

FREE

Place Hereford Civic Society

The City's built environment forum

Summer 2018

HCS Declaration of 17th May 2018

Developed at the **Upcycling Cycling event**

Urban Review Panel & Peer Review

Measured appraisal of recent reports

Widemarsh Brook Walk

A new city walking route

Amazing Places

Panson Cottage

Hereford Now

Packers House

NEXT ISSUE - OCTOBER 2018

Revealed – a new approach to Highway Design by our retained consultants Witteveen+Bos UK

Ideas for improvements to Holme Lacy Road, from the Co-op Shop under the railway bridge and up to the Straight Mile.

Measured, logical and sound advice to bring Hereford into the 21st Century – join us and be sure of your copy.

Joining instructions on back page.

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the city's built environment forum

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PREFACE



Nobody seems to know what is happening when it comes to the future of our built environment. Our members are passionate about Hereford with a welcoming public realm fronted by appropriate and inspiring buildings. Ten years ago we were positive about the Ten Year Ambition – Hereford City Centre Regeneration Strategy;

we contributed to it. We understand the financial crisis somewhat messed up those aspirations but so much of what was written then, much of which is not expensive to achieve, has not occurred.

Our concerns are highlighted in this expanded edition – much of what HCS stands for, and inspires debate about, is not rocket science. We despair that our politicians can't get it right more often.

- Page 4 - Detailed analysis of the Urban Review Panel's (URP) Report

- Page 5 - Peer Review and 10year Ambition
- Page 6 - our Upcycling Cycling event in May, at the University Centre, inspired many; so much so that HCS has retained professional consultants (HBUK) to come up with ideas for the further works in Holme Lacy Road – page 7
- Page 7 - Our Declaration of 17th May
- Page 8 - Perceptive analysis of what is sustainable housing by new contributor Robert Palgrave and Localism as practised in Preston,

clearly a lesson for Herefordshire.

- Page 9 – our inspired suggestion for a walking route from the station to the Old Market
- Page 10 – David Whitehead again reminds us of amazing places
- Page 11 – extracts of an excellent appraisal of the flawed application for a GP Centre by the station

Please join with us insisting we have a better public realm and vision for the City.

John Bothamley
Editor

NEWS & COMMENT

2nd July 2018

Herefordshire Council confirms a Public Inquiry into the Southern Link Road. The inquiry is scheduled to commence on 30 October 2018.

Cllr. Price commented "The council will be presenting a robust case for the road to the Inquiry". Some will think it is a shame that the democratically elected council cannot proceed with it's published aims.

Museum, Library, HARC

At a full Council meeting on 28th June 2018 it was agreed that up to £230,000 is invested in the development of the mezzanine floor at the Hereford Library and Museum creating a flexible community use space and multi-agency office, with external funding sought to

highlight the historic features. There are to be further attempts to divest the Herefordshire Council (HC) of responsibility for these services but an undertaking that services must be maintained was given. HCS despairs that so much time and effort has been expended trying to resolve these issues and now HC has only ideas for "a flexible community use space".

Rail & Bus for Herefordshire (RBfH)

Those of us who are not train buffs probably like to have an occasional update on the state of the rail industry. We are positive supporters of RBfH and much enjoy their quarterly newsletters, Gareth Calan Davies wrote in June:- "In the forty eight years that I have been involved with the transport industry I have never known such a mess with the



bath street proposals

nations' railways. The blame cannot be laid at any specific door, it is the result of creating a huge railway melting pot into which has been thrown political dogma, warped economic theory, inept management, misunderstanding of railway operation and finance, the desire to maximise profits and the worship of greed". The rant then proceeds in more measured fashion explaining the latest on franchises and what is happening to our network. We are intrigued that the Ewyas Harold

reported that Connexus, previously known as Herefordshire Housing, was inspired by our proposals for the site (PLACE Spring 2014, Winter 2014 and Spring 2016) and obtained planning consent. It was, therefore, satisfying to read Cllr. Bramer's complete change of mind. We understand he is now an avid reader of our magazine and we look forward to the delivery of more logical and well thought out projects. He wrote:-

"I'm delighted that the Bath Street sale has officially completed. The 1.88 acre site will enable us to provide 75 high quality homes, a number of which will be affordable housing, all built around one of the city's most iconic Victorian buildings. We were keen to preserve as much of the original building as possible, because even though it's not listed, it's an important part of our city's character and has been since it was constructed in 1877 to answer the city's desire to support and care for local orphans. Our development has been approved by the county's planners and will ensure this historic example of Victorian architecture and philanthropy is preserved for future generations, while also fulfilling our city's need for quality housing."

Friar Street

As we go to press Cotswold Archaeology is excavating in Friars Street ahead of McCarthy & Stone's enormous sheltered housing development (173773). They have found a range of buildings, interpreted



new city link road

Neighbourhood Development Plan is considering the inclusion of plans for a new station at Pontrilas. HCS first suggested this in our proposals for a much expanded Ewyas Harold to be the focus of services for the many outlying villages in the south west of the county. (PLACE Summer 2015)

Cllr. Bramer

Members will remember the Council's proposals to demolish the former Council Premises in Bath Street and let the Fire Service build a huge garage for fire engines. We have previously

Contributors

John Bothamley – Chairman HCS, property developer and chair of charitable grant making trust

John Faulkner – Retired Chartered Civil Engineer, former chairman HCS

Liz Lloyd – Chairperson Herefordshire Rural Hub

Jeremy Milln - Archaeological conservation consultant

Robert Palgrave – Environmentalist - Hereford Green Party

Stanley Vincent – Planning visionary

David Whitehead – Hereford historian and author

Design & Layout - Gary Nozedar

Front Cover
bikes holland

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NEWS & COMMENT



foundations of quaker meeting house

as an early Friend's (Quaker) meeting house, constructed from stone almost certainly taken from the walls or gates. Unless the developer can be persuaded to amend his plans and leave the range in situ we could take steps to recover the stone to go back in the wall when it comes to require repair.

RTPI research paper

A recently published paper - Settlement Patterns, Urban Form and Sustainability confirms the HCS research.

"The evidence presented here describes how Settlement patterns and urban forms that promote sustainable mobility play a critical role in reducing transport emissions, with larger settlements, higher densities and mixed land uses reducing the need to travel by car".

Further evidence that the Herefordshire Council's Local Plan to grow every village by a few houses is flawed. HCS promoted an enlarged Eywas Harold (PLACE Summer 2015) rather than piece meal developments that are too small to provide necessary local services.

Street call

The Mayor of the West Midlands has urged the government to boost efforts to increase cycling and walking journeys by investing in safe infrastructure. Andy Street has asked the Department for Transport (DfT) to support the West Midlands in increasing investment on cycling to £10 per head by 2023. The focus is on new and upgraded cycling

infrastructure. The call forms part of a call for evidence by the DfT ahead of the publication of a new Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. Roger Lawrence, leader of City of Wolverhampton Council and transport lead on the West Midlands Combined Authority, said: "We're seeing an unprecedented level of investment in public transport in the West Midlands which will have a major impact on traffic congestion".

Meanwhile Hereford must fight for improved rail links and not be sidelined by the larger conurbations around Birmingham.

