

# CONSERVATION AREA PORTHKERRY



## APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION



# **Porthkerry**

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

March 2009

This document is the adopted Porthkerry Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and is a publicly agreed statement on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and of a publicly agreed set of policies and actions intended to preserve and enhance the special qualities of the Conservation Area.

Following a period of public consultation from 5<sup>th</sup> May 2008 to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2008, this document was submitted on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2009 to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet with a recommendation that the document is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011). The Appraisal/Management Plan will also inform the preparation of the emergent Local Development Plan.

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## Introduction

The Porthkerry Conservation Area was designated in March 1973 by the former Glamorgan County Council in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the village.

Having designated the Conservation Area, the local authority has a statutory duty to ensure that the character of the area is preserved or enhanced. It is therefore necessary to define and analyse those qualities that contribute to, or detract from, the special interest of the area, and to assess how they combine to justify the area's special designation as a Conservation Area.

The Porthkerry Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan builds upon policy set out by the Welsh Assembly, in Planning Policy Wales, and local policy including the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance '*Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale*' (1999). This document provides a further, firm basis on which applications for development within, and close to the Porthkerry Conservation Area can be assessed.

The document is divided into two parts, Part 1 (The Conservation Area Appraisal) and Part 2 (The Conservation Area Management Plan).



The Conservation Area Appraisal records and analyses the various features that give the Porthkerry Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest. These features are noted, described, and marked on the Conservation Area Appraisal Map along with written commentary on how they contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area. There is a presumption that all of these features should be “preserved or enhanced”, as required by the legislation.

The Conservation Area Management Plan is based upon the negative factors and summary of issues identified in Part 1 and sets out proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the Porthkerry Conservation Area. The recommendations include proposals for enhancement and policies for the avoidance of harmful change.

The Management Plan is written in the awareness that in managing the Vale’s conservation areas the Council’s resources are limited and therefore need to be prioritised. Financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals for which it is responsible may take longer than is desirable to implement. However, the Council will continue to encourage improvements to the Conservation Area in co-operation with property owners, groups and local businesses.

The document is intended for use by planning officers, developers and landowners to ensure that the special character is not eroded, but rather preserved and enhanced through development activity. While the descriptions go into some detail, a reader should not assume that the omission of any building, feature or space from this appraisal means that it is not of interest; if in doubt, please contact the Vale of Glamorgan Council - contact details can be found at the end of this document.

The survey work for this appraisal was undertaken during January and February 2008. To be concise and readable, the appraisal does not record all features of interest.

## The Effects of Designation

This Appraisal/ Management Plan has been prepared in compliance with Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Areas Act, 1990. The consequences of designation are summarised as follows:

- the Council has a general duty to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the Porthkerry Conservation Area in the determination of planning applications;
- six weeks notice needs to be given to the Council before works are carried out to certain trees not subject to tree preservation orders (those over 7.5cm in diameter measured 1.5 metres above the ground);
- conservation area consent is needed for the demolition of any unlisted building in the conservation area (subject to certain exemptions in terms of size some very minor buildings may be excluded from this provision);
- the details as to the limits regarding the works (such as extensions) which may be carried out without the benefit of planning permission are stricter;
- extra publicity is given to planning applications.

In practice, the Council's principal involvement in the management of the conservation area is through its duty to advise on, consider and respond to planning applications for new development. These are normally subject to closer scrutiny from a design perspective and may as a result often require a greater level of explanatory information and presentation. Dependent upon size of a proposal, an application may also be referred to the Council's Conservation Area Advisory Group, an independent forum which makes recommendations to the Council's Planning Committee regarding a number of issues regarding the management of conservation areas in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Council also makes an important contribution to the appearance of the conservation area in the management of the public estate (e.g. parks, open spaces and its own buildings) and in fulfilling its statutory obligations as highway authority (e.g. in the maintenance of highways, verges, ditches, drains, hedges and in the provision of street furniture, signs and lighting).

## Process of the Appraisal

Involving the community (and thereby raising public awareness) has been an integral part of the Appraisal process. This has been beneficial in two respects. Firstly, it has allowed the local community to provide important commentary on both the existing situation and its aspirations for the Conservation Area. In addition, it has raised awareness of the Conservation Area status of the village, and the implications for those living within its boundaries.

