

Woolwell, Roborough and Bickleigh

Issues to emerge from workshop

- Note that much of the discussion at this workshop focused on Woolwell, and there were no residents present from Roborough and Bickleigh. However the three seem to be closely connected. Comments relate primarily to Woolwell.

Issues

- The landscape setting of Woolwell, Roborough and Bickleigh was highly valued, with Dartmoor and the Plym valley in close proximity. However housing development at Woolwell was felt to have turned its back on the landscape, and does not really relate to it.
- Woolwell benefits from a local centre with a good range of facilities, but these were not well planned in terms of what the community needs, particularly in relation to youth facilities and sports pitches / public spaces. A lot of work has gone into improving youth facilities but more is needed. The 'centre' also sits on the edge of the area and this compromises accessibility.
- The proximity of Tesco and the imminent Lidl reduce the need for travel for food shopping
- The community centre provides a facility for an extended area of north Plymouth. This hosts a wide range of events and includes meeting rooms and a youth room.
- There is no secondary school locally, and children / young people are sent to a variety of schools including to Tavistock, Eggbuckland and Estover. This means that rivalries can emerge between different groups of young people.
- Daytime bus services to Woolwell and Roborough are good. However services in the evenings and weekends are poor and this has an impact in particular on young people who often want to travel to Tavistock. In addition services do not reach all residents, and many people must walk some distance up steep hills to reach stops.
- The A386 forms a significant barrier to local inter-connectivity between different neighbourhoods. It is reduced to a single lane section between Tesco and the George and this causes congestion.
- Cycle paths are intermittent and this represents a poor means of provision
- The design and layout of Woolwell, and the architecture of its housing was criticised for its cul-de-sac layouts, parking courts, and limiting palette of materials.
- The area was considered to be relatively prosperous, with low levels of crime
- The proximity of the airport creates noise pollution problems. The extension to the runway will be elevated, and this will increase noise levels across the valley.
- Access to the countryside around the area is possible through permissive paths, but limited due to the lack of public footpaths and the fact that homes back onto the countryside. The disused tramway provides a little used but strategic footpath around the area.
- Bickleigh is seen as a separate entity which is removed from Woolwell and Roborough by a valley. The Parish Council do not view this area as suitable for development.

- Communication between organisations and residents groups across neighbourhoods could be improved.

Opportunities

- Improvements to the A386 are needed on the A386 from Tesco south as well as additional crossing points.
- Better evening and weekend bus services are needed, with perhaps a hopper style bus service to reach the southern parts of Woolwell, which are not well served
- Complete cycle paths are needed alongside the A386 to remove conflict between pedestrians and cyclists
- Any new development should retain and enhance wildlife within the built up area
- There is scope to develop housing and additional community facilities to the north of the 'centre' of Woolwell. This would make the centre more central.
- New development needs to be better connected to the centre, with a more permeable street pattern and fewer cul-de-sacs
- Development should respond to the landscape, and the appearance of a long term edge to the city needs to be considered, along with the views towards this new city edge from Dartmoor national park and Bickleigh.
- The possibility of a new secondary school was raised
- An idea for a sports hub on land east of Roborough was suggested, which would link to existing community facilities in Woolwell
- There is a question of whether the settlements of Woolwell and Roborough will continue to remain physically separate in the future, or whether development between the two would be of benefit in terms of increasing accessibility to services and facilities.
- Cross border communication between councillors is needed (between neighbourhoods and the District / PCC).
- There is scope for 1000 extra patients at Woolwell health centre.
- Look for ways to enhance public footpath provision between Woolwell and the surrounding countryside, including more direct public footpath links to pick up the strategic recreational route which runs north / south along the Plym valley.
- These public footpaths should include a formal access points from the existing residential areas of Woolwell (from as many different cul-de-sacs as possible), and access to them should be well sign posted.
- Explore the possibility of enhancing the existing tramway route as a strategic public footpath, bridleway, and possibly cycle route (un tarmaced). This tramway could form part of a stronger network of paths / cycle and bridleways providing better and more direct, and signposted links for residents to Dartmoor National Park via Roborough.

Other issues to emerge from SNA's.

Woolwell

Issues

- There are no 'informal' indoor meeting spaces in Woolwell, although the community centre provides excellent facilities for formal meeting (e.g. through clubs and groups)

- Public spaces are often not well designed and tend to be ‘left over’ spaces, with little provision of outdoor seating
- Play areas are often poorly overlooked and play equipment is somewhat tired and dated.
- Sports pitches accessible to all in the community within the village are limited – the Parish council’s pitches are some distance away to the north of Roborough
- The neighbourhood centre is laid out to a very low density and poorly designed with buildings which do not really relate to each other.
- The range of housing tenures is rather unbalanced, with a very low proportion of social housing.
- There are good employment opportunities locally, with a number of large employers, but the range of sectors is limited.
- The neighbourhood population is not sufficient to support the level of services and community facilities within the local centre.

