

# **PORTHGAIN CONSERVATION AREA**



## **APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

**Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development  
Plan 2**

**Approval Date for Consultation: 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
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# Introduction

1. The introduction of Conservation Areas resulted from the growing awareness that as well as individual buildings and trees, whole areas could be of interest and value. Conservation Areas. They were introduced in 1967 and now fall under the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, Local Authorities being required to determine and designate 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' as Conservation Areas.
2. Porthgain was designated a Conservation Area in 1997. Once designated, Local Authorities have a duty to protect Conservation Areas from harmful development, this reflected in the policies contained within the National Park's Local Development Plan. They also have a duty to review boundaries and identify potential measures for enhancing and protecting the Conservation Area.

*See Map 1 overleaf.*

3. Over and above the general restrictions on permitted development across the National Park, the consequences of Conservation Area designation include the requirement for consent to demolish certain buildings/boundary features and the requirement to notify the Authority of proposals affecting certain trees.
4. The purpose of a Conservation Area appraisal is to define the qualities of the area that make it worthy of Conservation Area status. This will provide a sound basis for development control decisions and for improvement/enhancement initiatives. It will also enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of the area, on which planning and applications and other proposals for change may be considered.
5. This document serves as:-
  - An appraisal of the various features which give Porthgain Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest, the presumption being that they be preserved or enhanced as required by legislation.
  - A management plan setting out proposals which can enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
6. The relevant stakeholders are drawn from the private and public sectors and this document is intended for use by both.

# **Porthgain Conservation Area Designated 1997 MAP 1**

## **Key**

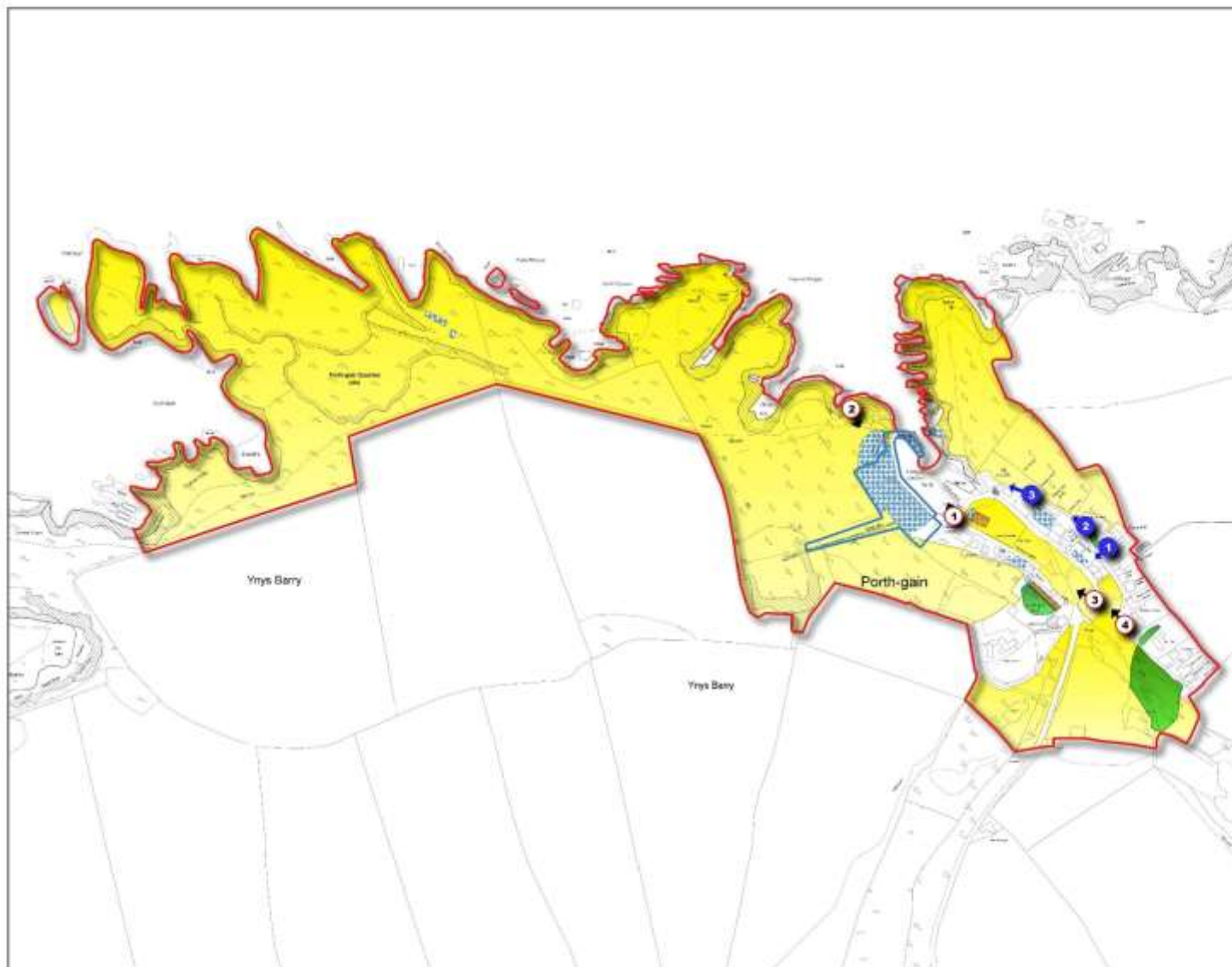
- Conservation Area / Character Areas
- Listed Buildings
- Tree Preservation Order / Trees important to setting
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Special Area of Conservation
- Landmark Buildings
- Positive Buildings
- Key curtilages/frontages
- Essential Open Areas
- Opportunity for improvement of forecourt/courtyard/shop fronts
- Opportunity for enhancement of area
- Opportunity for public realm / features enhancement

