

Penycae Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan

This document is available in Welsh

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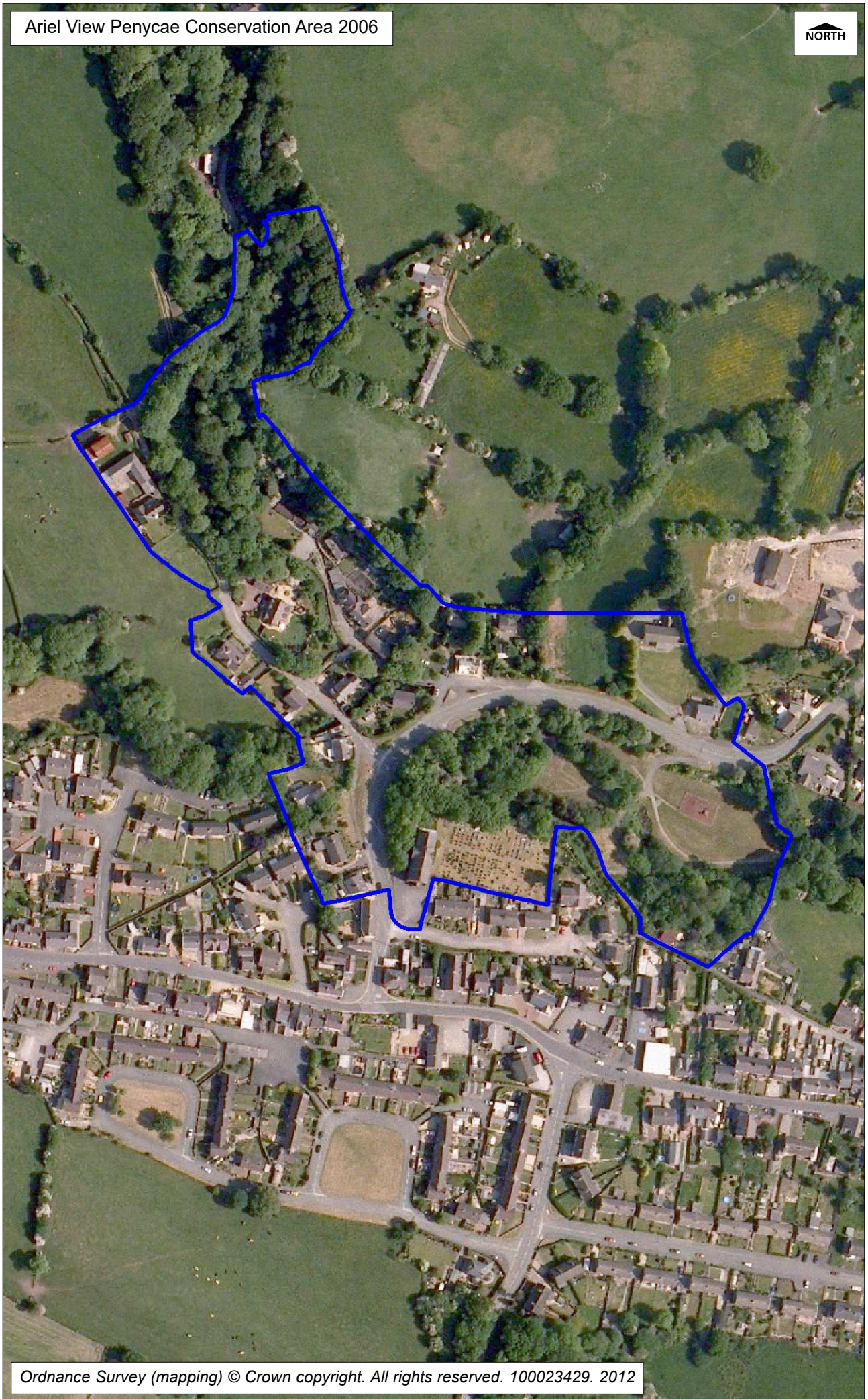
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Part 1 Character Assessment

Figure 1: Penycae Conservation Area





1 introduction

Conservation Area Designation

1.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Authorities to identify "areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" for designation as conservation areas.

Purpose

1.2 The purpose of the Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan is to:

- Provide a clear definition of the area's special architectural or historic interest
- Identify ways in which their unique characteristics can be preserved and enhanced through the Enhancement Plan
- Strengthen the justification for designation
- Create a clear context for future development in accordance with conservation area policies in the development plan
- Provide a vehicle for engagement and awareness raising

Penycae Conservation Area

1.3 This Assessment and Management Plan aims to promote and support developments that are in keeping with, or enhance, the character of the Penycae Conservation Area. It is not an attempt to stifle change. The aim is to strike a balance so that the interests of conservation are given their full weight against the needs for change and development. The Penycae Conservation Area was first designated in 1976 and its boundary amended and reduced in January 2003 and June 2011. This document is concerned with the reasons for designation, defining the qualities that make up its special

architectural and historic interest, character and appearance. The omission of any reference to a particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

Planning Context

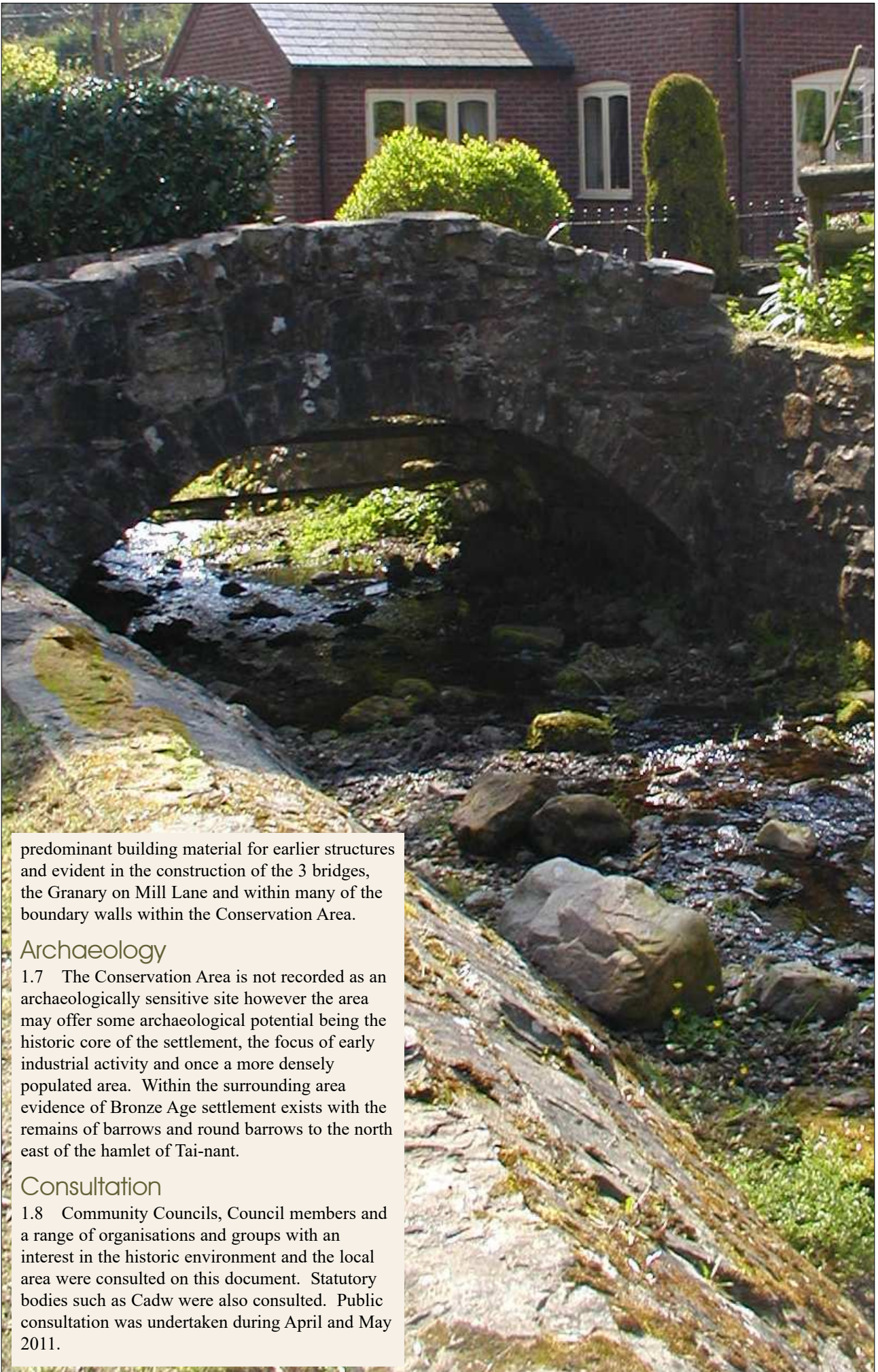
1.4 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the adopted Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 2005, and national planning policy guidance, in particular Welsh Office Circular 61/96 Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas.

