

copy to G. G. G. Feb 24<sup>th</sup> 1985  
Glen March 19<sup>th</sup> 1986

COWBRIDGE WITH LLANBLETHIAN TOWN COUNCIL

CATALOGUE OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY COWBRIDGE WITH LLANBLETHIAN  
TOWN COUNCIL AND ITS PREDECESSOR COUNCILS TO ENSURE THE  
PRESERVATION OF ST. QUENTIN'S CASTLE, LLANBLETHIAN

1960 — 1986.

SEPTEMBER, 1960 Llanblethian Community Council asked the Ministry of Works to take over responsibility and guardianship of the castle. At that time it was readily admitted by the owners that the castle was in a dangerous condition and letters were sent to the Heads of schools and the Police warning them of the risks and danger to children who frequently played in the vicinity and in the castle. Notices were also erected warning visitors to keep out, and exonerating the owners of any responsibility in the event of accidents or injuries.

1964 The castle was sold by the Executors of the late Mansel Evan Edwards and purchased, apparently by Mr. M. Boland.

NOVEMBER, 1974 A request from Llanblethian Community Council, supported by a petition signed by 60 local residents, was submitted to the Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Department of the Environment, to consider acquiring the castle and surrounding land by compulsory purchase. In reply, the Inspector had indicated his intention to prepare a scheme for treating the dangerous parts of the gatehouse. The department did not have powers to compulsorily purchase, although it did have powers to take the monument into care if it was suffering wilful damage or neglect.

DECEMBER, 1974 Llanblethian Community Council gave consideration to the purchasing of the castle for use by the public as an Open Space, if the Department of the Environment could guarantee to take the castle into guardianship and make safe the dangerous parts. It became obvious that the owner did not wish to part with the site and further discussions took place between the owner and the Department.

JANUARY to  
DECEMBER, 1975 Numerous requests from the Community Council to the owner to negotiate.

FEBRUARY, 1976 The Department experienced difficulty in gaining access to the

site in order to prepare a report on the condition of the castle and the work considered necessary before making a recommendation concerning guardianship.

MARCH, 1976 Llanblethian Community Council resolved to request the Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council to compulsorily acquire the Castle on their behalf.

SEPTEMBER, 1976 Llanblethian W.I. submitted a petition to the Welsh Office regarding the condition of the monument. A proposed schedule of works, produced by the owner's architect for the long term stabilization and preservation was examined. The owner was asked to agree to undertaking approved preservation work over a period of 5 to 10 years with the Department of the Environment bearing a share of the cost within a specified limit.

MAY, 1977 The District Valuer was asked to negotiate on behalf of the Community Council but reported that the owner had no intention of selling and had agreed future preservation work with the relevant department. It was later reported by the Welsh Office that efforts to reach agreement with the owner on measures to ensure the future preservation were inconclusive.

NOVEMBER, 1978 PRESS STATEMENT 'The Secretary of State for Wales has stepped in to help save the crumbling St. Quentin's Castle from further deterioration. The risk of rapid further deterioration is such that it was thought advisable that an Interim Preservation Order should be made. The notice stated that the monument was under the protection of the Secretary of State under Part 11 of the Ancient Monuments Act. The department had confirmed that the monument was in danger from neglect and that its preservation was of national importance.

JULY, 1979 The Welsh Office, Ancient Monuments Branch, the owner and his architect discussed a programme of preservation works which would be satisfactory to the department and which might be grant aided.

MARCH 1979 The Welsh Office published the draft of a proposed Preservation Order with the object of maintaining its long term interest in the monument under existing legislation. Objection to the proposed Order was entered on behalf of the owner, which was neither resolved or withdrawn. Meanwhile, agreement had been reached on the estimate and elements of a long term programme to extend over a period of about 10 years, of preservation and conservation works.

The owner's reply to the departments's offer to share the cost of the 1st year's work equally with him up to a specified amount in 1979/80, was awaited. At this stage it was hoped that a tangible result to the negotiations would be seen shortly.

JANUARY, 1980 The department reported that the owner, his architect and mason had met with servants of the department, discussed and agreed a programme for the initial stages of the preservation works. Long awaited commencement of the conservation works would at last be carried out !

NOVEMBER, 1980 The Welsh Office reported that the condition of the site of the castle had, for some time, been of great concern to the department and considerable efforts had been made to persuade the owner to put the site in order. The main interest lay with the ruins which were deteriorating slowly through neglect. The department stated 'unfortunately, there is nothing we can do at the present time to improve the situation although we will continue to negotiate with the owner to agree and implement a programme of works.

FEBRUARY, 1981 Interim Preservation Order had expired. The Welsh Office confirmed its awareness of the local concern and stated that the efforts in trying to persuade the owner to implement the initial stages of the preservation work were continuing.

SEPTEMBER, 1982 Consideration was being given by the Welsh Office to the most appropriate form of action which could be taken under the Archaeological Areas Act, 1979.

