

T: 01495 355001

E: committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Our Ref./Ein Cyf.
Your Ref./Eich Cyf.
Contact:/Cysylltwch â:

THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

Date Not Specified Date Not Specified

Dear Sir/Madam

PWYLLGOR CRAFFU LLEOEDD

A meeting of the Pwyllgor Craffu Lleoedd will be held in Ar MS Teams on Dydd Mawrth, 8fed Tachwedd, 2022 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Damien McCann
Interim Chief Executive

AGENDA

Pages

1. CYFIEITHU AR Y PRYD

Mae croeso i chi ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod, mae angen o leiaf 3 diwrnod gwaith o hysbysiad ymlaen llaw os dymunwch wneud hynny. Darperir gwasanaeth cyfieithu ar y pryd os gwneir cais.

2. YMDDIHEURIADAU

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau.

3. DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn cyfathrebu gyda chi yn eich dewis iaith, dim ond i chi rhoi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English and we will communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

Derbyn datganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

4. **PWYLLGOR CRAFFU LLE** 3 - 6

Derbyn cofnodion y Cyfarfod Craffu Lle a gynhaliwyd ar 20 Medi 2022.

(Dylid nodi y cyflwynir y cofnodion er pwyntiau cywirdeb yn unig).

5. **DALEN WEITHREDU** 7 - 8

Derbyn y ddalen weithredu.

6. **CYNLLUN CREU LLE TREDEGAR** 9 - 160

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Adfywio a Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

7. **GWASANAETHAU DIOGELU'R CYHOEDD A GORFODAETH AMGYLCHEDDOL – POLISI GORFODAETH DIWYGIEDIG** 161 - 186

Ystyried adroddiad Rheolwr Gwasanaeth Diogelu'r Cyhoedd.

8. **BLAENRAGLEN GWAITH: 13 RHAGFYR 2022** 187 - 190

Derbyn y flaenraglen gwaith.

To: M. Cross (Cadeirydd)
Councillor R. Leadbeater (Is-gadeirydd)
P. Baldwin
Councillor S. Behr
Councillor J. Gardner
J. Hill
J. Holt
J. P. Morgan
Councillor D. Rowberry

All other Members (for information)
Interim Chief Executive
Chief Officers

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**SUBJECT: PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
- 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2022**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. Cross (Chair)

Councillors R. Leadbeater (Vice-Chair)
S. Behr
J. Hill
J. Holt
D. Rowberry

WITH: Head of Community Services
Service Manager Public Protection
Service Manager Neighbourhood Services
Service Manager Business & Regeneration
Team Manager, Leisure & Street Scene
Team Manager, Regeneration Opportunities
Service Manager Infrastructure
Specialist Environmental Health Officer
Senior Engineer, Highways
Marketing & Communications Projects Officer
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>No apologies for absence were reported.</p>	
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 9th February, 2022 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 9TH FEBRUARY, 2022</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the actions arising from the meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 9th February, 2022.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.</p>	
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28TH FEBRUARY, 2022</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 28th February, 2022 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 28TH FEBRUARY, 2022</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the actions arising from the meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 28th February, 2022.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.</p>	

<p>No. 8</p>	<p><u>TIMING OF MEETINGS SURVEY RESULTS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Scrutiny & Democratic Officer.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED the preferred meeting time of 9.30am Agenda Management Discussion and the formal meeting to commence at 10.00am.</p>	
<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>PROPOSED SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Scrutiny & Democratic Officer.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED the Forward Work Programme for the People Scrutiny Committee. (Option 1)</p>	
<p>No. 10</p>	<p><u>REVIEW OF HIGHWAY CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2017 – 2022</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Community Services.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that in the event that funding becomes available the following options be proposed:</p> <p><i>Option 2b was the Members’ preferred option.</i></p> <p>Option 2a: Highest Priority Classified Roads (ranked in order of priority) Estimated Total Cost £500,000</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A467 Warm Turn Carriageway Resurfacing £75k 2. Tafarnaubach Ind Est (Top Road) Resurfacing £175k 3. Blaenant Ind Est Roundabout Resurfacing £75k 4. Big Arch / Steelworks Road / GO Resurfacing £50k 5. A4046 - Waun-Y-Pound Road, Ebbw Vale £25k 6. College Road, Ebbw Vale £100k <p>Option 2b As Option 2a plus 5 worst Residential Roads & Other Highway Related Works – Estimated Total Cost £1,000,000</p>	

	<p>Residential Roads: 5no priority residential roads £350k Other Highway Related Works: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crash Barriers £50k • Road Markings, signs and bollards £35k • Speed Humps £50k • Traffic Order Reviews £15k <p>Options 2a & 2b may vary subject to the level of funding that may be made available.</p>	
<p>No. 11</p>	<p><u>RENEWAL OF PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS FOR DOG CONTROL OFFENCES – RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Service Manager Public Protection.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend the proposed amendments following the statutory consultation, as listed in paragraph 2.7, and that the proposed new PSPO be supported by the Committee prior to consideration to full Council. (Option 1).</p>	

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Action Sheet

Place Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	Action to be Taken	By Whom	Action Taken
20.09.22	Item 9 - Review of Highway Capital Works Programme 2017-22 Clarification to be sought on an underspend highlighted at the Budget Outturn 2021/22, member briefing session in relation to highways.	Head Community Services	<p>The briefing session covered 2021/22 Capital & revenue budget information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital - the 'Highway' schemes below were highlighted with significant underspends within Infrastructure portfolio:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resilient Roads Fund - £156k (scheme to be completed in 2022/23)• LTF Bedwellty Pits - £945k (scheme unable to proceed in 2021/22, new funding bid to be submitted to WG)• Cwmcelyn Pond Sediment Removal - £94k (total cost of works less than grant approval) <p>Members were informed that these were grant funded schemes and any underspend would be returned to funders and could not be used by the Council for other purposes.</p> <p>Action complete: 21.09.2022</p>

Agenda Item 6

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Place Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **8th November 2022**
Report Subject: **Tredegar Placemaking Plan**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr J. Morgan, Cabinet Member for Environment and Place**
Report Submitted by: **Amy Taylor, Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
X	X	27.10.22			08.11.22	07.12.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To present and seek endorsement of the Tredegar Placemaking Plan from Scrutiny Committee.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1. As one of five towns across Blaenau Gwent, Tredegar like all towns faces significant challenges as a result of the shift to online retailing and the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Many of our regeneration focus on the town in the past has looked at how the town could be refurbished and updated.
- 2.2. Whilst we still seek to carry out refurbishment of properties in need of attention we must also take a step back and reconsider the spaces and properties in and around our town centre. In Wales placemaking is a statutory requirement of the planning system. We will therefore take a placemaking approach to deliver sustainable development and provide solutions and investment that addresses the needs of Tredegar.
- 2.3. In 2014, the Council successfully bid for a Heritage Lottery funded Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Programme which focused on the restoration of historic buildings located in the Southern Conservation Area around The Circle, Morgan Street and Castle Street.
- 2.4. In addition to the HLF funds, the Council were also able to take advantage of funding from the Welsh Government's Targeted Regeneration Initiative programme which offered loans and grants to refurbish and bring key buildings in the town back into use. These funds were available between 2019-2021.
- 2.5. In 2020, the Council were awarded funding by Welsh Government from the Transforming Towns programme to engage consultants to undertake development of a Placemaking Plan for Tredegar. This commission falls in line with other Placemaking plans currently being developed in Ebbw Vale,

Brynmawr and Abertillery, with a further study also being considered for Blaina within the coming months.

- 2.6. After a competitive tendering exercise the Contract to deliver the Placemaking Plan was awarded to Austin-Smith Lord Ltd.
- 2.7. The work undertaken by Austin-Smith Lord will be delivered in two parts:
 - i. **Deliverable 1: Placemaking Plan**
A public facing, overarching strategic vision that identifies priority areas for action within the study area.
 - ii. **Deliverable 2: Delivery Plan**
An internally focused, 'detailed delivery plan' that utilises an appropriate methodology for the detailed analysis of the study area sites and puts forward 'evidenced based' recommendations on the preferred development/redevelopment options for the Council to take forward.
- 2.8. This report presents the first of their deliverables the Placemaking Plan and overall strategic vision that identifies our core ambitions for the town. This will then be followed in early 2023 with the proposed Delivery Plan.
- 2.9. The aims of placemaking are outlined within the Placemaking Guide (Placemaking Wales 2020). The way places are planned, designed, developed and managed has the potential to positively shape where and how people live, works, socialise, move about and engage. Placemaking is ensuring that each new development or intervention contributes positively to creating or enhancing environments. It places people at the heart of the process and results in places that are vibrant, have a clear identity and where people can develop a sense of belonging.
- 2.10. The primary focus of the Placemaking Plan for Tredegar is to inform and influence strategic decision making for regeneration activity within the town and act as an evidence base to support the Council with future external funding options and support development of the replacement Local Development Plan (LDP). All place making plans will be used to form the town centre policies that will be used to support future planning decisions within the towns. It is the intention that placemaking plans will all be complete or substantially complete in advance of the finalisation of the deposit Local Development Plan.
- 2.11. The Placemaking Plan study area includes the town centre comprising of Lidl and Gwent Shopping Centre in the north along Commercial to Castle Street and down to Tredegar Town Clock at the heart of The Circle, Coronation Street, Iron Row and Tredegar Business Park. The plan aims to provide a new vision for Tredegar and identifies the type of projects and investments we want to attract to the town centre. All the proposals within the plan are 'people centred' with a focus on improving the experiences of the town. A plan of the study area is shown on page 8 of the Placemaking Plan (**Appendix One**).

2.12. Tredegar like many towns across the UK has faced extremely challenging times as a result of the increase in online shopping and the economic challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic. This has intensified challenges already being faced as a result of town centre decline and we need to look at how we can refocus and reinvent the town centre spaces.

2.13. The overall vision of Tredegar Placemaking Plan is:

“Maintain and improve Tredegar as a Convenience and Community Centre, serving its local communities well, but overlay this by developing a Speciality Town signature where the anchor is not just retail”.

The vision seeks to enhance and protect characteristics of the town whilst creating a place that meets the ambition of ‘building sustainable places that supports active and healthy lives’. This is supported by the goal of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept ‘creating healthier, happier communities fit for a zero-carbon future’.

2.14. Delivery of our vision shall be done by:

- i. Delivering a sustainable mix of different uses to create a vibrant town, which is welcoming and inclusive to resident and visitors.
- ii. Improve access and movement around the town centre
- iii. Build on heritage of the town being the birthplace of the NHS to attract tourism.
- iv. Providing the building blocks for additional employment opportunities.
- v. Creation of additional housing.
- vi. Improved transportation linkages.
- vii. A healthier environment.

2.15. Within the draft Tredegar Placemaking Plan ambitions have been identified to support us in transforming the town and delivering upon the vision which are:

- Transition the town to meet the 20-minute neighbourhood concept to better align what is in the town with transport infrastructure to make it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport.
- Improve gateways into the town that open up the high street, enhance the retail environment, green the centre and create new homes, work spaces and leisure uses.
- Revitalise connections between the town centre and local and regional areas.
- Transform Gwent Shopping Centre to meet the current and future needs of the town and remove the underpass to open up the area and road infrastructure.
- Transform vacant pockets of land on Coronation Street and Iron Row into exemplary modern homes.

2.16. Taking forward these ambitions, the plan identified a series of intervention areas and high level actions. These are:

1. **Gateway Enhancements to the Northern and Southern Entrances to Tredegar** - new entrance space from the north, redesign of the junction prioritising pedestrians and cyclists, new green space and redevelopment of key buildings to create an attractive and engaging townscape. Creation of a new southern entrance to Tredegar Business Park.
2. **Gwent Shopping Centre** – Removal of the underpass to allow for the creation of a new bus interchange between local and regional services. Building restoration and shopfronts that include a diverse mix of uses that include retail, business, workspaces, leisure, homes and live/work spaces. Introduction of green spaces and re-use of underutilised land to create outdoor events space.
3. **Commercial Street and Castle Street** – improve the street scene, enhance buildings and create synergies between the historic and modern buildings in the town. Add wayfinding, stopping and leisure points and improve active travel routes for walking and cycling.
4. **Church Square** – the ‘knuckle’ between Commercial Street and Castle Street. Highway redesign to provide more public realm space and establish a central public space at the heart of the town.
5. **Coronation Street/Iron Row** – new site entrance to the southern area of Tredegar Town Centre with improved access to Tredegar Business Park which opens up new gateways to Coronation Street and Iron Row. New housing proposals and improvements to public realm.
6. **New Bus Interchange Development** – removal of underpass through Gwent Shopping Centre to allow for the creation of a new bus interchange for local and regional bus services.
7. **Enhance Connectivity between the Town Centre and Tredegar Business Park** – improved cycling and pedestrian infrastructure including National Cycle Routes 467 and 411 and active travel routes between the town centre and Tredegar Business Park.
8. **Sirhowy River Embankment** – improvements to river corridor and embankment connecting Tredegar Business Park and the town centre. New green leisure and recreational facilities.

2.17. The projects listed above are predominantly physical regeneration projects. Non-physical projects are not included in the intervention areas, but they are pivotal for the success of the town centre and are also included within the Placemaking Plan.

2.18. Each intervention area is considered in the Placemaking Plan in **Appendix One** with details on the potential opportunities/projects to address these issues.

Transport and Movement Strategy

- 2.19. A movement and access appraisal has been undertaken by Asbri Transport as part of the commission (**Appendix Two**).
- 2.20. The Movement and Access Appraisal proposed transport improvements which could improve accessibility to Tredegar town centre for pedestrian, cyclists and road users and enhance the viability of the town centre and support economic development.
- 2.21. The potential transport improvements identified are by no means exhaustive and a WeTAG Assessment will be commissioned subject to funding.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 2.22. As a result of Covid-19 engagement has been undertaken with key stakeholders via online workshops. Engagement with business stakeholders has been undertaken via telephone calls. Stakeholder engagement is being undertaken in three stages:



- 2.23. Stakeholders that have formed part of the engagement to date include:

- The Council (Officers and Elected Members)
- Welsh Government
- Tredegar Advisory Board
- Gwent Police
- Coalfields Regeneration Trust
- Local businesses
- Bryn Bach Primary School
- Design Commission for Wales

- 2.24. The initial engagement has supported the assessment of issues and opportunities that face Tredegar. Pages 19 - 23 of **Appendix One** provide details of the issues and opportunities that were identified by Austin-Smith: Lord along with stakeholder feedback on these and any other issues / opportunities that were identified.
- 2.25. Wider public engagement is also to be undertaken and will be used to support development of the delivery plan which will support this placemaking plan.
- 2.26. The Council's Regeneration Department intend to undertake public consultation as the next stage of work. This will help us to ascertain public perception on proposals identified with the Placemaking Plan.

Decarbonisation

- 2.27. The Council has set a target for the Local Authority to become net zero by 2030. Mirroring this ambition there is a commitment towards supporting the borough of Blaenau Gwent to become net zero. The projects that emerge from the Placemaking Plan offer an opportunity to support further decarbonisation across Blaenau Gwent.
- 2.28. Green urban areas can be used to offset carbon emissions of businesses that operate within the town. They can also help improve air quality.
- 2.29. New build and refurbishment projects can be used to deliver buildings that have a lower carbon impact. This can include using local supply chains to reduce travel of materials, energy efficient lighting and appliances.
- 2.30. Transport and movement projects can also support decarbonisation. Improved active travel routes alongside multi-modal transport systems and wayfinding can assist with reducing dependence upon car travel within the Town Centre.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1. The options contained within this report relate only to the approval of the overall vision and series of core ambitions contained within the Placemaking Plan in **Appendix One**. Future reports will be submitted in relation to the delivery plan and details of potential projects to be developed and implemented in order for us to achieve our overall vision.

Option 1 – Do Nothing

- 3.2. Note the contents of the Placemaking Plan and take no further action. Without Council endorsement of the projects contained within the plan it is unlikely that we would be successful in securing Welsh Government Transforming Towns money for redevelopment/refurbishment of the Town.

Option 2 – Endorse the Placemaking Plan

- 3.3. Agree the Tredegar Placemaking Plan, its vision and core ambitions for the future. This will enable us to finalise the draft of the delivery plan and steps towards implementation of the projects that will be contained within it.

Preferred Option

- 3.4. The preferred option is Option Two. This will enable the projects that will support achievement of the core ambitions to be brought forward as part of the Delivery Plan. Such projects are likely to be eligible to apply for Transforming Towns funding.
- 3.5. Projects which show a strategic vision and delivery approach that are supported by Placemaking Plans will be more positively received by potential funders such as the Welsh Government than ad-hoc projects which don't consider overall impact upon the area.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040

- 4.1. Future Wales - The National Plan 2040 is the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing national priorities through the planning system. As the national development framework, Future Wales is the highest tier of development plan and focused on challenges at a national scale.
- 4.2. Policy 2 of the plan is Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking. The aspirations of Future Wales are an opportunity to regenerate our towns. The plan sets out the policy for a strategic placemaking approach and principles to help shape urban growth and regeneration.
- 4.3. Policy 3 of the plan is Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership. This policy highlights the role the public sector can play in assembling land and enabling development to realise aspirations.
- 4.4. It also supports delivery of the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan:
- Safe and friendly communities;
 - To look after and protect the environment;
 - To forge new pathways to prosperity and;
 - To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places they live, learn, work and play.
- 4.5. The Town Centre Strategy will seek to ensure that our town centres are safe and friendly communities for our residents and visitors to shop within. This will include projects to maintain and enhance the local environment, increase business occupancy and create an environment in our town centres that encourages our residents to spend time there for work, learning and leisure.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Corporate Plan Refresh 2020-2022

- 4.6. The report supports the following Corporate Plan priorities:

To protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities;

To support a fairer sustainable economy and community; and

An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities

- 4.7. Town Centres is one of the key themes identifies for the Regeneration and Community Services which support delivery of the priority areas identified in the Council's Corporate Plan 2018/22

5. Implications Against Each Option

Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

- 5.1. Option 1 – there would be no financial implications association with option one of this report.
- 5.2. Option 2 – there would be no immediate budgetary implications as a result of endorsing the Tredegar Placemaking Plan. There would however be medium and long term capital and revenue implications associated with taking forward the emerging projects that will form the Delivery Plan.
- 5.3. In the medium to long term taking forward Option 2 will result in future development and implementation costs. It is likely that development costs such as surveys, feasibility studies would be eligible under the Transforming Towns programme (subject to a successful application) but this would only be for up to 50% of the eligible costs and there would be a need for the Council to identify suitable revenue match funding for the remaining 50%.
- 5.4. Implementation costs are also likely to be eligible for capital funding under the Transforming Towns programme (subject to successful application) but this would only be able to cover up to 70% of these costs and the Council would need to identify capital match funding for the remaining 30%.
- 5.5. Further detail on development and implementation costs will be included within the Delivery Plan which will be presented for approval in early 2023.
- 5.6. The future maintenance cost implications will be incorporated into the project proposals when they are presented for approval. All project proposals will be developed to limit maintenance liabilities for the Council and this will be included in the proposals along with proposals to establish a maintenance budget.

Risk including Mitigating Actions

- 5.7. Option 1 – if no further action is taken there is risk that sites will remain undeveloped or fall into disrepair.
- 5.8. Option 1 – footfall within the town centre associated with retail has been severely hit with the increase in online shopping and enforced lockdowns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Key to recovery will be intervention that supports repurposing and reinventing our town centres. This would not happen if option 1 is chosen and then we would have a further risk of deterioration in footfall.
- 5.9. Option 2 – further work to develop / implement projects that will achieve the core ambitions would require revenue and capital funding. Such funding is likely to be eligible for application under the Transforming Towns programme but there is a requirement to identify a suitable source of match funding to fully meet the costs.

Legal

- 5.10. There are no direct legal implications for any of the options considered within this report. The report seeks endorsement of a Vision and set of ambitions that set out our approach to future regeneration of Tredegar Town Centre
- 5.11. Legal implications associated with project delivery will be explored as part of the delivery plan.

Human Resources

- 5.12. Staff within Regeneration and Development are leading the preparatory work and working across other service areas within the Council where required.

6. Supporting Evidence

Performance Information and Data

- 6.1. A health check of the study area was undertaken in November 2021. The health check identified key issues within the town:
 - Retail is suffering with increasing numbers of empty units in the high street and of particular concern, Gwent Shopping Centre at the heart of the primary retail area is in significant decline.
 - Tredegar Town Centre has a vacancy rate of 25% compared to a national vacancy rate of circa. 15% across Wales and 12% across the UK (Q1,2020).
 - In April 2021, 40 properties within the town centre were considered in poor condition with significant defects and damage to the property noticeable from the high street e.g. cracks to render, peeling paint, broken windows, visible build-up of dirt and mould growth. In addition, 52 buildings had visible damage to the shop-front fascia / signage at street level.
 - 65% of customers surveyed stated the quality of shops was poor or very poor but 75% of customers said they use the town centre on at least a weekly basis.
 - There are a higher than UK average number of A1 retail premises - hair and beauty and tattoo parlours and a higher than average A3 - fast food and takeaway premises.
 - Half of customers surveyed thought that the attractiveness and experience of food and drink establishments around the town were poor or very poor.
 - Car parking is well catered for in the northern area of the town but Commercial Street is car dominated.
 - The interchange between local and regional bus services is impeded by the restricted vehicular access created by the underpass within Gwent Shopping Centre, preventing access for regional busses.

Expected outcome for the public

- 6.2. Some of the sites included within the study area are no longer fit for purpose or underutilised. The Placemaking Plan seeks to identify these sites and identify alternative uses or opportunities for refurbishment or redevelopment.
- 6.3. Active travel routes between the town and sites such as Tredegar Business Park need improvement. Improved active travel will provide greater accessibility for residents and visitors to move within the area.

Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

- 6.4. Initial engagement was undertaken with the stakeholders to understand how the town works currently and what ambitions there are for the future. The initial phase of engagement included fact finding and this was used to identify the issues and opportunities discussed within the Place Making Plan (**Appendix One**).
- 6.5. Engagement has also taken place with the Tredegar Advisory Group consisting of key public, 3rd sector and business stakeholders. The Tredegar Ward Members have also been part of the overall engagement process.
- 6.6. As a result of COVID-19 much of the engagement has been undertaken with stakeholders via online workshops or by one-to-one telephone discussions.

Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

- 6.7. The Placemaking Plan sets a vision and series of core ambitions that are aimed at planning for the long term future of the Town Centre.

Preventative focus

- 6.8. Taking forward the outcomes of the placemaking plan will ensure that areas of the town that are in need of attention are protected and enhanced in the future.

Collaboration / partnership working

- 6.9. Many of the projects that will be identified to deliver on our core ambitions for Tredegar Town Centre will require collaborative approaches to delivery. This will be developed further alongside stakeholders subject to endorsement of this report and the delivery plan.
- 6.10. The Tredegar Advisory Group was formed in 2015 to support delivery of the Tredegar Townscape Heritage Initiative project. It consists of officers, elected members, business representatives, third sector and members of the Community. The purpose of the board is to oversee the delivery of projects for Tredegar.

- 6.11. Since its inception, the Advisory Board has worked alongside Council Officers and Elected Members to deliver projects in Tredegar and this approach has received positive feedback from all stakeholders involved. The advisory board have been involved in the stakeholder engagement for the placemaking plan process.

Integration(across service areas)

- 6.12. As outlined above, initial consultation has been undertaken across service areas within the Council. This includes service areas such as highways, housing, planning and education.

Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions

- 6.13. Blaenau Gwent declared a Climate Emergency in 2020 and as a Council we have committed towards achievement of net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Creating high quality green spaces in the town centre will help with decarbonisation and offsetting carbon emissions. It will also help improve air quality.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1. Progress will be reported through the Regeneration and Development business plan.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix One – Tredegar Town Centre Placemaking Plan – Please note this is currently in draft format but the final version will be available for Scrutiny Committee*
- *Appendix Two – Movement and access appraisal*

This page is intentionally left blank





CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

3. THE VISION

4. THEMES & STRATEGIES

5. THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

6. TIMEFRAMES & MEASURES OF SUCCESS

APPENDICES:

1. ANALYSIS: CHARACTER AREAS

2. THE HEALTHCHECK

3. THEMES & STRATEGIES

01 INTRODUCTION

WHY A PLACEMAKING PLAN?

Tredegar town centre and the Tredegar Business Park are pivotal to Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's planned regeneration and investment within Tredegar under the Transforming Towns Fund programme. Responding to this focused approach, this placemaking plan has been prepared for the County Council and Welsh Government to identify issues and target activity where maximum benefit can be achieved. The plan sets out the vision and ambition for the town to meet the challenges of The Future Wales - National Plan 2040, in particular, the implementation of the 'Town Centres First' Policy.

Tredegar sits towards the eastern end of the string of upper Valley towns than run west - east along the southern foothills of the Brecon Beacons, some 26 miles north of Cardiff.

Within each of the valley towns within Blaenau Gwent the centres suffer high vacancy rates and low presence of national retailers compared to other valley towns. The covid pandemic has only accelerated this trend. Most suffer as a result of the dominance of out of town food retail stores and a key issue is that the town centres compete against each other with no clear roles. The challenge expressed in the Local Development Plan, is to provide a new retail hierarchy, identify clear roles and limit damage from out of town retail development.

Within the context of the Capital City Region, the neighbouring town of Ebbw Vale sits at the top of the local hierarchy with a Sub-Regional Role, followed by Tredegar, Abertillery and Brynmawr (District Town Centres), with Blaina a Local Town Centre and then Neighbourhood Centres.

Connectivity is key and the South Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan describes a modern, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system for the SE Wales Valleys and beyond which increases opportunity, promotes prosperity for all and protects the environment; where walking, cycling and public transport provide real and sustainable travel alternatives.

South Wales Metro is an integrated public transport network that will make it easier for people travel across the Cardiff Capital Region, made up of 10 local authorities including Blaenau Gwent. Tredegar, which is currently disconnected from the railway line, will benefit from Bus Rapid Transit through connecting the town to rail links in Ebbw Vale, Rhymney and Merthyr.

Investment in necessary infrastructure will be a focus of the plan to make interchange between regional and local services seamless and attractive to the passenger.

Similarly, the plan outlines how Tredegar can transition towards and meet the aims of the Welsh Government's 'Future Generations Report 2020', which promotes a placemaking approach to community programmes and commits to "introducing the 20 minute neighbourhood concept for all towns and cities in Wales; creating healthier, happier communities fit for a zero-carbon future"

This will be achieved by prioritising mix-type development which combines town centre retail with housing, transport links, public services, workplaces and recreational facilities.

Central to the placemaking plan and underpinning each initiative is the importance of embracing the town's rich history in all aspects of the plan and design, to engender pride amongst the community and further an appreciation of what is 'their place'; and importantly, to relate Tredegar's heritage to the current context and drive the economy.

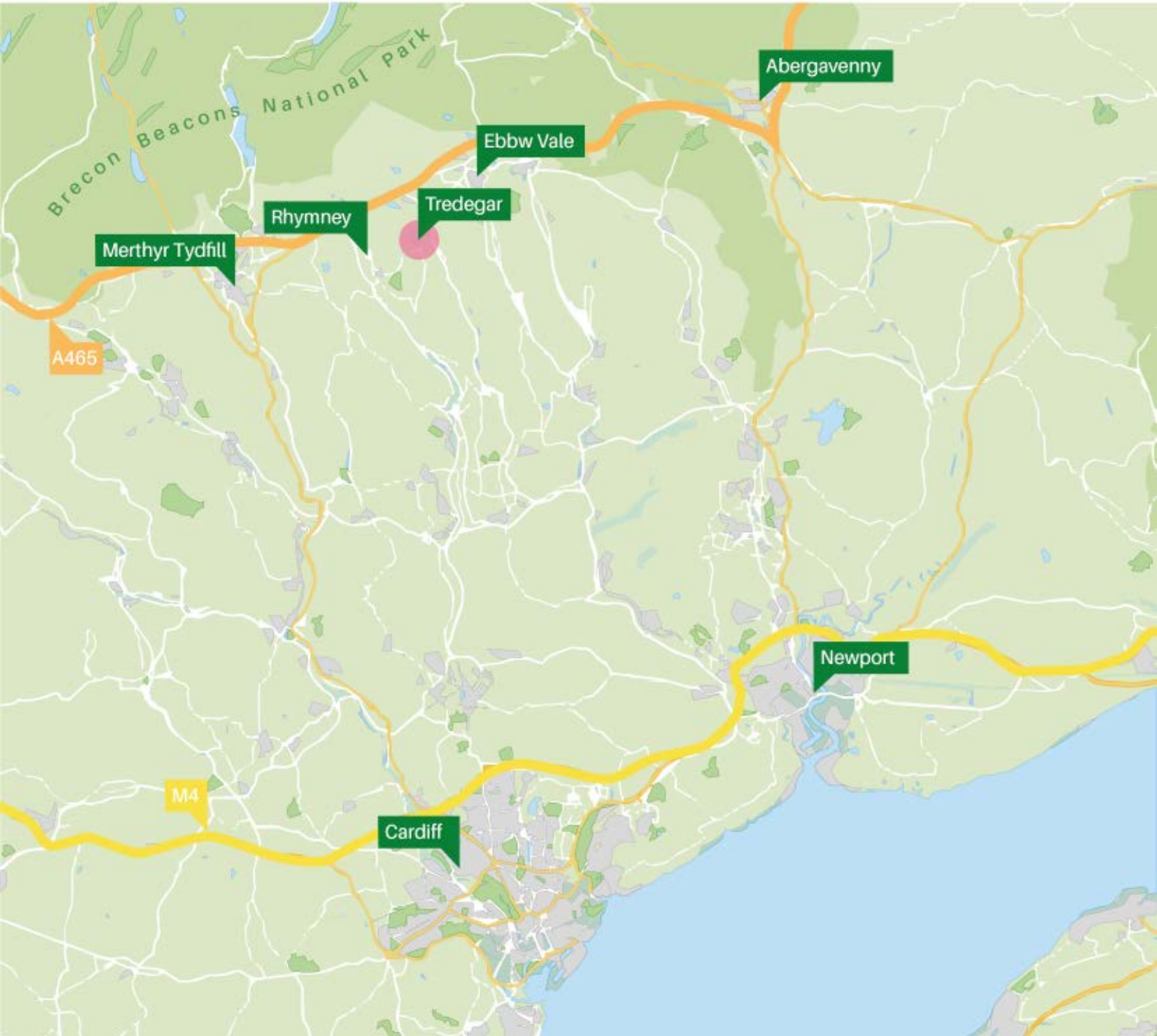


FIG. 1 TREDEGAR - THE WIDER CONTEXT

THE STUDY AREA

The study area initially consisted of the town centre as defined within the Local Plan and the Tredegar Business Park. This leaves a corridor of land between the two, around Coronation Street and Iron Row, that must be considered as part of the Placemaking Plan. Effectively, the town centre extends from Lidl and Gwent Shopping Centre in the north along Commercial Street to Castle Street Church and then southward along Castle Street to include the clock tower at the heart of The Circle.

This area has been subject to a number of masterplanning exercises over the years, and recently, was subject to an RIBA ideas competition that sought visionary concepts to unlock longstanding issues and trigger the imagining of the possible. In terms of recent physical interventions, the properties around The Circle have benefitted from substantial investment through the Townscape Heritage Initiative, which must become a touchstone for further growth and confidence in the town. However, the COVID pandemic, pre-existing pressures for change on the High Street and the production of Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 responding to climate change and sustainable, resilient communities, has collectively redrawn or refocused the landscape and points towards new measures for success for towns in Wales.

