

Cyfarthfa Conservation Area



Character Appraisal



A N DAVIES
Head of Town Planning

December 2009



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This document is the adopted Cyfarthfa Conservation Area Character Appraisal and is a publicly agreed statement on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

Following public consultation, this document was adopted by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee on the 16th December 2009.

Cyfarthfa was declared as a Conservation Area under s.69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 on the 16th December 2009.

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Acknowledgement:

This document was compiled by Mr Lewis Thomas (Design, Heritage and Conservation Officer) of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. Historical information was provided by Mr Joe England.



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Strategy ("The Strategy"), approved by Council in September 2008, was commissioned in order to improve the way in which the rich heritage assets of Merthyr Tydfil are managed. The Strategy assesses the survival of these assets and develops an action plan to address designation, funding, policy and management. As one of the recommendations in this Action Plan, it is proposed to review existing Conservation Areas while considering the designation of a number of new Conservation Areas, of which, Cyfarthfa Park and Iron Works is deemed to be a priority.

1.2 Conservation Areas



Gardens in Cyfarthfa Park

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest. The decision to designate a Conservation Area is made by the Council following an assessment of the character and historic interest of the area. Once a Conservation Area is designated by the Local Planning Authority, the Council has recognised that the area has a special character and identity which is worth protecting.

The Council is required by legislation to preserve or enhance the character of each Conservation Area and all new proposals which affect that special character have to be considered in the light of this requirement.

1.3 Appraisal



Cefn Viaduct

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council is continuously reviewing its Conservation Areas to establish whether boundaries need amendment or new areas require designation altogether. Additional measures for enhancing and protecting Conservation Areas should also be devised.

A Conservation Area Appraisal is the first step in a dynamic process, which records and analyses the various features that give the Area its special architectural and historic interest. This appraisal aims to provide a clear and sound understanding of the Conservation Area by recording, evaluating and presenting all of the key elements that together make up its special interest.

The appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive

and does not provide detailed descriptions of all individual historic buildings. The omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

1.4 Implications of Designation

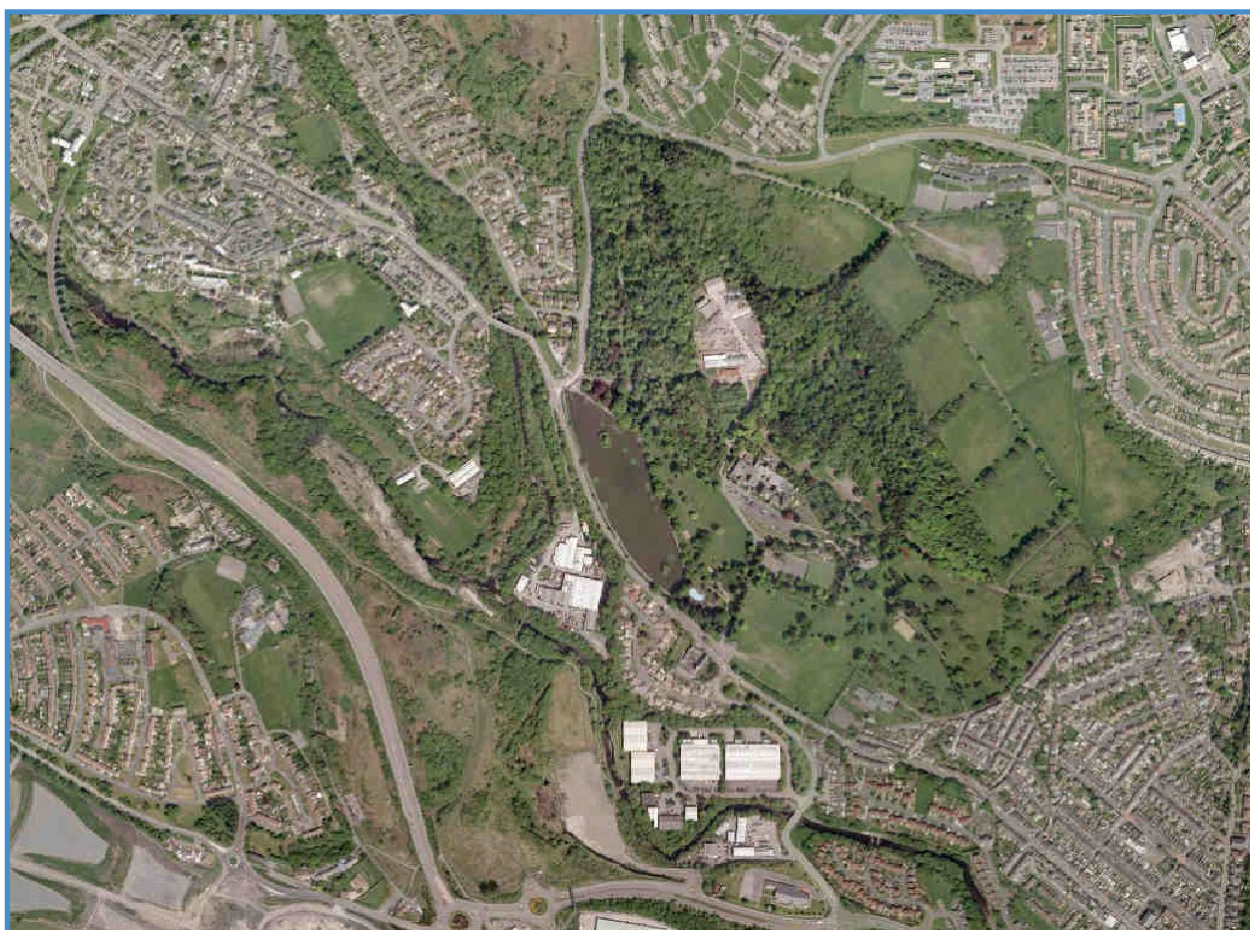
The Conservation Area designation provides statutory protection for the built heritage and landscape. It is an acknowledgement of the heritage merit of the locality and seeks to ensure that change is managed to protect and enhance the local character of the area.

Proposals for new development will be required to

preserve or enhance this special character and the designation will enable applications for grant assistance to improve the landscape and buildings to be made to both the County Borough and Cadw.

Within a Conservation Area, additional control is afforded to the elements which contribute to its significant character. This may be summarised as follows:

- The Local Planning Authority is under a general duty to ensure the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and a particular duty to prepare proposals to that end;



Cyfarthfa Conservation Area aerial photograph

1.5 Management Plan

- Notice must be given to the Local Authority before works are carried out to any tree within the area;

- Conservation Area Consent must be obtained for the demolition or partial demolition of any unlisted building or structure in the area, including stone walls;

- Extra publicity is given to planning applications affecting Conservation Areas and the planning authority is to take into account the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character of the area when determining such applications;



Taff Fechan Leat

The Management Plan is based on the identified negative features and opportunities for preservation or enhancement and sets out

proposals and policies which may enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

These proposals are prioritised in order for the enhancement of the Conservation Area to be more effective and to avoid harmful change to the fabric which makes the Area unique. The principal objective of the Management Plan is to formulate proposals which provide a basis for making sustainable decisions on the Conservation Area's future.

- Details as to the limits of what works may be carried out without Planning Permission are somewhat different. This includes the cladding of buildings, roof alterations, building extensions, construction of new buildings and the installation of antennas.

The local authority or the Secretary of State may take enforcement action or institute a criminal prosecution if planning consent is not obtained.

1.6 Review

The designation and appraisal of a Conservation Area should not be regarded as a static process. It will be subject to periodic review and update, especially in the light of new research, as more information and knowledge becomes available along with the continuing enhancement of the Conservation Area.

1.7 Public Consultation



Cefn Coed y Cymmer, near the Taf Fechan

A draft of this Character Appraisal and a proposed boundary was made available for inspection by the public during a consultation period of 22 days from 13th November until the 4th December 2009. Consultation included a flyer sent to all properties within the proposed Conservation Area boundary informing them of the consultation process and inviting them to a consultation event.

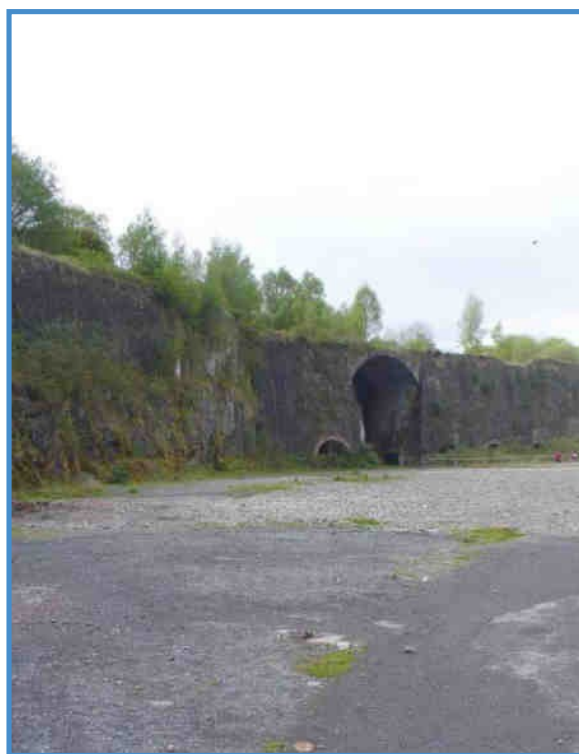
The consultation event was held at Cyfarthfa Castle on the 19th November from 10.00am until 4.00pm and was attended by local residents, ward Councillors, property and business owners, members of the Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust and other interested parties. The draft appraisal was made available at Merthyr Tydfil Public Library and at the Council's Planning Division for viewing. The draft appraisal was also uploaded to the Council's website.

Feedback from the public was encouraged through a questionnaire which was available at the consultation event and from the Council's website. Briefly, the questionnaire asked the following questions:

- The desirability of designating Cyfarthfa as a Conservation Area;
- Views on the historic interest of the area;
- Views on the key positive features of the area;
- Views on any negative features or issues that detracted from the area's character and appearance.

