



# Oswestry and District Civic Society

## Oswestry 2050

A Vision and Plan for a Sustainable  
Future

Looking for the Big Picture

# Oswestry 2050

- We said:
  - Oswestry needs a plan
  - Oswestry needs to grow to 35,000 population\*
  - Concentrate growth around a tramway on the rail link to Gobowen
- Looking for the Big Picture

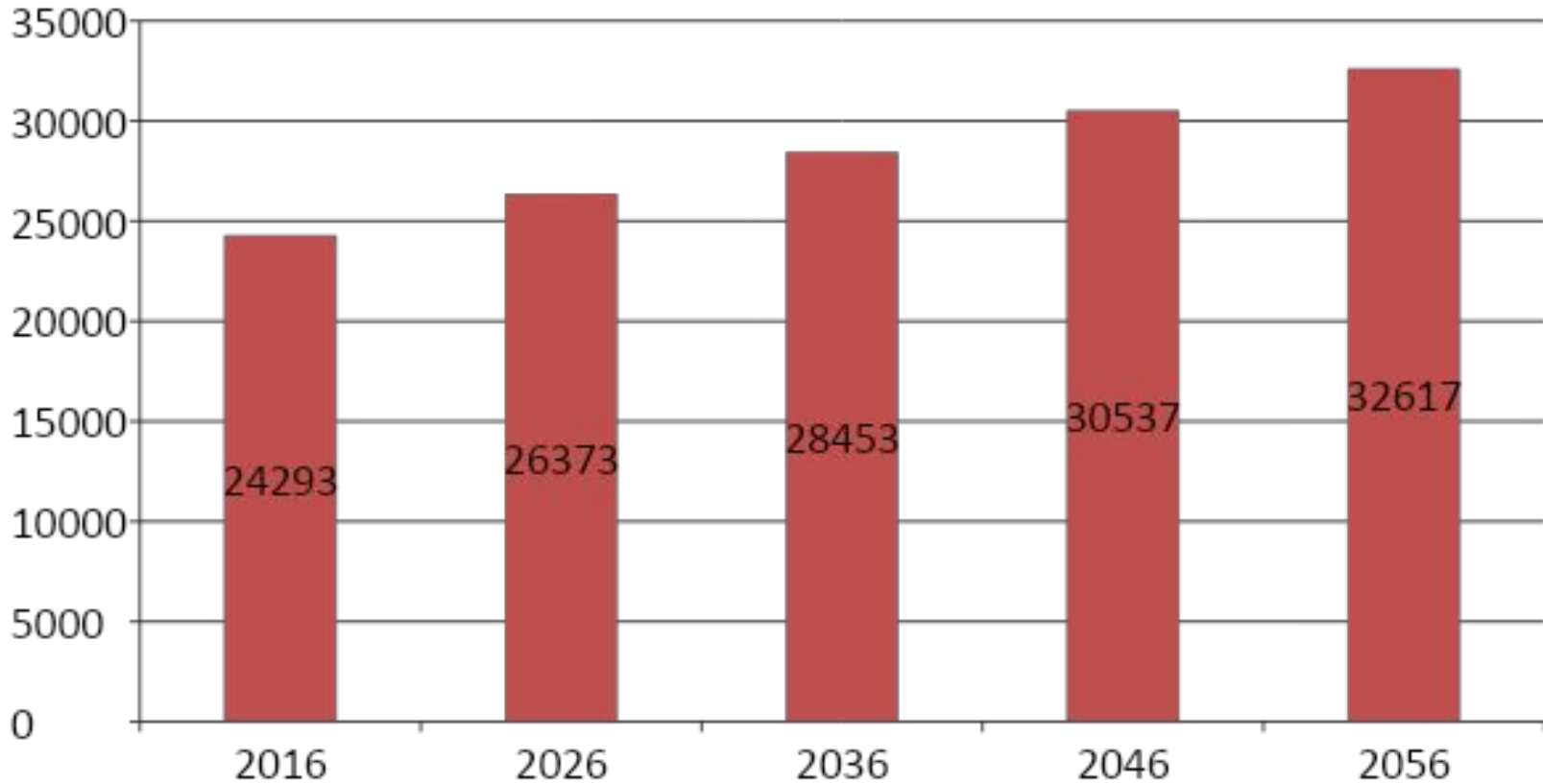
\*(i) Prof Tony Venables – academic view of minimum size for completeness

\*(ii) Oswestry & Gobowen Place plan population growth 322pa. Applying that to populations in 2011/12 gives 35,728 in 2050

