

# MASTER PLANNING

We enjoy working at the point of overlap between differing scales, uses and communities. This 'negotiated space' provides fertile ground for design interventions that can act as agents for change within an area. From a small public space to a complex masterplan, a thorough understanding of the physical and social context is the starting point, and in each case our approach is collaborative, innovative and strategic. We have developed a number of proposed schemes working across the fields of architecture, urban design and landscape, often testing ideas evolved through our research and practice engagement with urban agriculture and social and environmental sustainability.

## 'Woodland Services' Ideas Review - Chawston Bedfordshire

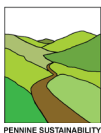


The Woodland Services Ideas Review proposes a radical rethink of the generic service station model along sustainable lines. The intention is to create an exemplar that others might follow and to provide an alternative vision for service stations of the future. Against a backdrop of rising fuel prices and climate change, architects and developers are having to rethink accepted building typologies. The motorway service station cannot remain immune from this process and indeed the current Government Review of planning policy surrounding the strategic road network suggests that planning rules might be eased - an opportunity for alternative service station models perhaps to challenge the monopoly of the likes of Moto, Roadchef and Welcome Break.

The starting point for the study was an analysis of the existing industry standard and alternative models in the form of the renowned South Mimms services and the lesser known but award winning family run Tebay services in Westmorland. Self-proclaimed 'World's finest Motorway Area', South Mimms has been immortalised in books such as 'Destination Nowhere', by Roger Green. Deemed by Government regulations as 'stopovers', i.e., not places in their own right, the likes of South Mimms are the archetypal 'non place'. All reference to people and place is excluded by a generic landscape of logos, harsh lighting, garish colours and slot machines.

Tebay Services suggests an alternative model, whereby the service station provides a platform for the local community to reach a national audience. In addition, the site very much embeds itself within the landscape, providing a more authentic and refreshing visitor experience than that offered by the likes of South Mimms.

Woodland Services would take Tebay as a starting point, with facilities including a farm shop and exhibition/workshop space for local businesses and artists plus improved facilities for families and children, such as a play cafe, with externally accessed showers/welfare area for tired motorists. Recharge stations, along with on site energy generation would be a highly visible feature of the scheme, but an approach that prioritises local, natural and sustainable principles would be paramount. The architecture is conceived as an adaptable 'kit of parts' that might be arranged to suit a number of landscapes and settings.



### Key Details

Architect: Pennine Sustainability

Proposal Completed: 2013 (Idea developed with Social Enterprise Organisation Shadows in Green)