



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

**Land at Nant Y Wenallt,
Abernant, Aberdare,
Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC**

**Cardiff Archaeological Consultants
DBA 2020-01**

2020

Jean-Yves Robic, MCifA

March 2020

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

**LAND AT NANT Y WENALLT,
ABERNANT, ABERDARE,
RHONDDA CYNON TAFF**

Supporting Document

**Client: Xurbia Developments
Agent: Asbri Planning Ltd**

**CAC Project:
20-007**

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DBA-01**

Prepared by J.-Y. Robic, MCIfA

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Cardiff Archaeological Consultants, Cardiff Archaeological Consultants

33 Nicholl Court, Llantwit Major CF61 2LR, 01446 795 552, cardiff.consultants@gmail.com

SUMMARY

Cardiff Archaeological Consultants was commissioned by Xurbia Developments in March 2020 to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment to assess the impact of the proposed development of residential dwellings and associated works at land at Nant y Wenallt, Abernant, Aberdare, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC on the known and potential archaeological and historical resource and assets.

*No sites of interest dated to the Prehistoric, Roman or Medieval period were identified in the proposed development area and, based on current evidence, the assessment has identified that the proposed development site has a **Low** potential for previously undiscovered Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval. Sites of Post-Medieval and Modern dates, associated with the Abernant Ironworks and the River Level Colliery, were recorded within the boundary of the proposed development site and the potential for previously undiscovered set to **High** for Post-Medieval remains and **Moderate** for remains of Modern date.*

It is considered unlikely that the archaeological risk would not constrain or preclude the proposed development if an appropriate mitigation strategy in line with the recommendation of the Supplementary Planning Guidance (2011) 'The Historic Built Environment' is implemented before and during the development works.

It is proposed that a phased the mitigation strategy could be in the form of a walkover survey, archaeological building recording, non-intrusive and intrusive archaeological evaluations and watching brief. This would allow the preservation by records of any potential standing or buried archaeological resource before and during the development works.

CRYNODEB

Comisiynwyd Cardiff Archeological Consultants gan Xurbia Developments ym mis Mawrth 2020 i wneud asesiad archeolegol o'r swyddfa i asesu effeithiau'r datblygiad arfaethedig, sef aneddiadau a gwaith cysylltiedig ar dir yn Nant y Wenallt, Abernant, Aberdar, Rhondda Cynon Taf, ar yr adnoddau archeolegol a hanesyddol posib a hysbys ar y safle.

*Ni chafwyd safleoedd o ddiddordeb yn dyddio i'r cyfnod cyn-hanesyddol, Rhufeinig na chanoloesol yn yr ardal ddatblygu arfaethedig ac ar sail tystiolaeth bresennol, daeth yr asesiad i'r casgliad bod gan safle'r datblygiad arfaethedig botensial **isel** o gynnwys olion cyn-hanesyddol, Rhufeinig a chanoloesol nas canfuwyd hyd yma. Cofnodwyd safleoedd ôl-ganoloesol a modern a'r rheini'n gysylltiedig â Gwaith Haearn Abernant a Glofa River Level o fewn cyffiniau safle'r datblygiad arfaethedig a nodir bod y potensial y cynnwys olion ôl-ganoloesol yn **uchel** a'i fod yn **ganolig** ar gyfer olion o'r oes fodern.*

Ystyrir yn annhebygol na fyddai'r risg archeolegol yn cyfyngu neu'n rhwystro'r datblygiad arfaethedig os sefydlir strategaeth liniaru addas yn unol ag argymhellion yr Arweiniad Cynllunio Atodol (2011) 'The Historic Built Environment' [nis cyfieithwyd] a'i gweithredu cyn ac yn ystod y gwaith datblygu.

Argymhellir y gallai strategaeth liniaru raddol fod ar ffurf arolwg ar droed, recordiad adeilad archeolegol, arfarniadau archeolegol ymwithiol ac anymwthiol a briff gwyllo. Byddai hyn yn caniatáu cadw ar glawr adnoddau archeolegol uwchben neu o dan ddaear cyn ac yn ystod y gwaith datblygu.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cardiff Archaeological Consultants was commissioned by Xurbia Developments in March 2020 to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment to assess the impact of the proposed development of residential dwellings and associated works at land at Nant y Wenallt, Abernant, Aberdare, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC on the known and potential archaeological and historical resource and assets.

The assessment shows that there are no designated archaeological assets (Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Historic Parks and Gardens) within the proposed development site but that Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings exist only inside the extended 1km radius study area.

Based on current evidence, this assessment has identified that the proposed development area has a **Low** theoretical potential for previously undiscovered Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval evidence.

The HER data recorded no evidence of Post-medieval activity within the site boundaries but 15 sites are recorded in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development area or the wider study area. All are associated with the industrialisation of the area from the beginning of the 19th century and in particular with the Abernant Ironworks assessed as "*of regional if not national significance*" in the *Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 1: the core ironworks areas* (Roberts 2005, 115). The historical cartographic sources provided direct evidence of Post-medieval sites within the boundaries of the development and immediately to the east. All are pertaining to the Abernant Ironworks (1801-1875) and to the River Level Colliery (1820-1940). The majority of the HER records were collated from the study of historic cartographic sources but the walkover of the northern part of the proposed development area has identified archaeological standing remains relating to the stable buildings of the ironwork or colliery. The risk for previously undiscovered Post-Medieval remains is **High** in the development site boundaries. Such assets are considered to be of regional or national significance as part of the Abernant Ironworks.

There were no sites of Modern date recorded in the HER data within the development site or the 1 km radius extended study area boundaries but the cartographic and historical sources revealed that the River Level Colliery was in activity until the early 1940s to the east of the proposed development. It is likely that structures associated with the colliery (underground road links) extended in the proposed development area. The risk for previously undiscovered Modern remains was set to **Low** after the assessment of the HER data but the historical cartographic evidences necessitated to upgrade the risk from **Low** to **Moderate** in the development site boundaries.

As the proposed development site has been designated for housing development in the adopted Local Development Plan and given the prospect for development impact on standing and potentially buried assets or remains of regional or national significance, it is considered unlikely that archaeology would constrain or preclude the proposed development if an appropriate mitigation strategy, in line with the recommendation of the Supplementary Planning Guidance (2011) '*The Historic Built Environment*' is implemented before and during the development works.

It is suggested that the mitigation strategy could be phased and in the form of a pre-commencement walkover survey, building recording, non-intrusive and intrusive archaeological evaluations and archaeological watching brief. This phased mitigation would allow the development of the proposed area and the preservation, by records, of any potential buried archaeological resource before the start and during the development works and in exceptional case, the preservation *in situ* of important archaeological remains.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site location:

The proposed development site is located at land at Nant y Wenallt, Abernant, Aberdare, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC (NGR SO 00900 03350, Figures 1), some 750m to the south-west of Aberdare town centre. The proposed development area is a roughly 'L' shaped plot of 3.125ha located on the northern lower slope of the Nant y Wenallt valley, a tributary of the River Cynon flowing immediately to the east of Aberdare town centre. The proposed development site is located within the boundary of Policy NSA 12 - "*Housing Development Within and Adjacent To Settlement Boundaries*" of the Local Development Plan, where development in the Northern Strategy Area will be permitted within the defined settlement boundaries (Rhonda Cynon Taf Council 2011, 84-85).

1.2 Topography and setting

The proposed development area lies on sloping ground at an altitude of 160m OD to the north and 140m OD to the south-east. The site is bounded to the south-east by a very steep wooded embankment dropping to the Nant y Wenallt stream and by Abernant Road bordered by terraced houses on its southern side. To the east, the site boundary follows the line of the lane leading from the south-east of Abernant Road to Moss Place to the north-east and to Ysgubor-wen House to the north-west. The western boundary is formed by grazing land with wooded hedges to the north-west and dense wood to the south-west (Plates 1 and 2). The development area was originally industrial land occupied by the Abernant Iron Works in activity from 1801 to 1875.

1.3 Geology

The proposed development site lies in a zone where the underlying geology is mapped as South Wales Middle Coal Measures Formation - Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone formed approximately 310 to 318 million years ago in the Carboniferous Period. The local environment was previously dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas. These sedimentary rocks are fluvial, palustrine and shallow-marine in origin. They are detrital, forming deposits reflecting the channels, floodplains and deltas of a river in a coastal setting (with periodic inundation from the sea) (British Geological Survey materials © NERC 2020).

2 PLANNING GUIDANCE

The national framework for the management of the wider historic environment, i.e. archaeological and cultural heritage resources, through the planning process is set out in four principal acts and policies:

2.1 Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979

The Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended) protects the fabric of Scheduled Monuments, but does not afford statutory protection to their settings. Relevant policies relating to the protection of the setting of scheduled monuments are contained within national and local development plan policies.

2.2 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This Act places duties on public bodies requiring them to act in accordance with the ‘sustainable development principle’. The Act also establishes well-being goals which include achieving ‘a Wales of vibrant culture and Welsh language’, described as ‘a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language’. The Act lays down the principle that a properly protected, conserved and enhanced historic environment can improve the quality of life and well-being for everyone.

2.3 Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act was given Royal Assent in March 2016. This Act provides the legislative framework for managing the historic environment in Wales. Accompanying the Act is new policy and guidance in the form of a Technical Advice Note (TAN) specific to the Historic Environment (TAN24, see below), and changes to Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Chapter 6 – Conserving the Historic Environment. This legislation and guidance supersedes the previous Welsh Office Circulars which formed the basis of historic environment policy in Wales.

2.4 Planning Policy Wales

The Welsh Government has published Planning Policy Wales (PPW), currently updated to Version 10 from December 2018 (PPW10). This sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs). Procedural advice is given in circulars and policy clarification letters.

Chapter 6 of PPW10, 'Distinctive and Natural Places', provides, in Section 6.1 'Historic Environment', policy for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Chapter 6 in relation to archaeology can be summarised as seeking to:

- a) Conserve and enhance the historic environment, which is a finite and non-renewable resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales.
- b) Recognise its contribution to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life, and its importance as a resource to be maintained for future generations.
- c) Base decisions on an understanding of the significance of Wales' historic assets.
- d) Contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the past by making an appropriate record when parts of a historic asset are affected by a proposed change, and ensuring that this record or the results of any investigation are securely archived and made publicly available; and specifically to conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and the economy.

Section 6.1 of PPW10 describes the historic environment as being made up of individual historic features, archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic parks, gardens, townscapes and landscapes, collectively known as historic assets. It also outlines that the conservation of archaeological remains and their setting is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application (PPW10, Chapter 6, Section 6.1, Para 6.1.23). Guidance on understanding and assessing the impact on the settings of historic assets was published by Cadw in 2017 (Setting of Historic Assets in Wales).

In order to take into account archaeological considerations and deal with them from the beginning of the development control process, Local Planning Authorities in Wales need to be fully informed about the nature and importance of archaeological remains and their setting and the likely impact of any proposed development upon them. Paragraphs 6.1.23 to 6.1.27 of PPW10 Chapter 6, Section 6.1 set out the staged process of investigations which may need to be undertaken by an applicant required to provide the relevant information to inform decisions and compliance with imposed conditions:

"6.1.23 The planning system recognises the need to conserve archaeological remains. The conservation of archaeological remains and their settings is a material consideration in determining planning applications, whether those remains are a scheduled monument or not.

6.1.24 Where nationally important archaeological remains are likely to be affected by proposed development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical

protection in situ. It will only be in exceptional circumstances that planning permission will be granted if development would result in a direct adverse impact on a scheduled monument (or an archaeological site shown to be of national importance).

6.1.25 In cases involving less significant archaeological remains, planning authorities will need to weigh the relative importance of the archaeological remains and their settings against other factors, including the need for the proposed development.

6.1.26 Where archaeological remains are known to exist or there is a potential for them to survive, an application should be accompanied by sufficient information, through desk-based assessment and/or field evaluation, to allow a full understanding of the impact of the proposal on the significance of the remains. The needs of archaeology and development may be reconciled, and potential conflict very much reduced, through early discussion and assessment.

6.1.27 If the planning authority is minded to approve an application and where archaeological remains are affected by proposals that alter or destroy them, the planning authority must be satisfied that the developer has secured appropriate and satisfactory provision for their recording and investigation, followed by the analysis and publication of the results and the deposition of the resulting archive in an approved repository. On occasions, unforeseen archaeological remains may still be discovered during the course of a development. A written scheme of investigation should consider how to react to such circumstances or it can be covered through an appropriate condition for a watching brief. Where remains discovered are deemed to be of national importance, the Welsh Ministers have the power to schedule the site and in such circumstances scheduled monument consent must be required before works can continue."

2.5 Local Policy

The Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council adopted the *Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021* in March 2011. The Local Development Plan, Chapter 3 contains the vision and objectives of the plan. Objective 4 specifically relates to the Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's cultural heritage:

"Better Quality of Life

4. Promote and protect the rich culture and heritage of the County Borough by protecting and enhancing the historic landscape of the Rhondda, the historic parks and gardens in the south and the built heritage of the County Borough as a whole."
(Rhondda Cynon Taf Council 2011, 22).

The objectives have been translated into the spatial framework provided by the LDP and have informed the development of the core, area wide and strategy area policies of the plan. In both Core Policies, CS1 '*Development in the North*' and CS2 '*Development in the south*', it is recognised that the aims will be achieved by:

7. Protecting the cultural identity of the Strategy Area by protecting historic built heritage and the natural environment, (Rhonda Cynon Taf Council 2011, 30.)

Policy **AW7 - Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment** and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) - **The Historic Built Environment 2010** will be relevant in the determination of planning applications.

Policy AW 7 is repeated below:

"Policy AW 7 - Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment Development proposals which impact upon sites of architectural and / or historical merit and sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site. Development proposals which affect areas of public open space, allotments, public rights of way, bridleways and cycle tracks will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- 1. There is a surplus of such facilities in the locality, or;*
- 2. The loss can be replaced with an equivalent or greater provision in the immediate locality; or*
- 3. The development enhances the existing facility*

5.49 The historic built environment and the man made features of archaeological, historic or architectural interests are integral to the quality of the County Borough's environment. They are unique to Rhondda Cynon Taf and trace the development of the area over time. Areas of recognised architectural and / or historical merit or sites of archaeological importance include listed buildings and conservation areas and their settings, registered historic landscapes and historic parks and gardens and their settings; and archaeological remains. The Plan area has 86 scheduled ancient monuments, 366 listed buildings (at the time of the preparation of the LDP), 16 conservation areas, 1 registered historic landscape and 5 registered historic parks and gardens, all of which contribute to the rich and diverse nature of the area. Over the plan period, the Council will, where appropriate, seek to implement enhancement and management schemes to improve the character, quality and appearance of these recognised heritage features.

5.50 In addition to these formally recognised buildings and areas, there are individual buildings, groups of buildings and features, which whilst not subject to formal

recognition, make an important contribution to the character and appearance of local communities. This policy will be used to ensure that these important features are protected and enhanced." (Rhonda Cynon Taf Council 2011, 55-56).

The Supplementary Planning Guidance (2011) provides more specific advice on all aspects of the 'The Historic Built Environment' including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, archaeology, historic parks and gardens and historic landscapes. For archaeology, the Section 4 of the guidance applies:

"4.3 Archaeology

4.3.1 The following guidance applies to development proposals affecting archaeological sites or potential archaeological sites.

4.3.2 Where an archaeological site is identified as present, consideration will be given to the extent, nature, condition and importance of any such site. Sufficient information should be made available to determine the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource.