A report on the public consultation has been prepared and forms an appendix to the character appraisal.

Minor changes were made to the character appraisal to take into account comments received from the public during the consultation period, with the inclusion of a number of issues identified as detracting from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



The derelict former Ironworks site



2 Planning Policy Framework

Council has a duty in exercising its planning powers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and assisted by relevant Planning Policy Guidance. This Planning Policy Framework is set out below:

2.1 National Legislation

Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. As the principal form of legislation, its definition of Conservation Areas shall be used for the purpose of this document:

“A Conservation is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

This definition often extends beyond buildings alone, and includes the road layout, street scene, trees and green spaces; reiterating the quality and interest of the area.

Development proposals within Conservation Areas will be subject to control through statutory legislation, encompassing the following three primary Acts:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990

These acts restate that in making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

2.2 National Policy

In terms of national policy and guidance specific to Conservation Areas, the framework is established by the following policy documents:

- Planning Policy Wales (*March, 2002*)
- Welsh Office Circular 61/96 – Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas (*December, 1996*) (As Amended)
- Technical Advice Note 12 (Design)

The guidance provided at the national level provides advice on the designation of Conservation Areas, and the importance of assessing the special interest of each one in an appropriate manner. The guidance also stresses the need for the Council to ensure that the character and appearance of Conservation Areas is preserved and enhanced. This should be addressed in the provision of Planning Policy and in the implementation of Development Control functions at a local level.

2.3 Local Policy

The existing development plan framework in Merthyr Tydfil is provided by:-

- The adopted Mid Glamorgan (Merthyr Tydfil County Borough) Replacement Structure Plan



1991-2006

- The adopted Merthyr Tydfil Borough Local Plan
- The deposit Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan 2006-2021.

National Policy Guidance is reiterated under Policies EV9 and EV10 of the Structure Plan in stating that development of features of the built and historic environment or environmental improvement schemes will not be permitted where it is likely to damage the existing character of structures designated as being of special architectural or historic interest.

The Merthyr Tydfil Borough Local Plan was adopted in May 1999. The plan sets out the Council's aspirations for protecting and enhancing the historic environment and states how applications affecting Conservation Areas will be assessed.

Policy BH1 relates to the protection of the Cyfarthfa Heritage Area, of which the proposed Conservation Area would cover a large part of. The area consists of an amalgamation of features which should be considered as one single entity. Policy BH2 meanwhile relates directly to the management of Conservation Areas and states that new development should preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

Furthermore, the Draft Deposit Local Development Plan for Merthyr Tydfil considers the historic built environment as a precious resource that can be harnessed in a sustainable manner for the purposes of regeneration, and affords for its protection and safeguarding. Policy BW6 states that proposals must not have an unacceptable

impact on historic and cultural features of acknowledged importance. In addition, Policy AS15 requires for land to be safeguarded as part of the Cyfarthfa Heritage Park. A predominant designation of the proposed site as a Conservation Area would contribute significantly towards its protection.



3 History

This section provides an overview of the history of Cyfarthfa Ironworks, Park, Castle and the features which relate all three. The section considers the area within a wider region making note of its history and setting.

3.1 Historic Evolution

Early Industry



Cyfarthfa Ironworks c1800, engraving by William Pamplin

1765 heralded the establishment of a new ironworks at Cyfarthfa by two Cumbrian Ironmasters (Anthony Bacon and William Brownrigg), on land leased from Lord Talbot. Charles Wood was employed to manage construction and, later, to manage the works. The introduction of the 'potting and stamping' process by Wood made Cyfarthfa the first ironworks in Merthyr to produce wrought iron. Wood was also responsible for the construction of the Tai Mawr Leat, a canal 1,348 metres running from the River Taf Fawr at Cefn-Coed-y-Cymmer and partly cut through solid rock. At the ironworks this was divided into at least six mill races to power numerous mill wheels for the works' industrial machinery.

Acquisition by Richard Crawshay

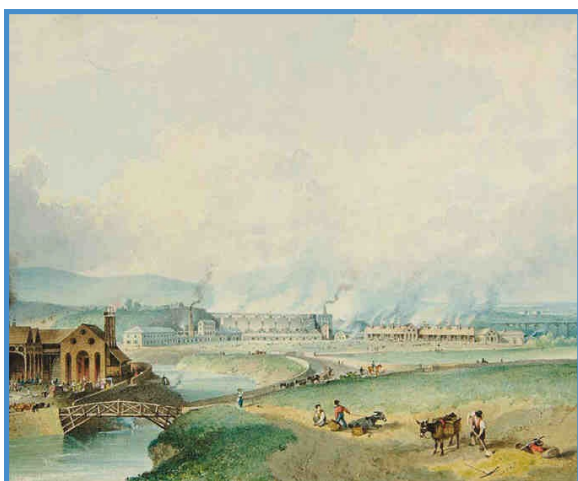


Cyfarthfa Castle entrance, Penry Williams c1825

In 1774 Richard Crawshay entered into partnership with Anthony Bacon, taking over Brownrigg's share of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks. Crawshay maintained the ironworks' status as a centre of manufacturing innovation. Richard Crawshay devoted much time and resources perfecting Cort's puddling process, an innovation that put the South Wales industry ahead of its rivals. By 1792 Crawshay had taken full control of the works and had moved there to oversee its management. Working with the engineer Watkin George, Crawshay constructed tramways from the mines and quarries surrounding the works. The Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge (the earliest iron railway bridge in the world) and the Gurnos Tramroad was built around 1792 to link the ironworks with the Gurnos Quarry to the north. The completion of the Glamorgan Canal in 1794 then provided the ironworks with a direct waterway to the wharfs at Cardiff, coinciding with Crawshay acquiring full legal control of the ironworks.

The Napoleonic Wars proved to be hugely

profitable for Crawshay as some of the canons, guns and shots on British Warships at Trafalgar were reputed to be cast at Cyfarthfa. However, Crawshay did not live to see the final defeat of Napoleon. By his death in 1810 Richard Crawshay's personal fortune was estimated at £1.5m (approximately £4.3bn in modern terms according to the Sunday Times Wealthiest People in Britain since 1066, published in 2000) and the Cyfarthfa Ironworks was the largest in the world.

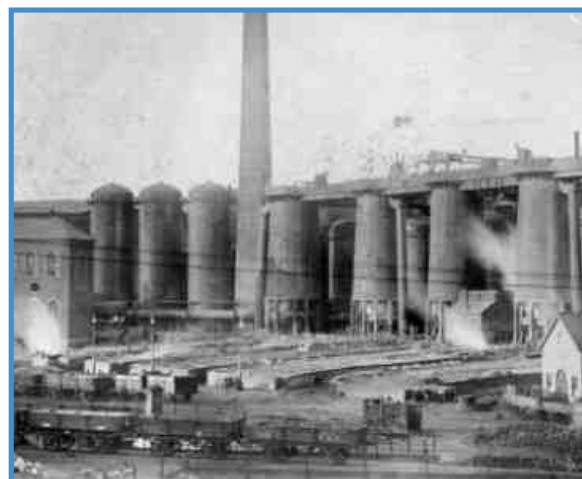


Cyfarthfa Ironworks c1825, Penry Williams

Early 19th Century under William Crawshay II

Richard Crawshay's son William inherited only a share of his father's business. However, he gradually removed other shareholders from the company. William managed the ironworks through his son William Crawshay II, who lived at Gwaelodygarth House, an imposing Georgian mansion which still stands just to the south east of Cyfarthfa Park, adjoining the Conservation Area. The early 19th century was a period of gradual expansion of the ironworks. By 1825, the ironworks' was at its largest with seven blast furnaces, as well as engine houses built at either end of the furnace bank. At this point the

ironworks was the largest in the world and, arguably, the most technically advanced.



Cyfarthfa Works Blast Furnaces c1900

Cyfarthfa Castle was built during within one year in 1825 at the cost of £30,000. The footprint of castle covered an acre of land and was a self contained community, including its own brew house, dairy, icehouses, glasshouses, kitchen gardens and farmstead (Pandy Farm). The grounds surrounding the Castle combined an unusual mixture of decoration and utilitarianism. The ornamental lake, for example, acted as a substantial reservoir for the ironworks and was fed by a newly constructed canal which carried water along the side of the Taff Fechan Valley from the Gyrnos Quarry to the north. The canal and lake cost an additional £30,000 to build. The castle, on its hill, was designed to be highly visible, particularly from the ironworks in the valley below. Its location also afforded a view of the activity in the works from the ironmaster's office, which lay on the south west side of the building.

