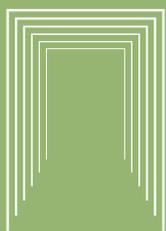


# Market Arcade

Established 1905



**HIGH STREET CHARACTER AREA  
NEWPORT TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA  
CHARACTERISATION STUDY - CONSULTATION DRAFT  
AUGUST 2017**

PURCELL

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I'rwy Gronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



**NEWPORT**  
CITY COUNCIL  
CYNGOR DINAS  
**CASNEWYDD**

# HIGH STREET CHARACTER AREA, NEWPORT TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA – CHARACTERISATION STUDY

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

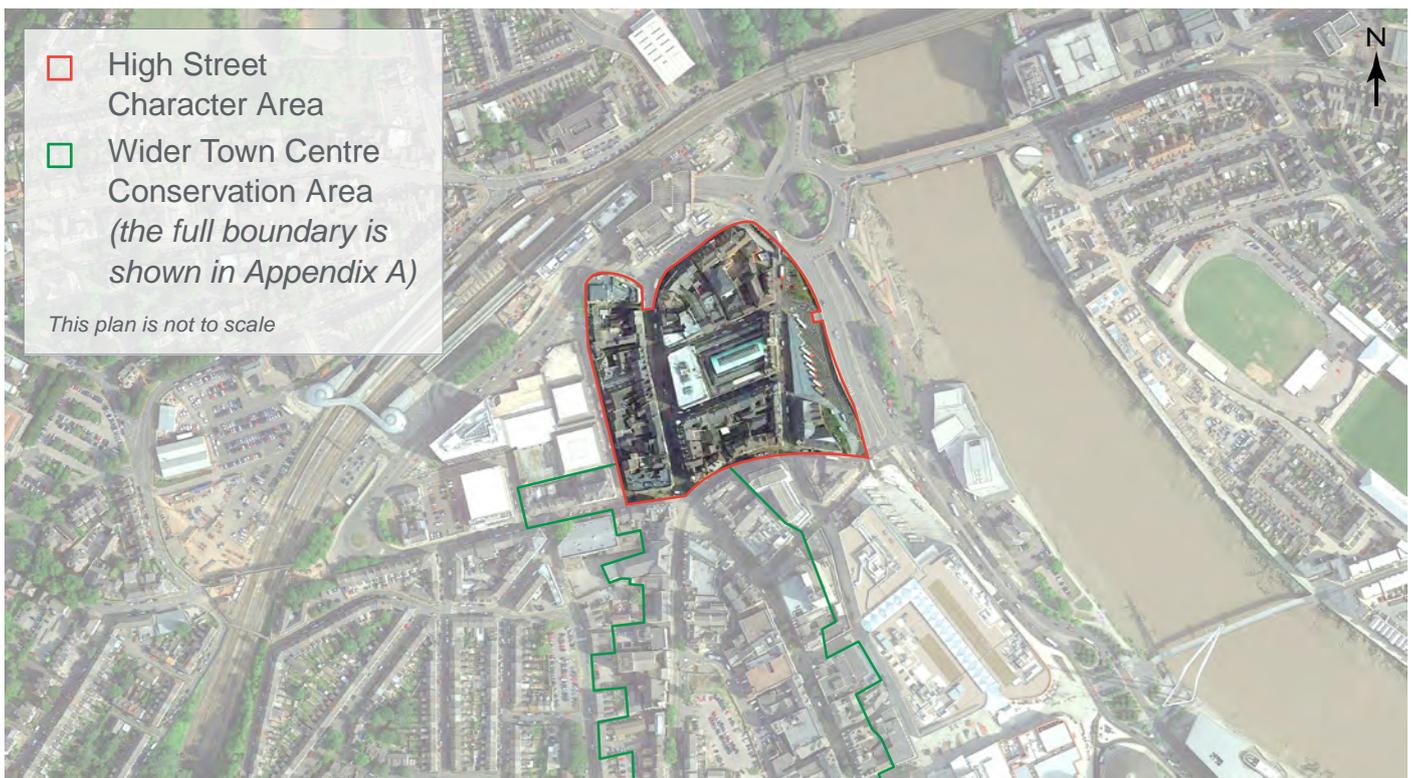
## 1.1 Aims of the Study

1.1.1 *Urban characterisation aims to describe and explain the historic character of towns to give a focus to local distinctiveness and to serve as a tool for the sustainable management of the historic environment. It seeks to inform and support positive conservation and regeneration programmes, help improve the quality of planning advice, and contribute to local interpretation and education strategies.*

1.1.2 *Urban characterisation defines the distinctive historical character of individual towns, and identifies the variety of character within them, recognizing that this character is fundamental to local distinctiveness and pride of place, and is an asset in regeneration. It looks at how the history of a town is expressed in its plan and topography, in areas of archaeological potential, and in its architectural character. The survey is not just an audit of features, but a reconstruction of the themes and processes which have shaped the town.* Cadw

1.1.3 This Characterisation Study has been prepared for the High Street Character Area within Newport Town Centre Conservation Area. It forms part of a suite of documents for the regeneration of the area as set out in Newport City Council’s Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Programme. It is intended that this study provides a baseline for the management of conservation and development within this area, which will be set out in detail in a management plan.

1.1.4 The project focusses particularly on the Market Arcade at the north end of the High Street Character Area but does not include the whole of the Conservation Area. It is intended that this study examines the historic development, character and significance of the Market Arcade and the wider High Street character area, and create a model for the further study of the rest of the Conservation Area at a later date.



## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 Summary Timeline

- 1126** The earliest known reference to a settlement at Newport, likely to have been a walled town, known as 'Novus Burgus', or 'New Town'.
- 1314** The first town charter was awarded.
- 1324** Development began to overspill the town walls.
- 1327-86** The surviving castle was constructed.
- 1385** The second town charter awarded.
- 1426** The third town charter awarded, permitting a town market.
- 1793** The market at the north end of the High Street was closed.
- 1801** Town population = 1,087.
- 1817** A new market opened between Griffin Street and Market Street.
- 1800s** Much development took place along the High Street, including widening the road and constructing new buildings.
- 1850** The rail station opened.
- 1865** Newport Market was extended.
- 1867-69** The first arcade, known as Fennell's Arcade, was built on the site of the Market Arcade.
- 1885-89** Newport Market was rebuilt.
- 1893** Newport Arcade was built.
- 1900** Town population = 67,000.
- 1905** Fennell's Arcade was rebuilt and thereafter known as Market Arcade.
- 1934** The west side of Newport Market was rebuilt with an emphasised entrance off the High Street.

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

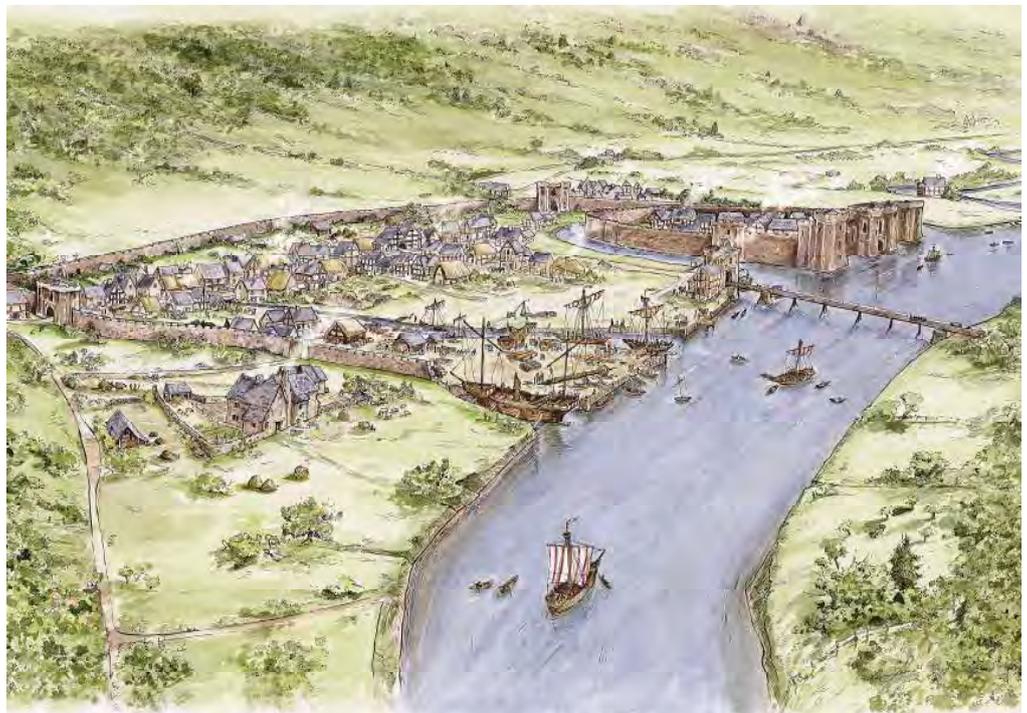
### 2.2 Town Origins: Pre-Historic and Medieval Periods

2.2.1 There has been a settlement in Newport since the pre-historic period, when fishermen settled around the fertile estuary of the River Usk. During the Romano-British period (43 AD – 5th century), a fort was built at Caerleon as a means of defending the important river crossing. Despite this evidence of early settlement in the wider Newport area, the town itself did not begin to develop until the medieval period (c.5th-15th century).