# Population Growth

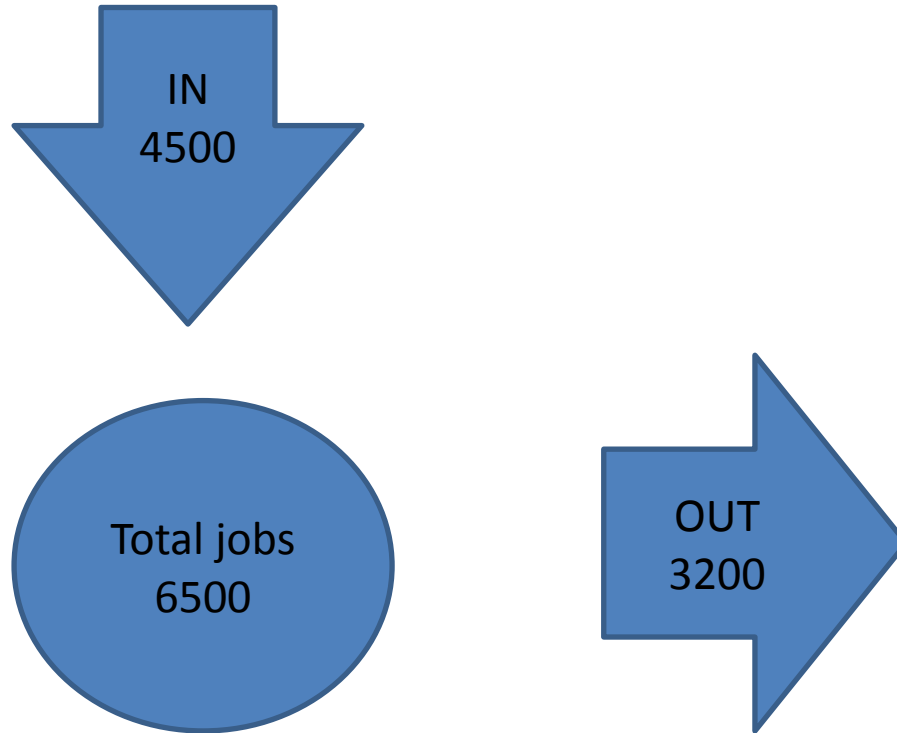
Oswestry, Gobowen and Whittington

2016: 19429      3333      1531

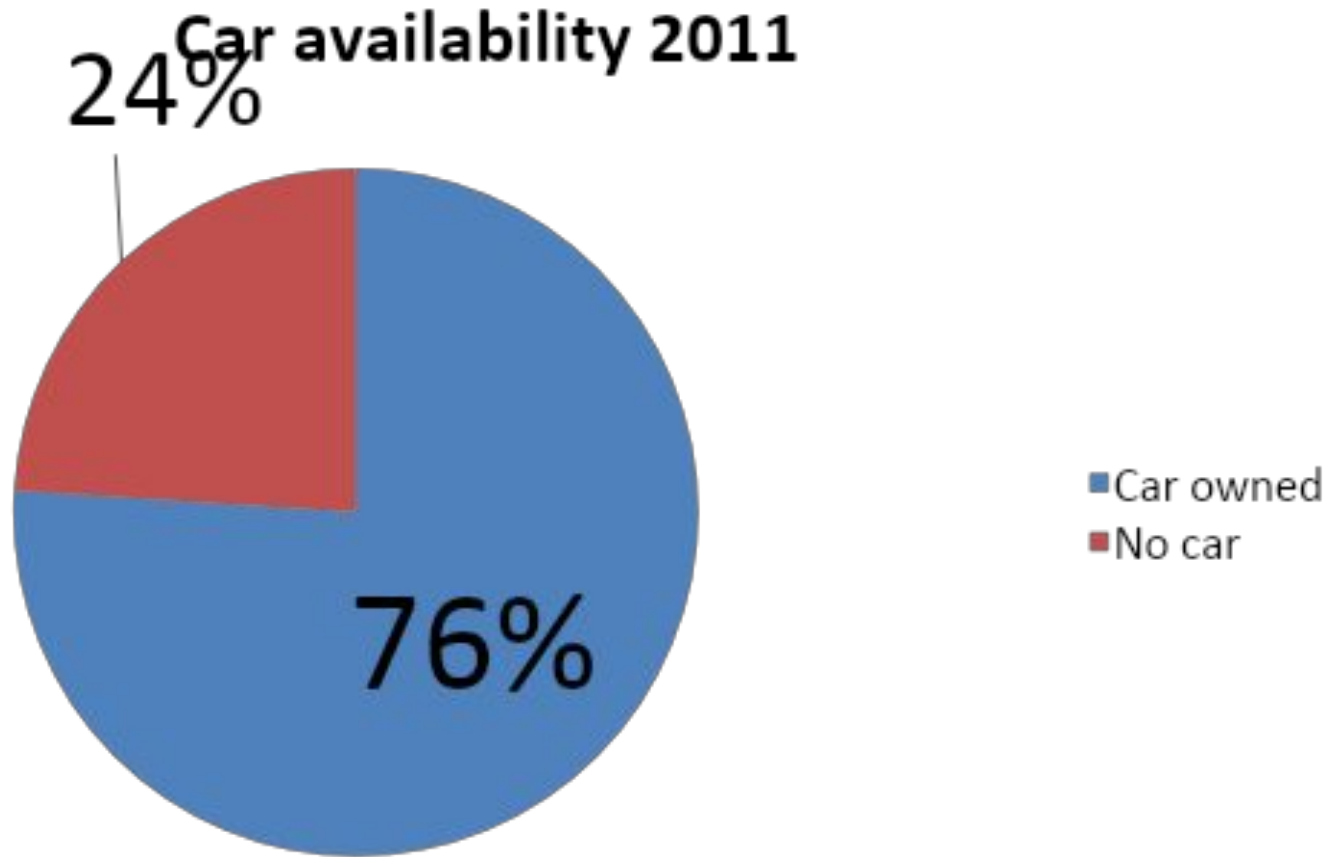


# Oswestry

- Commuting

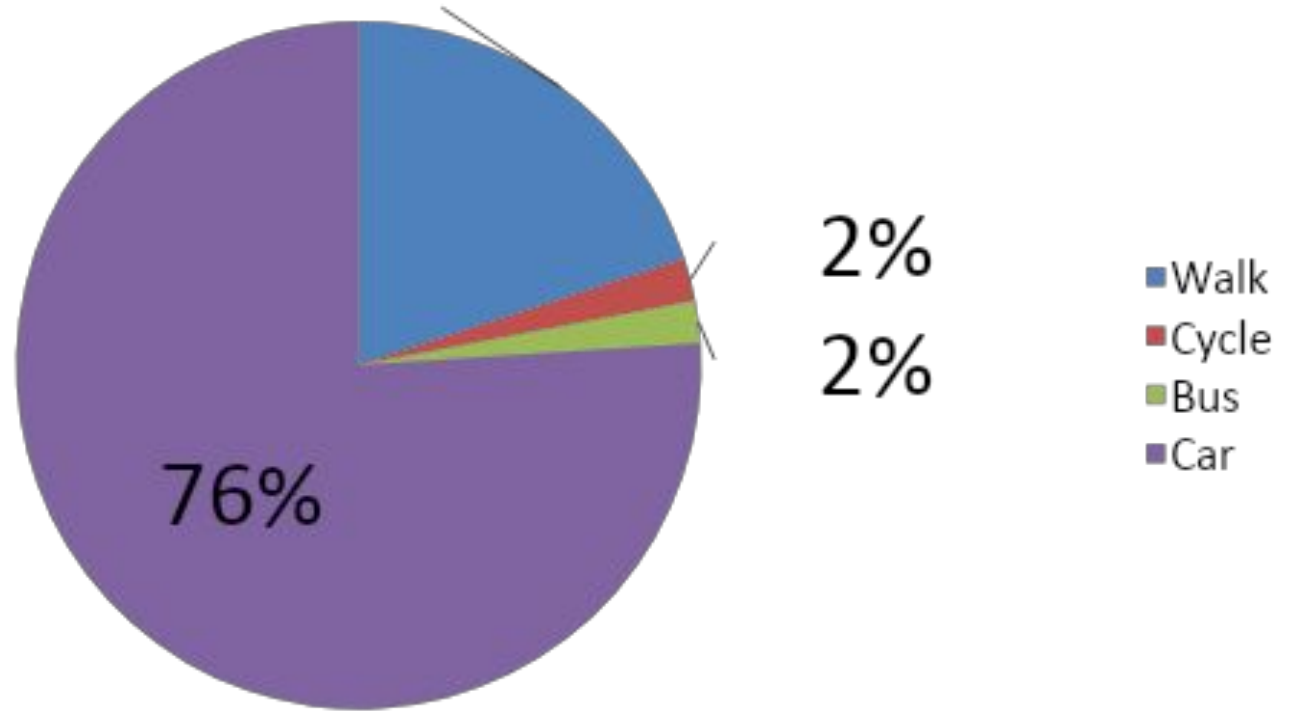


# Oswestry



# Oswestry

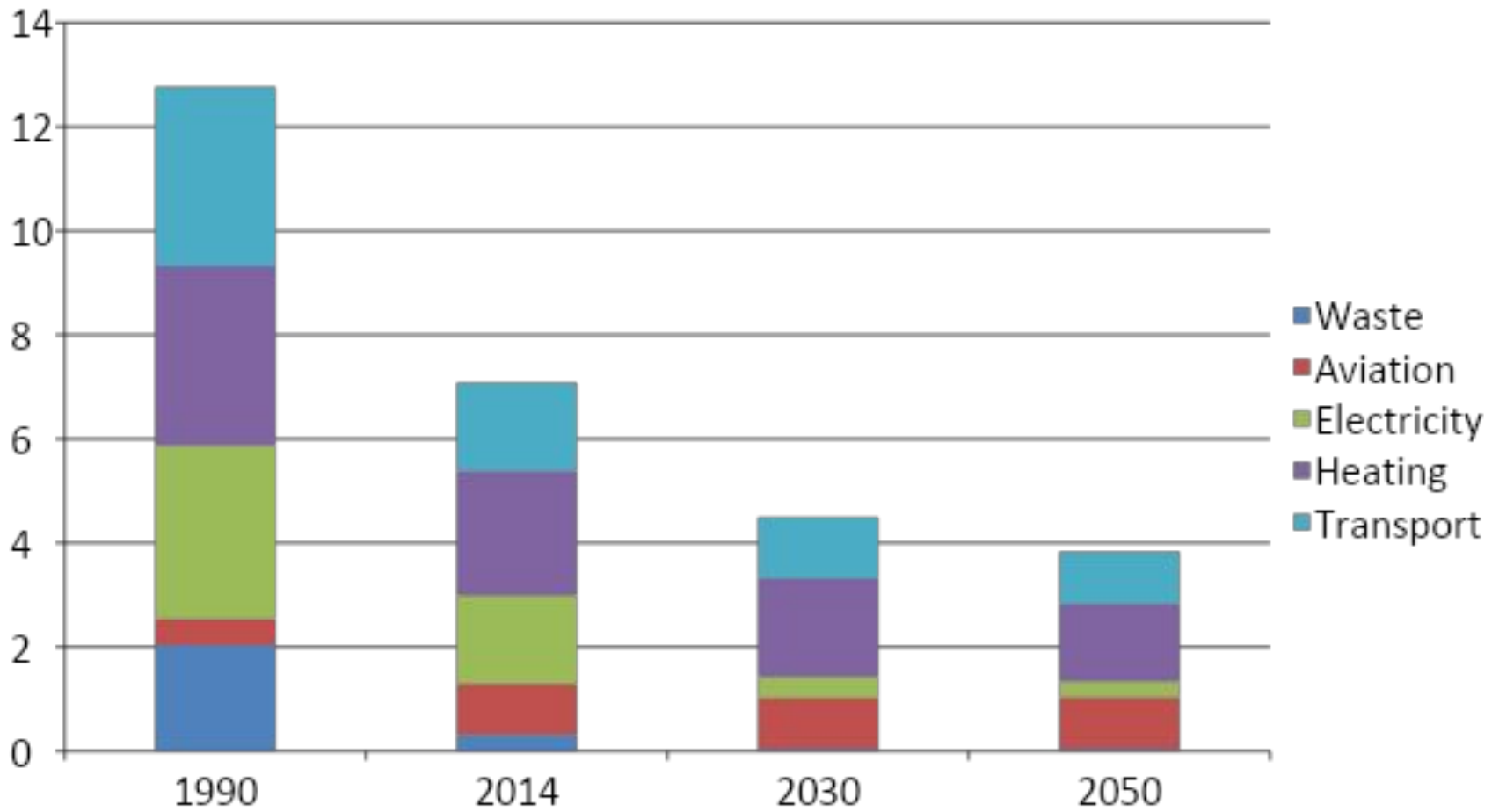
Journey to work  
20%



# UK Household Carbon Budgets

Committee on Climate Change to 2030

2050 - estimate



# Shropshire Local Plan Review

- We said:
  - Hubs and clusters in rural areas do not constitute sustainable development
  - Development in rural areas should be no more than required to meet local needs



# Core Strategy – CS3

- The Market Towns ..will maintain and enhance their roles in providing facilities and services to their rural hinterlands, and providing foci for economic development and regeneration. Balanced ..development .. that respects each town's distinctive character and is supported by improvements in infrastructure, will take place ...

# Shropshire Local Plan Review

- prioritises investment along strategic corridors and growth zones, utilising existing road and rail connections
- A5 West corridor, including the Principal centre of Oswestry as Shropshire's second largest market town
- **But no Big Picture**

# Shropshire Local Plan Review

- Determines overall development requirements
- Asks for site submission proposals
- Chooses “suitable” sites



- No Big Picture; No Big Idea.
- Field by field development - aimless
- Leads to “unconvinced” communities - eg develop near to the Hill Fort, only to meet numerical requirements and landowner aspirations.

# Idealised Sustainable Local Planning

- Housing development should be close to main services – shopping, schools, social facilities.
- Housing should have good access to employment opportunities
- Housing and employment should be “in step”
- Public transport should be favoured.

