

The lost architecture of Wales: how do we preserve our heritage?

School of Architecture, Built and Natural Environment

Course: BSc Architecture

Name: Brandon Roberts

Student Number: 1900104

Module code: M6X01986

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Date:

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Abstract

This dissertation covers the field of conservation in Wales and the dynamics between the historic fabric that is preserved and those that are not; the reasons and limitations involved that prevents conservation of the built heritage, the state of conservation, as well as the opportunities to improve for the future.

Welsh conservation suffers from a few but key limitations, that can prevent a typical historic building from being preserved; from financial constraints, of which deter private owners, to the lack of professionals and expertise in Wales to advise, guide and design conservation projects.

These limitations are fundamental drivers to Welsh historic fabric as to whether pieces of the past survive into the future or collapse further into growing natural decay or man-made demolition. The threat is constant, real, and now. As of writing this dissertation, the brutalist architecture that was prominent in Britain during the 1960s-70s is being demolished, notably the Wrexham Police Station in North Wales.

Another aspect to this dissertation is the significance and value of architecture, that plays a big role in the life of a typical piece of the built heritage, the recognition of its history and culture can determine the survivability of fabric. The local communities often consider historic buildings theirs, as a group possession, rather than an individual ownership, which could help bring community-led projects and investment in conservation projects.

This group effort has been identified as one successful measure to ensuring the successful preservation, restoration and/or retrofit of a particular historic piece of Welsh architecture. With community participation, recognition of the importance of historic fabric through education can help the public value the past rather than seek to replace them.

Any piece of architecture could be considered of significance, either to the locale or to the larger national level, and as such, there are thousands of potential pieces of historic fabric in Wales that are under threat and requires attention. This means there is a lot of work that is needed to further conserve key and important parts of Welsh architectural history, of which good foundations are already in place, with Cadw's current 196 sites under their ownership and responsibility already showing us that it is possible.

Overall, more awareness; educational opportunities through group participation and courses, along with recognition of the significance and value in individual pieces of Wales's historic fabric can aid in overcoming the financial constraints, the lack of diversity and experts in the field as well as dampen the threat of demonisation as we look forward to a more sustainable future.

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I would also like to thank my Great-Grandmother, whom without her addicting enthusiasm and flawless belief in my abilities, may have never been able to attain my ambitions. She has been an invaluable and integral part of my life and without her presence, things would be vastly different for me.

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Introduction

This dissertation is an exploration of Welsh architectural heritage and a platform to think about the significance of the built heritage of Wales and as such, how we deal with the preservation of architecture in Wales; given the rich history, culture, and educational value that historical architecture gives to future generations.

The reasons for exploring lost architecture and the field of conservation in Wales particularly, is the interest in the rich and diverse architectural history of Wales; the various influences that impacted the creation of historical sites over time, as well as the social dynamic that determines the value of these historical sites versus more current architecture.

In addition to this, exploring this topic aids in improving the knowledge and understanding of the field of conservation that highlights key, lost architecture and so provokes thinking about our built heritage in Wales.

The importance of any architectural heritage could be argued as significant to human history; some being more predominantly influential than others, being more impactful on the fabric that the built heritage that has formed over millennia. However, it is an important factor to realise that to know the whole, the sum of its parts is needed.

Bringing this into context with Welsh architectural heritage, which has had a mixing pot of external cultural influences over its existence, has many architectural gems. A selection of which are unique to Wales, particularly in terms of contextual and climatic responses.

Without these sites, there would not be a history to learn from and to inspire generations of architects in thinking differently when designing.

Nevertheless, the historic fabric of Wales is under constant threat of being lost to time; general wear from the environment consistently degrades architecture and without proper maintenance, falls into disrepair, and the attraction to demolish or modify sites so that modern replacements take their place is the greatest challenge of all.

As such, this dissertation aims to highlight the value and significance of the built heritage; the challenges and opportunities that Welsh architectural heritage faces today, and what conservation has done/could do to preserve the architectural heritage of Wales for future generations. Discussing a range of examples of Welsh historical architecture along the way, through a series of case studies, that are explored in chapters 2 and 3, with supporting literature reviews and independent research.

Venn Diagram – Structure and Key Topics

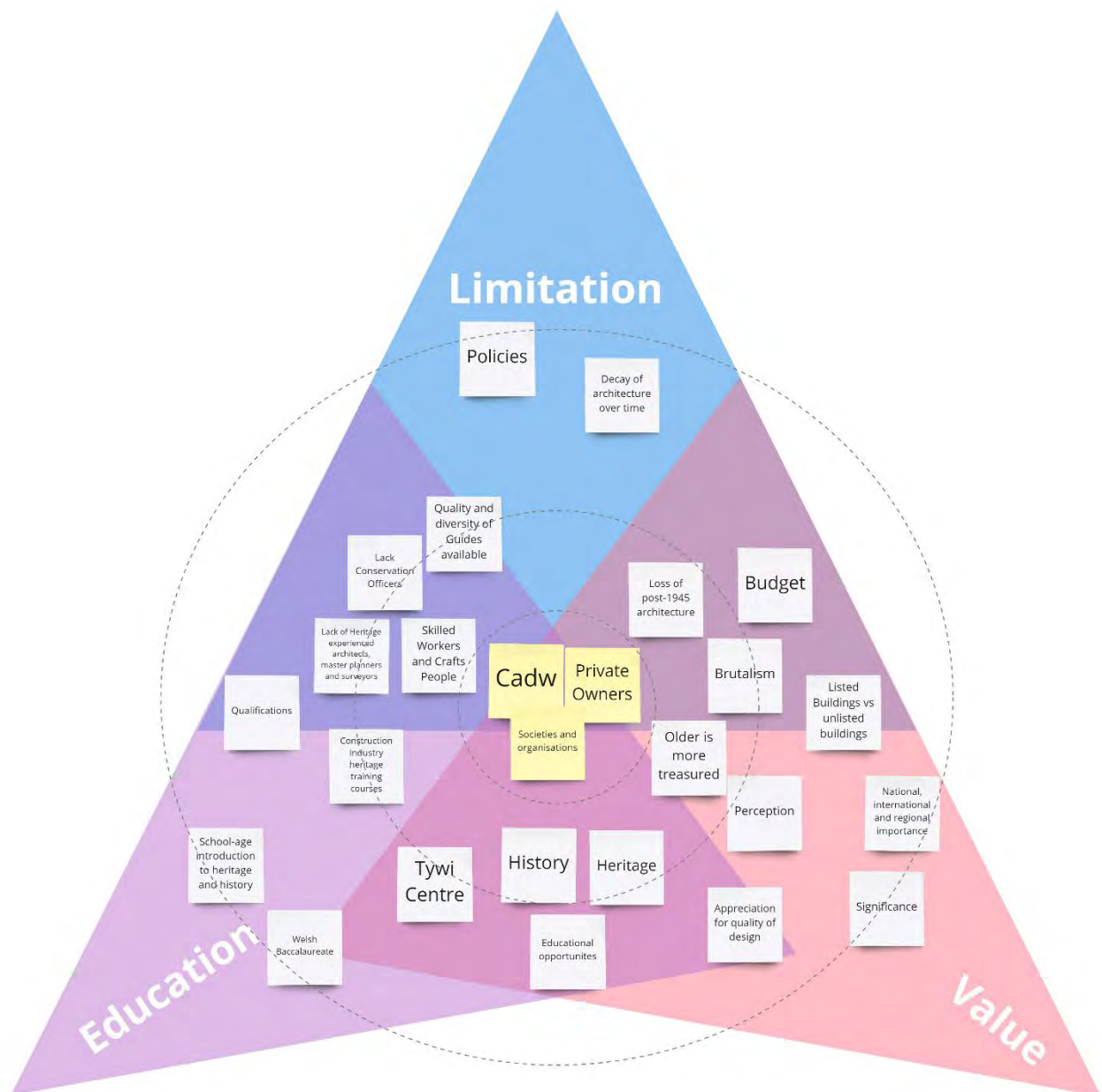


Figure 1 – Venn Diagram showing key topics and discussion routes discovered from research

Methodology

To complete these objectives and as such the aims of the dissertation, there needs to be a series of methods that are undertaking to achieve each objective. They are:

Questionnaires: create and distribute questionnaires to key members in the field of conservation so that a gauge on the main themes of the dissertation can be established and what key topics to take forward to best answer the titled question.

Interviews: conduct a series of interviews with key members that can draw out refined responses to the key topics identified within the questionnaire and to gain a greater understanding of the views that these key members have.

Case studies: identify, visit, and record a series of sites in Wales that can aid in reinforcing the key topics being explored in the dissertation. These case studies can be used to bring real and current challenges/opportunities to the forefront of my research.

Literature review: researching through relevant, peer-reviewed, and useful resources will aid in understanding the key topics being explored in the dissertation as well as highlighting further points of research to build up the knowledge and background within conservation in this dissertation.

Key members of this dissertation involve members of Cadw, National Museum Wales, Ty Mawr and several conservation architects from various parts of Wales. This enables a range of views and backgrounds to be drawn out of the research, allowing several opinions and ideas to be explored within the key topics.

Case studies include Blaenavon Ironworks and the World Heritage Centre, St Athans 'Boys Village', Penuel Chapel in Pontypridd and Caerphilly Castle.

Aims and objectives

To answer the question in this dissertation, a set of aims and objectives need to be created so that it can be used as a guide for completing relevant tasks that aid in answering the question. These are as follows:

To gather information on conservation as it stands; what are the current challenges, philosophies, and state of Wales's conservation. This will be done by:

Discovering the budgeting strategies, ambitions, and limitations in the field of conservation. Exploring the design philosophies, key drivers, and motivations behind the conservation of the built heritage. Uncovering the common limitations on typical conservation projects, the impact these have on its success and explore potential changes.

To identify and explore a list of case studies, both preserved and lost architecture. This will be done by:

Compiling a list of historic sites that best represent either a well conserved site or an abandoned site. Visiting and record data from these sites, noting key features, problems, and opportunities that each site has. Using the data collected to identify key topics of discussion.

To identify the importance of the built heritage of Wales, and the changes that may be needed for the preservation of the built heritage in the future.

Researching the history of key sites along with important points in Welsh architectural heritage to gain an understanding and appreciation of the value of Welsh architecture. Obtaining the views of key members in conservation on significance and importance of Welsh architecture. Formulate a personal view on this topic, using all the research collected. Thus, discussing a set of recommendations for future conservation projects.

Definitions

Below are key definitions that this dissertation will follow throughout:

Lost Architecture – When a piece of the built heritage is no longer in physical presence; has been demolished, forgotten, abandoned and/or obscured through time.

Welsh Architecture – Built heritage that sits within the boundaries of Wales in today's context and/or has a strong historical connection to Wales and its people.

Map of Wales, showing the key sites of interest, which are talked about in this dissertation, as well as the location of case studies, highlighted in blue:

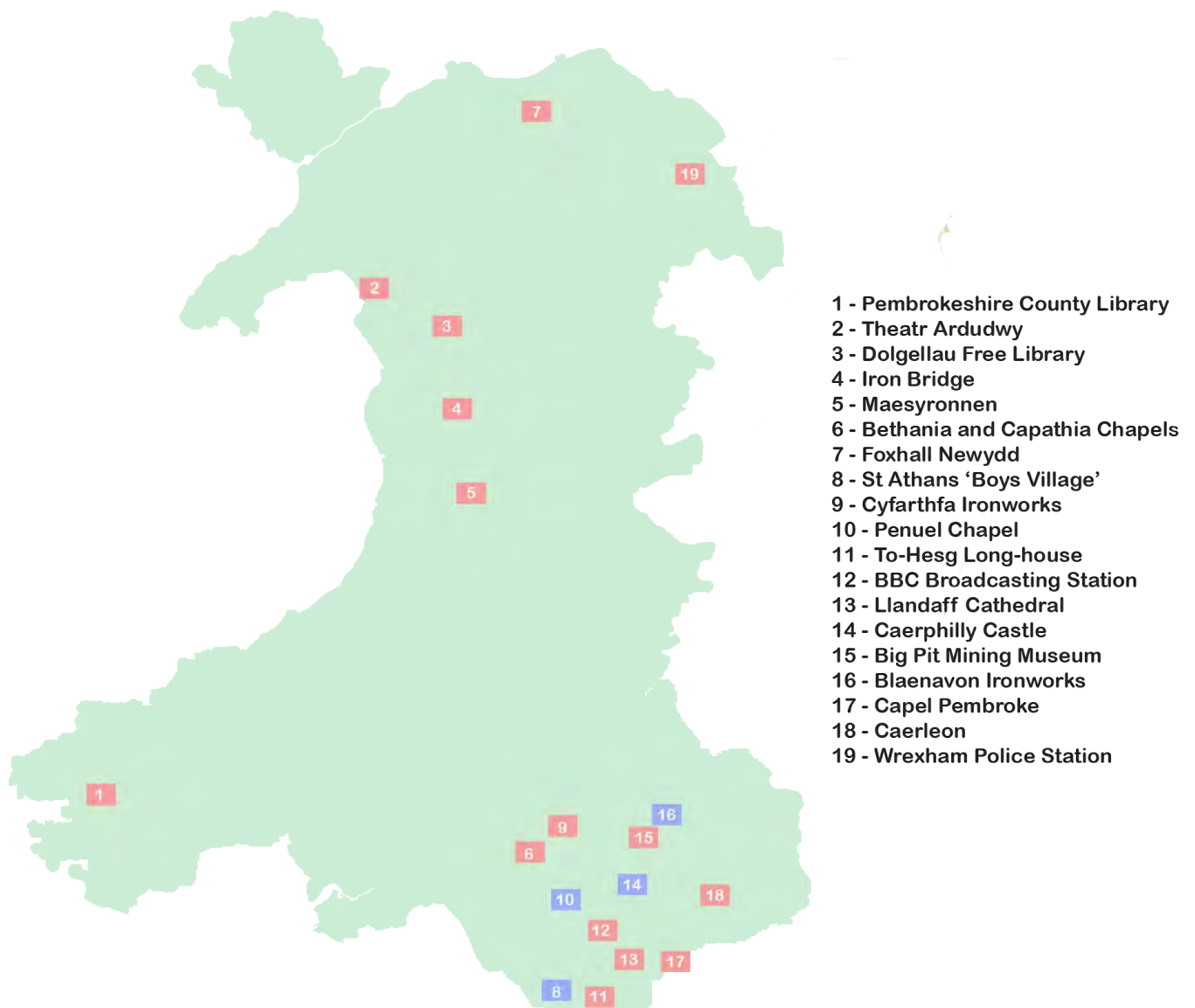


Figure 2 – Geographical context of all sites mentioned in the dissertation in Wales

Literature review

In this dissertation, there are several key sources that this section highlights as below:

Hilling's books on the architecture of Wales, both in 1978 and 2012, give one of the best in-depth insights on Welsh architecture, covering the whole breadth of the history and heritage the Wales has to offer. Hilling himself, born in Abertysswg in the Rhymney valley, he worked as an architect and town planner for many years. He is an expert in the history of Welsh architecture.

Cadw's business plan for the Welsh government showcases how the allocated budget gets distributed across its sites, with the priorities, management and use of this budget being highlighted throughout along with future forecasting. A useful but somewhat limited resource for those who wish to explore the official, financial situation that the main heritage body for Wales is in, as well as their ambitions and targets for the future.

The History of Wales series, of which has been reworked and rewritten over the years, is an excellent source for those who wish to delve into specific areas of Wales and wish to get an understanding of the key pieces of the built heritage. However, these books are limited in scope as only a select few of the best examples of architecture for each region are chosen to discuss and as such, do not give a complete picture of Welsh architecture, avoiding examples of abandoned, derelict sites in favour of more appealing well-designed examples instead.

Lost Futures by Owen Hopkins is a wonderful book focused on post-war architecture in Britain and how this period of architecture is disappearing. It covers a broad range of studies with varying circumstances, whether currently used, derelict or demolished. Explaining real, in-depth stories that led to each fate of each building from the time. On the other hand, the book largely covers the London area of Britain as opposed to the larger scope of the UK, with many of the included examples being in or around London.

Chapter 1: Heritage – Treftadaeth

What is the significance and value of architecture, particularly Welsh architecture in this case? It is a difficult and complex topic of discussion. The built heritage of Wales has a rich and diverse history, rooted in both the challenging climatic conditions of the Welsh landscape; namely its mountainous and valley topography (above 305m sea level in much of Wales), along with the many foreign cultural impositions that shaped the language, culture, politics and indeed the architecture of Wales (Hilling, 1976, p. 2).

This section aims to provide the reader with an overview and provide key highlights on the built heritage in Wales, with a range of ways in which value and significance could be interpreted. This will set the scene for the remainder of this dissertation as a reminder to what you could consider important, and as such the reasons for conserving architecture.

