COAL MINING RISK ASSESSMENT

PRE-PLANNING ENQ. Q22/0056

NEATH PORT TALBOT C.B.C.

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

LAND ADJACENT TO 37 DERWEN ROAD

ALLTWEN

PONTARDAWE

SWANSEA

SA8 3AU

6/10/2022

RICHARD DAVIES – BSc.(hons), MSc., F.G.S.

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COAL MINING RISK ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This Coal Mining Risk Assessment (henceforth C.M.R.A.) has been produced for Mr Pietro Granaiola to support a pre-planning application to Neath Port Talbot L.P.A. reference Q2022/0056. The application is for the construction of a detached residential property on land adjacent to 37 Derwen Road, Pontardawe. No plans of the proposed development have been finalised, but the footprint of the proposed property can be seen in Appendix 1. The Coal Authority have informed the LPA that they require a C.M.R.A. and until one is produced, they will object to planning being granted. The site area is classed as partly being within a Development High Risk Area. The reason for this classification is a coal mine entry being present within the northwestern part of the site. With such a classification the C.A. become statutory consultees for the application and a C.M.R.A. needs to be produced to validate the application as requested.

Richard Davies BSc. (Hons), MSc., F.G.S. of Rhondda Geotechnical Services has been commissioned as the competent person to prepare a C.M.R.A. of the proposed development site. The purpose of any C.M.R.A. is to provide the L.P.A. with information on possible coal mining and an assessment of its impact on the ground stability of the site in order to satisfy the L.P.A. that the site is, or can be made safe and stable in line with national guidelines. This will be done in line with the template and recommendations of the C.A. document Guidance for Welsh L.P.A.s (version 4, 2017).

The site is centred on grid reference 272050, 203140 and is at an elevation of approximately 45m. A.O.D. There are no surface watercourses. The site location is shown in Figure 1 and the site boundary is shown in Figure 2 overleaf.

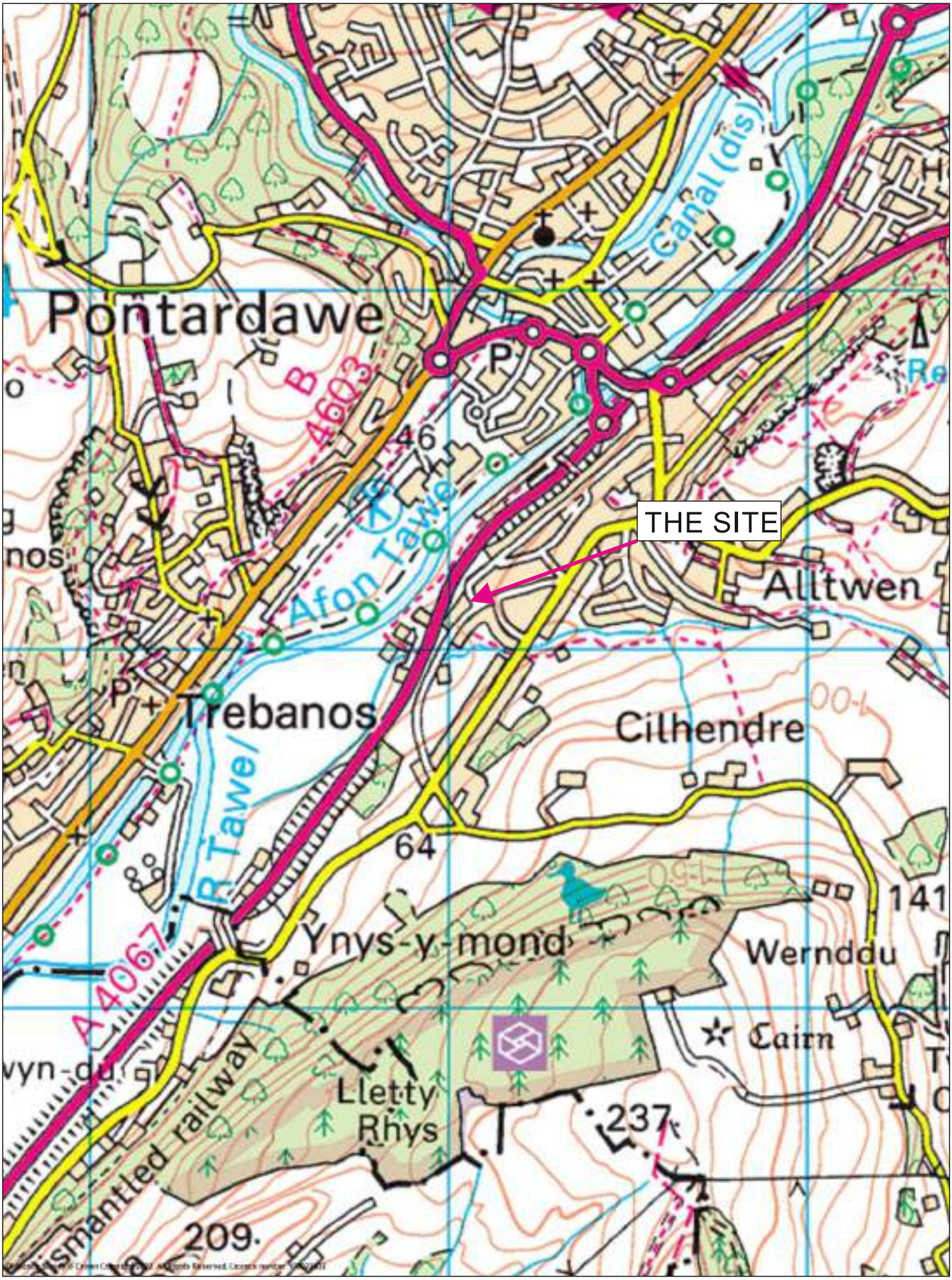


FIGURE 1
SITE LOCATION

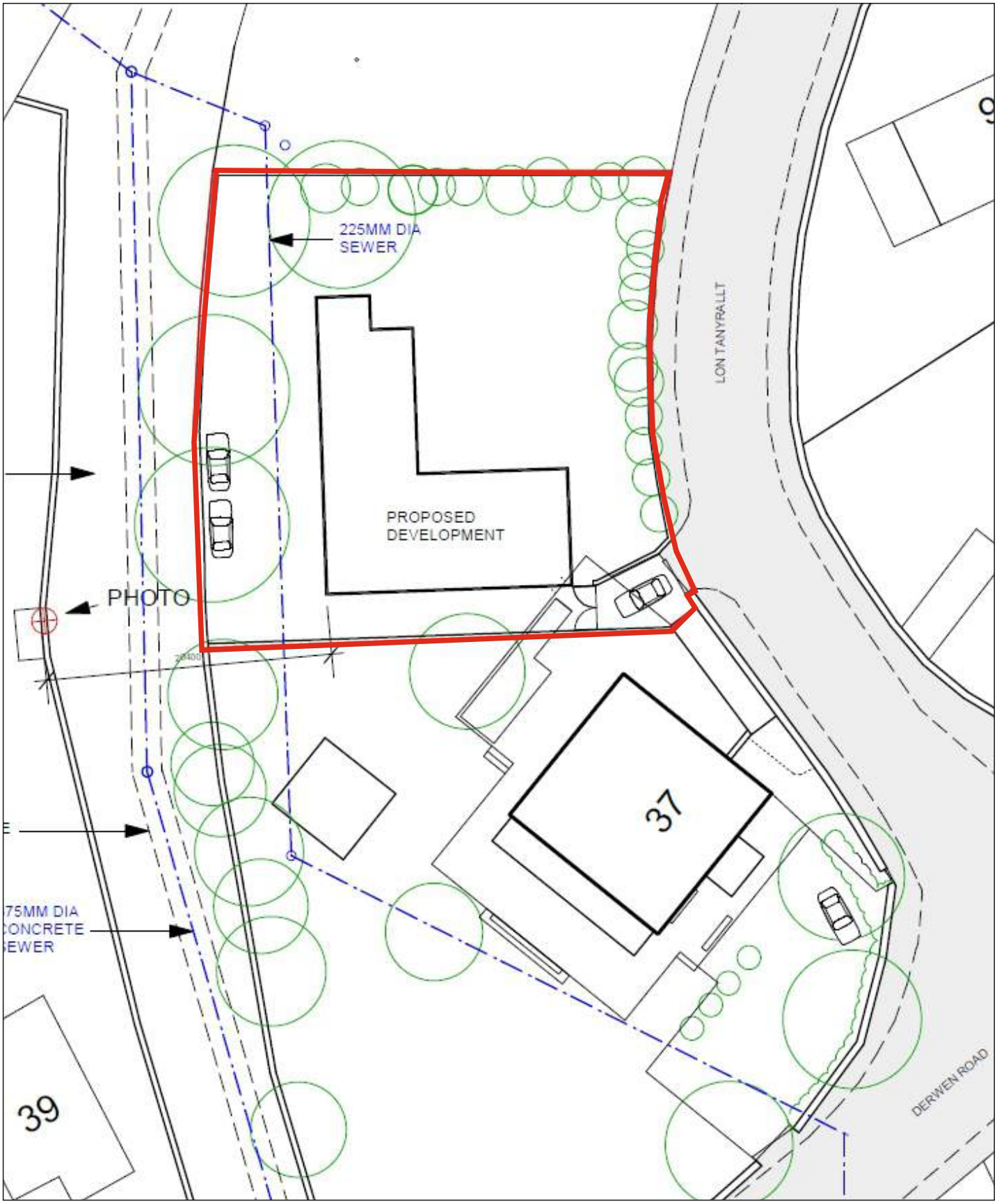


FIGURE 2
SITE BOUNDARY IN RED

2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

a) Coal Authority Consultants Report ref 51003309049001.

b) The C.A. interactive viewer.

c) The 6" to the mile Geological Survey sheet SN 70SW (1959-63 revision, published in 1973).

d) The Memoirs of the Geological Survey of The South Wales Coalfield, part VIII The Country around Swansea (1907) and other mining archive sources.

e) British Coal Rationalised Development Plan Sheet 07/D/SN/70SW

f) Mine Plan SW1941

g) Historical Ordnance Survey maps, Old County Editions Glamorganshire, Sheet VIIISE 1876 and 1899 at 1:10,560 scale and 1914 revision at 1:2500 scale.

h) A Site Walkover

2a) The Consultants Report states that there is no recorded underground mining of coal beneath the site. The report goes on to say the C.A. believe there are no shallow unrecorded workings or shallow spine roadways beneath the site. The report then states that there is a recorded mine entry close to the boundary of the site. This is an adit with the reference 272203-017. The report also contains the reference numbers of two abandonment plans which may be of relevance to the site. One of these was obtained for the risk assessment. The C.A. is not aware of any geological faults, fissures, breaklines or other weaknesses that have been affected by coal mining. There are no opencast mines within 500m of the site.

