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Cyfartha Castle

Urgent Repair Works: Heritage Impact Assessment

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

This Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to accompany the application for a scope of urgent repairs to localised areas of the roofs and facades across the south-east range of the building and access improvements to enable ongoing maintenance of the roofs at the Grade I listed Cyfarthfa Castle.

As per Planning Policy Wales, it is a requirement that applicants for listed building consent must provide a heritage impact statement which is proportionate both to the significance of the building and the degree of change proposed. This Heritage Statement provides the requisite information.

1.2 Existing information and resources

A Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Cyfarthfa area, which includes the Cyfarthfa Castle and Park, was completed in 2009. The study area of the CMP included the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area and parts of the Cyfarthfa Heritage Area (as set out in Policy CW2 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031).

This report has also drawn on previous analyses produced in Purcell's Statement of Significance for the Castle, published in 2016.

1.3 Gaps in knowledge

No historic plans covering the development of the Castle following its conversion into the Museum and School have been located. Therefore, understanding of the development of the built fabric post-1912 has been informed by reviewing the existing documentation and archival material, assessment of visible built fabric on site and provision of historic planning applications from the Planning Department at Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council.

It is unclear how much historic fabric was retained during the construction of the School in the early 20th century. Specifications from this time indicated a desire to retain as much early 19th-century fabric as possible. In the absence of documentary evidence on this subject, detailed analysis of the built fabric may help to establish where original fabric was reused.

2.0 Understanding the site

2.1 Statutory designations

2.1.1 Listed buildings

Listed buildings are buildings of special architectural and historic interest. They are protected under the *Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023* and alterations or demolitions require Listed Building Consent from the local planning authority before they can proceed.

The Castle is Grade I listed as follows:

Grade I

History

1824-5. Designed by Robert Lugar, architect of London, for ironmaster William Crawshay II. Cost £30,000. Sold in 1909 to Merthyr Corporation; large extensions of 1912 for School.

Interior

Interior retains main suite of state rooms including entrance hall, library, drawing room and dining room (now used as Museum and art gallery). Entrance hall is baronial with ribbed ceiling, heraldic cornice, Gothic shafts and panelling to doorcases and castellated chimney-piece in library, the rest of public rooms are neo-classical in style with anthemion plaster bands, egg-and-dart cornices, wide architraves with angle paterae. Ceiling roses to drawing rooms, plus fine caryatid chimney-piece and scallop-shell niches to long drawing-room; Ionic pilasters from columned screen remain in dining-room.

Exterior

Large country house Picturesque castle style. Terraced site. Basically rectangular in shape, with almost symmetrical entrance and garden fronts meeting at a circular corner tower. Coursed bull-nosed facings with ashlar dressings. Crenellated parapets with false machicolation to towers, weathered stringcourses to rest. Stair and outlook turret to rear of corner drum-tower, dummy arrow loops, rectangular hood moulds (arched to drum tower which also has 3-light mullioned windows to top floor). Cross windows (later?) to entrance front and drum, sash windows with glazing-bars to ground-floor of garden front. Central towers to both fronts with splayed angles, splayed bay with finial over porch to main entrance with round turrets and arched openings; oriel over Tudor garden doorway. Attached to left of main building are the castellated screen-wall and towered entrances to former stable courtyard and offices (now rebuilt as School accommodation). Composition of walls with dummy loops, polygonal end turret, solid left-hand gatehouse with arched entry under 3-light window and right-hand entry between round and square turrets. Tudor-style School buildings to rear.

In addition, the Park contains a Grade II listed fountain and the park wall, gate piers and railings flanking the driveway entrance to the south-east of the Castle are also Grade II listed. The site is located close to a number of designated heritage assets, several of which are associated with the former Cyfarthfa Ironworks (designated as a Scheduled Monument). These include:

- Pont-Y-Cafnau Tram-road Bridge (Grade II and Scheduled Ancient Monument);
- Gwaelodygarth House (Grade II);
- Pandy Farmhouse (Grade II);
- Barn at Pandy Farm (Grade II);
- Clock tower at Pandy Farm (Grade II);
- L-Plan stable ranges at Pandy Farm (Grade II);
- Nos. 22-30 Cyfarthfa Road (Grade II);
- Grawen (Grade II);
- Limekilns south of Cefn Bridge (Grade II);
- Pont-Y-Cefn (Grade II)
- Old Cefyn Bridge (Grade II).

- Approximate Boundary of Cyfarthfa Park,
Grade II* Registered
- Grade I Listed
- Grade II Listed
- Scheduled Monuments
- 01 Cyfarthfa Castle
- 02 Fountain Below S.Terrace at Cyfarthfa Castle
- 03 Railings at Driveway Entrance to Cyfarthfa Castle
- 04 Park all Flanking Railings at Driveway Entrance To Cyfarthfa Castle
- 05 Gatepiers at Driveway Entrance to Cyfarthfa Castle
- 06 Pandy Farm and Clock Tower (4.no seperate Grade II Designations)
- 07 Nos. 22-30 Cyfarthfa Road
- 08 Grawen
- 09 Remains of Blast Furnaces, Cyfarthfa Ironworks
- 10 Pont y Cafnau Tramroad Bridge
- 11 Limekilns South of Cefn Bridge
- 12 Pont y Cefn
- 13 Old Cefn Bridge
- 14 Gurnos Quarry Tramroad and Leat
- 15 Gwaelodygarth House

This plan is not to scale



Aerial imagery annotated to show the distribution of heritage assets around Cyfarthfa Castle. Google Earth 2023.

2.1.2 Registered Park and Garden

Cyfarthfa Castle is located within Cyfarthfa Park, a Grade II* registered Park and Garden. The Cadw list entry notes that 'the park and gardens are of great historic interest not only as the landscape setting for the Romantic mansion but also for their proximity and usefulness to the ironworks [...] which in their day were considered to add great sublimity to its landscape setting'.⁰¹

2.1.3 Conservation Area

The main purpose of conservation area designation is to acknowledge the special historic or architectural character of an area. This influences the way in which the local planning authority, deals with planning applications that may affect the particular character of the area.

The site is located within the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area, covering approximately 100 hectares and divided into four Character Areas:

- Character Area 1 - Cyfarthfa Park South and Castle
- Character Area 2 - Cyfarthfa Park North
- Character Area 3 - Taf Fechan Valley
- Character Area 4 - Cyfarthfa Ironworks and Taf Fawr Valley.

The character of the Conservation Area is defined by the industrial heritage of the late 18th and 19th-century ironworking activities in the area. Alongside the Castle, the conservation area contains the remains of the Cyfarthfa ironworks and later steelworks, and the remains of the former blast furnaces, coke ovens, refineries, engine houses, tramways and aqueducts which serviced them.

The Castle and the southern area of Cyfarthfa Park make up Character Area 1 of the Conservation Area. The Castle is described in the Conservation Area Appraisal as the 'centrepiece' of the character area; 'a throne' built by William Crawshay to overlook his Ironworks opposite the River Taf.⁰²

01 Cyfarthfa Castle, Full Report, <https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/parkgarden/FullReport?lang=en&id=384>

02 Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cyfarthfa Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2009.



- Cyfarthfa Castle
- Approximate Boundary of Cyfarthfa Conservation Area

This plan is not to scale

Aerial imagery annotated to illustrate the relationship of Cyfarthfa Castle to Cyfarthfa Conservation Area. Google Earth 2023.

2.2 Undesignated historic environment assets

2.2.1 Cyfarthfa Heritage Area

The Cyfarthfa Heritage Area occupies approximately the same area covered by the Conservation Area designation, although extends slightly further south-east to encompass the residential development and industrial estates just beyond the south-west boundary of Cyfarthfa Park.⁰³

Its key features are Cyfarthfa Castle and Park, the Cyfarthfa Iron Furnaces and the Gurnos Quarry Tramway and Leat. The Heritage Area recognises and promotes the industrial heritage of Merthyr Tydfil.⁰⁴

2.2.2 Urban Character Area 5:

Cyfarthfa Castle and Park sit within Urban Character Area 5, *Cyfarthfa Park and Ironworks*, which encompasses Cyfarthfa Park, the former Ironworks, and later residential and industrial development which sits between them. It recognises the physical link between Cyfarthfa Ironworks and its domestic counterpart – the Castle, Park and former Pandy Farm – and the archaeological potential around the site of the former furnaces which once straddled the river Taff.⁰⁵

2.2.3 Archaeologically Sensitive Area 1: Cyfarthfa castle and park

Cyfarthfa Castle and Park are located within Archaeologically Sensitive Area 1: Cyfarthfa Castle and Park. This classification recognises the potential for below-ground archaeology on the site to reveal more about the earlier formation of the landscape and its buildings.⁰⁶

2.3 National and Local Policies and Guidance

2.3.1 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 directs that, in determining applications for Listed Building Consent, a planning authority or the Welsh Ministers must have special regard to the desirability of preserving -

- a the listed building to which the application relates*
- b the setting of the building, and*
- c any features of special architectural or historic interest the building possesses.*

2.3.2 Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales, (updated 19 July 2024) is the overarching planning policy document for Wales and provides guidance about how to implement the legislation which covers the historic environment. Within section 6 of Planning Policy Wales are the Welsh Government's policies for the protection of heritage.

The policies advise a holistic approach to planning and development, where all significant elements that make up the historic environment are termed heritage assets. These consist of designated assets, such as listed buildings or conservation areas, non-designated assets, such as locally listed buildings, or those features which are of heritage value. The policies within the document emphasise the need for assessing the significance of heritage assets and their setting in order to fully understand the historic environment and inform suitable design proposals for change to significant buildings. The document also requires that the impact of development proposals which affect heritage assets is assessed.

2.3.3 Local Planning Policies

The Local Development Plan for Merthyr Tydfil (adopted January 2020), is the Council's overarching planning document setting out priorities for the future planning and development of the County Borough until 2031.

The following policies are pertinent to the proposals affecting Cyfarthfa Castle:

- **Policy CW1:** Historic Environment
- **Policy CW2:** Cyfarthfa Heritage Area

⁰³ Merthyr Tydfil Proposals Interactive Map.

⁰⁴ Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031, Policy CW2.

⁰⁵ Cadw, Merthyr Tydfil: Understanding Urban Character, 2015.

⁰⁶ Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031, Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 3: Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.

2.3.4 Setting of historic assets in Wales (Cadw, 2017)

This document explains the importance of setting and how it contributes to the significance of heritage assets. It also provides guidance for assessing the impact of development on setting and how adverse impacts can be mitigated. The document notes that:

- Setting includes intangible as well as physical factors such as function, sensory perceptions, historical, artistic, literary and scenic associations.
- Change or development with the potential to impact on the setting of a heritage asset should define and understand how that setting contributes to the significance of the historic assets.
- Development proposals should aim to avoid any harmful impact on a historic asset and its setting.

2.3.5 Managing Listed Buildings at Risk (Cadw, 2017)

Cadw do not maintain a public Heritage At Risk Register. However, their guidance note, 'Managing Listed Buildings at Risk', defines 'a listed building at risk' as 'one that is suffering through neglect and decay.' The guidance notes that 'listed buildings are especially likely to be at risk when they are functionally redundant because their original purpose has come to an end'. This is the case for Cyfarthfa Castle; since the school closed in 2013, the building has suffered substantial and continuing deterioration.

2.4 Other guidance documentation

Other guidance documentation consulted during the production of this Heritage Statement includes:

- *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales*, (2011). This document sets out key guiding principles for the management of the historic environment in Wales. It provides a logical approach to making decisions regarding the historic environment based on significance.
- *Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment* (2017). This document provides guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and listed building consent.
- *Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales* (Cadw, 2017). This document sets out general principles to consider when making changes to listed buildings.
- *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales* (Cadw, 2017). This document sets out the general principles to consider when planning changes to historic assets and applying for listed building consent, conservation area and scheduled monument consent in Wales.

3.0 Description

3.1 Location and setting

Cyfarthfa Castle is located on a low rise overlooking the former site of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks on the north-western end of the town of Merthyr Tydfil. The town is situated just south of the Brecon Beacons, and the surrounding landscape is rugged and mountainous. The Castle sits within 160 acres of mixed parkland known as Cyfarthfa Park. The Park is bounded to the south by Brecon Road, Gwaelodygarth Road to the east, Gurnos Road to the west and north and a residential estate to the north-east. The Park is open to the public and provides a range of pleasant wooded walks, play areas, sporting facilities and recreation grounds for local residents and visitors.

The wider landscape retains numerous tangible links to the industrial heritage of the area; notably the remains of several blast furnaces and the Cefn Viaduct. Though much of the former ironworks have been redeveloped the industrial heritage of the area is very much still tangible in the landscape, albeit much reclaimed by plant growth.

Cartographical and pictorial evidence indicates that the trees within the southern and south-eastern areas of the park were historically far less dense, which would have afforded the Crawshays an uninterrupted view of the Ironworks. The remains of the blast furnaces can be glimpsed from the Castle today. At the time of survey it was not possible to see the Castle from the site of the Ironworks, though it is acknowledged that the extent of intervisibility may change dependent on seasonal plant growth.



Cyfarthfa Ironworks as seen from the terrace south of the Castle in the late 19th century. Old Merthyr Tydfil, alangeorge.co.uk.



Looking south-west across the sloping lawns and lake. Beyond the residential development is a striking mountainous landscape.

3.2 Exterior

Cyfarthfa Castle was designed by the London architect Robert Lugar in 1824-25 in the Picturesque style. The building is constructed from coursed ashlar masonry set beneath a crenelated parapet. The Castle layout is rectangular in shape, though the arrangement of the buildings is asymmetrical with the family rooms located on the south-east side of the building and the former school on the north-west. The school occupied a later phase of the building, which was rebuilt behind the screen wall in the early 20th century to replace the original stable and service ranges.

The main entrance to the building, which today overlooks the car park, consists of a central protruding porch flanked on the western side by a square tower and larger circular tower to the east. The towers are also crenelated with false machicolations and dummy arrow slots below. The circular tower features a small outlook tower on its west side, and links to the eastern return which essentially mirrors the layout of the entrance front and overlooks an attractive formal garden. The eastern front was used by the Crawshay family as the principal entrance to the building, and the path leading from this historic entrance, is flanked by a pair of ram's head sculptures.

When viewed from the south, the western half of the Castle appears broadly as it was designed by Robert Lugar in 1824-5, as the south screen wall was retained when the site was developed in the early 20th century. Behind this screen, the Castle was extensively demolished and rebuilt in 1910 to form the school ranges. A pair of gatehouses in the screen wall, one square and the other flanked by towers, provide access into the central courtyard and school buildings. The screen wall also features crenelated parapets and dummy arrow slots.

The only original sash windows thought to survive are those to the Caretaker's House on the western elevation of the Museum. The 2009 CMP for the Castle and Park suggested that the other sash windows on the eastern side of the Castle, i.e. the Museum, were relatively recent replacements, noting that care had been taken to ensure they matched those shown in late 19th century photographs of the building. The first floor windows of the Museum are later replacements installed during the 1910 refurbishment of the building.

The rear elevation is set back against the hillside and is largely obscured from a distance by planting. It can be appreciated from a footpath behind the building. There are a number of modern brick built extensions to the rear of the school.

The Picturesque

Cyfarthfa Castle was designed in the Picturesque style.

The *Picturesque* was an artistic concept and style of the late 18th and early 19th centuries characterised by a preoccupation with the pictorial values of architecture and landscape in combination with each other. It evolved partly as a reaction against the earlier 18th century trend of Neoclassicism, with its emphasis on formality, symmetry, proportion, and exactitude. Picturesque architecture and landscapes are characterised by variety, irregularity, asymmetry, and texture. For example, medieval ruins in a natural landscape were thought to be quintessentially picturesque.⁰⁷



Main entrance

⁰⁷ Adapted from Picturesque Architecture, www.britannica.com/art/picturesque



Cyfarthfa Castle, principle elevation



East elevation and former family entrance



The west elevation of the Castle.



Rear elevation (partial), note the first floor extension to the rear of the School



The small courtyard to the rear of the cafe



The west elevation of the Caretaker's House, from the central courtyard.



The door to the south-eastern facade, which is a 20th-century replacement proposed to be removed as part of the scope of works.



Looking east within the main courtyard towards the set of historic double doors proposed for replacement.

3.3 Interior

The interior of the building is essentially of two parts, with the historic rooms of the former ironmaster's house preserved within the Museum and Art Gallery located in the basement and the ground floor of the eastern side of the building, and the former school to the west and first floor areas. The former Caretaker's House may be considered a third part, occupying a section of the eastern half of the building and rising to four storeys in height. The Caretaker's House contains some historic features and has retained its historic planform. Historically this part of the building provided accommodation for the school caretaker.

The Museum and Art Gallery

The Museum occupies eight rooms on the ground floor of the Castle. These run along the southern front of the building between the Caretaker's House and the round tower at the south-east corner of the building, and along the eastern front from the round tower to the square tower in the north-east corner of the building. These rooms comprise the principal reception rooms from the former Crawshay mansion, including the Gun Room (now known as the Wedding Room), which was originally used as an office from which William Crawshay could oversee the operation of his ironworks in the valley below. The rooms to rear, and those occupying the core of the building, were taken over by the school in the early 20th century and have undergone a degree of alteration, including the removal of the central staircase and fernery.

The eight rooms forming the Museum are the best preserved historic interiors within the Castle, broadly retaining their historic planform and many historic features. These rooms were restored and redecorated in the 1990s by the Merthyr Leisure Trust, which operated the Museum, with reference to the historic decorative schemes. The renovated interiors retained original architectural features such as fireplaces, cornices and skirting.

Original plans for the building dated 1827 indicated that the rooms of the Museum were utilised for the following purposes:

- From west to east along the southern frontage:
 - o Children's Play Room (north) and office - now known as the playroom or nursery (now temporary gallery space) and Wedding Room respectively;
 - o Hall;
 - o Library, now the Yellow Gallery;
 - o Drawing Room, now the Round Room;
- From south to north along the eastern frontage:
 - o Drawing Room, now the Red Gallery;
 - o Anteroom;
 - o Dining Room, now in use as a gallery.

The entrance hall has a striking Baronial Gothic

character, with heraldic bosses running around the perimeter at cornice level, two large tudor-arched fireplaces with crenelated surrounds, stained glass to the north and Gothic pointed arches over the entrance door and the connection to the WCs.

The remainder of the rooms across the Museum are decorated in a more typical late-Georgian style, with Neo-Classical mouldings, plain sash windows and round-headed niches.

The division of masculine and feminine rooms typical of Georgian properties is visible in the decorative schemes, with rooms such as the Round Drawing Room being defined by delicate foliate patterns and restrained gilding. In contrast the more masculine Wedding Room (former office) is characterised by a muted colour palette, angular Greek key patterning and dark-coloured marble.

The principal spaces at ground floor level contain a number of modern fixtures and fittings including free-standing display cases, suspended track lighting, power sockets and security cameras.

The Museum also includes a number of small offices and a small café area linked by narrow corridors. The basement below the Museum has been converted to form exhibition space. The character of the basement is in tact, with its small interconnected rooms and barrel vaulting remaining visible.

The main offices of the curatorial staff and the collections storage areas are located within the Caretaker's House.



The Wedding Room, formerly the office from which William Crawshay could monitor the activities of the ironworks in the valley below. The room was redecorated and refurbished during the 1990s, with the wallpaper modelled on fragments found within the space.



The Yellow Gallery (originally the library). The iron grills to the floor (also present in the entrance hall, Round Room, Red Gallery and former Dining Room) were inserted in 1912. All other features are presumed to be original to the room.



The Entrance Hall, re-decorated during the 1990s. The Baronial Gothic scheme was retained (or re-instated) during the refurbishment.



The Round Gallery at the south-east corner of the Castle. The design scheme within this room is based on one designed by Robert Adam for No. 1 Royal Crescent in Bath.



