

CONSERVATION AREA EAST ABERTHAW



APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND
ECONOMIC REGENERATION



East Aberthaw Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

July 2009

This document is the adopted East Aberthaw Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and is a publicly agreed statement on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and a publicly agreed set of policies and actions intended to preserve and enhance special qualities of the Conservation Area.

Following a period of public consultation from 16th March 2009 to 24th April 2009 this document was submitted on 29th July 2009 to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet with a recommendation that the document is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Vale of Glamorgan Unitary Development Plan. The Appraisal/Management Plan will also inform the preparation of the emergent Local Development Plan

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Introduction

The East Aberthaw Conservation Area was designated in 1973 by the former Glamorgan County Council in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the village.

Having designated the Conservation Area, the local authority has a statutory duty to ensure that the character of the area is preserved or enhanced. It is therefore necessary to define and analyse those qualities that contribute to, or detract from, the special interest of the area, and to assess how they combine to justify the area's special designation as a Conservation Area.

An East Aberthaw Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared by the Vale of Glamorgan Council in May 2003, and has been used as a basis for the production of this updated Appraisal and Management Plan. In addition, the Conservation Area has been surveyed and a detailed photographic record made of the spaces and buildings.

The East Aberthaw Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan builds upon policy set out by the Welsh Assembly in Planning Policy Wales and Circular 61/96, and local policy including the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance '*Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale*' (1999). This document provides a further, firm basis on which applications for development within, and close to the East Aberthaw Conservation Area can be assessed.

The document is divided into two parts, Part 1 (The Conservation Area Appraisal) and Part 2 (The Conservation Area Management Plan).

The Conservation Area Appraisal records and analyses the various features that give the East Aberthaw Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest. These features are noted, described, and marked on the Conservation Area Appraisal Map along with written commentary on how they contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area. There is a presumption that all of these features should be "preserved or enhanced", as required by the legislation.

The Conservation Area Management Plan is based upon the negative factors and summary of issues identified in Part 1 and sets out proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the East Aberthaw Conservation Area. The recommendations include proposals for enhancement and policies for the avoidance of harmful change.

The Management Plan is written in the awareness that in managing the Vale's Conservation Areas the Council's resources are limited and therefore need to be prioritised. Financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals for which it is responsible may take longer than is desirable to implement. However, the Council will continue to encourage improvements to the Conservation Area in co-operation with property owners, groups and local businesses.

The document is intended for use by planning officers, developers and landowners to ensure that the special character is not eroded, but rather preserved and enhanced through development activity. The survey work for this appraisal was undertaken during December 2008. To be concise and readable, the appraisal does not record all features of interest. The reader should not assume that the omission of any building, feature or space from this appraisal means that it is not significant; if in doubt, please contact the Vale of Glamorgan Council - contact details can be found at the end of this document.

The Effects of Designation

This Appraisal/Management Plan has been prepared in compliance with Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Areas Act, 1990. The consequences of designation are summarised as follows:

- the Council has a general duty to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the East Aberthaw Conservation Area in the determination of planning applications;
- six weeks notice needs to be given to the Council before works are carried out to certain trees not subject to tree preservation orders (those over 7.5cm in diameter measured 1.5 metres above the ground);
- conservation area consent is needed for the demolition of any unlisted building in the conservation area (subject to certain exemptions in terms of size some very minor buildings may be excluded from this provision);
- the details as to the limits regarding the works (such as extensions) which may be carried out without the benefit of planning permission are stricter;
- extra publicity is given to planning applications.

In practice, the Council's principal involvement in the management of the conservation area is through its duty to advise on, consider and respond to planning applications for new development. These are normally subject to closer scrutiny from a design perspective and may as a result often require a greater level of explanatory information and presentation. Dependent upon size of a proposal, an application may also be referred to the Council's Conservation Area Advisory Group, an independent forum which makes recommendations to the Council's Planning Committee regarding a number of issues regarding the management of conservation areas in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Council also makes an important contribution to the appearance of the conservation area in the management of the public estate (e.g. parks, open spaces and its own buildings) and in fulfilling its statutory obligations as highway authority (e.g. in the maintenance of highways, verges, ditches, drains, hedges and in the provision of street furniture, signs and lighting).

Process of the Appraisal

Involving the community (and thereby raising public awareness) has been an integral part of the Appraisal process. This has been beneficial in two respects. Firstly, it has allowed the local community to provide important commentary on both the existing situation and its aspirations for the Conservation Area. In addition, it has raised awareness of the Conservation Area status of the village, and the implications for those living within its boundaries.

