



Pennant Walters

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# Rhyswg Wind Farm

Appendix 7A: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment





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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1. WSP has been commissioned by Pennant Walters Ltd (the 'Applicant') to carry out a Historic Environment desk-based assessment (HEDBA) in advance of a proposed wind farm development (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development') at Rhyswg Farm, Caerphilly, in Caerphilly County Borough (National Grid Reference/NGR ST 25312 96445; **Figure 7.1** and **Figure 7.2**).
- 1.1.2. The Proposed Development comprises the construction and operation of a wind farm of up to three turbines, along with substation and transformer housing; temporary construction compound; temporary site offices; crane pads and cabling; and access track construction.

## 1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1. The potential impact of the Proposed Development on the historic character and setting of significant historic assets within and beyond the Site (e.g. views to and from listed buildings and conservation areas) are assessed in **Chapter 7 of the Draft Environmental Statement (ES)**. The report includes recommendations to mitigate any adverse effects (e.g. site-based investigation and/or design changes), where appropriate.
- 1.2.2. This HEDBA is a technical appendix to the Draft ES and provides a baseline of known or potential buried heritage assets (archaeological remains) and above ground heritage assets (structures and landscapes of historic interest) within or immediately around the Proposed Development site (hereafter the 'Site'). These are identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions and includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority, and non-designated assets.
- 1.2.3. Professional expert opinion has been used to assess heritage significance, based on historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest, considering past ground disturbance which may have compromised survival.

## 1.3 Aims and objectives

- 1.3.1. The aim of this HEDBA is to assess the impact of the Proposed Development and to provide a suitable strategy to mitigate any adverse effects, if required, as part of a planning application to develop the Site. The aim is achieved through five objectives:
- identify the presence of any known or potential heritage assets that may be affected by the Proposed Development;
  - describe the significance of such assets, in accordance with the Cadw Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales (2017), considering factors which may have compromised asset survival;
  - determine the contribution to which setting makes to the significance of any significant heritage assets;
  - assess the likely impacts upon the significance of the assets arising from the Proposed Development; and

- provide recommendations for further investigation and/or mitigation where required, aimed at reducing or removing completely any adverse effects.

## 1.4 Key heritage constraints

- 1.4.1. The Site does not contain any nationally designated (protected) heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings and registered historic parks and gardens.
- 1.4.2. The nearest scheduled monument is the 'Iron Ore Scours at Upper Race, Pontypool', comprising of remains of former iron ore extraction features, dating from the 16th century onwards. It is situated approximately 2km northeast of the Site (Cadw 3487). This asset is out with the ZTV and has therefore been scoped out of the assessment (see **Appendix 7C**).
- 1.4.3. The nearest listed building is Rhyswg Fawr Farmhouse and Walled Forecourt (Grade II), situated 150m west of the Site (Cadw 1900).
- 1.4.4. The Site does not contain any conservation areas, as identified by the Local Planning Authority. The nearest is Upper Cwmbran Conservation Area, situated 1.2km east of the Site. This asset is out with the ZTV and has therefore been scoped out of the assessment (see **Appendix 7C**).

## 2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

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2.1.1. The legislation and policy background used to inform this HEDBA is included in **Draft ES Volume 2: Chapter 7: Historic Environment**.

### 2.2 Heritage sector guidance

#### Welsh Government Guidance

The Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment<sup>1</sup> provides planning system guidance for the Historic Environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning applications.

#### Cadw Guidance

- Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales<sup>2</sup> sets out the general principles to consider when planning changes to historic assets and applying for listed building, conservation area and scheduled monument consent;
- Setting of Historic Assets in Wales<sup>3</sup> sets out the principles used to assess the potential impact of development or land management proposals within the settings of World Heritage Sites, ancient monuments (scheduled and unscheduled), listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens, and conservation areas;
- Managing Historic Character in Wales<sup>4</sup> explains the importance of recognising historic character and its use as an evidence base for conservation, regeneration and planning work. It shows how policies and programmes to manage change can take inspiration from the past to help create and sustain distinctive places for the future;
- Cadw Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the Historic Environment in Wales<sup>5</sup> informs the determination of historic asset significance using four key heritage values: evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal; and
- Cadw Guide to Good Practice on using The Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales in The Planning and Development Process Revised (2nd) Edition<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government (2017). *Technical advice note (TAN) 24: the historic environment*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/technical-advice-note-tan-24-historic-environment> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

