



The DEAN FOREST GREENWAY (Multi – Use Track)

Linking

Lydney to Parkend

and the Forest's

Active Travel Network



Introduction

KEY Objectives:

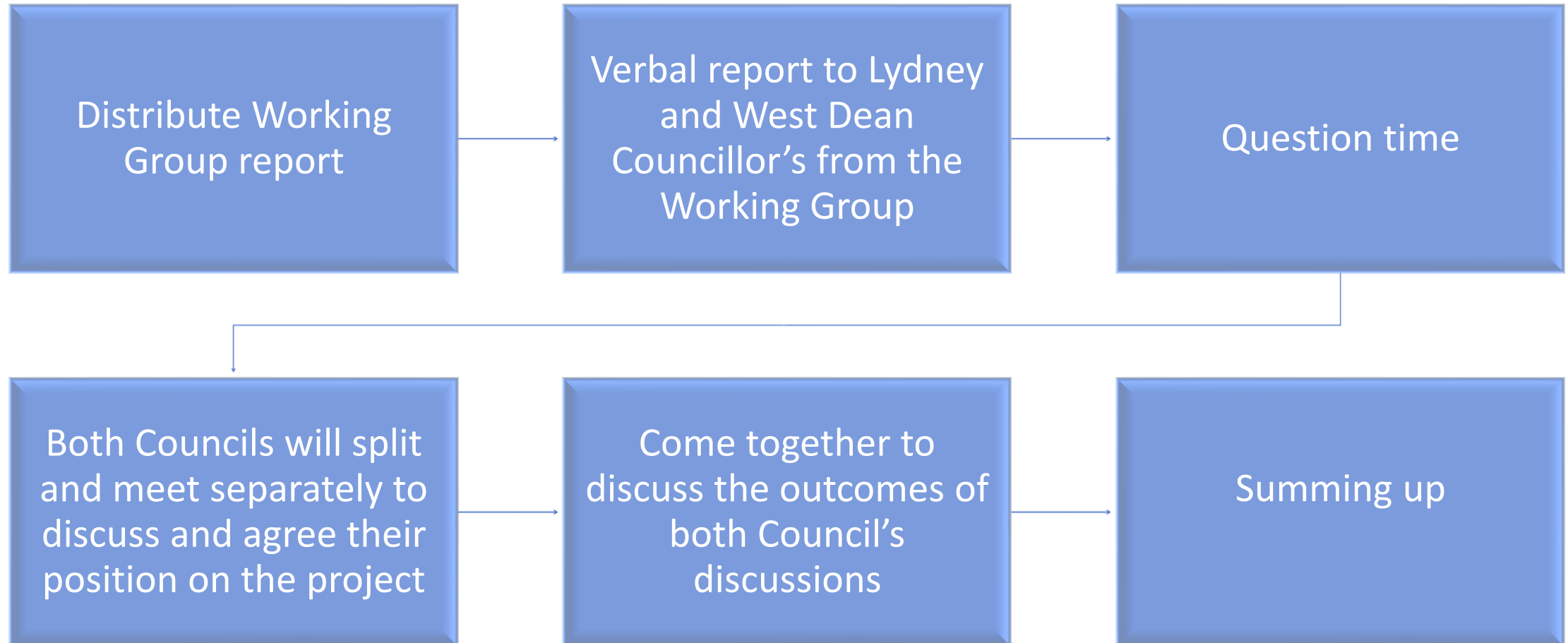
1) Joint working to achieve Planning Consent

And

2) Provide a mechanism for the ongoing delivery of project



Format for this evening.



What we'd like to present



The Rational for the Multi Use Track



A brief history explaining how we have arrived at this evening's presentation and the report in front of you



The challenges over the Route and our proposals to overcome these



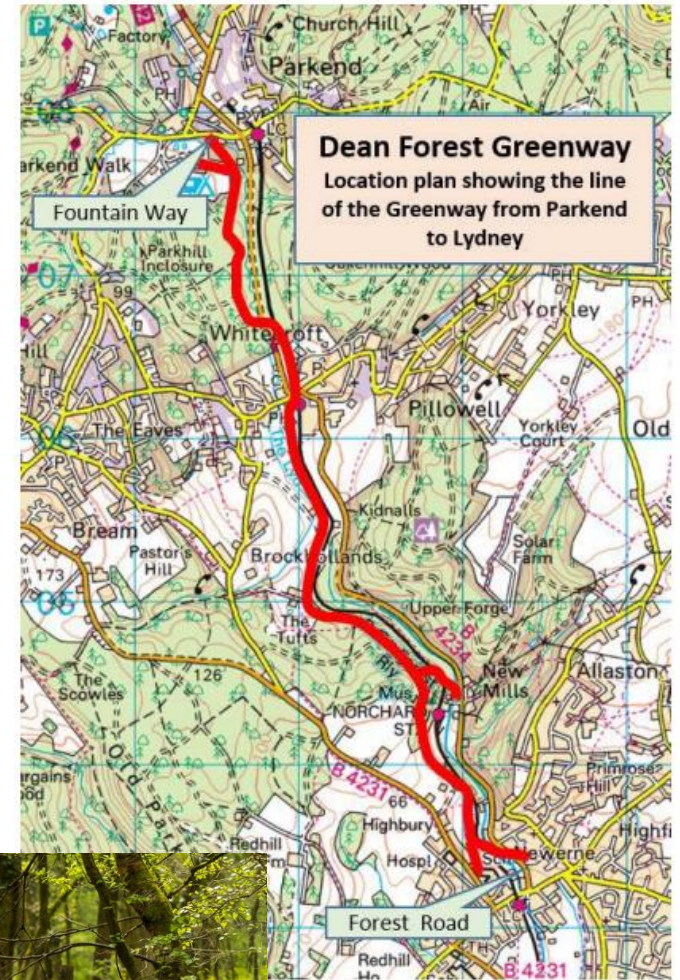
Future Joint Council working and a new organisation

