AtkinsRéalis

Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

Neath Port Talbot

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NE05_001-ATK-EHR-SWMWREC-RP-LH-000002

GRANDISON BROOK FLOOD ALLEVIATION

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Executive Summary

This Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment has been written to determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within the proposed Scheme area for Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme. It considers the significance of the designated and non-designated assets within the proposed Scheme, and within a 500m buffer. It then assesses the impacts to these assets and to any buried archaeology. It lastly provides recommendations and conclusions for proceeding with this project. It finds that the proposed works will impact upon the scheduled monument and on the registered Jersey Park. These works will require scheduled monument consent and further works, which are further defined in the recommendations section of this report and the accompanying document NE05_001-ATK-EHR-SWMWREC-RP-LH-000003. It also identifies potential for archaeological remains within sections of the proposed culvert and recommends that this work will require archaeological mitigation as agreed with the Local Planning Archaeologist for Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust.

1. Introduction

This Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (hereafter referred to as HEDBA) has been prepared by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of Neath & Port Talbot Council (NPTC) to assess the significance of historic assets potentially affected by the Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme. A separate document (NE05_001-ATK-EHR-SWMWREC-RP-LH-000003) has been prepared and provides a focused assessment of the proposed scheme to the scheduled monument of the Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline (GM489) and the Registered Park and Garden of Jersey Park (PGW(Gm)62(NEP). As such these assets have been mentioned in this assessment, however, this HEDBA should not be considered the definitive document for assessing the impacts to these assets.

NPTC has statutory responsibility for managing flood risk in the county and are the risk management authority (RMA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Under the act, NPTC has the power to undertake works to manage flood risk from surface runoff or groundwater, consistent with the local flood risk management strategy.

1.1 Proposed Scheme

1.1.1 Need for the scheme

The proposed scheme is situated in Briton Ferry, approximately 8km northeast of Swansea and 3km south of Neath. It is located entirely within the administrative boundary of Neath Port Talbot Council (NPTC). The Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme is located primarily within the residential area of Briton Ferry, which suffers from frequent surface water flooding of residential properties. The area is ranked amongst the worst affected in Wales for residential flooding and NPTC has successfully received funding under the Welsh Government's Flooding and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) grant to develop a scheme to reduce flood risk.

The principal cause of flooding in Briton Ferry relates to surface water flooding, with floodwaters following natural topography and along man-made routes such as the 'Incline' through Jersey Park, which consists of a historical railway cutting.

The target for the grant funding is to achieve a level of protection against flooding of 1% (1 in 100) Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP). The proposed scheme removes over 250 buildings from receiving flood damage.

The majority of the works will involve the installation of a new relief culvert along a route parallel to the existing culvert system within the highway and through playing fields, which will be buried underground, but in order for the proposed culvert to operate within its design limits, there is also the necessity to attenuate/store water at Jersey Park to reduce the overall burden to the new drainage system.

The specific aims of the Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme are to:

- Construct a new flood relief culvert together with stormwater attenuation through Briton Ferry from Grandison Brook, to extend the current hydraulic capacity of the surface water drainage system;

- Improve the existing drainage infrastructure, including new trash screens at the inlet structure at Ynysymaerdy Road and lining repairs to the existing surface water drainage system;
- Reduce incidences of flooding for local communities; and
- Improve watercourses that benefit local communities and improve local biodiversity, contributing to Water Framework Directive objectives and/or the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act goals.

The proposed works would involve the installation of a new culvert in the highway and through green spaces, also enclosing the current open channel within a culvert in some sections. The new culvert will re-join the existing watercourse further downstream before it discharges into the River Neath. An overview of the scheme is shown in Figure 1-1 below.

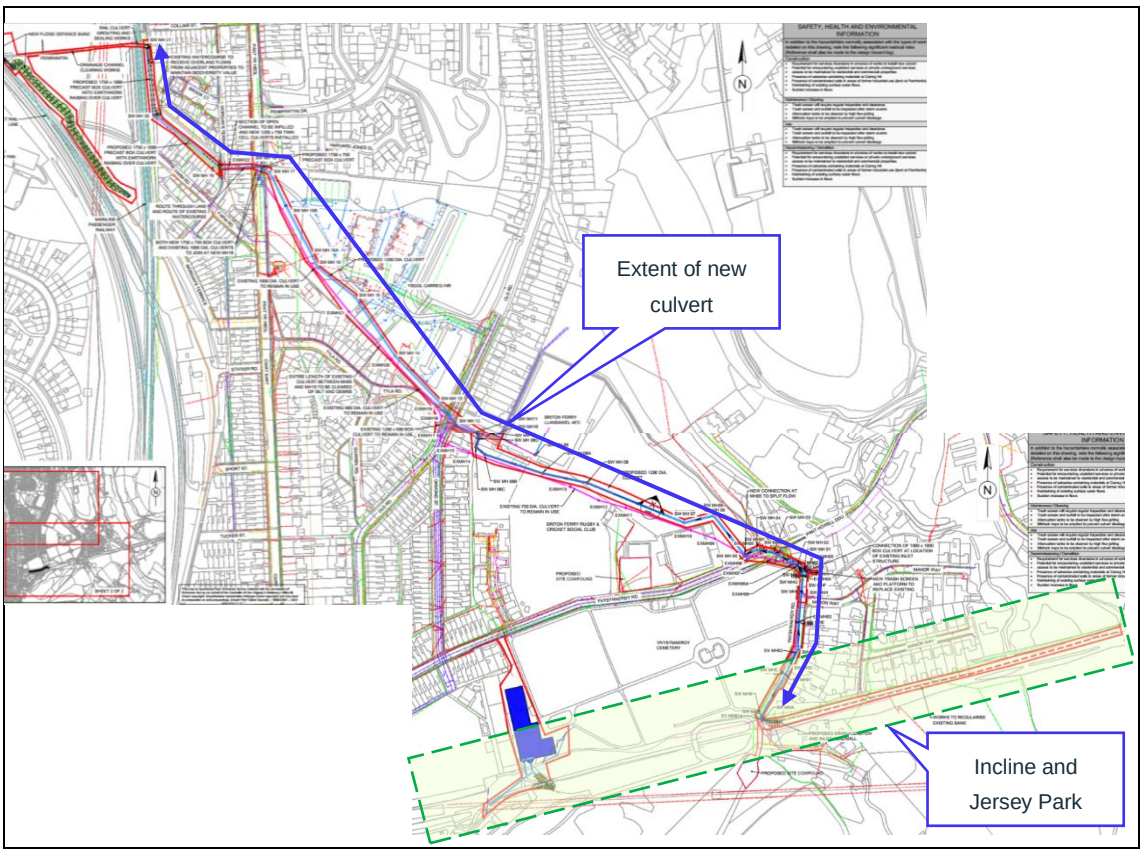

Figure 1-1 – Overview of the Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme

The draft proposals concerning the culvert are shown on the following drawings:

- NE05_001-ATK-GEN-SWMREC-DR-CD-000010
- NE05_001-ATK-GEN-SWMREC-DR-CD-000011
- NE05_001-ATK-GEN-SWMREC-DR-CD-000312
- NE05_001-ATK-GEN-SWMREC-DR-CD-000313
- NE05_001-ATK-GEN-SWMREC-DR-CD-000314
- NE05_001-ATK-GEN-SWMREC-DR-CD-000315
- NE05_001-ATK-GEN-SWMREC-DR-CD-000316

2. Methodology

2.1 Overview

This Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (HEDBA) has been produced in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 - 2024, Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) as well as local planning policies.

The information presented within this document is correct at the time of writing to the best knowledge of the author, within the limits imposed in dealing with historic materials and mapping. The archaeological resource is by its nature an unknown resource prior to confirmation through archaeological investigations.

2.2 Study area

For the purposes of this HEDBA, the study area has been defined as an area extending 500m from the southernmost part of the proposed Scheme located closest to Jersey Park. This was judged to be appropriate given the nature of the proposed Scheme and sufficient to inform the historic environment baseline for the purposes of defining impacts, by reference to relevant guidance and based on professional judgment. This Study Area was agreed with Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) Local Planning Archaeologist Rob Dunning.

The extents of the study area are based on professional judgement and in line with professional guidance which has been designed to account for the sensitivity of the historic environment and the potential impacts of the proposed development. These, therefore, account for:

- The historical and archaeological context of the proposed scheme;
- The settings of heritage assets within the proposed scheme and surrounding landscape;
- The potential for archaeological heritage assets to survive within the proposed development footprint.

The 500m study area is considered sufficient to capture those assets which are likely to undergo changes within the setting as a result of the proposed development.

In order to assess the impacts of the Scheme upon the historic environment, a desk-based review of the existing baseline data within the study area was undertaken to identify the historic character of the area and the heritage assets within it. Three separate areas within the proposed planning red-line boundary to the north and south of Ynysymaerdy Road, are as shown on figure 2-1 together with the study area.

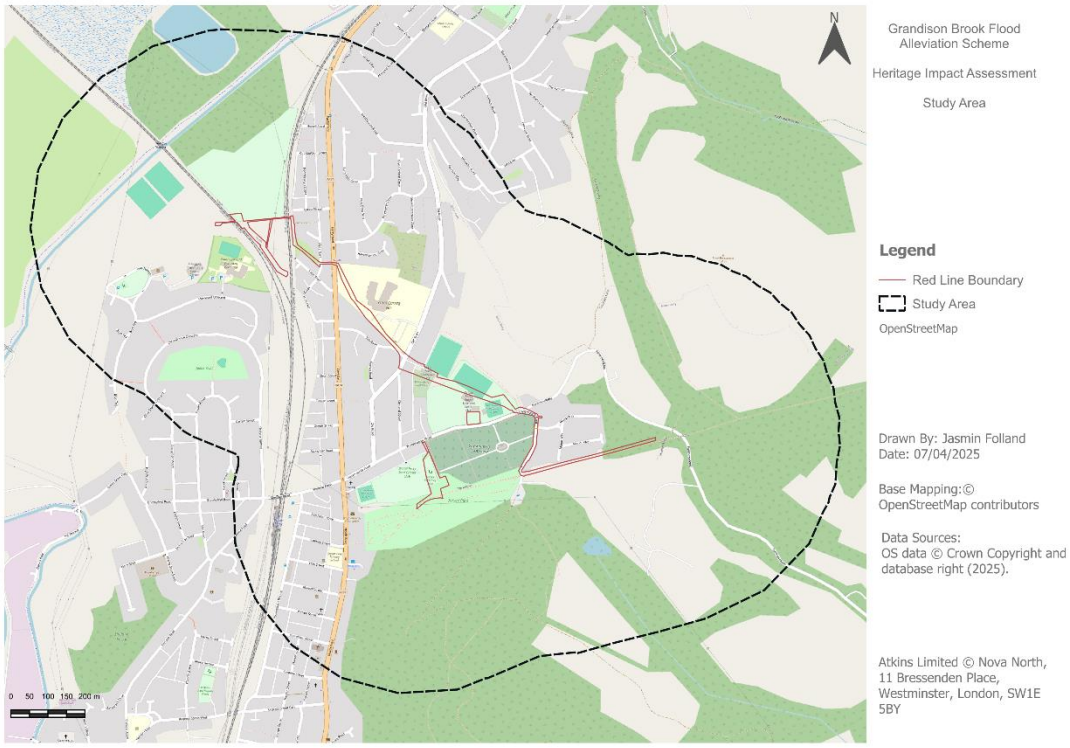

Figure 2-1 – Proposed Scheme location and 500m study area considered in this assessment

2.3 Baseline research

The following sources of data were consulted during the preparation of this HEDBA:

- Data obtained from Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record;
- Data relating to designated assets held by Cadw;
- National Monuments Record for Wales (NMRW)[1];
- British Geological Survey (BGS): Online digital, solid, and superficial geological data and historic borehole records, and GeoIndex;
- Documentary Sources: Published histories, historic mapping, site reports and monographs;
- Central Registry for Aerial Photography Wales (CRAPW); and
- Online Resources: Web-published material, including local planning authority planning policies, CADW guidance, aerial photography, online heritage registers (eg: Archwilio.org.uk).