Identification of Sites

Abandoned at the June Cabinet meeting was this item "To agree the options that will be evaluated through detailed development appraisals (for Student Accommodation and Multi-Storey Car Parking adjacent to the City Link road) on Council-owned land at Station Approach and the County Bus Station and Car Park, Hereford" There is also evidence that the delivery of the GP Centre is a done deal, before the granting of planning consent. Answers to our questions are not forthcoming. See planning on page 11.

Hereford Area Plan

Meetings of the steering group have stalled during this last quarter with not one meeting of the Steering Group – our group member is frustrated by the lack of progress and the risk that unreasonable developments will be consented through the absence of an agreed Neighbourhood Plan. Whatever one calls it we need a master plan urgently, a vision must be decided upon. HCS is getting tired of banging the same old drum.

City Link Road

Our Editor was incandescent when he heard about the Institution of Civil

Engineers (ICE) opinion of the new road.

"For decades architects and planners have clashed with highway engineers who so often demand excessive infrastructure for vehicles. The recent award by Institution of Civil Engineers commending the new City Link Road is like an April Fools joke. The quality of the work may be good but the design is last century stuff. Highway experts have commented that old style software has been used and the whole layout is outdated, including a cattle like pen for pedestrians at the eastern end, potentially dangerous cycle lane that to date (six months after opening) has no signage or line markings and other failings. The ICE must have been trawling through some dire projects to commend this one. Legislation now obliges designers to take account of humans as well as vehicles – this project considers only vehicles – it is a disgrace – where are our councillors? And from an aesthetic point of view it is a depressing sight for visitors arriving at the station"

Sufton Court

Saturday 16th June saw our revered historian, David Whitehead, lead a visit to Mordiford especially to look at the landscape inspired by Humphry Repton in 1795. Repton's Red Book for Sufton showed the before and after views and an intriguing narrative with the new owners of the James Wyatt designed house; being absolutely symmetrical but with many "blind windows" virtually imperceptible from the outside.



sufton court

Design Review

New research demonstrates that independent design review improves the design of buildings and brings clear benefits to the quality of places. The report, Reviewing Design Review carried out by the Place Alliance, provides convincing evidence that design review delivers real benefits in terms of raising the quality of design in new developments and changes the culture locally to prioritise the delivery of better place quality.

For local authorities, design review is cost neutral, raises aspirations, and can be used to support in-house design capacity. Developers also benefit from a faster and more predictable formal planning process at what they regard as a minimal headline cost.

Prof. Matthew Carmona, Chair of the Place Alliance commented: "Professionally run, independent design review improves the design of development and brings clear benefits to the quality of places. It is a no-brainer that local authorities across England should adopt it as a standard practice for all major developments".

HEREFORD NOW

Packers House, West Street

The refurbishment and the addition of a lift to the first floor of this RRA designed building is a welcome uplift in the Berrington Quarter. What is most credible is the alterations, once completed, will not appear as uncomfortable or clumsy additions but will be viewed as part of the original design. Here's hoping that the

confidence the owners have in investing here will encourage others to do the same. This area has been forgotten and left for too long and enterprising start-ups have tried but been hit with rent increases; let's hope this western gateway to the Quarter will inspire a renaissance.



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URBAN PANEL REVIEW

Historic England's Urban Review Panel last visited Hereford in 2007 mainly to advise on the Old Market redevelopment. It returned in October last year to consider the proposed new University and particularly "how does a compact historic City of the character and importance of a place like Hereford begin to accommodate such a major development" and "what else needs to happen in order for Hereford to become a successful University city?" (Para 1.1) The Panel also reviewed progress and developments in the city centre since 2007. Here we review the report published in March 2018



The University

The Panel was of the view, with which HCS fully agree, that the University "offers enormous potential to address many of Hereford's troubles" (Para 2.3) These have been regularly highlighted by HCS at its meetings and in its publications. The Panel agreed with the intention to integrate the University into the city "becoming a campus with both new and reused buildings". For example they welcomed the intended use by the University of the Franklin Barnes building – proposed by HCS in 2016.

However for this campus to be successful the University "now needs to start thinking about the practicalities of how this University manifests itself on the ground." (Para 5.9) – "the Panel were extremely concerned that, at the moment, there appeared to be little certainty about precisely what the implications of the new University might be," (Para 5.8). The University need to appoint in the very near future an experienced team working in a suitable framework.

They propose the production of a joint Design Code by the University and Herefordshire Council setting out the design quality expected. "The Panel were concerned that the Council "currently has no access to the expertise offered by an independent Design Review Panel." (Para 5.25) They felt there was an urgent need for this to be set up.

How to achieve higher architectural quality for the city's buildings has always been an objective of HCS. In 2015 we proposed the establishment of such a design code and a Design Review body. It is pleasing to see that the Panel supports this objective.

The need for a Masterplan

"There is more to creating a successful University City than simply building a new University. There has to be in place

an appropriate framework which will coordinate the delivery of all the various elements necessary to create a thriving University City." (Para 2.4).

While the Council is at present producing an Area Plan for the city the Panel felt this was not the right approach. "The production of a City-wide Masterplan by Herefordshire Council is perhaps the most important component in helping to realise the full potential of this new academic institution" (Para 2.4) They have been continually pressing the Council for such a plan but it never appears – remember our 20-20 vision symposium in 2004, the Space supplement in PLACE in 2012 and our pleas since 2015 for an Urban Room? Such a Masterplan would provide a long term strategic vision for Hereford. In this respect, the Panel considered that Herefordshire Council should invest now in the successful delivery of this Plan. If it does not do so "then the people of Hereford are likely to get functionality not excellence". (Para 5.19)

Newmarket Street/ Bath Street

The Panel were not impressed that the planned downgrading of Newmarket Street and Bath Street had not occurred. The Panel were impressed by the pedestrian crossing leading to The Old Market and the "exemplary" improvements to Widemarsh Street. It would have been interesting to have their views on "Shared Space" which HCS has been advocating. While visiting these streets they, not surprisingly, were not briefed on the sagas of Blueschool House or the Working Boys' Home.

The City Wall

The busy streets were felt to detract from the environment of the city wall. This meant that people could be forgiven for failing to recognise that they were actually walking around the edge of a medieval walled city. Walking the route of the wall was "a thoroughly unpleasant experience". (Para. 3.6) The Panel "considered that there is a need for the City to consider how the



presentation of the whole length of the Walls might be improved". (Para 5.27)

The Link Road and the Railway Station

The City Link Road is heavily criticised by the Panel, being "a very over-engineered solution" and "a rather unpleasant pedestrian environment" (Para 3.10). Equally disappointing to the Panel was the situation at the railway station where 10 years ago "there were plans to create a new high-quality public space in front of this rather attractive mid-nineteenth Century railway building. However, nothing has happened" (Para 5.22)

So, "The sense of arrival at Hereford Station is quite awful." and "Just what impression the large expanses of car parking, the uninspiring buildings opposite, and the prospect of crossing a busy inner-relief road might have upon people's perceptions of Hereford one can but imagine." (Para 5.22) This has also been a constant moan from HCS. Then there is the absence of any signage or an attractive footpath to the city centre. The Panel felt that such a footpath would also improve the setting of two most important heritage assets - Coningsby Hospital and Blackfriars' Priory. "still as lost and forgotten as they ever were" (Para 3.9). See page 9 of this issue - HCS's inspirational suggestion.