The Red Gallery, formerly a drawing room for the Crawshay family. The wall finishes are modern replicas, but all architectural features are presumed to be original.

The basement beneath the principal spaces has also been adapted to provide exhibition space. The planform appears to be largely original, comprising small interconnected rooms with barrel vaulted ceilings. The wall and ceiling surfaces have been modified with the addition of prominent modern services.

To the north of the principal rooms at ground floor level is a café, which was created by infilling a section of the courtyard during the mid-late 20th century. The staircase in the centre of the café, which connects to the basement, is a modern insertion. However the east and west walls of the stairwell are of exposed masonry, and likely enclosed a small space at basement level before this section of the ground floor was broken out to insert the stairs.



Typical example of exhibition space within the basement.



The café, a 20th-century infill structure in the courtyard.

Caretaker's House

The Caretaker's House comprises two similarly sized rooms on each floor arranged either side of a central staircase which rises to four storeys in height.

Originally, the ground floor of the Caretaker's House was located within the childrens' area of the house. Located close to their large indoor playroom (now temporary exhibition space), the ground floor contained their School Room (north) and Day Room (south), and overlooked the childrens' garden.

The floorplan remains unchanged from its original 1825 layout and the house retains a number of key architectural features including fireplaces (to every floor except the ground), original sash windows, doors, architraves and skirting. Though the uses of the upper rooms are not recorded on the historic plans, it is probable that this space comprised servants' accommodation, as unlike typical Georgian properties, the Castle does not have extensive attics for this purpose.

The Former School

The former school comprises the bulk of the rooms which make up the building. Following the sale of the Castle and Park to the local Council in 1908, the western half of the Castle was extensively rebuilt in order to provide separate Boys' and Girls' Schools for the local community. The Boys' School originally occupied the ground floor and the Girls', the first floor. The two institutions operated separately until 1945 when they were merged and redesignated as a Grammar School.

The development of the first school buildings in the early 20th century represented an almost complete rebuild of the former stables, coach house, wash rooms and bakehouse which supported the Castle. It also required the demolition of the historic core of the Castle itself, removing the Fernery and central staircase which previously linked to the Anteroom in the Museum. The northern rooms located along the rear of the Castle were also demolished and rebuilt, though the new buildings replicated the historic footprint almost exactly. Only the rooms reserved for the Museum and those above them, along with the perimeter screen walls from the south boundary of the Castle were retained whilst the service ranges were demolished. The footprint of the school as indicated on early plans of the building would suggest that it reused some of the footings of the historic house, and the 1910 Specification for the works to convert the building confirm that care was taken to ensure that when viewed externally, the new material was as indistinguishable from the old as was possible.⁰⁸

The Specification also recorded the intention to retain as much internal historic fabric as possible and with this in mind the original doors from inside the former service ranges were retained, though not the architraves or door linings. At least part of the former staircase was retained within the school. More historic fabric would appear to survive within the northern ranges of the school, and the first floor classrooms on the east side retain their historic proportions and high ceilings with architraves and cornicing within the round tower. Much of the historic fabric within the school does however date from the 1910 rebuild and the key characteristics of the building; its structure, mullioned windows and tiled corridors, date from this period.

Later additions include a range of mid-20th century extensions to the north and to the south-west corner of the Castle.

The interiors of the building are a mix of utilitarian classrooms containing workbenches and fittings, and more characterful spaces such as the music room within the tower and the former bedrooms which occupy the first floor above the Museum. Rooms such as the former Assembly Hall retain original features from 1910 such as the simple moulded plaster ceiling and tiling. Some internal subdivision has taken place though in general, the rooms retain their 1910 proportions. Key historic features include the historic window frames, tiling and parquet flooring, a single historic fireplace and a number of ceiling roses, cornices and skirting which are preserved in the rooms above the Museum.



Typical example of a classroom within the former school.



Room 1.41 - the proposed location for a new loft hatch.



Looking west within room 1.55A at first floor level (where structural interventions are proposed to the ceiling).



Looking east within room 1.55A.



Looking east within corridor 1.31C., where structural works are proposed to the ceiling.



Looking south-west within corridor 1.31E at first floor level.
The high level window is proposed to be altered as part of the proposed works.



Looking up towards the high level window (W-1.48-03) within room 1.48.
The window is proposed to be altered.

Roof

The roof across the Castle is a mixture of shallow hipped and flat roofs. The roof over the original sections of the south-east range are hipped and finished with slate. The single-storey range behind the original screen wall to the south-west is also hipped. The roofs over the turrets and towers are similarly hipped and finished with slates and lead flashings.

The roofs to the ranges constructed from 1910 onwards are largely flat, finished with modern single ply membranes, asphalt and liquid applied bitumen. The flat roofs are comprised of steel beams and concrete planks and are plastered and painted internally.

The shallow pitches of the hipped roofs are not visible from ground level, being concealed behind the substantial battlemented parapet which encircles the majority of the building.

There a variety of rainwater goods present on the building (both historic cast iron and later replacements in uPVC).



The roof of Cyfarthfa Castle as shown in drone imagery (2024).

There are shallow roof voids within the pitched-roof ranges. The fabric within the voids suggests that the principal elements of the original trusses have been largely retained, whilst the rafters, battens and sarking boards have been replaced.



Roof R.1.7 (south-east range)



Underside of roof covering in void R.1.9 (the pitch of this roof is proposed to be altered to allow for more effective water run-off).



Interior of roof void R.1.20 (south range)



Interior of roof void R.1.15 (south range)

4.0 History and development

4.1 History of Cyfarthfa Castle

The following section provides a timeline to situate Cyfarthfa Castle in its historical context. This will be followed by a more detailed exploration of the pertinent historical context, the history of the built fabric of the Castle and the evolution of its immediate setting; Cyfarthfa Park.

Early History

While little has been found about the earliest history of the region, it would appear that until the mid-18th century, Merthyr Tydfil was a small farming village. However, like the Severn Gorge at Coalbrookdale and the area later known as Ironbridge, the upper Taff Valley contained the necessary raw materials needed for large scale ironworking; limestone, iron ore, woodland, a ready water supply and was located near to one of the best coal seams in South Wales.

4.2 History and development timeline - wider context

Early History of Cyfarthfa

The name 'Cyfarthfa' is thought to be associated with the historic use of the land as hunting grounds. The word *Cyfarthfa* loosely translates from the Welsh for *place of barking*, presumably related to hunting dogs.

1756-1786

Cyfarthfa Ironworks were established by Anthony Bacon and William Browning, capitalising on the availability of raw materials such as limestone, iron ore, woodland and a ready water supply.

1786

The flourishing Cyfarthfa Works were sold to Richard Crawshay, who extended and developed Cyfarthfa to become one of the largest ironworks in Britain.

1813

William Crawshay II (grandson of Richard Crawshay) became responsible for managing the Ironworks.

1824-5

William Crawshay II commissioned Robert Lugar to design Cyfarthfa Castle on a site overlooking the Ironworks. The Castle was built with an adjoining stable block and coach house.

1827

Lugar's floor plans from this date, produced for publication, illustrated the layout of the house when first built.

1846

Robert Thompson Crawshay, son of William Crawshay II, moved to the Castle with his family. He added a photography studio in the north-west corner of the Castle, adjacent to the stables (since demolished.)

1874

Robert Thompson was forced to close the Ironworks amidst the South Wales coal strike.

1884

Cyfarthfa Works was converted to steel production to combat an unfavourable economic climate.

1889

The Crawshays vacated Cyfarthfa Castle, following the death of Robert Thompson and the decline of the Works.

1908

The Castle and Park were purchased from the Crawshays by the local council.

1908-1912

The Castle was converted to serve as a museum and school for the local community. The majority of the building was demolished, with only a small section of the original south-east corner retained.

1945

The Boys and Girls schools, separated over different floors, were amalgamated to create a single grammar school.

1992-3

The principal rooms within the Museum were refurbished.

2012

The playroom/nursery, used as temporary exhibition space for the museum, was refurbished.

2013

Cyfarthfa Castle High School closed.

2013-2025

The majority of the Castle has been vacant for over a decade. During this time, substantial water ingress has caused serious deterioration of the historic fabric. A structural survey conducted in 2022 recommended a large scale renovation to arrest further decay.

Cyfarthfa in Context - The Ironworks and the Crawshays

1765-1786

In 1765 the Cyfarthfa Ironworks were first established by Anthony Bacon and William Browning, a pair of Cumbrian ironmasters. The land was leased to them by Lord Talbot and stretched approximately eight miles along the Taff Valley. The pair employed the services of Charles Wood to oversee the construction and later management of the works. Wood's diaries for 1766-7 chronicled the construction of a state of the art, coke-fired blast furnace at Cyfarthfa⁰⁹. Shortly afterwards, Bacon purchased shares in the nearby Plymouth and Hirwaum works, meaning that he owned three of the four significant coke iron furnaces in the Merthyr Tydfil region.

As a specialist producer of munitions during the American Revolutionary War (1775-83), the Cyfarthfa Works flourished. Following Bacon's death in January of 1786, his sons first leased and later sold the Ironworks to Richard Crawshay.

⁰⁹ The Diary of Charles Wood of Cyfarthfa Ironworks, Merthyr Tydfil, 1766-1767.

The Crawshay Dynasty

Richard Crawshay (1739-1810)

Richard Crawshay had been associated with the Cyfarthfa Ironworks since 1774, when he took over Browning's share in the works. Crawshay maintained the ironwork's status as a centre for innovation; introducing puddling furnaces and a rolling mill powered by a Watt engine by 1789.

Working with the engineer Watkin George, he expanded the site, constructing tramways leading from the quarries and mines, the Pont-Y-Cafnau Bridge (the first iron railway bridge in the world) and the Gurnos Tramway to link to the Gurnos Quarry to the north.

By 1793 Crawshay claimed to have laid out £50,000 on new plant at Cyfarthfa. A survey of pig iron production in 1796 identified Cyfarthfa as by far the largest ironworks in Britain, casting over 7200 tons at a time when the average output per works was typically 1562 tons¹⁰. The expansion of smelting was more than matched by a massive growth in forge capacity at Cyfarthfa. Indeed, it was in the field of iron refining that Crawshay made his most signal contribution to the British iron trade. He was a sponsor the 'iron puddling' technique of Henry Cort during the 1780s, which revolutionized the production of malleable bar iron in Britain. As a result, Cyfarthfa attracted industrialists and technologists from across Europe, anxious to view what was referred to locally as the domain of Moloch the Iron King¹¹. By 1807, the Cyfarthfa Ironworks were the largest in the world and had transformed the landscape and scale of Merthyr Tydfil.

¹⁰ Evans, C. Crawshay, Richard (1739–1810', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2008

¹¹ Evans, C. Crawshay, Richard (1739–1810', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2008

The Cyfarthfa Works remained the largest in Britain under the ownership of William Crawshay, Richard's only son, and by 1823 were producing 24,000 tonnes of pig iron from eight blast furnaces¹². William Crawshay left much of the management of the Works to his son William Crawshay II.

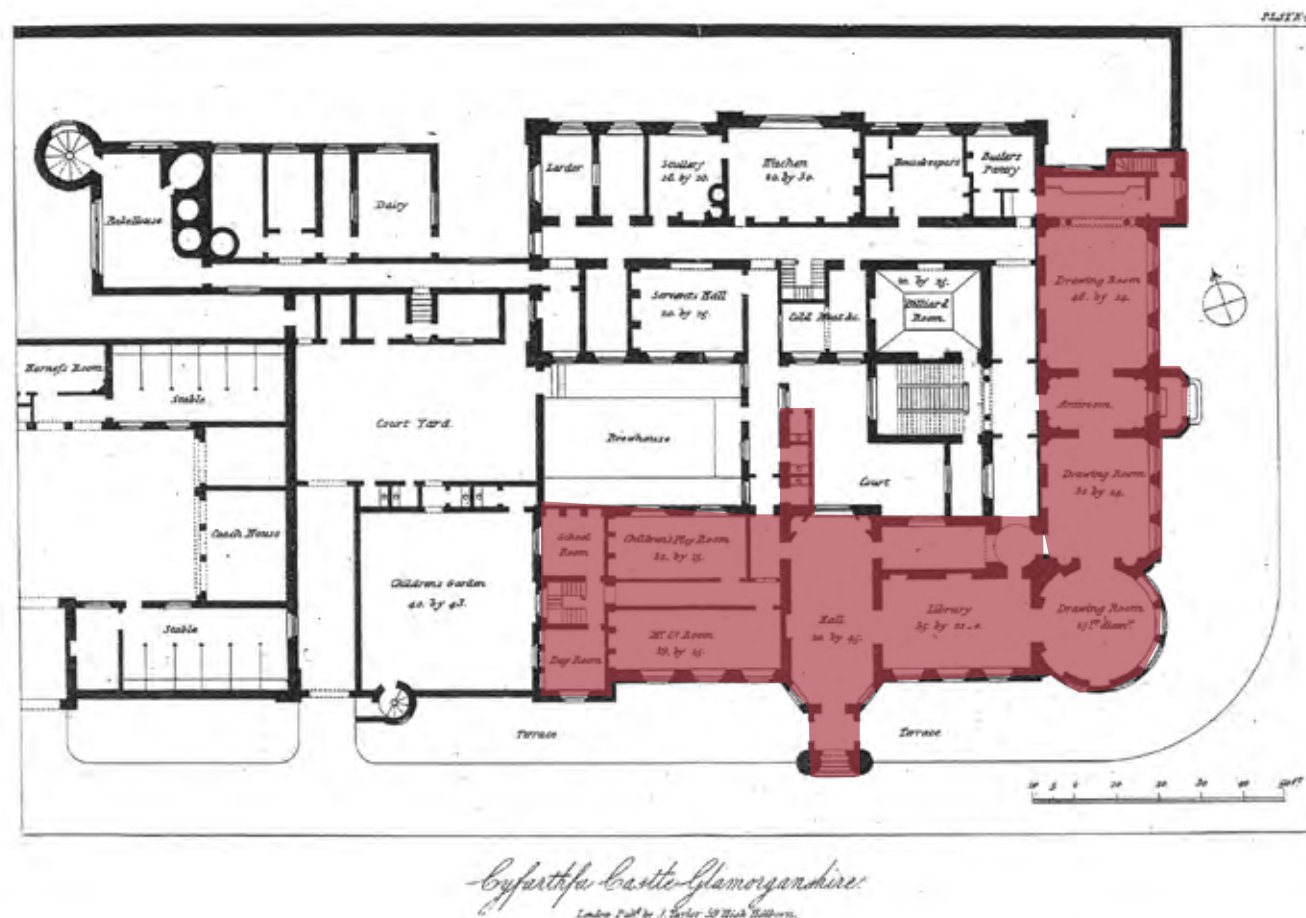
¹² Evans, C. Crawshay, William (1764–1834), Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2004

Robert Lugar's House, 1824-1825

It was William Crawshay II who was responsible for the construction of Cyfarthfa Castle, relocating the family from their former home at nearby Gwaelodygarth House¹³. Subsequently Gwaelodygarth was sold for £2,500 to William Meyrick, a local lawyer who gave service to the Crawshays and, more recently, this building was in the ownership of the Mid-Glamorgan Health Authority.

In designing his grand new mansion at Cyfarthfa, William (II) employed the architect and engineer Robert Lugar. The site was chosen for its position overlooking, but separate from the noise and smoke of the Ironworks. The Castle in its original form covered approximately one acre and contained a kitchen, bake-house, icehouse and dairy alongside the family's grand suite of rooms. Adjoining the house were a large stable block and coach house.

Lugar's 1827 plan of the Castle, which appeared in a publication by the architect, shows the historic layout of the ground floor rooms. A section of this plan is reproduced adjacent, showing the rooms now occupied by the Museum and the original arrangement of the rear service range prior to its demolition and rebuilding in 1908-10. This also shows the now lost grand central staircase. The plan shows the location of the later Fernery (removed 1910) as a 'court.'



A ground floor plan of Cyfarthfa Castle from 1827, with the ground floor rooms retained in the 1910-12 rebuild highlighted.

Robert Lugar, (1772/3–1855),

Born at Ardleigh, Essex, the son of Edward Lugar, a carpenter of Colchester, Robert Lugar established himself in London c.1799, and exhibited at the Royal Academy from that date on; in due course he developed a very widespread practice as a country-house architect, which extended to Scotland and Wales as well as throughout much of England. He also published a number of books of his designs, which doubtless served to publicize his name. The first two—Architectural Sketches for Cottages, Rural Dwellings, and Villas (1805; repr. 1815 and 1823) and The Country Gentleman's Architect ... Designs for Farm Houses and Farm Yards (1807)—were purely pattern books, but the subsequent volumes were records of executed projects: Plans and Views of Buildings Executed in England and Scotland, in the Castellated and other styles (1811; 2nd edn, 1823) and Villa Architecture: A Collection of Views, with Plans, of Buildings Executed in England, Scotland (1828). The last of these was dedicated to the south Wales ironmaster William Crawshay, for whom Lugar designed his largest work, Cyfarthfa Castle, Glamorgan (1825).

Lugar was a practitioner of the Picturesque after the manner of John Nash and Humphry Repton, working in a wide variety of architectural styles including the 'Grecian', the Tudor Gothic, and that of the cottage ornée as well as the castellated. At Gold Hill (later Dunstall Priory), Shoreham, Kent (1806), he produced a notably early example of a villa in the Italianate vernacular style of Nash's Cronkhill, Shropshire, and at Balloch Castle, Dunbartonshire (1809), he was among the first to introduce the picturesquely asymmetrical castle form into Scotland; but he was a designer of only limited ability, who frequently reduced the process of picturesque composition to a meagrely detailed routine formula of only marginal asymmetry.

Lugar also served as county surveyor for Essex from 1812 to 1816, and became a freeman of Colchester in 1812. The architect Archibald Simpson of Aberdeen was his pupil. He married on 17 June 1829 Susanna (d. 1860), eldest daughter of John Coles. He died in Pembroke Square, Kensington, where he lived in retirement, on 23 June 1855, aged eighty-two¹⁴

An early engraving by H. Gastineau shows a stylised view of the Castle from the south-east within a pastoral landscape. This idealised scene epitomises the Picturesque style which Lugar was striving for in his design, though it conveys nothing of the industrial landscape of the surrounding town, or of the Ironworks located just to the south.

A different perspective is offered by Penry William's watercolour of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks Interior at Night (1825) which gives some indication of the character of the Ironworks themselves. The Castle with its towers and brightly illuminated windows is visible in the background on the right hand side of the image.

Little is known about any alterations to the Castle which may have taken place during its time as the Crawshay's family home.



Cyfarthfa castle, Merthyr Tydvil (sic), Glamorganshire c. 1835 by H. Gastineau (source wiki commons)



Cyfarthfa Ironworks Interior at Night by Penry Williams (1825) © Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Art Gallery

Robert Thompson Crawshay (1817 - 1879)

Robert Thompson grew up at Cyfarthfa, and started a family at the Castle with his wife Mary in 1846. After the death of his half-brother William in 1839, Robert became manager of the Ironworks and assumed full control of the business in 1867.

In 1874, he was forced to close the Ironworks due to the South Wales coal strike. In an article published in the *Western Mail* in October 1877 and entitled *The Fate of Cyfarthfa*, Robert Thompson responded to rumours that the Ironworks would restart with the following:

"Trade is worse than it ever was, and I see not the slightest chance of Cyfarthfa starting again; and I believe if it ever does start it will be under different circumstances to the present, as it will require a large sum to be laid out in improvements such as making steel rail etc. etc. I am too near my grave to think of doing anything of the sort, and I think so badly of trade altogether that I have no wish to see my sons remain in it."

Though the strike ended and the Cyfarthfa Collieries reopened in 1875, the Ironworks stayed closed until after Robert's death in 1879.

