



Chepstow

*Conservation Area
Appraisal &
Management Proposals*



monmouthshire
sir fynywy

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FORUM
Heritage
Services

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Chepstow Castle

Part A: Purpose & Scope of the Appraisal

1 Introduction

1.1 Conservation areas comprise the accumulation of an area's positive architectural or historic attributes, rather than the quality of its individual buildings, which makes it worthy of conservation area status. The attributes might include: the landscape setting of the area; the grouping of traditional buildings and the resultant spaces and sense of enclosure; the scale, design, type and materials of the buildings; historic boundaries; public realm; landmarks, views and vistas; and the present and former pattern of activities or land uses.

1.2 Chepstow is one of 31 designated Conservation Areas in the county of Monmouthshire. It was designated as a conservation area on 12th January 1976.

1.3 The *Chepstow Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals* is seen as the first steps in a dynamic process. The overarching aim is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Chepstow Conservation Area and to provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future management.

1.4 Key study aims:

- Identify those elements of Chepstow which contribute to its character
- Identify elements which detract from the character
- Propose measures to maintain or improve the positive character, local distinctiveness and sense of place of Chepstow

1.5 The framework for the study follows guidance set out in *Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology* and *Circular 61/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas* and the latest draft guidance from Cadw; *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*, adopted March 2011.

2 Consultation

2.1 A consultation event was held in Chepstow on 29th June 2010.

2.2 The purpose of this event was to obtain initial views from the local community on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the conservation area.

2.3 Participants were broadly asked to consider the following:

- Positive characteristics (i.e. strengths) of the conservation area that makes it special
- Negative aspects (i.e. weaknesses) of the conservation area that threaten its special character
- Areas or features within the conservation area that need to be improved or enhanced (i.e. opportunities within the conservation area)
- Areas or features within the conservation area under threat or at risk
- Whether the boundary of the conservation area is correctly drawn
- The use of additional powers available to the Council's Planning Department to control alterations to original features on housing in the conservation area, such as windows and doors (where this is not already controlled)

2.4 Feedback from this initial consultation has been used by the study team in preparing the Conservation Area Appraisal.

3 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Section 69 1(a) and 2 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') defines conservation areas as:

"Areas of special architectural and historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"

3.2 In addition, the Act puts particular emphasis on specific duties:

"It shall be the duty of the local authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas..."

3.3 This is reinforced by the guidance set out in *Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology* and *Circular 61/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas*. In particular, the local authority should from time to time, formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas (management proposals).

3.4 In order to undertake works of enhancement, the character of the conservation area needs to be clearly defined and understood (character appraisal).

3.5 National planning policy is set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW). PPW provides the overarching national strategic guidance with regard to land use planning matters in Wales. Conservation of the historic environment is set out in Chapter 6 of PPW. Policies relating to Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Archaeological Remains and Historic Parks and Gardens are contained in PPW unless locally distinct elements require further Local Development Plan policies. PPW also sets out clear statements for development management in Conservation Areas.

3.6 This Conservation Area Appraisal should be read in the context of the Monmouthshire County Council Local

Development Plan (LDP) which was adopted on 27 February 2014, covering the period 2011-2021. Strategic Policy S17 helps to meet LDP objectives to protect and enhance the historic and built environment by ensuring good design that enhances the character and identity of Monmouthshire's settlements and respects the County's distinctiveness. Conservation Area Appraisals can play a significant part in helping to meet such aspirations. The historic environment chapter is contained in pages 167-172 of the LDP. Policies HE1, HE2 and HE3 directly relate to conservation areas.

3.7 The detailed criteria for assessing development proposals in Conservation Areas is set out in Policy HE1 and where appropriate aims to ensure the findings of the Conservation Area Appraisals are fully taken into account when considering development proposals. The Council will seek to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of Conservation Areas in the assessment of Planning Applications. Policy HE2 relates specifically to the alterations of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas to ensure that the conversion, alteration and extension of such buildings make a positive contribution to Conservation Areas. A number of detailed criteria relating specifically to the design of shop fronts in Conservation Areas are provided in Policy HE3. Policy HE3 seeks to maintain high standards of shop front design in Conservation Areas.

3.8 A number of additional studies carried out to support the LDP should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisal. These include Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Studies of the surroundings of Monmouthshire's towns and villages, including those with conservation areas. Similarly, published studies on Accessible Natural Greenspace and Habitat Connectivity may also include information that needs to be taken into account in preparing development proposals in conservation areas. Relevant information is also contained in the Monmouthshire LANDMAP landscape character assessment.

3.9 Draft Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has also been produced. This provides practical design and planning checklists along with good practice case studies. This SPG should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisal.

For Additional Information:

Monmouthshire Local Development Plan
<http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning>

4 The Study Area

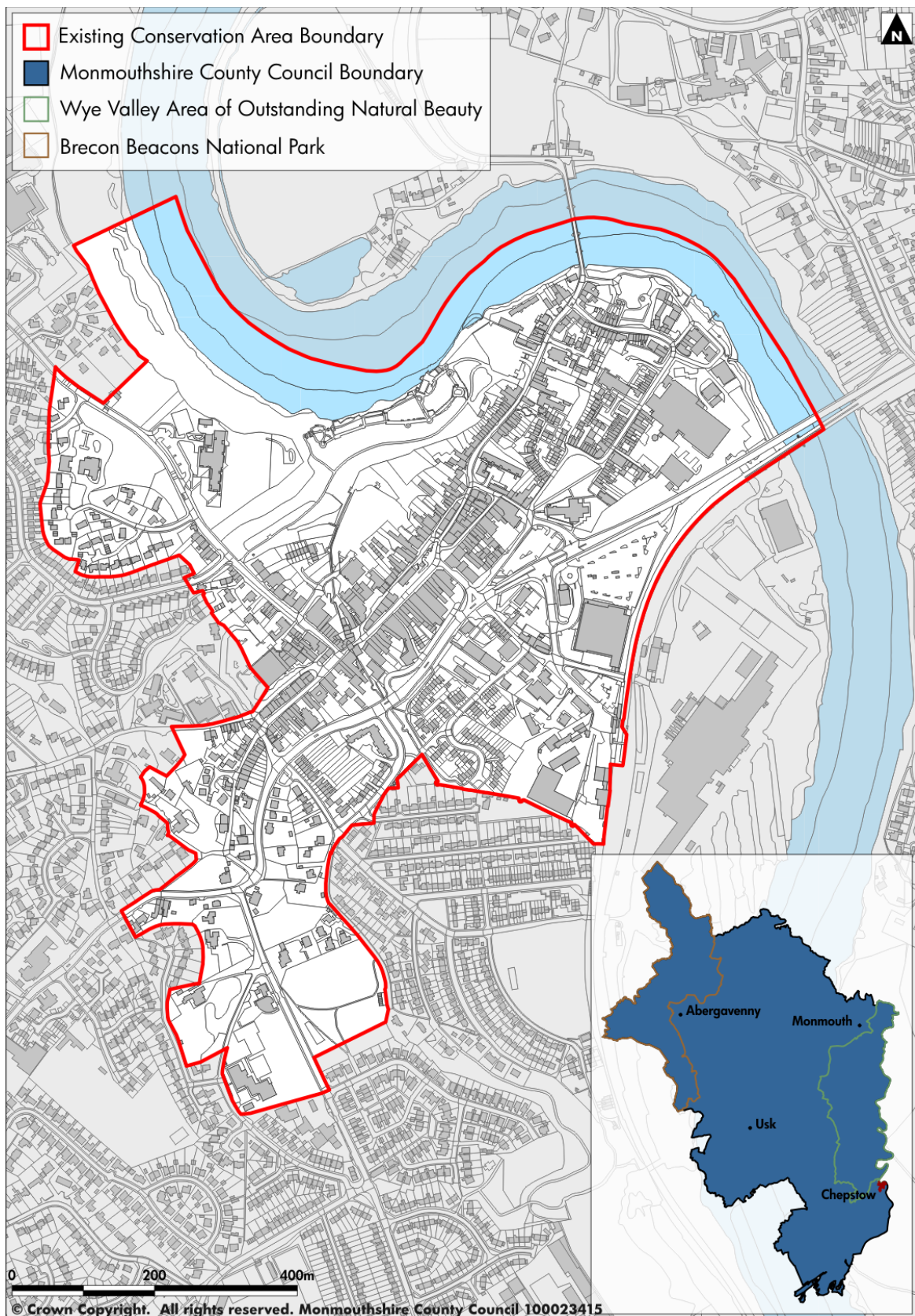


Fig.1 Study Area

Part B: Conservation Area Appraisal

5 Location & Setting

5.1 Chepstow is located in the south-east of the County near the confluence of the River Wye and the Severn Estuary. It is positioned on the A48 between Gloucester and Newport. To the south is the suburb of Bulwark. To the east, in Gloucestershire, are the villages of Tutshill and Sedbury. Beachley is located to the south-east extending south to the M48. The settlement rises from the River Wye in the east proceeding westward up Hardwick Hill. The main historic road (formed by Bridge Street, Middle Street, Moor Street and continuing as Steep Street) rises steadily and sometimes steeply throughout the conservation area. In sections, it widens to form a broad rectangular space with groups of island buildings forming one side of a central square (Bank Square) with

Beaufort Square to the north-east and White Lion Square to the south-west. The conservation area, designated in 1970, includes the entire town and castle within the Port Wall thus conserving the setting and prospect of the castle. (**Fig.1 & Fig.2**)

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 1 Conservation Area Plan



Fig.2 Chepstow Location Plan

6 Historical Development & Archaeology

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 2 Historical Plan

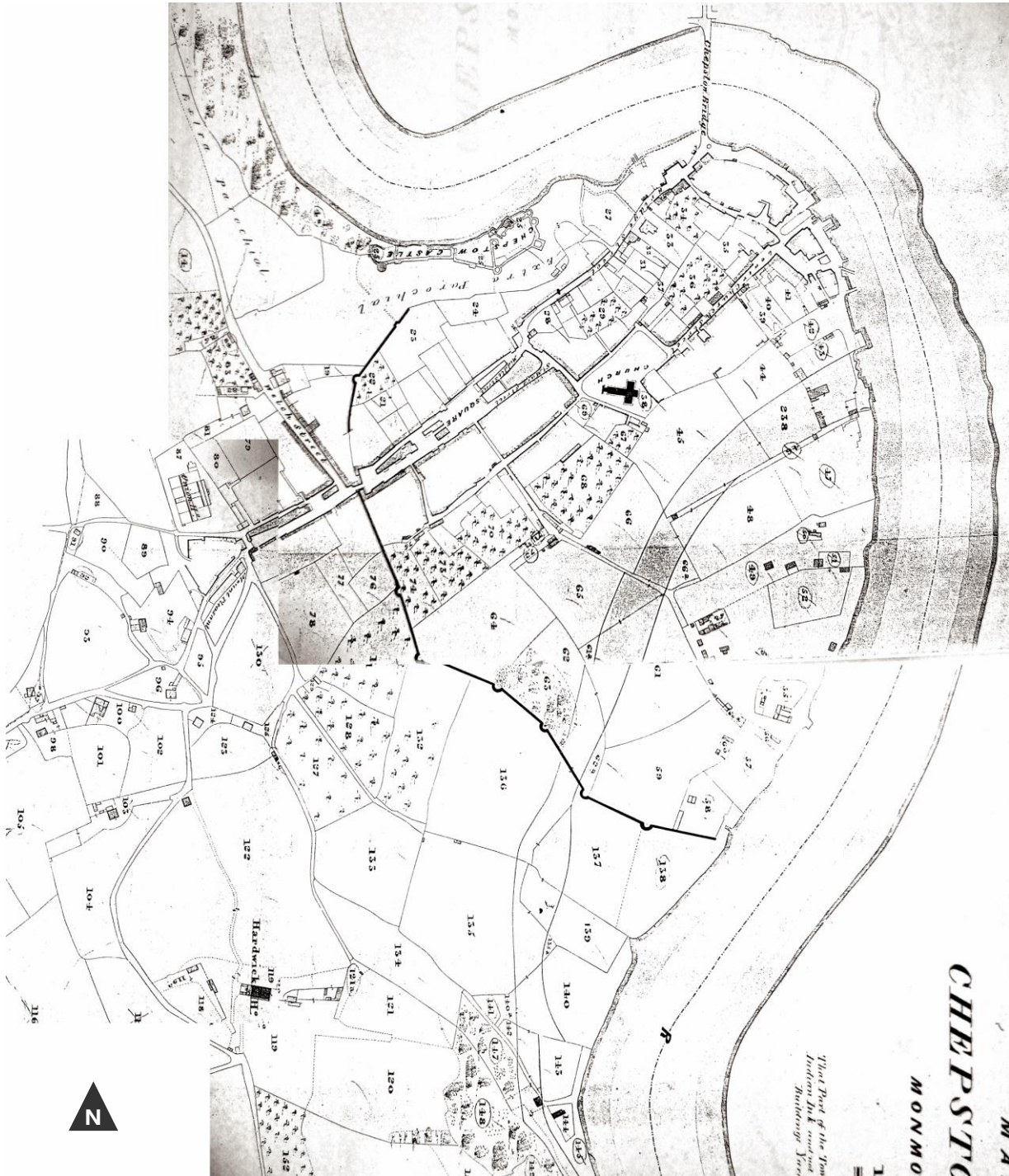


Fig.3 1846 tithe map of Chepstow

© Gwent Record Office

6.1 Historic Background

6.1.1 There is little indication of prehistoric settlement within the town.

6.1.2 The main Roman road from Caerwent to Gloucester crossed the River Wye by a timber bridge some 1km north of the castle, a short length of *agger* (the raised camber of the road surface) has been identified near the river at Piercefield (GGAT). The re-use of Roman material in the castle and scattered finds of coins and pottery from around the town suggests that there was Roman activity nearby but unlike Abergavenny and Usk, Chepstow did not develop as a Roman fort.

6.1.3 In the 8th century King Offa of Mercia built a dyke on the eastern bank of the river stretching for 150 miles between Wales and Mercia. This famous boundary earthwork ran from the Severn estuary east of its confluence with the Wye and ran alongside the Wye northwards towards Monmouth. Relatively little is known about Chepstow in the early medieval period; there have been no archaeological finds of pre-Norman date made in the town, but to the north-west of the town there was a priory dedicated to St Kynemark which was first mentioned in c.624 AD.

6.1.4 After the Norman Conquest, a string of defences was constructed along the Welsh Marches, controlled by semi-autonomous Marcher Lords. King William I awarded Chepstow and the Saxon earldom of Hereford to his most loyal follower, William FitzOsbern. The strategic position of Chepstow on the southern boundary of England and Wales at the lowest defensible point on the River Wye led FitzOsbern to build the first Norman fortresses constructed to contain the Welsh (Newman, 2002). Work began on the castle in 1067, within a year of the battle of Hastings. Described as the greatest of Wales's Norman fortresses (Jenkins, 2008), the square keep, the first stone castle in Britain, was built on the river cliffs of the Wye with the steep valley of the Dell to the south.

6.1.5 In 1070 FitzOsbern established a Benedictine Priory, now St Mary's Church. This

was a daughter house of the monastery he founded at Cormeilles in Normandy. The medieval town grew up between the castle and the priory, extending northwards up the hill. The origins of the town are unknown, but it is suggested that settlement was first established near the priory. It is possible that the early town may have been focused on a road partly following the line of Upper Church Street, connecting priory and castle (GGAT). Based on this assumption Hocker Hill Street, St Mary Street, Nelson Street and Church Street would have formed a small grid system of streets (GGAT).

6.1.6 In c.1115 land and castle passed to Walter fitz Richard de Clare, whose family held the castle for most of the 12th century. Walter de Clare did not undertake any major work at Chepstow but was responsible for the foundation of Tintern Abbey. In 1189 the castle passed by marriage to William Marshal. Marshal was a successful knight, rising to become Earl of Pembroke and the premier courtier to Henry II, negotiator of the Magna Carta, and regent of England during the minority of Henry III. Marshal was an advanced military tactician and is renowned for his innovative castle building at Usk Castle, Chepstow Castle and Pembroke Castle. The gatehouse, defended by two round towers at Chepstow, was a revolutionary design. On William Marshal's death the castle passed in turn to each of his five sons who extended the western defences and transformed the great tower (Turner, 2006). During the Marshals' control, the town expanded and became wealthy through commercial enterprise and trade as a busy port (GGAT). As well as the priory there were other chapels in the town including St Anne's chapel at the north end of Bridge Street near the castle, St Ewin's chapel at the north end of Bridge Street and St Thomas' chapel, its presence recorded in the street name beyond the Town Gate. Although Chepstow was under the control of Bristol, customs port duty was seldom paid to Bristol; instead money was paid to the lord of the castle.

6.1.7 At the end of the Marshal family line the castle passed to the Bigod family. Roger Bigod

(c.1245-1306) enclosed Chepstow with the Town or Port Wall, built in c.1272-1278 (Newman, 2002). This stone wall was erected in order to control access to the town and ensure the payment of tolls and taxes. The town gate was extended in 1524, and the upper storey converted into the town prison. Roger Bigod also instigated a major phase of building at the castle; equipping the stronghold with a range of accommodation suites, extending the great tower, and building Marten's Tower (Turner, 2006). During this time the town prospered as a market centre and mercantile port and Merchant's houses lined the streets surrounding the market. By 1306, 308 burgages were recorded (GGAT).

6.1.8 The post-medieval town remained at a similar size to the medieval settlement, although the population may have declined. In the south of the town St Anne's and St Ewan's chapels were lost, the land given over to meadows and gardens. Excavation has revealed evidence of medieval settlement in this area (GGAT). The medieval town survived along the High Street leading into Bridge Street.

6.1.9 It was not until Charles Herbert, Earl of Worcester, became lord of Chepstow in 1507 that any major building programme recommenced at the castle. He transformed the lower bailey into a great court and relocated his private apartments (Turner, 2006). After the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536 the nave of the priory church was taken over by the town for its parish church. In the same year the Act of Union between England and Wales was signed, neutralizing the power of the Marcher Lords

6.1.10 During the Civil War the castle held out for the King but was taken by the Parliamentarians in October 1645. In 1648 the second phase of the Civil War commenced and Chepstow was seized by the royalist Sir Nicholas Kemeys. Parliamentarians attacked the town walls, forcing open the town gate, and bombarded the castle, breaching the south wall. The castle was granted to Cromwell and in 1650 it was repaired and converted into a military barracks and prison

for political dissidents. The castle continued as a fort and barracks and was still under repair in 1662. It was adapted into an artillery fortress with walls lowered and thickened. In 1685 the garrison was finally disbanded and parts of the castle were demolished and removed (Turner, 2006).

6.1.11 During the 17th century Chepstow's trade prospered with the various industries along the River Wye. The most important of these were the wireworks at Tintern and Whitebrook and the copperworks at Redbrook. Chepstow was a trans-shipment site between Bristol and the Wye. A number of timber merchants set up along the banks of the river at Chepstow, some supplying the town's own shipbuilding industry (Green, 1999).

6.1.12 Jacob Millerd's 1686 map of Chepstow (Fig.4 next page) shows the town, accessed via a bridge leading to St Anne's Street in the north. Along the river bank to the south-east is marked 'The Green' and 'The Back' with a wharf. To the north-west the castle stands on the river cliffs with the Dell valley to the south-east. The Port Wall extends from the castle, south-west to St Thomas Street with the town gate at the top of the town. The wall runs south and then east back towards the river containing 'several inclosures of meadow and pasture grounds' as well as Chepstow Well. St Anne's Street meanders south west to the market place, by this date filled with buildings, faced by a series of merchants' houses. The priory church is located to the east. Roads link with the rear of merchants' houses and travel north, around a square, to 'The Green' (Fig.5 next page). Outside the Port wall and town gate there is a suburb running along Newport Road and extending along St Thomas Street, leading to Monmouth Road.

