



INTRODUCTION

This document has been composed to provide supplemental information to the Village Enhancement Proposals presented to Marden Parish Council in February 2021. The information is to be used in discussion with Balfour Beatty and the other stakeholders that are affected by the proposals. The Committee Members in this group would be glad to be part of the discussions.

The proposals have been designed to allow those stakeholders who currently maintain the specific areas to continue to do so. It is not the intention of the Gardeners Group to take over and maintain the entirety of the areas – only those planted areas that we create. We don't desire to mow grass or mow the areas. We have therefore tried to take this into consideration when designing these areas – that the planting areas are simple shapes and easy to mow around.

As previously stated:

All planting areas take account of the restrictions of their particular situation – this includes maintaining visibility at intersections, utility boxes, maintaining rubbish bins etc. However, we know that surveys will be required and that some areas may need to be adjusted to take account of the underground utilities.

All proposals have considered maintenance, wildlife, drought conditions etc. We would expect these areas to require seasonal maintenance only.

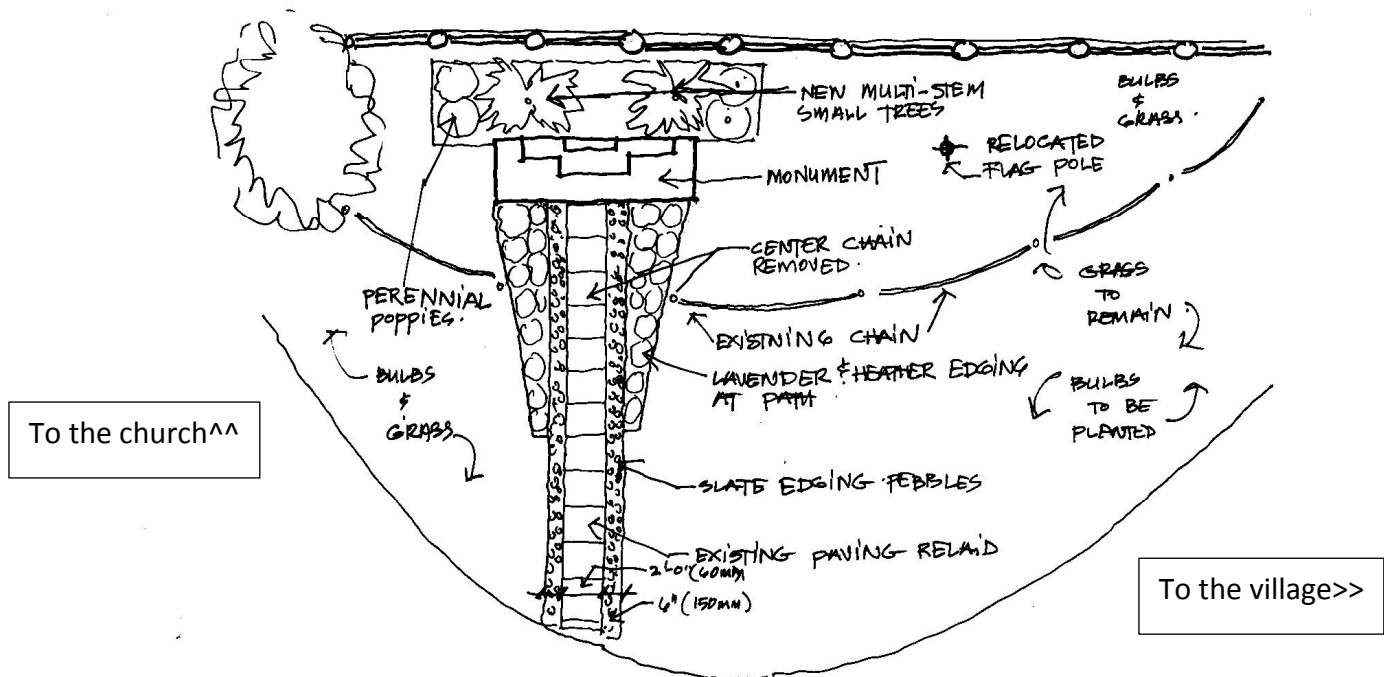
We have specifically not considered installing planters around the village (only two in our original document) and that is because they would be difficult to maintain and keep watered.

This document only addresses the four Priority Areas described in the original presentation. If any of these areas are approved, we have people in the village ready to start to work on getting them ready for planting without violating current Covid Rules – ie, persons from the same household. Once Covid restrictions are eased up, we anticipate we would have additional volunteer labour. There is quite a bit of labour required.