The Conservation and Design Team met initially with local Councillors on 4 November 2008 to outline the objectives of the review and to outline the main issues that are affecting the Conservation Area. Following this meeting a leaflet summarising the purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was prepared and a short questionnaire was distributed to all properties. The consultation period lasted 3 weeks. The results of the questionnaire were considered in the preparation of this draft Appraisal. A summary of issues and concerns raised through the consultation process is listed below:

- Inappropriate development and alterations to some buildings;
- Importance of historic buildings;
- Volume and speed of traffic travelling through the village;
- Issues relating to the proximity of the power station.

Following a consultation period of six weeks from 16 March 2009 to 24 April 2009, which included a surgery held at Llancarfan Village Hall on 7 April 2009 any further comments were considered and amendments, where necessary, made to the document which was then presented to, and approved by, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet of ***.

Planning Policy Framework

National Advice

Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A Conservation Area is defined as “*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”. It is the quality and interest of an *area*, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a Conservation Area.

Section 72 of the same Act specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

This document should be read in conjunction with national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Wales, which is augmented by Circular 61/96 – ‘Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas’ and Circular 1/98 – ‘Planning and the Historic Environment: Directions by the Secretary of State for Wales’. These documents provide advice on the designation of Conservation Areas, and the importance of assessing the special interest of each one in an appropriate manner.

Development Plan

The Vale of Glamorgan’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in April 2005. The Plan sets out the Council’s aspirations for protecting and enhancing the historic environment and states how applications affecting Conservation Areas will be assessed. The policies relating directly to the management of Conservation Areas are:

- ENV 17 (Protection of Built and Historic Environment)
- ENV 20 (Development in Conservation Areas)
- ENV 21 (Demolition in Conservation Areas)
- ENV 22 (Advertisements in Conservation Areas)
- ENV 23 (Shopfront Design in Conservation Areas)

Additionally, Policy ENV 24 (Conservation and Enhancement of Open Space) and Policy ENV 27 (Design of New Developments) are important in the assessment of planning applications relating to Conservation Areas.

These policies will be strengthened by this Appraisal, which will offer greater detail regarding those elements that give the area its distinctiveness.

It should be noted that the designation of a Conservation Area is not intended to prevent change. It is, however, important that new development in or adjacent to the Conservation Area either preserves or enhances the quality of the area. The adopted Unitary Development Plan places East Aberthaw in the countryside. For this reason, strict controls exist over applications for new development.

In particular, in addition to Conservation Area specific policies, the following UDP policies apply:

- ENV 1 (Development in the Countryside)
- ENV 2 (Agricultural Land)
- ENV 4 (Special Landscape Areas)
- ENV 11 (Protection of Landscape Features)
- ENV 12 (Woodland Management)
- HOUS 3 (Dwellings in the Countryside)
- HOUS 5 (Agricultural or Forestry Dwellings)
- HOUS 7 (Replacement and Extension of Dwellings in the Countryside).

These policies, and in particular ENV1 and HOUS3, restrict new housing development in the countryside to those that are justified in the interests of agriculture and forestry only.

Given the policy background and the character of East Aberthaw it is unlikely that an intensification of development here would be appropriate.

Local Development Plan

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has started work on producing its Local Development Plan (LDP), which will set out how land within the Vale is used between 2011 and 2026. This includes the historic built environment and Conservation Areas. Up-to-date information on the progress of the Council's LDP can be found at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.

Summary of Special Interest

Although not exhaustive, the defining characteristics of the Conservation Area that reinforce the designation can be summarised as follows:

- Small village located close to the river Thaw with an interesting history as a medieval port;
- Further historic association in the 19th century with the development of the adjoining limestone quarry and associated limekilns;
- The survival in the village centre of a small group of historic buildings clustered around the crossroads including:
 - The principal building is the popular Blue Anchor Inn (Grade II* listed), a long low building, of medieval origins, with a thatched roof;
 - Close by, Marsh House (Grade II listed) is a prestigious 18th century building with a symmetrical front, sash windows, and slated catslide roof;
 - The Granary (Grade II listed) is of early 19th century origins, and consists of stables, hayloft and granary – it has now been converted to residential use;
 - Locally Listed ‘County Treasures’ – Nos. 1 and 2 Marsh Cottage and the The Haven;
- Other unlisted cottages and modest houses, some of them former farmhouses, are considered to be ‘positive’;
- The survival of a working farm (Upper House Farm) within the Conservation Area;
- A number of converted barns, largely completed without too much loss of character;
- The use of rendered or natural limestone rubble, with simple vernacular building forms;
- Little modern development apart from some bungalows along the west side of Station road, well hidden by walls or planting.



The Blue Anchor Inn.



