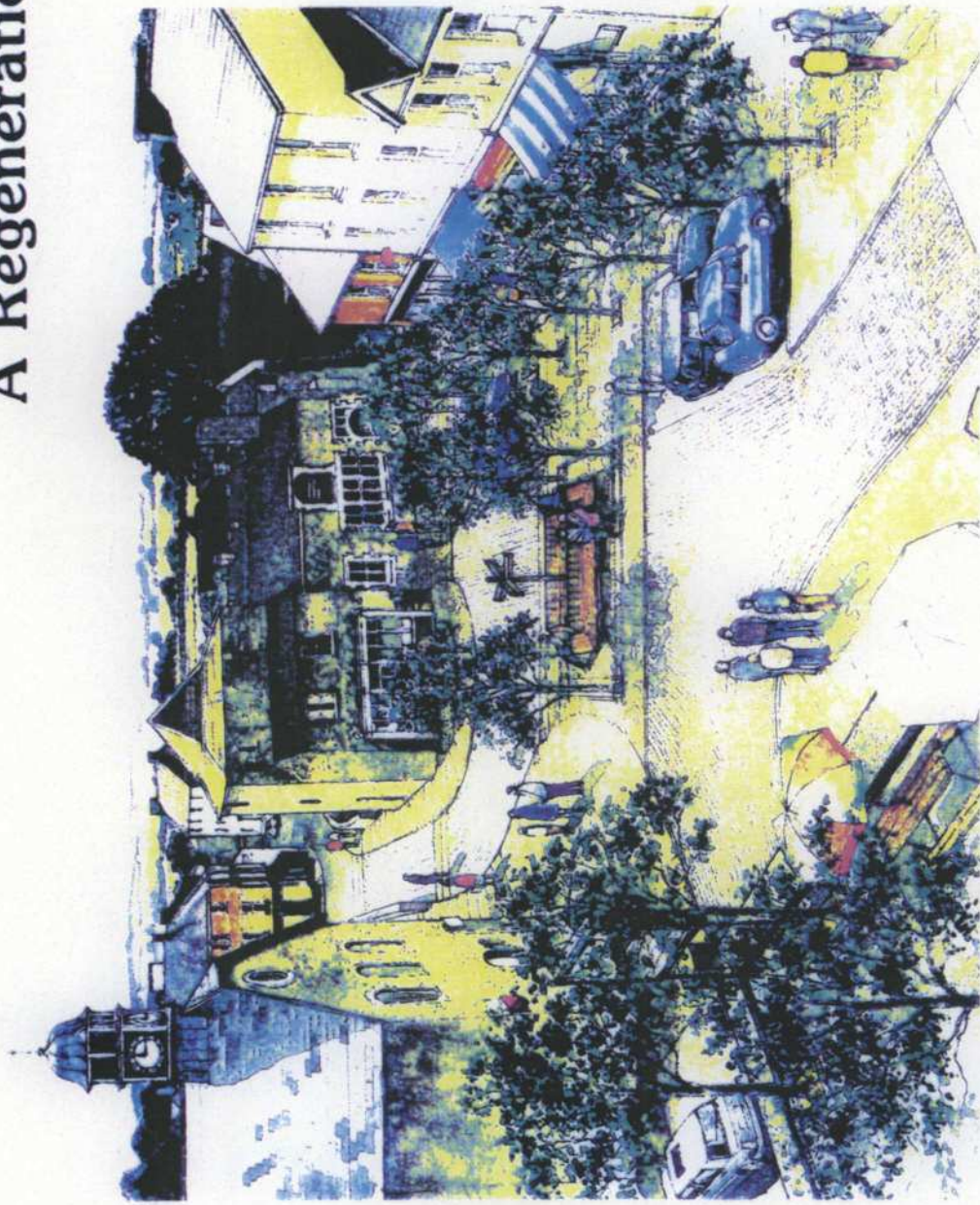


A Regeneration Strategy for TALGARTH 1995 - 2000



Development Board for Rural Wales : Brecknock Borough Council : Powys County Council
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority : Powys Health Care N.H.S. Trust

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In the context of social/economic deprivation the Talgarth ward scores "below average" in the 1991 Revised Deprivation Index. It held that position prior to the malaise associated with imminent hospital closure being apparent.
- The town is already, therefore, in a state of substantial economic decline some 3 years before the full impact of hospital closure is experienced.
- Of 9 retail units within the town centre core, 4 are vacant. Whilst there were 70 businesses and shops in the town in 1985 there are currently only 20.
- Four vulnerable groups can be identified within the town - young people, the elderly, the disabled, and single parents.
- Currently some 530 people (or 435 full-time job equivalents) are employed/allocated to the Mid Wales and Bronllys Hospitals. That generates some £5.8m spending power per annum in the local community. Potentially, when job losses and relocations have been completed, some 225 whole-time equivalent jobs will be lost in the period 1994 to 2000. That equates to a spending power of some £3m.
- **The economic outlook for Talgarth is therefore extremely precarious and fundamentally bleak unless alternative job opportunities are created.**
- An immediate package of regeneration is therefore required and the success of the Strategy depends fundamentally upon the completion of the By-Pass. Equally there is an urgent requirement to assess the feasibility of alternative uses for the Hospital campus.
- If those fundamental issues are appropriately addressed there is reason to be optimistic that the town has the basic impetus, infrastructure and environmental quality, as well as community strength, to survive and to promote itself as a viable and therefore justifiable investment and visitor destination. The town therefore has the capacity, assisted by public sector pump priming assistance, to pull itself up by its bootstraps and to establish itself as an attractive town within which to live and work, and to visit.
- The proposed Action Plan targets environmental improvements; manufacturing and servicing industries; retail and catering; tourism; and business support and training.
- The Action Plan proposes investment in the town to the value of £2.046m between 1995 and 1998, £1.679m of which is in capital projects. The estimated SDS contribution towards such investment is £1.316m. That will create some 170 new full-time jobs and 96 part-time jobs (215 Whole Time Equivalents). At a cost of less than £6120 per whole time equivalent that is exceptionally good value and below the accepted Exchequer cost of unemployment.
- Talgarth needs assistance. It needs it now. In the context of Powys there is no more deserving economic case. The Strategy and Action Plan is therefore recommended for implementation as a matter of priority.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Brief

- 1.1 The Brief for the preparation of the Strategy was:
- To assess the economic profile of the town and to identify the sectoral deficiencies and opportunities that exist within it.
 - To assess the economic impact, direct and indirect, of the imminent closure of the Mid Wales Hospital and the reduction in size of the Bronllys Hospital.
 - To assess the "community profile" and to establish community concerns and aspirations for the future.
 - To undertake a SWOT analysis that consolidated the work already undertaken by the sponsors, and the results of the economic and community analyses referred to above.
 - To undertake a thorough environmental appraisal of the Study Area that identified weaknesses in the existing infrastructure and opportunities, particularly those associated with the environmental consequences of the Talgarth By Pass if and when constructed.
 - To develop an Economic Development Strategy for the town that established objectives for its future and set the context, through a phased Action Plan, for projects and initiatives that are capable of implementation over the next 5 years and are tailor-made to support the Council's 1995/96 Strategic Development Scheme Bid.

1.2 The Brief required, as the end product, a phased strategy of regeneration that identified initiatives and projects that were of high quality, created jobs, encouraged local enterprise and initiative, offered an opportunity for private sector leverage, demonstrated community support and involvement, and had a beneficial impact upon the local environment. The projects were also to be capable of early implementation, without impediment, within the time frame set largely by the SDS Initiative.

Study Objectives

- 1.3 The objectives of the Study were therefore to identify a Programme of Regeneration and a Schedule of Projects capable of successfully attracting SDS and other appropriate public sector funding. In that respect particular emphasis was therefore placed upon seeking to identify joint venture opportunities with local businesses so as to ensure that the town's regeneration was based upon a secure and indigenous economic base that was already committed to the town.
- 1.4 In support of such projects it was recognised during the course of the Study that there was a need to develop a community and social infrastructure that provided training and support for economic growth, and a quality environment that assisted the uplifting of the town's image and identity and, therefore, increased its attractiveness to visitors.

Consultation

- 1.5 The Study embraced an extensive process of consultation with the following organisations and individuals:
- Brecknock Borough Council
 - Development Board for Rural Wales
 - Powys Health Care NHS Trust
 - Brecon Beacons National Park
 - Powys County Council
 - Welsh Office (Highways Directorate)
 - Powys Health Authority
 - Powys TEC
 - Powys Community Transport Forum
 - Talgarth Town Council

Strategy Summary

- 1.12 There are two key events which will have a major impact upon the town's future.

Hospital Closure

1.13 The imminent closure of the Mid Wales Hospital at the end of 1997 and the merger and reduction of jobs at the nearby Bronllys Hospital will mean that Talgarth will experience the largest job loss of its kind in Powys and it is essential, therefore, that the town is recognised as an area of exceptional need, both now and for the remainder of the decade. Indeed the impact on the town will be of no less significance, locally, than the recent job losses at Trawsfynydd and Trecwn.

1.14 There have been significant losses in job opportunities at the two hospitals during recent years. These losses are to continue and culminate in the closure of the Mid Wales Hospital by the end of 1997 and merger/slim-down of Bronllys. The hospital closure will have a dramatic impact upon the employment rate within the local workforce, will extract a very large proportion of its spending power, and will have a consequential serious impact upon the local business community. Indeed it is understood that the projected job loss at Talgarth will be one of the largest ever experienced within the area administered by the Development Board for Rural Wales.

1.15 The town of Talgarth faces the loss of some 270 job opportunities (235 whole time equivalents) at the Mid Wales Hospital itself by the end of 1997, although some of these job opportunities will be available elsewhere. The projected loss of job opportunities for the Talgarth area associated with the closure of the Mid Wales Hospital and merger/slim-down of Bronllys is some 260 persons or 225 whole time equivalents over the next 6 years ie 1994-2000. The town therefore faces the loss of a wages/salary bill of some £3 million per annum. It will therefore experience a substantial loss of local spending power, with significant impact upon local businesses, after a period that has already been characterised by economic stagnation and decline.

1.16 The exact size of the job losses and decline in spending power will depend on a number of factors, particularly the mobility of people to travel from Talgarth to the additional job opportunities created elsewhere

- "Talgarth Action" - A local forum set up specifically to support and monitor action throughout the local community

- Numerous local businesses, individuals and community groups

1.6 A series of meetings were held in the town to which specific interested parties and community leaders were invited, all of whom were selected by the forum that became known during the Study as "Talgarth Action", rather than the consultancy team itself. The Draft Strategy was also displayed and discussed at an Exhibition and Public Meeting held in the town in early July, 1994.

1.7 This Strategy, therefore, has the full support of a very broad cross-section of influence within the town and a strong commitment to its implementation in the event of appropriate funds being made available.

Strategy Partners

1.8 The main partners in the exercise are Brecknock Borough Council, DBRW, Powys County Council, Brecon Beacons National Park and Powys Health Care NHS Trust.

1.9 Their roles have been to jointly fund the preparation of the Strategy and the Borough Council will adopt the role of acting as "agents" in seeking to generate the funds necessary to support it.

Strategy Context

1.10 The Strategy has been prepared to coincide with the extensive consultation exercise currently nearing completion in respect of the Draft Brecon Beacons National Park Plan. That Plan, although only in Draft form at this stage, sets the planning context for the Strategy and there is therefore compatibility between the two. The same applies in respect of the Powys Replacement Structure Plan which was placed on Deposit earlier this summer.

1.11 Whilst there are no significant additional initiatives in place in respect of the Talgarth area the Strategy complements fully the objectives of wider "local" initiatives such as the National Park sponsored Beacons Country Products organisation.

1.20 The essence of urban regeneration is to turn liabilities into assets. Some towns display more potential in that respect than others. Talgarth, fortunately, is a settlement where that potential is high because it has a superb natural townscape, sits within a nationally renowned landscape and tourism base, and has a strong community that appears capable of assisting the process provided it is offered support.

1.21 The primary focus for the Strategy has been on the town centre in the context of both its environment and facilities and, in particular, upon existing and potential employers and employment opportunities either located within it or within striking distance of it. From the consultations undertaken it is clear that Talgarth is a close-knit community that is aware of its decline, conscious that further decline is inevitable without the introduction of corrective initiatives, but one that is capable of successful regeneration without sole or total dependence upon public sector funding assistance. The potential for recovery is therefore high and that a solid commitment is made to its effective and complete implementation over a 5 year period.

in the health services in Powys. There may, also, be future potential opportunities for health and social care requirements locally. Nevertheless, despite such opportunities, and the difficulties in forecasting precisely future losses in job opportunities, the scale of the losses is particularly serious given the town's population. Over the past two years (1992-94) there have been a loss of some 140 whole time equivalent jobs at the Mid Wales/Bronllys Hospitals, and even more will be lost over the coming periods 1994-97 and, probably, 1997-2000. These recent and projected losses in job opportunities for the locality produce an impact which can be compared to the closure of a colliery on a local mining community. To this extent Talgarth is a "one industry" town where that industry has been in decline in recent years, and is about to shed most of its jobs locally.

