

Land at Common Road, Merthyr Tydfil

Historic Building Recording

McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

28 July 2026

Lichfields is the pre-eminent planning and development consultancy in the UK

**We've been helping create great places
for over 60 years.**

lichfields.uk

Summary

Paratowyd y Cofnod Adeilad Hanesyddol Lefel 2 hwn gan Lichfields ar ran McDonalds. Ei phwrpas yw darparu cofnod parhaol o'r adeilad Station House (sydd yn ased hanesyddol o ddiddordeb lleol arbennig) cyn ailddatblygu'r safle ehangach ar y tir i'r gogledd o Ffordd Heads of the Valleys, oddi ar Rhymney Common Road, Merthyr Tudful. Ni fydd yr ailddatblygiad yn effeithio ar Station House. Mae'r datblygiad yn cynnwys creu bwyty McDonalds gerllaw, ynghyd â gwaith tirlunio cysylltiedig gan gynnwys maes parcio a llwybr beicio.

Mae Station House yn adeilad o ganol i ddiwedd y 19eg ganrif, a datblygwyd yn wreiddiol fel tŷ i reolwr yr orsaf, yn ffurfio rhan o Orsaf Reilffordd Dowlais Top. Mae'n cynnwys tŷ tri bae a dau lawr o waith maen cerrig garw (rubble stone) wedi'u gosod mewn haenau rheolaidd ar yr ochrau gogleddol a deheuol, a gorffeniad rendr 'pebbledash' ar yr ochrau dwyreiniol a gorllewinol. Mae ganddo do clun (hipped roof) bas o lechi, gyda nefoedd yn ymestyn allan. Mae'r tu mewn wedi'i addasu'n sylweddol. Ar wahân i'r grisiau, nid oes nodweddion hanesyddol yn bresennol. Mae gan y grisiau 'open-string' bostiau newel wedi'u troi, rheilen law ar oleddf a balwstradau syml. Mae'r byrddau sgertin, y cornisiau (coving), y drysau mewnol a'r lleoedd tân yn rhai modern.

Yn ôl yr angen o Ofyniad Amod 16 o'r Caniatâd Cynllunio (ref. P250265), lluniwyd y Cofnod Adeilad Hanesyddol hwn yn unol â'r Cynllun Ymchwilio Ysgrifenedig, a gymeradwywyd gan Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) drwy e-bost ar 4 Chwefror 2026. Mae'r Cofnod yn cynnwys cofnod ffotograffig llawn o'r adeilad, disgrifiad ysgrifenedig o'r tu allan a'r tu mewn, a chrynodeb o'r datblygiad hanesyddol.

Unwaith y bydd y Cofnod Adeilad Hanesyddol wedi'i gymeradwyo gan GGAT, bydd y Cofnod yn cael eu hadneuo gyda'r National Monuments Records (a gedwir ac a gynhelir gan Gomisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru / RCAHMW) a'r HER a gedwir gan Heneb.

Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Methodology	3
	Recording methods	3
	Sources and Bibliography	4
	Deposition	4
3.0	Description	5
	Station House	5
	Surroundings	6
4.0	Historical Analysis	7
5.0	Conclusions	12

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Lichfields has been commissioned by McDonalds to prepare a Level 2 Historic Building Record (HBR) of Station House (a historic asset of special local interest); located within the wider development site (Figure 1.1) at Land to the north of the Heads of the Valleys Road, off Rhymney Common Road, Merthyr Tydfil (NGR: SO 07982 08447).
- 1.2 Station House (PRN: 03125m) (Figure 1.1) is first shown on Ordnance Survey mapping from 1897, adjacent to the Brecon & Merthyr Railway and close to a junction with the North Western Railway Line (LNWR) Dowlais Extension of 1873. The Brecon & Merthyr Railway line to Dowlais Top was opened in 1863 and so it is likely that Station House was built around this time.¹ The site is located within the Merthyr Tydfil Registered Historic Landscape of Outstanding Importance (Cadw reference HLW (MGL) 2) and within that, the Historic Character Area of Dowlais Top, HLCA047.
- 1.3 The building recording is required under Condition 16 of Planning Permission ref. P250265 (Granted 20th April 2026) for:
- “Demolition of existing buildings and development of a restaurant with drive-thru facility (Use Class A3) including access and cycle path, servicing, car parking, hard and soft landscaping, advertisements and other associated works (Full).”*
- 1.4 The application site is shown at Figure 1.2.
- 1.5 Condition 16 states that:
- “No works to which this consent relates shall commence until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.*
- Reason - As the buildings is of cultural significance the specified records are required to mitigate impact and to accord with Policy CW1 of the of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.”*
- 1.6 The approved development does not directly affect the Station House, however, Heneb suggested the condition in order to provide a lasting record of the historic asset prior to the redevelopment of its immediate surroundings.
- 1.7 Heneb recommended the production of a Level 2 HBR as set out in Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (Historic England 2016). This is to provide a record of the structure, in such detail as to preserve it by record with a written account of the building and its history, plans, and photographs with a measured scale and directional plan.
- 1.8 The Historic Building Record has been produced in accordance with the methodology set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Lichfields, 21st January 2026), which was updated and approved by Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) via email on 4th February 2026. The approved version is included at Appendix 6.

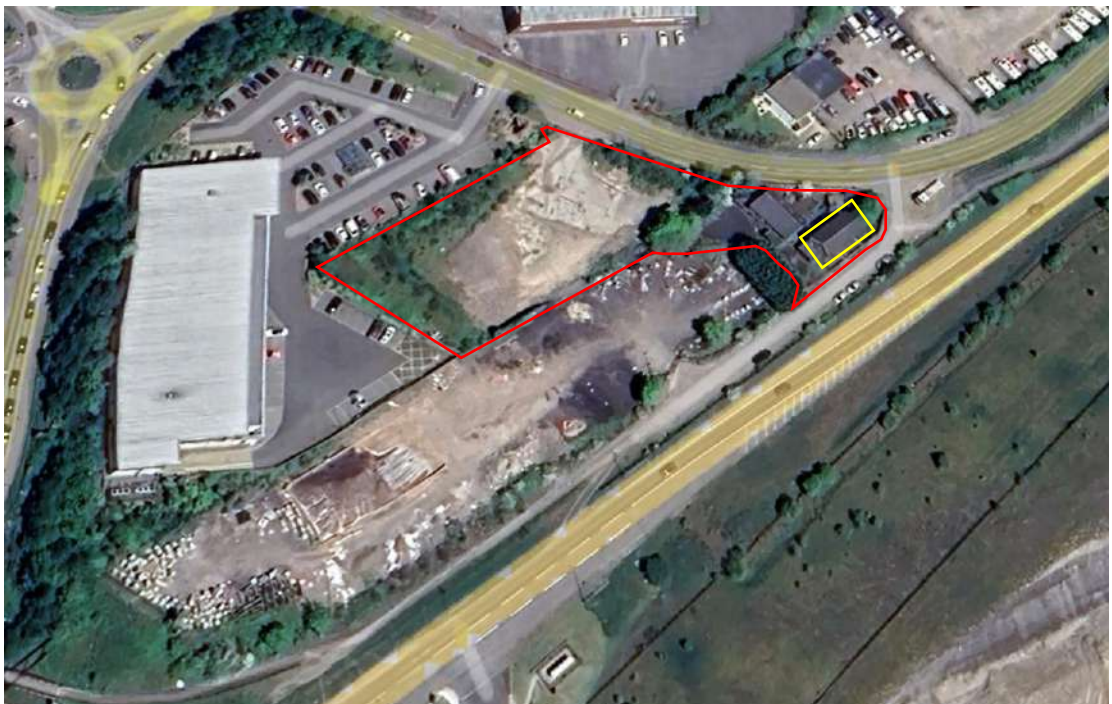
¹ HER description for Station House, PRN: 03125m

Figure 1.1 Station House



Source: Lichfields (May 2026)

Figure 1.2 Aerial imagery with the approximate wider development site boundary added in red. Station House is located in yellow.



Source: Google Earth Pro

2.0 Methodology

- 2.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) dictates that historic assets are a non-renewable resource. Under PPW and the Historic Environment (Wales) Act, any proposed development affecting these assets requires proportionate investigation and recording. All assessments and findings must be publicly lodged with the regional Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 2.2 Historic England has prepared guidance, *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (May 2016), which establishes a four-level approach to the recording of historic buildings:
- 1 Level 1 – Basic Visual Record;
 - 2 Level 2 – Descriptive Record;
 - 3 Level 3 – Analytical Record; and
 - 4 Level 4 – Comprehensive Analytical Record (appropriate for buildings of special importance).
- 2.3 Heneb (GGAT), recommended in November 2025 that a Level 2 Historic Building Record would be most appropriate for the Station House, given that the building is a non-designated historic asset that is under no threat by the proposed planning application, which only affects its setting.

