

Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme

ferguson mann architects

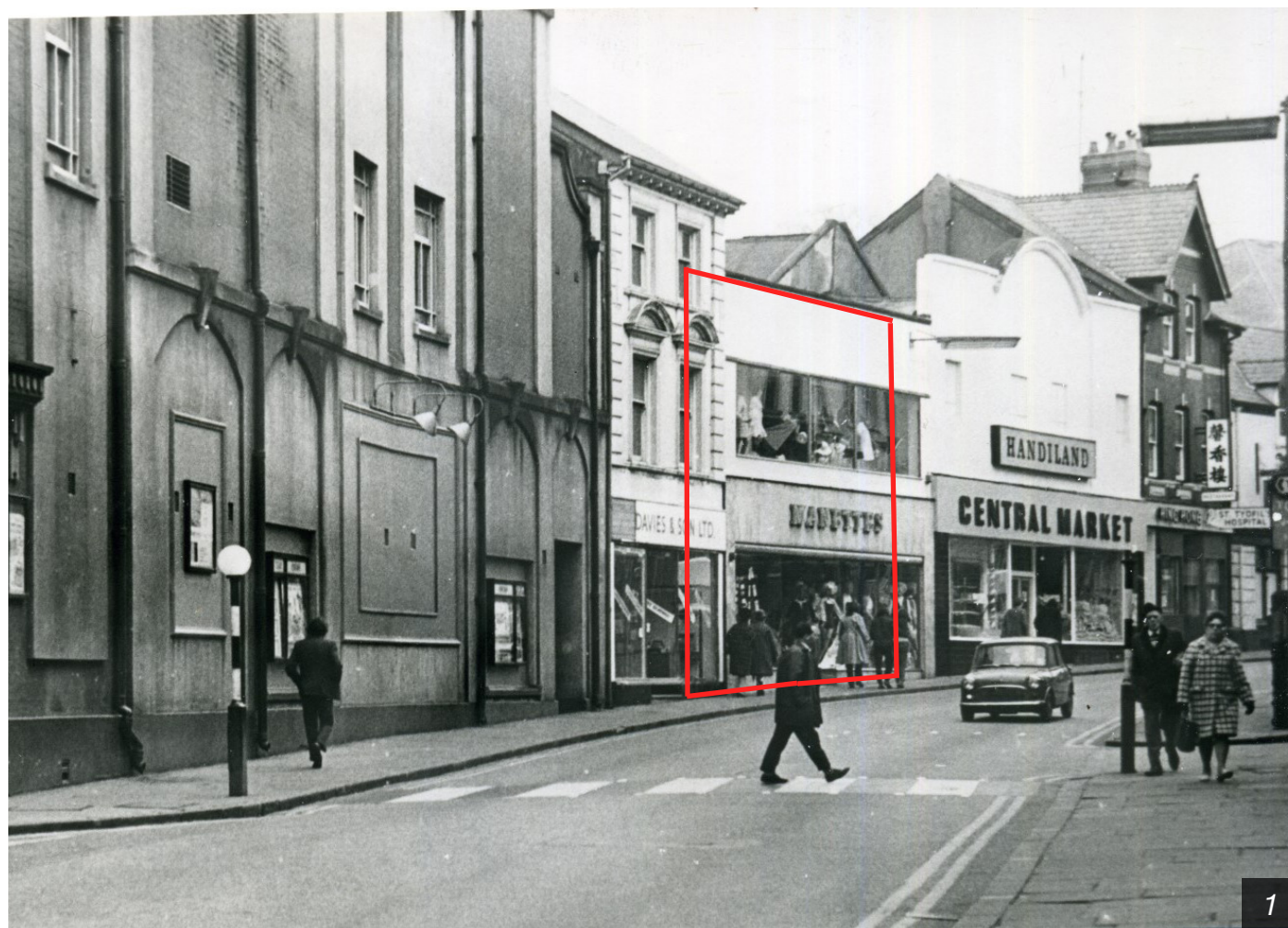
Design & Access Statement

(incl Heritage Impact Assessment)

Manettes Building, Pontmorlais, Merthyr Tydfil

February 2022





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Manettes building lies within the Pontmorlais area at the northern end of the Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Conservation Area. The character area of Pontmorlais described in the Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Conservation Appraisal (June 2009) is concentrated around the Pontmorlais High Street which is a continuation of what is now the more commercial end of the High Street to the south.

