

# CONSERVATION AREA LLANMIHANGEL



## APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION



# Llanmihangel

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

March 2009

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

Following a period of public consultation from 16<sup>th</sup> June 2008 to 25<sup>th</sup> July 2008, this document was submitted on 25<sup>th</sup> March 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 Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011). The Appraisal/Management Plan will also inform the preparation of the emergent Local Development Plan.

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## Introduction

The Llanmihangel Conservation Area was designated in August 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.

The Llanmihangel Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan builds upon policy set out by the Welsh Assembly, in Planning Policy Wales, 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 Llanmihangel 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 Llanmihangel 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 Llanmihangel 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. While the descriptions go into some detail, a reader should not assume that the omission of any building, feature or space from this appraisal means that it is not of interest; if in doubt, please contact the Vale of Glamorgan Council - contact details can be found at the end of this document.

The survey work for this appraisal was undertaken during May and June 2008. To be concise and readable, the appraisal does not record all features of interest.

## 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 Llanmihangel 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 29 May 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:

- Condition of fishponds and mill pond;
- Area around the Church is need of attention;
- Importance of historic buildings and structures.

Following a consultation period of six weeks from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008 to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2008, which included a surgery held at Cowbridge Community College on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008 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 25 March 2009.



## 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. For this reason, strict controls exist over applications for new development.

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 Llanmihangel 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](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk).



*Plas Llanmihangel is the focus of the area.*



*The Church of St. Michael and All Saints with a saddleback roof.*



*The 17<sup>th</sup> Century stone barn, beside the manor house, is now converted to residential use.*

## 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 in a rural hilltop setting;
- Virtually complete medieval site comprising manor house, pleasure gardens, church, barn, fishponds and corn mill (possibly erected on an earlier site).  
In detail:
  - Plas Llanmihangel (Grade I listed);
  - Church of St. Michael and All Saints (Grade II\* listed);
  - The Pleasure Garden (Grade II\* in the Register of Parks and Gardens);
  - Barn and stables (Grade II\*)
  - The stone bounded ancient churchyard;
  - St. Anne's Well;
  - Medieval fishponds and former mill pond;
  - Nant Llanmihangel, the stream that runs along the valley bottom;
  - 18<sup>th</sup> Century stone road bridge that crosses the Nant Llanmihangel;
  - Former corn mill and remnants of the mill race;
  - Trees and woods;
  - Narrow lanes with grass verges;
  - Stone boundary walls;
  - Bio-diversity and wildlife.

## Location and Setting

### Location and Context

Llanmihangel Conservation Area lies about 3 kilometres south of Cowbridge astride narrow country lanes that meet at cross-roads to the south-east of the core of the area, Plas Llanmihangel, a rambling Glamorgan mansion. The conservation area is primarily focussed on Plas Llanmihangel and the adjacent Church of St. Michael and All Angels but it also extends in a westerly direction to include Rectory Farm and woods and fields north and south of Nant Llanmihangel, the stream that runs through the area. In an easterly direction the boundary encloses former fishponds, corn mill and the historic landscape which runs along the valley.

The area is connected to the local network of public footpaths and is on the route of the Valeways Heritage Millennium Trail, a complete walking circuit around the Vale of Glamorgan.

### General Character and Plan Form

The conservation area embraces a historic group of buildings set within a secluded valley. Its core is a virtually complete medieval site consisting of an impressive gentry house, its 'Gardens of Pleasure', a parish church beside an old well, barn and stables, fishponds and corn mill. House and church have a close relationship in sight of each other, the former stands near the bottom of a south-facing slope above the little valley of the Nant Llanmihangel, the latter sits on the lower side of the road within an overgrown water meadow.

The house and its barns stand closely side by side on the same level up the hillside overlooking the valley but separated by the tarmac road. The granary/stables has mullioned upper windows decorating the façade facing the House to make it appear as a residence and it has been suggested that this was for the gratification of the Lord of the Manor who would have preferred not to be presented with a view of a farmyard from his residence. Overgrown fish ponds are situated on the south side of the church beside the stream.