Recording methods

- 2.4 The recording has been undertaken in accordance with a Level 2 survey (Analytical Record) as set out in Historic England's (2016) *Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. The following points for each Level 2 category have been included in this Historic Building Record:
- 1 Drawn Record – an existing site plan and if possible interior floorplans will be submitted and annotated to highlight architectural or above-ground archaeological features of interest;
 - 2 Photographic Record – a full set of high-quality exterior and interior photos of the building will be included in the report, labelled and located on photo location plans. Where possible, the photos will include a ranging pole to provide a measured scale. This will include photos of:
 - a interior elevations of each room/space;
 - b any external or internal detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use;
 - c Any machinery or other plant, or evidence for its former existence;
 - d Any dates or other inscriptions; any signage, makers' plates or graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the building. A transcription will be made wherever characters are difficult to interpret; and
 - e Any building contents which have a significant bearing on the building's history (for example, a cheese press, a malt shovel), if such items exist.
-

- 3 Reporting – A Level 2 Record of a historic building is identified by Historic England as a descriptive record and should comprise the following:
 - a Introduction – setting out the context of the historic building recording and proposed development affecting the site;
 - b Methodology – confirming the methodology agreed with Heneb (Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust) and the relevant guidance followed;
 - c An introductory description, including a written description of the building, construction, materials and features;
 - d A systematic account of the building’s origins, development and use, set within the context of the of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway and Dowlais Top railway station, clearly referencing any sources; and
 - e Accompanying drawn and photographic and mapping records that are required to illustrate the building’s appearance and structure and to support the historical analysis.

Sources and Bibliography

2.5 The following sources will be consulted when preparing the Historic Building Record:

- 1 Tithe mapping provided by Genealogy.co.uk
- 2 Promap: Digital historic Ordnance Survey maps from the 1st edition to present.
- 3 Internet Sources: Web-published material, including local planning authority planning policies, conservation area information, and information on designated assets.
- 4 The Heneb Historic Environment Record (HER) – covering a search area of 1km from the Station House (enquiry no. 9264). The relevant HER records are shown on the map at Appendix 4.
- 5 Aerial photographs available on the National Collection of Aerial Photographs for Wales (CRAPW) and The National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW), as well as historic aerial satellite imagery available on Google Earth Pro.

Deposition

2.6 On completion the draft Historic Building Record will be submitted to Heneb (Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust). Once approved, the final Historic Building Record will be deposited with the National Monuments Records, held and maintained by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) and the HER held by Heneb. This will conform to the guidelines set out in: *‘The National Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales 2017’* (National Panel for Archaeological Archives in Wales 2017); *‘Guidelines for Digital Archaeological Archives’* (RCAHMW); and *‘Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Heneb Historic Environment Record (HER)’* (Heneb: The Trust for Welsh Archaeology 2024).

3.0 **Description**

- 3.1 This section should be read alongside the sketch interior layout plans at Appendix 2 and photos at Appendix 3.

Station House

Exterior

- 3.2 Station House is a mid to late-19th century building, originally built as a station master's house, forming part of Dowlais Top Railway Station. It comprises a house of three bays and two storeys of coursed rubble stone masonry, to the north and south, and pebbledash render, to the east and west. It has a shallow hipped roof in slate, with projecting eaves.
- 3.3 The building is rectangular on plan, of single depth with one room each to front and rear, and a single storey lean-to shed attached to the west elevation.
- 3.4 The main (south) elevation is symmetrical with a central door flanked by two rectangular windows and three identical windows to the first floor. The openings all have a flat stone headers. The doors, windows, fascia and guttering are all modern uPVC replacements. A small front courtyard is enclosed by a concrete-rendered wall and metal railings. The door and ground floor windows include metal security bars.
- 3.5 The rear (north) elevation, facing the former railway, features the same three windows at first floor and an original window and door opening at ground floor level. A modern slot window is located centrally at ground floor. The openings have flat stone headers, as seen on the south elevation. The door, windows and guttering are all modern uPVC replacements.
- 3.6 The west elevation features two windows at first floor, both modern uPVC replacements. At ground floor level, a concrete block and externally rendered lean-to provides storage.
- 3.7 The east elevation is blank and has no openings.
- 3.8 The building has various modern appurtenances, including boiler flues, security alarms, lighting, and satellite dishes. The western side of the roof features a modern weathervane erected by the long-term residential occupant.

Interior

- 3.9 The interior has been substantially altered and, other than the staircase, there are no surviving historic features. The open-string staircase has turned newel posts, a ramped handrail and plain stick balusters. The skirtings, coving, internal door and fireplaces are all modern.
- 3.10 The ground floor has a central staircase hall with principal rooms to either side. The eastern room features a modern fireplace to the eastern wall. The western room includes a modern kitchen. The space has been subdivided to create two separate bathrooms, featuring modern sanitaryware. At first floor level, there are two main rooms and a small central room made from plasterboard partition walls, suggesting the original layout has been altered.
-

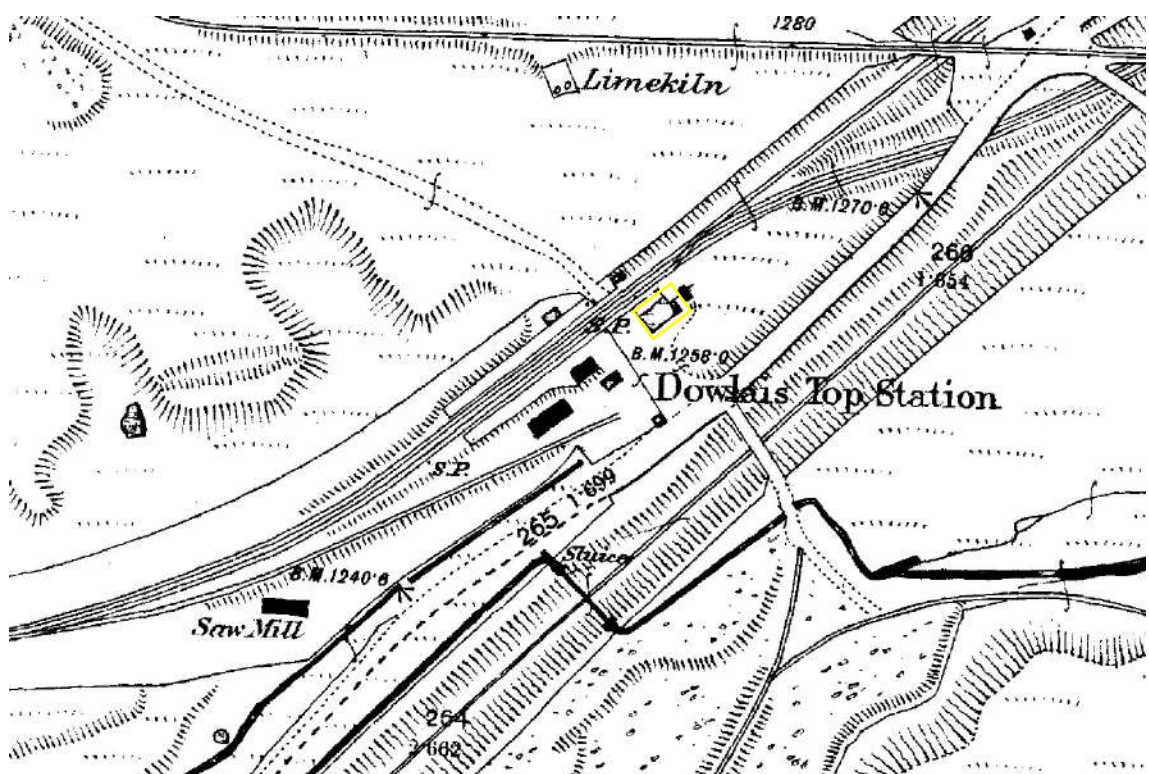
Surroundings

- 3.11 Station House is bounded to the southeast by the Heads of the Valleys Road and to the northwest by a modern building, beyond which lies a Lidl supermarket and associated carpark. To the north is a large discount furniture retailer store and an MOT testing centre.
- 3.12 The site is located within the Merthyr Tydfil Registered Historic Landscape of Outstanding Importance (Cadw reference HLW (MGL) 2) and within that, the Historic Character Area of Dowlais Top, HLCA047. This is characterised as: *Reclaimed industrial area, recent commercial, retail and light industrial area, site of industrial extractive landscape: quarries and spoil tips, rail corridor: Brecon and Merthyr Railway (including Dowlais Top Station) and sidings associated with Dowlais Iron Company Railway.*
- 3.13 Set in the wider landscape of minerals extraction, and land and water management recorded from the early 19th century, and currently largely reclaimed, aqueducts, drains and leats nearby associated with the Dowlais free drainage system that utilised and managed water from the uplands to supply the Dowlais Ironworks are recorded in the HER.
- 3.14 Specifically, the area formed part of the Dowlais Top railway station, where the L&NWR Dowlais Extension, the Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway, and the Brecon and Merthyr Railway converged with tramroads supplying the ironworks with raw materials.
-

