

CONWAY ROAD



CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

CARDIFF

1. INTRODUCTION.....>

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Appraisals
- 1.3 The Boundaries
- 1.4 The Policy Context

2. THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AREA

3. THE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT.....>

- 3.1 A distinctive quality of place
- 3.2 The presence of Landmark Buildings and landscape features
- 3.3 High quality architectural detailing
- 3.4 High quality or unusual materials in the Townscape
- 3.5 Hierarchies of public and private space
- 3.6 High Quality hard and soft landscaping

4. A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION.....>

- 4.1 The Background
- 4.2 Conservation Area enhancement

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.....>

6. CONSULTATION.....>

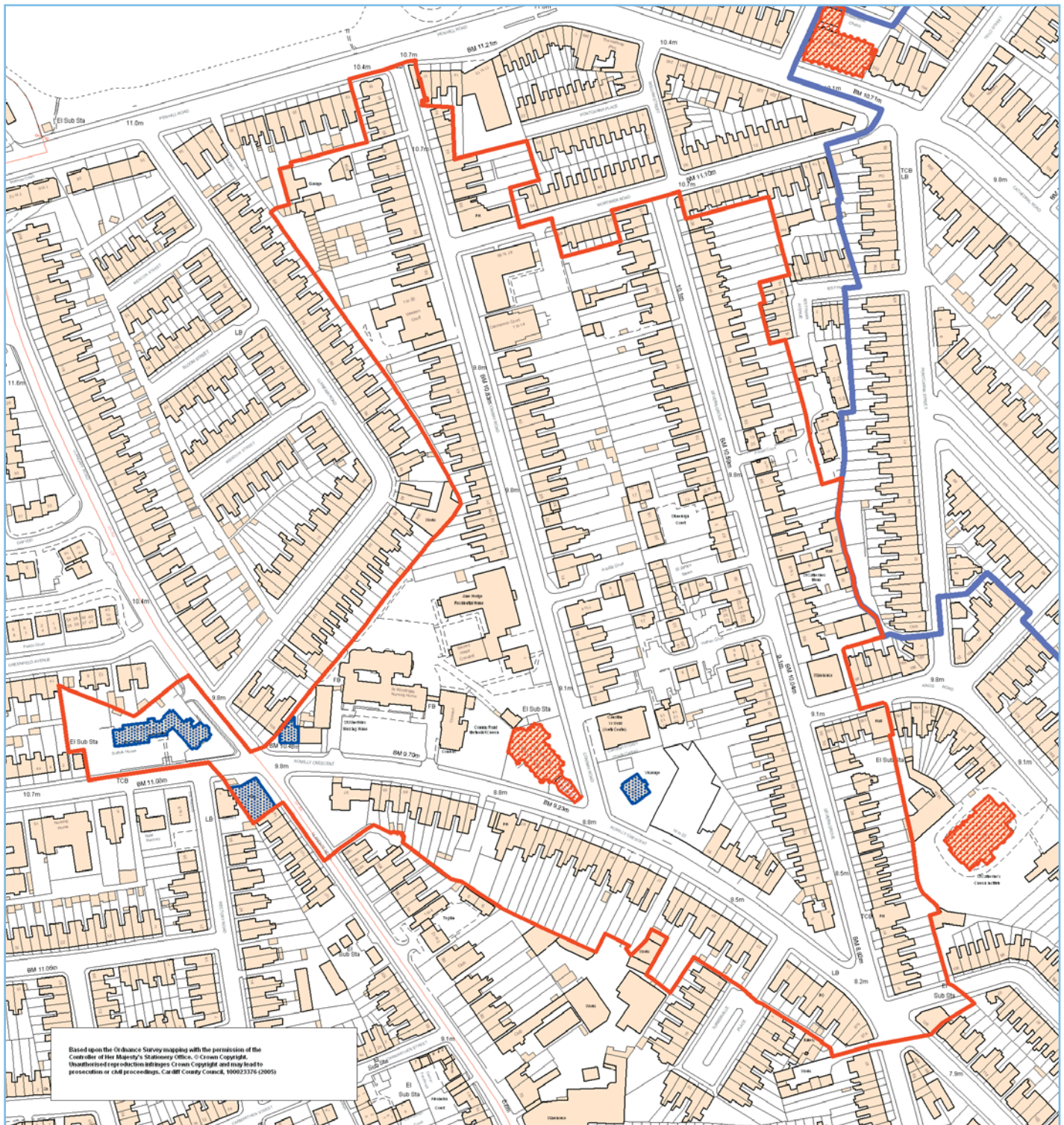
APPENDIX 1.....>

Guidance for those planning development in the area

APPENDIX 2.....>

Landscape and Trees Advice

PLAN 1



Conway Road Conservation Area

- Conway Road Boundary
- Cathedral Road Conservation Area
- Statutory Listed Buildings
- Locally Listed Buildings

Do not Scale Adopted June 2007

1.1 Background

Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historical interest. A decision to designate a Conservation Area is made by the Local Planning Authority after an assessment of the character of the area. This often extends beyond the buildings alone. The road layout, street scene, trees and green spaces can all contribute to the quality of the area. Designation gives special protection to this character, and to achieve this, the Council has extra controls over demolition, minor developments and the protection of trees.

