

# Cowbridge

# PLACEMAKING PLAN

June 2025



Creu Lleuedd Cymru  
Placemaking Wales

Llofnodydd y Siarter Charter Signatory



Trawsnewid Trefi  
Transforming Towns



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Engagement & Consultation



# Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b>	INTRODUCTION TO THE PLACEMAKING PLAN PROCESS	6
<b>Chapter 2</b>	PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT	10
<b>Chapter 3</b>	COWBRIDGE IN CONTEXT	14
<b>Chapter 4</b>	COWBRIDGE TODAY	18
<b>Chapter 5</b>	VISION AND OBJECTIVES	32
<b>Chapter 6</b>	HOW DO WE GET THERE?	36
<b>Chapter 7</b>	MAKING IT HAPPEN	58
<b>Appendix</b>		64



# Foreword

## A Warm Welcome from the Former Mayor

On behalf of Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council, I am delighted to present our Placemaking Plan, the culmination of nearly two years work in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Cowbridge, granted its first charter in 1254, boasts a rich history deeply woven into the fabric of our community and this is reflected in the Plan.

This Plan, born from extensive consultation with residents, businesses, and community groups, reflects a shared vision for Cowbridge's future. It outlines a roadmap for enhancing our town, embracing the 21st century while safeguarding our cherished past.

We aim to create a thriving and vibrant community where everyone feels welcome and included. Our vision encompasses a thriving high street, enhanced green spaces, improved infrastructure, and a focus on sustainability and well-being.

This plan is not just a document; it's a blueprint for action. We invite you to join us in shaping the future of Cowbridge, a place where history and modernity coexist, creating a vibrant and welcoming community for all.

**Heather Weddell**

Cllr Heather Weddell

Former Mayor of Cowbridge (Ancient Borough) with Llanblethian Town Council



*Heather passed away on the 12th May 2025 so, it is with both profound sadness and immense gratitude that we present this Placemaking Plan. Our late Mayor's passion for Cowbridge with Llanblethian deeply inspired its creation, and though she is no longer with us, her spirit of community and progress will forever be woven into its pages.*



# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PLACEMAKING PLAN PROCESS





# Introduction

## Purpose of the Placemaking Plan

The Vale of Glamorgan Council (VoGC), in partnership with the Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council (Town Council), have commissioned a multi-disciplinary team to prepare this Placemaking Plan for Cowbridge town centre. The team is led by SLR Consulting and supported by ThinkingPlace.

The overall aim of the Placemaking Plan for Cowbridge is to guide future investment in the town. The plan has been informed by a comprehensive stakeholder and community engagement process, as well as design advice from the consultant team.

The Cowbridge Placemaking Plan builds upon the current strengths and opportunities of the town and its neighbouring communities, and creates a series of projects that respond to a variety of opportunities. The Placemaking Plan will be used to guide future investment in Cowbridge in a cohesive manner, and may be used to develop emerging planning policy and guidance. A clear action plan is provided which identifies priority actions across short, medium and long term time frames.

## How the Placemaking Plan has Developed

VoGC’s Creative Communities team and Town Council, have held a comprehensive programme of engagement to make sure that the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan is informed by the views and needs of local people and those who use the town centre. Working in collaboration with the consultant team this information has been analysed and supplemented with on-site analysis and meetings with Council Officers and stakeholders.

As a result, the Placemaking Plan has created a vision and objectives for Cowbridge that address key themes which have arisen from this thorough engagement process.

The Vision for Cowbridge sets a bold and exciting target for the future of Cowbridge, supported by 5 key objectives. These objectives respond directly to specific issues from the community engagement feedback and baseline analysis, and correspond with 5 specific opportunity areas and town wide projects which will have clear and targeted impacts.

## Placemaking Plan Timeframe

The Cowbridge Placemaking Plan has a proposed timeframe of 10+ years up to and beyond 2034. Within this timeframe, it is hoped the Placemaking Plan can support and facilitate the delivery of ‘quick win’ projects which can be delivered within the context of current available funding, but also progress and support those more complex, longer term projects which will require further study and assessment. VoGC and Town Council will continue to review the Placemaking Plan over the course of its lifetime, responding and adapting to changing circumstances but also capturing new opportunities as they arise.



# Introduction

## Placemaking Charter Wales

In September 2020, the Placemaking Wales Charter was launched by the Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales, in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership.

In May 2023 the VoGC became a signatory to the Placemaking Charter Wales and it was agreed that the VoGC would apply for Welsh Government funding to prepare Placemaking Plans for each town in the Vale. The Town Council adopted the Charter in October 2023.

**The Charter builds on strengthening the focus of Placemaking in policy and practice in Wales and aims to provide a common understanding of the range of considerations that go into placemaking. The charter outlines six placemaking principles that cover the range of considerations that contribute to establishing and maintaining good places.**

In signing the Charter, the VoGC agrees to support placemaking in the planning, design and management of new and existing places. In support of this, the 6 principles of the Placemaking Guide, create the foundation for the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan to drive forward the potential projects suggested later in this document.

The principles set out in the Charter are detailed below:

- **People and community** - The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.
- **Location** - Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment, leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.
- **Movement** - Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network, and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.
- **Mix of uses** - Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.
- **Public realm** - Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.
- **Identity** - The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location, including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes, are identified and responded to.



## The Study Area

The Placemaking Plan focuses on the town centre area, which includes Westgate, High Street and Eastgate. Within these extents includes areas to the north around Bear Field and North Road, the Town Hall as well as areas to the south at Police Field, the Former Livestock Market and Old Hall.

More widely, it also considers the relationships between the town centre and the wider town, as well as surrounding villages. It looks to better integrate new developments such as Clare Garden Village with the town centre, but also acknowledges the importance of Cowbridge as a service hub for the surrounding hinterland villages, particularly those to the west and north of the town and does, where possible, identify projects that better support and capitalise upon these wider influences.



## Study Area



# Chapter 2

## PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT





# Participation and Engagement

## Summary of Engagement and Consultation

The VoGC's Creative Communities team together with the Town Council have undertaken considerable community mapping over several months to understand local stakeholder and community members views and aspirations for Cowbridge. The community mapping exercise included pop-up events, focus groups, school visits, conversations with businesses and an online survey via Placemaking | Participate Vale ([valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)).

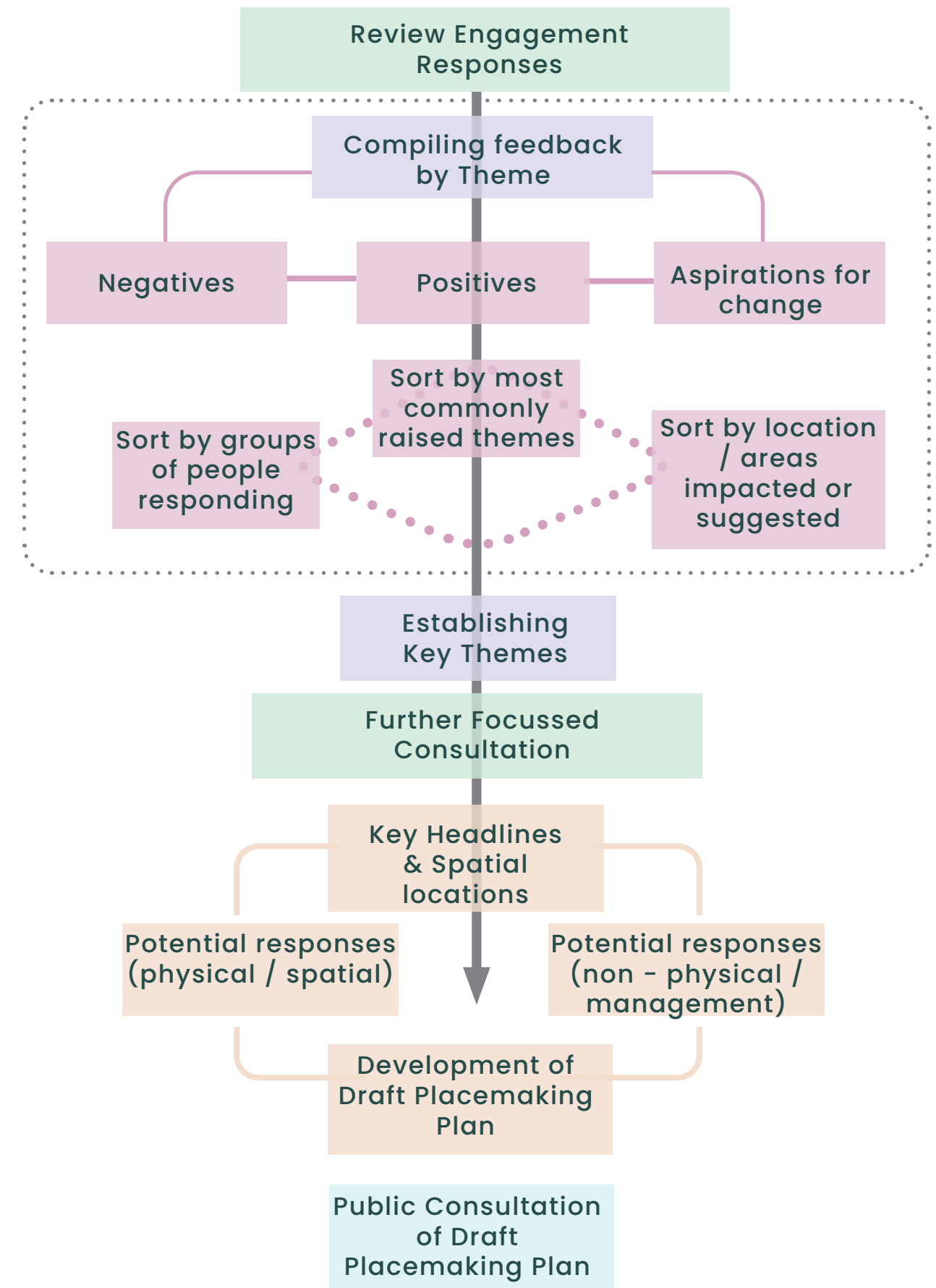
This was followed by more targeted engagement by the consultants to sense check and delve more deeply into the feedback gathered through in-person and online meetings with the Town Council, online meetings with key stakeholders and relevant VoG Officers. Further engagement was also undertaken by the Council with businesses and school pupils.

The aim of the consultation process was to encourage people to share their experiences of Cowbridge, to establish a picture of how the town functions on day-to-day basis and how the local and surrounding communities interact with the place.

The engagement feedback has provided the team with an excellent insight into the needs, wants and aspirations of the local community, which will be used as the evidence on which the Placemaking Plan's opportunity areas and proposals are based in the following chapters. The areas for intervention and projects detailed later in this plan are informed by comments made and ideas suggested by community members and stakeholders.

Engagement events have included:

- **Community pop up events**
- **One to one sessions with local businesses**
- **School visits**
- **Online teams sessions with Town Council members**
- **Town walk around with Town Council Members**
- **Town walk around with VoGC teams**
- **Online session with Charter Trust**
- **Online sessions with Vale of Glamorgan Council teams**
- **Questionnaires circulated to local businesses**
- **Website feedback**



# Participation and Engagement

## Emerging Local Priorities



### Strengths

- Lucky to have so many independent shops along High Street
- Plenty of occupied shops along High Street
- Pride in the historic environment and appreciation for Physic and Old Hall gardens
- Great walking trails around Cowbridge
- Lots of festivals to bring the community together
- Community spirit in the town is strong
- Lots of sports opportunities at the Leisure centre and surrounding spaces such as the Rugby club and playing fields
- Good offer of local facilities such as pharmacies, leisure centre
- Cowbridge residents take pride in the aesthetic of the town, so there is a strong pride of place
- Local residents feel the area is quiet and safe with local amenities a short walk away
- Location of the town is appreciated by residents, its close to neighbouring villages, the coast and not too far from Cardiff
- Appreciation of the towns rural location, with emphasis on the value of green spaces for wellbeing and recreation



### Weaknesses

- Poor accessibility with small streets, narrow pavements and wobbly slabs.
- Too many cars parked on side streets and on High Street
- Shops and parking along High Street are all seen as too expensive.
- Litter in the streets and local parks and not enough bins
- The town doesn't feel bike friendly, with no bike lanes or paths
- Not enough spaces for families
- There is little to no space for children ages 10 and up to play. Current play spaces cater for younger children
- Poor digital connectivity, the town needs better connections to 4G and 5G services
- Public facilities are limited - not enough public toilets for example
- No swimming pool in the local leisure centre
- No space for gymnastics or dance outside
- Some pathways don't feel safe for children to walk along on their own
- The history of the town could be better advertised
- The town needs more competition in terms of supermarkets
- No cinema in the town centre



### Opportunities

- To celebrate the independent nature of the town both in terms of spirit and businesses/organisation
- Promote and grow the strong sense of community as seen by the various groups
- Use the location and setting to promote health and well-being for residents and visitors alike
- Focus on being a destination for a wider area both through the promotion of the town and the facilities it provides
- Package up opportunities for visitors and residents to create a stronger liveability and visit proposition
- Introduce quality dwell places within the town for people to meet up and spend time together increasing footfall
- Creating multi use event space in the centre and an enhanced events programme to encourage footfall
- Ensure that any new developments and residents are part of the fabric of the town and value and maintain its sense of place
- Don't lose that special sense of place and identity, a bit upmarket and not afraid of being different
- Develop spaces that allow people, especially youth to gather. Suggestions include kids Parkrun, youth clubs and public free-use spaces
- Foster more art and creative projects, potentially including an arts community centre similar to Chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff
- Improve food and drink offerings to create more social opportunities similar to nearby towns like Penarth
- Desire for improved walking and cycling routes connecting to neighbouring communities

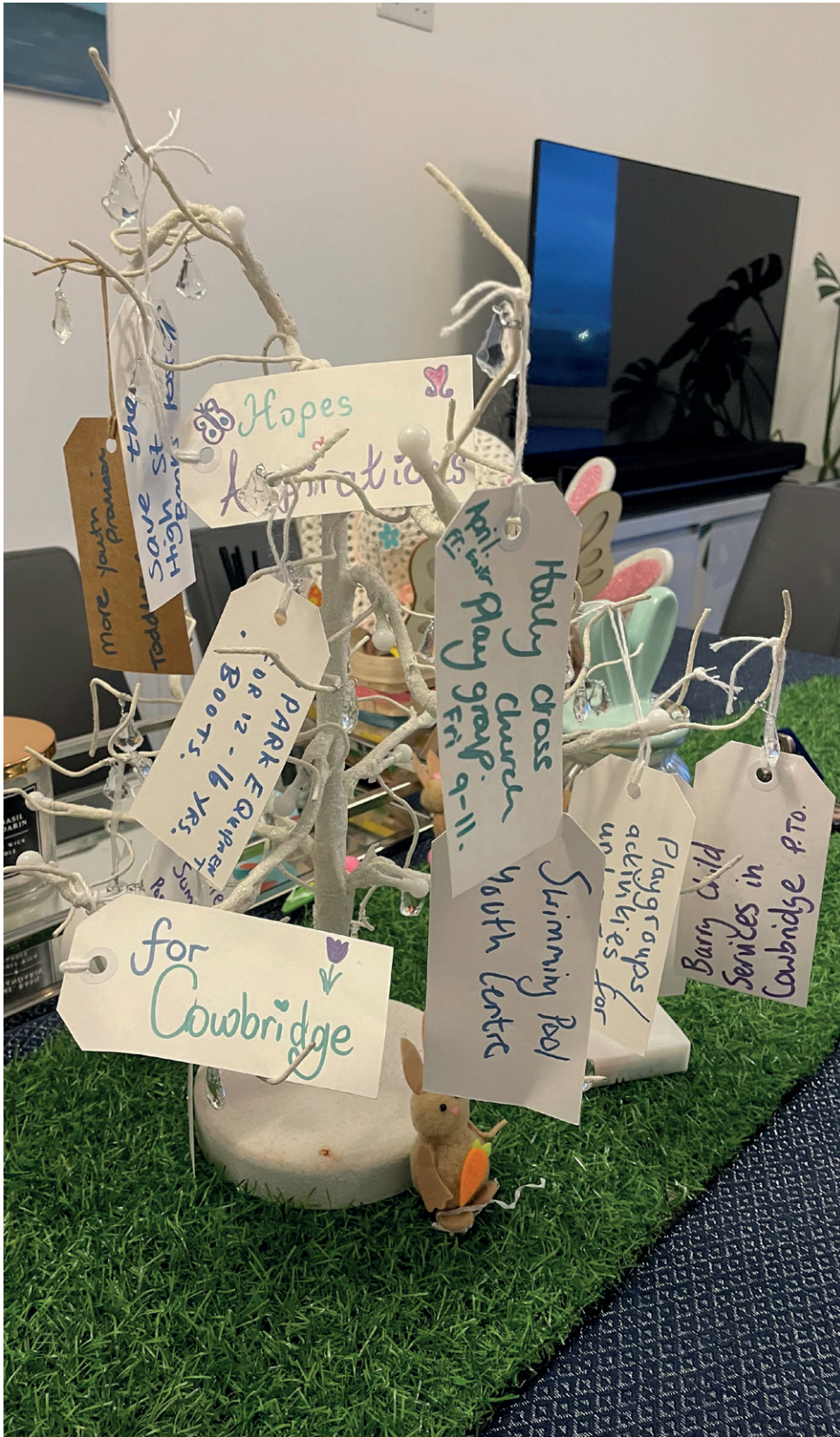


The feedback from the engagement has been analysed and key words or phrases highlighted, which allowed particular themes to emerge. The themes were informed by the prevalence of words and descriptions, ensuring that feedback would be captured within a broader theme.

The main themes that have emerged out of the likes, dislikes, and hopes for Cowbridge, will be used to inform future change and interventions for Cowbridge. These include:

- **Public Realm Improvements**
- **Better Local Facilities**
- **Safety and Security**
- **Sustainability**
- **Infrastructure Improvements**
- **Local Community Pride**
- **Heritage and Character**
- **Supporting Local Economic Growth**

Further detail on the emerging themes can be found in Appendix A.



## HAVE YOUR SAY!

MONDAY 26th FEBRUARY  
THE HORSE & CROOK  
COWBRIDGE  
17.30 TO 20.00

MONDAY 4th MARCH  
THE BUREL  
COWBRIDGE  
17.30 TO 20.00

MONDAY 11th MARCH  
FARMERS BARN  
ABERTHUN  
17.30 TO 20.00

**INFLUENCE THE FUTURE OF YOUR TOWN**

COME ALONG TO ONE OF THESE COMMUNITY DROP-IN EVENTS AND MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE PLACEMAKING PLAN CURRENTLY BEING DEVELOPED THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL AND THE COWBRIDGE WITH LLANBLETHIAN TOWN COUNCIL.

CREATE@VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK

MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE PLACEMAKING PLAN, ALONG WITH A SHORT SURVEY CAN BE FOUND BY SCANNING THE QR CODE.

WWW.PARTICIPATE.VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK/PLACEMAKING-COWBRIDGE

### Creu Lleodedd yn y Bont-faen – Dweud Eich Dweud

Mae'r Cyngor Tref a Chyngor Bro Morgannwg yn awyddus i glywed eich barn i lunio dyfodol y dref am y degawd nesaf. Dilynwch y dolenni neu'r codau QR isod i gael gwybod mwy a chwblhau arolwg.

Yr arolwg i gau ar 25 Mawrth!

### Placemaking Cowbridge – Have Your Say

The Town Council and the Vale of Glamorgan want your views, to shape the future of the Town for the next decade. Follow the links or QR codes below to find out more and complete a survey.

Survey to close on 25th March!

http://tiny.cc/creulleoeddybont-faen

Cymru

http://tiny.cc/placemakingcowbridge

English



# Chapter 3

## Cowbridge IN CONTEXT





# Cowbridge in Context

## Planning Policy Context

There are a number of existing plans, strategies and policies which have guided the production process and outcomes for the placemaking plan. These range from national to local policy and have been summarised below however further detail is provided in Appendix B.

