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Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Kidwelly Conservation Area

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## Executive Summary

The Kidwelly Conservation Area was designated in 1972. It is now appropriate and necessary to take stock of the significance of this area, consider whether the existing boundaries are appropriate and to produce a robust appraisal document which will guide the future management, preservation, and enhancement of the area. That is the aim of this document.

The area has a multi-layered history, derived from the Norman settlement up to its 19<sup>th</sup> Century development. This historic evolution has left a legacy of architectural interest and character which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The following are considered to be the key significant characteristics of the area:

1. Kidwelly Castle and St Mary's Church as two highly significant structures
2. The old and new town and the surviving historic street pattern of development
3. Location of several historically significant buildings and structures including the Town Hall, Castle Mill House, and Capel Sul
4. Its topography and setting along the river which offer far reaching views to, from and within the CA

It is concluded that the areas' conservation area status should remain, but that three alterations should be made to the boundary to reflect its current condition and include previously overlooked yet significant areas.

The next step is to find out what people think of this analysis and the proposals to alter the conservation area boundary.



## 1.0 Introduction

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### 1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Report

This report has been prepared by Donald Insall Associates (Insall) in response to a brief issued by Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) for the preparation of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for the Kidwelly Conservation Area. This report has been funded through a grant from the Community Renewal Fund. The aim of the project is to study and assess the existing Conservation Area to understand and articulate what makes it special, consider whether the existing boundaries are appropriate and to produce a robust appraisal document which will guide the future management, maintenance, and development of the area. This document is intended for use by building owners who wish to undertake work on their properties, by architects and developers when considering change to existing buildings and by Local Authority staff to aid them in making decisions.

The report is set out in 4 parts:

**Understanding the area:** This consists of a summary of the area, its historic development and significance.

**Site appraisal:** This sets out key elements of the Conservation Area (CA) and how they contribute to its character, appearance, and significance.

**Issues, threats, and management:** The report continues with observations around specific issues and threats and sets out a series of principles to help guide future development whilst ensuring that the special interest of the area is preserved and where possible enhanced.

**Opportunities:** This section elaborates on opportunities that have been identified to inform the concluding section.

### 1.2 Defining Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'

CAs are distinct parts of the historic environment designated by Local Planning Authorities for their special architectural or historic interest. Architectural interest could include a good example of a particular type of settlement, town planning, or a group of buildings of distinctive regional or local style or of high architectural quality. Historic interest is associated the historic evolution of a place, a particular period or with social, economic, or cultural movements such as early industrial housing and areas where archaeological, architectural, or topographical evidence of the origins and main periods of development have survived particularly well. Character is expressed through such things as building styles, materials, street layouts, land use and periods of development.

Within the planning system, applications for change within a CA are assessed to understand the effect that the development might have on significance. Significance is one of the guiding principles running through Planning Policy Wales 2021 (PPW). This may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic significance and it may derive not only from a physical presence but also from its setting.

Additional regulatory controls are placed upon certain works within CAs, including demolition, works to trees and advertisements. All planning decisions are required to be assessed against the significance of the area to ensure it is maintained and where possible enhanced.

This document sets out the significance and character of the area to aid those applying for change or making decisions can understand where proposals may impact upon this and determine whether this is a positive or negative change.

### 1.3 Summary of Related Legislation, Policy, and Guidance

The key provisions for conservation area designation and management are set out in legislation, government planning policy and guidance. This includes:

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11 February 2021

Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment, 2017

Managing Conservation Areas in Wales, Cadw, 2017

South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan, September 2021

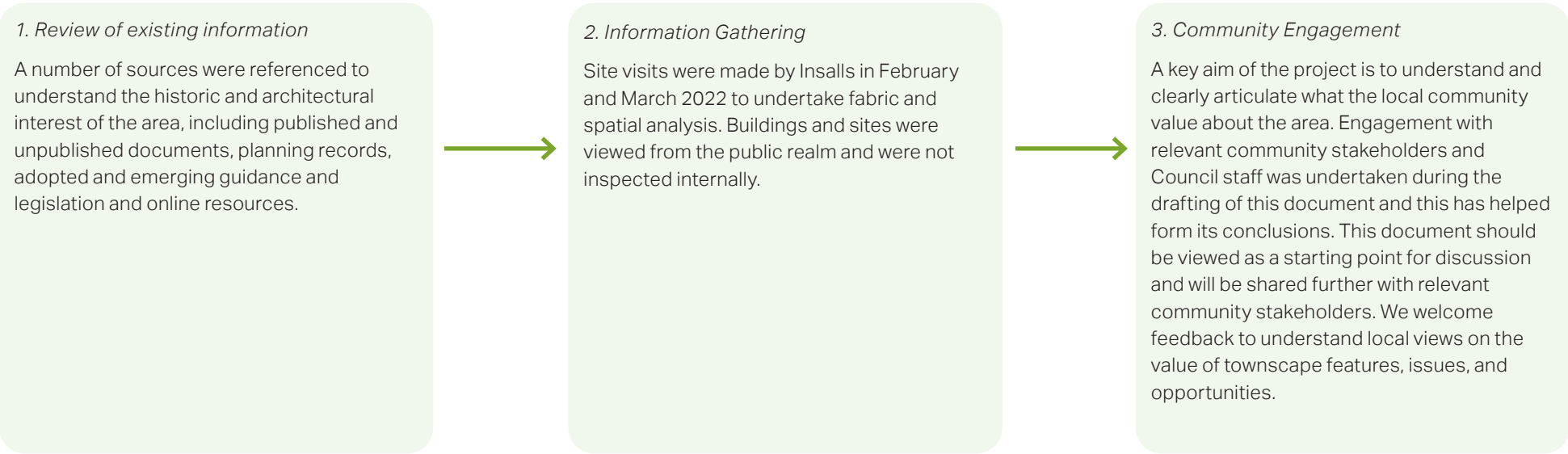
Carmarthenshire Economic Recovery and Delivery Plan, April 2021

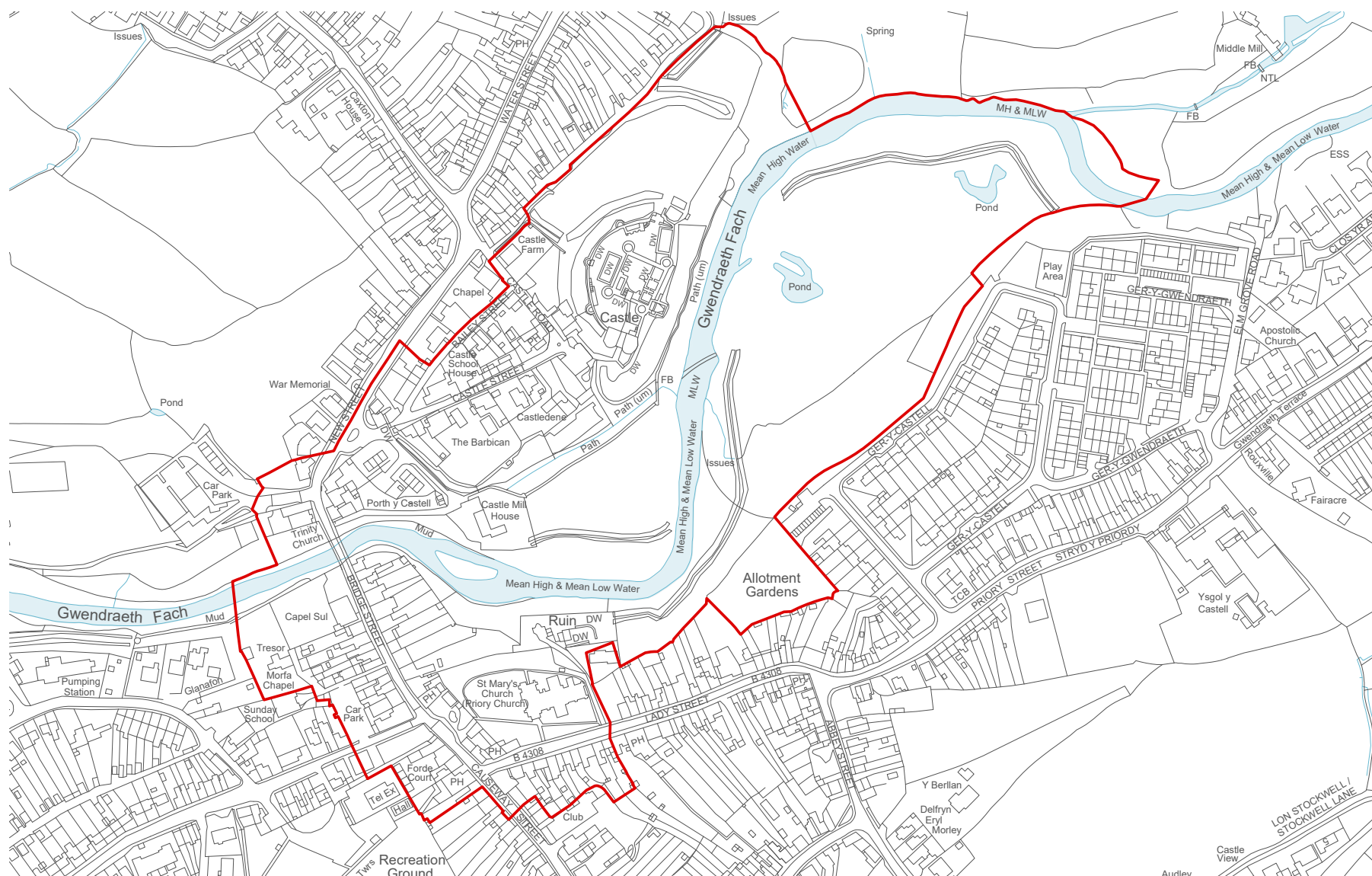
A summary and links to these documents can be found in an appendix to this document.



1.4 Method Statement

The following has been undertaken through the preparation of this report:







## 2.0 Understanding the Site

### 2.1 Summary of Significance and Character

The key characteristics of the area and items of significance are summarised below (a more expansive list can be found in section 7).

- Largely surviving historic street pattern from the Medieval walled town and the following expansion to the south of the river
- Two distinct patterns of movement and development following the old and new towns
- High archaeological potential
- Contains the scheduled monument of Kidwelly Castle
- St Mary's Church, the largest parish church in Southwest Wales
- Links to the industrial revolution seen throughout Southwest Wales in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century
- A series of significant views to, from and through the area due to its topography and setting
- Local and national buildings of significance
- Surviving historic boundaries including metalwork and rubble stone
- A series of notable religious buildings
- Several associations with notable events and people

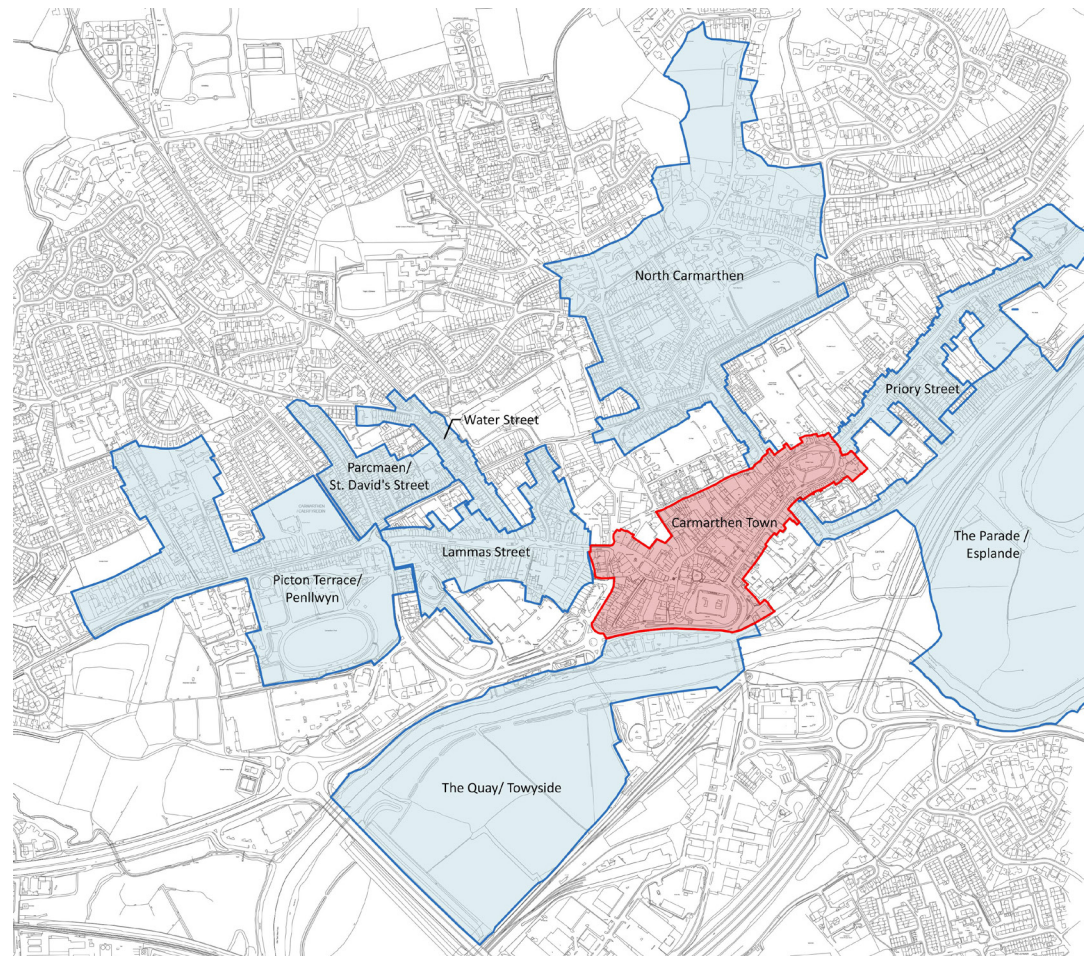


## 2.2 Location

Kidwelly is a town which lies approximately 10 miles west of Llanelli in Southwest Wales on the Gwendraeth Fach river just over one kilometre from where it flows into Carmarthen Bay. The CA makes up the historic core of the town and includes Kidwelly Castle and St Mary's Church which were the centres of the old and new towns when the town was founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. As such, the form of the CA is principally established by its historic layout which remains largely intact, forming a main thoroughfare from south to north crossing the river, with buildings generally fronting onto the streets. Over 50% of the CA is made up of the marsh land which lies on the northern and southern banks of the river.

## 2.3 Topography and setting

The town is situated on the river Gwendraeth Fach with the castle at the head of the estuary on the highest point within the town, with the steep rise from the river forming a natural protection to the south. St Mary's church and the surrounding streets are on lower-lying ground to the south of the river. Most of the CA is relatively flat but with far reaching views between both banks of the river as well as along its length, evident where there are breaks in the buildings, from the bridge and the castle. The mixture of long straight roads alongside the bends which circumnavigate the castle create a mixture of long views as well as shorter deflected views, punctuated by breaks in the building line.





## 3.0 Historic Development

### 12<sup>th</sup> Century

When Bishop Roger, on behalf of Henry I, re-established Norman control in the Kidwelly area in 1106, he created a lordship from the three native Welsh administrative units; Cydweli, Iscennen and Carnwylion. Kidwelly Castle and Priory were established shortly after. The castle was erected at the mouth of the Gwaendraeth Fach, forming one of a series of Norman strongholds to secure South Wales and command the rivers across which the road to the west passed. The priory became a cell of the abbey of Sherborne likely replacing an earlier religious structure dedicated to St Cadog. The priory was one of the smallest Benedictine cells in medieval Wales and its name is evidence of a move away from the Welsh Celtic saints to St Mary the Virgin, a particular favourite of the Normans. As such, Kidwelly was formed of three distinct parts; the castle to the north of the river, Kidwelly Priory on the south side of the river ('old town') and the town within a defended area to the south of the castle where Castle Street and Bailey Street now stand ('new town'). A recent study by the RCAHMW raises the possibility that there may have been a Roman fort at Kidwelly, obscured when the castle was built, with the westerly Roman road traced from Carmarthen to Kidwelly. The first townspeople were English, Flemish, and French immigrants, traders, and agriculturalists with Welshmen notable by their absence. The large areas of grassland around the town sustained a large wool trade throughout the Middle Ages, with its coastal location providing trading links throughout South Wales, Bristol and Ireland. The first castle was likely a timber motte and bailey structure with semi-circular moat and ramparts. Within the earthwork town defences there were likely a series of burgage plots following a similar street layout as can

be seen today with gates where the current gatehouse remains and an additional gate where Castle Road joins New Street. After the death of Henry I in 1135 an army was raised to expel the English from South Wales, led by Gruffydd ap Rhys. Whilst Gruffydd ap Rhys was travelling to seek reinforcements the Lord of Kidwelly, Maurice de Londres, decided to counterattack. His wife, Gwenllïan, gathered her forces and led the Welsh army to attack the town and castle at Maes Gwenllïan, a spot that now bears her name. Although defeated, she is still remembered as a heroin of Kidwelly and a statue of here stands at the castle.

### 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries

The castle remained in English hands through much of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries but with continual attacks which disrupted the growth of the town, including in 1258 when it was destroyed, although the castle itself was not captured. In 1223 the priory church was burnt down.

