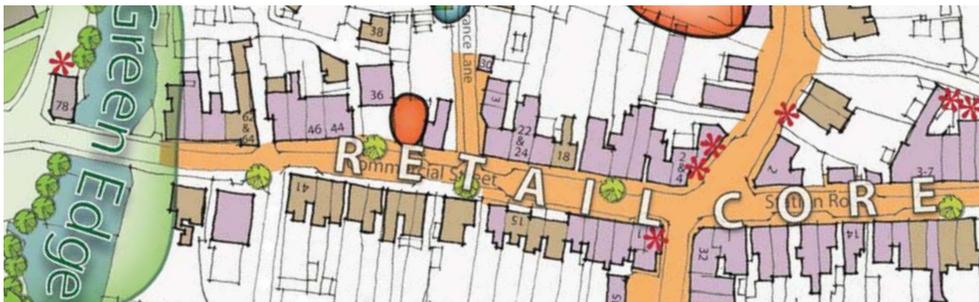




YSTRADGYNLAIS TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN



FINAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2010



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INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd has been commissioned by Powys County Council (PCC) to undertake the Ystradgynlais Town Centre Masterplan. The study develops the findings of the Upper Swansea Valley Regeneration Strategy (November 2009), which identified the need to tackle environmental, economic and transport related issues to improve vitality and viability. The study has also addressed priorities identified through consultations with traders, councillors and other town centre stakeholders.



The Masterplan has specifically responded to the brief, namely consideration for potential streetscape and environmental improvements, the potential capital development of the bus terminus and creation of enhanced street market space. It also considers improvements and developments in the Welfare Hall and integration into the town centre offering, shop front improvements and the development of economic potential within underused or redundant retail space.

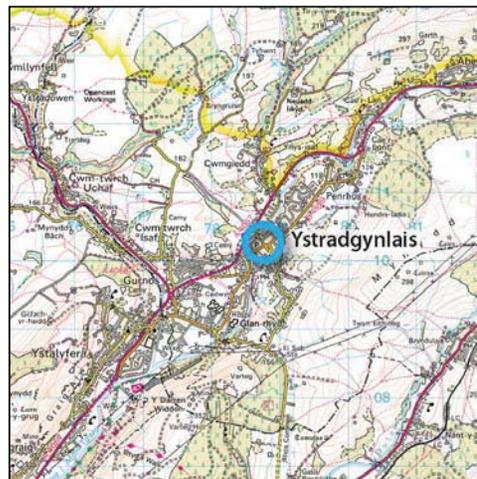
The Masterplan presents an integrated programme of improvements for Ystradgynlais Town Centre that have emerged from a thematic consideration of issues and ideas (see Section 2). The Masterplan and associated Action Plan (Section 3) have the potential to generate significant positive economic and community development, building on the town centre's distinctive

qualities and maximising strengths through collaborative action.

The remainder of this section reflects on the role and function of Ystradgynlais as highlighted within the strategic planning framework and summarises the need for delivering regeneration as part of the wider Western Valleys Strategic Regeneration Area.

1.1.1 Strategic Context

Ystradgynlais (see location plan) is the largest settlement within the Upper Swansea Valley, in immediate proximity to Penrhos to the north, Ystalyfera to the south and Cwmtrwch to the west. The town grew around the iron making, watch making and coal mining industries.



Location Plan

The Upper Swansea Valley (USV) Regeneration Strategy (2009) envisaged Ystradgynlais as part of a cluster of small rural and valley communities with links to its north with Brecon for governance, administration and its tourism and leisure opportunities. It also has links to its south to support access to employment and other key services and amenities. The Strategy highlights Ystradgynlais as a key settlement within the USV that should be an affordable and attractive place to live, work and visit; a place which everyone can enjoy.

In the Wales Spatial Plan (Update, 2008) Ystradgynlais is an established 'Key Settlement' with a clear role and function in the wider Swansea Valley. It states the importance of maintaining links with the Brecon Beacons cluster but identifies the significant influence and linkages with the Swansea Bay Spatial Plan Area which requires

strong cross-boundary co-ordination. This provides an opportunity for the area and specifically Ystradgynlais to cement its position as an important gateway between Mid-Wales (including the Brecon Beacons) and South Wales.

The Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update highlights tourism as having a particular role to play in providing jobs in the more remote Valleys communities, allied to outdoor activities and recreation. In particular the area must draw on its link with the Brecon Beacons National Park and Forest Fawr's designated Geopark status to help strengthen its image for tourism.

In relation to future economic growth in the Ystradgynlais area, Winning Mid Wales (2005) identifies Ystradgynlais town as a 'Regional Centre' and highlights the need to strengthen the town's regional influence, encourage inward investment and redevelop rarely used sites and premises.

The adopted Unitary Development Plan (2010) acknowledges Ystradgynlais as an 'Area Centre'; settlements which have been and still are a social and trading focal point for quite an extensive rural hinterland. It is also identified as an 'Area Retail Centre'; strategically important for the wider rural region in terms of retail and services.

1.1.2 Regeneration Need

Ystradgynlais is located within the Western Valley Strategic Regeneration Area (WVSR), a targeted area of investment due to the high levels of multiple deprivation. The vision for the area is:

"By 2015 the Western Valleys will embrace a network of distinctive, vibrant, sustainable communities that are confident and secure in themselves and with their relationship to the wider world. Communities that are sustained by an increasing culture of self reliance and enterprise in which everyone can fulfil their greatest potential by linking communities with opportunities, whilst protecting their first class environment."

In the context of the vision, the town centre of Ystradgynlais has a key role in contributing towards distinctive, vibrant and sustainable communities. To achieve this, the brief highlights the potential for the Masterplan to address elements of three WVSR themes: 'Economic Investment', 'Environmental Improvement' and 'Social Legacy'.

A cluster of high multiple deprivation exists within Ystradgynlais as measured by the Welsh Index of

Multiple Deprivation 2008 (WIMD). The deprivation experienced refers to problems caused by a general lack of resources and opportunities (not just money) with income and employment classed as the most important factors. "Ystradgynlais 1" super output area, which largely comprises the central core area of the town, is classed as Category 1, in the top 10% most deprived super output areas in Wales (particularly in terms of income, health and employment). In the case of the employment domain this super output area is ranked as the 86th most deprived in Wales.

A key consideration in the regeneration of the town is the proposed Tesco supermarket development on the former Lyte Ladders site between Ystradgynlais and Ystalyfera. This represents an opportunity in terms of "clawing back" retail expenditure to the town, generating employment and contributing funding for town centre improvements (as part of the Section 106 agreement) but may also be regarded as a threat in terms of potential impacts on the town centre vitality and viability. The Masterplan provides a clear strategy for tackling these concerns and maximising the advantages that the Tesco investment may bring.

The Masterplan must therefore acknowledge the importance of the town as a gateway between mid and South Wales and build on its established role and function as a 'Key Settlement' and 'Area Centre'. It should seek to build a distinctive, vibrant and self-sustaining community as advocated by the WVSRA. Tourism is clearly recognised as an important sector through which to maximise the assets of the Valley and the challenge for Ystradgynlais is therefore to become a more vibrant town centre that also provides its own 'attractions'.



Figure 2.1
Land Use



LAND USE - APPRAISAL 2

2.1 LAND USE

Land use within the town centre is shown in Figure 2.1. It indicates the broad distribution of land uses within the centre and also shows areas of the natural environment including public green space and street tree planting - these are explored in more detail in the Environment section of this report.



Generally Ystradgynlais offers a good range of independent retail and services. Whilst these uses are mainly located around the central crossroads, there is a significant residential component to the town centre, particularly on the western side of Commercial Street and along Heol Eglwys. The latter also connects the town's core to Gorsedd Park and the adjoining church grounds, by far the largest area of public green space within the study area.

In terms of the town's arts and cultural offer, Figure 2.1 highlights the scale and dominance of the Welfare Hall accessed either from Brecon Road or Temperance Lane.

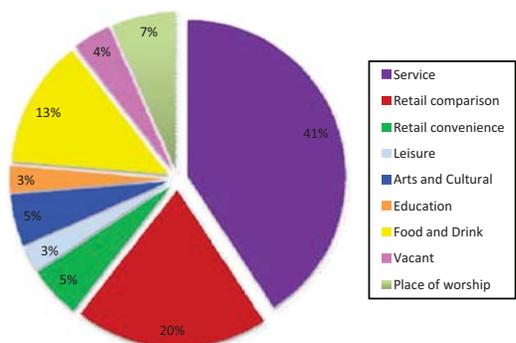


Chart 2.1 Detail of non-residential property use within study area

There are other smaller facilities to the periphery of the town centre that offer premises for arts and cultural related activities.

2.1.1 Property

Chart 2.1 shows the split of the town centre land uses excluding residential properties. This is supplemented by observations from town centre survey work that has highlighted the following land use issues:

- 41% of the retail/commercial offering is service related
- a significant number of charity run units
- the level of vacant/underused properties/areas of land, is very low at 4%
- there are five Places of Worship in active use (although some on an ad hoc basis)
- two defined leisure facilities Constitutional Club off Station Road and Betfred betting shop
- a strong provision of food and drink establishments, although only one public house within the town centre
- three national banks, all with cash point facilities and a national travel agent
- the retail core is well served by both on-street restricted parking and accessible pay-for car parks

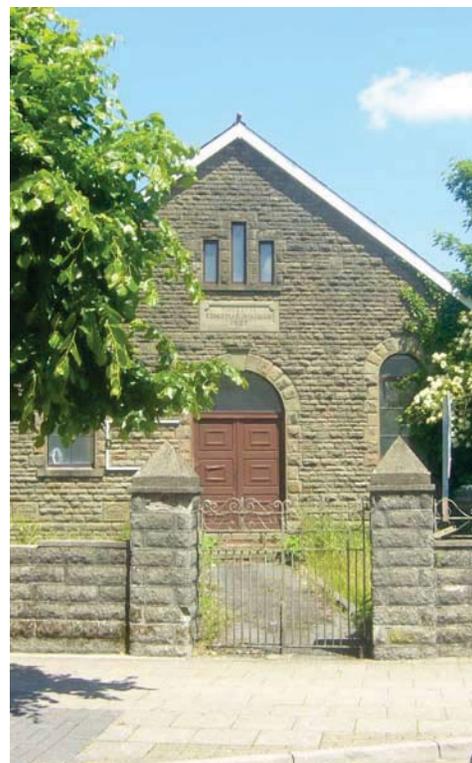
Although not shown on Figure 2.1, the first floors of retail and service units have mainly residential uses with high occupancy rates.

Consultation did however identify a concern locally that retail properties within the core of the shopping area have reverted/converted to residential over the last 10 years, to the detriment of the high street retail offer.

Non residential town centre uses (surveyed in June 2010) have been compared with an identical survey undertaken in March 2009 as part of the Upper Swansea Valley Regeneration Strategy. Comparison shows that the retail offer has remained steady, despite the economic down turn, with the only significant loss being the greengrocer.

2.1.2 Vacant properties

As already mentioned, the vacancy level of the town centre is 4% (two properties): 5 Commercial Street has recently been vacated by Jules Beauty Therapy (who retain alternative premises in Temperance Lane) and 5 Temperance Lane. Low vacancy indicates a sustained vibrancy of the town centre and recent changes show that the occupancy levels continue to remain buoyant. Numbers 74/76 Commercial Street have recently been let and the premises is soon to trade as a homeware store with a digital media business occupying the first floor, while the Congregational Chapel on Commercial Street (currently standing vacant) has been bought by childcare venture Little Steps and this is anticipated to open in the spring of 2011. (This is therefore shown as a service in Figure 2.1.)



In terms of future use, there are three further sites for consideration and monitoring: Firstly, the integration of local educational services in Ystradgynlais means that the Coleg Powys building at 3 Brecon Road is likely

to become a development opportunity in the next few years.



