

**CASTLERING ARCHAEOLOGY**

**REPORT NO.230**

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**ERYRI HOSPITAL**

**MORFA ROAD**

**CAERNARFON**

**GWYNEDD**

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**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING**

**JANUARY 2006**

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MORFA ROAD  
CAERNARVON  
GWYNEDD**

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**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING**

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## SYNOPSIS

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This report contains the results of a contracted archaeological assessment comprising photographic recording and desk-based study undertaken in January 2006, of seven buildings to be demolished on the site of the former Bodfan Workhouse and Eryri Hospital, Caernarfon. Five of the buildings are recorded on the c.1881 plan of the former Caernarfon Union Workhouse, known as Bodfan, constructed in 1845 after the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act.

Prior to 1834, parishes in Wales predominantly dispensed poor relief as 'out-relief' and relatively little use was made of 'indoor' relief through the establishment of a workhouse. Before 1834, The Parish House in Caernarfon's Twthill area had afforded shelter to the parish destitute, tramps and those people considered 'socially unacceptable'. This shelter was only available to Caernarfon unfortunates, but the formation of Caernarfon Poor Law Union in 1837 had resulted in widening the catchment area to the surrounding parishes. Consequently The Parish House found itself unable to cope with the increased demand for shelter.

The Board of Governors then decided to erect a building large enough to accommodate all those in need. In 1845 Bodfan was constructed south of the town. The workhouse accommodated up to 200 inmates taken from the poor of Caernarfon and surrounding parishes.

Bodfan was one of five workhouses in Caernarvonshire, the others being at Pwllheli, Conwy, Bangor and Llanrwst. Bangor (*later St David's Hospital*) and Conwy buildings have recently been demolished, and are now sites for new housing. Map evidence suggests Bodfan was the largest of the five sites sharing the same '*cruciform plan*' as Pwllhelli Workhouse, which survives as a Hospital in the Town. Bodfan was one of the 54 workhouses built in Wales after the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act.

Although Bodfan workhouse represents one of the few surviving workhouses in Wales, it was not considered to have fulfilled the criteria for Listed building status, and as such has received no statutory protection.

The buildings on site represent social and economic history displaying a typical workhouse plan based on the principles of classification, segregation and supervision. The stone walled boundary further isolated the inmates from the community. The location of the site itself is a social statement, in so far as purpose-built workhouses were invariably sited in rural locations away from the towns.

The transition from Poor Law to Welfare State saw many of the buildings fall into disuse and disrepair and others only utilised as stores. The current programme of work has ensured that a record has been made of a group of buildings which are part of a social system that no longer exists.

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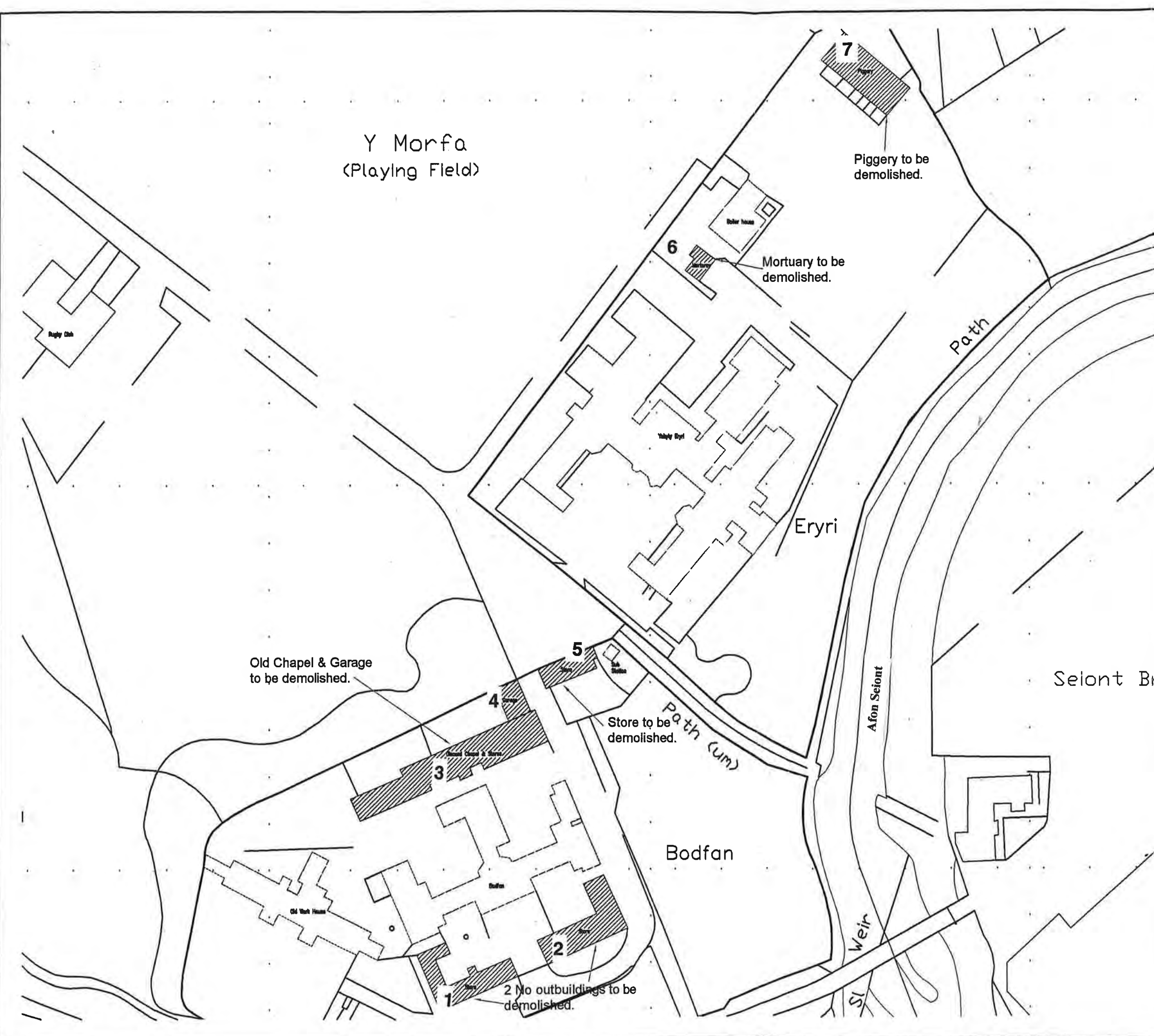
**Appendix 1** Copy of the Project Design



**Appendix 2** Archive statement

***Abbreviations:***

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| OS     | Ordnance Survey   |
| RCAHMW | Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments, Wales |

|               |             |          |
|---------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Fig. 8</b> | D – door    | W-window |
|               | C - chimney |          |



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| <div><div>Fig. 1    Site plan</div><div>Reproduced with permission from<br/>North West Wales NHS Trust<br/>Estates &amp; Facilities Office</div></div>  |  |                 |
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| tel/titre   |  |                 |
| Block Plan  |  |                 |
| cynllun/project   |  |                 |
| Demolition of 5 Buildings   |  |                 |
| graddfa/scale   |  |                 |
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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1.1 A Planning application (*Ref: C05A/0682/14/LL*) has been submitted in respect of the demolition of buildings at Eryri Hospital, Morfa Road, Caernarfon, Gwynedd by North West Wales NHS Trust. Consultation with Ashley Batten, Development Control Archaeologist, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, revealed that some of the buildings to be demolished are recorded by the OS in 1889 and are part of the former Caernarfon Union Workhouse, known as Bodfan, constructed in 1845 after the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act.

1.2 The workhouse itself had been considered for statutory protection but was considered to not fulfil the criteria. However, in view of the archaeological importance of the site and the fact that there is no prior record of the buildings, Ashley Batten, Development Control Officer, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, acting in his curatorial capacity, recommended that a photographic survey of the existent buildings together with a desk-based study should be undertaken prior to any works on the site, as part of planning consent.

1.3 In December 2005, Castlering Archaeology was contracted by Daniel Eyre, Architectural Design Officer, on behalf of the North West Wales NHS Trust to undertake the prescribed archaeological work. The project was undertaken in January 2006 and the results form the basis of this report.

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## 2. AIM & OBJECTIVES

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- 2.1 The historic building recording is designed to:
- provide a comprehensive historical record of the buildings / structures on site in order to understand the development of the former workhouse
  - provide a data set of characteristics and architectural details
  - assess the date and significance of the buildings to be demolished
  - provide a general record of the buildings to be demolished, as part the proposed development.

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## 3. METHODOLOGY

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3.1 The historic building recording has been undertaken in accordance with the broad specifications defined by RCAHME Level 2 survey (1999 4th ed.). Castlering Archaeology has abided by the *IFA Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* and *IFA Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*.

### ***Phase 1 – Desk-based study***

3.2 The desk-based study has consulted relevant readily available records held by Caernarfon County Record Office, Victoria Dock, Caernarfon and the North West Wales NHS Trust. Relevant sources are listed in Section 9 of this report.

### ***Phase 2 – Photographic survey***

3.3 A photographic record of the buildings / structures to be demolished and general landscape shots has been undertaken in 35mm format. A selection of the photography is included for illustration in the report. The full photographic collection will be deposited at RCAHMW, Aberystwyth together with a copy of the report.

3.4 The buildings to be demolished are marked on Fig. 1 as Buildings 1-7, and described in Section 5.

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#### 4. CAERNARFON WORKHOUSE - HISTORIC BACKGROUND

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4.1 Since the Acts of Union (1536-43), Wales has been administered under the same laws as England. Thus, the Poor Law Acts of 1597 and 1601, and all successive poor law legislation applied equally to England and Wales. Prior to 1834, parishes in Wales predominantly dispensed poor relief as 'out-relief' (*money, food, clothes, blankets, fuel etc*) and relatively little use was made of 'indoor' relief through the establishment of a workhouse. The 1792 *Gilbert Act* had enabled parishes to group together voluntarily to raise capital to build a House of Industry for the housing, education and employment of the poor and to set up purpose built workhouses under a Board of Guardians (Morrison 2000, 20). The option was soon adopted in East Anglia, but few Welsh Parishes grouped for this purpose until in 1792 the Montgomery and Pool House of Industry opened at Forden, Montgomeryshire (Morrison 2000, 25).

##### **1834 Poor Law Amendment Act**

4.2 In the years post-dating the Napoleonic Wars there was a marked increase in the cost of poor relief resulting in a Commission set up to investigate in 1832. By 1834, the results were incorporated into the *Poor Law Amendment Act*, which embodied the Poor Law Commission with the power to enforce the grouping together of parishes to provide poor law relief. The whole of England and Wales was divided into Poor Law Unions and each was to have its own workhouse. The Board of Guardians were responsible to give poor relief to all able bodied persons who sought it – but only within a workhouse, where conditions were to be worse than the lowest independent labourer. Those who sought relief were segregated, men were separated from women and families were broken up.

##### **Caernarfon Poor Law Union**

4.3 The *Caernarfon Poor Law Union* was officially formed in 1837, operating in parishes in the counties of Caernarfonshire and Anglesey. Its operation was overseen by an elected Board of 27 Guardians, who represented 16 constituent parishes. Before 1834, The Parish House in Caernarfon's Twthill area had afforded shelter to the parish destitute, tramps and those people considered 'socially unacceptable'. This shelter was only available to Caernarfon unfortunates, but the formation of the Poor Law Union 1837 had resulted in widening the catchment area to the surrounding parishes. Consequently The Parish House found itself unable to cope with the increased demand for shelter.