## **Key views**

1. Seaward views from harbour
2. Panoramic views of village and harbour and headlands from cliff path above Pilots House
3. Panoramic views of village and harbour and headlands from cliff path above Pilots House
4. View over village towards sea: western beacon visible

## **Glimpses to an object/landmark/point of interest**

1. Glimpse of Porthgain Row over Sunnyside
2. Glimpse of hoppers, T'y Mawr and harbour
3. Glimpse of harbour, Pilots House and headland with beacon



# The Planning Policy Context

7. Appendix A to this Guidance sets out a summary of the national legislation, policy and guidance. Policy 8 Special Qualities of the Local Development Plan 2 provides for the protection of the special qualities of the National Park. This guidance is prepared in support of that policy in particular criterion b) which seeks to ensure the identity and character of towns and villages is not lost.

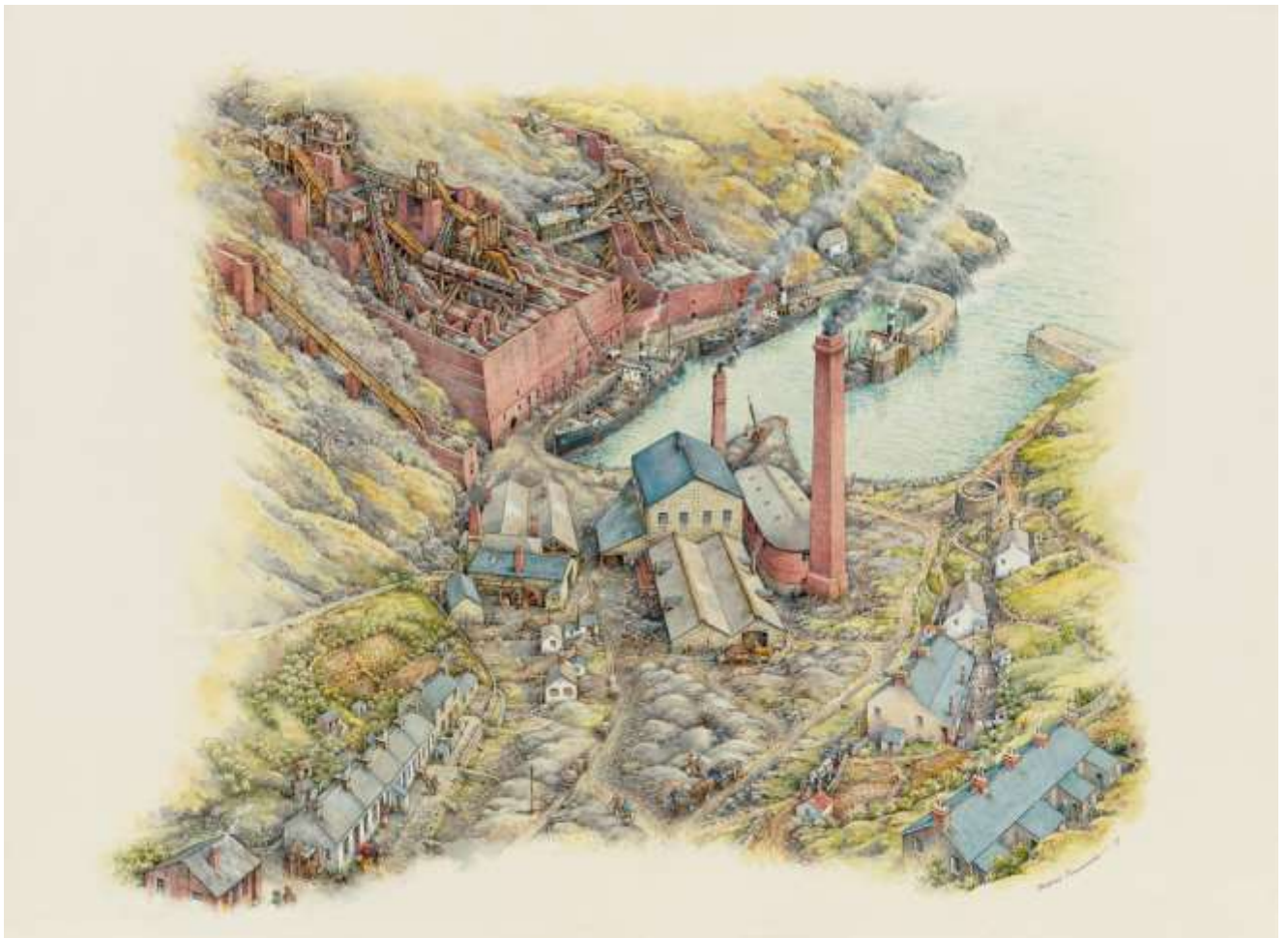


Figure 1 - reconstruction of working harbour – copyright Michael Blackmore



# Historic Development and Archaeology

8. The place-name comprises two elements – *Porth* (bay) and *Cain*, either a lost name for the culverted stream flowing through the village, or a personal name.
9. The area abounds in early archaeology, with local finds dated to the Mesolithic period. Several Iron Age promontory forts exist along the coast between St Davids and St Dogmaels.
10. Little is recorded of any medieval history, but Porthgain formed part of the medieval manor of Llanrhian, granted to Maurice Fitzgerald prior to 1175. By the seventeenth century, the manor had passed down to the Le Hunte family of Altramont, Co. Wexford, with whom it remained until 1881, when purchased by Henry Prosser.
11. Quite probably, Porthgain was a small harbour from early times, although not recorded in the 1566 list of ports and creeks in Pembrokeshire. Emanuel Bowen's map of South Wales (1729) suggests that a harbour was in existence, perhaps exporting local slate. The Sloop Inn is possibly the earliest building, apparently dating from 1743, but much rebuilt after it became a pub in the mid-nineteenth century. The nearby limekiln - typical of the many coastal kilns of the county – also probably predates the present village.
12. Dominating any earlier surviving evidence of occupation and activity are the extensive remains of quarrying activity along the cliffs. With extensive reserves of slate and granite, the area was transformed during the nineteenth century. A London consortium obtained leases of land from George le Hunte in 1840. Eventually trading as Messrs Barclay & Co, they obtained the land to build a harbour, breakwater and piers in 1851.
13. The reformed consortium took in Abereiddy slate quarries, as well as those at Trwyn Llwyd, to the east. Steam machinery was brought in and a narrow-gauge railway built between the quarries at Abereiddy and the new harbour at Porthgain, where a slate quarry was started. Several workers came to the area from the North Wales slate quarries and by 1855, William Prichard (originally from Caernarfonshire) was in charge of operations. Cottages were built in the village and at Pentop and the whitewashed headland beacons built to guide shipping into the notoriously difficult harbour. An unusual survival of the period is the pilot's house, overlooking the harbour.
14. Trade was stop-start, facing the increasing competition of North Wales slate, which was of better quality (and cheaper) than the porous local slate (which was often laid and slurried in lime). After cessation of trade 1860-2, a new company rebuilt the tramway, complete with a 16-horse power engine to power a chain incline from Porthgain. The St Brides Welsh Slate & Slab Company was formed in 1875, with several stakeholders keen to invest in the booming slate industry. Success was short-lived and the company collapsed in 1880.

