

4 Public Consultation

4.1 Introduction

The regeneration strategy was presented in draft at a public exhibition held at the Model House in Llantrisant on the 16th-18th June 2005. The exhibition began with a presentation of the strategy to the Old Town Forum, attended by reporters from the Pontypridd and Llantrisant Observer. It was then open to the public for the three days with members of the consultants' team on hand to discuss the ideas and comments. In total, 140 people attended the exhibition. A form was also provided to enable the public to comment upon the draft regeneration strategy proposals. A total of 51 completed forms were received. The number received was disappointing but probably reflected the generally positive response of the public, with many choosing not to record comments. The exhibition panels and comments form are included for information in Appendix C.

This section summarises the results of the 51 comments forms received following the public exhibition.

4.2 Support for Projects

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they strongly supported, supported, did not support or had no opinion on the projects presented. Table 4.1 shows the response.

It can be seen that all proposals had a majority support, varying from total support to 78% support. The projects with the most overall support (strongly supported or supported) were:

- H3 – The Historic Core (all measures) – 100% (67% strong support);
- H3(2) – Tackling Prominent Buildings – 96% (78% strong support);
- T3 – Enhancing the High Street – 96% (75% strong support);
- A1 – Traffic calming on the Northern Approach – 96% (71% strong support);
- C1 – The Old School – 96% (67% strong support);
- A2 – Signing Strategy – 96% (59% strong support).

Table 4.1: Support for Projects

Project	Strongly Support	Support	Total Support	Disagree	No Opinion
H1 – Llantrisant Castle	41%	41%	82%	14%	4%
H2 – The Guildhall	41%	41%	82%	12%	6%
H3 – The Historic Core	67%	33%	100%	0%	0%
H3(1) – Conservation Area	63%	29%	92%	2%	6%
H3(2) – Tackling Prominent Buildings	78%	18%	96%	0%	4%

Project	Strongly Support	Support	Total Support	Disagree	No Opinion
H3(3) – Conservation Area Enforcement	71%	24%	94%	0%	6%
H3(4) – Supplementary Planning Guidance	39%	45%	84%	0%	16%
H4 – Southgate	73%	18%	90%	4%	6%
H5 – Heritage and Countryside Trail	57%	33%	90%	2%	8%
T1 – Town Centre Policies	65%	29%	94%	0%	6%
T2 – Events and Festivals	47%	43%	90%	4%	6%
T3 – Enhancing the High Street	75%	22%	96%	4%	0%
T4 – Enhancing the Bull Ring	57%	31%	88%	8%	4%
T5 – Car Parking	49%	37%	86%	10%	4%
T6 – Town Centre Management	47%	35%	82%	6%	12%
A1 – Traffic Calming on Northern Approach	71%	25%	96%	2%	2%
A2 – Signing Strategy	59%	37%	96%	0%	4%
C1 – Old School	67%	29%	96%	0%	4%
C2 – Model House	45%	37%	82%	10%	8%

The support for the projects in terms of their type are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

4.2.1 Heritage Projects (H1-H5)

Of the total 51 respondents, the majority strongly supported all of the heritage projects, with the exception of proposals for supplementary planning guidance where most respondents (45%) only generally supported the project's proposals. Improvements to the quality and character of the historic core) received the most support, with a clear preference expressed for addressing key buildings, which are derelict or under-used.

Of the small percentage of respondents who disagreed with projects, this was mostly associated with Project H1 (Llantrisant Castle) (14%) and Project H2 (The Guildhall) (12%). The concern regarding the Castle, from discussions mainly related to the suggested later phase of constructing a new tower.

Concerns for the Guildhall were what would happen to the existing uses and its future ownership and management.

4.2.2 Projects T1-T6

The majority of the respondents supported the proposed town centre improvement projects (Projects T1-T6). Most support was for proposals to enhance the High Street (Project T3 – 96%) and policies to protect and enhance the commercial core of Llantrisant (Project T1 – 94%).

Of the small percentage respondents who disagreed with projects, this was mostly associated with Project T5 (Expanding Swan Street Car Park) (10%), although some concerns were also raised regarding Project T4 (Enhancing the Bull Ring) (8%) and Project T6 (Town Centre Management Officer) (6%).