Marsh House.



The Granary.



Holly Barn.



View from Station Terrace towards the Power Station.



View down Well Road towards the railway bridge.



View eastwards from Port Road to the surrounding countryside.

Location and Setting

Location and Context

East Aberthaw is located on the east bank of the River Thaw. It lies immediately adjacent to the Vale of Glamorgan railway line. One kilometre to the north is the B 4265 which connects Barry to Bridgend, via Llantwit Major and St Brides Major. Cardiff Airport is just three kilometres to the north east.

The small settlement developed in the 19th century as the neighbouring quarry and limeworks, which lie to the north of the village, grew in importance. To the west, on the other side of the estuary, a high grass covered bund conceals all but the chimney of the power station. The larger settlement of Rhoose is just two kilometres further along the coast to the east.

The East Aberthaw Conservation Area covers the whole of the small village and the cross roads which form its centre, around which the principal historic buildings are concentrated. From this crossroads, a lane (Well Road) drops down the hill to a tunnel underneath the railway lines. To the east, a similarly narrow lane leads up the slight hill to a farm group (Upper House Farm) and then into open countryside and woodland. Beyond this, is the very large limestone quarry.

General Character and Plan Form

East Aberthaw is primarily a residential village with an historic inn (the Blue Anchor) at its centre. In the late medieval period, the inhabitants of East Aberthaw would have relied upon the trade and work opportunities presented by the development of a highly successful port at the mouth of the river Thaw, and later on, in the 19th century, from the development of the nearby limestone quarries. The modern settlement is still centred on the Blue Anchor Inn, which dates originally to the 14th century. This may have been used as a farm house and there are other farmhouses in the village - now called Marsh House and Upper Farm House. Modest development of farm workers' cottages and two chapels followed in the 19th century. With the development of the nearby quarry and limeworks, more housing was needed and terraces of cottages were added in 1899 (to the south) and in the 1920s (to the north). The present-day character of the conservation area is therefore defined by the informal layout of the various historic buildings, by the listed public house which forms the centre of the village, and by the setting looking over the railway line towards the River Thaw.

The main feature of the layout of East Aberthaw is the winding road (Station Road) which runs through the village in a north-south direction and which forms the

principal street in the conservation area. Next to the Blue Anchor Inn, Port Road meets this road and then continues downhill as Well Road, where it now terminates, although originally it would have connected to the wharves and other features of Aberthaw port. The crossroads which is created forms the central feature of the village and the principal historic buildings are positioned around this junction. Despite being a B class road, Station Road is often busy with traffic on its way to or from Rhoose.

Landscape Setting

The village is set on a west facing slope above the estuary of the river Thaw. To the north east, an area of woodland divides the village from the Aberthaw Quarry, still in use for extracting limestone. Beyond is the Rhoose plateau, an area characterised by low hedges and few trees. To the west, high bunds have been constructed to conceal the power station, although there are small areas of woodland between these bunds and the village. These mounds, together with the railway embankment and viaduct, provide a strong western edge to the settlement. The historic route of the river is now largely lost within the industrial complex. There are important views from Station Road to the south, over the Bristol Channel, and to the immediate west, over the grass planted bunds which separates East Aberthaw from the power station, where its tall chimney is the only visible feature. The large cement works, again with a tall chimney, can also be seen from Station Road in views to the north.

Historic Development and Archaeology

The village of East Aberthaw derives its name from word 'aber', meaning estuary or river mouth, of the river Thaw, and the existence of a safe natural harbour provided an early impetus for development and trade. Settlement appears as early as the 2nd and 3rd centuries, as demonstrated by the discovery of Roman pottery, shells and tiles when a new pipeline was laid through East Aberthaw in the 1950s. Further excavations in Well Road also revealed the foundations of walls which may have belonged to the Roman settlement. Further discoveries included coins, jewellery, tiles and Samian ware pottery, all suggesting that the nearby bay served as a landing point or port during the Roman invasion.

By the time of the medieval period, the site had come to be occupied by a small village centred, as now, upon the intersection of the two lanes. To the east, what is now Port Road led towards Fonmon and Penmark, whilst to the west the present Well Road (previously known as Marshe Way) led towards the marshland and a ford across the estuary. The road leading north-south connected the coast with the settlements inland, and as the trade conducted from Aberthaw flourished, it would be used for the conveying of imported goods to the markets at St. Athan and Cowbridge.

