



TREGARON

Conservation Area Appraisal

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Prepared for

Ceredigion County Council

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The GRIFFITHS HERITAGE CONSULTANCY Ltd

Table of Contents

Tregaron Conservation Area Appraisal

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Introduction to Tregaron Conservation Area	5
3.	Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance	7
4.	Definition of Special Architectural or Historic Interest	10
5.	Location and Physical Context	15
6.	Historical Development	17
7.	Spatial Analysis And Architectural Character	25
8.	Designated Assets and Important Local buildings	34
9.	Historical Associations and Traditions	38
10.	Hidden Histories	39
11.	Biodiversity	39
12.	Issues — SWOT Analysis	41

Tregaron Conservation Area Management Plan

1.	Introduction	42
2.	Article 4 Directions	42
3.	Boundary Review	44
4.	Need for Detailed Design Guidance or Public Information	48
5.	Opportunities for Local Listing	52
6.	Consideration of Enforcement	53
7.	Opportunities for Regeneration	54
8.	Advertisement Guidance and Control	57
9.	Buildings at Risk	59
10.	Environmental Improvements	61
11.	Trees, Landscape and Open Spaces	63
12.	Monitoring and Review	64
	Appendix A: Action Plan	66
	Appendix B: References and Bibliography	69

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Historic Environment in Ceredigion

- 1.1.1 The Ceredigion landscape is rich in evidence from the past. The term ‘historic environment’ describes the results of human interaction with the natural environment over many thousands of years, including the buildings, monuments, conservation areas, townscapes and landscapes that we value as a community and wish to preserve. This series of appraisals and management plans are to assist the Council and the local community / public with understanding the special value and interest of the conservation areas in Ceredigion, and how it can best be protected and enhanced.
- 1.1.2 Many historic features are protected through legislation and the planning system (see below). In addition to Ceredigion’s designated assets there are numerous undesignated features including archaeological sites and historic buildings. Undesignated assets can be more vulnerable to unsympathetic change or loss through development and other works. As well as analysing the contribution of designated assets to the towns of Ceredigion, the acknowledgement of undesignated assets, through tools such as this appraisal, can help to identify their significance and to protect them for the future. In Wales, over 200,000 undesignated heritage assets are recorded on the four regional Historic Environment Records that are now a consideration in the planning system under the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016.



Fig. 1 General view of Tregaron Conservation Area

- 1.1.3 There are 1896 buildings and structures included on the national 'List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest' in Ceredigion. Many more pre 1948 structures are protected by being within the 'curtilage' of a listed building. A Listed Building is one which has been identified, by Cadw, as being of national architectural or historic importance. As such, any works which would affect the character of the structure or any features of architectural or historic interest would require permission - known as Listed Building Consent. Contrary to popular belief, the listing covers the whole of a building - inside and out, and includes any fixtures or fittings.
- 1.1.4 Ceredigion has 262 Scheduled Monuments. Scheduling is the way that a monument or archaeological site of national importance is recognised by law. The term 'scheduled monument' is wide ranging and includes not only well-known castles, abbeys and prehistoric burial sites, but also sites such as limekilns, deserted medieval settlements and the remains of the iron, coal and slate industries. Some scheduled monuments contain standing buildings or ruins and others have no visible remains above ground, but their buried archaeology is of national importance. The aim of scheduling is to preserve the archaeological evidence that survives within sites and monuments. This includes the physical fabric of the monument, its setting and any associated artefacts and environmental evidence. This means that if you want to carry out work that would physically alter a scheduled monument you will probably need to apply to Cadw for permission - known as Scheduled Monument Consent.
- 1.1.5 There are 12 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens within Ceredigion. Registration identifies parks and gardens which are of special historic interest to Wales. They range in date from the medieval period to the mid-twentieth century. Registration is a material consideration in the planning process; local planning authorities must take into account the historic interest of the site when deciding whether or not to grant permission for any changes.
- 1.1.6 Four areas in Ceredigion have been designated through the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales. The largest of these is the Upland Ceredigion Historic Landscape which covers much of the eastern and northern part of the county. The Lower Teifi Valley Historic Landscape, is located in the south-west, and is partially shared with Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire. The Drefach-Felindre and Towy Valley Historic Landscapes are located within Carmarthenshire, but part also falls within Ceredigion's southern boundary.
- 1.1.7 Ceredigion also has 13 designated conservation areas, which means there are additional controls over demolition (requiring Conservation Area Consent) and works to trees in these areas.

The conservation areas are:

- Aberaeron
- Aberystwyth
- Adpar
- Cardigan
- Lampeter
- Llanbadarn Fawr
- Llandysul
- Cenarth
- Llanddewi Brefi
- Llanrhystud
- Llansantffraed
- New Quay
- Tregaron

At the time of writing, Cardigan, Llanddewi Brefi and Tregaron have Article 4 Directions in place. These Directions remove the permitted development rights for a particular building, site or area meaning that there are more restrictions regarding what works can be carried out without the need for planning permission. Trees in Conservation Areas are also protected: the local authority must be given 6 weeks notice before carrying out works to trees in a conservation area.

1.2 Conservation Areas

- 1.2.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to ***preserve or enhance*** the character and appearance of designated conservation areas under The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This Act also requires the Local Authority to identify and designate new conservation areas by determining which parts of their area are of special architectural or historic interest.
- 1.2.2 There are more than 500 conservation areas in Wales and they are valued as special places by those who visit and live or work in them.
- 1.2.3 Conservation areas are rich in the physical evidence of the past. Their special interest is expressed in the character of the area and not in isolated buildings. This could be the pattern of settlement, the organisation of space and building plots, and the networks of routes, as well as the style and type of building, their materials and detailing.
- 1.2.4 This means that it is essential to manage change carefully in conservation areas to make sure that their character and appearance are safeguarded and enhanced. To achieve this, there are special controls around demolishing buildings and cutting down, topping and lopping trees.

1.3 Appraisals and Management Plans

- 1.3.1 Section 71 of the 1990 Act sets out that it shall be the duty of the LPA, from time to time, to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas. Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment identifies conservation area appraisals as the foundation for such proposals as they provide a basis for more detailed management plans.
- 1.3.2 A conservation area appraisal is the foundation for positive management. It provides a detailed picture of what makes an area special and can be used to identify opportunities and priorities for action. The appraisal offers a shared understanding of character and importance, and highlights problems and potential, which can be used as the evidence base for a more detailed management plan supported by a robust local policy framework.
- 1.3.3 Ceredigion County Council has commissioned The Griffiths Heritage Consultancy to prepare appraisals and management plans, alongside undertaking a boundary review, for the conservation areas in 6 of the County's towns.
- 1.3.4 The appraisals and management plans have been subject to initial stakeholder and public consultation as set out in section 4.5.6. If agreed, following further public consultation, they will be adopted by Ceredigion County Council as supplementary planning guidance (SPG).



Fig. 2 The centre of Tregaron has a variety of historic architecture

2 INTRODUCTION TO TREGARON CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 The Conservation Area Status

- 2.1.1 Tregaron conservation area was designated in 1989. The current boundary is shown overleaf. No amendments have been made to the boundary since it was designated.
- 2.1.2 There is no current Conservation Area Appraisal or Management Plan for the conservation area.

2.2 Location and Setting

- 2.2.1 Tregaron is located in the upper Teifi valley, on the River Brenig, a tributary of the River Teifi, and is 11 miles north-east of Lampeter and 18 miles southeast of Aberystwyth, set between Llangeitho and Llanddewi Brefi.
- 2.2.2 Tregaron sits in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains, at a crossroads of routes to the north, south, east and west, and at a crossing point over the river. It is also close to Strata Florida and Llanddewi Brefi, both important religious centres in the medieval period.

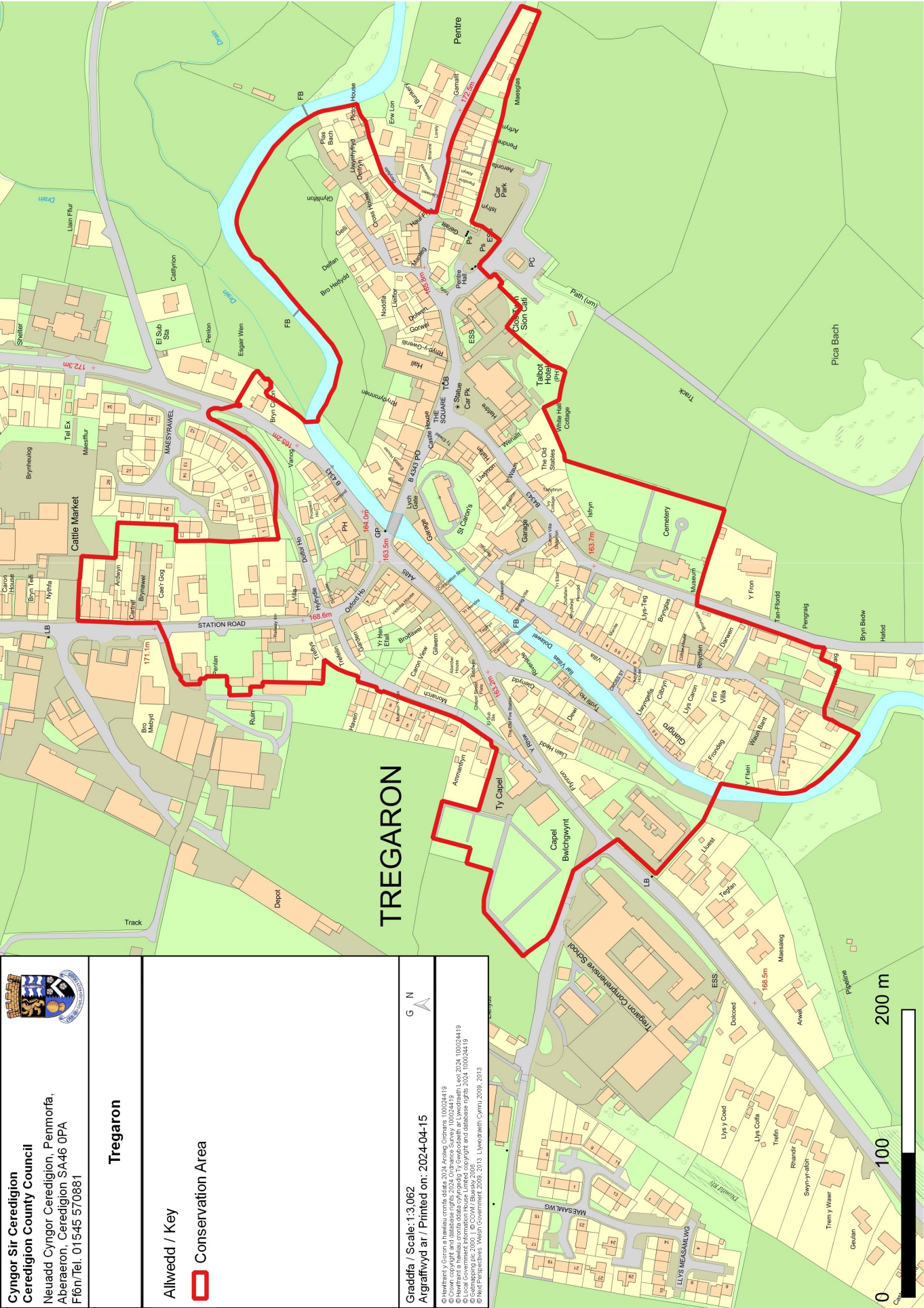
2.3 Summary Description

- 2.3.1 A small settlement in the pre Anglo-Norman period, in 1290, Edward I granted to Geoffrey Clement the privileges of holding a weekly market and two annual fairs. Tregaron grew as the market town for the area - an area of scattered agricultural holdings of various sizes. To the south was broad, fertile countryside and the east rich landowners with extensive upland holdings. To the north is Cors Caron, which was fertile agricultural land when it was drained.



Fig. 3 The peat bogs of Cors Caron National Nature Reserve lie to the north

Fig. 4 Tregaron's current Conservation Area Boundary



To the west were self-sufficient farmers on smallholdings in upland areas of the Cambrians. All these people were reliant on the weekly market at Tregaron. The early nineteenth century saw the town grow further due to its location as an important stopping point for drovers before or after they crossed the inhospitable Cambrian mountains but it did not develop greatly outside the historic core until the late 20th century.

- 2.3.2 Tregaron, although still a small town, is the only substantial settlement within the Ceredigion upland landscape. It still holds its livestock market and remains a centre for local agricultural services. The historic core is centred on a market square and the medieval St Caron's Church, with secondary development found on the west bank of the River Brenig towards the former railway station. It is not a planned settlement, and most buildings front directly onto narrow, winding streets. Most of the older building stock dates to the 19th century. It still provides a local service centre for an extended catchment area and also relies on small scale tourism. Tregaron has active cultural life with many clubs and organisations.

3 LEGISLATION, PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

3.1 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 3.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, places a duty on public bodies to *'improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in accordance with the sustainable development principle that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'*.
- 3.1.2 It is widely recognised that the historic environment can have a positive impact on people and communities and contribute towards quality of life and well-being. If the historic environment is going to continue to deliver its rich benefits to communities there is a need to identify what is significant and manage change in a sensitive and sustainable way.
- 3.1.3 Essential to maintaining the special quality of a particular area (or any heritage asset) is the positive management of change based on a full understanding of the character and significance of the area. This is underpinned by raising awareness and understanding of the benefits that they can deliver and the skills necessary to do so.

3.2 Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023

- 3.2.1 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 ('the 2023 Act') came into force on 4 November 2024, and provides the framework for the protection and management of the Welsh historic environment. It repealed the following legislation in Wales:

- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Act 1953
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016



Fig. 5 Tregaron is the only substantial settlement within the Ceredigion upland landscape

- 3.2.2 The 2023 Act requires the local planning authority have: special regard to the desirability of preserving: the listed building; the setting of the building; and any features of special architectural or historic interest the building possesses when considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting.
- 3.2.3 The 2023 Act also requires that the local planning authority must, in exercising a planning function in relation to a building or other land in a conservation area have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

3.3 National Policy and Guidance

- 3.3.1 *Planning Policy Wales* (PPW) (Edition 12, 2024) sets the context for sustainable land use policy within Wales and identifies the need for the promotion of good design.