### Placemaking in Wales

The policies listed below set out key placemaking principles, examples and outcomes, which have been used to structure the placemaking plan itself, introduce talking points during consultation and guide prioritisation of different interventions.

- Planning Policy Wales (PPW) - Edition 12, 2024
- Placemaking Guide, 2020

### Other Sources of Guidance

The Placemaking Plan also draws on a range of other studies and strategic statements including:

- Regenerating Town Centres in Wales, Audit Wales (2021)
- A vision for Welsh towns, Federation of Small Businesses (2022)
- Small towns, big issues: Aligning business models, organisation and imagination, Welsh Government /Foundational Economic Research (2021)

### Sustainability

Alongside Placemaking, sustainable regeneration and creating sustainable development is a key driver for change in Cowbridge. The following policies are relevant to the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Project Zero Vale of Glamorgan Council's Climate Change Plan 2021-30

### Wales National Policy

Future Wales - The National Plan 2040, 2021

This framework, published by the Welsh Government in 2021, plans for the change and development Wales will need over the next two decades and influences significant areas of Council activity. It identifies 11 overarching ambitions based on the national planning principles and national sustainable placemaking outcomes set out in Planning Policy Wales.

Of relevance to Cowbridge are the following policies:

- Policy 2 - Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration - Strategic Placemaking
- Policy 3 - Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration - Public Sector Leadership
- Policy 6 - Town Centre First
- Policy 9 - Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure
- Policy 10 - International Connectivity
- Policy 11 - National Connectivity
- Policy 12 - Regional Connectivity
- Policy 36 - South East Metro

### Regional Policy

- Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

The Vale of Glamorgan is one of the ten authorities which make up the Cardiff Capital Region. It is the largest city-region in Wales and accounts for approximately 50% of the total economic output of the Welsh economy, 49% of total employment and has over 38,000 active businesses.

### Local Policy

- The Corporate Plan, Vale 2030 Strong Communities with a Bright Future
- Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026

Within the LDP, additional policies which are relevant to the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan include:

- Policy SP7 - Transportation
- Policy SP11 - Tourism and Leisure
- Policy MG2 - Housing Allocations

*At the time of writing, VoGC are currently preparing a RLDP.*

- Cowbridge with Llanblethian Conservation Area: Appraisal and Management Plan, 2010



The 7 well-being goals defined in the Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Credit: Welsh Government

# Cowbridge in Context

## Regional Context

### Location and Connections

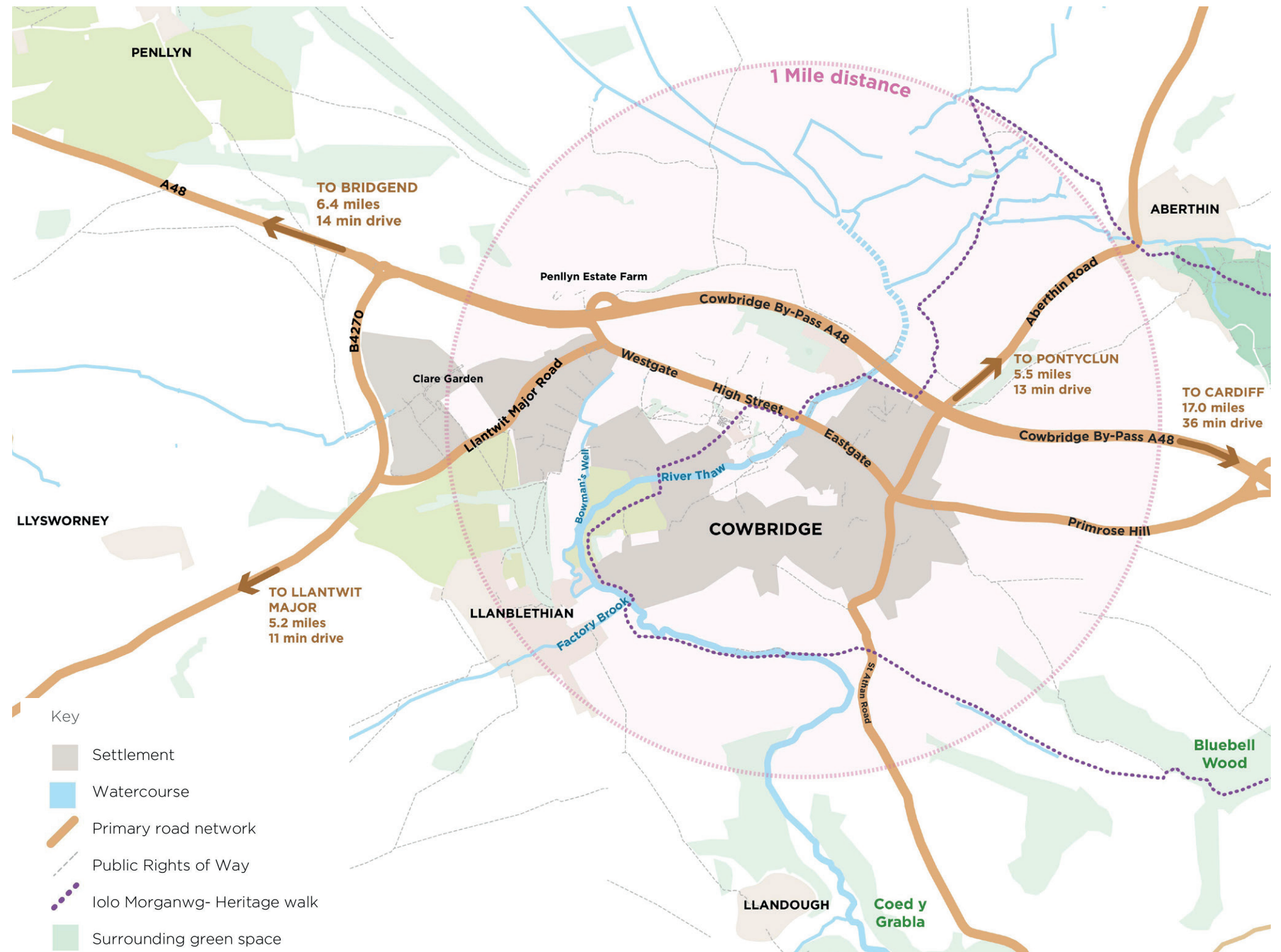
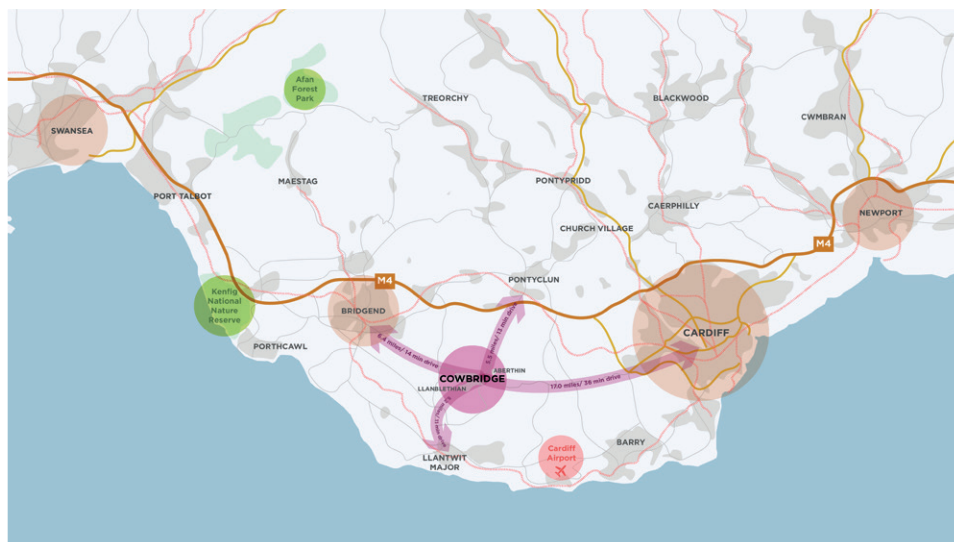
**Cowbridge is an ancient town located at the centre of the Vale of Glamorgan in the South East Region of Wales, which is the most populous region in Wales with over 1.5 million residents.**

The town is located on the A48 and is 17 miles from the capital city of Cardiff. The Vale of Glamorgan falls within the 'Cardiff Capital Region', an area driving major economic growth within Wales and identified as a key area where people want to live and work.

From Cowbridge, there is easy access to the M4, London by rail is 2 hours away from Cardiff, and Cardiff International Airport is just a 20 minute drive; it's secluded but connected.

The town is around 7 miles from the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, which is made up of 14 miles of natural coastline with beaches, dramatic cliff tops gardens and castles.

More locally, Cowbridge acts as an important local hub for neighbouring villages such as Llanblethian, Aberthyn, Llysworney and Penllyn offering key services such as health, education and retail.





# Cowbridge in Context

## Historic Context

Cowbridge is one of the oldest towns in Wales, built along an old Roman road. Records from 1254 indicate how plans for 80-90 burgage plots within the town walls were set out by Richard de Clare, on 96 acres of land set aside from his manor at Llanblethian. This has largely shaped the layout and character of the town as it is today.

Through the Medieval and early modern periods, Cowbridge grew as a market and administrative centre with the central area of the town walled in the 13th Century. The former livestock market area at the junction of High Street and The Butts was the focus of life and buildings of note which remain today, include the Duke of Wellington, The Bear Inn, the Mason Arms, the Ancient Druid, 71-73 Eastgate and 38 High Street.

Through the 18th Century, as local industries developed, grander town houses were built along the high street with small businesses, shops and other establishments. The town's importance as a coaching town grew with inns and hostelries thriving on serving this trade. However, the Old Town Hall and parts of the East and West Gates were demolished to better accommodate this increase in traffic from stage coaches.

The historic maps opposite, illustrate development within the town from the 19th Century to the present day. The linear east to west high street remains a prominent feature of the town. New housing estates can be seen to the south of the town on the 1948-1973 map, which were likely developed to accommodate commuters into Cardiff and Bridgend, following the opening of the A48 by-pass in the 1960s.

To the south of Cowbridge, the ruins of St Quentin's/ Llanblethian Castle are located, likely built in the early 14th Century. The castle ruins are a local landmark and key heritage asset within the town.

Cowbridge is a place steeped in history and its sense of place to this day reflects its historic past.

Reproduced with the  
permission of the National  
Library of Scotland

1888-1915



1945-1965



1948-1973





# Chapter 4

## Cowbridge TODAY





# Cowbridge Today

**Cowbridge is a historic town set in the stunning countryside of the Vale of Glamorgan. It's a town with an enviable mix of characterful heritage, a distinctive high street, beautiful historic parks and access to the outdoors. Cowbridge has all the qualities of a quaint, historic Welsh village.**

Today, Cowbridge acts as a service centre for neighbouring villages such as Llanblethian, Aberthin, and beyond, with a destination high street. It is also a visitor destination, boasting picturesque walks, characterful heritage buildings as well as hosting a number of popular events throughout the year, which attract visitors from both within the town, and across the Vale.

This rich mix of experiences and activities means that Cowbridge is a town that is growing, with new residents moving in to the recently delivered Clare Garden Village (with phase 3 of the scheme yet to come) as well as other surrounding planned developments.

The following baseline analysis provides a summary of engagement with Town Council members, desktop studies and an immersive site visit. The analysis covers the themes below, which supports the information gathered through community engagement:

- **People and Community**
- **Access and Movement**
- **Green Assets**
- **Character and Heritage**
- **Land Use and Activity**
- **High Street**
- **Pipeline Projects**



Local businesses on High Street



Cowbridge Town Hall



Cowbridge Physic Garden



Cowbridge Old Hall and Gardens



# Cowbridge Today

## People and Community

Cowbridge is a small town with a population of approximately 6,573 people. The plan opposite shows the key community facilities in the town centre.

Key points of interest include:

- A main shopping area along High Street which hosts a range of shops and services, offering a blend of local independent retailers as well as a Waitrose supermarket located to the south of High Street.
- Civic & community facilities: Cowbridge Town Hall, Library and the Old Hall, located in the centre of the town, which offer a range of community facilities. Local community facilities such as Cowbridge Amateur Dramatics Society (CADS) and Cowbridge Scout Hall are also located just south of High Street.
- Leisure and health facilities: Cowbridge Squash and Cricket Club, Athletics Club and Leisure Centre, located north west of High Street. The Cowbridge and Vale Medical Practice is also located adjacent to the Leisure Centre.
- Green spaces: Bear Field is located to the north of High Street, with Police Field and a large open space around St Quentin's Castle located to the south of High Street.

Key statistical information from the Office for National Statistics shows that Cowbridge deviates from the average on a number of categories, summarised below:

- **Higher population growth:** Census data from 2011 and 2021 show the residential population grew by 6%, which was higher than the proportion of growth in the Vale of Glamorgan area (4.4%) and Wales (1.4%).
- **Lower proportion of younger people:** Lower proportion of residents aged between 16-34 living in Cowbridge (12.9%) compared to the Vale of Glamorgan (20.1%).

- **Higher proportion of older people:** Higher proportion of residents aged between 65-74 in Cowbridge (16.4%) when compared to the Vale of Glamorgan (11.8%).
- **Higher proportion of residents with Level 4 qualifications and above:** 52%, when compared with the wider Vale of Glamorgan (37.3%) and Wales (31.5%).
- **Higher proportion of residents who own their own home:** The data shows that Cowbridge has a significantly higher proportion of residents who own the house that they occupy when compared to the Vale of Glamorgan and Wales as a whole, 82.2%, 71.9% and 66.1% respectively.
- **Higher proportion of households with two or more cars:** In addition to this, a significantly higher proportion of households in Cowbridge have three or more cars or vans, when compared to the Vale of Glamorgan and Wales as a whole, 15.0%, 10.3% and 10.7% respectively. These higher numbers may identify a reliance on car travel, which will be considered in shaping the interventions and actions illustrated later in this Placemaking Plan.
- **Higher proportion work from home:** The data shows that a higher proportion of residents living in Cowbridge work mainly at or from home when compared to the Vale of Glamorgan and Wales as a whole, 45.8%, 34.0% and 25.6% respectively.
- **Affordability:** Statistics highlight that Cowbridge is an affluent area, with high levels of qualifications, home ownership and car ownership and whilst a desirable place to live, the area does come with a higher price tag. This may have an impact on attracting younger people and younger families into the area.
- **Local economy:** Cowbridge is recognised for its retail offer, 57% of the units in the town centre are A1 Shops which is slightly higher than the National Small Towns average of 53%. It also has quite a large visitor economy with 44% of shoppers, counted within the 2014 Towns Alive study, coming into the town from approximately 30 minutes away.

## Community Demographics



Population of  
**6,573**



**33%** of the  
community are  
over age 65



**52%** with Level  
4 qualifications or  
above



**82%** own their  
own home



Source:  
Mid-2020 Population Estimates, ONS  
2011 and 2021 Census Data







# Cowbridge Today

## Access and Movement

Cowbridge has excellent road connections to both Cardiff, Cardiff Airport (10 miles/20 minute drive), and the nearby larger towns of Bridgend (6.4 miles/14 minute drive) and Barry (11 miles/25 minute drive). Cowbridge is also a service centre to its hinterland villages and given the surrounding rural setting as well as noted older demographic and infrequent public transport, the town is predominantly accessed via car. Below summarises the key observations around access and movement in the town, taken from the desktop analysis and site visit:

### Streets and Parking

- The majority of visitors and residents access the town centre via car which has led to the town centre having 90% off street car parking (2014 Towns Alive Study)
- There is a hot spot for traffic congestion at the Town Hall / Waitrose junction
- There are limited safe crossings for pedestrians along Westgate, Eastgate and High Street, with one noted zebra crossing and one signalised crossing on High Street
- There is a convoluted road arrangement behind the Town Hall and the bus station which poses a risk for pedestrians
- There is limited EV charging at present, but proposals for new points are understood to be in motion.

### Walking and Cycling

- There are lots of informal routes from short cuts, such as those through Police Fields which seem to be well trodden by local residents, to those which are part of a wider walking network connecting surrounding residential areas to the centre of Cowbridge
- There is currently no dedicated cycle lane in the town centre
- There is limited cycle parking and where available is falling into disrepair for example at The Butts / High Street junction
- Some areas have narrow footways which limit accessibility
- Street signs and furniture restrict movement along footways in some areas
- The Vale Trail 9 passes through Cowbridge from north to south, routing up to St Quentin's Castle.

### Public Transport

- Cowbridge is served by 2 bus routes. The X2 route which runs between Bridgend and Cardiff Central every 30 minutes. The bus takes approximately 30 minutes to reach Bridgend and 1 hour to reach Cardiff. The 321 route runs less frequently between Llantwit Major and Talbot Green via Cowbridge and takes 20 minutes to get to Llantwit Major and 30 minutes to get to Talbot Green
- Current bus stops are located along High Street and to the rear of Town Hall.



Poor pedestrian access along The Broad Shoard



Bus routing to rear of Town Hall



Surface parking along The Butts



Existing zebra crossing at Church Street / High Street Junction

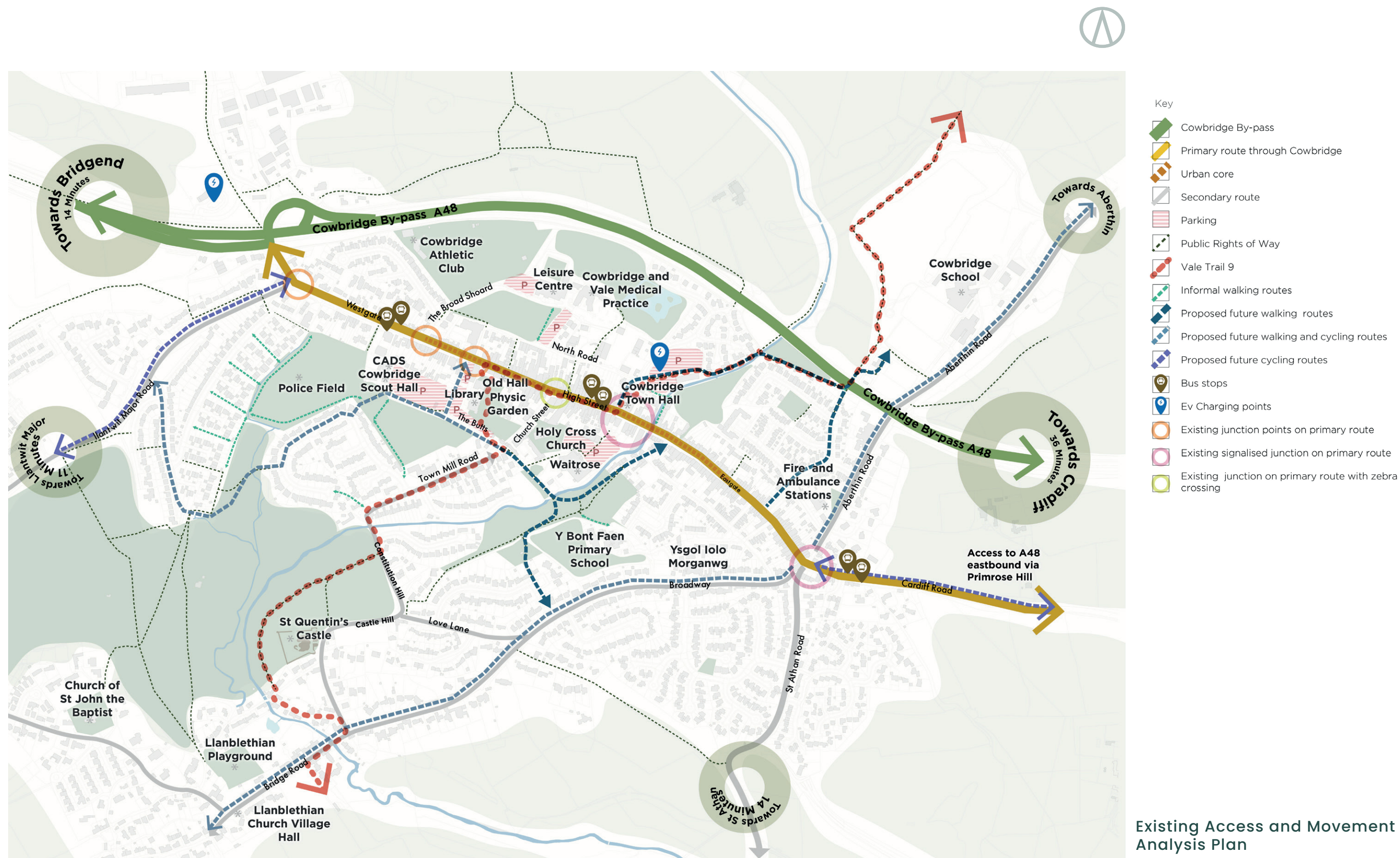


Pedestrian routes from Police Fields to Llantwit Major Road



Waitrose / High Street Junction





Existing Access and Movement Analysis Plan



# Cowbridge Today

## Green Assets

Cowbridge is well served by a range of play parks, historic gardens and green open spaces. Several green spaces are within close proximity to the town centre such as Bear Field and Police Field, which are managed by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, and Twt Park, which is managed by the Town Council and offer recreation and play space for residents and visitors.

