a (well-proven) community-friendly analysis method. Details to follow.	MR

All those who offered will be contacted to confirm their commitment (they may not be able to find any helpers for example). Once agreed, they will all receive a draft brief from Place Studio, to be discussed and agreed.

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS

ATTENDEES

TOWN CENTRE GROUP

- Chris Bartrum
- Eleanor Kercher
- Ian Murray
- Caroline Utting
- Vic Lockley
- Mandy Price
- David Ravenscroft
- William Wilding

WIDER TOWN GROUP

- Nick Critchley
- Andy Hough
- Jan Nesaratnam
- Sam Phillips
- Helen Saunders
- Nigel Gibbs
- Clare Llewellyn-West
- Melvin Reynolds
- Amanda Smith
- Andrew Wilson

The following were on the initial list, sent full invitation details but did not arrive:

- Nathan Avard
- Simon Clarke
- Jeannette Draper (sent apologies)
- Maggie Kilcar
- Nick Richmond
- John Taylor
- Debbie Wareing

All of the latter group will be sent this report and encouraged to still be involved.

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS

What is a Community Land Trust (CLT) ?

This note was produced in another context by Ian Crawley, a national adviser on CLTs and involved in CLTs across Gloucestershire.

A Community Land Trust is a community-led organisation, operating in and for a defined geographical community, usually the area of a Parish Council. What is most important is that the community area is one that people identify with as somewhere they live and/or work. The CLT is run by local volunteers. It is set up to develop and own land and buildings the community needs. It holds that property in trust; it can never be sold for private profit. Any surplus from the CLT's activities is reinvested in that community. A CLT is legally defined in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, but must still be registered as a Community Benefit Society, Community Interest Company or Company Limited by Guarantee. These types of legal structure provide limited liability protection for those involved with governance.

Why set up a local CLT?

- Interest is increasing from communities to have a CLT to develop affordable housing for local people in housing need and owned by local people collectively.
- This is due to the following:
 - loss of affordable rented homes through the Right To Buy (RTB), which will accelerate with the new voluntary RTB for Housing Associations(HAs);
 - the reduction in new affordable homes from private, HA and local authority development, exacerbated by changes to planning rules and the reduction in Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) grant per new home;
 - the recognition that an increasing proportion of the population do not wish to buy or will never be able to afford to buy, their own home;
 - the recognition that if a Neighbourhood Plan is to be fully implemented that community needs its own development agency; and
 - the likelihood that only CLTs will be fully exempt from the RTB and thereby an important means of providing affordable rented homes in perpetuity.
- There is a worsening housing crisis. Local CLTs have a role to play through focusing local expertise experience and enthusiasm in understanding local housing needs, bringing in external investment; and developing genuinely affordable rented housing to meet those specific needs.

How are individuals involved?

CLTs help communities become more resilient and sustainable by giving all those living and/or working over 16 years of age a stake (through a £1 share for life) in the CLT assets; and a say in what the CLT does through membership, or standing and being elected as a Director. The test of whether a CLT is fit for purpose will include the clarity of the vision and its relevance to local people; the size of the membership and their involvement; and the transparency of how it conducts its business. These give credibility to the CLT in the eyes of local people, local government, government agencies and the business community.

What do CLTs do?

There are over 170 CLTs across England and Wales that have built over 650 homes. There are 2400 homes in the pipeline. The CLTs are located where people have come together to build affordable homes or refurbish derelict homes for local people in housing need; build a village hall or community centre; rescue the village shop or pub; grow food on allotments and through community orchards and farms; and plant and manage woodland - to create a better quality of life for all.

Approaches to Delivering Affordable Homes through a CLT

There are a number of different approaches to providing affordable housing by CLTs that have emerged in recent years. Approximately 90% of CLTs either already partner with an HA or intend to do so. Of the 175 CLTs, seven are Registered Providers, and therefore able to manage and maintain their own stock. Otherwise the CLT will have to contract with a Housing Association. The options are:

- **Direct development on land obtained by the CLT at less than market value.**
 - This involves the CLT obtaining grant/loans to meet the costs of obtaining planning consent and employing its own professional advisors, borrowing to build the scheme and employing contractors. The CLT could become a Registered Provider via the HCA and then manage and maintain the homes, or employ a HA to do so.
- **Partnering with a Housing Association throughout.**
- This usually involves the following:
 - CLT owning the freehold of the land - most CLTs start by obtaining a site, then choosing a HA.
 - The HA has a long term (usually 125 year) lease from the CLT, with a break clause only in the CLT's favour.
 - The HA funds and develops the homes, by agreement with the CLT at every stage.
 - The HA manages and maintains the homes, allocating them through a Local Connections Policy agreed with the CLT and the local authority.
 - The HA pays the CLT an annual ground rent, say £200 per home.
 - The CLT has the option to buy out the lease for one or all the homes at any time, funded through borrowing.
- **Other options:**
 - Obtaining the freehold of the land for the affordable housing in a private development and then developing directly or with a HA.
 - Purchasing the completed affordable homes in a private development through funds raised from sources such as the Resonance Fund; the Public Works Loans Board, via the Parish Council ; or banks. Management and maintenance is then through a HA.
 - Purchasing or accepting the gift of the freehold of existing homes. Management and maintenance is then through a HA.
 - Including serviced land for self-build or homes for sale to meet particular local needs and/or cross-subsidise the affordable homes for rent.

You are never on your own!

Advice and financial assistance is available specifically for communities wishing to set up a CLT - to develop the vision, prepare a business plan, become registered and obtain professional advice. The National CLT Network (www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk) is an independent social enterprise with full time staff. One of its roles is to manage the CLT Start Up Fund, through which grants and loans are available.

There is a network of regional umbrella CLTs which exist to provide advice and support. There are CLT Technical Advisors, who will work with your community to help build the competence and confidence to set up a CLT and develop assets for the benefit of the community. There are also the volunteers themselves who have set up a CLT in their own community and developed assets, who are keen to share their experience with those just starting out.



**WORKING GROUPS AND STEERING GROUP
WORKSHOP REPORT
20th October 2016**

*Produced by Place Studio for
Ross Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*

engage • design • deliver

place

INTRODUCTION

This event was the second for the Working Groups for the Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan. It was combined with the regular monthly Steering Group meeting mainly because this was now an important stage in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. As it happened the timing was even more important because of significant new issues (see later).

The two main aims of the workshop were to:

- *Discuss the emerging plan framework and 'fill some gaps' in coverage as recently highlighted.*
- *Discuss some emerging options for larger scale development.*

This report is divided into two as per the topics above. The list of those attending is also included. (Given the importance of this meeting, which was made clear to everybody, the attendance was rather disappointing – no reflection on the quality of work done by those present!) All text as here, in italics, is explanation and description, everything in plain text is as noted by participants themselves.

One reason why this was a really important meeting was because of the speedier than anticipated progress made; very much a result of some superb evidence collection work by members of the Working Groups – for which much thanks!

Jeff Bishop and Cleo Newcombe-Jones: Place Studio

THE EMERGING PLAN

Two tasks were outlined for the first part of the workshop:

- Seeking comments on the proposed format of the final Plan and some draft content.
- Developing further ideas for some topics perhaps not yet adequately addressed.

PLAN FORMAT

In advance of the workshop people had been sent a slightly revised structure for the main Neighbourhood Plan, an idea about how to express the vision, some rearranged (but otherwise unchanged) objectives and some mock-ups of Policies and Promotional Statements. The aim was to seek feedback on these. Perhaps because people had already been divided into groups and allocated interesting topics to address, there was almost no feedback on the material sent out.

The team is taking this as general support, or at least a lack of any major concerns, but comments are still very welcome!

OUTSTANDING TOPICS

Drawing from previous work, four topics had been highlighted where more work seemed to be needed and the group task was to generate more Policies, Promotional Statements and Projects. The topics and the notes produced by the groups follow below. Photos are included of the sketch maps done by three of the groups. These do not work well within this report so some notes have been added (correctly we hope) to help explain the map content.

Branding

Purpose: Use by the town council, businesses and organisations – so need buy-in from all

Issues: Avoid over-narrow brand which limits buy-in and restricts promotion. Avoid copy-cat.

Elements:

Quality of life	History	Flexible and big
Family	Leisure	Weather
Environment	Heritage	Library
OAPs	Sporting	Riverside
Outdoors	Fishing	Compact
Work	Arts and crafts	Border town
Road networks	Dog-friendly	'Bijou'
Red sandstone – river cliff	Hedgehogs	Hotels
Independent shops	Tourism	'Food'
Schools	'Gateway'	Museum
Canoeing	Everything within reach/In a nutshell	'Vintage' (quality, recycling, retro)

What is missing: Big name stores?

