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JOHN DAVID WATTS & MORGAN

Chartered Surveyors, Auctioneers, Valuers and Land Agents

81 High Street, Cowbridge, South Glamorgan CF7 7YN.

GARETH J. LLOYD, F.R.I.C.S., F.R.V.A., Chartered Surveyor
ALLAN R. FAIRFAX, F.R.I.C.S., F.R.V.A., F.A.A.V., Chartered Surveyor
W. HOPKIN JOSEPH, BSc (Est. Man), A.R.I.C.S., A.R.V.A., Chartered Surveyor
C. TREHARNE JONES, F.R.I.C.S., Chartered Surveyor
JOHN D. MORGAN, F.N.A.E.A.

Consultants
ROBERT L. MORGAN, M.N.A.E.A.
G. MORGAN JOSEPH, BSc (Hons Ag), F.R.I.C.S., F.A.A.V., Chartered Surveyor
Tel. (01446) 774152 and 774439 Fax. (01446) 775757

YOUR REF

OUR REF

DATE

GJL/VLJ/G.Marts

12 October 1995

M P A Smith Esq Bsc(Hons)M Soc Sc, MIEH
Chief Executive
Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council
Civic Offices
Holton Road
BARRY
South Glamorgan

Dear Mr Smith

Re: Cowbridge Cattle Market

We understand that the proposals put forward for the possible re-development of the Cattle Market are to be considered by your Authority's Finance Sub-Committee on 18 October, and we have been asked by Councillor R Gwyn Thomas to provide the Sub-Committee with an indication of our thoughts on the proposals.

During the last 40 years, there have been two major re-developments as far as the Market site is concerned. Firstly in the 1960's the original sheep section, which was situated adjoining the Masons Arms, was relocated to its present site and the old sheep market was then developed for car parking purposes.

In 1977 with the closure of Bridgend Market, we as Auctioneers undertook extensive alterations which included doubling the size of the buildings on the sheep market site to accommodate the sale of rearing calves, pigs and subsequently the sale of store cattle.

The last 10 years have seen substantial changes in the marketing of fatstock due mainly to the closure of the majority of small abattoirs in South Wales including the abattoirs at Bridgend, Maesteg, Port Talbot and most recently, W H Mayberry's premises at Pontadawe. Traditionally, the majority of livestock fattened in the Vale of Glamorgan would have been slaughtered at these abattoirs.

With the changes, we as Auctioneers, have had to look further-a-field for buyers which has resulted in the majority of fatstock sold at Cowbridge going as far-a-field as Preston, Bodmin Moors, Shrewsbury, Birmingham and the North Midlands.

X Heavy transport costs have dictated that vehicles become larger and there is now a growing problem with these large articulated vehicles having to come through the centre of Cowbridge Town to get to the Market premises. X

Ideally, we would like to see the highway facilities in the vicinity of the Market improved, which would then allow us to develop the Market into a more viable enterprise with at least a two day market plus other seasonal sales etc.

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However, it is appreciated that improved highway facilities can only be done by way of Local Authority expenditure. Currently school buses are unavoidably held up in the vicinity of the Market as their arrival coincides with the arrival of market traffic bringing livestock to the Market in the early morning. Again, in the afternoon when the school buses leave the area, their movement coincides with the arrival of articulated vehicles arriving to load livestock for ongoing distribution to abattoirs.

The introduction of the limit on driver's hours and the number of hours which stock can be left unfed and unwatered will inevitably decrease, imposing a further burden on livestock auctioneers to meet an increasing request to provide overnight lairage accommodation for livestock together with adequate feeding and watering facilities.

In fact, the writer recently attended as a Delegate the General Assembly of the Congress of European Agriculture in Strasbourg and it is relevant to record that animal welfare was a priority on the agenda. The attached copy of a Press Release from EALM specifically refers to livestock markets.

The size and location of the Market at Cowbridge gives no scope for enlargement or for providing adequate overnight lairage accommodation and the position is aggravated by the fact that the cattle section is segregated from the remainder of the Market premises by a public highway.

Modernisation will undoubtedly be high on the agenda to accord with more stringent welfare codes and environmental health regulations, investments other than essential is restrained by income and general refurbishment of the Market premises is unlikely to be a viable proposition, unless of course the Local Authority is prepared to provide a degree of financial assistance. It is imperative that a modern market premises is available to service the needs of the agricultural community in the Vale of Glamorgan and to meet this demand serious consideration has to be given to either extensive remodernisation or the alternatives which are available.

Other markets have been faced with the same predicament, Bury St Edmunds Market for instance had firm proposals to refurbish on the existing site, but is now seeking to relocate out of town as it is financially a more viable proposition.