4.4 The Board then decided to erect a building large enough to accommodate all those in need. In 1845 *Caernarfon Union Workhouse*, known as *Bodfan*, was constructed south of the town. The workhouse appears to have been built on land formerly occupied by 'Penmorfa'. The 1841 Tithe map (Fig. 2) records 'Penmorfa' together with Plots 1468, 1467 & 1469 already owned by Caernarfon Union but leased as arable and pasture land to Hugh Hughes. On the west and north side of the site, The Crown own the wastes recorded as Plot 1939. On the north bank of the river, part of which would become the site of Eryri Hospital, Plots 1470 – 1473 are owned by Frank Jones and let to Wm Matthew as arable and pasture land with woodland on Plot 1471.

##### **Bodfan Workhouse**

4.5 *Bodfan Workhouse* accommodated up to 200 inmates taken from the poor of Caernarfon and surrounding parishes. The Board of Guardians controlled the day to day running of the workhouse, reclaiming a pro-rata amount from each parish in proportion to the use of the facility.

##### **c.1881 plan**

4.6 The c.1881 plan of the workhouse, deposited at Caernarfon Archives (Fig. 3), gives some indication of the layout, which apparently also included a tramp's ward, an infirmary and a school. The map is included in a deposit of minute books, financial statements and case studies. Also included is a document (XG/2/67) recording that in 1881/2, the workhouse was altered and enlarged to the cost of £2,500 by Roberts Brothers, builders of Gerllan, Bethesda. An undated building contract (XG/2/ADD/108) is also included in the Bodfan deposit, which gives details of building materials etc, which suggest it is more likely to date to the c.1913 building of Eryri.

##### **Eryri Hospital**

4.7 The deposited plan of Eryri (XG/2/70; Fig. 6) is also dated c.1881, although Eryri was not completed until 1913 and first recorded by the OS in 1918 (Fig. 7). In 1910, the Board of Guardians had decided that the Infirmary building at Bodfan had become outdated and laid plans to erect a new, larger, modern building to cater for the sick,



which became known as Eryri. At the outbreak of the First World War (1914-18), Eryri was commandeered by the authorities to be used as a military hospital (*Photographic records - XS/1497/25/1, 3-7*).

#### **20<sup>th</sup> century developments**

4.8 By the time of the Local Government Act of 1929, Unions were abolished and the duties of the Board of Guardians were transferred to County Councils. Responsibility for the poor was transferred to the Public Assistance Committee until the 1948 NHS Act. Following the Local Government Act of 1929, the hospital section dealt with the chronic sick, while the workhouse site operated as *Bodfan Mental Home*, continuing to function as it had under the Caernarfon Poor Law Union, caring mainly for the old, the mentally ill, unmarried mothers and vagrants.

4.9 Following the 1948 NHS Act, the hospital was managed by the Caernarfon and Anglesey Hospital Management Committee. The Bodfan Institution then merged with the adjacent Eryri Hospital. Following reorganisation in 1974 control passed to Gwynedd District Health Authority, and subsequently North West Wales NHS Trust from 1999. The old workhouse buildings are now mainly used for hospital administrative accommodation and storage.

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### **5. WORKHOUSE - ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN**

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5.1 Many early institutions were 'working-houses' — places where work was performed by the poor and unemployed, not necessarily providing any of the residential accommodation or medical care facilities that later became associated with workhouses. These early establishments were generally part of existing buildings rented by the parish or town or almshouses, rather than being purpose-built. Since parish workhouses were so uncommon in Wales, almost all of the Welsh Poor Law Unions had to erect new workhouse buildings rather than the usually cheaper option of adapting existing accommodation.

5.2 The first annual report published by the Poor Law Commissioners in 1835 included an appendix containing a number of model plans for workhouses (*May, 2002, 9*). The early designs were mainly for rural workhouses where land was not an issue. The early nineteenth century saw architectural developments that were to become significant in workhouse design and workhouse architects explored the fashionable styles of the day. The principles of classification, segregation and supervision were embodied in all plans.

5.3 Designs were often based on the principle that all areas could be observed from a central observation point, giving the building a prison-like appearance. In the 'Courtyard Plan', the buildings were arranged around three sides of a large quadrangle and the administrative offices, board-room and Master's quarters etc were sited at either side of an entrance archway on the fourth side of the quadrangle. In the early years of workhouse construction from 1834, the most widely adopted model plans were those produced by the architect Sampson Kempthorne. His 'cruciform' and 'hexagonal' designs were used throughout England and Wales. The first new workhouse to be erected under the 1834 Act was the hexagonal workhouse at Abingdon, for which Kempthorne himself was the architect. In 1836, Kempthorne produced a cut-down version of the 'square' plan, which was known as the '200-pauper plan' and lacked a polygonal supervisory hub. It was intended for use in more rural areas where pauper numbers were lower. Between about 1840 and 1870, new workhouse buildings moved away from the Poor Law Commission's model 'radial plans' into a 'Corridor Plan', where it became the norm to have a separate entrance block, linear main block and hospital block all running parallel to one another (*Morrison 1999, 85*).

5.4 Bodfan was one of five workhouses in Caernarvonshire, the others being at Pwllheli, Conwy, Bangor and Llanrwst. Bangor (*later St David's Hospital*) and Conwy buildings have recently been demolished and are now sites for new housing. Map evidence suggests Bodfan was the largest of the five sites, sharing the same 'cruciform plan' as Pwllhelli Workhouse, which survives as a Hospital in the Town. Bodfan was one of the 54 workhouses built in Wales after the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. The building was presumably designed by a local architect using a variation on Kempthorne's 'cruciform plan'.

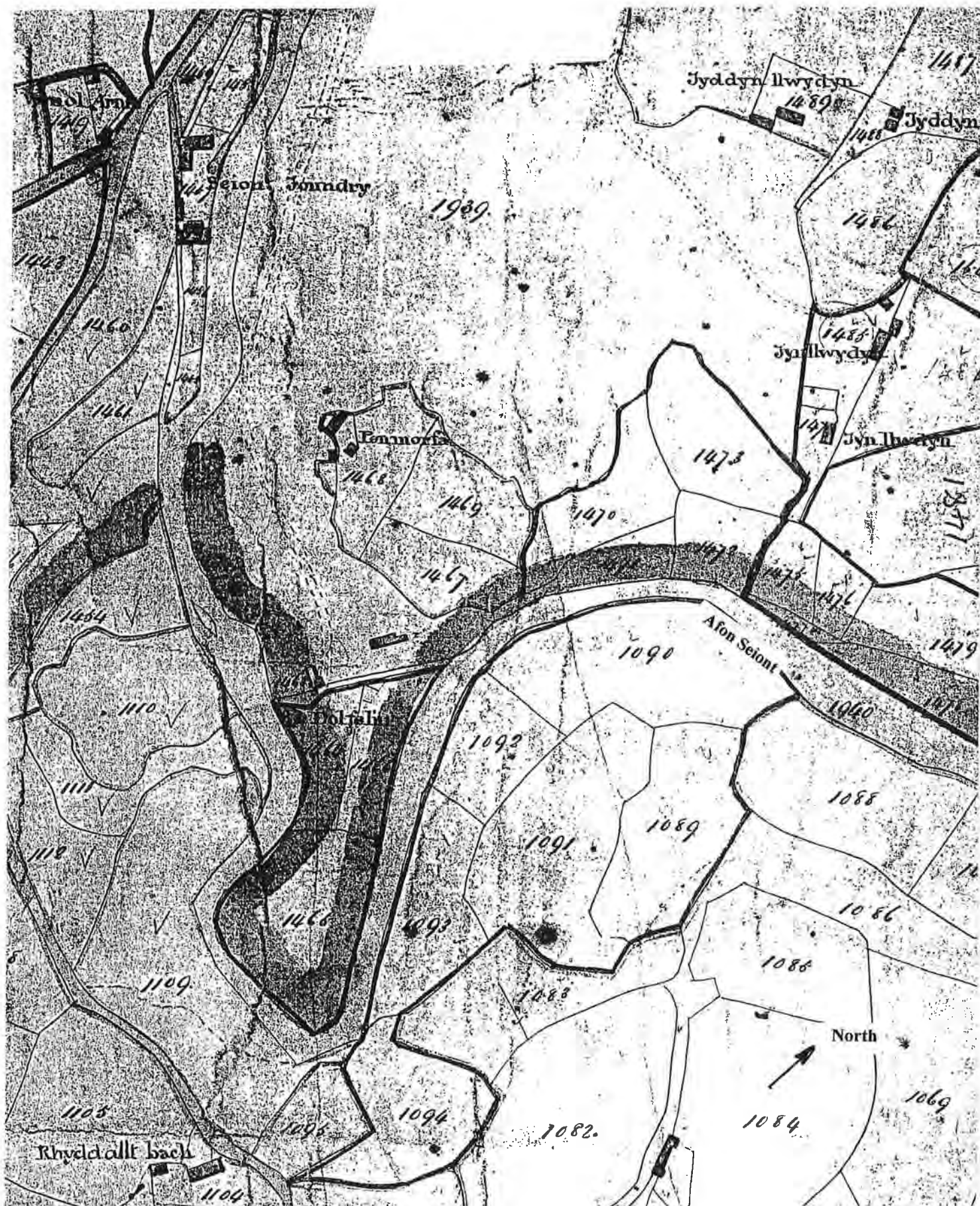


Fig. 2 Extract from 1841 Llanbeblig Tithe Map

CARNARVON BOARD OF GUARDIANS.  
THE PARK. CARNARVON.  
WORKHOUSE &c.