The Conservation and Design Team met initially with local Councillors on 19 December 2007 to outline the objectives of the review and to outline the main issues that are affecting the Conservation Area. Following this meeting a leaflet summarising the purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was prepared and a short questionnaire was distributed to all properties. The consultation period lasted 3 weeks. The results of the questionnaire were considered in the preparation of this draft Appraisal. A summary of issues raised through the consultation process is listed below:

- Concern over potential new development in the Conservation Area.
- The importance of the landscape setting of the Conservation Area.
- The importance of traditional building materials and styles.
- The negative impact of traffic in the Conservation Area.

Following a consultation period of six weeks from 5<sup>th</sup> May 2008 to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2008, which included a surgery held at Rhoose Library on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008, any further comments were considered and amendments, where necessary, made to the document which was then presented to, and approved by, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet of 25 March 2009.



## Planning Policy Framework

### National Advice

Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A Conservation Area is defined as *“an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”*. It is the quality and interest of an *area*, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a Conservation Area.

Section 72 of the same Act specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

This document should be read in conjunction with national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Wales, which is augmented by Circular 61/96 – ‘Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings’ and Conservation Areas and Circular 1/98 – ‘Planning and the Historic Environment: Directions by the Secretary of State for Wales’. These documents provide advice on the designation of Conservation Areas, and the importance of assessing the special interest of each one in an appropriate manner.

### Development Plan

The Vale of Glamorgan’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in April 2005. The Plan sets out the Council’s aspirations for protecting and enhancing the historic environment and states how applications affecting Conservation Areas will be assessed. The policies relating directly to the management of Conservation Areas are:

- ENV 17 (Protection of Built and Historic Environment)
- ENV 20 (Development in Conservation Areas)
- ENV 21 (Demolition in Conservation Areas)
- ENV 22 (Advertisements in Conservation Areas)
- ENV 23 (Shopfront Design in Conservation Areas)

Additionally, Policy ENV 24 (Conservation and Enhancement of Open Space) and Policy ENV 27 (Design of New Developments) are important in the assessment of planning applications relating to Conservation Areas.

These policies will be strengthened by this Appraisal, which will offer greater detail regarding those elements that give the area its distinctiveness.

It should be noted that the designation of a Conservation Area is not intended to prevent change. It is, however, important that new development in or adjacent to the Conservation Area either preserves or enhances the quality of the area.

### **Local Development Plan**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has started work on producing its Local Development Plan (LDP), which will set out how land within the Vale is used between 2011 and 2026. This includes the historic built environment and Conservation Areas. Up-to-date information on the progress of the Council's LDP can be found at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk).

## Summary of Special Interest

Although not exhaustive, the defining characteristics of the Conservation Area that reinforce the designation can be summarised as follows:

- Small village in a rural setting of open fields and woodland on a secluded promontory above the Bristol Channel;
- Narrow cul-de-sac approach road bounded with green banks and hedgerows;
- Grass-verged central village green surrounded by an outstanding ensemble of medieval and later buildings;
- The stone walled medieval churchyard;
- Associations with the 19<sup>th</sup> century Romilly family of Porthkerry House;
- The architectural and historic interest of the area's historic buildings and structures, five of which are listed namely: Church of St. Curig (grade II\*); Cross in the churchyard of the Church of St. Curig (grade II); Church Farmhouse (grade II\*); Outbuilding to the north of Church Farmhouse (grade II\*); The Old School House (grade II);
- Situated above a deep cutting and railway tunnel on the Vale of Glamorgan line, opened 1897, beside the Porthkerry Viaduct;
- Trees provide a backdrop to the village green and hamlet;
- Located on a network of local footpaths and a designated Valeways Walk with access to the Glamorgan Coastal Heritage Walk and Porthkerry Park;
- Stone boundary walls;
- Bio-diversity and wildlife.



*Porthkerry Viaduct, a grade II listed building outside the conservation area, is a local landmark.*



*Trees are an important part of the setting of the church and the whole area.*



*In winter there is a glimpse of the Bristol Channel from the western extremity of the conservation area*



*A small stone outbuilding constructed of local lias limestone.*

## Location and Setting

### Location and Context

The Porthkerry Conservation Area encompasses the tiny hamlet of Porthkerry which is situated on the coastal plain that extends west of Barry overlooking the Bristol Channel. The village lies about 3 kilometres from Barry at the end of a cul-de-sac lane running from a minor road (Porthkerry Road) that loops around the southern boundary of Cardiff International Airport.

