

FREE



Place

Hereford
Civic Society

The City's built environment forum

Hereford Area Plan

Extra guidelines needed

Shared Space

Summer 2017

Pre-consultation experiment

HCS inspired approach to consultation

Approach to our City

A better gateway for us

Real eco travelling

Creative but pragmatic

Tirana Now

A real statement

Our objects

To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting Hereford.

To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of Hereford and give related advice and information.

To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in Hereford.

This is what we do

Hold lectures, events, visits

Publish this magazine quarterly

Comment on planning applications

Come and join us

URBAN
ROOMS
NETWORK



Place
alliance

Hereford Civic Society
hcs
the city's built environment forum

PREFACE



A prominent and respected Herefordian recently told me that the Hereford Civic Society is "against everything". Of course I was disappointed to hear this

and wondered if the purveyors of these views ever bother to read our magazine or attend our meetings. Our contributors are volunteers and we have an eclectic cross section of professionals, civil servants, retired business people, et al.

As a forum about the built environment, one would expect to read and hear differing views. Flipping through our archive of past editions of PLACE I see many examples of well-reasoned critical assessment of projects, the highlighting of some questionable planning applications and reports of what is happening in other parts of the country. Criticism of the Herefordshire Council has always been respectful. We have inspired a new future for the former Boys' Home in Bath Street, are currently working on piloting an improved consultation style with the Council (see page 3). Our magazine is read by locals and potential investors in our City and we do not wish to be seen as moaners

and complainers. But today, after five years as chair of the Society, I'm posing a question:- Is there one person in the City who thinks that the proposed pedestrian route from the railway station into the City is fit for purpose? Creating good public realm is not easy but Herefordshire has complicated arrangements with subcontracted service providers and fails to maintain an overall vision for Hereford. To be a respected city of the West Midlands we need to be able to welcome train travellers and visitors with easy and pleasant access into the City. See what Blackburn and Stockport have done on Page 7. These towns are run

by councils with vision. See the HCS proposal to improve the situation with the Morrison Gateway, on Page 7. I am intending promoting this question through my column in the Hereford Times and the BBC and if not one person, as I expect, likes the existing proposals for crossing our new four lane link road then that has to be a wake up call for our politicians. When the chips are down Councillors have the power to create the background for the private sector to thrive and bring in jobs. By failing to create a decent environment they are letting us all down. John Bothamley

NEWS & COMMENT

Local Plans

Let us give Herefordshire Council credit when it is due – a report by Lichfields, planning consultants, has just highlighted the fact that only 36 per cent of planning authorities have seen a local plan through examination to adoption, and 43 per cent have not even published a draft local plan. Herefordshire's was adopted in Autumn 2015. 'The inability of some councils to make progress with their local plans could expose them to government interventions announced in the housing white paper'.

Neighbourhood Plans (NDPs)

Whilst there is considerable progress in the ratification of Neighbourhood Development Plans there are still many parishes making very slow progress. Herefordshire maintains its position as the county with most NDPs. HCS has long pleaded for more co-operation between adjoining parishes as has happened in the Golden Valley. Elsewhere we are getting too many inward looking ideas.

Hereford Area Plan

Our chairman, John Bothamley, is a member of the HAP Reference Group and attends monthly meetings and is passionate about Hereford working together to create a vision that we stick to and work towards over the coming decades.

Planning Applications

The declining standard of planning applications for new housing is of concern to HCS. Over the years we have established some design guidelines against which we consider new building proposals. These are the criteria we use:-

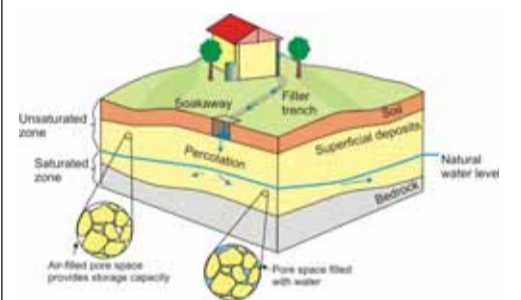
- eco minimalism – including orientation, thermal mass, high levels of insulation
- logical layout - respecting landscape, creating a sense of place
- local reference
- respect for adjacent buildings
- creating communities

We must move forward and reflect current thinking on the creation of PLACE. HCS is not wishing to design or even to say what should be built, but we are saying there is there a need for a little more "togetherness"? Are we too disparate in our built environment? In some of our black and white villages you know where you are but in Hereford is there an eclectic mix or a muddle? Where are the communities? Where are the groupings of buildings? Have we created PLACES?

