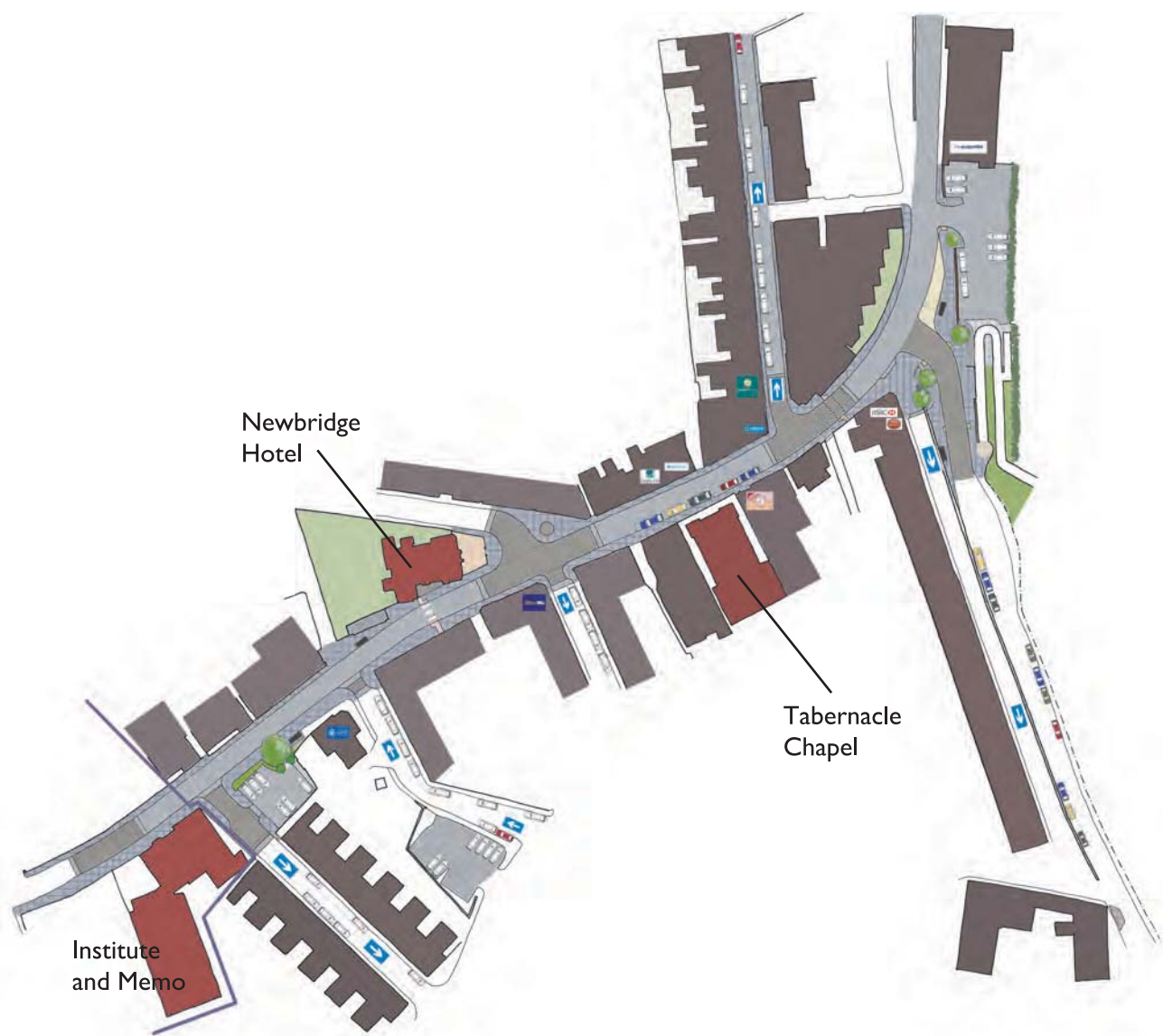


NEWBRIDGE

Town Centre Regeneration Programme



NEWBRIDGE REGENERATION : INFORMATION HAND-OUT

THANK YOU !