Location

1.5 Penycae is a small village located 7 miles south west of Wrexham. The settlement lies on the slopes of the Ruabon Mountain where the varying topography creates a picturesque setting for many properties and forms a dramatic rural backdrop to the Conservation Area. Penycae Conservation Area is centred on the historic core of Pentre Cristionydd which as its name suggests has strong historic religious connotations to Valle Crucis near Llangollen. Here the Trefechan and Nant-y-Crogfryn brooks flow into the Conservation Area converging at its centre below a series of historic stone bridges. The Conservation Area has a strong rural character reinforced by the scattered layout of the buildings, the narrow footpaths, abundance of trees and views of the surrounding landscape which is in direct contrast to the more densely settled and barren streets to the south.

Geology

1.6 The Conservation Area is located at the base of the Ruabon Mountain where the geology is a mix of Cefn-y-Fedw Sandstone, which underlies the upper slopes with coal measures and sandstone overlain by glacial till being present on the gentler lower slopes. Sandstone is the



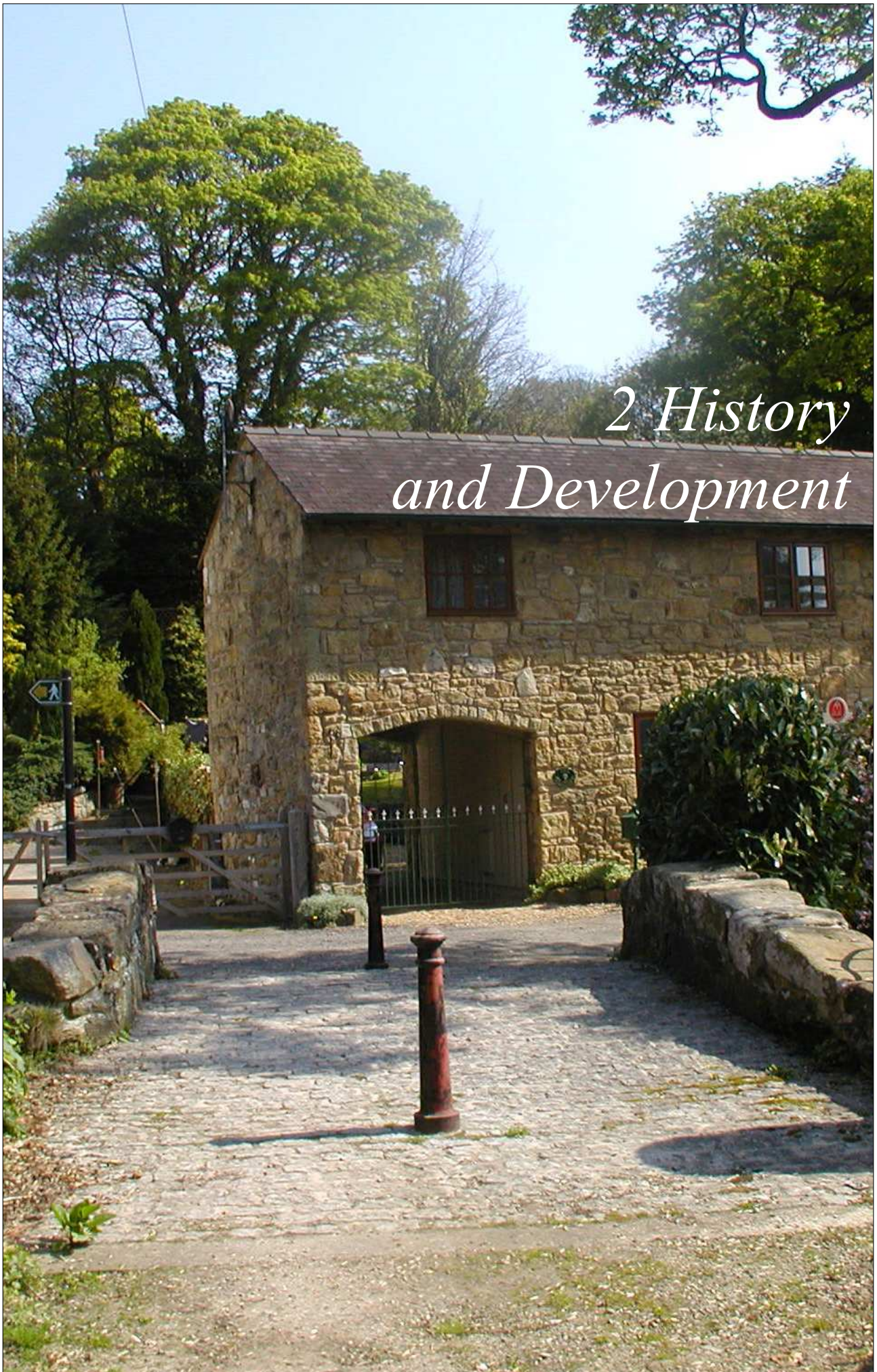
predominant building material for earlier structures and evident in the construction of the 3 bridges, the Granary on Mill Lane and within many of the boundary walls within the Conservation Area.

Archaeology

1.7 The Conservation Area is not recorded as an archaeologically sensitive site however the area may offer some archaeological potential being the historic core of the settlement, the focus of early industrial activity and once a more densely populated area. Within the surrounding area evidence of Bronze Age settlement exists with the remains of barrows and round barrows to the north east of the hamlet of Tai-nant.

Consultation

1.8 Community Councils, Council members and a range of organisations and groups with an interest in the historic environment and the local area were consulted on this document. Statutory bodies such as Cadw were also consulted. Public consultation was undertaken during April and May 2011.





2 History and Development

2.1 The present parish of Penycae was formed in 1879 from the parishes of Ruabon, Rhosymedre and Rhosllanechrugog. Until then the village had been part of the ancient parish of Ruabon and was historically known as Dynhinelle Uchaf or Cristionydd Fechan. The Conservation Area covers the oldest section of the village known as Pentre Cristionydd or 'Christian Town'. It is believed that a small settlement existed here in the 7th Century when tradition tells that many of the monks from the monastery at Bangor on Dee who were captured during the Battle of Chester in 616 AD were put to death by hanging on a yew tree at Y Groes.

2.2 The word Dynhinelle, present in older names for the settlement denotes the religious connections of the village with the large Valley Crucis Abbey near Llangollen. Monks from the abbey used to pass through the village on their pilgrimages walking over the mountain and resting at a place called Plas Du, believed to be located near to the Drefechan Reservoir and Ffynnon Well.

2.3 Pentre Cristionydd formed the economic centre of the village. At the heart stood the stone built Pentre Mill which was powered by water taken from the Nant-y-Crogfryn brook which ran adjacent. Above the mill was the mill pond which is said to have been used for baptisms in the early days of the Baptist movement within Penycae. The mill which was believed to date from the late 17th Century was demolished in 1978 and the site is now included in the garden area of the modern property, 'The Mill Pool.' It is also suggested that Pentre Felin Cottage, which lies close to the site of the former Mill, was the mill keeper's cottage and may originate from as early as the 16th Century.