Secondly, it is also recognised that the Murco Garage site remains a viable facility but, in light of the petrol station proposal as part of the Tesco development, its future could be affected.



On the southern periphery of the town centre is Ysgol Gymraeg. Part of the School Modernisation Programme will result in its closure in 2012. Considering the scale of this site and its strong links with the town centre it represents a significant future development site, albeit constrained by potential flooding issues.

2.1.3 Vacant Land

There are three areas considered to be suitable / in need of redevelopment, all of which are in private ownership.

The first area is a plot of land to the rear of the Murco petrol station on Brecon Road and adjacent to the Welfare Hall car park. This area is an open brownfield site which also provides a number of buildings in various stages of deterioration, all of which the owner confirms are vacant or used only for storage, although there is a valet service which operates sporadically from one of the premises.



There is also a plot of unoccupied land adjacent to the Gwynfe Cat Welfare shop at 32/34 Commercial Street. Local traders have confirmed that this land has been out of use for a number of years and this could therefore represent a development opportunity. The land is currently for sale as part of a package to include 32/34 Commercial Street.



Towards the periphery of the study area, off Heol Eglwys in Heol Sant Cynog, is a plot between a small new housing development and the existing St John's Ambulance Hall. This is another brownfield site containing a large corrugated metal clad 'Black Shed' in very poor condition, which is currently being marketed for sale by Clew Estate Agents.



2.1.4 Welfare Hall

To the north of the retail core is the Welfare Hall. This facility is owned by Ystradgynlais Town Council and is run by the Welfare Hall Charitable Trust.

It has expanded on its former role as local community facility to become an arts and cultural hub for the wider region. The facility accommodates a diverse range of community activities and services.

Recent improvements have included the installation of a 3-dimensional cinema and retractable seating to improve the efficiency and adaptability of hall functions.

The forecourt of the Welfare Hall is used for a weekly Friday market. The market has declined over several years and is considered to have settled at a level of operation that provides only a small scale service for the town centre.

A grocer and butcher remain the most regular attendees and a fishmonger also sells at the market on an ad hoc basis. There is a second grocer that occupies a plot in the adjacent privately owned land at the same time as the regular market. This has surprisingly continued despite competition from the main market. Consultation with the Town Council has indicated that they currently

have no aspirations to expand or refresh the market offering.

The nature of the remaining traders provides important access to basic food items which are not readily available in the town centre, but there is an opportunity to revive the market offer as an important aspect of the town centre vitality. This could be achieved through improved siting as well as introducing a more diverse range of stalls.



Ideas

- Give value to the shopping experience by redefining and protecting the retail core
- Address future vacant retail units through appropriate information and marketing, appointing a local 'Business Champion' to lead on promoting retail opportunities
- Potential to incorporate a mixed use development scheme within the prominent town centre site on Brecon Road
- Improving links between the Welfare Hall and the town centre, integrating existing and potential residential with additional community and market space
- Consider use of unoccupied land on Commercial Street as opportunity to extend outdoor play area for new childcare facility
- Consider 'Black Shed' site on Heol Sant Cynog as redevelopment a housing redevelopment opportunity
- Refresh market offer and consider alternative locations

LAND USE - APPRAISAL 2

Figure 2.2
Environment & Development
Issues and Opportunities



ENVIRONMENT - APPRAISAL 2

2.2 ENVIRONMENT

2.2.1 Built Environment

Consideration of the 'built' environment focuses on the artificial or man-made. It should however be noted that other components of this Masterplan such as land-use, movement, access and our appraisal of existing building façades and shop fronts all have strong 'built' elements. As a consequence, this section focuses primarily on the 'public realm' considering street furniture, general appearance of streetscape and associated opportunities for improvement.

2.2.1.1 Street Furniture

The town centre has previously been the recipient of streetscape improvements in the 1990s. While now looking a little dated they are generally in good condition and appropriate to the townscape. Consequentially, there is a strong provision of benches, bins and street lamps.



Benches and street lamp columns incorporate the locally significant 'crane' insignia, referencing the late George Crane, a pioneer of iron smelting techniques and mine owner. This provides a sense of distinctiveness and a design consistency for the town, however there is currently no interpretation of this background story for the visitor.



Benches appear to be well used and this demonstrates the town centre function as a social meeting place in addition to being a hub for retail and services. Strong usage, although weather dependent, also reflects the greater proportion of elderly residents in the locality.



The bus shelters in the town centre are on the whole of a poor standard and in need of upgrading.



2.2.1.2 General Appearance

The town is generally well presented and the public realm generally well kept and free from litter. Our surveys, supported by consultation with both town centre traders and councillors, did however highlight some 'eye sore' areas and important visual 'gateways' to the town centre (see viewpoints in Figure 2.2). These can be grouped into those within publically owned spaces and those visible from public space but occurring on privately owned land, as shown in Table 2.2.



Pavement widths have been extended at various points along Commercial Street, Station Road and Heol Eglwys whilst maintaining provision of on-street parking.



The significant number of bollards, whilst providing some protection from vehicular traffic, are however considered to constrict the amount of space on pavements.

Other parts of the town include some successful efforts to connect retail to the street. Along Station Road, retailers have encroached slightly on the pavement to display their wares and this successfully juxtaposes the street line and contributes to a sense of distinctiveness.



Street lamps appear to be well spaced and of sufficient quantity for general street lighting, however the town lacks any lighting specifically designed to accentuate the town features such as the church, the river and its bridges and some of the more mature trees within the public realm.

Whilst there is a strong provision of street furniture, and the streetscape is generally well maintained, there is a lack of a central point within the built environment in which the town users can converge. In fact, the area considered to be the town centre, known locally as 'The Cross', is a comparably low quality built environment in the town.

Ideas:

- To develop a distinctive central point for Ystradgynlais town
- Integrated landscaping to the rear of the Welfare Hall
- Incorporating murals or public art in town centre locations
- Interpretation of local history needed
- Address eye-sores within private spaces that impact on public realm
- Lighting strategy to enhance the evening economy

Eye Sores

Public Space	Within Private Space but impacting on Public Space
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rear of the Welfare Hall, and Temperance 'ne. • The access road and footpath to Heol Eglwys from the Heol Maes Y Dre car park • Both bus-stops on Brecon Road and bus stop on Heol Giedd • Opposite the zebra crossing point, on Heol Eglwys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rear of Station Road properties that back onto Club Lane • The area adjacent to the Blacksmith visible from the main off-street car park • Land adjacent to the Welfare Hall and to the rear of the Murco Petrol Station • Building frontages at The Cross

Table 2.2 Eye Sores

2.2.2 Natural Environment

2.2.2.1 Setting

The setting of the town centre, nestled on the River Tawe in the Upper Swansea Valley, is a strong contributor to its distinctiveness and sense of place.

The green edge identified in Figure 2.2 is important in a number of ways:

- it provides two high quality gateways to the town centre, where stone bridges cross the very attractive River Tawe offering views along the treed river environs
- due to its setting on the valley slope, the topography of the town centre allows open or glimpsed views of this green edge - the treed valley sloping to the River Tawe to the north and west and the green slopes of the valley to the south and east. This reinforces the character of Ystradgynlais as a rural town, and offsets the low provision/retention of green spaces, planted areas or street trees within the centre. While the River Tawe wraps around the town centre there is no pedestrian access to the water.



2.2.2.2 Green Open Spaces

The main green spaces within easy walking distance of the town centre are those on Heol Eglwys. The mature trees in the parkland in which the Gorsedd Circle is set extends the semi-rural feel of the approach from the River Tawe into the town itself.



with adequate provision of access pathways. The permeability is good with routes both through and within the area however there is a lack of interpretational signage and the pedestrian entrance from Heol Eglwys is very poor.

The areas around Cynog's Church including the Cemetery also contribute to the green character of the fringes of the town centre, as does the patch of grass on Heol Giedd which historically hosted travelling fun fairs.

The only other green space within close proximity to the town centre is the area of amenity grass opposite the library on Temperance Lane which, possibly due to its close proximity to the retirement flats, appears to be underused. There are two other green spaces within walking distance, the Daniel Protheroe Memorial Garden and Coronation Park, both located to the north of Heol Giedd, to which signage and links could be improved.

2.2.2.3 Street Trees and Hanging Baskets

There is a lack of green infrastructure within the town centre's streets. While the existing street trees are in a reasonable condition, though some raising of crowns is needed, some trees have been lost since the improvements and this is particularly noticeable in Station Road where only one tree remains.



A former hanging basket scheme organised by traders is no longer running. Hanging baskets would provide a much needed injection of greenery, adding to the biodiversity of the environment while supporting the town's rural character.

2.2.2.4 Welfare Hall Environs

Former planting to the western edge of the Welfare Hall car park which helped to screen the neighbouring development site has been removed during the construction of a new walkway. Replacement of some screen planting will provide a short-term solution to the eyesore issue prior to the improvement to the site.



In light of the lack of sufficient car parking at the Welfare Hall, rationalising the larger planting beds could provide additional parking spaces.



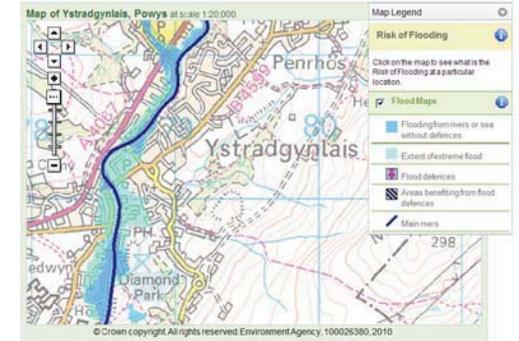
2.2.2.5 Opportunities for New Green Space

There is little scope for the addition of green space within the town centre itself although links to existing green spaces could be improved with signed pedestrian routes and interpretational information. There is potential for the creation of new open public space in the vacant site neighbouring the Congregational Chapel or within the other potential development sites identified in this report.

2.2.2.6 Risk of Flooding

The proximity of the River Tawe whilst providing a strong natural boundary for the town centre should also be highlighted as a development constraint. Commercial Street, the Western edge of Heol Eglwys and Gorsedd

Park are within the defined extent of extreme flooding, representing a significant constraint to development in this area.