The By Pass

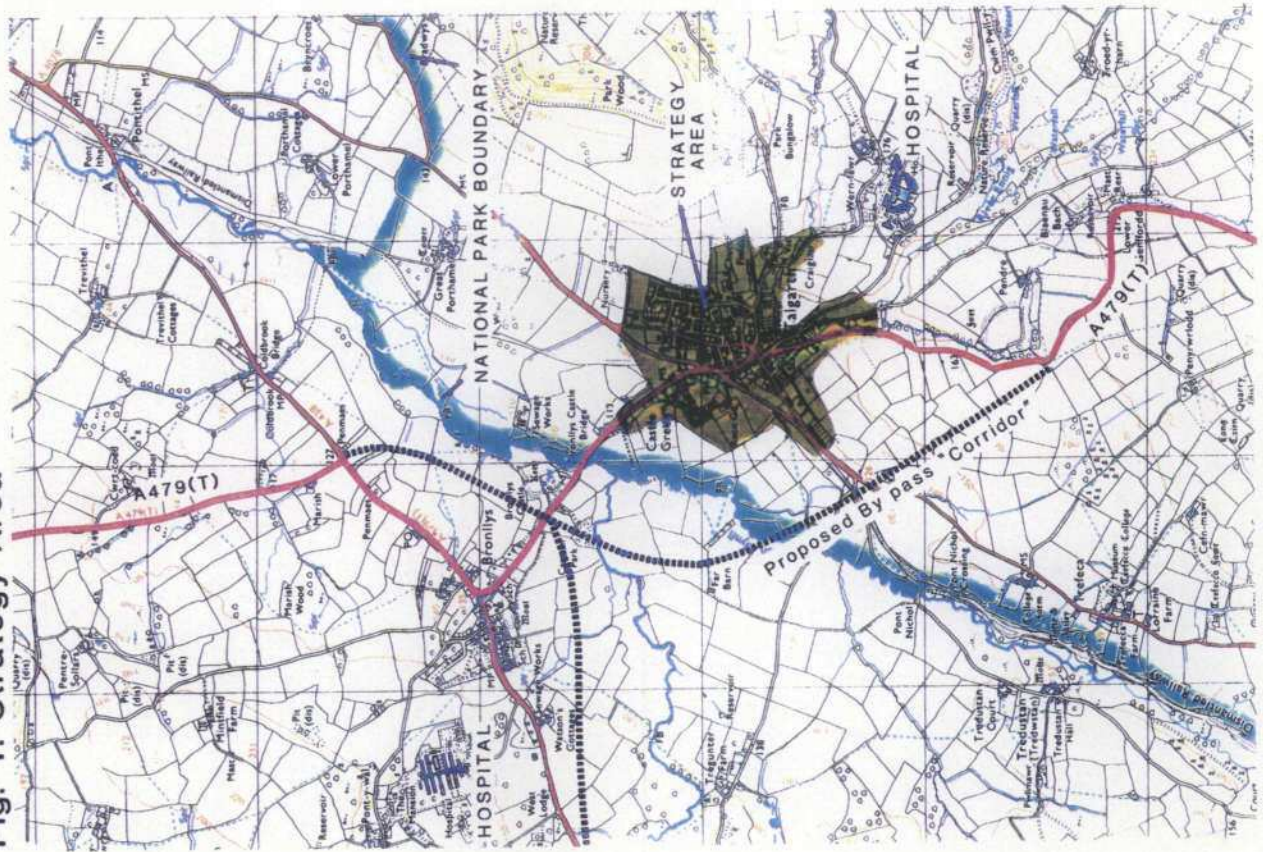
1.17 A preferred route for the By Pass has been selected and a scheme is being prepared. It is intended, subject to the outcome of a public inquiry yet to be arranged, to commence construction in late 1997. The completion of the By Pass is fundamental to the achievement of any substantial and effective environmental upgrading of the town centre.

1.18 Until the trunk route, which currently passes through the core of the town, is diverted along the By Pass, and heavy vehicles are consequently removed from the town centre, the opportunities to improve the environment, upgrade properties, increase visitation to the town, and therefore increase the trading potential of retail premises are limited. The early completion of the By Pass is therefore a fundamental element of the Strategy for the regeneration of the town. Whilst it may not be of direct relevance in the context of SDS funding, its completion will have an indirect impact upon the success or otherwise of SDS funded projects and the two cannot, therefore, be seen in isolation.

The Proposed Strategy

1.19 The Proposed Strategy is, therefore, aimed at a structured long term regeneration that is assisted by a systematic use of public funds generated from various funding sources including the Welsh Office, the DBRW, the National Park and Local Authorities, the Wales Tourist Board and the EC.

Fig. 1: Strategy Area



2. THE STRATEGY AREA

Definition

2.1 The Strategy Area, as shown on Figure 1, is the town of Talgarth, a settlement of 1818 people located within the Brecon Travel to Work Area and the area administered by Brecknock Borough Council. The town, however, also sits within the Brecon Beacons National Park and it is that Authority that is responsible for plan preparation and planning control within the area.

2.2 The town is strategically located and straddles the A479 trunk route, the B4560 and the A438. It is a town, therefore, that experiences substantial through traffic although it is not a distinct or popular destination in itself.

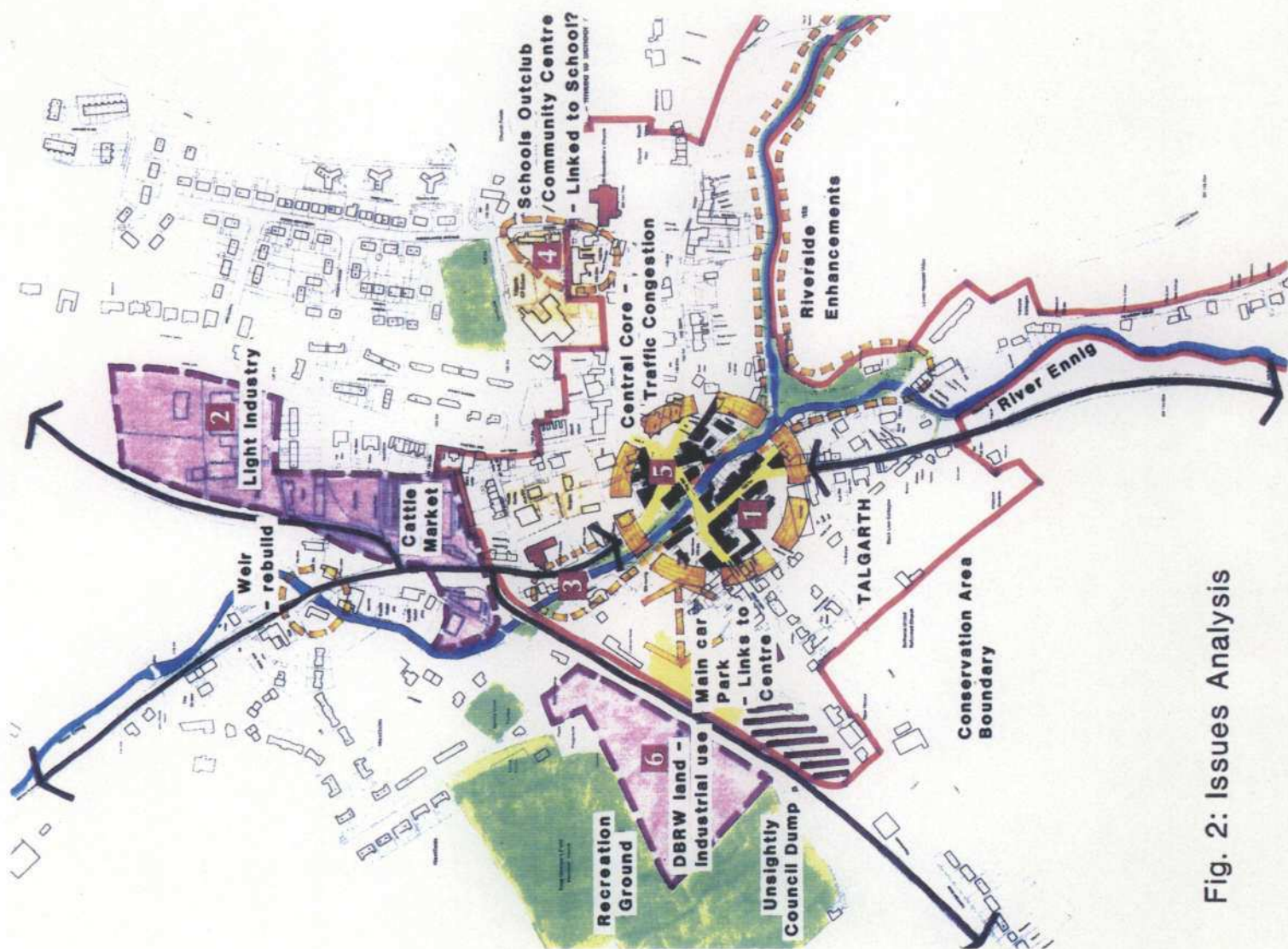
2.3 Talgarth sits at the north western corner of the Black Mountains and to the north east of the central massif of the Brecon Beacons. It therefore nestles within a superb and dramatic rural environment that is visually attractive and popular with visitors, but still manages to retain an air of peace and tranquility. Some of the issues affecting the town's future are illustrated on Figure 2.

Physical/Environmental Context

The Setting

2.4 Talgarth nestles on the north western foothills of the Black Mountains. It is located some 2 miles to the south east of Bronllys, approximately 10 miles from Brecon to the west, and some 20 miles from Abergavenny to the south east. Hay on Wye is located some 10 miles to the east.

2.5 The town itself is not conspicuous within either the immediate or wider landscape. It sits astride the A479 Trunk Route between Abergavenny and Builth Wells and is approached from the south west by the B4560 from Bwlch and from the north east by the A4078 from Hay on Wye. It therefore occupies a strategic pivotal position which generates heavy traffic movement through its narrow streets.



1. TRAFFIC CONGESTION

One of the major factors which deters visitors from stopping in Talgarth. The town's by pass (due 1997/8) will help to relieve congestion and allow environmental improvements to take place in the town centre.

2. ECONOMIC DECLINE

Talgarth's unfashionable image, and the uncertainty surrounding the by pass and the future of the hospital has caused concern in the local community. This has contributed to a decline in confidence, and a withdrawal in investment, of which the closure of so many shops in the centre is just one symptom.

3. IMAGE AND PROFILE

Talgarth has a 'low key image' in the Brecon region partly because of traffic congestion and the hospital and yet it sits in one of the most outstanding strategic locations in the National Park. Its profile needs to be raised as a tourist/service centre for the Black Mountains.

4. COMMUNITY SERVICES

The young, elderly and disabled appear to the most disadvantaged in the Talgarth community. The lack of public transport outside peak periods and the lack of a designated community centre/schools outclub' only serve to isolate these groups. The subsidy of such services needs to be a priority of any economic strategy.

5. TOWN CENTRE FACILITIES

Talgarth has many important and attractive attributes (its buildings, spaces and river) but little investment has been made to enhance them. Talgarth has the potential to become a 'key' tourist centre, but a coordinated enhancement strategy must be devised to make it a more convenient, comfortable and enjoyable place to visit and stay.

Fig. 2: Issues Analysis

The Town

- 2.6 The Town rises gently from west to east and is visually dominated by the tower of St Gwendoline's Church and the dramatic backdrop of the northern ridge of the Black Mountains.
- 2.7 The central part of the Town displays a medieval street pattern made up of well-enclosed narrow streets, lanes, and mature stone walls. One of the town's greatest assets is the River Ennig which flows through the centre under the river bridge at The Mill and north towards its confluence with the River Dulas. The river is a prominent resource within the townscape especially within the vicinity of the Bank and Bronllys Road where it has a character reminiscent of a Cotswold village with large, well maintained, grassy banks. To the south of the town's main bridge the river has a less formed appearance. Its banks are overgrown with scrub and young trees which shroud its appearance from the town centre.

- 2.8 The town therefore has an attractive and historic townscape which is unusually intact. The central area has been designated a Conservation Area and contains a number of prominent Listed Buildings. The Town Hall is currently under a programme of refurbishment assisted by Town Improvement Grant. Unfortunately the other prominent building adjoining the square, the Tower, is vacant and in need of occupation and refurbishment.

Land Use

- 2.9 The DBRW undertook a Land-Use Survey of the town in February 1994. This showed that, of the 266 units surveyed, 68% of the ground floors were in residential use, 5.3% were used for community purposes, 3.6% were in recreation use (hotels, pubs and clubs), 6% (16 units) were in retail/financial/small business use, 7.9% were agricultural and 7.1% were unoccupied. That unoccupancy related to 19 units. In addition to the above there is also the livestock market located to the east of the Junction of the A4560 and the A479 Trunk Road. Naturally the bulk of the retail and recreational uses were concentrated largely around the town square and Regent Street which are the two main retail areas within the town.

Image

- 2.10 Talgarth has a very attractive historic townscape which has remained largely intact, but its image is tarnished by its general poor state of repair, especially in the more conspicuous locations in the town centre. In some senses this may be a product of the stigma of being associated with a mental hospital, which combined with its relatively economic buoyant (and consequently mobile) hospital workforce has deterred pressure for speculative development in the centre.
- 2.11 The town possesses a quite distinct architectural and urban heritage which has been by-passed by the ravages of development that other similar sized towns have suffered in the last 20-30 years, and this may be a result of its unfashionable reputation and image.

