

Archaeology & Archaeologically Sensitive Areas



Gwent Glamorgan Archaeological Trust

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Archaeologically Sensitive Areas

Defining Archaeologically Sensitive Areas

The designation of Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (ASA) highlights the archaeological significance of these areas and the need for potential developers to seek professional archaeological advice to ascertain the archaeological significance of a development site. This is in order to consider at an early stage the possible impact of the development on the archaeological resource and how that effect might be mitigated.

The ASAs are not the only areas within a local authority's boundaries where archaeology will be a factor in the determination of planning applications, but show the most likely areas where this could occur.

ASA designation is not intended to introduce new policies or restrictions to development, but to indicate to developers, areas where it is more likely that the effect of the development on the archaeological resource could become an issue during the determination of a planning application. Identification enables the developer, the LPA and its advisors, to identify where additional information may be required prior to the submission of a planning application, or is required to be submitted with a planning application in order to establish the importance of the archaeological resource and the effect of the proposed development.

Archaeological remains are not confined to the ASAs; the boundaries illustrate a core or cluster of data points and it should not be taken that areas outside a designated ASA do not contain archaeological and historical sites of importance and that these could be a factor in the determination of any planning application.

It is strongly recommended that the archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust are consulted early in the design process of any proposed development in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to check whether or not any archaeological sites are present or suspected of being located in the development area.

The ASAs have been designated following appraisal by the archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, to clearly define the most likely areas in which archaeology may become a component in the determination of planning applications and give potential developers early indications of such factors.

Data points register the information within the Historic Environment Record and indicate the existence of remains but not necessarily their physical extent. Larger areas that form designed landscapes such as Registered Parks and Gardens; or Registered Landscapes and their constituent character areas, are delineated by polygons, as are scheduled monuments. Much of the area of the County Borough Council is designated as Registered Landscape, Merthyr Tydfil (HLW (MGL) 2) and also Gelligaer Common (HLW (MGL) 4)

The nature of the archaeological resource in Merthyr Tydfil is influenced by the topography and geology, primarily by the deep valley and head mineral ore, the extraction of which over the last three centuries has shaped the landscape and heritage. The importance is national and international, and the statutory protection of a number of these areas emphasises the technological developments associated with the investment in the works as well as the extensive remains. Archaeological work undertaken in characterising areas of Historic Landscapes has aimed to describe what makes the character areas within the Landscapes distinctive and also illustrates the wider nature of the remains. For example, the extensive Dowlais Free Drainage System covered a vast area and by gravity and with a system of reservoirs, dams and leats fed the ironworks at Dowlais and Penydarren, as well as further mines. The importance of these technological and engineering developments is also culturally within the community, in understanding the part that families played in making Merthyr Tydfil a place of belonging as well as a world centre of expertise.

The large town of Merthyr is located in the north of the local authority area, and has evidence of occupation from the Roman period onwards. From the Medieval settlement of the *llan* (religious enclosure) of St Tydfil the Martyr, the small settlement on the banks of the river expanded greatly from the mid 18th century when the large scale extraction and transportation of minerals began. This led to entire landscapes being changed, and some cases designed around infrastructure production and maintenance.

Evidence of some form of settlement and land use dates from the Neolithic period, where isolated finds of that date show there was human activity. This activity continues through to the modern day with industrial, transport and power facilities re-shaping the landscape. The nature of the remains therefore differs hugely, from the pre-historic remains being a mixture of flint tools, and cairns, where human remains are interred in stone and earthen mounds. These earlier remains tend to be located on the higher ground, the hill tops at the sides and head of the Taff valley.

Areas of greater archaeological potential or sensitivity may have numerically few data points. For example, Medieval agriculture, especially including granges, which were extensive in the area of land which they covered, would have had relatively few buildings and yet are important as a preserved landscape, representative of intensive activity at that time, which is fragile and potentially at risk.

