



Monmouth

Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Proposals

May 2012



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View looking south-west from the River Monnow flood plains across the town towards Kymin Hill

Part A: Purpose & Scope of the Appraisal

1 Introduction

1.1 Conservation areas comprise the accumulation of an area's positive architectural or historic attributes, rather than the quality of its individual buildings, which makes it worthy of conservation area status. The attributes might include: the landscape setting of the area; the grouping of traditional buildings and the resultant spaces and sense of enclosure; the scale, design, type and materials of the buildings; historic boundaries; public realm; landmarks, views and vistas; and the present and former pattern of activities or land uses.

1.2 Monmouth is one of 31 designated Conservation Areas in the county of Monmouthshire. It was designated as a conservation area on 12th January 1976.

1.3 The *Monmouth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals* is seen as the first steps in a dynamic process. The overarching aim is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Monmouth Conservation Area and to provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future management.

1.4 Key study aims:

- Identify those elements of Monmouth which contribute to its character
- Identify elements which detract from the character
- Propose measures to maintain or improve the positive character, local distinctiveness and sense of place of Monmouth

1.5 The framework for the study follows guidance set out in *Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology* and *Circular 61/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas* and the latest draft guidance from Cadw; *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*, adopted March 2011.

2 Consultation

2.1 A consultation event was held in Monmouth on 8th July 2010.

2.2 The purpose of this event was to obtain initial views from the local community on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the conservation area.

2.3 Participants were broadly asked to consider the following:

- Positive characteristics (i.e. strengths) of the conservation area that makes it special
- Negative aspects (i.e. weaknesses) of the conservation area that threaten its special character
- Areas or features within the conservation area that need to be improved or enhanced (i.e. opportunities within the conservation area)
- Areas or features within the conservation area under threat or at risk
- Whether the boundary of the conservation area is correctly drawn
- The use of additional powers available to the Council's Planning Department to control alterations to original features on housing in the conservation area, such as windows and doors (where this is not already controlled)

2.4 Feedback from this initial consultation has been used by the study team in preparing the draft Conservation Area Appraisal. This document will also be subject to a formal public consultation.

3 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Section 69 1(a) and 2 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') defines conservation areas as:

"Areas of special architectural and historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"

3.2 In addition, the Act puts particular emphasis on specific duties:

"It shall be the duty of the local authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas..."

3.3 This is reinforced by the guidance set out in *Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology* and *Circular 61/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas*. In particular, the local authority should from time to time, formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas (management proposals).

3.4 In order to undertake works of enhancement, the character of the conservation area needs to be clearly defined and understood (character appraisal).

3.5 National planning policy is set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW). PPW provides the overarching national strategic guidance with regard to land use planning matters in Wales. Conservation of the historic environment is set out in Chapter 6 of PPW. Policies relating to Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Archaeological Remains and Historic Parks and Gardens are contained in PPW unless locally distinct elements require further Local Development Plan policies. PPW also sets out clear statements for development management in Conservation Areas.

3.6 This Conservation Area Appraisal should be read in the context of the

Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan (LDP) which was adopted on 27 February 2014, covering the period 2011-2021. Strategic Policy S17 helps to meet LDP objectives to protect and enhance the historic and built environment by ensuring good design that enhances the character and identity of Monmouthshire's settlements and respects the County's distinctiveness. Conservation Area Appraisals can play a significant part in helping to meet such aspirations. The historic environment chapter is contained in pages 167-172 of the LDP. Policies HE1, HE2 and HE3 directly relate to conservation areas.

3.7 The detailed criteria for assessing development proposals in Conservation Areas is set out in Policy HE1 and where appropriate aims to ensure the findings of the Conservation Area Appraisals are fully taken into account when considering development proposals. The Council will seek to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of Conservation Areas in the assessment of Planning Applications. Policy HE2 relates specifically to the alterations of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas to ensure that the conversion, alteration and extension of such buildings make a positive contribution to Conservation Areas. A number of detailed criteria relating specifically to the design of shop fronts in Conservation Areas are provided in Policy HE3. Policy HE3 seeks to maintain high standards of shop front design in Conservation Areas.

3.8 A number of additional studies carried out to support the LDP should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisal. These include Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Studies of the surroundings of Monmouthshire's towns and villages, including those with conservation areas. Similarly, published studies on Accessible Natural Greenspace and Habitat Connectivity may also include information that needs to be taken into account in preparing development proposals in conservation areas. Relevant information is also contained in the Monmouthshire LANDMAP landscape character assessment.

3.9 Draft Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has also been produced. This provides practical design and planning checklists along with good practice case studies. This SPG should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisal.

For Additional Information:
Monmouthshire Local Development Plan
<http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning>

4 The Study Area

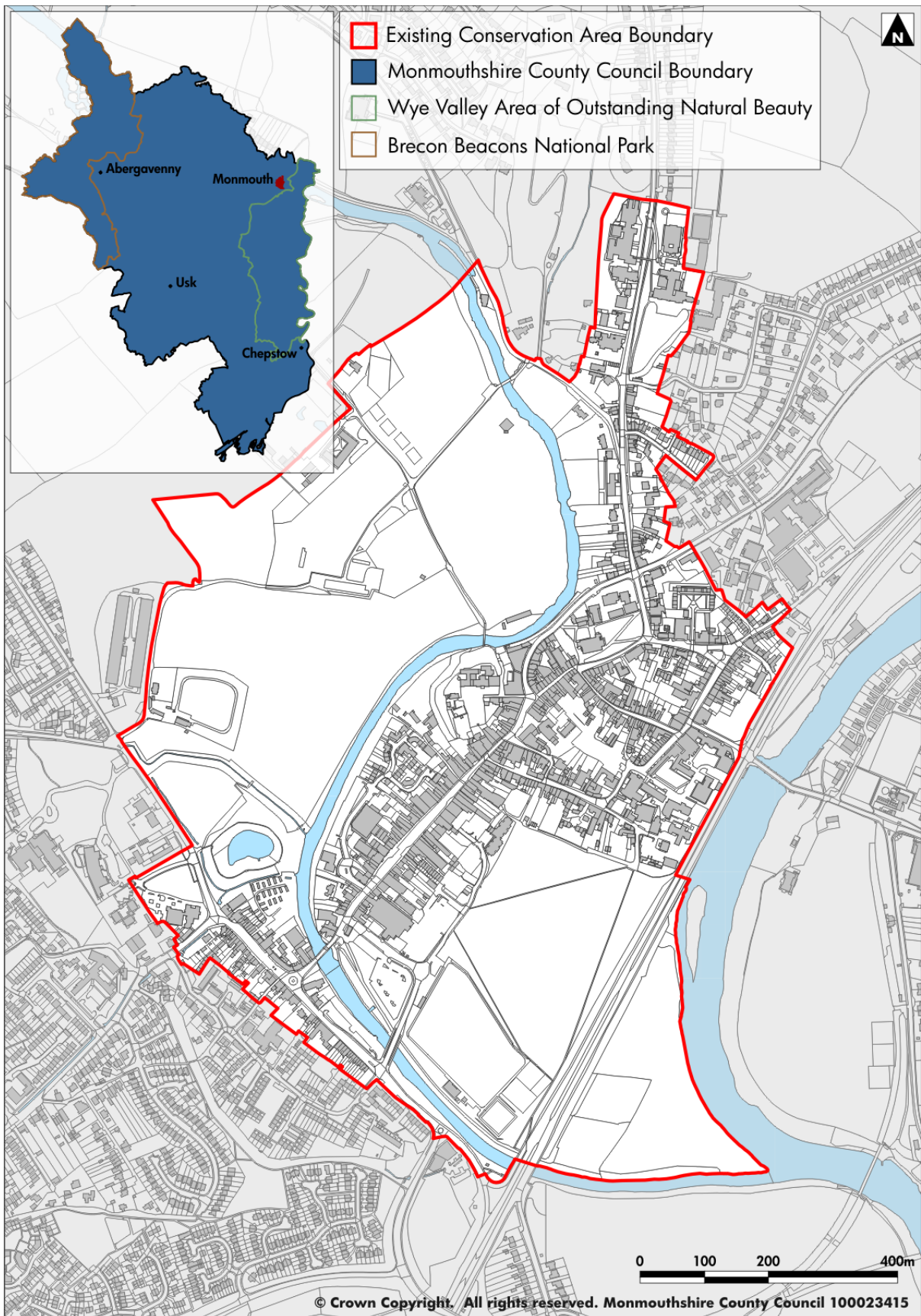


Fig.1 Study Area

Part B: Conservation Area Appraisal

5 Location & Setting

5.1 The Anglo-Welsh border town is located on a narrow area of land between the Monnow and the Wye rivers. Positioned in the east of the county it is sited between Ross-on-Wye approximately 9 miles upstream and Chepstow approximately 12 miles downstream. It is a natural entry point into the county from the steep hills of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire down to the flat river valley of the Wye and its history has been conditioned by these factors. It is surrounded by gently rolling wooded hills and rich farm country. The surrounding hills include Buckholt to the north, Little and Great Doward to the north-east, The Garth, May Hill and the Kymin to the east, The Craig to the south and King's Wood to the west. The Regency banqueting house on the Kymin commands great views of Monmouth and Monmouthshire looking to the Brecon Beacons encompassing the Black

Mountains. Dixon and the Dixon Conservation Area lie to the north east. The Monmouth Conservation Area, designated in 1976, takes in the old part of the town, the old part of Overmonnow beyond the Monnow Bridge, and the meadows and fields, which form a natural setting for the castle and town. (Fig.1 & Fig.2).

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 1 Conservation Area Plan



Fig.2 Monmouth Location Plan

6 Historical Development & Archaeology

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 2 Historical Plan

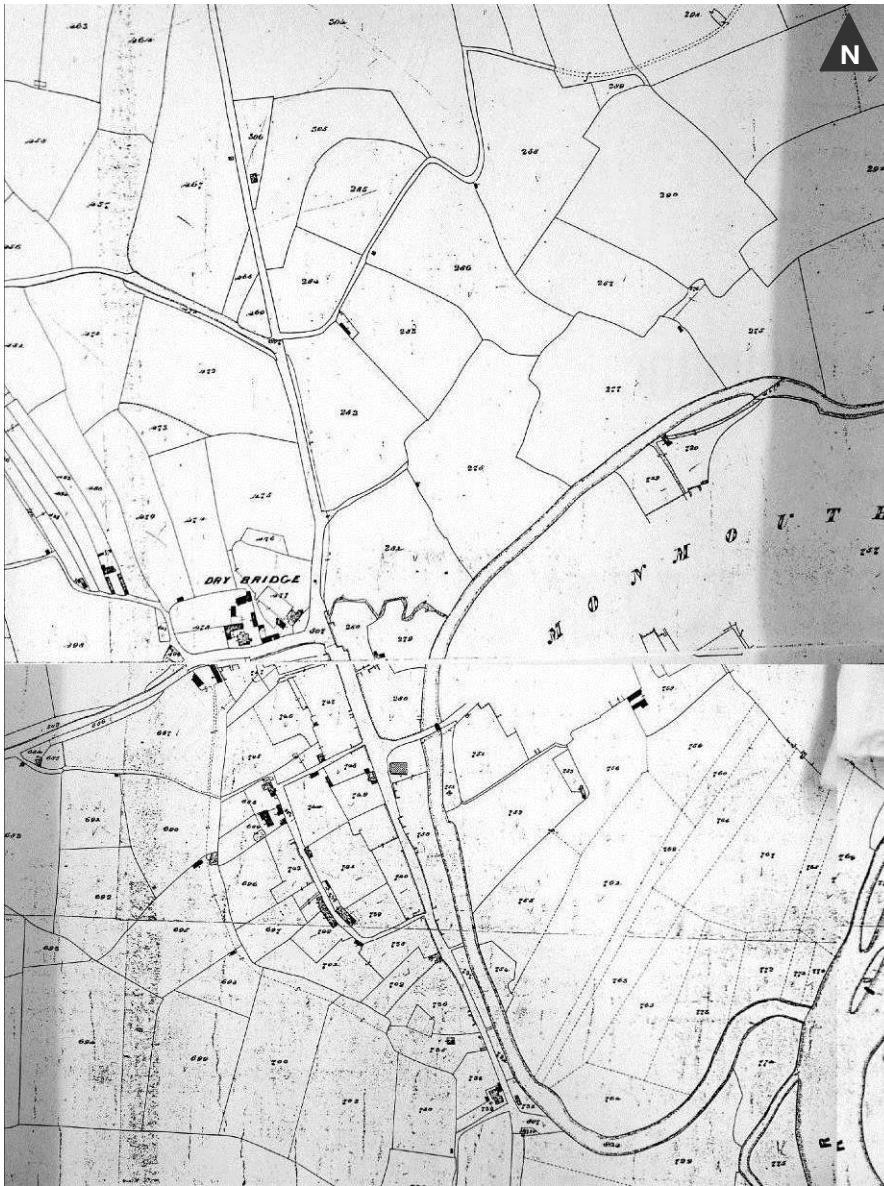


Fig.3 1846 tithe map of Overmonnow, Chippenham and Vauxhall

© Gwent Record Office

6.1 Historic Background

6.1.1 Monmouth developed on the site of the Roman fort of Blestium. Excavations carried out by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust revealed evidence of Roman occupation along Monnow Street and suggest that between the 2nd and 4th century AD settlement was civilian with evidence of iron working (GGAT).

6.1.2 Little is known of early-medieval Monmouth but there are documentary sources relating to the 8th century church of St Cadoc (on the site of St Mary's Church). At the Norman Conquest William FitzOsbern established a wooden fortress here sometime between 1066 and 1071, which was replaced in the 12th century by a stone structure. The castle occupied the highest point overlooking the River Monnow. The Benedictine Priory (under the control of St Florent de Saumur in the Loire) was established c.1075 and the

church of St Cadoc is thought to have been incorporated into the priory (GGAT). The Domesday Survey in 1086 records the already established town. The priory church was consecrated in 1101 (Newman, 2002). The priory owned a farm, fishery, vineyard, mill and collected tithes and rents from burgages. Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1100 – c. 1155), famous for his *Historia Regum Britanniae* - History of the Kings of Britain, is said to have been a monk at the Benedictine Priory (Coxe, 1801). A superb mid-15th century oriel window in the remains of the medieval Prior's Lodging is erroneously known as Geoffrey's Window.

6.1.3 The settlement grew as a commercial centre around the castle walls and priory with Monnow Street as the focus for early burgauge development, although the town did not receive formal borough status until it was granted by Henry VI in 1447. During the 12th century the town expanded south of the River Monnow with the suburb of Overmonnow served by St Thomas's Church recorded by 1186. The 13th century saw the consolidation of the town with burgesses constructing town walls (in order to introduce tolls and taxes) in 1297-c.1320 and the fortification of the river crossings into Monmouth. The Monnow Bridge was established with a distinctive fortified gateway. Originally a wooden structure, the current bridge was built in 1262 and has subsequently undergone many alterations. It is the only surviving medieval bridge in Britain with a gateway on the bridge itself.

6.1.4 Harry of Monmouth, later to become King Henry V, was born in the castle in 1387. Agincourt Square (named after Henry V's famous battle defeating the French in 1415) developed in the outer bailey of the castle as the site of the market place. The economy of the town suffered considerably from plague in the later 14th century. By the end of the 15th century Monmouth's street plan was firmly established. As an incorporated borough it catered, through the market and other services, for the surrounding countryside (Kissack, 1975). Surrounding the town were Castle Field, Williamsfield (later to become Vauxhall Fields) and Chippenham, which were common fields open to tenants for their cattle.

The name Chippenham is said to derive from two words; Cyppa, from the word 'ce-ap' meaning market and Hamme meaning enclosed by river.

6.1.5 Monmouth Caps were made in the town from the 15th century and the knitted cap industry flourished in the 16th century with the decline of capping in Coventry. The Monmouth caps were used by soldiers and sailors. Legislation in the late 16th century protecting the knitted woollen cap industry encouraged other towns to start manufacture and soon Monmouth itself ceased production.

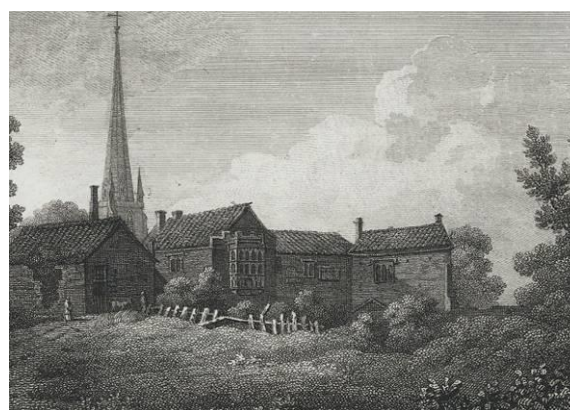


Fig.4 Depiction of the priory and 'Geoffrey's study', Hoare 1801



Fig.5 Monnow Bridge with its fortified gatehouse, J Varley, 1801

6.1.6 At the dissolution of religious houses in 1536 the nave of the priory church became the parish church. It was suggested at the time that the priory buildings should be reserved and used in repair of the castle which, with the exception of the walls and hall, was in ruins (Kissack, 1975). The Act of Union, uniting England and Wales in 1536 created the new County of Monmouth with Monmouth its shire town. It was felt a town of such status would

need to retain its castle but no rebuilding programme took place and work was limited to repairs. A Shire Hall was built in the same year to be replaced in 1571 by a timber-framed building (Newman, 2002).

6.1.7 In the antiquary, John Leland's, mid-16th century description of Monmouth it is reported that the town was still walled, although broken and ruinous in places, with four gates: Monk's Gate (north-east of the priory), East Gate (also known as Dixtons Gate), Wye Gate (by the Wye Bridge) and Monnow Gate (on the Monnow bridge itself). A survey of the castle in 1550 detailed that the gate with its bridge had been partially rebuilt, but the towers, chapel and chambers were in decay with only the hall habitable (Kissack, 1975).

6.1.8 John Speed published *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* in 1611 that contained a detailed plan of the town. In his factual account he commented that the 'Princely castle is become no better than a regardless cottage' and that there was 'a beautiful Church built with three aisles...and at the East end a

most curious...Church...called the Monks' church...' (Kissack, 1975). His town plan clearly shows 'islands' of houses encircling orchards and gardens. There were four major housing areas with three in the town and one in the suburb of Overmonnow. The 1611 town plan shows the town in detail with the key buildings and roads that survive today. Monnow Street is a clearly defined route with high-density housing linking Overmonnow with the top of the town at the castle and church. The plan depicts numerous key features including; the 13th century round tower and gatehouse of the castle; the arcades of the ruined priory church (Monk's Church); the churchyard surrounded by a ditch spanned by bridges; crosses in St Thomas's Square (Overmonnow), Whitecross Street, and the churchyard; St Thomas's Church; the Elizabethan market hall; the Robin Hood Inn near the Monnow Bridge; a section of the old town wall; Monk's Gate; Dixon Gate; and a gatehouse on the Wye Bridge.

6.1.9 The town walls and all but one of the gates have disappeared. Dixon Gate survives in part as a section of the Old Nag's Head Public House.

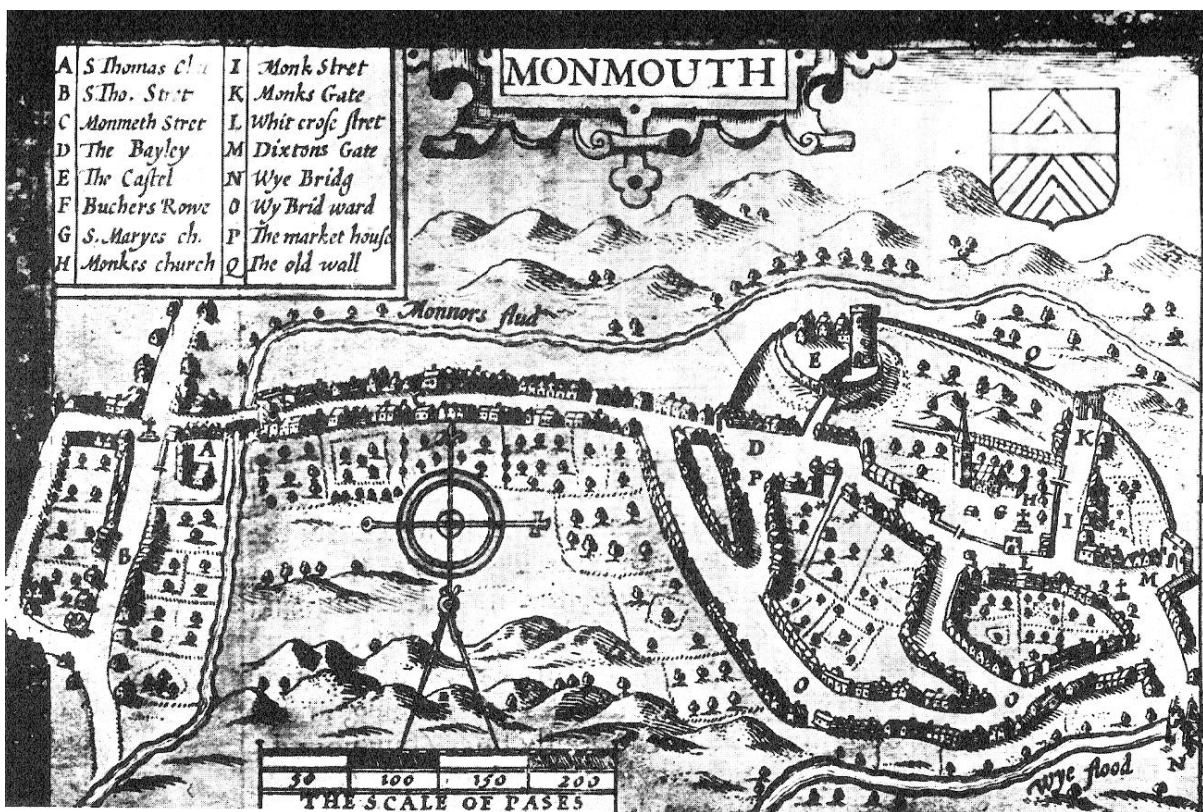


Fig.6 John Speed's 1611 plan of Monmouth

6.1.10 The 17th century saw investment in the town with a free school and almshouses founded by William Jones, haberdasher and native of Newland in the Forest of Dean. The school was constructed in 1614-15 on land between Wyebridge and Weirhead Street and the nearby Wye Bridge rebuilt in 1615 (widened in 1864-5). The school institutions continued to invest in the town and the wealth and influence of the Haberdashers Company signalled a new era of development (GGAT). The school was rebuilt in 1864-5 and substantially extended in the 1870s (Newman, 2002).

6.1.11 During the Civil War, Monmouth changed hands between the Royalists and Parliamentarians several times following numerous skirmishes which involved forces taking the Monnow Bridge and scaling the ditches and town walls. Miners from the Forest of Dean undermined sections of the castle walls which forced the Royalists to surrender. In 1647 after final victory for the Parliamentarians the round tower of the castle was pulled down.