Through Traffic

- 2.12 Talgarth's relative decline as a commercial centre has probably been exacerbated by the fragmentation of some of the town's key components. In this context the impact of through traffic on the A479 Trunk Road has probably done more to 'carve up' the town centre and, through traffic congestion, deterred passing traffic from stopping to spend in the town. It is a commonly held view that the traffic congestion encourages trunk road traffic to avoid the town altogether and to travel the extra distance via Brecon before travelling north to Builth Wells.

Parking

- 2.13 The lack of convenient visitor parking in the Town Centre also discourages people from alighting in Talgarth. The town car park is completely divorced from the centre with no profile to the trunk road traffic and its pedestrian connections are woefully inadequate in terms of signage and routes.

Economic Context

Employment Profile

- 2.14 Talgarth is a small but significant town with a 1991 population of 1818 people. While the population of Brecknock Borough Council increased

by 8.9% between 1971 and 1991, the population of Talgarth declined by 4.7%.

2.15 Although Brecknock Borough has a reasonably favourable position in the context of the Wales ranking of Districts in respect of social/economic deprivation, lying within the top half of favourable areas, the Talgarth ward stands in marked contrast in that, of the 908 wards within Wales included in the 1991 Revised Deprivation Index, Talgarth scores "below average". Table 1 demonstrates the extent of that deprivation compared to nearby communities such as Builth Wells, Bronllys, Crickhowell, and Hay on Wye. Of particular significance is the fact that such deprivation existed in 1991 at a time when the malaise associated with imminent hospital closure was not known. The results of closure will therefore clearly exacerbate the situation.

2.16 Talgarth, however, is located within the Brecon Travel to Work Area which had an overall unemployment rate of 6.1% in April 1984, one of the lowest rates in Wales. Accordingly it is not designated as an Assisted Area for purposes of regional policy aid. However, it does have Objective 5b status in the context of European assistance. A range of regeneration programmes are available which remain operative until 1999. These include ERDF, ESF, and EAGGF and could all apply to Talgarth.

2.17 Between April 1990 and April 1994 the level of unemployment in the Talgarth ward increased by 125%, from 20 to 45 persons, compared to an increase of 48% for Wales as a whole. Of particular concern is the fact that, of those unemployed persons in April 1994, 89% were men compared to a corresponding figure for Wales as a whole of 78%. The loss of job opportunities associated with the Hospital closure/merger will exacerbate that problem of predominantly male unemployment.

2.18 The rate of unemployment facing the Talgarth and Hay on Wye planning area in April 1994 was 8.9% for men and 2.6% for women. For Talgarth itself with a population of 1800 and some 600 economically active residents, the loss of some 255 job opportunities (full-time equivalents) at the two hospitals can therefore be expected to have a dramatic impact on unemployment in the locality unless alternative job opportunities are created.

2.19 The number of vacant shops in the town centre vividly illustrates its run down state. Of 9 retail units, including the bank, within the town centre

TABLE 1
WARD ANALYSIS OF DEPRIVATION IN WALES
BRECKNOCK B.C.

WARD	Ranking	
	Total	Wales
Aber-Craf	1.54	264
Bronllys	-4.70	844
Builth	-4.51	833
Bwlch	-3.36	756
Crickhowell	-4.32	818
Cwm-Twrch	4.14	131
Enwood	-2.02	624
Felin-Fach	-5.38	871
Gwernyfed	-0.58	466
Hay	-5.18	865
Llanafanfawr	-1.91	611
Llanfynach	-2.13	635
Llangamarch	-1.83	600
Llangatfcock	0.46	340
Llangorse	-3.78	787
Llangynidr	-5.86	882
Llanwrtyd Wells	0.14	389
Llywel	-2.88	714
Maescar	-2.06	627
St David Within	-1.76	590
St. John	-1.58	569
St. Mary	-3.22	746
Talgarth	0.12	391
Talybont-on-Usk	-1.23	531
Tawe-Uchaf	2.21	221
The Vale of Gwyney	-1.74	587
Ynyscadwyn	2.36	208
Yscir	-5.15	863
Ystradfellte	3.83	139
Ystradgynlais	3.33	159

Total Number of Wards in Wales 908
Total Number of Wards in District 30

Talgarth's Position in District 9th Worst

Positive Score - Worse than Wales Average (i.e. Talgarth)
Negative Score - Better than Wales Average

core itself, four are currently vacant. There are additionally many other vacant buildings within the town and it is quite clear that the town is suffering from a lack of investment. Significantly, whilst in 1985 there were 70 businesses and shops, by 1994 the number had fallen to 20. The recent stagnation and decline of Talgarth has been due in part to recent significant losses in job opportunities at the two hospitals (some 140 whole-time equivalents 1992-94). The prospect of even greater losses in the future underlies the need for action now to regenerate the local economy and to make preparation for the closure/merger programme.

2.20 Consultation with community groups has identified the extent of social need and disadvantage within four vulnerable groups - young people, the elderly, the disabled, and single parents. Particular problems within the town are a lack of social facilities for young people aged 11 to 18 and the disadvantage to certain less privileged groups caused by lack of public transport. In that latter respect the railway service closed in 1962 and there is no bus service to or from Talgarth after 6pm.

2.21 Talgarth is therefore a community in need of regeneration and economic revitalisation in the short term, but particularly in the medium to long term given the proposed scale of job losses associated with hospital closure and rationalisation. In fact, in many respects Talgarth has the economic, social and environmental characteristics of many valley towns in industrial South Wales which are manifested in population decline, unemployment problems, job loss, lack of investment, poor image, vacant shops, run-down town centre, vulnerable/socially disadvantaged groups within the community, and poor public transport provision.

Economic Impact of Proposed Hospital Closure/Merger

2.22 At the present time the staffing associated with the Mid Wales Hospital is some 270 persons or 235 whole time equivalents. The complete closure of the hospital is expected by the end of 1997, with the majority of the job losses expected in the 1996-97 period. It should be recognised, however, (as already noted above) that there have been significant job losses in recent years and that these are on-going.

2.23 The current staffing levels for both the Mid Wales Hospital and Bronllys Hospital are shown in Table 2. There are currently 270 people employed/allocated to the Mid Wales Hospital (235 full-time job equivalents) and 260 at Bronllys (200 full-time job equivalents). There

TABLE 2 STAFFING AT THE HOSPITALS JULY 1994

HOSPITAL	PERSONS	WTE*
Mid Wales	270	235
Bronllys	260	200
TOTAL	530	435

* Whole Time Equivalents
 NB. Figures cover both patient related and non-patient related staff. Figures do not include corporate / central service departments eg. finance, personnel etc.

TABLE 3 JOB LOSSES AT THE MID WALES AND BRONLLYS HOSPITALS PAST & PROJECTED TRENDS

	PERSONS	WTE*
1992 - 1994	160	140
1994 - 2000	260	225
TOTAL	420	365

* Whole Time Equivalents

are, therefore, some 530 people or 435 full-time job equivalents associated with the two Hospitals. These figures cover both patient-related and non-patient related staff. It is expected that the bulk of the job losses will be associated with the patient-related staff.

2.24 A major concern in respect of the proposed hospital closure/merger is the loss of local spending power associated with job losses. The New Earnings Survey 1993 reveals that the average level of earnings in Wales is in excess of £15,000 per man and £12,000 per woman. On the basis of average earnings, therefore, the spending power of some 500 people currently employed at the two Hospitals, in terms of over 400 whole time equivalents (Table 2) is some £5.8 million per annum. That figure ignores other indirect "multiplier" effects elsewhere in the community. It should be recognised, however, that due to the scale and specialised nature of the two hospitals in caring for the elderly and partially ill the level of earnings is actually above the all-Wales average. Consequently the figures quoted are more than likely under-estimates.

2.25 The expected programme of losses in employment opportunities covering the two Hospitals is complex and not yet finalised. For example, the current figure of 270 staff associated with the Mid Wales Hospital covers both patient-related and non-patient related staff. Whilst none of these jobs will be located/attached to the Mid Wales Hospital by the end of 1997, many of the non-patient related staff posts (eg including central service staff who will be based elsewhere in the local travel to work area) will remain unaffected by the proposed merger of Mid Wales and Bronllys. The Powys Health Care NHS Trust has estimated the maximum job losses associated with the closure/merger programme at 177 persons or 154 whole time equivalents for the period June 1994-end 1997, and a further 70-75 persons (60-65 whole-time equivalents) could be lost by the year 2000. These figures are summarised in Table 3. The potential loss of some 225 whole time equivalent jobs in the period 1994-2000 equates to a wages/income bill and spending power of some £3 million.

2.26 The projected job losses associated with the two hospitals are based on a number of assumptions regarding future health care facilities/initiatives. These include:

- Reduction and stabilisation of long stay residents at Bronllys by the year 2000;

- Resettlement of the Mental Handicap Learning Difficulty Unit at Bronllys into the community by the end of 1997;

- Changes in staffing at the Trust Headquarters and some central departments subject to cost improvement programmes over the period.

2.27 The scenario for the year 2000 is therefore:

- A closed Mid Wales Hospital at Talgarth by the end of 1997;
- A slim-down at Bronllys providing accommodation for long-term elderly residents.

2.28 The precise number of future job opportunities associated with a merged/slim-down Bronllys and increased care in the community services/initiatives is difficult to forecast. However, the future job losses shown in Table 3 appear to be "best estimates" at the present time. The impact upon Talgarth, however, is clear. There will be further substantial losses in job opportunities for the town associated with the hospitals' closure/merger to add to those which have already taken place over the past two years.

2.29 The economic outlook for Talgarth is therefore extremely precarious and fundamentally bleak unless alternative job opportunities are created.

The Tourism Context

Tourism Trends

2.30 Jobs in tourism-related industries increased by 39% between 1981 and 1991, and there are also some 12,000 self-employed people in the industry, indicating the potential of tourism for small business development.

2.31 Traditional resort destinations within the Principality have suffered for twenty years from the growth of the overseas package holiday. At the same time there has been an increase in visitors to non resort areas, particularly to areas of high landscape quality. A high proportion are taken as short breaks or additional holidays. While the volume of these visits may not match the lost markets of resort destinations, they are at

a more appropriate scale for rural communities and are beneficial in a number of other ways:

- Overall, there is a tendency towards higher spending, higher socio-economic groups.
 - There is evidence of higher than average activity at either end of the summer season (ie Spring and Autumn) particularly through short breaks and additional holidays.
 - Activity is less weather-dependent than in resort areas.
 - Activity may generate several repeat visits per annum.
 - Activity often generates long term 'destination loyalty' which can produce repeat visits over very long periods.
- 2.32 The latest WTB Strategy (Tourism 2000, 1994) identifies that Wales is well placed to capture short holiday domestic traffic, and that day visitor tourism is becoming more important.

The Regional Tourism Context

2.33 The Brecon Beacons National Park has foci of tourism leisure interest mainly in the Brecon Beacons proper and, to a lesser extent, in the Black Mountains. There are also a number of urban foci, most notably Abergavenny, Crickhowell, Brecon and Hay on Wye. The last two centres have been particularly successful in developing individualistic tourism profiles.

2.34 Not unexpectedly, visitors to the area display many of the characteristics associated with emerging rather than traditional markets, and a Visitor Survey conducted by Brecknock Borough Council in 1993 revealed that:

- 68% of respondents gave peace, quiet and scenery as the most appealing aspect of their holiday, with the remaining 32% giving specialist interests and activities. The most significant activity was walking, given by 12% of respondents.

- 67.5% of respondents stayed for 1-4 nights, which can be compared with an all-Wales average of 38% of visitors staying 1-3 nights.
- 61.3% of respondents were from ABC1 socio-economic groups, compared with an all-Wales average of 57%. The overall picture was one of higher than average discretionary income, and this is supported by Main Family Income findings where almost 50% of respondents fell within the £15,000-£35,000 bracket and 16% earned more than £35,000 pa.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that the area has experienced growth in shoulder season and year round trade.
- More than 50% of respondents were on repeat visits to the area.
- 44% of respondents used serviced accommodation, compared with an all-Wales average of 19%. This has considerable implications for the number of jobs dependent on the industry.
- Around 15% of respondents were from overseas source regions, compared with an all-Wales average of 8%.

2.35 It is therefore apparent that the region is particularly well positioned to attract staying visitors from those markets which have been emerging as significant over the past 15 years.

2.36 Talgarth is an integral part of an area of superb landscape quality, with the Wye Valley to the north, Llangorse Lake to the south west and a series of attractive wooded valleys which converge on the town and lead upwards to the magnificent upland backdrop. The town and surrounding area are rich in comparatively unspoilt architectural detail and there remains evidence of large country estates, some of which were intimately involved with mainstream Welsh heritage and culture. It would be expected, therefore, that the town performed as a strong tourism base where much of the employment was tourism based. That, however, is not the case.

2.37 Preliminary bedspace statistics for the immediate area of Talgarth exclude occupier-owned static vans, which eliminates most of the accommodation in the immediate vicinity of Talgarth. Accommodation around Llangorse

Lake is also excluded. Nonetheless, the available staying visitor accommodation represents almost 30% of all the bedspaces (9,309) identified in Brecknock. The addition of occupier-owned static vans and the accommodation base around Llangorse will obviously increase the proportional level of distribution local to Talgarth.

