

Water Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



Location: Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, Wales

Date: 12 May 2026

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Commissioned by: Carmarthenshire County Council Built Heritage Team

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Executive Summary

The Water Street Conservation Area was designated in 1995 and this Appraisal and Management Plan provides an updated, evidence-based assessment of the architectural and historic significance of Water Street, Carmarthen, and establishes a clear strategy for its long-term preservation, enhancement, and sustainable management. Prepared by the Carmarthenshire County Council Built Heritage Team, with supporting analysis from Purcell, the document brings together detailed historic research, on-site appraisal, and community engagement to form a comprehensive understanding of the area and its future needs.

Water Street is one of the historic approaches into the centre of Carmarthen and retains a distinctive linear form, a varied townscape, and a rich concentration of historic buildings, including five listed structures and the Grade II* Capel Heol Dŵr. Its significance derives from its historic development, architectural diversity, associations with the Rebecca Riots and the Calvinistic

Methodist movement, and its contribution to the wider historic core of the town.

The appraisal identifies a number of issues currently affecting the character and condition of the conservation area. These include the deterioration of historic buildings due to insufficient maintenance, the use of inappropriate modern materials, and widespread damp caused by incompatible renders, ineffective rainwater goods, and vegetation growth. The cumulative impact of uPVC windows and doors, modern shopfronts, external wiring, satellite dishes, and non-traditional cladding has eroded historic detailing and weakened the architectural coherence of the street. Without intervention, these issues pose risks to the long-term sustainability of the buildings and the quality of life for residents.

In response, the Management Plan sets out a series of opportunities and actions aimed at reversing decline and supporting sensitive, informed change. These include promoting regular maintenance, improving public understanding of traditional building performance, reinstating lost historic features, removing unsympathetic alterations, and encouraging the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques. Strengthened community engagement and clearer design guidance are identified as key tools in supporting owners and developers to make positive contributions to the area.

As part of this review, proposed boundary changes have also been considered to ensure that the conservation area accurately reflects the extent of its historic and architectural interest. The appraisal recommends modest adjustments to include additional buildings and spaces that contribute to the area's significance - most notably the Sunday School associated with Capel Heol Dŵr, which forms an integral part of the chapel complex but currently sits outside the designated boundary. Incorporating this building, along with other minor refinements, will create a more coherent and defensible boundary and strengthen the protection of the area's most important heritage assets.

Together, the appraisal and management plan provide a robust framework for safeguarding the special interest of the Water Street Conservation Area. By supporting sensitive repair, informed decision-making, and community stewardship, the document aims to ensure that Water Street continues to evolve in a way that respects its historic character, enhances its appearance, and contributes positively to the wider townscape of Carmarthen.

Crynodeb Gweithredol

Dynodwyd Ardal Gadwraeth Stryd y Dŵr yn 1995 ac mae'r Asesiad a'r Cynllun Rheoli hwn yn darparu gwerthusiad diweddar, wedi'i seilio ar dystiolaeth, o arwyddocâd pensaernïol a hanesyddol Stryd y Dŵr, Caerfyrddin, ac yn sefydlu strategaeth glir ar gyfer ei chadwraeth, ei gwella a'i rheolaeth gynaliadwy yn y tymor hir. Wedi'i baratoi gan Dîm Treftadaeth Adeiledig Cyngor Sir Caerfyrddin, gyda dadansoddiad ategol gan Purcell, mae'r ddogfen yn cyfuno ymchwil hanesyddol fanwl, asesiad ar y safle, ac ymgysylltiad cymunedol i greu dealltwriaeth gynhwysfawr o'r ardal a'i hanghenion yn y dyfodol.

Mae Stryd y Dŵr yn un o'r prif ffyrdd hanesyddol i ganol Caerfyrddin ac yn cadw ffurf linellol unigryw, trefgordd amrywiol, a chrynodeiad cyfoethog o adeiladau hanesyddol, gan gynnwys pum strwythur rhestredig a Chapel Heol Dŵr Gradd II*. Mae ei harwyddocâd yn deillio o'i datblygiad hanesyddol, amrywiaeth pensaernïol, cysylltiadau â Gwrthryfel y Rebecca a'r mudiad Methodistiaid Calfinaidd, a'i chyfraniad at graidd hanesyddol ehangach y dref.

Mae'r asesiad yn nodi nifer o faterion sy'n effeithio ar gymeriad a chyflwr yr ardal gadwraeth ar hyn o bryd. Mae'r rhain yn cynnwys dirywiad adeiladau hanesyddol oherwydd diffyg cynnal a chadw, defnydd o ddeunyddiau modern amhriodol, a lleithder eang a achosir gan rendrau anghydnaws, offer dŵr glaw aneffeithiol, a thwf llystyfiant. Mae effaith gronnol ffenestri a drysau uPVC, ffasadau siopau modern, gwifrau allanol, dysglau lloeren, a gorchuddio anghynhenid wedi erydu manylion hanesyddol ac wedi gwanhau cydlynidat pensaernïol y stryd. Heb ymyrraeth, mae'r materion hyn

yn peri risg i gynaliadwyedd tymor hir yr adeiladau ac ansawdd bywyd trigolion.

Mewn ymateb, mae'r Cynllun Rheoli yn nodi cyfres o gyfleoedd a chamau gweithredu i wrthdroi dirywiad a chefnogi newid sensitif a gwybodus. Mae'r rhain yn cynnwys hyrwyddo cynnal a chadw rheolaidd, gwella dealltwriaeth y cyhoedd o berfformiad adeiladau traddodiadol, ailgyflwyno nodweddion hanesyddol coll, dileu addasiadau amhriodol, ac annog defnydd o ddeunyddiau a thechnegau atgyweirio priodol. Mae ymgysylltiad cymunedol cryfach a chanllawiau dylunio cliriach yn cael eu nodi fel offer allweddol i gefnogi perchnogion a datblygwyr i wneud cyfraniadau cadarnhaol i'r ardal.

Fel rhan o'r adolygiad hwn, mae newidiadau ffin arfaethedig hefyd wedi'u hystyried i sicrhau bod yr ardal gadwraeth yn adlewyrchu'n gywir ehangder ei diddordeb hanesyddol a phensaernïol. Mae'r asesiad yn argymhell addasiadau cymedrol i gynnwys adeiladau a mannau ychwanegol sy'n cyfrannu at arwyddocâd yr ardal – yn arbennig yr Ysgol Sul sy'n gysylltiedig â Chapel Heol Dŵr, sy'n rhan annatod o'r gymhleth capel ond sydd ar hyn o bryd y tu allan i'r ffin ddynodedig. Bydd cynnwys yr adeilad hwn, ynghyd â mân welliannau eraill, yn creu ffin fwy cydlynol ac amddiffynnol ac yn cryfhau'r amddiffyniad i asedau treftadaeth pwysicaf yr ardal.

Gyda'i gilydd, mae'r asesiad a'r cynllun rheoli yn darparu fframwaith cadarn ar gyfer diogelu diddordeb arbennig Ardal Gadwraeth Stryd y Dŵr. Trwy gefnogi atgyweirio sensitif, gwneud penderfyniadau gwybodus, ac arweinyddiaeth gymunedol, mae'r ddogfen yn anelu at sicrhau bod Stryd y Dŵr yn parhau i esblygu mewn ffordd sy'n parchu ei chymeriad hanesyddol, yn gwella ei hymddangosiad, ac yn cyfrannu'n gadarnhaol at drefgordd ehangach Caerfyrddin.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Report

This report has been prepared by the Carmarthenshire County Council Built Heritage Team, with input from Purcell Architecture Ltd in the form of an assessment of Significance undertaken in March 2025.

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 2024 (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 Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12 February 2024
- Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment, 2017
- Managing Conservation Areas in Wales, Cadw, 2017

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

1.4 Heritage Regeneration

Our built heritage is a huge resource which helps to shape how our towns and villages look and feel.