4.0 Historical Analysis

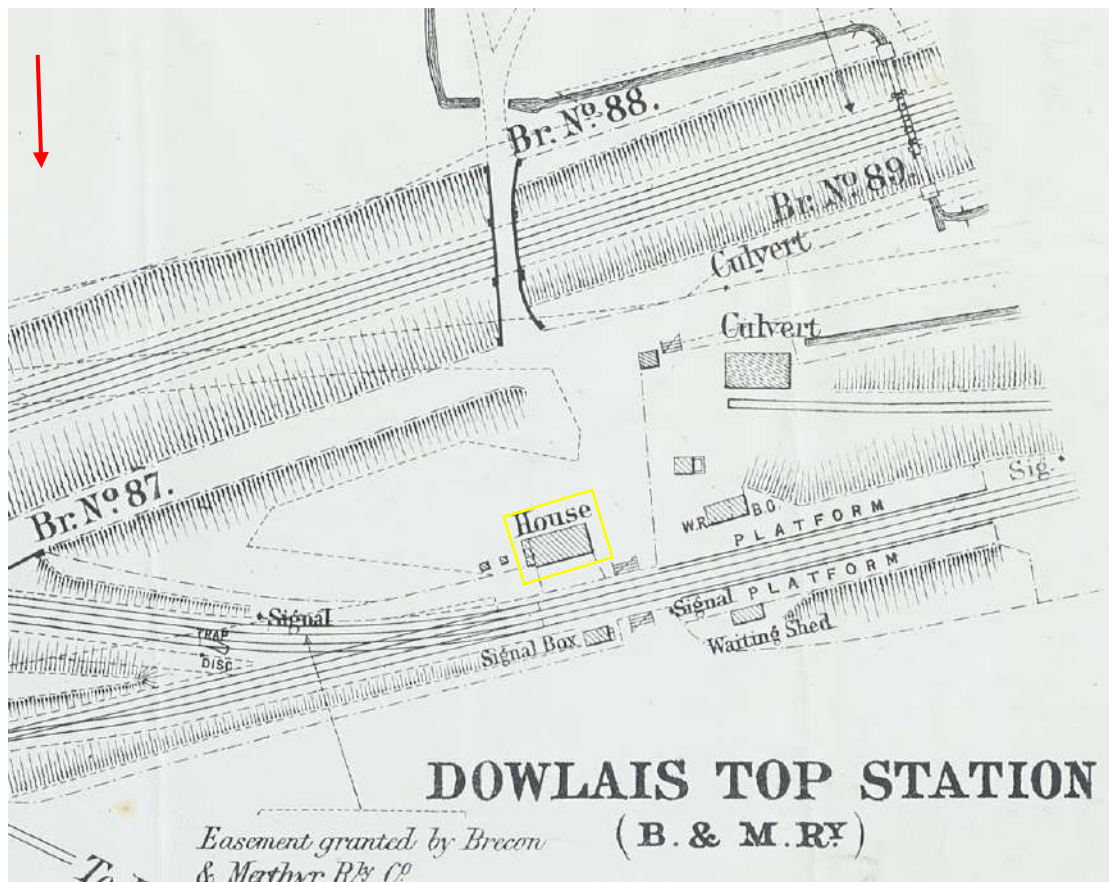
- 4.1 The OS mapping referred to in this section is included at Appendix 4. The relevant Historic Environment Records (HER PRNs) are listed and mapped at Appendix 5.
- 4.2 On OS mapping from 1875-76 (Figure 4.1), the form of Station House (PRN: 03125m) is shown just south of the Brecon & Merthyr Railway Line (PRN: 03177m) and the Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway Line (PRN: 02499.0m) of 1862. Station House is located at Dowlais Top Station, north of and close to a junction with the London and North Western Railway Line (LNWR) Dowlais Extension (PRN: 06076.0m) of 1873. A plan of Dowlais Top Station from 1891 (Figure 4.2) shows Station House alongside other buildings including a Waiting Shed and Signal Box. These are shown on photos from the 1950s and 1960s (Figure 4.3).
- 4.3 Various other railway sidings and tramlines are shown in the vicinity on historic mapping including Twynau Gwynion Line 1 (PRN: IWT015), just west of Station House. Small industrial sites are shown in the vicinity of Station House, including a Saw Mill and Lime Kiln.

Figure 4.1 OS mapping from 1875-76. The Station House is located in yellow.



Source: Promap

Figure 4.2 Plan of Dowlais Top Station in 1891. The Station House is located in yellow. The red arrow is pointing north.



Source: Glamorgan Archives, ref: DG/F/6/26.

- 4.4 Dowlais Top Station opened on 1st August 1867 as part of the northern extension of the Brecon and Merthyr (B&M) Railway Line from Pant. It formed part of the wider initiative of various companies to provide connectivity to the burgeoning iron industry in the region. It focused on local goods and passenger links to ironworks.
- 4.5 The history of the B&M Railway Line is summarised by Hodge and Caston (2022) as:
- “The B&M Act of 1865 authorised the construction of a short branch from Pant to a terminus station at Lloyd Street, Dowlais, this being opened in June 1869. This was territory over which the B&M was rather unsuccessfully fighting the progress of the LNWR, to make agreements which authorised the latter to make two junctions with the B&M, firstly at Dowlais Top where the two lines converged and secondly at Ivor Jct., Dowlais where the lines both companies diverged. The first saw some use, mainly for the exchange of goods and mineral traffic, though closed in 1935. The second was of far greater importance, the LNWR using it to gain access to the products of the Dowlais Iron Co., and until their station at Dowlais High Street opened in 1885, LNWR passenger trains used Lloyd Street, even though the through line to Merthyr had opened in 1879.”²*
- 4.6 This indicates that Dowlais Top Station closed in 1935, albeit photos from the 1950s-60s (Figure 4.2) show the platforms and facilities building still in-situ.

² Hodge, J & Caston, R. 2022. South Wales Valleys Railways and Industry on the Brecon & Merthyr. Pen & Sword Books Ltd.

Figure 4.3 Dowlais Top Station (looking northeast), 1955 (above) and 1960s (below). Station House (northwest elevations) visible along with a station facilities building to the east and signal box to the north of the railway.



Source: Alan George, *Dowlais Top Station*, accessed: http://www.alangeorge.co.uk/DowlaisTop_Station.htm