ASA 1: Cyfarthfa Castle and Park

Community: Park

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments: None

Listed Buildings: Three, including two Grade I
Conservation Areas: Cyfarthfa

Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales: Cyfarthfa Castle Grade II*;

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales

Merthyr Tydfil HLW (MGL) 2: HLCA 013: Cyfarthfa Castle and Park

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries:14
Event Records: 00

Significance

Cyfarthfa Castle was the seat of the ironmaster William Crawshay, and was built in 1825; the castle and grounds were built and developed next to the ironworks. A Grade I Listed building set in a Grade II* Landscape, it is probably the most historically important ironmaster's home in Wales. Landscaped and extensive grounds surround the castle, designed as a Romantic mansion, and there is visual and physical connectivity to the site of the ironworks and its extractive landscape. Its importance is reflected in it being registered in both Parts of the Register; as a Park in Part One and as being within the Landscape in Part Two.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Construction of the castle and park began in 1824, on a south west facing slope above the River Taff, which runs between Cyfarthfa Park and the site of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks. Commissioned by William Crawshay, and designed by Robert Luger, the house was designed as a mock castle with battlements, crenellations and turrets. Initially an informal park, later 19th century designs created a more formal landscaped layout and planting. The castle and the grounds in which it is located are the core survival of a much larger park, the surviving park covering some 64 hectares, which at the time of its inception was 245 hectares.

The core area that remains of the estate park includes the castle buildings, reached by a formal drive, and remains of the associated estate buildings such as the ice house, kitchen garden area and bothy, and a series of dams, reservoir and fish ponds.

Remains exist of the water management system, which includes four aligned elliptical reservoirs towards the tops of the slope, each of which is revetted by dams. The lower lake, which is now reduced in size and which is also marked on historic OS mapping as a fish pond, also supplied Cyfarthfa works with water. This was contained in a feeder channel, shown on the OS second edition map, leading from both the south eastern part of the lake, and from the north western part of the former estate, to Pont y Cafnau and thence to the ironworks.

To the north west of the Castle, there were estate ranges including stables, glass houses, kitchen gardens and although now demolished showed the involvement of such estates in developing the technical means in the 19th century of growing exotic species such as pineapples. Wider species planting of trees in the formal landscape reflected the involvement of plant hunting and was a typical display of wealth at the time. The tree planting gave a long term, basis to the wealth of the new estate owners and looked forward to a prosperous future.

Pressures of development on such a landscape and building are likely to include small scale developments and those which affect drainage. Renovation of smaller structures may reveal archaeological features associated with the earlier formation of the landscape and its buildings, which in turn informs the knowledge of the wider management and development. Works to structures relating to the water management systems, lakes, ponds and dams can reveal technical information as to how they were originally constructed.

Given the current suite of heritage legislation in Wales, which now includes measures for the greater understanding of created landscapes such as parks, and their setting; having a professionally qualified archaeologist undertake a heritage and archaeological assessment for the castle and park would be of benefit in ensuring that planned works are mitigated to meet the current legislative requirements. This should lead to the production of a conservation management plan, thereby benefiting the long term future of the park.

ASA 2: Cyfarthfa Ironworks and Infrastructure

Community: Park

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments: Three:

GM424: Pont y Cafnau Tramroad Bridge

GM425: Remains of Blast Furnaces, Cyfarthfa (two areas)

GM486: Iron Canal Bridge from Rhydycar

Listed Buildings: Seven, including one Grade II*

Conservation Areas: Cyfarthfa

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

Merthyr Tydfil HLW (MGL) 2:

HLCA009: Georgetown, Former Industrial Settlement

HLCA012a Cyfarthfa Ironworks

HLCA012b Cyfarthfa Ironworks Cinder Tip

HLCA014: River Taff Canal and Railway Corridor

HLCA079 A470 (T) Road Corridor

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 32

Event Records: 5

Significance

Nationally and internationally significant ironworks; 18th century foundation; in 1806 was the largest ironworks in the world; first works to produce bar iron and adopt other technological advances. Associated infrastructure includes industrial transport and water management.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Located on the south of the River Taff, the ironworks was founded in 1765 by Bacon and Bowrigg, on a lease from William Talbot. Initially with a single furnace producing pig iron, it was the third of the five large ironworks in the area to open (Dowlais 1759 and Plymouth 1763). The advantages of the area included an abundance of raw materials, as well as iron ore, there was limestone, coal, and water.

On the retirement of Bacon in 1783, Richard Crawshay gained control of the works and the expansion of the works increased, both physically and technologically. The production of pig iron was refined by using Henry Cort's method of a reverberatory furnace, soon after it was patented, where the ore is not in physical contact with the fuel, and better quality iron was produced as a result.

