



Mathern

*Conservation Area
Appraisal &
Management Proposals*



monmouthshire
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FORUM
Heritage
Services

Report Title: Mathern Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Proposals
Client: Monmouthshire County Council
Project Number: 2009/089

Draft Issued: 26 November 2010
2nd Draft Issued: 18 January 2010
3rd Draft Issued: 7 June 2011
4th Draft Issued: 31 January 2012
5th Draft Issued: 25 March 2013
Final Issue **23rd March 2016**

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

1.4 Key study aims:

- Identify those elements of Mathern 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 Mathern

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and *Circular 61/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas* and the latest draft guidance from Cadw; *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*, adopted March 2011.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 covering a number of conservation areas, including Mathern, was undertaken on 1st March 2010 at County Hall in Cwmbran.

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

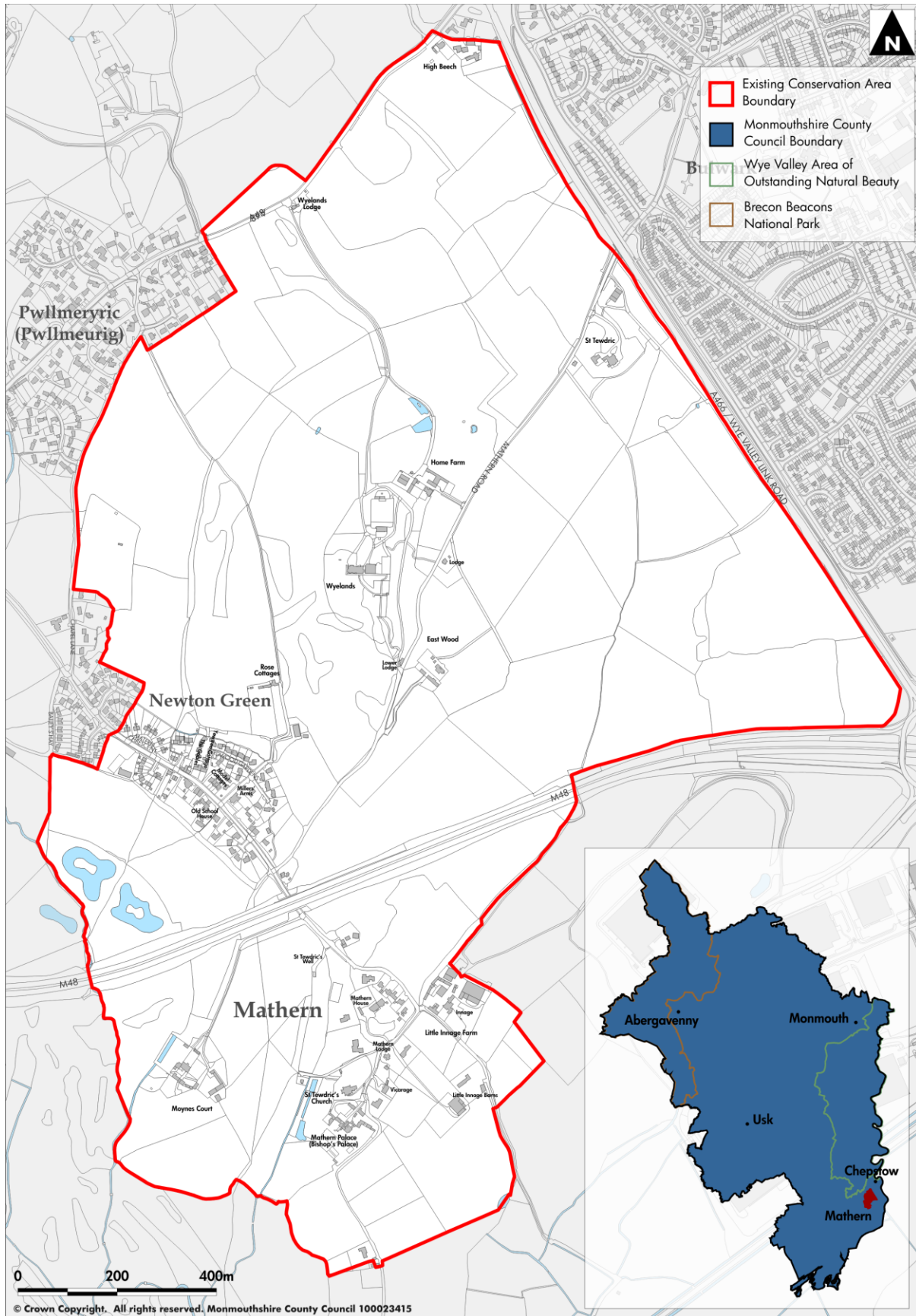


Fig.1 Study Area

Part B: Conservation Area Appraisal

5 Location & Setting

5.1 The village of Mathern is situated one mile south of Chepstow, to the south of the M48 near the Grade I listed First Severn Bridge Crossing (1961-66) with the Caldicot Level, part of the Gwent Levels, to the south. Three historic riverside pills (river inlets, often tidal and used as docks), St Pierre Pill, Mathern Pill and Hunger Pill, once extended northwards from the river but these were largely blocked by the construction of the railway across the Gwent Levels in the 19th century.

5.2 Although Mathern is a small village, the Mathern Conservation Area covers a large area to the north of the M48, bounded by the A48 to the north, the A466 running alongside Bulwark to the east and the St Pierre Golf Course and Country Park to the west. The conservation area includes the villages of Mathern (south of the M48) and Newton

Green (south of Pwllmeyric), and Wylands House and its parkland, which is heavily wooded in places, with large areas of open arable and pasture farmland, particularly to the south-eastern part of the conservation area. (Fig.1 & Fig.2)

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 1 Conservation Area Plan



Fig.2 Mathern Location Plan

6 Historical Development & Archaeology

6.1 Historic Background

6.1.1 Mathern lies on the edge of the Gwent Levels, an area that has been variously reclaimed and inundated by the sea. Whilst there is little recorded evidence of prehistoric activity within the immediate Mathern area, a littoral area such as this is likely to have attracted settlement and activity. During the Roman period the Levels were drained, possibly partly through natural changes, but the three pills stretched inland and these natural havens probably attracted settlement from an early date.

6.1.2 The Tewdric family ruled the area in the 6th century (the land from Rhymney to the Usk and extending inland to the Brecon Breacons and the two divisions of Gwent). The village's former name was Merthyr Tewdric, 'Tewdric's burial place' (Davies, 1990), changing to Ma Teyrn ('the place of a king'), in the 13th century. In the 12th century Book of Llandaff in the '*Grant of King Meurig son of Tewdric*' it is recorded that in c.560 a 'battle' took place with the Saxons at Tintern where King Tewdric, having given up his kingdom to his son Meurig, lived as a hermit among the rocks of Tintern. Tewdric fought to save his son's kingdom (Meurig's name is commemorated in the nearby village of Pwllmeyric). Tewdric won the battle but was mortally wounded. He was brought to Mathern on route to St. Pierre Pill to travel across to the island of Flat Holm in the Bristol Channel where he wanted to be buried, but he died and was buried at Mathern although it is thought that a church was not founded here until c.600 (Walters, 1992). A stone wall-tablet of 1614 stands in the present church describing that the body of the martyr-king was buried (probably re-interred) before the altar and it is said that the tomb still remained in situ in the 1880s (Hando, 1964). Tewdric's well in the village is so called because it is said that his wounds were washed there after his fatal battle (Rees, 2003).

6.1.3 Meurig and his son Brochmael made three grants of land to the bishops of Llandaff (Hando, 1964) and it is the bishopric's

ownership of the manor that led to the importance of Mathern in the medieval period. The bishops established one of their three bases at Mathern.

6.1.4 At the end of the 13th century the episcopal manor had shrunk as much of the land had been transferred to the nearby manor of St Pierre. The episcopal manor now only covered the lands south of the church and east to Bulwark including Mathern Palace and Innage Farmhouse. A new manor of Newton-juxta-Mathern and Barron's Green had been created between 1254 and 1270. This new manor consisted of the estate of Moynes Court, so called after Thomas and Marjorie Moyne (or Moigne) who lived there in the mid-14th century, and today's village of Mathern, Newton Green and the Wyelands estate (Davies, 1990). To the west was the manor of St. Pierre.

6.1.5 In 1307 a Knight's Fee of Mathern was made on the death of Bogo de Knoville that recorded that the demesne comprised 300 acres of arable land, 6 acres of pasture, 20 acres of meadow and 8 acres of woodland (Griffiths, 2008). This probably refers to the manor of Newton-juxta-Mathern.

6.1.6 At the end of the 14th century the era of episcopal building in South Wales had virtually ceased with none of the Welsh Sees having enough money to re-build after the damage caused by Owain Glyndwr's uprisings. Bishop John de la Zouch of Llandaff (1407-23) abandoned his castle at Llandaff and moved to Mathern and the potential safety of the nearby Castles of Chepstow and Caldicot, and the close proximity of England. The new house at Mathern (Mathern Palace) became the bishop's chief residence and replaced an earlier house in the manor. A gatehouse was built, carrying the date 1419, as a defensive structure reflecting the unrest of the period. It was taken down in the 18th century (Emery, 2006). Today's 'palace' is largely the work of Bishop Miles Salley (1500-16). Salley was

buried at Bristol, his heart interred before the altar at Mathern. The church was remodelled in the 15th century by Bishop John Marshall (1478-96) (**Fig.3**).

