

**GLAMORGAN-GWENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST**

**CEFN-YR-HENDY**

**AN INITIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSESSMENT**

1991

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#### Acknowledgements

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The report was compiled by AG Marvell with assistance from M Lawler.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Development and Development Area

It is proposed to develop approximately 44 hectares (109 acres) of rural land at Cefn-yr-Hendy, Mid Glamorgan (approximate central National Grid Reference ST 046 815). The greater part of the area will be developed as housing, which will be served by a new network of roads. The development proposals also include the construction of a school at ST 0447 8177. The central and extreme eastern parts of the application site, which lie above mine workings will be retained as open space except where they are of necessity crossed by the infrastructure for the new housing. Two areas of woodland at ST 0458 8148 and ST 0466 8147 will be retained within the development.

### 1.2 Commission and Specifications

Following discussions with Taff Ely Borough Council, the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust was commissioned by the Land Authority of Wales through their agents Wyn Thomas & Partners, to undertake an archaeological assessment of the application site.

It was initially agreed that this should consist of a desk-top study of the whole site combined with the trial excavation of two possible prehistoric sites identified from oblique aerial photographs and noted in the County Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) as Primary Record Numbers (PRN) 615m & 616m. However, as a result of a re-examination of these and other photographs, it became clear that these features had been wrongly interpreted. Accordingly, the trial excavation element was removed from the proposed programme of works.

It was, nevertheless, apparent that a number of other archaeological features lay within or close to the application site and were likely to be affected by the development. As a consequence measures would need to be considered in order to safeguard this resource within the development proposals.

The final extent of the study was defined by the outline specifications (attached here as appendix 1). These consisted of two principal elements - Documentary Research and Assessment of Impact.

### 1.3 Scope of The Report

This report provides background information on the physical setting (Section 2), archaeological work undertaken to satisfy the client's brief (Sections 3), a summary of the likely archaeological resource (Sections 4) and recommendations for remedial measures to be implemented to mitigate the effects of the proposed development on the archaeological resource (Section 5).

The report should not be regarded as a definitive statement of the full archaeological resource but rather as a statement of the likely potential archaeological resource based on the researches undertaken to date.

## 2. The Physical Environment

### 2.1 Surface Geology

The site lies in the Border Vale close to the southern edge of the South Wales Coal Measures. The upper geological strata consist of glacially deposited sands and gravels across the south-western and Carboniferous Limestone across the north-eastern half of the site (Ordnance Survey, **Geological Survey of Great Britain (England & Wales)**, Drift, Sheet 261 & 262). In places the morainic drift is over 3m deep, as shown by the results of test pits cut by Messrs WS Atkins.

### 2.2 Topography

The application site is defined to the south-west by Heol Miskin and to the west by existing housing; to the north-west lies the woodland of Coed-yr-Hendy and to the north and north-east open fields; the southern part of the site is defined by the now disused Hendy & Bute Quarries and other quarries and the former Bute Haematite Works lie to the east of the site.

The highest part of the application site at 91m OD (NGR ST 0452 8164) is in the centre of the land reserved as open space, c. 310m from the western site boundary. From here the land falls gently to the north, east and west, but sharply to the south and particularly the south-west (43m OD close to the junction of Heol Miskin and Miskin Crescent NGR ST 0441 8122).

Within the application site there are three small woods or copses at ST 0470 8165, ST 0458 8148 and ST 0466 8147, a complex of extant and partly demolished farm buildings at ST 0450 8138, and a series of disused quarries mainly clustered at the eastern end of the area intended as open space.

A footpath running from the former haematite works across the site from east to west follows the highest contours. A further footpath crosses the site from north to south and this forks at ST 0465 8151; one branch continues southwards, the other south-eastwards below the farm complex.

The field system has remained intact from the late eighteenth century.

### 3. Documentary Research

#### 3.1 Sites & Monuments Record

The Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) are archaeological records curated by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd and adopted by Mid Glamorgan County Council as an official record. Each entry in the Sites and Monuments Record is assigned an individual Primary Record Number (PRN).

The record shows two entries within the application area (PRNs 615m, 616m and three entries (PRNs 617m, 1131m, 1197m) outside, but closely connected with the application area. Other sites identified during this study have been added to the record (see appendix 2).