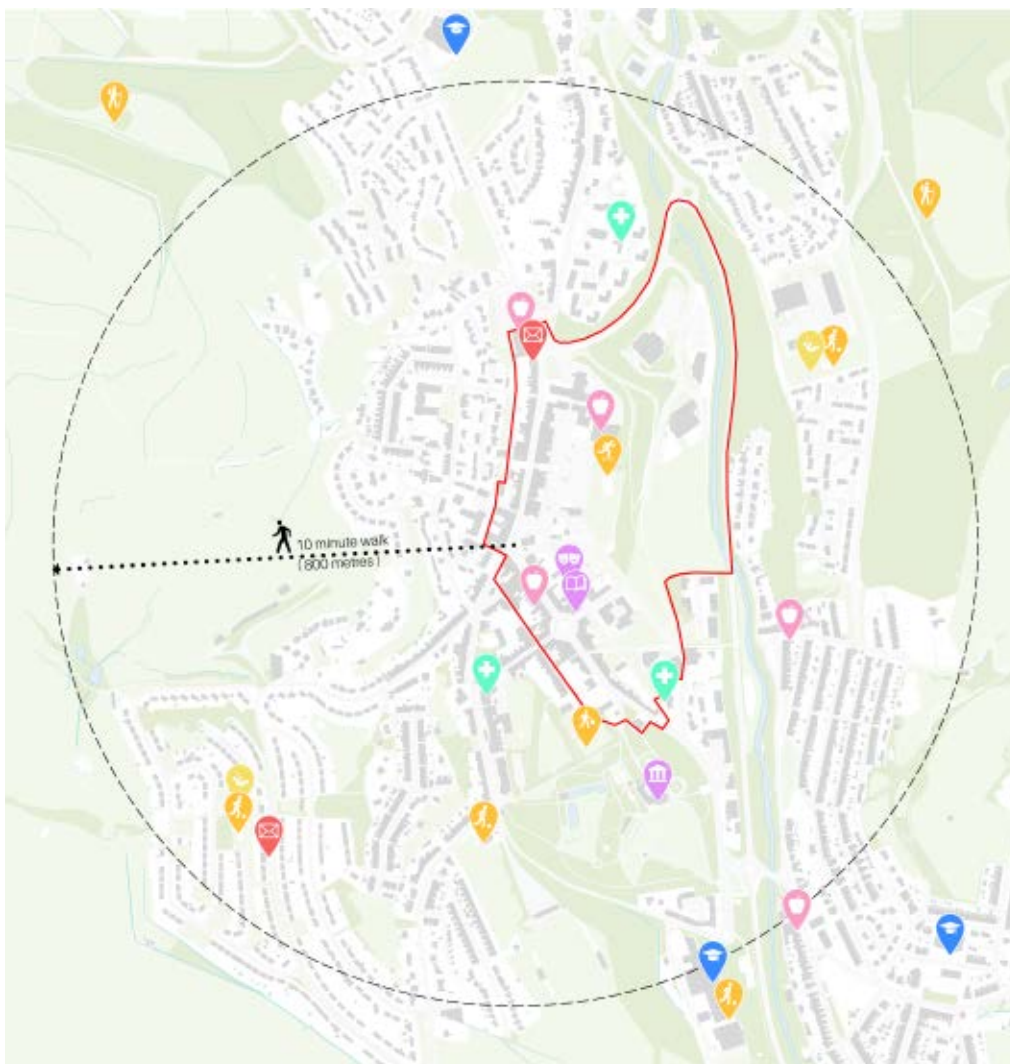














FIG. 2 THE STUDY AREA

LAND USE AND FACILITIES

The relative compactness of the town resulting from its historic, pre-car development, and with most of the town centre facilities and amenities within 10 minutes' walk from the surrounding residential areas, has the potential to achieve the goal of a 20-Minute Neighbourhood.

FIG. 3 LOCAL FACILITIES KEY



-  Leisure - Walking/hiking area
-  Leisure - Sports pitch / court
-  Leisure - Bowls
-  Leisure - Skate Park
-  Leisure - Equiped play area
-  Healthcentre/Doctors surgery
-  Education - School
-  Civic - Beddwelty House
-  Civic - Library
-  Civic - Theatre
-  Convenience Store / Groceries
-  Post Office

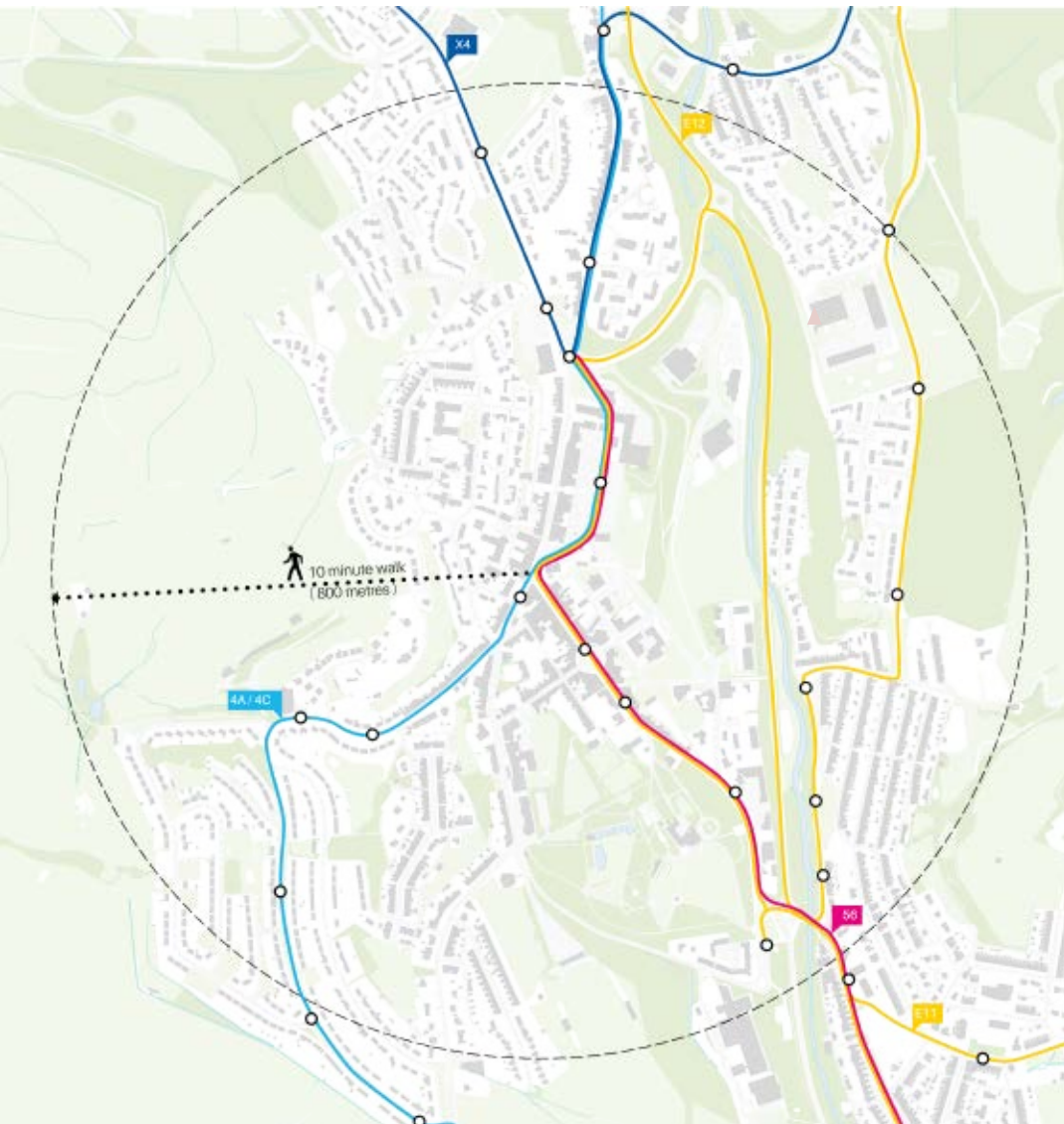
MOVEMENT

Tredegar is well served by road and poorly by rail. Both Rhymney to the west and Ebbw Vale to the east have rail connections, whilst Tredegar relies on the local and regional bus services. The Heads of the Valleys Road, the A465, runs immediately to the north of the town connection to Merthyr to the west and Abergavenny and onto England to the east.

As shown on Figure 4, the X4 regional bus accessing and departing Tredegar from the A465, is unable to interchange with the local services 4A/C, 56 and E11 within the town centre, as the buses are too long to

pass beneath the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass and enter the town. This is a severe hindrance to effective connectivity between local and regional services, which ideally would be brought together in a single hub.

Active travel routes are currently limited with National Cycle Routes 467 and 411 running to the north and east of the town centre. Connected to this, there is little by way of cycle or pedestrian infrastructure within the town, despite cycling (and mountain biking in particular) being a major draw within the region.








▼ FIG. 4 EXISTING BUS NETWORK

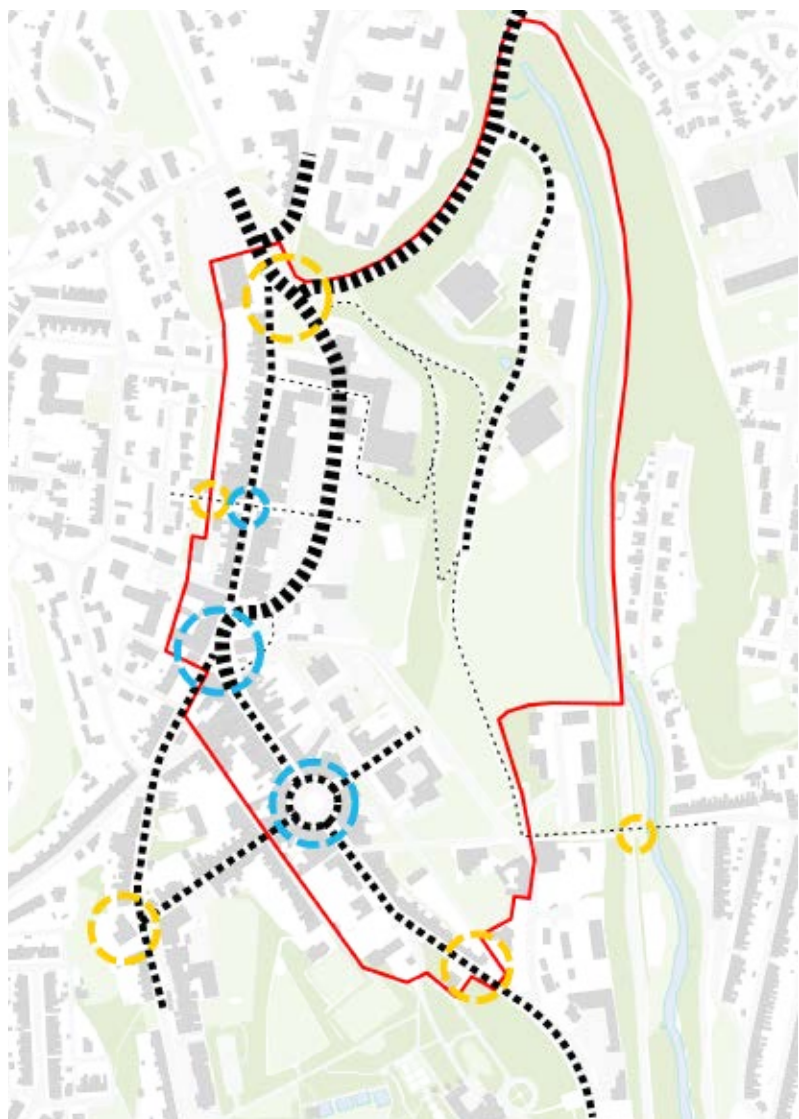
A pedestrian connection cuts across the grain running west - east through the retail core, from the residential area of Ty Bryn, crossing Commercial Street, linking to the bus stands on Stockton Way and the Gwent Shopping Centre Car Park.

Similarly, what was historically a strong west - east axis through the town runs down Market Street, across The Circle and down Iron Street. However, with the erosion of the housing area either side of Iron Street and the lack of connection with the business park, this route has lost its prominence.

The third west - east link, which again is evident on the Victorian maps, is the pedestrian connection linking the town centre with Georgetown, via Bridge Street, the pedestrian underpass beneath the A4048 and across the Sirhowy River.

FIG. 5 EXISTING MOVEMENT PATTERNS

-  Primary vehicular movement
-  Secondary vehicular movement
-  Pedestrian movement
-  Primary Gateway
-  Secondary Gateway

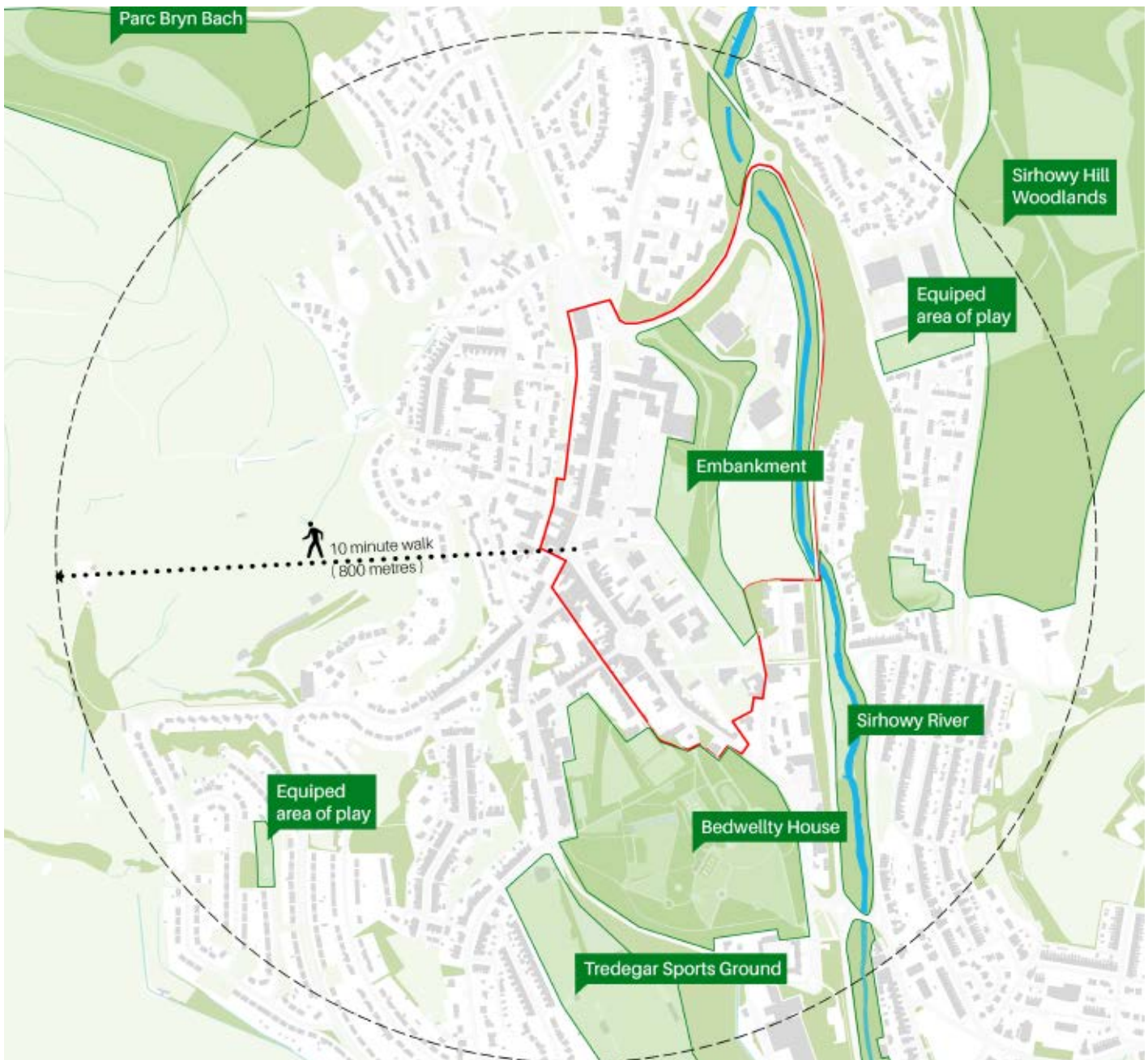


GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

There is little by way of civic green space within the town centre, a legacy of the hard, civic nature of the town plan. A pocket park exists to the west of Commercial Street at the junction with the pedestrian route to the housing area above the town. Bedwellty Gardens, the town park, lies to the immediate south of the town centre. There are a number of street trees throughout the town centre - on Commercial Street, either side of Stockton Way and around The Circle.

The linear nature of the settlement within the valley, however, means that access to green space is readily available on the hills above the town, on the embankment east of the town and along the river corridor. A walking route runs along the west bank of the river through the business park, but needs connectivity to a wider network.

FIG. 6 EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

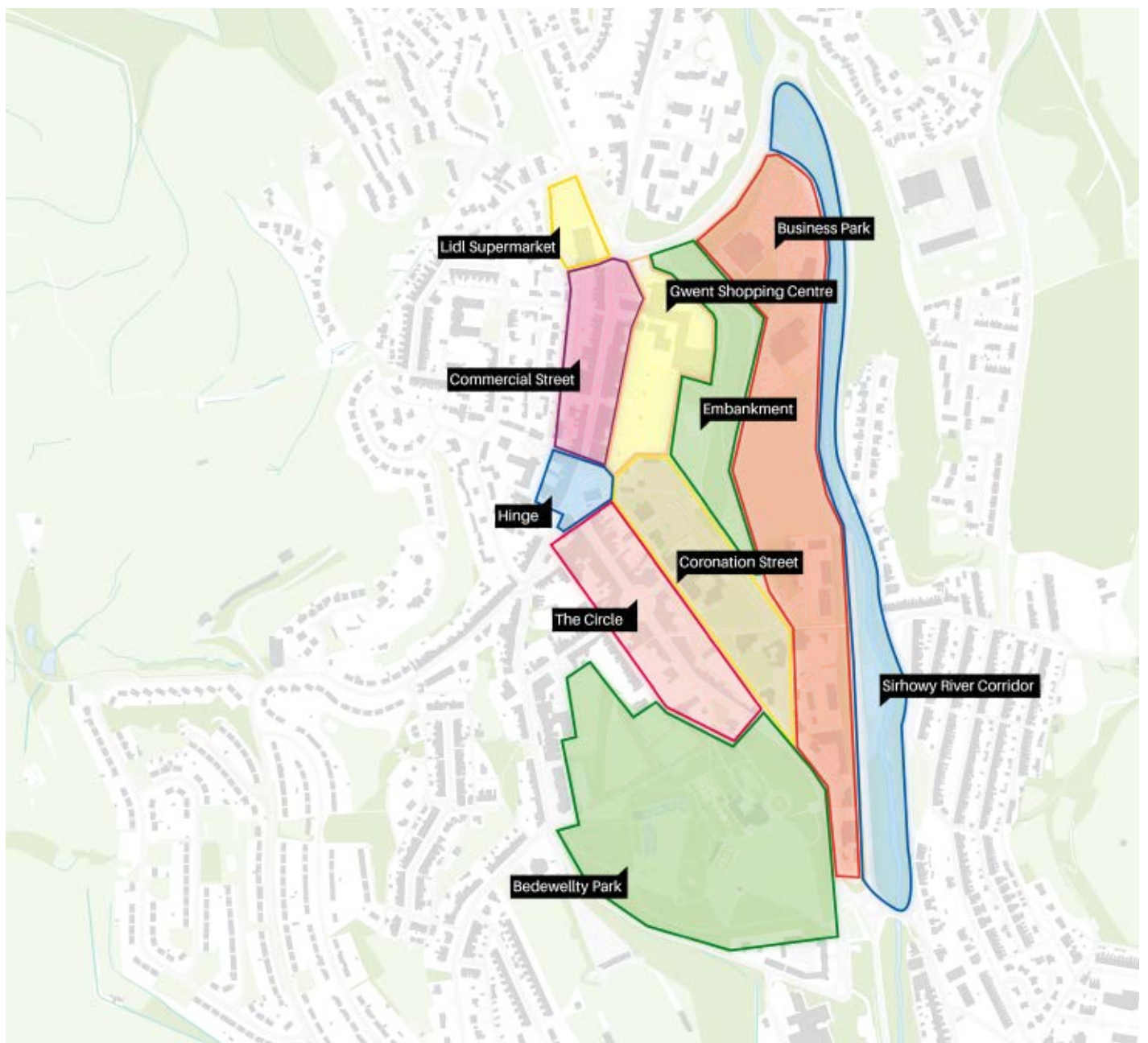


CHARACTER AREAS

The study area and its adjacent surroundings are made up of clearly defined character areas, each distinct from its neighbour and immediately apparent in moving through the town.

the detailed appraisal of these character areas is described in Appendix 1.

FIG. 7 CHARACTER AREAS



VIEWS AND GATEWAYS

Views generally within the study area are contained to the west by the rising ground and residential development, whereas to the south, they extend over the business park from the elevated position of the town centre, to the wooded western slopes of the Sirhowy valley.

Within the town centre, the views are linear along the two arms of the high street - Commercial Street and Castle Street. The joint in these two arms, around Castle Street Church, contains the internal views with the purple façade of the nightclub, DJ Loft, terminating the view northward from Castle Street.

Southward from the top of Castle Street, the iconic feature of the clock tower set in the middle of The Circle dominates the vista, with the wooded edges to Bedwellty Park beyond. The clock tower also

highlights in a secondary view from Harcourt Terrace, down Market Street and over Iron Row to the distant valley side. Here, a subtle piece of townscape has the main façade of the Saron Congregational Church on Harcourt Terrace angled to turn the view down Market Street, whilst terminating the view westward from the clock tower.

Recognisable gateways are formed at either end of the town, at the Morgan Road, Shop Row, Lower Coronation Street junction to the south; and the northern façade of the Gwent Shopping Centre to the north. The approach to the town, passed the park to the south, is an attractive and slowly revealing experience (accepting that more could be done to reinforce the actual gateway); whereas the shopping centre is a brutal and uninviting point of entry to the north.

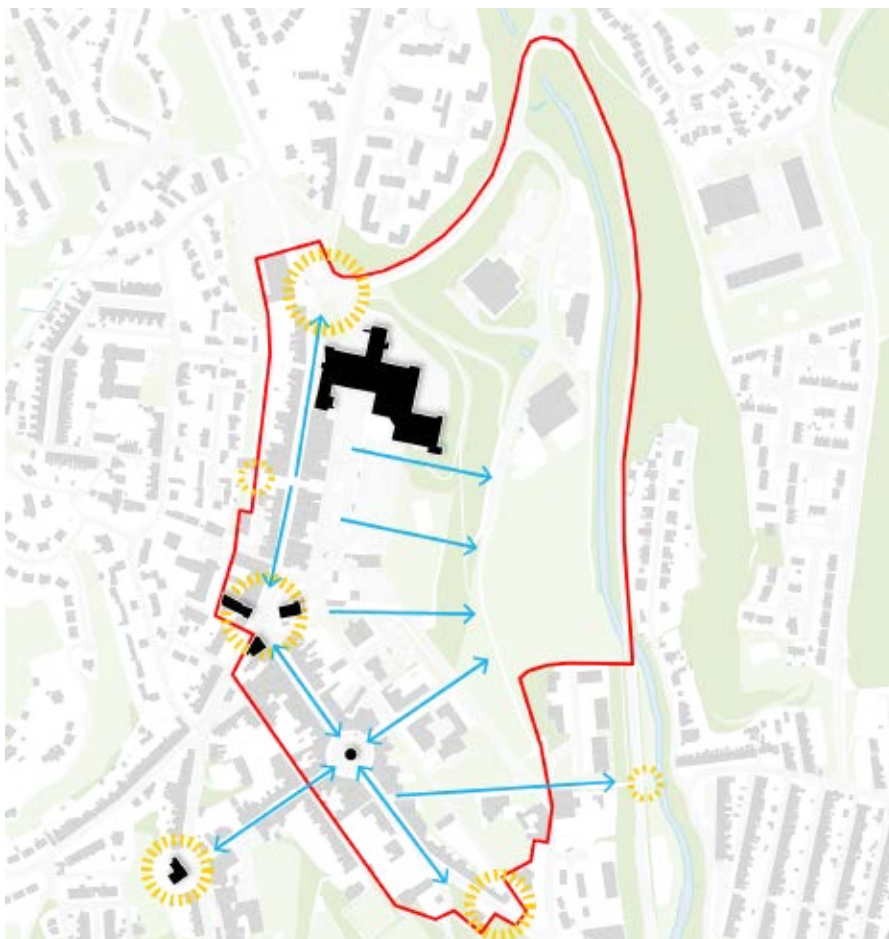


FIG. 8 VIEWS AND GATEWAYS

- Key view
- ☀ Gateway

URBAN QUALITIES

Figure 9 describes the areas exhibiting strong and weak urban qualities and frontages; primarily associated with the structure of the townscape and completeness of the facades, but also the quality and cohesiveness of the urban realm and landscape.

As can be seen, the two arms of the town centre - Commercial Street and Castle Street, have a consistency and continuity to their urban structure and

a quality to the urban realm, whereas the areas to the east of the main high street are fractured, ill-defined and lacking in urban character.

The wooded topography to the setting of the business park is attractive and complete, complemented by the landscape works within the park itself. Although little used and in need of some attention, the river corridor landscape is also of a quality.



FIG. 9 EXISTING URBAN QUALITY

- Good Quality Urban Environment
- Poor Quality Urban Environment
- Good Urban frontage
- Poor Urban frontage

TREDEGAR HEALTHCHECK

The Tredegar Town Centre Healthcheck has regard to the extent of the boundary defined by this study, which closely follows the current Town Centre boundary as defined in the Local Plan. It therefore extends from Lidl and the Gwent Centre in the north along the spine of Commercial Street (the primary retail area) and Castle Street to The Circle in the south.

The Placemaking Plan also encapsulates the Business Park to the east of the town centre. The purpose of the healthcheck is to assess the current state and vitality of the town centre, forming part of a robust, primarily retail evidence base to aid in the preparation of the Placemaking Plan for the town.

The full Healthcheck is to be found in Appendix 2, and covers:

- Diversity of uses
- Proportion of vacant street level properties
- Commercial Rents
- Access and Accessibility
- Customer views and behaviour
- Perceptions of safety and occurrence of crime
- Environmental quality

To summarise, the town is fulfilling its intended role within the Local Development Plan as a District Hub, serving the needs of its local communities and to this extent, subordinate in its role to Ebbw Vale as the Principal Hub. There are increasing rates of vacancy within the town centre, with particular concern with the level of vacant properties within the Gwent Shopping Centre, at the heart of the Primary Retail Area.

Whilst there are gaps and imbalances within the diversity of uses, the mix is basically solid and along with the underlying attraction and robustness of the urban structure, provides a good base for development of a unique and compelling vision for the town and offer within the Valleys.

TREDEGAR AT A GLANCE

Town Centre Turnover



Tredegar

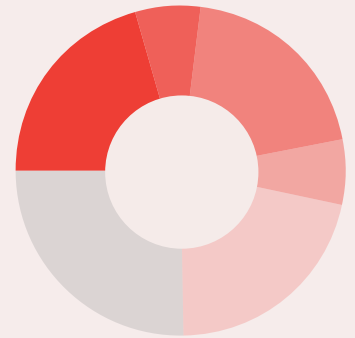
Ebbw Vale



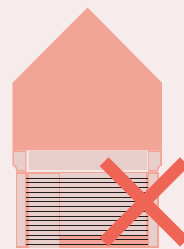
- Identified within the LDP as a district shopping centre to serve the needs of the local catchment area.
- Tredegar's population is circa 15,000 people
- Contains the second largest Town Centre in Blaenau Gwent, (The largest when based on the number of retail units. Ebbw Vale has a Town Centre Turnover 3x larger than that of Tredegar.
- Southern end of the Town Centre designated a Conservation Area linked with industrial heritage of the Town and links to Aneurin Bevan and the formation of the NHS

DIVERSITY OF USES

- Higher than the UK national average for A1 service uses reflects a large number of Hair and Beauty and Tattoo parlours.
- The Leisure Use class in Tredegar is slightly below the UK national average and has very high levels of fast food & takeaway provision, accounting for most of the A3-A5 use in the town centre.



PROPORTION OF VACANT SHOPS



25%

Shops vacant in Tredegar Town Centre

12%

Experian GOAD UK National Average February 2020

ACCESS & ACCESSIBILITY

- Car Parking in northern part of the Town Centre is well catered for but street parking dominates Commercial Street.
- Interchange between local and regional bus services is limited as the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass impedes access for regional busses.
- 76% of those surveyed thought that there was a good or very good ease of pedestrian movement around the town centre.



CUSTOMER VIEWS & BEHAVIOUR



- High local usage of the Town Centre with 75% of those surveyed within the Tredegar catchment areas said they visited Town Centre at least once a week.
- Poor perception of quality of the Town Centre shopping offer with 65% of customers surveyed suggesting that the quality of shops was poor or very poor.
- Almost half of all customers surveyed thought that the attractiveness and experience of food and drink establishments around the town centre was poor or very poor.

FIG. 10 BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY



02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS: STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

The Tredegar Placemaking Plan has been prepared in collaboration with a wide array of stakeholders and consultees. Ideas and opinions have been shared locally by those who live and work in the town with the major stakeholders who operate within the Heads of the Valleys region and local borough council. Due to the Covid pandemic, the placemaking team has had little opportunity to consult widely with town centre communities, and stakeholder and schools' events and workshops have been restricted to online events, with comments and guidance gathered.

These conversations have helped set the agenda and identify priorities for change in the short, medium and long term. The team has facilitated countless meetings and workshops, often with one to one follow up conversations, with the following groups;

- Tredegar Advisory Board
- Welsh Government
- Welsh Government Metro Team
- Council Members
- Council Officer and teams:
 - Transport
 - Housing
 - Health
 - Destination Management
 - Police and Crime Prevention
 - Green Infrastructure
 - Active Travel
- Coalfields Regeneration Trust
- Sectors (Creative Industries, Pharmaceutical, High Street businesses, Gwent Shopping Centre, Chamber)
- Bryn Bach Primary School

WHAT WE WERE TOLD

OPEN SPACE

- Bedwellty House and Gardens and the heritage townscape
- Lack of connectivity with the Business Park
- Proximity to National Park and open countryside
- Skateboard Park is little used and general positive spaces for young people
- Too much open space that does not add anything, is poorly maintained and uninviting

GETTING AROUND (MOVEMENT + CONNECTIVITY)

- Sense of Tredegar being isolated - poor public transport connectivity and infrastructure
- Bring back the railway!
- Little active transport opportunities or infrastructure
- Tredegar doesn't strongly feature in the Regional Metro proposals
- Disconnection between the town and the business park
- Streets dominated by the car and traffic - little enforcement of parking restrictions
- The short section of Queen Victoria Street between Commercial Street and Castle Street, acts as a hinge for the main thoroughfare and is traffic dominated and lacking in active frontages, splitting the two halves of the town;
- Entry into Tredegar significantly impacted by the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass
- The bus station is also split by the underpass with regional buses operating from outside Lidl
- No entry into the business park from the south.

BUILDINGS

- Housing quality inadequate with poor quality of service
- Significant heritage and buildings at risk should be brought back into use
- Gwent Shopping Centre an eyesore and an obstacle as a northern town gateway

COMMUNITY/SOCIAL (ACTIVITY)

- Regeneration initiatives must not displace the existing communities, but enhance and support them
- Access to local amenities seriously lacking (convenience stores, GP, local school etc); Tredegar has the physical make up and proximities, but still fails as a 20 Minute Neighbourhood
- Concern that regeneration initiatives should not displace the existing communities but enhance and support them;
- recognition that change is needed though residents want to be included in the process of making change
- Desire to improve communication / collaboration between key institutions and the local communities

RETAIL/ECONOMIC (ACTIVITY)

- Activity on the high street benefited hugely from the series of events and festivals that used to occur - sadly missed and should be re-introduced.
- Overall retail activity very much dependent on the shopping centre vitality and success.
- Covid has been an enormous set back at a time of existing vulnerability.
- Long-term businesses remain with a commitment and willingness to 'carry on', but need support and grateful for any assistance

IDEAS SUGGESTED - KEY DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

The quality of the surrounding **natural environment** and the existing **architecture and heritage** of the town were sources of immense pride, but also considered to be key defining characteristics of Tredegar. There is a strong desire for this quality and character to be retained, as much as a springboard to growth and retention. Many people commented on the need for any new development to be sensitive to, and build on the existing fabric of the town and its context.

Linked to its heritage, the strong connections to Nye Bevan and the **founding of the NHS** based on the Tredegar model were mentioned as a source of visitor interest and also a touchstone and draw to future inward investment in health industries (research/ pharmaceuticals) and business tourism.

Arts and Culture are clearly seen as emerging components of the town's identity, and indeed of the Valleys as a whole. References to arts/culture and creativity were repeatedly mentioned in relation to the town's existing assets and future development. Enhancing the arts and cultural offer of Tredegar is clearly seen as fundamental to future success.

The opportunity to **invest in local businesses and create jobs** is seen as a real opportunity for the town, with a particular emphasis on health, innovative, creative industries and the digital economy. Which hopefully would lead to the local organisation of supply chains, which in turn would contribute to circularity; driving entrepreneurship and experiment.

With the changing characteristics of retail and the high street, the need for **mixed-use development** is also seen as a key driver for a successful town centre. People would like to see a mix of uses with an emphasis on firstly retaining existing businesses, then attracting new independent businesses and retailers, rather than a targeted focus on purely the large chains.