The whole of the town centre area was developed during the late 18th and early 19th century as a result of rapid industrial development and population growth. The Pontmorlais area played an important strategic role in the expanding areas of Merthyr, situated as it was between the industrial hubs of Penydarren and Dowlais with the town centre to the south.

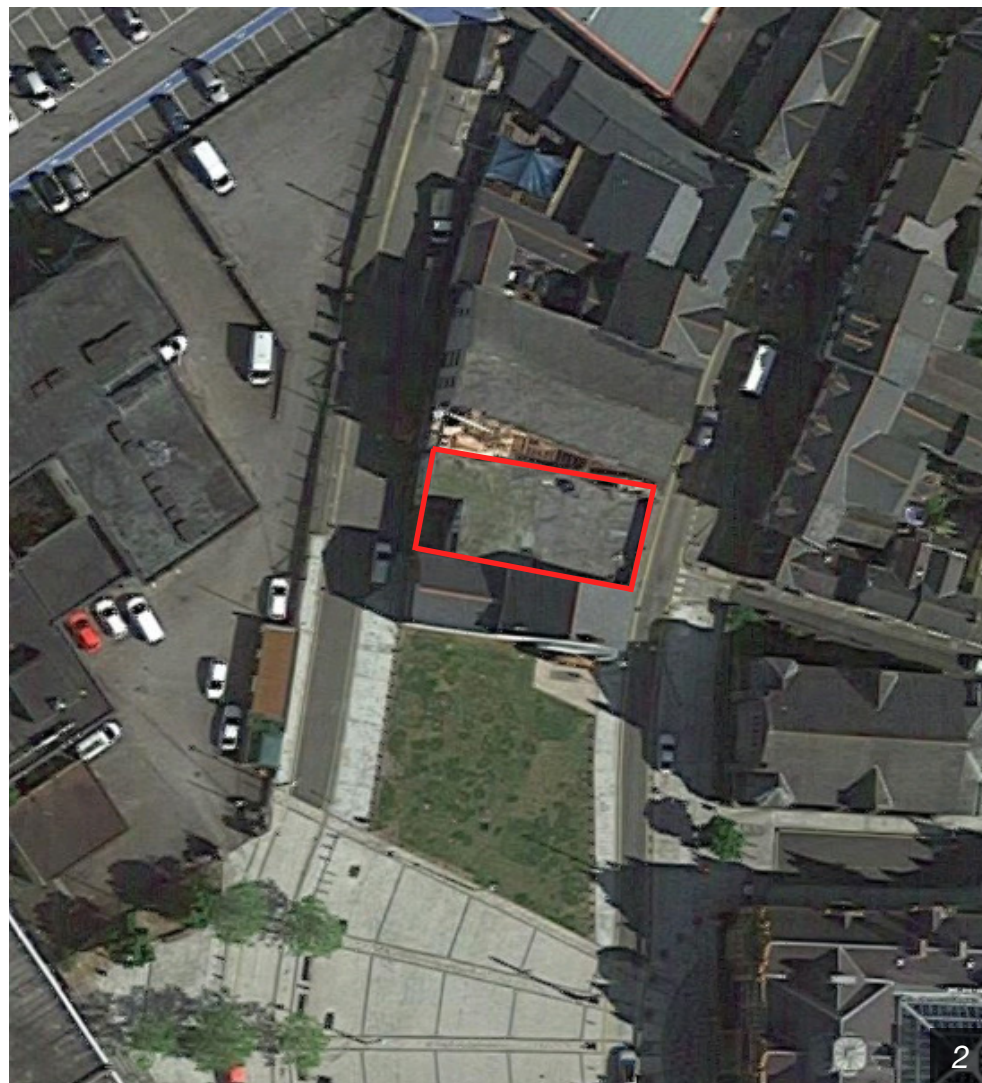
The importance of the area during these growth years is reflected in the rich variety of architectural styles that developed during the late 18th, 19th and into the early 20th century, all representative of the significant investment made in the area during this period.

The various uses accommodated in the buildings: commercial, civic, social and spiritual also reflect the vibrancy of the area during this era.