2.4 The Industrial Revolution of the late 18th Century saw the introduction of iron and copper works to the Penycae area. In 1760 an iron furnace was built in the Copperas area and in 1765 it was sold for £6050. The furnace produced pig iron and continued to operate until 1840. The meaning of the name Copperas is "green vitriol or sulphate of iron" and the presence of the name within the modern settlement suggests that the iron industry in the area was significant enough to lend its name to a street.

2.5 More rapid expansion of the settlement during the 19th Century can be attributed to the extraction of coal which was prevalent in many of the villages to the west of Wrexham. Mining of coal in the area can be traced back to the early 18th Century but it was not until the 19th Century that coal came into its own in Penycae. In 1854, the HM Inspector of Mines list shows 26 coal mines in the county of Denbighshire, of which eight were in the parish of Penycae. These were relatively small family run mines and were nothing in comparison to the larger mines at Ruabon and Wynnstay.

2.6 Housing conditions in Penycae during the mid 19th Century were described in the "Blue Book" of 1847 as being worse than Merthyr Tydfil with many houses consisting of one small room where all the family lived together. Many of the older, smaller stone cottages that would have been prevalent within the Conservation Area at the height of its growth have been demolished resulting in a more rural and open townscape.

2.7 Penycae had a strong non-conformist tradition with 3 independent chapels being located within the settlement by the mid to late 19th Century. Y Groes Presbyterian

Chapel on Hill Street dates from the mid 19th Century and was formally named the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel and is now redundant. Saint Thomas Church, located to the south west of the Conservation Area did not begin construction until the late 19th Century and was consecrated on 6th December 1878. Prior to the erection of St Thomas's Church residents would travel to Ruabon and Rhos for conformist services.

2.8 The late 19th Century saw the expansion of the village to the south and east with the erection of the red brick terraces similar to those still present on Hall Street and Chapel Street. Residential development of the village continued throughout the 20th Century with the erection of the larger planned estates like

Groesfan, Cristionydd and Pont yr Afon. The concentration of new development away from the historic core has created a clear distinction in character between Pentre Cristionydd and the other areas of the village which combined with the varied topography has given the Conservation Area a definite sense of place and distinctiveness.

2.9 Today the village offers little employment opportunity with no remaining physical evidence of the former industries that occupied the area, most people now travel outwards to Wrexham and the surrounding larger villages for work and leisure facilities.



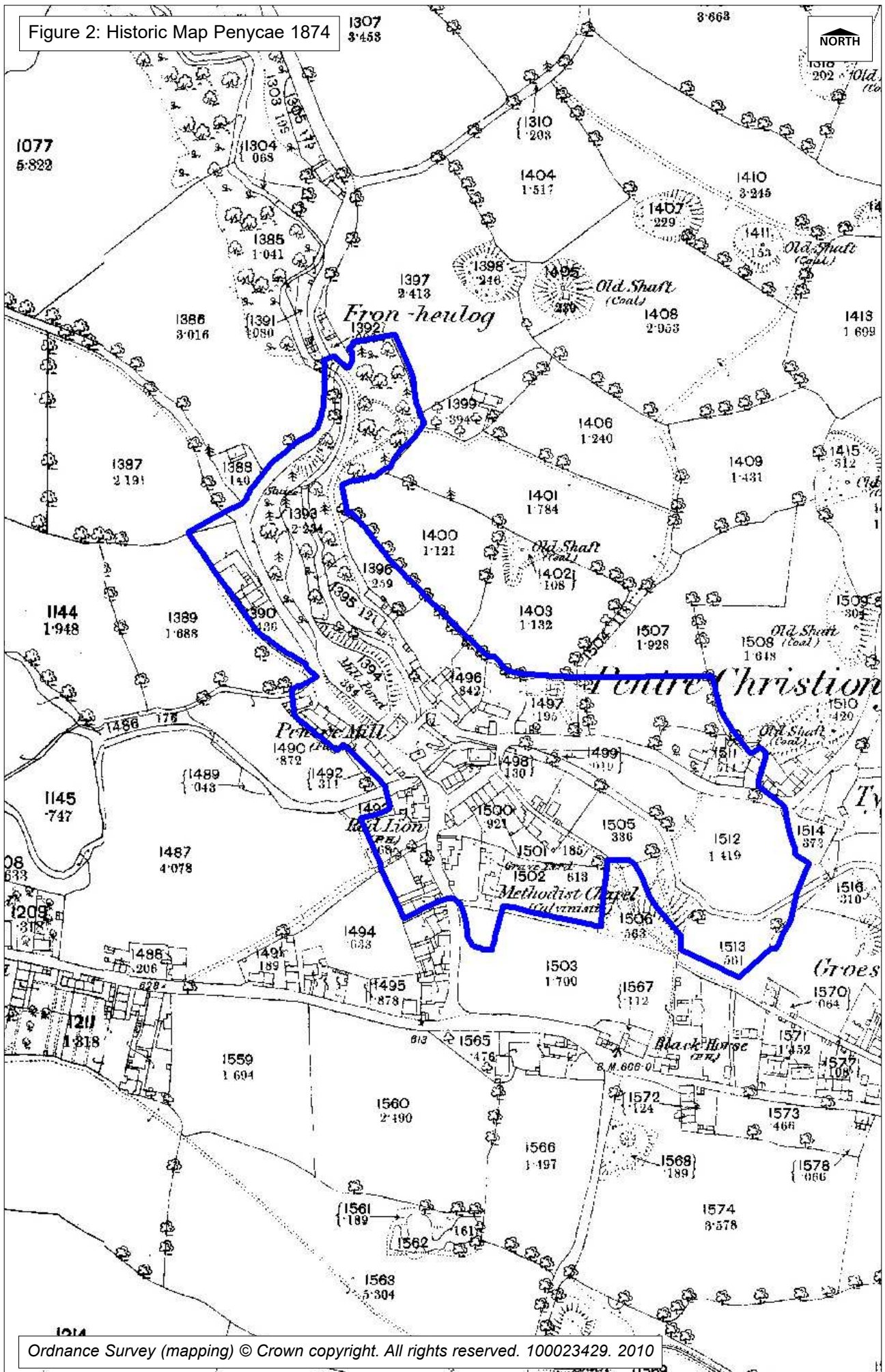
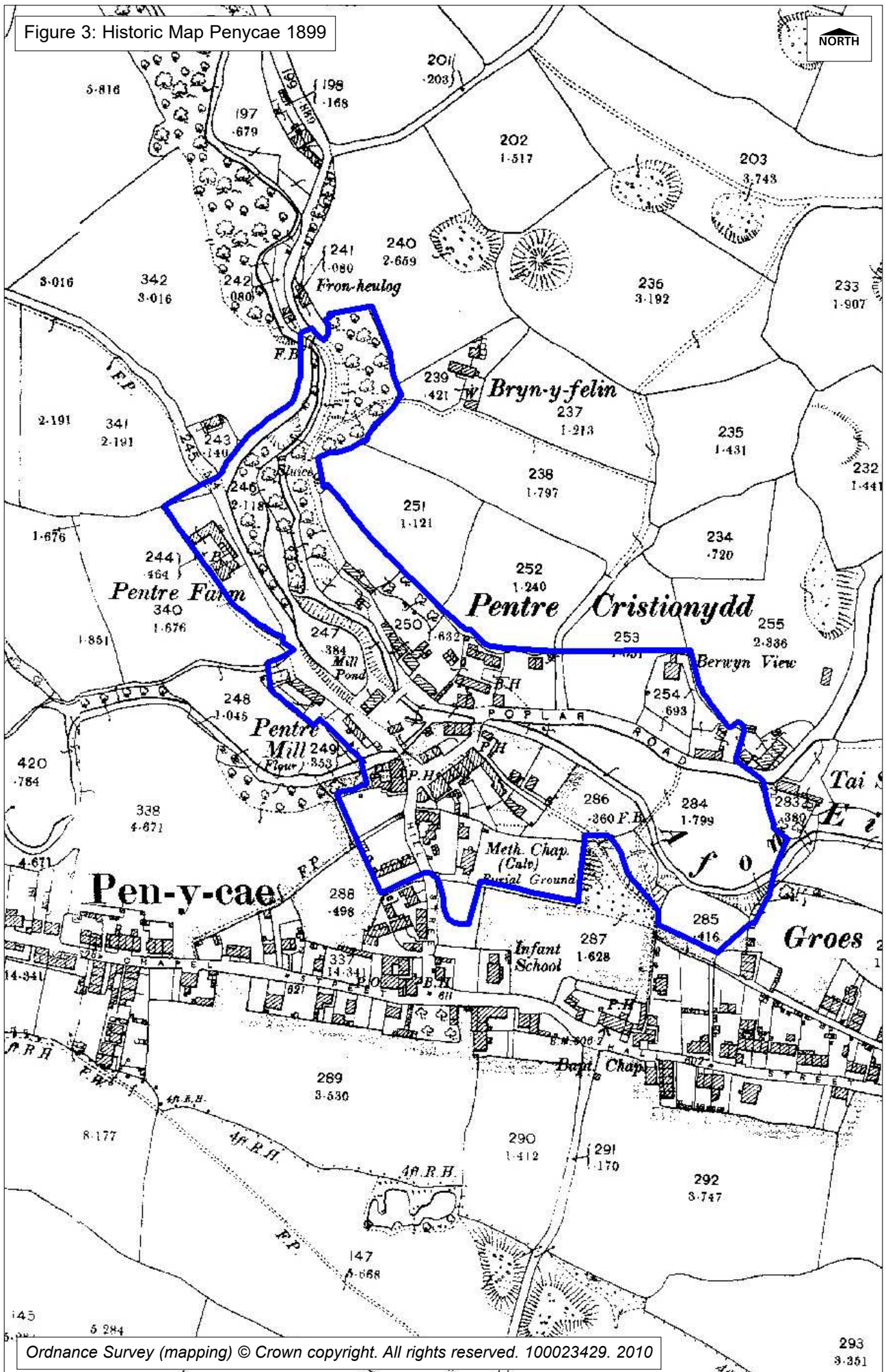