Based on: Management, Community involvement, land procurement, insurance,

Project Management, Maintenance, and Finance

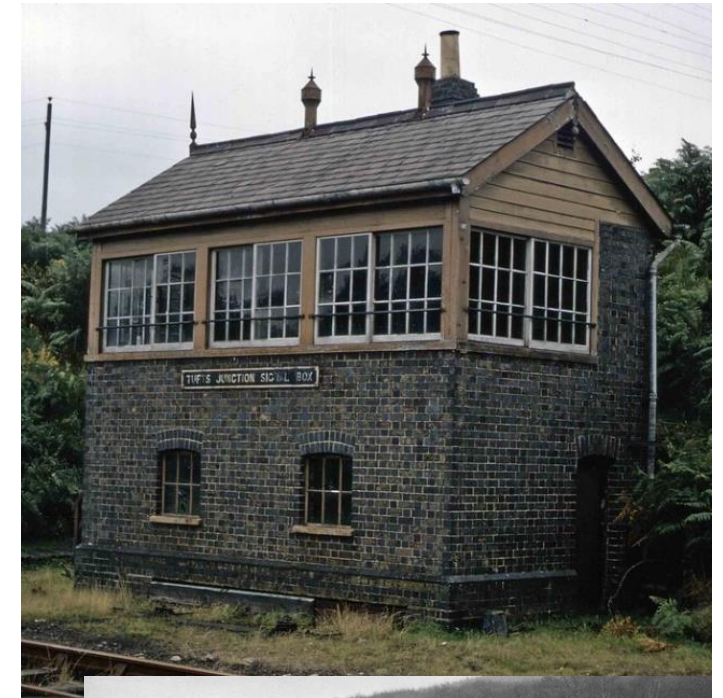
Rational

To provide a safe, usable for all, attractive active travel route that links Lydney to Parkend and onward into the Forest and it's existing routes to the towns of Coleford and Cinderford, for local residents work and leisure and a boost to the area's tourist offering.



History

- In the 1990's the Forest of Dean District Council embarked on a project to build Multi Use Tracks between the Forest Towns. Cinderford, Coleford and the Central Forest were built but the link to Lydney was never achieved – probably due to terrain and funding difficulties.
- Since around 1995 WDPC have discussed the link but once again funding was not forthcoming. Lydney also investigated for a period of time but once again the project failed to get restarted.
- WDPC decided to be more energised on this project and formed a Steering Group which used a company called Greenways to plan a route which would achieve planning approval.
- This turned out not to be an easy task and the second application is now on hold at the FoDDC planning department. The plans stalled mainly due to sections that passed through Ancient woodlands.
- After 18 months of stagnation WDPC decided to proactively join with LTC to kick start the stalled plan. This presentation is the culmination of many months of work and negotiations and has got the project to a point where we can modify the plans and kick start the process.



The Working Group

Set up after May elections

- Conciliatory approach

Open to new ideas

- Working in partnership

Respect & Confidentiality

- To be honest at all times.



The Challenge:

- **ANCIENT WOODLAND :**

THE PLANNING OFFICER HELD A VERY STRONG VIEW THAT AS THE ROUTE WAS TO BE CONSTRUCTED THROUGH ANCIENT WOODLAND THIS WAS CONTRARY TO NATIONAL GUIDELINES AND AS SUCH WAS SUBJECT TO A LEGAL CHALLENGE. AS SUCH HE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECOMMEND IT TO COUNCIL.

Other Challenges that were faced:

- Objections from local residents faced with intrusion
- Mitigation measures
- Concerns over some Highways aspects.
- Concerns over possibility of flooding along the route.
- A commitment from both WDPC and LTC.





Ancient Woodland

Ancient woodlands are irreplaceable features of our landscapes that can be high in biodiversity or cultural value.

Ancient woods are defined in the UK as areas that have been continuously wooded since 1600 (or 1750 in Scotland). And can be subdivided into two types:

Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW), which is composed of native trees and shrubs, though it may have been previously managed.