In Section 2 the report states there have been no site investigations and there are no recorded surface hazards that have required remedial action within 50m. The C.A. have not received any damage notices or subsidence claims for any property within 50m since October 1994 (i.e. since the formation of the C.A. to take liability for legacy mining issues). There are no records of gas emissions requiring action within 500m. Section 3 states there are no present underground workings or plans for any. There are no Section 46 notices or withdrawal of support notices. An extract of the summary map is reproduced in Figure 3. This shows the mine entrance west of the existing property (Brynderwen) adjacent to the site. It should be noted at this stage that the enquiry boundary for the Consultants Report included Brynderwen, but the planning application

boundary is considerably smaller. This is outlined in blue in Figure 3. The distance of the mine entrance is of crucial importance and will be the subject of later sections of the report.

All these facts will feed into the later quantitive risk assessment. Section 4 states no further information has been highlighted. The Consultants Report is attached in Appendix 2.

2b) The C.A. interactive viewer contains a vast amount of information from various sources, particularly on the mining data window. Much of this is not contained within a Consultants Report for reasons unknown. An extract from the planning window can be seen in Figure 4. Development High Risk Areas are hatched in grey. The site lies close to a small isolated circular area. This is the 20m exclusion zone around the mine entrance.

In order to fully understand why a site has a high risk status it is informative to study the Coal Mining Data window. This window is far superior to the planning window as it is at a larger scale. There are multiple datasets which can be turned on and off. An extract from the Mining Data Window is reproduced as Figure 5 overleaf. For clarity only two sets of data are turned on in Figure 5- seam outcrops and mine entries. The brown lines are coal seam outcrops. The two nearest outcrops north of the site are numbered with their seam codes. The C.A. seam directory shows these to be the Hughes Seam (SW1011) and SW1021 is unnamed. These are too far away to be shown on the Summary of Findings Map in the Consultants report.

The mine entry west of the site is marked. Sometimes the Interactive viewer gives mine entry information not recorded in the Consultants Report. In this case, the only additional information is that the adit has an orientation of 186°.

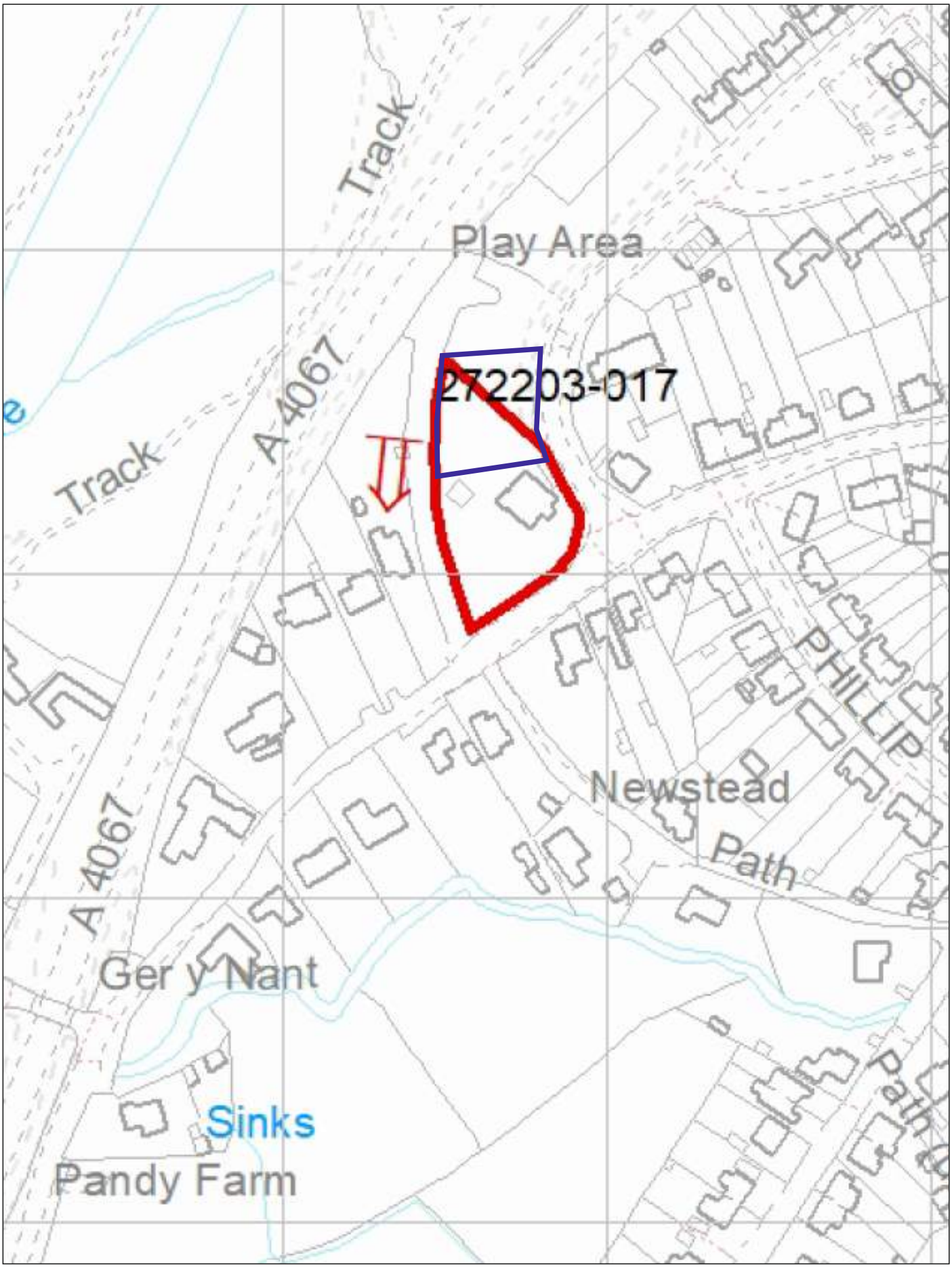


FIGURE 3
EXTRACT OF THE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS MAP.
THE DEVELOPMENT SITE BOUNDARY IS IN BLUE