The decline of the iron and steel industries has inevitably impacted on employment opportunities and hence investment in the area. This, together with inappropriate 20th century development and changes in the way consumers use the high street have further contributed to the slow erosion of the fabric of the Pontmorlais area.

However, a substantial variety of buildings do still survive within the Pontmorlais area and although a number of buildings are run down through lack of investment and beneficial use or have suffered from inappropriate alterations over time, the character of the area is still evident and is an important asset for Merthyr Tydfil.

01 introduction



1. Historical view - buildings outlined in red
2. Google satellite view - site outlined in red
3. OS extract with site area outlined in red

Manettes Building, Merthyr Tydfil

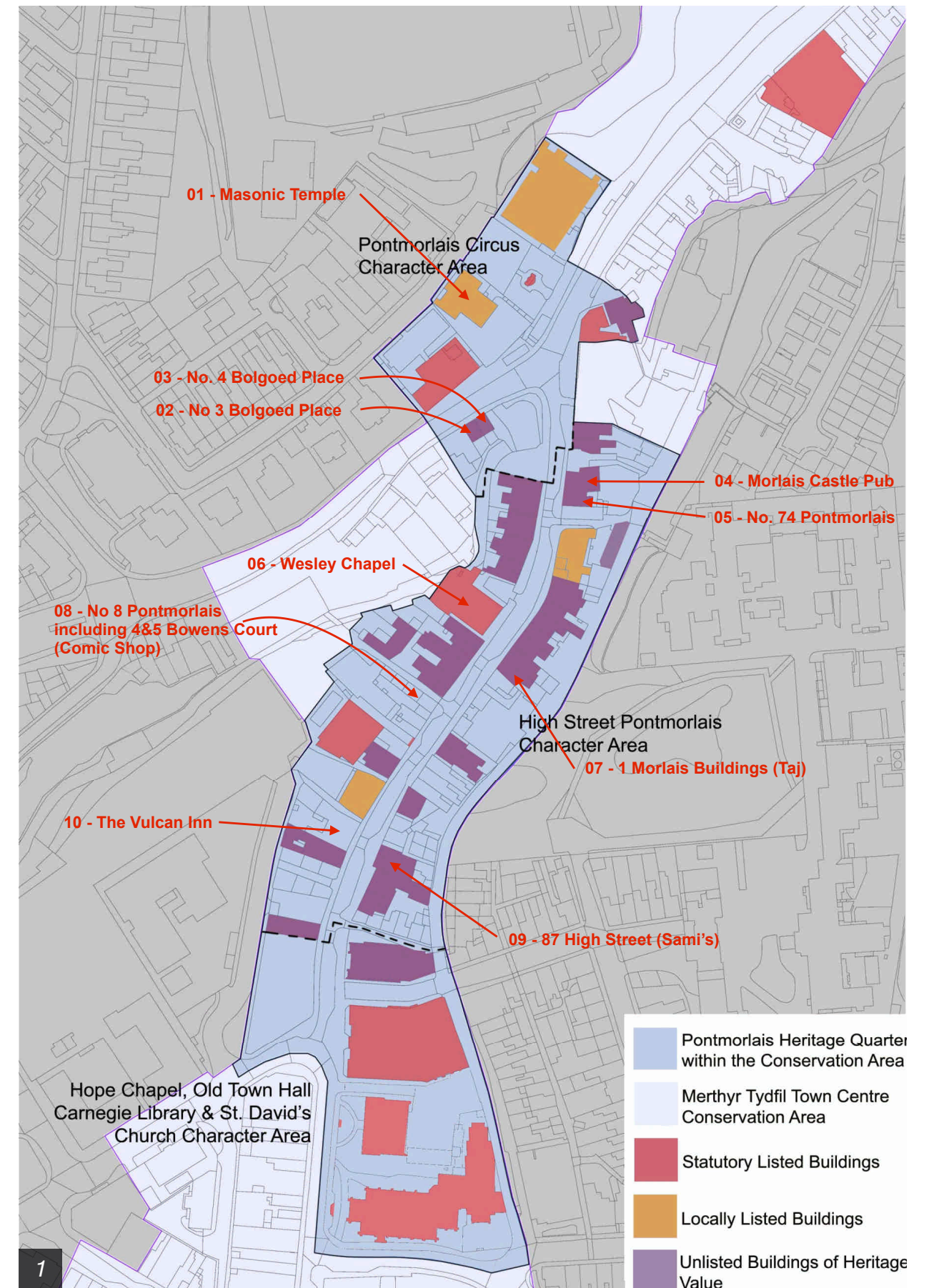
02 townscape heritage initiative & the brief