2.2.2 The early town was established by Robert, Earl of Gloucester in 1126 and was known as *Novus Burgus*; literally, *New Town*. The 12th-century development was focused around the High Street area and is thought to have possibly been encircled by defensive walls.<sup>01</sup> Sources conflict regarding the date of the first castle in Newport: a predecessor of today's castle was established around the late 11th or 12th century in an unknown location, possibly to the south of the High Street area, near the cathedral.

2.2.3 The medieval walled town is likely to have had three gates: one near the bridge, a second near St Lawrence's Church and a third in the centre of the High Street.<sup>02</sup> A murenger, or tax collector, collected money for the repair of the town walls. At 53 High Street, Ye Olde Murenger House survives on the site of an earlier building likely to have been the offices of the murenger given its close proximity to the northern town gate. Murage tolls were abolished in 1324 as a result of pressure for more building space outside the town walls.

2.2.4 The surviving Newport Castle on the banks of the River Usk was established around the mid-late 14th century; its construction date is generally agreed as between 1327 and 1386. It was sacked during the Welsh Revolt in 1402, at which time much of Newport was also burnt, but survived and recovered.



(C) Anne Leaver *Impression of medieval Newport, viewed from the south*

<sup>01</sup> Archwilio, PRN 00226g.

<sup>02</sup> *South Wales Illustrated: Series of Views comprising the Picturesque Scenery, Towns, Castles, Seats of the Nobility and Gentry*, (1830).

### 2.3 Trade and Commerce

2.3.1 In 1314, settlement in Newport had become sufficiently established to be awarded its first charter, with a second following soon after in 1385. A third charter was issued in 1426, permitting the right for the town to hold its own market. This was established at the north end of the High Street, where the road bends around towards the Castle. A much later map from 1750 clearly shows the presence of a market house in the middle of the road. By 1521 Newport had become a prosperous market town. The river was an important factor in its trading success, providing an easy transport link for moving goods via the wharfs lining the banks of the river, a short channel extending off the west side of the river.

2.3.2 The High Street extended southwards off the market place and formed the principal thoroughfare through the medieval town. John Leyland, writing in the 1530s, described how *'the fairest of the town is all yn one street'*, presumably referring to the High Street as he also notes that the town is largely in ruin.<sup>03</sup>

2.3.3 Though the medieval buildings along the High Street have been demolished, the narrow width and long depth of the plots lining the street are a clear nod to the medieval built development along this thoroughfare. These are common in medieval market towns where street frontage was highly desirable to catch passing trade. By reducing the width of the plots, more could be squeezed into the streetscape.

2.3.4 Despite its status as a prosperous market town, Newport remained relatively small: comprising 221 houses by 1801, with a population of 1,087. Despite this small population, the market proved to be a disruptive influence due to the congestion it caused along the High Street and was ultimately closed in 1793.<sup>04</sup>

2.3.5 Following the closure of the medieval market, it was necessary to find a new site for market activities. A site on the north side of Griffin Street was chosen, bordered to the north by what is now called Market Street (known as Cross Keys Lane in the mid-18th century). The new market opened in 1817.<sup>05</sup> It was later purchased by the Corporation of Newport in 1885, who instigated its rebuilding to designs by Kirby & Watkins, completed in 1889. The west side was rebuilt in 1934 so that the Market had a more obvious presence on the High Street.

2.3.6 Since the 16th century, the town had developed little beyond the High Street area. However, this began to change in the early 19th century, initially with the widening of the High Street in 1809. It was later widened in 1851 and again in 1879.<sup>06</sup> This instigated numerous rebuilding projects along the High Street, including several in a French Renaissance style (Nos. 24/35, 41/43 and 46/47) by architects Habershon & Fawckner, who are believed to have later designed the rebuilt Market Arcade. They also designed the Newport Arcade, created in 1893 on the west side of the High Street, connecting it with Cambrian Road which had been created as a relief route for the heavy traffic using the High Street.<sup>07</sup>

<sup>03</sup> Caerleon Net, <http://caerleon.net/history/Ieland/index.htm> (accessed June 2017).

<sup>04</sup> Newport Historic Town Centre: Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, (2016).

<sup>05</sup> Newport Historic Town Centre: Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, (2016).

<sup>06</sup> Newport Historic Town Centre: Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, (2016).

<sup>07</sup> Evening Express, (7 December 1895).

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

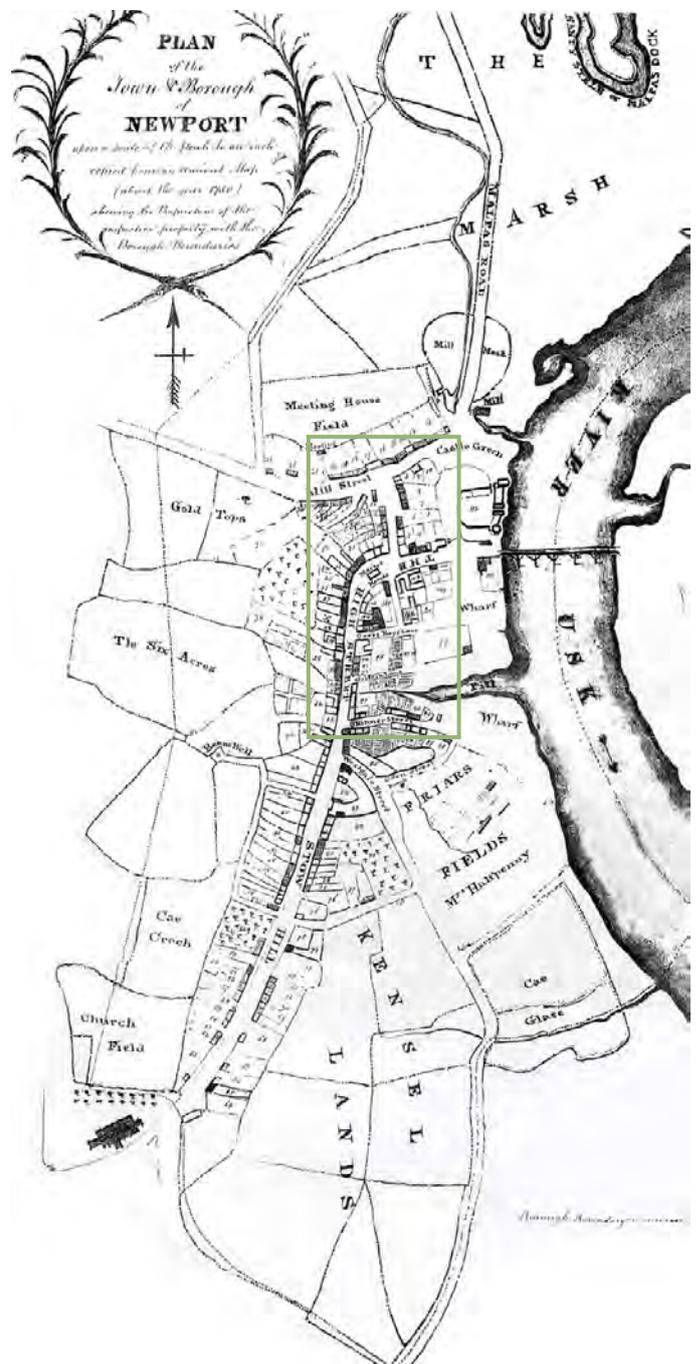
2.3.7 Postcards from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century showing the increasingly busy High Street.



## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.3.8 A plan of Newport from the mid-18th century clearly shows the High Street and Stow Hill as the principal thoroughfare connecting the cathedral to the south with the castle to the north. Along the banks of the River Usk were wharfs for loading and unloading commercial vessels; a channel (called a 'pill', from the Welsh *pwl*, meaning an inlet or pool) branched off the river and extended into the wharfs, creating more dock-able water frontage almost parallel with the commercial High Street.

2.3.9 Much of the configuration of the High Street area discussed in this study is shown laid out as it currently survives: Skinner Street, Griffin Lane (now Griffin Street) and Cross Keys Lane (now Market Street) all extending off the east side of the High Street. Cambrian Road is not evident, with the plots on the west side of the High Street extending back onto orchard enclosures or open fields. At the northern bend of the High Street, where the road now widens, stood the Market House – a clear indicator that this was the historic location of the town's market. A cut-through route is visible between Cross Keys Lane (Market Street) and the Market House, most likely Carpenter's Arms Lane.



