



Dinas Planning has been commissioned to review the relevance of the attached Heritage Impact Assessment for the purposes of supporting a revised set of applications for the redevelopment of the Bolston House site, Bonvilston, including an updated planning application for 14 dwellings and an application for conservation area consent for the demolition of Bolston House and the removal/re-building of a minor section of the boundary wall to allow formation of an upgraded access.

The Town and Country Planning, Wales The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Wales) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2017 remains as the primary Statutory Instrument (SI) for Heritage Impact Assessments.

With regard to applications for Conservation Area Consent, it states that a heritage impact statement must contain—

- a) a description of the proposed works (“the demolition works”), including a schedule of works;
- (b) an explanation of the objective that the demolition works are intended to achieve and why demolition is desirable or necessary;
- (c) a description of the contribution any building which is proposed to be demolished makes to the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- (d) an assessment of the impact of the demolition works on the character or appearance of the conservation area, including a description of any potential benefits or harm to the character or appearance of the area;
- (e) a summary of the options considered for the purpose of achieving the objective referred to in paragraph (3)(b) and the reasons why demolition is preferred

The original Heritage Impact Assessment considered a proposal to demolish an existing dwelling and carry out alterations to the boundary wall - ‘the demolition works’, albeit that the accompanying planning application at the time was for a development of 9 dwellings, later amended to 14 dwellings through the application process.

In respect of the SI, the demolition works described and assessed in the attached document continue to satisfy each of the requirements (a-e) set out above. Consequently it can be used to support both the revised conservation area consent and planning applications for the revised proposals.

The appeal against the non-determination of applications (appeal references CAS-02110-Z3G0G4 & CAS-02116-V8L7Z7) was dismissed, with the inspector reaching the following relevant conclusions in respect of the impact on the conservation area:

Para 16: As the width of the opening has some effect on the wall's contribution to the character and appearance of the CA, it follows that its alteration in the manner proposed would have a limited harm.

60. In terms of the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, and whilst I do not consider that it would represent an inefficient use of land, I have found limited harm to the character and appearance of the CA by reason of the loss of a section of the stone boundary wall.

62. Overall, and although the effect of the works to the stone boundary wall on the character and appearance of the CA may not, of itself, necessarily have been a factor to justify withholding planning permission, I do not consider that the benefits I have described would be sufficient to justify this limited harm and the harms associated with the other main issues.

Without prejudice to the view set out in the appended statement that the proposed access maintains and preserves the special character of the conservation area, the inspectors conclusion that of itself, the impacts of the loss of the small section of wall would not necessarily have been a factor to justify withholding planning permission, is highly relevant.

The inspector took the view that, in the absence of any benefits in the form of affordable housing, S106 contributions, landscape improvements or biodiversity enhancements, planning permission and conservation area consent could not be justified as there was a lack of mitigation for the very minor harm caused.

The revised application benefits from a reduction in the loss of the boundary wall proposed, and comprehensive improvement in the tree planting proposed, which itself will have a beneficial impact on the character of the conservation area. Bio diversity enhancements are now integrated into the proposals and public benefits will be realised through a legal agreement (with details to be negotiated through the application process).

On balance therefore, and without prejudice to the conclusions set out in the appended HIA, the very minor concerns raised by the inspector over the impacts on the conservation have been addressed through the revised proposals. In line with paragraph 6.1.16 of Planning Policy Wales, mitigation measures will result in an overall (at worst) neutral or positive impact of the proposed development on the conservation area, and can therefore be supported.

HERITAGE IMPACT Assessment

Land at Bolston House, Bonvilston, Vale of Glamorgan

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in accompaniment to applications for Planning Permission and Conservation Area Consent for the proposed redevelopment of the existing dwelling, associated buildings present on the site at Bolston House, Bonvilston, consisting of the demolition of the existing property and its erection of 9 no. detached dwellings within the site.

While Bolston House is not designated as a Listed Building, both the existing dwelling and the site are located within the Bonvilston Conservation Area. This statement has been prepared in order to assess the significance of this asset and determine any impacts upon this significance.

SITE DETAILS

Site Images



Front Elevation of Bolston House



Rear Elevation of Bolston House

Proposed Work

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in support of an application for Planning Permission and Conservation Area Consent for the proposed development to be undertaken at land at Bolston House in Bonvilston Conservation Area, which will comprise of:

- The demolition of the existing dwelling on the site and associated buildings present on the site;
- The erection of 9 no. dwellings within the site;
- Associated works including access arrangements through the partial removal of the frontage wall.

Objective

The demolition work is being proposed in order accommodate the development of 9 no. residential properties on the site in order to increase housing supply within the locality and to ensure that the land is put to the most effective use.

