

Heritage Impact Assessment

**Pandy Farm,
Cyfarthfa**

**Proposed change to paint colour on
rainwater goods, doors and window
sills**

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Summary

This report concerns Pandy Farm, Cyfarthfa.

The report is intended to provide a rationale for intervention within an understanding of the significance of the historic building.

In order to understand the site this report has been divided into the following sections:

Section 1: Background

Section 1 gives a description to further understand the significance and heritage value of the buildings.

Section 2: Description of elements to be painted

Section 2 describes the elements proposed to be re-painted.

Section 3: Elements of Significance

Section 3 assesses significance of the buildings and the relationship to the paint colour in question.

Section 4: Proposals

Section 4 describes the proposals for the repainting of elements of the buildings.

Section 5: Analysis of impact

Section 5 describes the proposals for the buildings. Analysis by:

- Potential impact on heritage assets
- Evaluation of the Potential Impact of Change
- Mitigation of the impact of the proposed change

Introduction

Conservation is about the careful management of change. This means that it is vital to understand the implications of any proposed change — from deciding what to do and how to do it, to deciding whether or not consent is given. Understanding historic assets and their significance is the foundation for sound decision making. Once significance is understood it is possible to assess the potential impact of any proposed changes and adapt proposals to find the best way to meet the requirements of the client and those of the historic asset.

Heritage impact assessment is a process designed to help this decision making.

For designated historic assets of special interest (Pandy Farm) — heritage impact assessment can help find the best way to accommodate change.

Historic assets, in all their forms, make up the historic environment which is central to cultural heritage and sense of identity. It is a resource that we need to cherish and protect for future generations. Protection, however, need not prevent change which can increase the long-term sustainability and economic viability of historic assets. Positive, well-designed change can bring improvements to our understanding and appreciation of the historic environment, as well as social and economic benefits through increased regeneration. Change to the historic environment needs to be managed, which is why it is important to consider its potential impact on the significance of historic assets.

Heritage impact assessment is a structured process to make sure the significance of historic assets is taken into account when developing and designing proposals for change. It is a core part of the design process, which tests whether the proposals for change to a historic asset are appropriate by assessing their impact on significance. It helps to ensure that any changes use the principles of good design to sustain or enhance the significance of the historic asset.

The heritage impact assessment takes into account sufficient information to enable both the significance of the asset and the impact of change to be understood. It is proportionate both to the significance of the historic asset and to the degree of change proposed. In this case the assessment in the Heritage Statement (October 2021) and Impact Assessment includes detailed information about the significance of the asset as a whole and a thorough explanation of the impact of the proposed changes.

In order to establish the significance of the historic asset and understand the impact of change detailed historical research and investigation has been carried out as detailed in the Heritage Statement (October 2021).

Pandy Farm, is a former estate farm associated with Cyfarthfa Castle and Ironworks. The current buildings span a range of phases of construction mainly across the 19th century. Much re-ordering of the farmstead may be contemporary with the construction of Cyfarthfa Castle in c.1825 when the farm became the 'Home Farm' of the estate. The landholding/ property name of Pandy is older with a Pandy aka 'Fullers House', a place for weaving and preparing wool, noted from the 14th century in the vicinity – this was more than likely a water powered mill and would therefore have been near the river. From the early 18th century the Pandy name is recorded in the vicinity of the ironworks – this could include part of the fabric of the current farmhouse although much of the farmhouse structure ties in with a 19th century date.

The farmstead comprises a group of buildings statutory listed Grade II in 1973; L-plan stable ranges, barn, farmhouse and clock tower. The stable and coach house range abutted to and below the L-plan courtyard is perhaps the most impressive and important on the site.

Pandy Farm has early origins but its significance today largely derives from its place in the history of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks and Castle – forming part of a wider estate with an estate style.

This report intends to provide an assessment of impact on the significance of the building through the change in paint colour to the windowsills, door and doorframes and rainwater goods of Pandy farmhouse. .

The report is to accompany the Listed Building Consent Application for the works and sets out to identify the character of the building, and if there is potential for sensitive alteration.

Definition from the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework)

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Aims of Report

To identify opportunities and constraints for alterations to the heritage asset of Pandy Farmhouse that may be affected by any proposed works and assess their significance. Following identification of the proposals consider any detrimental effects of any works and the potential impact on the significance of the asset and setting.

When assessing the impact of a proposed change or development of historic assets, essentially, there are four stages.

Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a proposed change or development.

Stage 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the significance of the historic assets and, in particular, the ways in which the assets are understood, appreciated and experienced.

Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.

Stage 4: If necessary, consider options to mitigate or improve the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.

Methodology

- Desk Based Assessment: Assimilating current documentation.
- Site Inspection: Visual assessment from ground level.

Section 1: Background

Site Location

Pandy Farm,
Brecon Road,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8PA

SO040070

The site comprises ranges of buildings divided into four separate Grade II listed designated heritage assets within and around the site. The farmhouse, clock tower, courtyard range of farm buildings, including the lower stable range, and the rubblestone roadside barn.

