

aspirations based on the development of its green/ecological attributes as unique selling points.

- **In terms of additional attributes two groups (A & B) specifically mention coordination and leadership – this echoes the earlier identification of leadership as an issue in section 2.1 above.**
- **The attraction of intelligent workers and skilled jobs emerge as important themes from groups A & C.**
- **Group D proposes the development of a new unique model of urban/rural living. This is also reflected in Groups A's mention of Wellingborough being a Green Playground.**

In summary the participants felt that Wellingborough should have a regional role by 2021 focused on the South Midlands/Oxford Cambridge arc. In order to achieve this it would need leadership and coordination of effort to attract high levels of skilled jobs and harness its existing green character to create a unique urban/rural living experience.

2.3 Identifying actions - getting Wellingborough from 2006 to 2021

Using their 2006 comments and 2021 ‘pictures’ as reference points each group carried out a SWOB (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Barriers) analysis of Wellingborough using a prepared template to identify key actions that must be taken to deliver their 2021 picture. Table 7.0 presents the composite SWOB analysis. There was generally a high degree of overlap between each group’s analyses, but with some individual points also being made. Between them the four groups identified 15 town wide strengths, 16 weaknesses, 21 opportunities and 19 barriers. It is noticeable that several items appear in more than one table. The main themes that developed through the S.W.O.B analysis are summarised after tables 7.0 to 10.0 below.

Table 7.0 Identified Strengths & regional, sub regional and town scale actions.	
Strengths	Proposed actions
S1. Connectivity, links and communications - road and rail. 4 airports within 1 hour. A14. A45. Cycleways. Broadband. Near London 52 minutes by train. Eurohub, Walkability.	More walking, cycling /buses. Strengthen the east/west links (e.g. to Milton Keynes). Improve A45. Development around the station. Permeability through the town. Better public transport. A14; Isham bypass/improvements. Make sure the growth areas are connected. Provide up front infrastructure. More trains/bigger.
S2. Some of [the] architecture & buildings	Protect existing buildings and conservation areas in villages. Redevelop eyesores. [Produce] design codes.
S3. The green infrastructure, environment and ecology i) Corridors (green) Ise; Nene. ii) Surrounding countryside, woodland and villages. iii) Country parks/nature reserves iv) Leisure facilities e.g. golf club.	Enhance existing – River Nene Regional Park project & Ise valley park. Promote cycle paths. Stewardship and sustainability to manage green space at a high standard with financial arrangements. Connect up green spaces.
S4. Tresham College	New buildings in Wellingborough.
S5. Diverse faith communities. Cultural diversity.	More money to voluntary groups SLA etc.

Table 7.0 Identified Strengths & regional, sub regional and town scale actions....continued	
S6. Warehousing	
S7. Low unemployment	
S8. People	Building skill levels. Raise aspirations. Involve everyone in decisions
S9. Tree lined streets	
S10. Parks and open spaces – landscape	
S11. Low crime	
S12. New leisure facilities	
S13. Built and green diversity	
S14. culture i) Theatre ii) Heritage/civic trust	Promote free access. Funding public and private – identifying culture and strategy. Improve access and amenity.
S15. Diverse economic base.	

Table 8.0 Identified Weaknesses & regional, sub regional and town scale actions.	
Weaknesses	Proposed actions
W1. Congestion of road network A14 - A45	Improve capacity. Reduce demand.
W2. Low aspirations. Poor [and] restricted skills/jobs pool.	[Develop a] strategy with colleges, employers and council. [Secure] resources.
W3. Limited job opportunities/earning power.	Attract new employers. Make land available.
W4. Tatty town centre – poor retail/not enough. Poor legibility.	Promote larger floor areas.
W5. Exporting to outside Universities.	
W6. No hospital/health facilities.	
W7. Competing with other centres	
W8. Poorly planned estates.	
W9. Imbalance of distribution vs. other employment.	
W10. Poor work environments.	
W11. Swansgate.	
W12. Lack of higher education.	
W13. Standards and availability of secondary education.	
W14. Quality [of] leisure/recreation.	
W15. Gateways to the town [are] poor (visually).	
W16. Access to countryside.	