The current proposals have been developed as part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) for the Pontmorlais area. The Heritage Lottery Fund Initiative in partnership with CADW and the local authority is aimed at regenerating run-down historic conservation areas through historic building repair. The programme is specifically designed to address problems in areas of particular social and economic need to improve the quality of the environment for all who live, work or visit there; to restore the appearance of the historic town and to encourage regeneration.

A recent Townscape Initiative Scheme has seen the regeneration of a number of properties within the Pontmorlais High Street Area which has already had a positive impact on the surroundings.

Focusing on the repair and reinstatement of historic fabric, eligible works typically include reinstatement of traditional shopfronts, timber sash windows, natural slate roof coverings, decorative ridge tiles, chimneys and rainwater goods, although the scope of works varies from property to property.

The objectives of the THI Scheme are consistent with the recommended strategies for improvement as set out in the Pontmorlais Conservation Area Management Plan (Insalls Report 2011) and with the relevant policies of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan (2006-2031) in particular strategic objective 11 – *to ensure the continued protection and enhancement of the natural, cultural, built and historic environment*



1. Key buildings in Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Conservation Area (north) as identified in the Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009)

Manettes building was built in the late 1960s. The building is considered to contribute to the environmental and cultural heritage of the Borough and through the current THI scheme the council is seeking to preserve and enhance these historic buildings.

The building is located at the north end of the High Street, within Character Area 3.

The main entrance to the building is from the High

Street. The building is currently unoccupied. The ground floor ramps up slightly from the street into the premises. There is a rear entrance at ground level as well as an external staircase which leads to the first floor level. This is accessed from Castle Yard. The building is 2 storeys.

There has been a Pre-Planning Application submitted for internal and external works to this building. That proposal was for 6 self-contained studio apartments and two A3 use spaces. The

Pre-Planning Application submission can be found in the appendix of this report.

Following advice from the Pre-Application process the proposed accommodation arrangement has been changed, with the upper floor now including office space rather than residential accommodation, and the ground floor spaces are to be A1 use.

03 site & context

1. View of the shop front from the High Street

2. The rear view of the building from Castle Yard



04

condition of existing building

Manettes building sits within a row of terraced buildings on the High Street. The building & surviving fabric is generally in good condition, though the exterior finish has deteriorated.

The original shopfront, shutter and signage has been removed from the front elevation and replaced. The glazed shopfront has black metal frames, stallrisers and a double door. The double entrance door ramps up slightly from the street. There is a black external roller shutter to the shopfront.

The windows to the front elevation have been boarded up and painted various colours over the years.

On the rear elevation there are a mix of timber and metal framed windows, some of which have

been painted, though in many places this finish is deteriorating. Some of the original openings have been blocked up since the building was constructed.

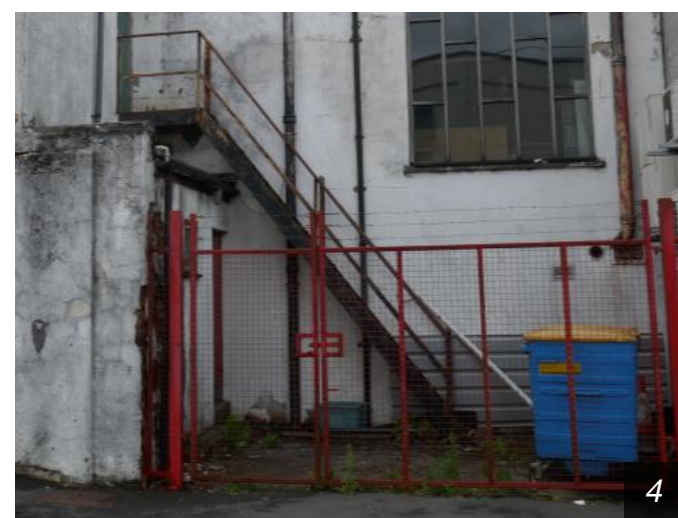
The front and rear elevations are both rendered. Historic photos of the front elevation shows different tones of render to the upper and lower parts of the front elevation. This has been painted over and is damaged in many places. The render to the rear elevation is also deteriorating. There is concern about the beam over the first floor windows that has corroded.

