

CONSERVATION AREA ST. HILARY



APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND
ECONOMIC REGENERATION



St. Hilary

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

July 2009

This document is the adopted St. Hilary 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 St. Hilary Conservation Area was designated in 1971 by the former Glamorgan County Council in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the village. It was extended in 1977.

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.

A St. Hilary Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared by the Vale of Glamorgan Council in 1999, 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 St. Hilary 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 Vale of Glamorgan Supplementary Planning Guidance '*Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale*' (1999). This document provides a firm basis on which applications for development within, and close to the St. Hilary 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 St. Hilary 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 St. Hilary 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 November 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 St. Hilary 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:

- The importance of the historic road layout and buildings;
- Concern over amount and quality of modern development;
- Concern over amount and speed of traffic travelling through the village.

Following a consultation period of six weeks from 16 March 2009 to 24 April 2009, which included a surgery held at Bonvilston Reading Rooms on 1 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 29th July 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. The adopted Unitary Development Plan places St. Hilary 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 St. Hilary 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.



St. Hilary's Church is the focus of the village.



West House, one of several unlisted 'positive' buildings.



These converted barns reflect the village's agricultural origins.

Summary of Special Interest

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

- Small, tightly drawn hillside village lying to the south of a ridge which carries the modern A48;
- Location on south facing slope provides long views towards the Severn Estuary and the Aberthaw Power Station;
- Quiet rural setting with fields and areas of woodland;
- Narrow winding lanes intermingle around St. Hilary's Church, which sits in a slightly elevated position overlooking the village;
- Buildings cluster around the church with more spacious plots around the edges of the village;
- Many of the historic buildings face south to take advantage of the views;
- Past connections with the Basset family and Beaupre Estate;
- Some substantial family houses – The Manor, The Grange and The Cottage – all with important history links to the wealthy families which once lived in the village or Beaupre;
- The Bush Inn is a popular local facility and provides the village with its only truly commercial building;
- Former agricultural buildings have now been converted into residential uses, although Village Farm, the principal village farmhouse, remains as a private house;
- Ten listed buildings or structures, including a listed pig sty;
- Six County Treasures, including a World War II pill box;
- A number of unlisted positive buildings, most of them 19th century but some earlier;
- Local limestone is used for boundary walls as well as for building houses and cottages, where the stone is often rendered or painted over;
- Roofs are either slate, thatch or tile;
- Some 1960s or 1970s houses have been built in the village, largely without any particularly detrimental impact.

Location and Setting

Location and Context

St. Hilary is located between the 100 metre and 120 metre contours on the south facing slope of St. Hilary Down. Cardiff is approximately 15 kilometres distant, the busy A48, which connects Cardiff to Cowbridge, lying barely one kilometre to the north. This road is not visible from the village, although some low level traffic noise can intrude at times. Shops and more comprehensive facilities are provided at Cowbridge, which is about two kilometres distant from St. Hilary.

The St. Hilary Conservation Area covers the core of the historic settlement which is centred on St. Hilary's Church and The Bush Inn. New houses have been added, mainly in the 1960s and 1970s, in various locations, but these are generally low key in their impact, particularly because so many good quality historic buildings remain, their settings often enhanced by groups of mature trees.

General Character and Plan Form

Historically, St. Hilary was loosely centred on St. Hilary's Church and historic maps of the late 19th century confirm the presence of three prestigious houses: The Manor House, The Rectory (now called The Grange) and The Cottage. A farm with associated farm buildings, and The Bush Inn, make up the other more substantial buildings in the village. In addition there were a few detached, more vernacular houses and cottages, but overall the village was always modestly sized and despite modern additions, mainly of the 1960s and 1970s, St. Hilary remains a small village.

Of note is the convoluted street pattern with narrow, winding lanes surrounding the church with high banks on many sides, tightly enclosing the road without, in many places, room for a pavement. There are two roughly circular routes, one of which surrounds the church although the western side is now a pathway through private land. Limestone walls, grass verges of varying widths, and many fine trees, all add to the rural qualities of the conservation area.