Ideas:

- "A natural habitat for the good life" (gives an indication of those with a stake)
- "Commutable"
- "Friendly – people have time to talk, welcoming"
- "Small and perfectly formed"

- "The good life on your doorstep"
- "The country life come true"
- "At the centre of the good life"
- "Every day is a holiday"
- "No traffic lights"
- "The only town in the AONB" (Only cross-border protected landscape in England and Wales, one of 46 AONBs, sister designation to National Parks)
- Brand to piggy-back on historic buildings, eg. market house
- "Centre for the Outdoors"
- "Gateway to the Outdoors" (Links canoeing, climbing, caving, mountain biking, walking, fishing, rowing, eg. as Kendal. Possible PGL sponsorship?)
- "Birthplace of tourism"
- Iconic townscape view – river, sandstone cliff and town
- Cider apples and orchards
- "Ross: the good life starts here"
- Boat trips to retrace the Gilpin tours of the Wye (link to Hereford City of Culture)

Better use of the River, Riverside and Links to Town

The river is:

- In the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- A Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Important for Natural England
- Important for the Environment Agency

Would need good, open working relationships with these in order to 'develop' and enhance the positive and productive recreational use of the river

Uses:

- Exploit historical usage
- Fishing – important source of revenue, valuable users
- Sports fields
- Skateboard Park (more/better)
- Increase biodiversity
- Rowing boats/paddle boats
- Rowing regatta
- River boat trips
- (Sponsorship from local businesses)
- Redefine riverside as a park

Link river/riverside/town:

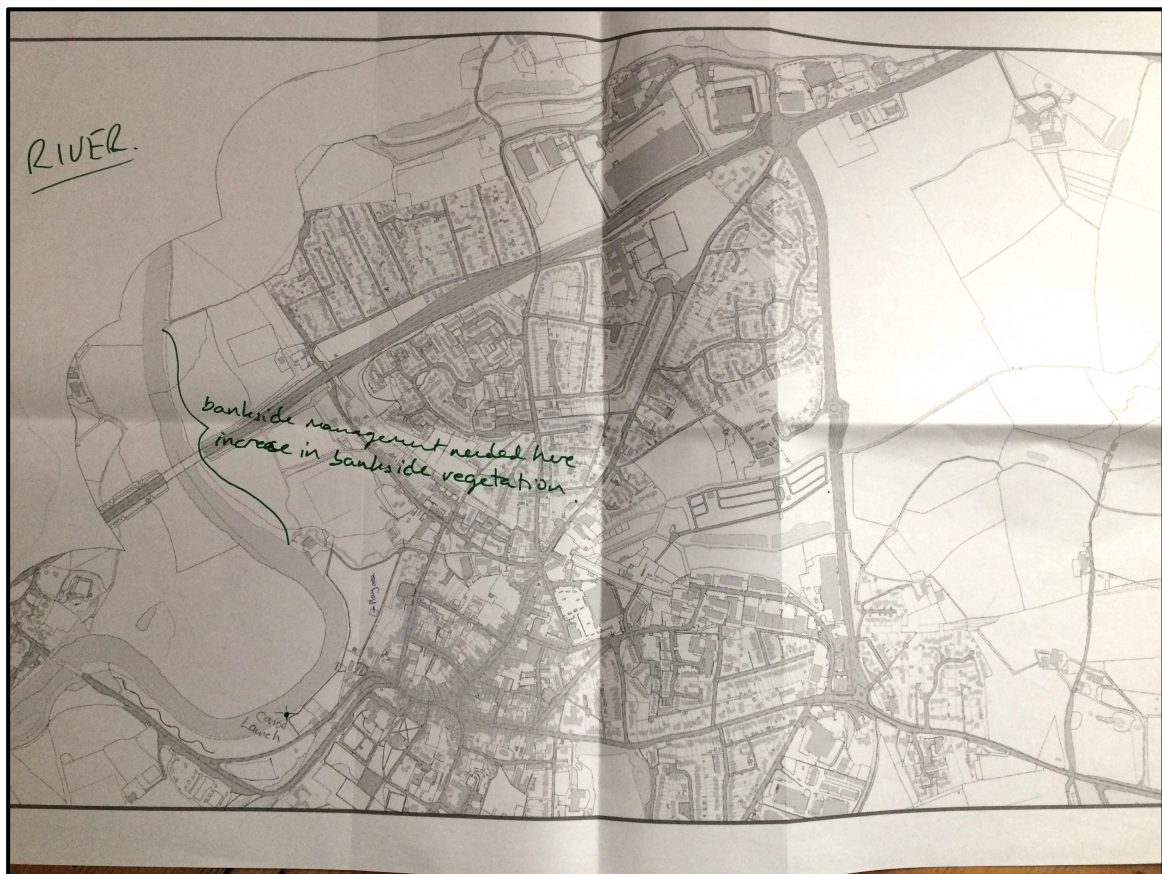
- Signage
- Offer reasons to go down: wildlife, bandstand, play area (appalling, could be natural play area – beautiful walled area, link to wildlife – flood resistant)
- Funicular cableway from Royal Hotel to the riverside

Other ideas:

- Control non-native invasive plant/tree species
- Good management of vegetation
- Need to cut down some trees and weeds in order to see the river
- Green volunteering

- Redevelop Homs Road car park
- Canoe launch
 - Needs to be developed and enhanced responsibly)
 - Needs improvement
 - Improved drop-off facilities
 - Improved access to launch
 - Talk to local canoe hire companies
 - Extend tarmac path from canoe launch to Wilton bridge, ramp up to road
 - Canoe/back pack lockers needed

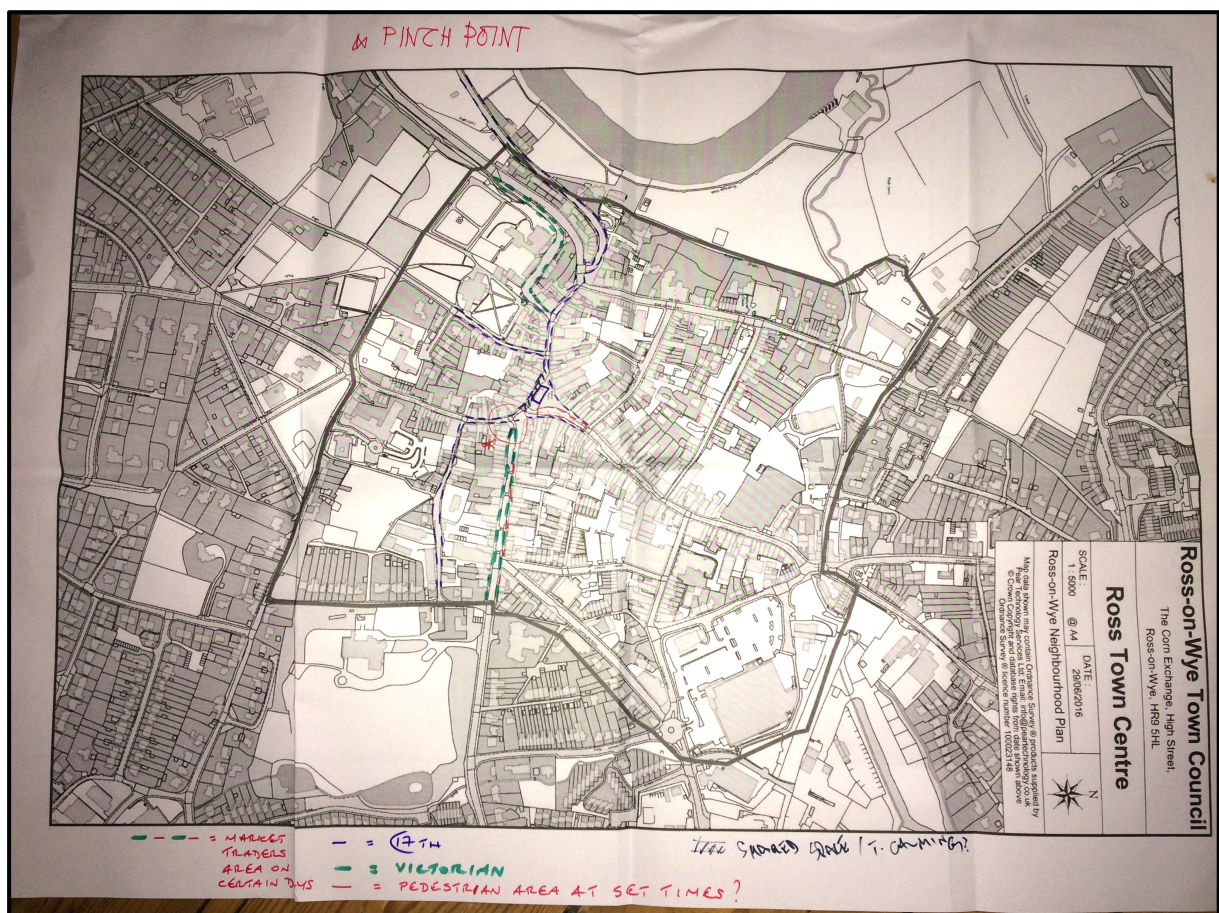
(The sketch map below highlights a stretch of the river where the group felt that some bankside management is needed, increasing bankside vegetation.)



