

# Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan

This document is available in Welsh



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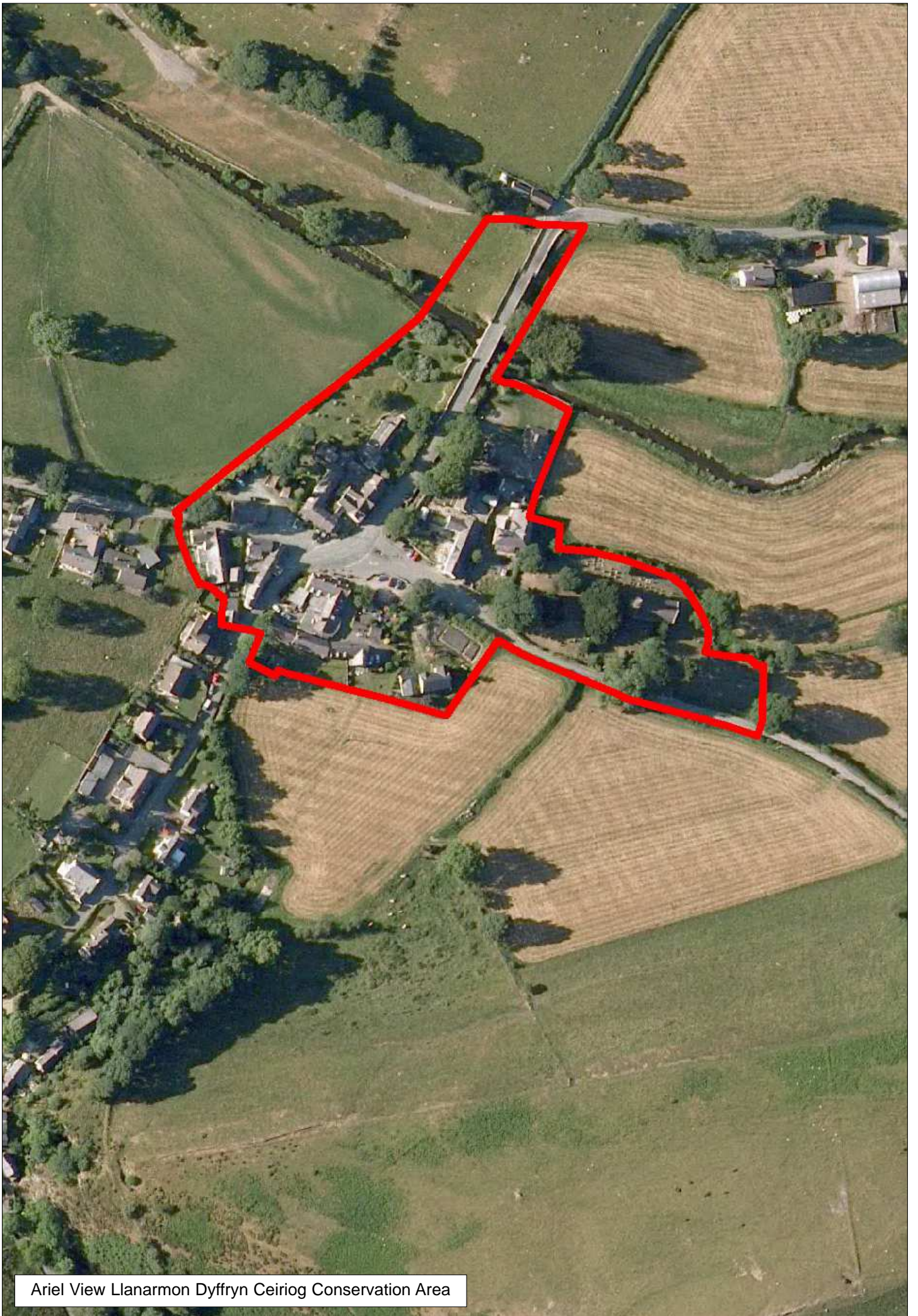
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Ariel View Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog Conservation Area



# Part 1

## Character Assessment





## 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 Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan is:

- To provide a clear definition of an area's special architectural or historic interest
- To identify ways in which its unique characteristics can be preserved and enhanced through the Enhancement Plan
- To strengthen the justification for designation
- To create a clear context for future development in accordance with conservation area policies in the development plan
- To provide a vehicle for engagement and awareness raising

### Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog 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 Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog 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 Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog Conservation Area was first designated on 29 August 1975 and its boundary amended in February 2000. This document is largely 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 Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog is approximately 15km (9 miles) south west of Chirk on the B4500 road. It is 11km (7miles) south west of Llangollen and 14km (9 miles) to the west of Oswestry. The village lies almost at the head of the Ceiriog valley, approximately 870 feet above sea level in the folds of the Berwyn Mountains. The Conservation Area encompasses the historic village centre.