The approach to St. Hilary from the south



View southwards from Llantrithyd Road



View to the north east from St. Hilary over farming land and the rising ridge

Landscape Setting

The village sits on an undulating slope which provides changes of level within the settlement, particularly to the west and south. This situation provides views to the south with occasional glimpses of the sea, and historic photographs confirm that most of the buildings in St. Hilary are deliberately located to take advantage of the southerly aspect which also takes in the distinctive chimneys of the East Aberthaw Power Station. To the north, the land rises towards the A48 and there are pleasant views across open fields to the rising ground of St. Hilary Down. To the west lies the valley of the river Thaw, which flows into the Severn Estuary between East and West Aberthaw.

Around the village in general, the fields intermingle with the buildings so that in some places these fields form part of the ambiance of the settlement and are included within the conservation area boundary for that reason. Overall, farming land with open fields and low hedges, with further clumps of woodland, are typical of the surrounding landscape. Tree species include beech, chestnut, sycamore, ash, oak, lime, and evergreens such as pine and yew. Of special note is Coed-y-Tor, an ancient woodland site, and Coed-y-Seler, which together represent important stretches of woodlands (both deciduous and coniferous) which add to the rural setting of the village on its north-western edge.

Historic Development and Archaeology

There are no remains of prehistoric man in St. Hilary although there is plenty of evidence in adjoining villages of early settlement. Likewise, despite the location close to the old Roman road which connected Gloucester to Neath (the modern A48), no Roman remains have been found. The more recent history of the village appears to start with the Anglo-Norman subjugation of the Vale of Glamorgan which was carried out by the Norman baron Robert Fitzhamon. Using Cardiff as his base, he established castles and manors across the Vale, the first lord of the manor of St. Hilary probably being a member of the de Cardiff family who established a 12th century castle at Llantrithyd.

The earliest documentary evidence for St. Hilary dates to 1119 AD with the recording of Bishop Urban of Llandaff's claim that St. Hilary fell within the possessions of his see. It is possible that a church and settlement existed some considerable time before this, but there is no evidence for any earlier buildings although archaeological investigation might change this view. Meanwhile, the church retains some possibly 12th or 13th century features although rebuilding may have taken place in the 1230s after the rebellious Welsh apparently burnt both St. Nicholas and St. Hilary to the ground.

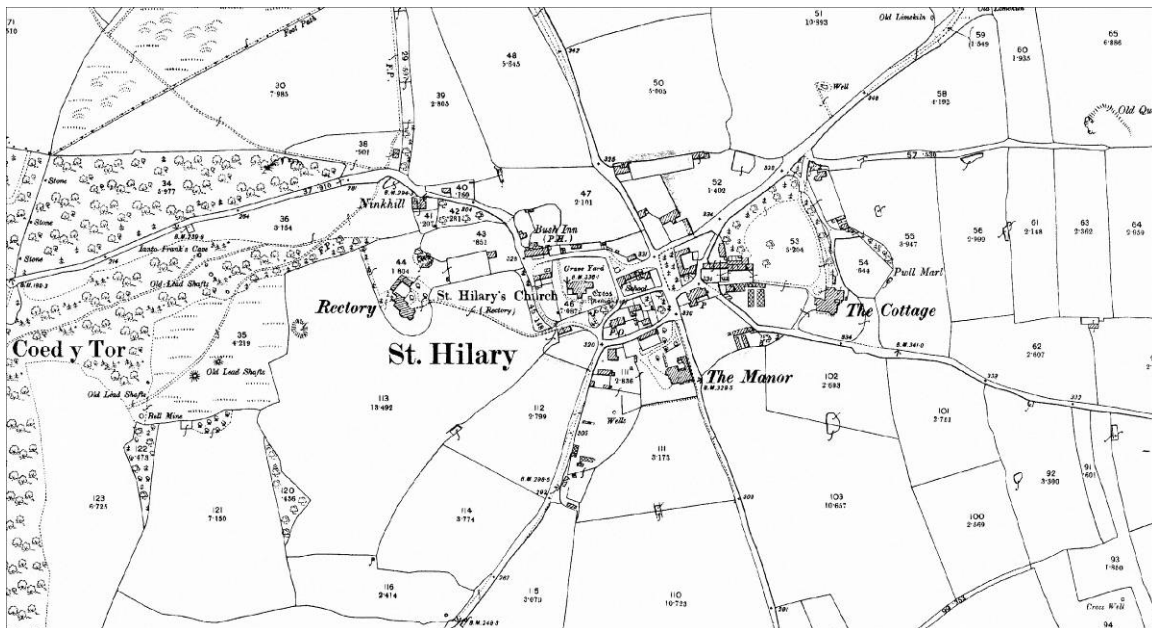
Sometime in the 13th century the Bassets succeeded the de Cardiffs as lords of the manor of St. Hilary and by 1300 a mansion (Old Beaupre) had been built on the edge of the river Thaw valley close to St. Hilary. This stood to the south of the 16th century house, which still stands although now a ruin. This house, with its mixture of medieval and Elizabethan features, epitomised the affluence and prominence of the Basset family at the time. Of note is the outer gatehouse with its decorated porch of 1586 and the magnificent inner porch of c1600. Whilst the Bassets invested heavily in Beaupre, they also had estates in Gloucestershire and Somerset, so the management of St. Hilary manor was often left in the hands of stewards. During the 16th and 17th century the Bassets took an active role in the official life of the county, six of them serving as Sheriffs during this period. However, the family's support of the Royalist cause in the Civil War in the 1640s led to financial ruin, and after a period of retrenchment the family estates in Beaupre (including the manor of St. Hilary) and Llanblethian were sold in 1709 to Christopher Brewster. In 1755, by which time the mansion at Beaupre was only partially occupied by a tenant farmer, the estate was purchased by Thomas Edmondes of Cowbridge who considered the old house too ruinous for his purposes and who built a new prestigious house in the village for himself and his family. The Manor House (now a Nursing Home)

