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CONSERVATION AREA ST BRIDES MAJOR



DRAFT APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND
ECONOMIC REGENERATION



St. Brides

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Public Consultation Draft

This document is the public consultation draft of the St. Brides Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and is put forward for scrutiny as the basis for 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 6 June 2008 to 25 July 2008 this document will be submitted on [**] to the ***Cabinet meeting with a recommendation that the document is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Vale of Glamorgan Unitary Development Plan. The Appraisal/Management Plan will also inform the preparation of the emergent Local Development Plan

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Introduction

The St. Brides Major Conservation Area was designated in August 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 be 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 St. Brides Major Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan builds upon policy set out by the Welsh Assembly, in Planning Policy Wales, and local policy including the Vale of Glamorgan Supplementary Guidance '*Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale*' (1999). This document provides a firm basis on which applications for development within, and close to the St. Brides Major Conservation Area can be assessed.

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

The Conservation Area Appraisal records and analyses the various features that give the St. Brides Major 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 St. Brides Major 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 to be used by planning officers, developers and landowners to ensure that the special character is not eroded, but rather preserved and even 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 conservation staff at the Vale of Glamorgan Council. 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.

This document is the public consultation draft of the Appraisal, and is put forward for scrutiny as the basis for 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 special qualities of the Conservation Area.

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 St. Brides Major 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 the 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 the local Councillors on 30th January 2008 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 a draft Appraisal, which has now been made available for inspection and comment by the public on the Council's website. A brief summary of concerns and issues raised through the consultation process is below:

- Erosion of hedges and verges through traffic;
- Quality of new development;
- Commercial development of Pool Farm and inappropriate signage
- Farm buildings behind Farmers Arms should be considered for exclusion;
- Horeb Baptist Chapel should be included;
- Speed and volume of traffic is having a negative impact;

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. The adopted Unitary Development Plan places much of the St. Brides Major Conservation Area in the countryside and it is not therefore generally recognised in planning policy terms as suitable for additional residential development. For this reason strict controls exist over applications for new development.

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.

Planning Policy Framework

In particular, in addition to Conservation Area specific policies, the following UDP policies apply:

- ENV 1 (Development in the Countryside)
- ENV 2 (Agricultural Land)
- ENV 4 (Special Landscape Areas)
- ENV 11 (Protection of Landscape Features)
- ENV 12 (Woodland Management)
- HOUS 3 (Dwellings in the Countryside)
- HOUS 5 (Agricultural or Forestry Dwellings)
- HOUS 7 (Replacement and Extension of Dwellings in the Countryside).

These policies, and in particular ENV1 and HOUS3, restrict new housing development in the countryside to those that are justified in the interests of agriculture and forestry only.

Given the policy background and the character of St. Brides Major it is unlikely that an intensification of development here would be appropriate.

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

- Small hamlet on the outskirts of St. Brides Major, an enlarged historic village 5 kilometres south of Bridgend;
- Location on the level margins of the Bristol Channel, about a mile from the sea;
- The architectural and historic interest of the area's historic buildings and structures which includes three listed buildings: Pen Ucha'r Dre farmhouse and outbuildings and The Old Vicarage;
- Four buildings identified as County Treasures: War Memorial and the three listed buildings;
- Pwll y Mor Pond (or Pitcot Pool), a typical village pond by the roadside;
- Prevalence of local lias limestone and grey/blue Welsh slate;
- Spacious character with wide gaps between roadside properties and settlement clusters;
- Wick Road, the spine of the conservation area, that leads from the edge of St. Brides major through Pitcot to open countryside;
- Two foci of historic interest: a northern group focussed on the pond and surrounding space and historic buildings, a southern group based on the stone-built farm buildings of Pitcot Farm and Pen Ucha'r Dre;
- Extensive rural views over the Bristol Channel and surrounding countryside through breaks in the buildings and from the public footpaths;
- Pitcot Green, a small roadside grassy 'green' opposite the Farmers Arms;
- Vernacular stone farm buildings;
- Situated on a network of local footpaths and highways;
- Mature trees, particularly a grove on the east side of Wick Road approaching the village and dispersed amongst the buildings surrounding the pond;
- Historic association with Dunraven Estate;
- Stone boundary walls;
- Bio-diversity and wildlife particularly in and around the pond.

