ADFER CONSERVATION



PLAS NEWYDD, RUABON

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESMENT

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Appendix A. Listing Description(s)

1. Introduction

1.1 Gareth Roberts was instructed by Darren Monahan in December 2025 to assess proposals for the sensitive restoration of Plas Newydd as a family home. Urgent works are required to ensure the future of this neglected treasure. We received generally positive pre-application feedback (ENQ/2026/0090) on our proposals in June 2026.

1.2 An LBC application to demolish the later added rear extension and for the installation of new rainwater goods throughout is proposed. This forms part of the wider redevelopment of the site, however, this application is submitted separately so ensue that works continue at Plas Newydd without delay whilst formalising the detail for the rest of the building, particularly the main hall.

1.3 The primary aim of the HIA is to explore the potential impacts of the proposals upon the heritage significances of the listed building, in line with the requirements of planning law and policy relating to the conservation of the historic built environment.

1.4 The approach taken in the preparation of this statement adheres to the principle of managing change intelligently, which lies at the heart of national planning policy for conservation of the historic built environment.

1.5 The HIA assesses heritage significance and guides proposals for change in a manner that conserves significance and avoids harm. The approach adheres to the principle of managing change intelligently, which lies at the heart of national planning policy for conservation of the historic built environment. The methodology employed involves the following sequential steps:
▪ Establish the nature of the proposed change(s), including the overall aim of the change and any emergent design proposals
▪ Identify any designated and/or non-designated heritage assets potentially affected by proposals for change
▪ Evaluate the heritage values and significances of the heritage assets, placing particular focus on values and significances that might be affected by the proposed change(s)
▪ Produce a statement of significance which is to be used to guide the design of changes in a manner that places conservation of significance as a priority ▪ Analyse the impact of proposed changes

1.6 The Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in accordance with planning law, policy and general guidelines set out in the following:

Primary Legislation
The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023
Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

Planning Policy
Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 2024
Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment (Welsh Government, 2017)
Technical Advice Note 12: Design (Welsh Government, March 2016)

Conservation Philosophy
Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (Cadw, 2011)
ClfA and BS7913 standards

Best practice guidance
Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales (Cadw)
Managing Conservation Areas in Wales (Cadw)
Managing Historic Character in Wales (Cadw)
Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (Cadw)

1.7 This Heritage Impact Assessment is produced with reference to all the above relevant legislation and guidance which provide the background and context for this report.

Method of research

1.8 The property has been visited in December 2025 to assess the building. Photographic evidence, historical mapping, Cof Cymru, National Monuments Record, Coflein, National Library for Wales, and Pevsner guides, have all been inspected as part of the research into this HIA.

1.9 According to the Cadw guidance '*Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales'*, the HIA should take into account sufficient information to enable both the significance of the asset and the impact of change to be understood. It should be proportionate both to the significance of the historic asset and to the degree of change proposed.

2. Policy Background

2.1 National Policies

2.1.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 12, February 2024)

2.1.2 PPW sets out the Welsh Government's land use planning policies. Its primary objective is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation.

2.1.3 Regarding aspects of design section 3 of PPW covers '*Placemaking In Action: Good Design Making Better Places'* and states that in relation to good design; it is: *'.....fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. ..... Meeting the objectives of good design should be*

the aim of all those involved in the development process and applied to all development proposals, at all scales'.

2.1.4 The PPW continues to talk about character in paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10: *'The special characteristics of an area should be central to the design of a development. The layout, form, scale and visual appearance of proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are important planning considerations….In areas recognised for their particular landscape, townscape, cultural or historic character and value it can be appropriate to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.'*

2.1.5 Paragraph 3.14 addresses site and context analysis, which should be used to determine the appropriateness of a development proposal in responding to its surroundings. The analysis process should highlight constraints and opportunities presented by existing uses, landscape, biodiversity, movement, infrastructure, materials and resources, and built form which will need to be considered when formulating proposals.

2.1.6 PPW chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places in part deals with the Historic Environment. The stated objectives are to preserve and enhance the historic environment, to ensure that the character of historic assets is safeguarded from alterations that would compromise a building's special architectural and historic interest. PPW states that the planning system must take the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general wellbeing of present and future generations into account. PPW stresses that the historic environment is a finite, non-renewable and shared resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales. It contributes to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life.

2.1.7 The PPW sets out the understanding of the significance of a historic asset as the basis for making informed decisions about any proposed change that has an impact on the historic environment. Paragraph 6.1.9 of PPW states that any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place.

2.1.8 With specific reference to listed buildings, Planning Policy Wales (PPW) provides the following paragraphs:

6.1.10 *'There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.*

6.1.11 '*For listed buildings, the aim should be to find the best way to protect and enhance their special qualities, retaining them in sustainable use. The continuation or reinstatement of the original use should generally be the first option, but not all original uses will now be viable or appropriate. The application of planning and listed building controls should recognise the need for flexibility where new uses have to be considered in order to secure*

a building's survival or provide it with a sound economic future'.

6.1.13 'Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals, show why the alteration or demolition of a listed building is desirable or necessary and consider the impact of any change upon its significance. This must be included in a heritage impact statement, which will be proportionate both to the significance of the building and to the degree of change proposed'. –

2.1.9 This policy requires justification for proposals based upon a primary appreciation of heritage significance. The heritage significance of the building will be assessed within the Heritage Impact Assessment, thereby providing an informed basis for designing the proposed scheme.

2.1.10 The advice also urges LPAs to recognise the contribution made by the country's heritage to economic vitality and culture and local distinctiveness, and this, together with detailed built conservation advice are shared objectives that will be achieved by the application proposals.

2.2 Technical Advice Note 12: Design [TAN 12]

2.2.1 The TAN offers advice on creating a high-quality sustainable design in context. This application acknowledges that understanding the site and its immediate context is the basis of achieving meaningful development solutions. Key design issues are listed include:

- The setting and views of key buildings etc,
- The degree of architectural unity in building groups;
- Distinctive building elements;
- Boundary details;
- Local facing materials.

2.2.2 The design process for developing the proposals has considered the above issues at the principal design stages to narrow down options to achieve the most suitable solution. TAN 12 gives guidance on how to achieve a high quality of architectural design that pays respect to its context. The content of the TAN has been utilised in the evolution of the design solution for the application proposal. The proposals have particularly followed the advice in paragraph 5.6.4, 5.6.7 and 5.6.8 of TAN 12. These encourage the use of local materials and the adoption of more imaginative and contemporary approaches to design, where possible without compromising special interest.

2.3 Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment (TAN 24)

2.3.1 TAN 24 contains recently updated advice upon the management and development of listed buildings. It emphasises the listing grade and the degree of preservation of the building to be key factors in judging whether a historic structure can be altered without disruption and harm being caused to its special character. In exercising its statutory controls for listed buildings under sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, LPAs should: *'have*

special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

2.3.2 TAN 24 states that conservation principles should be used to assess the potential impacts of a development proposal on the significance of any historic asset/assets and to assist in decision making where the historic environment is affected by the planning process.

Relevant principles are:

1. Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values.

2. Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital.

3. Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.

2.3.3 The use of an objective, structured approach to identifying the elements of historic character and creating an evidence base is vital when considering proposals for change.

2.3.4 TAN 24 recognises that many listed buildings can sustain a degree of sensitive alteration and extension to accommodate continuing or new uses. Past changes that reflect the history of use and ownership may themselves be aspects of the special interest of the listed building. The sensitivity of a building to proposed changes should also be considered. This is vital to sustaining the special interest and significance of a listed building through processes of alteration, extension or reuse.

2.4 BS7913 (2013) and Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (2011)

2.4.1 Conservation Principles and Standards contained in BS7913:2013, a 'Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings' [revised in 2013] and the Welsh Government publication 'Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales' (2011) apply to the process of assessing the significance of an asset and the recommended approach to design.