...for taking the time to look at this exhibition. It is very important to us that the people who live in, work and travel to Newbridge every day have their say in the future of their town.

This handout has been produced to give you some additional background information alongside the plans and boards on display. We hope this will give you a fuller understanding of the proposals and help address any concerns or queries you may have. When you have studied the plans, please take the time to complete the short questionnaire. Your views are hugely important and will be considered as the final plans are drawn up and before the works get underway, so don't leave it too late to get involved!

THE REGENERATION OF NEWBRIDGE - HOW WE GOT HERE

In 2005, Caerphilly County Borough Council in partnership with the former Welsh Development Agency (WDA) appointed Atkins Consultants to prepare a "Newbridge Master Plan". The final "Master Plan" was just that – a comprehensive plan of action designed to regenerate and revitalise the key areas of the town. The plan particularly highlighted the division between the town, school and Leisure centre, the traffic dominated High Street, and the neglected landmark buildings such as the Memorial Hall & Institute and the Newbridge Hotel, as the principal problems to tackle.

The Atkins Masterplan is one of a number of plans and strategies produced over the last decade concerning the regeneration of the town:

TIMELINE:

- 1998 – Draft Newbridge Town Centre Action Plan (Caerphilly CBC)
- 2001 – Newbridge Riverside Action Plan (Newbridge Partnership)
- 2006 – Newbridge Masterplan – Atkins

- 2009 – Newbridge Regeneration Programme – Business Plan Convergence Funding Bid (CCBC)
- 2009 – Newbridge Memorial Hall & Institute Business Plan (Celynyn Colliery Trustees)
- 2010 – Revised Newbridge Town Centre Action Plan (Caerphilly CBC)

A major funding package is being put together to ensure a bright future for Newbridge Town Centre! Thanks to funding from the European Union Convergence Programme; Welsh Assembly Government (WAG); the Arts Council for Wales, together with significant funds from Caerphilly County Borough Council and the Newbridge Community Partnership, you will see a series of exciting improvements to your town centre over the next few years.

In addition, the Council is proud to be working closely with the Trustees of the Celynyn Colliery Institute & Memorial Hall to secure funding to take forward their plans to fully restore these beloved and historic buildings.

So, with work on the Bridge complete, the next stage of the town's regeneration can now begin.

THE PROPOSALS: THE PUBLIC REALM WORKS

Jargon Buster - WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PUBLIC REALM?

"Public Realm relates to all those parts of the built environment where the public has free access. It includes: all streets, squares and other rights of way, whether predominantly in residential, commercial or community/civic uses; the open spaces and car parks; and the "public/private" spaces where public access is unrestricted..." - Definition from ODPM in Living Places (Jan 2004)

WHAT'S THE PUBLIC REALM LIKE NOW?

The quality of a town's public realm essentially shapes its image and use and is key to its success. It is important that the quality of your local environment is as good as it can be and the Public

Realm improvements will help enhance civic pride, local distinctiveness and contribute to a positive, unified identity to boost confidence in the town.

Despite its many plus points, there are some parts of the town centre that could be improved:

- The narrow footways throughout the town can cause congestion and are potentially hazardous for people using them.



- The street furniture (e.g. benches, bins, bollards) is poor. Over the years, different styles and colours of street furniture have been installed, giving a disjointed feel to the town;
- The prominent road signage makes the street environment feel cluttered and dominated by vehicles;



- The settings of the landmark buildings are poor and detract from the quality of those buildings, contributing to a poor public realm.