6.1.7 A small two-storeyed manor house called The Innage (Innage Farmhouse) was built east of the palace in the 16th century. It was home to members of the Lewis family of St. Pierre in 1549 and it survives today as a farm. During the 16th century the bishop, Anthony Kitchin, alienated considerable parts of the episcopal manor and numerous people were granted land. Between Kitchin's death in 1563 and the installation of a new bishop in 1566 the lease of the palace went to the manor of St Pierre and the Lewis family took large areas of land (Davies, 1990). Due to the deals struck by Bishop Kitchin the episcopal estate at Mathern was in decline when Bishop Francis Godwin (1608-10) inherited the manor. Even so, Godwin built Moynes Court on the site of a medieval fortified manor house, retaining the 14th century gatehouse which still stands although remodelled in the 17th century (**Fig.4**). The house was built as a 'lodge', a compact occasional residence for privacy and recreation, in 1609 (Newman, 2002).



Fig.3 Mathern's St Tewdric's Church – early 20th century



Fig.4 Moynes Court gateway by R.C. Hoare c1800

6.1.8 The palace was lost to the bishopric at the time of the Civil War, probably to the Parliamentarian, Colonel Thomas Hughes of Moynes Court and governor of Chepstow during the Civil War. It was sold in 1649 to Edward Green but the bishopric estates were returned after the Restoration. The last bishop to reside at the palace was Bishop Bew who died in 1706 and the palace became a farmhouse. In the 1770s large parts were demolished and at the turn of the 19th century Coxe described it as 'in a sad state of delapidation' (**Fig.5** & **Fig.6**). In the mid-1800s the episcopal manor had shrunk to some 49 acres surrounding the palace with the surrounding land owned by the St Pierre Estate. Eventually the palace was sold by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1889. In 1894 it was bought by H. Avray Tipping, the garden designer and future architectural editor of *Country Life*, who restored and enlarged it (Newman, 2002).

6.1.9 In the 19th century the old manor of Newton-juxta-Mathern became the centre of a new estate. Wyelands, an ashlar-faced classical villa, was designed by Robert Lugar for George

Buckle, High Sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1819. The mansion was situated in mature wooded grounds, and still commands a panoramic view of the Bristol Channel and the surrounding hills. In the mid- to late 19th century the estate became the seat of the Rev. Robert Vaughan-Hughes. At this time the estate village of Newton Green developed with a school of c.1860 alongside late 19th century estate housing for workers and the E-plan almshouses of 1891.



Fig.5 Mathern Palace pencil drawing by Edward Blore c.1800

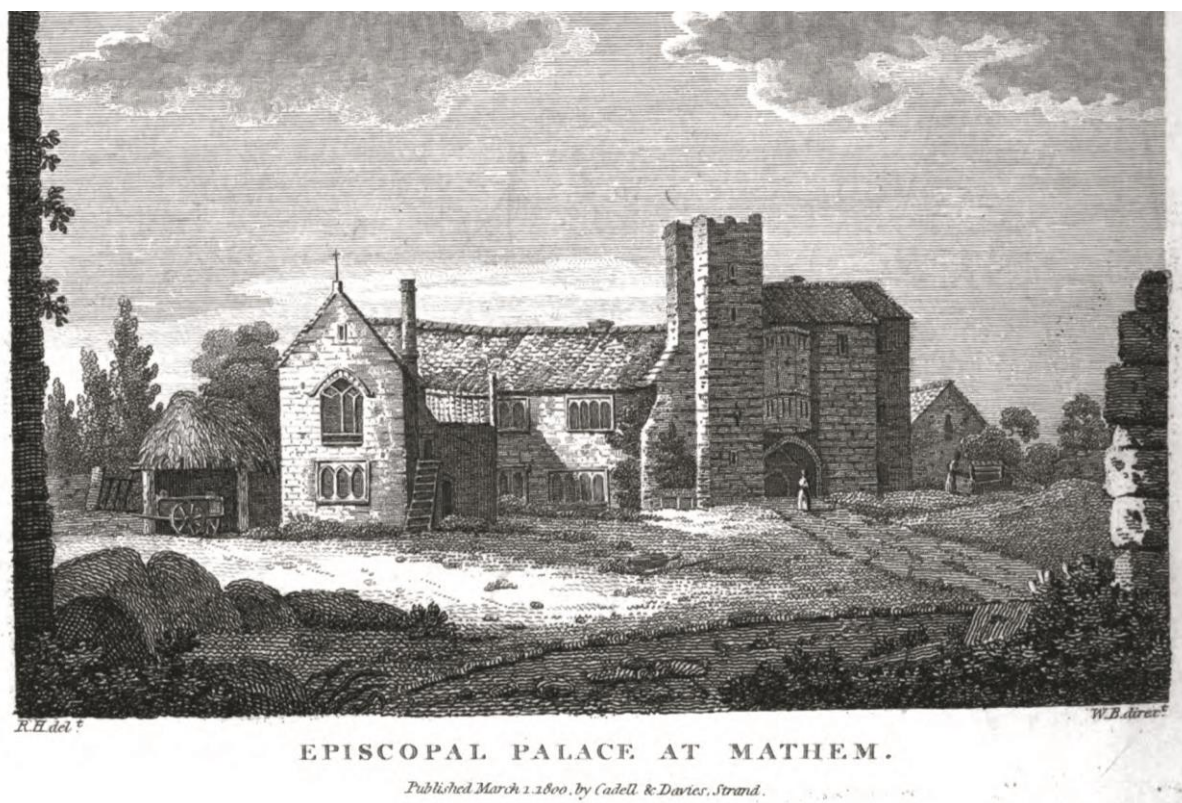


Fig.6 Mathern Palace as it appeared in Coxe's *History of Monmouthshire* 1801

6.2 Settlement Plan

6.2.1 There are two small settlements within the conservation area; Mathern and Newton Green.

6.2.2 Mathern developed as a small, high status settlement controlled by the bishops of Llandaff, loosely clustered around the early church with Moynes Court, standing on the site of a medieval fortified manor house, detached from the village. Mathern has seen relatively little development since the late 19th century with the exception of a group of 20th century bungalows placed on the roadside east of Mathern House.

6.2.3 To the north Newton Green developed, possibly from a small late medieval or early post-medieval core, as a linear estate settlement either side of the road to Pwllmeyric in the early 19th century with workers' cottages associated with Wyelands to the east. By the 1840s Newton Green comprised over a dozen buildings either side of the road with a number of small land parcels to the east and west.

6.3 Key Historic Influences & Characteristics

6.3.1 The key historic influences and characteristics of Mathern are:

- 12th century Llandaff manor with church and farms with important river links from the pills along the River Severn;
- 14th century Owain Glyndwr's uprisings further west make Mathern the official residence of the bishops of Llandaff in a strategic position on the banks of the River Severn near the English border;
- Development of Mathern Palace, and Moynes Court as high status residences;
- 19th century development of the Wyelands estate and the village of Newton Green;
- 1966 opening of the first Severn Bridge bringing the M4 motorway (now M48) straight through the conservation area between Mathern and Newton Green;

- Mid to late 20th century development of housing schemes in Newton Green and infill in Mathern.

6.4 Archaeological Potential

6.4.1 Mathern lies on the edge of the Gwent Levels and as such is likely to have attracted settlement and activity from the prehistoric period onwards. The presence of the pills may have made the area particularly attractive to settle and may account for the cluster of medieval manorial status properties found here (**Fig.7** next page).

6.4.2 The village has probably been the focus of settlement since the 7th century and from the time of the grants to the bishops of Llandaff and the construction of the palace. Mathern was a small, high status settlement consisting of the palace, the church and a few houses. Moynes Court, a medieval fortified manor house, stood a short distance away from this core – its earthworks are a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

6.4.3 It is probable that evidence for the origins and development of the settlement will survive below ground except where modern development will have destroyed or compromised archaeological deposits. Evidence of the post-medieval period will also be encountered within some of the standing buildings of the village.

6.4.4 There has been limited archaeological work undertaken within the village to help inform the potential for archaeological deposits but an Area of Special Archaeological Sensitivity (ASAS), a non-statutory designation supported by national planning policy guidance covers the area of the village and the Gwent Levels south of the motorway. 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 in any proposed development scheme.