The number of blast furnaces increased to four by 1800, and paintings by Pamplin show the extent of the works at that time, with tramroads, furnaces, charging banks and casting houses, and a large diameter waterwheel. Further buildings shown were known to house puddling furnaces and rolling mills. Gun carriages, cannon and shot were made at this time.

The works expanded with the increase in railway transport and was at its peak during the 1870s, with new mills and furnaces having been constructed in the 1830s and 1840s. The works moved to steel production in 1884 and new furnaces were constructed in order to allow technological changes and improvement. Coking ovens were constructed and the steel production continued until the early part of the 20th century. After a decline in the 1920s, the works was closed and became a factory making incandescent lamps (Thorn Electrical) which closed and was demolished in the 1990s.

Redevelopment work in some areas of the works since then has shown that although the works has been described as destroyed, this refers primarily to the demolition of most of the upstanding structures. Recent archaeological evaluation work ahead of development has shown that significant buried remains survive, with a high degree of integrity, in part these are deeply buried, and in some areas have a shallow cover only. Contamination is present and is also a consideration in any redevelopment.

Three areas are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the works itself (two areas with one number) and two of the bridges made with iron from the works. These statutory designations reflect the importance of the site, from a technological aspect and also reflecting its global importance.

Any redevelopment work will encounter significant archaeological remains, and industrial remains by their nature will be complex and deeply stratified. The Historic Environment legislation states that the impact of a development on the setting of Scheduled Ancient Monuments is also a consideration, as well as the physical impact of any development on the archaeological resource.

ASA 3: Penydarren Roman Fort and Environs

Community: Park

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments: None

Listed Buildings: Two

Conservation Areas: Morgantown, Town Centre

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

HLW (MGL) 2: HLCA003: Penydarren Park and Gwaelod y Garth

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 22

Event Records: 15

Significance

Site of a Roman Fort, with associated remains of roads, a bath house, stone buildings and human remains external to the fort. Site of Penydarren House, built 1786; home of the Ironmaster Samuel Homfray.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Built on a spur of land above the confluence of the Morlais and Taff Rivers, the fort was established in the last quarter of the first century AD. With an occupation period of AD c70 to c140, two main phases of construction have been identified, firstly of timber and secondly of stone. Evidence from archaeological work shows that the fort was part of a complex of military buildings that included a bath house, located to the south east of the fort, a high status stone building to the north of the fort which was identified initially by finds of a tessellated (mosaic) floor, and a stone paved area and stone building to the south.

It was the Roman practice to inter their dead outside forts, partly for health reasons, but also to indicate to visitors the importance of those who lived and worked there. Evidence of this has been found to the north and north west of the fort, and it must be noted that the extent of the cemetery is not known, as the cremation burials were interred in what appears to be an irregular pattern, and their exact location cannot therefore be predicted with any certainty.

Roman remains were first identified when the construction of Penydarren House the home of Ironmaster Samuel Homfray. Fragments of mosaic, and Roman building material were uncovered in 1786. The first organised archaeological work was undertaken in 1902, when the work of an antiquarian society revealed remains of a hypocaust system that was part of a military bath house. The creation of the football ground at that time also confirmed the site as military, with the identification of a granary within the fort.

During the 18th century, the development of the area as a world centre of ironworking and industrial development led to the building of Penydarren House, located to the west of Penydarren Ironworks. Homfray supported research into the science surrounding metallurgical development and extraction; it was through this that Richard Trevithick developed steam engines for the ironworks, and which ensured the construction of the world's first powered train, and the construction of the Trevithick Tramroad.

The area surrounding the current sports facility developed as a prosperous suburb of Merthyr Tydfil in the later part of the 19th century, when civic and public buildings and suburban villas were created. After the decline of the ironworking industry, the house initially, like Cyfarthfa Castle, become a school in the latter part of the 19th century, and was demolished in 1966. The parkland and estate surrounding the House has become housing.

In this area, the nature of the archaeological resource ranges from human remains, remains of Roman features which may be of a structural nature, finds of building material, pottery, and metalwork; to features and finds associated with Penydarren House and its estate.

Relating the impact of development to this, the creation of even small extensions may reveal Roman cremation burials, which are small in physical size and not easily recognisable to the untrained eye. Any larger developments, or developments which require deep groundworks are likely to have a more significant impact. The capability to identify and record the occurrence and extent of features and finds ensures their preservation by record, and greater understanding of the archaeology and heritage of the area. It would be in line with current legislation, and also, in adding to the HER, inform responses to any further proposed development work.