1.2 Appraisals

The Council has a duty to review Conservation Areas and to work with local people to develop policies and plans that will help to safeguard their character. To manage the process a Conservation Area Strategy has been prepared. The Strategy identifies priorities for the City of Cardiff and the criteria to be used in the assessment of existing and new conservation areas. In 2007, an appraisal of the Cathedral Road Conservation Area identified potential for a new Conservation Area in the Conway Road area. The main reason for designation stemmed from the area's distinctive and unusual history which is still evident in the layout of streets and houses, and in the variety of building styles dating from the mid 19th century. The findings of an appraisal of the area are presented here with proposals for the area's enhancement. They have been informed by the work of the Canna Residents Action Group and advice from the Victorian Society and the Cathedral Road Conservation Area Advisory Group.

1.3 The Boundaries

A number of key qualities have been identified to assist in the appraisal of the area. They are:

- A distinctive quality of place.
- The presence of landmark buildings and landscape features.
- High quality architectural detailing.
- Hierarchies of public and private space.
- High quality or unusual materials in the landscape.
- High quality hard and soft landscaping

The appraisal relates to the area shown on plan 1. This area has been chosen because it is an area that was largely developed in the 19th Century by a group known as the National Freehold Land Society. Although remnants of the early layout of the Freeholders' land is evident beyond this area, the most distinctive and significant cluster displaying the adopted criteria for Conservation Area designation is in the defined area. Beyond this area, to north and south, the variety in building style diminishes and more rigid terraces of the Cardiff leasehold estates, and in particular the Bute Estate, return.

An account of the area's history and an appraisal of the area which has been identified follows.

1.4 The Policy Context

The appraisal is supported by parallel policies within the adopted Local Plan. The appraisal has three parts:

- An assessment of the character of the Conservation Area.
- A framework for the protection and enhancement of the Conservation Area.
- Guidelines to achieve this.

2 the historic significance of the area

2.1 The Historic Background

The fields comprising the Manors of Llandaff and Canton were owned and managed by the Mathews family for almost 400 years until purchased in 1818 by Sir Samuel Romilly. At the time, he was Solicitor General and a leading law reformer. In 1852, the Estate was offered as freehold building ground for sale. The two lots offered in Canton were purchased by the Cardiff Freehold Land Society. The Society offered flexibility in the sale of plots and made them available in multiples of 10 feet. The only restrictions on their sale were the building line and a minimum value of £150 per house.

Cardiff's Freehold Land Society was just one of very many in Britain, all representing part of an important campaign to enfranchise ordinary people. Quite simply, people who bought a plot of freehold land through the society and built a house with a minimum value of £150 gained the right to vote. Sir Samuel Romilly was among those who failed to achieve reform in the early part of the 19th century, but his sons fought for the same ideals. When they sold the Pontcanna land to the National Freehold Land Society in 1853, they were sympathetic to the society's aims and essentially honouring their father's intentions. While many societies succeeded in their aim of building houses and achieving voting rights for their owners, relatively few areas survive intact today. The legacy of the Cardiff Freehold Society is important for retaining many of the original buildings, their individual character being testimony to this unusual history as well as embodying a fundamental democratic principle.