<sup>2</sup> Cadw (2017). *Cadw Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales*. [online]. Available at: <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/placemaking/heritage-impact-assessment/heritage-impact-assessment> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

<sup>3</sup> Cadw (2017). *Cadw Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*. [online]. Available at: <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/placemaking/heritage-impact-assessment/setting-historic-assets> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

<sup>4</sup> Cadw (2017). *Cadw Managing Historic Character in Wales*. [online]. Available at: <https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/Managing%20Historic%20Character%20in%20Wales%20%20EN.pdf> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

<sup>5</sup> Cadw (2011) *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the Historic Environment in Wales*. [online]. Available at: <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/historic-assets/conservation-principles> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

<sup>6</sup> Cadw (2007) Guide to Good Practice on using The Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales in The Planning and Development Process, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. [online]. Available at: [https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/LandscapesRegisterGoodPractice\\_EN\\_0.pdf](https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/LandscapesRegisterGoodPractice_EN_0.pdf) [Accessed 15 September 2025].



describes the Assessment of the Significance of the Impact of Development on Historic Landscape (ASIDOHL) assessment methodology.

## **Chartered Institute of Archaeologists**

- 2.2.1. The baseline study has been undertaken in accordance with guidance published by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), specifically the standard and guidance for Historic Environment desk-based assessment (CIfA, 2020).<sup>7</sup>

## **2.3 Wales Archaeological Research Framework**

- 2.3.1. This resource provides the relevant archaeological research agenda for Wales. The series of publications is organised by chronological period from the Palaeolithic to the modern period, and provides a viable, realistic and effective academic basis for undertaking archaeological intervention. This framework was consulted during the production of this assessment.

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<sup>7</sup> CIfA [Chartered Institute for Archaeologists] Dec 2020, Standards and guidance for Historic Environment desk-based assessment, [online]. Available at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/2023-11/CIfA-SandG-DBA-2020.pdf> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

## 3 Sources and Methodology

### 3.1 General

- 3.1.1. To determine the full Historic Environment potential of the Site, a broad range of standard documentary and cartographic sources, including results from any archaeological investigations in the Site and 1km Study Area, were examined. These have been used to determine the likely nature, extent, preservation and significance of any known or possible heritage assets that may be present within or adjacent to the Site.
- 3.1.2. The Study Area for the collation of information on historic assets was defined as 1km from the Site for both designated historic assets and non-designated historic assets. This distance has been judged as appropriate to provide the context of, and potential for, surviving archaeological remains on the Site given the nature of the Proposed Development and its location. An extended Study Area of 5km from the Wind Turbine Site has been defined for the assessment of effects through change to setting. The reason for this is that the turbines are the components of the Proposed Development most likely to present potential for impacts through change to setting. This is referred to in **Chapter 7: Historic Environment** and **Appendix 7C**, and will not be discussed further in this HEDBA.
- 3.1.3. **Table 3.1** provides a summary of the key data sources. Occasionally there may be reference to assets beyond the 1km Study Area, where appropriate, e.g., where such assets are particularly significant and/or where they contribute to current understanding of the historic environment.

**Table 3-1 –Data sources consulted**

Source	Data	Comment
<b>Cof Cymru - National Historic Assets of Wales (CADW)<sup>8</sup></b>	Cadw record with information on statutorily designated historic assets	Statutory designations (scheduled monuments; statutorily listed buildings; registered parks and gardens; historic battlefields) can provide a significant constraint to development.
<b>Historic Environment Record Team: Glamorgan Gwent (Heneb)<sup>9</sup></b>	Historic Environment Record (HER)	Primary repository of archaeological information. Includes information from past investigations, local knowledge, find spots, and documentary and cartographic sources.

<sup>8</sup> Cof Cymru - National Historic Assets of Wales (CADW) (2025). National Historic Assets of Wales. [online]. Available at: <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/cof-cymru> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

<sup>9</sup> Historic Environment Record Team Glamorgan Gwent (Heneb) (2025). Historic Environment Record. [online]. Available at: <https://heneb.org.uk/historic-environment-records-her/> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