FEBRUARY, 1983 A meeting of representatives of the Welsh Office, Vale of Glam Borough Council, Town Council and the owner took place - report attached. - (SEE BACK OF PAGE 4)

MARCH, 1983 Mr. Boland was warned 'In view of the length of time this proposal has been under discussion, if work has not started within six weeks the department will consider using its powers either to enter the monument to carry out works which are urgently needed or to compulsorily acquire the castle.' Further letters were sent in April, July and August, but no reply.

OCTOBER, 1983 The Town Council drew the attention of Lord Parry of Neyland, and Sir Raymond Gower, M.P. to the matter. Both made representation to the Welsh Office.

NOVEMBER, 1983 The Town Council, Local History Society and local residents held a demonstration at the castle. The owner had failed to respond to the latest request for an application for scheduled monument consent to be submitted for approval and in the circumstances, the case was submitted to the Secretary of State for guidance on how to proceed.

On 24th November, 1983 the Welsh Office received a directive from the Secretary of State to acquire by means of a Compulsory Purchase Order. It was noted that the owner might request a public inquiry and was acting illegally by laying vehicular access, etc.

JANUARY, 1984 Petition of 274 persons submitted to Welsh Office

JANUARY, APRIL, MAY, AUGUST, & SEPTEMBER Council enquired re progress and the Welsh Office reported that the matter was in the hands of the Legal Department.

APRIL, 1985 Further enquiries from the Town Council re progress and information requested by the Welsh Office was given.

JUNE, 1985 C.A.D.W. was considering options to ensure the future maintenance and preservation and confirming certain details to ensure correct procedures.

JULY, 1985 The Town Council enquired as to the reasons for the delays and expressed surprise that no preservation works had been carried out.

AUGUST, 1985 Town Council enquired again. C.A.D.W. replied that the decision to acquire the castle by C.P.O. was taken in the knowledge that the only real alternative was the execution of urgent preservation works a path that was rejected because, in view of the nature of the statutory provisions, the urgent preservation works that could be carried out would be very limited. It was anticipated that the draft orders for the compulsory purchase would be ready soon.

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 1985 Reminders and enquiries to C.A.D.W.

JANUARY, 1986 C.A.D.W. stated that instructions were still awaited from legal department of W.O.

FEBRUARY, 1986 Still no positive action. There are complications which are proving difficult to resolve and the W.O. cannot promise an early conclusion.

---

## ST QUENTIN'S CASTLE PRECIS OF EVENTS SINCE 1960

The following is a view of events as seen by Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council and its predecessors in a period of over 30 years during which the people of Cowbridge and Llanblethian have tried to ensure the preservation of St Quentin's Castle for the benefit of the Nation and for future generations.

**SEPTEMBER 1960** Llanblethian Community Council (referred to below as LCC) ask the Ministry of Works to take responsibility for the castle. Admitted by the owners that the structure is in a dangerous condition.

**1964** Castle sold by the Executors of the late Mansel Evan Edwards and purchased, apparently, by Mr Michael Boland.

**NOVEMBER 1974** LCC submit a request to the Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Wales (DOE), asking for compulsory purchase to be considered. In his reply, the Inspector indicates his intention to prepare a scheme for consolidating dangerous parts of the gatehouse.

**DECEMBER 1974** LCC consider purchasing the castle for use as public open space. It becomes obvious that the owner does not wish to sell.

**1975** Numerous requests by LCC to negotiate a purchase.

**FEBRUARY 1976** DOE Ancient Monuments Department claim difficulty in gaining access to the site in order to prepare a report.

**MARCH 1976** LCC resolve to request the Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council to compulsorily acquire the site.

**SEPTEMBER 1976** Llanblethian WI submit a petition to the Welsh Office (referred to below as WO) expressing concern at the condition of the monument. A proposed Schedule of Works is produced by the owners architect for stabilisation and preservation of the structure.

**MAY 1977** The District Valuer is asked by LCC to negotiate a purchase price but again the owner declines to sell. He agrees to discuss future preservation work with the proper authorities but efforts to reach agreement are inconclusive.

**NOVEMBER 1978** South Wales Echo reports that "The Secretary of State for Wales has stepped in to save the crumbling St Quentin's Castle from further deterioration". An Interim Preservation Order is made under Part II of the Ancient Monuments Act in order to preserve a monument of national importance.

**JULY 1979** WO Ancient Monuments Branch, the owner and his architect discuss a suitable programme of work which might be grant aided.

**MARCH 1979** WO publish draft Preservation Order. Owner registers his objection to the proposed Order.

Agreement is reached with the owner on an estimate and a long term programme of conservation work

**JANUARY 1980** WO representatives meet the owner, his architect and his mason and agree a programme for the initial stages of the work.