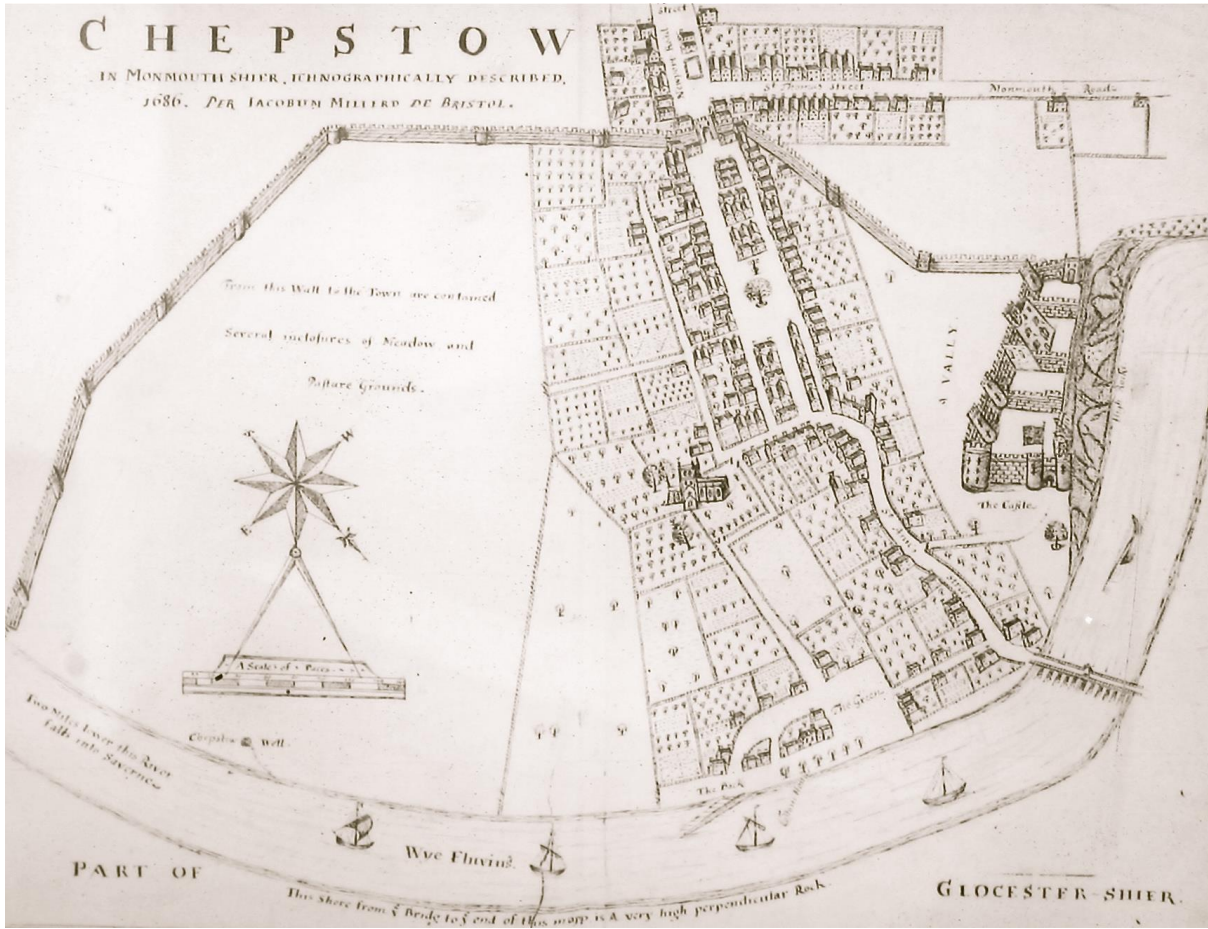


Fig.4 Jacob Millerd's 1686 map of Chepstow

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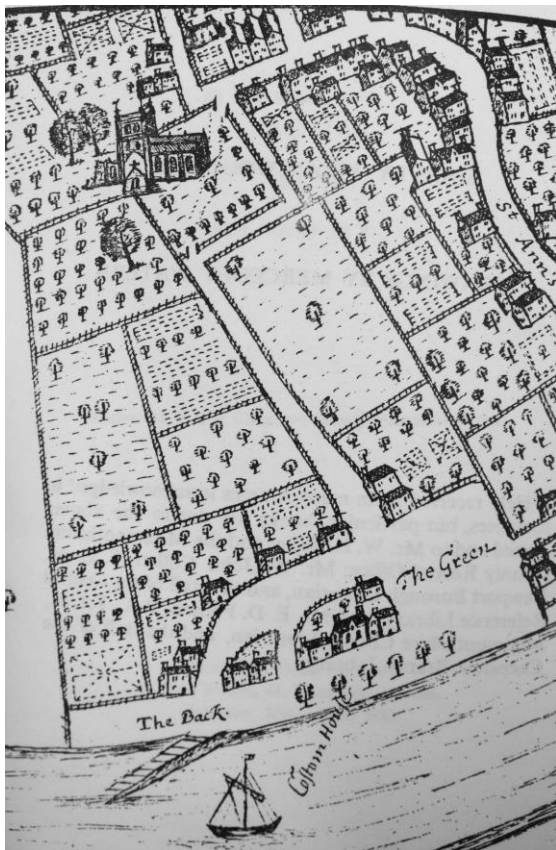


Fig.5 1686 map detail showing the priory church, The Green and The Back

© Gwent Record Office

6.1.13 During the 18th century the lower bailey of the castle was converted into industrial use with a nail manufactory and a glass blowers with numerous timber-framed buildings (Turner, 2006). In 1701 the crossing tower of the parish church fell, destroying the transepts. In 1705-6 a new east wall was built at the east end of the nave, and its west end built up to form a new west tower (Newman, 2002). As the century progressed Chepstow developed as an important port and centre of ship-building and repair (**Fig.6**). In 1759 a graving dock (a narrow form of drydock; 'Graving' means 'scratching' - somewhere you went to scratch off barnacles, rust and so on) was constructed (Newman, 2002) (**Fig.7**). In the later 18th century the castle and town became a tourist attraction on the Wye Tour, benefitting from the close proximity of the fashionable Piercefield Park (**Fig.8**).

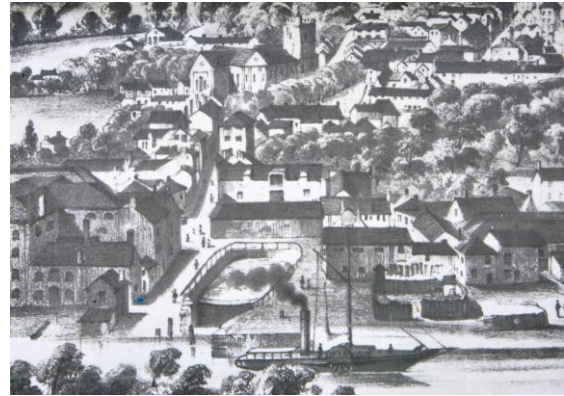


Fig.7 1846 view of The Back with its dry dock and Wye tourist steamer in the foreground. The large building in the foreground left is the bobbin factory in Lower Church Street. The central building with first-storey loading loft still exists today



Fig.8 J. M. W. Turner's depiction of the riverside and castle, painted on his Wye Tour in 1793

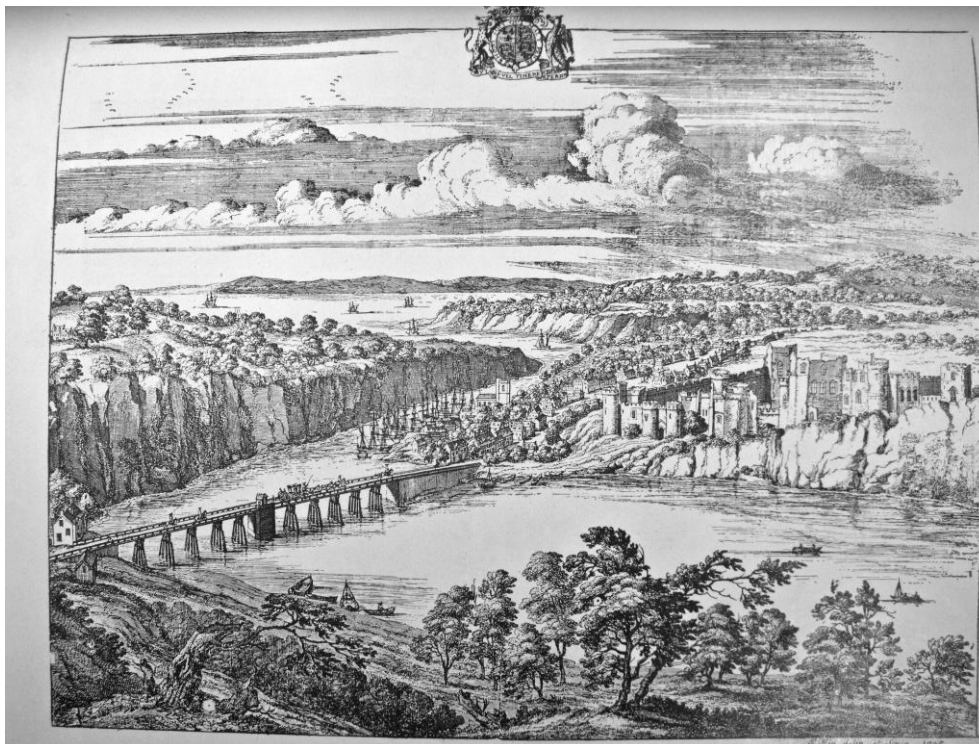


Fig.6 Chepstow 1705, note the number of ships moored near The Back, Johannes Kip

6.1.14 The port continued to prosper into the 19th century with the failing timber industry being replaced with a thriving wine trade, Chepstow becoming a bonded port (a port or area where no customs duty was charged) in 1838 (Fig.9). A large area east of the church and south of Back Lane was still given over to agricultural use, as shown on Millerd's map. It was only with the construction of the railway in 1850 and growth in industrial and maritime activity experienced from the mid-19th century that the southern part of the town came back into urban use (GGAT). The railway necessitated a breach in the Port Wall and it was carried over the River Wye by a tubular suspension bridge built in 1850-2 to Isambard Kingdom Brunel's designs. The coming of the railways signalled the decline of Chepstow's river trade by removing the necessity of a trans-shipment port. The castle became overgrown and ruinous and during the 19th century the Duke of Beaufort cleared out the

interior, laid out paths and planted trees. In 1905 the castle was purchased by the Lysaght family who owned it until 1953 (Turner, 2006) (Fig.10).



Fig.10 Chepstow Castle with small boat yard in the foreground, early 20th century



Fig.9 View of the old Wye bridge from Gloucestershire, note the castle and prominent position of The Mount, R. C. Hoare, 1801

6.1.15 The 20th century saw the expansion of the town. The first major suburbs at Hardwick Village and Bulwark were constructed during the First World War for workers in armaments factories located in the dock area. The closure of the shipyards was temporarily halted and the National Shipyard No. 1 was created with over eight slipways (Green, 1999). The extension of the shipyard required the removal of the eastern third of the Port Wall, which had remained intact apart from the breach made by the railway line. The National Shipyard continued to 1925 when it went bankrupt (Green, 1999). It was sold to steel fabricators Fairfield Engineering, later to become Fairfield Mabey. In the 1960s a substantial section of the wall was demolished west of the town gate to give access to the town's upper car park. Fairfield Mabey replaced the superstructure of Brunel's railway bridge in 1962 (**Fig.11**). The opening of the Severn Bridge (built in sections by Fairfield Mabey) and M4 motorway in 1966

and the inner ring road in 1971-3 made Chepstow readily accessible and new housing estates developed to serve a growing commuter population working in Bristol, Newport, Cardiff and beyond. The 1970s inner relief road resulted in further destruction of the Port Wall between Garden City Way and the rear of the High Street.



Fig.11 Brunel's railway bridge over the River Wye before its replacement in 1962

6.2 Settlement Plan

6.2.1 Chepstow shares many characteristics with planned towns of the late 12th/early 13th century with its long rectangular market place, the focus of the town's commercial trade, lined by the houses and shops of its merchants set in long, narrow burgage plots. Nelson Street /Upper Nelson Street probably formed a back-lane to the plots on the south-east side of the market place. The market place was originally open and contained market stalls, some of which gradually became permanent creating the 'islands' of properties that can be seen today. Jacob Millerd's map of 1686 shows that a range of buildings had been built down its centre, to be succeeded by today's buildings. This urban area was enclosed with a wall which took in a far larger area than the built-up part of the town, probably reflecting the importance of the waterside commerce and industries that were present in the medieval period. A small suburb probably developed outside the gate to the south-west.

6.2.2 Bridge Street, the principal route into the town from the north-east, and Lower Church Street may have also formed part of this grid of streets although there has been little evidence of medieval occupation recovered from this north-eastern part of the town to date.

6.2.3 The town remained focused on its medieval core into the 19th century. In 1840 the orchards and other plots of land remained undeveloped on the south side of the town. With the construction of the railway in 1850 this area soon developed with industry.

6.2.4 In the 20th century the town expanded with early village suburbs at Hardwick and Bulwark. This expansion continued throughout the century increasing after the opening of the Severn Bridge in 1966.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 2 Historical Plan

6.3 Key Historic Influences & Characteristics

6.3.1 The key historic influences and characteristics of Chepstow are:

- Chepstow Castle started in 1067
- Benedictine Priory established in 1070
- Medieval town grew up between castle and priory
- 12th century Marshal control of the castle and town. Expansion of town as a busy port
- c.1272-1278 Chepstow enclosed by the Port Wall. The town prospers as a market centre and mercantile port
- Post Civil War the castle was transformed into a fort and barracks
- 17th century trade with industries developing along the River Wye and ship building in dockyards
- 18th century continued success as a port and ship building centre.
- Late 18th century tourism with the Wye Tour
- 19th century wine trade. Mid 19th century railway and growth in industry
- 20th century expansion of town. First World War suburbs for armaments factories.
- Transfer of shipbuilding to steel fabrication. Opening of Severn Bridge and M4 motorway in 1966 brought growth with new housing estates serving a growing commuter population

6.4 Archaeological Potential

6.4.1 The castle and the town wall are Scheduled Ancient Monuments and as such are regarded as being nationally important with a consequent presumption against development that would cause physical damage to a monument or negatively impact on its setting.

6.4.2 The core of the built-up area of the town has been identified as an Area of Special Archaeological Sensitivity (ASAS); a non-statutory designation supported by national planning policy guidance, due to the potential for encountering archaeological remains relating to the medieval town and its defences as well as later phases of its history. Additionally, the historic buildings of the town are an important archaeological resource in their own right. Any proposed development within the ASAS will need to include appropriate measures to assess and, if necessary, protect or record the archaeological interest of the site or building. Advice from the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, the council's archaeological advisors, should be sought at an early stage.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 3 Area of Special Archaeological Sensitivity

7 Spatial Analysis

7.1 Background

7.1.1 Conservation areas are designated for their special character, but within the area there will be zones which are varied but contribute to the whole. It is important to define these 'character areas' and provide a clear understanding of the defining elements making up the character of a particular part of the conservation area. This leads to a more useful and comprehensive document in development management terms.

7.1.2 Whilst individual character areas have been defined with a line (see **Plan 6**), adjacent areas will, in almost all cases, have a direct effect on the character of any defined sub-area. Character areas do not sit in isolation and when considering the impact of proposals on the character and/or appearance of a conservation area the character area and adjacent character areas and their wider setting (which may in some cases extend beyond the conservation area boundary) should be very carefully considered. There are often cases where character areas will overlap giving these spaces added complexity and importance in terms of proposed changes.

7.1.3 It should be noted that whilst nine character areas have been identified, it is also important to appreciate the cohesion to the whole conservation area, which should always be considered when addressing the character of the Chepstow Conservation Area.

7.1.4 For general guidance on the criteria used for assessing buildings making a particularly positive contribution to the conservation area, please refer to **Appendix 1**.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 4 Spatial Analysis

Part D - Plan 5 Listed Buildings & Buildings Making a Particular or Special Positive Contribution

Part D - Plan 6 Character Areas

7.2 Overview

7.2.1 Chepstow is a small busy market town marking the south-eastern approach into Wales from England. Historically a key defensive point on the River Wye protected by Britain's first stone castle, the town retains much of its medieval character with castle, priory church, market place and narrow streets. Its history is remembered in the Chepstow Society Heritage Trail, shown on pavement route markers throughout the town and photographic tiles at key historic sites.

7.2.2 The historic character of the central core of the town is derived from the strong morphology of the distinctive medieval layout of roads and building plots. With the development of a busy dockyard and extensive river trade resulting in the 18th and 19th century expansion of the town, Chepstow Conservation Area is diverse and rich in architectural quality from a number of key periods in the town's history.

7.2.3 The topography of the town and its riverside landscape setting plays an essential role in defining the character of the conservation area. Its hillside location produces planned and un-planned views to the River Wye, River Severn and Gloucestershire villages of Sedbury and Tutshill. The tower of the parish church and extensive ruins of Chepstow castle are key landmarks in the conservation area. The construction of the A48, by-passing the town centre and cutting through the Port Wall, has created a busy thoroughfare which divides the conservation area and is characterised by ubiquitous highway infrastructure (large signs, barriers, road markings and over-engineered junctions).

7.2.4 Within the conservation area there is an interesting and diverse mix of building types and materials reflecting the high status of the town, both during the medieval period and the

industrial revolution. The town's historic importance is well illustrated by two major Norman buildings; the church to the east and castle to the north. The 13th century Portwall, following a line over two-thirds of a mile long across the promontory above the historic town, is a very significant feature of the town and cuts across and defines in part four character areas. It extends from the west end of the castle in an arc across the high ground of the hill and descends the steep hillside to the south-east and originally met the River Wye near where the railway station is presently located.

7.3 Character Areas

7.3.1 Nine distinct character areas have been identified in Chepstow, the boundaries of which have been identified in **Fig.12** below

and Plan 6. This section will identify the key attributes of each character area.

