

ISSUES QUESTIONNAIRE

This first questionnaire focused on very early ideas and issues. It was first available at the first open, public Drop-in at the end of March 2016 and also available via the website. It remained available for just over one month.

The questionnaire listed some 'prompting' issues drawn from the Town Plan, other recent local initiatives and the consultant team's own experience of likely Neighbourhood Plan issues. These initial Issues were grouped under the following themes:

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

For each heading people could place a tick or a cross against each of the prompting issues and then add any others of their own. People were also asked and could comment on "And what have we missed?".

Rather disappointingly (and despite small prizes being offered through a lucky draw), only 8 questionnaires were returned making any detailed analysis inappropriate.

All the prompting issues were supported. 45 other issues emerged and are listed below, though some were variations on those in the prompting lists and some (eg. Council Tax levels) were not irrelevant to the plan. As below (shown by number of repeat ticks) the only issues emerging from more than two questionnaires were the failure to deliver infrastructure in association with new developments and the need for effective flood protection.

Additional Issues

- Reuse old centre buildings for (affordable) housing for local people. ✓
- More social housing.
- Fiveways junction unsafe for drivers and pedestrians.
- Pedestrianise inner town centre/ improve for pedestrians. ✓
- Infrastructure not coming with new housing. ✓✓✓✓
- Lack of pedestrian routes from new housing to centre. ✓
- Bigger, better street market. ✓
- Need to get visitor views.
- Increasing traffic.
- One-way system is not easy to use, puts people off.
- More mini-roundabouts to slow people down at junctions.
- Several dangerous places for pedestrians to cross. ✓
- Southern by-pass.
- Open up all of old railway lines as paths. ✓
- Link bus timetables to trains in other towns.
- Beautiful setting for town.
- Avoid further development over the A40. ✓
- Well-served with clubs and societies but information not easy to find.
- More housing needs more leisure provision.
- Play areas need improving and need more. ✓
- Town centre shops too spread out and poor links.
- More specialist shops.
- More shops in areas on edge of town.
- Re-use empty buildings and poorly used car parks in town for start-up businesses.

- Don't just listen to loudest voices.
- More eco housing, wildlife areas, energy efficiency.
- More allotments needed.
- Poor road maintenance.
- Effective flood protection needed. ✓ ✓
- Solar panels on all public buildings and new buildings.
- People parking on yellow lines causes problems. ✓
- Places for older people to meet.
- Better/more parking provision for new houses. ✓
- Higher quality jobs needed.
- Facilities for cyclists are non-existent.
- Make more use of riverside and river.
- Ban dogs!
- Less empty shops.
- Less charity shops. ✓
- Free parking in centre.
- Better design of shopfronts. ✓
- Ban large vehicles from town centre.
- Speed limit enforcement.
- Fewer take-aways (and litter).
- Public toilets needed.

TOWN TRAIL (QUESTIONNAIRE) COMMENTS

This was intended as a more interesting and engaging type of questionnaire than is usual. It took the form of a problem-solving trail around the town centre. Those tackling the challenge had to use photos taken at every street or main footpath junction to tell them which direction to take next. At each junction, a question was asked about the participant's views on a particular issue, such as design or traffic. The trail ended at the Library where the completed trail and question answers could be submitted.

Only 5 completed trails were received, all from people in Ross, so no analysis was possible. Responses per issue were as follows:

- 1. Wish to be consulted?** Email questionnaire/ Like this method of consultation, gets to others/ Like this method, need to see results/ Have given ideas.
- 2. Centre safe?** Some minor anti-social behaviour in evenings/ No problems/ More police exp. weekend evening/ Publicise crime information better.
- 3. Enough for visitors?** Canoe hire facility/ Poor one-way system puts off visitors, TIC not obvious, more and more frequent markets attract people/ TIC hard to find, visitors need free parking, more events, need own website?/ TIC in Old Chapel Cantilupe Road, public toilets needed and signposted.
- 4. Conservation standards?** Old buildings OK, not so old not so good/ Old Mill at Fiveways to be kept/used, few prominent run-down premises/ Not all sympathetic in design/ Preserve and use for community events.
- 5. Enough sport provision?** OK/ Representation of local groups poor at River Festival/ Good range of provision, not easy to find out about/ Difficult to find out what's going on – website again/ Better use of surrounding countryside.
- 6. New housing in centre?** Eco housing needed/ No more retirement housing or low cost housing/ Self-build and eco housing, less of Persimmon type/ Housing for police, eco housing, no more Persimmon type/ Is land needed for burials, local hospice on site?..
- 7. Pedstrianisation?** Pedestrianise High Street (bit steep for events)/ Yes/ Possible but need great care/ Pedestrianise High Street/ Small paving dangerous, retain access for deliveries.
- 8. Use of empty centre land?** Car parking free/ No more retirement housing or low cost housing/ Starter units, shops, food market, mixed use possible/ Is car park needed?/ Need car parks, especially for visitors, should be free for special days.
- 9. Traffic and congestion?** Congestion problems/ Congestion High Street and Gloucester Road, difficult to get from Market Place to Gloucester Road, dangerous to walk to Labels/ Difficult town to negotiate by car, Gloucester road congested, one-way system poor/ Problems: Brookend Street into Station Street, make Station Street one-way.
- 10. Traffic movement and parking?** One-way system linked to car parks/ Maybe too many car parks, need to be free/ Need car parks nearby.
- 11. Shops?** More service centred shops/ Shops too spread out/ Free parking helps/ More corner shops on edges of town/ Need larger shop like Dunelm, M&S Food and for clothes, too many charity shops.
- 12. Another supermarket in town?** No more supermarkets, more attractions/ Probably Ok for large supermarkets, smaller one near residential areas perhaps/ Not another supermarket.

