



Shirenewton

*Conservation Area
Appraisal &
Management Proposals*



monmouthshire
sir fynywy

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FORUM
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The Stables, a key building found within the Shirenewton Conservation Area

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 Shirenewton 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 *Shirenewton 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 Shirenewton Conservation Area and to provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future management.

1.4 Key study aims:

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

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*Circular 61/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas*, and the latest draft guidance from Cadw; *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*, adopted March 2011.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

2.5 Some of the photographs used in this Appraisal were provided by the Local History Society and their knowledge and assistance is acknowledged here.

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.

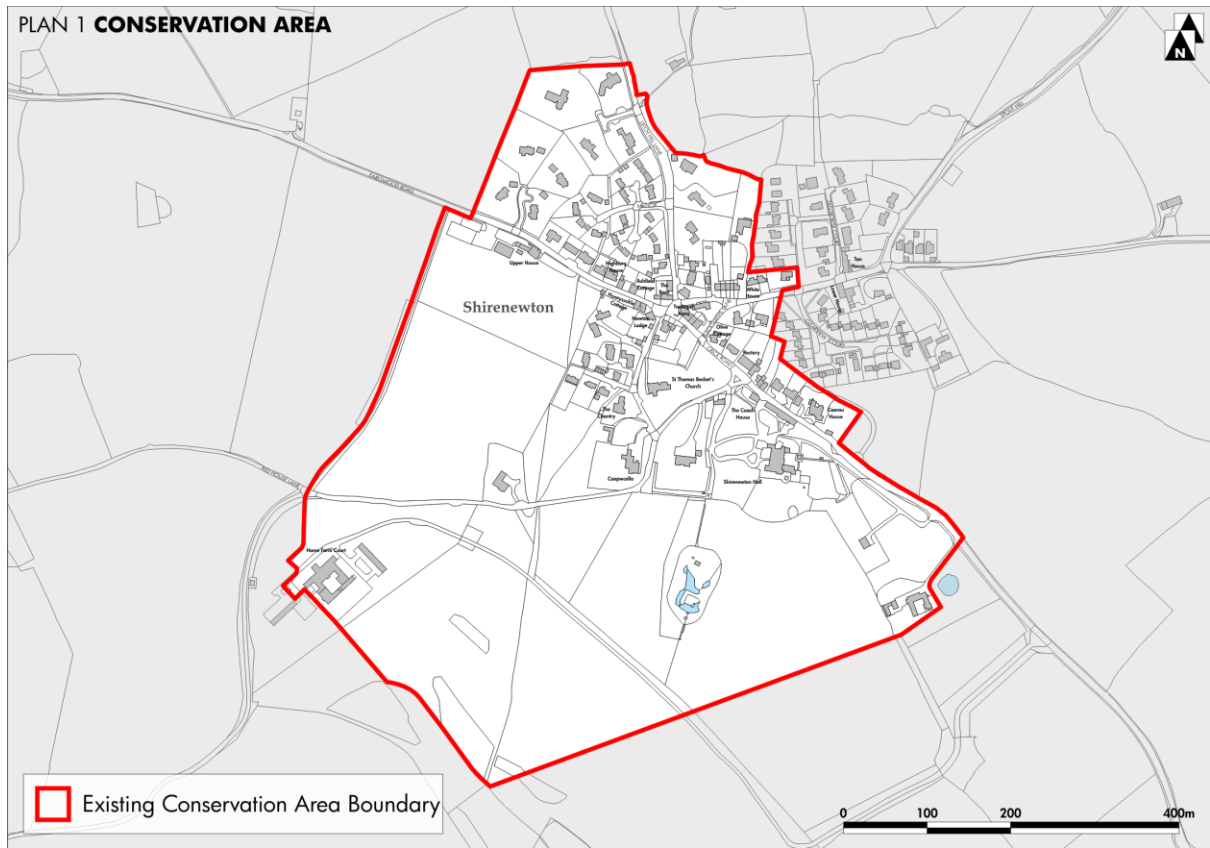
3.8 A number of additional studies carried out to support the LDP should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisal. These include Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Studies of the surroundings of Monmouthshire's towns and villages, including those with Conservation Areas. Similarly, 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



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Fig.2 Study Area

Part B: Conservation Area Appraisal

5 Location & Setting

5.1 Shirenewton is a hill-top village, situated in the south of the County, at around 500ft above sea level with views east over the Severn Estuary and Bristol Channel. It is 4 miles west of Chepstow on Earlswood Road, just south of the B4235 Usk Road (**Fig.2 & Fig.3**). A remnant of the ancient forest of Wentwood, from which the village emerged, survives to the west. The settlement of Mynydd-bach lies immediately to the north with the village of Itton, and Chepstow Park Wood further afield. The picturesque Golden Valley lies to the south. The whole area is classed as a Special Landscape Area (SLA).

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 1 Conservation Area Plan



Fig.3 Shirenewton Location Plan

6 Historical Development & Archaeology

6.1 Historic Background

6.1.1 The locality of Shirenewton has been occupied since Neolithic times with flint tools and Bronze Age lithic scatters amongst the finds, particularly from the hill top area across the Golden Valley from the village (Aldhouse-Green & Howell, 2004).

6.1.2 The current settlement of Shirenewton has its origins in the late 11th century/early 12th century. Shirenewton Manor was held with Caldicot Manor as part of a Marcher Lordship under the control of Walter fitz Roger, Sheriff of Gloucester and Constable to King Henry I. Clearings were made in the once vast ancient forest of Wentwood between 1086 and 1129. Shirenewton, the 'sheriff's new farm', was created to provide the sheriff with a private hunting base. Walter fitz Roger was succeeded by his son Milo who later became Earl of Hereford. Upon Milo's death in 1143 the manor passed to his daughter who had married into the De Bohun family (Aldhouse-Green & Howell, 2004).

6.1.3 In the 13th century the De Bohun Manor, based at Caldicot Castle, held 60 acres at Shirenewton. The Church of St. Thomas à Becket, founded by Humphrey De Bohun, was built on the hilltop in c.1262. By 1349 there were a total of 26 English villeins (a peasant who was directly subject to his lord, to whom he paid dues and services in return for his land), and Welsh tenants in Shirenewton (Griffiths, 2008).

6.1.4 Shirenewton Court, to the south-east of the church, was part of the Manor of Dinham rather than Caldicot and has existed since the 16th century at least. The Court was the birthplace of William Blethin who became Bishop of Llandaff in 1575. The property remained in the Blethin family until 1785.

6.1.5 Shirenewton became an early location for Nonconformists with the setting up of Quaker meetings from 1688. The Friends burial ground was established in 1700 and a

Quaker Meeting House constructed in c.1734-5 (Fig.4).

6.1.6 The village was served by several coaching inns including the former King's Head positioned on the 1758 turnpike road which led south to Crick, Caerwent and Caldicot. The village experienced growth in the early to mid-1800s with the construction of a number of properties including the Tudor Revival Cae-pw-Cella, the Old Rectory and the Tredegar Arms (Fig.5 & Plan 2).



Fig.4 The Old Post Office with Quaker Meeting house to the right c. 1907



Fig.5 The Tredegar Arms, and the Old Post Office c1906, note the ivy covered barn



Fig.6 Shirenewton Hall c.1907

6.1.7 The Italianate Shirenewton Hall was built by Thomas Hollis in c.1830 replacing the Court (Fig.6). As well as employing agricultural estate workers Hollis, the owner of paper mills at Mounton and Shirenewton (in the valley below Mynyddbach), employing over fifty workers, also funded the repair of workers housing and the construction of new cottages within the village. The gardens of the hall, which are protected by virtue of being on the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Specific Historic Interest, were laid out and planted with specimen trees in 1880-1900 by the horticulturalist and botanical author E. B. Lowe (Fig.7).

6.1.8 At the turn of the 20th century the village was still largely an agricultural settlement with a farm within the village (and several farms in the area around the village) together with grocers, blacksmiths, boot and shoemakers and cattle and horse dealers (Fig.8). In 1901 Shirenewton Hall was purchased by Charles Liddell, a shipper in the Far Eastern trade, who commissioned an architect to encase the 1830s house and transform it into a Jacobean style mansion. Later, in 1909 architect Norman Evill added a wing with loggia and belvedere tower. Liddell also transformed the garden with reminders of the Far East including three

Chinese structures comprising a large open pavilion covering a huge bell, a smaller summer-house and another pavilion with copper domed roof. In addition he laid out a complete Japanese Garden with tea-house, ponds, bridges and arches (Newman, 2002).

