



COWBRIDGE

Advice and Guidance

Purpose of this leaflet

The Council has adopted a policy to review conservation areas in the Vale of Glamorgan and to set out policies for their protection and enhancement. The Cowbridge with Llanblethian Conservation Area was designated in 1970. Since that time there have been many changes to the town and the surrounding countryside. Recent work by archaeologists has revealed significant finds from Roman and Mediaeval periods. Many buildings have altered or have been converted for new uses. New housing estates have been developed on the edge of town.

The adopted Local Plan for Cowbridge recognised some of these changes and responded by identifying key areas within the conservation area: the main town and the village of Llanblethian. This leaflet looks at Cowbridge in more detail, providing those who live there or have an interest in the town, with information on its past and clues as to what constitutes its special character. The views of those who live there are especially important, since they will be aware of changes, elements of the town

which they wish to preserve, or opportunities for improvement which may add to the special character of the town.

This leaflet is a part of a series of consultations which the Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council is carrying out before adopting a formal review of the conservation area. A separate leaflet has been prepared for the village of Llanblethian

Growth of the town

1600-500 BC
Bronze age settlement in Cowbridge area. Standing stone in garden of Rhoscelyn, Eastgate.

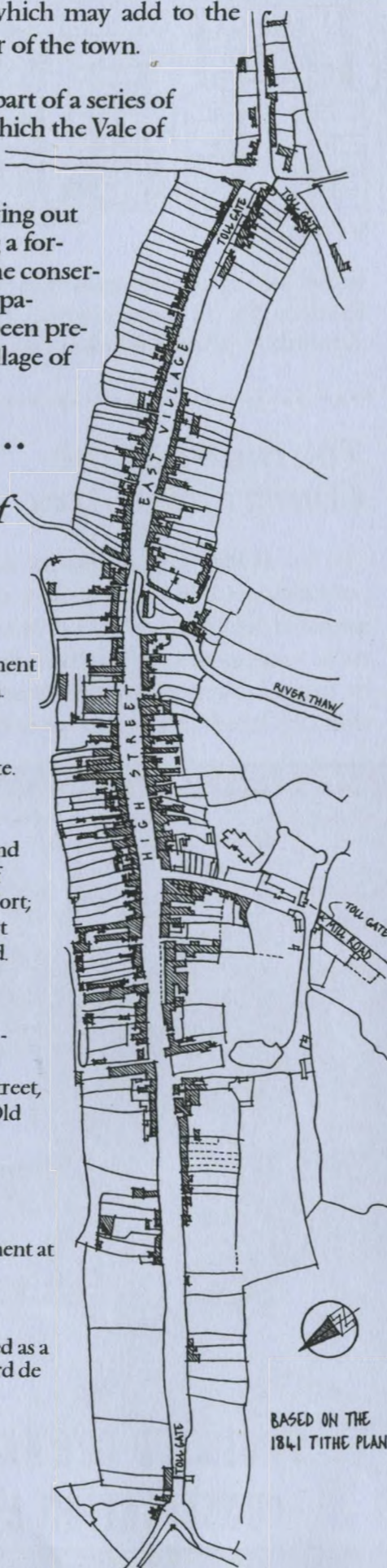
500 BC- 400 AD
Possible Iron age and later occupation of Llanblethian Hill Fort; also smaller hill fort at Llanquian Wood.

50-350 AD
Roman settlement - possibly on site of Cowbridge High Street, from the river to Old Hall.

400-125
The dark ages - no evidence of settlement at Cowbridge.

1254
Cowbridge founded as a Borough by Richard de Clare.

1300
Building of Town Walls.



BASED ON THE 1841 TITHE PLAN

1307-1314
Beginnings of St. Quentin's Castle. Completion not confirmed, but may have been finished by 1375.

Late C13th to C15th
Building of the Holy Cross, Cowbridge. (Nave and chancel, 13th Century; Tower, early 14th Century).

1608
Cowbridge Grammar School founded.

1681
Charter of incorporation granted by Charles II- final recognition of the town's status.

1753
West Gate demolished.

1768-1775
East Gate demolished.

1805 (and 1862)
South Gate repaired.

1828
Date of Ramoth Chapel.

1830
House of Correction enlarged to become present town hall.

1832
First bank in Cowbridge opened - then the National Provincial Bank, now Barclays.

1847-1852
Grammar School buildings reconstructed.

1850
Cardiff - Swansea railway opened (by-passing Cowbridge).

1862
Police station built.

1865
Cowbridge - Llantrisant railway opened.

1892
Railway extended to Aberthaw.

1896
Cowbridge High School for Girls opened.

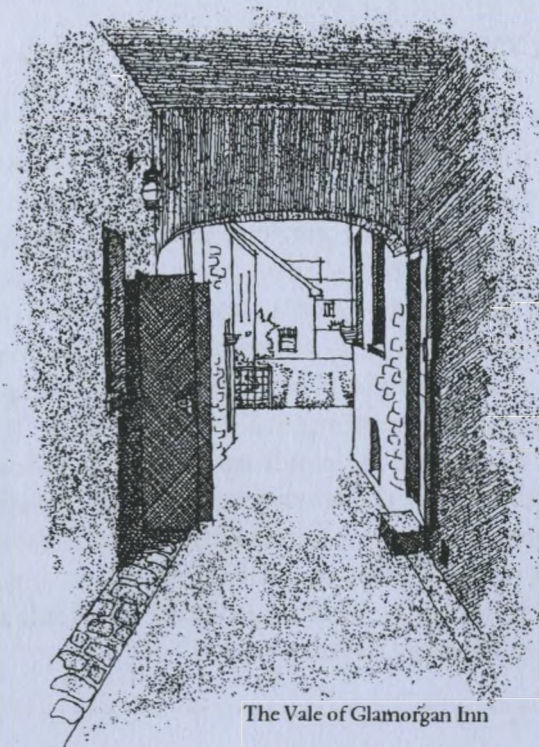
1930
Cowbridge - Aberthaw railway closed.