Key Highlights of Welsh Architecture

Roman and Norman Occupations



Figure 1 – Caerleon Roman Legionnaire Fort, the amphitheatre 80 CE (Hilling, 2018, p. 11)

Wales is rather unique in its architectural fabric, as an amalgamation of styles dating back to the Roman occupation of Britain; the first of many external influences from the European mainland, where evidence of the Romans settling the now Welsh landscape from 48CE had brought the classical form of architecture to the area. A well recorded example is the Caerleon Roman legionary fort [Fig.3] (Johnson, 2021).

This ancient piece of architecture could be considered as a very significant site due to its age and that the peoples in which constructed it where a vital driver in the future of architectural design but is it a site of superior value to any other piece of the built heritage.

After the Romans abandoned Britain, as the empire started to decline over the following centuries, the island was reclaimed by the various native tribes, where Wales became isolated from the rest of Britain due to the beforementioned topographic challenges, which becomes the predominant shield of protection against foreign invasion and occupation for the local cultures of Wales at the time (Johnson, 2021).

However, it wasn't long before another occupation was on the horizon with the Norman conquest of Britain. Especially in South Wales, this occupation resulted in the mass construction of fortifications to control the local populous, alongside bringing new architectural styles (Newman, 1995).



Figure 2 – Caerphilly Castle, [1268-71, (Author, 2021)

There are some well-preserved examples of Norman castles, one such example is Caerphilly Castle [Fig.4]. Built between 1268-71, this is just one of thousands of castles that once dominated the Welsh landscape. The architectural influences evolved over time, with more efficient, resilient, and richer constructs (Wiles, 2008).



Figure 3 – Llandaff Cathedral, 1120, (Boaden, 2013)

On the other end of surviving Norman architecture is the religious sector, with the construction of cathedrals such as Llandaff Cathedral [Fig.5] built in 1120 which is dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. It is just one of many examples of early Welsh cathedral architecture. (RC, 1988)

The religious buildings in Wales make up many of the remaining historical structures along with castles and fortifications, both types of which were built to last, but even these suffer from decay and are vulnerable to the climate (RC, 1988).

Welsh Vernacular Architecture



Figure 4 – To-hesg, Llantwit Major, a long-house in the Vale of Glamorgan, 1600 (RC, 1988, p. 1)

Moving forward in time; the vernacular architectural styles, which where the means to an end, provided shelter and a place of living within the wet climate of the Welsh landscape. A selection of these original constructs remains today, though largely lost to time, there are examples of early farmhouses, chapels and forts that dot the country. Examples include To-hesg in Llantwit Major, The Vale of Glamorgan. A 17th century cottage, known to be the only surviving long-house within an urban context [Fig.6] (L.Moore, 2011).



Figure 5 – Maesyronnen Chapel, Glasbury, 1690s (The Landmark Trust, 2020)

A religious example is the Maesyronnen Chapel in Glasbury, Powys. One of the earliest Nonconformist chapels to have been constructed in Wales and still operates as a chapel to this day [Fig.7] (Jones, 1996, pp. 2-4).

Both examples give an indication to the thousands more that are currently or had existed in the landscape of Wales. Unfortunately, much of these original vernacular gems where either decayed beyond repair or demolished for something new. This makes these examples rare to find, to learn about the techniques and responses that they employed to meet their purposes and functions. Is this a sign of significance and value, the rarity of the piece that once it was commonplace, but nowadays is a remnant of time gone by?

Welsh Industrial Revolution

Moving ahead to arguably one of the most important periods in Welsh architecture, the industrial revolution; a gigantic evolution in technological advancement that enabled new architectural expression to formulate, being expanded in scale and scope to accommodate a rapidly growing population and the advent of mass production of resources.

Wales was at the forefront of this change, becoming a prominent production hub during the 18th and 19th centuries, which consequently led to the sharp rise in cultural, religious, and notably architectural shifts that shaped the modern built heritage we have today.

As the country has one of the largest coal fields in Britain, in particular South Wales, there was a huge driver to build new settlements at mines and collieries to accommodate workers (Hughes, 1994).

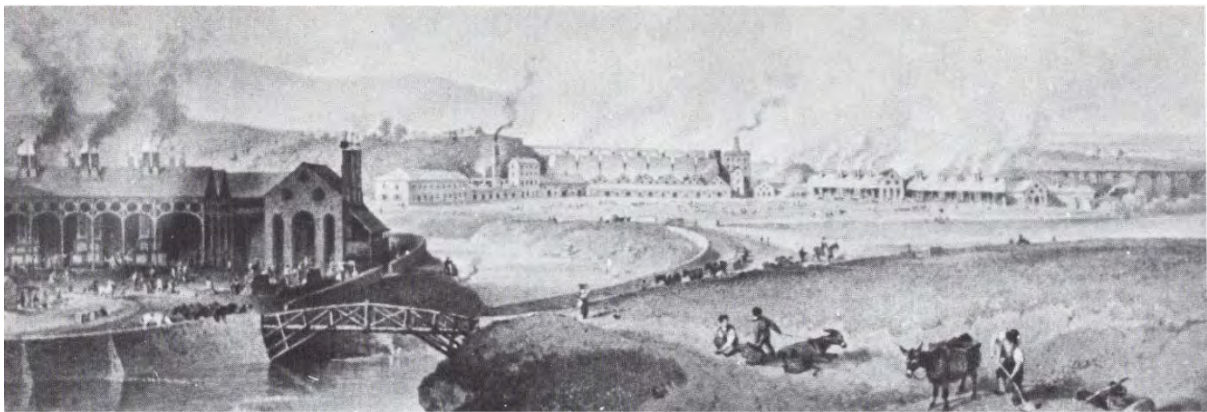


Figure 6 – Cyfarthfa Ironworks, Merthyr Tydfil [1820]. Painted by Penry Williams

Cyfarthfa Ironworks that once existed in one of the key industrial centres of Wales, Merthyr Tydfil, was one such example [Fig.8]. As a coal and iron producing powerhouse, it had a great legacy on the resources that were used to produce the industrial architecture of Wales, as well as the many other sectors that used the Welsh industry as a source at the time.



Figure 9 – Capel Pembroke Terrace, Churchill Way, Cardiff (H.C.Harris, 1877) (Hilling, 1973, p. 143)

The industrial revolution had also redefined the meaning of religion in its architectural form, the amorphization of traditional styles with modern solutions, often combining century old motifs with current materiality and construction methods. A good example of this is Capel Pembroke in Cardiff [Fig.10], a cross-bread of gothic detailing and industrial theming.

This can be seen across Wales, where chapels were very important cultural centres that local communities came together to engage in religious ceremonies. As such, these buildings became an important aspect of Welsh heritage with many towns having over 100 chapels with differing denominations (RC, 1988).



Figure 10 – Late 19th century terrace houses at Elliotstown, New Tredegar (Hilling, 1973, p. 109)

Another dominant feature of industrial architecture in Wales is the vast mining cottages in terrace rows, [Fig.11] that were mass built across Wales to accommodate workers and families. These cottages formed the backbone of any Welsh industrial community and at large, still provides accommodation to the people of Wales today.

This simple but important aspect to Welsh architecture is unique and is not seen outside of the British Isles. Is this worth conserving? Considering both the importance of Wales's rich industrial history and the impact these have had on the modern Welsh world?

Post 1945, Brutalist Architecture



Figure 71 – Theatr Ardudwy, Harlech [1973] (T.Driver, 2008)



Figure 12 – Theatr Ardudwy, Harlech [1973] (Halliday, 2021, p. 5)

After WW2, the British government had introduced a series of plans to rebuild Britain, which was a monumental task for the time. As the war had weakened the available budgeting and economy that would support architectural projects, there was a massive switch to mass social housing, temporary accommodation, and short-term solutions (Hopkins, 2017, pp. 16-17).

This was very true for Wales, with a boom of social housing across the country as demand for new, cheap but modern housing soared. However, it took a couple of decades for there to be an acceptance to this shift to modernism as the strong traditional culture of Britain and indeed Wales had resisted change outside of what was necessary (Hopkins, 2017, p. 15).

Theatr Ardudwy in Harlech, North Wales [Fig.12,13] is a fine example of post-1945 architecture, particularly of the brutalist style, which became prevalent in the built heritage during the late 1960s and 70s. Designed by Gerald Latter, It once served as part of an adult school where conferences and plays were held (Halliday, 2021, pp. 5-6).



Figure 13 – BBC Broadcasting Station, Llandaff, Cardiff [1967] (Halliday, 2021, p. 11)

Other examples of Welsh brutalist architecture include the BBC broadcasting house in Llandaff, Cardiff. It was the home of the BBC Headquarters for over 50 years [Fig.14]. It was designed by Welsh architect Ivan Owen in 1960 and built on the grounds of a Victorian Villa from 1963 until its completion in 1967 (Halliday, 2021, p. 11). It was closed in 2020 as the BBC moved their HQ to a 1932 Art Deco building in London. It was swiftly demolished after what the BBC described as a 'grand old ship liner' (Roderick, 2020).



Figure 14 – Wrexham Police Station, 1975. (Halliday, 2021, p.15)

In North Wales, the Wrexham Police Station [Fig 13] designed by architect Eric Langford Lewis in 1975, its bold Le Corbusier inspired move with its large structural Piloti, gave its central block a unique twist on Welsh architectural expression (Halliday, 2021, p. 16).

It served as a headquarters for the Wrexham Police Force for over 70 years until in 2019 they moved base to a new development and the building became derelict for a short time before being demolished in late 2021 (BBC, 2020).

There were calls to have it listed by Cadw and initially was looking promising, but it was not granted and is now currently being replaced with a Lidl and drive thru (ITV, 2020).



Figure 15 – Pembrokeshire County Library [1969] (Halliday, 2021, p. 24)

Yet another example of Welsh Architecture is this Library in Haverfordwest [Fig.14], designed by architect Gilbert Ray in 1969 to serve the local community it has since become derelict as demand for physical media is replaced by digital resources, making libraries like this hard to upkeep (Halliday, 2021).

There were plans to redevelop the site as a cultural centre by the local Pembrokeshire council, but it became too costly. Currently, it is up for sale for demolition and redevelopment (Powell, 2021).

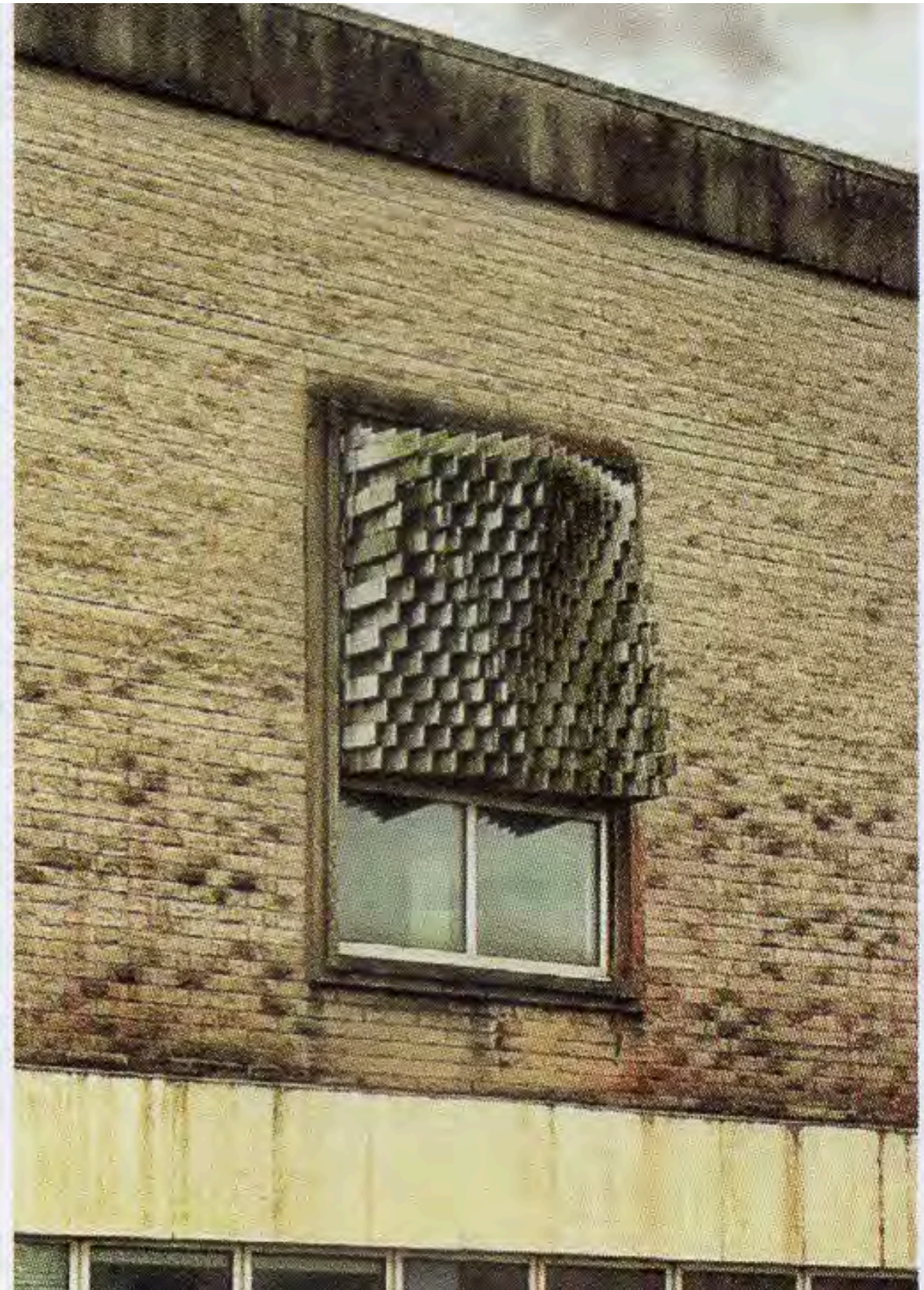


Figure 16 – External Window Detail at Pembrokeshire County Library (Halliday, 2021, p. 24)

It is noted that this building has a unique external window detail [Fig.17] that detracts from the usual architectural forms that arises from typical brutalist architecture, which is at risk of being lost to time with the prospects of demolition, following alongside the last two examples.

Despite the aged appeal of these structures, many could be argued as good architectural design, focusing on functionalism, simplicity and boldness over traditional forms of architecture. Are these significant and of value to Wales?

Welsh architecture is broadly a machination of architectural styles; from the invading cultures that occupied the landscape, bringing along its own cultural, political, and architectural influences on Wales. Through to the response to the Welsh landscape, being a rugged, mountainous region with a particularly humid and wet climate. Which determines the both the longevity of the built heritage but also its materiality and construction to withstand such climate and local context.

The important aspect to this dissertation, however, is not just identifying what could be considered Welsh architecture, but to expand into the why and how; what is significance and value and how does that apply to the examples shown previously? As such why should these be conserved? Is it important to preserve our heritage?

This chapter has shown just a few of an endless number of sites that are in Wales, with many already lost to time, particularly of note, recently with the continued demolition of modern buildings in Wales. It could be argued that it is important to consider the impact that losing these architectural gems may have on the future, not just in value terms but also sustainability.

It is also important to highlight that the earlier examples shown in this chapter are still standing in one form or another, even centuries or millennia after its initial construction, which shows us that it is possible to maintain architecture in Wales, even with the harsh climate that erodes away the fabric over time.

Take these thoughts forward as we move into the next chapters of the dissertation, as it is key to consider the topics in this chapter going forward.

Chapter 2: Conservation – Cadwraeth

This chapter covers the variety of ways in which conservation takes place in Wales and the impact it can have on site, the local community and larger context of Wales. This is an investigation into how conservation takes place, the decision-making processes that determine the success of an architectural conservation project as well as the component parts that are involved in these processes.

Conservation in Wales could be argued as being highly important to the built heritage, especially when considering the beforementioned significance and value of architecture, accompanied by the continued decay of building fabric as the wet climate of Wales poses a constant threat. As such, this chapter will discuss several case studies of successful conservation projects in Wales to gauge an understanding of how the built heritage can be conserved and protected for future generations.

Blaenavon Ironworks – Case Study 1



Figure 17 – Blaenavon Ironworks, copper model of the Blaenavon site, designed by R. Eynon (Payne, 2021)

Blaenavon Ironworks in South Wales [Fig.18] was once a major early industrial centre to produce iron goods, as the epicentre for the industrial revolution, which makes this site highly valued as an historical site in Wales, as the country was a heavy industrial producer (Staziker, 2020, p. 5).

As an architectural site, it could be said that there isn't anything spectacular about its form and its aesthetics. However, without its existence, along with other similar ironworks, much of the industrial and later modern constructs wouldn't have existed in Wales.

During the early 1970s, the site was labelled an 'eye sore' and a 'danger to public health' and as such was at risk of being demolished until preservation efforts were taken to keep the site as a heritage centre, later becoming one of the world heritage sites (Staziker, 2020).