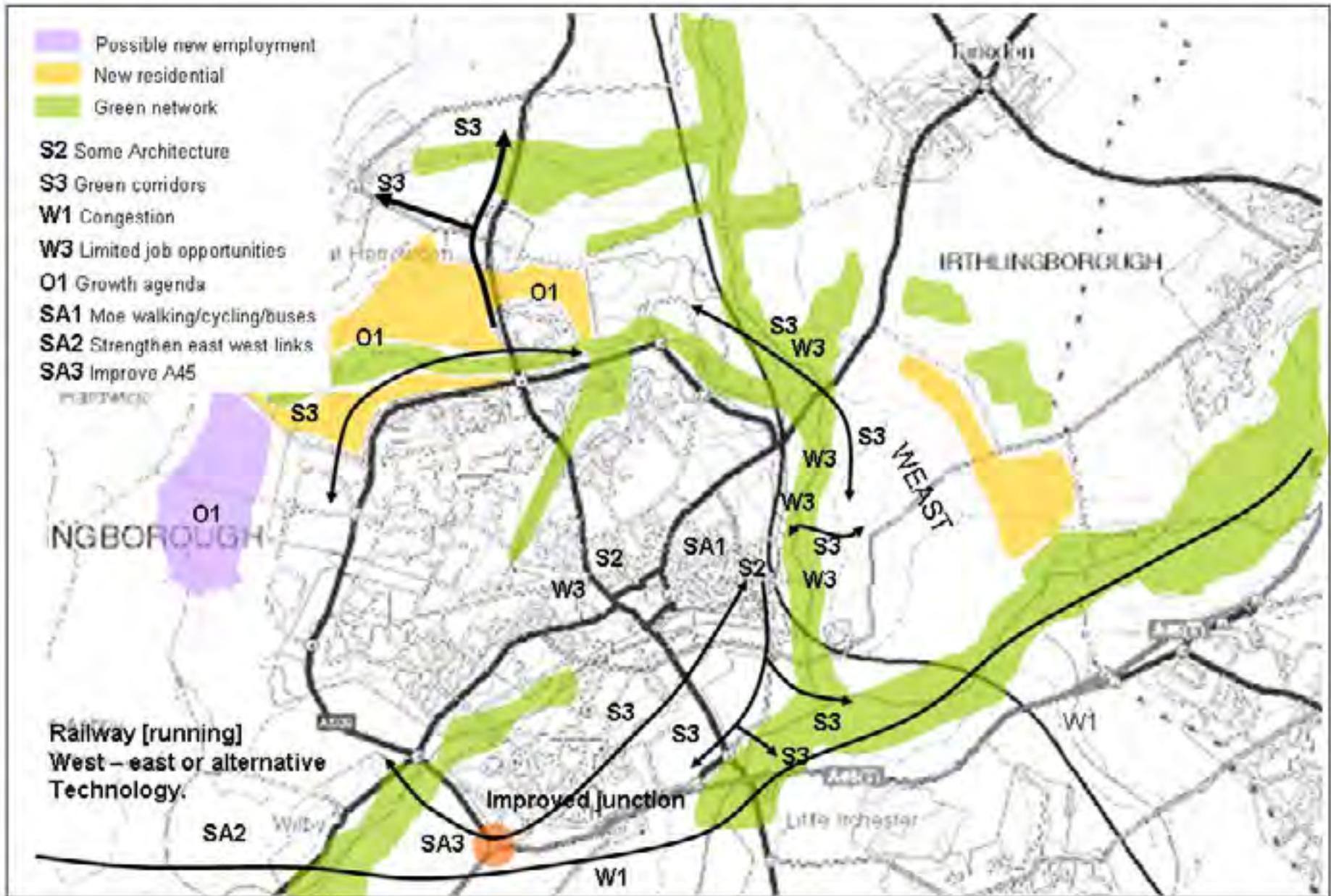
Table 9.0 Identified Opportunities & regional, sub regional and town scale actions.	
Opportunities	Proposed actions
O1. Growth agenda and money (Government).	Demonstrate value for money. Better bids. Better Partnerships. Take local people with us.
O2. Delivery vehicle. North Northants Development Company.	Ensure that it promotes Wellingborough's case.
O3. Joint planning arrangements.	
O4. Maintain public support for growth.	Education of public to make connections. Valuing people's opinion.
O5. Getting high skills/education/technical	Better further/higher education [with] skills focused on desired jobs
O6. Being distinct. Raise the profile of the area.	Unique selling point = knowledge industry
O7. Improve public realm/urban design	
O8. Town centre and growth areas [offer] development opportunities.	Quality retail, leisure, entertainment & culture (castle). Pull the outside of the Swansgate Centre down. [Enhance] the town centre to station link.
O9. More footfall in the town centre. Regenerate the Town centre.	Redevelop/expand the town centre.
O10. Variety of employment. Wider range of jobs.	
O11. Attract high skill employment space/opportunities = University	
O12. To provide more employment space	
O13. Providing leisure facilities.	
O14. Oxford – Cambridge Arc.	
O15. Nene/Ise valley.	
O16. Bridging the railway/river.	[Can] provide a gateway.
O17 Redevelop brown field sites	
O18. Rectify planning mistakes.	
O19. Remove development from the floodplain.	
O20. Improvements to quality of life based on a stronger economy.	Develop a knowledge economy. Innovation centre. Station Island as a potential employment area with rail links.
O21. High quality new development – sustainability.	Urban design.