Support for the principles of the 20 Minute Neighbourhood were widely expressed, with better connectivity to facilities and services, open space and regional travel modes. It was noted that the **response to Covid** was supercharging certain potential interventions (eg active travel).

Green space and eco-friendly design principles are important to the people of Tredegar, with frequent mention made of the quality of Bedwellty Park. That said, the river corridor is an underused asset, seen as a part of the business park and not of the town. Sustainable design principles and features such as Sustainable Urban Drainage, permeable paving and green energy were frequently mentioned, along with the importance of encouraging sustainable modes of travel. In this area it was seen that policy and governance structures need to catch up with the Welsh Government **low carbon agenda** ambition. Ensure all strategies are turned into action!

Car parking and traffic were mentioned time and again as one of the biggest issues facing what can be considered the high street - Commercial Street/Castle Street. Resolving these issues, particularly around the hinge formed by Queen Victoria Street, will be key to improving the high street experience and better connecting the two parts of the town spine. Linked to this is the need to resolve **pedestrian connectivity and permeability** issues into and within the high street, including better integration of the housing to the west and the car park/bus hub and onward to the business park to the east. The stakeholders recognise the importance of creating a pedestrian-friendly, safe and attractive walking and cycling environment in order to successfully integrate the town centre with its residential context and thereby encourage sustainable modes of travel.

Young people were concerned about countering the impacts of climate change and ensuring that any new development should be **accessible and inclusive to all**. They were particularly concerned about safety and ensuring that the area is welcoming for young people. They were also worried about the aging population and the need to cater for them within the new development. Population growth in this part of the Valleys seems to be essentially about growing existing communities sustainably, with **better access to services and opportunity**.

Viability and sustainability were seen as fundamental to the success of the town centre. There was a consensus that these should be top priorities for the project, and should be embedded across all decisions that follow. There was a recognition that viability needs to be considered with the long-term aspirations of the project in mind, as early investments may be needed up-front in order to grow the value and achieve the longer-term objectives of the place. To this end, **meanwhile uses and projects**, of potential low value but immediate and of high impact would be useful to change perceptions and signal change.

Fundamentally, a **community-empowering engagement strategy** is needed to ensure successful delivery of the plan. However, what came over from a number of workshops was the need to **join the dots between policies, strategies and action**, accepting that investment was paramount to successful delivery of meaningful change. To achieve this, two things needed to happen; firstly, key institutions within the town and region must take the lead in change-making and be seen to **work with the communities**; and secondly, there was a need to **build alliances and coalitions between key stakeholders** - must improve existing coordination and collaboration.

03 THE VISION

THE VISION

Maintain and improve Tredegar as a Convenience and Community Centre, serving its local communities well, but overlay this by developing a Speciality Town signature, unique within the sub-region.

Of all the Valley towns, Tredegar is perhaps best endowed with a unique set of cultural and spatial assets. A rich tapestry of historic layers, retained within a singular, simple yet striking townscape structure; the town immediately creates a lasting impression.

These characteristics are immensely valuable, and Tredegar is the only town within its sub-region that has the potential to be defined as a Speciality town, where the anchor is not (just) retail. These attributes and characteristics must, therefore, be protected and the potential monopolised. Importantly, one of the key characteristics of Speciality towns is that footfall, dwell time and spend is balanced out across the year.

The vision for the town therefore seeks to enhance these inherent qualities, whilst creating a place that meets the ambition of ‘building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, within urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infrastructure’.

Delivering a sustainable mix of different uses will be key to generating a vibrant town centre, which is relevant, welcoming and inclusive to resident and visitor alike, throughout the day and across the year. A place that is loved, used and cherished by all its community, will become one that is immediately attractive to the guest.

The challenge will be to balance these new development with the town’s existing assets in a way that supports existing uses whilst also allowing new ones to flourish. Both policy and mindsets must remain sufficiently flexible to allow new uses to emerge, to improve viability and vitality, as technologies and markets evolve.

It is vital that new development creates high quality, sustainable architecture, be that new build or repurposed, complemented by habitable streets and spaces which extend life and activity into the public realm.

A sensitive, phased approach to delivery will encourage incremental growth over time, a growth that must be driven by local communities and stakeholders, empowered and supported by the public sector, ensuring that Tredegar leads in committing to the goal of realising the 20 minute neighbourhood concept - ‘creating healthier, happier communities fit for a zero-carbon future’.





04 THEMES & STRATEGIES



A ROUTE TO SUCCESS

APPROACH

In order to move from an understanding of the existing context, and the current condition and performance of the town centre as a district hub, to identifying projects that would support the vision and “improve [the] functionality, attractiveness, liveability and vibrancy” of the town centre, a series of themes and strategies were developed. In combination, these would set out a model and criteria for success, and are derived from national, regional and local policy.

Particularly, the strategies emerge from the Welsh Government ‘Future Wales: The National Plan 2040’ and ‘Future Generations Report 2020’ for the adoption of a placemaking approach to community programmes and fully endorses the concept of the 20 minute neighbourhood for all towns and cities in Wales; driving towards “healthier, happier communities fit for a zero-carbon future.”

A stated aim for Welsh Government in its spatial strategy is “building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infrastructure”.

Responding to the particular circumstances and opportunities in Tredegar, the themes and strategies, as described more fully in Appendix 3, centre on:

- Sustainability
- Land Use
- Movement and Connectivity
- The Public Realm
- Culture and Heritage

The Key principles of each of these themes is:

SUSTAINABILITY

- 20 minute neighbourhood concepts
- Buildings: Adaptive Reuse
- Transport
- Energy
- Green Infrastructure
- Lifestyle: Health & Well-being

LAND USE

- Retail
- Commercial
- Residential
- Hotel
- Arts, Culture & Leisure
- Transport & Parking

MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY

- Retail historic street patterns
- Safe and Accessible Streets for all
- Resolve the underpass
- Improve connections between housing, town centre, business park and river
- Promote active travel routes

THE PUBLIC REALM

- Sequence and hierarchy of public spaces
- Safe, active spaces
- Incorporate blue/green infrastructure

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

- Reveal and inform
- Engender pride and appreciation of their ‘place’ within the community
- Relate Tredegar’s rich history to the current context and drive the economy
- Embrace Heritage in all aspects of design

05 THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

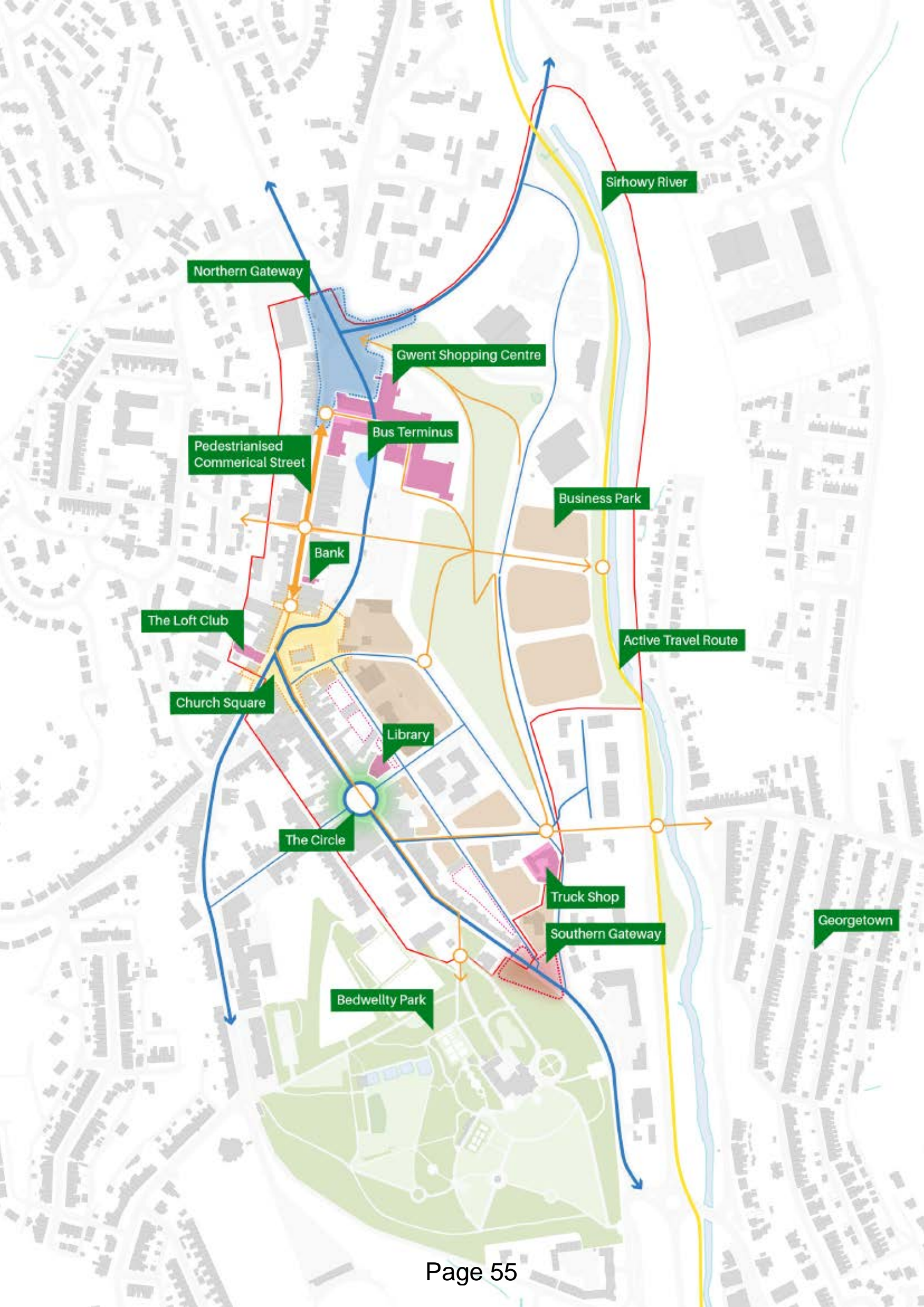
THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Placemaking Plan provides the physical manifestation of the Vision by way of defined spatial and movement objectives to which any potential schemes should conform and contribute. The plan addresses structural deficiencies within the built fabric and also issues of connectivity around the town, with the overarching aim of progressing the 20 Minute Neighbourhood concept.

The Placemaking Plan accepts that over the duration of the realisation of the plan, change is inevitable; instigated by political, social, economic or environmental forces. The plan needs to be sufficiently robust and flexible to accommodate such change without jeopardising the underlying and fundamental development principles.

**FIG. 21
PROPOSED FRAMEWORK PLAN KEY**





Northern Gateway

Sirhowy River

Gwent Shopping Centre

Bus Terminus

Pedestrianised Commercial Street

Business Park

Bank

The Loft Club

Active Travel Route

Church Square

Library

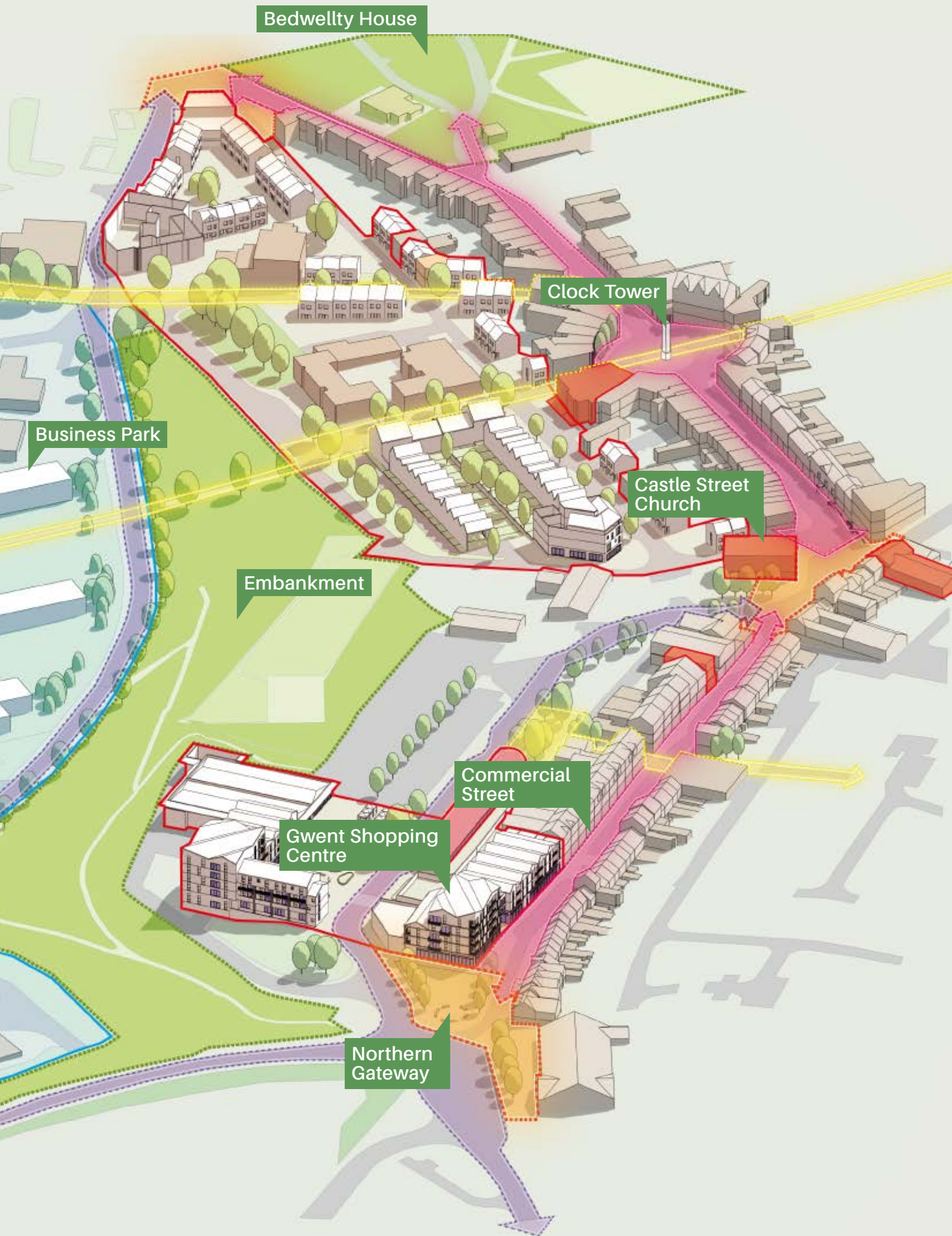
The Circle

Truck Shop

Southern Gateway

Bedwellty Park

Georgetown



Bedwelty House

Clock Tower

Business Park

Castle Street Church

Embankment

Commercial Street

Gwent Shopping Centre

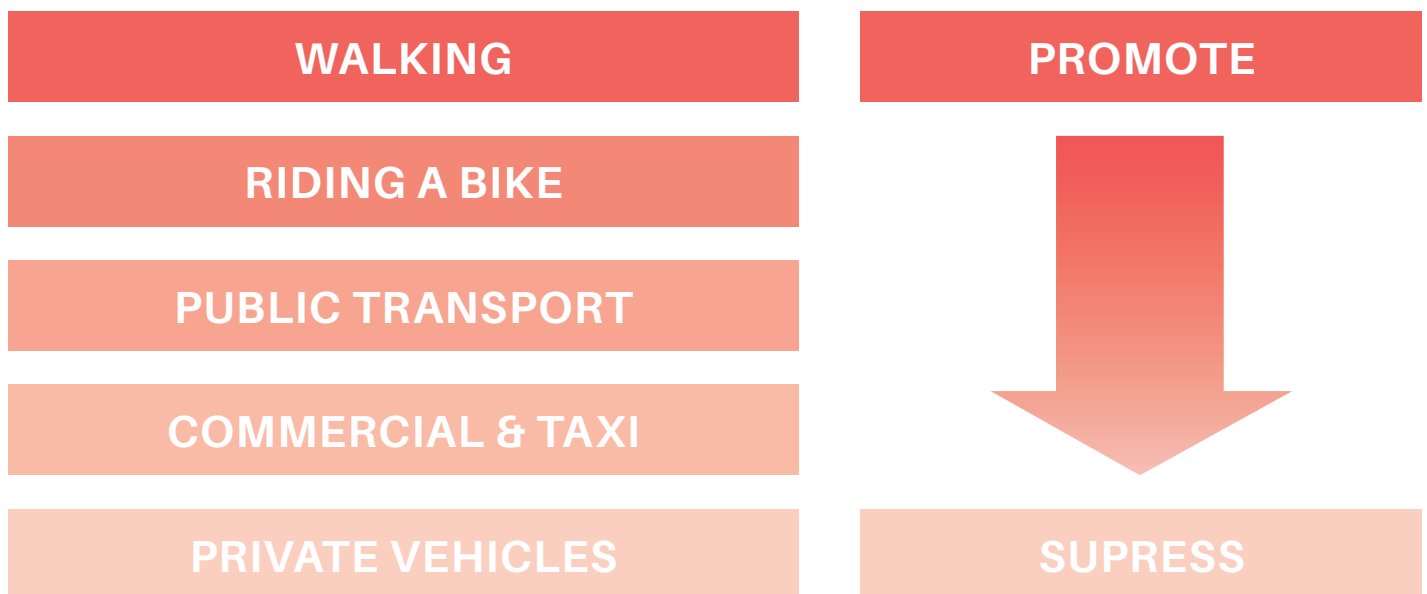
Northern Gateway

ACCESS & MOVEMENT

The plan establishes the principal pedestrian, cycle and vehicle movement patterns and points of access to enable ease of movement around the town based on active travel principles, whilst satisfying the need to service and supply town centre businesses and facilities.

Effectively, national, regional and local policy creates a hierarchy of travel modes, prioritising space within the public realm to promoting green, active means of travel - walking, wheeling and cycling. This hierarchy is illustrated in the diagram below.

However, it must be applied sensibly to recognise the needs of the broader transport and highway network and it is increasingly important to consider the movement of services and goods, not just people. Nevertheless, this hierarchy is a clear statement of the Council's priorities for movement within the region, and this must be reflected in the design of all streets and spaces.



THE PUBLIC REALM

Delivering a variety of public streets and spaces that respond to their location and function is a key aspiration of the Placemaking Plan. As stated above, the key principle in designing the public realm is prioritising the attractiveness and therefore the invitation to the cyclist and pedestrian, with the ambition to increase footfall, dwell-time and civic activity within the urban realm. This in turn feeds back into economic activity and the attractiveness of Tredegar as a place to live and visit. The Placemaking Plan clearly defines a strategy for the public realm around the character and typology of the public spaces, which seeks to achieve these goals.

HERITAGE

The strong historic urban model of the street pattern, key buildings, views and vistas all contribute to the town's identity and sense of place. Repair is required, but the fundamentals of this urban structure must not be lost and are essential to the success of the town going forward.

NEW INTERVENTIONS AND POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

The Placemaking Plan identifies new development plots that would be brought forward over time. These key developments might consist of renewal, re-purposing or repair, but with the intention of building on the strong bones of the town to retain and increase critical growth within the community, effectively building in resilience for the economy, culture and well-being. The Placemaking Plan provides the starting point to assembling and bringing forward development.

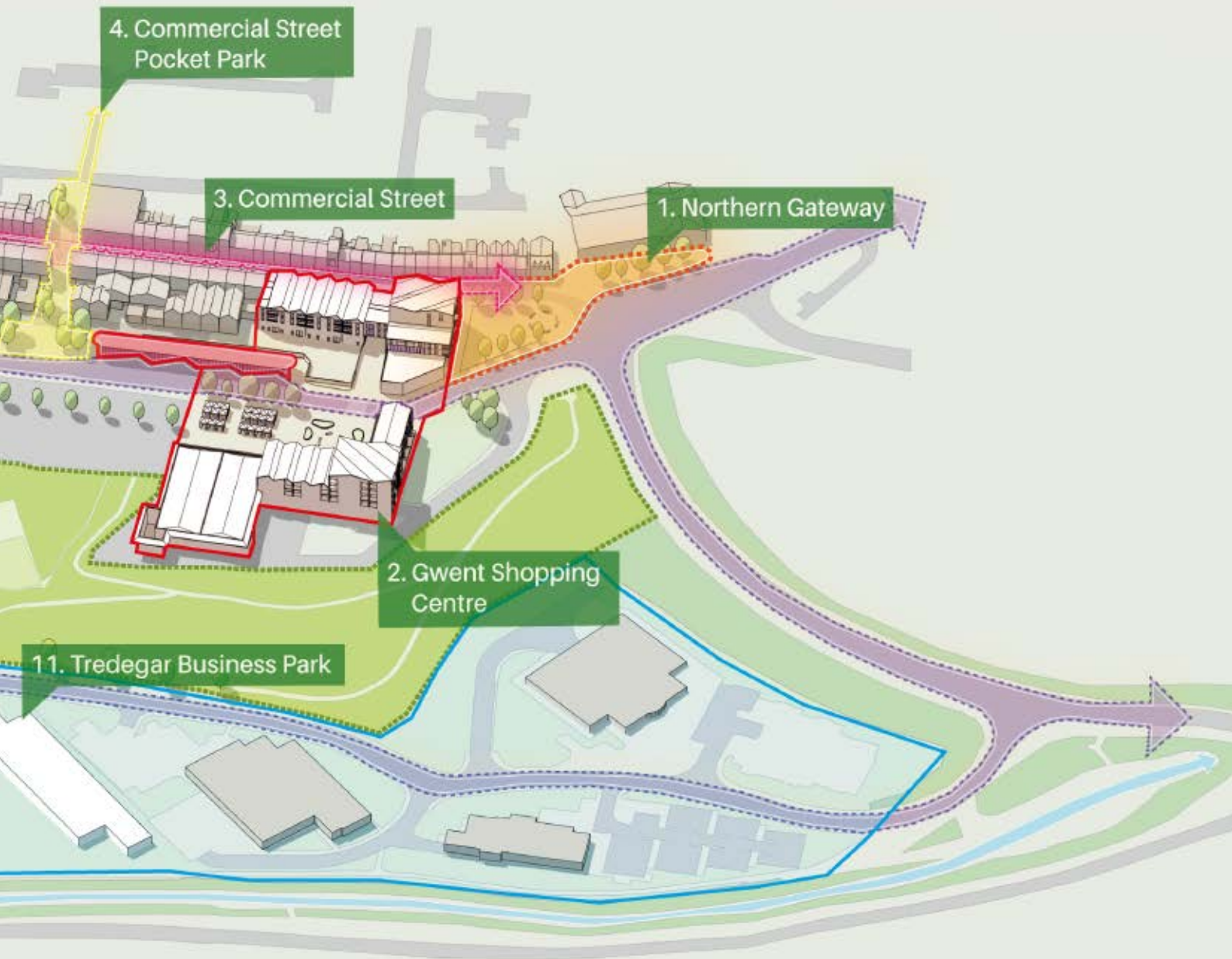
ACHIEVING QUALITY DESIGN

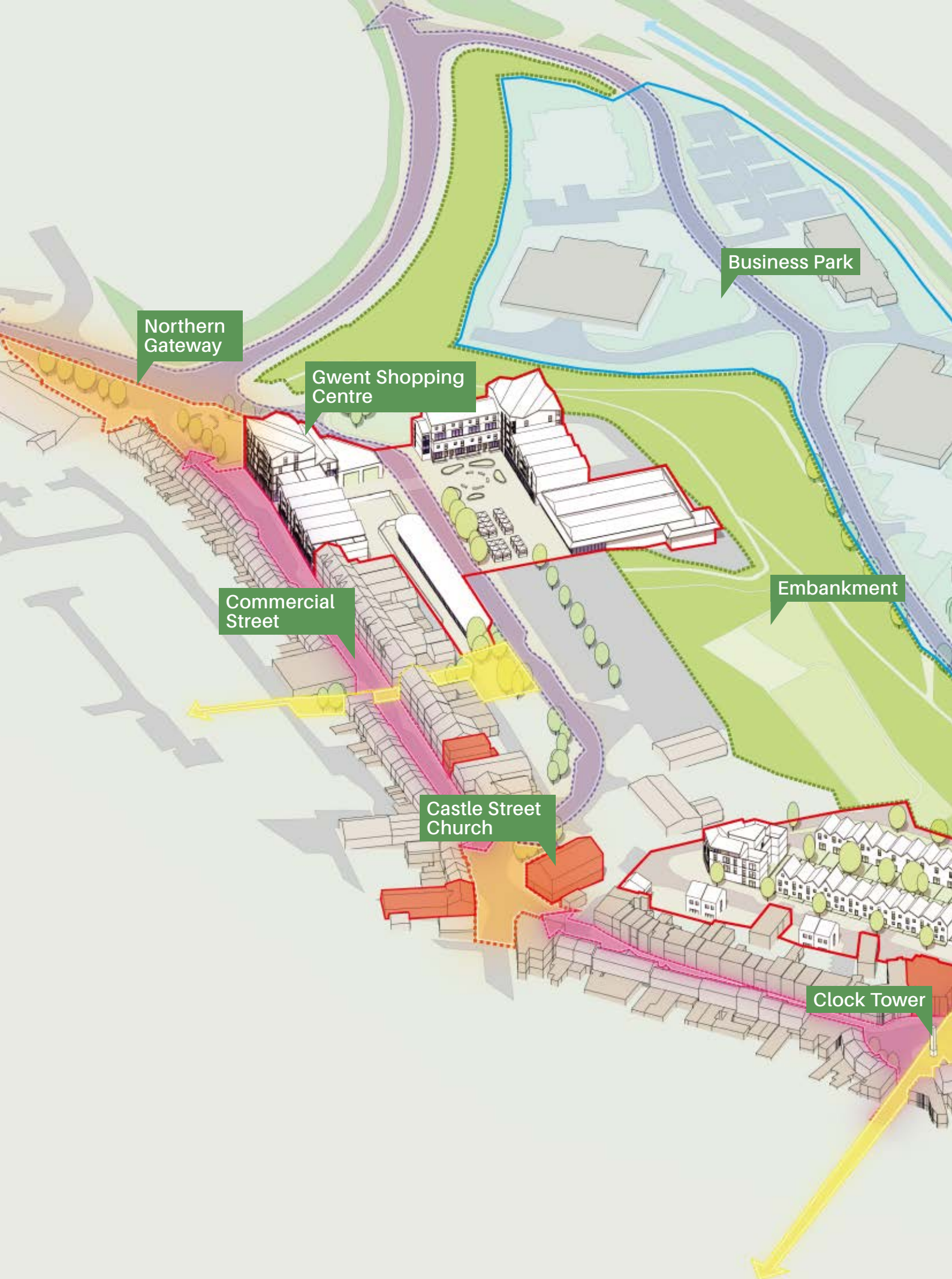
This should not be confused with the cost of development, but the quality of the designs brought forward within Tredegar should be measured by the developments ability to meet the aspirations set out in this document for sustainability, respect for the town's heritage, creating life between buildings and the scale, massing and density to support a 20 minute neighbourhood.

ACTION AREAS









Northern Gateway

Gwent Shopping Centre

Business Park

Commercial Street

Embankment

Castle Street Church

Clock Tower



1. NORTHERN GATEWAY

The northern gateway into the town is formed by the controlled junction outside the Lidl and north of the Gwent Shopping Centre. The junction is heavily traffic dominated and a sense of disconnection from, and lack of welcome to the town results. This is reinforced by the blank façade of the shopping centre and the oppressive nature of the highways underpass that passes beneath it.

Initial traffic modelling would suggest that the junction can be simplified, permitting active travel modes to better cross and enter the town, and the proposed regeneration of the Gwent Shopping Centre and reconfiguration and renewal of Commercial Street would also change the context of the gateway. The landscape works around the junction are of a quality and should be extended to follow the realigned Stockton Way into the town. Similarly, the urban treatment of Commercial Street should be expanded in front of the western street façade, where the remodelled shopping centre return eastward, to create a small public space running up to the Post Office and drawing Lidl onto the 'High Street'.

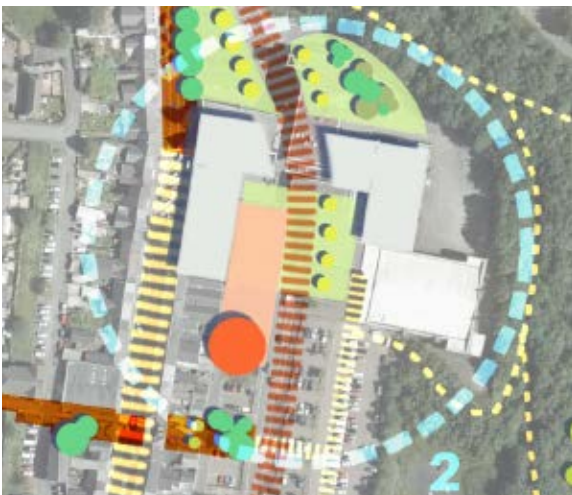


2. GWENT SHOPPING CENTRE

Effectively, this development currently forms the northern gateway into the town as all movement patterns are funnelled through the underpass on Stockton Way, under the shopping centre. The current shopping centre still fulfils an important retail function for the town, forming the majority of the Primary Retail Area. However, the quality of the environment and issues of access into the town centre for pedestrians, cyclists, cars and public transport are critically detrimental to the town centre and substantial reconfiguration and repurposing is required.

The programme needs to reflect the current realities of retail and to remain a key component of the town centre attraction, the centre needs to be re-envisioned as a mixed use development, potentially underpinned by a residential component, but containing retail, leisure and community facilities.

The underpass should be removed to allow the creation of a new bus interchange between local services and regional Metro services. Taking advantage of the consolidation of public transport the links to the active travel network would be strengthened by the provision of a cycle hub adjacent to the bus interchange.

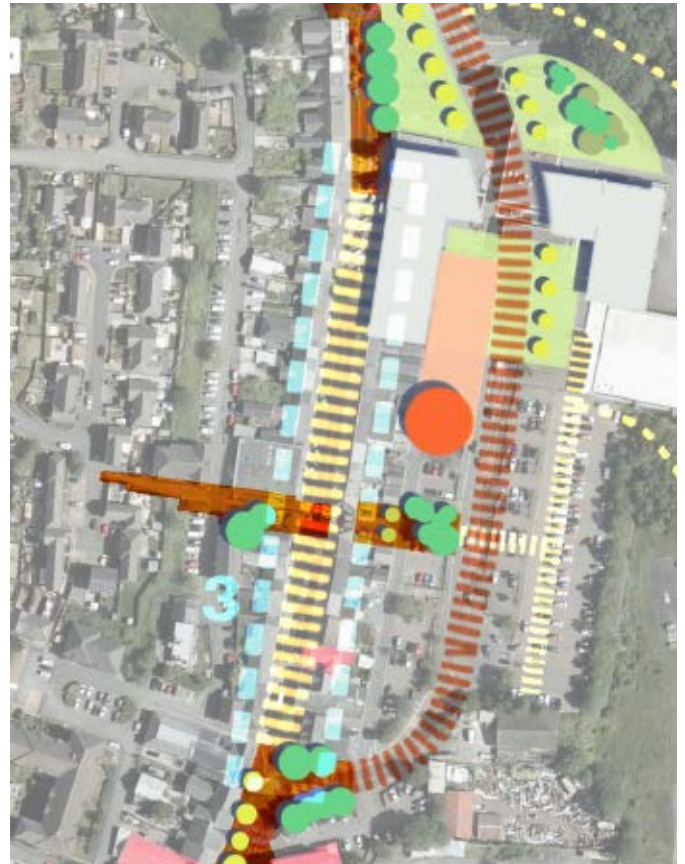




3. COMMERCIAL STREET

The issues on Commercial Street are intertwined. We need to generate more footfall and increase activity and dwell time to stimulate retail spend. This will assist with the property take up and investment in the street, addressing problems of vacancy, poorly maintained frontages and anti-social behaviour.

The streets needs to offer an invitation to the resident and visitor to meet, walk and spend time, through the provision of an attractive and pleasant environment. We need, therefore, to switch the emphasis from the immediacy and ease of vehicular access to promoting pedestrian and cycle activity. The proposal is to restrict vehicular access at certain times of the day, permitting service and deliveries, but in a predominantly pedestrian environment. The change over could be gradual, where the street is initially closed to vehicles to facilitate key events or festivals, but the transition needs to happen.



4. COMMERCIAL STREET POCKET PARK

With the exception of the two points of entry into Commercial Street to north and south, this is the only pedestrian intersection with the street, but provides access from the extensive housing area to the west and connection to the Gwent Shopping Centre and bus stands to the east. Recognising its importance and potential, a small pocket park already marks this midway point along the street, but is suffering from neglect, underuse and a lack of active frontages.