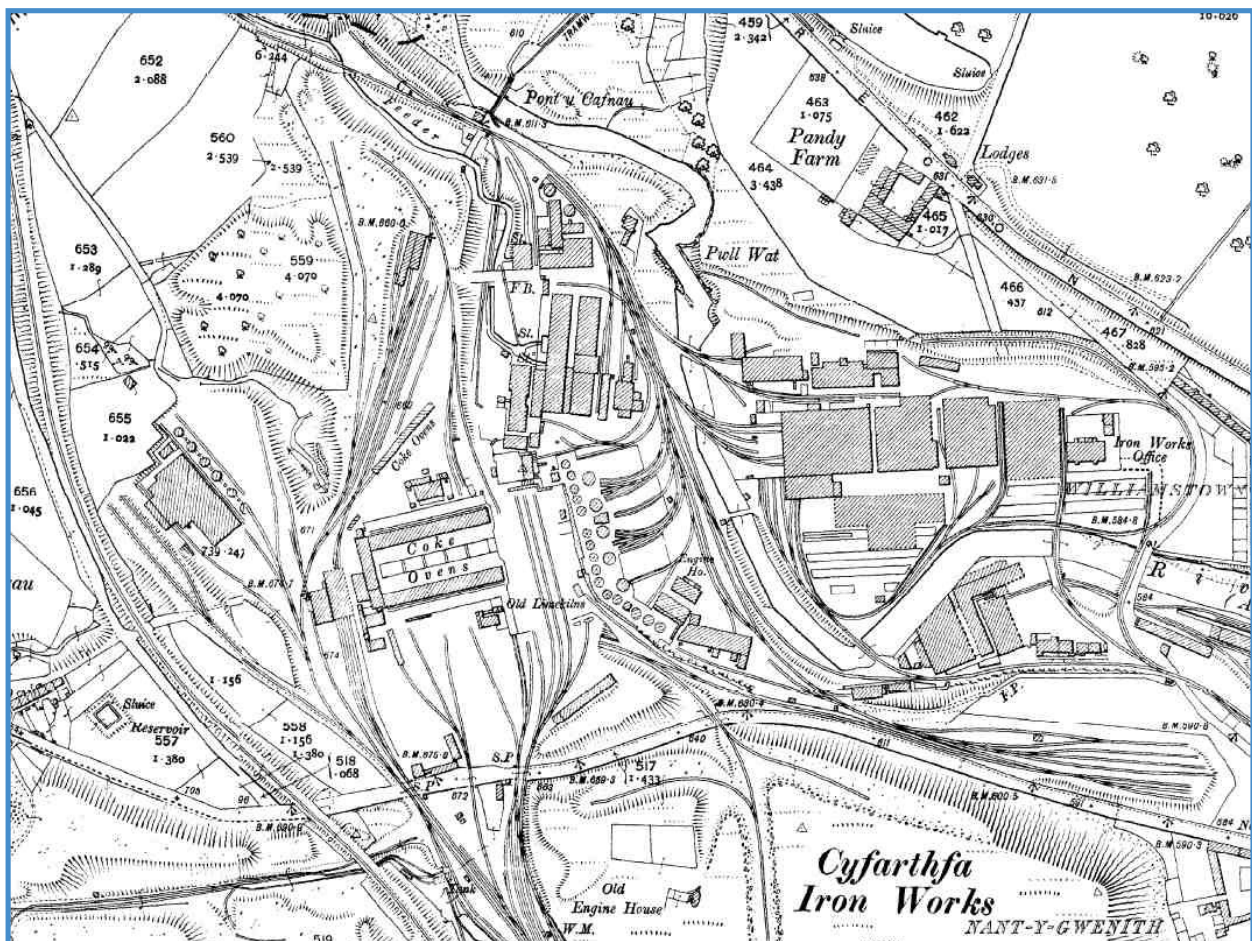


The Transformation to Steel

The ownership of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks had then passed from Crawshay to his son, William Crawshay II in 1834. In 1839 he subsequently appointed his eldest son, Robert Thompson Crawshay to manage the works. The ironworks were still prosperous during the 1830s and 40s. The advent of the steam engine facilitated massive expansion of railways in Britain, Europe and the USA. This required large amounts of railways to be built using cast iron tracks. Such demand required further expansion of the ironworks towards the east side of the Taf. However, local mineral sources of ironstone of sufficient quality

were slowly becoming exhausted by the 1850s.

When William Crawshay II died in 1867, Robert Thompson had inherited the works. However, the works had begun to decline. When the mineral lease was up for renewal in 1862, this was on far more expensive terms. The works also had to import its ore, which pushed costs up. The decline in value of iron by 1874 and Robert Thompson's lack of managerial ability forced the company's labour force to strike over poor conditions and low wages in 1884. This resulted in Robert Thompson stubbornly closing the ironworks, and this lock out continued until his death in 1879.



Cyfarthfa Ironworks Circa 1900

In 1879, the Ironworks' was inherited by Robert Thompson's sons; William, Robert and Richard who invested £150,000 in converting the works to produce steel, requiring a number of changes in the layout of the site. This put such a strain on the finances of the family that the brothers became a



Cyfarthfa Park Circa 1875

Limited Company, trading as Crawshay Brothers, Cyfarthfa Ltd in 1890.

playground and bandstand. The park was also used as a rallying ground for trade unions during the General Strike of 1926.

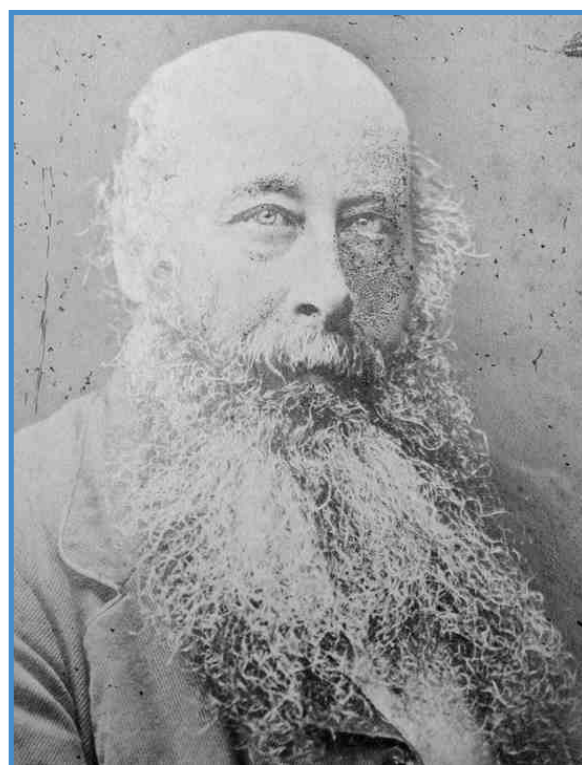
Meanwhile, the steelworks deteriorated further. Though there was a brief revival was held during the First World War for the production of shell casings and other

munitions, it finally closed in 1919. Demolition followed.

The steelworks struggled to remain profitable and in 1902 it was purchased by the owners of the rival Dowlais Steelworks.

Change in ownership

The Crawshay family had abandoned their home in Cyfarthfa to move to their country estate in Caversham Park, Oxfordshire in 1889. The Castle remained derelict until its purchase in 1908 by the Merthyr Tydfil Council for £18,000. Over the coming years, the castle was converted to a high standard to provide a grammar school, museum and art gallery in January 1913 while the park and gardens were turned over for recreational purposes. During the 1920s, construction in the park facilitated the development of a bowling green, pavilion, tennis courts, tea shelter,



Robert Thompson Crawshay

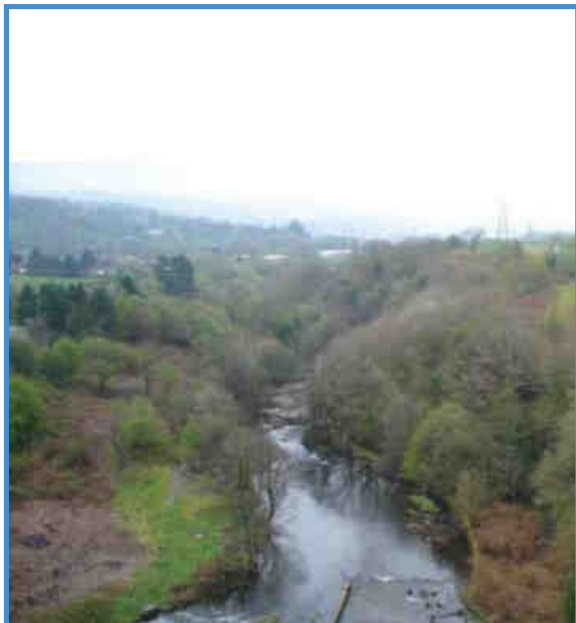


Mid 20th Century to date



EFI Industrial estate dividing Cyfarthfa Conservation Area

During the Second World War, part of the ironworks site was redeveloped for a factory occupied by Rotax, who produced aircraft instruments. Subsequent factories, notably Tri-Ang, also occupied the site until the mid 1970s. In the mid-80s, a new industrial estate subsequently covered land to the north of the Ironworks site. However, some of the businesses on the site proved to be unsuccessful



View looking along the Taff Fawr Valley

By the latter part of the later 20th Century, the Council had acquired most of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks site as part of a Compulsory Purchase Order. As a result of which, many of these industrial buildings were demolished and the site in front of the blast furnaces had been cleared. The works were initiated as part of a World Heritage Site bid, which had subsequently failed.

In terms of the management of leisure facilities within the Conservation Area, the park had suffered the demolition of a number of features such as its entrance lodges, boathouse, tea shelter and kitchen gardens. The latter was replaced by a Parks Department Depot, which detracts from the visual amenity of the parkland. The Taf Trail was also developed through the ironworks site and up the Taf Fawr valley to the Cefn Viaduct by the Groundwork Trust in the 1990s, improving it as a recreational route.