**NOVEMBER 1980** WO report great concern at the condition of the monument. They confirm that they will continue to try to negotiate with the owner in an effort to agree and implement a programme of work.

**FEBRUARY 1981** Interim Preservation Order expires. WO acknowledges local concern and confirms it will continue to try to persuade the owner to carry out the initial stages of conservation work.

**SEPTEMBER 1982** Consideration being given by WO to most appropriate form of action available under the Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

**FEBRUARY 1983** Meeting of representatives of WO, Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council, Cowbridge Town Council and the owner. Council minutes record "Obvious that Mr Boland has very little intention of cooperating with the WO".

**MARCH 1983** South Wales Echo reports that WO has given the owner "six weeks to come up with a scheme to renovate the 13th century ruin". It confirmed that the WO would otherwise exercise its powers either to enter the monument to carry out works which are urgently needed or to compulsorily acquire the castle.

**OCTOBER 1983** The Town Council draw the attention of Lord Parry of Neyland and Sir Raymond Gower MP to the matter. Both make representations to the WO.

**NOVEMBER 1983** The Town Council, Local history Society and local residents hold a demonstration at the castle.

Mr Wyn Roberts, Under Secretary of State, writes to Sir Raymond Gower confirming the WO's intention to seek compulsory acquisition.

**JANUARY 1984** Petition of 274 persons submitted to WO. Enquiries by the Town Council in January, April, May, August and September bring assurances by WO that the matter is in the hands of the Legal Department.

**APRIL 1985** Further enquiries from Town Council regarding progress. Information provided by WO.

**JUNE 1985** Cadw still considering options to ensure future maintenance and preservation of the castle.

**JULY 1985** Town Council enquire as to the reasons for delay and express surprise that no preservation work has been carried out.

**AUGUST 1985** Town Council enquire again. Informed by Cadw that draft orders for compulsory purchase would be ready soon.

**OCTOBER NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1985** Further reminders and enquiries to Cadw from Town Council.

**JANUARY 1986** Cadw state that instructions are still awaited from the WO Legal Department.

**FEBRUARY 1986** Still no positive action. Town Council informed that there are complications which are proving difficult to resolve. WO cannot promise an early conclusion.

**MARCH 1986** Glamorgan Gazette reports that "Cadw cannot locate Mr Boland, owner of the castle".

**JANUARY 1988** Cadw convene meeting of local householders to explain the work to be undertaken on the castle. The castle will be consolidated and the area of ground around it cleared and grassed with a facility for car parking. Finance has been allocated and the land will be acquired by agreement with the owner or by compulsory purchase.

Householders accept the possible temporary inconvenience and agree to provide access where required.

**JANUARY 1989** Town Council advised verbally by Cadw that the project has not advanced because the owner claims to have a scheme of his own for restoring the castle. Cadw see this as a delaying tactic but are obliged to await the outcome.

**SEPTEMBER 1989** In response to an enquiry Cadw write to advise that the owner has appointed an architect to prepare a scheme.

**NOVEMBER 1989** In response to a further enquiry Cadw write to advise that the owners agents are devising a programme of repairs, with target dates, which will be available by Christmas.

Cadw also advise that a site inspection "did not suggest that the structure represents any immediate danger".

**MARCH 1990** Cadw advise that they are to meet the owners agent in order to consider whether it would be appropriate for Cadw to assist financially.

In reply to a verbal enquiry Cadw confirms that a meeting took place with the owners agent and they will liaise to draw up a programme of work. No target dates have been fixed.

**MAY 1990** Cadw advises that powers of compulsory purchase, though passed by parliament, would never be used.

**JUNE 1990** Six local MPs table a motion deploring the failure of the WO to act. They are informed that they are too eager to use compulsory purchase powers.

**JULY 1990** Cadw says the owner is very willing to see the monument restored.

**DECEMBER 1990** John Smith MP uses an Adjournment Debate to denounce the owner and deplore the inaction of the WO.

**JUNE 1991** Minister of State at the WO implies that the owner can have another five years to do some work.

**OCTOBER 1991** Minister advises that Cadw will carry out some more work.



**JUNE 1992** Cadw clears some more vegetation and puts up netting to catch falling stonework.

**SEPTEMBER 1992** BBC "Week in Week out" television programme features the problems associated with the castle.

**OCTOBER 1992** WO issues draft Compulsory Purchase Order.

**DECEMBER 1992** Cadw advise that the owner has objected to CPO and the Secretary of State will appoint an independent Inspector who will probably set up a Public Local Inquiry.

**MAY 1993** Town Council informed by Cadw that a Public Local Inquiry will be held to consider the owners objections to the draft Compulsory Purchase Order. The date for the Inquiry is set for 5th October 1993.

**JANUARY 1994** Following the postponement of the Public Inquiry Cadw issue notice of a new date of 1st March 1994.

**MARCH 1994** Public Local Inquiry at Cowbridge Town Hall.