

**DRAFT CONSERVATION AREA  
MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BRIDGEND  
TOWN CENTRE**

**January 2011**

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Bridgend Town Centre conservation area management plan, in accordance with other relevant strategy documents aims to increase the vitality, viability and attractiveness of Bridgend Town Centre. It demonstrates the fundamental role that can be played in this process by the sympathetic and sensitive regeneration of the town centre which respects its special character and appearance.

1.2 This Management Plan together with the character statement and the most recent conservation area appraisal provides Bridgend County Borough Council with a tool to not only assist with its statutory duties in relation to Bridgend Town Centre Conservation Area but to formulate a framework for actions that will address some of the issues identified in the appraisal.

1.3 The management plan will assist with the following local authority statutory duties;

- To pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in the exercise of their powers under the planning acts.
- To formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of the conservation area.

1.4 It aims to achieve the conservation led regeneration of the town centre through the unified and consistent

commitment of all relevant service areas within the authority, Members and key stakeholders. Some of the proposed actions may also assist with the preservation and enhancement of the Council's other 14 conservation areas.

1.5 The management plan sets out the Council's aspirations for the future of the conservation area. It also outlines a strategy for protecting the special architectural or historic interest as proposals for future use, alteration and development and management and repair come forward.

1.6 The Management Plan and appraisal, along with further detailed guidance to be prepared, will be used to explain the essential qualities of Bridgend Town Centre Conservation Area to a wide audience including businesses, developers and their agents, amenity societies and the general public.

## **2. The Area**

2.1 Bridgend Town Centre Conservation Area was designated on 22nd June 1999, extending the former Court Road Conservation Area (which was designated on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1975) to include the whole of the historic core of Bridgend. Its status as a conservation area means that it is recognised as an "area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance". The character statement and the boundary of the area are contained in Appendix A.

### **2a Conservation Area Appraisal**

2a.1 A detailed appraisal of the area was undertaken in 2009 to inform the preparation of the successful Phase II Bridgend THI application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2010.

The conservation area appraisal (2009) examined the following issues in detail; Key Buildings and Frontages; Views and Vistas; Key Spaces and Gap Sites; Opportunities for Development; and Public Realm Enhancements.

2a.2 The appraisal, along with a number of other recent studies and strategies listed below, have informed the development of a programme for action for Bridgend County Borough Council to address those features that have a negative effect on the character and appearance of the area and consider opportunities for enhancement.

- Draft Issues for Bridgend Masterplan (2010 Powell Dobson)
- Retailing and Commercial Centres in Bridgend County Borough (2009)
- Bridgend Civic Trust SWOT Analysis 2010
- Visitor Perception Survey June-August 2010

### **3. Planning Policies and Strategy Context**

3.1 The following documents establish the context of strategy and policy for the Management Plan:

- Planning Policy Wales (2010)
- Welsh Office Circular 61/96 Planning and the Historic Environment (as amended by Circular 1/98)
- The Adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan

3.2 Planning Policy Wales notes that “the positive management of conservation areas is necessary if their character or appearance is to be protected and enhanced”

3.3 The Circulars emphasise the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas must be considered both in the formulation of policy and in the exercise of development control functions.

3.4 The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for Bridgend County Borough was adopted in May 2005 and includes planning policies that protect the historic built environment and are used in consideration of development proposals. Policies include those which:

- Control demolition, alteration and extension of listed buildings
- Establish criteria for the management and enhancement of conservation areas, including boundary review and control of new development
- Address re-use of historic buildings which may assist in the regeneration of run-down areas
- Control development which may affect the archaeological resources and

3.5 The emerging Local Development plan will also contain heritage related policies relevant to the conservation area.

## **4. Planning Measures**

4.1 Planning Policy Wales views the management of conservation areas as an essential aspect of their preservation or enhancement. This can be instigated by taking positive measures and actions with a view to

initiating beneficial changes. Bridgend County Borough Council has the opportunity to use its powers to secure preservation or enhancement.

#### 4.2 Issues to be addressed include;

- Breaches of Planning Control (unauthorised works and breaches of planning conditions) which have resulted in the negative impact on the character or appearance of the area
- Poor condition of Listed Buildings (front and rear), particularly in Elder Street and Dunraven Place due to lack of maintenance

#### 4.3 Bridgend County Borough Council statutory powers that can be used include:

- Enforcement Action – The Council's enforcement Officer will be supported by the Conservation and Design Team to ensure efficient and effective resolution of any inappropriate unauthorised works.
- Repairs Notices - These will be considered for Listed Buildings identified as being at risk but priority will be given to negotiation with the owners of the listed buildings through the recommendations in the agreed Buildings at Risk Strategy
- Article 4 Directions - An article 4(1) Direction was confirmed for the whole of the conservation area on December 2008, as a requirement of the Townscape Heritage Initiative Phase I. The Direction controls the painting of the exterior of the buildings in the area. The impact of the Direction is being monitored but there is a need for the production of related colour scheme guidance.
- Section 215 notices – These notices will be considered where there is an issue of land that is injurious to the amenities of the area.