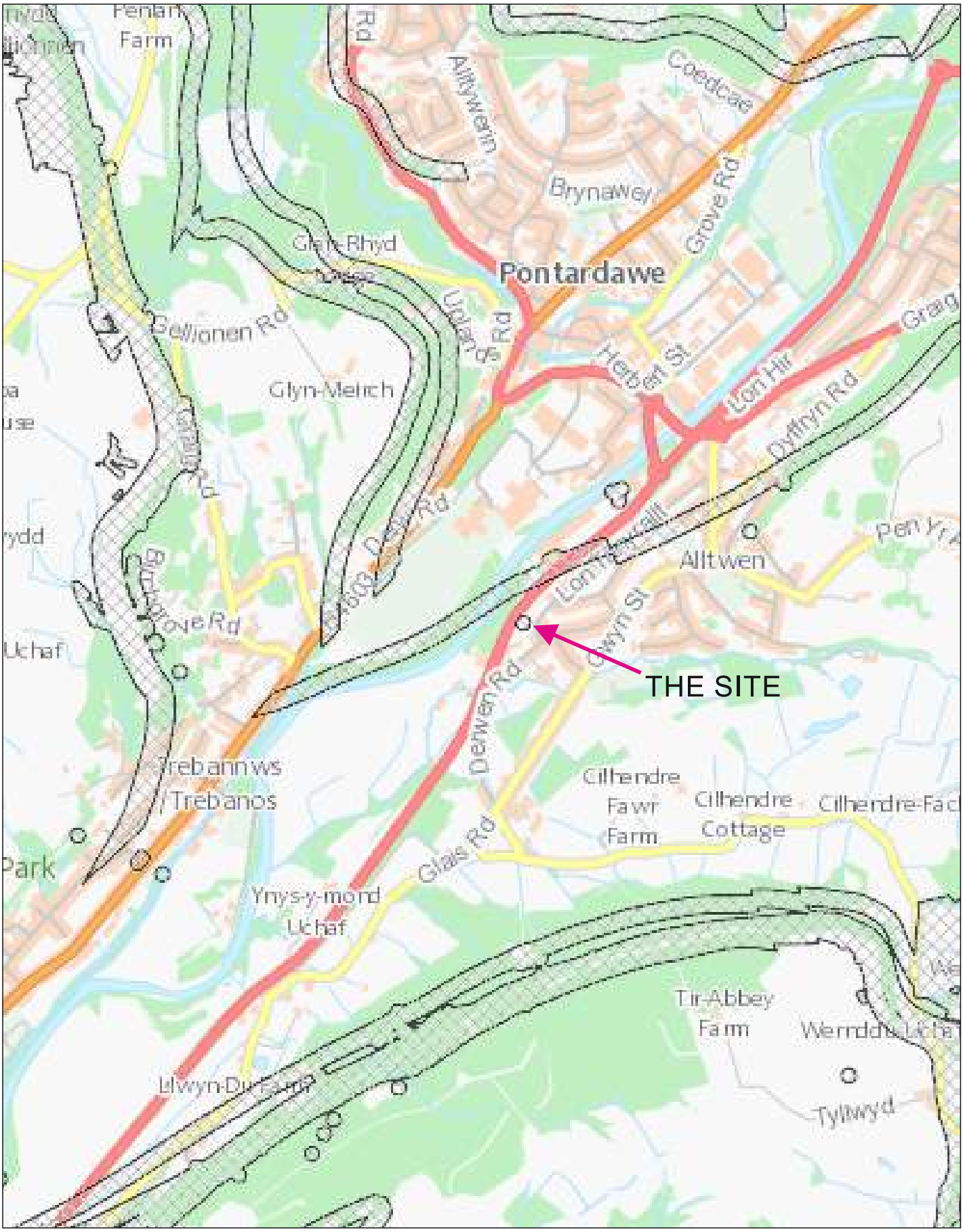


FIGURE 4
COAL AUTHORITY INTERACTIVE VIEWER, PLANNING WINDOW.
GREY HATCHED AREAS ARE DEVELOPMENT HIGH RISK.

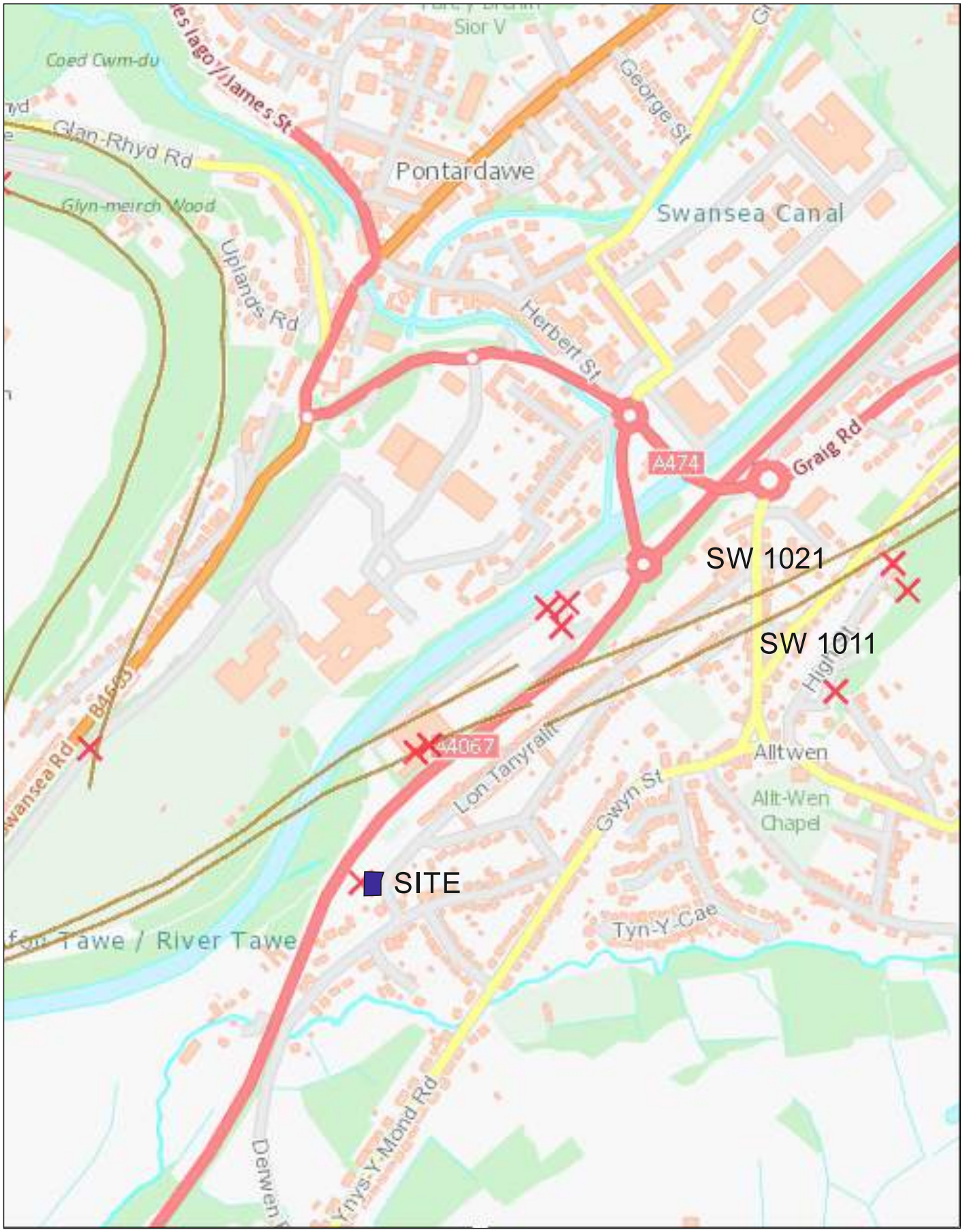


FIGURE 5

C.A. VIEWER, MINING DATA WINDOW. THE RED CROSSES ARE MINE ENTRIES, THE BROWN LINES ARE COAL SEAM OUTCROPS. C.A. SEAM CODES HAVE BEEN ADDED.

2c, d and e) The six-inch to the mile Geological Survey sheet SN 70SW covers the area around the site. An extract of the map is reproduced as Figure 6 overleaf. A section of the stratigraphic column from SN 70SW is shown in Figure 7 with the site level marked. It is always very useful to study the survey sheets in conjunction with the Memoirs. Used together, the six-inch survey sheets and the Memoirs are an invaluable source of much detailed geological information on the area. Much of this has been obtained from mining records. Due to the very high economic importance of South Wales, extensive government funded geological surveys have been carried out in the past. These were completed in 1845, 1899 and 1954 respectively. Very little information on historical coal mining in the area is missing. In the case of the Swansea Area the Memoirs have not been revised since the 1907 edition.

The map was published in 1973, following a re-survey of the entire area between 1949 and 1962. The site is underlain by strata from the Upper Coal Measures, more specifically the Hughes Beds. The boundary between the Hughes Beds and the underlying Brithdir Beds is marked by the Hughes Seam. This seam has been worked extensively in the area to the north of the site. One mine entrance is marked on the outcrop with a strata description. Ynysfechan Level is also marked as being driven to the Hughes from a position well north of the outcrop. The term level is generally used in South Wales instead of adit, which is usually used for metalliferous mines only.

The bedrock is predominantly sandstone and there are measured dips of 8°-12° on various exposures. The outcrop pattern on the Survey Sheet is broadly similar to that on the interactive viewer. The outcrop of the Hughes Seam is marked and just north of that is the outcrop of the Glyngwilim, the highest seam in the Brithdir Beds. The primary source for the C.A. Interactive Viewer is the British Coal Rationalised Development Plan. This itself drew heavily on the Geological Survey with additional information from N.C.B/B.C. records. Figure 8 is a section of Development Plan 07/D/SS/70SE. The site is highlighted, and the outcrop of the Hughes Seam can be seen along with a second outcrop. There are some differences between the two maps, but in this case, they are irrelevant to the risk assessment and will not be discussed further. Where they are in agreement is that neither shows an outcrop or a mine entry in the vicinity of the site.