**PRNs 615m & 616m** (NGR ST 0421 8128 & ST 0431 8126 respectively). Two ring ditches revealed as parchmarks by drought in 1955. PRN 615m c. 75 ft. (23 m.) in diameter, PRN 616m c. 60 ft. (c. 18 m.) in diameter with a possible entrance on west side. Differential grass growth suggested that the ditches were 5-6 ft. wide (c. 1.75 m.). Subsequent site investigation during preparation of **Glam Invent. 1** revealed no further trace of these features although they are noted in the inventory (nos 380-1). Further investigations in the course of this study (see below) cast serious doubt on the validity of the interpretation of these parchmarks.

**PRN 617m** (NGR ST 0477 8090). (Not Shown on Fig. 1)

A coin of Antoninus Pius together with pottery and iron slag found about 1752 near Miskin (**Archaeologia**, II, 14 (1773)). Later mis-sited by Wheeler (1925) at Bolston Gaer near Miskin; a hand written note by Dr. Wendy Davies shows that Wheeler had confused his earlier sources and conflated two earlier findspots Bolston Gaer (= Bonvilston Gaer ST 0635 7478). The pre-Wheeler references all place the find near Miskin.

**PRN 1131m** (NGR ST 0480 8110). (Not Shown on Fig. 1)

A socketed bronze axe head found c. 1960 in a spoil tip near a new housing estate on the northern outskirts of Miskin (ie the houses on either side of Miskin Crescent) by E Williams of Ton-yr-efail and presented to the National Museum of Wales (Acc. No. 63.148) (**Bull Board Celt Stud**, 307-8, (1962-4); **Arch Wales**, 3, item 2, (1964)). A similar find has also been made near Mwyndy.

**PRN 1197m** (NGR ST 0445 8045). (Not Shown on Fig. 1)

Roman and Post-Medieval finds including parts of a glass jar.

#### 3.2 Map Search

Maps relevant to the application area and retained by the Glamorgan Archive Service were examined.

These show that the modern land divisions were established by the mid-eighteenth century, and that there has been little variation in the alignment of boundaries. Such changes as are visible probably reflect changes in ownership, or field amalgamation.

There are no features of great antiquity indicated on these maps. However, those features which are shown demonstrate the previous agricultural and industrial uses of the site.

The Ordnance Survey 1885 edition shows Hendy as a small settlement (PRN 2175m at ST 0452 8140) or perhaps a large farm consisting of at least seven buildings to the north of the present farmhouse. This map also shows the Bute Haematite Works (PRN 2176 at ST 0518 8165) just to the east of the application site; six ironstone shafts (PRN 2177m at ST 0470 8165) sunk in an east - west line along the central site ridge and close to a mineral railway or (?) tram line (PRN D 37); and a quarry (PRN 2178 at ST 04408155) to the south of the shafts. Also of interest is an ovoid earth mound (PRN 2180 at ST 0437 8163), which shows particularly well on air photographs and measures c. 18m east - west by c. 25m north - south.

The Bute Estate Map of 1824 shows Hendy Farm to the south of the cluster of buildings shown on the OS map. Hendy Farm in the early nineteenth century (PRN 2178m) is sited on this map at ST 0442 8121. A small group of buildings, perhaps barns, cattle sheds are in the same place as the site of the buildings (PRN 2175) shown on the 1885 OS map. The farm and adjacent land was leased at this time to one Mary Williams.

It has not been possible to examine the tithe apportionment maps and registers held by the Glamorgan Archive Service or the Bute Estate Records held in the National Library of Wales, both of which may provide further information about the buildings shown on the cartographic sources described above.

### 3.3 Air Photographs

Air Photographs in the collections of the Welsh Office Central Register of Air Photographs and Mid Glamorgan County Council were examined. Analysis of the RAF vertical coverage from 1946, 1947 and 1972, the OS 1:24,000 coverage from 1979 (see appendix 3) and the Mid Glamorgan County Council survey of 1971 at 1:5,000 suggested that there were a number of additional archaeological features within and close to the application area.