The economic criteria determining the profitability of livestock markets in terms of traditional investment appraisal does not show strong rates of return. However, there are strong socio-economic functions which are often considered to far outweigh purely financial viability. These socio-economic criteria are those that the EEC seek to support. In this context, the national view is that the returns from improved livestock marketing are considerable as the margin value added by efficient marketing is often the balance between profitability and non-profitability in the livestock sector. This is particularly important in the UK and Ireland where there is a high proportion of grassland, more so than in other EEC countries and generally a far higher density of livestock.

M P A Smith Bsc(Hons) M Soc Sc MIEH
Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council

12 October 1995

With this in mind, MAFF and WOAD have been extremely supportive on any improvement in livestock marketing and relocation to improved facilities tops the priority for Grant assistance.

Other markets such as Ludlow, Exeter, Ruthin, Lichfield, Ross on Wye, Frome and indeed Carmarthen (which is to relocate shortly) see their long term future and viability to be by way of relocation on sites with good access communications to the motorways.

X Turning to the question of the re-development of the Market site in Cowbridge, it is our understanding that the proposal made by one of the three main retailing companies is for the development of the site as a "Country Store" with more than ample car parking facilities but still retaining through the site, adequate access to the Amateur Dramatics and Scouts Buildings which are situated at the western end of the Market Site. X

X We are of the opinion that development of a "Country Store" would rejuvenate the western part of the Town and would not have a detrimental impact but contrary, in the long term, would prove to be beneficial to trade within the town. X

X The Feasibility Plan, copy of which is enclosed, show that the Old Town Wall which is a major historical feature of Cowbridge would be exposed and would undoubtedly enhance the character of this part of Cowbridge. X

X As you are aware, we have identified a new 10 acre market site as an alternative to the existing site. The site is at Ruthin, St Mary Hill which is within half a mile of the M4 Motorway but still in close enough proximity to service adequately the needs of the agricultural community throughout the Vale. To provide investment capital for such a venture, part would have to come from the element of "gain" which would be provided by the proposed developers, together with Grant aid. X

X The benefits to your Authority would be to either sell its residual freehold interest in the site to developers or alternatively consider leasing the site if your Authority does not wish to dispose of the freehold. Additional annual income would of course be derived from the development by way of substantially increased rates revenue. X

X We can understand that there may well be divergent views as to the proposal for a "Country Store" within the Town, but we believe that the interests of the agricultural community throughout the Vale of Glamorgan would be best served by relocation of the Market and we would ask that your Council should give further preliminary consideration to the matter pending full impact studies. X

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Yours sincerely,

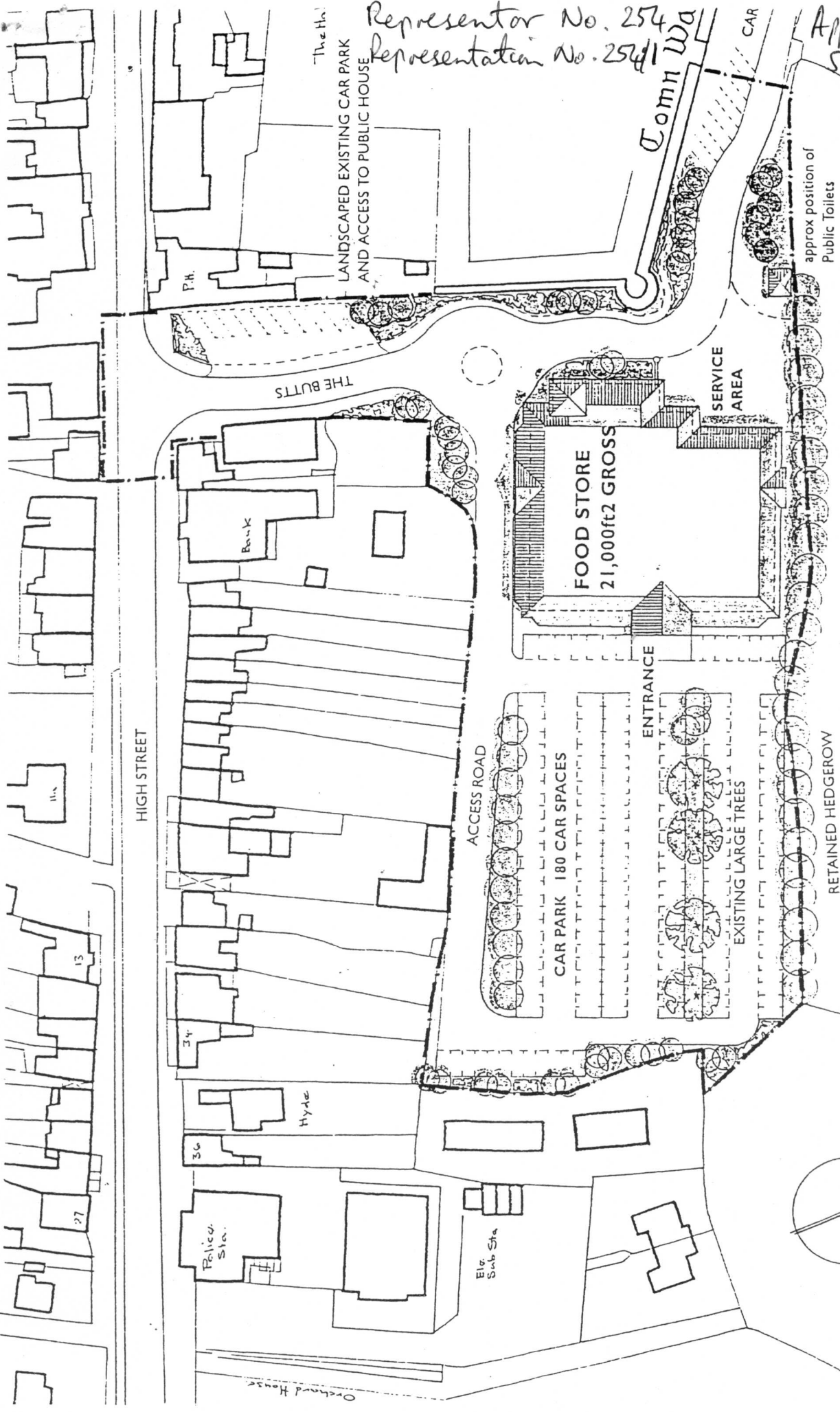
Gareth J Lloyd FRICS IRRV
For and on behalf of:
Messrs John David Watts & Morgan and
Messrs. Herbert R Thomas