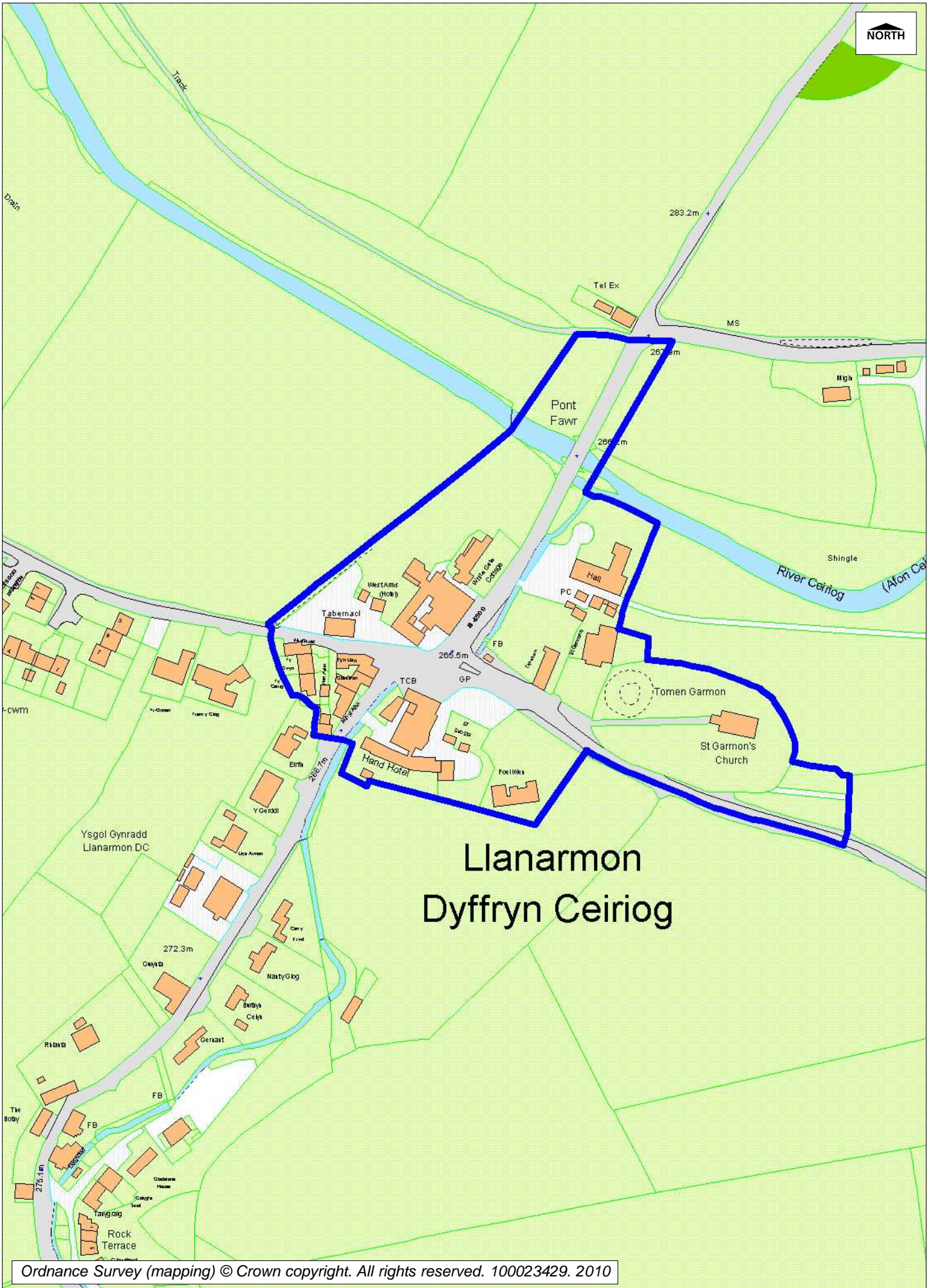
### Geology

1.6 Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog is set within the upland pasture of the Ceiriog Valley, cut through by the River Ceiriog. The underlying geology is that of the Berwyn Dome; a mixture of Ordovician sedimentary silt-stones and mud-stones, which form the principal building material of the area.

### Consultation

1.7 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 December 2009 and January 2010. Members of the public were invited to discuss the proposals with the Conservation Officer at the Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog Village Hall.

introduction



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## 2 History and Development

2.1 The history of Llanarmon suggests that from ancient times the village and its surrounding landscape was a suitable location for food, shelter and defence. A stone axe from the Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age period (8000 - 4300 BC) was found approximately three miles north west of the village. A later Bronze Age axe head (2300 - 600BC) was also found, which may have been used for hunting purposes. An Iron Age settlement (600BC - AD 43) slightly closer to the village has an earth fortification called Cerrig Gwynion (white stones) on a white quartz feldspar outcrop with some evidence of roundhouses remaining. Also discovered nearby were several Roman coins dating from AD43 - 410.

2.2 Llanarmon is a Welsh word which translates into English as 'The Parish of Germanus'.

Dyffryn Ceiriog means 'in the valley of the Ceiriog'.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the current village of Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog



began as a druid settlement which in the 5th century came under the leadership of Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, (C378 - 448 AD), a French Christian monk and soldier who came to Britain in 429 AD to establish Christianity. He might have been responsible for other Christian cells in North Wales, such as Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr, near Conwy and Llanarmon yn Ial, near Ruthin. All are situated on valley slopes with a church, cemetery and living quarters, and in Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog there is also a preaching mound, Tomen Garmon, which is located in the current churchyard.

2.3 The 12th and 13th Centuries brought about much change and unrest in North Wales as a result of the Norman Conquest and Edward I. Neither was able to penetrate the valley. The Normans swept into the coastal areas of North Wales by the late 11th Century after their triumphant invasion of Britain in 1066. In the middle of the 12th century, they defeated the Welsh at Chirk, constructing a motte on the edge of the Dee valley to the south of St Mary's Church. This was sited to control access up the valley.

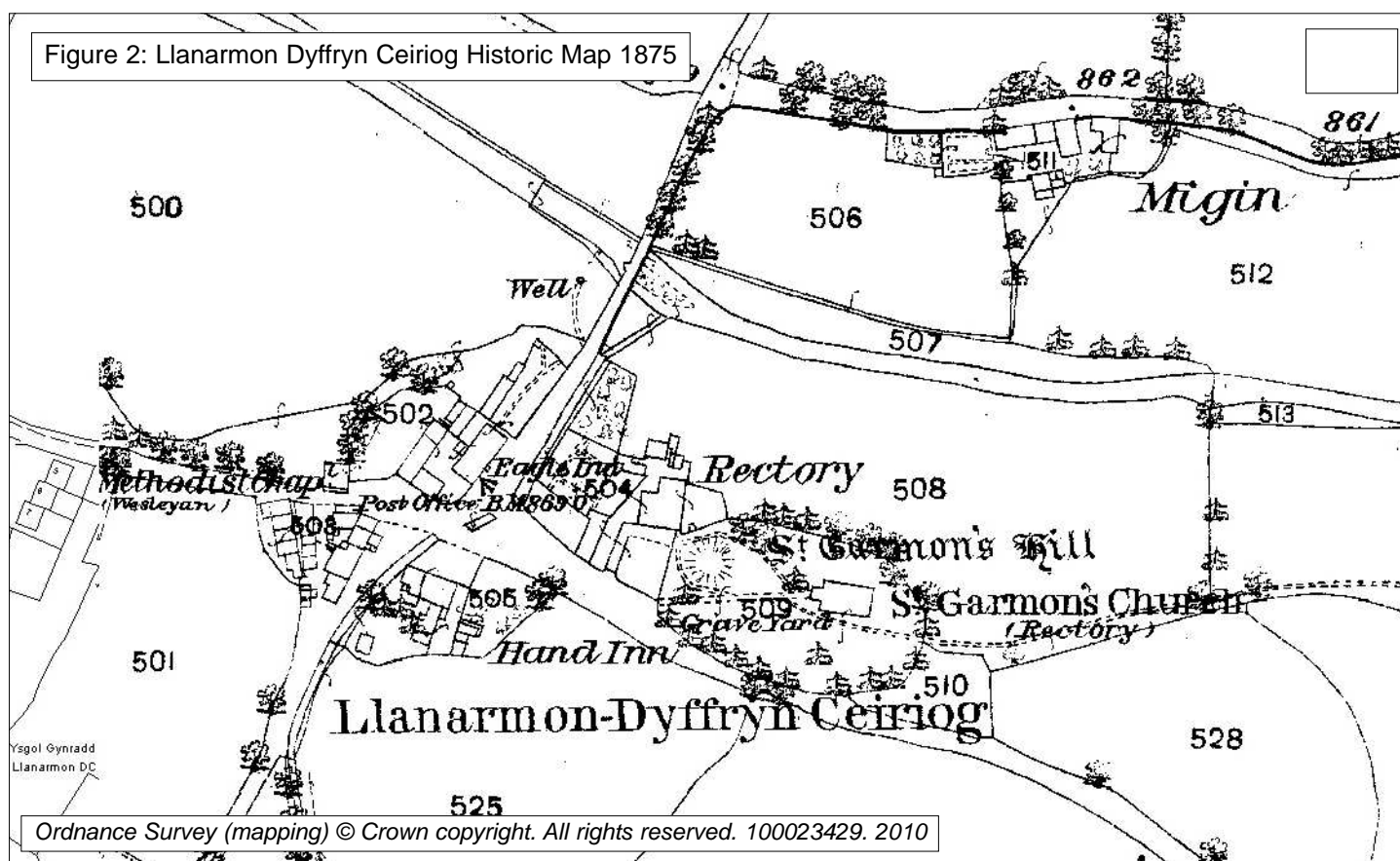
2.4 Henry II (1154-1189), King of England and half of present day France attempted to invade and conquer the Welsh for final subjugation in the valley in 1165. His army was assembled at Shrewsbury, and then marched to a base at Oswestry Castle before advancing to the Ceiriog Valley. Henry's mercenaries were attacked at various points en route through the valley, notably by Owain Gwynedd. The fighting fury of the Welsh and the lack of basic supplies plus terrible weather conditions, particularly around the boggy ground of Nantyr, meant that the expedition was hampered. In a rage Henry ordered his army to Chester, where his Welsh hostages were blinded and castrated.