We have not yet attempted to put together a budget. Once each of the areas are agreed, and we know what we are doing, we can put a call out for plants and hard materials to be donated. We can then put together a budget for plants, and other materials to be bought. We can also ask for sponsors by village and parish organisations. Some of the planting might want to be done in autumn (trees at the War Memorial for example) to avoid periods of summer drought, and often plants are less expensive at the end of the summer. So we have time to investigate funds. We will also start to investigate grants – but in order to apply for grants, we need to know exactly what we are allowed to do.



AREA 1 – WAR MEMORIAL

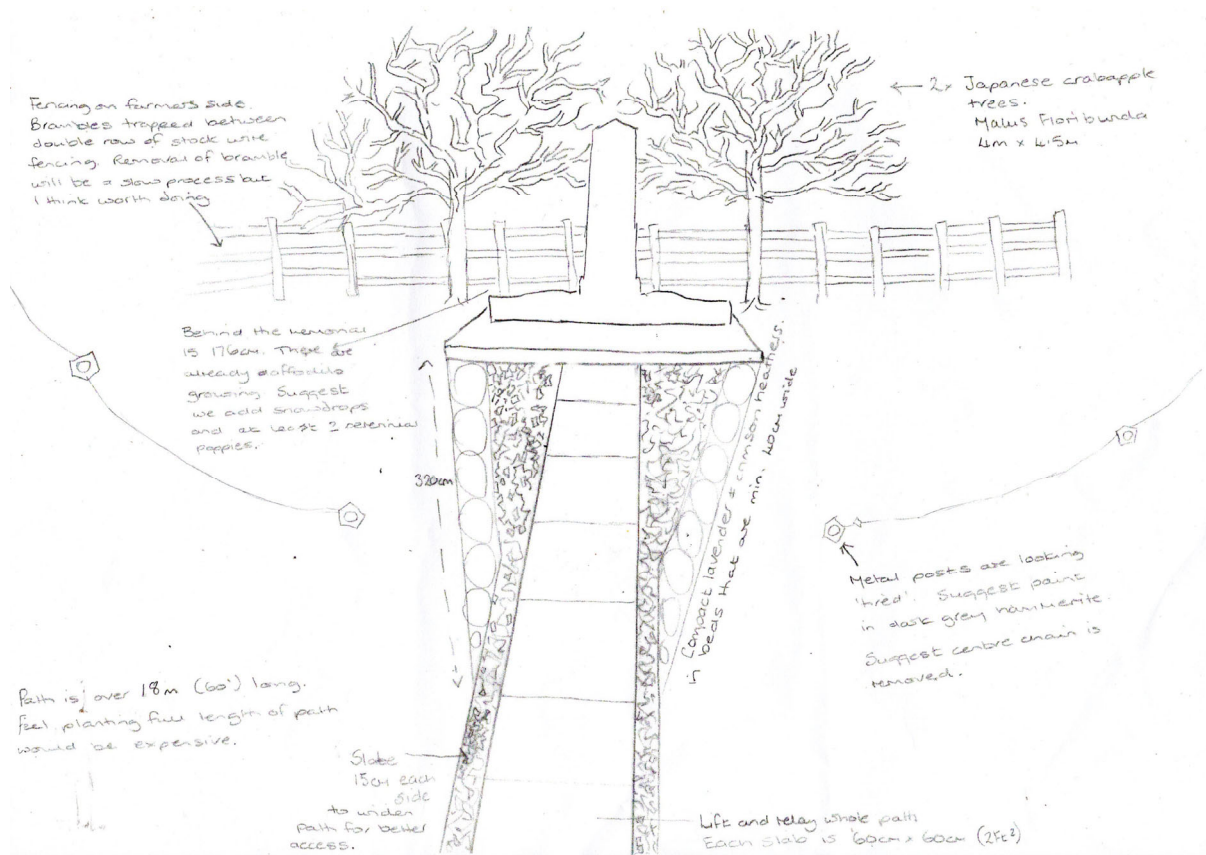


The overall concept is to make the War Memorial more of a feature when entering the Village and to create more of a formal scheme to give the area "weight".