[1] Coflein - The online catalogue of archaeological sites, historic buildings, industrial and maritime heritage in Wales

The designated historic assets within the study area and Scheme are detailed in the Historic Asset Maps and accompanying gazetteers presented in Appendices A and B. Designated historic assets are referred to with their Cadw list entry numbers and non-designated historic assets referred to with their HER references as found on online databases.

Designated assets comprise:

- World Heritage Sites;
- Scheduled Monuments;
- Listed Buildings;
- Conservation Areas;
- Registered Parks and Gardens and Landscapes; and
- Registered Battlefields.

Non-designated historic assets include but are not limited to:

- Archaeological sites;
- Buildings and structures; and
- Historic landscape features.

2.4 Assessment criteria

Guidance on the assessment for the significance of historic assets in Wales is provided by Cadw in the document *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* (Cadw 2011). Significance for heritage assessment is defined as: “The significance of an historic asset embraces all of the cultural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens, and people’s perceptions evolve” (Cadw 2011, 10)[2].

Cadw contains the following guidance on defining significance in the Historic Environment. [3]Significance is weighted by consideration of the potential for the historic asset to demonstrate value in the following criteria:

- **Evidential Value.** This derives from the elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence as to past human activity, including its physical remains or

[2] Cadw. 2011. Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly. Available at: Conservation Principles | Cadw (gov.wales).
[3] ibid

historic fabric. These may be visible and relatively easy to assess, or they may be buried below ground, submerged, or by hidden by later fabrics;

- **Historical Value.** Historic assets may illustrate a particular aspect of past life, or be associated with a notable family, individual, event or movement. These illustrative or associative values of an historic asset are potentially less tangible than its evidential value, but can often connect past people, events, and aspects of life with the present;

- **Aesthetic Value.** This is derived from the sensory and intellectual stimulation which people may draw from a historic asset. This can include tangible features such as the appearance or landscape setting of the asset, but it is also recognisably a subjective value, influenced by an individual's own experience with the asset; and

- **Communal Value.** This derives from the meanings that an historic asset has for those who relate to it, or for whom it features in their collective experience or memory. Whilst it is linked with historical and aesthetic values, it can have specific, and additional values, which may have shifted overtime. Communal value can be commemorative or symbolic.

The impacts of the proposed changes created by the Scheme are assessed on the harm to the significance of the historic assets, and their wider settings. Table 2-1 sets out how Significance is determined.

Table 2-1: Criteria for assessment of Significance

Significance	Determining Significance
Very high	• World heritage sites • Assets of recognised international importance • Assets that contribute to international research objectives
High	• Scheduled monuments • Grade I and grade II* listed buildings • Grade I and grade II* registered parks and gardens • Non-designated assets of the quality and importance to be designated • Assets that contribute to national research agendas
Medium	• Grade II listed buildings • Grade II registered parks and gardens • Assets that contribute to regional research objectives

Low	• Locally listed buildings • Assets compromised by poor preservation and/or poor contextual associations • Assets with importance to local interest groups • Assets that contribute to local research objectives
Negligible	• Assets with little or no archaeological/historical interest
Unknown	• The importance of the asset has not been ascertained from available evidence

2.5 Assessment of Archaeological Potential

The presence of buried archaeological remains can be difficult to identify fully through a desk-based assessment. Whilst the use of the variety of available records can indicate the likelihood of unknown assets, or archaeology within the Scheme, these cannot be confirmed without further, detailed information. This information can typically be generated through non-intrusive (e.g. geophysical survey, aerial photography, LiDAR, and intrusive (archaeological, geoarchaeological survey) methodologies.

A site's archaeological potential is identified using professional judgement and knowledge. A site's baseline potential is compared to the level of existing impact upon it, from modern and historic developments. The potential for surviving archaeological evidence of past activity within the Scheme boundary is expressed in this HEDBA according to the criteria set out in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2: Archaeological Potential

Potential	Criteria
High	The available evidence suggests a high likelihood for past activity within the Scheme boundary and a strong potential for archaeological evidence to survive intact or reasonably intact
Medium	The available evidence suggests a reasonable likelihood for past activity within the Scheme and consequently there is a potential that archaeological evidence could survive
Low	The available evidence suggests archaeological evidence of activity is unlikely to survive within the Scheme, although some minor land-use may have occurred
Uncertain	Insufficient information to assess

2.6 Setting

The setting of Historic assets has been assessed in accordance with Cadw 'Setting of Historic Assets in Wales' (2017)[4]. The guidance explains what setting is, how it contributes to the significance of a historic asset and why it is important. Setting of Historic Assets in Wales also outlines 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. These principles, however, are equally applicable to all individual historic assets, irrespective of their designation.

The stages of assessment for assessing change within the setting of historic assets are:

1: Identify the Historic Asset

2: Define and Analyse the Setting

3: Evaluate the Potential Impact of the Change or Development

4: Consider Options to Mitigate Impacts of Proposed Change or Development

5: Document the Assessment

[4] https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/Setting%20of%20Historic%20Assets%20in%20Wales%20EN.pdf

3. Legislation, Policy and Guidance

This HEDBA has been produced within the context of national legislation and policy, as well as local planning policy. Legislation, policy and guidance relevant to this assessment are summarised below.

3.1 National Legislation

3.1.1 Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act was given Royal Assent in March 2016. This act provides the legislative framework for managing the historic environment in Wales, and has three main aims:

- To provide more effective protection to listed building and scheduled monuments;
- To improve the sustainable management of the historic environment; and,
- To introduce greater transparency and accountability into decisions taken on the historic environment.

The Act provides several new provisions to existing legislation but does not specifically affect the way in which historic assets are assessed. Accompanying the Act is policy and guidance in the form of a Technical Advice Note (TAN) specific to the Historic Environment (TAN24), and changes to the Planning Policy Wales (PPW). These policies supersede the previous Welsh Office Circulars, which previously formed the basis of historic environment policy within Wales.

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 will be superseded by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 when it is brought into force in the latter part of 2024[5.] The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 introduces several significant changes related to the preservation and management of historic sites in Wales, including:

- Consolidation of Legislation: The Act consolidates existing laws related to historic environment protection, making it easier to understand and apply.
- Scheduled monuments and listed buildings: The Act provides clearer guidelines for owners and occupiers of scheduled monuments and listed buildings. It aims to enhance their accessibility and management.

[5] Cadw 2024. Advice & Support: Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023. https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/historic-environment-wales-act-2023

- Third-sector groups and public authorities: The Act empowers third-sector organizations and public authorities to play a more active role in preserving and promoting Wales' historic environment.

- Improved accessibility: The Act aims to improve access to information about historic sites, making it easier for the public to engage with Wales' rich heritage.

- Enforcement and penalties: The Act strengthens enforcement measures and penalties for non-compliance with historic environment regulations

3.1.2 Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended) protects the fabric of scheduled monuments but does not afford statutory protection to their settings. The relevant policies pertaining to the protection of the setting of scheduled monuments are contained within national and local development plan policies. Any proposals affecting a Scheduled Monument would require Scheduled Monument Consent to be applied for.

3.1.3 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)

This statute states that, where a local planning authority is considering a development which affects a listed building or its setting, the authority of Secretary of State shall have given special regard to the desirability of preserving the historic assets, including any features of particular architectural or historic interest it possesses (section 60).

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

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

3.2 Planning Policy

3.2.1 Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, 2024

The Welsh Government published Planning Policy Wales (PPW), currently Version 12 published in February 2024 (PPW11)[6].

[6] Welsh Government 2024 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) Chapter 6 The Historic Environment. Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12 (gov.wales)

Chapter 6, 'Distinctive and Natural Places', sets out national planning guidance in Wales relating to listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains and the wider historic environment. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs). Procedural advice is given in circulars and policy clarification letters. The following advice is given for archaeological remains.

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

6.1.24 Where nationally important archaeological remains and their settings are likely to be affected by proposed development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical protection in situ. It will only be in exceptional circumstances that planning permission will be granted if development would result in an adverse impact on a scheduled monument (or an archaeological site shown to be of national importance) or has a demonstrably and unacceptably damaging effect upon its setting.

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

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

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

PPW is supplemented by Technical Advice Notes, including:

- Welsh Government 2017 Technical Advice Note 12: Design (Planning Advice)[7]. This sets out how heritage is considered in the planning process and how it is important to consider heritage asset and sustain the character of conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and areas recognised for their landscape, townscape, architectural, archaeological and historic value.

[7] Welsh Government 2017. Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (Planning Advice). https://www.gov.wales/technical-advice-note-tan-12-design

- Welsh Government 2017 Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment[8]. This provides guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and Listed Building Consent (LBC) applications. It is used in conjunction with PPW and provides specific guidance on Designated Heritage Assets as well as gathering the criteria employed in the designation of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings and the registration of historic parks and gardens and historic landscapes.

3.2.2 Future Wales – the National Plan 2040

'Future Wales – the National Plan 2040'[9] is the Welsh Government's national development framework which sets out the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities. Elements of relevance to this assessment include:

- Policy 8 – Flooding Flood risk management that enables and supports sustainable strategic growth and regeneration in National and Regional Growth Areas will be supported. The Welsh Government will work with Flood Risk Management Authorities and developers to plan and invest in new and improved infrastructure, promoting nature-based solutions as a priority. Opportunities for multiple social, economic and environmental benefits must be maximised when investing in flood risk management infrastructure. It must be ensured that projects do not have adverse impacts on international and national statutory designated sites for nature conservation and the features for which they have been designated.

- Policy 28 – National Growth Area – Swansea Bay and Llanelli, Swansea Bay and Llanelli will be the main focus for growth and investment in the South West region. Strategic and Local Development Plans should recognise the National Growth Area as the focus for strategic economic and housing growth; essential services and facilities; advanced manufacturing; transport and digital infrastructure. The Welsh Government will work with regional bodies and local authorities to promote and enhance Swansea Bay and Llanelli's strategic role and ensure key investment decisions support places in the National Growth Area and the wider region.

3.2.3 Local Planning Policy

The Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2011-2026) was adopted in January 2016. The following policies are relevant to the historic environment.

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[8] Welsh Government 2017. Planning Policy Wales. Technical advice note (TAN) 24: the historic environment. https://www.gov.wales/technical-advice-note-tan-24-historic-environment

[9] Welsh Government 2021 Future Wales – the National Plan 2040. https://www.gov.wales/future-wales-national-plan-2040

- Strategic Policy SP21**: Built Environment and Historic Heritage:** The built environment and historic heritage will, where appropriate, be conserved and enhanced.

