

West Manley Lane Conservation Group

M.D.D.C.

Liz Pickering,
Principal Forward Planning Officer,
Mid Devon District Council,
Phoenix House,
Phoenix Lane,
Tiverton,
Devon, EX16 6PP
29 March 2011

31 MAR 2011

TIVERTON

Dear Madam,

Mid Devon Green Infrastructure – Initial Consultation.

. West Manley Lane Conservation Group (WMLCG) is pleased to contribute to the initial consultation phase of Mid-Devon District Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) and "A Vision for Green Infrastructure" (MDV). In so doing it refers to points made in its representation to the examination of the MD Allocations and Infrastructure Develop Plan Document (MDAIDPD) (See *Representation of WMLCG on MDAIDPD November 2009 paras 3-10 for details*)

It is assumed that the comments made in the Inspectors' Report (IR) on the MDAIDPD with regard to Delivery and Flexibility (pp7, 8) Public Open Space and Education (p13), and Planning Impact (pp. 14, 15) will be incorporated into the formulation of GIS.

It is understood that there will be two further opportunities to comment on the plans: during the "Public consultation (6 weeks)" phase (MDV) and during the preparation of a master plan prior to the commencement of any subsequent development (IR page 15). That being so, at this stage, the Group wishes simply to highlight those matters that need identifying, enhancing or protecting, using, as headings, the "Benefits of Green Infrastructure" taken from MDV. We confine ourselves to that area marked on the enclosed map for which we have interest and concern.

West Manley Lane (WML) forms the northern of four roughly parallel wildlife corridors viz Grand Western Canal (GWC), Railway Walk (RW), Ailsa Brook (AB) and WML, with interconnecting fields, hedges, ditches, bridges and trees. It is a quiet rural thoroughfare increasingly appreciated by Tiverton residents, their families and tourists for walking, jogging, cycling, horse-riding, exercising, and educational walks being a comparatively safe connection between the GWC, RW and the adjacent housing estates. Bounded by two miles of ancient hedgerow and agricultural land, with access to the Tidcombe Fen SSSI, views over the AB, evidence of pre- and historic and industrial usage, WML provides a template for much of what is envisaged in the GSI, supporting the argument to retain and enhance those facilities according to GSI's stated objectives and benefits, outlined below.

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A) "Biodiversity and nature conservation"

1. Update current statistics on fauna and flora within the outlined area.
2. Protect and enhance the ancient hedgerow along WML with Tree Preservation Orders as necessary.
3. Incorporate WML and its attendant features as the northern boundary of a larger environmentally friendly area, as outlined above and on the map, creating a substantial mix of inter-connected wildlife corridors.
4. Protect Tidcombe Fen SSSI and its wider catchment area by restriction of adjacent development and usage, being mindful of the flood plain of AB to the east of SSSI.
5. Alternatively or additionally, consider incorporating the boggy land to the south of WML into the adjacent SSSI and the Green Infrastructure area (GIA) designated in the AIDPD, thus creating a larger countryside park and wildlife and wetland habitat bordered by GWC in south to WML in north and SSSI in west incorporating AB and RW for future enjoyment, recreation and education for the community.
6. Improve maintenance of trees, paths and structures along RW and GWC replanting where necessary.

B) "Climate change mitigation and adaptation"

1. Avoid further flooding and water run-off by sympathetic and limited development away from the southern boundary of WML.
2. Develop new stands of woodland within the area south of WML and designated AIDPD GI area

C) "Landscape setting and historic environment"

1. Realize the uniqueness of WML as a typical and increasingly rare example of a Devon hedge- bank lane.
2. Protect and highlight for educational purposes those previously recorded pre-and historic and industrial sites within the area.
3. Protect and enhance the views of the AB valley to and from the GWC.

D) "Local food production"

1. Retain the "best and most versatile agricultural land" (IR) between GWC and WML.
2. Consider the conversion of some of this land into allotments

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E) "Public health and well-being"

1. In acknowledging the strong link between health and recreation, improve the access and safety for pedestrian traffic from current nearby housing estates without damaging the present environment.
2. Consider designating WML as a "Shared Road" (*see Country Mile Project e.g. as in Powderham Lane*)
3. Extend current cycle paths to include WML as safe alternative to Blundell's Road.

(See Representation of WMLCG on MDAIDPD November 2009 paras 3-10 and AIDPD Proposed Submission Proposals Map 1 for details, references and data.)

WMLCG is committed to the protection and enhancement of this unique area within the MDDC's overall development plan and hopes these suggestions generate interest and understanding. We look forward to being involved in more detailed discussion at a later date.