passed through various family members including Llewellyn Traherne and his sister who sold off the Beaupre part of the estate in 1797 to Daniel Jones. He was a wealthy solicitor who endowed Cardiff Royal Infirmary and although married, he died childless in 1841, leaving Beaupre to Richard Basset, thereby re-establishing the link with the Basset family. Richard Basset soon took up residence in New Beaupre, the house built by Daniel Jones a short distance from the old ancestral mansion.

After Richard Basset's early death at fifty one, the property passed to his wife then to his nephew, Major William Bruce, who later assumed the name of Basset. The Bassets, Trahernes and Edmondeses all retained links with St. Hilary until well into the 20th century, although the major landowners were the Bassets and the Saundersons, relatives of the Trahernes.

In 1865 the church was restored by the great church architect, Sir George Gilbert Scott, the work being largely paid for by Charlotte, widow of the Reverend J M Traherne, who had died in 1860. A large new vicarage, now called The Grange, was provided on the western edge of the village in 1875. Throughout the 19th century the village remained dependent on its agricultural produce for income, the largest farm, called Village Farm and comprising 600 acres, being located within the village boundary. The tenants were the Thomas family who also rented part of the Beaupre estate. A small school for poor children was supported in the 1830s and 1840s by the Traherne family and in 1856 a National School was established in a building next to the church. Most importantly, in the early 1890s the Aberthaw railway passed close to St. Hilary, connecting the coast to the Taff Vale Railway.

Extract from OS map 1899



In 1909 the Beaupre Estate was put up for sale, including New Beaupre which was then let to a Colonel Quin. The effect of Lloyd George's 'People's Budget', which had tax implications for the wealthy, may have deterred prospective purchasers and in the end only small sections of the estate were disposed of, the Basset family retaining possession of the rest until the 1930s. A small group (Church Crescent) of semi-detached rural district council housing was added in 1948.

Today St. Hilary is an almost totally residential village, many of the former barns having been converted into residential accommodation. The Bush Inn is a popular local facility but residents have to travel to Cowbridge or further afield for shopping. Apart from the inn, the only other commercial property is The Manor, now used as a nursing home. A small church hall, the former village school, is located next to the churchyard.

Spatial Analysis

Character of Spaces

The defining spatial features of the St. Hilary Conservation Area are the four interconnecting, roughly circular, lanes which surround the church, Little Hall Cottage, The Old Farm/The Granary, and Lansdowne, Manor Cottage and Myrtle Cottage, and the six roads which radiate from this central core to the north-east, north, north-west, south-west, south and south-east. This layout produces an interesting, somewhat convoluted road layout in the middle of the village, the narrowness of the lanes enhanced by the high stone retaining walls and mature trees.