- Policy BE1: **Design:** All development proposals will be expected to demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places

- Policy BE2: **Buildings of Local Importance Development:** proposals that would affect buildings that are of local historic, architectural or cultural importance will only be permitted where:

    1. They conserve and where appropriate enhance the building and its setting; or

    2. It is demonstrated that the development could not reasonably be accommodated without affecting or replacing the building and the reasons for the development outweigh the heritage importance of the site.

- Policy TR3: **Safeguarding of Disused Railway Infrastructure:** Disused or redundant railway infrastructure will be safeguarded and development which would inhibit the re-opening or the re-use for transport purposes will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that such re-opening or re-use is not realistic or necessary.

3.2.4 Guidance

The Welsh Government guidance relevant to this assessment includes:

- Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales

- Setting of Historic Assets in Wales[10];

- Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales[11];

- Guide To Good Practice on Using The Register Of Landscapes Of Historic Interest In Wales In The Planning And Development Process (2nd edition) (aka ASIDOHL2);

- Managing Historic Character in Wales;

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[10] Welsh Government 2017. Setting of Historic Assets in Wales. Best-practice guidance. http://cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/historicenvironment/20170531Setting%20of%20Historic%20Assets%20in%20Wales%2026918%20EN.pdf

[11] Welsh Government 2017. Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales. Best-practice guidance. http://cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/historicenvironment/20170531Heritage%20Impact%20Assessment%20in%20Wales%2026917%20EN.pdf

- Managing Lists of Historical Assets of Special Local Interest[12]; and
- Managing Change to Registered Historic Parks and Gardens in Wales.

[12] Welsh Government 2016. Site and context analysis guide: Capturing the value of a site. http://gov.wales/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/site-and-context-analysis-guide/?lang=en

4. Baseline Conditions

4.1 Location, Topography and Geology

The proposed Scheme is located east of the River Neath, which flows in a north-east to south-west direction within the Neath Valley, bounded by steep slopes within the upper sections of the valley, with the north and south slopes exceeding 100m AOD. Briton Ferry is centred around the A474 (Neath Road and Pant Yr Heol) which acts as the district centre. The surrounding area, to the south-east is typified by steep wooded valleys which rise away from Briton Ferry, with a densely populated housing area to the west of the A474.

The proposed scheme is at an approximate average elevation of 7m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), with the significantly higher elevation of 42m AOD at the south-east boundary of the Grandison Brook culvert. The topography of the wider area is more variable, with elevation decreasing in a west direction.

The proposed scheme crosses over three distinct areas of bedrock geology. The eastern end of the scheme, including the area of the scheduled monument and registered park and garden is sited on Sandstone (Brithdir Member), whilst the middle section crosses a small band of Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone (Hughes Member). The western most section of the proposed scheme is within Sandstone (Hughes Member).

The primary superficial deposit that can be found across the breadth of the proposed scheme is Till, however there are also Tidal Flat deposits predominantly in the north western parts of the scheme.

4.2 Designated Assets

Within the proposed scheme boundary there are two designated historic assets. These comprise:

- Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline, (GM489); and
- Jersey Park (PGW(Gm)62(NEP)

All designated assets are shown in the map in Appendix 1A.

Outside the proposed Scheme but within the study area, a further six designated historic assets have been identified. These comprise:

- Bridge over Ynysmaerdy Incline (23308), located within the incline and within the Scheduled Monument but approximately 60m outside the proposed Scheme;
- Ynysmaerdy Incline bridge over Pant Howel Ddu (23303), 75m north of the proposed Scheme;
- Carreg Hir Standing Stone (GM170), c.15m to the north of the proposed Scheme;
- Church of St Clement (23306), 461m south-east of the proposed Scheme;
- Salem Baptist Chapel (23305), 380m south-east of the proposed Scheme; and

- War Memorial, including revetments and steps (23296), 460m south-east of the proposed Scheme.

4.3 Non-designated Assets

There are two non-designated assets recorded by the HER within the proposed Scheme. The Rhonda and Swansea Bay railway (01701.0w), which intersects with the proposed scheme at the far western extent and a Roman road (RR60c-06), which follows the route of the A474 on a north-south alignment and which the proposed scheme crosses at a right angle.

Within the study area, a total of 48 non-designated historic assets are recorded by the HER. These are listed in the appendix provided as outlined in appendix B.2.

The following non-designated assets are most relevant due to proximity to the proposed Scheme:

- Ynys Y Maerdy Manor House and Watermill, Neath (GGAT00646w), approximately 17m south-east of the proposed Scheme.
- Ynys Y Maerdy Grist Mill (GGAT01967w), approximately 70m south-east of the proposed Scheme.
- Old Air Shafts (GGAT07386w), approximately 80m north of the proposed Scheme.
- Ynysmaerdy Cemetery Chapels, Briton Ferry (GGAT09096w), approximately 85m north-west of the proposed Scheme.

Of the 48 non-designated assets within the study area, all but five assets are dated as either post medieval, modern or unknown. The other assets include the Bronze Age Standing Stone, Iron Age Hillfort, Roman Road and medieval Manor and medieval Grange.

None of the assets have specific historical relations to the incline, though many of the non-designated assets are of a similar, post medieval date and were likely constructed around the same time.

4.4 Events

The following six records of previous work has been recorded on the GGATHER. All aside from one relate to desk-based assessments.

A watching brief was undertaken for building demolition works at the location of the Cwrt Sart primary school in 2017 (E006429). The watching brief was required to comply with a scheduled monument consent related to the Carreg Hir standing stone (GM170). No finds or features of significance were encountered.

GGAT conducted a landscape study for Neath Port Talbot in 2000 (E008777), which identified 48 distinct character areas. Three areas are recorded in the scheme and study area, Mynydd y Gaer to the east, Giants Grave in the southwest and Neath estuary in the west.

A desk-based assessment (E000102) was undertaken in 2016-2017 by Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust of the sites of military hospitals and other locations in Glamorgan and Gwent associated with the care of wounded servicemen in the First World War.

The western part of the study area falls within the Rapid Coastline Zone Assessment (E006100) undertaken by the GGAT in the 1990's and updated in 2018-2019.

The scheme area falls within that as discussed within 'The Rural Settlement of Roman Britain' (E005431) a review of literature undertaken by Reading University and Cotswold Archaeology, on behalf of Historic England and the Leverhulme Trust, which aimed to create a resource that brings together the excavated evidence for the rural settlement of Roman Britain with the over-arching aim to inform a comprehensive reassessment of the countryside of Roman Britain.

The scheme and study area was considered as part of a desk-based assessment for Leiros Park, Neath prior to residential development (E006338). The development was not found to be impacting on any assets within the proposed scheme or study area.

The entire scheme and study area was captured under a reginal desk-based assessment examining High Status Settlement in Glamorgan and Gwent (E007242) produced in 2010 by GGAT.

4.5 Archaeological and historic baseline

4.5.1 Palaeolithic (800, 000 BP – c.12, 000 BP)

This period is characterised by the development of stone tool technology and is a period when, during the Middle Palaeolithic, different hominid species, such as Homo sapiens neanderthalensis coexisted alongside modern humans. By the end of the Upper Palaeolithic, the ice sheets which dominated much of the British Isles retreated for the final time (Late Glacial Interstadial), the climate ameliorated, and ecological succession began to take place. This changing climate may have attracted human activity. The final stages of the Palaeolithic coincide with the Younger Dryas, a period of renewed cooling which saw a return to some glacial or periglacial conditions within Britain.

Evidence for this period is known from South Wales. The Gower Peninsula, across Swansea Bay, contains evidence of early human activity with the earliest dated record being a 75, 000-year-old hand axe discovered at Rhossili. To the west of Mumbles Bay, approximately 14 miles away is Paviland Cave where a skeleton of a young man was discovered. This skeleton dates to 26 ,000 BP. Elsewhere a submerged forest has been uncovered in the foreshore of Mumbles Bay and the bones of bear, wolves, hyenas, deer, rhinoceros and mammoths have been discovered within it.

There are no assets dated to this time period within the proposed scheme or wider study area.

4.5.2 Mesolithic

The beginning of the Mesolithic period coincided with the end of the Younger Dryas and rising temperatures and sea level. The climate would have changed considerably across this time and greatly influenced changes in flora and fauna, principally an increase in tree cover and a decline in megafauna. This would have precipitated changes in human interactions with the landscape and activities would likely have centred on areas with predictable resources such as coasts or river valleys. The Later Mesolithic is associated with the development of microlithic artefact technology. This represents a technological development which facilitated better hunting, fishing, and the ability to craft.

Human activity in this period has typically been characterised as nomadic groups following a seasonal pattern of occupation depending on available food sources. This is hard to detect within the palaeoenvironmental record although pollen diagrams can indicate decreases in tree cover, and increases in charcoal could represent small-scale, purposeful clearances by Mesolithic people. Peats and waterlogged sites can also preserve organic materials or artefacts associated with this period.

There are no assets dated to this period within the proposed scheme or wider study area.

4.5.3 Neolithic

The Neolithic was characterised by the development of agriculture in Britain. Clearance of forests were undertaken for grazing and for growing crops, although there was continuation of use of wild resources. There is some evidence for a widespread change in the palaeoenvironmental records from c. 4000 BC termed the Elm Decline, which saw a reduction in the amount of pollen recorded from elm trees (a climax vegetation). This coincided with a rise in pollen from plants associated with human activity such as nettles and plantain. It has been attributed to a combination of disease, climatic change, and human activity, and was a notable feature of the mid-Holocene environment. This deforestation was a general trend throughout the Neolithic, marking significant landscape changes that supported a growth in population. Sea levels were reaching those seen today but the rate of change was slowing, meaning the environment would have been increasingly stable in comparison to the Mesolithic.

The Neolithic saw the development of new artefact types including flaked and polished stone axes, and leaf-shaped arrowheads. The polishing of tools such as knives and axes allowing for more durable cutting edges. This period was notable for the construction of monuments such as long barrows and causewayed enclosures which represented a new scale of relationship with the landscape not seen in the Mesolithic, and a signifier of more settled Neolithic communities. Isotopic analyses of human remains point to immigration from the continent, though the scale of this is still unclear. During the Middle Neolithic, early stone circles and some individual burials appeared, with individual and satellite burials under and within round barrows in the Later Neolithic.

There are no assets dated to this period within the proposed scheme or wider study area.

4.5.4 Bronze Age

The Bronze Age marked the introduction of metal technologies to Britain. This corresponded with an increase in economic and cultural communications with mainland Europe, and a corresponding change in social structure, artefacts, technologies, and land use. Initial copper artefacts seem to have coincided with the use of distinctive Beaker pottery, associated with continental developments and probably the immigration of people from Europe. Metal artefacts allowed for greater precision and efficiency in activities such as farming and crafting but also demonstrate the importance of social and cultural practices such as gift giving, burial goods, and votive offerings. Roundhouses and field systems appeared in many areas of Britain. During the Late Bronze Age, the climate became cooler and wetter which led to a shift in settlement patterns towards the lower ground, and there were also coastal flooding events from marine transgression. Coupled with deforestation, there is evidence for soil erosion and therefore alluvial deposition of sediment.

There is evidence of a growing population in Glamorganshire at this time, with a large number of burial sites and cairns. There have also been Bronze Age finds including at Crymlyn Burrows, to the west of the proposed Scheme, where an un-looped Bronze Age axe was uncovered during excavation.

There are no sites of this date in the proposed scheme boundary.