Better Town Centre for Traffic and Pedestrians

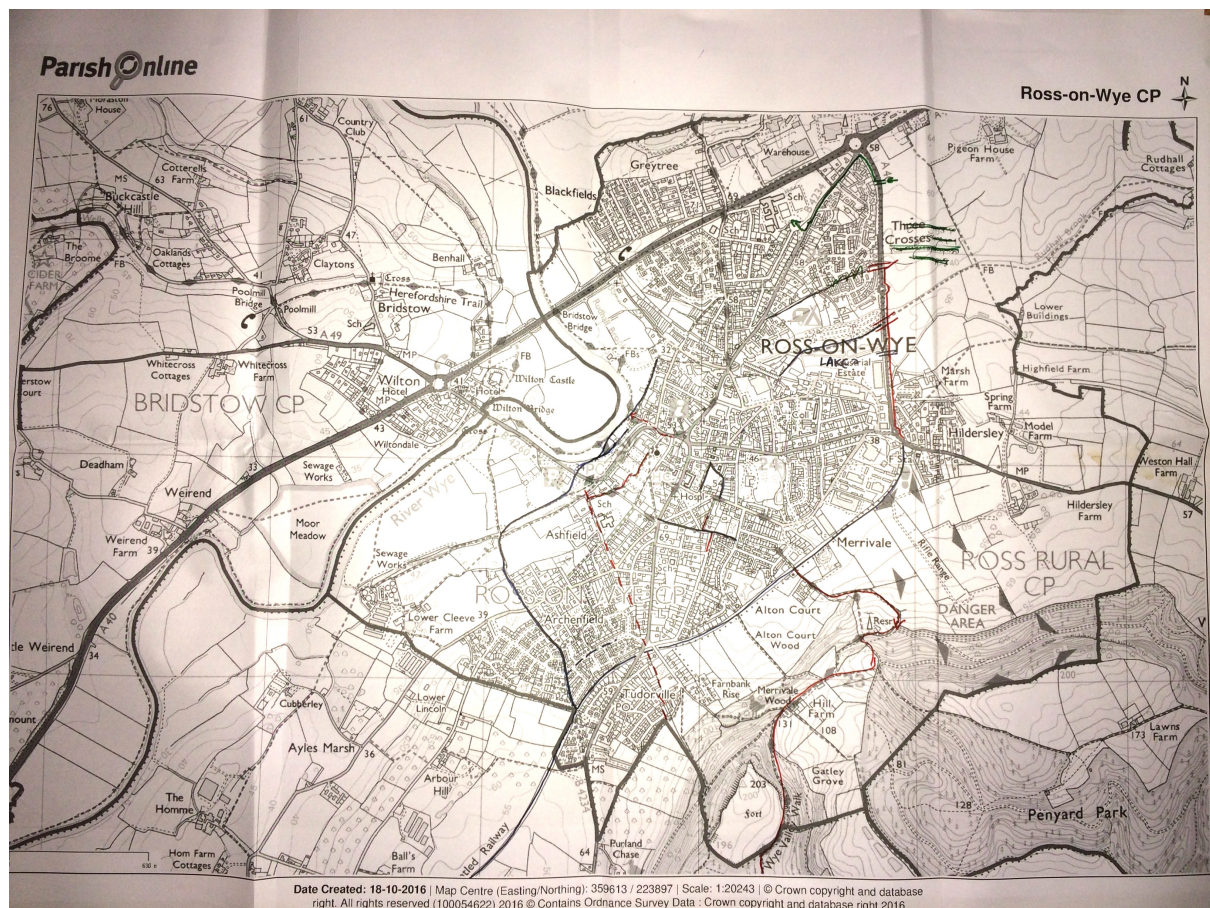
- Define distinct areas of the town, eg. market house area and High Street and Wye Street – the oldest areas
- Gloucester Road and Walford Road – Victorian areas
- Look at pavements: maintenance, traffic-free areas
- Secure cycle parking in centre
- Signage policy
- Highlight viewpoints and interpretation
- Use the 'Design Guide' to protect Conservation Area status
- When writing this it is important to ask 'what does it look like?'. We want quality, sustainable, modern design which uses local materials and craftspeople, not just pseudo-Georgian boxes
- Traffic calming and pedestrianisation
- No deliveries during working hours
- How to relieve pinch points?

(On the map below the group highlighted in blue the 17th century core of the town, the main Victorian areas in green. They also highlighted in red those areas that are pedestrianised at set times, linked to the area used by market traders. The current pedestrian area around the Market House is also highlighted.)



Improving/Creating Footpaths and Cycleways

(This group had a lengthy and wide-ranging discussion. No notes were produced, just the map. Some key points they made were about the need to link longer distance/countryside paths and cycleways into the centre of town – and have appropriate signage, the need to develop or link together bits of routes within town, the value of opening up the Town and Country Trail towards Kerne Bridge and the importance of pedestrian and cycling links from new developments east of town through the Broadmeadow area to the town centre.)



A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR ROSS

BACKGROUND

In the second part of the meeting, Jeff highlighted a series of recent events that look likely to lead to a quantum shift upwards in terms of the amount of development to be included within the NDP. This was introduced briefly but is elaborated here, first because it is important that the right messages be conveyed to the wider community, secondly because one or two factors changed as a result of the meeting the morning after the workshop. The **initial** triggers to broader thoughts included the following:

- The poor condition of the site known as Broadmeadow (behind Morrisons), and its importance in planning terms, had become obvious and the NDP needed to address this.
- Noise problems from the rifle range south of Hildersley now appear to have made development of that area (for 200 houses plus other uses) unlikely, at least in the short to medium term. Other sites need to be found.
- Herefordshire Council are exploring how to take forward school place planning for Ross, a process that seems almost certain to conclude with the need to find a site for a new primary school within Ross.

Following a discussion with Herefordshire officers, two other potentially significant elements were added to the list:

- The possibility of developing a new Children's Centre to replace the existing Ryefield Centre and to co-locate this with the new school.
- The possibility of relocating one of the two doctors' surgeries in Ross, again in co-location with the school and Children's Centre.

Very importantly, the only way in the short term to ensure solutions to the issues above is through formal allocation in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Please note two important **updates to this list** following the meeting with officers the day after the workshop:

- Planning officers are still of the view that housing may be able to proceed on the Hildersley site, so that is **not** yet ruled out.
- Health professionals are working towards a 'health hub' near the town centre so those uses, including the GP surgery would **not** be moving.

OPTIONS

Simply to generate early discussion, three options were put forward for how the NDP might respond to the issues above. Everybody received three plans of the options which were then explained verbally. (The option plans are in Appendix B.)

The options considered, in different ways, potential development on Broadmeadow, the upper part of that site (termed Tanyard Lane), Marsh Farm (north of Model Farm), the John Kyrle school field north of the A40 and the old Somerfield site also to the north of the A40. Moving Ashfield Park school to a new site was common to all options, as was the use of Broadmeadow for a linear park and employment. None of these options is affected in principle by the updates about Hildersley or health provision.

- **Option 1** placed the new school on the Tanyard Lane site, with some land there for further housing, and housing to the north on the old Somerfield site.

- **Option 2** located the new school on part of the Marsh Farm site, with some land there for further housing. All of Tanyard Lane would be used for housing and there would be no development north of the A40.
- **Option 3** located the new school on the John Kyrle field with adjacent housing on the old Somerfield site. All of Tanyard Lane would be used for housing.
- (As someone highlighted, there is another obvious option of the school and housing on Tanyard Lane and housing on Marsh Farm, also avoiding any development north of the A40.)

Groups were asked to do a quick evaluation of the pros and cons of these options. Notes taken were as follows:

Group A: Option 1 Pro	Option 1 Con
School central with good access	Least housing/less £££
Tidy up Broadmeadow estate	Increased town centre
	Traffic due to loss of school
Group A: Option 2 Pro	Option 2 Con
Good amount of housing/ more £££	Access for people to school more challenging
Tidy up Broadmeadow estate	
Car access to school is good and draws traffic out of town	
Group A: Option 3 Pro	Option 3 Con
Most amount of houses/most £££	Loss of potential playing field site
Tidy up Broadmeadow estate	Poor access to school
	Too close to Brampton school
	Poor environment for children

Group B: Option 1 Pro	Option 1 Con
Central location of new school	Access problems to/at Overross*
Linear park/employment	
Group B: Option 2 Pro	Option 2 Con
More houses/more £££	School out of centre of town and poor accessibility
Group B: Option 3 Pro	Option 3 Con
Even more houses and money in the longer term	School even more out of the way and poor accessibility

- Maybe Marsh Farm for housing instead of Overross site?

Group C: Option 1 Pro	Option 1 Con
School at centre of town – walking to school for more	Fewer houses
Enough houses	Will the Coop sell?
	Access from housing to town for pedestrians from over A40
Group C: Option 2 Pro	Option 2 Con
Reserve capacity with warehouse site	School too far away from centre
More housing at centre	Safety issues with an A road crossing
	More houses at centre – greater traffic?
Group C: Option 3 Pro	Option 3 Con
More housing?	Too cramped site and off centre
	(In) Brampton Abbots catchment area