Old Hall Gardens, located just off the High Street, is well maintained by a group of dedicated volunteers from the Cowbridge Charter Trust. Neighbouring this lies the jewel in the crown of Cowbridge, the Physic Garden, which is a tourist attraction managed by an active volunteer group who ensure that its story continues to be told.

Below summarises the key observations around green assets, taken from the desktop analysis and site visit:

### Green Space

- There is lots of good quality open space but some spaces have limited function (e.g. Police Field provides playing pitches for the town, but the quality is poor)
- The existing green spaces feel somewhat disconnected from existing residential areas and could be better linked via signage and improved footpaths
- There are limited spaces which teens and young people want to use, this is due to poor lighting, lack of sheltered outdoor space and intimidation of older groups using the same space
- There are attractive, characterful gardens in close proximity to High Street; Physic Garden and Old Hall Gardens
- The area under the A48 feels vast and inactive yet provides a strong pedestrian link from Cowbridge School into the town.

### Public Realm

- Recent updates to the frontage of Old Hall are contemporary and high quality and demonstrate a great example of partnership working and community management (via the Charter Trust) of projects
- Informal walking routes are overgrown and under maintained in part, for example links through Police Field
- There are limited seating opportunities beyond the immediate town centre
- There is limited street planting along High Street
- The River Thaw, which crosses underneath High Street, feels hidden in parts and lacks soft landscape and ecological features
- The public realm to the rear of Town Hall lacks activity for those on foot, not just for vehicle traffic
- The area around The Butts is dominated by parking and is not inviting for pedestrians
- There is a mix of both contemporary and historic signage across the town which does not read as a town wide approach.



Skate park requires updating



Underutilised underpass space



Local routes connecting to residential areas



Physic Garden provides a central visitor attraction



Signage and wayfinding could be increased across the town



Contemporary public realm outside Old Hall





### Key

- Playing spaces
- Playing fields / recreational grounds
- Bowling green
- Tennis court
- Parks and gardens
- Allotments
- Religious ground
- Cemetery
- Other open spaces
- Countryside
- Public Rights of Way
- Vale Trail no.9 Heritage walk



# Cowbridge Today

## Land Use and Activity

Cowbridge is identified as a service centre settlement in the Local Development Plan serving the immediate residents of the town, but also those in the surrounding hinterland villages. It is also recognised as a visitor destination. The range of shops, services and civic uses Cowbridge has to offer attracts footfall into the town centre and supports the local visitor and tourism economy all year round.

Below summarises some key observations around land use and activity, taken from the desktop analysis and site visit:

- Large retail offer within the town centre which is primarily made up of independents. 71 % of the A1 class shops are unique to Cowbridge (Towns Alive Report 2014)
- Some high street brands - Costa, Greggs, Specsavers, Waitrose
- Community facilities within a walkable distance from High Street and each other (library, leisure centre, schools)
- Limited evening offer means the town is quiet in the evening
- Limited offer for teenagers and young people
- Forage Farm creates a visitor attraction on the edge of the town centre which could encourage more footfall
- Leisure centre provides a good hub for the community and supports healthy, active lifestyles
- A number of events take place throughout the year which attract large numbers of residents and visitors, including:
  - » Cowbridge Farmer's Market (weekly market on Saturdays)
  - » Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival (annual festival taking place in spring)
  - » Cowbridge Pride (annual event taking place in June)
  - » Cowbridge Open Art (annual event taking place in August)
  - » Cowbridge Music Festival (annual event taking place in September)
  - » Cowbridge Christmas Light Parade (annual event taking place in November)



Wide range of independent shops help draw footfall into the town



Convolved and limited activity to rear of Town Hall



Annual events in the town attract visitors and local residents



Limited evening offer



Annual events attract all ages and promote a variety of civic and cultural celebrations



Decorated shop-fronts along High Street at Christmas create picturesque setting and draw visitors



# Cowbridge Today

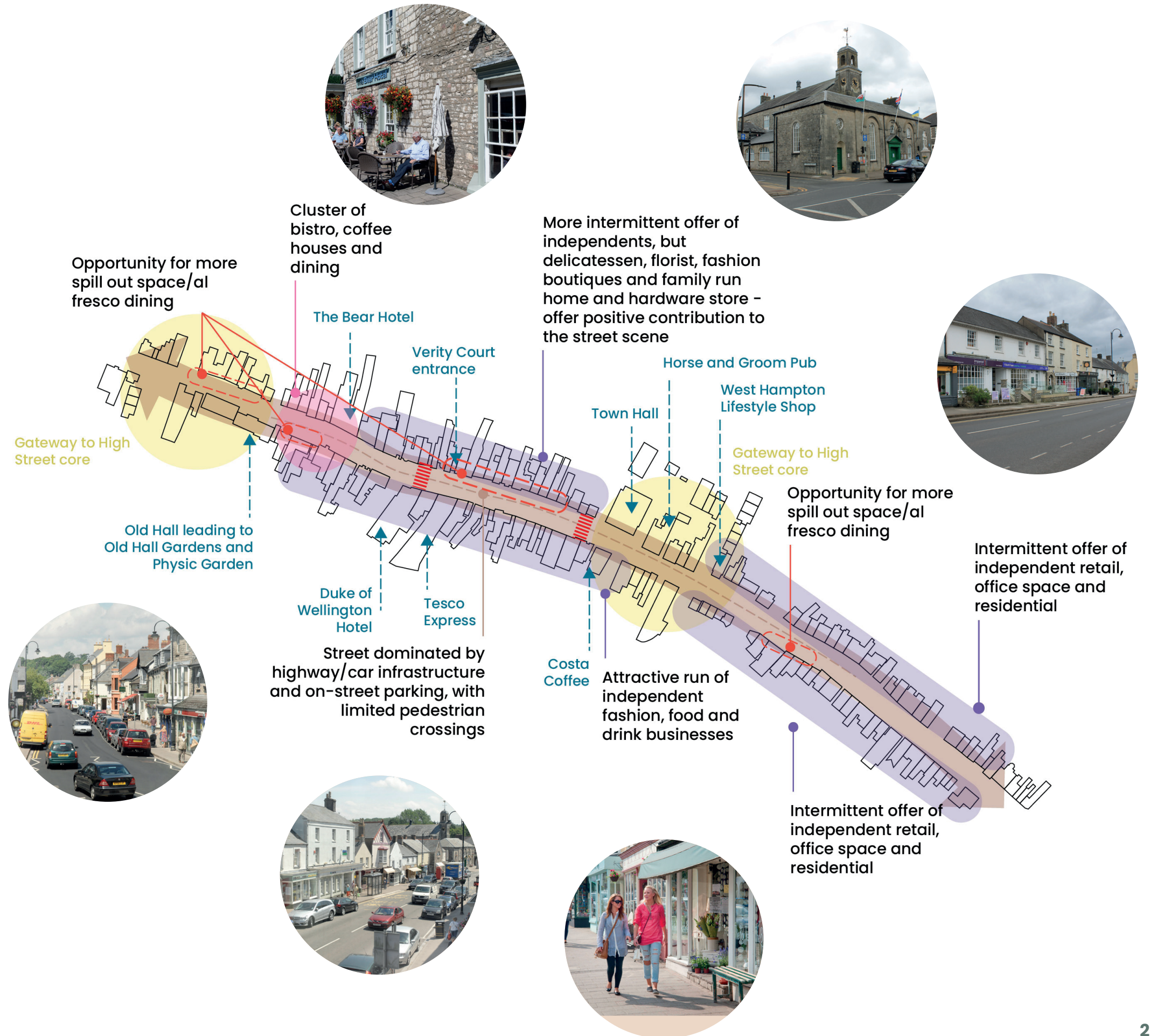
## High Street

High Street with its linear street (extending approximately 1.17km from Llantwit Major Road to Cardiff Road), variety of historic buildings and mix of uses is the defining feature of Cowbridge, around which the town historically grew. It boasts a range of independent shops, boutiques and unique retailers, many of which are set within the town's most historic buildings.

Data for the town between 2017 and 2019, identifies that the town has seen a reduction in vacancy rates from 28 to 21 businesses, with a significant rise in the service sector (87 to 101 units) and a slight drop in convenience businesses.

Compared with other towns in the Vale of Glamorgan, Cowbridge has a strong restaurant and traditional pub scene and a wide selection of cafés, with takeaway businesses less dominant.

The plan opposite identifies some key aspects of the high street and the arrival experience for both visitors and residents.





# Cowbridge Today

## Character and Heritage

Cowbridge is a historic market town which has buildings dating back to the medieval period, with archaeological evidence to suggest its foundation as a Roman settlement. Its intact historic character is often what attracts visitors to the town and which enriches the visitor experience.

Community groups, such as the Charter Trust and History Society contribute to the preservation and interpretation of history in the town.

Below summarises the key observations around character and heritage, taken from the desktop analysis and site visit:

- There is a mix of building styles and plots, capturing historic 'layering' from multiple periods such as Medieval, Georgian, Victorian and contemporary
- The high street has an east west alignment and historic frontages, displaying a range of local building materials
- There are retained burgage plots (long, narrow plots characteristic of Medieval times) on North Road which is a distinctive characteristic of the area north of High Street and a defining feature of the town's historic growth
- The character and heritage of this town is well preserved and celebrated through local events, enthusiastic volunteer groups, and residents who take pride in their homes
- Notable amount of blue plaques on a variety of buildings
- Heritage trail through the town - Vale Trail 09
- Key listed buildings include the Town Hall, Holy Cross Church, South Gate, former Cowbridge Grammar school and the Great House as well as a number of designated assets such as the town walls
- The historic core of the town reflects the layout of the walled town developed in the 13th Century
- Landscape character defined by the valley of the River Thaw, Llanblethian Hill to the west and hills of the Stalling Down to the east
- Notable character areas, as defined by the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, highlight the variation of built form across the town centre, ranging from historic market town to rural village, to contemporary residential development aesthetics.



Notable amount of blue plaques



Remaining walls define historic edge and enclosure of the town



Characterful buildings along the main street, emphasising prosperity during the 18th/19th Century



Historic structural walls of Old Hall, framing the edges of Old Hall Garden



Holy Cross Church / St Dochdwy Church



Georgian style Town Hall building



War Memorial on High Street



Ruins of St Quentin's Castle



# Cowbridge Today

## Surrounding Projects

The plan opposite shows key projects which are relevant to the Placemaking Plan, in that they may influence projects or create new opportunities for development in Cowbridge. The current pipeline projects are as follows:

### Sites with approved or live planning applications

#### **A Clare Garden Village (Approved and under construction)**

A large residential scheme of 475 homes on the former Darren Farm estate to the west of the town centre. The scheme is being delivered by Taylor Wimpey, which was granted planning permission in 2018. The scheme is part built and offers a range of house types, with a number of affordable units being provided by the Council.

The development includes the construction of a link road connecting Cowbridge bypass with Llantwit Major, as well as footpaths, cycleways, landscaping and new public open space.

#### Opportunities

- Significant development in Cowbridge with opportunities to increase footfall within the town centre
- Located a 20 minute walk from the centre - opportunities to encourage active modes of transport into the centre
- Provides more housing choice for local people
- Future relocation of Ysgol Iolo Morganwg.

#### **B McCarthy Stone development (Approved Planning Application)**

This development for 50 one and two bed retirement living apartments, together with a separate office block, communal facilities and associated car parking.

The application also involves highways works to the A48 to provide access to the site and slow approach traffic into the site.

#### Opportunities

- The site is a 10 minute walk from the centre of Cowbridge which will provide a good opportunity for more footfall in the centre
- Key gateway location on the western approach from the A48, creating a better sense of arrival into Cowbridge
- Provides more housing choice for older people, who may be looking to downsize, but stay close to the centre.

#### **C Ysgol Iolo Morganwg (Approved Planning Application)**

Ysgol Iolo Morganwg has plans to expand and move to a new location at Dunraven Close, freeing up a development opportunity within the primary school site.

#### Opportunities

- The vacant building will offer an opportunity for redevelopment close to the town centre.
- The existing building is unique and characterful, reflecting the historic nature of the town. Future uses could include new community and educational uses which are inclusive of young people. Future uses should be considerate of the historic character and retain or reflect it where possible.

#### **D Former Police Station (Current Planning Application)**

Residential development within the former police station building which proposed the conversion of 6, 1 bed flats. The site would also include an additional building which would house 8, 1 bed flats and associated parking.

#### Opportunities

- New development in the town centre at a key gateway
- Easy access to facilities within the town centre
- Opportunity for more residential uses within the town centre.

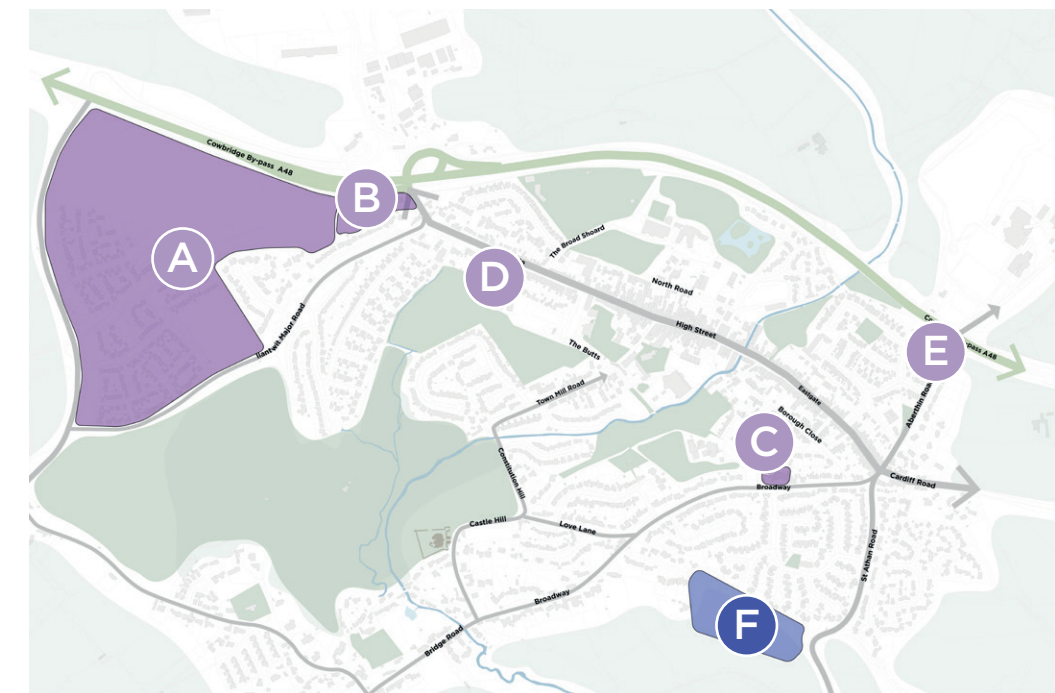
#### **E Affordable housing development at former Cowbridge Comprehensive Site**

Hafod Housing are building affordable homes - 30 flats and four houses with associated parking.

#### Other sites include:

#### **F Redrow residential development (Current Planning Application)**

An application for a residential scheme of 105 homes, 42 of which are affordable, located to the south of the town centre, off Windmill Lane.



Surrounding Projects



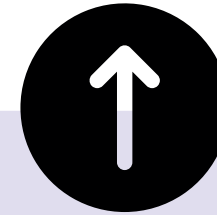
# Cowbridge Today

## Overall SWOT Analysis

Engagement with partners and stakeholders and the local community has shaped a better understanding of Cowbridge and the opportunities and challenges the town faces.

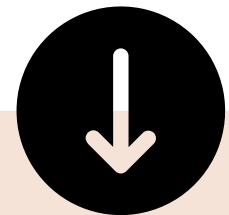
The community engagement as well as the baseline analysis, site visit and ongoing engagement with Vale of Glamorgan and the Town Council have also contributed to this SWOT analysis for the town centre. The following tables summarise the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats highlighted through these discussions and studies.

This thinking will help inform the vision and objectives for Cowbridge and help structure potential future opportunity areas and projects within the Placemaking Plan.



### Strengths

- Historic market town where buildings maintain a lot of character
- Range of independent shops which appeals to a wide demographic
- High levels of occupancy along High Street
- Physic Garden and St Quentin's Castle are great visitor attractions and easily accessible from the town
- Vale Trail 9 (Iolo Morganwg Heritage Walk) provides a circular route bringing walkers past heritage sites in the town and linking to surrounding fields and wooded paths
- Programme of events throughout the year attracts visitors and residents
- Strong sense of community within Cowbridge which will continue to grow with Clare Garden Village
- Good offer of local facilities and amenities
- Lots of open space surrounding the town centre which is easily accessed
- Active community groups who take pride in their centre
- Safe and quiet town
- Appreciation of the town's rural location, with emphasis on the value of green spaces for wellbeing and recreation
- Relatively easy to access on foot or by car



### Weaknesses

- No clearly defined arrival gateways into the town centre - detracts from arrival experience
- Large areas of on street parking
- Limited controlled crossing points for pedestrians
- Convoluted routing around Town Hall
- Limited cycle storage and infrastructure
- Narrow footways and street clutter
- Disconnect between green spaces
- Difficult to recognise where key areas are as a visitor
- Overgrown pathways and informal pedestrian routes
- River Thaw is an asset which is hidden in parts
- Limited offer for families, younger children and teenagers
- Limited evening offer
- Lack of a defined congregation space
- Limited clear connections on foot between Clare Garden Village and town centre
- A local view that shops along High Street are too expensive
- Street clutter and litter
- Poor digital connectivity





## Opportunities

- Potential to enhance area around Town Hall to create a congregation space and build the social elements of the town
- Improvements to green space at Leisure centre
- Creation of a green space strategy to connect spaces via accessible routes and signage
- Opportunity to coordinate events with local businesses to maximise footfall and offer
- Pop-ups in vacant units
- Additional crossing points along High Street
- Carriageway narrowing to allow for wider footpaths on High Street
- Review of on street parking and quality of surface car parking
- E bike/bike hire opportunities to encourage active travel
- New heritage trails
- Introduce quality dwell places within the town for people to meet up and spend time together increasing footfall
- Creation of gateways and arrivals to Cowbridge
- Improved place branding and celebration of identity could be tied in with improved signage and wayfinding
- Use the location and setting to promote health and well-being for residents and visitors alike
- Focus on being a destination for a wider area both through the promotion of the town and the facilities it provides



## Threats

- Continual move from shopping in shops to online shopping may threaten independent retailers
- Current offer in town centre doesn't appeal to all - teenagers and young people are less catered for - threat to businesses and local residents
- Impact on servicing and delivery if on street parking is to be redefined on High Street
- Potential conflict with those living on High Street / Westgate / Eastgate if evening economy is to grow
- Potential rise in anti social behaviour if younger demographics have less places to hang out /feel safe



# Chapter 5

## VISION AND OBJECTIVES





# A Vision for Cowbridge

## The Cowbridge Narrative

**The narrative for Cowbridge has been informed by the engagement process and review of feedback provided. The Vision for the town has been drafted from this narrative.**

### Active, Accessible and Fun

Cowbridge has a variety of green spaces and plenty of opportunities to be active. There are friendly sports clubs including cricket, rugby, tennis and football, as well as a leisure centre in the heart of the town. However, more facilities for young people would be welcome. The setting of the town, surrounded by rolling pastures and historic places, encourages exploration, with walking and cycling popular activities for residents and visitors alike. There is a desire for this to be a 'Walkers Welcome' town which loves dogs and dog walkers, with most establishments welcoming them displaying the 'Paws in the Vale' logo.