The Old Market/ Edgar Street Grid

In their 2007 visit the Panel had expressed worries about the impact of what was to become of the Old Market and they now noted the effect on areas such as Commercial Street and Eign Gate. Strangely they felt that the Old Market "has provided an attractive, well designed addition to the city" (Para. 2.1) – maybe they missed the Odeon and Debenhams.

They acknowledged that with the present economic situation: "large parts of the ESG area is still one of isolated groups of development scattered amongst large expanses of surface car parking" (Para 3.9) and that the planned housing has still to start.

Car Parking

The Panel were surprised at the extent of surface car parking in the city centre, dotted around many 'backland' sites. They suggest that this surfeit of surface car parking afforded "enormous opportunities for future University development and in turn that the new University buildings could begin to knit back together again the rather fractured townscape character of many areas on the edge of Hereford's medieval core."

(Para 3.4)

This could bring considerable townscape benefits. The Panel felt there should be a strategic review of transport and car parking around the city centre covering such aspects as the impact from the proposed loss of existing car parks and how this might reduce vehicle penetration into the city centre.

Archaeology

Re-development of surface car parks and other 'backland' sites often has archaeological implications - and costs. The Panel recognised there was a perception around Hereford that archaeology is likely to be a problem. The Panel considered that there was a need to "de-risk" these sites. They recommend work to provide a clearer picture of the likely archaeological sensitivity of these sites. HCS fully supports such an approach as it would ensure that no major archaeological discoveries are made during construction works – resulting in delays and increased costs far more than the archaeological work involved in de-risking these sites.

The historic core

The Panel contrasted the traffic-dominated character of the northern edges of the City, (the Old Market, Tescos and the City bus station) with the remarkably well-preserved townscape and street plan of the historic core. They were impressed by Church Street, Castle Street and Broad Street but not with High Town – "the largest space in the heart of the Conservation Area is despoiled by its somewhat shabby public realm" (Para 3.13) or St.Peter's Square – "a disappointing, highway-dominated area with a rather tired public realm marred by bus shelters and guard-rails" (Para3.2)

The shift of the main retail focus of the city was noted and the consequent adverse effect on Commercial Road and Street and Eign Gate with "large number of retail units to let, the amount of under-used upper floorspace and the prevalence of properties in marginal commercial use." (Para 3.14). This was seen as an opportunity for the University to utilise and so improve the historic core.

The river

The Panel agreed with HCS that much like the City Walls, the river seems to be something the City almost ignores - "As with the City Walls, the river is another unrealised asset of which the City should make much more" (Para 5.28)

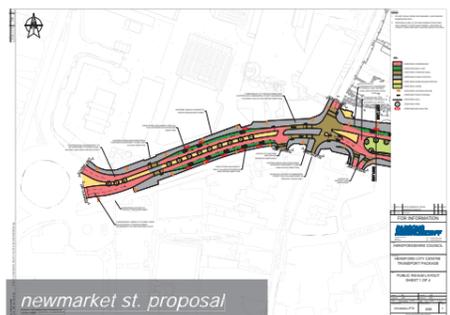


hereford station

PEER REVIEW & TEN YEAR PLAN



early master plan



newmarket st. proposal



widemarsh gate



blueschool street proposals



Peer Review

There is an intriguing process, overseen by the Local Government Association, that encourages councillors across the country to visit other local authorities and to provide a report of their findings. On this occasion councillors from West Berkshire, Northumberland and North East Lincolnshire contributed. The review, in February of this year, was the usual over wordy report using up to date business jargon running to over 6,000 words; with some paragraphs of high praise. However refer to para 4.33

"It is not completely clear where strategic thinking and strategic decision making happens. The membership of the existing Management Board is large – including heads of service. The Board's primary focus appears to be facilitating reports through the decision making process rather than providing a forum for leadership. Similarly, the informal executive meeting (Leader's briefing) often responds to officer reports rather than instigating horizon scanning and longer-term thinking. We would recommend that these structures are reviewed to place more focus on providing senior officers and members with greater opportunities to lead collaboratively, including by setting the agenda for what is discussed and shaping the Council's strategic thinking".

This conclusion coincides with the experience of HCS as we consider planning applications and search for adherence to the many reports and pontifications that are published over the years.

A 10-year Ambition - Hereford City Centre Regeneration Strategy 2008

This report published by the Hereford City Partnership (long since disbanded) in association with Economic Investment at the Herefordshire Council was bold with words and fine aspirations. Space prevents us publishing the entire report which is so positive and sad that so few of the smaller projects have failed to materialise. There have been some great results with the university getting going in September 2019 and other positives – here we highlight projects that were not over expensive to achieve and have been lost in the mists of time.

- Page 11. Creating an image** – The walkways, gateways and boundaries are clearly evident.....including defining the old city wall.
- Page 13. Aim 2**
 - ii "Parking in the City will be focused on key sites, that are well signed and Pay-on-Exit...."
 - iii "Enhance cycle ways.....seamless routes around the City"
 - v. "Promote walking routes.....to encourage walking as a pleasure rather than just a mode of travel"
- Page 15. Aim 3 Regeneration of City Centre**
 - ii. Restore and develop the Buttermarket
- Page 17. Aim 5 Great place to visit**
 - ii. Street scene is enhancedquality signage.... street "clutter" removed.
- P19 Priority Actions**
 - # Progress the expansion of the City Centre as a "one City"..... incorporating a transport hub at the railway station"
 - # Develop a City Centre Design Strategy for the development of and improvements to public realm and City. NB HCS was one of the contributors to the 10-Year Ambition!

Comment

It would be unreasonable not to refer to the surprisingly unexpected recession but even so much has not materialised over the last ten years, when referring to the 10-year Ambition report, and to the Urban Panel Review; and concern is illustrated by the comments in the Peer Review. HCS needs to tread carefully, and attempt to work to its charitable rules, so should not be too partisan when attributing blame but one party has overseen the development of Hereford for much more than a decade so responsibility is clear.

The HCS position is one shared by all Herefordians in that we are so often kept in the dark and learn of surprising decisions after it is too late to object. We understand the dire financial circumstances imposed by central government but that does not excuse muddled and unplanned decisions.

We are embarrassed that we have failed to get our message across on so many issues, as the Urban Review Panel comments are largely aligned with our views. Elsewhere we refer to some influence that has won through, notably the Working Boys' Home refurbishment and new build. (Well done Cllr Bramer for seeing the light); but we are still insistent that there must be a review of the design work of Balfour Beatty Living Places, so well illustrated by the City Link Road.

John Bothamley - Editor

Historic England's Urban Panel hoped for Results

The Panel's hope is that if it "were to return to Hereford again, in another decade's time, what they would find? All being well, a place that is well on the way to becoming one of this country's most prosperous University Cities." (Para 6.1) The report identifies what needs to be done for this to happen and many of the problems facing Hereford.

This excellent report adds to and supports the work HCS has done and we can only hope that this additional voice will convince the Council of the urgent need for much more action. We await their response.

John Faulkner

EVENTS BY OTHER GROUPS

Thursday 18th July at 7.30pm
Engaging a younger demographic – a workshop.

How to reach out to and include younger people in active concern for the environment.