'Conservation Principles' states that: '*Changes to historic assets are inevitable. Over time, natural forces and regular use will lead to the erosion of some of the evidential values such as the fabric. Repair and restoration of the fabric and changes to its setting can affect its aesthetic value….. To ensure the long-term future of historic assets, change needs to be managed to ensure that their significance is not diminished as a consequence. Retaining the economic viability or the social functions of historic buildings will sustain their survival and encourage their regular maintenance'*

2.4.2 The above document states that the Welsh Government has an obligation and duty to manage change sensitively and sustainably and to ensure that what is significant is passed on to future generations.

2.5 Local Policies

2.5.1 WREXHAM – The Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028 was unadopted by order of the high court in May, 2025. As a result, Wrexham reverted to the Wrexham UDP 1996- 2011 nad the Future Wales: The national plan 2040 as the basis of their local planning policies.

Policy PS2 Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.

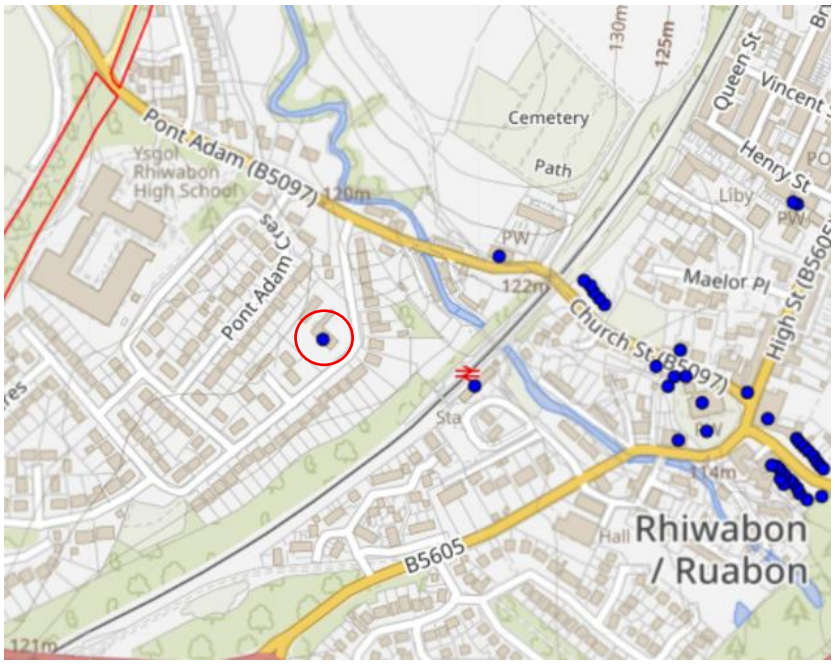
The County Borough contains over 870 listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest. The emphasis must be on their sensitive repair and improvement, using traditional materials and techniques, and in establishing appropriate new uses for them in order to guarantee their future survival.

Policy EC9 Alterations or additions to, and development or redevelopment within the curtilage of, buildings or structures listed as of special architectural or historic interest must respect the setting and character of the listed buildings or structures.

3. Description and Historical Background

3.1 Location

3.1.1 Plas Newydd is located in the Pont Adam area of Ruabon, to the North West of the town centre. Ruabon is located approximately 5 miles to the south of Wrexham, and in close proximity to Wynnstay Park.



Location of Plas Newydd (circled in red)

3.2 Historical Background and Statutory Designations

3.2.1 Plas Newydd is listed grade II*, notwithstanding recent alterations, because of the ornate roof structure and for its importance as a scarce surviving example of a spere truss hall house in this region. It is located outside of the Ruabon Conservation Area boundary.

3.3 Ruabon

3.3.1 The village of Ruabon occupies the top of a hill and its slopes to the south-west. A number of main roads converge on the centre of the village near the church. The industrial settlements of Rhosllanerchrugog and Acrefair are located to the north-west and south-west.

3.3.2 Ruabon was established between the two great Anglo-Saxon dykes: Offa's Dyke runs approximately 600m to the west, Wat's Dyke less than 1000m to the east. The earliest form of the placename is Rywnabon which appeared in 1291, with Riwuabon in 1362. Referring to an otherwise unattested individual, the name commemorates 'Mabon's hill'. It has been suggested that Mabon was a saint, and that the first church here was dedicated to him.

Middle Ages

3.3.3 After the Norman invasion of 1066, the Welsh had to defend themselves against English attack, driving English occupants back across the River Dee. Ruabon was part of the kingdom of Powys in Bromfield. At this time ecclesiastical parishes were established which were defined by a group of townships. The townships were run based on the communal farming system, comprising of several homesteads and communal pasture and meadowlands.

3.3.4 The year 1282 saw the conquest of Wales with part of the Kingdom of Powys Fadog becoming a Marcher Lordship. Welsh and English law co-existed relatively peacefully in Ruabon. Under the Act of Union 1536, Henry VIII took control over the whole of Wales due to his concerns over the loyalty of the Marcher Lords following his break with the Catholic Church. Under the terms of the new laws Wales was granted permission to be represented in Parliament and the Welsh gentry were able to acquire landed estates.

3.3.5 In the medieval period it can be assumed that the earliest settlement might have clustered around the church at the top of Bridge Street. Possibly there was a small community here by the C13, when the church is mentioned in the Pope Nicholas' Taxatio in 1291.

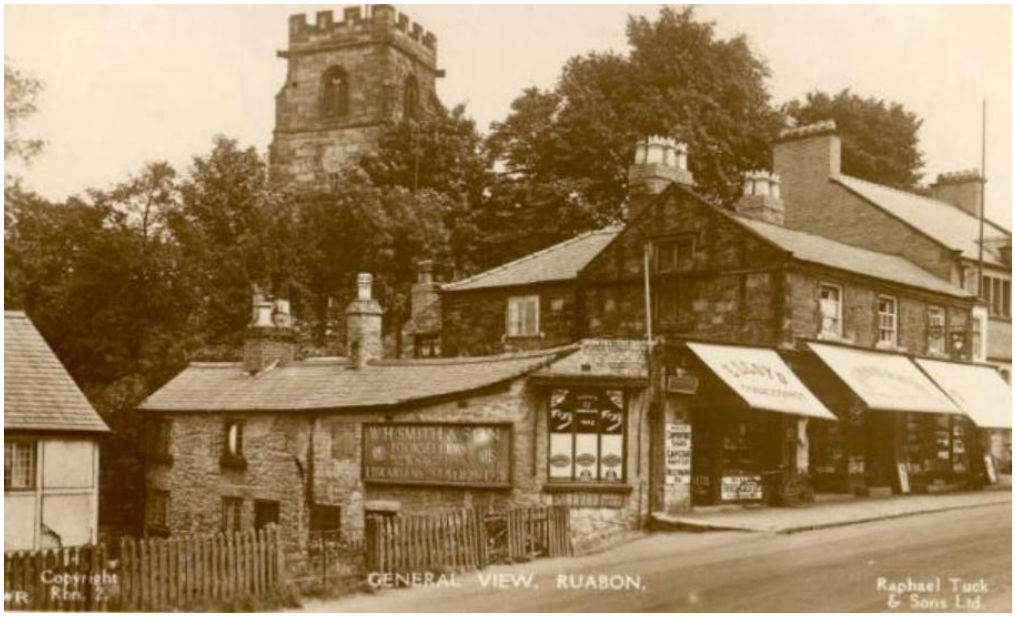
3.3.6 The site of the church is almost certainly much earlier. The near circular churchyard which formerly extended to the west down Ysgoldy Hill suggests that there was an early medieval Llan church, perhaps preceded by an enclosed cemetery here, before the Norman Conquest. The economy of the medieval settlement may have integrated ironworking and coal mining, but agriculture and farming generally would have been the primary concern with the utilisation of the lower land to the east.