6.1.12 After the Restoration in 1660, although Monmouth did not experience any sizeable expansion, the shire town attracted a range of local gentry and soon Monmouth developed into a fashionable county town. In 1671 William Roberts built the grand Drybridge House in Overmonnow (substantially altered in 1867). In 1673 the Duke of Beaufort built the magnificent Great Castle House on the site of the round tower, followed in the 1680s by the immense Troy House, little more than a mile from the town. As fashion dictated, larger, impressive houses were built within the town and medieval houses were re-fronted.

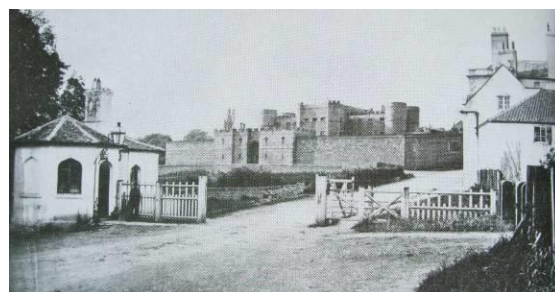


Fig.8 Monmouth Gaol before demolition



Fig.7 Monmouth became a fashionable country town with the Shire Hall at its centre, Newman 1860

6.1.13 By 1705 there were 158 resident burgesses in Monmouth and 23 in Overmonnow (Kissack, 1975). In line with the development of the town's housing stock the Elizabethan Shire Hall was replaced in 1724 by the present baroque style hall by Fisher of Bristol (Newman, 2002). The Monmouth to Llancloudy turnpike was established in 1755 on the Old Hereford Road (Helme, 1989). This brought increased road traffic from Hereford.

6.1.14 There was considerable rebuilding and refronting of earlier buildings in the second half of the 18th century and it is this period that dominates the architectural character of the town. During this period numerous key buildings were constructed including Monmouth Gaol and gatehouse (1790-1869), which was built to designs of John Howard (gaol demolished, 1884). Monmouth was on a busy coaching route as the gateway to South Wales and in addition saw the introduction of tourism from the 'Wye Tour' in the later 18th century. These factors influenced the decision to site a large number of inns in the town (GGAT). Principal inns included the 18th century Kings Head, early 19th century Punch House and c.1830s Beaufort Arms. Local architect, George Vaughan Maddox was responsible for a series of public buildings and private houses from the 1820s to the 1840s including the market house (partially destroyed by fire in 1963) and the Shambles (an impressive arcade of 24 arches used for riverside storage and slaughter houses).

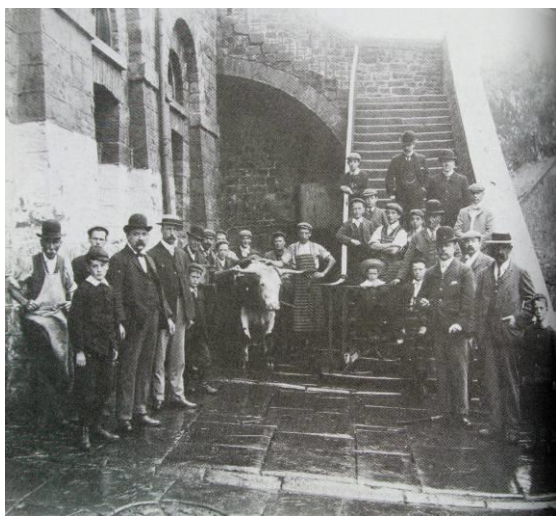


Fig.9 Butcher and onlookers at the Shambles slaughter houses

6.1.15 An 1835 plan of Monmouth shows the full extent of the town with its suburb at Overmonnow, a series of meadows west of the River Monnow (now Vauxhall Fields), the quay on the River Wye and Wye Bridge Lane (now obliterated by the A40), The Chippenham fields (the location of the race ground since 1797), and the proposed new road travelling between the priory buildings and the River Monnow. Priory Street was constructed in 1837 and formed part of a major re-structuring and planning of this part of the town by local architect George Maddox. This occurred at the same time as the opening of a new turnpike which improved traffic circulation to the top of the town'

6.1.16 In the 1850s Monmouth Cattle Show was first held. Cattle were originally sold in Agincourt Square until the construction of a cattle market at Chippenham Fields in 1876. In 1877 the agricultural show was held at the cattle market moving to Vauxhall fields from 1946-2006. In 2004 a new bridge crossing the River Monnow was constructed downstream from the Monnow Bridge, the cattle market was demolished and made into a car park. The Monmouth Show, now the largest one-day agricultural show in Wales, is held just outside the town on the Redbrook Road.

6.1.17 Later Victorian and early 20th century developments included; a series of six houses associated with Drybridge Estate on Drybridge Street (notable for their moulded panels with wallpaper manufacturer's blocks resembling pargetting; the 'New' cemetery, opened in 1851 and later extended to cover seven acres; the Union Workhouse, built in 1870; the Girls School, built in 1897 and the hospital, built in 1903 (moved from Cartref, St James' Square).

6.1.18 Before the Wye Commissioners improvements in 1696, which removed a high weir on the river, Monmouth was an important trans-shipment site moving goods from boat to boat contributing to a busy river trade. After these improvements trade declined but the river banks remained storage sites. Except for the iron works of Partridge & Co., 19th century industry in Monmouth was limited to the continuing river trade with Hereford and

Bristol. Bark was moved in large quantities from the forests of the Upper Wye and stored on the banks at Monmouth. It was then pared and cleansed before being sent to Chepstow and on to other ports for the tanning industry. The trade declined steadily in the later 19th century but ten trows and barges survived at Monmouth in the 1890s (Green, 1999).

6.1.19 The Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers Militia (the oldest regiment of the Reserve Forces established by 1539) has been based at Great Castle House since the mid-1800s. In the early 20th century its troop base was established at Vauxhall Camp in Vauxhall Fields, accessed over the River Monnow via a Mark II Inglis Bridge (erected in 1931 and one of only two known examples to survive).

6.1.20 The second half of the 20th century saw dramatic changes to the relationship between the town and River Wye. The A40 bypass was constructed in 1965-6 effectively cutting off the town from the river and resulting in the demolition of housing north-east of Wye Bridge. Recent developments include the

Waitrose supermarket (1995), waterside development on the banks of the Monnow, demolition of the cattle market and construction of a new bridge over the Monnow, pedestrianising the Monnow Bridge (2004).

6.1.21 Today Monmouth is a busy town with independent shops, supermarkets, restaurants, the Monmouth School for Boys, Monmouth School for Girls, Monmouth Comprehensive School, a theatre and cinema. Livestock markets are no longer held in the town but there are produce and goods markets held twice a week.



Fig.10 The town on the banks of the Wye before the construction of the A40 circa 1940

6.2 Settlement Plan

6.2.1 The historic core of Monmouth consists of a number of different areas that reflect the origins and development of the town. Historically, the two most prominent elements of the town were the castle and the adjacent priory church. The castle included an outer bailey which probably extended further to the south-east than it does today. Speed's map names the area at the north end of Monnow Street 'The Bayley' (see **Fig.6**). This area developed into the market place and was probably originally over-looked by the priory to the east although subsequent development on the edge of the priory site has separated the church from the market area. On the slope south-east of these important areas there developed an irregular grid of streets which, by the early 13th century, had become constricted by the encircling town wall.



Fig.11 Aerial view of Monmouth, 1990s

6.2.2 On the slope from the castle and market place to the west, stretching down to the Monnow lies Monnow Street. This street is a characteristic planned development of regular burgage plots; long, narrow strips of land set along a wide street that was capable of serving as a market area as well as a thoroughfare. It is possible that this part of the town was at least re-planned in the mid 13th century, probably replacing earlier development that may have followed the course of a road leading to the Roman fort on the higher ground. Beyond the Monnow Bridge with its medieval gateway into the town, was a suburb which may have had its origins in a pre-Norman settlement.

6.2.3 The town did not grow beyond its medieval limits until the 19th century. Priory Street was created in 1837 linking Agincourt Square in the south-west to Monk Street in the north. In the 1830s properties on Monnow Street and at Overmonnow still retained regular back plots which were to be infilled gradually throughout the later 19th century. Extramural development saw the expansion of the town to the north with Victorian terraces along Hereford Road. At the wharf by Wye Bridge yards, brick works and gas works developed mirrored on the opposite side of the river. The 20th century saw major changes to the appearance of the town. In 1965-6 the A40 was constructed on the west bank of the River Wye cutting the town off from the river and obliterating the historic wharf, Granville Street (also known as Wye Bridge Lane) and the eastern end of Wyebridge Street.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 2 Historical Plan

6.3 Key Historic Influences & Characteristics

6.3.1 The key historic influences and characteristics of Monmouth are:

- Roman fort of Blestium
- Castle established before 1071, Benedictine Priory founded c.1075.
- Early burgrave development on Monnow Street
- 12th century development of suburb of Overmonnow
- 13th century erection of town walls and gates
- 15th century town has borough status and continues to develop and consolidate its housing stock.
- 1536 Act of Union, Monmouth becomes the shire town
- 17th century development of the town with addition of a free school, almshouses and gentry houses
- 18th and 19th century remodelling of the town with major public and private buildings including the Shire Hall and Market House
- 20th century consolidation and infill. 1965-6 A40 bypass constructed cutting the town off from the River Wye

6.4 Archaeological Potential

6.4.1 Monmouth is a town with high archaeological interest reflecting the potential to encounter archaeological remains relating to the Roman period occupation of the site as well as its more obvious medieval development. The castle and the medieval Monnow Bridge with its rare example of a medieval gate on the bridge are Scheduled Ancient Monuments and are regarded as being of national importance. As such there is a presumption against development that would cause physical damage to a monument or negatively impact on its setting.

6.4.2 The core of the built-up area of the town has been identified as an Area of Special Archaeological Sensitivity (ASAS) a non-statutory designation supported by national planning policy guidance, due to the potential for encountering archaeological remains relating to the medieval town and its defences as well as later phases of its history. Additionally, the historic buildings of the town are an important archaeological resource in their own right. Any proposed development within the ASAS will need to include appropriate measures to assess and, if necessary, protect or record the archaeological interest of the site or building. Advice from the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, the council's archaeological advisors, should be sought at an early stage.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 3 Area of Special Archaeological Sensitivity

7 Spatial Analysis

7.1 Background

7.1.1 Conservation areas are designated for their special character, but within the area there will be zones which are varied but contribute to the whole. It is important to define these 'character areas' and provide a clear understanding of the defining elements making up the character of a particular part of the conservation area. This leads to a more useful and comprehensive document in development control terms.

7.1.2 Whilst individual character areas have been defined with a line (see **Plan 6**), adjacent areas will, in almost all cases, have a direct effect on the character of any defined sub-area. Character areas do not sit in isolation and when considering the impact of proposals on the character and/or appearance of a conservation area the character area and adjacent character areas and their wider setting (which may in some cases extend beyond the conservation area boundary) should be very carefully considered. There are often cases where character areas will overlap giving these spaces added complexity and importance in terms of proposed changes.

7.1.3 It should be noted that whilst ten character areas have been identified, it is also important to appreciate the cohesion to the whole conservation area, which should always be considered when addressing the character of the Monmouth Conservation Area.

7.1.4 For general guidance on the criteria used for assessing buildings making a particularly positive contribution to the conservation area, please refer to **Appendix 1**.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 4 Spatial Analysis

Part D - Plan 5 Listed Buildings & Buildings Making a Particular or Special Positive Contribution

Part D - Plan 6 Character Areas

7.2 Overview

7.2.1 The character of the town is defined by a complex series of distinct areas. The medieval core of the town forms the framework for the formal and informal network of streets and lanes which sit on rising land adjacent to the Rivers Monnow and Wye. The built form of the town comprises areas characterized by key building periods, most commonly the late Georgian and early Victorian periods (construction and remodelling) in addition to earlier individual houses and buildings of great historic and architectural significance. Despite this variation, there is a unification of the townscape in the constant glimpses of the spire of St Mary's church and also views out to the dramatic tree-lined landscape setting.

7.2.2 Intimate and grand streets are juxtaposed throughout and often a small lane or alleyway leads off a main street providing glimpses of the complexity of the built form behind the façades of the main streets. This informal network of streets, lanes and alleys linked to the more formal principal routes through the town provides richness and depth to the historic townscape.

7.2.3 Of particular note are the survivals of medieval buildings which have had such an important influence on the town and remain as monuments to its evolution. Included within this is the Monnow Bridge, a unique survival in Britain which sits at one of the key gateways to the town. The castle, set off Agincourt Square, is somewhat hidden from the main commercial core of Monmouth. However, its presence has had an important influence on the adjacent sections of the town plan. It has produced some of the more attractive curves to streets, particularly Priory Street, exploited to maximum effect by late Regency terraces of restrained stucco.

7.2.4 A key theme of the character of the conservation area is the frequent transition between grand and intimate spaces, particularly in the immediate environs of Agincourt Square, to the lanes and alleys

leading off St Mary's Street and to the intimacy and containment of the courtyards of the school complexes compared with the grand architectural gestures seen to the public fronts of the schools. However, there are also large open spaces such as the floodplains of the River Monnow and Wye and the Chippenham recreation ground. These tree-lined spaces provide an important open setting to parts of the town but also provide town defining views taking in church, castle and schools.

7.2.5 Distant views into Monmouth can be had from the hills of the Kymin and in particular from the Naval Temple monument. These views allow an appreciation of the scale and complexity of the town and demonstrate the sensitivity of the historic grain of the townscape and how this may be damaged by inappropriately scaled development (**Fig.12**).

7.2.6 The two rivers, and in particular their often tree lined banks, form important parts of the setting of the town and the conservation area, although much of the riverside adjacent to development is included within the designation. The conservation area extends

south of the River Monnow to include an historic section of Overmonnow. This is an important settlement in its own right and has a distinct village character separate but complementary to the town. The church of St Thomas and the Monnow bridge visually and physically link Overmonnow to Monmouth.



Fig.12 View of Monmouth from the Kymin showing the town's wider setting. The scale and complexity of the town plan can be appreciated from this high level view point

7.3 Character Areas

7.3.1 Ten distinct character areas have been identified in Monmouth, the boundaries of which have been identified in **Fig.13** below and Plan 6. This section will identify the key attributes of each character area.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 6 Character Areas

7.3.2 Each character area makes reference to the following key considerations

- Form (cohesiveness – why is it a character area)
- Scale & Building Line
- Significant buildings or groups of buildings making a positive or special contribution
- Materials
- Views
- Local Features
- Significant Spaces & Gaps
- Trees, hedges and boundaries
- Surfaces

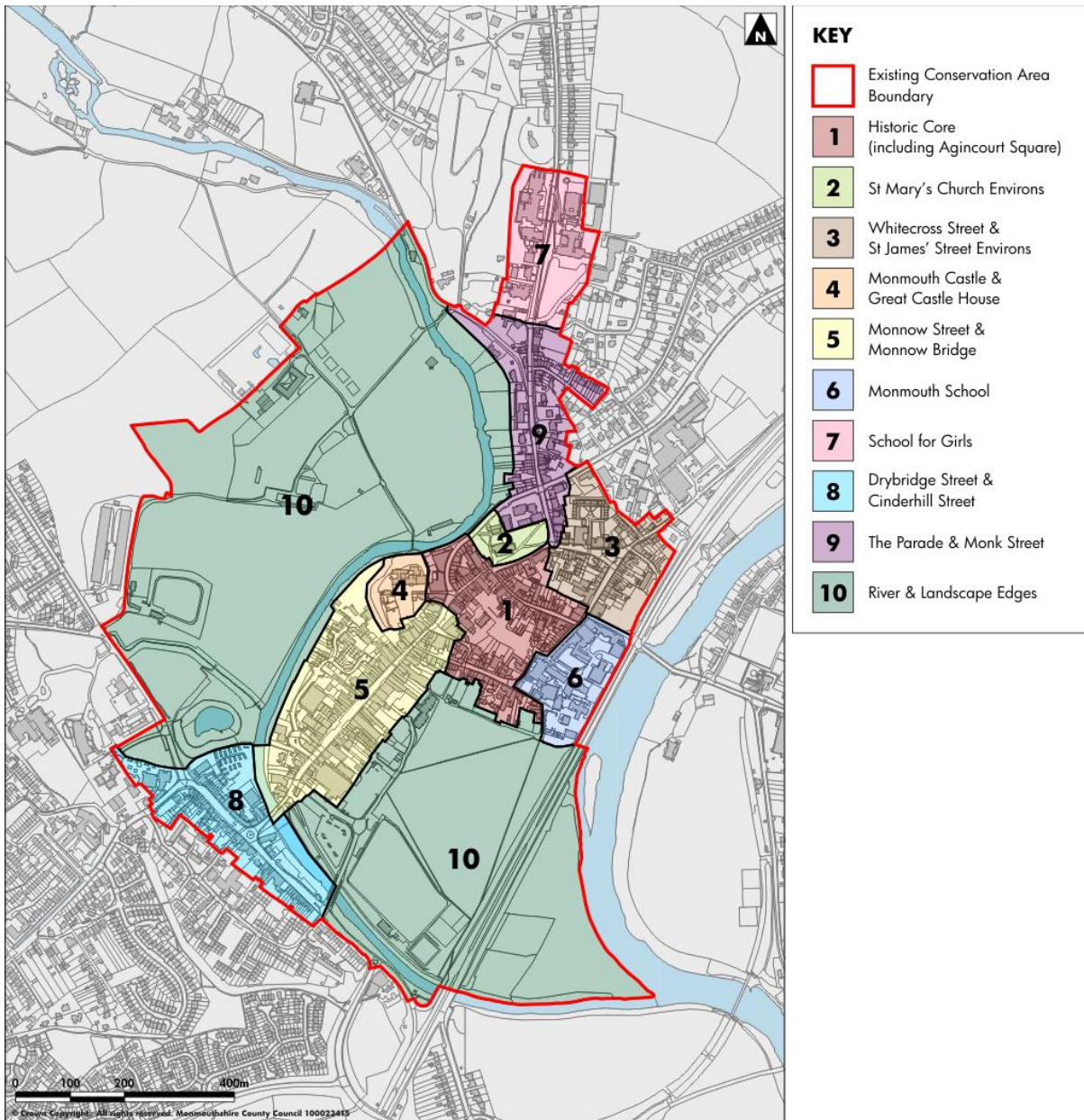
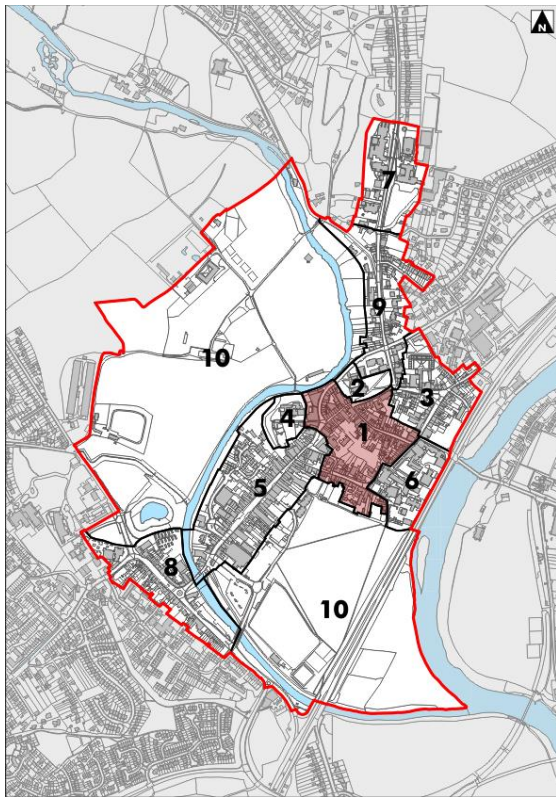


Fig.13 Monmouth Character Areas

CHARACTER AREA 1
Historic Core
 (including Agincourt Square)



7.3.3 The historic core character area comprises an informal grid of street, lanes and alleys and is focused on Agincourt Square. The complexity of the street plan, combined with an almost continuous enclosure from historic built form (**Fig.14**) and its connectivity to other areas of equal special character such as the church environs and the castle give this part of the conservation area a particular richness. This is combined with the varied uses found throughout from residential to commercial, the latter largely relating to services such as hotels, restaurants, offices and public houses, as opposed to the far more commercial areas of Monnow Street to the south-west.

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6A



Fig.14 View looking north-west along St Mary's Street. The intimacy of the streetscape and the almost continuous enclosure throughout are key characteristics of the historic core

7.3.4 Most buildings within the character area are three storey. There is some variation within streets and it is often the case that two storey buildings and houses maintain a sense of scale by the use of steeply pitched roofs or high parapets. The upper floors to three storey houses are often diminished in scale so that the windows are smaller than lower storeys and tucked into the eaves. The almost ubiquitous use of the timber vertical sliding sash window in classical proportions accentuates the scale of houses and emphasizes their sense of enclosure especially given that most of the street sections to the historic core are narrow and in some cases very narrow; for example Church Street (Fig.15). There is some variation to the way houses address the street but parapets and lower pitches to the three storey houses' generally obscure roofs, especially given the narrow road section which impedes long views of the roofscape. This gives the eaves and parapet lines added emphasis as they often strongly terminate the roofline. Where this is broken it adds variation and interest to the townscape (Fig.16).



Fig.15 The narrow section of Church Street and the vertical emphasis to the facades heightens the sense of enclosure to this part of the conservation area



Fig.16 Rich variety of architectural detail within the historic core but the character adversely affected by traffic congestion

7.3.5 What is perhaps most striking about the historic core is the almost continuous building line to streets with houses set to the back of pavement. This is seen in the context of narrow roads and lanes which accentuates the sense of enclosure. Access to the rear of properties from these streets is often via alleys and narrow footpaths. There are very few breaks in this building line and this helps to strongly define and enclose the townscape throughout this character area. Where the building line is set back the line of the street is frequently continued by the use of railings or a front boundary wall (Fig.17). This is also the case for side alleys and lanes which are enclosed by further buildings fronting the lane or by boundary walls (good examples of this are Worcester Street (off St Mary's Street) (Fig.18) and Agincourt Street (leading south-east from the Square).



Fig.18 View looking north along Worcester Street, no more than a pedestrian lane, but lined with house frontages, converted industrial buildings and garden boundary walls all adding to the activity, vibrancy and intimacy of the historic core.