Giving new life to these assets has been one of the cornerstones of the economic and social revival of our towns and the integration of heritage into regeneration projects has played an increasingly important and successful role in many major regeneration schemes, providing opportunities for conservation and development to work together to transform the built environment.

Even when in a poor or vacant condition, our built heritage remains an 'asset' with the ability to enrich our experience of our surroundings through their fabric of their historic or community associations. Heritage assets are also a key component of sustainable development. Replacing buildings demands a considerable investment of energy and the reuse of buildings safeguards the embodied carbon emitted during the production of the materials used. Many energy conservation improvements can be carried out to older buildings, often at a relatively low cost, creating comfortable and energy efficient buildings.

There is a strong economic case for regenerating historic buildings. These benefits relate not only to the individual building, but also to the wider area and community. This includes:

- improvement to the town and spaces around them
- improvements in personal safety and the reduction of crime
- increased community involvement and a sense of ownership which in turn helps to maintain spaces in good order and encourage further investment
- increased employment
- reversing population decline
- improvement of image encouraging more footfall and visitors
- improvement in confidence and creating a sense of pride
- indirect inward investment into the wider area
- a sustainable use of resources through reuse of past materials and embedded energy

Heritage assets can sometimes be perceived as an obstacle to regeneration being considered too costly, unviable, lacking efficiency and unable to meet occupiers or developers wishes. Yet heritage is valued by people and communities, and it forms part, or sometimes all, of the identity of a place. Historic buildings and spaces enrich our towns, our experience, create a sense of place and a destination. The key is to find optimum viable use for the asset which can be accommodated without impacting its conservation value and which is economically sustainable. It is also important to recognise that there is a cost to not endeavouring to successfully integrate heritage buildings into regeneration schemes. A heritage asset which does not receive sufficient care and maintenance can quickly fall into disrepair, lower the overall environmental quality, and counteract the initiatives that are taking place. Heritage Works is a joint publication between Historic England, RICS and the British Property Foundation to help guide owners, developers through the process of heritage regeneration, a link to which can be found in the appendix to this document. Equivalent research is also being undertaken by Cadw and the Welsh Government to add to this discussion.

1.5 What Control Measures Are Brought By Conservation Area Designation

Conservation Area designation brings additional control measures once designated. This is as a result of restrictions to permitted development (works which can be undertaken without the need to gain planning permission). In general, the controls mean that planning permission is needed for works that materially affect the external appearance of a building, this includes but is not restricted to:

- The total or substantial demolition of buildings or structures (including walls of over 1m in height, gate piers and chimneys);
- Other partial demolition including new openings in external elevations;
- Works to trees with a diameter of 75mm or greater, measured at 1.5m from soil level;
- Changes to the external finish of a building (including external wall insulation, rendering, pebble dash or other cladding);
- Changes to the roof shape including installation of new dormer windows and chimneys;
- Any extension other than a single storey rear extension of 4 metres or less (3 metres or less if the house is detached or semidetached);
- Extensions to the side of buildings;
- Any two-storey extensions;
- Erection of an outbuilding to the side of a property;
- Aerials and satellite dishes on chimneys or elevations visible from the street;
- Putting up advertisements and other commercial signage (Advertising Consent may also be required);
- Changing the use of a building (e.g. from residential to commercial); and
- Installing solar panels that are wall mounted on a wall or roof facing the highway.

The Council can develop bespoke controls to ensure that specific elements of a conservation area are protected from harmful change. This is done through the application of an Article 4 Direction. These provide additional control by specifically revoking certain permitted development rights meaning that Planning Permission needs to be sought before work can be undertaken. There are

no Article 4 Directions currently in place in the Water Street Conservation Area.

It should be noted that proposals which affect listed buildings, including changes to their setting, may also require Listed Building Consent.

1.6 Method Statement

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

1. Review of existing information

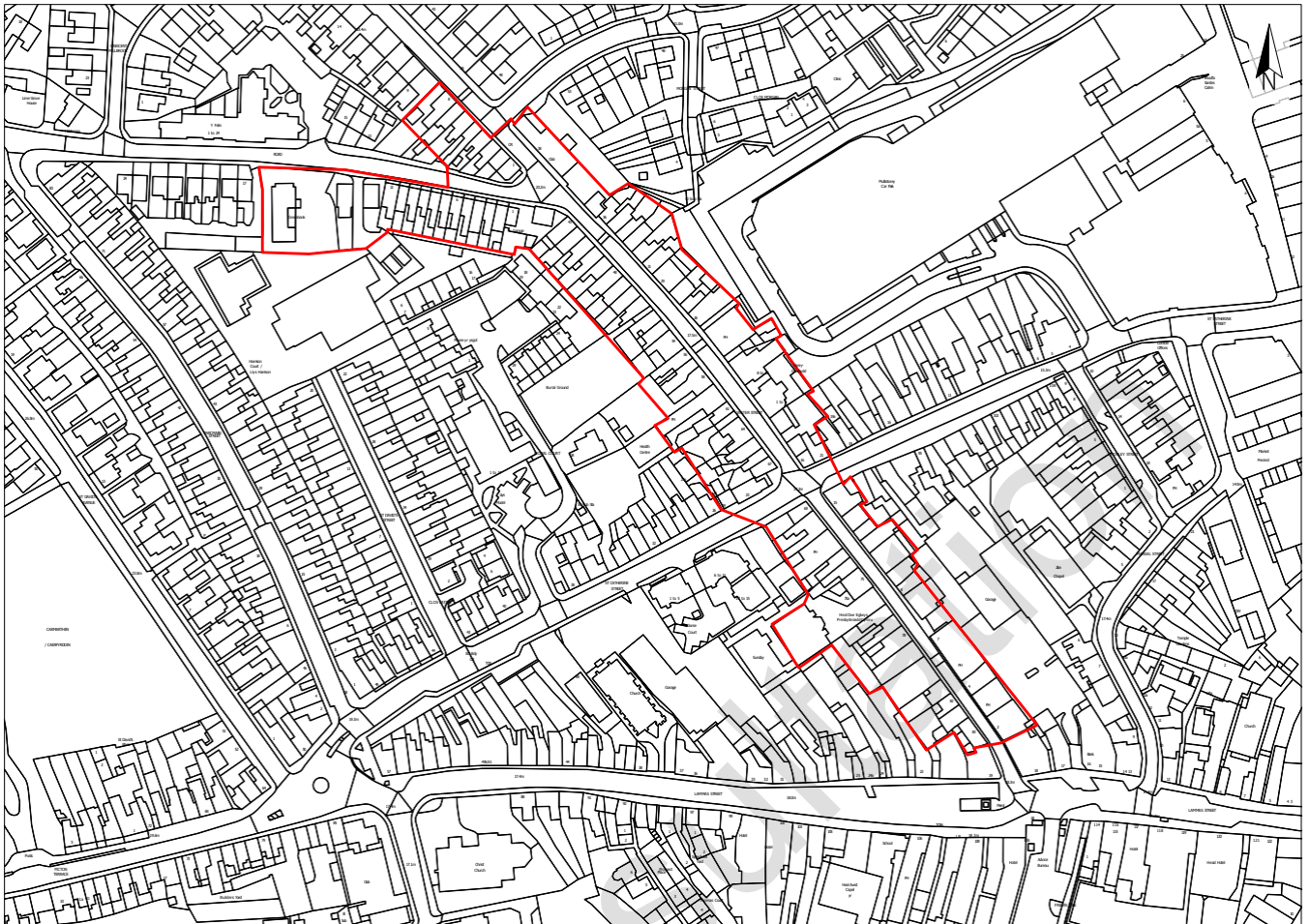
A number of sources were referenced to understand the historic and architectural interest of the area, including published and unpublished documents, planning records, adopted and emerging guidance and legislation and online resources.