Figure 18 – Blaenavon Ironworks, view of balance tower and cottages in background. (Payne, 2021)



Figure 19 – Blaenavon Ironworks, view of kilns from top of balance tower. (Payne, 2021)

It is a great example of a well conserved site, applying the design philosophy that whatever was remaining of the site should be preserved to prevent further decay. This resulted in parts of the site having modern alterations so that this was possible, such as these kiln chimneys [Fig.20], where a zinc paneled covering was built on top to prevent water damage in the internal space of the kilns (Staziker, 2020).



Figure 20 – Blaenavon Ironworks, view of foundries with balance tower in background. (Payne, 2021)

Another notable aspect of the conservation works done at the site, which does not stand out as much as the beforementioned works, is the copper roofing [Fig.21] that was added to the foundries to protect them from water damage, and to imitate the original, dark, and moody internal environments created in these buildings [Fig.22].

Blaenavon Ironworks is just one example of conservation done right, in which at one point was at risk of being lost entirely, is now a very well-known heritage center that continues to give to Wales, even if its original purpose is well in the past.

The site engages visitors from across the world, drawing them in with the balance tower and serving as one of Cadw's prized, protected collections.



Figure 21 – Blaenavon Ironworks, internal view of left foundry.

Caerphilly Castle – Case Study 2



Figure 22 – Aerial view of Caerphilly Castle (RCAHMMW, 2008)

Another example of a well-preserved piece of architecture is the previously mentioned 13th century Caerphilly Castle, commissioned by Gilbert de Clare, a Norman Marcher as the Lord of Glamorgan [Fig.21] (Jenkins, 2011, p. 134).

In terms of conservation, the castle has a relatively long history of work done to preserve, restore and repair parts of the site for tourists dating far back to the 1860s. This long history of conservation on the site, along with the range of different works, architects and conservationists make Caerphilly Castle a prime example of conservation in Wales. (RC, 2008).

The site visit to Caerphilly castle was very valuable in exploring how these various conservation projects on the site has affected the overall castle. The state of the castle prior to conservation works, was terrible, with key elements of the original, still unfinished parts of the site, decaying rapidly. However, with the economic and social incentive to develop the site as a tourist attraction has benefitted everyone, from a conservation view to the viability point of view.



Figure 23 – Caerphilly Caste, View of Visitors Centre from battlement gatehouse bridge. (Author, 2021)

One of the most noticeable additions to the site is the visitors centre [Fig.24] Designed by Davies Sutton Architects in 2017 as a place for visitors to purchase local produce and a range of gifts and books themed around the castle and Wales more broadly (Davies Sutton Architects, 2017). As it is adjoined to the existing crenelation wall, blending into the ancient fabric despite being a modern addition to the site, is well designed to fit in, using traditional timber construction [Fig.23] that themes well with the stone masonry surrounding the centre.



Figure 24 – Caerphilly Castle, timber construction on the visitor's centre (Author, 2021)

The visitor center is nestled between the adjoining curtain wall and the outer keep, with a full glass facade facing the courtyard as seen in the above image [Fig.24]. This allows visitors to see into the building as they walk towards the keep and/or from the return, of which you can see all the gifts that the center has to offer.

It is just one example of a well-designed project that is sensitive to the centuries old structure and after visiting the site during the summer, its architectural honesty and sympathy is very welcoming and inviting for visitors to Caerphilly Castle.



Figure 25 – Caerphilly Castle, honest repair job on the chapel (Author, 2021)

Caerphilly Castle has a variety of conservation design philosophies at play that have been applied to the site across the last century, predominantly the honest repair approach such as on the chapel in the castle grounds [Fig.26].

This restoration work on this chapel took place in 1957 as a series of repairs were planned on the site at the time, to prepare for the reopening of the Castle to the public as an official tourist attraction was underway (Wiles, 2008).

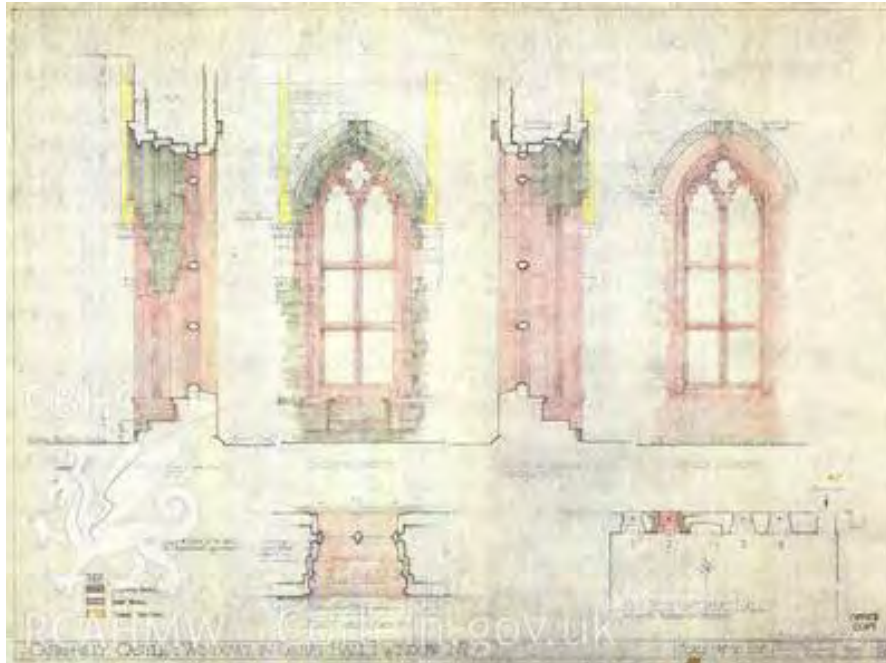


Figure 26 – Caerphilly Castle, Architects plans of the Restorative work on the Great Hall windows (Ministry of Works, 1957)

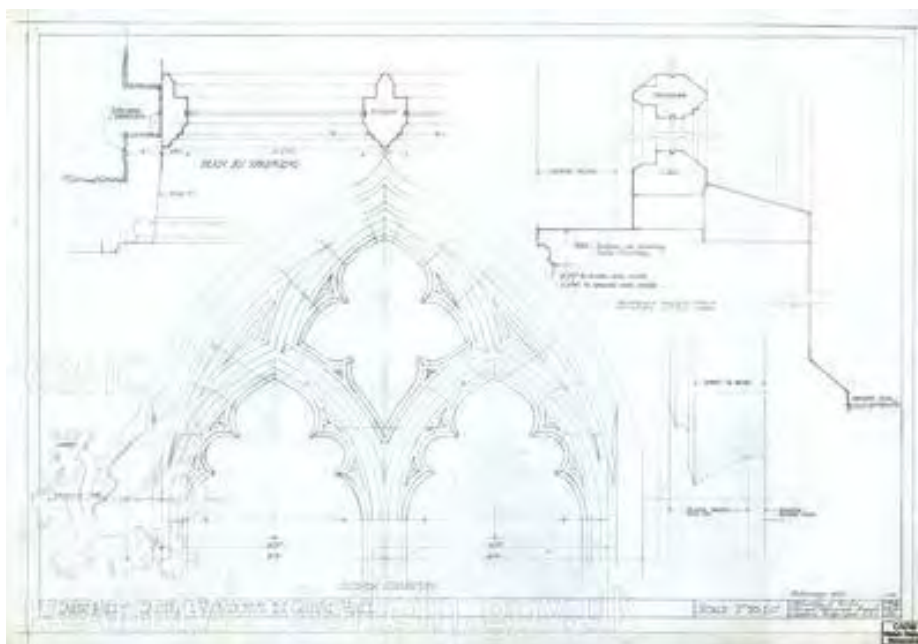


Figure 27 – Caerphilly Castle, doorway into keep from courtyard grounds, with its honest repair job (Author, 2021)

As you can see in the drawings, [Fig.27/28] there was an entire window to restore as it was largely missing at the time of the project, these formed part of the great hall as seen in the right image. [Fig,26] This restoration was about honesty, showing where alterations had taken place, but also representing the original detail, treating the site with respect and a level of authenticity [Appx.B3].



Figure 28 – Caerphilly Castle, Architects drawing of the Great Hall Windows (Ministry of Works, 1957)

Another restored element to the castle is one of the many entrance ways into the keep [Fig 28] Clearly shown is the replaced masonry work that forms the archway around the entrance, using similar stonework as the chapel restoration.



Figure 29 – Caerphilly Castle, Site Section drawing, showing drawbridge and battlements after conservation works (Frame, 1892)

Caerphilly Castle is a great example of how conservation takes form in Wales, with both its long historical history that dates to the Norman occupation, and its conservation history, which from the 1890s [Fig.26] has seen major works done to the castle and its site, so that it may be a centre for tourism, for future generations.

The concept of honest repair is well rooted in Cadw's interactions with its sites, as a valid and generally appropriate solution to conserving the build heritage of Wales as stated in their documentations, such as the Cadw Workstream Business Case, which is about the work they do and, in the policies, and regulations that are developed by the government on this topic (Cadw, 2018, pp. 26-28).

Additional Example: Big Pit – Repair over Rebuild



Figure 30 – Big Pit, Blaenavon – Tramway Sheds with repaired roof (Steinsky, 2006)

As part of the World Heritage Centre at Blaenavon, Big Pit was repurposed from its industrial coal mining operation to a commercial tourist attraction in 1983. It was previously one of many South Wales collieries and this one being close to the Blaenavon Ironworks, had links to the iron casting industries. It was operational as a mine dating back to the early 19th century (RCAHMW, 2008).

There was a repair project done around the site to ensure protection and longevity of the many grade II listed buildings at Big Pit, such as replacing portions of the mild steel sheets that are on the tramway sheds [Fig.31]. After speaking to the conservation architect responsible for the project, it was described as a series of repairs, in Cadw's terminology, as maintenance and periodic renewal, instead of as one big conservation project [Appx.B2].

He added that it was a question of how far should you go without it transforming into a whole new building? What approaches and solutions are most appropriate for each piece of work? [Appx.B2].

It could be argued that it is a very important consideration when working on a conservation project, especially one of historical value. The level of sensitivity and respect for the existing fabric along with the consideration of the impact changes will have to the integrity and honesty of the architecture.



Figure 31 – Bit Pit Mining Museum near Blaenavon, Wales (Delaedt, 2004)



Figure 32 – Big Pit – One of the exhibitions is a reconstructed power loader from the 1970s (National Museum Wales, 2012)



Figure 33 – Big Pit – Exhibition that takes you through time with the evolving protective clothing worn by the miners (National Museum Wales, 2012).

Big Pit has now got a museum with a guided tour of parts of the underground mine, where several exhibitions themed around the activities that occurred in the mines are held, such as this exhibition on the right [Fig. 33].

There is also a vast collection at the Pit Bathhouse, where a series of stories are told to showcase the way miners worked, lived, and as shown in [Fig.34] dressed over the decades that the Pit was operational for.

This theme of taking a piece of the built heritage that could be viewed as significant and of value to the public and as such future generations, is commonplace in Wales as it not only regenerates what would otherwise be lost architecture but also provides economic, cultural, and historical value to the sites (Cadw, 2017).

National Museum Wales is responsible for the management of sites such as Big Pit and run a range of museums across the country that aim to provide future generations with the rich history, culture, and life of Wales.

Additional Example: Dolgellau Free Library – Renovation and Restoration



Figure 34 – Dolgellau Free Library building in North Wales, after renovation works (Buck, 2015)

Another approach to conservation is renovation, where an existing building becomes something new, changing its original function and/or modernising the building in some way.

An example of this is the recently renovated Dolgellau free library, (*darllenfa rydd Dolgellau* in Welsh) built in 1911 [Fig.35]. It was designed by Edmund Fermaud after a design competition for the building that he won (Davies, 2015).

The library is one of thousands of free libraries across the UK and USA, as an initiative by Andrew Carnegie during the early 20th Century to provide access to literature for all people, not just the highest echelon in society, as he believed that it was important that everyone had equal opportunity to learn to read and write (Griffiths, 2021).



Figure 35 – Dolgellau Free Library, prior to renovation (Davies, 2015)



Figure 36 – Old Dolgellau Free Library from the early 20th Century (Tomos, 2013)

The practice Rhys Llwyd Davies Architects took on this project to renovate the property, and after speaking to the conservation architect who worked on the project, [Appx.A] the aim was to both renovate the building, as it was falling into disrepair after being partly derelict for a number of years, as its use as a public library was deteriorating, and to also restore the building to a previous state, more towards the original likeness of the fabric back when it was built in 1911 [Fig.37].

It is apparent with this example, where at some point in the past when the roof was replaced due to water penetration, the entire roof structure was replaced, including the parapet with the writing underneath it.

Overall, it can be said that when it comes to conserving, it is highly important to discover the history of the building, monument, or site as there may be more to it than what stands now, and as such the decisions that could be brought forward in restoring them to a previous state.

One unique aspect of the library is its Welsh writing, that had originally been attached beneath the parapet which read 'Darllenfa Rydd Dolgellau' or Dolgellau Free Library in English [Fig.38]. It was one of the few 20th century buildings that had Welsh written in the very fabric of the building as suppression of the Welsh language was very common until the 1980s, dating back to the Laws in Wales Acts in 1535 (Dafydd, 2019).



Figure 37 – Dolgellau Free Library with restoration of the original Welsh writing (Davies, 2015)

Conservation can take many forms, from retrofit to repair, but they all have one common purpose, to protect, preserve and prolong the built heritage, allowing the existing fabric to continue to provide to society.

Wales has a large collection of buildings, monuments and sites that are currently conserved in one way or another; with many of them functioning as an economic entity, either to aid in the continued maintenance of the place and/or to give to the local community in which it is belonging too.

Conservation is not just about saving something, in this case, architecture, but it can enable the future generations to learn and become inspired by the existing fabric of Wales, not just architects but the wider art and design sector as well. The value that comes from these projects varies across each site and is of course subject to opinion, but it can be said that places such as Blaenavon ironworks or Caerphilly castle do have a level of value to both the locale and the tourists that visit Wales.

It can be argued that it is highly important to consider what your conserving; the history and evolution of the place, the cultural value it has to both the locale and the larger Wales region, as well as the impact it has and can have on future generations. Of course, it can also be said that conservation should be at least considered as an option with most existing buildings, as it may just have something that will be lost forever if demolished.

Conservation works that have been shown in this chapter are only a snapshot into the many more examples that could have been drawn up in this dissertation, but it should give a good idea to the types of project work that happens in Wales with a range of examples, along with the impact that conservation can have on the built heritage of Wales.

Chapter 3: Lost and Abandoned – Ar Goll a Gadael

To contrast the previous chapter, this chapter aims to identify and explore a series of Welsh architecture that could be considered lost to time, as a way to understand where conservation could improve for the future, as well as to show how losing the existing build heritage has had an impact on the architecture of Wales.

This chapter will be a series of case studies and a sample of the architecture that no longer exists within the built heritage of Wales, with many having been replaced.

Architectural decay is always a constant threat to the built heritage, as the environment and climate slowly breaks down what humans put up. However, arguably the biggest threat to architecture are humans themselves, as decisions to demolish existing fabric and replace with new architecture, as it continues to be integrated within the lifecycle of a building.

St Athans ‘Boys Village’ – Case Study 3



Figure 38 – Aerial view of the holiday village site today (Bluesky Infoterra Ltd, 2022)

As the industrial revolution continued to shape Wales during the 18th-19th centuries, there was a growing realisation of the health implications that come with heavy industry as air pollution ravaged the Welsh settlements, causing a multitude of diseases as well as supressing the natural landscape (Boys Village, 2012).

One of the solutions that took precedence was the idea of creating holiday villages, in which the working class and their families could travel to over the holiday periods, to remove themselves from the highly dangerous conditions that was imposed on them back home (Boys Village, 2012).

It stems from the Boys Club Movement that started in the early 1920s by Captain J. Glynn-Jones and David Davies as a way to improve the welfare of the adolescent boys that, at the time, where workers of the coal mining industry (Clubs for Young People Wales, 2009). As a result, St Athans Boys Village was created, along with several other sites in South Wales.



Figure 8 – View of chapel from the war memorial, situated at the centre of the village. (Author, 2021)

The site had been a working attraction until 1990, when it was closed due to financial difficulties and has had several owner changes since then (Boys Village, 2012). It is now in a state of dereliction as seen in the above image [Fig.39].



Figure 40 – Graffiti plastered on this wall in the chapel (Author, 2021)

Due to a lack of security, several buildings at the village have been vandalised, arson attacked and subsequently demolished as seen in the imagery on the right. [Fig.41] As my visit to the site revealed the extent of the damage that had been caused to the architectural fabric of the place.



Figure 41 – Evidence of fire spread in one of the classrooms (Author, 2021)



Figure 42 – Gymnasium with natural decay of the roof structure along with the swimming pool in the foreground (Author, 2021)

Apart from the natural decay that occurs with any piece of the built heritage, there is plenty of human influence on the village's destruction, particularly the arson attacks that resulted in the removal of several buildings on site for safety [Fig.43].

