

## **Statement of Consultation - Appendix 11**

**Princes Risborough Town Plan – summary  
of responses report (July 2015)**

## Princes Risborough Town Plan

### Response from Public Consultation events 11 and 17 July 2015

*Views gathered on street at Princes Risborough Town Fair on 11 July using comments books and notes on plans, and subsequent exhibition at community centre 17 July.*

*Attendance at exhibition 124 names provided, 59 questionnaires returned. Responses have not been reported as %, as not all questions were answered and the questions were left intentionally open to a range of replies.*

#### Improving access:

##### **1. What are the key destinations that you use in the town centre today?**

Tesco's, Marks and Spencer, the High Street shops, library and doctors' surgeries are seen as the main destinations in the town centre.

##### **2. How do you travel about the town – on foot, by bicycle, by car or by bus? If we improved or provided more footpaths and cycleways, would you walk or cycle more?**

Most respondents travel about on foot, with cars necessary for larger shopping trips. Cycling is more popular than using the bus, but neither was very popular with this audience. Cycling could be encouraged if it felt safer on the main roads (Aylesbury Road).

##### **3. How can we improve access to the train station in Princes Risborough? Should this be by car or other means?**

Access to the station was seen to be about either providing better bus services or more car parking. Buses should link Monks Risborough and Princes Risborough stations too, and be based on the 300 service; there was concern that previous improved bus services had not been well used.

Car parking was felt to be essential to overcome illegal or unwelcome local parking, and in a multi-storey car park as nearby towns have at their stations. Introducing residents' parking permits was suggested for this area, as well as side streets off Longwick Road.

An alternative access from the station to Picts Lane was suggested to alleviate pressure on Station Road and Station Approach, plus better cycle access from both sides of the train line. Another proposal was to move the station to a parkway location on the edge of town.

#### Better facilities:

##### **4. If relocating the secondary school is the best way to deliver better facilities for it in the future, where should it move to? Or is it better if it stays where it is?**

The relocation of the secondary school was not a popular idea if it is capable of accommodating an expanded population in situ. Concerns were about ongoing investments in the current location and the ideal playing fields location. But there was recognition of the benefits of it having a more central location, and queries about whether a new secondary school was needed too.

##### **5. What type of green spaces does the town need? Playing fields, managed sports pitches, allotments, town parks with play spaces, or country parks and nature reserves? Looking at the emerging plan for the town, where should these facilities be located?**

Most respondents felt there was a need for more playing fields, managed sports pitches, allotments, play spaces and nature reserves. Mixed views were held about country parks as the countryside was seen as better. A protective designation or use for this land is needed against its future development.

The locations for these green spaces were seen as appropriate as shown on the current draft plan - between the development areas, between settlements, and closer to Princes Risborough than Longwick.

**6. How close to Longwick should future development lie – at the parish/ town boundary, at least two fields away, or close enough to share parks and sports facilities?**

Most respondents felt that future development should lie at least two fields away from Longwick, but that there was merit in encouraging the sharing of facilities (as today). There was concern about the existing showmen's land and the importance of retaining it with a buffer.

Other comments included: no development north of new road between Longwick Road and Mill Lane.

### **Town centre**

**7. If the fire station could be relocated to make room for shops in the town centre, where should that move to?**

Most respondents recognised that this could help the town centre, and the relocation of the fire station would be better suited to an edge or more accessible location on the new road (wherever that might be). The Hypnos site was proposed many times (as the town's current edge perhaps?).

The quality of the town centre shops was questioned by several people and whether with fewer take-away shops, estate agents and restaurants, more suitable uses could be accommodated in the town centre itself.

**8. Are there any other similar facilities that could benefit from being relocated, and which would free up land in or next to the town centre?**

Relocating the police station and fire station together was suggested as offering opportunities in two ends of the town centre.

The leisure centre is seen to be too small and limited in its offer of activities, and so could be relocated and expanded; the community centre could both be expanded and relocated; both doctors' surgeries were identified as needing better access and parking.