*Narrow lanes with grass verges and green banks are a characteristic of the area.*



*Fields beside Nant Llanmihangel form an open green corridor fringed by trees along the valley bottom.*



*The 15<sup>th</sup> century church tower was defensible.*



*Pastoral land on the south-facing slope. In the distance is the stone boundary wall of the formal gardens.*



*Nant Llanmihangel.*



*An 18<sup>th</sup> century stone road bridge crosses Nant Llanmihangel.*



*Plas Llanmihangel viewed from across the valley.*

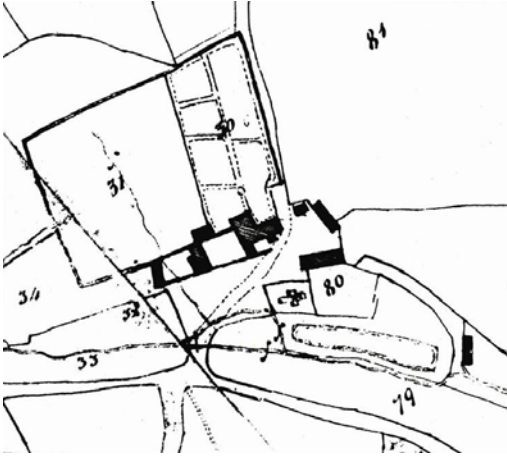
## Landscape Setting

The following is a description of Llanmihangel from the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: “Llanmihangel...is neither a village nor a hamlet; it is simply a beautiful spot which when viewed at its best, reflects the glory and tranquillity which obviously once graced this delightfully sequestered dell. It is a picturesque spot, a manor house looks down upon a small church, a large pool lies between the church and a small bridge, trees grace the hillside and the narrow lanes which lead to the outside world from this peaceful glen almost hide themselves away.”

This description holds up today and well describes the secluded setting and tranquil nature of the conservation area. Both house and church were designed with defensibility in view, the church obviously so, the house not so obviously. Part of this defensibility arises from their well concealed setting in a valley bottom.

The boundary of the conservation area has been drawn widely up the slopes of the valley to encompass open fields that are vital to its rural setting.

## Historic Development and Archaeology



*Llanmihangel Tithe Map c.1840*

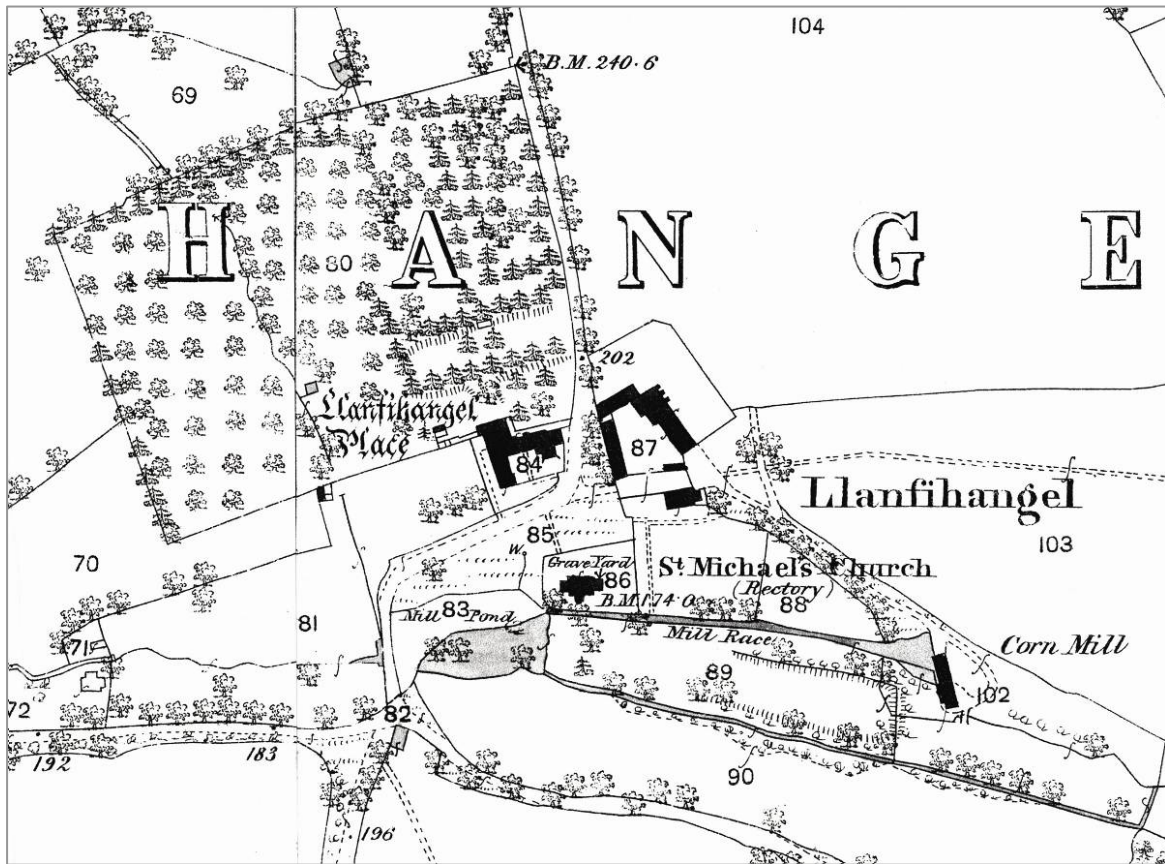
*The fishponds can be seen to the south east of the church.*

