



Cowbridge Consultation Report

July 2022

1. Background

The Vale of Glamorgan's Adopted Local Development Plan (2011-2026) has allocated land in Cowbridge for the provision of new 646 new dwellings across four allocated sites, including land to the north and west of Darren Close, Cowbridge.

Land to the north and west of Darren Close, Cowbridge has full planning permission for 475 dwellings and is currently under construction. As part of the planning permission for that site, the Council has secured off-site Section 106 contributions for new/enhanced community facilities, and sustainable transport via a Section 106 agreement.

In October 2020, a consultation was undertaken by Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council, to obtain ideas from the local community via a questionnaire for future projects for these funds. The results indicated that youth facilities are a high priority in Cowbridge, in addition to investment in walking and cycling.



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The Vale of Glamorgan Council are therefore exploring potential opportunities in the Cowbridge Ward.

An area of opportunity is the derelict space underneath the A48 by-pass, which is adjacent to the footway/cycleway from Cowbridge Comprehensive to Cowbridge Town Hall car park. This is already a popular route for students of Cowbridge Comprehensive, as they walk to and from school from Cowbridge town centre. It is also a popular route for residents to access the public right of way network to the north.

The space underneath the A48 by-pass has recently been used informally by 6th formers as an area of parking. However, this is due to change. The road which accesses the area underneath the by-pass is due to be restricted, with access only to those who require it e.g., the air cadets, utilities companies, and allotments. The 6th formers will be required to utilise space in the car park to the north of Cowbridge Comprehensive.

A new English Medium primary school has recently been approved within the grounds of Cowbridge Comprehensive (see planning reference 2021/01537/RG3). It is therefore anticipated younger and potentially more vulnerable pupils, plus their parents, will be using the footway/cycleway adjacent to this space going forward to walk/cycle/scoot to school – in addition to the pupils already attending Cowbridge Comprehensive.

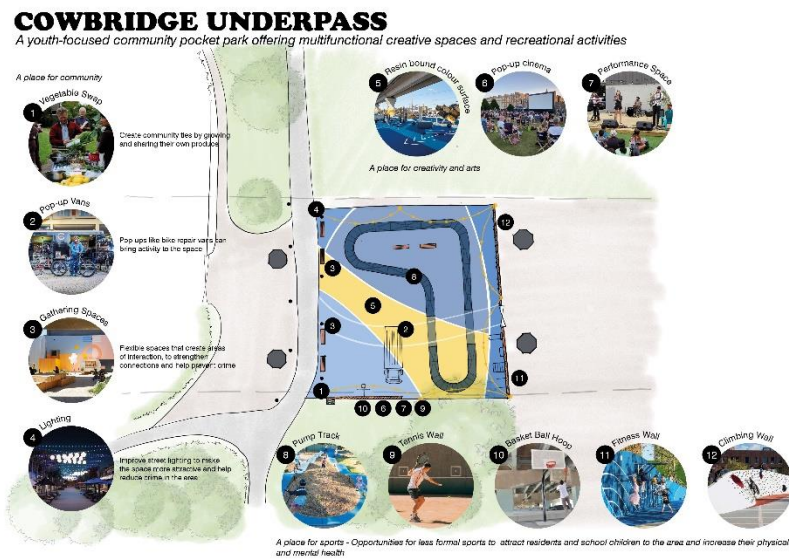
Concerns have been raised about this space (litter and anti-social behaviour). Consequently, this space presents an opportunity to develop something formally for youth facilities to try and 'drive out' such behaviour.

A stakeholder workshop session was held on 2nd March 2022, facilitated by ARUP. This was attended by Vale of Glamorgan Cowbridge Ward Councillors, Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Councillors, representative from Cowbridge Comprehensive School, Vale of Glamorgan internal departments – Highways, Road Safety, Active Travel, Planning, Education, Community Safety.

During this meeting, everyone in attendance agreed that options needed to be considered for this space, to prevent and “drive out” anti-social behaviour, whilst also providing a space that continued to encourage children to walk/cycle to school. Further engagement was required.

2. Methodology

Following the stakeholder session, ARUP developed a series of high-level proposals for the space, as options to be consulted upon further.



A consultation was open to residents 28 June - 20 July 2022. The consultation was primarily based on a “Commonplace” survey, which sought to ascertain the community’s future aspirations for the space underneath the A48 bypass, using the images to provoke

feedback. The survey was promoted via the Council’s website, social media channels, and posters around the town.

3. Responses to the Survey

There were 89 responses to the survey in total.

3.1 Suggested ideas

The survey required respondents to choose out of 12 pre-defined suggested proposals. Respondents could support as many of the pre-defined proposals as they wished.

Suggestion	Proposal supported (%)
1. Vegetable swap - people can share their own produce	10%
2. A small space for individuals to operate e.g. bike repair van can bring activity to a place	10%
3. A flexible area creating interaction to strengthen connections and help prevent anti-social behaviour	12%
4. An attractive space to reduce anti-social behaviour	31%
5. A place for creativity and arts	18%
6. Pop up cinema	13%
7. Performance Space	7%
8. Pump Track	28%
9. Tennis Wall	15%
10. Basket Ball Hoop	21%
11. Fitness Wall	29%
12. Climbing Wall	36%

The most favoured pre-defined suggestions were a climbing wall, an attractive space to reduce anti-social behaviour, a pump track and fitness wall.

Only 4 out of 89 did not choose any of the pre-defined options.