In 1280 the town was granted a licence to enclose the town with walls, replacing the earth and timber defences and the castle was rebuilt in stone by the Chaworth family, areas of which survive in the masonry ruins. A mill was likely located on the present site of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Castle Mill House at the low ground between the town and river. In 1298 Kidwelly passed to the Lancaster family, with the town mostly used as an administrative centre, reducing the castles military and domestic role, and rather focusing on the farms, forest and mills which could raise money for the Duchy of Lancaster.



Suspected plan of the town in the 12<sup>th</sup> century



Suspected plan of the town in the 13<sup>th</sup> century

The town was granted its first charter in 1308, which was confirmed in 1357, with the right to hold two markets a week and one annual fair, with the marketplace possibly located at the junction of Lady Street and Bridge Street where a public square now stands. As a result, during the 14<sup>th</sup> Century the town prospered and spread outside of the town walls along what are now known as Ferry Road, Water Street and Bridge Street, and became one of the busiest trading and commercial centres in South Wales. This growth may have been to the detriment of the town within the castle walls as deserted burgages were recorded in 1401. The priory also had a small settlement of tenants outside of the town's defences, with St Mary's church built around 1320 as the parish church, further indicating that at this time the focus was beginning to shift away from the 'old town' to the new. A carved memorial in St Mary's churchyard depicts the black cat of Kidwelly, seen on the Coat of Arms and Official Seal. There are those who believe that the cat was the first creature seen alive after the great plague of 1349-51, and therefore is a symbol of salvation and deliverance. The priory is thought to have always been relatively poor, with only one monk present in 1377.

### 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries

The castle and town were under sustained attack during the Glyn Dwr rising of 1403-4 when it was destroyed. Although the castle defences and town walls were strengthened, including the creation of the present gatehouse, the 'old town' did not recover, described in 1444 as 'now in manner of waste and desolate for want of Burgesses there swelling' and in 1530s, John Leland described it as 'nere all desolated'.

The two-arched bridge which joined the new and old town was built in the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> Century, to replace an earlier structure and to continue the road to West Wales. The priory was dissolved in 1539, at which time the patronage passed to the crown.

### 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries

By 1609 the castle was recorded as 'greatly decayed and ruynated' with just 3 burgages, seven tenements and eight cottages within the town walls. 136 burgages lay along Ferry Road, Water Street and Bridge Street, and a further eight burgages lay on Causeway Street and three on St Mary's Street (now Lady Street) alongside 28 other houses. As such, the town seems to have moved from the 'old town' by the castle to the 'new town' on the south of the river. This is confirmed in 1574 when a civic hall was built in its current location on the corner of Causeway Street and Lady Street.

In 1630 Kidwelly passed into the hands of the Vaughan family and the town saw little expansion during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries, however, there were several industrial buildings and structures which helped support the 19<sup>th</sup> Century growth of the town during the industrial revolution. This included a 3-mile-long canal and docks built by Thomas Kymer to link his coal pits with the coast and in 1737 a tinplate works was built, likely on the site of a former forge, the second earliest built in Wales. Production of tin and later iron continued until 1941, with the buildings dismantled in 1946 and the Kidwelly Industrial Museum developed on its site.



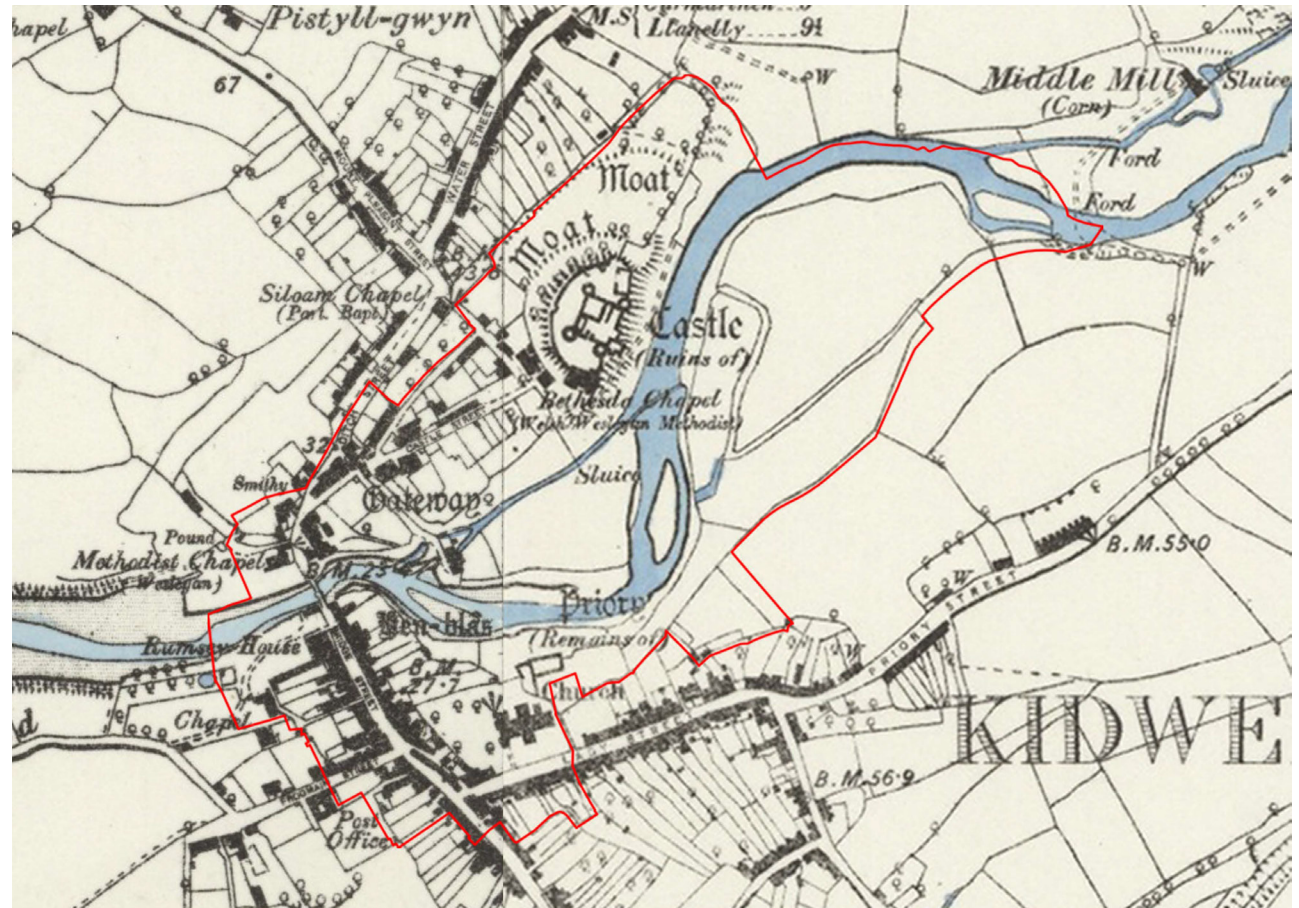
Suspected plan of the town in the 15<sup>th</sup> century



## 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The town prospered during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century with the export of coal from the Gwendraeth Fawr. Five separate brickworks were established between 1850 and 1900 served by sidings and railroads, producing bricks which were sent all over the world. Markets continued to take place near the Castle Gate, with animal fairs held in May and August and the Gwenllian fair in December. A slaughterhouse was built to the east of Trinity Church to support this. An early 19<sup>th</sup> Century tithe map for Kidwelly shows the extent of the town at this time; the boundaries to the north of the river are mostly confined to the castle and the houses to the west of this; the southern boundary extends approximately to Priory Street to the east, Hillfield Villas to the west and Maes Y Parc to the south, with the surrounding countryside split into a series of larger tithes.

OS Maps from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century show a very similar layout to what we can see today, with rows of buildings lining both sides of Lady Street, Bridge Street, Ditch Street (now New Street) and a few detached buildings along Castle Street and Bailey Street. A smithy is shown at the junction of New Street and Bridge Street. The site of Capel Sul is located at the former Rumsey House with landscaped grounds between Bridge Street and Station Road. The post office is located off Frogman Street (now Station Road). The junction between Bridge Street, Castle Street and New Street has a series of buildings which been removed almost in their entirety by the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. A school was built on Castle Street in 1858 for the British School movement in opposition to the church sponsored National Schools along with a schoolteacher's house. The town hall was built in 1877



Kidwelly Historic Boundary Overlay 1888 (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

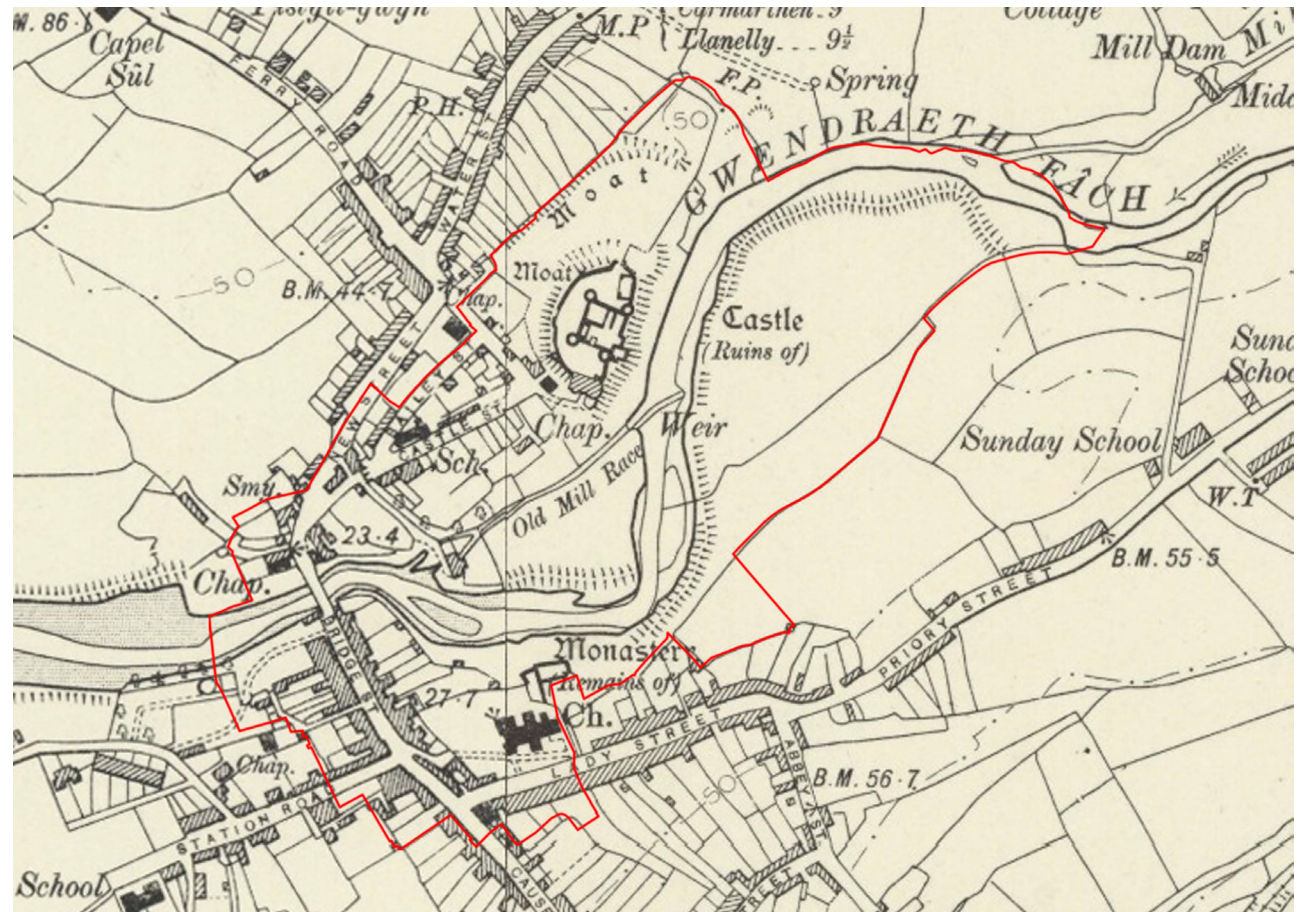


by TWA Evans, who was also the Mayor of Kidwelly, with the lower floor acting as a covered market and the upper floor as a guildhall, whilst also containing police cells and a reading room. In 1884 St Mary's Church underwent a large restoration by Middleton and Prothero of Cheltenham with a new nave roof, font and east and west windows added.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, development continued along Station Road and Priory Street. An extensive brickwork with at least 20 kilns producing silica bricks was built in 1903 by Sir Alfred Stephens who also donated Park Stephens to the town in 1921. Rumsey House, built in 1862, also by TWA Evans, became notorious in 1920 for the trial and acquittal of the then owner for the murder of his wife. It was subsequently bought in 1923 by the Independent congregation, then in Ferry Road, and converted into a chapel in 1924 with the ground floor acting as a schoolroom and the upper floors as the chapel. The war memorial was also erected in 1924.

In 1927, the ruins of the castle were placed under the guardianship of the state and together with the town gate is now maintained by Cadw. Preservation works have been carried out since this time, including archaeological excavations in 1930 and 1931.

In 1932, the last of the presumed Medieval dwellings known as Priors House, situated to the west of the church on Causeway Street, and likely associated with the former priory, was removed. It may have been that the house accommodated the monks and their attendants. In 1938, RAF Pembrey was built to the southwest of the town to support the defence of Britain and became a Battle of Britain base. As a major target for



Kidwelly Historic Boundary Overlay 1907 (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)



Most of the buildings which can be seen today date from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but with evidence of the former narrow burgage plots on Water Street, Ferry Road, New Street, Bridge Street and Lady Street. Nothing of the Benedictine priory survives above ground but is thought to have been located to the east of the church. In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century several contemporary developments have infilled sections of land, including along Castle Street, to the south of the junction with Bridge Street and Castle Street and a car park created to the northeast of the bridge. Although the medieval buildings within the walls have been replaced with modern houses, the line of the existing roads probably follows the original layout.



Kidwelly Historic Boundary Overlay 1948 (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)



## 4.0 Spatial Analysis

### 4.1 Views into, within and from the CA

The impact of proposed developments should include consideration of views into, within and from the CA. The following are noted without excluding other viewpoints and can be seen on the following map.

#### Kidwelly Castle

As can perhaps be expected, the castle is a dominant landmark throughout the CA due to its scale and location on the river. This acts as a reminder as to the importance the castle played in the development of the town and is a significant part of the character of the area. The views back towards the castle from the southern bank of the river are particularly of note but have been compromised by surrounding contemporary development.

#### St Mary's Church

Although the church itself is relatively hidden from a number of views, the spire is an almost constant landmark. The castle and spire have an important relationship positioned on opposite sides of the river with both visible together from the river's edge.

#### Street views

The relatively straight nature of Bridge Street and Lady Street create long uninterrupted views and allows the buildings to be read together. This is contrasted with the shorter and curved streets which are on the northern bank of the river and largely follow the boundary of the old town which formed around the castle. Buildings to the south of the river tend to follow the street edge,

whereas those to the north are principally detached and set within their own grounds. Both smaller scale cumulative changes and large developments along these roads could interrupt these characteristics. This can already be seen where larger buildings have been introduced which do not follow the street pattern or the characteristics of the buildings which surround them. There are also a series of glimpsed views between buildings and where buildings have been removed from the street edge, for example at the southern end of Bridge Street. The castle and river-side paths offer a more open view as well as those from the bridge.