4.3.3 Where appropriate, conditions will be placed on planning permissions to ensure the archaeological resource is appropriately surveyed, preserved and recorded. Mitigation measures should also be put in place where appropriate." (Rhonda Cynon Taf Council 2011, SPG, 14).

Appendix 2 of the Local Development Plan provides distribution in Rhondda Cynon Taf Council of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interests in Wales and Landscapes of Outstanding Interest in Wales (Rhonda Cynon Taf Council 2011, 163-164).

2.6 Special Landscape Areas and Conservation Areas

17 Conservation Areas are recorded in the Rhondda Cynon Taf. It is not intended to restrict development in these areas, but it indicates areas where the effect of any proposed development on the landscape character, archaeological and historical resource may become an issue during the determination of a planning application.

2.7 Definitions and Guidance

The 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales' published by Cadw in March 2011 provides the basic

principles under which all subsequent guidance has evolved. The six principles expressed are:

- a. Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values.
- b. Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital.
- c. The historic environment is a shared resource.
- d. Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.
- e. Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.
- f. Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

2.7.1 Definition of the historic environment

The historic environment is defined in TAN 24 (at para. 1.7) as:

“All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.”

2.7.2 Definition of Heritage assets

A historic asset is defined in TAN 24, para. 1.7, as:

“An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist of or be a combination of an archaeological site, an historic building, or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.”

A Designated Heritage Asset is considered to be a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area. In Wales areas of landscape have been designated and included in the non-statutory Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales.

2.7.3 Definition of Significance

Significance in relation to heritage policy considerations is defined as:

- The sum of the cultural heritage values (Cadw 2011).

The ‘*Guide to Good Practice on Using the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales in the Planning and Development Process, (Revised Edition 2007)*’ outlines Categories A – U which are used to place historic environment assets in order of relative importance.

2.7.4 Definition of Setting

Welsh policy makes it clear that setting must be considered in any assessment of the historic environment (PPW9 6.4.2, 6.5.1). The Welsh Government has published '*Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*' in 2017, and this provides guidance on what setting is, how it contributes to the significance of a historic asset and why it is important.

Setting of a historic asset is defined as 'the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to that significance or may be neutral. Setting is not a historic asset in his own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset' (WG 2017).

TAN 24 also makes the point that setting always forms part of the aesthetic value of a historic asset and can contribute to the other heritage values, and that setting is primarily a visual amenity. Consideration needs to be given to how the proposed development will appear in views out of and looking towards the historic asset and in views where the proposed development and the historic asset are juxtaposed (WG 2015).

Setting of Historic Assets in Wales sets out a four-stage process for assessing the impact of proposed developments within the settings of historic assets as follows:

Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a proposed change or development.

Stage 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the significance of the historic assets and, in particular, the ways in which the assets are understood, appreciated and experienced.

Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.

Stage 4: If necessary, consider options to mitigate or improve the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.

The final decision about the acceptability of proposals will depend on the range of circumstances that apply to a heritage asset and the relative sensitivity to change. Decisions are therefore made on a case by case basis, recognising that all heritage assets are not of equal importance and the contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies.

In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by Welsh Government policy, by current local planning policy and by other material considerations.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE INVESTIGATION

3.1 The archaeological desk-based assessment should assess the archaeological risk and historical risk in the development area and its close vicinity and record the distribution, extent and importance of the known or potential archaeological and historical remains and assets which exist in the development area.

3.2 On the basis of its contents, the assessment will provide basic information to assess the impact of possible archaeological and historical remains and assets on the design, project cost or programme.

3.3 The desk-based assessment was prepared by Jean-Yves Robic, MCIfA, and was compiled following the *Standard and Guidance for desk-based assessment* adopted by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014). It is intended to contain sufficient information to enable the investigation to be quantifiable, implemented and monitored to a measurable standard.

4 METHODOLOGY

The assessment involved the consultation of all archaeological and historical information held within the Historic Environment Record (HER) by the Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, Swansea (GGAT) within a study area of 1km radius of the centre of the proposed development site.

The collation of the HER records was supplemented by a map regression exercise centred around the proposed development site from historic maps held by Aberdare and Cardiff (Cathays Branch and Heritage Library) libraries and the Glamorgan Archives, Cardiff.

Historic aerial photographs and LiDAR data available through Lle Geo-Portal, developed as a partnership between Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales were also consulted.

5 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

5.1 Assessment of the HER data

Data from the HER and NMR were sorted and records for sites located within the study area (1km radius from the centre of the proposed development) are succinctly presented in Appendices 1 and 2 and in full in Appendices 3 and 4. The data was mapped on an Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 map.

Designated Assets

The HER data shows that there are no designated archaeological assets (Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Historic Parks and Gardens) of national importance within the site boundaries. Two Scheduled Monuments are recorded on the western edge of the extended study area. The Gadlys Ironworks (GM438) is located some 500m to the south-west of the proposed development site. The remains of the Tramroad east of Robertstown Bridge (GM527) some 500m to the north-west of the proposed development site (Figure 2).

Listed Buildings

No listed buildings are recorded within the site boundaries but a cluster is recorded, in the study area, to the west of the proposed development site in Aberdare town centre and around the Scheduled remains of Gadlys Ironworks (Calcining furnaces, casting house, blast engine house).

Prehistoric (500 000 BC to 45 AD)

There is no recorded evidence of Prehistoric activity within the site boundaries or the extended study area. The HER recorded an undated but possibly Prehistoric or Roman spindlewhorl at Blaen Canaid Fawr, probably to the north of the proposed development site.

The near lack of recorded evidence of Prehistoric occupation within the study area suggests a sparse occupation of the area surrounding the proposed development site but could also be the result of the extensive industrial development of the area from the early 19th century destroying potential Prehistoric sites. The risk for previously undiscovered Prehistoric remains is **Low** in the development site boundaries.

Roman (45 AD to 410 AD)

There is no recorded evidence of Roman activity within the site boundaries or the study area. The risk for previously undiscovered Roman remains is **Low** in the development site boundaries.

Early Medieval and Medieval (410 AD to 1485 AD)

A single record was identified for this period (Figure 3, n° 1). The HER entry for St Elvan's church reads: "*The remains of a substantial building of probable medieval date, identified in local tradition as having been the church of St Elvan. However, there is no documentary evidence to support this, and the form of the building suggests that it is more likely to have been secular.*"

The risk for previously undiscovered medieval remains is **Low** within the development site boundaries.

Post-medieval (1485 AD to 1900 AD)

There is no recorded evidence of Post-medieval activity within the site boundaries but 15 sites are recorded in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development area or the wider study area. All are associated with the industrialisation of the area from the beginning of the 19th century and in particular with the Abernant Ironworks (Figure 4, n° 2, 6 to 11) and Abernant Forge (Figure 4, n° 12 to 16). The sites identified were mainly associated with the water management for these industrials concern and were reservoirs (Figure 4, n°6 to 8, 10 and 11), pond (Figure 4, n° 12), leats feeding the reservoirs and ponds (Figure 4, n° 9, 13, 14 and 16). Two records were associated with the transport infrastructure associated with the industrial development of the area: Aberdare Train Station (Figure 4, n° 3) and the Tappendens' tramroad (Figure 4, n° 4). The tramroad opened in 1805 and was built in two sections; the first by the Neath Canal Company commenced in 1802 from the canal head at Glyn Neath to Wyfra bridge, the second by Homfray, Birch and the Tappendens eastwards from the bridge to Abernant Ironworks. It was later converted to a railway.

The Abernant Ironworks identified as IW027 Abernant (SO 006 035) during the research phase of the *Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 1: the core ironworks areas* by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (Roberts 2005) were extensively described by Roberts in the report (Roberts 2005, 115-117) :

"IW Number 027 Abernant Ironworks (01264m) SO 0090 0340

General Description

The Abernant Ironworks (NPRNs: 34,069 and 40,441; PRN: 01264m) is an early 19th century ironworks, founded in 1801, of regional if not national significance. The Abernant Ironworks later became part of a wider conglomeration of works under the auspices of the Aberdare Iron Company following its purchase in 1819. The Ironworks comprised three furnaces constructed between 1801 and 1807, and numerous forges, mills and puddling furnaces.

The first edition OS 1:2500 map depicts numerous features within the area, none of which survive today above ground. These included the following: two furnace sites at SO 00940 03475 and SO 01011 03433 and a probable third at SO 01062 03443, an extensive coke yard to the north of the furnaces with groups of ovens at SO 00929 03564, SO 00853 03516 and SO 01083 03504; Limekilns at SO 01018 03496, SO 00923 03503 and SO 00883 03499, a mine kiln (SO 01011 03503), smithy (SO 01063 03563) and Pumping Engine at SO 00816 03391, a several reservoirs such as Furnace Pond.

The 1st edition OS map also names the Abernant Ironworks Offices; this building appears to still stand and has been converted to domestic use, currently 1-4 Office Houses. The area also contained former industrial workers' housing just within its southern boundary: Long Row, and Arch Row, all of which have been subsequently demolished.

During the 1970s the Abernant Ironworks site was extensively cleared, though the general landform appears to have been retained, and for this reason it is considered that buried remains may survive. The Ironworks and its associated Forge Mills formed an extensive area; for the purpose of the current project the Forge Mill, the site of which has been previously developed for housing, has been excluded from the core ironworks area itself.

Historical Background

The Abernant Ironworks was founded following the lease of the Abernant property in 1801 for 99 years to Jeremiah Homfray of Llandaff and James Birch of Aberdare. Three furnaces were constructed by 1807. An expansion on the original two furnaces identified from the lease conditions was enabled when the three Tappenden brothers join the partnership in 1802. During the initial period of operation the works was involved with the development of high-pressure steam engines and several Trevithick type stationary engines were known to have been constructed at this time by the Abernant Iron Company.

Homfray and Birch retired from the company in around 1807. In 1819 the Abernant Ironworks was sold to the Aberdare Iron Company, following a costly dispute

between the Tappendens and the Neath Canal Company, which had ended in bankruptcy in 1814.

In 1823 the Aberdare Iron Company was operating three furnaces at each of its sites (Abernant, Llwydcoed and Aberdare) and was producing 5,676 tons of iron; this rose to 11,440 tons in 1826 and 12,571 tons by 1830. The enterprise continued to expand and by 1837 five engines were in operation at Abernant. Despite success and expansion, the company was sold to settle a dispute in 1846. Sales catalogues record that Abernant at the time comprised three blast furnaces, two blowing engines, a foundry, brick stove and kiln and a waterwheel for grinding clay and working lathes¹. Also at the Abernant site were fineries with a blowing engine.

Purchased by a new company, the Aberdare Iron Company; under the management of Rowland and later Richard Fothergill. During the period puddling furnaces were added and the works modernised.

In 1860 the puddling furnaces at Abernant were increased in number, however, by 1862 the Abernant Ironworks was only operating two furnaces. At this time the production of iron by the company's furnaces was at about the 800 tons per week mark. Some production figures are available for the early 1860s and from these we find that No.1 furnace at Abernant produced 349 1/2 tons of iron in the week ending November 7th 1862 while during the same period No.2 furnace at Abernant turned out 278 tons. These furnaces served seventy puddling furnaces, a large rolling mill and two smaller mills. In the week ending 4th July 1863 the production figures of the company's furnaces at Abernant were:

Abernant No.1 - 287 tons.

Abernant No.2 - 343 tons.

A full picture of the extent of the Aberdare Iron Company works at Abernant is revealed in a description of its works published in 1869. At that time the coking of the coal for both Abernant and Llwydcoed was achieved using 168 coke ovens. While the iron was processed in three double refineries at Llwydcoed, all the puddling was carried out at Abernant, the two sites being connected by rail. The furnace in blast at Abernant in 1869 was 40ft. high and 19ft. in diameter across the boshes, another furnace ready to be lit was 52ft. high and 18ft. in diameter across the boshes. The furnaces were closed with bell and hoppers and were blown with a hot blast at 8500 F. The blast was supplied by five beam blowing engines, one engine with a 78in. x 7ft. blowing cylinder, one with a 68in. x 6ft. blowing cylinder, one with a 52in. x 5ft. blowing cylinder and two engines working four 30in. x 2ft. blowing cylinders.

The forges and mills at Abernant covered a very large area with the buildings consisting of iron roofing carried on cast iron columns. There were seventy-eight puddling furnaces at Abernant supplying four trains of 19in. puddle bar rolls driven

¹ The description is that of the Aberdare Ironworks at Llwydcoed (Part 2 of the sale particulars of 1846, pink in the sale plan) and not of the Abernant Ironworks described under Part 7 of the sale particular, coloured brown in the plan. The description of Abernant Ironworks is given in section 5.2.1 of this document.

by four steam engines. The puddling furnaces received their draught from eight 48in. Lloyd's patent noiseless fans driven by two 10in. engines. There were also twenty-seven balling furnaces and twenty-one of these received a draught from six 48in. Lloyd's fans. The mills included two large rail mills and others for blooming fish-plates and Russian chair plates; these mills were driven by three engines. There were also thirteen engines for driving saws, presses and punches including two 10in. engines for driving fans. One pair of shears was actuated by a single cylinder engine making 150 strokes per minute and was used to cut cold bars for the top and bottom of rail piles. Fifteen boilers provided steam for the engines at the mills and forges. There was also present a Lilleshall double acting steam hammer used for special orders and another was being made for the company. The forges produced 1,200 to 1,300 tons of puddled bars per week, which supplied the mills at Abernant and Treforest. These mills were capable of producing 1,150 tons of railway iron per week. Also at Abernant were extensive foundries, smiths', carpenters' and fitting shops with the capability of making steam engines up to sixty horse power.

There seems to have been some contraction in the capacity of the company in the early 1870s, and the collapse of the wrought iron rail trade finally led to the closure of the ironworks at Abernant during 1875 (Ince 1993, pp 36-39)."

The condition of the Abernant Ironworks in 2005 was described as "cleared and partly reclaimed" and its archaeological significance rated as "Low-moderate potential" (Roberts 2005, 18). The 2010 final year report confirmed the condition and the Archaeological significance remained the same with a C grade (low-moderate) (Roberts 2010, 19). Table 4 of the 2005 report confirmed that there were visible and potential buried archaeological resource associated with the ironworks (Roberts 2005, 21) but only the Ironworks Office could be positively identified (Roberts 2005, 26). In 2005, the site of Abernant Ironworks was committed in the Unitary Development Plan for housing development (Roberts 2005, 29) and despite the area having been extensively reclaimed, it was thought that buried remains relating to the furnaces may have survived and some building footings and platforms, relating to structures of unknown purpose were noted along the southern edge of the area during a field visit (Roberts 2005, 117). It was recommended that archaeological evaluation would be needed to confirm the nature and extent of the buried remains and that they be recorded prior to development (Roberts 2005, 29, 117).

The risk for previously undiscovered post-medieval remains is **High** within the development site boundaries.

Modern (1900 AD to Present)

There is no recorded evidence of Modern activity within the site boundaries or within the extended study area except for clearing and reclamation works on the site of Abernant Ironworks.

The risk for previously undiscovered or un-mapped Modern remains is **Low** in the development site boundaries.

Unknown date

There is no recorded evidence of site of unknown date within the site boundaries and a single record of a site of unknown date within the extended study area (Figure 5, n° 17). The structure was a possible outlet leat for the Gadlys Ironworks to the west of the proposed development site. It is likely that it dates from the Post-Medieval as the ironworks was in activity between 1827 and 1876 (Newman 1995, 137, Ince 1993, 40).

