
Project	Pandy Farm, Brecon Road, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8PA
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Impact Assessment

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Summary

This report concerns the Farmhouse at Pandy Farm, Brecon Road, Merthyr Tydfil.

The impact assessment should be read in conjunction with the drawings and the Design, Access & Heritage Statement of which it forms part. Research was undertaken at an early stage of the project to create an independent, professional and unbiased analysis of Pandy Farm before plans were drawn up for its adaptation and reconfiguration. With a full understanding of the significance of the site and its L-plan stables ranges, courtyard, barn, and farmhouse heritage assets the architects have used the heritage information to guide and inform their plans.

The history and development of the farmstead is linked to the former estate in which it sits and the wider context of Cyfarthfa Castle and Ironworks. Research and analysis have enabled an understanding of significance and a commentary on the potential impact of proposals and possible mitigation solutions. In this document the impact assessment analyses the proposed plans for the Farmhouse, that have emerged from the initial assessment process.

This report has been divided into the following sections:

Section 1: Proposals

Section 1 describing the architectural proposals for the site.

Section 2: Analysis of impact of proposals/ justification

Section 2 analysing the proposals for the site. Analysis by:

- Potential impact on heritage assets and setting
- Analysis of setting
- Evaluation of the Potential Impact of Change or Development

Section 3: Mitigation measures

Section 3 looking at measures to mitigate any potential negative impact of the proposed development.

Introduction

Assessing the impact that proposed changes may have on the significance of the historic asset has identified the most appropriate way to make those changes.

The following questions have been asking during the design process:

- How the proposals affect the evidential value of the historic asset? Would they result in the loss of or damage to historic fabric, including archaeological evidence, or make it harder to appreciate the way in which the building or site was used in the past, and how it has changed over time?
- How would the proposals affect the aesthetic or design qualities of the historic asset? Will they compromise its historical design principles — such as its layout, scale and proportion — or result in the loss of historic detail or craftsmanship?
- How would the proposals affect communal value? Would they make it easier for people to access and appreciate the building or site?
- Are there any other risks or benefits? For example, risks include increased maintenance and management liabilities, or compromised performance through the use of incompatible materials; benefits include the introduction of a sustainable new use.

Proposals have a range of impacts which may be:

- positive — such as the repair of damage, the removal of intrusive elements or bringing a building back into beneficial use so that it is no longer at risk
- neutral — such as where proposals are sympathetically designed, or change is accommodated in part of the building or site that is less sensitive The plans, elevations and other drawings provided as part of the application for consent provide supporting information, illustrating the existing situation and showing how the proposals will change it.
- negative — such as when important fabric or significant aspects of the original design are removed or altered. If the level of damage is unacceptable and there are few compensatory benefits, the application may be refused.

When developing proposals, the approach that will realise the greatest benefit and cause the least harm to the historic asset has been identified, so that significance is sustained or enhanced. Alternative solutions have been considered at an early stage. For example, repositioning extensions to be less disruptive to the original design of the historic farmstead and retaining features to be repaired rather than replaced.

It has been understood that:

- Interventions are necessary and that new work is designed to be installed without damage to significant fabric or archaeological evidence.
- The design is sensitive, in terms of scale, materials, location and form.
- The design is based on understanding all aspects of the site and its context as well as the significance of the historic asset. High-quality design can make a positive contribution to the heritage values of the historic asset and its setting.
- Methods for carrying out the proposed works are sensitive, including, for example, the protection of significant features, and commission of high quality craftsmanship.

Section 1: Proposals

The proposal is to alter the accommodation to the south of the Farmhouse into a sustainable family home while conserving historic fabric.

The application document sets out the design proposals thus:

In order to facilitate the conversion of the Farmhouse into a workable family home, the proposed reconfiguration will enable the main historic building to be retained and sympathetically adapted which reflects the existing character, scale and fenestration, being careful to fit accommodation needs within the pattern of the plan.

The design of the proposed reconfiguration directly references the existing architecture on the site and offers a contemporary interpretation of the Farmhouse vernacular. The connection and new bedroom to the south continues the roofline (which will remain unchanged) of the former ancillary accommodation. Modest changes to the elevation are proposed, comprising new fenestration and alteration to service pipes. No further external alterations are proposed.

Internally, minor alterations are proposed to the rear accommodation converting the existing office, bathroom, and storage into an open plan split level kitchen and dining room. Internal walls are altered to reconfigure the WC and utility adjacent to the entrance. On the first floor, alterations are proposed to the bathroom and single bedroom to rectify contemporaneous post-war alterations. The first floor accommodation to the rear reconfigures the loft space to provide master bedroom with ensuite facilities.