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 2 Historical Plan

Part D - Plan 3 Area of Archaeological
Sensitivity

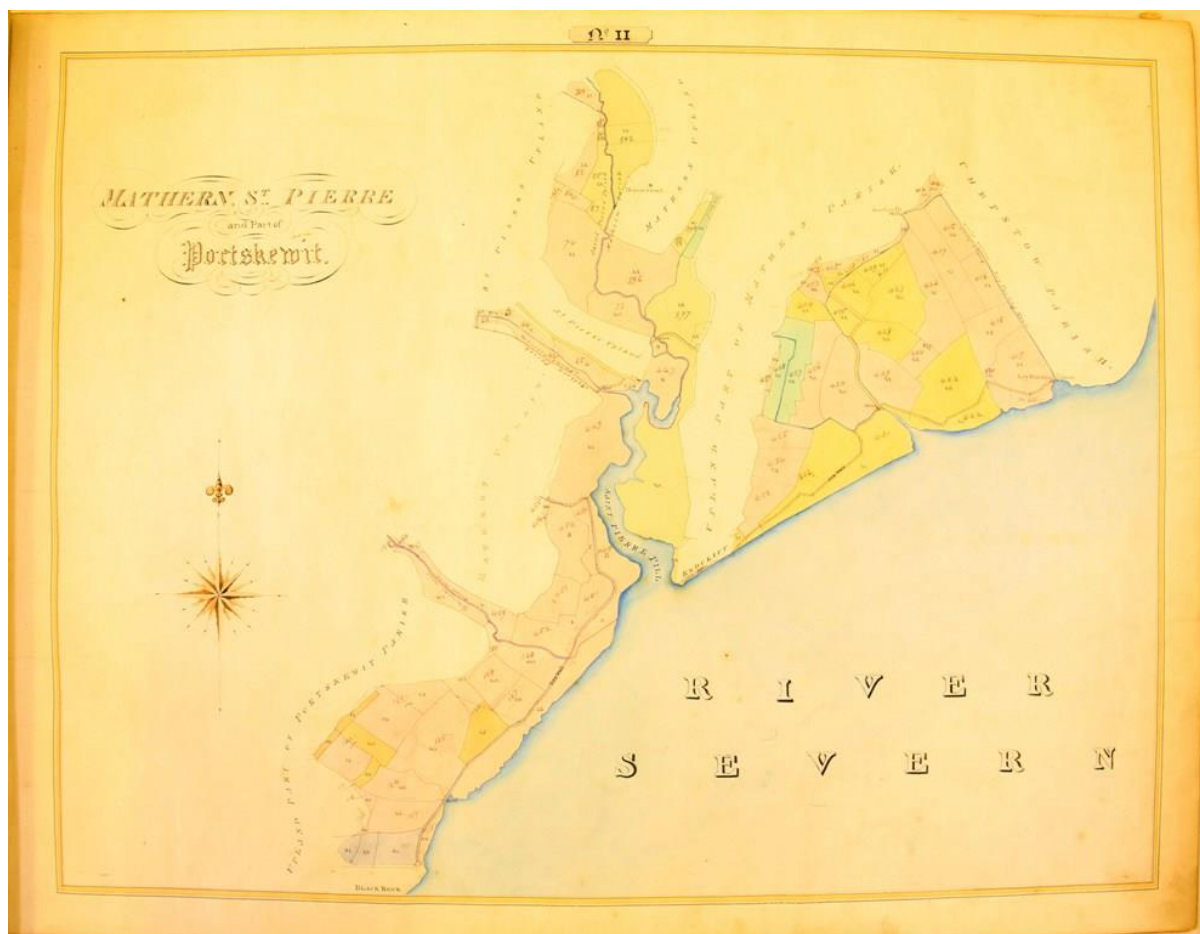


Fig.7 A map of the Caldicot Level in 1830 relating to the Monmouthshire Court of Sewers which shows St Pierre Pill which would have originally provided access by boat to Mathern, Moynes Court and St Pierre. By 1830 the upper reaches of this pill were silted up leaving no more than narrow streams. Mathern Pill is the smaller inlet further up the coast which was partly accessed by a road from Mathern (Copyright GWR D1365/1)

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 control 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 three 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 Mathern 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 Positive Contribution

Part D - Plan 6 Character Areas

7.2 Overview

7.2.1 Mathern Conservation Area comprises three distinct self-contained areas each with their own character. The Wyelands estate with outlying farms and fields covers two-thirds of the conservation area, mostly north of the M48. The small settlement of Newton Green occupying an area north of the M48 motorway has some pockets of historic buildings but is largely characterised by its 20th century housing developments while the historic settlement of Mathern is positioned south of the M48 on the Gwent Levels.

7.2.2 In the settlement of Mathern the physical characteristics of the site on the Gwent Levels, near to the River Severn, the former navigable streams and the English border made it an ideal site for occupation by the bishops of Llandaff. Their legacy in the form of the parish church, Mathern Palace and Moynes Court makes up much of the character of this section of the conservation area.

7.2.3 The conservation area contains a rich variety of historic buildings of varying styles, each of special architectural interest. This ranges from the palace and Moynes Court to the more modest Innage Farmhouse, the polite Mathern House, picturesque style Mathern Lodge, distinctive modestly scaled estate cottages, estate lodges and the Neo-Classical Wyelands and Italianate St Tewdric's.

7.2.4 The landscape character of this conservation area is a key element that distinguishes it from other conservation areas. The designation includes the extensive landscaped parkland setting to Wyelands House. This stretches to the A466 with the edge of Chepstow beyond.

7.3 Character Areas

7.3.1 Three distinct character areas have been identified in Mathern, the boundaries of which have been identified in **Fig.8** below and **Plan 5**. This section will identify the key attributes of each character area.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 6 Character Areas

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

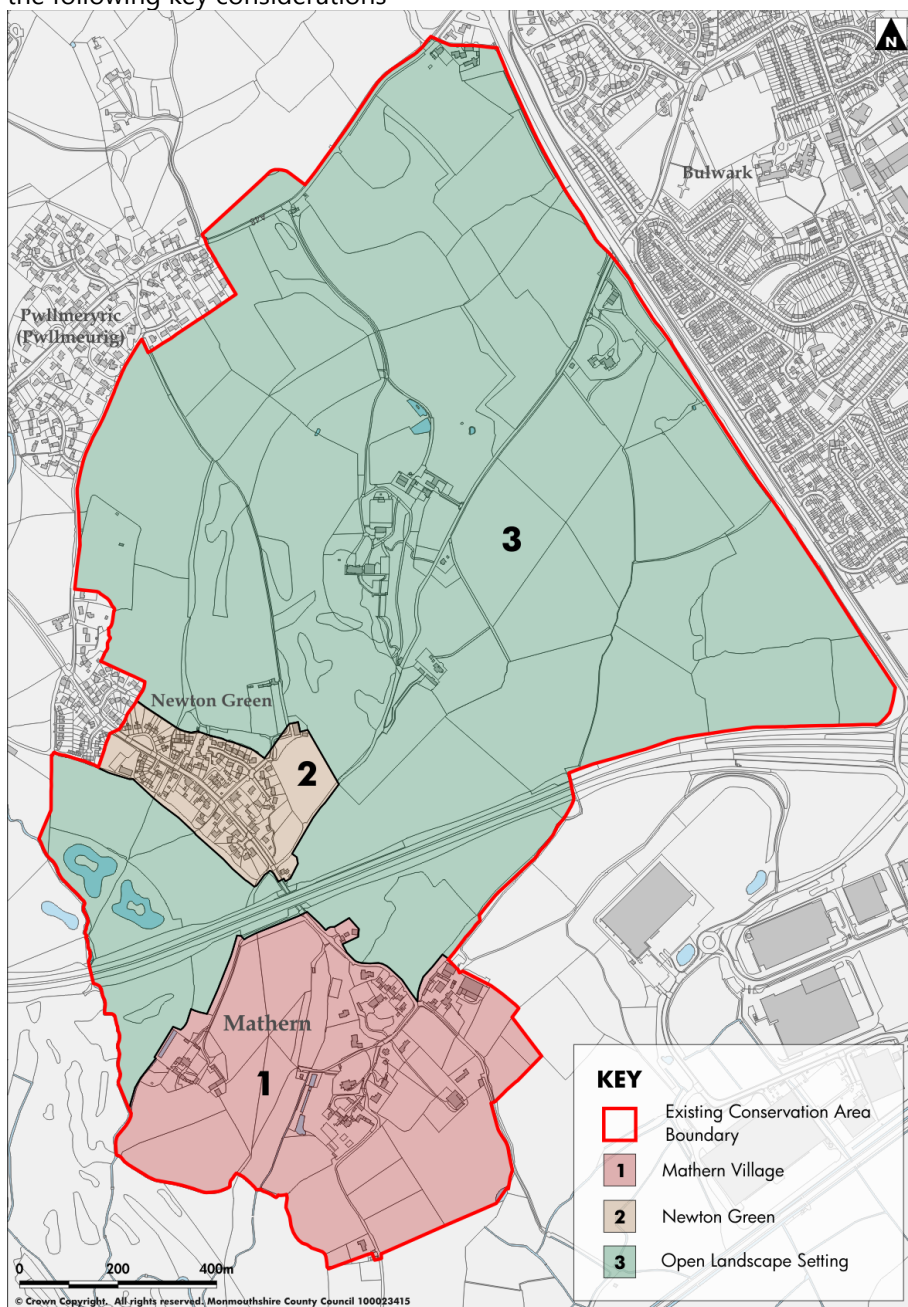
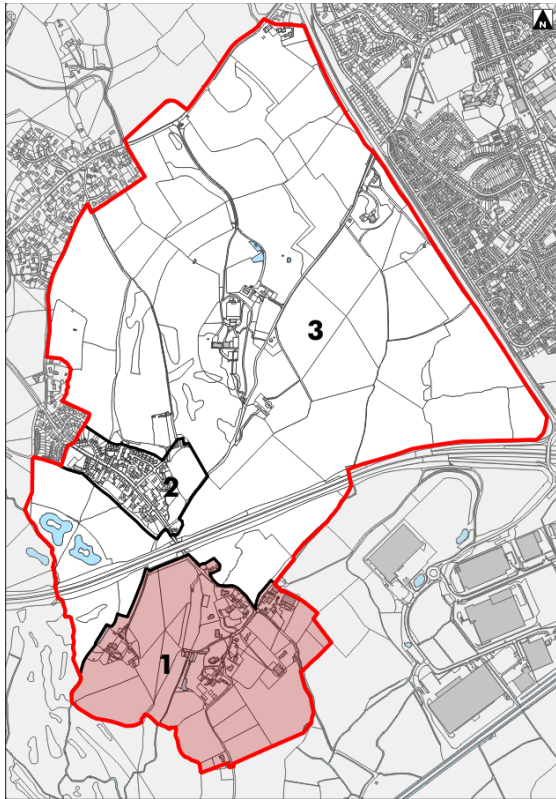


Fig.8 Mathern Character Areas

CHARACTER AREA 1
Mathern Village



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6A

7.3.3 This character area covers the village of Mathern on the south side of the M48. The area includes Moynes Court to the west, Mathern Palace and The Cottage to the south and Innage Farm to the east. Moynes Court has a registered garden of 16th century origin and Mathern Palace has a registered garden; an Arts and Crafts garden from 1894-1914. The area is focused on a single road that sweeps around towards the church and palace (**Fig.9**). Surrounding fields are laid to grass and grazed by sheep. Hedges and fences criss-cross them.