6.1.9 During the latter half of the 20th century Shirenewton has experienced extensive growth with the construction of modern housing developments on the hillside to the north and north-east. However, it still maintains its nucleated hill-top settlement character despite this recent development threatening to merge the village with the settlement of Mynyddbach to the north.



Fig.8 The blacksmiths and five bells with the village barn in the background



Fig.7 Aerial view of the village with Shirenewton Hall and its gardens in the foreground in the 1930s

6.2 Settlement Plan



Fig.9 The 1860 Tithe plan

© Gwent Record Office

6.2.1 Shirenewton is a small irregular cluster that grew up around the junction of five roads. South of this junction is a large triangular area on which the church stands with roads to all sides. This large 'island' site is an important feature of the layout of the village. Shirenewton Hall, standing on the site of Shirenewton Court, occupied the south-east part of the village, the Tithe map (**Fig.9**) showing the north-west boundary defined by the road to be a regular, gentle curve contrasting with the rather irregular form of the other roads through the village. The houses and farm of the village stood in plots of irregular size and shape with no indication of planning or organisation in the arrangement of properties.

6.2.2 Outside of the main cluster there were three farms, two to the east and Shirenewton Farm (Home Farm Court) to the south-west, and the Tan House and Lower House set down the slope to the north.

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 2 Historical Plan

6.3 Key Historic Influences & Characteristics

6.3.1 The key historic influences and characteristics of Shirenewton are:

- Shirenewton Manor developed in a clearing of the ancient forest of Wentwood for the Sheriff of Gloucester between 1086 and 1129
- Development of the small hill top village clustered around the junction of five roads with church, constructed in c.1262, standing in a large triangular area defined by roads. Population of villeins and Welsh customary tenants
- Development of Shirenewton Court, from at least the 16th century, later rebuilt and renamed as Shirenewton Hall
- 19th century patronage by Thomas Hollis of Shirenewton Hall with construction of workers cottages.
- Late 20th century, early 21st century period of growth with the development of modern housing estates on cul-de-sac layouts

6.4 Archaeological Potential

6.4.1 Shirenewton has been the focus for settlement since the late 11th- early 12th century and therefore 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 post-medieval period might also be encountered, including within some of the standing buildings of the village.

6.4.2 The village has had a limited amount of archaeological work carried out within it to help inform the potential for archaeological deposits. An Area Archaeological Potential (AAP) has been identified based on historic map evidence and settlement analysis. Any proposed development within the AAP should include consideration of 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:

Pard D - Plan 3 Area of 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 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 five 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 Shirenewton Conservation Area.

7.2 Overview

7.2.1 Shirenewton is a hill top village with a close-knit historic core centred on the cross roads. The Conservation Area comprises the village core, the Church of St Thomas à Becket set on the highest point in the village (to the south side of the village), Shirenewton Hall and gardens (largely hidden from public view but glimpsed in important views), the converted complex of Home Farm Court (Shirenewton Farm), surrounding fields, and presently substantial 20th-century housing development to the north of the centre. The south side of the Conservation Area is strongly characterised by its open fields and wider landscape setting of parkland and woodland.

7.2.2 The topography of the settlement is a key characteristic of the Conservation Area with houses lining the main hill top road circa 500ft above sea level and views south-east to the Golden Valley, east to the Severn Estuary and Grade I listed First Severn Bridge and north to distant hills.

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

7.3 Character Areas

7.3.1 Five distinct character areas have been identified in Shirenewton, the boundaries of which have been identified in **Fig.10** below and **Plan 6**. 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

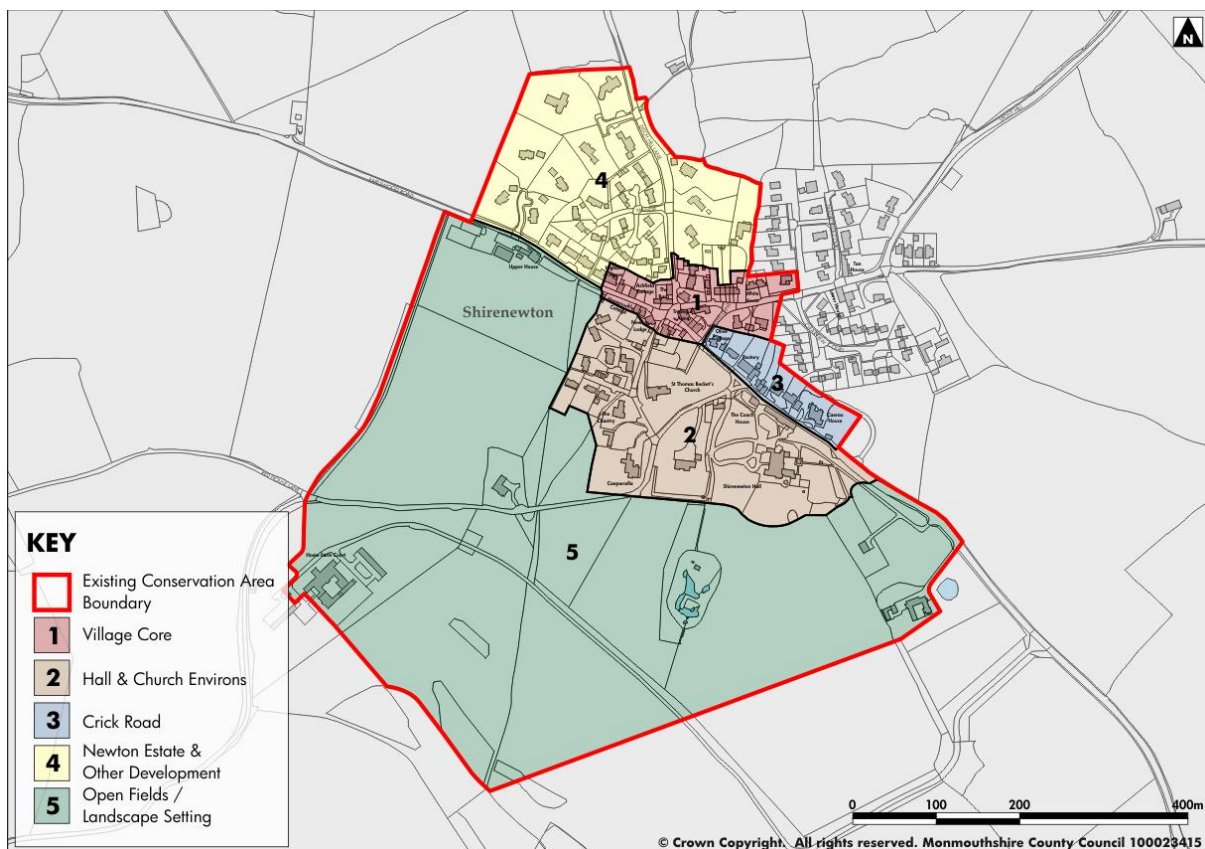
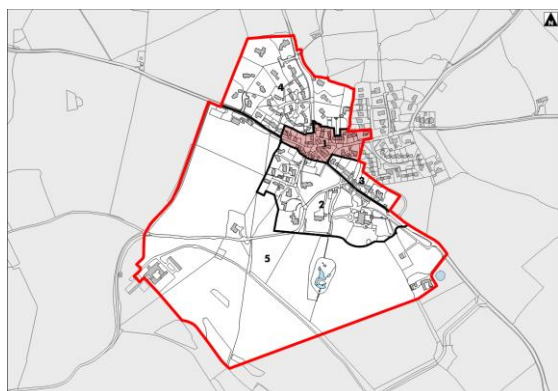


Fig.10 Shirenewton Character Areas

CHARACTER AREA 1 Village Core



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6A

7.3.3 The Village Core character area extends to include Blacksmiths Lane on the south-east side, east along Mounton Road and includes houses on Ditch Hill Lane and Earlswood Road to the north and west. This area is the core of the village at the junction of the main roads through the village. Built form strongly defines the junction and creates memorable streetscape providing a good sense of place and sense of arrival to the village centre (despite a lack of shops or facilities other than the public house and the church). (**Fig.11**)

7.3.4 Buildings are of domestic scale, mostly of two-storeys. Houses are generally set on the roadside, for example the Five Bells. There is a group of buildings facing the cross roads including; the Tredegar Arms set on the junction of Crick Road and Mounton Road

(**Fig.12**), the semi-detached Tremayne and Hill View Cottage (opposite), The Barn on the junction of Earlswood Road and Ditch Hill Lane, The Old Post Office on the junction of Ditch Hill Lane and Mounton Road and Newton Lodge on the junction with Earlswood Road and the lane leading past the church (**Fig.13**). These buildings create the feeling of a centre and a strong sense of place to the village core. The utilitarian highways street bollards and planter detract from the otherwise very attractive streetscape of the character area. Some buildings are gable end on to the street, for example, Ashfield Cottage and its converted outbuilding. Earlswood Road to the north-west narrows (as Crick Road does on the south-east side) with houses set on the roadside; Ashfield Cottage on the north-east side and Honeysuckle Cottage to the south-west of the road.