4.7

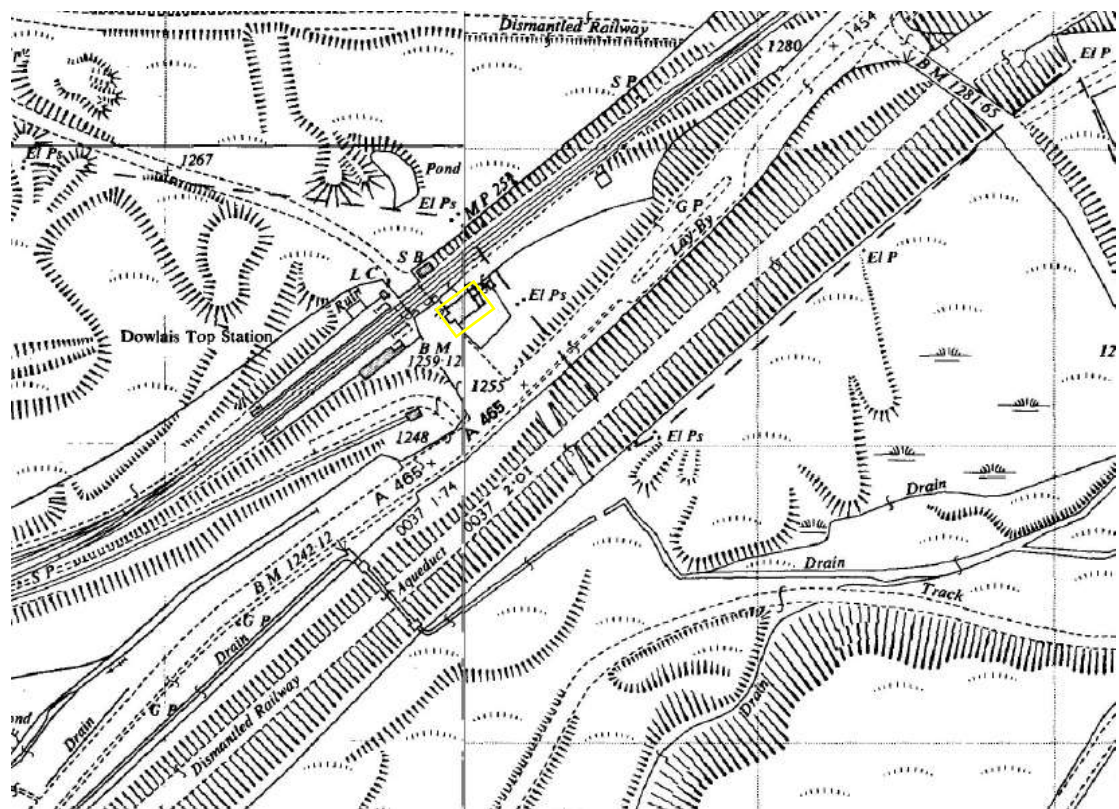
The LNWR Dowlais Extension line ceased to operate public services by 1960, but some parts remained in use for goods for another decade or so.³ OS mapping from 1962-63 (Figure 4.4) identifies the LNWR Dowlais Extension line to the south of Station House as a 'dismantled railway'. Much of the alignment was repurposed for the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road constructed in the 1960s. The section of the road immediately south of Station House opened in 1964. The road is shown on OS mapping from 1980-1991 (Appendix 3), just north of the disused railway. This map also shows the transformation of the surrounding area with the introduction of the Penygarnddu Industrial Estate. The station facilities building and signal box, still present on mapping and photos from the 1960s, are

³ Grokipedia (online history) at: https://grokipedia.com/page/dowlais_top_inwr_railway_station

no longer shown on the 1980-90s mapping. However, the form of the signal box is identifiable on aerial imagery from 2001 (Figure 4.5). This had been removed by 2004.

- 4.8 The footprint of Station House does not appear to have been altered throughout its history, except for the addition of a small, single-storey extension to the southwest elevation, which appears from Google Earth satellite images to have been replaced or extended between 2021 and 2023.
- 4.9 The redevelopment of the wider site and surrounding area with industrial uses is first shown on the 1980-90s OS mapping and subsequently on aerial imagery.
- 4.10 Station House has been occupied by the same owner since the mid-20th century until more recently, when it was vacated and used for storage.

Figure 4.4 OS mapping from 1962-63. The Station House is located in yellow.



Source: Promap

Figure 4.5 Aerial imagery of the site and surroundings in 2001.

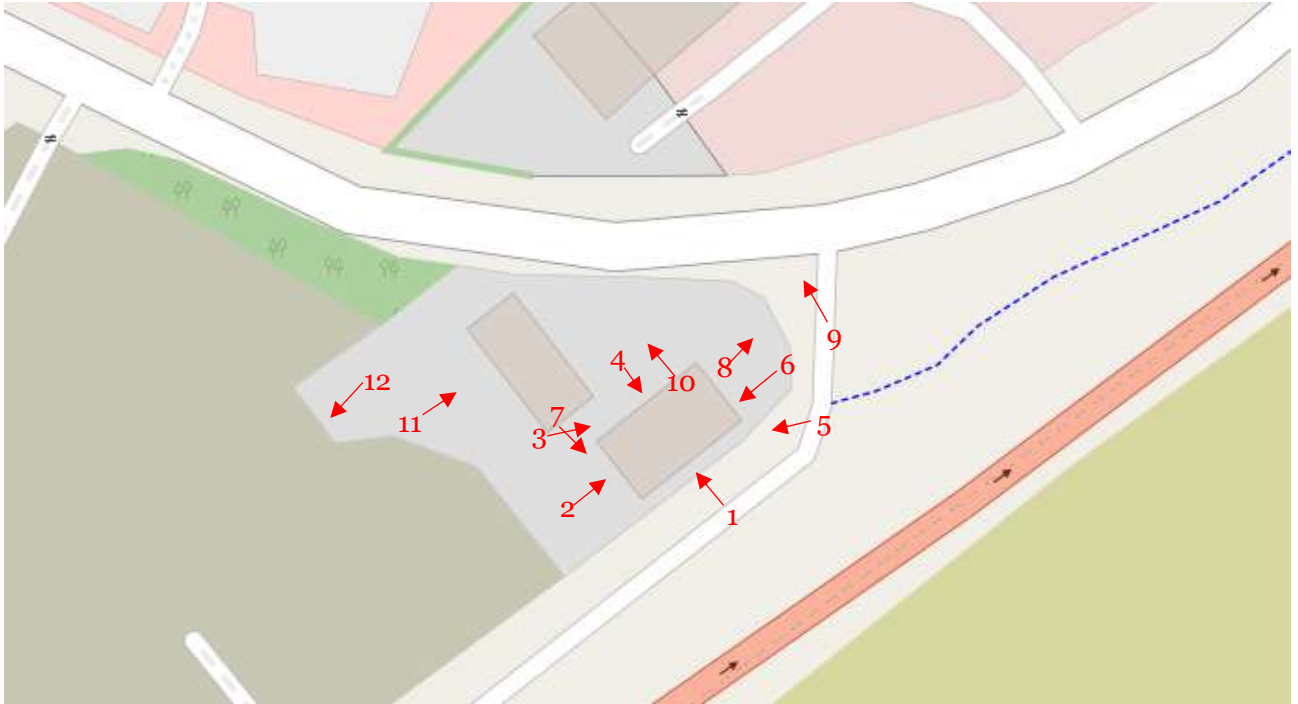


Source: Google Earth Pro

5.0 Conclusions

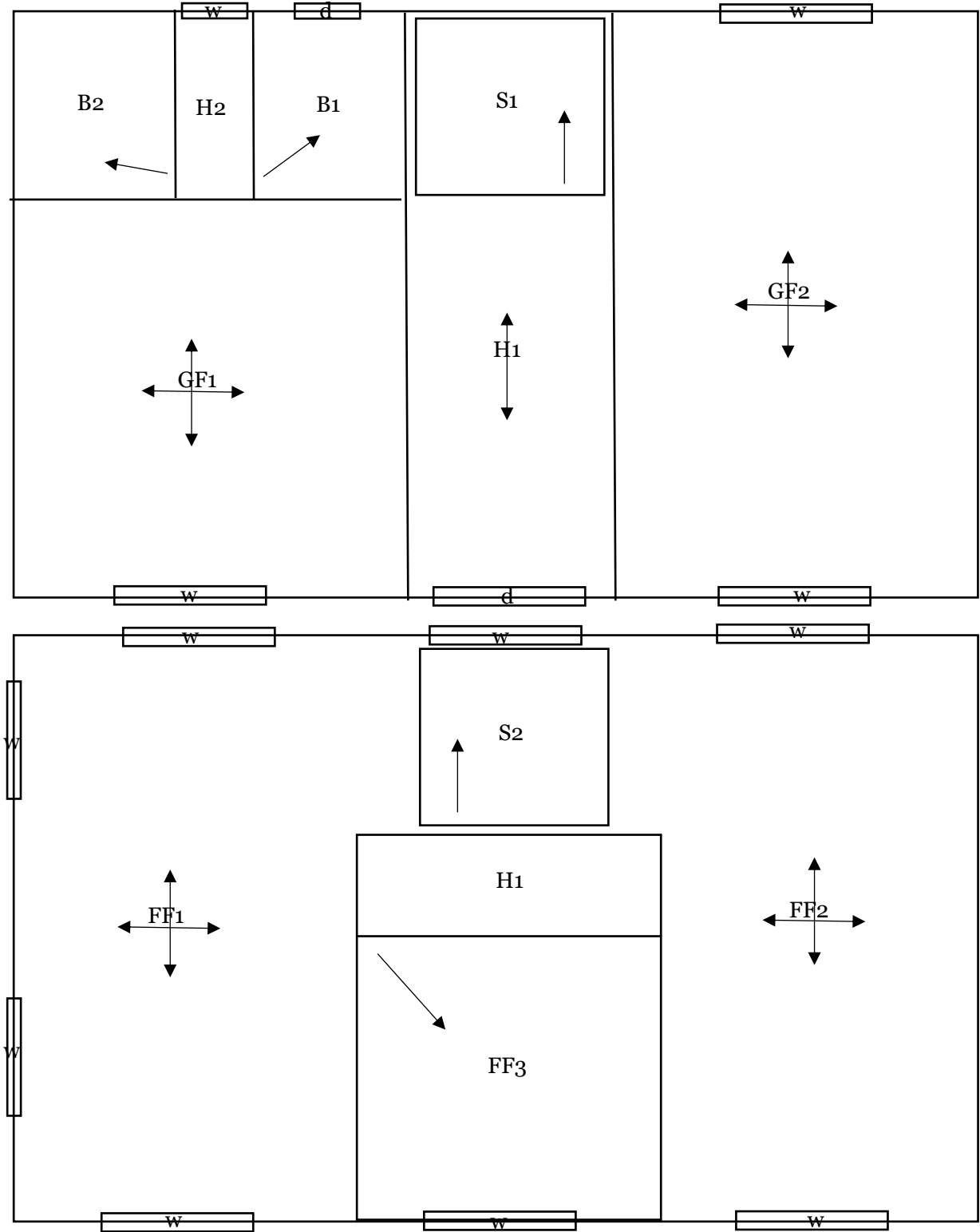
- 5.1 This Level 2 Historic Building Record has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of McDonalds to provide a lasting record of the Station House (historic asset of special local interest) prior to the redevelopment of the wider site at Land to the north of the Heads of the Valleys Road, off Rhymney Common Road, Merthyr Tydfil. The redevelopment does not affect Station House and comprises the introduction of a McDonalds restaurant in its vicinity, along with associated landscaping including a car park and cycleway.
- 5.2 As required by Condition 16 of Planning Permission ref. P250265, the Historic Building Record has been produced in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, that was signed off by Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) via email on 4th February 2026.
- 5.3 Once the Historic Building Record has been approved by GGAT, the final Record will be deposited with the National Monuments Records, held and maintained by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) and the HER held by Heneb.