Summary of Special Interest

Fig 1: Some characteristic features of the St. Brides Major Conservation Area



Pitcot Green in front of the Farmers Arms adds to the spacious ambience of the conservation area.



Prevailing westerly winds have shaped local trees.



Shop Farm is a 19th century stone dwelling with buff brick dressings and chimney stacks.



Pitcot Pool is the defining feature of the area attractively framed by reeds and bulrushes.



Pump erected to commemorate entry into the best kept village competition 1992.



Stone walls with 'cock and hen' coping are typical of the hamlet.

Location and Context

The St. Brides Major Conservation Area is located alongside Wick Road at the southern extremity of the village of St. Brides Major, a historic village much enlarged by 20th century residential development. The core of the village, to the north of the conservation area, contains an active parish church, school, shops, pubs and a large proportion of 20th century houses.

Wick Road forms part of the B4265, which connects with Wick to the east. In the north of the conservation area a minor road (B4524) leads from Wick Road down to Southerndown and Ogmere on the coast. The conservation area includes historic buildings on either side of Wick Road from this junction beside the War Memorial to a short way beyond Pen Ucha'r Dre Farm, a distance of almost one mile. The conservation area has the feel of a small hamlet with a distinctive identity quite different to the main village of St. Brides. The south of the conservation area is a hamlet known as Pitcot.

The area has a rural setting in the coastal plateau above Dunraven Bay amidst agricultural land bounded by stone walls and hedges. There are footpaths to Southerndown and Dunraven Bay.

General Character and Plan Form

The conservation area has a linear form in which buildings and groups of buildings have access from Wick Road but lack uniformity in their disposition to the highway. The area is comprised of two building groups separated by a short length of Wick Road. The principal focus of the northern end of the area is Pwll y Mor Pond. The buildings which surround the pond are dispersed in small clusters in an informal pattern that forms a picturesque focal point for the hamlet. Farmhouses and associated outbuildings of two old farmsteads, Kingshill and Pool Farm, are set back from the road with differing orientation to pond and highway.



Vale of Glamorgan Council

St Brides Major Conservation Area

Townscape Appraisal Map

Not to scale

- Conservation area boundary
- Listed buildings
- Positive buildings
- County Treasure
- Public footpath (approx)
- Significant tree or tree group
- Significant view
- Significant open space

Location and Setting

Fig 2: The location and setting of the St. Brides Major Conservation Area



The area is characterised by clusters of buildings in a spacious setting.



There are far-reaching views across the fields to the west.



Wick Road declines slightly from Pen Ucha'r Dre to the Farmers Arms



A gate leads into a field beside a wide roadside verge. Note the drystone walls.



Grass verges contribute to the area's rural charm.



The pool lies below the level of Wick Road.

St. Bridget's Church, situated in the main village (outside the conservation area) has 12th century origins. The churches of St. Brides and nearby Ewenny were granted to St. Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, before 1138.

The village grew up around the church in a rather haphazard fashion as can be seen from the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884. Although the oldest building in the *village* is the church, the oldest building in the conservation area is probably Pen Ucha'r Dre which dates back to the 16th century from which period there are monuments to John le Botiler in the parish church.