Hereford Green Network – De Koffie Pot – Garden Room

Saturday 4th August 2018 at 12.45 p.m.
Riverside Walk and visit to Warham House
Breinton HR4 7PF

Meet at the West Door of Hereford Cathedral and walk alongside historic buildings and landscapes as you follow the Wye Valley Footpath towards Breinton Springs, passing the site of the proposed bridge over the River Wye at Green Bank, near Warham House.

Local activists and followers of www.wyeruinit.org will be on hand to explain the importance of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation, its wildlife, heritage assets and the SSSIs along its banks. Kristina Thimm, MA Art Student at Hereford Art College, will exhibit her Degree Course work reacting to the Hereford bypass proposals.

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UPCYCLING CYCLING

Courtesy of the University of Worcester, a meeting in the University Centre, Folly Lane, Hereford, debated the state of our highway design and proposed better ways of creating a positive environment. The stimulating speakers enthused about how we should change our whole approach - the hundred plus audience was sold on their ideas.

Brian Deegan illustrated his views with pictures of good practice in London. With Holland viewed as the exemplar for cycling he emphasized the fact that there it is the natural thing to do to get on a bike and cycle; many of their routes are completely segregated away from traffic. Essentially there are three types of road, each with a different surface and style encouraging drivers to understand how they should be proceeding. In London there were attempts to define types of road from dual carriageways down to shared space but experts decided upon no less than nine different types! This hardly helps drivers to know how they should be proceeding. He particularly emphasised the need for clarity in design; some of his work, especially in London, referred to extremely busy junctions with complicated arrangements attempting to segregate cyclists.

Jess Read started her most convincing presentation by condemning parents for the way they treat their children which often leads to obesity and an unhealthy lifestyle; she further criticised highway engineers for designing a public realm to suit vehicles rather than people. Once we do get walking we are often confined to narrow pavements entirely unsuitable for easily moving around,

and we are especially inconvenienced when crossing side roads having to move away from the line of travel and to negotiate kerbs. Interestingly around half of our walking journeys are accompanied, further evidence the pavements should be much wider. Many slides illustrated so graphically just how many encumbrances there are on many of our streets. Her message was quite straightforward that we need to start with human beings and their essential needs; she feels some progress is being made including much wider crossing points whilst appreciating the cost of widespread improvements. She did suggest that sometimes little more than a can of paint is required to encourage priorities and respect for pedestrians. Following these two presentations Jesse Norman MP (Highways Minister) spoke up about cycle training initiatives and encouragement for schools to develop travel plans. He also spoke about the complex funding procedures with small pots of money funding small improvements and the need for an overall plan. Queries and questions from the floor followed and then a draft manifesto was proposed. John Bothamley, from HCS, listed the points of special concern and promised to review these with his colleagues and draw up a proper declaration. The Declaration of the



Jess Read
Transport Engineer at Witteveen+Bos UK
Healthy transport engineer and urban designer delivering walking and cycling projects here and in Europe and the US.

17th of May. This has happened and been presented to all local politicians and council officers. The meeting expressed a strong desire that change must happen. The recent Urban Panel Review condemned our recent new highway infrastructure and now, as the Hereford Area Plan is developed, is the time to change our whole approach.



Brian Deegan
Design Engineer
Co-author of the London Cycling Design Standards and Transport for London's Healthy Street Check.



segregated cycle lane



continuous level crossing



demonstration of cycle friendly roundabout



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The City Walls

The Project Group, whose members are drawn from both Councils, Historic England, Rural Media and the Civic Society, has now met three times (21st March, 23rd April and 25th June). The 'blue sky' thinking of the first has given way to a sense of focus on the immediate tasks, chief of which was the de-vegetation carried out over much of the monument in the Spring. Left untreated, woody species have already started to regrow and of course the section at the back of the Maylord Centre remains overwhelmed by self-set trees and invasive climbers. It is painful to report that progress on the City Walls project is likely to be glacial. We are saddled with the legacy of poor urban planning, on which Historic England's Urban Panel commented 'just how fractured much

of the townscape round the City Walls has become'. There is the challenge of multiple ownership and limited accessibility to parts of the wall and the ever-present question of 'who pays'? Herefordshire Council, Historic England and now even the Heritage Lottery Fund are all pleading poverty! Nevertheless HCS has been advising on the identification of a conservation professional to prepare a specification for repairs. Perhaps the next issue of PLACE will report who has been appointed, though there is then likely to be a lengthy fund-raising hiatus. We also see the need for an 'engagement' person to act as the Project's champion not only for the conservation, but also for research, interpretation, development and outreach.

Jeremy Milln.

DECLARATION OF 17TH MAY 2018

The Hereford Civic Society, here to champion what we love about Hereford as a place to live, work and visit, drawing upon the knowledge and experience of others, initiates this declaration for change in the way we plan and move about our City.

It is change which is badly needed for the sake of the future of Hereford as a vibrant, attractive and historically important place. It is change needed in the interest of our sense of well-being and that of our successors.

It is time we recognised that the public realm should be laid out for individuals to encourage healthy ways of moving around; recognition that our love affair with the private car degrades our environment, damages our health and separates us socially. Hereford is a small and attractive place so journeys within the City should be short and pleasurable to make whether by foot, bus, train or bicycle. Together we need to create a City that makes these the default options.

Hereford stands at a time of change building a university, the ESG area and much more housing. Managing those changes will require a radical and imaginative approach.

We urge Herefordians to join us in urging Herefordshire Council to make these changes:

- Produce a City Masterplan – an overall vision that everyone works to.
- Change mindsets so we become more open, embracing, adaptable and continental in our transport choices.
- Constantly challenge the 'car is king' approach to road design
- Develop a best practice Design Guide, as recommended by Historic England, to ensure changes are fit-for-purpose and of high quality.
- Introduce a 'twenty is plenty' speed limit on all roads
- Prepare travel plans covering the whole city, including schools
- Fund improvements in a measured, equitable and incremental manner,
- Emphasise walking and cycling e.g continuously level pavements across junctions.
- Promote park & choose schemes, joined up cycle lanes, integrated public transport, shared space schemes, de-signalised junctions and de-cluttered streets
- Deliver the long promised 'Transport Hub' adjacent to the Railway Station together with improved access to the city centre.
- Critically review the design work of Balfour Beatty Living Places and their performance together with the Council's supervision and control of the contract.

With particular thanks to leading highway planners Jessica Read and Brian Deegan who inspired the Society's well-attended 'Upcycling Cycling' event at the University Centre on 17th May 2018.