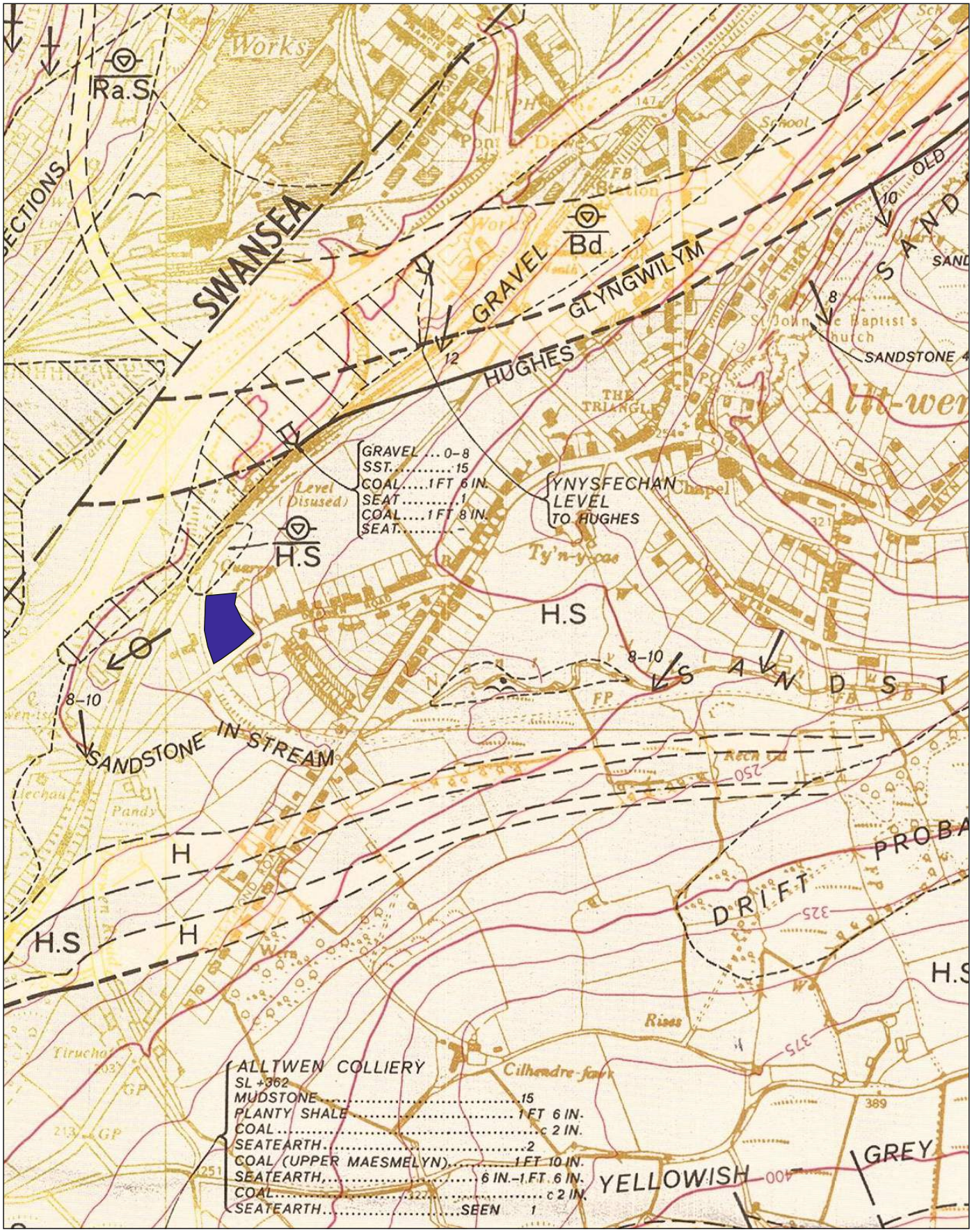


FIGURE 6
EXTRACT OF GEOLOGICAL SURVEY SHEET SN 70SW.
THE LAND OWNERSHIP BOUNDARY IS SHOWN AS PER THE SoF MAP.

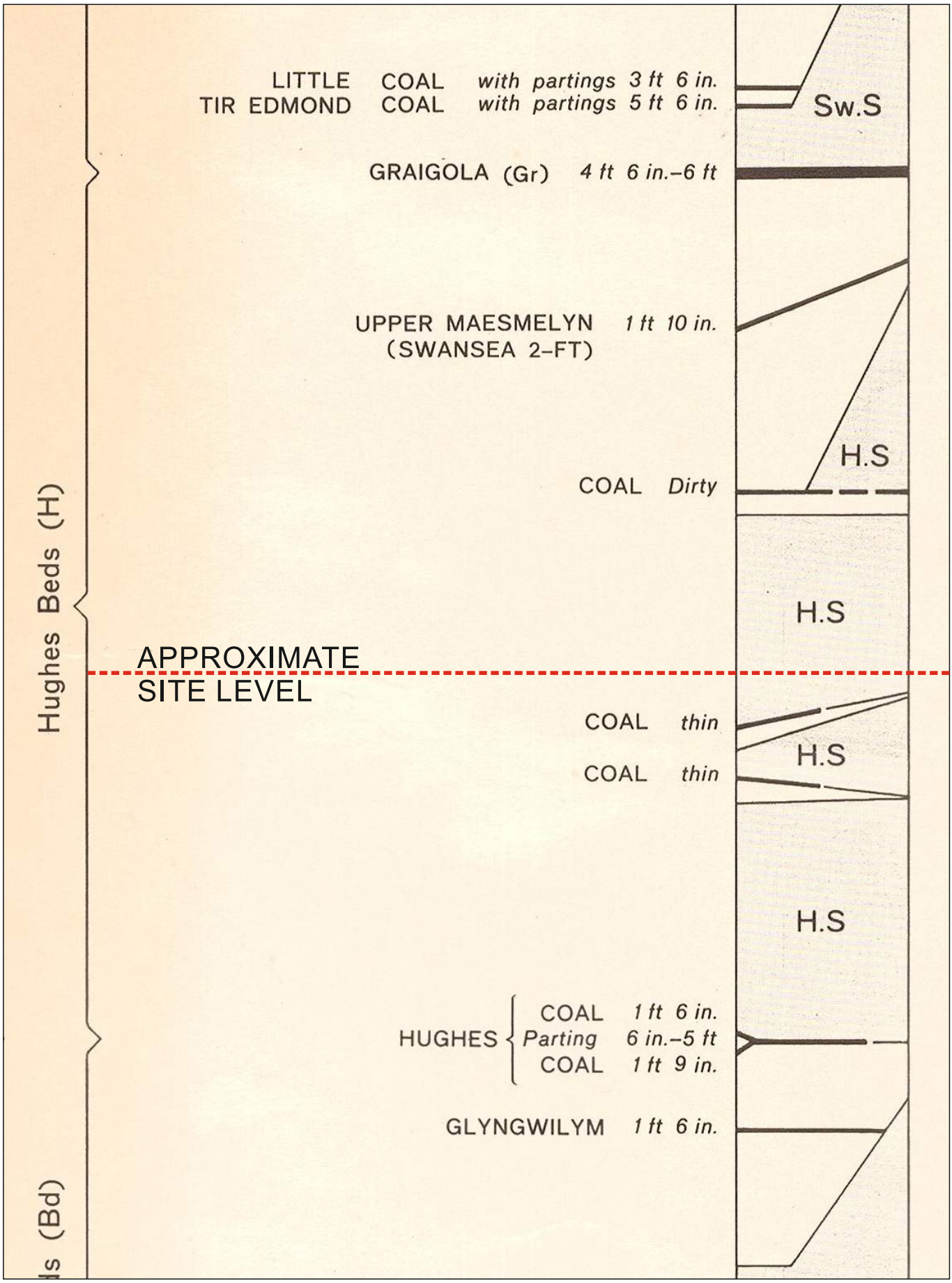


FIGURE 7
SECTION OF THE STRATIGRAPHIC COLUMN FROM SN 70SW.
THE APPROXIMATE SITE LEVEL IS MARKED.

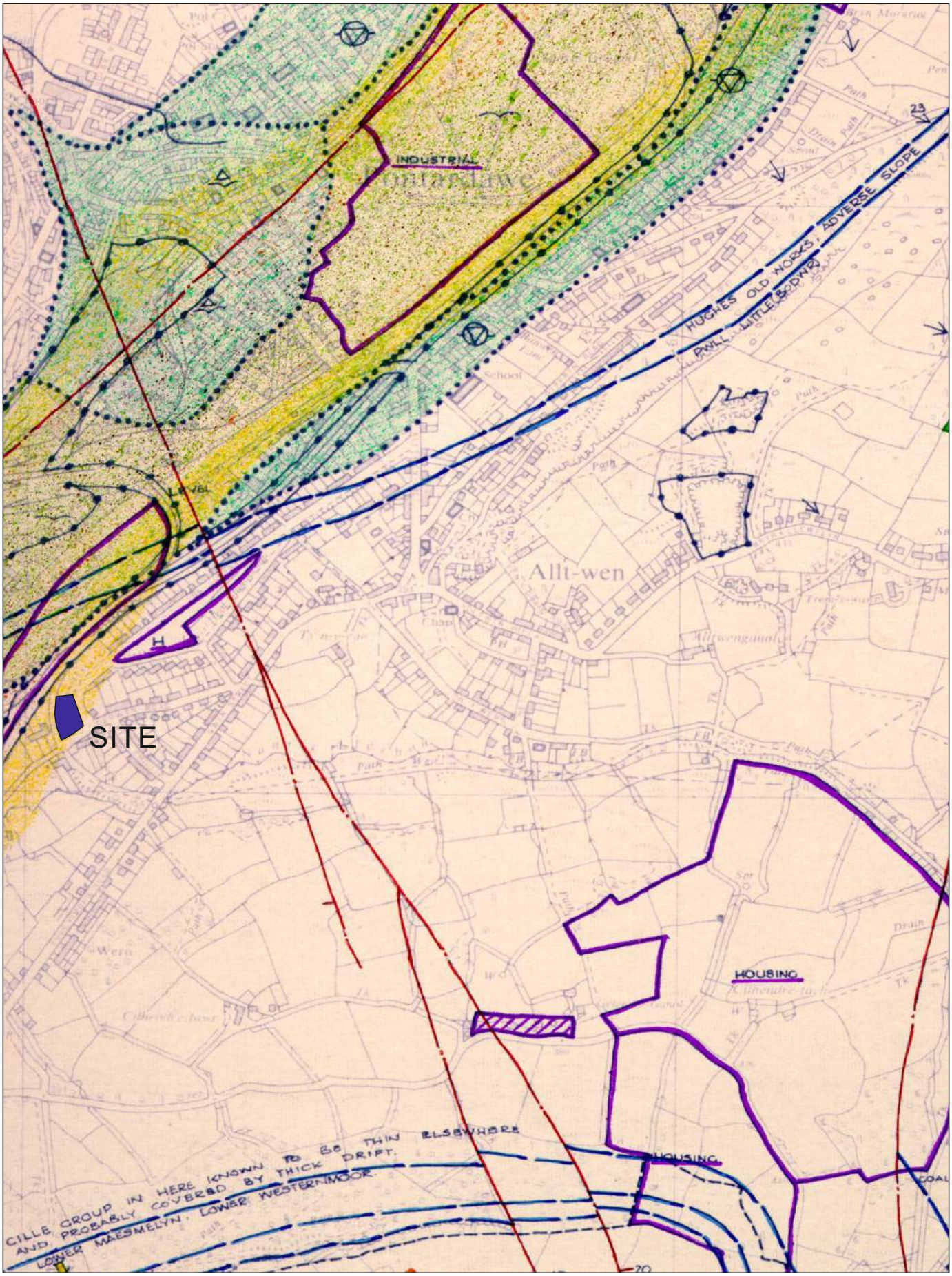


FIGURE 8
SECTION OF BRITISH COAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 07/D/SN/70SE
THE SITE IS HIGHLIGHTED.