Public footpaths connect the hamlet seaward to Porthkerry Park and Porthkerry beach (and to the Glamorgan Heritage Coastal Path) and inland to Lower Porthkerry and a network of rural footpaths.

To the north and east the land is well wooded and falls sharply away to Porthkerry Park, an area of woods and open space now managed as a Country Park (outside the conservation area). To the west of the hamlet lie open fields through which the single-track road accesses Porthkerry and, on the other side of Porthkerry Road, the runways of Cardiff Airport.

Located on the cliff edge a short distance to the south lies a promontory fort and ancient settlement known as The Bulwarks to the west of which there is a cliffside caravan park.

### General Character and Plan Form

The Porthkerry Conservation Area is small but contains an exceptional collection of historic buildings dispersed around a triangular green to which there is only a single vehicular access. The settlement pattern of the area's significant historic buildings and structures (i.e. St. Curig's Church, The Old School House, Elmhurst and Church Farmhouse and its outbuildings) has no formality or uniformity. The boundary of the conservation area has been drawn to include modern farm buildings close to Church Farmhouse, which are close enough to have an effect on its setting, and surrounding open space and woodland that is important. St. Curig's Church is aligned in the traditional east-west orientation. Its churchyard contains a medieval cross, lych gate and many tombstones. To the east is a 20<sup>th</sup> century cemetery. From the lych gate at the entrance to St. Curig's churchyard two unmetalled private drives lead to three dwellings outside the conservation area (Sea Breezes, The Gables, The Woodlands).



*Porthkerry's farm buildings seen from Porthkerry road.*



*A public footpath leads down from the green into a valley.*



*A single track bounded by hedges enters the village.*



*The tower of St. Curig's Church appears as one ascends the footpath from Porthkerry Park.*

A public footpath leads down through woods to Porthkerry Park and the beach. Though hardly visible from within the conservation area, railway track passes under the village green through a tunnel. Part of the railway's deep cutting on either side of the tunnel is included within the conservation area. To the east of the area the railway crosses the Porthkerry viaduct, a well known local landmark.

## Historic Development and Archaeology

Maps indicate that the name of this village has gradually evolved over the years. On maps of The Church of St. Curig has its origins in the 13<sup>th</sup> century but there is evidence nearby of Roman and earlier occupation in the vicinity.

To the south of the conservation area lies The Bulwarks, one of a series of large coastal Iron Age hillforts c. 700 B.C. - 100 A.D. Excavation has revealed some rectangular buildings, the latest being 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. indicating it was in use well into Roman times. Cold Knap, between Porthkerry and Barry, is the site of Glan y Mor Roman villa probably built at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

From the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards the Vale of Glamorgan was farmed and managed by English and Norman settlers who built strongholds and castles to defend their holdings. The name 'Castle Rock' which appears on ancient maps may possibly indicate the site of a medieval castle that was destroyed by the sea. It was supposed to have stood below The Bulwarks but there is no evidence to support this theory.

First mention of the Church of St. Curig appears in 1254 and much of the church walling is still medieval, although restored. The tower was added in the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century. The church was much rebuilt as part of a major restoration in 1867 at which time the church's thatch roof was replaced with slate. The top of the tower was rebuilt in 1958.