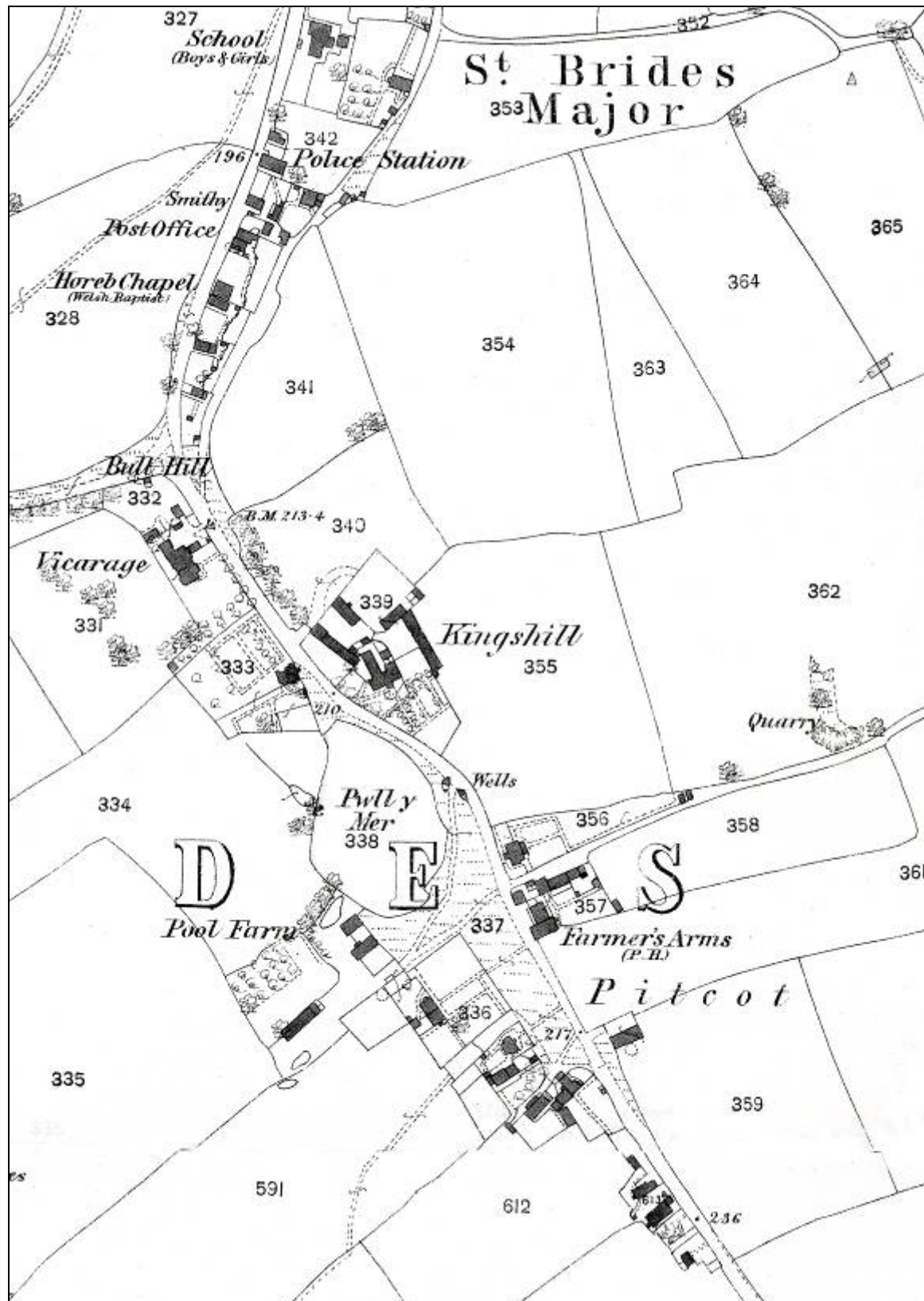
In addition to the agricultural economy of the village, the life of the village was connected to the Dunraven estate which stood a mile to the south. An Iron Age hill fort and with hut sites and pillow mounds overlooking the sea is testament to the early occupation of the area. The area is claimed to be the residence of the ancient Princes of Siluria. In the 12th Century, the Norman, Arnold le Botiler (later Butler) received the land from Maurice de Londres and built the first stone building here. The manor of Dunraven was first recorded in 1542. Ownership passed from the Butlers to the Vaughans and then the Wyndhams who in 1803 replaced the original medieval manor house with a Gothic mansion with its own kitchen gardens and a landing stage in the bay. The mansion was lived in until the 1940s and was demolished as unsafe in 1963 although the gardens can still be seen. It has been suggested that almost fifty percent of the village inhabitants were employed in the Castle or the Estate.