Detailed Layout Proposals

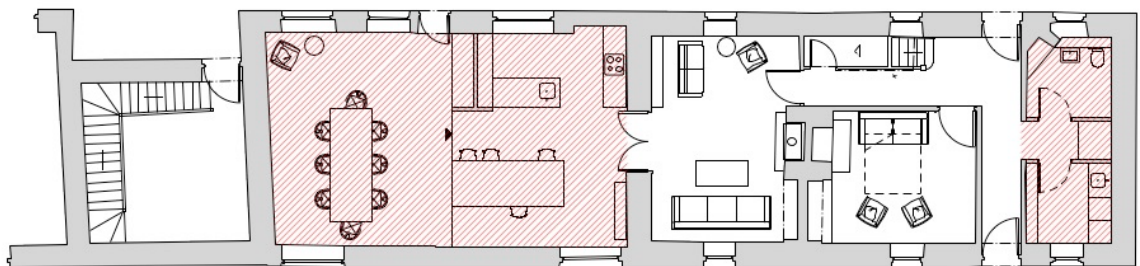


Fig.1 Proposed GF plan. Retaining the character and approach to the dwelling with link to the eastern garden. Alterations to the main footprint of the farmhouse repurpose the existing kitchen into a WC and utility room. A 'back door' to the extension provides a more informal modern kitchen, dining, and potential kitchen. This deals with the change in level by placing different functions across the split level.

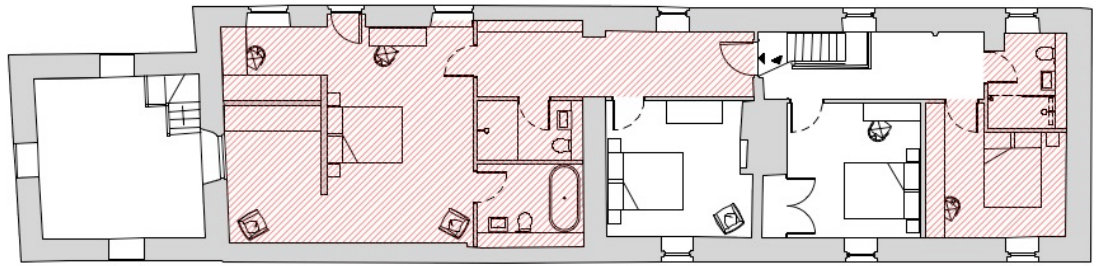


Fig.2 Proposed FF plan. Breaking through the gable wall provides connection and allows services to be gathered together for the ensuite and adjoining shower room. A corridor is inevitable in order to link and provide enough accommodation.