2f) Mine plan SW1941 was bought on the advice of the C.A. Information Managers when contacted by the applicants. The plan is apparently the source of the existence and location of the mine entry. The plan is primarily a map of mineral lease boundaries dated 1879 and covering a considerable area. Cwmnantllwyd Pit and Primrose Colliery are marked in the Rhos area. In addition, there is the accepted symbol for a level with the annotation "on Lower Maesmelyn Seam". This can be seen circled in Figure 9. In Figure 10 the plan has been georeferenced onto a modern large scale O.S. map. This places the level in almost exactly the same position as the C.A. currently place it. It should be noted that the C.A. are currently in the process of revising all mine entry positions derived from historic O.S. and mine plans. This is the reason that in their original letter to N.P.T. the C.A. state that the mine entry is within the northwest of the site. This is the blue mark in Figure 10. This position has now been revised by the C.A. to the red mark. Figure 10A shows the old position on a 2003 CON29. The position and orientation would have far more serious consequences for the proposed development.

2g) Historical Ordnance Survey maps can prove invaluable in looking for evidence of coal mining activity. Since the first County Series maps were produced in the 1870's nearly all mining features have been recorded, even if they were considered "old" at that time. This is particularly true of the 1:1250 and 1:2500 scale maps. Since the mine entry is the most important issue in this risk assessment, they are a useful additional source to the geological material. Levels are frequently labelled and spoil heaps shown. The older maps show nothing at the position of the level and for this reason are not reproduced here. They do show that the branch line forming the western site boundary was not there in 1876 but had been constructed by the 1897 revision. This appears to be on, or very close to the mouth of the level. Figure 11 is the 1913 O.S. georeferenced onto a modern aerial photo. There is a small trackside building at the supposed position of the mouth of the level.

2h) A site visit is not part of the C.M.R.A. template but can prove invaluable. This is particularly true when attempting to locate mine entrances. The site was visited on Saturday 2nd September 2022. The retaining wall of the former railway is clearly visible. In the exact location of the mouth of the level a feature can be seen low in the wall. This can be seen in Figures 12 and 13. There appears to be a large boulder at the base of the wall. Unfortunately, closer examination was not possible. The former railway is owned by neighbours who are not amenable to the proposed development.