Llanmihangel is recorded as being a grange in 1166 and in the ownership of John Norreys, a Norman knight. The earliest records for the Church of St. Michael and All Saints date from 1252 and 1254 and it is likely that Plas Llanmihangel predates this early construction, the church being erected to serve the owners of the house and estate workers. The church has 11<sup>th</sup> century origins with a fortifiable 15<sup>th</sup> century west tower. It was restored in 1888-9 to plans by F. R. Kempson, diocesan architect, with donations from Lord Dunraven. The work included new floors, a new roof to the nave and re-seating throughout. A staircase turret was added in 1909.

The earliest house, of which a stone vaulted undercroft remains, was held by the Norris family of Penlline in the 14<sup>th</sup> century but was occupied by the Thomas family by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. James Thomas, Sheriff of Glamorgan in 1551, is the reputed builder of the existing house which encloses parts of the earlier structure. The hall fireplace bears James Thomas' arms quartered with those of his wife's family (Van of Marcross).

The Thomas family suffered financial losses through their support for the Crown during the Civil War and in 1681 the house was sold to Sir Humphrey Edwin, a London merchant who became Lord Mayor of London in 1697. Although it is probable that the garden of Plas Llanmihangel was first laid out by members of the Thomas family in the later 16<sup>th</sup> century, the sophisticated pattern of yew-lined walks is generally agreed to have been the work of Sir Humphrey Edwin.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the house passed by marriage into the Wyndham family and formed part of the Dunraven estate. When Charles Wyndham succeeded to the estate in 1777 he contemplated building a new house at Llanmihangel but turned his ambitions to his property in Dunraven so that the house remained in tenant occupation. In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was the residence of John Franklen, agent of the Dunraven estate and a leading agriculturalist. The long period of tenancy may have contributed to saving the house from major alteration until an extensive restoration of 1869-82.

