

Our Camelford (Agan Reskammel)
a vision for the future

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Executive summary

Camelford is a town with a proud history, but in recent years questions have been asked about its future. Vital services have been lost, shops closed and there is a sense that the town is losing its identity. Combined with the recession triggered by the pandemic and long-standing pollution problems caused by traffic congestion, Camelford has been hit by a perfect storm.

At the beginning of 2021, a group of local people began working with specialist consultants to establish a placemaking group to reverse this decline, mobilise local people and develop a vision for change.

After a period of several months of discussions, this has been established and at its heart is a blueprint to help Camelford recover from the pandemic and reclaim a stronger identity. This is built around key areas that are deemed essential to create a memorable destination and strong community where people can live, work and play. These include food and drink, experiences, tourism and heritage, workspace, health and wellbeing, improved public realm and green space, arts and crafts, and improved cycling and walking routes.

Seeking to capitalise on plans for a new bypass in the coming years, this is a vision to create a greener, people-friendly environment with improved public realm and a stronger sense of community.

It aims to support the creation of more independent cafes/restaurants, develop an

organic market garden to support community food hubs with local grown produce and oversee an expansion of the public realm to create more flexible space for events and al fresco dining.

It seeks to strengthen the local economy by introducing much-needed co-working space, encourage more community owned businesses and create a year round tourism strategy that will include winter tourism and a European-style Aires model of overnight motorhomes.

And it wishes to build on the strong community spirit that exists in Camelford by strengthening local community assets, developing a stronger programme of events, creating new anchors like a community cider press and working with local artists to develop distinctive murals to celebrate the town's history and identity.

But above all, it prioritises wellbeing and health. Its focus is to bring in new health facilities and supporting services such as dentist, physio and optician, prioritise reducing pollution and promote active transport.

Linking Camelford to the Camel Trail, strengthening walking routes and unlocking the potential of our green spaces is key to creating a healthier environment for all.

This plan is timely not because of the need to reinvigorate Camelford, but because it chimes with a growing post-pandemic mood in Britain.

Lockdown has made people more rooted in their own community. "Live here, work anywhere" has become the marketing slogan for many rural areas

We all want 'the good life'. Our challenge is to make sure everyone in Camelford can access it.

With Cornwall overtaking London as the most searched for location for UK movers, there is a growing interest in relocating to rural locations.

Towns are no longer the poor relations of cities.

Aristotle famously said people went to cities to live the good life. This view has stood for thousands of years, but it's been tested during lockdown.

Lockdown has made people more rooted in their own community. "Live here, work anywhere" has become the marketing slogan for many rural areas. Technology has transformed everything and many have realised they no longer need to spend hours on a train or in a car every day.

We all want 'the good life'. Our challenge is to make sure everyone in Camelford can access it.



Background

Camelford is a small market town situated on the river Camel, six miles inland from the North Cornwall coast. Previously an old medieval trading route, its rich history extends to Arthurian legend with some people believing that Camelford is the site of Camelot. It was granted a royal charter in 1259 and, as the nearest town to Bodmin Moor, Camelford is seen as the entry point to the Moor. However, there is a growing view that it should be positioned as the 'Gateway to North Cornwall'.

More recently, its history has been shaped by two concerns; the loss of key services and the A39 Atlantic Highway, which passes right through its centre. In losing key services such as banks, shops and the museum among others, Camelford's identity has been weakened and there is a pressing need to restore amenities. The A39 on the other hand is used by many cars and heavy goods vehicles causing significant traffic congestion. As a consequence, Camelford has become one of Cornwall's most polluted towns.

Cornwall Council declared Camelford an Air Quality Management Area in 2017 after long term monitoring found that the Fore Street and High Street areas of the town have excessive levels of traffic related nitrogen dioxide.

The need for a bypass was identified as the main transportation priority for the town in the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultations. More than 70 per cent of residents have said they are in favour of a bypass.

These well documented traffic problems and the impact of Covid-19 on Camelford's high street and local economy are the starting point for this place shaping work, as we seek to identify opportunities for recovery.