CREATING “CIVILISED STREETS”- THE KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN:

By using established urban design principles, the scheme will address the problem areas and create a safer and more attractive pedestrian friendly environment. We intend:

- To create an environment that **enhances** civic **pride**
- To enhance the **character** of the village
- To create an **environment** that recognises the needs of people of all ages and abilities
- To put the **needs** of the **pedestrian** first
- To contribute to a **safer** environment by keeping vehicle speeds low
- Use **high quality** materials that will **last**

“Designing streets primarily for traffic movement, rather than places in their own right, has reduced the richness and variety of public space and its uses...” **CABE – Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (2008)**

“Government research suggests that ‘the excessive or insensitive use of traffic signs and other street furniture has a negative impact on the success of the street as a place’ Manual For Streets, (2007)- The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation.

“Streets which are designed to give all users more freedom of movement are ultimately slower, safer and more social places...they start to become more social and civilised. People are happier walking in them...and they are safer for children”. RUDI - Resource for Urban Design Information.

Based on this ideology, the designs proposed for Newbridge Town Centre removes the presumption that the car has greater rights to the street than the pedestrian. You will notice from the accompanying plans that pavements have been widened and at that the main junctions the pavement and road are at the same level. This is to give pedestrians, pushchair and wheel chair users a more comfortable journey through the town and better access to the shops. It has the added advantage of slowing traffic speeds. This type of design creates a greater respect for and awareness of the needs of the pedestrian by drivers. Hence, creating more civilised streets throughout the town.

WHY MAKE THESE CHANGES?

Regional Context:

- Comprehensive regeneration strategy promotes the growth and development of Newbridge as a key settlement within the South East connections corridor;
- Strengthening Newbridge’s local economy and identity;
- Creating a high quality environment that meets the needs of all its users;

- To create new, attractive civic spaces within the town centre – increasing the accessibility of services available to the community;
- Encouraging local spending through enhanced and attractive retail and cultural environment;

THE FEATURES OF THE PLAN:

The proposals hope to create a better environment and reduce speeds in the town centre by using new road surfaces, narrowing road widths and creating areas where pedestrians have priority over vehicles. Traffic is a particular problem where Ebbw View Terrace and Celynen Road join the High Street. We asked independent consultants to carry out a road safety appraisal of the area. The findings were:

- *All routes adjoining the main route of High Street do so via conventional junctions, with the exception of Ebbw View Terrace, where two routes at different vertical levels converge on High Street directly adjacent to each other. This results in a less than ideal layout, where the two junctions converge side by side to a single point, separated only by hatched surface carriageway markings and a slight fall in level towards the east.*
- *The priority junction arrangement where the two separate levels of Ebbw View Terrace interface with High Street side by side could possibly lead to vehicles failing to yield to each other upon exiting the side streets and possibly coming into conflict*

There are 3 main zones through the town

Celyn Street Junction:

This has been redesigned as a civic space at the heart of the busy town, where people can meet and chat and sit for a while

Tree planting to help with air quality and for seasonal interest. The tree pits will use a recycled glass product to help allow water to the roots

Curved granite steps improve the link into town



Bus stop and shelter relocated further south on Celyn Street

Re-aligning the carriageway provides pavements on both sides of the traffic-calmed road to greatly improve pedestrian safety

Dropped kerbs ease movement across the street

New pennant flagstone paving

Landing from the footbridge

The High Street will be resurfaced with tarmac and the white centreline removed, giving a clean new look to the town whilst helping to reduce traffic speeds.