Group D

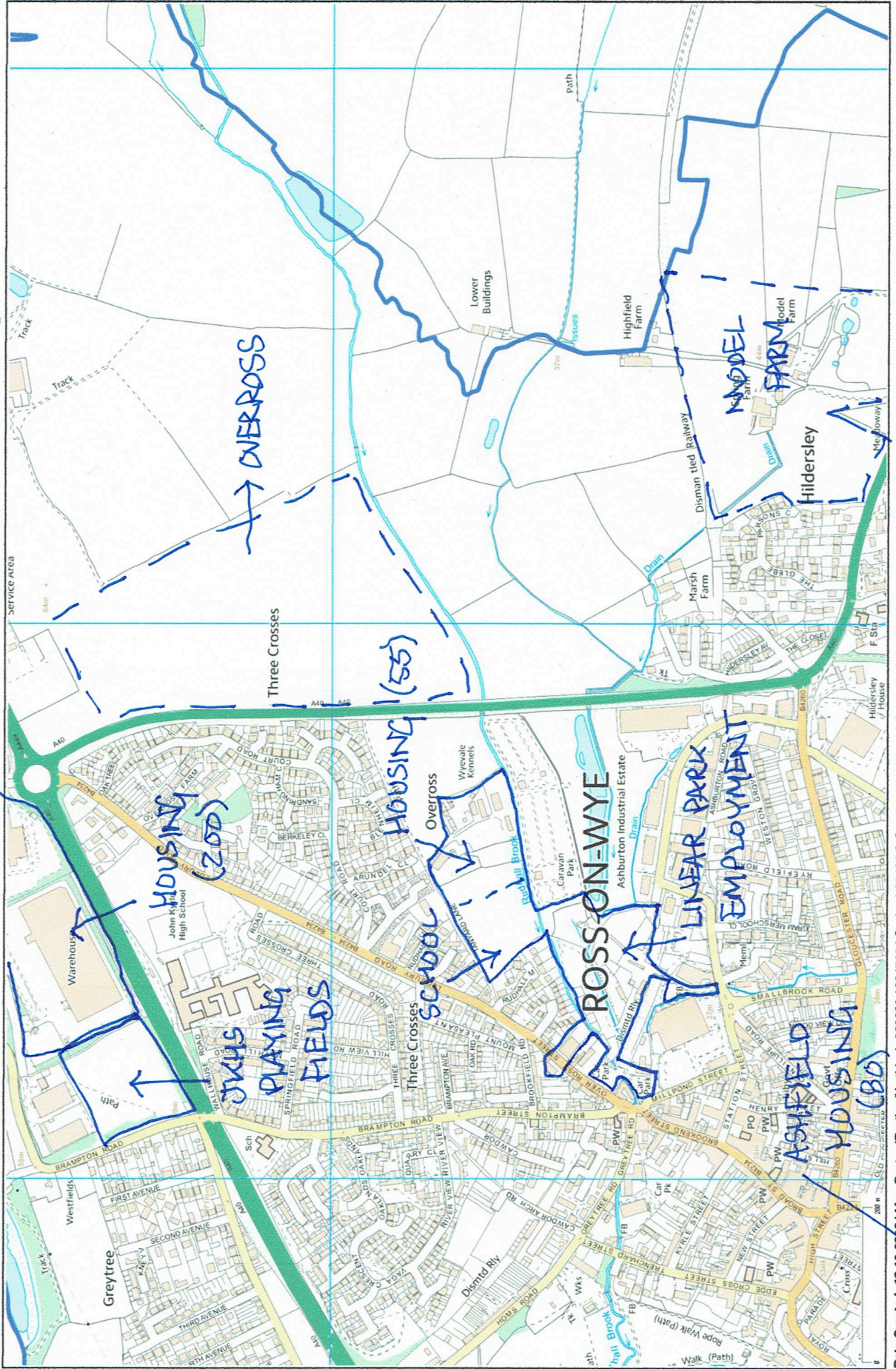
- **Option 1:** School in central location (good), access an issue along Ledbury Road, secondary school traffic as well. Makes good use of unused Somerfield space.
- **Option 2:** Access difficult to town from Marsh Farm/Model Farm. An A40 crossing would be necessary if school at Marsh Farm. Where would access be to Overross estate?
- **Option 3:** School to close to Brampton Abbots. (Is JK playing field an option for Brampton Abbots new site?) It would be close to lots of new housing.

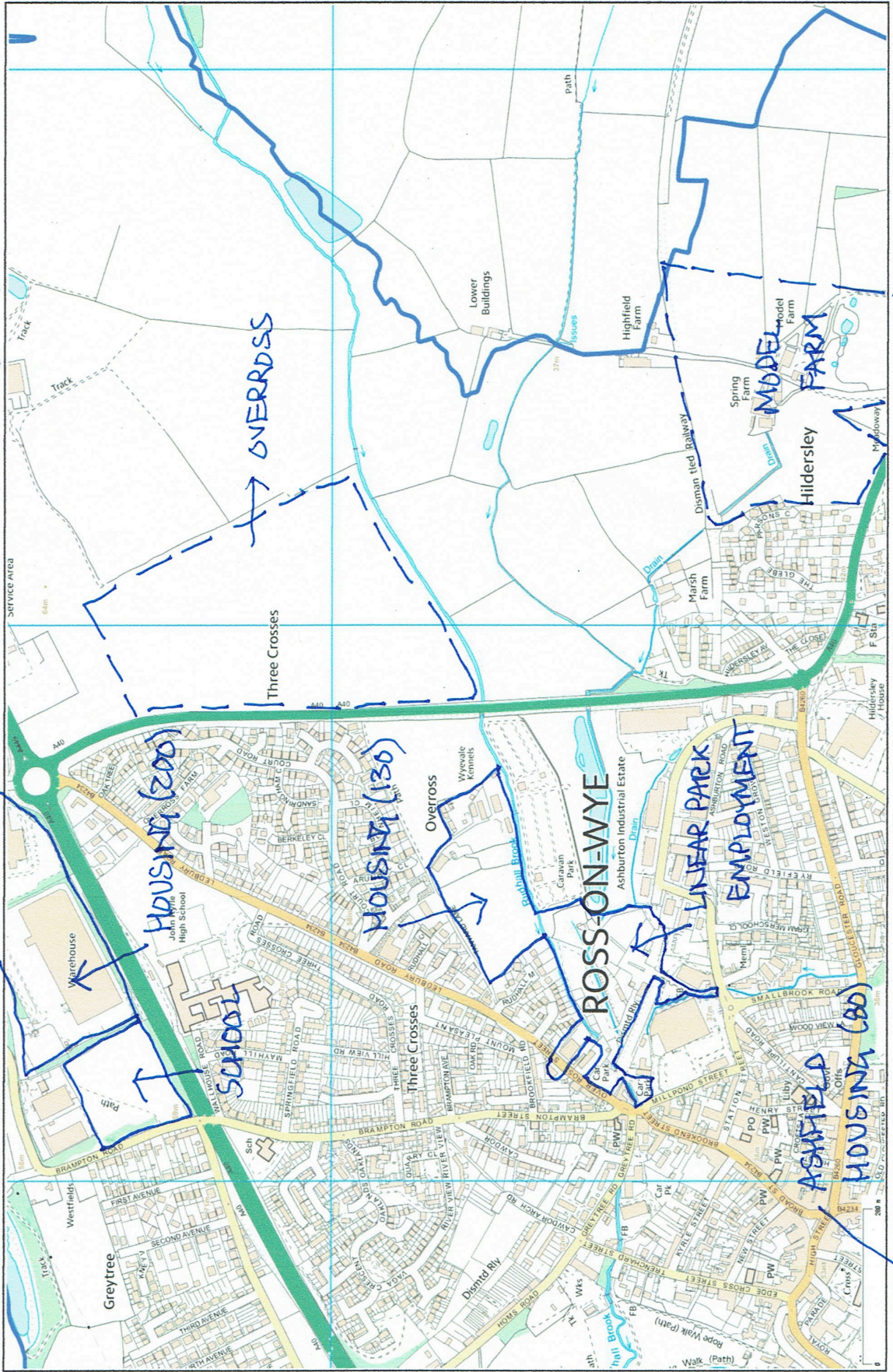
This suggests general support for Option 1 or variants thereof, mainly because of school location.

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS

- Chris Bartrum
 - Nick Critchley
 - Jeanette Draper
 - Nigel Gibbs
 - Elinor Greenacre
 - Andy Jones
 - Eleanor Kercher
 - Vic Lockley
 - Ian Murray
 - Sam Phillips
 - Melvin Reynolds
 - Helen Saunders
 - Amanda Smith
 - Caroline Utting
 - Clare West
 - Andrew Wilson
-
- Jeff Bishop and Cleo Newcombe-Jones: Place Studio

APPENDIX B: OPTION PLANS (OVERLEAF)







**STEERING GROUP AND WORKING GROUP
25TH MAY 2017
WORKSHOP REPORT**

*Produced by Place Studio for
Ross Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*

engage • design • deliver

place

INTRODUCTION

This event was the second run jointly for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Working Group for the Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan.

The three main aims of the workshop were to:

- *Seek any comments on the then current version of the Plan.*
- *Share ideas about and seek comments on local green spaces, development sites etc.*
- *Develop a list of possible practical projects to support the plan policies.*

This report is divided into three sections as per the topics above. The list of those attending is also included (Appendix A). It was particularly valuable that people new to the process were able to join the event (and occasionally to add a very different perspective!). Once again we are extremely grateful for the intense involvement of everybody throughout a long and extremely hot evening.

All text, as here in italics, is explanation and description; everything in plain text is as noted by participants themselves.

Jeff Bishop: Place Studio

COMMENTS ON DRAFT PLAN

The most recent version of the draft Neighbourhood Plan had been circulated some time in advance to all those on the list at that time. One consequence of this was that the newcomers at the session had not had an opportunity to read through it. A copy was made available but this clearly limited the extent of newcomer comments. (All newcomers will be sent a copy.) It was also the case that some of the others at the meeting had not fully read through the draft but, as people worked in small groups, this nevertheless ensured some valuable feedback.

The draft being considered had already incorporated (a) comments from Steering and Working Group members and (b) comments by Herefordshire Council officers, so it was made clear that it was getting close to being a final version. Comments were sought mainly on aspects still not clear or outstanding.

The chart below and overleaf lists the comments to the left and, as appropriate, adds some responses by the Place Studio team to the right. On some occasions we note, in the column to the right, that an issue is already, in our view, adequately covered by Herefordshire plan policies. Sometimes we just note the support for what is drafted already or that the issues are already included in the plan, and sometimes we suggest further action – in bold.