# Sustainable Development requirements in the NPPF

- Economic dimension – sufficient land for housing and employment in the right place.
  - Right place: Sustainable, low carbon, fullest use of public transport \*
  
- \*NPPF 17 – Core Planning principles

# NPPF

- Social dimension – accessible local services
  - Best access to services is in a local centre
  - Most hubs and clusters provide few services
  - None provide a full range of services when compared with main centres
  - Oswestry is the second centre in Shropshire, after Shrewsbury. It has accessible local services

# NPPF

- Environmental dimension - use natural resources prudently, minimise pollution, and move to a low carbon economy\*
  - Implies minimum transport distances and use of public transport

— \*NPPF 17 Core Planning Principles

# Oswestry

Oswestry is the second town in Shropshire – a key Historic Market town and environs

excellent range, with some outstanding successes

- Booka, Upstairs downstairs, Willow Gallery
- 4 traditional butchers, Good restaurant offer
- Notable employers – Lindstrand, Cheese Factory, Clocks
- Livestock mart, and wide range of specialist merchants – construction materials, agricultural, other specialists
- Superb musical offer – Os School Recitals, Whittington Festival, Parish Church Cathedral standard Choir
- Good Niche services – Library, Qube, Kinokulture



# Oswestry

- Offers an almost full range of services, with exception of a general hospital
- Town centre stress
  - Empty shops
  - High proportion of charity shops
  - Specialist shops short survival period
  - Reports of declining sales
- Poor public transport provision in hinterland

# Oswestry 2020

- Plan produced in 2013, looking forward 7 years
- Identified Weaknesses include
  - lack of clear vision/strategy for the town = No Big Picture
  - lack of main line rail link
- Identified Opportunities include
  - Opportunity to deliver balanced and sustainable growth with investment in new and improved infrastructure (and increased levels of local expenditure in the town centre)

# Oswestry 2020

- Threats identified include:
  - Increasing competition/attraction of other destinations actively pursuing regeneration strategies
  - SAMdev not fully addressing the need for growth and balanced development of the town as envisaged by the 2020 plan.- **No Big Picture**

# Oswestry 2020

- Identified Key issues include
  - The development of the local economy, the promotion of Oswestry as a business location
  - The promotion of Oswestry as a tourist destination and development of the town focussing on its key assets
  - The protection and enhancement of existing open space and provision of new open spaces where required
  - Improving accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling

# Oswestry BID

- Business led plan to achieve rapid improvements within the BID area
- Excellent approach.
- Not intended to address long term planning.
- **Not the Big Picture**

# Why Oswestry 2050?

- Many desirable changes cannot happen in a 7 year period – Oswestry 2020
- Many desirable changes cannot happen within an 18 year period – Shropshire Local Plan to 2036
- Even if growth is slow it will happen to the middle of the century and beyond.
- So look for the Big Picture