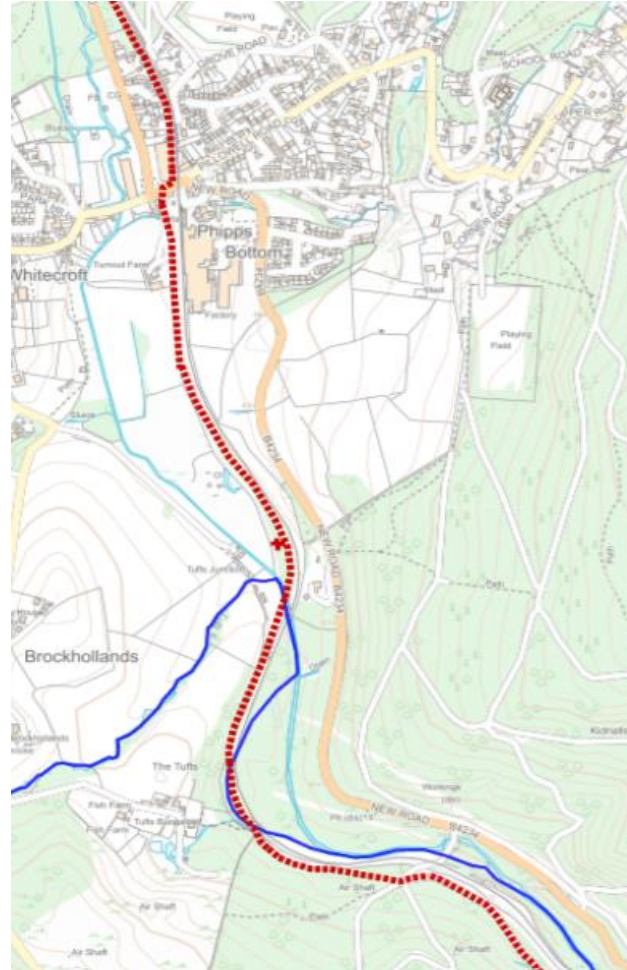
Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), which were planted with (often non-native) broadleaved trees and conifers after the First and Second World Wars. 5,10 PAWS are often less biodiverse than ASNW, but can retain some features of ancient woods.