Opportunities

- Consider ways to update and improve the play facilities around Woolwell
- Consider ways to provide improved seating in different places around the neighbourhood so that they will be used by different age groups
- Consider how to provide informal indoor and outdoor meeting space designed for young people
- Consider ways to provide informal indoor meeting space for adults, or improve access to the pub at Roborough through any future development.
- Additional community sports pitches that are accessible to all and are within the main part of the village should be considered.
- Consider options for additional development within the neighbourhood centre (either residential or other) to improve the design and layout of the centre
- Explore ways to enhance the quality of green spaces within existing residential areas.
- Consider ways to enhance the range of sectors of local employees
- Further residential development to the north of Woolwell neighbourhood centre would provide an increased population to support shops in the centre and increase the economic viability of the centre. There is potential at the Health Centre for a further 1,000 patients.
- Any new development should seek to provide a range of housing types and tenures, taking opportunities to redress the imbalance in respect of tenure.

Roborough

Issues

- Good provision of open space in terms of amount, but no play provision, and sports provision is physically separated from the village
- Connections to Woolwell and in particular to reach services there by foot / cycle could be improved
- Gateway into Plymouth at the Roborough Roundabout could be improved
- Improvements to transport required including evening bus services, cycle lanes and single lane section of A386
- Public footpath network connecting the village with the surrounding countryside and regional recreational routes is very limited

- Development in the late C20 did not respond to the character of the village – consequently there are two quite distinct character areas now. Housing in the east of the village does not relate well to the countryside.
- Housing tenure is dominated by the private sector (data for 3 villages together)
- There are a number of employment opportunities nearby in north Plymouth within walking distance, however these could be more diverse.

Opportunities

- Consider whether play facilities are required, and where these might most appropriately be provided.
- Look for ways to improve linkages to facilities at Woolwell; explore the potential to re-open the lane between Woolwell and Roborough as a cycle and pedestrian only link through negotiation with the owners.
- Look for opportunities to enhance the gateway into Plymouth from the north
- Consider ways in which to improve evening and weekend bus services, including to Tavistock and to the city centre
- Consider ways to improve cycling facilities, alongside any improvements made to the A386 to ensure that paths are continuous and reach specific destinations of large local employers as well as the city centre.
- Consider ways to encourage the use of public transport and car sharing.
- Any new development at Woolwell should seek to increase connectivity and links north towards Roborough and the A386. However this raises the question of whether it is desirable for Woolwell and Roborough to remain physically separate in the future.
- Improvements to the A386 itself are required for car drivers
- Look for ways to enhance public footpath provision between Roborough and the surrounding countryside, including more direct public footpath links to pick up the strategic recreational route which runs north / south along the Plym valley.
- Explore the possibility of enhancing the existing tramway route as a strategic public footpath, bridleway, and possibly cycle route (un tarmaced). This tramway could form part of a stronger network of paths / cycle and bridleways providing better and more direct, and signposted links for residents to Dartmoor National Park and south along the Plym valley or into the city via Woolwell. .
- Additional community sports pitches that are accessible to all and are closer to the residential areas of Roborough and Woolwell should be considered.
- The possibility of developing a new secondary school in the Woolwell area has been raised, and the need for this should be considered.
- Consider whether other mobile services are required
- Any additional housing in future should relate well to the open countryside, and the appearance of a long term edge to the city needs to be considered, along with views towards this edge from Dartmoor and Bickleigh.
- Any future development in Roborough should seek to respond to the character and context of the historic settlement, rather than replicating extremely low density suburban development patterns. It should seek to retain wildlife and enhance relationships with landscape.
- Any new development at Woolwell or Roborough should seek to provide a range of housing types and tenures, taking opportunities to redress the imbalance in respect of tenure
- Ensure that there is good access by foot, cycle and public transport to large employers in the local area.

- Consider ways to enhance the range of sectors of local employees.

Bickleigh

Issues

- Public transport facilities are poor, and access to the city centre for cyclists is via the A386 which needs improvement
- Cycle connections to Woolwell centre are not direct
- If the Barracks were ever to be vacated the land would revert to the original owner, and this would have a major impact on the village. At present there is no indication that this is likely.
- Housing tenure is dominated by the private sector (data for 3 villages together)
- There are a number of employment opportunities nearby in north Plymouth within walking distance, however these could be more diverse.

Opportunities

- If the Barracks were ever to be vacated the land would revert to the original owner. In these circumstances a masterplan or framework plan aimed at achieving the integration of the site with the rest of the village should be prepared.
- Consider whether bus services can be improved as part of services between Tavistock and Plymouth.
- Consider ways to improve cycling facilities, alongside any improvements made to the A386 to ensure that paths are continuous and reach specific destinations of large local employers as well as the city centre.
- Consider ways to encourage the use of public transport and car sharing.
- Improved cycle connections to Woolwell centre would assist in accessing facilities.
- The possibility of developing a new secondary school in the Woolwell area has been raised, and the need for this should be considered.
- Any future development in Bickleigh should seek to respond to the character and context of the historic settlement, rather than replicating extremely low density suburban development patterns. It should seek to retain wildlife and enhance relationships with landscape.
- Any new development at Bickleigh should seek to provide a range of housing types and tenures, taking opportunities to redress the imbalance in respect of tenure.
- Ensure that there is good access by foot, cycle and public transport to large employers in the local area.
- Consider ways to enhance the range of sectors of local employees