4.2.3 Projects A1 and A2

Overall, the majority (96%) of the respondents supported the proposed traffic and signage improvement projects (Projects A1-A2), although there was slightly more stronger support for the proposals to improve traffic calming on the northern approaches (Project A1 – 71% strong support), compared to proposals to improve signage within the town centre (Project A2 - 59% strong support).

4.2.4 Projects C1 and C2

There was very strong support for the Llantrisant Old School Community and Arts Centre proposals (Project C1 – 96%). The proposals to redesign the frontage and internal spaces of the Model House (Project C2 – 82%) received a more mixed response with a small percentage of responses either disagreeing with the proposals (10%) or having no opinion (8%).

4.3 Priority Projects

Respondents were also asked to identify their top three priorities for action from the list of proposed projects. Table 4.2 shows the projects listed in order of preference.

It can be seen that there were seven projects that 20% or more of people placed in their top three priorities. These were:

- 1 A1 – Traffic Calming on Northern Approach
- 2 H3(2) – Tackling Prominent Buildings
- 3 T3 – Enhancing the High Street
- 4 H3 – The Historic Core (all projects)
- 5 H1 – Castle
- 6 H4 – Southgate
- 7 T5 – Car Parking

Project A1 – Traffic Calming on the northern approach was the clear priority with 27% of people placing this as their first choice.

There were 5 projects that weren't placed in the top three priorities of any of the respondents (although they still had overall support): C2 – Model House; H5 – Heritage and Countryside Trail; and T6 – Town Centre Management.

Table 4.2: Top Three Priorities (Total 47 Responses)

Projects	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Total No. Placing in Top Three	Overall Rank
A1 – Traffic Calming on Northern Approach	27%	14%	14%	55%	1
H3(2) – Tackling Prominent Buildings	20%	8%	14%	42%	2
T3 – Enhancing the High Street	10%	10%	6%	26%	3
H3 – The Historic Core (all projects)	2%	16%	6%	24%	4
H1 – Castle	10%	4%	8%	22%	5
H4 – Southgate	12%	6%	4%	22%	6
No Opinion	6%	6%	8%	20%	N/A
T5 – Car Parking	6%	4%	8%	18%	7
T2 – Events and Festivals	2%	4%	8%	14%	8
H3(1) – Conservation Area	4%	2%	6%	12%	9
C1 – Old School	0%	8%	4%	12%	10
T4 – Enhancing the Bull Ring	0%	6%	6%	12%	11
A2 – Signing Strategy	0%	6%	4%	10%	12
T1 – Town Centre Policies	2%	4%	2%	8%	13
H2 – The Guildhall	0%	2%	2%	4%	14
H3 (3) Conservation Area Enforcement	0%	2%	0%	2%	15
H3 (4) Supplementary Planning Guidance	0%	0%	2%	2%	16

4.4 Other Suggestions

Of the 51 respondents, 34 respondents provided additional comments and suggestions relating to the draft regeneration strategy. For analysis purposes, these comments were collated under common category headings.

The most commonly occurring suggestions related to:

- the need for better car parking facilities, including the suggestion of an extension of existing car park facilities behind Caer Llan Hall and the restriction of parking to one side of the road in congested places and reducing the amount of double-yellow lines throughout the town centre;
- Traffic measures including the possible closure of the Common Road, introduction of a 20mph zone and weight restrictions; trimming back of mature vegetation to improve visibility and improved lighting and a new road from Beddau to the new hospital and factories via The Old Lamb and Flag Public House.

However, several respondents also stated they were against the proposals for a new tower at the Castle and did not want the Swan Street car park to be extended.

Other suggestions concerned improving local pedestrian and cycle accessibility, including better access to the Castle Green particularly for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

Public realm suggestions included providing better bus stops with seating, the use of cobbling outside certain properties; removal of the Dr William Price statue to the heather garden on the High Street or the crematorium. Some respondents identified the need to diversify the range of shops and restaurants within the town centre, to include a possible “*café quarter and traditional food outlets*”, whilst others suggested music and book shops and a farmer’s market, as well as bringing the Guild Hall back into public ownership. One respondent stated that Llantrisant should be marketed in a similar way to Cowbridge town in the Vale of Glamorgan, and another suggested the existing Llantrisant Castle tower should be used as a logo in tourist publications.