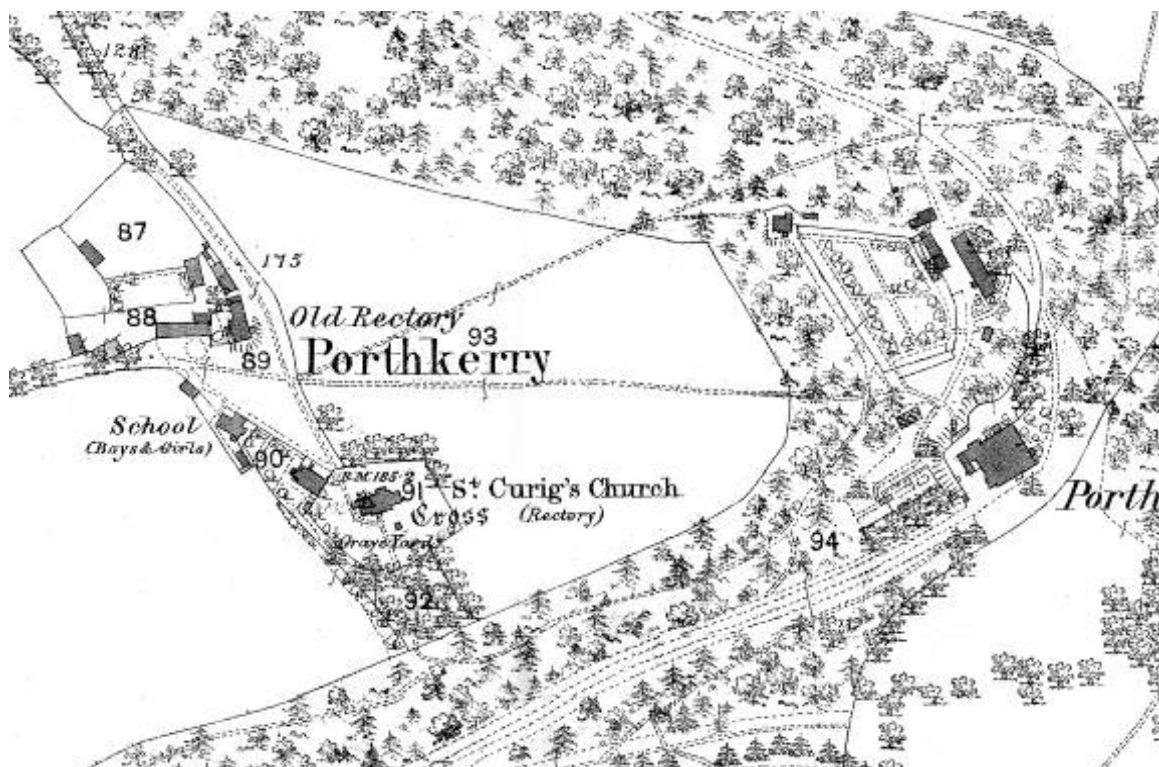
Church Farmhouse was first noted in the Stradling family correspondence in 1576 and is shown on the Penmark parish map of 1622. In the 1636 Glebe Terrier it is described as having three hearths and this also mentions the outbuilding to the north. It seems likely that it was built as a parsonage. The kitchen wing was extended, probably in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, possibly as a result of the rector moving to a new rectory nearby, now the Egerton Grey Country Hotel, to where he moved in 1839-40. The building now became, and remains, a farmhouse and was given some changes at that time and later.

The Old School House probably dates from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century; shown on the 1622 Manorial Map and described as the Church House. It was used as a school 1840-70 after which a new school was opened.

The new Victorian school, today's Elmhurst, was part of was part of the philanthropic work of the Romilly family. Sir Samuel Romilly (1757-1818) was a renowned legal reformer, statesman and philanthropist. His second son, Edward Romilly, built Porthkerry House in 1840. The Romilly family might be viewed as model landlords in the area during the Victorian period. In addition to building a school, they are noted for rebuilding farmhouses and cottages, introducing improved farming systems and raising their labourers' wages.

An extraordinary change was brought to the village in the 1890s by the construction of a tunnel under the village as part of the works to create the Vale of Glamorgan railway from Barry to Bridgend. The track approaches the village from Barry via Porthkerry Viaduct (listed grade II, situated just outside the conservation area). It is one of the last major masonry viaducts completed in Britain, stands 110' high and dominates the little valley that leads to the beach.

Industrialisation of the Valleys and the growth of Barry Docks at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with an ensuing increase in Barry's population, brought tourists and trippers to the coastline. The Porthkerry Caravan Park and Porthkerry Park, landscaped by the Romilly family in the 1840s, are testament to the area's continuing popularity.



## Spatial Analysis



*A timber post marks the route of a walk through the village and down to the beach.*



*The public footpath follows a hollow way through woods.*



*Three trees beside the stone wall above the railway tunnel entrance.*



*Trees and greenery usually obstruct views of the track across the viaduct.*



*The churchyard of St. Curig's Church is a place of tranquillity.*



*The village green is a grassy open space in the heart of the settlement.*



## Character Analysis

### Listed Buildings

#### Church of St. Curig – Grade II\*

The church dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century but was much rebuilt in 1867. The walls are constructed of roughly coursed lias limestone rubble. The roof is a plain principal rafter roof introduced when the thatch was replaced in 1867. John Wesley preached here in 1741 and on several occasions during his journeys through South Wales. The church lych gate was erected as a memorial to those who lost their lives in the First World War.