7.3.2 Each character area makes reference to the following key considerations

- Form (cohesiveness – why is it a character area)
- Scale & Building Line
- Significant buildings or groups of buildings making a positive or special contribution
- Materials
- Views
- Local Features
- Significant Spaces & Gaps
- Trees, hedges and boundaries
- Surfaces

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 6 Character Areas

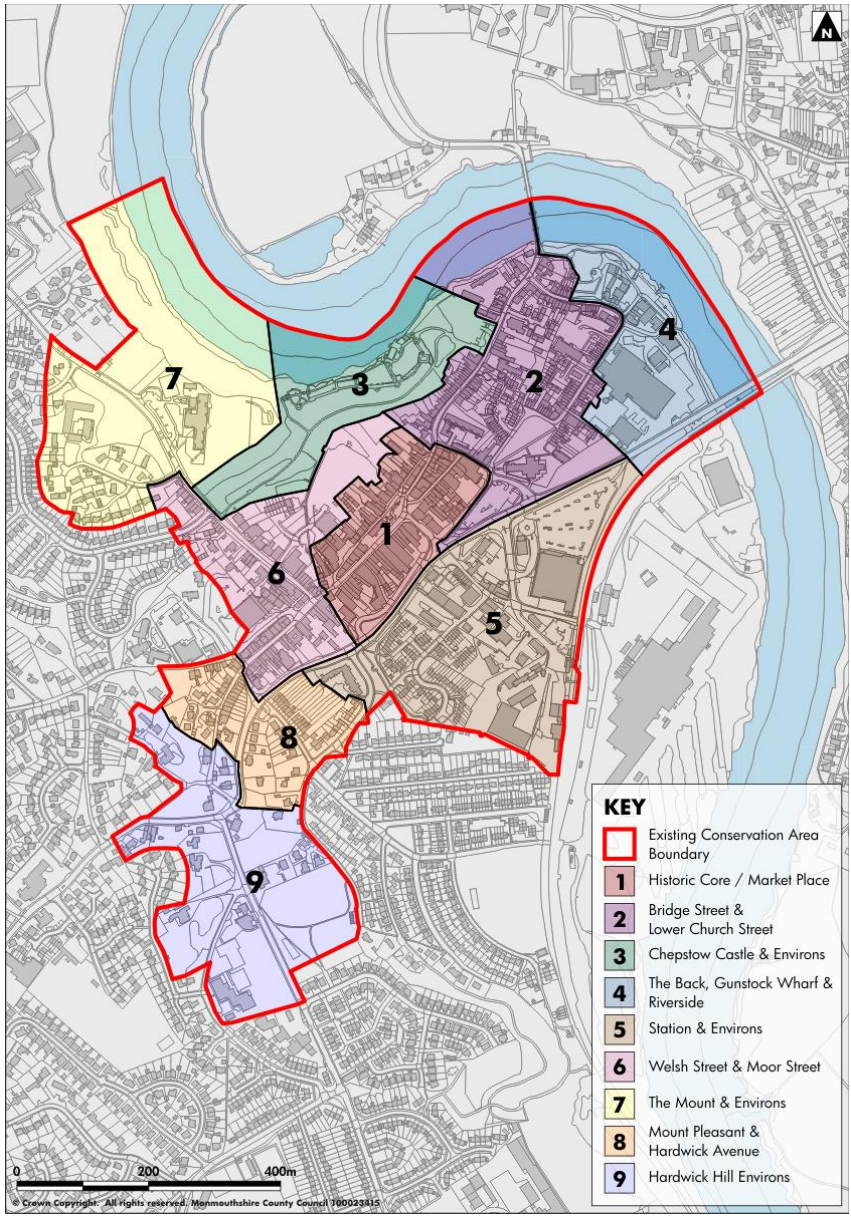
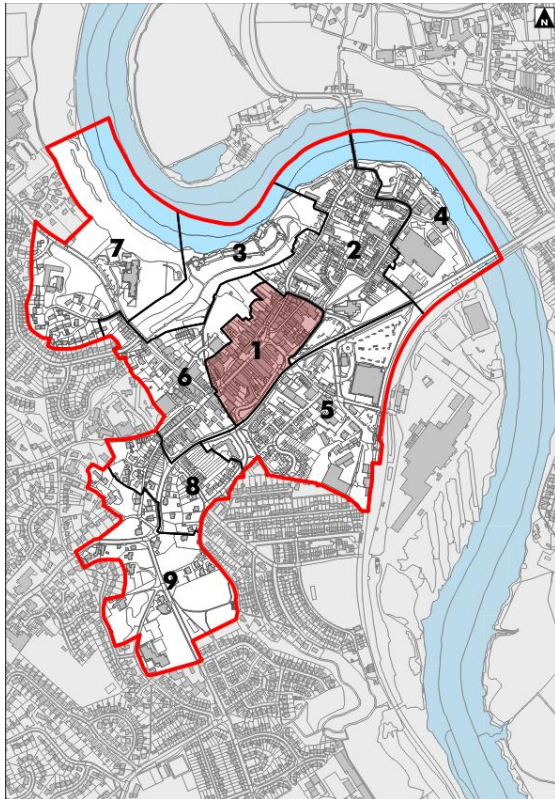


Fig.12 Chepstow Character Areas

CHARACTER AREA 1
Historic Core



7.3.3 This character area comprises the historic streets of High Street, Bank Street, Middle Street, St Mary Street and the very narrow Hocker Hill Street. These streets define the former medieval market place, now substantially in-filled with buildings but retaining an open space at its focus; Beaufort Square. Beaufort Square is an open public space dominated by the First World War Memorial. Two smaller squares; Bank Square and White Lion Square are located between buildings on travelling south-west adjacent to the High Street. The area is characterised by a high density of historic buildings comprising mainly town houses, with later shops inserted at ground floor level representing the commercial core of the town (Fig.13). The character area is bounded to the south-west by the Town Gate and Port Wall and to the north-west by Welsh Street car park. To the south the character area backs onto the busy A48 through road. It is bounded to the north-east by Upper Church Street.

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6A



Fig.13 Narrow historic streets and a high density of historic buildings characterise the historic core

7.3.4 The character area has a well-defined building line with back of pavement houses, shops, pubs and restaurants lining the five roads (**Fig.14**). The topography of the town, rising steeply from the east to the west, creates an interesting streetscene with buildings stepping up the roads towards the Port Wall in the west (**Fig.15**). The regular rhythm of the plot division and the consistent scale is occasionally broken by first floor balconies (for example No. 14 and 12 St Mary Street). The department store, Nos. 9-11 High Street, breaks the building line with a decorative corner turret (see **Fig.18**). Road junctions are consistently addressed by key corner buildings, for example, the curving No. 16 at the east entrance to St Mary Street. The roads have active street frontages with shops and café-restaurants except for Middle Street which, as a through route, is dominated by vehicular traffic and has taken on the role of a service street. Buildings are predominantly three-storey with occasional two-storey buildings on the High Street. Exceptions are prominent and four-storey buildings tend to dominate views along the roads, for example The Old Bell Chambers, Bank Street and Nos. 12-13 High Street (**Fig.16**)



Fig.15 Buildings are stepped up the hillside



Fig.16 The Old Bell Chambers, a four-storey building dominant in the streetscene



Fig.14 The High Street has a strong building line with shops to the back of pavement

7.3.5 The character area is dominated by listed buildings and buildings which make a particularly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The high number of varied listed buildings creates interesting historic groups of significant historic and architectural quality throughout the character area. This is especially the case within St Mary Street, Hocker Hill Street and Bank Street. The High Street has suffered from occasional mid- to late 20th century replacement buildings but when all buildings are seen as a group they form part of the attractive and varied street scene to this part of the conservation area. Historic shopfronts are important features especially where they survive in groups. Nos. 8, 9 & 10 St Mary Street are one such group (**Fig.17**). Occasionally individual buildings stand out in the streetscene due to their architectural style, scale and materials. These include Coronation Buildings (**Fig.18**) built in 1902 by a family business and still run as Herbert Lewis department store. This striking building with corner turret, pedimented

dormer windows and distinctive six-over-one sliding sash windows focuses views south-west along the High Street. Other examples include the four-storey Old Bell Chambers, Bank Street, with an 18th century brick front and central carriageway entrance (see **Fig.16**) and the Beaufort Hotel, with a three-storey, five-bay stucco Georgian frontage.



Fig.17 Where historic shopfronts survive they enliven the streetscene



Fig.18 The regular building line is occasionally punctuated by key buildings

7.3.6 Buildings are predominantly rendered and painted in shades of white or cream, with natural slate roofs and red brick stacks. There is frequent and rhythmic use of Georgian/Victorian timber single glazed vertical sliding sash windows, and uPVC replacement windows are relatively rare. Roughcast and pebbledash dominate Hocker Hill Street (**Fig.19**). Occasionally stucco is used on grander buildings such as the Beaufort Hotel and render is often lined out in imitation of ashlar stonework, a distinctive material detail in the town. Red brick is unusual and its use helps to define key street views with the brick built No. 29 High Street acting as a key punctuation in the street scene accentuated by its use of materials. Modern 20th century infill includes the concrete clad late 1960s Barclays Bank (by Merton Jones & Richards of Abergavenny) which commands a key position between Beaufort Square and Bank Square (**Fig.20**). Occasionally concrete interlocking tiles have replaced natural slate. Clay pantiles are to be found to a small number of buildings including No. 15 Upper Church Street, The Lion, White Lion Square and Nos. 19-20 High Street. Street surfacing is defined by its high quality materials from the historic stone setts of Hocker Hill Street to the variety of York stone paving laid throughout as part of a town regeneration scheme (2005) (**Fig. 21**).



Fig.19 The Five Alls, Hocker Hill Street, roughcast incised with lines



Fig.20 The 1960s Barclays Bank introduces a bold 20th century dimension to the High Street



Fig.21 Quality natural stone paving is a linking feature throughout the character area

7.3.7 The high density built form of the historic core is set around three public spaces which have been adopted by the town as 'squares', each with seating areas. At the western end of Bank Street an informal area of car parking provides additional open space. Due to the topography of the town, which rises up from the river from east to west, views open out as the streets climb the hill. At the War Memorial, Beaufort Square, there are views east along St Mary Street, Middle Street and Hocker Hill Street to the wooded river cliffs at Tutshill in Gloucestershire (**Fig.22**). These views expand as the High Street climbs to the town gate at which point there are framed views of the limestone cliffs and line of individual houses set between tree cover and other vegetation. The straight roads funnel views, which are often terminated by key buildings. On St Mary Street views east are terminated by the Sir Walter Montague Almshouses (**Fig.23**) while views west along the High Street are terminated by the town gate.



Fig.23 View east along St Mary Street terminated by the 17th century almshouses



Fig.22 View across Beaufort Square

7.3.8 The character area has a number of interesting features of local note. The scheme

of public artwork and paving which was carried out in 2005 by lead artist Howard Bowcott

together with a landscape architect, stone carver and letter cutter took inspiration from one of Chepstow's most famous landmarks, the port wall. York stone paving is used throughout and continues up the High Street to Moor Street and Welsh Street (Fig.24). At its centre is Beaufort Square, comprising a seating area and steps, which frames the 1921 War Memorial by Eric Francis of Chepstow and First World War German U-boat 105mm gun. The gun is the only 'war memorial' gun in the United Kingdom. King George V presented it to the town in recognition of the award of the Victoria Cross to Chepstow seaman William Charles Williams who is celebrated in the parish church¹. In Bank Square artist Andre Wallace's brass and stone sculpture, Boatman, is a focal feature (Fig. 25).



Fig.24 The High Street public realm scheme



Fig.25 The Boatman sculpture, Bank Square

¹ On 25 April 1915 during the landing on V Beach, Gallipoli, Williams, with three other men was assisting the commander of their ship, HMS *River Clyde* at the work of securing the lighters. He held on to a rope for over an hour, standing chest deep in the sea, under continuous enemy fire. He was eventually dangerously wounded and later killed by a shell whilst his rescue was being effected by the commander who described him as the bravest sailor he had ever met.

7.3.9 In term of architectural features of particular note are the examples of elaborate doorcases throughout (Fig.26). Other features include an ashlar arched doorway to the red brick range of the Powis Almshouses which leads to a former wine cellar, evidence of the once thriving wine trade in the town. Historic iron railings are to be found to Natwest Bank, Beaufort Square and a house named St. Maur where Nelson once stayed (Fig.27).

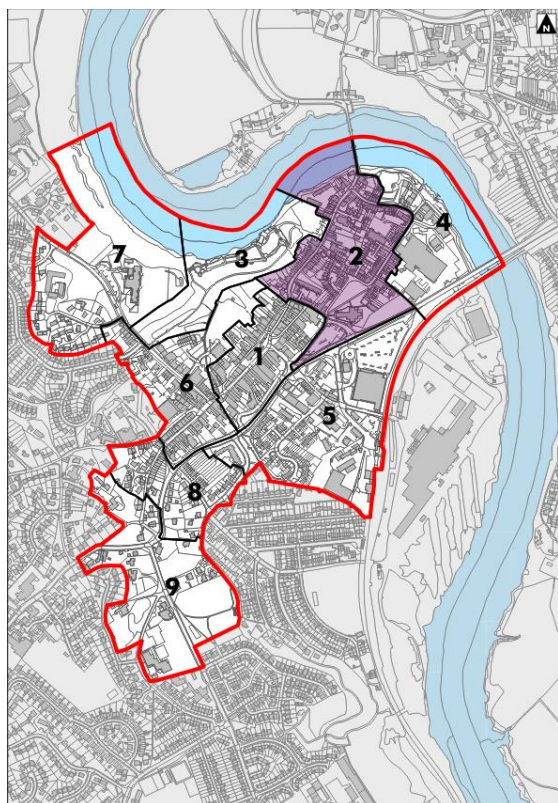


Fig.27 Traditional railings to St. Maur



Fig.26 Two examples of the wide range of historic doorcases found throughout the character area

CHARACTER AREA 2 Bridge Street & Lower Church Street



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6B

7.3.10 This complex character area occupies the lower parts of the town from the parish church in the south to the iron road bridge in the north. The area is defined by two historic streets, Bridge Street to the north and Lower Church Street to the south with 20th century housing located in the centre. The area is bounded to the north by St Ann Street and to the south by Upper Church Street.

7.3.11 The scale and height of buildings to streets is generally consistent to a particular street. This is accentuated by the setting out of houses in terraces and these are generally at either two or three-storey (**Fig.28**) with large buildings of note such as the Museum (Gwy House), Castle View Hotel and The Thomas Powis Almshouses. St Ann Street, Bridge Street, Lower Church Street, Upper Church Street, have a strong building line with houses set to the back of pavement with the occasional key building set back from this

strong building line such as the former Chepstow Board School (**Fig.29**), Baptist Church and Drill Hall. An extensive 1980s housing development by Holder Mathias Partnership is positioned in the centre of the historic streets on Gwy Court, Orchard Close and Hollins Close Gardens. These houses have a varied spatial arrangement creating squares and closes.



Fig.28 Two and three-storey terraces dominate the character area



Fig.29 Occasional buildings such as the former Chepstow Board School are set back from the roadside interrupting the generally strongly defined and consistent building line



Fig.30 Gwy House, one of a group of large-scale buildings within the character area

7.3.12 There are many buildings that make a particularly positive contribution towards the

character and appearance of the conservation area. Listed buildings line Bridge Street, St Ann Street, Upper and Lower Church Street. There are three groups of particular note. On Bridge Street the early 19th century Nos. 33A-47 climb the hill. These Grade II* listed two-bay, three-storey houses step up the hill, the rhythm of doorcases and segmental bow windows creates distinctive and engaging townscape to this part of the character area (**Fig.31** next page). On St Ann Street a series of two-storey 18th century houses, some with gables, and two and a half and three-storey 19th century houses form a cohesive group with a strong building line on the south side of the street. The varied architectural styles of the buildings and harmonious palette of

materials contribute to their significance and define them as buildings making a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area. A third group of note at the northern end of Bridge Street comprise large-scale buildings with Georgian façades; Gwy House (**Fig.30** previous page), Castle View Hotel and Cromwell House. These are distinguished by their size, the architectural language, proportions of the building type and close visual relationship to the castle.

Fig.31 (below) **The rhythm created by the bow windows of Nos. 33A-47 Bridge Street is a very distinctive townscape feature**



7.3.13 This character area shares much of the materials palette seen in the historic core, and comprises buildings predominantly rendered and painted in shades of white and cream, with a high number of pebble-dashed walls lined out to imitate ashlar stonework, occasional red brick houses and exposed and painted rubblestone (**Fig.32**). Mock timber-framing is found at Nos. 1-2 Bridge Street but is not a usual feature of the character area (**Fig.33**). Roofs are a mixture of natural slate and clay tile with some replacement concrete interlocking tiles and cement fibre slates. Chimney stacks are red brick, some rendered, or stone. Windows are characteristically multi-pane timber vertical sliding sashes. Boundary walls are coursed rubblestone, often with stone copings and more unusually slag blocks to those of the churchyard (**Fig. 33**).



Fig.32 The character area contains a varied but harmonious palette of materials



Fig.33 Slag blocks are a feature of special note



Fig.34 Contrasting character of Nos 1-2 Bridge Street with brick frontages and timbered gables

7.3.14 The narrow historic streets channel views and are sometimes terminated by key buildings for example north-east along Lower Church Street terminated by Lord Nelson House (**Fig.36**) and south-east along Upper Church Street terminated by the parish church (**Fig.37**). There are open views on Bridge Street west across the car park to the castle. The car park outside the Drill Hall is a significant open space within the conservation area with views to the rear of buildings on St Ann Street (**Fig.35**). The churchyard and green north of the church are two public open spaces with groups of trees. The green creates an informal square bounded by Lower Church Street to the north and the church footpath to the south (**Fig.38** next page). Hollins Close

Garden is an enclosed public open space, accessed via a stone gateway on Bridge Street.



Fig.35 The Drill Hall car park opens out views to the rear of properties on St Ann Street



Fig.36 Lord Nelson House terminates views north-east along Lower Church Street



Fig.37 The tower of the parish church terminates views south-east along Upper Church Street



Fig.38 The green north of the parish church

7.3.15 Features of local note include a good survival of historic iron railings to properties on St Ann Street and Lower Church Street and railings to the churchyard and green (**Fig.39**). The churchyard is of special note with a very large collection of 18th and 19th century chest tombs, many now eroded and in danger of collapse and a collection of pauper graves (marked with the letter 'P' from the Chepstow union workhouse) (**Fig.40**).



Fig.39 Railings between the churchyard and green are a distinctive feature creating enclosure to the footpath leading to Lower Church Street



Fig.40 An unusually large collection of chest tombs

**Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6C**

7.3.16 This small character area is tightly drawn around Chepstow Castle and the steep valley of the Dell. The Castle sits to the north of the town atop of the high Carboniferous limestone river cliffs of the River Wye (**Fig.41**). To the south the character area includes the high grass banks of the Dell which form part of the important setting to the castle (**Fig.42**). The wooded Dell rises west to Welsh Street. The castle, a popular tourist attraction, is served by a large surface car park to the east.



Fig.42 The steep sided Dell valley forms the southern setting of the castle

CHARACTER AREA 3 Chepstow Castle & Environs

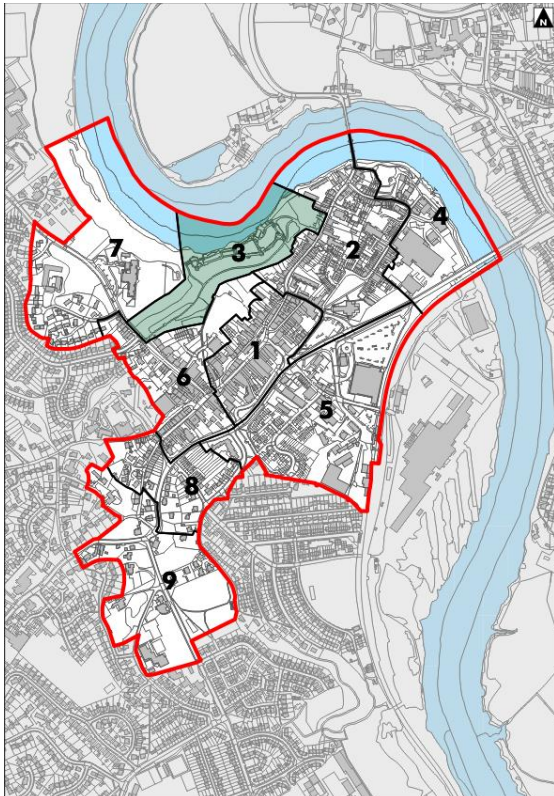




Fig.41 Chepstow Castle sits in a commanding position on top of the limestone river cliffs

7.3.17 The multi-phased castle is set out along the river cliff rising from east to west. The very large complex of buildings is arranged around the lower, middle and upper baileys linked by curtain walls (**Fig.43**). The massive rectangular Great Tower measuring 36m by 14m dominates the centre of the castle. Beyond the upper bailey gateway is the upper barbican marking the western limit of the castle, it contains a very sophisticated three storey south-west tower. In addition to the numerous towers and domestic range with hall, chamber, kitchen and cellar there is the main gatehouse. This gatehouse built by William Marshal is of a revolutionary design². It consists of two round towers of slightly different diameter built close together with a central gate-passage protected by murder holes, a portcullis with counterweights passing down through the floor, a pair of iron-clad doors and a second portcullis (**Fig.44**).