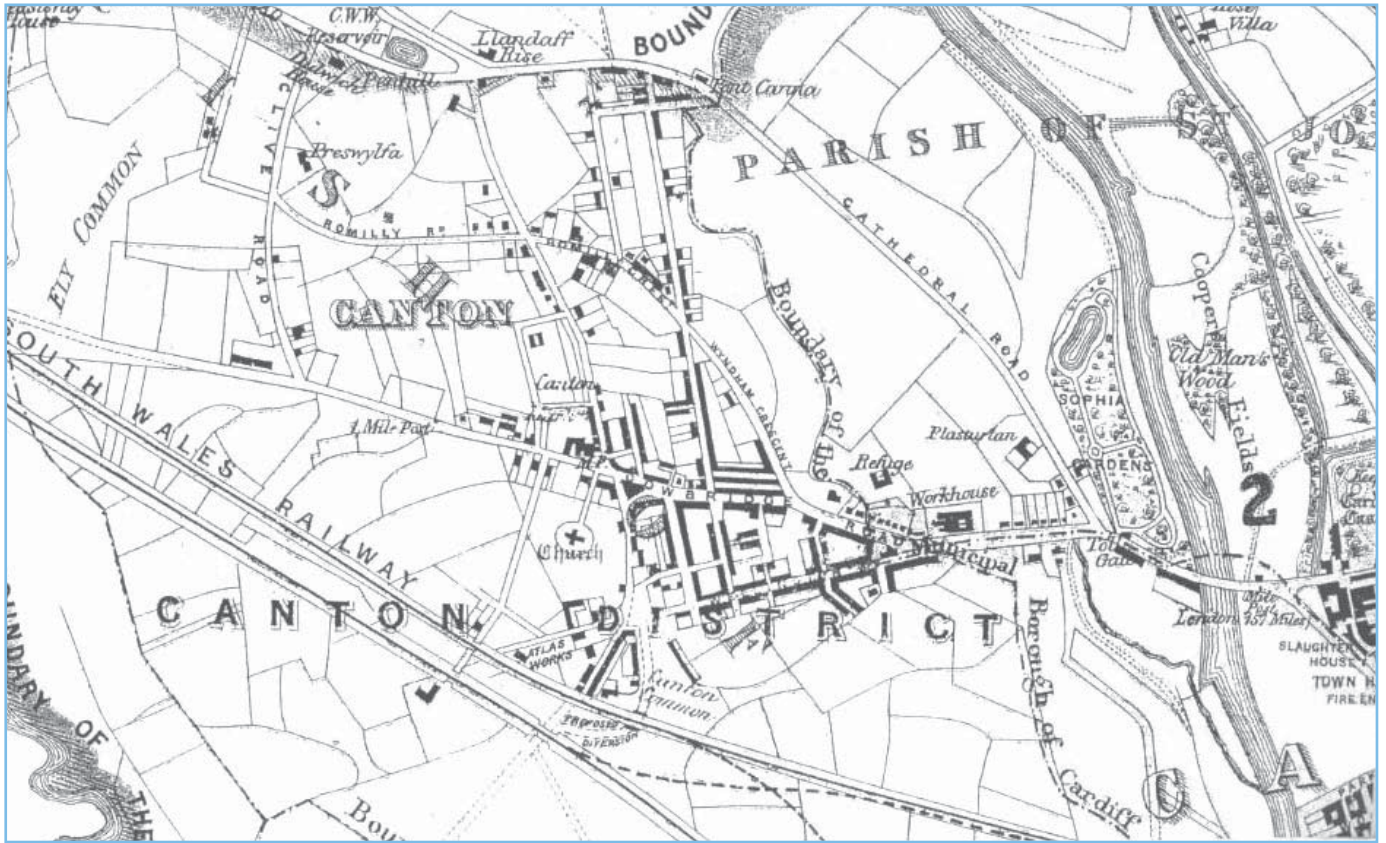
One of the objectives of the Society was to find areas of freehold land from which larger plots might be sold for more substantial houses. These are referred to in archived documents as 'country villas for merchants' and 'good sites for building'. The areas around Conway Road and Severn Grove were developed in this way. The method used to sell the plots can still be seen in the character of the area, and the variety and style in the area's houses. This is in contrast to the more uniform impression presented by the developments on adjoining Bute land and is what gives the area its special architectural and historic character.

The Cardiff Freehold Land Society had some dynamic young members:

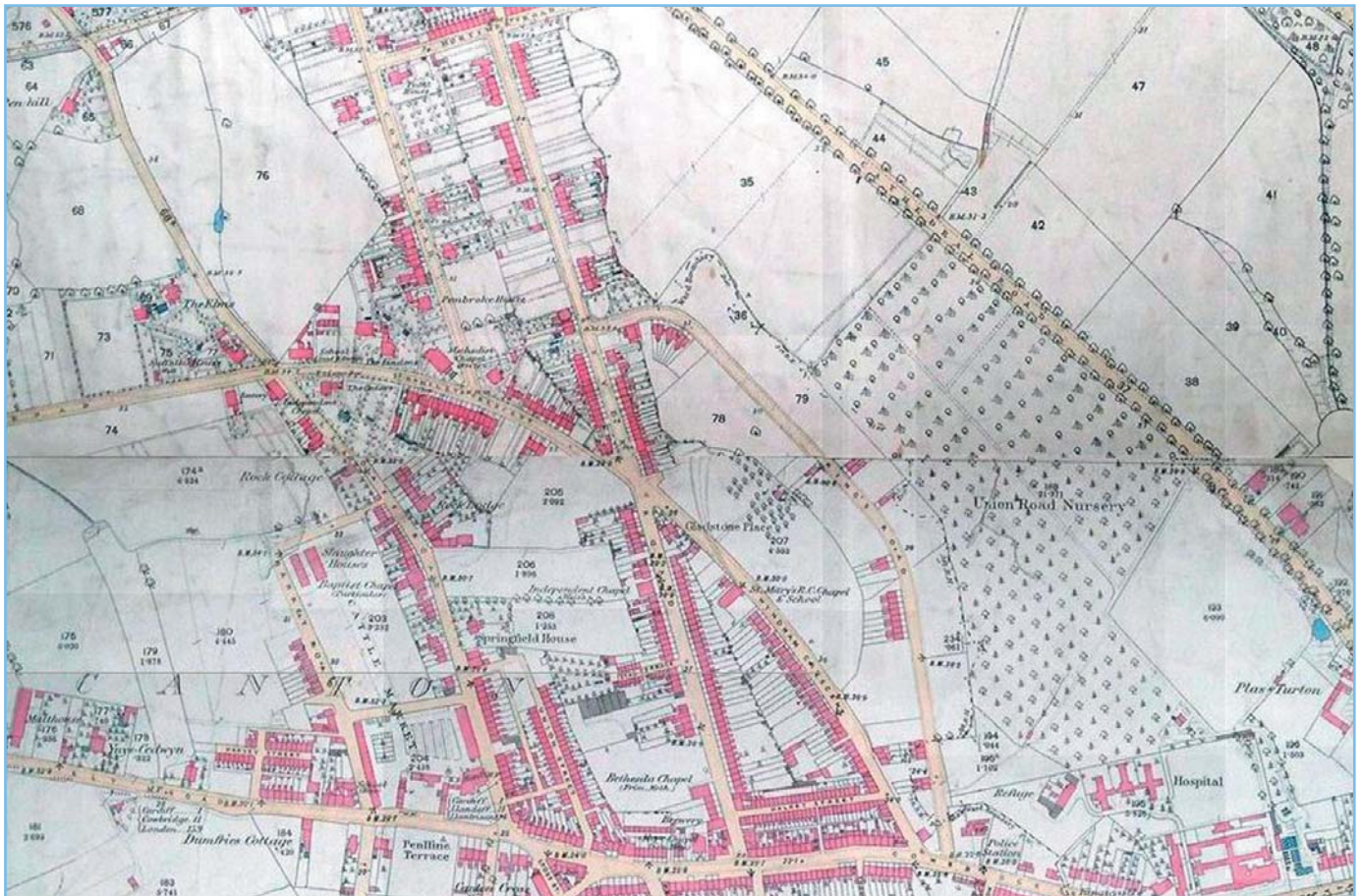
- William Parry James, was a substantial builder whose partnership with the architect Edwin Seward led to the construction of the Old Library, St Davids Hospital and the Cardiff Royal Infirmary. He built the Lindens [now part of St Winefride's Nursing Home] on the plots he bought from the Society,
- John Grant was one of a number of prosperous timber merchants who built in the area. He was the first resident of Carlton Villa, now familiar as the former St Catherine's vicarage.
- William Sanders was another timber merchant. He later became secretary of the Principality Building Society. He built Doncaster House on Conway Road, and was a major benefactor to the Methodist Church.



An extract from Thomas Warings map of Cardiff 1869



1881 Map



3.1 A Distinctive Quality of Place

Within the area and the very particular environment which the Freehold Society created is a history which is unique in Wales. Its distinctive quality of place derives from the diversity of building style, and the use of a plot layout plan incorporating:

- Clean water and modern drainage,
- Houses built to a strict building line,
- Uniformity and proportion in the width of houses,
- A tree line avenue with gardens to front and back,
- Two large planned corner plots framing the entrance to the area from the south,
- A variety of architectural styles and materials,
- Variety in building heights



3.2 Presence of Landmark Buildings and Landscape Features

- Conway Road Methodist Church is built of rock faced sandstone with pale ashlar, grey, yellow and red brick dressings to openings. The main entrance is in the southeast end and this elevation is gabled and has a stepped triple arched window in its centre. A long external staircase leads up to the main entrance creating a strong presence at this important and historic nucleus to the area.
- Carlton Villa, the former St Catherine's Vicarage lies opposite. It was built in the mid 1850's on a plot designated for a significant building by the Freehold Land Society. This grand and classically influenced stucco fronted house has now been converted to flats and endures as a landmark framing the entrance to the area.
- The Lindens [now St Winefride's Nursing Home] is set behind a high boundary wall and over grown garden. It is shown on the early 1878 OS map and despite additions and extensions to link it with the nursing home, endures as a fine brick built villa with blue brick window openings and ornate veranda to the front.
- The St Winefride's Nursing home. This restrained 1930's building lies within well-managed landscaped grounds. It retains the high stone boundary wall on Romilly Crescent, defined by decorative brick gate posts and bands of brick within it. A significant though, extended pair of classical revival villas at 1 Conway Road comprise part of the building group.