2. Information Gathering

Site visits were made by Purcell in February and March 2025 to undertake fabric and spatial analysis. Buildings and sites were viewed from the public realm and were not inspected internally.

3. Community Engagement

A key aim of the project is to understand the historic value of the area to the local community. Engagement with relevant community stakeholders and Council staff will be undertaken during the drafting of this document and will help form its conclusions (**Consultation to be undertaken following Council approval**). This document should be viewed as a starting point for discussion and will be shared further with relevant community stakeholders. We welcome feedback to understand local views on the value of townscape features, issues, and opportunities.



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 6).

- Listed Buildings
- Historic thoroughfare into centre of Carmarthen
- Associations with Rebecca Riots, a worker uprising in Wales.
- Associations with the Calvinists Methodists, illustrating the importance of Carmarthen as a religious centre in the 18th & 19th Century.
- The linear, winding form of the historic street pattern
- Incremental development of the street is seen through the diversity of the building types, sizes, materials and usages.
- Surviving historic and architectural features including chimneys, timber doorcases and canopies, uninterrupted, continuous traditional slated roofscapes, historic shopfronts, openings (windows and doors) of traditional proportions.
- Topography and setting which offers views to, from and within the conservation area.

2.2 Location

The conservation area is in the northwest area of central Carmarthen and abounds the St David's and Parcmaen and Lamma Street Conservation Areas. Water Street is a linear thoroughfare which enters the historic town from the northwest to connect with the centre of Lamma Street. The street is intersected halfway down by St Catherine Street at which there is a busy traffic junction. There is also a short offshoot to the west to include a historic terrace on Glannant Road..

2.3 Description of the Conservation Area

The conservation area includes Water Street, small sections of St Catherine Street at the intersection, and a small section of Glannant Road that includes a short terrace and a detached house, Green Bank House. The buildings are a mixture of historic commercial buildings including shops and public houses, ecclesiastical community buildings and residential housing. Presently, some buildings are still in use as commercial premises however most are used now as residential housing.

In terms of character, the conservation area is split into two halves; the north half above the intersection with St Catherine Street and the south half which connect with Lammas Street. The southern half is narrower and has a greater variety of scale and design across the buildings which creates a historic sense of incremental development.

The conservation area also notably contains the Capel Heol Dŵr, a grade II* Calvinist Methodist chapel, which sits behind the street line with a gated forecourt. However, the associated Sunday School not currently within the conservation area.

2.4 Existing Designations

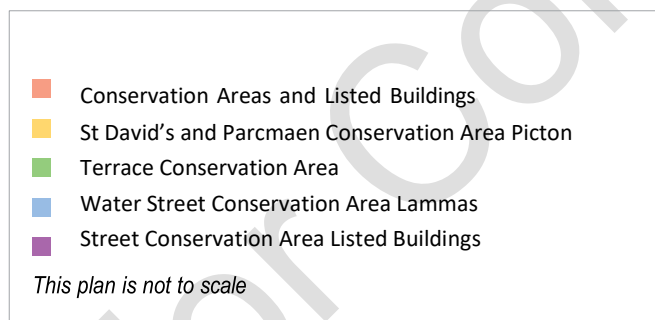
In addition to the conservation area designation the other relevant designations within the area comprise five listed buildings:

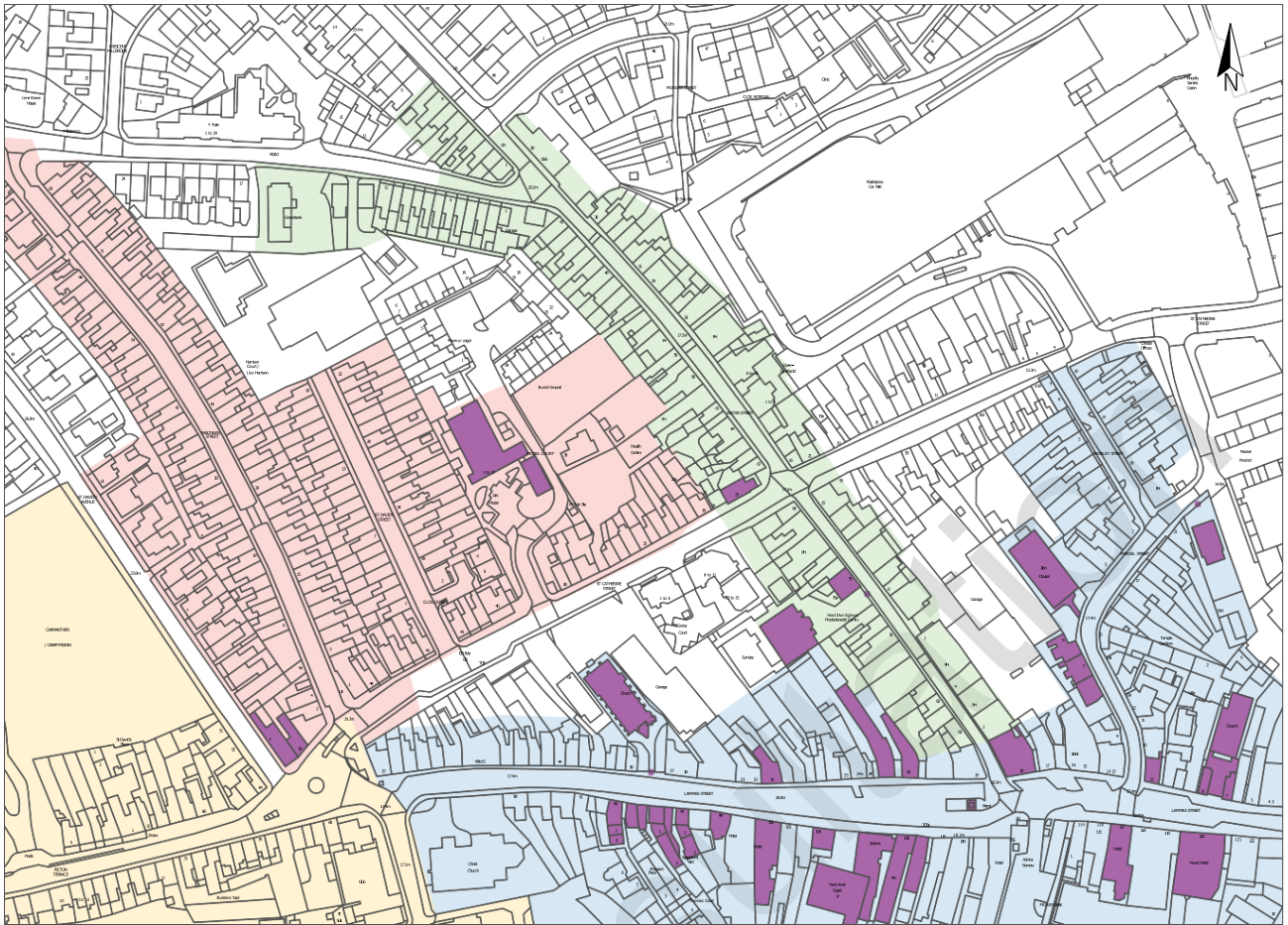
- 23 St Catherine Street
- 24 St Catherine Street
- 75 Water Street
- Gates, piers and railings to Capel Heol Dŵr Forecourt
- Capel Heol Dŵr

The conservation area is also neighboured by a number of other conservation areas including:

- Lammas Street Conservation Area immediately to the south
- St David's and Parcmaen Conservation Area immediately to the west

These designations are shown on the map below.





3.0 Historic Development of the Conservation Area

Carmarthen is considered to be the oldest continually occupied settlements in Wales, with a rich history dating back to the Roman period. The town can be split into two historic halves; Old Carmarthen which was centred around the Roman Fort and St John's Priory on the eastern side, and New Carmarthen which was Anglo-Norman in character and was focused on the Castle and the corresponding city walls.

The Water Street Conservation Area is located to the northwest of the historic New Carmarthen above Lammas Street.