Nature continues to claw back the site, with overgrowth present at every point at the site, such as the outdoor swimming pool [Fig.42]. This continues to be a danger to the existing fabric along with the wet climate of Wales, that over time will cause further decay of the architecture at St Athans Boys' Village.



Figure 43 – View of chapel tower, looking south-west (Author, 2021)

There are two notable pieces at the site; the war memorial [Fig.45] and the chapel [Fig.46], both having the highest chance of being protected and conserved in the future due to the connection they have to religion and as a place of ceremony and remembrance for those who fought in the world wars, that once attended the village.



Figure 9 –Structural brickwork arch detail in the interior of the chapel (Author, 2021)

The chapel has a plain modern architectural form, with simple detailing that reflects on traditional construction methods and architectural motifs [Fig.44]. There is nothing extraordinary about its fabric; having been built for the sole purpose as a place of worship, however, it has history that could be considered significant along with the rest of the site.



Figure 10 – War memorial dedicated to the fallen (Author, 2021)

Even more so for the war memorial that was built to commemorate and remember the fallen [Fig.45], especially to those that attended the village over holiday periods on a regular basis, in which there where many (Clubs for Young People Wales, 2009).

The question is whether a site like this is significant enough to be worth conserving, or is redevelopment really an option for a place with a century's worth of memories?

Is it time to move forward and leave the past in the past or is there importance to the built heritage at St Athans Boys' Village?

Penuel Chapel, Pontypridd – Case Study 4



Figure 46 – Penuel Methodist Chapel, Pontypridd [1860-1960] (RCT Digital Library Archive, 2020)

In Wales, chapels once formed an integral part of the architectural fabric of cities, towns, and villages across the country. The once highly diverse, religious communities that sat in the industrial landscape has slowly evolved into the contemporary forms of architecture we see today (Hillings, 2018).

A portion of these chapels have become abandoned post-1945 and replaced with newer construction such as Penuel Methodist chapel in Pontypridd, [Fig.47] which was built initially built in 1817 and later rebuilt in 1860 by the architect T. Thomas (RCAHMW, 2010).



Figure 47 – Brutalist shopping arcade replacing Penuel Chapel (RCT Digital Library Archive, 2020)

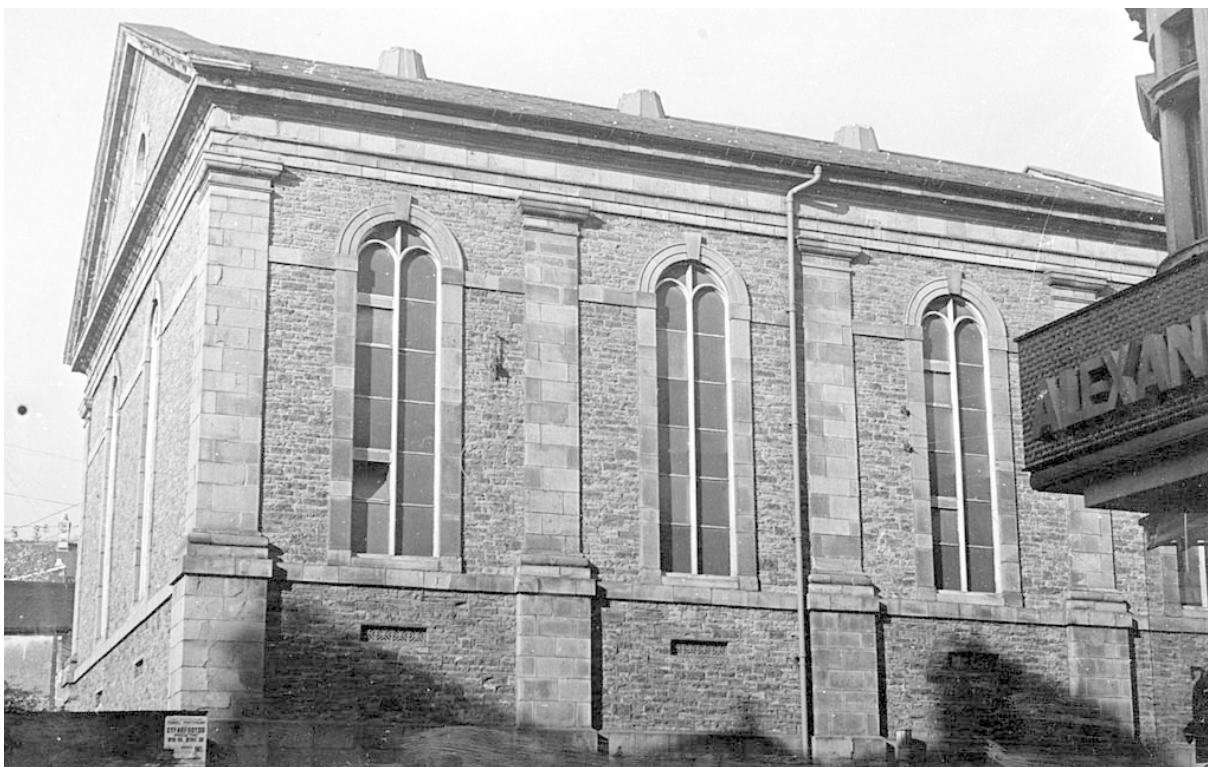


Figure 48 – Penuel Methodist Chapel, East elevation (RCT Digital Library Archive, 2020)

The architecture of the chapel had a Romanesque styled gable-entry that had tall round-headed windows with simple detailing on the east elevation that had repeating buttresses [Fig.49].

In 1960, the chapel was demolished and replaced by a fraternal shopping arcade designed in the then popular brutalist style [Fig.48].

This change has arguably changed how the Penuel square appears, where the original chapel had enclosed the square, making the space more intimate and tighter, over the later arcade, which opened the space, losing that enclosure but recreating the space so that more light fills the square.



Figure 49 – South elevation of Penuel Chapel, showing graveyard in foreground (RCT Digital Library Archive, 2020)

The chapel also had a small graveyard at the rear end of the site [Fig.50], which at the time was in the middle of a busy high street, of which is rather unique. Both the chapel and graveyard were demolished when the redevelopment occurred.



Figure 50 – Penuel Chapel interior view from balcony (RCT Digital Library Archive, 2020)



Figure 51 – Penuel Chapel interior view from altar (RCT Digital Library Archive, 2020)

This was just one site in Pontypridd that underwent redevelopment post-war, with many other chapels undergoing similar treatment as Welsh society shifted away from religion being an integral part of communities and the reduction in attendance to mass (Jones, 2014, pp. 163-164).

As for the interior of the chapel, it was as simple as the exterior, it served one purpose and that was a house of God, a place of worship for the community to come together.

One notable feature [Fig.51] is the blocked-out windows on the south side of the chapel, that may have been since the sun passed through these windows and was blinding to the people sitting in the pews, [Fig.52]. or perhaps due to the graveyard in which these windows would have looked out onto was not welcomed. However, the true reasoning may never be discovered, especially now as the chapel's fabric is lost to time.

Bethania Chapel, Aberdare – Case Study 5



Figure 52 – Interior of Bethania Chapel in 2009, falling into disrepair (Whitmore, 2009)

Continuing with the idea of lost and abandoned chapels in Wales, there are such examples close to home that are slowly disappearing such as Bethania Chapel in Aberdare [Fig.53] that had recently gone into deep dive disrepair, with its roof and most of its fabric being demolished in early 2015 for safety reasons (RCAHMW, 2015).



Figure 53 – Exterior of Bethania Chapel in 2014, before its ultimate partial demolition. (Macs15, 2014)

The Chapel was built originally in 1853 by architect Evan Griffiths and rebuilt in 1884 by architect William Jones in the Romanesque style. The chapel remained open to mass, up until the early 1990's, when it closed due to dwindling attendance and financial constraints and it didn't take long before the interior of the building fell apart [Fig.54], as by 2009 the roof and interior details were removed (RCAHMW, 2015).

This is not a novel story in Wales, with 25% of the over 6500 chapels have closed and became derelict. With the rest under constant threat of closure due to the decline in attendance and the financial constraints that it brings. Bethania Chapel was one of hundreds that dotted in and around the area of Aberdare, dominating the built heritage as it mixed in with the mining cottages and industries that were the heart of any Welsh settlement during the industrial revolution (Hidden Wales: Last Chance to Save, 2022).



Figure 54 – Unique detail above gable end doorway depicting the sun behind the bible, now lost to time (D.Workman, 2008)

One significant social aspect to this chapel, is that it was where the 'Gymanfa Ganu', 'Singing festival' was believed to have been pioneered by Reverend Evan Lewis. This is a festival of sacred hymns that were sung entirely in Welsh (Williams, 1998).

Along with a rather unique detail [Fig.55] that depicted the sun behind the bible above the gable end doorway into the Bethania Chapel, that has unfortunately been demolished during the removal of the roof back in 2014.



Figure 55 – ‘Ysgoldy Bethania’ A Sunday school that was part of the Bethania chapel site. (RCT Digital Library Archive, 1990)

The chapel had also been extended to include a Sunday school [Fig.54] at the rear end, built soon after the building of the chapel itself in 1890. It was used by the chapel up until its closure in the 90s (Cadw, 1991).

Surprisingly the chapel and the attached school had been given grade II listing back in 1991, shortly after its closure. However, as natural decay took over the building over the next decade, it quickly became unrealistic to keep the buildings standing due to a danger of complete collapse, hence the partial demolition of the site in 2014 (RCAHMW, 2015).



Figure 56 – Bethania Chapel Sunday School as existing, looking from South (Author, 2022)



Figure 57 – Front of Bethania Chapel as existing (Author, 2022)



Figure 58 – Bethania Chapel Sunday School as existing, looking from north (Author, 2022)

Comparative Example: Capel Calfaria, Aberdare



Figure 59 – Exterior of Capel Calfaria in Aberdare (Mac15, 2014)

Just across the road from Bethania Chapel's Sunday School is another iconic chapel in Aberdare that has fared a lot better than the previous example, with much of its fabric still existing. This chapel, Capel Calfaria, [Fig.60] was built in 1851 and was one of the largest Baptist churches in the South Wales Valleys and the oldest in Aberdare (Jones, 2004).



Figure 60 – Interior view facing front end of chapel (Hidden Wales: Last Chance to Save, 2022)

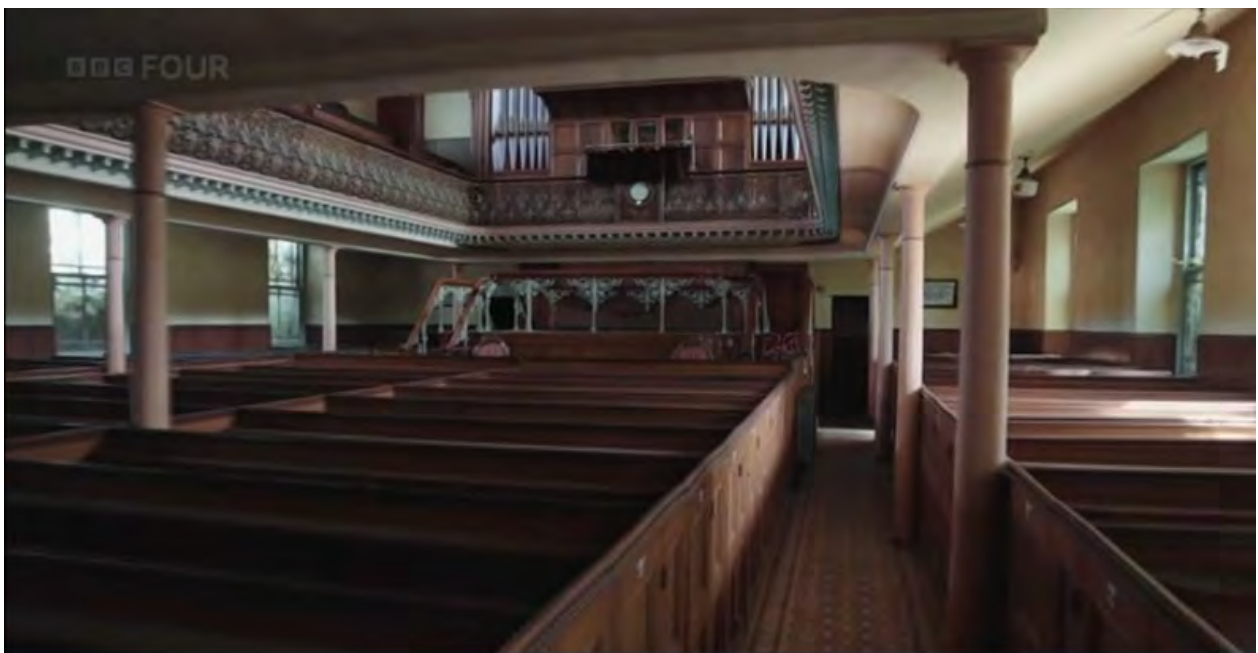


Figure 61 – Interior view facing the back of the chapel, showing the main space and organ on the balcony in background (Hidden Wales: Last Chance to Save, 2022)

It is well preserved despite it being derelict since 2012 as seen in its interior [Fig 56/57]. The chapel has also been given listed status, grade II as of 1991, similarly with the beforementioned Bethania Chapel (Cadw, 1991).

It was abandoned for over 2 decades until it was recently bought by Reverend Robert Evans, along with 12 other Welsh Chapels with the aim to restore them and bring them back to the heart of communities (Hidden Wales: Last Chance to Save, 2022).

These three examples of chapels are only a peak into the hundreds of other chapels that have become abandoned, and in worst cases demolished or lost in its context. Many just need a revitalisation, a new purpose for the legacy of the Welsh chapel is a strong part of architectural heritage for Wales.

Additional Example, Foxhall Newydd - Henllan



Figure 62 – Exterior of Foxhall Newydd falling apart (Searle, 2014)

Another type of Welsh architecture that had seen a steep decline are its country houses such as Foxhall Newydd in Henllan, Denbighshire. [Fig.63] Built in 1592 during the Tudor period, it was once a grand Elizabethan manor that was built for a local man named John Panton (Hidden Wales: Last Chance to Save, 2022).

This house was to be a statement to his fellows, to show them his growing wealth and success, as the house was a very ambitious and sophisticated project for the time and in context to Wales (Cadw, 2000).

The building was grade I listed back in 2000 but continues to be degraded by the Welsh climate as it sits in the middle of nowhere [Fig.65], making it difficult to notice as a someone passing by, well off the beaten track (Hidden Wales: Last Chance to Save, 2022).



Figure 63 – View inside Foxhall, looking from ground level to roof level (Hidden Wales: Last Chance to Save, 2022)



Figure 64 – View of Foxhall with missing façade large window (Seale, 2014)

Lost architecture can take many forms, and in the Welsh context; one thing they have in common is that it ravages the built heritage with architectural decay, constant threat of demolition and abandonment that if left unnoticed could wipe key, integral parts of Wales's history. The loss of any piece of architecture is saddening; the potential value and significance that a building in Wales had on the lives and communities of the Welsh society likely eroded with the gradual loss of key pieces of architectural fabric.

There are many examples of what could be considered pieces of lost architecture, all at different stages of decay, from well-preserved but derelict buildings through to a complete loss of fabric, with little to no physical trace of the building remaining. The examples in this chapter are just the surface to the vast quantities of Welsh architecture that is no longer sitting in the landscape.

As people, communities and societies evolve, change, so does its architecture. These changes are arguably biggest when it comes to the Welsh chapels and the many mining industries that were once integral to the lives of everyone in Wales that has now outlasted their original purposes, as such, are now on a path of gradual decay. It is what to do with the built heritage that survives which should become the focal point of discussion; the impact removing these architectural gems could have on the future generations that would not see them.

It comes down to value and significance of each piece of architecture, which are not easy, black, and white concepts, but instead are subject to opinion; whether the community that surrounds the built heritage still want and/or need these historic architectural forms to continue existing.

Lastly, it is a question of why these examples of architecture fall into such disrepair? Why does Wales continuously lose historic fabric? These are what will be discussed in the last chapter to this dissertation.

Chapter 4: Limitation – Cyfyngaid

Conservation is not a perfect solution, and it shows in Wales, with large portions of pre-war architecture either lost entirely, abandoned and derelict or in dire need of maintenance. On the other hand, there are portion of the built heritage that are well kept, especially those under guardianship of Cadw, where the government is responsible for the continued maintenance and improvement of 196 sites across Wales as of now (Cadw, 2017).

This chapter will discuss the reasons why architecture gets lost in the first place, the limitations of conservation projects in Wales, and how these impact the architectural fabric of Wales. There will be an exploration of why certain sites are left behind, rather than having efforts to restore, repair or retrofit these sites and what it means for the future for conservation architecture, particularly thinking about sustainability.