Source	Data	Comment
<b>Coflein<sup>10</sup></b>	Online database for the National Monument Record of Wales (NMRW)	Details of archaeological sites, monuments, buildings and maritime sites in Wales, together with an index to the drawings, manuscripts and photographs held in the NMRW archive collections.
<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	Conservation area	An area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
<b>British Geological Survey (BGS)<sup>11</sup></b>	Solid and drift geology digital map; online BGS geological borehole record data.	Subsurface deposition, including buried geology and topography, can provide an indication of potential for early human settlement, and potential depth of archaeological remains.
<b>Soilscapes<sup>12</sup></b>	Details of soil types.	Subsurface deposition, including soil type, can provide an indication of potential for early human settlement, and potential depth of archaeological remains, as well as influence the suitability of other techniques, such as aerial photographic analysis and geophysical survey.
<b>Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)<sup>13</sup></b>	Database of archaeological finds found by chance.	Government funded project to encourage the voluntary recording of archaeological objects found by members of the public. Database is online at finds.org.uk. This was consulted for the Site and its immediate vicinity only.
<b>National Library Scotland<sup>14</sup></b>	Ordnance Survey (OS) maps from the 1st edition (1900s).	Provides a good indication of past land use and impacts which may

<sup>10</sup> Coflein (2025) Online database for the National Monuments Record of Wales. [online]. Available at: <https://rcahmw.gov.uk/discover/coflein/> [Accessed 15 September 2025].

<sup>11</sup> British Geological Survey (2025). Maps and Resources. [online]. Available at: <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/discovering-geology/maps-and-resources/maps/> [Accessed 9 September 2025].

<sup>12</sup> LandIS (2025) Soilscapes viewer. [online]. Available at: <https://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes.cfm> [Accessed 1 September 2025].

<sup>13</sup> Portable Antiquities Scheme (2025). PAS Database. [online]. Available at: <https://finds.org.uk/database> [Accessed 9 September 2025].

<sup>14</sup> National Library of Scotland (2025). Georeferenced Maps. [online]. Available at: <https://maps.nls.uk/> [Accessed 9 September 2025].

Source	Data	Comment
		have compromised archaeological survival. Provides an indication of the possible date of any buildings on the Site.
Welsh Government <sup>15</sup>	Lidar data obtained from DataMapsWales.	Helps to map and measure surface archaeological remains, surviving earthworks, historic field boundaries, and other features of archaeological interest in the landscape, within and around the Site.
Internet	Web-published local history; National Library of Scotland; Archwilio Historic Environment Record of Wales; Archaeological Data Service.	Many key documentary sources, such as the Victoria County History, the Survey of London, and local and specialist studies are now published on the web and can be used to inform the archaeological and historical background. The Archaeological Data Service includes an archive of digital fieldwork reports.
The Applicant	Project information and detailed design of the Proposed Development	The information can be very useful in enhancing understanding of the nature and depth of construction.

3.1.4. **Figure 7.2** shows the location of known non-designated historic assets within the Study Area, as identified by the sources above for this assessment. These assets are listed in a gazetteer (**Appendix 7B**) and are referred to in this Appendix, and where appropriate, in **Chapter 7**. All distances quoted in the text are approximate (within 5m).

## 3.2 Consultation

3.2.1. Consultation has been undertaken with relevant stakeholders following the receipt of the Scoping Report for the Proposed Development. This is detailed in **Chapter 7**.

## 3.3 Site visit

3.3.1. A visual inspection (walkover only) was completed during a Site visit carried out on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2025. The purpose of this was to determine the topography of the Site and existing

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<sup>15</sup> Welsh Government (2025). Datamap Wales: LiDAR Data download. [online]. Available at: <https://datamap.gov.wales/maps/lidar-data-download/> [Accessed 1 September 2025].

land use, the nature of the existing buildings, the identification of any visible heritage assets (e.g. structures and earthworks) including any possible remains identified on LiDAR data and assess factors which may have affected the survival or condition of any known or potential assets. The full extent of the Wind Turbine portion of the Site was subjected to walkover survey, while access the entire access route was limited due to unsafe ground conditions.<sup>16</sup>

- 3.3.2. The visit also extended beyond the Site for the purposes of scoping heritage assets and their intervisibility with the Proposed Development, as required by Cadw guidance, and for the settings assessments.

### **LiDAR survey**

- 3.3.3. LiDAR data was downloaded from the Welsh Government Datamap Wales website at 1m resolution Digital Terrain Model (DTM) and Digital Surface Model (DSM). These datasets were merged to form a continuous LiDAR model across the survey area. LiDAR data was then processed to produce multi-shade hillshade and Local Relief Model images, from which the identification of archaeological features could be undertaken. A bespoke shapefile was used to record and provide interpretation of archaeological features present on LiDAR imagery.
- 3.3.4. No earthwork features of possible archaeological origin have been identified within the Site. However, the absence of upstanding evidence should not be taken as evidence of absence of archaeological remains within the Site as it is possible that buried archaeological remains could survive intact due to a relative lack of disturbance.