The reduced impact of vehicles through restrictions along Commercial Street, in combination with a renewed shopping centre and re-energised urban realm, would really enable this space to come alive.



5. CHURCH SQUARE

The 'knuckle' between Commercial Street and Castle Street has been lost as a civic space and is now a traffic junction that needs to be negotiated in moving between the two arms of the town - the high street spine. The majority of this space falls under the Town Centre Conservation Area, and should create a public space that addresses the Castle Street Church and provides spill out space for the buildings that terminate the two internal axial views along the streets clustered around the church. The highways function of this space will need to remain, but initial highways design suggests the land take for traffic purposes can be reduced, enabling suitable public realm to establish a central public space at the heart of the town.

6. CASTLE STREET

It is crucial that Castle Street is not overlooked in this plan. Recent works around the Circle have had a marked, but immediate effect, dramatically improving the attractiveness and offer around the Circle. However, to really make a difference to the wider town, the connections back to the retail area and onto Bedwelty Park, need to present a consistent quality and facilitate ease of movement.

Frontage improvements to the properties in combination with a sympathetic lighting scheme would draw the pedestrian along the street.



7. CORONATION STREET/IRON ROW

With strong reference to the Victorian street plan of Tredegar, the zone between Castle Street/Morgan Street and the business park should be repaired through phased residential-led development. As indicated on this early plan and following good urban design practice, these blocks should be designed as perimeter blocks, thereby accommodating density with lower building heights and a diversity of building types and uses. Importantly, when these blocks are grouped together to form a neighbourhood, it is the buildings themselves that define the public realm, as well as providing internal, sheltered semi-private spaces.

The redevelopment and repair of this eastern quarter of the town will take time, not only in terms of land assembly, with a number of uses still existing on the site, but also to build out in line with market demand. It is proposed therefore to establish a series of meanwhile spaces and uses, which could include allotments and other community growing areas, play areas and local open spaces.





8. MARKET STREET/IRON STREET

The strong axis of Iron Street and Bridge Street would regain its original importance and contribution to west - east movement patterns and the area would once again be worthy of inclusion within the Conservation Area.

The balance of the town would also be reinstated with the restoration of the urban form away from the current north-south linear nature to a more rounded community centred on The Circle. The town would regain depth.

Centred on the Circle, the urban realm of the two streets should be upgraded, focussing on the Saron Chapel to the west and a new point of entry into the business park to the south.

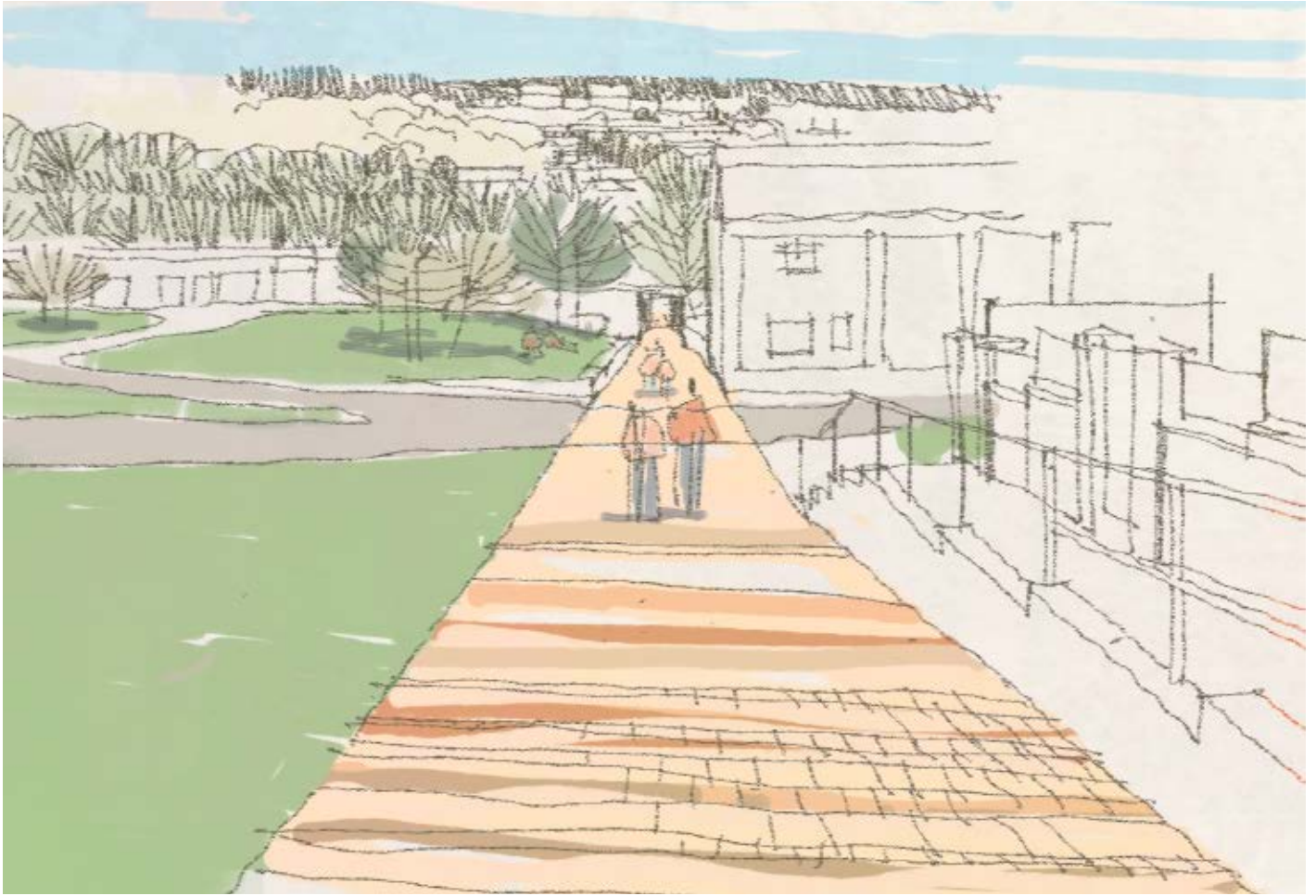


9. BRIDGE STREET/GEORGETOWN LINK

A linear pedestrian route connecting the Circle and the town centre to Georgetown to the east of the A4048. The route was strongly depicted in the early maps of the town and is still popular today. Some of the structure and directness has been lost, but could relatively easily be retrieved, with a continuity of paving material and lighting. This would be especially important at the underpass, which is somewhat daunting due to the restrictive headroom.

The western extent of the vista along the route terminates at the fine facade of The Olympia (now Weatherspoons), immediately below the Circle on Morgan Street.





BRIDGE STREET/GEORGETOWN LINK LOOKING EAST

10. SOUTHERN GATEWAY

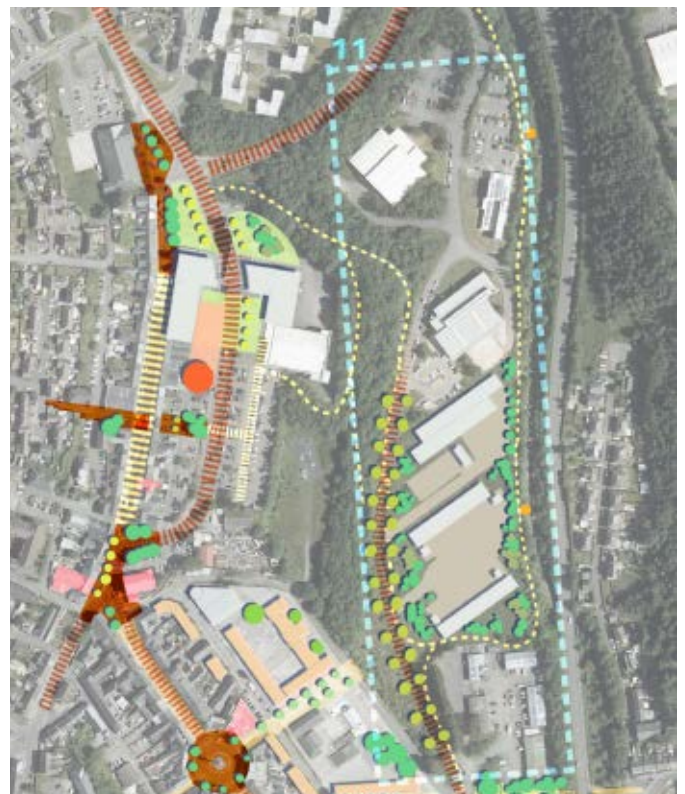
Continuing the theme of marking entrances to the town centre, place-marking principles should be applied to the area at the foot of Morgan Street, at the junction with Shop Row and Lower Coronation Street, to set the southern entrance point into the town centre. The development of a southern access into the business park along Shop Row would reinforce the importance of this entrance. The space is already there, and could be enhanced by tree planting and relatively minor public realm works to create this new space. There would effectively be a sequence of public space, each of differing character, along the town spine and between the two gateways at The Circle and Church Square.



11. TREDEGAR BUSINESS PARK

The business park is well located in terms of the road network and within the established, wooded river valley. All of the three existing premises are now let, completing the northern half of the site, however the southern half is undeveloped with no road infrastructure. The proposal would be to create a southern access into the site via Shop Row. This would be made possible by the partial demolition of the Truck Shop, retaining the areas of the listed building of greatest heritage interest (and retrievable condition), and widening the road corridor. The southern entrance would not only facilitate more local traffic movements from the south, but would encourage local bus operators to service the business park.

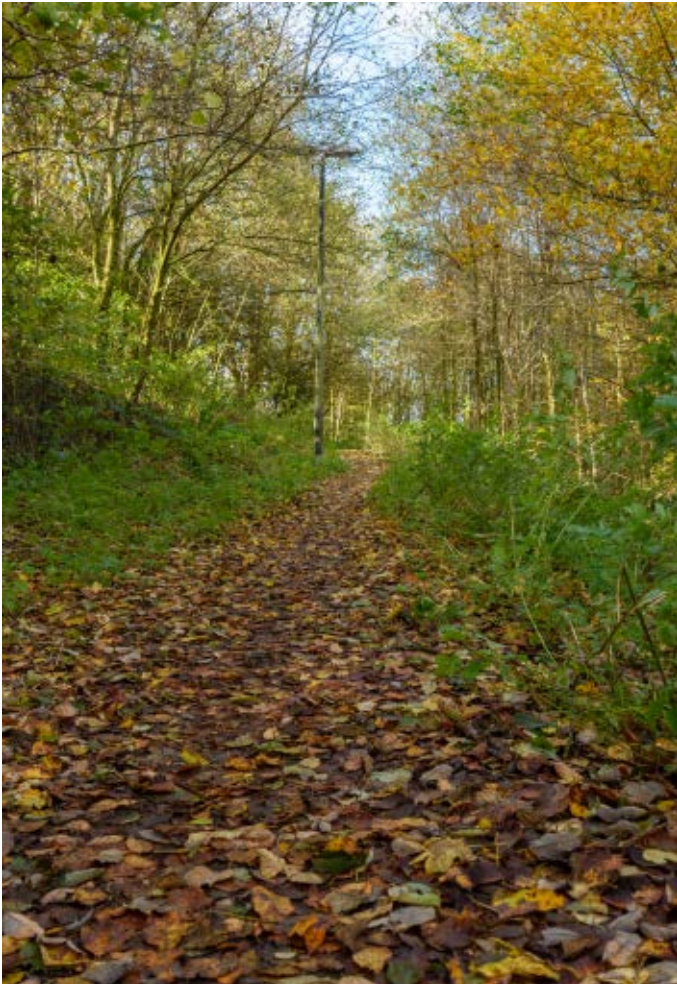
Connections back into the town centre would also be (re)created extending the west - east axial routes to Commercial Street and along Iron Street and Bridge Street. The improvements to the river corridor and associated increase in use as an active travel and ecological corridor, would further stimulate connectivity and attractiveness to potential investors in the park.



12. THE EMBANKMENT

The steep wooded embankment connecting the town to the business park is a great asset in terms of green structure to the town and business park and providing a wooded recreational environment, but the existing footpath system is neglected, with the limited lighting vandalised. In its current state it acts as a deterrent to movement between the two areas.

With increased activity on the business park and residential uses being located at the shopping centre, the footpath system should be upgraded and lighting restored, to encourage safe active movement between the town, business park and the river.



13. THE PROGRAMME

In creating these new town centre and high street environments, it is not just about highway restrictions and physical urban renewal, the programme of activities is key - the stage may be set, but it requires activity to create the draw. Farmer's markets, craft fairs, music, film, food, seasonal and heritage festivals would establish a regular programme of events throughout the year. These programmes should be cross-pollinated with the hospitality and the food offer to build a critical mass of visitor, resident and tourist engagement with the town.

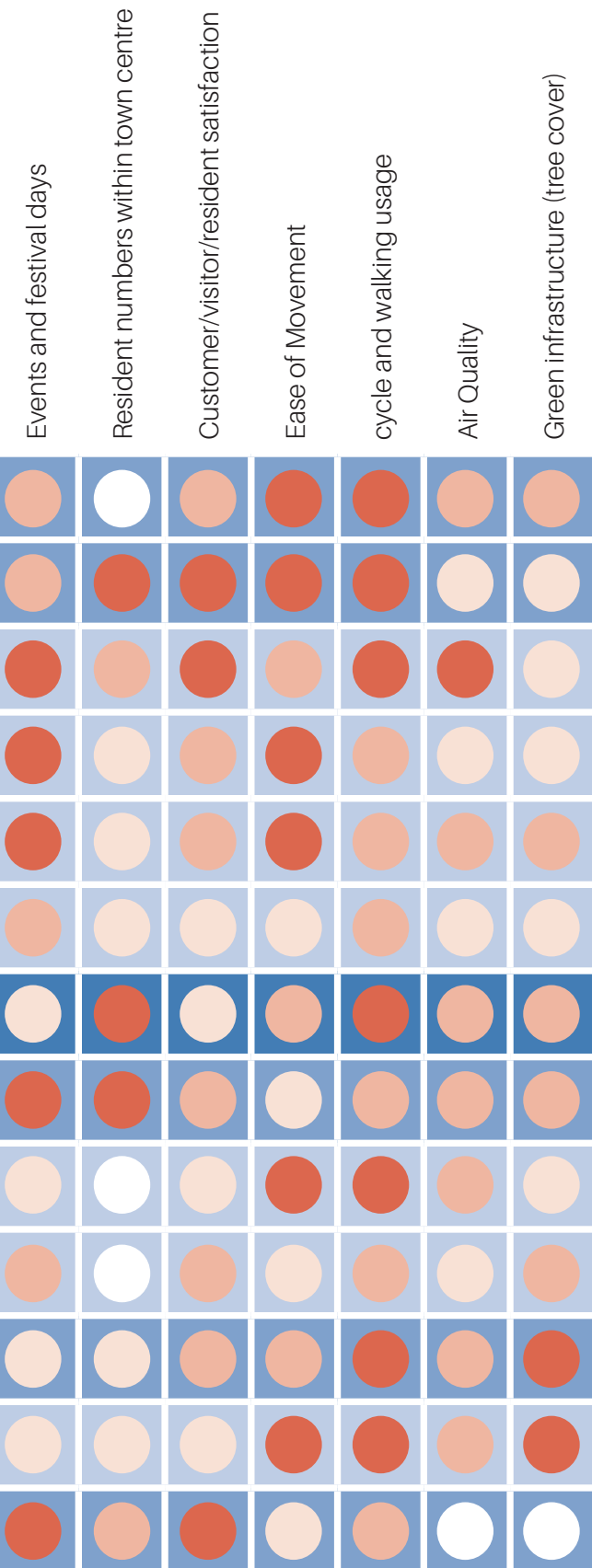


06
TIMEFRAMES &
MEASURES OF SUCCESS





Action Areas




Measures of Success

	Town centre vacancy numbers	Footfall	Retail spend/turnover/sales	Nighttime economy	Gross Value Added (GVA)	Retail diversity	Hotel bed nights	Place attractiveness
1 Northern Gateway	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High	Low
2 Gwent Shopping Centre	High	High	High	Low	High	High	Low	High
3 Commercial Street	High	High	High	High	High	High	Low	High
4 Commercial Street Pocket Park	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
5 Church Square	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
6 Castle Street	Low	Low	Low	High	High	Low	High	Low
7 Coronation Street/Iron Row	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Low
8 Market Street/Iron Street	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
9 Bridge Street/Georgetown Link	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High	Low
10 Southern Gateway	Low	High	High	High	High	High	Low	Low
11 Tredegar Business Park	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
12 The Embankment	Low	Low	High	High	High	High	High	Low
13 The Programme	Low	High	Low	High	Low	Low	High	Low



Key

-  Little / No Impact
-  Low Impact
-  Medium Impact
-  High Impact

-  Short term (3 years)
-  Medium term (5 years)
-  Long term (5+ years)

APPENDIX 1

ANALYSIS: CHARACTER AREAS

CHARACTER AREAS

The study area and its adjacent surroundings are made up of clearly defined character areas, each distinct from its neighbour and immediately apparent in moving through the town.

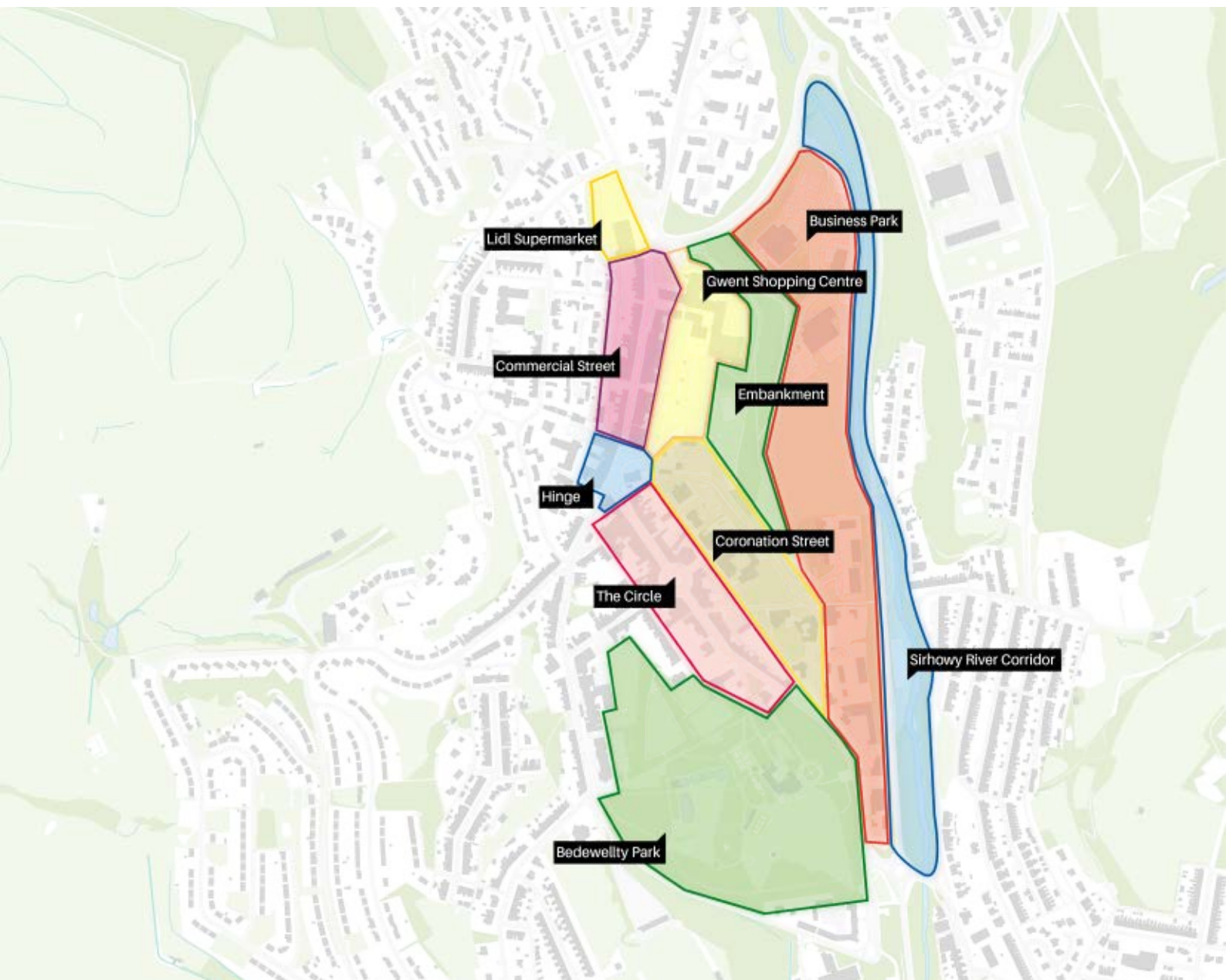


FIG. 9 CHARACTER AREAS

COMMERCIAL STREET AREA 1

- The northern arm of what can be considered the high street.
- Hard, narrow, linear and contained shopping street, with only a few breakouts to east and west
- Dramatic views northwards to the Brecon Beacons
- Busy (but mainly with cars!)
- Vacancies, shuttered shop fronts and unsympathetic signage are all visually detrimental to the strong and consistent underlying structure.



CASTLE STREET AREA 2

- Slightly more generous and expansive streetscape with long views southwards over and along the valley
- Steeply sloping to the south towards The Circle, where the clock tower is neatly and centrally framed by the street frontages.
- The topography lends interest with raised stepped platform entrance areas
- Intermittent views along connecting streets to the west up into residential areas and to the east long-range views over the business park to Georgetown and the wooded eastern side of the valley



QUEEN VICTORIA STREET

AREA 3

- A short section of Victoria Street that forms a knuckle between the two arms of the high street
- Open views eastwards either side of the solid mass of Castle Street Church
- An area dominated by the highway and traffic, disconnecting the flow of the high street
- Lack of animation from adjacent properties



STOCKTON WAY AND GWENT SHOPPING CENTRE

AREA 4

- A busy open area of predominantly car parking and highway
- The solid bulk of the Gwent Shopping Centre encloses the view to the north
- The backs of Commercial Street properties frame the western edge, with car parking areas and the pocket park connection to Commercial Street.
- To the east, striking, open views over the old skateboard park, wooded embankment, business park and river to the woodland beyond.



LIDL AND NORTHERN JUNCTION

AREA 5

- Modern superstore set above busy (and confusing!) traffic signalled junction
- Surroundings are wooded, green and enclosed
- Housing is visible along the roads to the north
- The main vehicular gateway to the town centre is beneath the shopping centre - daunting and uninviting



TREDEGAR BUSINESS PARK

AREA 6

- A flat low-lying landscape alongside the river, historically the ironworks, but with the exception of the ruined Truck Shop to the south, no vestiges of this remain.
- Modern business units surround the entrance and estate road to the north, set within landscaped grounds
- The southern area is vacant, open, rough pasture, awaiting development
- The wooded river corridor screens the A4048 8n embankment and with the wooded embankment to the west creates an attractive setting for the business park
- A series of industrial units are situated to the south accessed off Shop Row, cut through by the pedestrian connection between Georgetown and the town centre beneath the A4048 and over the river.



CORONATION STREET/ IRON ROW

AREA 7

- Two secondary streets running parallel to Castle Street with gapped-toothed commercial and residential development
- The Little theatre is one of only few community facilities within the town centre
- Strong views over the valley to the east and south
- Vacant plots create small, often unkempt landscapes, with little structure to the streets



THE EMBANKMENT

AREA 8

- A heavily wooded embankment separating the business park from the town
- A footpath connection zig-zags down the slope connecting the business park with the shopping centre car park
- A little used skateboard park resides on a plateau area immediately beneath the car park and accessed from Iron Row
- The wooded embankment mirrors the wooded slopes of Georgetown to the east of the river



SIRHOWY RIVER CORRIDOR

AREA 9

- Attractive wooded corridor, but with little opportunities to view the river!
- A pedestrian route with sitting areas and artwork has been created along the stretch within the business park, but seems little used.
- A great asset that needs revealing and brought into use.
- Potential for onward active travel connections to north and south



HOUSING AREA

AREA 10

- Dense residential area on the hillside above Commercial Street
- Although immediately adjacent to the retail core, seems separate and disconnected
- Poor planning has left only one narrow point of connections between the town centre and housing area, which needs strengthening and reinforcing



APPENDIX 2

THE HEALTHCHECK

TREDEGAR TOWN CENTRE HEALTHCHECK

This town centre healthcheck provides a snapshot of the current state of Tredegar town centre. *Future Wales: The National Plan 2040* sets the context for the appraisal and suggests the indicators, promoting a new vision of environmentally responsible, spatial development around compact centred towns with active travel and local facilities. It argues that the way forward, as set out in the *Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, should be to place a much greater emphasis on environmental sustainability and social justice, mitigating against the current norm of low-density developments where the car is a default necessity for work, retail and leisure.

A further point of reference is the emerging Replacement Local Development Plan, which establishes policies governing retail and town centre development and growth.

Tredegar is defined as a District Hub within the Local Development Plan, whose role, whilst acknowledging its subordinate status to neighbouring Ebbw Vale as the principal hub within the borough, is to meet the 'culture, leisure and tourism needs of' its 'local communities' (SP1 Northern Strategy Area). Similarly, with respect to the retail hierarchy proposed within the Local Plan (SP3), Tredegar will act as a district shopping centre, principally to serve the needs of the immediate catchment, with Ebbw Vale providing the sub-regional retail role.

Given that the Healthcheck exercise was undertaken during the Covid pandemic, realistic and relevant primary data was difficult if not impossible to source, with many properties closed for the duration of the pandemic difficult to distinguish from those already or planning on permanent closure. Similarly, footfall was very low and not indicative of 'normal' trading conditions. Much use was made, therefore, of recent pre-pandemic reports and figures. The *Blaenau Gwent Retail and Leisure Study - April 2021*, (where again, the survey and healthcheck work was also undertaken during the period of the pandemic) also undertook a household survey in Tredegar to establish shopping behaviour, and resident and visitor views on the town centre, which provides useful insights.

A sense of the condition and appearance of the town centre was gleaned from site visits to the town through April and May this year.

The purpose of the health check is to form part of a robust, primarily retail evidence base to aid in the preparation of the Placemaking Plan for Tredegar. The Tredegar Town Centre Healthcheck was undertaken having regard to the extent of the boundary defined by this study, which closely follows the current Town Centre boundary as defined in the Local Plan. It therefore extends from Lidl and the Gwent Centre in the north along the spine of Commercial Street (the primary retail area) and Castle Street to The Circle in the south. The Placemaking Plan also encapsulates the Business Park to the east of the town centre.

TREDEGAR OVERVIEW

Tredegar is comfortably the second largest town centre within Blaenau Gwent behind Ebbw Vale, based on retail floorspace and would be the largest were it based on the actual number of retail outlets. However, a truer indication of the role of Ebbw Vale as the Principal Hub is gleaned from town centre turnover, which is three times greater than Tredegar, and reflects the relative number of national multiples.

The population of Tredegar (which includes Waundeg, Sirhowy and Georgetown) is slightly over 15,000 (2019). It is located 20 miles north of Cardiff along the Sirhowy Valley and lies immediately to the south of the A465, the Heads of the Valleys Road. It is, therefore, on the southern edge of (but outside) the Brecon Beacons National Park. The larger town of Ebbw Vale, the Principal Hub town within the Northern Strategy Area of Blaenau Gwent, is to the east of Tredegar.

The southern part of the town centre, around the Circle, is designated a Conservation Area and the town caters for a number of tourists and visitors, interested in the industrial heritage. A further source of interest in the town is the political and historic interest of the role of Aneurin Bevan and his links and references to Tredegar in the formation of the National Health Service.

Many of the Valleys are served by a railway; unfortunately, Tredegar is not one, with the rail line closing under the Beeching Cuts in 1963. Although proposals were mooted to re-open the line in the Welsh Metro proposals this is not the current proposal and the service along the valley currently extends as far as Blackwood. Bus is, therefore, the means of public transport, with other nearby rail stations at Ebbw Vale and Rhumney.

The current large employment site at the Tredegar Business Park is located immediately east of the town centre alongside the Sirhowy River, with good access to the town and the A465. Approximately half of the site is currently developed.

TREDEGAR AT A GLANCE

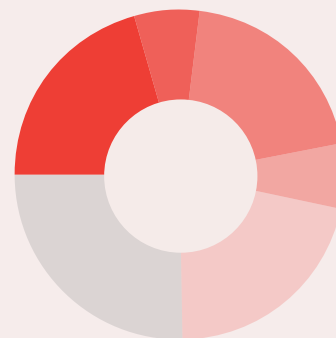
Town Centre Turnover



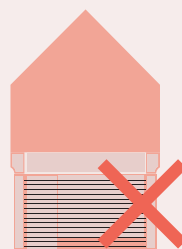
- Identified within the LDP as a district shopping centre to serve the needs of the local catchment area.
- Tredegar's population is circa 15,000 people
- Contains the second largest Town Centre in Blaenau Gwent, (The largest when based on the number of retail units. Ebbw Vale has a Town Centre Turnover 3x larger than that of Tredegar.
- Southern end of the Town Centre designated a Conservation Area linked with industrial heritage of the Town and links to Aneurin Bevan and the formation of the NHS

DIVERSITY OF USES

- Higher than the UK national average for A1 service uses reflects a large number of Hair and Beauty and Tattoo parlours.
- The Leisure Use class in Tredegar is slightly below the UK national average and has very high levels of fast food & takeaway provision, accounting for most of the A3-A5 use in the town centre.



PROPORTION OF VACANT SHOPS



25%

Shops vacant in Tredegar Town Centre

12%

Experian GOAD UK National Average February 2020

ACCESS & ACCESSIBILITY

- Car Parking in northern part of the Town Centre is well catered for but street parking dominates Commercial Street.
- Interchange between local and regional bus services is limited as the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass impedes access for regional busses.
- 76% of those surveyed thought that there was a good or very good ease of pedestrian movement around the town centre.



CUSTOMER VIEWS & BEHAVIOUR



- High local usage of the Town Centre with 75% of those surveyed within the Tredegar catchment areas said they visited Town Centre at least once a week.
- Poor perception of quality of the Town Centre shopping offer with 65% of customers surveyed suggesting that the quality of shops was poor or very poor.
- Almost half of all customers surveyed thought that the attractiveness and experience of food and drink establishments around the town centre was poor or very poor.

DIVERSITY OF USES AND PROPORTION OF VACANT STREET LEVEL PROPERTY

DIVERSITY OF USES:

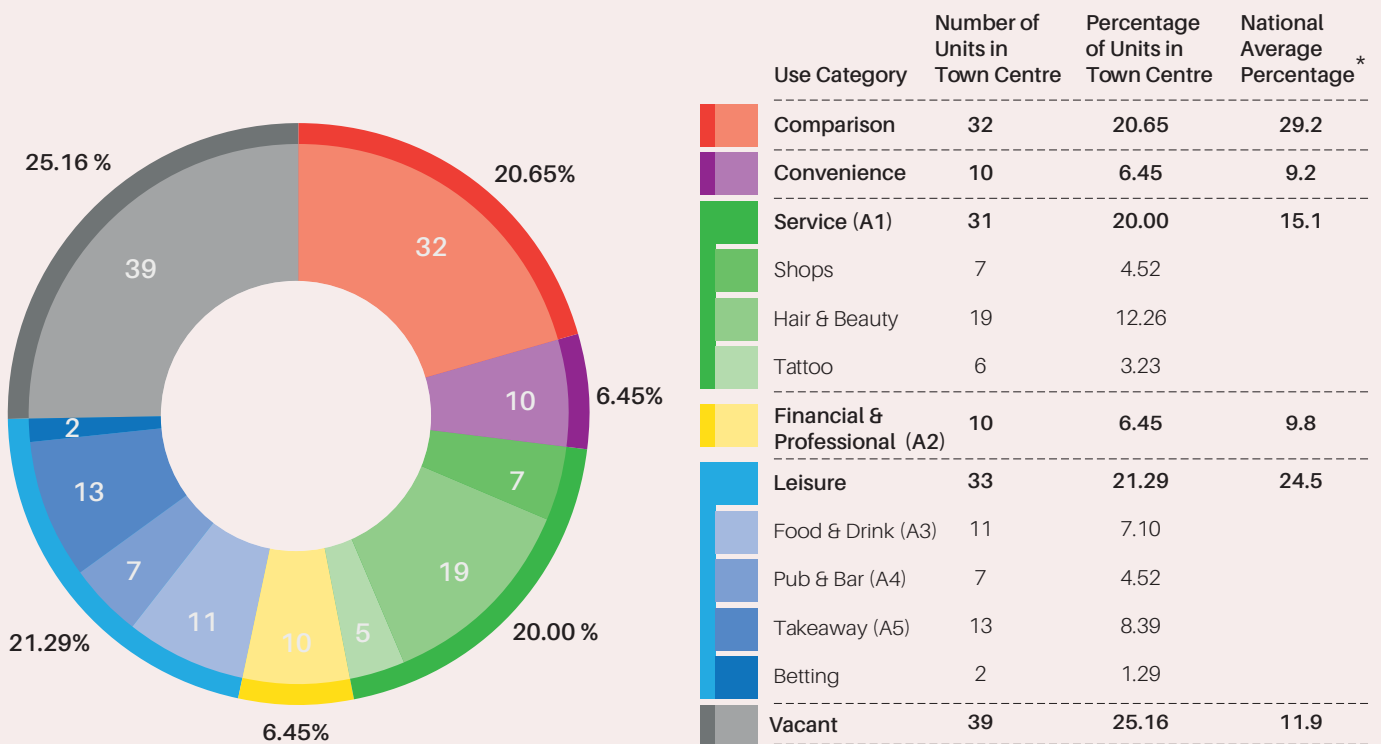
The Principal Retail Area (PRA) lies to the northern end of Commercial Street and includes the Gwent Shopping Centre, which straddles Stockton Way. The diversity of uses within Tredegar Town Centre closely matches the national average for Wales in most use classes with the exception of A1 services, which at 20% is 4.9% above the UK national average and the proportion of comparison goods stores, which is 8.55% under the national average. (Figure 1)

The comparative surplus of A1 service uses reflects a large number of Hair and Beauty and Tattoo parlours located in the Town Centre.