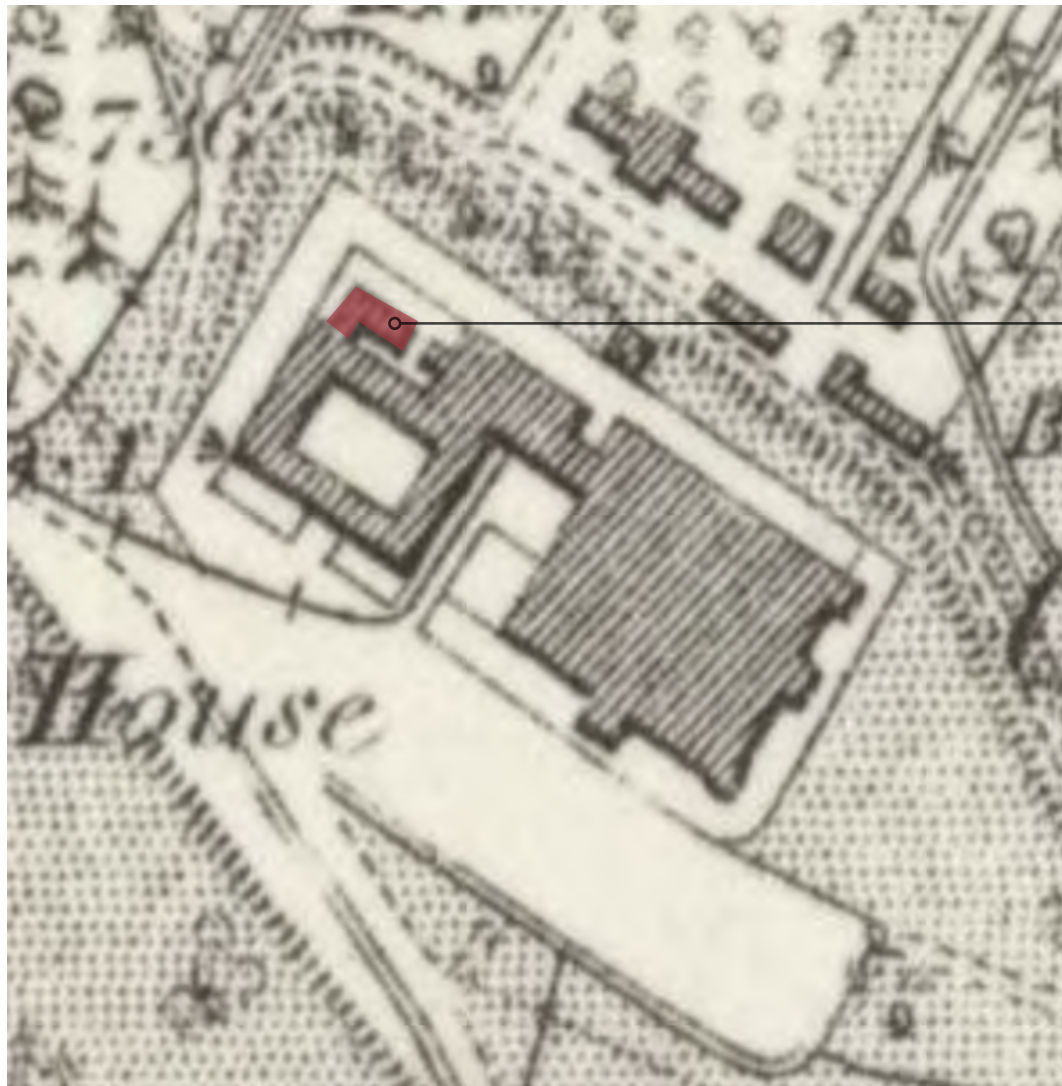
The Castle does not appear to have undergone many changes during Robert Thompson's lifetime, though the Grade II listed fountain to the front of the property was probably added during the late 19th century. An aquatint from 1840 shows the Castle as Robert Thompson would have known it. Although this image is, like the earlier engraving, slightly stylised, it clearly shows the arrangement of the original castle. The Museum side of the building appears broadly unchanged, though the single storey stables and service range which here were entirely concealed behind the screen wall have been replaced double storey ranges of the school.



Aquatint of Cyfarthfa Castle c.1840 (source wiki commons)

Robert Thompson Crawshay, son of William Crawshay II, made at least one notable addition to the Castle; a photography studio in the north-west corner, adjacent to the Stables. He was a keen photographer in later life and travelled all over South Wales. The construction of the school sadly demolished all evidence of the studio, though it is recorded in a 1909 plan of the building.

The 1868-75 Ordnance Survey (OS) map of Merthyr Tydfil shows the Castle as it existed in the closing years of Robert Thompson's life. The photography studio is just visible as a small extension on the north-western corner of the Castle.



Photography Studio,
demolished 1910-12

Cyfarthfa Castle as shown in the OS map surveyed 1868-75.

The Closing of the Ironworks

Following Robert Thompson's death in 1879, his sons reopened the Cyfarthfa Works. The business was in dire straits however, and though the Crawshays converted to steel production in 1884, they faced mounting competition from other companies who had made an earlier transition. The Works closed and reopened a number of times between 1884 and 1901 when they were purchased by Guest, Keen and Nettlefold (GKN) who would go on to close the Works completely in 1910. After a brief reopening to support the war effort in 1917, demolition of the Ironworks building began in the 1920s and today much of the core of the former Works have disappeared or been redeveloped.

The furnaces still exist, along with the infrastructure; surrounding tramways, viaduct and bridges etc. Collectively these form one of the most important industrial archaeological sites in Britain.

A Castle for the People

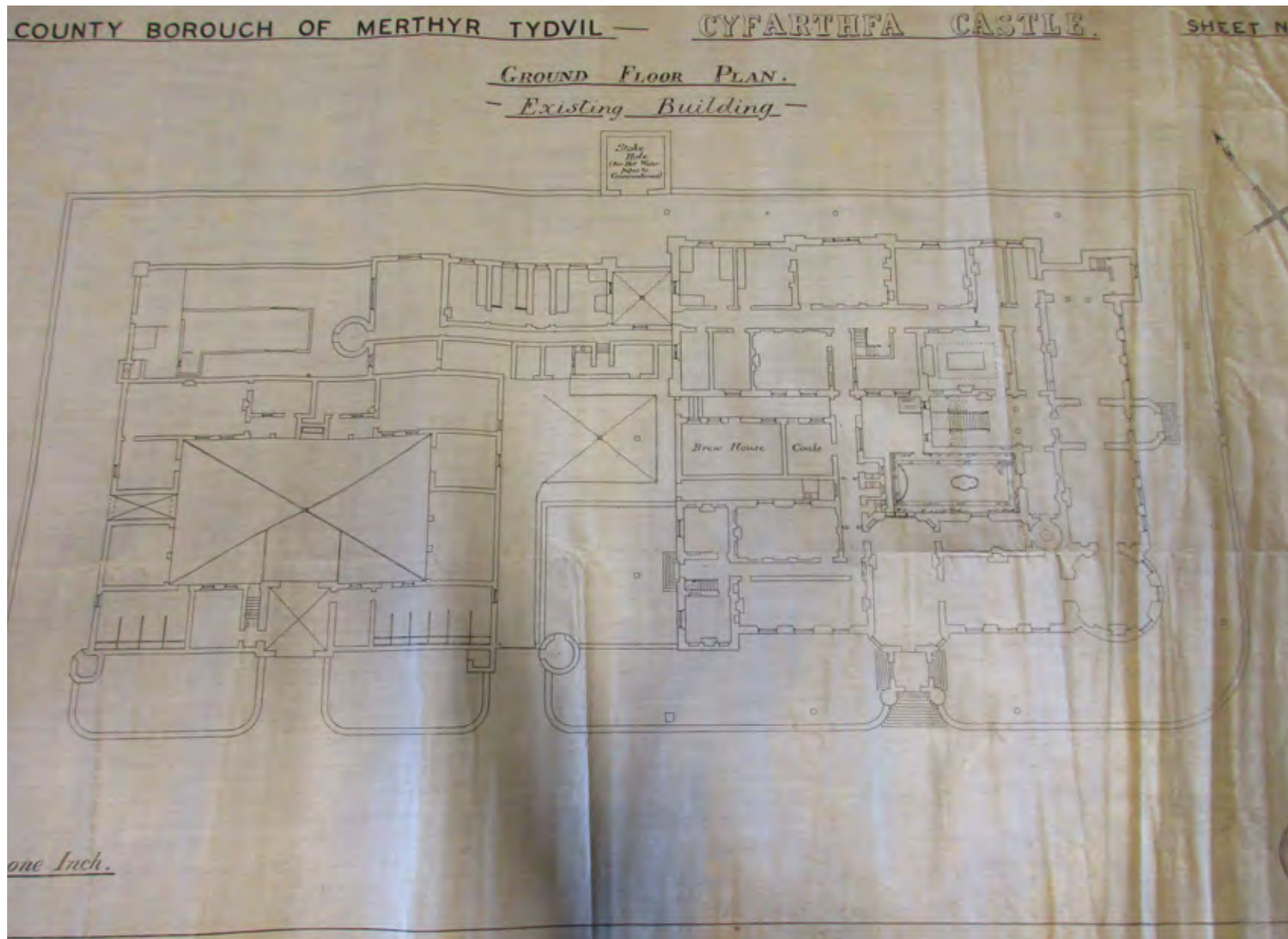
Following Robert Thompson's death and the decline of the Ironworks, the Crawshay family vacated the Castle for their home in Caversham Park, Reading in 1889. The Castle then lay empty aside from occasional family visits and as early as 1893 it was proposed that the Castle be used by the people of Merthyr Tydfil¹⁵.

"The old home of the Iron King, is literally denuded of furniture, with the exception of one room which is kept for the very occasional visits...(sic) ...why resign to rats that which would improve men and women?"

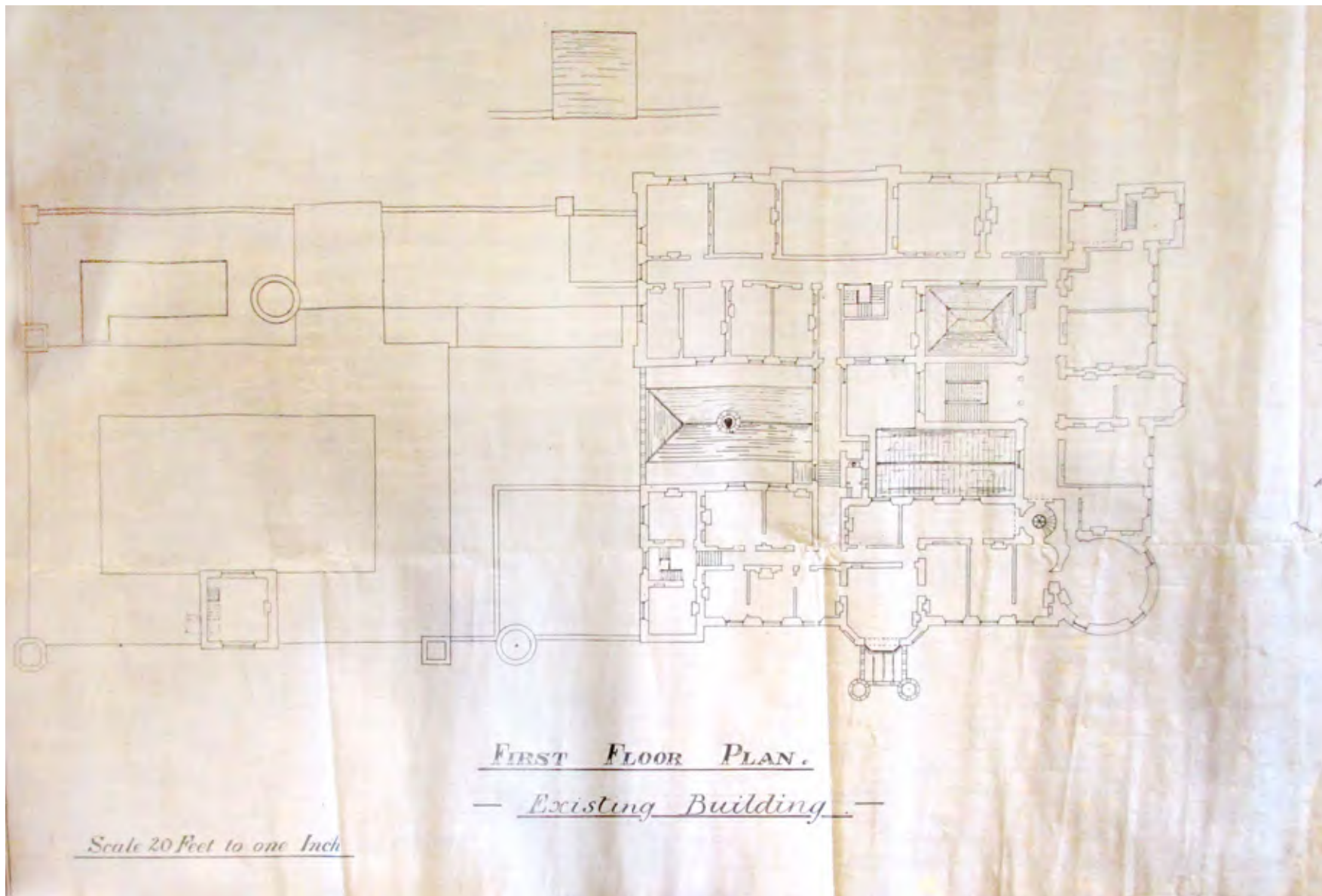
(Letter to the Weekly Mail, August 19th 1893)

In 1908 this idea was brought to fruition when the Castle and Park was purchased from the family by the local council. It would seem that the plan to utilise the building not only for the enjoyment of the people as a Museum and Art Gallery but also as a School was always intended. Plans of the Castle drawn up in 1909 show both the Castle as was existing at the time of the council's purchase but also several plans for the proposed new School wing.

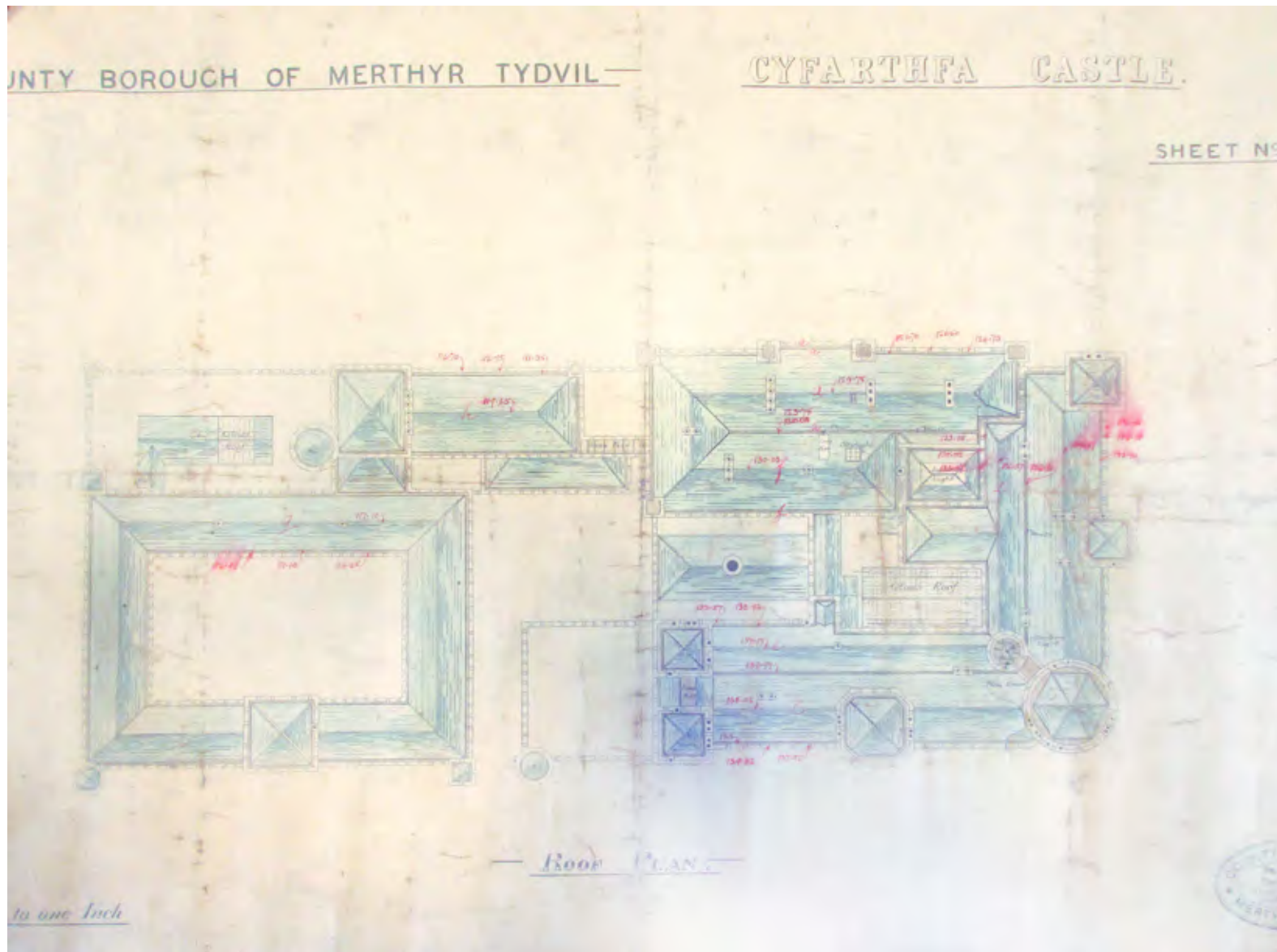
The 1909 'as existing' plans provide a glimpse at the historic layout of the Castle, one example in particular, shows the layout of the lost Fernery which appears to have had a small central pond and what may have been a statuary plinth at its western end. A 'stoke hole' at the rear of the castle provided access for hot water pipes which fed into the conservatories. This may have linked to the glass houses located up the hill to the rear of the Castle close to the former walled garden area. The roof plan also indicates that the entire building once had gently pitched roofs hidden behind the crenelated parapets. These appear to have been slated and would have provided a far better roof system than the existing flat roofs. The roof over the billiard room, which was demolished in 1910 appears to have been glazed.



