

Powys COUNTY TIMES and Express

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MONTGOMERYSHIRE

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High pollution fuels town bypass demand

HIGH levels of pollution in Newtown's often gridlocked New Road have exceeded national Air Quality Objective standards. The latest findings have led to calls from people who live on what is the busiest road in Powys for help in reducing the number of vehicles travelling along it. Most say the only way to reduce traffic and pollution levels is to build the town a bypass. Their calls are echoed by a prominent county councillor who says the findings show the town must have a bypass.

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THIS WEEK



Premier Cup
action Page 62

Delight as Welshpool town scheme gets the green light

Biggest thing for a lifetime

THE biggest thing to happen to Welshpool in our lifetime.

That was the reaction of local people to news that revolutionary plans to rejuvenate the town had been given the green light.

Local politicians and councillors spoke of their pleasure following Powys County Council planning committee's decision to grant outline planning consent to redevelop the Welshpool Livestock Market.

The project will see plans for a retail park, supermarket, non-food retail warehouse, canal-side restaurant, petrol station and a complete revamp to the town's road system finally go ahead after years of discussion.

Lembit Opik, MP for Montgomeryshire, said: "I am delighted. It has been a ludicrously long process, but now that it has been given the go-ahead it will provide a real economic rejuvenation to central Welshpool.

"As long as we do it sensibly everybody

EXCLUSIVE

By RICHARD JONES

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should win - we shall get new shops, more economic turnover and a social vibrancy that is long over due.

"The opportunities here are great and as long as Welshpool has the confidence to go for goal, it really will have a gold standard town centre."

Welshpool Town Mayor, Geoff Cross, has described the development as the biggest thing to happen in Welshpool during his lifetime - one that will bring both new jobs and trade to the area.

"I am very pleased that the outline planning consent has been granted," he said.

"Although the details have still got to be worked out it should bring much more trade and new jobs to the town. There is no doubt-

ing that this is the biggest thing that has happened to Welshpool in many, many years."

Glyn Davies, the prospective Conservative candidate for Montgomeryshire, confirmed his delight after years of negotiations finally came to fruition, and he believes the plan will significantly improve the town's atmosphere.

"Not everybody approves of the plan, but I have always supported it and I think it is very good news for Welshpool," he said.

"The three main benefits that will come of it are: We will have a much improved livestock market in the town, Welshpool will have a much more vibrant retail centre and it will drastically improve the town centre's atmosphere.

"This is without shadow of a doubt the biggest thing that has happened to Welshpool in my life time, and it if all goes ahead as

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Over 150 join in Pet Idol fun

GIGGSY the dog is one-year-old Leighton's pet idol. Leighton's dad, *County Times* Chief Photographer, Phil Blagg, says: "Giggys and Leighton adore each other. Giggys really is his Pet Idol." He is delighted that more than 150 *County Times* readers agree with him and have already entered the paper's Pet Idol competition. The winner will receive a portrait of their favourite pet and six months' supply of food. There are two super runners-up prizes. Closing date for entries is today (Friday). Readers will get to vote for their Pet Idol in the paper of February 8



Man admits Post Office robbery

A LLANYMYNECH man has admitted carrying out an armed robbery at a village post office. Aaron Scane, 29, of Priory Walk, pleaded guilty at Shrewsbury Crown Court this week, to a charge that on November 14 last year, he robbed Emma Parker of £760 in cash at Loppington Post Office, Shropshire. Scane also admitted that at the time of committing the offence he had with him an imitation firearm – a handgun. He has been remanded in custody to await sentence.

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Green light for Welshpool scheme

By DOMINIC ROBERTSON
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A DEVELOPMENT which will transform the future of Welshpool has been granted outline planning permission.

Plans to redevelop the Smithfield Livestock Market were voted through unanimously by Powys County Council's county planning committee on Tuesday afternoon.

The plans will see massive changes for Welshpool, including the re-organisation of the town's road system.

The main development will see a 4,300 square metre foodstore created on the livestock site, along with 3,978 square metres of non-food retail warehousing, a 256 square metre canal side cafe/restaurant, a petrol station and 479 car parking spaces.

A pedestrian walkway will also be created from the livestock site over the former listed railway bridge over the canal to link with Church Street car park's existing pedestrian walkway.

The plans to change the road system in Welshpool will see a through road built through Church Street Car Park, and a one way system through the town centre created.

There was some dispute over the route the road should take through Church Street Car Park with worries aired about the loss of car parking spaces.

It was suggested by Councillor Phil Pritchard that the plans be amended for the link road to meet the existing road through Church Street car park running along the south west side of the development.

However, head of planning Gareth Thomas said any attempt to change the route of the road would collapse the application entirely.

County councillor Richard Noyce said the proposal would present a major challenge to businesses in Welshpool, he said: "I feel this development offers real challenges for shops in the centre of



POWYS County Councillors tour Welshpool before making their decision on the scheme. (PB45B)

Welshpool which have already received a large challenge from Coed y Dinas.

"I would hope that the business community in Welshpool will be encouraged to look on this opportunity as not being a detrimental challenge but offering an opportunity."

Speaking in support of the plans, Spencer Cooper of J Ross Developments, the company behind the scheme, said: "These plans will bolster the rural economy. This is on the edge of the town centre and it will address leakage and bring people back to Welshpool to shop rather than go to Shrewsbury or Oswestry. I and my team are convinced this will have a truly positive effect on the town and the rural economy."

County councillor Dawn Bailey said: "We owe it to the local people to bring this development forward. The charity shops we have at the moment have far more impact on the town centre than this

development." County councillor Anne Holloway congratulated her fellow councillors on their decision, she said: "I would like to thank my colleagues for such a reasoned and fair debate."

"Two decades ago we made an awful mistake in the town. Do not make it again."

Get in touch

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
 This story will be placed in our debate section online so you can have your say – visit www.countytimes.co.uk

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