Comments

Responses/Actions

Objective 2b (Better use of brownfield land): Develop Tanyard Lane/Broadmeadow - good idea - as long as corridor for flooding covered.	Include as part of Green Infrastructure corridor for Ross whether Broadmeadow/Tanyard site allocated or not.
Objective 2c (Self-build housing): Good idea. Encourages younger people better quality building.	Support noted
Objective 2d (Design for working from home): Need more employment in Ross!	Support noted

<p>Ensure any development ensures that any flooding risk is minimised lower down - towards river</p>	<p>Covered by Herefordshire Local Plan policies,</p>
<p>Ensure sewerage/run-off is properly catered for to prevent further contamination of river</p>	<p>Covered by Herefordshire Local Plan policies,</p>
<p>These are the things we welcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in natural environment and reference to the AONB - Link between town and river - Community facilities: allotments - Building for places to meet - theatre etc. - NHS dentists, doctors surgery etc. to manage increase in housing? 	<p>Support noted</p>
<p>Model Farm? Broadmeadow/Tanyard Lane and Caravan Park Development type Masterplan East of Ross bypass? Chase Hotel Grounds - development vs green space?</p>	<p>These were comments by our 'newcomers', checking whether key things were in the plan, having not been able to read it in advance. So:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model Farm and any east of Ross by-pass are outside this plan's remit. • A masterplan is being developed for Broadmeadow etc. • Different types of development are dealt with in terms of location and design. • The owners of The Chase want some further development; as of now the plan will not support this.
<p>Digitisation not mentioned... likely to have a huge impact - in 2031 will there be buses? shops? Museum? banks? health services? interactive boards around town? Is it future proof? vision statement More residential like in the past? List alternative futures? What are we transitioning towards? Show awareness of possible futures - forward,</p> <p>Is there too much emphasis on retaining shops? What kind of destination is Ross?</p> <p>Health/shops developing more on outskirts? Health hub - not centred - alternative centre near new housing</p>	<p>The Vision goes some way to addressing this but it will be looked at again. Plan policies can, however, only address issues in terms determined by the format of current planning system criteria.</p> <p>Getting this balance right is important and it will be looked at again. It links to ideas about enhancing Ross as a shopping and visitor/tourist destination, including for uses associated with the river, links to the Forest of Dean etc.</p> <p>The NHS and Herefordshire Council currently favour a single, central 'health hub'. This is being questioned given the amount and location of new housing. Peripheral shopping is currently strongly resisted by Herefordshire. Small shops in existing or new neighbourhoods are generally unviable.</p>

School/Health centre on same site?	Co-location of school and health facilities may not be possible given the above but there is a proposal to co-locate the replaced Children's Centre with any new Primary School
------------------------------------	---

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

For this part of the session, Jeff Bishop ran through a presentation covering various issues and ideas as below. A few important comments are noted below. The plans and diagram referred to follow the text below.

1. Green Infrastructure

'Green infrastructure' is all the green links, networks, wildlife corridors, major biodiversity sites etc. in and around Ross. The first diagram shows the proposals for Ross from the Herefordshire Core Strategy, showing some 'Local Enhancement Zones' and 'Local Strategic Corridors'. This does not imply that no development would take place in these areas but that any development must provide properly for new green infrastructure.

Jeff explained that this is quite a strong framework but also that some more detailed local information **might** be appropriate to add local value. He then showed plans (not included here) of the main footpaths into and around Ross and pointed out that, for example, some of these might valuably be enhanced – notably as wildlife corridors - as they pass through the town, or should be retained and enhanced in new development (for example in the large developments east of the A40).

This would best be developed through good local knowledge so he asked for volunteers. Helen Saunders and Marti Hewitt offered to help (many thanks!). Jeff then passed them a brief and some maps.

2. Local Green Spaces

The next two slides show locations (to the south and north of the town) for some possible 'Local Green Spaces' which the Plan can designate if they meet some key criteria and secure good community support. Some that had been suggested had already been dropped as inappropriate and some on the maps may have enough protection through Herefordshire Council not to need further protection (this is being checked). Those judged by the Place Studio team to be worth pursuing are:

- Off Redwood Close
- On Duxmere Drive
- Off Falaise Close
- Paddock on Merrivale Lane
- On Fernbank Road
- Cleeve Orchard
- Off Bluebell Close
- On Greytree (Road)
- The Community Garden

There was further support for all of these but note comments below on the site at the end of Hawthorne Lane.

3. Possible Housing Sites

The overall plan and the three site plans that follow show sites that have emerged as potentially suitable for housing. Jeff explained that that most of the 900 houses target for Ross in the Core Strategy has been or will be met but some contingency is always needed. He also added that, if they meet county criteria, sites such as those shown are also likely to be developed over the plan period so it would be better to include them now in order to maximise local influence over their detail. Jeff commented on all three as follows:

South of Cleeve Lane: Only part of this, almost certainly the field to the north east (this is being checked), was supported by county planners. It was regarded as highly developable but, on the basis of comments made, it could be included in the plan as a development for the later period of the plan's timeframe, ie, from 2026-2031.

Hawthorne Lane: This had been put forward as a Local Green Space by local people and received good community support as such. Place Studio had some cautions about whether it might qualify because it was on the edge of the settlement, so had taken it out of the list above. However, the planners had rated it very positively as a housing site despite it being on the edge of the settlement and so, given workshop members' support, it is back on the list as a potential Local Green Space.

RSPCA: This site on Brampton Road had been ruled out for housing by the planners because of (a) views into it from the surrounding AONB landscape and (b) poor road access. The views issue is probably now less valid given the considerable tree belt around the top of the site. In order to deal with the road access issue, we had suggested access to only a small amount of housing off Brampton Road and other small amounts of First and Second Avenue – but that was before we actually looked properly at the latter two, very narrow roads! There may be a possibility of a Care Home on the site as this generates far less vehicular traffic.

We have since contacted Herefordshire Council planning officers to seek further information and opinions on the above three sites.

4. Broadmeadow and Tanyard Lane

Jeff showed a diagram that included both areas of land and made the argument for a single overall development because:

- A narrow linear park could go from the edge of the town centre right out to the A40, serving the triple purpose of (a) ensuring a good pedestrian link to new developments over the A40, (b) creating an important green/wildlife corridor, and (c) creating a balancing pond to deal with flooding.
- There will be considerable cost involved in enabling Broadmeadow to be used at all, certainly for housing, because of flooding. Including Tanyard Lane for housing could ensure overall cross-subsidy to address the cost issue.
- Herefordshire Council planners are very much in support of a mixed development on these sites.
- Although appropriate road access to the Tanyard Lane area is not currently possible, the owners of the kennels have put up that land for housing development and this would enable an appropriate road access from the east.

There is much to do to move this idea forward. We are currently awaiting a lot more technical information (notably about flooding and contamination) and will go out with further proposals once this information is received.

5. Marsh Farm (etc.)

In early May we were contacted by Savills on behalf of Taylor Wimpey because they now have an interest in developing housing on the Marsh Farm site (as on the later sketch). The site received a mixed evaluation from the planners because of flooding on the northern part of the site and road access. Once again, it was our view that, if the site moves forward, it would be better to manage it within the controls in the Neighbourhood Plan.

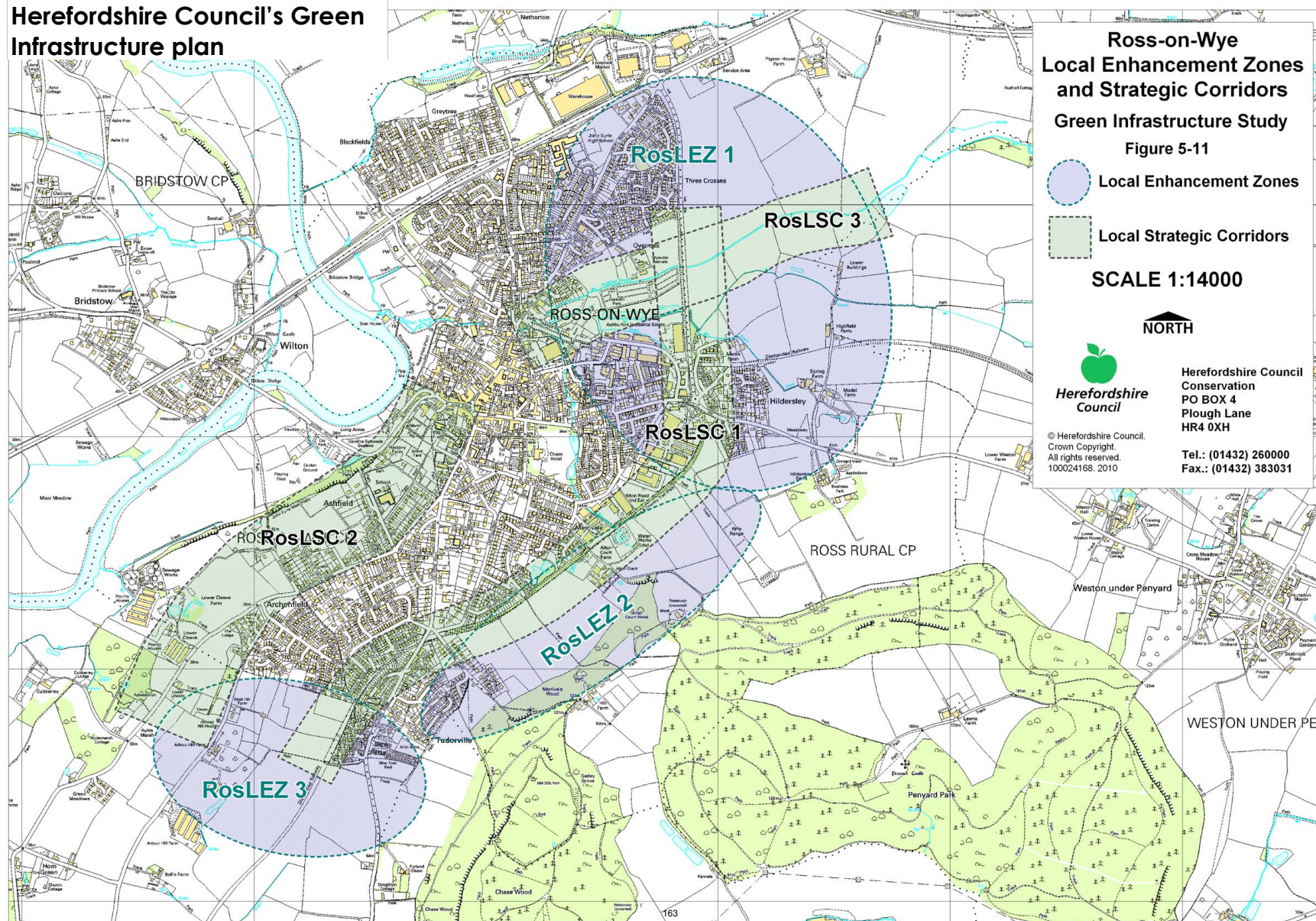
In discussion with the potential applicants we proposed an interesting alternative for Marsh Farm and the employment development on Model Farm. The latter is currently unviable and it is now being reconsidered by Herefordshire. Placing some housing on the western part of the site as shown would generate some funds and also create a road access to Marsh Farm – at a price to the Marsh Farm developers. Furthermore, we suggested part of the land to the east of Model Farm could be used for the potential new primary school. Given other things such as the linear park, new developments at Overross and the existence of the Town and Country Trail, the site would, in our view, be very well located for the school (better than the other suggested sites). The land would also be free so all the revenue from selling the Ashton Park site for housing could go into the new building instead of paying for land, as would be the case elsewhere.