Proposed Solutions

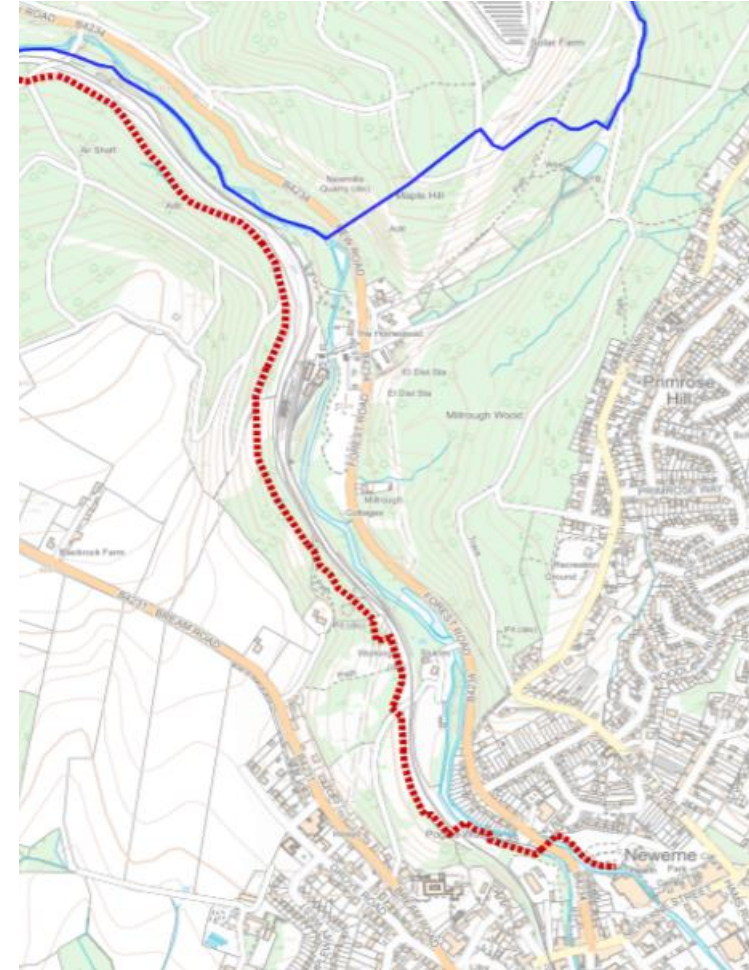
PARKEND



WHITECROFT



LYDNEY



Parkend





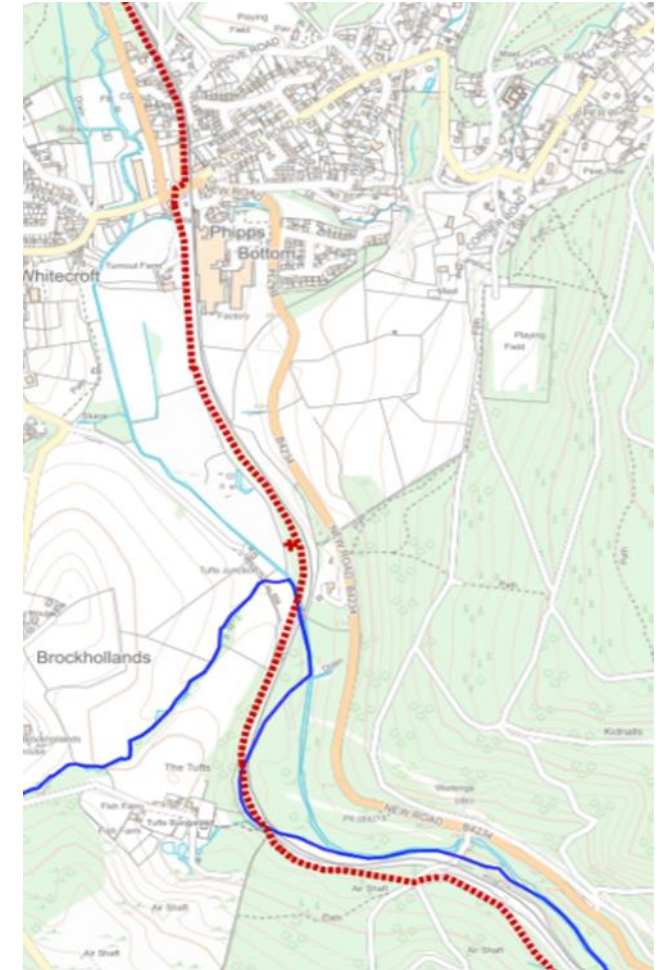
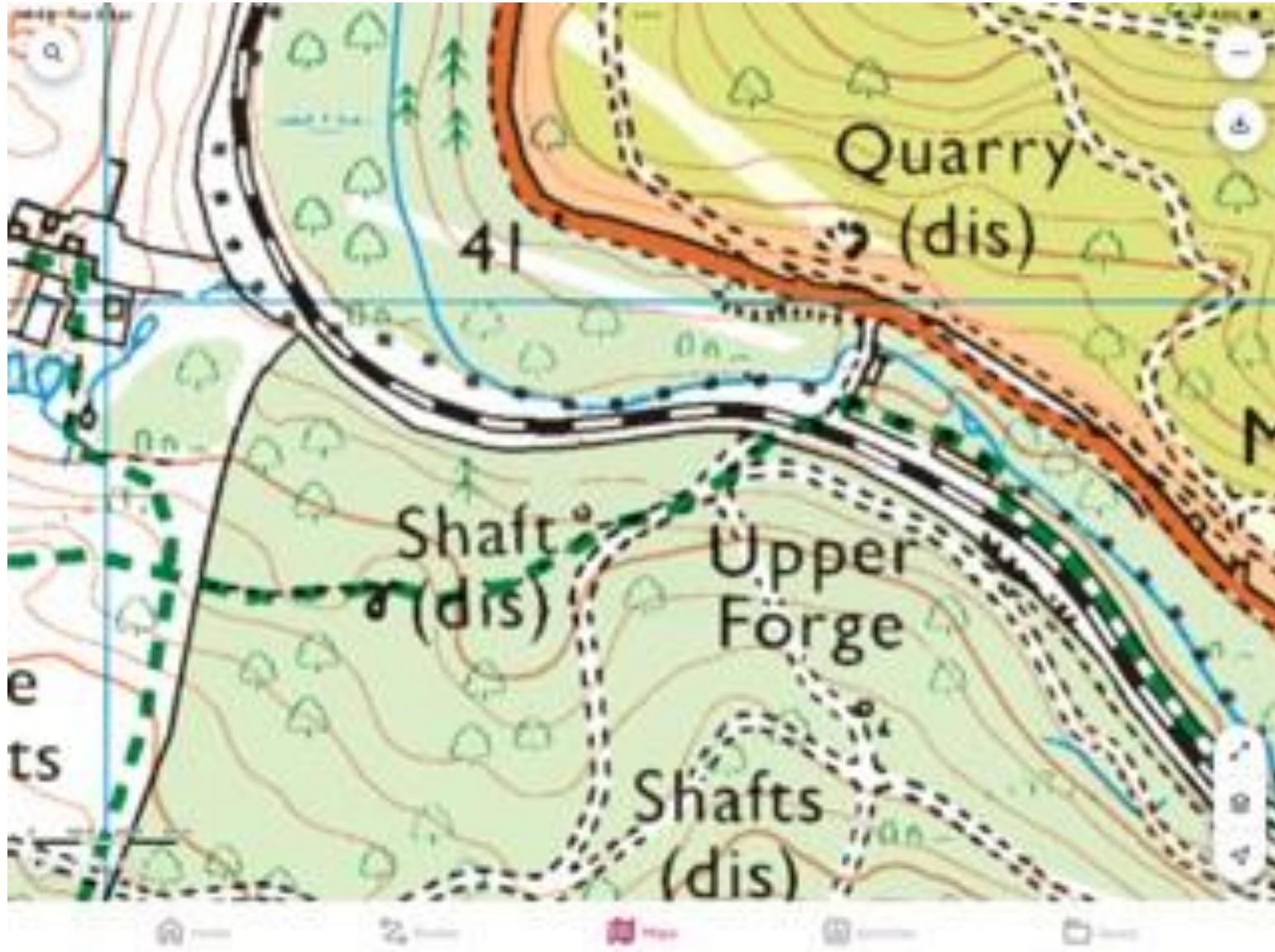
New proposed route from Parkend to Whitecroft via Whitemead through Parkhill Enclosure, Parkend.



