

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council



Llantrisant Old Town Regeneration Strategy



Final Report

05th August 2005

Report no: 0001-NE02515-NER-02



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1 Introduction

1.1 The Commission

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the Llantrisant Old Town Forum commissioned Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd in partnership with Davies Sutton Architects (providing conservation and architectural advice) and Geoff Broom Associates (giving specialist tourism advice); in February 2005 to produce a Regeneration Strategy for Llantrisant's Old Town.

The main task, as set out in the brief, is to: "produce a fully costed strategy for the regeneration of the Old Town, setting the context for development opportunities and creating a thriving and vibrant town centre".

The purpose of the Regeneration Strategy is therefore to show the way forward for the regeneration of Llantrisant's Old Town, so that it can maximise its potential as the principal "gateway" settlement into the Taff Ely Vale and positively utilise the Old Town's unique historic attributes to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider Rhondda Cynon Taf area.

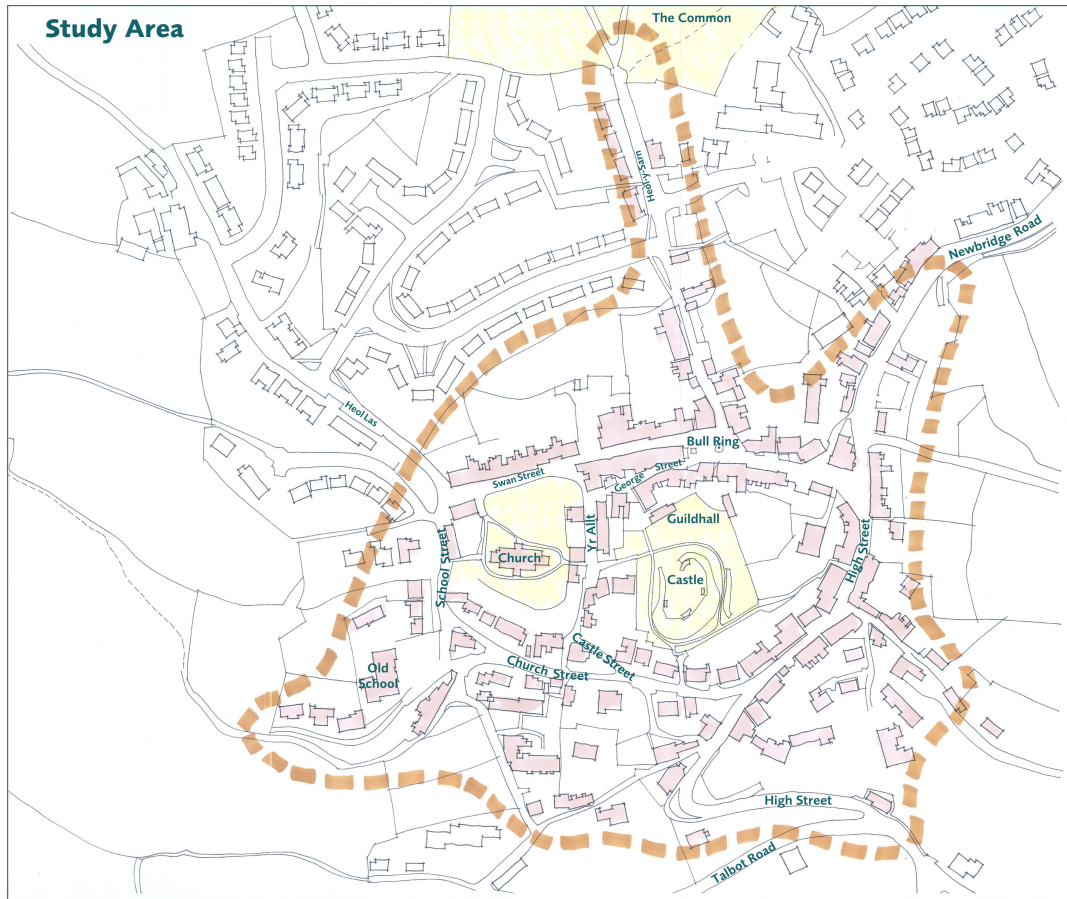
1.2 Study Area

Llantrisant Old Town is an ancient hill settlement overlooking some of the most picturesque parts of the South Wales valleys. It adjoins the rapidly growing urban settlement of Talbot Green and the rest of Llantrisant and lies within the Taff-Ely Vale. The town is on a principal route to the Rhondda Valley and is approximately 12 miles north east of Cardiff, and 8 miles west of Pontypridd. It is accessible from Junction 34 of the M4 motorway via the A4119 and from the east via the A473.