Appendix 1 Exterior Photo Location Plan



Appendix 2 Interior Photo Location Plan

Ground Floor (above) First Floor (below) – sketch plans NTS



Appendix 3 Photos

Exterior – South, West, North and East Elevations, western lean-to and outbuilding









Surroundings





Interior – GF1, H1, GF2, B1, B2, S1, S2, FF1, FF2, FF3















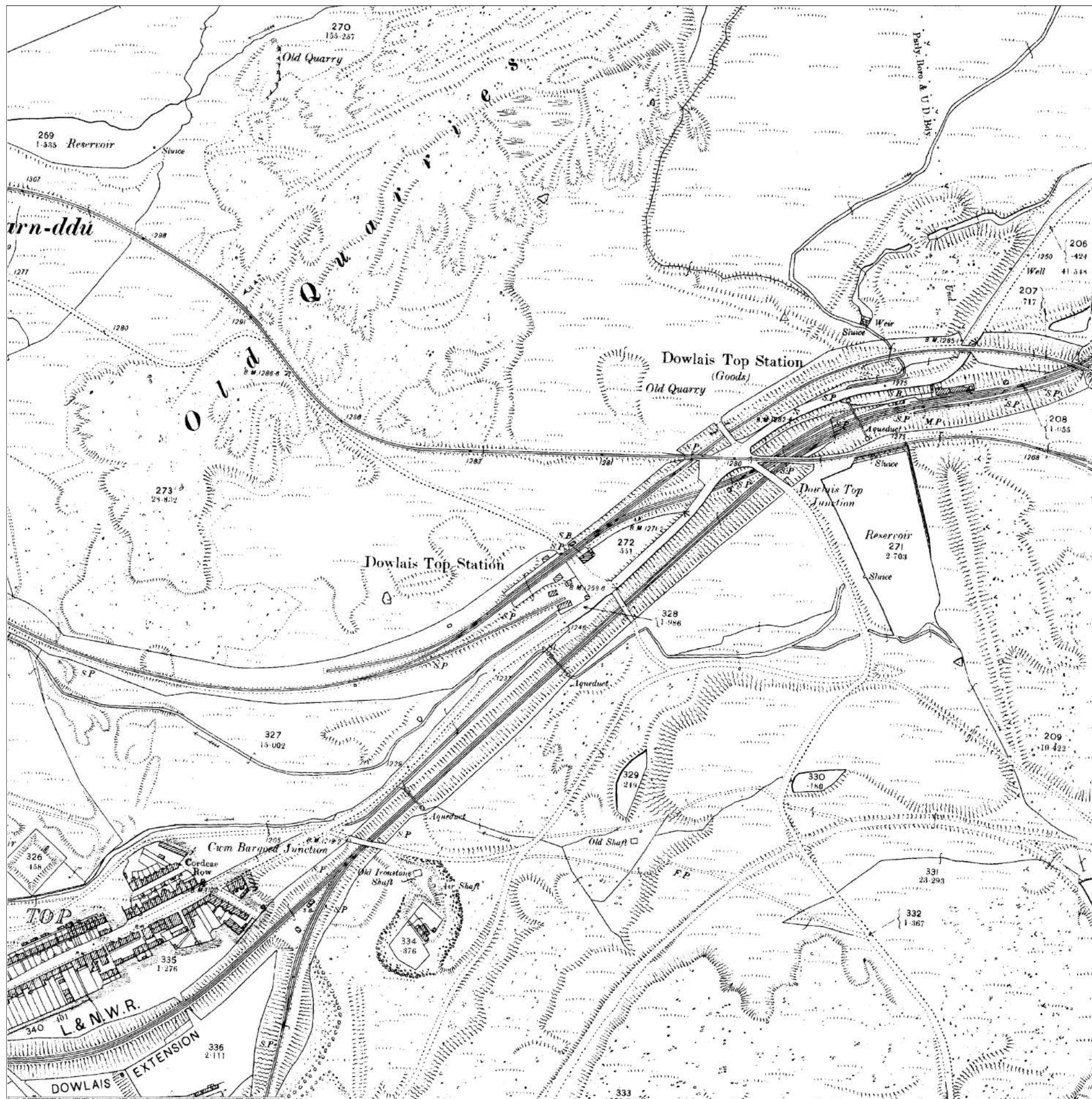






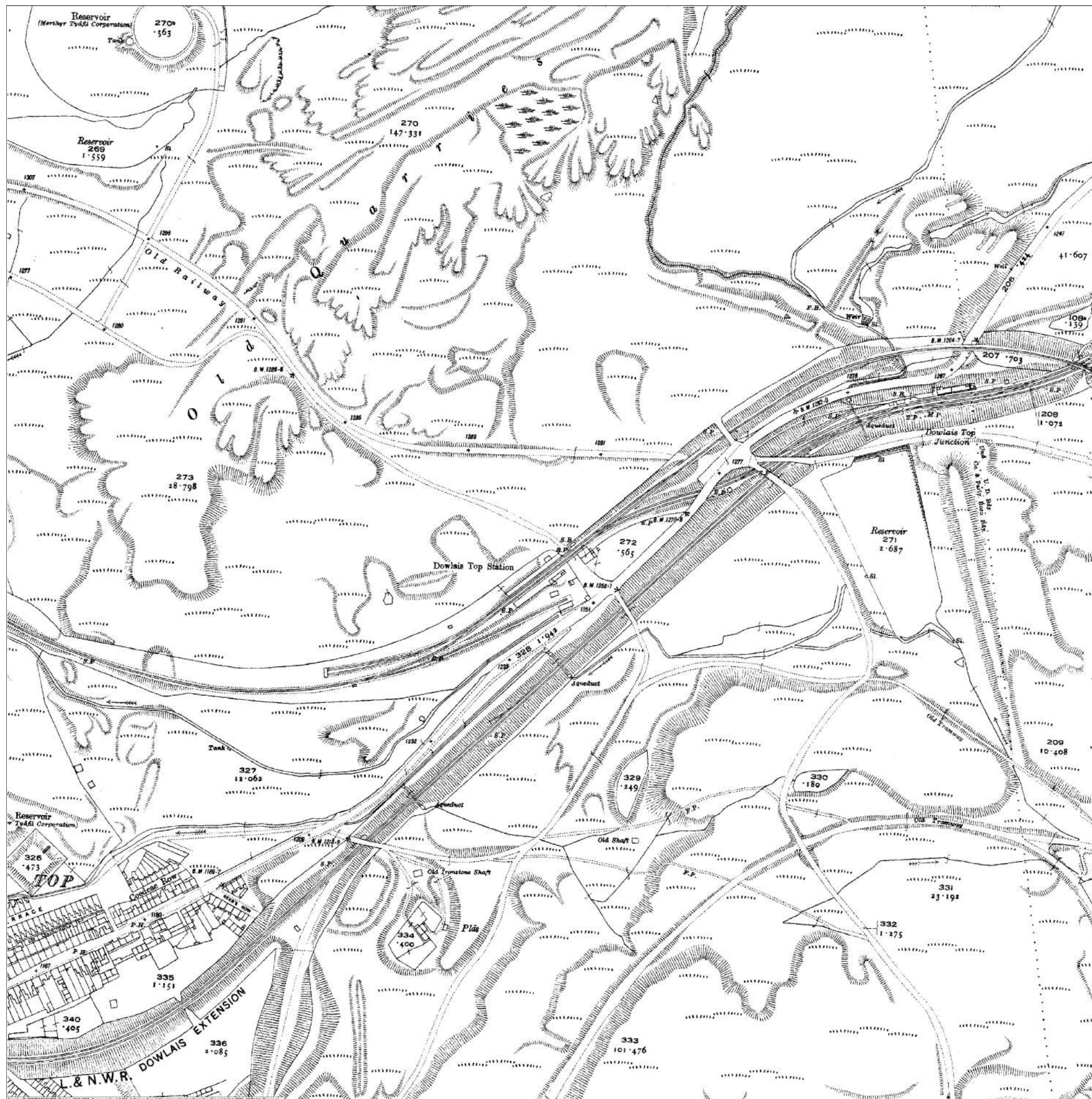


Appendix 4 Historic Mapping



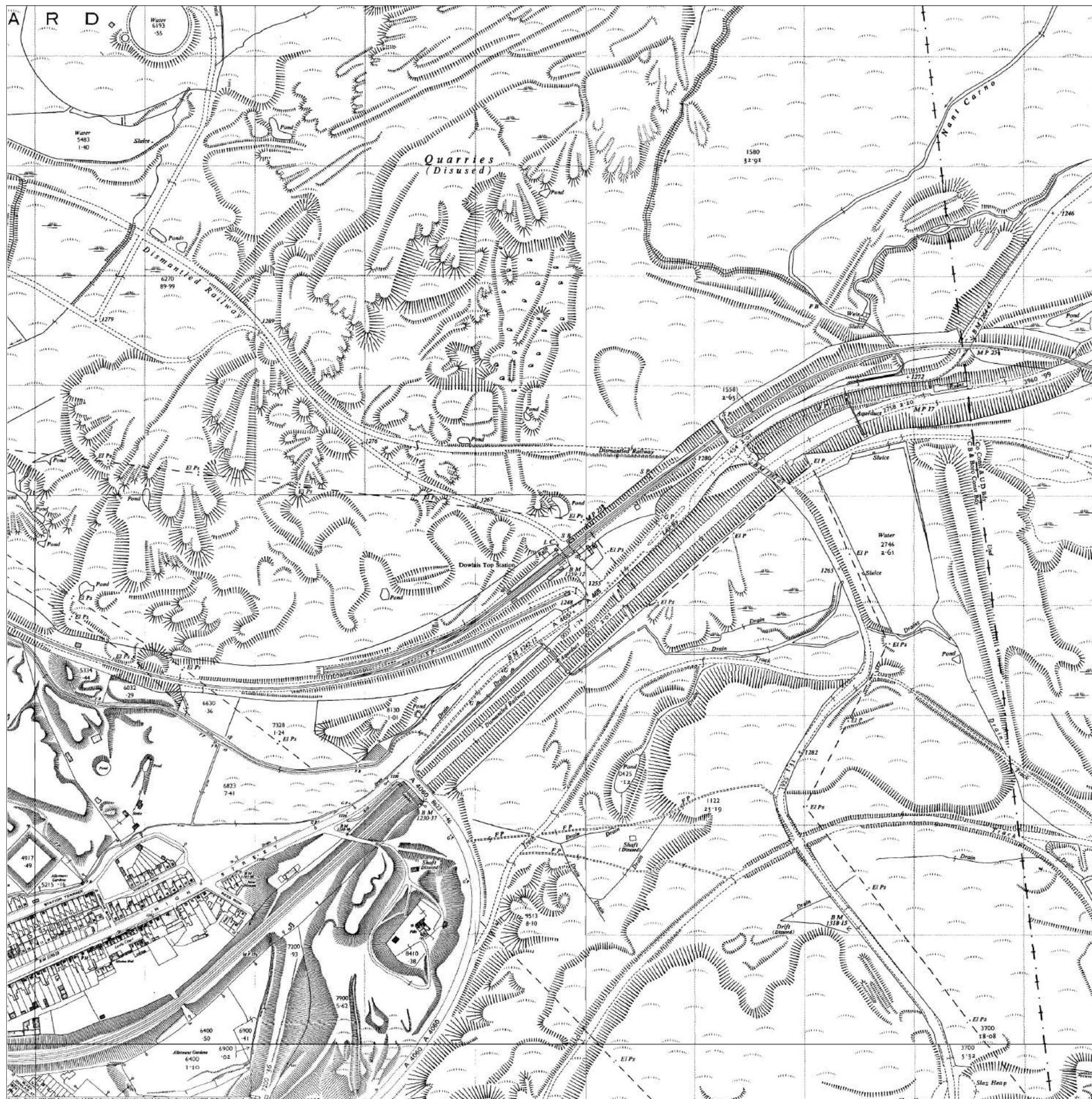