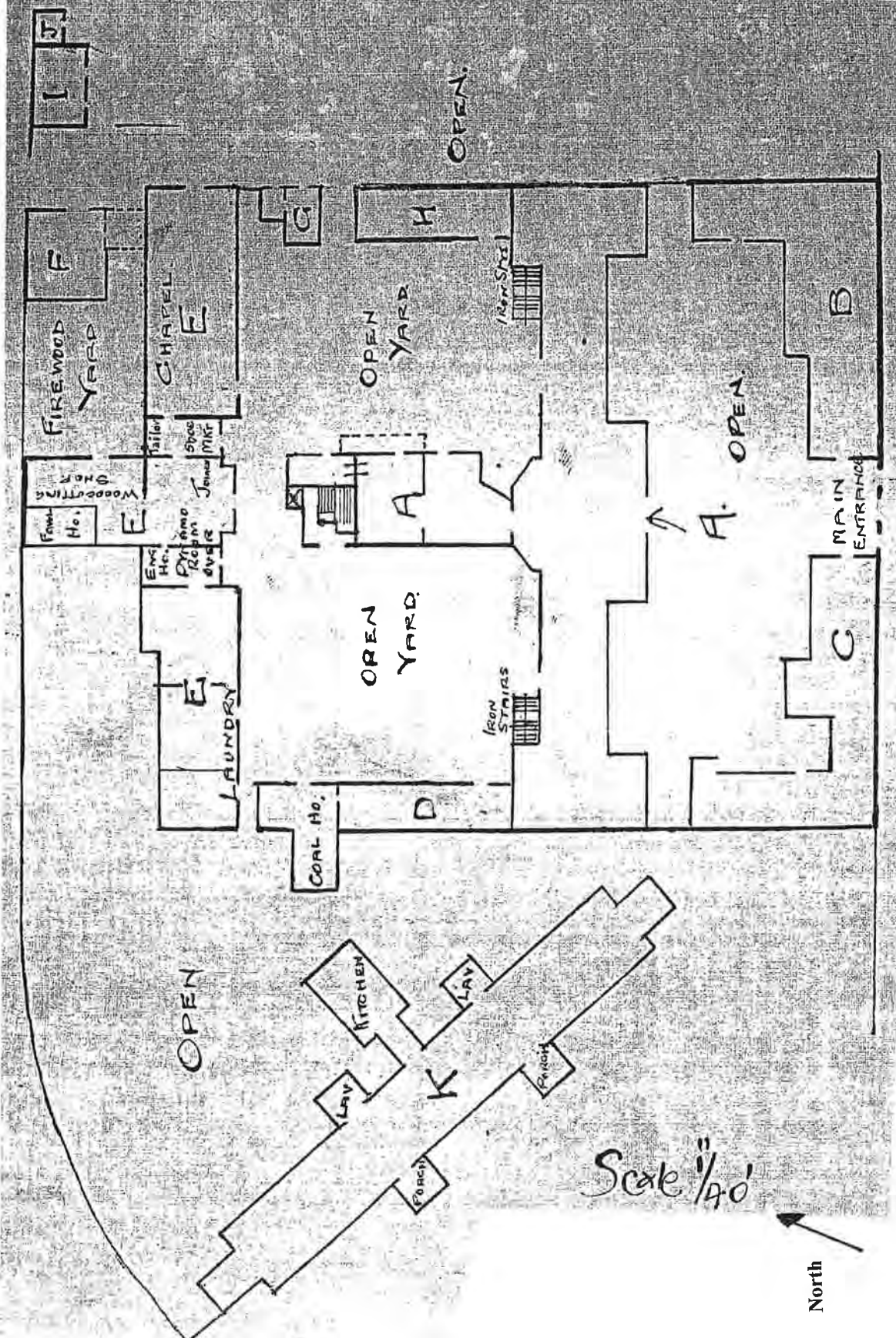


Fig. 3 Plan of Bodfan Workhouse c.1881 (XG/2/69)



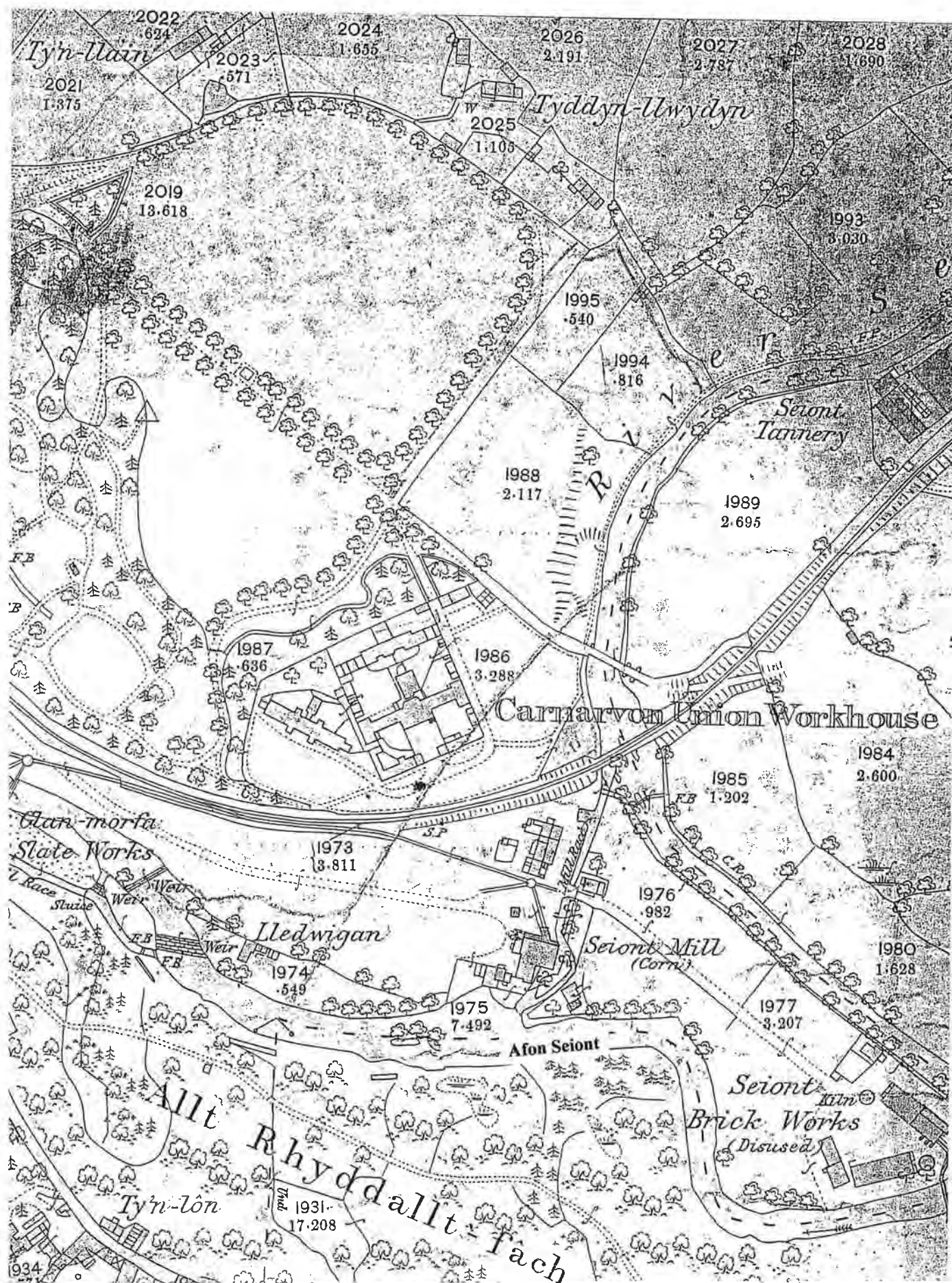


Fig. 4 1889 Ordnance Survey Map (Sheet 15.8)

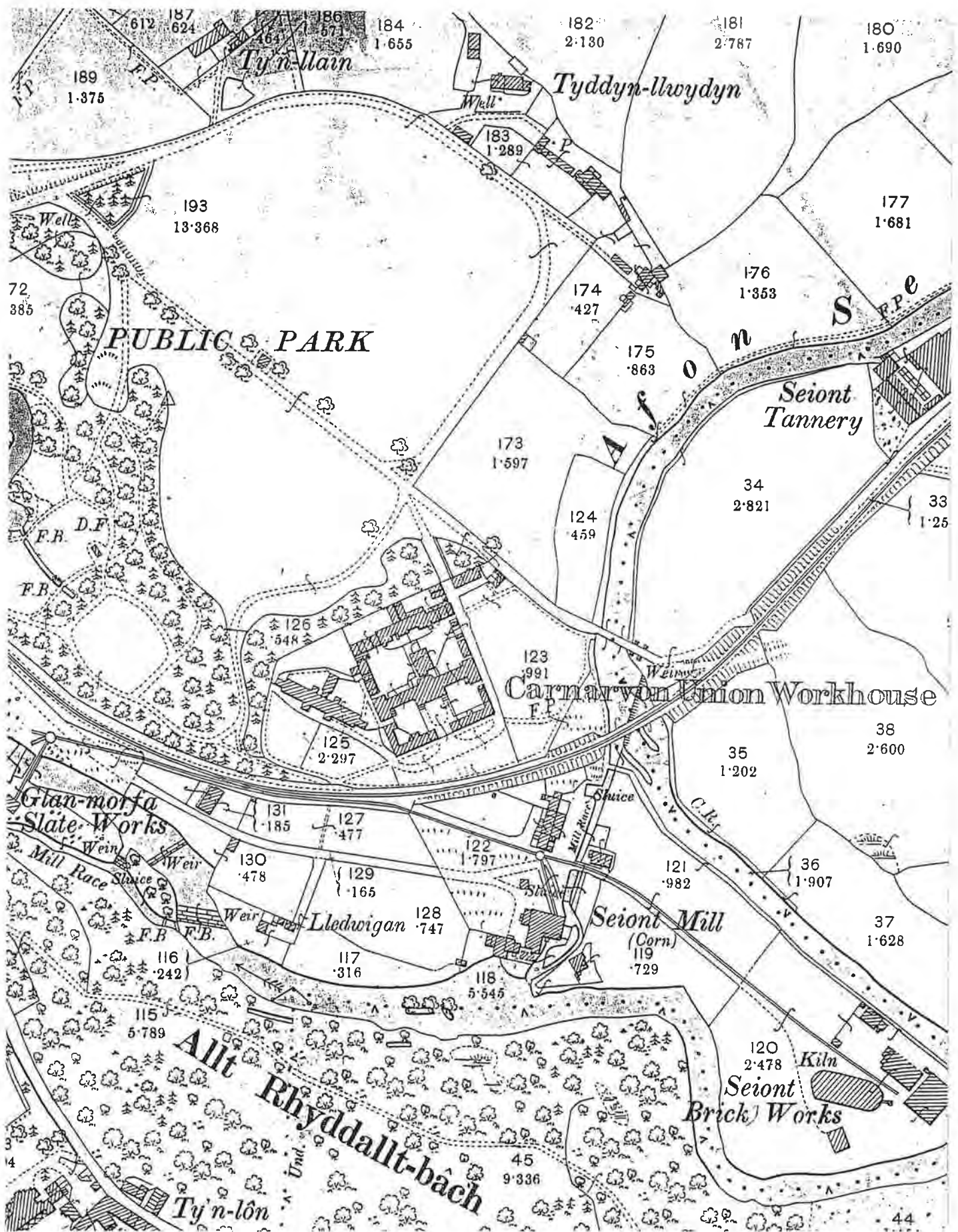


Fig. 5 1900 Ordnance Survey Map (Sheet 15.8)