Cowbridge is a compact place that needs to ensure it is accessible to all, easy and pleasant to walk around. That means more dwell spaces and consideration given to people with disabilities. For instance, further promotion of the town's status as a Dementia Friendly Town through public realm enhancements. Creating a compelling experience in the town through wayfinding and storytelling and highlighting the assets in the surrounding area is vital. Cowbridge needs to be a place where people enjoy spending time and it can build on its successful events such as the Food and Drink Festival, Music Festival, Reindeer Parade and Pride, to create a year round programme to generate footfall.

### A Living Location

Cowbridge is a highly desirable place to live and recent developments have brought new people to the town. As the town grows it needs to cater for and provide the 'glue' that ties new and existing residents together. Those moving in to enjoy what Cowbridge has to offer also play a role in being custodians of the future of the town. The place has a more mature demographic and has been an attractive place for retirement, but the offer in the town needs to reflect the arrival of a younger demographic and families, as well as do more to provide for the youth already in the town.

Cowbridge is a great place to work and live, offering an exceptional and safe quality of life. People can work from home and meet up or socialise in cafes within walking distance. The independent businesses, compactness and convenience of the town, create a friendly atmosphere and mean that residents really feel part of the town, fostering a sense of community.

### Destination Cowbridge

As a historic and picturesque town, Cowbridge has an opportunity to be a highly desirable base from which to explore and enjoy the surrounding area. From the town you can easily visit nearby quaint villages or reach the coast or city in half an hour. Beautiful beaches, the Glamorgan Heritage Coast and wonderful woodlands can be enjoyed via the ten Vale Trails. Cowbridge needs to make the most of its offer by packaging it up; the Physic Garden, Medieval walls, St Quentin's Castle, Beaupre Castle, vineyards and other food and drink producers all make up a unique and high-quality experience.

Whilst the up market and independent nature of Cowbridge is ready made to deliver a destination offer it will need to grow its accommodation and food and drink offer. The town centre could also be a shop window for the wider area, communicating the breadth and quality of tourism offer in the vicinity. The aim is to be a destination for residents, shoppers, diners and tourists.

### A proud, independent and up-market experience

Cowbridge is proud of its independent businesses and air of affable affluence. It boasts great community leadership and has developed a town centre offer that is genuinely independent, unique, and increasingly sought after. It is also surrounded by and provides important services for smaller villages. However, the experience needs to be more inclusive of young people who need places to come together, chill and have fun. The town combines a beautiful natural environment with an aspirational and characterful urban environment which creates a distinct sense of place. Cowbridge is a special place for both residents and visitors, and is a valuable hub in the heart of the Vale.



# A Vision for Cowbridge

## Vision and Objectives

“Cowbridge will build on its heritage, embrace local enterprise and create a connected, inclusive and greener environment for all. Cowbridge will be a town where rich heritage meets a vibrant, community-driven future.”

The vision aims to define a place where local independent businesses can thrive in a dynamic high street, neighbours can connect in community spaces, and picturesque walks and unique dining experiences entice visitors to explore the Vale.

Sample images of how small interventions can have a big impact on the vitality and vibrancy of a place.





To support the Vision for Cowbridge, five key objectives have been identified that will drive the future projects and investments in Cowbridge. These objectives emerged from the opinions gathered during the extensive engagement process and findings from the baseline analysis.

The five objectives underpin the Placemaking strategy. The proposals associated with the key opportunity areas and the town wide project proposals deliver against these objectives.

**Sustain A Dynamic And Appealing High Street** - Cowbridge is well known for its offer of independent, local businesses but the High Street needs to be supported to diversify and adapt if it is to continue its success in a changing environment. Expanding the offer into the evening, improving accessibility via public transport, walking and cycling, and enhancing the public realm will help achieve this.

**Safe And Sustainable Place For People To Move Through The Town** - By supporting active travel and through better traffic management it will be easier for people to move around the town. Well signposted routes with improved surfacing of footpaths that link residential areas with the town centre and with green spaces will enable more residents to walk and cycle. Safe and accessible routes within Cowbridge could also create opportunities to connect with extended routes to nearby villages.

**Preserve and Celebrate** - Cowbridge's identity is largely defined by its historic and charming character. It is a place for beautiful walks and includes many green assets which present an opportunity to enhance recreation and well-being for all ages. Creating opportunities to celebrate the town's heritage and natural environment will increase its appeal as a destination for visitors as well as the wider community.

**A Multi-Functional Town Supporting A Changing Population** - The community takes pride in tradition and independence but welcomes innovation and community stewardship. Fostering a sense of community and enabling a pro-active approach will support a changing population and ensure that Cowbridge is a place for everyone.

**A Great Place For Young People To Live, Thrive And Belong** - More activities and improved facilities specifically for young people will provide opportunities for them to socialise within the town and feel more connected with the local community.





# Chapter 6

## HOW DO WE GET THERE?



# How Do We Get There?

## The Placemaking Plan Strategy in Summary

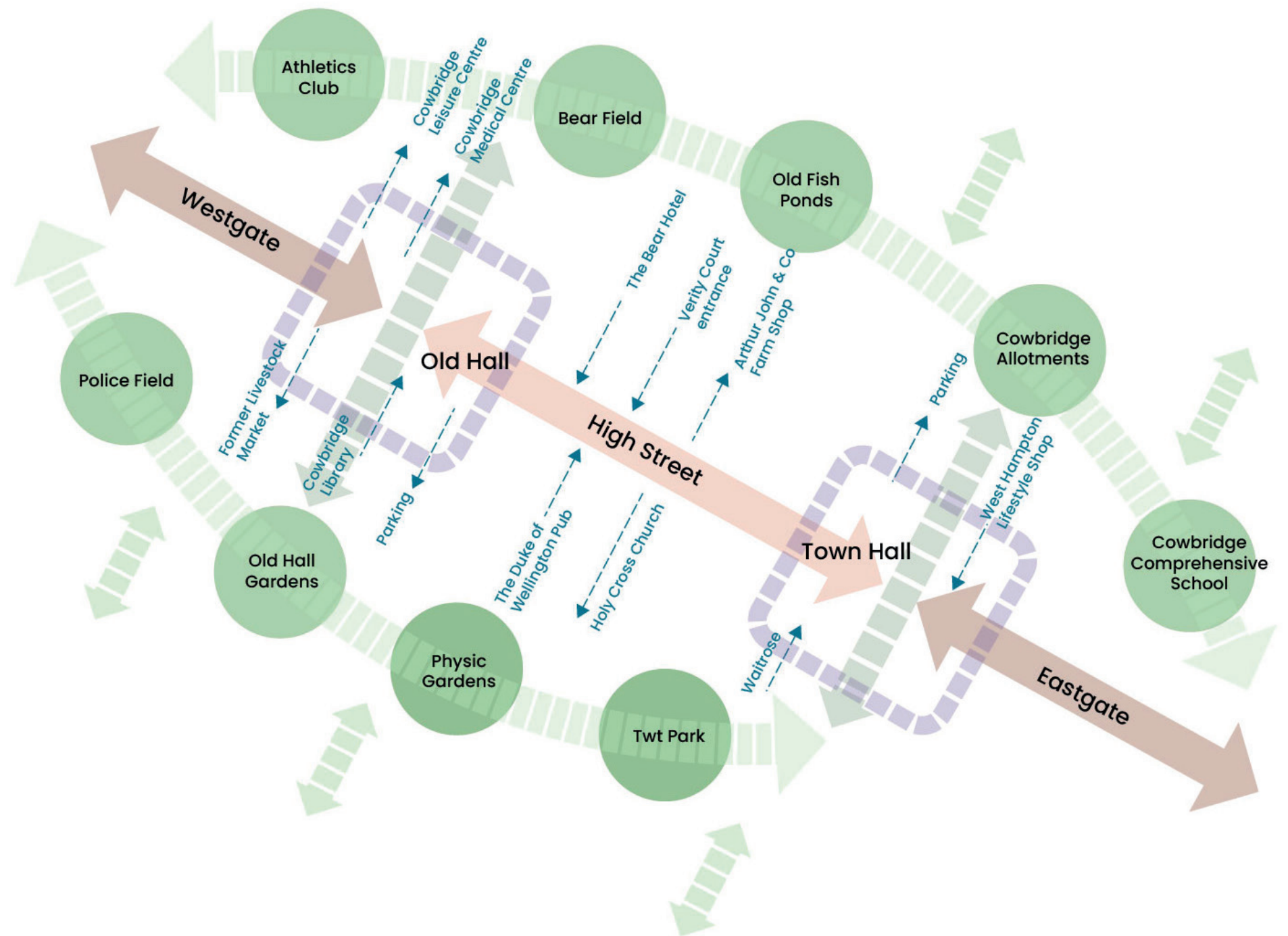
The following chapter details the Placemaking Plan Strategy which presents the key physical opportunities and projects across the town which support the Vision and Objectives for Cowbridge. It responds to and complements the existing strengths and features of Cowbridge.

The Placemaking Plan Strategy identifies 5 Key Opportunity Areas which are supported by a series of town wide projects which are detailed later in this chapter.

Elements of each of the projects could be delivered across the short, medium and long term. They demonstrate the art of the possible in Cowbridge, and would be subject to further consultation and feasibility testing with of a range of stakeholders.

The strategy for Cowbridge will:

- **Celebrate the heritage of the town, bringing activity and vibrancy back to the High Street.**
- **Stitch key areas of the town together via High Street.**
- **Highlight Cowbridge's significant green assets and how these could be better connected and gateways strengthened.**
- **Set out public realm interventions which would support visitors and the local community to explore more and dwell.**
- **Hold back on fine detail, allowing the end design and development type (considerations of scale, form, land use mix and amount of public realm for any potential future opportunity site) to be fixed and flexed dependant future assessment, consultation and funding availability.**





# How Do We Get There?

## The Placemaking Plan - Spatial Strategy

### The Placemaking Plan Strategy

The Placemaking Plan Strategy combines spatial and movement proposals, reflecting both the Placemaking Plan objectives and aligning with the Placemaking Wales Charter. It also identifies opportunities for future investment.

The strategy aims to capture the priorities identified through public engagement and wider strategic opportunities in a coordinated way.

There is an emphasis on public realm and enhancing the street environment and the proposals are set out in the plan opposite.

### People and Community

The local community have been engaged at the outset to determine their needs, and to identify what is important to them about their town. All available data, such as demographic data, has been taken into account, to support the qualitative information gathered through the community mapping process.

The proposals have been developed to meet those needs, as well as enhancing the sense of community in Cowbridge.

### Identity

- Creating a civic and cultural focus within the town centre for both visitors and residents. Location of gateway features into and out of Cowbridge on Eastgate and Westgate, celebrating local town pride and identity.
- Identifying important historic buildings which should be supported to ensure they meet the needs of their occupiers or if they are vacant, to be supported to be brought back into use.
- Allocating spaces and upgrades to local facilities that are inclusive and can be used by all age groups.

### Movement

- Implementation of variety of interventions including junction improvements, pedestrian crossing points and gateway features at the arrival to Cowbridge. Historic towns over time have had to adapt to the requirements of vehicle traffic and infrastructure, which can create issues and conflict between local movements and wider through movements.
- Focus on the town centre's street environment, addressing issues with crossing the High Street, the experience of Town Hall Square, as well as introducing improvements to the quality of the public realm, which will improve footfall and dwell time, supporting local businesses.
- Creation of a town wide signage and wayfinding strategy will allow for greater recreational and tourist access to destinations spots in Cowbridge whilst reducing general street clutter – railings/ bollards etc.
- Prioritising pedestrian movement through the centre of Cowbridge and reconsidering the arrangement and provision of car parking in destination locations such as the Former Livestock Market, rear of the Town Hall and under Cowbridge bypass. Improving the experience for people must be balanced with the parking and access requirements for commercial businesses that are in the heart of the town.
- Enhancing the quality of walking routes, more accessible surfacing, and ensuring routes connect places where people most need to go.

### Public Realm

- Improving the public realm quality of High Street through changes in materiality, localised carriageway narrowing and removal of some on street parking bays, creating a co-ordinated and high quality townscape that compliments the historic character of Cowbridge's buildings as well as providing space for to people to dwell.

- Identifying areas where improved or additional planting can be encouraged to offer more amenity value, biodiversity and sustainability. This will provide benefit to residents and improve the setting and townscape quality of High Street.
- Introducing more green infrastructure and SUDs features to improve both amenity values and contribute to tackling climate change challenges.

### Mix of Uses

- Providing a mobility hub at the rear of Town Hall which could include safe and secure cycle parking, bike / scooter hire, timetables, shelter, seating, planting & kiosk.
- Upgrades to the Town Hall and Old Hall will encourage greater and wider use of their existing facilities, which will attract more people into the town centre.
- Providing a wider mix of uses could cater for all ages. It would encourage more activities for young people within the town, as well as supporting an evening economy.
- Identifying pipeline projects which can be connected into the town by various walking routes.
- Ensuring that bus accessibility is still provided for in the heart of the town centre, ensuring residents, neighbours from Llanblethian, Aberthin and other villages, as well as visitors continue to be well served by High Street businesses.



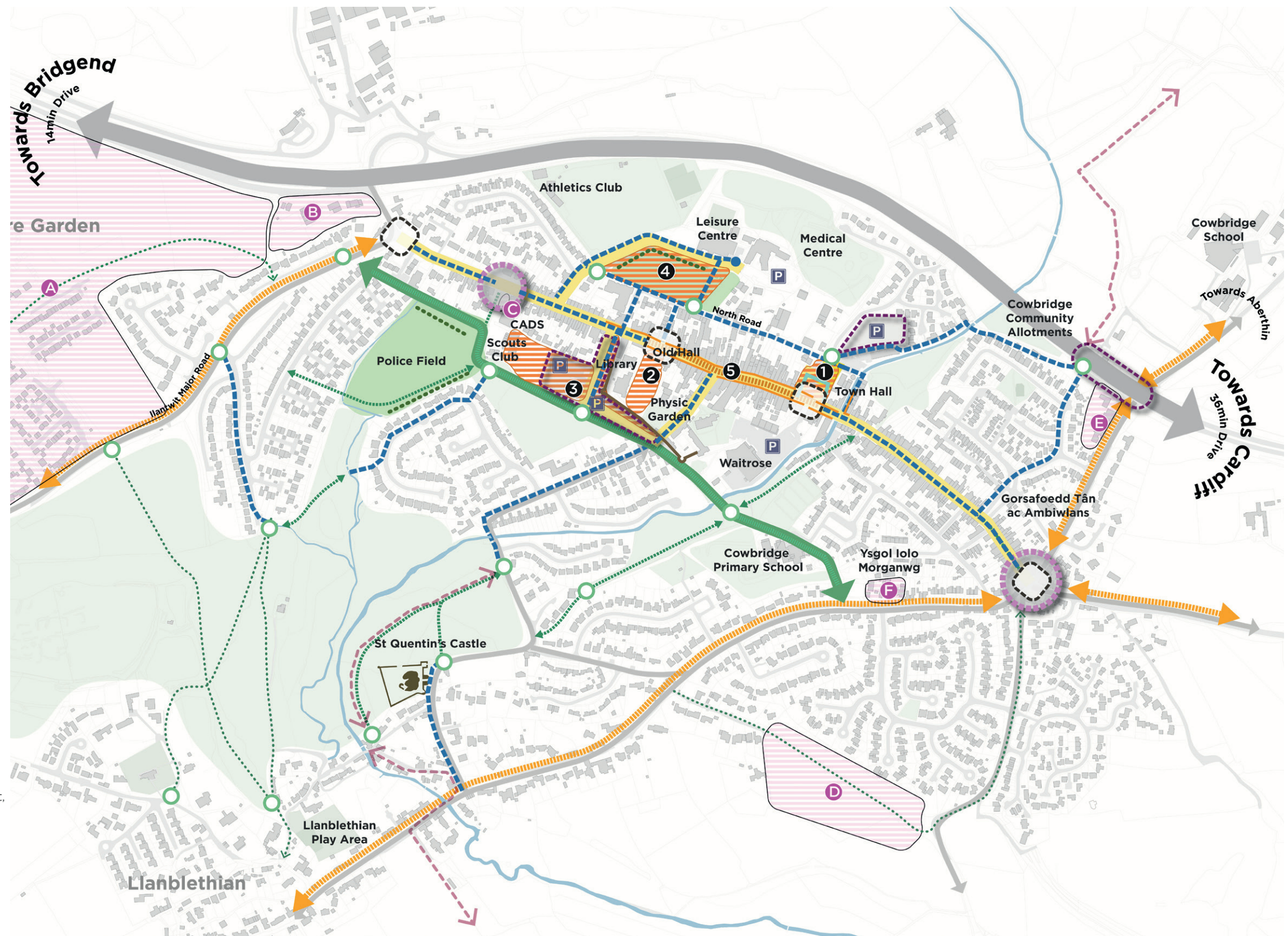


### Key features

- Primary vehicular routes
- Existing PROWs
- Vale Trail no.9
- Existing car parking
- Historic wall
- Key arrival gateways
- Retail core active frontage
- Recent investment/Pipeline projects:
  - A Clare Garden Village
  - B McCarthy Stone development
  - C Former Police Station
  - D Redrow residential development
  - E Former Cowbridge Comprehensive School Building
  - F Ysgol Iolo Morganwg

### Key opportunities and actions for the Placemaking Plan

- Establishing gateway points into town centre
- Improved pedestrian routes to link with existing network
- Routes with improved cycle infrastructure
- Key pedestrian route through existing green spaces which provides an alternative route to High Street
- Improved green links through POS, connecting to existing routes and PROWs
- Public realm improvements focused around carriageway re-design such as new materials, junction improvements, pedestrian crossing improvements, footway widening, carriageway narrowing etc
- Public realm improvements focused around signage, wayfinding, street greening and prioritising pedestrian movements
- Opportunities for crossing points - zebra crossing or material change
- Potential for re-routing of traffic and junction improvements around Town Hall and Waitrose
- Key points for new signage and wayfinding
- Landscape enhancements - new planting, boundary treatment, biodiversity enhancements
- Potential destination car parking
- Focus areas of intervention within placemaking plan:
  - 1 Town Hall Square
  - 2 Old Hall and Old Hall Gardens
  - 3 Former Livestock Market Site
  - 4 Bear Field
  - 5 High Street





# How Do We Get There?

## Opportunity Areas within the Town Centre

The Placemaking Plan has identified 5 key Opportunity Areas across the town centre that can have a transformational impact on Cowbridge.

Focusing on these areas will meet the vision and objectives of the Placemaking Plan and also align with Design Commission for Wales Placemaking Charter principles.