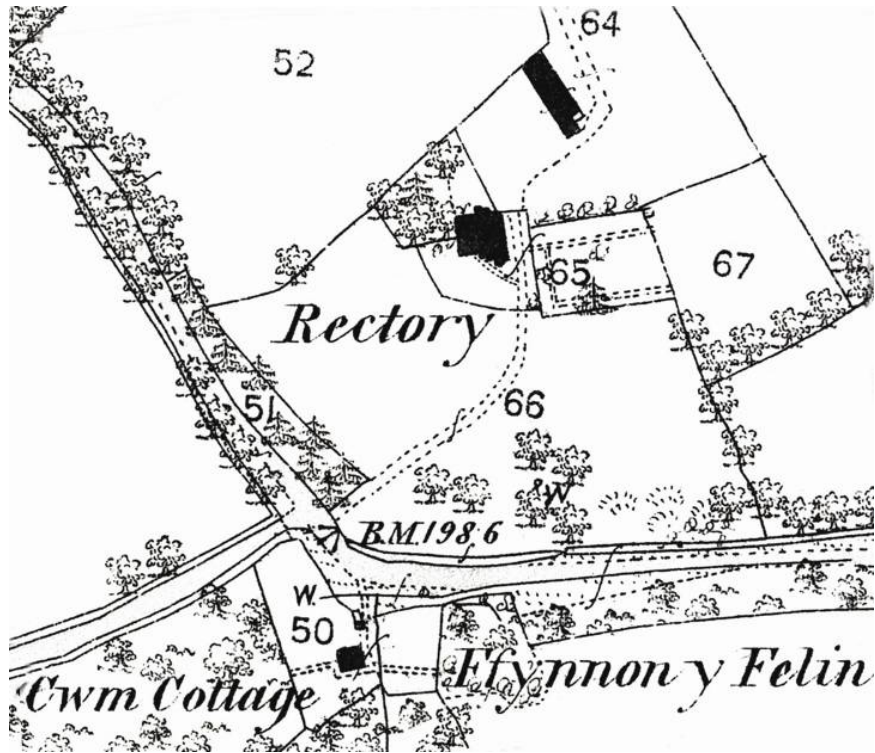


Llanmihangel First Edition  
Ordnance Survey c.1880

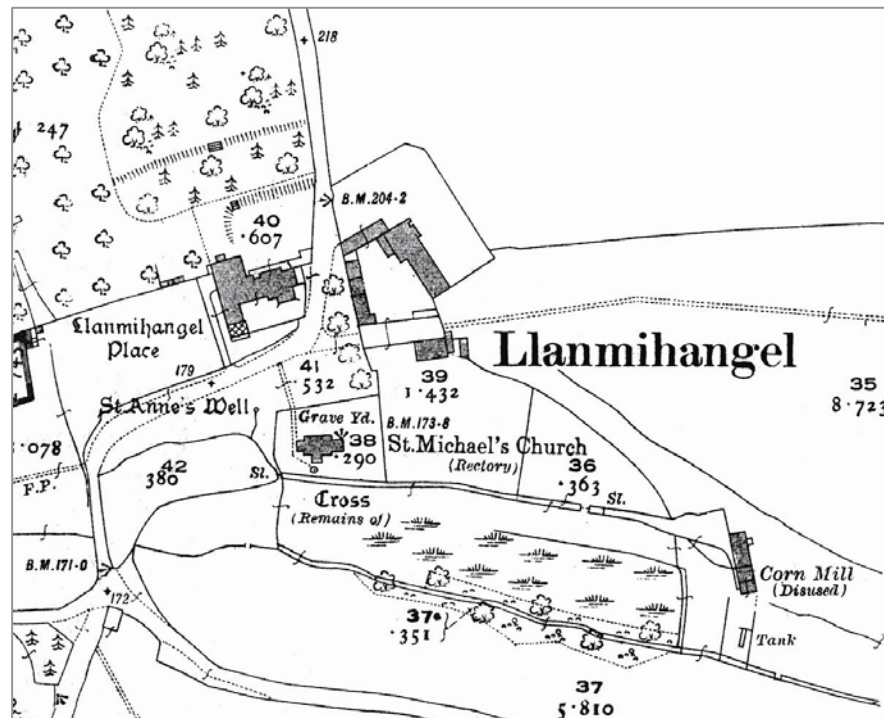
The barn and stable to the east of Plas Llanmihangel comprise an early 16<sup>th</sup> century barn, built at the same time as the house, with a linear southern stable block of c.1600. To the south east of the church is a fishpond of an uncertain date but possibly medieval. The sides of the pond were originally revetted with mortared masonry that is now largely obscured.

As has been shown, the area underwent little change between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, both church and house were restored in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and nearby Rectory Farm was built slightly earlier. Mill pond, mill race and corn mill are clearly identified on a map of c. 1880 but undoubtedly had earlier origins.

At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the church remains in active use and Plas Llanmihangel is a private dwelling offering bed and breakfast accommodation, having been carefully restored over 20 years by the current owners. The medieval barn has been converted to residential use. Fishponds and water engineering works along Nant Llanmihangel have become overgrown.



First Edition  
Ordnance Survey  
c. 1880 – Rectory  
Farm and environs



Llanmihangel  
Ordnance Survey  
c. 1919



## Spatial Analysis

The Llanmihangel Conservation Area is an unspoilt rural enclave containing a small number of buildings of exceptional historic interest. It embraces semi-natural landscape, planned formal gardens and deteriorating managed fishponds and mill workings. Within and around these planned and semi-natural spaces stand the three main building groups: Plas Llanmihangel, St. Michael's Church and the converted barns.