Lady Street to Bridge Street



Bridge Street to the south



Castle Road to New Road

Street views of note, without excluding others are noted below:

Castle Street to Castle Road  
Bailey Street to Castle Road  
Castle Road to the Kidwelly Castle  
Bridge Street to New Street  
Lady Street to Priory Street  
Bridge Street to Station Road  
Bridge Street north and south

### Spires and Towers

The tall spires, towers and gables of the town provide important landmarks emphasised by the lower storey heights and open views along the river's length. Developments which interrupt these views could have a negative impact on the area. This includes views of:

St Mary's Church  
Kidwelly Castle and the gatehouse  
The Town Hall  
Capel Sul  
Trinity Church



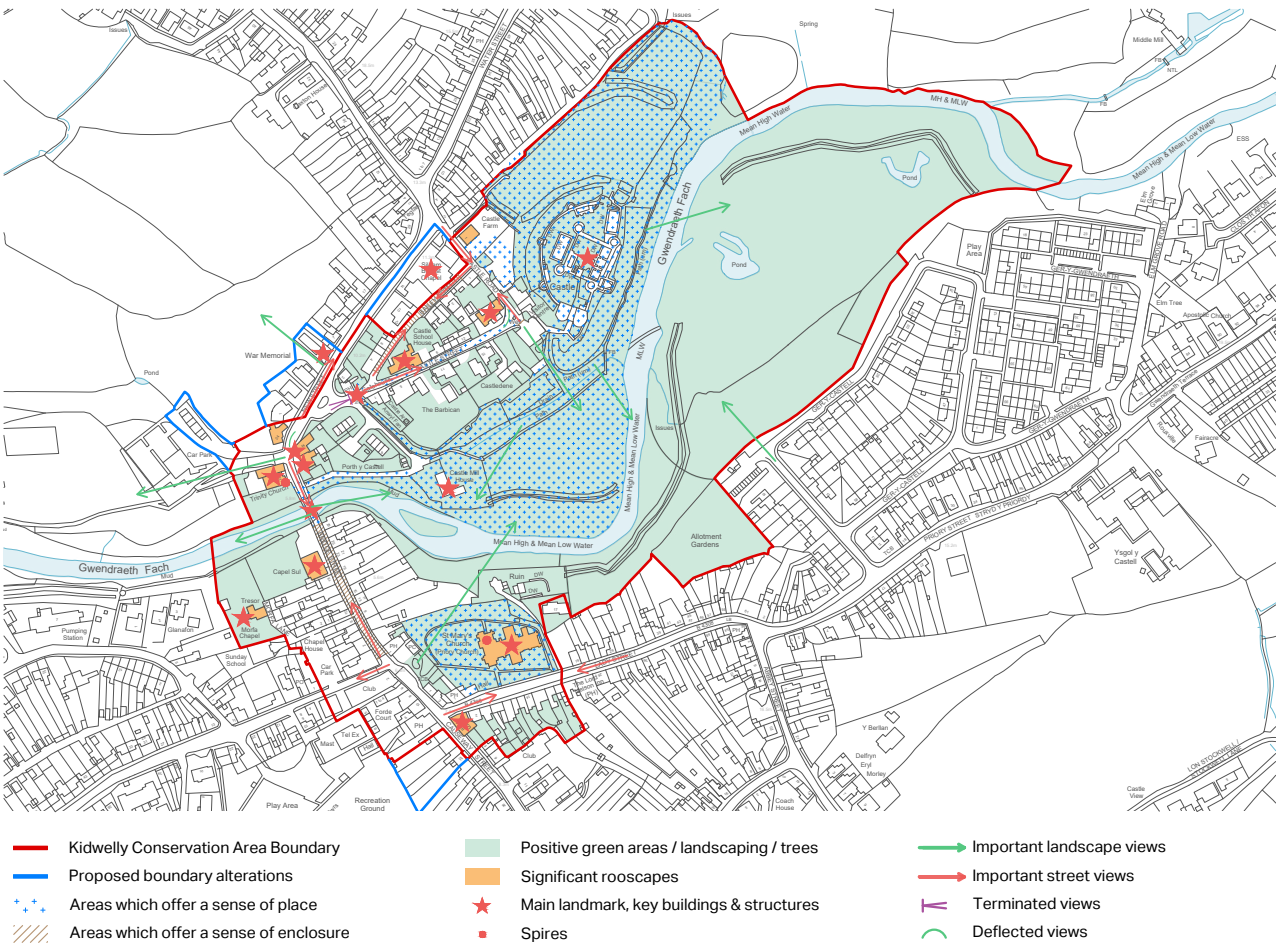
Spire of St Marys from Lady Street



# Surrounding landscape and open spaces

The river setting of the town provides a series of panoramic views along its length as well as between the north and south banks, particularly from the site of the castle, where you can see almost the entirety of the CA, and from the bridge. These viewpoints also allow you to see the rear of the buildings which face onto Bridge Street and Lady Street. In contrast to this are the rows of buildings which enclose views but with glimpses between. There are also several open areas, both green and urban which offer places to rest and views out, for example, the grounds to St Mary's Church and the open square at the junction with Station Road, which offers a particularly characterful view of the church spire.

The topography of the area also provides landscape views to the north from New Street and Bailey Street.





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## 4.2 Main Landmarks and key buildings

Kidwelly CA has 14 listed buildings and structures which stands as a testament to its high quality of architecture and the historic associations and development which are an essential part of its character.

### Listed Buildings and Structures

#### *Kidwelly Castle*

The Norman castle is both a scheduled monument and is Grade I listed as one of the finest castles in Wales. Founded in 1106 by the Bishop of Salisbury the current castle dates from the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century with a twin towered gatehouse, semi-circular outer ward, square inner ward with four corner towers, hall, chapel, and kitchen. The building of the castle illustrates the historic importance of Kidwelly as a strategic and commercial location with the present town developing around it. Its layout still influences the way people perceive and move around the town, with a range of views to and from the castle dominating much of the CA.



#### *St Mary's Church*

The parish church of St Mary's is Grade I listed and reputed to be the largest parish church in Southwest Wales, whose spire is a recognisable landmark throughout the CA, particularly when viewed from the north bank of the river. The current church likely dates from around 1320 with the former Benedictine priory church founded in 1114 burnt down in 1223. Its gothic detail is also of note, as well as its grounds, for their contribution to the streetscape.



#### *The gatehouse*

The gatehouse was built in the early 14<sup>th</sup> Century as the principal gate into the walled town around the castle. It still carries out this function, standing at the western end of Castle Street and offering access from Bridge Street, framing views to and from the castle. It is Grade 2\* listed and a scheduled monument.



#### *Capel Sul*

Listed Grade II for its townscape value, this substantial Italianate style chapel is situated at the end of Bridge Street and is particularly of note when viewed from the northern end of the bridge, but its upper storey is also a landmark in the roofscape when travelling north up Bridge Street. The deep console brackets to the roof and stucco architraves exaggerate its prominence.



### *The Old Moat House*

Located adjacent to the castle, this grade II listed building is one of the oldest surviving houses within the medieval walled settlement. Now a restaurant it occupies a substantial corner plot between Castle Street and Castle Road and adds to the setting of the castle beyond.



### *Castle School and School House*

This grade II listed building was built in 1858 to designs by David Davies of Llanelli for Kidwelly School Board as part of the British Schools Movement which was in opposition to the church-sponsored National Schools. A schoolteacher's house was also incorporated into the western end. The rubble stone with yellow bricks are particularly characterful, alongside the pitched slate roofs and gables, which characterise the views from the south of Castle Street looking towards the Castle.



### *The War Memorial (outside of CA)*

Grade II listed and erected in 1924 to designs by Glendinning Moxham of Swansea, the memorial consists of a white marble statue of a soldier on a large Portland stone pedestal and is dedicated to the memory of the soldiers who fell in WWI. Its setting is somewhat compromised by the contemporary developments and bus shelter which surround it, but it remains a clear landmark in the street.



### *Castle Mill*

The grade II listed former corn-mill was built by Benjamin Haselwood in 1804 on the site of a medieval mill first mentioned in 1114. Its location on the lower banks of the river likely took advantage of the tidal streams to power the mill machinery. Now restored as an antique furniture store, it remains as testament to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century development of the town as a centre of industry, as well as a prominent building on the river's edge.



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### *Kidwelly Bridge*

The two-arch bridge over the river is believed to have been constructed in the late 15<sup>th</sup> Century to replace the original structure and was subsequently altered in 1920-30 when the exterior rock-faced rubble and parapets were added. Contributing both aesthetically and strategically to the towns development it features in numerous paintings and descriptions of Kidwelly through its history, and still offers some of the finest views of the CA. The bridge is grade II listed.



### *The Town Hall*

The town hall forms a large corner block to Bridge Street and Lady Street and is the focus of several street views. It is listed Grade II and was built in 1877 to designs by TWA Evans, an architect and Mayor of Kidwelly, who gave his services for free. A market was contained on the lower floor, with a guildhall on the first floor, alongside police cells and a reading room.





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## Unlisted Buildings and structures of note

The following buildings are not statutorily listed but reinforce the character of the area, provide an important landmark or are a part of Kidwelly's heritage due to architectural, historic, or archaeological significance, and are recognised as irreplaceable heritage assets. As such, we propose their inclusion on a local list of buildings of merit; this would not grant a building statutory protection nor would works to a locally listed building require listed building consent, but the special interest of the building would be a material consideration in the planning application process.

### *Trinity English Methodist Church*

The church was built in 1866 by Jacob Chivers who was the owner of Kidwelly Tin Works and was instrumental in bringing a piped water supply to the town. As a deeply religious person, but not Welsh speaking, he founded the church so that he and others could worship in the English language. The spire itself is a notable addition to several views and its prominent location at the northern entrance to the bridge, significantly and positively adds to the views to and from Bridge Street.



### *Siloam Baptist Chapel*

Currently outside of the CA but whose rear and side elevations form part of the northern border. Built around 1892 the chapel was part of the Baptist Union of Wales which was established in 1866. The building, boundary wall and churchyard form a significant corner plot with elevations to New Street, Castle Street and Berkely Street and mark the entrance to Castle Road with clear views from the south and north on New Street.



### *Morfa Chapel*

Located to the rear of Capel Sul, Morfa Presbyterian Chapel has limited visibility from Bridge Street but is an important historic building which requires enhanced protection, as well as its burial ground. Built in 1830, it was rebuilt in 1907 to the design of architect WD Morgan of Rhondda in the sub-classical style.



### *Castle Farm*

Presumed to date from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, the detached house, alongside the Siloam chapel, form the entrance into Castle Road from the north. Its yellow brick quoins are particularly of note, as well as its boundary wall with railings to the street which create a charming and characterful addition to the CA.



#### *31-33 Bridge Street*

A 19<sup>th</sup> Century commercial building on the north side of the bridge which along with No35 forms a distinct group of good quality buildings which create a strong end to the bridge before the road curves to the north. The gabled roofs, red clay ridge tiles, chimneys and surviving timber shopfront all help to create a positive addition to the CA.



#### *35 Bridge Street*

A 3-storey 19<sup>th</sup> Century building which defines the northern end of the bridge and creates a positive corner to Bridge Street and Castle Street. A carved stone inscription above a simple shopfront window reads Steam Bakery. Of particular character are the rubble stone rear elevations, chimneys, projecting entrance bay and stone quoins.



#### *41-43 Lady Street*

Currently outside of the CA, but borders the southern boundary, this detached building appears to contain earlier historic material which may be associated with the former priory, including what appears to be a former chapel. For this reason, it is proposed that it be included as a building of note to help protect its historic significance.



### Shopfronts of note

Shopfronts can make an important contribution to the CA and can significantly add to street elevations both positively and negatively. There are only two surviving examples of 19<sup>th</sup> Century shopfronts at 31-33 and 16 Bridge Street which due to its rarity should be preserved. Where new shopfronts are proposed, these should respect the character of the buildings they are in and take inspiration from these surviving examples.

### 4.3 Important Green and Natural Spaces

The CA benefits from many mature trees, green spaces, and natural habitats, which contribute to the area and provide breaks to the high density of building to the street. Key features and spaces include:

Allotment gardens

St Mary's Church

The north and south banks of the river

Castle School grounds

Residential gardens to the street

Castle grounds

Green spaces and local features are shown on the following map.



Castle School grounds



16 Bridge Street

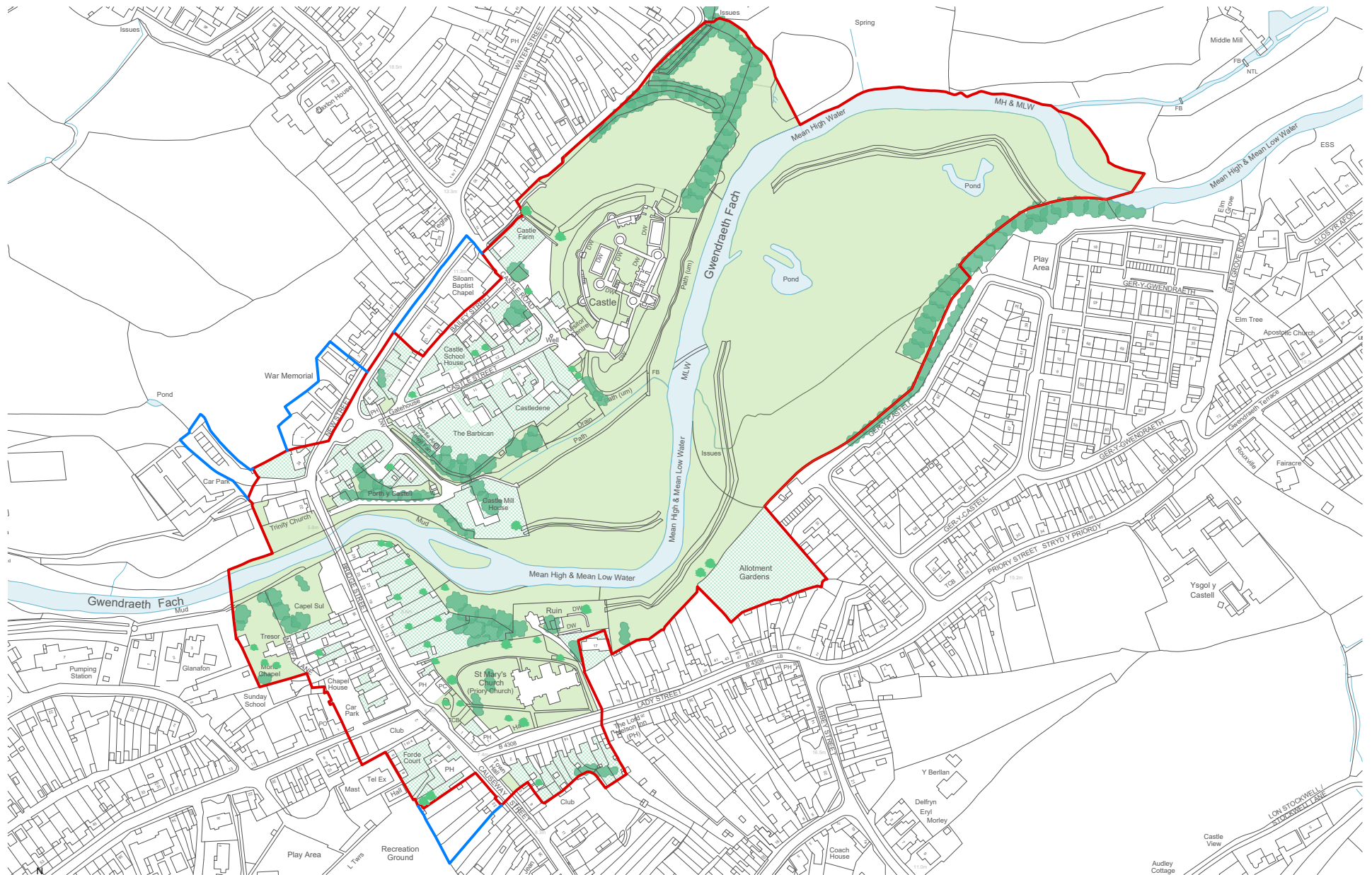


St Marys Churchyard



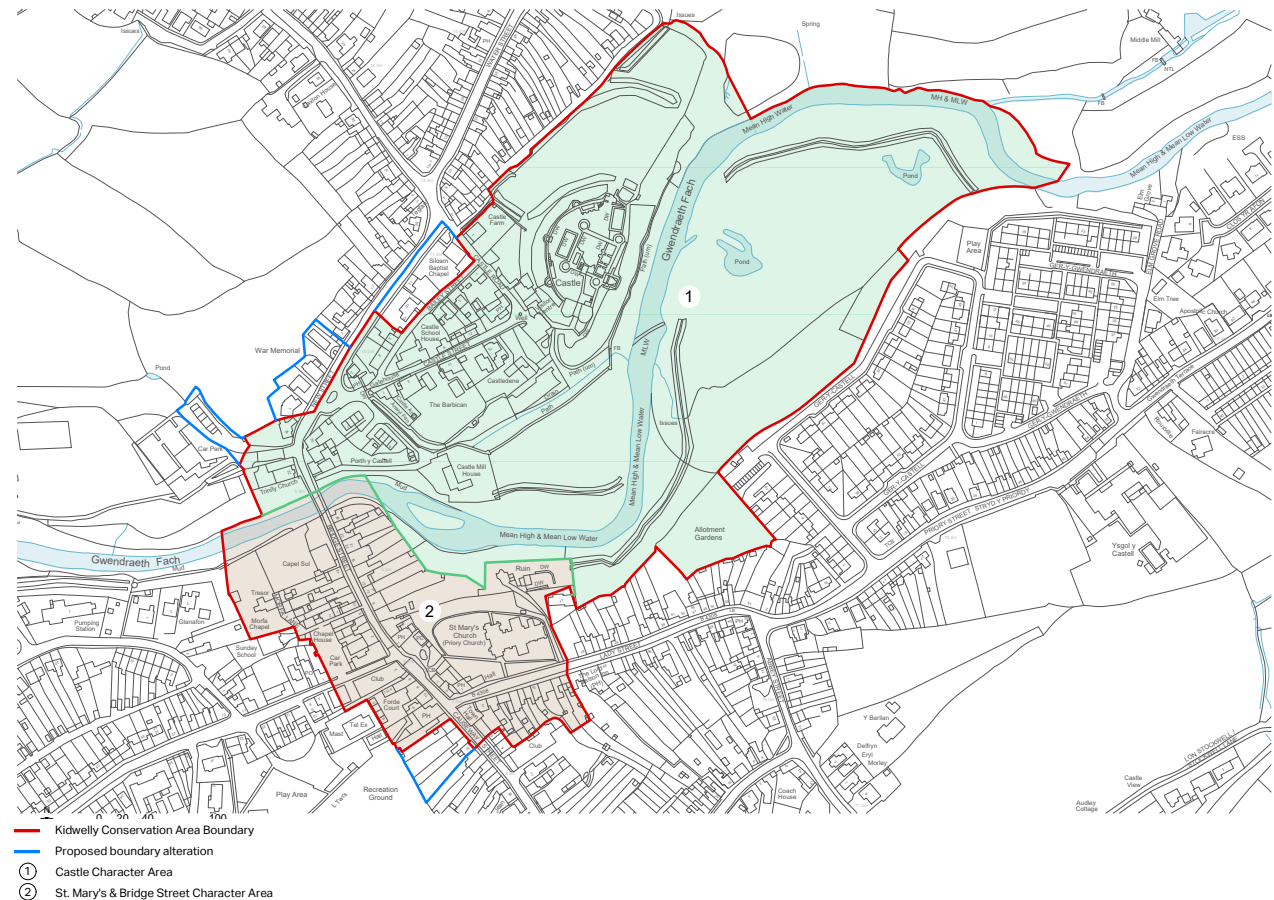
31-33 Bridge Street





## 5.0 Character and Appearance

This section describes the character and appearance of the area as it exists at the time of this study. The CA has two distinct parts: the streets immediately surrounding the castle which were part of the medieval plan of the town and those to the south of the river which were part of the expansion of the town merging with the former priory. The differing patterns of street layout alter the way people move through and view these areas as well as influencing the architectural style of the buildings within, and as such create two distinct characteristics. It is therefore proposed that two-character areas be defined which respond to these differences, helping to preserve, manage and enhance the differences as well as similarities between them.





