

# Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan Shaping the heart of Stroud

**Report of Environment, ecology and energy seminar held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015 at the The Exchange**

## **Present**

Leonora Rozee Chair of Shaping the heart of Stroud Steering Group  
Clare Mahdiyone Stroud Valleys Project ; Steering Group member and convener of Environment Thematic Group  
Clive and Jill Field from the Canal Trust  
Amanda Godber from Down to Earth  
Steve Roberts from Stroud Festival of Nature  
Mark Graham from Public Spaces team SDC  
Martin Quick (arrived towards the end of the meeting due to bus cancellation)  
– particularly interested in energy issues  
Apologies from Diana Blanchard

## **Purpose**

To consider what the Neighbourhood Development Plan might need to say about environmental, ecology and energy issues and what the options might be.

## **Process**

A round table discussion was held using the base map of the designated area to mark key factors.

## **Discussion**

LR noted that the emerging Local Plan had quite a lot to say on energy and as there was no-one present for most of the meeting who specialised in energy<sup>1</sup> the meeting would focus on the environment and ecology. She noted Policy ES13 of the emerging LP provided for the protection of existing open space and set 4 criteria for such spaces ie:

- contribute to distinctive form, character and setting;
- create focal points within the built up area;
- provide the setting for important buildings
- form part of an area of value for wildlife including areas forming part of a green corridor.

The discussion focussed on identifying these areas in the designated area and considered the various ways in which the town might be made more attractive to people, both from a physical and a spiritual perspective, and to wildlife.

## **Outcomes**

The following areas were marked up on the map:

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<sup>1</sup> As Martin Quick did not arrive until towards the end of the meeting LR agreed to send him the policies in the LP and ask for his comments on anything that might need to be included in the NDP

*Contribute to distinctive form, character and setting:*

Bank Gardens

Fawkes Place

*Focal points:*

Subscription Rooms/Four Clocks area

Junction of High Street/Union Street/The Shambles

Top of High Street/Ram's Head/junction with London Road

Wallbridge

*Settings for important buildings:*

Subscription Rooms

The Medieval Hall

*Green corridors/areas of wildlife value*

Canal corridor

Frome valley and Capel's Mill

Bank along north-western side of Marrywalks

Important areas outside the plan area

Park Gardens on Slad Road a valuable recreational area close to north edge of town centre

A wildlife corridor runs along river valley westwards and northwards out of the Plan area via Painswick Stream/Long Ground to Tesco site and on into Stratford Park.

Rodborough Fields which are part of the setting of the town.

Options:

Preserving important views out of/into the town

Signposting to help guide people round the town

Story boards/information to tell people about the history of the town

Reflect creativity of town by introducing public art

Green the town with trees – where - generally or at focal points?; what - fruit trees (blossom trail) or specimen trees? (note risk that trees do not do well generally in compacted soils of town centres and potential conflict with underground services); wildflower planting; shrubs and herbs (for insects); roof gardens; planting against buildings; living green walls

Use of materials to help guide people and define different areas/locations

Promote festival culture

Use water as feature in landscaping eg outside Sub Rooms

Use wildflower planting to enhance appearance of vacant land

Lively shop fronts

Insect friendly town: building construction; 'untidy' areas for insect habitat; planting (role of Stroud in Bloom)

Enhancing attractiveness of town in evening – 'greening'/café culture King Street/Sub Rooms area

**Next steps**

The information gathered will inform the preparation of the draft plan with options for consideration at a major public consultation event between 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

23.2.15