Historic England's Urban Panel Report (March 2018)

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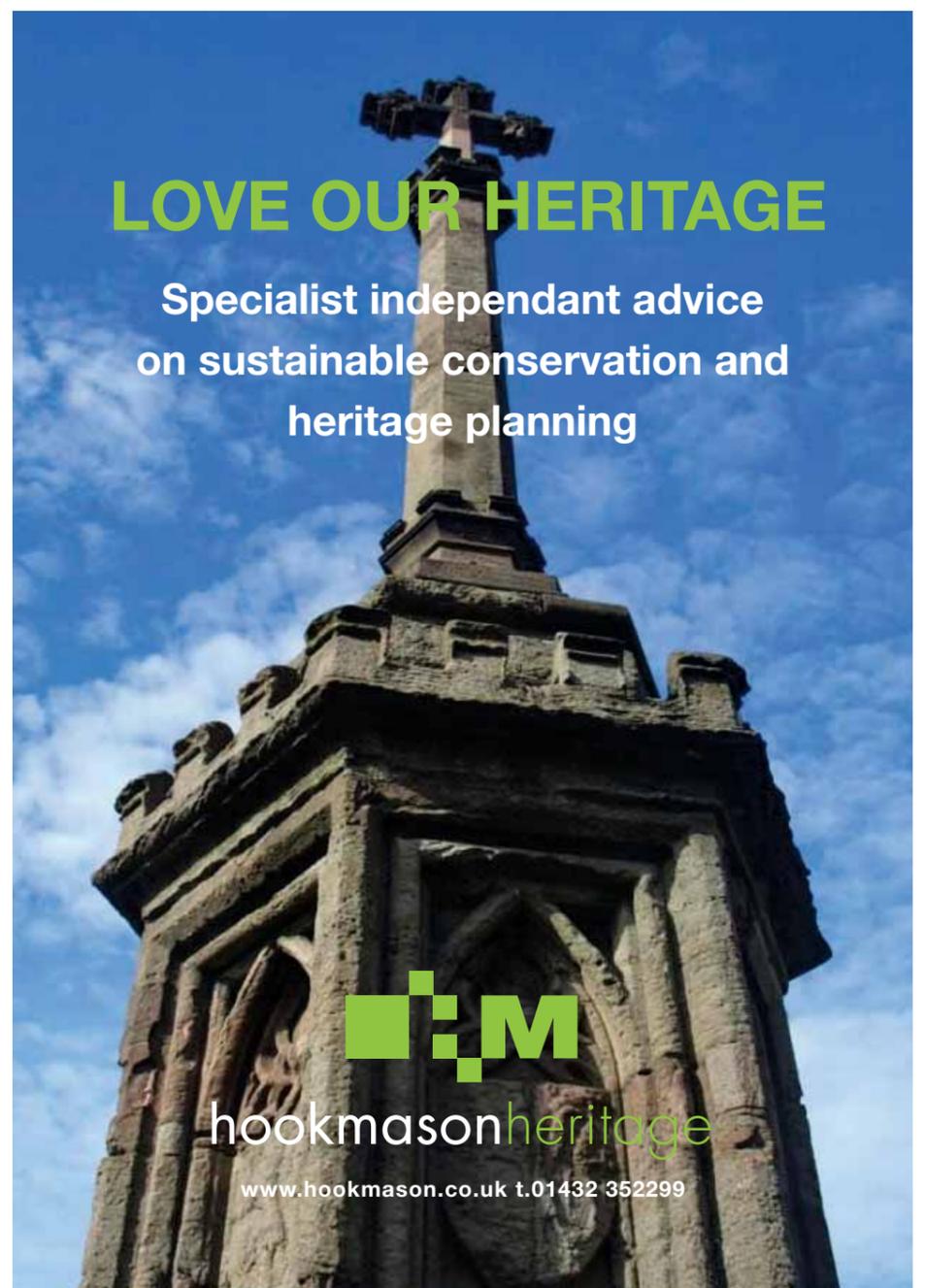
CALL TO ACTION

This is a mission – join us – lobby your councillor – recruit more support – write to the Hereford Times. Hereford can become an exemplar of moving around efficiently on foot and by bicycle. This is the twenty first century with much change in the air. Hereford needs some of it. Our own Highways Minister would be proud to see us sorting the PLACE out.

Witteveen+Bos UK (WBUK)

Urban planners from the Netherlands have been retained by HCS to consider the design of the further works required in Holme Lacy Road. Convinced that our criticism of the work of Balfour Beatty Living Places is valid, and because the HC was not prepared to have this work reviewed, we decided to do the next best thing and come up with proposals by experts. Accordingly WBUK is considering the road from near the Co-op Shop to the start of the Straight Mile, just to the east of the railway bridge.

This work will be published in our Autumn edition and our initial meeting on 18th June was inspiring. This downgraded route to the Enterprise Zone can be transformed into a pleasant route for both pedestrians and cyclists, with heavy vehicles, as was always the intention, diverted to the southern relief road. Whilst Jess Read, one of their principal transport engineers, is confined to just working on this stretch of road she certainly has her sights on other projects for Hereford!



HOUSING & LOCALISM

Sustainable Housing Plans

Hereford aims to grow by 6,500 homes in the Local Plan period up to 2031. About half of these homes are to be delivered by three ‘Sustainable Urban Expansions’ (SUEs) at Holmer West, Three Elms and Lower Bullingham. Building has started on the first, and a planning application for the last is expected this year. The term ‘Sustainable Urban Expansion’ invites comment. What does sustainable mean? Why are some housing developments designated ‘sustainable’? Is other housing therefore unsustainable, and if so, should we still be building such housing?

Herefordshire Council’s Local Plan has a SUE policy for Lower Bullingham (H6). The sustainability objectives listed include local employment, local primary schooling, a mix of housing types including affordable, a community building, small-scale retail outlets, sports and play facilities, community orchards and allotments. All helpful to encourage a sense of community and to moderate the need to travel. The policy also asks for new direct walking, cycling and bus links to a new Park and Choose site to the west, to the HEZ and to the City. So far so good – reduce the need for travel and provide alternatives to the private car.

What about climate change though? When I see the term sustainable, that’s foremost in my mind. For housing it means construction techniques and build quality that all but eliminate carbon emissions from occupancy and minimises embodied emissions from construction. For a sustainable development, Council Policy H6 is nearly silent on this point, calling for the vague - and impossible to measure - *“sustainable standards of design and construction”*.

Rewind to 2007, when a Supplementary Planning Document for the Edgar Street Grid was more ambitious and prescriptive, *“Any buildings will need to consider building orientation, mass, density and mix of development including landscaping, minimise energy consumption, maximise cooling and avoid solar gain in summer. Such techniques may include the use of green roofs, on appropriate buildings. Developments will need to look at sourcing local materials and maximise technologies in producing a low/zero carbon development to reduce energy consumption and pollution.”*

This is a reflection of how far Britain has relaxed its efforts to combat climate change. Gone is subsidised home insulation. Building regulations that would have meant all new homes were zero carbon by 2016 have been scrapped. Solar panel installations have

nearly dried up. Houses being built now are undoubtedly more energy and water-efficient than the legacy housing stock, but are they good enough? In 2017, just over 1% of new build dwellings in England had the best EPC (band A) for energy cost – 81% were in Band B. Only 4 homes out of 338 were built in Herefordshire with the highest rating last year.

Given the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions, good policy and practice would surely require that we now only build homes to the highest levels of energy efficiency, and equip them with decent numbers of solar panels to offset their electricity use. (California is mandating that all new houses from 2020 have solar roofs) If we can’t do this across the board we should at least do so for ‘Sustainable Urban Expansions’ like Lower Bullingham. We have a legacy of energy-inefficient, ‘hard to heat’ housing in the UK, so it’s essential that new homes are as efficient as possible to offset the continuing emissions from the existing housing stock.

The current UK housing crisis is characterized by poor availability and affordability. Tempting as it is to build cheaply to solve these problems, in doing so we must not ignore the urgent need to address climate change.

Robert Palgrave



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Localism – Keeping more money in the County

Does enough of the money spent by Herefordshire Council, the NHS, the police and other public bodies stay in Herefordshire so benefitting the local economy? Judging by experience elsewhere the answer is probably no. Across the country more and more public authorities are being encouraged to rethink their procurement policies so that local enterprises can carry out a higher proportion of the work put out to tender. This may mean splitting work into smaller packages; not always taking the lowest cost option once the effects on the local economy and environment are considered.