The 1940s coverage was the most useful; much of the farm land was under plough at the time and it also predated the housing development off Heol Miskin. The 1971 coverage revealed a particularly interesting complex of cropmarks in the south-western corner of the application site.



No evidence was visible for the two reported ring ditches (PRNs 615m & 616m). However, there were other cropmarks to the north of these sites (see list below, nos 14 & 15, and particularly 18).

On both sides of the central ridge, but particularly to the north a number of circular features were observed. These were mostly visible as dark cropmarks, but two were visible as earth mounds in the 1940s. One of these cropmarks showed as a dark ring with a lighter shaded centre. These features were mostly circular and about 5m in diameter, although there was at least one larger, ovoid-shaped cropmark which was c. 10m in length.

It is difficult to give a definite interpretation of these circular cropmarks and mounds. In some instances, it appears likely that between one sortie period and the next changes to the cropmarks have occurred as a result of the degradation of mounds, presumably caused by ploughing. The uniformity of shape and size of these cropmarks and their cluster patterns indicates that they are probably the result of human activity rather than geological characteristics. The date of the features is uncertain, although it is reasonable to assume that they are contemporary with one another. It is also likely that the features derive from a period when the area was being intensively exploited. In this respect they are unlikely to be connected with the post-medieval agricultural use of the land or works connected with the 19th century mineral extraction, which for the most part are centred, as would naturally be expected from the local geology, in the eastern part of the application site. Given the presence of chance prehistoric finds close to the application site, there is a strong possibility that these features are representative of a prehistoric use of the land, perhaps either a cemetery or a settlement site, or combination of the two.

The modern OS 25" sheet shows a straight boundary wall to the west of the present Hendy Farm (extending between ST 0440 8135 and ST 0447 0133). The 1940s coverage shows a second wall parallel to this and of the same length, located c. 6m to the north of the extant wall. There are also what appear to be cross walls or partitions between the two long walls. This entire complex is unlikely to have been a single building (of 75m or more in length) but may represent a range of smaller structures.

The principal cropmarks or earthworks observed are listed below:-

1. ST 0431 8176 Indistinct.
2. ST 0433 8178 Indistinct.
3. ST 0442 8189 Circular cropmark, c. 5m in diameter. PRN 2179m  
(Not shown on Fig. 1)
4. ST 0442 8182 Indistinct.
5. ST 0452 8191 Circular cropmark, c. 5m in diameter. PRN 2181m
6. ST 0454 8182 Circular cropmark, c. 5m in diameter. PRN 2182m
7. ST 0455 8194 Circular mound, c. 5m in diameter. PRN 2183m
8. ST 0455 8191 Circular cropmark, c. 5m in diameter. PRN 2184m
9. ST 0457 8186 Indistinct.

10. ST 0460 8194 Circular cropmark, less than 5m in diameter. PRN 2185m
11. ST 0460 8189 Circular cropmark, c. 5m in diameter. PRN 2186m
12. ST 0466 8184 Ovoid cropmark, c. 10m max. length. PRN 2187m
13. ST 0423 8139 Indistinct.
14. ST 0432 8140 Indistinct.
15. ST 0434 8131 Indistinct.
16. ST 0437 8132 Ovoid cropmark, indistinct, larger than c. 5m in length. Also appears as a slight crest or rise.
17. ST 0437 8132 Indistinct.
18. ST 0426 8131 A group of sub-rectangular and ovoid cropmarks in the southern half of OS Field 3335. PRN 2188m
19. ST 0445 8136 A group of linear cropmarks to the west of Hendy Farm. PRN 2189m

Only those cropmarks which are clearly identifiable have been entered on the SMR and assigned PRN numbers, although all the possible circular features are shown on Fig. 1

## 4. The Potential Archaeological Resource

### 4.1 Summary

The studies carried out as part of this assessment indicate that the archaeological resource at Cefn-yr-Hendy is likely to be far richer than previously anticipated.

The possible potential of the archaeological resource is summarised by period below, but it may be noted here that the most intense use of the site appears to have been in the prehistoric and industrial periods.

Apart from the destruction of part of the potential earlier archaeological resource through quarrying and other works associated with historic industrial activity in the eastern part of the site and some degradation through ploughing across most of the application area, it is likely that the surviving archaeological deposits are reasonably well preserved.