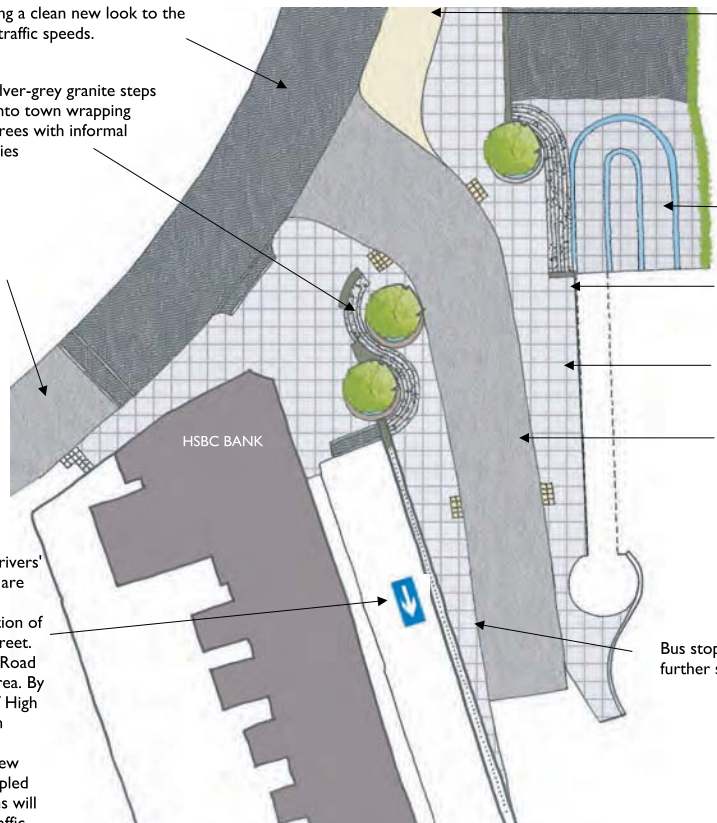
Flight of curved, silver-grey granite steps improve the link into town wrapping around two new trees with informal seating opportunities

Granite sett raised tables through the High Street will

- help slow traffic;
- enable users of pushchairs, wheel chairs and less mobile people an easier journey through town;
- and promote a more civilised relationship between drivers and pedestrians.

Reversal of one-way traffic on Ebbw View Terrace.

To help encourage a change in drivers' attitude to the town centre, we are proposing a number of changes including alterations to the junction of Ebbw View Terrace and High Street. This area was highlighted in the Road Safety Appraisal as a problem area. By changing the priority (to "in" off High Street) and creating a pedestrian friendly area, drivers will be discouraged from using Ebbw View Terrace as a short cut. This coupled with priority given to pedestrians will help discourage non-essential traffic along this residential street.



Realigning the car park entrance gives us a larger bus lay-by near the Co-op

The area under the footbridge will be opened up with granite steps. The paving below will be designed using Sustainable Urban Drainage System

BT telephone box relocated - precise location to be agreed

Opportunities for new benches and bins on either side of the street

Granite setts along Celyn Street make drivers more aware of the presence of pedestrians, reducing vehicle speeds and creating a more civilised environment

Bus stop and shelter relocated further south on Celyn Street

Newbridge Hotel Junction:

This has been re-designed to show off the splendour of this locally important building and to make the junction more pedestrian friendly



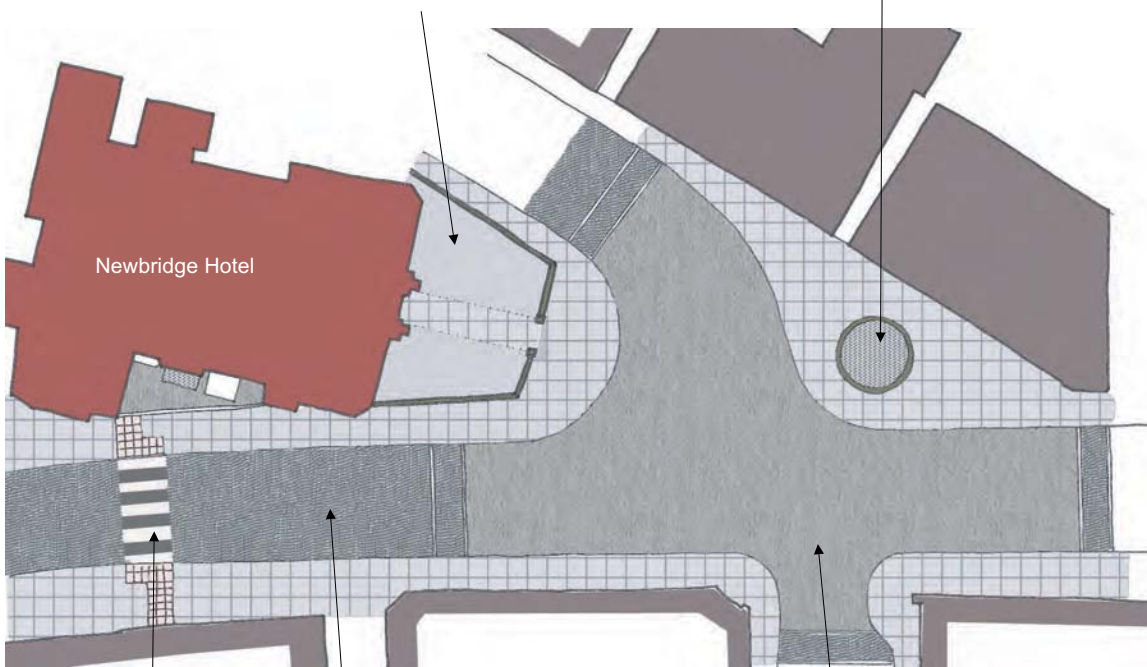
A new stylish boundary wall with horizontal railings will enhance the setting of this splendid building