1909 'As Existing' Ground Floor Plan



1909 'As Existing' First Floor Plan

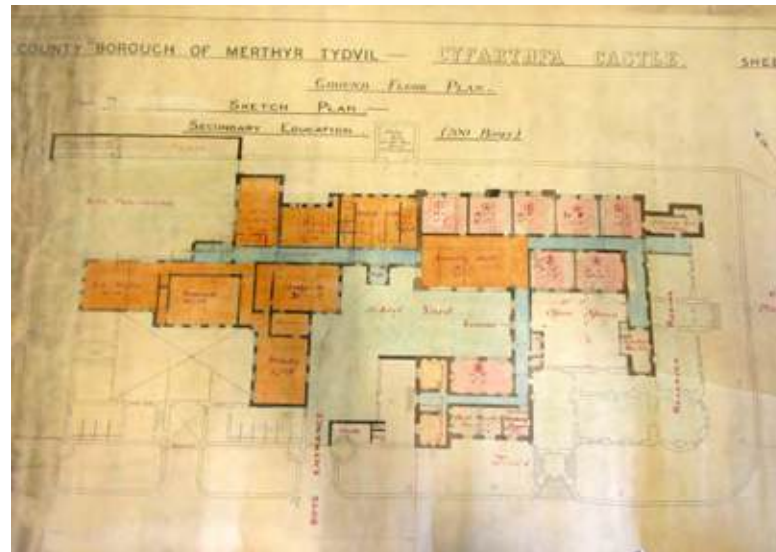


1909 'As Existing' Roof Plan

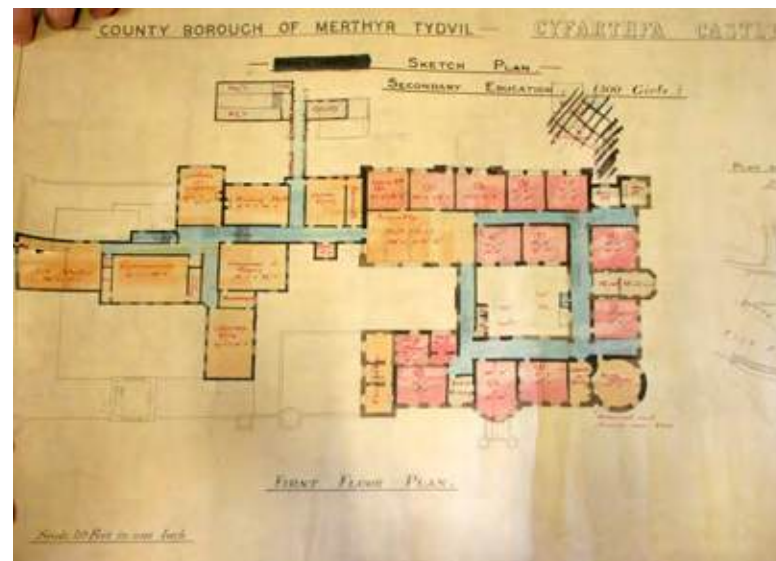
The 1909 'as existing' plans demonstrate the extent of the rebuilding undertaken to create the school. Only a small section of the original Castle survives in the south-east corner. Though the principal rooms which are today occupied by the Museum, as well as the corresponding rooms above on the first floor, have undergone few changes, all of the original staircases throughout the building have been lost, with the possible exception of the cellar steps leading from the north-easternmost tower. The Kitchen, Scullery and Housekeeper's rooms to the rear of the Castle have been rebuilt, though the layout of the replacement rooms are very similar to the historic floorplan and presumably must have made use of the footings from the old building. The Fernery, Billiard Room, Brewhouse, Servants Hall and Coal House were also cleared to create a large open courtyard to the rear of what is today the Museum. To the west, the Stables, Coach Houses, Dairy, Wash Houses and Robert Thompson's Photographic Studio were also cleared and replaced with the two storey school ranges.

While the new school wings broadly respected the footprint of the previous service buildings, there were dramatic changes to the plan on the western side of the Castle. A first floor extension was also added to the rear to provide WC facilities for the Girls School. This appears to have been altered, if not entirely replaced, during the mid-20th century.

The Specification (which was written in 1910 after the production of these plans) records the intention to retain as much historic fabric from the previous building as possible. This accounts for the high quality joinery seen throughout the school wings. Historic plans indicate that the Caretaker's House, Children's Playroom (temporary exhibition space) and Gun Room (Wedding Room) which are now part of the Museum, originally formed part of the school. The date of their transfer to the Museum is unknown. It would appear that the rooms now known collectively as the Caretaker's House historically provided accommodation for the school caretaker.



1909 Plan showing the proposed Boy's School (ground floor)



1909 Plan showing the proposed Girl's School (first floor)

Examination of fabric on site suggests that the staircase to the cellar in the eastern most tower may have been retained rather than rebuilt as originally proposed in 1909. The south-east front, south elevation and west screen walls were retained to maintain the historic appearance of the Castle.

The Museum and Art Gallery opened in 1910, with the Boys' and Girls' schools following in 1912.



New School Cyfarthfa Park, postcard c. 1912 © Cyfarthfa Castle Museum



Boys' Art Room 1914 © Cyfarthfa Castle Museum



The Museum and Art Gallery

The Museum appears to have undergone relatively few changes since it opened c.1912. The toilets located at the rear of the Entrance Hall were inserted c.1912. The uniformity of the joinery within both the male and female WCs indicates that the planform of this ancillary space has been preserved. The sink units are clearly historic, and may be original to the WCs.

With the exception of the windows in the Caretaker's House and Wedding Room, the majority of the windows in the Museum are considered to be good quality, replacement sash windows.

Internally, the Museum has undergone at least one phase of refurbishment, known to have taken place in 1992. During these works, fragments of wallpaper were discovered inside the Wedding Room and Yellow Gallery (former Library). The wallpaper in the Wedding Room was recreated and the room restored to an approximation of its historic appearance. The paper within the Yellow Gallery was not recreated, rather a sympathetic colour scheme based on designs typical of the Georgian period was installed. Similarly, the colour scheme within the Round Drawing Room is based on one designed by Robert Adam for No.1 Royal Crescent in Bath and is therefore is a sympathetic pastiche of a historic interior rather than a recreation. The corridor located between the Wedding Room and what is now the Playroom Gallery was refurbished in 1993.

The former Play Room, which was used by the school for an unknown period from 1913, and was later converted for storage, was refurbished by the Museum and reopened as the Playroom Gallery in 2013.

The School

The school continued to operate as separate Boys' and Girls' schools until 1945, when they were amalgamated in to a single grammar school. Information regarding alterations to the building are very limited, and appears to have been carried out on an as needed basis.

The rear extension shown on the 1909 plans for the building was extended during mid-20th century to provide a pottery room and additional WCs. The differing phases of this building are visible in its fabric; part brick and part concrete. The building was further altered during this period by the addition of the gymnasium to the western side of the building, behind the screen wall. This structure is of notably different construction to the surrounding fabric and filled in most of the courtyard once occupied by the stable blocks. New window openings appear to have been created in the west screen wall to allow light into the gym. A new floor was also added to the showers, and this has contributed to other level changes observed across the school wings. Finally, the stage was added to the side of the gymnasium at some point during the late 20th century, along with the reordered entrance behind the Stable Gatehouse.

Internally, much of the interior decoration dates from the 1910 rebuild, though new desks, workbenches and kitchen fit outs have been installed at various points during the life of the school. One classroom and a number of small storage rooms retain historic fitted

cupboards and cabinets for chemicals etc. Some of the windows have been replaced with uPVC, however a significant number of original windows are thought to survive (notably within the art rooms). In 2001, a Listed Building Consent application was consented for the retention of unauthorised windows to the façade of Cyfarthfa Castle (reference no. P/00/0424), though the information available online does not make it clear which windows the application refers to.

Cyfarthfa Castle High School officially closed in 2013, when the final group of year 7 students moved into the new Merthyr Tydfil High School.

2013 Onwards

By 2016, when emergency repairs were undertaken to the Castle Roof, original flat-roof finishes had already been comprehensively replaced. The parapet walls across the site were judged to have been rebuilt, probably when large sections of the house were demolished during the early 20th century, with further interventions made when a lead damp proof course was installed at a later date.¹⁶ The pitched roofs to the older ranges comprised a mixture of slate and asbestos clay tiles.

Inspection of the roof voids within the building demonstrates that the original trusses have been largely retained, whilst rafters, battens and sarking boards have been replaced.

¹⁶ Purcell, Cyfarthfa Castle - Water Eradication Proposals to Roof, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, 2016

In 2017, consent was granted for a scope of roof repairs including:

- Re-profiling of the main tower roof (R.1.11) and the replacement of asbestos clay tiles with Penryhn Heather Blue slate and renewal of coping to the parapet;
- Replacement of asphalt covered roofs to R.1.12 (flat inter-section) and R.1.13 (look-out tower) with lead, reconstruction of parapets;
- Replacement of compromised structural timbers to roof R.1.8 (north-east tower) and wall plate, provision of woodfibre insulation, recovering with recovering with Penryhn Heather Blue slate tiles;
- Replacement of concrete and asphalt roof over Caretaker's House north tower with new stepped central valley lead flat roof, reconstruction of parapets;
- Replacement of roof R.1.22 over Caretaker's House with lead flat roof with minimum fall and renewal of guttering;
- Re-profiling of R.1.23 (Caretaker's House, south tower) and recovering with slate, reconstruction of parapet.¹⁷

The majority of the Castle has been vacant since 2013. Water ingress, damp and poorly maintained rainwater goods have seen a significant deterioration in the built fabric. Severe structural issues have followed. The urgent need to arrest this process was recognised in Purcell's Condition Survey and Mann Williams' Structural Survey, both carried out in 2022.

¹⁷ Planning reference: P/17/0173

4.3 Development of the built fabric

The adjacent block plan illustrates the main phases of evolution for Cyfarthfa Castle. A full set of Historic Development Plans can be found in Appendix C.

- 1825
- 1910
- Mid-20th Century
- Late 20th Century

This plan is not to scale



Image captured in a drone survey of the Castle circa 2016, annotated to show the relative age of the built fabric.

5.0 Significance

5.1 Assessment of Significance

This significance assessment focuses primarily on the spaces which comprise the Museum, at ground and basement level within the south-east range of the building. For the purposes of this assessment, the Caretaker's House is treated as part of the Museum and Art Gallery.

Cadw's guidance document for managing the historic environment in Wales; *Conservation Principles*, espouses a thorough assessment of the significance of a heritage asset. When making an assessment of significance numerous aspects are considered including: architectural interest, historic interest, social value, former uses and local distinctiveness. These aspects can be grouped under a series of four values: Evidential, Historic, Aesthetic and Communal. A description of each value is given under the adjacent headings.

- **Evidential value** – This derives from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including its physical remains or historic fabric. These may be visible and relatively easy to assess, or they may be buried below ground, under water or be hidden by later fabric. These remains provide the primary evidence for when and how an historic asset was made or built, what it was used for and how it has changed over time.
- **Historic value** – An historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life or it might be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement. These illustrative or associative values of an historic asset may be less tangible than its evidential value but will often connect past people, events and aspects of life with the present.
- **Aesthetic value** – This derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset. This might include the form of an historic asset, its external appearance and how it lies within its setting. It can be the result of conscious design or it might be a seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which an historic asset has evolved and been used over time, or it may be a combination of both.
- **Communal value** – This derives from the meanings that an historic asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It is closely linked to historical and aesthetic values but tends to have additional or specific aspects. Communal value might be commemorative or symbolic. For example, people might draw part of their identity or collective memory from an historic asset, or have emotional links to it.

The significance of Cyfarthfa Castle is assessed using a scale of significance ratings ranging from high down to detrimental.

- **High:** A theme, feature, building or space which is important at national or international level, with high cultural value and important contribution towards the character and appearance of the Castle and its setting.
- **Medium:** Themes, features, buildings or spaces which are important at regional level or sometimes higher, with some cultural importance and some contribution towards the character and appearance of the Castle and its setting.
- **Low:** Themes, features, buildings or spaces which are usually of local value only but possibly of regional significance for group or their value. Minor cultural importance and contribution to the character or appearance of the Castle and its setting.
- **Neutral:** These themes, spaces, buildings or features have little or no cultural value but do not detract from the character or appearance of the Castle and its setting.
- **Detrimental:** Themes, features, buildings or spaces which detract from the values of the Castle, its setting, character and appearance. Efforts should be made to remove or enhance these features.

5.2 Significance assessments

5.2.1 Summary statement of significance

Cyfarthfa Castle has a medium level of evidential value, derived from the potential for surviving evidence which could enhance our knowledge of past decorative schemes, room uses, lost structures and the relationship between the Edwardian school and the service ranges which originally occupied the area immediately west of the principal living quarters. The evidential value of the Museum and Art Gallery is low relative to the former School ranges; historic plans survive for the Museum which confirm that the principal family rooms occupy their original footprint and generally retain their original planform. The historic decorative schemes across the Museum have also been researched and recorded.

The Castle has high historic value; illustrating early-19th-century architectural fashion and demonstrating the associative relationship between the development of Merthyr Tydfil and the Cyfarthfa Ironworks, which the Castle was built to overlook. The Museum has high associative historic value through its connections to the architect Robert Lugar and various members of

the Crawshay family. The suite of historic family rooms has high historic value, illustrating the transitional and eclectic tastes of early 19th-century architecture.

The Castle has a high level of aesthetic value, which is principally derived from the south and east facades, and through the sympathetically designed interiors and original architectural features present throughout the Museum. The Castle also forms an important local landmark.

Finally, the communal value of the Castle is high. This value is derived both from the former use of the building as a local school, and the long history of the Museum and Art Gallery, which has been publicly accessible for over 100 years.

The various values which feed into the overall significance of the Castle are explored in more detail below, and the relative significance of the interior spaces and external elevations are set out in the significance plans in **Section 5.3**.

5.2.2 Evidential Value

The Museum and Art Gallery

The development of the Museum and Gallery is generally well understood. A concerted effort was made to retain and preserve this part of the building during the restructuring of the remaining fabric to form the School wings. The rooms broadly retain their historic proportions and original architectural features. Where alterations have taken place, such as within the Entrance Hall, these are generally well understood, though exact dates for some changes such as the addition of the cafe and addition of additional stairs to basement level would benefit from further clarification.

Two key internal refurbishment schemes are known to have taken place within the museum; the 1992 refurbishment of the principal rooms and the 2013 refurbishment of the Play Room Gallery. During this time, care was taken to research and record the underlying historic fabric and where possible to retain and restore original features. The current interior finish is as rule, a pastiche, though the Wedding Room wallpaper is a direct recreation of fragments found during refurbishment works. The cornices, skirting, and picture rails throughout the ground floor spaces are presumed to be largely original.

The Caretaker's House also has some evidential value due to its largely unadulterated state. The structure has been subject to less refurbishment and documentation than the rest of the Museum and thus may provide evidence which could enhance our understanding of past occupants and/or decorative schemes relating to the historic usage of the space.

The ground beneath the cafe was partially excavated to provide a new access route into the basement during the 20th century, and the construction of the adjacent toilets likely also disturbed any below ground archaeology in this area. It is possible that the courtyard adjacent to the café may preserve below ground remains relating to the Georgian Fernery, which could enhance our understanding of that now lost structure.

For these reasons, the Museum is considered to be of **Low Evidential Value** with some elements of **Medium Evidential Value** within the Caretaker's House.

The Former School

The early development and construction of the former School is well documented through plans held by the Museum. The 1910 Specification held at Glamorgan archives, and a private collection of photographs which are currently available to view online which provide an insight into the appearance and operation of the School from its opening in 1912 into the late 20th century.

However, information regarding the development of the School post-1912 is lacking. There is potential that historic plans relating to post-1912 alterations such as the addition of the gymnasium may yet be uncovered.

It should be noted that the 1909 plan and 1910 Specification for the School do not constitute an 'as built' record. This strengthens the evidential potential of the built fabric of the school and below-ground archaeology to yield further information about what was salvaged or retained from the original 1825 service ranges.

The footprint of the original service range to the rear is semi-preserved within the existing arrangement of the building. The ground below the central courtyard may contain evidence earlier buildings such as the Brew House or other artefacts related to the occupation of the original building. This area therefore has the potential to enhance our understanding of the site, its owners, and the many staff required to keep the estate running.

For this reason, the School wings and central courtyard are considered to be of **Medium Evidential Value**.

Overall Evidential Value

The built fabric of the museum and the potential for the survival of below-ground archaeology mean that the Castle may in the future yield further information about past decorative schemes, uses, lost structures such as the 19th-century Fernery, and the relationship between the School and the original service ranges. It is noted that historic surface finishes may survive beneath the hardstanding on the front terrace. The Castle is as a whole considered to have **Medium Evidential Value**.

5.2.3 Historic Value

The suite of family rooms retained within the Museum holds tangible associations with the history of the site and the wider industrial setting of the Castle. These rooms are illustrative of the style of the period; employing Gothic motifs in the main entrance and Classical detailing elsewhere in the principal rooms; foreshadowing the revivalist styles of the Victorian period. The existing decorative finishes are generally pastiche, based on sympathetic interiors of the period sourced from elsewhere. The Wedding Room contains an accurate representation of an earlier historic scheme and is therefore of slightly higher illustrative historic value than other rooms.

The Museum comprises the majority of the original early 19th-century fabric in the building. As such this part of the Castle has historic associations with William Crawshay II, Robert Thompson Crawshay and Robert Lugar, as well as illustrating their respective aspirations for the site. Cyfarthfa was Lugar's largest residential commission, and as much of his original building has been rebuilt, the remaining southern and south-western wings are of particular historic significance; providing a tangible link to the original designs for the Castle.

The Caretaker's House contrasts with the opulence of the main rooms but remains largely unaltered from its historic form. The contrast between the simple interiors and features of the Caretaker's House and the main suite of rooms illustrates the hierarchy of spaces across the estate. The significance of the Caretaker's House is all the more important given the loss of all other service areas during the creation of the school.

The retention of the planform at basement level also confers some historic value, illustrating the original layout of this ancillary space.

For the above reasons, the Museum is considered to have **High Historic Associative Value** and **High Historic Illustrative Value**.

The Former School

The school is illustrative of the intentions of the local council to provide a high quality teaching establishment for the education and betterment of its young people. The care taken to match the new fabric with the old and to where possible, salvage parts of the original Castle illustrates of the regard held for this building in 1910, as well as the practical requirements of a large school at this time.

Internally, the school has undergone successive redecoration and adaptation to incorporate new kitchens, classrooms and facilities. However, a significant amount of original 1910 fabric survives both in the floorplan of the building, and in key decorative elements such as the many high quality wall tiles, and timber joinery saved from the earlier buildings. This is illustrative of both the style of the period and the desire to provide an educational facility which was attractive as well as practical. The retained handrails and iron balustrade from the staircase on the eastern side of the School are thought to have been salvaged from the main staircase of the Castle and provide a valuable record of this now lost feature. The use of iron railings on the staircase holds historic associative value with the former ironmasters who originally commissioned the Castle.

No records have been found which highlight any associations with key historic figures or groups. However, it is possible that members of the school's substantial alumni may be of historic associative interest. Detailed examination of school records may provide further information. On the basis of the evidence assessed to date, the School is considered to have **Neutral Historic Associative Value** and **Medium Historic Illustrative Value**.

Overall Historic Value

The building as a whole illustrates the early-19th-century fashion for the grand Picturesque villa. In adopting a castellated style the building illustrates a cultural transition away from the classical style which had dominated polite architecture in the 18th century.

The school and Museum considered together in their setting have **High Historic Associative Value** with the Cyfarthfa Ironworks, which the Castle was originally built to overlook. Though the significance of historic views to and from the site of the Ironworks have been depreciated by dense planting and intervening development, there remains some inter-visibility between the sites. The orientation of the building and the position of window openings illustrates the historic relationship between the Castle and the Works.

For all the reasons set out above, the Castle is considered to have **High Historic Associative Value** and **High Historic Illustrative Value**.

5.2.4 Aesthetic Value

The suite of rooms which make up the Museum and Art Gallery, are of **High Aesthetic Value**. Though the decorative finish is not original, the interiors have been finished in manner which is sympathetic to their age and character, and where possible has taken reference from earlier schemes found during conservation works. Original features such as fireplaces, chandeliers and decorative joinery have been retained and conserved. The loss of the main staircase is unfortunate however fragments of it are preserved within the former School.

Later additions such as the cafe and toilets are of fair quality and in the case of the WCs, are sympathetic to the design of the Entrance Hall, but add little aesthetic value to the building.

Although of a utilitarian character, the barrel-vaulted ceilings at basement level lend **Low Aesthetic Value** to the basement spaces. This has been somewhat depreciated through the addition of conspicuous modern services.

Overall, the Museum is considered to be of **High Aesthetic Value**.

The Former School

The former School has undergone a greater degree of alteration than the rooms of the Museum but retains significant elements which contribute to the character and aesthetic value of this area. The glazed wall tiles, high ceilinged rooms and large windows in several of the classrooms are key features which are considered to be of **High Aesthetic Value**. Within the first floor rooms located above the Museum, features such as the cornice, architrave and skirting within the Music Room are of particular value. Decorative skirting, dado rails and a single historic fireplace also survive in the first

floor rooms over the Museum and represent the last surviving elements of original fabric within the School wings. These features lend and historic character and compliment the 1910 finishes in the rest of the building.