ASA4: Penydarren Ironworks

Community: Park

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments: None

Listed Buildings: None

Conservation Areas: Town Centre

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

Merthyr Tydfil HLW (MGL) 2: HLCA004 Penydarren Ironworks Area; HLCA005 Penydarren; HLCA036 Thomas Town (East) and Penyard

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 7

Event Records: 4

Significance

Nationally and internationally important ironworks; associations with technological and rail advances, associations with Trevithick.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Penydarren Ironworks was founded in 1784 by Francis Homfray; by 1788 it was the second of the large works to be producing bar iron, buying pig iron from the Dowlais works to refine.

The works' extensive network of tramroads and railways ensured the smooth and regular supply of raw material including from the Morlais Castle Quarries (ASA4). Maps from 1799 show "wagonways" linking the internal buildings and bringing raw materials from mines. It was here that Richard Trevithick developed steam engines for rail transport within the works, and external to the works for the tramroad. IT was from Penydarren that the first locomotive in the world hauled ten tons of iron plus passengers to Abercynon. The works also produced iron rails for the Liverpool and Manchester Railway during the 1850s.

Dowlais Ironworks Company bought the lease to the mineral grounds of Penydarren in 1859, after an increasingly competitive market caused production to cease. AS shown in early photographs, the works although still extensive, was in ruins by the 1870s.

The works was therefore relatively short lived, and are not shown on the 1880 First Edition OS maps. In the early part of the 20th century, the Merthyr Electric Traction and Lighting Company occupied the areas of the furnaces; other parts of the works were built on for workers housing, with Trevithick Street being in place by 1905. associated with Dowlais and other works in the Merthyr Tydfil area.

Although much of the extensive site has been redeveloped, with some of that being early 20th century work to create both housing and industrial; the below ground clearance is unlikely to have removed the underground elements of the works. Archaeological work on industrial sites has shown the survival of deeply stratified and complex remains, where they have been believed to have been demolished and removed.

DRAFT

ASA5: Prehistoric Enclosures; Morlais Castle; Morlais Castle Quarries

Community: Pant

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments:

GM028 Morlais Castle

GM563 Morlais Hill Ring Cairn

GM594 Merthyr Tramroad, Morlais Castle

Listed Buildings: Two, including one Grade II*
Conservation Areas: None

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

Merthyr Tydfil HLW (MGL) 2: HLCA027: Taff Fechan; HLCA044 Morlais Castle Quarries; HLCA045 Morlais Hill Castle; HLCA052 Gurnos Farm and Bunkers Hill

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 35

Event Records: 7

Significance

Prehistoric defensive and funerary enclosures; Medieval castle on the border of the Lordships of Glamorgan and Breconshire; extensive industrial extraction landscape and infrastructure

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Morlais Hill is the location for an Iron Age univallate (single ditch) hillfort. This originally enclosed c1.5ha and only parts of it now survive, having been damaged by the construction of the castle and its outworks. Stretches of the ditch, berm and counterscarp bank survive well in places at the southern part of the hilltop.

A ring cairn is located on the slopes to the east of the hillfort, and is of earlier, probably Bronze Age origin. Some 33m in diameter, it is considered large for a funerary monument of this type. Isolated funerary monuments usually represent settlement in the surrounding area, which itself has left no trace within the landscape, having been obscured by agricultural or industrial activity.

The early establishment of Morlais Castle at the norther border of Glamorgan by Gilbert de Clare in 1288 marked the Normans taking over the Welsh Kingdoms of Glywysing and Brycheiniog. Its building took advantage of the strategic topography on Morlais Hill above the river valley to the north, and the views in all directions. The defensive position is matched by Cae Burdydd on the north bank of the Taff Fechan

some 500m north west of Morlais, as pairs of castle or mottes across rivers are a feature of the Norman landscape.

Its location was provocative in relation to the Lord of Brecon, Humphrey de Bohun, and following disagreement between them followed by an uprising, the life of the castle appears to have been short lived, with it falling into decay and probably abandoned by the mid-1290s.

A curtain walled enclosure was surrounded by rock cut ditches and banks; six towers were spaced along the wall, which encompassed an inner and outer ward, and further settlement outside the walls. Although collapsed, the remains are well preserved, having been soundly built, and represent medieval defensive and domestic practice of national importance. The Scheduling description notes the significance of its archaeological potential with a strong probability of structural evidence and intact associated deposits.