- 3.3.2 Policy on the historic environment is contained within Chapter 6 of PPW, which sets out national policies requiring that Local Planning Authorities exercise a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character of a Conservation Area and/or its setting when considering development proposals.
- 3.3.3 *Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment* provides guidance on how to consider the historic environment in development plans and planning decisions.
- 3.3.4 Local planning authorities should take account of Cadw's (2011) *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* (Conservation Principles) to achieve high-quality sensitive change. The document sets out six guiding principles for the conservation of the historic environment:
- Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values
 - Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital
 - The historic environment is a shared resource
 - Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment
 - Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent
 - Documenting and learning from decisions is essential
- 3.3.5 Cadw has also produced a series of best-practice guidance publications. These complement the legislative framework, associated planning policy and advice, and support the sustainable management of the Welsh historic environment. These include: *Managing Conservation Areas in Wales*; *Managing Historic Character in Wales*; *Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales*, *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*, and *Managing Lists of Historic Assets of Special Local Interest*, amongst others.
- 3.3.6 Cadw's (2017) *Managing Conservation Areas in Wales* supplements PPW and TAN 24 and sets out the policy context and duties for local planning authorities to designate and manage conservation areas. It also identifies key aspects of good practice for their designation and appraisal, including the participation of stakeholders and the development of local policies for positive management and enhancement so that their character and appearance are preserved and enhanced.

3.4 Local Planning Policy

- 3.4.1 Ceredigion Local Development Plan (LDP1): 2007 - 2022 (Adopted 2013) sets out policies and specific proposals for the development and use of land in Ceredigion for the 15 year period up

to 31 March 2022. The replacement LDP (LDP2) is, however, currently on hold due to Phosphate issues and therefore LDP1 is the current Development Plan for the county.

3.4.2 In LDP1, Policy DM07 requires that development within conservation areas must demonstrate that regard has been had to Conservation Area Appraisals, where available, and national guidance.

3.4.3 Ceredigion County Council's SPG: Built Environment and Design provides supplementary guidance for development relating to or affecting the historic environment.

4. DEFINITION OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST

4.1 Summary of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

EVIDENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE	HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE	AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE	COMMUNAL VALUES
MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH / MEDIUM	HIGH

4.1.1 This table, together with the explanations below, summarise the state of the conservation area at the current time and identifies the special interest, which should be preserved, and also where enhancements can be made. They are based on the physical and historic research and assessment undertaken for this appraisal and used in conjunction with Cadw's (2011) *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales*, which identifies four heritage values by which significance can be identified:

- **Evidential value:** every historic asset has a unique story to tell. The surviving historic fabric and detail — whether above or below ground — helps us to understand when and how each historic asset was made, how it was used and how it has changed over time. Pictorial and documentary sources may also increase our understanding.



Fig. 6 The circular nature of the churchyard has evidential value for demonstrating its earlier origins (see 6.1.1)

- **Historical value:** historic assets may illuminate particular aspects of the past. They can help us to understand how people lived and worked, and the beliefs and values they cherished. They may be associated with notable people or events. Through evocation and association, historic assets can connect past people, aspects of life and events with the present.
- **Aesthetic value:** we may value historic assets for their visual qualities, whether they result from conscious design and craftsmanship, or from the fortuitous effect of change over time. Tastes alter and so do historic assets: earlier records and careful analysis of what survives may help in appreciating aesthetic value.
- **Communal value:** historic assets may be cherished by the people and communities who relate to them, and they may play an important part in collective experience or memory. Historic assets can have economic as well as social value with the capacity to provide a valuable source of income or employment.

4.1.2 The terms 'significance' and 'value' are used interchangeably in this context and both contribute to identifying the 'special interest' of a place.

4.2 Evidential - Medium Significance

- 4.2.1 There is some potential for the survival of prehistoric archaeological features in the area.
- 4.2.2 Tregaron has a high archaeological potential due to its former status as an important Medieval market centre and its early Christian connections. Whilst later development dominates the building stock, there are potential remains of former settlement within the historic core of the town. The street layout also has Medieval origins.
- 4.2.3 It seems likely that some of the earlier buildings may retain evidence of 18th century craftsmanship, building traditions and materials, despite later alterations.
- 4.2.4 The expansion and development of the town in the 19th century is evident through its buildings, structures and historical archive.

4.3 Historical - High Significance

- 4.3.1 Tregaron has a long historical timeline, with some evidence of Prehistoric activity in the area and stronger evidence of an early Christian community possibly associated with nearby Llanddewi Brefi. This early Christian period was an important period which set the foundations for the pattern of settlements and administrative boundaries in Ceredigion and wider Wales

and the physical remains in the landscape of field patterns, settlement layouts, chapels, wells and memorial stones.

- 4.3.2 Tregaron had a relatively unusual role in the Medieval period. Unlike the other key settlements in Ceredigion, it was mostly peaceful, probably due to the lack of a strategic Anglo - Norman castle. Instead it provided an important religious, social and economic centre for its rural hinterland.
- 4.3.3 The expansion and development of Tregaron in the post Medieval period testifies to the important role the town had in supporting and facilitating the rural economy.
- 4.3.4 The town continues to provide a service centre role for its rural environs and has a valuable role in the tourist economy for Ceredigion and west Wales.

4.4 Aesthetic - High / Medium Significance

- 4.4.1 Tregaron has an attractive town centre with a distinctive village like character. The central square is a focal point mostly surrounded by neo-Georgian buildings.
- 4.4.2 The central river, astride of which the town has developed, is characteristic of many of west Wales' towns and villages. The river Brenig here is particularly picturesque as it is neither too large nor too small and due to its partial canalisation, the settlement on either side has developed right up to its edge.



Fig. 7 The River Brenig runs through the centre of the area, with development right up to its edge

- 4.4.3 Pendre and Doldre, with their small cottages from various periods and winding lanes are also particularly picturesque and best explored on foot to appreciate the smaller historic and architectural features.
- 4.4.4 There has been some loss of architectural purity with later alteration including the replacement of features such as windows, doors, traditional shopfronts etc.
- 4.4.5 Tregaron's location and wider landscape positively contribute to its setting, with the wild beauty of the Cambrian Mountains and the ecology and accessibility of Cors Caron bringing in visitors from far and wide as well as being enjoyed by local communities.
- 4.4.6 Whilst the aesthetic of Tregaron is mostly positive there are a few negative attributes such as small untidy sites which could be improved and enhanced and the dilution of its overall charm, character and appearance through the incursion of modern materials and unsympathetic design, alterations and features.

4.5 Communal - High Significance

- 4.5.1 Tregaron has had an important role for the immediate and wider community throughout its existence. From its beginnings as an early Christian community, it's role as an administrative, economic and social centre in the Medieval and post-Medieval periods, through to its current local service centre role today, Tregaron demonstrates its importance to a large scattered rural community.
- 4.5.2 The services provided by the town throughout its history have supported the wider economic and social systems of west Wales, particularly through its early religious role and its later agricultural markets and support of the droving economy.
- 4.5.3 Whilst today tourism plays no small part in its economy, Tregaron has perhaps always been a place for visitors. From early pilgrims, Medieval fair and market goers, through the extended droving community and travellers, Tregaron has always provided a place to meet, do business and find food, company and shelter.
- 4.5.4 The conservation area contains a number of public buildings and community resources such as the church, Heritage Centre, pubs, chapels, shops, cafes, hotels, and community buildings amongst others.
- 4.5.5 During the process of producing this appraisal, an online survey was sent to stakeholders asking them what they thought was important about the conservation area and to identify any issues.



Fig. 8 The Heritage Centre, run solely by volunteers, has high communal value

4.5.6 The public consultation events sought to gather knowledge and views from stakeholders on the conservation area. This included a public consultation drop-in event which was held at Tregaron during January 2024. Electronic copies of the draft Management Plan were shared with stakeholders. Eighteen people (and one dog!) attended the drop-in session which is an extremely high turn out for a small community. A good number of comments were received which have been used to revise the appraisal. Responses related to the following matters, amongst others:

- Support for boundary extension and suggestions for it to be extended further
- Support for environmental enhancement of untidy sites, additional sites noted
- Concerns over the future of Trefelin, an empty Grade II Listed Building
- Issue of empty properties in the Conservation Area
- Better promotion of historic assets is required (e.g., use of the Square's electronic information board, tours etc.)
- Better maintenance of historic buildings is required
- Highways and open spaces are detracting from the Conservation Area (unadopted roads and area around B4343 (see map below) and to west of Y Talbot)
- Funding to improve shop fronts is needed

- The Tregaron Townscape Heritage Initiative was successful in the past
- Local people are not concerned with on street parking and perceive any parking restrictions would negatively impact on access to shops and local services
- Extending the opening hours of the Heritage Centre would be difficult with current resources
- Noted empty properties may provide opportunities for expansion of local businesses
- Need to be clear what ‘improving views of the church’ might actually involve

4.5.7 This rate of engagement is, from experience, considered to be very positive. It is clear from the written and verbal responses that the local community has immense pride in the town, its architecture and history and would like it to be preserved and enhanced. Specifically, more investment in particular projects such as addressing empty properties and environmental improvements to untidy sites.

5. LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CONTEXT

5.1 Geology and Topography

5.1.1 Tregaron sits within a small plain at the confluence of the Brenig river valley and several small valleys radiating out east and west. The lower area of Cors Caron dominates the north whilst the high hills of the Cambrian Mountains run in a north-east to south west line to the west of the town.

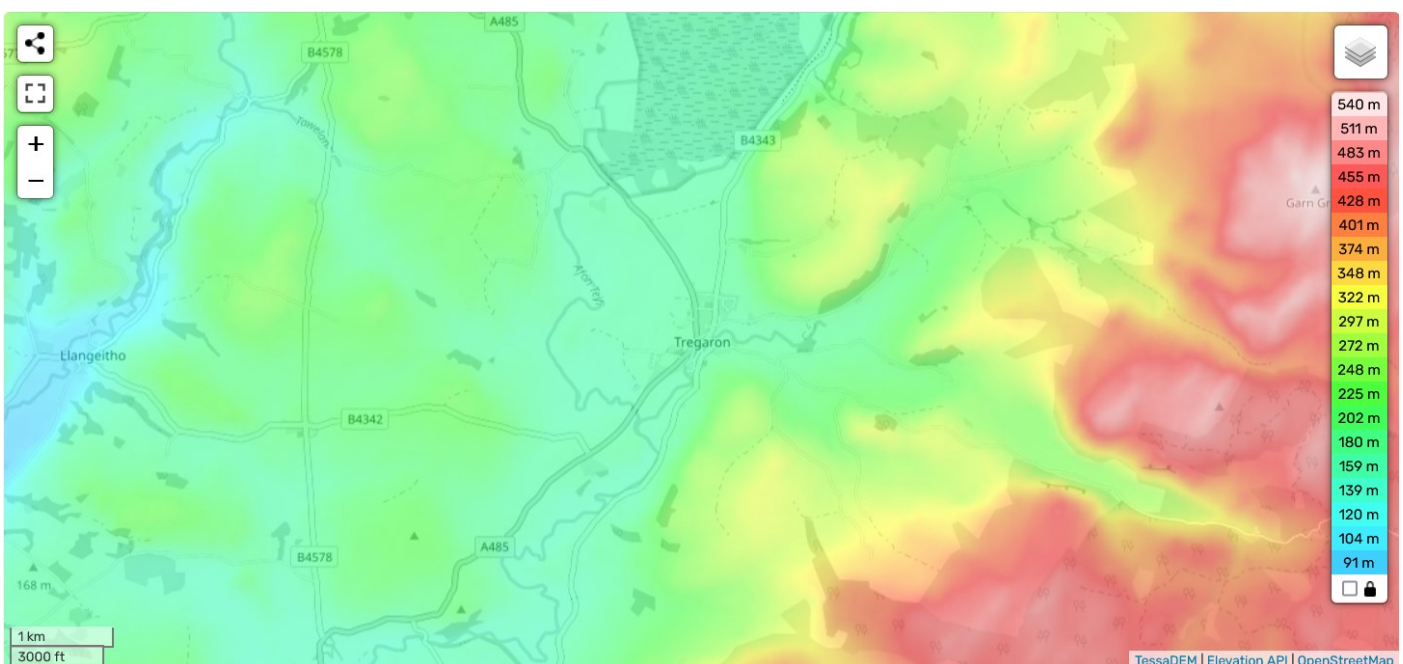


Fig. 9 Topographical Map of Tregaron

(<https://en-gb.topographic-map.com/map-6vknx/Tregaron/>)

- 5.1.2 Tregaron is relatively low lying at approximately 168m above sea level compared with its wider hinterland. The land rises slightly to the western side of the town whilst its central geography is dominated by the river valley and its floodplain.
- 5.1.3 The upper Teifi valley is underlain by early Silurian rocks whereas the exposed valley sides and gorges of the lower valley are Ordovician. The sequence is dominated by turbidites, a sedimentary rock type consisting of repetitive sequences of sandstones, siltstones and mudstones, occurring in various proportions. The upper part of the Teifi Valley, extending north-east from Llanybydder, lies along the trace of the Teifi Anticlinorium which comprises an array of NE-trending folds. The eastern flank of the valley in this area is defined by the Teifi Fault which can be traced north-east as a strong topographic lineament along the transition with the Cambrian Mountains from Cwmann to Tregaron. This structure has clearly exerted a control on the orientation of the valley in this area.

5.2 Landscape Character

- 5.2.1 As with several of the other Conservation Areas in Ceredigion, Tregaron is located within the Teifi Valley National Landscape Character Area. This area covers the course of the longest river in West Wales and its associated settlements. Natural Resources Wales' description of the Tregaron area includes the following relevant points:
- The valley is predominantly rural and enclosed for agriculture and there is a wide variety of field sizes and areas with thick hedgerows, mainly enclosing pastures;
 - Cors Caron is noted as one of the most intact and ecologically important raised bog landscapes in the UK;
 - Traditional buildings are simple in form, of local stone and slate, but modern buildings show greater variation in style and material;
 - There is a trend to brightly colour old buildings;
 - Sites of mills and factories illustrate the historic use of the river for power;
 - Views are typically focussed along the valley and the presence of the adjacent Cambrian Mountains does not dominate the scene;
 - Roads that pass along and across the valley are not major transport routes, but link the small market towns and villages located every few miles, usually close to the main river;
 - These settlements blend into their background, forming small tight-knit groups of buildings with a prominent church or castle.

5.2.2 Tregaron is located on the fringes of the Upland Ceredigion character area, recognised in the Cadw, CCW and ICOMOS's *Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales* as one of only 36 'outstanding' landscapes identified in Wales.

6. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Prehistoric

6.1.1 Archaeological artefacts, such as stone axes, worked flints and so on, suggest that there has been human activity in the area from at least the late Neolithic onwards. There are a number of well preserved pre-historic sites in the area such as the Iron Age hillforts at Sunnyhill, Castell Flemish and Castell Rhyfell. The circular shape of the churchyard is traditionally thought to indicate an early, and possibly prehistoric, religious significance for the site prior to its later occupation by Christian communities. It has even been suggested that the mound on which the church is built is a Bronze Age barrow. Palaeoenvironmental evidence suggests that the earliest agricultural activity in the area dates from around 400BC.



Fig. 10 The church is built on top of a prominent mound, the origins and purpose of which has been the subject of scholarly debate

6.2 Roman

- 6.2.1 There is little evidence of any direct Roman occupation or influence on the native population at Tregaron, although the Roman military fort and vicus at Llanio is only 3 miles to the south.

6.3 Medieval

- 6.3.1 Early Christian inscribed stones found within the fabric of St Caron's Church suggest that there was a church occupying this site from as early as the 6th century.
- 6.3.2 St David, the Patron Saint of Wales, is said to have addressed an important Church Synod meeting in nearby Llanddewi Brefi in c.AD545 and it seems likely that if there was an early church at Tregaron that the community would have been similarly receptive to new Christian ideas.
- 6.3.3 Just outside the town is the well of Ffynnon Garon, whose water was believed to contain healing properties. This may have been a focal point of pre-Christian ritual practice later to be adopted by Christians as a holy well in an attempt to appropriate pagan sites and beliefs into Christian practices.
- 6.3.4 A local historian, Daniel Davies, states that a church was erected on the present site in the years 1017 to 1019 but there is no other evidence to back up this date. However, it seems certain that a strong Christian presence and possibly a church was established at Tregaron prior to the Norman invasion.
- 6.3.5 Tregaron was unusual in that it had a peaceful and stable time during the Norman period, probably due to its lack of a strategically desirable castle, and it continued to develop and thrive.
- 6.3.6 It was clearly an important local centre by 1292, when Edward I granted a Royal Charter allowing a weekly market and an annual fair to be held at Tregaron. The Ffair Garon, was once a three day fair held on the 15th, 16th and 17th March, and was a major social and trading event. At roughly the same time Edward granted the lordship of Caron to Geoffrey Clement and it remained within the ownership of the Clement family until the mid 15th century.

6.4 Post Medieval

- 6.4.1 Tregaron had become the chief town of the Pennarth Hundred by the first half of the 16th century. This makes it likely that the town was not only a commercial centre, but an administrative centre as well, with free courts administering justice. The annual Ffair Garon was at this time one of the largest fairs in Wales.

- 6.4.2 It was during the 16th century that the legendary Twm Shôn Catti - the 'Welsh Robin Hood' - was born at Tregaron. As with all great legends there may be more than a grain of truth amongst the stories of his exploits and what does seem likely is his association with the town, the dangers of travel in this period, and the discrepancy of status between rich and poor. It is said that he later become a wealthy landowner and a Justice of the Peace, living in a grand house near Tregaron.
- 6.4.3 The rise of Nonconformity in the 17th century was embraced by the community at Tregaron and its surrounding agricultural communities, although they were obliged to meet in secret until the 1689 Act of Toleration, which allowed Nonconformists to worship in public, use existing buildings and build their own as places of worship. By the 18th century there was substantial Nonconformist movement in the town and Bwlchgwynt Chapel was first built in 1774.



Fig. 11 Bwlchgwynt Chapel was founded in 1774 although the present chapel was built in 1833 and altered in 1865 and in the late 19th century

- 6.4.4 The first known surviving documentary sources for the town date from the 17th century and give an insight into what was a period of unusual unrest and activity. During the Civil War, Tregaron was reportedly razed by Col. Gerard on his journey from Montgomeryshire to

Haverfordwest. Nevertheless, Tregaron managed to continue to develop and prosper and the woollen industry grew to be one of the main industries in the area in the 18th century, with the hosiery and flannel woven by the women of Tregaron gaining a reputation for its quality.

- 6.4.5 Records from this period suggest a small nucleated town of around 50 houses, although there is likely to have been some additional urban expansion in the second half of the century. It is noted that the square in front of the Talbot Hotel was home to the weekly market while the annual Ffair Garon, hire fairs, and sheep fairs were held on fields on the edge of the town.
- 6.4.6 That Tregaron had become a significant town of economic importance by the 19th century is recognised by the opening of the 'Aberystwyth and Tregaron Bank' here in 1810. Its 'black sheep' bank notes, famous for their representation of their value by the number of sheep, rams or lambs, are indicators of a thriving local economy based on wool, droving, agriculture, and supporting businesses, such as blacksmiths and public houses.



Fig. 12 The 18th century, Grade II listed, Trefelin House, said to have been an Inn in the 19th century

- 6.4.7 Several historic directories demonstrate the social and economic transformation of Tregaron in the 19th century. Samuel Lewis records a town of 655 inhabitants in 1833, clearly needing more than the 50 houses recorded just 100 years previously. Six inns and public houses are recorded in 1835 along with a wide range of trades, such as blacksmiths, a saddler, butcher,

millers, chemists and carpenters - totalling 27 traders. The recorded names indicate a close-knit community of extended families.

- 6.4.8 By 1844, there were about 800 inhabitants and 64 traders and by 1851 there were three woollen factories employing 176 knitters and 63 tailors. Tregaron was thriving by the 1860s and the arrival of the railway, which brought both benefits and disadvantages to the town, although building continued and the size of the town continued to increase. Indeed the town virtually doubled in size between 1840 and 1890.

6.5 20th Century and Modern

- 6.5.1 The 20th century saw the end of some of the traditional economies of the town with railways replacing the droving industry and the woollen industry in decline. All five mills at Tregaron were closed by 1929. However, the market and fairs continued to flourish, and Tregaron retained its importance as an agricultural market town and as an administrative centre.
- 6.5.2 The mid and later 20th century saw some expansion of the outskirts of the town including housing and industrial estates, particularly to the north of the town.
- 6.5.3 Two enhancement schemes have been run within the town: A Townscape Heritage Scheme between 2004 and 2008, and an Uplands Rural Heritage Scheme Partnership between 2008 and 2011.

6.6 Historic Mapping

- 6.6.1 Dyfed Archaeological Trust produced a conjectural map of the potential extent of the Medieval settlement at Tregaron in the 14th century. This does not, however, include the known Medieval mill site and associated industry at Pendre, so potentially the settlement was larger than is depicted here.

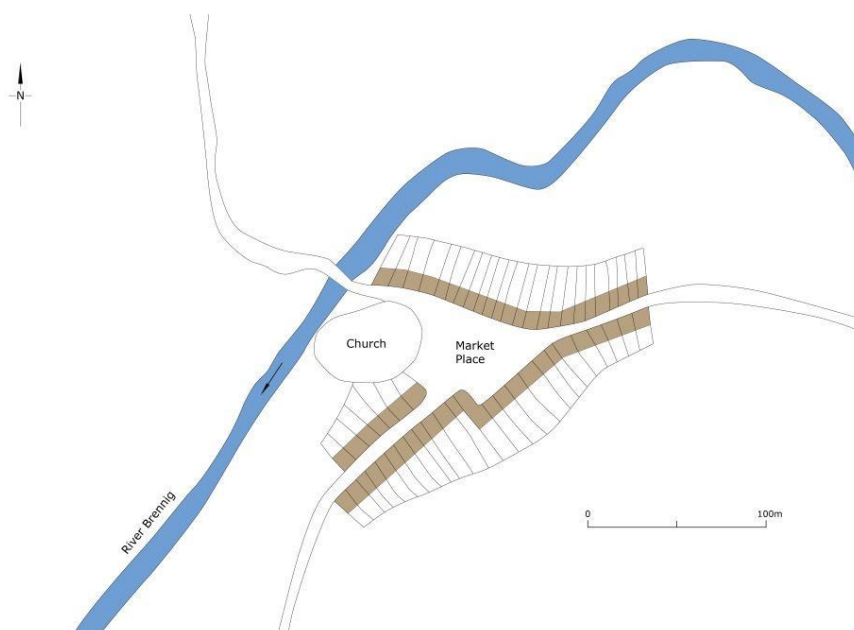


Fig. 13 Dyfed Archaeological Trust's conjectural map of Tregaron c. 1320

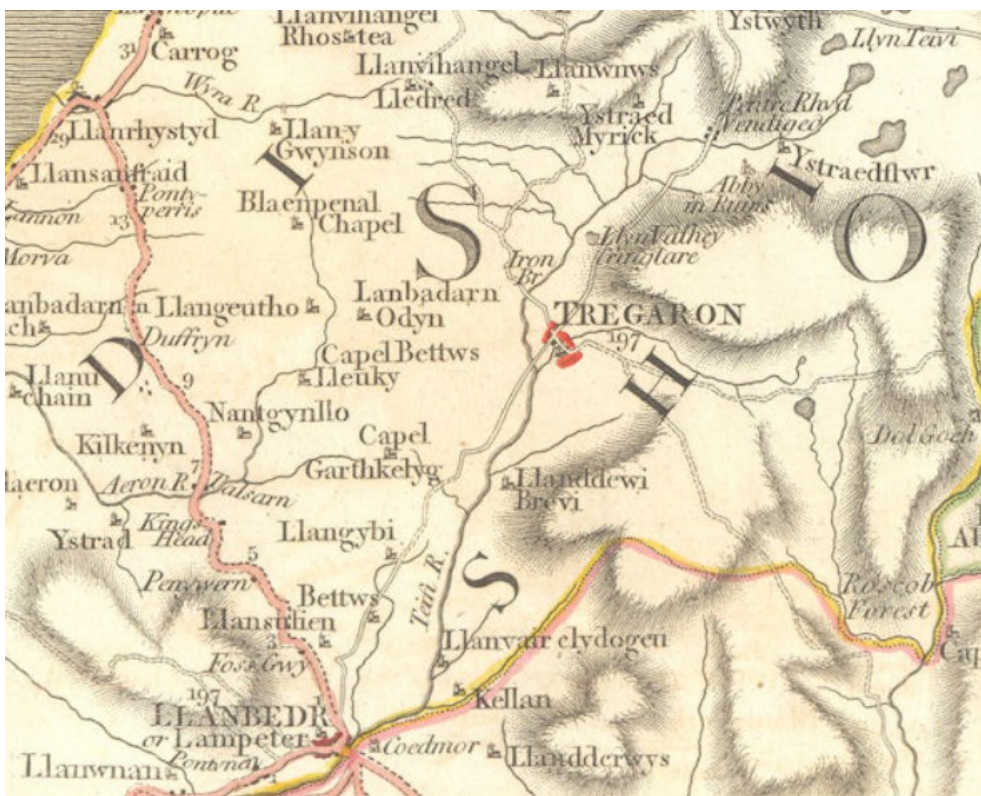
(<https://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/wp/discovery/projects/tregaron/>)

- 6.6.2 One of the earliest maps showing Tregaron is Saxton's map of Cardigan in 1610. Tregaron is shown as a substantial settlement, particularly in comparison with other settlements in the area. This perhaps demonstrates its economic and social status rather than the actual size of the settlement at this time.

**Fig. 14 Detail from
Saxton's 1610 map**



- 6.6.3 Also at a large scale but showing some interesting clustering of buildings in the historic town centre and giving us a good idea of the extent and layout of the town in the 18th century is Cary's Map of Cardiganshire from 1794.



**Fig. 15 Detail from Cary's
map of Cardiganshire 1794**

- 6.6.4 Most historic town mapping of any useful detail usually start with the 1840s Tithe maps. However, at Tregaron we are fortunate that we have the original surveyors drawings of the first edition Ordnance Survey dating from the 1820s and it is interesting to compare the two.

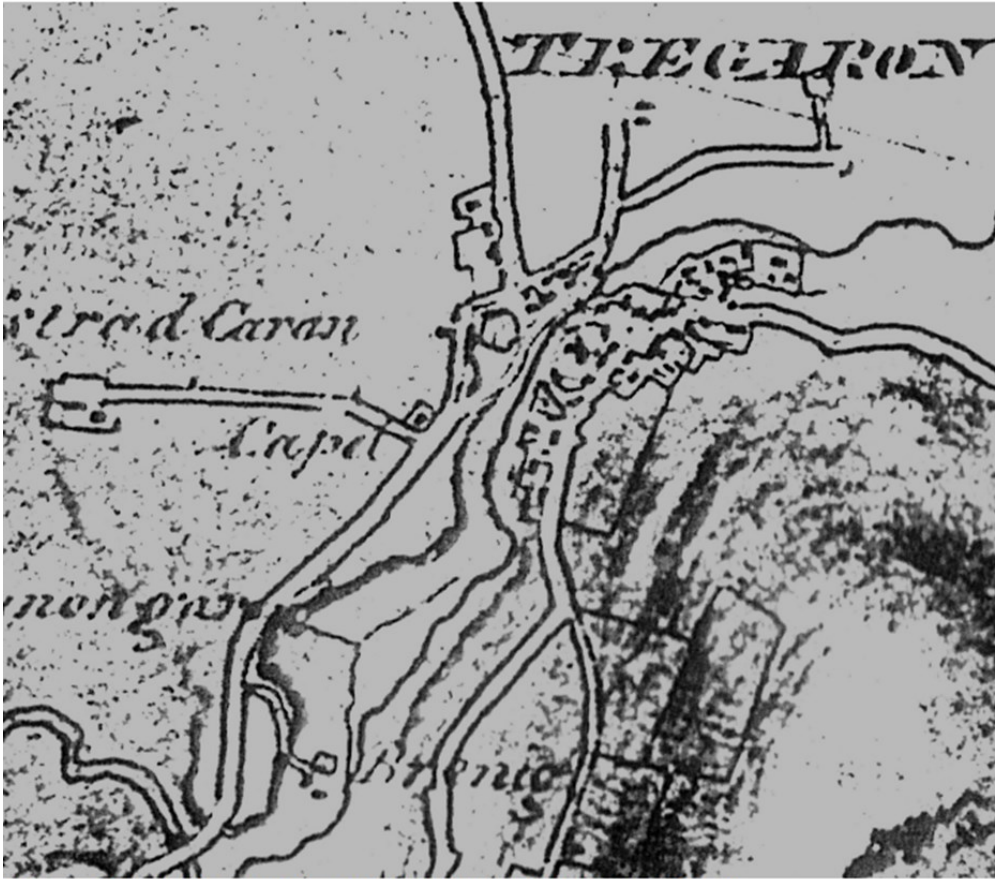


Fig. 16 Detail from the OS surveyor's original drawings 1820-21



Fig. 17 Detail from the 1840s Tithe Map

6.6.5 By the end of the 19th century Tregaron had expanded considerably. This is shown in detail on the first edition Ordnance Survey map published in 1889.