Fig.17 The street line is often continued with railings and boundary walls – seen here looking north-west along Glendower Street

7.3.6 There are a number of very important historic and architectural groups of buildings throughout this part of the conservation area. Agincourt Square is the most notable and varied group of buildings with the Shire Hall to the east side and the Inns of the town grouped around this triangular space overseen by the spire of St Mary's behind the buildings to the north-east. Here are some of the only buildings over three storeys with some accommodation in roof spaces lit by dormers or gable windows. This relatively small and informal square is still one of the larger urban spaces in the historic core. This gives some indication of the generally fine urban grain producing a tight townscape in terms of the way historic spaces are enclosed and the access to further spaces – often along narrow passages, through carriage arches or down tightly enclosed streets. The exception to this is Priory Street, a planned piece of town intervention feeding off from Agincourt Square to the north-west and sweeping round revealing open views across the River Monnow floodplains or on travelling into the town, fine developing views of Shire Hall (Fig.19). Both sides of St Mary's Street and Glendower Street form groups of considerable architectural and townscape value, united in their scale, plot division (which is regular and derived from the medieval plan) and the occasional punctuation

by an oriel window, shopfront, doorcase or other feature (Fig.20).



Fig.20 This building in St Mary's Street has had a variety of uses with the features such as the carriageway arch and shopfront adding to the special character of the street and breaking up the street scene



Fig.19 The view into Agincourt Square from Priory Street provides good developing views of Shire Hall and the group of historic buildings which form its setting

7.3.7 The vast majority of buildings to this part of the conservation area are statutorily listed, mostly Grade II. The notable exception to this is the large group of smaller cottage scale houses forming the north side of Almshouse Street. These form a good group as a terrace (Fig.21) and a wider group with the listed Almshouses to the south side of the street (forming part of the school – see Character Area 6).

7.3.8 There are two further notable groups in both historic building and townscape terms. The fine sweep of late Georgian houses to the east side of Priory Street (Fig.22) and buildings forming the narrow Church Street (linking Agincourt Square with St Mary's Church). Church Street is a commercial street of particularly high quality with mostly traditional shopfronts to the ground floor. The intimacy created by the narrow section of the street and the high quality of the street floorscape (Fig.23) and shop frontages (Fig.24) make this a memorable part of the conservation area with a very high degree of heritage assets.



Fig.21 The terrace to the north side of Almshouse Street forms a good group of unlisted buildings to this part of the conservation area.



Fig.22 A view looking from Agincourt Square into Priory Street showing the sweep of these late Georgian houses which forms such an attractive piece of planned townscape.



Fig.23 High quality floorscape of Pennant stone flags and central gully of small stone setts



Fig.24 Simple, restrained and well-designed shopfront and fascia. The font and design of this signage is particularly successful

7.3.9 The predominant walling materials to this part of the conservation area are painted render or stucco with some examples of early pebbledash. Colours vary but are mostly white or creams with some softer pastel shades of blue and green. Occasionally colour is used to accentuate pilasters, cills or lintels or doorcases (**Fig.25**). Brick and stone are seen in limited and isolated buildings. Bricks are generally a red/orange colour with some variation created by the use of burnt headers but this is generally in a random pattern and not used for decorative purposes. Brick bonds vary with English bond commonly seen. Stone is generally red sandstone laid to courses. Ashlar is often used for window and door dressings and other architectural detailing. Stone buildings in this part of the conservation area generally date from the 19th century. Most roofs are natural slate seen to varying pitches, some relatively steep for the material. In these cases, the slates probably replaced another material, possibly stone slates or clay pantiles. There are some isolated examples of pantile roofs. These generally appear on more modest scaled houses and to outbuildings to this part of the conservation area (**Fig.26**). The mix of material types and subtle changes in colour form an important part of the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area (**Fig.27**).

7.3.10 The very tight enclosure of the townscape formed by the almost continuous development at back of pavement means that local views are constantly funnelled along streets or down lanes. These are often terminated by further buildings although rarely as a planned vista. This informality to views is part of the character of the area. Also due to the high density of development and its relative height, views to the spire of St Mary's tend to be glimpsed (usually over or between buildings) (**Fig.28** next page) until the observer is adjacent to the church on the edge of the churchyard where the full splendour and scale of the church can be appreciated. This dramatic interaction is a result of such a highly developed historic core.



Fig.25 Render and stucco finishes to houses are painted various (mostly) subtle shades giving variation to the streetscene



Fig.26 Pantiles are seen to roofs of more modest dwellings and outbuildings to this part of the conservation area (houses to junction of St Mary's Street and Worcester Street)



Fig.27 St John's Street, the subtle but effective variation in materials and material use greatly adds to the special character of this part of the conservation area

7.3.11 Across the Glendower car park looking east and north-east a sense of the town set between hills can be gained with views out to The Naval Temple and banqueting house at the Kymin and the wooded slopes of Garth Wood (**Fig.29**).



Fig.28 A glimpse of the spire of St Mary's along Agincourt Street running from Glendower Street

7.3.12 Of particular local note to this part of the conservation area is the survival of a number of high quality doors, doorcases, brackets and hoods. They are often painted to accentuate their presence in the street scene and greatly add to the quality of the townscape and the special character of the individual buildings (**Fig.30**).



Fig.30 Examples of doorcases, brackets and hoods found in the historic core



Fig.29 Views out of the conservation area looking east to Kymin allow the town to be appreciated in its landscape setting (for example, from Glendower car park)

7.3.13 There are some good examples of local paving traditions. These generally use Pennant sandstone components – setts and larger stones for gulleys (**Fig.31**). Stone setts are also seen to Agincourt Square and the courtyard of The Beaufort Arms to the east side of Agincourt Square linking through to the car park on Glendower Street (**Fig.32**). The bronze statue of Charles Rolls (of Rolls-Royce) by W Goscombe Johns R A 1911 stands as a feature outside Shire Hall. He is depicted holding a model of the Wright Biplane in which he was killed at the age of 32.

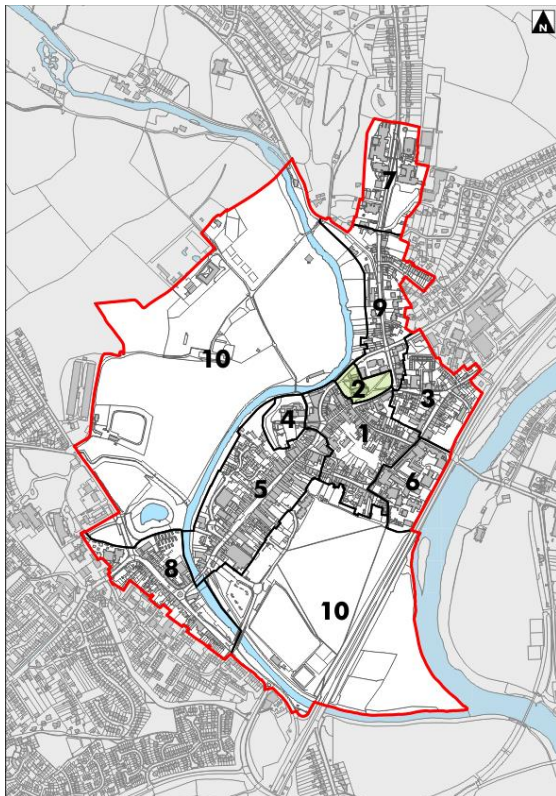


Fig.31 Pennant stone has been used locally for paving details local features significantly add to the character and appearance of the Monmouth Conservation Area



Fig.32 The courtyard to the Beaufort Arms retains its traditional stone sett surface and carriageways finished in flag stones

CHARACTER AREA 2
Church of St Mary Environs



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6B



Fig.33 The spire of the church of St Mary dominates the skyline within its immediate semi-open setting to Priory Street

7.3.14 This small part of the conservation area is distinctive for its relatively generous (in terms of the town centre) open space albeit mostly comprising the churchyard to St Mary's church. In addition there is a mix of historic (the church and surviving buildings from the Priory) and modern buildings. This character area is closely linked to Whitecross Street (see Character Area 3), the Historic Core and North Parade and Monk Street. It also partly sits to the edge of the River Monnow to the north.

7.3.15 The spire of the church of St Mary is an impressive monument and town landmark of considerable special historic and architectural interest. The church dominates both the immediate townscape from Church Street and Priory Street (**Fig.33**) and in wider views of the town from the surrounding hills particularly those to the east (Kymin) and the floodplains of the River Monnow to the north-west. The scale of this building is reflective of its ecclesiastical significance within the town and its importance as both the priory church and parish church of the town. Elsewhere within this small character area buildings are relatively modest at two storeys. The modern Post Office buildings are generally single storey. Of note are two very large mature trees to the grounds of the church and priory. These trees form a significant part of the local views of the church and priory in their immediate setting (mainly from Priory Street) but are significant for their scale. The area generally comprises of buildings set back from the roadside in small gardens or private gardens or the graveyard space. The street line, however, particularly to Priory Street is maintained by stone walls and the structural planting of hedges. The prominent end section of part of the ranges which form the Priory is set to the back of pavement on Priory Street and its corbelled chimneys are a notable local landmark in the street scene (**Fig.34**).



Fig.34 Buildings relating to the priory set to the back of pavement (Priory Street) make a significant contribution to the street scene.



Fig.35 A view looking east along Whitecross Street showing the significant contribution that the edge of the churchyard and the trees within the churchyard make to the street.

7.3.16 The church of St Mary and the buildings which make up Monmouth Priory form a group of considerable historic and architectural quality. The shared spaces between the church and the priory are very quiet, pleasant and relatively tranquil green spaces away from the busy town centre's adjacent streets. The churchyard wall and the trees to the churchyard form an important part of the character of Whitecross Street to the southern edge of the character area (Fig.35).

7.3.17 Oak House is an early Victorian house facing Monk Street which formed part of the former Royal Mail Delivery Offices. The house is Grade II listed and forms a wider group with

those of a similar period and slightly earlier to Monk Street. The group is also closely linked to the church and the priory as all are clearly seen on approach to the character area from Monk Street to the north.

7.3.18 The church of St Mary and the priory buildings are constructed of red sandstone rubble with ashlar stone dressings. This gives the buildings a particular presence in the townscape and in-part justifies the separate character area status as this material use contrasts with those seen to the adjacent Priory, Monk and Whitecross Streets (see Character Areas 2 and 3). To the eastern edge of this character area, forming part of the former post office, Oak House (see Character Area 9) facing Monk Street is in painted stucco reflecting the predominance of this material in houses facing this street in Character Area 9. The roofs of the priory buildings are clay tile. These are relatively rare within the conservation area and probably replaced earlier stone slate. The red clay tile roofs of the priory contrast with the grey of the natural slate roofs of the church (beyond). The low pitched natural slate roofs of the older building to the Post Office site visually links this building to those on Monk Street.

7.3.19 There are important views across the northern sections of this character area to the spire of the church of St Mary. From Priory Street there are some long landscape views north across the floodplain of the River Monnow. These views give a real sense of how the town hugs and is hard up against the southern bank of the river with the open countryside beyond.

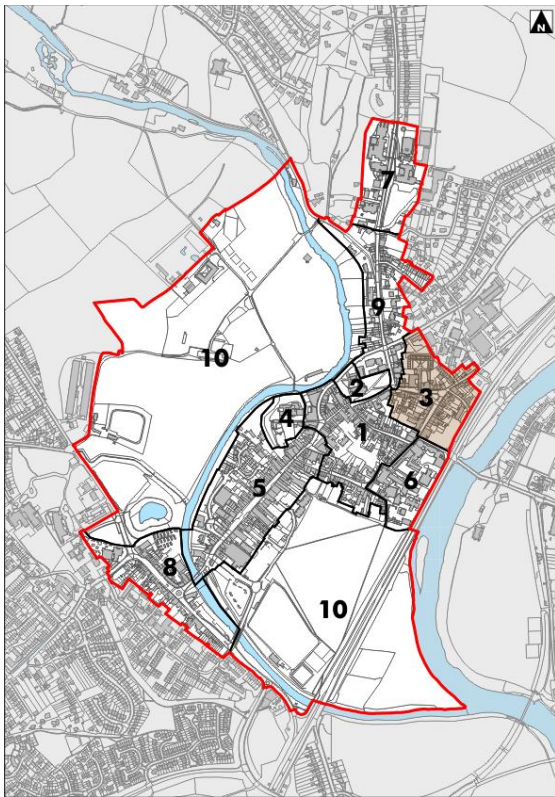
7.3.20 The gates, screen, gate piers, boundary wall and railings to the churchyard of the church of St Mary are a local feature of very high architectural quality and make an important and particularly positive contribution to the street scene (Fig.36)

7.3.21 The mature trees to the churchyard provide a green foreground to the church and when in leaf they strongly define the north side of Whitecross Street and the Monk Street elevation to the churchyard. They are significant local features in the townscape.



Fig.36 The gates, screen and gate piers to St Mary's church are an important local feature in the street scene

CHARACTER AREA 3
Whitecross Street & St James' Street
Environs



7.3.22 This part of the conservation area reads very much as a high status, mainly 18th century suburb of the town. The townhouses that line the streets define a large triangular space (larger than Agincourt Square) known as St James' Square (**Fig.37**). Within the square there is a railed war memorial adjacent to an Indian Bean Tree (Catalpa). Almost all of the buildings which front the streets are statutory listed buildings. Most of those that are not listed are considered to make a particularly positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area. Plots lining the east side of St James' Street ran to a back lane. Subsequently these former garden spaces have been truncated by the A40 separating the town on its east side from the River Wye which formed such an important role in the town's development and prosperity.

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6C



Fig.37 St James' Square; war memorial and Indian Bean Tree (Catalpa) from the west with the tree lined ridge of Garth Wood seen between houses



Fig.38 Architectural character around the square created by variety of well-preserved buildings of varying sizes and with painted render and brick elevations

7.3.23 Houses are mostly three storey within this part of the conservation area although there are small groups of two and two and a half storey houses (usually with small dormers to the roofs) (Fig.38). The building line is almost consistent throughout with houses set to the back of pavement strongly defining the formal spaces to this part of the conservation area. The rear of plots are accessed via alleyways between houses, the Methodist church to the north side perhaps being the most dramatic of these side accesses (Fig.39) or via carriageway arches. Where the building line is set back, for example, to some sides of St James' Square the line of the street is maintained either by boundary walls or railings (Fig.40).



Fig.39 Monmouth Methodist church set back from the street line is dramatically accessed via a gap between houses which has been designed as a small forecourt which gives the well considered classically inspired façade some modest sense of a setting



Fig.40 Boundary walls and railings maintain the line of the street where buildings are set back or gardens front streets – southern edge to St James' Square

7.3.24 There are three significant groups of buildings within this part of the conservation area. The first group comprises those houses lining St James' Square (**Fig.41**), which are consistently grander and of higher status to those around the square and to part of Whitecross Street. Looking along St James' Street, this is a distinctive group of townhouses. These are characterised by their scale, emphasis of the principal floors (with string courses and pediments) and grand door cases of which there are a number of very good examples from the mid to late 18th century period (**Fig.42**). This quality and consistency of architectural detailing, proportion and scale unifies the street and forms part of the very high quality of townscape to this part of the conservation area. The second group comprises the houses to St James' Square. The built form here is no less impressive but is more varied in its scale, materials and uses. There is also more varied use of colour to the Square's facades with shades of greens, blues and greys enlivening the street scene. Colour is, however, restrained and subtle and never dominant (**Fig.43** next page). Rolls Hall (1887-8 F.A Powell) to the northern end of the Square dominates the

space somewhat with its use of stone and boldly articulated façade which includes to one corner of the plan, a small lead covered spire – a prominent landmark in this part of the town (**Fig.44** next page).



Fig.42 One example of the many grand doorcases found in the character area



Fig.41 St James's Street looking east – houses are generally on a grand scale and of a higher status than those to St James' Square



Fig.43 The use of colour to the houses of St James' Square is subtle, complementary to the building and those adjacent and never dominant



Fig.44 Rolls Hall, west corner of St James' Square – a significant landmark to this part of the town.

7.3.25 The final group comprises the buildings to the eastern corner of St James' Square to the south side of Old Dixton Road. The Old Nags Head Public House is a prominent building in this group and abuts a section of the former town defenses (forming part of the medieval East Gate). The group includes a former toll house to the north side of the road (No.16) which along with the remains of the 15th century East Gate reinforces the former importance of this road as one of the principal routes into and out of the town running along the River Wye.

7.3.26 There is a predominance of painted render and stucco to this part of the conservation area which gives other materials such as red/orange bricks, red sandstone and the timber framing to the Queens Head Inn (south side of St James' Street on corner with Wyebridge Street) more emphasis in the street scene. There is generally a good use of colour throughout this part of the conservation area with subtle shades (pinks, greys, blues and greens), off white and cream colours harmoniously mixed within groups and windows, door furniture, architectural detailing (brackets, pediments and string courses) and joinery brought out in contrasting or complementary colours or left white. Roofs, where seen (and they are often out of view given the scale of buildings and their low pitch) are natural slate almost throughout. The combination of the render/stucco and natural slate generally unites and distinguishes the character area and reflects both the status of building and period within which much of this part of the conservation area was developed or remodelled.

7.3.27 Views out to the hills surrounding the east and north flanks of the town are particularly apparent to this part of the conservation area and they form a very important part of the special character and appearance. Between houses, along roads, particularly looking east along Old Dixton Road, the green ridge line of distant hills is constantly present (Fig.45). These hills also form an attractive backdrop to houses on the south-east side of St James' Square where the elevated nature of the view down into the

Square accentuates the sense of the town set in its hill-locked landscape (Fig.46).

7.3.28 To the centre of St James' Square is the war memorial. This comprises a railed area of grass with planted beds and a statue; a figure of a soldier sculpted by W. Clarke (1921). To the east of this a striking Catalpa (Indian Bean Tree) reputed to have been planted c1900 and propped in several places with iron rods to prevent collapse of the sprawling limbs (Fig.47 next page). The grouping of the statue and the tree and their enclosure bring some formality to this space and provides a focus to the Square from all entry points.



Fig.45 the view looking south-east from St James' Square taking in the slopes of Garth Wood and the Kymin to the east side of the River Wye



Fig.46 The view looking east from Whitecross Street as it enters St James' Square with the green backdrop of the of the Kymin framing the houses to the east side of the Square.



Fig.47 The landmark Indian Bean Tree, *Catalpa bignonioides*

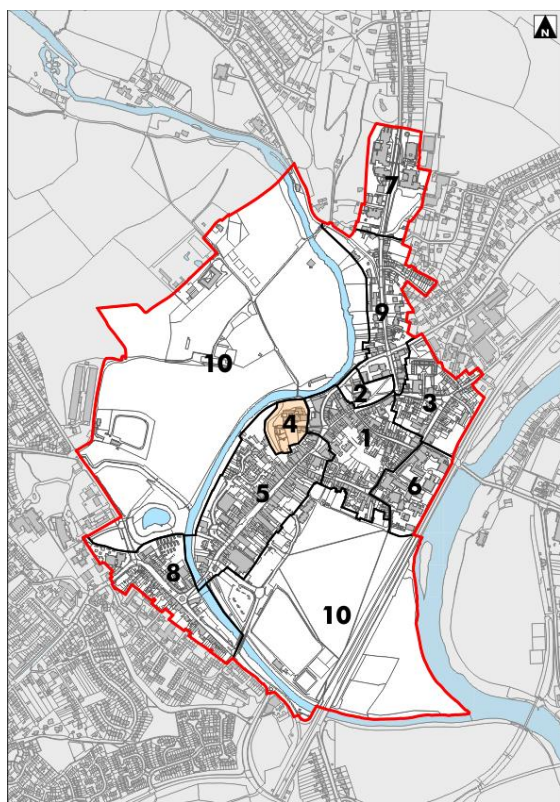
7.3.29 A notable and unusual local feature to the built form is the occasional use of a front mounted chimney stack which springs from the eaves line to the principal road-facing façade of the house. There are examples in both St James' Street (**Fig.48**) and St James' Square.



Fig.48 The unusual planting of a chimney stack to the eaves line of a principal façade seen here to a house in St James' Street

CHARACTER AREA 4

Monmouth Castle & Great Castle House



7.3.30 This relatively small character area lies to the west of Agincourt Square. The former defenses of the castle have largely dictated the present line and curve of the street through Agincourt Square and into Priory Street. There is a small access lane from Agincourt Square into the space now occupied by the remains of the castle, the impressive Great Castle House and its car park (doubling as a parade ground) (**Fig.49**).

7.3.31 Great Castle House at three and a half storeys is on a grand scale and dominates the open space to the south of the house which also forms the setting for the remains of the once considerable extent of Monmouth Castle. The castle remains are dwarfed by the house and somewhat compromised by later development within the standing castle ruins. To the south side of Castle Hill is Castle Hill House a three storey 18th century townhouse. This building, partly because of its scale and partly because of its present paint finish (October 2010) of a vivid blue is prominent in extended views into the conservation area for some distance (**Fig.50** next page).

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6D



Fig.49 Photomontage showing Great Castle House in its immediate parade ground setting with the spire of the church of St Mary seen beyond.



Fig.50 A view from the east looking back over the town. Note the clearly identifiable blue gable of Castle Hill House at the highest point of the town. The remains of the castle and Great Castle House can also be clearly seen in this view.

7.3.32 The building line is consistent to both sides of the open space forming the setting principally to Great Castle House. This reads as a formal space and has largely been adopted by the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers whose museum occupies the western stable block of Great Castle House. Armoured cars and cannons are set to the edge and a section is separated off for a car park with a memorial garden beyond.

7.3.33 Great Castle House, Castle Hill House and the remains of the castle form an historic and architecturally significant but disparate group united in their enclosure of the large open space to the centre of this character area. With the very limited access to the site physically and administratively (the site is still an active military site), the castle and its environs are not often considered integral to the town despite their immense significance and influence on the towns development and prominence on the skyline of the town in distant views. A sense of its former size and dominance of the town (as seen at Chepstow) is hard to imagine.

7.3.34 The Old Red Sandstone of the castle ruins (as rubble stone) and Great Castle House (seen unusually in ashlar blocks) with much relatively recent replacement of stone giving a mottled appearance to the façades (**Fig.51**) dominate this part of the conservation area. However the painted render of Castle Hill House is a strong contrast to the softened red/browns of the sandstone. Roofs are a mix of natural slate and clay tile (the latter to Great Castle House is likely to have replaced stone slate).

7.3.35 Important views can be had from the grounds of the castle particularly to the south over the roofs and along the rear elevations of houses and commercial premises to the north-west side of Monnow Street. These views are an attractive mix of roofscape, vernacular materials and have a pleasant informality and complexity which is often hidden from view. To the north-east the spire of the church of St Mary is glimpsed over rooftops and remains the dominant landmark of the town. In extended views from the north-west (from the

floodplains of the River Monnow) the church spire remains the dominant feature on the skyline but the surviving rubblestone walls of the castle and the roof of Great Castle House are still prominent and important foreground features in these views (**Fig.52**).

7.3.36 The historic association of Great Castle House and the castle with the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers is of significant local importance to the town.