HCS is reaching out to developers and their architects to consider the wider setting of their developments and the Council to establish guidelines of what Herefordians actually want to see in the future.

SUDS

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) might become mandatory following on going consultations by the Welsh Government, and would apply to all developments of more than one home. SUDS are a natural approach to managing drainage in and around properties and other developments. SUDS work by slowing and holding back the water that runs off from a site, allowing natural processes to break down pollutants. HCS thoroughly endorses this approach and has proposed its inclusion in the Hereford Area Plan.



SUDS scheme

50 Years of Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are defined areas of special architectural or historic interest, covered by planning legislation, to preserve or enhance their character or appearance. There are currently 64 conservation areas in Herefordshire, varying in size from tiny hamlets to villages to country house estates, market towns, and Hereford's historic centre.

Representatives of local civic societies across the UK and professionals from the private and public sector were invited to contribute to a picture



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RIBA

Contributors

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

Mo Burns – Environmentalist and campaigner

James Copeland - Environmental scientist and campaigner

John Faulkner – Retired chartered civil engineer, chairman of HCS 2003-2006

Stanley Vincent – Planning visionary

David Whitehead – Hereford historian and author

Design & Layout - Gary Nozedar

Front Cover

Times change as industry makes way for sporting venue in Burcott Road, Holmer. Planning App 163536

NEWS & COMMENT

of opinions and attitudes towards conservation areas. Almost all respondents felt that conservation areas had been 'in some way successful in protecting heritage'.

Respondents who lived in a conservation area generally wanted to remain living in one if they moved. Reasons cited included the quality, historic character and general condition of the area. However, the survey identified some aspects that need tackling including litter, the loss of traditional paving materials and historic features, advertisements and lack of maintenance.

Student Flats

Newcastle City Council has approved a 10-storey student accommodation development in St James' Boulevard in the city centre. The new development will provide 246 bedrooms in a mix of studio and cluster apartments of three, five and six bedrooms. Plans also include open space areas, a terrace area on the first floor, and a gym. The project will be a major step in the urban regeneration of a city block ultimately



Newcastle student flats

providing a mixed-use development with a balance of residential and student accommodation. The new development meets the need for quality, contemporary living accommodation for students and will allow Newcastle to compete with other major university cities across the UK.

Place Alliance (PA)

Big Meet 7 of the PA was organised by the Urban Room Network specifically around news and progress on the establishment of Urban Rooms around the country. Our chairman spoke on the wish of HCS to see one established in Hereford. John spoke of the need to work with Herefordshire Council to improve consultation processes and that an Urban Room could form the crux of such work. Unlike some proposals which are community focused groups the HCS view is one of collaboration between council and volunteers. With Coventry (one of our opponents for City of Culture 2021) also presenting John was able to position us somewhere ahead of the opposition.



Place alliance breakout session

Pre-consultation group

The purpose of this group is to endeavour to smooth out the potentially controversial points in public consultation before a project goes out to full public consultation. The proposal for this process was made by our Society who have long been concerned by consultation processes. It was agreed by the Asst. Director Environment and Place that a trial meeting could be convened to consider the proposed improvements to St. Owen's Street and the contra flow cycle route. HCS provided the independent facilitator, at a cost of £500. The extent of the work was decided by the group and the initial meeting was restricted to two and a half hours. There were representatives from: Herefordshire Council, Hereford City Council, Cathedral School, Hereford BID, Hereford Pedicabs, Hereford Wheelers, Herefordshire Vision Links, Royal College for the Blind, St James & Bartonsham Community Assoc., Castle Street & District Residents Assoc., Hereford Civic Society, Clinical Commissioning Group, Hereford Cathedral.

It is a first for the Council and the group was observed by a Cabinet member and the Asst. Director to consider the merits of this style of early consultation. Whilst being less than a "co-production" model - sometimes used in social care applications - it aimed to be a drawing together of divergent views to, hopefully, form a broad proposal for the general public to consider, in an uncomplicated way.