The setting and context of the farm, originally an outlier of the then small village of Merthyr Tydfil, has changed dramatically and beyond recognition from its origins (perhaps further south near the river) as a fulling mill in a pastoral landscape to its reincarnation as an important estate farm directly opposite the entrance gates to Cyfarthfa Castle. The farm separated the splendid castellated house from the vast ironworks (once the largest in the world!) and has been witness to the collapse and ruination of the ironworks to be replaced with industrial estates and creeping suburbs with the loss of local character and landscape features. It is now almost completely divorced from its historical setting south save for its relationship to Cyfarthfa Castle to the north, which in itself has been eroded.

Section 2: Description of the areas proposed for redecoration



*Elevations showing the extent of the proposed colour changes.
(Identified in red)*

It is proposed to change the colour of the windowsills, door and doorframes and rainwater goods of Pandy farmhouse and doors on various farm buildings.

The existing, mustard yellow, paint colour has been used throughout the exterior windowsills, door frames, doors, and rainwater goods of the farmhouse. This colour appears to have been introduced in the latter half of the 20th century or even early 21st century.



The current yellow colour scheme at Pandy Farm

Section 3: Significance

Assessments of significance derive from architectural and archaeological interest and its place in national and local history.

The following assessment attributes significance values

The four values as defined by Conservation Principles are:

1: Evidential – the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

2: Historical – the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It can be illustrative or associative:

Illustrative – the perception of a place as a link between past and present peoples; it depends on visibility in a way that evidential value does not.

Associative – association with a notable family, person, event or movement, and other aspects of cultural heritage such as literature and film.

3: Aesthetic – the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. These values can be fortuitous or designed.

4: Communal – the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it. These can be commemorative or symbolic, and also spiritual.

The history of the farmstead as a Home Farm to Cyfarthfa Castle Estate, and its links to the ironworks, provides evidence of its place in the town, as a farmstead, which was run with its designed farm buildings acting as a hub for the management of the surrounding landscape. Farming activity centred on the Home Farm had shaped the wider landscape in its topography, field boundaries, hedges, trees and waterways. The history of those that lived and worked at the Home Farm is largely documentary; from newspaper articles, from photographs and census returns – however the way in which they lived and worked is still to be found in the house and the farm buildings, each with their own distinctive layout and used to house horses, cattle, pigs and poultry, and for storing and processing crops. This translated into the wider landscape with the creation of tracks where animals were driven and people walked, the field boundaries and hedges as well as the stone walled rickyard. Much of this landscape evidence has been lost with housing, retail and light industrial developments on former farmland however elements of the stone walled yard to the west still survive as do the stone walled boundaries and railings to the south and east.

The buildings illustrate the development of an Estate Home Farm, a mixed farm with milking cattle, pigs, corn, hay, and working and riding horses. The working buildings testify to the development of Estate farming between the 19th and 20th centuries. The clock tower, stable range and coach house testify to the farm serving a large estate although historic evidence of the farmed land has largely been lost.

Estates, and thus landlords and their agents, have been massively important in farming history, with tenants occupying some 85% of the farm area until the land transfers of the early 20th century. The character of an area thus can be strongly influenced by the estate of which it was part. Family insignia, paint colours, estate-made bricks and the styling of cast-iron windows or ventilation grills can all give a unity to buildings. By the mid-17th century, home farms were being developed as examples of best practice for tenants. Between 1650 and 1750 landlords assumed increasing responsibility for fixed capital works (particularly barns and houses) and after 1750 the influence of estates can be seen in the planning and design of buildings and entire complexes for home farms and tenant farms.

Home Farms in the 19th century continued to function as the suppliers of fresh produce to the Estate House. Their architectural embellishment is an indication of their importance of their role.

Estate farms, farmhouses and cottages were often aesthetically unified by a particular colour palette use on rainwater goods, barge boards and joinery. Several estates across Wales still practice this and continue to have a strong colour palette linking estate buildings.

The current yellow colour on the buildings at Pandy Farm is late 20th century or even early 21st century. It appears to be an arbitrary choice of a modern synthetic off the shelf paint with no historic or architectural precedent or significance. Thus the current yellow colour in heritage terms is of no significance to the importance of the character and appearance and historic and architectural merit of the buildings.

Section 4: Proposals

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

The following questions have been asking during the design process:

- How the proposals affect the evidential value of the historic asset? Would they result in the loss of or damage to historic fabric, including archaeological evidence, or make it harder to appreciate the way in which the building or site was used in the past, and how it has changed over time?
- How would the proposals affect the aesthetic or design qualities of the historic asset? Will they compromise its historical design principles— or result in the loss of historic detail or craftsmanship?
- Are there any other risks or benefits? For example, risks include increased maintenance and management liabilities, or compromised performance through the use of incompatible materials; benefits include the introduction materials that work with the building to better conserve and maintain its historic fabric.