Fig.44 The main gatehouse leading into the lower bailey



Fig.43 The castle lower bailey

² Believed to be the oldest twin-towered gatehouse in Britain. Round towers were less vulnerable: they had no blind corners and could not easily be brought down by undermining. They could also deflect missiles better than flat-fronted towers. The tower nearest the river was the castle prison.

7.3.18 The castle complex, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade I listed building, is a group of national significance. The multi-phased construction covering seven distinct periods from 1067 through to the 18th century and later has resulted in a diverse mix of building styles and distinctive palette of building materials.

7.3.19 Over the long history of the castle masons used a wide variety of stone. In the Norman castle large blocks of yellow Triassic sandstone were used for dressed stone on the Great Tower, found at the Sudbrook cliffs, 5 miles to the south and also in large blocks in the ruins of the forum-basilica in the Roman town of Venta Silurum (Caerwent) 4 miles away. It is likely that materials were reused from the ruins of the Roman town and, in addition to the stone, there are bands of orange Roman tiles, which rise to frame the top of the doorway (Fig.45). The Great Tower also has a wide variety of local Devonian sandstones and Carboniferous limestone (Fig.46). In the Marshal period (1189-1245)

grey Carboniferous limestone was used for rubble walling stone and large blocks of creamy yellow limestone were used for dressings. A reddish purple sandstone was also mixed with limestone for openings. More exotic stones – including dark grey Purbeck marble, polished Blue Lias and pink alabaster – were used as decoration in the Great Tower. In the Bigod period (1270-1306) some of the reddish green Devonian sandstone is documented to have come from the abbey quarry west of Tintern. The pinkish Carboniferous limestone rubble came across the river at Tidenham, and 'sparstone' to make plaster, was brought from Austcliff across the Severn Estuary. Some oolitic limestone was also used for dressings in the lower bailey.



Fig.45 Large blocks of yellow Triassic sandstone are seen here with Roman tiles



Fig.46 Devonian sandstone and carboniferous limestone are used in conjunction in the Great Tower

7.3.20 Expansive long ranging views can be had from the towers and ramparts of the castle. On the north side there are open views along the River Wye east and west (Fig.47). The wooded river cliffs overlook the brown tinged Wye, its huge tidal range evident by deep mud banks. To the east the listed 19th century decorative iron road bridge linking

England and Wales is a distinctive landmark painted white against the brown of the river water (Fig.48). On the south side there are well-defined views of the town rising from the river in the north-east along the High Street to the top of the town in the west. Views from Marten’s Tower take in a dynamic town scene with the long Castle View terrace set in front of the priory church, its square tower a striking and prominent landmark in the townscape. Beyond is the road bridge linking England to Wales with the tubular supports of Brunel’s railway bridge glimpsed behind (Fig.49). Further in the distance the slender towers of the Grade I listed Severn Bridge to the south are juxtaposed with the rectangular façade of the Grade II* listed Sedbury Park, a classical style country house set high on the Gloucestershire side of the river cliff. The Dell, a steep sided valley with substantial deciduous tree cover is essential to the attractive town setting of the castle. Its rough grass banks contrast with the manicured grounds within the curtain walls. At Welsh Street views are channelled down the Dell valley toward the castle, hidden from view by tree cover. A large surface car park to the east of the castle is appropriately low key and does not impede views of the castle from the town.



Fig.48 The Wye Bridge and Wyecliff House viewed from the castle towers

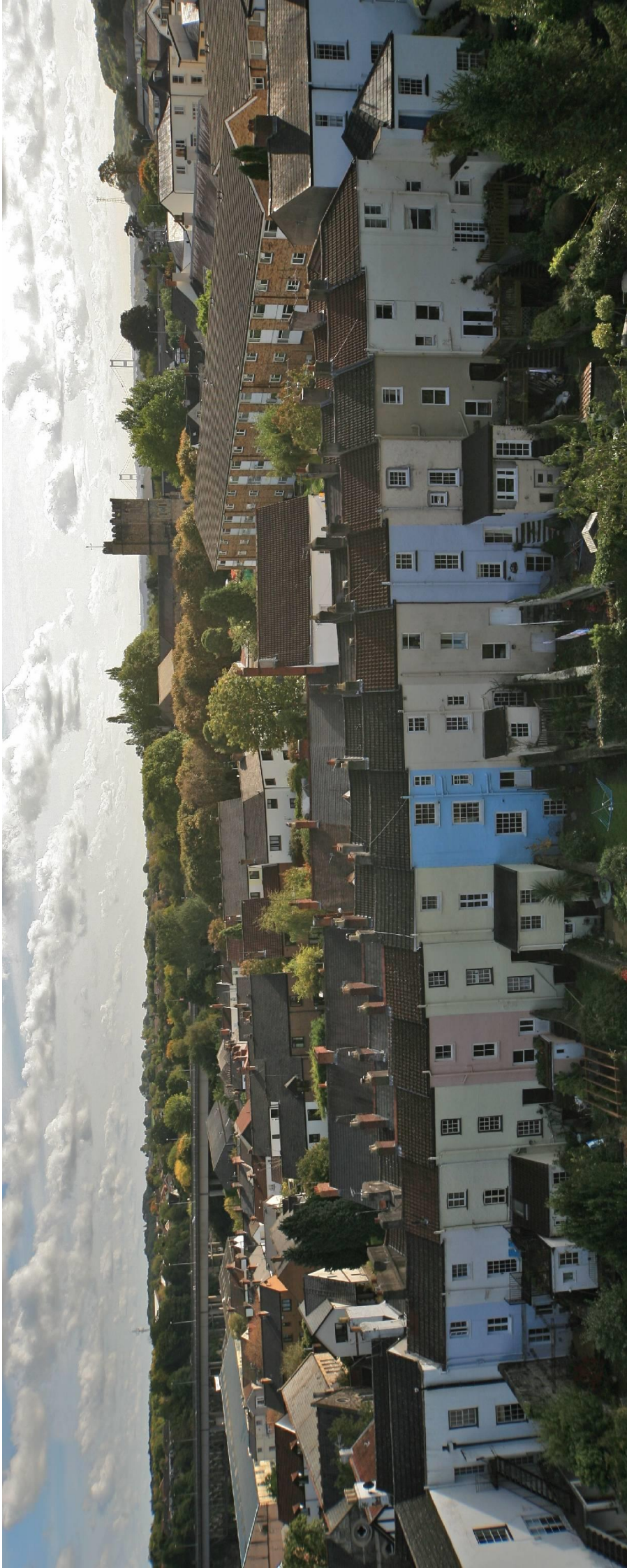


Fig.49 View from Marten's Tower to Castle View terrace taking in the A48 road bridge, parish church tower and distant Severn Bridge



Fig.47 Views along the River Wye from the north side of the castle

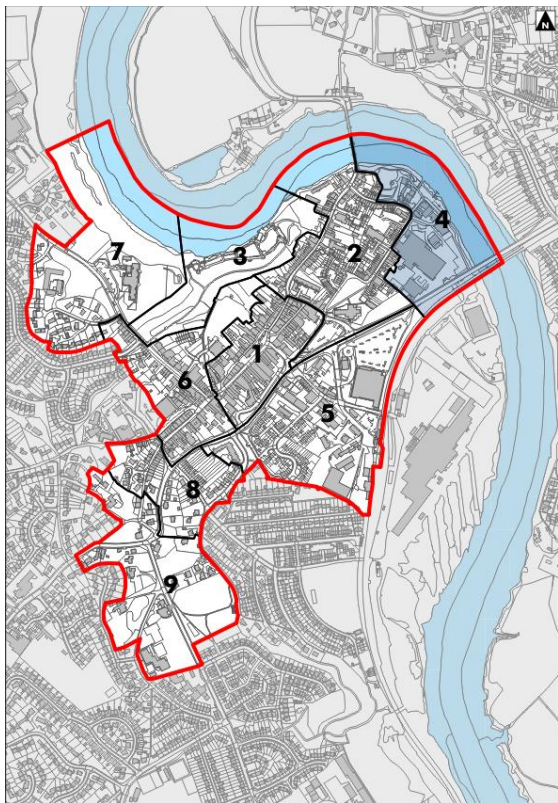
7.3.21 Aside from the wide-ranging views from the castle towers and physical structure of the castle itself there are some additional features of special note. A yew tree in the upper bailey is a reminder of the castle's late 19th to mid 20th century history when the Duke of Beaufort cleared out the interior of the castle, laid out paths and planted trees. The castle has a number of historic castle doors. The elm and oak board doors clenched together with iron nails, between the upper and middle bailey, date from the first half of the 16th century. The two doors surviving in Marten's Tower are of similar materials and construction. The most significant doors are those to the main gatehouse, now moved under cover, which date from no later than the 1190s (**Fig.50**). The doors are revolutionary in their construction. Iron plates, held by iron straps and massive nails driven through diagonal washers sheath the outer timber face to stop attackers burning or battering the doors down. The wooden lattice framework on the back is the earliest evidence of developed mortice and tenon joints known in Britain.

7.3.22 At the west end of the Dell is a drinking fountain, now without workings.



Fig.50 The gatehouse doors dating from before the 1190s

CHARACTER AREA 4
**The Back, Gunstock Wharf &
 Riverside**



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6D



Fig.51 **The interconnected Silverpill Lodge, Wye House, wine warehouse and Stuart House**



Fig.52 **The Boat Inn**

7.3.23 This small character area occupies an area between the two road bridges extending along the riverside from the iron Chepstow Bridge to large retail and warehouse units towards the A48 road and tubular rail bridge. The area is bounded to the west by St Ann Street. It is strongly characterised and well-defined by its riverside location and views. This area was at the heart of the town's river trade with shipbuilding docks, wine warehouses, customs house, fishery and storage yards. Running east from the iron bridge an area of seating over-looking the river was Gunstock Wharf where timber was stacked for shipment. Stone-built bark houses for the storage of oak bark for tanning were located in this area. Further east was the site of a fishery backing onto warehouses, which in turn fronted The Back. This space is now a square but formerly housed a dry dock for ships up to 500 tons. The presence of boats moored on the river and stored on the riverbank adds to the riverside/maritime character of the area.

7.3.24 The three-storey Georgian Wye House, and attached warehouse, forming a six-bay elevation, dominate The Back. The frontage of Wye House faces St Ann Street while the warehouse range faces onto The Back. Attached to the warehouse is the two-storey, three-bay Stuart House and another former warehouse with seven-bay river frontage. Other historic properties are of a similar two and three-storey scale with new build apartments of three and four storey. South of Lower Church Street are large warehouse units.

7.3.25 The key group of buildings in this area addresses The Back. This comprises the

connected Wye House, the Wine Warehouse, Stuart House and attached warehouse and Silverpill Lodge (**Fig.51**). The 18th century Boat Inn (**Fig.52**) and Lord Nelson House (former Inn) are situated opposite. The stone warehouse between the two inns dates from c.1790 but has been redeveloped as part of Riverside Mill apartments and only the façade (although this too has been altered) has been retained. These buildings comprise an important historic group of riverside buildings including inns, storage warehouses, the Chepstow Wine and Spirit Co. warehouse, the former Wye fishery office, and fishery bailiff's house with archway to the fishery yard.

7.3.26 Buildings are a combination of rubblestone, render, stucco and red brick. Silverpill Lodge uses Forest of Dean stone whilst the red brick wine warehouse has a prominent ground floor of slag blocks, created as a by product up stream at the Redbrook copper furnaces in the late 18th century/early 19th century (**Fig.53**). Roofs are natural slate, usually with red brick chimney stacks. Windows are mix of timber vertical sliding sashes, and casements (for example, to the Boat Inn). The Wine Warehouse has large cast-iron casement windows with centrally placed opening lights.

7.3.27 Due to its riverside characteristics there are many open views both up and down river. The deep mud banks and tide line on the limestone cliffs are testament to the considerable tidal range of the river. At 40 feet (12m) the rise and fall of the tide is second only to that in the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia. At the site of Gunstock Wharf there are uninterrupted views to the iron road bridge. From St Ann Street views are channelled through The Back towards the Gloucestershire river cliffs. The 'Gloucester Hole' is a natural cave, with its entrance excavated. It was reputedly used as a store for tea by the Shirenewton Quakers, as a crane hole for unloading large ships and as an explosives store. From the Riverside Mill apartments there are views south-east to the late twentieth century A48 road bridge and Brunel's tubular supports of the 1850 railway bridge (**Fig.54**).

7.3.28 The Back Square is a landscaped public open space (**Fig.55**) supplemented to the west by a small park with bandstand, gardens and trees. The grass river banks with riverside seating also provide public amenity space. An area of open land under the A48 bridge and railway bridge is unused wasteland.



Fig.53 The wine warehouse with slag block ground floor



Fig.54 View south-east to the A48 road bridge with Brunel's railway bridge beyond



Fig.55 The Back Square

7.3.29 Local features include the restored Packet Slip, a slipway regularly used by steamers from 1822 bringing tourists from Bristol (**Fig.56**). The cast iron bandstand in the gardens near Gunstock Wharf is also of local note. The two listed bridges are significant survivals of both local and national importance. The cast-iron road bridge of 1814-16 by Rastrick, Hazeldine, Davies & Brodie has been described as 'a supremely elegant composition' (Newman, 2002) with five shallow segmental arches carrying the gently curved roadway (**Fig.58**). The decorative railings, scrollwork panels and lamps on scrolled shafts add to its aesthetic appeal. Downstream only the substructure of Brunel's tubular railway suspension bridge survives

carrying the 1962 superstructure. Despite this, the engineering finesse displayed in the tall cast-iron columns with simple capitals placed in trios and the massive rock-faced stone abutment on the Welsh side with responding ashlar pillars can still be appreciated (**Fig.57**).

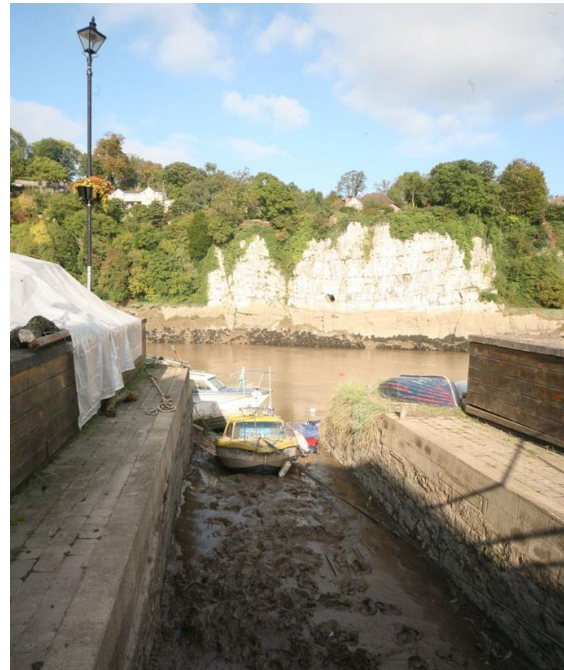


Fig.56 The restored Packet Slip



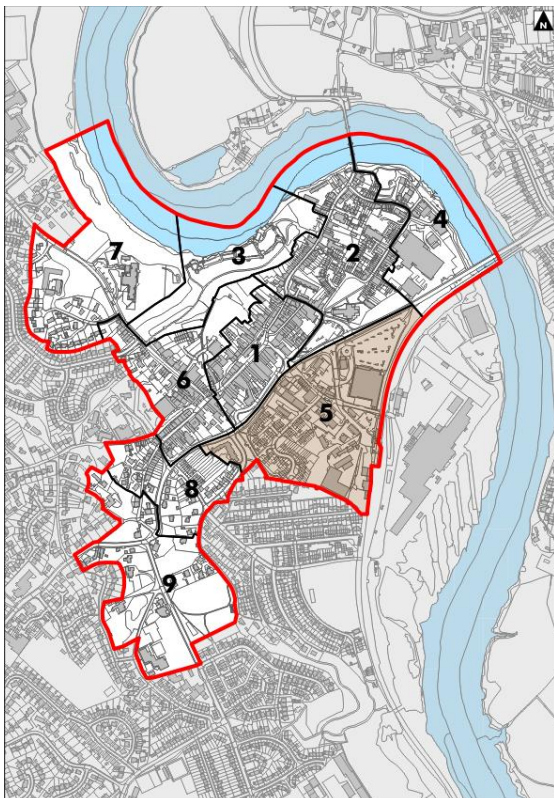
Fig.57 Brunel's railway bridge



Fig.58 The 1814-16 Wye Bridge with elegant ironwork

CHARACTER AREA 5

Station & Environs



Refer to:

Part D - Plan 6E

7.3.30 This large character area contains much of the town's surviving industry interspersed

with 20th century residential cul-de-sac development, offices, older terraces, the railway station and a more recent Tesco superstore. It is bounded to the north and west by the A48, to the east by the railway line and to the south by the Port Wall. The superstore and car park is housed on the site of the former Norman Priory, later a cattle market.

7.3.31 Buildings in the character area fall into two categories of large retail/office/industrial units and residential detached houses and terraces. The 19th century terrace on Station Road comprises two-storey, two-bay houses set just off the roadside behind a low boundary wall. The 20th century housing on cul-de-sacs at School Hill, River View and Beaufort Place comprise a variety of two-storey detached houses and three-storey terraces with small front gardens. Retail units vary in size from the very large square plan superstore (**Fig.59**) to the smaller steel clad units on School Hill. At Station Road industrial estate specialist architectural and fabric manufacturing firm Architen Landrell work from a purpose-built 1,800m² production facility housed in a striking tensile fabric building (**Fig.60**). The station and station cottages are of a smaller domestic scale.



Fig.59 Tesco superstore and car park dominate the north-east section of the character area



Fig.60 Architen Landrell's striking tensile fabric building

7.3.32 The principal group of buildings which make a significant contribution towards the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area are centred on the railway. The Italianate, single-storey Grade II listed railway station of 1850 by N. Lancaster Owen for Brunel's South Wales line (**Fig.61**) and Grade II listed 1892 decorative cast iron pedestrian footbridge by Edward Finch and Co of Chepstow (**Fig.62**) form a group with railway cottages The Quarries, the goods shed (now housing a builder's merchants) and a contemporary railway/industrial building west of The Quarries. An additional railway building is located north-east of the Grade II listed railway bridge over Mill Lane next to the listed Mill, both outside the conservation area. On Station Road the imposing two-storey, five-bay Post Office faces No. 6, a stone building with ashlar arches and circular windows suggestive of a previous railway/industrial use (**Fig.63**). Immediately to the east is the bullnosed 1939 Job Centre. All three buildings create an eclectic group distinctive to the Station Road character area.