The Leisure Use class in Tredegar is slightly below the UK national average by 3.21%. Tredegar has very high levels of fast food & takeaway provision, accounting for most of the A3-A5 use in the town centre. But what is marked even from a walking survey, is that whilst there is a higher provision of takeaways and cafes, there is no 'restaurant' provision.

There would, therefore, appear to be a qualitative need to improve the mix of A3 uses within Tredegar, to better reflect the expenditure available to spend on eating out in cafes and restaurants compared with fast food and takeaways. The former uses would also support the vitality of the town centre to a greater extent than fast food and takeaway uses as they are more likely to be open at the same time as the retail uses, that is, during

FIG.1 DIVERSITY OF USES IN TREDEGAR



*Experian GOAD UK National Average February 2020

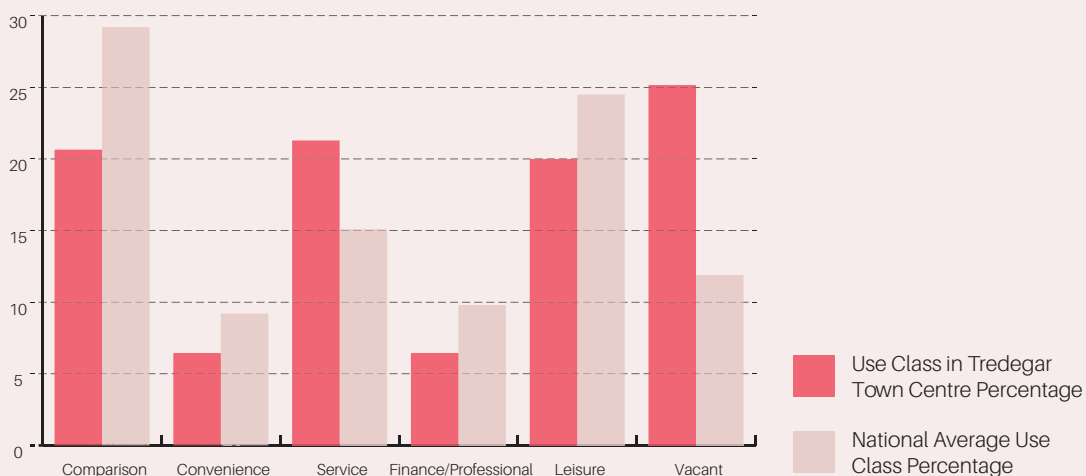
the daytime trading hours, respond to the ambition to attract and retain both tourists and regional residents to the town and have greater potential to increase the dwell-time of visitors.

Tredegar was used as a case study for developing a benchmarking tool for assessing town centre performance in Wales*, published in August 2021, but based on evidence gathered pre-pandemic. This study provides a good basis to compare with our findings. The case study classified Tredegar as a Medium Market Town based on its retail mix. Reflecting this assessment, the study indicated that it is performing poorly compared to its peers, with vacancy rates in 2016 around 12 pp higher than the category benchmark.

However, a closer examination of its catchment area suggests that Tredegar is situated in more urban, deprived communities than other towns of this type, and that a Medium Market Town’s diverse mix of businesses, focused on comparison goods and independents, is normally associated with more affluent, rural catchments and is, perhaps, not appropriate for a town centre such as Tredegar. The case study suggested that whilst independent businesses can be used to anchor a town, their lack of resilience can leave poorly performing towns fragile. Given the correlation between service businesses and improvements in town centre performance in deprived areas, their recommendation was that Tredegar’s stakeholders focus on attracting more service businesses to the town.

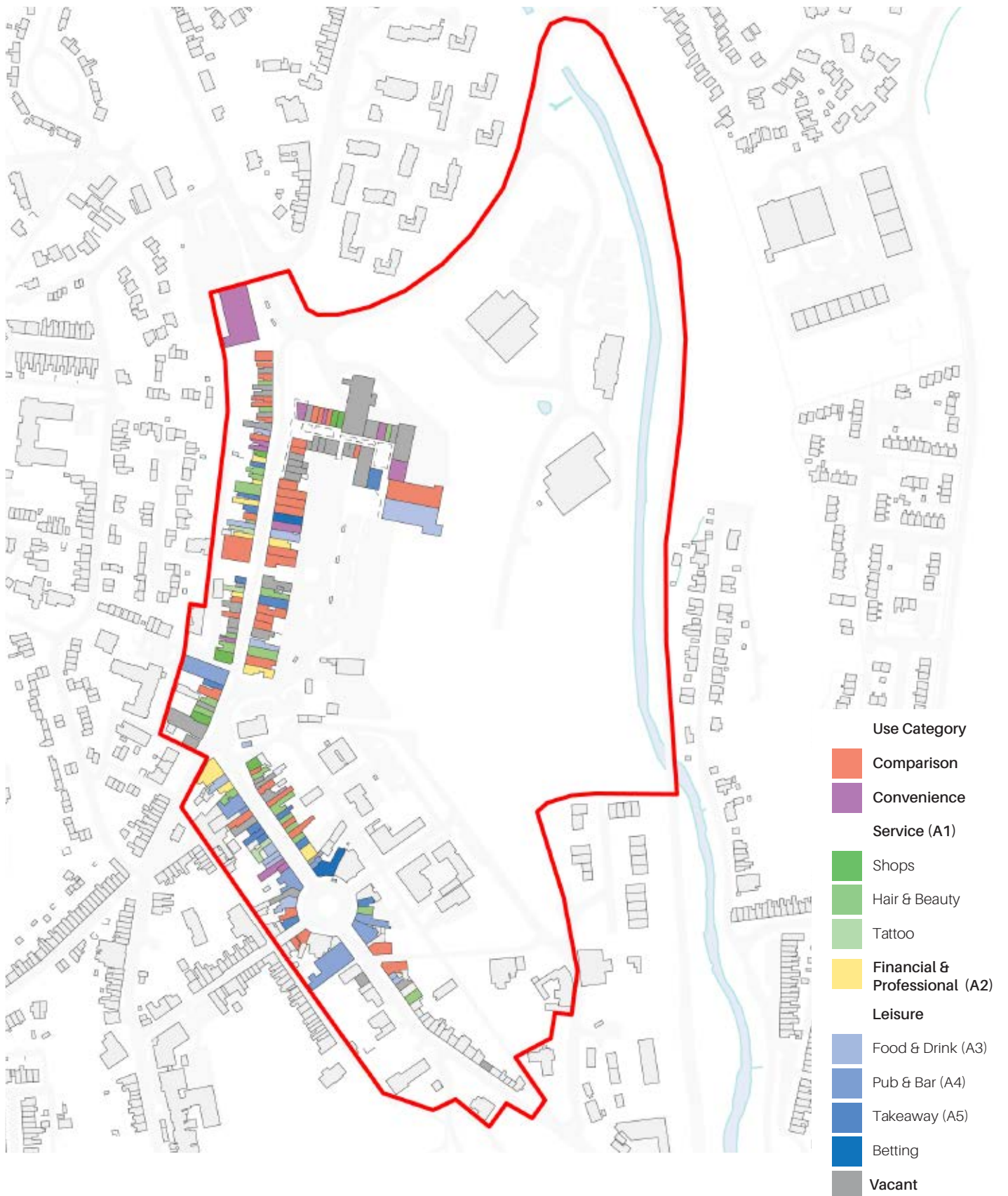
* Jones, S., Newing, A. & Orford, S. Understanding Town Centre Performance in Wales: Using GIS to Develop a Tool for Benchmarking. Appl. Spatial Analysis (2021).

FIG.2 COMPARISON OF USES WITH THE UK NATIONAL AVERAGE



* Experian GOAD UK National Average February 2020

FIG.3 GROUND FLOOR USE PLAN



PROPORTION OF VACANT STREET LEVEL PROPERTY

The proportion of vacant street level property in Tredegar is just over 25%, more than double the UK national average. There has been an increase in the number of vacant units over the past seven years, but with many of these coming in the period 2013-16, with the loss of numerous national multiples, particularly from the Shopping Centre. During the undertaking of the health check, it was difficult to be definitive about the status of properties in this regard, as a number had been closed for a long period due to the pandemic, with plans to reopen as restrictions were lifted.

However, it was observed that the vacant units comprised a variety of building types and floor plates, and whilst the units were dispersed across the town centre, the vast majority were situated on Commercial Street and within the Shopping Centre. The majority of vacant units appeared to be well maintained, but a number were showing signs of neglect (figure 6) The increasing level, and long-term nature of vacancies within the Gwent Shopping Centre is a concern in terms of sustaining viability of the Primary Retail Area in its current form.



Vacant units to Gwent Shopping Centre Facing Commercial Street

COMMERCIAL RENTS

Commercial rents in the town vary significantly dependant on property sector.

RETAIL:

Nationally the decline of High Street retail has been much publicised. The primary retail area in Tredegar is dominated by The Gwent Shopping Centre and Commercial Street, with a vacancy rate double the national average asking rents range between £8.27 and £11.70 psf which is significantly lower than the nearby town of Merthyr Tydfil. The volume of vacant space provides an occupiers market creating favourable lease terms for occupiers.

OFFICE:

Regional Office markets have demonstrated a steady recovery through Q1 2022. Occupiers are demonstrating a flight to quality with 54% of take-up being for the highest quality space. In Q1 2022 the largest proportion of regional office take-up (28%) was from the Public Services, Education & Health sectors, demonstrating the importance of public sector occupiers to a regional office market. The office market in Tredegar is limited, with space provided within Welsh Governments Enterprise Zone of Tredegar Business Park with rents between £6.50 and £7.50 psf

INDUSTRIAL:

The industrial market in south Wales has shown resilience throughout the last 24 months. The IAS Stats highlighted that in Q1 2022 the largest number of deals was for smaller units up to 5,000 sq ft at an average of £6.00 psf for lettings and an average capital value of £74 psf for sales. For units between 5,000 and 10,000 sq ft the average rent was £5.41 psf and lettings of 10,000 to 20,000 sq ft showed the lowest average rent at £3.88 psf. The lettings of 20,000 to 50,000 sq ft averaged £4.07 psf and for units over 50,000 sq ft the average rent was £4.32 psf. For Q2 2022 the Stats again show that the largest number of deals was for units up to 5,000 sq ft with lettings at an average of £6.50 psf. Industrial space in the area is dominated by the Business Improvement District of the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates. Welsh Governments' 2018 Tech Valleys Strategy includes Tredegar Business Park which has recently seen the successful relocation of Frontier Medical to a 30,000 sqft building at £4.00 psf.

ACCESS & ACCESSIBILITY

VEHICULAR ACCESSIBILITY

Road access to the town is good, with nearby access to the A465, Heads of the Valley Road. Car parking for the northern area of the town centre is well provided for with all day, free parking at the extensive surface car park serving the Gwent Shopping Centre and ancillary car parking areas to the rear of Commercial Street off Bank Lane. A further car park is centrally located to the north of Castle Street Church. Time-limited parking restrictions are in place along Commercial Street with on-street parking permitted along the wider Castle Street. Other than the on-street parking however, there are no designated car parks serving the southern section of the town centre.

Tredegar is served by regular bus services to the bus hub along Stockton Way, with regional bus services calling at the stops outside Lidl. Regional buses are not able to access the Stockton Way stands, as they are too long to manoeuvre through the shopping centre underpass. This prevents ease of interchange between the regional and all of the local bus services.

Over half of those surveyed were of the view that the availability of car parking was either good or very good.

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

Pedestrian movement is also well catered for within the town centre, with good connections between bus station, car parking and the shops. Not surprisingly, therefore, almost 76% of those surveyed thought that there was a good or very good ease of movement around the town centre.

The pedestrian experience on Commercial Street suffers in the balance with the vehicular, with the ease and accommodation of car parking, often parking herringbone so requiring reversing movements and unenforced in terms of the duration, taking precedence over pedestrian comfort and facility. The abundance of heavy steel bollards to protect the already narrow pavement zone is testament to the problem.

The knuckle between Commercial Street and Castle Street is a perceptual divide, splitting the town centre in two. Reconnecting the two parts of the town and giving each part a clearer and more defined role should be a primary goal.

CUSTOMER VIEWS AND BEHAVIOUR, PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY AND OCCURRENCE OF CRIME

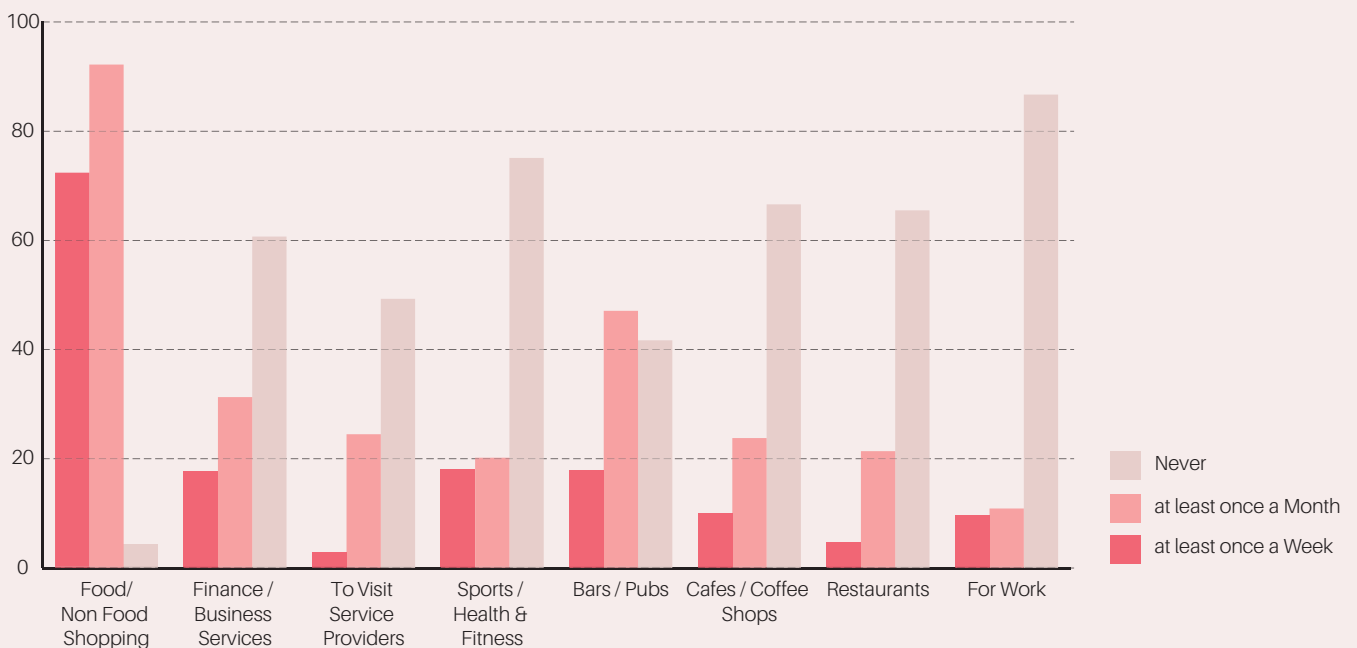
CUSTOMER'S VIEWS AND BEHAVIOUR

As part of the *Blaenau Gwent Retail and Leisure Study - April 2021*, local household were surveyed to establish shopping behaviour and visitors and residents asked about their perceptions of the town centre. Three quarters of those surveyed within the Tredegar catchment area said they visited the town centre at least once a week, with by far the most popular reason being to shop. 90% of all visitors indicated that they shop in Tredegar at least once a month. The bars and pubs were well-used on a monthly basis by both residents and visitors alike, with financial and business services also acting as a draw.

However, it would appear that usage of the town centre does not reflect the perceived quality of the offer, with almost 65% of customers suggesting that the quality of the shops was poor or very poor.

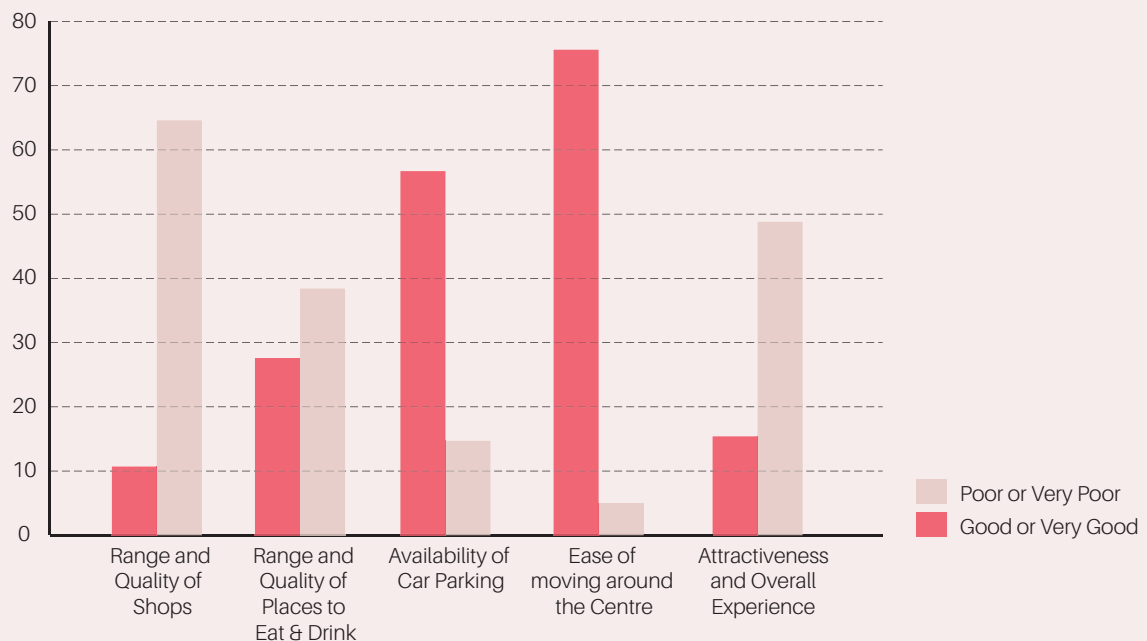
Similarly, far more customers thought that the quality and range of the food and drink establishments was poor and in terms of the overall attractiveness and experience almost half of those questioned thought the offer was poor or very poor, whilst only 15% were of the view it was good or very good. What was liked was the availability of parking and, particularly, the ease of moving around the town centre.

FIG.4 FREQUENCY AND PURPOSE OF VISITS TO TREDEGAR



The disparity between the high local level of usage of the town centre and the poor appreciation of the experience, suggests that there is great potential to improve the mix and the quality of the offer, increasing the number of visits, particularly from wider afield and extend dwell time.

FIG.5 PERCEPTION OF TREDEGAR TOWN CENTRE



TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The linear, elongated town centre of Tredegar runs north/south and is split into two sections. Commercial Street forms the northern section and Castle Street, down to The Circle, forms the southern. The two sections hinge around a busy, highway dominated stretch of Queen Victoria Street, which is a major thoroughfare and junction at the heart of the town. The lack of activity from the buildings around this knuckle, combined with the predominance of traffic, effectively splits the town centre in two.



The major anchor to the northern section of the town centre is the Gwent Shopping Centre, a solid, almost brutal, 1970 construction that straddles Stockton Way, forcing traffic coming into the town into a dark, constrained underpass. This creates a poor, unattractive gateway into the town from the north.



By contrast, the area around The Circle, which pins the southern end of the town centre, forms an attractive townscape, recognised by Conservation Area status and benefitting from substantial recent and on-going investment in properties surrounding The Circle and the lower sections of Castle Street.



With the exception of the central hinge area, the quality and consistency of the streetscape is generally high and both Commercial Street and Castle Street have a strong scale and completeness. Natural stone materials have been used for pavements and crossing, however the street furniture and signage is now looking somewhat heavy and dated.



The qualities and character of Commercial Street are marred by the preponderance of cars and delivery vans. Parking restrictions are in place, but are not adequately enforced. The infrastructure required to restrict the vehicle within the street is in itself a obstruction to ease of movement for the cyclist and pedestrian.

FIG. 6 BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY



APPENDIX 3

THEMES & STRATEGIES

SUSTAINABILITY

THE EXISTING CONTEXT

In September 2020, Blaenau Gwent declared a 'Climate Emergency' after councillors voted unanimously to work towards making the borough council carbon neutral by 2030. With a focus on addressing the carbon footprint of the council as an organisation, measures would include:

- Systematically reviewing the climate change impact of each area of the Council's activities;
- increasing local resilience to climate impacts already in the system;
- Maximising local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as health, agriculture, transport and the economy;
- Supporting, and with all other relevant agencies, moving towards making the borough Zero Carbon over the next decade.

Beyond looking at the immediate corporate impacts, other actions for consideration, that support the Welsh Government's ambitions captured in their plan 'Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales', could include:

- increasing the efficiency of buildings;
- prioritising these measures for council housing and private sector housing;
- addressing fuel poverty;
- building solar, hydro and other renewable energy generating and storage plant;
- requiring all new housing and commercial developments to be low carbon;
- replacing the vehicle fleet with electric and/or hydrogen powered vehicles;
- switching to 100% fossil-fuel-free energy and adapting the council's purchasing policy;
- commissioning consultations with the borough's young citizens, who will be most affected by the effects of climate change.

Bold actions are required to achieve this ambition. As a town, through its existing potentialities and with the opportunities and capacity to effect change, Tredegar has a clear role to play in reaching this goal and in setting a precedent for future sustainable development within the borough and Valleys region.

THE 20 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD - AN HOLISTIC APPROACH

Neighbourhood is state of mind, it is not a physical place.

In order to shape the future of Tredegar and ensure it evolves in a sustainable way, it is necessary to think of it in the round, avoiding cherry-picking and imposing individual green actions and initiatives. As with any town, city or community, it is the special and unique circumstances of Tredegar’s social and physical evolution that must play their part in building its future.

The concept of the 20 Minute Neighbourhood, grounded in an understanding of the forces that have formed the community, provides an outline of the principles and approaches that should be taken to ensure sustainability is fundamental to the transformation of Tredegar. Commitment to the concept of the 20 Minute Neighbourhood is becoming firmly established in national planning thinking, although not yet embedded in policy. The Commissioner for Wales recommended in Chapter 3 of the Future Generations 2020 report that in order to support and encourage cohesive communities, the Welsh Government should “commit to introducing the 20 minute neighbourhood concept for all towns and cities in Wales; creating healthier, happier communities fit for a zero carbon future. This means strong, well-connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services, and prioritising mix-type development which combines housing, transport links, public services, workplaces and recreational facilities.”



Tredegar is ideally suited to this approach and the key tenets that underpin the 20 Minute Neighbourhood concept and outlined within the Future Generations report, effectively underpin this Placemaking Plan. The compactness of the town, proximities of residential areas to shops, facilities and services, the location of transport facilities and access to open space would all fit within the parameters of the 20 Minute Neighbourhood. However, this doesn’t mean that Tredegar is currently functioning as a 20 minute neighbourhood and it is through adopting an holistic approach around these principles and then achieving the quality and culture that is required that drives change. Neighbourhood is a state of mind, it is not a physical place, so to achieve this requires the plan to be people-centred and developed with and for the stakeholders within the community.

Any development proposals, therefore, will be expected to incorporate sustainable approaches with regard to the following topics:

- Buildings
- Energy
- Transport
- Green and blue infrastructure
- Lifestyle, health and well-being

SUSTAINABILITY

BUILDINGS - ADAPTIVE REUSE

- First look to reuse and retrofitting of existing building stock
- Build in adaptability and longevity to any new development
- Reduced energy need
- Adopt modern methods of construction - eg offsite/modular
- Incorporate smart technology
- Improve biodiversity - green walls, green roofs
- Enhanced access to open space (lessons from pandemic in terms of private and semi-private outdoor space within residential development)



Adaptive reuse to create coworking spaces, Palermo

TRANSPORT

- Proposals must adopt Council Active Travel policy, providing well-designed streets and secure cycle parking, building in improved cycle and pedestrian routes and furthering 20 Minute Neighbourhood principles
- Tie into and develop Regional Metro plans, including an improved bus station provision
- Develop a cycle hub adjacent to bus station and as a node on the active travel network.
- Development must address and respond to the Council's Climate Emergency goals
- Rationalise surface car parking to promote active travel whilst accommodating necessary car users of the town centre
- Make provision for increased use of electric vehicles through the locating of electric charging points



Edmonton Green Cycle Hub

ENERGY

- River Sirhowy hydro scheme
- Use of PVs on shopping centre
- Use of PVs around bus/cycle hub
- Encourage sustainable procurement, targeting low or zero carbon energy generating technologies



Energy Positive Housing at Active Homes, Neath

SUSTAINABILITY

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- This refers to the use of trees and vegetation in combination with permeable hard surfaces to capture, infiltrate, and clean stormwater. Beyond stormwater management, green infrastructure also provides significant additional benefits including air cooling and cleaning, reduced building energy use through shading, air cooling through evapotranspiration, enhanced aesthetics, and public health benefits.
- The key design and planning elements of this nature-based approach should include the following:
 - Accepting the need for hard surfaces and footpaths, plant more and pave less! Then support by healthy soils, and include bio-swales and rain gardens.
 - Maximise use of green (vegetated) roofs for stormwater capture and air cooling/cleaning benefits.
 - Maximise use of porous pavement technologies to support natural hydrology.
 - Use attenuation for capturing and enabling reuse of excess stormwater for irrigation, etc.
- Preserve and enhance the tree canopy. Tree canopy cover directly correlates to reduced urban heat island effects, creating a much more comfortable outdoor living environment and reducing emissions from internal cooling. Tree cover is also strongly linked with air quality improvements that improve public health outcomes. For example, create meanwhile woodland planting on the business park. This would be cut into as necessary, as development is brought forward, but a setting is created.
- Develop wetland and riparian planting to Sirhowy river corridor
- Rainwater management - incorporate swales, rain gardens, tree planting, green roofs, ponds and permeable paving
- Improve biodiversity - green roofs, living walls, allotments, communal gardens, meanwhile open spaces
- Explore opportunities for new street trees provision



Planted green wall, humanising a tall narrow space



Raingarden and swale

LIFESTYLE - HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Promote and improve access to Tredegar Sports Centre, Aneurin Leisure.
- Encourage/develop regular Farmer's Market
- Expanded opportunity to grow your own - develop allotments and communal growing areas to west of town centre, and within longer term residential sites and within area of skateboard park.
- Connection to open spaces, cycle and walking routes
- Encourage healthy environments for all ages, particularly encouraging children to establish and develop healthy and sustainable habits



Active Travel

LAND USE

THE EXISTING CONTEXT

Across the UK the impact of Covid-19 has been to accelerate long-standing trends in most markets, this has included the:

- accelerated decline of retail in our town centres, most noticeably for discretionary retailers;
- demand for more flexible employment space including co-working (which potentially increases demand in peripheral town centres as hubs for enterprise and start ups); and
- demand for home working, with higher quality, larger, but town centre focused residential properties with access to a range of amenities (further promoting strategies embodied in the 20 Minute Neighbourhood).

KEY PRINCIPLES

RETAIL

Concentrate on measures within the shopping environment of Commercial Street and Gwent Shopping Centre to generate footfall and improve dwell time. Retain and support existing retailers, including during periods of construction or refurbishment.

COMMERCIAL

Further examination of the potential to develop new and existing industries (pharma in particular) on the business park, links to visitor and leisure economy, heritage/ business tourism.

RESIDENTIAL

Need to understand and apply the potential for residential, both private and social, to become a component of the Gwent Shopping Centre site, but also the repair of the area between Castle Street and the business park. Increasingly, gaps are appearing within this area and the key to supporting 20 minute neighbourhoods is maintaining size and density. Compact settlement patterns of sufficient size can reduce the distances between home, jobs, facilities and amenities and make more effective use of transport infrastructure. They also provide sufficient critical mass of population to support local services, reduce landtake to provide space for blue/green infrastructure lead to reduced transport emissions, better public health and greater social interaction.

HOTEL

Of the Valley towns, Tredegar is possibly the most well-served in terms of accommodation, but does it cater for and enable the ambitions of the Visitor Management Plan to be realised?

ARTS, CULTURE AND LEISURE

Culture and heritage underpins much of the destination and tourism proposals, based on Tredegar's unique legacy of heritage and cultural assets, which are, perhaps, best embedded and presented of the towns within the region. These activities are a special driver of character which typifies Tredegar and offers potential for further concentration of cultural, artistic and recreational uses that will bring a daytime and evening presence into the town. By clustering these uses, there is an opportunity to create an environment where existing and new cultural assets can collaborate on activities and projects. The programme should facilitate this greater alignment within the cultural, artistic and recreational sectors, and land uses that accord with this principle will be supported.

TRANSPORT AND PARKING

A balance is required as the move to active travel modes is pursued, to ensure that there is adequate parking provision and access for the car to support the various economies in the town. This balance point should continue to shift, as public transport facilities and active travel infrastructure and culture increases. Our view is that this balance is too far skewed towards the vehicle at the moment, with streets dominated by car movements and parking. Areas of car parking should also be treated as flexible, to permit temporary uses and functions and attractions to flourish, for example, markets, fairs and festivals.

LAND USE

THE STRATEGY

The fundamental disposition of land uses within the town is historically grounded, well-established and fits nicely with the market demand, and the existing qualities and characteristics of each area - the urban grain, topography, heritage assets and building footprints. It is the finer grain that needs examining, where the proposed richer, mixed use approach is essential, with the overall aim of creating active and attractive ground floors - retail, commercial, food and drink, with residential above, and/or a mix of education, community, mixed with commercial. This generates footfall and passive surveillance with an improved sense of personal security.

To support this finer grain mix of uses, and potential for increased footfall, the streets and public realm need to respond providing greater space and invitation for cycling, walking, social interaction and flexible activities such as markets, fairs, festivals and events.

Certain areas of the town have been identified for particular attention:

GWENT SHOPPING CENTRE

The shopping centre forms to core of the Primary Retail Area and anchors the northern end of the town centre. The healthcheck has identified the struggling nature of the retail offer and the area needs a new lease of life and energy, in keeping with the overall strategy. Opportunities exist to create a new mix of uses, retaining retail, but permitting residential, community uses and workspaces to enhance the appeal and attraction of this key element.

CHURCH SQUARE

The area in front of Castle Street Church is a key connecting space between the two main areas of the high Street (Commercial Street and Castle Street) and needs uses that bring life and activity, whilst accepting it will continue to enable traffic to move through the town from north to south and east to west. The existing buildings would be retained, but need charging with uses that contribute to activity within new civic spaces.

CORONATION STREET/IRON ROW

The gap-toothed, neglected nature of this area, immediately to the rear of Castle Street, needs addressing either through strategic retreat or, preferably, residential-based mixed use. The relocation and potential redevelopment of the Glan yr Afon Surgery and restoration of elements of the adjacent historic Truck Shop, present opportunities to pin the southern end of this redevelopment strip. Development in this area could take time and meanwhile uses, for example, allotments and temporary open spaces, should be considered.