- Identification and designation of Archaeologically Sensitive Areas – As part of the preparation of the Local Development Plan, such designation could ensure consideration of potential archaeological issues at an early stage and secure the support and advice of Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust.

## **5. A Framework for Design Standards**

5.1 The preparation of design guidance and partnership working will be promoted to address the following main issues;

- Inappropriate shopfronts and disproportionate fascias
- Inappropriate location of, often redundant, street furniture
- Missing historic architectural detail where there is photographic or other evidence of the original condition.
- Inappropriate new development, adversely affecting important views and vistas and damaging the historic street plan and urban grain
- Inconsistent and occasionally unsympathetic public realm works
- Unsightly fixtures and fittings to buildings
- Statutory suppliers redundant street furniture affecting townscape quality
- Storage of rubbish / wheelie bins

5.2 Existing Design guides that relate to the Conservation Area include;

- The Improvement of Commercial Buildings in Bridgend Town Centre – Town Improvement Grant Promotional Brochure

- Conservation Areas in Bridgend County Borough (1991)

5.3 These shall be updated where necessary and considered for adoption as supplementary planning guidance. These provide general guidance for town centres / conservation areas and will be a material consideration in the consideration of proposals for development throughout Bridgend Town Centre Conservation Area. This will allow for consistency in design standards and ameliorate two tier standards that are apparent through the provision of grant aid in the Dunraven Place / Elder Street THI area.

5.4 Consideration will be given to further Supplementary Planning Guidance for the following;

- Shopfront design Guide
- Advertisements Control Guide
- Bridgend Townscape Heritage Initiative (Dunraven Place and Elder Street) Design Guide
- Draft Local List (Policy EV 35 of UDP refers)
- Built Heritage Strategy which is identified in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and in the emerging Local Development Plan and will set out the authority's comprehensive approach to the built heritage of Bridgend County Borough.

5.5 Consideration will also be given to the preparation of more specific guidance on the following topics:

- A colour palette to guide decisions on the application of paint to buildings to provide advice regarding the confirmed Article 4 Direction.
- The repair, restoration and reinstatement of historic details (e.g doors, windows and roofs) using traditional materials and skills .
- Promotion of Cadw's Maintenance Matters website

5.6 Where enhancement opportunities exist for new development on gap sites, or for sympathetic redevelopment of buildings which could potentially damage the character or appearance of the conservation area, the following approach will be taken;

- Preparation of site specific development briefs where necessary
- The encouragement of pre-application discussions with owners at an early stage

5.7 Such sites include;

- Wyndham House / Cambria House
- Nos 2-4 Wyndham Street
- Nos 1-13 Caroline Street
- Modern extensions to the rear of 9, 9a, 9b and 11,13,25 Adare Street

5.8 Bridgend County Borough has significant land and building holdings within the town centre and high design standards should be demonstrated through the sympathetic repairs and maintenance of its own buildings. Enhancements of the public realm and streetscape should conform to current guidance for historic areas, and advice will be offered by the Conservation and Design Team on that basis. This will be particularly significant in the proposed enhancements in Court Road and Elder Street through the Convergence Project.

## **6. Education and Training**

6.1 Issues identified by the appraisal and other recent studies include;

- Poor quality skills and knowledge in terms of traditional building techniques and materials as well as the quality of planning and grant applications for the THI Scheme
- Only partial awareness of the historic significance of the town centre and the contribution the historic buildings make to the character of the area.

6.2 It is significant that many of the issues raised by the conservation area appraisal involve works to buildings which do not always need planning or Listed Building consent. Bridgend County Borough Council has very little control over works that do not constitute development and it is acknowledged that quite often the gradual deterioration of character is due to minor alterations undertaken over a long period of time.

6.3 Education and training of key stakeholders, individual building owners and the general public can help resolve some of these issues.