One respondent identified the need for a Conservation Officer to enforce better conservation design within the historic core, with regard to doors, windows, roofs and paving design, whilst another suggested that further development between Llantrisant and the M4 should be resisted.

4.5 Conclusion

The draft regeneration strategy was positively received at the public exhibition, although there was a disappointing response in terms of completed comments sheets. All projects were supported by the majority and there were clear priorities. The priorities of the public are an important influence on the phasing of projects in the Action Plan, which is contained within the next chapter.

5 Action Plan

5.1 Introduction

The Regeneration Strategy can only be realised and bring the benefits to the town of Llantrisant if there is an action plan in place to bring forward projects to implementation. The strategy has identified 18 separate projects, which will not all happen overnight and will require prioritisation and phasing if they are to be achieved.

The projects have been compiled into an Action Plan for the Old Town for the next ten years (2005 to 2015). The action plan comprises recommendation for phasing of projects over the ten years of the strategy, based on project costs, funding opportunities and the priorities of the public as identified in the public consultation. The phasing has been divided into three timescales – short, medium and longer term:

- Short term: 2005-2007;
- Medium term: 2008-2010; and
- Longer term: 2010-2015.

5.2 Implementation and Funding

The implementation of the projects will require a co-ordinated approach, involving the various departments of the local authority, the Community Council, Llantrisant Town Trust and local businesses as appropriate to each project. The most appropriate delivery mechanism would be for the co-ordination of the action plan to be by the Regeneration team of Rhondda Cynon Taff, reporting to the Old Town Forum, who would provide the political drive towards implementation.

The achievement of projects will of course be reliant on the availability of funding. It is appreciated that the local authority and external funding sources are limited and subject to significant pressures. However, the action plan priorities projects with the aim of achieving the regeneration of the town in the medium and longer term. This should allow sufficient time for budgets to be obtained for the more capital intensive projects.

The table of projects (Table 5.1) summarises the potential funding sources for the projects, as discussed in the Strategy chapter. These are based on the current funding situation as discussed with the funding officers within the local authority.

5.3 Project Costs

Costs for the projects, as included in the Strategy chapter and in Table 5.1, have been estimated by Hyder Consulting at 2005 prices, based on recent tenders. They include materials, labour and plant as well as traffic management, preliminaries, contingencies and consultants' fees for design and supervision. They do not include for any land acquisition or 'abnormals' such as substantial service relocation. Where a project requires a further feasibility stage, only the cost of the investigative work has been included, since the capital costs cannot be estimated until the next stage has been undertaken.

Table 5.1 – Action Plan

Phasing	Project	Description	Budget Cost Estimate	Potential Funding Sources	Lead Partner
Short Term	H1 – Llantrisant Castle – Phase 1 Consolidation and Investigation	Works to consolidate the Castle remains alongside archaeological investigations and recording of artefacts	£160,000	Cadw Heritage Lottery Fund	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC
Long Term	H1 – Llantrisant Castle – Phase 2 Possible New Tower	Construction of new tower within Raven Tower to provide viewpoint/ tourist attraction	£1,001,000	Uncertain	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC
Short Term	H2 – The Guildhall Museum and Archive Centre	Feasibility Study and Business Plan to investigate museum potential and building refurbishment costs	£30,000	Town Trust RCT Community Regeneration Fund	Llantrisant Town Trust
Short Term	H3(1) – The Conservation Area	Review of the Conservation Area and imposition of Article 4 directions	-	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, Development and Regeneration
Short Term	H3(2) – Tackling Prominent Buildings	Preparation of Stage One Bid for Townscape Heritage Initiative	£30,000	Heritage Lottery Fund Physical Regeneration Fund WDA – Town Improvement Grant ERDF/ LRF Cadw	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, Development and Regeneration
Short Term	H3(3) – Conservation Area Enforcement	Appointment of Designated Conservation Officer for County Borough	Revenue cost to local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC
Medium Term	H3(4) – Supplementary Planning Guidance	Preparation of guidance on appropriate materials and developments within the	-	-	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development and Regeneration