There is another significant cluster of landmark buildings at the junction of Romilly Road with Llandaff Road. It includes;



- Suffolk House. This was built by Benjamin Wright as a wedding present for his daughter. It is an impressive white 3 storey villa, with a classical porch with decorative bays and balconies above.
- 97 Romilly Crescent is set at a diagonal to the road junction.
- Canton Gospel Hall. This lies opposite and was opened in 1859 by the Methodist congregation of Canton pending the construction of the Conway Road Church. It has been used by a number of non-conformist groups since. It has a plain facade with tall arched Venetian windows, with a fanlight above the entrance and arched hood-moulds.
- 30 Romilly Crescent at the corner of Llandaff Road was once the School for Deaf and Dumb (1866 - 1906). Its boundary wall retains a stone water trough.



The third significant landmark group lies at the junction of Romilly Crescent with Severn Road. Here five roads meet at the cluster of early shops; they are now all heavily altered.

There are a number of distinctive Public Houses, which lie within areas of established housing:



- The Conway Pub was built in the 1850's. It is a stuccoed corner building with hipped roof and occupies a prominent position in the street scene.
- The Romilly Pub was built in 1898 as a coach house
- The Robin Hood was built in 1901. A later projection is faced in glazed ceramic tiles, and set within decorative pilasters and copings.



The most notable landscape features are the streets lined with mature trees. Severn Grove and Conway Road have gardens enclosed by hedges. All contribute to the areas leafy character which is in contrast to the limited landscaping on adjoining streets.

The most distinctive landmark group of trees lies at the junction of Conway and Romilly Road where Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are in place within the former St Catherine's Vicarage.

3.3 High Quality Architectural detailing

A wide variety of building styles can be found in the proposed Conservation Area, and each employ their own distinctive architectural detailing. They range from:

- Cottages dating from the area's history as arable land on the Romilly estate [e.g. 42,44 Severn Grove]. These are built in stone or render,
- Houses dating from the 1850 these are of classically influenced construction and use often faced in stucco or render e.g. Suffolk House, Doncaster House and 71, 73 and 75 Conway Road



- There are simpler stucco terraces on Severn Grove and Romilly Crescent too, they are often distinguished by heavy overhanging eaves, ornate cornices and brackets;
- Later terraces and houses built in a gothic style with stone dressings. These can be found throughout the area.

The variety of historic building style and materials has provided a rich backdrop for new in fill developments, and over the past twenty years, a number of contemporary developments have been included within the street scene. These have been successful where the early freeholder building line and grain have been followed, less so when garden size and quality has been diminished.



Distinctive Building features:

- Doors and windows are the most important building details and contribute significantly to the character of the area. Early doorways often have canopies set on scrolled brackets. Later ones are set within gothic arched porches.
- Sash windows or later copies are common. There are some early and distinctive examples showing narrow margin lights and stained glass.
- Whilst most roofs to houses have either the original or artificial slate, a number have been replaced with concrete tiles. There are a few properties with skylights on the front of the building, causing a loss of character.
- Chimneys are important features in the area. They are constructed commonly with red, or a mix of red and cream bricks with tall pots on top.
- Forecourt walls and railings are common throughout the area.



A building quality survey undertaken in 2006 reveals that although more than 50% of the area retains its original features, important details such as doors and windows have been lost with less than 25% original features still remaining. The change bringing most impact is the replacement of windows and doors for new double glazed upvc, or timber pivot opening mechanisms. Some houses have additional doors or porches too. Despite this, the style achieved by the area's first 'freeholders' endures. In fact, many contemporary alterations add character to the area, for example the extension to 14 and 16 Conway road, and the colourful paintwork at Pembroke house.



3.4 High Quality or Unusual Materials in the Townscape

- The main building materials are pennant stone with either red brick or Bath Stone for detailing and decoration around windows, doors and parapets.
- Brick is mainly used as a decorative feature, to define windows openings, and stonework.





- There is also evidence of stucco, with many houses displaying its use in a classical or Italianate style. This is most common in Romilly Crescent where some of the earliest houses display moulded parapets, copings and quoins.
- There is evidence of local materials such as Radyr Stone.
- There are a number of distinctive stone walls with decorative iron work. Those in Romilly Crescent are the best. They are constructed in rubble or river boulders, with brick details and Radyr stone on top.

3.5 Hierarchies of Public and Private Space

- There are no substantial areas of open space within the Conservation Area, although Llandaff Fields, to the north of Cathedral Road, provides a strong boundary and provides a setting to enclose the urban area.
- The distant vista of open fields from Conway Road is an attractive feature of the area.
- Public and private space is clearly defined, with properties set on a consistent building line, separated from the roadway by low boundary walls of red brick or stone with mature planting behind.
- There are a significant number of large gardens with mature trees and shrubs within. These have an impact beyond the garden area, and frame buildings and entrances.