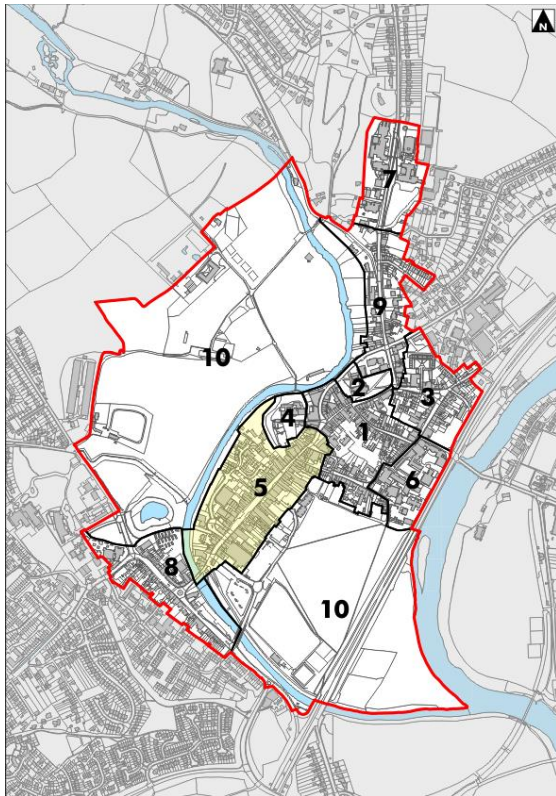


Fig.51 Ashlar old red sandstone seen on Great Castle House



Fig.52 View looking east from the floodplain of the River Monnow towards the town

CHARACTER AREA 5
Monnow Street & Monnow Bridge



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6E

7.3.37 Monnow Street is the commercial area within the town and is strongly characterised by both the notable and memorable wide section of the street, tapering at its northern and southern ends to historically enable the closing off of the street to prevent the loss of livestock (during market days) and its southern termination at the Monnow Bridge. Built c. 1270 as part of the town defenses, it is the only surviving medieval bridge in Great Britain with its gate tower intact on the bridge (**Fig.53**). Today this legacy of practical town planning has produced a very distinctive townscape. Looking to the north, the narrowing of the road and the gently curving frontage, particularly to the north side, is emphasized by the road seemingly terminating with the church spire (actually set back beyond Agincourt Square) set above the townscape of Monnow Street (**Fig.54** next page).

7.3.38 Much of the character of this part of the conservation area is derived from a

combination of the variation in the heights of buildings to the length of Monnow Street. There are some two, occasional two and a half storey buildings (with dormers) and a high number of larger three storey houses (and occasionally more), some with parapets and varying roof pitches addressing the street (**Fig.55** next page). The subtle variations in the scale of buildings, which are set on medieval plot boundaries still clearly surviving today, form part of the essential townscape quality of Monnow Street. Consistency and a cohesiveness to the character of the street is derived from the scale and proportions of shopfronts to ground floors (in some cases later insertions to townhouses) and the almost ubiquitous use of the timber vertical sliding sash window (with various glazing configurations). The building line is almost consistent throughout with mostly shopfronts forming the pavement street frontage. The exception to this is Cornwall House (south side) which is set back from the roadside. The street line, however, is maintained with fine cast iron railings and wrought iron overthrow.



Fig.53 The Monnow Bridge, the only surviving gated medieval bridge in Britain. The bridge makes a dramatic termination to Monnow Street



Fig.54 The spire of the church of St Mary seen above the buildings on Monnow Street forming an important landmark within this part of the conservation area



Fig.55 The variation in building height, combined with the varied roofline set within the medieval town plots forms part of the memorable and distinctive townscape to this part of the conservation area (Monnow Street looking north)

7.3.39 All of the buildings to Monnow Street form a group of considerable historic and architectural significance. Over half of the buildings fronting Monnow Street are statutory listed buildings. The remaining unlisted buildings in most cases make a particularly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Historic buildings to the rear of both sides of Monnow Street form two further interesting groups. There is a small terrace of cottage scaled dwellings to the south side of Monnow Street accessed from Howells Place (Maes Howell). This group is well-detailed and sits on one of the characteristic alleys which lead from Monnow Street linking rear areas to the principal street. The second group comprises a series of older buildings to Nailers Lane; small warehouses/stores (**Fig.56**) and industrial buildings (**Fig.57**) are set off from and in some cases line this lane. They combine with modest housing to form groups of some considerable historic and architectural value which, in addition, form interesting and robust townscape to the rear of the main thoroughfare of Monnow Street (**Fig.58**).



Fig.56 Small warehouse/store building – south side of Nailers Lane



Fig.57 View looking north along Nailers Lane characterised in places by the survival of former industrial buildings



Fig.58 The strong enclosure of Nailers Lane with a combination of former industrial buildings and small townhouses

7.3.40 The cohesiveness of this part of the conservation area has much to do with the materials adopted for walls and roofs. Most buildings are either rendered or stuccoed. Most are painted; either white or shades of cream with other subtle use of pinks, greys and yellows (**Fig.59**). Variation in colour is often seen to architraves and windows and to shopfronts. Roofs are natural slate with a combination of rendered and brick chimneys creating a dynamic skyline which is constantly changing in views. This is accentuated by the stepping up of buildings along Monnow Street exposing flank elevations which are occasionally brought up to a coping to the verge and terminated with chimneys. The shopfronts and signage to this part of the conservation area are notable for their general good quality and traditional use of materials – timber with hand painted signage and small projecting signs (**Fig.60**). Roofs generally retain their traditional natural slate covering although there is more variation and use modern roofing materials (to the detriment of the host buildings) to the southern section of Monnow Street.



Fig.60 Shopfronts and signage to Monnow Street are generally of a good quality, using traditional materials. Hanging signs in particular are modest in scale and are not overbearing



Fig.59 The use of stucco and render for facades unifies the buildings facing Monnow Street. Colour varies but is seldom a dominating element in the street scene

7.3.41 One of the town defining views can be seen when looking north along the full subtle curve of the widening and narrowing sections of Monnow Street towards the spire of St Mary’s church (see **Fig.54**). The kink in Monnow Street to its southern end prevents a long view down this street, although the bridge’s gate tower comes into view in the lower section of the street. At this point, the gate tower commands and closes views out of the street with the historic gate house set in front of a green background formed by St Dial’s Wood (**Fig.61**).

7.3.42 In terms of the local features to this part of the conservation area, the Monnow Bridge is of national if not international importance (**Fig.62**) and has come to symbolize the town, but it is also a local landmark of considerable significance.



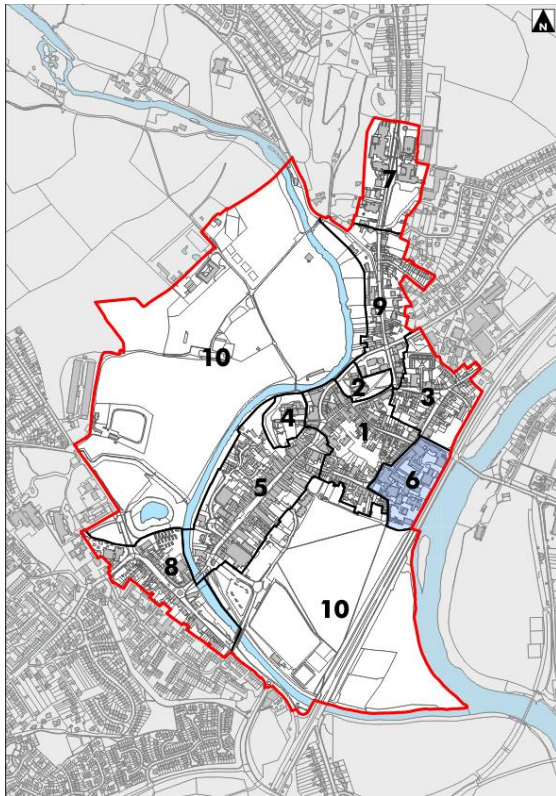
Fig.61 The gate house sitting astride the bridge – an important landmark to the southern end of Monnow Street



Fig.62 Monnow Bridge marking the entrance to the town from Overmonnow

**CHARACTER AREA 6
Monmouth School**

**Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6F**



7.3.43 The boys school complex comprises a series of buildings bounded by Almshouse Street to the west, Weybridge Street to the north, the A40 and the River Wye to the east and the recreation ground to the area known as Chippenham to the south. A mix of historic (many of which are statutory listed) and modern buildings form both informal and formal courtyards, greens and other spaces associated with the history, ceremony and servicing of a large school (just under 900 pupils in total). The school is an important part of the visual and cultural fabric of the town. Its buildings are generally large, exuberant in terms of material use, and look out to the town rather than inwards to private courtyards. The school is a considerable private landholding within the conservation area (**Fig.63**).



Fig.63 Haberdasher's Monmouth School for Boys seen within its town setting – view from the Kymin

7.3.44 There is much variation in scale across the site with single storey buildings and

buildings up to four storeys in height. The larger buildings are to the north and east

boundaries of the site. Pitched roofs, strongly defined gables, and prominent chimneys characterise the large buildings throughout. These features very much form part of the distinct character of the school (Fig.64). The building line of the school buildings in relation to their public interface is strongly defined with buildings set to the back of pavement to Weybridge Street and Almshouse Street. A high rock-faced stone boundary wall with ashlar stone dressings forming battlements encloses the school site on the eastern boundary with the busy A40 (Fig.65). Within the school site, the building line remains formal for the most part and strongly defines internal courtyards and grassed spaces forming quad-type arrangements – a common arrangement in older school and college establishments (Fig.66).

Fig.66 A view from the main gates of the school on Almshouse Street looking into one of a series of open and semi-open courtyard spaces strongly defined by built form but with welcome greenery and some tree cover



Fig.65 The stone boundary wall to the east side of the school site maintains the historic line of the extent of the schools grounds. A footpath to the river bank has been replaced by the A40 effectively forming a bypass for Monmouth



Fig.64 The exuberance and embellishment of the built form and the use of tall chimneys and well-defined gables characterises a number of the buildings forming part of the boys school complex

7.3.45 There are two distinct groups within the character area. Buildings to the north of the

site including the exceptionally well-detailed survival of an almshouse group to the east side

of Almshouse Street. The group known as Jones' Almshouses replaced earlier buildings in 1842-3 (the present buildings were designed by London architect J B Bunning) and now form part of the school (Fig.67). The remaining historic buildings to this section of the school were designed by either Snook in the mid 19th century or Henry Stock, architect to the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, late 19th century. They are characterised by their flamboyance and exuberance in both their architectural design and use of materials. They form a group of considerable historic and architectural significance reflected in their statutory listing. The group is joined by the relatively recent Science Block (1981-4 by W.F. Johnson and Partners) with the use of pink sandstone and strong gabled roof profile respectfully reflecting some of the key characteristics of the older buildings adjacent. To the south of the character area the buildings are general post-war, mostly flat roofed and of limited architectural interest. Their modest scale does not compete with the older buildings to the northern part of the site (see Fig.65 – the distant view from the Kymin). Blake Theatre fronting Glendower Street was

refurbished in c.2004 when it was opened up to the public as a theatre for the town. It was during the refurbishment that the building was clad in the stone seen today. This use of stone helps unify what is a large building into the street scene and relate it visually to the buildings to the northern part of the school.

7.3.46 A distinctive red rock-faced sandstone is used for the historic buildings on the school site. This is complemented by ashlar stone dressings to windows, doors, copings, battlements, string courses and chimneys. The elaborate use of materials combined with the unifying effect of the red sandstone are strong characteristics of the buildings within this part of the conservation area. Traditional pitched roofs are natural slate.



Fig.67 Almshouses, designed by J B Bunning c1842-43 now form part of the school complex and present an attractive and well-detailed frontage to the street scene

7.3.47 The strong definition of the boundaries to the school complex define local views along streets such as Almhouse Street which leads the eye to the timber-framed Queens Head Inn to the corner of St James' Street and Wyebridge Street (**Fig.68**). The stepped pediment and chimneys to School House are a prominent landmark on approaches to the town from the east. These views open out on the Wye Bridge, the school acting as a gateway marker (**Fig.69**). Within the grounds of the school local views across courtyards to key historic buildings will form part of the character of these essentially private spaces. These views are informal and are not designed as vistas or planned views but are nonetheless important to the setting of listed buildings

particularly where that setting is one of open (but private) green spaces and trees.

7.3.48 The school is of considerable local importance to the town and its presence both physically and intellectually forms an important part of the character and appearance of the Monmouth Conservation Area. The flamboyant nature of the architectural treatment of buildings within the school complex sets this area apart from the rest of the conservation area but also greatly adds to the richness of the townscape with its buildings making a conscious effort to outwardly convey the status and traditional values this type of educational establishment represents.

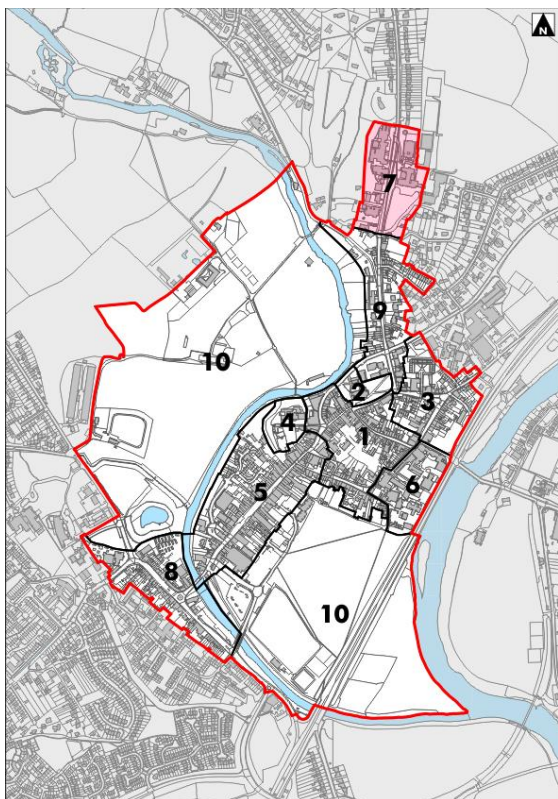


Fig.68 The strongly defined townscape funnels views to key buildings – view looking north along Almhouse Street to the Queens Head Inn



Fig.69 View to School House from the A466 approach road

CHARACTER AREA 7
Haberdasher's Monmouth School for Girls & Environs



Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6G

7.3.49 The girls school is on the northern outskirts of the town with a series of sometimes disparate buildings climbing both sides of the hillside adjacent to the Hereford Road. The main building is to the east side of the road and is only fully appreciated in extended views of the town from the east and across the meadows of the River Monnow from the south (**Fig.70** & **Fig.71** next page). A notable landmark is the 1970s low enclosed pedestrian bridge which links the two school sites and acts as not only a landmark for the school (displaying the Haberdashers coat of arms centrally) but as an informal gateway to the town from the north (**Fig.72**). The buildings on both sides after this point (and in-part before) are set up from the road-level accentuating the height of and enclosure created by built form and tree-lined embankment (**Fig.73**).



Fig.70 View from the meadows of the River Monnow looking north-east towards the school for girls



Fig.72 The pedestrian bridge linking school sites either side of the Hereford Road and acting as both local landmark and informal gateway to the town from the north



Fig.73 Buildings to the west side of Hereford Road are set up from the road level and along with the tree-lined embankment to the east side creates a strong sense of enclosure to this part of the conservation area – view looking south along Hereford Road from the pedestrian bridge



Fig.71 View from the Kymin across the town – note the dominance in scale of the school in relation to surrounding buildings (outside the conservation area)

7.3.50 The scale of buildings varies within this character area with some buildings at three storeys accentuated by their raised level from the road. Others are more modest at two and even single storey but accentuated by their generally raised positions. The level change on travelling down into the town is often exploited with buildings having bays orientated to the open views to the south (**Fig.74**) and a mix of buildings raised to sit level (possibly with semi-basements) or in the case of the cottage hospital set down with plots built into the hillside but in this case taken advantage of open views to the south with two large gabled projecting bays facing the town (**Fig.75**). Buildings have a varied building line but are generally set back from the roadside. The exception to this is the projecting bay of the single storey building to the road edge, appearing from historic maps to form part of the former Workhouse (**Fig.76** next page).



Fig.74 Buildings are generally orientated to the roadside but with features such as bays facing out to views across the town



Fig.75 The former cottage hospital (presently vacant and in a poor condition – Oct 2010) is set into the hillside and has two prominent gables facing out to the town



Fig.76 This building is the exception to the group as it sits to the roadside where most other buildings are set back from the road – in this respect, it is a prominent building in the street scene



Fig.77 The former Vicarage, west side of Hereford Road still retains much of its individual character despite now forming part of the school



Fig.78 There is much articulation to pitched roofs adding to the varied townscape character to this part of the conservation area

7.3.51 There are two groups of buildings within this character area. The road passing

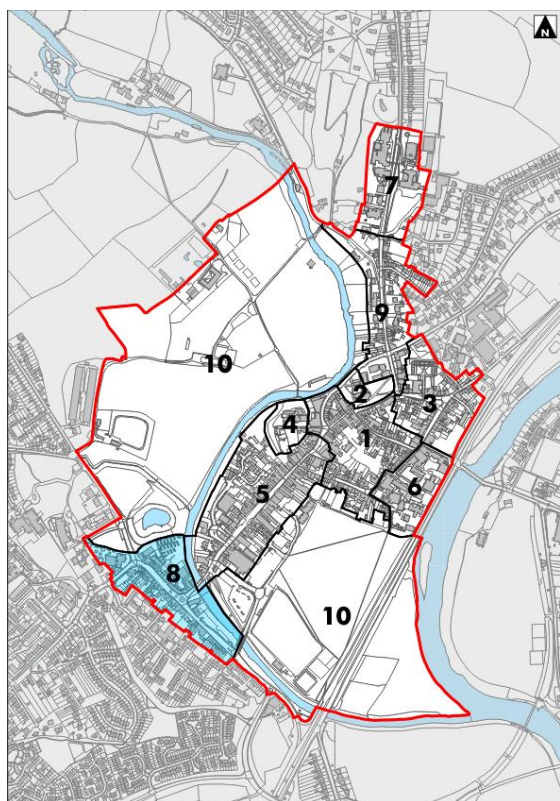
through the school sites effectively divides the area into two sections. To the east side of Hereford Road are the original school buildings built c1897. The main block faces almost due south looking across the town from its elevated position. This group differs from that to the west side in that these buildings were designed and built to form the Haberdasher's School for Girls rather than as is the case to the west being formed from a series of buildings which have had previous uses and have been incorporated, adapted, extended and remodelled to form extended accommodation for the school as it has expanded since inception. In this respect, the grouping of buildings to the west side of Hereford Road is far more disparate and varied, though nonetheless of a special character and appearance due to their previous uses and the survival of significant features such as windows, doors, cupolas, chimneys and bays. These buildings have retained much of their individual character despite being subsumed into a much larger institutional use (**Fig.77**).

7.3.52 There is a mix of materials to this part of the conservation area although the colour of materials is generally consistent and a cohesive element of the character of built form. There is a mix of red rock-faced sandstone with both brick and stone dressings. The brick dressings are seen as red bricks and buff bricks adding to the variation of material usage. The principal school building is in a characteristic flamboyant Tudor/Jacobean style (characteristic of the school buildings of the Haberdasher's schools in Monmouth) and uses Bath stone dressings for windows, doors, copings and string courses. Roofs are generally natural slate with the exception of the former cottage hospital which has a clay tile roof. Despite the relatively late date of most buildings (mid to late 19th century and later) and the use of natural slate, roofs are generally steeply pitched. This gives additional emphasis to their massing particularly where gables are set towards the roadside. This breaks up the townscape in an attractive and far more informal way than is seen to other parts of the conservation area (**Fig.78**).

7.3.53 There are important long views along Hereford Road, funneled by the townscape and the tree-lined embankment towards the town and focused on the spire of St Mary's church. This includes buildings relating to the former workhouse on the site (to the west side of Hereford Road) and the former vicarage. In addition, the former Cottage Hospital forms part of this group of historic buildings and collectively they have significant local interest and their survival form an important part of the character and appearance of the Monmouth Conservation Area.

7.3.54 Part of the special character of this part of the conservation area are the series of buildings that despite being subsumed into school uses have maintained elements of their special interest. This includes buildings relating to the former workhouse on the site (to the west side of Hereford Road), the former vicarage and the former Cottage Hospital. These buildings have significant local interest and their survival forms an important part of the character and appearance of the Monmouth Conservation Area.

CHARACTER AREA 8
Drybridge Street & Cinderhill Street
Environs, Overmonnow



7.3.55 Of the 12th century suburb of Overmonnow, only remnants of the church dating from this period and elements of the street plan survive. However, the built form tells a story of gradual replacement and remodelling whilst retaining a sense of historic plots, land divisions and boundaries which give the townscape such a diverse and interesting character in this part of the conservation area (**Fig.79**). Despite the close proximity of the town's historic core and the shared presence of the Monnow Bridge (equally forming an important part of this character area in addition to the important role of terminating Monnow Street), the general character of this part of the conservation area is village-like and somewhat independent from the town, despite sharing much similarities with parts of the conservation area to the east of the river.

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6H



Fig.79 The townscape of Overmonnow is characterised by its diversity; varied roof forms, heights and use of materials. It is a townscape borne out of the adaptation and remodelling of buildings over time to produce a patina of age which is very difficult to reproduce

7.3.56 The scale of buildings within this character area is widely varied, from the modest two storey cottage scale houses

(**Fig.80**) to grand three storey townhouses accentuated in scale by their use of symmetry and embellishment of principal upper floors

(Fig.81). What is particularly evident to this part of the conservation area is the variation in scale between buildings adjacent to each other in the streetscene creating a constantly changing and dynamic roofline throughout the character area (see Fig.79). The building line is almost consistent throughout with houses set to the back of pavement strongly defining the edges of streets. This is the case for both the main routes through this part of the conservation area (Drybridge Street and Cinderhill Street) and the side lanes (Goldwire Lane) and alleys (Glenroyd Terrace). Where buildings are set back, the street line is generally continued by either stone boundary walls (Fig.82) or railings to the top of low level rendered or stone boundary walls. This continuous enclosure created by built form most of which is statutory listed has produced very high quality townscape of considerable historic and architectural significance.



Fig.80 Drybridge Terrace – an attractive group of modest terraced houses set perpendicular to Drybridge Street and seen in the setting of their front gardens from Drybridge Terrace



Fig.81 Overmonnow House opposite the church, one of several large townhouses which dominate the street scene with their scale accentuated by the symmetry of the built form and the emphasis of the upper storeys, in this case with the use of a central arched window with moulded architrave



Fig.82 View looking west along Goldwire Lane – the stone walls to boundaries and houses set to the back of pavement enclose the street and strongly define the townscape along this side lane

7.3.57 The houses, some with shops to the ground floor, church of St Thomas and Monnow Bridge form a significant group when travelling from the town across the river into Overmonnow. The scale of buildings, mostly three storey, provide good enclosure to this part of the conservation area and the church, despite its diminished scale, is a key landmark in the street scene. It is clearly seen in views along the road and from the east side of the river (**Fig.83**). Its red sandstone walls are particularly striking seen against the coloured render of adjacent townhouses.