*Church of St. Curig.*

#### Cross in the Churchyard of St. Curig's Church – Grade II

The cross is probably 15<sup>th</sup> century in origin but the steps have been rebuilt. It is recorded that the cross blew down in a storm in 1874 after which the shaft and part of the head were reconstructed. The cross is built with limestone ashlar and consists of a tall polygonal shaft with a much worn head depicting virgin and child.



*Cross in the Churchyard of St. Curig.*

#### Church Farmhouse– Grade II\*

This is a remarkable late medieval, i.e. probably early 16<sup>th</sup> century house, which survives in a very complete state considering its age. It seems likely that it was built as a parsonage, suggested by its limited but well finished accommodation. Built of local rubblestone, wholly rendered or repainted, it retains the whole of its medieval envelope with the only external changes being the replacement of the windows and the rebuilding of the top of the chimney stacks. The house's Grade II\* grading reflects its significance as a late medieval rectory which retains a number of good architectural features.



*Church Farmhouse.*

#### Outbuilding to the North of Church Farmhouse – Grade II\*

This is a detached kitchen which is probably contemporary with the main farmhouse and is thus early 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was converted to a bakehouse probably in the mid C19 when the house stopped being the rectory and became a farmhouse. It also had what is probably a donkey stable added to the north gable at that time. The interior retains its large stone fireplace, and this was adapted when it became the farm bakehouse. The fireplace contains the brick built washing copper which was added when the building became a wash-house in c1930. The barn is mentioned in the 1636 Glebe Terrier.



*Outbuilding to the North of Church Farmhouse is to the left of this photograph.*



*The Old School House*



*Elmhurst, formerly a school built in 1870*



*Agricultural buildings form part of the rural character of the area.*



*A grave to a drowned man testifies to the nearness to the sea.*

### **The Old School House – Grade II**

The building is probably early 17<sup>th</sup> century and though much altered it has retained much of its character. It is possible that the poor were housed in the ground floor chambers, while the upper room, accessible by means of an external stone stair against the north-west elevation, was used for parochial functions.

### **Locally Listed County Treasures**

The County Treasures survey contains a unified list of historic built assets found within the Vale of Glamorgan. It contains listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, as well as entries identified as being of 'local importance'. The listed buildings noted above have also been identified as County Treasures.

### **Positive Buildings - The Contribution of Key Unlisted Buildings**

In addition to the area's five statutorily listed buildings Elmhurst, an unlisted building, is identified as a 'positive building' on the appraisal map. Positive buildings are those which make a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area. Criteria for selection are given in Appendix 1.

Elmhurst dates from c. 1870. It was built as a school by the Romilly family prior to which schooling was carried out in today's the Old School House. The building has been altered and extended in the 20<sup>th</sup> century but it notable as part of the works of the Romilly family in the area and holds an important position overlooking the village green.

### **Local Details**

Stone walls around the green and the churchyard are notable features that add to the area's local distinctiveness, so too are the hedgerows beside the access road. The railway tunnel, not visible from a public viewpoint and on private land, is a distinctive and unusual feature of the area. The post-mounted ER II red letter box outside Elmhurst adds to local interest. The absence of lighting columns and road signs reinforces the area's isolated rural character.



*The green and trees are important elements but require management.*



*Concrete slabs are a poor quality surface for the approach to a medieval church.*



*This timber post and rail fence is out of keeping with the stone walls or hedges that typically form boundaries.*



*Car parking by the green is eroding the unkerbed grass verge.*

## Green Spaces and Biodiversity

A significant proportion of the conservation area is open space and woodland that support many plants, trees, wild animals, and birds, including many protected species.

Trees, hedges and other greenery in the conservation area play a vital role in helping to consolidate the rural character of the conservation area. Of particular note in this respect are the beech and sycamore by the church lych gate, the trees on the village green, the trees above the eastern tunnel entrance and those around the open space leading to the beach and private dwellings. Whilst all trees within a conservation area are afforded statutory protection, these are of sufficient amenity value to warrant being considered for further protection by means of a Tree Preservation Order.

## General Condition

The general condition of the area is good. However, the east-facing chimney breast of Church Farmhouse is in need of remedial works and the outbuilding north of Church Farmhouse has a large crack in the stonework.