The outer limits of the area, comprising open fields vital to the area's rural setting, have a spacious feel and there are long views across and along the valley of Nant Llanmihangel. The core of the hamlet has a much more enclosed feel than the area's outskirts as it lies nestled close to the valley bottom and is partly surrounded by woods and trees. In summer, when the trees are in leaf, the feeling of enclosure and seclusion is intensified.

The valley bottom is well wooded but open fields lie on the north side of the narrow east-west lane leading to Sigingstone, creating an open green corridor through the area, albeit dotted with trees and hedgerows. In the western end of the conservation area, the open space enables views of the stream which is otherwise overgrown and overwhelmed by trees and scrub which have, in the last century, grown up in and around the medieval fishponds and mill race.

The third aspect of the spatial character of the area is formed by the private grounds of Plas Llanmihangel. On either side of the vehicular access drive lie unremarkable open grassed areas but on the south facing slope behind the main house lies a rectangular area of formal gardens and orchard. Although originally a design based on neat formality characterised by a neatly laid orchard and grass terraces lined with clipped trees and shrubs, today the impact of time and nature has changed the area into a much more wild and untamed space dominated throughout the year by evergreen yews.

## Character Analysis

### Activity and Prevailing Uses

The original Plas Llanmihangel estate would have been about 400 acres but the farm was separated from the house in the 1970s. The remaining twelve acres of land immediately surrounding the house contain the grade II\* registered historic garden and other well-tended private grounds. The conservation area boundary has been drawn widely around Plas Llanmihangel and environs to include outlying fields that remain in agricultural use.

Both church and house remain in the use for which they were intended, the former a private dwelling, the latter an active place of worship. The barns to the east of the house have been converted into residences. The fishponds are overgrown and the former corn mill in a state of disrepair; the mill workings obviously out of use.

### Buildings in the Conservation Area

Almost all the historic structures in the conservation area are listed and are described below. The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales describes Plas Llanmihangel as “one of the finest and most complete gentry houses in Glamorgan”. The house and surrounding ensemble of pleasure garden, church, barns, granary and stables, fishponds, holy well and corn mill represents an outstanding demonstration of a medieval rural settlement.

Rectory Farm, to the west, is not part of the medieval collection of buildings but is a purpose-built mid 19<sup>th</sup> century rectory in the High Victorian Gothic style. It is a building of interest in its own right but has no relationship, visually or historically with the Plas Llanmihangel group.

Local lias limestone is the prevalent building material under Welsh slated roofs.



*Part of the stone boundary wall around the formal garden above Plas Llanmihangel.*



*Church of St. Michael & All Angels.*



*Llanmihangel Place.*



*Steps in Gardens of Llanmihangel Place.*

## **Historic Parks and Gardens Llanmihangel Gardens (Grade II\*)**

The gardens are a rare and exceptionally interesting late 17<sup>th</sup> century planned garden and orchard, probably with earlier 16<sup>th</sup> century elements. The gardens were laid out in the reign of William and Mary, probably by Sir Humphrey Edwin who was Lord Mayor of London in 1697. Over three hundred yews were planted to a design based on a description by John Parkinson in 1629 in 'Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris'. The garden is laid out in terracing, with parterred avenues flanked by yew trees. Listed grade II\* in the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Interest in Wales.

## **Listed Buildings**

### **Church of St. Michael & All Angels – Grade II\***

The church has 11<sup>th</sup> century origins and the present structure was first built mainly in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The tower dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century with big arrow loops in the west and south walls.

The church was restored in 1888-9 and in 1909 a staircase turret was added because the upper floors of the tower were originally only accessed by external ladder.

### **Llanmihangel Place – Grade I**

The structure of the house suggests a 13<sup>th</sup> century house, the hall of which was refurbished in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Another wing was added in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The house now stands as an imposing and picturesque rambling mansion, listed grade I as one of the finest and most complete early gentry houses in Glamorgan.

### **Two Flights of Steps up to Terrace and Yew Tree Pleasance at Llanmihangel Place – Grade II**

The steps date from the time of the creation of the garden in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. They comprise a narrow flight of ten plain limestone steps leading to a broader, shallower flight of 13 steps which in turn leads into the formal flat grass terrace.