Of the buildings grouped around the crossroads, the original fabric of Lower Farm House and the once-thatched Rose Cottage and Marsh Cottages can all be dated to the medieval era; the Blue Anchor Inn is likewise of medieval origin, and appears to have been erected during the 14th century. The village, which came within the parish of Penmark, is also known to have included a small chapel which was possibly located towards the south of the settlement, as suggested by the marking of 'Chapplefeld' on the Evans Mouse map of 1622. This was to serve as a place of worship until being converted to a house at the turn of the 17th century.

By this time the port of Aberthaw, situated to the south east of the village proper, had emerged as a small but thriving harbour: 'a drie Haven for small vessels', as *Phaer's Memoranda* of 1562 described it; 'the Countrie upon the Coaste somewhat bare but within daily passage to Mynet [Minehead] and Douster [Dunster]'. The ships took wool and foodstuffs from Wales and returned laden with wine, salt, dried fruit and leather from the towns of northern France. Its importance was to be furthered by the loss of Porthkerry harbour to a storm of 1584, rendering Aberthaw the principal calling-point within South Wales between Cardiff and Swansea. 'At the mouth of the Thawan Shipple-lettes may cum yn to the haven mouth', as John Leland,

antiquary to Henry VIII, recorded during the 16th century.

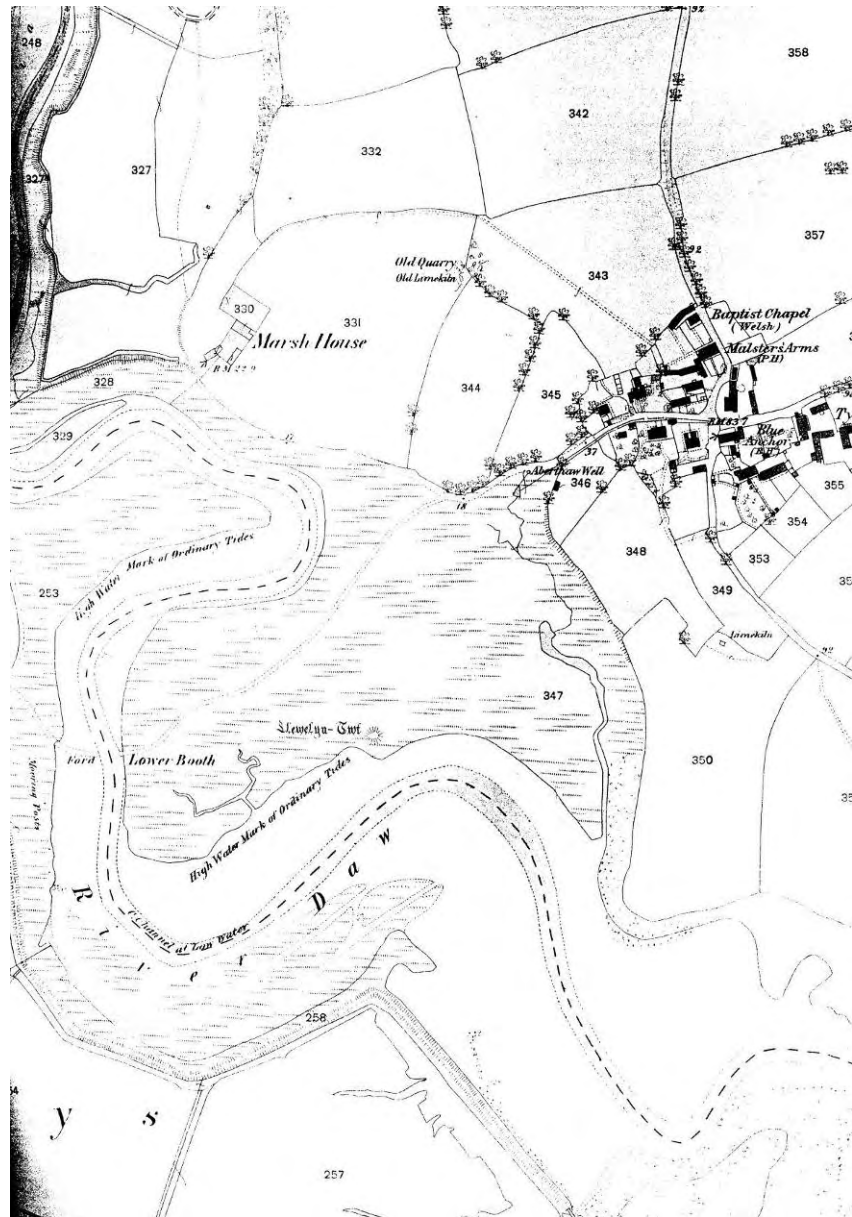
By the first half of the 17th century boats were departing for a wide variety of destinations in not only England and France but also Spain and Ireland. A similarly flourishing trade with the West Indies, chiefly in sugar and tobacco, did not, however, survive the disruption caused by the outbreak of the Civil War.