TREDEGAR BUSINESS PARK

With current post-pandemic demand for industrial, warehouse and distribution space, the temptation is to increase the use classes permitted on the business park. However, the opportunities to build on the recent arrival of a pharmaceutical business onto the park in terms of growth and employment opportunity, combined with the alignment of such uses with the destination and tourism plan for health-based conferencing and business tourism, should firstly be developed. The creation of a new access to the south of the business park would hopefully open up this area and build on the momentum.

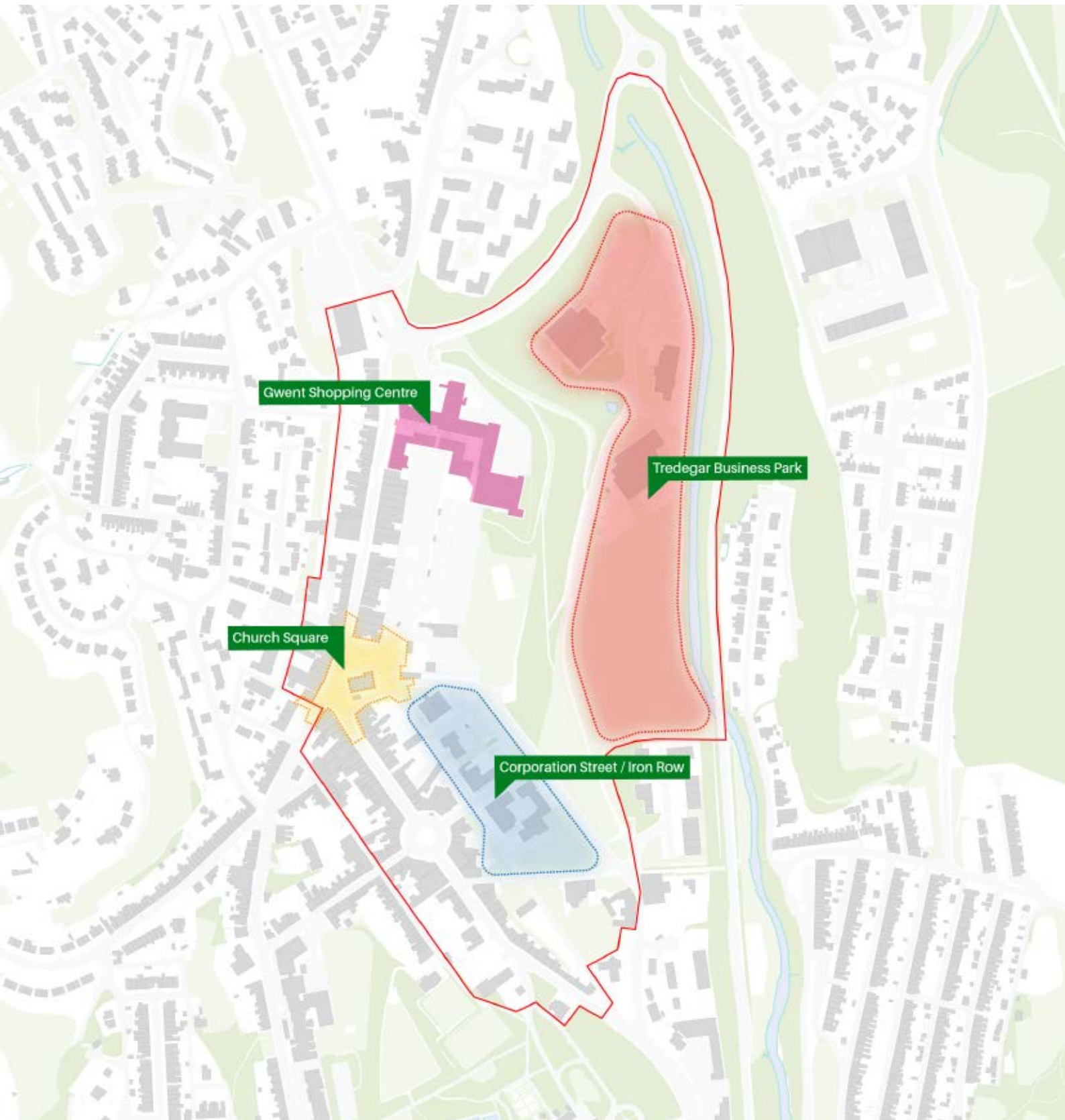


FIG. 17 LAND USE KEY AREAS

MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY

THE EXISTING CONTEXT

The car, and the perceived need for an immediacy of parking to the front of shops and premises, currently drives the movement patterns and vehicular dominance around the town. The historic street pattern is still fit for purpose, but the balance of space allocated for pedestrians, cyclist and vehicles need overhauling and turning on its head.

The underpass at the Gwent Shopping Centre prevents regional buses from accessing the town centre and interchanging with the local services, and also presents an uninviting entrance to the town for the pedestrian, cyclist and motorist.

Apart from access at either end and the connection to the Gwent Shopping Centre, Commercial Street has only one other point of connection and access. This is a crossing point centrally along the street providing access eastward to Stockton Way and the car park and westward to the residential estate. A small public seating area is located at this intersection.

The central hinge between Commercial Street and Castle Street, where Queen Victoria Street cuts through to Stockton Way, is traffic dominated and stifles continuity along the main spine of the town.

There is currently no easy, or sense of, connection between the town centre and the river and the business park also seems remote and disconnected from the town.

KEY PRINCIPLES

RETAIN THE HISTORIC STREET PATTERN

The primacy and strong spine of the historic route through the town centre from Commercial Street onto Castle Street, through The Circle and onto Bedwellty Park would be reinforced and form the basis of the movement patterns within the town.

SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE STREETS FOR ALL

We will promote footfall, activity and dwell time within the streets for all groups within the community. Encouraging Promoting the night time economy should retain a sense of safe streets.

OVERCOME THE CHOKE OF THE UNDERPASS AT THE GWENT SHOPPING CENTRE

Future development of the Gwent Shopping Centre must address the visual and physical issues around the underpass, permitting successful regional and local bus interchange within the town and a welcoming entry for the visitor to the town.

IMPROVE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE TOWN CENTRE, BUSINESS PARK AND RIVER

The disconnections between the town centre, the business park and the river need repairing, to foster movement between the various areas and a sense of communality. These connections would be active travel modes with improved and safe pedestrian and cycle routes. As well as providing amenity for the resident, this would also bring further visitors into the town, with enhancements to the river corridor as a regional cycle and pedestrian route,

PROMOTE ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES INTO AND AROUND THE TOWN CENTRE

A key component of a move to a 20 Minute Neighbourhood is the establishment and encouragement of active travel on safe and secure pedestrian and cycle routes. These should look to connect to the regional network of trails and thereby extend local, amenity routes around the town, to feed into longer recreational travel around the county.

MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY

MOVEMENT STRATEGY

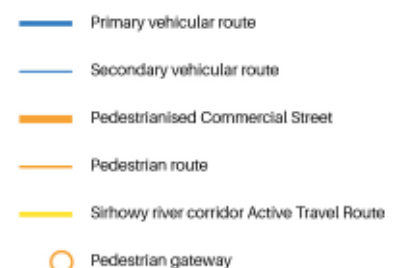
VEHICULAR

- Building on the opportunities presented by the Metro Scheme, promote and improve local bus connections, visitor and leisure use. Creating a consolidated bus interchange on Stockton Way.
- In the longer term, Commercial Street becomes closed to vehicular traffic (excepting servicing and access). Initially, this would most probably be trialled to coincide with the regeneration of the shopping centre and markets/events/festivals to promote footfall.
- New traffic arrangements to Lidl northern gateway junction; Commercial Street/Queen Victoria Street junction allowing improved pedestrian and cycle connection between Commercial Street and Castle Street.
- Once space is created by the regeneration and repurposing of the Truck Shop, create a new southern entrance to the business park.

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST

- Create an integrated network of safe cycle and pedestrian routes
 - Strengthen the link to Georgetown via A4048 underpass/Bridge Street to the town centre
 - River Corridor including seating/rest areas with river overview with connections to the wider network
 - Ty Bryn to bus station and onto the business park and river, via Commercial Street open space
 - Market Street/The Circle/Iron Street and on into the business park and river corridor
 - National Cycle Route 467 - create river corridor and town centre options.
- Establish an Active Travel hub at the new bus interchange, with cycle storage, hire and repair facilities.
- Provide and designate space for the cyclist and pedestrian along road and street corridors.
- Provide information online, at bus station/cycle hub, civic buildings and tourist destinations on the cycle and pedestrian network.

FIG. 18
PROPOSED MOVEMENT KEY



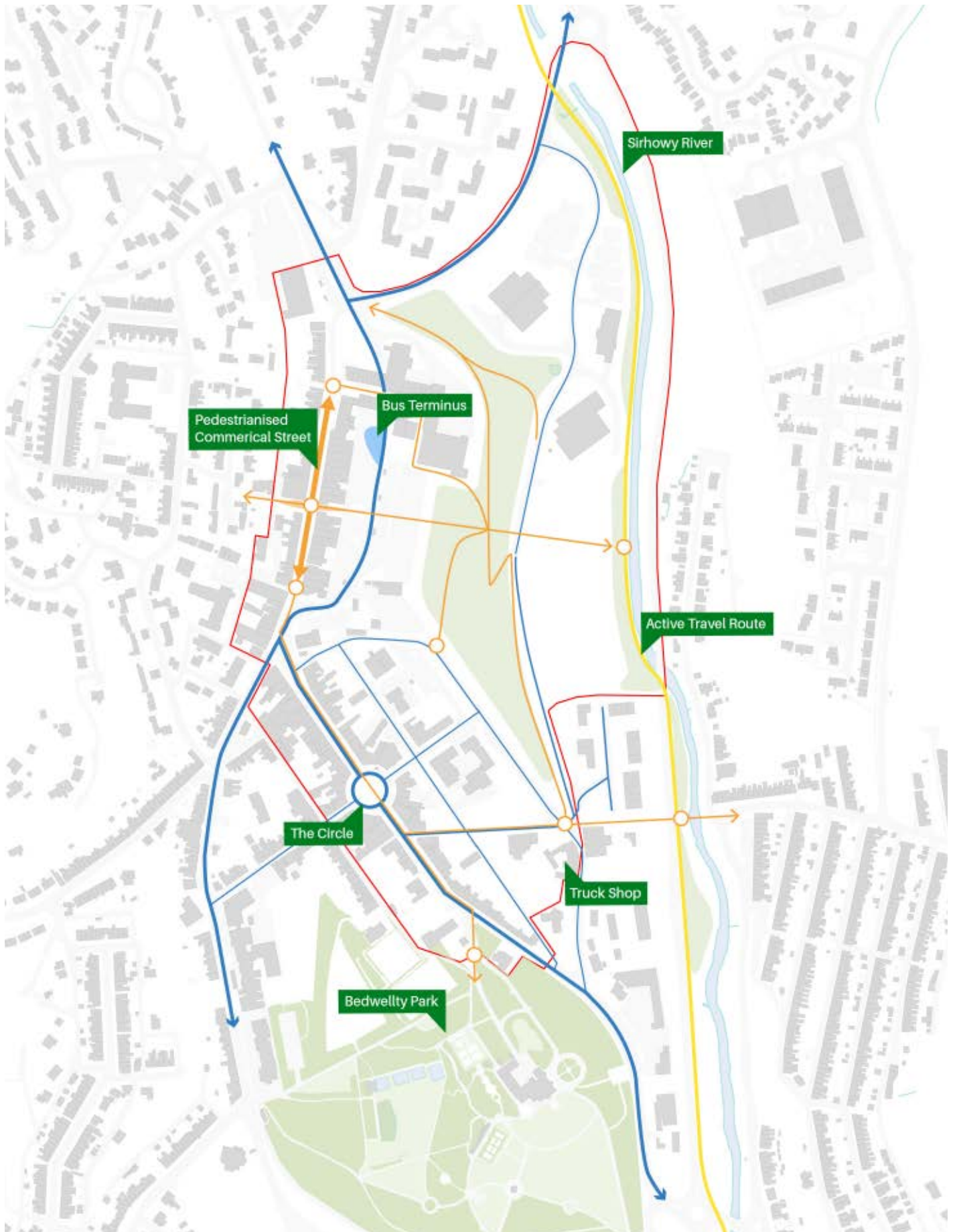


FIG. 18 PROPOSED MOVEMENT

THE PUBLIC REALM

THE EXISTING CONTEXT

Bedwellty Park is a wonderful amenity for the town, but is peripheral to the town centre and does not function as a civic space as such. There is little real successful civic space within the town, where people can gather, celebrate or casually meet. Most areas of hard open space are given over to car parking.

There is public open space within the courtyards within the shopping centre. However, this is tired and neglected and being enclosed by vacant properties with no outlook, of little invitation to the pedestrian to linger. Similarly, the two small open spaces either side of Commercial Street, where the footpath between Ty Bryn and the car park cuts through, are ideally located, but again, suffer from neglect, a lack of pedestrian activity on Commercial Street and no interaction or active frontages from and with the enclosing properties. Particularly to the east of Commercial Street the small pocket park is slightly daunting.

KEY PRINCIPLES

IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO SECTIONS OF THE MAIN TOWN SPINE

The pedestrian realm has a key role to play in reuniting the two arms of the town centre spine - Commercial Street and Castle Street, bridging the disconnect currently caused by the highway dominance.

CREATE A SEQUENCE AND HIERARCHY OF PUBLIC SPACES

The overall aim is to dramatically improve the invitation to the pedestrian and cyclist to populate, tarry and enjoy the experience of being within the public realm of the town centre. A sequence and hierarchy of public spaces would provide connectivity and legibility, from small courtyard spaces and pocket parks spilling out from cafes and retail, to play parks and green spaces. They should be sequences on the active travel routes.



Light installation for safety and interest

CREATE SAFE, ACTIVE SPACES

Public spaces need to feel and be safe places to stay. They should be overlooked by adjoining properties and streets and preferable adjacent to active frontages that provide a positive interaction with the space. Lighting is important to provide a sense of personal security, whilst retaining the welcome and attraction.

INCORPORATE BLUE/GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Well designed and engineered drainage and planting infrastructure can become a positive component of the public realm, with planted raingardens, swales and open channels enlivening the experience of the outdoor spaces and extending knowledge of natural systems.

COMMUNITY AND MEANWHILE SPACES

Community spaces provide valuable opportunities for new and existing residents and visitors to the town to meet and mingle. Development proposals on particularly the Gwent Shopping Centre and Coronation Street/Iron Row area will be expected to provide for the provision of open spaces for community use to encourage interaction and neighbourliness.

These spaces should be designed to incorporate and encourage play for all ages, as well as facilitate pop-up community events. They must be safe, overlooked and activated by surrounding land uses. Some of these spaces might be temporary in nature, awaiting the later phases of development.

Proposals must also incorporate sustainable urban drainage features as an integral design component. Community Spaces have the potential for allotments and community growing (for example community orchards).

THE PUBLIC REALM

THE STRATEGY

The strategy for the public realm open spaces is to work in conjunction with the streets, cycle and pedestrian routes to create a continuity within the public realm that allows and ease of movement around the town, with a variety of open spaces of differing scales, character and uses. Public spaces would be located where people would naturally seek to gather and in relationship with key buildings and functions within the town, namely:

- Gateways
- Intersections
- Open Spaces
- River Corridor



Pedestrianisation of Waltham Forest

CULTURE & HERITAGE

THE EXISTING CONTEXT

The area of the town centred on The Circle falls within the Tredegar Southern Town Centre Conservation Area. It is contiguous with the Bedwellty Park and Gardens Conservation Area to the south, and extends northward to include the Castle Street Church and properties opposite. The two Conservation Areas in Tredegar are the only such designated areas in Blaenau Gwent and indicate the richness of the historic evolution of the town and the importance of heritage to the offer and attraction of Tredegar.

The urban grain, the planned arrangement of streets and spaces of Tredegar, are as much a defining element of the town as are the buildings themselves. The central spine is still relatively complete, although there are a number of vacant buildings and buildings in disrepair. However, away from the central spine the enclosure of the streets is somewhat haphazard, with numerous gap sites diluting the strength of the built structure. The topography of the town lends some exciting views over the valley and the business park and down Castle Street from Castle Street Church to The Circle.

The UK Government report *People, Place, Culture* explores the relationship between people and their environment, highlighting the important role regeneration can play in nurturing and growing the level of cultural engagement communities have with their space. 'Cultural identity is strongly tied in with a person's sense of engagement, belonging, understanding and appreciation of their 'place' ... What is local and unique has a special value and should be supported and encouraged'.

This is, in simple terms, what placemaking is all about: 'capitalising on a community's unique assets, inspiration and potential with the intention of creating public spaces, places, events and activities that promote people's health, happiness and wellbeing.'

Telling the story of Tredegar is improving with numerous printed and online descriptions of the heritage assets of the town and its evolution, with Heritage Trails available to follow and OCR locations around the town.

The stories are important, as there is tremendous interest in the industrial heritage of the Valleys and the spreading of the technologies and products worldwide. There is also great interest and potential in the role of the town and Aneurin Bevan in the founding of the National Health Service, with health and pharmaceutical companies seeing a link with the location that could result in business tourism.

KEY PRINCIPLES

REVEAL AND INFORM

Take every opportunity to tell the story, through the retention and restoration of historic buildings and spaces and in their detail. But importantly, enable engaging interaction of heritage with the community, through repurposing buildings and information.

Digital placemaking can help transform regeneration projects into more than the sum of their parts: environments rich in historical meaning, but also in economic and social opportunity. So continue to develop digital placemaking experiences that truly engage the visitor and stakeholder communities.

RELATE TREDEGAR'S HISTORY TO THE CURRENT CONTEXT AND DRIVE THE ECONOMY

Heritage-focused placemaking schemes express and serve the needs of a wide range of stakeholder communities, by helping those communities forge a deeper connection to their shared past, and a greater sense of belonging in the present. Placemaking, therefore, creates social value, by building spaces where people want to live, work and play. This, in turn, creates economic value, by creating a need for local services and businesses. Placemaking and heritage are therefore key strategic assets we should bind together in our regeneration projects.

EMBRACE HERITAGE IN ALL ASPECTS OF DESIGN

Tredegar needs to move forward, exhibiting the best of contemporary design in its public spaces and buildings. However, these should be respectful of the scale, textures and detail of its heritage - rooted, but not stuck in the past.

THE STRATEGY

INFORMING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The proposal to wrap the heritage of the town into the Placemaking Plan is based on the layering of the various heritage components, which collectively form the distinctive identity and spirit of the town. These components can be broadly categorised as:

- Heritage buildings
- The urban form
- The topography
- Details and materiality

HERITAGE BUILDINGS

There are a variety of listed heritage structures and buildings within the town, mainly emerging from the industrial heritage of the 19th century, with many associated with Bedwelty Park and Gardens. The buildings and structures are of varying heritage significance, but collectively add to the character and distinctiveness of the town and are a strong, visible reminder of the past, whilst assisting in telling the story going forward.

The Clock Tower in the centre of The Circle, for example, is the iconic landmark of the town and a ready and distinct symbol.

Listed Buildings:

01. Bedwelty House
02. Ice House to NW of Bedwelty House
03. Great Exhibition Lump of Coal at Bedwelty Park
04. Bandstand at Bedwelty Park
05. War Memorial at Bedwelty Park
06. Former Tredegar Company Shop
07. Saron Congregational Chapel, including attached schoolroom
08. Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, including schoolroom
09. N.C.B. Club
10. The Town Clock
11. Christina Louise Nursing Home
12. St George's Church

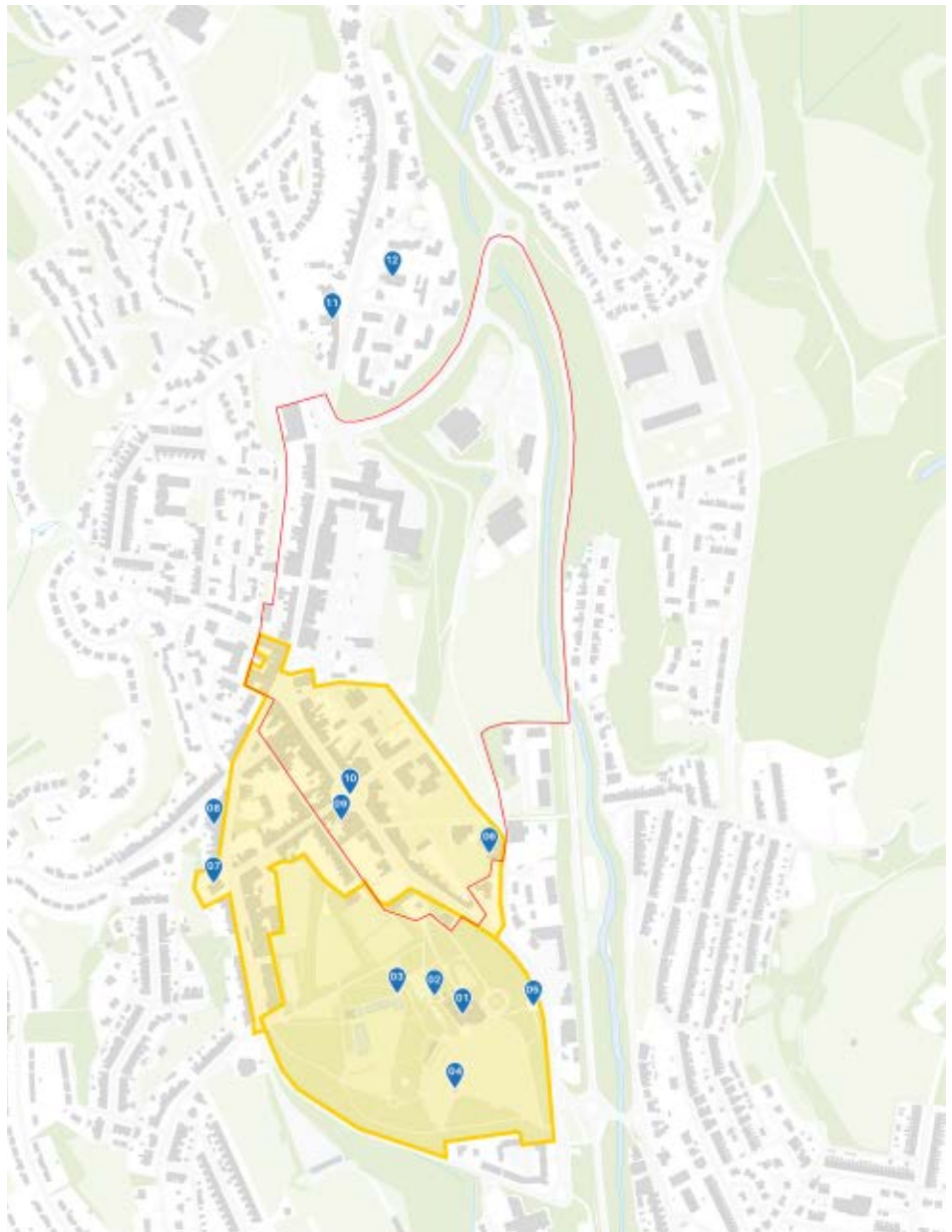


FIG. 19 CONSERVATION AREAS AND LISTED BUILDINGS

THE URBAN FORM

The historic, planned urban form would be preserved and repaired, with particular attention strengthening the west/east town axis between Saron Chapel, along Market Street, through The Circle and along Iron Street to the business park. Linked to this, the built structure evident in the 1888-1913 OS plan around the eastern side of the town bounded by Iron Row would also be renewed. Interestingly, this area, although now totally devoid of heritage buildings or historic urban quality is still within the Conservation Area.

Also evident from the Victorian plan is the public space around Castle Street Church, which should be rediscovered and freed from the constraints of the highway and the car, and the importance of the pedestrian route between Georgetown and the town centre running along Bridge Street. The framed views of the listed Olympia cinema (now a Wetherspoon) terminate the view within the town centre and turn the viewer towards the Clock Tower.



THE TOPOGRAPHY

The town was structured around the works area, which in turn, was dictated by the topography of the River Sirhowy valley. In following the existing grain, new development should maximise the potential for views over the valley and the interest that can be achieved within the townscape through carefully articulating changes in level, to move the point of interest and perspective of the observer as they navigate the town.



DETAILS AND MATERIALITY

Not only is there great joy to be had from quality materials and carefully crafted detailing within the public realm, their use can also reinforce local distinctiveness and help to keep local suppliers and crafts alive. The underlying materiality of Tredegar strongly reflects its solid and robust industrial heritage, however, this solidity was often offset and overlaid by a simplicity and lightness of detailing within street furnishing, for example. To a certain extent this contrast and clarity has been lost, with the accretion of 20th century highway infrastructure and signage, and an exercise needs to be undertaken to strip away all superfluous elements and rationalise street signage and furniture.

New street furniture should be kept to a minimum, contemporary, simple, elegant, yet appropriate to context. The last refresh of the urban realm made use of robust, quality natural paving materials, but this would benefit from a visual lift through incorporating detail into drainage channels and changes in paving unit size and textures, and contrasting the weight and mass of the paving and kerbs with a considered use of modern street furniture components. The existing faux historic furnishings result in a heavy, sombre, cluttered appearance.



DRIVING THE VISITOR ECONOMY

Heritage, and building on the tremendous legacy of the historic assets of the town is not only crucial in fostering the sense of identity and pride within the community, but has rightly been identified as a key driver of the visitor economy. The Destination Management and Tourism Plan identifies a number of themes for development as an attractor for the visitor economy:

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Every aspect of Tredegar in its current form, from its physicality to its social structures and community has been founded, influenced or touched by its industrial heritage. This is important not just for the Valleys, but the influence of Welsh industry and production is global and the story is of interest internationally.

NHS AND HEALTHCARE

The role of the town and the influence of the health care facilities provided to the ironworks families on Aneurin Bevan and the formation of the National Health Service are well-known and of tremendous interest to visitors as well as a source of pride and inspiration for local communities. There is also an attraction to pharmaceutical and medical companies proud of their association with the NHS or provision of health-related products or services in creating a link with Tredegar. Stories resonate and even a recently borrowed or acquired history has value and can help foster a shared culture.

The opportunity exists, therefore, not just to attract potential investors in these medical fields, but to take advantage of the other qualities and facilities of the town and the region to establish a business tourism market based on health, well-being and the medical industry.



BEDWELLY HOUSE

Central to both the above strategies, Bedwellty House is not only a fantastic facility and location to contribute to developing and serving the themes, it is redolent with a history of both the industrial heritage and the formation of the NHS, being originally the Ironmaster House and then the council chambers where Aneurin Bevan cut his political teeth.



NATURE AND WELL-BEING

Tredegar sits immediately south of the Brecon Beacons National Park with great access to nature and the myriad opportunities for walking and cycling. The extension and expansion of the active travel routes around the Heads of the Valley region, connecting into the national park, will improve this access network. Similarly, the development of the Metro system will enhance public transport connections around the region, which is a key consideration in planning routes for walking and cycling from a fixed base. Cycle hire and repair facilities developed as part of the regeneration of the Gwent Shopping Centre and linked to a new bus hub, would further reinforce the attraction of Tredegar as a base for outdoor activity and cycling and walking in particular.



Bristol

40 Berkeley Square
Bristol BS8 1HP

+44 (0) 117 239 0500
bristol@austinsmithlord.com

Cardiff

one Dunleavy Drive
Cardiff CF11 0SN

+44 (0) 2920 225 208
cardiff@austinsmithlord.com

Glasgow

25 Bothwell Street
Glasgow G2 6NL

+44 (0) 141 223 8500
glasgow@austinsmithlord.com

Liverpool

Port of Liverpool Building
Pier Head L3 1BY

+44 (0) 151 227 1083
liverpool@austinsmithlord.com

London

154-158 Shoreditch High Street
London E1 6HU

+44 (0) 203 0920 333
london@austinsmithlord.com

www.austinsmithlord.com

Tredegar Town Centre
Place Making Plan
Movement and access appraisal

DRAFT

Transport Vision

October 2022

Applicant: Austin Smith Lord

Project no: T21.118

Document ref no: T21.118

Document issue date: 15th October 2022

Project name: Tredegar Town Centre Regeneration Scheme

Offices at:

Unit 9, Oak Tree Court
Mulberry Drive,
Cardiff Gate Business Park,
Cardiff, CF23 8RS
Tel: 029 2073 2652

Suite D, 1st Floor,
220 High Street,
Swansea,
SA1 1NW
Tel: 01792 480535

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Existing Situation	7
3.0	Identified Transport Challenges	17
4.0	Proposed Transport Improvements	20
5.0	Conclusion	29

Figures

Figure 1.1	Tredegar Town centre Study Area
Figure 2.1	Walk Distance & Walk Time Isochrones
Figure 2.2	National Cycle Network Routes
Figure 2.3	Bus Interchange Location
Figure 2.4	Personal Injury Collision Plot
Figure 4.1	Wayfinding Examples
Figure 4.2	Potential Active Travel Route
Figure 4.3	Proposed Metro Routes
Figure 4.4	Proposed Southern Business Park Access

Appendices

Appendix A	Personal Injury Collision Data
-------------------	--------------------------------

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Asbri Transport Limited have been instructed by Austin Smith Lord to produce a supporting document for the regeneration place making plan for Tredegar. The Plan will identify and facilitate future regeneration activity within the study area that focuses in and around Tredegar Town Centre, Blaenau Gwent, South Wales. Tredegar Town Centre is located on the banks of the Sirhowy River in the county borough of Blaenau Gwent, in the south-east of Wales.

1.1.2 The Place Making Plan is intended to inform and influence future strategic decision making for regeneration activity within the study area and to act as an evidence base to support Blaenau Gwent CBC with external funding applications.

1.1.3 Sites covered by the study will include the Commercial Street and Castle Street conservation area, Gwent Shopping Centre, Tredegar Business Park, and key transport hubs.

1.1.4 The extent of the study area is indicated in **Figure 1.1**.



Figure 1.1: Tredegar Town Centre Study Area

- 1.1.5 This report will explore how current transport modes including pedestrian, cyclists, car, bus, taxi and integrated regional on-demand transport interact with Tredegar town centre and its strategic sites and how these can be improved.
- 1.1.6 The 2011 Census identified a significant percentage of households in Blaenau Gwent do not own a car or van at 29% which is above the Wales average of 22.9%. Having a multi-modal transport system which does not depend on personal car travel will provide all residents with access to travel enabling them to access employment, education and other key services.
- 1.1.7 The current Local Development Plan refers to the town centre as a District transport hub within Blaenau Gwent. A key element of the LDP strategy is to improve connectivity between Ebbw Vale and the district hubs of Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery.
- 1.1.8 This report explores how all current transport modes interact with Tredegar town centre. In addition, it references the South Wales Metro and how this major transport infrastructure project will benefit the town.

1.2 National Transport Priorities

Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy 2021

- 1.2.1 Llwybr Newydd sets out a vision for how our transport system can deliver priorities for Wales, helping to put us on a pathway to creating a more prosperous, green and equal society.
- 1.2.2 The Transport Strategy aims to bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel and notes that ‘if more people can walk and cycle for everyday trips, we will reduce our dependency on cars.’
- 1.2.3 It sets a long-term direction and three urgent and immediate priorities:
- **Priority 1** – Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel;

- **Priority 2:** Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure; and,
- **Priority 3:** Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport

1.2.4 The thrust of Llwybr Newydd is to achieve a shift away from private car use to more sustainable transport modes for the majority of journeys. Investment will be promoted into low-carbon, accessible, efficient and sustainable transport services and infrastructure that enable more people to walk, cycle and use public transport, and low-emissions vehicles.

1.2.5 Where there is a need for new transport infrastructure, the sustainable transport hierarchy should be considered to give priority to meeting the demand for travel by walking, cycling and public transport ahead of private motor vehicles.

1.2.6 The transport planning recommendation detailed in this report have been informed by the content of Llwybr Newydd and in particular the three headline priorities of the Wales National Transport Strategy.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

1.2.7 Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 is a national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

1.2.8 To breathe new life into town centres, the Welsh Government has adopted a ‘Town Centre First’ approach. This puts the health and vibrancy of town centres as the starting point of locational decision-making. It also directs facilities and services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them.

- 1.2.9 It is important that developments serving a town, city or region-wide catchment are well served by active travel infrastructure and public transport. Ideally this will be utilising existing public transport facilities, but can be achieved through improvements to services or the creation of a new bus route or train station.