The 5 Opportunity Areas include:

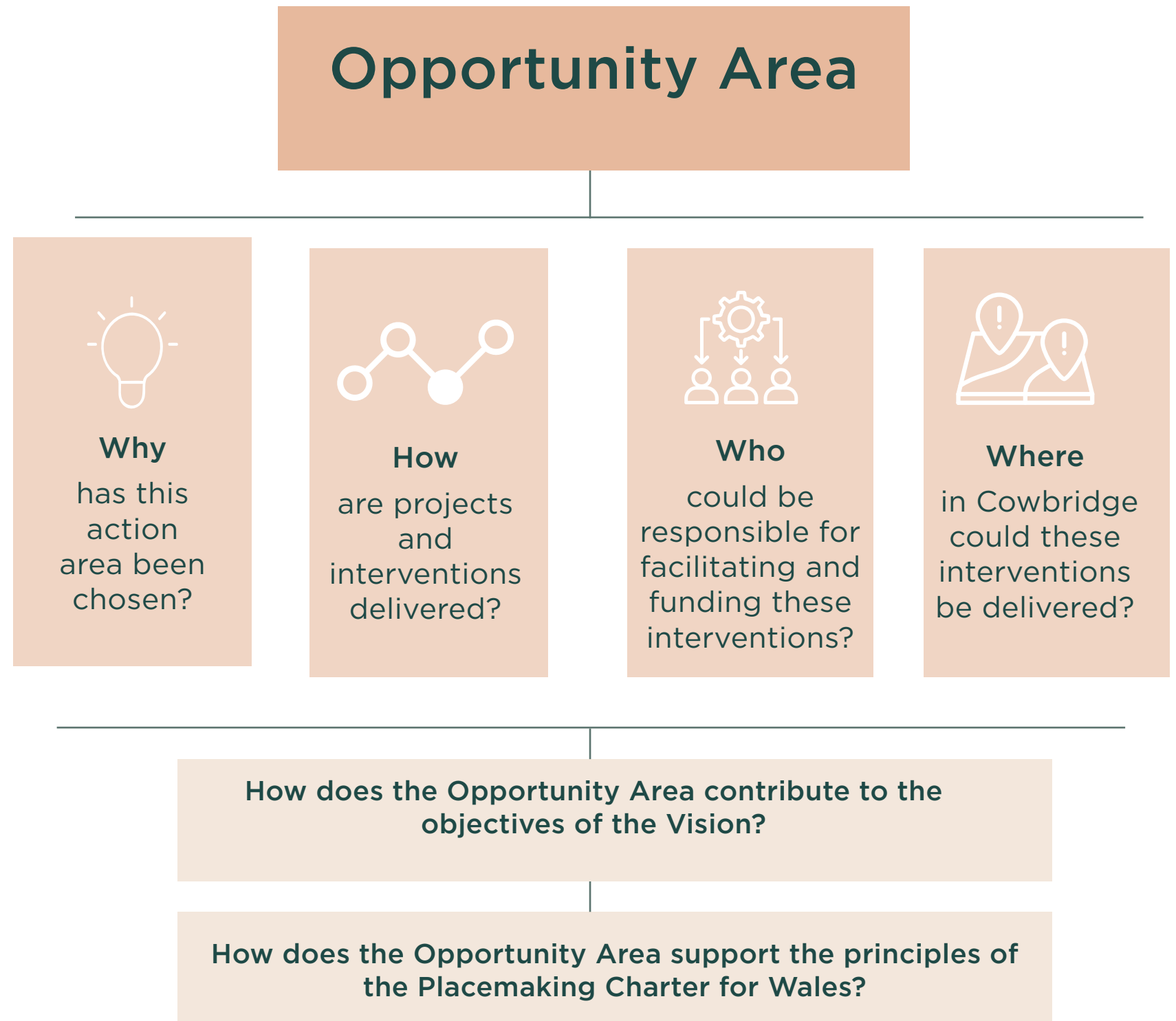
- **Opportunity Area 1: Town Hall Square**
- **Opportunity Area 2: Old Hall & Old Hall Gardens**
- **Opportunity Area 3: Former Livestock Market Site**
- **Opportunity Area 4: Bear Field**
- **Opportunity Area 5: High Street**

Over the following pages further detail is provided for each Opportunity Area, explaining:

- Why has this action area been chosen?
- How are projects and interventions delivered?
- Who could be responsible for facilitating and funding these projects and interventions?
- Where in Cowbridge could these projects and interventions be delivered?

Each of the Opportunity Areas are made up of a number of projects and interventions which could be short, medium and long term and could include involvement of a range of stakeholders.

The Placemaking Plan also identifies opportunities beyond the town centre. The 5 Opportunity Areas are supported by a series of town wide projects which are detailed later in this document.





The plan opposite identifies where the 5 Opportunity Areas are located across Cowbridge and how intervention in these areas, big or small, can have a significant, positive impact on future vitality of the town.

Key features

 Key points of interest

 Existing car parking

 Heritage assets

 Historic wall

Framework actions

 Improved walking and/or cycling routes

 Public realm improvements focused around carriageway re-design which could include new materials, junction improvements, pedestrian crossing improvements, formalised parking facilities, footway widening, carriageway narrowing, traffic calming and junction tightening

 Public realm improvements focused around signage, wayfinding, street greening and prioritising pedestrian movements

 Indicative zone with opportunities for new and improved crossing points - zebra crossing or material change

 Potential for rerouting of traffic and junction improvements around Town Hall and Waitrose

 Landscape enhancements - new planting, boundary treatment, biodiversity enhancements

Location of Opportunity Areas

 1 Town Hall Square

 2 Old Hall & Old Hall Gardens

 3 Former Livestock Market Site

 4 Bear Field

 5 High Street



Proposed Opportunity Area Plan



# Opportunity Area 1: Town Hall Square

## Why

Cowbridge's Grade II listed Town Hall sits as one of Cowbridge's most recognisable historic buildings and forms a distinctive townscape feature along High Street. It is the civic heart of Cowbridge, currently offering internal events space for both visitors and local residents. Community consultation has identified that the Town Hall is cherished by many and presents an opportunity to ensure its social and cultural role within the local community continues. The Town Hall is also set to receive investment to improve the internal condition of the building and this Opportunity Area will help to maximise the investment already committed.

This Opportunity Area project will celebrate the importance of the Town Hall as a destination, through reconfigured and enhanced public realm, creating an enhanced community destination for a variety of indoor and outdoor events. It will also promote greater active travel connectivity through the area.

## How

### Short Term Projects

- Promote and curate flexible, working and function spaces within the Town Hall to encourage a more varied use of the building. This will create additional income, increase community use of the spaces, encourage tourism and contribute to the local economy.
- Internal improvements such as painting and decorating and signage to enhance the functionality of the building.
- Improved lighting to front of Town Hall to celebrate the significance of the building and its historic character.
- Explore options to keep a bus stop at Town Hall Square or move all buses to the High St.
- Trial reconfiguration of the one way routing around Town Hall for vehicles as a means to reduce congestion with Waitrose junction.

### Medium Term Projects

- Design and test options to reconfigure traffic movement around Town Hall based on the outcomes of the short term trial.
- Concept designs to reconfigure the area to include Mobility Hub, public realm enhancements, improved pedestrian linkages from High Street and Cowbridge School, street planting, crossings, ATM machine and improved seating.
- Creation of an outdoor civic space to allow for community celebrations, outdoor events and dwell time.
- Potential overspill car-park under bypass.
- Improved links through civic space to Penny Lane will better connect the existing shops and businesses as well as improve access and views to River Thaw.
- Improved signage and wayfinding as part of a town wide strategy.

### Long Term Projects

- Full suite of public realm improvements around the Town Hall building, streets and square including material and paving changes, soft landscaping, street furniture, signage and wayfinding and lighting.
- Reconfiguration of junctions to High Street with potential to include raised junction.

## Who

- Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council
- Local Community Groups and Societies
- Cowbridge Charter Trust

## Where

- Town Hall (interior and exterior) and space to front of Town Hall
- Town Hall Square (space to rear of Town Hall)
- Integrating with High Street

## Opportunity Area 1 contributes to the following objectives of the Vision:

- Preserve and Celebrate
- A Multi-Functional Town Supporting A Changing Population
- Safe And Sustainable Place For People To Move Through The Town

## Opportunity Area 1 supports the following principles of the Placemaking for Wales Charter:

- People and Community
- Public Realm
- Location
- Identity
- Movement





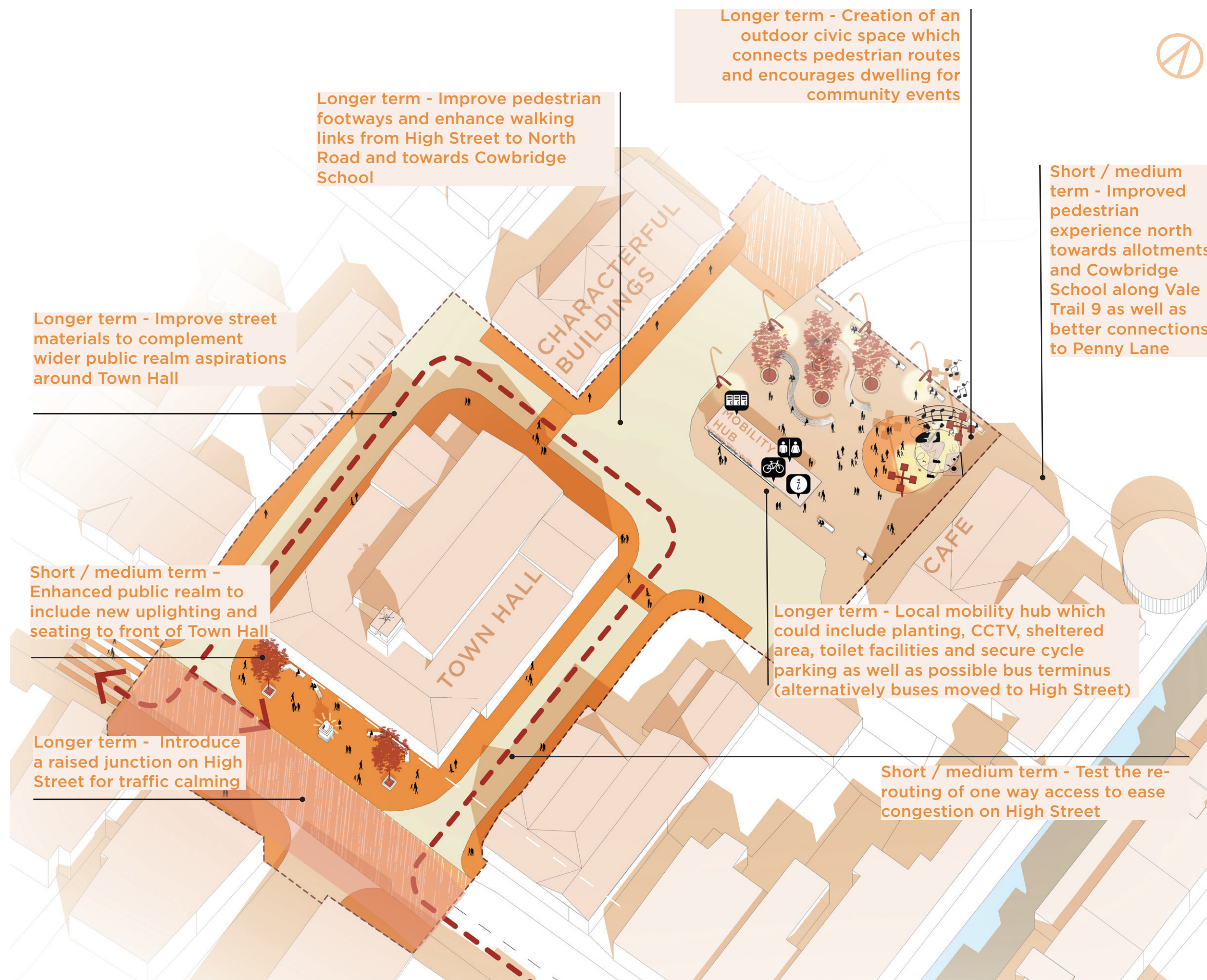
Mobility Hub, Stirling



Outdoor Civic Space , York



Street decoration, Quebec



Conceptual Layout of Town Hall Square



# Opportunity Area 2: Old Hall & Old Hall Gardens

## Why

Feedback from local engagement has highlighted Old Hall and its tranquil gardens are an important historical and cultural part of the town's identity. As well as a heritage asset, Old Hall is a place to enjoy arts, culture and education. Currently hidden to the rear, Old Hall Gardens is a pleasant thoroughfare for locals passing through from High Street and onto the Physic Garden. By creating an improved relationship between the Old Hall building and its rear gardens and making better use of the building's internal space, this area can become a mixed use, arts and culture focused destination within Cowbridge. Events and facilities available at Old Hall should differ to the offer of the Town Hall's civic role, focussing on arts, entertainment and education.

## How

### Short Term Projects

- Promotion of more events in Old Hall and Old Hall Gardens, including working with the Old Hall Gardens volunteer group as well as reaching out to other local community groups and societies. Working in partnership to better promote what's happening in Old Hall, to residents and visitors, and linking this to partner websites such as VoG.
- Creation of gallery and exhibition space in underused rooms within the building to support creatives in the community.
- Signage and wayfinding from High Street thorough Old Hall and into Old Hall Gardens.
- Enhancing the setting and historic information of the building at the rear, encouraging people to dwell in the area and learn more about it's cultural and heritage significance.

### Medium Term Projects

- Improvements to allow Old Hall Gardens to host community events. Working in collaboration with excellent volunteer groups who maintain the gardens, the Library and Old Hall space could be improved to create a shared, hard surfaced outdoor space, near to the existing building that could be used to host makers markets, outdoor classes and other community events. This could be done on a temporary basis over a small area to test the idea. If successful, staging, outdoor cover, seating and lighting could become a facility that supports outdoor arts and cultural events in the gardens.

### Long Term Projects

- Make the most of the Old Hall building's rear walls, extending to incorporate these as part of a modern extension to the rear, making use of the historic orangery area to the rear. Extending the building could provide additional space for classes and community events and create a pleasant and more direct relationship between the building curtilage and its historic gardens. This additional space could also provide temporary or permanent space for community groups, societies or function as flexible exhibition and gallery space.
- Longer term, the extension to the building and use requirements (shaped in part by local stakeholders) for internal reconfiguration would be subject to more detailed architectural testing and feasibility.

## Who

- Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council
- Charter Trust
- Local Community Groups

## Where

- Old Hall
- Old Hall Gardens

## Opportunity Area 2 contributes to the following objectives of the Vision:

- Sustain A Dynamic And Appealing High Street
- Preserve and Celebrate
- A Multi-Functional Town Supporting A Changing Population
- A Great Place For Young People To Live, Thrive And Belong

## Opportunity Area 2 supports the following principles of the Placemaking for Wales Charter:

- People and Community
- Identity
- Mix of Uses
- Location





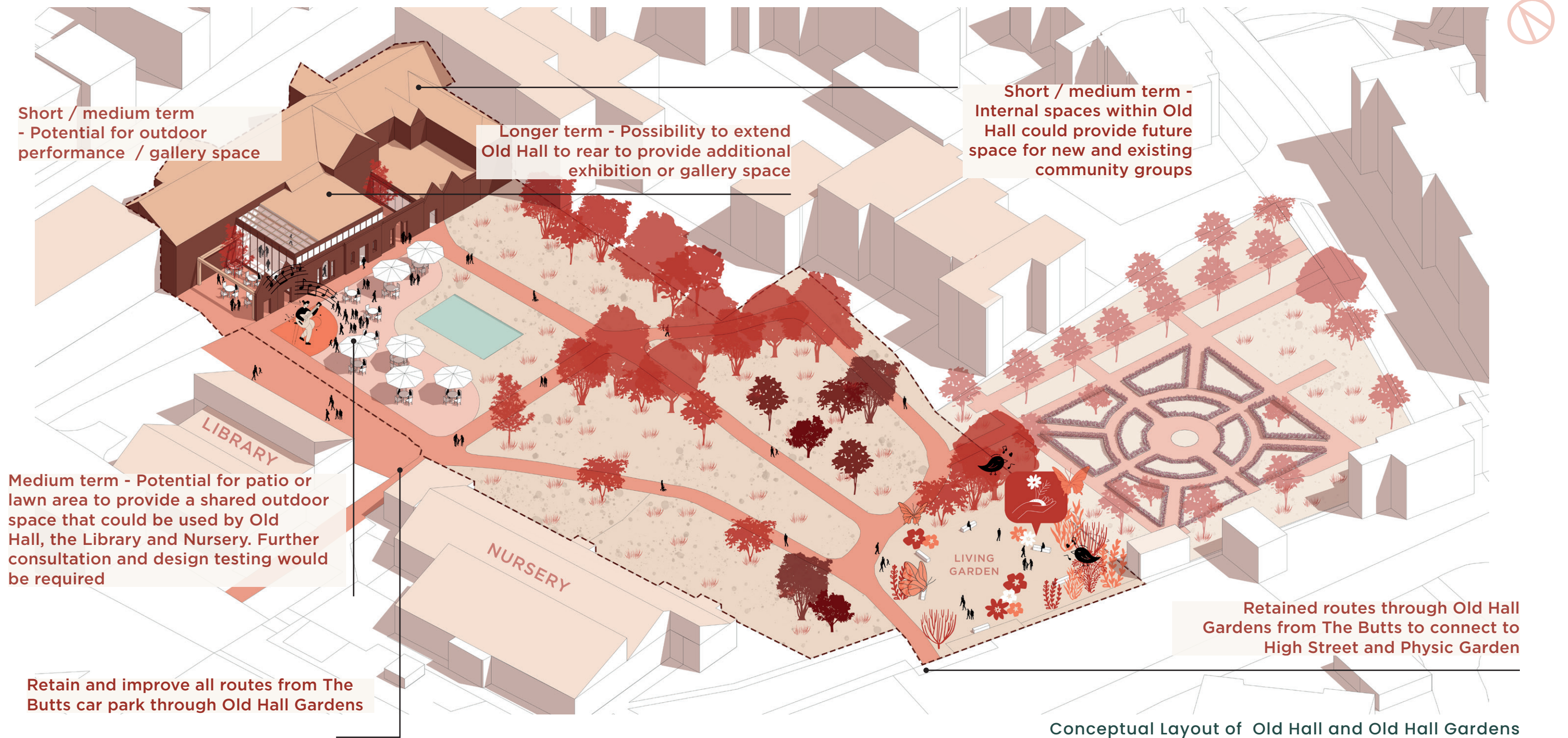
Glass extension at Whitworth Gallery, Manchester



Outdoor event space



Retained community garden space





# Opportunity Area 3: Former Livestock Market Site

## Why

Since the closure and demolition of the former Livestock Market, this derelict space has been used by visitors and local residents as a free, informal car park. However, in its current condition it is not fit for purpose, provision of safe pedestrian movement is limited and parking bays are undefined which leads to inefficient use of the space. The space also provides an important thoroughfare for pedestrians, and proposals for this area will help to improve the quality of walking routes, increase passive surveillance, improve wayfinding and create a high quality town centre space through improved public realm materials and planting, to better serve the needs of the local community and visitors. The projects set out below have been chosen based on the potential to deliver transformational change, however final future use would be subject to further detailed design, feasibility and stakeholder consultation.

## How

### Short Term

- The car park could remain functioning as a car park with a formalised and more efficient layout. Further assessment would be required to understand parking needs of Cowbridge.
- Improved lighting in this area which could form part of a town wide lighting strategy.
- Improved pedestrian linkages within the car park and along The Butts to High Street.
- Improving / upgrading the existing cycle parking including the provision of a secure cycle shelter.
- Planting enhancements to the edges of the Police Fields, such as pollinator friendly planting, increasing opportunities for nature and bio-diversity. SUDs features could also feature, to help manage local drainage issues.

### Medium Term

- Significant improvements to the existing area being used as a car park, with improved surfaces, designated parking bays, soft landscaping and provision of EV charging bays.
- With a more efficient and defined layout, this could allow for the CADS and Scout buildings to have dedicated spill out space next to their buildings to make use of.
- This defined car park could be a multifunctional event space for traders during markets or festivals. Part of the space could be retained as parking, with the other part being used to host pop-up events.
- Improved and formalised walking and cycle routing along the Former Livestock Market site from The Butts to Police Field would allow for a safer and legible route. These routes could continue across Police Field to neighbouring residential areas.
- The number of parking spaces could be dictated by a town wide parking strategy, any lost parking could be captured in a potential new overspill car-park under the Cowbridge by-pass.

### Long Term

- Explore a mixed use development as part of the transformation of the former Livestock Market sites. The final solution will be determined by further market feasibility studies and community consultation.
- Supporting the above, upgrades to the public realm along The Butts, including footway widening and improved materials, lighting and tree planting would provide an enhanced connection back to High Street.