Photos from
Whitemead and
Parkhill Enclosure
showing some of the
new route difficulties



Norchard at Upper Forge



Photos of
route through
Norchard
Wood

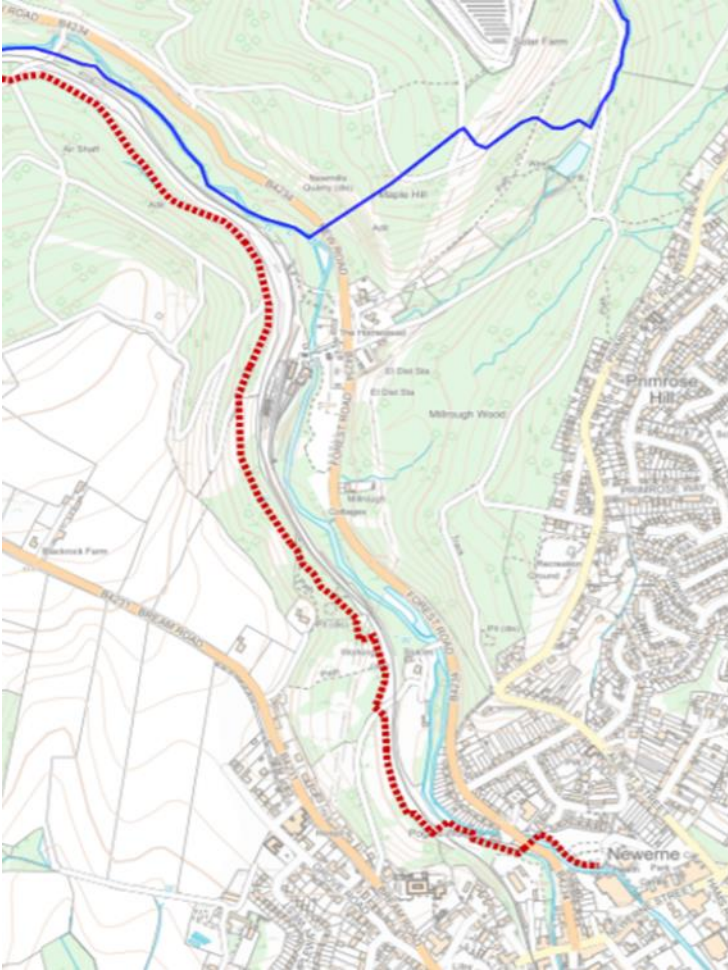


Suggested Amendments - elsewhere & why

LYDNEY

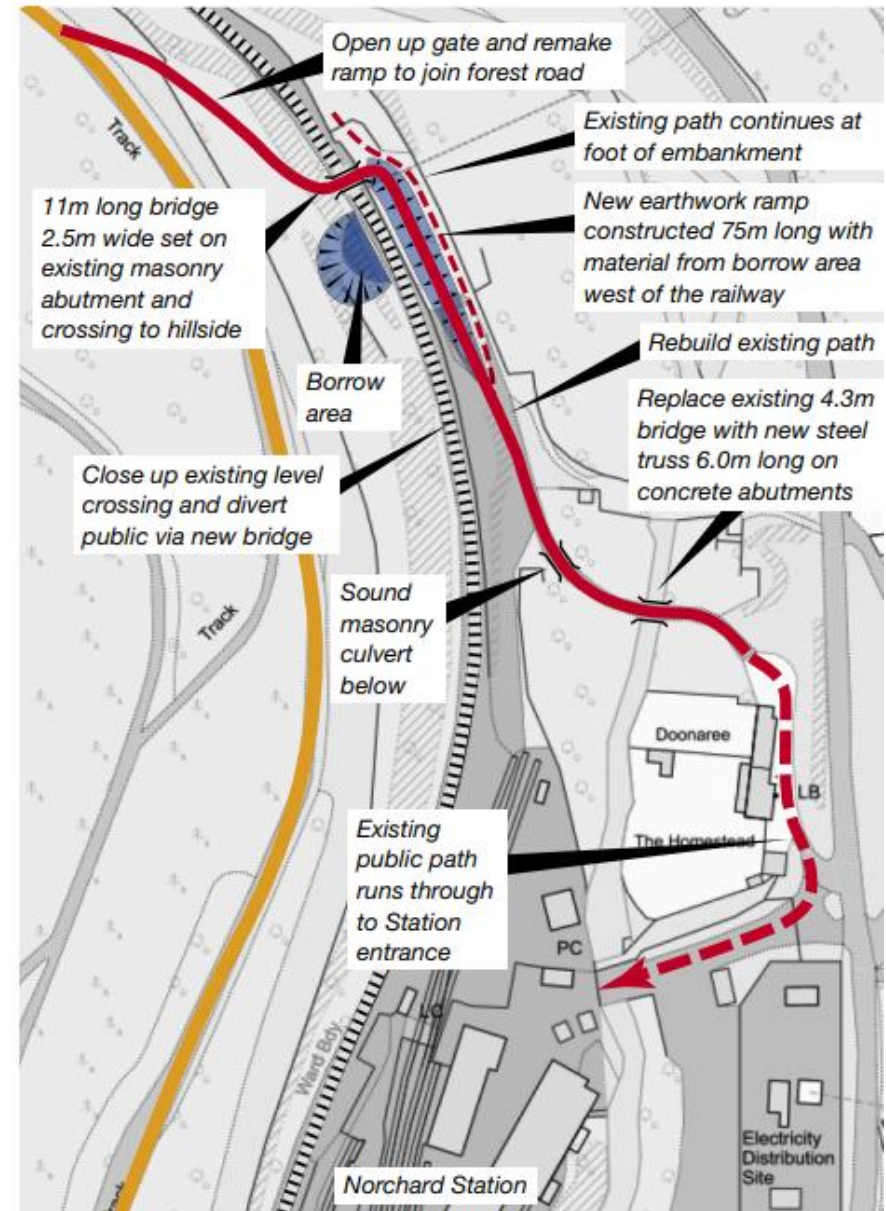
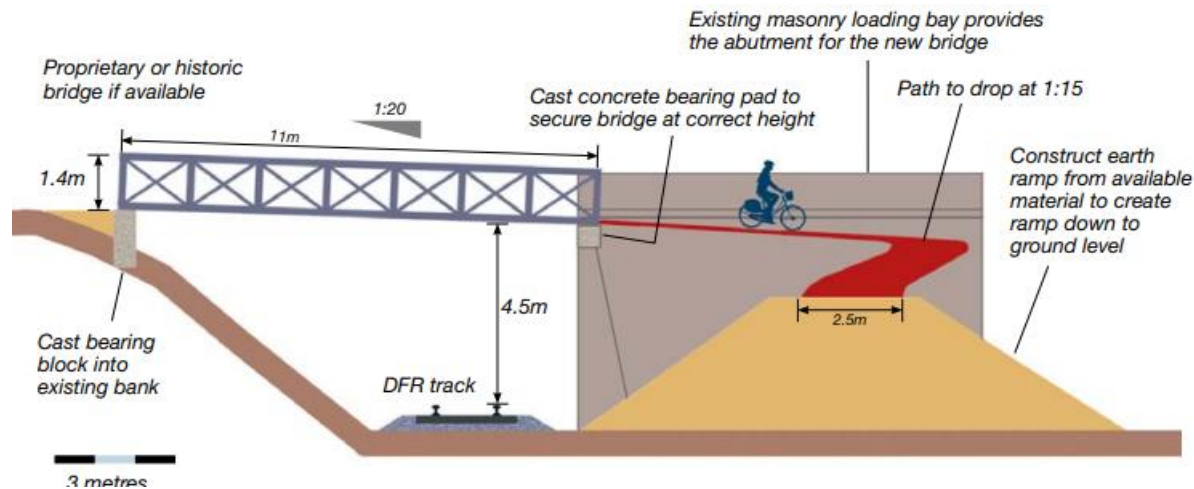
Other Challenges that were to be faced:

- Objections from local residents faced with intrusion