## 5.1 Townscape Features

### *Castle Character Area*

The building of the castle and the walled town which grew around it influenced, and still influences, the character and feeling of the area. As such, the castle is both a landmark and a destination with the gatehouse and castle still visually connected, navigating people east from Bridge Street. Alongside the river-side walk, the castle provides a moment of pause and reflection, and a space where you can consider the CA as a whole.

There is a great deal of variation in architectural style here, with 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century infill developments. A number of the most recent developments do not respond to the characteristics of the earlier buildings around them, and these are noticeably at odds and detract from the street views. For example, houses which are set back from the street edge or those of increased mass regarding height and width. This is exacerbated by the use of uncharacteristic materials and details. This variety creates an ever-fluctuating view, from enclosed views along the streets, glimpses between detached buildings and wider panoramic views towards the river and castle, but with the castle always as a constant. Developments which disrupt this characteristic should be resisted.

The area is dominated by residential use, with the castle and restaurant opposite forming a larger public open space at the castle entrance. This has limited car movements through these smaller roads, but the lack of space to the rear of properties means that on street parking is prevalent and interrupts views through. The

use of traditional signposts and lanterns is a positive addition and helps maintain a sense of unity which recognises the historic walled city boundaries.

The entrances to this area mirror the historic gate positions. That to Castle Street at the former gatehouse could be a positive moment but is currently dominated by traffic and the signage and hard landscaping this brings, including the no entrance signs on the gateway itself. The position of the bus shelter and the contemporary developments with red brick boundary wall to the south add to this confusion and detract from the setting of the gatehouse and 18<sup>th</sup> Century building next to this which are otherwise positive elements. Several buildings were removed from the street during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century which would have continued the gatehouse restaurant to form a line of buildings to the street. The loss of these creates this larger gap as well as two blank gable ends at an important gateway. The introduction of high-quality buildings, hard and soft landscaping and/or narrowing the roads here would substantially improve this significant entrance. The remains of a masonry wall with arched entrance survive to the north of Castle Farm but is almost completely covered in vegetation.

The entrance to Castle Road is more successful but traffic signage and contemporary developments currently detract, and it is not clear that this entrance is a historic or existing entrance to the Castle. The chapel may benefit from a brighter paint scheme, as well as removing the render from the boundary wall. The inclusion of street trees and traditional signs and lanterns may help tie this entrance back to the streets beyond and signify its historic significance.

The war memorial, although currently outside of the CA, remains a landmark bordering the area but has become significantly overshadowed by contemporary developments and the bus shelter.



### *St Mary's and Bridge Street Character Area*

This area is formed of longer streets with a wider landscape view at the bridge to the north, a view towards St Mary's at the public square to the south and views outwards at street junctions. As such much of this area has a feeling of enclosure, with a hard edge to the street defined by the buildings. There is more consistency in architectural style with the coloured renders and roofscape breaking formality and adding interest, encouraging you to move through and discover the area. Taller, more prominent buildings are situated at corners, providing entrances to the north and south of Bridge Street and creating bookends to the street. At No 16, a raised parapet has extended the building upwards, breaking the roofline, and noticeably detracts from views through. Further extensions should be resisted.

To the south, the Kidwelly Arms and neighbouring community centre have been decorated in a similar palette and this has resulted in the creation of an overly large block which is at odds with the narrower plots surrounding them. The Town Hall defines the corner between Lady Street and Bridge Street as well as being a noticeable landmark in the roofscape. However, its condition and lack of public space which you would associate with a building of this type detracts from its setting. The corner plot opposite which has several street signs and poor patch repairs to the tarmac also contributes to its poor setting.

The bridge, as a key crossing point over the river, has resulted in heavy traffic through each of these streets, with narrow pavements, staggered junctions at Station Road and Lady Street, and a lack of crossings

forcing people to walk on one side of the road with little opportunity to appreciate the views or buildings around them.

The public square to the west of the church could be a positive moment offering a moment to pause and reflect but the poor-quality landscaping, WC block, bus shelter and contemporary bollards do not encourage stopping. The blank gable end created when the buildings were removed from the street edge plus several street signs has also impacted the visual quality of this space. The use of traditional boundaries, high quality landscaping, artworks, interpretation, and furniture could help to enhance this area to the wider benefit of the CA.

There is a particularly significant view at Ger Y-Castell looking back at the castle beyond.





## 5.2 Building materials

The following images and list provide examples of the materials used within the CA which either enhance or preserve the characteristics of the area.

*To larger landmark buildings typically of a religious nature*

Rock faced stone

Rubble stone

Stone details

Yellow and red brick

*Common materials seen throughout the CA*

Painted render, stucco and roughcast

Rubble stone, painted and unpainted

Slate roof coverings

Clay ridge tiles

Leadwork

Painted timber joinery

Cast iron rainwater goods

*Boundary materials*

Rubble stone with stone and capped top

Cast/ wrought ironwork gates and railings



### 5.3 Building heights and relationships to plots

#### *Castle Character Area*

The new town within the historic town's defences evolved from a series of burgage plots into a few detached properties with land between gradually infilled from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century onwards. This has created a great deal of variety with regard to mass, height and position to the street including detached, semi-detached, buildings directly on the street edge, those with narrow front plots with boundary walls to the street, and those with larger gardens which set the buildings further back from the pavement. Driveways and garages have also been integrated. As such, views through these streets are defined mostly by buildings and boundary walls. Where there are larger gardens to the contemporary developments by the gatehouse, this has weakened this entrance. There is also an open green space to the rear of the school but a rubble stone wall to the street ensures the hard edge is retained.

Buildings are between one and two storeys, with single storey buildings in the main being historic outbuildings or extensions. The Castle School is single storey, but its larger storey height and gables increase its height to the street ensuring that it is not overshadowed. The exceptions to this are the gatehouse, castle and chapel which are larger landmark buildings which mark three distinct corners.

#### *St Mary's and Bridge Street Character Area*

This character area is more consistent, with buildings situated on the street edge with boundary walls to St Mary's and Capel Sul maintaining a consistent line. Buildings are in the main 2 storeys with a handful of 3 storey buildings at junctions and in a few cases where buildings have been extended upwards, often to the detriment of the existing building. This varies the roofline and presents some gable ends to the street. Buildings to Lady Street are consistently 2 storeys but variations in roof pitches add some variety to views.

Where buildings have been removed this creates noticeable breaks in the building line. This is particularly noticeable at the area of public realm by the church. A traditional boundary here may help alleviate this awkwardness.

The rear streets offer more variety with views towards rear elevations, single storey extensions and contemporary outbuildings. These views can be found from the river-side walk and from the castle which provides views back towards the CA. These areas can be easily overlooked when considering development but can significantly alter views from these important viewpoints.

The burgage plots which once defined the area are now lost, although the narrower 2 bay width building plots retain some of this historic character. Buildings which exceed this proportion, or which have been merged without breaking down the mass of the building to the street have been less successful.





#### 5.4 Typical or significant details

*To landmark buildings, including those of a religious nature*

Decorative ironwork gates and railings

Stone tracery and arched windows

Expressed quoins

Dentilled eaves

Carved names

Projecting door bays

Gable roofs

Towers and spires

*Consistent details throughout the CA*

Pitched roofs

Chimneys

Decorative ridges

Colourfully painted renders

Panelled timber doors

Expressed window surrounds, brick and painted

Decorative keystones and door surrounds

Timber sash windows, typically 1 over 1 and 2 over 2

Plinth detail

Rubble stone boundary walls

Painted metal railings

Traditional lanterns to Castle and Bailey Street









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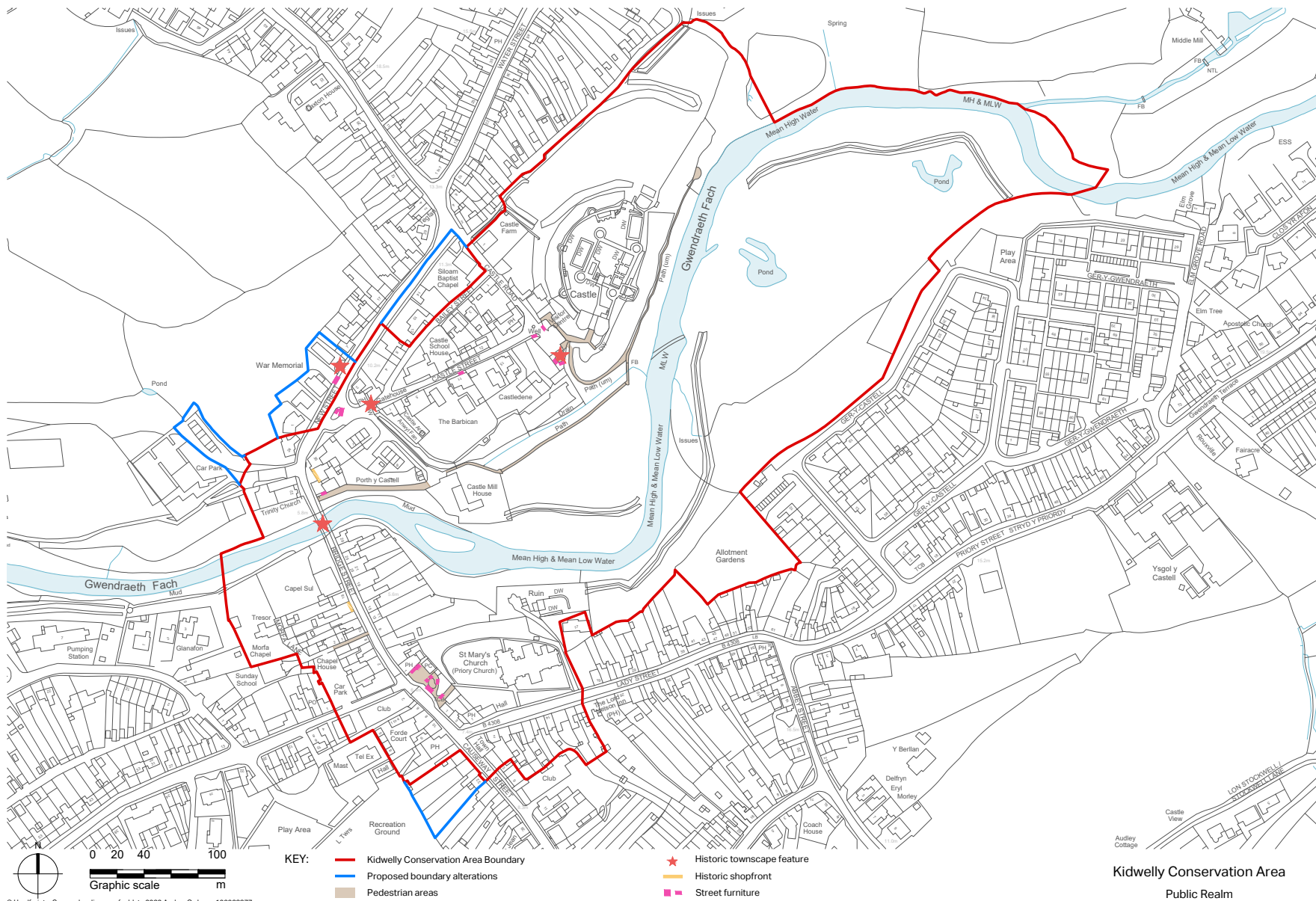
### 5.5 Public realm; surfacing, street furniture and signage

Roads and pavements throughout the CA are concrete with raised profile slabs at dropped kerbs which are detracting due to their colour and style. Numerous patch repairs also detract. The only exception to this is concrete pavers within an area of public realm to the junction of Bridge Street and Station Road. This could be a positive area within the CA, offering a significant view of the church spire, but is currently uninviting due to the hard surfacing and location of the bus shelter which blocks views in and out. A similar bus shelter has also been placed next to the memorial statue and gatehouse, again to the detriment of their setting. The gatehouse entrance and that to Castle Road also have a number of street signs which detract from views.

On a positive note, traditional lanterns and signposts have been used throughout Castle and Berkeley Streets which significantly uplift the area and create characterful street scenes.

The river-side walk has a very different feel to the more enclosed street network, being open and defined by the river and surrounding landscape which is a peaceful and public facing area, but which might benefit from wayfinding, lighting and good quality seating.





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## 5.6 Boundary materials and treatments

### *Castle Character Area*

There is a great variety to boundaries throughout this area, relating in the main to boundary walls to residential properties. Historic boundaries are of rubble stone with and without railings and at a mixture of heights which both open and enclose views as you travel. There is also a mixture of capping styles, between stone and concrete caps, mortar, and upended stone. Several contemporary materials have been introduced where new development has taken place, either creating new, or possibly removing, historic boundaries. This includes timber, brickwork, and blockwork either bare or rendered. The variety within this area is not necessarily a negative characteristic, but where materials have been introduced which are at odds with their surroundings, this detracts. This is particularly the case at the junction between Castle Street and New Street, where a red brick boundary wall has been developed alongside new housing at the detriment to this important approach to the castle and gatehouse.

The river-side walk around the castle has a mixture of barbed wire, open metal railings and low stone verges. A consistent and high-quality approach to boundary materials here would help to sustain the significant views to, from and across the river.

### *St Mary's and Bridge Street Character Area*

Bridge Street is characterised by buildings directly on the street edge and as such there are few boundary walls, other than at the three largest landmarks buildings in the area; St Mary's Church, the Town Hall and Capel Sul. The high boundary wall to Lady Street defines much of the street view and limits views into the churchyard until you reach the entrance gates. The boundary wall to Capel Sul has been rendered to the detriment of the setting of the building. The area of open land to the rear of the Town Hall is currently bordered by open timber fencing which is of a residential nature and not appropriate to the stature or architectural style of the building.



# 6.0 Building analysis

## 6.1 Buildings which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area

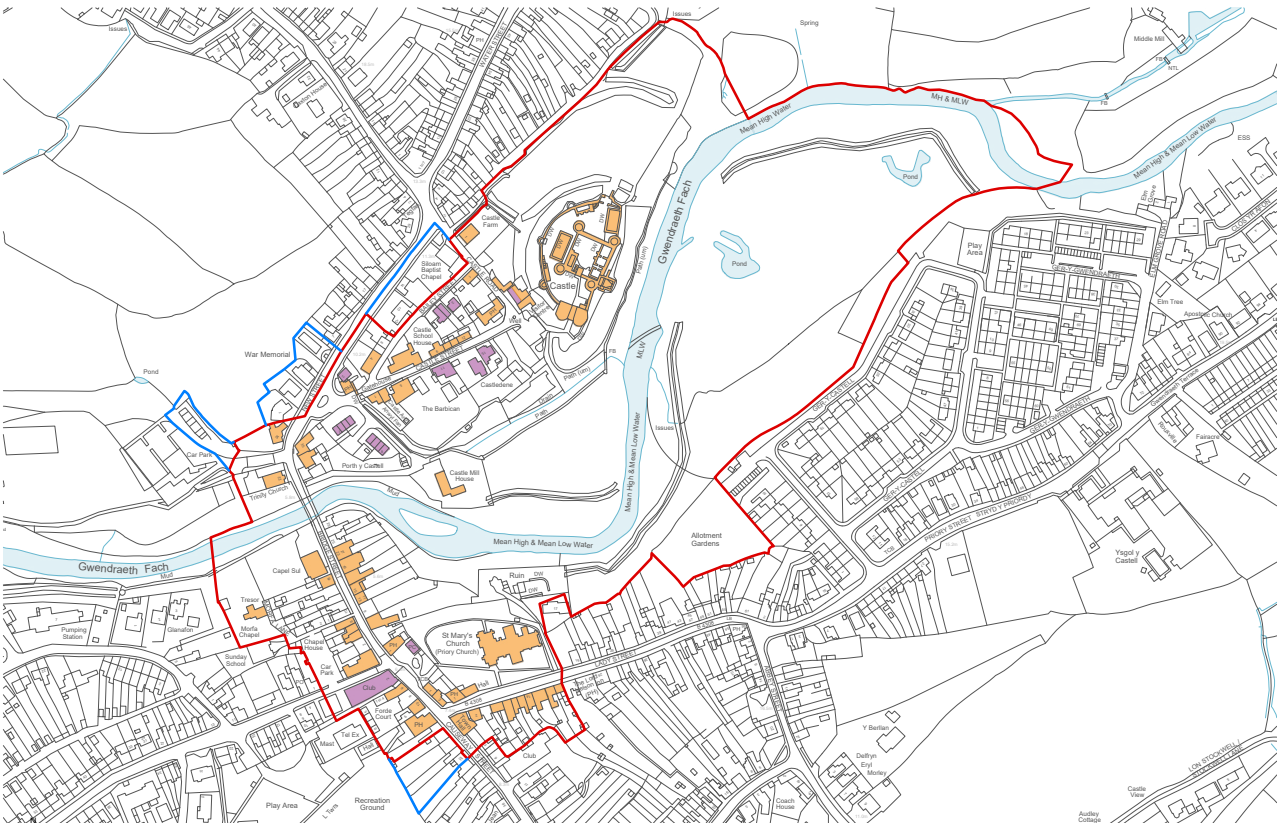
In addition to those buildings of note set out in section 4.1, many more modest buildings make a positive contribution to the character and quality of the conservation area; this may be for several different reasons. These include their townscape contribution, quality, and decorative features, or historic or cultural associations.