Previous work



Camelford
Commemorative Stone
Camelford's First
Charter
Confirmed by
Richard Earl of Cornwall
750 Years
1259 - 2009

As part of our work to create a post-pandemic vision for Camelford, we reviewed previous consultations and development plans to look at aspirations for Camelford. Our work as a team has been carried out in keeping with these aspirations and important needs that are summarised here. They are the foundations which this vision seeks to build on.

Among the aspirations from the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultations is a wish to see an improved range of shops including a supermarket. Only 12 per cent of local people do their shopping in Camelford and there is a clear need for an improved food shopping offer.

With 79 per cent of people wanting to see more premises for small businesses, there is a need for more start up space and opportunities to encourage the growth of independent shops and micro businesses.

Furthermore 37 per cent of people believe that housing is not sufficient and there was a consensus among our team that more housing was needed in Camelford.

Other needs that were identified in the Neighbourhood Development Plan are:

- **Improvements in health provision**
- **Play areas**
- **A tourism information point**
- **Cycle paths**
- **Evening entertainment**
- **Protect existing community facilities and**

develop new community facilities for local groups – e.g. Scouts

A previous community development plan for Camelford, Delabole and the surrounding area of North Cornwall (2004) highlighted four key strategic strands to drive a community vision. These were:

- **Promoting a prosperous and sustainable local economy**
- **Strengthening the local social environment**
- **Reducing the impact of human activity on the local environment**
- **Promoting community involvement in the planning, decision making and delivery of initiatives**

Projects contained in this plan that were prioritised for delivery include affordable housing, a new learning centre for further and higher education, specialised support service for community business and tourism initiatives aimed at sustainable or low impact tourist developments such as farmstay holidays, cultural tourism, tracks and trails etc.

The most recent work that was reviewed is a Cornwall residents survey from January 2021. This interviewed 3,000 Cornwall residents and found that resident satisfaction with their local area as a place to live increased significantly and sits 10 percentage points higher than the national figure. Furthermore, resident agreement that people in their local area pull together also increased, rising 9 percentage points in this wave.

Introduction



Like many other towns, Camelford has been hit hard by the pandemic. The number of empty shops is now approaching approximately 40 per cent of all units on the high street.

The key challenge for the town is to build confidence and strengthen the Camelford brand as it emerges from lockdown, while striving to attract new businesses and increase footfall.

In the longer term, with the possibility of a bypass, there is an opportunity to reimagine Camelford as a very different place with a more diverse offer.

There is a substantial body of literature on the impact on local economies and quality of life from bypasses and the Department for Transport report on Action for Roads: A Network for the 21st Century argues that bypasses can “help reunite communities”. It is this opportunity to strengthen the community fabric that we wish to capitalise on to make Camelford more economically resilient. Cornwall Council have submitted an outline business case (March 2021) for the £48.17m bypass project to the Department of Transport, signalling that it is now at a stage where the local authority can seek Government funding. If successful, Camelford wishes to be in an optimum position to capitalise on the reduction in traffic that the bypass would bring and create a more people-friendly, community-led environment that can help develop the town into an attractive destination.

To meet these challenges, a place making team has been assembled. There are 13 members of the team, which is made up of local business people, residents and councillors. The group has been named ‘Our Camelford’ (Agan Reskammel) and a chair elected.

As part of the group’s work in identifying opportunities to strengthen the local community, sense of place and ways of attracting investment and new businesses, we have identified eight transformation themes. These are:

- **Food and drink**
- **Experiences**
- **Tourism and Heritage**
- **Workspace**
- **Community hub/health and wellbeing**
- **Green space/public realm**
- **Arts/crafts**
- **Cycling/walking/active transport**

Outline vision

Using these themes to guide our discussions, a number of opportunities have been identified to drive change across the town. These will be explored in more detail below, but our overarching vision can be described as follows.

Our aim is to grow Camelford as a destination and gateway to the Moor and North Cornwall. This will be achieved by reclaiming public space from traffic and creating a greener, people friendly environment that promotes cycling and walking.