Preliminary Findings from Questionnaire Responses

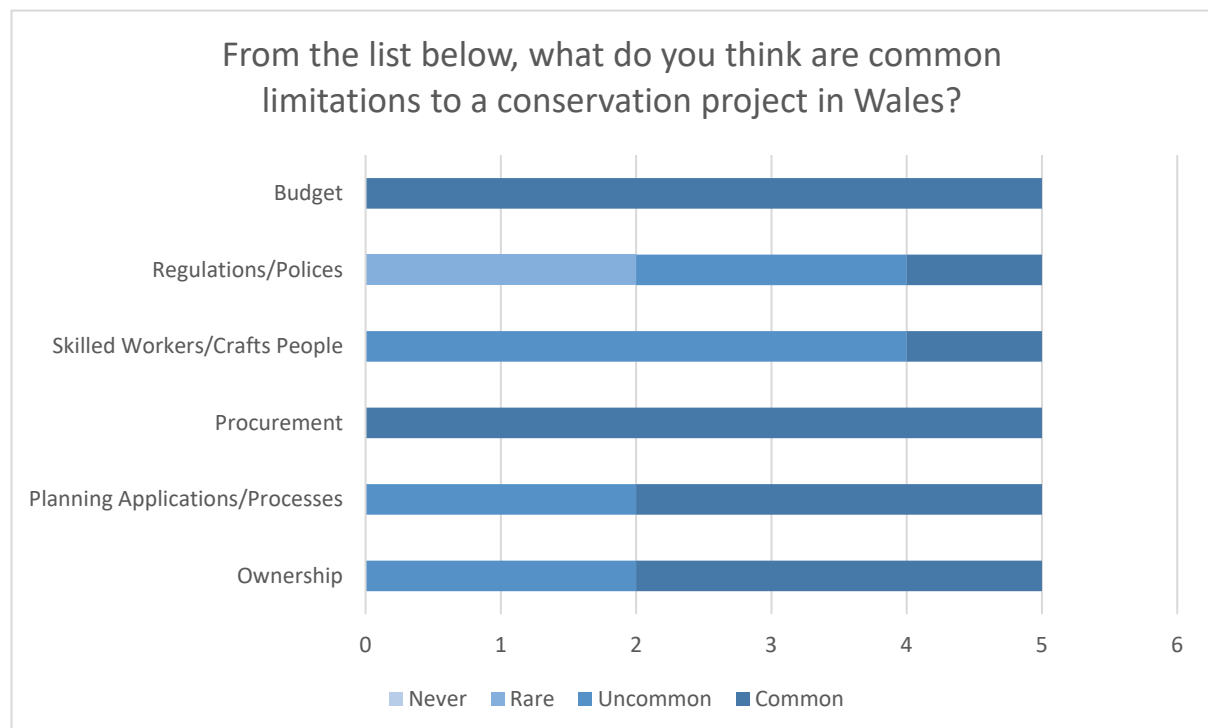


Figure 65 – Graph showing responses to Q3 in the questionnaire

Several questionnaires that asked conservation professionals from Cadw, independent practices and members of the National Museums Wales key questions that explore the issues that conservation has today and what they think of the state conservation in Wales today.

The question probes the key areas in conservation that can determine the success of a project in Wales, and as such, could be a limitation to a particular project. This can be seen in the response to the question, where the responders indicated that procurement, which in terms of conservation, would involve acquiring the suitable materials that depending on the project, could be unique as certain types of limestone are required for example. This tells us that there may be an issue with having access to proper materials to complete certain conservation projects that involve restoration for instance [Appx.A].

In addition, the lack of professional crafts people and skilled workers can further complicate the procurement process in some instances. It is important to note however, that even though there is a limited pool of these workers, the companies that do specialise in traditional materials, construction and crafts are available in Wales. This means that there is a limited diversity in this field, which could limit a typical conservation project but is more of a hinderance than a limitation [Appx.A].

The graph also indicates that every respondent believes that budget is a common limitation, which is unsurprising when considered in context to Wales. Financial constraints to any architectural project are a concern, but in terms of conservation, the often-increased costs working with historic buildings, using unique materiality and traditional construction methods, will likely make a typical conservation project more expensive than alternatives [Appx.A].

The heightened specialisation and planning required for a typical conservation project to be successful can drive costs in completing work compared to demolition and redevelopment in most cases, and as such can be more enticing to clients, along with the greater freedom of design choices that usually comes with redevelopment.

Less of a limitation, according to the graph, to conservation projects in Wales are the planning policies and regulations that aim to protect the integrity of the built heritage as well as a guide in dealing with the historic fabric. The freedoms of creativity are protected as best as possible when it comes to every evolving document [Appx.A].

Overall, the questionnaire responses pointed out some key topics that affect the conservation field and as a result, the state of the built heritage in Wales. With budget, financial constraints that can deter conservation projects being the most limiting in the success of a typical conservation project, and procurement, with the lack of diversity in skilled workers and materials to complete on site work.

Interview Responses

As part of the research, a series of interviews aimed to delve deeper into the initial questionnaires, was conducted. From the questionnaire responses, there were several key topics that came to light, particularly in what limits conservation in Wales. These topics are discussed in brief on the previous page and further discussed in these interviews.

One of the key limitations to conservation, as highlighted previously, was the lack of skilled workers and crafts people. During interviews, this was further refined as it was discovered that this issue is more about the limited number of contractors that specialise in conservation as well as a limited supply of workers with the necessary skill and experiences to work on site [Appx.B3,B4].

However, this is not just limited to labourers such as carpenters or masons but also the planning and architecture side of the field, in which a lack of master planners that can work on larger conservation projects are limited [Appx.B3]. In addition, it has been discovered that conservation officers, of which work with local authorities, that assess the state of historic buildings in their areas, as well as advise clients, architects and planners are few and far between, often having one officer covering multiple authorities [Appx.B2].

This lack of skills in conservation in general can have dire consequences, as the rate in which conservation can take place is slowed significantly by the low pool of skills as well as acting as a barrier to success, especially when considering budget constraints.

One other interesting point discovered during an interview with one of the members at St Fagans, National Museum of History, explained that they can complete work on the projects they have through a dedicated pool of workers, that specialise in historical reconstruction, archaeology, and fabric preservation as examples. This means that the museum rarely has problems sourcing a suitable workforce, as they have teams on standby to work specifically with the requirements of the work at St Fagans [Appx.B1].

This is in stark contrast to the rest of Wales, in which a typical conservation project is not limited but more hindered by the lack of diversity in the skilled workers and crafts people pool. This is however, slowly changing, as organisations that offer training and advice to those in conservation, are being setup. Such instances like the Tywi Centre in Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, which offer a range of courses for workers, planners, and architects alike. As well as offering advice and guidance to clients seeking to do a conservation-based project. The courses range available range from working with traditional lime to bespoke carpentry work [Appx.B4].

Another issue that was further investigated with the interviews, was how the clients themselves can have an impact on built heritage of Wales. That the majority of the historic buildings in Wales are owned by private owners and not public organisations such as Cadw. This suggests that clients could have more impact on the state of a typical building than was first thought. This means that a client that owns a historic building, has influence on how conservation occurs in Wales [Appx.B4].

Since much of the built heritage belongs to private owners, the education and awareness available to potential clients would be an important element in a typical conservation project [Appx.B1]. As the lack of knowledge in how conserving fabric works and the importance and value that it could bring can impact the decision making of the owners that have responsibility of these sites, that the risk of demolishing due to conservation generally being more expensive and complex is high [Appx.B2].

Therefore, guidance and advice from professionals, such as those at Cadw, RCAHMS or the Twyi Centre are invaluable to clients that are looking to work on a historic building. They provide potential clients with knowledge and information that will help them make informed decisions. The variety of design philosophies, compounded with the many forms of conservation provides a range of options and opportunities to a conservation project, and as such, these need to be explained to owners of historic buildings.

There is another angle involving private owners that also impacts conservation, the perception of the historic fabric itself; perceived significance and value of a building can affect whether fabric gets repaired, restored etc, that older, Victorian and Georgian pieces for example, are generally considered more valuable than say a 1960s brutalist piece, even though both groupings are equally historic [Appx.B1].

Expanding further on this, considering that private owners of historic buildings could explore conservation options, the costs involved in supporting such a project could be expensive, and is often a limitation in a typical conservation project, [Fig.66] and currently there are grants available to clients that are working on historic buildings, particularly ones with grade listing. These grants, however, are often not enough to support a typical project and recently has become less prioritised by the Welsh government in terms of budgeting [Appx.B3].

Overall, there are many limitations that can impact a typical conservation project in Wales, with the majority of issues involving financial constraints, with the combination of the usually higher costs involved in conservation projects combined with the limited grants system and budgets allocated to these projects, especially considering that the majority of the historic buildings are private owners, rather than key organisations that could have more capabilities in successful conservation projects.

In addition to financial constraints, the lack diversity of skilled workers and crafts people in Wales hinders the progress and could limit creativity in on-site work with the lack of conservation officers, planners and architects with the experience and expertise to inform the design of a typical conservation project is also a continued problem in the field.

The increased complexity and costs involved in working on a conservation project can cause private owners to shy away from the prospect, which is made worse by the general lack of knowledge about how conservation works; the importance in conserving, the significance and value that historic buildings have and could bring to Wales. Which is also not aided by the beforementioned lack of expertise based in Wales, that can provide guidance and advice to private owners.

On the other hand, there are well crafted and designed regulations and policies that have evolved over time, that both protect the existing fabric, particularly graded sites and act as guidance to designers and clients alike [Appx.B3,B4] Which is a very important process in the field of conservation.

Conclusion

The built heritage of Wales is steeped in rich history, culture and as such architecture; an amalgamation of external cultural influences that is rooted in the Welsh society. From the Roman and Norman conquests that attempted to penetrate through the Welsh landscape, all the way to the modern and contemporary architectural styles that continues, for the most part, to be influenced by the European mainland.

Despite this consistent external influence, Wales has a range of unique architectural forms, in which are heavily impacted by both the Welsh climate and the landscape they sit in. This is particular in the Vernacular pieces, in which the priorities were focused on functionality, the sheltering from the at times harsh, wet climate of Wales. As well as the largely lost industrial heritage, which played a huge role in the development of modern Wales, and as a centre to progression of European advancement and evolution at the time.

This long, substantial history is a key element to architectural conservation in Wales; the value and significance of the site to the local area, how the community perceives historic architecture and as such whether it is important to keep, which means that, without the local support and recognition of a particular building, the potential loss of this building is high.

How a certain building or site had shaped the course of history for Wales has a certain volume of significance, and that the opportunity to preserve a piece of architectural history, in very much the same way as a book or film, has either been lost or currently in dire need of attention in the vast number of the historic buildings in the Welsh landscape.

That the hard work done by the field of conservation is limited and restrained in Wales; often in part of financial constraints and complex, limited procurement processes in which private owners often struggle to justify investing in conservation efforts, over abandonment or at worse demolition and redevelopment.

On the other hand, the lucky few that are successful, are carefully conserved. With sensitivity to its fabric, in-depth consideration of what is the best route; is it repair, restoration or retrofit? The applied design philosophies are also an important element, is it about honesty or aesthetic value? What makes the building or site valued and significant to both the locale and to Wales? These are just a few of the many aspects that are carefully considered and vigorously designed to ensure that the purpose of conserving is meaningful to each individual piece of the built heritage that eventually goes through this process

Recommendations

There are still actions that could be taken to improve how conservation in Wales could scale, become more recognised as a valued approach in dealing with historic fabric and looking forward to the immediate future, how conservation can play a big role in reaching sustainability goals as we tackle the climate emergency:

Education – As identified in the research, there is a clear lack of expertise in all aspects of conservation; planners, officers, architects, skilled workers, and crafts people, which is accompanied by a lack of awareness generally about architectural history, and the significance and value that it brings and could bring to Wales.

The further development of organisations like the Twyi Centre are key in providing Wales with the knowledge base that is required to tackle the thousands of potential conservation sites that are currently in dire disrepair. More awareness through community driven projects and engagements with communities have shown to work well, and so bringing in groups that can engage with a historic building in a unique way could help develop the general knowledge and understanding of the communities in Wales.

Investment – The limiting factor of a typical conservation project in Wales is the necessary budget to complete an often more complex and specialised route, that can cost more than redevelopment. This needs to change, with the current grant schemes and the National Lottery Fund providing support for some conservation projects, it is not enough to make the big difference that is needed to conserve more of the built heritage in Wales. Investment can enable more private owners to participate in conservation projects, which would be a key driver in a successful conservation project.

Recognition – Realising the vast opportunities that the Welsh built heritage has, the value that historic fabric could bring to the future of Wales, it seems wasteful to ignore the importance of certain buildings and sites, in which each one tells a different story, a unique life cycle, very much like any human being it could be argued.

To answer the question: how do we preserve our heritage? There are numerous avenues that conservation can take, all unique and tailored to each site that it is applied to, as each site is unique in of itself, with differing needs, perceived values, and importance to the communities that it belongs to. Conservation in Wales is unfortunately relatively limited in scale, with only hundreds out of hundreds of thousands that could be considered well preserved and protected.

The listing of historic buildings, in which is one of the most direct, regulatory, decision-making processes that can both recognise the importance of a particular building and state that it should be protected from either decay or demolition is a robust system, that has enabled the protection of historic fabric in Wales. However, it is not a perfect system, with some of the graded buildings still falling into disrepair, such as the Bethania Chapel that was discussed previously.

Preservation of architectural heritage can be very successful in Wales; that it extends the usefulness of a historic building past its original purpose, bringing further value to Welsh culture and economy of the area in which it is in, Big Pit near Blaenavon being a good example of this. In which an educational focus allows future generations to gain knowledge about the past and to explore the Welsh identity.

On the other hand, is what is left behind, such as the Boys Village at St Athans, which has great potential in being retrofitted as a cultural centre or restored to its previous function as an at-home tourist destination, a place of commercial viability that could enhance the locale and attract people to the history of Wales and as part, the architectural fabric.

The loss of any piece of architecture is hard to evaluate in terms of value and significance, it is subject to opinion, and that understanding that not every piece of historic architecture is going to survive through time is a key realisation in this dissertation. Even now, more buildings such as the former police station in Wrexham are being demolished, lost forever.

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Site visit to Blaenavon Ironworks and the World Heritage Centre, 01 July 2021.

Site visit to Caerphilly Castle, 24 July 2021

Appendix: A1

Respondent

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1

Anonymous

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21:31

Time to complete

1. In your experience, what are the key priorities involved in working on listed buildings and how does that affect the outcome of the project?

A full understanding of the particular building and what is significant about it. This is not necessarily just in heritage terms

2. Do you have a philosophy that informs your work in conservation and how does that influences your projects?

Honesty

3. From the list below, what do you think are common limitations to an architectural conservation project in Wales?

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Budget	☒	☐	☐	☐
Regulations/ Policies	☒	☐	☐	☐
Skilled Workers/ Crafts People	☒	☐	☐	☐
Procurement	☐	☒	☐	☐
Planning Applications/ Processes	☒	☐	☐	☐
Ownership Rights	☐	☒	☐	☐

4. In relation to question 3, within your experiences, do you have any examples of these limitations?

Costs are driven higher due to many factors. The time input to deal with additional regulation, a shortage of traditional craftsmen, and conservation work is often more time consuming (and so expensive).

5. In relation to question 3, do you believe these limitations impact negatively on the built heritage in Wales; in terms of the risks that they become 'lost to time'?

Yes. Some owners disregard regulations, especially when the processes appear to add expense or delay unnecessarily. The cost of repairing listed buildings are also sometimes so high that a project becomes unviable without grant funding.

6. Are there any historic sites in Wales that you think deserve conservation or recognition as an important architectural site? Perhaps a site you would personally take on if given the opportunity?

I believe there is currently a lack of protection to c20 architecture

7. Do you feel that Cadw could do more to protect historic Welsh architecture?

I think this is an open ended question. funding will always be a limiting factor regardless of how high the ceiling is

8. Does Cadw employ any architects? Do you think an architect brings any advantage as part of the organisation?

There appears to be fewer and fewer architects employed by CADW and Planning Authorities, which I do believe to be at the detriment of our built heritage, and a failure to pass on knowledge built up during an officer's tenure.

9. What are your thoughts about St Fagans; do you think St Fagans is relevant or important in terms of conservation of the built heritage?

Yes. I think it is a particular valuable asset in terms of allowing buildings to be retained in a historic state without the pressure of adapting to current day needs, but also sparking and interest in our built heritage and further in terms of allowing better understanding of building types and tradition

10. In Wales, do you think more should be done to discover, promote and conserve the built heritage? If so, what would you suggest changing?

I think the Conservation Area legislation lacks teeth, and that too many buildings are subsequently listed for 'group value'. If no external changes were permitted to buildings in a conservation area without consent, it would free up the owners of these buildings to carry out internal changes without being tied up in an unpopular legislative process. I think be easier to understand by a member of the public, be easier to police, and give better protection to both conservation Areas and the heritage structures yhat warrant a higher level of protection

11. Do you feel in your experience that more could be covered in schools in terms of the history of Wales and Welsh architecture?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☒ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

12. Any further comments?

13. I plan to setup interviews to elaborate on the topics in this questionnaire. It would be done through Teams or Zoom as an online interview with myself, lasting 30 minutes. Are you prepared to be interviewed?