Fig.12 Tredegar Arms: positioned on a key corner site in the centre of the village



Fig.11 The centre of the village is marked by the meeting of principal routes and the juxtaposition of buildings particularly the Tredegar Arms creating memorable townscape

7.3.5 Mounton Road falls away down to the east from the high point of the cross roads. The road has walls either side, with conifers to the Old Post Office garden. The Old Meeting House is positioned directly on the roadside and forms a large range of buildings extended in two phases to the east, stepping down the road (**Fig13**). Mounton Road has a strongly defined building line on the north side with houses set back behind walls and hedges with front gardens/driveway (**Fig.14**). The building line is disrupted by the BT exchange set back from the roadside with a concrete, stone effect wall and concrete pillar and wire fence. Between the Row terrace and semi-detached White House and Old Engineer's Arms a large tarmac driveway leads up to a set of gates leading to Springfield, a late 20th-century house set over the ridge, below Mounton Road. Further east, past two 20th-century bungalows are the Tan House Public House and the ivy covered Lower House, opposite each other, forming a distinct entrance to the historic village from the east. Both Tan House and Lower House are currently outside the Conservation Area. Laurel hedging and

conifers partially hide the mid to late 20th century Clearview housing development to the south.



Fig.14 An historic photograph of the terrace on Mounton Road set behind stone walled front gardens



Fig.13 The Old Meeting House, extending down Mounton Road

7.3.6 There is a concentration of buildings of architectural and historic interest to this part of the Conservation Area. One of the key groups of buildings includes the stone built Five Bells, the rendered Tredegar Arms with its three-bay, symmetrical main façade, the stone semi-detached Tremayne and Hill View Cottage, The Barn (converted to residential use), Honeysuckle Cottage, the Old Post Office (Fig.15), The Old Meeting House and Newton Lodge. The Old Meeting House has a new extension constructed in concrete block and clad with coursed rubble-stone with living space above and garage below, executed sympathetically and reminiscent of an agricultural outbuilding. There are other positive buildings set slightly away from the core, which includes the characteristic 1911 Police Station (Highbury House) to the west and the semi-detached stone cottages to the east on Mounton Road. The 1907 Newton Lodge (a re-fronting and alteration of an earlier building) (Fig.16) is an excellent Arts and Crafts style building probably designed by the Chepstow architect Eric Francis.

7.3.7 There is a good variety of stone buildings, some rendered and painted. Buildings are mostly coursed rubble stone, for example The Old Post Office and The Old Meeting House while the former Police Station has a dressed squared stone frontage with rendered elevations to the rear. Buildings are sometimes painted white, for example, Newton Lodge or rendered and painted, for example, the Tredegar Arms (see Fig.12).



Fig.16 Newton Lodge probably by local architect Eric Francis



Fig.15 The Old Post Office with former shop window forms an intimate group with the traditional red telephone kiosk (K6) and the post box to the west of the building and is part of a much larger attractive group of buildings forming the village core

7.3.8 Natural slate roofs predominate and these are usually seen with stone stacks. There are plain clay tiles to the former Police Station and clay pantiles to The Old Meeting House (**Fig.18**). There are occasional brick stacks, for example, The Barn and former Police Station. The insertion of uPVC windows are an unfortunate feature to some buildings including The Barn, Tremayne, Hill View Cottage and the Row, a terrace of five cottages on Mounon Road. Nevertheless there is a good selection of timber windows from the timber sashes with central glazing bar of the Old Post Office and the replacement multi-paned sashes of The Old Meeting House to the two-light oak casements with ovolo mouldings and leaded lattices to Newton Lodge. There are stone kerbs to the lane by Newton Lodge. Boundary treatments are characteristic stone walls, some with hedging or railings, for example, The Old Post Office has a low boundary wall with railings (in need of repair due to damage from vehicles – December 2009). The close-boarded fencing to Barn Cottage garden is an uncharacteristic feature.

7.3.9 There is a wide variety of well terminated and glimpsed views due to the enclosure of the roads (by built form, boundaries hard and soft or a combination of these) and the topography of the village which is very noticeable to this part of the Conservation Area. From Tan House and Lower House on Mounon Road (presently outside the Conservation Area) there are glimpsed views west towards the village. Further west along Mounon Road views are successfully terminated by the end of the Old Meeting House extension (**Fig.18**). There are also views south-west up Blacksmiths Lane terminated by the War Memorial and church beyond (**Fig.19** overleaf). There is a key glimpsed view south between Newton Lodge and Tremayne to the tower of the church. This provides a link between church and village core. Open spaces are restricted within the character area. The crossroads forms a focus for the village and acts as an important nodal point. To the north, the Friends Burial Ground is an important visual and historic open green space.

7.3.10 Distinctive local features include the small stone-walled Friends Burial Ground (**Fig.20**), the grouping of the red telephone box and red pillar post box, the various stone boundary walls with excellent railings to The Old Post Office, and semi-circular coping stones to the wall in front of the Old Engineer's Arms.



Fig.17 Attractive combination of coursed rubble stone and clay pantiles to the Old Meeting House



Fig.18 View west up Mounton Road terminated by the extension to the Old Meeting House

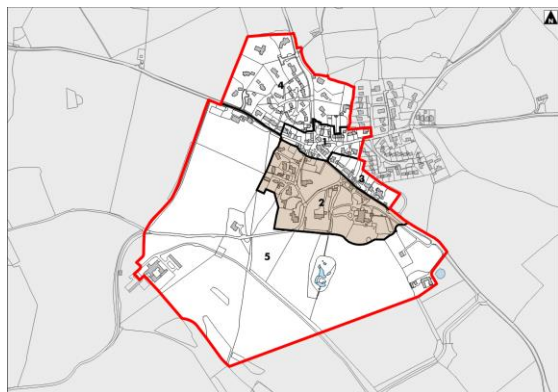


Fig.20 Friends Burial Ground: an important historic open space in an otherwise densely developed part of the Conservation Area



Fig.19 View looking south-west up Blacksmiths Lane terminated by the War Memorial with the church beyond

CHARACTER AREA 2
Hall & Church Environs



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6B

7.3.11 This character area encompasses two important historic land uses in the village; Shirenewton Hall (with its registered garden, garden structures, stables, coach house, gates and lodge) and the Church of St Thomas à Becket set in a walled churchyard surrounded on all sides by roads. Cae-pw-cella (a former rectory that replaced what is now known as the Old Rectory) lies to the south-east and 20th century housing is situated to the west and south-west of the church. The church dominates this part of the Conservation Area as the roads drop away to the north and east requiring stone retaining walls to enclose this space to the roadside. Shirenewton Hall which takes up a large section of the central core of the Conservation Area is largely screened from view by high stone walls and outbuildings built hard against the roadside and integral to the stone boundary walls which strongly define the grounds of the house and dominate the streetscene (**Fig.21**).



Fig.21 High stone walls and integrated outbuildings strongly define the boundary to the grounds of Shirenewton Hall

7.3.12 Domestic buildings are mostly two-storey with occasional one and a half storey 20th-century infill. The pitch and eaves lines are generally parallel with the roadside, but there is variation on what is a very informal area of mostly 20th century infill development around the church. Shirenewton Hall is a large six-bay house of two-stories plus attic with a four-storey crenellated tower. The large parish church has a square, three-stage tower. The buildings within this character area have no single defined building line. Shirenewton Hall, set back from the roadside in its own grounds, is orientated to face south over its formal gardens. The stables and coach house of the Hall form part of the high stone boundary wall on the south side of Crick Road (see **Fig.21**). The 20th-century Stoneycroft is also orientated facing south and set back from the road in the former walled kitchen garden of Shirenewton Hall. Access is via a driveway created by a breach of the wall. To the western side of the church, on the west side of the lane leading past the church to the cross roads, there is a series of 20th century houses built to irregular building lines and informally facing access roads or the playing fields to the west. The Chantry is set back behind a front garden with curving driveway and Cae-pw-cella (the former rectory) is on the bend of Cwm Lane behind a hedge topped wall. The enclosed streetscape on the lane leading past the church is compromised by a tarmac area with the 20th century building known as The Summerhouse, set back some distance from the lane. The low hedges, conifers, laurels, and garaging gives the 20th-century infill a suburban character but maintains the street line with a green edge and encloses the lanes around the church.