A Bronze Age standing stone, Carreg Hir (GM170) is located in the grounds of the Carreg Hir school approximately 15m north of the proposed Scheme.

4.5.5 Iron Age

Iron-based tools and technologies became dominant in this period and were associated with settlement and agricultural areas becoming more extensive. Generally, society was structured into small villages and farmsteads with greater interconnectivity and trade in goods. A substantial marine transgression occurred during this period. In South Wales the coastal landscape would have been increasingly dominated by tidal mudflats and saltmarshes, although some areas of reed swamp were present, and peats continued to form in some locations. Seasonal grazing probably occurred, with livestock grazed throughout the drier summer months and moved upland in the winter. A defining archaeological feature of the Iron Age is the construction of fortified built enclosures, typically on areas of high ground.

There are three Iron Age hill forts on upland hill areas of Mynydd-y-Gaer to the east of Briton Ferry named Buarth-y-Gaer (GM054), Mynydd y Gaer lower camp (GM055) and Craig Ty-Isaf camp (GM263). The local tribe at this time was the Silures, whose territory also extended to Breconshire and Monmouthshire. It is likely that the lowland landscape was used for farming, and there may have been settlements in these regions as well.

There are no sites of this date within the proposed scheme boundary.

There is one asset dated to this period within the study area. Pencaerau Bank, Neath, an Iron Age hillfort or boundary bank (GGAT00607w). It is sited 300m north of the line of the proposed culvert route. Low banks forming an oval enclosure on the top of the area of raised ground can be seen in lidar imagery, and in ground observations.

4.5.6 Romano-British

The impact of the Romans within Britain was largely that of a social restructuring, with a new road network being established which connected major trading centres and settlements throughout the landscape. Many former *oppida* (fortified Iron Age trading centres) became regional trading centres. The environment remained dominated by agriculture, although increasingly centred on forts, larger farms and villas as a centralised authority controlling the landscape. These often were centred near transport routes such as roads, where movement of goods could be controlled. The climate ameliorated, and flooding events became less common.

The Romans had attained control over the region within a decade of the invasion of Britain. Briton Ferry is located on the first river crossing along the Roman road that extends along the south Wales coastline. Nearby, at the village of Baglan a milestone was uncovered which was dedicated to Victorinus, a former Roman Governor in Gaul and Britain. There was an auxiliary coastal fort, Leucarum, sited at Loughor, Swansea.

There is one asset dated to this period in the proposed scheme area, the Roman road (RR60c-06), which follows the route of the A374.

4.5.7 Early Medieval

The early medieval period in Wales spans the time between the end of Roman occupation and the arrival of the Normans, and represents a period of great social, political and economic change. During this period the Welsh language and culture was consolidated and became generally distinct from other British regions. Following the departure of the Roman administration, there was an apparent period of decline in Britain in the 5th century, though Latin remained a written language. Settlement refocused on older trading, defensive and industrial centres, though generally in Wales the landscape remained dominated by agriculture and small rural settlement, largely in keeping with the late Roman structure. This points to a society with infrastructure inherited from the Romans but moving towards a more distinctively Welsh culture. This social re-organisation is also exemplified by the transition to Christianity, which helped to consolidate social elites and urban centres of power.

Within the Gower region the political situation changed frequently, with the land itself being fought over and forming part of shifting kingdoms. It was absorbed into the kingdom of Glywysing , later known as Morgannwg In 974, and then merged to become part of Deheubarth following the success of the campaigns by the Dyfed kingdom. From the 10th century, Viking activity along the coastline increased, with settlements and trade being established. There are many sites and settlements with names attributed to this within the wider landscape of the study area.

There are no assets dated to this period within the proposed scheme boundary or wider study area.

4.5.8 Medieval

The Norman Conquest instituted a period of social upheaval in Britain, with considerable changes in political structure, landholdings, and social structure. Within south-east Wales a manorial system developed in the Newport area. New places of worship superseded pre-existing Celtic churches which had been founded between the 7th and

9th centuries. Whilst these buildings typically retained their churchyards, the new churches were dedicated to Latin Saints. This process continued throughout the 11th and 12th centuries.[13].

At the Norman conquest in 1066 the last native King of Morgannwg and Glywysing, Iestyn ap Gwrgan (1081-1090) was deposed by Robert Fitzhamon who established the Lordship of Glamorgan, one of the most powerful Marcher Lords. At this time the lowland areas were manorialised and many historic buildings such as castles and Cistercian abbeys constructed. One of these, Margam Abbey was constructed in 1147 and which owned Briton Ferry Estate.

There are no assets dated to this period within the proposed scheme.

There are two assets dated to this period within the wider 500m study area, both relate to buildings or sites. Court Sart Grange (GGAT00594w) located 190m west of the western end of the scheme, a was a Grange of Neath Abbey, exchanged with Gilbert de Clare in 1289. There are no standing remains of the grange. The other, Ynys Y Maerdy Manor House and Watermill, Neath (GGAT00646w) is a range of buildings located 19m west of the proposed scheme which can be seen on historic mapping.

4.5.9 Post Medieval

After the dissolution the estate passed to several noble families, eventually passing to the Earls of Jersey in 1757 who modernised and reduced the size of the estate.

Coal extraction and forges had been built in Briton Ferry as early as 1660, however the growth of the settlement was fuelled by its location on Swansea Bay and its role in the transport of goods from Swansea and the Neath Valleys. The Neath Canal opened in 1797, running from Abernant to Briton Ferry, and was used to transport iron ore and limestone. During the early 19th century, factories and workers' housing were established. The arrival of the railways in 1850 and 1851, and the subsequent purchase and development of land in Briton Ferry by Rhondda & Swansea Bay Railway and the South Wales Mineral Railway further fuelled the settlement's growth.

The growth of trade in the Neath area and increasingly congested condition of the River Neath fuelled the need for establishment of a dock at Briton Ferry. In the 1850s Isambard Kingdom Brunel was instructed to design the docks for export of coal and other goods at Briton Ferry for the Vale of Neath Railway. It opened in 1861 and comprised a tidal basin and floating dock. The presence of the dock also supported the town's transition to steelmaking at the end of the century.

Brunel also designed the Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline, which was a rope hauled railway incline opened in 1863. Extending for approximately 1 mile, the railway incline linked collieries in the upper Afan Valley with the docks at Briton Ferry. The Incline is depicted on the 1st edition 6" Ordnance Survey map of 1884 when it is visible as a straight linear route running east-west, linking into the Great Western Railway to the north of Briton Ferry.

There are two further sites intersecting with the proposed scheme, the Neath Canal (01027.0w), and the Rhondda and Swansea Bay railway (01701.0w), which bisect the

route of the proposed scheme in approximately the same location, at the western end of the scheme route.

There are a further 16 assets in the wider 500m study area. Further details of these can be found in the gazetteer in appendix B.2.

A further 8 assets that are labelled as either unknown or left blank in the GGATHER data. However, the descriptions of these would indicate that they are of a post medieval date.

4.5.10 Modern

Briton Ferry's role as an industrial and port centre continued into the 20th century.

In 1908 the Earl of Jersey gifted land to the town for the purpose of establishing a public park, leading to the opening of Jersey Park in 1925. Historic Ordnance Survey mapping shows the cricket ground to have been present by 1921, but the formal layout of the ornamental gardens to the south-west of the Railway Incline is not depicted until 1936. The park is shown on the 5th edition 6" Ordnance Survey map, published from the late 1930s to early 1950s, when the sports ground, and formal gardens are depicted, and the Railway Incline is shown as a path running east-west through the park. This layout survives largely intact today.

A review of the aerial photos of the proposed Scheme area held by Central Registry for Aerial Photography Wales [14] demonstrates the development of the proposed Scheme area. The earliest historic aerial photos of the area were taken in 1945. They clearly depict Jersey Park and the Incline as well as Ynysmaerdy cemetery. The most significant change is the development of the Manor Way housing estate directly to the north of the incline.

The historic map analysis supports this development, the original Ordnance Survey 1830's- 1880's map shows the incline surrounded by fields and woodland. Later Ordnance Survey 1:1250 maps dated from 1944-1973 show the area marked as Jersey Park with evidence of further planting of trees and shrubbery. They also depict the beginning of the development of Manor Way housing estate.

The closure of the works and docks in Port Talbot in the 20th century led to the decline of much of the early iron and steel industry in the region, and industry within Briton Ferry went into decline during the second half of the 20th century. The docks closed in 1959, and the inner basin was largely built over. The industrial expansion of Port Talbot had led to greater house building and associated industry development but with the closure of many of the big steel, iron and tin industries these also declined.

There are no assets of this date that are within the proposed scheme boundary. There are 10 assets in the wider study area dating to this period.

[14] View map | DataMapWales (gov.wales)

4.5.11 Unknown

There are three assets listed in the HER data that have not been assigned a date or description in the GGATHER data. While they likely date to either the post medieval or modern period, there is no information available to support attributing either date to the assets within the scope of this assessment.

6. Assessment of Significance and archaeological potential

6.1 Assessment of significance

6.1.1 Designated assets

The scheduled monument and registered park and gardens are discussed in detail in a separate document. Whilst they are discussed in this document, please refer to the Heritage Impact Assessment (NE05_001-ATK-EHR-SWMWREC-RP-LH-000003) for a detailed assessment of these assets.

The following designated asset are within the 500m buffer, however, have been excluded from this assessment as they are removed from the area of works and no impact to them, or their setting is anticipated.

- Salem Baptist Chapel (23305), a grade II listed building located in the centre of Briton Ferry set back behind a railed forecourt from Vernon Street on the W side of Neath Road. Located 380m southwest of the proposed Scheme.
- Church of St Clement (23306) a grade II listed building located the centre of Briton Ferry and set within a railed churchyard. Located 460m southwest of the proposed Scheme.
- War Memorial (23296) a grade II listed structure sited opposite the Church of St Clement. Located 460m southwest of the proposed Scheme.

6.1.1.1 Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline

The scheduled monument of Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline (GM489) consists of the remains of a 19th century rope-hauled railway incline, constructed during the 1850s and opened in 1863. Extending for a distance of one mile in length, the rope-hauled incline formed part of the 13 mile long South Wales Mineral Railway which linked the dock at Briton Ferry with the collieries of the Upper Afan Valley and was later extended to Glyncorrwg.

The Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline (GM489) is designated for its potential to enhance knowledge of the development of industrial transportation in the nineteenth century, and specifically, the industry of South Wales and Port Talbot. It is well preserved within the area of Jersey Park and is intrinsically linked to the development of Briton Ferry and Port Talbot. It is a highly legible asset, particularly within the boundary of Jersey Park, which adds to its value and significance.

The scheduled monument includes two bridges, designated in their own right as listed buildings (23303 and 23308), both of which are located outside the proposed Scheme. Constructed contemporarily with the Railway Incline, the bridges form an integral part of the scheduled monument and evidence the quality of its construction and design. In particular, the Bridge over Ynysmaerdy Incline (23308) is well preserved with obvious historical, physical and visual links to the incline. The other bridge over the Incline at Pant Howell Ddu (23303) is likewise linked, however the Railway Incline at this location

is less well maintained, diminishing the appreciation of their historic relationship. This bridge is not visible from the proposed Scheme.

The historic association between the Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline and Brunel further contributes to the asset's significance and provides a tangible link to the historic development of Briton Ferry docks.