The Town and Borough of Newport, 1750

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 2.4 Market Arcade

2.4.1 The first arcade to be built on this site was underway by 1867, when it was recorded that ‘a handsome arcade, to form an excellent approach from High Street to the Duke of Beaufort’s new market’ was about to begin construction.<sup>08</sup> This new arcade had been discussed as early as 1862 in a letter to the *Monmouthshire Merlin* decrying the potential rebuilding of the market, though expressing support for a potential new arcade. This letter refers to the Duke of Beaufort’s supposed intention to take down two houses in the High Street – belonging to a Mr Bryant and Mr Ewins – and replace them with an arcade, approaching the market.<sup>09</sup>

2.4.2 In the event, the houses of Mr Bryant and Mr Ewins were taken down, but the project was funded by a Mr Fennell, rather than the Duke of Beaufort. Fennell was a prosperous fishmonger within the town of Newport and an active member of the community, particularly in religious matters; one account recalls how, after preaching at a special service at Barry Dock, he joked ‘I sell fish all the week and catch souls on Sunday’.<sup>10</sup> Fennell’s premises had been located on the High Street, opposite the South Wales Railway, adjoining the site of the arcade.<sup>11</sup> He took out a 12-year lease on the land from the Duke of Beaufort in order to build the arcade, which occupied a prime location close to the rail station and fronting directly onto the High Street.<sup>12</sup>

2.4.3 Plans – submitted for approval by the local Board of Health by a Mr Lawrence – were described as depicting ‘nine shops, one story high, forming an arcade.... from High Street to the market’. The 1817 market had been extended in 1865 and the new arcade was intended as a new approach from the station end of the High Street.<sup>13</sup> Fennell’s plans also intended to build two ‘handsome’ shop fronts on either side of the High Street entrance, and it was proposed that the footway would be 12-feet wide and covered with a glass roof.<sup>14</sup>

2.4.4 The reaction to the arcade was generally positive, with articles in newspapers of the day stating that it would be ‘a decided improvement’, and one that ‘every tradesperson in the city will be glad to see carried out’.<sup>15</sup> The development attracted a number of different trades, with the 1876 *Butcher’s Street Directory* listing occupants as: a photographer, an umbrella maker, a watchmaker, a bible and tract seller, an earthenware dealer, a fruiterer, an agent, and a milliner.<sup>16</sup>

2.4.5 The present Market Arcade was constructed around 1905. Plans show that it followed the same general arrangement as the structure it replaced, though the number of units were increased to 17. The architects are believed to have been the practice of Habershon & Fawckner, who were well established architects in the town, designing many public buildings including St Mark’s Church (1874) and Beechwood House (1877), as well as numerous buildings along the High Street and Newport Arcade.

<sup>08</sup> *Country Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 10 August 1867.

<sup>09</sup> *Monmouthshire Merlin*, (4 January 1862).

<sup>10</sup> *Barry Herald*, (10 July 1896).

<sup>11</sup> *Monmouthshire Merlin*, (13 December 1862).

<sup>12</sup> *The Cardiff Times*, (10 August 1867).

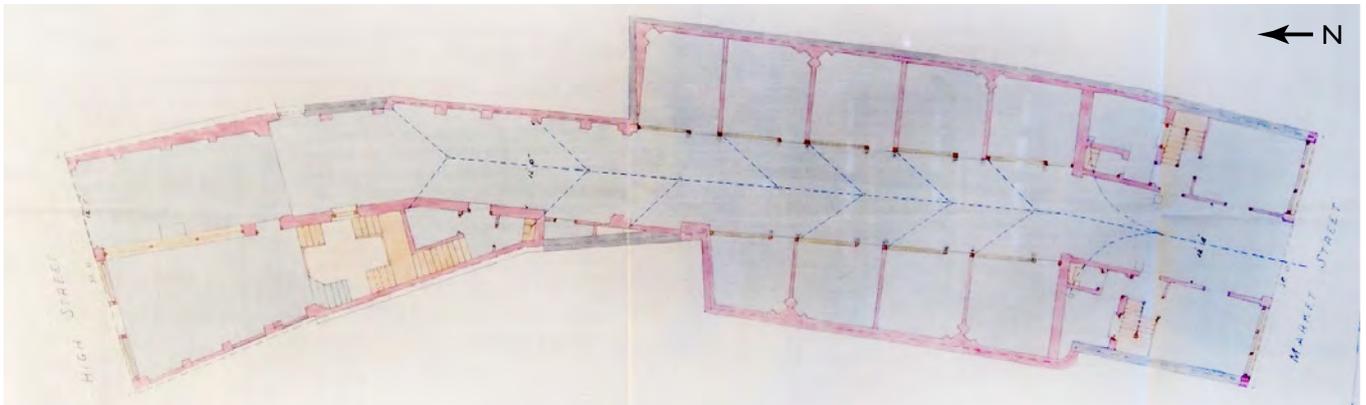
<sup>13</sup> *Monmouthshire Merlin*, (2 November 1867).

<sup>14</sup> *The Cardiff Times*, (10 August 1867).

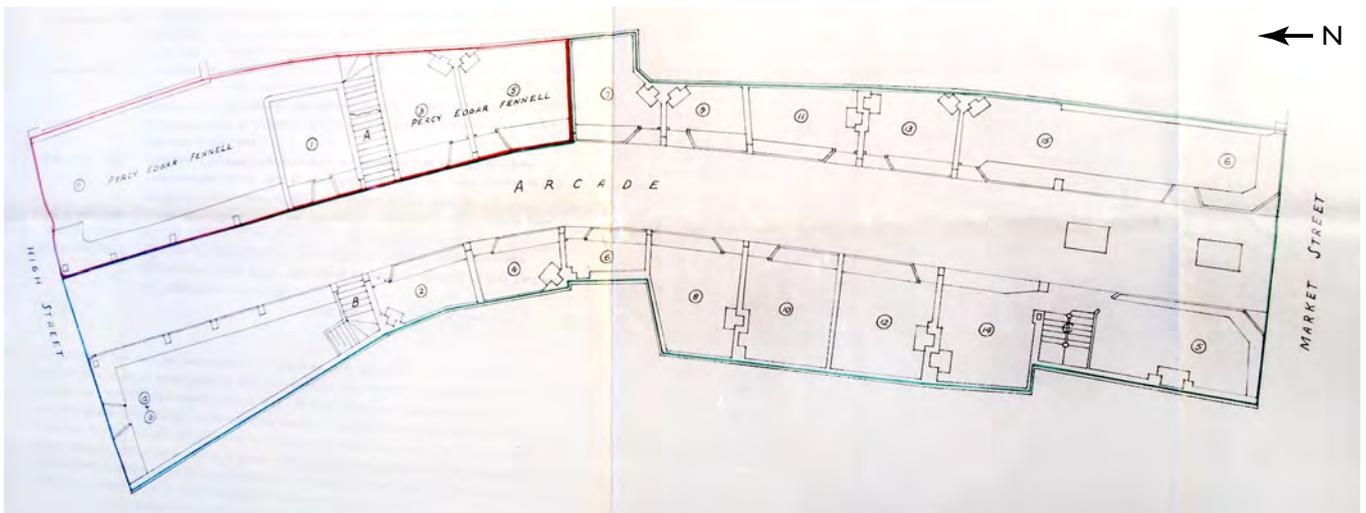
<sup>15</sup> *The Cardiff Times*, (10 August 1867).

<sup>16</sup> *Butcher’s Newport Street Directory*, (1876), accessed through Newport Past.

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT



Fennell's Arcade, drawn in 1869



The re-built arcade, 1905

2.4.6 As with its previous incarnation, the renewed Arcade proved to be a commercial success. The 1914 entry in *Johns' Newport Street Directory* lists the occupants of the units generally as smart retailers. Occupants included: two drapers, an outfitter, a china dealer, a watchmaker, a confectioner, a florist and a tobacconist.<sup>17</sup> The arcade continued to flourish through the inter-war years, with anecdotal evidence suggesting it developed as a flower market. As late as the 1950s, one trade remembers that, 'I sold 3,000 lbs of tomatoes on a single Friday. It was that busy, other traders were complaining about the queues blocking the route through the arcade'.<sup>18</sup>