By rediscovering the human scale, we aim to attract new investment and businesses including cafes, restaurants and independent shops. This will be supported by authentic experiences ranging from live music and wassailing gatherings to

carnivals and winter festivals. Key assets in the town such as the library, Camelford Hall and park will be strengthened to better serve communities and encourage more people to use the town. These anchors will be complemented by improved public realm to create a more welcoming space and new gathering points. At the heart of this vision is a vibrant and inclusive town that needs more essential infrastructure such as health and dentistry services, flexible workspace and other amenities. Once these elements are in place, Camelford will benefit from increased civic pride and renewed confidence.

This will allow us to reclaim a distinctive identity and become a best practice model of how a bypass can transform a town, showing how a shift away from cars towards a more people friendly environment



A town where everyone has a stake

Underpinning our wish to drive improvements across Camelford and create a great place to work and live is the need to create an inclusive place where everyone feels welcome; a town where young and old coexist safely and everyone has a stake. Camelford has an older population that's above the average for Cornwall. But it still has a younger demographic and its population is growing at a faster rate than the average population growth across Cornwall. We wish to create a town that's a great place to grow up in and a great place to grow old.

Because our vision to transform Camelford is a 10-year plus project, we are keen to capture the views of a next generation of young people, who are arguably the most overlooked group of stakeholders in regeneration.

During March 2021, we spoke to a representative sample of students aged from 12-15 at Sir James Smith Community School. Their views are summarised below.

- **The houses are neglected. There's boarded up windows and the fabric needs improving because many buildings give the impression that it's not a nice place to live in**

- We need more sports facilities
- We like the skatepark but it can get intimidating at times. Some people won't go there because they're scared. It needs to be a more supportive and inclusive environment. It's not that welcoming
- Camelford is a good place but there's not enough facilities. There are also groups of people that can make it quite unsettling. It's not a violent place, but there are fights
- There are quite a few kids who don't know what to do. We could do with a basketball court
- The park could be tidier
- We could do with some wardens or supervision in the park. Older kids can be intimidating
- We need more diversity on the town council. There are no young people and it needs to represent our generation. I'd like to see more young people involved in our town.

Despite a wish to see improvements in their town, the vast majority of children had a strong connection to Camelford and said they would like to stay there when they left school.

Where the recovery starts

Following a workshop delivered by Matt Baker and Bill Grimsey in January 2021, which brought together key stakeholders to discuss challenges and opportunities for Camelford, a number of sub groups were established to explore priority areas for improvement.

This work aims to further develop our outline vision by providing detail on what needs to happen in practical terms to transform Camelford.

The opportunities identified below for each theme will also be supported by the following cross cutting themes.

Cross Cutting Theme	Purpose
Inclusive community	Residents feel safe. Established and new communities blend successfully with a shared sense of identity and belonging.
Technology	Use new technology such as augmented reality to establish effective wayfinding and display town information. Employ technology to better understand how the town is used by residents and visitors.
Sustainability	In line with the climate emergency and target for Cornwall to become carbon neutral by 2030, sustainability needs to underpin all elements of the vision.

Food and drink

Cornwall has one of the most distinctive culinary cultures in the UK and Camelford has an opportunity to be a gateway to the region's cuisine. At the same time, food can be used to address some of the rural deprivation in the area and strengthen communities.

Building on the town's agricultural history, there is an opportunity to develop an organic market garden to support community food hubs with local grown produce. This could be supported with Camelford's community orchard and beehive. Similarly, the opportunity to join the 'Incredible Edible' movement to connect communities through the power of food could see unloved spaces used to grow food and access to resources such as adult gardening clubs, training courses and workshops such as chutney making, pickling and frugal cooking.

It's also recommended that we explore the possibility of creating a Camelford Community Garden Trust. The Neighbourhood Development Plan has identified a lack of allotments and also the need for increased mental health resources.

With the creation of a community garden (super allotment), there is the opportunity to achieve both for schools, disabled people and careers, the retired and elderly. It could also generate social engagement opportunities, mental health and education resources, employment opportunities and the opportunity to sell local grown produce on the high street.

The growth of micro and community bakeries across the UK also presents an opportunity to strengthen Camelford's high street offer. A

community bakery in the town would not only create jobs and give local people a bigger stake in the community, but also provide a more diverse food offer and help create a distinct town identity.