Within the context of East Aberthaw village, the significance of the port is indicated by the fact that more than 20 members of the small community had come to depend upon it for their livelihoods by the 17th century. The manner in which this was conducted was not always scrupulously legal: smuggling was rife within the Bristol Channel, and buildings such as the fortified Marsh House, built just to the west of the village in 1636, appear to have been used for the storing of illegally imported goods. Beyond the business of the harbour, agriculture also continued to be of central importance to the settlement. At this time, the land to the east of the village, between East Aberthaw and Fonmon, was marked by windmills and orchards. To the west, the marshes provided land suitable for grazing.

Aberthaw carried on attracting maritime trade throughout the course of the 18th century, but by the 1840s its role as a port was in decline: the harbour 'is resorted to by a few coasting-vessels of inferior burthen', as the *Topographical Dictionary of Wales* in 1849 reported. The principle material then being exported, however, was the local lias limestone, called Aberthaw tarras, which was used to make hydraulic lime, which sets under water and was therefore very useful for building light houses (including the Eddystone Lighthouse) and canal locks. This limestone was to play a key role in the local economy during the ensuing years, beginning with the opening of Aberthaw Lime Works in 1888. From 1897 the area was served by the newly-constructed Vale of Glamorgan Railway, and a second plant, the Aberthaw and Bristol Channel Portland Cement Works, began production to the north of the village in 1916. Today, the Vale of Glamorgan line remains open. This provides a link to the power station and cement works, and has recently been reopened for passenger traffic.

The establishment of these industries in close proximity to East Aberthaw was to result in an increased demand for residential accommodation, and by 1919 two new stretches of housing, namely Burton Terrace and Railway Terrace, had been added at the northern and southern edges of the village. The community, by this time, had gained a Methodist Chapel and a Mission Room, the latter erected in an Arts and Crafts style on Station Road. Services such as a post office and village shop were also established.

Extract from OS Map
1877-78



The last significant change to the area was to be brought about by the opening of the Aberthaw Power Station in 1966, which resulted in the course of the river being diverted and last remains of the port essentially removed. Beyond the conversion of the former mission hall and a number of former agricultural buildings to residential use, East Aberthaw itself, however, has undergone little development.

Spatial Analysis

Character of Spaces

The defining spatial feature of the East Aberthaw Conservation Area is the main road (Station Road) which winds and undulates in the middle of the village where it creates a cross roads with Port Road and Well Road. There is no public open space apart from a children's play ground on the east side of Station Road next to Burton Terrace. A car park on the west side of Station Road presumably once served the railway, as access is possible to the sidings through a locked side gate. Otherwise, the village is characterised by the informal layout of the buildings, some of which face the street and some of which are at right angles to it, and the general lack of any coherent building line. Of note are the surviving former farmhouses, some with farm buildings which have now been converted into houses – Lower Farm House and Holly Barn. Along Port Road, Upper House Farm is still a working farm with barns which remain in agricultural use. Private gardens are often visible due to the informal layout of buildings, adding to the pleasantly rural qualities of the conservation area. The provision of two groups of terraced houses – Station Terrace, dated 1899, and Burton Terrace, of a later date, provides a contrasting form of development, as they have a more formal layout and all face the street.



View down Port Road towards the village centre.



The crossroads in the centre of the village.



Well Road looking west.



View along Station Road.



Upper House Farm remains a working farm and serves as a reminder of the villages agricultural origins.



The railway line and cement works lie beyond the Conservation Area.



A number of former barns have been converted into residential use.

Character Analysis

Activity and Prevailing Uses

East Aberthaw originated as an agricultural community which in the late medieval period developed as an important port, a role it continued to hold until the 19th century. Today, the buildings are nearly all in residential use. Upper House Farm, on the eastern edge of the village and included within the conservation area, is still a working farm. The Blue Anchor Inn is the only commercial use in the village and despite a fire a few years ago, which largely destroyed the first floor and roof, is a very successful and popular business. The building provides a focus to the village and is a useful community facility. The Bethel Baptist Chapel in Station Road is a Victorian building which is still in use, although the former Mission Hall next to Station Terrace was converted into a house in the 1980s.

Close by, the industrial activity around the cement works, with the constant movement of traffic, is at times intrusive although the lorries servicing the works do not permeate as far as the village. Also of note is the activity along the railway line, which passes over Well Road on a bridge and is thus clearly visible from the conservation area. This line is used to transport heavy materials and the noise of these trucks moving backwards and forwards along the track often permeates the village.