Whilst there are numerous buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area, in many instances their architectural quality has been compromised by poor alterations. With respect to domestic properties, this tends to be through the loss of historic features such as timber sash windows. Despite this, these buildings still exhibit strong qualities and positive contributions that could be greatly enhanced by remedying the detracting alterations. Applications to undo unsympathetic alterations either as a standalone application or as part of a wider redevelopment would be supported.

## 6.2 Buildings which detract from the Conservation Area

Negative buildings are identified as those which, due to their scale, detailed design, or materials, are incongruous in relation to the predominant character of the conservation area. These may be considered as candidates for wholesale redevelopment, although in some case, it may be suitable to retain the shell of these buildings, avoiding the embodied carbon associated with large scale redevelopment.

Positive and detracting buildings are set out on the following map.



- Kidwelly Conservation Area Boundary
- Proposed boundary alterations
- Positive buildings
- Detracting buildings



## 7.0 Significance

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One of the guiding principles to managing change within the historic environment is an understanding of the significance of that asset, be it a building, place, or something more intangible. Best practice suggests assessing significance against a series of values which are set out below:

**Evidential Value:** The physical remains and surviving fabric which still exists in the area

**Historical Value:** How the area can inform us of past people, events, or aspects of life

**Aesthetic Value:** Whether the area is pleasing to walk around and experience

**Communal Value:** The value it has to the people who live, work, and visit the area

Each of these values might exist in varying levels from low to high and this is also important to understand. It is also important to recognise those items which may fall outside of these categories or fall within multiple categories to differing levels. This can particularly be the case when considering those characteristics which create a sense of place.

The following summary sets out the key items of significance for the Conservation Area. This is followed by a more detailed examination of each item and is concluded by indicating how each relates to evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal values and to what level.

- Largely surviving historic street pattern from the medieval walled town and the following expansion to the south of the river
- Two distinct patterns of movement and development following the old and new towns
- High archaeological potential
- Contains the scheduled monument of Kidwelly Castle
- St Mary's Church, the largest parish church in Southwest Wales
- Links to the industrial revolution seen throughout Southwest Wales in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century
- A series of significant views to, from and through the area due to its topography and setting
- Local and national buildings of significance
- Surviving historic boundaries including metalwork and rubble stone
- A series of notable religious buildings
- Several associations with notable events and people

### *Historic street pattern*

Kidwelly largely follows the Medieval formation of the town from Kidwelly Castle to the north of the river and St Mary's Church to the south. The road and street patterns still largely inform development as well as the way one moves through and experiences the CA.

### *Old and new towns*

Kidwelly developed around three distinct elements: the castle and town to the north known as 'new town' and the priory to the south known as 'old town'. Separated by the river, the development of these two areas, including the expansion of the town outside of the town defences, has created two distinct areas whose characteristics are still recognisably unique.

### *Archaeological potential*

Due to its Medieval origins, the area still retains a high potential of archaeological discovery through finds as well as the knowledge one can gain of the town's development and wider historic insight. This can be easily overlooked, often being below ground potential, but development requires careful control to avoid any potential damage to these important finds. The location of the priory has yet to be identified with surety and any development around St Mary's will need to consider this potential. The possibility of an earlier Roman settlement has also been suggested.

### *Kidwelly Castle*

The castle was erected by Bishop Roger in 1106 at the mouth of the Gwaendraeth Fach, forming one of a series of Norman strongholds to secure South Wales and command the rivers across which the road to the west passed. The town outside of its walls was established around it, expanding, and growing into what we can see today. It is considered one of the best examples of Medieval churches within South Wales and was made a scheduled monument in recognition of its significant historic value and archaeological potential. It still

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dominates a number of views, acts as a reminder as to the importance the castle played in the development of Kidwelly and is a significant part of the character of the area.

#### *St Mary's Church*

The Kidwelly Priory was one of the smallest Benedictine cells in medieval Wales and after it was burnt down, the parish church of St Mary's was built, now considered to be the largest parish church in South Wales. Its gothic design and tower are particularly notable and visible throughout the area. It also marks the site of the old town and a physical link to the story of Kidwelly's history.

#### *Industrial revolution*

The town prospered in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century through the trade links which its position on the river have supported since its development. This included a large tinplate factory, the second to be developed in Wales, and a number of sizeable brickworks which exported bricks throughout the world. The houses, shops, chapels and churches were a product of this prosperity and retain a visible link to this period within the town's development.

#### *Significant views*

The topography of the area creates a series of significant views to, from and through the CA, including long street views contrasted against the shorter enclosed and deflected views and wider views outwards to the landscape and river beyond. Each of these views provides a different perspective of the area, how it has developed and alter the way one moves and

experiences each part. The spire of St Mary's and ruins of the castle are also significant landmarks within the streetscape.

#### *Buildings of significance*

There are a series of listed buildings throughout the CA which are listed due to their architectural quality and their surviving historic fabric. As such they not only present a high-quality aesthetic but also allow one to understand how you may have experienced the area in the past. Where there is surviving historic fabric, this can also guide the reinstatement of lost details and inspire future development which is derived from the high-quality character of the area.

#### *Historic boundaries*

Although a number of historic boundaries have been lost, there are a series of stone walls and decorative railings which significantly add to the street views, maintain the characteristic hard edge to the street as well as provide evidence of historic plots.

#### *Notable religious buildings*

A series of churches and chapels offer moments of discovery, often dominating street views or defining corner blocks. They are all of high architectural quality and invite exploration as well as maintaining a tangible connection to the historic development of religious communities within the town.

#### *Notable events and people*

The CA has witnessed several notable historic events, has been home to several notable residents and retains a physical connection to many of these through built structures. This includes Gwenllïan, who led the Welsh army to attack the town and castle at Maes Gwenllïan; the second earliest tinplate works was established here in 1737; the Town Hall and Rumsey House designed by TWA Evans, who was an architect and Mayor of Kidwelly; Sir Alfred Stephens built an extensive brickworks and donated Park Stephens to the town in 1921; and the castle and bridge, which were often the site of inspiration for noted artists including Turner.

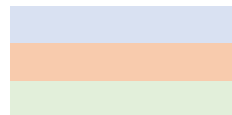


	Evidential Value	Historical Value	Aesthetic Value	Communal Value
Historic street pattern	High Value	Medium Value	Medium Value	
Old and new towns	High Value	Medium Value	Medium Value	
Archaeological potential	High Value	High Value		
Kidwelly Castle	High Value	High Value	High Value	Medium Value
St Marys Church	High Value	High Value	High Value	Medium Value
Industrial revolution	Medium Value	Medium Value	Medium Value	
Significant views			High Value	High Value
Buildings of significance	High Value	High Value	High Value	Medium Value
Historic boundaries	Medium Value	Low Value	Medium Value	
Notable religious buildings	High Value	High Value	High Value	Medium Value
Notable events and people	Medium Value	High Value		

Low Value

Medium Value

High Value



## 8.0 Issues, Threats, and Management Proposals

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### *Strategic overview*

A conservation area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' as set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. As such, Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) is required to ensure that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area' (Section 72). CCC has a duty 'from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas' (Section 71).

The following table summarises the key issues and threats which have been identified through the preparation of the Character Area Appraisal for Kidwelly. Accompanying each item are recommendations for its management. This list is not comprehensive and does not exclude additional items which may present themselves either currently or within the future development of the CA.

Issues relate to those items which are currently causing harm to the appearance and or the character of the area. Threats are those items which do not currently cause harm but which through insensitive alteration may. Those items which are identified as issues should also be considered as those posing continual threat. Alongside each is a management recommendation intended to ensure the character, appearance of the conservation area, its significance and special architectural and historic interest, is preserved and enhanced. These historic environment recommendations could inform the production

of a wider and more detailed policy document for the management of the area, to be produced by Carmarthenshire County Council.

The issues have been identified through site visits, as well as consultation with stakeholders, County Council officers and members of the public. They relate primarily to the historic built environment, both in the conservation of existing historic fabric and the impact of new development on the character and appearance of the CA. This includes those identified as affecting the public realm.

Examples have also been provided to illustrate both good and bad examples of the management of these items to offer additional guidance when considering development within the area. It is important that the following is read in association with all relevant guidance and policy documents, including the CCC's Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 and supplementary planning guidance.






Item	Issue	Management	
<b>1.0 Views and setting</b>			
1.1	Side streets and the rear of buildings are a characterful part of the CA, offering glimpsed views away from the main thoroughfare. Due to a perceived lack of visibility these areas can encourage anti-social behaviour such as littering, damage to buildings, the public realm, and graffiti. These areas also suffer from a lack of general maintenance in both the public realm and boundary treatments, which erode the character of these areas. An example of this is the carpark to the rear of bridge street and Morfa Lane. Views from the castle in particular need to be considered with wider landscape views back to much of the CA.	Development proposals should be carefully assessed to understand the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of side streets and of rear buildings, as well as key views and main thoroughfares. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the conservation area and there will be a presumption against development which is considered to cause harm. New development within the conservation area or its setting should not obscure or detract from important views within, towards or from the conservation area. Important views and landmarks have been highlighted within the appraisal, however more may be identified by others.	
1.2	Views into and out of the CA can be difficult to protect, since those buildings which have the potential to affect key views can be outside of protected areas such as a CA; their impact can sometimes become fully apparent only after construction. This relates to the introduction of tall buildings outside of the CA, or those on higher ground which affect long distance views of the landscape beyond. For example, whilst much of the CA's setting is protected by terracing which encloses many of the principal road frontages, the topography of the land allows for panoramic and far-reaching views at a number of locations the CA. The far-reaching views of the spire of St Mary's also adds significantly to the area. For example the introduction of contemporary developments to the rivers edge has impacted views from the river side walk and castle grounds.	<p>"Development within the conservation area's setting should be carefully assessed to understand the impact of the proposals on the significance of the conservation area. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against development which is considered harmful.</p> <p>New development within the conservation area or its setting should not obscure or detract from important views within, towards or from the conservation area. Important views and landmarks have been highlighted within the appraisal, however more may be identified by others.</p> <p>Proposals which have the potential to affect and fall within important views which contribute to the significance of the conservation area, and the heritage assets within it, should be assessed carefully. Verified computer generated views showing the potential impacts of proposals may be required to demonstrate the effect on the character and appearance of the area or its setting. "</p>	

Item	Issue	Management
<b>2.0 Demolition of buildings</b>		
2.1	The loss of buildings to the street can cause break points, increase the dominance of traffic and associated hard landscaping and result in blank gable end elevations. For example, where buildings have been removed to create access through to the gatehouse and to create a public square beside St Mary's Church.	There are many listed buildings and unlisted buildings of merit which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and there is a strong presumption that these buildings and their features are retained. Applications for consent to demolish must be made to the local planning authority. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against the creation of modern gaps which would disrupt long elevational views of established street lines.
<b>3.0 Redevelopment</b>		
3.1	The use of modern materials which are not complementary or appropriate to the existing palette of materials can erode the historic character and significance of the CA. Whilst a building should be of its time, some deference to the CA's original palette of materials will ensure continuity. Similarly, buildings of poor design have caused harm to the CA; the original characteristics of 19 <sup>th</sup> and early 20 <sup>th</sup> Century design must be respected to prevent further harm.	Development proposals should respond to and respect the unique character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting, and should be of appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design. Any new development in the conservation area should be of high quality, in terms of design and materials used. Generally, all work to historic buildings, alterations and extensions, should positively respond to the original architectural style of the building, its setting and should enhance its traditional appearance. In considering any proposals reference should be made to the Placemaking and Design Guidance 2016.







Item	Issue	Management	
3.2	<p>Corner plots are important gateways into the CA and mark junctions to branch roads. As an example, those buildings to the north and south of the bridge provide characterful entrances and views back towards and along the bridge. In comparison, that to New Street is considerably weaker, dominated in the main by contemporary developments which step back from the street due to hardstandings.</p>	<p>Development proposals should respond to and respect the unique character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting, and should be of appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design. Any new development in the conservation area should be of high quality, in terms of design and materials used. Where corner buildings are redeveloped or replaced, an understanding of their impact and how they may help to strengthen these key points is required.</p>	
3.3	<p>The pressure for housing has led to infilling of plots to Castle Street and Berkeley Street, often with those of uncharacteristic design which do not respond to the character of the CA.</p>	<p>Development proposals should respond to and respect the unique character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting, and should be of appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design. Any new development in the conservation area should be of high quality, in terms of design and materials used.</p>	
3.4	<p>The visibility of the rear elevations at Morfa Lane and the car park have caused usually overlooked areas of alteration to have a significant impact on the public realm, emphasised by the loss of boundary walls to the street edge. This includes the insertion of rear escape stairs, extensions, and contemporary materials to create new boundaries.</p>	<p>Development proposals should be carefully assessed to understand the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of side street and of rear buildings, as well as key views and main thoroughfares. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the conservation area and there will be a presumption against development which is considered to cause harm.</p>	

Item	Issue	Management
<b>4.0 Inappropriate alterations and loss of original features</b>		
4.1	The topography of the area means that roofs can impact significantly on views and the insertion of items such as aerials and satellite dishes to the roofscape can erode character, particularly in buildings of a uniform style.	The wider use of Article 4 Directions could be considered so that planning permission is required for such alterations.
4.2	<p>"The introduction of seemingly minor works can have a cumulative effect on the building as a whole and the setting of the CA. This includes the following examples:</p> <p>Changing windows to PVC replacements</p> <p>The introduction of new services which are prominently positioned</p> <p>The installation of satellite dishes</p> <p>Loss of cast iron rainwater goods</p> <p>Replacement of slate with red tile and concrete tiles</p> <p>Loss of chimneys</p> <p>Loss of timber panelled front doors</p> <p>Loss of historic boundaries such as railings and rubble stone walls"</p>	<p>Detailed design guidance should be developed to include information on the typical architectural details such as windows, and materials found in the area to assist homeowners wishing to improve their property in ways which are beneficial to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Design guidance should also include advice on retrofitting existing buildings, to improve their thermal performance and the installation of renewable energy sources, without harming the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>The wider use of Article 4 Directions could be considered so that planning permission is required for alterations listed where appropriate.</p>
4.3	The replacement of traditional lime render with pebble dash has had a considerable impact on buildings and views through the CA.	The use of traditional materials such as lime render should be encouraged and applications for the introduction of inappropriate plasters and renders should be refused.