7.3.58 The Monnow Bridge is an important landmark visually and physically linking Overmonnow to the town. Cinderhill Street to the south of the church forms a modest group of mostly two storey terraced houses. Their cottage scale in places and the varied use of colour for the painting of render adds to their character. To the northwest of the church of St Thomas, Drybridge Street is notable for its width and the larger houses lining and

successfully enclose it. There is a perception of dramatically increased scale to this group forming the north and south sides of Drybridge Street. This is partly due to the relatively recent (c1960s) large three storey development to the corner of Drybridge Street and St Thomas's Square and partly because of the considerable variation in scale of buildings adjacent to each other. There is only a small number above two storey but some with attic storeys and dormers and others accentuated by their use of gables facing the roadside or their juxtaposition with far more modest houses next to them in the street scene (see **Fig.79**). This variation to the townscape is a strong characteristic of this part of the conservation area.



Fig.83 The church of St Thomas, despite its relative modest scale compared with surrounding townscape, is a striking building in views along Drybridge Street

7.3.59 To the eastern end of Drybridge Street where it meets Drybridge Terrace, a number of mature trees dominate the townscape and frame buildings set back in garden spaces. From this junction Glenroyd Terrace is clearly seen set back from the road in their own garden spaces but strongly defined by their cohesiveness as a terrace despite different window designs and much variation in colour schemes. The terrace is a very attractive group of houses and their historic and architectural importance both individually and as a group are reflected in their Grade II listing (see **Fig.80**). The terrace forms a larger group to this edge of the conservation area which includes Drybridge House and stable to the north side of Drybridge Terrace. The buildings here are also framed by trees and set back from the roadside. The line of the road is defined by low stone boundary walls and the walls of the stable with its prominent clock tower forming a local landmark of some quality and distinctiveness. When viewed from the south-west the clock tower is a prominent landmark in the street scene and is seen in combination with the glimpsed spire of the church of St Mary's on the distant skyline (**Fig.84**).

7.3.60 The walls to most buildings within this part of the conservation area are rendered or stucco and painted various colours. They are mostly pastel shades of pinks, blues, greens, beige and creams with no colour dominating or being strongly defining in any particular group of buildings. This variation, though subtle, adds character to the street scenes and is a key aspect of the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area (**Fig.85**). The Overmonnow character area has perhaps the most use of colour variation within the Monmouth Conservation Area. The predominance of painted render to this part of the conservation area gives emphasis to those buildings of different materials such as red brick and ashlar stonework; Drybridge House and red sandstone; the church of St Thomas. This variation in combination with the careful use of colour greatly adds to the richness of the townscape within the character area. Roofs are almost entirely natural slate, prominent in places on steep roof pitches

where they probably replaced earlier materials such as stone slates or possibly thatch. There are a small number of clay tile roofs. These are prominent given the almost consistent use of natural slate. Some traditional roofs have unfortunately (particularly when seen to terraces) been replaced with modern interlocking concrete tiles although this is relatively isolated. Stone rubble boundary walls are a common feature of this part of the conservation area particularly to Drybridge Terrace and lanes leading from Drybridge Street. They are mostly laid to courses with stone soldier courses forming a capping but some have a distinctive half-round coping which forms a very attractive termination to the wall (**Fig.86** next page).



Fig.84 The former stable to Drybridge House sitting prominently on the roadside with its clocktower, a notable local landmark in the street scene. Note the spire of St Mary's church on the skyline beyond



Fig.85 A subtle variation in the use of colour tone adds to the character of the streetscene and accentuates the architectural qualities of the buildings



Fig.86 Stone walls form an important part of the character and appearance of this section of the conservation area. This wall is defining part of the enclosed garden spaces to Drybridge Terrace



Fig.87 The cedar of Lebanon to the forecourt of Drybridge House is a prominent landmark in extended views along Drybridge Street

7.3.61 Views within this part of the conservation area include deflected views along the streets to prominent landmarks such as Drybridge House (framed by trees and dominated by the cedar of Lebanon to the fore-court of the house) (Fig.87). There are also views to the church of St Thomas; of diminished scale but with a prominent bellcote set on the street frontage and constructed of Old Red Sandstone which sets it apart from other buildings. A common characteristic of long range views both north and south is the dominance of trees and the presence of a wider landscape setting. In views south, Livox Wood extends across the steeply rising landform which wraps around the river bend (Fig.88). To the north the trees forming part of the meadows of the River Monnow and Drybridge Park and the cedar of Lebanon to the grounds of Drybridge House, in part, define the views.



Fig.88 Long views to the south are characterised by the green backdrop and tree lined ridge of Livox Wood and Troy Park Wood

7.3.62 The distance view to the spire of the church of St Mary from Wonastow Road (presently outside the conservation area) is notable for the fact that even for some distance out of the centre of the town, the spire still dominates the skyline for much of the conservation area and parts of the setting of the conservation area (see **Fig.84**). Views to the spire on Drybridge Street are framed between Nos 23A and 25 (**Fig.89**).



Fig.89 View of the spire of the church of St Mary framed between Nos 23A and 25 Drybridge Street

7.3.63 The boundary walls to this part of the conservation area are a feature of considerable local significance. They incorporate local stone and have a distinctive half round capping which is not seen elsewhere within the conservation area (**Fig.90**). The stone cross (by F. A Powell 1888) is a prominent local landmark but somewhat lost on the roundabout in front of the church (**Fig.91**). The pollarded lime trees to the street are notable and are a feature not commonly seen elsewhere in the conservation area. A series of six houses associated with Drybridge Estate on Drybridge Street are notable for their very

unusual use of moulded panels with wallpaper manufacturer's blocks resembling pargetting, which at the time of survey (October 2010) were much deteriorated (**Fig.92**).



Fig.90 Boundary walls within the conservation area incorporate local stone with a distinctive half round capping

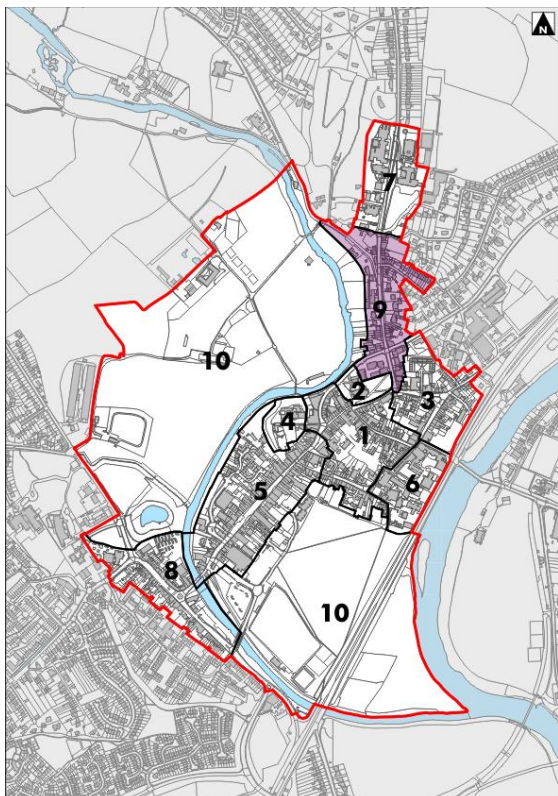


Fig.91 The stone memorial by F. A. Powell, architect of the Rolls Hall.



Fig.92 Drybridge Street houses displaying an unusual decorative motif created with wallpaper manufacturer's blocks

CHARACTER AREA 9
North Parade & Monk Street



7.3.64 North Parade and Monk Street form the principal route into the town from the north. There is a sense of arrival as the road travels down hill into the town giving views to the spire of the church of St Mary and glimpsed views out to green hills to the south and west. The roadside is lined for the most part with large houses or well-defined with stone boundary walls (**Fig.93**). The western boundary of the character area is formed by the River Monnow with the gardens of houses to the west side of North Parade sloping down to the river. The southern end to Monk Street terminates adjacent to the churchyard of the church of St Mary at Whitecross House which intentionally closes this vista. The eastern boundary defines part of the eastern edge of the conservation area and takes in parts of Dixon Road (to the junction with Monk Street) and Monkswell Road which stretches off to the east from North Parade. It is relatively late in terms of development with most buildings dating from the 19th century although there are also some fine 18th century buildings (some very early) which have been remodelled in the 19th century.

Refer to:
Part D - Plan 6I



Fig.93 View looking south along North Parade into Monk Street, note the green backdrop to Whitecross House seen in the distance closing the vista along Monk Street

7.3.65 There is some variation in scale to built form, but most buildings extend to three storeys or are a grand two storeys. There are few modest cottage scale houses to this character area. There is much variation to the way in which buildings address the street with combinations of gables to the street, parapets, strong eaves lines with roofs pitched back and broken eaves lines with gable dormers. All these elements combine to produce often very dynamic and interesting townscape throughout the character area (**Fig.94**). The larger houses break into two types; the townhouse of which there are a number of good examples (**Fig.95** next page) and the villa (**Fig.96**). The villa type house tends to be set back from the roadside in grounds with space around the houses and boundary walls (low and high) strongly defining the boundary to the road. The townhouses tend to be set back only slightly from the roadside, often with railings to small gardens (**Fig.97**).



Fig.96 The villa house type is well represented in this part of the conservation area.



Fig.97 Wrought iron railings to small front gardens is a common form of street frontage treatment. These fine examples are fronting townhouses in Monkswell Road



Fig.94 The variation in the way the buildings address the street is a strong characteristic of this part of the conservation area, the upper section of North Parade (east side) is pictured



Fig.95 This part of the conservation area has some very high quality examples of the late Georgian and Early Victorian townhouse. Porches and doorcases are a particular feature of this building type

7.3.66 The building line varies throughout the character area, but there is some consistency to groups of terraced houses (**Fig.98**) and rows of townhouses seen to strongly define the junction between North Parade, Monk Street, Priory Street and Dixton Road. It should be noted, however that the line of the street is consistently maintained by front boundary treatments. This means that despite this variation the streets are well defined and enclosed (**Fig.99**).



Fig.98 A very high quality group of terraced townhouses to Monkswell Road, note the rhythm of the bays, gable dormers and chimney stacks



Fig.99 The street line throughout is maintained by robust stone and brick boundary walls. Some parts of the character area particularly the central section of North Parade, pictured here, are strongly defined by boundary treatments

7.3.67 There are four main groups of buildings in the character area but the groups are such that there is some overlap in each case and the character area is notable for its continuous high quality of built form throughout comprising both statutory listed and particularly positive unlisted buildings. To the north part of North Parade and Monkswell Road, a series of terraces and rows of houses are grouped around and define the junction of Monkswell Road with North Parade. To the east side a more informal and irregular grouping more loosely defines the junction of North Parade with Osbaston Road. To the south of this junction, the houses form a far looser, informal group and there are a number of high quality villa type buildings but some indifferent infill houses of limited historic or architectural merit. The boundary treatments however to this part of the character area maintain the quality of the townscape. The final group is perhaps the most striking in townscape terms. The townhouses grouped around the junction of Monk Street (**Fig.100**) with North Parade stretching south towards Whitecross and enclosing the churchyard is

one of the best groups in townscape terms within the conservation area. This includes some infill development to the south-east corner of this important junction (**Fig.101**).



Fig.101 New buildings to the junction of Monk Street and Dixton Road maintain the important enclosure to this junction and building line to these major routes



Fig.100 The townhouses to North Parade contributing to the definition of the important junction with Monk Street are some of the best in the conservation area

7.3.68 Most buildings within this character area are rendered or stuccoed. This is often incised to mimic the use of ashlar stonework. These are mostly painted white, creams or subtle pastel colours; some pale yellows and greens. This subtle variation in colour adds to the quality of the townscape. To Monkswell Road in particular, but not exclusively, sandstone rubble, usually laid to courses, is used for walling. This is also seen to buildings fronting North Parade and used extensively in low and high boundary walls and garden enclosures. Brick is occasionally seen, sometimes paired with decorative terracotta panels. There is also some variation to brick colour in individual buildings to highlight

windows and door surrounds but also paired with stone for dressings (such as to the terraced houses to Monkswell Road – see **Fig.98**). The gatehouse to the former County Gaol and its walls are notable for their use of squared Old Red Sandstone blocks, particularly where they accentuate the original configuration of openings in the walls, now remodelled with later sash windows inserted (**Fig.102**). Roofs are almost consistently natural slate and they are generally laid to a shallow pitch. There is a good survival of original roof covering throughout this part of the conservation area.



Fig.102 The gatehouse to the former County Gaol. The use of Old Red Sandstone blocks clearly defines the original window configuration on this building. The Gaol Gatehouse and its high stone wall form a good group

7.3.69 There are views to the spire of the church of St Mary throughout the character area. Given the enclosure by built form for much of the area and the drop in level, these are only generally glimpses of the spire over roofs. The surrounding landscape is very apparent throughout the character area and buildings will often be seen against a backdrop of green steeply sloping and often heavily wooded hills. To the west side of the upper part of North Parade, there are important gaps between houses which give a sense of openness to this side of the road as the gardens fall away to the River Monnow. Similarly, glimpses out to the hills to the south are also reminders of the dramatic landscape setting within which the town sits (**Fig.103**). The view south along Monk Street is successfully and skillfully terminated by Whitecross House. The view on emerging from North Parade from the junction with Monk Street to the church spire of St Mary's is

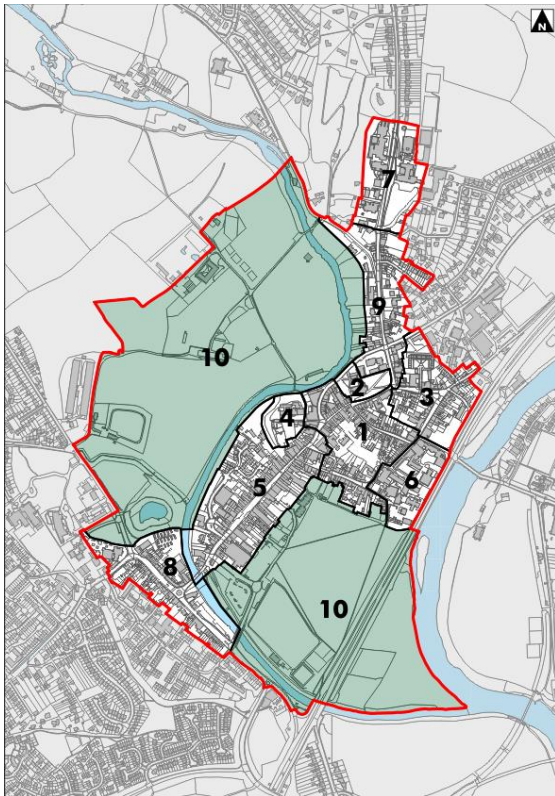
one of a sense of arrival within the town centre and, along with the closing of the view by Whitecross House, completes this route into the town.

7.3.70 The remains of the County Gaol are an important building of national as well as local importance. It forms a good group with its high stone wall and traditional red K6 telephone kiosk. Door cases, bracketed doorhoods and porches are very common and locally distinctive features to this part of the conservation area and along with the Whitecross and St James's areas of the conservation area they form a significant part of the high architectural quality of the buildings to the character area.



Fig.103 A view looking south from Dixon Road - an important gap in the townscape giving rise to views to open countryside

**CHARACTER AREA 10
River & Landscape Edges**



Refer to:

Part D - Plan 6J

7.3.71 The Monmouth Conservation Area includes two large areas of historic open landscape setting. These are to the north and south of Monnow Street. To the north is Vauxhall Fields, the grassed floodplains of the River Monnow, edged on the town side by mature trees on both sides of the river as it curves to the south-west travelling parallel with Monnow Street. Vauxhall Fields are still



Fig.106 Much of the foreground of the area known as Chippenham as seen from the river is dominated by car parking. The mature trees of the recreation ground beyond can be seen lining the car park areas

grazed by cattle that come down to the Monnow to drink (**Fig.104**). The supporting Troop of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers is located in Vauxhall Camp to the north-west (outside the conservation area) (**Fig.105** next page). To the south of Monnow Street and divided into two sections by the A40 is an area known as Chippenham which comprises a large tree-lined recreation ground and areas used for parking (**Fig.106**) to the north of the A40 and an area of garden allotments to the south of the A40. The latter is a triangle of land separated from the town by the A40 but with a sense of place given its isolation from the town and strong definition and enclosure by trees lining the riverside. From this space, the hills to the east rise steeply from the far bank of the river and there is a real sense of the dramatic landscape setting of the town which pervades much of the views from the town and across the town (from the Monnow River floodplains).



Fig.104 Cattle still graze the medieval pastures at Vauxhall Fields and drink from the Monnow



Fig.105 The view towards the River Monnow and the town from the lane which crosses the floodplains from Rockfield Road to Osbaston Road

7.3.72 There are only two buildings within this large character area; Vauxhall Farmhouse, an early 19th century house which is extremely prominent in extended views from the town due to its yellow painted walls accentuated by a green backdrop of mature trees (**Fig.107**), and Monnow Mill, a 19th century building on an ancient mill site adjacent to the river. The latter sits back from Osbaston Road surrounded by trees and elevated from the riverside. A weir adjacent to the mill contained a water wheel on its west side. The wider riverside setting is important to both these buildings although the open setting of Vauxhall Farmhouse is in stark contrast with the enclosed wooded setting of Monnow Mill.

7.3.73 There is no grouping of buildings within the character area. However, the grouping of buildings to the west side of North Parade (**Fig.108**) and further houses which sit within treed settings as they step up the hillside out of the town to the north culminating in the grand Tudor-Jacobean Haberdashers School for Girls main building on the ridge of the hillside is a dynamic and very picturesque composition (see **Fig.70**).



Fig.107 Vauxhall Farmhouse a prominent Grade II listed building clearly seen in extended views from the town and from across the floodplains.



Fig.108 The rear elevations of houses to the west side of North Parade are prominent in views from the River Monnow flood plain.

7.3.74 There are a complex series of views across the flood plains towards the town. These views are dominated by the spire of the church of St Mary and/or the tall gables and chimneys of the main Girls' School building on the hill. The castle does not figure as prominently as would be imagined but rather Great Castle House sits at the highest point of the town with its large roof being a recognisable feature on the skyline. This is particularly the case when viewed from Rockfield Road in the south (forming part of the southern boundary to the character area and the conservation area). A footbridge over the Monnow, immediately north of the castle ruins, offers views west across Vauxhall Fields and east to the arched structure of the shambles slaughter houses topped by the 1960s modernist riverside façade of the former Market Hall (designed by Donald Insall). There are good views to the spire of the church of St Mary from Chippenham however these are marred by the massing and dead frontages of the Waitrose store to the rear of Monnow Street. Looking from the Chippenham

recreation ground there are important open views to the surrounding dramatic tree lined hillsides which steeply climb from the riverside opposite the town. The Regency banqueting house and Naval Temple at the Kymin are prominent in these views. These views which are also present throughout the town consistently providing a sense of the wider enclosure of Monmouth by its immense landscape setting.

7.3.75 Of considerable local note is the survival of one of only two known examples of the Inglis Bridge (Grade II listed, **Fig.109**) an earlier version of the widely used Bailey Bridge designed by the military as an easily erected temporary bridge which can carry infantry and equipment across rivers and other obstacles. The Inglis Bridge sits on the north-east side of the character area connecting a lane which runs across the floodplain with Osbaston Road. This example dates from 1931 and was erected by the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers. It was refurbished in 1998.



Fig.109 Inglis Bridge dates from 1931 and was erected by the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers

7.4 Architectural & Historic Qualities of Buildings

7.4.1 Monmouth possesses a particularly rich architectural heritage with fine examples of almost all periods and styles spanning from the Norman to the 20th century. This heritage is reflected in the fact that in this relatively small town there are about 350 buildings on the statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest at Grade I to II* and II and others, whilst not listed, are of local architectural interest, and make a particularly positive contribution to the character of Monmouth.

7.4.2 Due to the large number of statutory listed buildings, a representative sample of each period and style will be reviewed chronologically and those of interest but not listed will be identified. The appraisal has been compiled from field surveys undertaken by the consultants, as well as by reference to the Statutory Lists of buildings for Monmouth, compiled by Cadw and the Monmouth section in the Gwent/Monmouthshire volume of the Buildings of Wales series by John Newman (*Yale U.P 2002*).

Medieval

7.4.3 There are few remnants of the Norman period that survive at present within the older churches in the town. The lower parts of the tall buttressed tower of St Mary's church contain some stonework with Norman carving and internally, the tower incorporates part of a semi-cylindrical sandstone respond pier which would have supported the original nave arcading. St Thomas church Overmonnow is almost wholly a 19th century Neo-Norman restoration, but a Norman chancel arch survives in the interior. The ruins of the castle retain some of the original Norman stonework of the 11th and 12th centuries. A section of the medieval Dixon Gate also survives. It is thought to have been a twin-towered, U-plan structure. Now only a vaulted structure remains, incorporated into the 'Nag's Head'.

7.4.4 The tower of St Mary's church, (Grade II* listed, **Fig.110**) is 14th century with an

impressive internal pointed arch. Otherwise, the spire and the nave and aisles are 18th and 19th century reconstructions. The remaining part of the Priory, on the north side of the churchyard (Grade II* listed, **Fig.111**) which was extensively demolished in 1536 under Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries consists of part of the Prior's Lodging. Whilst it was largely rebuilt in the 19th century, lower parts of the walls and medieval and carved stonework from that period remains and was reused around the oriel window.



Fig.110 Church of St Mary. The tower is medieval, the spire, nave and aisles are 18th and 19th century reconstructions



Fig.111 The remaining wing of the former Priory consists of medieval work in the lower wall and remnant sculpture. The upper parts were rebuilt in the 19th century.

7.4.5 The Monnow Bridge Gateway (Grade I listed and a Scheduled Monument, **Fig.112**) is the iconic building of Monmouth and unique in Great Britain. Whilst it has been altered and restored, it retains most of its medieval character and construction. The bridge and gateway were built c1272. Originally, the Gatehouse consisted of the main archway and was topped by battlements. In the 19th century, the narrow footway arches were added and a dwelling constructed above the archway resulting in the roof as seen today. Nevertheless the garderobe, corbelled murder-holes and grooves for a portcullis are original details.

7.4.6 There are few secular buildings in the town which reflect their medieval origins, however the Robin Hood Inn (Grade II* listed, **Fig.113**), probably built in the early 16th century, retains its wide front range, shallow plan low profile and end stacks. The notable external visible late medieval features are its stone moulded four centred doorway arch and

the shallow projecting bay to the left, although with replacement timber mullioned windows. The Great Room on the first floor is particularly fine, although this and the short rear wing were added in the 17th century. Other windows and the render are more recent.