Figure 3: Historic Map Penycae 1899



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*3 Summary of
Special Character*



3 Summary of Special Character

3.1 The special character of Penycae Conservation Area derives from the following key features:

Topography

3.2 Penycae has grown as a settlement eastwards and southwards from the historic core of Pentre Cristionydd which lies within a small valley base where the Nant-Y-Crogfryn and Trefechan brooks converge and where tree covered hills rise up to surround the Conservation Area creating an intimate setting and a strong sense of containment. The surrounding hills, trees and low density development add to the peaceful atmosphere of the Conservation Area and create an important backdrop to views. More recent development is concentrated at the top of Groes and Pentre Hill where the naturally steep gradient of Hill Street has created a varied roofscape and has allowed for views over the older section of the Conservation Area and out towards the Ruabon Mountain to the west.

Nant-Y-Crogfryn and Trefechan Brooks and Bridges

3.3 The convergence of the two brooks at the centre of the Conservation Area through a series of three local yellow sandstone bridges adds significantly to the sense of place forming a distinct focal point and adding to the picturesque and rural character around Mill Lane and Lambpit Street. Historically the brooks powered the mill and enabled the settlement to establish and grow around the bridges as demonstrated on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 2).

3.4 The bridges still maintain their original historic linkages between Mill Lane and Lambpit Street criss-

crossing the brooks and leaving narrow tracks and footways that now demarcate the boundaries of Pen-y-Bont, Nant-y-Crogfryn and The Mill Pool. The narrow width, stone boundaries and enclosure offered by the buildings and the topography create an intimate feeling and offer a strong sense of enclosure.

3.5 The course of the brooks has also had an impact on the appearance of the area, winding down the hill side forming the small flat valley floor and dictating the layout of Lambpit Street and Mill Lane which enclose the Nant-Y-Crogfryn Brook as it flows down into the village.

Boundary Walls

3.6 Local yellow sandstone walls are the most common form of boundary treatment within the Conservation Area. Sandstone has also been used to construct the larger retaining walls to the rear of Mill Lane and in some of the properties on Hill Street. The stone walls are important character features within the area that not only provide a means of enclosure but provide continuity to the street frontage. Constructed from the principal local building material, they provide an element of continuity and a sense of cohesion within the Conservation Area.

Contribution by Trees and Open Space

3.7 Trees are prevalent within the Conservation Area and due to the topography, form an important backdrop to many of the properties and views into and out of the settlement. In particular the non-coniferous woodland which lines the steep course of the Nant-Y-Crogfryn Brook to the north contributes significantly to the rural setting of the Conservation Area whilst individual and



smaller groups of trees within private garden areas frame and enhance the setting of individual buildings. The scattered layout of the buildings and the large open space contribute to the area's semi-rural character.

Landmark Buildings

3.8 Pentre Farm and the former Presbyterian Chapel form landmark buildings within the Conservation Area standing out from the strong rural landscape due to their elevated positions, large scale and use of red brick, the natural colour offering visual variety to a townscape dominated with render and painted facades.

Footpaths

3.9 Public footpaths and routes wind through the Conservation Area providing links to the main village settlement and also to the surrounding countryside and a legacy to the area's industrial past.

House Names

3.10 The majority of the properties within the Conservation Area have Welsh house names which help create the definite sense of place within this area of Penycae.

4. *Character in Detail*













Figure 4: Penycae Conservation Area Character Map



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Key

-  Penycae Character Area Boundary
-  Buildings of Interest/Significance
-  Landmark Buildings
-  Important Stone Boundary
-  Key Views
-  Important Brick Boundary
-  Boundary Railings
-  Trees and Vegetation Forming an Important Backdrop and Providing Strong Sense of Enclosure
-  Important Open Space
-  Public Footpath



Hill Street

4.1 Upon entering the Conservation Area from the south, Hill Street descends sharply before gently winding round the valley floor and meeting Poplar Road as it begins the ascent up the northern edge of the valley. From here the dramatic topography and wider rural setting of the Conservation Area can be fully appreciated with the elevated position providing extensive views to the north and west out across Pentre Cristionydd and offering glimpses of the eastern slopes of the Ruabon Mountain.

4.2 The redundant Y Groes Presbyterian Chapel occupies a large open site on the edge of the Conservation Area above Hill Street where the brightness of its Ruabon brick walls and large size contrasts to the diminutive scale and paint and render finishes of the nearby properties. The Chapel built originally



as the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel dates from the latter half of the 19th Century but has been extended and altered in the early 20th Century. Local sandstone detailing and pointed arched windows add to the buildings simple gothic inspired appearance. Surrounding the site to the roadside is a mixture of the original cast iron railings and smooth red brick walls.

The burial ground is just visible to the east of the Chapel. To the north the site is surrounded by large trees which obscure the Chapel and the burial ground from views from the northern valley slope but form an important backdrop to the building when viewed from the south.

4.3 Continuing down into the valley, Hill Street is characterised by two storey buildings that follow the naturally steep gradient of the land and display painted and rendered facades. To the west the 20th Century properties of Mill View, Green Bank and Swyn Y Nant



are set into the hill slope behind traditional sandstone boundary walling the line of which marks the former route of Hill Street. A historic footway, accessed by worn sandstone steps and enclosed by high sandstone walls, remains between Green Bank and Swyn Y Nant connecting Hill Street to Chapel Street.

4.4 Trees are also an important feature of the area adding to the picturesque appearance and easing the

integration of modern developments into the more rural landscape. To the east of Hill Street a large wooded area contributes significantly to the rural setting on a site that was historically a densely populated area of the village



4.5 Sandstone walling continues as a common boundary to the west curving round the property known as River Bank, before extending north westwards along Lambpit Street. 'River Bank', positioned facing the junction of Hill Street and Lambpit Street, is a two storey stone cottage is one of the few historic buildings within the Conservation Area that displays the original stone façade. The property dates from the early half of the 19th Century and displays a date stone inscribed "J E S Jones 1826". Originally the building comprised two cottages however significant alterations and rebuilding of the front elevation has removed most evidence of the buildings original composition. The sandstone wall to the front is finished with worn 'cock and hen' copings with painted brick gate piers. To the left of the gateway a variation in the stone work may indicate the original access to the

second cottage. The property retains the traditional slate roof with modern rendered end chimney stacks.