3.3.7 Ruabon continued to expand in the Tudor period, and in the early C17 a grammar school was established close to the church, later moving to the outskirts of the village, while C17 church terriers reveal buildings around the church. By the mid C19 a compact, almost rectangular shaped, settlement was in existence around the church. A western extension crossed Afon Eitha where a mill is recorded at Plas Newydd. The eastern end of the village was incorporated within the Wynnstay Estate and indeed Samuel Lewis in the 1830s claimed that the prosperity of Ruabon was due to the proximity of Wynnstay as well as the neighbourhood ironstone and coal mines.

3.3.8 There are records of industrial activity within the Parish of Ruabon dating back to the Middle Ages, in particular the iron industry based in Gyfelia. Within the village itself, early industrial activity was based in the areas of Tan-y-Llan and adjacent Plas Newydd where the Afon Eitha was used to power both woollen and grain mills. Historical maps record a concentration of buildings in both these areas suggesting the early development of the village was centred around these industries. The village continued to grow in the immediate environs of the church and to the southeast with the construction of the Wynnstay Arms in 1740 and the estates workers cottages on Park Street.

3.3.9 Park Street effectively became a small square with cottages of *c*.1840 on either side of the road. The listed Ruabon Gateway into Wynnstay Park was at the eastern extreme of the square while at the western end lay the Wynnstay Arms Hotel. A station was built in 1848. A well-developed brick-making industry expanded along with the collieries in the C19, the former surviving well into the C20.

3.3.10 There are a number of listed buildings in Ruabon. Most of the pre-C19 buildings are grade II, although Plas Newydd on the opposite side of the river to the church is Grade II*. The others are the Old Grammar School from 1618 which may incorporate parts of an even earlier building, but is now disguised behind a C19, the almhouses in Church Street that are said to have been built in 1711, the Bridge End hotel which is thought to have an C18 if not earlier origin, and a range of later post-medieval structures that include the Round House, the parish lock-up, adjoining the church wall on the north side of Bridge Street, which is later C18, as is the Wynnstay Arms Hotel in Park Street.



General view, Ruabon *c.*1900

3.3.11 Unlisted and unverified but potentially of architectural/historic importance are several other buildings: a number of houses along Church Street display timber-framing behind C18 and C19 facades and could possibly be of C17 or earlier origin, contemporary with Plas Newydd; several houses on the west side of Duke Street also display timber-framing which may indicate an older construction than their facades would suggest.

3.3.12 Two of the most important buildings in Ruabon were the mansion houses of Watstay (now replaced by the Grade II* listed Wynnstay Hall) and Plas Newydd. Both were built in the early-mid C16 by the Eyton family. The Wynnstay estate of national significance. Originally named the Rhiwabon Estate, then Watstay (due to the Dyke running through the estate), it was renamed Wynnstay by Sir John Wynn in the mid C17. The Williams-Wynns made significant contributions to the local community and were responsible for many of the key structures evident in Ruabon, in particular the Wynnstay Arms Hotel and the estate workers cottages along Park Street. The Hall was sold to Lindisfarne College following the death of the 8th Baronet in 1949, and in recent years has been sub-divided into private dwellings.

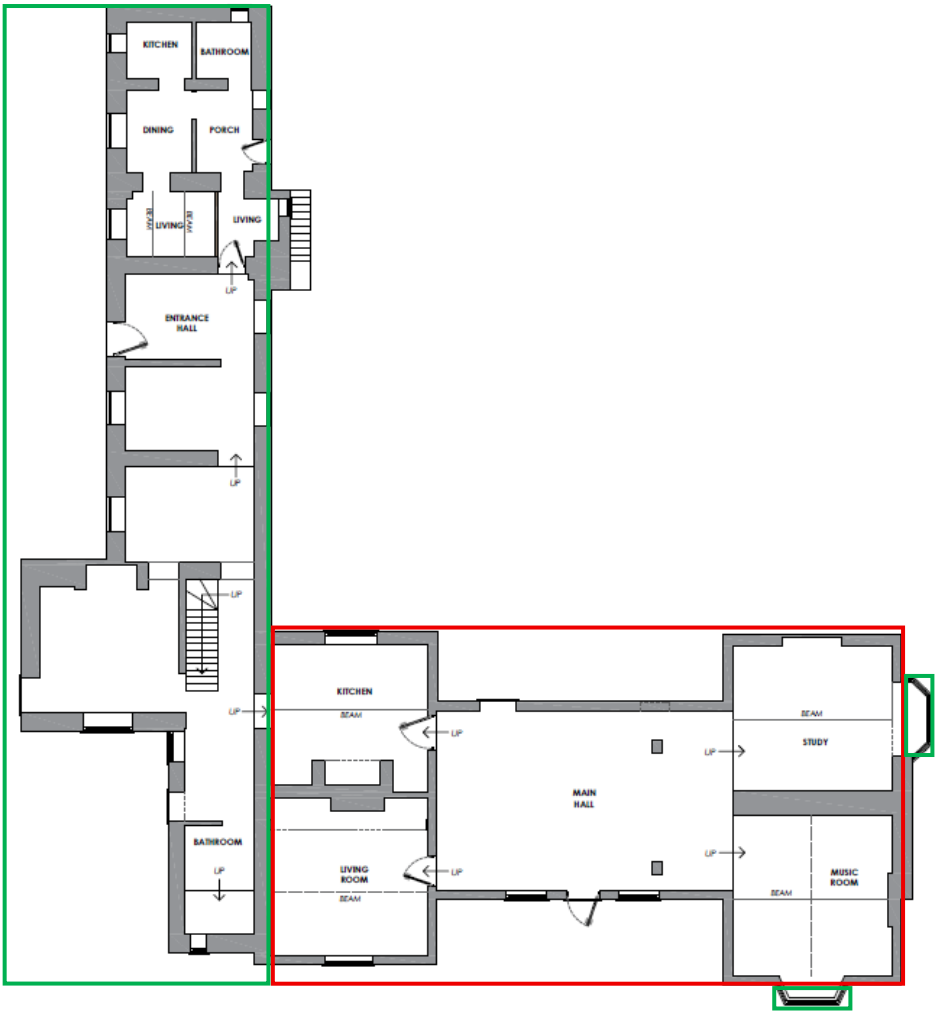
3.4 Hall Houses of North East Wales

3.4.1 The hall-houses of England and Wales are buildings of the greatest interest. It is difficult to parallel either the hierarchical arrangement of their interiors – the high-table at one end, and the cross-passage at the other - or the ornate open roofs in the peasant houses of the continent. It is even possible that the ornately roofed hall-house influenced local church design in that the open roof of the parish church may have been built in emulation of the open roofs of the hall-houses of the wealthier members of its congregation.

3.4.2 Plas Newydd is a C16 Hall house, with later additions. It is still identifiable as a Hall House of this period, as it still retains the notable characteristics as set out below. Despite later added accretions, C19 additions, and general deterioration, it is still amongst the most important buildings in the region.



Plas Newydd



Age of Plas Newydd – Red C16, Green – C19 (house remodelled in mid/late C18 and partially refaced in brick.

3.4.3 The hall-house probably originated as a single cell without any secondary rooms. In early medieval times additional accommodation for special purposes tended to be provided in separate, detached buildings. The next development was to add a room at the dais end so that the house then consisted of three units, a hall between a room at the passage end and a room at the dais end. Most Welsh hall-houses belong to this last phase. The next development was to add a room at the dais end so that the house then consisted of three units, a hall between a room at the passage end and a room at the dais end. Most Welsh hall-houses belong to this last phase.