Fig.113 The Robin Hood Inn dates from the early 16th century, as indicated by the low arched doorway.



Fig.112 The Monnow Bridge Gateway is unique in Great Britain. It was built in the late 13th century and was restored in the 19th century.

7.4.7 A handful of other 16th century buildings exist within the conservation area although they have undergone considerable adaption over a number of periods. An example of this adaption process is seen at Nos. 1 and 2 Whitecross Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.114** & **Fig.115**). The building consists of two parts, a narrow fronted gable ended wing facing the street and to the right, a low, wide fronted building with slightly projecting cross wings. Both these forms are characteristic of the 16th century, but both have been refitted with sash

windows, and in the low building, with low pitched hipped slate roofs. Furthermore a veranda was added and in the early 20th century part of it was converted to a garage. It was reconverted to wholly residential uses in the last few years.



Fig.114 Nos 1 & 2 Whitecross St. 16th century origins although refronted and reroofed in the 18th and 19th centuries.



Fig.115 Nos 1 & 2 Whitecross St. The late medieval gable element of this group.

17th Century

7.4.8 The transition from the medieval styles of architecture and construction to the influence of classical architecture are evident in a number of buildings within Monmouth.

7.4.9 During the first decades of the century, timber frame construction and steep gables dominated the street scene. Agincourt House of 1624 (Grade II* listed, **Fig.116** next page & **Fig.117**), in its corner location demonstrates its timber construction in the use of jettied and exposed timber beams, even though it is fully rendered. The canted oriel window running through the first and second floors is a copy of the original, and the steep pitched gabled roofs are typical of the period. The ground floor was completely remodelled in the late 19th century, when a glazed shopfront and a fine mosaic threshold were inserted. The Queen's Head (Grade II listed, **Fig.118**) in St James' Street is contemporaneous with Agincourt House, being built c1630. This building, also a corner site, is aligned on a broad front and is lower, being two storeys with a jettied cross wing gable which has a wide oriel window of seven mullioned and transomed lights. It is this cross wing, which is the greatest original external feature. The extensive half timbering on the first floor is an addition of the 1920s.

7.4.10 Following the Civil War, the architecture of the Renaissance was being gradually established in Monmouth, as exemplified to a grand degree in Great Castle House (Grade I listed, **Fig.119**). This tall symmetrical building stands in the Castle precinct, the highest point within the town centre. The symmetry, the use of string courses to achieve horizontal balance with the strong verticals created by the slightly projecting cross wings, the use of a semi-basement to raise the main floor, and the use of Tuscan and Ionic pilasters flanking the door and central window, point to a classical influence. However, this is as much a late Jacobean house in its use of stone mullions and transoms. The steep pitched hipped roof with a simple coved cornice (seen also in the

Speech House in the Forest of Dean), are typical features of this transitional style.



Fig.117 Agincourt House; detail of the jetty supporting the attic floor.



Fig.118 The Queen's Head, c1630. The gabled crosswing is the earliest visible survival of its original construction



Fig.119 Great Castle House, 1673, reflects the influence of Renaissance architectural ideas



Fig.116 Agincourt House dating from 1624. Render masks the timber frame construction

7.4.11 No.6 Agincourt Street (**Fig.120**), prominently dated 1678, in its pediment, was built only five years after Great Castle House. The house is well sited, terminating the view down Agincourt Street. The symmetrical elevational design and the use of a large central pediment establish its classical credentials. The large pediment, flush with the wall, perhaps has more in common with the local tradition – seen more widely in Chepstow – than a more typical later, strictly classical arrangement of the use of an entablature and the slight projection of the bays, capped by a pediment. The segmentally arched window in the pediment is probably original, but the ground and first floor sashes, doors and delicate balcony date from early 19th century alterations. The steep pitched hipped roof and the rear side wing are however original.

7.4.12 Other houses dating from the 17th century can be seen in the town centre, for example No. 8 Church Street (Grade II listed) and Nos. 20 and 22, but they were more radically altered or refronted in the 18th and 19th centuries.



Fig.120 No 6 Agincourt Street. It is dated 1678, as can be seen in the pediment. Classical symmetry is apparent in the design, although most of the windows are later.

18th & Early 19th Centuries

7.4.13 This period represents a considerable high point in the architectural heritage of Monmouth. The overwhelming majority of listed buildings (and some unlisted ones) dating from this period reflect this achievement. The consistency of architectural knowledge and refinement demonstrated in the proportions and use of the Classical Orders in the buildings, both in large town houses and terraces both grand and minor, new builds or refronting, is of a high quality, giving the town an urbane architectural character. The widespread use of painted stucco and render gives the streetscape a light and colourful appearance. A significant part of the consistency in quality is due to the fact that a single architect George Vaughan Maddox, designed public works, whole streets and individual buildings from the 1820s to 1840s.

7.4.14 Shire Hall (Grade I listed, **Fig.121**), is one of the earliest wholly 18th century classical buildings in Monmouth. It was built in 1724 in

a Baroque, Wren-like style. The building has giant order pilasters running the whole height of the building. It also has tall windows with semi-circular heads and incorporates an anomaly in classical design having a pier placed on the central axis (and flank axes) instead of the conventional void or doorway. The parapet and pediment play down the impact of the roof, as was the case with most buildings as the period progressed. The Ionic pilasters are doubled up at both ends of the main façade to give it strength and finality. The ground floor arches are elliptical rather than semicircular, giving a slightly weighty appearance. Above the central pier stands a pedestal topped by a statue of Henry V. This is one of the few classical buildings wholly faced in ashlar stonework, rather than stucco or brick reflecting its importance and high status within the town.

7.4.15 A number of large town houses are to be seen throughout the town centre, a sample are discussed below.



Fig.121 Shire Hall, a fine Baroque example of this type, dating from 1724. The full height Ionic pilasters reinforce the dignity of this building

7.4.16 St James' House (Grade II listed, **Fig.122**) on St James' Square, is a good example of 16th century houses with gables facing the street, which were altered, extended and refronted in the mid 18th century in the then fashionable Georgian style. It was further brought up to date in the early 19th century when the strict neo classical portico with its fluted Greek Doric columns was added (together with the large central semicircular window). The mid 18th century elements include the well executed Flemish bond brickwork, keystones centred on the brick window heads, stone quoins and the steeper pitched sweeping hipped roof. The elegant 6 over 6 pane sashes replaced earlier ones in the early 19th century. A glance at the side elevation reveals a rubble stone wall and the roof descending to the earlier two storey house.

the steep roof which lacks chimneys. The doorcase is typically Georgian.



Fig.122 St James' House. Georgian refronting of a 16th century house, as can be seen from the side.

7.4.17 The Old Dispensary (Grade II listed, **Fig.123**) facing St James' Square, built in the mid-18th century, has characteristics of later Georgian town houses in Monmouth. At three storeys, it has five bays, with a central door. The house underwent some external alterations in the early 19th century, when the sash windows were replaced. However the steep pitched hipped roof and the projecting modillion cornice is typical of the first half of the 18th century. The refined doorcase with its broken pediment engaged fluted Doric columns and semicircular fanlight is a feature, with variations which can be seen throughout the conservation area from North Parade in the north to Overmonnow House in the south. The deep string course beneath the cills of the second floor windows appears to have a wide recessed panel which could have carried lettering when the building was used as a Dispensary or later as a hospital (in the mid to late 19th century).



Fig.123 The Old Dispensary, the former hospital, one of a number of spacious 18th century town houses in Monmouth.

7.4.18 Chapel House (Grade II* listed, **Fig.124**) is a fine example of this early 18th century house building phase within the town. It is located behind substantial walls and railings on the west side of North Parade and has seven bays of early Georgian sashes between prominent quoins. In this case the second floor is an attic storey with hipped dormers in



Fig.124 Chapel House, The Parade. A fine early Georgian house located behind substantial brick walls.

7.4.19 Among the later Georgian houses, two good examples can be seen in Monnow Street. Cornwall House (Grade II* listed, **Fig.125**) stands back from the street frontage behind a magnificent yet delicate overthrow and associated gates and railings, not unlike those fronting No.6 Agincourt Street. The parapet rather than eaves, is a more prominent feature and whilst the refined Doric portico, the ground and second floor sashes and the single storey side wings date from this period, it appears that the first floor sashes were reused from the earlier building. The quoins also seem to hark back to the early 18th century. The rear elevation (**Fig.126**), seen clearly from the car parks is that of the mid-18th century house whose main pedimented elevation faced in this direction until the house was 'turned' to

face Monnow Street. Further down the Street, Chippenham House (Grade II listed, **Fig.127**), has a well preserved late 18th – early 19th century rendered façade, with three elegant semi-circular recesses, the central one, shown in (**Fig.128**), occupied by a particularly good recessed doorcase with Doric columns and pilasters. The ground floor windows are tripartite sashes as are all those on this elevation, topped by large fan lunettes. The parapet with well moulded cornice completes this particularly well proportioned elevation.



Fig.125 Cornwall House, set back from Monnow Street, behind an elegant overthrow gateway. The Doric portico is a particularly refined Georgian feature.



Fig.127 Chippenham House, Monnow Street, a late 18th/early 19th century house whose low pitched roof is typically hidden by a parapet.



Fig.126 The earlier, mid-18th century, rear elevation of Cornwall House, facing south east to what are now car parks.



Fig.128 The refined Doric doorcase and semi-circular fanlight and recess of Chippenham House.

7.4.20 No. 20 'Singleton House' Monk Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.129**) shows the transformation of strict Georgian style to the late Regency and neo classical of the 1830s. The almost full height semi-circular recess topped by a swag, is a neo classical device, whereas the domesticity in the finely detailed trellis porch with tented top and the shallow pitched roof with projecting eaves are characteristics of the Regency style.



Fig.129 No. 20 Singleton House, Monk Street. A later Regency house of c 1830. The tented canopy and trelliswork of the porch offsets the formality of the overall neo-classical design.

7.4.21 Parade House (Grade II listed, **Fig.130**) across the road, illustrates the popularity of the Tudor-Gothic style in the mid 19th century. Whilst the basic form and symmetry of the Georgian house remains, the sashes have been replaced by pairs of four centred Tudor Gothic arches with traceried glazing bar heads and a distinctly Gothic porch.



Fig.131 Monkswell House. A cottage in the picturesque 'Gothick' style, dating from around the 1820s-40s.

7.4.22 Further up the road and turning into Monkswell Road, Monkswell House (unlisted, **Fig.131**), dates from perhaps the 1820s to 1840s and, like Parade House, is in the early Gothic revival style; a 'cottage ornée'. Unlike Parade House this has an irregular plan and skyline, typical of this type, and prominent gables with bargeboards and pointed arch casement windows. Its situation in a secluded garden with evergreens is appropriate to this style.



Fig.130 Parade House, Monk Street. A possibly late 18th century house remodelled in Tudor-Gothic style in mid 19th century

7.4.23 There are no formal terraces of Georgian houses in Monmouth, except for Priory Street, described below. However St James' Street and the terrace facing the south side of the Church are lined with ranges of individual houses exemplifying the variations offered by Georgian architecture (**Fig.132** & **Fig.133**).

7.4.24 The unlisted terrace fronting Monnow Street (**Fig.134**), south of the Monnow Bridge linking to Drybridge Street, whilst unremarkable creates an important, subtly curving continuous frontage, framing the entrance to the town. The terrace consists of three storey, late 18th and early 19th century houses, now converted to shops at the ground floor; some double pile in depth. Upper window openings retain their shape, although the sashes have been replaced.



Fig.132 Part of an informal range of Georgian townhouses in St James' Street, facing the Square



Fig.133 More attractive later Georgian townhouses facing St Mary's churchyard



Fig.134 Terrace on the south side of the Monnow Bridge, turning into Drybridge Street

7.4.25 In Glendower Street a short terrace of more modest 18th century houses demonstrates the use of brick contrasting with the usual render or stucco (**Fig.135**).

7.4.26 In Overmonnow, Drybridge Terrace (Grade II listed, **Fig.136** & **Fig.137**) is a rare example of an off street terrace of houses, behind main buildings fronting onto Drybridge Street. The houses, all two storey and rendered, date from the early to mid-19th century. They face a pathway between the frontages, and the house gardens and privies. Most are of simple sash window design although one has a neo gothic window arrangement (this building was formerly a chapel).



Fig.136 Drybridge Terrace, another view of these early 19th century cottages adhering to Georgian proportions



Fig.137 Drybridge Terrace, situated behind buildings facing Drybridge Street. Former privies can be seen in the gardens on the opposite side of the path.

Fig.135 Glendower Street, a short range of modest mid 18th century houses in brick, rather than the typical render.



7.4.27 The work of George Vaughan Maddox is a major feature contributing to the architectural character of Monmouth at this period. His conception in 1837 of the new road and promenade of Priory Street involved not only the construction of a major curving terrace but the construction of substantial sandstone retaining walls along the river cliff of the Monnow. The retaining walls, (**Fig.138** next page) incorporate massive vaults known locally as the Shambles. These vaulted spaces were formerly used as slaughterhouses, topped by Priory Street, acting as a promenade overlooking the Monnow at this point and at its southern end the former Market Hall. Occupying a curved triangular site at their southern end, the Market Hall, now the Tourist Information Centre and Nelson Museum, was built in 1837-39 in a scholarly neo classical Doric style, albeit with semi-circular arched windows between the Doric pilasters. Recessed doorways behind Greek Doric columns enhance this composition. Only the ground floor remains, following a disastrous fire which destroyed the upper floors and cupola. The building was partially rebuilt and restored in 1968-9 by Donald Insall, which resulted in 'false' mansard roofs and a modernist riverside façade which reflects the rhythm of the bays of the vaulting below, in its cladding and fenestration proportions. Across the road is the grand and elegant sweep of the neo classical terrace of Priory Street c1837-9; Nos. 1-6 (Grade II* listed, **Fig.139** next page) and Nos. 7-12 (Grade II listed, **Fig.140**). The convex stucco terrace of three storeys and an attic floor, behind parapets, is subtly divided into groups of three bays, some with Corinthian pilasters. The centre group has a large Diocletian window topped by a wide pediment. Nos. 7 – 12 are similar, but less ostentatious; their central pediment is plainer, supported by the more modest Ionic order. One or two original pattern shopfronts remain and the wide segmental arch between Doric pilasters leads to White Swan Shopping Court (Grade II* listed, **Fig.141**) connecting Priory Street with Maddox's façade within the Church Street frontage. The Court, originally a hotel is stucco fronted with two string courses and a subtly recessed bay with segmental arch to

articulate this convex façade hidden between the two streets.



Fig.140 Nos. 7-12 Priory Street, continuing Maddox's design, but in a more restrained manner.



Fig.141 White Swan Shopping Court, Maddox's handsome yardscape, linking Priory Street with Church Street.



Fig.138 The massive retaining walls and arches housing the Shambles, with the former Market Hall at street level. The extent of the rebuild of the 1960s is evident from this view.



Fig.139 Nos 1-6 Priory Street, a curving terrace of urbane stuccoed buildings; part of the new street scheme by George Vaughan Maddox in 1837-9.

7.4.28 Maddox also built a number of individual houses, the Masonic Hall (Grade II listed) and the Wesleyan Methodist Church in St James' Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.142**), again in 1837. Set back from the street frontage behind neo classical gatepiers and railings, the church façade is a typically elegant version of an almost standard non-conformist front elevation, with a massive pediment supported by Ionic pilasters. Typically, tall semicircular arched windows light the church which is entered via a portico supported by paired Ionic columns. Other classical non-conformist chapels include the former Congregational Chapel in Glendower Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.143**), now converted and known as Glendower House. This was designed by William Armstrong of Bristol, a little later in 1843-4, with a severe but powerful façade marked by giant order Tuscan pilasters and two massive engaged Corinthian columns, either side of the entrance, and dividing the usual round headed tall windows. Behind the well proportioned cornice and parapet, a huge low pitched hipped roof spans the chapel. A third Classical chapel (**Fig.144**) (unlisted) is glimpsed between buildings fronting the south-east side of Monnow Street. This probably dates from the mid-19th century and is not in such good condition as those described above. Its façade is spanned by a characteristic wide pediment 'supported' by four simplified Tuscan pilasters. It may be that the façade has been re-rendered, which might have blurred the original detailing. Nevertheless, this is a significant building which contributes to the 'set' of chapels in the town, and creates an intimate space behind the main frontage.



Fig.142 The Wesleyan Methodist Church, set back behind the St James' Street frontages is also by Maddox in 1837.



Fig.143 Glendower House was the former Congregational Chapel, in Glendower Street, a powerful design of 1843-4, sporting two massive Corinthian columns and strong cornice.



Fig.144 A glimpse of a former non-conformist chapel behind the frontages of Monnow Street. Its classical mouldings are somewhat eroded

7.4.29 Maddox also designed one of the main Hotel/Inns in the town centre, the Beaufort Arms Court (Grade II* listed, **Fig.145**), c. 1835. This substantial four storey stuccoed building is located in a recessed position to the north side of the Shire Hall. Its style is that of the terrace of Priory Street, with Ionic pilasters rising through two floors, the first floor being the main rooms, marked by the deepest windows, the central ones opening onto a delicate late Regency balcony. The ground floor has two large tripartite windows either side of the entrance. These and the cartway to the right are articulated by segmental arches. Through the archway the yard is extensively paved with original stone setts and flagstones. To the right is an interesting wing with a continuous canopy.

it was altered in the 19th century. It effectively frames the Shire Hall and leads the eye to the spire of St Mary's. The steeply pitched roof and prominent quoins point to its earlier origins, whilst the balcony and the tripartite windows probably form part of the 19th century alterations.



Fig.145 The Beaufort Arms Court, c1835, by Maddox is another example of his late Georgian/Regency style.

7.4.30 The Punch House (Grade II listed, **Fig.146**) predates the Beaufort Arms Court, to its right, being of 18th century origins although



Fig.146 The Punch House; dates from the early 18th century, although the balcony and tripartite windows are part of the 19th century alterations.

7.4.31 Typical of a market town of this scale and importance, there are a number of inns and former inns throughout. Amongst them is the 'Three Horseshoes' (Grade II listed, **Fig.147**) in Drybridge Street, Overmonnow. This unassuming and largely intact early 18th century façade features three tripartite windows with Victorian sashes and an attractive tented canopy over the front door. Four regularly spaced 2 over 2 sash windows completes the elevation. The roughcast render is scored to imitate stonework.

7.4.32 Perhaps one of the last of the classically-influenced buildings in the town centre is Commerce House (unlisted, **Fig.148**), towards the lower end of Monnow Street. Despite the insertion of a roadway through its ground floor to the right, its lively somewhat Italianate façade especially on its left wing makes a particularly positive contribution to towards the special historic and architectural interest of this part of the conservation area.



Fig.148 Commerce House at the lower end of Monnow Street retains its original Victorian Italianate characteristics on its left side, despite the drastic insertion of a roadway on its right side.



Fig.147 The Three Horseshoes in Drybridge Street is an example of the many inns situated on the main streets of Monmouth.

Victorian Gothic & Other Revivals

7.4.33 The great stylistic shift which swept throughout Britain is reflected in the architecture of Monmouth from the mid-1840s to the beginning of the 20th century. Not only does the classical grammar of 'The Orders' (Doric, Ionic and Corinthian), vertically proportioned sash windows and symmetry disappear, but so does the widespread use of stucco and render, and to a lesser extent brickwork. Instead, the ecclesiastical pointed arches and mullions, gables, informality in roofline and plan shape predominate. Red sandstone, usually rock faced, becomes the preferred material, especially for the educational and institutional buildings which characterise this period. In addition, a number of inventively designed middle class housing groups appear at this time to the north of the town centre. The 19th century restoration of medieval buildings often employed the Gothic revival style and examples of this can be seen within the conservation area.

7.4.34 The Jones Almshouses (Grade II listed, **Fig.149**), in Almshouse Street were among the first of the Victorian Gothic style buildings in Monmouth, dating from 1842-3. Whilst the doors have Gothic arches, it is probably more accurate to place the style as neo Tudor, with its mullioned ground floor windows with square heads and clustered chimney stacks. Whilst gables abound, the main roof is concealed behind a parapet. The red

sandstone is complemented by Bath Stone dressings and buff terracotta stacks.

7.4.35 Adjoining these former Almshouses, which have latterly become part of the Monmouth Boys School, later blocks have been built in the 1870s and 1890s by two different architects (William Snooke and Henry Stock), to complement the Almshouse terrace by J. B. Bunning, to create a successful and coherent group in form, style and materials. These include the Chapel and Library (Grade II listed, **Fig.150**) built in 1860-65. These are in a distinctly neo Gothic style, with the Chapel to the left having a Perpendicular style mullioned and traceried main window. The Library, topped by a tall belfry and a lower arched mullioned window, is slightly set back from the street, behind a screen wall carrying a large inscription.



Fig.150 Gothic Revival Boys School Chapel and Library built in the 1860s, complementing the earlier Jones Almshouses in the same street.



Fig.149 The Jones Almshouses in Almshouse Street, now part of the Boys' School, built in 1842-3, demonstrates the major stylistic shift taking place at the time, as the Tudor and Gothic Revivals replace Classical architecture. Compare this with the contemporary Glendower House (Fig 143).

7.4.36 The later phase, along Wyebridge Street and turning to face the river, was built in the 1890s (Grade II listed, **Fig.151**). Whilst the materials are the same, the neo Tudor/Jacobean style recalls the first phase, but the scale has increased, appropriately for its riverside setting. The red sandstone is effectively complemented with Forest of Dean stone dressings, mullions, pinnacles, battlements and chimneys creating a memorable skyline. The skyline is further enhanced by the use of ogee roofs to the octagonal turrets.



Fig.151 The larger scale of the later extensions of the Boys' School built in the 1890s in a neo Tudor/Jacobean style faces the Wye Bridge.

7.4.37 Other individual institutional buildings in this revivalist style occur in the streetscape throughout the town. The Glover Music School, (unlisted, **Fig.152**) opposite the Blake Theatre, is a straightforward, compact neo Gothic building with large mullioned windows on its principal gable ends, and three flanking gables with smaller scale windows facing the street. Forest of Dean stone is used for the ashlar quoins and string courses as well as the mullions, and the steep pitched roofs are clad in natural slate. The building with its coursed rock faced sandstone retains its crispness and integrity whilst having been adapted and enlarged.



Fig.152 The Glover Music School represents the Gothic Revival being built in the first decade of the 20th century.

7.4.38 The Nelson Rooms (Grade II listed, **Fig.153**), forming the corner of Glendower Street and Agincourt Street, dates from about 1870 and is remarkably intact. Its style is generally neo Tudor, with prominent gables, a battlemented oriel and four centred arched doors. The first floor appears to be the principal one, as the mullioned and transomed windows are taller. Materials and general detailing are common with this set of buildings.