# CARNARVON BOARD OF GUARDIANS ERYRI NEAR THE PARK, CARNARVON WORKHOUSE INFIRMARY

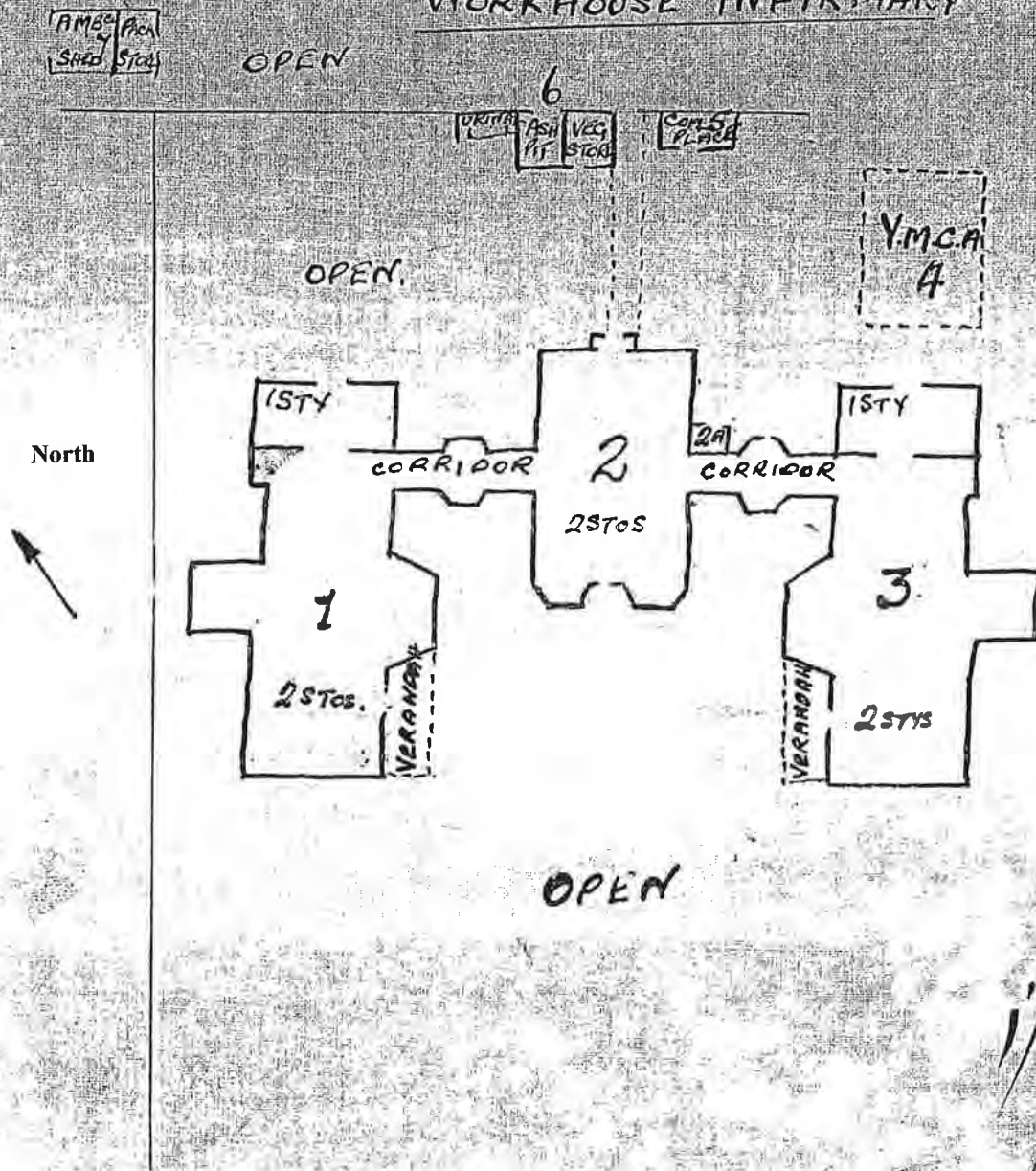
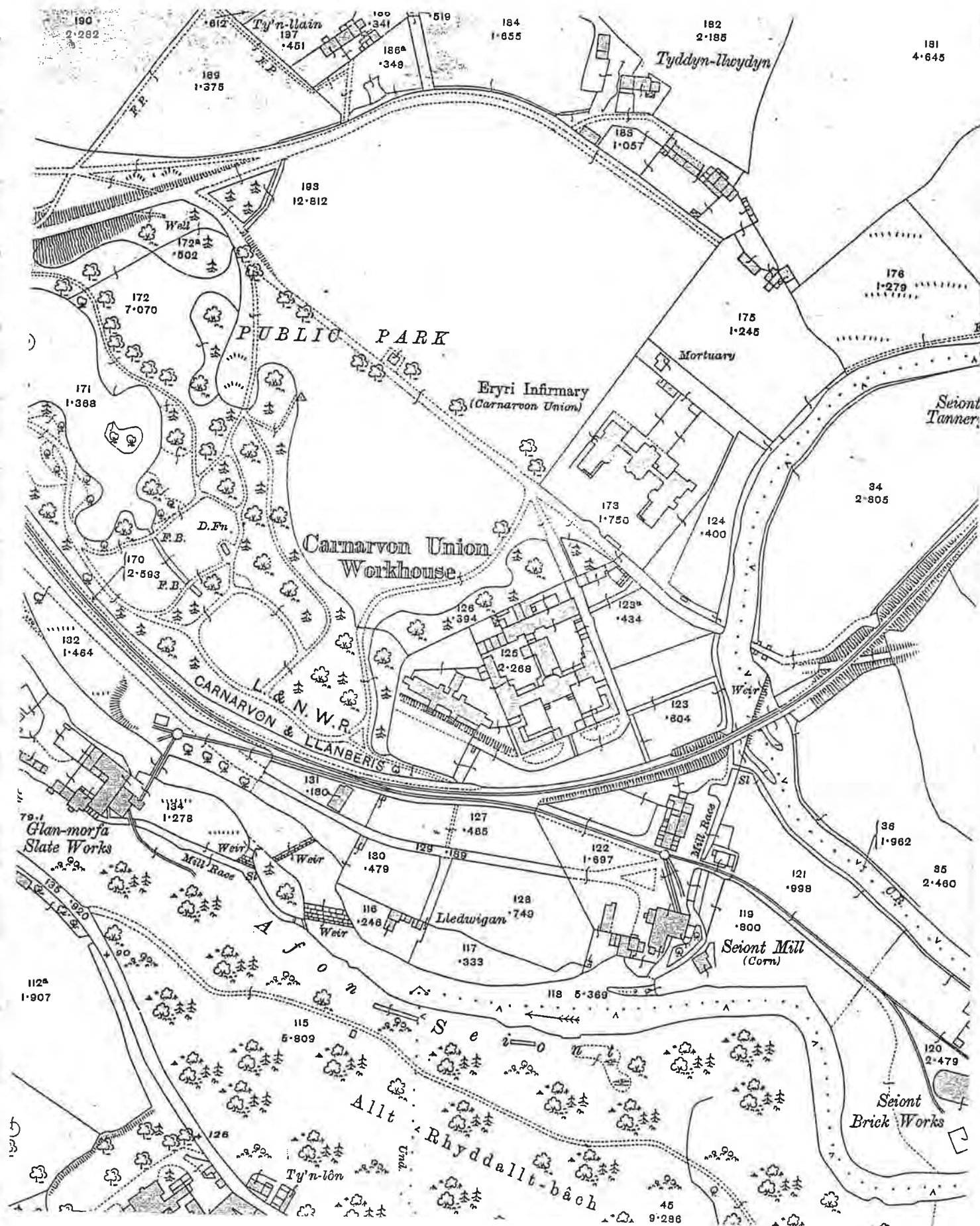


Fig. 6 Plan of Eryri Hospital (XG/2/70)