## **3.4 Assessing archaeological potential**

- 3.4.1. **Section 5** presents an assessment of archaeological potential for each chronological period, based on the archaeological and historical background of the area, its geology, topography and hydrology, the likelihood for evidence of past activity, and considering past disturbance which may have affected survival. For example, the Site may have high potential for activity of a particular period, but with low survival. **Section 5** also includes professional opinion on likely heritage significance, where there is low to moderate, or higher, potential for remains to be present. Where potential is low, heritage significance is not assessed, as this implies that remains from the period are not present.

## **3.5 Assessing heritage significance**

- 3.5.1. The determination of significance is based on statutory designation and/or professional judgement against these values. These are identified in Cadw Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales.<sup>2</sup> Cadw also identifies historic asset significance through determining presence of evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.

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<sup>16</sup> Ground conditions in the access route portion of the Site were found to be extremely boggy, and following dynamic risk assessment the decision was taken not to continue survey in this area. Overall, approximately 80 percent of the entire Site was subjected to walkover.

- 3.5.2. Each asset is evaluated against the range of criteria listed above on a case-by-case basis. Unless the nature and exact extent of buried archaeological remains within any given area has been determined through prior investigation, significance is often uncertain.
- 3.5.3. In relation to significant historic assets, the assessment considers the contribution which the historic character and setting makes to the overall significance of the asset.
- 3.5.4. **Table 3-2** gives examples of the significance of designated and non-designated historic assets. Professional judgment is used to determine the value of the potentially affected asset.

Table 3-2 – Heritage value of assets

Heritage value	Summary rationale	Examples
<b>High</b>	Asset has significance for an outstanding level of archaeological, architectural, historic and/or artistic interest.	All designated heritage assets or non-designated assets of demonstrably schedulable quality.
<b>Medium</b>	Asset has significance for a high level of archaeological, architectural, historic and/or artistic interest.	Locally listed buildings and buildings of merit. Regionally significant non-designated historic assets of archaeological interest.
<b>Low</b>	Asset has significance for elements of archaeological architectural, historic or artistic interest.	Locally significant historic assets of archaeological interest and important hedgerows.
<b>Negligible</b>	Due to its nature of form/condition/survival, cannot be considered as an asset in its own right.	Non-extant HER references.

## 4 Historic Environment baseline

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### 4.1 Assets within the Site

- 4.1.1. There are no designated historic assets within the Site.
- 4.1.2. There are two non-designated historic assets located within the Site recorded in GGAT HER data. A post-medieval ruined barn situated wholly within the southern section of the Site, reported in the Uplands Survey Gwent Project (Ref: 05031g). There are also remains of a former farmstead, which is recorded as Blaen Gotappy, Rhyswg Ganol (Ref no: 02205g) which is partially located within the Site.
- 4.1.3. The site of a former medieval grange is recorded within the Site on the Coflein database (NPRN Ref: 421323).
- 4.1.4. The three previously recorded non-designated assets are shown on **Figure 7.2**.

### 4.2 Physical Site Conditions

#### Topography

- 4.2.1. Topography can provide an indication of suitability for settlement, and ground levels can indicate whether the ground has been built up or truncated, which can have implications for archaeological survival (see **Section 4.5**).
- 4.2.2. The Site is located on a high elevation, in a hilly region comprising a mixture of farmlands and built-up areas. The Site encompasses an undulating landscape on hills, flanked by valleys and wooded areas. The slope increases from the west to east, with the average ground elevation ranging from 285m in the west to 460m in the east. The land slopes down from north to south, with the average ground elevation ranging from 460m in the north to 340m in the south.
- 4.2.3. The Nant Gawni River flows through the north-western section of the Site, while the Ebbw River flows 875m the west of the Site. Other rivers flowing in close vicinity to the Site include the Nant Gwyddon, the Nant Carn and the Nant Gofapi as well as tributaries of these.