3.4.4 The houses with wings may again be divided into those which have a single projecting wing either at the dais end or at the passage end, and those which are flanked by two balancing wings. A house built on this last U or H plan, with wings on two floors sometimes rising higher than the single-storeyed hall between their balancing gables, makes an extremely attractive composition.

3.4.5 The dominant type of hall house in the north and east, consisted of a primarily single-storeyed building, its main floor on ground level, and its main room, the hall, open to the roof. The hall-house

served not only as the home of the peasantry, but, in this area, as the home of the upper classes as well.

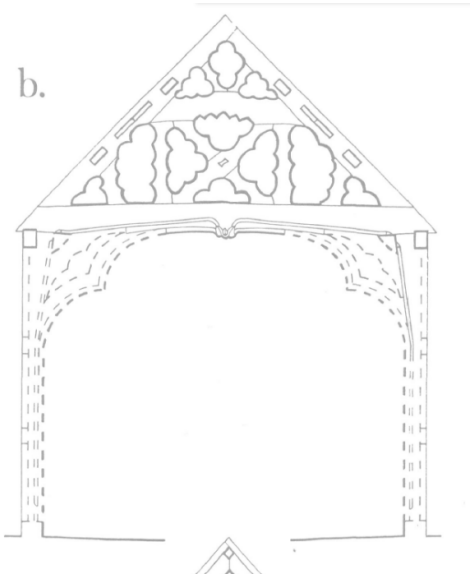
3.4.6 Most of the finest hall-houses in Wales are in the north east; the south-west has little to compare in their genre with buildings such as Nantclwyd yn Dre, Ruthin, or with, **Plas Newydd**, Ruabon.

3.4.7 Early peasant hall-houses also seem to be more numerous in the northern and eastern zone. But most of them are to be found in the borderland. It is here that can most easily be detected in terms of building the emergence in the late Middle Age of a rich farming class - suggested by the social and topographical changes described but also held by economic historians to have been characteristic of the C15 generally, when land was plentiful and labour scarce. Such houses can most usually be identified by their cruck frames or box frames, which often manage to survive repeated later reconstructions.

Wall frames

3.4.8 Wall frames of this era can be divided into two main groups, the cruck, and the box-frame. Plas Newydd is of box frame construction. The cruck-couple consisted of a pair of curved timbers springing from near the ground and meeting at the ridge. In contrast the box-frame was conceived on principles very different from those governing cruck-construction and its derivatives. The box-frame consists of two vertical posts linked by a horizontal tie which secured the side walls and served to hold any outward thrust from the roof. Unlike the cruck, wall and roof were distinct and separate entities so that the types of roof carried by box-frames could vary considerably.

3.4.9 Roofs of the bayed, butt-purlin type achieved a modest popularity in good-class domestic work in C15 and early C16 Wales. But, though often without ridges, they are otherwise usually very heavily bayed



Butt purlin without ridge at Plas Newydd (Smith, Houses of the Welsh Countryside)

Aisle Truss halls

3.4.10 Most people are familiar with the aisled church where the problem of spanning a great width was solved by carrying the roof on posts or columns within the external walls. Fewer will be aware that the same device was once used in domestic architecture, as seen at Plas Newydd.

3.4.11 Unlike aisled churches, which have a wide distribution, aisled houses and barns have a marked south-easterly bias, which can be related to a similar bias in the box frame and the rafter-roofs with which they were so often built. Aisled building is obviously far removed from the north-western cruck tradition suitable for a smaller scale of living and farming. Welsh aisle trusses were primarily symbols of aristocratic pride. Moreover, unlike the houses of the descendants of the Anglo-Norman settlers in Pembrokeshire - Eastington, Monkton, etc. -which are identified by their very names as alien, the majority of aisle-truss houses have Welsh names, and, as far as is known, most had Welsh owners. This was the case at Plas Newydd, where this fine building was built by John ap Elis Eyton. They represent not so much an invading *race* as an invading *idea.*

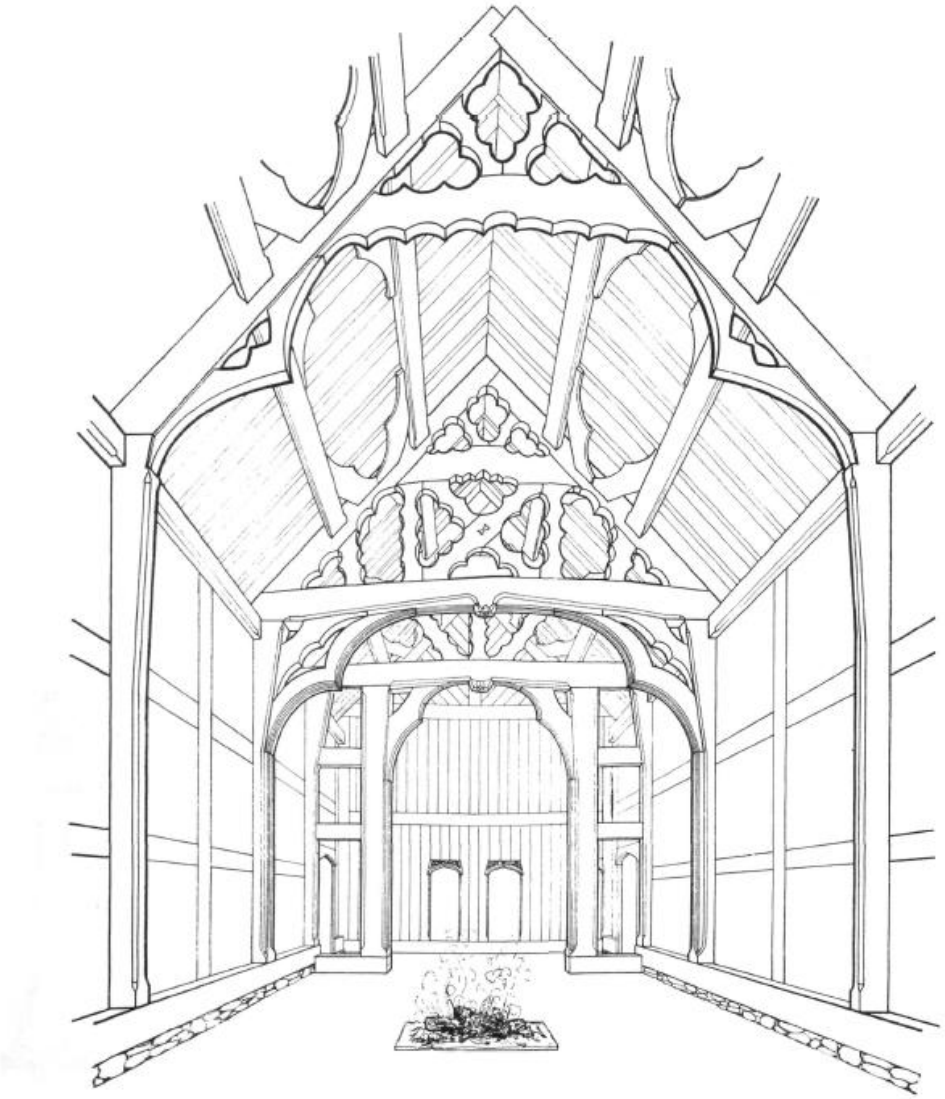
Spere Truss

3.4.12 Buildings such as Plas Newydd were aisled by the entry only, with what is sometimes known as a spere truss, an open partition dividing the passage from the hall. These spere-truss halls are similar and closely related to spere truss houses in Lancashire and Cheshire, rather than to South Wales counterparts.

