

Plaid Cymru Cangen BTM Caerffili ag Iago Sant Branch



**The Firs
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All Town Councillors
Caerffili Town Council

1 September 2023

Dear Councillors

Caerffili 2035 Plan

You will be aware of the Caerffili 2035 Plan published by Caerffili County Borough Council early last year. Plaid Cymru's branch in Caerffili has been discussing the proposals in detail and has been taking the opportunity to hear views of the general public in Caerffili. The overall impression is that the consultation on this document has been poor and that the plan itself has been ill thought out. The branch as a result has submitted its detailed response to the Plan to the County Borough Council. We would ask you as Councillors and as a Council to make representations to Caerffili County Borough Council on the following issues:

1. Much is made of the idea of Place in the Plan, but it takes very little note of Caerffili's linguistic, cultural, historical and social identity as key factors in developing an idea of place in a population in its proposals. This has resulted in a skewed historical vision of the town as a tourist destination based on the Castle. There is much therefore omitted about its role in key historical periods from the Roman period, through rebellion against the Anglo-Normans, religious Nonconformity and the industrial and post industrial periods. These events and associated developments made Caerffili what it is today. The Plan needs to take account of this aspect of identity in place making. The design of buildings and urban art need to reflect this identity as well as the function of buildings.
2. In the 21st Century sustainability is a key concept in planning for the future, yet there is simply a list of economic projects with some reference to their social benefits and

hardly any consideration of their relationship with the environment. There is no assessment therefore of how the various projects work together as a sustainable vision for the future. Thus projects such as revitalising the old market are dropped and another market to replace a hotel scheme is inserted without consideration of the overall impact on the whole Plan. The Plan should be identifying a clear vision around a process of rebranding for the a sustainable future for the town.

3. Consultation has been poor. One of the key processes in producing a sustainable plan around a clear vision for the future of the town is the full involvement of the residents and other stakeholders such as voluntary groups and businesses. This creates a feeling of ownership. Once a clear strategy has been developed with such involvement it would be hoped that a plan would proceed with popular support. Unfortunately, the opposite is clearly the case. The County Council needs to go back to the drawing board and adopt a bottom up approach to consultation.
4. Several specific projects have been singled out as inappropriate and should be either dropped or re-thought :
 - a. The Transfer of the Caerphilly Social Club to the Picadilly Square. This has been opposed by the club and local residents (via a public meeting and petition) and has appeared in the Plans without any consultation. This project needs to be dropped completely. At the time of writing approaches to the 2035 Plan Team have not been answered.
 - b. The proposal to develop the Glyndwr Fields as a campsite next to homes on Crescent Road and Nantgarw Road has met with similar hostility from residents. Similar approaches as in point a above to the 20335 Team have met with silence. The project must be dropped.
 - c. The proposal for Pentrebanne Street involves an estimated 71 flats without parking provision in an area already subject to parking restrictions of various kinds. As such the scheme is clearly unsustainable and needs to be radically amended with additional attention given to its design which should be keeping with the nearby townscape and not a clone of an industrial urban renewal project.
 - d. Caerffili Station Interchange : this proposes the demolition of a key building in Caerffili's history reflecting the role of the railway in the towns development. In addition the design of the proposed building does not again reflect the nearby townscape. Modern and traditional can be successfully merged as evidenced by the Town library. One of the most worrying aspects of the Plan is to build offices on the site of the Park and Ride car park which flies in the face of a sustainable development on a number of levels. The Railway ticket office should be retained and be merged into the new station building possibly as visitor centre/ museum. Additionally the Park and Ride car park must be retained to maximise accessibility to the station for commuters and shoppers alike
 - e. The Ffos Caerffili has been met with dismay by residents as an ill conceived eyesore totally out of keeping with a historical traditional Valleys urban landscape, being more suited to a brownfield urban regeneration scheme. Unfortunately

there is little that can be done about this project which is now at an advanced stage.

In conclusion, we would urge you and your Council to consider the comments we have made in this letter and consider taking action either as a Council or individually. The vision of the Caerffili of the future has to embrace its past to contribute to its future identity. The Caerffili of the future must be one that people of the town can feel a part of, to be proud of and be sustainable.

Yours sincerely

Huw Jackson

Ysgrifennydd/Secretary

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More info : [Caerphilly Town 2035 Caerphilly Town 2035](#)

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