1. Uneven existing paving to be re-laid. Grass overgrown on pavers to be removed. Pathway to be widened by including a slate gravel edging on each side on top of a weed barrier. Paving and slate areas to be designed so that a mower can be passed over them.
2. We have allowed a large mowing path along the Highway Edge for Balfour Beatty.
3. Centre chain to be removed to allow easier access to Memorial
4. Angled planting area to be planted with a lavender and heather small low hedge each side.
5. Brambles on fence behind the memorial will be kept for wildlife but some attempt will be made to keep them under control.
6. Two multi stemmed, ornamental, small habit crab apple trees to be planted behind the memorial to give the edifice a contrasting background. Crab Apples are three season trees – flowers in spring, bright red fruit that forms in summer and stays on the tree into winter, (these provide food to birds – especially blackbirds) and lovely autumnal colour.
7. Red perennial poppies (Oriental) that will come back and flower every year.
8. Winter and Spring bulbs to be planted in the grass.

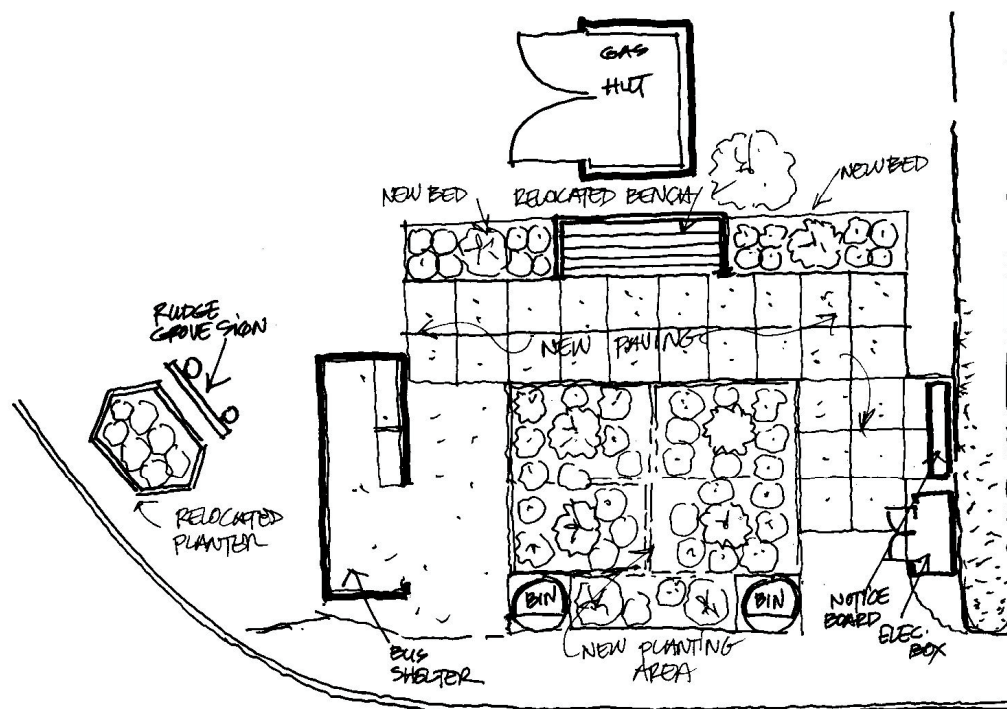


9. Relocated Flag Pole.





AREA TWO – RUDGE GROVE BUS STOP



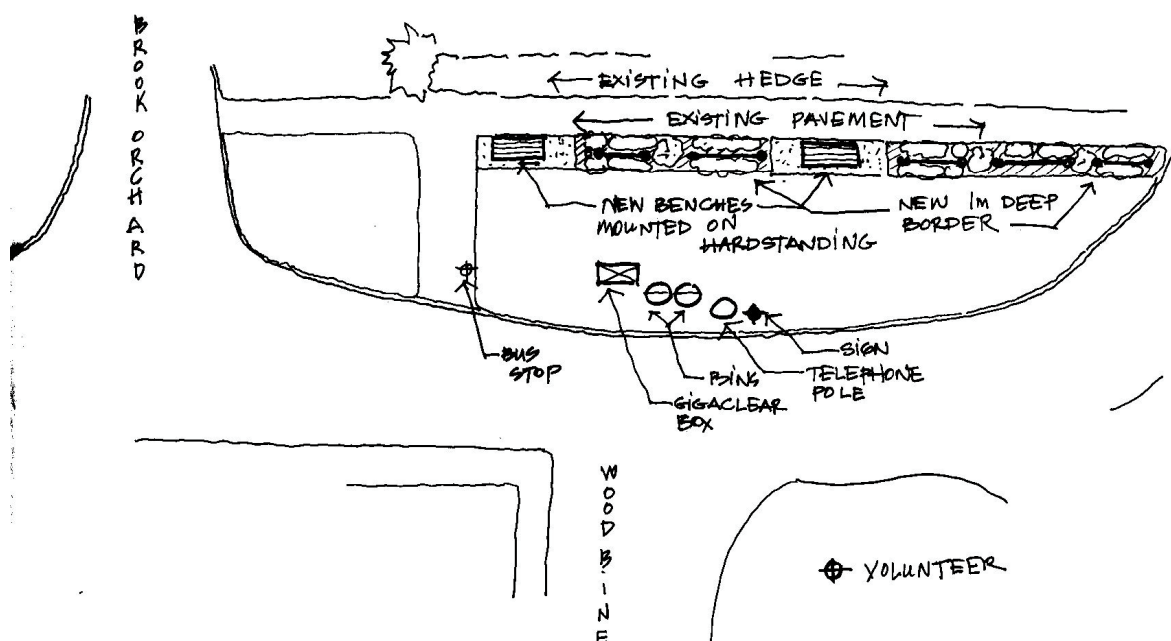
This area seems to have a bit of everything – bus stop, bins, bench, planter, signboard etc. The main intention of the scheme is to organise the area and make it more of a feature. The overall concept is to create a sensory garden with perennial herbs for people - and especially children - to touch and smell. They can of course, be picked and used for culinary purposes as well. One of our Committee Members thought it could be a bit of fun to pin culinary uses to the notice board – Lemon Balm Lotion, Mint Tea for example. Moving the bench and creating a new “square” creates a “pause area” in the village.