Buildings in the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area's principal historic buildings are located in the middle of the village – the Blue Anchor Inn, with 14th century origins, notable for its vernacular form and thatched roof, Marsh House, an 18th century more prestigious building with Georgian details; and the Granary, a former late Georgian stables, hayloft and granary. Other buildings include modest cottages (such as Marsh Cottages and The Haven) as well as more substantial farmhouses (such as Lower Farm House and Upper House Farm). A number of barns, such as Holly Barn, have been converted into houses. To the north of Bethel Baptist Chapel is a derelict single storey outbuilding with a tin roof. The former Mission Hall in Station Road is an interesting example of an Arts and Crafts building with a distinctive roofline. To the south of the Conservation Area, Station Terrace of 1899 is a well detailed group of two storey cottages, a later terrace, Burton Terrace, on the north edge of the village being a less interesting example of its type.



Blue Anchor Inn.



Marsh House.



The Granary.

Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monuments within or on the edges of the Conservation Area.

Listed Buildings

There are three listed buildings in the Conservation Area:

Blue Anchor Inn - Grade II*

This long, low 14th century stone building has a thatched roof and stone chimney stacks. The casement windows are modestly sized and the front door has a medieval arched head. A serious fire in 2004 resulted in the regrettable loss of the historic roof and other details. This is a key building within the Conservation Area and very important in views along Station Road, particularly from the south.

Marsh House and Attached Garden Wall – Grade II

Marsh House dates to the 18th century and provides the only example in the Conservation Area of a more prestigious, almost symmetrically arranged Georgian house. Covered in slate, with axial end stacks, the building sits at right angles to the main street and is a simple rectangle in shape. At the back, which is clearly visible from Station Road, a long cat slide roof is punctuated by a thick chimney stack, and, less appropriately, by two modern stainless steel flues. The building is built from stone which has been rendered and painted, although stone quoins to the widows and corners are visible on the front elevation. Unusually, the first floor has sashed windows, and the ground floor windows are side-opening casements. A modest porch to the front is an unobtrusive addition.

The Granary – Grade II

The eastern arm of this long, low building lies at right angles to Marsh House. It is built from stone, with quoins on the visible gable end, and an entrance in this same gable. An extension on the south elevation is rendered and also roofed in slate.



No's 1 and 2 Marsh Cottages.



The Haven.



The Laurels and Sea View.



Station Terrace.

Locally Listed County Treasures

The County Treasures survey contains a unified list of historic built assets found within the Vale of Glamorgan. It contains listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, as well as entries identified as being of 'local importance'. The listed buildings noted above have been identified as County Treasures. In addition, No's 1 and 2 Marsh Cottages and The Haven have been identified as locally listed County Treasures.

No's 1 and 2 Marsh Cottages

This pair of cottages is built from stone, which has been painted, and was once a single house. The thick walls and pointed arch over one of the entrance doors suggests a medieval origin. The roof is covered in modern tiles and is punctuated by two stone chimney stacks. Modern windows, some of which break through the eaves line, detract from the building's architectural and historic value.

The Haven

The Haven is an early two roomed house of early 17th century foundation with an 18th century extension. The doorways have stone surrounds and inside is a 17th century winding staircase. A substantial flat roofed extension to the front has been added in recent years.

Positive Buildings - The Contribution of Key Unlisted Buildings

A number of key unlisted buildings have been identified as 'positive buildings' and these are marked on the Appraisal Map. Positive buildings are those which make a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area. Criteria for selection are given in Appendix 1.

Local Details

Most of the buildings are built from the local rubble limestone which has traditionally been covered in a lime render and lime washed, although today more modern paint systems are used. For the more prestigious buildings, like Marsh House, ashlar blocks of stone are used to define the corners and window openings. The two pointed stone arches over doors to the Blue Anchor Inn and Marsh Cottages confirm the medieval origins of some of the buildings in the Conservation Area. Roofs are varied, with thatch and Welsh slate for the listed buildings, and the use of more modern artificial substitutes for some of the unlisted buildings. The former barns which can be seen in several locations throughout the village, such as Holly Barn, have generally been converted with a minimum of external alteration, which reinforces the rural character of the area.



Details of stone wall at Station Terrace.



St. Peters.

Of the more recent 'positive' buildings, Station Terrace is rendered, with many of the houses remaining unpainted. The windows and door openings are defined by a dark red brick. Some of these houses still have their original sash windows but the majority have been replaced in uPVC. Their slate roofs also largely retain their original red terracotta ridge tiles and finials. Close by, Saint Peter's, the former Mission Hall, dates to a similar period as confirmed by the red brick dressings which match those on Station Terrace. This building has an unusual roof overhang on the roadside gable once containing a bell. In Well Road, a small stone building in the garden of Tyle House is roofed in corrugated tin and was once the village forge.