Although some subdivision has taken place, most classrooms retain their original large proportions. Murals in the art room, though not of intrinsically high value, speak to the former use of the building and provide a tangible visual link to past pupils. Later alterations such as the late 20th century desks in the Chemistry room and the modern kitchen and showers fit outs are of generally **Neutral Aesthetic Value** whilst the mid-20th century extensions at the rear of the building are considered to be **Intrusive**. Where original Edwardian decorative schemes survive, these are considered to be of **High Aesthetic Value**.

Overall Aesthetic Value

Given the arrangement of the School and Museum within the building, particularly inside the surviving 1825 ranges, it is logical to assess the exterior elevations as a whole, rather than to divide them between the School and Museum.

The south-western and south-eastern elevations of the Castle are considered to be of **High Aesthetic Value** as the last surviving fragment of Lugar's original 1825 design. Historic plans indicate that the north-western elevation was partially retained during the 1910 works to the building, though it has undergone a degree of alteration to incorporate the later gymnasium and thus is considered to be of **Medium Aesthetic Value**. The rear (north-eastern) elevation is largely inaccessible and has been altered with a number of intrusive extensions, and is thus considered to be of **Low Aesthetic Value** overall. The courtyard elevations are generally of **Medium-Low Aesthetic Value**, with

the exception of the Caretaker's House, which has a broadly unaltered western elevation considered to be of **High Aesthetic Value**.

The windows to each elevation have undergone numerous changes across all elevations and the only original 1825 windows are thought to survive within the Caretaker's House and Wedding Room. These are of **High Aesthetic Value**. Other timber sash windows within the older portion of the Castle are high quality and sympathetic replacements and thus are of **Medium Aesthetic Value**. Original windows within the School ranges include the large arched windows from ground and first floor art rooms, which are of **Medium Aesthetic Value**. Other windows across the School have been replaced on a piecemeal basis including some unsympathetic UPVC examples which are **Intrusive**.

Cyfarthfa Castle is a local landmark deriving aesthetic value from its contribution to views in the local area. Although the number and quality of views into the park have been steadily obscured by trees and vegetation over the course of the 20th century, the Castle is readily visible from certain positions in the local area, a particularly important view being that from the A470 to the west.

Overall the Castle is considered to have **High Aesthetic Value**.

5.2.5 Communal Value

The Museum And Art Gallery

The Museum and Art Gallery was opened for the people of Merthyr Tydfil to enjoy and to provide a home for important collections, some of which were obtained by local people or which reference the art, social history and trade of the local area. The Museum employs staff and volunteers from the local community as well as offering educational activities and experiences for families and visitors. Spaces like the Playroom Gallery encourage repeat visits to view the temporary exhibitions. The Museum is considered to have **High Communal Value**.

The Caretaker's House is considered to have **Low Communal Value**. It functioned as a private residence for some time and has since served as offices and storage areas for the Museum. It has never been open for public viewing, and as it is mostly concealed behind the south wall, it is unlikely to feature strongly in the collective memory of the site.

The Former School

The former School functioned as the main High School for Merthyr Tydfil from 1912 until 2013. As such, it has been the School for successive generations of families within the town. The School historically operated numerous societies and sports teams which reached beyond the boundaries of the site, competing in regional competitions and events. The School is likely to feature very strongly within the collective memory of the local community.

For this reason the former School is considered to have **High Communal Value**, though it should be noted that this likely to diminish over time since the building is no longer used for this purpose.

Overall Communal Value

Collectively, the Castle and Parkland represent a shared resource which has been at the heart of life in Merthyr Tydfil since 1908. As described by the CMP in 2009:

"They (the Park and Castle) provide a constant, which is bound up in their life stories. For some families, several generations have been pupils at Cyfarthfa Castle School and all the family members have enjoyed the park together."

As such, the Castle and Park holds intrinsic communal value both for the long standing association as a public attraction and School but also for the ongoing programme of events and educational activities offered within the site. The site is place of local pride and is seen as a valued asset to the community.

The Museum along with other contemporary facilities in Cyfarthfa Park facilitates a continued culture of learning on the site despite the closure of the School, offering educational activities in the industrial, political, natural and social history of Merthyr Tydfil and South Wales. The site continues to attract families, school groups and visitors.

For the above reasons, the site is considered to have overall **High Communal Value**.

5.3 Significance plans

Methodology for Significance Plans

Significance ratings have been attributed to internal/ external walls and interior spaces based on a combination of factors including:

- the importance of external elevations in views from within Cyfarthfa Park;
- the age of the fabric;
- the level of aesthetic interest conferred through either historic or well-conceived replica design schemes;
- the survival of historic decorative features, such as glazed wall tiles and parquet flooring;
- the integrity of historic planform and room proportions;
- the historic status, usage and hierarchy of rooms, e.g. whether a room was designed as a principal space, ancillary space or a circulation space.

Significance ratings range from 'very high' to 'detrimental'. The below illustrates how the ratings have generally been applied:

VERY HIGH - reserved for the principal elevations of the late Georgian building, which were designed to be (and remain) highly visible in multiple views from Cyfarthfa Park. Views of these principal elevations lend communal and historic interest as well as significant aesthetic value.

HIGH - generally applied to historic principal rooms in the original Castle, particularly where sympathetic decorative schemes exist and the rooms retain their historic proportions. High significance interiors may benefit from other designed features, such as elaborate windows or high ceilings.

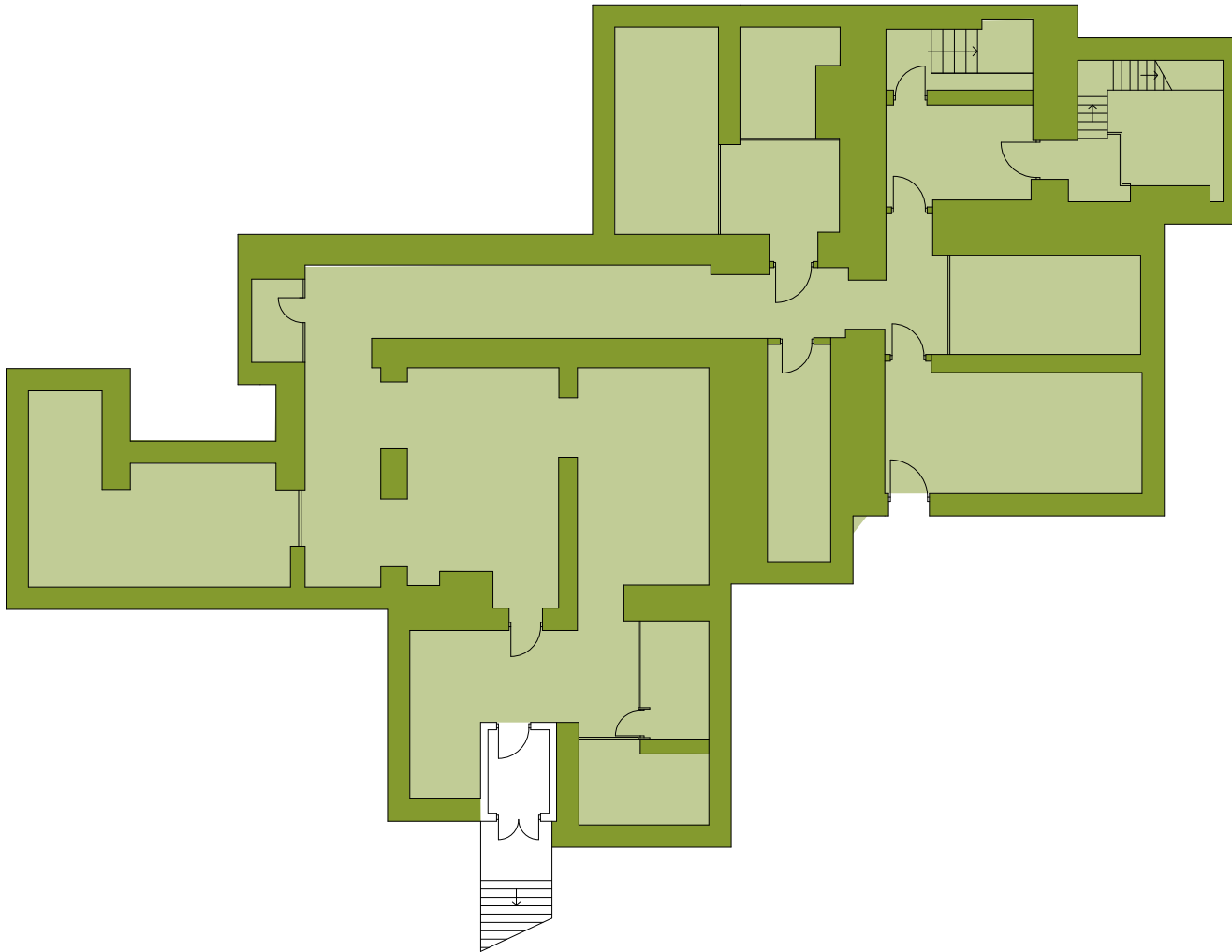
MEDIUM - recognises the importance of well-preserved former teaching spaces to the historic and communal interest of the building, generally where historic proportions and one or more elements of a historic decorative scheme survive.

LOW - generally applied to modified rooms and/or ancillary spaces of lower historic status. These spaces may contain elements of historic design schemes.

NEUTRAL - applied to historic spaces which have lost their original decorative scheme and/or historic proportions, and to modern spaces which do not enhance the historic, aesthetic or communal interest of the building.

DETRIMENTAL - modern additions/interiors which detract from the special interest of the building.

Main Building Basement

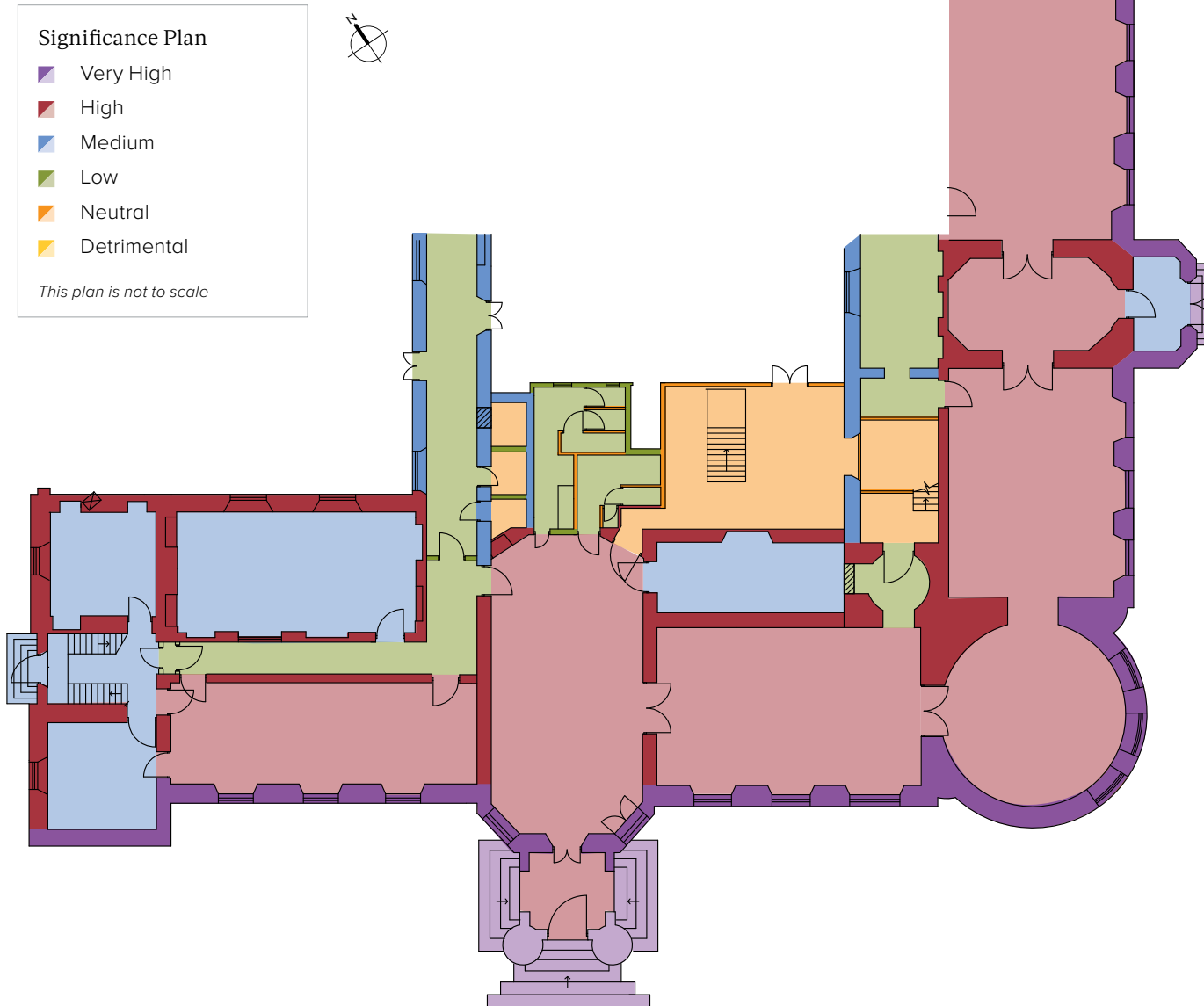


Significance plan

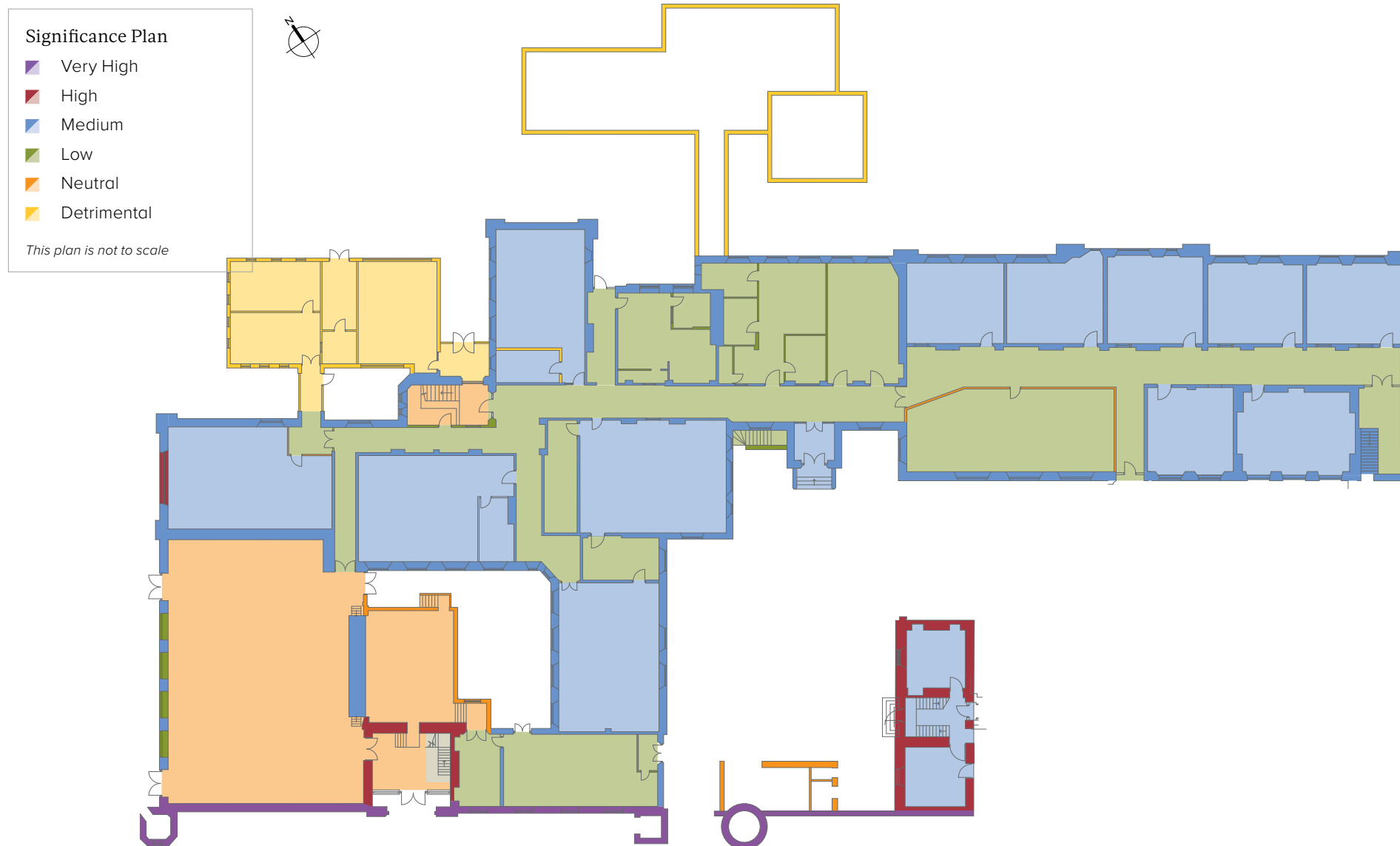
- Very High
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Neutral
- Detrimental

This plan is not to scale

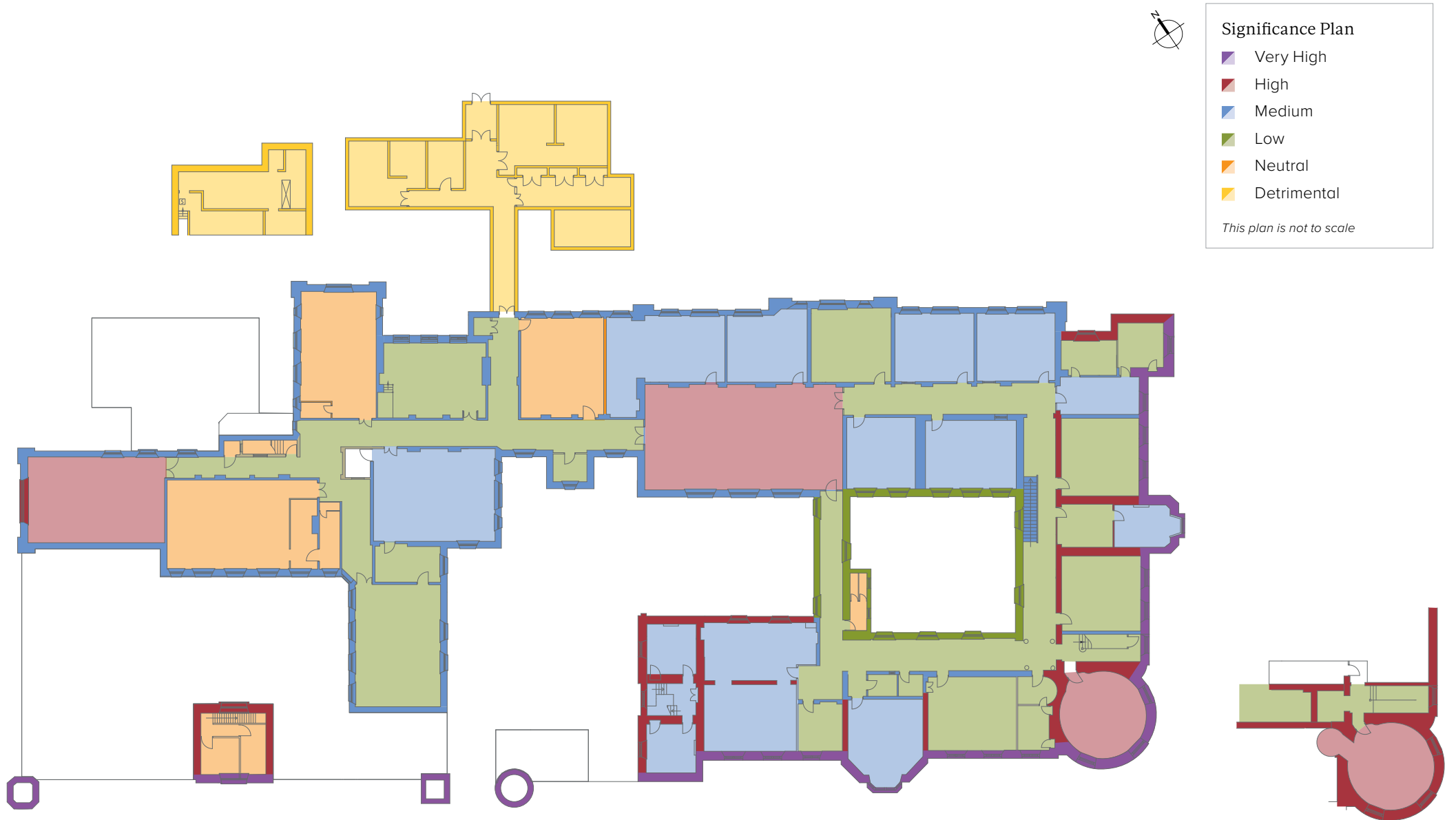
Museum Ground Floor



Cyfarthfa Castle Ground Floor (Former School)