## Who

- Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council
- Local Community Groups

## Where

- Former Livestock Market Site
- The Butts
- Police Field

## Opportunity Area 3 contributes to the following objectives of the Vision:

- Sustain A Dynamic And Appealing High Street
- Safe And Sustainable Place For People To Move Through The Town
- Preserve and Celebrate
- A Multi-Functional Town Supporting A Changing Population

## Opportunity Area 3 supports the following principles of the Placemaking for Wales Charter:

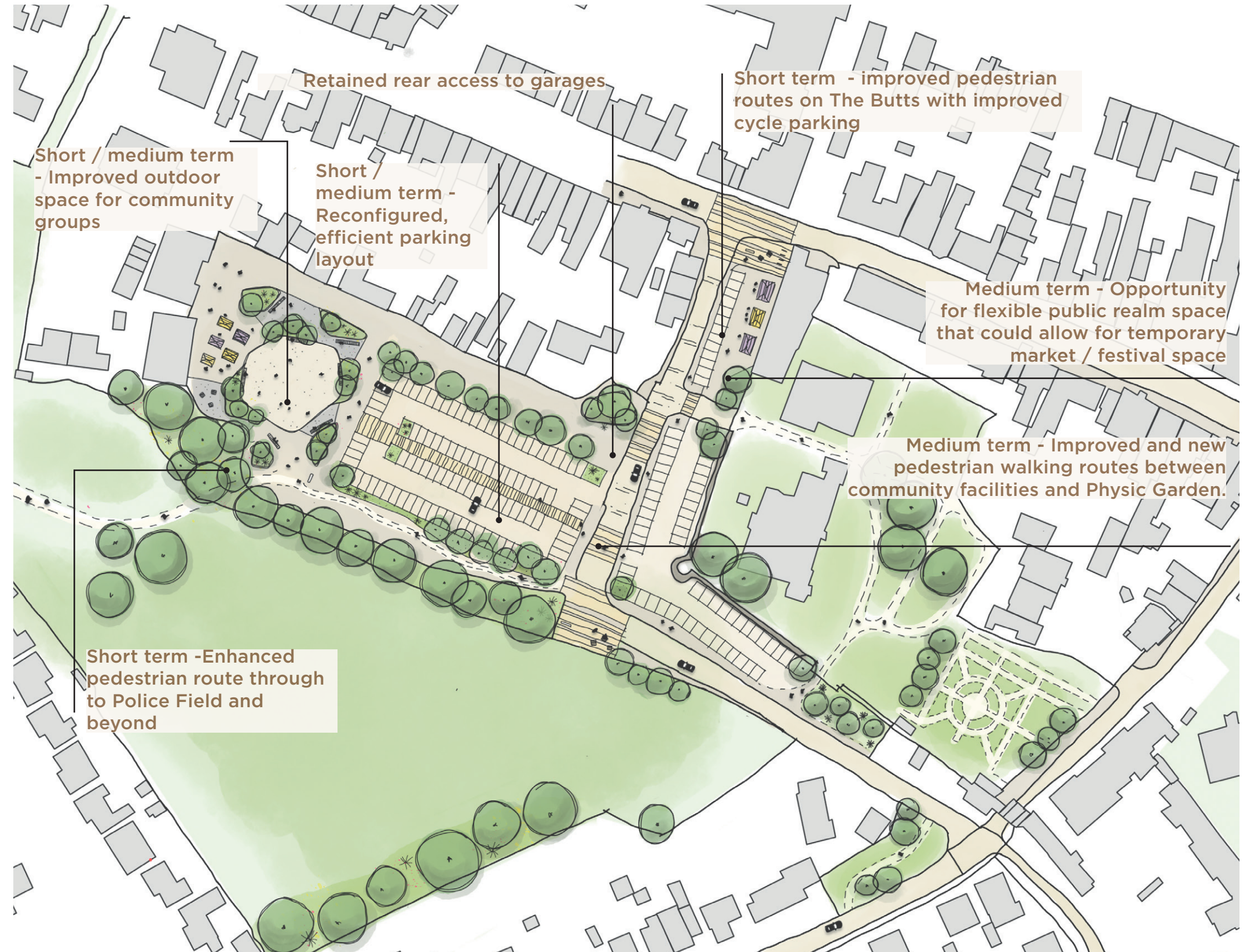
- People and Community
- Public Realm
- Movement
- Mix of Uses
- Location



# Option 1: Short/Medium Term - Enhance Public Realm and Car Park



Public realm enhancements could include street planting and furniture as temporary entertainment and event space



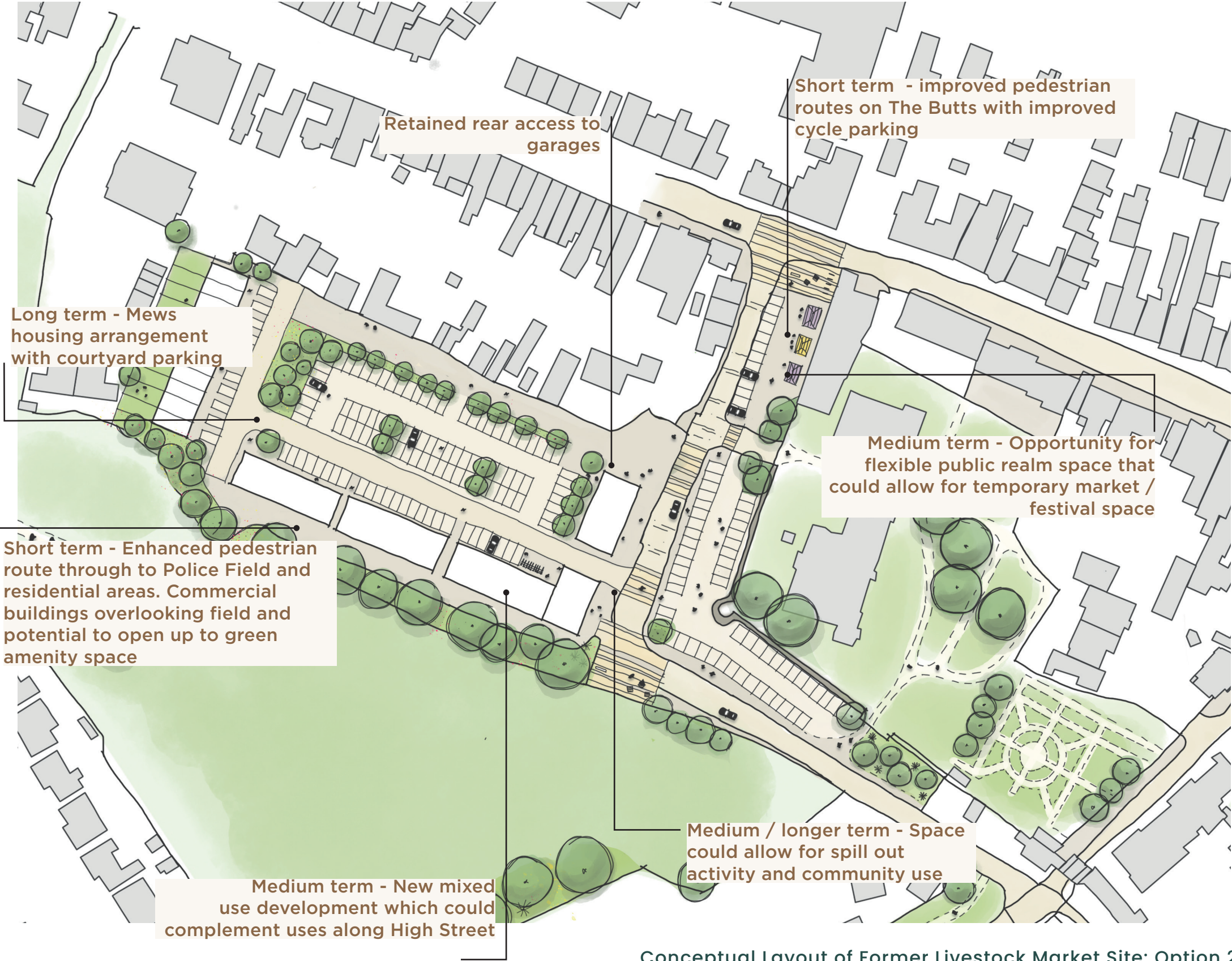
Conceptual Layout of Former Livestock Market Site: Option 1



# Option 2: Longer Term - Create A New Mixed Use Area



A mixed use area could combine, commercial and retail space with entertainment and residential



Conceptual Layout of Former Livestock Market Site: Option 2





Contemporary housing, Timekeepers Square, Salford



Enhanced public realm, with street planting, Ashington



Boutique entertainment, UK wide



# Opportunity Area 4: Bear Field

## What

Consultation and community feedback has highlighted a need to improve the offer for teenagers and young people in the town centre. Bear Field is identified as an important Opportunity Area that could provide improved facilities for the town, with a particular focus on younger members of the community. Currently it is a publicly accessible space adjacent to the Leisure Centre and is used by young people as a hang out space. Despite having a number of facilities such as skate ramps, a MUGA and a football pitch, it is not performing to its full potential with some of the facilities aging and falling into disrepair. Bear Field could provide better facilities for younger members of the community to socialise and be active in a safe environment. Reconfiguration and upgrading of the sports and leisure facilities will create a safe and active space for use throughout the year. The spaces around the Leisure Centre could also be enhanced by improving parking facilities for cyclists, EV charging and safer pedestrian routes walking to and from High Street. Improvements to existing routes around Bear Field will promote safer and more comfortable active travel links for children, walkers, wheelers and mobility impaired.

## How

### Short Term Projects

- The existing skatepark equipment is refurbished in its current location.
- Reinforced boundary planting to secure play space from the Broad Shoard.
- Improved cycle parking facilities at Leisure Centre and entrance at Eagle Lane.
- Signage at entry points to Bear Field to support wayfinding to High Street and Leisure Centre.
- Inclusion of natural play areas.
- Test closure of Eagle Lane to vehicular access to prioritise pedestrian routes to Bear Field from High Street.

### Medium Term Projects

- Making Bear Field part of a wider, connected network of green spaces in the town, through enhanced routing and signage.
- Creation of new footways through Bear Field, connecting North Road to the Leisure Centre and The Broad Shoard, will support safe active travel journeys.
- Improved lighting and seating would improve accessibility and safety in darker evenings.
- Introduction of a canopy to provide shelter during wet weather would ensure a usable space throughout the year.
- Reconfiguration of uses on Bear Field, consolidating the skatepark and MUGA into one designated area.
- Review of ramps and fencing between Bear Field and Leisure Centre to soften the link to leisure centre. This could include removal of the internal metal barriers and guiding people through soft landscaping and hedge planting.

### Long Term Projects

- Redesign of pedestrian movement from Westgate along Broad Shoard to ensure greater safety and accessibility for those with mobility impairments. This would include footpath improvements, safe crossing points and priority narrowing.

## Who

- Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Cowbridge Leisure Centre

## Where

- Bear Field
- The Broad Shoard
- Eagle Lane
- North Road

## Opportunity Area 4 contributes to the following objectives of the Vision:

- Safe And Sustainable Place For People To Move Through The Town
- A Multi-Functional Town Supporting A Changing Population
- A Great Place For Young People To Live, Thrive And Belong

## Opportunity Area 4 supports the following principles of the Placemaking for Wales Charter:

- People and Community
- Public Realm
- Movement
- Location





New facilities at Bear Field could include sheltered hangout space, cycle storage, play space and repair stands



Conceptual Layout of Bear Field



# Opportunity Area 5: High Street

## What

High streets that are attractive, safe and active not only invite visitors and residents to visit more frequently, they also attract business into the community. This is evidenced through successful high street regeneration projects in similar market towns across the UK and a recent study on re-addressing the balance of car parking, pedestrian footfall and business patronage (Common Misconceptions of Active Travel Investment, Sustrans 2019) illustrates that these types of changes can help sustain the longer term vitality Cowbridge. This Opportunity Area envisages a transformed experience of High Street by increasing activity throughout the day, promoting community interaction, supporting existing businesses and attracting new businesses too. This people focused environment will create a better experience for visitors and residents and increase footfall. By testing various interventions, whether that be additional seating or temporary carriageway narrowing, an improved High Street corridor is required to promote more footfall activity and celebrate the heritage, character and attraction of the high street.

## How

### Short Term Projects

- Test the temporary removal of some on street parking to provide temporary spaces for seating.
- Public art installations to bring colour and variety to the streetscape.
- Shop window trails for children (QR codes or painted images on shop fronts) as part of a curated visitor experience.
- Greater support for local traders to come together and promote the local business community. This could be through establishing a business/ enterprise group and encouraging greater collaboration during events.
- Encouraging stronger evening economy through twilight markets, increased food and beverage offer, evening classes etc.
- Upgrading of old street furniture and de-clutter the High Street. Also work with local business owners to freshen shop fronts and window dress.
- Introduction of additional sheltered and secured cycle parking.
- Improved wayfinding and signage strategy which is co-ordinated as part of a town centre heritage trail, showcasing the history of the towns historic buildings and spaces.
- Inclusion of gateway / arrival points on Eastgate, High Street and Westgate to celebrate the arrival into the town along its main high street, promoting local identity, heritage and community.

### Medium / Long Term Projects

- Changing of carriageway materials between Old Hall and Town Hall to celebrate historic features, calm vehicular traffic and prioritise pedestrian movements.
- Localised narrowing of the carriageway to allow for wider pavements and introduction of soft landscape features.
- Inclusion of safe crossing points on High Street to improve north south pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- Parking strategy to reduce on street parking and consolidate into areas behind High Street (subject to further parking study).
- Review of vacant properties for future commercial / mixed use development opportunities.

## Who

- Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council
- Businesses on High Street
- Local Community Groups

## Where

- Section of High Street between Old Hall and Town Hall
- Wider Town including Westgate to Eastgate

## Opportunity Area 5 contributes to the following objectives of the Vision:

- Sustain A Dynamic And Appealing High Street
- Safe And Sustainable Place For People To Move Through The Town
- Preserve and Celebrate
- A Multi-Functional Town Supporting A Changing Population

## Opportunity Area 5 supports the following principles of the Placemaking for Wales Charter:

- People and Community
- Public Realm
- Movement
- Location
- Identity
- Mix of Uses

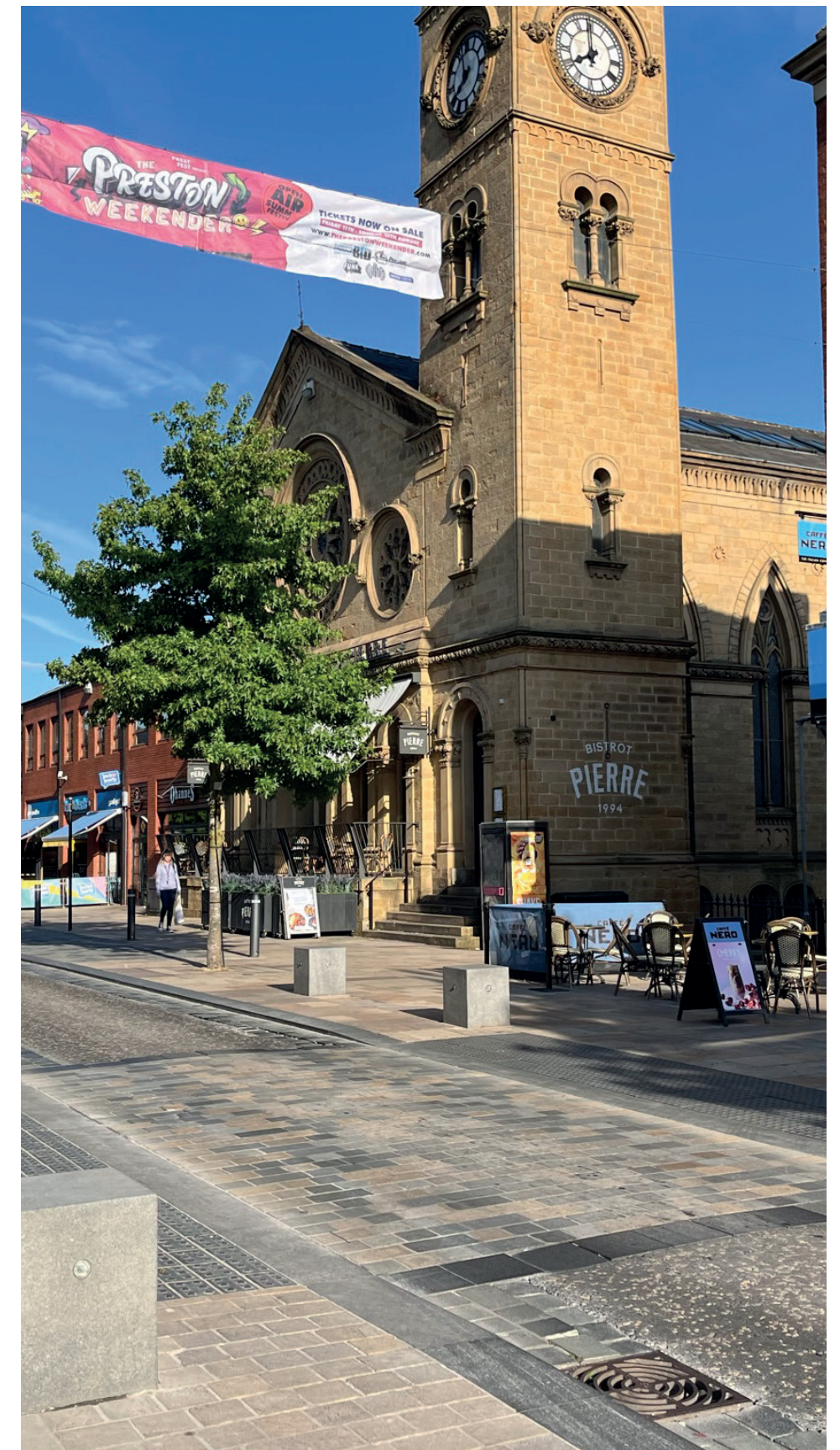




Permanent spill out space, Drury Street Dublin



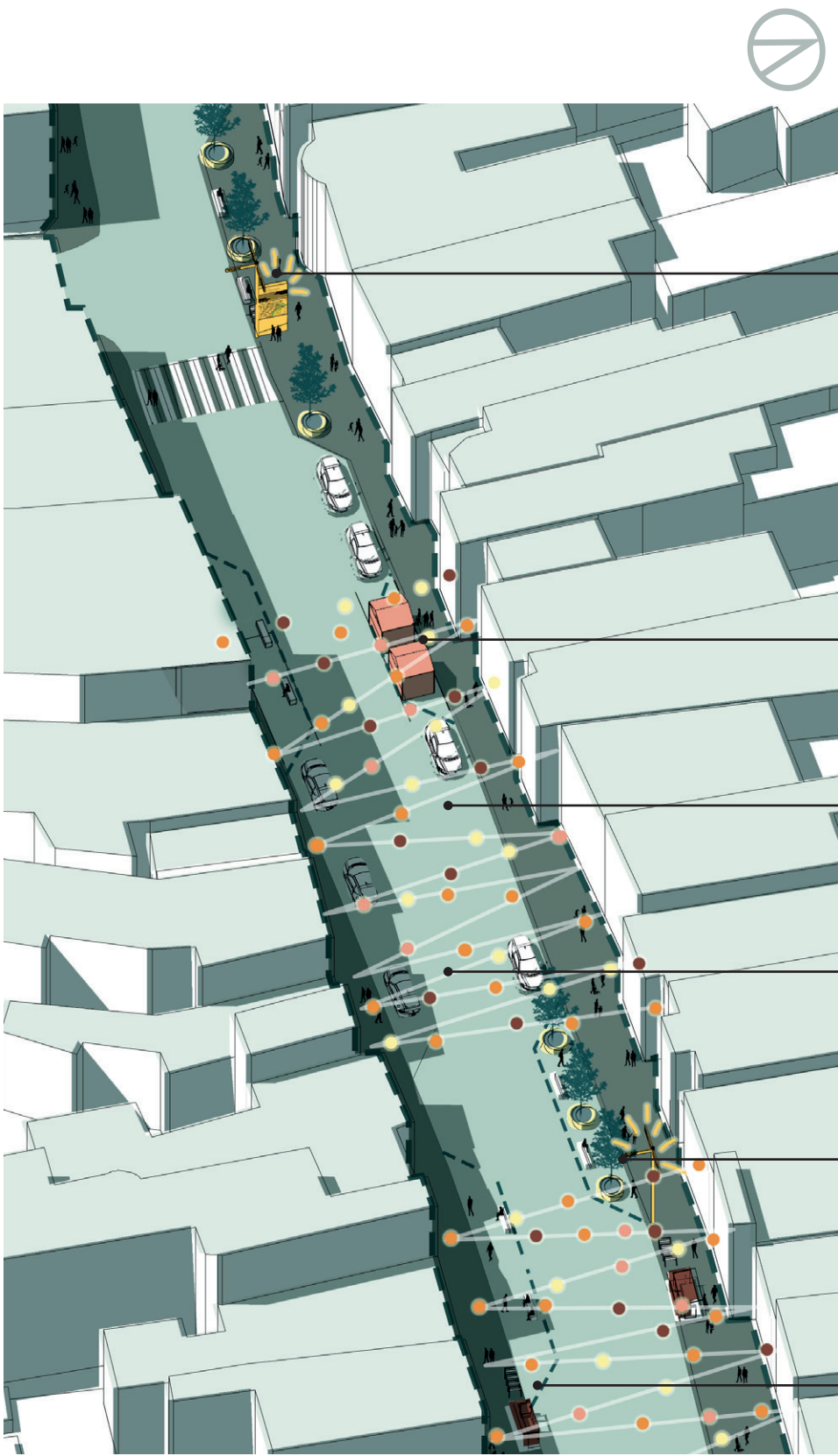
Temporary market event, Guildford High Street