3.6 High Quality Hard and Soft Landscaping

Soft landscaping:

- Mature Street trees and hedges are an important part of the streetscape. There are many along Severn Grove and Conway Road. Trees within gardens create a dense backdrop to building lines. Those around St Catherine's Vicarage (formally Carlton Villa) are protected by tree preservation orders. All help to provide a leafy backdrop to the distinctive plot layout and building line.
- A further important tree group lies within the garden of 97 Romilly Crescent. Here, trees overhang railings and an impressive random rubble wall.
- St Winifride's holds the most substantial landscaped area retaining a number of specimen trees.

Hard Landscaping:

- Many areas of original paving have been replaced with tarmac or paving slabs and there is no consistency through out the area.

4.1 The Background

Earlier sections of this document describe the main features which make up the Conservation Area's special character. Once adopted, they may be used in the following ways:

- Informing the preparation of a scheme of enhancement to guide development of the area,
- In establishing a framework for the assessment of planning applications,
- In setting out priorities for the management of the public realm in the future,
- In providing guidance for those who live in the Conservation Area.

These are the opportunities presented by the appraisal:

- To maintain the special character of the Conway Road area,
- To ensure that new developments are well integrated within the area,
- That where there is scope for the enhancement of the public realm, they are achieved with regard for the Conservation Area's special character and the enhancements identified in the appraisal,
- To enhance the enjoyment of its special character,
- To increase the understanding and appreciation of its special character, and the significance of the Cardiff Freehold Land Society.
- To encourage those who live there to protect and maintain the area's special character.
- To protect trees in the area and identify priorities for further protection through the servicing of Tree Preservation Orders.

The pressure for change arises from:

- Continued pressure to alter and extend buildings and gardens,
- Continued pressure for on street parking, and disruption to traffic as a result,
- Change to buildings and houses to meet other objectives, for example improved energy efficiency, and security for houses,
- Continued traffic congestion throughout the area.

This final section aims to address these findings in proposals to enhance the character of the Conservation Area and the positive features described in preceding sections.

4.2 Ways to enhance the Conservation Area

Guidance

The most effective way to enhance the Conservation Area is to ensure that those planning work or development understand its historic character. Guidance set out in appendix 2 and 3 provides advice on how buildings may be protected in proposals for development. It also provides advice to those who are considering repair and maintenance.

Enhancement

The Planning Act 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas), places a duty on the LPA to prepare a scheme of enhancement for a Conservation Area. This enhancement can only be achieved in cooperation with other Service Areas within the Council or in partnership with developers, the community or other public bodies.

The following opportunities are those where the Council could have a role in influencing and bringing forward enhancements.

1. Through the adoption of guidance and enhancement opportunities identified within this appraisal.
2. Through the management of existing Council budgets for example in:
 - Housing repair,
 - Grant aid to improve Energy Efficiency in homes
 - Highway improvement and repair, and the enhancement of footpath links
 - Parks – maintenance and enhancement
3. Through the extra protection offered by designation as a Conservation Area.

The following recommendations summarise the findings of the Appraisal and the action that may be taken on adoption.

- The Appraisal its recommendations and priorities for action are confirmed as the basis for corporate initiatives in the Conservation Area.
- The Appraisal serve as a framework for the assessment of planning applications in compliance with Section 72 of the Act.
- Improved communications with local groups and residents be established in partnership with the Cathedral Road Conservation Area Advisory Group.
- The Appraisal and information of the history of the Conservation Area be made available for study in the library and at local schools.
- An appropriate scheme of repair and maintenance within Parks and Highways be agreed to ensure that work in the public realm is sensitive to the character of the Conservation Area.
- The designation of the Conservation Area be advertised in accordance with the Act.

This document has been adopted following local consultation. If you would like to share information on the history of the area, please contact the conservation team on 20873485, or 20873431.

Details of Listed buildings, the Local List and the Cadw Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, together with other planning policy documents may be obtained from the Conservation Team.

For contacts and information

***The Conservation Team,
Strategic Planning, Room CY4,
County Hall,
Cardiff CF10 4 UW
Tel : 02920 87 3485 3431***

Acknowledgements

- ***The Canna Residents Action Group***
- ***The Cathedral Road Conservation Area Advisory Group,***
- ***The Victorian Society,***
- ***The Glamorgan Record Office,***
- ***Cadw Welsh Historic Monuments***

Guidance for those planning development or alterations in the Conservation Area.

1 Policy Framework

1.1 The policy framework for this guidance is supported by Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Planning Policy Wales 2002, Circular 61/96, South Glamorgan (Cardiff Area) Replacement Structure Plan 1991 – 2011 Adopted April 1997, the City of Cardiff Local Plan Adopted January 1996 and the Unitary Development Plan Deposited Written Statement October 2003, which all have policies relating to the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment, including conservation areas. The guidance contained within this appendix will also complement policies within the emerging Local Development Plan, and Supplementary Planning Guidance on Householder Design Guidance.