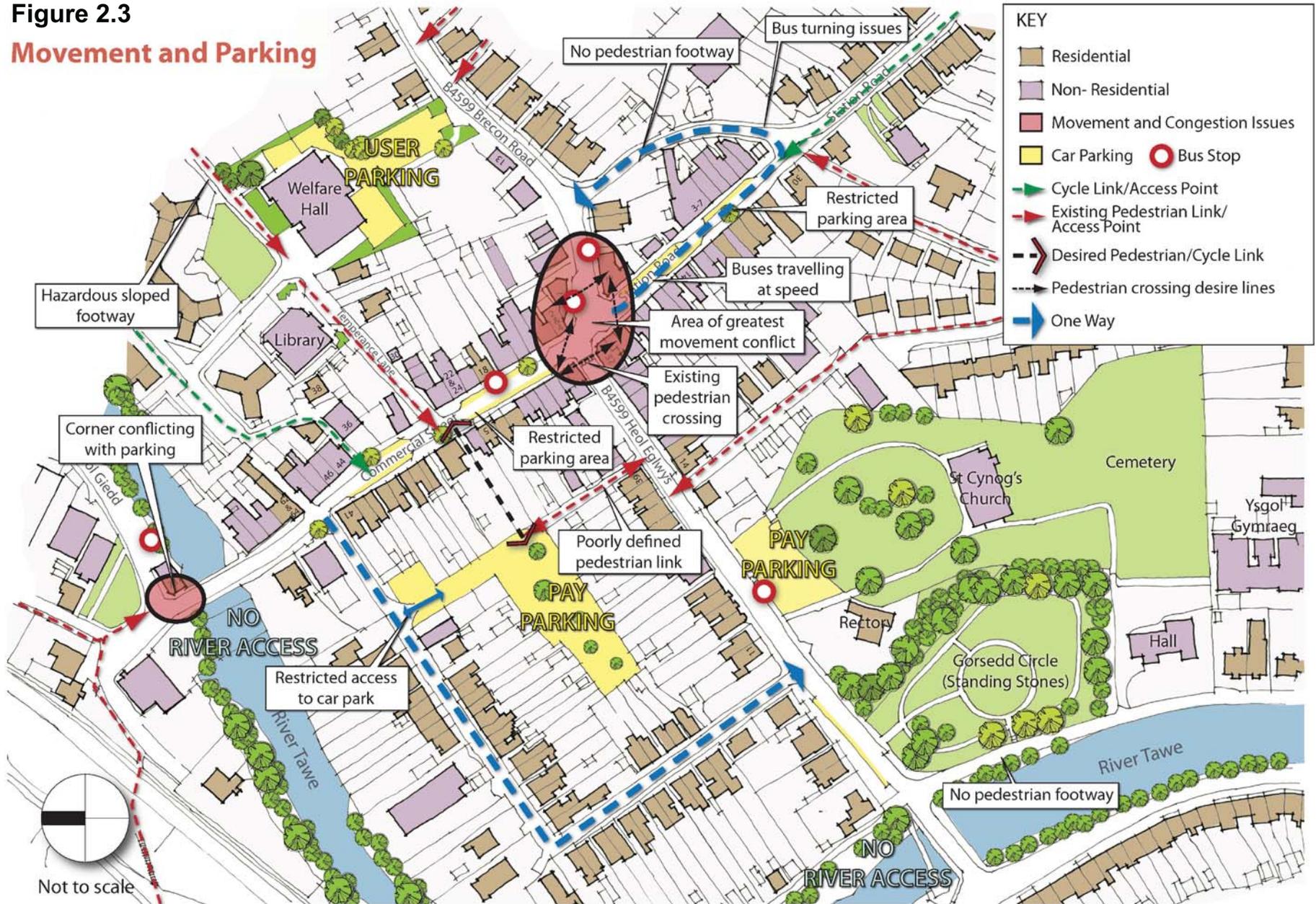
Source : Environment Agency Interactive Flood Map

Ideas:

- Introduce more natural bedding and green infrastructure within the town centre
- Planting on Welfare Hall boundary to screen a key eye sore
- New pocket park on Commercial Street
- Reinstatement hanging basket scheme
- Improve links and signage to green spaces
- Improve existing green/open spaces
- Potential for improved pathways/accessibility/seating, installation of focal points/features
- Improve links signage and interpretation, as well as access to the River Tawe
- Boundary treatment reinstatement at Welfare Hall as a short term improvement to views into neighbouring vacant site

ENVIRONMENT - APPRAISAL 2

Figure 2.3
Movement and Parking



MOVEMENT AND PARKING - APPRAISAL 2

2.3 MOVEMENT AND PARKING

This section addresses movement both within the town centre and where appropriate between the town centre and the wider region, focusing on the quality and provision of public transport, cycling and walking. The section also reflects on existing parking provision and accessibility issues for the mobility impaired.

2.3.1 Public Transport

Ystradgynlais Town Centre's public transport consists of a range of bus services reflecting its role as an important transport hub for the valley. Three commercial bus service providers (Veolia, First and Rob's Minibus Hire) operate services with Ystradgynlais Community Transport providing additional ad hoc on demand services for local residents.

Service Number	Operator	Origin	Destination	Via	Frequency
120	First Cymru	Ystradgynlais	Pontardawe	Ystalyfera	Services approximately every 2 hours. From Ystradgynlais Mon-Fri first service leaves Ystradgynlais at 06.12 and last service leaves at 17.42.
125	First Cymru	Ystradgynlais	Pontardawe	Ystalyfera	Services approximately every 2 hours. First service leaves Ystradgynlais at 06.42am and last service 11.45pm. Last service leaves Pontardawe at 11.15pm.
121 (local service)	Veolia Transport Cymru	Ystradgynlais	Ystalyfera	-	Approximately hourly
124/125	Veolia Transport Cymru	Ystradgynlais	Ammanford	Gurnos	Both services provide an approximately 2 hourly service. On Sat and schooldays first service leaves Ystradgynlais at 07.35am and Mon-Thurs last service leaves at 5.15pm, Mon-Fri last service leaves 7.28pm.
903	First Cymru	Neath	Abercraf	Ystradgynlais	Mon-Fri service that operates one service in each direction. Service leaves Abercraf at 07.45am and service leaves Neath at 4.35pm.
X63	Veolia Transport Cymru	Swansea	Brecon/Coelbren	Ystradgynlais	Mon-Fri service that operates approximately hourly
X25	First Cymru	Swansea	Ystradgynlais	Pontardawe	Mon-Sat 1 service in each direction, but the service to Swansea only operates on Sat and schooldays only. The service leaves Ystradgynlais at 07.40am.
T62	Rob's Minibus Hire	Ystradgynlais	Tafarn-y-Garreg	Penrhos; Ynsyswen; Abercraf	Mon-Sat 7 services per day, Mon-Fri 8 services per day

Table 2.3: Bus services operating from Ystradgynlais town centre

2.3.2 Bus Timetabling

The bus services that connect Ystradgynlais to all surrounding towns also stop in the town centre, resulting in bus congestion at peak times. These services are summarised in Table 2.3. The current provision of bus services are:

- an hourly direct bus service to/from Swansea;
- a service to/from Ammanford every 2 hours;
- at least 2 services an hour connecting Ystradgynlais to nearby Ystalyfera; and
- approximately an hourly service to Pontardawe.

The majority of bus services run south from Ystradgynlais Town Centre and services are much less frequent to/from the north.

At Pontardawe passengers can connect with Swansea services with a very limited waiting time. There is an approximate delay of 30 minutes if passengers miss the first connection.

Table 2.3 indicates that there are few regular Saturday services.



2.3.3 Bus Service Provision

There are 5 bus stops within the town centre, as shown in Figure 2.3. The two bus stops located on Brecon Road and Heol Eglwys benefit from shelters.

The bus stops located along Commercial Street and Heol Geidd use bus flags and display timetable information. The bus stop on Commercial Street also has a bench.

Consultation with PCC has highlighted the importance of Ystradgynlais Town Centre interchange within the region. The Mid-Wales transport consortium (TraCC) is currently undertaking appraisal work on urban-rural transport interchanges and has identified the following issues relating to Ystradgynlais:

- The proximity of the bus stops to the town centre is well planned. There is a need to improve quality of bus stands with seating, clearer timetable information and lighting.
- Consideration for replacing the existing bus lay-bys with longer and wider lay-bys.
- The need to consider traffic calming/speed reduction measures to address speed issues along Brecon Road.
- Consideration for a designated loading bay as several vehicles were observed to unload in the bus stops, which is an issue due to the frequency of some of the services.
- The need to widen the footways by the bus stops, possibly in conjunction with staggering bus stops and a slight realignment of the carriageway.

In addition to the above points, consideration of public bus services along this section has highlighted that the bus stop southbound on Brecon Road provides insufficient waiting space for the volume of bus services using this stop. Also, the current arrangement of bus lay-bys disrupts vehicle movements along Brecon Road.

Consultation with commercial bus operators also highlighted the general abuse of parking, particularly along Station Road, that disrupts bus movement.

Cars parked on the end of Commercial Street also constrain bus movement into town from Heol Geidd; long vehicles are observed to have to swing out around the corner.

Ideas:

- The major issue associated with public transport is the capacity of the existing interchange to cope with the volume of buses, particularly at peak times, and the conflict between buses and parked vehicles that hinder free flowing town centre traffic. A number of ideas on how to resolve these issues are considered in the following sections.

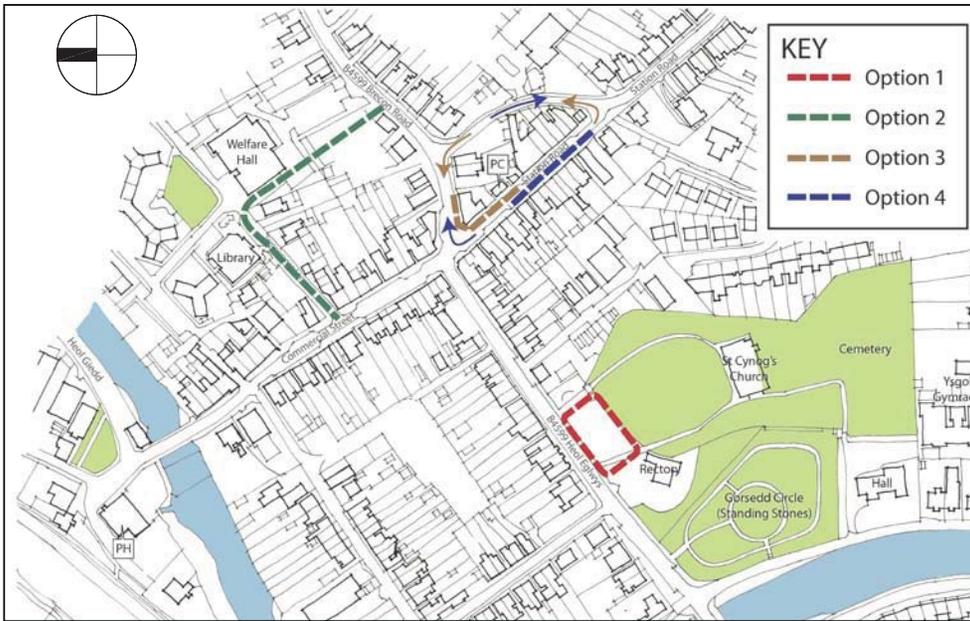


Figure 2.3.1: Plan showing location of options for new bus interchange

2.3.4 Bus Interchange Options

To address the issue of town centre bus movement and congestion, a number of sites for a bus interchange have been considered based on initial consultation. One option to consider the provision of a bus terminus as part of the development site on Brecon Road has not been taken forward for further consideration. It was not considered appropriate as part of a viable mixed development opportunity due to access constraints, topography and the large proportion of the development land that a terminus would require.

Figure 2.3.1 shows the location of the options considered further:

- Option 1* : Proposed bus bays in existing Car Park on Heol Eglwys
- Option 2* : Bus bays on new through route from Brecon Road to Temperance Lane
- Option 3* : 'Wrap-around' bus bays on Brecon Road and Station Road, retaining existing Station Road/Club Lane one-way system
- Option 4* : Bus bays in Station Road, reversing Station Road/Club Lane one-way system

An initial analysis using swept path tracking has established the potential of these options. The swept path drawings show wheel overrun in green and vehicle overhang in red.

Swept Path/Constraints Analysis

Option 1

Figure 2.3.2 shows the swept path of a rigid bus pulling into and out of the existing car parking space. The limited amount of space left for passenger embarkation and safe vehicular movement, together with the distance of the location from the town centre means that, without the potential to increase the land available, which is constrained by adjoining land uses, Option 1 is considered therefore to be less favourable.

Option 2

Figure 2.3.3 shows the swept path for Option 2 at the junction of a possible new through-way at Temperance Lane. This indicates a need for significant works in the area immediately in front of the library.

Figure 2.3.4 shows the swept path for buses pulling out of Temperance Lane into Commercial Street, indicating significant impact on the traffic flow together with a need to widen/improve the junction and the environs of Temperance Lane itself, where the footways are currently insufficient for safe pedestrian flow.

In view of these constraints and together with the significant cost of creating the new through-way and resolving level change constraints where the site meets Brecon Road, this option has also been discounted.

Option 3

Figure 2.3.5 shows the bus movement turning left from Brecon Road into Station Road. As well as showing existing movement, it also gives an indication of the restricted movement of buses having to overtake parked buses in the proposed bus bays in Station Road.