Preston in Lancashire gives a good example of what can be done. Back in 2011 after the financial crisis Preston suffered from the shutting down of a very large shopping development which left a vacuum in the city. The council decided that enough was enough and decided to keep its money as close to home as possible by encouraging local businesses and start-ups.

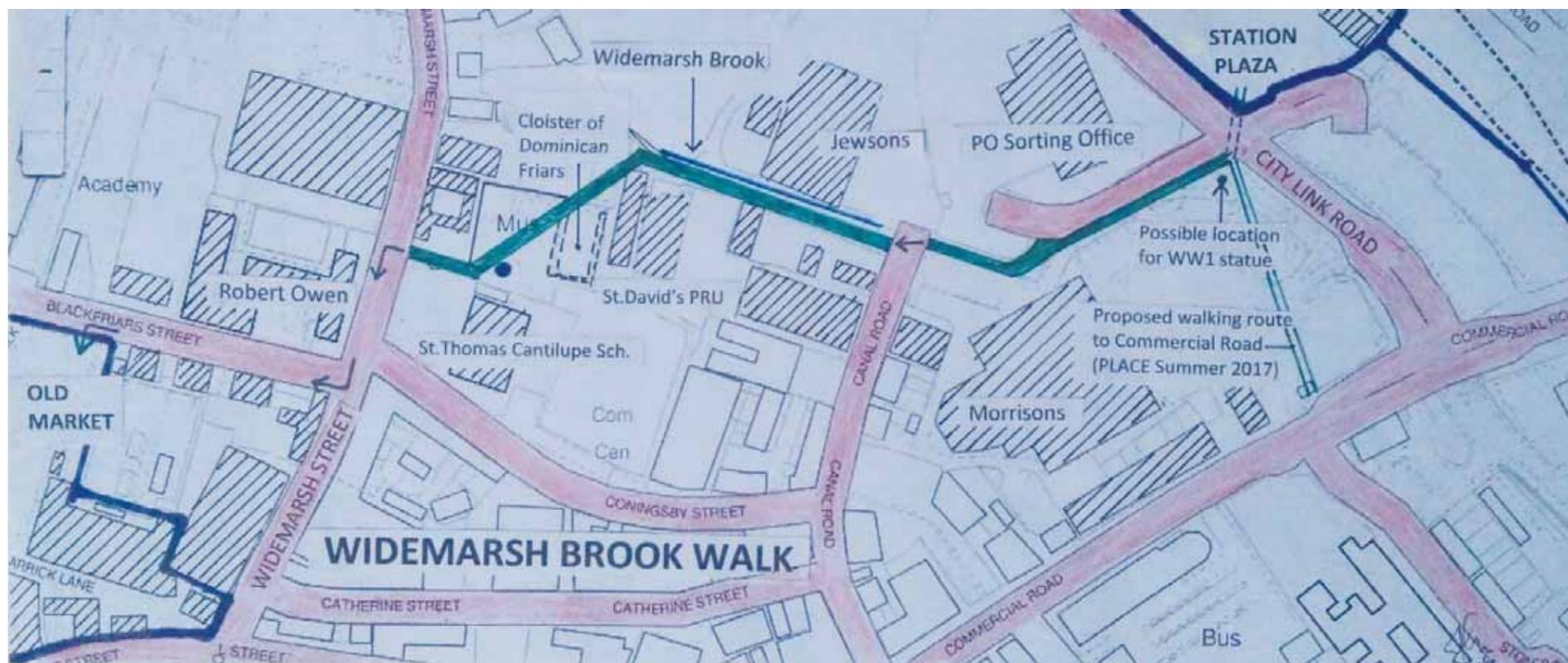
That the council went down this route was, as is so often the case, due to the work of one independent minded member of the majority party becoming the “Champion” of the scheme and persuading his fellow members to go along with him. As in Herefordshire the public sector was the largest employer and biggest spender and these organisations had to be persuaded to think locally. Six of the public bodies committed to spending locally wherever possible. It sounded common sense;

yet it defied procurement convention which rarely thinks about the local economy, society or environment. It has been successful with the proportion of local spend steadily rising. Another example comes from Lancashire where in 2015, the county council put a contract to provide school meals out to tender. That was impossibly large for local firms, so it was broken down into smaller chunks. It worked, the market was shaped to fit society. Local suppliers using Lancashire farmers won every contract and provided an estimated £2m boost to the county. Tendering for school meals happens in Herefordshire as well, by each individual school rather than the council, and it is usually local people who are doing the work, which shows we can do it – why not highway matters as well? John Faulkner



hockerton housing

AN INSPIRED VISION?



Wondering how we can best access our City from the station we submit here a suggestion for a walking route. Now we are lumbered with a wide City Link Road to cross connectivity is not an easy matter. In PLACE Summer 2017 we suggested a tree lined route across Morrison's carpark into Commercial Road. We remain of the view that this suggestion deserves consideration.

Now we are taking up the suggestion proposed by the Urban Review Panel, see page 4 and our own David Whitehead, PLACE Spring 2018, for a route through the Rose gardens at the Coningsby Hospital. These gardens have recently been taken into hand with volunteers helping as the County Council have been unable to provide funds. (Not the City Council as was incorrectly referred in our last issue). Our suggestion would include a remodelling of the area so as to inspire a reasonably direct route between the station and the Old Market.

Our proposal could be delivered, at relatively little cost, and as the main beneficiaries will be shoppers and staff walking between the station and the Old Market, there is a case that British Land, owners of the shopping centre, might be persuaded to fund! However HCS would object to it being called the Old Market Alley.

The Widemarsh Brook Walk

From the station pedestrians will cross the, yet to be designed, transport interchange before diagonally crossing the wide super highway of the City Link Road. Here, possibly admiring the new statute of our WW1 VC hero, (see planning p11) one bears to the right, admiring the sides of Morrisons and the Post Office Sorting Office buildings. Enter a narrow alley of 8 foot high wire fences, through which you glance at areas of car parking on both sides. Emerging from this horrid path, cross narrow Canal Street, watching out for lorries accessing Jewsons builders' yard.

Wow – stretching in front of you the Widemarsh Brook, a clear shallow

stream, currently waiting to be opened up for our enjoyment and pleasure. Cutting back of the overgrowth on both banks and the creation of a path to the south side will provide such an uplift to one's spirits – so close to the City centre.

Turning left through the grounds of St. David's Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) one is suddenly in the precincts of the historic ruins of the cloister of the Dominican Friars with its prayer cross; described in last quarter's edition of PLACE. And the recently restored rose garden. A hidden historical gem with the chatter of school children in the air at the adjacent St Thomas Cantilupe School. Out onto Widemarsh Street, with the down grading of Newmarket and Blueschool Streets. Left and right into Blackfriars Street, past three respectable, worthy Victorian villas and you have arrived at the Old Market.

What a lovely way to get to the shops! N.B. There is no reason why this public path should not run through the grounds of the PRU – currently this well run school has open access with no security gates.

We would appreciate your comments. Does this suggestion have merit?