Item	Issue	Management	
4.4	<p>Unauthorised works to buildings appears to be a common problem, including works such as the replacement of historic features such as windows and doors. This has led to a steady erosion of the character of some parts of the CA. Where unauthorised works have occurred, this can encourage other property owners to undertake similar works and can result in a cumulative effect on a larger scale.</p>	<p>Where appropriate the council should seek enforcement action to remediate unauthorised works. Detailed design guidance should be developed including information on the typical colours, architectural details such as windows, and materials found in the area to assist homeowners wishing to improve their property in ways which are beneficial to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Design guidance should also include advice on retrofitting existing buildings, to improve their thermal performance and the installation of renewable energy sources, without harming the character and appearance of the conservation area. The wider use of Article 4 Directions could be considered so that planning permission is required for alterations which at present do not require permission.</p>	
4.5	<p>The repair and maintenance of buildings appears to have suffered throughout the CA with a number of buildings in a poor condition. Due to the nature of the CA this has a significant impact on views and can lead to the partial or total loss of significant heritage assets.</p> <p>"The use of the same colour across numerous buildings has led to the appearance an overly large building to the junction of Station Road and Bridge Street which detracts from views."</p>	<p>Publish guidance on appropriate maintenance and repair of buildings and structures within the Conservation Area.</p> <p>Detailed design guidance should be developed including information on the typical colours (including positive combinations of neighbouring colours), architectural details such as windows, and materials found in the area to assist homeowners wishing to improve their property in ways which are beneficial to the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p>	

## 5.0 Street furniture, signage, roads

Item	Issue	Management	
5.1	Increased traffic density and poorly managed road layouts can have a detrimental impact on the overall character of the area, causing a loss of stopping points, and areas to congregate which would otherwise allow for moments of reflection and appreciation. Limited crossing points and narrow pavements also cause streets to be divorced from each other and a limited appreciation of buildings due to the density of traffic obscuring lower storeys. This is particularly the case at Bridge Street.	Produce and implement a strategy for opportunities for increased pedestrianisation and improved road layouts. The Council will encourage and support proposals for improved cycle and pedestrian connectivity and which incorporate public space.	
5.2	Street 'clutter' created by large amounts of public signage, bollards, bins, and barriers, particularly on roadsides, can cause confusion, obscure views, and detract from the wider environment.	Publish design guidance on the design of streets and public spaces to encourage co-ordinated approach to lighting, materials, boundary treatments and furniture. Prioritise a series of renewals to enhance the appearance of streets including decluttering, maintenance of paintwork and introduction of appropriate surface materials and street furniture.	
5.3	Roads, pavements and contemporary boundary treatments are typically of modern materials and can detract from the setting of buildings and public realm. Several key public realm spaces are also now dominated by parking, hardstanding's and highways furniture which can weaken key gateways in, around and through the CA. For example, at the gatehouse, Castle Road, Lady Street and the public square.	Publish design guidance on the design of streets and public spaces to encourage co-ordinated approach to lighting, materials, boundary treatments and furniture. Prioritise a series of renewals to enhance the appearance of streets including decluttering, maintenance of paintwork and introduction of appropriate surface materials and street furniture.	
5.4	The coordinated approach of high quality street lanterns and street signs within the old walled town have helped to unify this area and uplift the quality of the public realm. In contrast, the roads and streets to the south of the bridge lack consistency and quality in approach and design to the public realm.	<p>"Signage and furniture and should be sensitively designed and integrated into the street scene. A coordinated approach would help to unify the character of the area and uplift the quality of the public realm. Further guidance could be produced on the design of signage and street furniture in the conservation area, to ensure a consistent and high-quality approach is achieved.</p> <p>There is scope for introducing more traditional streetlights, traditional paving materials, and greater street planting throughout the conservation area. "</p>	

Item	Issue	Management	
<b>6.0 Boundary treatments and parking</b>			
6.1	The increase in demand for onsite and on street parking has led to the loss of historic boundary treatments to incorporate hard standings and parking spaces within Castle Street. This can dilute the hard street edge which is characteristic of the area and interrupt views through, in and out of the CA.	Reinstatement of traditional boundary walls should be supported. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against the loss of historic boundary walls which make a positive contribution to the area. The wider use of Article 4 Directions could be considered so that planning permission is required for alterations to historic boundary walls, irrespective of height.	
6.2	The introduction of modern materials to create new boundaries and hard landscaping which are not in keeping with the CA or of sufficient quality can dilute character and interrupt views.	Development proposals should respond to and respect the unique character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting, and should be of appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design. Any new development in the conservation area should be of high quality, in terms of design and materials used. Detailed design guidance should be developed to include information on the typical architectural details such as windows, and materials found in the area to assist homeowners wishing to improve their property in ways which are beneficial to the character and appearance of the conservation area.	



Item	Issue	Management
<b>7.0 Shopfront design</b>		
7.1	<p>The insertion of inappropriate shopfront designs can have a negative impact on the character of the area. There exist a few examples of historic shopfronts within the CA and where these exist, they provide an important contribution to the streetscape and can provide inspiration for future heritage-led design. Features which currently have a negative impact on the CA include:</p> <p>The lack of consideration between the ground floor and the building above, for example the replication of bay widths, and an acknowledgment of architectural detailing and style of the existing building.</p> <p>The lack of consideration between the ground floor and the building above, for example the replication of bay widths, and an acknowledgment of architectural detailing and style of the existing building.</p> <p>Large fasciae which are not in proportion with neighbouring buildings, or which overwhelm the building frontage and cover surviving historic details.</p> <p>The use of inappropriate contemporary materials, or colours, such as Perspex, PVC or aluminium, whose reflective nature typically does not respect the palette of materials within the CA or neighbouring buildings.</p> <p>The loss of traditional hanging signs.</p>	<p>Where an existing shopfront represents a good example of an earlier style appropriate to the character of the area and the host building it should be retained and refurbished rather than replaced. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against the loss of historic shopfronts and signage. The replacement of unsympathetic modern shopfronts with more appropriate designs has the potential to greatly enhance historic buildings and conservation areas and should be supported.</p> <p>Replacement shopfronts should reflect the scale and proportions of the host building. Publish shopfront and signage design guide to demonstrate a best practice approach to materials and design.</p> <p>Replacement shopfronts should reflect the scale and proportions of the host building. Publish shopfront and signage design guide to demonstrate a best practice approach to materials and design.</p> <p>Replacement shopfronts should use high quality and respect the traditional materials of the host building. Publish shopfront and signage design guide to demonstrate a best practice approach to materials and design.</p> <p>The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against the loss of traditional hanging signs.</p>






Item	Issue	Management
<b>8.0 Views and setting</b>		
8.1	The existing green spaces to the rivers edge requires effective, continued protection, particularly during new development and alteration works, including views along the river and to and from each bank	Significant green spaces should be actively maintained, and management processes should be adopted which ensure their special interest, and their ecological value, is preserved and enhanced. There is scope for more tree and other planting to enhance the appearance of the conservation area and its potential for biodiversity and this should be encouraged. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against the loss of trees or green spaces which make a positive contribution to the area.
8.2	The impact of development on the setting of St Mary's and Kidwelly Castle is potentially very significant in consideration of the importance of the area. Any development to the fringes of these , or which has a visible connection across or from it, needs to be carefully considered and managed.	<p>The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against development which is considered harmful. New development within the conservation area should not obscure or detract from important views within, towards or from the conservation area.</p> <p>Proposals which have the potential to affect and fall within the important views which contribute to the significance of the conservation area, and the heritage assets within it, should be assessed carefully. Verified computer generated views showing the potential impacts of proposals may be required to demonstrate the effect on the character and appearance of the area and the setting of these important heritage assets.</p>



Item	Threat	Management
<b>9.0 Demolition of buildings and structures</b>		
9.1	Partial or total demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the CA can erode the architectural quality of the area. This can include whole buildings for redevelopment or partial areas such as chimneys, boundary walls and extensions.	There are many listed buildings and unlisted buildings of merit which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and there is a strong presumption that these buildings and their features are retained. Applications for consent to demolish must be made to the local planning authority.
9.2	The poor condition of buildings which have been out of use or have suffered from poor maintenance, can be used to put pressure on the Local Authority for demolition and redevelopment. This can lead to a misunderstanding that large scale redevelopment is appropriate, when careful management of future alterations could reinstate the original character of these buildings, enhance the CA, and avoid the loss of embodied carbon already spent through its original construction.	Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision. There are many listed buildings and unlisted buildings of merit which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and there is a strong presumption that these are retained. If demolition is proposed, consideration should be given to the whole life carbon cycle, taking into account the embedded carbon of the existing building. It may be appropriate to retain and adapt the existing building rather than to replace it with a new building. The care and reuse of traditional and historic buildings in the area, in order to save energy and carbon dioxide, through better maintenance, management and energy efficiency measures, should be encouraged. Reinstatement of traditional features should be encouraged through the production of a design guide specific to the CA. Applications for consent to demolish must be made to the local planning authority.



Item	Threat	Management	
<b>10.0 Redevelopment</b>			
10.1	The consistency regarding storey height, mass, material, architectural detailing, plot size and relationship to the street causes any deviations from this to have an immediate impact, particularly where there are long ranging views. Where these details vary between the two character areas, these unique qualities also need to be acknowledged.	Development proposals should respond to and respect the unique character and appearance of the conservation area, its character areas and its setting, and should be of appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design. Any new development in the conservation area should be of high quality, in terms of design and materials used. Generally, all work to historic buildings, alterations and extensions, should positively respond to the original architectural style of the building, its setting and should enhance its traditional appearance. In considering any proposals reference should be made to the Placemaking and Design Guidance 2016.	
<b>11.0 Inappropriate alterations and loss of original features</b>			
11.1	The loss of features such as chimneys and the introduction of dormers can fundamentally change the roof-scape and have a detrimental impact on views. This includes the upward extension of buildings to provide additional height at upper storeys.	<p>Detailed design guidance should be developed to include information on the architectural details such as windows, and materials found in the area to assist homeowners wishing to improve their property in ways which are beneficial to the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>The wider use of Article 4 Directions could be considered so that planning permission is required for alterations where appropriate. There will be a presumption against the loss of traditional features which contribute to the conservation area's character and appearance.</p>	

Item	Threat	Management	
<b>12.0 Landscaping</b>			
12.1	Green fringes and trees provide important breaks in an otherwise hard urban area and their loss can substantially harm the character of the area.	There is scope for more tree and other planting to enhance the appearance of the conservation area and its potential for biodiversity and this should be encouraged. The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against the loss of trees or green spaces which make a positive contribution to the area.	
<b>13.0 Shopfront design</b>			
13.1	<p>The introduction of commercial activities within former residential buildings can cause harm through the following;</p> <p>Introduction of signage which does not respond to the proportions or layout of the building.</p> <p>Introduction of shopfront windows which overwhelm the domestic scale of the building and lead to loss of original fabric.</p> <p>Splitting ownership can cause confusion with regard to maintenance and upkeep and lead to the general deterioration of the building.</p> <p>The installation of external security shutters which can materially affect the external appearance of a building and add to a perceived lack of security.</p>	<p>Any proposals for the change of use of existing buildings would require careful consideration of the impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, including any consequent changes to delivery access, parking, and external services, such as condensing units and other plant. Continued residential use in historically residential streets should be encouraged. Publish shopfront and signage design guide to demonstrate a best practice approach to materials and design.</p> <p>The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against inappropriate security shutters that do not respond to the traditional character and appearance of the area. Publish shopfront and signage design guide to demonstrate a best practice approach to materials and design.</p>	

Item	Threat	Management
	<p>The introduction of inappropriately scaled awnings or canopies, often in non-traditional materials, which break the rhythm of terracing and the building line.</p>	<p>The council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the conservation area and there will be a presumption against inappropriate signage and canopies which do not respond to the traditional character and appearance of the area. Publish shopfront and signage design guide to demonstrate a best practice approach to materials and design, including how to incorporate awnings and canopies.</p>



Item	Threat	Management
<b>14.0 General</b>		
14.1	Archaeology	When considering any significant development proposal, the potential impact on archaeological remains should be professionally assessed and advice taken as to how they can be best preserved and protected.
14.2	Climate Emergency	<p>"Retrofit proposals to improve energy efficiency should be carefully considered to ensure compatibility with traditional building materials, functionality and significance.</p> <p>If demolition is proposed, consideration should be given to the whole life carbon cycle, taking into account the embedded carbon of the existing building. It may be appropriate to retain and adapt the existing building rather than to replace it with a new building. The care and reuse of traditional and historic buildings in the area, in order to save energy and carbon dioxide, through better maintenance, management and energy efficiency measures, should be encouraged. "</p>
14.3	Implementation and Review	All the statutory duties under the Planning Acts resulting from conservation area designation need to be adhered to. The Council should adopt the recommendations made here and formulate a formal management plan (it is intended that this report will form the basis of this) which is reviewed regularly to ensure the policies remain useful and relevant. The Council should seek to undertake other relevant studies and produce further guidance as identified here, where the resources for this are available.
14.4	Heritage Impact Assessments	A heritage impact assessment should be provided by applicants, where a proposal is considered to affect the conservation area (either within the boundary or its setting) or a heritage asset within it.

## 9.0 Opportunities

The following opportunities refer to identified possibilities for undoing harm, enhancing the area and the appreciation of it, or managing development. These have been identified through the preparation of this document and the proceeding issues, threats, and management section.

1. The public square beside the church could be a positive place for rest and contemplation of the significance of the CA. The use of traditional boundaries, high quality landscaping, artworks, interpretation, and furniture could help to enhance this space to the benefit of the whole CA and a chance for people to recognise why the area is designated and in turn help increase public awareness and care of the area.
2. The Town Hall is a significant building historically, acts as a junction between Lady Street and Bridge Street and adds to views through the area. However, its redundant state and lack of surrounding public space currently reduces its potential contribution. Its reuse could help improve this but the impact of development upon its character needs to be carefully controlled.
3. The paths and views from the riverbanks provide restful and characterful places for viewing the CA and provides several significant views. As the opportunity arises, the introduction of high quality and consistent boundary materials, wayfinding, lighting, and public realm furniture could increase use of these spaces and in turn promote better care.



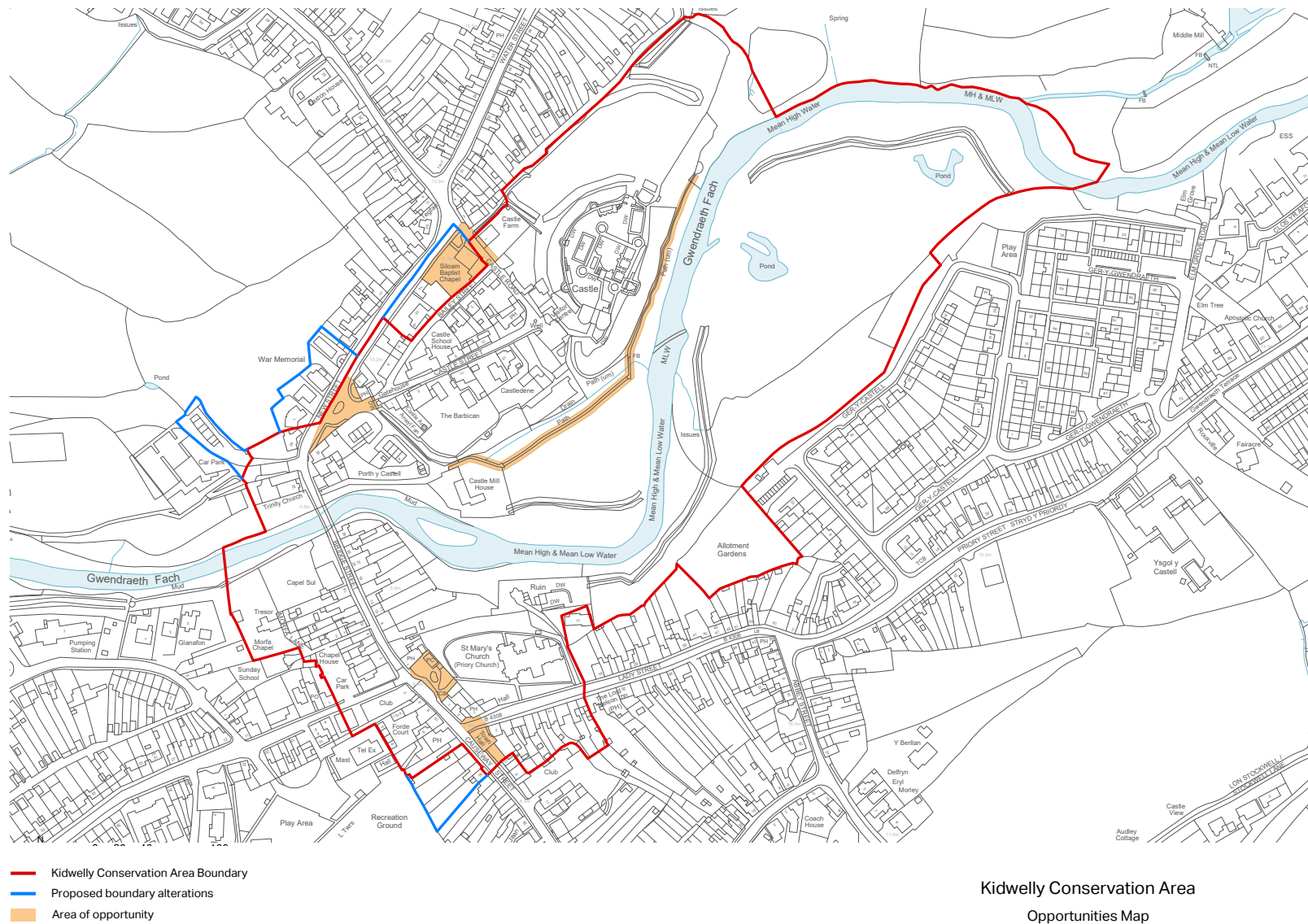
4. The gatehouse is an historically significant structure and still provides an important gateway into the historic walled town. However, the removal of buildings to the street has increased the dominance of traffic, created blank gable ends which has been exacerbated by uncharacteristic contemporary developments, boundary walls and a bus shelter. The introduction of high-quality buildings, hard and soft landscaping and/or narrowing the roads could substantially improve this significant entrance.



5. The entrance to Castle Road is a historically significant gateway into the previous walled town, but traffic signage and contemporary developments currently detract. The inclusion of street trees and traditional signs and lanterns may help tie this entrance back to the streets beyond and signify its historic significance. The chapel may also benefit from a brighter paint scheme, as well as removing the render from the boundary wall.