Fig.62 The 1892 cast iron footbridge



Fig.63 The Post Office and No. 6 Station Road



Fig.61 Chepstow railway station

7.3.33 Modern units comprise a combination of red and yellow brick, preformed steel, tensile fabric and rendered and painted brick. The 20th century housing developments are categorised by a mix of red brick and render with slate and clay tile roofs with concrete interlocking tiles. Most historic buildings have natural slate roofs. Stone is found to the station and associated buildings with squared stone and ashlar to the station building and cottages (Fig.64), rock-faced stone to the railway bridge over Mill Lane and embankments and rubblestone to the other buildings.

7.3.34 From the footbridge over the railway line there are long distance views south-east to the River Severn with River Wye in the foreground. On School Hill there are views east to the lower town and the tower of the parish church. The church tower is also a landmark from the superstore car park and the church terminates views north-east on the junction of Station Street and the A48.

7.3.35 Features such as the Scheduled surviving sections of town wall are of national

significance but also of great local importance. The 13th century Port Wall to the south and west marks the extent of the walled town. Along this well-preserved stretch from the A48 there are two bastions intact up to the battlements (Fig.65). After a break the wall descends down the steep hillside with two more bastions behind the houses in Portwall Road and Green Street, best seen from below the railway station. Other features include Staffordshire diamond pavers surviving within the vicinity of the station, railway style railings to the front of The Quarries and an iron street lamp with flower motif on the Mill Street Bridge (Fig.66).



Fig.64 The Quarries feature squared stone

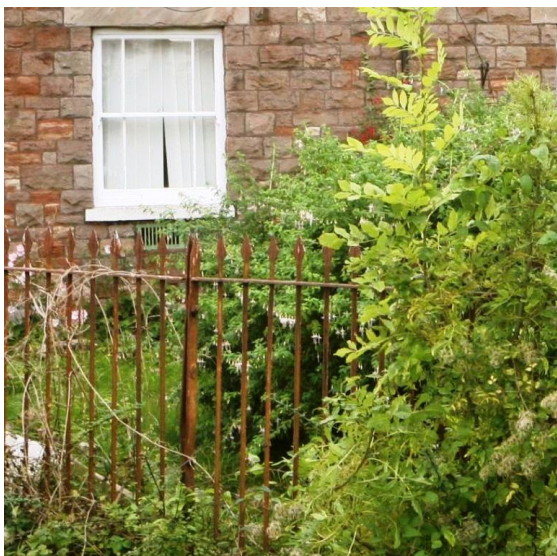
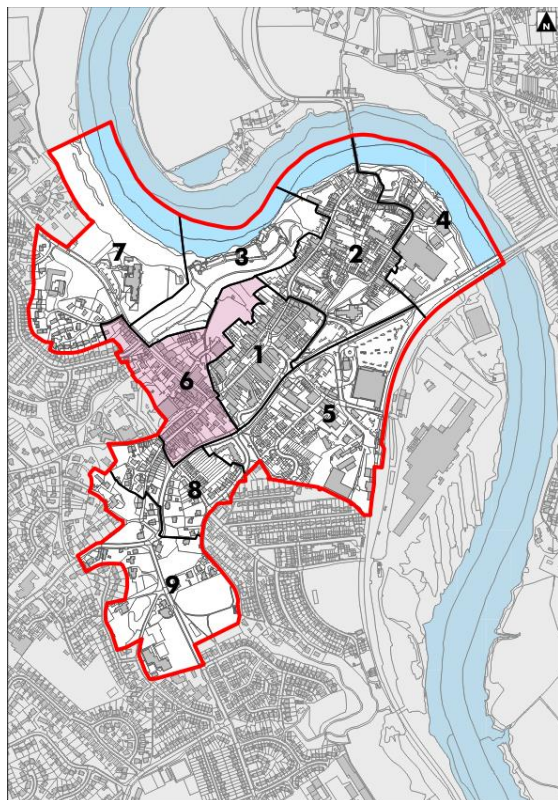


Fig.66 Railings to The Quarries



Fig.65 The Port Wall is a Scheduled Ancient Monument of national significance

CHARACTER AREA 6
Welsh Street & Moor Street



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6F

7.3.36 This character area comprises Welsh Street and Moor Street extending to Welsh Street car park and the Port Wall. It is strongly defined to the south by the A48, to the east by the Port Wall and High Street, to the north by

the Dell and to the west by Regent Way. This area has a diverse character with, for example, the juxtaposition of open car park with large-scale 20th century commercial units alongside terraces of houses, substantial public houses and detached villas. The busy bus station is located on widened Thomas Street.

7.3.37 The scale of buildings in this area is a mix of two and three storey with the occasional single storey range (**Fig.67**). In addition to terraced houses there are relatively large public houses (Kings Head – four bay) and detached villas (Boscobel House - four bay), 20th century buildings such as Nos. 1-12 Dell View, No. 24 (Wilkinson’s) Welsh Street, the 10- bay Nos. 21-22 Welsh Street, Chepstow Library and the Cooperative Store are all large-scale buildings with a relatively coarse grain contrasting with the fine grain of adjacent historic buildings (**Fig. 68**).



Fig.68 The library is one of a group of larger-scale buildings juxtaposed with historic built form found within the character area



Fig.67 Two and three-storey buildings are the typical scale of built form in this part of the conservation area

7.3.38 The building line, in places, is not as well-defined as the historic core. Buildings on Moor Street are positioned back of pavement with a regular rhythm to terraced houses. A number of alleyways lead from the south side of Moor Street to large rear yards containing business premises and ancillary buildings running parallel to the Moor Street frontage (**Fig.69**). Albion Square at the junction of Thomas Street and Moor Street creates a break in the building line with buildings facing the junction on three sides (**Fig.70**). A narrow alleyway runs to the front of the Methodist Church emerging in Welsh Street east of the Kings Head. Distinctive curved corner buildings address the junction of Welsh Street and Moor Street (**Fig.71**). On Welsh Street buildings are arranged in groups facing the road with open spaces between each group. From Llanover Lodge to the junction of St Kingsmark Avenue on the west side, buildings are raised on a bank above Welsh Street giving them added emphasis in the streetscape (**Fig.72**).



Fig.71 Distinctive curved corner buildings address the junction of Welsh Street and Moor Street



Fig.72 Buildings on Welsh Street raised above the roadside



Fig.69 View north to Moor Street from one of the many rear yards



Fig.70 Albion Square, showing impact of traffic management at the junction

7.3.39 The public house and former public house is well represented in this part of the character area and the group of buildings forming this group are varied in terms of their architectural character. For example, The Greyhound of 17th century origin, the unusually gabled 18th century Queen's Head (not common for an 18th century building fronting the road), the typically Georgian Coach and Horses Inn, mid- to late 19th century The Place to Meet, the Neo-Tudor George Hotel (1898) and early 20th century Baroque style King's Head (**Fig.73**). Other groups of note are Nos. 11, 11a, 12 Welsh Street, an intact group of three late 19th century terraced houses and a group of five listed late Georgian and early Victorian town houses comprising Fairlight, Castledale and York House, Marlborough House, The Moat House and Meridale complete with front iron railings (**Fig.74**). The Castledale and York House building is particularly prominent due to its massive central chimney stack with 16 pots.



Fig.74 A cohesive group of listed Georgian and Victorian houses on Welsh Street (note the corner building is the lodge to The Mount)



Fig.73 A significant group of historic inns and public houses most of which are still in use as public houses

7.3.40 The character area has a wide variety of materials. Most buildings are rendered or stuccoed with brick chimney stacks, natural slate roofs, sometimes behind parapets, and timber vertical sliding sashes. Some buildings have rusticated stucco such as No. 3 Moor Street, probably dating from the Regency period (**Fig.75**). There is the occasional use of clay pantiles and double Roman tiles as well as tile hanging (The Lodge). Metal casement windows are a feature of Nos. 18-19 Moor Street. They probably replaced timber vertical sliding sashes but due to their fine glazing bars and characteristics typical of their early 20th century period they have given this building an almost Art Deco character (**Fig.76**). 20th century buildings are either rendered or red brick with natural slate or cement fibre slate roofs. The cooperative store is notable for its striking preformed leaded roof which adds interest to the roofline in this part of the character area (**Fig.77**). Stone is found to the Gothic Revival Methodist Church (1855) as dressed and coursed sandstone with ashlar dressings, as rock-faced stone and ashlar mullions to the George Hotel (1899) and Police Station (with pink ashlar) of 1912 (**Fig.78**). The Port Wall is constructed of un-worked rubblestone. Nos. 22, 23 & 23a Moor Street are unusual for its use of roughcast rendering with applied timber framing.



Fig.75 No. 3 Moor Street with its distinctive and somewhat unusual stucco façade on a building of this scale



Fig.76 Metal casement windows are a feature of Nos. 18-19 Moor Street



Fig.77 The lead roof to the Co-operative store adds interest to this building positioned on a key site on Thomas Street



Fig.78 The rock-faced stone Police Station (1912)

7.3.41 As a continuation of the High Street there are long views along Moor Street east down the hill. These are partially terminated by the Town Gate but the High Street is glimpsed and then emerges in full view as one travels through the archway. On Welsh Street views south-east are terminated by the formal façade of the George Hotel (**Fig.79**). At Albion Square views north-west are terminated by the Methodist Church. At the northern end of Welsh Street there are open views across the Dell valley. At Welsh Street car park there are views to the castle, river cliffs and parish church (**Fig.80**). A doorway in the Port Wall accessed from the car park reveals views to the wooded Dell.

7.3.42 The character area's main open spaces are the large Welsh Street car park located to the rear of Bank Street and somewhat hidden from view and the smaller but more visually intrusive Co-operative car park. Both of these spaces have practical uses but are devoid of landscaping (**Fig.81**). In the case of the Co-operative car park, its visual presence from Thomas Street is detrimental in townscape terms to the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. Albion Square is not a square in the true sense of the definition but a complex convergence of streets creating dynamic townscape but being dominated by

vehicular traffic. There is a small space with a seating area immediately north-east of the Co-operative building offering a quiet informal space, enclosure created by 20th century buildings.



Fig.79 Views south-east are successfully terminated by the bold architectural treatment of the George Hotel



Fig.81 The Welsh Street Car Park, a large surface car park with very little landscaping



Fig.80 Elevated views looking north to the castle from Welsh Street car park

7.3.43 The scheduled 13th century Port Wall is a major local feature of the character area defining the extent of Welsh Street car park and cranking back towards the High Street marking the extent of the historic walled town and its suburbs (**Fig.82**). At the break in the wall leading into the car park there are three 19th century gravestones (of unknown origin) set against the wall. Other features include a stone mounting block on Welsh Street, opposite the Coach and Horses and stone buffers on the alleyway leading from the Methodist Church (now becoming rare these stones were to protect buildings from being struck by wagon wheel hubs) (**Fig.83**). On Welsh Street is the site of the late 16th century Chepstow bell foundry (eight Chepstow bells hang in the parish church). A stone and brick boundary wall on the site is a good survival. Other historic boundaries which survive in numbers include a good range of Chepstow ironwork railings and gates by Hawkesford (**Fig.84** next page).

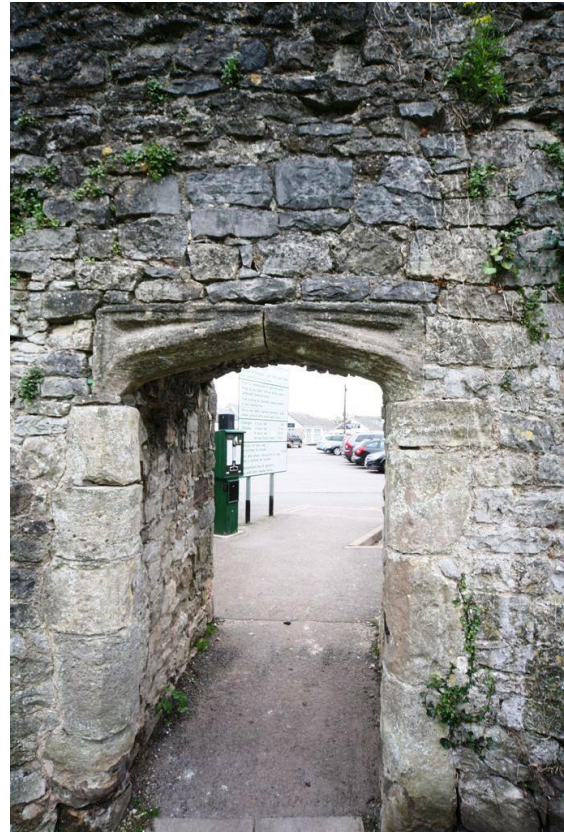


Fig.83 Stone buffers featured on buildings were used to protect buildings from being struck by wagon wheel hubs.

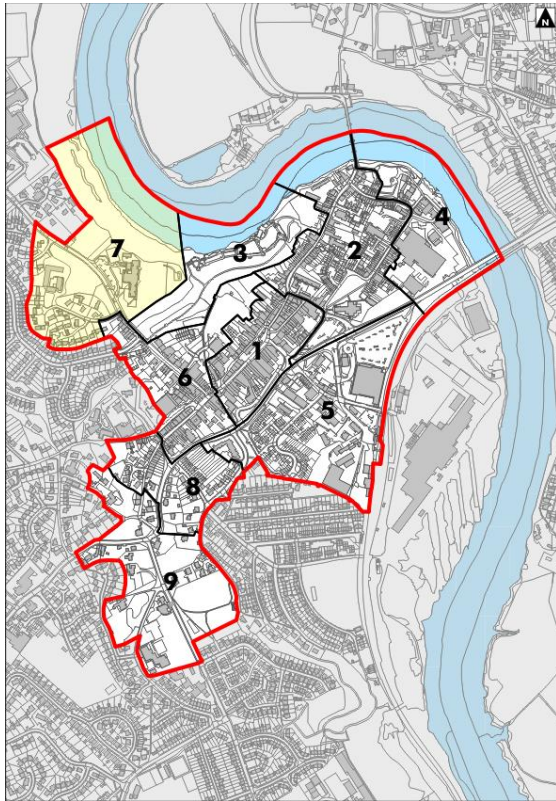


Fig.82 The Port Wall with arched doorway (top) and curved bastions (bottom)



Fig.84 Railings bearing Chepstow foundry marks are a local feature

CHARACTER AREA 7 The Mount & Environs



Refer to: Part D - Plan 6G

7.3.44 This character area focuses on the mid-19th century house, The Mount, on the west side of Welsh Street but includes its wider setting now occupied in part by the Dell Primary School. The house is set above the road in its own grounds, now reduced in size by 20th century housing on Mount Way which occupies the area of the former landscaped wooded grounds and substantial walled kitchen garden. On the east side of Welsh Street the character area extends across an area of scrubland and includes The Dell Primary School and the wooded river cliffs high above the River Wye.

7.3.45 20th century housing on Mount Way comprises detached two-storey family houses set between street trees on curving cul-de-sac access roads (**Fig.85**). The Mount dominates the character area sat high on a mound above the roadside facing east (**Fig.86**). The three bay, three-storey house (now divided into flats) is flanked by a courtyard of new buildings

(finished 2010) designed in the style of coach house and stables. These two-storey plus attic ranges comprise an 11-bay north range with carriageway arch, 12-bay west range and 5-bay south range. The Mount still retains its dominance and is seen from the town and beyond in distant

views. To the east side of Welsh Street the Dell Primary School is a large 'T' plan single-storey complex orientated north-south. Its low scale and position set off the roadside minimise its impact on the streetscape and views across from The Mount.



Fig.85 Mount Way, a 20th century housing development on the former grounds of The Mount



Fig.86 The Mount, a simple classical house set in its own grounds

7.3.46 The Mount, and its range of new buildings together with its Grade II listed north and east wrought iron gates and curving random rubblestone retaining wall, forms a cohesive group of considerable historic and architectural importance (**Fig.87**)

7.3.47 Mount Way is characterised by its use of render and red/brown brick with slate roofs. The Mount's Bath stone façade is an important part of its architectural quality. The modern ranges are differentiated by their red brick and natural slate. The red colouring of the brick make the buildings stand out from their surroundings. Boundary walls are grey/brown limestone rubble.

7.3.48 The elevated position of The Mount, reputedly originally the site of a watch mound related to the nearby Roman road to Caerleon, offers wide ranging panoramic views north and east across the town and river to Gloucestershire. In views east there are distant views of Sedbury, the River Severn and Oldbury nuclear power station (**Fig.88** next page). On descending from the house to Welsh Street views are more restricted by tree cover but there are views south-east to the towers of the Severn Bridge.

7.3.49 The grounds of The Mount are enhanced by a number of landmark mature trees including a beech, maple and prominent cedar of Lebanon. North-west of the primary school is an area of scrubland covered with saplings and brambles. The river cliffs are heavily wooded with native mixed deciduous

trees. A number of ornamental trees screen the primary school from the roadside.

7.3.50 The curving stone boundary walls on both sides of Welsh Street are a locally distinctive feature of the character area. The two sets of statutory listed gates to The Mount are significant survivals. The east gates are particularly good examples comprising an elaborate structure in five main stepped bays with decorative wrought iron work with crestings, bands and finials of curlicues and leaf motifs to the gates, and spearheads and turned heads to the railings (**Fig.89**).



Fig.87 The rear courtyard of The Mount with a range of new red brick buildings

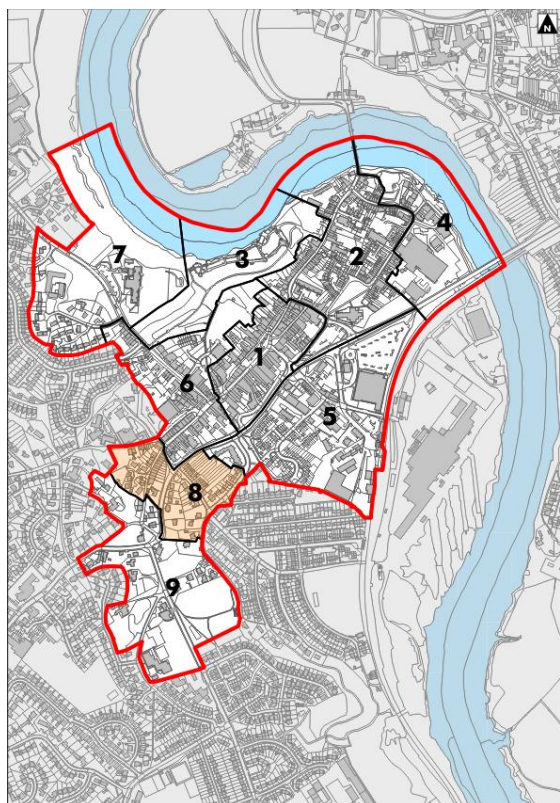


Fig.89 The well executed and highly decorated Grade II listed gates to The Mount



Fig.88 Long distance views east from The Mount

CHARACTER AREA 8 Mount Pleasant & Hardwick Avenue



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6H

7.3.51 This character area comprises Mount Pleasant Environs between Mounton Road and the A48 (Mount Pleasant) with the narrow Steep Street set between these two roads. Steep Street was the original main road to Newport and subsequently the turnpike road. It was a continuation of Moor Street and known historically as Back Hill. It did not gain its present name, Steep Street, until 1832. To the south of the A48 the gradient falls away to the river. A subway under the A48 gives access to the north end of Hardwick Avenue that continues down to Rockwood Road. This character area is a mix of early and late 19th century terraced houses with semi-detached and detached villas which step down the hillside towards the river.

7.3.52 Buildings follow the topography of the land with houses on the north side arranged following the alignment of Steep Street and Mounton Road running east-west whilst houses to the south face Hardwick Avenue

running north-south. Mount Pleasant terrace, set behind front gardens high above the A48, faces east to the River Wye (**Fig.90**), the plainer rear elevations back onto Steep Street with an eclectic mix of single storey outbuildings forming an integral part of the road's character.