The Dunbar Community Bakery in southeast Lothian, for example, was founded after 400 locals invested in the idea, raising £40,000. On its first day, 1,500 people queued to buy fresh bread.

To support this vision of a burgeoning food offer, the vision for Camelford must ultimately be to create more independent restaurants and support a rich café culture.

This is critical to increasing dwell time and supporting tourism and economic growth.

Camelford has some great walks nearby and access to stunning surroundings and green space. But to capture the spend of visitors, there needs to be a choice of cafes, pubs and restaurants at the end of the walk/cycle.

Recommendations

1. Develop an organic market garden to support community food hubs with local grown produce.
2. Develop Camelford Cider Press through community orchard
3. Explore opportunity for community bakery
4. Support creation of more independent cafes/restaurants
5. Explore creation of a super allotment and joining the 'Incredible Edible' movement to connect communities through the power of food

Experiences

Camelford has a long history of holding great social gatherings and, in years gone by, its annual fair would generate huge crowds. More recently, the Town Council has supported a wide variety of community events and festivals ranging from arts and circus skills workshops, skateboarding competitions and star gazing to bat and bird walks, Camelford festival and teddy bears picnics.

This pedigree for running events augurs well for the future of the town, reflecting how high streets are being transformed into a destination to 'experience' and socialise.

With a potential new bypass providing the opportunity to widen pavements, part or completely pedestrianise streets and use the area around the bandstand more due to less traffic, we wish to add to the events calendar and create more unique experiences.

A key part of this will be embracing the town's market history and creating a stronger outdoor market that not only supports tourism and the local economy, but provides a key gathering point for people to socialise and meet people.

Furthermore, by strengthening public realm and community assets, there will be opportunities to develop new cultural anchors in and around Camelford. One of these is the community orchard. With plans to create a community cider press there is the opportunity to organise annual wassailing celebrations involving music, song and dancing.

Authentic events like this can help put the heart and soul back into Camelford. They can also support the growth of a night time economy. With 90 per cent of respondents to the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultation saying they would like to see more evening entertainment opportunities, this should be prioritised.

Recommendations

1. Build on 'anchor events' to create a wider year round programme of experiences – including regular Foodie Friday events, and annual events such as Music in the Park, Four Days of Fun, Beating the Bounds, Easter and Halloween events and enhanced winter events
2. Create stronger outdoor market
3. Build events around new 'community anchors' such as wassailing
4. Free use of bandstand to create regular weekly slots for musicians, performers etc
5. Widen pavements and expand public realm to create more flexible space for events, al fresco dining etc.

Tourism and heritage

Tourism is worth over £2billion a year to the Cornish economy and prior to the pandemic around 40 million inbound visits were made to Cornwall each year. Camelford is well located to benefit from the predicted rise of staycations in the UK, being at the heart of a great area for touring, walking, fishing, swimming and surfing.

Early on in our discussions, the group identified the seasonal disparity of visitor numbers as an area to be addressed. It is recommended that efforts be made to improve the winter tourism offer in and around Camelford.

Star gazing, Christmas markets and enhancing winter events could help Camelford benefit from changing staycation habits.

The synergy between other gains identified among transformation themes – improved food and restaurant offer, links to the Camel trail, more events and unique experiences and arts/culture trails can further support the visitor economy and make Camelford more attractive to tourists.

The group also agreed to explore the possibility of setting up a camping car park to allow motorhomes to stay in Camelford during the winter season. The UK motorhome industry has already identified the tourism opportunity by providing overnight parking for motorhomes – and the possibility of establishing a similar model to European Aires motorhome stopovers could create unique tourism opportunities.

Discussions also touched upon the need for a tourism information centre and better communications to inform the wider public of Camelford attractions. Exploring possibilities of combining tourism information in an existing community facility, such as the library, is a recommended action.

Camelford's rich heritage should also be strongly represented to not only support tourism but also help restore a distinctive identity. Among the facilities that have been lost in recent years in Camelford includes the North Cornwall Museum and we would look to explore opportunities to re-house this in our town.