Policy Context	<p><u>Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021) – Section 6.1: The Historic Environment</u></p> <p>Paragraph 6.1.6 sets out the Welsh Government’s specific objectives for the historic environment, which seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Sites;</i>• <i>conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and the economy;</i>• <i>safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved;</i>• <i>preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous;</i>• <i>preserve the special interest of sites on the register of historic parks and gardens; and</i>• <i>protect areas on the register of historic landscapes in Wales.</i> <p>Paragraph 6.1.15 states that <i>'There is 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'.</i></p> <p>Further to this, Paragraph 6.1.16 outlines that the <i>'Preservation or enhancement of a conservation area can be achieved by a development which either makes a positive contribution to an area’s character or appearance or leaves them unharmed'.</i></p> <p>Paragraph 6.1.17 states that <i>'Conservation area designation introduces control over the total or substantial demolition of unlisted buildings within these areas, but partial demolition does not require conservation area consent. Procedures are essentially the same as for listed building consent. When considering an application for conservation area consent, account should be taken of the wider effects of demolition on the building’s surroundings and on the architectural, archaeological or historic interest of the conservation area as a whole. Consideration should also be given to replacement structures. Proposals should be tested against conservation area appraisals, where they are available'.</i></p> <p><u>Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment (2017)</u></p> <p>The following paragraphs of the above document are of relevance:</p> <p>Paragraph 1.8: <i>"Changes in the historic environment are inevitable. This can be the result of decay caused by natural processes, damage caused by wear and tear of use, and the need to respond to social, cultural, economic and technological changes."</i></p> <p>Paragraph 5.1: <i>"Listed buildings are nationally important assets which represent a unique source of information about the past and make a valuable contribution to the quality and character of Welsh landscapes and townscapes. Buildings are listed when they are considered to be of special architectural or historic interest."</i></p> <p>Paragraph 5.10: <i>"The controls that apply to a listed building also apply to any objects or structures within its curtilage."</i></p> <p>Paragraph 5.14: <i>"Many listed buildings can sustain a degree of sensitive alteration and extension to accommodate continuing or new uses. Sustaining the special</i></p>
-----------------------	--

interest and significance of a listed building through the process of alteration, extension or re-use is exacting, and should always be based on specialist knowledge and skill in order to realise the benefits that well-designed interventions can bring”.

Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026

The current, adopted development plan for the area comprises the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan (LDP), which was formally adopted in June 2017.

Policy MD8 – Historic Environment

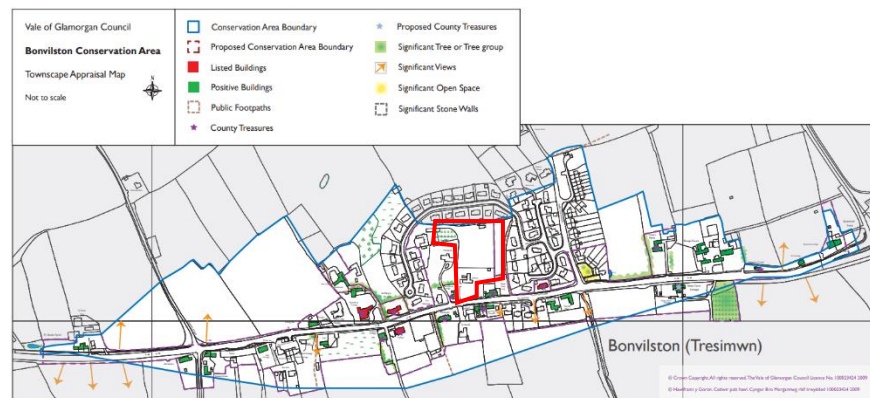
Development proposals must protect the qualities of the built and historic environment of the Vale of Glamorgan, specifically:

- 1. Within conservation areas, development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area;*
- 2. For listed and locally listed buildings, development proposals must preserve or enhance the building, its setting and any features of significance it possesses;*
- 3. Within designated landscapes, historic parks and gardens, and battlefields, development proposals must respect the special historic character and quality of these areas, their settings or historic views or vistas;*
- 4. For sites of archaeological interest, development proposals must preserve or enhance archaeological remains and where appropriate their settings.*

Significance of the Heritage Asset

Bolston House is not a Listed Building, however it and its grounds are situated within the Bonvilston Conservation Area, for which the Vale of Glamorgan Council provide a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

In terms of the extent of the Conservation Area, the plan below illustrates the site’s relationship with the boundaries of Bonvilston Conservation Area. As is evident from the below extract, a significant proportion of Bonvilston is designated as a Conservation Area.