A group of stakeholders discussed the proposals as sketched out by Balfour Beatty. Input from all was welcomed with the intention of highlighting the attributes of the proposal, and indicating if and where possible improvements could be made. Participants were encouraged to move to a group position rather than promoting a single viewpoint. A summary of the discussions will be published as a record for participants, but will not be published in advance of, or during the public consultation.

We now look forward to the official public consultation hoping that the questions and alternatives will be clear to understand, and our citizens will draw the best conclusion for these long awaited improvements to one of our most important streets.

TIRANA NOW

Skanderbeg Square, Tirana

With no special new building opening in Hereford a PLACE related holiday snap seemed relevant. On holiday in Tirana, Albania I met with the mayor Erion Veliaj, and was invited onto Albanian TV to discuss the newly renovated main square together with the architect, Johan Anrys. There is a lot of planting on the periphery whilst still retaining a vast Communist style meeting place. Underneath is a multi-storey car park the roof of which forms

a plaza, regularly washed with recycled water bubbling from the surface which is shaped like an upturned saucer. Standing in the centre one is supposed to feel on an equal level with the entrances to the surrounding buildings. It's vast and triumphant - proud to be there. The mayor has tidied the City, which now stands as an example of City pride, for a nation struggling to come to terms with globalisation. JB



Skanderbeg Square, Tirana

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HEREFORD AREA PLAN

The Herefordshire Council has to lead on the preparation of this important document which 'sets the scene' for our future built environment. The Issues and Options Consultation was undertaken in April and May and we await the Preferred Options from the Council later in the summer.

Hereford Civic Society considered this initial consultation document to be somewhat confusing. There are some quite precise suggestions (Gaul Street offices 9.12) and some vague ones (new university having some City centre locations 9.29). This makes it difficult to consider this enormous project holistically. There is some confusion over the role of the Council. Councils provide the services and the supporting backdrop to our society. They do not create jobs. All a Council can do is create a PLACE that is attractive and encourages inward investment that, in turn, makes for a better and more sustainable economic future for us all.

Consultation Presentations

HCS is concerned about some of the images displayed at the meetings. The "fly through" was a mixture of reality – the station and Jewsons - and pure fantasy. The new four lane link road was shown with terraced housing adjacent to the pedestrian/cycle paths. The proposed Fire and Rescue Centre was depicted with acres of green sward in front of it. It cannot possibly come to this.

Images of mothers and children in prams with lycra clad cyclists on the same pathway is madness in a city. (See our final paragraphs on the urgent need for up to date policies on shared space)

Call for Action

Historically Hereford has lacked a clear vision and this opportunity must not be missed to really get to grips with our future aspirations. As Cllr. Philip

Price said at a HAP Reference Group meeting in April "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to get it right". Our full response of over 5,000 words is on our web site. www.herefordcivicsociety.org.uk. However, we do list some serious omissions which we are sure the Council officers will address in the Preferred Options document. Failure to incorporate them in the developing plan will leave the City at the mercy of developers relying on the National Planning Policy Framework.

Important items that must be included

An Urban Room

In particular there should be improved consultation and sharing of aspirations for the ongoing development of the City. This is best done through the establishment of an Urban Room as promoted by the HCS. This facility would be centrally sited, information



four lane highway



fire station set within green sward



prop new uni - parking for staff!



white line encouragement not to share

provided by the Council and volunteers could provide support on a revolving basis.

A height restriction of 15 metres on all buildings

Imprecise restrictions lead to protracted planning decisions and HCS seeks proper limits. The Local Plan – Core Strategy 2011-2031 4.2.6 Hereford will be home to innovative design and sustainable construction which complements the existing historic character. Sightlines and heights of new buildings will be sensitive to the city skyline.

A volume restriction on all new buildings of 10,000 cu.metres

For the City to retain its eclectic character there must be respect for existing buildings. This does not mean that contemporary design is compromised – it should integrate and enhance. The current Odeon cinema is a massive block within the City and is somewhat out of proportion with its neighbours.

Access to the station – the Gateway to our City

We wish to reiterate the need for an urgent review of the design of the proposed bus facilities in front of the station and the incorporation of easy to use, and direct, pedestrian access into the City. (See page 7 and our proposals)

Design Review Panels

A system of design review should be incorporated into the planning process for all applications over a certain size. This could be based on the excellent Gloucestershire Design Review Panel.

20 mph zones

These should be incorporated throughout the entire area encouraging sustainable modes of movement.