15. The United Welsh Slate Company was formed in 1883. Increased quarrying of slate at Porthgain led to the deepening of the quarry floor, the slate removed via a double-incline, the brick-built engine houses still surviving. A second double-incline across the headland took the slate down to the harbour. Wire-borne trucks ('blondins') replaced the inclines and finally, the problem of the deepening floor was solved by the digging of the tunnel-link directly to the harbour.
16. The company was reformed in 1893, with grand plans to improve the infrastructure, but by 1895 it was in liquidation. By 1900, only three men were quarrying and dressing slate at Porthgain and by 1910, the slateworks had ceased altogether.
17. Brickmaking was another important industry at Porthgain, using local clay and stone waste. Operations commenced in 1878, Ty Mawr surviving as the brick-making shed. A leat powered the attached pugging mill (demolished) and to the north-east was a massive continuous anthracite-powered Hoffman kiln with a tall stack. Production of some 50,000 bricks per week were claimed as typical in 1893. Brick-making continued until the 1920s, the pinkish bricks of durable quality, sometimes frog-stamped 'Porthgain'.
18. The latest of the 'trinity' of industries at Porthgain was the production of crushed granite for road-stone. With the ongoing improvements of the increasingly-used roads, the demand for aggregate eclipsed that for slate. In 1904, that demand was exploited by the Bristol-based Forest of Dean United Stone Firms, who built the vast block of hoppers alongside the harbour, these containing the various grades of crushed stone for discharge to the waiting boats. The remains of the crushers survive above and behind the hoppers, supplied by tipper wagons from the coastal quarry to the north-west. The west pier was extended and a central pier created, resulting in a more secure inner harbour.
19. Road stone was shipped to destinations including Bristol and London, whilst the green granite was also used for kerbs and building stone. With stiff competition from quarries served by the rail system, Porthgain went into decline during the 1920s. Even though the north hoppers had been recently built or rebuilt, the works closed down in 1931. In 1982, the land and property were purchased from the residual owners by the National Park Authority and the Porthgain Village Association. The properties were in turn purchased by the inhabitants and the Authority took on areas including the harbour, hoppers and Ty Mawr.
20. Since the 1930s, the harbour has been important to the local fishing industry (especially crab and lobsters). The village is also a very popular tourist destination.



Figure 2 - view of c. 1900, dominated by the brickworks



Figure 3 - Porthgain Row/Y Stryd - c. 1900





Figure 4 - early C20 view from south-east



Figure 5 - The Harbour and Hoppers

# Character Analysis

21. The character of Porthgain is intrinsically linked to its history and development.
- The Conservation Area is of outstanding historical importance, retaining much evidence of its past.
  - The layout of the village is influenced by a pre-historic settlement and later grew around an open green.
  - The village has been little changed by later development and is something of a hidden gem.
  - The Conservation Area enjoys a fine setting within the open St Davids Peninsula.
  - The character of the buildings is predominantly nineteenth century. The architectural palette is typically simple, including render, sash windows and slate/grouted roofs.
  - The key building is the Methodist Chapel of 1827.
22. The Conservation Area contains nine **Listed Buildings**. This is shown on the Character Area map, along with **landmark buildings** and **positive buildings** (key unlisted buildings making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area).
23. The map also identifies **essential open areas** and **important trees/groups of trees**.