Representor No. 254
Representation No. 254/1

Appendix K
Sheet 4/4

JIMA ARCHITECTS

Proposed Food Store - Cowtridge



POLICY EMP 12 - COWBRIDGE CATTLE MARKET

LAND IS RESERVED FOR THE RELOCATION OF COWBRIDGE CATTLE MARKET AT RUTHIN ROAD, ST. MARY HILL.

5.4.54 The Cowbridge Cattle Market may require a larger and better located site during the Plan period. This 4.1 hectare site to the west of the Marley Tile Company site (Policy EMP 1(11)) on the Ruthin Road has better access to the local and national road and is located away from residential areas.

5.4.55 This allocation is exclusively for the relocation of Cowbridge Cattle Market, planning applications for any other uses will not be favourably considered.

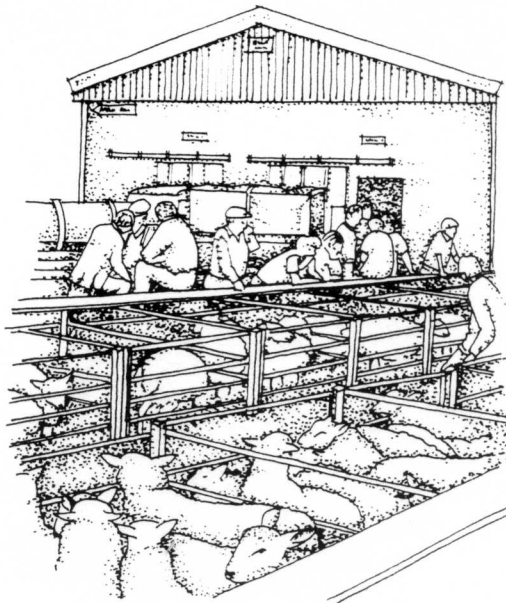
HOTELS

5.4.56 At present there is not a statutory definition of what constitutes a hotel. However, the European Community defines it as:

Any establishment that is commercially operated under the name of hotel, boarding house, inn, tavern, motel or other equivalent designation and offers accommodation for at least 10 paying guests.

(EEC 1986)

This definition will be used for the purposes of the Unitary Development Plan.



5.4.57 TAN 13 gives guidance on hotels and replaces the former PPG21. The guidance refers to the many historic buildings that are used as hotels. It states that carefully designed additions can be achieved without adversely affecting the historic fabric or character and enable a historic building to be maintained in a viable use. It is also pointed out that the conversion of redundant or obsolete buildings such as warehouses, railway stations or agricultural buildings can also lend themselves well to adaptation and modernisation as motels and hotels, therefore bringing back into economic beneficial use neglected buildings and sites.

5.4.58 The guidance emphasises that large scale building in small scale settings, buildings which break prominently into the skyline, and those which by their design, materials, illumination or building line are out of sympathy with neighbouring historic settings will normally be unacceptable. However, moderate sized extensions to existing hotels, including an increase in bedroom accommodation, is recognised as helping the future viability of a hotel or motel business, whilst also satisfying tourism need. But such extensions must not involve any disproportionate increase in scale.