Cyfarthfa Castle First Floor (Former School)



6.0 Proposals

The proposals contained within this application comprise a package of urgent remedial works intended to halt the ongoing deterioration to the condition of the castle, especially the upper floors which have suffered from long-term water ingress and neglect. The works concern the eastern wing of the building which is deemed to be the most significant and is the only part of the building which is currently in active use. The works can be summarised as follows:

Works to south-east range roofs generally:

Installation of roof access equipment to deliver a comprehensive access strategy for the safe and regular maintenance of roofs and gutters including:

- Stepped walkways to facilitate safe access to the lead gutters along the southern and eastern facades
- New fixed ladders with integrated lifeline systems to provide access to tower roofs
- A constant force post and mansafe system to all walkways to enable secure and continuous attachment for maintenance personnel
- Installation of allowing access to roofs where external ladder access is not feasible;
- New walkways within attic spaces to support safe inspection and ongoing monitoring in these areas.
- Localised, like-for-like repairs and timber reinforcements to eastern and southern roofs

Works to flat roof R.14:

- Replacement of existing single ply roof covering with new tapered insulation system and bituminous membrane covering.
- Adjustment of parapet height to account for 450mm increase in height of flat roof.
- Installation of freestanding guardrail system set back from roof edge
- Replacement of narrow clerestory windows overlooking flat roof R.14 with like-for-like windows on raised sills to accommodate increased roof build-up

Works to R.22

- Raising of parapet to achieve 150mm upstand from new lead gutter to DPC course below coping stone

Works to Roof R.9

- Increase pitch of roof R.9 from 20° to 25° to improve weathering performance

Gutters and downpipes

- Installation of new downpipes (6 no) to improve rainwater management, to south-east towers and front porch
- Minor alterations/partial removal of existing downpipes in central and east courtyard
- Replacing existing finish in box gutters with code 7 lead
- Replacing a number of hoppers across the south-east ranges and courtyards

External elevations

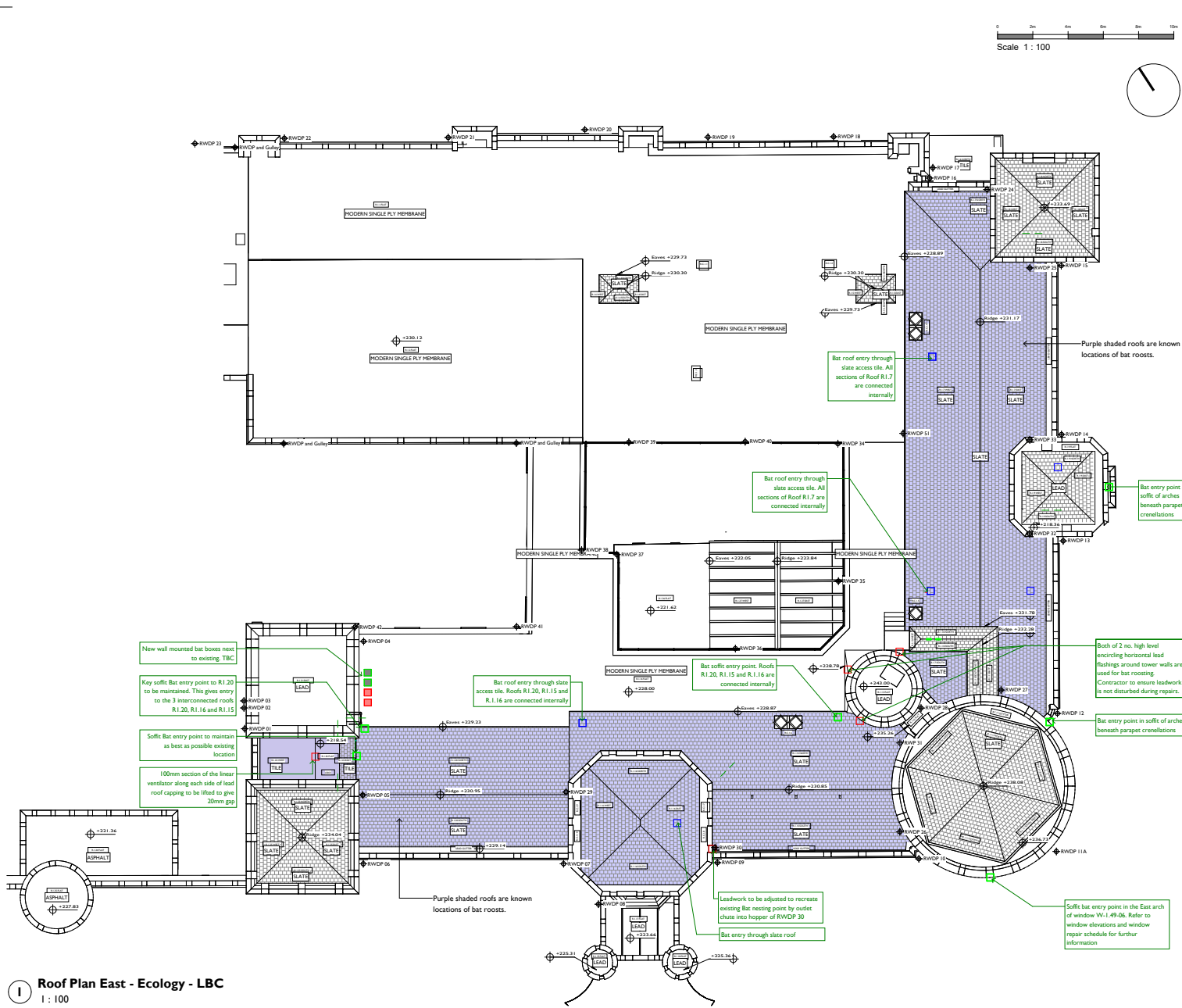
- Replacement of 1 no. boarded-up window on principal elevation (ground floor of Caretaker's House) with new sash window to reinstate the historic character and appearance of the principal elevations
- Removal of redundant vents and infill panels to windows across courtyard elevations and provision of glazing
- Like-for-like replacement of small non-openable timber window adjacent to entrance to Caretaker's House on south-east elevation of central courtyard
- Provision of new doors and new ironmongery to east elevation and central courtyard
- Removal of high level windows hidden behind modern metal cladding panels in east courtyard and infilling of openings with masonry
- Localised replacement of degraded lintels with pre-cast concrete to match existing
- Localised, like-for-like repairs and timber reinforcements to eastern and southern roofs and area of stair landing within Caretaker's House
- Localised crack/fracture stitching to masonry and lintels across facades

Internal works

- Installation of new steel beams beneath existing structural deck and new dropped ceiling to conceal steelwork within first floor spaces over room 1.55A and part of corridor 1.31C
- Localised, like-for-like repairs and timber reinforcements to eastern and southern roofs and area of stair landing within Caretaker's House
- Installation of internal loft access hatch within room 1.41 to provide access for inspections and maintenance

Ecology

- Installation of a range of bat boxes and access points, as set out in the ecologist's recommendations, to support existing bat populations.



Roof Plan East - Ecology - LBC
1 : 100

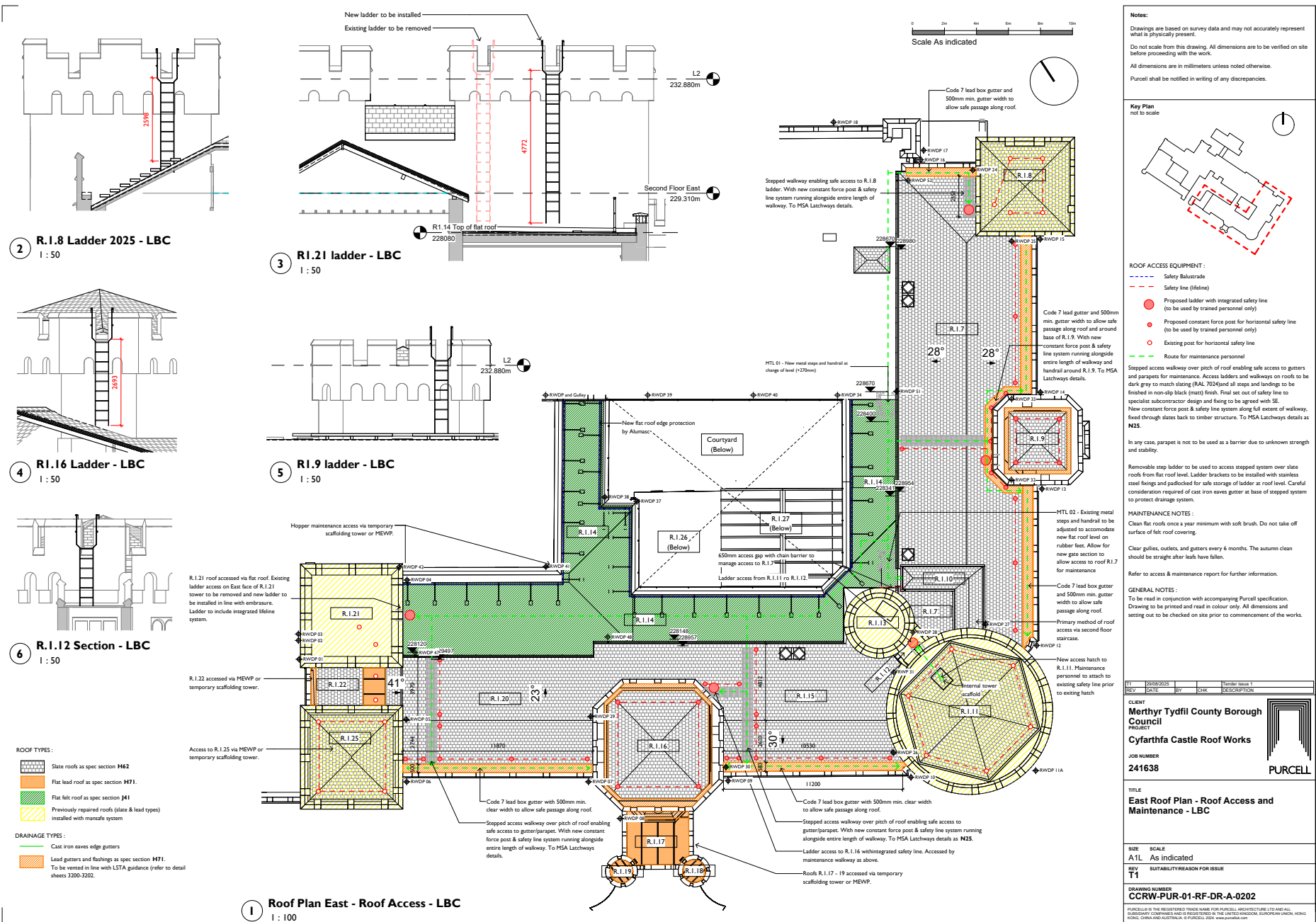
Notes:
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Key Plan
not to scale

- Internal Bat Roost Boxes
- External Wall mounted Bat Boxes - existing
- External Wall mounted Bat Boxes - new
- Bat Entry Holes in Slate Tiles
- Bat Entry Holes in soffit/eaves/walls
- Leadwork to include Bat mitigation

NOTE:
All work above bottom of capping stone line, including roofs, parapets or crenellations, to only be carried out under the auspices of a NRW Bat Mitigation Licence due to the presence of bat roosts or proximity to bat roosts. Refer to ecologist's information for exact locations.

A		CS		Notes adjusted	
REV	DATE	BY	CHK	DESCRIPTION	REVISION
CLIENT					
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council					
PROJECT					
Cyfarthfa Castle Roof Works					
JOB NUMBER					
241638					
TITLE					
East Roof Plan - Ecology - LBC					
SIZE SCALE					
A1L 1 : 100					
REV SUTABLY/REASON FOR ISSUE					
T1 - For Tender					
DRAWING NUMBER					
CCRW-PUR-01-RF-DR-A-0201					
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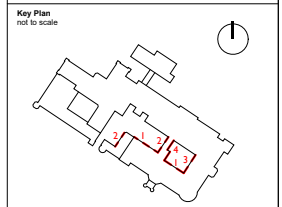
Notes:

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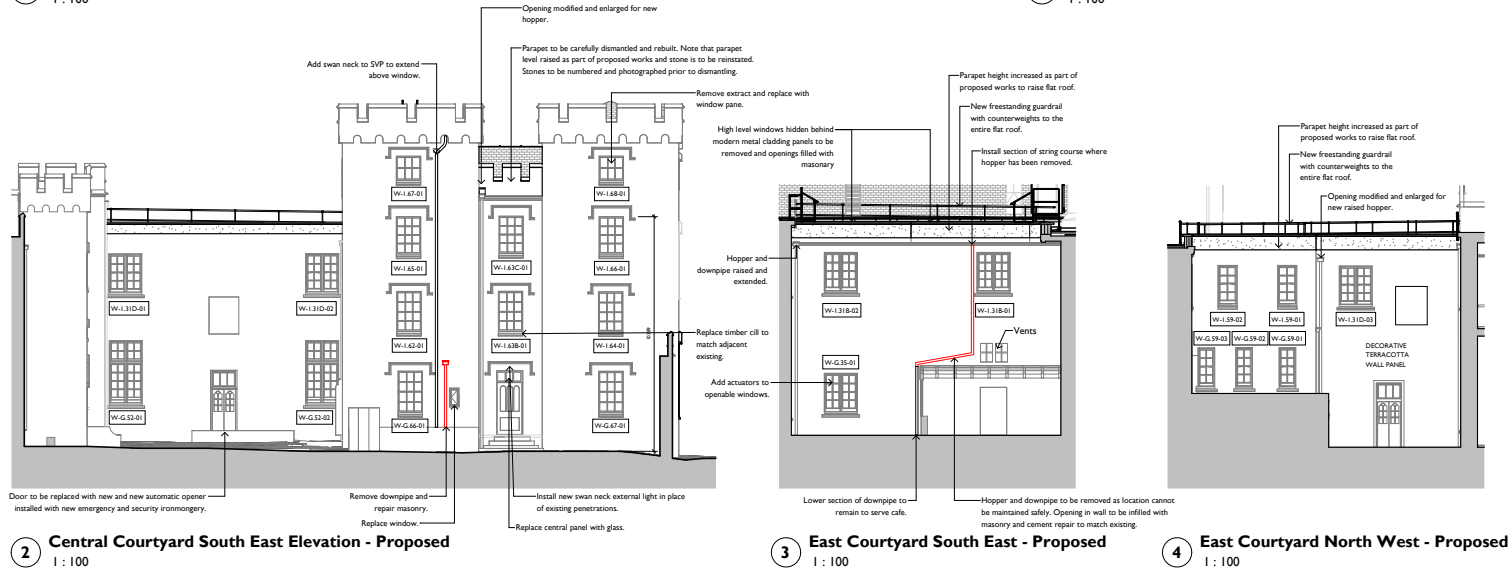
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1 Courtyard South West - Proposed
1:100

5 North West Towers Elevation - Proposed
1:100



REV	DATE	BY	CHK	Tender Issue 1
1	20/08/2025			
CLIENT Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council PROJECT Cyfarthfa Castle Roof Works JOB NUMBER 241638				
PURCELL				
TITLE Courtyard Elevations - Proposed - LBC				
SIZE SCALE A1L 1:100				
REV SUITABILITY/REASON FOR ISSUE T1 For Tender				
DRAWING NUMBER CCRW-PUR-01-ZZ-DR-A-0211				
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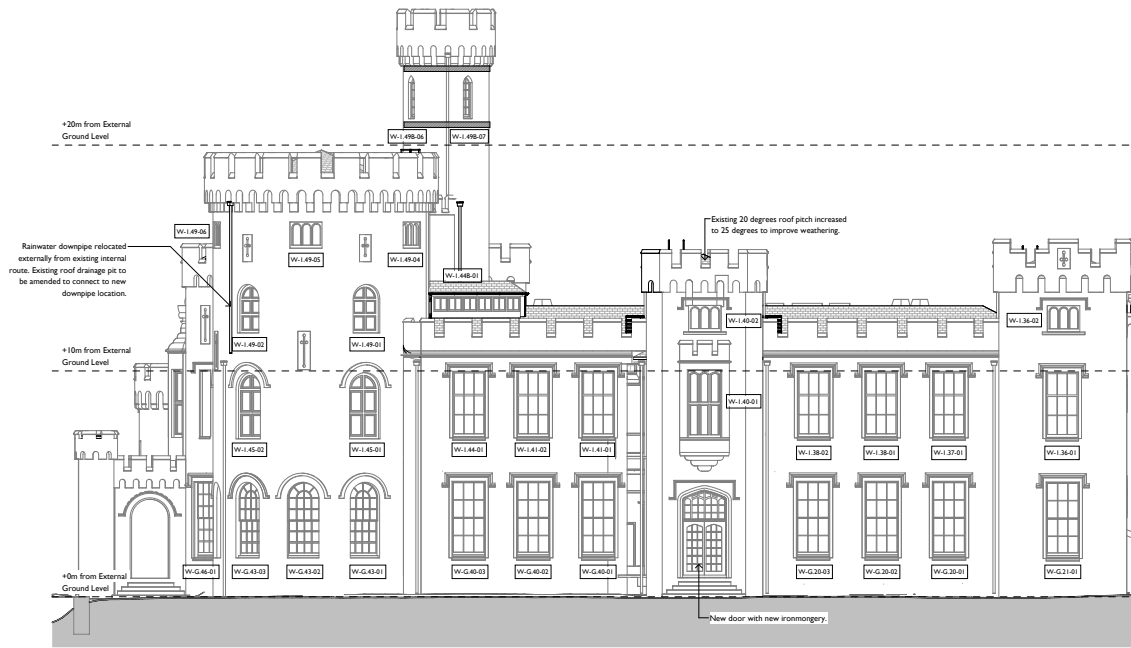
0 2m 4m 6m 8m 10m
Scale 1 : 100

+30m from External
Ground Level

+20m from External
Ground Level

+10m from External
Ground Level

+0m from External
Ground Level



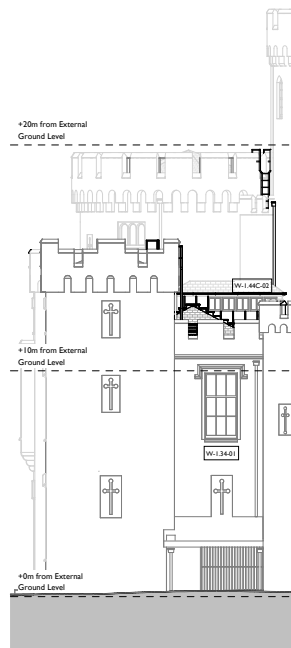
1 South East Elevation Windows - Proposed
1 : 100