Youth Zone

Provision of facilities for youth is sadly lacking here, and in many other towns. On-side, a charitable organisation promote and oversee management of youth facilities in cutting edge designed buildings on new sites throughout the country. A youth zone near the station should be considered as the least the City can do for its youth.

31 Broad Street

Detailed support is needed to ensure that the developing proposal for a cultural centre becomes reality.

NMiTE

The original intention of integrating the new university within the City must be maintained. Hereford is too small to cope with a separate university campus.

Concern over duplicate plans

The HAP and some Neighbourhood Development Plans are overlapping. Political pressure should be exerted on those wards that want to have their own plans to agree to fully engage with HAP. To have two plans for the same area is confusing, requires further consultation and is wasteful and costly administration. These local NDPs will further delay progress – and risk development under NPPF rules rather than our own locally agreed proposals. **HCS is pleased to be part of this consultation as we gather together and set the framework for a revitalised City that knows where it is going.**

The above comments are the joint effort of the committee of the Herefordshire Civic Society.

May 2017

The Hereford Transport Package

This part of the consultation required rather arbitrary answers on scales 1 to 5 etc. Our overriding wish is to see proper Shared Space (SS) highway design fully incorporated throughout the City.



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Bolton youth zone

AND SHARED SPACE

Shared Space – Streetscape Strategy

The adopted policy under the Hereford Streetscape Design Strategy for Hereford (HSDSfH) 2009 clearly set out design standards for the highway network. However these guidelines have been ignored on some recent projects (e.g. Holme Lacy Road cycle/pedestrian improvements) on the grounds of cost. HCS does not accept that a full-on Shared Space scheme could not have been developed using cheaper materials than those specified in the HSDSfH. For example, Shared Space in Stroud in Gloucestershire has shared space streets of a lesser standard than Widemarsh Street that succeed. The currently retained highway engineers seem not to be aware of these projects. Holme Lacy Road encourages cycles and pedestrians to share the same tarmac and crossings across side roads. A photograph on one of the HAP display boards shows mothers with children in prams negotiating space with lycra clad cyclists. This is madness, as is the proposal for cycle lanes in Commercial Road which must be revised. City centres of the size of Hereford do not need special lanes for cyclists, they should share the moving vehicle part of the highway infrastructure.

Another detailed look at this topic by HCS members has collected various definitions and scoured many websites and reports too many to list. What is clear is that

- there are many versions of 'sharing space'
- there are some poorly designed schemes
- good schemes are popular because they improve the appearance of our built environment, and stimulate the local economy

The HCS view of Shared Space (SS) is that it must be clearly labelled a Shared Space scheme. A short length of side road with no pavements is not proper Shared Space. The famous improvements to Kensington High Street, removing a lot of the street clutter, is not proper Shared Space. Our pictures show a confusing set of applications.

Three definitions

A street or place designed to improve pedestrian movement and comfort by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles and enabling all users to share the space rather than follow the clearly defined rules implied by more conventional designs.' Department for Transport, 2011.

Shared space is an urban design approach which seeks to minimise the segregation of pedestrians and vehicles. This is done by removing features such as kerbs, road surface markings, traffic signs, and traffic lights. It has been suggested that by creating a greater sense of uncertainty and making it unclear who has priority, drivers will reduce their speed. This is conducive to a safer environment for both pedestrians and vehicles. Shared space schemes are often motivated by a desire to reduce the dominance of vehicles, vehicle speeds, and road casualty rates. Wikipedia

A shared space diverges from a conventional road where all road users are encouraged to legitimately occupy the same road space with little physical separation. To achieve this in a safe and efficient manner, the design aims to reduce the dominance of the motor vehicle by promoting pedestrian and cycling activity and utilising the road space as a 'place' in addition to its 'transport' mobility and access purposes. A Review of the Evolution of Shared (Street) Space Concepts in Urban Environments - Douglas J. Wilson, Roger Dunn - Transport Reviews Vol. 34, 2014



Bus/bike germany



Pedestrian/bike track



Shared space brighton

Example

In Poynton, Cheshire, it was found that as well as providing significant safety improvements, and regenerating the retail and social centre, the road capacity was not reduced after the redevelopment of a busy junction in the town incorporated shared space elements. In the scheme, the redevelopment of a multi-lane signalised crossroads, with a traffic flow of 26,000 vehicles per day, which was completed in March 2012, traffic lanes, signals, road markings, road signs and street clutter were all removed. In the first three years after the redevelopment there was one minor personal injury accident, compared to 4-7 serious incidents in each of the three years leading up to the project. Although no speed limit changes were made, average traffic speeds fell to around 20 mph and there were reductions in vehicle journey times as well as reductions in pedestrian delays at the junction.