By the mid/late 19th century the village as a whole contained a post office and police station, three pubs, two non-conformist chapels and a school, opened in 1863. The church was heavily restored by Egbert Moxham in 1851. Pwll y Mor or Pitcot Pond was used as a source of water until 1926.

Today the village, much enlarged by 20th century residential development that has swamped the village's historic core around St. Bridget's Church but has left the conservation area relatively undisturbed, boasts a number of amenities for residents and visitors.



Yates' Map of Glamorgan 1799 (part)



St. Brides Conservation Area (north) - First Edition Ordnance Survey 1884

The conservation area has an extremely low density and its open spaces, wide gaps between buildings and settlement clusters, and its overall spacious character are an essential part of its special interest. The linear form of the conservation area and its spaciousness set it apart from the high density village centre to the north and give it the distinct identity of a typically spread-out Vale of Glamorgan hamlet that bears comparison, in density and form, with nearby Monknash and Broughton.

There is a marked change in building character and form to the west of the pond. The Old Vicarage and adjacent modern dwellings face the road in regular plots, some of which were subdivided from the vicarage's original curtilage. The settlement pattern becomes more formal in Bull Hill and Ewenny Road and the conservation area terminates at the War Memorial.

Roadside farm buildings, houses and estate cottages immediately east of the Farmers Arms are present only on the south side of Wick Road. These, and two adjoining farms, make up the tiny settlement of Pitcot. Older properties such as Pitcot House and Elm Cottage are set at right angles to the road, reflecting and reinforcing the open windswept vistas of the coastal plain. Twentieth century dwellings such as Sea View and Castle View directly face the road.

Proceeding southwards beyond the roadside cottages on the south side of Wick Road there are two historic farms on either side of the road: Pitcot Farm and Pen Ucha'r Dre. These buildings and their associated farmyards and enclosures are unified by the characteristic use of local stone and slate. Large modern agricultural sheds are also a common factor.

Character Analysis

The area originated as an agricultural settlement. Today there are still working farms in the area but residential uses unconnected to farming predominate. The Farmers Arms is a popular local pub, Pool Farm sells eggs, poultry and meat and Pitcot Farm (Slade Farm) sells organic meats.

The conservation area has a spacious feel due to the low density of development and open space, north and south of Wick Road, that is important to the area's rural setting. The most significant open space in the area is the pond and surrounding common land which adjoins fields to the north of Pool Farm and extends in front of the Farmers Arms, sometimes called Pitcot Green.

The pond, fringed with bullrushes and home to a variety of flora and waterfowl, is the most notable feature of the village and the conservation area. Open space around the pond adds to its rural charm. Stone-built cottages and farm buildings set at a distance from the water contribute to its picturesque character and serve as a reminder of the pond's historic role as a source of water for the settlement before the introduction of piped water in 1926.

The level of the pond is lower than the carriageway and the pond is bounded from Wick Road by a post-and-rail type fence comprised of concrete posts and tubular iron railings. Whilst evidently necessary to prevent accidents, the roadside railings intrude upon the rural appearance of the pond and their commonplace design and materials are out of keeping with the special interest of the area. A pump beside the road is enclosed by a low stone wall in which an incised plaque states that the pump was erected "to commemorate entry in the best kept village competition 1992".