There are a number of public open spaces, the most 'formal' in terms of layout being the crescent-shaped grassed area in front of Church Terrace and the adjoining area of grass which lies to the immediate east, both defined by low timber bollards. These create a 'setting' for the churchyard, which lies at a slightly higher level than the surrounding land and is the focal point for the village. To the south of the churchyard, a triangular-shaped piece of grass (the Pump Garden) also sits at higher level with low stone retaining walls and public seating which has been provided to take advantage of the southerly aspect.

The elevated position of the church and churchyard provides views out over the surrounding countryside but particularly to the south-west. Other notable views can be seen northwards from the road to the A48, and from Llantrithyd Road southwards. Glimpses through the semi-detached cottages on Church Crescent of the landscape to the north of the village are also important.



Llantrithyd Road.



Buildings and stone walls create intimate spaces in the village.



Church Crescent.



St. Mary Pump Garden.



The Lodge.



Rear view of Church Cottage from the churchyard.

Character Analysis

Activity and Prevailing Uses

St. Hilary originated as an agricultural community under the patronage of the varied owners of the Beaupre Estate, including the Basset and the Traherne families. The village once boasted a school, Post Office, farms and smithy, but the village is now in almost total residential use apart from St. Hilary's Church, the adjoining church hall, The Bush Inn, a nursing home (in The Manor) and a modern farm outside the Conservation Area boundary. The various agricultural buildings which must have once provided the village centre with activity and noise have now all been converted into houses. A number (about 17) houses have been added in the last 50 years or so, but mainly in small groups or singly, so their impact has been low on the overall historic character of the conservation area.

Buildings in the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area's principal historic buildings are St. Hilary's Church, medieval in origins but heavily restored in the mid-19th century, and Thomas Edmonde's Manor House, started in 1755 and subsequently extended in the early 19th century. The Cottage, a Regency villa of some substance, and the late 19th century former rectory, now called The Grange, are the only other houses of any size. Otherwise the buildings are more modestly proportioned village houses such as Manor Cottage, Village Farm or Abbotswood, or more vernacular cottages such as Kninkin, Little Hall Cottage or The Old Post Office. A number of former barns, namely Tythe Barn, The Old Farm and The Granary, represent buildings which were once in agricultural uses. Oddities include the Second World War brick-built pill box next to Village Farm, The Lodge, which marks the entrance to The Cottage, and a listed pig sty in the garden of Church Cottage. Some of these buildings are thatched and provide good examples of the local Welsh vernacular.

Scheduled Monuments

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



St. Hilary's Church



The Basset Family Tomb



Churchyard Cross



The Cottage

Listed Buildings

There are ten listed buildings or structures in the Conservation Area:

St. Hilary's Church – Grade II*

The church retains some 13th or possible 12th century fabric, but may have been rebuilt after a fire of 1229 which destroyed the village. The nave and chancel are the earliest parts of the building, the south aisle and porch being added in the 14th century and the tower a little later. It was heavily restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1865.

The Basset Family Tomb Enclosure

– Grade II

Pair of sarcophagi in memory of Richard and James Bassett, enclosed by high metal railings with spear finials. The family armorial is carved on the tomb with the family motto in Welsh: Gwell angau na chwilydd (Better death than dishonour).

Churchyard Cross – Grade II

The remains of a medieval churchyard cross comprising four steps of coursed ashlar blocks crowned by an eight sided medieval cross base with broach stops to four corners. On top of the base a mid 19th century limestone cross has been erected with concave moulding to the shaft and cross with fleuron decoration.

The Cottage – Grade II

This stuccoed Regency villa was built for the Traherne family in the 1830s and was probably attached to an existing, more modest structure. It is two storeys high with sash windows. A cast iron veranda stretches along the south elevation.



The Manor

The Manor – Grade II

Originally called the Great House, this building has late 16th century origins although subsequently enlarged c1800 and again later in the 19th century. The building is four bays wide and faces south, with later alterations and extensions to north and east. It is now used as a nursing home.