Phasing	Project	Description	Budget Cost Estimate	Potential Funding Sources	Lead Partner
		Conservation Area			
Medium Term	H4 - Southgate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New gateway signing Pelican crossing on Talbot Road 	£25,000	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Highways	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Highways
Long Term	H5 – Heritage and Countryside Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of trail leaflet; Provision of pedestrian/ way-marker signs Contingency for improvements to footpaths 	£25,000	Llantrisant Community Council Wales Tourist Board Heritage Lottery Fund	Old Town Forum
Short through to Long Term	T1- Town Centre Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of Commercial Core Zone; Consideration of licensing restrictions 	-	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development and Regeneration Department/ Planning	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development and Regeneration
Short through to Long Term	T2 – Events and Festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Farmers' Market Development of new events 	£5,000 Annual	Llantrisant Community Council Llantrisant Town Trust Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	Old Town Forum
Medium Term	T3 – Enhancing the High Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement scheme for the High Street including traffic priorities, re-paving in natural stone, new street furniture 	£350,000	Physical Regeneration Funds Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Highways Objective One ERDF Local Regeneration Funds WDA Town Improvement Grant	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development and Regeneration
Long Term	T4 – Enhancing the Bull Ring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement scheme for the Bull Ring including re-paving in 	£260,000	Physical Regeneration Funds Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development

Phasing	Project	Description	Budget Cost Estimate	Potential Funding Sources	Lead Partner
		natural Welsh Pennant stone, new street furniture, new setting for statue and removal of waiting restrictions in section of Swan Street		Highways Objective One ERDF Local Regeneration Funds WDA Town Improvement Grant	and Regeneration
Long Term	T5 – Car Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of extension to Swan Street car park including ramped access from existing car park, surfacing and lighting 	£160,000	This project is linked to the Bull Ring enhancement and development of the Guildhall and would need to be included in the same package with the Bull Ring project to obtain funding	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development and Regeneration
Medium Term	T6 – Town Centre Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated officer on part time basis to co-ordinate town centre activities 	Revenue cost to local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development and Regeneration	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Development and Regeneration
Short Term	A1 – Traffic Calming on the Northern Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of three priority pinch-points with signing, on Heol y Sarn with pedestrian margin markings. 30 mph speed limit on the Common 	£95,000	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Highways (possible Safe Routes to School funding?)	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Highways
Medium Term	A2 – Signing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown tourist sign on A4119; Improved car park signing; Visitor information boards in car parks 	£10,000	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Highways Llantrisant Community Council Local Traders	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Highways

Phasing	Project	Description	Budget Cost Estimate	Potential Funding Sources	Lead Partner
Short Term	C1 – Llantrisant Old School Community and Arts Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys and business plan to confirm required works, costs and future management of the centre. 	£9,500 Surveys and Business Plan	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Education	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Education
Medium Term	C1 – Llantrisant Old School Community and Arts Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbishment of Old School building for use as community meeting rooms, arts and music. 	£275,000	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Education and Capital Receipt <u>or</u> range of sources for community buildings if not in local authority ownership	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Education
Long Term	C2 – Model House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade of the building with new façade and reorganisation of internal space. 	-	-	Model House Craft and Design Centre

5.4 Next Steps

Once accepted as the Regeneration Strategy for Llantrisant Old Town by the Llantrisant Old Town Forum and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council, this Regeneration Strategy will be used as a basis for funding applications for individual projects and as an input into the emerging Local Development Plan. In the short term, the main actions required will include:

- The circulation of the report to key parties and partners such as the Assembly Member and the Welsh Development Agency;
- Preparation of an article for the local press to follow up the coverage of the public exhibition;
- Seeking funding for and commissioning of the feasibility studies identified to progress the Guildhall and Old School projects;
- Consideration of including the relevant short to medium term schemes in a Physical Regeneration Fund bid; and
- Preparation of a Stage One Bid for THI funding;

In addition to the physical works, it is important that a workable and realistic maintenance strategy be developed in parallel with the recommended improvements, to ensure that the investment to the town centre is suitably preserved, as well as investment in ongoing management activities such as street cleansing to maintain the attractiveness of the town centre.