

Groups Consultation – 3rd October 2013, Burgh Hall, Peebles

Feedback from the four Workshop Groups

Question:	1. How should Peebles be expanded?
Group:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As noted in the Local development Plan; • Other possibilities; • Implications of un-planned development.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Peebles is expanded it requires full supporting infrastructure. • Expansion would be better on the north side of the river since this is already better provided with facilities than the south side.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was recognised that there were problems of expanding on the north side due to flooding, the east side due to access problems and the golf course, and the west side from constrained ribbon development and flooding. • Therefore the south east offered the only potential option. • There definitely was a need for a 'plan' rather than being dependent on planning 'appeals'.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was some debate over whether there should be a 'modest' (as proposed) or 'significant' growth in Peebles. If there was 'significant' growth this might include a new retail centre on the south side to 'match' residential growth. The provision of a bridge would be unlikely to provide any significant impact on the decision between these two options.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus of any plan should be on creating a community, not just housing, with mixed land uses. • If there is a need for growth in the Borders then this should be primarily focussed around the Borders Railway. • However if there must be expansion in the western Borders then Peebles / Cardrona would be the right place.

Question:	2. Is a new bridge required?
Group:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications of new housing development; • Existing transport generators; • Implications for High Street; • Reliance on a single bridge.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes a new bridge is required, it should not have too great an impact on the High Street.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new bridge was required but this was very much tied to the potential development (or vice versa - it was a 'chicken/egg' situation). • However it was also felt that traffic could be reduced (and thus reducing the need for a bridge) by enhancing the cycle network

	and discouraging traffic around schools.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new bridge should be provided to increase the permeability / connectivity of the town – to be looked at in multi-use terms for walking / cycling / car movement across the town. • For walking / cycling the permeability / connectivity across the town should be tackled now - and for 'modest' growth a new bridge might be restricted to these modes. • If there was 'significant' growth a new road bridge would be required further to the east than the present proposals. • The development of a new road bridge might change the 'centre of gravity' of the town and damage the trade of the High Street. • There was a recognition that there should be a 'disaster plan' in place in case anything happened to block the existing bridge.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main reasons for identifying the need for a new bridge were questioned in the following terms – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could modal split change to greater use of walking / cycling and reduce car demand? ○ Will the growth of Cavalry Park change the balance in the town? ○ Can the town adequately depend on the existing bridge for the foreseeable future? ○ If a new bridge is provided then this may damage existing business in the town. <p>No conclusion was achieved to these questions.</p>

Question:	3. Where should a new bridge go and what should it look like?
Group:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options; • Design preference; • Any other comments.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route B3 is preferred (B7 and B8 felt not to be good routes) • It should be a single span bridge.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed routes seem to have not been adequately defined in terms of their links into the existing transport networks – it was felt that a better route would be east of Cavalry Park.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was felt that the consultants had been given too restrictive briefs. • The level of commitment to the bridge should be sorted out before detail design discussed. • The bridge should be as unobtrusive as possible. • Options to support walking and cycling should be developed – potentially a better use of money.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preferred route was a variant on route 7 moving its southern junction eastwards (the existing junction was felt to be at a very poor position). • Route 8 was felt to be a 'non-starter' due to its effect on the playing fields.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any adopted route should be made as unobtrusive as possible – and more thought should be given to the functional siting and design of the intersections.• The design of any new bridge should seek to be ‘simple’ and ‘match’ as much as possible the existing Peebles Bridge.
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Subsequent discussion following the Workshop Groups Feedback

A number of themes were identified from the feedback from the Workshop Groups and these were explored further among all the participants. The general conclusions to be drawn from these discussions were:

- The dependence on the existing single bridge in Peebles is not viewed as critical as long as there is a ‘disaster plan’ in place and the continuing usage of the bridge is monitored (as well as the surrounding road network).
- Walking and cycling should be encouraged (by infrastructure, control and exhortation) throughout the Peebles area to reduce car use as much as possible.
- There is no immediate case for a new bridge, but in any case this should be looked on in a broad context of connected transport provision as a potentially multi-use facility for walking/cycling, and possibly road traffic.
- The planning for Peebles should be undertaken by an adopted plan rather than by planning appeals – and a reservation for a multi-use transport link and bridge should be included in the plan.
- An ‘iconic’ design for a new bridge is not sought and preference should be for a classical stone bridge.