13. Use of old buildings? Museum, art centre, new tourist office/ Reuse good but not always residential, look at other towns / Housing/ Use space above shops.

14. Paths and cycleways? More safe paths/ Better paths from new Persimmon housing, zebra crossing by Fiveways/ Some good paths, some not so good, need them to housing/ Paths good but need more and better from new housing? More paths need more bins and to be safe and signposted.

15. Keep/improve facilities? Digital media centre/ Keep library open, some playgrounds poor, Ropewalk needs more/ Keep library – run café inside, more and better play equipment/ Public facilities to be open on bank holidays.

JOHN KYRLE HIGH SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire was a version of the Aims Questionnaire, slightly adapted for use with schoolchildren. The questionnaire was given out and completed in school time potentially by 140 children of various ages between 14 and 17. Not all students completed the form (some forms could be described as 'spoilt') and not all answered all questions.

The aims shown in column 1 of the results below are those used in the main Aims Questionnaire with some minor changes of phrasing. Each student was asked, for each aim, to rate its importance on a scale from 1 (irrelevant) to 10 (very important), to add ideas that might help to make the aim into a reality and then to assess what score (again from 1 to 10) they thought their parent(s) might give the aim.

The chart below:

- lists responses and average scores on personal views (Score 1);
- notes any ideas suggested and
- lists responses and scores for what parents might score (Score 2)

| AIM | SCORE 1 | IDEAS TO MAKE THE AIM HAPPEN | SCORE 2 |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1. It would be good to make the town centre more welcoming, safer and more attractive to be in. | 136 responses Total score 722 Average 5.3 | More colour, flowers, bins Better maintained Needs to be safer | 66 responses Total score 424 Average 6.4 |
| 2. It would be good to look after and improve the appearance of all the old buildings in the town centre. | 126 responses Total score 650 Average 5.2 | Keep main buildings Restore, paint buildings Maintain better | 66 responses Total score 339 Average 5.1 |
| 3. It would be good if there were better walking and cycling links between the town centre and the river. | 127 responses Total score 512 Average 4.0 | OK as they are, no more needed Need some more paths Manage dog mess | 66 responses Total score 335 Average 5.0 |
| 4. It would be good if there were more places to stop and talk to each other in the town centre. | 125 responses Total score 495 Average 4.0 | More benches Plenty of cafes to meet in More space generally | 66 responses Total score 271 Average 4.1 |
| 5. It would be good if there were really clear signs around the town centre, for us and for visitors. | 130 responses Total score 435 Average 3.3 | More signs needed, clearer/bigger More maps | 75 responses Total score 341 Average 4.5 |
| 6. It would be good if there were more flats in the (often empty) spaces above shops in the town centre. | 125 responses Total score 556 Average 4.5 | Good idea, make affordable, target younger people No more housing, spoil the environment Good for business | 68 responses Total score 325 Average 4.8 |
| 7. It would be good | 125 | More local business good for town and | 67 responses |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| to build things (houses, offices etc.) on the many small, empty sites around the town centre. | responses Total score 570 Average 4.6 | us Good use of place Damage the environment | Total score 325 Average 4.9 |
| 8. It would be good to build something useful for the town on the empty land behind Morrisons. | 125 responses Total score Average 5.4 | Park, McDonalds, shops, cinema, offices, housing | 65 responses Total score 403 Average 6.2 |
| 9. It would be good if there were less empty shops in the town centre. | 125 responses Total score 884 Average 7.0 | Yes! More clothes shops (Top Shop etc.), more nationals, less charity shops More newer shops Less charity shops | 66 responses Total score 499 Average 7.6 |
| 10. It would be good to have more cafes and specialist shops in the town centre. | 123 responses Total score 439 Average 3.6 | More than enough cafes | 63 responses Total score 364 Average 5.8 |
| 11. It would be good if it was easier for people to drive into and around the town centre. | 116 responses Total score 648 Average 5.6 | Less traffic into town centre One-way system is confusing More places to park | 64 responses Total score 364 Average 5.7 |
| 12. It would be good to have clearer signs to the various car parks. | 116 responses Total score 528 Average 4.6 | More and bigger signs Easy enough now Less people needing to ask directions | 62 responses Total score 278 Average 4.5 |
| 13. It would be good if it was easier to cycle and walk into and around the town centre. | 101 responses Total score 501 Average 5.0 | More/wider pavements More cycle paths More paths | 62 responses Total score 343 Average 5.5 |