Events

None of the events recorded were intrusive archaeological works such as evaluations, watching briefs or excavation that could have informed the nature, extent and condition of the potential buried archaeological resource. None of the events were located directly in the proposed development area but in its close proximity and all related to the Abernant Ironworks or related activities. The main event was the South Wales Industrial Ironworks Project carried out by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (Figure 6, n° 1). The aim of the project was to assess the current state of survival and preservation of ironworks landscape in the area of the northern coalfield rim to inform for conservation, protection and management of these monuments and their associated landscapes in response to the ongoing threats faced by industrial remains of Southeast Wales.

A number of field visits were conducted to inform the South Wales Industrial Ironworks Project and establish the condition and survival of archaeological features (Figure 6, n° 2 and 4) or associated with Desk-Based Assessment to support proposed development project (Figure 6, n° 3). The results of these visits were limited and confirmed that only 20% of the entire tramroad survived with numerous *in situ* features noted (n° 4) and that only the Abernant Ironworks Offices could be identified (Roberts 2005, 26). CgMs Consulting's field visit (n° 3) noted that above ground remains, probably pertaining to the former Abernant Ironworks, existed.

5.2 Archaeological, Historical and Cartographic history of the development site

5.2.1 Cartographic history

The Tithe map of the Parish of Aberdare dated 1847 shows that the proposed development site occupies several plots (1186, 1187, 1264a, 1265, 1268) immediately to the west of Abernant Ironworks. The plots included pasture (1186), garden (1264a), tip (1265 and 1268) and waste (1187) and were all occupied by the Abernant Iron Company. The sale particulars

of 1846 give a description of the land occupied by the Abernant Ironworks and is illustrated by the Tithe map of 1847 (Figure 7):

"Seventh.- [...] The leasehold farm, believed to contain about ninety-two acres, is (except as mentioned above) in hand, and for the most part in a high state of cultivation; upon it stand two blast furnaces, (one of which has hot air apparatus in full work, and the other has the same apparatus, but in not a state quite fit for present use), mine-kilns, fineries, with blowing engine, and other buildings necessary for the works, together with extensive farm buildings, stables, and granaries, and 24 workmen's and agents' houses, which (together with the aforesaid six cottages in the village of Aberdare) are in the occupation of the vendors, or let by the month to their workmen and agents, at rent amounting to £87 a-year, or thereabouts." (Glamorgan Archives, DX 835 / 1-2)

No buildings or parts of the ironworks, except for tips, seem to extend in the proposed development site at this date. Two constructions located immediately adjacent to the north-western end of the development site boundary are described as garden in Plot 1264a and may be agricultural buildings (Figure 7).

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1868 depicts Abernant Ironworks fully developed a only a few years before its closure in 1875 (Figure 8). To the south-east of the ironworks the Abernant Forge and Mills has been erected. The two blast-furnaces of the Ironworks are clearly visible and coke ovens, limekilns, coal screens, minekiln, a smithy and a pumping engine are labelled on the map. The intricate network of tramroads and railroads that internally linked the different parts of the works and externally to the forge and mills, the Aberdare Canal or the railway line to the south-west are also visible. Water management in the Ironworks is also clearly visible with large ponds (Furnace pound) and reservoirs and ponds to the east and west of the works. The forge has also a large reservoir (Forge pound) immediately to the north of the forge. The Nant y Wenallt stream was used to create the northern and southern reservoirs or pounds and it had been partly canalised and flowed underground in the south-western part of the works. Two rows of cottages (Arch Row to the west and Long Row to the east) are depicted on the map to the south of the ironworks(Figure 8).

Most of the structures of the Ironworks are located outside the proposed development area except for the pumping engine, a coal screen, a section of the culverted Nant y Wenallt stream and numerous tram or railway tracks. To the north-west of the pumping engine, a long range of buildings orientated north-west to south-east and extending the structure depicted on the 1847 map, occupied the north-western part of the proposed development area. The buildings, not labelled on the 1868 maps, are described as "Stables" on the 1900 Ordnance Survey (Figure 9).

By the time of the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1900 (Figure 9), the Abernant Ironworks has been closed for 25 years and some of its structures have already disappeared from the map (coke ovens, smithy, internal tram or rail tracks) and the furnaces are now derelict (Pate 3). The Abernant Forge and Mills to the south have been demolished and only the railway sidings remain. To the west of the blast-furnaces a small group of buildings can be identified with the River Level Colliery (Plate 4) dating from the 1820s and closed in the 1940s (Cooke 2018, 150, 1363-1365, Cynon Valley History Society 2001, 235).

In the development area, the stables to the north remain with new tramway sidings leading to it. The pumping engine building is still partly visible and most of the tram or rail track to the south of it has been dismantled (Figure 8). Between 1900 and 1919, the dismantlement of the Ironworks continued and the 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map shows the area formerly occupied by the Ironworks nearly totally cleared with two rows of coke ovens and the outline of the northern furnace still visible (Figure 10). The River Level Colliery buildings are still depicted and labelled Old Coal Shaft, possibly hinting as a period of closure of the mine between 1910 and 1915 (Cooke 2018, 1364).

In the development area, the stable buildings are still depicted but the tramway is now labelled as "Old Tramway" and the sidings have been dismantled (Figure 10).

By 1949, very little is left of Abernant Ironworks; both Arch Row to the west and Long Row to the east had been demolished and only the buildings of the former River Level Colliery, now renamed Gadlys Colliery, are depicted on the map (Figure 11). The River Level Colliery had been taken over and worked by the Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co. Ltd. between 1916 and 1934 and connecting roads were driven into the Gellideg seam from River Level to the Gadlys shaft and vice versa. The colliery was worked by the Powell Duffryn Associated Collieries Ltd between 1935 and 1940 (Cooke 2018, 1365).

In the proposed development area, the northern stables buildings have been demolished and only the entries or terminus of the connecting undergrounds road are transecting the development area from east to west.

Aerial photographs dated 1945 to 2013, available online through the Welsh Government Historic Aerial Photography WMTS and Google Earth, and LiDAR data at 2m resolution (Figure 12) were consulted. The photographs confirmed that the proposed development site was largely reclaimed between 1945 and 1969.

5.2.2 Site visit

The site was visited on Friday 13th March 2020 July under dry and sunny weather conditions. A rapid walkover survey of some accessible parts of the development area was carried out and evidence of archaeological standing remains were noted at the northern boundary and immediately outside it. It is likely that the standing remains pertained to the Abernant Ironworks stable buildings recorded on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map or 1868 and subsequent editions (Plate 5). The southern and western part of the proposed development area was covered with dense woodland and was not easily accessible. In the south-western area, the managed course of the Nant y Wenallt stream was recorded (Plate 6).

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Potential risk for undiscovered archaeological or historical remains

The potential risk for undiscovered archaeological or historical remains is summarised below and in Table 1. The risk is never **nil** except on sites where the soils above the natural geological horizon have been removed and the geological horizon removed or truncated to a depth where archaeological remains could no longer be present. The minimum risk level is therefore set at **Low**.

Based on current evidence, this assessment has identified that the proposed development area has a **Low** theoretical potential for previously undiscovered Prehistoric evidence.

There is no recorded evidence of Roman activity within the site boundaries or the study area. The risk for previously undiscovered Roman remains is **Low** in the development site boundaries.

There is no recorded evidence of Medieval occupations within the boundaries of the development area and a single site of local importance is recorded in the wider study area. The risk for previously undiscovered Medieval remains is **Low** in the development site boundaries.

There is direct evidence of Post-medieval sites within the boundaries of the development and immediately to the east. All are pertaining to the Abernant Ironworks (1801-1875) and to the River Level Colliery (1820-1940). The majority of the HER records were collated from the study of historic cartographic sources but the walkover of the northern part of the proposed development area has identified archaeological standing remains relating to the

stable buildings of the ironwork or colliery. The risk for previously undiscovered Post-Medieval remains is **High** in the development site boundaries. Such assets are considered to be of regional or national significance as part of the Abernant Ironworks.

There were no sites of Modern date recorded in the HER data within the development site or the 1 km radius extended study area boundaries but the cartographic and historical sources revealed that the River Level Colliery was in activity until the early 1940s to the east of the proposed development. It is likely that structures associated with the colliery (underground road links) extended in the proposed development area. The risk for previously undiscovered Modern remains was set to **Low** after the assessment of the HER data but the historical cartographic evidence necessitated upgrade of the risk from **Low** to **Moderate** in the development site boundaries.

6.2 Mitigation Strategy

Based on current evidence, this assessment has identified that the proposed development site has a **Low** potential for previously undiscovered Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval remains, a **High** potential for previously undiscovered Post-medieval remains and a **Moderate** risk for remains of Modern date.

Period	Risk Level	Asset in site	Mitigation Strategy
Prehistoric	Low	None	None
Roman	Low	None	None
Medieval	Low	None	None
Post Medieval	High	Yes	Building recording Evaluation Watching Brief
Modern	Moderate	Yes	Watching Brief

Table 1: Summary of risk and proposed mitigation strategy

The proposed development area was part of the Abernant Ironworks and of the River Level Colliery and despite extensive reclamation works, carried out without the same planning lead archaeological controls, it is likely that buried remains associated with these works still exist. Surviving standing archaeological remains associated with the Ironworks stables were located near the northern development site boundary.

The proposed development is still in the development process and any of the following activities associated with the proposed development could have a deleterious impact on any standing or buried archaeological remains that survive within the proposed development site:

- Enabling works
- Construction of access roads associated services
- Groundworks (landscaping, surface stripping, levelling)
- Construction of roads and infrastructure
- Foundation excavations and service installation

As the proposed development site has been designated for housing development in the adopted Local Development Plan and given the prospect for development impact on standing and potentially buried assets or remains of regional or national significance, it is considered unlikely that archaeology would constrain or preclude the proposed development if an appropriate mitigation strategy, in line with the recommendation of the Supplementary Planning Guidance (2011) '*The Historic Built Environment*', is implemented before and during the development works.

It is suggested that the mitigation strategy could be phased and in the form of:

1 A pre-commencement walkover survey of the development site to identify and record any archaeological standing remains. It is envisaged that this could be carried out prior to commencement works and during vegetation clearance in the area of dense vegetation covering. This would allow the preservation by records of any potential buried archaeological resource before the start of the development.

2 Building recording carried out to the standards as defined in Historic England's 'Understanding historic buildings: A guide to good practice. 2016' as means of preserving an historical record of the existing standing remains.

3 Archaeological evaluation to inform the nature and condition of the buried archaeological resource in the areas where cartographic sources had evidenced the existence of structures associated with Abernant Ironworks (stables, blowing engine, tramroad) or the River Level Colliery. It is envisaged that this could be carried out prior to commencement works but after vegetation clearance. The archaeological evaluation could be in the form of a non-intrusive geophysical survey where the ground conditions permit, complemented by an intrusive trench evaluation or by a trench evaluation where geophysical survey is not possible or warranted. The evaluation should elucidate the character, distribution, extent and importance of the known and potential archaeological remains which exist in the development area. On the basis of its contents, the evaluation report will provide information which is sufficiently detailed to allow informed decisions to be taken to

safeguard the archaeological resource and to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource.

4 Archaeological watching brief in the areas where archaeological remains do not require to be preserved in situ. The watching brief would be carried out during groundworks during the development phase.

This phased mitigation would allow the development of the proposed area and the preservation by records of any potential buried archaeological resource before the start and during the development works and in exceptional cases, the preservation *in situ* of important archaeological remains.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is pleased to acknowledge the help of Dylan Green of Asbri Planning, in providing information and plans of the proposed development and of Judith Smith for editing the report. The Welsh language summary was provided by Carwyn Graves.

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Scheduled Monuments

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9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Simplified Core HER data

CAC no	PRN	Period	Name	Type	Broadclass	Status
1	GGAT00486m	Medieval	ST Elvan's Church Aberdare	Church	Religious, Ritual & Funerary	Not known
2	GGAT01264m	Post Medieval	Abernant Iron Works	Iron works	Industrial	Not known
3	GGAT01619m	Post Medieval	Aberdare Station	Railway station	Transport	Near intact
4	GGAT03225.0m	Post Medieval	Tappenden's Tramroad	Tramway	Transport	Damaged
5	GGAT06137m	Post Medieval	Ysgubor-Wen Works, Trecynon	Works	Industrial	Not known
6	GGAT08672m	Post Medieval	Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks	Reservoir	Water supply & drainage	Not known
7	GGAT08673m	Post Medieval	Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks	Reservoir	Water supply & drainage	Destroyed
8	GGAT08674m	Post Medieval	Reservoir (Furnace Pond), Abernant Ironworks	Reservoir	Water supply & drainage	Near destroyed
9	GGAT08675m	Post Medieval	Leat, Abernant Ironworks	Leat	industrial	Near destroyed
10	GGAT08676m	Post Medieval	Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks	Reservoir	Water supply & drainage	Destroyed
11	GGAT08679m	Post Medieval	Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks	Water channel	Water supply & drainage	Damaged
12	GGAT08681m	Post Medieval	Forge Pond, Abernant	Reservoir	Water supply & drainage	Destroyed
13	GGAT08682m	Post Medieval	Leat, Forge pond, Abernant	Leat	Industrial	Not known
14	GGAT08683m	Post Medieval	Feeder Channel for Forge Pond, Abernant	Water channel	Water supply & drainage	Near destroyed
15	GGAT08684m	Post Medieval	Water pipe, Abernant	Water Pipe	Water supply & drainage	Not known
16	GGAT08686m	Post Medieval	Leat, Abernant Forge and Mills	Leat	Industrial	Near intact
17	GGAT08671m	Unknown	Possible outlet leat, Gadlys Ironworks	Leat	Water supply & drainage	Near intact

Table 2: Simplified Core HER data
(Derived from information held by the GGAT HER Charitable Trust copyright)

Appendix 2: Simplified Event HER data

CAC No	PRN	Name	Event Type	Organisation	Year
1	GGATE000954	S. Wales Industrial Ironworks Project	Project	GGAT	2005-2010
2	GGATE000047	Abernant Ironworks	Field visit	GGAT	2004
3	GGATE005417	Land at Lower River Tip Levels	Field visit	CgMs Consulting	2004
4	GGATE001996	Tappenden's Tramroad East and West	Field visit	GGAT	2005
5	GGATE001996	Tappenden's Tramroad East and West	Field visit	GGAT	2005

Table 3: Simplified Event HER data (derived from information held by the GGAT HER Charitable Trust copyright)
(Management Plan, Desk-Based Assessment omitted)

Appendix 3: Historic Environment Record Enquiry Report - Core Records

GLAMORGAN GWENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD ENQUIRY REPORT - CORE RECORDS

Enquiry reference number: 6242

**Prepared by: Calli Rouse, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust
Produced for: Jean-Yves Robic, Cardiff Archaeological Consultants**

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Search criteria

1km radius of Land at Nant y Wenallt, Abernant, RCT

PRN 00486m **NAME** ST ELVAN'S CHURCH AT PLASDRAW,
ABERDARE **NGR** SO01050259 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE Medieval, Church, **RANK:** 1

SUMMARY *The remains of a substantial building of probable medieval date, identified in local tradition as having been the church of St Elvan. However, there is no documentary evidence to support this, and the form of the building suggests that it is more likely to have been secular.*