#### Geology and Soils

- 4.2.4. Geology can provide an indication of suitability for early settlement, and potential depth of remains.
- 4.2.5. According to the BGS online data,<sup>17</sup> the bedrock geology of the Site comprises of Hughes Member Sandstone, a sedimentary formation formed in the pre-Quaternary Period.
- 4.2.6. Small patches of the outlying areas running along the north, east, and south-southwest extents, comprise of Rhondda Member Sandstone, a sedimentary bedrock. Additionally located towards the far eastern section of the Site, are three formations adjacent to each other namely, the Deri

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<sup>17</sup> British Geological Survey (2025) *Geology of Britain Viewer*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/> [Accessed 10 September 2025].

formation (Mudstone, siltstone and sandstone) a sedimentary deposit formed between 315.2 and 308 million years ago during the Carboniferous period. It overlies the South Wales Middle Coal Measures Formation (comprising of Mudstone, siltstone and sandstone).

- 4.2.7. Cropping out in a peripheral belt, is the South Wales Middle Coal Measures Formation (sandstone), a sedimentary formation dating between 318 and 309.5 million years ago during the Carboniferous period.
- 4.2.8. It is noticeable that the scheduled monument (Iron Ore Scours at Upper Race, Pontypool. Cadw 3487) is overlying the said South Wales Coal Measures formations, which are reported to be a productive coalfield.
- 4.2.9. The Site does not contain any superficial geology, but there are formations that have been mapped outside. To the north, and the west of the Site, there is an alluvium (clay, silt, sand, and gravel) formation, located in two patches, northwards at roughly ST 22604 99013, and westwards, roughly adjoining the Ebbw River, formed during the Holocene period. The alluvial deposits are associated with the Ebbw River and could be of moderate archaeological potential and possibly high paleoenvironmental potential, pertaining to Holocene Period archaeological remains.
- 4.2.10. To the north of the Site, there is a Devensian glacio-fluvial deposit formed around 116 and 12 thousand years ago, comprising of sand and gravel. The formation is roughly located at ST 22392 98808. In the north, northeast and south-southeast peripheries, are patches of sedimentary Head (clay, silt, sand and gravel), formed during the Quaternary period.
- 4.2.11. Both head and glacio-fluvial deposits are glacial deposits and may have low archaeological and palaeoenvironmental potential, except cases where archaeological features might be preserved underneath the deposits.
- 4.2.12. A peat survey undertaken in 2021 and included as part of the Scoping for the Proposed Development (REF) includes the Site. This was found that potential peat depths extended to between 0.00m and 0.10m. Peat is defined by the Welsh Government as >40cm thickness organic 'O' horizon material within the upper 80cm, or >30cm organic 'O' horizon material resting directly on bedrock.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the Site cannot generally be considered to be underlain by peat. The proposed access track between the Site and Mynydd Maen Wind Farm does traverse acid, loamy upland soils with a wet peaty surface,<sup>12</sup> which entails the presence of peat deposits in this area. Further peat probing surveys are planned prior to the submission of the Final ES.

### 4.3 Overview of past archaeological investigations

- 4.3.1. Current understanding of the archaeology of the Site and Study Area is limited to a small number of archaeological investigations. These are largely related to desk-based assessments and site visits and are listed and described in **Appendix 7B**.

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<sup>18</sup> Welsh Government (2022) Production of the Peatlands of Wales map: Soil Policy Evidence Programme, March 2022, Report code: SPEP2020-21/03. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/production-peatlands-wales-map> [Accessed 22 October 2025].