- Mitigation measures
- Concerns over some Highways aspects.
- Concerns over possibility of flooding along the route.
- A commitment from both WDPC and LTC is needed.



Suggested Amendments - elsewhere & why

- All of the Norchard Link including Bridge @ loading ramp, little value, close to residents danger of flooding
- So remove from the scheme

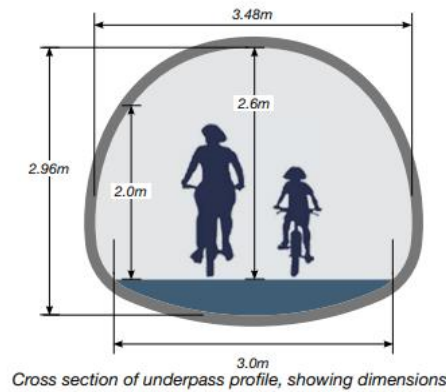
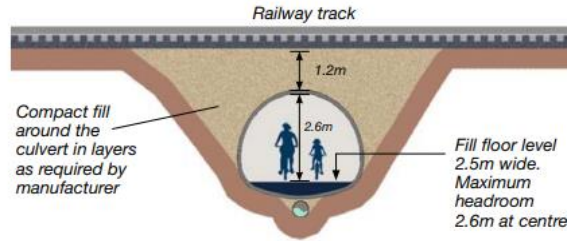