1.2 The conservation area contains a large number of historic buildings, most of which are not statutory listed. These properties have retained architectural features which help to maintain the character of the area. Minor alterations and additions to properties may seem insignificant in themselves but when viewed collectively can have a damaging impact on the special interest of the conservation area.

1.3 The special interest of the conservation area is a result of the key qualities described in the Chapter 3. Although some alterations to buildings may be 'permitted development' any development should seek to retain these key qualities. The guidance sets out good practice for development in the conservation area.

2 Exterior Walls

2.1 The covering of an original historic wall, be this by rendering, some form of cladding, painting or any disfiguring treatment is not supported.

2.2 Many properties have already had their Bath stone dressings and surrounds painted. When these surfaces are repainted it should be in a colour that closely matches bath stone.

2.3 The removal of paint on walls, dressings and surrounds is supported provided that an appropriate method of removal is chosen. Inappropriate cleaning methods such as the use of chemicals, excessive use of water or sandblasting can cause long term damage to the fabric of buildings.

3 Repointing

3.1 When repointing it is important that; the joints are correctly prepared, new mortar of the same colour and texture as the original is used and the profile and finish of the original work is matched as closely as possible. Overzealous repointing can cause long term damage to the fabric of the building.

4 Roofs & Gables

4.1 Original decorative details in gables and on the roof, such as ridge tiles, finials and ornamental barge boards should be retained and repaired. Where these details have been lost their reinstatement will be encouraged as this will enhance the special character of the conservation area.

4.2 Where possible the original roofing material should be retained. If replacement is planned the scope for the re-use of the original roofing material should be assessed as roofing works proceed. Reclaimed or new natural slates and tiles are the best way to preserve the special interest of the building and wider conservation area. However, good quality replica slates are sometimes a good alternative covering for an unlisted building in the conservation area.

5 Chimneys

5.1 The demolition of a chimney may require planning permission. It is important to ensure that steps are taken to maintain stonework or brickwork, the mortar and any details such as clay pots, even where the chimneys have become redundant. The removal of a chimney which makes a contribution to the conservation area will not normally be supported.

6 Rainwater Goods

6.1 Cast iron gutters and down pipes on prominent elevations should be retained where possible. Replacements should be in a style that is in keeping with the special interest of the conservation area.

7 Rooflights, Dormer Windows and Roof Extensions

7.1 Rooflights and dormer windows may require planning permission. The insertion of new rooflights and dormer windows on prominent elevations appear incongruous, undermining the character of the conservation area.

7.2 Dormer windows and rooflights are acceptable on rear elevations as they tend to be in discrete locations. However where a rear elevation of a building is very prominent from the highway, they are unlikely to be acceptable.

7.3 Proposals which alter the scale and height of rear extensions by the addition of extra floors will not be supported.

7.4 There are some buildings where dormers make an important contribution to the conservation area. Where replacement or reinstatement of these dormer windows is proposed a like for like type will be sought. Any increase in size of the dormer window is unlikely to be acceptable. The alteration of a dormer window into a balcony or balconette is not a characteristic feature of the conservation area.

8 Windows & Doors

8.1 Original timber sash windows and doors should be retained and repaired whenever possible. Repair of timber decay is not only more environmentally sustainable, it is often cheaper than complete replacement and has the benefit of retaining the original character of the building. The Conservation Team has a list of specialist local joiners who can repair or replace timber windows and doors.

8.2 Where new windows have become necessary, their replacement should carefully match the appearance, materials and function of the original windows.

8.3 It should be noted that upvc often appears unsympathetic because structurally they must be made thicker. This can result in them having none of the lightness that characterises timber sash windows.

8.4 Where a building has modern, non-original windows and doors and where development opportunities allow, replacements that accurately reflect the appearance, materials and function of those originally fitted to the building will be encouraged as an enhancement to the character of the conservation area.

8.5 Further advice on window repair and replacement can be found in a separate publication 'Window Repair & Replacement in Conservation Areas', available by contacting the Conservation Team or from the Councils internet site.

8.6 The size of window and door openings should not be altered as this is likely to harm the appearance of the building and the group of which it forms part. Where inappropriate alteration has taken place and where development opportunities allow, the reintroduction of typical fenestration patterns will be encouraged.

8.7 Decorative glass within windows, doors and porches should be retained. Where decorative glass has been damaged, sympathetic replacement of the damaged piece should take place rather than removal of the whole window.

8.8 Better energy efficiency, noise reduction and draught reduction can be achieved through benign methods, for example through the regular maintenance and appropriate repair of the windows or by the introduction of; secondary glazing applied to the inside of the windows, draught stripping and even by using thick curtains.

9 Porches

9.1 Decorative details within and surrounding porches should be retained. Where these details have been lost consideration should be given to their reinstatement.