At the western end of the conservation area is a triangular piece of land formed between a road junction in which stands the village War Memorial, a telephone call box and bench. Twentieth century houses overlooking this small green and a plethora of road signs dispel historic character but the War Memorial, a County Treasure, is a significant part of the village's history.

There is a gradual change in the area's character and appearance as one travels eastwards from the Farmers Arms. The area has the feel of open countryside and, despite the presence of a tarmac pavement on the south side of the road, the suburban environment of St. Brides Major seems a long way off. Pitcot Farm and Pen Ucha'r Dre, on opposite sides of the road, are farmsteads typical of the locality. Beyond the farms the pavement ceases and Wick Road becomes a country lane.

Buildings in the conservation area are constructed in the local lias limestone stone, commonly under slate roofs. Some mid/late 19th century buildings such as Shop Farm and Pitcot House have buff brick window and door dressings and chimney stacks. Local stone is also used in field and roadside boundary walls; weathered grey lichen on the older walls gives the coping stones an almost white appearance.

Listed Buildings



Pen Ucha'r Dre Farmhouse (Grade II)

The farmhouse is a late 16th century house enhanced by a two storey porch, probably added in the 17th century, and further additions linking the main range to a bake-house in the 18th century. The building is built of rubble stone under a slate roof and is listed as a good example of a single-unit 16th century house retaining its plan form and with good exterior detail, particularly the fenestration and converted two storey projecting bay window.



Pen Ucha'r Dre Farmhouse – Barn and Cow House (Grade II)

The barn and cow-houses are separately listed as fine examples of a 19th century farm building group. The north-south range was a threshing barn with loft and/or granary over. The two east-west ranges were a cow-house and byre, though the latter is supported on cast iron columns which may be later.



The Old Vicarage

The Old Vicarage is dated 1848, said to be by John Prichard, and was purpose built as a vicarage. The attics were school rooms. A lower range to the west was a cart shed and stables. The building is constructed of rubble stone with quoins under a half-hipped asymmetrical slate roof. Listed as a good example of a purpose-built Victorian vicarage.

Character Analysis

Locally Listed County Treasures

In addition to the three listed buildings noted above, the War Memorial at Bull Hill is a County Treasure.



War Memorial

The War Memorial comprises a single piece of inscribed stone on a stepped plinth. It is enclosed by iron railings and commemorates "the men and women of this parish who fell in the two wars 1914-1918 and 1939-1945".

Positive Buildings - The Contribution of Key Unlisted Buildings

A number of key unlisted buildings have been identified as 'positive buildings' and these are marked 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.

Amongst the positive buildings, one stands out as having special architectural or historic interest and should be considered for inclusion as a locally listed County Treasure. This is Kingshall Farm House.



Kingshall Farmhouse

An excellent example of a 17th century building featuring a dressed stone doorway with a four centre arched head. The building was constructed with a lateral-entry stone stairs with a bake oven built under. Altered in the 19th century.

Local Details

The rural character of the area is reinforced by an absence of pavements and grass verges without kerbs although, exceptionally, the central green is kerbed with natural stone. Stone walls, some of which are listed, and hedgerows of indigenous species are a feature of the area. Church Farm and St. Mary's Church have attractive stone gate piers and wrought iron gates which add to the area's local distinctiveness.

General condition

The conservation area is neat and well cared for. Buildings appear to be in good condition and well maintained.

Fig 3: The character and appearance of the St. Brides Major Conservation Area



Pool Farm stands beside a grassy fringe to Pitcot Pool.



This stone building has been rendered at the front.



An unusual example of a drystone wall.



Trees on the southern approach to the main village.



Pitcot Pool is a haven for wildlife, especially waterfowl.



Stone walls under slate roofs typify the area's farm buildings.

Character Analysis

Fig 4: Buildings and architecture in the St. Brides Major Conservation Area



Pool Cottage



Steep gables are a feature of many buildings in the area.



Many buildings are gable end on to the road.