Water Street is marked on the 1786 map of Carmarthen and the conservation area is shown as the northwestern edge to the historic core of the town. No specific buildings are drawn out on this map, however the street pattern is clearly shown; an entranceway from the northwest into Lammas Street which is intersected halfway down by St Catherine Street (which is labelled on this map also as Water Street).

Notes in the margin of this map describe Water Street as being occupied by public houses, residential houses and gardens. The land between the streets in the northwest corner of Carmarthen are shown to be open fields, parks and gardens at this time and it is assumed that there were also open spaces away from the main thoroughfare of the principal streets.

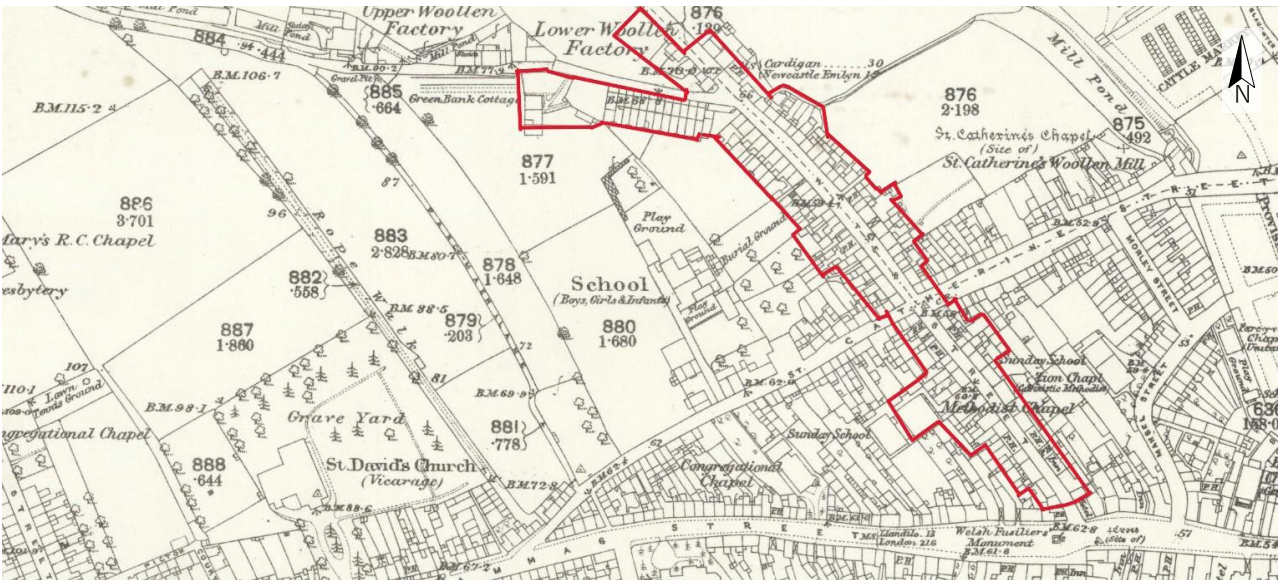


The 1834 town map details the individual houses that had been built within the conservation area boundary by the early 19th century. Water Street is recorded in two halves; the southern half which leads into Lammass Street is labelled as Upper Water Street, and the northern half above the junction with St Catherine Street is labelled as Lower Water Street.

The land behind the west side of Lower Water Street is shown to be occupied by nurseries with open fields extending to the west; there are not yet any structures on the northwest side of the street or on the corner of what is now Glannant Road. A paper mill is recorded just outside the boundary to the northwest of the conservation area.

Several public houses are marked along both halves of Water Street, with one labelled in the map key as the Bear on Upper Water Street close to the Methodist Chapel, Capel Heol Dŵr, which was built in 1831. The Sunday School to the rear of Capel Heol Dŵr had not yet been built at this time.

A toll gate is shown at the top of Lower Water Street at the entrance to the historic town. This was destroyed by approximately 300 farmers during the Rebecca Riots on 17th May 1843 during demonstrations against the extortionately high tolls to enter Caermarthen to attend the markets. The male rioters were dressed as women and obscured their faces with black paint to avoid recognition. A similar riot took place at Caermarthen Workhouse later that year on 19th June. A blue plaque on the former inn at the junction with Glannant Road on Water Street marks the location of the former toll gate and commemorates the riot.

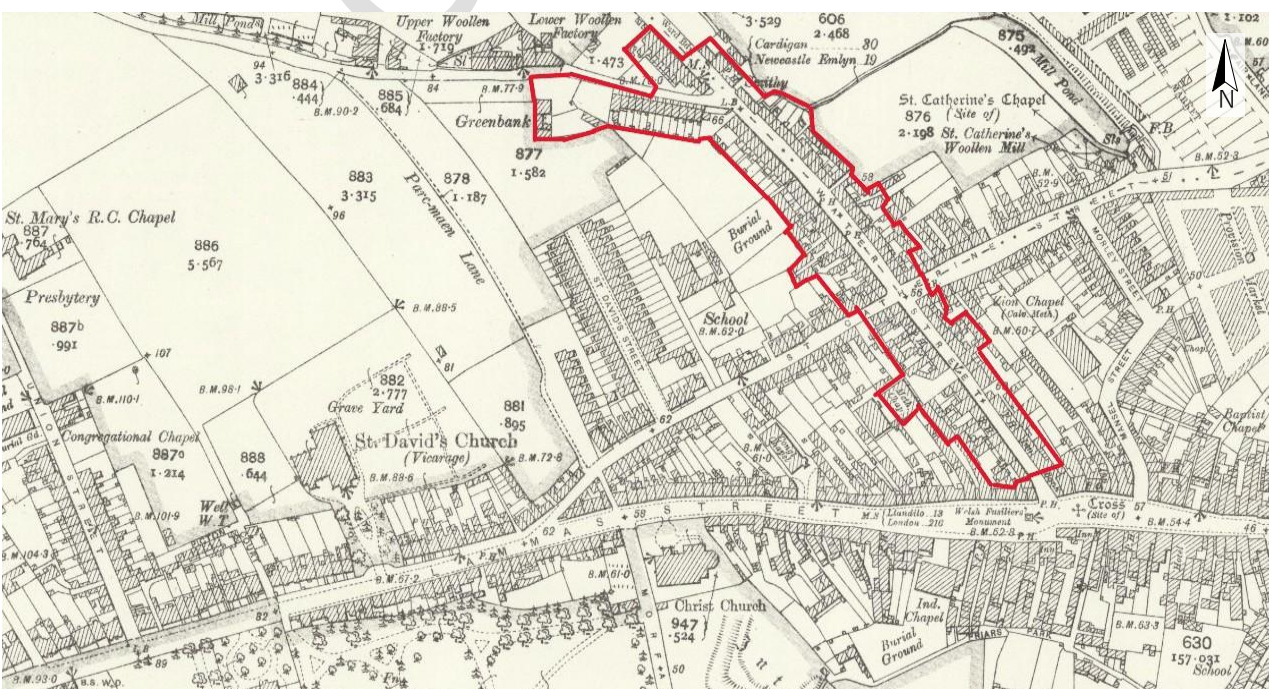


The 1886 Carmarthenshire map, with the Water Street Conservation Area marked. Small-scale development has taken place since the early 19th century, indicating the growth of Carmarthen throughout the Victorian period. (National Library of Scotland).

The 1886 Carmarthenshire map shows that Water Street continued to be an entranceway into the historic town.

The toll house is no longer marked following its destruction during the Rebecca Riots, however a public house is shown in its place. Terraced houses have been constructed at the northwest end of Water Street and on the southern side of Glannant Road on the land that had previously been marked as nurseries. The immediately west of the conservation area there has been the addition of the Model School and its associated playgrounds, however the open fields beyond have been left undeveloped. The paper mill marked on the 1834 map has been converted into a pair of wool mills with associated mill ponds, and Greenbank Cottage has been built on the south side of Glannant Road west of the terraced houses.