Workshop members expressed support for this school location in particular.

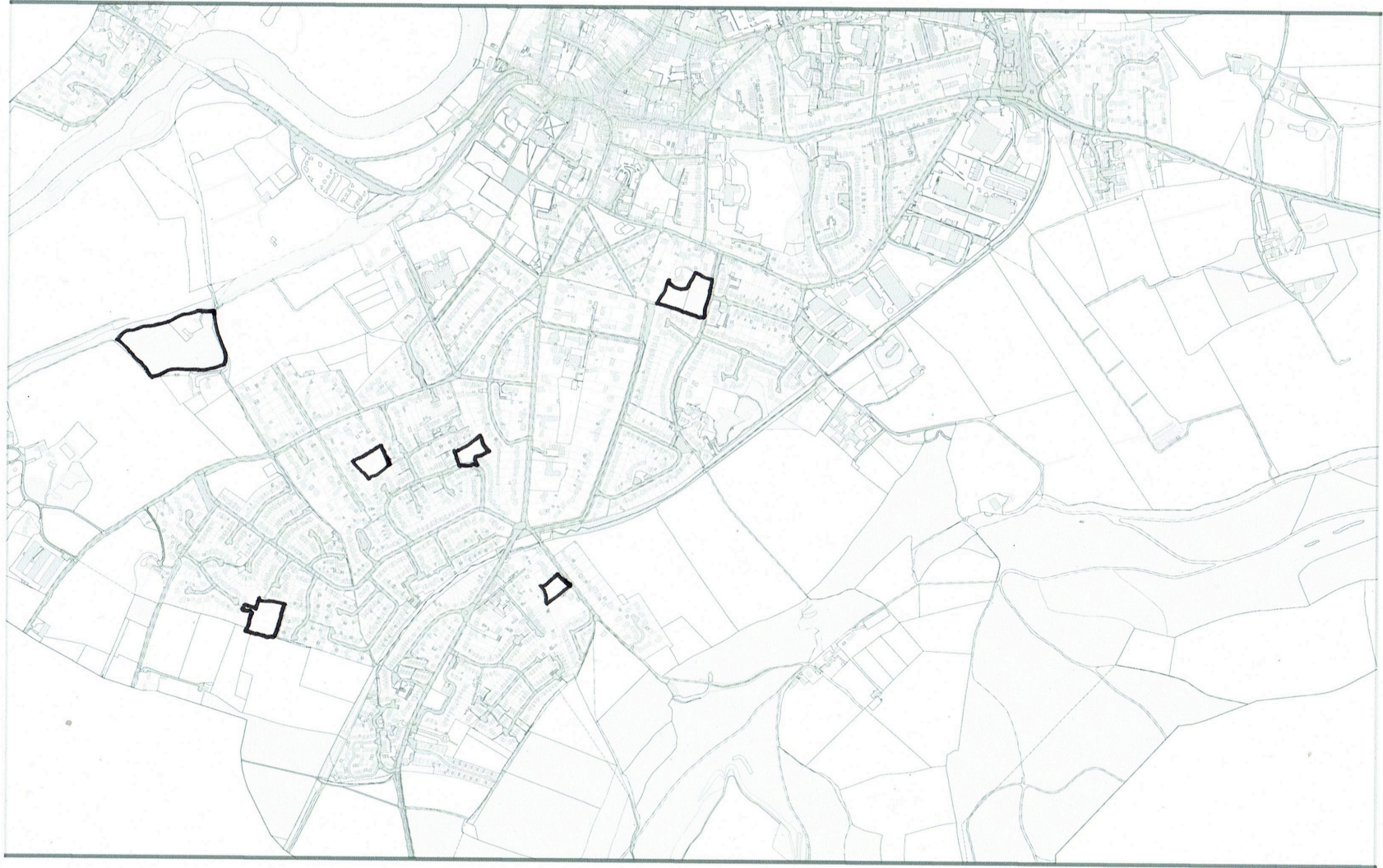
Taylor Wimpey appreciated these ideas and, if they continue to offer benefits, they will share them with county planners. In the meantime, it is valuable to note that the study of all county lands to the east of Ross (including some outside the parish boundary) is underway and we will be taking a close watching brief because of potentially significant outcomes for Ross and the Neighbourhood Plan.

Diagrams overleaf

Herefordshire Council's Green Infrastructure plan



**Possible Local Green Spaces
south of town**



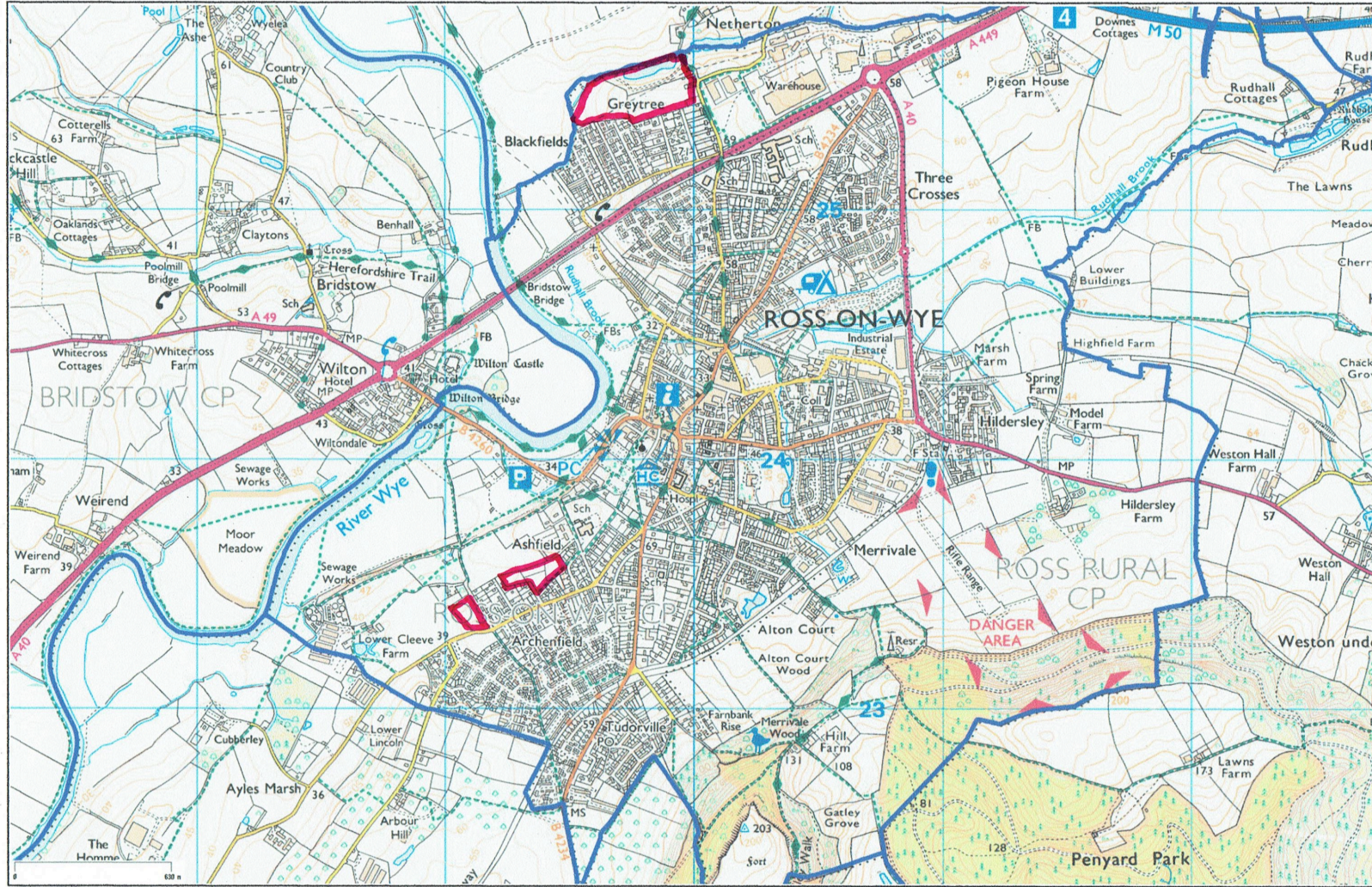
Possible Local Green Spaces
north of town



Three possible housing sites



Ross-on-Wye CP



Date Created: 6-10-2016 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 359995 / 224055 | Scale: 1:20008 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100054622) 2016 © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2016