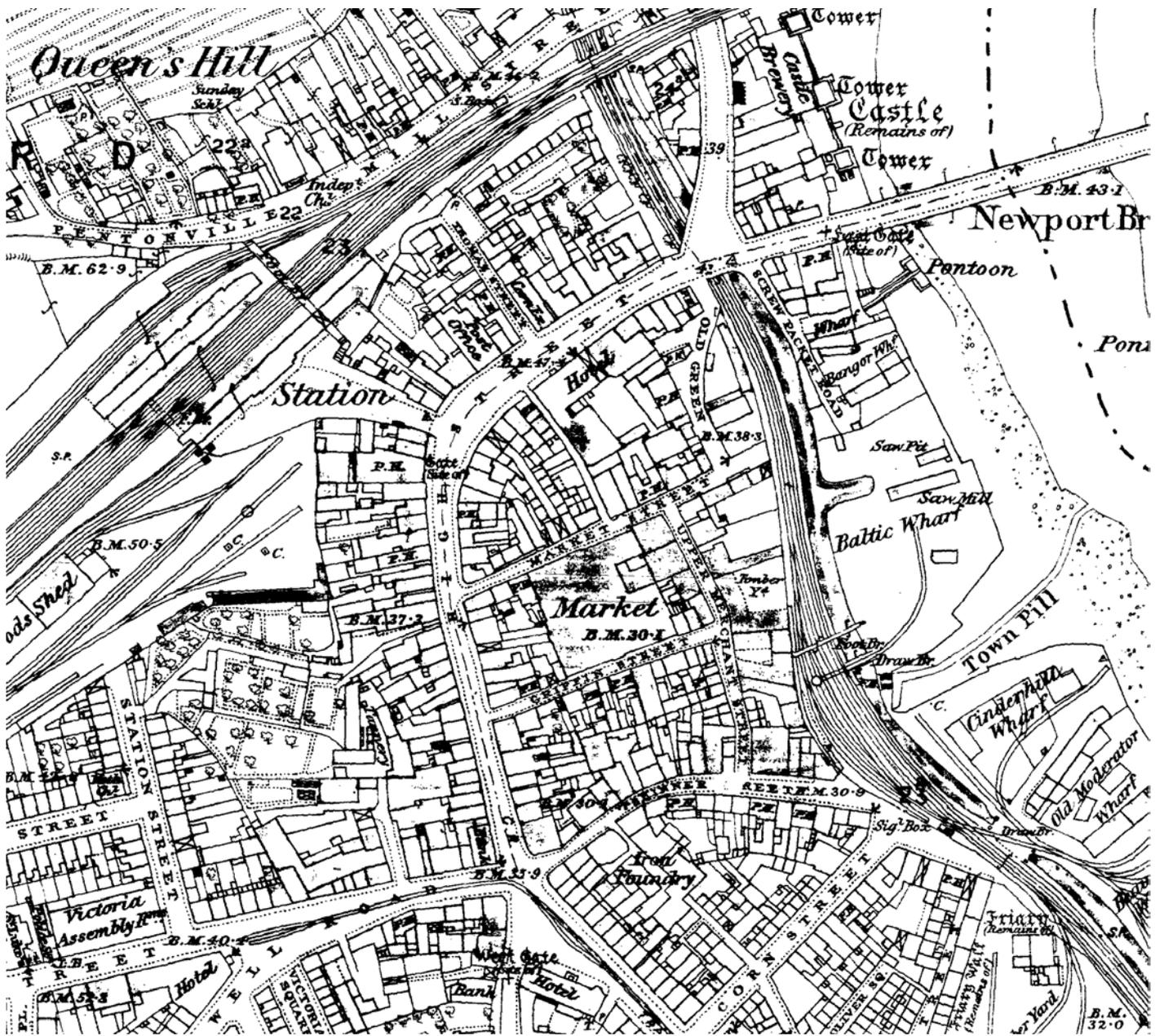
2.4.7 However, during the later 20th century, commercial development in Newport moved away from the Victorian market centre of the town. As retail development moved away from the northern area of the town, more recreational developments such as cafes and pubs were established in their stead, meaning a lack of trade due to reduced footfall and an increase in anti-social behaviour in the area.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Johns' Newport Street Directory*, (1914), accessed through Newport Past.

<sup>18</sup> *Newport City Council: Market Arcade Townscape Heritage Scheme, the Project in Pictures*, (2016).

<sup>19</sup> *Newport Historic Town Centre: Draft Conservation Area Appraisal*, (2016).

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT



Ordnance Survey (1885-87) showing the 19th-century developments in the town centre; including the market in the centre, the railway to the north-west (top left) and river wharfs to the east (right), with a goods rail line adjacent. The two arcades are also shown as narrow cut-through routes between the dense buildings.

### 2.5 The Industrial Revolution

2.5.1 During the Industrial Revolution trade in Newport really flourished. Although the many towns and cities across the England and Wales expanded during this period, Newport underwent a remarkable boom: rising from a population of just over 1,000 in 1800 to 67,000 by 1900.<sup>20</sup>

2.5.2 With the sudden increase in the demand for coal, the mines in the South Wales Valleys became increasingly important and productive. Coal was transported via waterway to the Welsh port towns, including Newport which was connected to the mining towns of Pontypool and Abergavenny in 1799 by the Monmouthshire Canal. By the 1830s, Newport had become one of the leading coal ports in Wales; exporting 519,000 tons in 1831.

2.5.3 In response to the need to expand Newport's commercial core, Commercial Street was laid out in 1810 along the earlier Westgate Street which, in the mid-18th century, had led into open fields. This scheme was part of a wider plan by Sir Charles Morgan, Baron Tredegar, to increase Newport's prospects and wealth.

2.5.4 The rail station in Newport was opened in 1850, operated by the South Wales Railway Company and with direct access onto the north end of the High Street across what is now Queensway. The topography of South Wales necessitated complex engineering solutions. At Newport both a large timber viaduct and the Hillfield tunnels were constructed to accommodate the tracks. The opening of a railway in Newport was highly anticipated and viewed with enthusiasm as it was hoped that it would open the town to the rest of Britain. Originally, there were additional stations at Dock Street and Mill Street.

2.5.5 However, these stations closed in 1880 and the main station was expanded to meet the increased demand.

2.5.6 Newport continued to thrive into the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Alexandra Docks were established in 1875 and expanded over the following decades. As the town expanded southwards, the need for another river crossing became apparent and the iconic Transporter Bridge was opened in 1906.

### 2.6 Modern Era

2.6.1 Recognising that the High Street was becoming increasingly busy with traffic, the Newport Corporation implemented a one-way system in 1949, diverting traffic onto Upper Dock Street. From the mid-20th century onwards, focus began to shift and move away from the High Street. The Kingsway Shopping Centre was opened in 1968 and Friars Walk opened in 2015, cementing the commercial shift away from the historic town centre towards the extended Commercial Street.

2.6.2 As part of the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations in 2002, Newport was bestowed official city status. In recognition of this, the Riverfront Arts Centre was constructed on the banks of the river, south-east of the High Street area. It was during excavations for the build that the Newport Ship was discovered, a 15th-century trading vessel with Portuguese artefacts that illustrates the busy and international trade seen in the late medieval town.

<sup>20</sup> Newport Historic Town Centre: Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, (2016).

## 3.0 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY

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### 3.1 General Configuration

3.1.1 The High Street Character Area generally comprises principal north-south thoroughfares with secondary and tertiary routes running across between them:

- Principal thoroughfares: Cambrian Road, High Street, Upper Dock Street, Skinner Street.
- Secondary thoroughfares: Market Street, Griffin Street, Station Approach.
- Tertiary thoroughfares: Market Arcade, Newport Arcade, Carpenters Arms Lane.

3.1.2 The High Street forms the main spine of the Character Area, continuing southwards through the Conservation Area as Stow Hill. Transport routes and hubs enclose its north end, causing its architectural and spatial character to stop abruptly where it meets the bus station, the Queensway/Usk Way roundabout and the rail station. The relationship of the north end of the High Street with the Castle and riverfront has been completely truncated by the A4042 Usk Way, such that this section of the High Street has the character of a secondary thoroughfare, rather than the significant principal route it was historically. Further south, the area's spatial and physical character blends more seamlessly with the neighbouring areas.

3.1.3 Griffin Street and Market Street are similar in character and form parallel secondary routes running either side of the Market, linking this and the High Street with Upper Dock Street and, historically, the river wharfs where incoming/outgoing goods were processed. This historic narrative is no longer easily discernible, what

with the loss of the working riverfront wharfs and the close proximity of the bus station abutting the east end of these routes. The same has happened at Station Approach, where the historic direct link between the rail station and the High Street has been truncated by modern developments. However, the historic development of the wider area has left a distinct mark on the evolution of these thoroughfares' configuration.

3.1.4 Also characteristic of the area are the tertiary routes which link primary and secondary routes by channelling through the dense building blocks filling the spaces between. The two arcades are such tertiary links and have evolved in tandem with the prevalent trade and commerce activity within the High Street area, resulting in the historic retail units which line either side of the arcades.

### 3.2 Natural Topography

3.2.1 The topographical landscape of Newport has been hewn by the flow of the River Usk, resulting in a bedrock geology of sedimentary deposits from millennia of flooding and the movement of water southwards towards the Severn estuary.

3.2.2 The topography of the area generally declines southwards, this being notable at the north ends of Cambrian Road and the High Street. The generally southwards sloping topography is particularly obvious looking at the entrance on the north side of the Market compared to the south side: from the north shoppers step down into the Market, whereas from the south they step up to the entrance.