Manor Cottage

Manor Cottage – Grade II

This is a mid 19th century building, although masonry features possibly suggest earlier origins, which was once two cottages. The new casement windows have stone drip moulds above, and the roof is now tiled although early photographs show thatch.



The Bush Inn

The Bush Inn – Grade II

This long, low building dates to the 17th century or earlier and is thatched with a large fireplace inside.

Village Farm – Grade II

A substantial farmhouse dating from the 16th Century, this building also faces south away from the lane and features drip moulds above the windows to this elevation. Despite alterations it retains its character and has significant group value within the conservation area.



Village Farm

Telephone Call Box – Grade II

G VI R, K6 type telephone box to the standard design of Giles Gilbert Scott, architect of London.



Telephone Call Box



Pig Sty

Pig Sty – Grade II

A typical conical Glamorgan pigsty of circular plan probably of 19th century date. Limestone rubble construction with conical roof rising to approximately 2m in height. Remains of pig pen still evident with stile within a low rubble wall. Bisected by a small flight of steps leading from front of house to rear with feeding trough set against the flank wall of the house.



Tythe Barn

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'. In addition to the listed buildings identified above, within the St. Hilary Conservation Area, there are seven locally listed 'County Treasures' as follows:

Tythe Barn

A restored, stone tithe barn, but retaining much original character. Formerly single storey with external stone stairs. Slate roof. Ventilator slits. Entries and window openings with bricks on edge of arches. Yard formerly cobbled.



Pill Box

Pill Box

Brick and concrete Pill Box of 1940's design. Sited on corner of village, controlling access from the road to the South.

Little Hall Cottage

Two-storey C17 stone rubble built dwelling, restored and partly modernised. Thatched roof with 'eyebrow' features. External structure possibly an oven.



Little Hall Cottage



Kninkin

Kninkin

C19, two-storey stone cottage with thatched roof and stack, square-headed, diamond paned casement windows, with central, square-headed doorway. Recent, single storey extension with lean-to roof.



Old Post Office

Old Post Office

C17 house with Tudor arched dressed stone, chamfered doorways and beamed ceilings. Stonewalls and front gable windows. The village post office was first established at Manor Cottage at the end of the C19. It later moved to Ty'r Eglwys - the house now known as "Abbotswood".



The Lodge at Pinklands

The Lodge at Pinklands

Small much altered residential building, formerly the lodge to the Manor. Part of the Edmondson family estate until 1934 when it was sold to Sir Gerald Bruce. Subsequently owned by the Clay family.



The Old Farm

The Old Farm

Modernised farmhouse around paved courtyard. Rubble walls with slate roof. Arched, three centred windows in ground floor. External stairs to upper floor of barn to south of complex. The doorway to the parish pound is still (just) in the boundary wall nearby. These buildings were formerly part of Village Farm.

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. The criteria for selection is provided in Appendix 1. In the St. Hilary Conservation Area the 'positive' buildings include unlisted 19th century houses and cottages, as well as some buildings which were formerly in agricultural use.



Local limestone is the predominant building material.



These important iron railings provide local distinctiveness.



Here, trees and stone walls act as a frame to the Church.



This plaque commemorates those who returned safely to the village after the First World War.

Local Details

The use of local materials such as limestone, slate and thatch for the buildings is important although many of the buildings which have been built from rough rubble limestone have been rendered and painted white. The 20th century houses in the Conservation Area follow this example and are also rendered and painted white which does provide some cohesiveness despite their modern details. Of these, Burnaby House in Llantrithyd Road is the most dominant due to its overall width and its position overlooking the lane.

Pitched roofs are usually seen on the older buildings although where they are thatched the pitch is much steeper to provide the fall needed to maintain water-tightness. There are now only three thatched properties in the village - The Bush Inn, Little Hall Cottage, and Kninkin. There are a few rooflights in some of the buildings and the occasional, relatively modest dormer, such as the Tythe Barn.