Figure 2.3.2 : Option 1 constraint : Existing Car Park on Heol Eglwys

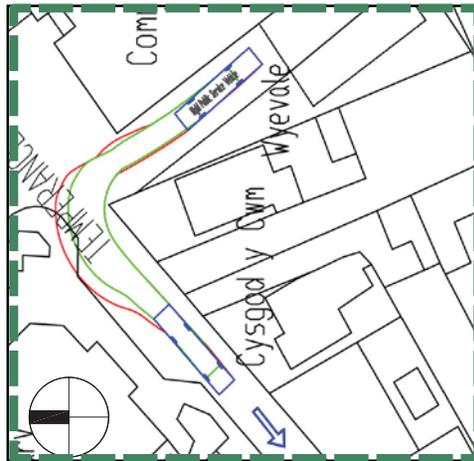


Figure 2.3.3 : Option 2 constraint: Development site to south of Welfare Hall - junction with Temperance Lane

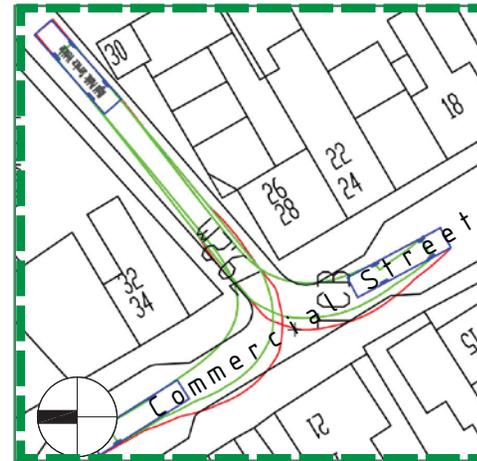


Figure 2.3.4 : Option 2 constraint : Development site to south of Welfare Hall - exit onto Commercial Street

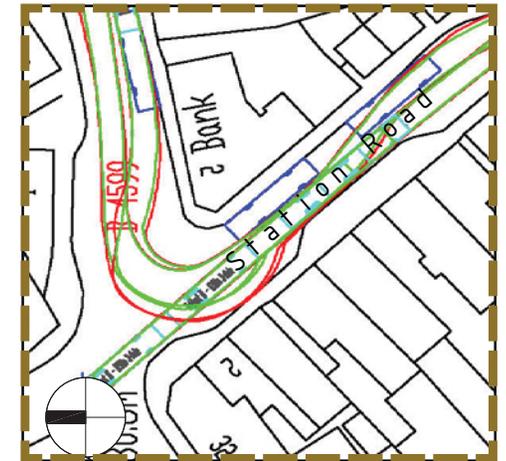


Figure 2.3.5 : Option 3 constraint : Brecon Road and Station Road

MOVEMENT AND PARKING - APPRAISAL 2

Option 4

There are no significant swept path constraints relating to Option 4.

2.3.3.4 Preferred Options

The result of the analysis has identified two preferred options: Option 3 (Wrap Around) and Option 4 (Station Road), both at the Brecon Road/Station Road location.

2.3.3.4 Provision/Loss of on street Parking

The existing number of on street parking spaces within the Option 3 and 4 areas is 11 spaces, all located on Station Road.

Option 3 (Wrap Around) will result in a loss of 4 existing spaces.

Option 4 (Station Road) will result in a loss of 1 existing space, with the displacement of 2 spaces from Station Road to disabled only parking on Brecon Road plus the creation of a 15m long loading bay where currently there is a no parking restriction.

2.3.5 Cycling

It is possible to cycle through and around the town centre and secure a bicycle to a lamp post or street sign, but the town does not provide any short or long term cycle-parking provision.

Ystradgynlais is on the periphery of National Cycle Route 43, currently running from Caehopkin to Swansea City Centre. As part of the planned extension of the National Cycle Route network, Route 43 will link with the outskirts of Llanwrytd Wells and complete a Route 43 connection to Builth Wells. This will significantly expand the appeal of regional cycling and Ystradgynlais could become a well-used stop-off and refreshment point en route, boosting the visitor economy.

In addition, a Safe Route to School (both walking and cycling) has been established and it links with Commercial Street near Merlin's café. A foreseen increase in town users arriving on foot or by cycle is also envisaged as a result of increases in motoring costs.

An opportunity exists for Ystradgynlais town centre to better equip itself to accommodate cyclists in terms of infrastructure, marketing and signage.



2.3.5 Walking

The 'walkability' of the town centre is fragmented; the main roads split the town centre retail offer and linkages are hazardous. Consultation with the Traffic Restraint Officer indicated high vehicle speeds heading south on Brecon Road made for particularly hazardous crossing points.

Pavement widths are particularly narrow at certain points within the town. The corner of Temperance Lane and Commercial Street and the southern end of Brecon Road around the southbound bus stop are both restricted. A shared surface scheme may be a solution to relieving the constraints on pedestrians trying to cross the roads at this junction.



There are parts of the town where there are no walkways as indicated in Figure 2.3 but these do not generally inhibit town centre movement.

There are existing walking links east to Maescynog and Llanfaes residential area and similarly south towards the Gurnos and Cwmtwrch. The north of the town centre links directly with Penrhos Estate via a walkway on the end of Temperance Lane but consultation has highlighted this as being particularly hazardous when wet or icy. Walking routes exist from all residential areas but in some instances the quality of the footways could be improved.

Another limiting factor for encouraging walking in the town is the complete absence of signage or information/interpretation. Visitors to the town have no opportunities to orientate themselves and find information about the local attractions and services.

The current pedestrian link between the off-street car park off Commercial Street and Heol Eglwys is often obstructed and used by delivery vehicles. There is a need to improve the links between this car park and the town centre to encourage patronage.

2.3.6 Car Parking

Car parking is available both on-street and off-street. Off-street car parking charges are applied between 8am and 6pm at the standard Powys County Council rate at the two main car parks in the town. There is however a general avoidance of using these facilities due to the charges applied. On street car parking is restricted to half an hour free parking and no return within an hour.



Users arriving by car generally seek free parking in the main street (where restrictions apply), in residential streets adjacent to the County Library and within the Welfare Hall Car Park. This has generally occurred because of poor enforcement of short term free-parking and the lack of restrictions elsewhere. This limits the opportunity to the top-up shoppers to use the town, restricts access to the library and at peak times it affects users of the Welfare Hall.

The imminent transfer of car parking enforcement responsibility from the local constabulary to Powys County Council presents an opportunity to increase the level of enforcement in the town.

2.3.7 Accessibility Issues

There are a number of black bollards within the town centre used to demarkate crossing points and corners within Commercial Street/Station Road. The lack of a contrasting colour strip on the majority of these may prove hazardous to town centre users with visual impairment, notwithstanding their importance for pedestrian protection from vehicle movement. Similarly overhanging trees in two locations are low enough to obstruct the mobility impaired, both on the corner of Heol Maes-y-dre/Commercial Street and on the new walking link in front of the Welfare Hall.

There are points in particular on Temperance Lane but also on Commercial Street and Heol Eglwys where the

narrow pavement widths would prove hazardous for wheelchair users.

Whilst attractive, external retail displays also represent additional obstructions for users with difficulties.

Tactile paving is generally well applied with the only one suggestion for further installation around the Ynyscedwyn Arms and at the crossing opposite the bus stop on Heol Geidd.



As already identified signage is limited but what exists is clearly legible with a good use of colour contrasts. The one exception to this is the main sign for PCC library where capitals are used rather than lower case – much more difficult for the partially sighted to read.

The PCC owned public convenience is centrally located on Station Road and within close proximity to the existing bus stops. The facility can accommodate wheelchairs.

Ideas:

- Improvement of footway from Penrhos Estate
- Interpretation/signage for walkers/cyclists
- Improved frequency of parking enforcement
- Improvements to accommodate the mobility impaired
- Develop link to Town Centre from cycle route

Figure 2.4
Shop Front Appraisal



SHOP FRONTS - APPRAISAL 2

2.4 SHOP FRONT & BUILDING FACADE APPRAISAL

This appraisal considered the quality and condition of retail frontages in conjunction with the wider building façades. The methodology has been developed and applied in conjunction with Davies Sutton Architecture. It seeks to establish a sense of priority for presentational improvements to the retail core. Full results of the assessment are included in Appendix 3, but the following assessment stages highlight our approach:



2.4.1 Stage 1: Development of Assessment Criteria

The following criteria were established to encompass the various aspects of each building façade and shop front:

Condition of Existing Features: An assessment of the condition of existing features, irrespective of the style/character of the building/shop front.

Level of Architectural Interest: The extent of features that are considered to be of architectural note

Potential to Improve Townscape Character: The potential influence the building and shop front could

have on the wider appearance of the town, considering scale and character.

Significance of Location: Consideration for the location of the building within the town – buildings which were within important eye-lines for example, at key approaches to the town or appear more prominent due to their elevation would be considered more significant.

Value of Improvements: Consideration of likely cost of overall improvements against their potential impact on the overall appearance of the town. This is a subjective assessment of cost versus benefit.



2.4.2 Stage 2: Scoring

A point based system was applied to the assessment of each building façade/shop front. The scoring was used to ensure that those of greatest priority for investment scored the highest (refer to Appendix 3).

In addition to this scoring, consideration was also given to the potential for any improvement to enhance the public realm and whether the building and shop front improvements contained any quick win elements (low cost improvement). These aspects were considered as important considerations depending on the potential to integrate improvements with other public realm project recommendations and potential budgetary constraints.

2.4.3 Stage 3: Prioritisation and Ranking

Having applied the scoring matrix, it was possible to identify which building façades/shop fronts were requiring greatest attention and conversely those that have exemplar characteristics. Four distinguished groups were generated as follows:

Score	Category
13-15	Priority project
10-12	Recommended projects
7-9	Desirable project
<7	No change/improvements identified

2.4.4 Stage 4: Results and Recommendations

The results of our appraisal are shown in Figure 2.4: Shop Front Appraisal. What is of particular note is the emergence of a cluster of priority projects around the main cross-roads in the town; the buildings within the core of the town are considered to have the greatest need for improvement.

Our analysis finally focused on the development of design guidelines for both building façades and shop fronts that promote a design standard to be applied to all categories.

Detailed recommendations for the Priority Projects are shown in Appendix 4.

2.4.5 Delivery

In terms of delivering the proposed shopfront and building facade improvements identified in similar towns has highlighted the following issues:

Time/hassle to make improvements deters shop owners: a town study in Merthyr is being used to guide improvement in the town with the local authority proposing that they will initiate the works by having a dedicated architect and selected contractors available to reduce the amount of work for the shop owners. Whilst the shop owners provide their element of the funding, the local authority could take on the management administrative responsibilities.

Funding proportion: a town centre improvement grant in Pencoed, run by Bridgend County Borough Council, offered 50% funding for improvements within the retail core. However, there has been no take up from shop owners as a 50% contribution is still considered too costly for retailers.

Timescale incentive: the importance of providing funding opportunities within a limited timescale - up to two years to maintain a focus for improvements.



2 APPRAISAL - TRADITIONAL BUILDING DESIGN GUIDANCE

Consider the pitch, shape and cladding of the roof – important features to retain or enhance the character of the building.

Plastic rainwater goods should be replaced with cast iron rainwater goods, more traditionally found within the town but becoming increasingly scarce.

Decorative elements such as cornices and architraves should be retained wherever possible, or carefully copied.

Paint tired looking renders – when carried out on a number of buildings the collective impression can dramatically improve the town.

Lead details should be retained and not be replaced with modern alternatives.

Retain the proportion and detail of original door and window openings and, where original door and window openings have been badly altered these should be reinstated to maintain the character and rhythm of the street.