7.3.4 The buildings within this character area are generally set back from the roadside within gardens. 19th and 20th century buildings face the access road with older properties set in the landscape rather than orientated to the road. Moynes Court is set at the end of a long tree-lined driveway (**Fig.10**) and includes the gatehouse (to the foreground) and cottage (to the rear) forming an important group with the

house. To the south-east is a very large converted tithe barn. Mathern Palace, positioned south of the church with a group of outbuildings, faces south-west onto its garden and a small valley beyond.



Fig.9 View of the palace with church behind taken from the south-west



Fig.10 The enclosing tree-lined avenue leading to Moynes Court

7.3.5 The buildings are a variety of scales. 20th century infill generally comprises bungalows and one and a half storey houses set in moderately sized suburban gardens behind low walls. The Cottage to the south of this group is a modernised and extended one and a half/two storey property set back from a lane and surrounded by fields. The 19th century

'estate cottage style' Mathern Lodge is a modest one-storey property. Its scale is part of its estate character. These modest buildings contrast with the major buildings in Mathern. The late 15th century/early 16th century Innage Farmhouse forms a large two-storey plus attic range with an attached outbuilding. The double-depth Mathern House is two-storey plus attic as is the large square block Vicarage constructed circa 1880s. Mathern Palace, built as a quadrangular plan house, only half of which survives today, is a large three-storey building with tall tower to the entrance front. Moynes Court is located to the west set behind its massive 14th century stone gatehouse (Fig.11). The early 17th century house is an impressive gabled property of three-storey plus attic. To its east is the huge former tithe barn, now converted to domestic use. Towering above the landscape and the surrounding secular buildings is the three-stage west tower of St Tewdric's Church (see Fig.15). The large-scale of the above buildings, which are set in large plots with no strongly defined building line, are a key feature of this character area and unusual for their small village setting.

7.3.6 The character area contains three cohesive historic groups of buildings of special interest, most of which are statutorily listed. The first is to the west with a strong physical and historic relationship. This comprises the impressive, early 17th century, double depth, Moynes Court (Fig.12), its massive stone gatehouse to its front and the cross-passage Moynes Cottage to its rear. To the east lies the great tithe barn, now converted and re-roofed, but still with strong presence within the group and of significant historic and architectural importance (Fig.13).

7.3.7 The second group of historic buildings within the conservation area comprises the church with its lychgate and churchyard with significant survival of chest tombs and a stone arch sham ruin. Mathern Palace lies to the south with its courtyard of outbuildings converted into separate dwellings and its surviving pigsties. Opposite the church is the huge square plan vicarage north-east of which is the attractive 'picturesque' Mathern Lodge.

On the opposite side of the lane the grand gateway leads to Mathern House, set back from the roadside. This village core group is significant for its high-status buildings, their physical relationship to one another (the palace having a strong visual relationship to the church) and use of materials with strong definition to the collection of stone buildings contrasting with the rendered Mathern Lodge and House.



Fig.11 The formidable fortified gatehouse of Moynes Court



Fig.12 The 17th century Moynes Court with attractive gables and large relieving arches above stone mullion windows



Fig.13 The large converted tithe barn and outbuildings have a strong presence on the roadside

7.3.8 A third group of cohesive historic buildings within the conservation area lies to the east and comprises Innage Farmhouse and its courtyard of outbuildings including threshing barn, stables, cart shed and loose boxes. These are a historically significant farmstead group of traditional buildings representing the main estate farmstead.

7.3.9 Buildings are predominantly exposed stone with some rendered and painted buildings and later 20th century rendered or stone clad infill. Of the stone buildings many are local rubblestone with a distinctive yellow hue, for example Mathern Palace and Mathern House. Others can be positively identified as the local red and grey sandstone rubble, for example Moynes Court (mix of random and squared rubblestone with Bath stone dressings) (Fig.14), Innage Farmhouse (see Fig.49) and the Vicarage (rubblestone with ashlar dressings). The church is local fine-grain limestone and coarse Tintern sandstone with an ashlar tower (Fig.15).



Fig.14 Rubblestone and Bath stone dressings to Moynes Court



Fig.15 The church displays a harmonious palette of materials comprising limestone and sandstone with ashlar tower

7.3.10 Some roofs to older houses are stone slate. Good examples include Mathern Palace and Moynes Court (laid to diminishing courses with tiles on rear roof slope). Double Roman interlocking clay tiles and clay pantiles are seen to outbuildings, for example, the tithe barn to Moynes Court, Courtyard, Old Barn and the pigsties to Mathern Palace and outbuildings to Innage Farmhouse (**Fig.16**). Elsewhere natural slate predominates. There are red brick chimney stacks with stone chimney stacks to higher status properties, such as the diamond set stone stacks on Moynes Court. Stone transom and mullion windows are a feature to Mathern Palace and Moynes Court, some with two centred heads and trefoil heads with diamond lattice lights (**Fig.17**). There are oak mullioned windows to the converted outbuildings at Mathern Palace and traditional six over six vertical sliding sashes to Mathern House. Mathern Lodge has a fine castellated bay window. Other features include two good early 17th century studded plank doors to Moynes Court and its gatehouse and scalloped barge-boards to Mathern Lodge. The character area also contains a number of stone boundary walls of local significance.

7.3.11 The setting of the character area comprises open fields providing excellent panoramic views to the surrounding countryside and the Gwent Levels to the south. From the lane leading south to the railway line past Innage Farm there are wide views east and south to open fields. Modern facilities and utilities infrastructure such as a series of large electricity pylons and the large industrial estate of retail distribution units accessed off the A466 roundabout with the M48 characterise the wider views from this part of the conservation area. There are views back towards the village to the west and the tower of St Tewdric's Church. To the south of Mathern Palace on the lane leading to The Cottage there are good distant views south-west to the Second Severn Crossing. On the bend of this lane south of the church, views to the north are terminated by Mathern Palace and its converted outbuildings. In the field south-west of the palace there are settlement defining views east of the palace and its

gardens with the tower of the church in the background (**Fig.18** next page).

7.3.12 From the lower slopes of the field on the north side of the brook (leading from St Tewdric's Well to St Pierre Pill) there are views north to the long range of the converted tithe barn. From the tithe barn there are views east towards the church tower nestled between trees (**Fig.19** next page). A tree-lined lane leads to Moynes Court and there are glimpses of the house south along the lane leading to the gatehouse. From the access road to the village, south of St Tewdric's Well, there are views south-east towards Innage Farmhouse and its farm buildings. The field north of Innage Farmhouse has wide open views north across fields to woodland. The area at the approach to the village is dominated by constant traffic noise on the M48 motorway.



Fig.16 Double Roman interlocking clay tiles are a feature of farm buildings including those at Innage Farm



Fig.17 Mullion windows are a striking feature of Moynes Court



Fig.18 The harmonious group of palace, gardens and church tower create a dramatic ensemble in such a small settlement



Fig.19 Views east to the church tower glimpsed between the tree tops

7.3.13 The pasture fields throughout the character area provide key open spaces and provide landscape context for the major houses. The open fields dividing Moynes Court from the rest of the village are important in reading the development of the building, built as a retreat. The field immediately to the south-west of the palace is essential to the open setting of the listed building and its registered garden. Belts of trees and distinguishable tree groups all add to the character of the area. The mature tree cover has established a series of glimpsed views to areas of the village that emerge and regress on travelling around the settlement (**Fig.20**).

7.3.14 St Tewdric's Well is an important local feature. The well was restored in 1977 and a commemorative plaque erected. Since then a new picket fence surrounds the well and a seating area with timber planters has been created. This paraphernalia, practical, but not altogether sympathetic, has fortunately not disturbed the set of older stone steps and the stone covering to the well (**Fig.21**). Boundary walls also appear as a local feature with stone walls to the churchyard, to the south of Foxways and leading north into Foxways garden. These provide robust structure to the views east from a copse of trees on the public footpath in the field south-east of Moynes Court. The rendered curving walls, topped with iron railings, of Mathern House are an unusual (and relatively modern) feature on the roadside leading to the church (**Fig.22**), as is a stone arch sham ruin within the churchyard.