Walk from Station to Old Market



Return walk through the Rose Garden



AMAZING PLACES OF HEREFORD

Panson Cottage

You have probably noticed that 2018 is the bicentenary of the death of Humphry Repton, the landscape gardener, who worked on several estates around Hereford between 1788-c.1800, including Belmont. Repton obviously knew Hereford well and published two sketches in the fashionable journal *The Polite Repository of houses in the suburbs of the city*. One was *The Vineyard on Hampton Park Road, seen from across the Wye on the footpath to Rotherwas* and the other, *Panson Cottage at Putson, 'The Rev Mr Bird's Cottage, near Hereford'* published September 1802.

On his coach journeys around England Repton produced hundreds of similar sketches which, no doubt, created some welcome income when landscaping commissions were in short supply. Indeed, once the Napoleonic Wars started, Repton lost much of his work on the great estates and turned to designing 'villa' gardens around the great cities. Thus, he may have been lobbying for work at *The Vineyard* and *Panson Cottage*.

The Revd Charles Bird, the owner of *Panson Cottage*, a member of a family of genteel solicitors, was the rector of *Mordiford* and behind his cottage there was a quirky garden, which was sketched several times by the local artist, James Wathen. In it was a gothic temple, dedicated to the pagan god Pan. Hence the name of the cottage, combined with 'son' from *Putson*. The Revd Bird was a serious antiquary and a member of the London Society of Antiquaries. He had a museum of curiosities in his cottage and collected manuscripts relating to Herefordshire. Eventually, Hereford Library inherited twenty-one volumes of his collections. In 1995 a friend of mine was on a

sabbatical in Washington DC and sent me a copy of a watercolour from the *Dumbarton Oaks Library*. On its reverse someone had written 'Panson Cottage, to have been erected near Hereford'. It was catalogued under 'Humphry Repton'. It was clearly a design for the cottage shown in the *Polite Repository* illustration. I recognised it immediately and could see the link with Humphry Repton. Bird was the godson of the Hon. Edward Foley of *Stoke Edith*, who presented him to the church at *Mordiford*, a very good living. In 1792 the Hon. Edward had employed Humphry Repton to improve the grounds of *Stoke Edith* and subsequently, in 1795 Repton produced another *Red Book* for *Sufton Court*, above *Mordiford*. What could be more natural than the Revd Bird seeking a design for his new cottage from Repton or his partner, John Nash? In fact, at this time, both Repton's sons were being trained as architects in Nash's office. This design is probably by George Stanley Repton, who produced several cottage designs for the *Belmont* estate. Thus, the cataloguing at *Dumbarton Oaks* was wrong but not far



panson cottage

out. It is an important design since it shows an Italianate round tower, which Nash used for his later designs, such as *Cronkhill* in *Shropshire* and for the large seaside villa at *Sandridge Park* in *Devon*.

Sadly, the 'cottage' was extended as a gentleman's residence in 1883 and demolished in the early 1950s to be replaced by flats. Nevertheless, it is still possible to stand in the car park of *Panson Close*, under a spreading yew tree from the Revd Bird's garden and dream of the cottage designed by the architect of the *Brighton Pavilion* and *Regent Street*. David Whitehead

Annual General Meeting

Nominations for vacancies including
Chairperson, Secretary and Web master to David Fowler before the 4th October 2018

Public statue (182205)

The A L Lewis Memorial Fund has generously raised funds to install a bronze statue in Hereford to commemorate Allan Leonard Lewis, the only Herefordshire soldier decorated with a Victoria Cross from the first World War. What is surprising is the dearth of information on the planning application which has been submitted by Herefordshire Council without a Design and Access statement. Further the proposal is on private land – the Old Market and includes the removal of cycle racks. An important and impressive monument should surely not be destined to a private commercial estate but be in a prominent position for the recognition that it deserves? Our committee has several suggestions. As Allan Lewis was a loyal worker of Great Western Railways an ideal

position would be in the new transport interchange outside the station; as that is at the design stage HCS suggests the plot opposite the station in front of *Morrisons* might be a more prominent location. It would also be alongside our proposed *Widemarsh Brook Walk* through the City. (see page 9) Other alternatives are on the south west corner of *Castle Green* outside the *Pavilion*, the old *Canoe Centre*, now under the auspices of the *Friends of Castle Green*. The statue could look across to the column celebrating *Nelson's victory* in 1805, or in the pedestrianised street north of the *Buttermarket*. We hope the Memorial Fund appreciate our suggestions, HCS members are inspired and hope our suggestions result in the placing of this statue in the best position for posterity.

The Statue of Lance Corporal Allan Leonard Lewis VC for Hereford 2018



proposed statue



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PLANNING MATTERS

Medical Health Centre (181583)

Proposals for this major new block, adjacent to the station, cause our planning group some major misgivings. Much is down to the lack of an overall vision for the City and special concern relates to car parking for over a hundred cars. There is still no overall plan for car parking across the City (see page 5) and Hereford Civic Society would like to see a halt on the granting of consent for private car parking on the basis that the Hereford Area Plan has developing plans (well advanced and sound enough to ward off legal challenge). "We must have a vision for the City that is joined up and considers the whole, please reject this application" is what we have said to the Planning Committee. Extracts from a detailed appraisal by our member Jeremy Milln follow:-

The idea the current local health centres combine together makes sense and will happen as Hereford Medical Group on 1st July. Combining the physical infrastructure makes sense too. Following discussion within Hereford Civic Society, there are considerable reservations both about the choice of site and the building design itself.

Site Location

It is disappointing the application makes no reference to the findings of the Urban Panel, see page 4. The applicant's attention is drawn particularly to sections dealing with the public realm in the area of the listed railway station and how the sense of arrival and welcome for visitors to Hereford has become so compromised by the 'over-engineered' City Link Road, hard landscaping and the poor quality built environment locally.

Building design

The scheme is one which is rooted in the 1990s in terms of many of its design precepts. A more contemporary approach, one which would today be adopted in other historic cities, would be to take cues from the surroundings and historical context of the site. Advice offered by the Council case officer at pre-application state was as follows:
"It is felt that there should be a clear architectural concept and that the building should promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. It has not been demonstrated that the character of the townscape has positively influenced the design. As such the proposals would not accord with policies 60 and 63/64 of the NPPF and policies LD1 and SS6 of the adopted Hereford Core Strategy".
"The response to the setting of the listed Railway Station should be to frame the space in front of this, forming a new civic space At present the building doesn't offer a response to this nor is the understanding of the setting and significance of the building communicated through the form of a heritage statement, a key design tool. As such the proposals would not accord with policies 128 of the NPPF and would cause harm to the setting of the railway station, policy 134 of the NPPF"

Transport & Access

The applicant offers a 'Framework Travel Plan' and a 'Transport Assessment' but access is assumed to be chiefly by private motor car.

Planning for health & well-being

One would expect a proposal for a health centre to come up with a forward-looking proposal which prioritises active, low carbon travel. A recent RTPI report describes how urban forms that promote sustainable mobility play a crucial role in reducing transport emissions and better health outcomes.