The land became part of the Plymouth Estates and maps depict the field patterns of the area and compared with later maps the pattern survives. The next phase of intensive activity in the area is represented by the extensive quarries which form a surround to Morlais Hill. Leased to the Dowlais Iron Company from 1765, and to the Plymouth Iron Company from 1810, the extractive landscape supplied the Penydarren, Dowlais and Plymouth Ironworks. From 1793, the Morlais Tramroad was constructed to supply the ironworks. The quarries were accessed by branches of tramroads to facilitate the supply, and the quarries remained in operation until the early part of the 20th century.

Currently largely a rural area, the importance of the early and later remains is nationally recognised, and it is a characteristically important visual part of the landscape. Pressures on this area are those which may have an impact on field patterns, and those which impact on drainage, particularly relating to the lower lying prehistoric and medieval remains, which are likely to include fragile organic material. Developments which may have a visual impact on the setting of the remains, and also those which impact on the integrity of the linear features are a risk.

ASA6: Dowlais Ironworks; Supporting Infrastructure; Dowlais Gas

Community: Dowlais

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments: None

Listed Buildings: One Grade II*

Conservation Areas: Dowlais

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

Merthyr Tydfil HLW (MGL) 2: HLCA007: Dowlais; HLCA008: Dowlais Iron Works Area; HLCA078 Dowlais Great Tip; Trecati; Trehir and Twyn y Waun

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 35
Event Records: 4

Significance

Nationally and internationally important ironworks, in operation between 1759 and 1930; surviving standing structures. Most important of the four 18th century ironworks in Merthyr Tydfil. Industrial infrastructure and power generation.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Thomas Lewis leased the land for the works in 1747; the works itself opened in 1759 by Lewis in partnership with Isaac Wilkinson. As with the other ironworks, the proximity of raw material led to the proliferation of extraction sites and the necessary infrastructure linking them. The discovery of coal within the land lease enabled production of iron to be achieved by using coke instead of charcoal. During the 1780s and 1790s, Dowlais supplied Penydarren and Cyfarthfa with pig iron; after the failure of Onions' puddling process at Dowlais, unlike Cort's at Cyfarthfa. By the 1790s, investment had increased and steam blowing engines were in place, replacing the water driven bellows.

Dowlais produced rails at the start of the rail boom, for the Stockton and Darlington Railway, patenting the hot blast technique in 1828. With rails being exported globally, steam powered rolling and cogging mills were constructed to produce the rails and plates, Big Mill in 1839, Little Mill in 1849 and Goat Mill in 1857, followed by Sleeper Mill and Sole Plate Mill. Locomotives were also produced.

The Dowlais Gas undertaking was created in 1856, one of a number in south Wales established between 1820 and 1860; the Dowlais works was lit by gas, provided by the gas works located to the north west of the works.

The Bessemer Process to produce steel was trialled at Dowlais, between 1856 and 1865, although as the local iron ore was unsuitable the process later transferred to coastal sites with imported ores. Dowlais used the Siemens-Martin process from 1871 and production was increased. By 1897, Dowlais had eleven blast furnaces, six Bessemer converters, and seven rolling and mills. Ownership transferred through the Guest family to merge to form GKN with multiple sites, amalgamating with Crawshays of Cyfarthfa in the early 20th century. Following more changes, the works closed as a result of the economic depression, in 1936.

The foundry remained and was extended in the 1950s, and one blast furnace was brought back into use. A new foundry was built in the late 1950s and at the nationalisation of the industry became part of British Steel. The works closed permanently in 1987.

As with all long running industrial sites, the complexity and nature of archaeological remains will be significant. As Dowlais operated for over two hundred years, with a number of new builds, technological changes, improvements, rebuilds, extensions and demolitions, the amount of buried remains will be significant. It is known that when works were demolished, this referred primarily to the upstanding structures, although some of these were reduced in height and buried beneath spoil tips. There has not been any large scale archaeological works, although comparable sites have shown that remains survive with a high degree of integrity. Proposed development will have an impact on these buried remains, and also on any drainage systems in the wider area that may be buried.