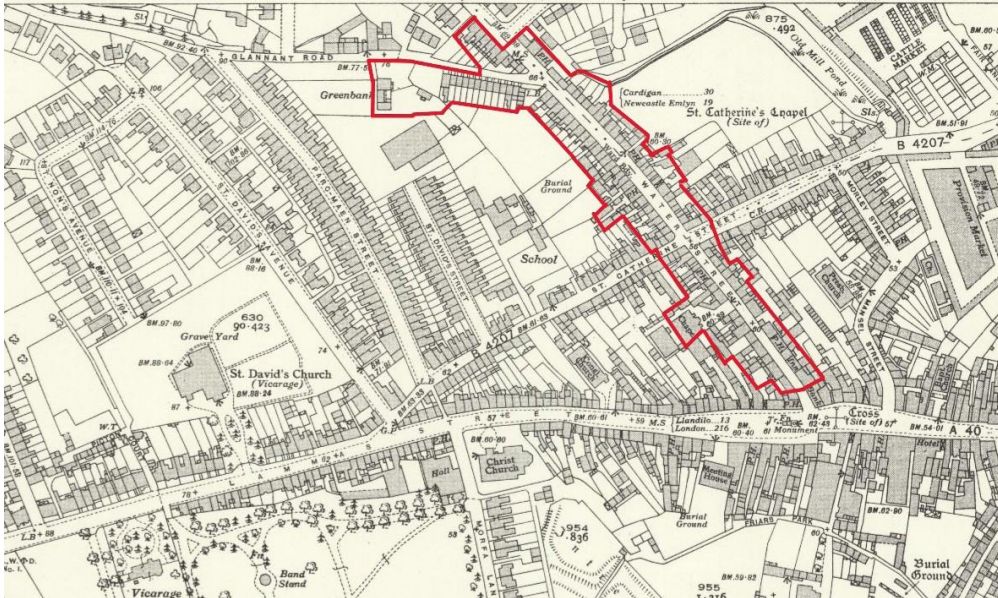
In the southern portion of Water Street, the Sunday School for Capel Heol Dŵr, west of the conservation area boundary, has been built behind the principal chapel building to the west.



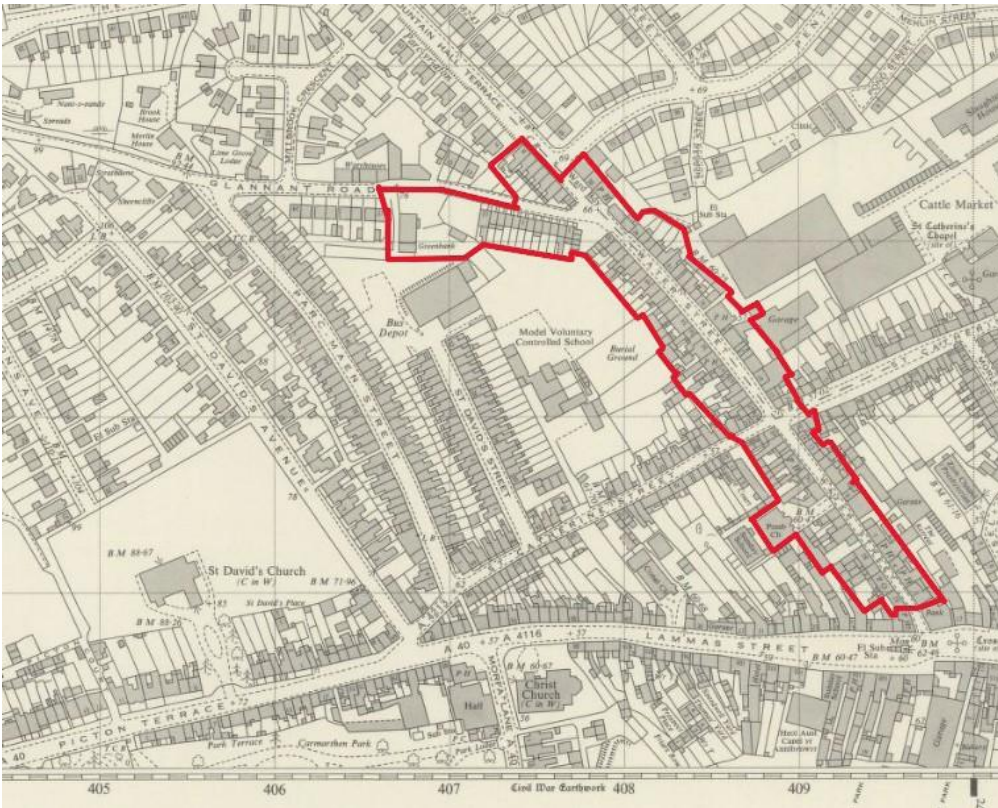
The 1905 Carmarthenshire map, with the Water Street Conservation Area marked. (National Library of Scotland).

The 1905 map of Carmarthen shows little change within the Water Street Conservation Area, with only the addition of a short terrace of houses at the northern most end of the street above the junction to Glannant Road.

In the surrounding area, the west of Water Street is beginning to be developed at the turn of the 20th century with the construction of St David's Street, the beginnings of construction of Parcmaen Street and the building of St David's Church on Picton Terrace.



The 1936 map shows the completed Parcmaen Street, St David's Avenue and St Non's Avenue to the west of Water Street, and the 1968 map shows the northern development along Fountain Hall Terrace and north of Glannant Road. By the end of the 20th century, the Water Street Conservation Area was within an urban setting and marked the edge of the historic core of Carmarthen. It was no longer on the outskirts of the town as it had been at the beginning of the century.



The 1968 Ordnance Survey Map, with the Water Street Conservation Area marked. (National Library of Scotland).

4.0 Analysis of the Water Street Conservation Area

4.1 Topography

The section of Water Street between Lammas Street and St Catherine Street is flat, with a slight curve in the road to the northwest.

Beyond the junction with St Catherine Street, the road gently inclines northwest up towards Fountain Hall Terrace beyond the boundary of the conservation area. The road continues to curve slightly northwest to meet Glannant Road which extends off westwards.

4.2 Use

Historically, Water Street has been an entranceway into the historic centre of Carmarthen and therefore has buildings which have been used for a range of uses, including commercial, hospitality and residential. Presently, the use in this area is predominantly residential however there are instances of continued commercial and office use.

The former commercial uses can be seen in the survival of historic shopfronts and buildings with proportions that indicate their use as inns and public houses. The north half of Water Street is predominantly residential, and Glannant Road is entirely residential in use.

The notable exception to this is Capel Heol Dŵr on the south half of Water Street. The chapel sits behind the street line with a gated forecourt which gives it a sense of separation from the street. This is in keeping with several other chapels in Carmarthen follow this planform in being set back from the main thoroughfare within their own forecourts.



The north half of Water Street, looking north. There is a diversity of building size and scale which is suggestive of a range of former historic uses.



The Capel Heol Dŵr and its gated forecourt as seen from Water Street, looking west



A former historic shopfront, infilled to convert the building into residential housing

4.3 Settlement pattern / arrangement of streets

The settlement pattern and arrangement of the streets The Water Street Conservation Area is linear, with a northwest offshoot at Glannant Road. Historic mapping shows that this is a historic street pattern as access into Carmarthen from the northwest.

The principal throughfare is dissected by St Catherine Street, which has historically also been recorded as Water Street on the mapping. This intersection is now a busy road junction for traffic coming into Carmarthen and using St Catherine Street, which is heavily trafficked as a main road through the town east to west. The north half of Water Street is busier with both traffic and pedestrians and the south half of Water Street is noticeably quieter.

4.4 Building typology, scale and massing

The Water Street Conservation Area has a variety of building uses, historically and presently, as well as a diversity in scale and massing which together creates a character across the street which pertains to the historic status of Water Street as a thoroughfare into the centre of Carmarthen.