Strategic site planning

Unfortunately the proposed scheme is let down not only for being a poor design but by being proposed for the wrong site. A far better site would be that currently occupied by the County coach and bus station on Union Walk because it meets the criteria outlined by the RTPI report, namely that it is more accessible, especially by foot and cycle, it is better integrated within the urban environment, but most particularly because it is right next to the Hospital. The error over the choice of site is not the applicant's but Herefordshire Council's for its failure to work to a strategic Masterplan which demonstrates an intelligent integrated approach for future development of the City as urged by Historic England. In a conversation with Ms Bethany Wright, Hereford Medical Group's Communications Manager, it became clear that the Group was not given a choice of site by the Council and that the Transport Hub site was all that was offered. It is unfortunate that a proposal results which demonstrates a lack of grasp of the bigger picture, a poor approach to urban planning and a simple lack of understanding of the needs of patients who would struggle to access such a facility. This deficiency of strategic direction in Herefordshire Council was noticed in a peer review as recently as February 2018. (See page 5)

Conflict of interest

It is noted that Herefordshire Council has a clear vested interest in approving a GP's hub at this location in view of



proposed gp centre

the fact that by December 2017 it had already given notice of its intention to sell the land for this purpose, a decision which was ratified on 8th May 2018, the purchaser for the 1.2 acre site being Prime (UK) Development Ltd, the manager at Hereford Council responsible being Ian Higgs. This leaves the applicant vulnerable to the not unreasonable charge his pre-application public 'consultation' was simply 'window-dressing'.

Conclusion

Herefordshire Council has this opportunity to demonstrate that the move was not window dressing; is capable of making impartial decisions on important developments based on a sound and broad understanding of need, coupled with an intelligent and informed strategic vision for the future of Hereford based upon genuine sustainability principles, especially for

health, housing and transport. Because Hereford Council is not equipped with strategic vision it is urgently encouraged first to take a step back and produce the City Masterplan Historic England advises it must have before it risks making more flawed decisions like the over-priced and over-engineered HCLR. The idea of a combined health centre or 'super-surgery' is a good one but it must be in the right place and of first class design. The GP's Commissioning Group is encouraged in the endeavour, but sadly this design and this site is not supported. In the interest of the longer-term interest both for patients and for Hereford city as a whole I must ask that the present application is turned down.

Jeremy Milln FSA - extracts only – full letter on Herefordshire Council web site. www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning



Steven Thomas of Watkins Thomas

Steven Thomas first joined the company in 1987, and became Director of Watkins Thomas Ltd in 2012. Born in Hereford in 1964, Steve graduated with a BSc. in Estate Management in 1986; is a Fellow of the National Association of Estate Agents (FNAEA) and a Member of the Association of Residential Letting Agents (MARLA).

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Parking policy confusion

In June 2018 Richard Gabb, council housing and growth programme director, said: "Herefordshire Council has started a feasibility appraisal regarding the potential for multi-storey car parking within the county bus station and car park site, and feasibility work is progressing well regarding the development of student accommodation at Station Approach.

"The investigations will develop the outline business cases for the potential projects and show how they contribute to the council's Economic Vision." The pitchbook reads: "A number of sites on the principal commuter routes will be identified as new multi storey car park sites to intercept traffic before it reaches the city centre. Hereford has an appropriate number of car parking spaces but they are not in the right location and are spread over too many sites. This currently leads to an uncoordinated and non-strategic level of parking supply which is difficult to access and find for visitors. Edge of centre sites will then replace the current supply which will then be released for use in other regeneration projects."

MEETINGS

Thursday 21st June 2018

NMiTE Hereford's New University

Karen Usher last spoke to us in December 2016 (Winter 2016/17 PLACE) and she gave us an update. The first intake of engineering students (75) will arrive in October 2019. Before then a "Design Cohort" of 25 - a combination of pre-university students and recent graduates will work on trialling new methods of learning and student living. Two architectural practises including local firm Architype are working on interior and external designs for NMiTE's buildings, both new and modification of existing. These will include worklabs, (each for no more than 25 students), administration and accommodation which will be mandatory for all students and available for local NHS staff and college students. Initially in converted city centre buildings with new build to follow, all within a 10 minute walk. Workshops and laboratories would be at Skylon Park.

Karen's dedication and enthusiasm has driven this project with its potential benefits for Hereford. Much still to do with little time available.



YOUR OPINIONS

Moving around in Holland

Tolerance and civility are the first requisites. Meanwhile, confident and considerate driving, walking, cycling and scooter riding are necessary to negotiate complicated road arrangements. Netherlanders regard the blowing of car horns and ringing of bicycle bells as impolite. Shared space was less omnipresent than we had expected. Instead, clearly marked cycle lanes (where low cc motorbikes are also allowed) were often prioritised over motor vehicles at junctions. Signs were all too prolific and needed some experience and intuition to follow. 'Look to the left!' was a frequent mantra and cycling two abreast impractical in cities as the 2-way lanes are just comfortable for 2 cycles meeting each other.

Away from cities, cycling is a particular joy. Well signed routes follow canals and byways through pretty villages, past dairy farms and luscious gardens surrounded by green moats. And, of course, most of this in top gear if you don't want to spend time admiring the prolific fauna and flora. Storks, herons, water fowl and families of ducklings crossed our path while frogs serenaded our passing.

In conclusion, yes - cycling is easy in Holland; the scenery is surprisingly diverting and people not only speak English but are pleasant and forgiving of our scant knowledge of either their country or their transport etiquette.

Liz Lloyd

A Bypass for Hereford

Is it worth it? Part 2: The Alternative

Herefordshire Council's 1970s style 'Transport Package' is really only about a bypass, albeit with an undertaking 'to consider' active travel measures if it is built. Cabinet is due to announce its 'preferred route option' on 27th July, yet this ignores the result of question 2 of the recent consultation which asked if we want it at all.

Although we may not rule out another bridge one day, building more roads is not the answer: using our cars less is. So to tackle the 85% (short trip and destination traffic), we have to prioritise public transport to become demand-responsive, safer, more reliable and integrated across services - bus, train, even tram and all electric. Following European models, we should commit convincingly to walking and cycling so that these becomes attractive, safe and reliable choices for all, with joined up lanes and adequate racks. Let us have a park & ride scheme where the A49, 438 and 465 enter the City. Without many of the traffic lights and

road clutter we could both improve the public realm and ease movement - on a 'twenty is plenty' basis - across shared spaces. Go further and free the walled city from non-residential traffic; restoring its wasteful surface car parks to domestic or recreational use. City parking could be concentrated at multi-storey sites round the edge, say at Edgar Street, by the Station or SW of the New Bridge.

Do this and at a fraction of the cost of a bypass, Hereford's genius loci will thrive. After all we share responsibility to leave this great place in a state fit for our children, a historic city set in unspoilt countryside. Jeremy Milln.

Annual General Meeting

Nominations for vacancies including

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Thursday 20th September 2018 Hereford Museums' Service

Judy Stevenson and Miriam Griffiths describe recent developments.

Thursday 18th October 2018 Update on our activities and superfast AGM

City Walls - Jeremy Milln
Declaration of May 17th - ideas for our Council - John Bothamley
New style roads designed for walking and cycling - John Faulkner
Sustainable Housing - Robert Palgrave
News from NMiTE, Historic England, CPRE, Hereford Area Plan and more

15th November 2018

Housing: the endless conundrum

Markets versus need, the local scene, speakers discuss

13th December 2018

Hereford's shops: despair or optimism?

Retail therapy from local experts

HELP

We could do with a bit of help emailing members and updating our web site - not onerous and be great to hear.

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