

Hart Council Green Grid Signage and Wayfinding Workshops

21st June 2022

In developing signage and wayfinding for the Green Grid pilot project (a new route between Fleet Railway station and Hartland Village), several workshop sessions were undertaken in June to collate feedback from a range of key stakeholders who have an interest in the Green Grid pilot.

Aims of the workshop sessions:

- 1. Present the key principles of the wayfinding strategy and their application**
- 2. Gain feedback on the proposed strategy and proposed sign types**
- 3. Introduce three design concepts for the wayfinding**
- 4. Discuss the sign concepts and proposed materials and identify preferences**

The feedback listed below were raised within the workshops by the key stakeholders and have helped to advance the strategy and the final designs options.

Feedback on the Green Grid Signage Strategy

Target users:

- Regular users would be more familiar with the route and therefore the signage should be aimed at new users who haven't used the route or are not familiar with the journey. Signage should encourage users along the path rather than into the pond's surrounding because it is a nature reserve for wildlife.
- There should be sufficient marketing to ensure that the public recognise the Green Grid branding to ensure its success

Sign family:

- A sign within the information family for seasonal information i.e. cattle grazing would be needed.
- Ensure there is synergy between the Green Grid signage and other signage in the area, to ensure they complement each other and it's not 'death by signage'.
- Consider fitting into existing signage (signs or pole sharing) in a town or park rather than using separate, stand-alone Green Grid signs
- Consider how to ensure that Green Grid signs is not imposing on existing signage.
- Ensure that signage is easily changeable for maintenance and updating

Wayfinding information and mapping:

- An interactive district map, linking to other routes for users would be really useful.
- Consideration should be given to digital instead of static maps for ability to gain extra information
- Consideration is needed when there are two paths crossing, how will that then be communicated?

Summary of feedback on the Green Grid Design Concepts

Wayfinding icon:

- The preferred icon was unanimous, all attendees preferred the 'teardrop' icon with the abstract 'gg' inside.
- There was also unanimous support for having an icon as a low impact signage option when possible.
- The 'teardrop' shape with its 'organic nature' would work well in the country.
- The 'teardrop' looks like a location pin, it's slick and subtle and would fit well in the environment. The other icon could be confused from a distance for the QR code due to its decorative 'g'

Wayfinding concepts:

- Some attendees did not select a favourite, but those attendees who did favour one concept were split equally between all three concepts.
- Feedback and comments for each concept were given by various attendees.

Concept 1

- Would be most at odds with our rural woodland setting but recognise this could work in urban locations.
- Clean professional appearance presents the correct image for the Green Grid.
- Cold, industrial and impersonal visually, but appropriate in an urban environment.
- Too urban
- Counterintuitive - style is at odds with aims of the Green Grid.

Concept 2

- Largely favoured because it would work in an urban and country environment.
- The phased approach between wood and metal on the secondary wayfinding signage was thought to be a good solution.
- Soft, human concept that imitates growth and emerging from the ground.
- Wood element softens the appearance of the signs.
- Too fussy.

Concept 3

- Using wood as the primary material blends in naturally with countryside settings. The colours also fit a countryside environment.
- It would blend well with Hartland Village Country Park and existing signage/branding
- This is a non-intrusive design for country settings, and when used in an urban setting it would stand out. The use of a natural material would promote a countryside walk which is a purpose of the Green Grid.
- Review the contrast when reversing the word sets to ensure visibility is sufficient in different lights.
- Need to ensure that timber used is at least FSC certified and sourced from local managed woods if possible. There was a discussion about utilising timber from the Hart Council managed woodland but this was discounted due to small volume available and also the issues with uniformity and certification.

Other concerns raised

- A fourth concept had been removed before the stakeholder consultations and two councilors who had seen very early design concepts were disappointed that this option wasn't available anymore.
- Concerns around being as environmentally friendly as possible with the materials were raised and discussed.
- Graffiti and vandalism is a big problem and where possible all of the signage should be resistant to graffiti and arson. This will need to be considered in detailed design for whichever concept is chosen.
- Solar lighting in dark areas could be incorporated to improve usability.
- As the Green Grid will span across varying locations, both urban and rural, could there be a combination of designs to reflect the user's location at that juncture?
- A suggestion to combine Concept 1 and Concept 3 to work across urban and countryside was unanimous. Using messaging/design on Concept 1 and the posts from Concept 1 or 3 depending on the environment.