The Tea House. Cyfarthfa Park, c1950

3.2 Historic Significance

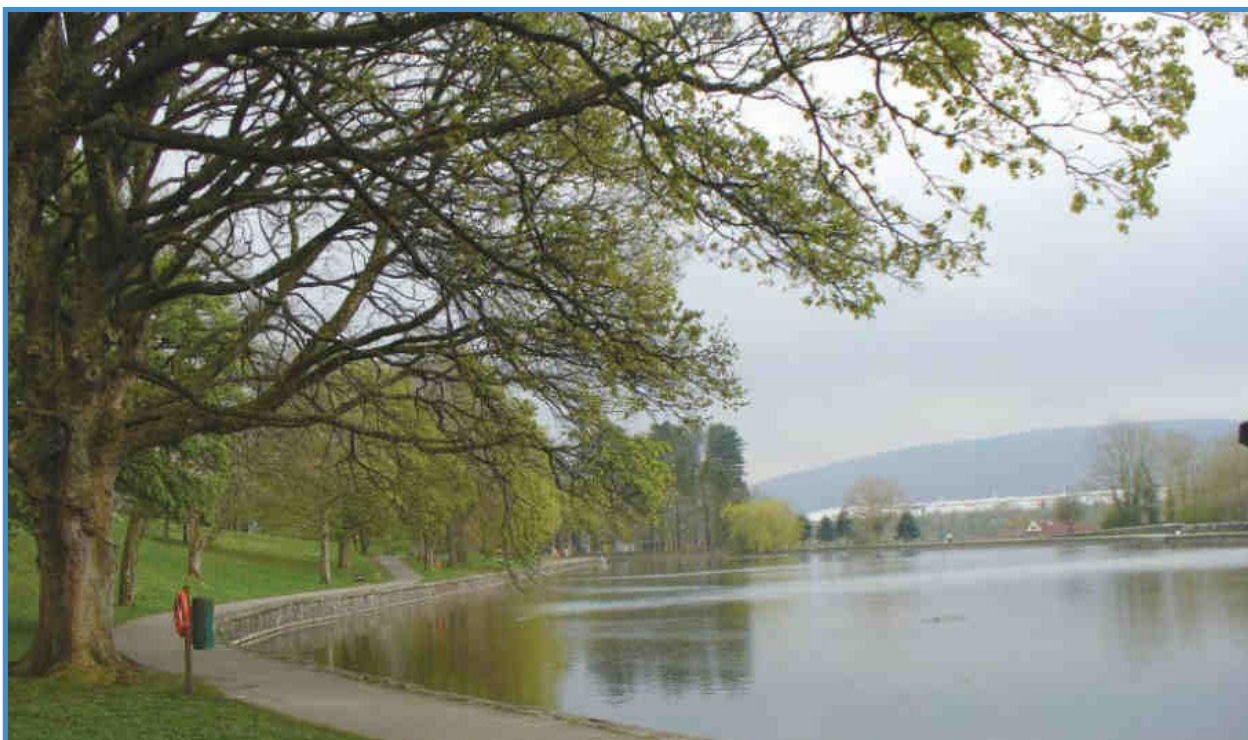
The Conservation Area of Cyfarthfa is important as it is a lasting symbol of Merthyr Tydfil's strength during the 18th and 19th Centuries as Ironworks of Worldwide significance. This is displayed with the grand architectural scale of Cyfarthfa Castle, Cefn Viaduct and the Blast Furnace bank. In addition, the designated area consists of 16 structures which are of national importance. The Conservation Area provides additional protection for the setting of such monuments, it adds fortification to the link between the Ironworks and Cyfarthfa Park and recognises further the historic merits of Cyfarthfa Park and Castle.

Below is an assessment of the significance of the Conservation Area:

Local Importance

The Cyfarthfa Ironworks site was at the centre of the industrial revolution in the South East Wales coalfield while the buildings and archaeological remains of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks Landscape form just one part of the wider landscape character of Merthyr Tydfil. The site at Cyfarthfa provides a detailed account of the Town's beginnings, and is at the centre of the town's history. The Ironworks was involved in many of the historical events of Merthyr Tydfil, such as the early industrial revolution, the Merthyr Rising of 1831, the lockout of 1874-9 and the depression of the mid to late 19th Century to name but a few. Such events are important in presenting the evolution of the Town.

In terms of its significance to local residents, the Conservation Area forms a vital component to local



The lake at Cyfarthfa Park



communities as one of few amenity spaces in their locality. The adoption of Cyfarthfa Park by the Council in 1908 had the purpose of meeting the recreational needs of the local community. As a result, it is highly valued by local residents and local community groups and organisations, such as the Friends of Cyfarthfa Park, the Merthyr Tydfil Angling Association and Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust. Additionally, the High School at Cyfarthfa Castle is synonymous with a number of generations of pupils, and is a key component in the community for that reason.



Clocktower to Pandy Farm

A number of smaller elements of the local built heritage add to the amenity of the Conservation Area, namely the stone walls and cast iron fencing that surround Cyfarthfa Castle and parts of the River Taf. The unscheduled remains of the Cyfarthfa fingertip provide for an interesting man-made feature of the landscape by means of a cinder tip, while the Cyfarthfa museum contains portraits of the Crawshay family, examples of steel and iron work, and much on Merthyr's industrial and cultural life.

National Importance



Fountain near Cyfarthfa Castle

The built heritage of Cyfarthfa Conservation Area is dominated by buildings from the early 19th Century while employing styles of grandeur. The buildings and structures in the area are predominantly built of pennant stone with limestone incorporated on buildings of a higher status. Many of which have been recognised nationally as buildings, structures, or archaeological remains of special historic interest.

Listed Buildings

There are a total of twelve buildings within the Conservation Area that have been designated as statutory Listed Buildings of Special Historic or Architectural Interest. The Listed Buildings contribute significantly to the Historic Interest of the Conservation Area, while their amalgamation relates to the legacy that the Crawshay dynasty has left in Merthyr Tydfil. The sparse distribution of these grand buildings and structures creates a simple landscape character.

The Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area are as follows:

- Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and School (**Grade I**)
- Pont-y-Cafnau (**Grade II***)
- Cyfarthfa Castle Fountain (**Grade II**)
- Gate piers and railings at entrance to Cyfarthfa Park (**Grade II**)
- Park walls flanking railings at Cyfarthfa Park (**Grade II**)
- Pandy Farmhouse (**Grade II**)
- Barn and attached L-Plan stable range at Pandy Farm (**Grade II**)
- Tower adjoining Pandy Farmhouse including tower and bell (**Grade II**)
- Limekilns south of Cefn Bridge (**Grade II**)
- Pont-y-Cefn Bridge (**Grade II**)
- Old Cefn Bridge (**Grade II**)
- Cefn Railway Viaduct (**Grade II**)



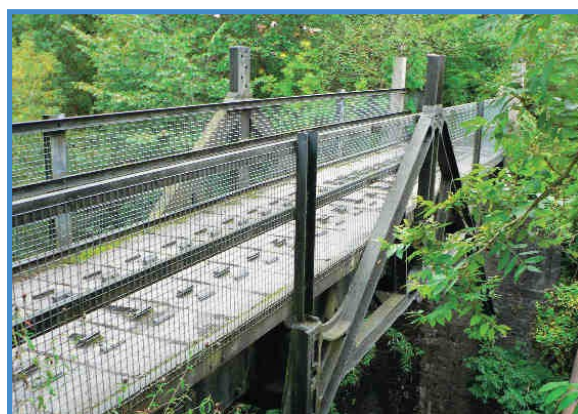
Cyfarthfa Castle

Cyfarthfa Castle is listed as Grade I and is therefore considered to be of exceptional interest. As the only building of this Grade within the County Borough, it reflects the architectural interest of the building's late Georgian period design. Its importance is achieved by its status as the best preserved and grandest Ironmaster's house in Wales. This provides a clear image of the

wealth created for the industrial elite at the time by the industrial revolution in extractive industries.

Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge meanwhile is listed as Grade II* as a building of outstanding interest. This reflects the structure's importance as an engineering innovation in bridge construction, metal casting and fabrication and the use of tramways during the industrial revolution. The importance of the bridge is far more superior than its simple structure, but more significantly its linkages with other elements of the former Ironworks site, such as the tramways, furnaces and aqueducts and the role it played to facilitate successful Iron production.

The Grade II Listed Pandy Farm and associated outbuildings is located between the Castle and Ironworks, and comprises of a farmhouse, clock tower, barn and stables. This contributes significantly to the architecture of the area and displays 19th century cultural attitudes towards agriculture. The building also displays a good relationship with the nearby Cyfarthfa Park.



Pont-y-Cafnau



Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The Conservation Area encompasses a number of ancient monuments which display the industrial evolution of Merthyr Tydfil. The following areas have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments in recognition of their archaeological potential, including:

- Cyfarthfa Ironworks furnace bank, engine house and melting house **(GM425)**
- Cyfarthfa Ironworks brick kilns and the site of an early farmhouse **(GM425)**
- Gurnos Quarry tramroad and Taf Fechan Leat **(GM 478)**
- Pont-y-Cafnau **(GM424)**
- The Tai Mawr Leat **(GM478)**



Cyfarthfa Ironworks Furnaces

The Conservation Area at present is characterised by a number of nationally and internationally important remains which are protected by legislation. This includes the recently restored furnace bank and a number of water management and transport features. Such elements are architecturally significant, and the blast furnaces' exaggerated size in particular creates a unique setting.

Scheduled Ancient Monument is the highest official grade of designation of archaeological remains in the United Kingdom, and at present, the archaeological remains of the Ironworks include the best preserved late 18th and early 19th Century blast furnaces in the country with substantial survival of associated transport and waterpower features. Such features have the potential to be of international interest.

Registered Park and Gardens



View from Cyfarthfa Castle c1875

Cyfarthfa Park has been recorded on the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, and is assigned a Grade II* Listing. Though a non-statutory designation, it demonstrates that a competent authority has deemed the park to be of special interest within accepted and regarded criteria. Its presence on the register is a consideration in the determination of all planning applications within its boundaries.

The context for the area centres around a Victorian style park, which was converted to public uses from a private park and ironmasters' throne. The

park contains a number of formal gardens and was established between 1825 and 1870. The area was graded as it exhibits the survival of much of the park and gardens of Cyfarthfa Castle, the most historically important Ironmaster's home in Wales. The park and gardens are of great interest, not only as the landscape setting for the Romantic mansion, but also for their proximity and usefulness to the ironworks. This demonstrates the consideration that the area enjoys a group value with its surrounding elements.



Balancing Ponds above Cyfarthfa Castle, Penry Williams

Historic Landscape

Much of the northern part of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough is registered as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest within the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (1998). This recognises Merthyr Tydfil and Cyfarthfa as one of Wales's most valuable cultural assets.

Cyfarthfa Park and Ironworks form an integral part of this area, and form the core of this landscape. This core demonstrates integral connections with the remainder of the landscape including its

associated settlements in Williamstown, the Quar, Georgetown and Morgantown to the south and east. The site also demonstrates a historic connection with its resource areas to the south and west. Most notable of this is the land leased for mineral extraction including that which ranged along the eastern-facing slopes of Mynydd Aberdare, the workings alongside the river Taf and the workings near Gethin, Llwyn-Celyn, Ynysfach and Rhydyar.

Today this resource of extractive landscapes is of national and international importance displaying a complex evolution of workings, including scouring, quarrying and pit working together with water management systems used to help raise and move materials and the transport system, including inclines, plateways and tramroads, needed to carry the mineral resources of Cyfarthfa. The workings also graphically display the evolving efficiencies of disposing of overburden and waste.