### 3.0 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY



Looking south down the High Street from its northern bend, where the topography notably slopes downwards



Looking south down Cambrian Road, where the southwards decline is more marked

## 3.0 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY

### 3.3 Views

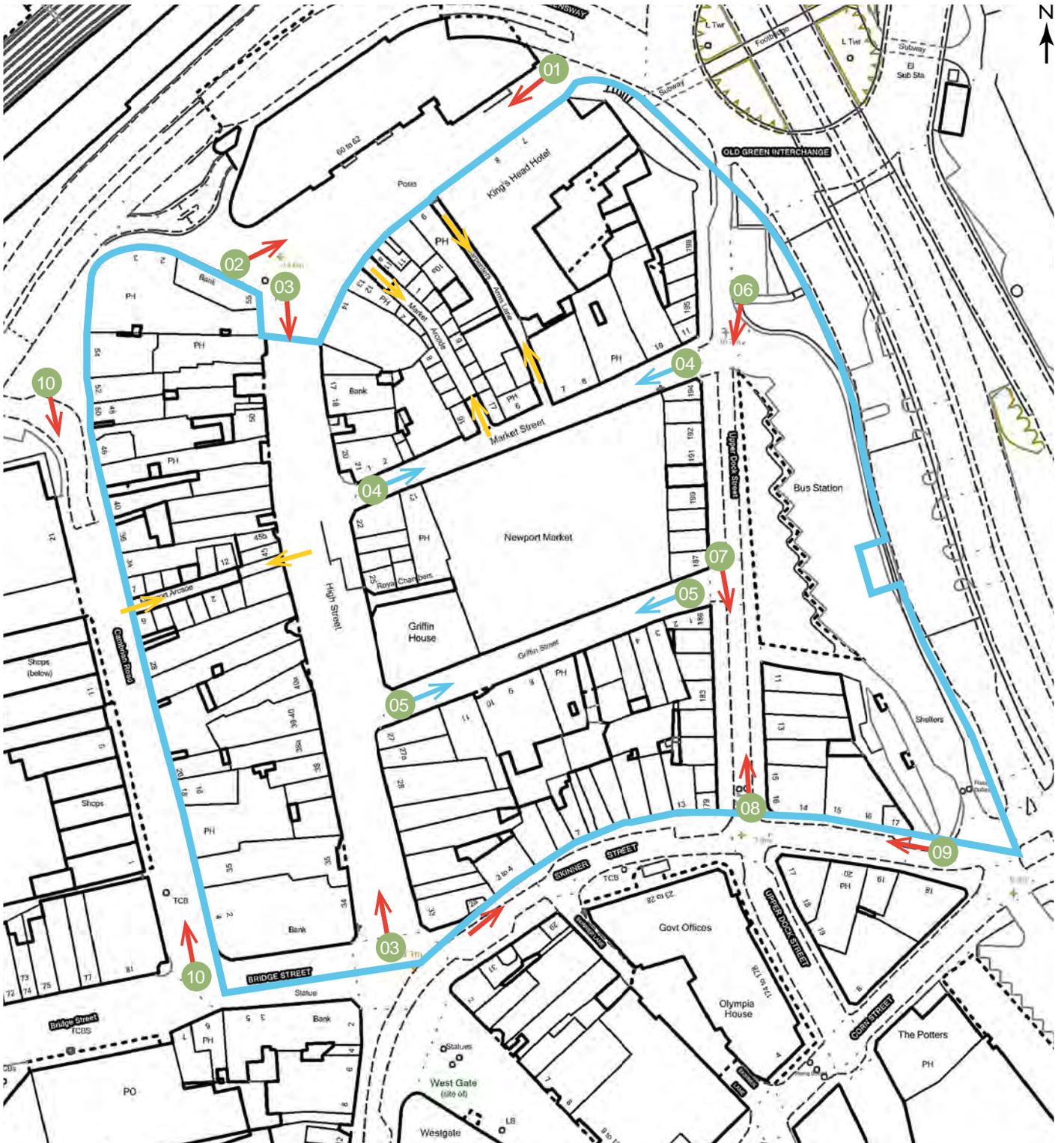
3.3.1 The relatively short and straight thoroughfares through the Character Area channel views up and down the streets. In other instances, the gentle curve in the road and building line encourage a kinetic view, where more is revealed as the viewer travels along. As well as these principal views, there are also secondary glimpsed views directed through the arcades and Carpenters Arms Lane.

#### VIEWS PLAN

-  High Street Character Area
-  Views along principal thoroughfares
-  Views along secondary thoroughfares
-  Views along tertiary thoroughfares
-  View number

*This plan is not to scale*

### 3.0 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY



## 3.0 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY

### 01 Looking south-westwards from the top of the High Street

Historically, this view would have been the first glimpse of the town centre for those crossing the bridge; however, it is now limited to the reduced passing traffic. The somewhat disconnected feel of this section of the High Street is at odds with the commemorative statuary against the former Post Office and the landmark building on the corner, which historically evolved in response to the busy nature of their surroundings. The prominence of the Ye Olde Murenger House is illustrative of this location's history of toll collecting from those entering the formerly walled town. The width of the road is also indicative of the market house that historically stood in the centre.

### 02 Looking north-eastwards from Station Approach across the High Street

This view looks out across the entrance into the High Street towards the Castle, which is just visible behind the parked vans. Historically, this would have been an immensely important view; however, its significance has been diluted by the modern development at the far end of the High Street and the reconfiguration of the transport routes such that traffic into the High Street is dramatically reduced. Although not within the Character Area, the former Post Office is a key component within this view. Unfortunately, the density of vehicular parking detracts from much of the streetscape, particularly the entrance into Market Arcade.

### 03 Looking north and south along the High Street

These views are dominated by rich architectural pieces, including the elevation over Newport Arcade on the west side and the turret at the corner of 27 High Street (the latter particularly in views from the north end). The generous width of the street results in a layered streetscape, with buildings along the east side overlapping where the building line varies and the buildings opposite gently curving round. At the south end of the High Street, the view is framed on either side by the prominent corner buildings.

### 04 Looking up/down Market Street from either end

These are secondary views within the Character Area, channelled by the comparatively narrow width of the street and almost continuous building line. The uniform elevation of the Market is a prominent feature in these views. There are also ancillary views into the cut-through routes on the north side of Market Street (Market Arcade and Carpenters Arms Lane), which are unique within the Character Area as they bend around and do not offer a clear view straight through to the other side.

### 05 Looking up/down Griffin Street from either end

As with the views up and down Market Street, these are secondary views channelled by the narrow width of the street. These streetscapes differ from most of the Character Area given the disparate roof heights on either side: the Market seems comparatively diminutive compared to the taller buildings on the opposite side of the street in both thoroughfares.

### 06 Looking southwards towards the Market from the north end of the bus station

There is little impetus for the public to take in this viewpoint as it requires crossing the bus route and standing on a corner. However, it offers the best vantage point of the Market's historic entrance, marked by a central tower which is hardly visible anywhere in the Character Area. This orientation illustrates the historic configuration of this area as a busy thoroughfare connecting the riverfront wharfs with the Market, albeit heavily diluted now by the close proximity of the bus station.

### 07 Looking southwards down Upper Dock Street from the junction with Griffin Street

This is a relatively short view but is significant for the fragment of historic wharf character projected by the warehouse-like buildings at the far south end of Upper Dock Street. These were historically prominent commercial buildings. Additionally, the faded advertisements painted on the gable end of this block can be glimpsed behind the canopy of the bus station, evidently in a location that was once highly prominent.

### 08 Looking northwards up Upper Dock Street from Skinner Street

The tower over the Market is prominent in this view, projecting a civic character contrasted by the more utilitarian style of the former wharf buildings in the foreground opposite.

### 09 Looking along the north side of Skinner Street from the east and west

The road here curves around but is interrupted by the protruding modern development halfway along the south side, meaning that the view of the north side does not extend the full length of the block. However, this converts the view into a kinetic view, where more architectural features are revealed as the viewer travels around the curve of the road.

### 10 Looking north and south along the east side of Cambrian Lane

The views along Cambrian Road are channelled by the more obviously sloping topography, with a steeper slope at its north end than anywhere else in the Character Area. The architecture is less rich along this thoroughfare; however, there is a particularly strong group of brick elevations at the north end which make a significant contribution to the view here.