## Negative Factors

There are a number of elements which detract from the special character of the area, and which offer potential for beneficial change. They are:

- Parts of the stone boundary walls beside the green and around the churchyard are in need of repair;
- Church Farmhouse and outbuildings are in need of remedial action;
- The post and rail fence beside Elmhurst is out of character with the prevalent stone boundaries to the green;
- The footpath to the church's south door is paved with square concrete slabs which are out of keeping with the church's historic character and appearance;
- Noise of planes at Cardiff International Airport upsets the rural ambience of the area;
- Litter along the public footpaths is unsightly;
- Speeding motorists are a safety hazard;
- Car parking on the village green is eroding its grass verges.

## Summary of Issues

The following issues have been identified with regard to the 'negative factors' identified above and include the views of the local community as part of the preliminary public consultation exercise. They provide the basis for the Management Plan. These issues will be subject to regular review by the Council and new ones may be added in the future:

- Protection of the setting of the village green, in particular the care and management of its unkerbed grass verges;
- The protection and repair of stone boundary walls;
- Building maintenance and repair;
- The care and management of important trees and tree groups;
- Boundary review;
- Control of traffic speed and car parking;
- The enhancement of footpath links to Porthkerry Park.

## Management Plan

### Introduction

The Management Plan sets out proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in the light of the issues identified in the preceding Appraisal.

For further details about the purpose and status of the Management Plan, please see the introduction to this document.

### Boundary Review

As part of the character appraisal process, a thorough survey and review of the existing boundaries of the Porthkerry Conservation Area was undertaken.

The boundary of the conservation area has been drawn widely to enclose land surrounding the village that is important to its rural setting. Whilst there may be some merit in extending the area to include Porthkerry Viaduct and Porthkerry House, both buildings are already subject to adequate protection, the former is a grade II listed building; the latter is a County Treasure.

A boundary to the west of Elmhurst does not follow an obvious field boundary or hedgerow and is therefore not easily identifiable on the ground. In addition, modern farm buildings north of Church Farmhouse, presumably built after designation of the conservation area, are not included within the conservation area.

***Recommendation:***

*It is recommended that the conservation area boundary that crosses the field west of Elmhurst is amended to follow the course of the field boundary.*

*It is also recommended that the boundary is amended to include all the farm buildings adjacent to Glebe Farm/Church Farm in order that the setting of the area and the grade II\* listed farmhouse is fully protected.*

*The proposed changes are shown on the Appraisal Map.*

## Landscape Setting

The landscape setting of the Conservation Area is very important and is notable for its rural location overlooking the Bristol Channel. For this reason the boundary has been drawn widely around the historic built environment and includes fields and open spaces to the west of the built environment that are vital to the area's rural landscape setting.

### **Recommendation:**

*Development which impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting of the Conservation Area will be resisted. The Council will resist applications for change on the edges of the Conservation Area which would have a detrimental effect on the area's setting.*

## Views

There are many short and long views into, out of and through the Conservation Area which make a positive contribution to its special character. The most important views are identified on the Appraisal Map in the character appraisal.

### **Recommendation:**

*The Council will seek to ensure that all development respects the important views within, into and from the Conservation Area, as identified in the appraisal. The Council will seek to ensure that these views remain protected from inappropriate forms of development.*

## Protection of Important Open Spaces

Open areas and 'greens' between buildings and groups of buildings play an aesthetic part in forming the character of the village, in particular the village green. They can improve access into the surrounding countryside, frame vistas, enable distant views or are simply part of the historic development of the rural place.

### **Recommendation:**

*The development of open areas that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area will be opposed.*

### Management of Grass Verges

The appraisal has identified that unkerbed grass verges are a significant element in the rural ambience of the Conservation Area especially beside the western approach to the village.

**Recommendation:**

*The Council will ensure that any highway works bring a positive improvement to the Conservation Area and that grass verges are protected. Where highway improvements are required, they should respect the character of the Conservation Area.*

### Protection and Repair of Stone Walls

Traditionally, most boundaries in the Conservation Area are defined by limestone rubble walls. There is a small loss of these walls where routine maintenance and rebuilding of fallen sections has been neglected. Stone boundary walls, hedges and railings which enhance the character of the Conservation Area should be retained.

**Recommendation:**

*The Council will seek to resist proposals to remove or significantly alter traditional boundary walls or for new boundary treatments which fail to respect the form and materials of traditional boundary treatments in the area. The Council will seek to secure the maintenance and repair of traditional stone walls.*

### Building Maintenance and Repair

There are a small number of historic buildings in need of routine maintenance and repair, particularly Church Farmhouse.