**Fig. 7** 1918 Ordnance Survey Map (*Sheet 15.8*)

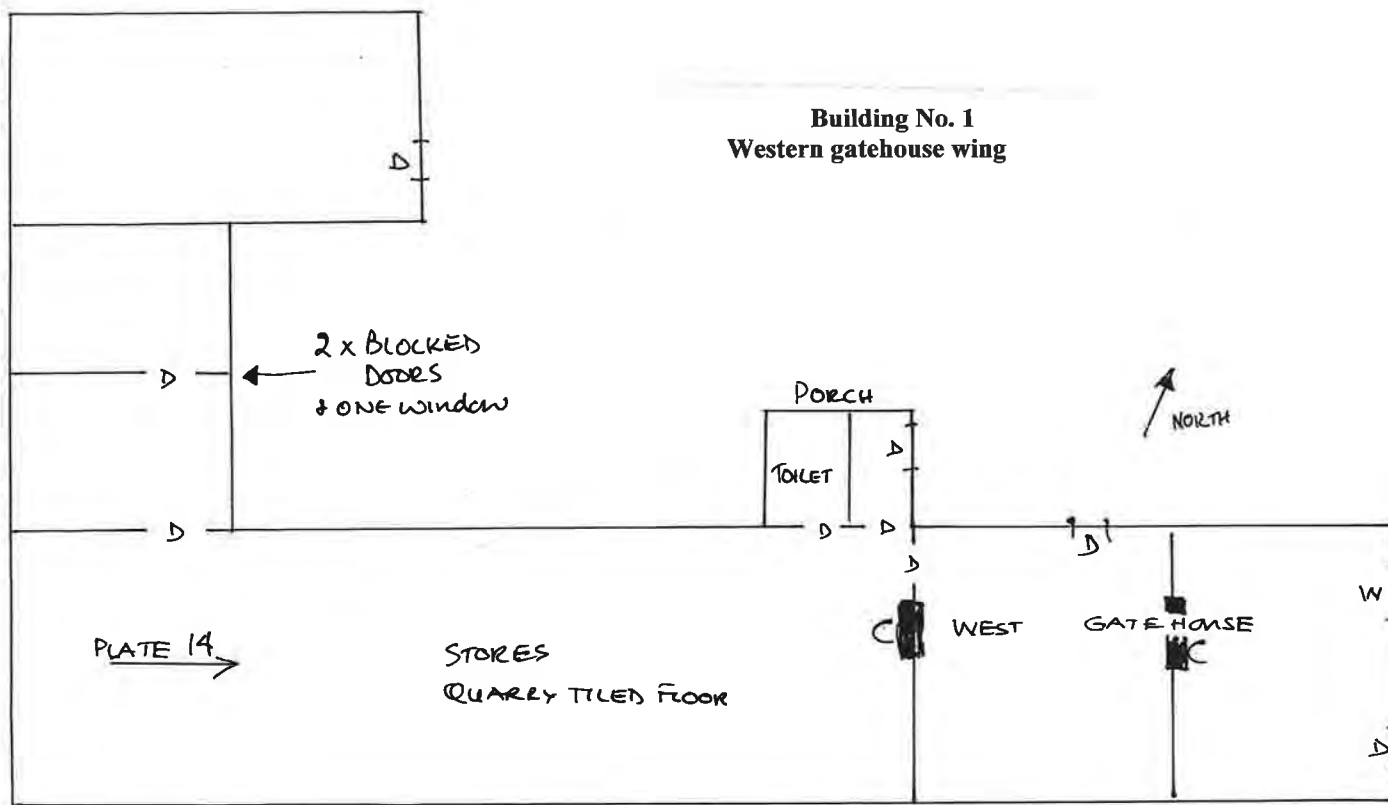
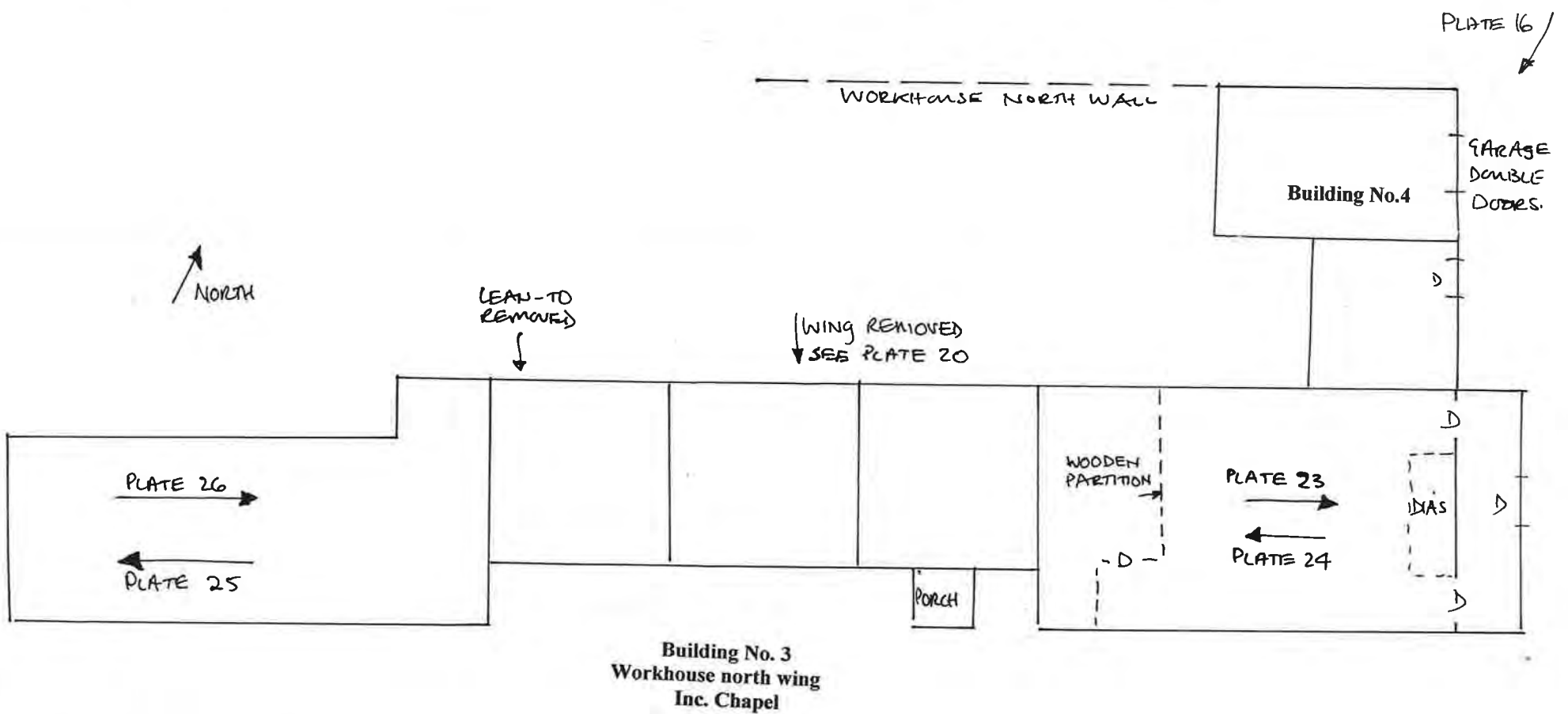
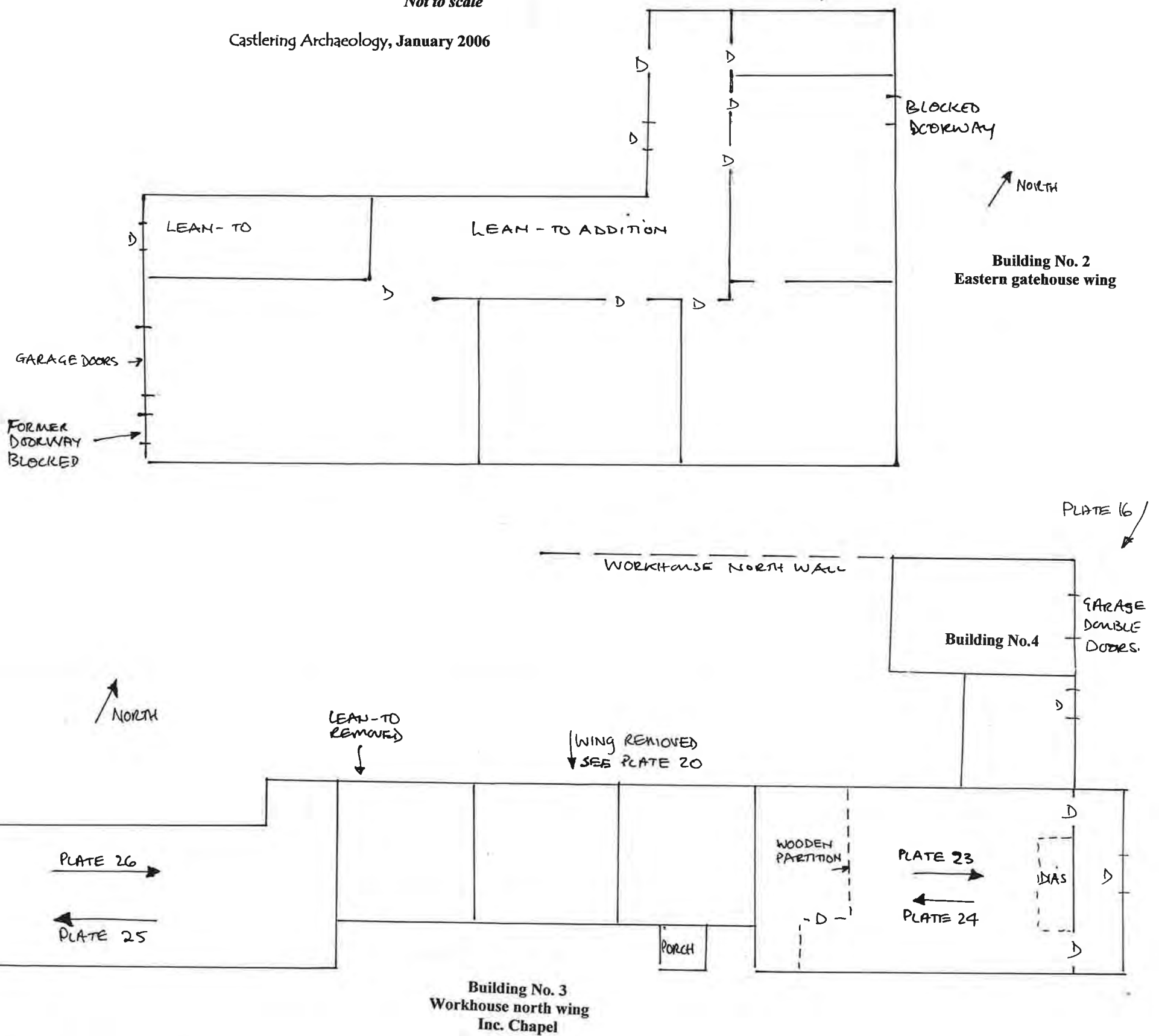


Fig. 8 Site sketch plan – buildings to be demolished.

Not to scale

Castlering Archaeology, January 2006





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## 6. THE EXISTENT SITE

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6.1 The former workhouse and Eryri Hospital buildings are sited on the north bank of the Afon Seoint, south of the town of Caernarfon. The site visit and cartographic evidence (*Figs 4, 6 & 7*) indicate that the workhouse entrance was from the southwest, where an overgrown track now leads up to the Porter's gatehouses and stone pillars which once formed the main entrance.

6.2 The gatehouses or lodges are included in the proposed demolition work (*indicated on Fig. 1 as Buildings 1 & 2*). The single storey gatehouses and the range of buildings that extend east and west of them once enclosed an open area to the forefront of the main workhouse entrance (*Fig. 3; Area A*). The open area is now laid out as an area of hedged garden on the west side, a central lawn and yard to the east (*Plates 1, 4, & 10*). The main workhouse building, with central pediment and clock, displays a slate clad frontage, which overlooks the area enclosed by the gatehouses and stores (*Sites 1 & 2*). The 'E' shaped main building lies south of and parallel to the long range that includes the former chapel and laundry, which will also be demolished (*Fig. 1; Building No. 3 & Fig. 3 'E'*).

6.3 On the northeast corner of the chapel, a former stores, later enlarged into a garage, is also due to be demolished (*Fig. 1; Building No. 4 & Fig. 3 'F'*). The stores are sited on the west side of the north entrance to the former workhouse. On the east side of the entrance a linear building, now used now as storage for building materials, will also be demolished as part of the proposed scheme (*Fig. 1; Building No. 5 & Fig. 3 'I' & 'J'*).

6.4 The five buildings are all recorded on the c.1881 Plan of Bodfan Workhouse (*Fig. 3*). As with all the original workhouse buildings and enclosing walls, the buildings are constructed in stone below slate roofs.

### ***Buildings to be demolished at Bodfan***

#### **6.5 Building 1 - The Western Porter's gatehouse and adjoining stores.**

*Recorded as 'C' on the c.1881 Workhouse Plan (Fig. 3). See Plates 1, 3-5, 7, 9 & 14-15*

The two-roomed gatehouse with hipped roof forms the east end of the range of buildings that enclose the west end of the open area to the forefront of the main workhouse building. The stonework on both sections, although random, is broadly coursed and both sections retain iron guttering and downspouts.

Gatehouse east elevation: single door with slate threshold and boarded opening with stone sill (*Plate 1*). South elevation: three rectangular windows (*1.3 x 1m*), on 10cm deep stone sills, that once lit the gatehouse are now boarded.

The stores that adjoin the west side of the gatehouse is a continuous build with the gatehouse although the roofline is slightly higher. Four windows (*1 x 0.7m*) light the stores together with small 6-pane openings (*see Plate 7*). A chimney at the east end of the roofline is shared with the gatehouse. A stone plinth 0.64m above the current ground level and stone lintels above the openings are continuous along both sections.

The north elevation of the gatehouse includes a single door and window. The porch (*Plate 9*) at the junction of the gatehouse and the stores leads into the large storeroom. The room has a quarry tiled floor and the area appears to have been abandoned in the post-WW2 period (*c.1948*) (*Plate 14*). During the site visit, the room was piled high with disused hospital beds and mattresses bound up in sacks. Four small 6-pane lights face north. The room gave access to the west wing of the range of buildings, which had concrete floors.

The west wing the east elevation with four windows (*1 x 0.7m*) with brick dressings includes two blocked doors and a central window. The west wing terminates in a short right hand wing which echoes the roofline of the gatehouse (*Plate 9*). The short wing includes a door in the east elevation and a window facing north. The west elevation of the west wing includes four *1 x 0.7m* windows on the north side and small 6-pane lights on the south side.

#### 6.6 **Building 2 - The Eastern Porter's gatehouse and adjoining stores.**

*Recorded as 'B' on the c.1881 Workhouse Plan (Fig. 3). See Plates 6, 8, 10 - 13*

In general, the east range of buildings are a mirror image of the western range, although they have been altered and added to more recently. The eastern range has continued in use and been modified in recent years.

While the south elevation (*Plate 8*) is identical to the west range, a pair of double doors have been inserted into the east elevation of the gatehouse, replacing the former entrance door, seen blocked on the right in *Plate 11* and a modern lean-to adjoins the north elevation (*Plates 10*). The brick lean-to with corrugated plastic roof masks much of the original north and west walls, where original openings have been blocked and new ones opened. Internally most of the building is still in use for general storage. All floors are concrete, walls plastered and ceiling plaster-boarded.

The east elevation includes a blocked doorway towards the north side, three 1 x 0.7m windows and a single short blocked opening at the south end (*Plate 12*). The east range is roofed with slate tiles 0.34m x 0.65m surmounted by blue ceramic ridge tiles while smaller the south range has been reroofed.