2.5 Even the warlord Edward I was unsuccessful in his quest to conquer the Welsh. His army managed only to conquer Chirk, which was bequeathed in 1272 to Roger Mortimer of Wigmore.

Mortimer subsequently built the new Chirk Castle between 1295 and 1310, a mile to the west of the Norman motte.

Chirk Castle does not appear to have been placed in





a strategic military site, however its original gateway faced west to the Ceiriog valley, so any Welshman would be immediately aware of Chirk's allegiance to the English crown.

2.6 Whilst wars were raging however, religion was important. The Cistercian order built 76 monasteries around Britain, the last being at Valle Crucis near Llangollen in 1202. The religious cell at Llanarmon, originally dedicated to and related to Valle Crucis, became the chapelry to the mother church of St Mary's in Church Street in Chirk, which serviced the Norman fort at Chirk. The first written record of the village is found in the Norwich taxation of 1254 for 'Capella de Llangarnayan', a taxation on ecclesiastical property in the 11th century.

2.7 It was not until the 18th century that further documentary evidence of the village surfaced. An Estate Map of c1760 depicts a small village built around a crossroads. The oldest building in the village today is reputed to be the West Arms Hotel, built in the 1600s and formerly known as the Eagle Inn. An Ordnance Survey benchmark on the front of the building is at a height of 870 feet above sea level. The Hand Hotel is also very old, used as both a farm and inn until the early 20th century. The village served as a regular halting place for drovers in the days when cattle were taken to London by foot; it developed organically during the 18th and 19th century, with agriculture the primary source of employment. In the mid 19th century the medieval church at Llanarmon was destroyed by the Victorians, who built a new one in its place. When the church was demolished a hoard of 15th century coins was found, which are now in the British Museum.

2.8 George Borrow, the 19th Century travel writer visited the valley and Llanarmon and wrote in his account of 'Wild Wales' (1854): -

"I reached Llanarmon, another small village, situated in a valley

through which the Ceiriog flows. It is halfway between Llangollen and Rhaeadr, being ten miles from each. I went to a small inn, sat down and called for ale. A waggoner was seated at a large table with a newspaper before him on which he was starting intently. "What news?" said I in English. "I wish I could tell you" he said in very broken English, "but I cannot read".

2.9 However, for the children of Llanarmon, literacy and numeracy had been addressed. The Church of England National school was created in 1833, for both boys and girls, which taught both in Welsh and English. In 1847 Llanarmon Church School was built. It was at this school that the Welsh poet Ceiriog was taught. A British school under the Quaker Body acting for the non-conformists opened its first school in 1870.

2.10 The biggest threat to the way of life in the valley was in 1922. Warrington Corporation required an improved water supply and storage for Merseyside, and their proposal was to flood the upper Ceiriog valley of about 13,600 acres. A number of valleys in both England and Wales were flooded for the purpose of supplying burgeoning conurbations with water, but in this valley it stoked up more than usual racial resentment between Wales and England, and threatened to dispossess hundreds of people, some of whom had ancestry in the area dating back centuries. It also threatened to submerge Dolwen, reputed to be the former home of C12th Welsh Prince, Owain Gwynedd. If the project had been successful it would have involved the construction of two lakes, one on either side of Llanarmon. The corporation announced its intention of acquiring virtually all the property in the village and adjoining parts of the valley, which included one church, five chapels, two post offices, five shops and a blacksmith's forge, plus eighty two other dwellings, of which forty five were farm houses and farm buildings. Fortunately however, after a visit by the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, who stated that the valley

was 'A little bit of Heaven on Earth, which must be preserved at all costs' ("Darn bach o nefoedd ar y ddaear"), alternative proposals were eventually put forward and the valley was saved.

2.11 Today the village has a low key but thriving tourism industry for walkers and shooting parties. All of the historic shops and services have gone, with the exception of the school and community centre, due presumably to better road links and increased mobility of the community. Some small scale development has occurred in the village in recent years, but due to its relative remoteness, the character of the area remains largely unchanged.





## 3 Summary of Special Character

3.1 Llanarmon is a particularly picturesque village with a sense of orderly serenity, and a strong community, located in a valley which is enriched by mountainous view points, hidden paths, linear settlements and isolated farmsteads, and narrow roads.