4.6 Beyond the junction with Lambpit Street the topography levels out at the valley floor. Hill Street curves widely round to the east joining Poplar Road where the Conservation Area is once again enclosed by significant tree cover to the northern valley side. 'Pen-y-Bont', a two storey rough rendered property is positioned on a large plot at the narrow junction of Hill Street and Mill Lane and as its Welsh name suggests, sits at the head of the bridge. The property has an intimate setting created from its enclosure by a large Leylandii hedge and a red brick and terracotta boundary wall to the east and south and the stone lined course of the Trefechan and Nant y Crogfryn brooks to the north and west. The Edwardian façade of the building dates from the early 20th Century but the building is likely to incorporate elements of earlier structures on the site.





Lambpit Street

4.7 The Trefechan brook flows down into the Conservation Area adjacent to 'River Bank' where it continues under the Lambpit Street Bridge running between the properties known as Pen-y-Bont and Nant-y-Crogfryn. A variety of trees line the course of the brook adding to the tranquillity of the area and creating an attractive backdrop to the Conservation Area.

4.8 Lambpit Street Bridge marks the beginning of Lambpit Street where the steady incline of the road and wide spaces between the buildings allow for almost constant views out to the countryside and the surrounding hills. The bridge itself is a simple, narrow, sandstone structure forming part of the distinctive group of historic bridges which help define the historic layout of the village within its modern context.

4.9 Immediately beyond the bridge and situated directly adjacent to Hill Street sits Nant-y-Crogfryn a two storey late 20th Century brick dwelling. The building occupies a peaceful location set behind a low brick wall



surmounted with metal railings and fronting the narrow cobbled track linking Lambpit Street to Mill Lane. The garden area of the property is enclosed to the north and south east by the two brooks which converge at the eastern end of the site. Detailing to the building is simple with painted timber windows and a traditional slate roof.

4.10 Facing the narrow cobbled track to Mill Lane is Number 1

Lambpit Street a late Victorian red brick dwelling. The building, set behind a characteristic sandstone wall, originally formed part of a row of two dwellings



with the second dwelling having been demolished during the 20th Century. The alteration and enlargement of the original openings has diminished the original appearance although the simple dentil course beneath the eaves and the traditional slate roof are retained.

4.11 Continuing up the hill and set behind a characteristic sandstone boundary walling is Plas-y-Nant an attractive building of the interwar period, which

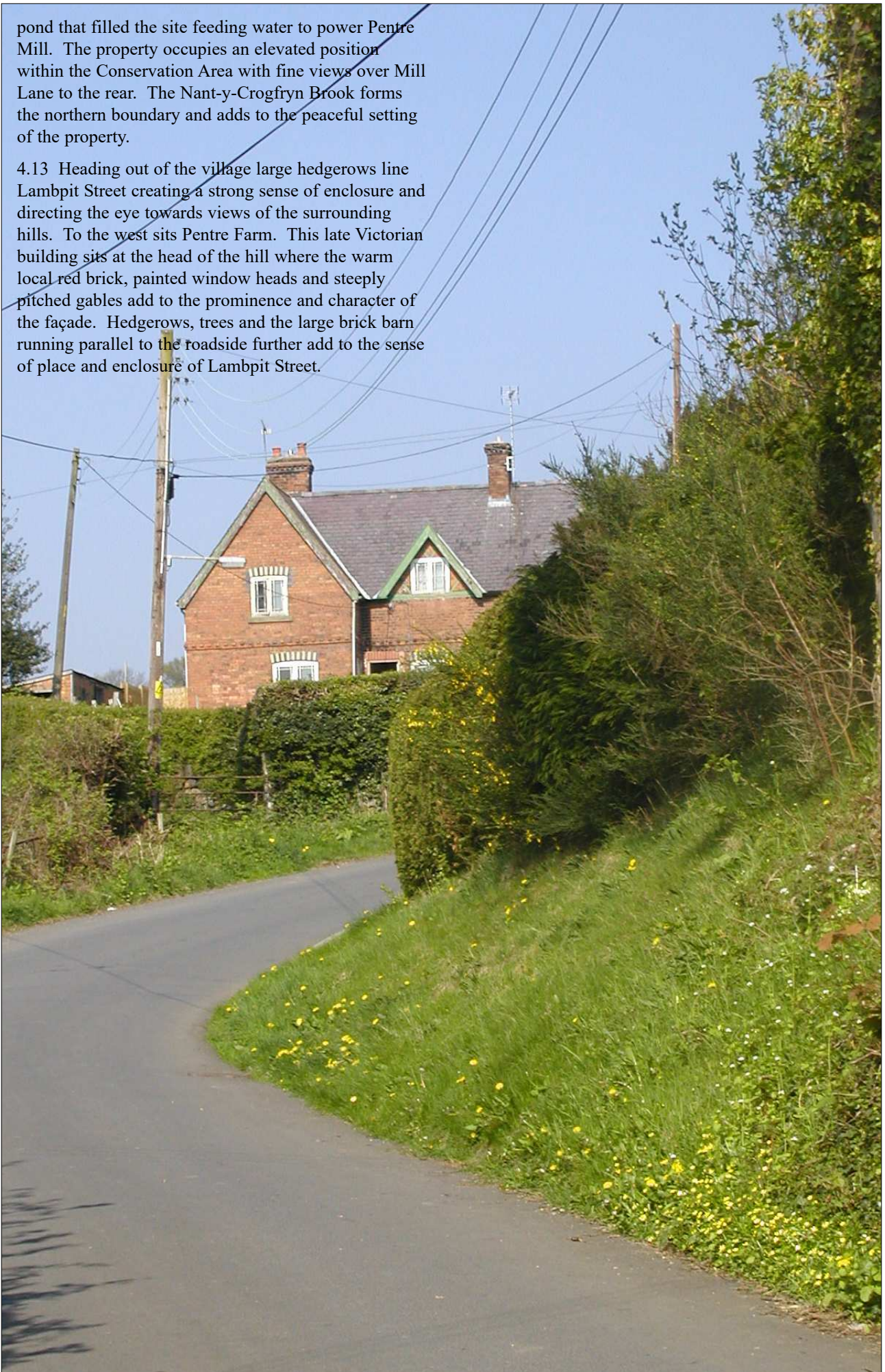


although quite different in character to the older, simple cottages in the village still adds to the sense of place of the Conservation Area due to good design, symmetry in the façade and the space around the building.

4.12 Situated opposite is The Mill Pool, a large modern brick built dwelling that gains its name from the former

pond that filled the site feeding water to power Pentre Mill. The property occupies an elevated position within the Conservation Area with fine views over Mill Lane to the rear. The Nant-y-Crogfryn Brook forms the northern boundary and adds to the peaceful setting of the property.

4.13 Heading out of the village large hedgerows line Lambpit Street creating a strong sense of enclosure and directing the eye towards views of the surrounding hills. To the west sits Pentre Farm. This late Victorian building sits at the head of the hill where the warm local red brick, painted window heads and steeply pitched gables add to the prominence and character of the façade. Hedgerows, trees and the large brick barn running parallel to the roadside further add to the sense of place and enclosure of Lambpit Street.





Mill Lane

4.14 Mill Lane has a definite rural character and emanates a strong sense of tranquillity. The narrow width and surface materials of the Lane, the Nant-y-Crogrfryn Brook which flows gently through this section of the Conservation Area, and the sloping topography and presence of trees and planting which envelop Mill Lane to the north and west, all contribute to this special character.