# Core Planning Principles

*“actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable”\**

NPPF Paragraph 17

\* NPPF Paragraph 17

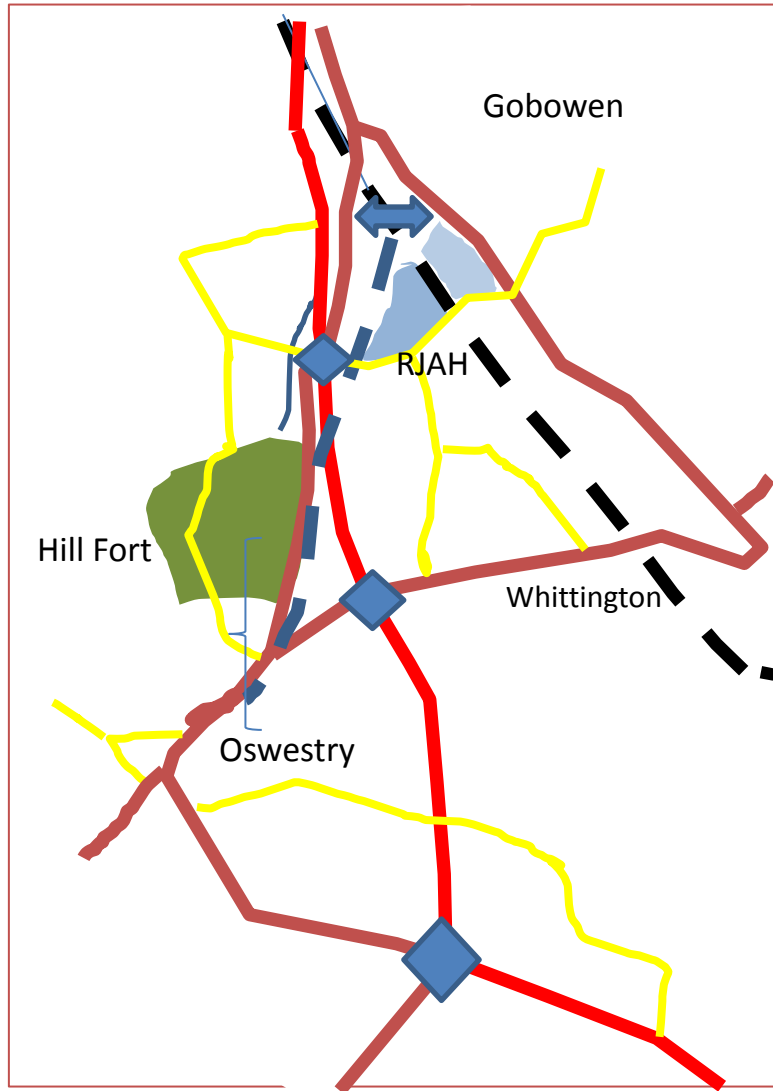
# Oswestry 2050 - A Vision

- A town which
  - is more self sustaining, by its supply of goods and services to a wide hinterland
  - makes the best of its assets with a clear social purpose
  - is energy efficient and low carbon
  - is economically vital and attractive
  - strongly favours walking, cycling and public transport
  - is efficiently connected to its neighbours



# The Big Picture - Oswestry 2050

- A plan is preferable to haphazard development without a vision for the town
  - e.g. Sustainable Urban Extension lacks any social facility.
  - Future Employment Development poorly connected to residential areas
  - Major employers are poorly connected to residential areas e.g. RJAH
- A good balance may be achieved by concentrating additional development between Gobowen, Whittington and Oswestry



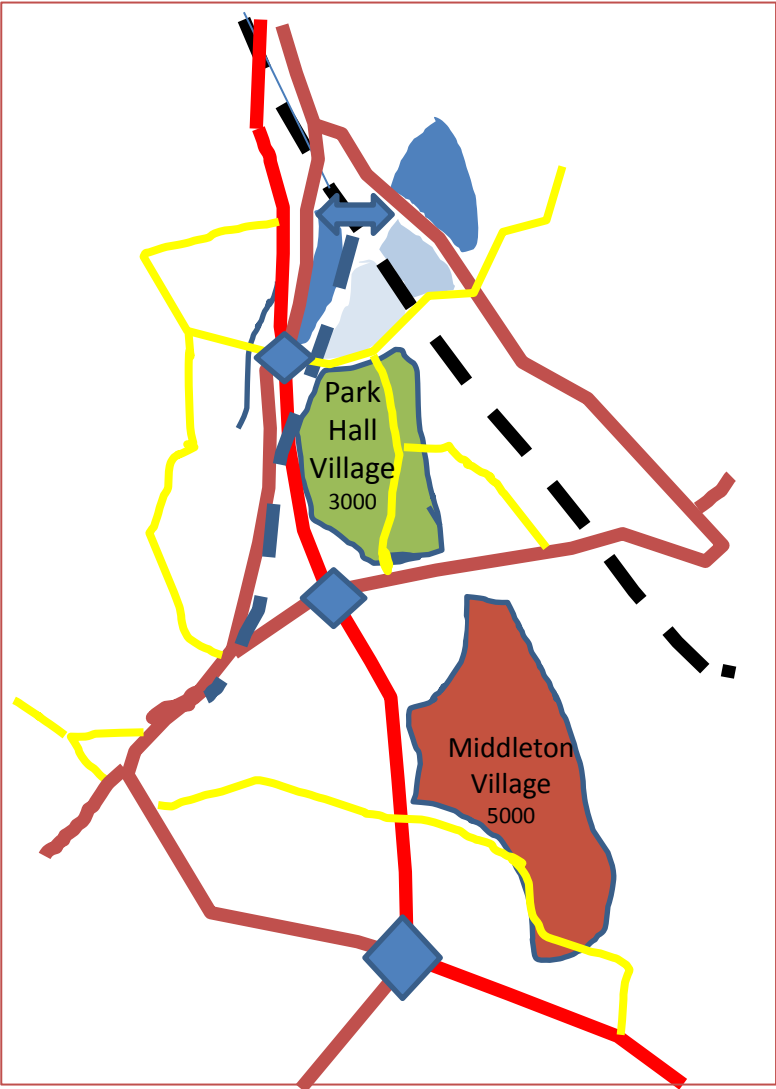
Existing

# The Big Picture

- Expand the town to support retention of its best shops and social facilities
- Bring existing communities closer
- Improve road access
- Improve rail access
- Include major assets accessibly within the town
  - Hill Fort
  - RJAH Hospital

# Oswestry 2050: The Big Picture

- Develop identifiable villages within greater Oswestry, giving a sense of place
- Connect to employment hubs by public transport - Orthopaedic Hospital, Maes y Clawd, new employment sites allocated at Mile End, Park Hall
- Develop new public transport and cycle routes between Oswestry and Gobowen Station