Yours faithfully,



Dr Roger W Whittlesey,

For and on behalf of West Manley Lane Conservation Group (WMLCG)

Annex 1: Map

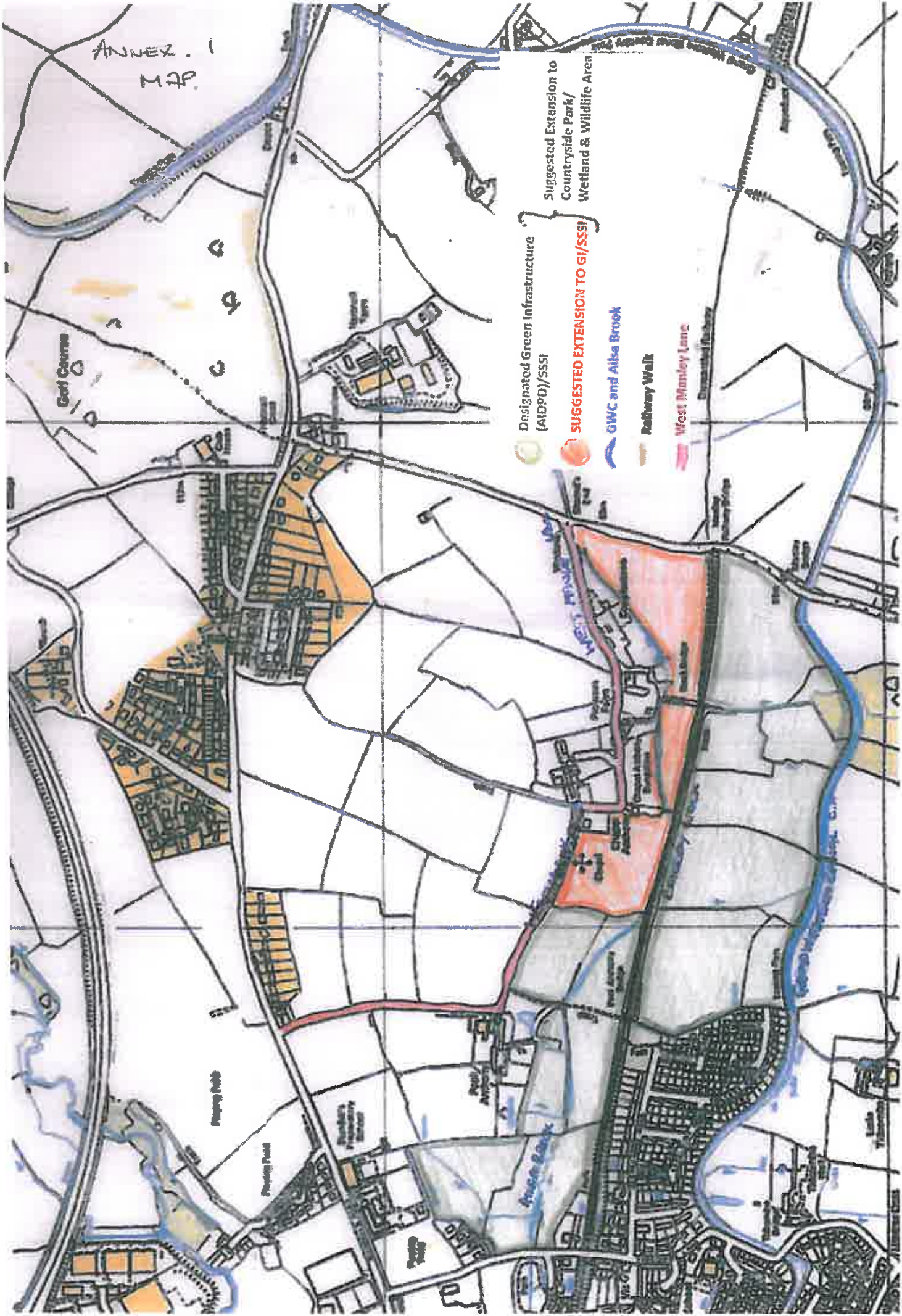
References:

1. Representation of WMLCG on MDAIDPD November 2009
2. Mid-Devon District Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy
3. A Vision for Green Infrastructure
4. MD Allocations and Infrastructure Develop Plan Document
5. MD Allocations and Infrastructure Develop Plan Document – Inspectors Report

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ANNEX 1
MAP



Designated Green Infrastructure
(AIDPD/SSSI)



Suggested Extension to
Countryside Park/
Wetland & Wildlife Area



GWC and Ailsa Brook



Railway Walk



West Manley Lane



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