These elevations have effectively become the working 'front' of the houses despite the more formal and architectural 'front' of the houses facing onto Mount Pleasant (**Fig.91**). Detached houses, positioned below the A48 on a steep bank, opposite The Dingle and Dingleside, face out to views in the east. On the rising Steep Street and Mounton Road buildings are stepped up the hillside creating a dynamic roofscape (**Fig.92** next page). Buildings are generally on a grand scale and range from two through to two and a half and three storeys. Terraced houses on Hardwick Avenue are smaller but still generous.



Fig.90 The 1832 development of Mount Pleasant terrace enjoys views east to the River Wye



Fig.91 The rear elevations of Mount Pleasant terrace on Steep Street – the main entrance to these houses is from Steep Street despite their original architectural orientation to the south-east

7.3.53 There are four significant groups of buildings in the character area. The first is the Grade II listed Mount Pleasant terrace of 11 houses built in c.1832. No. 2 and 3 at the top of Steep Street may be the significant remodelling of an earlier building fronting Steep Street. The buildings display multi-pane sliding sashes, rusticated quoins, tripartite ground floor windows and classical doorcases with fanlights. Each house has a long front garden enclosed by a stone wall, sometimes rendered, sometimes topped by railings. Front gates are flanked by tall gate piers with stepped coping and iron gates. The railings and gates have distinctive spear, fleur-de-lys and orb finials and are listed Grade II in their own right (**Fig.93**). The second group comprise three detached houses (the squared stone Grosmont and its neighbour and red brick Hill House) accessed via steps down from the A48. They all have an open aspect overlooking the east of the town. The third group comprise two terraces on the north side of Hardwick Avenue. Nos. 5-13 which step down the road are distinguished by their rich decoration comprising terracotta flower motifs, and yellow ashlar bay windows with ionic columns and fluted key stones and pedimented doorcases with lively figurative keystones (**Fig.94** next page). Most, but not all, original dividing boundary iron railings survive. Nos. 19-27 are less distinguished but exhibit unusual features such as wide window openings and a relatively rare survival of a complete collection of front boundary walls, gate piers, front and dividing railings (**Fig.95** next page). The fourth group are on both sides of Hardwick Avenue and comprise six 19th and 20th century detached and semi-detached villas set back off the roadside with largely original roof coverings, stacks, windows, front boundary walls and gate piers. Rosedale is in a poor state of repair and completely covered in ivy and tree saplings so that no part of the front wall or windows can be seen (**Fig.96**). Stoneleigh is of particular note due to its decorative bargeboards, crested bay windows and elaborate ironwork balcony as well as an excellent survival of front boundary railings.



Fig.92 Buildings follow the steep gradient stepping up the hillside



Fig.93 Listed railings with unusual spear finials



Fig.96 Rosedale, part of a significant group but almost entirely encased in vegetation



Fig.94 The distinctive Nos. 5-13 Hardwick Avenue with rich decoration



Fig.95 Nos. 19-27 Hardwick Avenue with a rare complete collection of boundary walls and railings

7.3.54 The character area has a wide range of materials. Painted render is used on Mount Pleasant terrace, elsewhere there is squared stone rubble, yellow ashlar, terracotta, engineering brick, red and yellow brick, roughcast and mock timber framing (**Fig.97**). Roofs are invariably natural slate with red brick or rendered chimney stacks. Occasionally clay tile, concrete interlocking tiles and cement fibre slates are seen. Timber detailing to cornices, pediments, bargeboards and bays are a particular feature along with a rich variety of historic ironwork (**Fig.98**). Windows are predominantly timber, single glazed vertical sliding sashes with occasional uPVC replacement. Hawkpoint has decorative Gothick style metal framed lancet casements with leaded glazing (**Fig.99**).



Fig.98 The late Victorian villa of Stoneleigh has fine examples of timber detailing and ironwork



Fig.99 The Gothick style windows of Hawkpoint stand out given the predominance of sashes found in the character area



Fig.97 The terraces on Hardwick Avenue display a wide range of materials

7.3.55 The location of the character area high up on the hill means that open views across the town can be appreciated from a number of viewpoints. On Mounton Road there are views east to the lower town and distant views across the Wye to Sedbury. Rising up Steep Street there are views north-east along Moor Street down into the town and town gate. From the top of Steep Street views open out to reveal long vistas to the A48, the English/Welsh road bridge, railway bridge and road bridge between Tutshill and Sedbury. Both of these settlements can also be seen along with the River Severn. On the A48 there are views on the north side of Hill House east to Hardwick Avenue and the 1915-19 garden suburb of Hardwick Village (**Fig.100**). On the A48 descending Hardwick Hill views are presently terminated by the brightly painted Pink House Party Shop No. 3 Hardwick Terrace (this building would not be so prominent if painted an alternative more generally seen colour such as white or cream) (**Fig.101**). There are also views at the junction of the A48 and Hardwick Terrace north-east to the landmark tower of the parish church.



Fig.100 Views east to the roofs of the houses in Hardwick Village



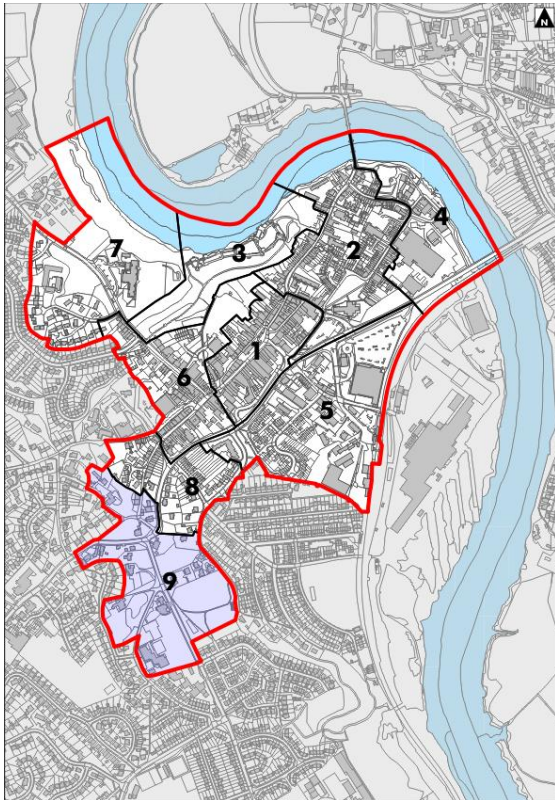
Fig.101 No. 3 Hardwick Terrace (mostly given its chosen colour scheme) terminates views north-east along the A48

7.3.56 Features within this character area include rubblestone boundary walls along Mounton Road, and a good survival of historic garden walls, gate piers and iron gates and railings, many with Chepstow foundry marks (**Fig.102**). In addition street ironwork such as drain covers on Mounton Road are by Chepstow foundries.



Fig.102 Examples of the good survival of historic ironwork in the character area

CHARACTER AREA 9
Hardwick Hill Environs



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6I



Fig.103 The grand scale and refined Georgian architectural treatment of the three-bay, three-storey Stratheden

7.3.57 This character area is centred on the area of Hardwick Hill including Hardwick Hill Lane, Vauxhall Lane, Bulwark Road and Old Bulwark Road. It rises to the east as Hardwick Hill begins to plateau. The area is sparsely populated with eight major listed Georgian gentleman's residences, many previously associated with gentry, merchants and industrialists. Brunel stayed at High Trees during the construction of his tubular railway bridge and it was the birthplace of Isambard Owen, founder of the Universities of Wales, Bristol and Newcastle upon Tyne. Ashfield House was built for a ship builder and a later ship owner installed a bell to communicate with the riverside. Hardwick Cottage was built for the site-engineer of the Great Western Railway. The houses were built with the development of Mount Pleasant by the Chepstow Turnpike Trustees from c.1808.

7.3.58 The grand scale of the buildings in this area reflects their former status as Georgian gentlemen's residences positioned on the hill with a fine aspect over the town. Most are symmetrical three-bay houses but they vary in height from the two-storey High Trees and two-storey plus basement and attic house known as The Gwentlands to the three-storey Nos. 1-4 Hardwick Hill and double pile three-storey plus basement Lower Hardwick. Nos. 1-4 comprise four attached residences facing west, north, and east. The chief of these, Stratheden, has the appearance of a detached residence with formal front driveway (**Fig.103**). The houses all correspond to their topography and face out to views south and east. High Trees, The Gwentlands and Lower Hardwick are all located in their own grounds, those containing The Gwentlands being the most impressive (**Fig.104** next page). To the south on Bulwark Road are the 1970s St Mary's Roman Catholic Church (its quarter circle plan a response to the liturgical movement¹) and 1960s church school which face east over the town to the River Wye (**Fig.105**).

¹ The liturgical movement was an attempt to bring the laity closer to the congregation both spiritually and physically and often meant bringing the altar closer or actually within the congregation. The resulting plan in new churches often reflected these aspirations.

7.3.59 The large Georgian houses create a cohesive group relating the development of the town and its past 18th and 19th century prosperity. Combined with gardens, mature trees, outbuildings, walls and gates the character area is defined by these attractive well considered buildings and their essential settings. In addition to listed properties four other houses make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. On Bulwark Road St Govans, an early 20th century mock timber-framed detached residence (**Fig.106**) and Boverton House, a three-bay late 19th century house continue the theme of large buildings set in landscaped grounds (**Fig.107**). The Dingle and Dingleside, Mount Pleasant, introduce a more modest Victorian building type to this part of the conservation area.



Fig.106 St Govans set back off the roadside in its own private grounds



Fig.105 St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, its quarter circle plan a direct response to the liturgical movement – bringing the altar closer to the congregation



Fig.107 Boverton House, a large detached property. Its large grounds reflective of the character of the area



Fig.104 The Gwentlands positioned within mature landscaped garden

7.3.60 Buildings are usually rendered or stucco with scored lines to simulate high quality stone masonry. Boverton House stands out due to its use of grey rock-faced stone and yellow ashlar. The Dingle and Dingleside are red brick with clay tile roofs with a random rubblestone rear wing with red brick dressings (**Fig.108**). Roofs to other properties are invariably natural slate, often hipped. Boundary walls on Hardwick Hill and Old Bulwark Road are dark grey rubblestone with hints of brown rubblestone. Windows are usually timber, single glazed, vertical sliding sashes with lancet headed windows to Ashfield (**Fig.109**) and cross-frame casements to Hardwick Cottage. Features include decorative bargeboards to Ashfield and trellis window surrounds to Hardwick Cottage.

7.3.61 Panoramic views are to be had on Bulwark Road over-looking a small public park with views east to the River Severn and Wye and the village of Sedbury (**Fig.110**). In views north-east the castle towers can just be glimpsed between buildings and tree cover. Views north along Bulwark Road are terminated by Lower Hardwick which stands high above the A48 behind a stone retaining wall (**Fig.111**). Immediately east of Ashfield there are expansive views east to Hardwick Avenue, and the garden suburb of Hardwick Village (**Fig.112** next page). Views north on Rockwood Road, below Hardwick Cottage are terminated by No. 31 Hardwick Avenue and its monkey puzzle tree. At the western end of the character area, just outside the conservation area, on Vauxhall Road there are long distance views to the River Severn and Oldbury nuclear power station.



Fig.108 The red brick houses set above the A48 are distinguished by their more modest scale



Fig.109 Ashfield with picturesque styling to window openings and bargeboards



Fig.110 Views east over the park, the River Severn can be seen in the distance



Fig.111 Views north along Bulwark Road are terminated by the elevated Lower Hardwick

7.3.62 The character area contains a number of large gardens and grounds to properties as well as the school grounds to St Mary's Catholic School. A small public park is terraced down the hillside from Bulwark Road containing many trees, a playground area and skate park. Trees are an important feature of the character area with laurel hedges, mature beech and cedar to The Gwentlands, monkey puzzle to Lower Hardwick and a line of mature copper beech between St Govans and Boverton House (**Fig.113**).



Fig.113 Mature trees are a feature of the character area

7.3.63 The stone boundary walls are a prominent local feature of the character area. The walls provide a strong positive sense of enclosure. This is particularly the case along the curving Hardwick Hill and in the narrow alleys along Vauxhall Lane from High Trees west and east on emerging onto Hardwick Hill (**Fig.114**).



Fig.114 Stone boundary walls are a strong local feature of the character area



Fig.112 Views open out between trees east to Hardwick Village

7.4 Architectural & Historic Qualities of Buildings

7.4.1 Chepstow has a rich architectural heritage spanning the 900 years from the Norman period to the 20th century. There are almost 200 listed buildings within the conservation area; about 180, omitting listed railings, structures and a phone box. Of these, 159 date from the 18th and early 19th centuries, reflecting the essentially Georgian and Regency architectural character of much of the town.

7.4.2 This review will examine the architectural interest of Chepstow by taking representative buildings, types, styles and groups, both Listed and unlisted, chronologically from the Norman period up to the turn of the present century.

7.4.3 The appraisal has been undertaken by field surveys by the consultants in addition to reference to the Listed Building Database for Chepstow, compiled by Cadw and the Chepstow section of the Gwent/Monmouthshire Volume of the Buildings of Wales series by John Newman (*Yale U.P 2002*).

Norman and Medieval

7.4.4 Chepstow Castle (Grade I listed, **Fig.115** & **Fig.116**) one of the great architectural and historic monuments, not only of Monmouthshire, but of Wales, is located on the bank of the River Wye on the north side of the town and separated from it by a natural dry moat, the Dell. Chepstow Castle incorporates many of the key architectural and military phases of castle architecture and is built of stone from local sources (as well as remnant Roman brick), to those within easy reach such as Caldicot and Portskewett, to Dundry on the southern edge of Bristol. The tall Norman keep, commenced immediately following the Conquest in 1067, lies at the narrowest point of the castle site, with later phases fanning out to east and west. The keep with its practically blank south wall, is built to a height which allows it to dominate the highest part of the town, now occupied by the car park, to the south side of the Dell.



Fig.115 Chepstow Castle. The eastern end with the massive Martens Tower on the left and one of the gatehouse towers on the right.



Fig.116 Chepstow Castle. The main domestic range as seen through the gate.

7.4.5 The gatehouse on the western extremity of the castle is rectangular in form and appearance, dating from the late 13th century, otherwise the towers and the eastern gatehouse are 'D' shaped on plan, mainly dating from the earlier 13th century. The most impressive and complete of the towers is Martens Tower (late 13th century) on the south-east corner of the castle, at perhaps the most visible part of the whole castle complex. The tall domestic range, on the north-east end of the castle is seen at its best from the riverside and with its tall cranked southern wall, as one approaches through the main gate. This potentially weaker structure is located atop the unassailable river cliff. It is here that the mullioned and traceried windows of medieval secular architecture are located behind the massive curtain walls and towers. Later alterations included Tudor square headed windows inserted in one or two locations on the castle walls and in particular

on one of the eastern gatehouse towers, an indication of more peaceful times. On the other hand, the castle walls were considerably strengthened during the turbulent period of the Civil War. Overall, the plan and massing of the castle is a masterly response to the limitations and potential of a narrow precipitous site.

7.4.6 The Parish (and Priory) Church of St Mary (Grade I listed, **Fig.117** & **Fig.118**) founded at the same time as the commencement of Chepstow Castle, retains its massive, almost austere character, despite subsequent additions and alterations. Situated at the eastern end of the town, at a slightly lower level than some of the later roadways, its impact is somewhat compromised by the main A48 (on its eastern boundary), and a car park to the south. Nevertheless, the west tower, mainly Norman with an 18th century upper portion is of particular historic and architectural interest. The characteristic Norman west front door with its semi-circular arch and five 'layers' of moulding (most with chevron patterns), and columns, reflects the depth of the masonry of the tower structure.

7.4.7 The other visibly Norman parts of the church are the nave having round headed windows and tall proportions. Otherwise the church has been drastically altered, not least as a result of the collapse of the crossing tower. The recessed upper two stages of the west tower date from the 18th century with some attractive pedimented renaissance windows and pilasters. 19th century alterations included the demolition of the nave aisles and the subsequent infilling of the nave arcade, the rebuilding of the chancel and east end and the construction of rather boxy transepts in a simplified Neo Norman style. The northern transept has untypically tall windows, albeit with round heads. Nevertheless, this is a church of great significance forming a Norman counterpoint to the castle, retaining its Romanesque character, largely undiluted by extensive Gothic remodelling, despite its 19th century restoration work.

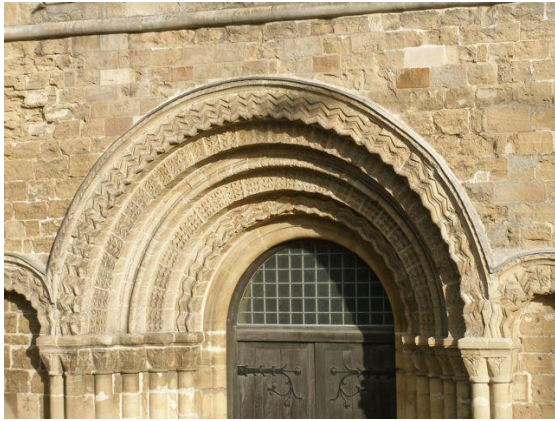


Fig.118 St Mary's Church. A detail of the west door shows the boldly carved chevron and other patterns characteristic of Norman architecture.



Fig.117 St Mary's Church from the south-west. The Norman and 18th century stages of the tower are clearly visible. The Victorian south transept can be seen to the right.

7.4.8 Apart from the Port Wall and Town Gate, the few remaining buildings of the medieval period include St Ann's (Grade II listed, **Fig.119**) at the top of Bridge Street, adjacent to Powis Almshouses. Whilst the building was altered in the 18th and 19th centuries, its essential medieval character can be detected. The large gable end cross wing has a small cusped window at the apex. St Ann's is constructed in rough coursed stone blocks, with a wing either side of the gable; that on the left was remodelled in the 18th century. The side elevation contains a medieval stone trefoil leaded window. The main street elevation under the gable has rectangular drip moulds (probably 16th century) over later paired 18th century windows.

7.4.9 Medieval work can still be seen behind later re-fronted buildings, for instance a late medieval stone window opening in the rear wing to the Manor House on Beaufort Square (**Fig.120**). Raglan Lodge (Grade II* listed) on Beaufort Square, whilst having a refined Regency frontage, has a medieval vaulted hall to the front, probably dating from the 14th century.



Fig.120 Late medieval window. Some medieval features survive behind 18th century refronting. This is to the rear of Manor House, Beaufort Square.



Fig.119 St Ann's. The original medieval gable and layout remains, although the windows are later alterations.

16th and 17th Centuries

7.4.10 Few buildings from this period have retained their wholly pre-classical appearance, as they were usually re-modelled and re-fronted in the 18th century.

7.4.11 Cromwell House (Grade II listed, **Fig.121**) at the lower end of Bridge Street retains the basic form of an early house (albeit isolated by later set back development) being tall, of three storeys, with a narrow frontage on the back edge of the pavement and with its gable end facing the street. The square

headed doorway with plain oak door, the Tudor fireplace and chamfered beams internally indicate its origins.

7.4.12 The White Lion Inn (Grade II listed, **Fig.122**) forms the corner of the small square at the top of the High Street. Its recorded location in 1644, a low profile with steep pitched roofs and the gable end on the return, all suggest its 17th century origins, although the sash windows and shopfront date from a later remodelling.