DESCRIPTION *The remains of a substantial building of probable medieval date, identified in local tradition as having been the church of St Elvan. However, there is no documentary evidence to support this, and the form of the building suggests that it is more likely to have been secular. The HER contains a typescript compilation of local traditions about the site, which includes a series of short notes on the Parish of St John by William Edwards and part of an essay by Ivor Parry on the religious history of Aberdare. Both Edwards and Parry's writings draw heavily on two 19th century works. The first of these is an essay in the Gardd Aberdar (1853) on the history of the parish of Aberdare, by Thomas Dafydd Llewelyn. The second is an article on the remains of St Elvan's, published in the local parish magazine in March 1885 by Eilir Evans, a curate in the local parish. All of the local interpretations, given in Parry's and Edwards's writings, view the building as having an ecclesiastical connection, being used either as a monastery, an oratory, or as the home of a hermit (as noted by Edwards on his p22). The most persistent and widely accepted explanation for the remains is that belong to a church dedicated to St Elvan. This belief appears to have derived largely from oral tradition, with accounts dating to the 19th century of gravestones having been seen in the vicinity. Quite how the dedication was determined to have been to St Elvan remains unclear. The only source of information on St Elvan is a legend about Lucius, King of Briton. There are two principle versions of this legend, the earlier of which is derived from a Roman source Liber Pontificalis. In this account Elvan is of Roman origin, and was sent with three companions to Briton to instruct King Lucius in the ways of Christianity. In a later version by Bede, there is more embellishment as Elvan (now a Briton) and a companion called Medwy, are sent by King Lucius to seek the aid of Pope Eleutherius in the conversion of the British to Christianity. According to Bede, Elvan proceeded to become a bishop and Medwy a doctor or teacher, and the pair of them are joined by a further two companions upon their return to England; together all four men then proceed to convert Britain to the Christian faith (summarised on p1 of Parry's manuscript). The name Elvan has been assimilated by local writers to Evan and a connection has been made with St John, to whom the medieval church in Aberdare is dedicated. There has been no philological study done on the feasibility of this identification. With regard to the possibility that the site may have had a Cistercian connection, the leading expert on*

the Welsh Cistercians had not found any documentary evidence to support this at the date of publication of his most recent study (Williams 2001). The structural remains at the Glade, Plasdraw are of a substantial stone-walled rectangular building, much of which survives at ground level. The structure is orientated northeast-southwest, and appears to be situated on a landscaped platform. It remains unclear as to whether this is an original component of the buildings construction, or else a later modification associated with either the gardens of Plasdraw House or the woodland pathways. Three rooms can be recognised from the 1953 OS plan (SO 00SW 4), although an early estate map of unknown date shows only the main hall and northeastern anteroom. Internally the largest room measures some 35m in length and is approximately 9m wide, these measurements are roughly the same on all the first four OS 1:25000 edition maps. The room at the northwest end, which can no longer be made out at ground level, is also rectangular. It is considerably smaller than the main hall, measuring only 5m by 6m. At the southwest end a semicircular wall defines another even smaller chamber measuring just 5m by 3.5m. The walling of the structure is recorded as having an approximate width of 1.50m, and is constructed of rubble. Most of the walls are overgrown by vegetation and in a state of disrepair, but where complete, they look to be coursed. There are conflicting reports regarding whether or not the walls are bonded with mortar. For the Ordnance Survey, Colquhoun notes on OS card SO 00SW 4 that during his survey he could not identify any traces of mortar, whilst the archaeologist responsible for a watching brief in the surrounding area, Clarke (2006) states that he could. It is important to note that Clarke has also commented in his report that there are other walls, that relate to the complex but the details of these are not known. To the south of the structure, there is a sunken feature with stone-walls, which may be a well. Five sherds of medieval pottery were recovered during a watching brief just to the west of the ruins (Clarke, 2006). These included four body fragments and one thick angled base, all of which had a light grey core, with oxidised reddish-yellow surfaces. The fabric has been tempered with rounded brown clay pellets, iron ore and a distinctive sub-angular quartz sand (Clarke 2006, Specialist Report: Medieval). Whilst it was ascertained that they came from unglazed cooking vessels, of probable local origin, they could not be conclusively matched with any of the fabrics in the Monmouth Archaeological Society fabric collection (Clarke 2006, Specialist Report: Medieval). Three pieces of stone roof tile with nail/peg holes were found, during the watching brief, amongst a larger deposit of broken tile and stone which had slipped north-westwards down a bank from the building remains (Clarke 2006, Specialist Report: Medieval). The whole area has also produced occasional ceramics dating to the Victorian and modern periods (Clarke 2006, Specialist Report: Post medieval/ modern). (Statton 2009) The earliest traceable reference to a church of St Elfan at Plasdraw is the Aberdare parish magazine for 1885, where it is stated that 60 years previously the walls had been several feet high; indecipherable gravestones had been seen on the site, and that there was a Ffynon Elvan within a few hundred yards. Described as the remains of 'a substantial stone-walled rectangular building' in the 1970s or 1980s. Evans 2003: GGAT 73 Early-Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites Project database

CONDITION

CONDITION: Not known DESCRIPTION: - RELATED EVENT: - RECORDED: 2004

STATUS *None recorded*

CROSS REFERENCES *Same as 3803*

SOURCES

*Report Graham, E. 2008 Aberdare Urban Survey, RCT: preliminary mapping report 2658
Report Statton, M. 2009 Proposal for a community Archaeology Project at the site known as St Elvan's Church, Plasdraw, Aberdare 2897 2011/03
Book Williams, D H 2001 The Welsh Cistercians
Report Clarke, S 2006 An Archaeological Watching Brief: The Glades, Plasdraw, Aberdare. Monmouthshire Archaeology unpublisjhed report
Evans EM, 2003-04, GGAT 73 Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites Project
03/PM Desc Text//Edwards W/1946//;
01/MM Record Card/OS//1957/SO 00 SW 4/;
02/MM Oral//Price W.W/1953//;
04/MM Desc Text//Wrathmell S/1981//*

PRN *01039.0m* **NAME** *RHIGOS-BLAENGWRACH TRAMWAY* **NGR** *SN925075* **COMMUNITY** *Hirwaun*
TYPE *POST MEDIEVAL, Tramway, RANK: 1*

SUMMARY *FORMER B48 : Built for the Hirwaun Ironworks to the canal at Aberdare in the 1790's, it is now represented by a minor road and a footpath. The line was still in operation during the mapping of the second O.S. in the 1870's*

DESCRIPTION *Built for the Hirwaun Ironworks to the canal at Aberdare in the 1790's, it is now represented by a minor road and a footpath. The line was still in operation during the mapping of the second O.S. in the 1870's, by which time it had been rebuilt and inte*

CONDITION

CONDITION: Not known DESCRIPTION: - RELATED EVENT: - RECORDED: 1998

STATUS *None recorded*

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000959

SOURCES

PRN 01264m **NAME** ABERNANT IRON WORKS **NGR** SO00900340 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, Iron works, **RANK:** 1

SUMMARY *Abernant ironworks was founded in 1801, later becoming part of a wider conglomeration of works under the Aberdare Iron Company. The Ironworks comprised three furnaces constructed between 1801 and 1807, and numerous forges, mills and puddling furnaces.*

DESCRIPTION *Blast furnace at Abernant, Aberdare, first blown in 1820. The remains now comprise two overgrown stacks (1987). Abernant ironworks was founded in 1801, later becoming part of a wider conglomeration of works under the Aberdare Iron Company. The Ironworks comprised three furnaces constructed between 1801 and 1807, and numerous forges, mills and puddling furnaces. The area has been extensively reclaimed, though some possibility of buried remains relating to the furnaces may survive (Roberts 2005).*

CONDITION

CONDITION: *Not known* **DESCRIPTION:** - **RELATED EVENT:** - **RECORDED:** 1981

STATUS *None recorded*

CROSS REFERENCES *Same as 34069, Associated with 2497M, Associated with 40441 GGATE000047, GGATE005332, GGATE005417*

SOURCES

Report Graham, E. 2008 Aberdare Urban Survey, RCT: preliminary mapping report 2658

01/MM Map/Keen R

03/PM Mention/Hist Metall Soc/1980/Newsletter/SO 00 SW 22

02/MM Record Card/OS/1980/SO 00 SW 22

PRN 01619m **NAME** ABERDARE STATION **NGR** SO00500283 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, Railway station, **RANK:** 1

SUMMARY *Timber station built by Brunel*

DESCRIPTION *Timber station built by Brunel*

CONDITION

CONDITION: *Near intact* **DESCRIPTION:** - **RELATED EVENT:** - **RECORDED:** 1982

STATUS *None recorded*

CROSS REFERENCES *Same as 34774*

SOURCES

02/MM Desc Text/NMR////

01/MM Record Sheet/RCAHM/Jones SK/1979//Letter, Maps;

PRN 03225.0m **NAME** Tappenden's Tramroad **NGR** SO0151202181, SN9616405313 **COMMUNITY** Cwmbach

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, Tramway, **RANK:** 1

SUMMARY *Opened 1805, the tramroad was built in two sections; the first by the Neath Canal Company commenced in 1802 from the canal head at Glyn Neath to Wyfra bridge, the second by Homfray, Birch and the Tappendens eastwards from the bridge to the ironworks. Later converted to a railway.*

DESCRIPTION *It took long deliberation before the construction of a tramroad connecting the ironworks at Llwydcoed and Abernant with the Neath Canal was finally begun. The tramroad was eventually built in two sections; the first by the Neath Canal Company commenced in 1802 from the canal head at Glyn Neath to Wyfra bridge, the second by Homfray, Birch and the Tappendens eastwards from the bridge to the ironworks (Mear 1999). The whole tramroad was eventually opened in 1805. The section east of Hirwaun (03225.0m), also known as the Abernant Tramroad, carried limestone brought from Penderyn along the pre-existing Mr Glover's tramroad (PRNxxx) to Aberdare and Abernant furnaces. Following the eventual commencement of the Aberdare Canal in 1809 a new tramroad branch was built from the proposed canal head to Gelli Isaf bridge. Later in 1819 Abernant ironworks constructed a direct line to the canal, making the route westwards (03225.1m) redundant. In 1827 Gadlys ironworks*

was linked via a small branch to Robertstown bridge (van Laun 2001: 188-196). The growth of Abernant ironworks resulted in increased traffic and acted as a catalyst for the conversion of the eastern section of tramroad to Aberdare canal firstly to a steam-hauled line and then to a railway in 1852. This route represents the most long-lived section of Tappendensâ€™ Tramroad east of Hirwaun, which thrived after the construction of the Aberdare Canal. This includes the original route running between Abernant and Llwydcoed to Hirwaun; later branches built to the new canal head from Gelli-Isaf bridge and Abernant ironworks as well as the 1827 branch linking Gadlys ironworks to the whole system. From Hirwaun the route can be followed along a tarmaced track and footpath just south of the River Cynon above Penywaun to Gelli-isaf bridge near Llwydcoed. Through the site of Llwydcoed ironworks the route can be followed along a footpath then minor road to Abernant, where the later route to the canal can be traced as a footpath to the canal. The branch running from a junction at Gelli-isaf bridge (01084m) to the canal can now be traced along a tarmaced footpath to the canal. approximately 29% of the tramroad survives in varying condition, surviving features include; stone blocks, revetment, bridges (Roberts and Jones 2006). A branch of the Hirwaun-Aberdare Tramroad exists to the west of Hirwaun and follows the present route of the Rhigos Road (A 4059). Orientated roughly east/west, the route approaches Hirwaun from the south-west, and then heads north-east through the town (pmgb 1998).

CONDITION

CONDITION: Damaged **DESCRIPTION:** The surviving tramroad to Llwydcoed Ironworks has been divided into 3 sections: SN 96164 05313 to SN 01512 02181 now forms a footpath crossing Gelli-Isaf tramroad bridge and is reasonably well preserved with exposed stone blocks in situ. The bridge itself is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM GM411). SN 99119 04370 to SN 99012 04350) exists in formation as a muddy footpath continuing east from Gelli-Isaf bridge with no surface finds, however, buried remains are possible. SN 99267 04350 to SN 99119 04370 continues along the footpath from the section above in slightly better condition, through a hollow under a bridge for the mineral railway. No surface features were visible, however, buried remains are possible. Four sections surviving at the canal end of the tramroad are: SO 01139 02850 to SO 01332 02447 is a badly damaged section. Even though this is a public footpath, a drain has been excavated through the middle of the track, destroying the tramroad formation. A couple of finds were made and more may be buried under the dense leaf litter. SO 01428 02349 to SO 01463 02277 survives as a slight grassed over bank, running into a wood. This is on private property and therefore was not surveyed. SO 01199 02398 to SO 01339 02313 is wider than the other sections, the track bed survives and is built up for use as a footpath, buried remains are possible. SO 01199 02398 to SO 01339 02313 the track bed formation survives under built up footpath. Buried remains are possible. SO 00120 03599 to SO 00489 02945 is currently a muddy footpath. The tramroad formation survives in generally good condition with a number of exposed stone blocks, which extends over a bridge abutment. This section has suffered from erosion and disturbance and requires conservation work. A number of stone blocks have been displaced and the south end of the section is untidy, rubbish has been dumped here and building works are ongoing nearby. A fence has been constructed along the west side of the tramroad in this area, this may have destroyed some of the tramroad formation. SN 99701 03611 to SO 00120 03599 is an exceptionally well-preserved section, including an arched stone bridge; the Gelli-isaf bridge built between 1803 and 1805 to the designs of Evan Hopkin, the noted Swansea Valley Engineer. Many exposed stone blocks survive in situ. Although part of the tramway has been destroyed by the A4509, this section includes the scheduled Robertstown Bridge (SAM GM347, 01096m) (Roberts and Jones 2006). **RELATED EVENT:** E001996 **RECORDED:** 2010

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES Associated with 03225.1m GGATE000956, GGATE001996, GGATE000959

SOURCES

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2006 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscape Year 2: transport networks 2060

PRN 06137m **NAME** Ysgubor-Wen Works, Trecynon **NGR** SO00220404 **COMMUNITY** Llwydcoed

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, Works, **RANK:** -

SUMMARY Ysgubor-Wen Works located to the southeast of the Ysgubor-Wen Coal Pit. Visible on the 1st editon OS map (1868)

DESCRIPTION Ysgubor-Wen Works located to the southeast of the Ysgubor-Wen Coal Pit. Visible on the 1st editon OS map (1868)

CONDITION

CONDITION: NOT KNOWN **DESCRIPTION:** - **RELATED EVENT:** - **RECORDED:**

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - -

SOURCES

Map Ordnance Survey 1st Edition OS map 6"

PRN 08668m **NAME** Possible Outlet Leat for Llwydcoed Ironworks **NGR** SN9973903516,
SO0016003517 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE UNKNOWN, LEAT, RANK: 0

SUMMARY Possible outlet leat depicted on 1st edition OS map, which ran from below spoil tips at Llwydcoed Ironworks southeast to join the River Cynon.

DESCRIPTION Possible outlet leat depicted on 1st edition OS map, which ran from below spoil tips at Llwydcoed Ironworks southeast to join the River Cynon (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NEAR INTACT **DESCRIPTION:** Marked on modern maps, and outline can be seen on APs (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES Associated with 01393m GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08671m **NAME** Possible Outlet Leat, Gadlys Ironworks **NGR** SO0020402790,
SO0039502917 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE UNKNOWN, LEAT, RANK: 0

SUMMARY Possible outlet leat for Gadlys ironworks which ran into the River Cynon, depicted on 1st edition OS map.

DESCRIPTION Possible outlet leat for Gadlys ironworks which ran into the River Cynon, depicted on 1st edition OS map (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NEAR INTACT **DESCRIPTION:** Marked on modern maps as far as meeting with road (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES Associated with 01171m GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

PRN 08672m **NAME** Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks **NGR** SO0133203673 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, RESERVOIR, RANK: -

SUMMARY Elongated reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map at Abernant Ironworks.