1. We would like to move the bench so that it is centred on the side of the gas hut (this scheme shows that). If that is too difficult, then the scheme works but loses some of it's symmetry.
2. If possible, we would like to paint the Gas Hut a “garden green” to make it blend into the back ground a bit more.
3. The existing hard areas would continue as paving around a central planted area to create more of a “square”
4. One bin to be moved to the other side of the “square”.
5. Central planted area to be comprised of: Lavender, Thyme, Garlic Thyme, Chives, Garlic Chives, Marjoram, Lemon Balm, Curry Plant. Sage and Mint to be sunken into pots into the ground to control their spread.



6. Planted area at sides of bench to be larger plants: Cat Mint, Fennel and Rosemary. These would screen off the Gas Hut as well.
7. The existing Planter maintained by the Girl Guides is proposed to be moved to the front of the Rudge Grove street sign. We think it will actually be more a feature in that location.
8. We're not sure who maintains this area, but with our design, this makes the area easier to maintain. The "Square" would not need to be mowed, and the mowing becomes easier as you aren't mowing around things or features.
9. We recognise that this area will need to have a detailed utility survey due to the Electrical Cabinet that is on the side and a Giga Clear Box across the street. We anticipate the planting to require no more than 1 foot (30 cm) depth. If the survey comes back and we are not able to plant the "square" then we may move to a raised bed or a partial raised bed in the area. This is why we would require a detailed survey to indicate exactly where the utility boxes are located and how deep. Raised beds are more work and more expense, and we would like to avoid them if possible.