Fig.153 The Nelson Rooms, on the corner of Glendower Street and Agincourt Street continues the theme of institutional buildings designed in the Gothic Revival style and constructed in red sandstone with Bath stone dressings.

7.4.39 The Working Men's Free Institute (Grade II listed, **Fig.154**) built a couple of years earlier and by the same architect continues the Gothic Revival and sandstone theme, however with some Venetian Gothic variations, especially in the columns, brackets to the balcony and the balcony over the entrance itself.

7.4.40 Benjamin Lawrence returned to build the Baptist Church (Grade II listed), adjacent to his Working Men's Institute some 40 years later. The Church and the Institute relate successfully together, but perhaps at the expense of the Church, appearing rather dated for 1906-7. There is, for example, hardly a trace of Art Nouveau or Arts and Crafts, which would have been expected at that time.

7.4.41 The Church of St Mary (Grade II listed, **Fig.155**) was completed in 1871, replacing and part incorporating traces of one of the earliest Roman Catholic Churches to be built in Britain after the legislation of 1778. The Church is Gothic Revival, but with north Italian aspects such as the Venetian Gothic arch at the entrance and the distinctly Romanesque belfry under a French-influence steeply pitched belfry roof.

roof. The absence of ashlar quoins gives the building rather 'soft' corners.



Fig.155 The Roman Catholic Church of St Mary, 1871, in a slightly more Italian version of the Gothic Revival, with a perhaps French-influenced belfry roof.



Fig.154 The former Working Men's Free Institute, c1868, with the Baptist Church, built by the same architect some 40 years later, demonstrating remarkable consistency in materials and general style, with minor variations of architectural expression.

7.4.42 The Public Library, formerly Rolls Hall (Grade II listed, **Fig.156**) built in 1887, whilst retaining the established materials for the late 19th century institutional buildings, is almost a Freestyle, which might be expected some 10-15 years later. The elegant spire however, seems to recall classical influences.



Fig.156 The Public library, formerly the Rolls Hall, is a lively Freestyle design of 1887.

7.4.43 The main building of Monmouth School for Girls (Grade II listed, **Fig.157**) situated on a ridge facing south, overlooking the town, was completed in 1897. Its wide, broadly symmetrical main façade, topped by a gabled tower, is built in a Tudor/Jacobean style. The four gables, with paired windows are an interesting feature, and the interplay of red-brown sandstone and Bath Stone dressings, together with the slight projection of bays and buttresses makes this a coherent design which can be appreciated from a distance. The Girls School has expanded reusing nearby Victorian buildings. The broad fronted former Workhouse (unlisted, **Fig.158**) has eye catching chamfered window head details in Bath Stone used in single, paired and bay windows. This building of 1870 has a wide gabled front and incorporates red brick strainer arches and quoins in the greyer sandstone coursed rubble walls. The cupola spire is perhaps a little fragile for the robust building below. The character of the building is somewhat diluted by the recent reglazing.



Fig.158 The former Workhouse (1870), now part of the School for Girls, was completed in 1870. Its stone chamfered window heads are unusual. Otherwise this simple design is typical.



Fig.157 Monmouth School for Girls, Main Building of 1897, is effectively located on the ridge overlooking the town.

7.4.44 Further down the hill are two large freestanding houses (unlisted). The upper one (**Fig.159**), dated 1899, is a semi-detached pair, with an interesting angled ground floor bay taking advantage of the view, is otherwise fairly conventional, but contributes to this group. The lower one, (**Fig.160**) is the more architecturally accomplished of the two paired houses. This semi-detached pair, are possibly originally early 19th century, but have been given a later two storey bay window, a generous glazed porch and a neo Gothic single storey side elevation, with a pepperpot glazed oriel. The main three storey buildings to the school group are a brown-red brick in Flemish bond, with Victorian sashes, except for the mullioned casements in the extension.

7.4.45 Further down the hill, The Lodge to the Girls' School (Grade II listed, **Fig.161**), although

built in the same year as the main school buildings, is in the contemporary Domestic Revival Style, with bargeboarded gables, tile hanging on the first floor, and oriel window. The ground floor is red-brown sandstone coursed rubble with Bath Stone dressings. Generally, the windows of this balanced design are placed and dimensioned according to the rooms they serve, rather than to a formalised plan. The entrance veranda further enhances the design. The larger Lodge-type building across the road, adjacent to the entrance to the former Gaol, The Moat House (unlisted, **Fig.162**), is an imaginative variant of this type. Whilst it has an almost square, regular shape, this is articulated with bracketed projecting gable ends, black and white panels, bands of terracotta low relief, and asymmetrical chimney locations and window designs.



Fig.159 Further down the hill, this house, dated 1899, became part of the School. Its bay windows, are angled to take advantage of the sun and the view.



Fig.161 The Lodge is an example of the simplicity of the Domestic Revival style, which began to replace the near monopoly of the Gothic Revival at the end of the 19th century.



Fig.160 A pair of large houses also now part of the School, were probably built in the first half of the 19th century, with a single storey extension in the Gothic Revival style.



Fig.162 The Moat House, another example of the Domestic Revival Style, situated almost opposite the Lodge.

7.4.46 To the southern end of town, a former toll house dating from the end of the 19th

century (unlisted, **Fig.163**), is located at the junction of Drybridge Street and Rockfield Road. This delightful late version of a cottage ornée and Swiss Chalet, is a mass of intersecting roof planes, dormers, black and white work and unusual decorative plasterer's moulds applied in the style of pargetting. It acts as a complement to both the exuberant, remodelled Drybridge House and its Stables (both on the Statutory List) and the terrace of similarly black and white houses on the opposite side of Drybridge Street.

7.4.47 Returning to the upper end of Hereford Road, Monkswell Road has a remarkable group of three Victorian terraces as well as a substantially intact and confidently designed individual house 'Westfield' (unlisted, **Fig.164**) on the corner of Monkswell Road. This large



Fig.163 Late 19th century toll house at the northern end of Drybridge Street; a picturesque composition of half timbering and gables.



Fig.164 Westfield, on the corner of Monkswell Road, typically High Victorian domestic architecture.

three storey orange-red brick house with buff brick bays and string courses, exemplifies high Victorian domestic architecture. It is complete even to the cast iron gate and railings. 'Winterbourne Villa' (unlisted, **Fig.165**), is a further intact example of the Victorian house in sandstone, buff brick and terracotta, which contributes to the fine ensemble in Monkswell Road.

7.4.48 The first of the three terraces Nos. 1-9 (Grade II listed, **Fig.166**), built in 1869 is cranked to follow the curvature of the road. It is composed of 5 three storey units, two pairs and a single. The ground floor windows and recessed doors have semi-circular heads, the rest are tripartite sash windows. The mud coloured coursed rubble is contrasted with painted quoins and window surrounds.



Fig.165 Winterbourne Villa, Monkswell Road, a well proportioned detached late Victorian house, complementing the fine terraces in the street.



Fig.166 Nos. 1-9 Monkswell Road, built 1869, a Victorian version of the Georgian terrace, effectively following the curvature of the street.

7.4.49 The second terrace, Nos.17-21 (Grade II listed, **Fig.167**), probably c1880, is identified

by the chamfered window heads. This feature is also used in the former Workhouse building (see **Fig.158**). These houses display familiar Victorian features such as large gabled half dormers, bracketed timber canopies and two storey bay windows.

7.4.50 The third terrace Nos.23-31 (Grade II listed, **Fig.168**), is dated 1870 and has an almost Georgian simplicity of basic form, but is unmistakably Victorian in its detail having exquisitely carved bargeboarded canopies, bay windows with margin glazing bar sashes and unusual double line banding, both vertical and horizontal.



Fig.168 Nos.23-31 Monkswell Road, 1870. A simple Victorian terrace enhanced by an unusual scribing of the render and by delicate fretwork bargeboards on the canopies.



Fig.167 Nos 17-21 Monkswell Road, c1880. Gables, double height bay windows and canopied porches enliven this Victorian terrace,

20th Century

7.4.51 Whilst there are no examples of classic modernist buildings in Monmouth, there is a collection of buildings which reflect the eclecticism in 20th century architecture.

7.4.52 'The Gables' (unlisted, **Fig.169**), in Hereford Road probably dates from the first years of the 20th century or the last of the 19th. It is a well considered design of the Domestic Revival, even to its pegged timber framings.

7.4.53 Further up the hill, the former Cottage Hospital (vacant at the time of writing – October 2010) is set perpendicular to the road (unlisted, **Fig.170**). It dates from 1903 and is typical of the Arts and Crafts style, with broad gables, mullioned and transomed windows, tile hanging and a general simplicity to its style. This building enjoys a prominent position on the hillside and is a good example of the style and contributes to the range of outstanding domestic and non-domestic architecture along Hereford Road/North Parade.

7.4.54 The HSBC Bank in the town centre (Grade II listed, **Fig.171**) reflects one of the numerous styles current around 1900. The building's architectural style could be considered a complex combination of Queen Anne revival or neo Wren, especially in the pedimented dormer with Flemish-type scrolled work. The well detailed red brickwork in English garden wall bond and the alternating tile and brick voussoir arches with the shell tympanum are typical of the period.



Fig.169 The Gables Hereford Road, one of a handful of spacious houses of the Domestic Revival dating from the turn of the 19th/20th centuries.



Fig.170 The extensive former cottage hospital building, set at right angles to Hereford Road, dated 1903. Its simplicity, massive mullioned and transomed bay windows and sweeping gables mark this as a relatively rare and high quality example of the Arts and Crafts style in central Monmouth'.



Fig.171 HSBC Bank c1909. An Edwardian reworking of early classical styles (above the cornice) and later classical (ground floor), make this an interesting composition.



Fig.173 The former Woolworths store, designed in their inter-war corporate style. Its details, glazing (both ground and 1st floor) and shopfront are remarkably intact, demonstrating the well considered elevational design.

7.4.55 The small group of almshouses, Henry Burton Court (Grade II listed, **Fig.172**), built as recently as 1928, is somewhat whimsical in its use of Gothic style polygonal turrets atop straightforward archways. Its layout, massing and elevational design recalls Victorian almshouses of the previous century.

7.4.56 The Iceland Store (Grade II listed, **Fig.173**) on Priory Street, is a good example of the standard Woolworths store front designed by their in-house architect, and dates from about the same year as Henry Burton Court. The quasi Art Deco/classical first floor frontage with four simplified brick pilasters and concrete cornice and parapet masks the utilitarian remainder of the store. The bronze window frames and curved glazing of the original shopfront are all intact. Overall, this is a good example of its type.



Fig.172 Henry Burton Court almshouse group, whilst built in 1928 has distinctively Victorian characteristics

7.4.57 Whilst there is little of architectural note in the immediate post-war era, the Blake Theatre (1961, re-clad c2004, by Buttress, Fuller and Alsop) (unlisted, **Fig.174**), addresses the townscape requirements of terminating the view south down Almshouse Street and creating continuity with the materials of the School. The full height 'gothic' arched glazed front reference the gable end windows found in the main School buildings. Later side wing gables address the street quite successfully. The Science Block (unlisted, **Fig.175**) of 1981-4, maintains its 20th century honesty of expression, whilst relating to the school context of gabled roofs and sandstone materials.



Fig.174 The Blake Theatre (1961), a modernistic expression of the basic structure of the building whilst acknowledging the Gothic Revival arches found elsewhere in the School buildings. It is also designed to fulfil its role in terminating the view down Almshouse Street.



Fig.175 The Science Block of the Boys' School, of 1981, makes reference to the gables and red sandstone of the original buildings, whilst being a building of its time

7.4.58 The latest extension to the Girls' School (unlisted, **Fig.176**), designed by Buttress Fuller and Alsop, is a bold composition of metal clad triple gables with horizontally louvred south facing windows. Below them a contrasting brick storey sits atop an existing substantial stone retaining wall. The full height glazed entrance is at the far end.

7.4.59 The only substantial domestic infill is some recent housing behind Monnow Street, backing onto Nailers Lane. The arrangement of the houses creates some promising streetscapes although the road layout is conventional.

7.4.60 The Burgage off Old Dixton Road (**Fig.177**), built in dark brickwork fashionable in the 1970s-80s, addresses the need to create frontages which address both streets in a lively corner design.



Fig.176 A recent extension at the School for Girls is a bold expression of triple gables, louvred south-facing windows and full height glazed entrance, sitting above and to one side of an existing stone wall



Fig.177 The Burgage, c1980s, an interesting handling of a tight corner site off Dixton Road, to create a higher density housing scheme

Vernacular Building

7.4.61 Simple smaller houses and cottages which have few stylistic or architectural features and which are more difficult to date, can be seen throughout the town. Most of these are not on the Statutory List, but they make a substantial contribution to the streetscape of the conservation area, in their use of local, traditional materials, the maintenance of street alignment, continuity, enclosure and domestic scale. The cottages on the west side of Almshouse Street (unlisted, **Fig.178**) are excellent examples. The render probably covers rubble stone walls. The lower cottages may be older than their mainly 19th century sashes suggest. The simple but effective shallow pedimented canopies provide unifying elements, whilst the differences in plot width and eaves height provide variety. Most, including No.3, have been particularly well conserved. As Almshouse Street turns into the eastern end of Glendower Street, other cottages and mixed use buildings contribute to the street scene; in particular the broad fronted three bay house (unlisted, **Fig.179** next page), which terminates the view eastward down Glendower Street, with its front door on Chippenhamgate Street. The façade has handsome mullioned casements, the lower ones transomed, regularly spaced and enhanced by a string course. The house, having a shallow plan and gable and ridge stacks, probably originated in the 17th or early 18th century. However, the front door on the minor elevation and the mix of hip and gable roof are elements which require some further interpretation.

7.4.62 Across the road and on the opposite corner, the building now occupied by a funeral directors business (unlisted, **Fig.180**), was probably built as a workshop or stable, as it has a sizeable central door opening. The walls appear to be rubble stone under a painted render. The paired sash windows may be original, placing it as 19th century, but the four dormers and the concrete pantiles are 20th century. Nevertheless, this building with its side wing contributes to the scale and character of this end of Glendower Street.



Fig.178 Well maintained vernacular cottages in Almshouse Street



Fig.179 House terminating the view down Glendower Street, with a regular set of mullioned windows



Fig.180 This simple building on Glendower Street was probably built as a workshop or stable

7.4.63 The informal terrace turning the corner of Chippenhamgate Street (Grade II listed, **Fig.181**) was probably built as a group in the early 19th century, as evidenced by the elegant 6 over 6 pane sash windows, the tripartite windows, low pitched roofs and regular curvature of the terrace as it turns the corner.

7.4.64 The Coach House (Grade II listed, **Fig.182**), in St John's Street, is another good example of a non residential vernacular building of architectural and townscape interest. Although recorded on the Statutory List as probably late 18th century, it is little altered since that date and may have earlier origins. The tall openings, hayloft door, painted coursed rubblestone wall and steep pitched roof, clad in pantiles (no longer a common roof material in Monmouth), give the building the utilitarian and functional character of ancillary buildings complementing the 'polite' architecture of the town.

7.4.65 St Mary's Street contains a series of unlisted buildings of some architectural interest which play an essential part in maintaining its frontage continuity, enclosure and scale. The building on the north side toward its eastern end (**Fig.183**), is probably 17th century in origin, being wide fronted, shallow in plan with steep pitched roof and substantial gable end and ridge chimneys. The flush central gable/pediment, a local tradition, suggests that the building may have been a single property which was subsequently subdivided. Whilst the windows are 19th and 20th century replacements, this roughcast over rubblestone building makes a particularly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area due to its historic and architectural significance.

7.4.66 The modest, rendered, late 18th and early 19th century buildings to the east, which turn the corner into Almshouse Street, including the Monmouth School Maths Centre, play an important role in the townscape.



Fig.181 An attractive range of cottages in Chippenhamgate Street, some with handsome tripartite sash windows



Fig.182 The Coach House, St John's Street, retains most of its utilitarian character



Fig.183 Two houses linked by a wide gable, in St Mary's Street. Its overall form suggests a building of the 17th century

7.4.67 Nailers Lane off Monnow Street, retains unlisted vernacular buildings testifying to its workshop and trade character. The stone building (**Fig.184**) located at the end of the Lane at right angles to the river bank, is one of the few which directly address the river frontage. Due to the dense vegetation and tree growth surrounding much of it, close inspection is difficult, but mill or warehouse uses are likely. The building has recently been converted, but its simple sturdy character, with steep slate roof, quoins and window dressings in red sandstone contrasting with the greyer rubble wall, make this a significant structure. Other, possibly later 19th century brick warehouse / workshop buildings fronting the lane (see **Fig.56** & **Fig.57**) are notable.

view and creates an informal yard. Whilst this broad-fronted two storey cottage has been considerably restored, it retains its early 19th century character, not least by the two tall chimneys, original window openings and adjoining outhouses.



Fig.184 Stone building, one of very few situated on the river bank, at the end of Nailers Lane.

7.4.68 To the lower section of Monnow Street on its north side, cottages and smaller houses remain, evidence of less intense commercial pressure on sites. The double-fronted house, (**Fig.185**), now a restaurant, has striking double height slightly canted bays, with fixed lights. Whilst these may be replacements for sashes, it appears that the bays are possibly early 19th century. The roof seems to have been adapted to project over these bays; the core of the building may have been earlier. The cottages are probably earlier still, with steep pitched roofs and possibly 18th century sashes; overall an attractive range of buildings. The interest is heightened by a glimpse down a passageway between these buildings to Inglenooke (**Fig.186**), which terminates the



Fig.185 Interesting range of vernacular cottages at the lower end of Monnow Street.



Fig.186 Inglenooke Cottage, glimpsed down a passageway from Monnow Street.

7.4.69 Across the Monnow Bridge, other cottages line the west side of Drybridge Street, all unlisted. Nos. 27 and 29, (**Fig.187**) are the best preserved and are in the earliest range. Their sashes, from 6 over 6 to 8 over 8, and a wide 14 over 14, including narrower panes (possibly an early shopfront), span almost the total range of glazing combinations. The canopies with rectangular lights over the half glazed front doors are, with the exception of the slightly later doors, original and in good condition. The other cottages in this rendered range have more alterations but maintain their scale and overall character.

7.4.70 Further south, Sunny Place (**Fig.188**) an Edwardian brick terrace of two storeys, with an attic floor of bold dormers, is particularly well detailed constructed mainly of red brick with buff brick quoins, soldier arches and banding with terracotta keystones, cills and a continuous 'dripmould' feature. The name

plaque dated 1912, is in an Edwardian style. Unfortunately, however reversible, all window frames have been replaced, but maintain the sash character to a degree.



Fig.188 Sunny Place, 1912, Drybridge Street. A lively design in two colours of brick.



Fig.187 Cottages on Drybridge Street. These retain their sash windows in a variety of sizes.

7.4.71 South of Sunny Place, a varied terrace of two storey houses completes the range, (**Fig.189**). These are mid-19th century; those to the right probably a little earlier, as suggested by the segmental arched windows and doorways. The windows here are two light casements rather than the Victorian sashes in the houses to the left.

7.4.72 The Green Dragon Inn and the adjoining cottage (**Fig.190**), although much altered, maintain their (probably) late 18th century character and terminate the view from the Monnow Bridge. A brick outbuilding to the rear of the plot, although in poor condition, is an important component in the group.



Fig.190 The Green Dragon and adjacent cottage, probably late 18th century, terminate the view on crossing the Monnow Bridge.



Fig.189 Drybridge St. A varied terrace of artisan cottages from the mid 19th century.

7.5 Activity: Prevailing & Former Uses

7.5.1 Monmouth has a long history as a defensive settlement on the Anglo-Welsh border. It developed on the site of the Roman fort of Blestium and continued to be an important defensive point in the Norman period. It soon developed as a commercial centre in the rich agricultural county of Monmouthshire. From the 15th century the town became a centre for the knitted cap industry. As the county town in the 16th century it developed as an administrative centre with its shire hall. Monmouth's school was established in the 17th century and the town became known for its educational establishments in the 19th century. As well as thriving as a market town Monmouth developed as a centre for the coaching trade and exploited its strategic location on the rivers Wye and Monnow with a flourishing river trade.

7.5.2 Today Monmouth is a busy town with independent shops, supermarkets, restaurants, the Monmouth School for Boys, Monmouth School for Girls, Monmouth Comprehensive School, a theatre and cinema. There are music concerts held in the summer months and a spring time Women's Festival.

7.5.3 Use is a very important component of the distinctive character of parts of the conservation area. Monnow Street is very much the commercial core of the town and thus characterised by shopfronts (some of which date to the 19th century) with some accommodation above, although most spaces above shops are storage areas or separate office suites.

7.5.4 The school complexes have a very special and specific role within the conservation area. As such they comprise a series of functional and institutional but traditional spaces; courtyards, private garden spaces and more open squares. The school uses and their associated building groups form an important part of the character of the conservation area.

7.5.5 The residential suburbs St James's environs, North Parade and Monks Street and

Overmonnow are of a very high quality. Some of the large houses still remain as single houses (rather than converted to flats) and this has maintained their significant role as grand houses in the conservation area.

7.6 Contributions Made By Key Unlisted Buildings

7.6.1 There are a number of unlisted buildings which make important positive contributions towards the character and appearance of the conservation area, both individually and in groups. Key groups are:

- Monnow Street: a large number of unlisted buildings combine with statutory listed buildings to maintain the quality of the townscape and share common characteristics such as the use of sash windows.
- Overmonnow: a rich and diverse townscape ranging from modest terraced houses, to townhouses and shops with accommodation above. Key unlisted buildings maintain the strongly defined townscape throughout.
- Old Hereford Road: The buildings which comprise the school complex are complementary and historically significant (they include sections of the former workhouse).
- Almshouse Street: a very attractive group of terraced houses to the north side of the street defining a very pleasing curve in the street line, following round to become a narrow lane of interesting former industrial buildings now converted to residential dwellings.
- St Mary's Street: a series of unlisted buildings form very important groups with statutory listed buildings to the northern end of the street. They share common characteristics and maintain the scale, enclosure and historic grain of this important street in the conservation area.

7.6.2 Individual properties which make a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area and important boundary walls and outbuildings are identified on **Plan 5**.

Refer to: Part D - Plan 5 Listed Buildings & Buildings Making a Particular or Special Positive Contribution

7.7 Prevalent Local & Traditional Materials

7.7.1 Monmouth is a predominantly rendered stone and natural slate settlement. Render is used extensively with classical treatment including incising to mimic fine ashlar work and some rustication to key buildings. A number of high status buildings are constructed of local sandstone and limestone in shades of pink, brown and grey including the church, castle, bridges and Great Castle House. Vernacular cottages and medieval houses survive in small numbers displaying the tradition of white-washed rubblestone with natural slate roofs. There are a significant number of classically inspired door cases, porches and doorhoods combined with panelled doors. These are found in both carved timber and stone. The finer examples are found to Monk Street, North Parade, Whitecross Street and St James' Street, but there are isolated examples of a very high quality throughout the conservation area. Historic decorative ironwork; particularly railings is seen throughout the conservation area and complements the Georgian and Victorian townhouses.