4.15 A variety of cottages line the northern side of Mill Lane where their differing roof heights provide interest within wider views of the Conservation Area. The cottages have a peaceful setting facing the brook and positioned close to or directly adjacent to Mill Lane. To the rear, the cottages are enclosed by trees where the steep slope of the valley adds to their prominence and creates an imposing backdrop.

4.16 At the head of Mill Lane and set within large grounds is Nant-Y-Felin a 1½ storey painted rendered cottage with a traditional slate roof. The original part of the property is single storey and is said to have been used as a school. It is believed this section dates from the 18th Century, the uneven ridge line indicating it's age whilst adding to the character and charm of the building. The later larger extension is easily distinguishable and somewhat detracts from the traditional form. Windows are modern replacements within the original openings.



4.17 Adjacent and occupying an elevated position is

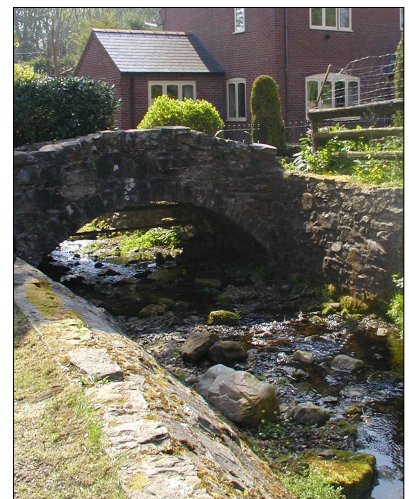
Cwm Afon, a modern two storey rendered building built into the hill slope behind a local yellow sandstone retaining wall.

The design of the building has incorporated simple detailing, such as gabled dormer windows and timber casement windows, from the surrounding dwellings helping it to integrate into the wider townscape.



4.18 Beyond here Mill Lane begins to bend round

following the course of the brook allowing for excellent views of the stone arched Mill Lane Bridge in the foreground. Positioned close to the side of the lane are Min yr Afon and Pentre Felin, two 1½ storey white render cottages with slate roofs and gabled dormer windows. Pentre Felin is believed to date



from the 16th Century and is said to have been the mill keepers cottage and directly faces the former site of Pentre Mill. Elements of its original timber - frame construction remain exposed within the buildings interior. In the 1980's a section of wattle daub panelling taken from Pentre Felin was placed on display in Wrexham County Museum. It has two end chimney stacks and renewed timber windows.

4.19 Adjacent is The Granary, an attractive yellow

sandstone building which is likely to be contemporary with the former Pentre Mill. The brightness of the sandstone offers a pleasing contrast to the modern cement render of the surrounding



buildings and gives the Granary a strong traditional character. The building was converted to residential uses in the later 20th Century and retains the arched cart entrance which adds interest to both the building and the street-scape.

4.20 Moving towards the junction with Poplar Road, Mill Lane becomes enclosed by local sandstone boundary walls which line either side of the Lane.



Significant planting in the garden areas of 'Pen Y Bont' and 'Pentre View' further add to this sense of enclosure. Pentre View occupies an elevated position set back and above Mill Lane and within attractive grounds bounded by large trees. The property dates from the late 19th Century and originally comprised two dwellings however much of the original character has been lost through modern alterations to windows and doors and the application of modern cement render. A traditional slate roof and end stack remain on the building.





Poplar Road

4.21 Historically Poplar Road was only accessible by travelling over Packhorse Bridge at the base of Hill Street where turning left led to Mill Lane and right to Poplar Road. Today this junction no longer exists with Hill Street having a smooth curving transition onto Poplar Road which leads back up the northern valley slope out of the Conservation Area. Brookside, a small 1½ storey cottage sits opposite the historic junction and bridge at the valley floor and displays the simple painted rendered façade now common throughout much of the Conservation Area. The property dates from the 19th Century with recent alterations revealing the original yellow sandstone construction beneath the modern cement render.

4.22 A sandstone wall extends from the side of Brookside forming a consistent boundary to the northern side of Poplar Road. Numbers 11 and 12 Poplar Road sit back from and above the highway with their position somewhat secluded by the large trees that line the site to the north.



The cottages date from the late 19th Century with the painted sandstone sills and end chimney stack being the only original detailing left visible on the façades. The cottages now comprise a single dwelling.

4.23 To the south of Poplar Road the ground descends to an area of public open space where the Afon Eitha,

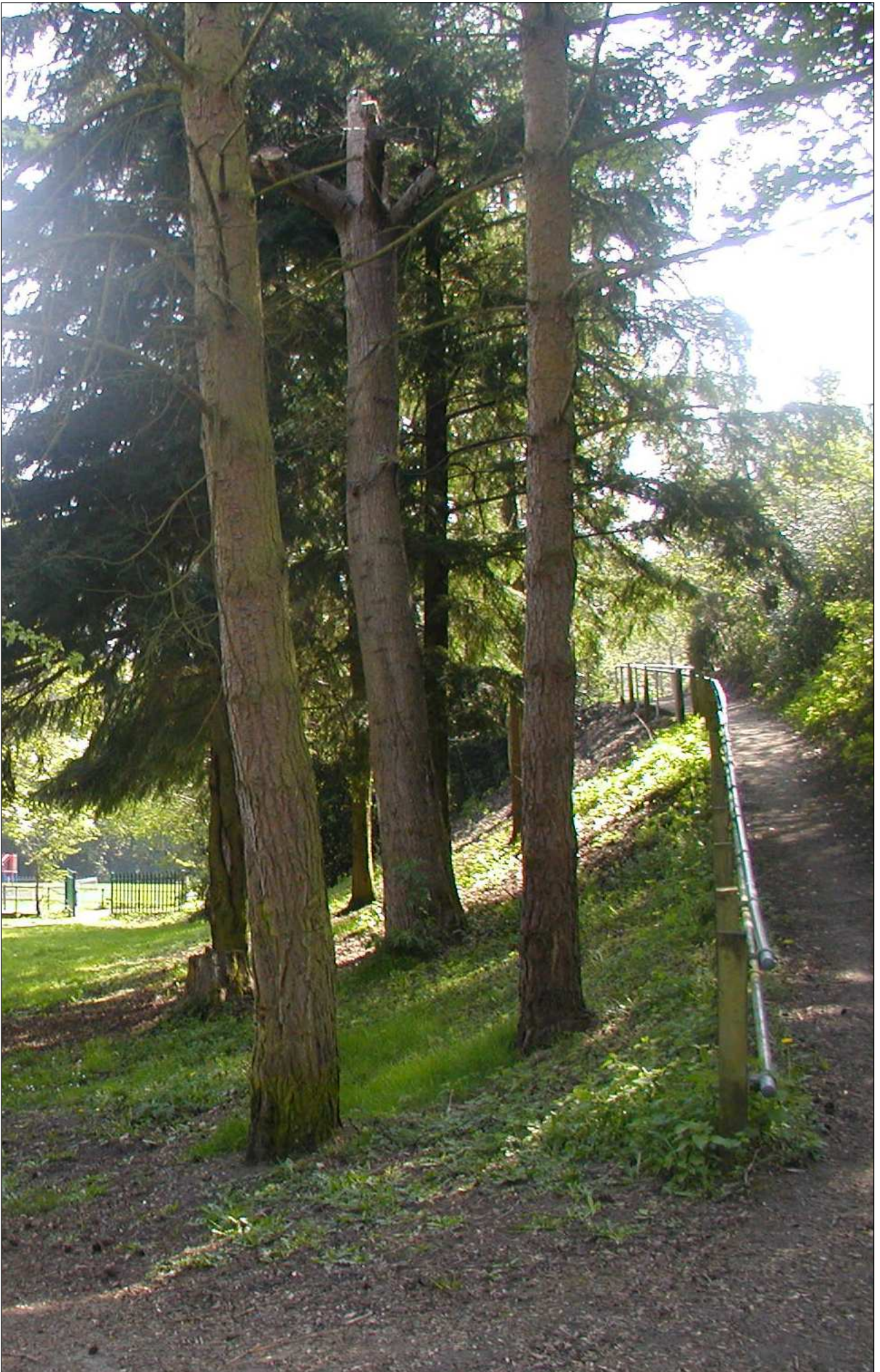
formed from the convergence of the Trefechan and Nant Y Crogfryn brooks, begins its journey through the landscape emerging from a sandstone tunnel. This area provides important greenery which contributes to views across the valley from the north and provides a natural barrier between the older settlement and the more recent expansion of the village to the south.