Site south of Cleeve Lane



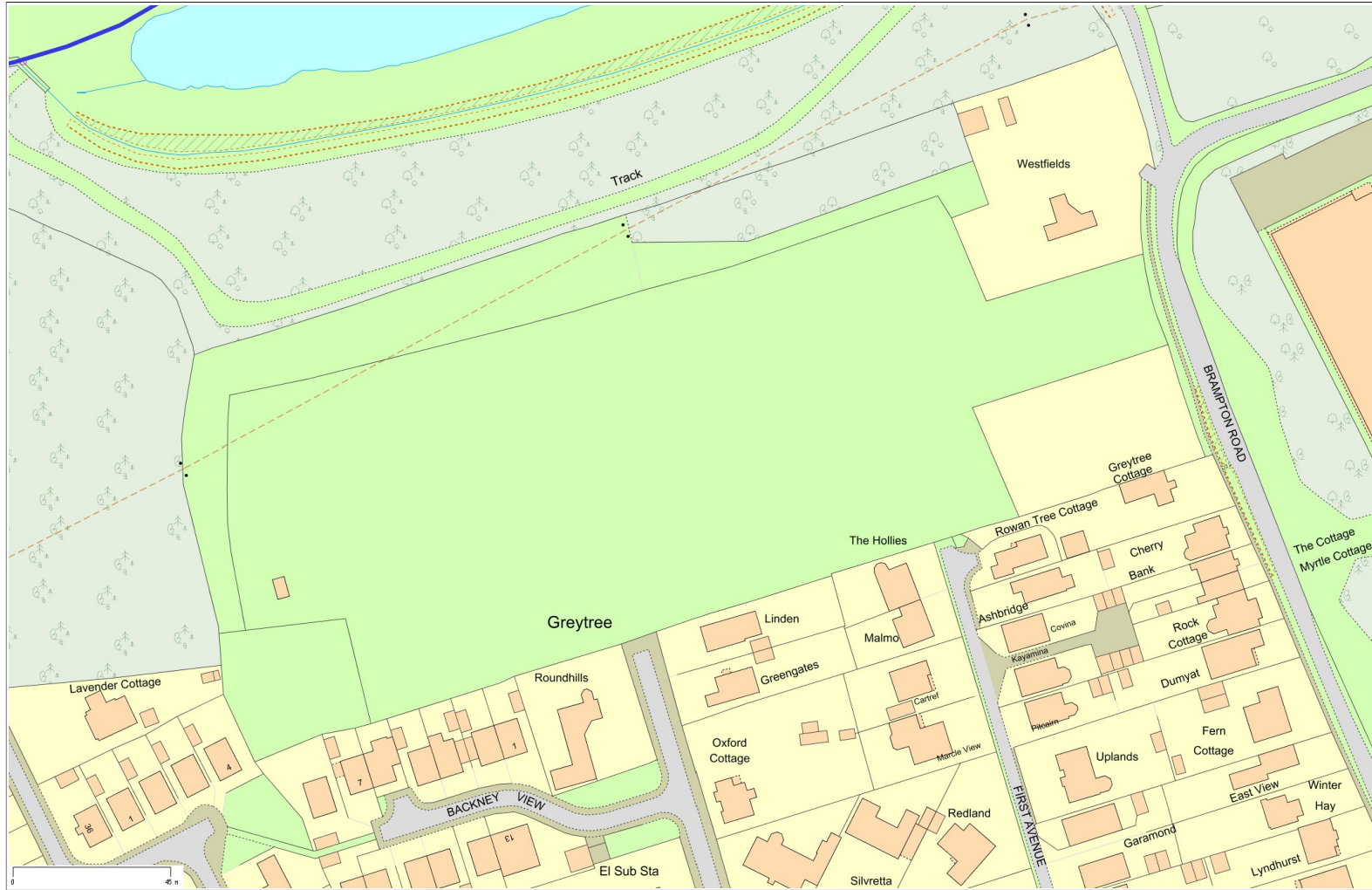
Ross-on-Wye CP 



Site at top of Greytrees, on Brampton Road



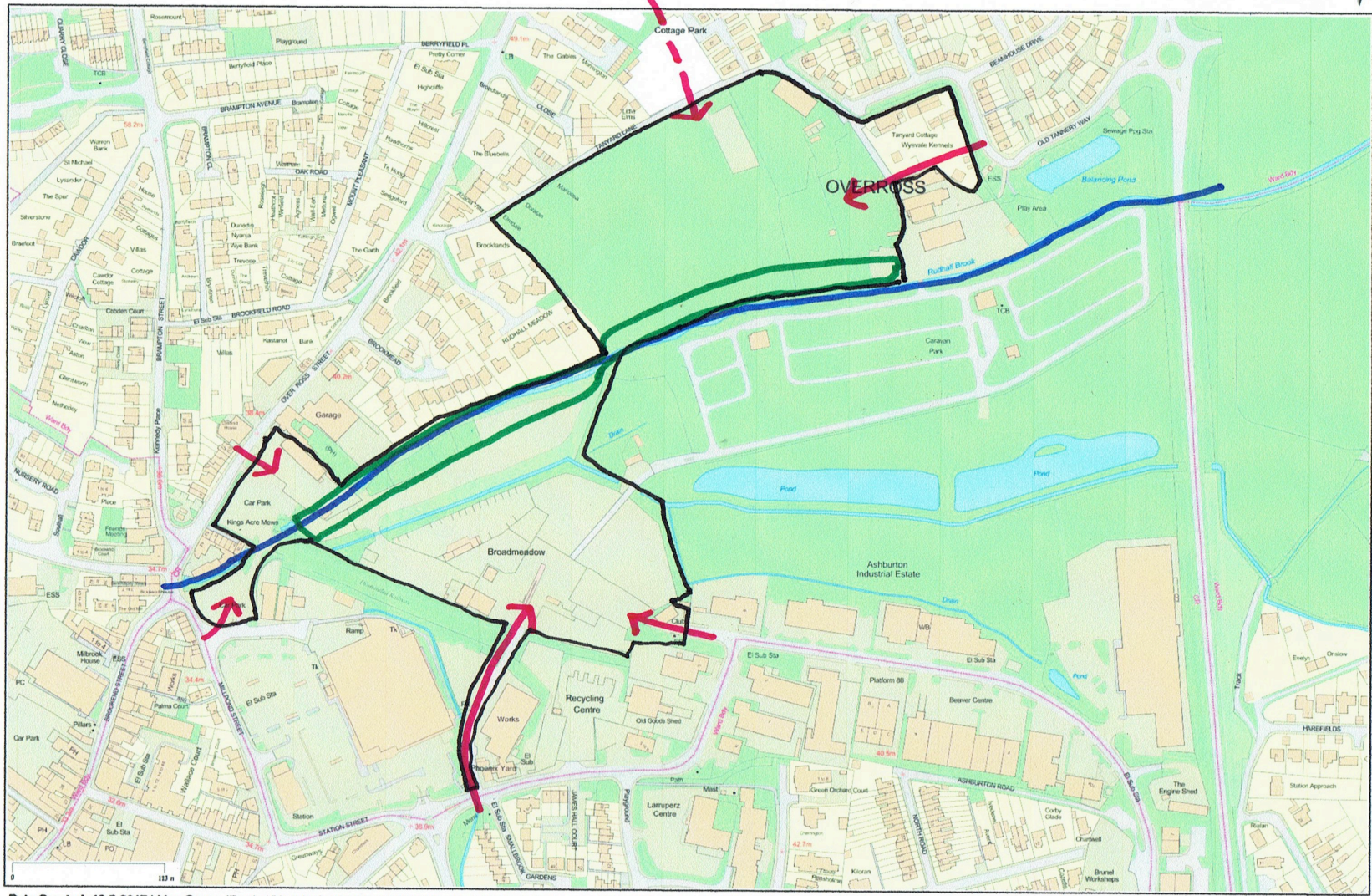
Ross-on-Wye CP 



Date Created: 2-5-2017 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 359884 / 225441 | Scale: 1:1431 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100054622) 2017 © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2017