As a route into the town, Water Street was the location of commercial buildings such as shops

and inns which is visibly apparent in the surviving historic features and the form and design of buildings along the street. Many of the historic shop buildings along Water Street have been converted into residential housing. Evidence of former traditional shopfronts can be seen on the principal façade of these buildings where they have been infilled. Other traditional shopfronts have been removed and replaced with uPVC units.

Water Street has also several examples of residential buildings. These include terraced houses, which from the available historic mapping were added to the northwest side of the street in the mid to late-19th century and are regular in form and proportion as a planned development. These are similar in typology to other late-19th century terraces in Carmarthen but add historic interest to the Water Street Conservation Area in demonstrating the ongoing historic development of the street.

The listed pair of terraced houses on St Catherine Street are also a part of this narrative as modest 18th century buildings that demonstrate the evolution of Carmarthen. The form of the listed houses, single storey with attics, contrasts the larger commercial buildings and later domestic housing and its location at the junction of Water Street and St Catherine Street indicates the historic street plan.



Traditional shopfronts and pubs on Water Street, looking south towards Lammas Street.



The pair of listed houses on the corner of St Catherine Street at the junction with Water Street, looking west.



Late 19th-century terraces at the north end of Water St

Larger residential houses are also present on Water Street and these are predominantly found in the south half of the street immediately north of Lammas Street. These buildings are generally symmetrical two and three storey buildings with some surviving decorative features such as door canopies, rendered detailing and large door and window openings.

Capel Heol Dŵr is an important building on Water Street and distinctive in its form, location and orientation in relation to the street. Set back behind its own gated forecourt, the Chapel is a symmetrical two storey structure with a canted central three- sided projecting bay with pedimented porches with Tuscan columns and semi-elliptical headed doorways with traceried fanlights and panelled doors to either side. The principal east elevation also has two large arched windows with late 19th century Florentine tracery with roundels and a collection of early 19th century monuments either side of the porches.

The Sunday School to the rear of the Chapel is also distinct in the context of the Water Street Conservation Area as it is clearly associated with the Chapel and also set behind the street. It is built in an exposed rubble stone with large windows and decorative brick detailing which contrasts the rendered exteriors of the other buildings on Water Street. The listed house adjacent to the forecourt gates to the Chapel is a large residential building currently used as offices, the proportions and detailing of which positively contributes to the character of this area of Water Street.

The southern half of Water Street immediately north of Lammas Street is narrower than the street beyond the St Catherine Street junction; this gives the illusion that the buildings are larger, or certainly taller, than the buildings in the norther half of the conservation area. All buildings are two storeys, some with attics, with individual instances of three storey buildings. This variety in heights and the stepping up of buildings to accommodate the topography travelling northwest through the conservation area gives the street a historic character and visual interest. The variance between individual buildings suggests, particularly in the southern half of the conservation area and around the junction with St Catherine Street, that the development of Water Street was incremental and took place over a long period of time as this became the entranceway into Carmarthen from the northwest.



The east elevation of Capel Heol Dŵr.



The north elevation of the Sunday School to the rear of Capel Heol Dŵr



The listed building on Water Street, to which the forecourt railings of Capel Heol Dŵr are attached.

4.5 Boundary treatments

Buildings predominantly face directly onto the road within the Water Street Conservation Area so there are no visible boundary treatments from public roads.

The exceptions to this are the terrace of houses on the south side of Glannant Road, which have low masonry walls to the front of the principal elevation, Green Bank House which has a large retaining wall to the front elevation, and the listed iron railings and gates to the forecourt of Capel Heol Dŵr, which are set upon dwarf walls and are highly decorative.



The terrace on Glannant Road with low boundary walls.



The railings and gates to Capel Heol Dŵr which separates the forecourt from Water Street.

4.6 Materials and architectural features

There is a wide variation of materials and architectural features within the Water Street Conservation Area.

Buildings are understood to be constructed in masonry and have been externally rendered, in both roughcast and stucco. Renders that would likely have historically been lime-based have been replaced in modern cement. As inappropriate materials for use in traditionally built buildings, these will be causing issues with damp within these structures.⁰³ The colour palette of external finishes is diverse, with many buildings painted in varied and bright colours which could be considered to bring visual interest to the views along the street. Individual buildings have examples of rusticated render, especially along the southern end of Water Street which may have been influenced by the rustication of the Capel Heol Dŵr. There are also instances of additional modern external coverings such as mock-timber studwork, rubble- style cladding and glazed tiles, which do not contribute to the character of the area.

The roofs of buildings lining the street are pitched and covered with Welsh slate, with some areas of artificial slate replacement. Surviving chimneys have been built in brick, however it is apparent that some have been removed along the northern half of Water Street. Generally, roofscapes are uninterrupted however there are isolated examples of traditionally styled dormer windows to historic buildings on the southern half of Water Street, in addition to isolated instances of rooflight installation to front roof pitches.

Most of the historic timber windows within the Water Street Conservation Area have unfortunately been replaced with uPVC units. uPVC has also been used for doors, shopfronts, rainwater goods for many buildings along the street. Doors and windows generally have stone or concrete sills and surrounds. The use of uPVC is inappropriate within the context of the conservation area and detracts from its architectural interest.



Rendered exterior to buildings in the northern half of Water Street, each painted in bright colours.



The southern half of Water Street, looking southeast. Roofs vary in height but have matching pitches and are covered in slate, whilst some of the larger building have additional dormers and rooflights to the attics.



The north end of Water Street, looking southeast. Historic timber windows and doors have been replaced with uPVC units.

There are also examples of surviving traditional timber shopfronts with historic detailing; some of these are to commercial buildings still in use whereas others have been infilled to convert buildings into residential houses. Additionally, houses along the length of Water Street have surviving timber canopies and door surrounds, plaster articulation around doorways and passageway access to the rear of buildings that add a historic and architectural interest to the streetscape.



Traditional shopfronts constructed in timber.



Surviving historic shop windows and timber door canopies constructed in timber.

4.7 Green / open space and trees

As a high-density urban area, there are no open green spaces or trees within the Water Street Conservation Area. The only exception to this is Green Bank House on Glannant Road which sits within a larger plot and is screened from view from the road by trees and hedging.

North of the conservation area boundary on Fountain Hall Terrace, mid-20th century semi-detached houses are elevated above the road on grassed verges with planting and trees, which soften the long view into the Water Street Conservation Area.



The grassed verges, planting and trees north of the Conservation Area boundary that frame views along Water Street from Fountain Hall Terrace.

Setting and views

The immediate setting surrounding the southern half of the Water Street Conservation Area is historic urban in character, with the neighbouring Lammas Street and St David's and Parcmaen in addition to the nearby Carmarthen Town and Picton Terrace conservation areas and continuing 20th century expansion beyond illustrating the different phases of development within the town. The setting around the northern half of Water Street is suburban in character, with predominantly 20th century developments occupying the spaces adjacent to the conservation area boundary.

Key views within the Water Street Conservation Area are those which highlight the street's length, form and diversity of building types and sizes. Of note are the long views into the conservation area from Lammas Street looking north and from the bend in the road at the top of the hill on Fountain Hall Terrace. These emphasise the street's historic character due to the topography and curving alignment and the view from Fountain Hall Terrace shows the clear distinction between the start of the historic core of Carmarthen and the later, 20th century suburban developments.



View of Water Street from Lammas Street, looking northwest.



View from the south half Water Street, looking northwest.



View from the top of Fountain Hall Terrace at the bend in the road, looking southeast towards the Water Street Conservation Area.



View from the Conservation Area Boundary at the north end of Water Street, looking south.

5.0 Significance

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.