## 4.4 Archaeological and historical background

### Prehistoric (800,000 BCE (before common era)– 43 CE [common era])

- 4.4.1. The earliest evidence for human occupation in southeast Wales comprises finds of animal and human bone and artefacts from the Upper Palaeolithic which began around 40,000 before present (BP) during a warm phase of the Pleistocene<sup>19</sup>. The majority of these finds in the region come from caves in the Gower, a limestone area in southern Wales (75km west of the Site), and King Arthur's Cave, near Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire (35km north of the Site), which have produced late Glacial remains. During the Early Upper Palaeolithic and, after the final glaciation (c. 20,000 BCE), in the succeeding Late Upper Palaeolithic, small human groups possibly used these caves for temporary shelters<sup>19</sup>.
- 4.4.2. The Mesolithic hunter-gatherer communities of the post-glacial period (10,000–4000 BCE) inhabited a largely wooded environment. The river valleys and coast would have been favoured in providing a predictable source of food (from hunting and fishing) and water, as well as a means of transport and communication. Evidence of activity is characterised by flint tools rather than structural remains.
- 4.4.3. During the Neolithic, the massive communal tombs of megalithic construction scattered along the coastal plain of southeast Wales give evidence of the importance that the region held for the early farming communities in the fourth to third millennia BCE. Little is known of the settlements of the period and, indeed of the succeeding Bronze Age when, the evidence suggests, the area flourished with an expansion of population. Burial traditions changed to individual burial under round mounds.
- 4.4.4. The Iron Age in southeast Wales followed on from the Bronze Age without any obvious cultural or population break. Iron tools started to appear in the first half of the first millennium BCE but were initially rare. Hilltop settlements are the main site type known from the period and vary greatly in size and complexity.
- 4.4.5. No prehistoric archaeological remains have been reported from within the Site or the 1km Study Area. This could be due to a relative lack of archaeological investigation within the Site, as other prominent hilltops in the wider area do contain evidence of prehistoric activity, such as the Iron Age hillfort (Cadw 2349) approximately 1.8 km to the south, and Bronze Age barrows (Cadw 589) approximately 4.6 km to the southwest. These monuments in the wider area suggest that at least in the Bronze Age and Iron Age, the upland areas around the Site were the focus of settlement and mortuary activity. There is also the possibility that the upland area in which the Site is located was used during later prehistory for grazing, which would leave little archaeological evidence.

### Roman (43–410 CE)

- 4.4.6. The Roman name for southeast Wales seemed to have been *Siluria* as the tribes who occupied south-eastern Wales were known as the *Silures*. They gave formidable opposition to the conquest of

the Romans, and it took the Romans nearly thirty years between 49 CE and 77,CE to overpower them.<sup>19</sup>

- 4.4.7. Romans built a fort at Caerphilly in 78 CE (10km south of the Site), though by the beginning of the fifth century, their influence had waned.
- 4.4.8. There are no Roman roads in the immediate vicinity of the Site. The Roman Road connecting Llandrindon Wells in the north to Cardiff in the south (Margary 621),<sup>20</sup> passing via Brecon, ran 10km west of the Site. Another Roman Road connected Cardiff in the west to Caerleon in the east, running 8km south of the Site (Margary 60b).<sup>20</sup>
- 4.4.9. No Roman archaeological remains have been identified from within the Site or the 1km Study Area. This correlates with the lack of known evidence for Roman archaeological remains within the surrounding area; however, there is the possibility for agricultural activity to have been taking place within the Site, such as seasonal grazing, leaving little archaeological evidence as previously noted.

### **Early medieval (410–1066 CE)**

- 4.4.10. Following the withdrawal of the Roman army from Britain in the early 5th century CE the whole country fell into an extended period of socio-economic decline. In the 9th and 10th centuries, the Saxon Minster system began to be replaced by local parochial organisation, with formal areas of land centred on nucleated settlements served by a parish church.
- 4.4.11. Saint Cenydd established a monastery on or near the old Caerphilly? fort in the 6th century CE. It later came under the tutelage of his son Ffili, who may be the source of the name *Caerffili* – Ffili's fort.
- 4.4.12. No early medieval archaeological remains have been identified from within the Site or the 1km Study Area. This correlates with evidence from the surrounding area, although it is possible that the upland area in which the Site is located was used in this period for seasonal grazing, which would leave few archaeological traces.

### **Medieval (1066–1540 CE)**

- 4.4.13. Following the Norman invasion of Wales in 1066 CE, the separate townships of Abercarn (1km west of the Site), Cwmcarn (2km east of the Site) and Newbridge (2km northwest of the Site) were given a manorial title of Abercarn. The three townships were also within the boundaries of the ancient parish of Mynyddislwyn and remained therein up until comparatively recent times. A Norman Castle was established at Caerphilly in 1271 CE (10km south of the Site).
- 4.4.14. Medieval remains situated within the Site include the site of the former Rhyswg Grange<sup>21</sup> (within the southern section of the Site), held by the Cistercian Abbey of Llantarnam (NPRN 421323). This was located along Cefn Rhyswg, on high ground on the east side of the valley above Abercarn. The top of the ridge is now occupied by the enclosed land of Rhyswg Fawr and Rhyswg Ganol and is

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<sup>19</sup> Rees, S., Knight, J., and Hilling, J.B., 2016, Southeast Wales in the Prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon Periods, *The Archaeological Journal*, p. 6-16.

<sup>20</sup> Margery, I.D. (1955) *Roman Roads in Britain*. Unknown Publisher.