Re-aligning the junction and introducing a granite sett raised table will help promote a more civilised relationship between drivers and pedestrians.

The widened footway provides opportunities for seating, lighting and artwork. Working with an enthusiastic artist, the community will be able to express their civic pride and produce something fitting. (Note the sketch above is illustrative)

A stylish new boundary around the Hotel forecourt provides a better setting for the building and a more comfortable outside space for its patrons (subject to owner's consent)

The widened footway provides opportunities for seating, lighting and artwork. Working with an enthusiastic artist, the community will be able to express their civic pride



The Zebra crossing and its associated lighting will be moved to the east to allow for relocation of the bus stop (previously outside the hotel forecourt)

The High Street will be resurfaced with tarmac and the white centreline removed, giving a clean new look to the town whilst helping to reduce traffic speeds.

Re-aligning the junction and introducing a granite sett raised table will

- help slow traffic;
- enable users of pushchairs, wheel chairs and less mobile people an easier journey through town;
- promote a more civilised relationship between drivers and pedestrians.

Meredith Terrace Junction:

This has been re-designed to provide a much more pedestrian friendly approach to the restored Institute & Memorial Hall, whilst paying greater respect to the War Memorial

Trees will give help improve air quality and give colour and interest through the seasons. Trees also help to reduce heat build up in the summer, providing shade and shelter.

Opportunity for the community to work with the artist to create a bespoke seat around the tree, perhaps commemorating an event

Wider pavements allow people to mingle and meet without forcing other pedestrians out onto the road. It also allows the planting to spread out a little.