Fig.20 View to the churchyard with a backdrop of mature trees, the Vicarage roof can be glimpsed and is framed by the foliage of belts of mature trees which permeate and surround the village



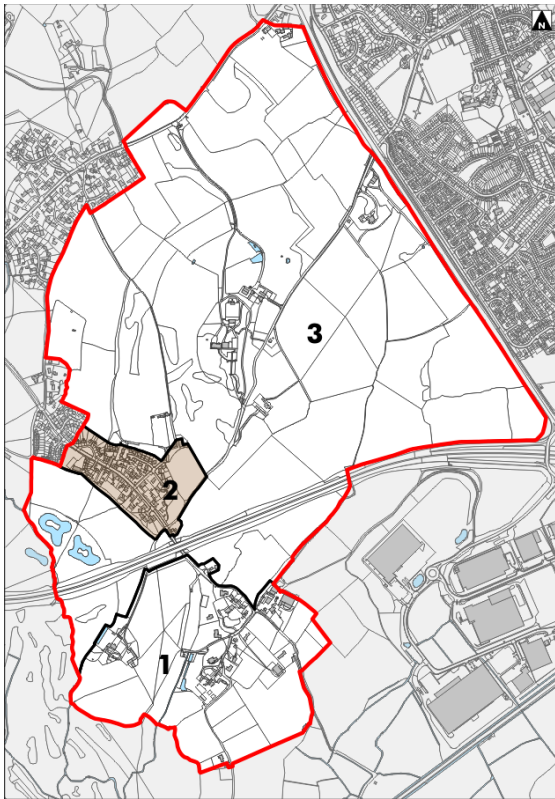
Fig.21 St Tewdric's Well with historic stone steps



Fig.22 Curving walls to Mathern House are a striking feature in the conservation area

CHARACTER AREA 2

Newton Green



Refer to:

Part D - Plan 6B

7.3.15 This character area takes in the village of Newton Green between Pwellmeyric and the M48. The area has a group of listed estate buildings at its heart with later 20th century housing developments to the north-west and south. The area extends eastwards to the boundary of the Wyelands estate parkland and backs on to fields to the west. The attractive core of 19th century buildings are now interspersed with late 20th century houses and 20th century expansion of the village has also

somewhat eroded its original scale and cohesiveness.

7.3.16 Buildings within the character area comprise a range of one and a half and two storey 19th century cottages, semi-detached houses and terraces with estates of 20th century bungalows, one and a half and two-storey houses and larger scale buildings comprising purpose built flats. Buildings of note due to their scale and massing include the large, five-bay, two-storey Millers Arms, the one and a half storey Nos. 1-4 Model Cottages, and the three-storey Rose Cottages (**Fig.23**).

7.3.17 Older buildings on the west side of the road are set directly to the roadside and generally face onto the roadside (**Fig.24** next page) whereas older buildings on the east side of the road are generally positioned back from the roadside behind walls and front gardens. Later 20th century infill is either set back from the roadside between older cottages or set facing secondary access roads to closes or crescents leading off from the main road. The 20th century developments include Stepside and Parklands Close to the west and Mathern Crescent, Bishops Mead and Birdwood Gardens to the east. The 19th century Nos. 1 and 2 Rose Cottages (one building) are an exception being positioned some way east of the village with a very large front garden. This three-storey range is clearly of higher status than the other older cottages and it is likely that this building was associated with the Wyelands estate.



Fig.23 The contrasting scale of Millers Arms & New Cottage



Fig.24 Old School House, raised above the roadside, maintains the building line with other properties located close to the road



Fig.25 The Gables



Fig.26 Nos. 1-4 Model Cottages



Fig.27 A former barn, Shop Cottages, displays typical treatment of random rubblestone walls



Fig.28 White painted stone is a strong feature which defines Rose Cottages in the character area

7.3.18 The listed and unlisted 19th century buildings at the core of the village form a significant group of some considerable historic and architectural quality. These comprise The Gables (**Fig.25**) and Yew Tree Cottage, Nos. 1-4 Model Cottages (**Fig.26**) with New Cottage, gates, railings and hexagonal water tank cover, the former school, traditional red 'K6' telephone box and Old School House. These buildings represent a cohesive group of village centre buildings with an eclectic range of architectural styles from vernacular stone cottages to estate style cottages. The stone boundary walls and railings also form part of this high quality group. There are other isolated buildings which make a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area, including, Anglecot, Rose Cottages, and the Millers Arms which, despite extensions, replacement windows and roof coverings, still retain their essential historic form and value in the context of the earlier development of this part of the conservation area.

7.3.19 Buildings are predominantly rendered and painted in shades of white and cream. There are stone cottages, either exposed sandstone as with Old School House, The Gables, Rose Cottage and Shop Cottages (**Fig.27**) or painted white as with Applecross Cottage and Nos. 1 and 2 Rose Cottages (**Fig.28**). Estate Cottages are stone to ground floor and rendered and half-timbered to first floor. There are also 20th century exposed brick houses such as the one and a half storey brown brick houses on Stepside. There are

exposed or rendered red brick chimney stacks. Roofs are predominantly concrete tiles or interlocking tiles. Some natural slate roofs survive, for example, on Vine Cottage, Red Roses, Sunnyside, School Cottages and the former school. There are also clay tiles with pantiles to the Millers Arms, The Gables and plain clay tiles to Model Cottages and New Cottage. Features include stone window arches to Old School House and Rose Cottage, well-built stone walls with stone gate piers and coping stones to Model Cottages and Anglecot (Fig.29), and hooped iron railings and a wide range of shaped clay pots to the chimney stacks to Model Cottages. There are few surviving timber sashes or traditional casement windows.

7.3.20 The enclosure of the townscape to Newton Green provides few opportunities for extensive views. There are limited open views west over fields from the rear of the former school building and views east from the recreation ground towards tree-lined ridges along the motorway. Other views are often glimpsed between buildings, for example the view south-west between Rose Cottage and Glen View marking a transition between settlement and countryside (Fig.30). There are also enclosed views along a sunken track opposite Anglecot. At Rose Cottages there are glimpsed views north along an estate track and views north-east across parkland to Wyelands itself.

7.3.21 The open recreation ground with clubhouse is the only significant green space within the character area. This space has considerable amenity value, but it does not form part of the early evolution of the village and has no special characteristics of its own (Fig.31).

7.3.22 Features of local distinction include stone boundary walls and the distinctive style of the estate cottages with their estate plaques. The hexagonal structure covering the water tank to Model Cottages is a local landmark within Newton Green (Fig.32).



Fig.29 The 19th century estate cottage, Anglecot, complete with its contemporary stone walls and gate piers



Fig.30 Glimpsed view to the countryside beyond the village

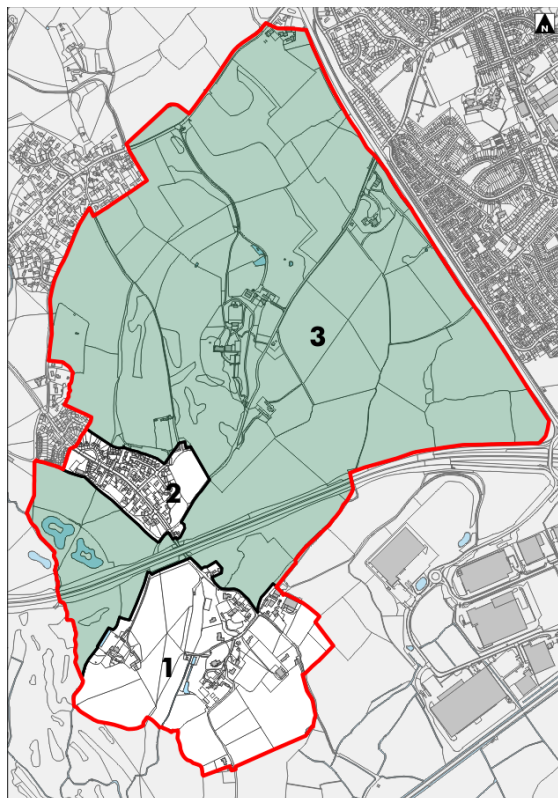


Fig.31 The recreation ground is a significant green open public space within the character area



Fig.32 The locally distinctive water tank structure, a key feature within the character area

CHARACTER AREA 3 Open Landscape Setting



Refer to: Part D - Plan 6C

7.3.23 This part of the conservation area comprises a large area of open rolling lowland grassland, formal parkland, woodland and five important groups of buildings. The groups are: Wyelands House, garden buildings and gate lodges; East Wood to the east; Home Farm within the grounds of the park; St Tewdric with stables and garden wall to the north-east; and High Beech to the north. The parkland to Wyelands, included on Cadw's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, covers a large area of land between the A48 and Mathern Road. The park is an irregular shape, elongated north-south with entrances at the north and south with lodges. Roadside boundaries are stone walled with iron railings to other boundaries.

7.3.24 The area contains a number of grand buildings built on a large scale in contrast with the small lodge houses. Wyelands is a substantial two-storey classical Regency villa with a low pitched tile roof and wide eaves. Its

north lodge (Wyelands Lodge) is a small single-storey lodge, built in the same style as the house. The Jacobean style south lodge (Lower Lodge, **Fig.33**) is also a compact single-storey building as is the picturesque style East Wood Lodge opposite. East Wood House on the east side of Mathern Road is a substantial two-storey building comprising a long range and side wings. North of Wyelands is the two-storey, three-bay Home Farmhouse with a series of outbuildings including a large five-bay threshing barn. North-east is the Italianate St Tewdric's with its four-bay entrance of two-storeys plus a three-storey tower (**Fig.33**).