Table 10.0 Identified Barriers & regional, sub regional and town scale actions.	
Barriers	Proposed actions
B1. Inertia	
B2. Low aspirations and ambition.	
B3. Competition from neighbouring authorities	
B4. Having it imposed by central Government – causing resentment.	
B5. Infrastructure and investment – funding and timing.	Build on existing and committed. Better co-ordination at Government level.
B6. Population size (barrier to growth).	
B7. Perception of crime.	
B8. Lack of investment.	
B9. Lack of training facilities	
B10. Natural environment.	
B11. Railway.	
B12. [Lack of] Utilities.	
B.13. Fear of change	
B.14. Limitations to growth	
B.15. Lack of leadership.	
B16. Low educational standards.	
B17. Poor town planning in the past.	
B18. Lack of confidence.	
B19. Non-coalescence.	Landscape and visual assessment to form the phasing strategy and extent of growth.

Analysis of the participant's S.W.O.B sheets shows a high level of agreement on most issues contained in the S.W.O.B analysis with several themes developing. It must be remembered that this SWOB analysis was used to identify issues in relation to delivering the aspiration of Wellingborough being a regionally important town by 2021.

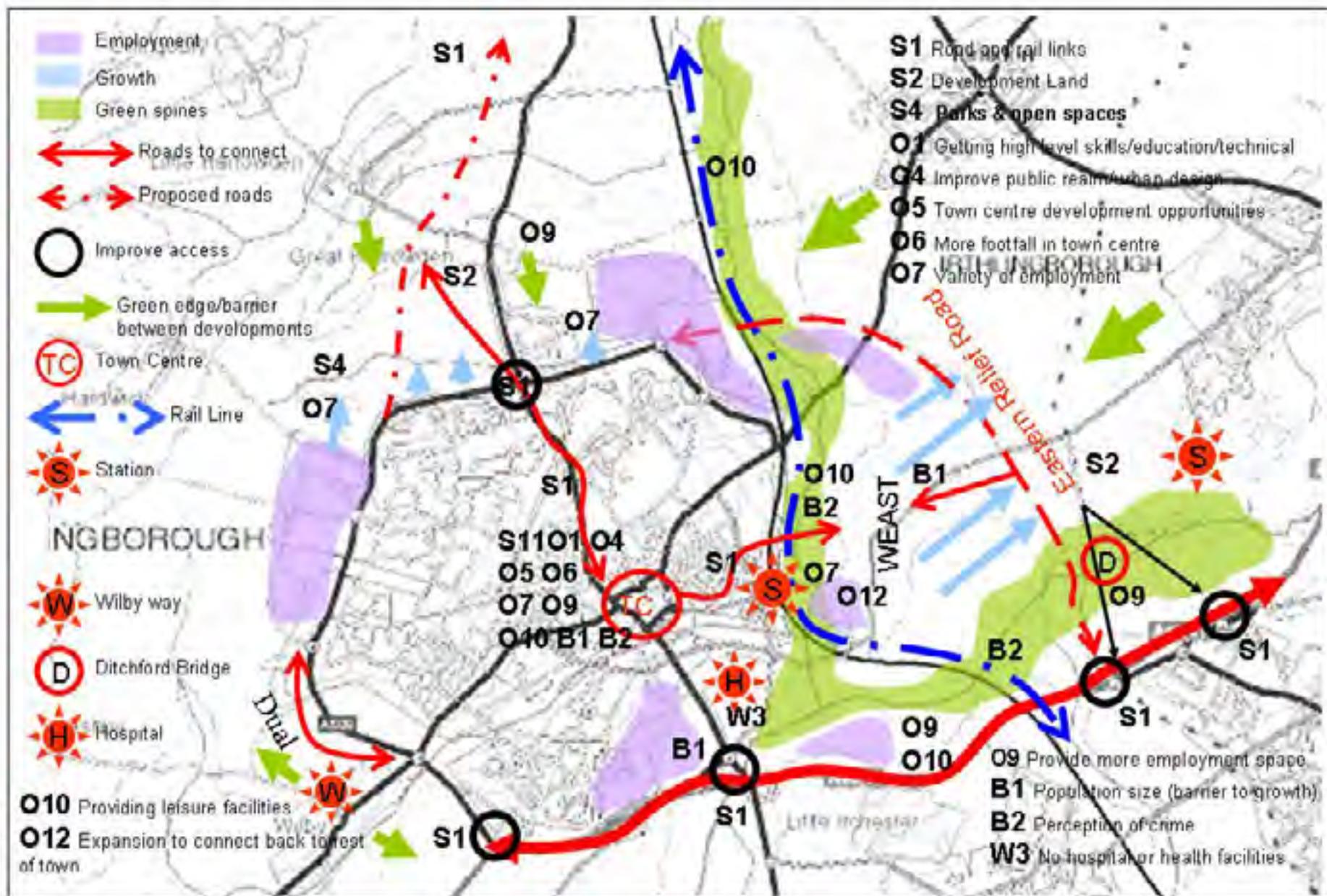
- 1. The main strengths to be built on are seen as:**
 - i) the physical features of Wellingborough's geographical location and position as a well connected place– rail and road connections, proximity to air ports etc.**
 - ii) Green infrastructure, landscape, open spaces and the proximity of countryside.**
 - iii) Selected historical and heritage features.**
- 2. Major weaknesses to be addressed are concerned with poor physical fabric, low expectation, low skill levels and economic base:**
 - i) poor quality of existing facilities and congested infrastructure;**
 - ii) low level of aspiration, confidence and expectation of both local people and other stakeholders;**