2.38 It is evident, therefore, that there is a good distribution of accommodation locally. This includes two large caravan parks and considerable and varied bedstock in the foothills of the Black Mountains, including farmhouse and other types of serviced accommodation, self catering, and activity holiday accommodation associated with riding centres and PGL Activity Holidays. The accommodation base within the town, however, is low with only the Old Masons Arms verified by the WTB. Nevertheless, unusual niche products exist in the form of the Black Mountains Gliding Club and Welsh Horse Drawn Holidays, which provides traditional gipsy caravans for the touring of quiet country lanes.

2.39 Talgarth is strategically placed in the context of road communications. The A479/A470 is a major route between South East and Mid/North West Wales; and the A438/A470 links the West Midlands with the Brecon Beacons and South/South West Wales. The same road network also serves more local leisure traffic, whether touring in and around the Wye Valley or circumnavigating the Black Mountain massif.

2.40 The region has very few day visitor attractions and none which are performing at any significant level. This perhaps explains the success of local towns in attracting day visits which are, to some extent, functioning as surrogate attractions on the strength of their character, vibrancy and a developing product mix.

2.41 It is surprising, therefore, that the town of Talgarth has not benefited more from the surrounding leisure activity. There is a limited accommodation base, of variable quality, within the town and there is little evidence of retail/catering activity targeted at the leisure and tourism markets. The lack of exploitation is probably due on the one hand to the trunk road which has created substantial through-traffic problems; and on the other, from the major employment opportunities which have, historically, been provided by the Mid Wales Hospital. Ironically, therefore, it appears that the traditional healthy employment situation has, perhaps, contributed to an economic decline within the town. As incomes and personal mobility have increased, retail spending has been attracted

away from the town, and this leakage has not been replaced by attracting the tourism markets which appear to be available.

2.42 Additionally, the accessibility problem is exacerbated by a lack of convenient parking adjacent to the shops within the town centre and the fact that the existing town car park, whilst having substantial capacity, is poorly related to the town centre and has no effective pedestrian link with it. Whilst congestion generates an unattractive pedestrian shopping environment that situation is compounded by the frequent inability of those wishing to stop to do so and an inconvenient parking arrangement which in itself acts as a deterrent. Consequently retail stores are essentially unattractive, particularly to the visitor market, and have little encouragement to carry out improvements because the physical infrastructure of the town cannot accommodate visitors conveniently and in comfort.

2.43 On the positive side, however, there are substantial leisure resources within easy reach of the town; access to a varied and high quality countryside which includes a number of valleys/streams/waterfalls (notably Cwm Pwll-y-Wrach); small cameo features (eg Llanelen); high moorland below the head ridge of the Black Mountains; and the long valleys and ridges of the main Black Mountain Massif itself.

2.44 There is evidence of leisure use of those resources and Talgarth has traditionally been a popular walking centre because of its substantial network of public and permissive paths, whether in the lower valleys or leading to the mountain upland. That market sector still exists but not in the volumes of the past and some of the reason for that may be due to the lack of rationalisation, adequate way-marking and supporting information. The better interpretation and improvement of the footpath/information regime would therefore greatly assist the increased positioning of the area as an outdoor leisure resource, and Talgarth as a natural regional centre.

2.45 It should also be noted that the historic reasons for visiting Talgarth have largely disappeared. In its heyday it hosted 8 fairs per annum in addition to a regular Friday market and hiring fairs. The Horse Fair was considered to be "the finest in the Kingdom" and the Great Christmas Fair was a significant annual event. There was a long tradition of ploughing matches and the region was a centre for heavy horse breeding. None of those traditional activities, however, currently exists and

3. NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Need

opportunities, therefore, to generate substantial day visitation for specific events is lost.

2.46 The only exception is the Gliding Centre which has an UK wide reputation and regularly attracts visitors from the Home Counties and South of England. The venue is particularly attractive not only because of the scenic character of the locality but, in particular, the local topography and thermal conditions allow winter flying, an activity that is far more restricted on low-lying airfields. The Centre therefore constitutes a significant attractor of both day and staying visitors and generates considerable patronage for local catering establishments, particularly during the weekend periods and when there are special events.

2.47 An unsuccessful attempt has been made in the past, and now abandoned, to establish a touring caravan base at the site. The remaining facilities at the Centre are extremely basic and the facility is in need of a new clubhouse and, ideally, improved hangar accommodation. Such improvements are required to support and sustain the existing patronage and it is not anticipated that they would necessarily increase visitation to the site appreciably. As the centre, however, makes an important contribution to the local tourism economy its sustenance and continued prosperity is an important element of any future economic strategy.

3.1 The fundamental need in respect of generating a prosperous and optimistic future for the town is therefore to address the employment loss and replace it with sustainable job opportunities. In order to be successful in that respect economic initiatives will need to be supported, and in some cases underpinned, by environmental enhancement throughout the town. The primary development opportunities that are identified are shown diagrammatically on Figure 3.

The Economic Potential

3.2 The £55m Welsh Office SDS package is aimed at the revitalisation of Welsh communities and, in 1994/95, 32% of the total was allocated to projects in rural areas. The case in support of Talgarth is strong in that:

- It is a significant town that has for some years been in decline.
- It is located within a vulnerable rural area.
- It is facing a severe job loss which will be the most significant to be experienced in Powys since the 1970's.

3.3 The case for assistance is therefore powerful and the town displays a potential for cost effective regeneration because:

- It has a superb natural townscape;
- It sits within a nationally renowned landscape and tourism base;
- It has a strong community that appears capable of assisting the process provided it is offered support.

3.4 Its image, however, does not reflect its potential because of its recent inability to identify new businesses/entrepreneurs to generate employment within the town, and the difficulty that it has experienced in the sale of reasonably priced new private houses.

3.5 An attempt to improve its visual image has recently been initiated by the establishment by the National Park Authority of a Historic Town Scheme which offers grants up to a maximum of 50% for the repair and restoration of historic buildings within the recently established Conservation Area. It specifically excludes 'modern' buildings built post

OPPORTUNITIES

- A. Consider short term traffic management in advance of the by pass to make the Town Centre a more convenient and comfortable place to stop:**
1. Pedestrianise in phases the town square.
 2. Create direct and convenient pedestrian links to town centre from car park.
 3. Improve signage.
- B. Build upon the positive aspects of Talgarth's facilities and services to enhance its role and image in the Brecon region:**
1. Promote the cattle market/local manufacturers.
 2. Promote street market/events' on recreation field.
 3. Develop National Park Visitor Centre in car park; Tower Building as local museum.
 4. Promote Town Scheme to encourage property improvements.
- C. Enhance physical attributes of the town centre to encourage climate of investment:**
1. Enhance river environment.
 2. Landscape and repave town square.
 3. Landscape car park and improve signage and links to town centre.
 4. Rebuild weir in River Ennig to hold water adjacent to town centre.
- D. Build strong economic and social infrastructure through creation of Local Business Enterprise Agency:**
1. Appoint local Community Business Coordinator.
 2. Possibly convert Great Barn to Enterprise Centre and workshops and Telecentre.
 3. Create independent 'schools outclub'/community centre.
- E. Encourage inward investment and development of DRBW owned land on Llangorse Road for international 'green industries'.**

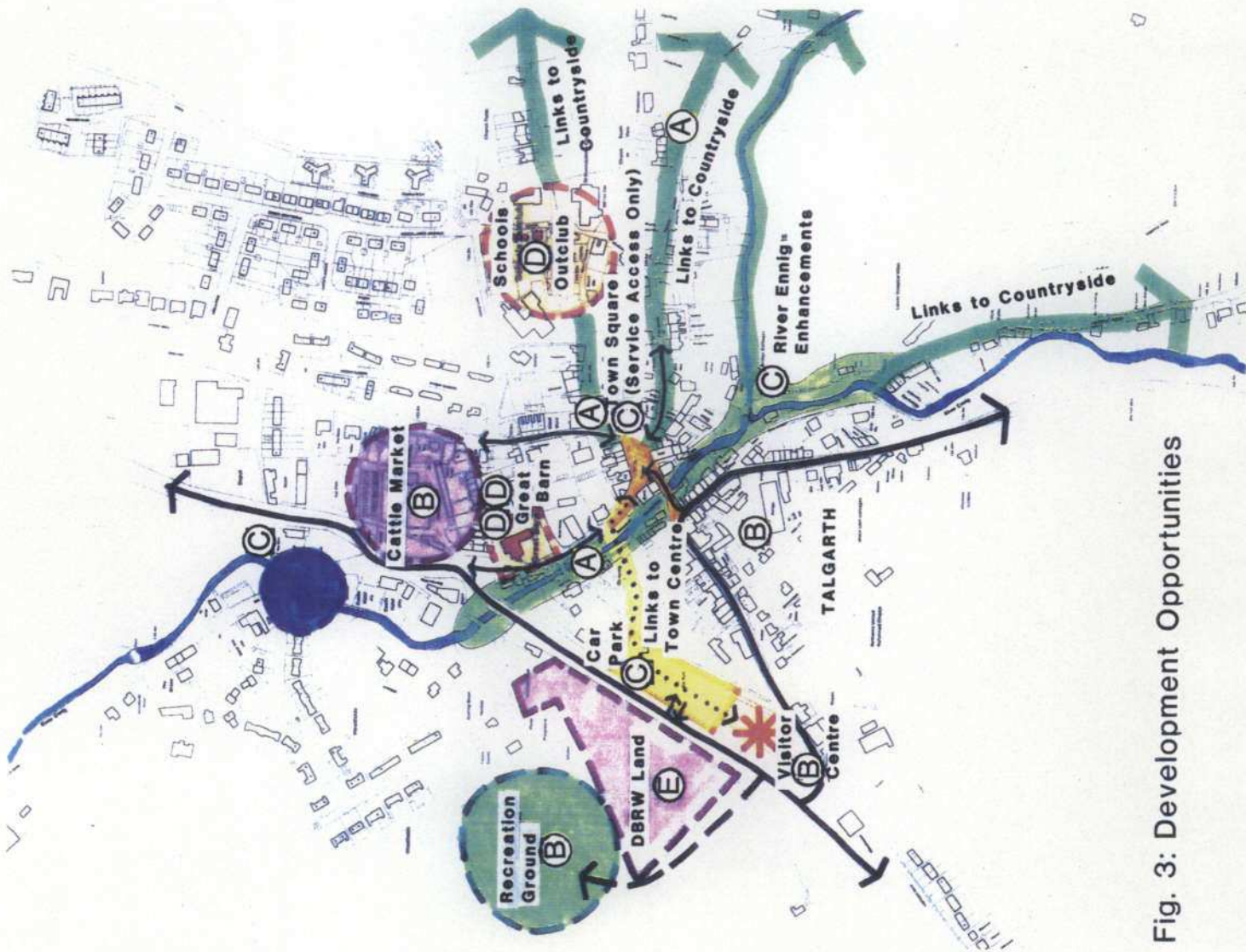


Fig. 3: Development Opportunities

1914 and those belonging to Public Boards or Utilities, and to large private organisations and companies. The SDS initiative offers the potential to extend that opportunity by the declaration of Commercial Improvement Zones aimed specifically at assisting commercial property owners to upgrade the elevations and structural fabric of their premises.

3.6 The town currently supports in excess of 20 voluntary organisations and societies which is an illustration of its underlying strength as a community. Despite its economic decline in recent years the town has a strong social infrastructure, but that strength will be seriously threatened by the closure/merger of the hospitals unless alternative job opportunities are identified which provide optimism and demonstrate that Talgarth is a community worth investing in.

3.7 The economic case for the regeneration of Talgarth is therefore strong, both in the context of special need and the potential for achieving tangible improvements. For the remainder of this decade the closure/merger/contraction of the Mid Wales and Bronllys Hospitals will be the main job loss challenge facing Powys. The time to address that job loss is not when it has occurred but in the years leading up to it. It is paramount, therefore, that a strategy is developed which puts in place a series of economic and business development initiatives that create new job opportunities, training, and guidance in readiness for late 1997. The economic case for Talgarth is therefore not only strong but immediate.

The Environmental Enhancement Potential

3.8 To support that economic case Talgarth needs a coordinated environmental enhancement strategy that creates a framework for targeting investment into the physical environment. Such a strategy must respond to the town's operational deficiencies and create an all-embracing package of phased initiatives which:

- Maximise impact and create an enthusiasm for action amongst the community.
- Develop an ambience in the Town Centre such that it is convenient, comfortable and stimulating to both residents and visitors.
- Stimulate private investment in the Town Centre.

3.9 Unless such conditions prevail there will be little likelihood of existing businesses being encouraged to invest in Talgarth, let alone a prospect of attracting new commercial investment from outside the town.

By Pass Proposal

3.10 The design of a preferred route is being prepared with the purpose of relieving traffic congestion in both Talgarth and Bronllys. The route diverts off the Trunk Route south of Talgarth and skirts its western perimeter, crossing the B4560 at the western extremity of Trefecca Road. It then proceeds north, by-passing Bronllys to the east before linking up with the A438/A479 (T) Junction to the east of the village. A link is also proposed to the south of Bronllys between the A438 west of the village and the new By Pass. There is a Welsh Office commitment to the By Pass route with a start date "programmed" for late 1997. The Bronllys link does not form a part of the By Pass and will be funded by Powys County Council or its successor Authority.