**Recommendation:**

*The Council will seek to monitor the condition of all historic buildings in the Conservation Area and will report findings and advise action, as necessary. Where the condition of a building gives cause for concern, appropriate steps will be sought to secure the future of the building, including the use of statutory powers.*

### Management of Trees

Trees make a vital contribution to the rural ambience of the Conservation Area and the setting of many of its historic buildings. The appraisal identifies a number of significant trees and groups of trees on verges or within areas of public open space and within private gardens. Because of the very large number of trees, and the difficulty of obtaining access onto private land, a full tree survey was not carried out at the time of the appraisal survey and the Appraisal map therefore only includes an indication of the most significant groups of trees.

**Recommendation:**

*The Council will seek to consider the use of Tree Preservation Orders in appropriate circumstances where a tree has significant amenity value and is considered to be potentially under threat. The felling of trees or development of woodland that contributes to the character of the Conservation Area will be opposed.*

### Loss of Architectural Detail and Minor Alterations to Historic Buildings

**Recommendations:**

*The Council will encourage restoration of architectural detail/reversal of unsympathetic alterations especially timber windows, chimney stacks and original roof covering.*

*The Council will consider the future introduction of an 'Article 4' Direction in respect of buildings identified as 'County Treasures' and 'positive' buildings in the Appraisal.*



## Control of New Development

Some modern developments do not harmonise with the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This applies to small extensions and garages as well as larger development schemes.

### **Recommendation:**

*Development proposals will be judged for their effect on the area's character and appearance as identified in the Porthkerry Conservation Area Appraisal together with relevant Development Plan policies and any other material considerations.*

*The Council will continue to ensure that all new development accords with policies in the Unitary Development Plan and any other policies which supersede this in the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP).*

## Positive Buildings

'Positive' buildings have been identified as part of the appraisal process and these are marked on the Appraisal Map. Generally, these are individual or groups of buildings that retain all or a high proportion of their original architectural detailing and make a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area. The criteria for selection of positive buildings are identified in Appendix 1 of this document.

### **Recommendation:**

*In accordance with Government guidance contained within Circular 61/96, the Council will adopt a general presumption against the demolition of 'positive' buildings with proposals to demolish such buildings assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. Any application for the demolition of a positive building will therefore need to be justified as to why the building should not be retained.*

## Conservation Area Guidance

Consultation with the local community suggests that there is a need for additional design guidance and leaflets about conservation areas that build upon existing supplementary planning guidance and advisory leaflets.

### **Recommendation:**

*The Council will consider preparing advisory guidance and 'best practice' notes that would assist in retaining the area's prevalent historic character and appearance and promote awareness of the value and importance of the Conservation Area, e.g. written advice regarding (a) alterations to historic buildings, (b) development within conservation areas, (c) the use of traditional building materials, (d) appropriate boundary treatment in rural villages and (e) care and maintenance of trees and woodland.*

## Buildings and Land in Poor Condition

### **Recommendation:**

*Where sites or buildings are in a poor condition and the appearance of the property or land are detrimental to the surrounding area or neighbourhood, consideration will be given to the serving of a Section 215 Notice, sometimes called an Amenity Notice. This notice requires proper maintenance of the property or land in question, and specifies what steps are required to remedy the problem within a specific time period.*

## Monitoring and Review

### **Recommendation:**

*This document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. A review should include the following:*

- *A survey of the Conservation Area including a full dated photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;*
- *An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;*
- *The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;*
- *The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;*
- *Publicity and advertising.*

## References and Useful Information

### Local Generic Guidance

Advice for owners of properties in Conservation Areas can be found in the leaflet *A Guide to Living and Working in Conservation Areas*, which is available on line on the Council website at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

Additional information, including design guidance and guidance on repairs and alteration is contained within the adopted supplementary planning guidance document – Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale.