## 3.0 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY

### 3.3.2 An illustrative selection of key views in the High Street Character Area:



01 Looking south-westwards from the top end of the High Street



02 Looking north-eastwards at the top end of the High Street



03 Looking north up the High Street



03 Looking south down the High Street



04 Looking west along Market Street



05 Looking west along Griffin Street

### 3.0 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY



06 The Market tower viewed from the corner of the bus station



08 Looking north up Upper Dock Street



09 Looking west along the north side of Skinner Street



10 Looking south down Cambrian Road



Local view through Market Arcade from the High Street



Local view through Newport Arcade from Cambrian Road

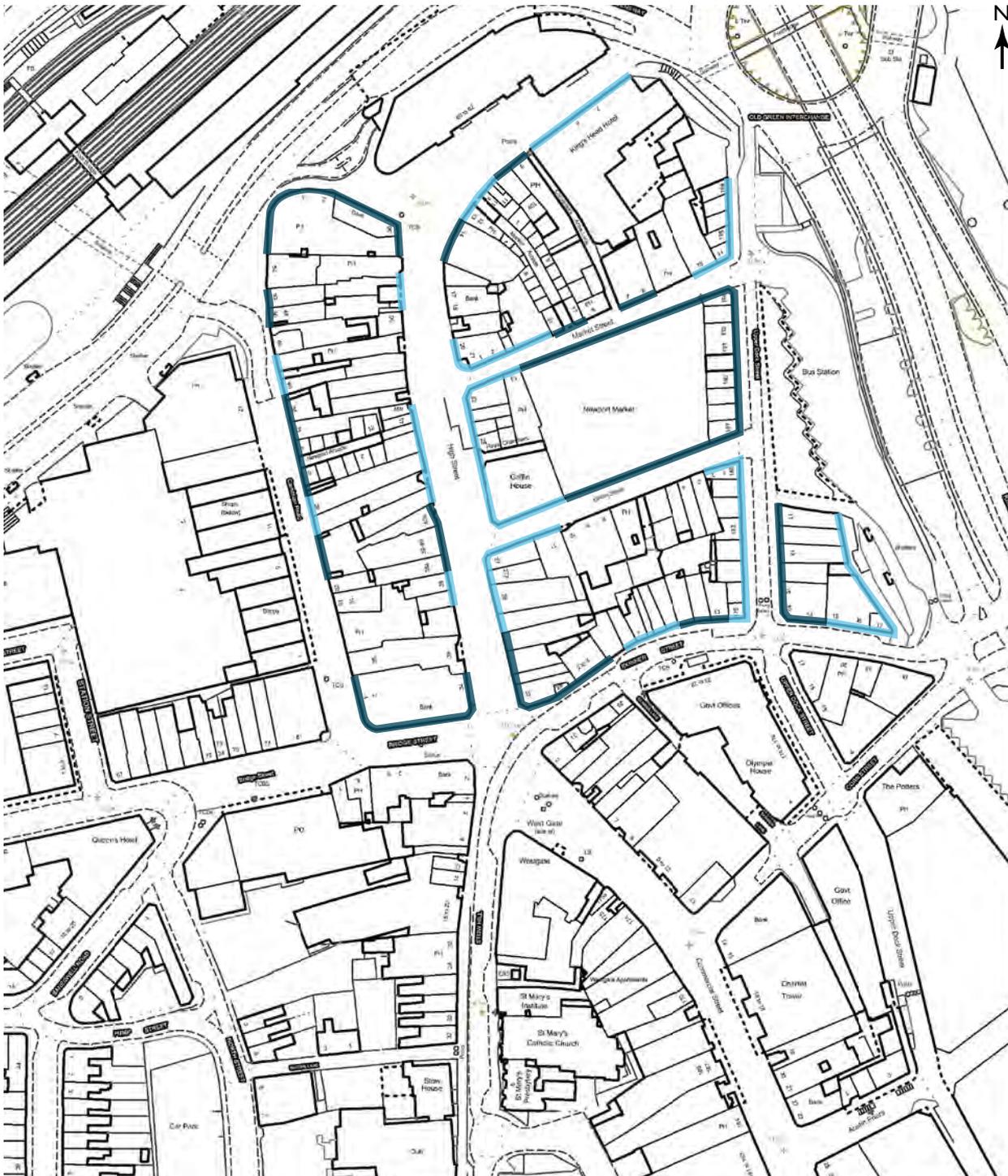
## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING

### 4.1 Architectural Groups

#### UNIFIED ELEVATIONS

 Architecturally unified elevations above ground floor level

*This plan is not to scale*



## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING

4.1.1 Generally, the architectural interest of the Character Area emanates from the elevational treatments above the ground floor. Here, there are clear groups unified by the same architectural design continuing across more than one address. The architectural styles range from highly ornate Renaissance styles to sleeker early 20th-century designs.

4.1.2 There are distinctive groups throughout the Character Area, those on the High Street are particularly notable for the sheer size of the grouped elevations as they span a much longer length of the streetscape than elsewhere. Each design is individual in character, using a range of materials and architectural features. This architectural uniformity across a group of buildings, in some instances, is not immediately recognisable as different properties have been subject to different paint schemes or had features added.

4.1.3 Additionally, corner buildings are treated particularly well, with elevational designs which focus on the corner unit and wrap around either side. This makes the visual flow from one streetscape to another smoother. Nos. 33 (NatWest) and 34 (Principality) High Street, both landmark corner buildings, notably frame the south entrance onto the High Street.



*The High Street elevation over the entrance to the Market Arcade, which is architecturally balanced but its uniformity has been diluted by different surface treatments*



*The architecturally uniform elevation above 41-47 High Street, which has a slight variance at the far north end where the arched windows echo the arch over the entrance to Newport Arcade*



*The altered elevation across 38a-40a High Street, where the Italianate fenestration has largely been retained, except for the large modern window above Subway which has diluted the uniformity of the group*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING



*The historically matching but much altered elevations at 40 and 44 Cambrian Road, where behind the oriel window the wide brick arch lintel, string course and gable end window matching its neighbour are still evident*



*Highbury Chambers, 5-10 Skinner Street – a rich architectural elevation with a central pediment and contrasting yellow brick dressings*



*Plainer matching elevations at 9 and 10 High Street*



*The former bank and public house on the corner of the High Street, the elevation of which wraps around the end of the block and onto the north end of Cambrian Road*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING



*The uniform above-ground elevations of 22-24 and 26-28 Cambrian Road, where the use of buff brick unifies the subtly different architectural styles within the wider group*



*33 High Street, a prominent corner building, the elevation of which wraps around to units on the High Street and Skinner Street*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING

### 4.2 Common Features and Materials

4.2.1 The use of prominent Dutch gables is especially prevalent in the High Street Character Area. These are typically ornate front-facing gable ends with scrolls and pediments extending above the parapet, creating a varied roofscape. They are most notable along the High Street, where the larger architectural groups are concentrated.

4.2.2 Dated features are also common and include foundation stones, high-level date stones/plaques and rain hoppers. These are especially notable for illustrating the widespread 19th- and early 20th-century developments that took place across the Character Area.

4.2.3 The use of carved ornamentation – scrolls, floral swags and arabesques, cartouches and busts – add a richness to the architecture within the Character Area and are indicative of the generous budgets available for the high-quality developments carried out in the late 19th and early 20th century.

4.2.4 The materials used vary across the architectural designs within the Character Area. A light-coloured Bath stone with an ashlar finish, contrastingly dark and roughly-hewn Pennant stone, and red and yellow bricks are the most common elevation materials. Bath stone, in particular, lends itself well to carving the delicate reliefs and dressings that ornament many of the buildings. Pennant stone is a South Wales material often used for its more hardwearing nature. Uniquely within the Character Area, the Market is faced with a roughly-hewn red-brown sandstone, creating a rusticated appearance. Portland stone is also evident on the west elevation of the Market, matching the elevation on the corner of the High Street and Market Street.



*Bust reliefs on 27 High Street*



*Cartouche detail on 28 High Street*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING



*Dated rain hopper*



*Date plaque on Griffin House*



*Detail of the Dutch gables on 28 High Street*



*Dated foundation stone*

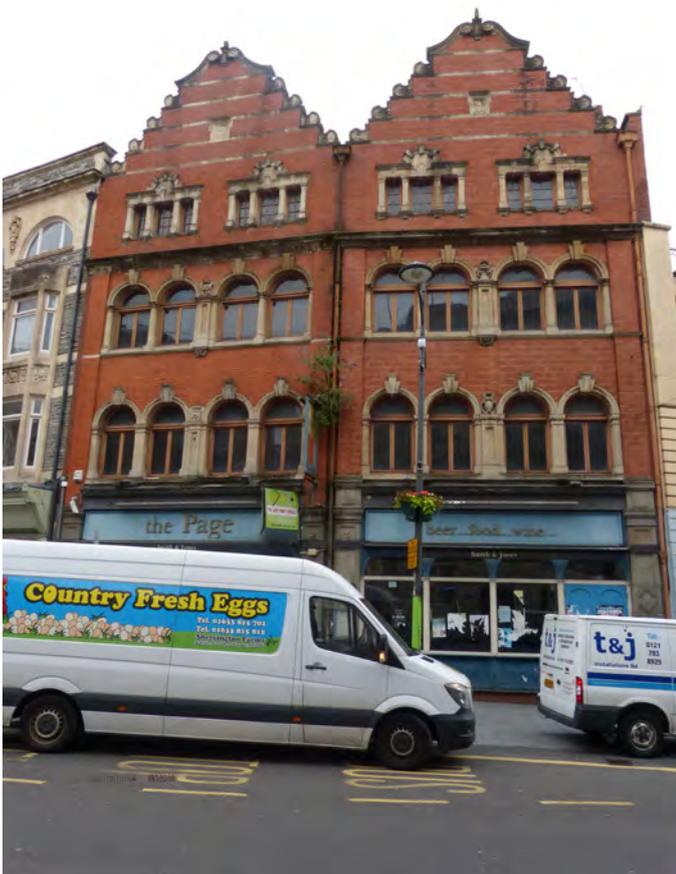


*Sculpted floral scrolls at frieze level*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING



*Highbury Chambers, with a pedimented Dutch gable and sculpted name and date detail*



*Ornate Dutch gables over 14 High Street*



*Portland stone finish on the west elevation of the Market*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING

### 4.3 Public Realm

4.3.1 The road and pavement surface treatments are generally uniform across the High Street, Market Street, Griffin Street, Upper Dock Street and Skinner Street where a modern scheme of varied Pennant setts have been laid in response to the pedestrianisation of these thoroughfares. Coupled with this along the High Street are a series of bollards demarcating the pedestrian-only areas from the main section of road where reduced traffic is permitted, and a seating area in front of the Market entrance. This highlights the mid-point along the High Street as a prominent meeting and resting place within the busy thoroughfare.

4.3.2 Cambrian Road, however, has a more dated surface treatment of herringbone bricks with square setts. This stops short at the north end of the road, where another scheme of different setts starts. Bridge Street has another scheme of surface treatment, with squared slabs.

4.3.3 Each street has a uniform series of streetlamps, with several modern styles evident throughout the Character Area. Many, including those on the High Street and Cambrian Road, also have planted hanging baskets. Within Newport Arcade are a series of traditional-style hung lanterns from the roof and mounted on wall brackets.

4.3.4 As well as modern traffic signage, at key pedestrian junctions are signposts in a traditional post design with multiple arrow signs.

4.3.5 A focal point on Bridge Street is the statue of Sir Charles Morgan, a key character in Newport's 19th-century development. Further statuary is somewhat arbitrarily placed opposite the former Post Office at the north end of the High Street, including a war memorial. This is indicative of its historical prominence, which has

subsequently waned. A commemorative statue of a produce-laden pig has been re-instated within the bus station, opposite the east entrance to the Market, and is a well-known local symbol of the history of the Market.



*The signpost outside Newport Arcade*



*Wall-mounted lanterns in Newport Arcade*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING



Statue on Bridge Street, depicting Sir Charles Morgan



War memorial on the High Street



A replica Preaching Cross on the High Street

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING

### 4.4 Arcades

4.4.1 The two arcades in the High Street Character Area diversify its spatial character, offering cut-through routes to connect the busier main thoroughfares. Newport Arcade is the more active of the two arcades, whereas Market Arcade suffers many serious issues that substantially detract from its character.

4.4.2 Despite the clear difference in their condition, the two arcades have many of the same features. The use of glazed tiles and bricks at high level is present in both, likely intended as means of emphasising the brightness of the top-lit interiors. Canted bay windows are also a common feature and are a means of gathering increased natural light for the rooms behind. Being bounded on either side by buildings, many of the units are only lit by these windows and it was therefore important to make use of such features.

4.4.3 On their High Street sides, both arcades are framed by ornate elevations, drawing attention to their main entrances. Newport Arcade also has a prominent elevation on its secondary entrance, off Cambrian Road; however, the elevation on the south side of Market Arcade, onto Market Street, is surprisingly plain.

4.4.4 Newport Arcade has retained its rhythmic uniformity: the shopfronts maintain their historic proportions with plinths, pilasters and corbels. Attractive cast iron detailing also survives along the upper level walkway and ornamenting the supporting iron posts. The floor is a modern tiled surface, which contributes to the overall fresh and light character of the interior.

4.4.5 Within Market Arcade, there are features which allude to its original historic character. Many of the shop units have retained their recessed and angled doors, albeit often behind security gates or shutters. Evidence of other historic features include sections of dentilled cornicing, shopfront corbels, decorative latticework and sign fascias.



*The Cambrian Road entrance into Newport Arcade*



*The High Street entrance to Market Arcade*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING

### Below: Newport Arcade



The cast iron walkway balustrade, fascias and glazed roof in Newport Arcade



Glazed bricks and bay windows in Newport Arcade



Newport Arcade, looking through to the High Street

### Below: Market Arcade



The cast iron walkway balustrade and glazed roof in Market Arcade



Glazed tiles and bay windows in Market Arcade



Market Arcade, looking through to the High Street

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING



*Moulded ceiling detail and dentilled cornice in Market Arcade*



*A surviving fragment of Fennell's shopfront sign*



*Damaged but surviving corbels and arch detailing in Market Arcade*

## 4.0 THE CHARACTER OF BUILDING

### 4.5 Comparable Arcades

4.5.1 The shopping arcade, as an architectural device, only came into existence at the close of the 18th century. The idea originated in Paris, where *galeries* were designed as covered shelters, where the well-to-do could shop, dine and socialise away from the dirt and noise of the streets beyond. Consequently, they became popular social haunts. The earliest of these arcades was the (now-lost) Galerie de Bois, located next to the Palais Royal, and built during the 1770s.

4.5.2 The idea was imported to England in the early 19th century. The earliest executed arcade was the Royal Opera Arcades, designed by John Nash between 1816 and 1818 (listed at Grade I). The arcade proved to be a convenient commercial design, allowing the designer to create architecturally unified schemes that also exploited the use of deep plots to create shops that were larger than they appeared. By concentrating a shopping mass in a relatively compact area, the shops housed in the arcades flourished commercially. Some other early examples of arcades can be found in England: the Burlington Arcade, London, 1818-1819 (Grade II); Montpellier Arcade, Cheltenham, 1831-1832 (Grade II\*); The Corridor, Bath, 1825 (Grade II); and the Royal Victoria Arcade, Isle of Wight, 1835-1836 (Grade II\*). The building type underwent a resurgence in the final quarter of the 19th century, as the improvements to cast iron technology made more intricate and ambitious designs possible.

4.5.3 In a Welsh context, the original Market Arcade, built in 1867, is the second oldest in Wales (the 1905 re-building appears to have retained at least some built fabric and the central spine of the Arcade walk). The oldest arcade in Wales is the Grade II listed Royal Arcade in Cardiff, built in 1858 by James & Price. The arcade is covered by a glass roof, supported by fretted iron ribs and contains 48 units. Cardiff is an important locale for shopping arcades, containing the highest concentration of Victorian and Edwardian shopping arcades of any British city, giving rise to its nickname, the 'City of Arcades'. Aside from the Royal Arcade, Cardiff contains five other shopping arcades from the period between roughly 1880 and 1900. These include Castle Arcade, Duke Street Arcade, High Street Arcade, Morgan Arcade, and Wyndham Arcade. Of these, all except Castle Arcade (II\*) are listed at Grade II. The on-going commercial success of Cardiff's arcades has been significantly boosted by the recent pedestrianisation of the Castle Quarter area, encouraging shoppers to explore the wider area rather than be constricted by the busy road.

## 5.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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5.1.1 As part of a designated conservation area and containing multiple listed buildings, the High Street Character Area is of obvious and recognised significance.

5.1.2 A major driving factor in what makes this area important is its long history and how this has shaped the configuration of its streets, affording a very high historical value that is both associative (connected to historical events and people) and illustrative (demonstrating how history has resulted in today's character). In particular, the evolution of the High Street as a principal thoroughfare extending off the river crossing and into the town from the 14th-century Castle is indicative of how settlement evolved as a result of the natural resources that had long been utilised before permanent settlement here. The High Street is the historic spine of the city, although modern intervention now largely disguises this.

5.1.3 Medieval activity in Newport is further evident where narrow and deep plot boundaries, characteristic of burgage plots, remain discernible. It is highly significant that these can still be identified despite the heavy development that took place in this area around the 19th century. Although large-scale development in the 19th-century is likely to have substantially truncated the archaeology under the buildings, it is possible that historic road surfaces and evidence of structures where there is now open road (for example, the medieval town walls) may survive below ground.

5.1.4 Throughout all chapters of Newport's history, its links with trade and commerce are highly significant. The proximity of the river is a key part of this, as is the city's long-held right to host a market (dating from 1426). The prosperity of the town as a centre of commerce also has significant links with the wider region: the hugely successful coal export industry in the

19th century resulting from the significant links Newport developed with the mining towns in the Valleys, and the use of the river to transfer goods from far and wide (as indicated by the goods excavated with the Newport Ship).