Proposals have a range of impacts which may be:

- positive — such as the repair of damage, the removal of intrusive elements
- neutral — such as where proposals are sympathetically designed, or change is accommodated in part of the building or site that is less sensitive
- negative — such as when important fabric or significant aspects of the original design are removed or altered. If the level of damage is unacceptable and there are few compensatory benefits, the application may be refused.

Proposed works

The proposals are to change the yellow colour of the windowsills, door and doorframes and rainwater goods of Pandy Farmhouse and doors on farm buildings.

The proposed colour scheme, a pale green, draws reference from the colour palette used by the castle on several internal and external features. The colour can best be seen used on the 19th century ground floor sash windows on the south and east elevations, and throughout the joinery of the service areas of the museum.

Section 5: Analysis of impact of proposals/ justification

Impact on Significance

Pandy Farm is clearly a significant and important building of architectural and historic merit surviving as an irreplaceable part of the history of the Cyfarthfa Castle Estate.

The current yellow colour scheme is not part of this significance and is a later 20th century or even 21st century arbitrary introduction rather than an historic estate colour.

In the course of the research for the Heritage Statement no original architect plans were uncovered that may shed light on an original colour scheme. Of the historic depictions of the farm the paintings and drawings include Pandy Farm only as a background to either the ironworks or the castle and do not show joinery details, colours etc. Historic photographs are of course in monochrome. Of the historic postcards some are by Photochrom¹ or tinted in post production and their colours may not be accurate.

¹ It used a revolutionary process whereby black-and-white photographs were overprinted by multi-colour lithography, with up to fourteen different ink colours being applied in sequence



Post production coloured postcards. Even though the process of colouring was not always accurate or true to form usually the attempt was to recreate basic colours as found.

The historic post coloured postcards may suggest the use of a green colour on some joinery as visible on the entrance gate and gatepost between the farmhouse and threshing/combination barn. The window sills appear unpainted. Traditional colours of cast iron rainwater goods included greens, blues and greys and stone greys (only later were they often painted black in the later 19th century).

The current cement roughcast rendered finish on the farmhouse is later 20th century and includes introduction of cement door surrounds – not an historic feature as seen on the earlier 20th century photographs. The window sills appear to have remained unpainted historically.

It has been difficult to accurately judge historic paint schemes from the surviving fabric on the farmhouse as much (the render, some rainwater goods, barges etc.) is indeed later 20th century rather than historic. On the farm buildings and within the yard various colour schemes are identified. Under the yellow of the cast iron trough in the yard there is red paint – although this may be a red oxide primer. On various doors and doorframes the current yellow scheme can be seen painted over red in turn painted over blue. This blue colour seems to match that of the interior of the modern stables and therefore suggests that this is not a historic colour that takes us back into the 19th century. Of what survives on railings and other ironwork etc. remnants of black seem to predominate with occasional red and grey/green. On the door lining of the Coach House doors on the lower level there is evidence of a green paint colour.



Left to right – green door lining on the Coach House with red (possibly red oxide primer) on its historic ironwork, grey/green on the historic stable stalls, the modern yellow paint on doors over red and, under the red, blue - and white over yellow, red and blue on a doorframe.

Analysis has shown beyond doubt that the yellow scheme is of no significance to the overall heritage significance of the buildings (some may even argue the current colour choice has a negative impact). The choice of an appropriate replacement colour, and indeed paint medium, should be to the betterment of the building.

The choice of a green taking its cue from the windows at Cyfartha provides a visual link between the castle and the former estate farm – even if the colour choice on the castle is historic or more modern. What is important is the link – such a scheme where the estate infrastructure responds to an estate style fits perfectly with the historic narrative of such sites. Some estate colour schemes were based on the natural resources, pigments etc. found locally, others from estate colours in insignia, heraldry etc. and some down to the personal choice of the estate owner or estate architects.

The choice of a linseed or stand oil paint, free from acrylic, is to the betterment of the building fabric ensuring protection of ironwork, and joinery. The use of a mineral paint (such as potassium silicate or Graphenstone) on stone or concrete sills similarly will work with the built fabric rather than against it.

Impact on Character and Setting

The proposals will alter the external character and appearance of the buildings subtly linking them once again to the castle – making a positive impact, if only in a small way, by re-uniting the sites through colour choice. The removal of the current yellow colour scheme will be to the benefit of the site's wider character and setting.

Mitigation measures

The following measures are suggested to preserve building fabric;

- Ensure the careful removal of the current paint surfaces by appropriate method such as latex stripping, DOFF, Thermatech etc. rather than by chemical or uncontrolled abrasive means such as sand blasting.
- Use of an appropriate paint medium such as linseed oil, stand oil or mineral paint with good vapour permeability, flexibility and capillarity.

In conclusion the current yellow colour scheme has no historic and architectural significance and the choice of a green colour taking its cue from the castle is an appropriate method of choosing a replacement colour taking precedent from estate colour schemes – shades of green also have precedent of use during the period of Pandy farm's construction and establishment and can be seen on the door lining of the coach house.



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