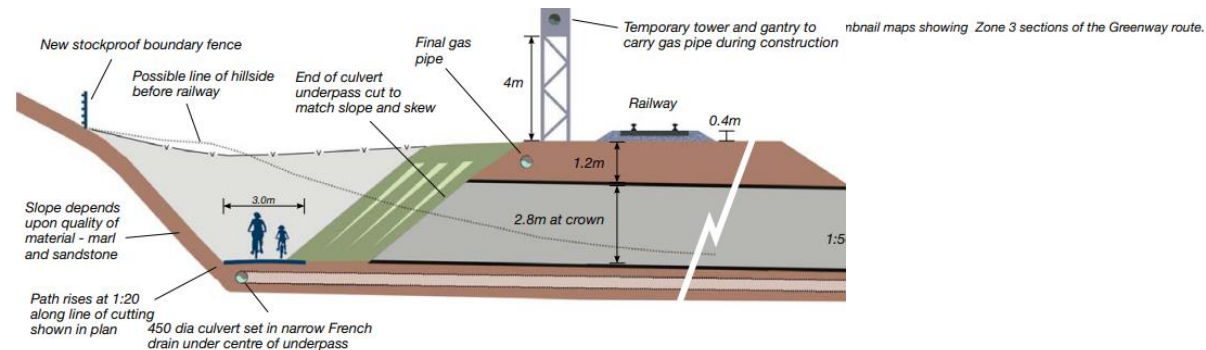
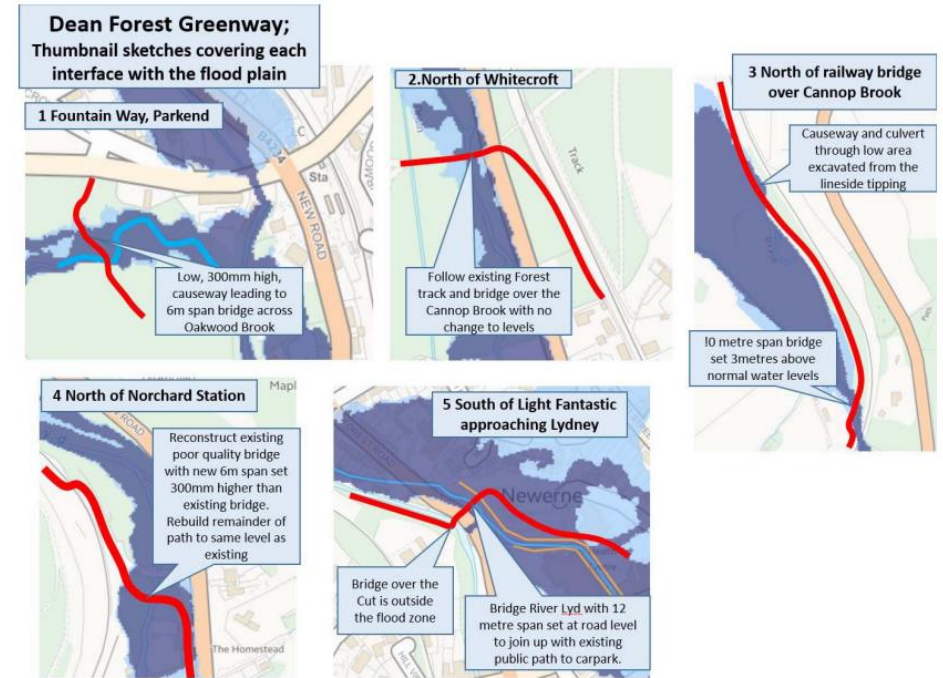
Suggested Amendments - elsewhere & why

- Removal of underpass of @ rear of SWM / bridge

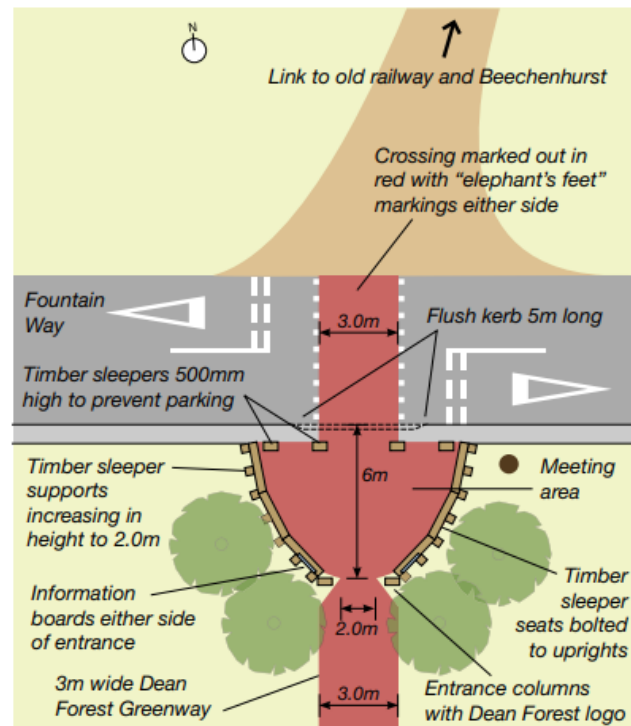
DFR18 Cross section of "Multi-plate 200" underpass passing beneath DFR track