Fig. 18 First edition Ordnance Survey map 1889

6.6.6 Dyfed Archaeological Trust (marketing name Cambria Archaeology) has also produced a useful map showing the later development of the town following the production of the 1889 OS map.

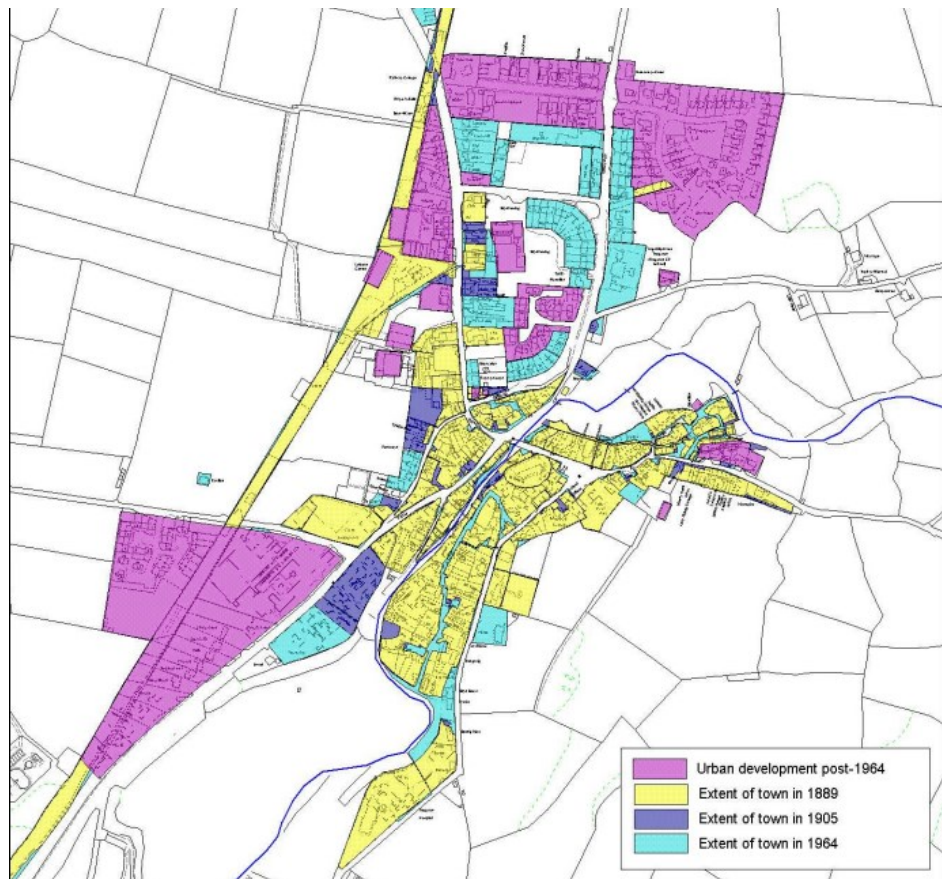


Fig. 19 Dyfed Archaeological Trust's map showing the post 1889 expansion of Tregaron (Cambria Archaeology 2007)

7. SPATIAL ANALYSIS AND ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

7.1 Character Areas - Introduction

7.1.1 Although comparatively small in size, Tregaron can be divided into distinct character areas, which are each described in detail below and shown on the map overleaf. These character areas have been identified through an analysis of the historical development of the town combined with an assessment of its current character and appearance:

- Historic Town Centre and Pendre
- Doldre (Dol-dre)
- Later Post-Medieval expansion

7.2 Historic Town Centre and Pendre

7.2.1 This area covers the Medieval core of the town which grew up around the church and the Medieval settlement at Pendre which grew up around the Medieval mill. It covers most of the extent of the pre-nineteenth century town.

7.2.2 The only known Medieval fabric remaining appears to be the church tower, although the Talbot Hotel, perhaps rightly, claims 13th century origins there is no visible confirmation of this. This does not, however, preclude the possibility of below ground archaeological remains from the Medieval town.

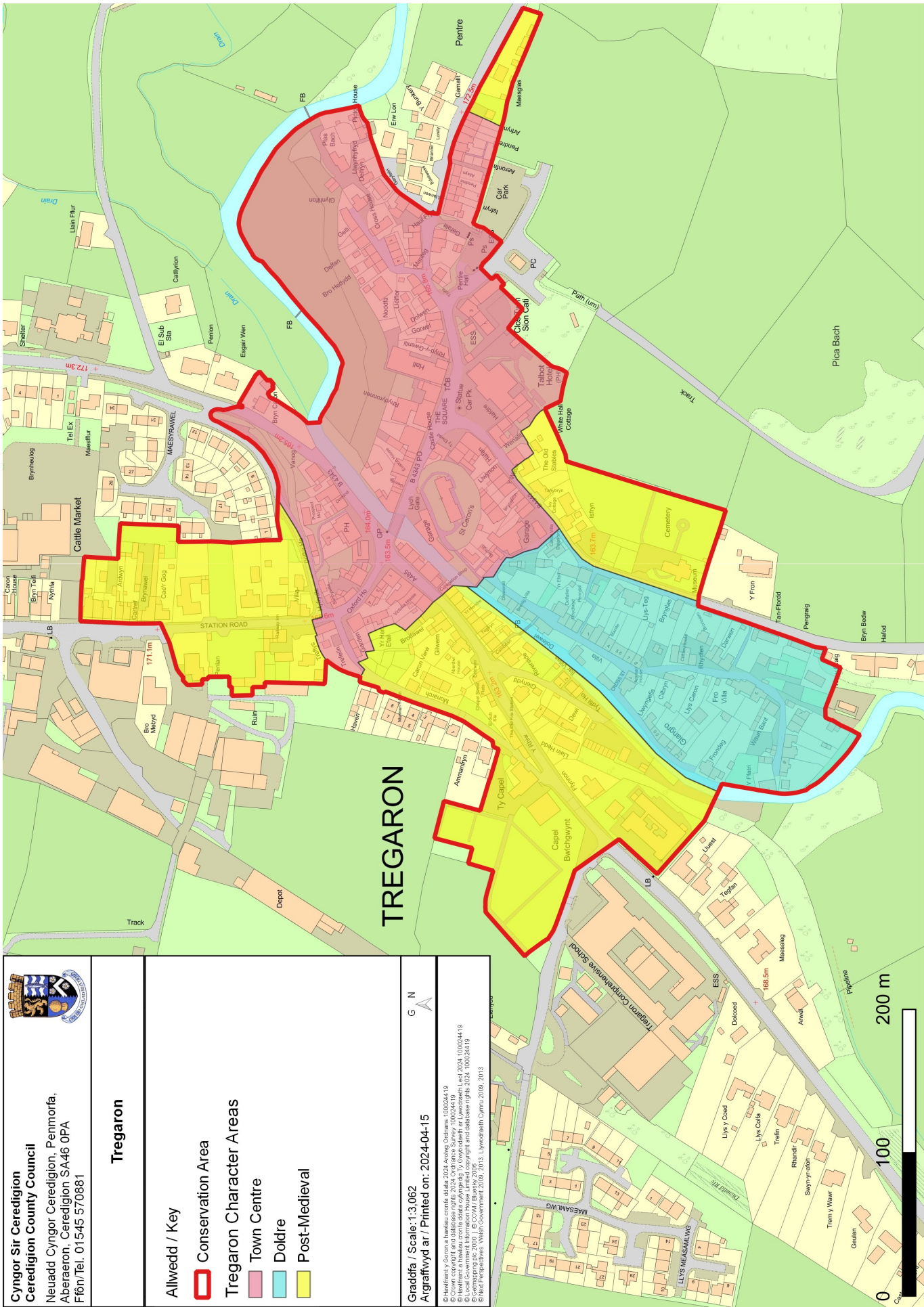
7.2.3 The dominant features in this area are the Church of Saint Caron, the square and the river crossing.

7.2.4 The remains of the medieval church are incorporated into the substantial structure seen today within its distinctive circular churchyard, suggestive of pre-Christian origins. The church is raised on a mound surrounded by mature yew trees and many substantial chest tombs. The church is Grade II Listed, with a 14th century tower, while the rest was substantially rebuilt in the early 1800s and again in 1878-9 by Archibald Ritchie of Chester.

7.2.5 The frontages on the east side of the river, to the north/northeast of the church, are evidence of the later rebuilding of the original properties which once existed there in the 18th and early 19th century, and evidence the growth of the town during the mid-Victorian period, which saw new and more refined buildings replacing the earlier workshops and dwellings.

7.2.6 Whilst the Medieval houses have been altered and rebuilt, there is a possibility that some medieval fabric may remain within these buildings. The plot layout in this area is unlikely to have changed since the Medieval period.

Fig. 20 Tregaron Character Areas



- 7.2.7 The square is the site of the former Medieval market but today is characterised by its Neo-Georgian architecture and the backdrop of the Talbot Hotel. A large statue of Sir Henry Richard also dominates this space in addition to car parking within the square and on the street around the junction. A smaller wooden statue of Twm Sion Cati has also been added in front of the Rhiannon Centre. A Grade II Listed red telephone kiosk is located in front of the Memorial Hall. Each building has an individual architectural character but contributes to the overall appearance of a smart Neo-Georgian town centre.
- 7.2.8 The area of Pendre has a less refined character, more reminiscent of village cottages, of a smaller scale than around the square. It is the known site of Medieval industry including a mill and is likely to have developed from this period. Short rows of terraced properties are interspersed with individual buildings with rural character. Drip stones on some chimneys indicate that the buildings were once thatched. The building layout generally follows the lines of the road and lanes with few front gardens and buildings opening directly onto the street. The occasional property is constructed at odd angles against the general grain, these may be indicative of the sites of older buildings from the Medieval village. It is highly likely that the layout is Medieval and some of the older properties in the town are located here.



Fig. 21 Pendre has a village character with some older properties at angles to the general grain



Fig. 22 Drip stones on some chimneys may indicate the earlier origins of some properties which might originally have had thatched roofs

7.2.9 A small area to the west of the river is included in this character area, which is shown as developed by the 18th century and likely has earlier Medieval origins. It was an important meeting point of roads heading north, south, east and west. This area includes the bridge crossing and the continuation of the Neo-Georgian architecture with the Red Lion and buildings around the crossroads (Sgwar Fach) with some older cottages going up the hill to the west. The former Natwest Bank (Grade II Listed) is a fine example of an inter-War building utilising the revival of timber-framing. Trefelin, also Grade II Listed is the sole intact 18th century house surviving within the town.



Fig. 23 The area just to the west of the river crossing. Some of the properties on the left may have earlier origins despite later alterations

7.2.10 The impact of the large public car park on the setting of the conservation area has been much improved by the conversion of the stone building to its entrance at the west and its toilet block. Some use of more traditional hard landscaping has also improved its appearance.

7.2.11 Some of the key characteristics of this area include:

- Neo-Georgian architecture
- The parish church of Saint Caron, its mound and churchyard
- The open space of the square with key features such as the statue, telephone kiosk and good street furniture and planters
- The Talbot Hotel
- Various institutional and commercial buildings such as the Memorial Hall, former banks, the church, former council offices, shops and public houses
- Good survival of architectural features and materials such as windows, doors, architraves, chimneys (some with drip stones), quoins, drip moulds, carriageway entries, traditional shopfronts, stone boundary walls, natural slate roofs (often Welsh slate), rubble stone buildings, contrasting brick detailing, and so on.
- Rubble stone buildings, some with colourful painted render, others exposed and with contrasting brick detailing
- Small traditional cottages in short terraces characteristic of various architectural styles and periods of development
- Individual older buildings interspersed between the cottages with traditional features, materials and rural character
- Few small open green spaces and private gardens publicly visible
- Medieval street and plot layout
- High archaeological potential for Medieval remains both sub-surface and within existing buildings
- Cobbled paths and surfaces
- Some sensitive use of hard landscaping materials
- Public car park
- Small scale building in Pendre with larger more institutional buildings around the two squares and along the main roads
- The main droving road across the mountains passes through this area
- Open green space to the north and west of Pendre enclosed by the river to the north assists in creating a rural character to this area
- Two historic water pumps remain in the Pendre area

7.2.12 There are, of course, some negative aspects to this area such as the occasional replacement of original windows, doors and shop fronts with poor modern alternatives, including UPVC. The garage next to the bridge has little architectural merit and negatively impacts on the setting of the church. The bridge crossing is a poorly designed modern construction which would benefit from a sensitive alternative in traditional materials. The Pendre area and the area to the west of the river seem to have more loss of traditional architectural features, such as windows and doors, and the historic character could be much improved by sensitive replacements. There is an area to the south of the car park, behind the Talbot Hotel, which appears to be disused empty ground partially surrounded by old Heras fencing and is becoming an area prone to fly tipping. This is outside the current conservation area boundary but negatively impacts on its setting.

7.3 Doldre (or Dol-dre)

7.3.1 Doldre is primarily an area of mid 19th century development. Partial canalisation of the river in 1840 allowed development on the floodplain and the site of the former Common. The growth and prosperity of the town in this period particularly relating to the woollen industry produced the need for additional housing. It is said many of the properties in this area were originally *Ty Unnos*, where if a person could build a house in a single night and have smoke coming out of the chimney by morning they could claim the freehold of the land. These overnight houses were generally of turf which was gradually replaced with stone. The random layout of this area with its winding lanes is typical of this type of development and it is likely that original plot boundaries remain.



Figs. 24 and 25 Possible Ty Unnos with stone and slate replacing the original turf, cob and thatch

7.3.2 Some original stone houses remain in this area and the large number of what today would be seen as small stone barns or sheds could be additional evidence. Drip stones on some house

chimneys show that they were originally thatched. There are also areas of original cobbled paving with small lanes or paths between the houses.

7.3.3 On the western side of this area the deepening of the river allowed for properties to be built right up to the river bank.