*Barn and Stable to East of Llanmihangel Place.*



*Rectory Farm.*



*St. Annes Well.*



*Base of Cross in Churchyard*

### **Barn and Stable to East of Llanmihangel Place – Grade II\***

The barn is an early 16<sup>th</sup> century seven bay corn barn with a storeyed stable block of c. 1600 to the south. It retains a fine roof structure. The main elevation of the stable faces west to the Plas.

It is listed grade II\* as one of the earliest surviving large barns in Wales retaining original roof trusses and for its association with Plas Llanmihangel.

### **Rectory Farm, Llanmihangel – Grade II**

Rectory Farm is a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century purpose-built rectory, possibly the work of Prichard and Seddon, diocesan architects. It is listed grade II as a good example of a high Victorian Gothic style.

### **St. Anne's Well, Llanmihangel – Grade II**

St. Anne's Well is constructed of limestone rubble and is probably medieval. It has a solid base with a series of stone steps leading down to the water. At the base of the well on the south side is a stone tablet with a three-quarter length carved relief of a woman. The overflow from the well originally poured from her breasts.

### **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, Historic Gardens as well as entries identified as being of 'local importance'.

The listed buildings and registered garden noted above have been identified as County Treasures. In addition the following structure is a 'locally listed County Treasure':

### **Base of Cross in Churchyard**

The socket stone, mounted on a single stone step, is all that remains of a medieval cross.

### **Positive Buildings - The Contribution of Key Unlisted Buildings**

Unlisted buildings beside the medieval barn and the road bridge over Nant Llanmihangel 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.



*Stone boundary walls are a feature of the area especially around the grounds of Plas Llanmihangel.*



*Stone gate piers mark the entrance to the grounds of Plas Llanmihangel.*



*Tall pine trees tower above the cross roads and are a feature for some distance around.*



*An old yew in the churchyard is one of the foremost trees outside of the formal garden.*

### Local Details

Traditional hedgerows which line the roads and form field boundaries are one of the main attributes. Grass verges to the roadside make a significant contribution to the rural distinctiveness of the area.

Stone boundary walls are a defining feature, especially the tall wall around the formal garden which overshadows the northern approach to the hamlet and the low stone wall that encircles the churchyard.

### General Condition

After several years of neglect, the house and adjacent barns have been restored and are in a good state of repair. However, St Anne's Well is in a poor condition and in urgent need of attention. The stone boundary wall around the churchyard and the road bridge are also in need of repair.

### Green Spaces and Bio-Diversity

A large proportion of the conservation area is open space and natural landscape. The conservation area boundary encompasses not only historic landscape around the house and church, including the planned gardens and neglected fishponds alongside Nant Llanmihangel, but also stretches widely around the medieval settlement to embrace the natural landscape of streamside woods, water meadows and fields that are important to the secluded rural setting of the historic buildings.

Trees are an essential element in the landscape, not only the planted yews of the formal man-made garden but also those along the wooded valley which help to create the seclusion of the locality and screen the buildings so that, from distant viewpoints, only the tower of the church and the top storey of Plas Llanmihangel can be seen. Trees of note include a large yew in the churchyard and a copse of planted pine trees by the crossroads which rise well above the more indigenous species in the valley bottom.

Nant Llanmihangel is a vital feature of the area and part of its raison d'être. The stream runs in an easterly direction along the valley bottom, diverting southwards around the church and it brings the sight and sound of water into the area to complement the profusion of bird song. When the fishponds were less overgrown, the setting of the church was formerly much more open but silting up of waterways has led to the development of a different flora and an enclosed character to this area.



*The churchyard wall is in danger of collapse in certain places*



*This large road sign, though presumably necessary, is an eyesore within the area, especially in front of the church.*



*Fishponds have become overgrown.*



*The parapet of the road bridge is in need of repair.*

The conservation area's extensive and varied green spaces and woods provide natural habitats for wildlife and help to promote biodiversity.

### 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:

- Obtrusive chevron traffic sign in front of the church;
- Churchyard boundary wall and the bridge parapet are in need of repair;
- Erosion of grass verges by traffic;
- Poor condition of St. Anne's Well;
- Fishponds and mill pond have become overgrown.