### Topography

3.2 Llanarmon has developed in a linear pattern to an area known as Nant y Glôg along the mountain road to

Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant which follows a tributary to Afon Ceiriog - on a mountain slope rising up from the village to the south and

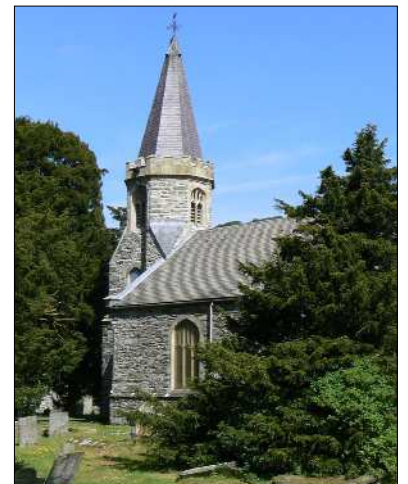


providing important views within and from the village. The topography of the village relates to the valley plateau in the Berwyns. The Ceiriog is a significant landscape feature, demarcating the settlement boundary to the north, and enriching the setting of the village. The Conservation Area is the compact village centre.

### Vernacular Detail

3.3 Buildings are mostly constructed of the local stone in courses and either rendered or whitewashed. Buildings tend to be linear in plan with low eaves, although with some notable exceptions, such as the West Arms Hotel. The roof-scape is very important to the overall appearance of the area with gable ends being a prominent feature, seen staggering up the hill when

viewed from the north upon entering the village. Chimney-stacks were probably originally built of stone but most have been rebuilt with clay bricks. Buildings are of an intimate scale, even the spire to the church being of a shortened design, allowing trees rather than buildings to dominate the skyline. Façades are simply detailed, with window and doors providing the essential architectural detail. Most ground and first floor windows tend to align with each other although older properties have a more random arrangement. The amount of solid wall is proportionately greater than void i.e. windows and doors, giving buildings a robust appearance.



### Boundary Walls

3.4 Stone walls, both dry-stone and mortar-bedded, are important boundary features within the area creating a strong street frontage and sense of enclosure.



## summary of special character

### Organic Building Layout

3.5 Within the village centre, the majority of buildings directly front onto the road, the greater number tending to date from the 17th Century onwards. The settlement pattern within the Conservation Area is however organic and comprises a mix of house types, such as



larger, detached buildings with fairly extensive rear curtilages, and half storey outbuildings, of local stone with pitched slate roofs. Cottages are mostly terraced in narrow plot widths with small gardens. Important boundaries comprise a mixture of historic dry stone walling and hedgerows.

### Village Square

3.6 There is no formal public space within the conservation area. The central point of the village is the informal open square at the crossroads from which the narrow roads lead to the north, south, east and west.

### Trees and Green Space

3.7 Green spaces within the conservation area relate principally to enclosed building



plots, the surrounding hills and the riverbanks. Trees, particularly along the road leading to the river, are important landscaping features easing the transition between the built and natural environment as well as defining the village centre. A number of public footpaths lead off from the village into the surrounding countryside.

### Landmark buildings

3.8 Situated approximately north, south, east and west of the village square, landmark buildings comprise the Church of St Garmon, the Hand Hotel, the Tabernacle chapel and the West Arms Hotel.





## 4 Character in Detail

4.1 Approaching the village from Glyn Ceiriog, the Church of St Garmon appears as a distant landmark to the east of the village centre, nestled at the foot of the mountainside. The village is entered along a wide road over an early 20th century bridge, the flanking walls and stone abutment piers framing the village ahead and in particular the prominent Hand Hotel. Beyond this the mountains rise up behind, with green pasture and many mature trees providing a backdrop to the village and affording it its picturesque setting.

4.2 The river crossing is the only point of entry to the village from the north of the Ceiriog Valley. The original double arched stone bridge

known as Pont Fawr, the big bridge, was replaced by the present bridge in 1909, at which time the road was widened. This bridge, is constructed of two spans of steel joists supported on sandstone abutments and a single pier at midstream. The bridge deck is of concrete and the parpet is of steel; the sandstone piers have concrete pyramidal cappings. Trees on the riverbank adjacent the bridge frame the view of the village and together with the stone walls which line the route into the village, create a strong sense of arrival.



4.3 After crossing the bridge, the Neuadd Ganmlwydd ('the Ceiriog Centenary Hall') is situated on the left and is reached over a small stream, the Nant Gwrachen, Gwrachen meaning 'crooked or meandering', which runs down through the village to

the river. The Nant Gwrachen is a natural feature within the built environment that contributes to the feeling of tranquillity in both its movement and sound. The entrance to the hall