3.4.13 The way in which the spere-truss was introduced into the hall also suggests that the aisle-truss was an intruder in the area. Most of the aisle-truss houses were designed like the other small halls, they are essentially two-bay halls where a central open ornamental truss stands midway between closed partition trusses at the passage and at the dais end. When the aisle-truss was inserted into such a hall, between the passage partition and the central truss, it resulted in the creation of two sub-bays, one next to the partition, occupied by the passage, and one next to the central truss in the main part of the hall which was thus effectively reduced to one-and-a-half bays. The interpolated truss had the effect of making the central truss look off centred, and the whole composition lopsided.

3.4.14 It is clear, that the builders thought of the passage as being part of the hall and did not at first see how to deal with the problem, however, they must have been aware of the resulting awkwardness and eventually devised two solutions. The first was to introduce a second intermediate truss between the main truss and the dais partition to balance the spere-truss standing between the main truss and the passage partition. This gave two main bays each divided into two sub-bays. This was the solution adopted at Plas Newydd.

3.4.15 There are aisle-posts which, although incorporated in a box-frame, do not directly support the purlins; such is the design at Plas Newydd. In this case, the lower purlin is set raking and there is only one aisle-truss.

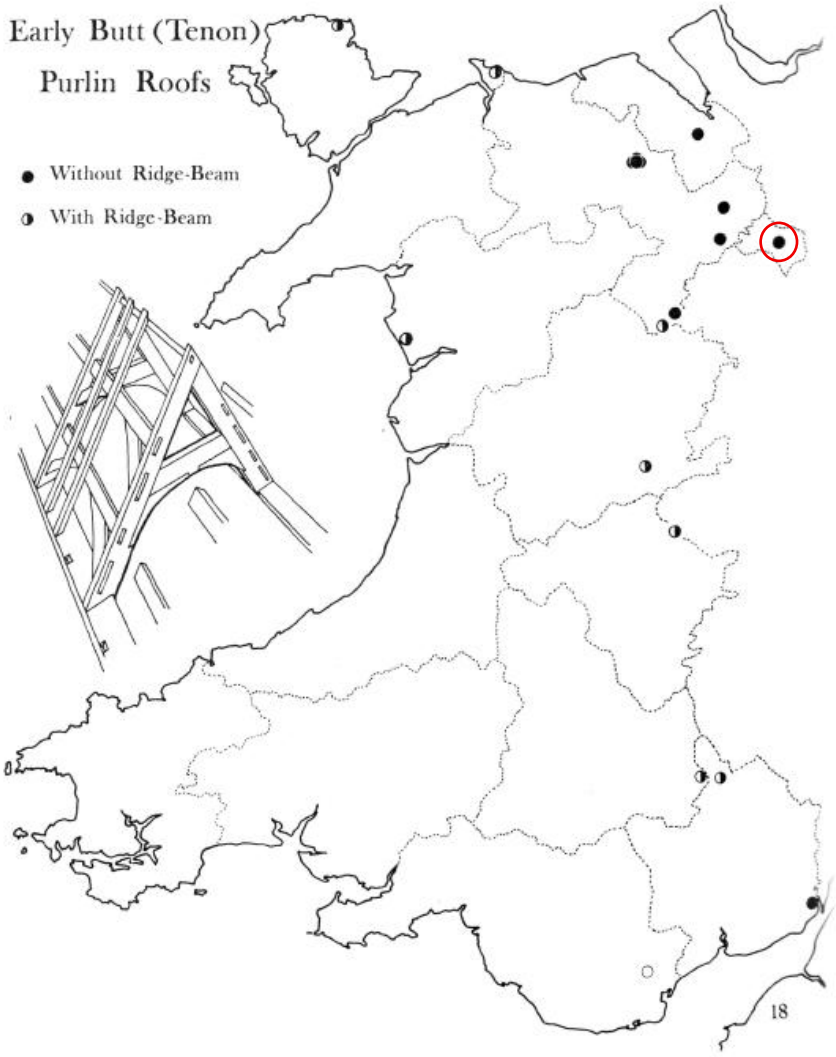


Plas Newydd was another magnificent structure, which unfortunately was almost entirely rebuilt below the wall plate. The form of the aisle posts by the entry and the passage partition have been reconstructed in this drawing. The extraordinary roof survives almost intact. The butt-purlin and ridgeless construction contrasts with the ridge and king-post opposite. Plas Newydd and Plas Cadwgan would have ranked in their day with the proudest halls of Lancashire. – (Smith, Houses of the Welsh Countryside)

Roof

3.4.16 The side-purlin roof having the purlins tenoned into the principal was held to have been a further step in the conversion of the single unbayed collar-rafter roof into a bayed roof. However, most Welsh butt-purlin roofs are so heavily bayed as to be equally reminiscent of the locally prevailing through-purlin, double roof. It appears that the butt-purlin roof had achieved a modest popularity for roofs of quality in the late Middle Ages. The number may, however, be seriously

underestimated, as it requires a very careful examination of the roof structure to be sure -whether it is a single or a double roof. The roof at Plas Newydd is a butt purlin roof with no ridge beam.

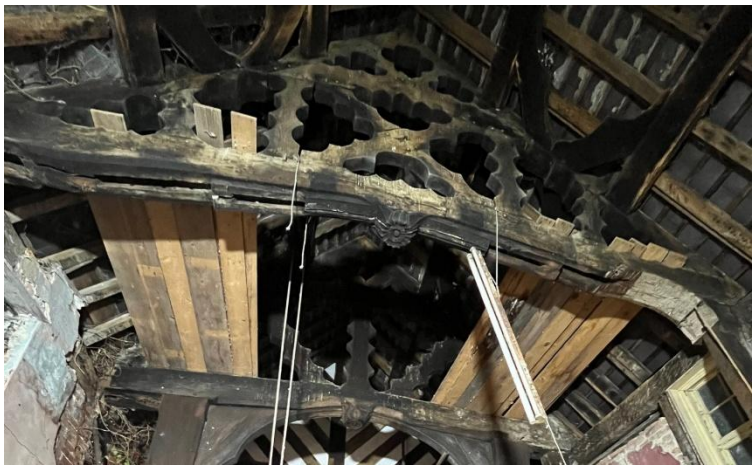


Early Butt Purlin Tenon Roof

3.4.17 Roofs were built which incorporated features of diverse origin. The use of elegant structural elements, windbraces and archbraces, as well as purely ornamental features such as bosses and cusping, became general in north-eastern Wales. The culmination of the process of mixing eastern and western ideas in the same roof appears in a fascinating sequence of roof-designs, the aisle-truss and the hammer-beam.

3.4.18 The windbrace is the first of a number of largely ornamental features fitted to both through-purlin and butt-purlin roofs. Although it originated as a practical device giving rigidity, particularly in a half-timbered building, its artistic possibilities were soon realized, with the result that it was carved in various ornamental forms and fitted in both wood and stone-walled structures. Ornamental

cusping is clearly visible in the impressive roof structure of Plas Newydd. Cusping was an ornamental device to enrich windbraces, struts, and in fact any part of a building whether of timber or stone. The distribution of such cusping is generally similar to that of windbraces.



Roof at Plas Newydd

3.4.19 The carved boss is another form of ornament commonest in the north. It was carved on the underside of collar or tie, usually in the form of a flower. Such ornament seems confined to hall-houses. The carved boss is clearly visible in the image above.

Post-and-panel partitions

3.4.20 The most important timber detail to survive the decline of half-timbered building was the timber-framed partition. There are two types: the half-timbered partition constructed either in squares or in close studding just as the containing walls of a half-timbered house, and the post-and-panel partition constructed entirely of timber. Only the latter is illustrated here. The post-and-panel partition seems originally to have been developed to dignify the dais partition of a hall-house.