Given the limitations of this study, it is also reasonable to expect that in addition to those already identified other sites and features of archaeological interest may exist.

### 4.2 Period Summary

#### Prehistory

Prior to this investigation the only known prehistoric features were two ring ditches (PRNs 615m & 616m), which are likely to have been mis-identified - the cropmarks representing these features probably form part of the group now identified as PRN 2188m in the south of OS Field No 3335 - and two bronze axe heads (PRN 1131m from just south of the application area and another from near Mwyndy). Such chance finds frequently indicate the presence nearby of centres of archaeological activity.

As noted above (Section 3.3 para. 5), the most likely interpretation of the circular cropmarks and mounds noted to the north of the central ridge is as features of prehistoric origin.

Roman

Roman activity and finds of second century date have been recorded to the south-east of the application area. It is probable that the activity was associated with exploitation of the haematite resource.

Although open cast extraction may have commenced as early as the 7th century BC, exploitation of iron sources was greatly increased in the Roman period as a result of increased demand necessitated in particular by changes in building techniques introduced by the Romans as well as the demands for military iron fabricated equipment (Lloyd-Jones, 1984, 123). Iron mining in the Roman period is not well attested in South Wales, but there is

ample evidence for specialist working at most of the South Wales forts and in particular at the small town of Cowbridge (Parkhouse, 1990, 95). Smelting and even some smithing probably took place near the centres of extraction (Ibid; but see also Crew 1990, 150-158 passim, for the problems regarding current understanding of Roman Iron production in Wales; and North FJ, 1962 passim).

There is no direct evidence for any Roman activity within the application site, but the possibility of iron exploitation cannot be entirely discounted.

#### Medieval

No certain evidence for medieval settlement has been identified within the application site. However, it is possible that the buildings group of buildings identified on the Bute Estate map and by aerial photography may have a late medieval or earlier foundation or lie above earlier structures.

Further documentary research might also provide further evidence of land use in the medieval period and thus the likelihood of associated archaeological remains.

#### Post-Medieval

##### i) Agricultural Use

Throughout most of the post-medieval period the land has been used for agricultural purposes. The original farm house was sited to the south of the present structure. It was certainly extant in 1824 and probably had an 18th century or earlier foundation.

##### ii) Industrial

Much of the eastern half of the application site was exploited in the 19th century for mineral extraction.

## **5. Recommendations**

### **6.1 Introduction to Recommendations - The Potential Impact of the Development on Archaeological Interests.**

6.1.1 The greater part of the area which is the subject of this study will suffer ground disturbance in the event of planning consent being granted. The principal causes of destruction will be road and roundabout construction and associated drainage works, building foundations, landscaping works and the provision of services.

6.1.2 Where archaeological interests have been identified they are mostly above the present land surface, (extant buildings around the farmhouse, mounds etc) or likely to be close to the present land surface (cropmarks).

6.1.3 There is no doubt that development which does not respect the archaeological interests would cause extensive damage to and destruction of these interests.

6.1.4 The exact extent of the archaeological interests is not yet defined with sufficient precision for a programme of protective and/or mitigatory measures to be recommended.

### **6.2 Recommendation for Archaeological Field Evaluation**

6.2.1 Further to 6.1.4 We recommend that an Archaeological Field Evaluation should be undertaken to define the character and quality of the archaeological interests prior to the determination of the application for detailed planning permission. The implementation of such a field evaluation following this desk-based evaluation would be in accord with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 Archaeology and Planning currently in force in England and the equivalent of which is due to be released in Wales in the near future. The field evaluation should be undertaken in accordance with section 21 of PPG 16, and necessary works are recommended below.

6.2.2 We recommend that the field evaluation should (1) consist of a programme of works to define the character and quality of the archaeological interests identified at Cefn-yr-Hendy, and (2) recommend appropriate protective and/or mitigatory measures.

The programme of works should be designed to take account of the following considerations:-

- The extent, character, quality and chronology of possible prehistoric features. In particular, the features revealed in the north and south-western parts of the site by the study of aerial photographs should be examined to ascertain their status, extent and condition and also to establish whether they are representative of a more intensive occupation. Both the distinct cropmarks and the indistinct cropmarks should be examined.