1951
Cowbridge - Llantrisant line closed 30.11.1951.

1965
By-pass opened.

Building Form

In appearance Cowbridge still retains many signs of its original form. The location of the old town wall can still be traced to the south of Old Hall at South Gate, Church Street, and the southern boundaries of the church and grammar school. The major part of the town was built during the 18th and 19th Centuries and extends east and west from High Street into Eastgate and Westgate. The linear building form, with courtyards and alleyways leading off the main street define its special character. Archways lead to courtyards, stabling blocks and lesser cottages, which lie behind the principal building frontage. The road's gentle curve is highlighted



The Vale of Glamorgan Inn

by a common building scale, and the rhythm of a repeated plot size, common to the earlier mediaeval street pattern.

Building Materials

The appearance of the area is created by the survival of a wide variety of building type, using brick, stone, timber and slate. On some the finish is roughcast, while others are in stucco, or limewashed. In many cases later additions have replaced earlier building patterns, creating multi-layered elevations, with evidence of earlier building phases often apparent in roof slope, chimney details and gable ends.

New Development

Such is the age and importance of the town, that substantial new development is unlikely to be acceptable in the conservation area. Most new building is likely to be related to the extension or improvement of existing properties. The Local Planning Authority will pay particular attention to design matters when considering planning applications to ensure that the character of the conservation area is enhanced and protected.

Trees and Shrubs

Trees and shrubs play an important part in creating the character of the conservation area. On Westgate, both road-side trees and those within front gardens provide a framework for domestic buildings. In contrast, many Eastgate houses are set hard against the pavement with only those set above the road possessing gardens and boundary hedges behind low retaining walls which abut the road. The major trees, whose stature provides a framework for the town are set at the east and west entrance points, and within the southern town walls. Within the conservation area, the churchyard, grammar school and Old Hall all possess substantial trees.

New Planting

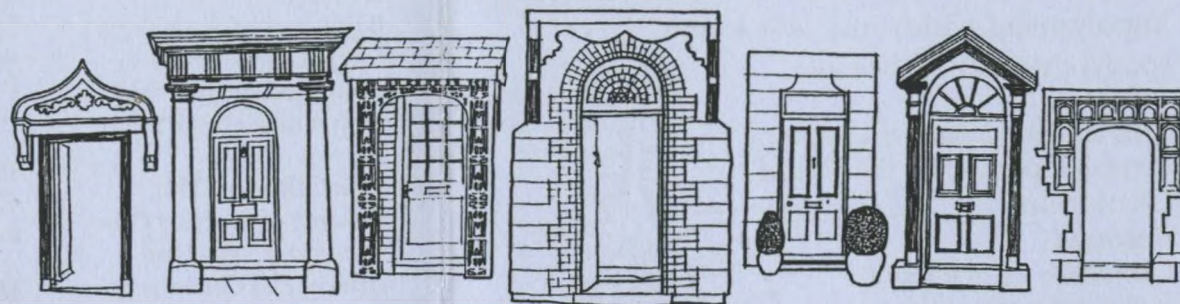
Trees and shrubs within garden courtyards provide an important contrast between busy high street and private backwater. This is especially important where archways and alleyways afford views through to garden courtyards and should be acknowledged in new development and car park layouts. Established planting gives a sense of maturity and should be an important element of either new building development or the restoration of burgage plots.

Conservation Area Controls

The principal provisions of conservation area legislation are set out below:

- The conservation area designation brings the felling of, or works to trees within the control of the local authority. Before work is carried out on any tree the Local Planning Authority must be given six weeks notice in writing. This six week period provides time for the service of a Tree Preservation Order, if necessary. Owners are urged to seek specialist advice on the care of trees. Such works include pruning, lopping, felling or uprooting.
- Consent is required to demolish a building, part of a building or boundary wall in the conservation area. This is known as Conservation

Area Consent and extends the control of demolition beyond the large number of listed buildings already identified in the town.



How you can maintain your property

Many properties in the area still maintain original features, both externally and internally. These include fan lights, railings, timber sash windows, panelled or decorative doors and surrounds, and stone chimneys.

These special features contribute to the character of the area as a whole and should be maintained and repaired on a regular basis. Some properties will be eligible for funding under the Cowbridge Town Scheme, where reinstatement with tradi-

tional or matching materials will be sought. Modern flat or neo-Georgian front doors, and aluminium pivoted windows are not appropriate.

The future of the Conservation Area

The Local Planning Authority consider that the conservation area can be a clear expression of the intended legislation if it is drawn closely around those areas possessing acknowledged architectural or historic interest. For this reason the conservation area is redrawn as two areas: Llanblethian and



Cowbridge. The Cowbridge area follows that defined in the early burgage development of the town: still evident in the 1841 Tythe Plan and the building form and plot boundaries present today. Areas of contemporary development which do not contribute to the character of the conservation area are excluded.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you want advice on your proposals for development or on alterations to your property, please contact the planning officers in the Development Control Department of the Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council. Information on those buildings which are listed as being of architectural or historic interest can also be obtained from the department.

Further information on any aspect of the conservation area can be obtained by contacting:-

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