Original windows should be repaired in preference to replacement and similarly, where factory made windows of all kinds (whether timber, aluminium, galvanised steel or plastic) have been installed, these should be replaced wherever possible with windows of more traditional design.



Typical, traditional building elevation - Ystradgynlais



Traditional first floor window and gable details at 2 Station Road



Traditional building and shop frontage at 76 Commercial Street, showing surviving ornate detail at eaves level, with the majority of the original shop front retained

TRADITIONAL SHOP FRONT DESIGN GUIDANCE - APPRAISAL 2



Traditional shop fronts located at 10 and 12 Station Road, Ystradgynlais



Signage to the Red Cross building at 24 Heol Eglwys is contained within the fascia



Decorative mullion and transom details at 1 Commercial Street



Above, typical console details found in Ystradgynlais, and, below right, a traditional pilaster detail from 1 Commercial Street - invariably painted rather than stained



Retail units should aim to achieve a traditional shop front where fascia, pilaster and stall riser are used to form a frame which encloses the shop window.

Historic shop fronts and display windows should, in general, be retained and restored to maintain the character of the building and the townscape.

Avoid and remove the staining of shop fronts – staining is not a traditional finish and should be consequentially painted over.

Ensure signage is to scale and not detrimental to the overall character of the building.

Shop fronts should enhance rather than obscure their traditional elements.

Shop fronts should avoid obstruction from modern fittings such as alarm boxes, satellite dishes, lighting, wiring and external plumbing, whose ill-considered location and/or design can seriously affect the general appearance.



Typical, traditional shop front design - Ystradgynlais



Repair, Reinstatement and Improvement...

2.5 DISTINCTIVENESS

What does a successful town centre look like? What do we mean by distinctiveness and how can we use distinctiveness to make successful town centres?

A successful town centres is usually busy - including evenings and weekends, it will have successful shops and businesses within a diverse economy, often acting as a local employment centre as well as a retail centre. The town centre will provide a focus for social, community and cultural activities, good places to eat and drink within attractive streets and public spaces. In some cases the town centre is also a visitor attraction, but in all cases it will be safe, well cared-for and accessible by car and public transport.

There are many challenges now facing town centres and high streets, they are no longer the "central places" in most people's lives. Increased mobility and prosperity, changing lifestyles means that people live their lives in a larger matrix of places including big cities, out of town retail/leisure, online shopping and local communities. As a result, captive markets are shrinking and more often it is the old, the young and the deprived who depend on the local town centre. Most people have to choose to use their town centre, so why do they make that choice?

Distinctiveness is therefore a complex feature of a town centre, including economic, social, environmental and cultural factors. Recent trends have shown the best performing small towns are often commuter towns in the accessible countryside that are centres of rural tourism. Such towns that are similar in size to Ystradgynlais may include Narberth, Crickhowell, and Newent. There are some key characteristics that Ystradgynlais town centre can seek to promote to enhance its distinctiveness and a snap shot appraisal has been undertaken to identify what makes the town centre distinctive, and what more could be done to improve its level of attraction.

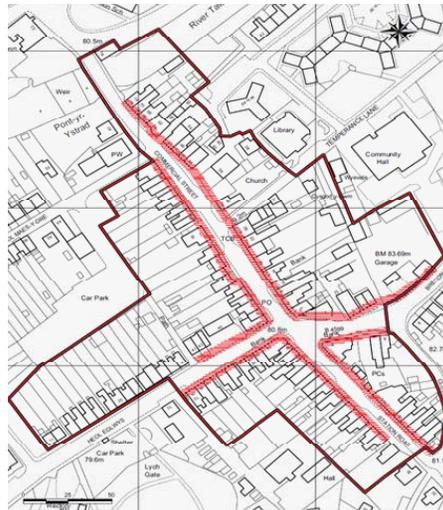
The Masterplan has considered a number of factors that exist or can be developed to promote the distinctiveness of the town including:

- Shopping
- Green Spaces
- Public Spaces
- Transport & Access
- People
- Buildings
- Things to do
- History & Culture

These factors have been considered in detail in previous sections of The Masterplan, and the appraisal has identified the following key features as distinctive or with the potential with further development to become distinctive and a draw for users of the town centre.

2.5.1 Shopping

Ystradgynlais Town Centre lacks the look of a traditional town centre, and this is because it is more characteristic of a large village centre, with many locals still referring to the centre as 'The Village'. The commercial core is dispersed over a wide area, with Commercial Street and Station Road acting as the main shopping area, despite the residential and other non commercial properties punctuating the retail frontages. The town centre is also split into two at 'The Cross' and lack the cohesiveness of a single 'High Street'.



UDP: Primary shopping frontages (Source Powys CC)

The Powys UDP has defined the town centre where it seeks to maintain and encourage further diversity and strike a balance between retail and non-retail uses.

The plan also defines primary shopping frontage policy that prioritises the retention of shop uses to ensure that non-retail uses do not become concentrated to the extent that they detract from the appeal and convenience of existing centres for shoppers. Primary shopping frontages are in place for almost the entire centre of Ystradgynlais, with no peripheral areas left undesignated to allow flexibility in land uses at its edges.

Analysis of land uses has shown that the shopping uses are stretched along a significant length of frontages when considered against the size of the overall town centre. The distances between the centre and edge of centre shops are not excessive for shoppers, but where there are large blocks of non shopping frontage e.g. Commercial Street, the impact is to make the shops located at the north of the street appear isolated, out of sight and therefore less attractive. There is some merit in considering an amendment to the extent of primary shopping frontage, firstly to protect shopping uses within a strong central core, and secondly to allow greater flexibility for alternative uses at the edges.

In terms of the retail offer, local independent traders provide the majority of businesses. The town centre provides a good range of basic and specialist retail that is a strength to promote to visitors and could become the differentiator from nearby towns and local supermarkets.

Local shopping includes: butcher, baker, florist, general stores, newsagent, sweet shop, sports shop, carpets, computers, hardware, pharmacy, children's clothing, pet, gardening. Apart from a lack of green grocers, the notable gaps are those shops more commonly found in larger 'higher order' town centres, and include adult clothing, footwear, furniture and household electrical items.

It is noticeable that there are six charity shops, although they are supporting important local causes, they do not elevate the overall quality of shopping in the town centre. The town centre is also an important local financial and service centre with three of the main High Street banks present, in addition to the Post Office, solicitors, and travel agent.



A survey in November 2008 (Ystradgynlais Household Shopping Survey, DPP) identified 32% of people state visiting financial services as the main reason for visiting the town, which is significantly greater than the 13% recorded for food shopping.

In terms of the food and beverage offer, the town has a good range of cafe's and may have attractive outdoor seating. However there is only one pub, and this is well positioned in an attractive location next to the river. Despite current provision there is scope to encourage more diverse food and beverage outlets, particularly good quality restaurants to grow the evening economy.



A key issue for the town centre, both in terms of its perception and its level of attraction is the practice of shops and business closing half day on a Saturday. This practice has been established for some 15-20 years and is out of date for a modern-day town centre economy.

It is considered a barrier to the town centre capturing the benefit from secondary shopping spend spinning out from the proposed new Tesco supermarket and in enhancing the towns reputation as a visitor destination.

Although not all businesses follow the practice in Ystradgynlais, closing at 1pm on one of most important shopping day of the week leaves the centre out of step with contemporary consumer and visitor expectations.

Promoting the town centre as a destination also needs to be supported by strategic partners through their own activities that encourage visitors to use local town centres. For example, a 'Google search' of the Web found limited information about the town centre offer, and an examination of the Powys Tourism web site found there is no promotional material for the town despite links to Brecon, Crickhowell and Hay on Wye town centre information.

DISTINCTIVENESS - APPRAISAL 2

2.5.2 Transport & Access

Ystradgynlais is a vital transport hub for the Upper Swansea Valley; it acts as a main terminus for services with Swansea, Neath, Brecon and Ammanford serving a wide rural and urban community.



Section 2.3 provides further information, but the significance of the town centre as bus hub should not be underestimated for travellers throughout the Upper Swansea Valley. Any improvements that seek to benefit bus users must recognise this and encourage spin off benefits for the town centre economy.

2.5.3 Green Spaces

Gorsedd Park is a prominent green space located within the town centre in a prominent position next to the river (see Environment Appraisal for further details).

This is a tranquil area in the centre of Ystradgynlais, named after its Bardic stone circle which dominates the centre of the park as a legacy of the 1954 Eisteddfod. It is common to see children playing among the stones and people relaxing, sunbathing and picnicking here. Although concerts are sometimes held here during the summer, the park could become a much more prominent open space for children's play and provide an outdoor venue for cultural and community activity close to the town centre.

"In the summer we tend to meet up here. It's quiet; we can just relax and chill out on sunny days"

(Young Persons Survey, Source: BBC Wales)



Ideas

Shopping

- The independence and diversity of shops is a strength which should be promoted to build the profile of the town centre as a good quality and diverse local centre. The idea of 'your local department store' where you can experience quality, variety and convenience within one centre.
- Town shopping guide for both local people and visitors
- Amend the primary shopping frontages to focus retail within a more central core
- Re-establish all day Saturday opening
- Market the town to potential independent retailers to fill gaps
- Using distinctive materials for roads and footways to define Commercial Street and Station Road as one single high street

Green Space

- Enhance the Gorsedd Park as an outdoor cultural venue for performances with links to the Welfare and local performing arts

2.5.4 People

Several former citizens of Ystradgynlais have left their mark on local and Welsh history and culture, many with links to industrialisation, trade unions and the arts. These are important figures in terms of the local distinctiveness of the community and the town identity (e.g. David Thomas – 19th Century industrialist and Adelina Patti – 19th Century Opera Singer). However, it is exceptional for a small valley town to have links with famous international figures, particularly one with international roots such as Josef Herman.

Josef Herman was a highly regarded expressionist painter who had an undeniable impact on contemporary art, particularly in Britain. Herman was born in Poland to a Jewish family. He left Poland for Brussels in 1938 where he was introduced to many of the prominent artists working in the city at the time. The invasion of Belgium by Germany forced him to leave for France and then Britain, where he first lived in Glasgow before moving to London. Much of his work took working people as its subject including grape pickers, fishermen and, most famously, miners. The latter were a particular focus for Herman during the eleven years that he lived in Ystradgynlais from the mid-1940s.

In 1951 he was asked to paint a mural for the Festival of Britain and he again took the miners as his subject. Herman's style was bold and distinctive. It often involves strong shapes with minimal detail. In 1981 he was awarded the Order of the British Empire and in 1990 he was elected to the Royal Academy. He continued to work up to his death in 2000.

Herman is quoted as saying:

"I stayed here because I found ALL I required. I arrived a stranger for a fortnight. The fortnight became eleven years."

This is an alluring statement regarding Herman's time in the town, one very relevant to town centre visitors.

The following images provide a flavour of Hermans work. As the subject matter of Herman's work strongly resonates the town's heritage there are many applications for his work being used to promote, brand and improve the appearance of the town centre.



(Source of images: Josef Herman Foundation, Swansea Museum, Sotherby's)

Ideas

- Murals inspired by Joseph Herman in prominent locations within the town
- Use of Herman's symbols on signage to brand the town – the trees/miners
- Use of Hermans quotes to promote the town on signage, and in literature
- Hold an exhibition in the Welfare Hall to gather local views and raise initial awareness

2.5.5 Places

The Welfare is an arts and community centre situated in the town centre. A versatile venue offering conference and private hire facilities as well as popular entertainment, including music, live theatre performances, regular digital cinema and specialist film screenings and weekly community events.



The Welfare is a prominent cultural and entertainment venue for the Upper Swansea Valley and Western Valleys and one of the few evening attractions for the area. The Welfare attracts visitors from across South Wales and often much further afield for special events and should therefore play a prominent role in developing the visitor and town centre economy. The Welfare also houses a collection of works by Joseph Herman although unfortunately these are not on public display.