Figure 6 - early C20 view of The Sloop

## The Conservation Area and its Setting

24. Porthgain is a small coastal village nestling in a broad valley set behind a small formerly industrial harbour. The housing to the south-east occupies a plateau, visible from the sole road entry to Porthgain. The village centre itself is set around a central green/car park, coming into sudden view beyond the sharp corner.
25. The layout of the village is unusual (for Pembrokeshire), mostly centred on a large open green, formerly the industrial hub of the slate and brickworks Ty Mawr, the machinery shed for the brickworks, survives. The housing is set along the valley sides. To the south is The Row - a terrace of mid-nineteenth century single-storey cottages, and to the north a short terrace of two-storey houses, with the Sloop Inn and limekiln set closer to the harbour. The latter is dwarfed by the brick hoppers, with the former harbour pilot's office alongside. In the twentieth century much infill occurred and some prefabricated houses (imported by sea) later replaced with larger dwellings. The overall built character is a mix of nineteenth and twentieth century, mostly informal in layout with little in the way of formal enclosure.
26. Most properties face onto the road with the majority set behind small gardens. Many of the houses are set on elevated sites, terraced above the road level. The upper houses to the steeper eastern side of the valley are accessed via narrow tracks, the terrace of houses facing directly onto one. There is a clear hierarchy of housing from the workers' cottages of The Row to the later bay-windowed terrace on the opposite side of the valley, perhaps built for more senior members of the workforce.
27. The village is set between rocky headlands with the coastal slopes providing an attractive setting for the village. These also contain the whitewashed stone navigation beacons, built in the 1850s to aid entry into the narrow harbour. In contrast to the exposed coastline, is the wetland to the south-east. On the clifftop behind the hoppers are several small structures dating from the era of the granite quarrying, including engine houses, a weighbridge, offices and stores. Various footings survive on the western headland, including those of the 1850s Pentop Terrace. To the north-west, is the line of the tramway lining the granite quarries to the harbour. Much of this may be explored from the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, from which are panoramic coastal views and views across the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is very rich in industrial archaeology with several minor relics and footprints of lost buildings/infrastructure remaining.
28. Nine buildings within the conservation area are **Listed**. The hoppers complex is a **Scheduled Ancient Monument**. Some key unlisted **positive buildings** have been identified in terms of their contribution to the streetscape. The Conservation Area is predominantly residential in character, but the pub,

restaurant and gallery are popular attractions and the harbour remains important to the local fishing industry.



**Figure 7 - Ty Mawr - listed Grade II**



Figure 8 - positive building

29. The topography of the Conservation Area allows a variety of **key views and glimpses** of the surrounding area. These are identified on Map 2. One of the most attractive views is that over the village and coastal backdrop from the path above the Pilot's House.





**Figure 9 - view over Conservation Area from above the Pilot's House**

30. Within the Conservation Area is a large amount of essential open areas, all informal/natural in character, ranging from the village green to the coastal headlands. Informal essential open area characterises the valley floor, criss-crossed by tracks and paths.



**Figure 10 - The village green**

31. Despite the exposed coastal setting, a number of **trees/groups of trees** are important to the character of the area, including the group of sycamores to the rear of The Row and smaller trees west of Sunny Hill, providing some softening to the built-up character of this part of the Conservation Area.



Figure 11 - trees to rear of Porthgain Row

32. In terms of the public realm, the village road is of standard finish with no pavements or formal edges. A recent undergrounding scheme has removed much of the intrusive wirescape whilst the street lighting is of unobtrusive modern style.



**Figure 12 - appropriate modern street lighting**



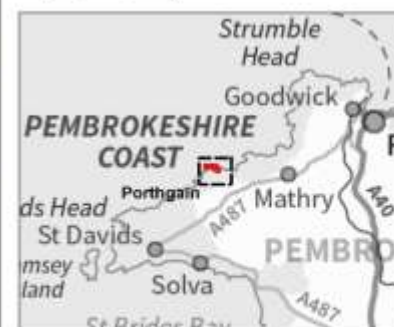
Prominent views into Conservation Area



1. Road entry into village showing houses on east flank of valley flanked by sycamore trees.
2. Views down towards harbour. Tj Maw, hoppers and Portgall Row. Rhys faen prominent on horizon above scrub slopes. Distant fells.
3. Views from headland over harbour, hoppers and Tj Maw. Expansive extensive headland with brick-built industrial structures prominently visible. Panoramic sea views and also expansive distant landscape studied with farms and houses.
4. Views from Feindre towards houses on eastern side of Conservation Area with headland and sea beyond.



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# Building Materials

## *Walls*

- Nearly all historic buildings of local slate/rubble, the houses mostly rendered and painted. Some buildings were colour-washed. Most outbuildings are of exposed soft slate, but most were originally lime-washed.
- Where it exists, rendered detailing is simple.
- Ty Mawr built of well-laid green granite with dressed voussoirs.
- Despite the existence of the brickworks, brick facing is rare, with the exception of the massive hoppers complex.



Figure 13 - typical rendered facades





Figure 14 - traces of colour-wash



Figure 15 - slate-built 'Ty-bach'



Figure 16 - whitewashed Pilot's House

### ***Windows***

- Typically early nineteenth century small-paned sash with later 4-paned examples



Figure 17 -12-paned sash window



Figure 18 - 4-paned sash window

## ***Doors***

- Typically of boarded construction



Figure 19 - boarded door

## ***Roofs***

- Mostly pitched and of natural slate (historically local, eventually superseded by North Wales slate).
- Some cemented 'grouted' roofs survive
- Mostly plain/lapped ridge tiles.
- Verge detail usually simple and mortared.



**Figure 20 - grouted roof**



**Figure 21 - North Wales slate roof**



## ***Chimneys***

- Earlier chimneys of stone with slate tabling and simple flaunched pots.
- Later chimneys of brick with corbelled heads.
- Generally modern pots.



**Figure 22 - stone chimney stack**



**Figure 23 - chimneys of Porthgain brick**



## ***Boundaries***

- Only a few buildings have front boundary walls defining forecourts or gardens, these typically retaining structures of modern construction.



**Figure 24 - front walls**



**Figure 25 - limekiln**

## Landscape Setting

33. The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority's Landscape Character Assessment (Trefin) and Seascape Character Assessment (Penbwchdy to Penllechwen) notes the pervading character of the rocky coastline punctuated by sheltered inlets and coves such as Porthgain. They also describe the long tradition of coastal quarrying within a landscape that has been occupied from Prehistory. The interlinked industrial remains at Porthgain and Abereiddy are specifically mentioned.
34. The surrounding landscape is typically fairly flat and expansive, allowing fine sea view over a landscape characterised by small settlements and farmsteads.
35. The **prominent views** into the Conservation Area are best seen from the eastern coastal headland and the footpath from the south-east.