☒ Yes

☐ No

14. All replies will be treated in confidence. Would you prefer to remain anonymous in this questionnaire?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Appendix: A2

Respondent

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Anonymous

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34:37

Time to complete

1. What is your role in Cadw and how does that affect the running of the organisation as a whole?

I am the Head of Conservation for Cadw and have overall responsibility for the general conservation ethos of all our projects, across the estate. I am part of a larger management team that runs the organisation, a team that includes archaeologists, historians, visitor service, commercial and marketing experts, finance specialists, conservation surveyors and HR.

2. In your view, what are the key decisions that should be made when considering a conservation project in Wales?

Priority of the works needing to be carried out i.e is there a risk of loss of historic fabric that is affecting public safety. Cost of the works is another important factor - there isn't endless pots of public money at our disposal. Timing of the conservation works/projects - we try not to carry out work during the winter months but this is sometimes unavoidable as sites tend to be quieter (less visitors) during the winter months.

3. From the list below, what do you think are common limitations to a conservation project in Wales?

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Budget	☒	☐	☐	☐
Regulations/ Policies	☐	☒	☐	☐
Skilled Workers/ Crafts People	☒	☐	☐	☐
Procurement	☐	☒	☐	☐

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Planning Applications/ Processes	☐	☒	☐	☐
Ownership Rights	☐	☒	☐	☐

4. In relation to question 3; what examples can you think of, where these limitations are particularly impactful?

Currently, there is a dearth of skilled heritage/conservation labour across Wales, so the same companies crop up to do the work time and time again.

5. If a site were to be proposed to Cadw for conservation and management; in your experience, what would be the typical processes involved during the stage of consideration?

For one of our larger sites we would look to appoint a masterplanner with heritage experience to consider the challenges and opportunities available to us at the site. Out of that report would come a series of actions needing to be undertaken - 3D laser surveys, conservation management plans, audience development plans, concept designs. With these reports in place, the senior management team could decide as to whether to progress with a major project.

6. Do you think more could be done if greater support was given to Cadw by the government?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

7. In relation to question 6, How would greater support affect Cadw for the near future?

Were Cadw to be given a bigger budget, we could undertake more conservation and

development projects across the estate (in order to attract more visitors to the monuments and Wales more generally) as well as offering grants to third parties to support their community-lead projects and supporting heritage skills training.

8. In your opinion, do you think enough is done by Cadw to preserve the architecture of Wales?

Cadw have a statutory obligation to care for the monuments in State Care (which we do). The conservation of other historic buildings - both private and public - across Wales lies with the owners of those buildings.

9. Do you feel in your experience that more could be covered in schools in terms of the history of Wales and Welsh architecture?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☒ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

10. Any further comments?

11. I plan to setup interviews to elaborate on the topics in this questionnaire. It would be done through Teams or Zoom as an online interview with myself, lasting 30 minutes. Are you prepared to be interviewed?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

☐

Other

12. All replies will be treated in confidence. Would you prefer to remain anonymous in this questionnaire?

☒

Yes

☐

No

☐

Other

Appendix: A3

Respondent

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1

Anonymous

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96:59

Time to complete

1. What is your role at St Fagans and what are your key responsibilities?

Principal Curator: Historic Buildings

2. In your view, what are key decisions that should be considered when considering an addition to the St Fagans site?

New acquisitions should allow us to interpret that which isn't already. What story can the building allow us to tell? Buildings should be typical examples, rather than architectural 'one-off's'. Has enough of the building survived to allow for rebuilding and interpretation? Does its present site allow for its safe and efficient dismantling? Where at the Museum will it be rebuilt? Is the building being offered freely by its owners?

3. From the list below, in your experience, what are common limitations to a building project at St Fagans?

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Budget	☐	☒	☐	☐
Regulations/Policies	☐	☒	☐	☐
Skilled Workers/Crafts People	☐	☐	☐	☒
Procurement	☐	☒	☐	☐
Planning Applications/Processes	☐	☐	☒	☐
Ownership Rights	☐	☐	☐	☒

4. In relation to question 3, what examples can you think of, where these limitations are/were particularly impactful?

Some of our newer buildings, because of their planned use have needed to comply with modern safety regulations. Finding a balance between interpreting its traditional use, and complying with modern regulations can be complex.

5. St Fagans is a museum of Welsh culture/life. What do you think are the most valued elements to the work done at St Fagans?

We are a public resource. We can answer questions about Welsh cultural life and show artefacts that highlight people's stories. We continue to collect so that our collections remain relevant now and in the future.

6. How significant do you think St Fagans is in depicting the architectural history of Wales?

Very significant. However, our focus is the people who lived in the buildings. We are not a Museum of buildings. The buildings we have provide context and backdrop for our interpretation. In terms of architectural history we have focussed on representing the lives of ordinary people, hence we don't present a complete picture of the development of architecture in Wales. As many fine and rare examples of Welsh architectural styles are represented (including those vernacular examples which were built by local people to suit local need), the Museum provides the only place where they can be viewed together. Many of our buildings have been listed by Cadw after they have been moved here.

7. In Wales, do you think more should be done to discover, promote and conserve the built heritage? If so, what would you suggest changing?

More can always be done. I would suggest enabling people to be aware of the importance of their architectural heritage in their own towns, streets and importantly, that which their own homes represent. People could be encouraged to act on a small scale in areas where they have influence such as their homes - keep original windows, skirting boards, fireplaces etc. Many small changes over time is more impactful than the loss of large buildings. Encourage understanding that buildings are part of our shared cultural history, and what their loss represents.

8. What do you think of the work that Cadw does with the built heritage of Wales?

9. Do you feel in your experience that more could be covered in schools in terms of the history of Wales and Welsh architecture?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☒ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

10. Any further comments?

Not sure why you added the history of Wales to the above question. This questionnaire is about the architecture of Wales.

11. I plan to setup interviews to elaborate on the topics in this questionnaire. It would be done through Teams or Zoom as an online interview with myself, lasting 30 minutes. Are you prepared to be interviewed?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other

12. All replies will be treated in confidence. Would you prefer to remain anonymous in this questionnaire?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ clarification required

Appendix: A4

Respondent

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2

Anonymous

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128:41

Time to complete

1. In your experience, what are the key priorities involved in working on listed buildings and how does that affect the outcome of the project?

To understand the significance and heritage values of the asset, identify its risks, vulnerabilities, and opportunities before working out the technical and design responses to ensure that decisions will be made on the basis of informed understanding.

2. Do you have a philosophy that informs your work in conservation and how does that influences your projects?

The current Historic England and Cadw approaches are clear and unambiguous. They are defined/underpinned by the successive evolution of international charters, conventions and guidance, or they alternatively align where practicable with e.g. SPAB Principles (mid-19th century). As these principles have not changed significantly since 2008 & 2011 respectively (with reference to guidance documents it has been possible for their interpretation to be better understood and implemented). In Wales, the robustness has been further underpinned by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

3. From the list below, what do you think are common limitations to an architectural conservation project in Wales?

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Budget	☒	☐	☐	☐
Regulations/ Policies	☐	☐	☒	☐
Skilled Workers/ Crafts People	☒	☐	☐	☐
Procurement	☐	☒	☐	☐

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Planning Applications/ Processes	☐	☒	☐	☐
Ownership Rights	☒	☐	☐	☐

4. In relation to question 3, within your experiences, do you have any examples of these limitations?

Owners, Trusts and Charters don't have the financial resources, knowledge or skills to manage the upkeep of their historic assets. WG + funding from organisations such as NHLP or other bodies is reducing. Procurement procedures can be problematic, particularly when specialist and not generalist skills are needed for heritage projects. Generic procurement procedures are not appropriate nor applicable in most cases and could result in inappropriate businesses being appointed. Resourcing of Planning Departments, the knowledge of officers and the low number of Building Conservation Officers employed by LA's is challenging.

5. In relation to question 3, do you believe these limitations impact negatively on the built heritage in Wales; in terms of the risks that they become 'lost to time'?

This will always be the case and the history/development or alternatively the decline and loss of any heritage assets in Wales is a reflection to the 'ebbs and flows' in society of individuals, organisations or communities, politics, religions, beliefs or values held by its populations at a point in time.

6. Are there any historic sites in Wales that you think deserve conservation or recognition as an important architectural site? Perhaps a site you would personally take on if given the opportunity?

There are many, and even more that I don't know about. 20th Century and former industrial sites or sites of industrial archaeological interest are particularly vulnerable. Similarly, ancient monuments, pre-historic or sites of Archaeological interest where little can be seen is challenging. Locations where 'intangible significance' is important and of heritage value is again misunderstood.

7. Do you feel that Cadw could do more to protect historic Welsh architecture?

Yes – but it is fully understood that it does not use the equivalent resources of Historic Scotland, Historic England etc. These are political decisions which demonstrate that heritage is not a key priority within the civil service of Welsh Government.

8. Does Cadw employ any architects? Do you think an architect brings any advantage as part of the organisation?

To my knowledge, Cadw do not employ any architects at this moment in time. They are generally led by archaeologists, building surveyors, planners. Historically, the technical leadership was undertaken by Architects. An Architect does sit on the Internal Operating Board of Cadw as a non-executive member.

9. What are your thoughts about St Fagans; do you think St Fagans is relevant or important in terms of conservation of the built heritage?

St Fagan's does have a place as a depository of last resort for buildings, structures and aspects of Welsh life. I am making a distinction here between buildings and the other collections held by NMW at the St Fagans National Museum of History. Whilst there is a huge amount to commend, the culture and conservation/historic environment narrative has evolved considerably since the early work of Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan and Dr Iorweth Peate as the first director. Whilst St Fagan's is the site of the first UK Folk Museum, it was derived/inspired by Scandinavian examples that evolved during quite a different political landscape of nationalism pre-World War II. By today, the historic environment legislation would suggest that the removal of a building from its site and context is far less likely to occur than in years gone by. All original buildings were unlisted (though are now listed and the museum sits within the St Fagan's Conservation Area).

10. In Wales, do you think more should be done to discover, promote and conserve the built heritage? If so, what would you suggest changing?

Yes - but not easily implemented. I'd suggest using the word 'recognise' as opposed to discover as a lot of our heritage is visible but is not appreciated now and as such becomes vulnerable as a consequence. The perceptions of what heritage and 'conservation' means to people and society also varies significantly and obviously the value-based understanding is a totally alien concept.

11. Do you feel in your experience that more could be covered in schools in terms of the history of Wales and Welsh architecture?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☒ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

12. Any further comments?

Yes - but this should be nuanced due to the far reaching links, connections and shared history of Wales with the other Nations of the UK, Europe or the rest of the world. There is currently an opportunity for more to be developed with the introduction of the new Donaldson Curriculum, equally, there is also quite a bit that could be done with the project work associated with The Welsh Baccalaureate.

13. I plan to setup interviews to elaborate on the topics in this questionnaire. It would be done through Teams or Zoom as an online interview with myself, lasting 30 minutes. Are you prepared to be interviewed?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

14. All replies will be treated in confidence. Would you prefer to remain anonymous in this questionnaire?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Appendix: A5

Respondent

<

1

Anonymous

>

11:21

Time to complete

1. What is your role in Cadw and how does that affect the running of the organisation as a whole?

I am Head of Finance. I am responsible for preparing annual budgets - making the case for the funding Cadw requires to operate and deliver its priorities. This includes presenting the case for Cadw's capital budget, to ensure that we get a sufficient level of budget to be able to carry out essential conservation work on our monuments; and to invest in sites to develop the visitor offer and therefore generate additional income from entry fees.

2. In your view, what are the key decisions that should be made when considering a conservation project in Wales?

Colleagues will advise on what the conservation requirements and priorities are. I am heavily reliant on their professional expertise in this respect.

3. From the list below, what do you think are common limitations to a conservation project in Wales?

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Budget	☒	☐	☐	☐
Regulations/ Policies	☐	☐	☐	☐
Skilled Workers/ Crafts People	☐	☐	☐	☐
Procurement	☐	☒	☐	☐
Planning Applications/ Processes	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ownership Rights	☐	☐	☐	☐

Common

Uncommon

Rare

Never

Others:



4. As Head of Finance, how is the budget allocated? Is there set priorities etc?

As above, I am reliant on the advice of professional colleagues

5. If a site were to be proposed to Cadw for conservation and management; in your experience, what would be the typical processes involved during the stage of consideration?

We conserve our own sites. We also run grant programmes to provide grants to others to assist them with the costs of conservation work.

6. Do you think more could be done if greater support was given to Cadw by the government?



Yes



No



Maybe

7. In relation to question 6, How would greater support affect Cadw for the near future?

Cadw has been successful in recent years in making the case for appropriate levels of funding within the Welsh Government, and using this funding effectively to address priority areas. If we were to get higher budgets again, more could be done, but we would also need to increase the level of staff resource to deliver additional work.

8. In your opinion, do you think enough is done by Cadw to preserve the architecture of Wales?

I am not qualified to answer this

9. Do you feel in your experience that more could be covered in schools in terms of the history of Wales and Welsh architecture?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☒ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

10. Any further comments?

11. I plan to setup interviews to elaborate on the topics in this questionnaire. It would be done through Teams or Zoom as an online interview with myself, lasting 30 minutes. Are you prepared to be interviewed?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other

12. All replies will be treated in confidence. Would you prefer to remain anonymous in this questionnaire?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other

Appendix: A6

Respondent

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2

Anonymous

✓

119:43

Time to complete

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1. What is your role in Cadw and how does that affect the running of the organisation as a whole?

I am a non-executive Boar member. My role is therefore in oversight of management and performance, advising on contentious issues and helping to define strategic direction for the organisation.

2. In your view, what are the key decisions that should be made when considering a conservation project in Wales?

Whether or not there is a need for it. The aims and benefits and how to achieve them. How to create a sufficient budget. How the proposals could affect the significance of a heritage asset in terms of its evidential, historical. aesthetic and communal values and how to achieve the best outcomes for these. How to deliver the project to completion.

3. From the list below, what do you think are common limitations to a conservation project in Wales?

	Common	Uncommon	Rare	Never
Budget	☒	☐	☐	☐
Regulations/ Policies	☐	☐	☒	☐
Skilled Workers/ Crafts People	☐	☒	☐	☐
Procurement	☐	☒	☐	☐
Planning Applications/ Processes	☐	☒	☐	☐
Ownership Rights	☐	☒	☐	☐

4. In relation to question 3; what examples can you think of, where these limitations are particularly impactful?

The lack of budget has most impact on projects, whether for private owners of historic buildings or for charities and public bodies.

5. If a site were to be proposed to Cadw for conservation and management; in your experience, what would be the typical processes involved during the stage of consideration?

It is very rare that Cadw takes an additional property into its own guardianship - perhaps once every few years. At present, I don't think there is a formal evaluation system for these, since cases are so rare and all are different. Key factors would be the conservation need and whether there is no other body to take responsibility first. Also, Cadw would need to consider a business plan - can the monument be consolidated and then left as open access, or can it be developed in such a way as to attract visitors and cover its running costs? Another issue would be whether taking on a project could benefit others significantly - for the local community or for the local economy. Proposals would also need to consider the impact of any intervention on the significance of the property as mentioned above.

6. Do you think more could be done if greater support was given to Cadw by the government?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

7. In relation to question 6, How would greater support affect Cadw for the near future?

While it is always true that greater support would allow more to be achieved, this has to be balanced against other needs in culture and in areas such as health, education and economy. However, if greater support were available in the near future this could raise deliver in several areas: larger grants from Cadw could make key heritage projects viable, more could be done to develop and conserve properties in Cadw's care and it might be possible to be more proactive in dealing with conservation priorities nationally.

8. In your opinion, do you think enough is done by Cadw to preserve the architecture of Wales?

Cadw does a substantial job in looking after so many properties, and by and large does it well. There are problems more broadly for the architecture of Wales, particularly in terms of some ongoing problem cases - more could always be done for them but would be dependent on priorities for public money.

9. Do you feel in your experience that more could be covered in schools in terms of the history of Wales and Welsh architecture?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☒ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly Disagree

10. Any further comments?

11. I plan to setup interviews to elaborate on the topics in this questionnaire. It would be done through Teams or Zoom as an online interview with myself, lasting 30 minutes. Are you prepared to be interviewed?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other

12. All replies will be treated in confidence. Would you prefer to remain anonymous in this questionnaire?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ Happy to be identified provided you check with

Appendix B1:

Interview Transcript [14 January 2022]:

ME: First of all, I wanted to ask you more about what your role is about, as the historic buildings curator. What sort of work do you do generally at the museum?

DAFYDD: Well, I look after our collection of historical buildings, including the fixtures and fittings. So, the fireplaces, everything that is attached to a building if you like. So, historically we have had a good collection of parts of historical buildings which are in our storage predominantly. And then a collection of around 50 physical buildings that have been moved from one place to another. Some of these buildings are recreations based on archaeological remains. We had to do that because, the further back in time you go the less there is surviving [of the building] to recreate and to interpret.