7.3.4 Some of the key characteristics of this area include:

- Visually distinctive character area
- Small narrow winding lanes
- Original stone cottages, often single storey (some with drip stone chimneys)
- Original plot layouts
- Small stone barns, sheds (or original *Ty Unnos*)?
- Development up to the river bank
- Cobbled paths and surfaces
- Stone boundary walls
- Distinctive mid and later 19th century character
- Stone and whitewashed cottages
- Small scale buildings with a relatively high density layout
- Short rows of terraced houses and some individual properties



Fig. 26 Original cobbled alleys survive in some places in the Doldre area

7.3.5 There are, of course, some negative aspects to this area such as the occasional replacement of original windows, doors and shop fronts with poor modern alternatives. There are also a number of untidy sites, particularly where rubbish has been dumped, which could relatively easily be improved through negotiation with owners. There are some examples of poorly designed modern extensions and a general lack of maintenance on some properties. The lack of parking and narrow lanes can cause traffic issues on occasion. Since the area is best explored on foot, a restriction on non-resident vehicles might improve access for those who live in the area. It appears a very private area and few visitors are likely to explore it, however its interesting history and attractive appearance could be better interpreted and exploited for the tourism of the town. Some of the small stone barns (*Ty Unnos?*) are in a state of disrepair. They are potentially very important historic features of this area.

7.4 Later Post-Medieval Expansion

- 7.4.1 The outer fringes of the town are characterised by later post-Medieval expansion. This includes most of the western part of Tregaron, the areas to the south and eastern of Doldre, the far eastern part of Pendre and the area to the north west of the town centre.
- 7.4.2 This is the typical late Victorian and 20th century expansion of a town with a medieval core where land was only available on the peripheries. The coming of the railway also encouraged settlement to the north and western parts of the town. Tregaron's size virtually doubled in the fifty years between 1840 and 1890. During this time a number of earlier cottages and buildings were demolished and rebuilt, and new areas were developed.
- 7.4.3 Again, typically, much of this expansion is dominated by functional and commercial service buildings such as schools, chapels, the workhouse / hospital, the police station, hotels and parlour shops along Chapel Street. Larger late Victorian and early - mid 20th century dwellings also appear in these areas. Later housing estates also dominate the outer areas, particularly to the west and north.
- 7.4.4 The annual Ffair Garon was once held on fields to the west of the river, although the site itself has now been built over.
- 7.4.5 The northern area around the former railway station has developed into a mostly industrial area interspersed by late Victorian dwellings forming the setting of the conservation area in this location. Primarily only residential properties along Station Road are included within the conservation area boundary.



Fig. 27 Station Road is characterised by late Victorian residential development

7.4.6 There are a few mid 20th century bungalows of distinctive appearance in these outer areas with good architectural detailing. Other buildings include, a large number of detached former farmhouses, often with small stone barns, and short terraces of late Victorian housing. Other distinctive buildings include the two former schools, the chapels (one now ruined) and a couple of originally tin built post war single storey dwellings with interesting timber detailing. Unfortunately one of these has now been altered beyond all recognition and the other is empty and in poor condition. The former workhouse to the south of the town (built 1876) closed in 1914 and was converted into a TB sanatorium, later becoming a cottage hospital in the 1960s. This was extended with an additional wing and opened in 1982 as the current hospital.

7.4.7 The setting of these areas are mostly characterised by open pasture fields with hedging. The north has an industrial area and the cattle market and to the south west is a further area of ribbon development along the Lampeter Road dating from the mid and later 20th century.

7.4.8 Some of the key characteristics of this area include:

- Late Victorian architecture and detailing
- Detached stone farmhouses
- Chapels and schools

- Small scale mid 20th century development characterised by distinctive individual and paired buildings of interesting architecture and high quality
- Post Medieval development along the main arterial roads
- Development associated with the railway
- The former workhouse / current hospital
- Parlour shops along Chapel Street
- Some continuation of Neo-Georgian styling morphing into more traditional late Victorian architecture and detailing
- Edge of town development with views out over agricultural land

7.4.9 There are again some negative features of these areas which detract from their overall character. This includes some untidy sites and empty buildings. In some places there has been replacement of original windows, doors and shop fronts with poor modern alternatives. The overall character of some later Victorian buildings has been altered through inappropriate extension, loss of and alteration of architectural features and poor choice of materials. There are a few modern infill developments of dubious architectural quality. A lack of maintenance of some historic buildings has been identified in these areas.

8. DESIGNATED HISTORIC ASSETS

8.1 Listed Buildings

8.1.1 There are seven Listed Buildings within the conservation area. They are all Listed at Grade II and shown on the map overleaf.

- Bwlchgwynt Chapel - Cadw Ref: 18480
- (Former) National Westminster Bank - Cadw Ref: 18477
- Church of Saint Caron - Cadw Ref: 9909
- Telephone Call Box by the Memorial Hall - Cadw Ref: 18479
- Henry Richard Memorial - Cadw Ref: 18476
- The Talbot Hotel - Cadw Ref: 18478
- Trefelin - Cadw Ref: 10691

8.2 Scheduled Monuments

8.2.1 There are no scheduled monuments within the conservation area.

8.3 Other Designated Assets

8.3.1 There are no other heritage designations within or in the setting of the conservation area.

Fig. 28 Designated Historic Assets



8.4 Buildings of Local Interest

- 8.4.1 There are two levels of buildings of interest - those which might meet the criteria for being included on a list of buildings of local special architectural or historic interest (see <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/historic-assets/other-historic-assets/historic-assets-special-local-interest>) and those which positively contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 8.4.2 Local planning authorities may choose to identify historic assets of special local interest and keep a list of them. This is known as 'local listing'. The criteria for the selection of assets should be drawn up by the local authority but can be based on Cadw's guidance. Selection should also be based on community involvement. Planning authorities can then develop policies for their protection and enhancement through Local Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 8.4.3 Buildings which positively contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area are often traditional buildings with historic value, quality architecture or detailing. It does not mean that they have not been changed in some way nor that there is not room for enhancement, only that their loss would negatively impact on the overall character or appearance of the designated area. Buildings not included on the list should not be viewed negatively since there are often opportunities to enhance a building or structure or reinstate features. Their lack of inclusion may mean that several elements of a traditional building have been lost or its integrity severely compromised through later alteration. Lack of inclusion should not, by itself, be a reason for granting consent for demolition or for permitting poor quality development, design, materials or alterations.
- 8.4.4 Within Tregaron Conservation Area there are many buildings which retain their original architectural features, have elements of previous historic development enshrined within their fabric or contribute to understanding the historical development of the town. These buildings are likely to positively contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 8.4.5 Suggestions for buildings which might be included on a 'local list include:
- Any Neo-Georgian style building which retains the majority of its original features
 - Any of the older stone cottages within Pendre, Doldre and the historic town centre which retain the majority of their architectural features
 - The schools and chapels which are not Listed
 - The chest tombs in the churchyard

- Any of the parlour shops in Chapel Street which retain the majority of their original features
- The small stone barns (and possible *Ty Unnos*) within Doldre and elsewhere
- Buildings and features on the Historic Environment Record
- The following specific buildings have also been identified:

Former Barclays Bank (Y Banc)

Rhiannon Centre

Cross House, Pendre

Tregaron Hospital (former Workhouse)

Heritage Centre

Ty Capel

Hafod, Dewi Road

Delfan, Pendre?

Dryscol, Pendre?

Plas Bach, Pendre

Yr Hen Efail (Old Smithy)

Older chest tombs in churchyard

Former County School, Lampeter Road

Ruins of the former Methodist Chapel, Dewi Road

Memorial Hall



Fig. 29 Chest tombs often have aesthetic, architectural, historical and communal interest

9 HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS AND TRADITIONS

9.1 Places

- 9.1.1 Local tradition says that the mound on which the church stands is the burial place of Saint Caron in the 3rd century AD.
- 9.1.2 Ffynnon Garon, recorded by Francis Jones (1954) as a holy well near Glanbrenig Farm, Tregaron, where the water was drunk with sugar at Easter time. It was also customary for lovers to bring each other gifts of bread, eat it and wash it down with water from the well.
- 9.1.3 On 10th July 1848 “Batty’s Menagerie” visited Tregaron, and one of the circus elephants died in the stable at the Ivy Bush Inn, from drinking water contaminated with lead. The elephant is said to be buried ‘behind the Talbot Hotel’, although the exact site is unknown.

9.2 People

- 9.2.1 Saint Caron was reputedly a man of lowly origins but according to Meyrick (1907) "his courage and generous deportment obtained him the sovereignty in Wales: he made war against the Romans, reigned seven years and was buried in Tregaron". Other sources suggest that there are two suggestions as to the identity of Caron. He is associated with either being Carausius, a 3rd-century Roman military commander or the 4th-century holy man, Saint Ciarán of Saighir in Ireland.
- 9.2.2 Sir Henry Richard was born in Tregaron in 1812. He was a Congregational minister and Welsh Member of Parliament between 1868–1888. In 1848 he was appointed Secretary to the Peace Society, gaining an international reputation as ‘The Apostle of Peace’. In 1868 he became M.P. for Merthyr and his concern for Welsh affairs in Parliament earned him the nickname, ‘the Member for Wales.’ He was also a prominent pioneer in education and in 1883 he became the first vice-president of Cardiff University College. He was also an active supporter of the anti-slavery movement.

**Fig. 30 Grade II Listed statue of Henry Richard,
‘The Apostle of Peace’**



- 9.2.3 Twm Sion Cati is a legendary figure possibly based on a real life person or people and known as the Welsh Robin Hood. He was born in Tregaron and following a varied, successful and often illegal career, he settled down at a 'grand house' in Tregaron as a venerated member of the local elite.

9.3 Events

- 9.3.1 The longest running events at Tregaron are probably the weekly livestock markets, formerly held in the square outside the Talbot and which are still running but on a fortnightly basis at the modern Cattle Market in the northern area of the town.
- 9.3.2 The annual Ffair Garon also has an extremely long history, being granted its Royal charter in 1292 and being still held today. It appears to have been a particularly special occasion, occurring over three days in March and becoming the largest such fair in Wales.
- 9.3.3 Tregaron still has an active programme of events - the Ffair Garon Traditional Country Fair is held every May whilst Tregaron also plays host to the Tregaron Music Festival, Tregaron Carnival, Tregaron Show and the Tregaron Eisteddfod, amongst others.

10 HIDDEN HISTORIES

10.1 Archaeological Potential

- 10.1.1 As has been noted above, Tregaron has a high archaeological potential for surviving remains from the Medieval period. This includes both below ground features and medieval material retained in standing buildings despite later alteration.
- 10.1.2 There is also a high potential for below ground remains dating to the 18th century and indeed some of the existing buildings may date, at least partially, to this period.
- 10.1.3 The existing building stock mostly dates from the 19th century and the growth and development of the town can be read through its architectural styles and features.
- 10.1.4 Dyfed Archaeological Trust produced an Historic Town Survey of Tregaron, which sets out the archaeological potential of individual areas in more detail and provides advice regarding planning zones. A summary of this can be found on their website.

11 BIODIVERSITY

11.1 Green Infrastructure

- 11.1.1 Tregaron has quite a high proportion of green space and infrastructure within town, primarily consisting of private gardens, the area around the church, the open fields around the edges and to the north of Pendre and small areas of green space around prominent buildings.

11.2 Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest

11.2.1 The River Brenig, as a tributary of the River Teifi is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Brenig is home to otters, with infrastructure being created for the animals during a project in 2008. The river was once frequented by Atlantic salmon but their numbers have declined. Brown trout are prevalent in the river and larger specimens can be caught in the narrower parts where the water runs deeper, eels can also be found.

11.2.2 Cors Caron lies just to the north of Tregaron and is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The ecological and habitat character can be summarised as:

- Inland water bodies (Standing water, Running water) (2%)
- Bogs, Marshes, Water fringed vegetation, Fens (70%)
- Humid grassland, Mesophile grassland (21%)
- Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (7%)

11.3 Tree Cover

11.3.1 DataMapWales' data on Urban Tree Cover does not include the area of Tregaron. In the absence of such data, modern aerial views provide a good indication of tree cover within the conservation area. Moderate areas of tree cover are shown particularly to the southern and northern parts of the area along the river. The positive impact of private gardens is also well represented. There are no Tree Preservation Orders within the area or its setting.



Fig. 31 Areas of tree cover positively contribute to the character of the conservation area and its setting - even in winter

12 SWOT ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <p>Historical significance</p> <p>Quality post-medieval architecture</p> <p>Survival of vernacular features and buildings</p> <p>Popular local centre / small tourism destination</p> <p>Good quality independent shops and cafes</p> <p>Proximity to tourist attractions (e.g. Cambrian Mountains, Cors Caron etc)</p> <p>Good tree coverage</p> <p>Good close to town parking</p> <p>Medieval town layout / Characterful narrow back lanes</p> <p>Variety of local facilities</p> <p>River</p> <p>Welsh language, culture and community activities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <p>Loss of original features on non-listed buildings despite Article 4 Direction</p> <p>A few poor quality shop fronts</p> <p>Untidy sites</p> <p>Replacement of traditional boundary features with non-traditional materials</p> <p>Build up of maintenance</p> <p>Risk of loss of historic surfaces (cobble)</p> <p>Loss of banks</p> <p>Key empty properties</p> <p>Lack of town centre space for expansion of existing businesses</p> <p>On street parking</p> <p>Lack of awareness of town history</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Improve views of church</p> <p>Riverside use, access and appearance</p> <p>Town information / marketing / trail</p> <p>Conservation / re-use of small stone barns and empty properties</p> <p>Removal of on street parking</p> <p>Outdoor pursuits / sustainable tourism</p> <p>Archaeological potential</p> <p>Protection or replacement of original architectural features on unlisted buildings</p> <p>Increase community and visitor awareness of history and significance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <p>Inappropriate new development and extensions, particularly commercial / industrial</p> <p>Loss of original architectural detailing and features</p> <p>Loss of tree cover</p> <p>Loss of open spaces to development</p> <p>Loss of tourism</p> <p>Change to vernacular character</p>



TREGARON

Conservation Area Management Plan

June 2025

Prepared for

Ceredigion County Council

This project is funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The GRIFFITHS HERITAGE CONSULTANCY Ltd

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This management plan addresses the issues raised in the appraisals and identifies appropriate responses commensurate with the significance of the area. The plan sets out realistic management objectives, taking into account resources and funding opportunities, and policies for enhancement.

2. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

2.1 Introduction to Article 4 Directions

- 2.1.1 The special interest of conservation areas is expressed in the character and appearance of the area and not in isolated buildings. This means that it is essential to manage change carefully in conservation areas to make sure that their character and appearance are safeguarded and enhanced. To achieve this, there are special controls around demolishing buildings and cutting down, topping and lopping trees.
- 2.1.2 There are additional planning controls which can be applied to conservation areas to protect the historic and architectural elements that make the area special. These special controls are called Article 4 Directions. They are decided by each local planning authority depending on what particular element of the conservation area they wish to protect. They are most likely to affect owners who want to make changes to the outside of their building. These can include cladding, replacing doors or windows, and installing satellite dishes and solar panels.
- 2.1.3 These controls are not intended to prevent change; instead they encourage developments in keeping with the area or that enhance its special character. Article 4 Directions could be used to help manage small-scale changes which would have little effect individually, but cumulatively could affect the appearance or character of a conservation area.
- 2.1.4 Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order 1995 enable local authorities to make directions that withdraw some permitted development rights, including from certain types of buildings or specified areas.
- 2.1.5 Article 4(1) Directions can be used to withdraw permitted development rights to most types of land and building but need to be approved by the Welsh Ministers.
- 2.1.6 Article 4(2) Directions apply to domestic buildings and structures, but only to those parts that front onto highways, waterways or open spaces. They can be confirmed by local authorities once the direction has been advertised locally and notice served on residents. Such directions could also apply to the demolition of the whole or part of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure, which may or may not be associated with a domestic property.

2.1.7 Article 4 (2) Directions are the most commonly applied direction for control within conservation areas. They are often applied in a 'stick and carrot' scenario, where controls are applied through the planning system and the use of a Direction but incentives are applied through a grant system applicable to replacement or maintenance of traditional features.

2.1.8 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2022 contains a change to Article 4 Directions but as of the date of writing this has not yet come into force. This change removes Article 4(2) Directions and allows Local Authorities to make Directions without recourse to Welsh Government Ministers. In effect there will be two types of Directions, both served under Article 4(1) of the Order:

- An **Immediate Direction** is where permitted development rights are withdrawn with immediate effect and are then confirmed by the LPA following consultation;
- A **Non-Immediate Direction** is where permitted development rights are withdrawn following consultation and confirmation by the LPA.



Fig. 32 Stone cottage in Tregaron with replaced windows style



Fig. 33 Stone cottage with traditional windows

2.2 Tregaron

2.2.1 Tregaron Conservation area has an Article 4(2) Direction which was put in place in 2004/5 and covers all of the Conservation Area. It applies to dwelling houses and to elevations fronting a highway, open space or waterway and covers the following areas of permitted development:

- Schedule 2 Part 1, Class A: The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house

- Schedule 2 Part 1, Class B: Enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof
- Schedule 2 Part 1, Class D: The erection or construction of a porch
- Schedule 2 Part 1, Class E: Provision of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure.
- Schedule 2 Part 1, Class F: Provision or replacement of a hard surface
- Schedule 2, Part 1, Class H: Installation, alteration or replacement of satellite antennae
- Schedule 2 Part 2, Class A: The erection, alteration, rendering, or removal, of boundary walls, fences, or railings

2.2.2 Despite the making of an article 4(2) Direction there are numerous examples of inappropriately designed windows and doors within the Conservation Area, particularly on non-listed buildings.



Fig. 34 Traditional stone boundary wall



Fig. 35 Historic cobbled surfacing

2.3 Recommendations

- 2.3.1 Ensure that owners, occupiers and planning officers are aware of the existing Article 4(2) and the restrictions to permitted development rights.
- 2.3.2 Commit to undertaking enforcement action when necessary.

3. BOUNDARY REVIEW

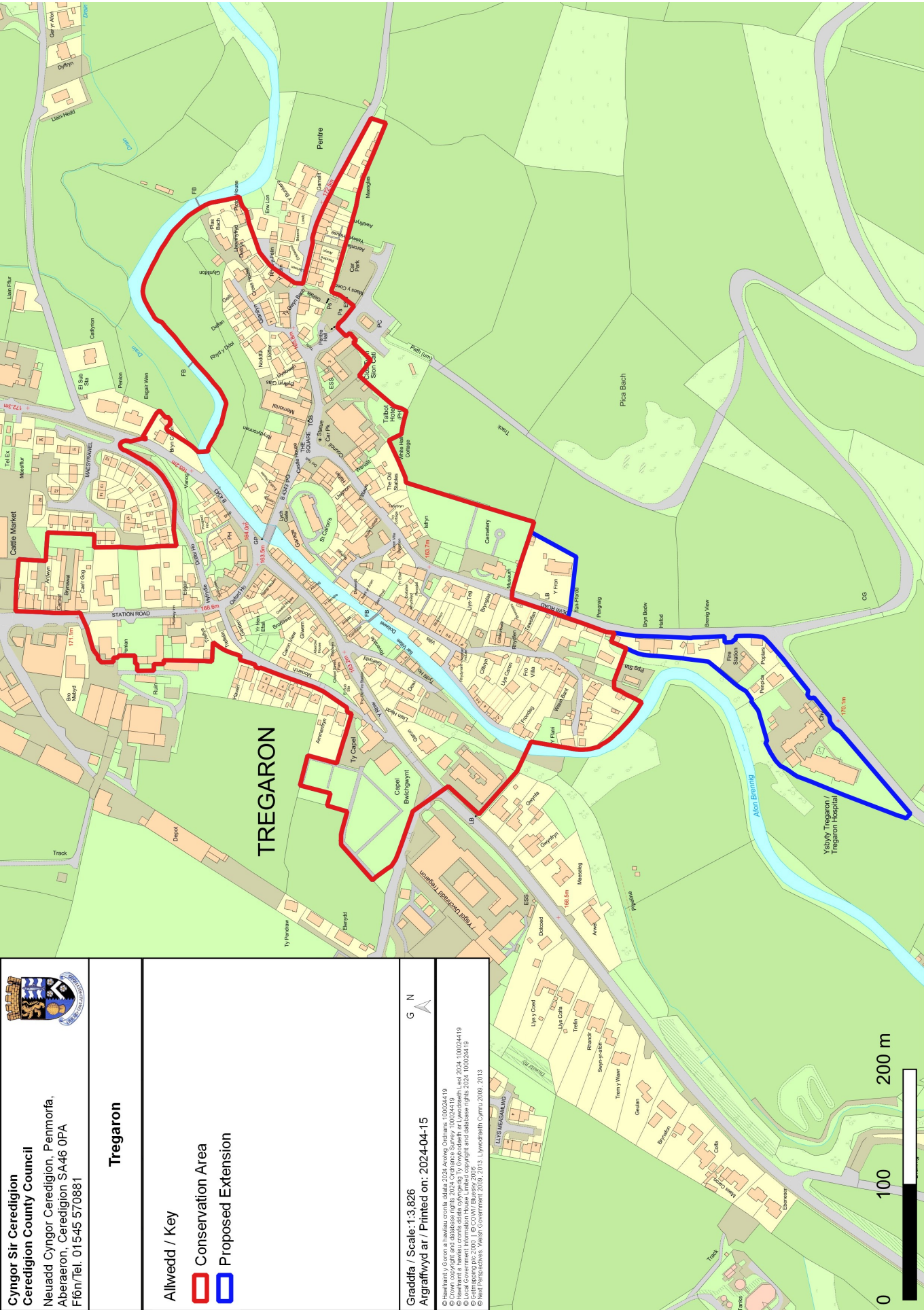
3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 It is important to review the boundary of conservation areas from time to time and consider where adjustments may be necessary. Many early conservation area boundaries were drawn very tightly and did not always acknowledge the contribution of later phases of development to the character of a place, or the value of historic plot patterns, for example. In some instances land boundaries have changed or good modern development has occurred.

3.2 Tregaron

- 3.2.1 The conservation area boundary at Tregaron has not been extended since it was first designated in 1989.
- 3.2.2 All of the original medieval part of the town and most of the later quality post-medieval development has been included within the boundary.
- 3.2.3 To the immediate south of the current boundary along Dewi Road (B4343) there are some residential properties of heritage interest:
- Hafod is a traditional tin build bungalow, retaining some interesting traditional timber detailing and original hopper windows. It probably dates from the early 20th century but is unusual in its survival. Its semi-detached neighbour Bryn Bedw was presumably of the same construction before it was either converted or rebuilt.
 - Brenig View is a traditional Mid-Victorian stone built residential property (possibly farmhouse) retaining original windows and use of traditional materials. It is shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map from 1887 as Brennig View.
 - Poplars is also a traditional mid Victorian stone built residential property (possibly farmhouse) although it's fenestration has been altered it retains its traditional proportions, good chimneys and an important location at the junction of Dewi Road and the track leading south east to Drysgol Farm. It is shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map from 1887 as Poplar.
 - The current Tregaron Hospital contains part of the original Tregaron Union Workhouse which was erected on this site in 1876 with accommodation for 30 paupers. It comprised two parallel ranges separated by a short central connecting block. The rear accommodation block has been demolished, but the entrance block is used by the local hospital. Following closure in 1915, it was converted into a sanatorium, known as the King Edward VII Hospital, for treating tuberculosis patients. It is now a community hospital.
 - As a result of the community consultation the distinctive bungalow Y Fron to the south of the Heritage Centre has been identified as being similar in quality and design to the bungalows on Station Road and of sufficient interest for it to be included within the conservation area.

Fig. 36 Proposed Conservation Area Boundary Extensions





Figs. 37 and 38 Hafod and its interesting timber detailing



Fig. 39 Brenig View



Fig. 40 Poplars

3.3. Recommendation

- 3.3.1 It is recommended that a small extension is made to the Tregaron Conservation Area consisting of the buildings identified above and as shown on the map on the previous page.



Fig. 41 Tregaron Union Workhouse, Poplar and Brennig View shown on the 1st edition OS map

4. NEED FOR DETAILED DESIGN GUIDANCE OR PUBLIC INFORMATION

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Local planning authorities are involved in the day to day management of conservation areas through their role in the planning process. Local planning authorities must aim to **preserve or enhance the character or appearance** of conservation areas and need to scrutinise planning applications closely with these objectives in mind.
- 4.1.2 Detailed information about particular aspects of the historic built environment can help owners, occupiers, planning agents and the Local Planning Authority to decide the best ways of managing positive change and keep to a consistent approach.
- 4.1.3 Public information or interpretation can help ensure that everyone understands why an area is special. People who understand why something is special are more likely to care about it and want to look after it. It can also help with the tourism offer and encourage investment in a local area.

4.2 Tregaron

- 4.2.1 A management Plan for Tregaron Conservation Area has been mentioned in information provided by the Council. It seems likely that this document was produced for one of the funding grant schemes which ran in the area from 2004-2008 and 2008-2011. It is therefore likely to be out of date and of little use for informing this current Plan.

- 4.2.2 There is little information available about the history of the town and that which is available is mainly drawn from the same few sources. Tregaron does have a heritage centre / museum but its website is basic and it has limited opening hours to the public.
- 4.2.3 There are a number of walking trails which start and finish in Tregaron - these mostly encourage exploration of the surrounding areas. There does not appear to be an easily accessible town trail type walk.
- 4.2.4 The only map currently available on the Council's website showing Tregaron Conservation Area is incorporated into the LDP documents. There is no mention of the Article 4 Direction.
- 4.2.5 The two most relevant documents are the Tregaron Place Plan (draft) and the Dyfed Archaeological Trust's (2007) *Historic Town Surveys of Cardigan and Tregaron*. The latter is an extremely useful document but not easily accessible. An historic landscape survey has also been conducted which includes Tregaron but only a small amount of information is available on the Dyfed Archaeological Trust's website.
- 4.2.6 Self-exploration is of course possible in Tregaron and intrepid walkers will discover some delightful vernacular architecture. However, the winding narrow back streets have a very private character and one feels that one is intruding on restricted space. It seems unlikely that most visitors would not venture to such areas unless they were encouraged.



Figs. 42 & 43 The winding back alleys hide many interesting vernacular buildings

- 4.2.7 There is no current or up to date and adopted appraisal and management plan for the conservation area and little other information easily available for either residents or visitors.

4.3 Recommendations

- 4.3.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance and used to guide decision making.
- 4.3.2 Produce a Tregaron Conservation Area leaflet for residents and businesses which explains what is important about the area, any controls, and what it means to be living and working within the area. Also have this available on the Council's website.
- 4.3.3 In partnership with other Local authorities, the South and Mid-Wales Conservation Officers Groups, Cadw's Built Heritage Forum, IHBC, Twyi Centre and other organisations develop and adopt new guidance leaflets and information relevant to the area. Examples could include guidance on maintenance and repair, historic windows and doors, micro-generation and the forthcoming guidance on external wall insulation.
- 4.3.4 Produce guidance regarding sustainability and energy efficiency for all conservation areas, historic, and listed buildings in Ceredigion. This could be produced in conjunction with other authorities or existing resources such as the Tywi Centre, Heritage Construction in Wales or the Traditional Buildings Alliance. The guidance should cover:
- **Maintenance:** Building defects affect the long-term sustainability of historic buildings. Educating building custodians and contractors is essential to address these issues, to preserve the region's architectural heritage, and to meet sustainability goals. The use of appropriate traditional materials and skills in a timely fashion is vitally important to the long term survival of historic buildings.
 - **Traditional construction and how old buildings work:** Traditional buildings are generally defined as those that were built before 1919, with solid (as opposed to cavity) walls, using natural materials including stone, earth, brick, wood and lime. The term 'traditional' covers a huge range of types, styles and ages of building, from stone cottages to castles and town houses to chapels. The materials and techniques used in traditional construction have created the individual, contrasting and idiosyncratic buildings that help to define the distinctive character of our towns, villages and rural landscapes, and the identity of the communities that live in them. Older buildings use different building techniques to modern new builds. Understanding this and learning to use the appropriate techniques is vital to the longevity of our historic buildings.

- **Energy saving and Retrofit in historic buildings:** The guidance should cover: Energy efficiency and why is it important - health, climate change and carbon emissions; What is retrofit and why do older buildings need a special approach? ; Options for improving energy efficiency in traditional buildings - e.g. use, ensuring a whole house approach, alternatives to traditional window and door replacement, the importance of heating and venting, breathability and insulation, maintenance and repair etc.