Walling

7.7.2 Stone is a mix of local limestone and sandstone with its distinctive pink coloration as seen in the rocky banks of the River Monnow. It is often seen as rubblestone laid to courses, even in high-status houses including Drybridge House. Stone is also squared to create more formal, austere facades including to the 1790s County Gaol gatehouse. Stonework to many Victorian, Tudor/Jacobean style buildings such as the Haberdashers Boys' and Girls' Schools are rock-faced with ashlar dressings. Stone-work to modest cottage-scale houses often has red or yellow brick dressings. Smooth render is used to a great extent to Georgian town houses with stucco and roughcast to a lesser extent. A number of the larger town houses and some commercial properties such as the banks in the town are rusticated to the ground floor. Many have lined out render to imitate high quality ashlar stonework. Classical detailing is prevalent to

Georgian buildings perhaps best expressed in the large composite columns to Glendower House. Mock timber-framing is a feature in Overmonnow. Overmonnow is also of note due to the striking use of the strong colour combination of white painted render and black painted detailing found in many properties (Fig.191). Red brick is occasionally found to 18th century town houses (Fig.192), often with fine pointing and rubbed brick arches. Victorian terrace groups also utilise red brick, sometimes in combination with mock timber-framed gables. There are many Georgian multi-paned timber vertical sliding sashes with thick glazing bars and more slender Victorian sashes.

7.7.3 The use of colour as paint applications to render and stucco is a common feature of the houses of Monmouth. Some parts of the conservation area are very strongly defined by this subtle but important use of colour. The townhouses to St James' Square and houses to North Parade and Monk Street utilise subtle tones of pastel colour; pinks, blues, greens and pale yellows. This is always understated and never dominant (with the one exception of Castle Hill House, adjacent to Monmouth

Castle). The variation in colour and the complementary use of subtle shades combined with the careful defining of joinery and architectural features is a very attractive characteristic of some parts of the conservation area. Great care is required when considering the painting of houses in order to retain a sense of grouping with adjacent buildings and understate the prominence of a single colour on a façade.



Fig.192 St James' House, a 16th century stone building re-fronted in brick in the 18th century.



Fig.191 An example of incised render with black and white colour scheme at Overmonnow.

Roofing

7.7.4 Traditional buildings for the most part still retain natural slate (**Fig.193**). There has been some replacement with artificial cement fibre slates but this is limited. Roofs are generally seen at low pitches with simple gables and brick ridge chimney stacks. Medieval buildings, some re-fronted in the Georgian period, retain steeply pitched roofs, often with gabled dormer windows. There are some examples of the use of plain clay tiles (**Fig.194**) or double Roman tiles, or pantiles but these are isolated examples. Stone slate is rarely seen, although it is likely to have been replaced with natural slate on a number of older buildings within the town. 20th century housing is dominated by the use of concrete interlocking tiles. Late 20th century housing and 21st century housing and flats have natural slate or cement fibre slate roofs.



Fig.193 Natural slate is still seen to traditional buildings.



Fig.194 This Edwardian garage retains its plain clay tile roof.

Boundary walls and retaining walls (Fig.195)

7.7.5 Historic boundary walls dominate some sections of the conservation area. There are important stretches of continuous walls to sections of Overmonnow and to North Parade. This is generally rubblestone laid to courses. Various copings are seen to these sections of wall including a very attractive use of a half round stone seen to walls relating to properties in Drybridge Terrace. Elsewhere the more common stone soldier course is seen. There are some very important and townscape defining boundary walls such as those to the churchyard of the Church of St Mary and to Drybridge House, Overmonnow. Some historic stone walls have been raised (historically) in red brick. Red brick garden walls are seen on the Hereford Road on travelling towards Osbaston. They are also seen along North Parade.



Fig.195 Historic boundary walls are found both in coursed rubblestone and red brick. Walls often feature doorways and other architectural details.

8 Contributions Made by Green Spaces (including Biodiversity Value), Trees, Hedges & Natural Boundaries

8.1 Green space makes up a considerable part of the conservation area forming an essential part of its special character. Vauxhall Fields and Chippenham Recreation Ground form part of the town's historic landscape setting being former common fields open to tenants for their cattle from the medieval period (**Fig.196**). Chippenham grounds is a Cadw registered park. It became a popular park in the 18th century and later was the site for Monmouth horse races. Tree-lined avenues on the Chippenham grounds were planted in 1909 with the north-east to south-west path an avenue of limes, the north to south avenue of large well-spaced limes and the north-west to south-east avenue of young limes and sycamores. In addition to the expansive grounds around the town is the Grade II* listed Nelson garden located south of St John's Street on the north corner of Chippenham. It is all but invisible, tucked away behind brick/stone walls and only accessible through a 10ft tunnel. Once described as the best garden in Monmouth, it lay abandoned until a team of volunteers set about its restoration. The original 19th-century promenade pathways and a hollow hypocaust wall, once heated to cultivate fruit trees, are being uncovered and restored. The restoration will return the garden to its Georgian heyday, when Nelson visited the garden with Lady Hamilton and her husband Sir William.

8.2 The allotments to the south-east of the town and the Monmouth Boy's School sports fields on the east bank of the River Wye ensure the town has a green approach from the east separating the town from the development of Wyesham. Treed hills form a background to many views within the town linking the town to the surrounding countryside. Street trees are a significant feature within the town especially noted around the Church of St Mary, Church of St Thomas, the castle and along Old Hereford Road. The landmark Indian Bean Tree, *Catalpa bignonioides*, planted c1900 in St James' Square is of considerable historic and aesthetic value to the conservation area. Tree cover on the banks of the Monnow and on the edge of the A40 dual carriageway are important green corridors. Parkland trees in the former gardens of Drybridge House mark the extent of its historic parkland.



Fig.196 Vauxhall Fields forms part of the historic setting of the town with views to St Mary's Church, Great Castle House, the castle ruins and the rear of buildings on Monnow Street

9 Key Views

9.1 Landscape Setting

9.1.1 The town's landscape setting is a significant element of its character. Located on the rivers Wye and Monnow, the town sits in a fertile plain surrounded by rolling hills. Meadows and fields form a natural, historic setting to the castle and town. The elevated land form around the town provides opportunities for long views into Monmouth. The complexity and high density of the town plan becomes evident in these views (**Fig.197**) as does the scale and importance of the school complexes in relation to the scale of the town.

Refer to:

Plan 4 Spatial Analysis

9.2 Types of View & Their Relative Significance

Strategic

9.2.1 The Regency banqueting house and Naval Temple on the Kymin command extensive panoramic views of Monmouth and Monmouthshire looking to the Brecon Beacons encompassing the Black Mountains (**Fig.198**). Key historic buildings are important landmarks in these views. The tall, slender spire of St Mary's Church punctuates the skyline set off by the rich purples of surrounding copper beech trees. The substantial proportions of Great Castle House make it stand out against the background of Vauxhall Fields. In the foreground the Neo-Tudor Monmouth Boy's School signals the entrance to the town overlooking the Wye with the late Victorian Tudor/Jacobean gables of the Girls' School prominent on the hill adjacent to Old Hereford Road. The brown/orange shades of 20th century housing appear in the foreground at Wyesham and are mirrored in the background with the extensive estates of Rockfield.



Fig.197 Views into Monmouth from the 2004 road bridge over the Monnow. The roofline of Great Castle House and the spire of St Mary's Church are landmarks set against the distant hills.



Fig.198 Panoramic views from the Kymin over town and across the county to the Brecon Beacons

9.2.2 Views east from Vauxhall Fields are focused on the spire of St Mary's Church and Great Castle House overlooking the castle ruins. In the background the Kymin frames the view with the banqueting house an eye catcher on the horizon.

Glimpsed (Fig.199)

9.2.4 There are glimpsed views of the church spire and church in its walled setting with mature churchyard trees. These are to be had from the junction of St John's Street and Agincourt Street, from Glendower Street car park, Wyebridge Street, Burgage, Drybridge Street and the castle ruins. There are glimpsed views into the town from the riverside allotments to the south of the town at the confluence of the River Monnow and River Wye. There are views south from the Monmouth cemetery to the distant Lydart Hill and Penalt. Views south-east along Cinderhill Street are framed by the Kymin.

Terminated

9.2.5 There are many significant terminated views, focused on buildings. Entering the town on the Wye Bridge, the Boys' School terminates views west. There are many varied terminated views within the town itself due to its historic layout with intersecting roads and a dense core of buildings leading to the church and Agincourt Square. Views south-east from Burgage are terminated by No.1 Old Dixon

Road. Views south from the 1960s almshouses are terminated by the gabled No.1 on St James' Square. Views east on St James' Square are terminated by the Old Dispensary (**Fig.200**) Views south along Monk Street are terminated by Whitecross House, Whitecross Street. Views north-west along St Mary's Street are terminated by No. 24 Church Street and views south-east by the Boys' School buildings on Almshouse Street. At the Boys' School, Almshouse Street views north-east are terminated by the black and white timber-framed Queen's Head Inn. On Agincourt Street views south-east are terminated by the symmetrical 5-bay gabled No. 6.



Fig.199 Glimpsed view to the spire of St Mary's Church between Nos. 23A & 25 Drybridge Street



Fig.200 Views east on St James' Square are terminated by the Old Dispensary with the Kymin in the background

10 Degree of Loss of Architectural and/or Historic Elements

10.1 There is some loss of historic windows, doors, roof coverings and chimneys. This is seen throughout the conservation area, although much of this change is reversible. Windows and roof coverings are the most significant and consistent change to historic buildings with in some cases groups of houses (such as the terrace to the south side of Cinderhill Street) with relatively few original or historic windows surviving. Some historic shopfronts have also been replaced in large numbers along Monnow Street.

Part C: Management Proposals

11 Boundary Revisions

11.1 Overview

11.1.1 As a result of analysis undertaken, the following are suggested boundary revisions to reflect ownership changes, recent development or a re-appraisal of the special character of a particular part of the town.

11.1.2 For general guidance on why suggested boundary changes are being made, please refer to **Appendix 3**.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 7 Management Proposals

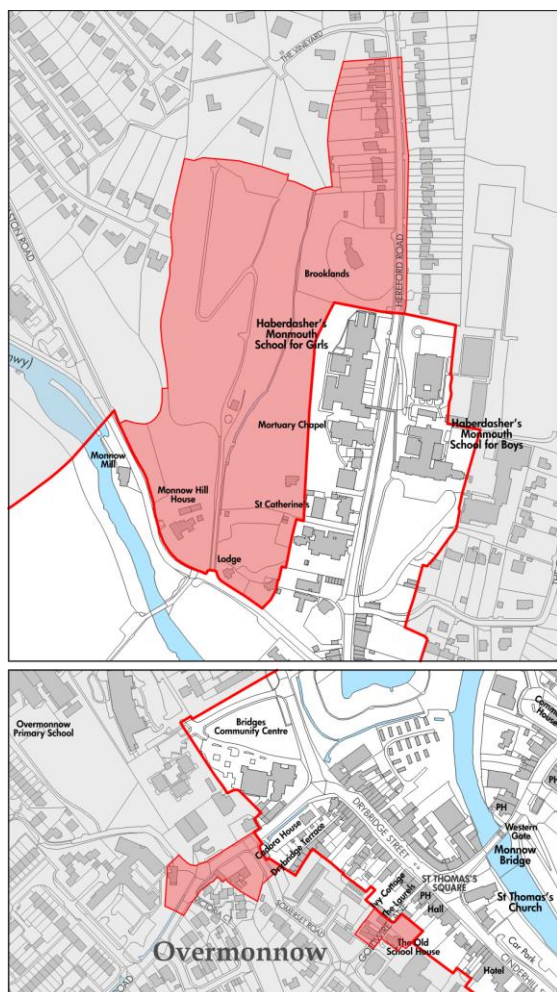


Fig.168 Plan showing areas suggested for inclusion in the conservation area (refer to Plan 7)

11.2 Areas for Inclusion

Drybridge (Fig.201)

11.2.1 It is suggested that the conservation area would benefit from being extended south along Wonastow Road to take in a three-storey brick house with attractive vitrified brick patterning, its stone walled garden and two listed properties on Somerset Road which are also set in their own gardens with a low stone boundary wall. These properties continue the eclectic mix of historic houses and semi-rural character seen to the adjacent sections of the street which are within the present conservation area. This strongly contrasts with the indifferent 20th century housing developments and infill to the west and south.



Fig.201 The attractive historic three storey property on Wonastow Road

Overmonnow (Fig.202 & Fig.203 next page)

11.2.2 It is suggested that the conservation area would benefit from being extended south along Goldwire Lane to include a semi-detached cottage pair dated 1877, a detached three-bay house with flanking stone boundary wall and the pink/ brown sandstone Old School House. This collection of historic 19th century properties forms a group which, despite alterations, adds to the special character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.



Fig.202 The Old School House, Goldwire Lane



Fig.203 Goldwire Lane with the Old School House to the right and cottages to the left

Monmouth cemetery & Old Hereford Road (Fig.204 to Fig.207)

11.2.3 It is suggested that the conservation area would benefit from being extended to take in the entirety of the cemetery and a series of semi-detached 19th century houses and terraces lining the west side of Hereford Road. The cemetery has significant historic, architectural and aesthetic characteristics which make a particularly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The cemetery walls, lodge, recently refurbished chapel and small mortuary to the former hospital on Hereford Road are all important features of note as are the rich collection of gravestones and memorials. The semi-detached houses and terraces on Hereford Road are distinguished by their tripartite timber sashes, doors with bracketed hoods and tall red and yellow brick stacks. All buildings within this group have a good survival of original features which greatly adds to their special historic and architectural significance.



Fig.204 19th century terrace on Hereford Road



Fig.205 Mortuary building to the former cottage hospital



Fig.206 The extensive grounds of the cemetery with picturesque views to the hills beyond



Fig.207 The recently refurbished cemetery chapel, now a heritage centre

12 Article 4 Directions

12.1 Under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, planning permission is granted as 'permitted development' for a range of minor developments subject to limits and conditions designed to protect the amenity of the environment. Due to the sensitive nature of conservation areas and the fact that such 'permitted development' in this environment could be harmful to the character of the area, it is recommended that these 'permitted development rights' are restricted in order to preserve the character of the conservation area.

12.2 Article 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) enables local planning authorities to make directions withdrawing the permitted development rights given under the order. These rights should only be withdrawn where there is firm evidence to suggest that permitted development is likely to take place which could damage the character or appearance of a conservation area, and which therefore should be brought within full planning control in the public interest. There are different areas where permitted development rights may be taken away; generally affecting the external appearance of dwelling houses in the conservation area.

12.3 Article 4 Directions may be applied to the whole Conservation Area, to parts of it such as Character Areas, or to individual buildings or groups of buildings, or features. This will be subject to further detailed consideration and recommendation. Their introduction does not mean that development specified within them is automatically precluded, but does seek to ensure that through the exercise of full planning control that such development does not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area and that all alternatives that can avoid this have been fully explored."

12.4 Examples would include:

- The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney
- Various kinds of development fronting a highway – to include gates, fences or walls or any other means of enclosure
- The construction of an external porch
- The painting of the dwelling house
- The construction of a building or enclosure within the curtilage of a building
- Alteration including partial demolition of a gate fence or any other means of enclosure and the construction of a means of access to a property
- Microgeneration – possible restrictions on changes which fall within permitted development rights relating to the retrofitting of renewable energy equipment; for example, wind turbines and photovoltaic cells, where they would have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Refer to:

Part D - Plan 7 Management Proposals

12.5 Within the Monmouth Conservation Area Article 4 directions could be considered for windows and doors and roof coverings where the original natural slate, clay tile or pantile survives. This is particularly the case for the following groups (**Fig.208** & see **Plan 7**)

- Houses to the west side of Hereford Road (presently outside the conservation area but proposed for inclusion)
- A group of houses to the south of the junction of Monkswell Road and The Parade (Monk's Street)
- Houses to Almshouse Street and Worcester Street

12.6 Front stone boundary walls, where they exist, form a positive part of the character and appearance of the conservation area. Where these are fronting domestic properties consideration should be given to the removal

of permitted development rights in relation to the partial removal of boundary walls and the creation of hardstandings in gardens. Where not protected by statutory listing, boundary walls and railings should be retained by the

use of additional planning controls. This is particularly important for walls to North Parade, Worcester Street and Osbaston Road.

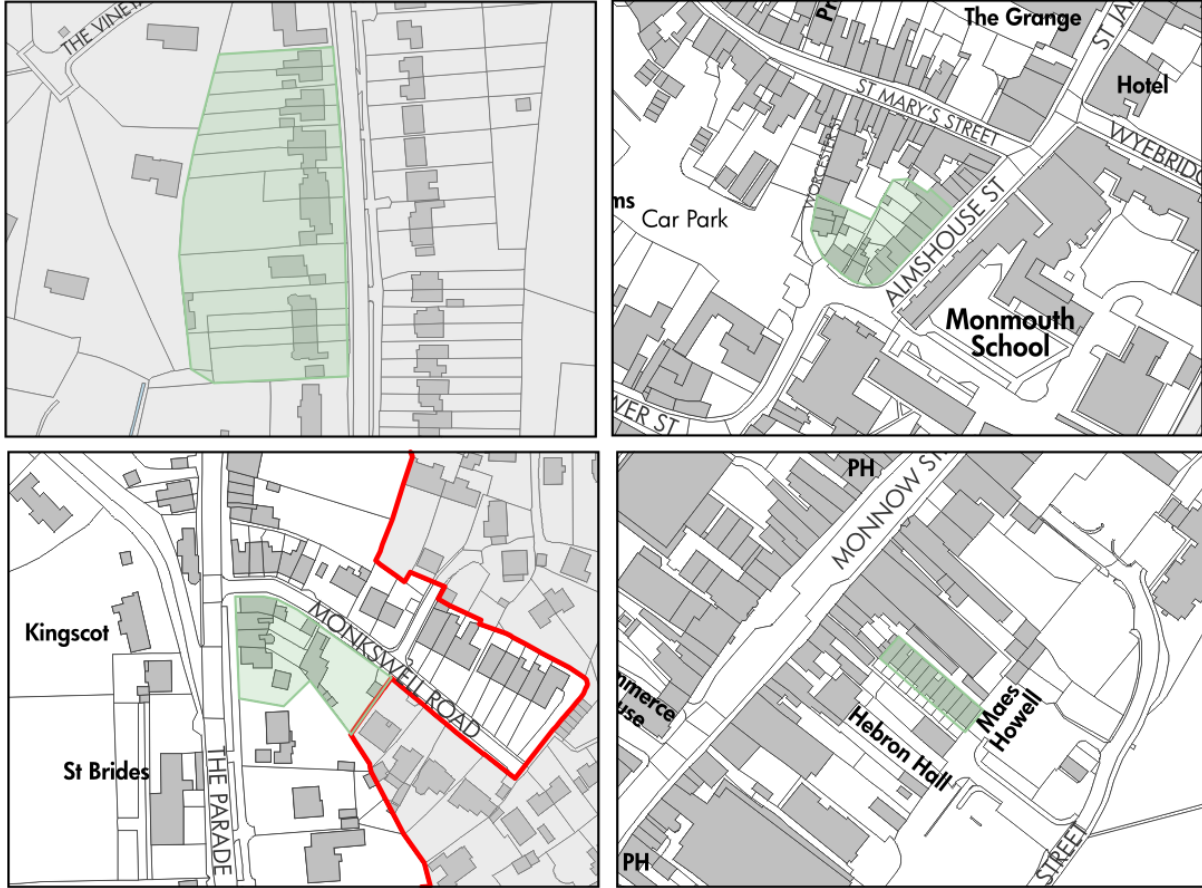


Fig.208 Proposed Article 4 directions

13 Proposals for Enhancement

13.1 General Enhancement Opportunities

13.1.1 A number of opportunities exist that would help to enhance the overall appearance of the conservation area. These include:

- Boundary walls: maintenance and upkeep
- Footpaths and routes
- Maintenance of the public realm
- Traffic, parking and street improvement.
- Signage strategy

13.2 Specific Enhancement Projects

Recommended Enhancement Projects.

13.2.1 The following enhancement measures could be undertaken, subject to the availability of resources and community endorsement. These measures are not ranked in any order of priority.

St James Square

13.2.2 This triangular space, fronted almost exclusively by Statutory Listed Buildings, has two way carriageways on its three sides, resulting in a cramped triangular patch in the centre, surrounded by railings, containing the war memorial, a distinctive Indian Bean Tree and other planting.

13.2.3 It is recommended that a scheme be designed which increases the size of the central triangular area and which reduces the impact of highway markings and road engineering. This might be done by building out from one pavement on the north or south west side of the Square, to join with the triangle. The resultant road system would be a simple 'T' junction. The scheme could accommodate the same amount of parking as at present.

13.2.4 It is stressed that in either case the surface treatment should consist of traditional paving materials.

Glendower Street / St John's Street

13.2.5 This street has a varied alignment, resulting in large areas of tarmac, especially the widened area around the entrance to the car park, at the northern end of the Street, the junction with Chippenham Gate Street, and at the western end at the junction with Agincourt Street and St John's Street .

13.2.6 In these areas it is recommended that pavements could be 'built out' and crossovers and informal parking fringes included, e.g. in front of the large two storey stone building on the corner with Agincourt Street.

Wyebridge Street (north side)

13.2.7 It is recommended that a design brief be prepared with the aim of reinstating the missing built frontage along this important gateway street, opposite the School for Boys, which at present is underused greenspace. The scheme should also address the improvement of the subway and its approaches, located near the bridge. It has been suggested that stone boundary walls be built to create a sympathetic but strong boundary definition.

Southern end of Monnow Street (at junction with Blestium Street)

13.2.8 This area, linking the town with the Monnow bridge and forming the approach from the east, along the new road, is characterised by poorly defined public realm, road dominated space and a number of indifferently designed and prominent post war buildings and structures, providing an unsatisfactory setting for the nationally important Monnow Bridge Gatehouse.

13.2.9 It is recommended that a design brief or design scheme is implemented in order to:

- a. The following issues will be dealt with by a forthcoming environmental design study funded under the Rural Development Plan for Wales, which will commence in the Summer of 2012:

- create a pedestrian priority junction
 - improve the surfacing in the area fronted by the existing public toilets
 - replace the toilet block with a more appropriate building, perhaps accommodating additional uses
- b. The potential for the replacement of buildings which do not positively contribute to the conservation area within this specific area will be informed by the study noted above and funded by a Town Improvement Scheme currently operating in the Lower Monnow Street area (2012). It will review the location and/or the 'architectural' presence of the toilet, and recommend improvements to the surfacing.