DESCRIPTION Elongated reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map at Abernant Ironworks. (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NOT KNOWN **DESCRIPTION:** Condition unknown (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08673m **NAME** Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks **NGR** SO0125303634 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, RESERVOIR, RANK: 0
SUMMARY Reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map, associated with Abernant Ironworks.

DESCRIPTION Reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map, associated with Abernant Ironworks. One of a number in the same area; e.g. 08672m, 08674m (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: DESTROYED **DESCRIPTION:** Probably destroyed, not visible on modern map or APs. (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

PRN 08674m **NAME** Reservoir (Furnace Pond), Abernant Ironworks **NGR** SO0122203576 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, RESERVOIR, RANK: 0

SUMMARY Reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map, labelled as 'Furnace Pond', associated with Abernant ironworks.

DESCRIPTION Reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map, labelled as 'Furnace Pond', associated with Abernant ironworks. One of a number in the same area e.g. 08672m, 08673m (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NEAR DESTROYED **DESCRIPTION:** Probably buried, not visible on modern map or APs (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08675m **NAME** Leat, Abernant Ironworks **NGR** SO0125303648, SO0127703676 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, LEAT, RANK: -

SUMMARY Leat depicted on 1st edition OS map, which connected 2 reservoirs at Abernant Ironworks,

DESCRIPTION Leat depicted on 1st edition OS map, which connected reservoirs 08672m and 08673m at Abernant Ironworks, possibly intended to deal with overflow (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NEAR DESTROYED **DESCRIPTION:** A remnant possibly survives (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

PRN 08676m **NAME** Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks **NGR** SO0117603614 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, RESERVOIR, RANK: 0
SUMMARY Reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map, associated with Abernant ironworks.

DESCRIPTION Reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map, associated with Abernant ironworks. One of a number in the same area e.g. 08672m, 08673m, 08674m (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: DESTROYED **DESCRIPTION:** Listed as Destroyed (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012
Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08677m **NAME** Nant Wenallt, Abernant **NGR** SO0155103782, SO0131803627 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE NOT APPLICABLE, WATER CHANNEL, RANK: -
SUMMARY Canalised diversion of natural stream (Nant Wenallt).

DESCRIPTION Canalised diversion of natural stream (Nant Wenallt) which fed into reservoir 08673m, depicted on 1st edition OS map (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: DAMAGED **DESCRIPTION:** Partial survival, may have been diverted underground (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300
Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

PRN 08678m **NAME** Nant Wenallt, Abernant **NGR** SO0110903421, SO0157803794 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE NOT APPLICABLE, WATER CHANNEL, RANK: 0
SUMMARY Natural stream depicted on 1st edition OS map partly canalised in places.

DESCRIPTION Natural stream depicted on 1st edition OS map partly canalised in places. Was used to supply water to reservoirs in the area, for example via leat 08677m. Also used to divert waste water to the River Cynon. This feature is diverted underground in places (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NOT APPLICABLE **DESCRIPTION:** Natural stream (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012
Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08679m **NAME** Reservoir, Abernant Ironworks **NGR** SO0114903471,
SO0123403550 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, WATER CHANNEL, RANK: -
SUMMARY Outflow leat for Furnace Pond reservoir depicted on 1st edition OS map.

DESCRIPTION Outflow leat for Furnace Pond reservoir 08674m depicted on 1st edition OS map, flowed into Nant Wenallt (08678m) (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION
CONDITION: DAMAGED DESCRIPTION: May partially survive as a dry channel (Roberts & Jones 2007).
RELATED EVENT: RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded
CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES
Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300
Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

PRN 08680m **NAME** Pond, Abernant Ironworks **NGR** SO0108303537 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE NOT APPLICABLE, POND, RANK: -
SUMMARY Small pond depicted on 1st edition OS map, may have been larger in size before publication of 1st edition OS map.

DESCRIPTION Small pond depicted on 1st edition OS map, may have been larger in size before publication of 1st edition OS map, likely to have been associated with Furnace Pond reservoir 08674m (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION
CONDITION: DESTROYED DESCRIPTION: Destroyed (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT: RECORDED:** 2007

STATUS None recorded
CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES
Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012
Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08681m **NAME** Forge Pond, Abernant **NGR** SO0118203179 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare
TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, RESERVOIR, RANK: 0
SUMMARY Reservoir named on 1st Ed Os map as 'forge pond'.

DESCRIPTION Reservoir named on 1st Ed Os map as 'forge pond', this reservoir may also have served the Abernant Ironworks as well as the forge and rolling mills (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION
CONDITION: DESTROYED DESCRIPTION: No longer survives, now partly Abernant playing fields. (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT: RECORDED:** 2007

STATUS None recorded
CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES
Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300
Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

PRN 08682m **NAME** *Leat, Forge pond, Abernant* **NGR** SO0120503270,
SO0127103439 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, LEAT, RANK: 0

SUMMARY Possible outlet for Forge Pond which flowed into Nant Wenallt, depicted on 1st edition OS map

DESCRIPTION Possible outlet for Forge Pond which flowed into Nant Wenallt, depicted on 1st edition OS map (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NOT KNOWN **DESCRIPTION:** Unknown, possibly buried (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08683m **NAME** *Feeder Channel for Forge Pond, Abernant* **NGR** SO0185803079,
SO0129702675 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, WATER CHANNEL, RANK: 0

SUMMARY Feeder channel depicted on 1st edition OS map for Forge Pond reservoir

DESCRIPTION Feeder channel depicted on 1st edition OS map for Forge Pond reservoir (08681m), flowed from Nant y Geugarn (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NEAR DESTROYED **DESCRIPTION:** Likely to be destroyed as most of area is now relandscaped to be a golf course (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

PRN 08684m **NAME** *Water Pipe, Abernant* **NGR** SO0115202525, SO0149402784 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE POST MEDIEVAL, WATER PIPE, RANK: -

SUMMARY Underground water pipe depicted on 1st edition OS map.

DESCRIPTION Underground water pipe depicted on 1st edition OS map, this flowed from the pumping engine house to feeder channel 08683m - may be only associated with Aberdare Canal (Roberts & Jones 2007).

CONDITION

CONDITION: NOT KNOWN **DESCRIPTION:** Unknown, may still survive below ground (Roberts & Jones 2007). **RELATED EVENT:** RECORDED: 2007

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES - - GGATE000957, GGATE000954

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

PRN 08686m **NAME** *Leat, Abernant Forge and Mills* **NGR** SO0072002389,

SO0121402941 **COMMUNITY** *Aberdare*

TYPE *POST MEDIEVAL, LEAT, RANK: 0*

SUMMARY *Possible outlet leat for Abernant Forge and Mills depicted on 1st edition OS map.*

DESCRIPTION *Possible outlet leat for Abernant Forge and Mills depicted on 1st edition OS map, perhaps also utilised by Abernant Ironworks. This leat ran to the canal head of the Aberdare canal (Roberts & Jones 2007).*

CONDITION

CONDITION: NEAR INTACT DESCRIPTION: Largely survives as on the 1st edition OS map (Roberts & Jones 2007).

RELATED EVENT: RECORDED: 2007

STATUS *None recorded*

CROSS REFERENCES - - *GGATE000957, GGATE000954*

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes

Website accessed 29 Feb 2012

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2007 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Year 3: water management features 2300

AM - 03.19.20 (12:03) - HTML file produced from GGAT HER, GGAT file number 2266.
Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, Heathfield House, Heathfield, Swansea, SA1 6EL.
tel (01792) 655208 , fax (01792) 474696, email her@ggat.org.uk , website www.ggat.org.uk

Archaeological data, from the Regional Historic Environment Record, supplied by The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust in partnership with Local Authorities, Cadw and the partners of ENDEX GGAT, 2010.

Appendix 4: Historic Environment Record Enquiry Report - Event Records

GLAMORGAN GWENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD ENQUIRY REPORT - EVENT RECORDS

Enquiry reference number: 6242

**Prepared by: Calli Rouse, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust
Produced for: Jean-Yves Robic, Cardiff Archaeological Consultants**

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Search criteria

1km radius of Land at Nant y Wenallt, Abernant, RCT

PRN E000047 **NAME** *Field visit, Abernant Ironworks* **NGR** SO00900340 **COMMUNITY** *Aberdare*
TYPE *Field visit* **YEAR** 2004 **ORGANISATION** *Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)* **PERSON** *R. Roberts*
SUMMARY *Field visit undertaken as part of the South East Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Project (GGAT80 SEWIL Yr1).*

DESCRIPTION *Field visit undertaken as part of the South East Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Project (GGAT80 SEWIL Yr1). To assess the survival/condition of ironworks and related features.*

COMMENTS

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES *E000955 GGAT01264m*

SOURCES

PRN E000954 **NAME** *Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Project* **NGR** SO0965205462 **COMMUNITY** *Darran Valley*
TYPE *Project* **YEAR** 2005-2010 **ORGANISATION** *Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)* **PERSON** -
SUMMARY *This project was instigated in response to the ongoing threats faced by industrial remains of Southeast Wales. The aim of the project was to assess the current state of survival/preservation of ironworks landscape in the area of the northern coalfield rim to inform conservation, protection and management of these monuments and their associated landscapes.*

DESCRIPTION *This project was instigated in response to the ongoing threats faced by industrial remains of Southeast Wales. The aim of the project was to assess the current state of survival/preservation of ironworks landscape in the area of the northern coalfield rim to inform conservation, protection and management of these monuments and*

their associated landscapes. Currently, this project is made up of 5 stages: Year 1 Assessment of the core Ironworks areas Year 2 Assessment of the associated limestone transport infrastructure Year 3 Assessment of the related water management features Year 4 Assessment of related extractive areas and features Year 5 The Upper Sirhowy, Ebbw and Ebbw Fach Valleys

COMMENTS None

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES E000955, E000956, E000957, E000958, E002092 GGAT01809m, GGAT08616m, GGAT08617m, GGAT08618m, GGAT08619m, GGAT08620m, GGAT08621m, GGAT08622m, GGAT08623m, GGAT08624m, GGAT08625m, GGAT08626m, GGAT08627m, GGAT08628m, GGAT08629m, GGAT08630m, GGAT08631m, GGAT08632m, GGAT08633m, GGAT08634m, GGAT08635m, GGAT08636m, GGAT08637m, GGAT08638m, GGAT08639m, GGAT08640m, GGAT08641m, GGAT08642m, GGAT08643m, GGAT08644m, GGAT08645m, GGAT08646m, GGAT08647m, GGAT08648m, GGAT08649m, GGAT08650m, GGAT08651m, GGAT08652m, GGAT08653m, GGAT08654m, GGAT08655m, GGAT08656m, GGAT08657m, GGAT08658m, GGAT08659m, GGAT08660m, GGAT08661m, GGAT08662m, GGAT08663m, GGAT08664m, IWW053, GGAT08666m, GGAT08667m, GGAT08668m, GGAT08669m, GGAT08670m, GGAT08671m, GGAT08672m, GGAT08673m, GGAT08674m, GGAT08675m, GGAT08676m, GGAT08677m, GGAT08678m, GGAT08679m, GGAT08680m, GGAT08681m, GGAT08682m, GGAT08683m, GGAT08684m, GGAT08685m, GGAT08686m, GGAT08687m, GGAT08688m, GGAT08689m, GGAT08690m, GGAT08691m, GGAT08692m, GGAT08693m, GGAT08694m, GGAT08695m, GGAT08696m, GGAT08697m, GGAT08698m, GGAT08699m, GGAT08700m

SOURCES

Online Resource Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 2010 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes Website accessed 29 Feb 2012 <http://www.ggat.org.uk/cadw/swi/english/index.html>

PRN E001389 **NAME** *Aberdare Urban Survey: preliminary mapping* **NGR** SN99956503498 **COMMUNITY** *Aberdare*

TYPE *Historic Landscape Characterisation* **YEAR** 2008 **ORGANISATION** *Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)* **PERSON** -

SUMMARY *GGAT undertook preliminary mapping and database work for an Urban Survey of Aberdare and its satellite settlements to inform an urban characterisation project of Aberdare prepared by Cadw, for sustainable management of the historic resource.*

DESCRIPTION *GGAT undertook preliminary mapping and database work for an Urban Survey of Aberdare and its satellite settlements to inform an urban characterisation project of Aberdare prepared by Cadw, for sustainable management of the historic resource. This part of the project mapped the urban development of the area between 1844 and 1900 based on cartographic sources and compiled an associated database of known archaeological interests within the area.*

COMMENTS None

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES E001390

SOURCES

Report Graham, E. 2008 Aberdare Urban Survey, RCT: preliminary mapping report 2658 ReportPDF/2658_GGAT91_AberdareUrbanSurvey_ASS.pdf

PRN E001390 **NAME** *Aberdare Urban Characterisation* **NGR** SN99956503498 **COMMUNITY** *Aberdare*

TYPE *Historic Landscape Characterisation* **YEAR** 2009 **ORGANISATION** *Cadw* **PERSON** -

SUMMARY *Urban characterisation of Aberdare town undertaken by Cadw, incorporating mapping produced by GGAT. The study will also help inform a bid for a Townscape Heritage Initiative in Aberdare, and offers links to the Rhondda Cynon Taff wider regeneration agenda.*

DESCRIPTION *Urban characterisation of Aberdare town undertaken by Cadw, incorporating mapping produced by GGAT. Urban characterisation aims to identify local distinctiveness and to serve as a tool for management of the historic environment; informing conservation and regeneration programmes. The study will also help inform a bid for a Townscape Heritage Initiative in Aberdare, and offers links to the Rhondda Cynon Taff wider regeneration agenda (Cadw 2009).*

COMMENTS *None*

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES *E001389*

SOURCES

Report Cadw 2009 Aberdare: understanding urban character 2659

PRN *E001996* **NAME** *Field visit Tappenden's Tramroad East and West* **NGR** *SN8871206736* **COMMUNITY** *Glynneath*

TYPE *Field visit* **YEAR** *2005* **ORGANISATION** *Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)* **PERSON**

SUMMARY *Field visit undertaken. Approximately 20% of the entire tramroad survives with numerous features in situ.*

DESCRIPTION *Field visit undertaken as part of the Cadw project GGAT80 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscapes to establish the condition/survival of archaeological features. Approximately 20% of the entire tramroad survives with numerous features in situ (Roberts and Jones 2006).*

COMMENTS

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES *E000956 GGAT03225.0m, GGAT03225.1m, GGAT03225.2m, GGAT03225.3m, GGAT01039.1m*

SOURCES

Report Roberts, R. Jones, C. 2006 Southeast Wales Industrial Ironworks Landscape Year 2: transport networks 2060
ReportPDF/2060_GGAT80_IronworksYr2_ASS.pdf

PRN *E003104* **NAME** *Aberdare Hospital, Aberdare* **NGR** *SO0056003270* **COMMUNITY** *Aberdare*

TYPE *Desk Based Assessment* **YEAR** *2009* **ORGANISATION** *CgMs Consulting* **PERSON** *-*

SUMMARY *CGMS were commissioned by Cwm Taf NHS Trust to undertake an archaeological desk based assessment of an area of land at Aberdare Hospital, Aberdare prior to development. (Heard and Pugh, 2009)*

DESCRIPTION *CGMS were commissioned by Cwm Taf NHS Trust to undertake an archaeological desk based assessment of an area of land at Aberdare Hospital, Aberdare prior to development. No scheduled monuments are within the study area, nor does the area lie in a Registered Historic Landscape or Conservation area. The study site has low potential for all periods until the 19th century. The study concludes that archaeological potential is low in the development area and that no further work is necessary. The loss of the remains associated with Abernant House could be mitigated, if appropriate, through a photographic record of specific features. (Herd and Pugh, 2009)*

COMMENTS *None*

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES *E003111, 265636*

SOURCES

Report Heard, H and Pugh, G 2009 Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Aberdare Hospital, Aberdare 2775 2010/05

PRN *E005332* **NAME** *Land at Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant,*

Aberdare **NGR** *SO0086003420* **COMMUNITY** *Aberdare*

TYPE *DESK BASED ASSESSMENT* **YEAR** *2004* **ORGANISATION** *CgMs Consulting* **PERSON** *Sarah Watt and Jim Hunter*

SUMMARY *CgMs Consulting were instructed by Hyder Consulting to undertake an archaeological desk based assessment of the land at Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant, Aberdare which is a proposed site for residential development. The assessment found no scheduled ancient monuments within site so no archaeological intervention is considered necessary.*

DESCRIPTION *CgMs Consulting were instructed by Hyder Consulting to undertake an archaeological desk based assessment of the land at Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant, Aberdare which is a proposed site for residential*

development. The assessment also included a walkover survey (E005417). The assessment found that the site was formerly part of the Abernant Ironworks (01264m), and concluded that it was possible that below-ground remains from the 19th and 20th centuries survive on the site, but that, despite this, further pre-determination works were not recommended. Instead, it was recommended that a condition for further archaeological work be added to any future planning permission (Watt & Hunter, 2004)

COMMENTS None

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES E005417 GGAT01264m

SOURCES

Report Watt, S & Hunter, J 2004 Land at Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant, Aberdare 1761 205/02

PRN E005417 **NAME** Land at Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant,

Aberdare **NGR** SO0086003420 **COMMUNITY** Aberdare

TYPE FIELD VISIT **YEAR** 2004 **ORGANISATION** CgMs Consulting **PERSON** Hunter, J.