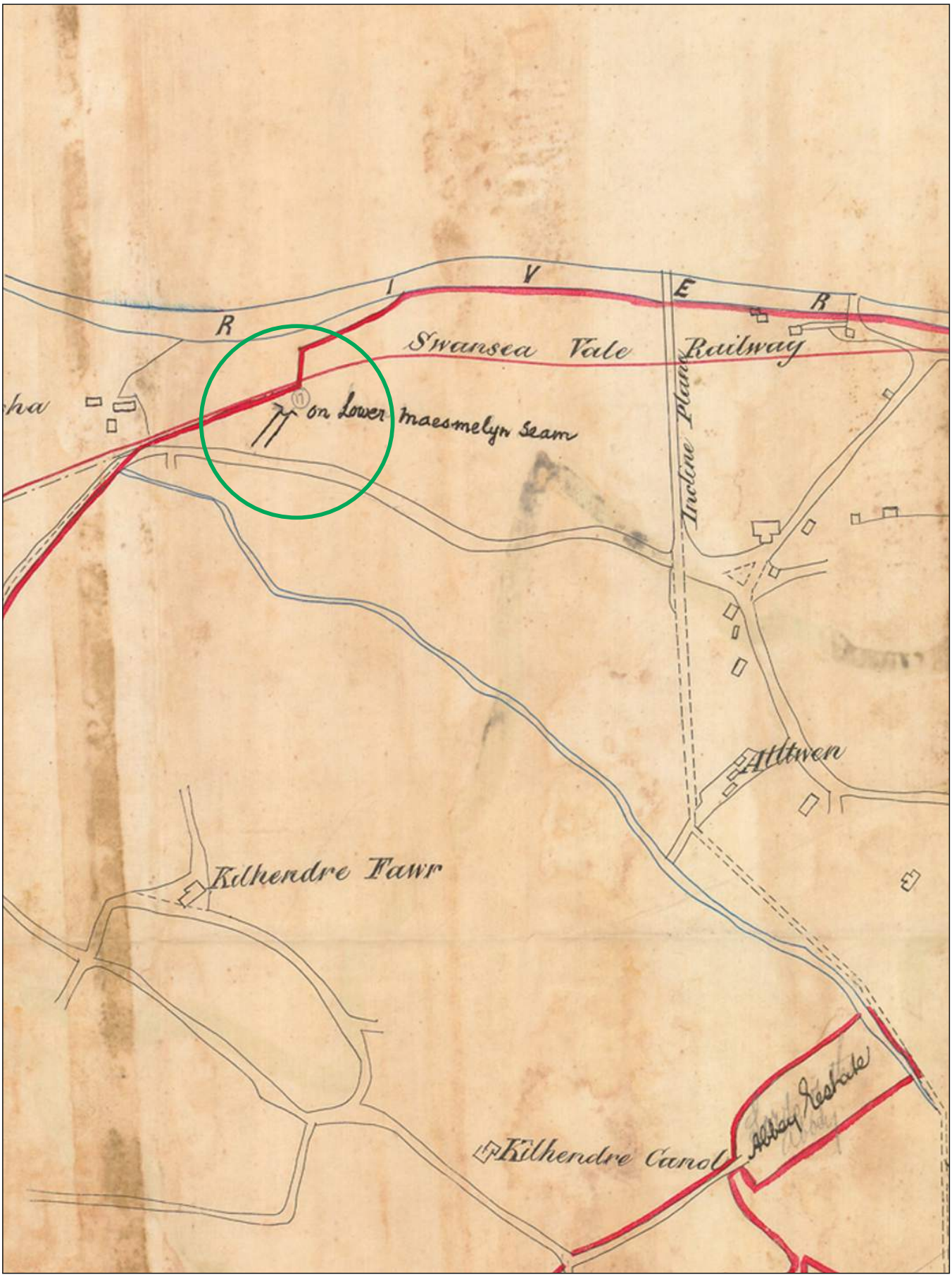


FIGURE 9
SECTION OF ABANDONMENT PLAN SW 1941
WITH THE MINE ENTRANCE CIRCLED

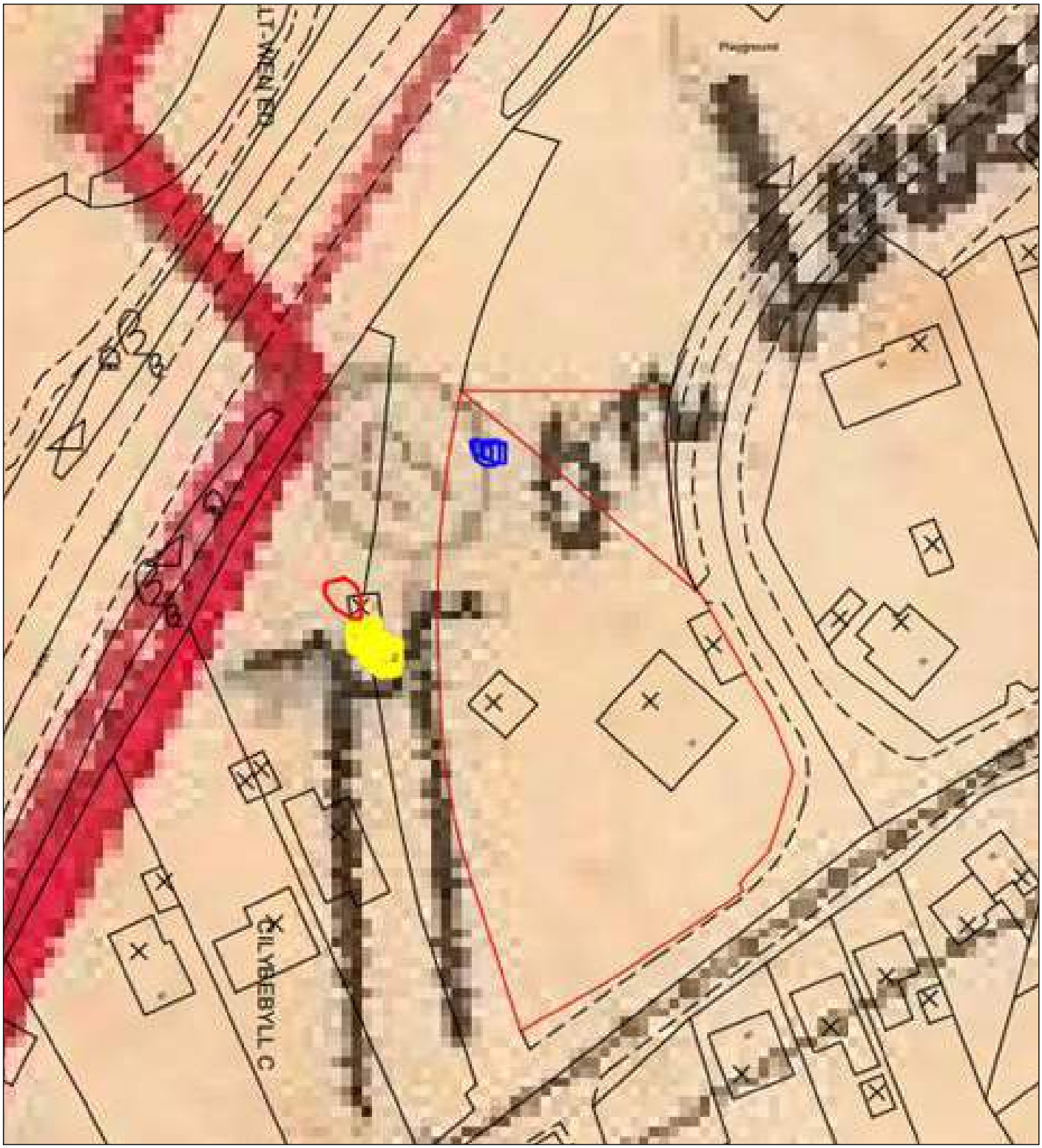


FIGURE 10

SW 1941 GEOREFERENCED ONTO LARGE SCALE O.S.
THE BLUE CIRCLE IS THE PREVIOUS C.A. POSITION, THE RED IS THE REVISED POSITION FROM THE INFORMATION MANAGERS AT THE COAL AUTHORITY.

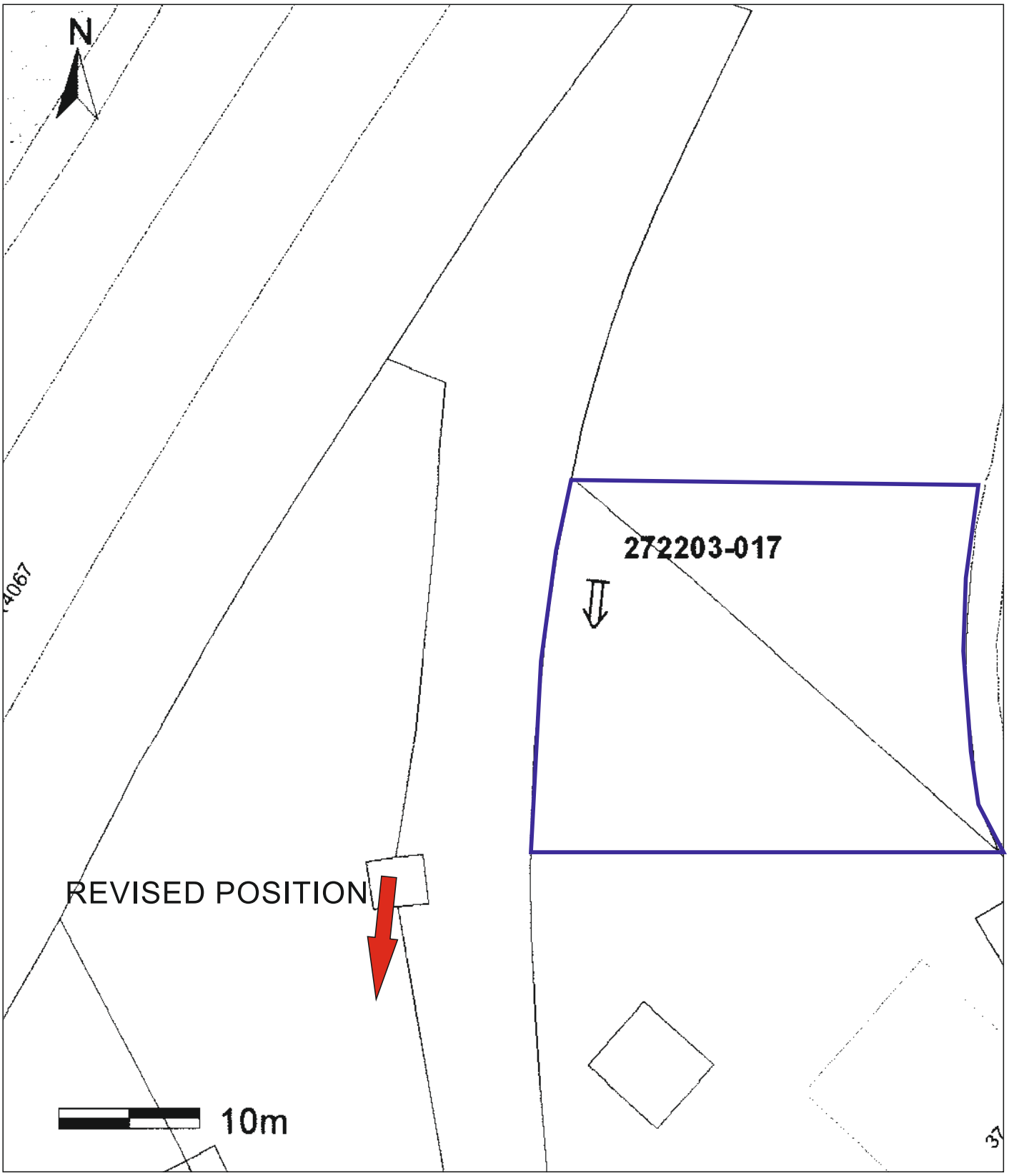


FIGURE 10A

ORIGINAL POSITION OF MINE ENTRY FROM A 2003 CON29.
THE PLANNING BOUNDARY IS IN BLUE

FIGURE 11
1913 1:2500 O.S. OVERLAID ON A MODERN AERIAL PHOTO.
THE SITE IS OUTLINED AND THE MINE ENTRY POSITION HIGHLIGHTED.

FIGURE 12
FEATURE IN FORMER RAILWAY RETAINING WALL

FIGURE 13

CLOSE UP OF THE WALL APPARENTLY SHOWS A PARTIALLY BURIED LARGE BOULDER WITHIN THE WALL CONSTRUCTION

COAL MINING ISSUE		YES	NO	R.A?
SHALLOW RECORDED WORKINGS			X	
SHALLOW UNRECORDED WORKINGS				
MINE ENTRIES		X		X
FISSURES			X	
GAS EMISSIONS		X		X
SURFACE HAZARDS			X	
SURFACE MINING			X	
FUTURE MINING LICENSE			X	

3. SITE SPECIFIC COAL MINING RISKS

From the table above it can be seen that two issues require a risk assessment for this site. These are stability issues caused by the mine entrance near the site, and a more detailed look at the risk from mine gas emissions. To first briefly deal with the issues marked NO on the table:-

a) There are no recorded workings beneath the site at any depth. This is an unusual situation in South Wales and is due to the site being underlain by a considerable thickness of barren measures between the Hughes Seam at depth below the site and the Upper Maesmelyn and Graigola Seams outcropping on high ground above the site

b) Neither the Geological Survey nor British Coal have any record of a seam outcropping where plan SW1941 states the level is “on Lower Maesmelyn Seam”. Seam names in the area are even more confusing than normal for South Wales. The Memoirs state that the Lower Maesmelyn is 78 yards (71.3m) beneath the Graigola in a nearby shaft. This would place it close to the position shown in Figure 8. It is possible that there is a seam outcrop where the mouth of the level is shown. This could possibly be one of the three Cille Seams. These were considered too thin to work in the Pontardawe Area. Whatever the identity of any seam, the strata is dipping away from the proposed development. So even if there are unrecorded shallow workings in the seam, they do not underlie the site

c) The C.A. report states there are no fissures, surface hazards or lines of geological weakness affected by underground mining under the site. The site has not been subject to remedial works carried out by the C.A.

d) There has been no damage notices/ subsidence claim within 50 metres of the site.

e) There has been no surface mining (opencast) within 500m of the site. There are no future mining licenses in existence or pending.

The Coal Authority consider any mine entrance within 20m of a proposed development to be a possible risk to ground stability. This is a sweeping generalisation as size and type of mine entrances vary enormously and each case needs to be looked at individually. In an ideal situation some minor excavation would be done under a C.A. permit. Unfortunately, this is not possible. The entrance is on land not under the ownership of the applicant. It is known that the entrance is a level from the mine plan SW1941. It is also known that the level has been driven on a relatively minor seam since there are no thick seams in this section of the strata succession. The roof and floor (with the exception of a possible thin seatearth) will be Pennant Sandstone, a very strong sandstone with very wide joint spacing. The height and width of the original entrance are unlikely to exceed 1.7m. This is a standard dimension for level entrances of the period. The level has been driven away from the site. Historic O.S. combined with the lack of records indicate this may have been a trial level that was not continued once the seam thickness had been proved. It certainly didn't operate for long, as a railway was built practically on top of it by 1897. Although the accuracy of mine plans of the period can vary enormously, it seems that the position of the mine entrance is exactly where the C.A. and the georeferencing place it. In Figure 14 this position is just over 20m from the development. It appears the mine entrance was crudely blocked up and partially buried during the construction of the railway branch that adjoins the site. It can be stated with confidence that there is no threat of ground instability caused by such an insignificant mining feature 20m from the development.