“This is the Welfare Hall. It’s mainly a cinema, but it’s also a place for concert and gigs. The local theatre group hold their theatre productions here too. There are workshops during the summer - dancing and painting workshops. It’s like an arts centre really”

(Source: Young Persons Survey, BBC Wales)

2.6.6 Culture and Heritage

Ystradgynlais is a Welsh speaking town and the Welsh culture and language distinguishes it from other towns and communities in the south of Powys. Apart from the Gorsedd Circle and very few bilingual shop signs, the towns ‘Welshness’ appear to be under cover and could be encourage further.

Ystradgynlais is also rich in industrial heritage and the Ironworks Park at Ynyscedwyn, bears witness to its industrial past. Although much of the industrial heritage is situated outside of the town centre, the links between features of heritage value and the appeal of the town can be strengthened as part of a package of wider tourism improvements.

Ideas

- Supporting The Welfare as a cultural and entertainment venue with complementary improvements to the town centre that support visitors and the promotion of the evening economy
- Promotion of bilingual signage and shop signs



DISTINCTIVENESS - APPRAISAL 2

MASTERPLAN 3

3. MASTERPLAN

The Masterplan provides the framework for guiding future investment, development and action for Ystradgynlais town centre. This Masterplan has acknowledged Ystradgynlais is strategically located as a gateway between two distinct areas: the predominantly urban South Wales and rural Mid Wales. It also has a strong mix of retail and other land uses that indicate its continued and growing importance as a service centre for the region.

Development opportunities have also been highlighted that, constraints aside, have the opportunity to add value to the town centre's role and functions.



Environmental quality has been considered, built and natural, to enhance the public realm and improve the general presentation of the town.

Appraisal of town centre movements has highlighted the need to improve bus interchange facilities as a key priority in addressing general town centre movement. Other opportunities that have emerged include the need for additional car parking enforcement and enhancement of linkages for pedestrians and cyclists.

The shop front and building façade appraisal has highlighted the need to prioritise units located around the town centre's crossroads where the most prominent views coincide with the poorest shop fronts.

3.1 Strategy

The Masterplan is the chance to improve the efficiency and integration of town centre activities that will generate a sustainable growth. Projects must sustain a strong community and provide an attractive place to live, work and visit; a place everyone can enjoy. Developing the centre's legibility and layout will make it more convenient and attractive for local shopping while enhancing the quality of the townscape. Improving transport infrastructure and links and creating opportunities for cultural and evening activities will create a stronger independent retail destination. The Masterplan develops the potential of the town centre to become a vibrant destination for local residents and visitors.

The following key objectives have been developed to prioritise projects detailed within the action plan.

Masterplan Objectives

1. To tackle sites, buildings and environments of greatest need as well as those with greatest potential;
2. to enhance the distinctiveness and attraction of the town;
3. to improve access and movement for all users and all modes of transport (foot, car, cycle and bus);
4. to encourage town centre enterprises and the enhanced performance of businesses;
5. to integrate the town centre with cultural and recreational facilities / attractions; and
6. to integrate improvements and actions to maximise impact.

The '**Anchor Project**' for the Masterplan is '**The Cross**': a series of integrated projects that collectively meet the full complement of Masterplan Objectives. Two suggested options for The Cross project have been considered, using corresponding bus interchange design proposals. Further detail of the Cross Options and Bus Interchange Options are included in Appendix 1 and 2, but the principles of The Cross can be summarised as follows:

- Creation of a central public space, giving a 'heart' to the town as well as a high quality arrival point at its busiest road junction and public transport hub.
- Reduction in traffic speeds, and greater priority to pedestrian movement.
- Additional street furniture, an electronic information kiosk, tree planting and potential street market space.
- Improved visitor orientation and signage.
- Potential to incorporate public art.

- Enhanced shop fronts in conjunction with the delivery of Priority Shop Front Improvements.

Cross Option A has been designed to incorporate the Station Road Bus Interchange, whilst Cross Option B incorporates the alternative Wrap-around Bus Interchange. Example design schematics from the appendices are shown as follows:



The Cross Option A sketch design



The Cross Option A related Station Road Bus Interchange

The full list of identified projects is included within the Action Plan (Section 3.2) however the projects that are considered to have the broadest contribution to the Masterplan Objectives are regarded as 'Primary Projects' within each of the following themes: 'Development

Sites', 'Environmental Enhancements', 'Movement and Parking', 'Retail Enhancement' and 'Distinctiveness'.

3.2 Development Sites

There are five sites identified within the town centre area that are either existing or future development opportunities. Development Site 1 is a Primary Project because of its scale, proximity to the town centre and potential integration with the adjacent Welfare Hall. The site has the potential to incorporate a range of uses to include a more formalised market space, start-up enterprise units and housing.

3.3 Environmental Enhancements

The Cross project is the Primary Project and 'anchor project' for the town centre. This reflects the potential to provide a series of integrated improvements to the central cross-roads in the town centre to include greater emphasis on the pedestrian environment, improve traffic speed restraints, enhancement of shop frontages around the cross roads, improved interpretation, lighting, public art, additional street furniture, cycle infrastructure and importantly transport integration through an improved bus interchange.



High quality street furniture and Public Art

Other highlighted projects that The Cross can contribute to in the wider town centre enhancement includes a town centre greening strategy, a wider lighting strategy, specific improvements around the Temperance Lane and the need to engage with private landowners to improve the condition and appearance of their boundaries.

3.4 Movement and Parking

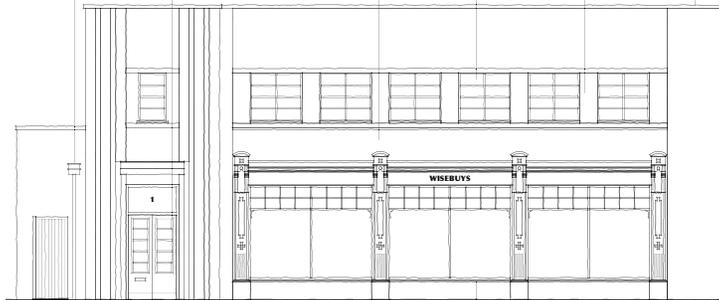
The design and delivery of a bus interchange facility is considered a Primary Project both in its inter-relationship with The Cross but also due to the wider transportation linkages.

The project looks to build appropriate infrastructure for Ystradgynlais to fulfil its role as a transport hub for the wider Upper Swansea Valley and it has the potential to be centrally located to maximise the retail advantages and to generate town centre footfall.

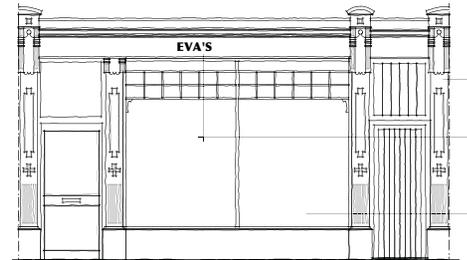
The other movement and parking projects will complement the bus interchange to provide a consistently high level of transport infrastructure for the wider town. Projects will improve permeability with a proposed new walking link and general access improvements and by increasing the potential for top-up/short-stay shopping through greater on street car parking enforcement. Introduction of cycle infrastructure is designed to support the national cycle route users and other more local cyclists that may wish to use the town.



Shop Front Improvements : 1 Brecon Road



Shop Front Improvements : 26-28 Heol Eglwys



Cycle Infrastructure Options



3.5 Retail Enhancements

The establishment of a Retail Champion is considered the Primary Project within this theme there is an opportunity to appoint a highly motivated and enterprising champion that is passionate about enhancing the quality of the retail offer for the town.

This will have much broader benefits to maintain and enhance retail variety, improve the overall presentation of the town through increased implementation of shopfront improvements and a more integrated town centre retail offer. Examples of the Priority Improvements to shop fronts are shown in the following images. Full details included in Appendix 4.



Distinctive signage at Blaenavon

The retail champion will be an important personality in maximising the inter-relationship between town centre retail improvements and the Re-launch of the Market and promotion of the Virtual Department Store concept.

3.6 Distinctiveness

The introduction of Visitor Interpretation is highlighted as a Primary Project for the wider benefits that could be gained from introducing consistent signage and interpretation that refers to local area heritage.

The emerging role for Ystradgynlais as a visitor service centre requires a brand that the local community can be involved in developing. Signage and interpretation can be used effectively to link with other projects including the Gorsedd Park and the Welfare Hall.



Art inset into public realm at Chepstow



Abergavenny Brewery Yard

Other attractions such as the old iron works and Diamond Park and key infrastructure such as off-street car parks, the national cycle route and bus interchange would also benefit from signage/interpretation.

MASTERPLAN 3

Action	Detail	Impact/Deliverability	Lead Organisation (L) and Partner (P)	Timescale: Short: 2010-2012 Medium: 2013-15 Long: 2016+	Funding Opportunities	Estimated Level of Investment
PRIORITY PROJECT Development Site 1: Land adjoining Welfare Hall	To establish a mixed use high quality development that incorporates residential, small workshop/business units and the opportunity to connect with the Welfare Hall. The precise mix of uses would be developed through a site development brief. This is a 'gateway' area and needs to evoke the sense of pride and quality of the wider town centre. The area would incorporate some public space that connects with the forecourt of the Welfare Hall, accommodate the existing and fragmented market stalls, providing the opportunity to expand the market concept to improve trade opportunities for the wider town centre. Inclusion of the existing Murco Petrol Station site highlights the opportunity to improve street frontage through alternative development.	Enhancement of the town centre area, integration of the site with the Welfare Hall, improved sense of arrival adding value to the visitor experience, expansion of the town centre population and potential to formally refresh and promote an Ystradgynlais Market to increase footfall for the wider town centre. Whilst the principle for mixed use development is supported by the land owner, discussions have indicated a clear need to maximise potential land value. Discussions have also indicated the presence of asbestos in existing buildings which would need to be appropriately disposed of. The development plot has assumed the potential availability of the existing Murco Petrol station. Discussions have similarly indicated a willingness to consider alternative uses.	L: Public Sector P: Private landowner, Town Council, residential developer, PCC, Welfare Hall Charitable Trust	Short: Develop plans Medium: Implementation of scheme.	Scheme delivered through the private sector	Site Development Brief: £5,000-10,000 Private sector led
Development Site 2: Site adjoining Cat Charity Shop	This land parcel is centrally located on Commercial Street and it is currently unused space. There is the potential to develop this space as a pocket park and natural play for dual use – both as an extension of the outdoor play space for the proposed childcare facility in the Congregational Chapel, but also for public use out of hours – evenings and weekends.	The proposal could contribute to the green infrastructure of the town centre, complement the childcare facility and enhance local recreation provision. The proposal could be impacted by the limited funding for additional sports/recreational provision from PCC. In addition, liabilities relating to 'play' areas would need to be discussed with a view to seeking Town Council ownership/responsibility in conjunction with the childcare facility. The site is owned and is currently part of the area for sale as part of the adjacent charity shop – need to work with landowner to consider alternative use for the site.	L: Childcare provider/Ystradgynlais Town Council/landowner. P: PCC	Short: Potential to deliver scheme in the short period in conjunction with child care facility development.	S106, Western Valleys, private sector, landowner	Price dependent on ownership arrangements. But pocket park installation costs circa £20,000.
Development Site 3: Coleg Powys site	There is the potential for this facility to become available to purchase if Coleg Powys release the asset as part of a co-location process. Whilst the market would present potential uses, considering the scale and location of the facility away from the core retail area, it might lend itself to becoming an accommodation facility for tourists to the Upper Swansea Valley, potentially incorporating both the bed and breakfast/bunkhouse accommodation options. Part of the facility could incorporate a food and beverage element.	Expansion of the role and function of Ystradgynlais as provider of essential visitor infrastructure Structural issues/build costs associated with conversion for this purpose may deter the private sector. Need to planning permission to secure approval for the change of land use.	L: Private accommodation provider	Medium	Private sector	Not cost-able project. Conversion costs to be determined.
Development Site 4: Black Shed	Potential demolition and rebuild for residential. This building is currently unused and for sale via local property agents. This site would be appropriate for residential use, considering the proximity and range of other town centre community facilities, the bus interchange and links to the town centre.	Increasing local population on the periphery of town centre could increase the vitality and viability of town centre functions. Potential development constraints associated with the structural integrity of the site. Consultation has also highlighted potential archaeological issues to be investigated further	L: Private developer P: Registered Social Landlord	Medium	Private sector	Not cost-able project. Determined by site specific constraints established through further investigations.