New Villages

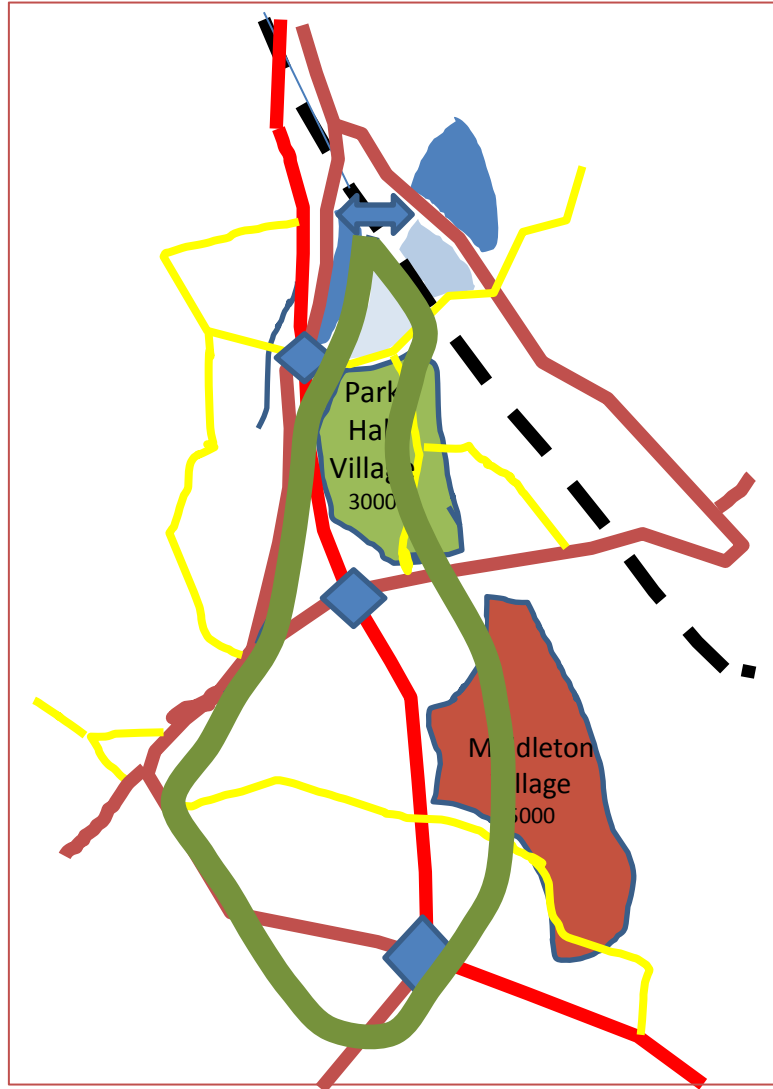
# Identifiable villages

- Each with a local centre
- Each a place with a transport hub
- Each a place where it is desirable to live
- Each with its own local recreation or cultural facility
- Community sized place

# The Public Transport Link 1

- Connecting employment and residential sites, and the national rail network
- Use the old railway formation between Oswestry and Gobowen, - e.g. the Parry People Mover, already in progress through Cambrian Heritage Railways
- Cycle route





