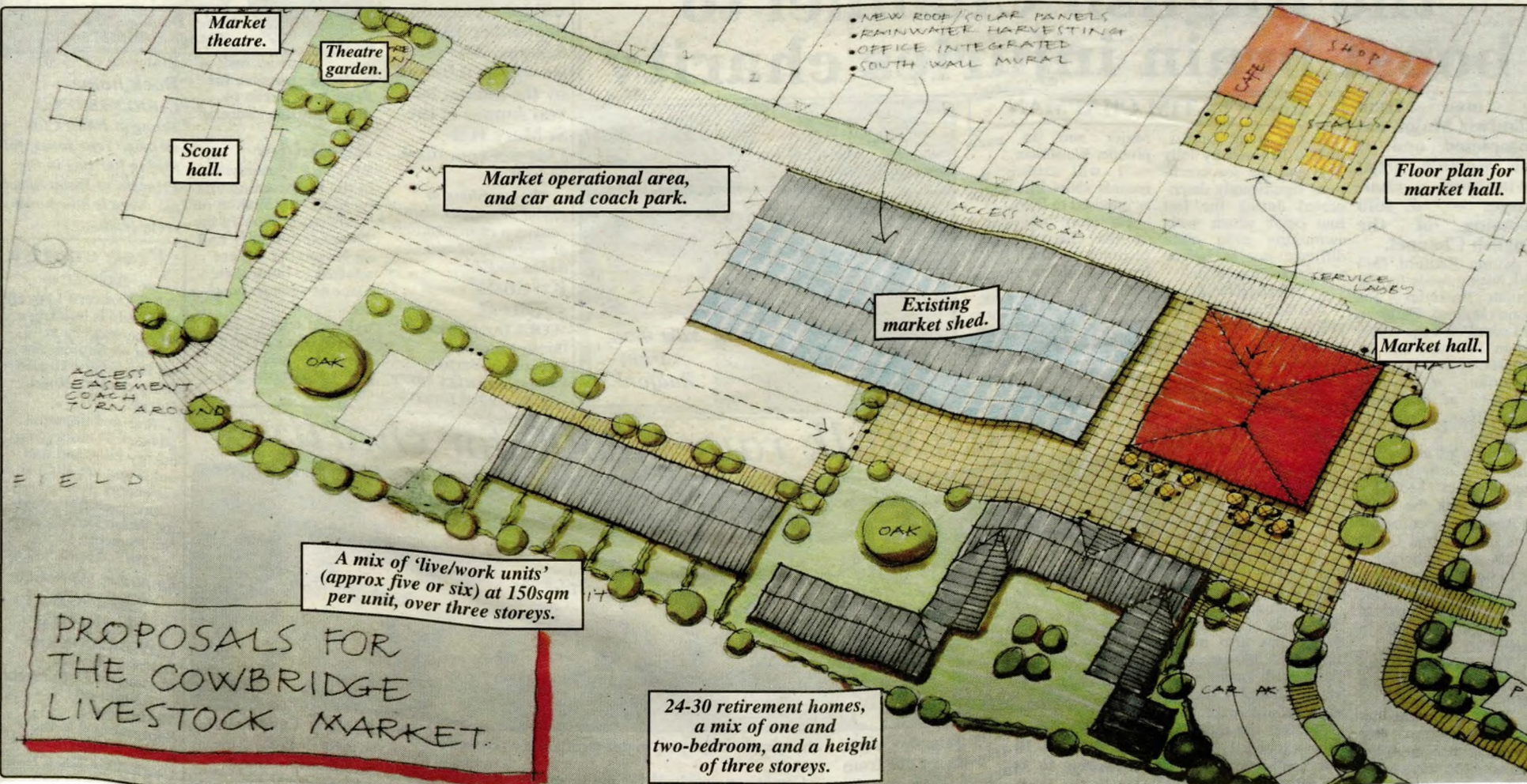


The future for the livestock market?