4.24 Continuing along the road the rural character of the area is strengthened by the presence of fields and native hedgerow boundaries which line the northern side. Looking south offers views towards Y Groes and the later 19th Century and 20th Century housing developments of Penycae. Number 10 Poplar Road sits on top a grassed verge within a large open site at the edge of the Conservation Area. The property incorporates an earlier building of late 19th century date known as



Berwyn View however modern extensions, alterations and materials have disguised the age and destroyed the traditional character of the building. The elevated, open location makes the property an unfortunate obvious feature within the wider views of the Conservation Area.



5 Summary of Negative Features





5 Summary of Negative Features

5.1 A number of factors have been identified as causing detriment to the visual quality and character of the area. These include:

Loss of Architectural Detail through Unsympathetic Alterations and Use of Inappropriate Materials

5.2 Inappropriate alterations strip away the original historic character and fabric of the buildings. The widespread use of cement render has obscured original stonework facades and architectural features and has destroyed the original design intention. This is a common problem throughout the Conservation Area.

5.3 Similarly, replacing original and traditional windows and doors with modern and inappropriately detailed alternatives such as uPVC and the enlarging of original openings to suit contemporary glazing styles has eroded much of the historic character of the Penycae Conservation Area.

Palisade Fencing to the southern side of Poplar Road

5.4 The fencing along this section has a harsh industrial appearance in contrast to the traditional sandstone boundary walling and detracts from the strong rural character of the area. The fencing is made more prominent within the wider views of the Conservation Area by the sloping topography.

Hard Surfacing at the junction of Mill Lane, Hill Street and Poplar Road

5.5 The expanse of hard surfacing lies at the heart of the Conservation Area disrupting the historic layout and connectivity of the streets. The extent of the area and the modern tarmac finish creates a definite urban feel which does not sit well within the wider rural context.

Number 9 Poplar Road

5.6 Planning permission for 9 Poplar Road was granted in 2002. The new dwelling has never been fully completed with the unfinished appearance and boarded up windows detracting significantly from the rural and tranquil appearance and character of the Conservation Area. The prominent roadside position unfortunately draws further attention to the building and sets a negative precedent for the rest of the Conservation Area.





Part 2 Management Plan

6.1

GENERAL PROPOSALS FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

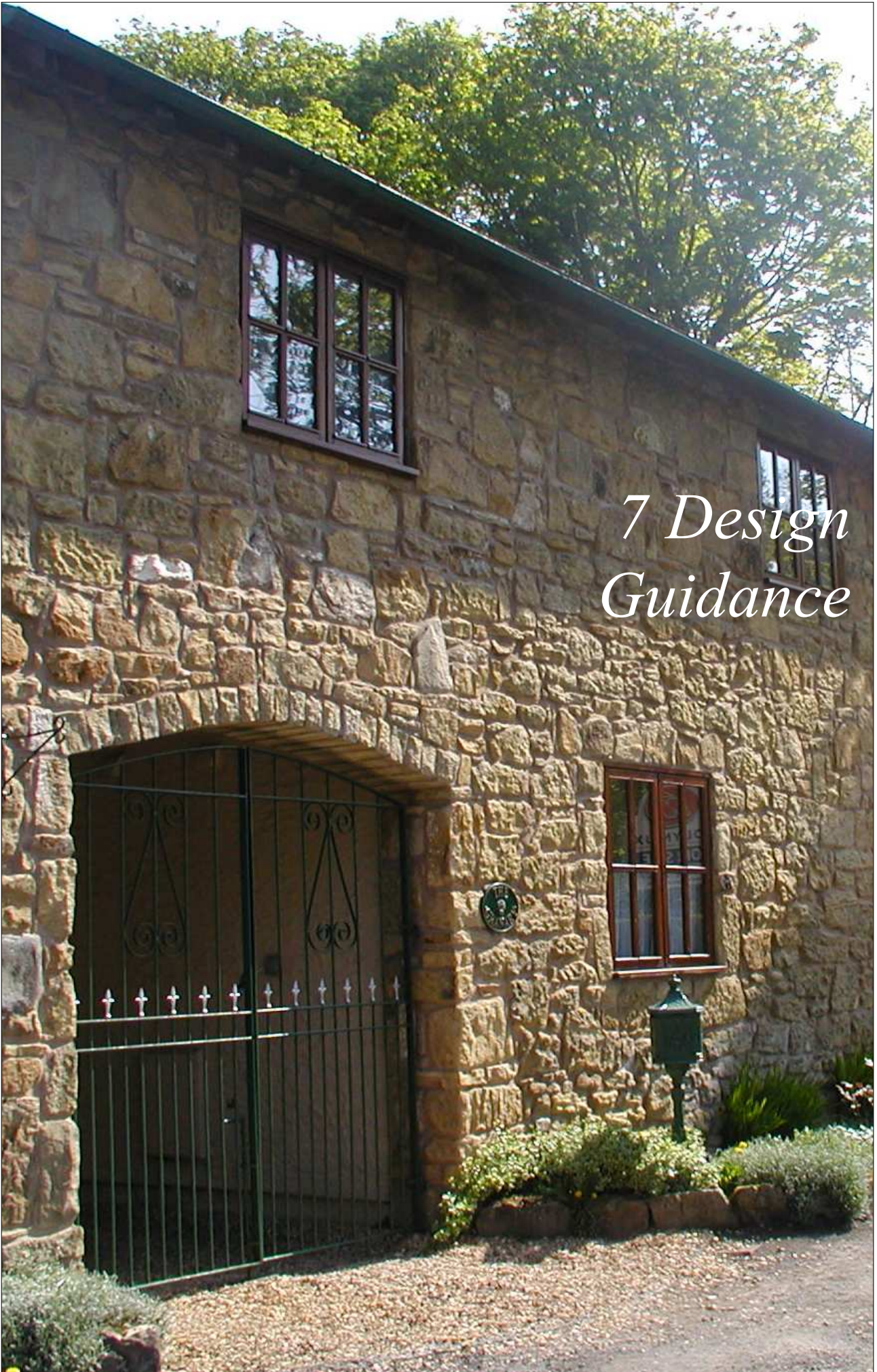
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|---|---|
| Reinstatement of lost features and preservation of traditional and original detailing | Traditional architectural details, local materials and vernacular features are important in creating the special character of the Conservation Area and should be retained, repaired or reinstated where lost. |
| Archaeology | Archaeological mitigation may be required in response to development proposals within the Conservation Area. Early consultation with the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in relation to any proposed new dwelling or extension is encouraged to prevent delay at the application submission stage. |
| Highway Improvements | Highway works should be designed in accordance with guidelines as set out in Section 7.0 of this document. |
| Trees | Trees contribute greatly to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and those which are considered to make a significant contribution have been identified on Figures 4 and 5 of this document. The unnecessary removal or works that may be considered detrimental will be resisted. Where removal is essential then an appropriate replanting scheme will be encouraged to mitigate any detrimental affects on the character of the Conservation Area |
| New Development and Alterations | It is possible to successfully incorporate new development into a historic settlement but it is essential that the development respects the scale, design, proportions and materials of surrounding architecture to strengthen the cohesion of the street. It is crucial that an imaginative and high - quality design is employed to reinforce the cohesion of the street and give continuity to the scale, rhythm and rich detailing of the architecture of the existing streetscape. Detailed design guidance is provided within Section 7.0 of this document. |

6.2

ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The following have been identified as opportunities for the enhancement of the Conservation Area. The undertaking of these works is dependent upon the availability of funding or grant assistance:

| ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS | RESPONSIBLE BODY |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Improvement of Public Realm at the junction of Mill Lane, Poplar Road and Hill Street - The use of sympathetic materials and introduction of appropriate street furniture, such as planters and improved bus shelter would enhance this area for public use. | Wrexham County Borough Council |



*7 Design
Guidance*



7 Design Guidance

7.1 The character of the individual buildings, which together form the Conservation Area, derives from a number of factors. The following design guidance seeks to enhance that character.