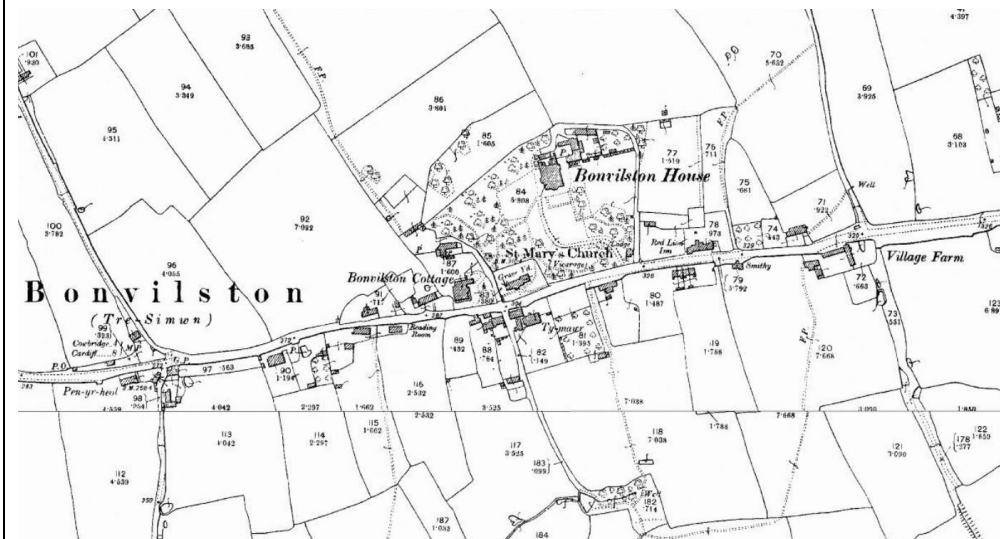


The Townscape Appraisal Map above illustrates that the site doesn’t accommodate any noteworthy assets, albeit is bound by two positive buildings / two county treasures.

The Conservation Area schedule outlines that *"Overall the character of the village, where the plots face the main road, is of detached or terraced properties set back slightly from the road, the depth of the front gardens having been reduced by the road widening in 1930. Substantial stone walls and groups of mature trees are also important features, the heavy planting now seen in oblique views along the road*

having been encouraged by house owners to provide a visual barrier from the road. To the eastern and western edges of the village, the density of building reduces to the odd property until the road is totally bordered by fields."

The below map shows that by 1900 the Village of Bonvilston had become well established with a number of detached houses set within spacious plots on both sides of the highway.



1900 Map of Bonvilston

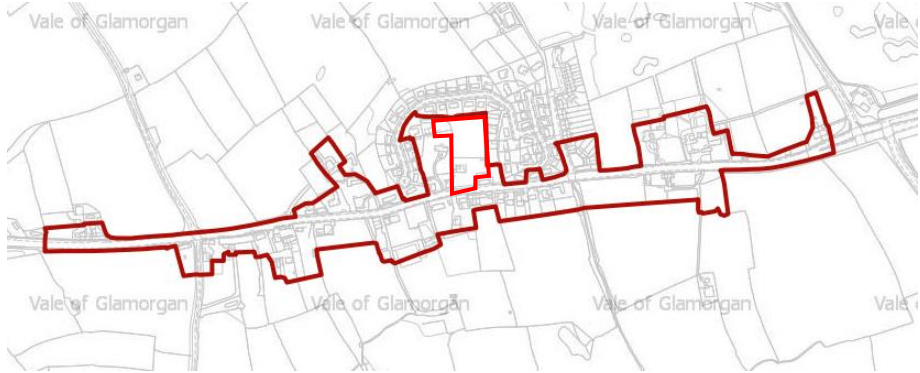
The above map extract shows that Bonvilston House was formerly a major property in the village, which was set back from the highway to the north, with access provided via a long driveway. The dwelling was built in 1838-40 by architect David Vaughan and consisted of a substantial 2-storey building.

Bonvilston House was demolished circa 1980, with Bolston House situated adjacent to what would formerly have been the grounds / driveway to the property.

This Conservation Area schedule describes the principal historic buildings within the Conservation Area as including *'St. Mary's Church, medieval in origins but virtually rebuilt in 1867; the Red Lion Inn; a number of substantial village houses (Plas y Coed, The Coach House, Bonvilston Cottage, Ty Mawr, and Plasnewydd); a number of farm buildings, including Court Farmhouse and Old Farm, both with adjoining barns; and several rows of terraced cottages, clearly built for agricultural labourers from the 17th century onwards'*.

Woodlands Lodge, located immediately east of the site, is included as a Locally Listed County Treasure in the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal describes the property as being *'designed in 1840 by David Vaughan. The Lodge and gate piers provide evidence of the impressive entrance to the former Bonvilston House. The construction of a later upper storey has altered its former classical proportions, although the original detail remains at ground floor'*.