- Listed Buildings
- Historic thoroughfare into centre of Carmarthen
- The linear, winding form of the historic street pattern
- Associations with Rebecca Riots, a worker uprising in Wales.
- Associations with the Calvinists Methodists, illustrating the importance of Carmarthen as a religious centre in the 18th & 19th Century.
- Incremental development of the street is seen through the diversity of the building types, sizes, materials and usages.
- Surviving historic and architectural features including chimneys, timber doorcases and canopies, uninterrupted, continuous traditional slated roofscapes, historic shopfronts, openings (windows and doors) of traditional proportions.
- Topography and setting which offers views to, from and within the conservation area.

Listed Buildings

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 Street Pattern

The linear, winding form of the historic street pattern which traverses the uphill topography to the north and is seen through the long views through the conservation area, both from the north looking south and from the south looking north, and evidences the status of Water Street as the entranceway into the historic core of Carmarthen.

Notable events and people

Historic mapping shows that Water Street was a historic entranceway into the centre of Carmarthen, initially with a toll gate at the north end of the street. It is this toll gate in particular which offers associative historic social interest with the Rebecca Riots, a mid-19th century worker uprising in Wales. Water Street also has an association with the Calvinist Methodists who were known to be present in the area from the mid-18th century; Capel Heol Dŵr is a rebuilding of a chapel which was built in the garden of significant Methodist leader, Peter Williams, who translated the Bible into Welsh in the 1770s. The associated Sunday School, which is unlisted and outside of the conservation area boundary, is illustrative of the expanding congregation and the importance of Carmarthen as a religious centre in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Development of the Street

The Water Street Conservation Area has architectural interest for the diversity of scale and use of buildings which suggests an incremental development of the street. Surviving historic features, such as traditional shopfronts and decorative features, add interest to the streetscape which emphasises the status of Water Street as a historic thoroughfare into Carmarthen.

Topography and Setting

The historic interest of the Water Street Conservation Area is visually apparent through key views of the streetscape. This is particularly evident when looking from the top of Fountain Hall Terrace towards the town centre, where the historic buildings are distinct from the later 20th century developments. This emphasises Water Street as an entranceway into Carmarthen, both historically and in the present day.

6.0 Issues, Threats, and Management Proposals

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 Historic Environment Act (Wales) 2023. 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 160 (2)). 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 159).

The following table summarises the key issues and threats which have been identified through the preparation of the Character Area Appraisal for North Carmarthen. 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.

1.0 - Views and setting

1.1

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, the multistorey carpark off St Catherines Street, the garages, at the Water Street/Glannant Road junction and to the rear of the Dog and Piano Public House has impacted on the character and setting of those areas and views through and to the Conservation Area.

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.

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.

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 or its setting.



2.0 - Trees and Landscaping

2.1 As a high-density urban area, there are no open green spaces or trees within the Water Street Conservation Area. The only exception to this is Green Bank House on Glannant Road which sits within a larger plot and is screened from view from the road by trees and hedging.

North of the conservation area boundary on Fountain Hall Terrace, mid-20th Century semi-detached houses are elevated above the grassed verges with planting and trees, which soften the long views into Water Street Conservation Area.

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. 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.

3.0 - Demolition of buildings and structures

3.1 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.



The loss of buildings to the street line can cause break points which disrupt the long elevational view, characteristic of the area and can lead to blank gable end elevations.


There are a number of 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.


3.2	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	
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4.0 - Redevelopment



<p>4.1</p>	<p>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 19th and early 20th Century design must be respected to prevent further harm.</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. 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 Guide 2020.</p>	
<p>4.2</p>	<p>Corner plots are important gateways into the CA, offer natural breaks between buildings and mark junctions to branch roads. As an example, those buildings to the junction with Lammas Street and Water Street create visual landmarks and celebrate these entrances. In comparison, the Water Street/Glanant Road junction is dominated by a garage and hardstanding.</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> <p>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>	

4.3	<p>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</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>	
<p>5.0 - Inappropriate alterations and loss of original features</p>			
5.1	<p>The topography of the area means that the insertion of items such as aerials and satellite dishes can erode character, particularly in rows of buildings of a similar style.</p> <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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pebble dash rendering • Dormer windows • Changing timber windows to uPVC replacements • The introduction of new services which are prominently positioned • The installation of satellite dishes • Loss of cast iron rainwater goods • Replacement of slate with red tile and concrete tiles • Loss of chimneys • Loss of timber panelled front doors with canopies and doorsets • Loss of historic boundaries such as railings and rubble stone walls 	<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>	

<p>5.2</p>	<p>A number of buildings have been faced with stone cladding, glazed tiles which is uncharacteristic and has a negative impact on the street scene.</p>	<p>Detailed design guidance should be developed to include information on the typical architectural details such as windows, and appropriate materials including types of render 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>5.3</p>	<p>Unauthorised works to buildings appears to be a common problem, such as the replacement of historic features like 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 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 of the conservation area. Design guidance should also include 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 which at present do not require permission</p>	

5.4	The replacement of traditional lime render with pebble dash has had a considerable impact on building appearance in the CA.	<p>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 Planning Permission.</p> <p>Guidance on appropriate building maintenance and repair and sustainability should be developed by the Local Authority.</p>	
5.5	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.	<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>	
5.6	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.	Publish guidance on appropriate maintenance and repair of buildings and structures within the Conservation Area.	
6.0 - Street furniture, signage, roads			

6.1	<p>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.</p>	<p>Support a strategy for opportunities for increased pedestrianisation and improved road layouts. Encourage and support development which would improve cycle and pedestrian connectivity and incorporate public space.</p>	
6.2	<p>There is a lack of coordination in the treatment of pavements, roads, and pedestrian footpaths, including a lack of cohesion in the use of materials, signage, road marking and barrier treatments. This can lead to a deterioration of character within the public realm and significant changes between areas which would otherwise share a strong connection to each other. The use of patch repairs and inappropriate repair methods has also led to a general deterioration of the streetscape.</p>	<p>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.</p>	
6.3	<p>Throughout the CA there is a lack of high quality and consistent design to street furniture, including modern street lighting. A coordinated approach to street furniture of a high-quality design would help to unify the character of the area and substantially uplift the quality of the public realm.</p>	<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 throughout the conservation area.</p>	

6.4	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.	
6.5	Due to the lack of rear service areas, there are a considerable number of bins on public highways and within the public realm. This has a negative visual impact on the CA can lead to further deterioration due to encouraging anti-social behaviour.		
7.0 - Boundary treatments and parking			
7.1	Buildings predominately face directly onto the road within the Water Street Conservation Area. The exceptions to this are the terrace houses on the south side of Glannant Road, Green Bank House which has a large retaining wall and the listed iron railings to the forecourt of Capel Heol Dŵr, which are set upon dwarf walls and are highly decorative.	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	

7.2	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.	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.	
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For Consultation

8.0 – Shopfront design

<p>8.1</p>	<p>The contribution of shopfronts to the CA is significant, and the insertion of inappropriate shopfront designs can have a negative impact on the character of the area. There exist a number of 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Large fasciae which are not in proportion with neighbouring buildings, or which overwhelm the building frontage and cover surviving historic details • The use of inappropriate signage, including illuminated signs • 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. • Two-dimensional elevations, including large areas of plate glass, which dominate the façade and bear little relationship to the treatment of the elevations above. • The loss of stallrisers which provide a base to the shopfront above and ground it within the streetscape. • 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>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Refer to the Local Authority’s published shopfront and signage design guide to demonstrate a best practice approach to materials and design.</p>	
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9.0 - Change of Use

9.1	<p>The introduction of commercial activities within former residential buildings can cause harm through the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of signage which does not respond to the proportions or layout of the building • Introduction of shopfront windows which overwhelm the domestic scale of the building and lead to loss of original fabric. • Splitting ownership can cause confusion with regard to maintenance and upkeep and lead to the general deterioration of the building 	<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.</p>	
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General

Archaeology	<p>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.</p>
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>

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.
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.