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Ground Level

+20m from External
Ground Level

+10m from External
Ground Level

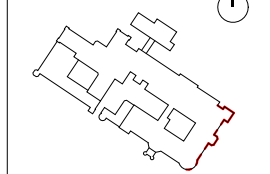
+0m from External
Ground Level



2 North East Elevation East Windows - Proposed
1 : 100

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Key Plan
not to scale

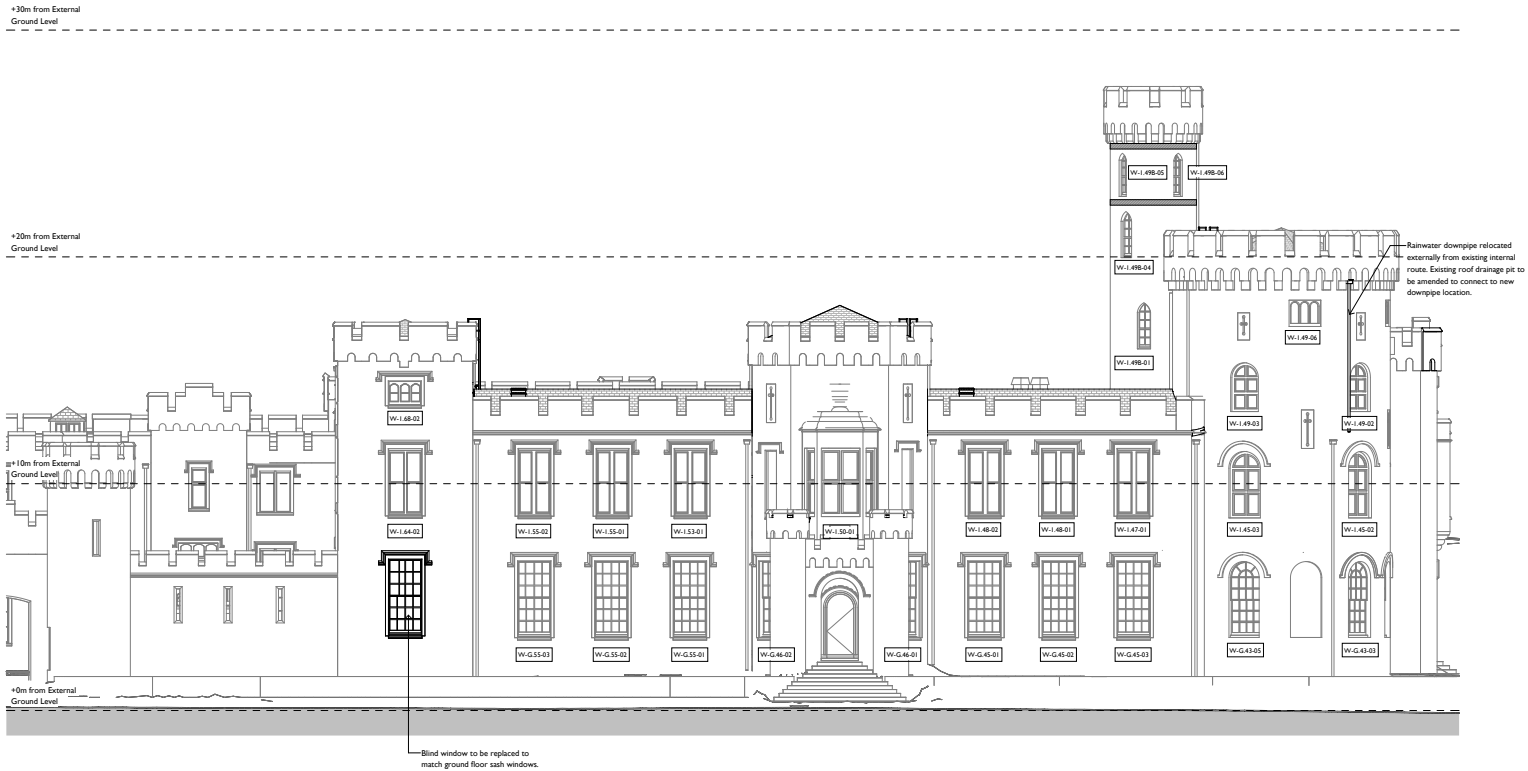
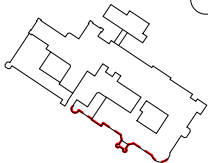


REV	DATE	BY	CHK	Tender Issue 1
				DESCRIPTION
CLIENT				
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council				
PROJECT				
Cyfarthfa Castle Roof Works				
JOB NUMBER				
241638				
TITLE				
SE and NE Elevations - Proposed - LBC				
SIZE SCALE				
A1L 1 : 100				
REV				
T1				
SUITABILITY/REASON FOR ISSUE				
T1 - For Tender				
DRAWING NUMBER				
CCRW-PUR-01-ZZ-DR-A-0212				
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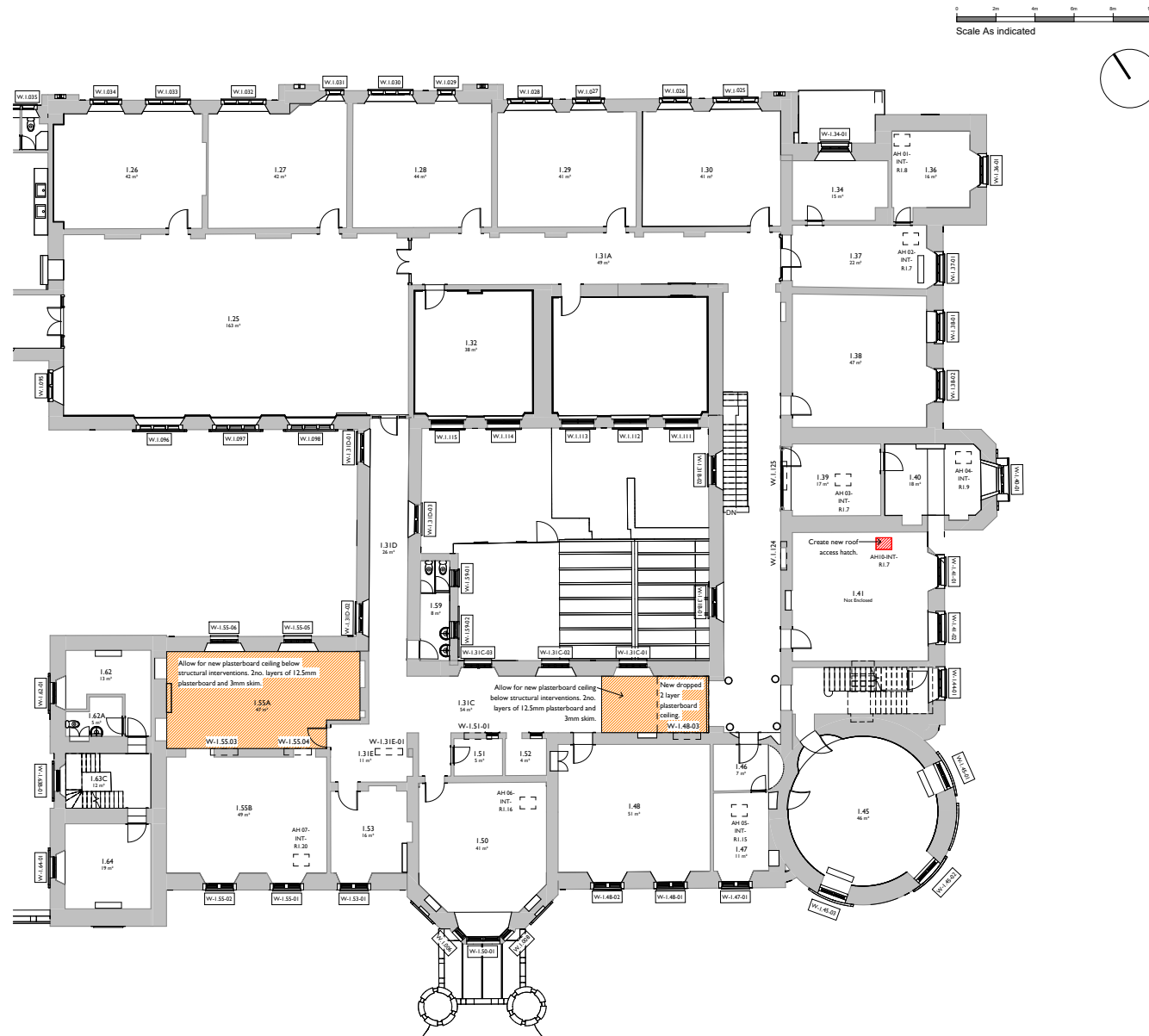
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Key Plan
not to scale



South West Elevation Window - Proposed
1 : 100

DATE		20/05/2025	REV	DATE	BY	CHK	TENDER ISSUE 1
1							10/07/2025/CP
CLIENT							
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council							
PROJECT							
Cyfarthfa Castle Roof Works							PURCELL
JOB NUMBER							
241638							
TITLE							SW Elevation - Proposed - LBC
SW Elevation - Proposed - LBC							
SIZE							
A1/L 1 : 100							
REV		SUBMITALITY/REASON FOR ISSUE					
T1		For - Tender					
DRAWING NUMBER		CCRW-PUR-01-ZZ-DR-A-0213					
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1 First Floor East - Demo & Repairs - LBC
1 : 100

Notes:

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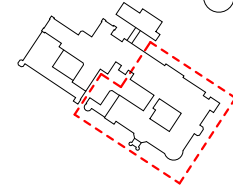
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Key Plan

not to scale



 Area of works to ceiling - structural

T1	20/08/2025			Tender issue 1
REV	DATE	BY	CHK	DESCRIPTION

CLIENT
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough
Council
PROJECT
Cyfarthfa Castle Roof Works

JOB NUMBER
241638

TITLE
Proposed First Floor Plan East - LBC

SIZE	SCALE
A1L	As indicated

REV T1	SUITABILITY/REASON FOR ISSUE
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DRAWING NUMBER
CCRW-PUR-01-01-DR-A-0220

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7.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

7.1 Methodology

An assessment of impact measures the special interest of the identified heritage assets against the degree of change proposed. This is to identify where there is potential for the local authority to verify associated benefits or determine that harm would be caused by the proposals, and subsequently to incorporate mitigation measures in order to reduce or eliminate this. It is recognised by the heritage sector that there is no defined calculation or matrix by which to assess heritage impact and that such assessment should be provided as a narrative founded on understanding the significance of the heritage assets affected.

The degree to which the proposed development positively or negatively impacts the identified heritage is measured according to the following criteria.

Level of Impact	Consequence of Proposed Change
High Positive	The proposal considerably enhances the special interest of the heritage asset, and/or the ability to appreciate that special interest.
Moderate Positive	The proposal enhances to a clearly discernible extent the special interest of the heritage asset, and/or the ability to appreciate that special interest
Minor Positive	The proposal enhances to a small extent the special interest of the heritage asset, and/or the ability to appreciate that special interest.
None	The proposal does not change the heritage asset, views of the heritage asset, and/or the ability to appreciate that special interest.
Minor Negative	The proposal damages to a small extent the special interest of the heritage asset, and/or the ability to appreciate that special interest.
Moderate Negative	The proposal damages to a clearly discernible extent the special interest of the heritage asset, and/or the ability to appreciate that special interest.
High Negative	The proposal considerably damages the special interest of the heritage asset, and/or the ability to appreciate that special interest.

7.2 Heritage Impact Assessment

Roof Works

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Hipped roofs R.1.7 and R.1.9: Provision of stepped walkways to facilitate safe access to the lead gutters along the southern and eastern facades. Provision of constant force post and mansafe system to all walkways to enable secure and continuous attachment for maintenance personnel. Further details: stepped access walkways are proposed to be installed at four locations; at the north of roof R.1.7 to provide access to roof R.1.8, across the centre of roof R.1.7 to provide access to roof R.1.9 and the adjacent box gutter, to the east of the main entrance to provide access to roof R.1.16 and adjacent box gutters, and at the western end of roof R.1.20 to provide access to roof R.1.25 and the adjacent box gutter. A new constant force post and safety line system is to be provided along the full extent of the walkway, fixed through the slates back to the timber structure.	To provide a fixing for the new stepped walkways and safety line, the existing joists along the length of the south-east hipped roof (R.1.7) will be doubled. At the centre point, steel PFC channels will be installed to provide a fixing for the walkway. PFC members will be installed along the length of roof R.1.9. Localised disturbance will be required to historic timbers within the roof structure to accommodate the new joists and PFC members. The historic queen and king post trusses will be left in situ, and the depreciation in historic and architectural interest as a result of new fixings internally will be negligible. The stepped walkways/safety line will be screwed into the new joists/PFC channels rather than existing historic fabric. The new walkways/safety line system will not be visible from ground level and will therefore have no impact on the architectural interest of the building as viewed from Cyfarthfa Park / the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) None (visual impact)
Hipped roofs R.1.7 and R.1.9: Provision of fixed ladders with integrated lifeline systems to provide access to tower roofs Further details: new ladders are proposed to be installed adjacent to R.1.8, R.1.9, R.1.11, R.1.16 and R.1.21.	Very minor, localised disturbance will be required to fix the new ladders to the masonry of the towers. The consequent depreciation in historic and architectural interest will be negligible. The new ladders will not be visible from ground level and will therefore have no impact on the architectural interest of the building as viewed from Cyfarthfa Park / the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) None (visual impact)

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Hipped roof R.1.11: Creation of 1no. new access hatch allowing access to roof where the provision of an external ladder is not feasible.	The provision of a new access hatch will require localised disturbance of fabric. The roof covering to roof R.1.11 was renewed c.2017 and the battens/sarking boards below appear to be 20th-century replacements. The consequent depreciation in historic and architectural interest will be negligible. The new roof hatch will not be visible from ground level and will therefore have no impact on the architectural interest of the building as viewed from Cyfarthfa Park / the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) None (visual impact)
Hipped roofs R.1.7 and R.1.9: Provision of new walkways within attic spaces.	Localised disturbance of historic fabric will be required to secure the new walkways within the attic spaces. The historic queen and king post trusses will be left in situ, and the depreciation in historic and architectural interest as a result of new fixings internally will be negligible.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance)
Flat roof R.1.14: Replacement of existing single ply roof covering with new tapered insulation system and bituminous membrane covering.	The existing roof covering is modern single ply membrane and its replacement will incur no disturbance/loss of historic fabric. The minor increase in roof build-up will not be visible from ground level. There will be no adverse impact on the special interest of the listed building, Cyfarthfa Park or the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area.	None
Flat roof R.1.14: Adjustment of parapet height to account for 450mm increase in height of flat roof.	The parapet will be carefully dismantled and rebuilt, with any additional masonry provided to match existing. As such there will be no loss of historic fabric. The very minor increase in the height of the parapet will not be noticeable from ground level and will have no impact on the architectural interest of the listed building.	None
Flat roof R.1.14: Installation of freestanding guardrail system set back from roof edge.	The installation of the new guardrail system would replace the existing provision, which is face-fixed and visually intrusive. By setting the guardrail back from the parapet, its visibility from ground level will be greatly reduced, thereby enhancing the aesthetic interest of the facades as viewed from the central courtyard. The guardrail would be free standing and would have no impact on historic fabric.	Minor positive (visual impact) None (historic fabric)

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Flat roof R.1.14: Replacement of narrow clerestory windows overlooking flat roof R.14 with like-for-like windows on raised sills to accommodate increased roof build-up.	The existing windows are plain timber units likely dating from the conversion of Cyfarthfa Castle to a museum and school c.1912. The windows are not visible from ground level externally. They are set at high level within the first-floor rooms, where they make a minor contribution to the historic character of the rooms by virtue of their materiality and proportions. The replacement of these windows with like-for-like replacements at a slightly higher level will have no impact on the special interest of the listed building. The replacement windows would be fitted with actuators, which would aid passive ventilation within the space; this would be of benefit to the historic fabric.	Minor negative / none (fabric loss) Minor positive (impact of improved ventilation on fabric generally)
Roof R.1.22: Raising of parapet to achieve 150mm upstand from new lead gutter to DPC course below coping stone.	The parapet will be carefully dismantled and rebuilt, with any additional masonry provided to match existing. As such there will be no loss of historic fabric. The very minor increase in the height of the parapet will not be noticeable from ground level and will have no impact on the architectural interest of the listed building.	None
Roof R.1.9: Increasing pitch of roof R.1.9 from 20° to 25° to improve weathering performance.	Disturbance to historic fabric within the roof structure in this location will be minimised by using firring to adjust the pitch of the roof (leaving the historic principal rafters/truss intact) and reusing the common rafters where possible. Localised disturbance of historic fabric will be required to secure the firrings and ply plates, but the consequent depreciation in historic and architectural interest will be negligible. The alteration in the pitch of the roof may slightly increase the area of roof which is visible between the crenellations at ground level, however this would unlikely be noticeable and would thus have no impact on the special interest of the listed building, Cyfarthfa Park or the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) None (visual impact)
Localised, like-for-like repairs and timber reinforcements to eastern and southern roofs	Localised repairs/replacements to rafter ends and joists are proposed to various locations across the south-east roofs of the Castle where water ingress has been noted and/or there is structural instability. The scope of repairs is the minimum intervention required to ensure these areas are made watertight and structurally sound. Localised disturbance and loss of historic fabric will have a negligible impact on the historic and architectural interest of the building and the interventions will contribute to the preservation of the built fabric generally.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) Minor positive (improved protection to fabric generally)

Gutters and Downpipes

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Installation of new downpipes (8 no.) to improve rainwater management	Only one downpipe (RWDP 11a) will be located on a primary elevation at high level on the south-east tower, where it will appear as an extension to an existing downpipe below. In all cases, new downpipes and hoppers will be of cast iron and painted to match the existing historic rainwater goods and will be in keeping with the existing facades. A very minor, localised loss of historic fabric will be required to provide a new opening for the chute for RWDP 11A. Otherwise, disturbance to historic fabric will be avoided by attaching new fixings into mortar joints rather than historic masonry.	Minor negative / none (new opening for RDWP 11A chute) None (visual impact)
Removal of short cast-iron downpipe adjacent to entrance to Caretaker's House on south-east elevation of central courtyard.	This short run of downpipe, which is located on a secondary elevation in the eastern courtyard, makes a negligible contribution to the architectural interest of the elevation and its removal would have no impact on the special interest of the listed building.	None
Removal of hopper and section of downpipe to south-east elevation of east courtyard.	The removal of this section of uPVC downpipe, which cuts across the south-east elevation, would minorly enhance the aesthetic interest of the courtyard.	Minor positive
Provision of new raised hopper to cast-iron downpipe on north-west elevation of east courtyard.	The loss of the existing historic cast-iron hopper and the creation of a new opening in the early 20th-century fabric would incur a negligible depreciation in historic interest.	Minor negative / none
Widening existing box gutters and renewing existing finish with code 7 lead	It is proposed to remove 1-2 courses of slate to increase the effective capacity of the lead gutter without intervening with the roof structure. The age of the existing lead within the gutters is unknown and the removal of this finish along with 1-2 rows of slates would incur a very minor loss of historic fabric and a very minor depreciation in architectural and historic interest. However, this would be offset against the overall fabric benefit of improving capacity for the discharge of rainwater away from the building	Minor negative (fabric disturbance) Moderate positive (improving capacity of box gutters)
Replacing a number of hoppers across the south-east range and elevations.	In all cases, new downpipes and hoppers will be of cast iron and painted to match the existing historic rainwater goods and will be in keeping with the existing facades. Hoppers will be designed to match existing where these exist, or will be modelled on historic examples where they do not. There will be no impact on the special interest of the listed building.	None