<sup>21</sup> Williams, D.H., *White Monks in Gwent and the Border* (1976), p. 88.

bounded on the north and south by forestry plantations. Beyond these holdings to the northeast is the open moorland of Mynydd Maen. The grange is referred to in documents of the early 14th century. Both the named holdings feature ancient barns and longhouses. The remains of Rhyswg Ganol are still extant, which is surrounded by vegetation and farm machinery. The former medieval grange may have been located in the area now occupied by Rhyswg Farm (Cadw 1900); however, it is possible that the fieldscape which occupies the Site may have its origins in the medieval period through association with the grange.

### **Post-medieval (1540–1900)**

- 4.4.15. In the 19th century, there were multiple working farms on the Rhyswg mountain between Abercarn (1km west of the Site) and Cwmcarn (1km south of the Site). The northern section of the Site is partly aligned with an existing trackway in the north before traversing open moorland, while the southern section of the Site is located uncultivated farmland which appears to have been enclosed by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.4.16. The OS First Edition 6" map of 1886, shows Site occupying roughly the same landscape context as that of today, with enclosed fields occupying the southern portion and open moorland to the north. Rural settlement features such as farmhouses and barns are recorded in close proximity to the Site, such as a farmhouse and barn named "Pen-y-caeau" lying adjacent to the northern portion of the Site and remains of a longhouse dwelling with associated forecourt buildings, named Rhyswg-ganol, (Ref: 02205g) situated adjacent to and partially within the southern section of the Site. No additional features beyond the HER boundary were identified within the Site through the LiDAR survey. Modern satellite imagery shows the heritage asset to be dilapidated and overgrown, surrounded by farm machinery and debris. This was confirmed during the Site walkover (Plate 11).

**Plate 11 - View towards remains of Rhyswg-Ganol farmstead (Ref 02205g) from the north**



- 4.4.17. A post-medieval ruined barn is situated within the southern section of the Site, reported in the Uplands Survey Gwent Project, in the year 1997 (Ref: 05031g). This was confirmed during the site walkover (see Plate 12). These former structures are likely to have been part of the Rhyswg Fawr Farmhouse and Walled Forecourt, a Grade II listed building situated 145m southwest of the Site (Ref: 1900). A long barn that was originally part of the Rhyswg Fawr Farmhouse and was formerly used as a dwelling is also designated as a Grade II listed building, situated 250m west of the Site (Ref: 20998). A further post-medieval barn and yard is recorded 570m north of the Site (Ref: 06405g; 06438g). The architecture of these buildings is typical of Welsh hill farms and was built gable end into the hill side in stone in the early 17th century and possibly modernised in the 19th century. Further sites relating to former agricultural land use are located within the 1km Study Area. The site of a ruined former farmstead is located approximately 900m east of the Site (04952g), and the ruins of a barn are recorded 700m to the west (05030g).

**Plate 12 - Ruined Barn (Ref. 05031g) looking east**



- 4.4.18. The Site is surrounded by the remains of former mineral extraction sites. The OS maps have recorded quarries that have been since filled-in and are now overgrown (07337g); and a marker stone thought to be a mineral boundary marker is recorded approximately 100m south of the Site (07341g), currently in an area of commercial forestry. Mining grew to be the prominent industrial activity in the region, which was led to the development of railways and canals for logistical purposes, and was also linked to the expansion of settlement in the region.
- 4.4.19. The Grade II listed Welsh Presbyterian Church (Cadw: 20995) is situated 980m west of the Site. Built in 1853 by Sir Benjamin Hall, a local landowner, the structure comprises of a simple small chapel in Gothic Revival Style and attests to the presence of a community in the vicinity who would have made use of the church services. The growth of the community may be attributed to the industrial revolution (18th-19th century), which is seen in the growth of mining as around the Site.
- 4.4.20. The railways and canals would have connected the settlement with the larger region. The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal -Crumlin Branch (Ref: 03263.16g) is situated 835m to the west of the Site. The canal was a part of the Newport to Crumlin Section of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. It was built by Thomas Dadford Junior, opening in 1798. The canal stretched from Crumlin in the western valley through to Rogerstone and then eastwards to meet the eastern valley branch at Crindau, just outside Newport.