For Consultation

7.0 Opportunities

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

The issues and threats currently affecting the Water Street Conservation Area also present significant opportunities for positive change, renewal, and long-term resilience. Addressing the deterioration of historic buildings and the prevalence of inappropriate modern alterations creates scope for a coordinated programme of enhancement that strengthens both the architectural character and the lived experience of the area.

A key opportunity lies in promoting proactive maintenance and repair, supported by increased engagement with property owners and residents. By raising awareness of the consequences of neglect—such as damp, failing renders, and poor energy performance—there is potential to foster a culture of regular upkeep using appropriate traditional methods. This would not only improve the condition and sustainability of the historic building stock but also contribute to healthier, more comfortable living environments.

The widespread use of unsympathetic materials and loss of traditional features provides a further opportunity for targeted reinstatement and sensitive restoration. Encouraging the replacement of uPVC windows, doors, and rainwater goods with high-quality timber or metal alternatives, alongside the removal of incompatible cladding and cement-based renders, would significantly enhance the architectural coherence of the conservation area. Reinstating lost elements such as traditional shopfronts, chimney stacks, and historic detailing would help recover the area's distinctive character and craftsmanship.

There is also scope to reduce visual clutter by rationalising satellite dishes, aerials, and external wiring, improving the overall streetscape and reinforcing the historic setting. Such interventions could be supported through guidance, grant schemes, or local partnerships that make sympathetic improvements more accessible.

More broadly, the conservation area has the opportunity to benefit from strengthened community involvement and heritage education. Initiatives such as workshops, heritage trails, or local volunteer groups could deepen public appreciation of the area's significance and encourage collective stewardship. This increased understanding may, in turn, support more informed decision-making around future development, ensuring that changes contribute positively to the historic environment.

Finally, the current challenges present an opportunity for the local authority to develop clearer policy guidance and management strategies, helping to ensure consistency in planning decisions and providing owners with practical advice on appropriate materials and techniques. Over time, this could lead to a more unified approach to conservation, reinforcing the area's identity and securing its long-term preservation.

8.0 Conclusion

The Water Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan brings together detailed historical research, on-site analysis, and community insight to provide a clear and comprehensive understanding of the area's special architectural and historic interest. Water Street remains an important component of Carmarthen's historic core, reflecting centuries of development, religious and social history, and the evolution of the town's built environment. Its linear form, varied building typologies, and surviving historic features continue to contribute significantly to the character and

identity of the wider townscape.

The appraisal has identified a number of pressing issues that threaten this special interest, including the deterioration of historic buildings, the use of inappropriate modern materials, and the cumulative impact of unsympathetic alterations. These challenges highlight the need for proactive management, informed maintenance, and a consistent approach to change within the conservation area. The proposed boundary amendments - most notably the inclusion of the Capel Heol Dŵr Sunday School and other historically related structures - will strengthen the coherence of the designation and ensure that all elements contributing to the area's significance are appropriately recognised and protected.

At the same time, the conservation area presents considerable opportunities. Through improved community engagement, clearer guidance, and the reinstatement of traditional materials and features, there is real potential to enhance the appearance, sustainability, and long-term resilience of Water Street. The Management Plan sets out practical measures to support this, encouraging sensitive repair, high-quality design, and a shared sense of stewardship among residents, property owners, and the wider community.

Taken together, the appraisal and management plan provide a robust framework for safeguarding Water Street's heritage while enabling thoughtful, sustainable change. By valuing its historic fabric, addressing current issues, and embracing opportunities for enhancement, the conservation area can continue to evolve in a way that respects its past, supports its present community, and contributes positively to the future of Carmarthen.

APPENDICES

Appendix I - Bibliography

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For Consultation

Appendix II - Glossary

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 brought within the control of the planning department.
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.
CA	Conservation Area	An area, designated by the local authority, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or 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 or government agency for a defined purpose and at a fair rate

Abbreviation	Formal term	Definition
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
	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
	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




	Fascia	The space in which a sign is displayed, typically above a shop
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
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.
PPW	Planning Policy Wales	National policy outlining guidance for making planning decisions
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

		or city with medieval origins
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
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
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

Appendix III - Boundary Review

It is recommended that the boundary to the Water Street Conservation Area is amended as follows:

KEY

-  Proposed new boundary to the Water Street Conservation Area
-  Proposed addition to the Water Street Conservation Area - the Capel Heol Dŵr Sunday School
-  Proposed exclusion from the Water Street Conservation Area - Glannant Road

This plan is not to scale



Inclusion of the Sunday School behind Capel Heol Dwr



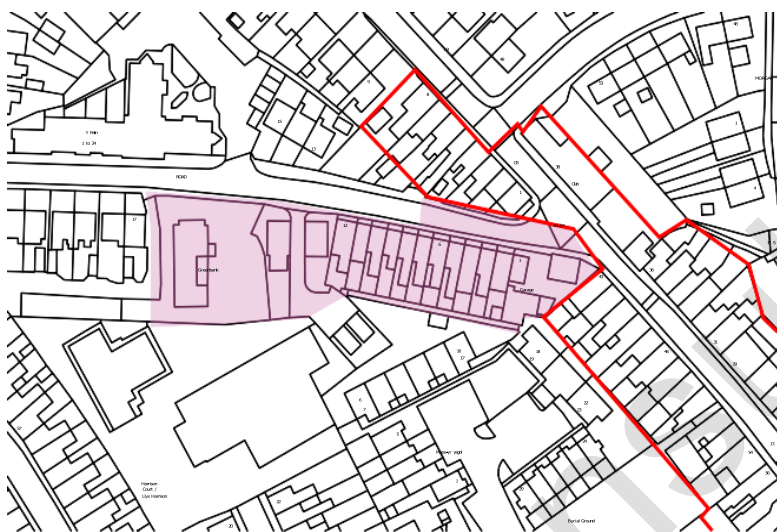
The east elevation of the Sunday School behind Capel Heol Dŵr

For Consultation

Presently, the Sunday School associated with Capel Heol Dŵr and to the rear (west) of the listed building is not within a conservation area. It was removed from the Lammas Street Conservation Area as a part of the boundary review within the recent Conservation Area Appraisal. The Sunday School is not listed in its own right but would highly likely be considered curtilage listed to Capel Heol Dŵr.

The Sunday School is understood to have been constructed in the mid-19th century (between the 1834 and 1886 maps of Carmarthen) during a period in which the congregation of the Calvinists was flourishing. It has been built in coursed rubble stone with a pitched slate roof and tall timber sash windows with yellow brick surrounds. The east elevation has a projecting entrance porch with a large pointed arch doorway. As the Sunday School is associated with Capel Heol Dŵr and it is accessed via the forecourt to the chapel from Water Street, it is proposed to include it within the Water Street Conservation Area.

Exclusion of Glannant Road Evan Road



The garage and adjacent 19th century terraces on Glannant Road, in the context of the Water Street Conservation Area

It is proposed that the northwest offshoot along Glannant Road is excluded from the Water Street Conservation Area.

This area is comprised of late 19th century housing, a short terrace and a detached house in a large plot, in addition to two modern detached houses and a 20th century garage. Whilst the 19th century housing is apparent on historic mapping, it is not of sufficient historic or architectural interest to warrant conservation area designation.

In addition, the buildings along Glannant Road do not contribute to the special historic and architectural interest of the Water Street Conservation Area; the 20th century garage on the corner of Water Street and Glannant Road is a detracting feature from the streetscape of the conservation area. This is because Glannant Road is not a part of the principal reasoning for which Water Street is designated as a conservation area: it is not a part of the main thoroughfare into Carmarthen and is not considered to contribute to the understanding of how Water Street has historically evolved.

For Consultation

Appendix IV – Policy Framework

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 requires:

- Local planning authorities to determine areas where it is desirable to preserve and enhance, and designate them as conservation areas (section 158[1 a and b])
- 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 159 [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 160 [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,⁷ 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, Edition 12, February 2024

- 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 Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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

- 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.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 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.