Landmark
INFORMATION GROUP

Landmark Historical Map
County: GLAMORGANSHIRE
Published Date(s): 1900-1901
Originally plotted at: 1:2,500



Landmark
INFORMATION GROUP

Landmark Historical Map
County: GLAMORGANSHIRE
Published Date(s): 1919-1920
Originally plotted at: 1:2,500



Landmark
INFORMATION GROUP

Landmark Historical Map
County:
Published Date(s): 1962-1963
Originally plotted at: 1:2,500

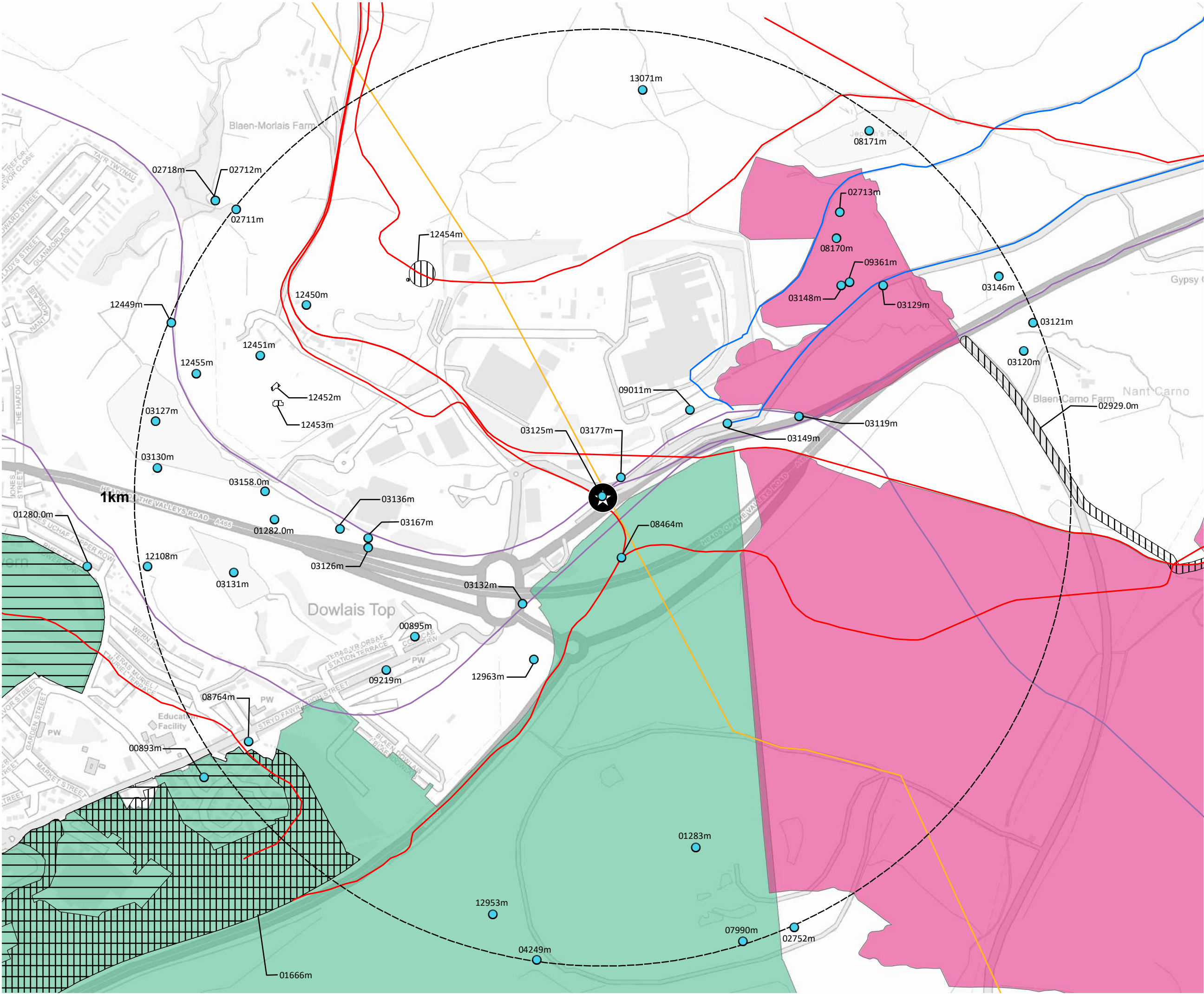
Appendix 5 Historic Environment Record Gazetteer and Map