DAF: So, the Llys Llewelyn is a medieval hall and Bryneryr is a conjoined iron house from the iron age. So, both of them are based on the results of excavation and academic research.

ME: Would you say that's a common problem; there are plenty of sites at St Fagans, and you say that a majority of them, a lot of the original building has been lost or need significant interpretation or is this only common with a few of them?

DAF: We can only accept a really small proportion of what is offered to us. So, we then decide whether that needs interpretation. Then is there enough of the original fabric of the building left for us to rebuild, cause buildings aren't static; they always change over time, so then we often get offered a building that we have to study about. What period would we like to interpret and what remains from that period and put it back to that period. That would involve blocking up later doorways or windows or removing extensions that were added. So, to take it back to its purest form, but that doesn't necessarily mean when it was built.

ME: Essentially, rather it being a preservation of a building, it is more about taking it back to a time where it was more appropriate to the activity and people there. I think that at St Fagans, it is less about the authenticity of the building but more about the activities and people that take place at these places.

DAF: Both, the main objective for our museum is to interpret the people. We are not a museum of buildings, that's not our remit. But we use the historical buildings to interpret the lifestyles of the people living in it. As a by-product, we have a really good collection of very rare buildings. These buildings were not rare when they were first built, in fact they were very common and there the buildings we go for; the ones that were very common but now very rare for us to interpret a very common way of life at a typical time.

ME: Yeah, that's understandable. I can see how that works. Carrying on from that, one of limitations that was mentioned in the questionnaire was skilled workers/crafts people and I have spoken to other people in conservation, and they mention that skilled workers/crafts people are quite hard to come by. But you mentioned that this isn't the case for the museum. Would you say that the national museum has a 'pool' of skills that you have reliable access to?

DAF: Yes, we have our own team, the historic buildings unit. Let's say there is about 10 of them and they are specialists in different fields and can put a building back and put it back to any period of history. So, we are very fortunate that we have our very own skilled staff that can dismantle a building. Cause essentially when we dismantle a building, we are destroying it. It is an archaeological excavation where you are learning an awful lot about how it was put together. So that in of itself is a

highly skilled role. Then reassembling it, normally to our curatorial specification. Conservation keeps evolving and the techniques keep evolving. And some of the key topics involve undoing what former conservatist did as a subject has developed a lot, and our understanding of what works and don't work.

ME: Yeah, that is very interesting. Would you say that the field of conservation could play a bigger role in educating about the built heritage and conservation works?

DAF: Well, there is lots of places where you can get advice, so in Wales, Cadw would be the one and they can provide grants as well. Some buildings are listed, so you would have to consult with a conservation consultant. The majority of buildings have not got that protection, so it is up to the individuals to seek guidance and if they are not knowledgeable about heritage then they might not think to do that. They might think that double-glazed windows is the way forward and not think that it be nice to put the original sash windows and that you can put double-glazing in the sash windows.

DAF: The responsibility is on the owners especially when the building is not listed. For example, when I walk around the streets of Cardiff, each property might have one original architectural feature remaining.

ME: I would say that's a common theme, as over time buildings need maintenance and often the decision falls on what's the most cost-effective, or up-to-date technology.

DAF: Or what the builder recommends.

ME: Yes.

DAF: Years ago, still the case now. The majority of builders prefer working with cement and are not familiar with working with lime for instance. So, that's where specialists come in to explain why it would be good for the building to use lime.

ME: Talking about using traditional materials such as lime and construction methods, would you say it is difficult to entice private owners to use these methods over other means?

DAF: It would always be hard because conservation restoration is more expensive, but it is getting more popular, and more people are becoming aware of that need to restore sensitively as I think there is more desire these days to purchase buildings that retain period features. So, it is getting better.

ME: Would you say that conservation could be a very important route in terms of the climate emergency? For example, demolishing and rebuilding a house is more damaging than retrofitting or restore it in some way.

DAF: Yes, a knowledge of conservation, as you say it is far more sustainable to keep and modernise/improve instead of knocking down. That's what I see all the time, someone knocking down and rebuilding something similar in its place.

ME: Picking on that, there was a Georgian police station that was knocked down in 2008 and in its place was, in my opinion, an ugly replacement. So, I agree with that, a common thing to happened, I think.

DAF: Very, and hopefully private individuals would challenge that. As a side note, our next project is taffs well police station. Is it more than just about the building, but about the quality of life, quality of the environment you live in, being surrounded by the history of the place you live in. You can't

necessarily put a price on that, we know it raises the value and quality of places because in general, people like seeing old buildings around them. IDK

ME: It is quite hard to define it in a way. It is very opinionated on what's good/bad. But there is a more general appreciation for something that's historical. Talking from that, would you say that, particularly post-war architecture, has value than something that is older? As I know they tend to be at the most risk at this point in time as they are more recent.

DAF: Yeah, it is a lot to do with our cultural perspective at the minute. A lot of people may find a lot of post-war architecture ugly. Whereas they may not find Victorian buildings ugly.

ME: Cause it's such a shift in styles, a 'culture shock' for a lack of a better phrase.

DAF: No, that's a good phrase, we are used to Victorian buildings, we have seen them throughout our lives. Collectively we are used to them. Post-war buildings were trying to follow different parameters, such as cost-effectiveness, challenging the normal and as of yet haven't been viewed as beautiful. Whereas a lot of brutalist architecture is amazing, for example. We still lose a lot of those types of buildings. St Fagans main building is brutal, built in 1975, by the same architect who designed the BBC building in Llandaff. Unfortunately, that building has been lost, pulled down. Along with buildings like multi-story car parks and their designs where at the time very brave and at the cutting edge of technology. A lot of these buildings could just do with jet-washing and people may see them in a different light.

ME: Yeah, so maintenance essentially.

DAF: They have all turned black because of air pollution, fumes from car exhausts. Clean that off and it would look amazing again.

ME: Talking about brutalist architecture, currently tracking down a recent publication called 'How Grey was my Valley', might have heard of it. It's very popular.

DAF: No, I haven't seen that, it sounds good.

ME: I think you would enjoy reading that cause it's predominantly about brutalist architecture, so hoping to get a copy soon.

DAF: It's all about looking backwards, I think. Bute Town in Cardiff was a very attractive Victorian, tree-lined area built by the marquis of Bute and that was flattened to make way for flats, so we are aware of the loss of Victorian properties. But in the future, we will be really aware of the post-war buildings we have lost. Cause if you look at the photographs of some of these buildings, they are astounding pieces of architecture that in future we would look back on and kick ourselves.

ME: There needs to be more consideration on the historical, cultural and heritage value of these before someone decides to bulldoze them.

DAF: Yes, we got a future generations commission in Wales and that's the kind of thinking that needs to be applied to historical architecture as well. Of which we do have Cadw and listed buildings for future generations but that's on a national level. On the local level, people do suffer from loss. Such social housing flats, which are uninspiring and won't be there for very long because they are not built to last or not attractive/exciting enough for them to stay.

ME: One of my final questions, do you have any notable literature that you can think of that might be of interest to me? I am currently looking at John Hilling's books.

DAF: Yes, he was the one who designed the St Fagans main building that's sort of books I be looking for to be honest. The book I use the most is called 'Houses of the Countryside'. Because I am into vernacular architecture, that's my field. this book has moved the steady of VA massively. It might not be relevant to your work, but to be aware that it exists. What he did was plotting various different types of houses from the medieval period onward. That demonstrated there was 4-5 main types of building styles that are prominent in Wales and that each one is regional and developed differently to that of England.

ME: I plan to discuss in my dissertation about regionalism and the value/significance of Welsh architecture.

DAF: Yes, what is the significance of any architecture really. You have to learn about it before preserving it, in order to appreciate what needs keeping: it provides a context, because the museum was founded in 1948 and the first director saw that the vernacular buildings were being pulled down. By the 1980s, there was a greater appreciation for them but by then the industrial buildings in Wales were being pulled down. We then thought we should collect some of them for the museum. Different styles of buildings are appreciated at different times. Yes, it is important to get an overview, so that you know what to protect I suppose.

ME: So, what do you think is a particular challenge for the future?

I suppose on the bigger challenges is to keep having these building suitable for use. Such as heating, keeping the buildings warm. My father has a small cottage in North Wales that we had recently had to put internal insulation in, which has made it even smaller on the inside but at least it looks the same from the outside. There are always compromises, but the knack is knowing where to compromise. What are your options?

For example, is underfloor heating better than using radiators? I'd argue that radiators are better in this case because you have control, away from, say wooden items, because houses generally had a fireplace and that was one point of heating. Whereas underfloor heating can heat the whole room, which may destroy furniture etc and change the atmospherics of the building.

ME: So finally, I just wanted to ask are you happy to be cited or remain anonymous?

DAF: It depends, I haven't had time to write a response suitable for publication.

ME: Would you appreciate me keeping in touch about where I have cited for you to check over to ensure that you're happy with it?

DAF: Yes, of course, I have only spoken in broad terms anyway

ME: Well, thank you very much for your time.

DAF: Yes, it has been fun, we need more people with an understanding and appreciation of architecture at a roots level. It only takes one person to render the outside of a Victorian building to destroy the original fabric, not sure how we will overcome that but we kind of need street-level curators or something.

ME: It is a huge challenge, I think.

DAF: Yes

ME: I think with the emphasis on Sustainability for the future, it would drive some of these changes.

DAF: Yes, I hope so and they are still pulling down buildings and rebuilding in its place instead of retrofitting/restoring in some way.

ME: I will end this interview now; hope all goes well and thanks again.

Appendix B2:

Interview Transcript [18 January 2022] :

ME: You previously mentioned that Cadw has unambiguous and clear guides with grant systems in place. Do they help you in your conservation work in Wales?

GE: It most definitely but again emphasis varies from year to year, depending on where the money is coming from, and I suppose the political outcomes that the Welsh government want from that money. There is certainly a bit more emphasis on community participation, community projects, welfare, and well-being, not necessarily directly the significance and absolute needs of certain buildings. Cause there might be certain, significant buildings that may not be quite as attractive because they don't have some of the tick box outcomes that the whole reporting procedure many desires in the longer term.

ME: So, would you say that the policies and guidance are helpful or a hinderance to your work?

GE: No, I find them helpful in my own perspective, in the fact that they haven't changed significantly in recent times and the body of information and guidance is becoming more well defined and I think gradually people are tuning into that and the way things are done. From my own perspective, I find them fairly straight forward, but I know it can frustrate any other number of people but that's by-and-by.

ME: Education, and the value of that in conservation. Would you say that having access to resources from a private owner point of view in terms of education so that they can learn more about the conservation and maintenance of historical buildings would be useful, considering that they make up the majority of owners in Wales?

GE: Yes would always be the answer to that, but how you would bring that all together, I am not sure about that. You got your normal website that have certain amount of information, whether it's the likes of Cadw, which isn't infraction on HE has as guidance documents. They are very comprehensive in their ways and obviously they got their technical Tuesday type webinars, which are really good. Cadw just don't have the resource for that. But I don't think it necessarily transfers down to local authority level to the same degree.

I think because conservation officers are few and far between in Wales, maybe that message is not as strong as it could be at the local authority level when either people are looking to purchase properties and are being advised or are after when they approach local authorities in connection with listed building consensus and the like.

There is also things from the amenity societies, that you got things like SCNP or the 20th century society, Georgian society or Victorian society and in their way, they also cover certain grounds with their own guidance. That's also pretty good but there is nothing to say, well look this is where you go.

ME: Expanding on that, would you say that education in schools, there should be a curriculum for heritage of Wales, history of Wales and conservation etc?

GE: In a way yes, it is a question of where do you bring it in? and how do you bring it in? As I said in the responses, I think there are probably opportunities now.

ME: Yes, because you had mentioned things like the Welsh Bac and the Donaldson Curriculum in particular. I did the WB in high school.

GE: Ah, did you.

ME: I know what that is about, because to some people it was like 'what is WB?' But I do agree with the fact that there is a potential opportunity to have a community-based project on something like a listed-building or learning more about that kind of stuff.

GE: But it is how do you introduce students at that age to make it an interesting thing in its own right. Because at that point you might have thought, yes, I would like to study architecture, so whether or not you took a stance or a slant in one of your projects for the baccalaureate along those lines, which might help with entry into the school of architecture or possibly other similar fields. It is just conveying that information at the key time more than anything.

With the Donaldson stuff, it is going with a thematic approach. I know this because my wife works with the local through school and she is responsible for all the teaching and learning there, so I get drip fed all this information all the time you see. So, that's why I got a little bit of an insight. Technically, as a through school they are looking to do a lot of the themes on a through school basis, especially up to when you're kicking off with your GCSEs and A-levels. You still got to cover the curriculum and the ground in respective subjects. But, prior to that I think there are opportunities there and its how to get that information out there and the RSAW do bits along those lines, I think the RIBA could do better with stuff along those lines but there are initiatives out there and I think the CITB as an industry are trying to do bits and pieces that provide the resources that make it easier for teachers to provide information in terms of the built environment.

ME: Yes, some very interesting points, the RIBA/RSAW do provide educational opportunities to students studying architecture or similar subjects but could introduce these earlier in some way.

GE: Back in my generation, the built environment was seen as a slightly regressive thing in that it wasn't design if you see what I mean in those terms. I come at it from quite a different perspective as I see it as a more contextual architecture and working with existing buildings and it is more to do with sustainability in my mind.

Often you're working with people who want to do the jobs that they are doing; there is crafts people as opposed to just people on building sites, rocking up in the morning doing their job and disappearing in the evening and really engaging beyond the wages they get at the end of the week. As a consequence, I find it more rewarding as an architect to work with people that take pride in what they are doing, so it is partly that as well. You get more enjoyment out of it as well as decent design work that is specified to a decent standard as opposed to it being dulled down all the time.

ME: Talking about skilled crafts people and workers, you indicated in the questionnaire that they are quite difficult to find a good workforce to work on, for example lime. Would you say that a lack of workers is the biggest problem for conservation in Wales or more of an hinderance to your work?

GE: It is more of a hinderance really. Yes, there is not a lot of people around, so the availability is not great from time to time. But as you go along you build up your own network, supply chain of contacts and that's the way I look at it. That's the way I look at it, you got fewer people to choose from, but you can work well with them, and they do a really good job. As long as they can do the the job well, it is good for everyone.

ME: I suppose there is a stronger team behind the tendering and procurement process in that regard then?

GE: Yeah, you still got to do your role as an architect and especially if it is grant funded because there is a lot of conditions in procurement that you need to work through, so everything needs to be done in a set way. But Yes, you know roughly who you can approach for certain types of work and you get certain prices from those types of people basically to suit the type of task in hand.

ME: You had mentioned about 20th century architecture in one of your responses. Particularly post-1945 architecture is vulnerable to demolition or modern adaptation due to it being a 'culture shock' between the more traditional styles of architecture and let's say brutalist architecture and on top of that there was a huge demand for temporary structures after WW2. So, would you say there is more perceived value in architecture prior to the 20th century and that's why it is difficult to conserve them, or would you say it is just because they are 'newer'?

GE: Yeah, there where the rules until recently that buildings after a certain period where such and such and prior was another thing, and I don't think that was that helpful. But really it is down to people's understanding, appreciation and tastes really in terms of what's good and not so good. Yet again you come back to that word: Significance and as such the heritage value. Yes, it is more difficult to convey that to most people because they don't necessarily appreciate the values of a well-designed, let's say a late 20th century building.

Yeah, the fact that it isn't as old is difficult more people to latch on to and value in the same way as other bits and pieces in their lives. The nature of the materials and components along with the uses of some of these buildings don't help either to say no actually these particular structures are of particular value because such-such a reason, the architecture etc.

ME: Yeah, currently it seems that post-1945 architecture is going through a phase of change from use to demolition and I suppose we have to think about what we do to conserve what is left. I am currently looking for a recent publication called 'How Grey was my Valley', not sure if you have heard of it?

GE: No, I haven't.

ME: Would you say that because more ancient architecture such as the vernacular of the early Welsh history is more significant because it has a longer history than something that's post-1945 then?

GE: Maybe, but it is down to the function and location and the materials used. You make reference to industry, let's take South Wales as an example, that has changed in all comprehension and that could be down to people turning their backs on heavy industries and maybe what some people thought to be bad in some ways. So the negative connotations to individuals, families and communities of these heavy industries in terms of pollution etc.

But in conservation terms, some of the best examples of these need to be looked after. A lot of them where build as a means to an end, and that you could argue that, like a lot of vernaculars, they were a means to an end in terms of being built to provide shelter and accommodation to individuals and as a result they are not as durable in comparison to higher status architecture and as consequence it is difficult for people to appreciate and put a value to because they see is rust, rot or decay. Because of that they are more difficult to conserve without them looking like a facsimile of what was original. Actually, your quite critical in your thinking when it comes to proposals because 'how far do you go?' without it becoming Disneyland.