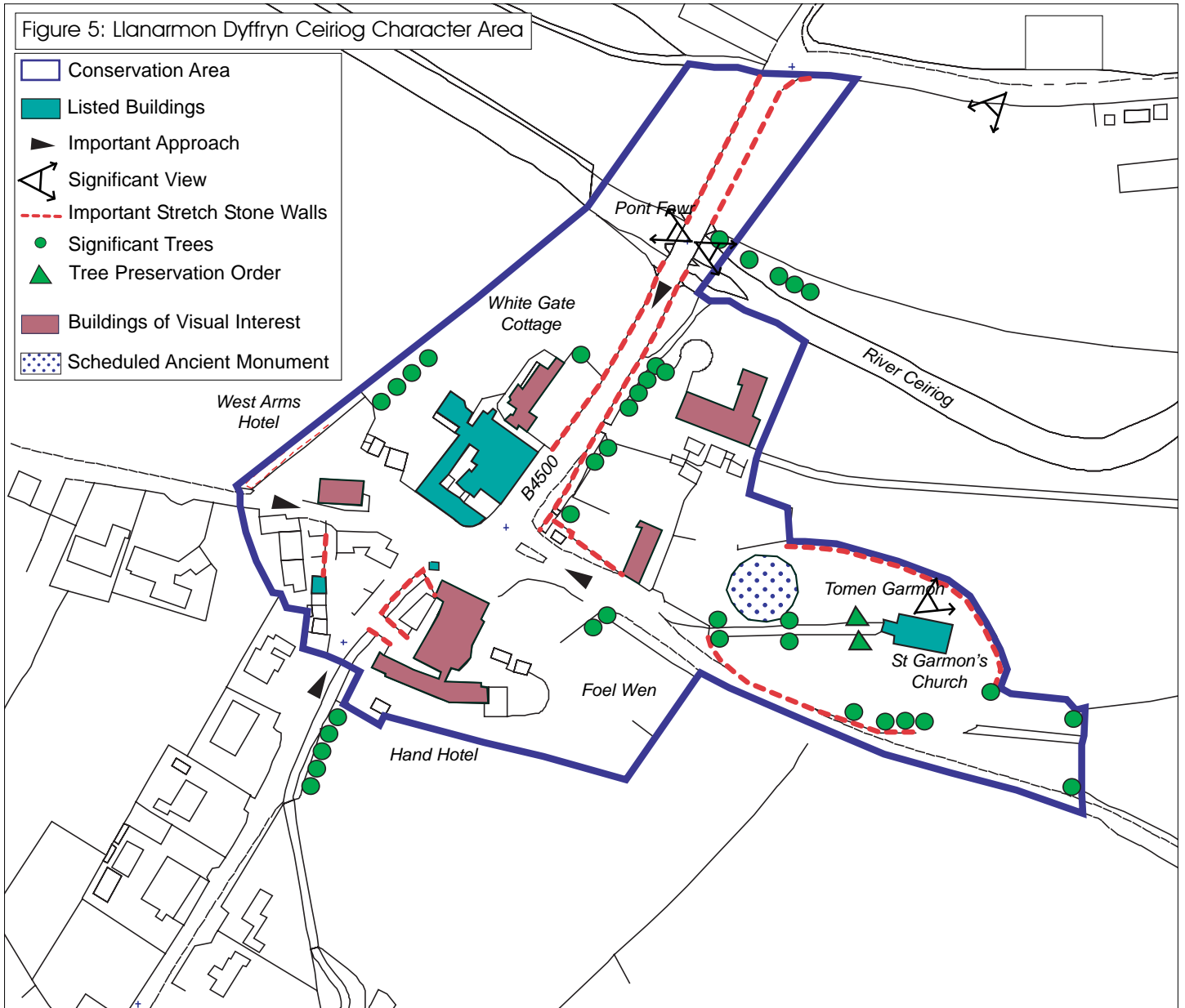


has one stone pier with pyramidal capping similar to those on the bridge. The hall itself is a fairly substantial building originally linear in plan it has been extended at a right angle from its eastern gable and on the north side; the roof covering is natural slate. The original structure is built of random, uncoursed stonework with brown brick window jambs and quoins and segmental arched window heads of local slates and emphasised keystones. This part of the building has traditional vertically sliding sash windows. Eight foundation plaques bear the names of several Welsh societies including those in Manchester, London and Liverpool, and colleges and schools in Wales.

The extension is modern and constructed of brown brick with a contrasting render finish and side hung casement windows creating a distinction between the new and the original construction. A row of sycamore trees and a large beech, to the frontage of the site give a strong sense of identity to the village approach and contribute to the setting of the hall.



# character in detail



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## character in detail

4.4 Turning left towards the Church, Ysgubor Ddegwm (the converted former Tithebarn) can be seen on the left. It is a long fairly substantial two-storey property set with its front elevation parallel to the stream and facing the West Arms Hotel. Originally a tithe (tenth) of the parish's annual produce collected for the upkeep of the established church (then The Church of England) was stored here. It is rendered and painted white, but the smoothness of the render is at odds with the roughness of the white painted or lime-washed stonework seen elsewhere in the village. It has a pitched slate roof with a blue brick chimney-stack. Several of the windows, the lintels and guttering have been painted black, which is typical of a number of cottages in the area. The windows are modern multi-paned casements in a mixture of timber and metal frames. The plan is characteristically linear in form. It is located within a large garden, bounded by a dry stone wall. An elm tree is a significant feature overhanging the stream and contributing to the setting of the West Arms Hotel from this direction.

4.5 The two-storey house, located next to the Ysgubor Ddegwm

('tithebarn'), was the Rectory for St Garmon's until the 1960's. A former parsonage built in 1815 was demolished and replaced by the current one in 1869, built of random local stone with a slate



roof. The original window openings have been greatly enlarged which has destroyed the traditional proportions of the façade. A bay window has been added to the ground floor with a balcony above. These additions together with the clearly modern and stained window styles appear incongruous with the original structure and with other properties within the Conservation Area. A two-storey stone barn exists to the rear. The front boundary comprises an uncapped random stone wall that extends to the entrance to the churchyard with a grass verge that continues to run alongside the road out beyond the village. This wall together with the gable wall and boundary of the adjacent property provide a strong and continuous street frontage.

4.6 On the eastern edge of the village is the Church of St Garmon. A pair of simple iron gates marks the entrance to the Churchyard, heavily guarded by a pair of substantial sycamore trees. The pathway is flanked by veteran yew trees, which predate the existing church and comprise some of the oldest and significant trees in the valley;



they are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. The trees overshadow the pathway and obscure all but the Church doorway from view heightening the sense of arrival.



Immediately adjacent the pathway to the west is a substantial preaching mound. The stone set on top may be part of a sundial or preaching cross. The church was built mid 1846 on the foundations of a 15th century church by the architect Thomas Jones of Chester as a simple preaching box. The building underwent a programme of restoration in 1986-7. It is situated within an ancient and roughly circular churchyard and is dedicated to St Garmon who reputedly founded a Church here during the 4th-5th Centuries.

4.7 The church is a Grade II Listed building, constructed of partly dressed random stone with quoins, high plinth and moulded coping and raised coping to the gables with kneelers. Windows are of the



perpendicular style with segmental pointed heads. The three-stage west tower supports a short slate covered spire with weathervane atop. Internally, the Church comprises a single chamber nave and chancel with a five bay roof constructed of collar trusses supported by straight braces.

4.8 Within the churchyard all the graves have the traditional orientation, approximately West to East. Many gravestones are inscribed in Welsh, and some plots are significantly sized, some with grand obelisks with cast iron rails and tombs. From the graveyard views open up in direct contrast to the darkened pathway out beyond the Church and towards the river as it makes its way back down the valley. Equally significant views are afforded into the Conservation Area from the church in its fine and slightly elevated rural setting. A curvilinear stone wall encloses the Churchyard.

4.9 Opposite the entrance to the churchyard and the Ysgubor Ddegwm ('Tithebarn') is



Foel Wen, a recently completed house of modern design and construction, of two storeys with two projecting bays to its frontage. It is perhaps a little oversized in comparison to the





more traditional properties in the Conservation Area. However, it is well proportioned and the black and white colour scheme compliments other buildings in the village. The white painted rendered gate piers are somewhat out of place although reflecting the finishes of the house; stone gate piers and a stone boundary wall would have helped to strengthen the frontage and assist in integrating the modern dwelling within its more traditional setting.