7.3.13 The Church is a key focal point for the village with its wide central tower (lit up at night) (**Fig.22** overleaf). The church is raised on an area of higher ground; the churchyard is walled with some hedging in places and contains a selection of shaped yews and other trees. Church Room, opened in 2008, is a well-conceived stone building with ashlar dressings and natural slate roof. The church (and Church Room) forms an important group with a selection of stone houses to its west comprising Barley Hill, The Chantry and Cae-

pw-cella and with the distinctive War Memorial to the north (**Fig.23**). To the east Shirenewton Hall, Lodge, stables, coach house, garden buildings and boundary walls form a cohesive group of historic buildings. The stone boundary walls to the Hall and surrounding the church and other houses in the character area strongly define the streetscene and visually link these groups together (**Fig.24**).



Fig.23 The War Memorial in the setting of the church forms a good group with the latter



Fig.24 Boundary walls form an important part of the enclosure to the roadside and visually link the important heritage assets in this part of the character area

Fig.22 The church of Thomas a Becket



7.3.14 Houses within this character area are predominantly stone, often exposed but sometimes painted or rendered and painted (**Fig.25**). Stone is a mix of red sandstone and grey and red limestone. The church is predominantly red sandstone with areas of quartz conglomerate and limestone with Victorian Bath Stone dressings. Shirenewton Hall is constructed of coursed limestone rubble with Bath Stone dressings, the Lodge is roughcast with ashlar dressings and Cae-pw-cella is red sandstone. Modern 20th-century infill is mostly rendered brick. A notable exception is The Summerhouse which comprises brown brick and a concrete tile roof house set back behind a low stone wall with laurel hedge.

7.3.15 Roofs are predominantly natural slate to traditionally built houses with concrete interlocking tiles characterizing the 20th-century infill. Concrete tiles are also seen to the church. Stone slates to the Lodge and Shirenewton Hall mark these out as buildings of high status. Stone, rather than brick stacks are a feature on older buildings. Notable architectural features include the massive Tudor style ashlar ground floor window to Cae-pw-cella, modern ironwork verandah to The Chantry, and louvred, leaded ridge cupola with weathervane and some fine window openings including large sashes and semi-circular vents with chamfered voussoirs to the stables (**Fig.26**).

7.3.16 The area is defined by its topography with the church a central focal point elevated on a mound. Cae-pw-cella sits behind a laurel topped stone wall with important mature trees in its grounds to the south-west. The trees have a scale and form which give them landmark qualities (**Fig.27**).



Fig.25 The Lodge to Shirenewton Hall rendered and painted white with ashlar dressings



Fig.26 The stables to Shirenewton Hall with distinctive semicircular openings to the roadside



Fig.27 The mature trees on Red House Lane have landmark qualities

7.3.17 From the churchyard steps above the War Memorial there are good views to the distant hills behind the houses on the north side of Crick Road. There are a group of mature pines in the corner of the churchyard near the junction of Red House Lane and Crick Road. These trees provide a green setting to Shirenewton Hall and Cae-pw-cella (**Fig.28**). From here (within the churchyard) there are views over to the Old Rectory (**Fig.29** overleaf). To the north side is a car park for the Tredegar Arms which provides an area for the village recycling, but the large expanse of hard standing has a negative impact on the setting of the church.

7.3.18 Views from Red House Lane looking north are, in part, terminated by a large yew tree with the tower of the church behind. Standing on the lane, opposite the church, views to the north-east are terminated by the Old Rectory. The Hall cannot be seen from the gated entrance with its lodge. A grass 'island' on the junction of Red House Lane and Crick Road with its oak tree set centrally breaks the line of sight at the junction. The Hall can be glimpsed from the gateway adjacent to the stable block on Crick Road. Travelling east on Crick Road the tower of the Hall comes into view above the wall and the Japanese themed garden buildings can be glimpsed from the point where the wall stops and is replaced by a bank and group of trees.

7.3.19 On the west side of the church the lane is narrow, bounded by the church wall, topped with holly hedge on one side and low stone walls of properties on the other. An area of vacant land (subject to a planning application for a new house) immediately north of the churchyard, behind Hill View is screened from public view by trees and the hedge line. This hedge line is an important feature in the approach to the church from the village core creating a green transition and setting for the church. The view north is terminated by The Barn.

7.3.20 The churchyard forms an important central green public space, while the gardens around the Hall (Grade II* registered) although

extensive are private and largely hidden from public view.

7.3.21 Local features include the unusual War Memorial (see **Fig.23**) to the north of the church, which has an Arts and Crafts inspired style and also forms an entrance to the churchyard. The very fine gilded iron railings and gates to Shirenewton Hall are also a notable local feature and form part of the entrance group of buildings to Shirenewton Hall. On the path leading from the War Memorial to the church there is a large street light, powered by a solar panel, the light appears out of context with its surroundings and is an obtrusive feature in views along the north of Red House Lane. The entrances to the churchyard form key points within the character area with their cut stone steps and timber gateways which echo the War Memorial. The north-west entrance to the churchyard is via a long tarmac sloping path with a rather over-engineered concrete post and tubular rail fence.

7.3.22 Stone walls are a strong linking feature throughout the character area. Cae-pw-cella is surrounded by a high quality stone wall with curving coping stones and iron gates. The stone boundary wall on Red House Lane rises from a low hedge topped stretch at the approach to the village, to a very tall section, rising in height towards the Lodge to Shirenewton Hall. These massive walls are a distinctive feature throughout this part of the Conservation Area and provide much of the enclosure to lanes and contribute significantly to the area's character.



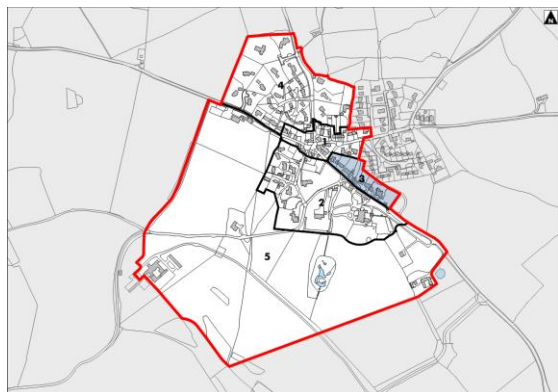
Fig.28 The trees flanking Cae-pw-cella

Fig.29 View across the churchyard to the Old Rectory



CHARACTER AREA 3

Crick Road



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6C

7.3.23 This small character area is focused on the short stretch of Crick Road between Caerau House in the east to Olive Cottage in the west. The building line, with houses lining and facing the road and the containment and enclosure of the stone walls create a very well-defined and high quality townscape on approaching the centre of the village from the south. This consistency to the building line and in terms of the scale of the buildings gives this area a very strongly defined character distinct from the rest of the Conservation Area (**Fig.30**).

7.3.24 From the south-east the walls of Shirenewton Hall on the south side combined with front boundary walls to properties on the north side strongly define the edge of the road to this part of the Conservation Area. At the eastern approach a set of grandiose entrance gates to Caerau House (**Fig.31**) joins a modern winding stone boundary wall. Opposite, the wall to the Hall kinks into a corner, planted in front with shrubs and retaining blocked arched doorways. The modern stone wall to Caerau House gives way to an older stone wall and is linked to a two barn/stable structure with two blocked entrances, small casement windows and first floor plank door (**Fig.32**). Houses are generally set back from the roadside with the exception of Holly Cottage and the stable/coach house to Caerau House which create important pinch-points in the townscape. Houses vary between modest (Holly Cottage) and a more grand two storey

scale (Old Rectory and Caerau House) and there is a variation of eaves and gables facing onto the street giving a pleasing variety in townscape terms and enlivening the roofscape with gable end chimneys. The large multi-phased Caerau House is partially hidden behind hedging and trees.