Fig.33 Lower Lodge – this Jacobean style lodge marks the south entrance to Wyelands estate



Fig.34 The Italianate style St Tewdrics

7.3.25 The buildings within the character area are generally offset from the roadside and do not follow any fixed or regulated building line adding to the informality of this part of the conservation area. Wyelands, positioned within the parkland, is orientated facing north with the main formal garden lying to the south. The gate lodges face the roadside. Home Farmhouse faces the farmstead to the north-east (**Fig.35**). St Tewdric's is also set in its own grounds and faces north-east. The north facing orientation of these buildings is likely to be coincidental. The buildings respond to their landscape setting which adds to the informality of the built form of the character area.

7.3.26 Wyelands and its landscaped gardens with statutory listed garden structures, and the gate lodges form a group of considerable significance and historic and architectural importance (**Fig.36**). The house has a number of formal gardens contained by walled terraces with stone balustrades. To the north is the single-storey range of stables in a small walled

courtyard with cobbled surface. The one acre stone walled kitchen garden is to the north, the stable block incorporated into its south side. There are also glasshouses with red brick plinths and cast iron frames within the walls and stone lean-to gardener's bothies outside the walls. To the south-east of the house lies a Jacobean style gazebo.



Fig.35 The Home Farm positioned in a dip in the shadow of a plantation



Fig.36 Wyelands seen in its parkland setting

7.3.27 To the north is Home Farm, a good example of a 19th century home farm for an estate. The double pile farmhouse faces the farm buildings, which include a bunkhouse and granary with cart house, a long, two-storey cow house and a large five-bay threshing barn (converted) facing a farmyard (**Fig.37**).

7.3.28 To the north-east is the Italianate St Tewdric's with an 'L' plan two-storey stable block and single-storey coach house and tall limestone boundary walls (partially rebuilt in 2000) with wrought iron entrance gates. To the south is St Tewdric's Lodge, a one and a half storey estate cottage with half-timbered first floor similar in style to Anglecot in Newton Green (**Fig.38**).

7.3.29 At High Beech Farm to the north there is a stone farmhouse and group of traditional stone outbuildings which form a historic farmstead group (**Fig.39**).



Fig.37 Home Farm is positioned some distance north-east of Wyelands obscured from view by tree cover. It is positioned near the walled kitchen garden where historically manure would be delivered from farm to garden.



Fig.38 St Tewdric's Lodge in a similar style to other estate buildings within the conservation area. This complex forms a self-contained group of houses and service buildings significant in their physical relationship to each other and status.



Fig.39 View to High Beech in its landscape setting

7.3.30 The buildings within this character area are almost exclusively built of stone. Mathern Lodge is squared pennant rubblestone with Bath stone quoins, Eastwood Lodge is pink and yellow limestone, St Tewdric's is squared Forest of Dean stone with ashlar dressings (**Fig.40**). Wyelands is of Bath limestone ashlar, the walled garden is red sandstone and other buildings are the local rubblestone. There are often ashlar chimney stacks to higher status buildings and stone or red brick stacks to others. Roofs are invariably natural slate. There are a good range of timber windows to properties including six over six timber vertical sliding sashes to St Tewdric's and a large 18 over 18 timber vertical sliding sash to the stables at Wyelands. Other features include a good range of plank doors to outbuildings on the Wyelands estate.



Fig.40 St Tewdric's use of Forest of Dean stone extends to its boundary walls and gate piers

7.3.31 This character area is defined by its rolling lowland landscape character as much as its buildings. Most of the park is permanent pasture with numerous isolated specimen trees, both coniferous and deciduous, including some good Cedar of Lebanon. Many of the trees are contemporary with the creation of the park in the 19th century (**Fig.41**). Areas of woodland include planned tree planting to the north with fine specimen trees and a large area of semi-natural deciduous woodland to the east (East Wood, **Fig.42**). The driveway from the north winds through the parkland and is defined by a variety of mature trees including cedar, sweet chestnut and holm oak. Along the north boundary there is a screen of evergreens including yew, Portugal laurel and holly. The house is flanked by Portugal laurel and euonymus hedging with clipped yew arches over iron gateways. The gardens of Wyelands include formal terraces with walls, stone balustrading, gravel paths and clipped yew.



Fig.41 Examples of the extent and quality of mature parkland trees likely to date from the creation of the 19th century estate



Fig.42 East Wood forms a background to the house

7.3.32 The open rolling parkland, mature trees, woodland and hedge lines are all vital to the character of the estate. The farmland beyond the estate boundaries forms part of the essential setting of the parkland. From Wyelands there are almost uninterrupted views south to the River Severn (**Fig.43** & **Fig.44**) with the topography of the land screening the motorway and modern housing estates to the edge of Chepstow from view.



Fig.43 Views to the first Severn Bridge



Fig.44 Views to the second Severn Crossing

7.3.33 Within the character area there are numerous views from within the parkland and fields beyond on the south side of Mathern Road. Views include glimpsed views south along the northern driveway from Wyelands Lodge. There are also vistas east, between tree groups on the northern approach driveway. In the south there are views over the fields towards the M48 and village of Mathern. Where Mathern Road narrows, aided by the enclosure with estate boundary walls, views are terminated to the north on the bend of the road looking towards East Wood House (**Fig.45**). From public footpaths there are views north to St Tewdric's and north to High Beech Farm, which is a prominent landmark for those travelling by car towards Chepstow on the A466.

7.3.34 A key local feature of this character area is the range of substantial estate boundary walls along the roadside. Along the A48 towards Pwllmeyric there is a long stretch of stone walling from High Beech Farm to the village. On Mathern Road the wall is seen at its best stretching for long distances along the west side of the road, and enclosing views where it lines the east side at the same time (**Fig.46**). The wall returns at St Tewdric's where it is a substantial structure of over 3 metres high (**Fig.47**). A stone boundary wall also lines

the track leading north to Pwllmeyric alongside Rose Cottages in Newton Green.



Fig.46 The distinctive stone walls lining the road as it narrows by Lower Lodge



Fig.47 The tall wall dominates the roadside



Fig.45 View north of East Wood towards St Tewdric's which is glimpsed between the trees

7.4 Architectural & Historic Qualities of Buildings

7.4.1 For such a small settlement, Mathern possesses a large number of buildings of architectural and historic interest, in particular those from the medieval period and the 19th century. In all, there are 48 listed buildings of which two are Grade I. Whilst this review will identify buildings chronologically, it is stressed that many of the other buildings have been altered and extended significantly during many periods, and therefore are overlain with a number of different architectural styles.

7.4.2 The major listed buildings are fully described in the Statutory List and in the Gwent/Monmouthshire volume of *The Buildings of Wales* series, *John Newman, Yale UP 2002 (pp 382-389)*. They are identified and discussed here within the context of the contribution they make to the conservation area.

Medieval

7.4.3 The unique architectural feature of Mathern is the former Bishops Palace (Grade I listed, **Fig.48**) built in the early 15th century and added to a century later, which is situated in a secluded location a few metres south-west of St Tewdric's Church. Its organic quadrangle plan, typical of many medieval buildings, partly survives and was adapted at the turn of the 19th/20th century. Notable features include a square tower, heightened in the early 20th century, a two-storey oriel window over the Gothic entrance-arch, a flight of external stairs, and various ranges including the Bishops Chapel and Granary. The palace, however, is a relatively compact ensemble, with an interesting roofline of gables, chimney stacks and the tower, although this is not a roofline visible from many vantage points. The complex is built of local rubble stone, with stone slate roofs in parts, clay pantiles in others.

7.4.4 St Tewdric's Church (Grade I listed, **Fig.49**) is, not surprisingly, a substantial church having been enlarged by one of the most influential bishops resident in the palace

adjoining the church. These enlargements in the Decorated period, include the tall and graceful tower and the widened nave aisles and south porch. Earlier phases of construction are detected in the chancel (the usual starting point in church building) with its early English triple lancet windows at the east end contrasting with the perpendicular-type square headed windows in the aisle. The church was constructed in limestone and sandstone rubble, ashlar stone being reserved for the structurally more demanding tower and buttresses. St Tewdric's was significantly restored in the late 19th century when the interesting organ recess was added, looking like a small transept projecting from the south wall of the chancel.



Fig.48 The tower of the Bishops Palace is glimpsed above wings surrounding the courtyard of the building in its secluded setting



Fig.49 St Tewdric's church. A mainly 14th century building including a graceful tower. Its relatively large size is due to its relationship to the adjacent Bishops Palace. The church was extensively restored in the 19th century

7.4.5 Innage Farmhouse (Grade II listed, **Fig.50 & Fig.51**), is a late 15th century farmhouse in an 'H' shaped plan arrangement of central hall with gabled cross wings. It has a two-storey entrance porch accessing the hall. The building is in local rubble stone with stone mullioned windows capped by dripmoulds. The farmhouse was considerably altered in the 17th, 19th and 20th centuries, and is somewhat hidden from view by a substantial rubblestone threshing barn and attached granary with pantile and natural slate roofs.