DRAFT

ASA7: Plymouth Ironworks; Trevithick's Tunnel; Associated Infrastructure

Community: Town

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments: GM573 Merthyr Tramroad Tunnel (Trevithick's Tunnel)

Listed Buildings: None

Conservation Areas: None

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

Merthyr Tydfil HLW (MGL) 2: HLCA019: Penydarren Tramroad Corridor; HLCA048 Cwm Blacks

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 6

Event Records: 4

Significance

Nationally and internationally important ironworks, and enhancing knowledge and understanding of the development of transport network associated with the iron industry: Trevithick's Tunnel, first recorded railway tunnel use by a steam locomotive on rails.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Founded by Isaac Wilkinson and John Guest in 1763, this was the earliest of three sites relating to the Plymouth works, the others being Pentrebach and Dyffryn. Later associated with the Hill family, who were involved with both the Hirwaun and Cyfarthfa Ironworks, as well as in the construction of tramroads to supply raw materials to ironworks and transport made goods to the Glamorgan Canal and later to railheads.

The Penydarren Tramroad was constructed in 1810 following disagreements over tariff charges on the Glamorgan Canal, which itself had revolutionised transport of iron and coal to the south coast, following its construction between 1790 and 1794. Plans to construct branch canals to ironworks were cancelled when they were replaced by rails. The Tramroad was constructed in 1802 and linked Penydarren ironworks with the canal at Abercynon, its route passing through Plymouth Works where the tunnel ran beneath the charging bank.

The works was unusual in that it used water power rather than steam, although steam was introduced in 1844 following dry weather. Although this increased production, there was not the amount of investment in Plymouth as there was in other works and production declined as a result, and the works closed in 1880.

Although there has been reclamation work on the site in the 1970s, there is a high likelihood that buried remains exist within the area, which should this be developed would be at risk. The Tunnel itself is a scheduled monument of national importance and is noted as of international importance due to the links with the world leading development of steam powered transport on rails and through the tunnel. Any development which has an impact on these features and their setting would need mitigation.

DRAFT

ASA8: Merthyr Tydfil West: Heolgerrig, Winch Fawr, Cwm Du, Cwm Glo

Community: Cyfarthfa, Troed-y-Rhiw

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments:

GM554 Iron Scours and Patch Workings at Winch Fawr, Merthyr Tydfil
GM460 Cwmdu Air Shaft and Fan
GM467 Cyfarthfa Canal Level

Listed Buildings: Eleven

Conservation Areas: None

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

Merthyr Tydfil HLW (MGL) 2: HLCA063 Clwyd-y-Fagwr, Gellideg and Pen-Llwyn-Deri; HLCA064 Winch Fawr, Pen-yr-Heolgerrig, Cwm Du, and Upper Cwm Glo Workings; HLCA068 Heolgerrig and Pen-yr-Heolgerrig; HLCA069 Cwm Glo North; HLCA070 Cwm Glo: Tramroad, Plateway and Incline Corridor; HLCA073 Mynydd Aberdare; HLCA074 Blaen-Canaid and Hendre-Fawr

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 779

Event Records: 13

Significance

Nationally and internationally important industrial extractive landscape associated with Cyfarthfa Ironworks, includes levels, drifts, mines, quarries, canals, inclines and tram and railroads, water management and drainage, transport corridors clearance cairns; earlier religious funerary and ritual remains.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

A long history of mineral working began in the 18th century, with mining and quarrying for coal and ironstone, and stone. The distinctive remains of patch and scour working, whereby the topsoil was removed by hand and by water release and release, has left distinctive remains, which are scheduled as a monuments of national importance.

The landscape exists as a result of over two centuries of working, and includes areas of early settlement and social infrastructure of schools, churches and chapels, libraries and workingmens' clubs.

Much of the northern part of the area was subject to extraction over a wide area of shallow depth scouring, in patches of land that were leased. The removal of topsoil was achieved either by hand or by water power from small reservoirs via a system of leats. Shallow pits and levels were created then to remove coal and ironstone. The south eastern area was subject to extraction on a larger scale, with deeper pits, of which the remains can be seen of air shafts and canal levels, with inclines and tramroads to convey the minerals to the works. Water balance was also used to convey materials within the mines. The use of canal levels creates a direct route which cuts out the lading stage; the canal is within the mine and the use of locks allows changes in levels between the mines and the main canal.

Isolated settlements associated with the industrial workings have now grown into larger villages, although some isolated buildings remain, for example, the non-conformist chapels such as Cwm Glo associated with radical thinking and established in the early 1600s.