Recommendations

1. Create a tourist information hub – either within the library or in a separate space
2. Improve shop frontages to create a more welcoming environment
3. Explore Aires model of creating motorhome overnight to support winter tourism. To be complemented with star gazing, Christmas markets and other winter events
4. Create a tourism strategy for Camelford to capitalise on changing staycation trends by marketing holiday cottages, B&Bs, events etc.
5. Explore opportunities to re-house North Cornwall Museum in Camelford to showcase the town's history and artefacts

Workspace

Urban workspaces look to become a popular trend post lockdown with many landlords repurposing void space to satisfy a growing need for people to work locally. A key objective of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is to strengthen and support economic activity, and, at present, there is no co-working space in Camelford.

The opportunity to create a co-working space on the high street in the snooker hall would serve multiple purposes; creating a workspace for people who are tired of working from home, supporting start-ups and creative freelancers and creating a cluster where people can share ideas and support each other. The Neighbourhood Development Plan shows that 22 per cent of respondents have a home business, demonstrating an immediate potential market for shared workspace.

Recommendations

1. Explore the creation of a co-working space in the snooker hall in Camelford



Community hub/health and wellbeing

As high streets move away from being just synonymous with shopping, a community hub model is fast gaining a reputation as the most viable alternative. Camelford has lost key shops and services like its bank in recent years and people need other reasons to visit their town centre.

There are clear identifiable strengths in Camelford's community spirit and social capital. There are numerous community groups and activities ranging from book clubs, floral societies, model making and sewing groups, and there's an obvious opportunity to strengthen community assets to house more of these activities. In particular, the following assets could be strengthened to better meet community needs and give people more reasons to visit Camelford:

Library – UK libraries are evolving and it's critical that they meet modern needs. For Camelford library to become a more dynamic social space, they would like to include the following.

- **A dedicated study area for students – this would encourage the 12-18 age demographic to utilise the library facilities for study**
- **A full-time activity table for the children's area so that crafts can be encouraged year round and incorporate Cornwall Libraries yearly Library Offers**
- **A specific area for Tourist information – this could include local interest leaflets, walking maps & a tablet with a link to the CTC website**

showing local accommodation, places to eat, local shops etc.

- **An area for local groups to meet up – Book Groups, U3A, Knit & natter, Rhymetime, Health visitor/baby weigh, storytime, CAB, Job centre etc. Ideally an area which can be booked out and is self-service for users.**
- **A community noticeboard where local businesses & community groups can advertise local events.**

Camelford Hall – This is a key local space and its full potential must be explored to host more events and meet all community needs

The Old Bank: a community hub providing key specialist services including autism support, debt advice, support for young parents and help for victims of domestic abuse among others

Bandstand/Enfield Park – a vital green space for the town, this could be used more to not only act as an important gathering space, but host different events and act as a dining area/picnic space for people to eat finger food etc. from a farmers market

Skatepark/youth facilities – Ambitious plans to introduce a repair café, parkour area, outside gym, community garden, table tennis and other sporting activities aims to create a vibrant youth hub that could serve youngsters well beyond Camelford's catchment area

The community hub vision, however, will extend beyond the high street with the community orchard and potential community garden trust also acting as key community anchors.

Building a wellbeing plan around this and also strengthening health facilities is essential to improving the quality of life in Camelford. The creation of a new medical centre will go a long way to addressing these needs, but other health amenities such as a dentist, optician and physio are needed.

Recommendations

1. Prioritise new health facilities and supporting services such as dentist, physio, optician etc.
2. Ensure the skatepark is integrated with the rest of the town so that a younger community has a bigger presence and strong stake in the town.
3. Prioritise reducing pollution and improving air quality through measures to promote active transport and create healthier spaces
4. Explore options to strengthen community assets such as the library and Camelford Hall
5. Promote community development/ownership and launch a version of 'Detroit Soup' to give micro-grants to creative social entrepreneurs
6. Explore wider use of the Methodist Chapel for community activities/events



Green space/public realm

Under Government planning reforms announced earlier this year, it's proposed that all developers must meet design codes. Under the National Model Design Code, which is currently out for consultation, characteristics of well-designed places are listed. Our vision is for Camelford to be an exemplar town that supports the environment and values green space.