Right Now

If you lived and walked around Hereford as I do daily, you would know that there is no move away from the dominance of cars, we are going backwards here – drivers are going faster and are more intolerant to cyclists and pedestrians on 20 mph streets, never mind 30. I think drivers feel either 'released' from lack of enforcement and/or defiantly impatient when driving across the city – gung-ho in fact. They have their road systems and they sense that the political wind is in the right direction to shove cyclists onto separate cycle lanes etc, which gives them a sense they alone 'own' the space they drive in. This is the spectre of non-shared space – internal motorways - its psychological outcomes not clearly understood yet by road designers and politicians. Mo Burns, HCS member



Stroud shared space

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CAR SHARE

In the Summer of 2014 we reported on an idea from two young designers that built on the centuries old tradition of hitch hiking turning it into a more respectable and pragmatic programme. Not least it is an environmentally responsible way of getting individuals to share car journeys. Could we adapt the idea for Herefordshire? Since our article there has been some positive response, and the suggestion that we brand this idea as CAR SHARE.

It occurs to us at HCS that this blue sky thinking could be applied to our county, both for regular commuting and social trips into and out of Hereford, and the market towns. With poor bus coverage, and long journey times visiting every village on the way, might it be possible to regularise and make hitch hiking respectable? The Council's valiant Car Share Scheme, though well advertised, is hardly a resounding success. With few pairings, one person driving and one being the paired passenger, the benefits are small and the Council has taken a big advertising bill. If we make hitching respectable with designated safe hitching areas, and a bundle of signs to show where you want to go, might this just make us the most transport eco-friendly county in the country?

Existing bus shelters could double up as hitching platz, no doubt the bus companies would object – even when there is only one bus a day! So our suggestion is to have a single sign on the shelters, they belong to the County not the bus companies. This is sharing capitalism, one can opt for which ever mode of transport one prefers. Of course there could be conflict in the City at busy times; here perhaps the hitching platz should be separate and on the periphery of the City. Not a word

about dangers please. This county has a good record and the number of unsavoury characters about is minimal.

The media must not highlight concerns, we plead for them to spotlight the benefits. A disc could be displayed in car windscreens saying you have a hitcher on board. A token pound could be a gift to thank the driver for stopping – the pound being a gift – we're not talking about hackney carriage licensing.

Like the principles of Shared Space, where drivers and pedestrians watch out for each other, Car Share could have the same philosophy. A person waiting at a designated bus shelter, or lay-by, could be given a lift on their way to their ultimate destination. There is so much talked about our frivolous use of fuel that this initiative would turn the conversation around. Can we find a champion to push this through? We expect the Destination Hereford 2 project would support this project – all that is needed is

- publicity
- small signs on bus shelters
- discs for car windscreens
- councillors and MPs actually using the scheme



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Already Happening

There is a pilot scheme in St Weonards, where there is already a sign on the bus shelter, and some "Hereford" signs on cardboard for those looking for a lift. Return journeys start outside the Hinton Service station in Ross road, just south of the Belmont Roundabout. I tried it on a fine day in June. Waiting time at St. Weonards was five minutes where I felt a little embarrassed being of mature years, and recalling my youth. The return journey was more embarrassing as there were many more vehicles passing with drivers largely ignoring me; and St. Weonards is not on the principle road south (A49) but on the A465, which is a turning off the A49 after about four miles. I secured a lift after sixteen minutes feeling that this project needs some more publicity!
JB



Liftplatz waiting place

Support for employers

Herefordshire Council is leading the way by establishing a workplace travel plan to ensure all employees of the council have support in making sustainable travel choices. They want to encourage sustainable travel across the county, reducing congestion and pollution; even grants are offered to Hereford businesses and organisations to support sustainable travel to work and to help reduce business mileage.