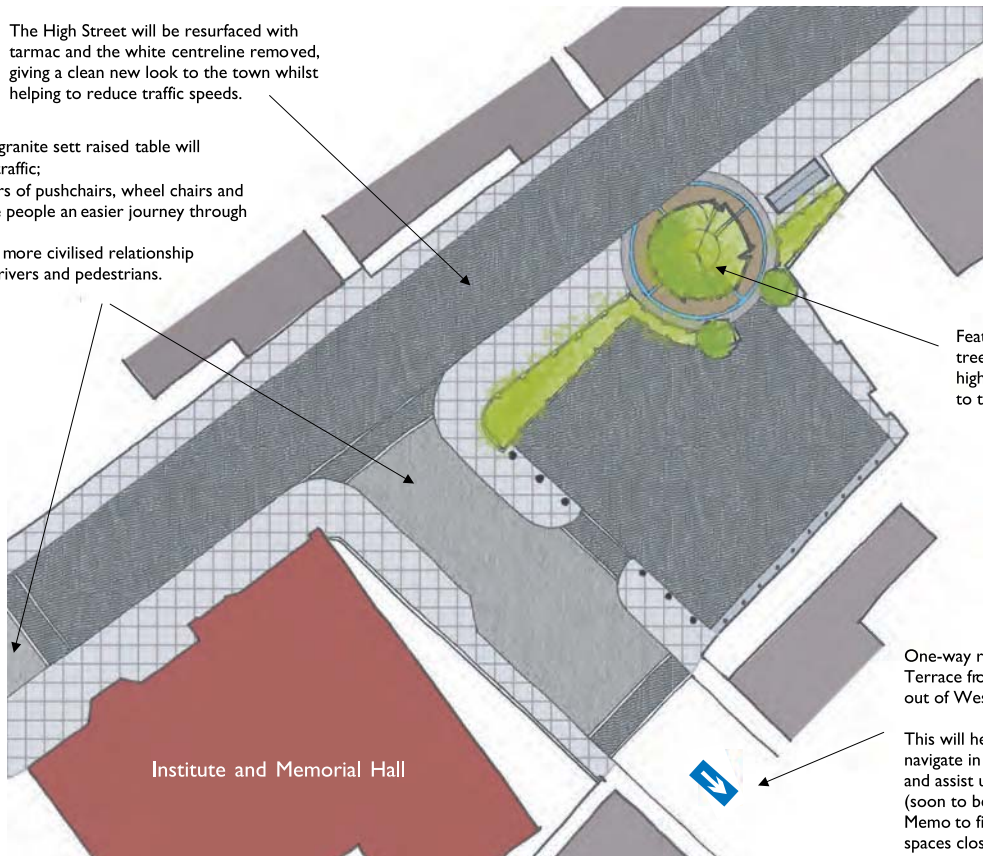
Sentinel Pine stand upright and "to attention" either side of the entrance to the War Memorial, creating a more respectful entrance.

New, evergreen shrub planting, with aromatic leaves and flowers will upgrade the quality of this part of town, replacing those that have outgrown their site

The High Street will be resurfaced with tarmac and the white centreline removed, giving a clean new look to the town whilst helping to reduce traffic speeds.

- Introducing a granite sett raised table will
- help slow traffic;
 - enable users of pushchairs, wheel chairs and less mobile people an easier journey through town;
 - promote a more civilised relationship between drivers and pedestrians.

Feature paving with tree pit and seating will highlight the entrance to the War Memorial



One-way reversal into Meredith Terrace from the High Street and out of West View onto High Street.

This will help users/visitors navigate in a more logical manner and assist users of the town and the (soon to be restored) Institute & Memo to find public parking spaces closer to the building in the first instance.

THE FEATURES OF THE DESIGNS:

- **Narrowing carriageways and widening pavements.**

This helps to slow traffic and gives more room to pedestrians.
- **Reduce existing street clutter associated with existing highway dominated town centre.**

By removing the existing build outs within the town and slowing traffic down via other means, worn and aging street clutter can be reduced creating a more attractive and accessible environment.
- **Tree Planting**

Trees will give help reduce air pollution and give colour and interest through the seasons. Trees also help to reduce heat build up in the summer, providing shade and shelter.
- **Granite sett raised tables through the High Street**

These will help slow traffic; enable users of pushchairs, wheel chairs and less mobile people easier access through town; and promotes a more civilised relationship between drivers and pedestrians.
- **Using contrasting textures on the carriageway including granite setts where pedestrian activity is more intense and new tarmac elsewhere.**

Using granite setts as a road surface will help reinforce the street environment and make drivers more aware of the presence of pedestrians, while retarmac the rest of the road will provide the opportunity to remove the centre line marking. Removal of the white centre line has been proven to help reduce traffic speeds.
- **Formalised parking on Celynen Road and new build out.**

This will slow traffic coming into the town centre from the south and allow traffic from Ebbw View Terrace and Golden Grove to join Celynen Road safely.
- **Re-aligning the carriageway to provide pavements on both sides of Celynen road where it joins the High Street and surfacing with granite setts.**

This will greatly improve pedestrian safety. Children and other users of the Calzage Bridge will be able to negotiate the trip into town and the bus stops more safely in this traffic calmed zone.
- **Relocating the bus stop further south on Celynen Road**