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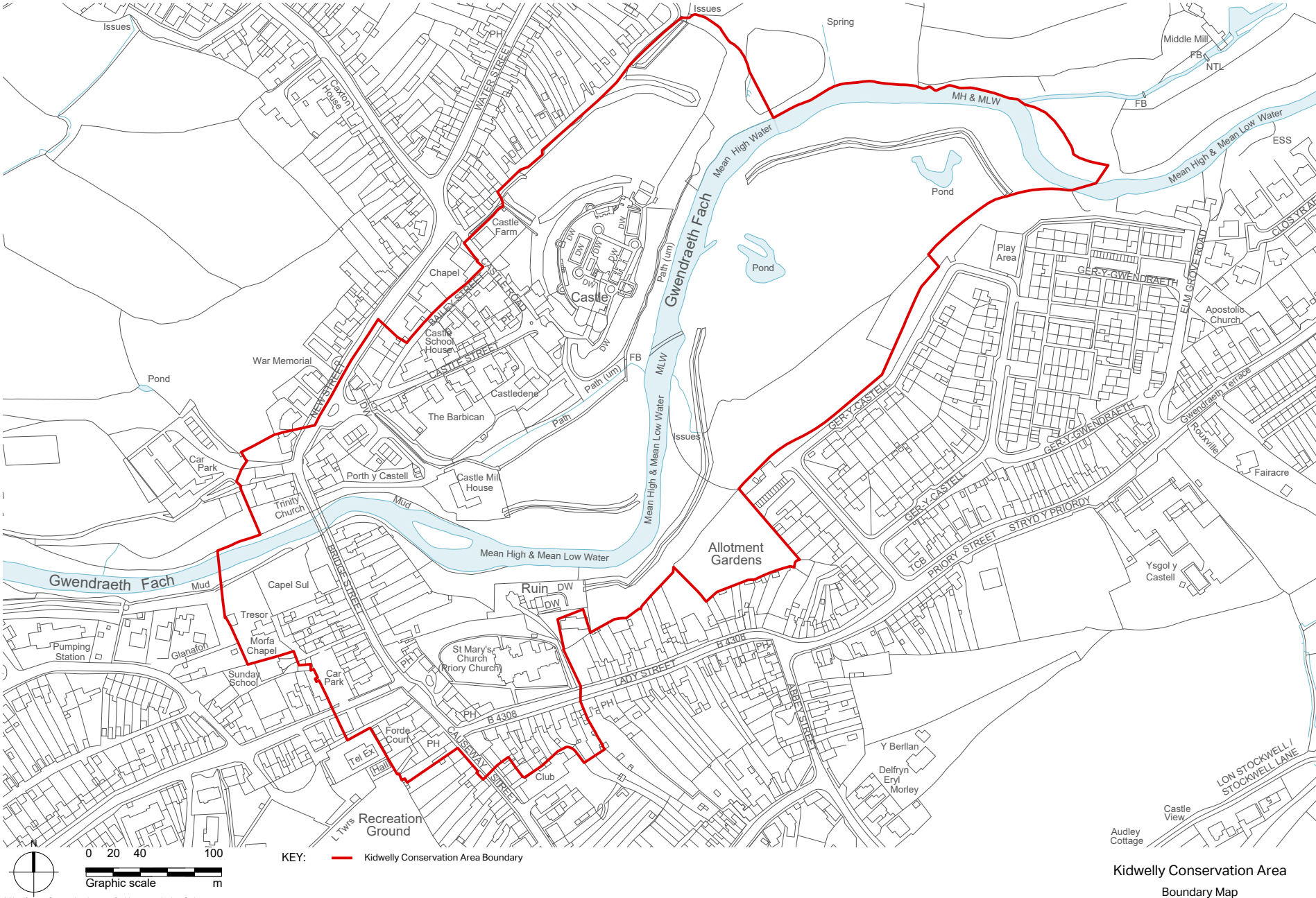


## Appendix II: Glossary

Abbreviation	Formal term	Definition	Abbreviation	Formal term	Definition
A4D	Article 4 Direction	A measure, instigated by a local authority, whereby issues of work which would normally be permitted under planning legislation General Development Orders are bought within the control of the planning department.	CCC	Carmarthenshire County Council	
			GDO	General Development Order	An order, under national planning legislation, which sets out the classes of development which are 'permitted development' and hence do not normally require the issue of formal planning consent
BAR	Building At Risk	A buildings register, maintained by local authorities (supported by Historic England) which includes buildings and structures which are at risk from decay, collapse or other loss. It usually sets out a degree of risk and indicates the type of action which is deemed necessary to remedy the problem.		Cadw	The organization responsible for the protection of historic buildings, structures, landscape and heritage sites in Wales
			LB	Listed Building	A building of architectural and/ or historic interest which is protected by inclusion on a list of such buildings maintained by Cadw. The building will be graded – grade 1 for the most important, Grade 2* for the next most important or grade 2 for the remainder which comprises about 95% of the total
CA	Conservation Area	An area, designated by the local authority, the character of which it is desirable to preserve of enhance			
CAA	Conservation Area Appraisal	A report which assesses the character and effectiveness of the CA at a particular time			
CPO	Compulsory Purchase Order	A legal instrument for the compulsory purchase of land by a local authority of government agency for a defined purpose and at a fair rate		Burgage Plot	A burgage plot is usually characterised as a long walled plot, garden or yard, behind a building, the front of which faces one of the older streets in a town or city with medieval origins
	Fascia	The space in which a sign is displayed, typically above a shop			

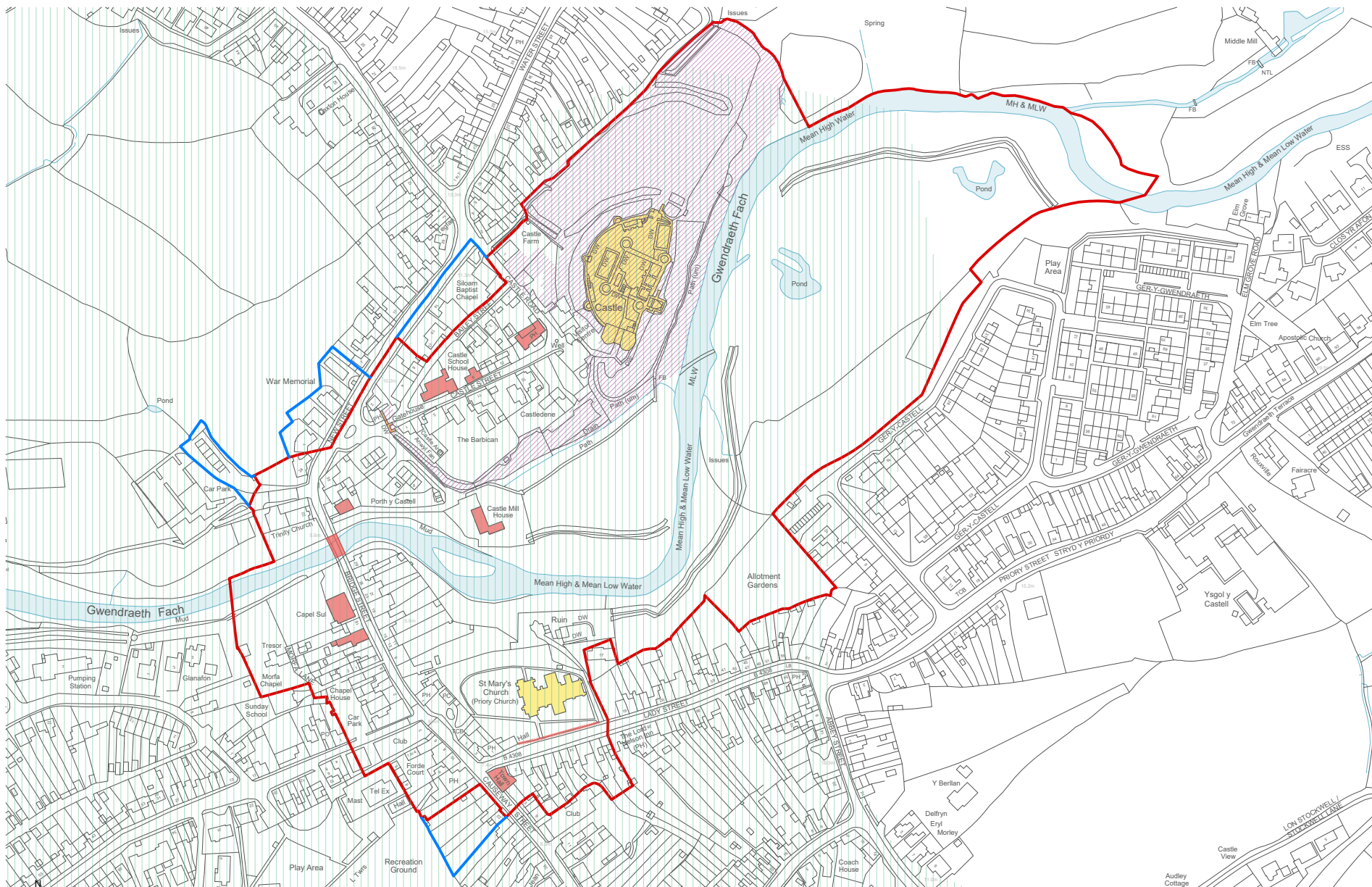
Abbreviation	Formal term	Definition	Abbreviation	Formal term	Definition
LBC	Listed Building Consent	An approval for the carrying out of works to a listed building (which would otherwise constitute a criminal offence) issued by the local authority and following consultation with a set list of national and local amenity bodies and organisations	Sn215	Section 215 Notice	A notice under the planning acts which a local authority can issue to owners or occupiers for the tidying up of land or buildings which are deemed to be harmful to the amenity of an area
LP	Local Plan	A document prepared by or on behalf of the local authority setting out its planning policy for a forthcoming fixed period; it will include policy concerning the natural environment, conservation, highways, building development among a wide range of other topics.	SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance	A document which sets out a particular policy specific to a site or area which can be used as material evidence in determining any relevant planning application. The content of the document will have been prepared with this specific intent and will require to be formally adopted as one of its suite of planning documents by the authority concerned
PPW	Planning Policy Wales	National policy outlining guidance for making planning decisions	TPO	Tree Preservation Order	An order made by a local planning authority in Wales to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodland in the interest of amenity. An order prohibits the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage and wilful destruction of trees without local authority's written consent
P(LBCA) Act 1990	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	A consolidating act which brought together previous diverse pieces of legislation into one Act of Parliament			
	Repairs Notice	A notice issued under sections 47 and 48 of the P(LBCA) Act 1990 requiring owners or occupiers to carry out urgent repairs to listed buildings			

Appendix III: Maps

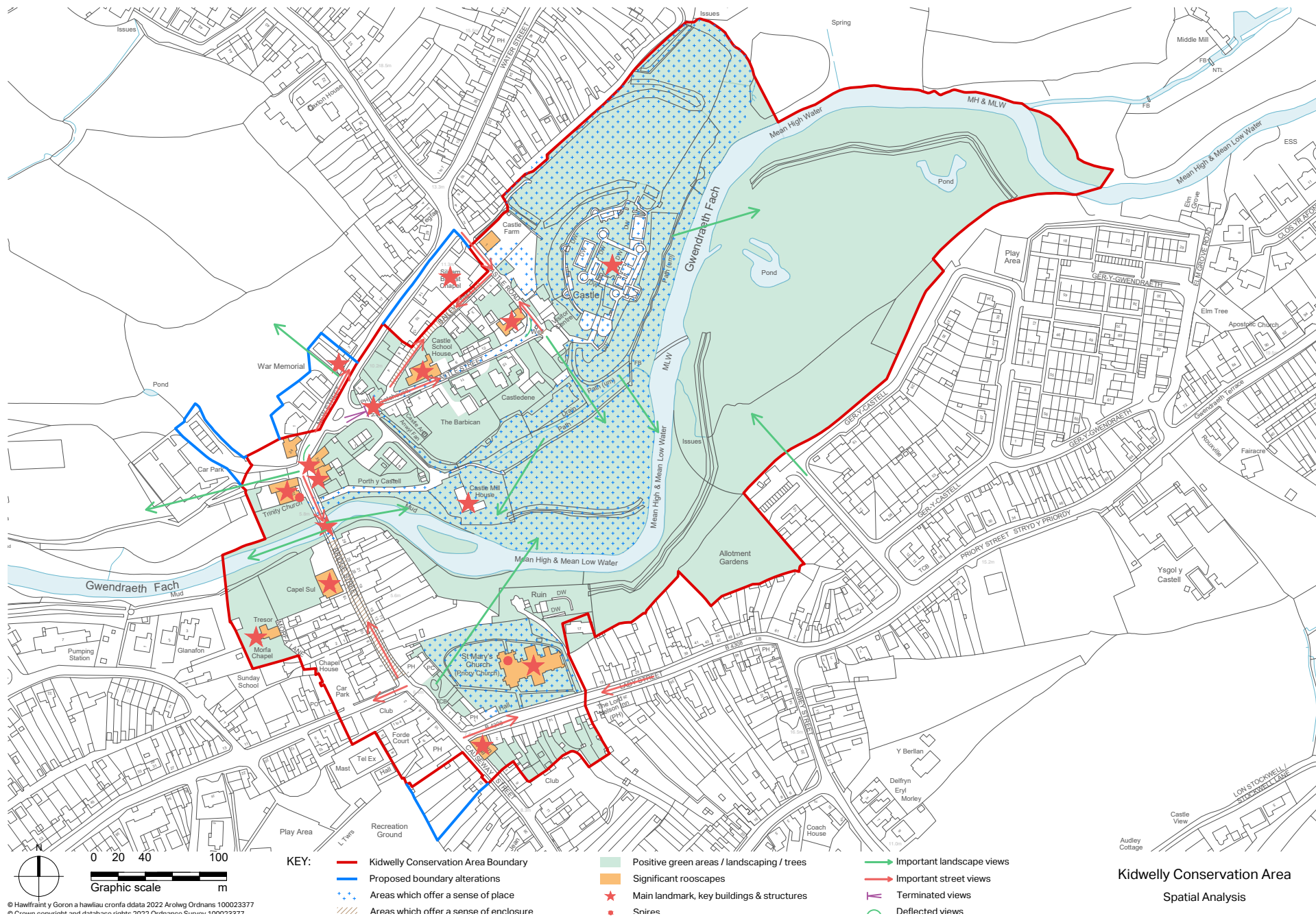


Kidwelly Conservation Area  
Boundary Map

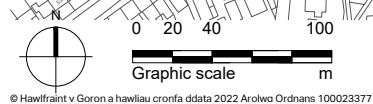
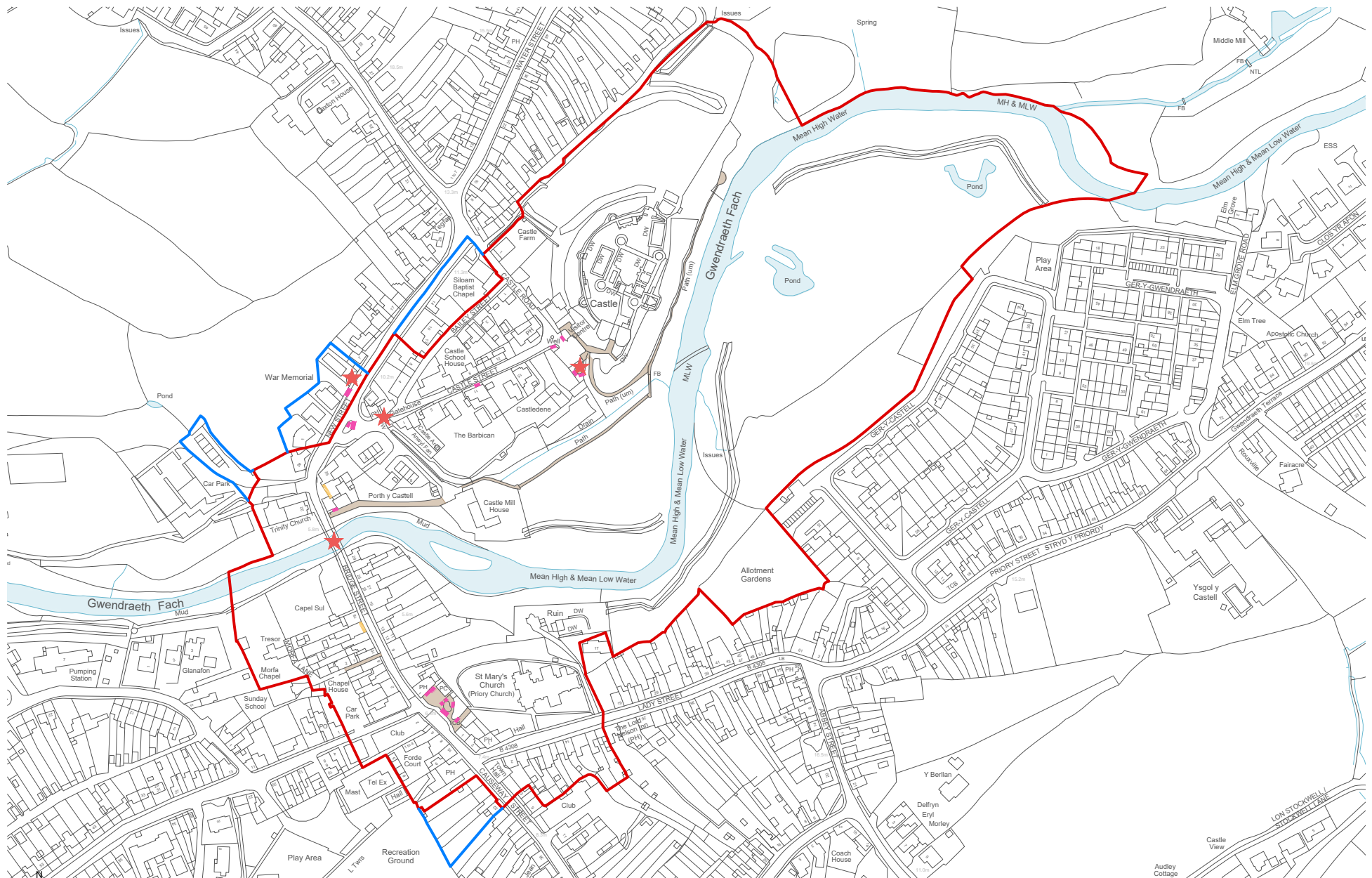