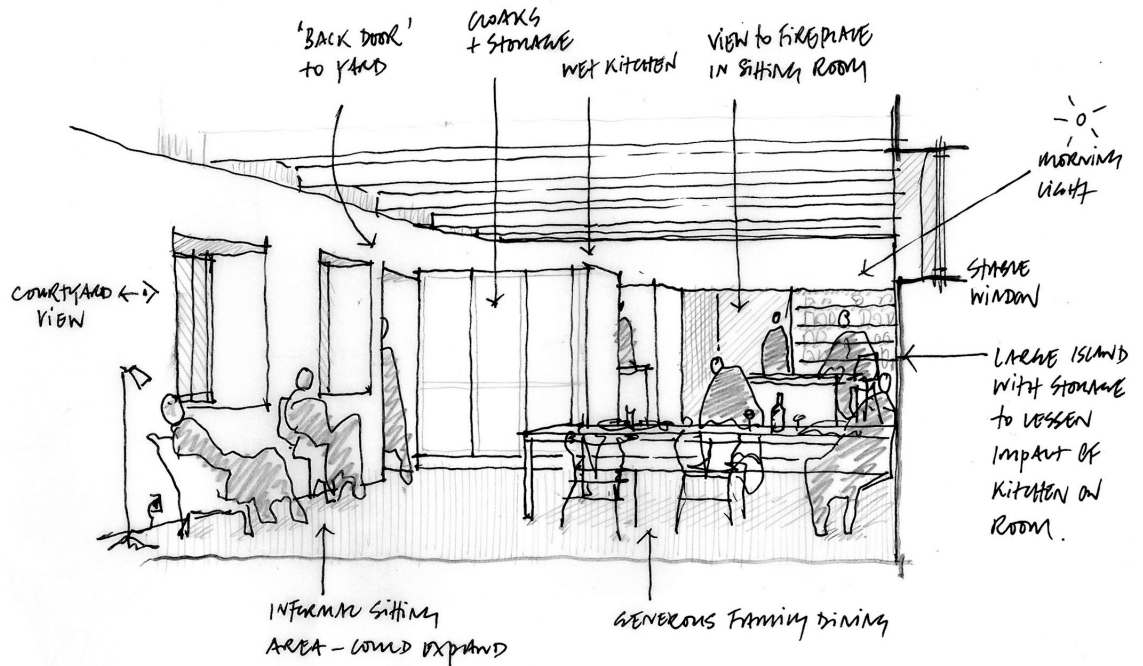


Fig.3 Sketch view within ground floor kitchen. Reformatted to include kitchen and dining space with split level. Kitchen to incorporate pantry and shared island. Dining area to include for seating area,

Section 2: Analysis of impact of proposals/ justification

Impact on Significance

Neutral impact. Sensitive conservation and repair will ensure the sustainable future of the farmhouse dwelling. It is proposed to bring the house back into domestic use and restore the internal features that remain, with replacement windows following the profile and proportion if the existing.

Impact on Character and Setting

Neutral Impact. No new additions or extensions are proposed. Pandy Farm has early origins, but its significance today largely derives from its place in the history of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks and Castle.

It is proposed that in providing a sustainable future for the historic farmstead the conservation, adaptation and alteration of the buildings will be carried out in the spirit of the place respecting the character and traditions of the site and its landscape setting. The design decisions, use of materials and methods of construction will seek to retain the character and significance of these designated heritage assets and their appearance in the historic landscape. The setting of the farmstead within landscape will pay particular attention to and seek to reinforce the relationship between Cyfarthfa Castle and the farm. The link between the buildings and the ironworks needs to be preserved in the retention of archaeological artefacts, fixtures and fittings related to the ironworks industry.

Elements of Potential Impact on Significance

Area	Element	Context	Effect on Significance
Exterior	Farmhouse windows and fenestration	Conservation and repair. Repair and reinstatement of historic doors, windows and frames. New contemporary replacement windows (sash style) to the south.	A consistent sash window profile is proposed to the elevation. This will lead to the loss of different scales and proportions of the glazing to the façade (southern part). This may impact on the reading of the evolution of the building over time – which would have originally been used for livestock and other agricultural purposes. Elsewhere the focus on the conservation and repair will save existing windows from dereliction and will repair them to last into the future. An appropriate response to restoration or replacement was agreed with Cadw on site in December 2021 – it was suggested that applying one window type across all replacement windows would be a suitable approach. Thus, the impact could be said to be neutral.

Interiors	Redesign of interiors to create accommodation and facilities	Reconfiguration to create ground floor kitchen and living space. Insertion of new doorways to interconnect accommodation resulting in some cases in loss of small areas of historic fabric.	Neutral impact – while loss of historic fabric is unfortunate it enables the buildings to work for their new intended use. Any negative impacts are outweighed by the benefits of providing a sustainable future for the buildings and repairing their fabric by removing incompatible materials, including intrusive later 20 th century finishes.
Landscape	Access, courtyard and environs	Courtyard landscape responding to the location and environment.	Access to the farmhouse and point of arrival will remain as existing. Landscaping will be minimal and respect the current courtyard configuration. Ancillary spaces such as vehicle parking may alter the character of the complex from agricultural use to domestic use. The success of these changes will be down to a well-design scheme that respects the buildings' setting in the wider landscape and its past history and uses.

As a general note historic fabric will be conserved and sensitively repaired in appropriate materials as appropriate.

The proposed alterations have been carefully designed to retain historic fabric. Positive intervention will restore the fabric. Removal of later 20th century inappropriate materials and finishes will have a very positive impact not only on the buildings' appearance but the function and building health.

Section 3: Mitigation measures

During the design process, reflecting on the heritage statement, several details have been put in place.

The reconfiguration of the extra accommodation to the south has been designed in a way to cause as little disruption to the existing farmhouse plan and relationship with the courtyard when viewed from the west, retaining the essential significance of the developed and characteristic historic farm layout.

The alterations are interconnected to the historic complex and are not designed to appear as contemporary which could confuse the historic narrative of the site. The proposals aim to create a new 21st century home which better connects the original farmhouse to the former stable building.

All designs have been considered to sit in the built landscape and not dominate or overshadow the existing historic buildings.