The setting of the Railway Incline makes limited contribution to its significance. When operational, the Incline was located in an open landscape, characterised by the presence of colliery workings and fields. Today, the setting of the monument comprises mature woodland, with views from the monument largely contained within its boundaries. The direct connection between the Railway Incline and the extant railway line to the west is now lost due to intervening development.

In consideration of its historic and evidential value, and its designation as a scheduled monument, the Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline (GM489) is assessed to be of high significance.

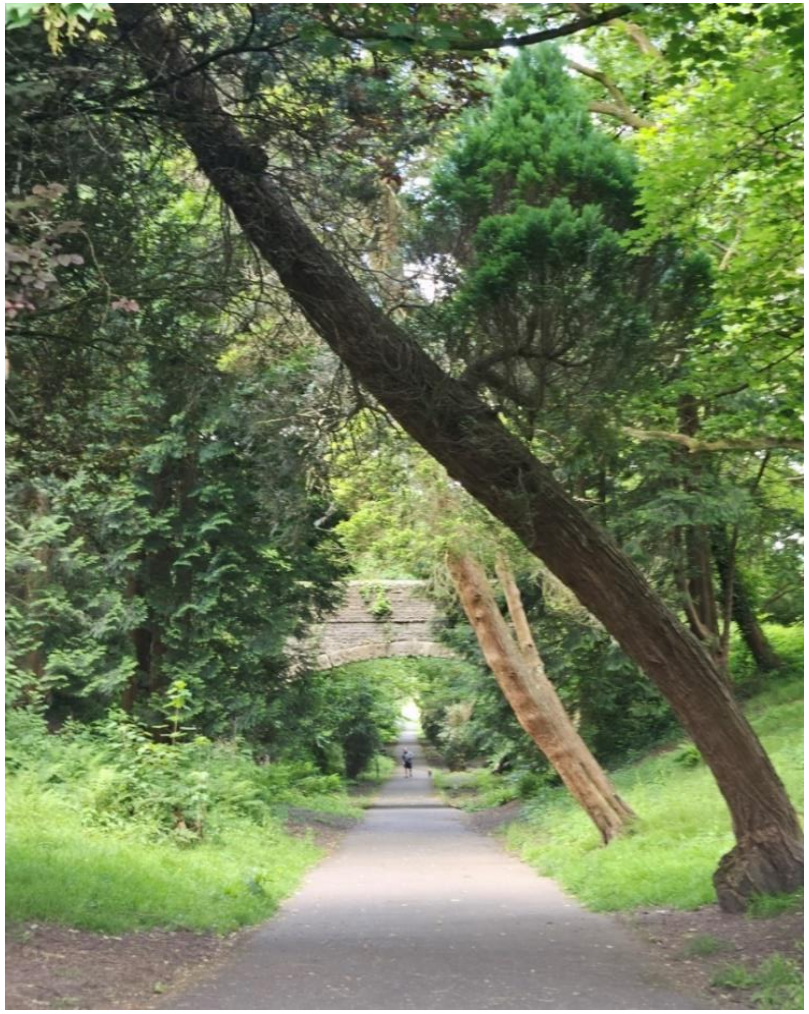


Figure 6-2 - Ynysmaerdy Incline looking west

Figure 6-1 - Bridge over Ynysmaerdy Incline (23308)

Figure 6-4 – Erosion damage to the Railway Incline resulting from the Grandison Brook to the south of the playpark in Jersey Park.

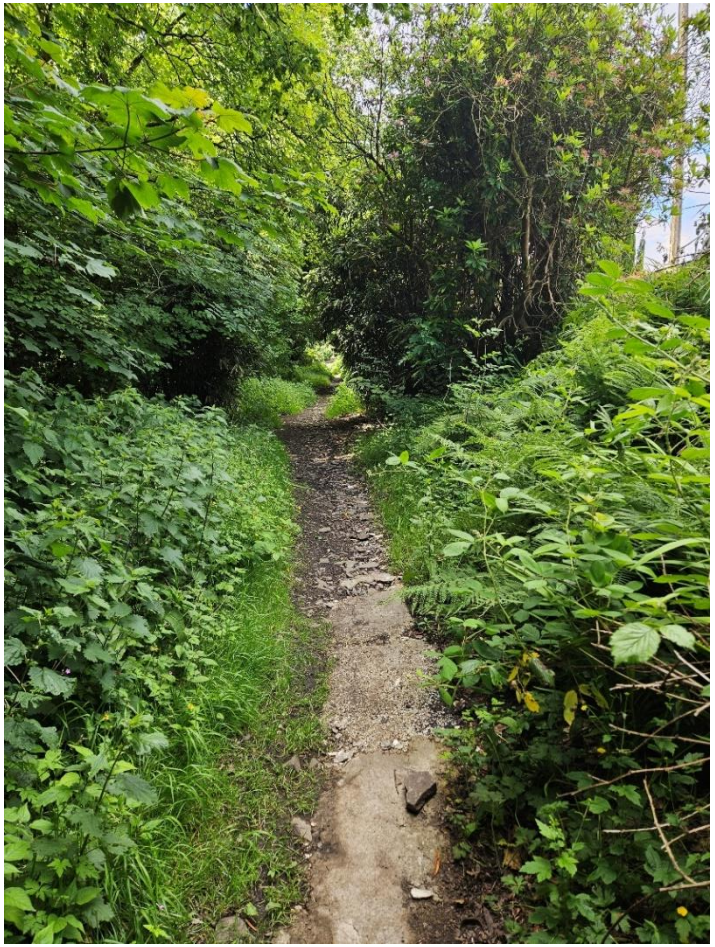


Figure 6-3 - General view of the Railway Incline to the east of Ynysmaerdy Road.

6.1.1.2 Jersey Park

The scheme is located within Jersey Park, a grade II registered park and garden (PGW(Gm)62(NEP)). It contains part of the Ynysmaerdy Incline (GM489), preserved as a surfaced footpath running east-west through the park.

Jersey Park is situated on the western edge of Briton Ferry in the Vale of Neath. The park is located within a small valley with steeply sloping wooded ground to the south and a cemetery and a modern housing estate to the north. The park comprises mature woodland to the south and west, a cricket ground and play area to the north and area of formal paths through a lawned area with decorative flower beds to the west. The Railway Incline runs directly through the park, forming the main footpath through its centre (Figure 6-6). Planting in the park is varied and there is a focus on promoting the ecology of the park evident through signage throughout it.

Jersey Park is designated for its historic interest as an exceptionally well preserved urban public park, opened in 1925. Its original layout of formal and informal areas remains substantially complete and includes sports facilities, a pavilion, and bowling green. Jersey Park is of historic, aesthetic and communal value and is assessed to be of medium significance. The Ynysmaerdy Incline and the listed railway bridge are also key features with the park and contribute to its historic interest.

Figure 6-5 - Formal gardens within Jersey Park.

Figure 6-6 - General view of the Ynysmaerdy Incline within Jersey Park

6.1.1.3 Carreg Hir Standing Stone

Carreg Hir Standing Stone (GM170) is an upright slab of Pennant Sandstone. It is located in the ground of the Cwrt Sart comprehensive school in Neath Port Talbot. It is sited 15m north of the mid-section of the proposed culvert.

It likely dates to the early to mid-Bronze Age, and is sited in an area of low lying ground, yet on top of a low mound which extends under the area of the school. Whilst the stone is set into a concrete vase, it is likely it is in situ.

This type of monument is considered rare in Glamorgan outside the Gower Peninsula. As a scheduled monument is considered to be of high significance.

6.2 Archaeological potential

6.2.1 Period assessment

6.2.1.1 Palaeolithic

There is considered to be a low potential for archaeology dated to the palaeolithic period to be present within the proposed site boundary based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the period within the region. Whilst significant archaeology dated to this period has been found within the region, no sites or finds are noted on the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any deposits dating to this period will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme.

6.2.1.2 Mesolithic

There is considered to be a low potential for archaeology dated to the mesolithic period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. No sites or finds of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme.

6.2.1.3 Neolithic

There is considered to be a low potential for archaeology dated to the neolithic period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. No sites or finds of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be identified or recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme.

6.2.1.4 Bronze Age

There is considered to be a low potential for archaeology dated to the Bronze Age period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. No sites or finds of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme. The proposed scheme is sited close to the Carreg Hir standing stone; however, it is not expected that the excavation required for the scheme will impact upon previous undisturbed deposits.

6.2.1.5 Iron Age

There is considered to be a low potential for archaeology dated to the Iron Age period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. There is one site of this date noted in the GGHER within the study area, Pencaerau Bank (GGAT00607w), however there is little indication that it extends down into the area of the scheme, nor that there will be archaeology associated with it in the area of the scheme. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any further archaeological sites, or any archaeological finds will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme. However, where the scheme will impact upon areas of previously undisturbed ground, such as at the playing fields, allotments and football grounds, there is a greater potential for archaeological deposits to be present..

6.2.1.6 Romano-British

There is considered to be a low potential for archaeology dated to the Romano-British period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. No sites or finds of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme. However, where the scheme will impact upon areas of previously undisturbed ground, such as at the playing fields, allotments and football grounds, there is a greater potential for archaeological deposits to be present.

6.2.1.7 Early Medieval

There is considered to be a low potential for archaeology dated to the Early Medieval period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. No sites or finds of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme. However, where the scheme will impact upon areas of previously undisturbed ground, such as at the playing fields, allotments and football grounds, there is a greater potential for archaeological deposits to be present. .

6.2.1.8 Medieval

There is considered to be a medium potential for archaeology dated to the Medieval period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. Two sites of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme. However, where the scheme will impact upon areas of previously undisturbed ground, such as at the playing fields, allotments and football grounds, there is a greater potential for archaeological deposits to be present. .

6.2.1.9 Post Medieval

There is considered to be a very high potential for archaeology dated to the Post-Medieval period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. 27 sites or finds of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme. However, where the scheme will impact upon areas of previously undisturbed ground, such as at the playing fields, allotments and football grounds, there is a greater potential for archaeological deposits to be present. .

Where the scheme crosses the railways there is very high potential for archaeology from the construction and operation related to this asset (01701.0w).

6.2.1.10 Modern

There is considered to be a very high potential for archaeology dated to the Modern period based on the baseline assessment and the archaeological understanding of the region. No sites or finds of this date are noted in the GGHER within the study area. As the scheme is primarily located in areas of previous disturbance, it is unlikely that any archaeological finds or sites will be recovered during the construction or operation of the proposed scheme. However, where the scheme will impact upon areas of previously undisturbed ground, such as at the playing fields, allotments and football grounds, there is a greater potential for archaeological deposits to be present.

6.2.2 Site specific assessment

6.2.2.1 Ynysmaerdy Incline

Any buried archaeology within the footprint of the Incline has the potential to be of high significance as it will likely relate to construction techniques and functional detail of the Railway Incline. Should any such remains be present these would add to our understanding of construction methodologies and uses of the Incline. It is expected that any archaeology associated to the Incline will be close to the surface and could be potentially truncated, disturbed or destroyed by shallow excavation.

There is high potential for buried archaeological remains of historical and evidential value to be uncovered related to the incline's development and low potential for archaeological remains that pre or postdate it. Any such remains are likely to be industrial in origin and date to the 19th century.

6.2.2.2 Registered Park

There is a high potential for finding archaeology from the post medieval and modern period related to the development and ongoing management of the registered park and garden.