This will reduce the conflicts between traffic and pedestrians at the busy junction, especially important for the school children and non bus users.
- **Creating attractive curved granite steps between Ebbw View Terrace and Celynen Road.**

Greatly improving the pedestrian links into town and providing short term seating opportunities for children of all ages.
- **Reversal of one-way traffic on Ebbw View Terrace.**

To help encourage a change in drivers' attitude to the town centre, where they have had priority for decades, we are proposing a number of changes including alterations to the junction of Ebbw View Terrace and High Street. This area was highlighted in the Road Safety Appraisal as a problem area. By changing the priority (to "in" off High Street) and creating a pedestrian friendly area, drivers will be discouraged from using Ebbw View Terrace as a short cut. This coupled with priority given to pedestrians will help discourage non-essential traffic along this residential street.
- **Opening up the area under the foot bridge, with granite steps and introducing a Sustainable Urban Drainage System "SUDS" paving scheme.**

This will improve the pedestrian links to the Co-op, particularly for the tide of children at the end of the school day. The "SUDS" paving

will allow rainwater from this area to be stored underground and released slowly, helping to reduce the impact of urbanisation on flooding.

- **Re-introducing evergreen hedging along the fence-line in the car park by the Co-op.**

This replaces some of the lost habitat, encouraging wildlife back into the town centre. Also the leaves help take dust particles out of the air, which is particularly important in an area dominated by motor vehicles and trains.

- **Realigning the car park entrance and bus layby near the Co-op.**

A large number of buses stop in Newbridge and the extended bus lay-by should accommodate two buses without blocking the entrance to the car park.

- **Introduction of formalised ‘short-stay’ parking along High Street.**

This will increase parking within the retail core and formalise an area within the heart of the town centre, where illegal parking currently occurs.

- **Re-aligning the junction outside the Newbridge Hotel and providing a stylish boundary to the hotel’s forecourt.**

Removing the clutter from in front of the Hotel will help show off the splendour of this locally important building. The new alignment and table-top arrangement will create a new area of civic space in the middle of the town helping to slow traffic speeds and allowing easier movement of pedestrians.

- **Potential for new artwork feature in the widened footway at the bottom of Ty Newydd Terrace.**

The proposed new junction layout in the centre of the town will create a new focal civic space with opportunities for artwork/seating. Provides an opportunity to add value to the street scene and express civic pride with an enthusiastic artist working closely with the community.

- **Relocate bus stop closer to the café & public conveniences.**

Travellers will be at a comfortable distance away from the Hotel forecourt (where drinking and smoking are allowed), with easy access to the café and public conveniences.

- **One-way reversal into Meredith Terrace from the High Street and out of West View onto High Street.**

This will help users/visitors navigate in a more logical manner and assist users of the town and the soon to be restored Institute & Memo to find public parking spaces closer to the building in the first instance.

- **Potential for a new artistic gateway feature to western entrance to the town.**

This will be the start of the public realm enhancement programme at this edge to the town, which will create space for the introduction of a gateway feature welcoming people to the centre. The area under consideration forms part of the designated Conservation Area, with a unique heritage character, the iconic Institute & Memorial Hall Buildings at its core. Provides an opportunity to add value to the street scene and express civic pride with an enthusiastic artist working closely with the community.

YOUR COMMENTS ARE WELCOME:

We realise that when you live in an area for a long time, you get to know its quirks and characteristics; the way the town “works”. So thank you taking the time to read about the proposals and the thinking behind the designs.

Now it’s over to you – please let us know what you think by completing the accompanying questionnaire.

This handout is available in other languages or formats on request

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“...through environmental design you can fundamentally affect the way people drive. By removing rights of way, highway drivers and pedestrians are forced to interact with one another and they almost universally display a courteous nature in their interactions...traffic speeds are dramatically reduced...” - Urban Design Group Journal Autumn 2010

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