3.11 A public inquiry is to be held to consider primarily the location and nature of junctions along the proposed route. A date is not as yet fixed. The implications of the route for Talgarth are substantial in that it will remove all through trunk route traffic from the town centre, particularly heavy vehicles. That will create a substantial environmental benefit and release opportunities for significant environmental enhancement works and traffic management measures within the town centre.

3.12 Traffic will be directed into the town from the west from a new junction to be created on the Trefecca Road, at a point within direct view of the existing town car park. Once implemented, therefore, the car park will take on a far more significant and prominent role provided it is well signposted, attractive, and readily accessible to the town centre for pedestrians.

3.13 There is a fundamental need for the By Pass to be completed as a matter of priority. Until it is opened only limited environmental improvements can be achieved within the town centre. Significantly, however, it is only when such improvements have been implemented and the town centre becomes a safe, convenient and pleasant place in which to shop and browse, that commercial confidence will return to it. Only then will the town be able to promote itself as a legitimate tourist and day trip destination.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Objectives

4.1 The Strategic Action Plan is aimed at satisfying the following key objectives:

- A. To address at an early stage the impact of hospital closure, to stem further economic decline and to commence the process of regeneration.
- B. To focus upon realistic projects that address in the early years current opportunities and problems, particularly those opportunities that offer the prospect of employment protection, employment creation, and skills training.
- C. To enhance the image of the town, create a reason to visit, create a reason for repeat visits based upon the quality of the environment and the experience, and to create a breadth of high quality visitor services.
- D. To enhance the trading potential of existing retail and catering units and to establish the framework for the reopening of vacant premises and the attraction of new businesses.
- E. To promote sustainable opportunities that emanate where possible from existing businesses, local enterprise and initiative.
- F. To use public sector funds to assist the leverage of private sector investment.
- G. To create, through voluntary sector support and community partnership, a long term "sense of ownership" in the town committed to its regeneration and future economic stability.

4.2 There is, however, one fundamental objective which must be accorded immediate priority. It is:

- H. To remove the uncertainty surrounding the impact of the hospital closure and to seek an early decision regarding the

future of the hospital premises. Uncertainty is a key factor in the town's recent economic and social decline and it is essential, therefore, to clarify formally the terms and programme for closure. However, there will then be an urgent need to address what, if any, alternative uses the premises can be put to. That issue will not be easy to resolve whilst the access to the site remains as at present. It is the opinion of the Study Team that an alternative use will prove extremely difficult, nigh impossible, to identify particularly for the whole site whilst the current access arrangements prevail. In such circumstances only a low volume traffic generator is likely to be acceptable to the County Surveyor. If no such occupier is identified an early commitment should be made either to the creation of a new access, at what will probably be significant environmental and funding cost, or measures should be taken to clear and reinstate the site to agricultural use. Whilst the latter option would clearly not be particularly attractive to the Health Authority the town's regeneration would not be assisted by either the uncertainty or the existence of a gradually dilapidating complex on the edge of the town. Urgent action must be taken, therefore, to resolve the issue so that early action can be taken following the final vacation of the complex.

The Strategy - Local Economic Development

4.3 While tourism can clearly play an important role in the future economy of Talgarth it is not the single solution to the economic difficulties facing the town. The mainstream of long term economic development must therefore lie elsewhere. The strategy must be one that relies upon core economic initiatives that create a diverse and sustainable economic base such as workshop expansion, the creation of a business centre and advisory unit, and the introduction of new manufacturing opportunities. That, in turn, should then be buttressed by strategies aimed at improving the social infrastructure of the town on the one hand, and improving the environment of the town and therefore its capacity to act as a tourism resource of some substance, on the other.

4.4 The Strategy that emerges addresses the social infrastructure of the town and aims to:

- Improve public transport provision especially during off peak periods when no current service exists;
- Support and develop a schools "out club" facility that is of direct benefit in providing opportunities, particularly for mothers, to seek employment and training opportunities in the knowledge that their children are well cared for;
- Mobilise the voluntary sector to take the leading role in steering progress and in having a direct input into environmental and community schemes.

4.5 Typically, it is the young, the elderly, and disabled that are disadvantaged in Talgarth and the creation of a more robust social infrastructure that is particularly targeted towards these groups will help sustain a more viable and vibrant community within the town.

4.6 Tourism and environmental strategies can make a significant contribution to the overall Strategy for the town by:

- Improving its image and identity;
- Maximising the opportunities that will arise from the completion of the By Pass;
- Capitalising upon the town's substantial heritage and attractive townscape;
- Increasing facilities and amenities for visitors and the local population alike;
- Creating better and more well defined access corridors within the town (eg between the car park and the town centre);
- Linking the town with its superb mountain hinterland;
- By developing an events strategy and creating a visitor centre that generate new reasons to visit the town on the one hand and opportunities for stopping through and touring traffic, and guiding it into the town, on the other.

4.7 The core strategy is aimed at creating as quickly as possible alternative job opportunities and training initiatives as direct compensation for substantial job loss to be experienced at the hospital. The advantage of that approach is that:

- It is largely indigenous;
- Actual projects and companies/organisations capable and willing to participate have been identified;
- There are expansion opportunities already identified within the town which require support, advice and a "kick start";
- And there are other public sector funded initiatives that are tailor-made to meet those immediate challenges. Consequently, opportunities exist to achieve significant private sector and public sector leverage and to create significant job opportunities.

4.8 The Strategy therefore encompasses a phased programme of initiatives based on Short, Medium and Long Term Opportunities.

5. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Strategy Funding and Project Categorisation

- 5.1 It is not to be expected that any Strategy for the regeneration of a town will be fundable from one source only. Accordingly, whilst this Strategy document has been prepared specifically to support an SDS bid for 1995/96 (and beyond) there are, not unnaturally, projects identified that are likely to be either non-eligible or eligible only in part for SDS funding. That does not, in any way however, diminish the value of the exercise because a comprehensive and coordinated approach to resolving the town's problems from complementary actions undertaken by a number of agencies and organisations is likely to be more readily supported and, consequently, achievable.
- 5.2 The projects outlined below, therefore, and included in the Action Programme (Table 4) are not all necessarily SDS eligible. Indeed, only those outlined in bold form the basis of the 1995/6 SDS bid. They provide the following opportunities:
- Employment Opportunities
 - Social Infrastructure
 - Environmental Improvements
 - Capital Investment
 - Marketing and Promotion
- 5.3 The projects are categorised largely into the following programming periods:
- Short Term (1995/6) – to support the SDS bid for that year
 - Medium Term (1996/7 – 1998/9))
 - Long Term (1999 onwards)
- 5.4 In essence the Medium Term is that period coinciding with the final closure of the Hospital and the opening of the By Pass which is particularly significant in respect of the more permanent environmental enhancement opportunities.
- 5.5 Table 5 demonstrates how each project contributes to the aims and objectives of the Strategy, as defined in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2, whilst the remaining tables predict outputs and general funding requirements.

Short term – "Creating the Climate" – 1995/6

- 5.6 The overall aim of this first phase is to inject enthusiasm into the community, create immediately obvious and beneficial projects, and create a climate for future growth. The components of the Short Term Strategy are as follows:

A.1 Talgarth "Telecentre"

The "Telecentre" opened relatively recently in Bronllys. It occupies a portacabin structure which is becoming totally inadequate for the scale and range of services that it supplies. The organisation is therefore seeking new accommodation in Talgarth, with easier pedestrian access and accessibility for the disabled, and has an immediate requirement for temporary accommodation within the town. The organisation provides training in information technology and modern business systems but also provides business services, such as typing, faxing and so on to local start-up business unable to resource such services in-house. The organisation has contributed to a substantial programme of training over the last 18 months and the services that it provides are likely to be of considerable value both in the context of training and retraining, and in respect of providing business support services for those people made redundant and wishing to set up their own businesses. It has a particularly valuable role also in complementing a similar existing facility at Brecon and another shortly to be established at Crickhowell and displays the potential for total compatibility with the existing wider Mid Wales Business Centre network.

The organisation, therefore, has a need for temporary replacement premises in the short term followed by more permanent arrangements thereafter, possibly linked with other service support initiatives elsewhere in the town.

A.2 Visitor Centre

The existing town car park will obviously adopt a more prominent and relevant role on completion of the By Pass and the implementation of traffic management and calming measures within the town centre. The creation of a direct pedestrian link and the provision of toilets at the car park will enhance its attractiveness and provide a reason and incentive for travellers to stop. The location could, however, be more fully exploited,

TABLE 4 TALGARTH REGENERATION ACTION PROGRAMME

PROJECTS	TOTAL COST	PUBLIC SECTOR	SDS FUNDING REQ.	PRIVATE SECTOR	TIMESCALE / COST (£000)					NEW JOBS			OUTPUTS		CAPITAL COSTS (£000)	
					95/6	96/7	97/8	98/9	99/0	P/T	F/T	P/T	F/T	TOTAL		
SHORT TERM 1995/96																
A1 Telecentre	20	-	20	-	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	2.5	1	5	Nil (Rentals)	
A2 Visitor Centre	250	-	250	-	10	200	40	-	-	-	5	2	5	2	200	
A3 Short Term Enhancement/ Footpath Improvements/Interpretation Aid	175	-	175	-	75	100	-	-	-	-	6	1	6	1	175	
A4 Town Scheme/Commercial Imp.	200	-	100	100	60	70	70	-	-	-	10	5	20	25	200	
A5 Business Centre	275	-	275	-	100	130	45	-	-	-	2	20	2	20	220	
A6 Project Manager	45	-	45	-	15	15	15	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	Nil (Revenue)	
A7 Job Shop/Training Programme	30	-	30	-	10	10	10	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	Nil (Revenue)	
A8 Community Bus Service	46	-	34.5	11.5	35.5	6	4.5	-	-	-	-	8	-	8	29.5	
A9 Street Market/Events Strategy	50	-	50	-	12.5	25	12.5	-	-	-	5	1	5	1	Nil (Revenue)	
A10 Hospital Access (Feasibility)	10	10A	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Nil (Revenue)	
A11 DBRW Speculative Industrial Units	300	300B	-	-	50	250	-	-	-	-	50	100	50	100	250	
SHORT TERM SUB TOTAL	1,401	310	979.5	111.5	388	816	19.7	-	-	-	88	141.5	89	164	1074.5	
MEDIUM TERM 1996/97-1998/99																
B1 Veindre Dance Supplies	75	-	37.5	37.5	-	50	25	-	-	-	-	10	3	19	75	
B2 Schools Out Programme	50	-	37.5	12.5	-	30.25	18.75	-	-	-	3	2	3	4	25	
B3 Talgarth Joinery	130	-	65	65	-	130	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	9	130	
B4 Gliding Club	75	-	50	25	-	5	50	20	-	-	1	-	2	-	75	
B5 Tower Building	140	-	140	-	-	60	70	10	-	-	2	1	2	1	125	
B6. Welsh Horse Drawn Holidays	25	6.5C	6.5C	12	-	25	-	-	-	-	2	2	4	4	25	
B7 Post (Bypass) Environmental Imps. / Pedestrianisation	150	150D	-	-	-	-	75	75	-	-	-	10	-	10	150	
MEDIUM TERM SUB-TOTAL	645	156.5	336.5	152	-	300.25	238.75	105	-	-	8	29	15	47	605	
TOTAL SHORT & MEDIUM TERM	2,046	466.5	1316	263.5	388	1116.25	435.75	105	-	-	96	170.5	104	211	1,679.5	

NOTES ON FUNDING BODIES

- A. PHA/DBRW
- B. DBRW
- C. WTB
- D. POWYS CC/WELSH OFFICE

ACTION PLAN - SUMMARY-PROPOSED FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS
TABLE 6

PROJECT No	TITLE	FUNDING SOURCES (\$000's)											
		YEAR			SDS			Other Public Sources			Private Sector		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
A1	Telecentre	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A2	Visitor Centre	10	200	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A3	Short Term Enhancements	75	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A4	Town Scheme/Commercial Imp.	30	35	35	-	-	-	30	35	35	-	-	-
A5	Business Centre	100	130	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A6	Project Manager	15	15	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A7	Job Shop/Training Programme	10	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A8	Community Bus Service	24	6	4.5	-	-	-	11.5	-	-	-	-	-
A9	Street Market/Events Strategy	12.5	25	12.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A10	Hospital Access (Feasibility)	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A11	DBRW Speculative Industrial Units	-	-	-	50	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B1	Velindre Dance Supplies	-	24.7	12.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	-	-
B2	'Schools Out' Programme	-	17.75	18.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	4.5	-
B3	Talgarth Joinery	-	65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	-	-
B4	Gliding Club	-	10	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	10	-
B5	Tower Building	-	60	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B6	Welsh Horse Drawn Holidays	-	6.5	-	-	-	-	6.5	-	-	-	12	-
B7	Post (Bypass) Environmental Imps.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	-	-	-

TABLE 7
ACTION PLAN - SUMMARY - TIMETABLE
(1995/96 SDS BIDS ONLY)

PROJECT No	TITLE	YEAR (\$000.s)		
		1	2	3
A1	Telecentre	10	10	-
A2	Visitor Centre	10	200	40
A3	Short Term Enhancements	75	100	-
A4	Town Scheme/Commercial Imp.	30	35	35
A5	Business Centre	100	130	45
A6	Project Manager	15	15	15
A7	Job Shop/Training Programme	10	10	10
A8	Community Bus Service	24	6	4.5
A9	Street Market/Events Strategy	12.5	25	12.5
	TOTALS	286.5	531	162

TABLE 8
ACTION PLAN - SUMMARY - OUTPUTS & ACHIEVEMENTS
(1995/96 SDS BIDS ONLY)

OUTPUTS	PROJECT No																																
	YEAR			A1			A2			A3			A4			A5			A6			A7			A8			A9			TOTAL		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3			
New Jobs (Part Time)	-	-	-	-	5	5	6	-	2	4	4	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5	5	13	16	16
New Jobs (Full Time)	-	1	1.5	-	2	2	1	-	1	2	2	-	10	20	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	26	36.5
Total Jobs (Part Time)	-	1	1	-	5	5	6	-	4	8	8	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5	5	15	21	21
Total Jobs (Full Time)	-	2	5	-	2	2	1	-	5	10	10	-	10	20	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14	35	48
Capital Costs (\$000's)	-	-	-	10	88	97	77	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97	88	97

town centre and, indeed, to establish toilets at the car park either as the first phase of a direct campaign to encourage people to stop and use the facility, or as a part of a more comprehensive visitor centre facility.