7.4.6 Moynes Court (Grade II* Listed, **Fig.52**) lying west of St Tewdric's Church was originally a fortified manor house, of which the moat and mound survives, and substantial parts of the gatehouse of the 14th century and later. The gatehouse is approached through a tree-lined drive and is only apparent at close quarters, which gives a dramatic effect. It is a tall, solid, roughly coursed stone structure, with few openings other than the relatively low tudor arched gateway, slightly off centre. The eye catching features are the low gable and towers, one placed forward of the other.

Post Medieval buildings

7.4.7 The cottages and farm buildings of Mathern contribute to the setting and context of the church, the palace and the grand houses of the settlement. The cottages are located in the centre of Newton Green, some 500 metres north of St Tewdric's Church. Whilst none of them are listed, they nevertheless represent in their materials, form, details and modest scale, together with their grouping, a sense of local distinctiveness and a reinforcement of a sense of the village core, despite their modernisation and extensive replacement glazing. Cottages of considerable local historic and architectural interest include The Gables, possibly the earliest. This is a one and a half storey, wide-fronted building, with three prominent gables incorporating a casement window in each. All lintels appear to be timber, and the general construction is rubble walls of local stone and steep pitched roof, re-clad with concrete pantiles. What appears to have been a former ancillary building adjoins The Gables on its

right. It is now called Yew Tree Cottage, but its almost blank front wall is relatively intact.



Fig.50 Innage Farmhouse. A fine medieval building demonstrating its prosperity by the use of numerous stone mullioned windows and entrance bay



Fig.51 Barn at Innage Farm. Its recent conversion retains its slit openings with internal timber shutters



Fig.52 The Gatehouse of Moynes Court, a sturdy medieval structure with a low tudor arch and tower



Fig.53 The 'Old School House' is a well preserved vernacular building. Its stonework, including voussoirs over the windows, are well constructed



Fig.54 The Millers Arms Inn retains its vernacular character with gable end chimneys and single-storey 'catslide' roof extension to the rear. The large porch is probably a later addition



Fig.55 19th century farm buildings creating an extensive farmyard at Innage Farm

7.4.8 A similar arrangement can be seen at Shop Cottage on the same side of the road. Here the building and its ancillary wing are located on the back edge of the footpath. Both are of rubble walling of local sandstone and some limestone and both have pantiles, the main house being roofed in what are clay pantiles. Whilst these cottages have had extensive replacement glazing, there are indications of the original openings, in remnant, tall, slit windows or vents, now blocked up. On the opposite side of the road, Rose Cottage and the Old School House (**Fig.53**), are both rubble walled, have good brick stacks and in the case of the Old School House, have well-formed stone voussoirs over the windows. School Cottage is rendered, has a blocked-in front door and extensive new or replacement glazing. However The Cottage helps to maintain good street continuity and enclosure.

7.4.9 Returning to the north side of the road, The Millers Arms public house (**Fig.54**) is a scaled-up version of this wide frontage cottage type, with five evenly spaced windows on two floors, with an attic window on the return elevation. It has a steeply pitched roof, clad in clay pantiles, with a catslide roof to the rear. The large porch appears to be recent. The front car park and landscape work tend to detract from the building's historic integrity.

7.4.10 The minor farm buildings also confirm the vernacular pattern of architecture in Mathern. This can be seen in the range of farm buildings including granary, threshing barns, combination barns, cattle shelter sheds and stables at Innage Farm (**Fig.55**), east of St Tewdric's Church. The farm buildings are constructed mainly of sandstone with red brick soldier arches, cills and edges, and are roofed with double roman tiles. Other good farm building ranges exist at Mathern Palace and Wyelands (mostly listed Grade II).

Seventeenth Century

7.4.11 The house at Moynes Court (Grade II* listed) and the tithe barn (Grade II listed, see **Fig.11** to **Fig.13**) were built early in the 17th century, possibly by Bishop Godwin of Llandaff. The house is relatively regular in its main façade, having three gables and a central doorway. It is of two and a half storeys with the gable windows lighting the attic storey. Mullioned windows with hoodmoulds, typical of the period are strong features of the front elevation. The plan is of the deep double pile type and is constructed in local red sandstone in squared rubble courses with some Bath stone dressings (testifying to its relatively prosperous foundation) and with stone slates on its main roofs.

7.4.12 The tithe barn, with its distinctive slit openings, has been converted to residential use (No. 1 and No. 2 Tithe Barn), but still retains much of its original agricultural character.

Nineteenth Century

7.4.13 Whilst there is very little evidence of 18th century architectural influence in Mathern (other than perhaps, the much altered Old Court House at the north-western edge of the new village) there is considerable evidence of architectural work of a significant standard from the early to the late 19th century, representing most architectural styles of that time. The influence of the Picturesque and 'Gothick' style of the early years of the 19th century can be seen in Mathern Lodge (**Fig.56**); the cottage-ornée type of gatehouse lodge, characterised by its whimsical revival of medieval motifs such as a quatrefoil and mullioned window. Its ornate bargeboards and decorative chimneys contribute to the character of this rendered single-storey building.

7.4.14 Mathern House (Grade II listed), barely visible behind dense tree planting and high hedges, also incorporates early 19th century 'Gothick' features such as an ogee arched window under a bargeboarded gable amongst its more numerous late Georgian sash

windows. The roof material is natural slate, which was becoming increasingly popular.

7.4.15 Wyelands, (Grade II* listed) designed and built in the Regency Neo Classical style, is an excellent example of this elegant architectural period, with its accurate Ionic order porch and refined sash windows, set in ashlar Bath stone walls. Its recessed entrance sits between two wings, with a lower pitched hipped roof of natural slate.

7.4.16 One of its estate lodges, Eastwood Lodge (Grade II listed) built at approximately the same time (c.1820) is another example of the Picturesque style being used to contrast with the cooler classicism of the main house.



Fig.56 The 'Gothick' inspired cottage ornée style of the early 19th century is apparent in the multiple angled chimneys, decorative bargeboards, quatrefoil gable decoration and the mullioned oriel window of Mathern Lodge



Fig.57 The Italianate tower, low pitched roofs and projecting eaves of St Tewdric's, preside over its extensive countryside setting. The later timber viewing gallery on the corner of the building enhances its simplicity

7.4.17 St Tewdric's (Grade II listed, **Fig.57**) was built two decades later, about 1845, and is in the Italianate style, fashionable at that time. Its signature feature is the tower, characteristic of this style, designed as a belvedere, overlooking the grounds from this elevated location. Its stone mullioned windows with arched heads are topped by a low pitched pyramid roof with projecting eaves. The villa has a regular plan and is built in coursed, squared Forest of Dean stone and has an elegant Venetian window on the first floor. There are some sensitive additions of c.1900, particularly a projecting timber viewing gallery on its south-eastern corner.

7.4.18 The High Victorian Gothic Revival Style is seen in the Old School (Grade II listed, **Fig.58**) of about 1865, situated in the centre of the new village. This small building, 'T'-shaped in plan, has the typical features of a 'busy' roofscape with gable, tall chimney stack and interesting steep pitched slate roofs. Its mullioned windows have chamfered heads, rather than full Gothic arches. The Bath stone dressings contrast well with the grey sandstone rubble of the walls.

7.4.19 Mathern Vicarage (Grade II listed, **Fig.59**) is slightly later, but shares similar architectural motifs. It is rather severe; a tall imposing four-square block, distinguished by grouped gables and steeply pitched hipped slate roofs. Three substantial red brick chimney stacks complete the composition. Windows are mullioned, some with drip moulds, adding to this revival of medieval forms.

7.4.20 The Lodge (**Fig.60**) at the southern entrance to Wyelands (Grade II listed) is a Victorian late Gothic or Jacobean Revival miniature, complete with 'crowstep' gable, battlemented parapets and oriel window. The Gothic Revival is also seen in the extensive restoration of St Tewdric's Church, carried out c.1889.



Fig.58 The 'Old School' on the main road is of a typical Victorian Gothic Revival design with steep pitched roofs, gables and ecclesiastical style details and windows



Fig.59 Mathern Vicarage is a powerful, boldly expressed design, enhanced by its massive, incised red brick stacks, a perfect foil to the severity of the stone and slate. Tudor revival drip mould lintels and stone mullions, contrasting with a tall staircase window



Fig.60 The neo-Jacobean design of the Lodge to 'Wyelands' is a lively composition of battlemented parapets, crowstep gables and a mullioned oriel

7.4.21 The Domestic Revival of the late Victorian period is well represented, especially in the new village. Here on the main road is a row of four model cottages, presumably for estate workers, dated 1891 (Grade II listed, **Fig.61** & **Fig.62**) with an eye catching water tank shelter, designed to look like a well, with an octagonal steep pitched tiled roof. The cottages are one and a half storeys, stone on the ground floor, with boldly projecting half-timbered gables. These are characteristic of the Domestic and Vernacular Revival styles which were favoured by model settlements large and small. Similar architectural features are apparent in the lodges, both at the southern entrance to St Tewdric's (**Fig.63**) and at the junction of Mathern Road and the main street through the village.

Twentieth Century

7.4.22 There is little of architectural or historic interest evident in the conservation area, other than Arts and Crafts additions in Mathern Palace (not generally visible).