SUMMARY Walkover survey undertaken as part of a desk based assessment (E005332) of the Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant by CGMS, who were commissioned by Hyder Consulting to undertake the work on behalf of their client. The walkover recorded that the site comprised a mixture of pasture and woodland, containing some above ground remains, probably pertaining to the former Abernant Ironworks.

DESCRIPTION Walkover survey undertaken as part of a desk based assessment (E005332) of the Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant by CGMS, who were commissioned by Hyder Consulting to undertake the work on behalf of their client. The walkover recorded that the site comprised a mixture of pasture and woodland, containing some above ground remains, probably pertaining to the former Abernant Ironworks (01264m) (Hunter, J 2004).

COMMENTS None

ARTEFACTS

TYPE: None recorded MATERIAL: - PERIOD: - DESCRIPTION: -

CROSS REFERENCES E005332 GGAT01264m

SOURCES

Report Watt, S & Hunter, J 2004 Land at Lower River Tip Levels, Abernant, Aberdare 1761 205/02

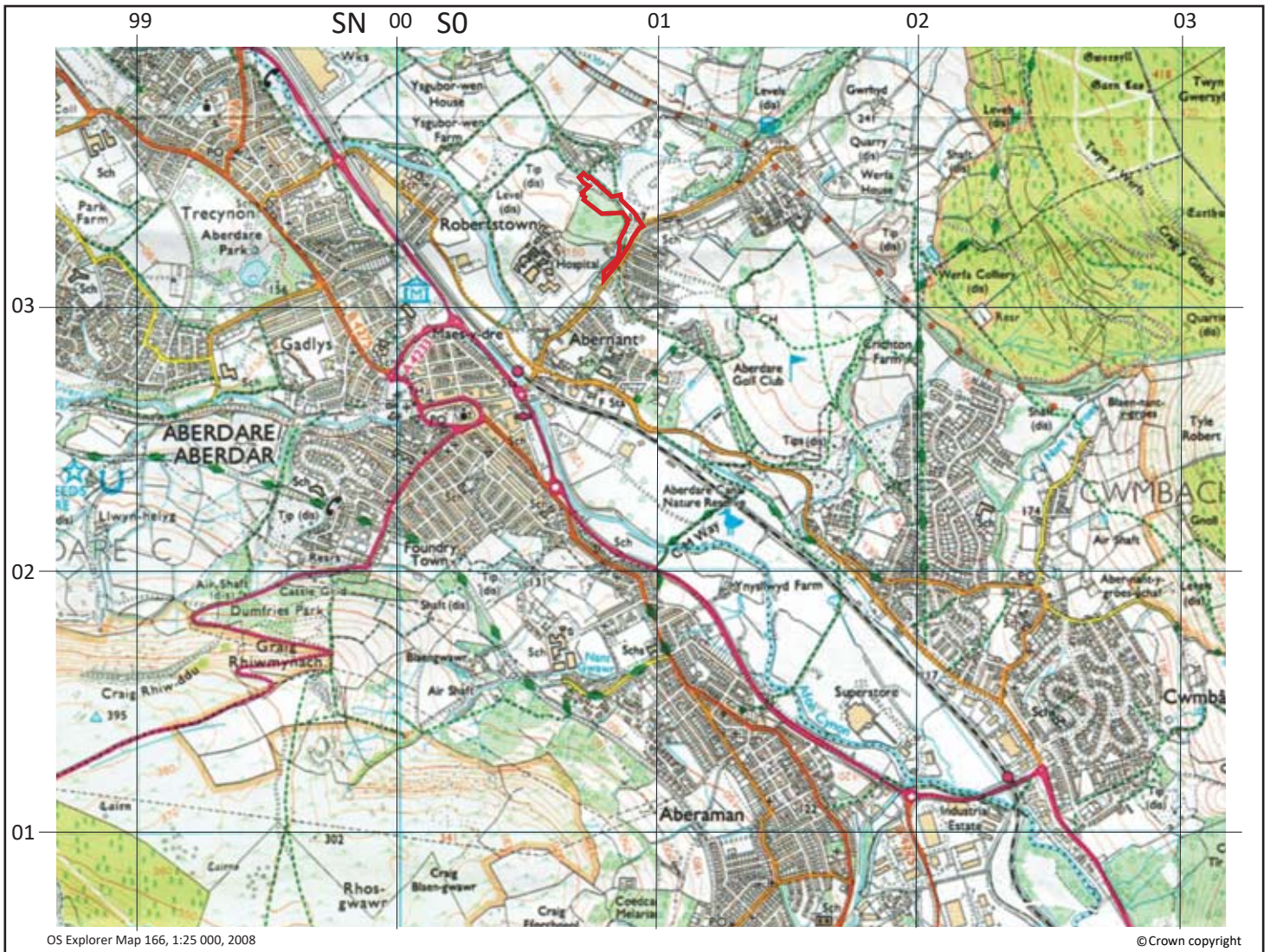
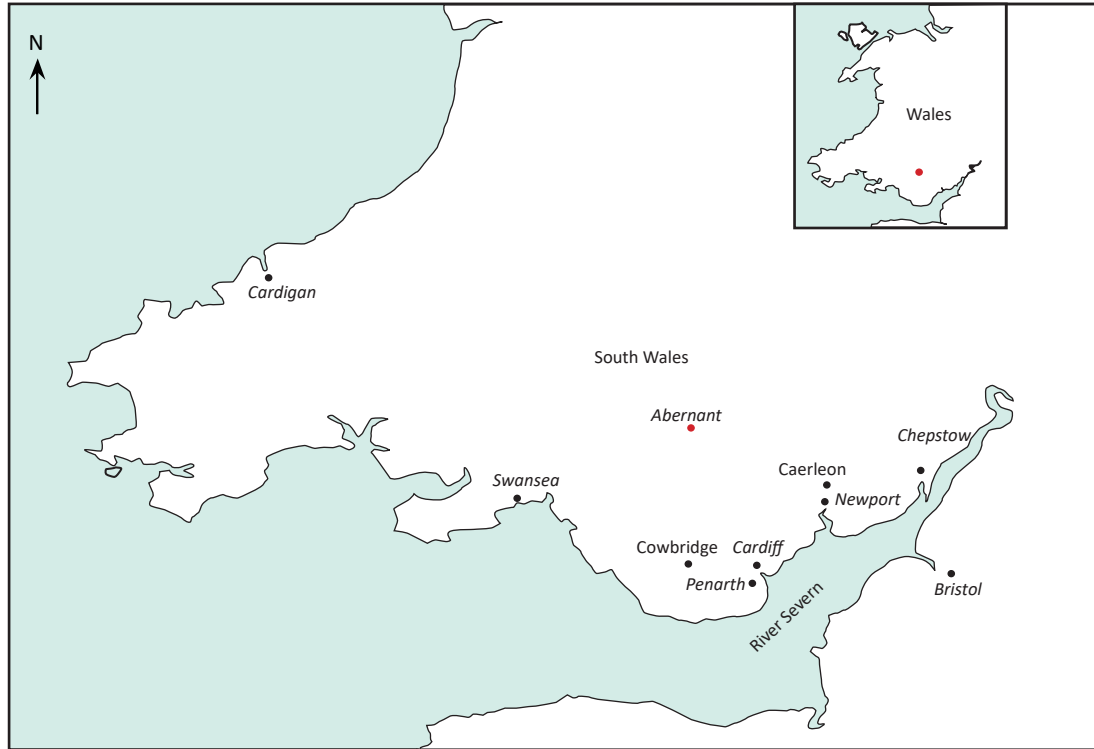
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Archaeological data, from the Regional Historic Environment Record, supplied by The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust in partnership with Local Authorities, Cadw and the partners of ENDEX GGAT, 2010.

Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt



○ Land at Nant Y Wenallt, Abernant

Figure 1: Location maps

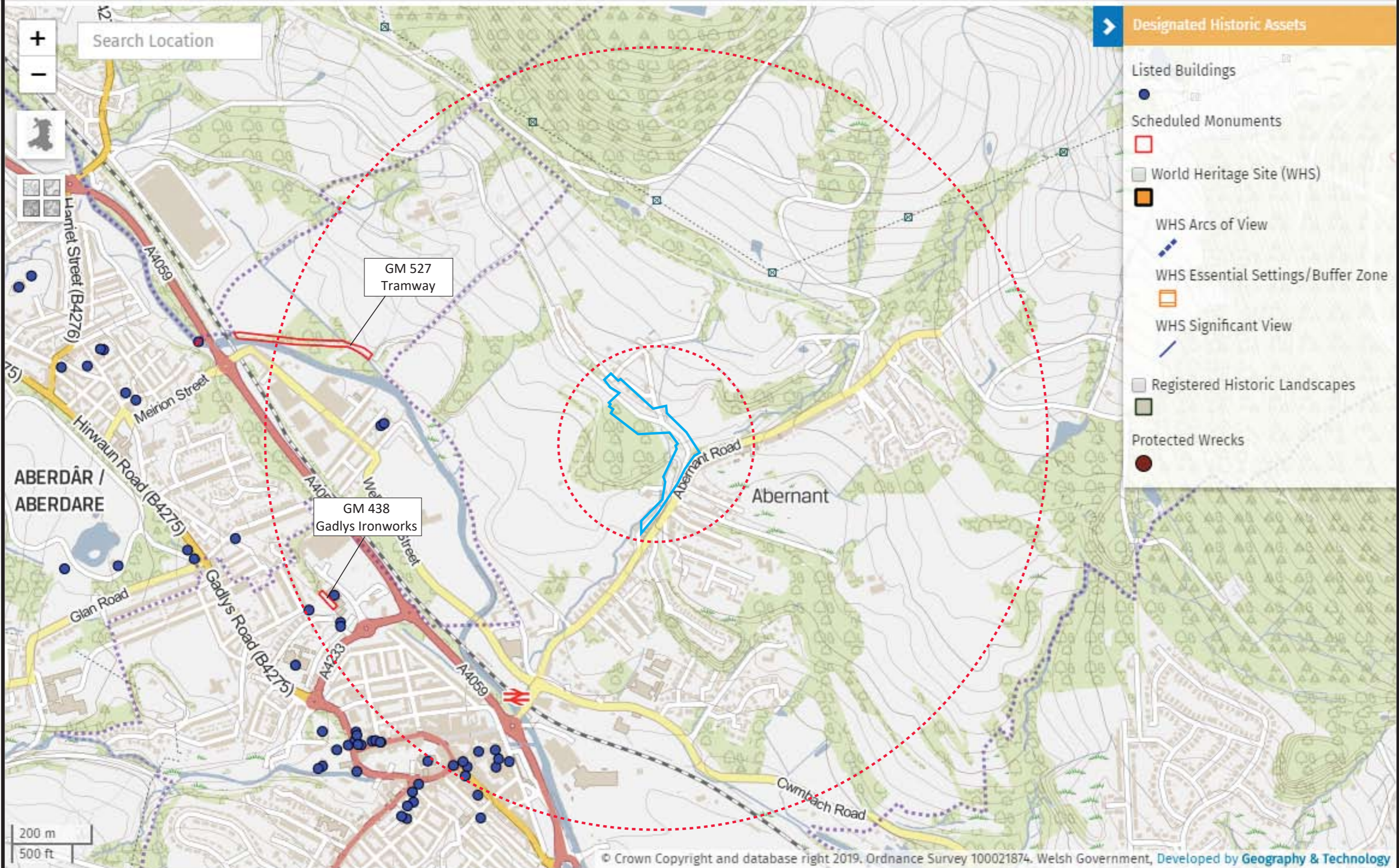



Figure 2: Location plan of the development area and the Scheduled Monuments
(Cadw, Cof Cymru - National Historic Assets of Wales)

 Proposed development area

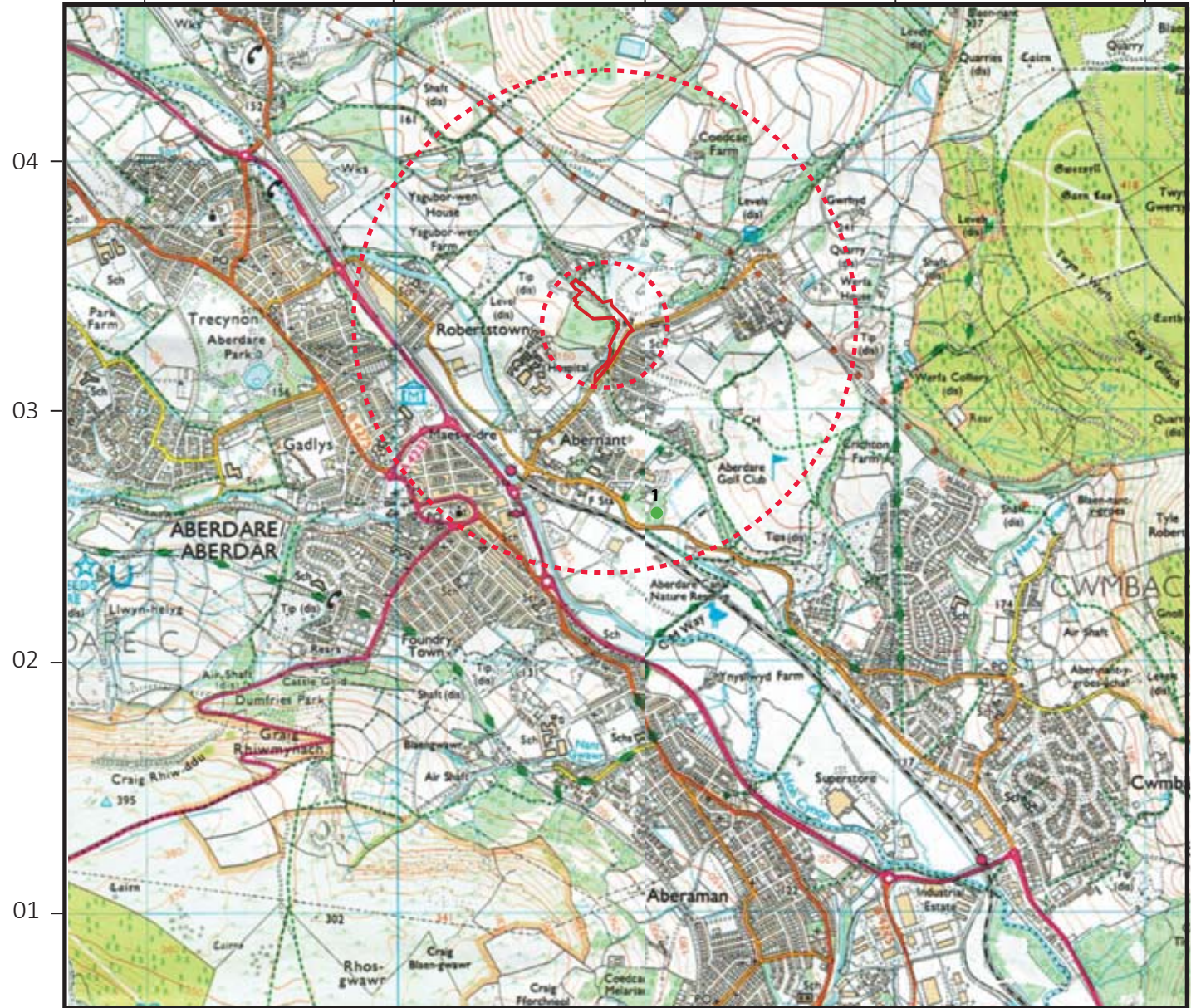
Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt

99 SN 00 SO 01 02 03

- Prehistoric
- Roman
- Medieval
- Post-Medieval
- Modern
- Unknown

□ Proposed development site

○ Research area



OS Map: Explorer 166, 1:25 000, 2008

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Figure 3: Distribution of the Medieval archaeological sites

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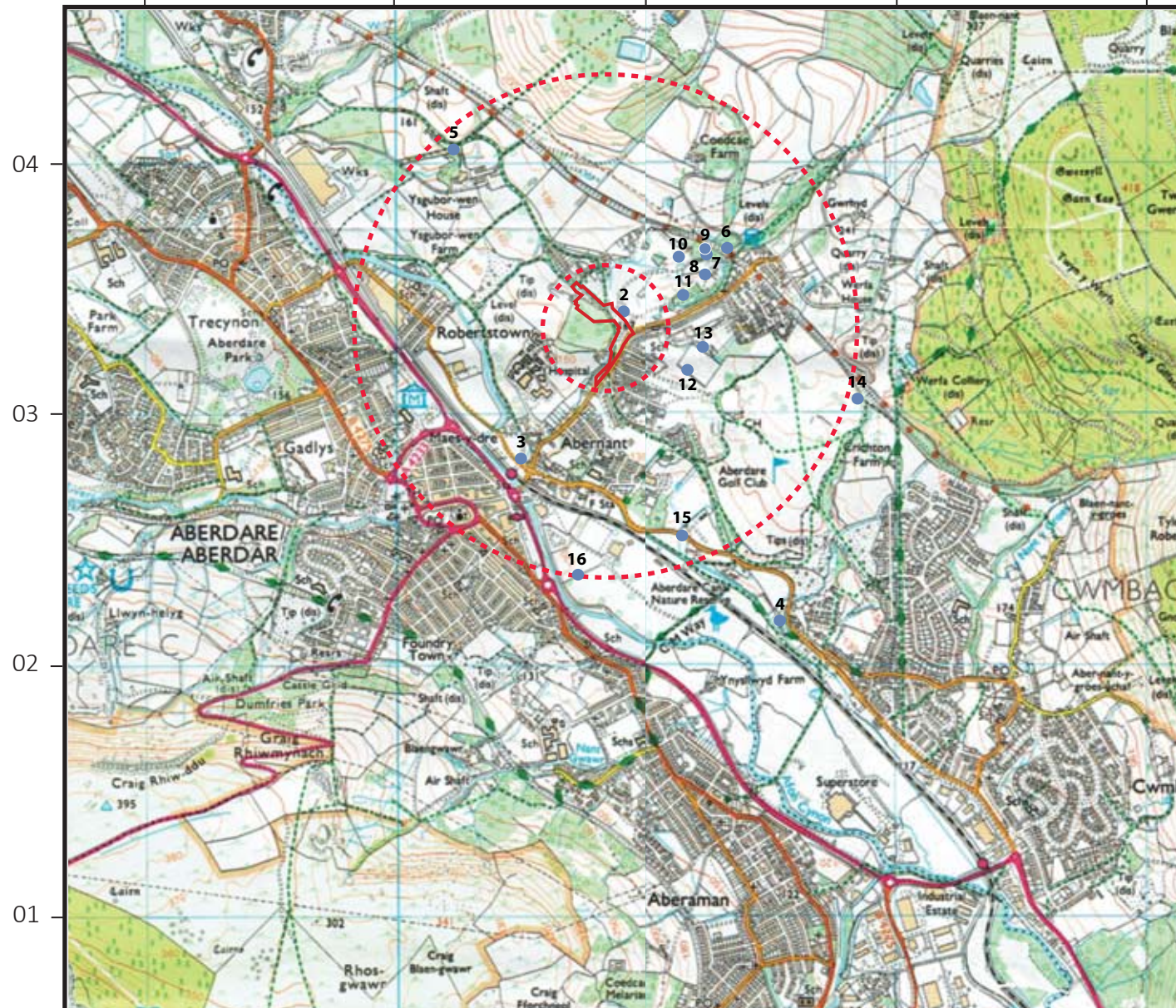
Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt

99 SN 00 SO 01 8 02 03

- Prehistoric
- Roman
- Medieval
- Post-Medieval
- Modern
- Unknown

Proposed development site

Research area



OS Map: Explorer 166, 1:25 000, 2008

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Figure 4: Distribution of the Post-Medieval archaeological sites

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Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt

99 SN 00 SO 01 02 03

- Prehistoric
- Roman
- Medieval
- Post-Medieval
- Modern
- Unknown

□ Proposed development site

○ Research area



OS Map: Explorer 166, 1:25 000, 2008

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Figure 5: Distribution of the Unknown date archaeological sites

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Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt

99 SN 00 SO 01 02 03

Events

- Building survey
- Evaluation
- Excavation
- Watching Brief
- Geophysical Survey
- Project
- Field visit

Proposed development site

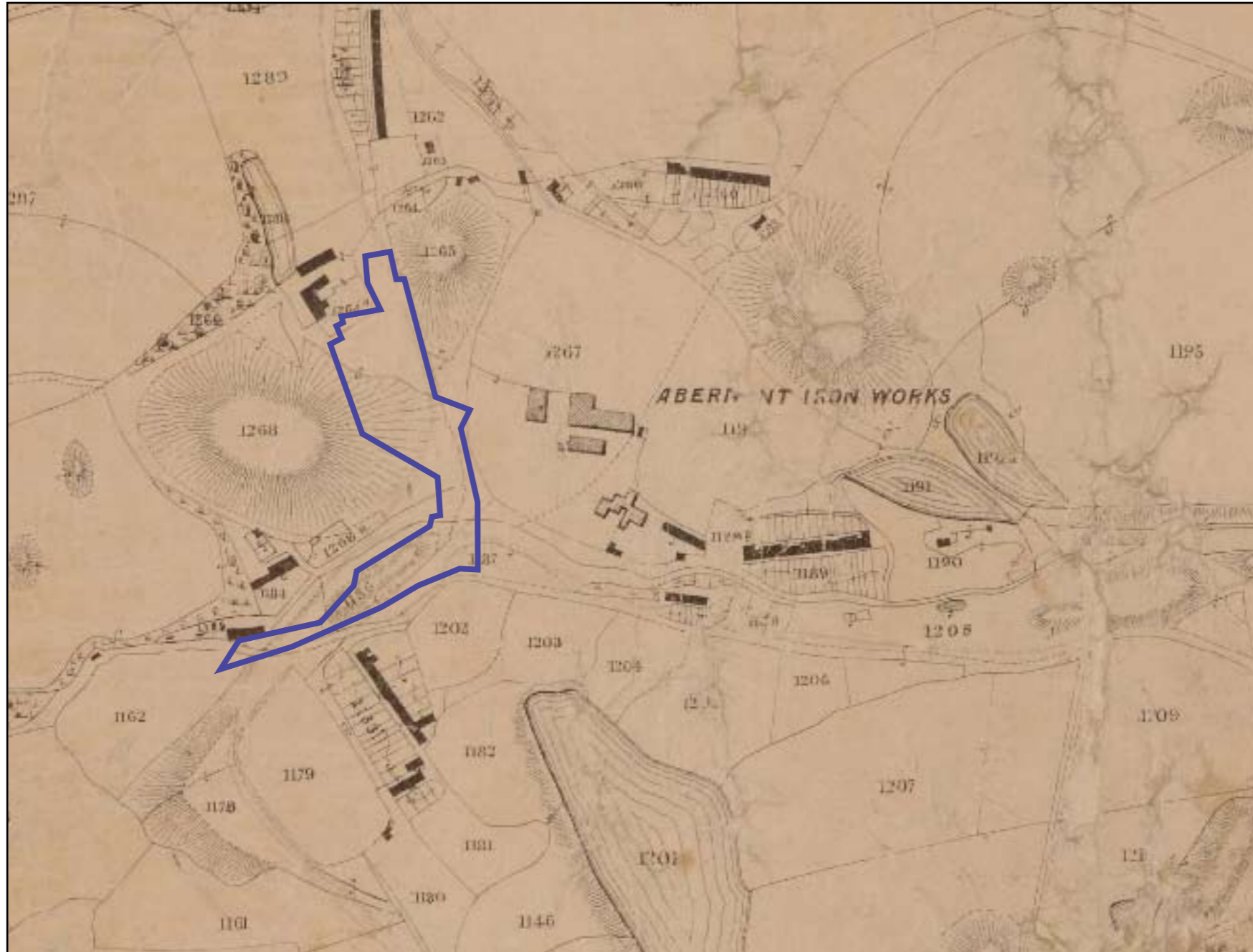
Research area



OS Map: Explorer 166, 1:25 000, 2008

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Figure 6: Distribution of the archaeological Events
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**Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt**



Map reference:

Plan of the Parish of Aberdare
in the County of Glamorgan 1847

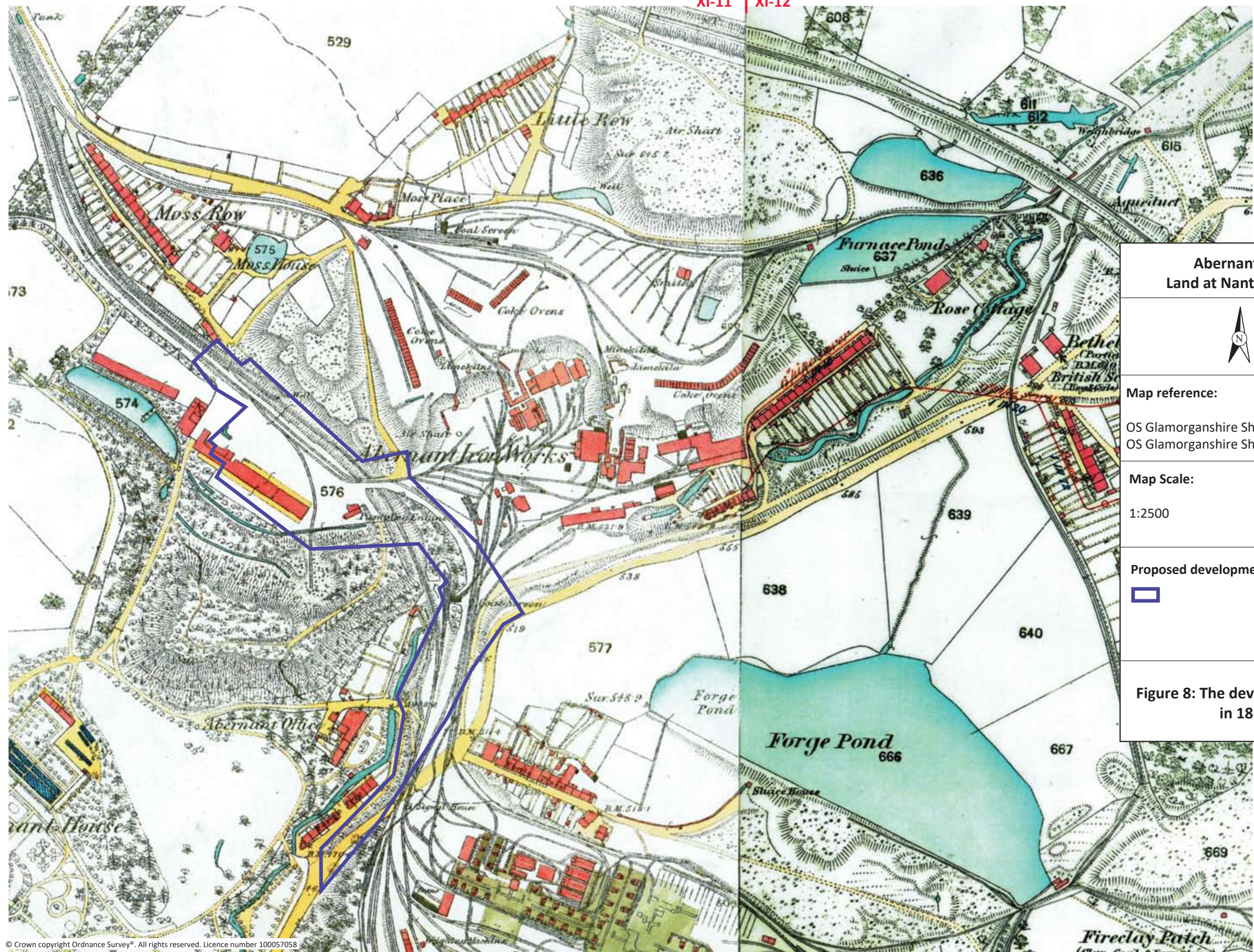
Map Scale:

Not to scale, illustrative only

Proposed development site



**Figure 7: The development site
in 1847**



**Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt**



Map reference:

OS Glamorganshire Sheet XI-11, 1868
OS Glamorganshire Sheet XI-12, 1868

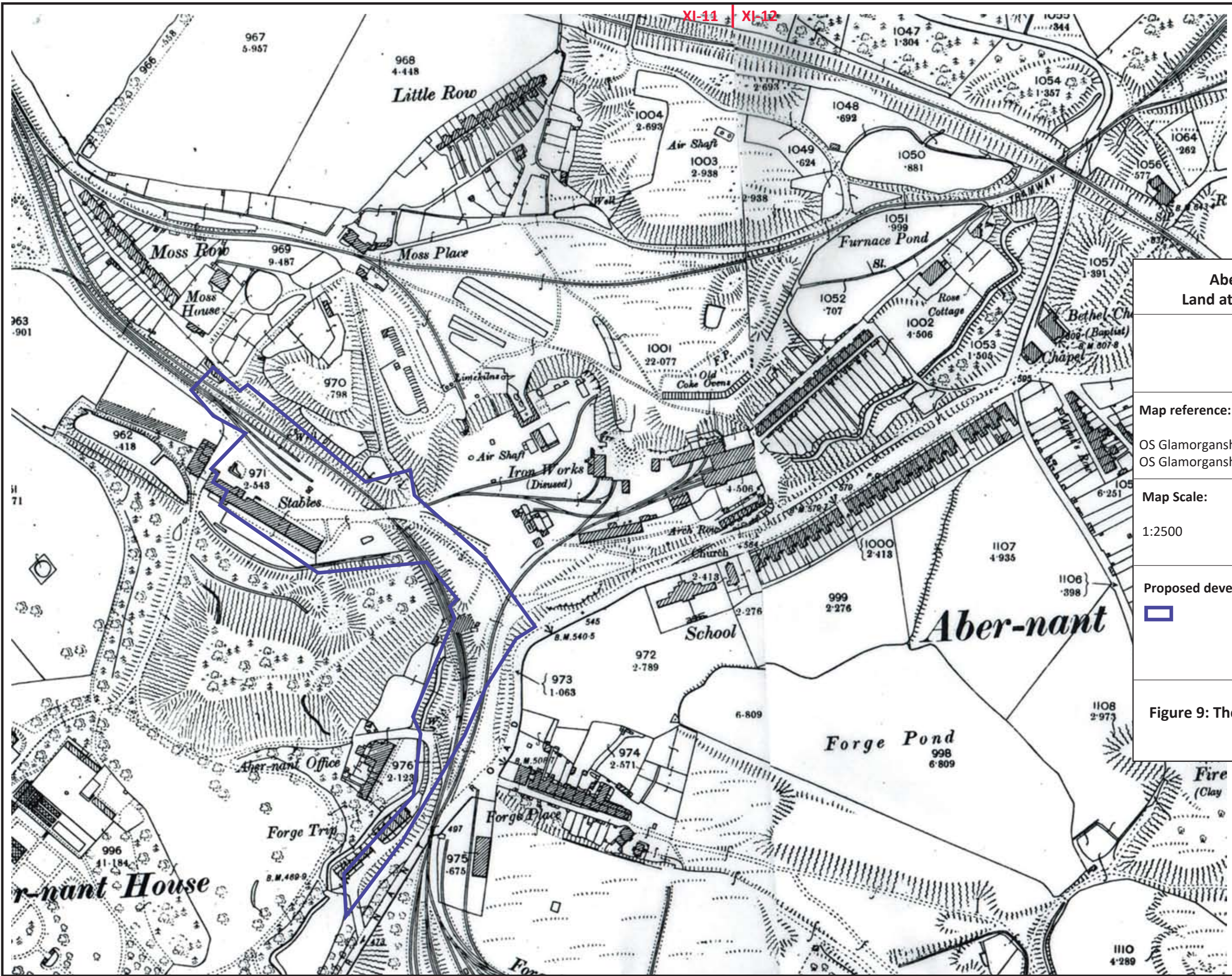
Map Scale:

1:2500

Proposed development site



**Figure 8: The development site
in 1868**



XI-11 | XI-12

**Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt**



Map reference:

OS Glamorganshire Sheet XI-11, 1900
OS Glamorganshire Sheet XI-12, 1900

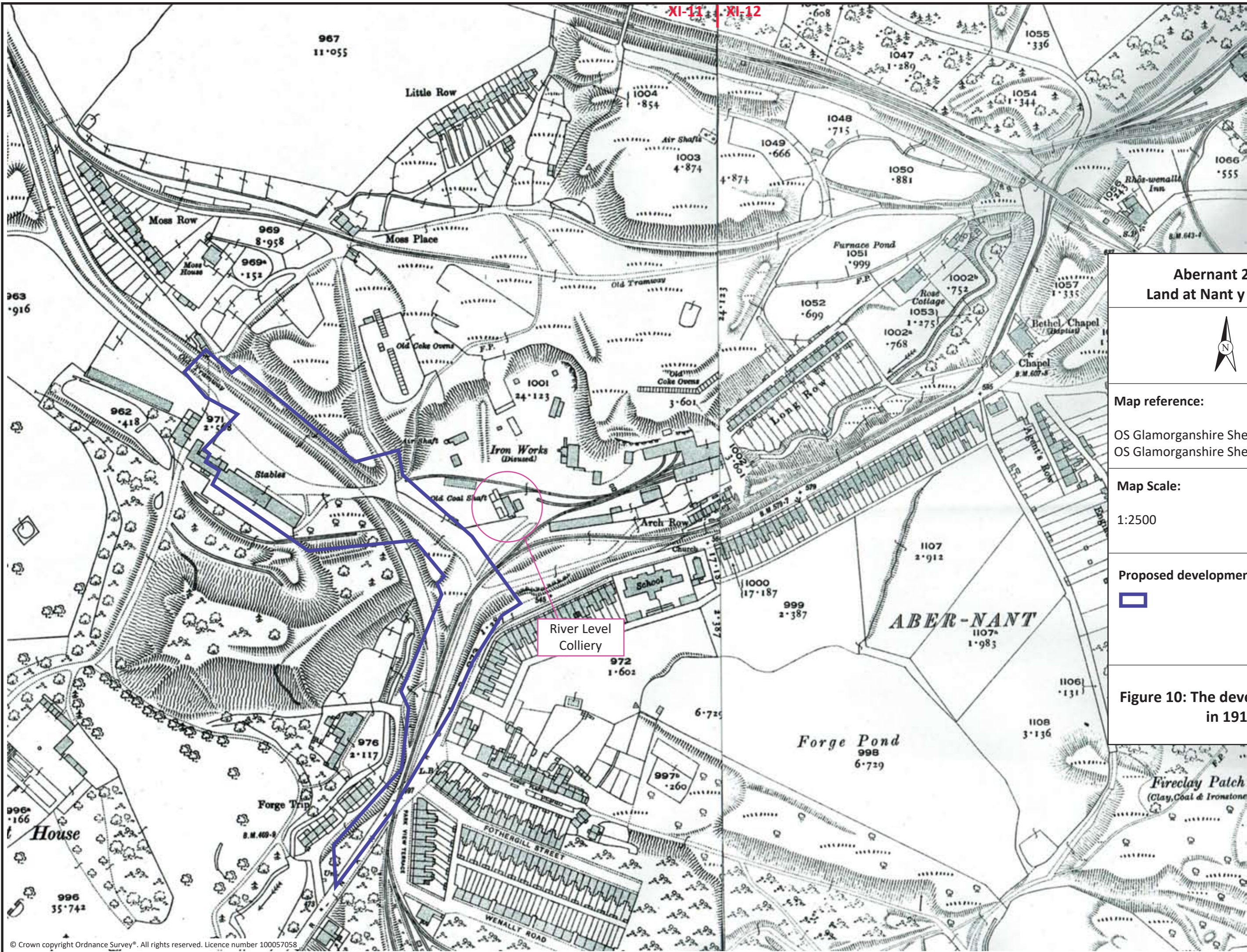
Map Scale:

1:2500

Proposed development site



**Figure 9: The development site
in 1900**



**Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt**



Map reference:

OS Glamorganshire Sheet XI-11, 1919
OS Glamorganshire Sheet XI-12, 1919

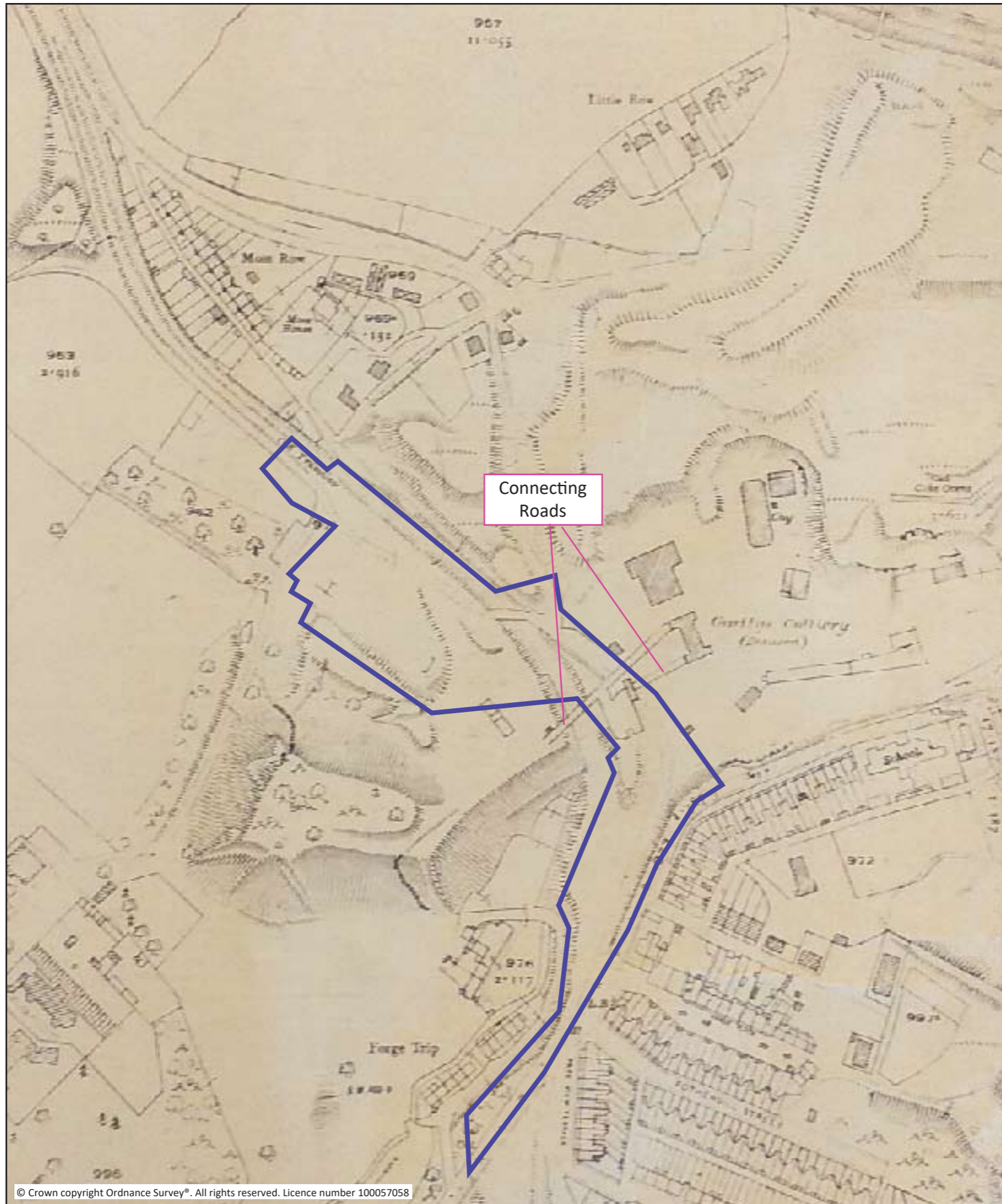
Map Scale:



1:2500

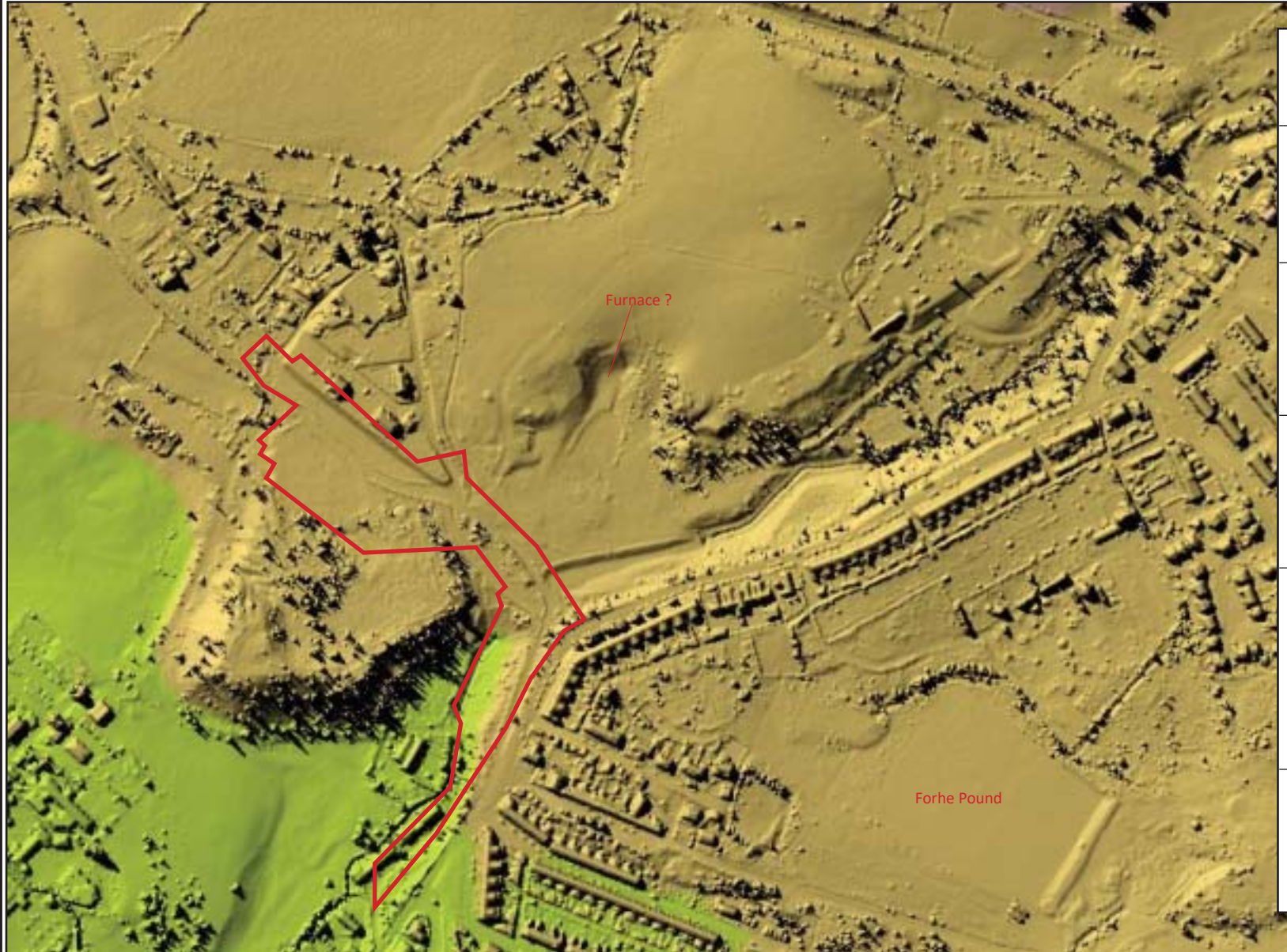
Proposed development site



**Figure 10: The development site
in 1919**



Abernant 2020 Land at Nant y Wenallt

Map reference: OS Glamorganshire Sheet XI-11, 1919
Map Scale: 1:2500
Proposed development site 
Figure 11: The development site in 1949



**Abernant 2020
Land at Nant y Wenallt**



Map reference:

LiDAR Composite Dataset - DTM 2m

Map Scale:

Not to scale, illustrative only

Proposed development site



**Figure 12: Lidar survey of
the development site**



Plate 1: The northern part of the development area from the south



Plate 2: The southern part of the development area from the north



Plate 3: Abernant Ironworks *circa* 1905 from the south-east (Rownson & Wright 2001, 112)



Plate 4: River Level Colliery with abandoned Abernant Ironworks in background (Cooke 2018, 150)



Plate 5: Remains of the ironworks stables in the northern part of the site from east



Plate 6: Managed section of the Nant y Wenallt from the west