Whilst a full diversion of traffic away from the town centre will not be acceptable to the Welsh Office because of its strategic trunk road status, opportunities (see Figures 6 & 7) exist to introduce first phase traffic management and calming measures linked to initiatives developed for the car park and measures taken to improve the general visual fabric of the retail and other business premises within the town centre. Such proposals will make the town a more attractive place to visit, with the effect that the actual evidence of increased activity will begin the process of encouraging business investment in the town.

A.4 Town Scheme/Commercial Improvements

The Town Scheme shortly to be introduced by the National Park Authority provides grant assistance towards the conservation of historic buildings within the town. It specifically excludes however, subject to certain criteria, modern buildings and grants are not generally available for internal works, or for works of enhancement rather than repair. An opportunity exists, therefore, to augment that initiative by the offer of Commercial Improvement Grants made available for the enhancement and refurbishment of commercial properties within a designated Commercial Improvement Zone. As the town centre retail premises are highly visible their visual appearance is critical to the success of the Strategy.

A.5 Business Centre and Workshops

A listed property known as Great Barn is located at Bronllys Road some 150 metres north of the Town Square. The building is currently vacant and its owner is seeking alternative uses for it. Despite the fact that he has the benefit of planning permission for its conversion to residential accommodation he is prepared to forego that permission and to make the property available for the development of a business centre, with workshop units at ground floor level. The building is one of the most prominent structures within the town, is capable of providing ample car parking provision and has a large and potentially attractive forecourt area. It is accessed from Cottage Road which also houses a doctors surgery, BT Control Centre, the Health Centre, and Fire Station.

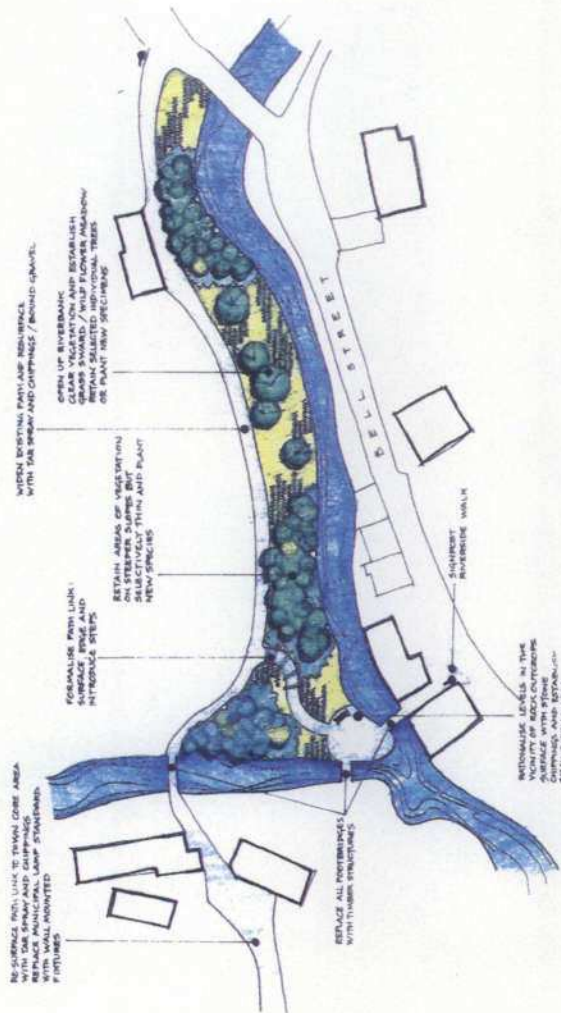


Fig. 5: Environmental Enhancements- River Ennig Corridor

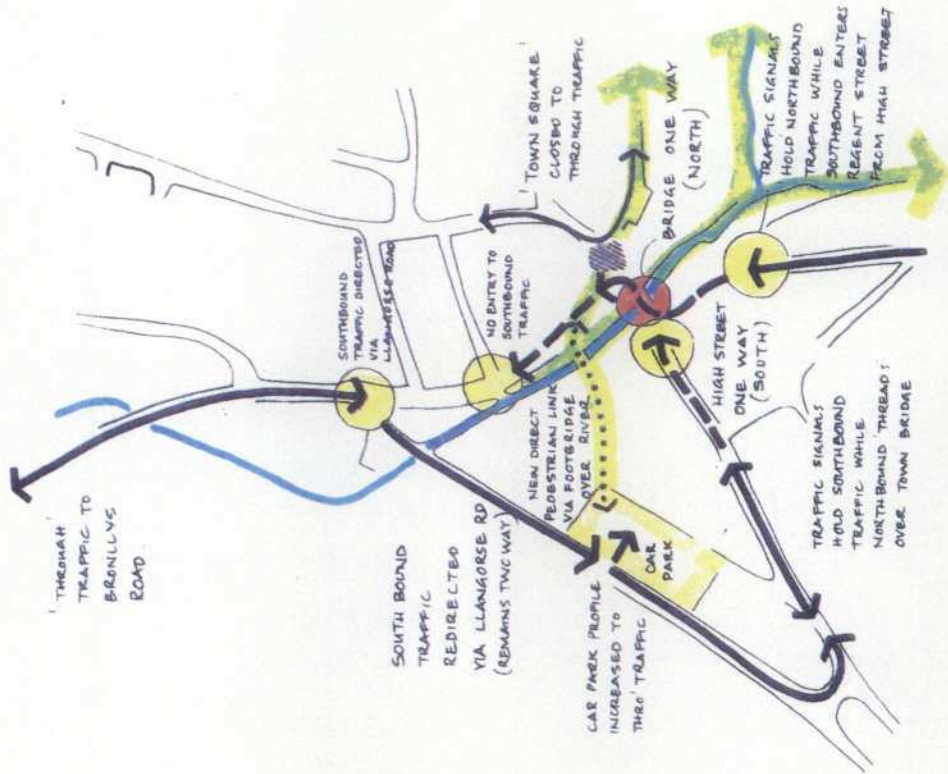
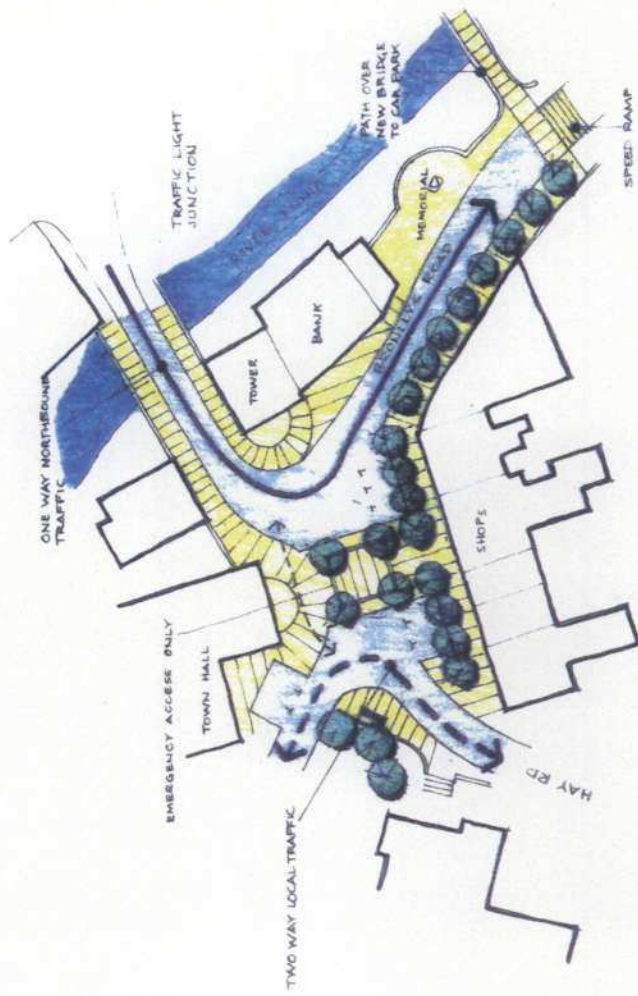
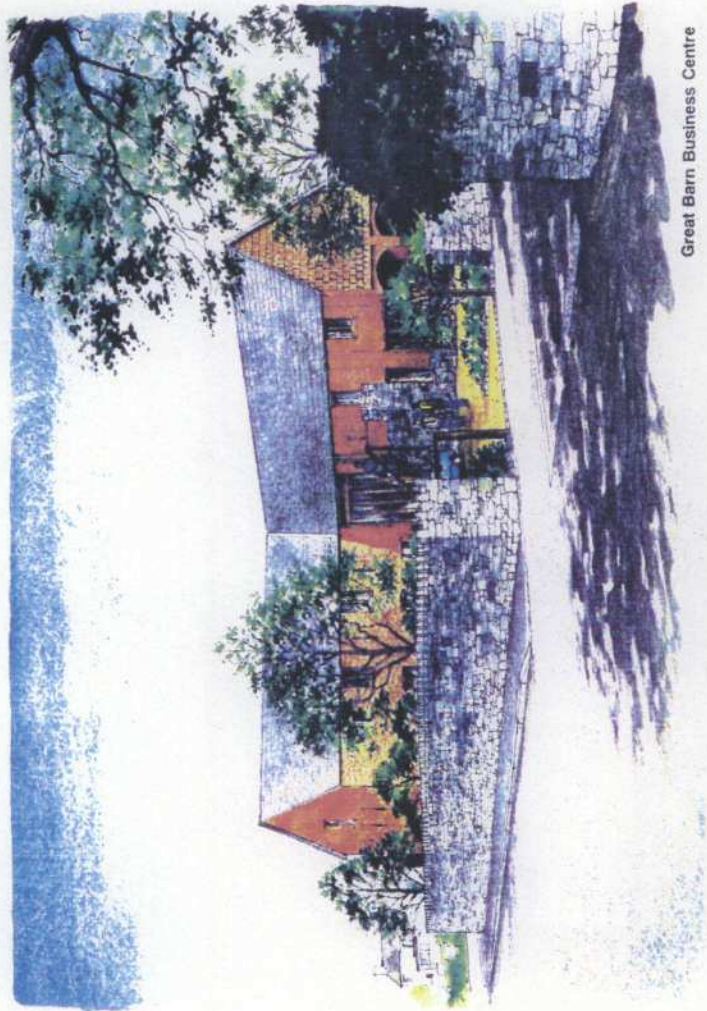


Fig. 6: Short/Medium Term Traffic Management

Fig. 7: Indicative Layout- Traffic Management (Pre By Pass)



Great Barn Business Centre

Fig. 8: Business Centre Proposal

The building represents an ideal opportunity to undertake a high quality refurbishment with Cadw grant assistance and then utilise it as a Business Centre for business development, administrative services, workshop and training purposes. Indeed it would be an appropriate centre for the eventual relocation of the Telecentre and could act as the Talgarth/Black Mountains focus for Beacons Country Products, established by the Brecon Beacons National Park Committee in 1993 with the objective of furthering rural economic development within the National Park. Together with Menter Powys and Telecentre the organisation could provide lines of communication with all agencies concerned with economic development and training and, particularly through an on-the-ground management partnership between Beacons Country Products and Talgarth Telecentre, this alignment would allow all the proposed functions of an Enterprise/Business Centre to be fulfilled. Again, the Centre would be compatible with the existing Mid Wales Business Centre network and the current emphasis on business "one stop shops".

The Centre, illustrated on Figure 8, could also be the base for a Project Manager necessary to coordinate the implementation of the Action Plan, the activities of the Business Centre, the coordination of the events programme, and to act as the primary point of contact with the local community and businesses.

A.6 *Project Manager*

As alluded to above the role of the Manager will be to liaise with and assist local businesses and to coordinate the social, tourism and environmental projects necessary to achieve the objectives of the Action Plan. The Project Manager will provide an administrative focus for the business, training and economic development of the town. As a facilitator and coordinator, therefore, he/she will have a critical role to play in ensuring that the Strategy is implemented to programme and budget.