 - iii) low educational and jobs skills standards.**
- 3. In terms of opportunities offered the overall impression is that although the growth has been imposed externally it does offer opportunities to address the weaknesses listed above. The most concise phrasing is that of group D when they write that a key opportunity is to deliver “improvements to [people's] quality of life based on a stronger economy”. A key point discussed briefly at the workshop as a means of focusing on the positive aspects of this imposed growth, was the notion of stakeholders asking “what's in it for us?”**
- 4. Main barriers to be overcome are principally concerned with issues of perception, aspiration and leadership. There is a need to raise the aspiration of local people and other stakeholders by illustrating possibilities for new developments with examples from elsewhere. A theme that reoccurs is that of leadership. This was discussed at the workshop in relation to both personal leadership but also in terms of leadership by aspiration. The clear definition of Wellingborough's role in 2021 is crucial in achieving this leadership by aspiration by providing a coordinating focus for development.**

2.4 Constructing a Role Delivery Plan(s) for Wellingborough 2021. Having identified key delivery actions each group was then asked to annotate a large-scale base map to produce a geographical action plan. This illustrates the spatial aspects of the identified actions. This resulted in the production by the workshop groups of a range of draft growth models for Wellingborough or an initial 'Role Delivery Plan showing the geographical scope, content and capacity of growth that local stakeholders agree is necessary to deliver their aspirations for Wellingborough's role in 2021. The four role delivery plans are presented in figures 1.0 to 4.0 below.