Evidence of a settlement at Llantrisant dates back to 500 AD and Llantrisant's "Old Town" has considerable historic interest, notably the Norman Church and a 13th century castle. It also boasts the centre for contemporary craft and design at the Model House, and a number of specialist shops and eating places.

The study has focused upon the identified Old Town historic core area (as illustrated on [Figure 1.1](#)), which includes the central oval area around the Bullring/Llantrisant Castle and Church (which used to be the fortified settlement), parts of Heol-y-Sarn, High Street/Newbridge Road to the north and High Street/ Southgate to the south.

Figure 1.1: Study Area



1.3 The Need for the Regeneration Strategy

Llantrisant's Old Town is a potentially vibrant, attractive historic town centre which, like many historic town centres throughout Wales, is in need of rejuvenation. Much of its public realm and infrastructure is looking tired and shabby, and although there has been significant investment in parts of the historic core area (such as the Model House and Bullring), this has not been sufficient to overcome the depreciation of other parts of the historic town centre. In particular, there is a very poor visual impression created by derelict properties along the key gateway route of the High Street. Moreover, the important historic interest of the town, notably the Castle, is not very evident to the visitor and there are considerable traffic and pedestrian issues that detract from the ambience of the town.

Llantrisant's Old Town however, has a number of advantages and attractions with considerable potential for acting as a catalyst for the further regeneration of the wider area:

- Llantrisant Old Town is located in an area with a growing catchment population;

- It has good transport links (including the A4119 links to the M4 motorway and Rhondda Valleys and A473 to Pontypridd and the A470);
- It is located near to Talbot Green – the current focus for major new retail, commercial and employment development within the County Borough;
- Llantrisant's Old Town is a relatively well-used centre, with relatively low rates of vacant properties in comparison to other towns within the County Borough area and a number of high quality specialist craft-related shops and eating places – with potential to develop more such activities;
- The historic core of the Old Town remains relatively intact (albeit some insensitive modern infill development along High Street) with attractive streetscapes and listed buildings;
- The Old Town has a number of historically-important resources, such as the Castle, St Illtyd Gwynno and Dyfodwg's Church and the Guildhall and links to Dr William Price;
- The Common (a designated SSSI/ Area of Special Landscape Value) is an attractive and important historical, recreational, environmental and community resource; and
- There are a number of vacant or underused sites located within the Old Town area, which may have potential for development.

A number of projects have been under discussion by the Town Forum and the community, notably the development of the Castle site, re-use of the Victorian School and traffic management proposals. There is a need to draw ideas together and capitalise on the opportunities presented by the town in order to provide a coherent framework for the future regeneration of the Old Town.

1.4 Site Appraisal and Consultation Approach

The multi-disciplined team's approach to the project has been to undertake a systematic series of appraisal tasks and consultation in order to gain an appreciation of key issues affecting Llantrisant's Old Town, from which to formulate a holistic and fully-costed strategy for transforming Llantrisant's Old Town over the next ten years.

Key elements of the study approach have included:

- Local area appraisal – including land use, settlement form, streetscape character, historic features, quality of the public realm, social and community facilities, building quality/ condition, access and parking issues, pedestrian environment, and commercial uses;
- A review of the socio-economic and policy context for Llantrisant Town and the wider area, including housing and planning policies and strategies, and 2001 Census information;
- Consultation with key stakeholders – including representatives of the Old Town Forum, and relevant Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council officers.

The aim of the consultations has been to gain a locally focussed understanding of the key problems affecting Llantrisant's Old Town and to identify what measures have already been implemented or are planned within the foreseeable future. The key issues raised at these meetings have been taken into account in the site appraisal and development of ideas. A

list of those who were involved in the initial consultation meetings is presented in [Appendix A](#).

Based upon the results of the initial consultations and site appraisals, a series of ideas were developed to address the key opportunities and constraints identified. The ideas were presented to the public in an exhibition at the Model House from 16th to 18th June 2005. Comments were received and the results are presented in Section Four.

1.5 Status and Structure of the Report

This report comprises the Final Regeneration Strategy for submission to the Old Town Forum. The report is structured as follows:

Section 2: Appraisal Provides an overview of the history of the town, appraisal of the key land-uses and facilities, tourism opportunities, the movement network and public realm.

Section 3: Regeneration Strategy Sets out the overall vision, objectives and strategy for the Old Town and provides details of the individual proposed projects for enhancement and development.

Section 4: Public Consultation Summarises the results of the public exhibition.

Section 5: Action Plan Provides an action plan including summary of the budget costs, suggested phasing, funding opportunities and the next steps to take forward the strategy.

The report has a number of appendices:

Appendix A: List of Consultees

Appendix B: Context Outlines the background for the study including and the socio-economic conditions and planning policy.

Appendix C: Exhibition Material and Comments Form