Blanchfords on Picts Lane was seen as a significant problem with many delivery trucks blocking the lane daily. The New Road offices and garage were also identified.

A topic which had also sparked discussion was whether Tesco, which is seen as too small already, could be relocated to a larger site – Hypnos/ Leo being its apparent original preference – so that smaller shops and more parking could be provided on its current site to support the town centre.

The Clifford Centre was also suggested as a good location to consolidate public services for the town.

**9. Would the High Street be improved by relocating buses and bus stops to New Road, if the traffic congestion can be resolved?**

Respondents' views were evenly split over relocating buses away from the High Street and whether this would improve the street. There was concern about the 'life being taken out' of the street if buses and bus stops went elsewhere. The quality of the walkways through to New Road needed to be better, and New Road being two-way would make corresponding bus stops less clear to passengers.

As there is already bus congestion in the High Street, any increase in services would require changes, and there was support for either a pedestrianised street (see Q11 though), or splitting services between High Street and New Road (depending on direction).

**10. Do you think additional car parking should be provided in the town centre? If so where or how could more parking be provided? Could the one-way system be designed to provide more short-stay parking spaces?**

More parking was generally seen as necessary to ensure that shoppers do not go elsewhere, as the town is viewed as struggling today. The Tesco car park is used to shop and then visit the town centre for the cafes and different shopping as it was free.

The 1-2 hours free car parking in adjacent towns is already a threat (on weekdays in particular), as not all of the spaces locally were usually full. Other towns mentioned were Thame, Wendover and Marlow. This loss of income would be offset by more income from rates as more businesses would be attracted to the town centre.

Possible additional car parking locations included: multi-storey car parks at Horns Lane and the Mount (up to 3-4 floors or underground); the rear of the High Street and on New Road itself; on the High Street for blue badge holders only; and the industrial units at the end of Park Street. The Tesco car park was suggested as a potential multi-storey too. The recycling bins in the council car parks were seen as taking up valuable parking spaces.

The two-way cycle track in the one-way system was seen hazardous in the town centre, and more short stay parking would be desirable. Better bus services for pensioners and better cycle routes were identified as needed.

**11. Should the High Street be pedestrianised or have car-free days?**

Views on this question were split between car-free days on market days (plus 1 hour free parking), and no pedestrianisation at all. Great Missenden was cited as a clear reason why pedestrianisation does not attract people.

Using lower traffic speeds was suggested and holding trial closed periods to test how footfall is affected. (The one-way system was more popular than returning it to a 2 way street.)

**Other ideas/ concerns offered via questionnaires/ comments books:**

Land uses:

- Including a cemetery for the larger population
- Identifying a location for a hotel

Other influences/ locations/ services:

- Building more homes at West Wycombe on the A4010 instead
- Better rail services to serve the town

Road network:

- The safety of the area (including local school children etc.) in Little Kimble is already viewed as compromised by the A road traffic, emergency vehicles, and regular traffic accidents. Joining two major 'A style' roads is seen as more dangerous, and so greater pedestrian safety measures need to be considered or an alternative location to join to A roads is needed.
- Need to address rat-running north of Lower Icknield Way (through Meadle and Owlswick) and whether that would increase with more traffic directed to the north of the town as proposed.
- Consideration of HS2 traffic routes and timing
- Widen all railway bridges at Princes Estate area.

**Ideas provided on plans of the town centre:**

***Would more on street parking or crossings help the shops here [M&S to Park Street]?***

Respondents were more concerned about improving traffic flows than increasing pedestrian access on Bell Street and Horns Lane, but it was acknowledged that it is hard to Horns Lane and a deterrent to go from there M&S to the High Street shops. The traffic lights across Horns Lane prevent traffic leaving the High Street and so could be moved away.

***Longwick Road/ New Road junction – Should this work better for pedestrians and cyclists?***

It was reported that it is currently hard to cross from St Teresa's Church for the less able. The zebra crossing is seen as too close to the roundabout to make it safe to stop for drivers. Traffic calming is perceived to be needed along Longwick Road. Trialling traffic lights at Tesco's was seen as a possible way to make flows and crossings better.