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Development Site 5: Ynyscedwyn Primary School	<p>As part of the school modernisation programme for the area, closure of the school will occur in 2012. Considering the scale of the site and its peripheral location, with strong walking links to the town centre, this site could be allocated for residential development with the likelihood of generating significant private sector interest.</p> <p>Due to the scale of the site it is likely that the development will require an affordable element so it important to engage a registered social landlord early in the development process.</p>	<p>Increase in the local population on the periphery of town centre could increase the vitality and viability of town centre functions.</p> <p>Potential development constraints associated with the structural integrity of the site and the proximity of the Tawe river: the site is within the extreme flood boundary as detailed in Environment Agency flood maps and would therefore require further flood risk investigative work.</p>	<p>L: Private developer</p> <p>P: Register Social Landlord</p>	Medium	Private sector	Not cost-able project. Determined by site specific constraints established through further investigations.

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PRIORITY PROJECT The Cross	<p>To deliver a series of public realm, movement, and green infrastructure improvements that enhance the centre of Ystradgynlais, bind the retail core and prioritises pedestrian movement. Two options detailed in Appendix 2 provide further analysis and indicative costs for development of the 'Cross'.</p> <p>Option 1 includes changing the direction of the one-way system on Club Lane/Station Road, relocation of the bus interchange along one side of Station Road, demolition of 1 Brecon Road, extension of the pavements all around The Cross, installation of a table-top road surface, enhancement of public realm and incorporation of an interactive information kiosk.</p> <p>Option 2 retains the existing one-way system and does not require the demolition of No. 1 Brecon Road. It loses the northbound bus stop on Brecon Road to incorporate a wrap-around interchange which extends from Brecon Road round to Station Road, an enhanced pedestrian environment including interpretation and additional street furniture and green infrastructure and improved road surfacing. Further details and drawings of both of these options are included in Appendix 2</p>	<p>The Cross is likely to improve the sense of arrival within the town centre, reduce risk of road traffic accidents, enhance public space, increase green infrastructure, avoid traffic congestion around interchange and provide users with a greater sense of orientation.</p> <p>This is an integrated project which will require significant capital investment and advanced consideration for vehicle/pedestrian conflict. Traders will need to be engaged in the development of the interchange proposals.</p>	<p>L: PCC - number of departments</p> <p>P: Town Council, Communities First, town centre traders.</p>	<p>Short – delivery of priority shop front improvements identified within the Cross Area, detailed design of bus interchange, pavement widths, road surfaces and design pallet.</p> <p>Medium – implementation of preferred scheme.</p>	S106, Western Valleys, and TraCC.	<p>See costs details for each option identified in Appendix 2</p> <p>Indicative costs range between £172,250 (Option 1) and £102,750 (Option 2)</p>
Temperance Lane Environmental Enhancements	<p>Implement an integrated landscaping design on Temperance Lane to address eye sores, improve setting for the Welfare Hall, strengthen links with the town centre and incorporate parking and improved access to the library and Welfare Hall. The design would also address the hazardous walking link to the Penrhos Estate.</p>	<p>Enhanced environment adjacent to key town centre facilities. Improved access to library, greater patronage of walking link and redistribution of car parking.</p> <p>Potential to integrate with the external design of the Welfare Hall redevelopment. Improved management of car parking will require introduction of car parking restrictions and enforcement.</p>	<p>L: PCC</p> <p>P: Town Council</p>	<p>Short – development of detailed design improvements and implementation of quick wins</p> <p>Medium – integration with Welfare Hall redevelopment and full implementation.</p>	S106, Western Valleys	<p>Approximately £80,000 but dependent on the integration and scale of Welfare Hall development proposals.</p>
Town Centre Greening Strategy	<p>Maximise biodiversity enhancement opportunities throughout the town both in private and public spaces. This should engage both retailers and residents in developing a network of greenery throughout the town. This includes flower beds, tree planting, window boxes and hanging baskets.</p>	<p>Greater town centre connection with the peripheral natural environment.</p> <p>Potential to engage town centre residents and retailers to introduce green infrastructure. Some planting in public space would require capital investment and ongoing maintenance and it would be important to gain support of the hardware store, florist and garden centre as part of this.</p>	<p>L: PCC, Town Council</p> <p>P: Retail Champion and wider retailers and residents, Chamber of Trade</p>	Short	S106, Western Valleys, retailers, residents	<p>Funding required to incentivise retailers and residents – up to 50%.</p> <p>£60 per basket likely.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance costs, primarily on a voluntary basis.</p>

Action	Detail	Impact/Deliverability	Lead Organisation (L) and Partner (P)	Timescale: Short: 2010-2012 Medium: 2013-15 Long: 2016+	Funding Opportunities	Estimated Level of Investment
Lighting Strategy	<p>To incorporate lighting improvements to the town which enhance the public realm and provide clear linkages to and at the bus interchange, Welfare Hall and car parks. This is specifically to promote the evening economy.</p> <p>Lighting selected should minimise energy consumption, reduce glare and consider colour to minimise nuisance to town centre residents. Lighting should enhance key buildings, features and public art.</p>	<p>The lighting strategy specifically looks to enhance the town centre's evening environment.</p> <p>The need to consider town centre residents opinions will be essential to develop and lighting which positively contributes to everyone's experience of the town centre at night time. Potential to conflict with street lamp policy for PCC but priority should be given enhancement of town centre evening environment.</p>	<p>L: PCC, Town Council</p> <p>P: Business, retailers and residents</p>	<p>Short: establish strategy</p> <p>Medium: implement improvements</p>	S106, Western Valleys, PCC	Funding dependent on the scale and nature of lighting fittings but £20,000 ceiling cost allocated to the feasibility and design of lighting improvements (to include key feature illumination).
Private Land Enhancements	To engage private landowners in improving identified eyesores on their land. This should focus on improving the condition and maximising presentation of their boundaries. Provide support (both advice and proportionate funding) to ensure at least quick-win environmental enhancements.	Enhanced local environments that collectively promote a high quality town centre feel.	<p>L: PCC</p> <p>P: Private land owners</p>	Short	S106, Western Valleys	Incentivising quick win improvements through matching funding. Suggested 50% improvement funding.

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Action	Detail	Impact/Deliverability	Lead Organisation (L) and Partner (P)	Timescale: Short: 2010-2012 Medium: 2013-15 Long: 2016+	Funding Opportunities	Estimated Level of Investment
PRIORITY PROJECT Bus Interchange	To design and install the most effective bus interchange which enhances the existing role and function of Ystradgynlais as a bus interchange for the region. See consideration of bus interchange options (Appendix 1)	Increased patronage of bus services, improved integration between other transport modes and improved local transport movements. Potential improvements are undermined by the limited space for bus sheltering, conflict with loading/ unloading of trades and illegal car parking.	L: PCC P: TraCC, Local Access Forum and commercial bus operators.	Short/Medium	TraCC Western Valleys, S106	Detailed costs to be considered in later design stages.
Bus Infrastructure Improvements	To ensure a consistently high quality provision of bus facilities at town centre bus stops. This includes clear information, interpretation materials, seating and shelters where appropriate and there is space. The location of cycle stands, car parking and taxi services should be signposted to enhance opportunities for multi-modal travel.	Increased use of bus services and greater town centre footfall which could positively impact on local trade. Pavement widths may restrict the potential to incorporate additional shelter provision.	L: PCC P: TraCC	Short	TraCC, PCC, Western Valleys, S106	Itemised costs dependent on requirements of each stop.
Travel Information Brochure	Development of a travel information brochure for Ystradgynlais that integrates travel options within local and regional destinations. This has been an effective initiative in Aberystwyth and Brecon and the award winning initiative delivered through TraCC could be introduced to Ystradgynlais.	Increased use of sustainable transport modes in and around Ystradgynlais. Greater orientation for visiting town centre users. Potential to be more effective in conjunction with other transport improvements including signage and cycle infrastructure.	L: TraCC P: PCC	Short	TraCC, Western Valleys, S106	£5,000 initial marketing and print run costs Ongoing printing costs.
Cycle Infrastructure	To install appropriate cycle infrastructure for both long term (all day) and short term (up to two hours) cyclists. Location of cycle stands should link with the proposed location and redesign of the bus interchange, integrate with food and drink locations, maximise linkages with the National Cycle Route and minimise disruption to pedestrian movement within the town centre. Potential to incorporate shower/changing facilities as part of the existing town centre public convenience may encourage further uptake.	Increase in the number of cyclists visiting the town centre. Indirect growth in food and drink expenditure and general town centre trade, encouraging active lifestyles and potential to increase bus service patronage through multi-modal travel. Pavement widths may limit the amount of on-street cycle stand provision. Stands need to maximise the potential for natural surveillance to avoid theft/damage limiting future uptake.	L: PCC P: TraCC, Town Council	Short	TraCC, S106	£600 for four 'Sheffield' cycle stands including installation. (Long-term parking, suggested within off-street car park) £160 per lightweight 'cycle-hoop' designed for more short-term parking on-street.

Action	Detail	Impact/Deliverability	Lead Organisation (L) and Partner (P)	Timescale: Short: 2010-2012 Medium: 2013-15 Long: 2016+	Funding Opportunities	Estimated Level of Investment
Access Improvements	To address accessibility constraints within the town centre as identified to include: Bollards restricting pavement widths Installation of colour contrasting strips on bollards Improved maintenance of overhanging vegetation Maintaining width of pedestrian link from off-street car park to Heol Eglwys Tactile paving provision on the corner of Heol Geidd and Commercial Street Lower case signage for the library entrance. Initial access observations could be developed into a full accessibility audit for the town centre.	Improved confidence in town centre movement for the mobility impaired. Increased use of public realm. Enhanced patronage of town centre by elderly and mobility impaired.	L: PCC Local Access Forum	Short: undertaking full access audit Medium: implementation of the required access improvements	PCC	Labour costs for maintenance of vegetation. £100 for new library sign. £1000 for purchase and installation of tactile paving. Full Access Audit up to £5,000
Enforcement of Car Parking	To maximise visitor turnover in the town centre by more frequent enforcement of restricted parking times. Whilst there is a limit to how frequently enforcement officers can attend the town, local traders/town council could support car parking controls to maximise the opportunity for top-up shopping.	Growth in top-up shopping, improved traffic flow through town centre by reducing conflict between shoppers/residents, delivery vehicles and bus services. Enforcement will need to be supported collectively by town centre stakeholders and should be linked to the development of a retail champion and the need to galvanise town centre retailers.	L: Local Constabulary to become PCC following change in management of car parking enforcement. P: Town Council, Retailers, Residents	Short/Medium/Long	PCC	Labour time for additional enforcement
New Walking Link	Create a pedestrian link from the off-street car park behind Commercial Street to link directly with the retail core and directly opposite Temperance Lane. Car parking at this location is considered important to complement a growth in day and evening economy (including provision for arts and cultural events at the Welfare Hall).	Improved permeability of town centre, stronger patronage of an off-street car park and added value to the town centre visitor experience. Land adjacent to the existing dentist on Commercial Street has been identified as appropriate for this purpose. An initial discussion with the landowner has indicated a willingness to an openness to this development option but as long as it did not restrict a foreseen expansion of the dental practice.	L: PCC P: Landowner, Town Council	Short: engage with landowner and establish support Medium: Installation of walking link	TraCC, Western Valleys, S106	£50 per square metre