7.4.13 The Sir Walter Montague Almshouses (Grade II listed, **Fig.123**) founded in 1614,

retains its original long low form, with five repeating gabled first floor windows and tall stacks. It was remodelled in the Victorian period when the decorative bargeboards, slate roof and possibly the drip moulds were added. It was remodelled again in the 1950s when it is likely that the (appropriate) casement windows were inserted.



Fig.121 Cromwell House. A rare 16th century house with its gable to the street. Oliver Cromwell stayed here during the Civil War.



Fig.122 The White Lion Inn, forming the corner of the square at the top of the High Street was originally built in the 17th century, although it is considerably altered.



Fig.123 Sir Walter Montague Almshouses, founded in 1614, with a characteristic low roofline and multiple gables, altered in the 19th century.

7.4.14 Adjacent to the Town Gate stands the Gatehouse (Grade II listed, **Fig.124**) rebuilt on a medieval site in 1609 as seen in the lively carving reminiscent of the Jacobean period, which was incorporated into the three storey Georgian re-fronting, creating an otherwise regular façade. Another fragment of the earlier building is the late medieval four centred arch (subsequently infilled), seen on the side elevation facing the Place de Corneilles.

7.4.15 A pair of cottages on St Ann Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.125**) built of rubblestone, now painted, with substantial gables creating half dormers with unusually deep first floor windows, are recognisable survivals probably from the 17th century.



Fig.124 The Gate House, this early Stuart carved doorway is absorbed into the 18th century refronting of the house.



Fig.125 Cottages in St Ann Street, probably originating in the 17th century, these sturdy gabled houses retain much of their original character.

18th and early 19th Centuries

7.4.16 Buildings built or re-modelled in this period predominate within the conservation area.

7.4.17 The Powis Almshouses (Grade II Listed, **Fig.126**) were built in 1716 although some aspects of their design suggest the use of earlier architectural motifs. The mullioned and transomed windows are characteristic of the 17th century and the four centred arch at semi-basement level on the street frontage would be more usual on a 16th century building. However, the parapet with moulded coping, the regular fenestration, string course, pedimented doors and symmetry of the south-eastern elevation indicate the early influence of classical architectural ideas.

7.4.18 Two buildings with a central gable (rather than Palladian pediment) date from the 18th century, but may have earlier origins. The Castle View Hotel (Grade II listed, **Fig.127**) was given a Georgian façade incorporating the gable with central window. Whilst the building is symmetrical along the axis of the gable, this pattern is broken with the five regular sash windows and a ground floor with off-centre door, two large sash windows (one almost on the centreline), and a paired sash on the left. The scored stucco rendering and eaves cornice complete this fine Georgian building.

7.4.19 Queen's Head Buildings (Grade II listed, **Fig.128**) formerly the Angel Inn, on Moor Street, adjacent to the Police Station is another example of the central gable with window type. It is strictly symmetrical on the upper floors with three early 18th century sashes on

the first floor. The ground floor has large paired sashes on the right and a cartway to the left of the slightly off centre front door. As with the Castle View Hotel it is stuccoed, with end chimney stacks and a natural slate roof.



Fig.126 The Powis Almshouses, built in 1716, a hybrid containing Queen Anne classicism, but also incorporating earlier stylistic features into the design.



Fig.127 Castle View Hotel: 18th century with characteristic Chepstow gable, plus Georgian sashes.



Fig.128 Queen's Head Buildings, on Moor Street. Another Chepstow gable on the well preserved former Angel Inn frontage.

7.4.20 Picton House (unlisted, **Fig.129**) at the northern end of Lower Church Street, in a rather isolated location, although built in 1907 is recognised by a striking large early 18th century style pediment with dentilled eaves and an oval attic window. The building is in red brick, Flemish bond and has a strictly symmetrical five bay composition. The sash windows are of an early 18th century type, with exposed timber frames. Each bay is marked by a plain pilaster (almost a pier), without classical capital or base. The first floor windows have voussoirs of painted stone alternating with tile on edge. The ground floor window heads are more conventionally cambered brick on edge. The central front door is arched with a large keystone and rusticated quoins. The ground floor is almost a plinth for the first floor piers, but strangely there is no coping. Overall this is an unusual building, and is described here as it is such an accomplished example of 18th century styling despite its construction date of 1907.

7.4.21 Other individual large Georgian town houses include 17 Moor Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.130**), facing Albion Square. This strictly symmetrical three storey house has an almost wholly intact façade. Paired sashes (a familiar feature in the town) flank the central doorcase (with modern door), with diminishing height sashes on first and second floor. The steeper pitched roof and end chimney stacks are also widely used on early to mid-19th century houses.

7.4.22 Nos. 6 and 7 Beaufort Square (Grade II listed, **Fig.131**), in a central position on the north side of Beaufort Square is a handsome early Georgian house of five bays width. The cambered arch window surrounds with boldly exposed keystones are unusual in Chepstow, but typical of the early Georgian period. A hipped roof (bereft of chimneys) sits behind a parapet with simple moulded cornice. A Victorian shopfront spans much of the ground floor and probably replaces a front door. The passageway to the left leads along the extended burgage plot.



Fig.129 Picton House, 1907 Lower Church Street. Its bold pediment with elegant oval window sits over a regular but rather unusual 18th century style façade.



Fig.130 17 Moor Street, the former Greyhound Inn is a well proportioned mid-18th century building with a full set of surviving sash windows.



Fig.131 Nos. 6 and 7 Beaufort Square, with early 18th century window surrounds, is a broad fronted town house, altered for commercial uses on the ground floor.

7.4.23 Gwy House (Grade II listed, **Fig.132**), the Chepstow Museum, is a fine example of a Georgian town mansion, incorporating Palladian principles of design, in contrast to the examples identified above. This is a free-standing house, set back from the street, with three central bays under a low pediment. These central bays project just sufficiently to cast a shadow, and the windows are given slightly increased emphasis by a double recession. The outer two bays complete the balance of the façade. A strong parapet cornice, masking a low pitched roof and a string course between ground and first floor create horizontal counterbalance to the verticals of the windows and shadow line. The projecting semi-circular portico with paired Tuscan columns is particularly elegant. The only surprise is the casement windows with transom lights above. This may be a later alteration.

7.4.24 Uphill out of the town centre, a number of large houses and villas were built in the Georgian and Regency period, usually set well back from the road in secluded landscaped gardens. A substantial example of this type is 'High Trees' (Grade II listed, **Fig.133**). This late Georgian villa is located on high ground overlooking the town, behind gates and within a spacious garden. Whilst it now houses offices it retains its original country house character. Similar to Gwy House it is rendered, with cornice screening a low pitched roof, and has a string course between ground and first floors. It also has a slightly projecting three bay entrance section, but otherwise the fenestration is not quite so regular. The sash windows have moulded window surrounds to create some modelling against the smooth stucco walls. The main garden façade includes a canted bay window extending to both floors.

7.4.25 The Picturesque movement of the late Georgian period is also represented in Chepstow. At the top of Mount Pleasant, backing onto the A48 as it descends into Chepstow, is 'Ashfield House' (Grade II listed, **Fig.134**). Gables rather than parapets are emphasised in a more informal composition. 'Gothick' tracery is tentatively introduced at

the head of sash window glazing bars. A pointed arch, hoodmoulds and decorative bargeboards and polygonal chimneys complete the composition.



Fig.132 Gwy House, the Chepstow Museum; a refined Palladian style house with correct Tuscan columns supporting a semi circular portico.



Fig.133 High Trees originally a late Georgian house overlooking the town and set in its secluded garden.



Fig.134 Ashfield House, an example of the ornamental 'Gothick' Revival of the early 19th century.

7.4.26 Lower down the hill on Steep Street, No. 10 Hawkpoint (Grade II listed, **Fig.135**) is another example of the Georgian 'Gothick' style in terms of its fenestration, within an otherwise regular house. Here the pointed arched windows are more authentically shaped than at Ashfield House, and simple tracery above a central mullion is used rather than glazing bars.

7.4.27 Perhaps one of the most memorable features of Chepstow's townscape is Castle Terrace, comprising Nos. 33a – 47 Bridge Street (Grade II* listed individually, **Fig.136**). Fifteen narrow fronted identical (except for minor variations) terrace houses step down the street at regular intervals. The great feature of the terrace is the shallow bow windows, a well-known Regency device. The first and second floor windows are sashes of diminishing height. The pedimented doorcases add to the elegance of this handsome terrace.



Fig.135 Hawkpoint in Steep Street. Another example of 'Gothick' windows used in a basically Georgian house.



Fig.136 Castle terrace. This regular Regency terrace with its characteristic subtle bow windows is one of the memorable images of Chepstow.



Fig.137 Mount Pleasant, another of the terraces of Chepstow, this time from the 1830s, but still adhering to Georgian principles.



Fig.138 Warehouse adjacent to Wye House. The plinth is constructed of furnace slag blocks.



Fig.139 The Methodist Church. A characteristic example of non-conformist Gothic in a prominent location.

7.4.28 Further terraces of modest Georgian town houses were built in Chepstow; Moor Street contains a more varied terrace than Bridge Street, but Mount Pleasant is perhaps the other comparatively regular terrace. Mount Pleasant (Grade II listed individually, **Fig.137**) lies high above the town centre, backing onto Steep Street. Developed in the early 1830s, some 25 years later than Castle Terrace, it adheres to the same late Georgian tradition. The houses have slightly wider frontages. Front doors have simple fanlights above the doors rather than pedimented doorcases. In common with Castle Terrace, Mount Pleasant houses are rendered with simple eaves bargeboards. Both had a system of what is today termed rainwater harvesting, involving the collection of rainwater from roofs in a sub-floor cistern.

7.4.29 At the lower end of town, the 'working' river frontage required functional and robust buildings in the 18th and 19th centuries. Lower Church Street contains examples of 18th century mixed use homes and workshops, and between The Back and St Ann Street, a cluster of warehouses serviced the quay. Among these is the Warehouse (Grade II listed) adjoining Wye House, (**Fig.138**). This functional three storey building is constructed in materials less familiar to Chepstow; a plinth of furnace slag blocks (seen also as coping to the boundary wall to St Mary's Church), the remainder of the wall is constructed with light red bricks in Flemish bond. The Warehouse

has evenly spaced large windows with cast iron glazing bars in traditional proportions.

Victorian Period

7.4.30 Following the extensive building activity in the Georgian period, there are comparatively few buildings of architectural interest constructed in the Victorian era.

7.4.31 The characteristic architectural style of the period, the Gothic Revival, can be seen most graphically in the Methodist Church (Grade II listed, **Fig.139**), built in 1855, facing Albion Square. The church is relatively ornate for a non-conformist chapel, with a sizeable west window in Decorated style with mullions and tracery, a large pointed arch door flanked by multiple niches and buttresses topped by pinnacles. The church is constructed in rough coursed stone blocks with sandstone dressings. The Baptist Church of 1869 (unlisted, **Fig.140**) in Lower Church Street, is somewhat more modest and is designed in a hybrid Romanesque, faintly Venetian Gothic style, with polychromatic voussoirs, those over the door being Venetian in design. Two slightly projecting side gabled wings 'bookend' the wider central gable and contain four mullioned main windows.

7.4.32 The Board School of 1878 (unlisted, **Fig.141**) in Bridge Street, is of a design typical of this building type. The quality of the simplified Gothic Revival Style and handling of materials makes a particularly positive contribution to the townscape. The central gable with a quatrefoil window, triple arched windows, bold lettering and expression of the stonework, contribute to an effective design.

7.4.33 The Gothic Revival was also used in domestic buildings and one of the houses in the Hardwick area (unlisted, **Fig.142**) with its twin gables, battlemented bay windows (one canted, one square), with sashes of large Victorian panes paired between stone mullions, illustrates the versatility of the style.



Fig.141 The Board School, Bridge Street. A sturdy and well constructed elevation to a building contributing to the Victorian infrastructure of the town.



Fig.142 Gothic Revival house. This flexible style could be applied to most building types; here battlements, gables and mullions are applied to a large detached house.



Fig.140 The Baptist Church (1869). A freer interpretation of pre classical architecture, with hints of the Venetian Romanesque.

7.4.34 Brunel's Railway Station (Grade II listed, **Fig.143**) of 1850 eschews the Gothic Revival in favour of the more utilitarian Italianate style, where a form of classical proportion twinned with semi-circular headed windows, singly and in pairs, and the bold expression of stonework ensures a simple and satisfying design. The replacement profiled metal roof follows the low-pitched hipped natural slate profile of the original.

7.4.35 The wide fronted shop on Station Road (unlisted, **Fig.144**) is an elegant composition of two Italianate gabled cross wings slightly projecting either side of a double fronted shopfront. The shopfront is a later insertion,

but is appropriate to the overall design. The cross wings are interesting; the characteristic low pitched roof with projecting eaves and brackets each sit above circular windows and generous semi-circular openings above, on one side a door, on the other a wide window. The shop is built of irregular coursed limestone blockwork with sandstone dressings and quoins.



Fig.143 The Railway Station, built to the designs from Brunel's office. The Italianate style is used for its simplicity and good proportions. The roof is a replacement.



Fig.144 Shop, Station Road. Italianate design principles enhance this functional mid-19th century commercial building.

20th Century

7.4.36 The differing approaches to architectural design in the 20th century can be traced to some extent in a handful of interesting buildings of the recent past.

7.4.37 The Lodge (Grade II listed, **Fig.145**) at the northern end of the conservation area on Welsh Street, was built between 1902 and 1908 in a Domestic Revival Style, using an

eclectic mix of traditional details and materials in a free manner. Thus curved timber-framing is used in the gables, angular oriel windows emerge from the wall and decorative tile hanging provides a colour contrast with stone and black and white work.

7.4.38 Built in the same year as The Lodge, Coronation Buildings (unlisted, **Fig.146**), on the south side of the High Street, could hardly be more different in style. It was built as a

department store and its 'pepperpot' corner turret makes an eye-catching positive contribution to the streetscape. Coronation Buildings is in the architectural tradition of late Victorian and Edwardian civic buildings, with generous mouldings, cornices, window surrounds and pedimented dormers, responding to the scale of the High Street. The upper floors appear to be in pristine condition and have their original Edwardian style sashes. A large clock projecting from an ornate bracket completes this fine example of its type.

7.4.39 The George Hotel (Grade II listed, **Fig.147**) adjacent to the Town Gate was built in 1899 but exhibits Freestyle elements which were a hallmark of Edwardian architecture. The rows of mullioned windows and the use of deep brick bonding alternating with stone, is almost modern in its treatment. The asymmetric sashes, with glazing bars on the upper sashes only, is an Edwardian feature, yet the four centred arch over the doorway recalls Tudor design.



Fig.145 The Lodge, a Domestic Revival building of the beginning of the 20th century, creatively fusing vernacular forms into a picturesque design.



Fig.146 Coronation Buildings 1902. The 'pepperpot' pinnacled corner turret makes a positive contribution to the skyline of the High Street.



Fig.147 The George Hotel uses mullions and contrasting bands of brick and stone in an almost modern manner.

7.4.40 To the north is the Kings Head (Grade II listed, **Fig.148**) built in 1907 and full of Edwardian Baroque exuberance, if only on the ground floor. The heavily moulded sweeping canopy sets the tone. Large semi-oval ground floor windows set in curving recesses continue the plasticity of the neo Baroque style. The rustication turns into oversized voussoirs, enhancing the composition. Above the canopy framing the central window are free flowing Art Nouveau low relief frames.

7.4.41 The Police Station (unlisted, **Fig.149**) built in 1912, more sober than The George Hotel or the Kings Head as might be expected, is a worthy addition to this very interesting set of Freestyle buildings. Its rows of mullions reflect The George; the double curve of the pediment and the exaggerated pediment over

the entrance complement the Kings Head. The two colours of stone are used to great effect.

7.4.42 The shop on the south side of St Mary's Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.150**) is another lively fusion of what could be considered to be Edwardian Freestyle. The use of a mansard roof gable end to the street is unusual. This is emphasised by a Venetian window edged in black and white voussoirs. Below the bulbous moulding, two recessed bow windows, mullioned and transomed, continue the liveliness of the façade. The ground floor shop is a contemporary survival, somewhat overwhelmed by the architecture above.



Fig.149 The Police Station, a sober and solid Edwardian building, but also effective in its use of Freestyle design.



Fig.150 Shop on St Mary's Street. An original composition of mansard gable and Arts and Crafts elements.

Fig.148 The Kings Head, built in 1907, has a lively Edwardian Baroque ground floor and Art Nouveau flourishes above the canopy.

7.4.43 The interwar period is not well represented within the conservation area, although there are interesting housing developments beyond. The government building, now occupied by Job Centre Plus on Station Road (unlisted, **Fig.151**), built in 1939 is almost wholly intact. The design changes drastically at eaves level. The walls of this corner building curve to follow the site. The windows have vertical Crittall steel frames and the entrance canopy is a timid but effective semi-circular reinforced concrete projection. The smooth render completes this modernist design. Above the eaves there is a steep pitched slate roof endeavouring to follow the curvature of the front and presumably topped by a narrow flat roof.



Fig.151 Job Centre Plus. A well preserved and rare example of 1930s modernism in the town, although the steep pitched roof recalls earlier periods.



Fig.152 Tourist Information Centre, 1992, a well considered handling of traditional form

7.4.44 Of the recent architecture in the town, the Tourist Information Centre built in 1992 by the Percy Thomas Partnership (**Fig.152**) at the Castle car park, is a skilful exercise in massing and use of traditional elements.

7.4.45 Hollins Court (**Fig.153 & Fig.154**) which received a housing design award in 1985, is a successful infill scheme behind Horse Lane. It consists of intimate courts and lanes of simple cottage style houses which are appropriate to the scale of the adjacent terraces. Gwy Court, fronting onto St Ann Street, is of a similar quality and sensitivity.



Fig.153 Hollins Court, a successful infill scheme which received a housing award in 1985, creates an intimate network of lanes and 'places'.

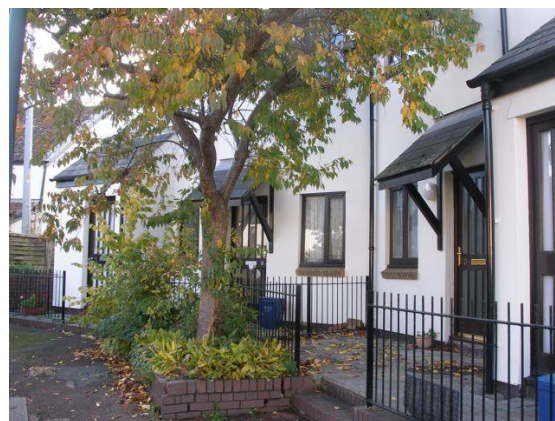


Fig.154 Hollins Court, subtly cranked short terrace framing a tree.

7.5 Activity: Prevailing & Former Uses

7.5.1 Founded as a Norman settlement, with castle and priory church, the town developed into a key market centre in south-east Monmouthshire with river trade from Herefordshire, the Forest of Dean and Bristol. Developing its trading links the town attracted merchants and various trades. Chief among these were wine trading, ship building and iron founding. These industries left their mark in key buildings from the rich industrialists' houses on Hardwick Hill, to the wine and whisky cellars on Hocker Hill Street and Bridge Street. At The Back warehousing survives from the river trade supplemented by an unusually high survival of inns.