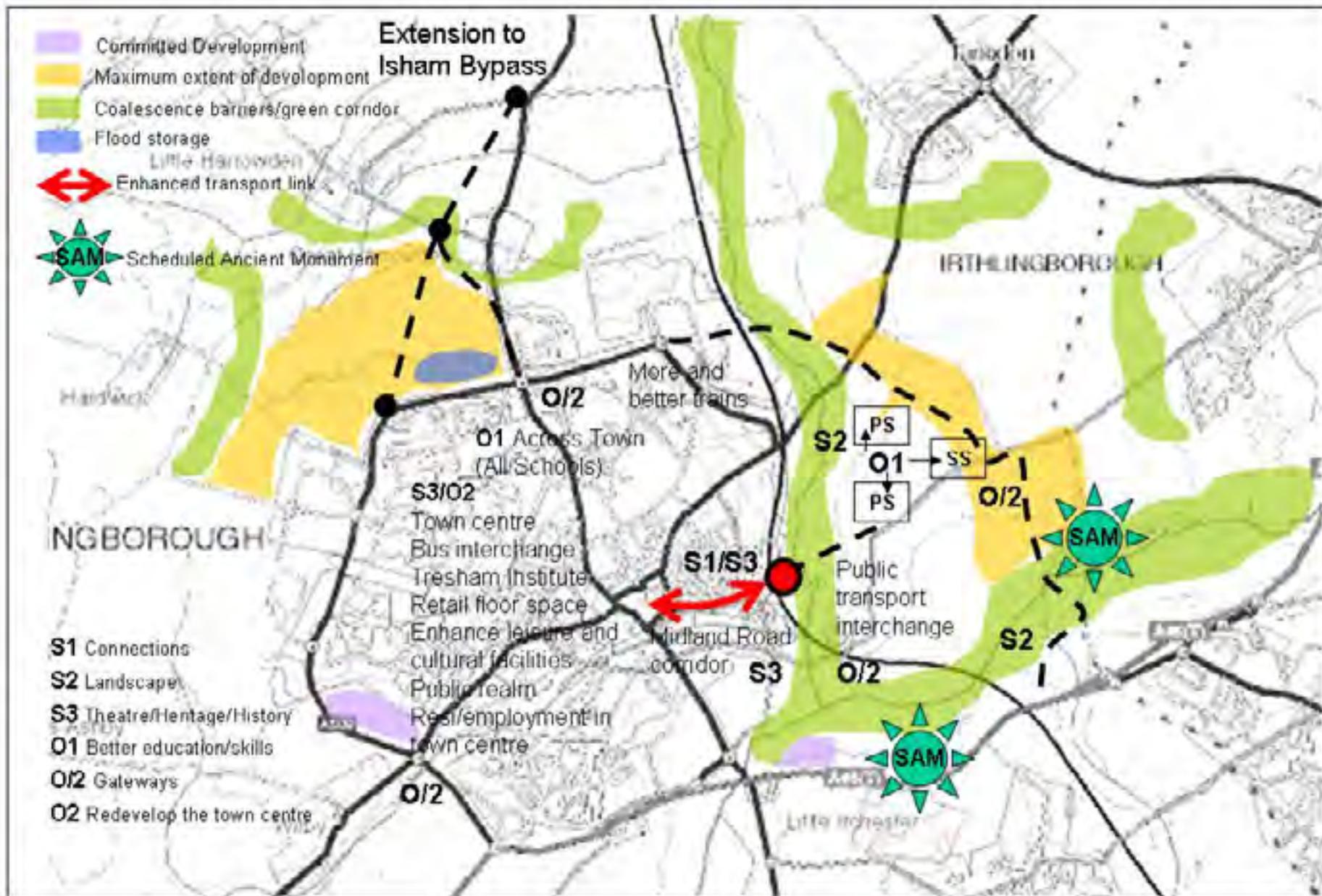
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Figure 1.0. Group A: Initial Role delivery plan