The low stone wall which defines the boundary between Station Road and the railway tracks retains a smooth black glazed brick coping, often seen near other railway sites. On the other side of the road, the front boundaries to Station Terrace are defined by low stone walls about 800 mm high which matches the brick gate piers, themselves topped by decorative terracotta caps. Some of the houses retain their original wrought iron gates, with simple spear heads. Around Marsh House, a low stone wall is topped by a simple cast iron railing with decorative supporting posts.

Pavements are simply covered in black tarmac, with narrow concrete kerbs, which suits the rural character of the village. This is also reinforced by the groups of trees, mainly on the edges of the village, which add to the sylvan setting of the Conservation Area.

Green Spaces and Biodiversity

East Aberthaw lies within a countryside setting although it is enclosed on the northern side by the limestone quarry and by the railway and industrialised valley floor of the river Thaw on the west. Whilst opportunities for wildlife habitats are therefore limited, there are areas of mainly managed woodland in the immediate vicinity which provide a more suitable environment for wildlife.



This field does not form part of the special character of the Conservation Area.



Barns at Upper House Farm, some of which are in disrepair.



Outbuilding next to the Bethel Baptist Chapel is in poor condition.



There is no pavement outside Station Terrace.

Negative Factors

There are a number of elements which detract from the special character of the area, and which offer potential for beneficial change. They are:

- Abandoned field and unattractive former garage next to River View in centre of village;
- Car park needs improvements, including the front boundary wall;
- There is no pavement outside Station Terrace;
- A number of visible satellite dishes;
- Many of the unlisted 'positive' houses or cottages have modern windows and doors made from aluminium or uPVC;
- Many examples of poor quality boundaries such as the wire mesh fence to the playground; the timber boarded fence to Marsh House; and concrete block walling in many locations;
- Trailing overhead wires;
- The derelict condition of the small outbuilding next to the Bethel Baptist Chapel;
- Street signage is in need of some maintenance/cleaning;
- The stainless steel flues on the back of Marsh House;
- Flat roofed garage with up and over door facing Station Road next to Marsh Cottages;
- The neglected barns, some in disrepair, at Upper House Farm;
- Two joined flat roofed garages in the garden of Tyle House in Well Road.

Summary of Issues

The following issues have been identified with regard to the 'negative factors' identified above and include the views of the local community as part of the preliminary public consultation exercise. They provide the basis for the Management Plan. These issues will be subject to regular review by the Council and new ones may be added in the future:

- Conservation Area boundary review required;
- The protection of unlisted 'positive' buildings from demolition;
- The need for additional controls to prevent the loss of traditional features on unlisted 'positive' buildings;
- Future control of applications for new front boundaries, and the overall protection of existing front boundary walls and front gardens;
- Specific improvements needed to several of the sites or buildings;
- Monitoring and review of these documents.

Management Plan

Introduction

The East Aberthaw Conservation Area Management Plan sets out proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in the light of the issues identified in the preceding Appraisal.

For further details about the purpose and status of the Management Plan, please see the introduction to this document.

Boundary Review

As part of the character appraisal process, a thorough survey and review of the existing boundaries of the East Aberthaw Conservation Area was undertaken. It was found that in a number of places the boundary includes fields, woodland or other open spaces which make no positive contribution to the special character of the conservation area. These lie to the east and south of the village.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that, in order to follow best practice in Conservation Area boundary definition, the boundary of the Conservation Area is amended to omit some fields, woodland and open spaces on the east and south of the Conservation Area.

The proposed changes are shown on the Appraisal Map.

Positive Buildings

'Positive' buildings have been identified as part of the appraisal process and these are marked on the Appraisal Map. Generally, these are individual or groups of buildings that retain all or a high proportion of their original architectural detailing and which add interest and vitality to the appearance of the Conservation Area. The criteria for selection of positive buildings are identified in Appendix 1 of this document.

Recommendation:

In accordance with Government guidance contained within Circular 61/96, the Council will adopt a general presumption against the demolition of 'positive' buildings with proposals to demolish such buildings assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. Any application for the demolition of a positive building will therefore need to be justified as to why the building should not be retained.

Loss of Architectural Detail and Minor Alterations to Historic Buildings

Many of the unlisted buildings in the East Aberthaw Conservation Area have been adversely affected by the replacement of original timber sash windows with uPVC or aluminium, the loss of original timber front doors, removal of render and painting of formerly exposed stonework. Most of these minor alterations are not currently subject of planning control. The incremental loss of original building materials and architectural detail is cumulatively eroding characteristic features of the Conservation Area.