6.4 The management plan for Bridgend Town Centre Conservation area recognises the need to support education and training initiatives which build on and reinforce the objectives for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Bridgend County Borough Council is keen to ensure there are appropriate in-house skills as well as skills available in the community and with building owners and tenants, architects and agents. There needs to be a clear awareness and understanding of the area's conservation value and the commitment necessary to sustain a conservation based approach to the long term management of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The management plan proposes the following measures that will be resourced and coordinated by the Conservation

and Design Team and the Development Department measures that include;

- Appropriate training and development of existing conservation and regeneration staff
- Member education and training days
- Use of established Officer and Member working groups for the area to address conservation related issues
- Cross departmental training initiatives
- Training of local community groups, such as Civic Trusts, local historical societies
- Expansion of the Conservation and Design Website to promote access to and improved understanding of and engagement with the historic built environment

6.5 The following initiatives have also been already partly explored and supported;

- The expansion of existing academic courses and new course provision at Bridgend College. Discussions have already been held at an early stage of the THI scheme.
- Formal conservation focussed initiatives supported by the lifelong learning partnership promoting the delivery of training services, basic skills provision, widening participation in education and training and workforce development
- An open day for owners of historic buildings.
- The use of the annual Civic Trust Open Doors event to raise awareness of what makes the area special
- The use of the County Borough Council's Bulletin, which is delivered to all address points in the County Borough, to maximise opportunities for promoting the historic environment.

## **7. Consultation and Participation**

7.1 Public consultation has been an ongoing process connected to both Townscape Heritage Initiative proposals and for the overall regeneration of Bridgend town centre. However, Bridgend County Borough Council recognises that it is essential that the representative groups and residents of Bridgend continue to be actively involved in developing priorities and actions for the preservation and enhancement of the character of the conservation area. The Town Centre Operational Group plays a fundamental role in steering the enhancement of the town centre and meets regularly to discuss issues relating to the ongoing regeneration of Bridgend Town Centre.

7.2 The proposed actions, in particular the supplementary planning guidance documents, will be developed in more detail through formal consultation and an exhibition or public meeting where necessary.

7.3 With regards to the Phase II THI scheme, involvement of the wider community was essential, particularly in developing proposals for Stage II application.

## **8. Implementation**

8.1 Officers of the Conservation and Design Team, supported by the Development Department and Elected Members of the Authority will be ultimately responsible for the implementation of the management plan through its statutory and non-statutory powers. However it will be the responsibility of the Conservation and Design Team in conjunction with the Town Centre Officer Working Group to review and monitor the management plan on a five yearly basis.

## **9. Resources**

9.1 The proposed actions are based on the current level of resources available within Bridgend County Borough Council. Progress will be monitored and reviewed in the event that resource levels change.

9.2 Many of these actions and intended outcomes are more likely to be levered through the provision of grant aid and on that basis opportunities for funding will continue to be explored and investigated through partnership working with other service areas and stakeholders

### **Background documents**

**Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

**Welsh Circular 61/96**

**Welsh Circular 01/98**

**Heritage Lottery Fund Guidance**

**English Heritage Guidance**

**Highway Works in Conservation Areas Cadw**

## **Appendix A**

### **CONSERVATION AREAS IN THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF BRIDGEND**

**BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE (incorporating the Former Court Road Conservation Area, designated 24<sup>th</sup> April 1975)**

Designated: 23<sup>RD</sup> June 1999

#### **Special Architectural and Historic Interest**

The town of Bridgend is situated between the urban centres of Swansea and Cardiff and developed during the fifteenth century on the site of an early ford over the River Ogmore. It is situated between the ancient hamlets of Newcastle and Oldcastle, the latter incorporating Nolton meaning “old village” with findings dating back as far as the Romans. Due to its central location,

Bridgend became an important market town flourishing rapidly during the nineteenth century when many of the remaining buildings were constructed.

Bridgend Town Centre Conservation Area essentially includes the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings that make up the commercial centre. It also includes the site of the former medieval market in Dunraven Place, Market Street, Wyndham Street, Derwen Road, Station Hill, Adare Street, Caroline Street and Elder Street, along with the area encompassed by the former Court Road Conservation Area that is situated along the eastern side of the town centre.

There are thirty-seven listed buildings within the Conservation Area, of which the Old Bridge is the only building listed Grade II\* and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The remaining thirty six buildings or structures are listed Grade II. All the listed buildings, apart from sections of the Wyndham Hotel, appear to date from the early nineteenth century, although internal inspections of some properties in Dunraven Place have revealed remains of earlier buildings. Nevertheless, this reflects the rapid growth of the town during this period.

The War Memorial, centralised in Dunraven Place and adjacent to the Post Office Building (site of the former Town hall prior to its demolition in 1974), acts as an important focal point in the area.

The buildings in the Court Road area vary in age from the 1830 Chateau Public House (currently Jagers Toll House) the site of turnpike gates to the 1979 glass / steel booking office of the railway station extension. A mix of Victorian "Gothic" and "Classical" domestic styles exist.