4.10 The Hand Hotel is an important building in the village its overall composition and its location create an excellent advertisement and terminate the view from the approach into the village. It was built as a farmhouse and public house of stone construction with horizontally sliding sash windows and cat-slide dormers. During the early 20th century these features were replaced with larger Edwardian windows and the pitched dormers still visible today. A second front door was also created, presumably to provide a separate pub and hotel entrance. At some point between this period and the late 1960's the door to the pub was removed and a later porch was added after 1970. A number of extensions have been added to the rear over time and the outbuildings converted. The outbuildings range in height, size and detailing creating an eclectic mix of visual interest. A recently erected 'hand' carved from wood stands to the front of the building and further adds to the character and appearance of the village centre.

4.11 Adjacent the western gable of The Hand is a Grade II Listed



K6 telephone call box, the style of which dates back to 1936. The call box is of feature of interest, which contributes to the character of the Conservation Area. It is in need of repainting.

4.12 The approach into the Conservation Area from the south west is lined on the right by mature trees on the banks of the stream. The entrance of the Conservation Area is marked by the contrasting stone and rendered gables of the cottages on Weaver Street. The cottages west of the Hand Hotel are densely concentrated in narrow plot widths and accessed by a single pathway in direct contrast to the more spacious and organic arrangement of buildings surrounding the village centre. Many of the properties have been modernised and extended. There are few examples of original windows or doors and several properties have been rendered. Despite this the intimate street pattern and the remaining small front gardens enclosed by low stone boundaries contribute to the special charm of this part of the Conservation Area.

4.13 The Grade II Listed Old Mill Welsh Shop was formerly built as a flannel mill, although according to local tradition it was actually a flax mill, and presumably gives Stryd y Gwennydd ('Weaver Street') its name. It was converted to a shop in the late 20th Century. It is a substantial three storey single bay mill constructed of rubble stone with large quoins, some of which are projecting. It is a prominent building rising above the adjacent cottages creating an interesting and varied streetscape. The building no longer retains any of its original glazing. It is listed as a rare example of a very small village mill, one of few now surviving within the Ceiriog Valley.



4.14 Y Tabernacl is a Welsh Wesleyan chapel extended in 1911, a single storey building with basement finished in a roughcast render with false cement quoins and five Ruabon brick expressed voussoirs to the arched entrance. Original timber framed windows have been retained to the roadside and gable elevation as well as a substantial pair of timber boarded doors under a gabled porch. The railings to the property are unusual in this area and were possibly introduced to give the building some status.





4.15 The West Arms Hotel is a prominent building in the conservation area and has many external and internal features of interest. It is listed Grade II as a fine hotel with some strong 18th Century vernacular character and detail. It is mainly of 18th Century date but may originate from the 16-17th centuries. It is a combination of two storey and single storey with attic elements; it has projecting bays to the centre and left of the front elevation. It is constructed of white-washed rubble under a steeply pitched slate roof with large stone chimney stacks. Windows tend to be two or three light casements with small panes under segmental brick heads. It is likely to have originated as a farmhouse during the 17th

century, later becoming a hotel. There are cobbles immediately in front of the hotel and a gabled timber open porch. A row of four mature trees within the gardens provides a backdrop that contributes to its setting. Internally there is a fine inglenook fireplace and some deeply chamfered beams.

4.16 The barns and outbuildings to the West Arms are built of stone and slate with black painted timber windows. Over the years some flat roofed extensions have been constructed to the rear of the hotel, to enlarge the hotel facilities and to link barns to the main hotel. There could be scope to redevelop these in the future to provide a less ad-hoc and more unified arrangement.



4.17 Whitegate Cottage to the North of the West Arms has its origins as a single storey long house. It was used for a time until about 2002 as ancillary accommodation to the West Arms Hotel but is now back in private residential use. It is constructed of white painted stone with a slate roof and has a simple frontage with multi-paned modern windows and large irregular stone lintels. It has a rear stone wall with cock and hen copings. The front concrete capped stone wall follows the line of the road, emphasising the linear route from the bridge to the centre of the village.

4.18 The public realm has largely escaped the introduction of too much street clutter and modern highway improvements, and as a result offers a rural streetscape. Some pavements exist, but generally their presence is minimal. The private curtilage to the front of the West Arms is paved with cobbles from the river; this serves as a sample of vernacular paving which could be reproduced in appropriate places in any enhancement scheme. The distinctive wooden guidepost surmounted by a lantern in the centre adds to the village charm.



## 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 Traditional features and Architectural Detail

5.2 Unfortunately a number of small alterations over time have gradually altered the special character and appearance of the area. There are few surviving examples of original or traditionally detailed window or door styles. In some areas traditional stone boundary walls have been removed and replaced either in a modern alternative or have not been replaced at all. The rendering of the original building fabric in a modern hard render, the replacement of roofs incorporating ridge vents or interlocking ridge tiles and the re-pointing of walls in hard cement mortar are all examples of minor works which cumulatively erode and adulterate the special character and appearance of the area.

### Inappropriate Alterations

5.3 Extensions must respect the size, scale and quality of the existing building. Certain features such as porches, bay windows and flat roof extensions can in some instances appear incongruous with the style and period of the existing building.

### Parking Areas

5.4 Parking does not currently appear to cause much visual intrusion within the Conservation Area. However, where parking is provided to the rear of the West Arms Hotel and an informal parking area is evident adjacent the bus stop, some informal landscaping or re-surfacing works could enhance their appearance. However, it would be essential not to introduce incongruous urban features.

### Appearance of the Traffic Island

5.5 The triangular traffic island in the centre of the village has concrete kerbs and macadam surface which appear a little harsh within the surrounding rural environment. The guidepost at its centre is a particular feature of interest and the island arrangement does nothing to enhance it.



summary of negative features





## Part 2 Management Plan

# 6.1

## GENERAL PROPOSALS FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Important views	Views into, out of and within the Conservation Area, in particular those of the Church are essential to the special quality of place. Their protection and enhancement will be an important consideration in the determination of any proposed development.
Trees	Trees are a strong character feature within this Conservation Area, therefore the removal of significant trees within the area will be resisted. Where removal is unavoidable then an appropriate replanting scheme must be undertaken. See section 8.1 of this document.
Archaeology	Varying levels of archaeological mitigation may be required in response to development proposals within the historic core. 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.
Boundary Details	Stone boundary walls are specific character features of the Conservation Area, their total demolition will be resisted. The use of traditional methods of construction and materials including the use of lime mortar (no cement) is encouraged in all schemes of repair and reinstatement of the traditional stone boundary walls.
Alterations and New Development	Proposals must be designed in accordance with Design Guidance as contained within Section 7.0 of this document.
Reinstatement of Lost Features	Traditional architectural details and local materials are important to the architectural interest and value of the area and should be retained where possible. The repair or reinstatement of traditional features is strongly encouraged.
Highway Improvements	Highway work should be designed in accordance with guidelines as set out in Section 7.0 of this document. Any proposed Highway works must have special regard to the desirability of retaining the special rural character of the area by limiting the use of unnecessary road signage, road markings and the preservation of grass verges, for example. Any proposals for the replacement or renewal of the traffic island must seek to enhance the village centre in sympathy with its historic and rural setting.