Broadmeadow and Tanyard Lane basic diagram

Ross-on-Wye CP 



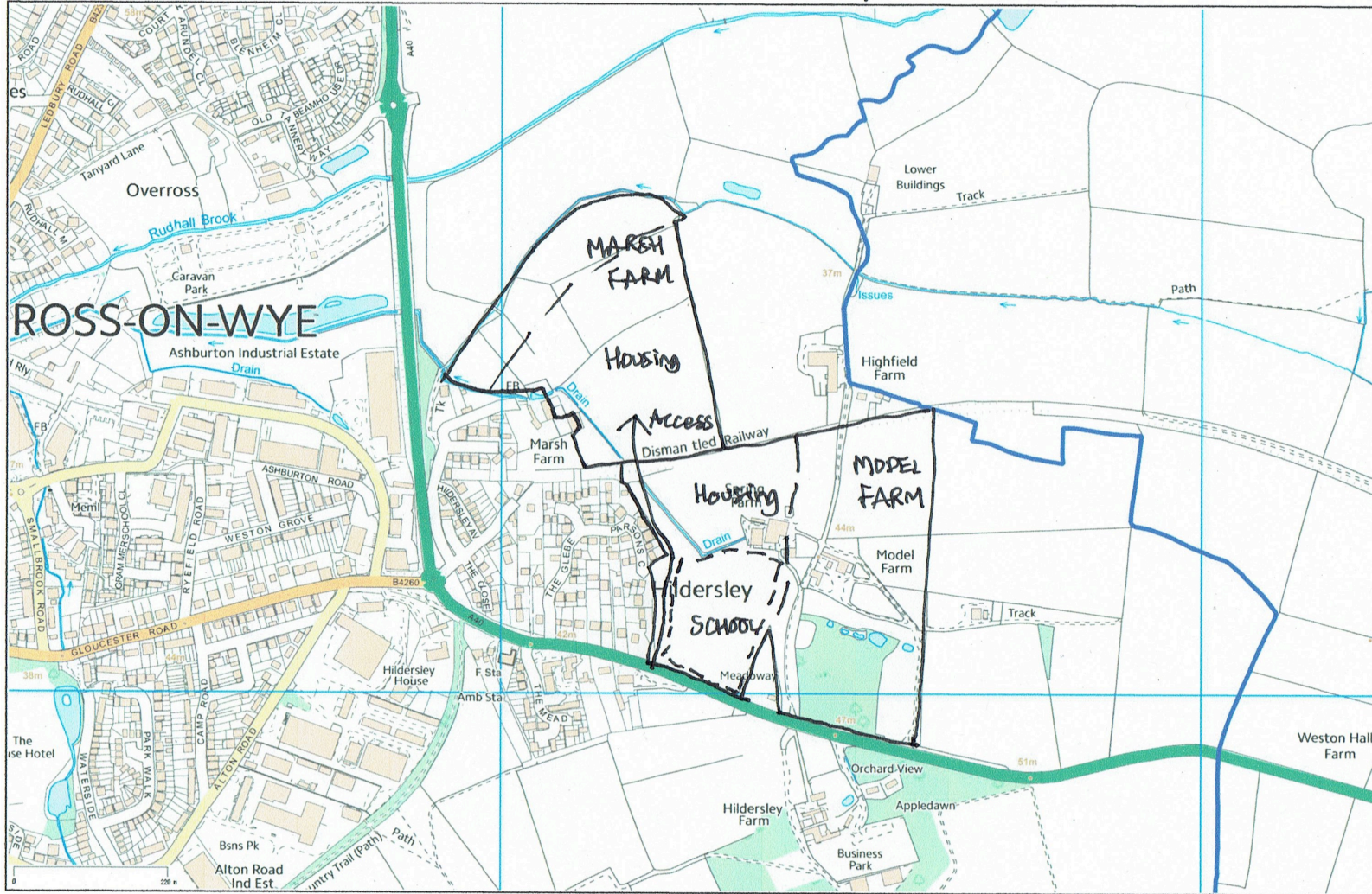
Date Created: 19-5-2017 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 360498 / 224551 | Scale: 1:3578 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100054622) 2017 © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2017

Marsh Farm/Model Farm school site option



MARSH FARM / MODEL FARM?

Ross-on-Wye CP



Date Created: 11-5-2017 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 361277 / 224348 | Scale: 1:7156 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100054622) 2017 © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2017

ACTION PROJECTS

Jeff introduced this final session by explaining the value of having some practical action projects in the plan, even though they would not be examined. A sensible and practical list of projects can help to reassure the plan examiner that the plan will be supported through practical initiatives and it also makes it possible to include things on some aspects of the plan, notably traffic and transport, that cannot be in the main plan policies.

For this session everybody received a copy of the latest plan objectives. People were also already in 5 groups so each group was tasked with considering just one of the main objectives. The task was very simple: what sort of practical and achievable projects could be developed to back up the plan policies or to fill some gaps where a policy is not possible. Groups then each worked on their allocated objective with a short opportunity at the end for people to look at other objectives and add any further suggestions.

As before, the lists have been brought together in the left hand column on the chart below with a simple ✓ in the right hand column where our experience suggests that this is an appropriate and achievable project, plus also some comments, where appropriate.

Place Studio agreed to review this list and suggest other projects back to the group, drawing from other successfully made plans. The list will also need to be discussed with Ross Town Council as they will be the main lead on carrying things forward, although there are, even today, other potential sources of funding and practical help.

Suggestions

Responses/Comments

Suggestions	Responses/Comments
Theme 1: Environment	
Promote, encourage wetland planting	✓
Photographs of select shop fronts as guidance to shop fitters/developers (use existing HC guidance)	Good suggestion, better to add into the Character Portfolio with the main plan
Hedgehog housing/shelters in green spaces	✓
Swan Island (for Jane) "Swannery" to encourage tourism and enhance riverside - yes double tick	✓
More public art - adding to existing to build a feature of Ross (John Kyle kids)	✓
Bring back Ross festival - cost - yes	✓
Employ Town Centre manager - cost? To promote town To promote bandstand Organise community events	✓
Identity - make more of town being 'birthplace of tourism' in promotional literature.	✓
IH Projects to enhance/improve condition of protected habitats SSSI/SAC. River and	✓

<p>riverbank and sandstone cliff.</p> <p>Survey of vegetation on the access routes (roads and paths) and develop project to enhance, e.g. road verges, roundabouts, significant trees. Improvement of gateways in natural way.</p> <p>Survey hedgerows/river corridors to develop connectivity projects</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
<p>A pedestrian and cycle bridge must be provided across the A449 to the 'labels' site.</p> <p>Hard Surfaces in new developments should be permeable to ensure that run off is avoided and that any flooding/pollution impact in the surrounding area is minimised.</p> <p>Air Quality?</p> <p>Consultation with other areas outside our boundary to ensure we move forward and have compatible objectives.</p> <p>Ensure the grant of housing permission that there is sufficient sewerage capacity and storm drains to safeguard water quality in the Wye.</p>	<p><i>This may not be viable/deliverable; to be included you'd need to consider this in more detail.</i></p> <p><i>Covered by Herefordshire Local Plan policies,</i></p> <p><i>Need to check if covered by Herefordshire Local Plan policies</i></p> <p><i>Built into the NDP process at Regulation 14 stage consultation</i></p> <p><i>Covered by Herefordshire Local Plan policies.</i></p>
<p>Theme 3: Employment</p> <p>Training/re-training facilities for new technology</p> <p>Education (including adult) employment links (links to local job vacancies)</p> <p>ICT infrastructure developed in line with economic development</p> <p>Apprenticeships - links with school, FE etc</p> <p>Very Important</p> <p>21st century tourist information and services</p> <p>Monitoring access to services for non IT people</p> <p>Change of use rules for shops</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p><i>Change of use rules for shops already included with new NDP policy proposed.</i></p>
<p>Theme 4: Traffic and Transport</p> <p>Plan for e-cars</p> <p>Demise of buses</p> <p>Greater use of drivers and self-driven hired/rental cars (post-uber transport)</p> <p>Reconsider current restrictions on cyclists to facilitate and encourage more cycling i.e.</p>	<p><i>These are difficult but important issues and would need a distinct task force within the town (and ideally linking with other towns)</i></p> <p>✓</p>

<p>remove some no cycling signs and overly restrictive barriers</p> <p>Reassess kerbs to make movement with wheelchairs and push chairs much easier</p> <p>Cycle parking - more facilities needed than in town centre</p> <p>Designated areas for non-polluting vehicles to encourage their use (charging points)</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
<p>Theme 5: Community Facilities</p> <p>Campsite for canoeists who are travelling down the River Wye, to encourage them to stay in the town.</p> <p>Develop GP practice close to new housing and school at Hlldersley.</p> <p>Virtual or physical health Hub e.g. including Mental Health Steering Group, signposting various health groups, e.g. dementia centre, young people's well-being.</p> <p>Develop ICT infrastructure design implementation plan to link with economic development proposals.</p> <p>Interactive boards around town giving info on history of town - Play Ross/Creative Initiative already in pipeline.</p> <p>Venue for cinema, art space, theatre etc. already being discussed - Create Ross.</p> <p>Cultural 'create Ross' activities and outlets - art, creative spaces and cinema. Linking current activities and encouraging areas.</p> <p>Play area funding - funding for park and educational interpretation of land etc.</p> <p>Audit of existing and potential facilities.</p> <p>Tourist Information - how to signpost, more cohesive approach.</p> <p>Bandstand - better promotion of its use: advertising river activities (e.g. launch site), day trips, canoeing. Consider disabled access.</p>	<p><i>This would need to be in the plan if specific site was available.</i></p> <p><i>As earlier, we are checking with the NHS about their current proposals for a single health hub.</i></p> <p><i>Good to complement the above.</i></p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p><i>Good ideas but would need more details, especially a site if this was to go into the plan.</i></p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p><i>Much of this has been done in the evidence base for the plan.</i></p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>

<p>Research the various well-being groups. School involvement - self harming, where do they go? Alcohol and drug addition - Ross help centre not Hereford.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Open Spaces that are not play areas (with formal equipment) grow groves of trees that are especially suitable for tree climbing), to encourage more use of these spaces by children. Natural Play.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Respecting and enriching the town's amazing roman history. This would be a great draw into the town. We must ensure we do not build on any historical land that would compromise this valuable asset. We have historic roman links and history with Hereford, Gloucester, Abergavenny and Monmouth. Our river and roads were used to transport materials from the Forest of Dean.</p>	<p>✓</p>

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS

- Chris Bartrum
 - Deborah Cornish
 - Nick Critchley
 - Nick Dale
 - Jeanette Draper
 - Nigel Gibbs
 - Ian Goddard
 - Margaret Hewitt
 - Martin Hewitt
 - Eleanor Kercher
 - Ian Murray
 - Eleanor Oakley
 - Melvin Reynolds
 - Helen Saunders
 - Lewis Scott
 - Amanda Smith
 - Jon Stern
 - Caroline Utting
 - Debbie Waring
 - Mark Weldt
-
- Jeff Bishop: Place Studio