- The extent, character, quality and chronology of the settlement at Hendy
- The extent, character, quality and chronology of buildings at Hendy Farm
- The extent, character, quality and chronology of features deriving from the historic industrial use of the land

6.2.3 All archaeological works should be carried out to specifications to be agreed between the applicant and the Local Planning Authority, who will need to be assured that archaeologist(s) commissioned to undertake it are capable of meeting the specifications.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Suitable archaeological organisations with appropriately qualified personnel or archaeologists are listed in the Institute of Field Archaeologists Directory of Members or The Confederation of British Industry's Code of Practice for Mineral Operators on Archaeological Investigation.

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## Appendix 1

### Specifications of Work Undertaken

#### 1. Documentary Research

- 1.1 Consultation of selected documentary references relevant to the application site.
- 1.2 Consultation of relevant aerial photographic collections.

#### 2. Assessment of Impact

- 2.1 Collation of information from 1 into report form.
- 2.2 Recommendation of mitigatory measures to lessen impact of development on identified features.
- 2.3 Recommendations as to desirability of and/or nature of further archaeological work.



## Appendix 2

### Sites and Monuments Referred to in this Report

PRN 615m ST 0421 8128 Prehistoric. Cropmark, ringwork. Identity now uncertain.

PRN 616m ST 0431 8126 Prehistoric. Cropmark, ringwork. Identity now uncertain.

PRN 617m ST 0477 8126 Roman. Industrial activity & associated finds, coin & pottery.

PRN 1131m ST 0480 8110 Prehistoric. Find, socketed axe head.

PRN 1197m ST 0445 8045 Roman & Post-Medieval. Finds, including Roman glass jar.

PRN 2175m ST 0452 8140 Post-Medieval (? Medieval). Settlement.

PRN 2176m ST 0518 8165 Post-Medieval. Industrial. Haematite Works.

PRN 2177m ST 0470 8165 Post-Medieval. Industrial. Ironstone Shafts (6).

PRN 2178m ST 0442 8121 Post-Medieval. Pre- 19th Century site of Hendy Farm.

PRN 2179m ST 0442 8189 (?) Prehistoric. Circular Cropmark.

PRN 2180m ST 0437 8163 (?) Prehistoric. Mound

PRN 2181m ST 0452 8191 (?) Prehistoric. Circular Cropmark.

PRN 2182m ST 0454 8182 (?) Prehistoric. Circular Cropmark.

PRN 2183m ST 0455 8194 (?) Prehistoric. Circular Mound.

PRN 2184m ST 0455 8194 (?) Prehistoric. Circular Cropmark.

PRN 2185m ST 0460 8194 (?) Prehistoric. Circular Cropmark.

PRN 2186m ST 0460 8189 (?) Prehistoric. Circular Cropmark.

PRN 2187m ST 0466 8184 (?) Prehistoric. Ovoid Cropmark.

PRN 2188m ST 0426 8131 (?) Prehistoric. Sub-rectangular and ovoid cropmarks.

PRN 2189m ST 0445 8045 Post-Medieval (?) Medieval. Remains of built structures to the west of the present farm at Hendy, revealed as cropmarks.

PRN D37 ST 0470 8165 Post-Medieval. Linear. Mineral Railway\(?  
Tramline.

### Appendix 3

#### Maps Consulted

1. Ordnance Survey 1885. Sheet 42.
2. Bute Estate 1824. (Drawn for John Crichton Stuart, Marquis of Bute by David Stuart Esq.).

## Appendix 4

### Air Photographs Consulted

Sortie	Scale	Date	Frames
1. RAF			
CPE\UK 1871	1:10000	04\12\46	2102, 2102.
CPE\UK 2081	1:9800	19\05\47	3369, 3370.
58\RAF 5154	1:10000	01\06\62	266, 267.
2. Ordnance Survey			
OS 79130	1:24000	22\09\79	191, 192.
3. Mid Glamorgan County Council			
Fairey Survey	1:5000	1971	14128, 14129.

Fig.1. Principal archaeological interests impinging on the application area.