#### 6.7 **Building 3 - Chapel and former Laundry and workrooms**

*Recorded as 'E' on the c.1881 Workhouse Plan (Fig. 3). See Plates 16 - 27*

The workhouse north wing once housed the laundry at the west end, a central engine house, joiners, tailor and shoemakers shop and the Chapel at the east end (*as recorded on the c.1881 plan – Fig. 3*).

##### 6.7.1 **Chapel**

On the east side, the east elevation of the Chapel displays a 'crazy-paving' style of stonework with limestone dressings around the central doorway and flanking windows below semi-circular arches (*Plate 18*). There is no inscription on the datestone above the doorway. The south wing of the chapel comprises eight 12-pane wooden sashes (2 x 1.06m) on 350mm thick slate sills with fanlights above. The entrance to the chapel is through a door at the west end; a second door has been blocked opening at the east end (*Plate 18*). Five 12-pane sashes let in light from the north (*Plate 19*).

Internally, the single storey chapel has parquet flooring throughout, tongue & groove dado panelling, plastered walls and ceiling (*Plate 27*). A wooden dais at the east end is flanked by doors into the eastern porch (*Plate 23*). An area at the west end is enclosed by wooden panelling (*Plate 24*).

##### 6.7.2 **Laundry**

The Laundry once formed the west wing of Building 3. The area has a parquet floor, lath and plastered ceiling and loft hatches at both ends and is currently in use as a stores (*Plates 25 & 26*). The south elevation, with seven 12-pane wooden sashes (2 x 1.06m) on 350mm thick slate sills with fanlights above, has been altered to allow for a wider entrance door. The north elevation is partly rendered and has had modern additions. Away from the public gaze, rear elevations were generally simplistic.

##### 6.7.3 **Two-storey central block**

The two-storey block once housed the engine house, joiners, tailor and shoemakers shop. The c.1881 Woodcutting Shop and Fowl House (*Plate 3*) have been removed from the north side as indicated by the white painted brickwork (*Plate 20*). The remainder of the north wall has a series of 1 x 0.7m windows, some of which are boarded. At ground floor levels, floors are red tiled. The small south porch is a later addition.

#### 6.8 **Building 4 – Garage**

*Recorded as 'F' on the c.1881 Workhouse Plan (Fig. 3). See Plates 16 & 20*

c.1881, the back of the chapel backed onto a Firewood Yard, which was enclosed on the east side by the stone building which has subsequently been enlarged into a brick garage with corrugated (*asbestos cement sheeted*) roof (*Plate 16*). The north boundary wall of the workhouse runs parallel to Building 3, extending west from the garage.

**6.9 Building 5 – Detached stores, sited northeast of the main building complex**

*Recorded as 'I' & 'J' on the c.1881 Workhouse Plan (Fig. 3). See Plates 28 - 30*

The detached two-compartment building is surmounted by a slate roof (*tiles 0.34m x 0.65m*) with red ceramic ridge tiles and a single skylight at the west end. The building is enclosed on the south side by a stone wall, which forms a yard area currently used to store dustbins (*Plates 29 & 30*). A small lean-to shed adjoins the east gable, filling the gap between the building and the enclosing stone wall. A small rectangular opening in the west elevation appears to have replaced a larger opening with flanking red brick trim. This possible doorway has been blocked with rubblestone. The north elevation faces Eryri car park (*Plate 28*).

Internally, the building is used for storage. The eastern compartment with concrete floor and lime-washed walls has a roof supported by two collar beam trusses, made up with bolted machine cut timbers. The compartment stores building materials.

***Buildings to be demolished at Eryri***

6.10 The remaining two buildings to be demolished are located northwest of Eryri Hospital and post-date the first phase of building at Bodfan.

**6.11 Building 6 – Mortuary, sited northeast of the main building complex**

*First recorded by OS in 1918 (Fig. 7). See Plates 31 & 32*

Early 20<sup>th</sup> century purpose-built building, which has been superseded by a newer mortuary on site. No particular features. There is no evidence to suggest that there were any burials on site either from this or any earlier mortuary. The normal practice in workhouses, backed up by references in case studies (*XG/2 deposits*) confirm that family members were invited to collect the deceased, who otherwise were buried in local cemeteries.

**6.12 Building 7 – Piggeries, sited northeast of the Mortuary**

*Recorded by OS in 1900 (Fig. 5), beyond the boundary of OS Plot 174. See Plates 33 - 35*

Rectangular brick-built building with renewed slate roof. Openings with red brick trim. External pens are currently covered by undergrowth. Internal white-washed walls and concrete floor with central drain. Opposing doors in the gable end open to a central corridor between pens, flanked by concrete animal feeding troughs. Nine low openings along each long wall presumably gave access to external pens. Eight iron trusses, which appear to be re-used railtrack, rise from the concrete feeder troughs to support the roof (*Plate 35*). All roof timbers are machine cut and bolted. The building is derelict and filled with 'junk'.

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## 7. DISCUSSION

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7.1 The buildings to be demolished at Bodfan are part of 1845 workhouse constructed by *Caernarfon Poor Law Union*. Buildings 1 & 2, the west and eastern gatehouse wings formed an integral part of the workhouse design, enclosing the open area that fronted the main workhouse administrative block. To the rear Building 3 enclosed two exercise yards. The buildings on site represent social and economic history displaying a typical workhouse plan based on the principles of classification, segregation and supervision. The stone walled boundary further isolated the inmates from the community. The location of the site itself is a social statement in so far as purpose-built workhouses were invariably sited in rural locations away from the towns.

7.2 In general, since the 1970s, there has been a growing awareness that historic buildings should be retained not just for their architectural or historic interest, but as a durable expression of past daily lives. Public attention to the heritage value and potential for redundant workhouses in Wales has more recently been drawn in the 2004 BBC Two series '*Restoration*' which featured Llanfyllin Workhouse, Y Dolydd, which had provided a temporary home for hundreds of local paupers in the nineteenth century. The workhouse is regarded as one of the most complete examples of its kind and although it was unsuccessful in the bid to win the Restoration prize money, plans to preserve the building continue.

7.3 Although, Bodfan workhouse represents one of the few surviving workhouses in Wales, it was not considered to have fulfilled the criteria for Listed building status, and as such has received no statutory protection. The workhouse postdates by five years the listing criteria of:

*'all buildings erected prior to 1840, which are of any quality, even if plain, and which survive in anything like their original form'*

and the workhouse complex was obviously rejected as one of the

*'buildings erected between 1840 and 1914, which are of definite quality and character, either individually or part of a group'.*

7.4 The piggeries and mortuary are a later addition to the site. While the mortuary is a 20<sup>th</sup> century addition, the piggeries appear to date to late 19<sup>th</sup> century period, when inmates often worked the land surrounding the workhouse. The piggeries may have been tended by inmates, prior to its inclusion in the Eryri complex.

7.5 The transition from Poor Law to Welfare State saw many of the buildings fall into disuse and disrepair and others only utilised as stores. The current programme of work has ensured that a record has been made of a group of buildings which are part of a social system that no longer exists.

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## 8. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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8.1 Castlering Archaeology would like to thank Daniel Eyre, Architectural Design Officer, for contracting the work on behalf of the North West Wales NHS Trust; Ashley Batten, Development Control Archaeologist, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust; staff at Caernarfon County Record Office, Victoria Dock, Caernarfon and Eryri Hospital, Caernarfon.

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## 9. SOURCES

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### ***Bibliography***

Morrison, Kathryn, 1999, *The Workhouse: A Study of Poor-Law Buildings in England*. English Heritage.  
May, Trevor, 2002, *The Victorian Workhouse*. Shire Publications Ltd.  
Dickens, AM (1976) *The Architect and the Workhouse*, Architectural review, CLX, No. 958, 345-52.

### ***Cartography***

1841 Llanbeblig Tithe Map, Part iii, SH.7  
1889 Ordnance Survey Map (*Sheet 15.8*)  
1900 Ordnance Survey Map (*Sheet 15.8*)  
1918 Ordnance Survey Map (*Sheet 15.8*)

### ***Caernarfon Archives***

Caernarfon Record Office, County Offices, Caernarfon LL55 1SH. Holdings:  
Guardians' minute books (1907-29); Births (1872-1902);  
Deposit XG/2 – Bodfan Institution - minute books, financial statements and case studies  
Deposit XG/2 - Eryri Hospital as above  
XG/2/69 Plan of Bodfan Workhouse c.1881  
XG/2/70 Plan of Eryri Hospital  
XG/2/67 refs. to £2,500 building work  
XG/2/ADD/108 Contract re. Building work (*undated*)

### ***Not yet been released for public view***

Caernarfonshire County Council Architect's Department  
Institution Plans for Caernarfon Poor Law Union.  
Reference code(s): GB 0219 XCA/CAEION (147 items), compiled by Richard Burman for the ANW project.  
Includes late 19th century plans 1945, relating mainly to Caernarfon Union Workhouse and Infirmary, 1901-1932;  
Bodfan Institution, 1931-1945 & Eryri Hospital, 1939

### ***Photographic catalogue:***

XS/1497/25/1 - Opening of the Eryri Hospital, Caernarfon, to wounded soldiers  
XS/1479/25/3-7 - Eryri Military Hospital during the first World War.

### ***Websites***

The History of Poor Law website  
<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~peter/workhouse/unions.html>  
© Peter Higginbotham  
[www.workhouses.co.uk](http://www.workhouses.co.uk) (Rossbret Workhouse)  
[www.poor\\_law.eu.org](http://www.poor_law.eu.org)



Plate 1 above: *Building No. 1* - the Western gatehouse and buildings enclosing the west side of the open area south of *Wing A*, as recorded on the c.1881 Plan (*Fig. 3*). View from the east. The west side of the open area is now a hedged garden, while the central area is lawned as seen in the foreground above.

Plate 2 below: Western gatehouse, east elevation; single door with slate threshold & blocked opening with stone sill.







Plate 3 above: The east and north elevations of the right hand wing of the western gatehouse buildings, echoing the gatehouse roofline (see Plate 4 below).

Plate 4 below: Western gatehouse and buildings enclosing the open area south of *Wing A*, viewed from the east with the slate clad main elevation (south-face) of the workhouse seen on the right.







**Plate 5 above:** Part of the south elevation of the western gatehouse and buildings enclosing the west side of the open area south of *Wing A*. Viewed from the south, where a large part of the elevation is obscured by conifers.

**Plate 6 below:** Part of the south elevation of the *Building No. 2* - eastern gatehouse and buildings enclosing the east side of the open area south of *Wing A*. Viewed from the southeast, where the elevation is also largely obscured by conifers. *See Plates 7 & 8 also.*

*The customary clock placed in a pediment above the workhouse entrance can be seen in both Plates.*







Plate 7 above: Composite photo of the south elevation of the western gatehouse and buildings enclosing the west side of the open area south of *Wing A*. Viewed from the south.

Plate 8 below: Composite photo of the south elevation of the *Building No. 2* - eastern gatehouse and buildings enclosing the east side of the open area south of *Wing A*. Viewed from the south.







Plate 9 above: The western gatehouse and buildings enclosing the open area south of *Wing A*. Photo left, viewed from the north, shows the gatehouse and central porch, which leads into the stores area (Plate 14). Photo right shows the west wing and the right hand return as shown in Plate 3.