The design guide recommends new streets to be tree lined, and new developments to incorporate planted green verges, communal gardens, and community orchards. This is something that Camelford is already making progress in and our vision must be to strengthen green space and improve the public realm to foster a greater sense of place.

The opportunity to widen pavements and extend the public realm around the bandstand area must be seized to open the potential of this area. This can create a plaza style gathering point to become a key attraction and flexible space for events, markets etc. There is also evidence to suggest that investments in the public realm has economically benefitted local retailers and businesses.

Camelford's stunning surroundings and access to beauty spots like Roughtor need also to be better linked through nature trails, walks and cycle paths to strengthen the visitor economy. We will seek to enhance green spaces and explore the possibility of funding to re-design Enfield Park.

Our ambitions also intend other green spaces such

as the community orchard to become, in time, key gathering points where people socialise and meet.

Recommendations

1. Promote green spaces in and around the town centre and in new developments
2. Explore possibility of lining part of the high street with trees
3. Prioritise more gathering points, parklets and look to widen public realm to create a plaza style square that will establish a community heart in Camelford.
4. Promote wilding more widely
5. Explore funding to enhance Enfield Park with a focus on nature conservation and restoration, species recovery, natural based solutions, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and connecting people with nature

Arts/crafts

The arts and crafts can play a major role in creating a sense of identity and pride. Similarly, they can help drive investment. For, as the former mayor of New York, Michael Bloomberg, one noted, “culture attracts capital more than capital attracts culture because the arts are a magnet for dreamers and innovators from every walk of life.”

Cornwall has a renowned creative and artistic community and it would be a mistake not to harness these skills as part of a vision of renewal for Camelford. It's suggested that partnerships with local arts groups look at the possibility of delivering a series of vibrant murals in appropriate spaces.

It is also recommended that local artists are involved in creating a locally themed trail along the lines of the successful Shaun in the City arts trail in Bristol and the Bee in the City Manchester sculpture trail. This can generate excitement, attract visitors and reinforce the town's identity.

Recommendations

1. Partner with local arts groups to deliver a series of bold murals across Camelford to strengthen the town's identity
2. Explore possibility of working with local artists to create a locally themed trail along the lines of the Shaun in the City arts trail in Bristol and the Bee in the City Manchester sculpture trail.



Cycling/walking/active transport

As Camelford potentially stands to benefit from a huge reduction in traffic should a bypass be granted, active transport measures are arguably the most important piece in our vision to transform the town. Embedding an active transport culture where walking and cycling is encouraged can be the difference between a post-bypass success or a short-term reduction in traffic before behavioural patterns return and traffic returns from other sources.

At the heart of this drive is the need for Camelford to link to the Camel Trail and, if possible, the Tarka Trail.

The extension of the Camel Trail from Wendford Bridge to Camelford, subsequently connecting Camelford to Bodmin, Wadebridge and the North coast with a multi-use off-road trail would require approximately 10 km of continuous new path following the River Camel. This could be combined with habitat restoration or new woodland, which could further protect and enhance this Area of Special Conservation.

As one of the most popular recreational routes in the country, the Camel Trail runs from Padstow to Wenford Bridge in St Breward, via Wadebridge and Bodmin. The trail passes through the wooded countryside of the upper Camel Valley and alongside the picturesque Camel Estuary. It is owned by Cornwall Council and recent data shows that the existing trail attracts over 400,000 user visits a year of which over 50 per cent are residents of Cornwall and two thirds are cyclists. The user spend is worth approximately £13M to the local

economy and supports approximately 260 jobs. Currently only one per cent of trips are used to commute to work, however with the growing popularity of e-bikes this is a use which has potential to expand. Most of the current activity is currently focused on the Wadebridge to Padstow end of the trail – possibly due in part to the lack of destination or centre of population at the Northern end.

With increased investment in a Green Recovery for Camelford after the introduction of a bypass, there is the opportunity to deliver green and blue infrastructure for public access and amenity, while creating the conditions for Camelford to become a key destination.