Fig.30 Crick Road: strong sense of enclosure created by the stone boundary walls



Fig.31 The rather grand gates to Caerau House signal the 'entrance' to the village and provide views of the open countryside to the north-east of the settlement



Fig.32 Stone outbuildings & walls strongly define the approach to the village from the south-east

7.3.25 The entire sequence of buildings to the north-east side of Crick Road along with the enclosure to Shirenewton Hall with stabling, outbuildings and boundary wall (described

within character area 2; Hall and Church environs) form a group of some considerable architectural and historic quality on an important approach to the village. This includes (to the north-east side) the stable/coach house outbuilding to Caerau House, Caerau House itself (although it is seen behind mature boundary treatments), and the distinctive Old Rectory (**Fig.33**), with its side wing (dated 1874 and formerly the village hall), Holly Cottage (a building making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area despite replacement windows and roof coverings) and Olive Cottage.

7.3.26 Buildings are generally stone with rendered brick 20th century infill. Stone is mostly exposed as with Caerau House, a large two-storey house with natural slate roof, stone stacks and timber sash windows but is also painted (No. 2 Holly Cottage) and unusually smooth stucco rendered (Old Rectory). Roofs are natural slate with concrete tiles to infill and replacement cement fibre slates to Old Rectory and concrete pantiles to Holly cottage. Stone, rather than brick stacks are the seen throughout this part of the Conservation Area. Old Rectory has both stone and brick stacks with decorative terracotta pots. On the north side there are two late 20th century buildings set back from the roadside, both rendered and painted white with slate roofs (Porthcerrig and The Laurels). West of the Old Rectory is a 20th century pebble-dashed bungalow with concrete tiled roof. On the corner of Crick Road and Blacksmiths Lane is Olive Cottage, a further example of the local stone. The road falls away to the north, Olive Cottage being prominently positioned high above the lane. There are excellent timber windows to Caerau House and Old Rectory, but there have been replacement windows to Olive Cottage and uPVC windows and doors to Holly Cottage and No. 2 Holly Cottage. The stone walls lining Crick Road contribute to the well-defined use of traditional materials in this part of the Conservation Area and define for the most part both sides of the road forming an important and well enclosed approach to the village centre.

7.3.27 From the south-east on Crick Road there are glimpsed views into the village funnelled along the well-enclosed roadsides formed from stone walls and built form. Further north-west views open out to the crossroads and village core with glimpsed views up to the church. At the south-east end of Crick Road there are distant views south-east towards the Severn Estuary and the Grade I listed Severn Bridge (**Fig.34**). The character area does not contain any open spaces of note.

7.3.28 The stone boundary walls are a locally distinctive feature of this part of the Conservation Area with the wall to Shirenewton Hall incorporating an Ordnance Survey bench mark. There are a number of mature trees set back in the gardens of the larger houses to both sides of Crick Road, which in part help define the roadside and provide a green backdrop to the roadside stone boundaries. This combination of hard and soft features is a one of the key characteristics.

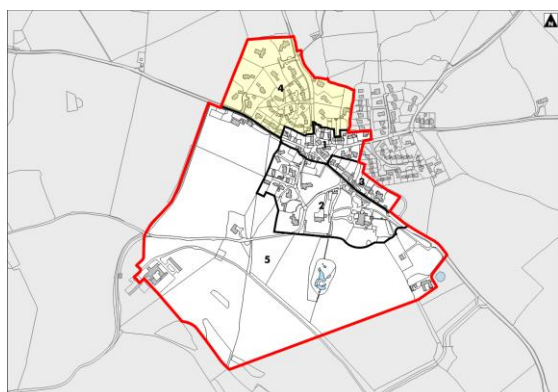


Fig.33 The Old Rectory with its distinctive use of materials and architectural detailing forms an important group with remaining buildings to both sides of Crick Road



Fig.34 View south-east out of the Conservation Area to the distant Severn Estuary

CHARACTER AREA 4 Newton Estate & Other Housing Developments



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6D

7.3.29 This character area is contained in an area north of Earlswood Road. Newton Estate is contained to the west of Ditch Hill Lane with four large properties set in large grounds to the east side of the road. From the plateau of Earlswood Road the ground slopes down to the north. The character area is a multi-phase suburban housing development with detached houses on cul-de-sacs. The built form shares very few characteristics with the rest of the Conservation Area.

7.3.30 Buildings are mostly two-storey detached family homes set in landscaped closes with driveways and garages (**Fig.35**). Some buildings are particularly large, dominating their surroundings, for example Kirrin House with a double garage. Buildings either face inwards on cul-de-sacs and closes or larger properties are set in large plots at angles to access roads.

7.3.31 The character area does not contain any significant groups that can be said to be of special interest to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. A group of four exceptionally large houses, out of character with the Conservation Area, make a statement on Ditch Hill Lane, opposite Coxe's Well. These comprise Ty Twr House, Kirrin House, Dalimore House and Beaulieu House (**Fig.36**).

7.3.32 Buildings are a typical mixture of modern housing development styles with everything from gables, brick string courses, quoins, oriel windows, dormers and tile hanging. Buildings are constructed with a variety of exposed brick, rendered brick and exposed stone with slate and tile roofs and brick stacks (**Fig.37**).



Fig.35 A typical house type at Redd Landes set in a landscaped cul-de-sac



Fig.36 The very large Kirrin House, out of context with the intimate nature of the settlement and its Conservation Area



Fig.37 The 20th century housing such as Oakley House, Ditch Hill comprises a variety of architectural styles and materials

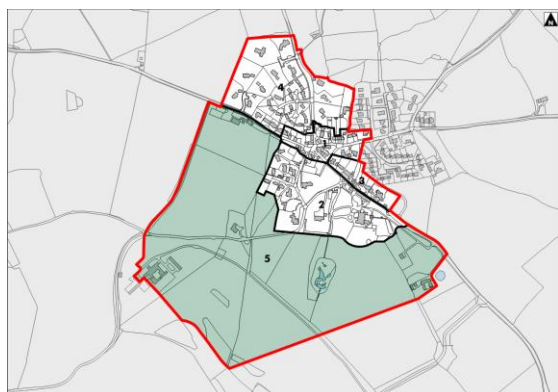
7.3.33 The houses are set around spacious winding access roads, some surfaced with pavers and wide pavements, for example, Redd Landes. Planting schemes are a mix of conifers and ground cover shrubs with occasional greens with trees such as horse chestnuts. These housing areas are largely self-contained and inward looking with few linkages (other than pedestrian footpaths) across the site and between the development and the village. There are views beyond houses to the distant landscape of rolling hills and woodland beyond, for example, views north on Redd Landes (**Fig.38**). There is a good view south from Ditch Hill Lane focused on the church.

7.3.34 The character area does not contain any locally distinctive features of special interest to the Conservation Area. The use of materials and architectural styles are not to be found in the Monmouthshire vernacular.



Fig.38 Views north to the hills from Redd Landes

CHARACTER AREA 5 Open Fields / Landscape Setting



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6E

7.3.35 This character area covers a large area of open rolling grassland, formal parkland, trees and a selection of buildings including Upper House on Earlswood Road, the Recreation Hall, Newton Edge, Home Farm Court (Shirenewton Farm) (**Fig.39**), and Owl Barn. The area includes the northern extent of the Golden Valley, a gently undulating pastureland extending south between Soberleaze Wood to the south-east and Longmead Wood to the south. South of Shirenewton Hall is the self-contained Japanese Garden (Grade II* registered) with an arrangement of six ponds, winding paths, narrow cascades and bridges.

7.3.36 Buildings within the character area are dispersed in the open landscape. To the east is the 'U' plan former outfarm, Owl Barn (now converted to residential use), offset from Crick Road behind a long beech hedge lined driveway. To the south on Earlswood Road is Upper House, positioned directly on the roadside facing west. A late 20th-century recreation hall is positioned immediately south-west of Upper House, facing onto the recreation ground. The detached Newton Edge is positioned at an angle to Red House Lane orientated south overlooking Home Farm Court. The former farm is positioned below the village, some distance to the south-west. The farm, a former estate home farm was built as a model farm, the grey stone farmhouse is backed by a large quadrangle of farm buildings (**Fig40** overleaf). It was converted to a Golf Clubhouse and later to a series of apartments, business premises and Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The buildings are positioned on the east side of Red House Lane as it curves around rising up to the village. A disused tree-lined avenue, presumably once providing access to the farm, still survives as an attractive feature in the landscape linking Red House Lane with Earlswood Road on the west side of the recreation ground.