Cefn Viaduct



4 Spatial Analysis

4.1 Preface

Cyfarthfa contains an historic industrial landscape of national importance, including the preserved furnace bank of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks, which was the largest of its type in the World by the early 19th Century. The area also includes well preserved transport and minerals corridors. In addition to the industrial landscape, the area includes the nationally important residence of the Crawshay dynasty and 190 acres of parkland and gardens which provide further testament to the wealth and power produced by the exploitation of South Wales' natural resources.

This section will generally analyse what makes the Conservation Area unique while testing as to why this area contains such a rich heritage merit.

4.2 Location and Context



Views towards the fountain from Cyfarthfa Castle

The Cyfarthfa Conservation Area is located within the Taff Valley which stretches from the Brecon Beacons down towards Cardiff. The area lies approximately half a mile to the north west of Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre and is within close proximity of historic ironworks residences such as

Morgantown, Williamstown, Georgetown and the Quar. The later 20th Century housing estate of the Gurnos is located to the north and northeast. Gellideg housing estate lies to the west of the Conservation Area. The later developed Cyfarthfa Industrial Estate and Cyfarthfa Retail Park are located to the south of the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area adjoins rural areas to the north which form part of the Taff Fawr and Taff Fechan Valleys which this Area amalgamates.

4.3 The Character and Interrelationship of Places

The Cyfarthfa Conservation Area lies immediately to the north-west of the main urban area of Merthyr Tydfil and in its present form offers an escape from the unique grid structured terraced homes of the central area.

Cyfarthfa is a relatively large Conservation Area, covering an area of approximately 100 hectares, though it contains a very minimal amount of dwellings. The Area consists of a number of Character Areas, including the Park, Ironworks, River Corridor and Tramroad. These will be explored in further detail in the Character Analysis section of the report. It is noted however, that the character is strongly defined around the late 18th Century and 19th Century Iron Industry.

This has shaped the Conservation Area and has created a number of elements, including:

- **Land Form** – The Area contains a unique topography in that it slopes in the form of terraces to the east of the Conservation Area,

overlooking a comparatively flat plateau to the west. Travelling further north along the Gurnos Quarry tramroad creates a narrow, partially man-made valley, unique to the area. To the North West, a far wider more natural basin is formed, linked at two sides by the Cefn Viaduct.

- **Key Buildings** – The Area may be noted for its good density of key Listed and Scheduled Buildings and Structures, including the Cefn Viaduct, Cyfarthfa Castle and the Pandy Farm buildings. These offer a sense of accentuated importance to the area.
- **Historic Significance** – The Area is steeped in historic importance being the location of

the largest ironworks in the World during the 19th Century. The Area is central to the history of Merthyr Tydfil.

- **Open Spaces** – Cyfarthfa is set within a historic landscape and contains the most prominent public park in Merthyr Tydfil. The area, as a whole, is generally accessible to the public for recreation and is open in character.
- **Industrial Relics** – A number of Scheduled and unscheduled Monuments appear throughout the Area reflecting the industrial evolution of Merthyr Tydfil. These make a significant contribution to the area in that they are architecturally significant and create a unique setting to the area.



Cyfarthfa Castle Aerial Photograph



- **Biodiversity** – The Area consists of segments of natural woodland, grassland alongside manmade and natural water bodies. This in turn, creates a desirable habitat for biodiversity. Areas near the Taf Fawr, Taf Fechan and within Cyfarthfa Park are subject to a number of statutory designations.

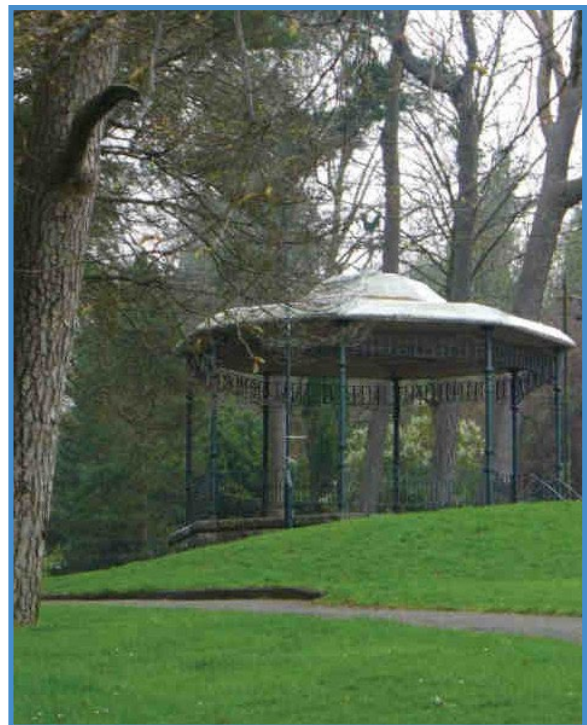
The Conservation Area consists of the remains of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks and steelworks, which supersedes it. It holds the remains of the former blast furnaces, coke ovens, refineries, engine houses, tramways and aqueducts. The area also consists of Cyfarthfa Castle, which was built as the home and throne to the Ironworks' owner. This centrepiece is surrounded by Listed gardens, parkland and woods, and now forms part of a romantic style public park consisting of terraces, lawns, and a lake. The castle and park was originally intended to face the former ironworks' site across the Taf Valley, although to date is divided somewhat by a modern housing and industrial estate.

The Conservation Area stretches to include sections of the rivers Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan which runs from the Brecon Beacons National Park through steep-sided and wooded valleys and converge to the south of Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer. To the north west of the Area, the Cefn Viaduct crosses the Taf Fawr Valley. A weir lies briskly to the south of the viaduct which fed water to the Tai Mawr Leat. A large cinder heap known as Cyfarthfa Fingertip lies between the leat and the river Taf Fawr forming a steep drop.

The former ironworks site is located to the south

west of the Conservation Area and includes a large area of level ground from the remaining blast furnace towards the rivers' edge. Less prominent remains of other buildings of the ironworks are hidden within a belt of woodland to the north of the furnace bank. The national cycle way of the Taf Trail runs from the viaduct down the valley and through the ironworks site.

In the north east of the Conservation Area, the river Taf Fechan runs through the former Gurnos Quarry, where a weir feeds water into another narrow canal which follows the valley to Cyfarthfa Park. This, in turn, feeds its ornamental lake with water. The course of the former Gurnos tramway runs between the river and canal and continued across the Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge over the River Taf. However, an industrial estate now stands at this passage.



The bandstand, Cyfarthfa Park

4.4 Landscape Setting

The Conservation Area is located at the head of the Taf Valley and surrounds the confluence of the Rivers Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan. The Area follows the course of the Taf Fawr and Fechan Valleys to the north and the River Taf to the south. The Area is set outside the Town Centre of Merthyr Tydfil whilst the settlement of Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer is wedged in between these two valleys. The wider landscape of the Conservation Area contains the mines, quarries, transport and water features which provided resources to the Cyfarthfa Iron Works. Visible remains are also apparent on mountains above Heolgerrig and Winch Fawr as well as towards the aesthetically striking Gurnos

Quarry to the North East.

Areas of modern and semi-modern housing development exist around the fringes of the Conservation Area including the Gurnos and Gellideg Estates. These have reduced the areas connection with the wider historic landscape. Some areas of modern industrial development appear to be unsympathetic to the historic character of the area.

The Conservation Area consists of a very varying and undulating topography, which creates a unique landscape character. Steep sided and narrow valleys run from the north of the Area, becoming wider and more open to the south. The



The landscape of Cyfarthfa Park



terraces which were carved to accommodate tramways and canals run artificial causeways through the narrow valleys. In the south west of the Area, the remains of the Ironworks create a large stable plateau, while the land becomes more fragile and altered to the north, with the visual remains of cinder tips, slag heaps and demolished buildings.

Within Cyfarthfa Park, the castle overlooks the valley and former ironworks site to the west. It provides a series of different landscapes running up the hill, containing of the watercourse to the bottom of the park, lawns and gardens further up, then woodlands, and finally remnants of the agricultural landscape which covered the area before the creation of the park in the early 20th Century.



View of the Taf Fechan Valley

The Park, Ironworks and contributing valley landscape provides for a large and valued area of open space that serves the dense urban development of Merthyr Tydfil.

4.5 Use

The Conservation Area is largely used as a recreational area including the ironworks remains

and park which provide an important symbol of the area's history of iron founding and industrialism. The area therefore provides a cultural and educational asset for local residents.

The Conservation Area provides a number of areas for walking, cycling and horse riding – notably along the Taf Trail in the Ironworks site. Meanwhile the park allows for a range of sports activities including bowls, tennis, basketball and five-a-side football. The Pandy Field is used as a football and rugby field while also being used for informal play. A number of exercise stations exist around the lake for general exercise. Play areas are located to the south of the park, and leisure facilities such as a paddling pool, play area and miniature railway provide for this.



The stage at Cyfarthfa Park

The Castle is equipped as a High School, Museum and Art Gallery, and therefore performs an educational function for the community. The museum provides resources for the industrial, political and domestic history of Merthyr Tydfil and South Wales. A number of events and courses are run from the Museum and Art Gallery.

An area within the park on the site of the former Kitchen Garden is occupied by Cyfarthfa Enterprise by means of horticultural training. This offers skill training to disadvantaged members of the local community. The remainder of the Kitchen Gardens area is used as the Parks Depot and storage area. Elsewhere, Cyfarthfa Park is used as an important venue for numerous cultural events, such as for music events, fairs and fireworks displays.



The view over Cyfarthfa Park Lake

The Taf Trail represents a nationally significant route for walkers and cyclists providing a link between Cardiff and the Brecon Beacons National Park. Improved access by means of the Taf Trail has made the Ironworks site popular as a destination for walkers.