Possible areas of grant funding include:

- Travel plan development
- Secure cycle racks
- Pool bikes, including folding bikes, for business use
- Changing facilities for cyclists, clothes lockers and wardrobes
- Remote working and video conferencing equipment

To apply for a grant, businesses and organisations will need to register as a member of Herefordshire Council's Travel for Work network. Travel for Work is a free service for sustainable travel information, promotions and events for employees. To find out more, contact 01432 260514 or move@herefordshire.gov.uk The grants form part of the Destination Hereford 2 project, which aims to support local sustainable growth, improve active access to jobs, skills, training and education and reduce CO2 emissions. It is funded by the Department for Transport.



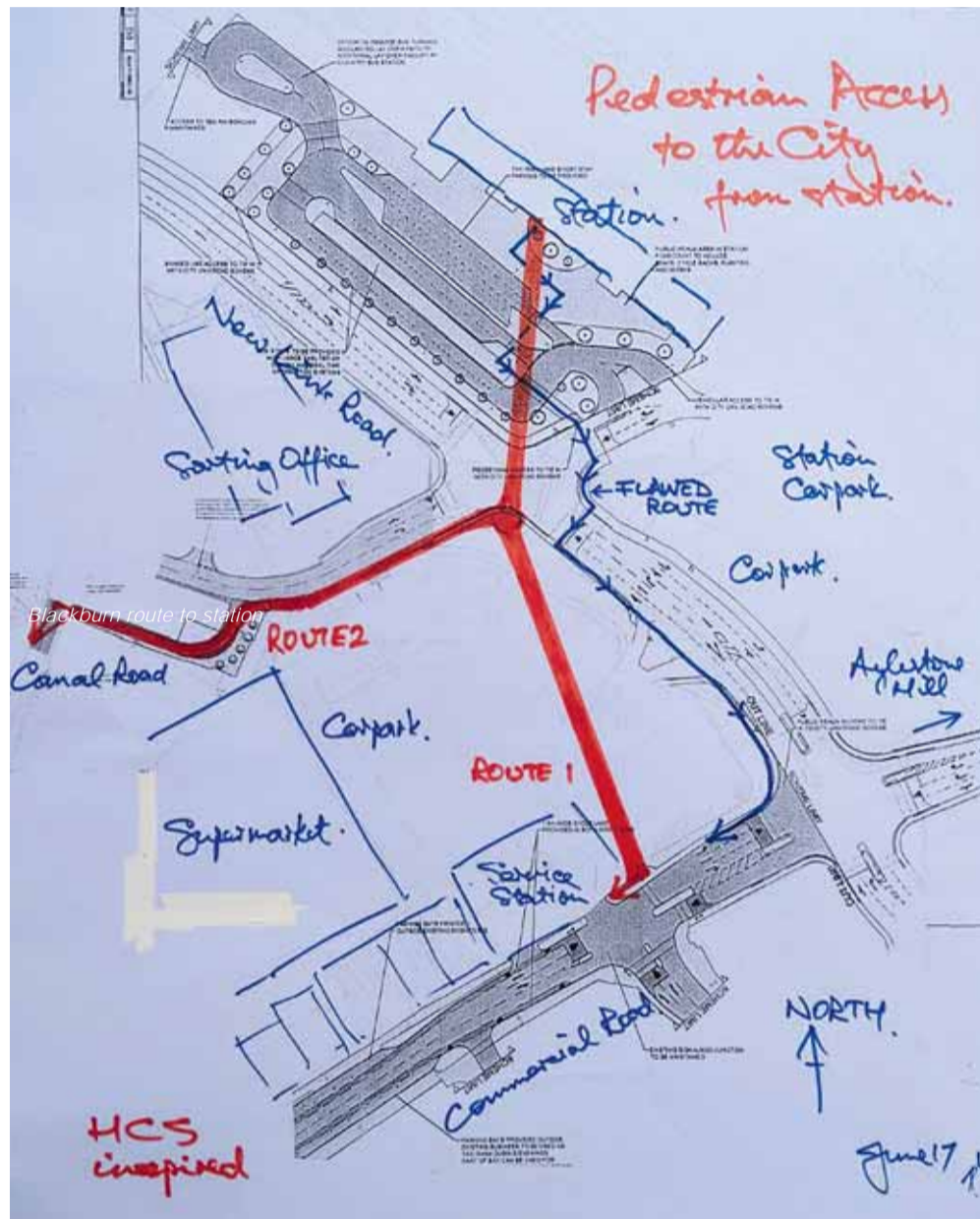
Stockport route to town centre

PLANNING MATTERS

Welcome to Hereford

Visitors and train travellers alight at Hereford, (possibly relieved to have arrived after more than three hours on the direct, stopping train from London!) to enjoy this unique and special City, steeped in history and yet with a soon to be established university. Expectations of a pint of a cider, knowledge that the SAS are here, news of a City of Culture bid, a world renowned college for blind people – wow – we're here. But how to get into the City? There is a four lane highway to cross, like Croydon used to be! Whether to get to the new Old Market, High Town or the Town Hall which way to go?

HCS works with the Council and attempts to inspire innovation but here we have failed. Councillors, council officers and their highways subcontractor Balfour Beatty have failed appallingly to create a proper gateway to Hereford.



Is there one person in the City who thinks that the proposed pedestrian route from the railway station into the City is fit for purpose?

Pedestrians should not have to negotiate kerbs and rumble strips – there should be an uninterrupted and direct level surface into the City. To proceed from the station to walk to the north end of Commercial Road requires no less than seven right or left turns, crossing the bus parking area, the approach road and the new link road and often on narrow pathways of five feet wide. Look at our pictures of



Blackburn route to station

Blackburn and Stockport, not dissimilar in size to Hereford. Clear smooth routes into their urban centres, fit for everybody. What is currently being built is twentieth century – we are nearly two decades into the twenty first one. We must do better. We need VISION and leadership to get us there.



Blackburn route to city centre

Again HCS comes up with a proposal that is pragmatic, won't cost too much and will make the best of a situation that could surely have been avoided.