Remains of post and panel partition at Plas Newydd

3.5 Plas Newydd

3.5.1 Plas Newydd is mentioned in Peter Smith's seminal book, Houses of the Welsh Countryside. At the time of the first survey in 1975, the outside wall and partition detailing was largely hidden under plaster.

'*Recent works/ deterioration has revealed much more of the original details and show the hitherto unsuspected use of herringbone and diamond pattern infilling, indicating that the house is probably later than first believed - early or possibly even mid C16 as perhaps also suggested by its height, as well as the Renaissance doorhead detail of the passage partition. The twin first-floor doorways in the lateral wall of the nearer cross-wing probably opened on to a latrine, but the details of this as well as of the fireplace and chimney alongside are not now recoverable*.' Smith, House of the Welsh Countryside, p.620

3.5.2 As shown above, Plas Newydd is of high significance as a surviving hall house. The building has been much altered and was subject to C18 and C19 alterations both internally and externally. There is evidence that there was an inserted floor within the hall, but that has long been lost. The fenestration is of C19 design and are in poor condition, this would include the bayed windows. Substantial parts of the wings have been rebuilt in brick. The rear elevation has been substantially rebuilt in brick with blocked doors and openings relating to the C18/C19 remodelling.

3.5.3 Plas Newydd also has a significant C19 range attached to the left hand return of the Hall house. The range is not as significant as the main Hall House, however, it still forms an important phase of development at Plas Newydd. The range is late C18, early C19 due to its design and architectural detailing. Whilst the Hall House itself is of the highest significance, the attached range is of lesser significance.



Attached c.C19 range

3.5.4 Plas Newydd was built by the Eyton family. The building was originally thought to have been built in 1465, however, the date was revised due to the discovery of the herringbone and diamond pattern infilling, indicating a later, early-mid C16 date. It is likely that the original building was altered in the C16 to form the Haall House form that remains today.

3.5.5 The earliest written reference regarding Plas Newydd is in a Wynnsay document dated 10th February 1464/5 , with the names of John ap Elis Eyton, son of Elys Eyton and Elizabeth, daughter of Hugh Calverley.

3.5.6 Sir John ap Elis Eyton fought at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 on the side of Henry Tudor, playing his part in the victory that would change history. As a reward for his loyal service, King Henry VII granted him a steady annuity of ten marks, acknowledging both his martial contribution and his faithful support during that pivotal moment in English history. The Ruabon knight John ap Elis Eyton decided to establish a new estate in Ruabon to go with his already Plas Newydd home, and with the land given to him by Henry VII, he built a house which went on to be called Watsay. Over time, his estates in Ruabon grew in importance, eventually passing into the hands of the powerful Wynnstay family — a testament to the value of his land and status.



Tomb of Sir John ap Elis Eyton of Ruabon at St Mary's Church, Ruabon

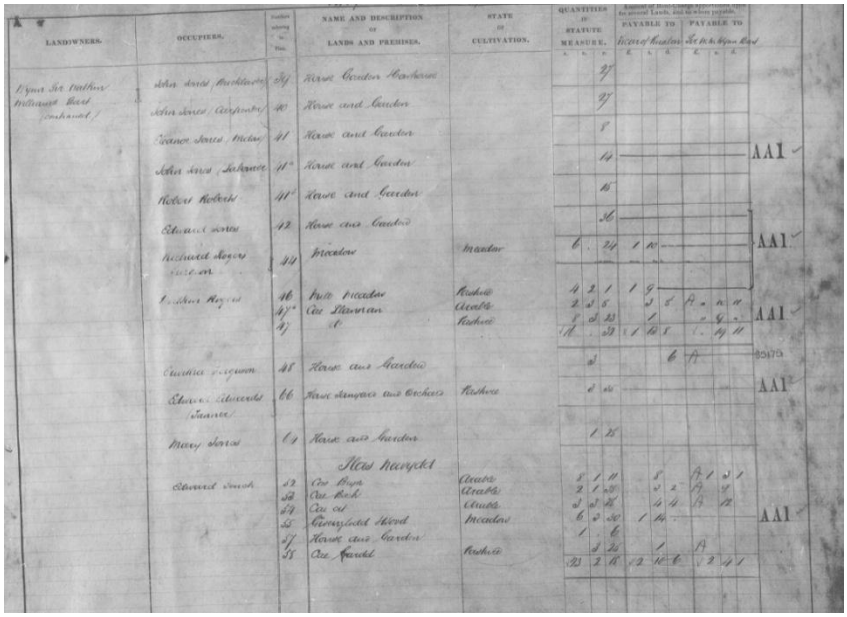
3.6 Historical mapping

3.6.1 A building is clearly visible on the 1845 Tithe Map of the parish of Ruabon. The *c*.19C range attached to the left-hand return of the Hall House.



1845 Tithe map extract

3.6.2 Plas Newydd belonged to Sir Watkin William Bart of Wynnstay and occupied by Edward Trench at the time of the apportionment.

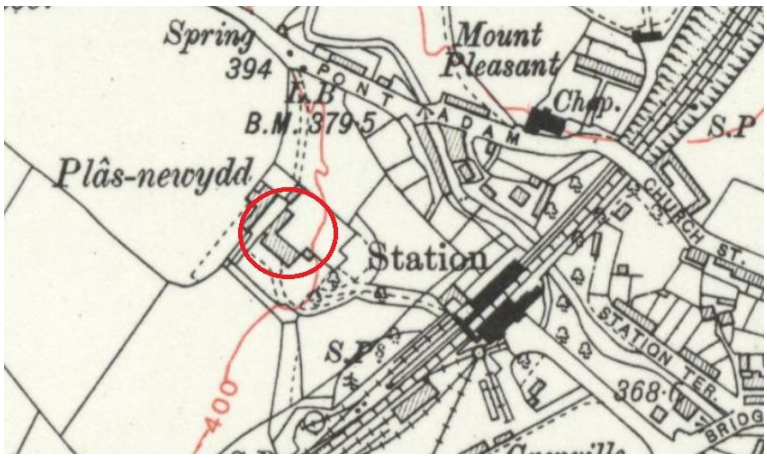


Tithe Map apportionment

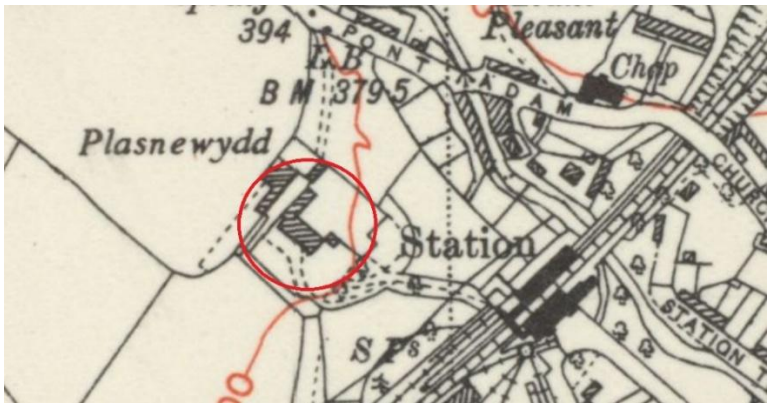
3.6.3 A building is also visible on the 1873 OS Map, 1914 OS Map, 1949 OS Map and 1972 OS Map. By 1873, the general footprint of Plas Newydd is clearly established. The village of Ruabon has also grown as a result of industry and the arrival of the train. The centre of the village, and the area of Pont Adam remained largely the same from the mid C19 to the mid C20.