There is a concrete coping to the front elevation which is in need of repair. Timber fascia boards and metal capping to the rear elevation are in poor condition.

The East elevation fronts the High Street. A back road, Castle Yard, leads to the rear of the building where there is an external metal staircase leading to the first floor. There is a double gate and fence securing the entrance to the rear of the building where existing waste & recycling bins are stored.

The rear of the building has uPVC half round section gutters, hoppers and round downpipes. There is a downpipe on the front elevation which runs off the neighbouring building. There is also a redundant SVP and sundry pipework to the rear elevation.

There are external extractor fans and services located externally on the flank elevation of the neighbouring building.



1. Existing shopfront with tiled entrance ramp
2. Deteriorating render/paint on front elevation with corroded beam behind
3. Boarded up first floor windows
4. Rear access stair and security gates/fence
5. Metal windows and damaged render
6. External roller shutters

The current proposal is to repair the deteriorating external envelope of the building and to remove the inappropriate alterations that are deemed to be harmful. The proposed alterations are based on existing details as well as historic photographs.

- Removal of existing shopfront, external shutter and first floor window boarding
- Installation of new metal framed shopfront with central external doors as historic images
- New internal chainlink roller shutter
- Removal of existing windows and alterations to rear elevation to form new windows and door openings
- New metal framed windows to front and rear elevation of a more consistent appearance
- New doors to rear elevation
- Removal of tiled finish to front entrance ramp and adapt existing stallriser to suit new shopfront
- New ramped threshold with tiled finish - pattern TBA
- Removal of deteriorated paint/render finishes and signage
- New render finishes to front elevation - colour/texture TBA (different treatment to ground and first floor in line with historic photos)
- Render repairs/renewals to rear elevation
- Pointing repairs to existing concrete copings
- New shopfront signage - details TBA
- Alterations to masonry for new gutter outlets to hoppers - front & rear elevation
- Removal of existing rainwater goods/redundant SVP and sundry pipework etc. to rear elevation
- New metal rainwater goods including hoppers
- Removal of existing timber fascia boards and metal capping to wall head and replacement with new coping - rear elevation
- Removal of existing rear metal access stair and security gate/fence
- New security gates and fence to rear entrance
- Rebuilding of existing rear extension which is in poor condition

As part of the proposed works, the unit will be opened up once again to enliven the High Street.

The pre-application report for the internal and external works to the building contains further details on the proposal and can be found in the appendix of this statement.



05 proposed alterations & repairs

06

heritage impact & access

HERITAGE

Whilst changes to buildings often reflect the way a building is used over time and can have significance in their own right, the alterations that have been carried out at Manettes Building are considered to have a detrimental impact on the aesthetic and historic value of the buildings.

The proposed works will remove the inappropriate and unsightly features such as the external security shutters, shopfront and boarded up windows. The existing render will be repaired and redecorated.

A new shopfront and new windows to the front elevation will replace the existing, with a metal frame and thin double glazed units, to match those in the historic photos.

The restoration of the shopfront will reinstate the design and proportions of the original building and as such will improve the appearance of the building.

These changes will contribute to the aesthetic quality of the street and the pontmorlais heritage quarter as a whole. The improved appearance of the building and others which have been improved as part of the townscape heritage scheme will hopefully contribute to the economic regeneration of the area.

ACCESS

The proposals will not affect access to the building.

The proposed alterations will have no impact on existing movement to and from the site and surrounding areas.



1. Historic photograph showing the street-scape (date unknown)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan 2006-20121 (MTDBC)

Merthyr Tydfil – Understanding Urban Character (CADW)

Pontmorlais Heritage Quarter – Conservation Area Management Plan (Donald Insalls 2011)

Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Conservation Areas Character Appraisal (MTDBC 2009)

Heritage Impact Assessments in Wales (CADW May 2017)

Design & Access Statements in Wales (CADW April 2017)

Alan George online archive

Francis Frith online archive

(Special thanks to Gareth Rogers from MTDBC for providing various maps and photographs from their records.)

07
reference material

08

appendix:

pre-application
submission

prepared by XL
Property Ventures