Fig.61 This Domestic Revival terrace of estate cottages has attractive verandas and recalls medieval architecture in its decorative half-timbered gables and mullioned windows



Fig.62 An ornamental 'well' structure which creates a pleasant pivotal corner to the estate cottage terrace



Fig.63 Lodge in a variation of the same Domestic Revival style as the estate cottages on the main road

7.5 Activity: Prevailing & Former Uses

7.5.1 The area was rich agricultural land on the fertile Gwent Levels. As the base of the bishops of Llandaff, Mathern became an important ecclesiastical estate. The fine farmhouses such as Innage Farmhouse were built as grand residences. In the 19th century Wyelands estate took over as the major landholding with estate workers housed in cottages and the Home Farm.

7.5.2 Today the conservation area contains three distinct areas: the villages of Newton Green and Mathern; and the fields and parkland (of Wyelands), and outlying farms. The area is still farmed, but less intensively. High Beech Farm has been converted into residential units, as have all of the outbuildings to Home Farm. The settlements are largely dormitory settlements for those working in nearby Chepstow or wider afield along the M48, M4 corridor. The church is still supported and there is an active clubhouse and village hall in Newton Green. The Millers Arms survives as a public house.

7.6 Contributions Made By Key Buildings

There are a number of listed and unlisted buildings that make important positive contributions to the character of the conservation area, both individually and in groups. Key groups are:

- Moynes Court (with walled garden), Moynes Cottage, the gatehouse and Tithe Barn.
- Mathern Palace and garden with converted outbuildings and agricultural outbuildings. This forms a group with the church, churchyard and vicarage.
- Innage Farmhouse and farmstead
- Model Cottages, New Cottage, Old School House and former school in Newton Green.
- Wyelands estate (house, lodge and garden buildings).
- Home Farm and farmstead.
- St Tewdric's, stables, coach house and lodge.

In addition, a number of stone boundary walls make very significant contributions to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Individual properties which make a particularly positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area and important boundary walls and railings 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 The conservation area comprises buildings predominantly of stone (sometimes rendered or limewashed – later painted) and roofs of natural slate. Variations include half-timbered estate cottages and houses and agricultural outbuildings with clay pantile and double Roman interlocking tile roofs. Twentieth century infill development is generally brick or render with concrete tile roofs. There has been some alteration to traditional houses resulting in the loss of original windows and doors and original roof coverings.

Walling

7.7.2 Stone is a mix of local limestone and sandstone with occasional Bath stone dressings, predominantly grey but with some red or yellow tinges to its colouration and is usually seen as rubblestone but laid to courses (Fig.64). Stone work to houses occasionally has red or yellow brick dressings to openings and invariably with brick chimneys, sometimes rendered. Often stone houses are rendered or painted (historically with limewash but later with modern paints). Traditional openings in stone walls are small and characterised by the use of timber casements. On higher status houses stone mullion windows form part of the stylistic quality of these buildings (Fig.65). Later Victorian cottages have larger openings with timber sliding sashes.

7.7.3 There is much use of render to older houses and this has been reflected in some 20th century infill and extension to Newton Green. This is generally painted (white, cream and other pastel shades).



Fig.64 Typical stone treatment to walls in the conservation area



Fig.65 Stone mullion windows to Moynes Court reflecting the higher status of this house

Roofing

7.7.4 The traditional houses still retain natural slate (Fig.66) with stone slates to key buildings such as Innage Farmhouse, Moynes Court and Mathern Palace. The stone slates are laid to diminishing courses, a very attractive and historically correct method of stone slate laying rarely seen today. Some buildings, particularly agricultural outbuildings, have clay tiles; some are pantiles and some are double Roman interlocking tiles (Fig.67). There has been much replacement with concrete tiles, especially in Newton Green.

Boundary walls and retaining walls

7.7.5 A key characteristic building type of the conservation area is the rubblestone boundary wall (especially alongside Mathern Road). Boundary walls create enclosure to areas, particularly roadsides, and provide structure to views. These walls are a mix of limestone and sandstone (Fig.68 & Fig.69).



Fig.66 Natural slate remains on many buildings including Moynes Cottage



Fig.68 Stone walls and native mixed hedging is a characteristic boundary treatment



Fig.67 Clay pantiles to Mathern Palace outbuildings



Fig.69 Curving stone walls create dynamic lines in the landscape and create positive and comfortable enclosure particularly to roadsides

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

8.1 Green spaces and parkland are integral to the character and appearance of the Mathern Conservation Area. The parkland around Wyelands is a registered park and garden, the surrounding fields essential to its landscape setting. Fields are also important to the setting of other high status buildings such as Moynes Court and Mathern Palace. The open spaces within the conservation area allow an appreciation of its development and situation, with Newton Green separated from Mathern. This division keeps the two settlements distinct from one another preserving their individual character. The area also contains hedgerows, parkland trees and areas of woodland that provide essential wildlife habitats. Fields along the Gwent Levels near the River Severn also have high biodiversity value.

8.2 In addition to the registered parkland around Wyelands, Mathern contains two fine examples of country house gardens, both on the Cadw Register of Parks and Gardens. At Moynes Court, there is a Tudor walled garden probably dating back to the late 16th century alterations to the house, with a medieval fishpond. At Mathern Palace the garden designer H. Avery Tipping (who designed gardens at Chequers (Buckinghamshire), Dartington Hall (Devon) and three other Monmouthshire country houses) devised and laid out an accomplished Arts and Crafts garden, which remains today. The garden was laid out with terraces, level lawns, the kitchen garden and a sunken rose garden all linked by paved paths and grass walks flanked by clipped yew and topiary hedges. A steep slope on the north-west side leading down to the medieval fishponds was remodelled as a rockery but is now a grass slope, and mature trees in this area were incorporated. The whole ensemble still forms an important planned setting to the Palace.

9 Key Views

9.1 Landscape Setting

9.1.1 The wider landscape setting to the conservation area is crucial to maintaining the understanding of the evolution and development of the settlements. The riverside mills and proximity to the English border secured its position as a base for the bishops of Llandaff. Today's landscape setting has been radically changed in the late 20th century by the M48 motorway, electricity pylons and the industrial estate to the south-east. Nevertheless, the wider context of the conservation area still retains a buffer of excellent countryside complemented by the attractive parkland to the Wyelands estate.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 4 Spatial Analysis

9.2 Types of View & Their Relative Significance

Strategic

9.2.1 Some of the views from the A48 south between the High Beech roundabout and Pwllmeyric can be considered of strategic importance. These views take in an extensive portion of the open parkland to the Wyelands

estate which defines much of the northern portion of the conservation area. Within the conservation area there are no strongly defined landmarks, which are ever-present or dominant in the landscape or townscape. Wyelands' parkland does however contain planned vistas to the surrounding countryside.

Incidental

9.2.2 There are good incidental views across farmland to the surrounding countryside and the River Severn. These are predominantly private views from parkland or fields, but views can be had from public footpaths.

9.2.3 There is an excellent uninterrupted view south-west from the lane leading to New Cottage to the distant Second Severn Crossing (**Fig.70**).

9.2.4 The views north along Mathern Road are dominated by the high stone boundary wall to Wyelands estate.

9.2.5 Good incidental views are to be had of Mathern Palace with its distinctive tower. These are found on the lane leading to New Cottage, and on the stretch of the main road outside Mathern Lodge.



Fig.70 View to the second Severn Crossing (slightly marred by the electricity pylons to the foreground)



Fig.71 View across farmland to the church glimpsed between the trees

Glimpsed

9.2.6 There are glimpsed views of the church tower and church in its treed setting. The most notable view is east of the Tithe Barn at Moynes Court (**Fig.71**).

Terminated

9.2.7 There are several terminated views, focused on Mathern Palace. The view north along the lane leading to New Cottage takes in the gable ends of the palace's converted outbuildings with the church tower behind (**Fig.72**). In views east from the field in front of the palace there is an interesting arrangement of garden, palace, church tower and surrounding trees. At the end of the track leading to Moynes Court views south are terminated by the bulk and scale of the medieval gatehouse (**Fig.73**).



Fig.72 View to the palace with church tower behind



Fig.73 The bulk and scale of the stone gatehouse terminates views along the driveway to Moynes Court

10 Degree of Loss of Architectural and/or Historic Elements

10.1 There has been some loss of historic windows, doors, roof coverings and chimneys (particularly in Newton Green). For example, windows to Old School House, Sunnyside, Vine Cottage and The Gables and roof coverings to Shop Cottage, Farrier's Barn and Rose Cottage. Windows and roof coverings are the most significant and consistent change to historic buildings.



Fig.74 Rose Cottage; Modern roof coverings and modern porch and door have eroded the traditional character of this cottage but these changes are reversible

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 village.

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

11.2 Areas for Exclusion

Parklands Close

11.2.1 This small area of 20th century housing bears no relation to the character of the conservation area. The layout of houses, the building line, the use of materials and repetition of style does not correspond to the character or appearance of the remaining section of the Mathern Conservation Area. The housing development does not comprise an area of special architectural or historic significance that it is desirable to preserve or enhance. .

11.3 Areas for Inclusion

11.3.1 There are no proposed areas for inclusion.

Refer to: Part D - Plan 7 Management Proposals

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:

- The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney
- 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.

12.5 There are no Article 4 Directions identified for this conservation area.

13 Proposals for Enhancement

13.1 General Enhancement Opportunities

13.2.1 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

13.2 Specific Enhancement Projects

13.2.1 There are no specific enhancement projects or proposals suggested for the Mathern Conservation Area.