Policy 11 – National Connectivity

- 1.2.10 Policy 11 of the National Plan sets out to support the delivery of the following measures to improve national connectivity:

- “Rail Network – Transform the rail network and improve the quality of rail services for passengers.
- Bus Network – Invest in the development of the national bus network, fully integrated with regional and local bus networks, to increase modal share of bus travel and improve access by bus to a wider range of trip destinations.
- Strategic Road Network – Invest in road improvements to reduce journey times, deliver a safer and more resilient road network, and improve air and noise quality.
- Create a network of rapid-charging points to enable longer distance travel by electric vehicles throughout Wales.
- National Cycle Network – Revitalise the National Cycle Network to create a network of traffic-free paths connecting cities, towns and countryside across Wales.
- Planning authorities should support developments associated with improvements to national connectivity and, where appropriate, maximise the opportunities that arise from them.”

Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity

1.2.11 In rural areas, the Welsh Government’s priorities are supporting the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles and diversifying and sustaining local bus services.

1.2.12 The Welsh Government will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities, operators and partners to deliver the following measures to improve regional connectivity:

- Active Travel – Prioritising walking and cycling for all local travel. We will support the implementation of the Active Travel Act to create comprehensive networks of local walking and cycling routes that connect places that people need to get to for everyday purposes.
- Bus – Improve the legislative framework for how local bus services are planned and delivered. We will invest in the development of integrated regional and local bus networks to increase modal share of bus travel and improve access by bus to a wider range of trip destinations.
- Metros – Develop the South East Metro, South West Metro and North Wales Metro. We will create new integrated transport systems that provide faster, more frequent and joined-up services using trains, buses and light rail.
- Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles – Support the roll-out of suitable fuelling infrastructure to facilitate the adoption of ultra-low emission vehicles, particularly in rural areas.

Bus Emergency Scheme 2

1.2.13 The ‘Bus Emergency Scheme (BES) 2’ is an agreement between bus operators, local authorities, Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government and provides the basis of partnership working to deliver better services.

1.2.14 BES2 will ensure the support provided to bus operators is more closely aligned with Llwybr Newydd, the Welsh Government’s new transport strategy. It will set the foundation for the more detailed National Bus Strategy which will be prepared to support Llwybr Newydd and will set out the Welsh Government’s plans for further reform of the bus industry.

1.3 Local Transport Priorities

South Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan 2015-2020

1.3.1 The five South East Wales Valleys local authorities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen have jointly developed this Local Transport Plan (LTP).

1.3.2 The vision of the South Wales Valleys LTP is to provide “A modern, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system for the SE Wales Valleys and beyond which increases opportunity, promotes prosperity for all and protects the environment; where walking, cycling, public transport and sustainable freight provide real travel alternatives.”

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Local Development Plan up to 2021

1.3.3 Bleanau Gwent CBC adopted their Local Development Plan (LDP) in November 2012.

2.0 EXISTING SITUATION

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section of the report describes the existing transport network and conditions within Tredegar Town centre and outlined study area.

2.2 Highway Network

Commercial Street

2.2.1 Commercial Street comprises of the main retail area of Tredegar Town Centre. Commercial Street provides pedestrian access to Gwent Shopping Centre along with other retail and commercial uses along its length.

2.2.2 It is a one-way single carriageway street with traffic travelling north-bound from Queen Victoria Street to the south. Parking restrictions are in place along its length in the form of double yellow lines and speed calming measures are in place in the form of speed tables.

2.2.3 Loading only bays are located at several points along Commercial Street along with allocated disabled parking bays.

2.2.4 Footways are provided along both sides of the carriageway ranging in width from between 2m to 3m. The street is lit and public seating in the form of benches are dotted along the length of Commercial Street.

2.2.5 Commercial Street is lined with metal bollards preventing any parking on the footway, aside from the footway located at designated loading bays and disabled bays.

Castle Street

2.2.6 Castle Street, formally known as the B4526 is a two-way single carriageway road which forms a roundabout junction with The Circ to the south. To the north, Castel Street merges with Queen Victoria Street.

2.2.7 The retail core of Commercial Street extends down Castle Street which is lined with retail and commercial units, some of which are vacant. On street car parking is provided along both sides of the carriageway and is restricted between Monday – Saturday, 8am – 6pm for 1 hour, no return within 2 hours. Double yellow lines are also in place outside of the designated parking areas.

2.2.8 Footways and street lighting are provided along both sides of Castle Street and a designated signalised pedestrian crossing is located mid-way up the street, approximately 50m to the north of The Circ.

Upper Salisbury Street

2.2.9 Upper Salisbury Street forms a narrow two-way single carriageway which forms a simple priority junction with Queen Victoria Street to the north east and Market Street and Lower Salisbury Street to the south. The street is lined with some residential properties and also provides rear access to car parking for the properties which front onto Castle Street.

2.2.10 Parking is restricted along the length of Upper Salisbury Street. Narrow footways are provided along both sides of the carriageway and street lighting is present. No crossing provision is provided.

2.3 Active Travel Routes

2.4 Walking

2.4.1 The CIHT guidance ‘Providing for Journeys on Foot’ (2000) sets out desirable, acceptable and preferred maximum walking distances for different trip purposes. These are set out in **Table 2.1**.

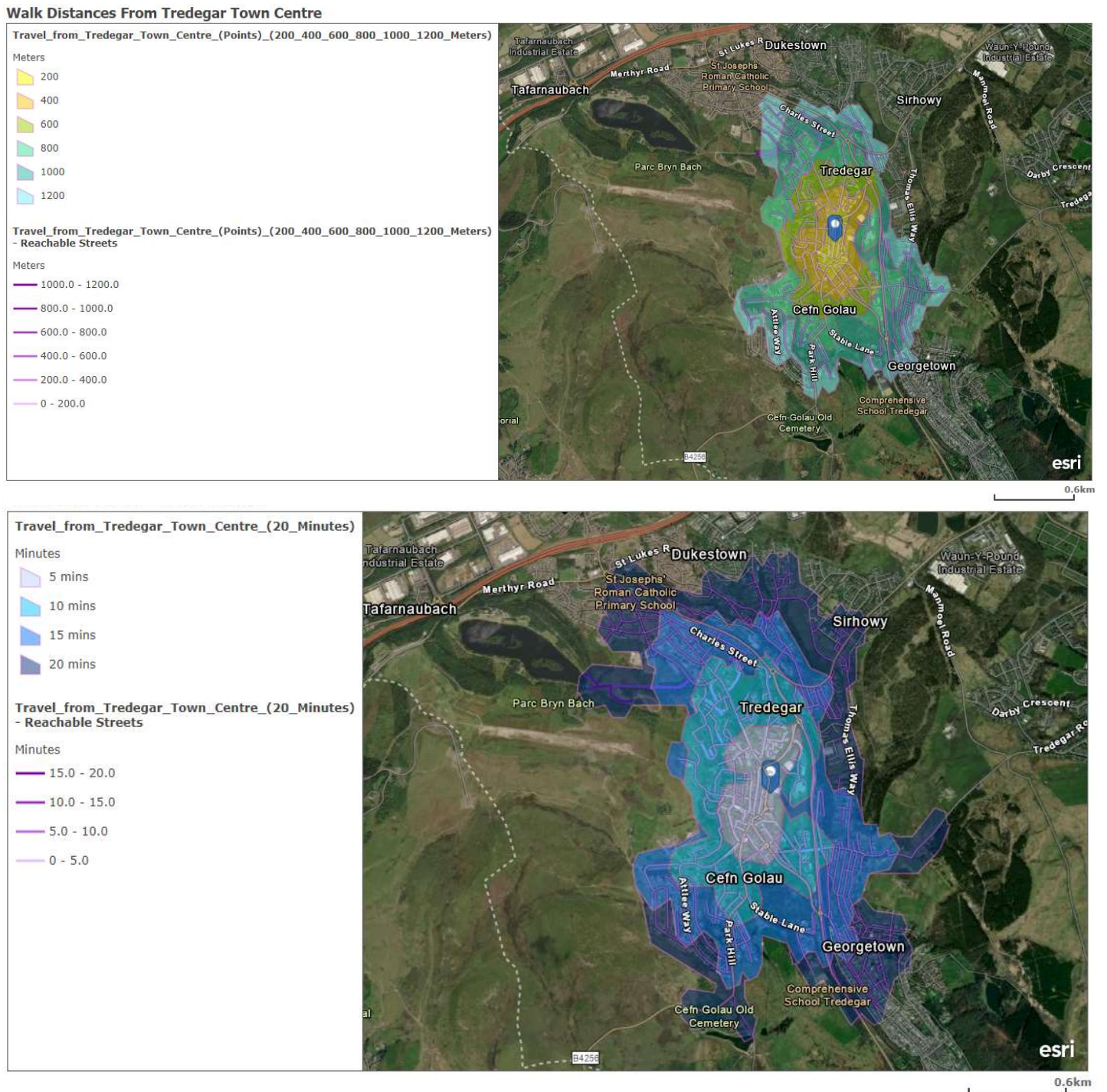
	Town Centre (m)	Commuting/school(m)	Elsewhere (m)
Desirable	200	500	400
Acceptable	400	1000	800
Maximum	800	2000	1200

Table 2.1: CIHT suggested acceptable walking distances

2.4.2 Research undertaken by WYG published in Local Transport Today edition 13th – 26th October 2017 states the following:

‘Our other research on walking distances to public transport stops has shown the mean walking distance to a bus stop is 580m and 810m the 85th percentile, notably longer than CIHT’s 400m maximum distance. The average walking distance to a railway station is 1,000m and 1,600m is the 85th percentile, again notably longer than CIHT’s guidance of 800m.’

2.4.3 **Figure 2.1** sets out the walk distances and walk times to areas of Tredegar from the Town Centre.



- 2.4.4 Footways are provided along the majority of carriageways throughout Tredegar Town Centre. Footway provision is of a reasonable standard along Commercial Street, Queen Victoria Street and Castle Street.
- 2.4.5 There are few formal crossing points provided throughout the Town Centre.
- 2.4.6 The Gwent Shopping Centre and car park is open plan in its design and has several secluded entrances and exits that encourage anti-social behaviour.
- 2.4.7 Access to the town Centre from the existing Bus Interchange is via a short alley way onto Commercial Street across the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass road or via a circuitous route through the rear entrance of Gwent Shopping Centre via several steps or a longer distance over the third access point via a ramped access walkway.

Cycling

- 2.4.8 National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 411 runs to the north of Tredegar Town Centre along Church Street and onto Stockton Way before crossing over to a traffic-free section running adjacent to Tredegar Business Park towards the roundabout junction of the A4084. At this point, Route 411 joins with Route 467 which runs parallel to the A4084. To the north, Route 467 provides access to Route 46.
- 2.4.9 Route 46 follows the Heads of The Valleys and provides access locally to Ebbw Vale and Brynmawr.
- 2.4.10 A map indicating the National Cycle Network Routes within the vicinity of Tredegar Town Centre are indicated in **Figure 2.2** below.
- 2.4.11 Currently, there are no dedicated cycle routes within Tredegar Town Centre.

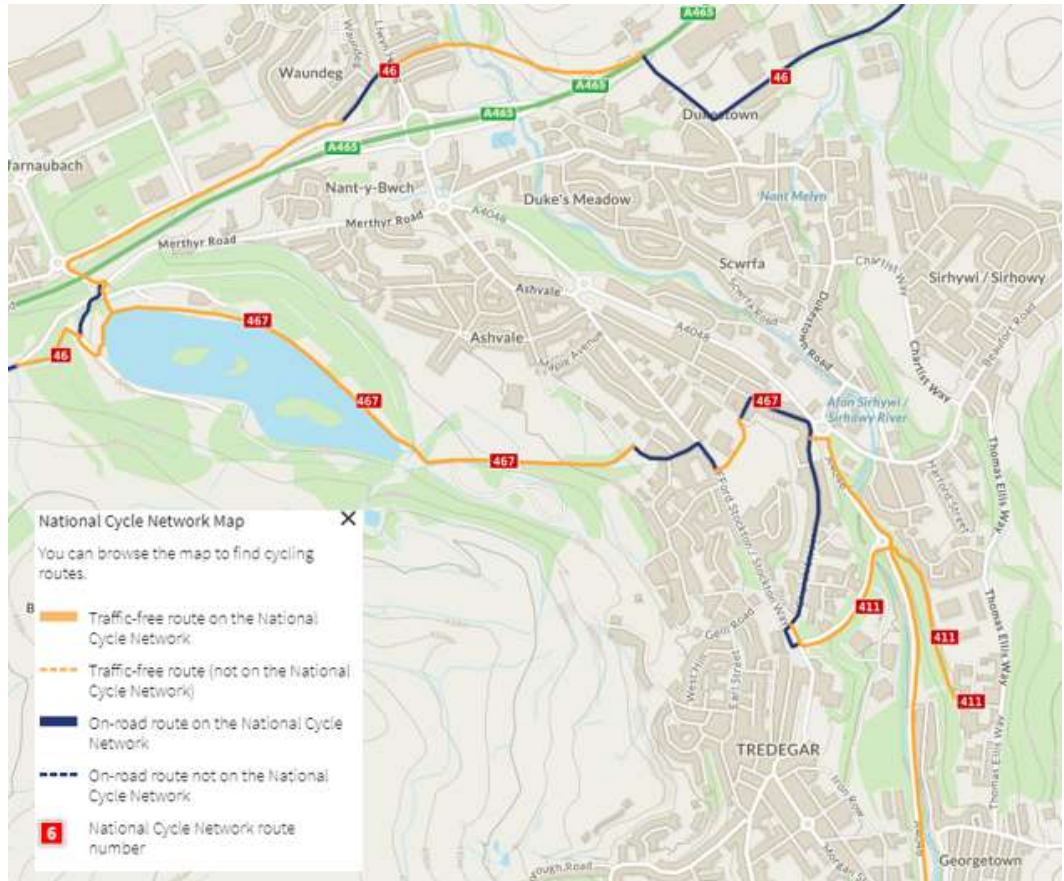


Figure 2.2: NCN Routes

2.5 Public Transport

2.5.1 The bus interchange and taxi rank are bound between the Gwent Shopping Centre car park and the rear of Commercial Street accessed via the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass. The location of the bus interchange is indicated in **Figure 2.3**.



Figure 2.3: Bus Interchange Location

- 2.5.2 The bus interchange comprises of three contemporary glass and steel bus shelters which are provided with seating.
- 2.5.3 The existing bus services currently operating at Tredegar Bus Interchange are summarised below in **Table 2.2**.

Route No.	Destination	First / Last	Frequency		
			Monday - Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4A	Tredegar – Rhymney (Circular)	07:12/17:10	5 services per day	5 services per day	No service
4C	Rhymney – Tredegar (Circular)	09:00/16:05	Approx. bi-hourly	Approx. bi-hourly	No service
56	Tredegar	07:17/19:18	Hourly	Hourly	Bi-hourly
	Newport	06:25/19:30	Hourly	Hourly	Bi-hourly
97	Brynawr	08:41	1 service per day	No service	No service
E11	Tredegar	09:42/18:07	Hourly	Hourly	No service
	Ebbw Vale	08:50/17:15	Hourly	Hourly	No service
E12	Tredegar	09:45/15:50	Approx. Hourly	Approx. Hourly	No service

Table 2.2: Tredegar Bus Interchange Service Summary

2.5.4 As detailed in Table 2.2, there are two services (56 & E11) operating Monday – Saturday on an hourly basis from Tredegar providing access to Newport and Ebbw Vale.

2.5.5 There is no rail service available at Tredegar. The nearest railway stations are located at Rhymney (5.1km) to the west or Ebbw Vale (5.7km) to the east. Services to Cardiff Central are available from both stations.

2.6 Existing Highway Safety Record

2.6.1 Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data has been obtained for the most recent five-year period from CrashMap.

2.6.2 A summary of the collisions that occurred within the study area outlined within this report are shown in **Table 2.3** and the full collision report for each incident is detailed at **Appendix A**. The location and severity of the collisions assessed are shown in **Figure 2.4**.

Year	No. personal injury			Casualties	Vehicles
	Fatal	Serious	Slight		

2016	0	1	1	3	2
2017	0	0	1	2	2
2018	0	1	0	1	2
2019	0	0	2	2	3
2020	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	2	4	8	9

Table 2.3: Summary of PIC data



Figure 2.4: PIC locations

2.6.3 It is evident from Table 2.3 that a total of 6 collisions have occurred in the study area during the most recent 5-year period resulting in a total of 8 casualties. Of the 6 collisions, 2 were recorded as serious.

2.6.4 The two serious collisions which occurred along Stockton Way and Castle Street are described in more detail below.

Stockton Way – 7th August 2018, 3:12PM

- 2.6.5 The collision involved a pedal cyclist and a car. The car was in the act of turning right and the cyclist was in the act of turning left. The car was struck on the nearside and the cyclist was struck to the front.

Castle Street – 17th October 2016, 11:25AM

- 2.6.6 The collision involved a car and a pedestrian. A car struck a pedestrian crossing from the drivers nearside. The pedestrian was not utilising a crossing facility.
- 2.6.7 Both of the serious collisions detailed above involved non-motorised users.

2.7 Existing Traffic Levels

- 2.7.1 Daily vehicle flow rates have been provided along Commercial Street by Blaenau Gwent County council. The data provided indicates the total number of vehicles travelling along Commercial Street between 27th January 2021 – 6th May 2021.
- 2.7.2 Over the time period surveyed, on average approximately 1670 vehicles pass through Commercial Street during an average weekday. This average takes into account the weekday AM and PM peak hour period.
- 2.7.3 It is estimated that of the 1670 vehicles, approximately 10% of the traffic will be on the network during the peak hour periods, equating to roughly 167 vehicles travelling along Commercial Street during the AM and 167 vehicles during the PM peak hour period.
- 2.7.4 Over the weekend, it is considered that on average 1351 vehicles travel along Commercial Street throughout the 48-hour period with a greater vehicle flow witnessed on a Saturday.

2.8 Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Study Area

- 2.8.1 At the time of the 2011 Census, Tredegar had a population of 15,103. The socio-economic distribution of the area will be based upon 2011 Census Data for W02000316 : Blaenau Gwent 003 and W02000319 : Blaenau Gwent 006. Key statistics for these areas include:

- 30% of residents in the wards analysed do not have access to a car or van, which is higher than the Blaenau Gwent average (29%)

- The average number of cars owned per household in the area is 1 and across Blaenau Gwent the average is also 1.
- 10% of residents in the wards either walk or cycle to work, which is the same as the borough average of 10%

3.0 IDENTIFIED TRANSPORT CHALLENGES

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section of the report outlines the existing areas of Tredegar Town Centre where there are perceived issues with the existing transport infrastructure.

3.1.2 The Town Centre is split into 4 zones:

- Commercial Street and Castle Street conservation area
- Gwent Shopping Centre
- Tredegar Business Park, and
- Key transport hubs.

3.1.3 The key issues in each zone have been identified below.

3.2 Commercial Street & Castle Street

3.2.1 Commercial Street is currently open to vehicular traffic and is dominated by parked vehicles. Pavements are cluttered and uneven in places with a lack of safe crossing points for disabled and visually impaired users. There is currently a lack of signs guiding pedestrians to transport services and local facilities.

3.2.2 There are a significant number of cast iron bollard located along the footways, which appear to be installed to deter footway parking.

3.3 Gwent Shopping Centre

3.3.1 The Gwent Shopping Centre is located to the east of Commercial Street and in the northern sector of the town centre. It is accompanied by a large surface car park immediately south of the buildings.

3.3.2 A single carriageway road links Stockton Way to the north of the shopping centre by way of a traffic signal-controlled junction and Queen Victoria Street to the south by way of a compact roundabout junction. This roundabout junction provides the access to the centre's surface car park.

3.3.3 The same road provides access to Tredegar Bus Station and also passes under the shopping centre by way of an under-pass that in turn provides access to the under-croft service area of both sides of the shopping centre.

3.3.4 Pedestrian access is via a ramped access on Commercial Street and there is secondary access via steps from the rear car park accessed via the underpass road running under the shopping centre.

3.3.5 The Shopping Centre and car park is open plan in its design and has several secluded entrances and exits that encourage anti-social behaviour.

3.4 Tredegar Business Park

3.4.1 Tredegar Business Park is currently segregated from Tredegar Town Centre. Pedestrian routes are currently available; however, these are indirect, poorly lit and unattractive to pedestrians due to a perceived lack of safety.

3.4.2 It is considered that there are opportunities for enhanced active travel connections linking the Business Park with the town centre. These are detailed in Section 4.

3.4.3 In addition, a high-level appraisal has been undertaken of improving access from the south of the Business Park to the A4084. Consideration would need to be given to the existing land levels and bridging over the Sirhowy River would need to be considered.

3.4.4 There is also considered to be some potential for a second point of access into the Business Park by way of an improved junction at Bridge Street and Iron Row.

3.5 Key Transport Hubs

3.5.1 There are 2 separate bus interchange facilities located in Tredegar. One to the immediate east of the Lidl store accessed via the Stockton Way signal junction and the other to the immediate west of the Gwent Shopping Centre car park and immediately south of the under-pass road.

- 3.5.2 The facility on Stockton Way has two 16m bus stops both accompanied by modern shelters. There is pedestrian provision by way of dropped kerbs and tactile paving that link with the pedestrian crossing provision on the northern arm of the signal junction.
- 3.5.3 At the southernmost facility (adjacent to the Gwent Shopping Centre car park) there is a double length bus lay-by and a single length lay-by located adjacent to the south-bound carriageway. All 3 stops are accompanied by modern shelters and seating.
- 3.5.4 Pedestrian access from the bus interchange to Commercial Street is by way of a short alley way across the Gwent underpass road and Bank Lane. This route is gates and has steps present. There is an alternative route to Commercial Street via the Gwent Shopping Centre.
- 3.5.5 There is a raised zebra crossing located on the road that passes underneath the shopping centre on the northern side of the bus interchange.

4.0 PROPOSED TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS

4.1 Key Objectives

4.1.1 The proposal to implement public realm and highway improvements as part of the Tredegar Town Centre Redevelopment will:

- Improve journey times, reliability and journey quality for all road users
- Improve accessibility to Tredegar town centre for pedestrians, cyclists and road users
- Reduce congestion and its environmental impacts
- Improve access between Tredegar's bus interchange and the nearby strategic sites:
- Proposed a consolidated bus facility and
- Enhance the viability of the town centre, support Economic Development and other key areas.

4.2 Active Travel Improvements

4.2.1 Improved wayfinding signs should be provided to ensure a clear route toward Tredegar Bus Interchange from both Commercial Street and Castle Street to promote complimentary multi-modal interchange within the town. An example of a wayfinding totem and signage is indicated in **Figure 4.1**.



Figure 4.1: Wayfinding examples

4.2.2 In addition, the potential for full or partial pedestrianisation of Commercial Street has been investigated and discussed with stakeholders.

4.2.3 Pedestrianisation of Commercial Street would include:

- Removal of all traffic from the street or removal of traffic during certain time periods during the day
- Removal of curbs and footways, addition of new paving.
- Consolidation and removal of existing street furniture to facilitate pedestrian movement.

4.2.4 The quality of the walking environment is a huge factor in people’s shopping choices, and people who walk to their high street have been shown to spend more, and in a wider range of shops, than visitors arriving by car, bus or bike.

- 4.2.5 Pedestrianisation aims to improve pedestrian’s safety and mobility. Another important benefit is related to the environment. These schemes can help to reduce both noise and pollution by discouraging or restricting access of non-essential vehicles. Furthermore, it helps to promote walking as a transport mode by making the walking experience more enjoyable.
- 4.2.6 An active travel route linking Tredegar Business Park to Tredegar Town Centre has been considered. A potential active travel route linking the business park and town centre has been identified in **Figure 4.2**.



Figure 4.2: Possible Active Travel Link

- 4.2.7 The creation of a bike hub/docking station offering bicycle hire and safe, secure, sheltered bicycle parking should be incorporated alongside the proposed new bus interchange. This would create a consolidated travel hub allowing easy interchange between modes.

- 4.2.8 The signal-controlled junction of Stocton Way, Commercial Street and the access to the bus facility could be improved to deliver cyclist crossing provision and possibly advanced cyclist stop lines for through cyclist movement.
- 4.2.9 It is noted from the collision analysis undertaken that there has been a serious collision involving a cyclist recorded at the junction.

4.3 Bus Interchange & Taxi Rank improvements

- 4.3.1 Developing a modern quality transport interchange to efficiently link commercial development with residential areas that capitalises on and maximises the opportunities being presented through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, specifically the delivery of the South East Wales Metro.
- 4.3.2 The provision of further Real Time Information (RTI) displays at key bus stops linked to the town centre.
- 4.3.3 Improved shelter provision to ensure passengers are protected from the weather whilst waiting for a bus.
- 4.3.4 Taxi parking provision and access should avoid causing conflict with pedestrian and cycle access in the station area.
- 4.3.5 Pedestrian and cycle safety will be ensured through appropriate design. The future design will ensure a hierarchy whereby pedestrian and cyclists are given priority, shared surface treatments, traffic calming and appropriate signs and demarcation will help to ensure taxi movements are conscious of other users and the busy interaction of users in the area.
- 4.3.6 Appropriate signs should be provided along key routes to and from the station area.

- 4.3.7 A drop-off area could be provided to the rear of Gwent Shopping Centre also providing a servicing facility for the existing retail use of Gwent Shopping Centre.
- 4.3.8 The South Wales Metro is an integrated public transport network that will make it easier for people travel across the Cardiff Capital Region, transforming rail and bus services as well as cycling and walking. The Cardiff Capital Region is made up of 10 local authorities including Blaenau Gwent.
- 4.3.9 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a bus-based system that uses dedicated and/or prioritised highway space, similar to European-style segregated busways. BRT uses high-quality stops, off-vehicle ticketing and high-frequency services that are integrated into a wider regional transit network.
- 4.3.10 The BRT will provide a west - east connection that will complement north - south travel connectivity provided by the railway lines, and provide residents of these communities with direct access to economic opportunities located in the Heads of the Valleys corridor.
- 4.3.11 The BRT will have a particularly positive impact on Tredegar, which is currently disconnected from the railway line through connecting the town to rail links in Ebbw Vale, Rhymney and Merthyr.
- 4.3.12 The BRT will provide access to natural tourism opportunities in the Valleys Regional Park, Brecon Beacons Park (via one of the Heads of the Valleys settlements) and Monmouthshire.

4.4.2 A consolidated facility will improve inter-change between all services operational in the town centre but land requirements will be dependent on partial demolition of the Gwent Shopping Centre.

4.4.3 The creation of a new consolidated bus interchange has been discussed with key passenger transport and SW metro officers who were supportive of the proposal. Such a facility could allow better integration with the South Wales metro proposal and would deliver socio economic benefits to the town centre.

4.5 Tredegar Business Park

4.5.1 The Consultant's brief requested that an additional exit only access from the Business Park to the A4048 be investigated. It is considered likely that any such new access would need to bridge the River Sirhowy as the A4048 traverses the river at the southern extent of the Council Land to the south of the Business Park. Beyond this location the river runs between the A4048 and the land associated with the Business Park.

4.5.2 An access into the Business Park from the A4048 would require a detailed engineering appraisal as it is considered from a preliminary review that significant structural work would be required to bridge the river. Such engineering works may incur significant costs, and may prove cost-prohibitive. However, it is recommended that this be investigated further.

4.5.3 The location of the potential access point is indicated in **Figure 4.4**.

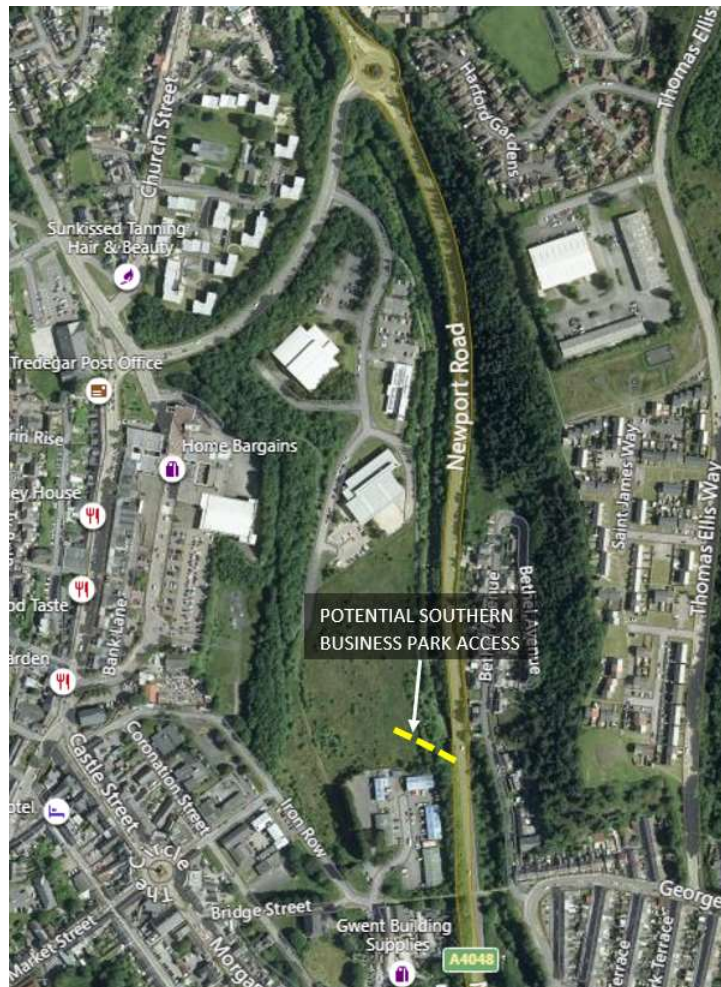


Figure 4.4: Potential Southern Business Park Access

4.5.4 A further option has been investigated in order to provide a second point of access into Tredegar Business Park from the south. This option suggests the provision of possibly a compact roundabout junction with Iron Row. The proposed location of the second access is detailed in **Figure 4.5**.



Figure 4.5: Proposed roundabout access location

4.5.5 It is envisaged that the point of access detailed in Figure 4.5 would possibly prove a more viable access improvement than that proposed in Figure 4.4.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 This Transport Vision Document is a high-level review intended to inform and influence future strategic decision making for regeneration activity within the study area outlined. It is intended and to act as an evidence base to support Blaenau Gwent CBC with external funding applications.
- 5.1.2 The report has reviewed current transport planning policy in Wales and undertaken a baseline assessment of the transport characteristics of the study area.
- 5.1.3 The Transport Vision outlines the key areas for improvement within Tredegar town centre and suggests a number of potential transport enhancement strategies for the town.
- 5.1.4 A number of meetings have occurred with key stakeholders and these have included meetings with local councillors and key passenger transport and active travel officers of the Local Authority and those with responsibilities for the South Wales Metro project.
- 5.1.5 It is envisaged that a number of improvements to the pedestrian realm, active travel routes and public transport infrastructure would enhance the overall experience for various users of the town centre. Similarly improved access to the Business Park and improved connectivity with the town centre would contribute to Tredegar's regeneration.
- 5.1.6 This report has discussed relatively low-cost improvements such as increased cycle parking provision throughout the study area to potentially significant infrastructure works such as a new all mode access to the Tredegar Business Park and a new bus interchange facility.

Agenda Item 7

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Places Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **8th November 2022**

Report Subject: **Public Protection & Environmental Enforcement Services – Revised Enforcement Policy**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Helen Cunningham – Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member, Environment**

Report Submitted by: **David Thompson – Service Manager, Public Protection**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
11.10.22	13.10.22	27.10.22			8.11.22		24.11.22	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek the support of the Committee in relation to the revised Public Protection & Environmental Enforcement Policy following formal consultation and prior to adoption by Council.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Regulators Compliance Code requires local authorities to publish a policy setting out their approach to compliance and enforcement. This is an important document for regulators in meeting their responsibility under the statutory principles of good regulation to be accountable and transparent about their activities. Further to recent changes in departmental services, it is now necessary to update the current policy.
- 2.2 As previously, the revised draft Enforcement Policy (Appendix 1) adopts the principles of the Regulators Code and affirms the Authority's commitment to protecting the health, safety, environment and amenities of the people who live and work in the area, as well as those that visit, whilst ensuring that the enforcement action is fair, accountable, consistent, proportionate and transparent.
- 2.4 Public Protection and other enforcement officers enforce a wide range of public health and consumer protection laws with varying possible outcomes dependent on the sanctions available under the relevant pieces of legislation. The revised policy summarises the wide range of enforcement action options that are available to ensure compliance with the law, ranging from informal advice to prosecution (see Sections 5.2 to 5.13 of Appendix 1). It lays out the general principles of enforcement to which Officers will adhere and it will act as an umbrella document for other more detailed enforcement policies where they are required.
- 2.5 Appendix 2 to this report provides Members with summary information relating to the number and type of enforcement actions taken across the relevant services during the last few years.