Figure 26 - view from eastern headland towards western beacon

36. From within the Conservation Area itself are a number of **key views**. These include fine views from the western headland over the village. These are set out on Map 1.

37. Also shown on Map 1 are **key glimpses** from within the Conservation Area towards objects/landmarks/points of interest. These include glimpses from the track above the Sloop Inn.



Figure 27 - glimpse of harbour



Figure 28 - line of old tramway





**Figure 29 - north beacon**



**Figure 30 - ancillary quarry buildings**

## Porthgain

Outlying areas important to the setting and character of the Conservation Area



### Porthgain Conservation Area Designated 1997 MAP 3

- A. Eastern headland prominently visible from opposite headland. Former cliff slate quarry of historic importance.
- B. Area to south east of Porthgain including Henllys and Felindre, both of historic importance; old pre-industrial track ways to Porthgain from Llanrhian, (the medieval settlement with parish church and other buildings of historic/architectural importance).
- C. Land to west of Conservation Area including granite quarries at Penclegyr, slate quarries at Aberciddy, settlement of Aberciddy with its industrial remains, routes and industrial tramways, Barry Island Farm of historic importance and visual prominence



# **Local Guidance and Management Proposals**

38. Inappropriate modern alterations can adversely affect the appearance of building elevations and can also be physically damaging to historic fabric. Important original features threatened by such alterations include shop fronts, timber sash windows, doors and door cases, cast iron handrails, railings, rainwater goods, and chimney pots and stacks. It is important, therefore, that property owners and occupiers adopt the right approach to repairs and the replacement of these features. The accumulation of small details in the streetscape is integral to its character and special care is needed to conserve them.
39. Proposed works should involve assessing each site and building in terms of its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, its historic value, form of construction and technical performance, including the presence of defects or any other threats to the survival of its fabric. Expert advice should be sought on all major projects, preferably from an architect, building surveyor or planner who is experienced in working within the historic environment. Even the simplest of operations should be based on an understanding of how a particular building 'works', in itself and in relation to its setting. Any work to larger buildings and buildings of exceptional historic value should be based on a comprehensively researched conservation plan, based on Cadw's Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales  
<https://cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/conservation/conservationprinciples>
40. Conservation Area designation does not prevent change but forms a framework in which the town can develop without losing any of the attributes which make it special.

## **Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

41. These are subject to controls under separate legislation. Listed Building control is operated by the National Park Authority, Scheduled Ancient Monument control by Cadw. The listing of buildings includes their exteriors, interiors and historic curtilages (the common myth being that listing only applies to facades).

## **Maintenance**

42. Regular maintenance of a building is the best and most economical way of conserving its fabric. Looking after a building is the responsibility of owners and occupiers. A building that is looked after will retain its value and the need for extensive repairs will be avoided. Protection from water and damp penetration is the most important issue. Roofs, gutters and down pipes should be the first to be repaired. Owners of large buildings might consider creating a maintenance plan based on annual visual inspections and a detailed survey every five years.

### Day-to-day maintenance

43. Building owners and occupiers should ensure that the following tasks are carried out on a regular basis:
- **Clearing leaves and debris** especially after the autumn with particular focus on gullies and rainwater goods. A period of heavy rainfall is the best time to identify faults.
  - **Controlling plant growth** that can accelerate decay and sometimes cause structural damage. Ivy should be killed by cutting near the ground and allowing it to wither before attempting to remove its roots from the wall. Valerian should be spot-treated.
  - **Looking for insect attack and fungal decay** both of which can be caused by damp penetration and poor ventilation.
  - **Checking ventilation** to ensure that any grilles which ventilate the spaces under floors are not blocked. Lack of ventilation may lead to conditions in which fungal decay can take hold.
44. Regular maintenance should minimise the need for major repairs to all buildings and repair of original features should always be the first option to be evaluated. However, some elements will eventually reach the end of their life, in which case consideration will have to be given to replacing using traditional materials and proven techniques of repair. The alternative is the loss of the historic value of individual buildings and the gradual erosion of the special interest of the conservation area. The purpose of the repair of any buildings within the conservation area is to prevent, or at least slow, the process of decay without damaging or altering features which contribute to its historic / architectural importance.
45. *A lack of on-going maintenance can lead to the deterioration of the built fabric if, for example, gutters are missing or roofs leaks are not repaired, with resultant water penetration into the vulnerable parts of the building.*

### Roofscape

46. The roof-scape of an urban area forms the skyline and visual profile of a streetscape and is a very significant part of its identity. The combination of materials, details, form and massing creates the 'hat', which sits above the building and is critical to its character. Although much of the detail may not always be visible from street level, the local topography allows views towards, across and over the roof-scape from different parts of the town. The roof is, by its very nature, a critical part of a building's defence against the elements and, as such, is one of the most significant focal areas for regular maintenance and repair.

### Roof Coverings

47. Most properties use natural slate, which should be used for any works of repair or replacement. Ridges, verges and other details should all be bedded in mortar and butt-jointed. Concrete and clay tiles are not appropriate.