Example of that, I was project architect on the works that happened at Big Pit mining museum, and we were trying to do repair. So, we treated, for instance, the tramway circuit just up from the winding house, was just a shed with a mild steel frame with steel sheets over it that went around in a U shape as a series of repairs. Actually, going back to Cadw definitions, it was treated as maintenance and periodic renewal as opposed to repair because we weren't actually changing much as a consequence. But it is how far do you go without it becoming a whole new building. Because of that, people have difficulties appreciating those sorts of values.

ME: Yeah, it is all about, do you just restore, or do you retrofit in some way and what is appropriate. Obviously, that comes down to each individual site. One of the last questions, is there any literature reviews that have popped out to you that might be worth looking into?

GE: If you're looking particularly at Welsh examples then there is all sorts, there is Erin Williams, the old director at St Fagans, you got your yorith petes', Cecile Fox or Lord Raglan stuff. I don't think we are as covered with later stuff unless they are publications released by the archaeological trusts or the Royal Commission. Likewise, there was one done between the RC and powys archaeological trust in north-east Wales on industrial and mining sites.

ME: I know there is a lot of literature done by the RC that may be relevant to my work.

GE: Yeah, you could try speaking with Richard Surgate, he is in more recent publications been involved in the research that has come out of what's gone on at the Commission.

ME: Would you be happy to be cited in my research or remain anonymous?

GE: I would like to remain fairly anonymous, that would be fine. But if there are any points you want to take about in the future, feel free to get in touch.

Appendix B3:

Interview Transcript [19 January 2022]:

ME: This first thing I wanted to ask is that I know Cadw don't often add new sites under their direct responsibility that often and part of the issue is budgeting, are there other factors in play?

CH: Yes, we have taken one recently which is Caergwrle Castle up here in North-East Wales about 3 years ago. We took that on principally because of its historical significance to Wales, it's one of the Welsh castles, and at the time our deputy minister, Lord Thomas was very keen that it should come into state ownership. It was a more ministerial push there, but he was absolutely right; it is, in terms of Wales's history, particularly North Wales and its development, it was a really good acquisition.

We often offered various monuments, not all make the cut, we have an acquisitions and disposals panel that sits every quarter and then we look at each offer from each point of view, in terms of conservation, significance and marketability. We try and have a broad discussion over each one. In most cases, the property owners want us to buy the property from them but one of our main policies is that this is seen as a last resort. For example. If you had a beautiful art deco building that was listed, then we would encourage them to sell it on the open market before actually coming to us.

We will take on new monuments, but generally it is done to the historical significance, and are we after conservation and/or interpretation, are we able to impart more understanding of the history of Wales?

ME: Yeah, that makes sense to me. I would say that's one of your key drivers, how significant it is to Wales and Welsh Heritage.

CH: Yes, that's true. We deal with monuments on a national and international importance with regional importance being lower on the must have list. Caernarfon is of international significance but may not be of any more significant as say Cadwelli or Castell Coch.

ME: Common Limitations to conservation projects in Wales. One key problem is lack of skilled labour. Would you say part of the issue is a lack of conservation officers or a lack of educational opportunities with traditional materials as example?

CH: That is one of the biggest questions at the moment, take the first point about conservation officers, they are few and far between, usually having to job share across multiple authorities in Wales and may be stretching over 2 counties which puts strain on him/her. If they can't do that then they will get a conservation architect to act as a proxy conservation officer. That in itself is difficult as there aren't so many conservation architects that have experience with being surveyors. Owners tend to go to them and of course you can't get your own work, so you have to avoid conflict of work and interest in that.

It's true that there is a shortage of conservation professionals, not bad if you are about to be qualified with work available. And certainly, when it comes to stone masons, joiners, lead workers etc again very true. We currently trying to recruit 9 stone masons, a very practical part of the business but it underpins what we do. Without the ability to conserve the monuments under our care, we will either have to mothball them or manage their decay until we are at a point where we have to invest more money in, it is a balancing act really.

It's certainly true, across the field, whether it be the practical side or the skilled side of it. The number of contracts across Wales in terms of conservation companies is pretty small, around 18-20 decent sized company, they are not big companies, the biggest I think we have employed hasn't been more than 30 employees. So, we are not talking about huge companies.

ME: Would you say that is largely because it is specialised in architecture.

CH: I think so yeah. If we go back to architects you have to be a bit more committed than just saying I like old buildings, there has to be a bit more than that. One of the stock questions we ask to people that come forward is 'What was the last historic building you visited?' and if they struggle for an answer then you kind of get the sense that they are just there for the job and not actually have the right commitment. After that it is really about experience, it's great to get experience with surveyors and architects because of the large range of work you could be doing, from the measured survey, the detail work through to the design work, contract admin. You might find that you have a particular interest for architectural research. You might think that archaeology is a better bet than architecture. There are a number of avenues to take, and all underpin conservation work.

ME: You would appoint master planners for larger sites, with heritage experience. Would you say that is also a limitation?

CH: Yes, I think there are only about 2 in Wales at this point, very rare. Ideally, being with Welsh government, we try and support Welsh companies. That's one of our business aims. But when you are master planning something like regeneration work at Caerphilly, you have to go out to the UK and if the fees are at such a level, then those opportunities are open to companies across Europe and that of course causes problems in terms of language barriers or philosophical approaches in terms of conservation. There is a scares supply, doesn't mean it will always be the case.

ME: On to a different topic, would you say that in general, the policies and regulations that deal with conservation work are helpful or a hinderance to your work?

CH: They are incredibly helpful to me, cause my colleges wrote them so you tend to get the 'inside skin of them'. All of our projects have to conform to those rules, there is no backdoor to it. They are there to help, give guidance to the work and as a framework for creativity. We won't look to stifle creativity, personally on the projects I run, I like the contrast between modern intervention and conserved fabric. Out in the wider world, where I come from architecture and surveying, some of my colleagues would prefer a more pastis approach, where they were looking for particular design cues and they used that as part of the extension of the regeneration works, again it is entirely understandable and justified.

ME: Would you say that being able to support community-led projects help improve the knowledge of heritage on a public level?

CH: Yes, I think a success of a good project is where the local community has come in and become involved in some form. We use a term 'community benefit', where a contractor will hold open days or engagement events, they are very important as the local community see the monuments as theirs, Caernarfon Castle, case-in-point, that belongs to the people of Caernarfon and Conwy you know. They don't see it as belonging to anyone else, they have grown up with them.

Community led involvement is invaluable not only at the end of the project when the builders leave. But right at the beginning, where we are looking to invest, and we want to make sure that local businesses are happy. We got to engage with them to ensure that our local businesses are happy, so that they get something out of the project. We done that at Harlech Castle, where we had quite a

new visitor centre designed about 5-6 years ago. But that was the end of a 6-year project, where we started with community engagement projects.

ME: So, would you say that doing these community projects is key to developing a conservation project?

CH: Very much so, whether it be conservation in its purest form, where we are repointing etc maybe less so, but certainly where there is an element of development where we are looking to bring more visitors into a town or area there is a monument, yes very true. We do need to community to be on board.

ME: Private owners, finance support in terms of grants etc. Would you say that a more educational approach could help them in a conservation project?

CH: It would to a degree, a lot of owners of historic buildings may have been born there and as such a part of the fabric in essence, and so they probably understand the roof needs doing every 100 years, gutters need to be kept clear, windows need to be kept open and shut, that sort of thing. People come in that buy historic buildings, hopefully have an understanding of what is needed. It is true that the grant levels aren't particularly high, and grants tend to help fund architects or surveyor fees for the work to be done. It could be argued that VAT should not be charged, that could help. Yes, there is a lot of things to improve; the grants need to be higher, education: possibly but I won't rate that quite as high as just being able to afford the work and the work has to be done right and by the right sorts of people as well.

ME: Yeah, I suppose it is about considering not using modern technologies such as double/triple glazed windows instead of sash windows or not using concrete slating over traditional slating etc.

CH: Absolutely, but it very much depends on the building. If you have 1907 building, where I am, it is not listed but it is quite old. It is ideal to have timber double/triple glazed windows, but it can cost 4x more than a good quality uPVC window, which functionally is the same, the homeowner would go for the uPVC version and that's it. Slate tiles: you pick up a very good point, it is just a case of being as pragmatic as you can. You're talking about listed building, where the material palette is quite less, cast iron or lead gutters, certain type of Welsh slate etc.

After that you can file it down the types of repairs you need to do, whether it be using limewater, harling on the outside or even stone repairs. Its open to interpretation, I am one to say that nothing is off the table, I think it is very much a case of what is appropriate and can it be reversed of course.

ME: Would you say that if something had been worked on previously in terms of conservation and repairs, would you also take that into consideration when working on a project?

CH: Yes, you should also take a view on how the building has evolved. Not everyone is going to put a brand-new orangery on the back but if you had the money to do that but then 20 years down the line the timbers rotten, well you won't take the orangery down, but you would piece in the new sections, so it becomes a part of the fabric. So, yeah, I think you go to take the whole thing and of course if the new owners come in, they usually want to have their stamp on things as well.

ME: Any relevant literature you can think of?

CH: I swear by the technical books, so the Asher series of books, in terms of conservation and repair in all manners of historic fabric. If you want something quite old and beautiful, the Mitchell series on the conservation books, which basically tells you how they used to build buildings in the past, out of that you can bolster your knowledge as to how some of the historic buildings were made and

conserved. John Earls Conservation Philosophy, years old. A bit esoteric but from a philosophy point of view it is bang on. It is about discussion and understanding the significance of the building and the landscape. Considering the techniques, materials etc. You need the education, and even with the best highly educated team, in the hands of the wrong builder it could go wrong and indeed the other way round. Very much about having this elegant team of working together.

ME: talking about builders, I suppose having a limited supply of skilled workers and having the same companies crop up would mean there is a stronger relationship in a conservation project over a usual project.

CH: We are part of a network of users really. National trust. Landmark Trust. Some of the local authorities may tender the work but there may be the same 5-10 companies that would win them and that's okay. But every now and then you do want someone else to win it so that you can have someone new to work with. Whom may have a slightly different way of working? Without that companies don't have a chance to develop and are usually 1-2 band businesses that end up absorbed into larger companies, the skills are not lost but the diversity of companies is reduced.

ME: Well, thank you for this discussion, very fascinating.

CH: Of course.

ME: Would you like to be cited in the dissertation

CH: Yes, that's quite alright with me.

ME: And would you appreciate me, if I write something in the dissertation that I have cited you in, to inform you about that for you to review it?

CH: Yes, of course, please do. It has been a delight; it would be worth it in the end.

Appendix B4:

Interview Transcript [21 January 2022]:

ME: I setup this interview to establish what you do and your work along with the impact it has on the availability of skilled workers in Wales. So, as a first question, what does your work involve as a heritage officer?

HE: I am a heritage and skills officer at the Tawi Centre, where are quite a unique organisation in that we deliver a range of heritage training, but we are also part of the local authority. So, we setup around 11 years ago as part of a project, funded by the heritage lottery fund and then through that, we became very aware of the lack of skills in Wales and indeed the UK.

That really then became our focus of how we actually change things around so that we can start delivering training. It has been quite a long road, been quite difficult to make sure you meet the right people and have the right level of qualifications, and quite simply some qualifications just don't exist. Which is still a challenge, we are always trying to improve what is available but really, we started with nothing; nobody in Wales had a recognised heritage qualification course when we started, in heritage carpentry or plastering or masonry for example. There were some courses in the more decorative stonework but not the kind of onsite work that is needed.

So that is a large part of my job really; identifying gaps, working with the construction industry to listen to what they are saying, which is still massive. We also work on the other side of it, educate homeowners who are owners of historical buildings and people like yourself, architects, who specify as surveyors. We try to deliver courses at different levels.

Alongside that comes the funding for these courses which is crucial, they don't fit on the mainstream of anything. That's essentially what my job is: running courses, finding courses, funding courses and, we run project quite often, there might be a big construction project going on. As part their project they might have to deliver community benefit or training, quite often we get involved in that as well.

ME: Very interesting. I had spoken to a variety of architects and practices who have said that the same companies crop up and there isn't a large range of skill diversity in conservation as an example, people to work on lime, sash windows etc. It must be quite a challenge to change that.

HE: I think one of the problems is that on big projects, they don't necessarily ask for qualified workers and I think that an issue.

ME: Would you say there is more incentive for a typical project to use modern approaches over the traditional counterpart because there is a lack of skills?

HE: I definitely think that has happened, if there are no qualifications then how are you going to employ qualified people to the work? And how are you going to assess whether they have the right skills and knowledge for the job unless they have some sort of qualification. I guess it would have to be done on past work and recommendations and I don't know if that's enough.

ME: Thinking of this as a future projection, with the climate change emergency and that conservation could play a big role in sustainability because it is more environmentally stable to repair and adapt over demolishing. Would you say that it's headed in the right direction or is there still a long way to go?

HE: I think there is still quite a long way to go, and I think there will be quite the battle in the next few years because would want a quick fix to reducing carbon and potentially do inappropriate works on to older buildings which can there for have unintended consequences for that building. I think over the next couple of years, we will have to be very careful in decisions we are making in terms of let's say retrofitting of historical buildings. It is something that shouldn't be rushed into.

ME: Would you say that the courses that you prepare and provide have enough attention/interest from people or awareness from the public?

HE: I still think there is not enough awareness. There is always work to do and I think that if you don't know what you don't know and if that's what you been taught, working on buildings in a certain way it is hard to change that and it is hard to admit that maybe it isn't a cement render on that building, might have actually damaged it. Once you have done that sort of thing to a building, I can imagine it can be quite difficult to go back from that.

ME: Would you say that this field is too specialist and that's a reason for why there is a lack of skills?

HE: It shouldn't be too specialist as a 1/3 of our buildings are traditional, have you read the CITV tate report. It is something like, can't remember, something like 40/50% of contractors that work on traditional buildings in some way. So, really, they all should have knowledge of what they are doing but that is definitely not the case.

ME: Moving on from that. I also have identified that there is not enough architects with heritage experience to conservation projects, and that there is a lack of conservation officers on a local level. Would you say that there just needs to be more educational opportunities in Wales, are there similar companies such as yourself that aim to improve the level of qualifications available?

HE: I think that the approach we have taken, because we are also part of the heritage team in the council of Carmarthenshire. We see the kind of situation where someone wants to do work on a listed building, but they literally cannot find a specialist architect or somebody to draw up the plans, and that is a really difficult situation. Or you will find that plans will come in and the detail; maybe you have to replace or repair some sash windows, isn't enough for the conservation officer to make a decision.

It kind of goes in a circle doesn't it, if architect plans and agent plans are coming in and are in a higher quality of information then that makes the conservation officers job easier because it is all clear and not going back and forth all the time. So, the approach we have taken is providing training, saying this is the kind of detail of information we expect in an application.

So, I do think education and training is the way forward, to make homeowners more aware of what is needed. It is kind of forewarning people. If people are educated in the first place, then it makes the whole process a lot easier and a lot quicker. 4

ME: I agree, private owners make up the majority of owners of historical buildings in Wales, so I think it is important to provide that educational opportunity.

HE: So, the courses we run at the moment, we have listed building consent guides for people how are thinking of buying a house or maybe just starting to think about the process of I need to make changes. I think generally without this sort of education, people may think, well I got this listed building and can't do anything, or it is going to be too expensive.

We are trying to just more a part of the community and get people to feel ownership to their own decisions and supported in caring for our built heritage. So, they need to feel supported in that.

There is absolutely no funding for homeowners for listed buildings if they are domestic, nothing to help them with that.

We do specify sash window detail courses, lime courses, which is quite complex because there is so many different types of lime and different parts of a building could require a different approach to detailing and specifying.

ME: Yeah, I would say it is more complex to work on a project that is focused on let's say retrofitting or renovation as opposite to demolishing or using a modern alteration solution. So, I think that is a part of the reason why people are more inclined to go with a cheaper alternative or easier more straight forward solution.

HE: Yeah, definitely. We also do a retrofit on historical buildings course that is accredited, and we do an accredited repair and maintenance course.

ME: I am glad there is something driving conservation courses forward.

HE: What do you think should be driving things forward? It is strange for us, as a local authority, to be the driving force behind this because we do cover the whole of Wales and beyond with our training but what do you think would better?

ME: Funding and Education. RIBA and RSAW could focus more on conservation and heritage, community-led projects and raising awareness.

HE: I think the IHBC as well has good educational resources, they do courses as well I think. I think it be worth speaking to Nell Hellier as well, she is my line manager, she is a lot more eloquent than me, and she knows more about the policy and strategy side of things. She is very good at knowing who is doing what etc.

Just as another thing, we have had funding to do conservation area appraisals, we are currently recruiting contractors to help us do that for us. If you want any sort of involvement in that just let me know, it is an interesting process of evaluating the heritage of a whole town. It can have a massive impact on the successes of a town and if the architecture is appreciated and looked after, it is more attractive to visitors. Lots of work to be done.

ME: Lastly, just wanted to ask whether your happy for you to be cited in my research?

HE: Depends on what I said, but of course and if there is anything else you can think of then give us a shout.