- 4.3.5 Undertake additional historic research on Tregaron Town to further understand its development and significance. This could be a community led project which helps to identify which areas tourists should be directed to and should feed into the interpretation plan (below). Involve Tregaron History Society, Ceredigion Historical Society and Local History Forum, amongst others.
- 4.3.6 In conjunction with the local community and businesses, consider developing an interpretation, communication and marketing plan for Tregaron based on the Place Plan, the LDP, other strategic documents, and additional historic research. This should consider all forms of information delivery in order not to clutter Tregaron with signage and to boost the offer available at the heritage centre / museum.
- 4.4.7 Update the existing shop front design guidance for Aberystwyth so that it can be used throughout all conservation areas in Ceredigion. Work with local business organisations to distribute and provide training.



Fig. 44 Shop front design guidance would be a useful addition to guidance notes for all historic areas

5. OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL LISTING

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Local planning authorities may choose to identify historic assets of special local interest and keep a list of them. This is known as 'local listing'. The list can include all types of historic asset — buildings, parks, gardens, monuments and archaeological sites — so long as they are not already formally designated.
- 5.1.2 The assets identified for inclusion on the list should make an important contribution to local distinctiveness and have the potential to contribute to public knowledge.
- 5.1.3 Their selection should be based on clear criteria, sound local evidence and public consultation. A conservation area appraisal is one way of identifying these assets.
- 5.1.4 An adopted list of historic assets of special local interest must be added to the local historic environment record for public accessibility. The Local planning authority must then develop relevant local plan policies that can be used for decision making.
- 5.1.5 Further information and advice can be found here: <https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/Managing%20Lists%20of%20Historic%20Assets%20of%20Special%20Local%20Interest%20in%20Wales%20EN.pdf>

5.2 Tregaron

- 5.2.1 Tregaron has a few historic buildings which are of particular local historic and architectural significance and which are not designated in their own right.
- 5.2.2 Recognising these buildings through inclusion on a 'local list' would:
- Provide recognition that these buildings are valued by local people
 - Provide an opportunity for the community to get involved in their identification and in caring for them appropriately
 - Allow the Council to apply for funding or grant schemes that would provide regeneration opportunities for locally listed buildings
 - Enable changes to be carefully considered through the planning process to ensure they are positive and do not negatively affect the assets, their settings or the communities in which they are located.

5.3 Recommendation

- 5.3.1 The Council should set up an 'Historic Assets of Special Local Interest Project' that will identify the criteria for inclusion on such a list and develop the list.

- 5.3.2 Local communities should have an opportunity to be involved with the selection process.
- 5.3.3 Ceredigion County Council should develop and adopt a relevant Local Development Plan policy as part of a replacement LDP or as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 5.3.4 The appraisal identifies a list of suggestions for buildings which could be included on a 'local list'. These buildings should be assessed against the criteria as developed by the Council.



Fig. 45 Ty Capel



Fig. 46 Former Methodist Chapel

6. CONSIDERATION OF ENFORCEMENT

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Enforcement has a key role to play in the protection of conservation areas.
- 6.1.2 It is essential to ensure that all owners and occupiers of buildings understand where there are limitations for development, what their permitted development rights are, and that they can approach the LPA for advice.
- 6.1.3 Regular monitoring is a more proactive approach for LPAs which may help to reduce the number of contraventions.
- 6.1.4 Discussion and negotiation with the owner / occupier should be the first action taken in any case, which may lead to a suitable solution without the need for enforcement action.

6.2 Tregaron

- 6.2.1 There is no current comprehensive baseline review information for Tregaron.
- 6.2.2 Owners and occupiers may be unaware of their permitted development rights and where there may be restrictions on development.
- 6.2.3 It has been identified that there has been a considerable loss of traditional windows and doors throughout the conservation area despite the existence of an Article 4(2) Direction.

What is not known are the circumstances of each individual case.

- 6.2.4 There are a number of untidy sites both within and within the setting of the conservation area which negatively impact on its character and appearance. The Council has various powers which could be used, if necessary, to tackle these problem sites. This is discussed further in Section 10 (Environmental Improvements).



Figs. 47 and 48 Untidy sites negatively impact on the area's overall character and appearance

6.3 Recommendations

- 6.3.1 The photographic survey produced as part of this conservation area appraisal should be used as baseline information for enforcement purposes.
- 6.3.2 The Council should make a commitment to follow best practice enforcement procedures within the conservation areas in Ceredigion.
- 6.3.3 The Council should take steps to ensure all owners and occupiers are aware of their permitted development rights and any restrictions.
- 6.3.4 A follow up photographic survey should be conducted during the next review of the conservation area appraisal, ideally every five years.

7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGENERATION

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Historic areas can be an important focus for community regeneration. Their distinctive character is an asset that can deliver social, economic and environmental benefits for Welsh communities. Regeneration can help to create a sense of place and local distinctiveness, and support valuable skills and encourage investment.
- 7.1.2 Many historic areas have suffered from declining economic activity, which results in underused buildings and low investment. In these circumstances, targeted actions may be needed to unlock potential and realise wider benefits. Regeneration activities can give historic

assets fresh meaning and relevance, breathing new life into underused and undervalued buildings and areas.

7.2 Tregaron

- 7.2.1 Tregaron has previously benefited from two funding grants schemes: Townscape Heritage Scheme in 2004-2008 and the Uplands RHS Partnership 2008-2011. In addition there have been several other regeneration funding schemes backed by the Council but it is not known whether businesses and residents in Tregaron have benefitted from these schemes, although they have been eligible to apply.
- 7.2.2 There are examples within the town of successful local businesses which have been able to expand their business comfortably within the existing premises or re-use of adjoining or nearby buildings. Other businesses appear to have struggled with finding suitable premises and business operations may be split between several town centre sites.
- 7.2.3 Successful new businesses have opened up in Tregaron but others have unfortunately failed. These and the loss of town facilities such as the banks have left key empty properties. There are also some empty properties which have lost their original use, such as the former primary school and have yet to be re-used or redeveloped.
- 7.2.4 Where buildings are empty for a considerable period of time, a build up of maintenance often occurs and this can lead to the loss of architectural features or even eventually to justification for the loss of a building. Many of the empty properties within the town positively contribute to its character and appearance and it would be desirable to retain these where possible.
- 7.2.5 Key empty properties include:
- Former Natwest Bank (Grade II Listed Building)
 - Former Barclays Bank (Y Banc) - partial?
 - Former County School on Lampeter Road
 - Former Council Offices, Talbot Square
 - Trefelin, Station Road (Grade II Listed Building)
 - Hafod, Dewi Road
 - Small stone vernacular barns (possible *Ty Unnos*) in residential areas - some in use for storage etc
- 7.2.6 The future of the Hospital and its site is currently uncertain.



Fig. 49 Former County School



Fig. 50 Small vernacular stone barn (possible Ty Unnos?)

7.3 Recommendations

- 7.3.1 There are many reasons why a property may remain empty. For example, there may be a lack of motivation by the owner to redevelop or sell, there may be financial constraints, there may be legal matters, it may be a difficult building to re-use or redevelop. The Council may be able to advise owners on suitable re-use and conversion schemes through its existing pre-application service. A specialised pre-application advice service could be considered involving all the necessary departments and officers (e.g. planning, policy, heritage, ecology, highways, etc) - a 'one-stop shop' for developers, which would also provide an income for the Council. Powys County Council ran a similar service some years ago.
- 7.3.2 Consider developing a register of empty commercial properties which could be reused for alternative purposes and combine it with the 'one stop shop' offer above. This could help to ensure that successful business can expand in their local area and that there are fewer barriers for new start ups.
- 7.3.3 The Council needs to ensure that building owners and users have the tools necessary to carry out their own appropriate repairs and renovations. This may include guidance, training and mentoring.
- 7.3.4 The Council should liaise with building owners of long term empty properties to establish the reasons behind their lack of use and use this information to inform applications for regeneration funding schemes. The Council also currently operates an empty home grant fund.
- 7.3.5 In line with the Aberystwyth Conservation Area Management Plan, the Council should seek funding to buy and conserve a vacant listed building to set up a Conservation training establishment in partnership with organisations such as Cadw, the University, RCAHMW, the

Welsh Traditional Buildings Forum, Building Research Establishment (BRE), the Strata Florida Project, the Towy Centre, Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training (HCT), Adult Learning Wales, Creative and Cultural Skills, or similar. This could train local people in conservation techniques, create jobs which provide local conservation services to owners and occupiers in the towns and surrounding areas. This could provide a valuable and sustainable resource which would support regeneration in Ceredigion's town centres and conservation areas, in addition to providing some employment, upskilling owners and occupiers, and helping to preserve and enhance the historical architecture of the county. A model similar to Carmarthenshire's Adfer Ban a Chwm building preservation trust could be used.

- 7.3.6 There are a few empty buildings within the town centre, some of which are Listed (please see above). The Council should work with their partners such as the Town Council and local business forums to identify appropriate uses and encourage owners to sensitively repair buildings so that they become attractive to investors. There are a number of tools available for the Council to use to 'encourage' owners to improve their properties such as Repairs Notices, Section 105s, and Urgent Works Notices. These generally require some financial commitment from the Council but recently there have been grants available from Cadw to assist with such activities. The Council should ensure they are ready to take advantage of such schemes should they be re-run.
- 7.3.7 Where owners are willing, consider alternative uses for redundant small vernacular barns. These would be ideal for small start up businesses such as craft workshops which could also be incorporated into a town trail, encourage entrepreneurship, job creation and exploration of the town by visitors. Funding could be sought for their conservation and repair.
- 7.3.8 The Council should implement the suggestions of the Place Plan to help address some of these issues.
- 7.3.9 Develop a tourism offer which keeps people in the town as well as highlighting the tourism activities and sites in the nearby areas (see 4.3.6).
- 7.3.10 Taking action over the untidy sites (see section 10) would not only enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area but make it a better place for local people and visitors.

8. ADVERTISEMENT GUIDANCE AND CONTROL

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 One of the purposes of the advertisement control system is to encourage the display of outdoor advertisements which make a positive contribution to the appearance of the

environment. Many conservation areas include commercial premises ranging from small corner shops to thriving commercial centres so outdoor advertising can be essential to commercial vitality. The kinds of advertisement which require planning consent include illuminated advertisements on business premises and advertisements on hoardings around development sites.

- 8.1.2 Authorities may choose to adopt advertisement control policies as part of their proposals for the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas, such as the designation of areas of special advertisement control. Local planning authorities should use such controls flexibly to preserve those features of architectural or historic interest which led to designation.

8.2 Tregaron

- 8.2.1 The conservation area has a small commercial core. This area features surviving and replacement historic shop frontages, public houses, and civic buildings. There has been some ingress of poor quality or designed shop fascia and advertising.



Fig. 51 Traditional shopfront



Fig. 52 Shopfront which could be improved



Fig. 53 New shopfront in traditional style

8.3 Recommendations

- 8.3.1 It is not considered that an area of special advertisement control is currently necessary within Tregaron Conservation Area. Instead, negotiation with owners and shop managers should be a priority.
- 8.3.2 Review the 2013 Aberystwyth shopfront guidance to cover good practice in all conservation areas and consider a re-release of the guidance with additional promotion throughout conservation areas in Ceredigion.

9. BUILDINGS AT RISK

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 Keeping buildings in use and repaired is the cornerstone of successful conservation area management. Neglected and underused buildings damage the vitality and attractiveness of conservation areas.

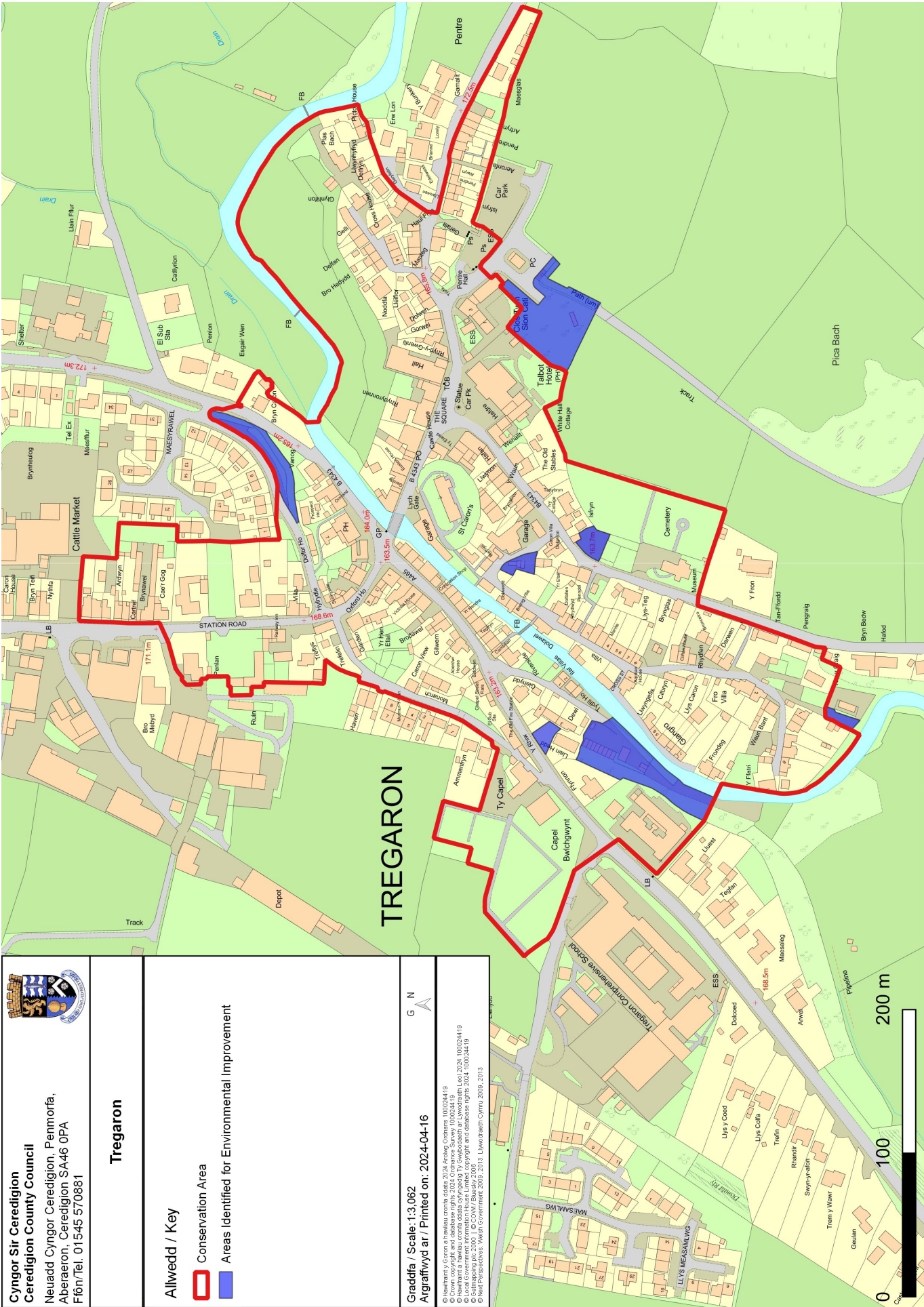
9.2 Vacant Buildings in Tregaron

- 9.2.1 There are a small number of vacant buildings within the conservation area which are currently empty and some which negatively impact on the character and appearance of the area (See Section 7.2.5 above).