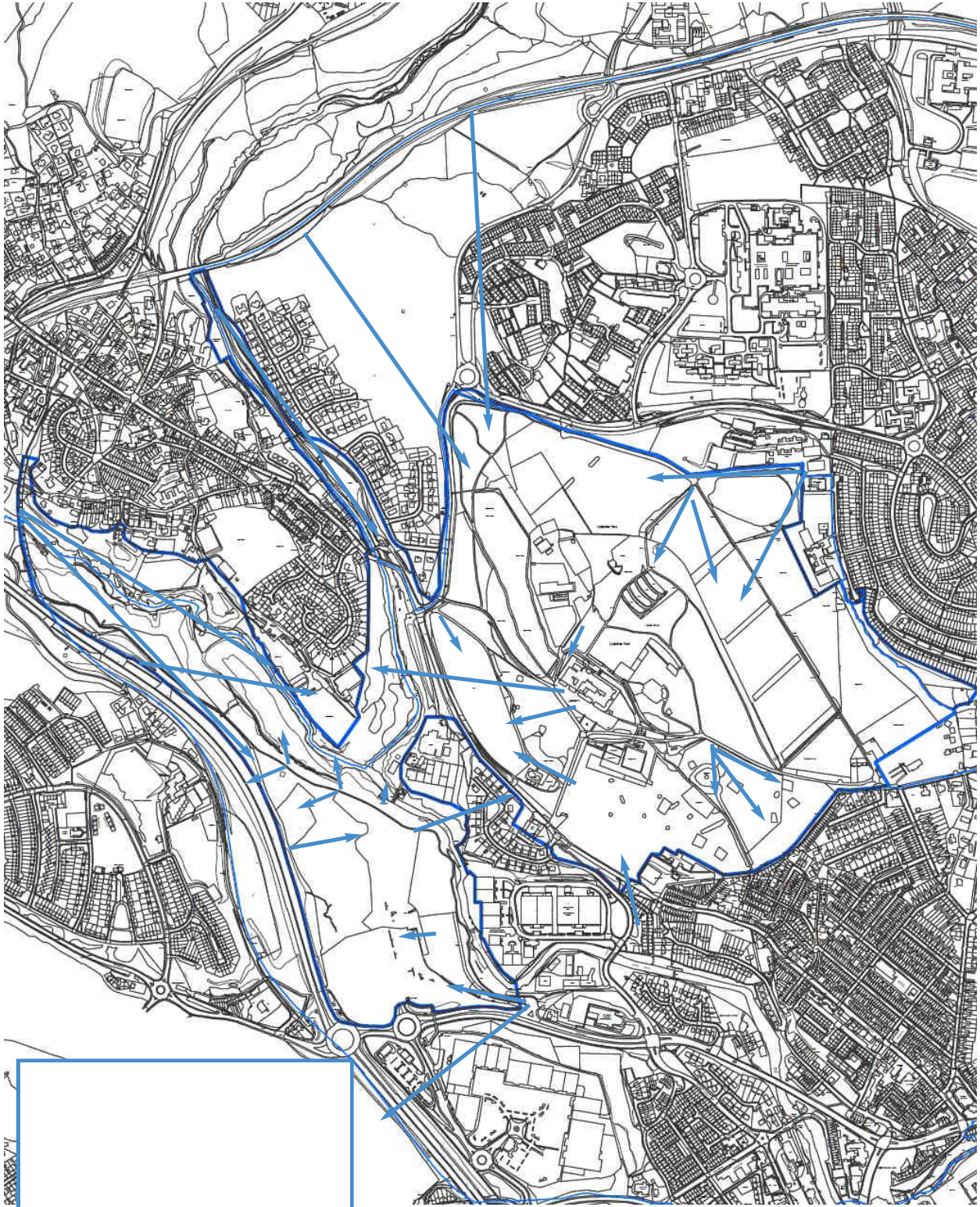
4.6 Scale

The Cyfarthfa Conservation Area offers a vast expanse of historic landscape with minimal development. Prior to the demolition of much of the Ironworks, the area was surfaced with numerous transportation lines, spoil tips and large industrial buildings which created a sparsely laid out but large scale development. Much of today's appearance derives from this.

The area, as it stands, is very sparsely populated with buildings. The rare constructions, such as Cefn Viaduct, the ornamental lake, Gurnos Quarry tramroad, the Blast Furnaces and Cyfarthfa Castle are ostentatious in scale and offer a striking vista onto the surrounding landscape. The setting of these should be retained in order to maintain a level of status to such buildings.

Various outbuildings and structures are dotted along the landscape of the Conservation Area, which are of smaller size. These include public toilets, bandstands, playgrounds and various tips. The scales of these smaller structures contrast immensely with the buildings and structures of higher status.

The area is primarily noted for its open landscape. The preservation of this is important to ensure that its feel and context connected with the various industrial remnants is retained.



Key Views and Vistas in the Conservation Area



4.7 Key views and vistas

Cyfarthfa offers a number of key views and vistas which form part of the Area's character. The area is characterised by its historic park and garden which remains a good example of an ironmasters' seat within its parkland setting connecting with the adjacent ironworks. The area is largely demonstrated in paintings by Penry Williams during the mid-19th Century, which reflect the historic character.

The most striking vista associated with Penry Williams within the Conservation Area is the view from the southern entrance to Cyfarthfa Park looking up towards the Castle. This includes a tree lined vista which opens up to display the main frontage of Cyfarthfa Castle overlooking the landscape.

Similarly, key views can be achieved southwards from the Castle towards the lake and to a lesser extent, the Ironworks site. The Castle was built primarily for views to be achieved over the ironworks site for its owner (Richard Crawshay) to overlook his dynasty. High and matured trees block these views to date, therefore it may be worth reducing the height of these in order to achieve the intended vista. It is noted, that some trees obscure views directly to the south towards Cyfarthfa Retail Park. This, however, is considered to be somewhat of an advantage to the amenity of the Park.

Key views can be achieved through the Park from east to west encompassing the tranquil parkland areas. However, views to the north are blocked by the castle woodlands, which screen views towards

the Gurnos Estate.

Along the Taf Trail, key vistas may be achieved to the east, which overlook Cyfarthfa Castle in its woodland setting, and also north looking towards the Cefn Viaduct which crosses over the Taf Fawr Valley. When arriving onto the Cefn Viaduct from the Taf Trail, an excellent woodland setting may be captured near the village of Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer whilst looking south-eastwards down the valley.

Within the Ironworks site, closer to the River Taf, a magnificent vista may be captured of the Ironworks furnace bank which offer an overbearing frontage. This Scheduled Ancient Monument in itself may be appreciated with a minimal setting in order to appreciate its sheer size.

The Gurnos Tramroad contains some particularly breathtaking views when travelling north, which encompass the narrow quarried valleys, looking back towards Cyfarthfa Castle and Ironworks. Equally as impressive are vistas of the Brecon Beacons further to the north which provide an excellent backdrop to this landscape area.



4.8 Ecology

The Conservation Area is lacking in dense urban sprawl, which allows it to largely become a habitat for numerous species. As a result, a number of statutory and non-statutory designations exist.



The Taf Fechan retains a high biodiversity value

The Taf Fechan Local Nature Reserve has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This area is located within the valley northwards from the Old Cefn Bridge. It includes vast woodland with canopies of beech, birch, ash, alder and grey willow. In travelling further north up the Gurnos Quarry Tramroad, wild flowers are supported amidst the hawthorn scrub. The woodland floor is also covered with a variety of ferns, mosses and wild flowers.

The Rivers Taf, Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan are a popular habitat for wild birds including the grey heron, grey wagtail and white throated dippers. Known sightings of otter and wild salmon have been reported in this area.

The Conservation Area, to the north of Cyfarthfa Park contains deciduous woodland, which is approaching over 200 years in age. Such areas are likely to provide good habitat conditions for potential ecological finds. Past surveys indicate at least 25 species of breeding birds and a high potential for roosting bats. Other species within the woodland area include wood mouse, bank vole, grey squirrel and foxes while ponds surrounding the woodland area are known to contain frog, toad and palmate newt. The woodland area is also known to contain a number of wild flowers.

Unfortunately, areas within the Conservation Area have developed a presence of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, Rhododendrons and common weeds. The uncontrollable growth of foreign species offers a detrimental appearance of some areas of the Conservation Area.



The Taf Fechan Valley is designated as a SSSI

4.9 Hard Landscaping

Cyfarthfa Conservation Area is hardly notably for its hard landscaping due to its location within a number of character areas such as public parkland, ancient woodland and as the former site of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks. However, some areas around built development offer hard landscaping features of note.

Boundary Treatments

The majority of boundaries within the Conservation Area are defined by rubble stone walls. These form an integral part of the Conservation Area in defining the historic location of ownership boundaries.



Gates at the entrance of Cyfarthfa Park

Boundaries of particular note include a 2m high wall surrounding the southern grounds of Cyfarthfa Castle, areas of retaining walls around the ironworks site and walls surrounding Pandy Farm. Some unsympathetic treatments have been made to some stone walls in replacing them with concrete alternatives. These examples may be

prevalent within Cyfarthfa Park. The secondary form of boundary treatment is through dwarf walls, up to a metre in height with cast iron railings with ornate designs making up for the remainder of the height. The walls surrounding the south-eastern and south-western areas of Cyfarthfa Park are built in this way.

Surfacing



Cyfarthfa Castle, overlooking its grounds

It appears that limited historic surfacing and paving remains within Cyfarthfa Conservation Area. Paving and Road surfaces in the Conservation Area appear to be largely modern approaches. Very little attempt has been made to create historically sympathetic renovations of surfaced areas.

Public highways are largely covered with tarmac, as are many public footpaths; including sections of the Taf trail, footpaths within Cyfarthfa Park and access roads. Areas within Cyfarthfa Park appear to have retained pennant stone kerb edges, though some replacements have been inserted with concrete blocks.

The preservation of the cobble lined drainage



channel which flanks the driveway to Cyfarthfa Park is a commendable retention, although some areas of which have fallen into disrepair.

Areas to the north of Cyfarthfa Park are surfaced in more natural materials such as beaten earth or stone chippings, which offers a natural look to the woodland area. No unnatural features are introduced in this area.

Furniture

The eastern side of the Conservation Area including Cyfarthfa Park is laden with street furniture for the amenity of the public. Conversely, the western side of the Conservation Area is lacking in purpose built features for public enjoyment. Granted, a number of remains are situated in the Ironworks area, though are remnants

of the industrial past.