10 Renewable Energy Devices, Communications Equipment & Security Equipment

10.1 The attaching of additional equipment, for whatever uses, to buildings can have a significant impact on the character of the conservation area. If inappropriately located they can have a cumulative impact that is detrimental to the character of the conservation area. Rear elevations or out buildings are often a more appropriate location, provided they are discrete and do not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area. Where this type of equipment is currently inappropriately located and when opportunities arise this visual clutter should be reduced.

11 Front Gardens

11.1 Where the original garden layout and details have been lost, their reintroduction should be encouraged.

11.2 Where front gardens have already been altered to include vehicle parking and when development opportunities allow, enhancement through the re-establishment of traditional front gardens will be encouraged.

12 Front Boundaries

12.1 Where originals front boundaries remain these should be retained in development proposals. Where these details have been lost and when development opportunities allow, enhancement through their re-establishment will be encouraged.

12.2 Railings on top of boundary walls and gates would have once been a common feature however few originals remain. However railings that feature on balconies and balconettes are abundant. There are also interesting examples of later replacement railings and gates, for example the art-deco style 'sunburst' railings and gates. These need to be retained. In repairing and restoring railings and gate it is best to use sections and profiles which reflect late-Victorian and Edwardian precedents. However good quality modern railings are also available.

12.3 Where new hedges are proposed as part of landscaping schemes associated with planning applications, it is important that the plant species is in character with the conservation area. The Council's Tree Preservation Officers will be able to give advice on appropriate species.

13 Rear Boundary Walls

13.1 Where planning permission is required, total or substantial demolition and the insertion of large new openings within the original rear boundary walls will not normally be supported.

13.2 Proposed new walls to replace inappropriate modern walls or open boundaries should try to reflect the materials, bond, mortar and pointing of the original walls or use other materials of a good quality.

14 Extensions & New Development

14.1 Whether a traditional or contemporary design approach is adopted, the success of new developments and extensions to existing buildings in the conservation area will require an understanding of its special interest.

Extensions to existing buildings and new development in the Conway Road Conservation Area will be required to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area by respecting the area's historic context. This can be expressed in :-

- Existing vertical and horizontal rhythms in the built form.
- Retaining important views and vistas in and out of the conservation area.
- Respecting the existing land uses.
- Reinforcing the existing hierarchies of public and private space.
- Using materials and architectural details which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings.
- Respecting established plot size and garden layout within the Conservation Area.

There are also wider planning issues to consider. For example attention needs to be paid to a development's impact on the amenity of neighbours, particularly with regard to the harm that could be caused by significant overlooking and loss of light.

15 Refuse and Waste Management

15.1 It is important that development proposals involving waste management are sympathetic to the historic built environment. Large bin stores may need planning permission and should be carefully sited, both visually and to ensure neighbours are not disturbed. Further Guidance is provided in the Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Waste Collection and Storage Facilities'.

Landscape & Trees Advice

Open spaces, verges and private gardens all contribute to the special character of the Conservation Area and the Planning Authority has special powers within the Conservation Area to assist in their protection. This guidance relates to landscaping issues including trees, parking, gardens, hedges, fences and gates within the Conservation Area.

Trees

Trees in conservation areas have special protection. You must apply in writing for consent for work to trees that are greater than 7.5 centimetres (about 3 inches) in diameter, measured at 1.5 metres (about 5 feet) above the ground. Specifically you must give 6 weeks notice to the Planning Authority of your intention to do the work. The Authority will agree to work which it considers will benefit the trees, and may agree other work where the benefits outweigh the damage to the trees. If it does not agree, the Authority may make a Tree Preservation Order to prevent the work. If the Authority does not respond within six weeks the work may be carried out anyway. The penalties the court may impose for not giving this notice are serious.

Work means not just the removal or killing of a tree, but also pruning or damaging roots or branches, whether directly or indirectly. An application should therefore be made if, for example, you plan to alter soil levels near trees, or install impervious surfaces, such as a new drive. It would also be an offence to damage trees by polluting their environment, for example by applying a broad leaved herbicide to an adjacent lawn. There are various exemptions from the need for consent, particularly for trees that are dead, dying or dangerous. You are advised, except in the case of immediate danger, to telephone a Tree Preservation Officer before exercising one of these exemptions. Trees that are illegally removed, or removed under an exemption, will normally have to be replaced. If the work relates to a development for which you need planning consent, you should include it within the planning application. You will not need to make a separate application– the whole issue will be considered at one time.

If you have a large or prominent tree you are strongly advised to take, from time to time, the advice of a tree surgeon as to its long term management. The Authority will give due weight to a qualified tree surgeon's opinion when considering applications. Trees in the highway, or in the council's managed fields and parks, are cared for by the Council's Parks Services, and are subject to a long term management regime, supervised by a qualified arborist.

Grassed and planted front gardens with walls surmounted by hedging and rails give the Conservation Area its special character.