48. Imported natural slates that match the grey or heather blue colour of the original Welsh slate are a cost-effective solution but it is important to source the slates from a reputable source to avoid longer term problems of compatibility when the slates weather. Artificial slate, although sometimes difficult to distinguish from natural material when new, weathers in a different way and will, over time, appear different from the genuine product. If insulation is introduced into the roof it should be placed at ceiling level, or between the rafters, subject to the provision of adequate ventilation (via eaves gaps, not proprietary vents fitted to the roof slope). Insulation on top of the rafters will raise the profile of the roof causing potential problems of detailing at the eaves and where it abuts adjacent buildings. However, the introduction of high levels of insulation into older buildings can cause condensation and consequent decay.

### **Rooflights and dormers**

49. Where loft spaces are converted and roof lights or dormers are a necessity, they should usually be situated on rear elevations as they break up the plane of the continuous roof slope on the street side. New dormer windows, where no previous dormers existed, should be avoided where possible, as they have a detrimental impact on the roof profile, scale and balance of the building's form and massing. Where original dormers exist, any changes to the proportions and overall size should also be avoided. Consideration should be given to using modern versions of early cast-iron roof lights (to the correct proportion and size, complete with a vertical glazing bar) to retain the character of the roof as much as possible. Many window manufacturers have special double-glazed Conservation Rooflights, which are designed to sit within the plane of the roof.

### **Chimneys and Chimney Pots**

50. Chimney stacks and pots add to the interest and variety of the skyline and streetscape. Chimneys should be retained and repaired with new matching clay pots provided as necessary. Where an original stack has been reduced in height, then it should be rebuilt to its original height. Where no evidence of the pattern of the original stack exists, the style should be based on the local style, typically with over-sailing corbelled courses at the head. Most chimney stacks are of red brick, but whatever the materials, the original construction should be followed.

### **Solar Water and Photovoltaic Panels**

51. The need to promote energy efficiency will be balanced against the need to protect the character and appearance of the area when dealing with proposals for solar panels in Conservation Areas. Due to sensitivity of the Conservation Area to modern alterations, careful consideration will need to be given to the siting and design of the panels.
52. Notwithstanding prevailing householder permitted development rights, the installation of microgeneration equipment on the principal elevations of

buildings or in prominent locations within Conservation Areas will require careful consideration. Alternative locations at the rear of buildings, on subsidiary outbuildings or ground.-mounted, where the panels would not be visible from the highway, should be considered. They should not project more than 200mm from the roof or wall surface. Solar slates along with an increasing number of 'heritage range' products are available.

53. The panels themselves should be of a dark colour and the framing should be in matt black or grey. Standard light-coloured blue panels with reflective light grey framing should be avoided.

### **Guttering and downpipes**

54. Consideration should be given to using traditional cast iron (or cast aluminium) gutters when restoring heritage buildings. Simple half-round gutters should always be used on earlier buildings. Half-round and ogee pattern gutters are suitable for later buildings. Cheaper uPVC materials are not as robust as cast-iron or cast aluminium and are more susceptible to impact and weather damage, as well as warping, sometimes affecting the gradient and natural fall of gutters with consequent risk of leaks and water penetration into the building's fabric. Higher quality uPVC may be suitable in a modern context or to lesser elevations.

### **Windows and glazing**

55. Windows are the 'eyes' of a building and are the central focus of its character. The double-hung sliding sash window is predominant within the conservation area. Changes to the proportions of window openings and / or windows themselves invariably have a detrimental impact on the building facade as a whole. The incorporation of trickle vents should be avoided, due to their detrimental impact on overall character.
56. Original sash windows should always be retained and repaired, unless completely unfeasible. Replacement is very rarely necessary. Decay normally occurs in and around the sills, where new timber can be spliced in. The original crown or cylinder glass is thinner and more uneven in surface than modern float glass giving more subtle reflections and where it has survived, should always be retained. Heavier modern glass is likely to require heavier sash weights to counter- balance the window. Where the window has to be replaced, rather than repaired, the new window should be in timber and an exact match of the original. Where double-glazing is possible, the sealed units must be traditionally rebated and of slim specification so as to permit traditionally slim joinery details. Original slate sills should be retained wherever possible.
57. The removal of unsympathetic windows that are not original to the building is encouraged, with replacements to replicate the historic type and pattern. Where the original windows have been inappropriately replaced, windows of non-traditional materials replicating the original design will be favourably considered, subject to agreement on the detailed specification. Planning permission will be required within the Article 4(2) area.



58. Where householders wish to replicate existing non-traditional windows, planning permission will not be required providing that the windows pre-date the designation of the conservation area and exact replicas are proposed.
59. Where the original or historic windows survive and are capable of repair and upgrading, planning permission will not be given for replacement in other materials within the Article 4(2) area.

## **Doors**

60. Many of the issues that are relevant to windows and glazing are also applicable to doors. Where possible, traditional timber doors should be retained and repaired. Replacements, where necessary, should reinstate the original door style if known, or be in keeping with the period of original construction. Whilst traditional door patterns are, on the whole, more varied than windows there are some general principles that apply. Front doors were not generally glazed, where they have fanlights above, although later Victorian and Edwardian properties often had upper panels added or replaced by frosted and / or decorated glass. Fanlights, door cases and other ancillary features must always be preserved, repaired and maintained. The design and style of the ironmongery is also important and should match the design and style of the original door. External lever handles should be avoided.
61. Within the Article 4(2) area, planning permission is not required for the repair or exact replacement of a historic door and where householders wish to replicate existing non-traditional doors, planning permission will not be required providing that the doors pre-date the designation of the conservation area and exact replicas are proposed

## **Porches and canopies**

62. These should reflect local traditions of simplicity and utility, with either flat, bracketed canopies or lean-to roofs on supports. More ornate door cases should be carefully repaired or restored.