### **Character and Appearance**

Once a commercial centre dominated by vehicular traffic, many of the streets are now pedestrianised and this has extended the public realm from which vertical (mainly three storey) dimensions of the buildings have been emphasised and can be appreciated.

The Conservation Area consists of two main areas, the town centre and Court Road, which are essentially of similar character but possess their own distinct qualities.

The majority of the older buildings in the central town area are stuccoed or are built from the local Quarella stone or Pennant sandstone with red or buff brick dressings. Roofs are generally covered in Welsh slates. The pastel colours of the upper floors of many buildings lift the grey tones predominant in the streetscape. Most of the buildings in the conservation area are three storeys, terraced, with narrow street frontages and ground floor shop fronts.

There are arguably three urban places of significance. Dunraven Place, an important focal point, York Place and Nolton Corner including the area around the listed drinking fountain. Important vistas exist between these nodal points.

The area has few trees, nevertheless good views are obtained from the Old Bridge to the north and to the Merthyr Mawr conservation area to the south, which does contain many mature trees. The River Ogmore plays an important part in the overall appearance of Bridgend Town Centre Conservation Area. An original landmark, it represents the historic origins of the town together with the ancient stone bridge.

The varied alignment of buildings along Court Road, together with the “s” shaped road pattern and steep gradient contribute to a sense of visual expectancy, terminating in an interesting grouping of features at the southern end, at its junction with Derwen Road and Nolton Street.

Two original telephone kiosks, stone chimney stacks and the strong emphasis on graphics in windows all contribute to the character of the area. The arrangement of properties with gables facing the road offer a sense of intrigue, allowing the eye to follow the buildings around to view the front elevations.

Limestone masonry walls with bay windows and slate roofs, sash window frames, flat fronted in fill buildings, forecourt walls all form part of the character of the area.

The majority of buildings on Court Road consist of office uses. Extreme contrasts exist of historic and contemporary building materials and design.

There are significant groups of trees and shrubs within the grounds of the Day care clinic and these form a visually important feature.

### **Listed Buildings**

The Old Stone Bridge	Grade II*
No. 3 Dunraven Place (Dental Surgery)	Grade II
Nos. 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 Duraven Place	Grade II
Barclays Bank Dunraven Place	Grade II
Wyndham Hotel Dunraven Place	Grade II
War Memorial Dunraven Place	Grade II
Public Library Wyndham Street	Grade II
Monroe’s (Former York Tavern) 23 Wyndham Street	Grade II
Milepost outside 1a Caroline Street	Grade II
Nos. 31, 33, 35 Caroline Street	Grade II
Nos. 5, 7, 9, 11 Elder Street and parallel range to rear	Grade II
Victoria PH Adare Street	Grade II
National Westminster	Grade II
Toll House PH Derwen Road	Grade II
Property to right of Jagger’s toll House	Grade II
Old Police Station Derwen Road	Grade II
Former Coach House to Old Police Station	Grade II
Former Fire Station and Post Office van depot, Derwen Road	Grade II

Randall Memorial Drinking Fountain, Nolton Street	Grade II
Pair of telephone boxes outside former head Post Office	Grade II
Western Platform Building, Bridgend Railway Station	Grade II
Pedestrian Bridge, Bridgend Railway Station	Grade II
Hope Baptist Chapel, including attached vestry and schoolroom	Grade II

### **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

Old Stone Bridge

### **Buildings of Local Importance (draft)**

Conservative Club, Dunraven Place  
 Ruhamah Welsh Baptist, Wyndham Street  
 United Reformed Church, Wyndham Street  
 Nos. 38, 40, 42, 44 Dunraven Place  
 Williams & Evans, Nos 2-4 Queen Street  
 Dunraven Arms Hotel, Wyndham Street  
 Nos. 5, 7,9,11 Dunraven Place  
 Congregational Chapel, Wyndham Street  
 Cottage Hospital (Former Chest Clinic) – Y Bwthyn, Nolton Street  
 Lloyds Bank, Adare Street  
 Pen-y-bont Inn, Derwen Road  
 Nolton Corner, Nolton Street  
 Nos. 2,4,6 Caroline Street  
 Nos. 6&8 Wyndham Street  
 Nos. 20a-24 Wyndham Street  
 No. 36 Caroline Street  
 No. 19 Wyndham Street (  
 HSBC Bank, Dunraven Place  
 Former Royal Mail Sorting Office  
 Tabernacle Church Hall, Elder Street  
 Nolton Corner  
 3, Cross Street  
 Nos 12 &14 Elder Lane  
 Princess of Wales Public House