Material improvements to calm traffic, Preston



# Short Term Public Realm Projects



Improved signage and wayfinding to be implemented along High Street as part of a wider strategy

Temporarily reducing the number of parking spaces to test appetite for spill out areas

Removal of street clutter to enhance High Street aesthetic

Temporary festoon lighting to celebrate High Street character

Improved street lighting along High Street as part of a town wide lighting strategy

Temporary planters and street furniture to be trialled in localised areas to reduce on street parking in localised areas



Credit: CycleHoop

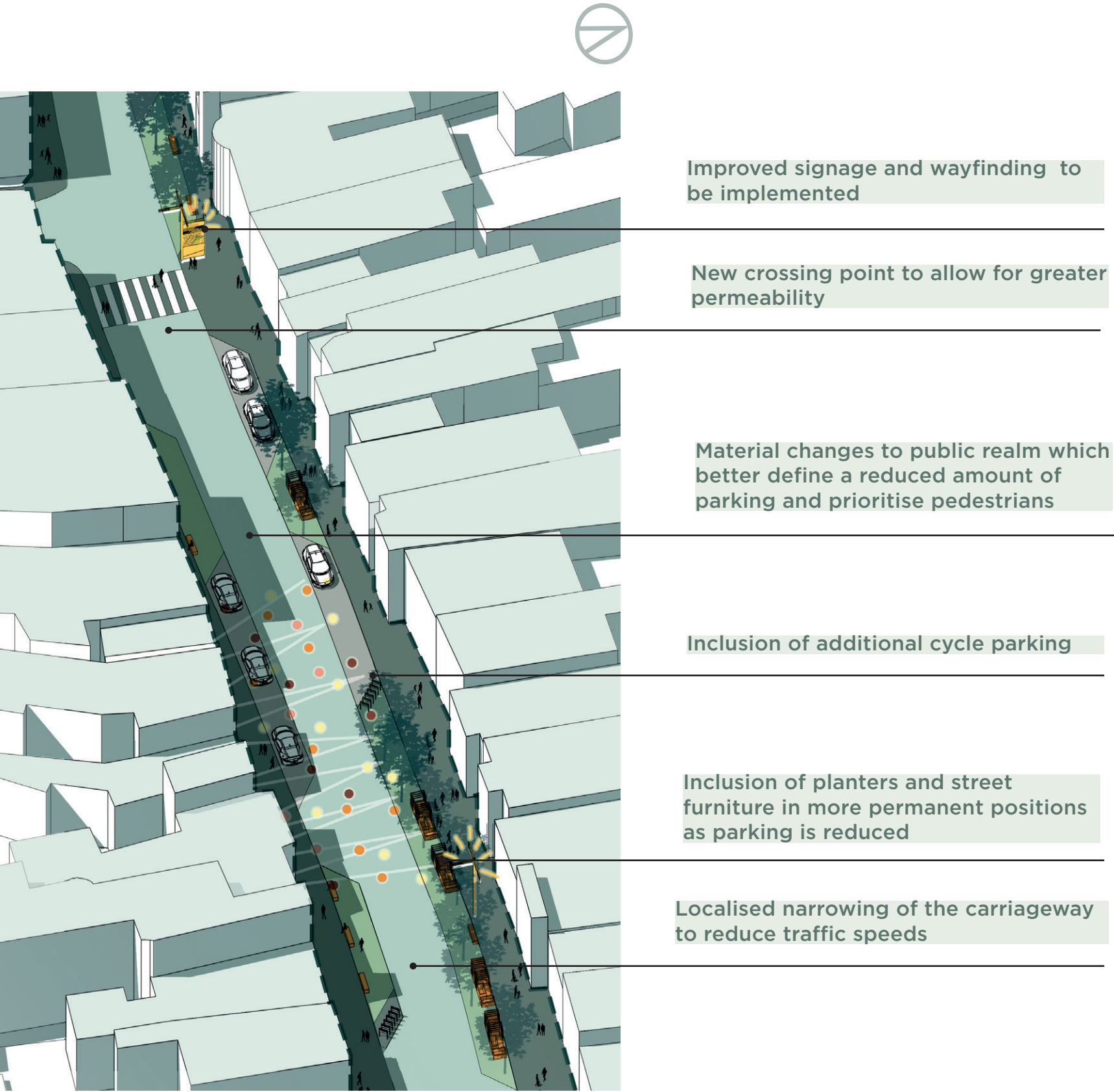


Short term projects could include temporary planting and seating, street decoration, improved signage, and improved cycle parking

Conceptual interpretation of short term interventions on High Street



# Medium - Longer Term Public Realm Projects



Conceptual interpretation of medium - long term interventions on High Street



Longer term projects could include permanent planting, material change and footpath expansion



# How Do We Get There?

## Town Wide Projects

### Sustain A Dynamic And Appealing High Street

- **Maintaining And Supporting A Thriving Local Economy** - A crucial element of Cowbridge's vitality is to ensure the local economy continues to thrive. This could include encouraging evening activity so that the town stays alive after 5pm. Local businesses can only thrive however if the footfall is encouraged and the town is easily accessible. Cowbridge must ensure there is a cohesive approach to public realm and movement to encourage re-use of derelict spaces as well as creating new spaces to promote pop up uses.
- **Creating a Diverse Mix of Town Centre Facilities** - It is noted that Cowbridge has a number of great facilities, however some of these go underutilised. A coordinated approach is needed to encourage the use of these spaces for the town's programme of events and for the benefit of community groups.
- **Gateway Arrival Points** - Cowbridge is a place to attract visitors and new residents. By creating a sense of arrival to the town through planting, material changes in highways or signage, visitors will know they have arrived in Cowbridge. Secondary to this, there can be a number of smaller incidental gateway points across the town that entice visitors and residents to explore further.

### Safe And Sustainable Place For People To Move Through The Town

- **Sustainable Mobility Through Improved Walking And Cycling Networks** - Walking routes should be complemented by improved crossing points / priority measures and cycle parking. Ensuring these networks are well lit and have the appropriate materials will promote greater use. This would allow residents and visitors to meander through the town, venturing from Bear Field up to St Quentin's Castle, from the community allotments across to Police Field and beyond as part of a co-ordinated and connected series of walking loops.
- **Promotion of Active Travel Corridors** - With a new influx of residents at Clare Garden Village as well as the surrounding schools on the periphery of the town centre, Active Travel corridors should be considered to allow residents and visitors the opportunity to access the town centre by foot, bike or other active means. The location of these routes has been highlighted earlier in the Movement Strategy.
- **Town Wide Parking Strategy** - In combination with various public realm interventions Cowbridge could consider a parking strategy to consolidate its parking spaces for visitors and residents and promote destination parking at the Former Livestock Market, Town Hall and under the Cowbridge bypass. This would be informed by further parking studies to understand demand and need. This study could also expand to include cycle parking facilities in the town too to better understand the low usage of existing facilities.

- **Junction Improvements At Aberthin Road** - More widely beyond the immediate town centre, junction improvements could be considered at Aberthin Road / Eastgate. This would help to address congestion at key times of the day, but could also play a part in a wider active travel strategy for the town, creating safe travel routes from Cowbridge School into the town centre.
- **Cohesive Signage and Wayfinding** - To encourage more exploration by residents and visitors it is key that a cohesive wayfinding and signage strategy is in place for Cowbridge. This will allow residents and tourists to navigate the many walking routes around Cowbridge that connect the various assets of the town and at the same time, remove street clutter.



## Preserve and Celebrate

- **Showcasing Cowbridge's Heritage** – Town Hall and Old Hall already promote the town's heritage but there is scope to expand upon this and to link better to wider tourism, arts and culture attractions and opportunities. The potential to embrace technology to broaden the appeal of the town should be considered. The use of QR codes or apps means more insight can be offered to more visitors. Trails could also be themed such as pub trails. Consideration should be given as to how to use these to encourage visitors to venture into other parts of Cowbridge.
- **Raising The Profile Of Cowbridge** – Consideration as to whether a single platform providing information for local residential, businesses and visitors could be prioritised. The website could also be linked to other partner websites like VoGC and Vale wide websites. Content could be added to showcase the town including profiles of local businesses (including individuals to make it more personal), local walks, cycle routes etc. Cowbridge has considerable scope to further enhance its profile as a tourist destination linking into marketing campaigns and social media in respect of St Quentin's Castle and other local visitor attractions.
- **Opening Up The River** – The River Thaw is somewhat of a hidden asset in the town, nestled amongst leafy walking routes or overshadowed by buildings on High Street. There is an opportunity to open up interfaces with the river allowing visitors and residents to appreciate this feature. Natural seating areas would complement the river course in parkland settings, allowing for space to sit and relax in nature. Frontage onto the river in the town centre could be softened. The area along Penny Lane feels harsh and engineered at the moment and there are more planting and biodiversity opportunities.

## A Multi-Functional Town, Supporting A Changing Population

- **Appointment of Town Centre Champions**
  - The identification of a nominated body (go to person/champion) within VoGC or Town Council who would understand local priorities for Cowbridge and would support them to access appropriate officers within key departments and also would seek to unblock issues.
- **Greater Stewardship From The Community**
  - Encourage the local community to take ownership and stewardship of proposed town centre projects and interventions, coming together through various groups and societies to implement change in the built and natural environments of Cowbridge. This could be achieved through more volunteering opportunities, encouraging all ages to get involved in their town centre.

## A Great Place For Young People To Live, Thrive And Belong

- **Creating a Diverse Mix of Town Centre Facilities** – Similar to supporting a dynamic and thriving high street, there is value in creating diversity of uses and facilities in support of young people in Cowbridge and its wider catchment. A variety of uses caters for the various interest this demographic have, whether that be sports, dance or arts and culture. An example of the above point is the expansion of the Cowbridge Athletic Club House which already provides an additional community space in the town for hire and with additional space could be used by many more groups and societies as well as being able to cater for larger events and family occasions. This can be further enhanced by the opportunities at Bear Field and Old Hall.
- **Opportunities for Volunteering** – To ensure teenagers and young people have a sense of belonging and pride in their town, volunteer opportunities are a great way to get this group involved. Whether that be community litter picks, bag packing in shops, or supporting at local events and festivals, giving this age group ownerships and stewardship for activities in town will build a sense of belonging.



# Chapter 7

## MAKING IT HAPPEN





# Making It Happen

## Governance and Delivery

The aim of this Placemaking Plan is to provide the VoGC and Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council with the means to take a strategic role in progressing and supporting the projects highlighted within the opportunity areas and those which are town wide. This will entail collaboration with the private sector (local businesses, developers) and local partners (community groups and organisations) to determine detailed delivery plans for each proposed project.

## Phasing

The opportunity areas and town wide projects identified in Chapter 6 range from projects which can be progressed straight away to long term aspirations which will require feasibility and funding before they can be delivered. The Placemaking Plan identifies 5 key opportunity areas which support the vision and objectives for Cowbridge:

- Town Hall Square,
- Old Hall and Old Hall Gardens
- Former Livestock Market Site
- Bear Field
- High Street

The VoGC and Town Council are hoping to pursue a number of the identified actions, as quick wins, recognising the importance of building momentum. Through public consultation, priority opportunities have been identified. Broadly speaking, the phasing of town centre and town wide projects would be delivered across short term (1-3 years), medium term (5 years) and longer term (10 years) time frames.

## Achieving Success

The Town Council and VoGC, alongside delivery partners will need to determine a detailed action plan. This will align to available funding, or support available, to successfully deliver.

It is important to acknowledge that this indicative programme is not fixed and if specific sources of funding are identified, the programme should be adapted to respond to the opportunity. Delivery partners should welcome the opportunity to test new approaches. For example temporary parking removal, to gauge whether reducing car access to encourage pedestrian movement or to provide outside dining space would benefit High Street. This approach should be continued so that rather than a public realm project having to be worked up in huge detail and then significant resources found to deliver it, more temporary solutions can be tested to determine whether a more permanent solution is required or desirable. Changes are much more likely to be embraced by businesses and supported by local residents if they know that ideas are being tested and monitored, and if they do not work, that alternatives can be found.

## Funding Opportunities

Potential sources of funding to support delivery of the Placemaking Plan projects could include:

- **Transforming Towns Funding** - This funding is available to local authorities who can work with partner organisations to develop projects.
- **The UK Shared Prosperity Fund** - A programme of funding providing £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than competition.
- **Active Travel Fund** - This fund provides £5 million across Wales to support projects which encourage people to choose active patterns of travel.
- **Private Sector** - Working with local landowners to encourage them to bring their sites forward or local developers working with local businesses to encourage them to deliver social value and encouraging local specialists to add value for example around marketing and landscaping
- **Public Sector Partners** - Encouraging public partners to invest their budgets into the area.
- **£106 Monies** from new developments.
- **Community Funds** - There are a number of funding pots available that community groups can apply for.
- **New Funding Streams** - The Placemaking Plan has been prepared to be flexible so that projects can be adapted to respond to new funding sources which the current or a new Government may look to bring forward.

Importantly, the Placemaking Plan will provide the platform to support funding bids by public partners and community groups. It must be recognised that in the current period of public sector spending cuts, the Vale of Glamorgan Council cannot be expected to lead and fund all the projects identified in the Placemaking Plan. Future investment in Cowbridge will be maximised where public and private partners come together with the local community to access available funding and harness local talent and resources.



# Making It Happen

## Project Action Plan

The following table provides more detail on the projects which make up the proposals of the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan. The projects identified will need further collaboration between the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town Council as well as discussions with the local community, business and stakeholders to test deliverability. It should also be noted that the Council will support both the local community and local businesses where possible to bring these projects forward.

Delivery and Implementation	Opportunity Area	Project	Cost	Possible Delivery Partners	Possible Funding Opportunities
Short Term	Town Hall	• Provide flexible exhibition, working and function spaces	Low	• VoGC • Town Council • Community Groups • Local businesses • Volunteer Groups	• Council Base Budget • S106 • Future Structural Funding • Lottery Fund • Transforming Towns Fund • Welsh Government grants • UK Government grants • Asset Transfer Grant • Community Facilities Grant • Charter Trust Seed Funding
Medium Term		• Internal improvements such as painting and decorating and signage	Low		
		• Upgrades to seating and street furniture around Town Hall	Medium		
		• Improved lighting to the front of the Town Hall	Medium		
		• Explore concepts to reconfigure movement around Town Hall Square	Medium		
		• Creation of an outdoor civic space to allow for community celebrations and dwell time - this could include improvements to local toilet facilities	Medium / High		
		• Inclusion of digital bus timetables and improvements to bus shelter to rear of Town Hall	Medium / High		
		• Bike hire as part of the outdoor civic space	Medium		
		• Inclusion of ATM machine	Medium		
		• Improved signage and wayfinding as part of a wider town centre strategy	Medium		
Long Term		• Overhaul of the public realm around the Town Hall	High		
		• Review and reconfiguration of junctions to High Street	High		
Short Term		Old Hall	• Building a greater presence and promotion of events		
Medium Term	• Creation of gallery and exhibition space in underused rooms within the building to support creatives in the community		Low		
	• Reaching out wider to community groups to offer space for events for example, working with CADS		Low		
	• Signage and wayfinding from High Street thorough Old Hall and into Old Hall Gardens		Low		
	• Enhancing the setting of the building at the rear, encouraging people to dwell in the area		Medium		
Long Term	• Working in collaboration with the library, both buildings could create a defined outdoor space in the gardens		Medium		
	• Built extension to rear of Old Hall to provide additional space for classes and community events		High		



# Making It Happen

Delivery and Implementation	Opportunity Area	Project	Cost	Possible Delivery Partners	Possible Funding Opportunities						
Short Term	Bear Field	• Reinforced boundary planting at Bear field to secure play space from the Broad Shoard	Medium	• VoGC • Leisure Centre • Local community groups • Community volunteers • Local schools	• Council Base Budget • S106 • Future Structural Funding • Sports Wales • Welsh Government grants • UK Government grants						
		• Improved access points to Bear Field from North Road	Low								
		• Improved cycle parking	Low								
		• Inclusion of natural play areas	Low								
		• Test closure of Eagle Lane to vehicular access to prioritise pedestrian routes to Bear Field from High Street	Low								
Medium Term		• Signage to support wayfinding to High Street	Medium								
		• Making Bear Field part of a wider, connected network of green spaces in the town through cohesive wayfinding strategy	Low								
		• Creation of new footways through Bear Field connecting North Road to the Leisure Centre and Broad Shoard	Medium								
		• Improved lighting and seating	Medium								
Long Term		• Reconfiguration of uses on Bear Field. Consolidating the skatepark and MUGA into one designated area	Medium								
		• Review of ramps and fencing between Bear Field and Leisure Centre to feel less domineering	Medium / High								
		• Redesign of pedestrian movement from Westgate along Broad Shoard	High								
Short Term	Former Livestock Market Site	• Encouraging parking efficiencies with bay defining	Low	• VoGC • Town Council • CADS • Scout Club • Community groups • Community volunteers • Private developers	• Council Base Budget • S106 • Future Structural Funding • Transforming Towns • Private / Independent • Welsh Government grants • UK Government grants						
		• Natural planting enhancements to Police Fields to increase bio-diversity	Low								
Medium Term		• Greater overhaul of the car park, with improved surfaces, designated bays and EV charging	Medium / High								
		• Spill out space / outdoor space for CADS and Scout Club	Low								
		• Improvement routing along the Former Livestock Market site from The Butts to Police Field would allow for a better defined and safer route for pedestrians	Medium								
• Inclusion of planting, SUDs features and enhanced planting edges to Police Field		Medium									
Long Term		• A mixed use development to complement the core of the town supporting local vitality					High				
		• Upgrade the public realm along The Butts					High				



# Making It Happen

Delivery and Implementation	Opportunity Area	Project	Cost	Possible Delivery Partners	Possible Funding Opportunities
Short Term	High Street	• Public art events to liven the streetscape	Low / Medium	• VoGC • Town Council • Local businesses • Community art groups • Community groups • Volunteer groups • Local stakeholders • Local schools	• Council Base Budget • S106 • Future Structural Funding • Transforming Towns Fund • Welsh Government grants • UK Government grants
		• Co-ordinated effort by local businesses and communities to de-clutter High Street and freshen shop fronts	Low		
		• Introduction of temporary seating and planting to shape the streetscape and test appetite for greater dwell space	Low		
		• A concept design study should be progressed, working with businesses to develop a phased and costed strategy for improvements to High Street such as localised narrowing of the carriageway, new and improved crossings, and street furniture	Medium / High		
Medium Term		• Improved wayfinding and signage strategy complementing the historical character of Cowbridge	Low / Medium		
		• Inclusion of gateway / arrival points on Eastgate, High Street and Westgate	Medium		
		• Localised narrowing of the carriageway to allow for wider pavements	Medium / High		
		• Delivery of safe crossing points on High Street to improve north south permeability	Medium		
		• Parking strategy to reduce on street parking and consolidate into areas behind High Street	Low / Medium		
Longer Term		• Changing of materiality between Old Hall and Town Hall that signifies a change in vehicular movement and prioritising pedestrians	High		



# Making It Happen

## Town Wide Projects

Delivery and Implementation	Project	Cost	Possible Delivery Partners	Possible Funding Opportunities
<b>Short Term</b>	• Raising the profile of Cowbridge via online and offline channels	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VoGC</li> <li>Town Council</li> <li>Charter Trust</li> <li>Community Groups</li> <li>Local Businesses</li> <li>Local stakeholders</li> <li>Volunteer groups</li> <li>Local schools</li> <li>Local community</li> <li>Private developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council base budget</li> <li>S106</li> <li>Future structural funding</li> <li>Lottery Fund</li> <li>Heritage Lottery Fund</li> <li>Transforming Towns Fund</li> <li>Welsh Government grants</li> <li>UK Government grants</li> <li>Asset Transfer grant</li> <li>Community facilities grant</li> <li>Charter Trust seed funding</li> <li>Private / independent</li> </ul>
	• Appointment of town centre champions	Low		
<b>Medium Term</b>	• Integrating local walking and cycling routes / active travel	Low		
	• Sustainable mobility through Improved walking and cycling networks	Medium		
	• Cohesive signage and wayfinding	Medium		
	• Creation of overspill car park under Cowbridge bypass - could be informal in the medium term but more defined and designed longer term if successful	Medium / High		
	• Gateway arrival points	Medium		
<b>Long Term</b>	• Creating and maintaining a thriving local economy	Medium / High		
	• Opening up the river front	Low / Medium		
	• Diversifying the mix of town centre facilities	Medium		
	• Opening up the River Thaw	Medium / High		
	• Junction improvements at Aberthin Road	High		

The table below provides an overview of the potential test projects and further studies which could be carried out in support of those listed above. The test projects and studies identified will need further collaboration between the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town Council as well as third parties to deliver.