## Summary of Issues

The following issues have been listed with regard to the 'negative factors' listed 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:

- Protection of significant views into and out of the Conservation Area;
- The care and management of unkerbed grass verges, hedges and wooded banks;
- The protection and repair of stone boundary walls;
- Building maintenance and repair;
- The care and management of important trees and tree groups;
- The protection and management of historic engineered waterworks in association with the sensitive drainage and management of wetland areas;
- The restoration and repair of the St. Anne's Well and well head;
- The maintenance and enhancement of the historic landscape which frames the building group;
- The protection of the historic garden landscape around Plas Llanmihangel;
- Monitoring and review;
- Boundary review.

## Management Plan

### Introduction

The Llanmihangel Conservation Area Management Plan sets out proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the Llanmihangel Conservation Area in the light of the issues identified in the above Llanmihangel Conservation Area 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 Llanmihangel Conservation Area was undertaken. The boundary is drawn widely along the slopes of the valley to protect the setting of the conservation area.

**Recommendation:**

*No amendments to the boundary of the Llanmihangel Conservation Area are proposed.*

### Landscape Setting

The landscape setting of the Conservation Area is very important and is notable for its rural location in the valley of Nant Llanmihangel. For this reason the boundary has been drawn widely around the historic built environment and includes fields and open spaces that are vital to the area's rural landscape setting.

**Recommendation:**

*Development which impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting of the Conservation Area will be resisted. The Council will resist applications for change on the edges of the Conservation Area which would have a detrimental effect on the area's setting.*



## Views

There are many short and long views into, out of and through the Conservation Area which make a positive contribution to its special character. The most important views are identified on the Appraisal Map in the character appraisal.

**Recommendation:**

*The Council will seek to ensure that all development respects the important views within, into and from the Conservation Area, as identified in the appraisal. The Council will seek to ensure that these views remain protected from inappropriate forms of development.*

## Protection of Important Open Spaces

Open areas and greens spaces between buildings and groups of buildings play an aesthetic part in forming the character of the village. They can improve access into the surrounding countryside, frame vistas, enable distant views or are simply part of the historic development of the rural place.

**Recommendation:**

*The development of open areas that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area will be opposed.*

## Management of Grass Verges

The appraisal has identified that unkerbed grass verges are a significant element in the rural ambience of the Conservation Area.

**Recommendation:**

*The Council will ensure that any highway works bring a positive improvement to the Conservation Area and that grass verges are protected. Where highway improvements are required, they should respect the character of the Conservation Area.*

### 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.*

### Building Maintenance and Repair

There are a small number of historic buildings in need of maintenance and repair, particularly St. Anne's Well, the churchyard wall and road bridge.

**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.*

### Management of Trees

Trees make a vital contribution to the rural ambience of the Conservation Area and the setting of many of its historic buildings. The appraisal identifies a number of significant trees and groups of trees on verges or within areas of public open space and within private gardens. Because of the very large number of trees, and the difficulty of obtaining access onto private land, a full tree survey was not carried out at the time of the appraisal survey and the Appraisal map therefore only includes an indication of the most significant groups of trees.

**Recommendation:**

*The Council will seek to consider the use of Tree Preservation Orders in appropriate circumstances where a tree has significant amenity value and is considered to be potentially under threat. The felling of trees or development of woodland that contributes to the character of the Conservation Area will be opposed.*

## Control of New Development

**Recommendation:**

*Development proposals will be judged for their effect on the area's character and appearance as identified in the Llanmihangel Conservation Area Appraisal together with relevant Development Plan policies and any other material considerations.*

*The Council will continue to ensure that all new development accords with policies in the Unitary Development Plan and any other policies which supersede this in the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP).*

## 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.*

## 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.*

## Buildings and Land in Poor Condition

### **Recommendation:**

*Where sites or buildings are in a poor condition and the appearance of the property or land are detrimental to the surrounding area or neighbourhood, consideration will be given to the serving of a Section 215 Notice, sometimes called an Amenity Notice. This notice requires proper maintenance of the property or land in question, and specifies what steps are required to remedy the problem within a specific time period.*

## 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 online on the Council website at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://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. H.Thomas, Historic Gardens of the Vale of Glamorgan, 2007
6. RCAHMW, Ancient Monuments of Glamorgan, The Greater Houses, 1981
7. [www.plasllanmihangel.co.uk](http://www.plasllanmihangel.co.uk)

### 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?