- 2.6 The policy also outlines how the relevant services will deal with non-compliance in relevant local authority owned and run premises, where Public Protection has enforcement responsibility but does not have the same formal enforcement powers as it has with private sector premises. (e.g. corporate catering premises).
- 2.7 Environmental Enforcement. Since September 2021, the Front Line Enforcement Service (part of the Neighbourhood Services Division) has been set up to deal with fly-tipping enforcement, household waste and recycling compliance, litter and dog control order enforcement, abandoned vehicles, dog warden and other services. After due consideration, it was considered best to continue to include these enforcement actions as part of this combined policy.
- 2.8 Consultation. Consultation took place between 25th July and 19th August 2022. This was advertised on the BGCBC website along with social media announcements on 28th July & 19th August (Facebook/Twitter). Contact was made with elected members, Businesses (Via Regeneration Service networks, relevant internal departments, and neighbouring local authority.
- 2.9 Consultation Response Analysis. The responses received were generally positive with several minor changes considered and included where appropriate.
- 2.10 The draft policy (post consultation) is outlined at Appendix 1.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 Option 1 (Preferred Option) - That Members consider and support the adoption of the Public Protection and Environmental Enforcement Policy as outlined in Appendix 1, and make any recommendations, as necessary, for consideration by Council.

The Policy will then be formally reviewed every five years for approval by Council, or earlier if deemed necessary.

- 3.2 Option 2 – That Members do not support the policy and recommend an alternative course of action.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

- 4.1 The policy is in line a wide range of statutory responsibilities and with the corporate priorities relating to Regeneration & Economic Development and Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities. It also recognises the preventative work undertaken by the relevant services in relation public health and consumer protection by promoting social, physical and mental well-being and a fair trading environment.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no significant financial implications associated with the adoption of this policy. Costs incurred relate to staff time, training and consultation. There is a risk that significant costs could be awarded against the Authority if inappropriate enforcement action is taken against the backdrop of policies and procedures that are not compliant with the Regulators' code.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Reputational Risk. Without an up to date policy, the Authority risks reputational damage due to public and media criticism, or criticism by the courts, for taking inappropriate action against the backdrop of a policies and procedures that are not robust.

5.3 ***Legal***

As above.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The policy will guide how Public Protection, Front Line and other relevant Enforcement Officers will investigate and decide upon relevant enforcement action and this will inform staff training and development requirements as necessary.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Performance information & Data is reported routinely as part of the Authority's Business Planning and Monitoring processes, and by way of press releases in relation to successful prosecutions etc. Appendix 2 to this report provides Members with summary information relating to the number and type of enforcement actions during the last few years.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The proposal promotes the preventative work undertaken by the relevant services in relation public health and consumer protection by promoting social, physical and mental well-being and a fair trading environment.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

Relevant consultation has taken place as outlined in paragraphs 2.8 and 2.9 above.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The recommendation ensures that enforcement action is undertaken in a manner that meets the short-term needs of the Authority whilst enabling enforcement action that promotes medium and longer-term public health gain and consumer protection

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The proposal recognises the preventative work undertaken by Public Protection in relation public health and consumer protection by promoting social, physical and mental well-being and a fair trading environment.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

This policy is consistent with those of partner agencies also involved in enforcement activities within the County (E.g. Powys CC).

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The proposal recognises the preventative work undertaken by the relevant services in relation public health and consumer protection by promoting social, physical and mental well-being and a fair trading environment. This positively impact on other public bodies such as the NHS, Police and other local authorities.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

There are assessed to be no adverse effects in relation to the renewal of this policy.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***

There are assessed to be no adverse effects in relation to the renewal of this policy.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Performance information & Data is reported routinely as part of the Authority's Business Planning and Monitoring processes, and by way of press releases in relation to successful prosecutions etc.

List of Appendices

- 1 - Draft Public Protection & Environmental Enforcement Policy - Sep 2022
- 2 - Summary of Enforcement Actions Taken by Services



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
Blaenau Gwent
County Borough Council

Public Protection & Environmental Enforcement & Compliance Policy

Sep 2022 – Draft

BLAENAU GWENT CBC

**Public Protection Service
Front Line Enforcement Service
Regeneration & Community Services
Directorate**

FOREWORD

As part of its statutory functions, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council delivers Public Protection regulatory services (Environmental Health, Trading Standards, and Licensing) along with Front Line Enforcement Services (Fly-tipping, Waste Collection Compliance, Litter and Dog Controls) with a view to protecting the health, safety, environment and amenities of the people who live, work and visit the county.

We recognise that prevention is better than cure, but where it becomes necessary to take enforcement action against a business or a member of the public, we will do so, whilst ensuring that the enforcement we carry out is fair, accountable, consistent, proportionate and transparent.

This document sets out what businesses and others being regulated can expect from the Public Protection Service.

This is a service for which we are proud to be responsible.



**Councillor Helen Cunningham
Deputy Leader & Executive Member –
Place & Environment
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

CONTENTS

		Page
	Foreword	2
	Amendments	3
	Contents	4
1	Introduction	5
2	Legal Status of this Enforcement Policy	6
3	Scope & Meaning of “Enforcement”	6
4	General Principles	7
5	Enforcement Action	10
	5.1 General Enforcement Considerations	10
	5.2 Range of Enforcement Approaches	11
	5.3 No Action	12
	5.4 Compliance Advice, Guidance & Support	12
	5.5 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) & Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs)	13
	5.6 Voluntary Undertakings	13
	5.7 Statutory Notices, Orders & Works in default	13
	5.8 Detention, Seizure & Forfeiture Proceedings	14
	5.9 Injunctive Actions & other Civil Sanctions	14
	5.10 Licence Modification, Suspension or Revocation	14
	5.11 Simple Caution	14
	5.12 Prosecution	15
	5.13 Proceeds of Crime Applications	15
	5.14 Enforcement Responsibilities as a Food Authority	15
6	Liaison with other Agencies	16
7	Keeping People & Businesses Informed	16
8	Review & Publication of the Enforcement Policy	16
	End	

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council delivers Public Protection regulatory services (Environmental Health, Trading Standards, and Licensing) along with Front Line Enforcement Services (Fly-tipping, Waste Collection Compliance, Litter and Dog Controls) with a view to protecting the health, safety, environment and amenities of the people who live, work and visit the county.
- 1.2 This policy has been developed to ensure that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's Regulatory Services comply with the legislative framework within which we operate. It also explains our enforcement practices so that residents and businesses can understand what enforcement action we take and how we decide what enforcement action is appropriate in each case.
- 1.3 This policy has been prepared with regard to a range of principal legislation and statutory guidance, including the:

- [Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008](#) (the RES Act).
- [Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006](#) (LRRRA).
- [Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013](#)
- [RES Guidance to the Act](#)
- [Food Law Code of Practice \(Wales\) \(issued under Section 40\(1\) of the Food Safety Act 1990 & Chapter 6 of the Food Law Practice Guidance \(Wales\)\)](#)

A full list of the legislation and guidance under the RES Act can be found [here](#).

- 1.4 As well as the above, our enforcement activities are conducted in compliance with both offence specific legislation and along with the:

- [Human Rights Act 1988](#);
- [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#) and the [Code of Practice on Powers of Entry](#)
- [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984](#) and [PACE Code B guidance](#)
- [Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000](#)
- [Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001](#)
- [The Co-ordination of Regulatory Enforcement \(Enforcement Action\) Order 2009](#) (CRE)
- [Code for Crown Prosecutors](#)
- [Regulators Code](#)

- [The Data Protection Act 1998](#)

1.5 Not all of the provisions covered within this policy are legally binding on all aspects of our enforcement. However, a commitment to good enforcement practice informs all of the enforcement decisions made our enforcement officers.

2 LEGAL STATUS OF THIS ENFORCEMENT POLICY

2.1 This Enforcement and Compliance Policy has been presented for Member approval as appropriate and details of the Member approval process is available on request.

2.2 This document does not replace or supersede legislation or statutory guidance.

2.3 All Enforcement Officers, when making enforcement decisions, will abide by this Policy. Departures from this Policy will be exceptional, capable of justification and be approved by an appropriate Team Manager, Head of Service, Director or Member Committee (as necessary), prior to implementation.

2.4 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is a public authority for the purposes of the Human Rights Act 1998. We will, therefore, apply the principles of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. In particular, due regard will be had to the right to a fair trial and the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence.

2.5 In exceptional instances we may conclude that the provisions in this Policy, and the legislation and guidance on which it is based, are not relevant or are outweighed by another provision. We will ensure that any decision to depart from this Policy will be properly reasoned, based on material evidence and documented.

3 SCOPE AND MEANING OF 'ENFORCEMENT'

3.1 This Policy applies to all legislation enforced by Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Licensing and Front Line Enforcement services as well as to any temporary and/or agency staff and to any person and/or organisation delivering enforcement on behalf of the services to which this Policy relates.

3.2 The service will have regard to the definition of 'enforcement action' as defined under the Regulatory Enforcement Sanctions Act 2008.

3.3 A full list of the actions covered by the RES Act is listed in the [CRE Order 2009](#). This legislation also applies to any other enforcement action taken, such as an informal letter, where it is stated that the listed actions may be taken.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Our enforcement aims will be as laid down in the [Regulators' Code](#), and will focus on changing the behaviour of the offender, changing attitudes in society to become less accepting of offences, eliminating any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance and deterring future non-compliance.
- 4.2 Our enforcement will seek to be responsive and to consider what is appropriate for the particular offender and regulatory issue, and to be proportionate to the nature of the offence and the harm caused.
- 4.3 We may not be able to deal with anonymous service requests/complaints/allegations but this depends on the nature of the concern and the source of the problem. In all cases, clients giving their name, address, or any other details, can be assured that this information will be held in the strictest confidence so far as legislation permits. Where appropriate, it will be necessary to treat information received as "intelligence" which will be processed in accordance with the Intelligence Operating Model and graded accordingly. This information will be treated confidentially and shared with other agencies as appropriate.
- 4.4 Where we consider that enforcement action is appropriate, each case will be considered on its own merits. However, there are general principles that apply to the way each case must be approached. These are set out in this Policy and in the Regulators' Code.
- 4.5 All enforcement decisions will be fair, independent and objective. They will not be influenced by issues such as ethnicity or national origin, gender, religious beliefs, political views or the sexual orientation of the suspect, victim, witness or offender. Such decisions will not be affected by improper or undue pressure from any source.
- 4.6 Our primary function is to protect the public, legitimate businesses, the environment and groups such as consumers and workers. We do this by ensuring compliance with enforcement legislation. However, we reserve the right to take enforcement action after compliance has been achieved if it is in the public interest to do so, and particularly where compliance was only achieved as a result of our intervention.
- 4.7 When considering enforcement action, we will take into account the views of any victims, injured parties or relevant persons or communities to establish the nature and extent of any harm or loss, and its significance, in making the decision to take formal action.
- 4.8 Where a business is in a registered Primary Authority Partnership under the RES Act we will, where required to do so by that Act, notify the Primary Authority of

any enforcement action we propose to take (unless action is being taken in an emergency in which case notification will be after the fact). We may also, under that Act, refer the matter to Regulatory Delivery (RD), which is part of the [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy](#), if appropriate. The Primary Authority has the right to object to proposed action, in which circumstances either they or we may refer the matter to RD.

- 4.9 Conflicts of Interest. A potential conflict of interest may occur where the Public Protection Service is the relevant enforcing authority in relation to premises in which either Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council or its Officers also have an ownership or management interest. The Council is committed to ensuring arrangements are in place to enable the Public Protection Service to undertake its role without fear or favour and without any conflict, actual or perceived. Any identified conflicts will be determined on a case by case basis having regard to the nature of the local authority involvement in the business, the duty-holders responsible for business and the person most likely to be primarily in breach should an offence occur.
- 4.10 Breaches of legislation found in respect of businesses or contractors operating at council owned premises will be dealt with in the same way as any other business proprietor, and the time-scales for carrying out such works will be the same as for any other business proprietor.
- 4.11 Advice given to or in respect of council owned premises will be the same as for any other business proprietor, and will not be permitted to conflict with the enforcement role of the authority.
- 4.12 Where the Public Protection or Front Line Services have a regulatory role but cannot take formal enforcement action in respect of council owned premises, non-compliances with the law will be reported to the appropriate Director/Chief Officer. In addition, the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer will be informed of non-compliances that remain unresolved after an appropriate timescale, and of any matters that would have led to formal enforcement action and/or prosecution in a non-local authority owned premises.
- 4.13 Enforcement will be undertaken by appropriately authorised officers, and authorisation will be based on qualifications, knowledge and experience. The authorisation for each officer will go through the relevant Authorisation procedure and be recorded.
- 4.14 In most instances, the decision to take enforcement action will rest with the authorised officer. Decisions other than informal advice and Fixed Penalty Notices may be subject to additional scrutiny as appropriate. In particular, any decision to prosecute will be taken by the Head of Service or others with authority

to do so, in accordance with the Local Authority Scheme of Delegations, in discussion with Legal Services.

- 4.15 Training will be used to ensure that authorised officers achieve and maintain the appropriate level of competency and professionalism, and this training will be recorded as necessary.
- 4.16 Where we use contractors or outside agencies, their qualifications and experience will be examined to ensure that they meet the required competency standards for any work carried out on behalf of the authority.
- 4.17 All enforcement decisions by authorised officers are subject to overview by line managers, as appropriate, and monitoring procedures are in place where required in law.
- 4.18 Any procedures in place to ensure consistency and uniformity of enforcement by officers employed by the authority will also be applied to temporary and contract staff. Any such staff will be monitored to ensure that their work complies with the requirements of this policy and any other procedures in place.
- 4.19 We will have regard to the confidentiality of any information obtained as part of an enforcement action, and to the need for confidentiality in respect of any action taken. Equally, the Services recognise the provisions and principals of the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act in respect of the rights of individuals to access certain data.
- 4.20 We recognise that giving advice is an important part of our work, but we must also ensure that the giving of advice to businesses and local residents does not conflict with any statutory enforcement function.
- 4.21 We will not generally offer consultancy services, other than via a Primary Authority relationship that we may enter into. In this context, consultancy work will be taken to mean the giving of detailed assistance and advice or acting on behalf of a client, whether or not for financial gain, but would not include the giving of general advice as part of an inspection, application etc.
- 4.22 Should we decide to offer consultancy services (subject to funding being available), these will not be marketed or advertised as part of an inspection or other enforcement action without reference to the fact that other service providers exist.
- 4.23 Where permitted in law, we may choose to make a charge for enforcement actions. In the case of prosecutions, we will submit an application for costs on a full recovery basis unless there are extenuating circumstances that make this inappropriate.

4.24 Where a person or business has an issue with or wishes to complain about enforcement taken against them under this Policy, they should have regard to any appeal or other judicial process in place and follow this where appropriate. Where there is no appeal or other judicial process in place, the person against whom the action has been taken may;

- a) Speak to the Enforcement Officer dealing with their case, where appropriate, so that the enforcement action being taken can be discussed and any issues resolved by agreement wherever possible.
- b) Speak to the line manager of the officer concerned where agreement cannot be reached or
- c) Make a complaint to the service manager as follows:
Service Manager - Public Protection
The General Offices, Steelworks Road, Ebbw Vale, Gwent, NP23 6DN
- d) Use the formal complaints procedure, which can be accessed through
 - www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

All queries and complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Authority's Corporate Guidelines.

5. ENFORCEMENT ACTION

5.1 General enforcement considerations

5.1.1 The general presumption will be that we take a graduated approach to enforcement to ensure compliance with the law. However, this does not preclude taking action such as prosecution or services of a fixed penalty notice/penalty charge notice as a first enforcement step where it is in the public interest to do so.

5.1.2 In assessing what enforcement action is necessary and proportionate, consideration will be given to, amongst other things:

- a) The seriousness of the compliance failure.
- b) The past and current performance of any business and/or individual concerned.
- c) Any obstruction on the part of the offender.
- d) The risks being controlled.

- e) Statutory guidance.
- f) Codes of Practice.
- g) Any legal advice.
- h) Any priorities laid down by Government or adopted by each local authority
- i) Whether the defendant is aged under 18 (termed 'juveniles'). We will not enforce against juveniles unless there are specific powers within the appropriate legislation and/or we have adopted such powers.
- j) The existence of any Primary Authority agreement via which compliance can be achieved.

5.1.3 Officers will also ensure that any proposed enforcement action is reasonable, proportionate, risk-based and consistent with good practice and guidance. In selecting the most appropriate action, the lead officer will utilise an appropriate enforcement decision making approach relating to the regulatory activity (e.g. Health & Safety Enforcement Management Model or referrals to Licensing Committees). Where such specific models do not exist, then, prior to taking any action, we will have regard to the Code for Crown Prosecutors and such internal procedures deemed appropriate in each case.

5.1.4 Where we require action to be taken by the recipient to remedy or prevent an offence, we will

- a) Clearly differentiate between offences and any recommendations and advice being given
- b) Explain how any offence should be remedied, where appropriate (this may be simply to cease an activity)
- c) Give reasonable timescales for remedying any offence (this may be immediate in certain circumstances)
- d) Provide contact details in case information or advice on the enforcement action is required.
- e) Provide written information on any appeal processes where relevant

5.1.5 Any action we take in respect of any offence will be recorded, and may be used to inform later enforcement decisions.

5.2 Range of Enforcement Approaches.

When determining the most appropriate course of action/s officers will have regard to the full range of enforcement options available to them. This may include, for example:

- i. No Action
- ii. Compliance Advice, Guidance & Support
- iii. Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs)
- iv. Voluntary Undertakings
- v. Statutory Notices, Orders, Other Prohibition Procedures & Works in default
- vi. Detention, Seizure and Forfeiture Proceedings
- vii. Injunctive Actions and other Civil Sanctions
- viii. Licence Modification, Suspension or Revocation, Penalty Points system and other warnings
- ix. Simple Caution
- x. Prosecution
- xi. Proceeds of Crime Applications

5.3 No Action.

5.3.1 In certain circumstances, contraventions of the law may not warrant any action, for example where

- Enforcement is inappropriate in the circumstances, for example where the defendant would not be able to understand and/or it would seriously affect their health or well-being.
- The offence is very minor, and the cost of compliance or enforcement significantly outweighs the detrimental impact of the contravention.

Such circumstances would be considered very unusual and, in most cases where a contravention of the law has been found, some form of enforcement action will be deemed appropriate.

5.4 Compliance Advice, Guidance & Support

5.4.1 Informal advice and support will be the Service's first response in the case of many breaches of legislation that are identified. Advice can be provided verbally or in the form of a warning letter to assist individuals and businesses in rectifying breaches as quickly and efficiently as possible and avoiding the need for further enforcement action. A warning letter will set out what should be done to rectify the breach and to prevent re-occurrence. If a similar breach is identified in the future, this letter will be persuasive in considering the most appropriate enforcement action to take on that occasion. Such a letter cannot be cited in court as a previous conviction but it may be presented in evidence. Where advice is given, we will clearly identify any contraventions of the law and give advice on how to put them right.

5.4.2 Where there is a primary authority relationship, we will have regard to the requirements of the Primary Authority regarding our advisory role, and advise the lead authority where any advice has relevance beyond a local level.

5.5 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs)

5.5.1 Where legislation permits an offence to be dealt with by way of a [Fixed Penalty Notice](#), [Penalty Charge Notice](#) or a [Penalty Notice for Disorder](#), we may choose to issue a FPN/PCN/PND for a first and/or minor offence. There is no requirement to issue a warning prior to taking this action, as these remedies were introduced by Government as a warning mechanism that allow prosecution to be avoided.

5.5.1 FPNs and PNDs are an offer to discharge liability for an offence instead of facing prosecution, and non-payment will therefore generally lead to prosecution unless there is evidence to show extenuating circumstances. PCNs are served for civil offences with non-payment pursued by way of debt recovery.

5.6 Voluntary Undertakings

5.6.1 The Authority may accept voluntary undertakings that breaches will be rectified and/or recurrences prevented. Any failure to honour voluntary undertakings is taken very seriously and will result in appropriate enforcement action.

5.7 Statutory Notices, Orders, Other Prohibition Procedures & Works in default

5.7.1 Certain legislation allows or requires statutory notices to be served or Orders to be made at court requiring offenders to take specific actions or cease certain activities. This type of enforcement action may require activities to cease immediately where the circumstances relating to health, safety, environmental damage or nuisance demand. In other circumstances, the time allowed will be reasonable, taking into account the seriousness of the contravention, the implications of the non-compliance and the appeal period for that notice. Under certain legislation, we may charge for the service of a statutory notice.

5.7.2 Certain types of notice allow works to be carried out at default, and if a notice is not complied with [a breach of the notice] we may carry out any necessary works to satisfy the requirements of the notice ourselves. Where the law allows, we may then charge the person/business served with the notice for any cost we incur in carrying out the work. Where possible, costs may also be laid as local land charges

5.8 Detention, Seizure and Forfeiture Proceedings

5.8.1 Certain legislation enables authorised Enforcement Officers to detain goods pending further investigations and/or seize goods, equipment or documents - for example where goods are unsafe or where they may be required as evidence for possible future court proceedings. When we seize goods, we will give the person from whom the goods are taken an appropriate receipt.

5.8.2 Forfeiture may be used in conjunction with seizure and/or prosecution where there is a need to dispose of goods in order to prevent them re-entering the market place or being used to cause a further problem.

5.9 Injunctive Actions and other Civil Sanctions

5.9.1 In certain circumstances injunctive actions may be used to deal with repeat offenders; dangerous circumstances; or consumer / environmental / public health detriment, for example. Also, the Community Safety Team may choose this route to deal with Anti-Social Behaviour.

5.9.2 Under the Enterprise Act 2002, action will be considered where there have been persistent breaches or there is significant collective consumer detriment, and these can include Informal undertakings through to Court Orders and Contempt Proceedings.

5.10 Licence Modification, Suspension or Revocation

5.10.1 A range of actions are available in respect of licenses, depending on the legislation under which the licence was issued and any specific policies providing differing approaches and laying down licensing conditions to which the licence holder is obliged to have regard. For example, the "Policy Relating to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences" provides for a penalty point system in respect of certain infringements

5.10.2 The actions that may be taken include suspension or revocation of a licence, modification of the conditions of the Licence, exclusion of a licensable activity from the scope of the licence, removal of a Designated Premises Supervisor or the issue of a statutory notice where this is permitted under the specific licensing legislation.

5.10.3 Where required in law or under the Licensing Policy of the authority, the above actions go through the appropriate Licensing Committee or the Courts.

5.11 Simple Caution

5.11.1 Where appropriate, and where a prosecution would otherwise be justified, a Simple Caution may be administered with the consent of the offender.

5.11.2 In determining whether a Simple Caution is appropriate, we will have regard to the [Ministry of Justice guidance 2013](#). Guidance on applying the public interest test in determining if a simple caution is appropriate is set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors, which can be seen on the [CPS website](#)

5.11.3 The refusal of an offender to be cautioned will be a material consideration when deciding whether the offender should then be prosecuted for that offence.

5.12 Prosecution

5.12.1 When deciding whether prosecution is appropriate, we will have regard to the [Code for Crown Prosecutors](#), and in particular

- (i) When deciding whether the case meets the evidential test, and
- (ii) When deciding whether prosecution is in the public interest

5.12.2 Where appropriate, and particularly in the case of prosecutions following the non-payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice, we will consider the use of a Single Justice Procedure Notice where this option is available.

5.12.3 We may choose to raise awareness by publicising any prosecution that we have taken, unless there is an over-riding issue why this would be inappropriate. This is because prosecution is seen as an important deterrent for other non-compliant businesses.

5.13 Proceeds of Crime Applications

5.13.1 We may, either through our own Officers or in cooperation with independent investigators, other regional or national teams such as the Regional Investigations Team or Food Fraud teams, or the Police, make application under the [Proceeds of Crime Act 2002](#) to restrain and/or confiscate the assets of an offender.

5.13.2 The purpose of any such proceedings is to recover the financial benefit that the offender has obtained from his criminal conduct. Proceedings are conducted according to the civil standard of proof.

5.14 Enforcement Responsibilities as a Food Authority

5.14.1 Blaenau Gwent CBC as a Food Authority will ensure that any enforcement action undertaken by its Authorised Officers will be in accordance with the requirements set out within the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) and also specifically with Chapter 6 of the Food Law Practice Guidance (Wales).

5.15 In order to ensure the above is achieved, having regard to the principles of this enforcement policy, specific documented procedures will be available for the use of each of the identified enforcement options available to Authorised Officers. These will also cover when it is necessary and appropriate to undertake revisits for the purposes of determining compliance where issues of non-compliance have been identified.

6. LIAISON WITH OTHER AGENCIES

6.1 In addition to the duties imposed by the RES Act, we will, where appropriate, cooperate and coordinate with any relevant regulatory body and/or enforcement agency to maximise the effectiveness of any enforcement.

6.2 Where an enforcement matter affects a wide geographical area or involves enforcement by one or more other local authorities or organisations, all relevant authorities and organisations will be informed of the matter as soon as possible and enforcement activity coordinated with them as appropriate.

6.3 We will share intelligence relating to individual and wider regulatory matters with other regulatory bodies and enforcement agencies, where the information concerned has a direct bearing on their enforcement functions and responsibilities, and in accordance with any data protection legislation.

7. KEEPING PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES INFORMED

7.1 We endeavour to keep alleged offenders and witnesses informed of progress of investigations, as appropriate. It is accepted that this may not be possible in every case, for example if it would impede an investigation or pose a safety risk to investigating officers, witnesses or the general public.

8. REVIEW AND PUBLICATION OF THE ENFORCEMENT POLICY

8.1 This Policy will be reviewed at least every five years, or whenever legislative changes to the way in which we enforce are introduced.

8.2 This Policy is available in a number of ways, including

- a. On the Council website at www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
- b. By e-mailing us at environmental.health@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

This Policy can be made available on tape, in Braille or large type on request. This document is available in Welsh.

8.3 Comments on this Enforcement Policy are welcome, and can be made by e-mailing us at environmental.health@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

END

Appendix 1 - Draft

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2 – Summary of Enforcement Action 2019/20, 2020-22, 2022-23 (Q2)

Commercial Team (Food Hygiene/Health & Safety/Infectious Disease)

Food Safety & Hygiene	2019/20	20-22 (2 Years – Covid Impacted)	2022-23 (Q2)
Voluntary closure	0	1	1
Seizure, detention & surrender of food	0	0	0
Suspension/revocation of approval	0	0	0
Emergency prohibition notice	0	0	0
Prohibition order	0	0	0
Simple caution	0	0	0
Improvement notices	25	24	8
Remedial action & detention notices	0	0	0
Written warnings	302	237	107
Prosecutions concluded	0	0	0
Commercial Health & Safety	2019/20	20-22 (2 Years – Covid Impacted)	2022-23 (Q2)
Improvement Notices	4	0	0
Prohibition Notices	0	0	0
Simple Caution	0	0	0
Prosecutions concluded	0	0	0
Follow-up/Warning Letters	16	0	0

Environmental Protection Team (Incl Private Sector Housing Enforcement)

Environmental Protection (incl Housing Enforcement, Pollution & Public Health Complaints, Private Water Supplies,	2019/20	20-22 (2 Years – Covid Impacted)	2022-23 (Q2)
Prosecutions	To follow	To follow	To Follow
Simple Cautions	0	0	0
Enforcement Notices (various categories of legislation)	173	230	51
Works in default	To follow	To follow	To Follow
Informal Action/Advice Letters	251(+195 perp initial letters)	255 (+342 perp initial letters)	29 (+111 perp initial letters)

Trading Standards

Trading Standards	2019/20	20-22 (2 Years – Covid Impacted)	2022-23 (Q2)
Prosecutions	3	1	0
Simple Cautions	1	0	1
Enterprise Act (Civil Injunctive Powers)	1	0	0
Consumer Complaints (Via CACS)	1050	1036 (21/22) 1045 (20/21)	436
Service Requests	20	12 (21/22) 24 (20/21)	6
Enforcement Visits	374	267 (21/22) 164 (20/21)	242
Non-premise visits (eg Web based Inspections)	136	71 (21/22) 138 (20/21)	30
Significant Breaches found (includes written warnings)	68	70 (21-22) 14 (20-21)	54

Licensing*

Licensing	2019/20	20-22 (2 Years – Covid Impacted)	2022-23 (Q2)
Prosecutions	0	0	0
Simple Cautions	1	0	0
Appeals (Licensing Act, Gambling Act and Driver/Vehicles)	0	1	1
Enforcement/Other Notices (Licensing Act fee non-payment suspension and prior actions)	41	96	25
Licensing sanctions:-			
Driver Licences:-			
- Revoked	1	3	0
- Suspended	0	0	0
- Warning letters	4	1	0

Vehicle Licences:-			
- Revoked	0	0	0
- Suspended	0	4	0
- Applications refused	0	0	0
- Warning letters	1	0	0
- Suspended	0	0	0
Other:-			
- Taxi complaints	10	6	2
- Licensing Act 2003 complaints	13	11	12
- Street Trading Complaints	2	0	1
- Taxi spot checks	35	0	0
- Taxi rank inspections (vehicles and drivers)	117	11	0
- Licensing Act 2003 compliance visits (including follow up visits)	128	20	15
- Gambling Act 2005 compliance visits	6	0	0
- Street trading consent compliance visits	5	0	1
- Scrap Metal compliance visits	2	0	0
- Multi agency enforcement operations/visits (Licensing Act, Gambling Act, Taxi)	6	8	15

* Licensing report to General & Statutory Licensing Committees

** some recording mechanisms were not in place during this period

Summary of Covid related Enforcement Action 25.03.2020 – 31.03.2022*

Covid Enforcement	2020 -2022
Visits made	12471
<i>Of which non compliance identified</i>	<i>273</i>
Written Warning	174
Fixed Penalty Notice	3
Business Improvement Notice	36
Business Closure Notice	3
Prosecutions	0
Self Isolation Compliance Checks	373
<i>Of which non compliance identified</i>	<i>157</i>
Returning Traveller Compliance Checks	39
<i>Of which non compliance identified</i>	<i>14</i>

* Data reported to Data Cymru

Environmental Enforcement – (since Sep 2021 – Under Front Line Enforcement, Neighbourhood Services.)

Env Protection/Front Line Enforcement.	2019/20	20-22 (2 Years – Covid Impacted)	2022-23 (Q2)
Fixed Penalty Notices – Litter	805	40	154
Fixed Penalty Notices – Dog Control	40	6	19
Prosecutions – Litter & Dog Control	220	36	1
Fixed Penalty Notices- Fly Tipping, Household and Commercial Duty of Care	7	25	37
Prosecutions – Fly Tipping	4	0	0
Simple Cautions – Fly Tipping	0	0	0
Written Warnings – Fly Tipping	5	11	4

Agenda Item 8

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Place Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **8th November 2022**
Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme: 13th December 2022**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Helen Cunningham, Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member Place and Environment**
Cllr John C Morgan, Cabinet Member Place and Regeneration
Report Submitted by: **Scrutiny and Democratic Officer**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
x	x	27.10.22			08.11.22			

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present to Members the Place Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 13th December 2022 for discussion and agreement.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Scrutiny Work Programmes are key aspects of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and support the requirements of the Constitution.
 - 2.2 The topics set out in the Forward Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's revised Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
 - 2.3 Effective work programmes are essential to ensure that the work of scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
 - 2.4 The Committee's Forward Work Programme was agreed in September 2022, recognising the fluidity of the document to enable the Committee to respond to urgent and emerging issues, and included timescales when reports will be considered by the Committee. The work programme is managed and implemented by the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer under the direction of the Chair and Committee.
 - 2.5 The forward work programme for the forthcoming meeting will be presented to Committee on a 6 weekly cycle in order that Members can consider the programme of work; request information is included within the reports, as appropriate and / or make amendments to the work programme.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** The Scrutiny Committee consider the Forward Work Programme for the meeting 13th December 2022, and

- Make any amendments to the topics scheduled for the meetings;
- Suggest any additional invitees that the committee requires to fully consider the reports; and
- Request any additional information to be included with regards to the topics to be discussed.

3.2 **Option 2:** The Scrutiny Committee agree the Forward Programme for the meeting 13th December 2022, as presented.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme – Meeting on 29th November 2022

Place Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Dates	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Cabinet / Council
Tuesday 13 th December 2022	Waste and Recycling Strategy 2022/23 review	Performance Monitoring Members to monitor the performance.	Matthew Stent	Cabinet – 18.01.23
	Replacement Local Development Plan	Pre-Decision To consider progress on the Replacement Local Development Plan and next steps.	Steve Smith	Council – 26.01.23

This page is intentionally left blank