Fig.39 Shirenewton Hall seen across the rough pastureland to the south-west

Fig.40 Home Farm Court: a model farm complex, now converted to residential accommodation



7.3.37 The early 19th-century Home Farm Court forms an attractive landmark group of buildings within the Conservation Area. The group is a very large complex of substantial buildings including a large central, square plan, two-storey farmhouse (**Fig.41**), cottages, barns and stables, all converted into residential use. A 20th century driveway sweeps around from Crick Road, skirting the boundaries of Shirenewton Hall park, leading to the farm complex.

7.3.38 Buildings are generally constructed of coursed rubble-stone with natural slate roofs. Buildings are sometimes rendered and painted, for example, Upper House. The mid-late 20th century recreation hall is a rendered single-storey building with concrete roof covering. Stacks are often stone, for example Upper House, Owl Barn and Home Farm Court. Upper house has a clay pantile roof, a well-executed extension with slate roof and range of stone outbuildings with corrugated asbestos roofs. An external flight of stone steps on the north side of Upper House is a distinctive feature (**Fig.42**). Owl Barn has a clay pantile roof (**Fig.43**).

7.3.39 The character area contains a large area of open farmland, mostly pasture, dotted with mature native trees and mixed hedging with specimen trees marking Shirenewton Hall's parkland. An arable field lies between the recreation ground and Red House Lane. As well as the historic and now unmanaged tree-lined avenue west of the recreation ground there is a recently established tree-lined drive leading to Home Farm Court from Crick Road. A copse of trees extends east of the drive (currently outside the Conservation Area) marking the eastern boundary of Shirenewton Hall's historic parkland. There is a series of landmark trees grouped along the Golden Valley and an impressive oak tree south of the driveway between the Japanese Garden and Home Farm Court. The Japanese Garden, accessed from the Hall via a pathway, sits isolated in the middle of a field, its features hidden from view by the trees and planting.

7.3.40 The enclosed Japanese Garden contrasts with the open nature of the

surrounding landscape. The garden is planted with mixed deciduous and coniferous trees, bonsai pines and acers and evergreen shrubs that flank the paths. The garden features numerous Japanese structures and ornaments, including a tea pavilion, two bridges, stone lanterns, stone pagoda, statues and red-painted timber archways.



Fig.41 The farmhouse at Home Court Farm



Fig.42 Mupper House (above) and its distinctive external stop steps (below)



Fig.43 Owl Barn with its distinctive red clay pantile roof

7.3.41 Key views are to be had from the recreation ground with views to the church tower (**Fig.44**) to the south-east and vistas and views south to the countryside and Home Farm Court. From the farm there are views north-east to the village. The former tree-lined avenue has views both north and south along its length. From the public footpath south of Newton Edge there are good views west to Home Farm Court (**Fig.45**). Along the farm driveway, eastwards, there are views north to Cae-pw-cella, the tree planted enclave of the Japanese garden and the façade of Shirenewton Hall.

7.3.42 Features include the old tree-lined avenue (**Fig.46**), landmark trees and countryside views.



Fig.45 View of Home Farm Court from the public footpath to the north of the farm



Fig.46 Former tree lined avenue still readable as an historic landscape feature in the present parkland



Fig.44 Glimpses of the church tower can be had from the recreation ground

7.4 Architectural & Historic Qualities of Buildings

7.4.1 This small hilltop settlement has an architectural quality of an urban character which belies its size and relative importance. The seven listed buildings and three listed structures reflect this quality, as do a number of buildings which, while not Listed, exhibit architectural and historic interest.

7.4.2 Shirenewton's most significant period in terms of architecture is the 19th century, although medieval and vernacular buildings are evident to some extent, and there are also modest, but notable examples of good architectural design dating from the 20th century.

7.4.3 The sturdy tower of St Thomas à Becket's church, (Grade II), situated at the highest point of Shirenewton, is the most substantial medieval survival. Its castellated parapet on brackets gives it a fortified appearance; the tall stair turret, also castellated, reinforces this impression and adds to the tower's skyline impact. The tower (**Fig.47**, see also **Fig.22**) (c.1300) is solid and severe, with only narrow slit openings rather than Gothic windows. The two storey south porch is also medieval, probably 15th century, and has a characteristic late Gothic (Perpendicular period) low arched opening with a dripmould and a flat topped mullioned window with simple cusped tracery. The medieval sandstone walls are built in irregular coursed rubble. The remainder of the church was substantially restored and rebuilt in the mid-19th century, in the Gothic Revival style, inspired by the Decorated or middle period of Gothic architecture, characterised by wide, pointed, arched windows subdivided by mullions and tracery. The nave, chancel and north aisle date predominantly from this period.

7.4.4 Some of the vernacular cottages and houses in the centre of the settlement may have medieval origins, although it is difficult to date these buildings accurately as the methods of building changed only gradually over the years, and few architectural or stylistic details are used, which can indicate particular periods.

Nevertheless some of the houses and cottages, all built in rubble stone, lend a scale and local distinctiveness to the street scene. Notable examples include the Old Meeting House (**Fig.48**) on the lane running north-east, downhill from the centre. It has the typical long frontage to the lane, shallow plan and steep pitched pantiled roof with chimneys on both gable ends. This form has been extended along the axis of the lane; notably at the eastern end, where its gable end, large window and undercroft opening, terminates the view on the eastern approach to Shirenewton. The original smaller windows were replaced by sashes, probably in the late 18th or 19th century.



Fig.47 St Thomas à Becket church: its solid battlemented medieval tower contrasts with the largely restored Victorian chancel and nave



Fig.48 The simple vernacular form of the Old Meeting House, built in 1734-5, with its steep pitched roof and wide frontage, was probably adapted later to accommodate sash windows

7.4.5 Amongst the vernacular cottages which cling to the back edge of the roadway running through Shirenewton is Holly Cottage, a painted rubble stone building, with gable end stacks to its steep pitched roof. Its neighbour, of a similar original design is situated a little further back from the road. These cottages have later windows, but the window openings in the wall appear to be original, contributing to their reasonably authentic appearance.

7.4.6 Later vernacular cottages in the settlement are characterised by lower pitched roofs, appropriate for slate, and original vertical window openings, suitable for sash windows. Examples of these are to be seen adjacent to the Tredegar Arms Inn, opposite its car park. Ancillary vernacular buildings also contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. Two small storage buildings built of rubble stone, situated on the back edge of the roadway can be seen; one opposite the Tredegar Arms, the other at the eastern entrance to the village. The first, with a hipped slate roof, is in a poor state of repair, but it is an important building asset. The second, built into the boundary walls of Shirenewton Hall, has a simple pitched roof and a first floor loading door on the road frontage. It is almost mirrored by another similar structure on the opposite side of the road, which has an infilled low arched opening (see **Fig.32**).

7.4.7 The Barn, at the crossroads in the centre, is, despite its conversion to residential use, a significant example of vernacular building, with its large (infilled) cart door and well built segmented archway. This is probably later than those buildings mentioned above, and has been considerably altered by the addition of windows and porch. Nevertheless, it plays an important part in the streetscape in this part of Shirenewton, especially as it forms a continuous terrace with its adjacent cottage.

7.4.8 Nineteenth century architecture in its numerous stylistic manifestations is well represented in this small settlement; from variants of classicism to the neo-gothic with other eclectic styles apparent.

7.4.9 The Old Rectory (Grade II, **Fig.49**) of the 1830s, is an elegant late Regency house, typified by its low pitched roof with projecting eaves and its regular façade of five wide bays and stucco finish. The eye catching architectural feature is its elegant windows with chamfered heads and rectangular dripmoulds, which were to become popular in the middle of the century. An extension dated 1874 was used as the village hall.

7.4.10 The Old Rectory is double-pile in form, as is the Tredegar Arms Inn, in the centre of the village. The simple late classical proportions of the building are eroded somewhat by the recent replacement glazing. The former Post Office, (**Fig.50**) of similar date and style retains its three bay proportions and early Victorian sash windows, as well as its elegant former shopfront. Unlike the Old Rectory, and the Tredegar Arms, this building has a rubble stone façade with dressed stone quoins at its windows.