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Action	Detail	Impact/Deliverability	Lead Organisation (L) and Partner (P)	Timescale: Short: 2010-2012 Medium: 2013-15 Long: 2016+	Funding Opportunities	Estimated Level of Investment
PRIORITY PROJECT Retail Champion	To establish a retail champion – to refresh the inter-relationship between traders. The retail champion would need to be appointed from established town centre stakeholders but be willing to commit significant time to galvanising the existing retail offer and support administratively by both the town council and PCC. The champion would need to fully understand and support the future role and function of the town and proactively market the existing and potential offering with the incentive of generating trade.	A key driving force behind the promotion and branding for the town. There is a need to revitalise communication between town centre retailers and the retail champion should prioritise the involvement of either new or disengaged retailers.	L: PCC in partnership with Retail Champion P: skillsmart retail cymru, town centre retailers, existing and potential, Town Council	Short	Town Council, Western Valleys, S106	Administration costs and marketing costs provided by Town Council and PCC - £5,000 per annum.
Priority shop front improvements	To deliver the identified priority shop front improvements result from the shop front appraisal matrix. Funding should be limited to two years, PCC should support as much as possible in the sourcing of an architect and contractors etc and the funding proportion (up to 70%) reflects the priority in the context of generating wider town centre benefits.	Enhanced distinctiveness and quality of built environment. Aesthetic improvements are likely to generate positive feedback from residents and visitors that will encourage footfall. Potential to attract more diverse and high quality retail to town centre environment Critically needs buy-in from retailers/owners of property. The next stage of this project should be an engagement session with existing retailers to explain the appraisal process, the process outcomes and the general importance of façade condition and design to the overall town centre impression.	L: PCC and local retail champion in partnership P: Town centre retailers, local volunteer groups to participate in renovations, local trades	Short	Western Valleys, S106	Broad cost estimations are provided for each priority project (see priority shop front and building design detail, Appendix 5). Total approximate costs for Priority Shopfront improvements: £123,050.00. It is advised to offer up to 70% funding for their implementation.
Delivering design code for retail	To communicate and engage town centre retailers in recommended improvements to the retail units throughout the town. An information and awareness day should be held with traders to explain the appraisal process, highlight observed assets and problem areas, before detailing suggested improvements and offering percentage grants to implement improvements. Funding should be limited to two years, PCC should support as much as possible in the sourcing of an architect and contractors etc and the funding proportion (up to 60%) reflects the priority in the context of generating wider town centre benefits.	This will develop a strong sense of identity for the town which is anticipated to galvanise retailers and generate footfall. Whilst this appraisal has been undertaken it is critical retailers are engaged to the process albeit retrospectively, and understand the positive implications of implementing improvements. The next stage of this project should be an engagement session with existing retailers to explain the appraisal process, the process outcomes and the general importance of façade condition and design to the overall town centre impression. Deliverability will be highly influenced by the percentage of grant funding that is available. Considering the integration of the town centre retail with residential, it would be important to engage residents living within the retail core.	L: PCC and local retail champion in partnership P: Town centre retailers, local volunteer groups to participate in renovations, local trades	Short – Identified Quick wins Medium – remaining recommendations	Western Valleys S106	Cost dependent on the extent of recommendation for each property how it is advised to offer up to 60% funding for delivery of recommended and desirable improvements. Anticipated average improvement costs: £6,000 per property. 60% funding for 48 properties: £172,800
Review of Retail Core	To review the town centre boundary defined in the emerging Local Development Plan. Properties outside the revised boundary should be able to achieve change of use from retail to residential. Conversely however, within the existing and future opportunity to expand retail provision should be secured. (to include Shops, Restaurants/Cafes and Financial and Professional Services)	The intention is to add potency to the defined retail core, but at the same time encourage the non retail element within immediate proximity. Depend on engaging with the development of the Local Development Plan at opportune stages.	L: PCC, Town Council and Local Retail Champion P: Existing and prospective town centre residents and retailers.	Medium – timescale dependent on the LDP process		Negligible – essential labour cost that is likely to be incorporated as part of existing roles.

Action	Detail	Impact/Deliverability	Lead Organisation (L) and Partner (P)	Timescale: Short: 2010-2012 Medium: 2013-15 Long: 2016+	Funding Opportunities	Estimated Level of Investment
Enhancement of Retail Offer	To ensure town centre retailers encourage visitor expenditure by tailoring their 'offer' to encourage visitor expenditure: e.g. for food and drink providers: walker's/cyclists energy smoothies; for the sports equipment shop: to include outdoor walking cycling gear and sale of fishing tackle. Retailers should collectively consider how to accommodate the needs of an Upper Swansea Valley tourist.	Increase town centre trade, improved linkages with established tourism assets within the region and growth in the evening and weekend economy.	L: Retailers led by retail champion P: Chamber of Trade, skillsmart retail cymru, PCC, South West Tourism Partnership, Tourism Partnership Mid Wales and Brecon Beacons National Park	Short/Medium/Long	N/A	Labour cost for tourism specialist to attend the town and engage with retailers on enhancing the tourism economy.
Ystradgynlais Market Re-launch	To refresh the market concept for the town to increase the quality and diversity of stall holders and to connect with the wider town centre retail offer. There is the potential to formalise the market area in conjunction with the redevelopment of a site for mixed uses adjacent to the Welfare Hall (see Development Site 1). There is similarly a need for the town council to work collaboratively with the adjacent landowner to avoid duplication in market offering. There is the potential to engage a third party market specialist to permanently manage the development of the market concept. Such a specialist would contribute to developing an innovative strategy for development that could integrate with local healthy eating initiatives, the potential to offer cookery classes, and incorporating some of the arts and cultural elements of the Welfare Hall offering. The market could have a distinctively 'Welsh' feel that similarly reflects the strength of Welsh language and Welsh culture within the region.	A growing high quality and diverse town centre market which complements the town centre retail offer, is supported by town centre stakeholders through a thorough collaboration in preparation for the re-launch and positively contributes to the distinctiveness of the town. The former farmers' market and current market offering has received limited support from the wider town centre stakeholders. A dedicated resource (perhaps a third party management market management company) to the development and integration of the market offering is recommended to generate a collective enthusiasm for the market, attract stallholders and maximise expenditure for the wider retail core.	L: Third party market manager P: Town centre retailers, Chamber of Trade, Town Council, PCC	Short/Medium	Western Valleys, S106, Town Council	Management costs and marketing costs for re-launch and ongoing market management cost. £1,000 annually. Part-time market manager – between 8 and 12 hours a week: £8,000 annually. Potential additional cost of renting market stall structures if being held outside.
Virtual Department Store	To deliver a series of marketing skills training sessions for businesses. The project seeks to equip existing retailers in with the knowledge to promote an integrated retail offer that can collectively meet the shopping needs of the resident and visitor. The development of a 'virtual department store' is a useful methodology for identifying retail gaps and improving communication between retailers. The 'department store' concept can be developed further to include: Retail 'stamps' following purchases that can offer discounts – a form of 'clubcard'. Encouraging general recommendations between traders and linking products. Developing a retail guide, possibly in Tesco.	Greater footfall and an integrated town centre economy. Dependent on a retail champion to lead the marketing and integration of retail offer.	L: Retail champion P: skillsmart retail cymru, Town centre retailers, Chamber of Trade, PCC, Town Council	Short	Western Valleys, S106	Circa £10,000 for every 8-10 retailers. Additional marketing costs for developing stamp cards etc..

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PRIORITY PROJECT Visitor Interpretation	To introduce consistent and distinctive signage for the town, linking peripheral attractions and other more central assets. Signage symbols such as a Joseph Herman pastiche or industrial heritage (Crane Insignia) could form a distinctive backdrop. Visitor interpretation could also include the use of bluetooth information at key buildings, and enhancement of Ystradgynlais as a visitor destination on existing websites.	Visible branding for the town which allows visitors or newcomers to orientate themselves but also communicate identity and range of assets. There is a need to engage a local representation to develop a sense of ownership and minimise the potential for vandalism.	L: PCC, Town Council P: Local retailers/ residents, Mid Wales Tourism Partnership, South West Tourism Partnership.	Short/Medium	Western Valleys, S106	£300 per sign, total cost dependent on number of signs. Bluetooth technology costs undetermined.
Gorsedd – expansion of recreational and cultural dimensions	To diversify facilities within Gorsedd Park to provide an external performance space that responds to its heritage as a performance venue for Eisteddford. In addition, the potential to incorporate innovative town centre children's play facilities e.g. 'mock rock'.	Generate family use of the town centre – potential to generate greater recreational appeal of the town centre, with the opportunity to link with other town centre spaces enhanced through the Green Strategy and Dev. Site 1 Weather dependent and the potential for outdoor concerts would need to engage local residents to address nuisances. Whilst PCC own and are responsible for this land, there is the potential for ongoing management/maintenance costs to shared as part of the expansion of the park facilities.	L: PCC, Town Council, Welfare Charitable Trust P: Residents, school children	Short/Medium	Western Valleys, S106	£50,000 but entirely depending on scale and specification of cultural/recreational facilities.
Welfare Hall – arts and entertainment venue	To update the feasibility and business plan (2004) to develop the arts and entertainment functions of the Welfare Hall. Particular attention should be focused on the precise blend of uses and the funding package to secure the long term viability of the facility. Uses for consideration should include: <i>Tourist Information Point</i> <i>Permanent art exhibition space</i> <i>Sound proof booths for recording</i> <i>Start-up arts/culture related business units</i> <i>Community restaurant</i> <i>Extension of the ground floor to the rear offer premises for business such as 'Spill Media'</i> <i>Dance/choir rehearsal hall.</i> <i>Kiln for arts/pottery classes</i> The proposed redevelopment of Development Site 1 would add potency to the Welfare Hall proposals, introducing complementary uses and working collaboratively in the provision of the town's market area.	An enhanced cultural hub which has built on the Hall's existing role and function as an arts and entertainment hub for the region. Reductions in arts funding may limit the potential to source public sector capital investment. A variable level of support for Welfare Hall functions may limit the potential to deliver proposed renovations/extensions. All town centre stakeholders will need to be fully engaged in design and use development.	L: Welfare Hall Charitable Trust P: PCC, Town Council	Short – undertaking feasibility study and business plan Medium/Long – detailed design and delivery	Western Valleys to fund feasibility study, Arts Council, Big Lottery (post 2012), S106, Coalfield Communities Fund, private sector investment.	£15,000 to undertaken detailed feasibility study and business plan Circa £2.5 million anticipated build costs.
Welsh Pride	To build on the development of the Communities First Heritage Group to develop a Welsh forum that promotes Welsh language and culture in signage/ interpretation, street furniture and information/marketing leaflets	Strong sense of Welsh language and Welsh culture in town centre facilities and functions. Potential to link with potential ad hoc events and festivals.	L: Communities First P: Town centre stakeholders, Bedwyr Fychan	Short	Communities First	Negligible – primarily about awareness and monitoring. Some administrative costs.
Saturday Opening	To ensure town centre retail and services are, as much as possible, open on Saturday afternoons. Following agreement of retailers to re-launch 'opening' to tie in with new Tesco opening and tap into renewed retail interest in the town centre. The re-launch should be adequately prepared for an maximise the opportunity to showcase town centre products.	To maximise on trading opportunities from both residents and visitors. The Saturday afternoon closure culture has been established in the town for over 15 years. The combination of new retailers and fresh leadership should overcome outdated habits.	L: Retail champion P: Town centre retailers	Short	Western Valleys, Town Council	Funding for event – organising and marketing. Circa £1500/2000