6.2.2.3 Carreg Hir Standing Stone

There has been significant development around the site of the standing stone which has potentially truncated any associated archaeology. The potential for buried archaeology surviving within the working depths of the proposed scheme are low.

7. Impact Assessment

7.1 Designated assets

7.1.1 Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline

The proposed scheme would result in physical impacts on the Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline in two locations.

To the south of the play area within Jersey Park, impacts to the Ynysmaerdy Incline would result from the following design proposals:

- Excavation for installation of pipework, hydrobrake flow control chambers and manholes;
- Formation of a new ditch with gabion retaining walls and headwalls; and
- Formation of a new earth retaining bank with raised footpath aligned along the crest of the bank along the former route of the Railway Incline.

To the east of Jersey Park and Ynysmaerdy Road, impacts to the Ynysmaerdy Incline would result from:

- Excavation of a ditch 1.5m deep with a concrete headwall with sloped grating to the north of the existing footpath, adjacent to Ynysmaerdy Road
- Regrading of the existing footpath to provide a 1 in 20 cross fall towards the new ditch; and
- Minor earthworks to top off low spots along the existing embankment along the north side of the Railway Incline.

Scheduled Monument Consent would be required for these proposals.

In the locations of the proposed new ditches and for the installation of new pipework construction activities would likely result in permanent physical impacts to the scheduled monument and the loss of fabric associated with the monument. This would detract from the evidential value of the asset and decrease legibility of the Incline at the above locations. In addition, construction has the potential to impact upon any surviving remains of a small rectangular roofed structure shown on the 1st edition 25” Ordnance Survey map of 1878, located adjacent to the railway lines.

New elements would be introduced into the scheduled monument with the construction of the headwall with sloped grating to the north of Ynysmaerdy Road in the area of the Rhodfa Clarke footpath and then further west within Jersey Park a ditch with gabion retaining walls to the south of the play park. These would introduce modern engineered elements into the Railway Incline, detracting from the integrity of the monument in two limited areas.

To the north of Ynysmaerdy Road, the repair and reinstatement of the bank along the north side of the Railway Incline would require localised removal of existing vegetation in advance of the works. The reinstatement of the earth bank would restore the historic form of the Incline and improve the legibility of the monument.

There would be no physical impacts to the listed railway bridges as a result of the scheme.

No change is anticipated to the setting of the Railway Incline. The flood attenuation tank proposed to be installed under the play park to the north of the scheduled monument would be located below ground level and the play park reinstated above, resulting in minimal change to the asset's setting and no impact on its significance.

Figure 7-1 - Approximate location of the proposed ditch and embanked path to the south of the playpark within the scheduled Railway Incline.

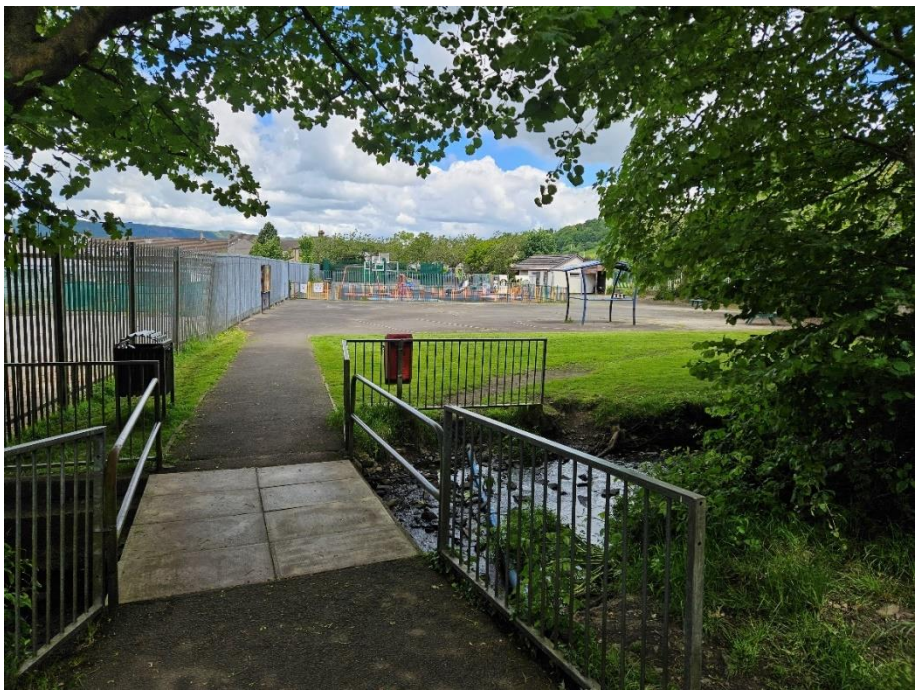


Figure 7-2 - Bridge into the playground from the Railway Incline.

Figure 7-3 – Entrance to the Railway Incline to the east of Ynysymaerdy Road. The proposed headwall and ditch would be located to the left of the path.

7.1.2 Jersey Park

The proposed scheme would have a direct, physical impact on Jersey Park and result in works within its setting. Physical impacts to the park would occur in the area of the play park and on the Railway Incline adjacent to this. These would result from:

- Installation of buried storm attenuation using Polypipe Polystorm cell units covering an area of c.1772m^2 below the playground and picnic area. Following installation, the playpark and picnic area would be reinstated;
- Excavation for installation of pipework, hydrobrake flow control chambers and manholes between the Railway Incline and playpark;
- Formation of a new ditch with gabion retaining walls and headwalls to the north of the Railway Incline;
- Formation of a new earth retaining bank with raised footpath aligned along the crest of the bank along the former route of the Railway Incline; and
- Reinstatement of grass / topsoil areas on completion of the works.

Impacts on the setting of Jersey Park would result from

- Excavation of a ditch 1.5m deep with a concrete headwall with sloped grating to the north of the existing Rhodfa Clarke footpath, adjacent to Ynysmaerdy Road
- Regrading of the existing footpath to provide a 1 in 20 cross fall towards the new ditch;
- Minor earthworks to top off low spots along the existing embankment along the north side of the Railway Incline; and
- Upgrading of the existing surface water culvert along Ynysymaerdy Road and installation of a new connecting culvert from the new concrete headwall.

Whilst installation of the storm attenuation would result in temporary disruption and intrusion on the park during construction, following reinstatement of the picnic area and playpark, this would not result in any change to the plan form or use of the registered park, and would not impact upon its historic significance. The playpark and picnic area are not of historic origin and make limited contribution to the historic significance of the park. There is potential for improvement of these facilities when reinstated.

The construction of the ditch with gabion retaining walls to the south of the play park would introduce a permanent new feature into the park, the form and materials of which would be clearly understood as a modern engineered intervention. The orientation of the ditch perpendicular to the Railway Incline would detract from the strong linear character the Incline at this location which forms a characteristic feature of the park. Installation of these works would result in the temporary removal of grass vegetation within the scheme footprint; however, this would not affect any ornamental planting or mature trees.

The construction of the ditch and headwall to the Rhodfa Clarke footpath area would introduce a new element into the setting of the registered park. These would be seen in the context of the existing large concrete headwall located adjacent to Ynysymaerdy Road which is the inflow for Grandison Brook and being adjacent to modern housing. This would not detract from significance of Jersey Park as an early 20th century public park.

The proposed scheme would reduce the risk of flooding within Jersey Park and the adjacent residential areas downhill of the park which suffer flooding. It would also enhance the communal value of the park through improvement of playpark and picnic facilities.

7.1.3 Carreg Hir standing stone

The proposed scheme will not have a direct, nor indirect impact to the scheduled monument of Carreg Hir. Works will be required within c. 15m of the monument, comprising:

- Construction of a new flood relief culvert within the existing highways boundary.

Whilst the construction of this element of work would result in temporary visual and noise disturbances to the setting of the asset, the operation of the scheme would have negligible impact to the asset.

7.2 Buried Archaeology

Construction of the proposed scheme would impact upon potential archaeological remains associated with the Railway Incline. The areas of impact are limited in extent and would affect a small proportion of the scheduled monument. These impacts would result particularly from the excavations for the new pipework and ditch to the south of the playpark. These scheme elements will require excavation through the scheduled monument in an area that historically has not been significantly disturbed. It is anticipated that there is the potential for industrial archaeological remains associated with the Railway Incline to survive at this location, potentially including archaeological remains of the small, roofed structure shown adjacent to the railway line on the 1st edition 25” Ordnance Survey map of 1878.

Construction of the attenuation tank will also impact upon the former route of an embankment that joined the Railway Incline in the area of the children’s playground. Constructed to carry a railway line, the embankment is shown as a raised bank on the 1884 6” Ordnance Survey map, linking to the Esgyrn Colliery, and nearby quarries (SS 74027 94598), suggesting that it was out of use by this time. The embankment can also be seen on the 1918 Ordnance Survey map by which time the Ynysmaerdy Cemetery has been established across part of its route. No visible trace of this embankment was noted during the site inspection and the area has been levelled, reducing the potential for associated archaeological remains to survive.

Construction of the culvert could potentially impact on archaeology from multi periods, however where the route will largely respect existing highways boundaries and be within areas of previous disturbance, it is expected that any archaeology would have been significantly truncated by previous development. Where the route will impact upon areas of undisturbed ground there is a greater potential for impact to buried archaeology. A review of historic mapping and lidar imagery suggests that prior to development the landscape was agricultural.

8. Conclusion

The Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme is being developed to improve surface water drainage along Grandison Brook and to reduce the risk of flooding to residential and commercial properties on and around Pany Yr Heol Road. The proposed scheme would result in impacts upon the scheduled monument Ynysmaerdy Incline (GM489) and Jersey Park registered park and garden (PGW(Gm)62(NEP)). These impacts would result from the construction of new flood attenuation tanks (within Jersey Park only), associated pipework, ditches and retaining / head walls.

The scheme would result in the removal of archaeological remains associated with the Railway Incline, within the scheme footprint, and impact on its legibility, due to the introduction of new drainage ditches and the interruption of the continuous incline due to the presence of a proposed bank. Minor earthwork repairs to the top off low spots along the railway embankment to the north of Jersey Park would also be undertaken, improving the form and legibility of the monument in this area. Scheduled monument consent would be required for all works resulting in ground breaking within the scheduled monument boundary. This would result in minor harm to the scheduled monument.

The proposed scheme would introduce attenuation tanks on the playpark and picnic sites to the north of Jersey Park, however, following reinstatement of the playpark and picnic ground, these would not be visible. The proposed drainage ditch and bank within the park would be legible as a modern engineered element within the historic park and detract from the legibility of the Incline. This would affect a limited area of the park and would not impact any formal designed elements, resulting in limited harm to the significance of Jersey Park.

The proposed scheme would require the excavation for and installation of an underground culvert within the current highways boundaries and within area of made ground. The potential impact to archaeological remains is assessed to be low. There are no setting impacts as a result of this proposed element.

8.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that the potential to reduce impacts on Ynysmaerdy Incline and Jersey Park registered park and garden is explored during development of the proposals to include:

- Detailed design of the scheme to reduce the need for ground disturbance within the scheduled monument;
- The use of sensitive materials within Jersey Park and the Railway Incline to aid the integration of the scheme into its surroundings and reduce its visual impact. This may include the use of stone cladding or installation of railings following design precedents within the park;
- Sensitive reinstatement of vegetation within the scheme boundaries;
- Improvement of the playpark and picnic area to improve the facilities and enhance the experience of park users;
- Explore opportunities for enhancement of the scheduled monument through repair of existing damage and erosion; and

- Explore opportunities for interpretation of the Railway Incline and Jersey Park as part of the scheme. This could include collaboration with local community or heritage groups.