In Cyfarthfa Park, a number of cosmetic touches have helped enhanced the character of its vicinity. These conform to a unified colour scheme to match green and gold livery which was advocated by the Crawshay family. Such features in this livery include Victorian style signposts, benches, railings, gates, bollards, painting to outbuildings and bins.

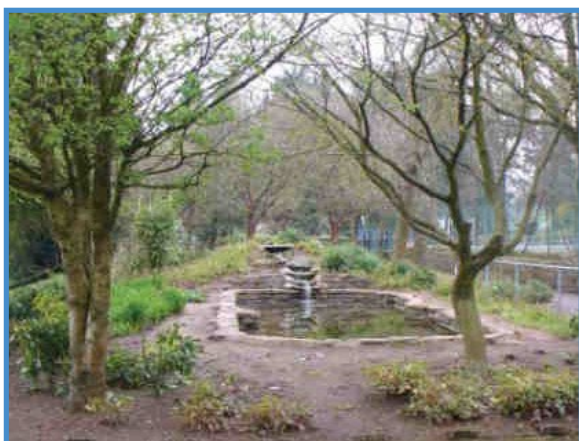
A fair amount of furniture exists in the Parkland area which performs a more functional role, and does not make a contribution to the character of an area. This includes green painted vandal-proof benches, a pond dipping platform and some boundary treatments and fencing around formal play spaces.



River Taf from the Pont-y-Cafnau bridge

Areas outside of the park are less notable for additional furnishings. The Taf Trail, which runs through the Ironworks site to the east of the Conservation Area, consists of some elements of hard furnishings such as steel railings and gates. These are constructed to a fairly standard specification, and do not offer an enhancement to the character of the Conservation Area. Additionally, some wooden walls and railings alongside the Taf Trail remain in character with the natural setting of the Ironworks and offer a neutral contribution.

4.10 Soft Landscaping



Ornamental Pond in Sensory Garden

The Conservation Area consists of a considerable amount of woodland, parkland and recreation space. However, much of this has been cultivated naturally, while the remainder (such as that in Cyfarthfa Park) had been manufactured to suit the needs of Cyfarthfa Castle's owner.

Corridors of soft landscaping has been cultivated on the Taf Trail corridor incorporating areas of grass and specimen trees which artificially creates an enjoyable setting for walking and cycling along. Wider from the corridor area, the landscape is of a

more natural, untamed format. This is shown with a number of trees and plants growing within an undulating topography. The landscape of the Ironworks area is populated with various scrub, broadleaved woodland, wet woodland, grassland and dense bracken further solidifying its natural feel.

Semi-natural soft landscaping is found by means of monuments and remnants of the Ironworks' past which have been reclaimed by the natural environment. This includes the Cyfarthfa Fingertip, which to an extent has been reclaimed as calcareous grassland and the areas of trees which now emulate from the remains of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks.

Further north along the Taf Fechan Valley, a landscape has been carved into the scenery by means of the Tai Mawr Leat which is formed by a ledge cut back into the rock face of the cliffs.



Sculptured Way Finder

Cyfarthfa Park contains a good level of lower level planting and incorporates a fair amount of varying landscapes, such as meadows, woodland, open areas and planted spaces. The Park retains an



openly landscape aspect from the frontage, with scattered tree planting, lawns sown with wildflowers and an amount of garden arrangements.

A number of artificially created features have been added to the landscape of Cyfarthfa Park such as elliptical ponds, play areas and clay based footpaths. Semi-natural features may also be found by means of the reclaimed areas such as the Pineapple Pits, disused bandstand and Bryn Cae Owen ponds. Such areas have been replaced with by trees and grassland which add to the amenity of the parkland.

4.11 Public and Private Space

The Conservation Area includes adequate levels of access to open space and publicly accessible countryside.



Views across wild flower meadows to the north

Cyfarthfa Park is the largest formalised parkland within Merthyr Tydfil, which makes up for almost half of the Conservation Area. This is clearly defined as formalised public space in containing parkland features such as walkways, parking areas

and open areas within a strong physical boundary.

Further to the north of the Conservation Area is the Taf Fechan Valley walk alongside the Gurnos Quarry Tramway. This represents an area of open countryside which may be explored at the leisure of pedestrians. The footpaths within this segment are less formalised, giving the opportunity to roam. The tramway path eventually leads to the National Park and contains excellent views to enjoy.

The ironworks area to the West contains of a formalised pathway, which is paved to suggest that roaming from the route is not necessary. The ironworks is predominantly an area of informal open space where the amenity of the surrounding remains may be enjoyed, although further up the Taf Trail are physical barriers such as fencing which suggests areas of private land. Although, not publicly accessible, the open private space contributes to the open setting of the Conservation Area and may be appreciated from public footpaths.



Old Salvation Army Flower bed

4.12 Detailing and Materials

The use of specific materials and details makes a significant contribution to the Conservation Area. Although there is a diminutive amount of separate buildings within Cyfarthfa (compared to other Conservation Areas within the Borough), a number of prevalent materials create a distinctive palette for the area. Furthermore, the materials used reflect the age and purpose of the buildings at their time of construction.

Materials such as limestone and rubble stone are predominant throughout the area, and are used on such buildings as Cyfarthfa Castle, a number of its matching walls, the outbuildings and clock tower in Pandy Farm. The magnificent Ironworks furnaces and a number of bridges are similarly clad in rock faced stone. This reflects a uniformed design style, reflecting its period of construction.

The main habitable buildings within the Area retain

features such as arched openings and crenulations to their highest points. This relates to the common castle-resembling theme of the area.

Detailing, where applicable, are often constructed of brickwork, such as the underside arches of a number of bridges, Cefn Viaduct and the Cyfarthfa Blast Furnaces. Within the Park, stonework to different patterns constitutes the window and door details of these features.

There appears to be minimal modern alterations to buildings within the Conservation Area, and they are well-preserved as good historic examples. The frontage of Cyfarthfa Castle, and the buildings of Cyfarthfa park retain their timber framed windows. There are a number of inappropriate uPVC alterations to the rear of the Castle. Regardless of which, later alterations to the building have managed to retain a fair amount of its original character and attempts to reflect its particular vernacular architectural styling.



The greenhouse c1930



5 Character Analysis

5.1 Preface

The purpose of this section is to look at the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area as a whole, as well as the character of the individual buildings and structures. Grouped in Character Areas, this section will assess the architectural and historic merits, whilst identifying those areas which enhance or possibly detract from the special character. An assessment has been undertaken of the existing buildings' and structural features' impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The character areas for this section are listed as follows:

- **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

5.2 Cyfarthfa Park South and Castle

This area was historically used for the enjoyment and production for the purpose of Cyfarthfa Castle. The south-western area of the Park is a largely open area of lawns with scattered mature tree planting and garden terraces sloping downwards from the Castle. Areas of formal gardens, rockeries and recreation facilities are scattered across this area, divided by low hedgerows. Further to the west is a partially screened area which offers a quiet and private atmosphere. This area retains a high level of attraction with a mixture of lawns, planting, open and enclosed areas. Further to the eastern fringes of the park is an ornamental lake, flanking a

driveway leading up to the castle. The park's boundaries are marked by a mixture of stone walls and railings on dwarf rails, while the entrance, unique in its own right, houses large wrought iron gates and railings.

The key elements which are essential to this character area are detailed below:

Cyfarthfa Castle



Cyfarthfa Castle, principal elevation

Cyfarthfa Castle is the centrepiece of the Cyfarthfa Park South Character Area and represents the only building in the County Borough deemed to be of outstanding architectural or historic importance, hence its Grade I Listing.

The structure was built by William Crawshay from 1824 until its opening in 1825 to provide a throne, overlooking his Ironworks opposite the River Taf. The house succeeds previous residences built by Anthony Bacon including Gwaelodygarth, and was built to the cost of £30,000. The two storey building was originally divided into two sections - one which included the living quarters and the remainder included practical functions such as the stables, wash house and dairy.

The Castle was designed by Robert Lugar in a picturesque style copying medieval castle features combining them with gothic elements. The building is rectangular in shape with almost a symmetrical entrance and garden fronts meeting at a circular corner tower. It is constructed largely of limestone with bath stone dressings. The use of a castellated style was deemed suitable for the mountainous landscape and its blend with local stone. This style had already been employed elsewhere in Wales, such as Fonmon Castle. The interior, meanwhile, was originally designed with a mixture of neo-classical and gothic styles.



Cyfarthfa Castle, south west tower

In the early 1900s, the Castle and Park was purchased by the Merthyr Tydfil Corporation for £18,000 following its abandonment in 1889. In 1913, the Castle Building was converted to the use as a museum and school, and some of the building's fixtures pre-date this. Works for this facilitated that demolition and rebuilding of service rooms to the eastern and northern side of the Castle and remaining rooms were remodelled to a good standard while the entrance to the museum was altered.



Entrance foyer, Cyfarthfa Castle Museum

Most of the school dates back to 1910 but along the southern garden at first floor level, much of the original building survives, such as the circular music room, retaining good quality joinery, a fireplace and plasterwork.

More recent changes to the castle include the addition of a stage to the gymnasium, the infilling of part of the former square courtyard, the addition of garages near the Caretaker's House and the provision of a small café. A number of windows to the rear of the school have been replaced with uPVC in recent times, which detract from a number of good quality alterations.

Boundary Treatments

The park's boundaries are marked with a mixture of stone walls and railings. This offers the sense of a formally designed landscape. The gates at the south west entrance, erected in 1825 though subsequently modified, are supported by railings on both sides and are painted in forest green and gold to match Crawshay family livery. These have a vertical emphasis. Its colourings are a running theme throughout the park.



Original Fireplace, Cyfarthfa Castle Museum

The walls continue from the striking southwest entrance and are built to approximately 1.8 to 2metres high in coursed rubble stone, topped with intervalling stones to offer the impression of a castle. These appear to be an original feature of the park. Further eastwards past Cyfarthfa Junior School, the boundary is resumed as a lower wall with early 20th Century railings on top, maintaining a formal setting.