## **Access for the disabled**

63. It is necessary to provide access for the disabled, to conform with accessibility legislation. It is always important to ensure that the regulations and supporting guidance are correctly interpreted for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. Where works of this nature are applied they should be done sensitively and with regard to the overarching principles of proportions, design, materials and workmanship that apply for the building as a whole

## **Pointing and wall finishes**

64. Lime mortar is preferable to hard cement mortars on repairs and extensions to historic buildings and pointing of stone and brick, on repairs and new-build, should follow traditional details, with flush, recessed or double-struck joints,

ensuring that mortar does not extend over the surrounding brick or stonework. Existing lime mortar should always be replaced by the same material and advice on composition or techniques should be sought from the Authority's Building Conservation Officer. The employment of render is acceptable in most cases, with a preference for smooth finishes – lime-based render should be used for historic building repairs or extensions, finished in pastel colours.

65. Slate-hanging is a traditional practice for exposed elevations (also providing the opportunity for insulation when newly constructed). The removal of historic slate hanging is strongly discouraged.

### **Shop fronts and signage**

66. The traditional shop front forms a 'frame' for the window display, comprising the fascia above, stall riser below and pilasters to either side. The proportions of each component should form a balanced composition. Entrance to the building may be central or to one side depending on the width of the property. Decorated steps in recessed doorways should be retained and repaired. The fascia should be finished at the top with a cornice moulding and contained on each side by a console or corbel, which acts as the capital to the pilasters. The use of tiles on stall risers will help to repel water and provide for a traditional detail.
67. Existing traditional shop fronts, or surviving components, should be retained and repaired wherever possible. Original features may be concealed beneath later facings. Where shop fronts have been completely lost but photographic evidence of their original design exists, a detailed replica is most appropriate. Where no evidence of the original exists, a modern design that follows the principles of the original 'framing' could be used. Where separate buildings have been combined to form a single unit, each building should have its own distinct frontage to maintain the rhythm and proportions of the streetscape. The same fascia should not be carried across both facades. The window should be sub-divided vertically to maintain proportions characteristic of the building and the context. Lettering and graphic design should be proportional, appropriate to the context and not generic.
68. The National Park Authority will be preparing Supplementary Planning Guidance on shop front design.

### **Colour**

69. Colours are also an important part of the town's overall character. Render should normally be in pastel colours and painted timber should be off-white with strong colours normally reserved for front doors, railings and shop-fronts.

### **Boundary walls and railings**

70. Many residential streets and properties retain walled or railed forecourts, which are critical to the special character of the conservation area. Particular attention

needs to be given to ensuring that boundary walls and railings are not removed to allow parking and are not inappropriately replaced.

71. Ironwork should generally be painted in dark colours or to match the 'livery' of the house. The ubiquitous 'heritage black and gold' is best avoided.
72. Front gardens are an important local amenity. They enrich the conservation area visually and can provide sustainable drainage.

## **New development within the conservation area**

73. Generally, where new development and / or extensions are proposed it is important that they are guided by sound design principles, as well as sympathetic detailing in relation to its historic context. It is particularly important to avoid standardized solutions whether in a domestic or commercial context All forms of new development within the conservation area should:
- Preserve and reinforce the 'local distinctiveness' and character of the conservation area, including street patterns, open spaces and trees, plot boundaries and boundary treatments;
  - Have regard for existing building lines and the orientation of existing development;
  - Respond to the particular rhythm and articulation of the subdivision of the street scape and individual buildings in terms of bays and openings that break up the façade;
  - Reinforce the distinctive character and grain of the particular character area of the conservation area, through an informed understanding of its building forms and styles, features and materials;
  - Respect the scale and massing of surrounding buildings. It is essential that new development is not out of scale with existing buildings by way of its height, floor levels, size of windows and doors, overall massing and roof scape;
  - Maintain key views and vistas within, into and out of the Conservation Area; and
  - Where possible, minimise the visual impact of parked vehicles (including during seasonal peaks when Porthgain is often congested) and the provision of parking areas on the streetscape and landscape setting of historic streets and buildings.
74. Where new development is proposed for areas that are adjacent to, rather than within, the conservation area, it will be equally important to have care and consideration for the impact of the intended scheme on the setting of the conservation area. Where appropriate, all forms of new development should respect the principles listed above, with particular concern to:
- Ensure new development continues the local scale, form and materials in order to reinforce the distinctive architectural character of the immediate context;
  - Consider the impact of new development on key views and vistas;
75. Good quality, contemporary designs may be appropriate in the conservation area, but the concern must be to avoid incongruous and low grade, brash and ostentatious development
76. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016 requires applications for certain types of development to be accompanied by a design and access statement. This includes all major



development, and in respect of development in Conservation Areas, developments for one or more dwellings or for provision of buildings with floorspace of 100 square metres or more. Further detailed guidance on Design and Access Statements is found in the Welsh Government/Design Commission for Wales document [Design and Access Statements in Wales: Why, What and How](#).

77. The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires certain applications (Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent) to be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS). This aims to ensure that the significance of the historic asset is taken into account when developing and designing proposals. The HIS is informed by the process of undertaking a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), which is aimed at assisting with the design of appropriate development by assessing the impact on significance. Further detailed guidance on the HIA process is provided in CADW's best practice guidance – [Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales](#).

## **Demolition**

78. Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of a the demolition of a building with a total cubic content exceeding 115 cubic metres and the demolition of a built boundary feature that is more than one metre high where abutting a highway, waterway or open space, or more than two metres high in any other case. There should be a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
79. Demolition of a listed building (or any part of it) without listed building consent is a criminal offence.

## **Satellite Dishes and Antennae.**

80. Such installations are not permitted development if they lie on a chimney, wall or roof-slope which faces both onto and is visible from a highway. Applications relating to the provision of dishes/antennae in such locations will be resisted.