Consultation should be undertaken with Cadw and Glamorgan Gwent County Archaeologist (now Heneb) to discuss the need for the scheme, its impact on the historic assets and potential design and heritage mitigation measures.

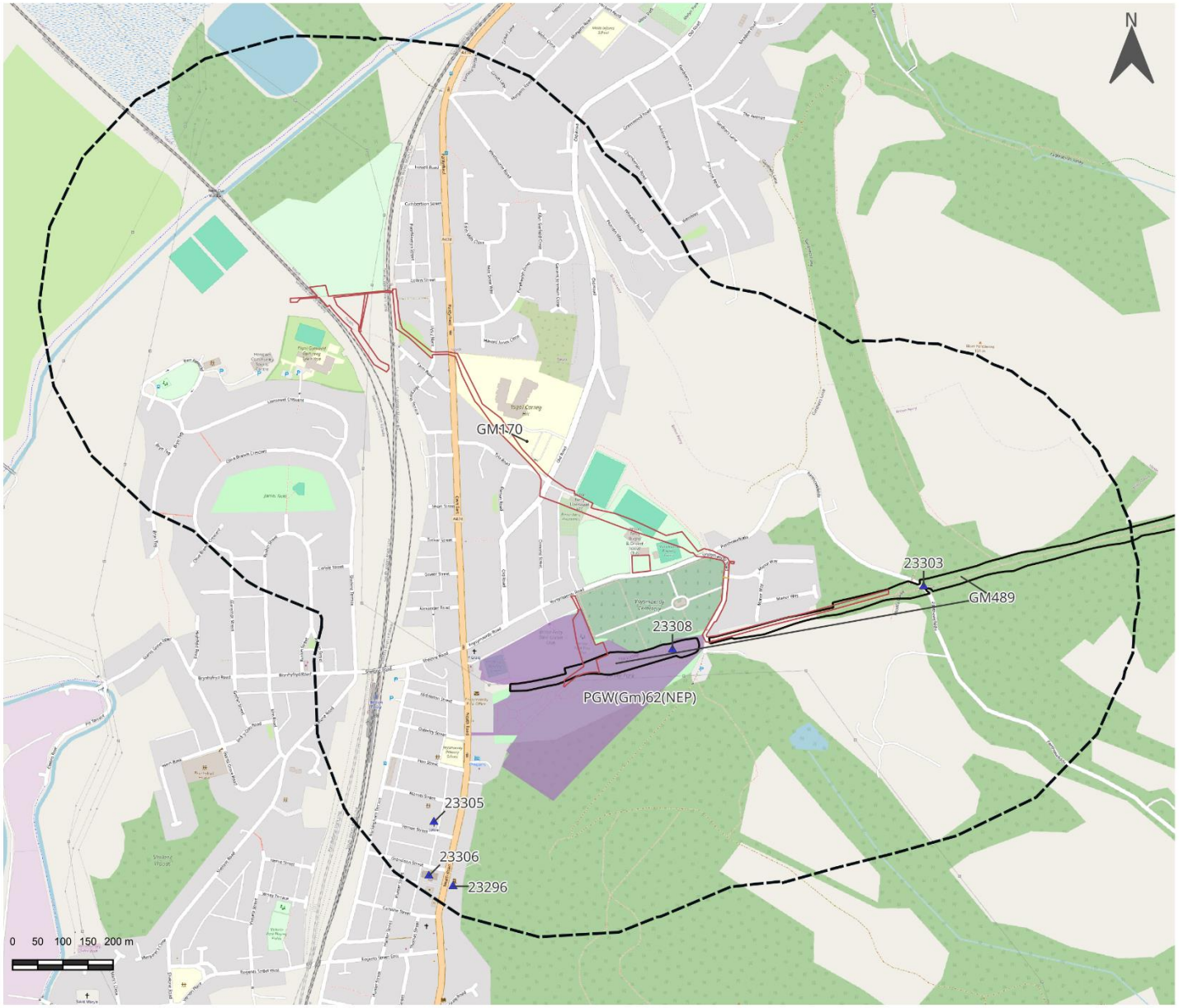
Any subsequent applications for scheduled monument consent or planning permission should be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement, including details of design optioneering, impact on significance and proposed mitigation measures.

This discussion should also consider the impact of the proposed culvert; however, the scale of effect is expected to be lower from this element of work. Appropriate mitigation measures should be put in place following consultation with the LPA.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Maps

A.1 Location of designated historic assets



Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme

Heritage Impact Assessment

Designated Heritage Assets

Legend

Red Line Boundary

Study Area

Designated assets

Listed Buildings

II

Scheduled Monument

RPaG

OpenStreetMap

Drawn By: Jasmin Folland
Date: 07/04/2025

Base Mapping:© OpenStreetMap contributors

Data Sources: Glamorgan Gwent Historic Environment Record
OS data © Crown Copyright and database right (2025).
© CADW (2025)

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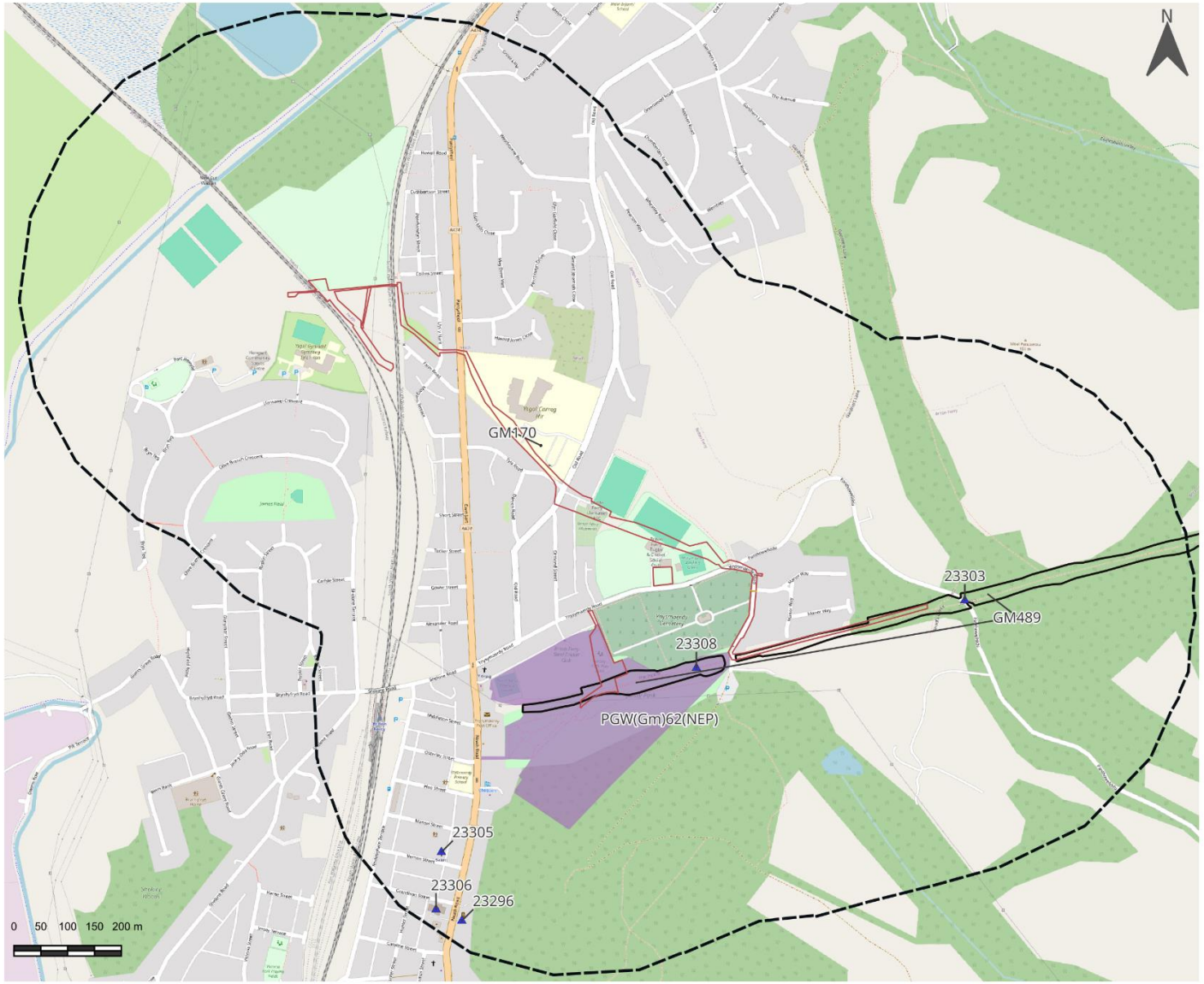
A.2 Location of non-designated historic assets



Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme

Heritage Impact Assessment

Non-designated Heritage Assets

Non-designated heritage assets

Red Line Boundary

Study Area

Designated assets

Listed Buildings

II

Scheduled Monument

RPaG

OpenStreetMap

Drawn By: Jasmin Folland
Date: 07/04/2025

Base Mapping:© OpenStreetMap contributors

Data Sources: Glamorgan Gwent Historic Environment Record
OS data © Crown Copyright and database right (2025).

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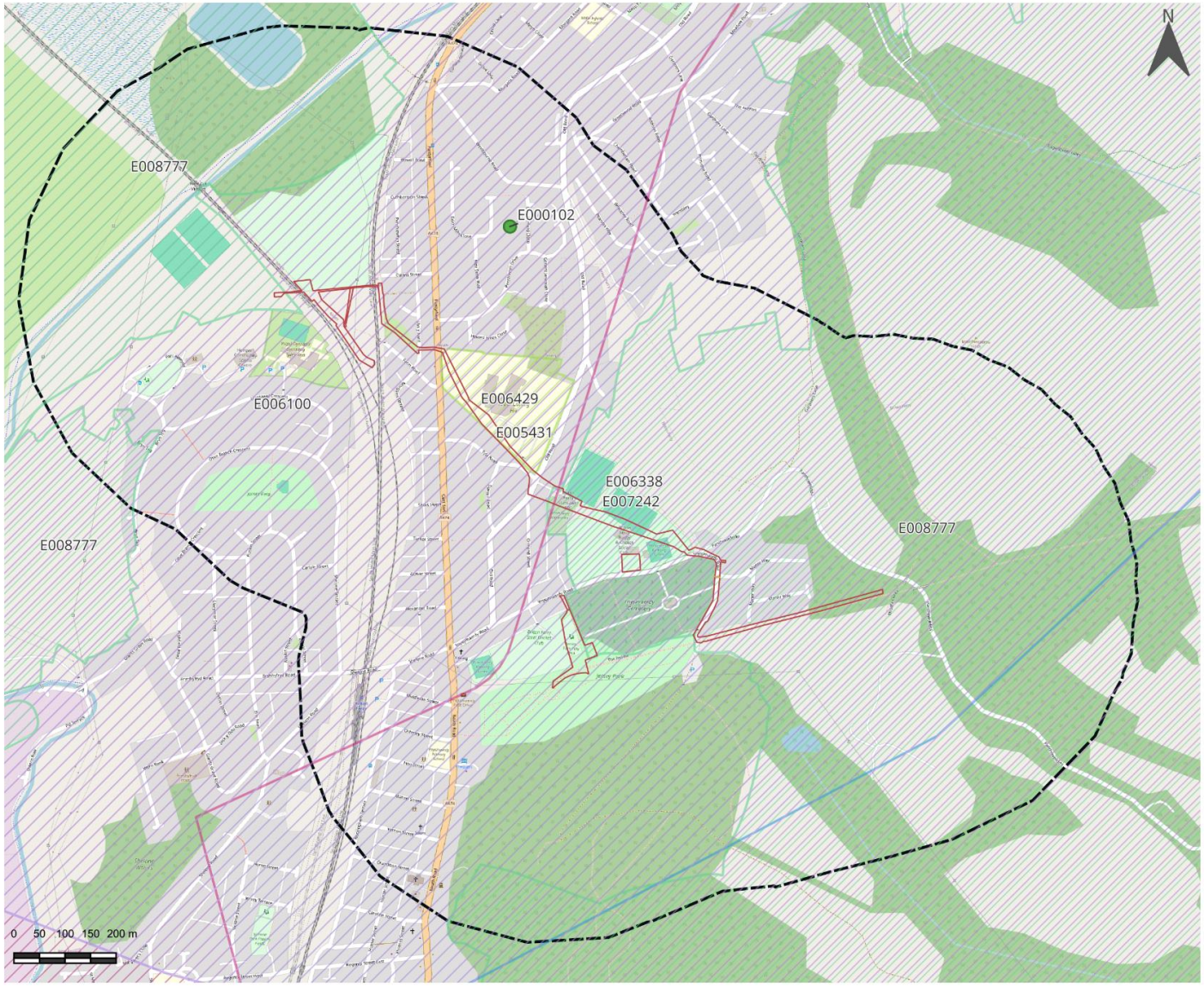
A.3 Location of previous events