1873 OS Map

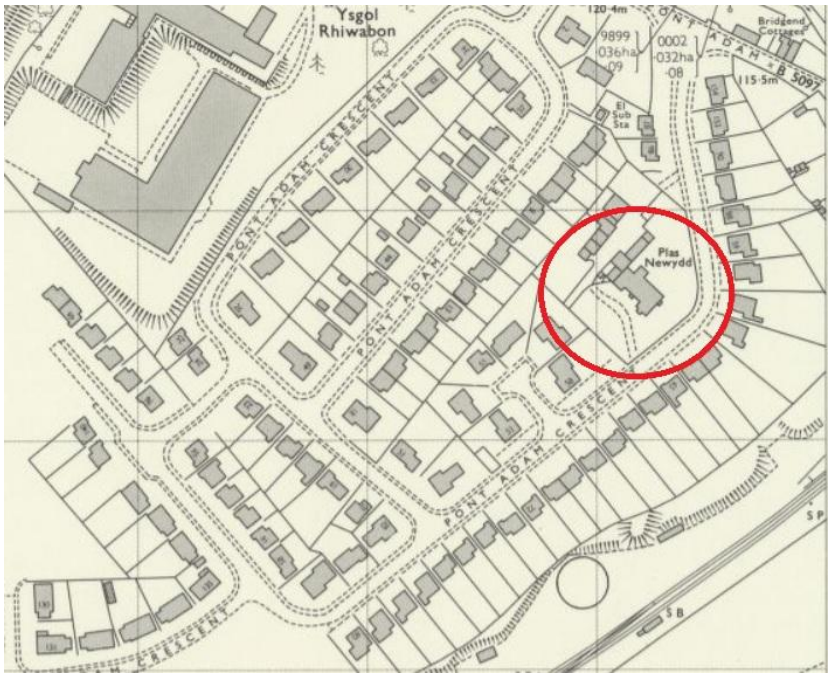


1914 OS Map



1949 OS Map

3.6.4 The 1972 OS Map shows a big change to the area surrounding Plas Newydd. Pont Adam Crescent was built as a result of demand for more housing in the area. The new housing surround Plas Newydd, effectively separating the historic asset from the village. The housing estate impacted the immediate setting of Plas Newydd and remains the same to this day.



1972 OS Map


Aerial photo showing extent of housing surrounding Plas Newydd

3.6.5 I have accessed a variety of historical sources to gain further information about Plas Newydd. There is a record in the Historic Environment Record (HER), in the National Library of Wales, as well as a record at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (Coflein). Plas Newydd is also referenced in the seminal book '*The Buildings of Wales – Clwyd*' by Hubbard et al.

'*PLAS NEWYDD, in Pont Adam Crescent, w of the railway.*

H-plan; lateral chimney, brick-nogged rear gables. Painstaking restoration in progress, 1992. (Though almost entirely reconstructed as a storeyed house, there remain roof timbers of a box-framed hall, possibly c 14. The hall was of two subdivided bays. One subdivision formed the passage bay, with spere-truss.

4. Assessing the Heritage Asset

4.1 In the publication, '*Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the Historic Environment in Wales'*, Cadw set out the principles behind conservation philosophy which guides their decision making in managing change in the historic environment. The Cadw guidance acknowledges the foundation provided by an earlier English Heritage publication, '*Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance,*' 2008.

4.2 Both publications give detailed guidance on the assessment of the built heritage and propose four categories into which they might be grouped. These are assessed below in relation to the listed building of Plas Newydd, which is the subject of the application.

4.2.1 Evidential value: the extent to which the physical fabric tells how and when your historic asset was made, how it was used and how it has changed over time. There may be buried or obscured elements associated with your historic asset which may also be an important potential source of evidence.

Plas Newydd is an exceptional example of a Spere Truss Hall House, reflected in its grade II* status. There is clear evidence of various phases of development and enlargement at Plas Newydd, however, it still retains clear evidence of its historical medieval construction. C18 and C19 fabric is still evident at Plas Newydd, with blocked openings, evidence of rebuilding, and evidence of altered plan forms. Despite later phases of development, it is the Hall House itself that retains a high degree of evidential value.

4.2.2 **Historical value**: your historic asset may illustrate a particular past way of life or be associated with a specific person or event; there may be physical evidence for these connections which it could be important to retain.

Plas Newydd is of high historical value. The historical value of Plas Newydd as a surviving Spere Truss Hall House cannot be downplayed. It is of the highest historical value. The evolution of Plas Newydd is interlinked with the growing influence of the Wynnstay estate which built and owned Plas Newydd for centuries. Sir John ap Elis Eyton is an important historical figure, who's influence on the surrounding area profound. There are some later added phases of construction that are of lesser significance, however, as a whole, Plas Newydd exhibits a high degree of historical value.

4.2.3 **Aesthetic value**: the design, construction and craftsmanship of your historic asset. This can also include setting and views to and from the historic asset, which may have changed through time.

The current condition of Plas Newydd does impact the aesthetic value of this listed building. It has been neglected and underused for decades. Externally, the building envelope offers some aesthetic value, however, it is the interior that is of the highest aesthetic value. The interior of the Hall House, with the intricate cusping, and exposed trusses of the roof, the screen passage, and surviving medieval carpentry which offers the greatest aesthetic value. Unfortunately, its setting has been compromised by Pont Adam Crescent.

4.2.4 **Communal value**: your historic asset may have particular significance to people for its commemorative, symbolic or spiritual value, or for the part it has played in local cultural or public life. This will be particularly important in the case of buildings in public use or sites where public access must be maintained or improved

It is difficult to assess communal value. As one of the oldest buildings in Ruabon, Plas Newydd has some communal value. The building will resonate with the local population.

4.2.5 **Summary** In terms of the guidance offered by Cadw, Plas Newydd offers a strong contribution to the Heritage Asset through three of the four categories of Evidential Value, Historical Value, and Aesthetic Value.

5. Analysis of the Proposals

Summary of Proposals

5.1 Plas Newydd has been in a derelict state since at least the 1970s. Previous owners have started and abandoned works to restore Plas Newydd over the last 50 years. Plas Newydd is an exceptionally important building, and any works to restore the building must follow accepted conservation principles. The intention is to restore Plas Newydd as a single dwelling.

5.2 As the following photos indicate, the condition of Plass Newydd can be described as perilous. It is in need of immediate attention to safeguard its future. The proposals have been carefully considered, with some energy efficiency measures proposed for the building. It is accepted that the building will never perform to passivehaus standards, however, there are options available in improve energy efficiency within historic buildings without impacting the character.



Images demonstrating general condition of Plas Newydd

5.3 The general approach for this development is to retain as much historic fabric as possible, use all available space, introduce compatible materials were necessary and retain historic plan form. All of the above are important to ensure that the future of Plas Newydd is not compromised by unconsidered and damaging options.

5.4 We received generally positive pre-application feedback (ENQ/2026/0090) on our proposals in June 2026. It is proposed to demolish the later added rear extension and for the installation of new rainwater goods throughout is proposed. This forms part of the wider redevelopment of the site, however, this application is submitted separately so ensue that works continue at Plas Newydd without delay whilst formalising the detain for the rest of the building, particularly the main hall. This HIA is restrained to the proposed demolition of the rear addition, and for the replacement rainwater goods. A more detailed HIA, proportionate to the proposals will be submitted in due course.

Demolition of later added rear extension.

5.5 There is a small later added, C20 outbuilding to the rear of Plas Newydd. It is low quality, in poor condition and is proposed to be demolished. The Conservation Officer at a recent site visit expressed no concerns with its demolition as it was of no significance. The demolition will enable the rear of the building to be fully appreciated.

5.6 The photos below demonstrate the condition of the extension, which is not tied into the building, is clearly a later addition, is in poor repair and is of no architectural or historic value. It is likely to date from the early to mid C20 judging by the construction method and type of brick.