Currently there is the "turn left, turn right" route to Commercial Road ("Flawed route" on the plan) and the dogleg route into Canal Road (Route 2) between six foot high wire fences (as though one was approaching a secure unit) for the route to Widemarsh Street and the Old Market etc. We suggest a level and almost straight route from the station exit, diagonally across the Link Road and across Morrison's carpark. The route could be called Morrison's Gateway, to placate them for the minor disruption during construction. It would be a credit to them for permitting it, would have little effect on the number of parking spaces, and encourage business.



Canal road alley

Next step – lobby your Councillor, the Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate, write to the Hereford Times. Join us – the more members the bigger voice we have.

Let us all press for change to establish Hereford as a shining example of a progressive enterprising City, respecting the environment and with innovative educational establishments.



Proper pedestrian link



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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MEETINGS

Thursday 20th April 2017

Community Archaeology

Chris Atkinson, a former Herefordshire Council conservation officer, enthused about his researches into Credenhill on a project with A level students. Not least they found a Romano-British farmstead just off Watling Street West. It was a surprise to us all to hear just what is happening so locally and there is a well sign posted heritage trail.

Thursday 18th May 2017

New Home Visit- Hereford's

latest Passivhaus

Members Claire and Huw Rees kindly showed us their new house in Southbank Road just two days before they moved in. Clearly a labour of love they have created an immaculate Bauhaus style house without compromise. Explaining the high standards of insulation, and their wish to create a long lasting icon, meant they chose rendered block work and triple glazed windows of mammoth size. Discussing the uncompromising design members were split on whether the complete absence of any locally sourced materials, even for the garden retaining walls, was valid. What is certain is that this building will be around for a very long time and is a credit to the Rees'.

Thursday 15th June 2017

Highways and byways

Richard Perkins of Balfour Beatty manages our road network. He gave an engaging session illustrating just how difficult it is to maintain the roads and keep the traffic lights working efficiently. An insight to a world which we think is straight forward but is, in fact, highly complicated.

Saturday 17th June 2017

Civic Day – High Town

A roster of members manned our little pagoda sharing our thoughts and aspirations on Hereford. With more members recruited we are encouraged by the enthusiasm of many to see our City improved and enlarged.

Litter

Has our local authority lost all authority – even over seagulls and thoughtless shop-owners? Or, is this in fact an innovative recycling policy in action? These photographs were taken about 9pm on Thursday 22nd June, showing a lack of any oversight of its waste management responsibilities in the city centre. When a council loses its civic pride, it loses the respect of its population – and that ultimately begs the question 'what is this council for any more?'