Proportion

7.2 Older building styles followed traditional systems of proportion. In most of the buildings within the Conservation Area, the relationship between windows, doors, floor heights and the relationship of solid to void in the design of elevations is crucial. Traditional proportions should be emulated in new development.

Roofs

7.3 The roof line is nearly always a dominant feature of a building and retention of the original shape, pitch, verge and eaves detail and ornamentation is essential. Heights and shapes of roofs are important; flat roofs are alien to local tradition and are generally unacceptable. Chimney-stacks are important features of the roof-scape and should be retained even if no longer required. Where roofing materials are to be replaced they should match the colour, size and texture of the original. Roofs should be roofed or re-roofed in traditional materials on a like for like basis where historically appropriate. If ventilation of the void is required, this should be achieved by inconspicuous means; under eaves ventilation are acceptable, but visible roof vents are not.



External Walls

7.4 Any alteration or repair to external walls must respect the existing building materials and match them in texture, quality and colour. Every effort should be



made to retain or re-use facing brickwork or stonework, which must not be rendered, pebble-dashed or painted. Re-pointing should be carried out with a mortar to match the existing in colour, type and texture and historically would have consisted of lime and sand. Modern hard cement mortar and renders prevent the evaporation of moisture which can accumulate within the wall causing damp internally. When appropriate, hard cement renders should be replaced with a lime alternative.

Rainwater Goods

7.5 Rainwater goods should be repaired if original or reinstated in original materials. Plastic guttering is not appropriate on buildings within Conservation Areas. It is not historically correct, and it does not enhance a building's character. Cast iron guttering can last for a lifetime, if properly installed and maintained.



Windows

7.6 Windows are important features which should be correctly proportioned, well related to each other and adjoining buildings and should respect existing openings. Any repair or replacement should always match the original. This includes not only structural elements of the window but also the historic glass and original window furniture. Particularly important is the method of opening, the recessed depth within the reveal and the sections of glazing bars. Replacement of timber or iron windows in a PVCu alternative, no matter what the pattern, is unacceptable. All windows must have a traditional painted finish rather than a modern stained alternative.



Doors

7.7 Original door-cases, doors and door furniture should be retained wherever possible. Replacements must match the original in proportion, style and materials and should have a painted finish. Porches should be designed within the overall context and architectural style of the building and in reference to any appropriate nearby styles. They should not dominate the front elevation.

Boundary Treatment

7.8 The removal or alteration of boundary walls will be resisted. Repair should be carried out using identical materials and in the same style or bond and missing copings replaced to match the existing. The use of a hard cement mortar to re-point joints is unacceptable, increasing the rate of deterioration of sandstone in particular.



Surfaces

7.9 The overuse of insensitive macadam finishes should be avoided and the opportunity taken to lay traditional materials, where colour, texture and pattern in sympathy with the character of the area and sensitive to adjacent buildings.

Highway Works

7.10 Redundant or unnecessary street furniture such as signs or poles should be removed to reduce the effects of street clutter. Any new items such as sign - posts, etc must be carefully integrated within the streetscape and respect adjacent buildings and the area as a whole. The number and size of road signs must be kept to a minimum and only illuminated where essential. Backing plates should be grey or black and luminous yellow must be avoided. Where road lines are essential they must be of a restricted width.

Micro Energy Generation

7.11 Whilst the use of micro energy generation systems is to be encouraged, they will not be accepted where equipment is fixed to building frontages or main or visible elevations where they would have a negative visual impact upon the Conservation Area.



8 Conservation Area Controls





8 Conservation Area Controls

Special Controls

8.1 In order to protect the special environment, stricter controls exist within the Conservation Area. These are not intended as a hindrance to change, but as positive management to safeguard the character of the area as a whole. These include:

- Additional powers of control to dwelling houses for extensions, roof extensions and alterations, cladding, garages and satellite dish location.
- Most works involving total demolition require Conservation Area Consent. Consent for demolition will not normally be granted until it is known what form redevelopment will take.
- Work to trees requires six weeks notice to be given to the Council.

With all proposals for development and the display of advertisements in a Conservation Area, greater care is necessary to ensure that schemes enhance and preserve the area's special character. Design and choice of materials are of particular importance in this respect.

9 Sources of Funding





9 Sources of Funding

A fundamental principle of all grant schemes is that grant cannot be offered after the work has been started. All grants are discretionary and rates may vary. Early consultation with possible providers is essential.

Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

Cadw is the historic environment division of the Welsh Assembly Government. One element of their of its activities is to offer grants to owners for the repair or restoration of historic buildings. The key grant schemes summarise as:

Historic Buildings Grant

For the repair and restoration of historic fabric of building's of 'outstanding' architectural or historic interest. Grants are normally paid in instalments or on completion of the work.

Conditions of the grant may require a specialist to undertake and oversee the works and allow a degree of public access to the property once works are completed. The owner must also ensure that the property is kept in good condition and take out and maintain adequate insurance cover for the property.

Conservation Areas Grant

For works to the external structure or appearance of historic buildings, which significantly enhance a Conservation Area. Grants are again paid by instalments or on completion of the work.

Similar to the Historic Building Grant, conditions may require a specialist to undertake and oversee the works. The owner must also ensure that the property is kept in good condition and take out and maintain adequate insurance cover for the property.

APPENDIX 1

CONSERVATION POLICY GUIDANCE

| Main Legislation | National Policy Guidance | Local Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Town and Country Planning Act 1990 | Planning Policy Wales | Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (LDP in preparation) |
| Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 | Welsh Office Circular 61/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas | Local Planning Guidance Note 4: Conservation Areas |
| Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 | Welsh Office Circular 1/98: Planning and the Historic Environment: Directions by the Secretary of State for Wales | Local Planning Guidance Note 30 - Design |
| | Technical Advice Note 12: Design | |
| | Welsh Office Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology | |

APPENDIX 2

GLOSSARY OF ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Canopy | Projection or hood |
| Casement | A window where the opening lights are hung on hinges |
| Coping | The top course of a wall, parapet or chimney |
| Cornice | Moulded ledge, projecting along the top of a building. Also a decorative moulding in the angle between a wall and ceiling |
| Dentil | Small cubic projections under the roof line |
| Eaves | The lower, overhanging section of a pitched roof |
| Edwardian | Dating from or typical of the period 1901-1910 |
| Façade | The front of a building |
| Gable | Area of wall, often triangular, at the end of a pitched roof |
| Georgian | Dating from or typical of the period 1714 to 1820 |
| Gothic | Period of medieval architecture characterised by the use of the pointed arch |
| Hoodmould | Projecting moulding shown above an arch or lintel to throw off water |
| Keystone | Central stone in an arch or vault |
| Lintel | Horizontal beam used as a finishing piece over a door or window |
| Quoin | Dressed stone which are bonded to the corners of buildings |
| Parapet | Feature used to conceal a roof |
| Polychromatic | Multi-coloured |
| Render | The plastering of a surface with plaster, stucco or another finish |
| Sill | Structural member consisting of a continuous horizontal timber forming the lowest member of a framework or supporting structure |
| Terracotta | Moulded and fired clay ornament or cladding, usually unglazed |
| Vernacular | Based on local and traditional construction methods, materials and decorative styles |
| Victorian | Dating from or typical of the period 1837-1901 |

APPENDIX 3

REFERENCES - USEFUL CONTACTS

References

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The Institute of Historic Building Conservation - www.ihbc.org.uk
 Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments - www.cadw.wales.gov.uk
 The Royal Institute of British Architects - www.riba.org
 The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings - www.spab.org.uk
 The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors - www.rics.org.uk
 The Georgian Group - www.georgiangroup.org.uk
 The Victorian Society - www.victorian-society.org.uk
 Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust - www.cpat.org.uk