A.7 *Job Shop and Training Programme*

Powys TEC is committed to the establishment of a Job Shop based, initially, at Mid Wales Hospital to assist current employees in skills auditing, the acquisition of additional/new skills and in general counselling. The provision of such a service is a fundamental early component of the Regeneration Strategy that deserves the fullest and

A.9 *Street Market and Events Strategy*

Neighbouring towns such as Hay on Wye and Brecon have substantially enhanced their images and attraction to visitors and tourists by focusing upon and promoting event based strategies – the Jazz Festival in the case of Brecon, the Literature Festival in the case of Hay-on-Wye. It would be futile to attempt to replicate such initiatives in Talgarth but there is every sense in generating an events programme that brings people to the town specifically for that purpose.

Talgarth was originally a market town of distinction and a popular and well known destination for fairs, its Horse Fair having been at one time one of the most respected fairs in the country. It is therefore proposed to re-utilise the ground floor level of the town hall as a market, which was its original use, and to, traffic management measures permitting, extend that facility onto the street outside. Initially, in due course, events could be held at the DBRW owned industrial site at Llangorse Road although, as that site is developed in due course, the opportunity should be taken to move appropriate events into the town centre preferably within a pedestrianised/semi pedestrianised town square outside the Town Hall. The introduction of such markets and events would act as an immediate stimulus to local retailing, catering and other businesses, as they would introduce potential new custom directly impacting upon the retail core of the town itself.

A.10 *Hospital Access*

It has already been stated that unless there is a need for an use such as a prison in Mid Wales, there is unlikely to be a single user for the Hospital complex that will not require a substantial improvement to the site's accessibility. A feasibility study should be commissioned, therefore, to consider the access improvement options available. That should be followed by an intensive marketing campaign with a commitment to the reuse of the premises as soon as they are vacated.

A.11 *DBRW Speculative Industrial Units*

The DBRW has acquired a site for industrial purposes and already invested some capital monies in the basic infrastructure. For the site to be effectively marketed, however, an access needs to be created. With there being no further units available at the Brecknock Borough Council

widest support. Support has already been expressed by the Employment Service at Brecon and the opportunity for a "joint venture" response to the requirement is therefore good.

A.8 *Community Bus Service*

Although strategically located in highway terms local transport links to and from Talgarth are poor. Whilst there are regular day time through bus services between Hereford and Brecon virtually all the village communities that do not lie on the major routes lack a public transport service. There is also a problem specific to Talgarth in that all current bus services to and from the town cease at 6 pm daily. With over 20 voluntary organisations covering a wide range of community based interests and welfare support schemes, the demand for regular transport services is high, especially in respect of a fully accessible vehicle for use by people with impaired mobility.

The Powys Community Transport Forum has therefore produced a strategy to:

- Initiate a phased enhancement of local transport services;
- To provide an integrated local transport network that meets the need of the local community at all levels;
- To develop partnerships between transport providers which can facilitate the creation of sustainable new transport initiatives and increase employment opportunities for local people;
- To utilise the resources of the voluntary sector to provide local transport coordination; and
- To develop new transport initiatives to meet the current and future potential provided by leisure and tourism orientated activities.

As a measure of the realism and attraction of the project a locally placed private sector operator has been identified who is prepared to participate in the scheme and a detailed cost and revenue schedule has been produced that clearly identifies an SDS funding requirement.

B.2 "Schools Out" Programme

A private sector but grant supported initiative already provides nursery and "schools-out" facilities within the town. The former is accommodated at a property known as The Cottage whilst the latter is currently provided in the Village Hall. The Village Hall, however, is used for a multiplicity of purposes which are not always compatible, either in the context of timing or nature, with the "schools-out" scheme. Additionally, the latter is required everyday to remove its equipment and materials and to store them away overnight.

The business is therefore actively seeking new dedicated premises so as to establish, in particular, its "schools out" programme. A market has also been identified for extending the "schools out" programme to tourists, holiday makers and visitors who are seeking creche type opportunities for their children whilst they explore the local area, participate in hill walking, pony trekking and the like.

The business therefore offers a particularly valuable service to households where both parents work, to single parent households, and potentially to tourists and visitors. In the context of regenerating the town's economy such a service will be invaluable and is likely to be under further pressure upon the closure of the Hospital. The need to acquire alternative premises is therefore substantial and the business is also faced with the possibility of losing its grant assistance at the end of this financial year.

In the event of suitable premises becoming available, therefore, this is another project that merits Short Term support if such is feasible. If not its support for 1996/7 would be particularly valid as the full impact of the hospital closure places pressure on households to seek new work or training opportunities that are incompatible with full time daytime child support.

B.3 Talgarth Joinery

This is a local company manufacturing and supplying joinery products and trading as builders merchants and suppliers. It has the capacity to expand and diversify but requires assistance in respect of business planning advice, relocation and diversification opportunities.

Workshop Units the development of this facility is important. The Development Board does not normally build premises speculatively, although the hospital closure may make Talgarth a special case. There is a need, however, to ensure that a variety of types of site and premises are available to accommodate differing business needs. Other local business expansions may release in due course existing workshops. The Development Board's site is therefore more appropriately reserved for larger pre-let units for either local or incoming firms. Active marketing of the site should therefore form part of the Strategy for Talgarth.

Medium Term - "Developing the Opportunities" - 1996/7-1998/9

5.7 The Medium Term is largely defined as the period immediately post both by pass opening and hospital closure. Some of the projects noted below, however, should be regarded as potential Short Term projects if, earlier than currently anticipated, the private sector inputs to the proposals can be properly and adequately secured. The projects that are relevant in that respect are B1, B2 and B3.

B.1 Velindre Dance Supplies

This is a local company currently employing 9 people (6 full time and 3 part time) and manufacturing dance wear to a UK wide market. The company occupies 1500 sq ft at the Bronllys Road Workshops site. It wants to expand but needs to have new premises to do so. With sufficient space secured the company will be able to take on an additional 5 employees immediately, with a further 5 three years later. With a large proportion of those to be made redundant at the Hospital likely to be female, Velindre Dance Supplies therefore offers an attractive opportunity for job replacement and training, and it is understood. A further cash injection from the SDS or similar initiative is required, however, to facilitate an early relocation.

This project is one that merits Short Term support if the private sector commitment can be established. On the basis of current knowledge, however, it is likely to be an early Medium Term project that is ready to make a valuable contribution to new job creation coincidental with hospital closure.

It currently employs 5 full time employees and predicts that, if new premises could be secured, a further 4 full time employment opportunities would arise. The expansion cannot be achieved, however, without grant assistance.

B.4 Gliding Club

As has already been mentioned the Gliding Club is one of the most significant attractors of visitors to the town as present. It has a national significance in the context of the flying opportunities that it offers and it therefore makes a valuable contribution to existing businesses, particularly in the catering and retail sector. It is essentially, however, a low budget operation and its ability to sustain its recent development is likely to be curtailed by a lack of appropriate modern amenities. Accordingly the Club is seeking to develop a new clubhouse facility, of modest dimension but of modern standard, that will assist the comfort of participants and their friends/relatives. As one of the key tourist attractions within the area such a scheme should be supported and consideration also given in due course to assisting with the provision of a new hangar facility. Whether it is the SDS rather than WTB grant mechanism that is the most appropriate remains to be considered.

B.5 Tower Building

This Listed Structure is probably one of the oldest and certainly one of the most interesting buildings within the town. It is currently vacant and available for sale. Its historical significance is such that it should if possible be sensitively and appropriately refurbished and utilised for some publicly accessible purpose. The most appropriate use would appear to be as a small museum, linked to a retail facility within the shop annex at the front, that could be related to one of the historical themes appropriate to the town.

B.6 Welsh Horse Drawn Holidays

This Company has operated since 1968 and provides traditional gypsy caravans for one and two week holidays. It currently has ten vehicles but a smaller number are currently being operated. The Company received a 50% WTB Grant in 1974 for the construction of 6 vans, toilets, and showers at the present business headquarters. However such headquarters are located at Pengefnffordd on the A479 trunk route south of Talgarth

and the business has been badly affected by increased traffic volumes on that road in recent years. The business is therefore relocating to new premises at Trefeca which are more remote from trunk road traffic. A building for the storage of the caravans has already been erected but further work is required in respect of toilets and amenity facilities, an office, and general landscaping and environmental works. The purpose of the move is to sustain, rather than extend, the business because in recent years no more than 2 of the 10 caravans have been rented, primarily because of the discomfort and danger caused by the use of the trunk route.

B.7 Environmental Improvements and Pedestrianisation (Post By Pass)

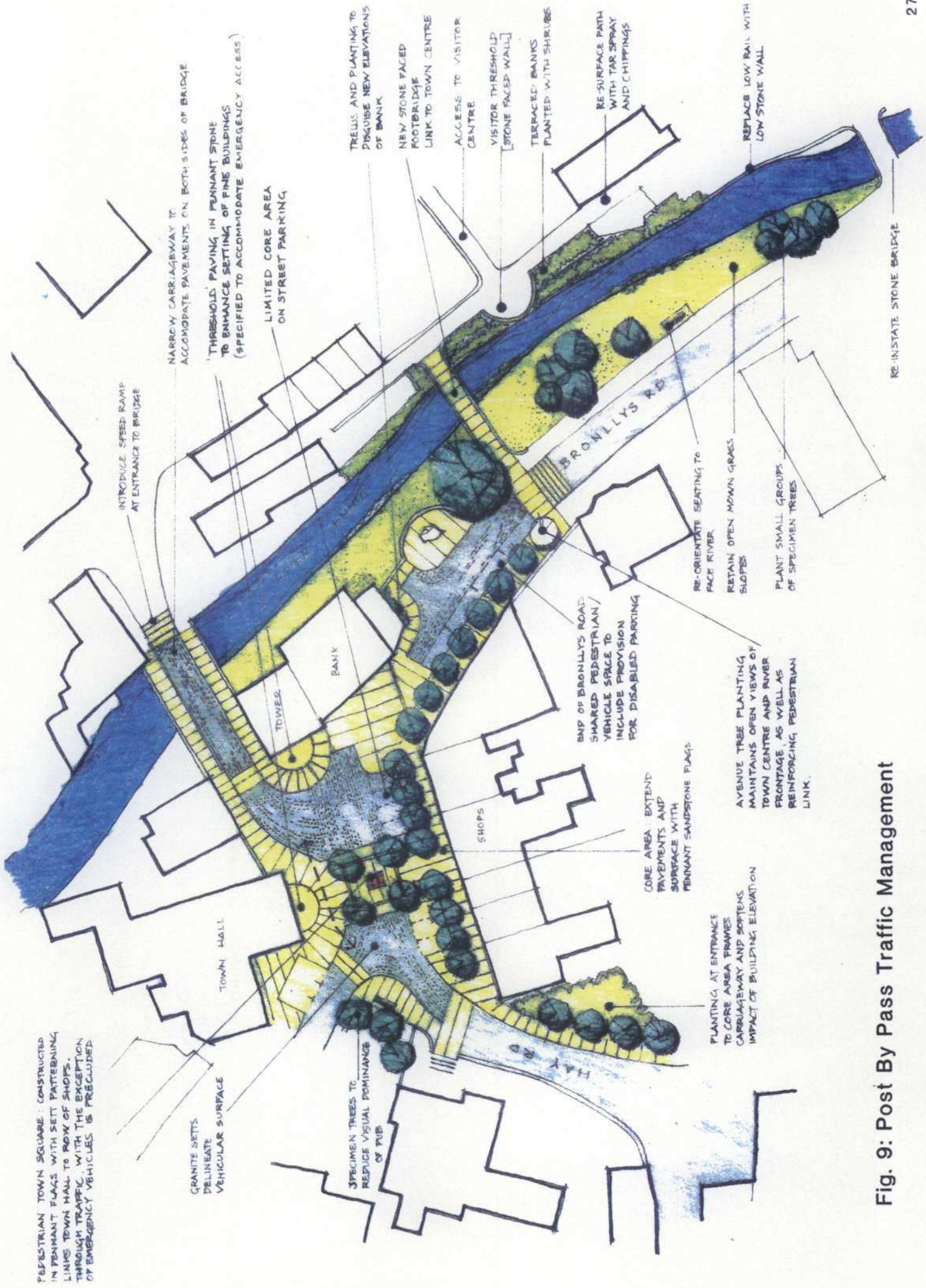
Figures 9 to 12 illustrate the extent of the environmental improvements and enhancement of the public realm that could be achieved once through traffic has been removed from the town centre. The ability on occasion to create a truly traffic free environment within the Town Square would substantially enhance its reputation as a destination worthy of a special and enjoyable visit. That in turn would generate enhanced expenditure and the occupation of the currently vacant retail premises.

Long Term - Sustainable Growth - 1999 and Beyond

5.8 Fulfilment of the Short and Medium Term Phases of the Strategy will lead to a strong and recognisable image for Talgarth and its hinterland, based upon its role as a regional service centre, its environmental quality, its vibrant and attractive townscape, and its diverse range of employment opportunities, leisure activities and events.

5.9 The earlier phases of the Strategy will also lead to:

- an appropriate range of services and tourism infrastructure, including a varied and interesting retail core;
- A high quality, expanded, accommodation base;
- A corresponding increase in general tourism activity especially during the shoulder and off season periods;
- And an opportunity to purchase specialist local products and produce.