AREA THREE – VOLUNTEER JUNCTION

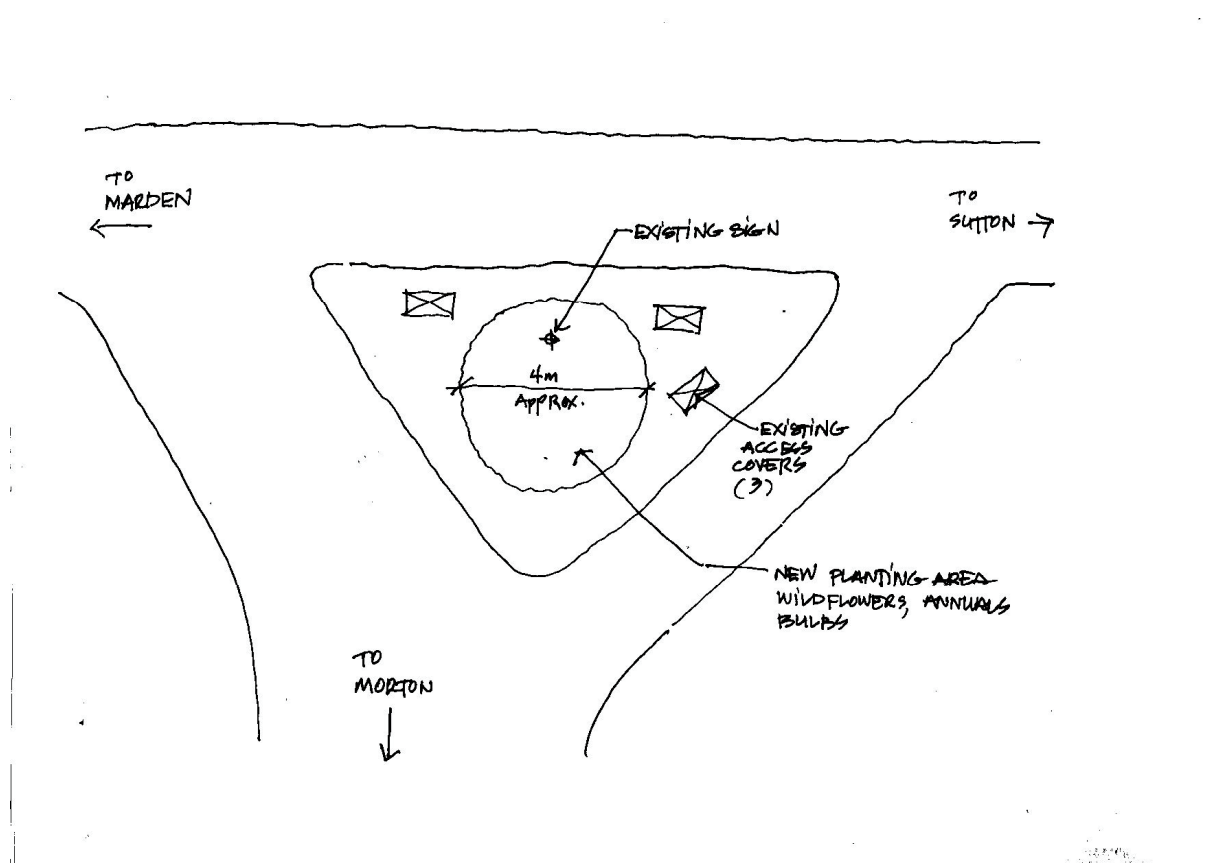


After looking at this area again in more detail, we felt that the proposal should be simplified. With bins, a GigaClear Box, signpost and a bus stop, there were too many permanent fixtures in place AND the space is too narrow to create three planting areas. Creating a long deep border along the pathway invites people to walk along it, and the benches give "pause areas" in the village. It creates colour and focus at the end of Woodbine.



1. 1m deep planted border along the existing pathway, interspersed with two backless benches. (backless to alleviate any concerns regarding visibility for drivers). One bench should be adjacent to the bus stop, and the other further along the path. Benches would need to be permanently installed into hardstanding for security. This also means that no mowing would be required under the seats.
2. Planting here to remain low: As a nod to Herefordshire's legacy, "Step-Over Apples" (nominally 30" high (70-80cm) supplemented with other planting for four seasons of interest: Geranium "Rozanne", Sedum "Autumn Joy", Heathers, Skimmia (evergreen in winter with flowers), dwarf grass "Tenuissima". Supplemented with hardy annuals such as Calendula, and Spring Bulbs Crocus, Daffodils, and Snowdrops. Mowing can be done right up the edge. If plants flop onto grass, then they can be mowed and still come back.
3. The remainder of the area can be maintained in the same way it is now. There is no proposal to move the bins.

AREA FOUR – MORTON/MARDEN JUNCTION



We like the idea of creating a focal area as you come into the village. Rather than creating a formal planted area, the Committee has rethought the area and considered a Wildflower Meadow Garden here instead. Wildflower Meadows are healthy for the environment and attract pollinators and birds.



1. A 4m (approximate) circular area to be dug out and planted with Wild Flowers and Annuals. Some things would self seed, others would need to be newly scattered every year. The remaining area around the Wildflower Circle would be mowed by Lengthsman and Balfour Beatty during their regular regime.
2. Planting: British wild flowers, cornflowers, calendula, wild poppies, California poppies, coreopsis, centaurea, field scabious, red campion, etc. Bulbs for winter and spring in addition. Planting is kept low, nothing would be higher than 24" (60cm)
3. In order to do any work here, safety would be of utmost importance. So "Men Working" and "Slow" signs would need to be out on the road. Anyone working on the area would need to be Hi-Viz.