9.3 Recommendations

- 9.3.1 The Council should set up a Buildings at Risk Strategy which would work with both Listed Buildings and those considered to positively contribute to the character or appearance of conservation areas. This would identify a strategic approach to identifying and managing these buildings. (see: <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/historic-assets/listed-buildings/listed-buildings-risk#section-managing-listed-buildings-at-risk>).
- 9.3.2 Owners of listed buildings are obliged to keep them in a reasonable state of repair. Local planning authorities have powers to serve Repairs Notices and use other enforcement tools in extreme cases. If negotiation fails, then the Council should consider the use of its statutory powers.
- 9.3.3 The Council, to cover all conservation areas, listed buildings and non-designated properties, should investigate the possibility of setting up training schemes and courses - training occupiers and owners in good conservation practice, especially in repair and maintenance with appropriate materials. See Aberystwyth Conservation Management Plan for full scheme suggestion. Circulation of a publication such as 'Stitch in Time' (IHBC and SPAB) to all properties within Ceredigion conservation areas would provide a good start to this process.

Fig. 54 Areas for environmental improvements



10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

10.1 Introduction

- 10.1.1 In addition to the various enforcement tools available for local planning authorities there are additional opportunities for environmental enhancement. These include partnership working with national agencies, other council departments and local organisations such as Town Councils and business forums.
- 10.1.2 Opportunities for environmental enhancement often relate to the physical infrastructure of the town, including highways, works by statutory undertakers, environmental health, housing and others.
- 10.1.3 Community engagement and mentoring can also achieve positive change within designated areas.

10.2 Tregaron

- 10.2.1 There are several areas within the conservation area and its setting which can be classed as untidy sites. Some of these appear to be storage for redundant vehicles. A map showing the locations of these sites is shown above.
- 10.2.2 There are some examples of small extensions or outbuildings of poor design and use of inappropriate materials within the conservation area which negatively impact on the overall appearance and character. Most of these occur to the rear of properties but are often still controlled through the planning system and are visible from public places.
- 10.2.3 There is a variety of street furniture throughout the conservation area but it is generally harmonious with the historic character of the area.
- 10.2.4 The historic cobbled paving is an important and attractive feature of the conservation area but is poorly maintained in most places and recent road resurfacing has started to encroach on it in others.
- 10.2.5 On street parking occurs very regularly in the town centre. Recently the fees for using the car park in Tregaron have been waived by the Council, however, it is not known how widely this was understood by visitors, residents and nearby communities visiting the town. Potentially on street parking is due to the perception that charges are levied at the nearby public car park or simply the wish to stop as close as possible to the various popular shops.
- 10.2.6 Tregaron has a number of pieces of public art. These help to tell the history of the town and to provide insight into its culture. It is important that these are maintained to ensure a high quality, welcoming public realm.



Figs. 55 and 56 Street furniture is generally well maintained and co-ordinated

10.3 Recommendations

- 10.3.1 The Council's development management team must encourage good design for extensions and new development within conservation areas, particularly by using the pre-application enquiry process and ensuring the current SPG is fit for purpose. The SPG may need revising and re-release with promotion especially within designated areas.
- 10.3.2 Ensure Enforcement Officers are trained in understanding the specific remit of conservation areas and designated buildings and sites and that resources are available for enforcement action if and when required.
- 10.3.3 If required, offer training for Highways Officers regarding good design in conservation areas. There are some excellent publications and guidelines available such as Historic England's 'Streets for All' (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/streets-for-all/heag149-sfa-national/>).
- 10.3.4 In conjunction with Highways colleagues draw up a design code for each conservation area in Ceredigion and seek funding for implementation. Cover surfacing, safety railings, street furniture, lighting and highways road and safety features.
- 10.3.5 With the local community set up a conservation area advisory / enhancement community group which can carry out small tasks which would make a big difference such as litter picking,

identifying signage for removal, assessing condition of public art, noting empty properties etc. (see: <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/sites/default/files/resources/How%20To%20Organise%20A%20Litter-Picking%20Event.pdf>). They could also comment on development proposals in conservation areas and bring any future issues within the conservation area to the Council's attention. Mentoring and training should be provided by the Council.

10.3.6 Consider continuing the free parking scheme to encourage local people to use the existing car park and publicising it more widely. This would also encourage more people to visit and shop in the town centre and to stay longer.

11. TREES, LANDSCAPE AND OPEN SPACES

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 Trees are an important component of the character and amenity of many conservation areas and, along with green open spaces (inc. private gardens), have a valuable role to play in ecosystems services. To complement the controls over trees in conservation areas, local planning authorities can develop specific local policies for the protection and management of trees and other elements of the natural environment, such as hedgerows and verges.



Fig. 57 Trees and hedgerows are important for biodiversity as well as contributing to the character and appearance of the conservation area

- 11.1.2 A strategy for trees could include an assessment of their amenity and biodiversity value, and their contribution to ecosystem services before there is pressure to remove them. The protection and management of trees and open spaces could be integrated in a green infrastructure strategy.

11.2 Tregaron

- 11.2.1 Tregaron has a large number of individual trees and areas of tree cover within the town centre which positively contribute to its character and appearance.
- 11.2.2 The appraisal has identified a number, of open spaces which greatly contribute to Tregaron Conservation Area's character and vibrancy. Some of these are underused or could be enhanced.
- 11.2.3 Ceredigion County Council has an adopted Strategy for Greening Towns and a Green Infrastructure Assessment has been undertaken by consultants.

11.3 Recommendations

- 11.3.1 Continue to follow the recommendations in the relevant and adopted green infrastructure strategic documents.
- 11.3.2 Ensure the green infrastructure assessment and the strategy for trees in each conservation area is kept up to date and regularly reviewed.
- 11.3.3 Consider commissioning a separate tree report and / or involve the local community in identifying and mapping trees and tree groups suitable for Tree Preservation Orders.
- 11.3.4 Protect important trees, open spaces and views within the conservation area and those which contribute to its setting through the LDP.

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

12.1 Introduction

- 12.1.1 The legislation requires local planning authorities to review existing conservation areas 'from time to time' - best practice is generally considered to be every five to ten years.
- 12.1.2 The review should establish progress achieved since the previous appraisal and should confirm or redefine both special interest and critical issues. The review should also revise the management plan and provide new recommendations where appropriate.
- 12.1.3 Monitoring change is essential to be able to evaluate the impact of designation and the success of management strategies in preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

12.1.4 Cadw considers that the baseline for periodic review is a full photographic survey recording buildings from the street, as well as other components of character, including trees, gardens, boundaries and views. There is scope for involving local community groups in carrying out this work.

12.2 Tregaron

12.2.1 Tregaron currently does not have a Management Plan for the Conservation Area.

12.2.2 The Council has recently appointed a new planning officer with responsibility for conservation.

12.3 Recommendations

12.3.1 The Council should adopt this appraisal and management plan as Supplementary Planning Guidance and use it to inform decision making.

12.3.2 The Council should commit to review the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan at a suitable interval and at least within ten years.

12.3.3 The Council should involve the local community with the monitoring and management of the area and future appraisal reviews, where possible.

12.3.4 The Council should ensure that, within budget constraints, Conservation and Heritage officers are politically supported and have sufficient resources.

12.3.5 The Council should continue to facilitate partnership working between local councils, departments, local businesses and communities to ensure their statutory duty with regards to conservation areas is carried out.



Fig. 58
Overlooking
Doldre

Appendix A: Action Plan

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION (FOR FULL EXPLANATION SEE MANAGEMENT PLAN)	RESPONSIBILITY / PARTNERS	PRIORITY
The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance and used to guide decision making.	CCC - Heritage and Policy	High 0-1 years
Implement the proposed boundary extension.	CCC - Heritage and Policy Tregaron Town Council Local community	High 0-1 years
The photographic survey produced as part of this conservation area appraisal should be used as baseline information for enforcement purposes.	CCC - Heritage, Planning Enforcement, Legal	High 0-1 years Ongoing
Make a commitment to follow best practice enforcement procedures within the conservation areas in Ceredigion (Enforcement charter or similar). Negotiate with owners regarding infringements. Serve Repairs Notices and use other enforcement tools as necessary. Ensure Enforcement Officers are trained in understanding the specific remit of conservation areas and designated buildings and sites. Negotiate and use enforcement action as necessary to improve 'untidy' sites.	CCC - Heritage, Planning Enforcement, Legal Local community	High - 0-1 years Ongoing
Ensure that regeneration and other schemes utilise heritage based design principles to ensure the significance of these areas informs the development of any proposals. Draw up design briefs for potential development and infill sites within and in the setting of the conservation area. Encourage good design for extensions and new development within conservation areas. Consider revising existing relevant SPG.	CCC - Heritage, Policy, Regeneration, Development Management TCC, local community	High 0-1 years Ongoing
Continue to follow the recommendations in the relevant and adopted green infrastructure strategic documents. Ensure the green infrastructure assessment and the strategy for trees in each conservation area is kept up to date and regularly reviewed.	CCC - Ecology, Policy and Development Management Local community	High - ongoing
Protect important trees, open spaces and views within the conservation area and those which contribute to its setting through the LDP and development management. Identify opportunities for tree planting and encourage participation in the Tree Warden Scheme.	CCC - Heritage, Policy, Ecology and Development Management Local community	High - ongoing
Ensure that, within budget constraints, Conservation and Heritage officers are politically supported and have sufficient resources.	CCC	High - ongoing

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION (FOR FULL EXPLANATION SEE MANAGEMENT PLAN)	RESPONSIBILITY / PARTNERS	PRIORITY
Facilitate partnership working between departments, local businesses and communities to ensure their statutory duty with regards to conservation areas is carried out.	CCC	High - ongoing
Produce a Tregaron Conservation Area leaflet. Ensure all owners and occupiers are aware of their permitted development rights and any restrictions, particularly in relation to the Article 4 Direction.	CCC - Heritage, Ecology and Policy Local community	Medium 2-3 years
Consider developing a community led interpretation, communication and marketing plan for Tregaron based on other strategic documents. Undertake additional historic research to support this plan.	CCC - Tourism, Policy Local community	Medium 2-3 years
Consider continuing the free parking scheme to encourage local people to use the existing car park and publicising it more widely.	CCC	Medium 2-3 years
Review the 2013 Aberystwyth shopfront guidance to cover good practice for shop fronts and signage in all conservation areas. Seek funding for a shop front and signage grant programme. Consider enforcement measures as necessary.	CCC - Policy and Heritage Other local authorities, the South Wales and Mid-Wales Conservation Officer Groups	Medium 2-3 years
Set up an 'Historic Assets of Special Local Interest Project' for the whole county. Develop and adopt a relevant Local Development Plan policy.	CCC - Heritage and Policy Local communities	Medium 2-3 years
Set up a county wide Buildings at Risk Strategy which would work with both Listed Buildings and those considered to positively contribute to the character or appearance of conservation areas.	CCC - Heritage, Policy, Regeneration, Housing Local communities	Medium 2-3 years
Work with the Town Council to implement it's Place Plan to help address some of the issues within the conservation area.	CCC - Policy and Heritage Tregaron Town Council Local community	Medium 2-3 years
In conjunction with owners and local community consider alternative uses for redundant small vernacular barns - tourism, start up workshops etc.	CCC - Heritage, Policy, Tourism, Regeneration Local communities	Medium 2-3 years
Establish the reasons behind long term empty properties. Seek relevant regeneration funding schemes and advertise those already available. Consider setting up a specialised pre-application advice service and a register of empty properties. Combine with action below.	CCC - Heritage and Policy, Regeneration TCC, local community, building owners and businesses	Medium 2-3 years and ongoing

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION (FOR FULL EXPLANATION SEE MANAGEMENT PLAN)	RESPONSIBILITY / PARTNERS	PRIORITY
Seek regeneration and other funding for a variety of maintenance, repair, regeneration and training schemes. Include repairs and maintenance, improvements to street scene, coordination of street furniture and signage, replacement of inappropriate architectural features, investment in empty buildings.	CCC - Heritage and Policy, Regeneration	Medium 2-3 years and ongoing
Seek funding to buy and conserve a vacant listed building to set up a Conservation training establishment in partnership with other organisations.	CCC - Regeneration, Heritage Cadw, the University, RCAHMW, the Welsh Traditional Buildings Forum, Building Research Establishment (BRE), the Strata Florida Project, the Towy Centre, Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training (HCT), Adult Learning Wales Creative and Cultural Skills, etc.	Medium 2-3 years and ongoing
Set up a conservation area advisory / enhancement community group which can carry out small tasks to enhance the conservation area and also comment on development proposals. Identify sites for environmental improvements.	CCC - Heritage, Policy TCC, Local community	Medium 2-3 years ongoing
Develop and adopt guidance leaflets and information for conservation areas (e.g. historic windows, micro generation, external wall insulation, sustainability and energy efficiency etc.).	CCC - Heritage Other Local authorities, the South Wales and Mid-Wales Conservation Officer Groups, Cadw's Built Heritage Forum, IHBC, Tywi Centre	Low 3-5 years
Highways - draw up a design code for each conservation area in Ceredigion and seek funding for implementation. Heritage training for Highways Officers, as required.	CCC - Heritage, Policy, Regeneration and Highways Welsh Government?	Low 3-5 years
Commit to review the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan at a suitable interval and at least within ten years. Follow up photographic survey as part of next review. Keep the Action Plan up to date and publish progress. Involve the local community with the monitoring and management of the area and future appraisal reviews.	CCC - Policy and Heritage Consultants	Low 5 -10 years

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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