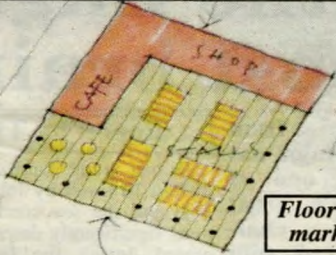
Market theatre.

Theatre garden.

Scout hall.

Market operational area, and car and coach park.

- NEW ROOF/SOLAR PANELS
- RAINWATER HARVESTING
- OFFICE INTEGRATED
- SOUTH WALL MURAL



Floor plan for market hall.

Existing market shed.

Market hall.

A mix of 'live/work units' (approx five or six) at 150sqm per unit, over three storeys.

PROPOSALS FOR THE COWBRIDGE LIVESTOCK MARKET.

24-30 retirement homes, a mix of one and two-bedroom, and a height of three storeys.

FIELD

ACCESS EASEMENT COACH TURF AROUND

ACCESS ROAD

SERVICE LANE

OAK

OAK

CAR PARK

PR

PLANS detailing how the Cowbridge live-stock market area could be developed were unveiled last week at the Vale Show.

Now, those plans (above) are on show in Cowbridge Library and at Arthur John's in the High Street.

At the same venues, consultation forms are available, and these will be returned to the Vale Marketing Action Group (VMAG) as part of the assessment process.

The plan, which follows on from protests last year over the proposed closure of the market, have been driven forward by the VMAG, who have consulted with as many interested parties as possible.

The Cowbridge-based organisation, Creative Rural Communities (CRC) obtained funding for a feasibility study, and the new plans are the result of that exercise.

Alun John, chairman of Cowbridge Chamber of Trade, told The GEM: "We were

delighted with the public response when the plans were unveiled at the Vale Show.

"Everyone has worked collaboratively on the plan, and we are pleased that the market will be retained and improved."

He added that the public reaction to the consultation would be an important factor in moving on to the next step - getting funding for the various elements.

The plan, which caused a furore in the town, envisaged giving the whole area over to housing. The favoured element was an extra care facility for the elderly, or supported accommodation, or a mixture of both.

The new plan has retained an element of housing, with 24-30 retirement homes, in three-storey buildings, pencilled in for part of the site.

Also, it is felt that some small business units would be useful, and around six have been included, at about 150sq metre each.

These two elements are on land currently used for parking.

However, an integral part of the overall plans is the proposal by the Cowbridge Charter Trust, to knock down the existing cattle sheds that adjoin the town walls and create more parking.

The sheds are in a poor state of repair, and the town walls could then be refurbished, with 42 spaces created.

These new car parking spaces will help to balance those lost to housing and business units.

The main market shed will stay, but it will be heavily refurbished, with a new roof, probably with solar panels.

Proper office space will be included in the refurbishment.

One major new aspect of the scheme - if it comes to fruition -

is a new market hall.

This would be a semi-open air market, open on the SE and SW sides, incorporating a cafe, farm shop, and a space that could be used for stalls or as a performance area.

There would also be loft space in the hall, but no use has been specified as yet for that area.

It is fair to say that this hall is the one element that will depend on commercial interest. Without a cafe and shop contributing to running costs, it might not be viable.

However, one interested party told The GEM that, if this part of the scheme did not happen, the town would still be left with an attractive open space that could be used for a variety of purposes -

particularly during events such as the food festival.

The access road which passes the market and then bears left past the Market Theatre and Scout Hall is an essential part of the scheme.

That road, which will be kept clear at all times, will end with a turning circle for lorries and coaches.

Trees will be planted to shield the Scout Hall and Market Theatre, and the latter will have the possibility of creating a garden space in front of the theatre.

Alun John praised the work of the Vale marketing Action Group, and stressed that the town's response to the consultation exercise would be crucial to making the plan a reality.

PHILIP IRWIN