- KEY:**
- Kidwelly Conservation Area Boundary
  - Proposed boundary alterations
  - Listed buildings Grade I
  - Listed buildings Grade II\*
  - Scheduled Monuments
  - Registered Landscapes of Outstanding and of Special Interest in Wales





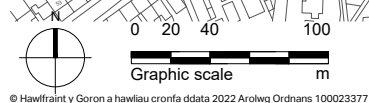
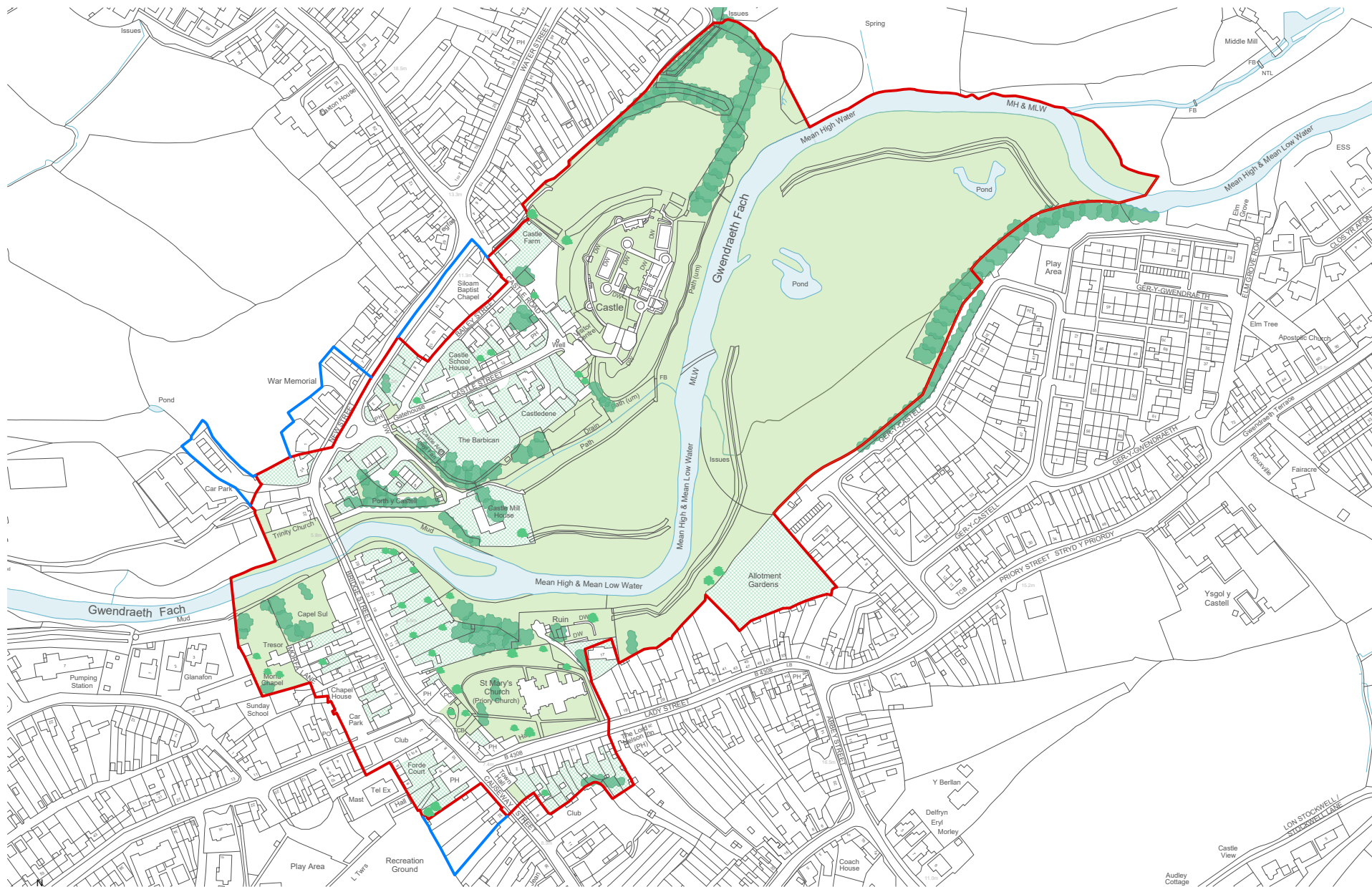


- KEY:**
- Kidwelly Conservation Area Boundary
  - Proposed boundary alterations
  - Pedestrian areas

- Historic townscape feature
- Historic shopfront
- Street furniture

**Kidwelly Conservation Area**  
Public Realm





- KEY:**
- Kidwelly Conservation Area Boundary
  - Proposed boundary alterations
  - Green spaces

- Private / semi-private gardens
- Trees
- Group of trees

**Kidwelly Conservation Area**  
Trees, Green Spaces, Parks and Gardens

## Appendix IV: Boundary Review

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As part of the preparation of this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, a review of the Conservation Area boundary has been undertaken to understand the rationale for designating the area, and whether development since its initial designation means that this boundary should now be redrawn. This review has been undertaken through a series of site surveys, as well as desk-top research and consultation with the Local Authority, stakeholders, and the public.

There are three suggested alterations proposed to the Kidwelly Conservation Area, each of which can be identified on the following map. The location and reasons for these alterations are set out below:

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## Area 1 – Siloam Baptist Chapel

### *An extension to the current boundary*

The primary elevation of the chapel is currently excluded from the CA, although the rear elevations align with the current boundary. This junction is the location of the historic gateway into the walled city and is the pedestrian and traffic access into this castle. The chapel is also an important landmark and part of the story of the establishment of religious communities within the town. Its inclusion would help to reunify the boundaries of the historic walled town and ensure development and redevelopment of the chapel consider their impact on the CA.





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## Area 2 – War memorial, slaughterhouse, and surrounding landscape

### *An extension to the current boundary*

The war memorial is currently excluded but in and of itself, plus its potential contribution to views in and out of the CA and entrance to the gatehouse, is, and could be, more significant to the benefit of the CA. The two contemporary development to the south of this currently detract, but their inclusion would ensure that any future redevelopment reflects the characteristics of this area and help to uplift the gatehouse entrance. The ruined slaughterhouse is currently excluded, although interpretation has been included to explain its significance to the history of the town. As such, it is proposed it is included to reunite it back within the core of the historic town. The slaughterhouse and war memorial both benefit from landscape views outwards which are a significant characteristic of the area and the protection of these views and control of future development would be to the wider benefit of the CA.



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### Area 3 – Causeway Street

*An extension to the current boundary*

The 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings opposite the Town Hall are currently excluded. Their impact on the entrance into the CA and upon the Town Hall is important and should be considered if and when the Town Hall is repurposed.





## Appendix V: Summary of Related Legislation, Policy, and Guidance

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The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires:

- Local planning authorities to determine areas where it is desirable to preserve and enhance, and designate them as conservation areas (section 69 [1])
- Local planning authorities to review their past activities in this area, including existing conservation areas, and to add more conservation areas (section 69 [2])
- Local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and consult the public in the area in question, taking account of views expressed (section 71 [1 and 2])
- In the exercise by local planning authorities of planning functions within the conservation area 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area' (section 72 [1])

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty of well-being on public bodies, which must set out and publish well-being objectives designed to maximise their contribution to achieving each of the seven well-being goals. One of these goals is a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, described as 'a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language'. There are clear synergies between the specific duty to preserve or enhance conservation areas, as required by the 1990 Act, and the general duty to promote and protect

heritage, as set out in the 2015 Act. Properly protected and enhanced conservation areas can improve the quality of life and well-being for everyone.

Planning Policy Wales February 2021

- The historic environment is made up of individual historic features which are collectively known as historic assets. Conservation areas are considered historic assets.
- Paragraph 6.1.6 states that the Welsh Government's specific objectives for the historic environment seek to: [...] preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous.
- Paragraph 6.1.14 notes that there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas or their settings. Positive management of conservation areas is necessary if their character or appearance are to be preserved or enhanced and their heritage value is to be fully realised. Planning authorities should establish their own criteria against which existing and/or new conservation areas and their boundaries should be reviewed. The preparation of conservation area appraisals and management plans can assist planning authorities in the exercise of their development management functions.
- Paragraph 6.1.15 notes that there is a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments, including advertisements, which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level. In exceptional cases, the presumption may be overridden in favour of development considered desirable on public

interest grounds.

- Paragraph 6.1.16 notes that preservation or enhancement of a conservation area can be achieved by a development which either makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance or leaves them unharmed. Mitigation measures can also be considered which could result in an overall neutral or positive impact of a proposed development in a conservation area.
- Paragraph 6.1.17 notes that conservation area designation introduces control over the total or substantial demolition of unlisted buildings within these areas, but partial demolition does not require conservation area consent. Procedures are essentially the same as for listed building consent. When considering an application for conservation area consent, account should be taken of the wider effects of demolition on the building's surroundings and on the architectural, archaeological or historic interest of the conservation area as a whole. Consideration should also be given to replacement structures. Proposals should be tested against conservation area appraisals, where they are available.
- Paragraph 6.1.29 notes that development plans should consider the inclusion of locally specific policies relevant to the historic environment. These must be distinctive and only cover those elements deemed as important considerations from a local planning perspective. They might include locally specific policies relating to:
- Listed buildings and conservation areas – development plans may include locally specific policies for the conservation of the built historic environment, including the protection or enhancement of listed buildings and conservation areas and their settings. They may also include



policies relating to re-use or new development that affect particular historic areas and/or buildings, which may assist in achieving urban and rural regeneration. Development plans should not include policies for the designation of new conservation areas or extensions to existing conservation areas, nor should they include detailed statements or proposals for existing conservation areas. The process of assessment, detailed definition or revision of boundaries and formulation of proposals for individual conservation areas should be pursued separately from the development plan.

- Paragraph 1.36 notes that the Welsh Ministers have reserve powers to make their own Revocation/Modification or Discontinuance Orders, but only after consultation with the planning authority. Such intervention would overturn a planning authority's judgement on a matter which is, in the first place, its responsibility and may only be justified in exceptional circumstances. The general principle is that such action should be considered only where the original decision is judged to be grossly wrong, so that damage would be done to the wider public interest. This policy also applies to the use of the Welsh Ministers' default powers in respect of listed buildings and conservation area consent.

Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment, 2017

This document sets out that:

- Local planning authorities are responsible for designating conservation areas and they hold the definitive information on their boundaries.
- Supplementary Planning Guidance may be developed and adopted by a local planning authority to assist them in delivering policies in the local

development plan. Specific guidance relating to the historic environment might include topics such as: Conservation area management plans.

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance and designate them as conservation areas. They should review their areas from time to time to consider whether further designations or revisions are called for. The Welsh Ministers also have powers to designate conservation areas after consultation with the local planning authority. This is a reserved power that is used in exceptional cases, for instance, where an area is of more than local interest.

6.2 Conservation area designation provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area's special interest: this might include the pattern of settlement and the organisation of space and routes as well as the style and type of building, and the use of materials and detail. Green infrastructure may also be important, but conservation area designation is not likely to be an appropriate means of protecting landscape features, except where they form an integral part of the historic built environment.

6.3 Local planning authorities must from time to time formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in a management plan. In accordance with best practice, this should be every five to ten years. It is good practice for local planning authorities to adopt the management plan as supplementary planning guidance. They must also give special

attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing conservation areas when taking planning decisions. In exceptional circumstances where part or the whole of a conservation area no longer possesses the special interest which led to its designation, the designation may be amended or cancelled.

6.4 A conservation area appraisal is the foundation for any proposals for preservation and enhancement. It provides a detailed picture of the special interest of an area and identifies opportunities and priorities for action which can provide the basis for a more detailed management plan. It should include an analysis of the policy and management needs of the area, including an assessment of the effectiveness of current planning controls, the need for supplementary protection and the identification of ways in which special character can be preserved or enhanced. Local development plan policies and development management decisions which relate to conservation areas will have a sounder basis and make more positive contributions to long-term aims if the character of each conservation area is defined and policies for its preservation and enhancement are set out in detail in a management plan. Consideration can also be given to whether to introduce Article 4 Directions in these areas.

6.5 By their very nature, conservation areas have multiple stakeholders and management arrangements should provide opportunities for participation and engagement in plan and decision making. Proposals for preservation and enhancement will also be most effective when all council departments understand the significance of designation and work together.

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A development team approach that recognises the contribution of other departments, such as highways and housing, is therefore strongly recommended.

6.6 Local development plans may include locally specific policies for the protection or enhancement of conservation areas. In such circumstances, the local development plan should make clear that development proposals will be judged against their effect on the character or appearance of a conservation area as identified in the appraisal and management document. Certain development proposals within a conservation area, including the provision of one or more dwelling houses, the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space created by the development is 100 square metres or more, will require a design and access statement.

6.7 Many conservation areas include the commercial centres of towns and villages. Generally, there will be an emphasis on controlled and positive management of change that encourages economic vibrancy and social and cultural vitality and accords with the area's special architectural and historic qualities. Many conservation areas include sites or buildings that make no positive contribution to, or indeed detract from the character or appearance of the area; their replacement should be a stimulus to imaginative, high-quality design and an opportunity to enhance the area.

6.8 One of the purposes of the advertisement control system is to encourage the display of outdoor advertisements which make a positive contribution to the appearance of the environment. It is reasonable

to expect that the local planning authority's duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area will result, in practice, in more exacting standards when the authority considers whether to grant consent for a proposed advertisement in such an area.

6.9 In conservation areas it is important for local planning authorities to be flexible in their use of their powers under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992, because many areas include retail and commercial premises ranging from small corner shops to thriving commercial centres. Outdoor advertising is essential to commercial activity and the success of local businesses will usually help owners and tenants of commercial premises to maintain buildings in good repair and attractive in appearance.

6.10 Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area, though there are some exceptions. In this context, the courts have ruled that demolition amounts to pulling down a building so that it is destroyed completely or at least to a very significant extent. Therefore, the removal of an entire building except its facade could also count as demolition.

6.11 The Welsh Ministers may direct that Conservation Area Consent is not required for certain descriptions of buildings and the Welsh Ministers have directed that Conservation Area consent is not required for certain works. These works include the demolition of a building with a total cubic content not exceeding 115

cubic metres and the demolition of a built boundary feature that is less than one metre high where abutting a highway, waterway or open space, or less than two metres high in any other case. This means that many works which involve the destruction of the fabric of part of a building will not be works of demolition and will not require conservation area consent.

6.12 Applications for consent to demolish must be made to the local planning authority. Applications for Conservation Area Consent will require a heritage impact statement, which should explain why demolition is desirable or necessary alongside a broader assessment of the impact of the proposals on the character or appearance of the area.

6.13 There should be a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. Proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings (see 5.15). In cases where it is considered a building makes little or no contribution, the local planning authority will normally need to have full information about what is proposed for the site after demolition. Consent for demolition should not be given without acceptable and detailed plans for the reuse of the site unless redevelopment is itself undesirable. The local planning authority is entitled to consider the broad principles of a proposed development, such as its scale, size, and massing, when determining whether consent should be given for the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area.

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6.14 It may be appropriate to impose a condition on the granting of consent for demolition so that it does not take place until full planning permission has been granted and a contract for carrying out the development work has been made.

6.15 Local planning authorities have the power to protect trees and woodlands by making tree preservation orders. In addition, there is a special provision for trees in conservation areas which are not the subject of tree preservation orders. Anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area is required to give the local planning authority six weeks' notice, during which time the local planning authority can decide whether to protect that tree with a tree preservation order.

6.16 When considering whether to extend protection to trees in conservation areas, local planning authorities should always consider the visual, historic and amenity contribution of trees. In some instances, new or re-plantings may be desirable where this would be consistent with the character or appearance of the area.

6.17 Enforcement has a key role to play in the protection of conservation areas and local planning authorities should consider a more proactive approach, including monitoring development activity and ensuring compliance with the terms of regulatory controls, rather than just investigating when a formal complaint is made. A positive and active approach to enforcement will help to reduce the number of contraventions and secure sustained improvements in environmental quality.

6.18 An applicant has a right to appeal against certain decisions or failure to take a decision by the local planning authority on a conservation area consent. An appeal may be made in circumstances including the following: Where a local planning authority: Refuses an application for conservation area consent; Grants an application for conservation area consent subject to conditions; Refuses an application for the variation or discharge of conditions attached to a conservation area consent; Refuses an application for approval required by a condition imposed on the granting of conservation area consent; or Fails to determine an application for consent within 8 weeks of its validation by the local planning authority.

6.19 An appeal is made to the Welsh Ministers on a form within six months of the applicant being notified of the local planning authority's decision.

Managing Conservation Areas in Wales, Cadw, 2017

Managing Conservation Areas in Wales supplements Planning Policy Wales<sup>1</sup> and Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment. Managing Conservation Areas in Wales sets out the policy context and duties for local planning authorities to designate and manage conservation areas. It also identifies key aspects of good practice for their designation and appraisal, including the participation of stakeholders and the development of local policies for positive management and enhancement so that their character and appearance are preserved and enhanced. It should also help local planning authorities to take account of Cadw's Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (Conservation Principles) to achieve high-quality sensitive change.