## Modern (1901–present)

- 4.4.21. There are no recorded modern remains within the Site or the 1km Study Area. Most of the post-medieval heritage assets in the Study Area continued to be used and modified in the modern period.
- 4.4.22. According to OS Second Edition 6": mile map of 1901, the rural nature of the Study Area was largely retained in the early 20th century. Old quarries located 170m northwest, and 920m north of the Site (Ref: 04994g) from the post-medieval period may have continued to be used in this period, along with other features such as stepping stones and springs. The Study Area was part of the South Wales coalfield, and the settlements in Abercarn (1km west of the Site) and Cwmcarn (1km south of the Site) grew during this period because of this. The field system occupying most of the Site has remained largely intact throughout the modern period, although a small amount of boundary loss has occurred.

## 4.5 Factors affecting archaeological survival

- 4.5.1. The OS mapping from the 1880s onwards has been used to identify past land use and impacts which may have compromised the survival of any archaeological remains that might be present within the Site.
- 4.5.2. Archaeological survival across the Site is anticipated to be moderate to high, based on the following assumptions:
- Past impacts to archaeological survival in the Site are most likely to have been from historic mineral extraction. No extraction sites are recorded within the Site boundary, although a number are located within close proximity. Mineral extraction may have led to the partial or complete removal of sub-surface archaeological remains. These would have had localised impacts to the archaeological survival within the Site;
  - The access road portion of the Site lay along trackways, which would have had minor and shallow impacts on any sub-surface archaeological remains present within the footprint of the route;
  - Most of the Site has been historically characterised by uncultivated grasslands and farmlands, immediately surrounded by blocks of woodland. It is not clear whether arable farming has taken place in this area, but ploughing and other agricultural activities may have caused some ground disturbance, although the impacts are unlikely to have been substantial enough to truncate all sub-surface archaeological deposits.

## 5 Archaeological Potential

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### 5.1 Palaeoenvironment

- 5.1.1. The Site has low potential for palaeoenvironmental remains. A peat survey was undertaken within the Site. This found no evidence for peat deposits within the portion of the Site occupied by enclosed fields, which is reflected in **Chapter 11: Ground Conditions**. The access track between the Site and proposed Mynydd Maen Wind Farm is located on acid, loamy, upland soils with a wet, peaty surface. It is possible that peat deposits may be located in this part of the Site, and further peat surveys are planned prior to the submission of the Final ES.

### 5.2 Prehistoric

- 5.2.1. The Site has low potential to contain prehistoric remains. There are no recorded prehistoric archaeological sites or artefacts from the Site or the Study Area. The presence of minor streams and alluvial deposits associated with the Rivers Ebbw and Afon Lwyd could indicate moderate preservation archaeological remains which could represent varying forms of settlement activity, particularly in the Bronze Age and Iron Age when upland areas were more populous. It is likely that any remains would be related to agricultural use of the Site, most likely grazing or livestock management.

### 5.3 Roman

- 5.3.1. The Site has low potential to contain Roman remains. No Roman archaeological remains have been identified from within the Site or the 1km Study Area.
- 5.3.2. The Site appears to have been located within a rural hinterland away from the main settlement foci. The nearest Roman fort is situated at Caerphilly, which is 10km south of the Site. There are also no Roman roads in the immediate vicinity of the Site. However, the rural population may have used the land within the Site during the Roman period, possibly for seasonal grazing activities which would leave little archaeological trace.

### 5.4 Early medieval

- 5.4.1. The Site has low potential to contain early medieval remains. No early medieval archaeological remains have been identified from within the Site or the 1km Study Area. However, the rural population may have used the land occupied by the Site during the early medieval period, possibly for seasonal grazing activities.

### 5.5 Medieval

- 5.5.1. The Site has low to medium potential to contain medieval remains. A former medieval grange was situated within the southern section of the Site, while the remains of a medieval chapel are recorded 790m south of the Site (NPRN Ref: 421323). However, the rural nature of the landscape indicates that the Site would have been mostly used for upland pasture and away from the settlement focus. As previously noted, the field system present by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century may contain elements established in the medieval period through associations with Rhyswg Grange. Any remains of this nature would be former field boundaries.

## 5.6 Post-medieval

- 5.6.1. The Site has low to moderate potential to contain post-medieval remains. The Site continued to be located within the agricultural periphery of known centres of settlement, with isolated farmsteads. One post-medieval ruined barn was identified within the southern section of the Site (Ref: 05031g) and the remains of a former farmstead are partially located within the southern portion of the Site (Ref: 02205g). Post-medieval remains, if found, would be expected to be related to local farming practices, and small-scale mineral extraction.



# APPENDIX TITLE





## References







# APPENDIX TITLE





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