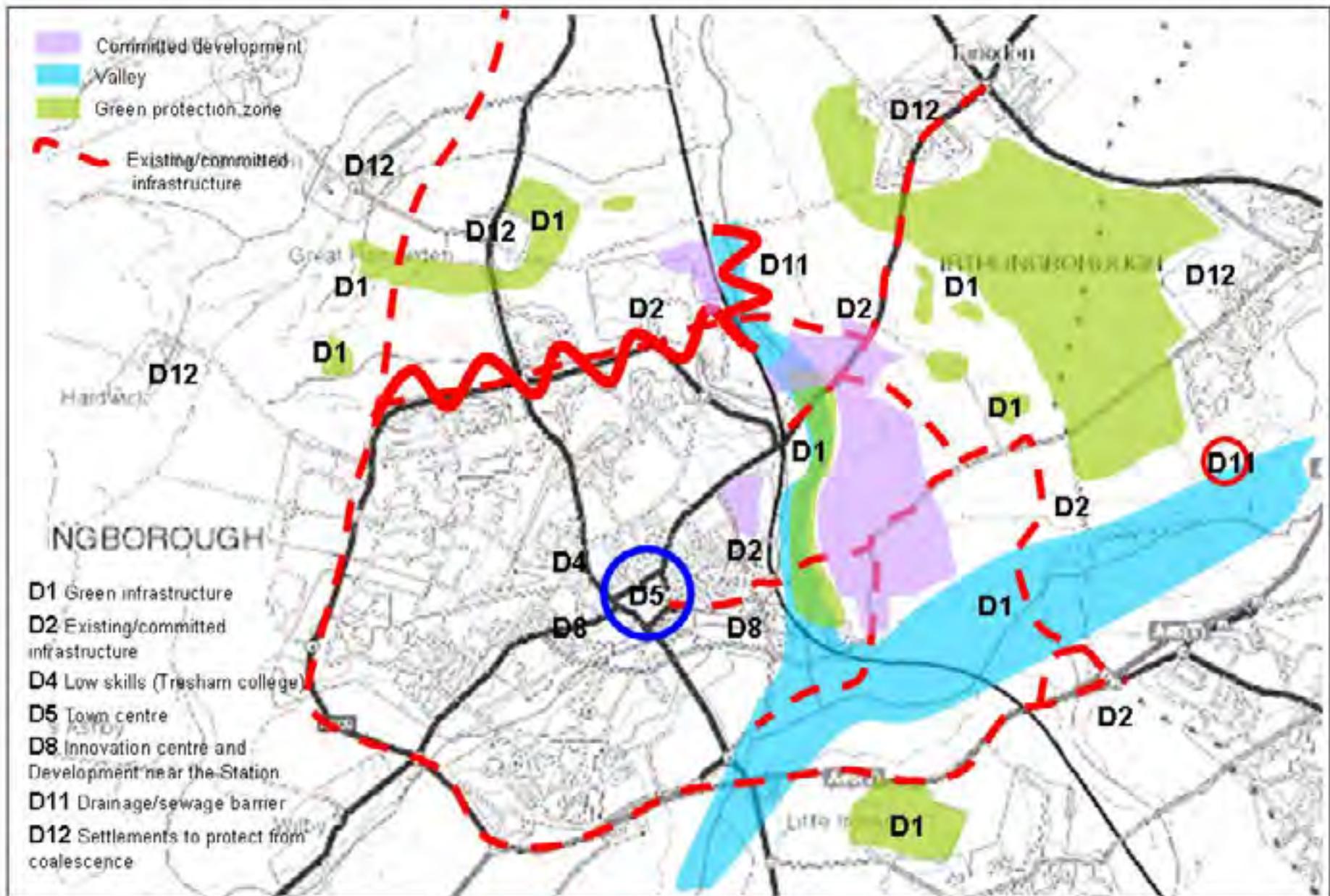
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Figure 2.0. Group B: Initial Role delivery plan



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Figure 3.0. Group C: Initial Role delivery plan



Not to Scale

Figure 4.0. Group D: Initial Role delivery plan

The symbols used on the plans are taken from the original material. The codes used e.g. **S1** are taken from the original material and refer to items included on each groups individual SWOB analysis sheets.

The role delivery plans show the spatial, physical aspects of the SWOB analysis and illustrate four variations on a series of common themes:

- **they all highlight the importance of the towns' existing green infrastructure;**
- **they all include details of improved cross town and around town circulation;**
- **they all highlight the need to improve the link between the station and town centre;**
- **regeneration of the town centre is a common theme**

In terms of delivering the aspiration of Wellingborough being of regional importance most of the suggestions incorporate in the plans are basic general infrastructure improvements but are not likely to have regional impact other than by providing a good basic framework for eye-catching development to take place within. In terms of actions that might have regional impact two proposals are made:

- **group A propose the development of an east-west rail line;**
- **group D propose an innovation centre – although the content of the centre is not given.**

The initial role delivery plans record basic spatial improvement actions rather than actions that will meet the aspiration of Wellingborough achieving regional importance by 2021. The exercises undertaken on days two and three will add to these initial plans by focusing on specific issues to the east and north of Wellingborough.