HER Record Gazetteer

Table 1 HER Record Gazetteer

PRN	Site Name	Description	Period
03146m	Blaencarno Common	Remnants of a small a doughnut shaped cairn c.3-4m in diameter and about 1m high built of medium sized stone rubble probably Bronze Age in date. Dimensions: diameter 4m (max); height 1m Remnants of a small a doughnut shaped cairn c.3-4m in diameter and a	Bronze Age
03129m	173 Drystone and Turfstone Walled Landscape, Blaencarno Common	North of a series of linear scratches are the remnants of an early drystone and turfstone landscape that extends north and east beyond the Merthyr Common road. Traces of turfstone walling can also be seen on the Blaencarno Common.	Postmedieval
03119m	177 Railway Furniture, Blaencarno Common	A line of concrete posts delineates the northern extent of the Abergavenny, Tredegar & Merthyr Railway. Approximately 2 m south the route has been infilled by later coal tips.	Postmedieval
03120m	178 Coal Tippings, Blaencarno Farm	These spoil-tips, which are still visible, are marked on the O.S. of 1880. They have been affected by the existing road.	Postmedieval
03121m	179 'dig for Victory' Allotments, Blaencarno Farm	A series of four allotment gardens dating from the World War 2 'Dig for Victory' campaign and originally belonging to the occupants of seven cottages (shown on tithe of 1842 and O.S. of 1880) which stood adjacent to Blaencarno Farm, but which have now b	Postmedieval
03125m	183 Station House	Adjacent to the Brecon & Merthyr Railway (B. & M.) and close to a junction with the LNWR Dowlais Extension of 1873 is the station house for Dowlais Top Station. The B. & M. line to Dowlais Top was opened in 1863 although the two-storey station house, whi	Postmedieval
03177m	184 Brecon-merthyr Railway	The main line of the Brecon & Merthyr Railway opened in 1869 and ran from Dowlais Central to Pant, parallel for most of the way with the present road between these places. At Pant it was joined by the earlier B. & M. main line to Brecon via Pontsticill o	Postmedieval
03126m	185 Brecon-merthyr Railway Embankment	A large section of embankment belonging to the Brecon & Merthyr Railway survives west of the Dowlais Top roundabout, close to the easterly section of the Upper Reservoir leat system (No.186). The route of the railway at SO 0729 0849 veers north alongside	Postmedieval
03167m	186 Eastern Leat System, Upper Reservoir	A well preserved leat running for approximately 300m and incorporating two aqueducts (No. 187) is located within a narrow piece of land belonging to Welsh Water. Orientated east/west, traces of original brick-work are visible along its entire length. Wit	Postmedieval
03136m	187 Aqueducts Under Leat, Upper Reservoir	Two nineteenth century aqueducts constructed of unmortared sandstone masonry are located approximately 15m north of the A465, close to the	Postmedieval

PRN	Site Name	Description	Period
		perimeter fence of the Asda superstore (Dowlais Top). The upper lining, which is constructed of Victorian yellow-b	
03130m	189 Pumping Station, Upper Reservoir	Below the Upper Reservoir is a 19th century pumping station constructed of red brick with a later low concrete slab roof.	Postmedieval
03158.0m	190 Inspection Road, Upper Reservoir	Surrounding the Upper Reservoir is a concrete inspection road, approximately 3m in width. It appears to be equidistant between both the Upper and Lower Reservoir as well as the leat system to the west. A smaller road links the Upper and Lower (No. 195)	Postmedieval
03132m	196 McDonald's Restaurant, Merthyr	Constructed during the early 1990s, this Post-Modernist fast-food restaurant is one of only a few 'Drive-thrus' situated within this part of Wales. Constructed of red brick to a 'McDonalds' standardised design.	Postmedieval
00893m	28-33 Cae Harris, Pond Street	Row of post-medieval workers houses, comprising two-up one-down single fronted type. Now demolished.	Postmedieval
08464m	Bute Tramroad	Bute Ironworks took over the quarries at Twynau Gwynion from Dowlais in 1825 and constructed a tramroad from the west side of the Rhymney valley across Merthyr Common to Pengarnddu where it met Dowlaisâ€™ Line 4 (02726.3m) to Twynau Gwynion quarries	Postmedieval
00895m	Coedcae Road, Dowlais	Row of post-medieval houses, double-fronted type, built before 1514 and much altered but similar to some of the houses in Well Street, Dowlais.	Postmedieval
01280.0m	Course of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway L3	Course of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway, branch line. The first of these is the main line Merthyr and Brecon Railway. This has now been demolished, but its line is still partly visible, north of the current A465, before heading south through Gelli Gaer	Postmedieval
01282.0m	Course of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway, Main Line	Course of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway, main line The first of these is the main line Merthyr and Brecon Railway. This has now been demolished, but its line is still partly visible above Dowlais Top, north of the current A465, before heading south thro	Postmedieval
01283m	Drain, Dowlais	A185 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT A465 ABERGAVENNY TO HIRWAUN DUALLING Two sites are identified in this section as Historical Landscapes, although this status confers no statutory protection. An important area lies south of the present A465, east of DowlaisTop,	Postmedieval
12963m	Farmstead, Merthyr	Potential historic farmstead identified as part of GGAT and Cadw's Historic Farmsteads project, visible on Second Edition OS mapping. This farmstead appears to be of row plan type (OS map).	Postmedieval
02752m	Farmstead, outbuildings and enclosure, Rhymney	GGAT Assessment East Merthyr Land Reclamation - farmstead, outbuildings and enclosure EM1: Remains of a small farmstead and its associated outbuildings.	Postmedieval



Key

★

Site

●

HER Core

Extraction Yr4

Ext Ironworks

Core Ironworks

HER Poly

Ironworks Tramline

Ironworks Waterline

Railway Line

Roman Road

02718m

02712m

02711m

12449m

12450m

12451m

12455m

12452m

12453m

03127m

03130m

01280.0m

12108m

03131m

03158.0m

01282.0m

03126m

03136m

03167m

03125m

03177m

09011m

08464m

03149m

03119m

03148m

08170m

09361m

03129m

03146m

03121m

03120m

02929.0m

08171m

13071m

12454m

09219m

00895m

12963m

12953m

04249m

07990m

02752m

01666m

08764m

00893m

0

200

400 m

Historic Environment Record Data has been obtained from Heneb (Glamorgan-Gwent Region)

Based upon Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of His Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright reserved. Licence number 100017707

LICHFIELDS

Project

McDonalds, Heads of the Valleys Road

Title

Historic Environment Records

Client

McDonalds

Date

05.02.2025

Scale

1 : 7,500 @ A3

Drawn by

GF

Drg. No

GIS\LF\68415\02-01

GIS Reference: S:\LF Jobs\LF68000 - LF68999\LF68415 - McDonalds, Heads of the Valleys Road\LF68415-02 - McDonalds, Heads of the Valleys Road - Historic Environment Records - 05.02.2026.mxd

Appendix 6 Written Scheme of Investigation (February 2026)