GENERAL PROPOSALS FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

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
Car Park and surface Improvements - Parking areas, in particular to the side and rear of the West Arms Hotel could benefit from some simple non-fussy landscaping and re-surfacing in a soft and natural material sympathetic to the rural surroundings.	Private Land owner/Transportation and Asset Management Department, WCBC
West Arms Hotel signage - The collection of piecemeal signage to the hotel façade detracts from the overall appearance of the building. Rationalisation of these signs in quality materials and style would make a significant visual improvement.	Private Land owner
Traffic Island - The appearance of the traffic island could be greatly enhanced by the use of more appropriate surface materials, planting and re-painting of the guidepost.	Transportation and Asset Management Department, WCBC



## 7 Design Guidance

7.1 The character of the individual buildings and street elevations, which together form the Conservation Area, derives from a number of factors to which the following design guidance relates. Within these parameters there is scope for high quality architectural innovation, provided that this is sympathetic to the existing character in terms of the following:

### Scale

7.2 Restoration and re-development must respect traditional plot widths and avoid massive repetitive and unrelieved facades which typify so many modern designs.

### Proportion

7.3 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.



### Building Line

7.4 Frontage development must conform to the historic street pattern. The historic layout of the village is linear with the buildings generally facing onto the road with their rooflines parallel to it.

### Roofs

7.5 The roof line is a dominant feature of a building and retention of the original height, shape, pitch, verge and eaves detail and ornamentation is essential. Flat roofs are alien to local tradition and 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 the new materials should match the colour, size and texture of those being replaced if those were traditional and historically appropriate. If ventilation is required, this should be achieved by inconspicuous means (e.g. Under eaves ventilation) but visible roof vents would not be acceptable.



### External Walls

7.6 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. 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 and possibly other fine aggregates such as grit. Modern, hard cement renders are unacceptable as they prevent the evaporation of moisture, which can accumulate between the wall and the render causing damp internally and should be replaced with a lime alternative.

## Rainwater Goods

7.7 Rainwater goods should be repaired if original or reinstated in original materials. Plastic guttering is not appropriate to Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas as it is not historically correct and it does not enhance a building's character.

## Windows

7.8 Windows should be correctly proportioned, well related to each other and adjoining buildings and should respect the existing openings. Retention of original windows must always be the first consideration but any repair or replacement should always match the original. This includes not only structural elements of the window but also historic glass and original window furniture. Particularly important is the method of opening, the set back within the reveal and the sections of glazing bars. The thickness and moulding of glazing bars, the size and arrangement of panes are vital elements in determining appropriate replacement windows, which respect the age of a building. Replacement of timber or iron windows in a uPVC alternative, no matter what the pattern is undesirable. All windows should have a traditional painted finish rather than a modern stained alternative.

## Doors

7.9 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

7.10 The removal or alteration of boundary walls will not be viewed favourably. 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 as it increases the rate of deterioration of soft stone.

## Surfaces

7.11 The overuse of insensitive macadam finishes should be avoided and the opportunity taken to lay traditional, natural materials preferably local in origin, and whose colour, texture and pattern are in sympathy with the character of the area and sensitive to adjacent buildings.

## Highway Works

7.12 Redundant or unnecessary street furniture such as signs, bins or poles should be removed to reduce the effects of street clutter. Any historic features such as street signs must be retained and any new items such as bollards, street-lighting columns and sign-posts, etc must be carefully integrated within the streetscape and relate well to 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 on safety grounds. 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 within the Conservation Area.

## Micro Energy Generation

7.13 Whilst the use of micro energy generation systems is to be encouraged they are not acceptable where equipment is fixed to building frontages or main or visible elevations where they would have a negative visual impact upon the Conservation Area or where the fabric, character or setting of a Listed Building are detrimentally affected.





## 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.

### Listed Buildings

8.2 A Listed Building is a building that is considered to be of 'special architectural or historic interest' and as such requires special protection. Once listed, a building is protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Listing protects the building both externally and internally irrespective of the reason for listing as well as any object or structure fixed to the building (whether or not mentioned in the listing description). The listing also extends to any object or structure within the 'curtilage' of the building, which has existed since before 1st July 1948. This is to ensure that the special character of both the building and its setting are protected.

8.3 Where works are proposed to a Listed Building, it is always advisable to check with the Council's Planning Authority whether Listed Building Consent is required. In any works proposed, special regard must be given to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting and special features of interest.