Plate 10 below: *Building No. 2* – the Eastern gatehouse and buildings enclosing the east side of the open area south of *Wing A*. Photo left, viewed from the northwest, shows the left hand return, which mirrors the gatehouse roofline. Photo right shows the south wing, the gatehouse with the addition of double doors and the modern lean-to that now adjoins the north elevation.

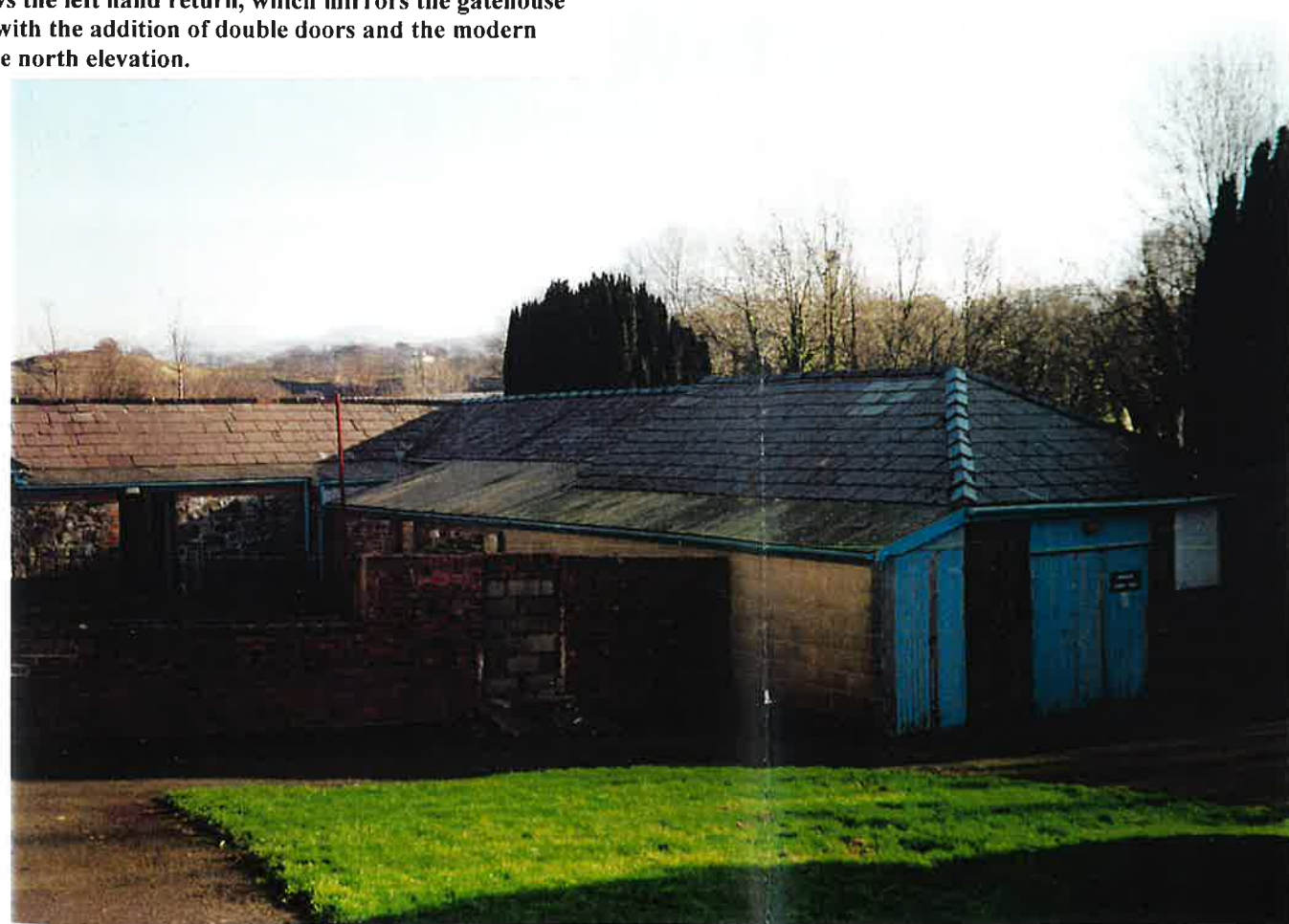
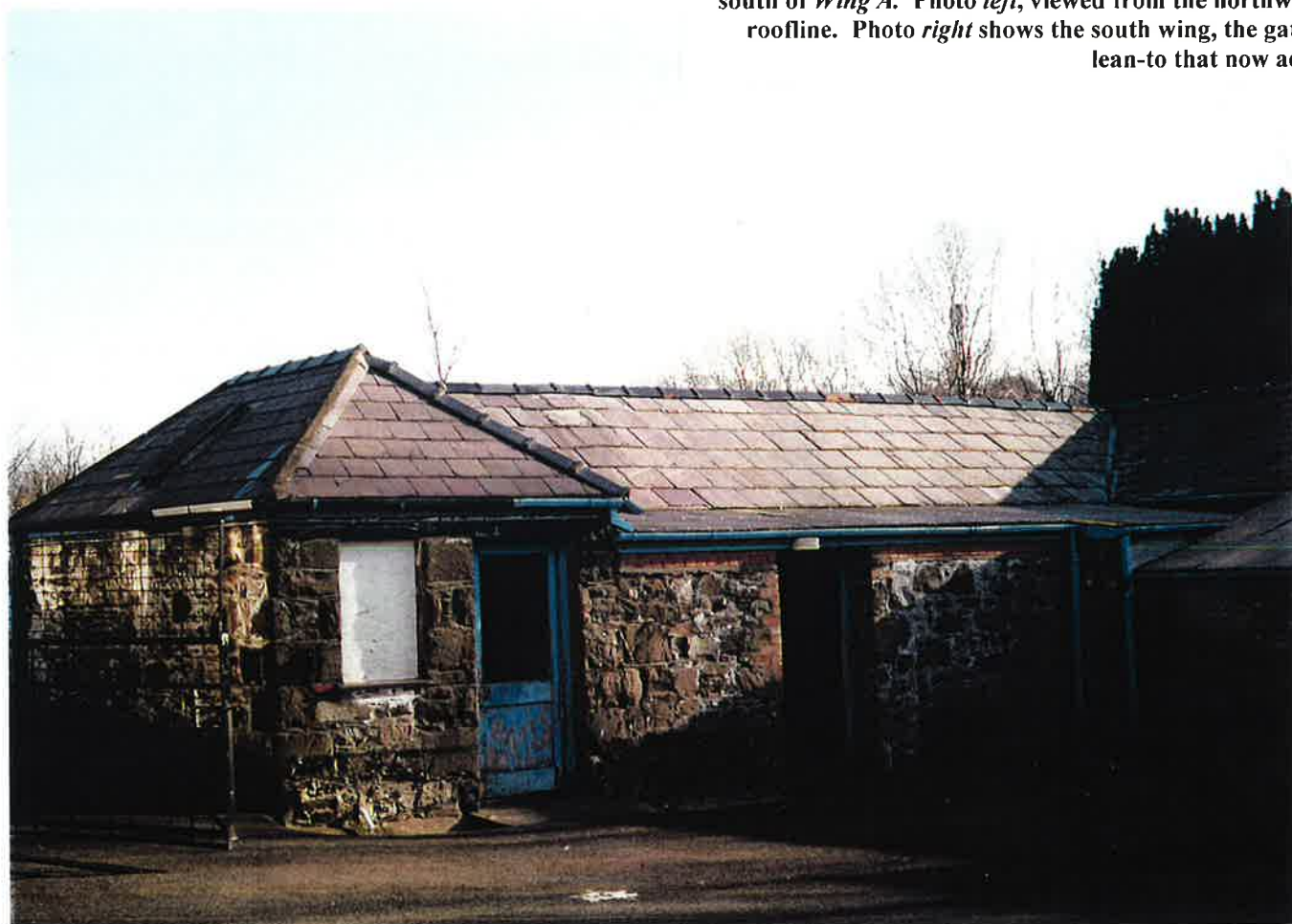






Plate 11 *above*: Eastern gatehouse, south elevation with double doors replacing the former entrance door seen blocked on the right.

Plate 12 *below*: Eastern gatehouse, east elevation viewed from the southeast, with the main elevation (*south-face*) of the workhouse with slated facade seen in the background.







Plate 13 *left*: View from the east, into the former open area south of *Wing A*, as recorded on the c.1881 Plan (*Fig. 3*) showing the north elevation of the east gatehouse wing *photo left*; the west wing of the west gatehouse in the *background* and the workhouse main wing *right*.



Plate 14 *right*: Internal view of the western gatehouse stores; one of the few rooms which appear to have been abandoned in the post-WW2 period (c.1948).





Plate 15 above: The west elevation of the west wing of *Building No. 1* - the Western gatehouse range.  
Viewed from the south

Plate 16 below: The east elevation of *Building No. 4* - the c.1881 building 'F', which has been enlarged into a brick garage. Viewed from the north with the chapel in the background.







**Building No. 3**  
the north wing of the former  
workhouse – c.1881 Building ‘E’

Plate 17 *above*:  
The Chapel forms the east side  
of the north wing.  
View from the east records  
the south elevation.

Plate 18 *left*:  
Chapel, east elevation.





Plate 19 *above*: The north elevation of the chapel, viewed from the northwest. The back of the chapel backed onto the Firewood Yard in 1881 (*see Fig. 3*).

Plate 20 *below*: View from the northwest towards the central block of the workhouse north wing, which housed the c.1881 engine house, joiners, tailor and shoemakers shop (*Fig. 3*). The white painted brickwork indicates where the c.1881 woodcutting shop has been demolished. Background left shows the garage (*Fig. 1 – Building 4*) also to be demolished (*Fig. 3 – building ‘F’*).







The west side of the north wing of the workhouse.

Plate 21 *above*: View from the southwest towards the north elevation of the existing stores, recorded as *Wing E Laundry* on the c.1881 plan (Fig. 3).

Plate 22 *below*: View from the west towards the c.1881 *Laundry and Wing E*. The main workhouse building and c.1881 *cross-wing A*, which separated two open yards can be seen to the right.







Chapel interior

Plate 23 *above*: View from the west and Plate 24 *below*, view from the east.