Recommendations:

The Council will encourage restoration of architectural detail/reversal of unsympathetic alterations especially timber windows, chimney stacks and original roof covering.

The Council will consider the future introduction of an 'Article 4' Direction in respect of buildings identified as 'County Treasures' and 'positive' buildings in the Appraisal.

Protection and Repair of Stone Walls

Traditionally, most boundaries in the Conservation Area are defined by limestone rubble walls. There is a small loss of these walls where routine maintenance and rebuilding of fallen sections has been neglected. Stone boundary walls, hedges and railings which enhance the character of the Conservation Area should be retained.

Recommendation:

The Council will seek to resist proposals to remove or significantly alter traditional boundary walls or for new boundary treatments which fail to respect the form and materials of traditional boundary treatments in the area. The Council will seek to secure the maintenance and repair of traditional stone walls.

Improvements to Specific Sites or Buildings

The Council will encourage improvements to the buildings/sites as noted below:

Car Park

This large open space would benefit from improvements to the front boundary wall and the possible planting of trees and other landscaping works.

Station Terrace

There is no pavement outside Station Terrace, so residents have to walk along the busy road to access their properties. Whilst changes to the front boundary walls would not be acceptable, the provision of a pavement, perhaps with a chicane-type of treatment,

would provide the residents with a much safer route, and would slow down through traffic.

The Small Outbuilding Next to the Bethel Baptist Chapel

This former stable or outbuilding, assessed as 'positive', is vacant and poorly maintained. The owner should be encouraged to find a suitable use for the building which would generate the funds for the necessary repairs.

Barns at Upper House Farm

This is the only working farm in the village and retains a number of historic barns, one of which has lost part of its walls and roof. The owners could be approached to see if a long term plan for the remaining buildings, which are assessed as making a 'positive' contribution to the special character of the conservation area, can be provided.

Recommendation:

The Council will monitor the condition of sites and buildings of poor visual appearance/condition and take enforcement action if appropriate. It will take steps to encourage improvements to specific areas as described.

Conservation Area Guidance

Consultation with the local community suggests that there is a need for additional design guidance and leaflets about conservation areas that build upon existing supplementary planning guidance and advisory leaflets.

Recommendation:

The Council will consider preparing advisory guidance and 'best practice' notes that would assist in retaining the area's prevalent historic character and appearance and promote awareness of the value and importance of the Conservation Area, e.g. written advice regarding (a) alterations to historic buildings, (b) development within conservation areas, (c) the use of traditional building materials, (d) appropriate boundary treatment in rural villages and (e) care and maintenance of trees and woodland.

Building Maintenance and Repair

Recommendation:

The Council will seek to monitor the condition of all historic buildings in the Conservation Area and will report findings and advise action, as necessary. Where the condition of a building gives cause for concern, appropriate steps will be sought to secure the future of the building, including the use of statutory powers.

Monitoring and Review

Recommendation:

This document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. A review should include the following:

- *A survey of the Conservation Area including a full dated photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;*
- *An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;*
- *The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;*
- *The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;*
- *Publicity and advertising.*

References and Useful Information

Local Generic Guidance

Advice for owners of properties in Conservation Areas can be found in the leaflet *A Guide to Living and Working in Conservation Areas*, which is available on line on the Council website at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Additional information, including design guidance and guidance on repairs and alteration is contained within the adopted supplementary planning guidance document – Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale.

Bibliography

1. J Newman, Glamorgan (Pevsner 'The Buildings of Wales'), Yale University, 1995
2. Statutory List of Buildings of Special Historic or Architectural Interest
3. Vale of Glamorgan Council, Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale, 1999
4. Vale of Glamorgan Council, County Treasures, 2007
5. Vale of Glamorgan Council, East Aberthaw Conservation Area Appraisal, 2003

Contact Details

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Appendix 1

Criteria for the Selection of 'Positive Buildings'.

For the purposes of this conservation area appraisal, a positive building is an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area.

The criteria for assessing the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area are given below.

Any one of these characteristics could provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area and is therefore identified as a 'positive building':

- Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?
- Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area?
- Does it relate by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase of growth?
- Does it have significant historic association with established features such as the road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within, the area?
- Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If a structure associated with a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building, is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?








Vale of Glamorgan Council

East Aberthaw Conservation Area

Townscape Appraisal Map

Not to scale



-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Proposed Conservation Area Boundary
-  Listed Buildings
-  Positive Buildings
-  County Treasures
-  Significant Tree or Tree group
-  Significant Views

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