The risk from mine gases from deep workings can be considered non-existent, as there are none. Any gas from mine workings (if there were any) connected to the level entrance will have vented long ago. There is no risk to the proposed property from gas emissions.

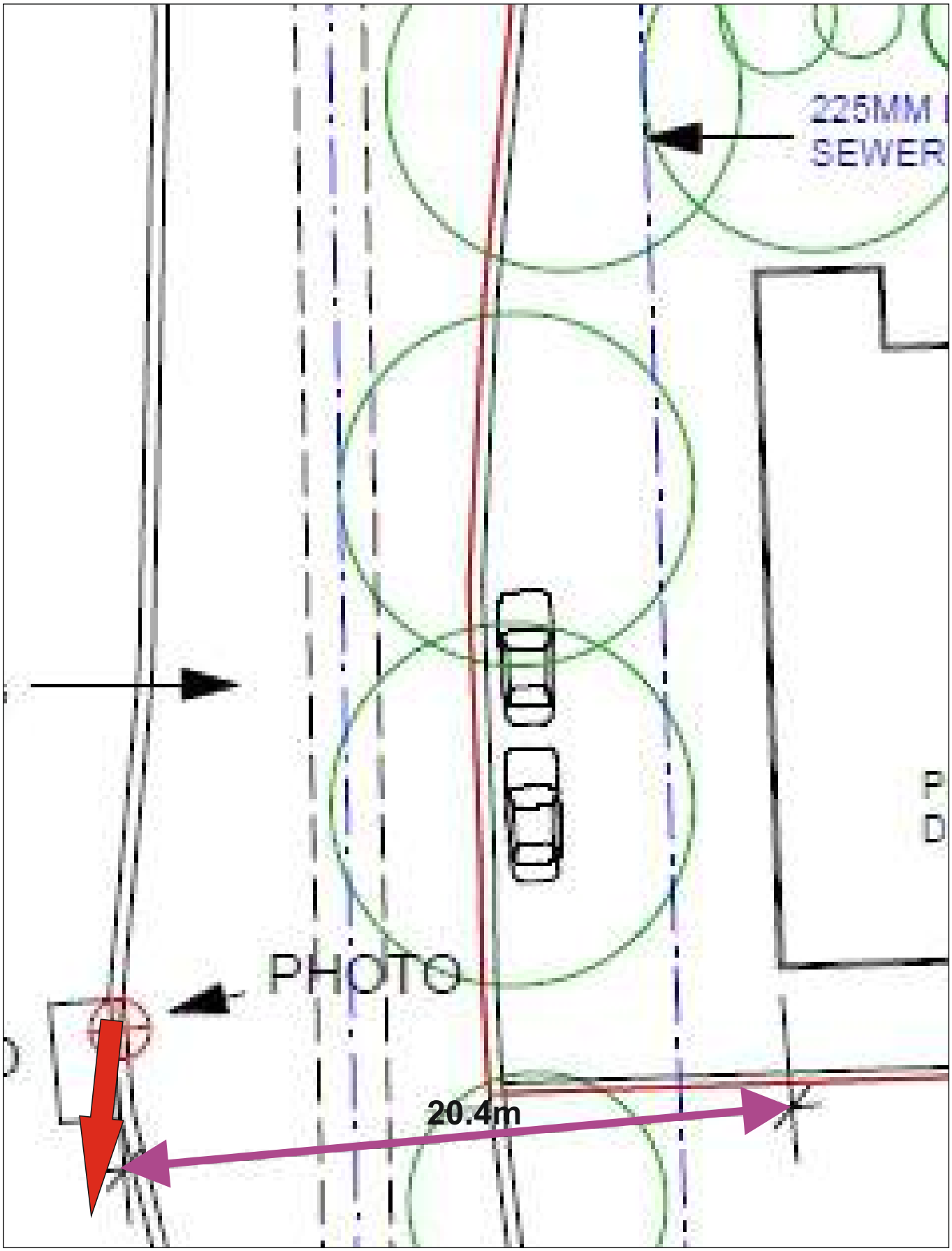


FIGURE 14

MEASUREMENT TAKEN FROM THE POSITION OF THE SUSPECTED MINE ENTRANCE TO THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT.
THE ORIENTATION OF THE LEVEL IS SHOWN AS 186°

4. MITIGATION STRATEGY

It is not proposed to offer any specific engineering or building location mitigation strategy. The reason for this is that there is a negligible possibility of ground instability caused by coal mining legacy issues at the position where the proposed house is to be constructed.

5. CONCLUSION

This risk assessment has presented abundant evidence from comprehensive research that the only risk to the proposed development is from a mine entrance. This is a level driven away from the site. It is probably of small dimensions and very limited extent, although this cannot be physically proven as it is not within the applicant's land ownership.

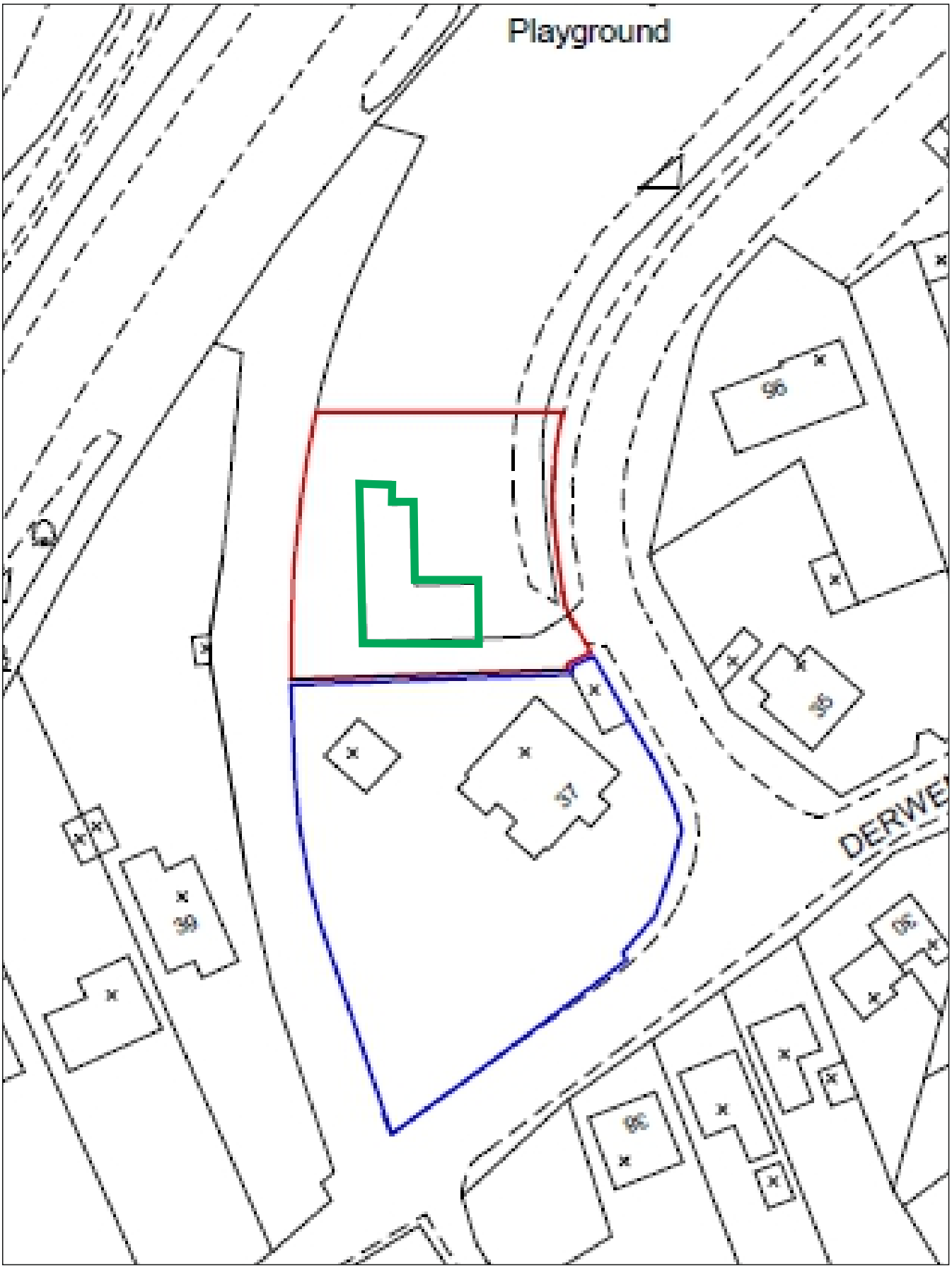
The risk from mine gases in these circumstances has been quantified and assessed as negligible. Therefore, there is no reason for the C.A. to object to the planning application in its current form.

Richard Davies BSc. (Hons), MSc., F.G.S.