Grandison Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme

Heritage Impact Assessment

Events

Events

Red Line Boundary

Events

Points

Polygon

E005431

E006100

E006338

E006429

E007242

E008777

Study Area

OpenStreetMap

Drawn By: Jasmin Folland
Date: 07/04/2025

Base Mapping:© OpenStreetMap contributors

Data Sources: Glamorgan Gwent Historic Environment Record
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Appendix B. Gazetteers

B.1 Designated historic assets

Record Number	Name	Designation
GM489	Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline	Scheduled Monument
GM170	Carreg Hir Standing Stone, Pen-Rhiw-Tyn	Scheduled Monument
23296	War Memorial, including revetments and steps	Grade II listed building
23303	Ynysmaerdy Incline bridge over Pant Howel Ddu	Grade II listed building
23305	Salem Baptist Chapel	Grade II listed building
23306	Church of St Clement	Grade II listed building
23308	Bridge over Ynysmaerdy Incline	Grade II listed building
PGW(Gm)62(NEP)	Jersey Park	grade II registered park and garden

B.2 Non-designated assets

PRN	Name	Summary	Period
GGAT00583w	Carreg Hir (Cwrt Sart Standing Stone)	In grounds of Cwrt Sart Comprehensive School, reset on a concrete foundation. A massive slab of sandstone with its widest faces E and W; parallelogram in plan; in elevation sides taper slightly to a squared top. The E face is the flattest. GGAT 72	Bronze Age
GGAT00594w	Court Sart Grange, Briton Ferry	Grange of Neath Abbey; exchanged with Gilbert de Clare in 1289, but Neath still had an interest at Dissolution.	Medieval
00607w	Pencaerau Bank, Neath	Hillfort or just a boundary bank dividing off the arable land from the hillock. The bank is 6m wide and half metre high on the S, with the possible remains of a similar one on the W. An old bank can be traced, making an oval enclosure of about 0.1 ha.	Iron Age
GGAT00646w	Ynys Y Maerdy Manor House and Watermill, Neath	Manor house and water mill with extensive changes visible with each publication. Four editions of OS map highlight the changes.	Medieval
GGAT01027.0w	Linear Feature, Neath Canal	The Neath and Tennant (01070.0w) Canals provided twenty-one miles of waterway from Aberdulais to Swansea and from Glynneath to Briton Ferry. The two canals were built separately, the Neath under Acts of Parliament of 1791 and 1793.	Post Medieval
GGAT01701.0w	Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway	Promoted and built during the 1880's to connect the Rhondda and Afan coalfields with the port of Swansea and opened in stages between 1885 and 1895.	Post Medieval
GGAT01701.7w	Linear Feature, Neath Branch Line Railway	Section of post-medieval line at Neath branching from the Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway	Post Medieval
GGAT01967w	Ynys Y Maerdy Grist Mill	The site comprises a Post-medieval mill entitled Ynys Y Maerdy Grist Mill situated within the community of Briton Ferry. No further information is currently available.	Post Medieval
GGAT02717w	House, Cwmnantyrarllwys	Post medieval dwelling thatch roof, hearth passage, end entry.	Post Medieval
GGAT04285w	Craig Y Daren Levels Ii	Levels as noted on OS 6-inch 2nd edition 1900 map. Area contains a number of levels and trial levels. These have been made safe and are now overgrown.	Post Medieval
GGAT04287w	Briton Ferry Enclosure	Enclosure as noted on OS 6-inch 2nd edition 1900 map.	Post Medieval
GGAT04413w	Craig Y Daren Air Shaft	Air shaft as noted on OS 6-inch 1st edition 1884 map. Shaft has since been backfilled and now acts as a drain outlet.	Post Medieval
GGAT05128w	Jersey Park, Briton Ferry	Exceptionally well preserved urban public park. Its original layout of formal and informal areas remains complete and includes sports facilities. Planting in the park is diverse and interesting, with an emphasis on evergreen trees and shrubs.	Modern
GGAT07250w	Water Management Feature, Briton Ferry	Probable pond, shown at this location on 2nd edition OS mapping.	Post Medieval
GGAT07267w	Findspot, Briton Ferry	The site comprises the location of a findspot where a metal detector identified the remains of a 16th/17th century stem of a Knop seal spoon with indications of a seal at the base (Jenkins 2014).	Post Medieval
GGAT07384w	Ty-nef, Pyle	an unassigned structure that can be found on the first edition of the ordinance survey map	Modern

GGAT07385w	Small Complex, Briton Ferry	A small complex of buildings to the south west of Cefncoed farm that can be found on the first edition of the ordinance survey map	Modern
GGAT07386w	Old Air Shafts	old air shafts that are north of Ynysmaerdy which can be found on the 1st edition of the Ordinance survey map	Modern
07387w	Ty-copyn, Briton Ferry	Ty0copyn is a house that can be found on the 1st edition of the Ordinance survey map	Modern
GGAT07388w	Esgyrn Colliery	A colliery south of cefncoed farm that can be found on the 1st edition of the Ordinance survey map	Modern
07390w	Old Levels, Neath	old coal levels that are visible on the second edition of the Ordinance survey map	Modern
07393w	Structure, Briton Ferry	A structure associated with a nearby quarry that can be found on the 3rd edition of the Ordinance survey map	Modern
GGAT07394w	Dwellings/Structures, Briton Ferry	Possible dwellings that can be found on the 3rd and 4th editions of the ordinance survey map	Modern
GGAT07512w	Findspot, Briton Ferry	The site comprises the location of a findspot where a metal detector identified a complete gilded general service WWI cap badge, numerous pre-decimal coin denominations dating from 1897-1934 and a number of spent 7.23 and 303 cartridges (Jenkins 2014; HERP2412).	Modern
GGAT08993w	Longhouse, Cwrt Sart Comprehensive School	Longhouse Structure Seen On Early OS Mapping	Post Medieval
GGAT09092w	Railway Overbridge, Briton Ferry	Significantly altered modern concrete railway overbridge on older stonework piers carrying the Swansea District line over the canal.	Post Medieval
GGAT09096w	Ynysmaerdy Cemetery Chapels, Briton Ferry	Twin stone-built chapels which are linked to form a bell-tower entrance. Constructed at the end of the 19th century.	Post Medieval
GGAT09101w	Y Graig Chapel, Neath Road/Ynysymaerdy Road, Briton Ferry	Imposing large chapel of dressed stone construction. Dated 1890.	Post Medieval
GGAT09155w	Bethesda Congregational Church, Briton Ferry	Small distinctive early 20th century chapel in largely original condition of stone construction with stone features and some timber framing decoration.	Modern
GGAT09343w	Leighs Barbers Shop, 177 Main Rd, Briton Ferry	Traditional shop front with windows on 2 elevations.	Post Medieval
GGAT09644w	Cwrt Sart Farm	Potential historic farmstead identified as part of GGAT and Cadws Historic Farmsteads project, visible on Second Edition OS mapping..	Post Medieval
GGAT09645w	Pen-rhyw-lyn	Potential historic farmstead identified as part of GGAT and Cadws Historic Farmsteads project, visible on Second Edition OS mapping..	Post Medieval
GGAT09764w	Pen-Rhiw-Tyn Farmstead	Potential historic farmstead identified as part of GGAT and Cadws Historic Farmsteads project, visible on Second Edition OS mapping.	Post Medieval
GGAT10424w	Enclosure, Craig-y-darren	Enclosure identified via LiDAR.	Post Medieval
GGAT10426w	Farmstead, Craig-y-darren	The semi-rectangular field to the south suggests a possible enclosure / garden area commonly found associated with old smallholdings.	Unknown
GGAT10873w	Reservoir, Briton Ferry	Reservoir identified on 1st Edition historic OS map (1878).	Unknown
GGAT11047w	Sluice, Briton Ferry	Sluice identified on 1st Edition historic OS map (1881).	Unknown
GGAT11048w	Pont-y-Lady	Bridge identified on 1st Edition historic OS map (1881).	Unknown

GGAT11049w	Old Kiln, Neath	Old kiln identified on 1st Edition historic OS map (1881).	Unknown
GGAT17899g	St. Clement's Church	Church identified on 1st Edition historic OS map (1882).	Unknown
07450w	Structure	Not provided	Unknown
07722w	South Wales Railway	Not provided	Unknown
07721w	Old Colliery	Not provided	Unknown
07723w	Buildings	Not provided	Unknown

B.3 Events

PRN	Name	Event Type	Organisation	Person	Year
E008777	NPTHL033, Landscape Study for Neath Port Talbot	Desk Based Assessment	Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)	Graves-Brown, P.	2000
E008777	NPTHL032, Landscape Study for Neath Port Talbot	Desk Based Assessment	Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)	Graves-Brown, P.	2000
E006429	Cwrt Sart Comprehensive School, Old Road	Watching Brief	Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)	Toseland and Clement	2017
E007242	High Status Settlement in Glamorgan and Gwent	Desk Based Assessment	Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)	Roberts, R.	2010
E005431	The Rural Settlement of Roman Britain	Project	University of Reading	Allen, M et al	2015
E006100	GGAT150: Rapid Coastline Zone Assessment	Project	Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust GGAT	Roberts, R	2018
E006338	Leiros Park, Neath	Desk Based Assessment	Archaeology Wales	Poucher, P.	2016
E008777	NPTHL007, Landscape Study for Neath Port Talbot	Desk Based Assessment	Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)	Graves-Brown, P.	2000
E000102	Casualties of War (Yr 4, GGAT 144)	Desk Based Assessment	Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)	Huckfield, P.	2016-16

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