There are multiple benefits to making it easier to walk and cycle in the town due to the reduction in traffic. Evidence from a Sustrans Space to Move survey, for example, shows that retail turnover in pedestrianised areas generally out performs non pedestrianised areas.

Opportunities to semi pedestrianise the town like nearby Wadebridge could also bring further economic benefits with investment in walking friendly public spaces. The Living Streets Pedestrian Pound report makes a strong business case for better, healthier streets and includes case study evidence showing that well-planned improvements to public spaces can boost footfall and trading by up to 40 per cent.

The report shows consistent evidence that customers like pedestrian environments and

dislike traffic. It also shows that this environment is conducive to jobs growth. Evidence from a US study that compares the number of jobs created through the construction of walking, cycling and road infrastructure found a higher employment density from pedestrian and cycling projects.

Furthermore, better public realm and increased walkability can help lower income households, as studies show how car dependent households on low incomes spend 50 per cent of their budget on transportation; the poor quality of the public realm in poorer neighbourhoods often acts as a disincentive to walking.

As drawings submitted to Cornwall Council by consultants in an options assessment show, plans could seek to encourage a shift to a market town philosophy that will encourage new businesses, particularly local cafes and restaurants, to be created in the area. There will be lots of public shared utilities that can be utilised by businesses and provide a destination for people to stop off or make a day trip to Camelford to use the market facilities.

These plans will also aim to encourage pedestrian and cycle movement throughout the high street. By creating a low speed, low traffic environment, with the opportunity to semi-pedestrianise or close the high street for events etc., a more people-centred destination will emerge, allowing Camelford to fully unlock its potential.

Recommendations

1. Prioritise establishing links to the Camel Trail and, if possible, the Tarka Trail.
2. Promote greater pedestrian and cycle movement through active transport initiatives to foster a culture in the town centre that's less reliant on cars in readiness for the bypass.
3. Develop a joined-up, informed view of pedestrianisation that allows residents to access their homes, delivery to residential and retail, and people to access shops in a safe and quality environment.
4. Improve cycling facilities and look to encourage further cycle-friendly amenities such as a cycle hire/repair facility and cycle shop.
5. Improve street lighting and ensure residents and visitors can enjoy a safe walking experience.

Conclusion

The introduction of a bypass is a once in a generation opportunity for Camelford. If the recommendations contained here are acted upon as part of a plan to prepare for this potential development, Camelford could be transformed into an exciting destination.

This vision aims to balance the need to capitalise on tourism opportunities with the needs of the local community. Seeking to protect the strong social capital that exists in Camelford, it looks to develop an authentic community identity that's open and welcoming.

As part of this balancing process, we have recognised the need for community empowerment to play a key part in the delivery of our vision. In the Neighbourhood Development Plan, community facilities and amenities are viewed as a key policy area, and this is currently reflected nationally with a shift towards community owned businesses stepping in to provide vital services in recent years.

There are multiple examples across the country of community groups taking over empty high street buildings to deliver community pubs, bakeries, performance spaces, repair spaces, cinemas and other facilities. In neighbouring Bodmin, for example, the Old Library has been used by a community business as a cultural facility, drawing visitors to the high street.

Research by the Plunkett Foundation shows that community owned shops tend to be more robust than traditional privately owned enterprises, with a 94% success rate versus 46% for average small

businesses. Community trusts and community owned businesses already own and manage thousands of buildings and spaces across the UK, and the conditions are favourable in Camelford for community groups to take an active role in regenerating their high street.

We would recommend exploring this option to develop a key high street asset such as a community bakery.

As our placemaking group has demonstrated, partnerships between the Council, private business, community groups and other local stakeholders are vital to creating the energy and vision to overcome the challenges facing Camelford. However, this partnership can also play a role in delivering the solutions and we would urge wider consultation to encourage the community to play a more active role in shaping Camelford's future.

Next steps

It is recommended that this is a starting point for wider community consultation to refine the plan and seek public consensus on moving forward. For these plans to have the best possible chance of being successful, they need to be supported by the community with local people need to be heard and invested in them.



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