Roadside walls built from the same grey limestone rubble blocks of varying sizes are a prominent feature of the Conservation Area and help to maintain a historic character to the village centre. The walls can be from one metre to nearly three metres high, and in many locations act as retaining walls. The most notable walls are shown on the Appraisal map although many more are also of merit though perhaps less dominant. Due to the need for privacy, these have in places been backed up with modern close boarded fencing, some materials not being particularly attractive. Other boundaries are defined by trees or hedging, occasionally neatly clipped, but more usually left untrained. The original green painted wrought iron post and chain parkland fencing around a triangle of land next to The Lodge is an important survival. Other notable local features include the metal 'kissing gate' which leads out of the churchyard to the east, and the stone mounting block outside Village Farm.

Pavements, where they exist, are simply covered in black tarmac, with narrow concrete kerbs, which suits the rural character of the village. This is also reinforced by the many mature trees, both singly and in groups, which can be seen throughout and on the edges of the Conservation Area.



Trees play an important part in establishing the character of the village.



The rear slope of the Bush Inn would benefit from rethatching.



Satellite dishes and alarm boxes can detract from otherwise positive buildings.

Green Spaces and Biodiversity

St. Hilary lies within rolling countryside which in places, such as to the north of The Lodge, and to the south of Llantrithyd Road, form part of the Conservation Area. The fields are usually using for grazing cattle or sheep. Large stands of mature trees both within and on the edges of the Conservation Area provide a suitable habitat for wildlife. The hillside location means that there are no streams although several ponds, presumably man-made, are marked on the modern map in the fields to the east and south of the village.

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:

- Some fast moving traffic which often appears to ignore the 30 mph speed limit through the village;
- The occasional use of modern materials on 'positive' unlisted historic buildings;
- Some poor quality front boundaries, and the loss of front gardens to car parking;
- The occasional satellite dish (e g Tythe Barn and Church Terrace);
- The Bush Inn would benefit from enhancements including the tidying-up of the car park and rethatching the rear roof slope.

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;
- Additional controls needed to reduce traffic speed and improve pedestrian safety;
- The protection of unlisted 'positive' buildings from demolition;
- The need for additional controls to prevent the loss of traditional features on unlisted 'positive' buildings, including the use of long straw thatch;
- Future control of applications for new front boundaries, and the overall protection of existing front boundary walls and front gardens;
- Identification of buildings for listing or as County Treasures;
- The care and protection of the many mature trees in the Conservation Area;
- The removal of unauthorised satellite dishes;
- The future control of new development;
- Monitoring and review of these documents.

Management Plan

Introduction

The 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 St. Hilary Conservation Area was undertaken. It was found that in a number of places the boundary includes fields or green space which make no positive contribution to the special character of the conservation area. These lie to the south and west of the village, with a small section of field to the north.

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 on the outer edges of the village.

The proposed changes are shown on the accompanying 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 St. Hilary 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.

Locally Listed County Treasures

Some buildings or structures in the Vale of Glamorgan, although not contained within the statutory list ('listed buildings'), are nevertheless of local interest. Survey work for the character area appraisal has identified one unlisted building that merits future inclusion as a County Treasure. Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011) discusses the implications in policy terms for locally listed buildings on the County Treasures list.

Recommendation:

The Council will, as part of a future review of the list of County Treasures, consider the inclusion of The Grange.

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.

Site Specific Improvements – The Bush Inn

Whilst not the responsibility of the Council, the owners of the Bush Inn could be approached to see if improvements could be achieved as follows:

- Tidy up the car parking areas to the front, side and rear of the inn
- Rethatch the rear roof slope using traditional long straw thatch

Recommendation:

The Council will approach the owner of the above building to see if improvements can be negotiated.

The 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. There are also, in places, large groups of leylandii which in the long term could be replaced with indigenous species such as beech, oak or horse chestnut.

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.

The Control of New Development

Some modern developments do not harmonise with the historic character and appearance of the St. Hilary Conservation Area. This applies to completely new buildings as well as the occasional extension.

Recommendation:

Development proposals will be judged for their effect on the area's character and appearance as identified in the St. Hilary 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).

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.

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, St. Hilary Appraisal, 2001

Contact Details

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Appendix 1

Criteria for the Selection of 'Positive Buildings'.