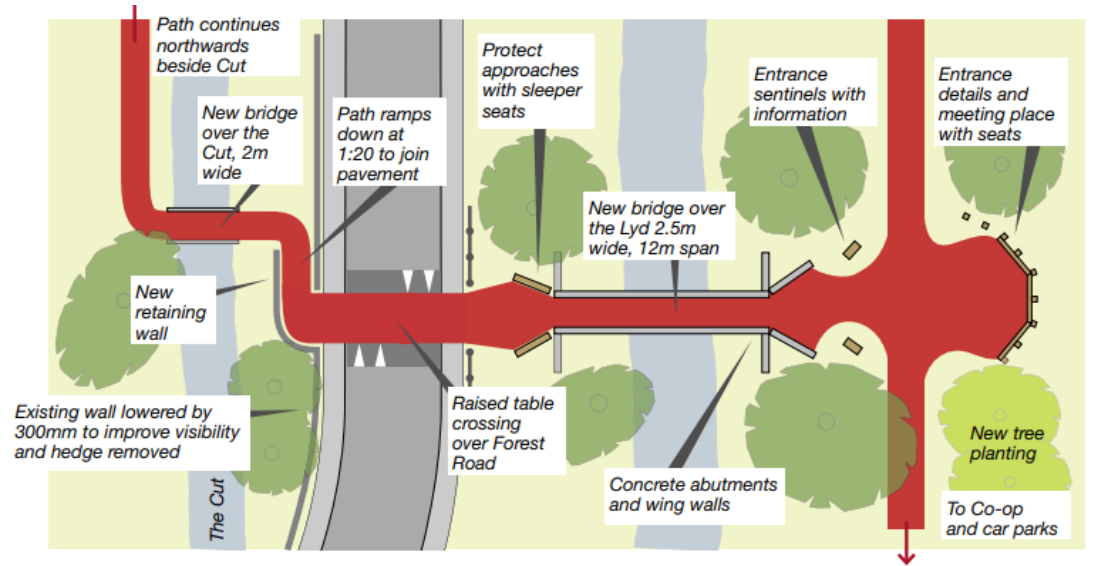
- Reasons
- FLOODING ,COST AND GAS MAIN



Removal of meeting points at both ends – Lydney and Parkend sidings



FE1: Sketch showing Fountain Way entrance arrangement based around reused railway sleepers or similar



Picnic Site location – Map of old and new at Close Junction

Info boards, working with NE/WT – pulls people away from AW



Financial Exposure, Construction and Maintenance.

- Need for seed money for future planning works, project management and procurement – minimal for next two years,
- Potential for Legal and leasing costs,
- Funding sources will be a task for the Management Group - post planning?
- Last estimate was £1.8m
 - Now suggest we set a working estimate of £2m
 - Estimated professional fees around 5% (£100,000)
- Proper procurement procedures to be followed and controlled by a new proposed Management Group reporting to the two Councils

Council's Financial Exposure, Construction and Maintenance.

- Maintenance
 - Anticipating at least 5 years before track maintenance needed
 - Suggesting a sinking fund is set up by both Councils
 - Base on costs awaited from FE (Requested)
- Will be costs for Health and Safety inspections and minor repairs to fencing or infill planting – but these are all costs to be calculated

The expectation is that costs to either Council will be minimal and all constructions need grant aid. In years 5 onwards maintenance costs, other associated H&S and insurance will be required.

Management



New structure after planning approval



Management Group (From Councils – See Appendix 2) for administration and oversight



Consultation Group (Also appendix 2) includes community representation



For advice and feedback on ongoing practical considerations

Management and development of the Project

Working Group – can continue to settle the last few outstanding matters prior to asking the Planning Permission to proceed

- These include:

- Finalising a re-commitment of Comfort Letters and verbal agreements
- Obtaining any technical support needed to complete the changes to the Planning Application document
- Advising both Councils on progress

Setting up Consultation meetings to revitalise the project in the public sphere

Recommend the correct time to hand over the project to the management structure referenced in Appendix 2 of the report



Management Group

- Oversee the ongoing progress of the project
- Act as the appointing body for any contracts (supported by WDPC & LTC Clerks)
- Provide scrutiny of the progress and finances of the project
- Report back to both Councils as appropriate
- Consider recommendations and comments from the Consultation Group
- Investigate funding streams
- Manage the day-to-day business until funding is found and project started.
- Manage the administration (which will be supplied by WDPC).

Consultation Group

- provide ideas and information concerning the Gateway to enable the Management Group to initiate and fund action,
- consider, identify and report issues of maintenance and improvement.
- monitor the usage of the Gateway
- Promote the Gateway as an Active Travel link and a tourist attraction.
(to appoint a publicity and marketing lead)
- formally report to the Management Group on an annual basis.

Next Steps

1. We ask for your agreement to the report and its recommendations
2. We ask for a commitment to move towards restart planning - (with the working group)
3. We ask for a Long term commitment to support; construction, maintenance, Land ownership/leasing and insurance
4. There needs to be Public Consultation to inform, enthuse, explain the technicalities and re-set the scheme's management
5. If the Planning Application is successful the Management Group (Supported by Consultation Group) is then formed to source funding for Project Management and Construction...



Breakout Session for Councils to discuss and make an informed decision

- Please consider the report and the recommendations presented – your decision is crucial to the project
- A Working Group member is designated to each meeting, to answer any questions you may have
- Scrutinise the report, as it will help you with your discussions
- Name change to **Forest of Dean Gateway**

The Working group requests your support – this is really the last chance to move forward with this project.