Land at Common Road, Merthyr Tydfil

Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Recording

McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

21 January 2026 (updated 4 February 2026)

Lichfields is the pre-eminent planning and development consultancy in the UK

**We've been helping create great places
for over 60 years.**

lichfields.uk

Contents

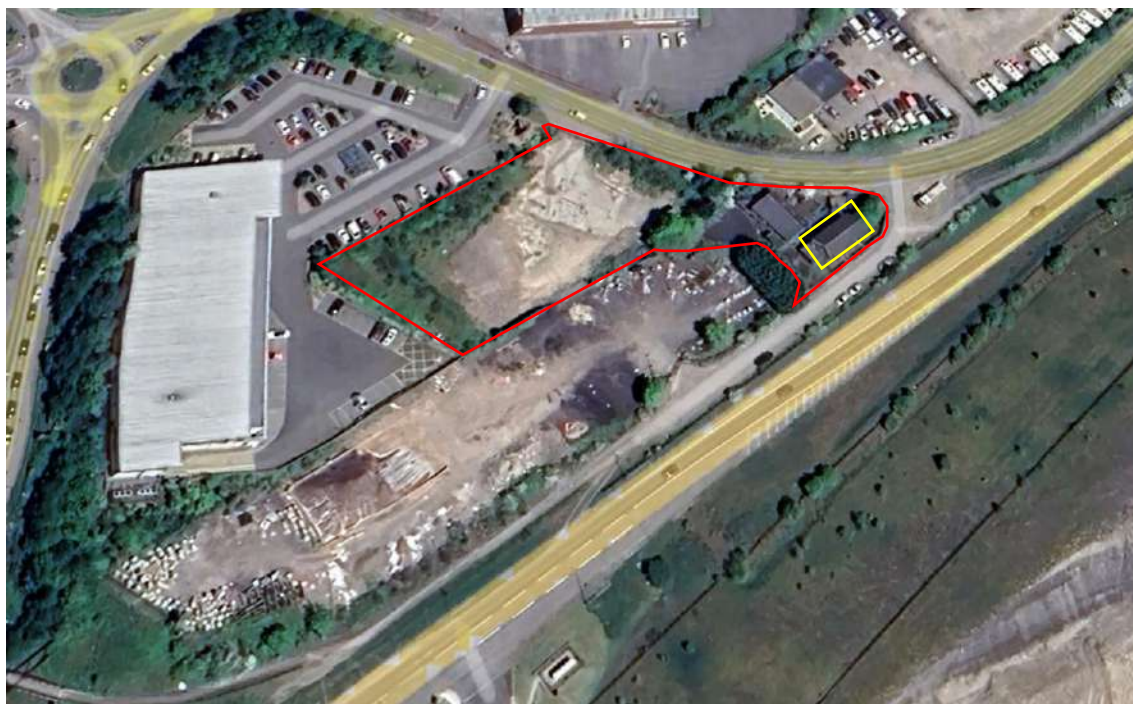
1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Method Statement	3
	Aims and Objectives	3
	Access and Safety	3
	Recording Methods	3
	Sources and Bibliography	4
	Deposition	4

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Lichfields has been commissioned by McDonalds to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a Level 2 Historic Building Recording (HBR) of Station House (historic asset of special local interest); located at Land to the north of the Heads of the Valleys Road, off Rhymney Common Road, Merthyr Tydfil (Figure 1.1) (NGR: SO 07982 08447).
- 1.2 Station House (Figure 1.2) is first shown on Ordnance Survey mapping from 1897, along with the Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway line which ran along the southern boundary of the site. The line reached Dowlais by 1873, and so it is likely that Station House was built around this time.¹ The site is located within the Merthyr Tydfil Registered Historic Landscape of Outstanding Importance (Cadw reference HLW (MGL) 2) and within that, the Historic Character Area of Dowlais Top, HLCA047.
- 1.3 The building recording has been requested by the Heneb (Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust) in relation to a planning application proposing the demolition of modern buildings on the wider site (Figure 1.1) and introduction of a McDonalds restaurant and associated access, cycle path, servicing and hard and soft landscaping. The proposals do not affect the Station House, however, Heneb has suggested the following draft planning condition in order to provide a lasting record of the historic asset:
- 'No works to which this consent relates shall commence until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.'*
- 1.4 Heneb has recommended the production of a Level 2 HBR as set out in Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (Historic England 2016). This will provide a record of the structure, in such detail as to preserve it by record with a written account of the building and its history, plans, and photographs with a measured scale and directional plan.
- 1.5 This document forms the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the Level 2 building recording of Station House. It sets out in detail the scope and methodology for a programme of historic building recording that will be employed by Lichfields. The WSI has been updated and finalised following comments received from Heneb on 23rd, 27th and 29th January 2026.
- 1.6 The HBR will be prepared by Madeleine Rigby (Associate Director – Heritage) and Nick Bridgland (Heritage Director). They are both Full Members of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).
- 1.7 A separate WSI will be submitted to cover Heneb's proposed archaeological condition on the planning permission, involving archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks.

¹ Industrial Wales, Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway, accessed: <http://industrialgwent.co.uk/e31-mtar/index.htm>

Figure 1.1 Aerial imagery with the approximate site boundary added in red. Station House is located in yellow.



Source: Google Earth Pro

Figure 1.2 Station House



Source: EDP

2.0 Method Statement

2.1 All works will be undertaken in accordance with standards set out in:

- Historic England (2016) *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*; and
- CIfA (2020) *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*.

Aims and Objectives

2.2 The aim is to provide a Level 2 record of Station House in its current condition prior to any works taking place across the development site (Figure 1.1). This record is to be in accordance with requirements defined by a Historic England Level 2 survey. It will clearly set out a description of the building, illustrated with photos, identified on photo location plans. It will also identify the historic development of Station House set within the context of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway and Dowlais Top railway station. The overall aim is to provide a better understanding of the building, to compile a lasting record and to disseminate these results.

Access and Safety

2.3 Before the on-site recording is carried out, the client will organise access and confirm the health and safety details of the building, including structural integrity and possible contamination from asbestos or guano. The amount of recording will be dependent on the level of safe access available to the building and the building recording team will not enter areas that are judged to be unsafe in any way.

Recording Methods

2.4 The recording will be undertaken in accordance with a Level 2 survey as set out in Historic England (2016) *Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. The points for each category are set out in this Written Scheme of Investigation as follows:

- 1 Drawn Record – an existing site plan and if possible interior floorplans will be submitted and annotated to highlight architectural or above-ground archaeological features of interest;
- 2 Photographic Record – a full set of high-quality exterior and interior photos of the building will be included in the report, labelled and located on photo location plans. Where possible, the photos will include a ranging pole to provide a measured scale. This will include photos of:
 - a interior elevations of each room/space;
 - b any external or internal detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use;
 - c Any machinery or other plant, or evidence for its former existence;

- d Any dates or other inscriptions; any signage, makers' plates or graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the building. A transcription will be made wherever characters are difficult to interpret; and
 - e Any building contents which have a significant bearing on the building's history (for example, a cheese press, a malt shovel), if such items exist.
- 3 Reporting – A Level 2 Record of a historic building is identified by Historic England as a descriptive record and should comprise the following:
 - a Introduction – setting out the context of the historic building recording and proposed development affecting the site;
 - b Methodology – confirming the methodology agreed with Heneb (Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust) and the relevant guidance followed;
 - c An introductory description, including a written description of the building, construction, materials and features;
 - d A systematic account of the building's origins, development and use, set within the context of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway and Dowlais Top railway station, clearly referencing any sources; and
 - e Accompanying drawn and photographic and mapping records that are required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support the historical analysis.

Sources and Bibliography

2.5 The following sources will be consulted when preparing the Historic Building Record:

- 1 Tithe mapping provided by Genealogy.co.uk
- 2 Promap: Digital historic Ordnance Survey maps from the 1st edition to present
- 3 Internet Sources: Web-published material, including local planning authority planning policies, conservation area information, and information on designated assets.
- 4 The Heneb Historic Environment Record (HER) – covering a search area of 1km from the Station House.
- 5 Aerial photographs available on the National Collection of Aerial Photographs for Wales (CRAPW) and The National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW)

Deposition

2.6 On completion the draft Historic Building Record will be submitted to Heneb (Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust). Once approved, the final Historic Building Record will be deposited with the National Monuments Records, held and maintained by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) and the HER held by GGAT. This will conform to the guidelines set out in: *'The National Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales 2017'* (National Panel for Archaeological Archives in Wales 2017); *'Guidelines for Digital Archaeological Archives'* (RCAHMW); and *'Guidance for the Submission of Data to the*

Heneb Historic Environment Record (HER) (Heneb: The Trust for Welsh Archaeology 2024).