6/10/2022

APPENDIX 1

REPRESENTATIVE SITE PLANS



APPLICATION IS FOR OUTLINE PLANNING ONLY. ONLY THE PROPOSED FOOTPRINT IS SHOWN (IN GREEN) TO ALLOW A COAL MINING RISK ASSESSMENT TO BE PREPARED

APPENDIX 2

COAL AUTHORITY

CONSULTANTS REPORT

BRYNDERWEN

37 DERWEN ROAD

ALLTWEN

The Coal Authority

Consultants

Coal Mining Report

Brynderwen
37 Derwen Road
Alltwen
Pontardawe
Neath Port Talbot
SA8 3AU

Date of enquiry:	**2 September 2022**
Date enquiry received:	**2 September 2022**
Issue date:	**2 September 2022**
Our reference:	**51003309049001**
Your reference:	

Consultants

Coal Mining Report

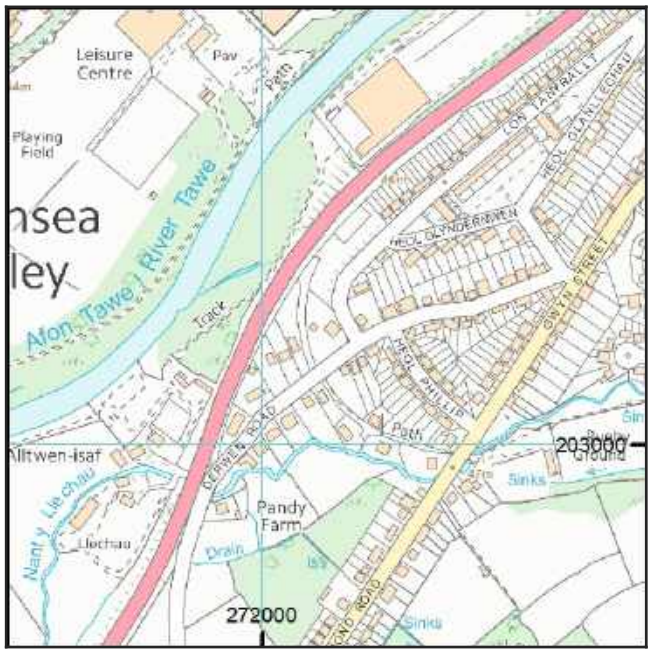
This report is based on and limited to the records held by the Coal Authority at the time the report was produced.

Client name

RICHARD Davies

Enquiry address

Brynderwen
37 Derwen Road
Alltwen
Pontardawe
Neath Port Talbot
SA8 3AU



Approximate position of property

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Section 1 – Mining activity and geology

Past underground mining
No past mining recorded.

Probable unrecorded shallow workings
None.

Spine roadways at shallow depth
No spine roadway recorded at shallow depth.

Mine entries

Entry type	Reference	Grid reference	Treatment description	Mineral	Conveyancing details
Adit	272203-017	272035 203140		Coal	

Abandoned mine plan catalogue numbers
The following abandoned mine plan catalogue numbers intersect with some, or all, of the enquiry boundary:

SW1941	6067	

Please contact us on 0345 762 6848 to determine the exact abandoned mine plans you require based on your needs.

Outcrops
No outcrops recorded.

Geological faults, fissures and breaklines
No faults, fissures or breaklines recorded.

Opencast mines
None recorded within 500 metres of the enquiry boundary.

Coal Authority managed tips
None recorded within 500 metres of the enquiry boundary.

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Section 2 – Investigative or remedial activity

Please refer to the 'Summary of findings' map (on separate sheet) for details of any activity within the area of the site boundary.

Site investigations

None recorded within 50 metres of the enquiry boundary.

Remediated sites

None recorded within 50 metres of the enquiry boundary.

Coal mining subsidence

The Coal Authority has not received a damage notice or claim for the subject property, or any property within 50 metres of the enquiry boundary, since 31 October 1994.

There is no current Stop Notice delaying the start of remedial works or repairs to the property.

The Coal Authority is not aware of any request having been made to carry out preventive works before coal is worked under section 33 of the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991.

Mine gas

None recorded within 500 metres of the enquiry boundary.

Mine water treatment schemes

None recorded within 500 metres of the enquiry boundary.

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Section 3 – Licensing and future mining activity

Future underground mining
None recorded.

Coal mining licensing
None recorded within 200 metres of the enquiry boundary.

Court orders
None recorded.

Section 46 notices
No notices have been given, under section 46 of the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991, stating that the land is at risk of subsidence.

Withdrawal of support notices
The property is not in an area where a notice to withdraw support has been given.

The property is not in an area where a notice has been given under section 41 of the Coal Industry Act 1994, cancelling the entitlement to withdraw support.

Payments to owners of former copyhold land
The property is not in an area where a relevant notice has been published under the Coal Industry Act 1975/Coal Industry Act 1994.

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Section 4 – Further information

Based on the responses in this report, no further information has been highlighted.

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Section 5 – Data definitions

The datasets used in this report have limitations and assumptions within their results. For more guidance on the data and the results specific to the enquiry boundary, please **call us on 0345 762 6848** or **email us at groundstability@coal.gov.uk.**

Past underground coal mining

Details of all recorded underground mining relative to the enquiry boundary. Only past underground workings where the enquiry boundary is within 0.7 times the depth of the workings (zone of likely physical influence) allowing for seam inclination, will be included.

Probable unrecorded shallow workings

Areas where the Coal Authority believes there to be unrecorded coal workings that exist at or close to the surface (less than 30 metres deep).

Spine roadways at shallow depth

Connecting roadways either, working to working, or, surface to working, both in-seam and cross measures that exist at or close to the surface (less than 30 metres deep), either within or within 10 metres of the enquiry boundary.

Mine entries

Details of any shaft or adit either within, or within 100 metres of the enquiry boundary including approximate location, brief treatment details where known, the mineral worked from the mine entry and conveyance details where the mine entry has previously been sold by the Authority or its predecessors British Coal or the National Coal Board.

Abandoned mine plan catalogue numbers

Plan numbers extracted from the abandoned mines catalogue containing details of coal and other mineral abandonment plans deposited via the Mines Inspectorate in accordance with the Coal Mines Regulation Act and Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act 1872. A maximum of 9 plan extents that intersect with the enquiry boundary will be included. This does not infer that the workings and/or mine entries shown on the abandonment plan will be relevant to the site/property boundary.

Outcrops

Details of seam outcrops will be included where the enquiry boundary intersects with a conjectured or actual seam outcrop location (derived by either the British Geological Survey or the Coal Authority) or intersects with a defined 50 metres buffer on the coal (dip) side of the outcrop. An indication of whether the Coal Authority believes the seam to be of sufficient thickness and/or quality to have been worked will also be included.

Geological faults, fissures and breaklines

Geological disturbances or fractures in the bedrock. Surface fault lines (British Geological Survey derived data) and fissures and breaklines (Coal Authority derived data) intersecting with the enquiry boundary will be included. In some circumstances faults, fissures or breaklines have been known to contribute to surface subsidence damage as a consequence of underground coal mining.

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Opencast mines

Opencast coal sites from which coal has been removed in the past by opencast (surface) methods and where the enquiry boundary is within 500 metres of either the licence area, site boundary, excavation area (high wall) or coaling area.

Coal Authority managed tips

Locations of disused colliery tip sites owned and managed by the Coal Authority, located within 500 metres of the enquiry boundary.

Site investigations

Details of site investigations within 50 metres of the enquiry boundary where the Coal Authority has received information relating to coal mining risk investigation and/or remediation by third parties.

Remediated sites

Sites where the Coal Authority has undertaken remedial works either within or within 50 metres of the enquiry boundary following report of a hazard relating to coal mining under the Coal Authority's Emergency Surface Hazard Call Out procedures.

Coal mining subsidence

Details of alleged coal mining subsidence claims made since 31 October 1994 either within or within 50 metres of the enquiry boundary. Where the claim relates to the enquiry boundary confirmation of whether the claim was accepted, rejected or whether liability is still being determined will be given. Where the claim has been discharged, whether this was by repair, payment of compensation or a combination of both, the value of the claim, where known, will also be given.

Details of any current 'Stop Notice' deferring remedial works or repairs affecting the property/site, and if so the date of the notice.

Details of any request made to execute preventative works before coal is worked under section 33 of the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991. If yes, whether any person withheld consent or failed to comply with any request to execute preventative works.

Mine gas

Reports of alleged mine gas emissions received by the Coal Authority, either within or within 500 metres of the enquiry boundary that subsequently required investigation and action by the Coal Authority to mitigate the effects of the mine gas emission.

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Mine water treatment schemes

Locations where the Coal Authority has constructed or operates assets that remove pollutants from mine water prior to the treated mine water being discharged into the receiving water body.

These schemes are part of the UK's strategy to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. Schemes fall into 2 basic categories: Remedial – mitigating the impact of existing pollution or Preventative – preventing a future pollution incident.

Mine water treatment schemes generally consist of one or more primary settlement lagoons and one or more reed beds for secondary treatment. A small number are more specialised process treatment plants.

Future underground mining

Details of all planned underground mining relative to the enquiry boundary. Only those future workings where the enquiry boundary is within 0.7 times the depth of the workings (zone of likely physical influence) allowing for seam inclination will be included.

Coal mining licensing

Details of all licenses issued by the Coal Authority either within or within 200 metres of the enquiry boundary in relation to the under taking of surface coal mining, underground coal mining or underground coal gasification.

Court orders

Orders in respect of the working of coal under the Mines (Working Facilities and Support) Acts of 1923 and 1966 or any statutory modification or amendment thereof.

Section 46 notices

Notice of proposals relating to underground coal mining operations that have been given under section 46 of the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991.

Withdrawal of support notices

Published notices of entitlement to withdraw support and the date of the notice. Details of any revocation notice withdrawing the entitlement to withdraw support given under Section 41 of the Coal Industry Act 1994.

Payment to owners of former copyhold land

Relevant notices which may affect the property and any subsequent notice of retained interests in coal and coal mines, acceptance or rejection notices and whether any compensation has been paid to a claimant.

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