Age and Gender

7 14 year old boys 14 15 year olds 1 16 year old 5 17 year olds 38 total
said boy
7 14 year old girls 19 15 year olds 5 16 year olds 7 17 year olds 56 said girl

Others gave no age or gender.

COMMENTARY

- A few children scored 0 for everything or 10 for everything (most of these adding no comments).
- Overall the children scored 5/10 for the given aims, with little difference by age or gender.
- The only high support from children came for 'less empty shops' (7.0).
- Two aims scored low: 'signs around the town centre' (3.3) and 'more cafes' (3.6).
- On all but two items (where the difference was very slight), the guessed scores for parental views were higher.

- The biggest difference between children and parents was on 'more cafes' where the adult score was noticeably higher.
- The results mirror those from adults although, in general, these aims seem to be of less interest to these age groups.

AIMS QUESTIONNAIRE: SUMMARY RESULTS

- This questionnaire was put out in hard copy during June and July 2016, mainly at the Ross-on-Wye Library, although a few people accessed it through other sources.
- The questionnaire listed the various aims/objectives developed to date through other stages of consultation.
- The main focus was the Town Centre but a shorter second section highlighted aims for the Wider Town.
- Those responding were asked to place a tick (for general support) or a cross (for no support) against each aim.
- There was also an opportunity, if they wished, to add comments.
- People were asked to provide their age, gender, number in household and length of time living in/near Ross.
- A few 'Lucky Draw' prizes were offered; those who wished to be in the draw were also asked to provide their contact details.

- 45 questionnaires were returned.
- Almost all respondents completed the tick/cross task and around 60% added comments.
- According to the postcodes given, almost all respondents lived in or near to Ross.

RESULTS

- Virtually every respondent ticked virtually every aim.
- There is therefore no point in undertaking any sub analysis by, for example, gender.
- Though comments were often made just by one person, these are nevertheless valuable.
- The following appeared (despite the caution about numbers) to be more common areas prompting comment.
- (NB. As is always the case, some comments were made in the 'wrong' section and some repeats. They have been left as noted.)

TOWN CENTRE AIMS

Environment

- Reduce and/or manage through traffic, especially HGVs.
- Introduce some areas/some forms of pedestrianisation.
- Include further 'greening' initiatives.
- Reduce the number of empty shops and charity shops.
- Introduce more and more regular market traders.
- There should be better signage and interpretation.
- Shopfront designs should be more carefully controlled to fit in.
- Solar/PV panels are supported if any visual impacts are addressed.
- Enhancement of the riverside is important.

Living

- Widely supported
- Affordable/social housing favoured
- Avoid over-development of town centre spaces.

Economy

- Reduce the number of empty shops and charity shops.
- Views varied on the appropriate balance between independent and national chain shops.
- Views also varied on the appropriate number of cafes and restaurants.
- A coherent parking plan and layout is needed.

Accessibility

- Look again at one-way systems.
- Support/retain the existing bus services.
- Improve the 'bus station'.
- A coherent parking plan and layout is needed.
- Make the centre safer for cyclists, especially children (on school routes).
- Road and path signage needs improvement.
- Stop charges for parking.

Social/ Cultural Issues

- The Library is of key importance.
- Improve the 'bus station'.

WIDER TOWN AIMS

- Introduce more affordable housing.
- Ensure that appropriate infrastructure comes with new developments.
- Retain neighbourhood 'corner' shops.
- No more out-of-town shopping.
- There is some support for some forms of traffic calming.
- There is strong support for more/better paths in, around and out of town.
- There should be shuttle buses from neighbourhoods into the centre.
- There needs to be a better route through town from the west.
- Important views should be protected.

Morrisons

NB. This was included in the section on town centre living but, since then, the flood risk status of the site rules out housing so it has been pulled out here as a distinct issue.

Suggested uses (other than housing)

- Park?
- Car park (shuttle bus)?
- Starter business units?