This landscape is likely to be under pressure of development; the mine workings of a deeper style mean that the ground is extensively disturbed by shafts, tunnels and galleries covering a wide area. The above and below ground remains, both known and unrecorded in extent, are important in the understanding of 18th and 19th century extraction and transportation systems. The impact of any development on setting of both scheduled and unscheduled features is also a material consideration.

All landscapes such as this are at risk from both large and small scale development, and are essentially fragile. The impact on the whole of a number of small scale developments much be considered. Their importance lies in not only their being individual features, but also their clusters and group value, which enables understanding of a cohesive industrial landscape.

Should any development be proposed, at the earliest stage it would be necessary for any developer to commission an ASIDOHL (Assessment of the impact of a development on a historic landscape) and an archaeological desk based assessment.

ASA9: Gelligaer Common

Community: Bedlinog

Principal Designations

Scheduled Monuments:

GM556 Gelligaer Common Roman Road
GM220 Gelligaer Common Round Cairns
GM320 Platform Houses on Coly Uchaf
GM314 Platform Houses and Cairn Cemetery on Dinas Noddfa
GM260 Dyke 315m E of Tyla-Glas
GM221 Gelligaer Common Standing Stone

Listed Buildings: None

Conservation Areas: Bedlinog

Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales:

Gelli-gaer Common HLW (MGL) 4: HLCA003 Western Enclosed Common; HLCA005 Central Open Common; HLCA006: Pen Garnbugail Mynydd Fochriw Open Common;

Historic Environment Record Registers

Core Entries: 194

Event Records: 26

Significance

Rare survival of high upland moor, with a rich and diverse archaeological resource; ridge rises to over 470m OD above Cwm Bargoed and Bargoed Rhymney, with moorland plateau, and improved pasture and enclosed fields to the south; remarkable continuity of occupation. Prehistoric funerary and ritual landscape; Roman and Medieval transport system, Medieval agricultural settlement and practice. Significant archaeological potential.

Reasons for Increased Archaeological Potential

Much of the upland area is dominated by a Bronze Age landscape of funerary and ritual monuments. Whilst there is one Scheduling number, this includes a number of cairns which are discrete from each other. Pen Garnbugail is visually dominant, near the summit of Cefn Gelligaer, a slab bounded monument some 16.5m in diameter. This represents extensive occupation of the area, although the funerary monuments are visual survivals, the day to day life is not represented in the visual archaeological record, but is highly likely to exist as buried remains. Later prehistoric evidence comes from the Iron Age, as there are remains of hut sites of this date.

The impact of the Roman occupation of the common is notable, with stretches of Roman roads surviving; the Pen Garnbugail stretch followed the route of a pre-historic trackway. The preservation of this stretch includes the *agger* (the central causeway of the road) as well as the drainage ditches to the side of the road itself. Linking the forts at Cardiff and Brecon, via those at Gelligaer, the road is an important element within the wider context of occupation. Related evidence can be expected to survive.

Early Medieval evidence of activity is recorded in the re-use of earlier monuments, such as the Gelligaer Common standing stone, where lettering dated to the 6th/7th century is carved into the Bronze Age stone.

The Medieval period brought evidence of settlement such as the upland house platforms, cut into the hillsides to create level areas for houses. These were normally related to seasonal agricultural practices, with transhumance (movement of people and animals to higher ground during the summer) leaving physical and place name evidence. Post-medieval agriculture and settlement has left field boundaries which are little changed today.

The common and upland areas represent a remarkable continuity of occupation, with transport and communications links, funerary monuments, settlement and agricultural practices all leaving remains from prehistoric to post-medieval. Some of these are statutorily protected, the importance of the landscape lies in its preservation and diversity. The nature of the geology means that peat deposits on the higher ground are undisturbed; it is often the case that organic material such as wood and leather is preserved in the anaerobic conditions within the peats.

Threats to the cohesive nature of the landscape and archaeological remains may come from a variety of sources. Small isolated developments, which would cause accumulative erosion of the special qualities of the landscape, would need to be looked at to assess this impact. Larger developments may not be likely in the short term, but should be discouraged. The impact of structures, such as wind or solar energy developments, would need an ASIDOHL undertaken, where the impact will be both physical and visual. Setting of historic assets is a material consideration in the planning process, as is the impact of any development on archaeological