## **Highway design standards**

81. These are very important determinants of design excellence and sensitivity in historic areas. The Highway Authority is encouraged to continue to work with the NPA and Town Council to maximize the considered use of design standards, to be flexible where appropriate and to use the most appropriate materials and finishes where financial resources permit. This applies to conservation areas and their settings.

## **Public Realm**

82. While the conservation and enhancement of private properties within the conservation area are important, public areas and features (poles, cables, signage, benches, bins, lighting etc) have significant effects on the special

qualities of the area. In working with the relevant agencies, attention will be drawn to the special qualities of the conservation area in the provision of appropriate infrastructure.

### **Essential Open Areas**

83. Several areas are highlighted as such within the appraisal, such areas including small private gardens and the harbour area. The spaces between buildings are critical to their setting, as well as to public wellbeing. Opportunity for development in these areas is generally limited and will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that there is no adverse impact on the character of the conservation area. Some areas offer the opportunity for enhancement

### **Trees and hedgerows**

84. Local planning authorities have the power to protect trees, hedgerows and woodlands by making tree preservation orders. In addition, there is a special provision for trees in conservation areas which are not the subject of tree preservation orders. Anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area is required to give the local planning authority six weeks' notice, during which time the local planning authority can decide whether to protect that tree with a tree preservation order.
85. When considering whether to extend protection to trees in Conservation Areas, local planning authorities should always take into account the visual, historic and amenity contribution of trees. In some instances, new or re-plantings may be desirable where this would be consistent with the character or appearance of the area.

### **Management and Enforcement**

86. The National Park Authority has existing planning powers to remedy such matters as the poor condition of land and buildings, urgent works and repairs notices for listed buildings and unlisted buildings and structures. The Town and Country Planning (General Development Order) 1995 (as amended) provides permitted development rights for minor building works on residential properties, with some restrictions in Conservation Areas. By the use of an 'Article 4(2) Direction', permitted development rights may be further restricted, for residential developments.
87. The Conservation Area is surveyed on a three-yearly basis to establish whether there is a real and specific threat to the character of the Conservation Area, whether an Article 4(2) Direction is necessary across the whole Conservation Area, and how effective the provisions of this document are.

# Appendix A: National legislation, policy and guidance

1. Conservation Areas are defined under sections 91 (with reference to section 69) of the [Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) Act 1990](#) as:
2. *“areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.*
3. Section 69 of the Act, requires Local Planning Authorities to identify these areas, and under section 71 of the Act, from time to time, to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas. Section 72 of the Act places a general duty on Local Planning Authorities to pay *‘special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.’*
4. Section 74 of the Act controls demolition in Conservation Areas by requiring Conservation Area Consent from the Local Planning Authority for the demolition of buildings within Conservation Areas subject to certain exemptions made under section 75 of the Act. This requirement does not apply to listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) or to demolition of ecclesiastical buildings in use for ecclesiastical purposes, as such works are subject to controls under separate legislation.
5. The [Historic Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#) makes changes to legislation relating to the protection and management of the historic environment in Wales. It introduces measures for the positive management of change to the historic environment, such as requiring all applications for Listed Building Consent and for Conservation Area Consent to be accompanied by Heritage Impact Statements (see section 6). It also places a duty on the Welsh Government to compile and keep up-to-date a Historic Environment Record.
6. [Planning Policy Wales \(PPW\) \(11<sup>th</sup> Edition\)](#) contains national planning guidance that recognises Conservation Areas as historic assets and acknowledges the need for the planning system to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets, including consideration of their settings. The need for decisions to be based on an understanding of the impact of a proposal on the significance of an historic asset is emphasised. It explains that *the protection, conservation and enhancement of historic assets is most effective...when designing new proposals.*
7. The Welsh Government’s objectives in respect of Conservation Areas is to *preserve or enhance their character and appearance, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous.* It refers to the *‘general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas or their settings’* and sets a *‘strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments, including advertisements, which damage the character or appearance of a*

*conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level...'. This presumption applies unless, in exceptional circumstances, where a development is desirable on the grounds of public interest. PPW also explains that Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans can assist in development management functions and that design decisions relating to character should be based on site and context analysis.*

8. [Technical Advice Note \(TAN\) 24](#) provides further detailed national planning guidance related to the topic of the historic environment and, in particular, on how the historic environment should be considered through the planning process. The section on Conservation Areas covers aspects including their designation and review, Conservation Area Character Appraisals, Planning in Conservation Areas, Conservation Area Consent, Advertisement Control, Trees, Enforcement and Appeals. Defining the character of each conservation area and setting out policies for preservation and enhancement through Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans, respectively, are seen as ways of providing a sounder basis for local development plan policies and development management decisions.
9. [Technical Advice Note \(TAN\) 12](#) provides national planning guidance related to design and is aimed at facilitating good design and sustainability through the planning system. It sets out the benefits of using Design and Access Statements as communication tools to outline how the design of the development proposal has been considered from the outset and how objectives of good design have informed this. With regards to the historic environment and Conservation Areas, in particular, it explains that there will be a greater need of direction and advice from the Local Planning Authority on how new development can be accommodated and change managed in areas of special character.
10. CADW has published a suite of best-practice guidance to support the changes to historic environment legislation in Wales. The most relevant of these is [Managing Conservation Areas in Wales](#), which is aimed at ensuring a consistent approach towards designation, appraisal and management of Conservation Areas. With regards to appraisals, they are seen as vital tools for positive management of existing areas. It explains their purpose, the potential for working with local communities, third-sector bodies and archaeological trusts, recording buildings and other elements, sources of information, and includes suggestions on content. Other best-practice guidance on related issues include [Managing Historic Character in Wales](#), [Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales](#) and [Setting of Historic Assets in Wales](#). CADW also published in 2011 [Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales \(Conservation Principles\)](#).