Test Projects and Further Studies	Cost	Possible Delivery Partners	Possible Funding Opportunities
Trial reconfiguration of the one way routing around the Town Hall	Low / Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VoGC</li> <li>Town Council</li> <li>Charter Trust</li> <li>Community Groups</li> <li>Local Businesses</li> <li>Local stakeholders</li> <li>Volunteer groups</li> <li>Local schools</li> <li>Local community</li> <li>Private developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council base budget</li> <li>S106</li> </ul>
Concept designs to reconfigure area at bus terminus	Medium		
Test closure of Eagle Lane to vehicular access to prioritise pedestrian routes to Bear Field from High Street	Low		
Town wide parking study to understand use and availability of existing parking spaces and inform town wide parking strategy	Medium		
Introduction of temporary seating and planting to shape the streetscape and test appetite for greater dwell space	Low		
A Concept Design Study should be progressed, working with businesses to develop a phased and costed strategy for improvements to High Street	Medium / High		



# Appendix A



# Summary: Offline Engagement Activity for Cowbridge Placemaking

**Placemaking activity in Cowbridge began in January 2023 when VoGC Officers met with Elected Members and Officers of Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council, along with key stakeholders identified by the Town Council where the Placemaking process and objectives were explained to those present.**

After a period of planning and development, the first public facing engagement activity took place in Cowbridge at the Coronation Picnic which was held in the Bear field in Cowbridge on the 2nd of May 2023. This marked the beginning of the 'on the ground' activity that is outlined in the table opposite.

Alongside these public-facing activities, VoGC Officers and Town Council Members have continued to meet on a weekly basis to monitor progress and plan Placemaking activities. Bi-monthly meetings of the Town Council's Placemaking Working Group also continue to take place. Membership of this group primarily consists of Elected members of the Town Council and VoGC Officers, but meetings are also sporadically attended by other stakeholders from the local community.

As would be expected, some of the engagement activities listed within the table above proved more successful than others in raising awareness of the purposes of Placemaking, and in capturing the views of residents about the priorities for the town over the near and medium future.

Emerging themes from the activities undertaken can be briefly summarised as follows:

## Connectivity

- Maintenance, signage and usability of footpaths
- Desire for safe, traffic free cycling routes
- Desire for safe pedestrian routes, within town centre and connecting to neighbouring communities
- Active travel routes for young people – for leisure and to and from schools

Date & Location	Activity Type	Summary description
02/05/23 Bear Field	Map-based engagement with residents at Coronation Picnic	Broad demographic of residents attending event were introduced to concept of Placemaking via placing heart stickers on map of the town to show places they value and love to spend time. Comment slips also used for suggestions for improvements/further detail. C. 150 responses recorded.
01/07/23 Town Hall	Workshop activity at Mayor's Coffee Morning	Residents attending event were invited to form groups on tables and to complete 'Placemaking Grids' using three of the Placemaking themes to create a Gaps and Assets table for the town. C. 40 people engaged.
06/07/23 Cowbridge Comprehensive School	Awareness raising session on Placemaking by Town Mayor to School Council	15 pupils engaged. No feedback collected as awareness raising only.
13/09/23 Duke of Wellington pub	Workshop activity for business owners/traders	Invited attendees were asked to form groups on tables and to create Gaps and Assets table related to running a business in the town. Attendees were also asked to separately complete the exercise as residents of the town. Information regarding Business Grants and pilot local banking hub was also provided to attendees. C. 25 people engaged [note: this was a disappointing turn out given promotion of the event by the Town Council with the local business community]
10/10/23 Cowbridge Comprehensive School	Placemaking awareness raising session and workshop activity with Year 7 pupils	Informal introduction to Placemaking plus comment sheet exercise. 60 pupils engaged.
14/11/23 Town Hall	Meeting with Members of Cowbridge Charter Trust	Introduction to Placemaking objectives by VoGC Officers plus request for input. Written submission offered and received Jan 24.
15/01/24 Cross Inn (on junction between CGV and road to Llanblethian)	Clare Garden Village and Llanblethian Residents drop-in session	Residents were invited to complete short questionnaires focused on how they move between home and local facilities and for CVG residents on whether they felt themselves to be residents of Cowbridge. C. 60 people engaged.
22/01/24 Town Hall	Workshop activity with Yr 3-6 pupils from Y Bont Faen Primary School	Pupils undertook a mapping exercise and a likes and dislikes questionnaire. C. 25 pupils engaged
02/02/24 Waitrose Foyer	Engagement with shoppers (residents and visitors)	Shoppers were invited to place like and dislike stickers on map of Cowbridge and to 'vote on what they considered most important out of the 3 emerging themes of connectivity, youth facilities and cultural and recreational facilities. C. 80 people engaged.



# Summary: Offline Engagement Activity for Cowbridge Placemaking

- Public transport options – focus on unreliability of services.
- Poor mobile signal
- Poor Broadband speeds
- High levels of walking between locations reported – e.g. from Llanblethian and Clare Garden Village to town centre as well as recreational walking on local footpaths. Walking options are clearly valued.

## Facilities for Young People

- Frequently highlighted as lacking by older respondents – with particular focus on activities/ facilities for older teenagers
- Repeated call for return of Youth Club by older respondents, this request not so marked amongst younger respondents.
- Older respondents report higher satisfaction with facilities such as Play Areas for Primary aged young people.
- Mixed attitudes regarding provision of new skatepark / upgrade to existing skatepark.
- Older respondents report needing to travel to neighbouring communities such as Llantwit Major to access sports activities and facilities for children / grandchildren
- CGV respondents positive regarding re-location of Iolo Morganwg Welsh Medium school to new site within the development.

## Natural and Built Environment

- High emphasis on value of green spaces in and around the town for well-being / recreation. Rural location /access to green space often cited as reason for move to the town.

Date & Location	Activity Type	Summary description
26/02/24 Duke of Wellington Pub	Residents Drop-in	It was hoped that residents would respond to the invitation delivered to all Cowbridge residents to attend the drop-in session and have their say. Unfortunately, less than 5 people were engaged with during the evening.
04/03/24 Duke of Wellington Pub	Residents Drop-in	The second of the three promoted dates. Engagement was better on this date, particularly with residents of the local Independent Living Facility. Questionnaires were completed. C. 20 residents engaged.
05/03/24 Welsh St Donats (neighbouring village)	Engagement with Community Council	Cllr Malcolm Wilson addressed the Community Council Meeting and promoted the online survey to members.
11/03/24 Farmers Arms, Aberthin (neighbouring village)	Drop-in aimed at residents of Aberthin Village	The third of the three promoted dates. Unfortunately less than 5 people were engaged with.
13/03/24 & 20/03/24 Cowbridge Library	Engagement with attendees of Toddler and Knitting sessions	Promotion of the Online Survey
20/03/24 Cowbridge Leisure Centre	Engagement with residents using the Leisure Centre Facilities	Promotion of the Online survey
22/03/24 Filco Supermarket Cowbridge	Engagement with shoppers	Promotion of online survey and mapping exercise. C.40-50 residents engaged.
08/04/24 Old Hall Cowbridge	Meeting with Yr 12 Cowbridge Comprehensive Pupil	Making connection to attempt wider consultation with this age group.
25/04/24 Horse & Groom Pub Cowbridge	Focus Group with Food and Drink retailers/businesses	Key stakeholder group
29/04/24 Ysgol Iolo Morganwg	Workshop activity with pupils at Welsh Medium Primary School	Collating feedback from Primary age pupils on how they use the public spaces in the town
20/06/24	Meeting with Cowbridge Charter Trust	Key Stakeholder Group
23/09/24 – two weeks	Two weeks lunchtime engagement sessions with Cowbridge Comprehensive Pupils	Yrs 7- 13 – Key stakeholder group – with particular emphasis on Bear Field Recreation facilities



# Summary: Offline Engagement Activity for Cowbridge Placemaking

- High reporting of recreational and active travel through green spaces
- Physic Garden often marked as space of high value to residents.
- Historic features have been less strongly marked as of value to residents than perhaps pre-supposed. Residents appear to value the unique character of the town without highlighting particular historical / cultural features.
- Most highlighted issue with town infrastructure is the surfacing of the Butts car park on the site of the old Cattle Market.

## Local Business Economy / Public Services and Facilities

- Focus on insufficiency of local health provision – GP surgeries / care services.
- High level of dissatisfaction with facilities for physical activity, improvement to facilities provided by the Leisure Centre requested. Repeated requests for a swimming pool, from both older and younger respondents.
- High value is placed on the range of independent shops.
- Younger respondents would value greater range of shops, to include cheaper options.
- Younger and older respondents report supermarket shopping outside of the town due to cost issues associated with the two supermarkets within the town.
- Respondents report disquiet with restaurants d cafes having recently closed. The hospitality offer of the town is seen as having declined post-Covid.

Date & Location	Activity Type	Summary description
22/10/24	Cowbridge Traders Group	Discussion of next steps for Traders – possibility of formation of formalised Traders Group
25/11/24	Cowbridge Scouts Group	With reference to Cattle Market area
9/12/24	Sir Thomas Mansel Franklen & Cowbridge School Trust	With reference to Cattle Market area and Old Cricket field

Draft Placemaking Plan Public Consultation		
21/10/24	Drop-in session at the Old Hall to view the proposals in the draft placemaking plan	Charter Trust, History Society, Old Hall Gardens volunteers, Sir Thomas Mansel Franklen & Cowbridge School Trust
24/10/24	Evening meeting with CADS representatives to view the proposals in the draft placemaking plan	Members of CADS
25/10/24	Meeting with Community Council representatives to view the proposals in the draft placemaking plan	Penllyn, Welsh St Donats, and Llanfair Community Councils
30/10/24	Meeting with Legacy Leisure at the Leisure Centre to view proposals in the draft placemaking plan	Legacy Leisure
31/10/24	Evening meeting with the Scouts to view proposals in the draft placemaking plan	Cowbridge Scouts
7/11/24 – 15/11/24	Drop-in sessions every day (First day at Town Hall, then at Old Hall) Exhibition of information panels	Members of the public



# Appendix B



# Planning Policy Context

**There are a number of existing plans and strategies which have guided the production process and outcomes for the placemaking plan. These have been summarised below.**

## Placemaking in Wales

The policies listed below set out key placemaking principles, examples and outcomes, which have been used to structure the Placemaking Plan itself, introduce talking points during consultation and guide prioritisation of different interventions.

### Planning Policy Wales (PPW) - Edition 12, 2024

This policy sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government to ensure the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

The policy emphasises the need to maximise well-being and creating sustainable places through placemaking and identifies four strategic themes which contribute to placemaking through the planning system:

- Strategic and Spatial Choices
- Productive and Enterprising Places
- Distinctive and Natural Places
- Active and Social Places

### Placemaking Guide, 2020

The Placemaking Guide 2020 sets out more information on the aims of placemaking and how it can be achieved through new development and regeneration. It identifies key qualities of good placemaking and what to avoid as well as providing case studies to detail good practices and successful outcomes.

The document also sets out the importance of involving the community to better understand place.

## Other Sources of Guidance

The Placemaking Plan also draws on a range of other studies and strategic statements including:

- Regenerating Town Centres in Wales, Audit Wales (2021)
- A vision for Welsh towns, Federation of Small Businesses (2022)
- Small towns, big issues: Aligning business models, organisation and imagination, Welsh Government / Foundational Economic Research (2021)
- Cowbridge with Llanblethian Conservation Area: Appraisal and Management Plan (2010)

## Sustainability

Alongside Placemaking, sustainable regeneration and creating sustainable development is a key driver for change in Cowbridge. The following policies are relevant to the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan:

### Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

The Act gives a legally-binding common purpose – the 7 well-being goals – for national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. It details the ways in which specified public bodies must work, and work together to improve the well-being of Wales.

**Public Services Boards (PSBs)** were established in each local authority area in Wales through the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Through the Vale PSB and its Well-being Plan, partners are working together to improve the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of the Vale of Glamorgan.

## Project Zero

Project Zero is the Vale of Glamorgan Council's response to the climate change emergency. It brings together the wide range of work and opportunities available to tackle the climate emergency, reduce the Council's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and encourage others to make positive changes.

### Vale of Glamorgan Council's Climate Change Plan 2021-30

Developed through Project Zero, the Council's climate change plan sets out 18 critical challenges and 80 underlying actions that will drive positive change. These include challenges on energy, waste, water, land use and transport amongst others.



The 7 well-being goals defined in the Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Credit: Welsh Government



# Planning Policy Context

**There are a number of existing plans and strategies which have guided the production process and outcomes for the placemaking plan. These have been summarised below.**

## Wales National Policy

### Future Wales - The National Plan 2040, 2021

This framework, published by the Welsh Government in 2021, plans for the change and development Wales will need over the next two decades and influences significant areas of Council activity. It identifies 11 overarching ambitions based on the national planning principles and national sustainable placemaking outcomes set out in Planning Policy Wales.

Of relevance to Cowbridge are the following policies:

#### Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking

Which establishes how growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infrastructure.

#### Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership

Which identifies the public sectors role in supporting and enabling regeneration by progressing investments and adhering to placemaking principles.

#### Policy 6 – Town Centre First

Which identifies the need to provide significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities within town and city centre first.

#### Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

Which states the importance of ensuring the enhancement of biodiversity, resilience of ecosystems and the provision of green infrastructure.

#### Policy 10 – International Connectivity

Which identifies Cardiff Airport as a Strategic Gateway and identifies the need for local areas to support international connectivity roles by ensuring their operation is not constrained or compromised.

#### Policy 11 – National Connectivity

Which encourages longer-distance trips to be made by public transport through improvements to the rail, bus, strategic road and national cycle network.

#### Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity

Which identifies support and investment in regional connectivity through new/improved active travel, bus and metro networks and a transition to ultra low emissions vehicles, in urban areas.

#### Policy 36 – South East Metro

Which requires local authorities to support the South East Metro and active travel networks to key stops. Although proposed lines won't pass directly through Cowbridge, it will pass through neighbouring towns in Pontyclun and Bridgend.

## Regional Policy

### Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

The Vale of Glamorgan is one of the ten authorities which make up the Cardiff Capital Region. It is the largest city-region in Wales and accounts for approximately 50% of the total economic output of the Welsh economy, 49% of total employment and has over 38,000 active businesses.

The City Deal secures £1.2 billion of investment and expect to deliver 25,000 new jobs and leverage £4 billion of private sector investment.

## Local Policy

### The Corporate Plan, Vale 2030 Strong Communities with a Bright Future

The VoGC's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2030, Strong Communities with a Bright Future, sets out an ambitious programme of work the Council will take to deliver on its vision by:

- Creating a great place to live, work and visit
- Respecting and celebrating the environment
- Giving everyone a good start in life
- Supporting and protecting those who need us
- Being the best Council we can be

### Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026

The Council are currently working on a Replacement Local Development Plan which will help shape the Vale over the next 15 years.

Current policy, written in 2011, classifies Cowbridge as a 'Service Centre Settlement' and identifies it as a sustainable settlement considered capable of accommodating additional development during the plan period.



# Planning Policy Context

The plan highlights the following area objectives for Cowbridge (p35):

- Provide for a range and choice of housing to meet the needs of existing residents and the residents of surrounding rural communities.
- Preserve and enhance the historic built environment given its significant contribution to the character and vitality of the town's commercial core and its role as a tourism and leisure destination.
- Safeguard and enhance important open spaces within and adjoining the Cowbridge and Llanblethian Conservation Areas.
- Reinforce the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the town centre by maintaining a diverse range of retail, commercial and community uses and encouraging the town's vibrant evening economy.
- Improve the town's existing bus interchange and favour proposals that provide enhanced walking and cycling facilities to and within Cowbridge to alleviate traffic congestion, particularly through traffic along the High Street.
- Promote development proposals which provide opportunities for additional or improved infrastructure, including short stay parking facilities within the town centre.

Other key policies which are relevant to the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan include:

## Policy SP7 – Transportation

Which identified a new cycle route at A48 Culverhouse Cross to Brigend via Cowbridge and bus priority measures along the A48 Culverhouse Cross to Bridgend via Cowbridge.

## Policy SP11 – Tourism and Leisure

Which encourages proposals which promote the Vale of Glamorgan as a tourism and leisure destination.

## Policy MG2 – Housing Allocations

Which identified Cowbridge as able to accommodate around 646 new homes to meet housing demand.

## Cowbridge with Llanblethian Conservation Area: Appraisal and Management Plan, 2010

The appraisal records and analyses the various features that give the Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest. It also sets out a management plan which identifies proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

It is a comprehensive document, relevant to the Placemaking Plan, and the following summary (p8) identifies special interest features within Cowbridge:

- Small historic town of outstanding archaeological and historic merit. Many sites exhibit historic 'layering' of multiple periods;
- Historic core of Cowbridge reflects the plan of the walled town planted in the 13th century with vestiges of the walls remaining and existing South Gate;
- Strong east-west alignment of plan from Eastgate – High Street – Westgate with enclosing historic frontages;
- Bridging point across the River Thaw and river setting;
- Important terraces of historic buildings along the prime historic frontage of diverse architectural character, with many identified listed buildings;
- Key listed buildings including the Town Hall, Holy Cross Church and Churchyard, South Gate, former Cowbridge Grammar School and the Great House;
- Important sequences of open space to the south of the east-west principal road alignment including Old Hall Gardens, the Physic Garden, Holy Cross Churchyard, the Twt and park area along the River Thaw;
- Enclosed historic courtyards to the north and south of the principal historic frontage in High Street, such as Verity's Court;
- Important 18th century period detailing of historic frontages reflecting the prosperity of the town in the period as a coaching town and regional centre;
- Important 16th and 17th century detailing, in particular to interiors.





Creu Lleoedd Cymru  
Placemaking Wales

Llofnodydd y Starter

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Trawsnewid Trefi  
Transforming Towns



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