7.5.2 Today Chepstow is a thriving market town with a busy High Street. The castle, priory church, race course and museum all attract tourists who still appreciate elements of the 'Wye Tour', often using the town as a base for visits to Tintern Abbey, Piercefield Park and walks along the Offa's Dyke path. In addition to its tourist industry and retail core, the town retains a strong manufacturing identity with Osborn International, a wire brush manufactory on the former Finch and Co. foundry and Mabey Bridge an international firm supplying bridges and other steel components all over the world and employing 400 people in Chepstow. The company is set to expand to produce wind turbine towers at a new site just outside the town employing a further 240 people. The construction of the Severn Bridge in 1966 created commuter links to Bristol and resulted in the rapid expansion of the town's periphery at Bulwark, Larkfield and St Lawrence Road. The town retains a busy High Street with national chains and independent shops and is served by a range of restaurants, cafes and a large number of historic public houses.

7.6 Contributions Made By Key Unlisted Buildings

7.6.1 There are a number of unlisted buildings which make particularly positive contributions towards the character and appearance of the conservation area, both individually and in groups. Key groups are:

- Terraces, semi-detached and detached villas on the north end of Hardwick Avenue
- Large-scale villas and semi-detached houses on Hardwick Hill
- Key late 19th and early 20th century buildings on Moor Street and Welsh Street grouped with the statutory listed George Hotel, Kings Head and unlisted Police Station
- Railway cottages and shed on Station Road
- Church Row terrace north-east of the parish church
- 19th century groups on the north side of St Ann Street and the west side of Bridge Street.
- 19th century terraces of cottages and the Baptist Church to Lower Church Street

7.6.2 In addition, a number of boundary and retaining walls and historic iron railings and gates make significant contributions to the character and appearance of the Chepstow Conservation Area. Individual properties which make a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area and important boundary walls and outbuildings are identified on **Plan 5**.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 5 Listed Buildings & Buildings Making a Particular or Special Positive Contribution

7.7 Prevalent Local & Traditional Materials

7.7.1 Chepstow is a predominantly rendered (over brick and stone) and natural slate/clay tile settlement but with some later 19th and 20th century red brick terraces and rock-faced stone institutional buildings. The lining out of render to mimic fine stonework is a particular feature of buildings (of the late 18th and early 19th century) throughout the conservation area.

Walling

7.7.2 Where seen, stone is typically the local limestone with some local sandstone (**Fig.155**), predominantly grey but with some brown, yellow and even pink tinges to its colouration and is seen as rubblestone laid to courses or squared/rock-faced stone to late 19th century institutional buildings and places of worship (**Fig.156**). Stonework is sometimes seen with brick dressings to openings (red and yellow) and stone houses tend to have red brick chimneys (**Fig.157**). Most openings in stone walls, where they survive, utilise the timber framed single glazed vertical sliding sashes with various glazing configurations reflecting the architectural period. Occasional casements are found to older properties but these are in the minority and do not dominate even to the historic core.



Fig.155 A wide variety of stone is found throughout Chepstow Castle



Fig.156 Chepstow Baptist Church constructed of pink/grey squared stone with ashlar dressings



Fig.157 Use of rubblestone with red brick dressings on the Drill Hall

7.7.3 There is much use of render, stucco and pebbledash, often incised to imitate high quality masonry stonework (**Fig.158**). This is generally painted (white, cream and other pastel shades). Many buildings within the town were re-fronted in the 18th and 19th century in an attempt to follow the fashionable and restrained classically inspired Georgian style. There are occasional (mostly) Victorian, red brick houses, but this material is not represented in great quantities (**Fig.159**). Modern houses have tended to use painted render with brick.



Fig.158 A typical group of rendered houses along Lower Church Street, note the incised render to the right-hand property



Fig.159 The striking red brick Picton House, Lower Church Street – unrendered/ unpainted brick is not a typical material within the conservation area and buildings of brick are very limited

Roofing

7.7.4 The traditional houses still retain natural slate or clay pantiles (**Fig.160**). In contrast to other areas of Monmouthshire stone slate is not seen. Natural slate and clay tile are generally seen at low pitches to simple gabled roofs with brick ridge chimney stacks. Some buildings are in the picturesque/cottage orne style seen in large numbers to the Lower Wye Valley. Typical features include decorated bargeboards, gothic windows and the use of arches generally in the composition.



Fig.160 Natural slate is a typical roofing material seen in the conservation area

Boundary walls and retaining walls

7.7.5 A key characteristic building type of the conservation area is the mortared rubblestone boundary wall (Fig.161). These are often also retaining walls. Slag blocks, brought to the town with the river trade, most likely as ballast, are seen occasionally to buildings and walls (Fig.162).



Fig.161 Rubblestone boundary walls strongly define some areas within the town



Fig.162 Slag blocks used as copings to the churchyard wall

8 Contributions Made by Green Spaces (including Biodiversity Value), Trees, Hedges & Natural Boundaries

8.1 There are a series of formal and informal green spaces within the conservation area. The largest of these is the Dell valley, a natural defence on the south side of the castle. In addition there is the churchyard to St Mary's and formal gardens at Bulwark Road, Hollins Close and the green north of St Ann Street (**Fig.163**). Large private gardens with established specimen trees on Hardwick Hill and at The Mount give context and well-defined attractive settings to the town's grand 19th century buildings.

8.2 The heavily wooded river cliffs of the Wye in Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire are an integral part of the town's setting and provide an excellent range of wildlife habitats. The railway also provides a green corridor to the east. Groups of trees often form a significant or defining part of the backdrop to built form and are often found in concentrations between buildings for example specimen trees at The Gwentlands and The Mount and a line of mature copper beech between St Govans and Boverton House.



Fig.163 The green near the riverside where Gunstock Wharf once stood

9 Key Views

9.1 Landscape Setting

9.1.1 The conservation area falls just outside the Wye Valley AONB. The topography of the landscape around Chepstow is one of the most defining characteristics of the conservation area and one of the main reasons why the Normans chose this site for a fortification. The steep hillside facing the wooded limestone river cliffs of the River Wye make up the key elements of some of the best views and vistas.

9.1.2 The historic riverside has retained good linkages with the town and has its own special landscape character. The meandering tidal river with its natural cliffs and deep mud banks is punctuated by road and rail bridges.

9.1.3 There are well-defined views out of the conservation area to the Gloucestershire side of the River Wye and some spectacular views from viewpoints on the Gloucestershire cliffs looking west across to and over the settlement. There are also significant views within Chepstow looking south and east to the River Severn.

Refer to:

Plan 4 Spatial Analysis

Fig.165 Views west from the iron Wye Bridge frequently appear in historic depictions of the castle



9.2 Types of View & Their Relative Significance

Strategic

9.2.1 There are a series of views from the Gloucestershire riverbank and river cliffs, which essentially define the topographical nature of Chepstow with the imposing and visually arresting ruins of Chepstow Castle in the foreground. Key views which contain the castle within its setting and its relationship to the parish church are considered of very high significance as they are very sensitive to inappropriate developments which may impact upon the careful balance between heritage assets and their settings. On the A48 crossing the Wye there are expansive strategic views to the town, its buildings rising above one another on the hillside. Landmark buildings include the castle, parish church and The Mount.

9.2.2 Elevated views across the town can be seen from the castle towers (**Fig.164** next page).

9.2.3 There are important views from the 19th century Wye Bridge to the town and castle which frequently appear in 18th and 19th century paintings inspired by the Picturesque movement. These views remain largely unaltered from their capture in paintings of this period (**Fig.165**). Strategic views are also to be had within the town along the High Street with views west to the town gate and east to the river cliffs.



Fig.164 Views east across Bridge Street to The Back and the river cliffs of Gloucestershire

Glimpsed

9.2.4 There are numerous glimpsed views within the town to key buildings, such as the castle, Port Wall and parish church tower. The narrow historic streets channel views north to the river. (Fig.166)



Fig.166 Glimpsed view north along Moor Street to the town gate

Terminated

9.2.5 Due to the nature of the settlement pattern, there are many terminated views to be had within the conservation area. Perhaps the most dramatic are those views terminated by the town gate west along High Street and east along Moor Street, views terminated by the George Hotel south along Welsh Street, views terminated by the Montague Almshouses north-east along St Mary Street and views terminated by Lord Nelson House north-east along Lower Church Street. Other terminated views are shown on the townscape plan. (Fig.167)



Fig.167 There are many terminated views including this view north on Rockwood Road to No. 31 Hardwick Avenue

10 Degree of Loss of Architectural and/or Historic Elements

10.1 There has been some loss of historic windows, doors and roof coverings but this is not prevalent and all character areas retain a high proportion of historic architectural elements. In most cases these changes are reversible.

Part C: Management Proposals

11 Boundary Revisions

11.1 Overview

11.1.1 As a result of analysis undertaken, the following are suggested boundary revisions to reflect ownership changes, recent development or a re-appraisal of the special character of a particular part of the town.

11.1.2 For general guidance on why suggested boundary changes are being made, please refer to **Appendix 3**.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 7 Management Proposals

11.2 Area for Inclusion

Sunnybank Nursery Building, Regent Way (Former block of the Chepstow Union Workhouse) (Fig.168 & Fig.169)

11.2.1 This rock-faced stone building is all that remains of the 1838 Chepstow Union Workhouse, a once substantial complex based on Sampson Kempthorne's 200-pauper plan. The building may have been the board-room block. A single-storey fragment of the main block with window openings stands nearby. The standing building and portion of the main

building are important to the history of the town and have a visual relationship with the top of Moor Street. It is therefore proposed to include both structures and take the conservation area boundary along the side of the Cooperative car park to provide some context and encourage possible schemes for improvement to the frontage space to Thomas Street to this part of the conservation area.

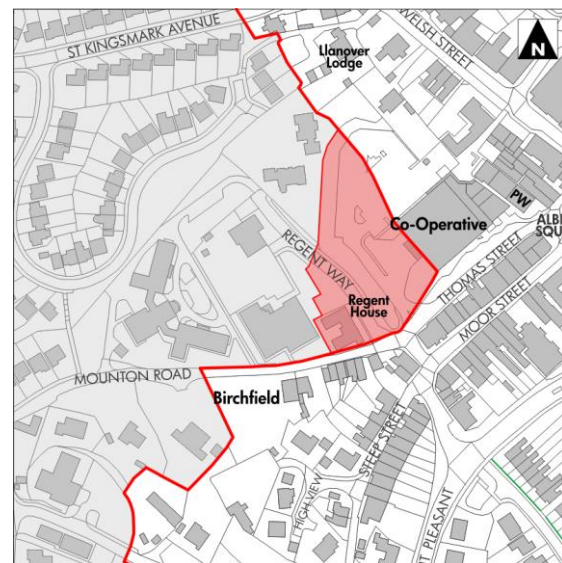


Fig.168 Plan showing area suggested for inclusion in the conservation area (refer to Plan 7)



Fig.169 The only remaining building of the Chepstow Union workhouse

11.3 Areas for Exclusion

Tesco Superstore and car parking (Fig.170)

11.3.1 This late 20th century development does not retain any identifiable industrial heritage related to the conservation area. This area was the historic site of the priory buildings and was later the site of industrial activity and the cattle market and so will be of archaeological importance but the current site does not fulfil the criteria of being an area of 'special architectural or historic interest' whose character or appearance is worth protecting or enhancing.

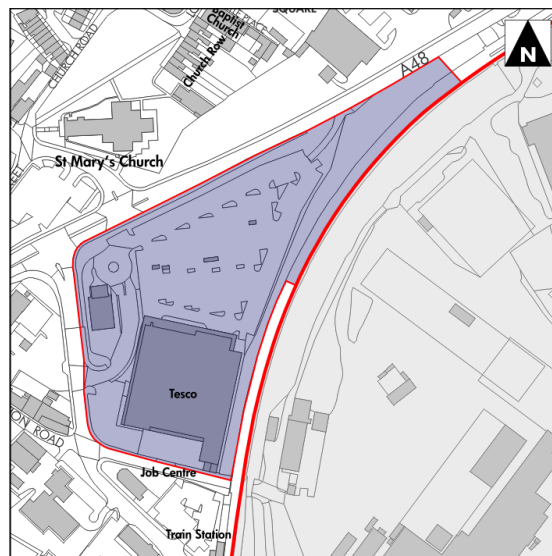


Fig.170 Plan showing suggested exclusion

Mount Way (Fig.171)

11.3.2 This 20th century housing development to the south and west of The Mount bears no relation to the grain of the conservation area. The development does not represent the work of a significant architect, have a significant building style or materials palette to be considered of special interest. Contemporary housing development to the south and west is correctly excluded. The housing is located within the boundary of The Mount's historic grounds but no visual trace of this survives.

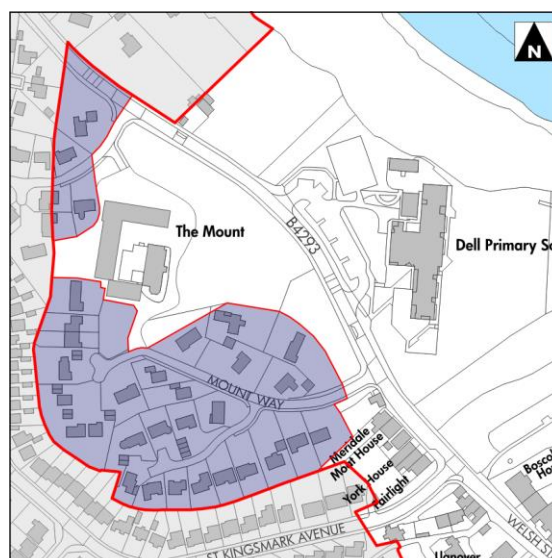


Fig.171 Plan showing suggested exclusion

Garden City Way (Fig.172)

11.3.3 This late 20th century housing development falls outside the Port Wall the setting of which is protected by its designation as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and listed building. The housing scale, mass and building materials are not representative of the conservation area.

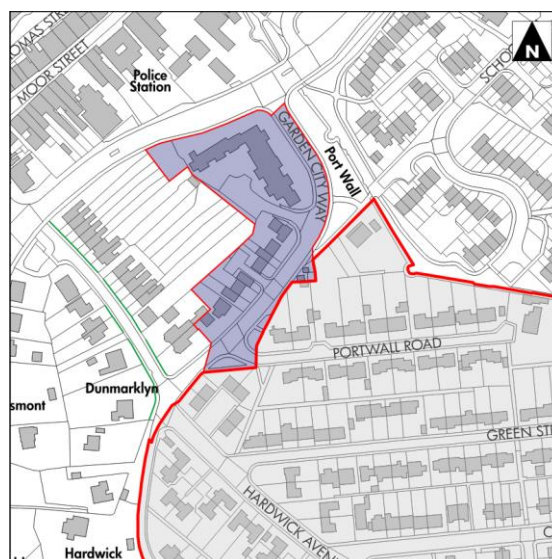


Fig.172 Plan showing suggested exclusion

12 Article 4 Directions

12.1 Under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2013, planning permission is granted as 'permitted development' for a range of minor developments subject to limits and conditions designed to protect the amenity of the environment. Due to the sensitive nature of conservation areas and the fact that such 'permitted development' in this environment could be harmful to the character of the area, it is recommended that these 'permitted development rights' are restricted in order to preserve the character of the conservation area.

12.2 Article 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) enables local planning authorities to make directions withdrawing the permitted development rights given under the order. These rights should only be withdrawn where there is firm evidence to suggest that permitted development is likely to take place which could damage the character or appearance of a conservation area, and which therefore should be brought within full planning control in the public interest. There are different areas where permitted development rights may be taken away; generally affecting the external appearance of dwelling houses in the conservation area.

12.3 Article 4 Directions may be applied to the whole Conservation Area, to parts of it such as Character Areas, or to individual buildings or groups of buildings, or features. This will be subject to further detailed consideration and recommendation. Their introduction does not mean that development specified within them is automatically precluded, but does seek to ensure that through the exercise of full planning control that such development does not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area and that all alternatives that can avoid this have been fully explored.

12.4 Examples would include:

- Various kinds of development fronting a highway – to include gates, fences or walls or any other means of enclosure
- The construction of an external porch
- The painting of the dwelling house
- The construction of a building or enclosure within the curtilage of a building
- Alteration including partial demolition of a gate fence or any other means of enclosure and the construction of a means of access to a property
- Microgeneration – possible restrictions on changes which fall within permitted development rights relating to the retrofitting of renewable energy equipment; for example, wind turbines and photovoltaic cells, where they would have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Replacement of timber windows
- Removal of traditional renders

12.5 In undertaking the appraisal of the Chepstow Conservation Area. The review has identified buildings that could benefit from additional planning controls such as Article 4 Directions. These houses retain a significant degree of original features and historic fabric which if lost would seriously erode their special character and appearance. In addition a number of historic boundary walls, railings and gates could be protected. These historic boundary treatments are a feature of Hardwick Hill, Hardwick Avenue and Mount Pleasant environs.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 7 Management Proposals

13 Proposals for Enhancement

13.1 General Enhancement Opportunities

13.1.1 A number of opportunities exist that would help to enhance the overall appearance of the conservation area. These include:

- Boundary walls: maintenance and upkeep
- Footpaths and routes
- Maintenance of the public realm
- Traffic, parking and street improvement.
- Signage strategy
- Shopfront design

13.2 Specific Enhancement Projects

Recommended Enhancement Projects.

13.2.1 As resources become available and subject to consultation with the local community and relevant agencies, the following schemes could be developed for implementation, with the aim of enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of its numerous listed buildings. These measures are not ranked in any order of priority.

The riverside industrial area between the A48 road bridge and The Back

This area of scrubland waste could be landscaped for continued riverside access from The Back to the A48 road bridge linking the historic riverside north and south. This area is subject to a current planning application for the demolition of the works buildings and the construction of a new housing development.

Welsh Street Car Park

This prominent area, between the Town Walls, the rear of the main streets and in view of parts of the Castle, lacks definition, coherence and a sense of place.

- The immediate setting of the Town Walls should be enhanced, chiefly by increasing the distance between the parking bays and the base of the walls, creating a pleasant pedestrian environment in this widened space, through appropriate surfacing, landscape, seating, lighting and interpretation.
- The pedestrian links between the car parks and the lanes and passages leading to the town should be given greater prominence by appropriate surfacing for pedestrians and effective signage.
- The setting and access of the side and rear elevations of the Library should be

- improved by realigning the roadway further from the building.
- The views and glimpses of the car park from the Castle should be considered, with the aim of screening intrusive views of parked cars, by landscape design.
- The extensive area of parked cars could be mitigated by lines of trees. This would contribute to the attractiveness of the area, provide some shading in summer, contribute to air quality and could be related to a footpath system.
- Signage, street furniture and interpretive material are uncoordinated, cluttered in places and of poor, standard design. A scheme for coordinated, well located and well designed street furniture should be implemented.
- enhance the setting of the Wall at its interface with the A48,
- extend the tree planting to line the Mount Pleasant Road frontage
- explore the feasibility of incorporating a building on the frontage, with realigned stone walling.

Travis Perkins Site, Bridge Street

- The view of the site from Telford's bridge is intrusive and mars the view and setting of the Castle. It is recommended that a landscape screening plan be agreed with the site owners.
- The site entrance off Bridge Street should be made more pedestrian friendly by continuing the footpath across the entrance, forming a crossover.
- In view of the critical location of the site, any future development proposals should be guided by a design brief.

Upper Nelson Street/A48

In common with much of the A48 (Mount Pleasant Road) frontage on its north west side, this area is characterised by the rear service yards of properties facing the High Street. This particular area, immediately within the Town Walls has additional 'space left over' as a result of the junction with the A48.

This area could be used to screen the 'rearscape' at a significant location at the (albeit new) gateway to the walled town.

An enhancement scheme should be designed to:

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