5.1.5 Market activity in Newport has had a significant impact on the character of the area. The notably wide north end of the High Street is a subtle clue alluding to the presence of the historic market house that formerly stood here and hosted the market before it moved southwards to a second (and the current) location. The development of a cut-through route directly onto this market place in the form of Carpenters Arms Lane is further indicative of how important this area was and remained an important route after the market was moved.

5.1.6 The 19th century is a highly important chapter in Newport's history: the boom in trade meant an influx of money into the area and this is manifest in the richness and variety of architecture evident throughout the Character Area, but particularly so on the High Street. The survival of details including sculpted reliefs and date stones is especially notable. The overall integrity of the architecture from this period is also highly significant: there are instances where its value has been diluted by inappropriate intervention but, generally, the architectural value of many of the buildings within the Character Area remains very high. This includes a smaller proportion of older buildings, which are notable for their contrasting scale and architectural detailing, especially at the north end of the High Street.

## 5.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1.7 The aesthetic value of the streetscapes is one of the key factors that make the Character Area significant. The richness and variety of its architecture, gentle topography and wide thoroughfares are significant components of the principal streetscapes. The comparative intimacy of the secondary streetscapes creates a balancing contrast to this.

5.1.8 Key figures associated with the High Street Character Area are also connected with its 19th-century success. In particular, architects Habershon & Fawckner, who were heavily involved with the redevelopment of the much of the area's buildings at this time. Habershon & Fawckner were prolific in South Wales, having designed numerous chapels and large areas of middle-class villa developments in Cardiff. They were also the appointed architects to the Tredegar estate, the seat of Sir Charles Morgan who had facilitated much of the development in Newport and is commemorated by a statue on Bridge Street.

5.1.9 Overall, the character of the High Street area is drawn from the layout of the streets and how these relay chapters in its history, the strong links with trade and market activity, and the architectural developments of the 19th century. This results in its distinctive and highly significant character.

### 5.2 Market Arcade

5.2.1 Market Arcade is especially significant as the second oldest arcade in Wales (albeit, the existing structure having been rebuilt in the early 20th century), and also an example of the popular retail movement in the mid-19th and early 20th century that arose across northern Europe at this time.

5.2.2 Although in a poor and deteriorating condition, there are a number of historical features within the arcade which are illustrative of its original, traditionally commercial character: corbelled fascias, cornice detailing, decorative ironwork and recessed shop doors. There is potential to uncover more of these features and to reinstate them.

5.2.3 Market Arcade also forms an important pair with Newport Arcade: both are located within the same Character Area and connect the High Street with other thoroughfares, and both are believed to have been designed by Habershon & Fawckner.

5.2.4 In terms of Market Arcade's built fabric, it is clear from comparison of the as-existing plan with the 1905 plan that a lot of change has been carried out, in particular the addition of internal staircases to connect ground floor units with the first floor. Elements of particular significance are the original dividing walls between the units as these still largely show the modular arrangement along either side of the Arcade. The staircase on the north-east side of the Arcade appears to be original to the 1905 and has some significance. The staircase opposite is in approximately the same position as one shown in 1905, albeit reconfigured. The staircase at the south end of the Arcade looks to have been retained from the 1869 Arcade (or rebuilt in the same location and configuration), and consequently has comparatively higher significance as a potential surviving feature of the earlier structure. The roof over the Arcade walkway is modern and not significant; however, the concept of the Arcade being top-lit by a glazed canopy is an important element of its character.

## 6.0 SELECTED SOURCES

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### 6.1 Heritage Guidance and Tools

Archwilio; The Historic Environment Records of Wales, <https://www.archwilio.org.uk/arch/>

Cadw, *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*, (2011).

Cadw, Understanding Character: <http://cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/regenerationand sustainability/understandingcharacter/?lang=en>

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, <http://map.coflein.gov.uk/>

### 6.2 Historic Published Works

*Barry Herald*, (10 July 1896).

*Butcher's Newport Street Directory*, (1876), accessed through Newport Past.

Caerleon Net, <http://caerleon.net/history/lreland/index.htm> (accessed June 2017).

*Country Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 10 August 1867.

*Evening Express*, (7 December 1895).

*Johns' Newport Street Directory*, (1914), accessed through Newport Past.

*Monmouthshire Merlin*, (13 December 1862).

*Monmouthshire Merlin*, (2 November 1867).

*Monmouthshire Merlin*, (4 January 1862).

*South Wales Illustrated: Series of Views comprising the Picturesque Scenery, Towns, Castles, Seats of the Nobility and Gentry*, (1830).

*The Cardiff Times*, (10 August 1867).

*The Cardiff Times*, (10 August 1867).

### 6.3 Existing Reports

*Market Arcade Townscape Heritage Scheme - Project in Pictures*, (September 2016).

*Newport Historic Town Centre: Draft Conservation Area Appraisal*, (2016).

### 6.4 Other

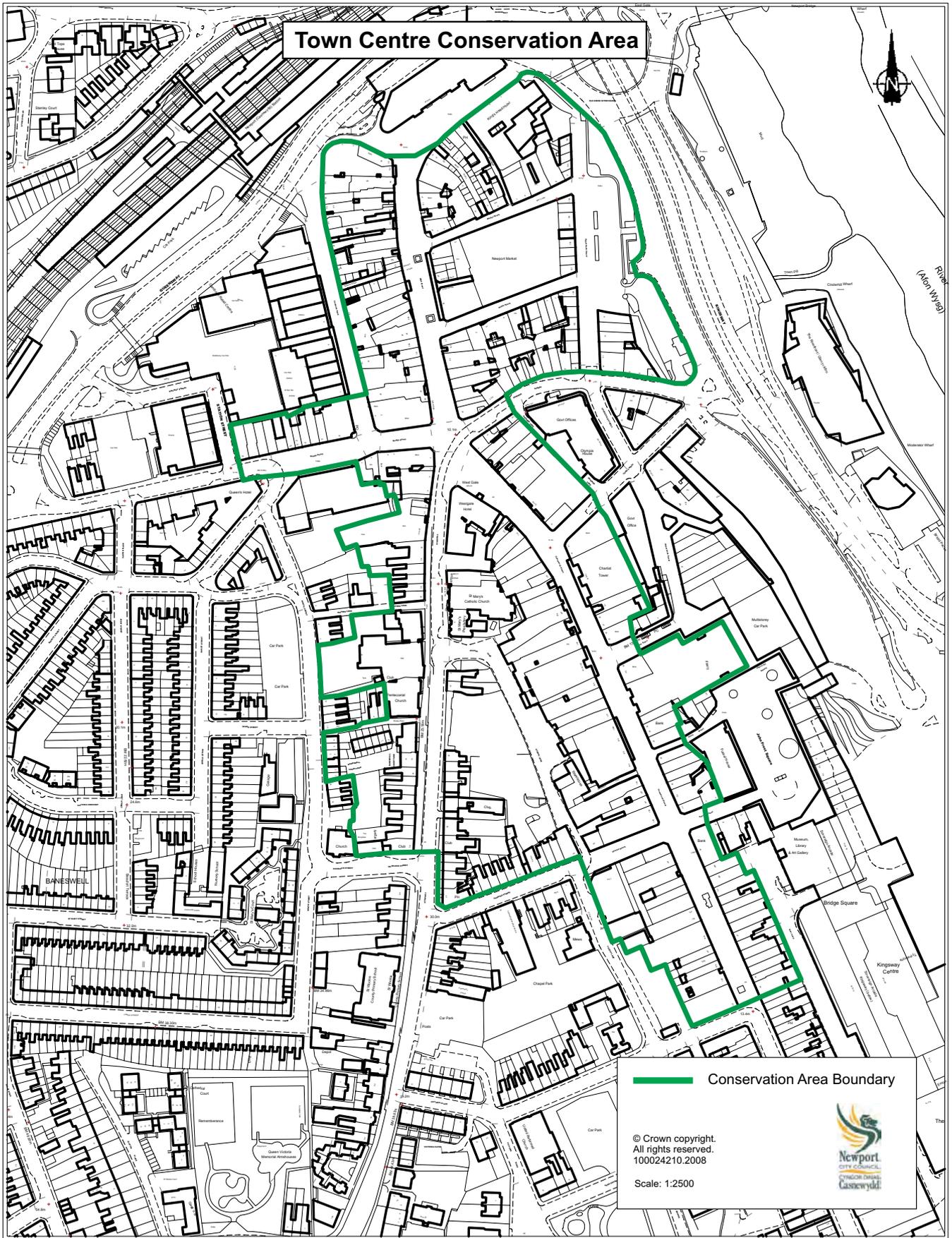
Newport City Council, <http://www.newport.gov.uk/en/Home.aspx>

Newport Past, <http://www.newportpast.com/index.htm>

### 6.5 Further Reading

Margaret MacKeith, *Shopping Arcades: A Gazetteer of Extant British Arcades, 1817-1939*, (1985).

# APPENDIX A: NEWPORT TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY





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