Littlewood Cottage has a fine setting well back from Wick Road.



The Old Vicarage, grade II, is a Victorian vicarage dated 1848.



The War memorial – a County Treasure.

Green Spaces and Bio-Diversity

A large proportion of the conservation area is open space that is important to its rural setting. Trees, hedges and other greenery in the conservation area play a vital role in helping to consolidate its rural character and of particular note in this respect are the trees on the east side of Wick Road on the approach to the War Memorial, trees close to Pen Ucha'r Dre and mature garden trees amongst the northern building group around the pond. Trees in the wider landscape are few and have a lop-sided appearance due to the prevailing westerly winds.

Apart from surrounding fields, the pond and its green fringes (including Pitcot Green) is the most significant green area. It provides a haven for wildlife and contributes to the notable bio-diversity of the area.

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:

- Major alteration and extension to some historic buildings has resulted in a significant loss of historic character;
- Some stone boundary walls are in need of repair;
- Volume and speed of traffic along Wick Road is hazardous;
- Electricity and telephone wires spoil the historic appearance of the area;
- Derelict farm buildings to the east of the farmers Arms are an eyesore.

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:

- The long term enhancement of Pwll y Mor, pump and roadside railings;
- The protection and management of common land around Pwll y Mor;
- Protection of significant views into and out of the conservation area;
- The care and management of unkerbed grass verges, hedgerows and wooded banks;
- The protection and repair of stone boundary walls adjoining the highway;
- Building maintenance and repair;
- Design of new development;
- The care and management of important trees and tree groups;
- Boundary review;

Fig 5: Some opportunities for enhancement



Telephone and electricity wires spoil the street scene.



Rubbish and debris beside the lane to Castle upon Alun.



Derelict farm buildings to the east of the Farmers Arms.



Stone wall in need of repair.



Some modern developments are out of keeping.



Concrete post and iron railings do not enhance the side of the pool.

Management Plan

Introduction

The St. Brides Major Conservation Area Management Plan sets out proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the St. Brides Major Conservation Area in the light of the issues identified in the above St. Brides Major Conservation Area 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 St. Brides Major Conservation Area was undertaken.

Recommendation:

No boundary changes are proposed.

Landscape Setting

The landscape setting of the Conservation Area is very important and is notable for its rural location. For this reason the boundary has been drawn widely around the historic built environment and includes fields and open spaces 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 spaces between buildings and groups of buildings play an aesthetic part in forming the character of the conservation area. 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.

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

Building condition in the area is generally good.

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.

Management Plan

Loss of Architectural Detail and Minor Alterations to Historic Buildings

Some of the unlisted buildings in the St. Brides Major Conservation Area have been adversely affected by the replacement of original timber sash windows with uPVC or aluminium, the loss of original timber front doors, removal of render and painting of formerly exposed stonework. Most of these minor alterations are not currently subject of planning control. The incremental loss of original building materials and architectural detail is cumulatively eroding one of the characteristic features of the Conservation Area.

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 'positive' 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 St. Brides Major 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.

Locally Listed Buildings and County Treasures

Some buildings or structures in the Vale of Glamorgan, although not contained within the statutory list ('listed buildings'), are nevertheless of local interest.

Survey work for the character area appraisal has identified two unlisted buildings of local importance that merit future inclusion as County Treasures. Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011) discusses the implications in policy terms for locally listed buildings on the County Treasures list and lists the criteria for inclusion.

Recommendation:

The Council will, as part of a future review of the list of County Treasures, support the inclusion of Kingshall.

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

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. *S W Bevan*, St. Brides Major, Southerndown and Ogmore by Sea, Brown & Sons, 1980
4. *Vale of Glamorgan Council*, Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale, 1999
5. *Vale of Glamorgan Council*, County Treasures, 2007
6. www.glamorganwalks.com
7. www.stbridesmajor.co.uk

Contact Details

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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?