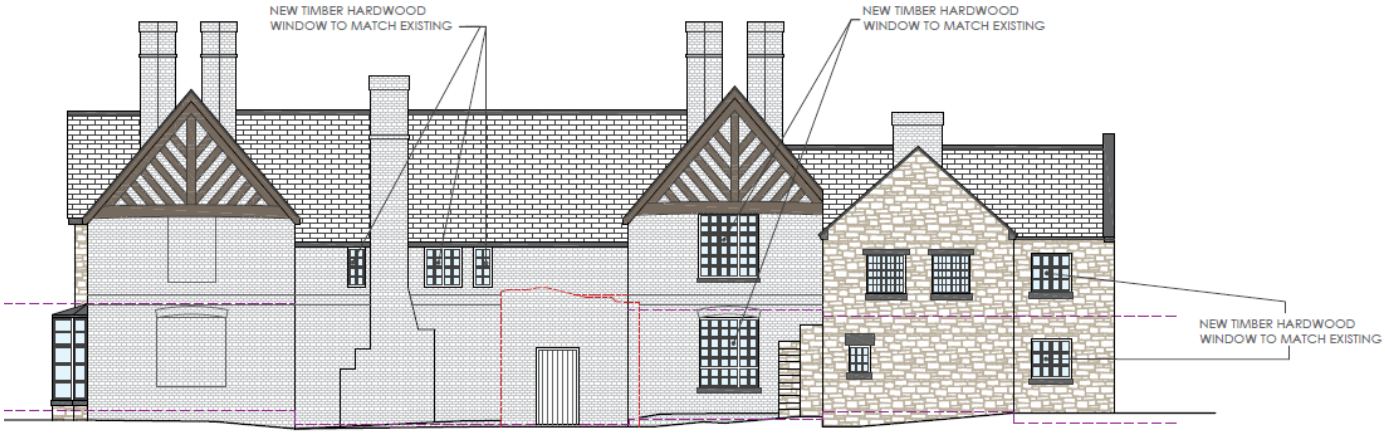


Proposed outbuilding to be demolished





Condition of extension



Proposed rear of Plas Newydd

Rainwater Goods

5.7 There is a mix of very short sections of cast iron, together with large sections of upvc RWG at Plas Newydd. It was originally proposed to replace the RWG system at Plas Newydd with new, half round, Alumasc Heritage guttering all-round, on rise and fall brackets. The use of Alumasc was considered an appropriate compromise due to the costs of cast iron and the financial outlay required to restore this at risk grade II* building. On reflection, and following feedback from the Conservation Officer, cost alone cannot be used to justify materials on a grade II* building. It is now proposed to use cast iron RWG at Plas Newydd. It is proposed to slightly increase the capacity of the gutters and downpipes to deal with the increasingly inclement Welsh weather.



Cast Iron Heritage half round 5” gutter and Round Circular downpipe





Example of plastic RWG at Plas Newydd

5.8. Section 28 of Cadw's *'Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the Historic Environment in Wales*' sets out the instances where new work and alteration s will be acceptable.

5.9 New work or alteration to an historic asset will normally only be acceptable if:

5.9.1 a. The need for the work is fully justified;

The proposed work would enable a new lease of life to this redundant, empty historic building. The proposed works is the minimum necessary to provide a family dwelling. The scheme has followed accepted conservation principles and will ensure that this nationally important building will survive for generations to come. This phase would remove a later added, poorly constructed extension that is structurally unsound. Replacing the RWG will ensure that water ingress is no longer an issue at Plas Newydd.

5.9.2 b. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the asset;

The research undertaken shows the significance of the asset. The proposals would result in the exterior envelope to be refurbished, which will result in a noticeable conservation benefit.

5.9.3 c. the proposal would not materially harm the values of that asset, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;

The proposed works would not materially harm the values of the asset. It is not proposed to make any unnecessary works to the listed building. The proposed works will not adversely impact the special characteristics of this listed building and is the minimum necessary to ensure a future use.

The demolition of the extension would better reveal the rear elevation and remove an unsightly addition of no significance.

5.9.4 d. the quality of design and execution must add value to the existing asset;

The proposed changes have been carefully considered. It is proposed to keep change to a minimum. The removal of the extension and the replacement of the upvc RWG will ad value to the listed building.

5.9.5 e. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, largely reversible or be designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

The proposed works at this stage are minor. The removal of the later added extension and introduction of Cast Iron RWG is not contentious and will be of benefit to the listed building.

6. Conclusions

6.1 This HIA has been prepared to assess proposals for the proposed works at Plas Newydd, Ruabon.

6.2 The primary aim of the HIA is to explore the potential impacts of the proposals upon the heritage significances of the listed building, in line with the requirements of planning law and policy relating to the conservation of the historic built environment.

6.3 The proposals are well considered, reasonable and sensitive to the historic asset. The works will give a new lease of life to this dilapidated asset, and provide a viable, future use for Plas Newydd. The proposals at this stage are minor and aim to ensure that works continue to progress at Plas Newydd whilst the detailing of the main application is formalised.

Appendix A

Listing Description

Full Report for Listed Buildings

Cadw

The list description is not intended to be a complete inventory of what is listed: it is principally intended to aid identification. By law, the definition of a listed building includes the entire building (i) and any structure or object that is fixed to the said building and ancillary to it and (ii) any other structure or object that forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948, and was within the curtilage of the building, and ancillary to it, on the date on which said building was first included in the list, or on 1 January 1969, whichever was later.

Summary Description

Reference Number	Building Number	Grade	Status	Date of Designation	Date of Amendment
1626		II*	Designated	07/06/1963	

Name of Property	Address
Plas Newydd	

Location

Unitary Authority	Community	Town	Locality	Easting	Northing
Wrexham	Ruabon	Ruabon		329918	343866

Street Side	Location
S	Situated off Pont Adam to the NW of the town centre.

Description

Broad Class	Period
Domestic	

History

Large H-plan house built early-mid C16 consisting of a hall and pasage between storeyed wings. The house was altered and remodelled probably in the mid/late C18 when it was partially refaced in brick and altered internally. At the time of the inspection (October 1994) substantial alteration and reconstruction was in progress.

Exterior

Timber framing, brick, sandstone rubble some areas of pebbledash, slate roof, brick chimneys. Attached ranges of sandstone rubble. Main elevation facing S: all openings date from the late C18 or early C19 when the hall range had an inserted floor; and these are blocked. Inserted doors in hall range. Substantial parts of the wings have been rebuilt in brick some areas of square panelled timber framing, now infilled in brick survive in some parts of the walls. Framing with diagonal braces is visible in hall range. Right hand return elevation has timber framing with diagonal bracing with brick nogging to wing, and gabled bay of sandstone rubble with squared quoins probably relating to C18 stack. To right rear wing has large blocked openings and timber framing in squarish panels with brick infill. Rear elevation has been substantially rebuilt in brick with blocked doors and windows relating to C18/C19 remodelling. Hall range has tall external brick stack to left of centre. Wings have king post trusses with diagonal braces. Left hand return has attached ranges of C18 and C19 date.

Interior

Central hall of 4 bays, butt purlin construction without ridge piece. The C18/C19 interior features have been removed. The C16 trusses are very ornate with multicusped braces and wind braces, some with large floral bosses on the tie-beams. Smoke blackening is visible on the trusses. Mortices in the tie beam of one of the trusses show that it was originally an aisled spere truss. At the lower end part of the screens passage survives with a decorative carved door head. The wings are of similar construction but of simpler design, with some cusping to the braces of the passage end wing.

Reason for designation

Listed grade II*, notwithstanding recent alterations, because of the ornate roof structure and for its importance as a scarce surviving example of a spere truss hall house in this region.

Cadw : Full Report for Listed Buildings [Records 1 of 1]

Export