Public  
Transport  
Loop



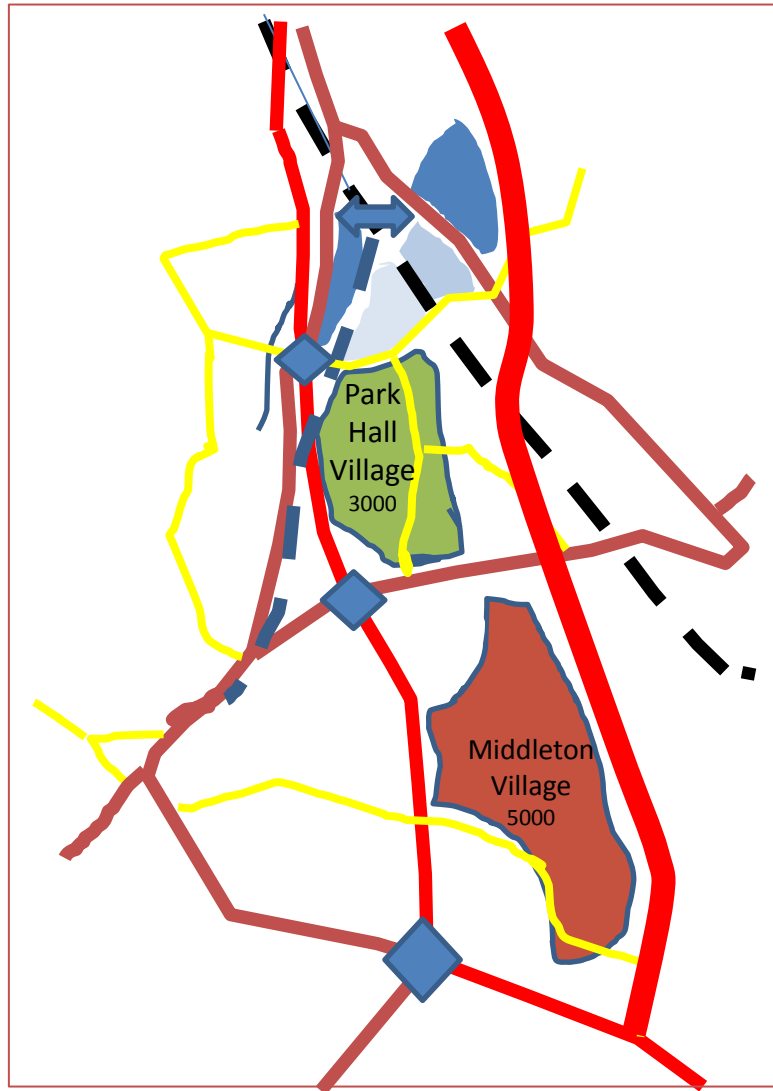
# The Public Transport link 2

- Return loop via Park Hall, Camp House, Maes y Clawdd. Guided pod or standard bus
- Total length 6-7km
- 15 Minute frequency.
- **Inexpensive**
- Cycle route



# The A5

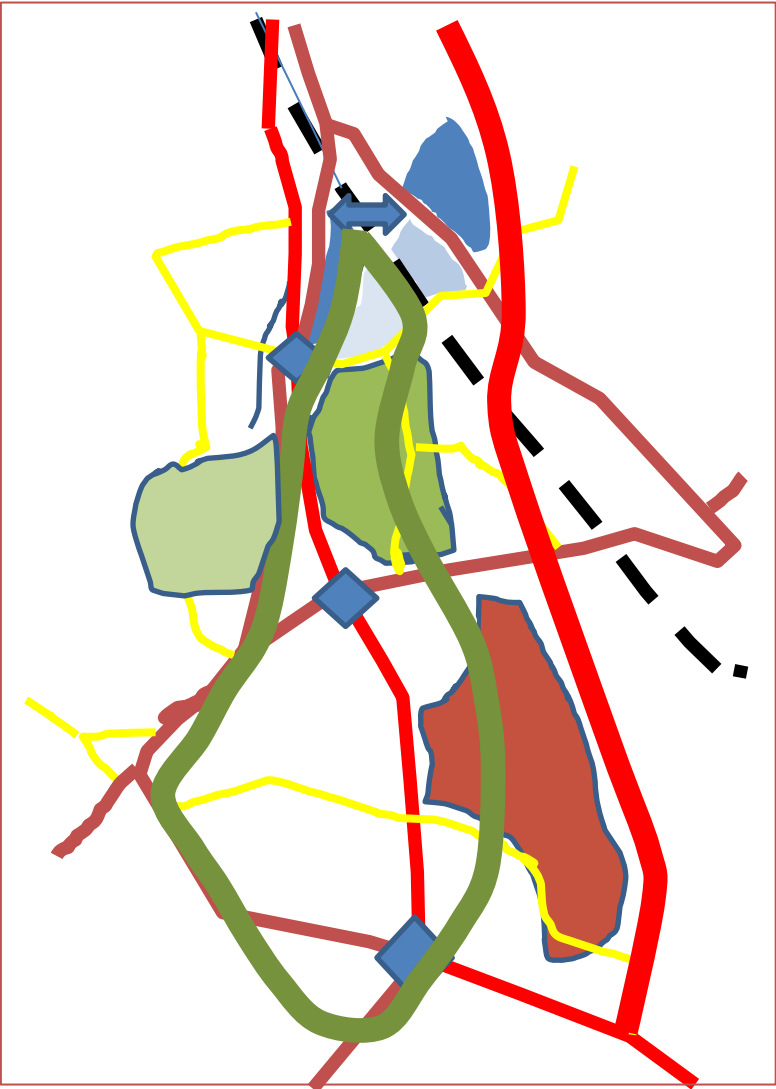
- A5/A483 nearing capacity due to numerous junctions
- Extent of expansion makes it feasible to consider diverting through traffic
- Bypass for A5 only, single carriageway with passing stretches
- Free flowing junctions at North and South
- No intermediate junctions



A5 Bypass

# The Big Picture – Oswestry 2050?

- Could look like this – each village connected by good public transport and cycling routes.
- A quality country park including the Hill Fort, protecting its setting, as a tourist destination
- Good rail and road connections, with adequate capacity



# Why have a **Big Picture**?

- requires developers to design to include public transport routes
- Makes it more likely for regional programmes to co-ordinate – for example A5 diversion
- Forum for development of local design – eg low carbon areas
- Makes a country park more likely to serve greater population

# Summary

- Future generations will have a far better town if realistic plans are made now.
- To go on planning “field by field” is not acceptable.
  - We call upon Shropshire Council to look at

# The Big Picture