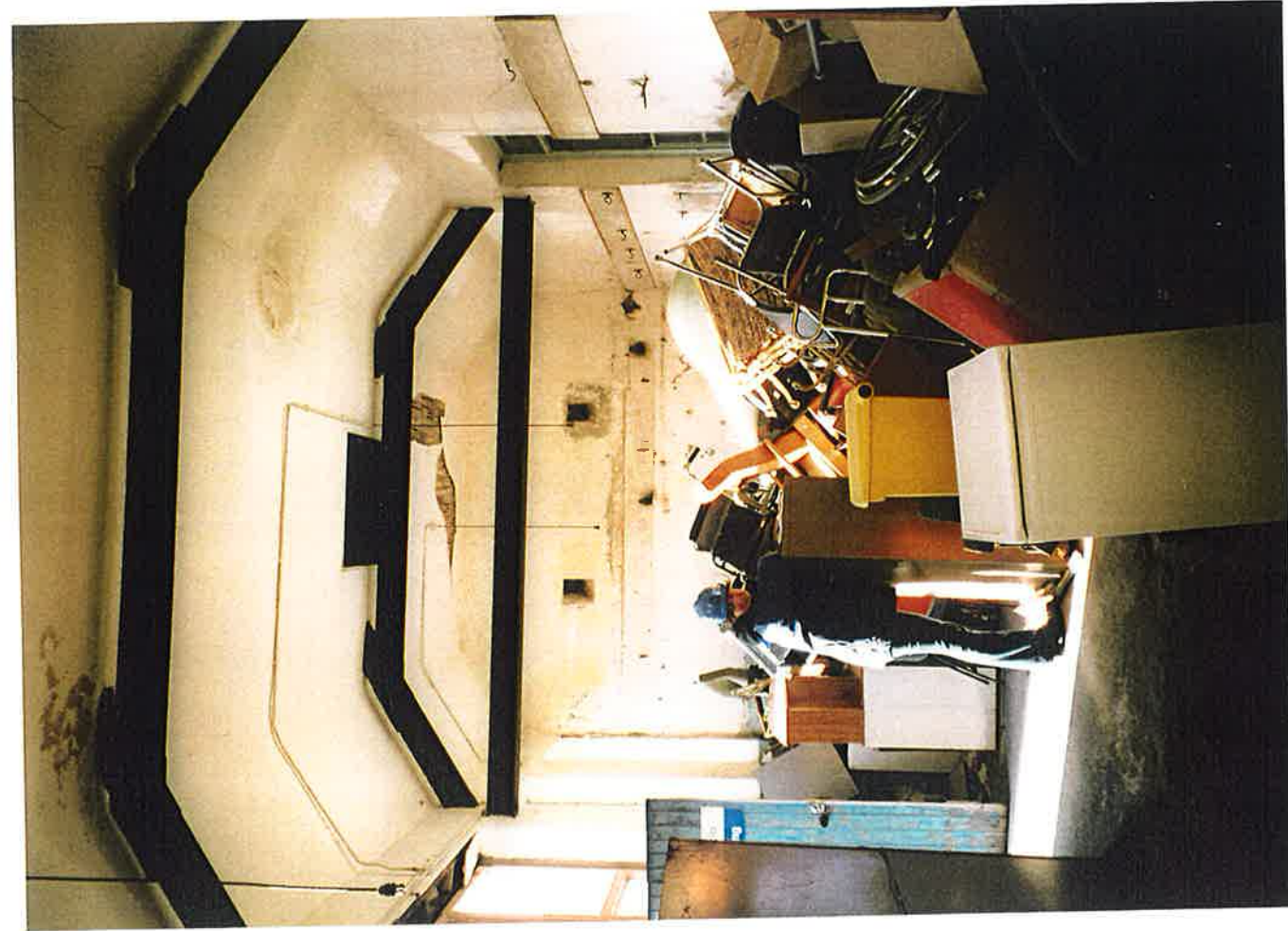


Plate 25 left:

Interior of the former c.1881 Laundry in Wing E, now used as a store. View from the east.



Plate 26 right: as above, view from the west.



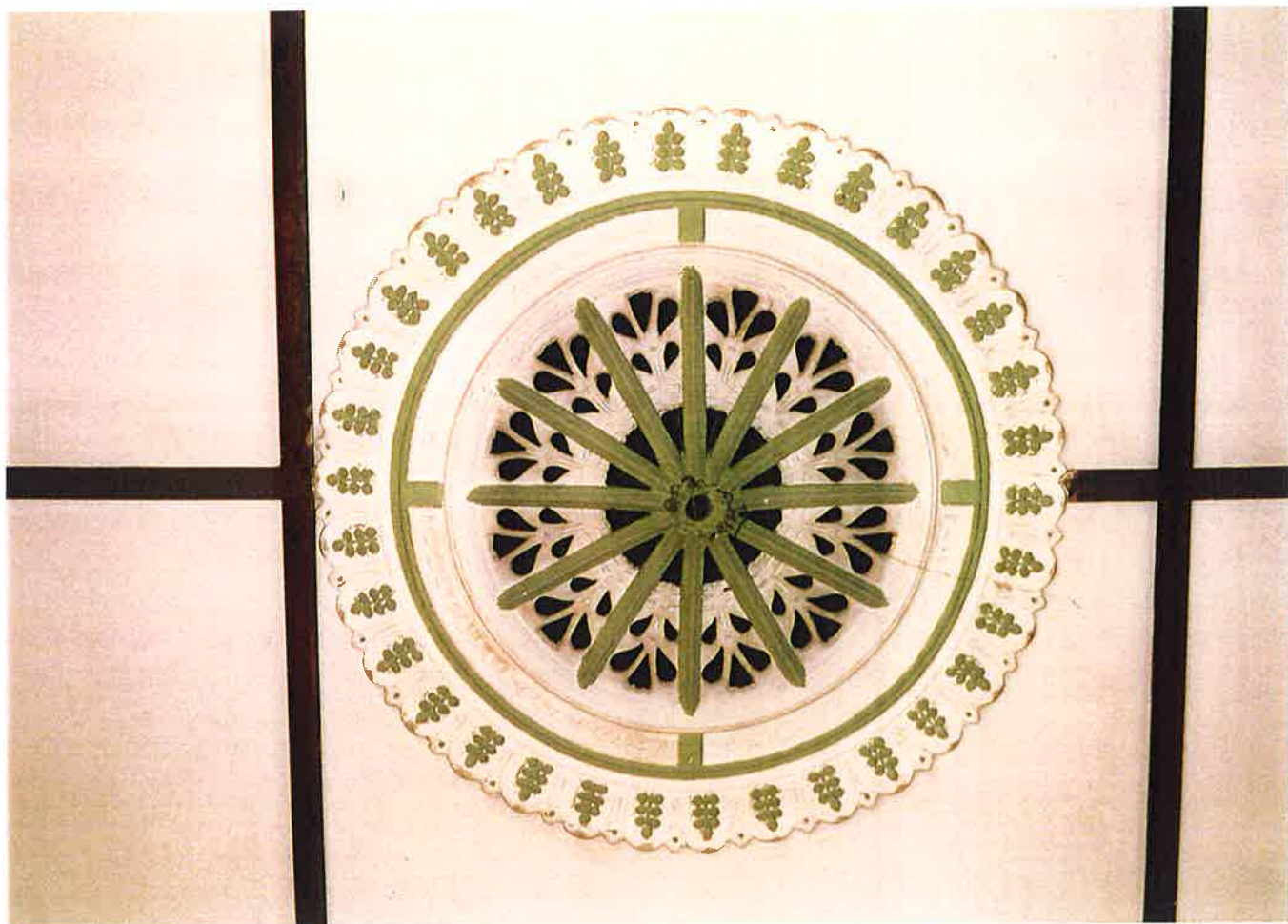


Plate 27 above: Chapel interior, plastered ceiling rose.

Plate 28 below: Detached stores - - *Building No. 5* - recorded as buildings 'T' & 'J' on the c.1881 workhouse plan (Fig. 3). View from the north.







Detached stores - Building No. 5

Plate 29 above: Detached stores (*right*) with enclosed stone wall on the south side and Chapel east elevation in the background.

Plate 30 below: Detached stores south elevation.







Eryri Hospital Mortuary - Building No. 6, recorded on site by the OS in 1918

Plate 31 *above*: North elevation & Plate 32 *below*, south and east elevations.







Piggeries - Building No. 7, recorded on site by the OS in 1900

Plate 33 above: West elevation & Plate 34 below, sample detail of window & pig hatch.







**Plate 35** *above:* Piggeries, internal view from the north.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Project Design for a Photographic Survey to be undertaken at Eryri Hospital, Caernarfon**

*Prepared by:*

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**January 20<sup>th</sup> 2006**

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#### **1. Introduction**

Planning application (C05A/0682/14/LL) has been submitted in respect of the demolition of 5 no. buildings at Eryri Hospital, Caernarfon, Gwynedd. The buildings to be demolished are recorded by the OS in 1889 and are part of the former Caernarfon Union Workhouse, created after the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. In view of the archaeological importance of the site and the fact that there is no prior record of the building, Ashley Batten, Development Control Officer, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, acting in his curatorial capacity, has recommended that a photographic survey of the existent buildings together with desk-based assessment should be undertaken prior to any works on the site, as part of planning consent.

#### **2. Aims**

The photographic survey is designed to record the past history of the building and the surviving structures on site, prior to the proposed development. The desk-based assessment will be undertaken to assist in placing the buildings in their context.

#### **3. Project Design**

This project design for historic building recording has been prepared by Pat Frost, Consultant Archaeologist, Castlering Archaeology, hereinafter '*the Contractor*', following the general practice of archaeological recording of historic buildings in accordance with the broad specifications set out in RCAHMS Level 2 (RCAHME 1999).

#### **4. Methodology**

The desk-based assessment, photographic survey, report preparation and archive deposition will be undertaken by the Contractor, who is a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (MIFA). The contractor will abide by the *IFA Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* and *IFA Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*.



#### **4.1 Desk-based study**

The desk-based study will consult the relevant records held at Caernarfon County Record Office, Victoria Dock, Caernarfon and records held by North West Wales NHS Trust.

#### **4.2 Photographic record**

A photographic record will be made of all external elevations of the building in 35mm format. The interior of the building will be photographed, as appropriate. The contractor is aware that most of the buildings have been used for storage, which has not completely been removed. There is also a problem of loose asbestos. The survey will include general shots to place the buildings in their setting and detailed shots of any noteworthy architectural features. The photographic record will be accompanied by a written description to complement the photographs included in the report.

The full photographic record will be individually labeled and cross-referenced. A set of photographic record sheets comprising the full archive will be included as an Appendix in the report. The archive will be deposited at the RCAHMW, Aberystwyth.

### **5. Report**

Following the Photographic survey, an illustrated and bound report will be prepared in A4 format. The report will include as a minimum:

- a non-technical summary
- the location and historic development of the development site
- photographic record
- cartographic material
- plans where available
- descriptive text
- significance of the buildings / structures
- archive list

The contract will be undertaken in January 2006 and an appropriate number of copies of the report will be produced for the client, the local planning authority and interested parties within 14 working days of the completion of the on-site work. A summary of the results of the project will be submitted to CBA Wales for publication in the relevant section of the annual 'Archaeological Notes'.

### **6. Health and Safety**

The Contractor is an affiliated member of CBA and holds Insurance for Public and Employees Liability through the CBA insurance service. Appropriate Health and Safety legislation will be complied with. The Contractor operates according to the recommendations outlined in The Health and Safety Manual of the Standing Conference of Unit Managers (SCAUM 1991).

**Pat Frost, Consultant Archaeologist, Castlering Archaeology**  
January 20<sup>th</sup> 2006

**Appendix 2:****Site Archive**

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Site Name:                     | Dolbelidr<br>Henllan<br>Denbigh.                        |
| Site Code:                     | Castlering Archaeology<br>Report No. 230                |
| Project Type:                  | Historic Building Recording                             |
| Contracted by                  | North West Wales NHS Trust                              |
| Site Type:                     | Post Medieval   |
| Project Date:                  | January 2006  |
| Categories Present:            | Post Medieval   |
| Location of original archive:  | RCAHMW  |
| Location of duplicate archive: | Castlering Archaeology                                  |
| Copy of report to:             | GAT   |
| Films:                         | 1 CS; 2 x B/W; 2 x CP ( <i>to be deposited RCAHMW</i> ) |
| Drawings:                      | N/A   |
| Finds Boxes:                   | N/A   |
| Restriction to access:         | None  |