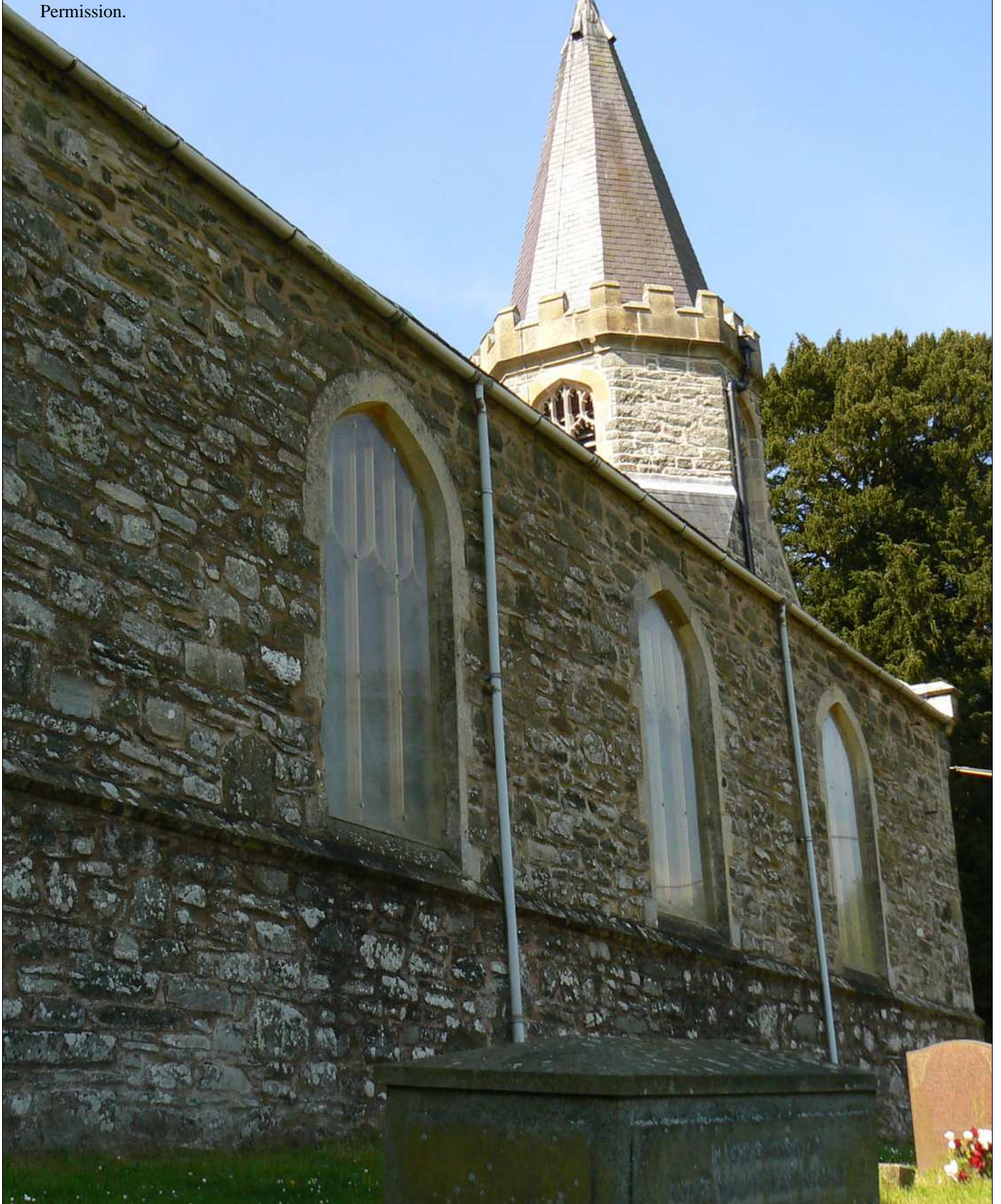
8.4 In considering any works to a Listed Building the principle objective must be to retain all original features and fabric of the building wherever possible. Listed Building Consent is required for the demolition of a listed building or for alteration, which would affect the building's character, integrity or special interest. This could include changing windows and doors, changing roofing materials, painting brickwork, moving or removing internal walls or plasterwork, fireplaces, floorboards or staircases. Like for like repairs may not need consent but it is always advisable to check prior to undertaking any works as the carrying out of works without the necessary consent is a criminal offence with significant penalties for those involved following a successful prosecution.

### Scheduled Ancient Monuments

8.5 Within the Conservation Area, the mound within the Churchyard, Tomen Garmon, is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Scheduled Ancient Monuments are nationally important sites and monuments, which have legal protection. In some cases Listed Buildings can also be Scheduled Ancient Monuments. If you propose to carry out any work, alteration or excavation, Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent must be obtained. Applications for consent should be made to the Welsh Assembly Government.

## Commercial Buildings

8.5 Properties in commercial use do not have Permitted Development Rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Any external works to unlisted commercial buildings other than repair and maintenance are likely to require Planning Permission.





## 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 principal public agency offering grant aid for historic buildings in Wales. 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. The percentage of the total eligible cost of repair payable through grant aid is dependent on the building type, for example:

Religious	50%
Trusts and Charities	40%
Domestic/Private	30%
Commercial/Industrial	30%
Public	30%

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 based on the following rates:

Religious	40%
Trusts and Charities	30%
Domestic/Private	25%
Commercial/Industrial	25%
Public	25%

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

## Listed Buildings

Listed Building	Grade
The West Arms Hotel	II
Telephone Call Box adjacent to W gable end of Hand Inn	II
Church of St Garmon	II
Old Mill Welsh Shop	II
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	
Tomen Garmon (Mound located within the Churchyard of the Church of St Garmon)	

# Appendix 2

## 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 2009)
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: A Guide for Developers and Architects when designing Residential Developments
	Technical Advice Note 12: Design	
	Welsh Office Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology	



# Appendix 3

## Glossary of Architectural Terms

Abutment	Solid part of a pier from which an arch springs, or the extremities of a bridge
Casement	A window where the opening lights are hung on hinges
Catslide	An extension of a sloping roof at the same pitch over a projection to a building
Chamfer	Surface formed by cutting off the squared edge, normally at a 45-degree angle
Chancel	Part of the east end of a church set apart for the clergy
Cock and Hen	Toothed capping to a wall
Coping	The top course of a wall parapet or chimney
Dormer	A window projecting from a roof
Eaves	The lower, overhanging section of a pitched roof
Gable	Area of wall, often triangular at the end of a pitched roof
Inglenook	Large recess for a hearth
Jamb	The vertical side of an opening
Lintel	Horizontal beam used as a finishing piece over a door or window
Long House	Combined house and byre, with internal access between
Nave	The main body of a church
Obelisk	A tapering pillar of square plan and ending pyramidally
Parapet	Feature used to conceal a roof
Perpendicular	Historical division of English Gothic architecture covering the period 1335-1530. The name is derived from the upright tracery panels used at the time
Piers	An isolated mass of construction
Plinth	Projecting courses at the foot of a wall or column
Quoin	Dressed masonry bonded to the corners of buildings
Render	The plastering of a surface with plaster, stucco or another finish
Roughcast	Plaster mixed with a coarse aggregate
Sash Windows	A window which moves on vertical grooves, either with one frame fixed (single hung) or both moving (double hung)
Stringcourse	Horizontal stone course or moulding projecting from the surface of the wall
Tracery	Delicately carved stonework usually seen in the Gothic style of window
Transom	A horizontal bar dividing a window
Vernacular	A term to describe local regional building forms and types using local materials without grand architectural pretensions

### References

- The Buildings of Wales:Clwyd, Edward Hubbard, 1986
- Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, English Heritage, 2005
- Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, English Heritage, 2005
- 100 Years in the Valley, Y Glyn a fu, Dewi Parry Jones and Robert Owen Jones, 1998

### Useful Contacts

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