Bolston House itself is not included within the key buildings that are referenced within the schedule, nor as a 'Positive Building' in the Conservation Area, which typically consist of the traditional, unlisted buildings of architectural note. The property is not considered to be of any particular architectural merit, nor is it of any particular interest in the context of the Conservation Area. The dwelling is also considered to be in a poor state of repair and is therefore making no valued

	<p>contribution to the Conservation Area. As such, it is considered that the demolition of the building and associated buildings present within the site will not detrimentally impact the character of the Conservation Area, particularly given the architectural design of the new dwellings proposed.</p>
<p>Assessing the Impacts</p>	<p>The Conservation Area Consent seeks permission for the demolition of the property known as Bolston House, along with the partial removal of the front boundary wall in order for to enable the development of 9no. dwellings in its place at the site.</p> <p>As outlined above, the existing property at the site is not considered to be of any architectural merit, nor does any evidence exist that they are of special historic interest. The property and grounds make no valued contribution to the Conservation Area, particularly in its current state of repair. Further to this, little can be seen of the property from public viewpoints due to its location which is set back from the A48, with several properties and mature trees covering the property from view.</p> <p>As such, the existing dwelling is not considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. With regard to both local and national planning policy, there is no presumption against the demolition of such buildings, given that they aren't designated or undesignated heritage assets in their own right. This approach was confirmed as agreeable through pre-application dialogue with The Vale of Glamorgan Heritage and Conservation Officer.</p> <p>The part removal of the boundary wall to facilitate access has been purposefully designed to be conservation sensitive, thus requiring a lower specification of access design and in turn maintaining and preserving the special character this wall presents through the conservation area. Again, this approach was welcomed at the pre-app stage with Officers.</p> <p>The application for full Planning Permission seeks permission for the demolition of the property to provide 9no dwellings on the site in its place. Of course, the existing building is unsuitable for integration into the proposed scheme, and as a result its loss is necessary in order to provide a new dwelling, the architectural merit of which is considered to be more suited to that found within the Bonvilston Conservation Area.</p> <p>The supplementary planning guidance relating to the Conservation Area Appraisal outlines that <i>"some modern developments do not harmonise with the historic character and appearance of the Bonvilston Conservation Area. This applies to completely new buildings as well as the occasional extension."</i> As identified below, the site falls south of the 1970's suburb development which was built as a result of the demolition of the former Bonvilston House.</p> 

	<p>Page 21 of the Conservation Area Appraisal sets out, within the management plan section, the proposals and policies which can enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. One of the management plans is that of a boundary review of the Conservation Area, <i>“as it was found that in a number of places the boundary includes fields or green space which make no positive contribution to the special character of the conservation area, as well as modern development and open spaces of no particular merit, with little architectural or historic interest. These are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Village Farm;</i> • <i>Maes-y-Ffynnon. Less the frontage of Maes-y-Ffynnon along the A48 including the green fields to the north of the A48 at the western end of the village and to the west of Court Farm.</i> • <i>In several locations, and particularly in the south of the Conservation Area, the existing boundary cuts through back gardens and does not follow established property boundaries. (GJP Emphasis)”</i> <p>Village Farm outlined above is a suburban development sited north of the site and it is considered that this omission of Village Farm is important as the modern design of the development was considered to be of little architectural merit. The character of the existing property and site is considered to be akin to that on Village Farm, albeit using a less modern approach. On that basis, and in the words of the character appraisal it is considered to be ‘of no particular merit’ and makes no contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The design of the new dwellings in place of the existing Bolston House have been carefully considered in direct response to the fact that the site is located within the Bonvilston Conservation Area. The proposed development would allow for a bespoke design, rehearsing the traditional architectural qualities that Bonvilston possesses on a site that is relatively well concealed from public vantage points and would take design cues from the positive and important characteristics of other properties within the Conservation Area.</p> <p>As forementioned, the Bolton House itself is in a poor state of repair having been left empty for approximately 15 years. Therefore, the demolition and subsequent redevelopment of the site is the most appropriate course of action in order to ensure that the land is put to most effective use and that the appearance and character of Conservation Area is not both undermined and detrimentally affected.</p> <p>Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development and its particularly high design standards would preserve the significance of the Conservation Area and as a result are considered to be acceptable.</p>
<p>Alternative Options</p>	<p>Alternative options would comprise leaving the existing Bolston House in a poor state of repair, as per the last 15 years, and subsequently, continue to allow the property to detrimentally impact the appearance and character of the Conservation Area.</p> <p>Other residential development within the land would not be able to take place given the property’s location within the site including the restrictions of any access and any impact that development would have on the property if it was to be retained. The failure to develop any residential dwellings as a result of retaining the property (in its poor state of repair) would result a loss of potential housing supply within the County and land not put to it’s most effective use.</p>