Fig.49 The Old Rectory: an elegant five bay late Regency house with interesting canted window heads. A remodelling (conversion from three estate workers dwelling according to the list description)



Fig.50 The former Post Office retains its 19th century sash windows and shop window

7.4.11 The Stables (Grade II, **Fig.51**) to Shirenewton Hall fronting Crick Road is a robust and well articulated composition, fronting the back edge of the roadway. It also dates from the 1830s and has neo-classical simplicity of basic forms and openings. The street elevation consists of a central two storey element of low pitched slate roof, and a single storey wing either side, again of low pitched slate roofs, all with projecting eaves. The right hand wing is enhanced by a louvered cupola and a set of five semi-circular, lunette windows (characteristic of 18th and 19th century stables to country houses) above eye level, which have deep chamfered reveals, demonstrating the considerable depth of the stonework walls (**Fig.52**).

7.4.12 Shirenewton Hall (Grade II) was built in two phases; the first in 1830 in a 'Tudorbethan' style, with mullioned and transomed windows and rectangular dripmoulds. The building's asymmetrical bays and varied roofline convey its romantic character. This historic style was repeated in 1909 when a lower two storey wing was added. Only glimpses of this building can be gained from the public realm, although an almost Scottish gabled tower, with corbelled upper floor can be seen, which adds to this intriguing composition. The Oriental garden pavilions can also be glimpsed.

7.4.13 Cae-pw-cella (Grade II) continues the Tudor Revival theme in Shirenewton, this time a decade or so later than those buildings already mentioned. This is a more typically Victorian version of the style; consciously irregular in its massing, with dominant chimneys, decorative bargeboards, a castellated projecting bay and mullioned and transomed windows. Walls are rubble and roofs are slate.

7.4.14 The Arts and Crafts movement of the turn of the 19th/20th centuries can be seen in two interesting examples; the Lodge to Shirenewton Hall and Newton Lodge. The Lodge to Shirenewton Hall (Grade II, **Fig.53** overleaf) dates from 1900. It is a well considered foursquare house, given some impact by asymmetrically placed gables with

parapets above the steeply pitched roofline. Elsewhere the projecting eaves have exposed rafters. The central stack gives further height and robustness. Windows are, as in so many notable buildings, mullioned with rectangular dripmoulds. Materials are stone, slates and render. The architect was Norman Evill.



Fig.51 The simple, well proportioned neo-classical stables to Shirenewton Hall, fronting Crick Road



Fig.52 Detail of the Stables, showing its louvered cupola and boldly expressed semi-circular high level windows

Fig.53 The Lodge to Shirenewton Hall is a crisp essay in Vernacular Revival architecture



7.4.15 Newton Lodge (Grade II) built in 1907 and possibly the work of local architect Eric Francis (**Fig.54**) is situated at the main crossroads in Shirenewton, set diagonally at the junction of two roads. The Lodge is symmetrical, not always a feature of the Arts and Crafts style, of three bays, the central bay slightly projecting and of continuous windows under a gable. The entrance, being at the side does not interrupt the very strong symmetrical fenestration which is given more elevational impact at this pivotal location by the white painted stonework and black painted window frames.

7.4.16 The former Police Station of 1911 (**Fig.55**) is an interesting hybrid; not really Arts and Crafts, more a freestyle, with hints of European modernism. Its semi-circular projecting gable catches the eye, the paired sash windows and the buttresses either side of the front door, framing the name plaque, make this an interesting architectural contribution to Shirenewton.

7.4.17 Unfortunately there is little of architectural interest in more recent times, except perhaps the Church Hall (**Fig.56**) which relates well to the Parish Church both in footprint, massing, well considered openings and appropriately chunky detailing. It is almost 'ageless' in design.

7.4.18 A recent rear extension of a cottage on the road heading south west (**Fig.57**) with good full height timber windows, again shows that contemporary and traditional design can be reconciled creatively.



Fig.54 Newton Lodge: another Vernacular Revival house c1907, whose simple symmetrical design effectively terminates views in the village centre



Fig.55 The former Police house of 1911: its semi-circular gable, paired sash windows and buttresses flanking the entrance distinguish this simple building



Fig.56 The recently completed Church Hall is sensitively linked to the Church and is appropriately detailed using traditional materials



Fig.57 A contemporary and sensitively designed rear extension to a cottage near the playing fields – its appropriately subservient form enhances the original building

7.5 Activity: Prevailing & Former Uses

7.5.1 Shirenewton and its farmland was carved out of the once extensive ancient wood of Wentwood to serve as a farm and hunting lodge for the Sheriff of Gloucester. On high ground above the Gwent Levels it developed as a hill top village with church, manor house and parkland. The area had forestry and good agricultural land. The village population were mostly employed in agriculture or milling, mostly in association with Shirenewton Court, later Shirenewton Hall.

7.5.2 Presently the Conservation Area is predominantly quiet and residential in character. It does however retain two public houses. The land around the village is still farmed although a large area was converted into a golf course south of the village and the Home Farm Court, The Barn and Owl Barn have been converted into residential units.



Fig.58 Barley Hill



Fig.59 The Chantry

7.6 Contributions Made By Key Unlisted Buildings

7.6.1 There are a number of unlisted buildings that make a particular or special positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, both individually and in groups. Key groups are:

- In the village centre: The Old Post Office, The Old Meeting House, The Barn, Honeysuckle Cottage, Tredegar Arms, Five Bells, Olive Cottage, Hill View Cottage and Tremayne.
- West of the church: The Chantry and Barley Hill (**Fig.58** & **Fig.59**)
- At the east end (outside the Conservation Area): Tan House and Lower House (although currently outside the Conservation Area, these are important to the setting and character of the Conservation Area)
- To the south: Home Farm Court

7.6.2 In addition, a number of stone boundary walls make significant contributions to the character of the Conservation Area and can create enclosure to areas and provide structure to views. 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 In summary, the Conservation Area comprises predominantly stone built houses, outbuildings and former agricultural buildings sometimes rendered, and with natural slate/clay roofs. The infill development of the 20th century is generally rendered or exposed brick/stone. There has been some alteration to houses resulting in the loss of traditional materials, particularly roofing materials having been replaced with concrete interlocking tile roofs or cement fibre slate roofs.

Walling

7.7.2 Stone is a mix of coursed local limestone and sandstone rubble, predominantly grey but with some red or yellow tinges to its colouration (**Fig.60**). Often stone houses are rendered or simply painted (**Fig.61**).

7.7.3 Traditional openings in stone walls are small and timber casements were used, some of which have been replaced and remodelled with later (and larger) timber vertical sliding sashes. On higher status houses stone mullions were used. Later Victorian cottages (or remodellings of earlier houses) have larger openings with timber sliding sashes.

7.7.4 Render is often used for new buildings within the Conservation Area. This is generally painted (white, cream and other pastel shades). There are also groups which display a mix of architectural styles and materials which includes stone and tile hanging (an alien material detail to this area) amongst other materials.

Roofing

7.7.5 Most of the traditional houses within the Conservation Area still retain natural slate (**Fig.62**) with stone slates to key buildings such as Shirenewton Hall. Some buildings, such as The Old Meeting House, have clay pantiles. There has been occasional replacement with concrete tiles or cement fibre slates. 20th century buildings have an eclectic mix of appropriate concrete tiles, natural slate,

cement fibre, and clay tile. Buildings often have stone chimneystacks, sometimes rendered and occasionally brick.



Fig.60 Typical colouration to the rubblestone walls



Fig.61 Newton Lodge with white painted stonework



Fig.62 Natural slate roof to the Old Rectory

Boundary Walls & Retaining Walls

7.7.6 A key characteristic building type of the Conservation Area is the rubblestone boundary walls (especially the wall to Shirenewton Hall alongside Red House Lane and Crick Road) (See **Fig.31** in Section 7.3, Character Area 3). These walls are generally local rubblestone (**Fig.63** & **Fig.64**).



Fig.63 Typical boundary walls along Red House Lane



Fig.64 Typical boundary walls along Red House Lane

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



Fig.65 The Golden Valley south of Shirenewton Hall

8.1 Green spaces and parkland form a very important part of the southern half of the Conservation Area. The grounds around Shirenewton Hall are a Cadw Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, with the surrounding fields forming an essential landscape setting to the park and garden (**Fig.65**). Open fields are also important to the setting of other high status buildings such as the model Home Farm Court (now converted to residential use), Cae-pw-cella in views from the farm driveway and Shirenewton Hall.

8.2 The Conservation Area contains hedgerows, parkland trees and areas of woodland that provide essential wildlife habitats. There are some spectacular large oak trees in the Golden Valley and landmark groups of trees around the Hall (**Fig.66**).

8.3 The Conservation Area contains many key trees and when viewed from a distance the village trees are a characteristic alongside the built form (**Fig.67** next page). On the village outskirts hedges are mixed native responding to the surrounding rural countryside whereas within the village there are laurels and conifers

which respond to the urban grain of the village.



