

# CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

**Report to:** Council

**Date of meeting:** Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025

**Title:** Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans  
Public Consultation

**Purpose of the report:** To recommend that the Conservation Area Appraisals  
and Management Plans be released for public  
consultation

**For:** Decision

**Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:** Economy and Regeneration – Cllr. Clive  
Davies

## **Context**

Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are 13 conservation areas in Ceredigion. Most of these were designated under the Civic Amenities Act 1967, the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 (as substituted by Section 1 of the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The aforementioned act has recently been superseded by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023. Said Act brings existing legislation on the historic environment together in one bilingual act without affecting existing levels of protection or duties.

Under Section 159 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required, from time to time, to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area designated as a conservation area.

*Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment* identifies conservation area appraisals as the foundation for any proposals for preservation and enhancement as they highlight the special interest of an area and identify opportunities and priorities. This then provides a basis for more detailed management plans which address the issues raised in the appraisals and set out realistic management objectives.

Such detailed appraisals and management plans have not been undertaken for most of Ceredigion's conservation areas. By not having conservation area appraisals and management plans in place, the Council is not meeting its statutory duty in full. Their absence means there is a lack of information available to Development Management Officers to justify the refusal of proposals which may harm Ceredigion's conservation areas. Moreover, Inspectors may overturn Officers' decisions to refuse planning permission in conservation areas due to the absence of such appraisals. Collectively, this contributes to the erosion of the County's conservation areas.

### **Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans**

In order to preserve and enhance the conservation areas, and to ensure the LPA is meeting its statutory duty, the Planning Policy Team sought to obtain funding to support the preparation of conservation area appraisals and management plans. The Planning Policy Team were successful in securing funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and therefore able to prepare conservation area appraisals and management plans, with some external support, for Aberystwyth, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberaeron, Cardigan, Lampeter, Llandysul, Tregaron and New Quay.

The Conservation Area Appraisals provide a detailed picture of what makes the areas special and provide a shared understanding of their character and importance. The appraisals are the foundation for positive management as they highlight any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which in turn informs the content of the Management Plans.

The Management Plans are allied to the appraisals and address the issues raised by identifying appropriate responses commensurate with the significance of the area. The Management Plans set out realistic management objectives, taking into account resources and funding opportunities, and recommend possible actions for enhancement and preservation but does not commit the LPA to any additional spending.

Regard has been had to relevant legislation and national planning policy and guidance when preparing the documents. This includes, but is not limited to, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023, *Planning Policy Wales: Edition 12, Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment* and Cadw's '*Managing Conservation Areas in Wales*'. In addition, public drop-in sessions were held in each conservation

area in order to garner pertinent knowledge from stakeholders and local communities. This was used to inform the content of the Appraisals and Management Plans.

### **Next Steps**

The overall intention is to request that the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the Ceredigion Local Development Plan 2007-2022. By adopting them as SPG, the documents can be taken into account as a material consideration when determining planning applications which may impact the conservation areas.

The *Development Plans Manual: Edition 3* however sets out that SPG will carry little or no weight unless it is subject to public consultation and adopted by Council resolution. It is therefore recommended to Council that the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans be released for public consultation. Following public consultation, the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans will once again be presented to Council as part of the process of seeking their adoption as SPG.

Once the current Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans have been adopted, the intention is to then prepare appraisals and management plans for the remaining conservation areas. This process has already begun for Llansanffraid and will be commenced for the remaining areas once resources allow.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations:**

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.**

No, as the report does not refer to a policy or service change.

### **Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:**

**Long term:** INSERT TEXT

**Collaboration:** INSERT TEXT

**Involvement:** INSERT TEXT

**Prevention:** INSERT TEXT

**Integration:** INSERT TEXT

**Recommendation(s):**

**That the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans be released for public consultation.**

**Reasons for decision:**

**To ensure that the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans are subjected to public consultation prior to seeking their adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.**

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

The documents have not been considered by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and are not on the forward work programme as consent is sought that they be released for public consultation.

**Policy Framework:**

Ceredigion Local Development Plan 2007-2022

**Corporate Well-being Objectives:**

- Boosting the Economy, Supporting Businesses and Enabling Employment
- Creating Sustainable, Greener and Well-Connected Communities

**Finance and Procurement implications:**

N/A

**Legal Implications:**

May result in a failure to meet the statutory duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas as required under Section 159 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023.

**Staffing implications:**

N/A

**Property / asset implications:**

N/A

**Risk(s):**

May result in a failure to meet the statutory duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas as required under Section 159 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 and a failure to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation areas when exercising planning functions.

**Statutory Powers:**

Planning And Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005

Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023

**Background Papers:**

N/A

**Appendices:**

- Aberaeron Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- Aberystwyth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- Cardigan Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- Lampeter Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- Llanbadarn Fawr Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- Llandysul Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- New Quay Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- Tregaron Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

**Corporate Lead Officer:**

Russell Hughes-Pickering

**Reporting Officer:**

Sarah Groves-Phillips

**Date:**

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024