

TEAM ABERGAVENNY

BETTER, TOGETHER

Report of Team Abergavenny to the North Monmouthshire Area Committee on 28 November 2018

1. Public Realm

Phase 3 of the Public Realm work in Abergavenny is due to start in January but we are concerned about several issues which might cause problems.

There was an overspend in Phase 2 and at the time of writing we are not aware of whether Welsh Government are able to cover that over spend. This is a major concern as if the overspend is not covered then presumably Phase 3 starts with a significant deficit which could seriously impact the overall effect of the Town Centre Redevelopment, particularly the effect it may have on businesses at the north end of Frogmore Street.

The question then arises whether Phase 3 can be adjusted to enable a satisfactory scheme to be completed within the remaining budget. Major concerns are:

- A. to ensure that the bus stops on the A40 are completed beside Tesco,
- B. the position regarding the War Memorial is resolved
- C. and the disabled parking arrangements in Baker Street are provided.
- D. Planter locations and continuous maintenance.

We are concerned that given the short time between now and the expected start date in January that some decisions may be taken without adequate consideration. The rest of the scheme has been carried out well and it would be most unfortunate if the final part is not completed satisfactorily. Any delay beyond the January start date puts traders in a precarious position for yet another year.

2. Signage.

A review of signs around the town directing drivers in particular to car parks and signs for pedestrians to the town centre is being finalised and will hopefully be available to you for your next meeting. Currently the draft is being discussed with County Officers to ensure accuracy and that there are no disagreements of fact. The aim is to optimise the use of car parks and to improve the visitors' experience both coming in and leaving the town.

3. Car Parks

As a side issue we have noted that new car park ticket machines have been introduced recently and we are disappointed that they are relatively old technology. Two things in particular are of concern, one is that you cannot get a ticket before 8am on the day of issue so early users have to revisit the car park to get a ticket. The second is that the whole registration number is required, leaving more room for error and taking longer to use the machine. We suggest that the whole process could be speeded up if no number at all was needed.

Also there has been discussion about Free after Three parking, but there is no evidence that this is happening. It would make a considerable difference to footfall in the shops later in the day.

4. Local Development Plan

We have made a submission to the Council to consider the existing Maindiff Hospital site as a possible future technology/education campus if it becomes available when the Health Board rationalises its estate. We are strongly of the view that Abergavenny needs jobs and not just more houses in any future development, and the sort of jobs that could be developed here would contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of the area. We need a balanced approach to development in the area which recognises the needs of farming and tourism as well, so as not to destroy the attraction of the area to visitors as well as local people.

5. The Spreading the Word Theme Group of Team Abergavenny is supporting the work of the Arts Festival Committee for the next festival in 2019.

6. Town Hall. We would appreciate regular updates on the progress to updating the Town Hall.