Fig.66 Tall trees define the area around the Hall



Fig.67 Views from the church tower north-west give a clear indication of the influence of trees on the character of the village

9 Key Views



Fig.68 Views to Home Farm Court from the recreation ground

9.1 Landscape Setting

9.1.1 Appreciating and interpreting the landscape setting of Shirenewton is an important part in understanding its evolution and development. The village is positioned at the head of a valley with the north slope of the village facing north-east to Mynydd Bach. There are irregular medium-sized fields with outgrown hedges/trees except along roads where there are cut hedges in places. There is strong tree cover along field boundaries. The area to the south partly acts as a setting to the Shirenewton Hall historic park and garden with views to and from the hilltop settlement. Crick Road lies on a ridge and the village including Shirenewton Hall forms the skyline to the north of Home Farm Court.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 4 Spatial Analysis

9.2 Types of View & Their Relative Significance

Strategic

9.2.1 There are good views and vistas from the recreation ground south towards Home Farm Court (**Fig.68**) and connecting views south of the farm looking north towards the hill-top village.

Incidental

9.2.2 There are good incidental views across farmland to the surrounding countryside and the River Severn and Severn Bridge to the east from Crick Road. Countryside views south to the Golden Valley are predominantly private views from the parkland or fields.

9.2.3 Good incidental views are to be had of the church of St Thomas à Becket with its distinctive tower both from the intimacy of the village, where views are funnelled along roads by stone walls or hedges and from the open parkland and recreation ground to the south and west of the church (**Fig.69** next page).

Glimpsed

9.2.4 There are glimpsed views of the church tower and church in its treed setting from the north and south. There are also glimpsed views of Cae-pw-cella, Stoneycroft and Shirenewton Hall from the driveway leading to Home Farm Court.

9.2.5 General glimpsed views to village houses are had along the wall lined Red House Lane and Crick Road with other views west along Mounton Road.

Terminated

9.2.6 There are several terminated views including west along Mounton Road terminated by the extension of The Old Meeting House, views south-west along Blacksmith’s Lane to the War Memorial and Church, and views north along Red House Lane from Cae-pw-cella focused on a large yew tree with the church tower behind (**Fig.70**).



Fig.69 Incidental views of the turret on the tower of the church from the recreation ground



Fig.70 Views terminated along Red House Lane by the yew tree with church behind

10 Degree of Loss of Architectural and/or Historic Elements

10.1 There is some loss of historic windows, doors and roof coverings (particularly on Mounon Road). Windows and roof coverings are the most significant and consistent change to historic buildings.

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 village.

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

Refer to:

Plan 7 Management Proposals

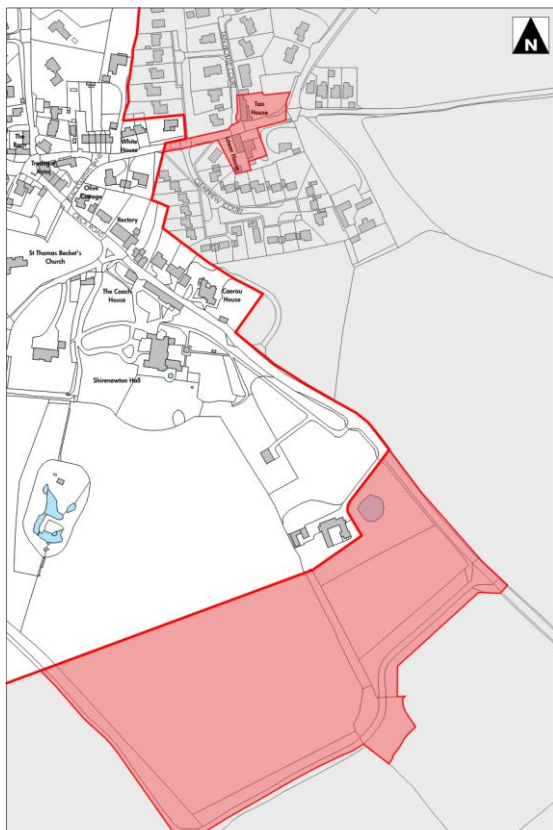


Fig.71 Areas for inclusion in the Conservation Area (shaded red)

11.2 Areas for Inclusion (Fig.71)

Tan House & Lower House, Mounton Road (Fig.72 & Fig.73)

11.2.1 Extend the Conservation Area along Mounton Road to include the 18th-century Tan House and Lower House opposite, which is strongly characterised from the public realm by its hedge lined boundary which at present forms an important part of the setting to the Conservation Area.

11.2.2 These buildings have historical interest and mark the eastern extent of the village on the 1840s tithe map. Today they retain much of their architectural character (although there has been some loss of architectural features and materials and a degree of loss to the historic setting of these buildings) and act as a positive gateway into the village on approaching the steepest gradient of hillside from the east.



Fig.72 Tan House – front elevation



Fig.73 Tan House – rear elevation

Shirenewton Hall & Home Farm Court wider setting (Fig.74)

11.2.3 Extend the Conservation Area south-east to follow the 20th century driveway to Home Farm Court (extending beyond the driveway to include the copse of trees on the east side) to take in the full extent of the parkland boundary to Shirenewton Hall.



Fig.74 Fields in front of Shirenewton Hall

11.3 Areas for Exclusion (Fig.75)

11.3.1 Newton Estate and surrounding 20th century housing developments on the north side of Earlswood Road bringing the boundary up to the friends burial ground and behind The Row on Mounton Road.

11.3.2 This area of 20th century housing development bears no relation to the character of the Conservation Area, similar houses to the east are correctly excluded. The layout of houses, their use of materials and the repetition of styles does not correspond to the established character of the historic sections of the village correctly designated as Conservation Area. The housing developments do not comprise areas of special architectural or historic significance that it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Including these buildings devalues the character of the rest of the Conservation Area, which does contain a good collection of genuinely special buildings or architectural and/or historic interest.

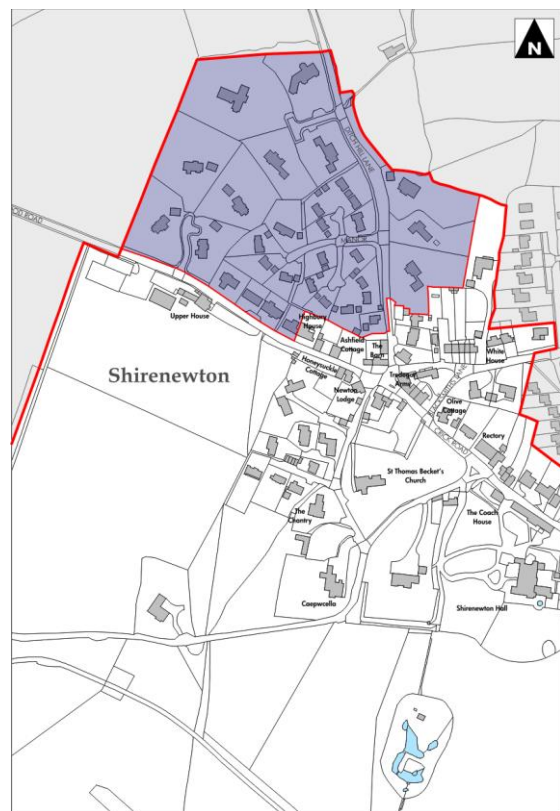


Fig.75 Areas for exclusion from the Conservation Area (shaded blue)

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 Within the Shirenewton Conservation Area, possible Article 4 Directions identified could include windows and roof covering to Highbury House (former Police Station), windows, stacks, roof covering to Tredegar Arms, windows, shopfront and railings to Old Post Office. Historic windows to Tan House and roof covering and chimney stacks to Lower House.

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

13.2 Specific Enhancement Projects

Road Intersection in Village Centre

13.2.1 Signage and surfacing could be more appropriately laid out and designed incorporating current best practice in order to enhance the character of this key focal point. Road materials and narrowing could also assist in reducing traffic speed.

Car Park

13.2.2 Recycling storage could be effectively and appropriately screened. The lighting provision in terms of siting, height and design might also be improved, given the prominence of the car park within the village setting.

Friends Burial Ground

13.2.3 Maintenance of this area is required. Re-pointing of stone boundary wall and removal of ivy is also suggested to enhance the appearance of the site. An interpretation board is recommended for this important historic site within the village.

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