External Elevations

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Replacement of 1 no. boarded-up window on principal elevation (ground floor of Caretaker's House) with new sash window.	This window is not original to the façade. The removal of internal boarding and replacement of the window with a glazed sash to match the adjacent ground-floor windows would minorly enhance the architectural interest of the façade.	Minor positive
Removal of redundant vents and infill panels to windows across courtyard elevations and provision of glazing	Where glazed panes have been modified to accommodate vents or replaced with infill panels, this is detrimental to the architectural interest of the building. The removal of these detracting features would be of minor benefit to the Castle, Cyfarthfa Park and the wider conservation area.	Minor positive
Like-for-like replacement of small non-openable timber window adjacent to entrance to Caretaker's House on south-east elevation of central courtyard	This plain timber window is a later addition to the façade and confers to particular architectural interest. Its like-for-like replacement will therefore have no impact on the significance of the listed building.	None
Provision of new doors and new ironmongery to east elevation and central courtyard, to improve accessibility and security. Further details: It is proposed to replace the historic double-leaf door within the central courtyard with a sympathetic, timber / glazed single-leaf door to improve access. The central door within the east elevation is a 20th-century replacement and currently poses a security risk.	The existing double-leaf door within the central courtyard is historic and possibly original to the 1912 conversion of Cyfarthfa Castle to a school. It has been modified over time through the addition of modern locking mechanisms / push bars and the infilling of the fanlight. There will be a very minor, localised depreciation in architectural and historic interest through the removal of the door, however this will be partially mitigated by retaining the door and storing it for future use elsewhere within the building. The new door will be in keeping with the historic character of the elevation. The central door in the south-east elevation is a modern replacement of no architectural or historic interest and its replacement with a sensitively designed timber / glazed door will have no impact on the special interest of the building or its setting.	Minor negative / none (replacement of doors in central courtyard) None (replacement of doors in south-east elevation)

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Removal of high level windows hidden behind modern metal cladding panels in east courtyard and infilling of openings with masonry	The existing three-light windows are small, plain timber units likely dating from the conversion of Cyfarthfa Castle to a museum and school c.1912. The windows are not visible externally. They are set at high level within the first-floor rooms, where they make a very minor contribution to the historic character of the rooms by virtue of their materiality and proportions (albeit admitting no light). The removal of these windows would incur a very minor, localised impact on the special interest of the listed building.	Minor negative / none
Localised replacement of degraded lintels with pre-cast concrete to match existing	Proposed lintel repairs are like-for-like and will have no impact on the special interest of the listed building or its setting.	None
Localised crack/fracture stitching to masonry and lintels across facades	There will be very minor localised fabric disturbance required to cut in stainless steel reinforcing bars at various points across the elevations, however the impact of this on the historic and architectural interest of the building would be negligible. The intervention offers an overall benefit by ensuring the structural integrity of the historic fabric.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) Moderate positive (reinforcement and protection of historic fabric)

Internal works

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Installation of new steel beams beneath existing structural deck and new dropped ceiling to conceal steelwork within first floor spaces over room 1.55A and part of corridor 1.31C	There will be minor, localised loss of original fabric required to install the new steel beams with 6no. pockets created in the existing masonry within room 155a and to the eastern end of corridor 1.31C. Fabric disturbance has been minimised through using the minimum number of steels/fixings to effectively reinforce the roof structure in this location. The localised loss of original late-Georgian fabric will incur a very minor negative depreciation in historic interest. The new dropped ceiling within room 155A will minorly alter the proportions of the space, however the new ceiling will sit above the window reveal and will not interfere with the picture rail or the architrave over the historic door to corridor 1.31E. It is unlikely that the altered proportions of the room will be noticeable following redecoration, and the impact on the architectural and aesthetic interest of the room will consequently be none. The insertion of the new ceiling will be slightly more obvious within corridor 1.31A, as it will not extend the full length of the corridor and will alter the profile of the ceiling at the eastern end. However, the dropped ceiling will sit above the window reveal to window W-131C-01 and will not obscure any existing decorative features. Corridor 1.31A is a circulation space of low significance relative to the wider listed building, and the slightly alteration in the profile of the ceiling in this location will have no impact on the ability to appreciate the special interest of Cyfarthfa Castle.	Minor negative / none
Localised, like-for-like repairs and timber reinforcements to stair landing within Caretaker's House	There will be very minor localised disturbance of historic fabric required to fix back the steel bracket to the masonry, but the impact on the architectural and historic interest of the building will be negligible. Only those timbers which are decayed beyond repair will be replaced (like-for-like) within the stair landing. The replacement of decayed timbers will ensure the staircase can be retained and will have a minor positive impact on the special interest of the Caretaker's House and wider building.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) Minor positive (repair of original staircase landing)
Provision of internal loft hatch over room 1.41.	It is presumed that the ceiling is lath and plaster, and therefore the removal of a small section of the historic fabric will incur a minor, localised depreciation of historic interest. Room 1.41 formed part of the school following the conversion of the Castle, and is of low significance relative to the principal rooms within the building. Visually, the provision of a discreet roof hatch will not depreciate the character of the room or its limited architectural interest.	Minor negative / none (fabric disturbance) None (visual impact)

Ecology

Proposal	Assessment narrative and mitigation	Impact
Provision of bat boxes and new access points as per ecologist's recommendations.	The wall mounted bat boxes on the external wall of the Caretaker's House will not be visible from ground level. Damage to historic masonry will be avoided by ensuring new fixings are made into mortar joints. No new entry points within slate tiles or soffits will be visible from ground level. Fabric disturbance will be negligible and there will be no impact on the significance of the listed building.	None

7.3 Conclusion

The proposals discussed here will result in a number of very minor, localised fabric disturbances required to fix new walkways, ladders and mansafe system, insert structural reinforcements to roof R.1.14, re-profile roof R.1.9, repair/reinforce decaying fabric and improve/ provide new rainwater goods across the building. The impacts of these interventions on the architectural and historic interest of the building are largely negligible and, in every case, will facilitate the protection of the built fabric.

Improving access to gutters and tower roofs and re-enforcing roof R.1.14 will ensure regular maintenance can be carried out safely. Works to rainwater goods and increasing the pitch of R.1.9 will improve the building's ability to discharge water; thereby protecting both internal and external fabric against further deterioration.

Where external windows and doors are proposed to be replaced the heritage impacts have been appropriately mitigated to ensure the character of elevations and interior spaces is retained. The removal of redundant vents and infill panels to the courtyard elevations will minorly enhance the architectural interest of the building, as will the replacement of the later timber window at ground floor level on the principal elevation to match the adjacent 9-9 sashes.

The provision of 2no. new bat boxes and discreet new entry points within slate tiles and soffits will have no impact on the significance of the listed building.

The proposed roof-top walkways, ladders and mansafe system would not be visible from Cyfarthfa Park or the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area and would therefore have no impact on the special interest of these designations.

Overall, the proposals would help to halt the continued deterioration of the fabric and protect the future of Cyfarthfa Castle for future generations to enjoy.

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Appendix B: Listed building description

Historic Wales Report

Dataset Cadw Listed Buildings

Title Cyfartha Castle

Type Listed Building

Dataset UID 11396

Community Park

Location

Situated in its own landscaped park overlooking the Taff Valley and site of the former Cyfarthfa Ironworks.

Date Listed 7/15/1974

Last Amendment 1/13/1988

Grade I

History

1824-5. Designed by Robert Lugar, architect of London, for ironmaster William Crawshay II. Cost #30,000. Sold in

1909 to Merthyr Corporation; large extensions of 1912 for school.

History

H Colvin: "Biographical Dictionary of British Architects" (1978), p 527;

Copies of plans by Thos F Harvey, Sept 1908, in house;

M S Taylor: "The Crawshays of Cyfarthfa Castle" (London 1967)

Interior

Interior retains main suite of state rooms including entrance hall, library, drawing room and dining room (now used as museum and art gallery). Entrance hall is baronial with ribbed ceiling, heraldic cornice, Gothic shafts and panelling to doorcases and castellated chimney-piece in library, the rest of public rooms are neo-classical in style with anthemion plaster bands, egg-and-dart cornices, wide architraves with angle paterae. Ceiling roses to drawing rooms, plus fine caryatid chimney-piece and scallop-shell niches to long drawing-room; Ionic pilasters from columned screen remain in dining-room.

Exterior

Large country house Picturesque castle style. Terraced site. Basically rectangular in shape, with almost symmetrical entrance and garden fronts meeting at a circular corner tower.

Coursed bull-nosed facings with ashlar dressings. Crenellated parapets with false machicolation to towers, weathered stringcourses to rest. Stair and outlook turret to rear of corner drum-tower, dummy arrow loops, rectangular hoodmoulds (arched to drum tower which also has 3-light mullioned windows to top floor). Cross windows (later?) to entrance front and drum, sash windows with glazing-bars to ground-floor of garden front. Central towers to both fronts with splayed angles, splayed bay with finial over porch to main entrance with round turrets and arched openings; oriel over Tudor garden doorway.

Attached to left of main building are the castellated screen-wall and towered entrances to former stable courtyard and offices (now rebuilt as school accommodation). Composition of walls with dummy

loops, polygonal end turret, solid

left-hand gatehouse with arched entry under 3-light window and right-hand entry between round and square turrets. Tudor-style school buildings to rear.

Historic Wales Report

Dataset Cadw Listed Buildings

Title Fountain Below S.Terrace at Cyfartha Castle

Type Listed Building

Dataset UID 11398

Community Park

Location

Situated below the level of main entrance and directly at head of driveway from entrance gates.

Date Listed 1/13/1988

Last Amendment 1/13/1988

Grade II

Reason for Listing

Group value with other listed items at Cyfarthfa Castle and Pandy Farm.

Exterior

Probably later C19. Circular roll-moulded stone basin with 4 carved cherubs seated on Baroque bull-frog spouts. Circular stone stem to centre with 3 putti supporting conch-shell fountain-jet. Griffins, dolphins etc carved in relief around spouts on moulded base.

Historic Wales Report**Dataset Cadw Registered Historic Park and Garden****Title: Cyfarthfa Castle**

Reference Number: PGW(Gm)1(MER)

Site Type: Victorian park, converted from private to public park, and formal gardens,

Date of Designation: 01/02/2022

Grade: II*

Summary Description and Reason for Designation:

The survival of much of the park and gardens of Cyfarthfa Castle, the most historically important ironmaster's home in Wales, built and developed immediately next to the ironworks by members of the Crawshay family. The large gothic Victorian mansion was built as a mock castle by Robert Lugar for the ironmaster William Crawshay in 1825. The park and gardens are of great historic interest not only as the landscape setting for the Romantic mansion but also for their proximity and usefulness to the ironworks (Cadw ref: GM425) which in their day were considered to add great sublimity to its landscape setting.

Cyfarthfa Castle (Cadw LB:11396) is surrounded by Victorian parkland, converted from private to public park, with formal gardens. By 1873 the park had assumed its present layout. It became a public park in 1910.

The park was begun when the house was built in 1825. An early drawing of the house (1820s) shows a natural landscape around the house, with none of the formality that was to follow. However, by the time of the

1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1873) the park had assumed its present layout. Early twentieth-century photographs of the ironworks and park show a well-wooded, mature landscape park in a rural setting, apart from the ironworks. The park is roughly oval in shape, elongated north-south, with the highest ground in the middle. The park contains a range of landscape and ornamental features, both original and post-1910.

The house is approached by a drive flanked by conifers leading up to the terrace/forecourt in front of the house. A small garden lies around the house on its south-west and south-east, and there is a kite-shaped kitchen garden to the north-west, now partly in use as a visitor car park. Below the terrace is a fountain of artificial stone (Cadw LB:11398).

Behind the house is a belt of woodland with gravel and earthen paths ('Garden Wood' & 'Castle Wood') extending to the north-west corner of the park. It has areas of both coniferous and deciduous trees, rhododendron, and underplanting of laurel and yew. In the Castle Wood area is a series of four narrow elliptical ponds, one above the other, former reservoirs, and above these an ice-house. Above the woodland to the east are five parallel rows of mature pines running north-east from the wood to a tarmac drive which crosses the park from the north to the south-east boundaries and is lined with birch and sycamore trees.

To the south-east of the house the park consists of unfenced grass with a few isolated trees, school playing fields, a terraced bowling green (with clubhouse), hard tennis courts, and a bandstand. Below the house to the

south-west the park is a smooth grass slope dotted with oak, beech and sycamore and below, adjacent to the boundary, a sinuous lake. Originally the lake reached as far as the main drive but this end has been filled in.

On the early Ordnance Survey maps the landscape is remarkable for the amount of glasshouse and conservatory, both in the kitchen garden and in the enclosure immediately to the north-east of the house.

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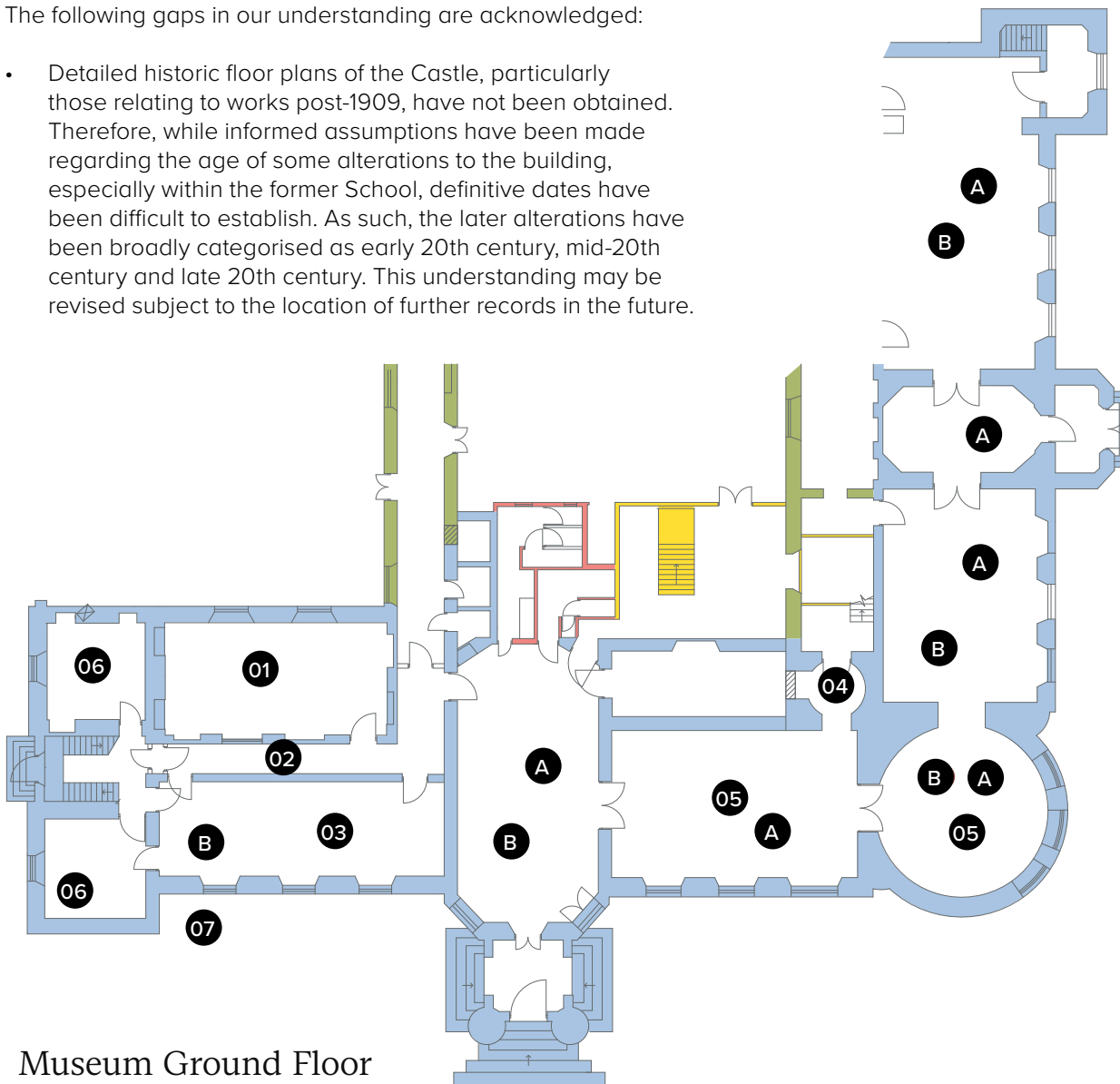
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Appendix C: Historical development plans

The following gaps in our understanding are acknowledged:

- Detailed historic floor plans of the Castle, particularly those relating to works post-1909, have not been obtained. Therefore, while informed assumptions have been made regarding the age of some alterations to the building, especially within the former School, definitive dates have been difficult to establish. As such, the later alterations have been broadly categorised as early 20th century, mid-20th century and late 20th century. This understanding may be revised subject to the location of further records in the future.



Museum Ground Floor

1825

1910

c.Early 20th Century

c.Mid-20th Century

c.Late 20th Century

01

Refurbished 2013. Historic skirting, dado and picture rails retained.

02

Refurbished as display space in 1993.

03

Refurbished with replica of historic wallpaper in 1992.

04

Spiral staircase removed c.1910.

05

Pastiche of period interiors installed c.1992.

06

Fireplaces removed (date unknown).

07

Besides the windows in the Wedding Room and Caretaker's House, all windows to the original wings of the Castle are presumed to be good-quality replacements. Further investigation would be needed to confirm this.

A

Contains original cornice, ceiling roses, chandeliers (converted), dado and skirting.

B

Contains original fireplaces and surrounds.

This plan is not to scale



- 1825
- 1910
- c.Early 20th Century
- c.Mid-20th Century
- c.Late 20th Century
- 01 Staircase thought to contain historic handrail and railings from now lost main staircase.
- 02 Historic (1909) plans suggest that this wall was retained from the original castle. New openings made when gym was added.
- 03 Windows seem to have been replaced on an ad-hoc basis. Some original 1910 windows remain, but a full windows schedule is needed.
- 04 Thought to be an original 1910 window.

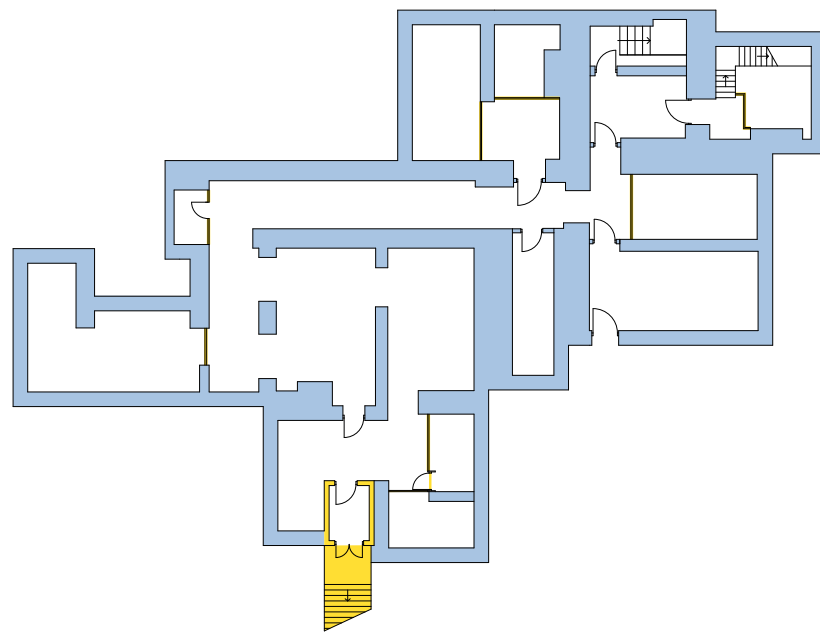
Note - even if original fabric survives here - the original layout of the georgian building is much altered and the fenestration is also much changed.

This plan is not to scale

Cyfarthfa Castle Ground Floor (Former School)



Cyfarthfa Castle First Floor (Former School)



- 1825
- 1910
- c.Early 20th Century
- c.Mid-20th Century
- c.Late 20th Century

Modern fit-out throughout for exhibition and display spaces

This plan is not to scale

Main Building Basement

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A team of experienced consultants from Purcell jointly contributed to the completion of this report.

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