3.2 Other Ideas and Comments

There was also the opportunity to make suggestions and comments. Suggestions and comments included:

“A facility for teenage children.... the state board ramp near the leisure centre is dreadful..... it would be nice for them to have somewhere interesting and safe to hang out, somewhere of their own. Another facility for old people is the last thing we

need in Cowbridge, let's do something for the youth and get them a place they deserve."

"Swimming pool"

"This area desperately needs to be cleaned up and made safe and user friendly."

"A skate/scooter park with Free running area with decent equipment for all capabilities"

"Plant attractive wild flowers alongside the pathway between the car park behind the town hall and the underpass. This desperately needs tidying up and could be so much more appealing. Also, far more frequent rubbish bins needed."

"A Muga area similar to PSE"

"A skateboard track would be amazing . Go down and see Cardiff bay park. Watch 3 year olds on ride along cars to primary kids to teenagers to older all using the same space . Everyone had to show respect . Fantastic shared space for such a range of ages."

"Something is needed here to improve this area. Walking through here with young children is not pleasant and the new school is being built for little ones, so we have to make it brighter/greener/more attractive and fun for them to want to walk to school through here. You will get complaints from local residents no doubt but please listen to the majority rather than the minority. Currently this area encourages Cowbridge Comp pupils and others to gather and we know they are doing things they shouldn't be - at the very minimum there needs to be some form of CCTV and parking should be stopped."

"Would be a good location for a Swimming pool for the community. Close to all Cowbridge schools to use too."

"CCTV to stop drug takers and vandalism and mob behaviour."

"To reduce ASB in the area I would suggest an extension of the allotment area, perhaps using raised beds or turn the whole area to a drop off area/car park for the increased amount of traffic that will arise as a result of the development of the new Junior school."

"I have seen a fantastic climbing wall set up in Switzerland that has utilised the concrete walls of a bridge/overpass. Just a simple climbing/bouldering wall would also be good. But if there was the ability for properly trained climbing instructors to utilise a larger/higher wall. That would be fantastic. The scout group would certainly make use of this, as well as others."

There were also concerns raised, as follows:

"All very good ideas but has drawbacks: noise and antisocial behaviour late at night, where are all the cars used by school students going to go. There must be dedicated parking for 6 formers with cars. CCTV must be supplied if this scheme goes ahead."

"I have a couple of worries, as a resident for Millfield park. We already have problems with children trying to kick out gate in and throwing rubbish into our garden. This would bring more youth to our area causing disruption. My main worry is the idea of creating something under an underpass what if something happened it would crush those underneath."

"This area needs cameras and lights to stop Antisocial behaviour, Drug dealing and the access Lane from main road needs traffic calming Scheme to prevent the students who have driving Too fast on the lane .If the school car park was used As it was designed for the students could park there."

"The image you have provided looks great. The problem is that it is isolated in the evening when students may have to walk their alone after school clubs etc. so good lighting is really important. I also agree that lack of parking for 6th formers and lack of a drop off point for parents for the high school is a big problem which needs resolution possibly where the old girls school is currently. The main road, Aberthin road is very dangerous for the children who walk to school from Cowbridge with buses and lorries mounting and driving along the pavement everyday. Bollards are needed at the very least. Thanks for your positive proposals"

"The provision of a skateboard park or anything similar will, without doubt lead to increased anti social behaviour in the area. A skateboard park already exists at BEAR FIELD in COWBRIDGE. COWBRIDGE already has a number of underutilised amenities including COWBRIDGE LEISURE CENTRE as well as Rugby, Football and Tennis clubs. The remoteness of the location lends itself to undesirable activities and whilst cctv would assist with the reduction of these activities, who will pay for the cctv, but more importantly who will maintain and be responsible for it's use."

"We already have lots for the youth to do with very little take up."

4. Other Consultees

Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council:

"At the Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council meeting on 19 July 2022 the following response to the Active Travel & S106 Consultation was agreed:

Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council are pleased to see ideas coming forward and being put out to consultation for the area under the bypass. The Town Council agrees with the concept of using the area for the benefit of young people. However, we must recognise that local residents have valid concerns about noise and antisocial behaviour. Whatever is ultimately done in this area would need to be well managed, well maintained and well lit. It is disappointing that there have been only 87 responses to this section of the consultation. In the view of the Town Council, before any decision is taken, much more consultation is needed particularly with young people. The Town Council suggest drop-in presentations in the Town Hall and also in the local schools. One of these could be at the regular coffee and drop in mornings held by the Town Council in the Town Hall on the first Saturday of each month.

One point of serious concern is that the before and after illustrations show only the area in front of the gates being used. In the Town Council's view it is essential that the whole area be utilised. If the area beyond the gates is not incorporated in the plan then it will surely become an even worse problem for antisocial behaviour, drug dealing etc."

South Wales Police: raised concerns regarding anti-social behaviour and the added incentive of new equipment.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The consultation indicated that there is a desire from respondents to see some enhancements to the space underneath the A48 by-pass, with over 95% choosing one of the pre-defined options.

However, there was a real mix of opinion in the feedback and comments section in terms of what the enhancements could be, with a number of comments wanting formal activity-based facilities, yet others raising concerns regarding Anti-Social Behaviour.

It is recommended that further consultation is undertaken with residents, young people, especially the local schools (Cowbridge Comprehensive, the new primary school and existing primary schools), and other interested parties, to begin to look at the options in more detail.