### Bibliography

1. J Newman, Glamorgan (Pevsner 'The Buildings of Wales'), Yale University, 1995
2. Statutory List of Buildings of Special Historic or Architectural Interest
3. Vale of Glamorgan Council, Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale, 1999
4. Vale of Glamorgan Council, County Treasures, 2007
5. [www.glamorganwalks.com](http://www.glamorganwalks.com)

### Contact Details

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## Appendix 1

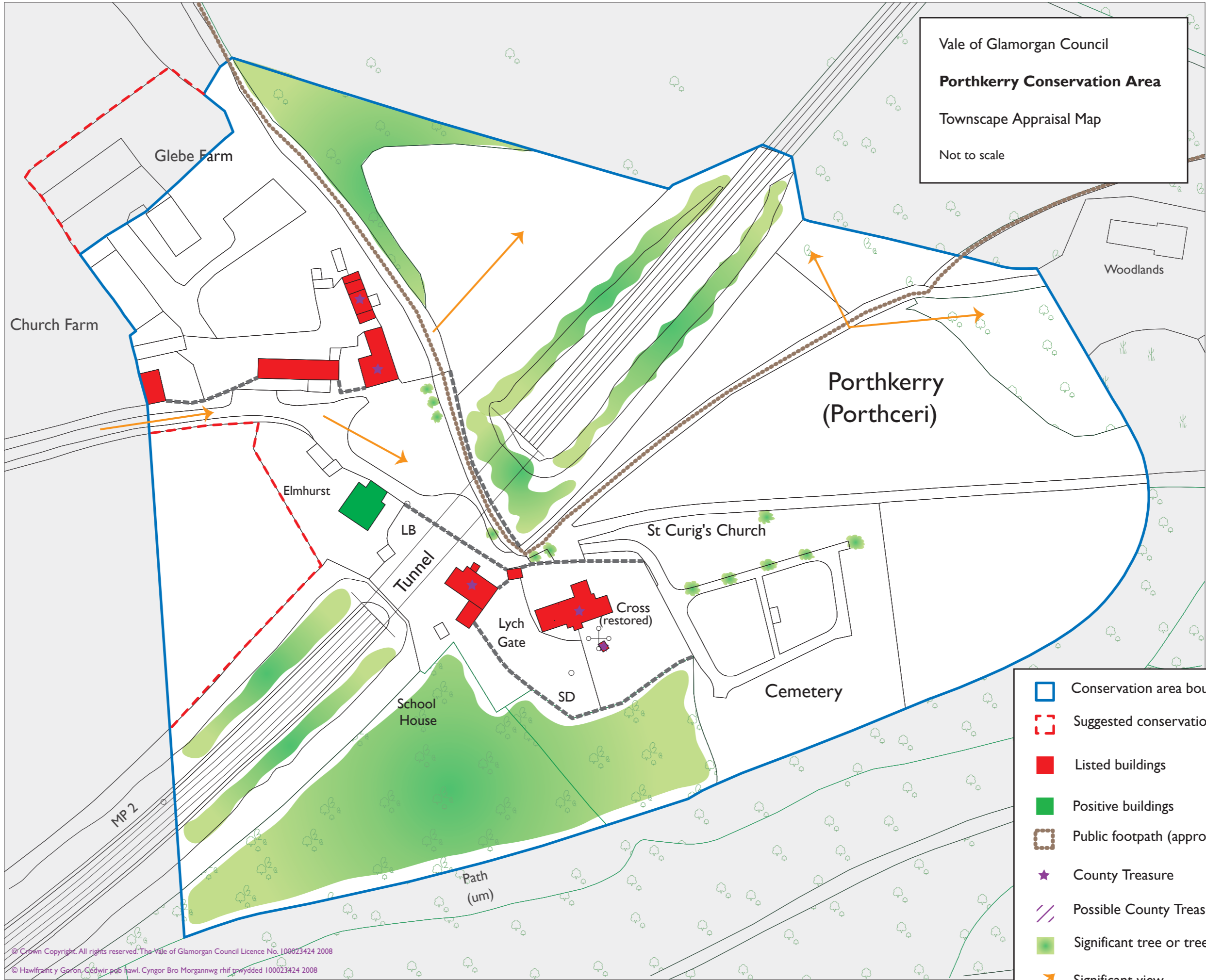
### Criteria for the Selection of 'Positive Buildings'.

For the purposes of this conservation area appraisal, a positive building is an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area.

The criteria for assessing the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area are given below.

Any one of these characteristics could provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area and is therefore identified as a 'positive building':

- Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?
- Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area?
- Does it relate by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase of growth?
- Does it have significant historic association with established features such as the road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within, the area?
- Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If a structure associated with a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building, is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?



Vale of Glamorgan Council  
**Porthkerry Conservation Area**  
 Townscape Appraisal Map  
 Not to scale

- Conservation area boundary
- Suggested conservation area boundary
- Listed buildings
- Positive buildings
- Public footpath (approx)
- ★ County Treasure
- Possible County Treasure
- Significant tree or tree group
- Significant view

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