It has to be acknowledged, however, this can happen everywhere, not just in Hereford. The difference here, seems to be the almost complete lack of



YOUR OPINIONS

Holme Lacy Road

HCS has engaged with Geoff Hughes, Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate over the design of the new cycle and pedestrian infrastructure following our well received article in PLACE Autumn 2016. Several images illustrated what appears to be an unusual approach to infrastructure design. Extracts from his formal response below - Please go to www.herefordcivicsociety.org.uk for full response which seeks to explain the process HC has taken in the redesign of this area, which is both a route for Rotherwas traffic, but also a busy village centre with all the complex social and retail needs of the local community to be considered.

On behalf of the Council, BBLP carried out a detailed design process. This ensured a number of elements were considered as part of the design, including: non-motorised user analysis; road safety assessment; speed surveys; and accident statistics. They identified the design standards required for the scheme, including the Manual for Streets, Sustrans Design Manual, Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic. Balfour Beatty's design review process follows a robust process through an established Engineering Design Manual.....the design is not a "shared space" scheme,..... Regarding your comments on capability, Balfour Beatty are an internationally recognised infrastructure provider with over 100 years of experience managing and delivering schemes. They employ their own chartered design resources in Herefordshire to provide design scrutiny over their subcontractor WSP Ltd. WSP Ltd are an internationally renowned design consultant with more than 10,000 designers working around the world. Both of these organisations maintain ISO 9001 quality systems that ensure the effective management of their works.

enforcement from our Council. Where is the 'policing' of local shop keepers who are allowed to put out thin plastic bags full of waste food and drink on pavements during busy social hours for the public to trip over or have to circumnavigate with disgust? What must they – and visiting tourists - think of Hereford and those who 'manage' it
Mo Burns



I am satisfied that the governance process associated with Council decision making has been followed and that a robust and reasonable approach to design has been taken... I hope this is of help. G.Hughes.

HCS is of the view that despite the undoubtedly wide range of consultation inputs, the century or so of 'expertise' of BBLP (and overview of their sub-contractors), the referencing to the many manuals of design good practice - and an undisputable desire to create a safer space for localised movement, the end result is sadly, a dangerous, ugly, 'industrialisation' of this once pleasant urban landscape. A curate's egg of a scheme, denuded of any aesthetic improvements such as spirit-raising, traffic calming green infrastructure even. Where are the trees it is crying out for, to give that personal sense of place to the residents of this locality amongst the concrete, kerbs, and tarmac? Where is that feeling of 'place', of 'community', of an attractive destination for local people to stop and chat as neighbours? Don't they deserve such basic elements of good design practice too?

A holistic approach has not been taken but a compilation of conflicting approaches thrown together, to result not in best practice, but in a scheme designed by committee. HCS Committee.

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Printed by Orphans 01568 612460

Heritage Open Day

Heritage Open Days annual event

7th-10th September 2017

Latest info here:

www.heritageopendays.org.uk



Holme Lacy Road - Keep right at the bus stop

Invest Herefordshire

HCS attended the launch of the We're Backing Herefordshire Convention which was an up-beat affair at Eastnor Castle. With British Land shouting about the success of the Old Market, and the inflow of people from other centres, to the Current Plans from Cllr. David Harlow it was good to feel that there really is some real activity happening. With many opportunities for inward investment this has to be the county of the future.

HCS admitted to the meeting that it had been wrong to oppose the Old Market project as clearly it has brought more footfall to the City; however the inward facing design still rankles with our membership.

Forthcoming Events

All meetings at the Kindle Centre, by ASDA, Belmont, Hereford HR2 7JE. 7.00pm refreshments for a 7.30pm start.

Thursday 21st September 2017 Hereford City Walls

A picture history by well known local historian, Derek Foxtan. A fascinating study of this defining, and still visible, heritage of old Hereford.

Thursday 19th October 2017 City in a Parish

Hereford Town Clerk, Stephen Kerry, explains how to survive and thrive in a local government conundrum. Proceeded by short AGM

Thursday 16th November 2017 Libraries in the modern age

Expert, Les Watson, explains how libraries can succeed now, and into the future, including Hereford

Thursday 14th December 2017 Community Land Trusts in town and country

Local Trust Chairman, Andy Johnson, describes this exciting new housing initiative for empowering local communities

Disclaimer

The views expressed in the letters, reviews, news and features in this issue are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the members of Hereford Civic Society.