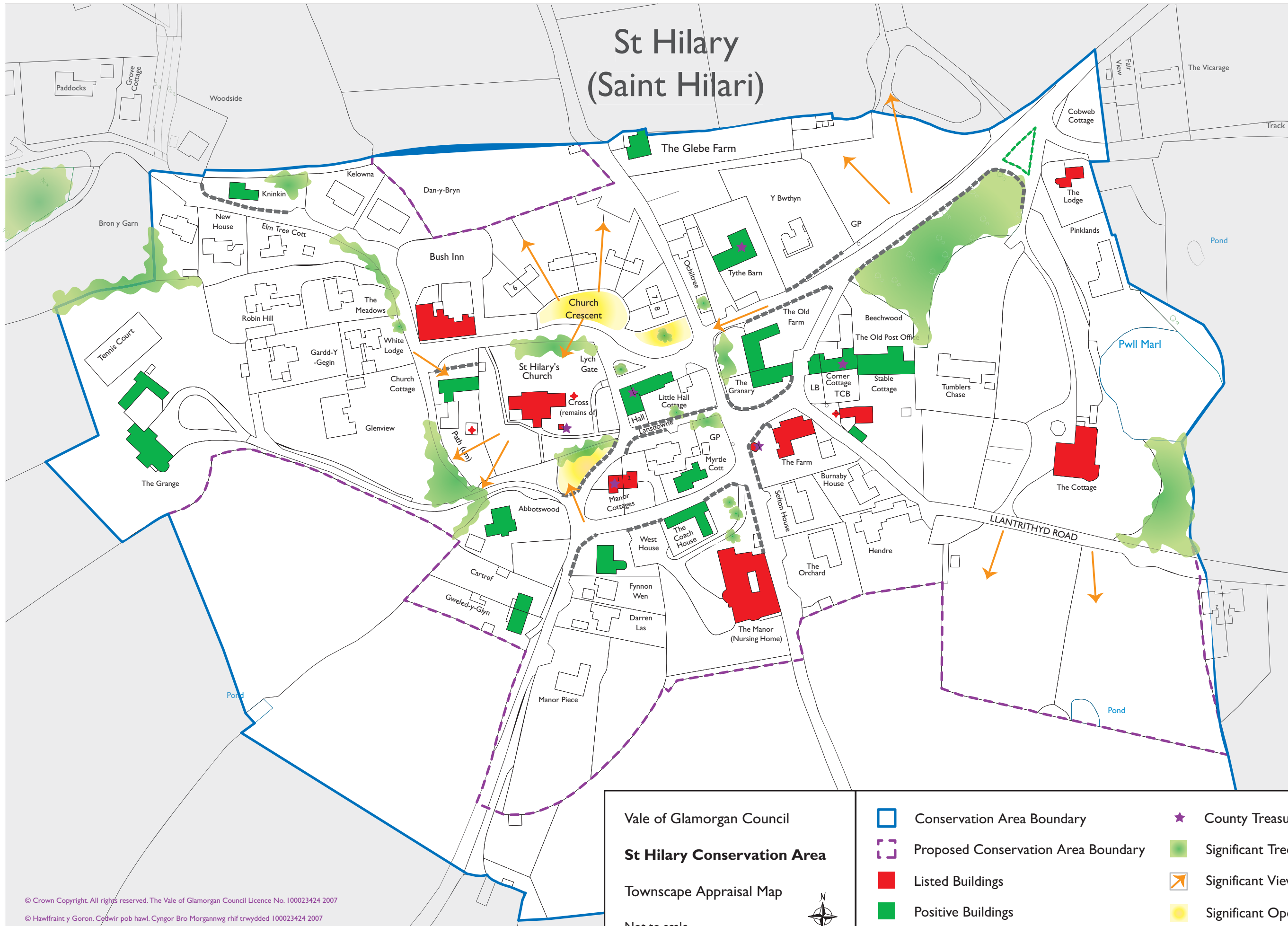
For the purposes of this conservation area appraisal, a positive building is an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area.

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?

St Hilary (Saint Hilari)



Vale of Glamorgan Council		Conservation Area Boundary	County Treasures
St Hilary Conservation Area		Proposed Conservation Area Boundary	Significant Tree group
Townscape Appraisal Map		Listed Buildings	Significant Views
Not to scale		Positive Buildings	Significant Open Space
		Green Wrought Iron Railings	Significant Stone Walls

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