PEDESTRIAN TOWN SQUARE: CONSTRUCTED IN PENNANT FLAGS WITH SETT PATTERNING LINKS TOWN HALL TO ROWS OF SHOPS. THROUGH TRAFFIC, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EMERGENCY VEHICLES IS PRECLUDED

GRANITE SETTS DELINEATE VEHICULAR SURFACE

SPECIMEN TREES TO REDUCE VISUAL DOMINANCE OF PUB

INTRODUCE SPEED RAMP AT ENTRANCE TO BRIDGE

NARROW CARRIAGEWAY TO ACCOMMODATE PAVEMENTS ON BOTH SIDES OF BRIDGE

'THRESHOLD' PAVING IN PENNANT STONE TO ENHANCE SETTING OF FINE BUILDINGS (SPECIFIED TO ACCOMMODATE EMERGENCY ACCESS)

LIMITED CORE AREA ON STREET PARKING

TRELLIS AND PLANTING TO DISGUISE NEW ELEVATIONS OF BANK

NEW STONE FACED FOOTBRIDGE LINK TO TOWN CENTRE

ACCESS TO VISITOR CENTRE

VISITOR THRESHOLD [STONE FACED WALL]

TERRACED BANKS PLANTED WITH SHRUBS

RE-SURFACE PATH WITH TAR SPRAY AND CHIPPINGS

REPLACE LOW RAIL WITH LOW STONE WALL

RE-INSTATE STONE BRIDGE

BANK

TOWER

SHOPS

BRONLLYS RD

HAY RD

END OF BRONLLYS ROAD: SHARED PEDESTRIAN/VEHICLE SPACE TO INCLUDE PROVISION FOR DISABLED PARKING

RE-ORIENTATE SEATING TO FACE RIVER

RETAIN OPEN MOWN GRASS SLOPES

PLANT SMALL GROUPS OF SPECIMEN TREES

CORE AREA: EXTEND PAVEMENTS AND SURFACE WITH PENNANT SANDSTONE FLAGS

PLANTING AT ENTRANCE TO CORE AREA FRAMES CARRIAGEWAY AND SOFTENS IMPACT OF BUILDING ELEVATION

AVENUE TREE PLANTING MAINTAINS OPEN VIEWS OF TOWN CENTRE AND RIVER FRONTAGE AS WELL AS REINFORCING PEDESTRIAN LINK

Fig. 9: Post By Pass Traffic Management

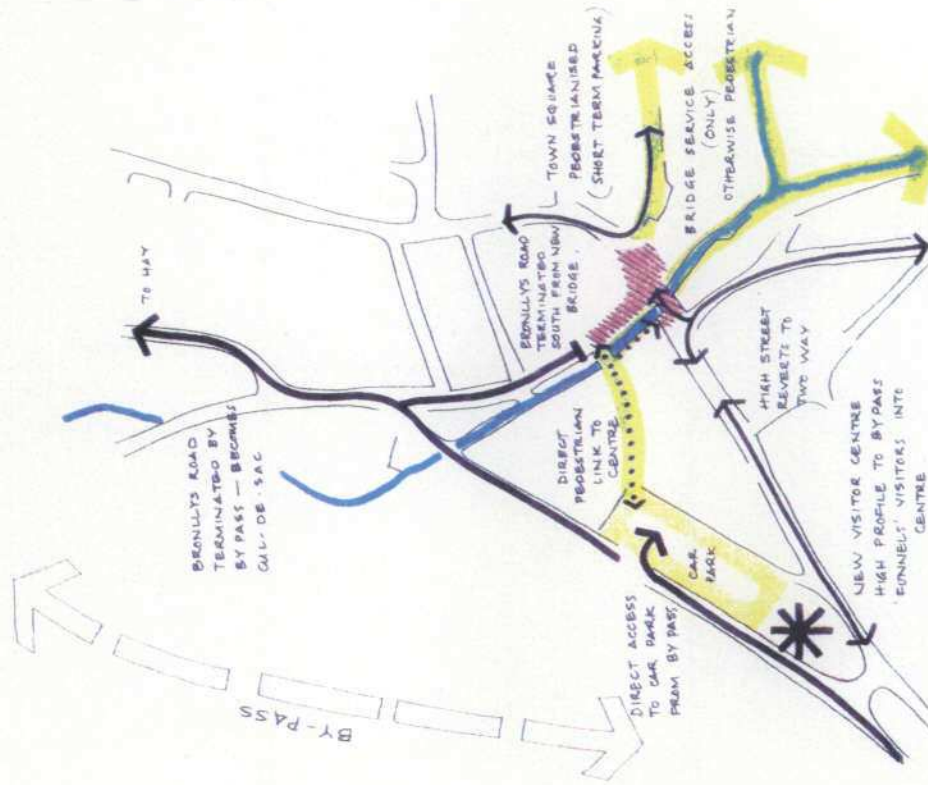


Fig. 10: Indicative Layout- Traffic Management (Post By Pass)

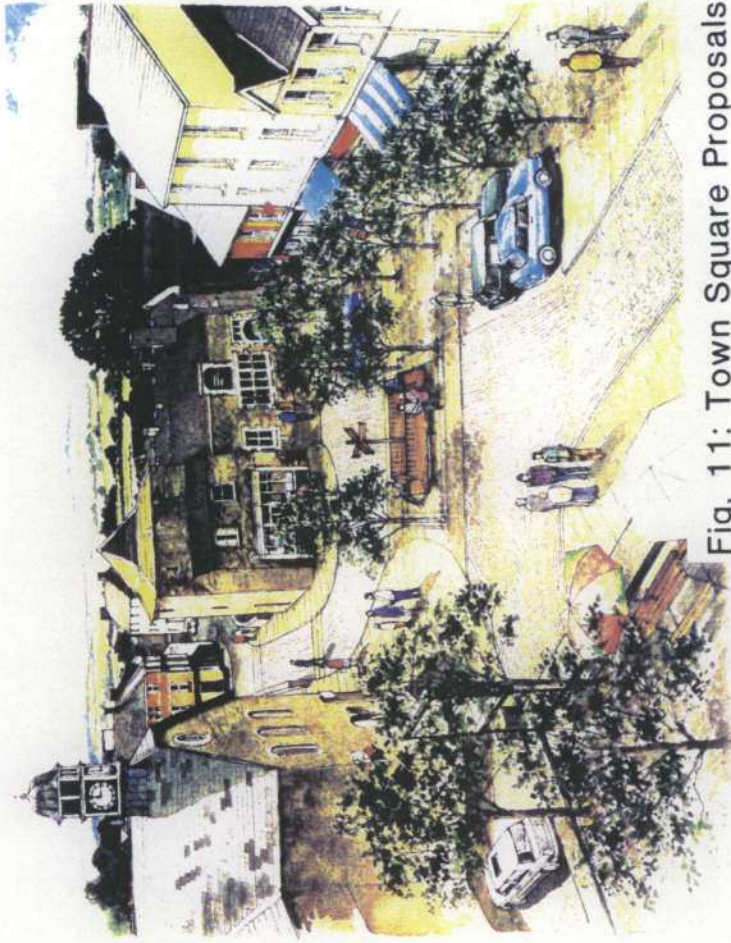


Fig. 11: Town Square Proposals



Fig. 12: River/Footway Link to Car Park Proposal

6. MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Purpose and Coverage

- 5.10 Expansion of the local business base will create viable and sustainable year-round economic activity. An expanding and diverse skill pool will increase the attraction of the town for inward investors. Opportunities created by the upward economic spiral may well lead to the attraction of new uses for the Mid Wales Hospital site, either in total or in part, and possibly through the need of existing local businesses to expand.
- 5.11 No specific projects are identified for the Long Term period. It is conceivable, however, that slippage in the earlier years will move some projects into this period, and that other longer-term opportunities will arise that are currently not identified.

- 6.1 Strategic planning required the monitoring and review of project outcome in relation to aims, objectives and performance criteria. Performance measurement is therefore an integral requirement of any local regeneration strategy. This is particularly the case where substantial public sector funding assistance is involved eg: the SDS Bids.
- 6.2 Meaningful performance indicators for the SDS Bids have been identified in the Circular guidelines, and this particular SDS Bid for Talgarth has focused upon the following criteria to evaluate value for money in terms of projects seeking approval.

6.3 Performance criteria will include:

- jobs created
- jobs sustained
- private sector investment leverage
- project quality
- progress against time schedule
- cost for job
- costs versus budget

- 6.4 These 'core' performance criteria will be supplemented by others relevant to individual sectors.

- 6.5 The Talgarth Bid covers projects located within 5 key sectors, namely:

- Environmental improvements
- Manufacturing and servicing industries
- Retail and catering
- Tourism
- Business support and training

- 6.6 The Action Plan provides for support for existing businesses and the creation of a suitable climate for the development of new businesses. Performance measurement will need to address both issues with particular

emphasis placed upon new business development given the current town base.

6.7 In the context of new business development the performance indicators will cover capacity created (ie: number of units, square footage), take-up of capacity, range of new products/services, success/failure rate, and potential for further growth.

6.8 The Strategy identifies the need for improvements in the retail and catering sectors and the urgent need to encourage the use of empty retail premises in order to assist with the transformation of the town into a more vibrant visitor destination. This is a key objective of the strategy. Performance measurement will need to address improvements to the quality of existing businesses and success in attracting new businesses, together with the core criteria per job creation, job retention, costs for job created and private sector investment leverage ratios.

6.9 Tourism has a key role to play in addressing the longer term economic strategy for the town and is capable of showing growth in its own right. To some extent, however, the success of the tourism component will be demonstrated by the results of performance measurement in other commercial sectors, particularly retail and catering. However, more direct performance measurement can be undertaken in the following areas:

- enhancement of existing businesses
- new capital projects
- visitation/performance.

6.10 In the context of the latter, 4 indicators exist which could provide numerate yardsticks/results, and offer relative ease in terms of collection and analysis. These indicators are:

- visitor numbers at National Park Visitor Centre, to provide a comparative measure of the effectiveness of the car park, and Centre as a 'stopper' for touring and tourist traffic
- visitors to town museum, to provide a comparative measure of the number of visitors being attracted into the town

- footpath patronage, to provide a comparative measure of the success of promoting access to the countryside and visitor management within it

- accommodation performance, to provide a comparative measure of increases in staying visitors.

6.11 The above data will provide indicators of seasonal patterns which will in turn provide a measure of the success of seasonal extension.

6.12 The potential exists in the Business Support and Training initiatives for a wide range of services and support mechanisms to be provided by the Business Centre, with the primary performance indicators being the levels of take up.

Public and Private Sector Leverage: Value for Money

6.13 The most important performance measurement relates to public/private sector leverage and the cost effectiveness of new job creation. The Exchequer cost of new employment per person per annum (that is, the economic cost of one person remaining unemployed) is in excess of £7000. This figure excludes the social costs associated with unemployment, and also the value of lost output due to unused resources. Job opportunities that can be created at a cost of between £5,000 - £10,000 per job per annum therefore represent good value for money and are well worth supporting. A measurement of the overall effectiveness of this proposed strategy will therefore be the number of jobs created, compared to the cost of the initiative as measured by the value of direct grants and funding support. Bearing in mind that the proposed closure of the Mid Wales Hospital and slim-down of the Bronllys facility will result in the largest job loss associated with any single project in Powys during the 1990's the ability to create new jobs at a cost of £6120 per whole time equivalent, which is below the generally accepted Exchequer cost of unemployment, is a major factor in support of this particular Strategy and provides every justification for supporting the SDS Bid.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Talgarth is already in a state of economic decline, some 2 to 3 years before the full impact of the hospital closure is experienced. Much of the reason for that existing decline is uncertainty in respect of both the Hospital's future and the timing of the proposed By Pass. It is essential, therefore, that appropriate decisions are made and announced to remove that uncertainty, and that initiatives are instituted quickly so that new opportunities can be identified and implemented at an early stage.
- 7.2 The success of the Strategy depends fundamentally upon the completion of the By Pass. If that is not achieved and the trunk route continues through the town centre the prospects of environmental enhancement, increased visitation, and thereby economic growth will be severely limited. Equally an important element of the strategy will be an assessment of alternative uses for the Hospital campus, with particular emphasis upon an assessment of the feasibility of providing alternative access arrangements.
- 7.3 On the understanding that those fundamental issues are appropriately addressed there is every reason to be optimistic that the town has the basic impetus, infrastructure and environmental quality, as well as community strength to survive and to promote itself as a viable and therefore justifiable investment and visitor destination.
- 7.4 The opportunities for private sector leverage in the core business sectors of manufacturing, retailing, and tourism within the town are encouraging especially in respect of the town's potential ability to help itself by promoting indigenous employment growth.
- 7.5 Significantly, whilst in economic terms the town displays many of the characteristics of the traditional mining communities, it does not portray a vision of desperation and lack of economic prospect. It therefore has the capacity, assisted by public sector pump priming assistance, to pull itself up by its bootstraps and to establish itself as an attractive town within which to live and work, and to visit.
- 7.6 The Strategy proposes investment in the town to the value of £2.046m from 1995 to 1998, £1.679m of which is in capital projects. An estimated SDS contribution of £1.316m towards the creation of,

particularly, some 170 new full-time jobs and 96 part time jobs (21.5 Whole Time Equivalents) is exceptionally good value at £6120 per unit.

- 7.7 Talgarth needs assistance and it needs it now. The involvement of the community in the preparation of this Strategy has galvanised its enthusiasm, and therefore its support. In the context of Powys there is no more deserving economic case and the Strategy is therefore recommended for implementation as a matter of priority.