To the west of the lake, the park's boundary wall remains at 1.8metres high in coursed rubble stone and castellated piers to the railings in the south west. The western entrance of the park, used by goods vehicles, is less cohesve to the setting of

the park due to its 20th Century wrought iron construction.

Trees

Cyfarthfa Park generally contains a number of mature parkland trees, dating back the early 19th Century, when the Park was laid out. Upon observations, the parkland displays a number of exotic specimens such as sequoia and trees of North American origins. A mature landscape throughout the winter is provided by the large number of evergreen trees, including Cyprus and pine.



Trees by Cyfarthfa Park Lake

Pine trees run down the eastern side of the main drive which offers an established setting to the Castle, though their grant height. However, their height also restricts views from the castle towards the historic landscape, though the visually abrasive Cyfarthfa Retail Park is screened as a result.

Regardless, the dotted trees around the park offer a mature appearance which softens the contrast between the parkland in the southwest and woodland to the northeast.

Open Parkland and Gardens

The open aspect of many of the fields to the front of the castle, with scattered tree planting, preserves a valuable 19th Century character to the parkland. Some lawns have been sown with wildflowers and a number of planting groups have been established to raised and undulating areas.

More specific gardening arrangements may be found to the south east of the Castle by the form of a triangular terrace, which may be overlooked. This is divided into a number of island beds which are planted annually. The north eastern edge of this garden is marked by a bank planted with rhododendrons, which screen views to the north and is considered to be one of the lesser appealing arrangements. A path, to the south of this garden leads to the broad rockery and bandstand, overlooking fields to the south and west.

The sensory garden is located adjacent to the tennis courts to the south east of the terrace. This provides an area which stimulates a number of senses for individuals and is used frequently by a number of local health charities. The area consists of multiple flower arrangements as well as two sculptures. The area offers good views to the iron works and across Pandy Field.

The Pandy field is the largest and most recognisable open space within the Park as the host of many events within the Park, such as Fairs. It was established from the 19th Century, when it was used for agriculture. It is marked by a series of trees which accompany the main driveway towards the Castle. The area is partly made-up ground of redeposited cinder waste from the

Cyfarthfa Ironworks. To the right of the Pandy Field is a grassed area containing a stage, constructed circa 1940. This structure has a curved frontage of rock-faced stone.



Wild flowers on the slopes within the Character Area

The bandstand, located to the south eastern open fields of the park, is symbolic of its 20th Century public revival. This acts as a centerpiece for formal gardens in this area. The bandstand overlooks an area of uninterrupted sloping, gently sloping grass, dotted with specimen trees. This tranquil area forms an integral part of the Park.



The Lake

With the exception of the Castle, the lake forms the most visually significant feature of the Park, with views naturally drawn down to it from the north and eastern directions. It is also visually prominent from Brecon Road when traveling alongside the Park's southern boundary. A number of features are gathered around this spot including a children's playground, paddling pool, activity trail and miniature railway.



Early 20th Century railings at Gurnos Road

The lake receives its water supply from the Taf Fechan Leat. The stone walls that support the banks of this lake are still the original construction. However, the lake's banks as well as its feeder suffer from a number of breaches which may sabotage its own supply in the future.

The lake complements the existing setting of Cyfarthfa Castle and makes a huge contribution to the local landscape. The lake was previously a reservoir for the ironworks' mills and was part of an extensive network of ponds and water channels feeding the works. Other remains of this vast network survive in various areas of the Park. The water body was also used as a boating lake during the Crawshay era, as well as its incarnation as a

Public Park. However, this use has since ceased, and the lake is now largely used by Angling Societies and acts as a vital habitat for some wildlife. The elongated lake consists of a number of islands at its centre to support this, which are later additions during the 20th Century.

Activity Area

The Activity Area largely consists of the Children's Playground, Miniature Railway and Paddling Pool. The Children's playground lies just south of the lake and covers an area that was formerly part of it, running up to the drive from the park's south west entrance. It was constructed following the infilling of this end of the lake in the 1960s and appears to be well used. The paddling pool associated with this is in a poor condition and is only used during the summer months. Associated shelter and toilet facilities are also in poor condition.

The Cyfarthfa Model Railway was built in the late 1980s by the Merthyr Tydfil and District Model Engineering Society. This structure is contained within a fenced enclosure to the east of the Children's play area and paddling pool and is constructed as a raised track, approximately 0.45m from the ground. The track has a parameter of 240m and includes a tunnel, concrete viaduct and turntable. This track is used to pull a small number of passengers along its length.

An area surrounding the railway has been maintained as a mixture of gardens and hard standing. This helps reduce the prominent effect that the development may have on the historic setting of Cyfarthfa Castle.

The Fountain

The Grade II Listed Fountain is located below the main entrance of the Castle and directly at the head of the driveway from the entrance gates. It was constructed in the later 19th Century on a circular roll-moulded stone basin on which four cherubs are seated, though it was not placed in its current location until before 1920.

The feature provides an enhanced setting to Cyfarthfa Castle and forms part of the main visage from the bottom of the driveway.

Driveways

The drives from the park's west and south entrances leading to the Castle provide for a

surviving element of the Castle's 19th Century formal landscape, although resurfaced to date in tarmacadum from their original material of gravel.

The drains which flank the main driveway are of importance to the park containing open, cobble-lined drains with stone sides. Unfortunately, these have deteriorated over time in terms of their condition and maintenance work was conducted using materials which are of detriment to their historic quality. The drains were originally used to carry water away from the castle. This detail to the highways, although negating, still provide for an important surviving detail.

Pandy Farm

The Farm is located opposite the southern entrance to Cyfarthfa Park, to the south of Brecon



Trees within the Character Area



Road. Its outbuildings were constructed during the early 19th Century almost contemporaneous with Cyfarthfa Castle. The complex of Pandy Place (its former name) was adapted by Robert Lugar (architect of Cyfarthfa Castle) as part his landscaping works to surround the Castle. This included the introduction of a clock tower and barn to a style complementing Cyfarthfa Castle.



Pandy Farm Barn

In terms of its construction, the farmhouse is a low two-storey structure with a hipped roof of natural slate and terracotta ridge tiles. The building is clad in white painted roughcast render and retains four pane timber sash windows, and a yellow brick chimney stack at the centre of the roof's ridge. The clock tower and barn are constructed of rubble limestone, to match Cyfarthfa Castle. The tower supports a blue faced clock on its south east facing elevation below a crenulated parapet. The barn fronts onto Brecon Road and houses an arched entrance with arch headed windows.

This group of buildings provides a landmark approach to Cyfarthfa Park, signified by the clock tower which stands proud, opposite the main gates and gate piers. This significant group forms an integral part of the historic landscape and

demonstrates group value with the Castle itself.



Pandy Farm Farmhouse

Bowling Green and Tennis Courts

Following the acquisition of the Park by the Local Council in 1902, the Bowling Green and Tennis courts were the first facilities to be added to the Park. The area is well maintained, although some elements detract from its peaceful and neutral feel, such as wire fencing and boundary treatments.

Regardless of this, the area enjoys regular use by park users and Cyfarthfa High School and is a well managed resource within the parkland setting.

5.3 Cyfarthfa Park North

The northern area of Cyfarthfa Park is largely covered by thick woodland on a hillside followed by a secluded area to the north east; a departure from the public and formalised areas to the South. The park retains long and formalised boundaries with the Gurnos Road, and access may be achieved through a tarmac-covered road to the rear and sides of the castle entering a Council depot and from the east passing Gwaelodygarth House. This area lacks the formalised decorative elements which the gardens and frontage consist of, but offers a number of functional and natural features which diversify the interest of the Park.

The key elements which are essential to this character area are detailed below:

The Parks' Depot / Kitchen Gardens



Former Vegetable beds, now a storage yard

The Depot covers the site of the former Cyfarthfa Castle Kitchen Gardens. These formerly generated the produce consumed by the Crawshays during the 19th Century. The former gardens cover an area of 2.1 Hectares and were laid out in terraces stepping down the hillside, consisted of some glass houses and planting beds. The garden was originally surrounded by a high wall, crenulated at the top of its south eastern side, built in a mixture of brick and stone.

The Kitchen Gardens and greenhouses were used, when it became a municipal park, to raise the thousands of bedding plants for the Borough's various parks and open spaces. During the Second World War, the garden was used to produce food as part of the Dig for Victory campaign.



Part of the former Kitchen gardens building

As well as some retaining walls, the Parks' depot area contains two buildings which are remnants of the Crawshay dynasty. This includes a long red brick shed and a yellow brick shed – both of which had glass houses built up against their elevations. These buildings are important surviving facets of the Kitchen Gardens. The remaining parts of the Rhydyar Iron Bridge are also stored within this area.

Accumulatively with these, the remaining buildings within the parks depot are of 20th Century construction, including greenhouses and outbuildings. As well as being used for storage of vehicles and equipment, the depot is also used for activities by Communities First and Cyfarthfa Enterprise.

Woodland



Woodland walkway in Cyfarthfa Park

The two main areas of woodland within Cyfarthfa Park are recorded as Garden Wood and Castle Wood, and date back to the setting out of the area in the 1820s. The tree species within these woodland areas consist of a mixture of native deciduous and evergreen variants as well as a number of larches.

These areas form an informal woodland setting

which contrasts with, and offers an escape from the formal layout to the front of the park.

Fields and Meadows

Wild flower meadows are located to the north of the Park near the Castle woods. These hay meadows are divided by rows of mature tree lines and the boundaries are marked by hedgerows and tarmac roads. The field meadows were laid out as part of the original park layout to satisfy Crawshay's interest in wildflowers and are shown on the earliest Ordinance Survey plans. Rough grassland and spring flowers or bulbs also covers a field to the north of the park's western entrance, which is referred to as 'the Pound'. The area is marked off by a rubble stone wall and was originally used as a paddock for the house's horses.



Mature trees line the former Bryn Cae Owen Ponds

The meadow areas appear to be a natural feature of the park. Although they were originally laid out in order to be maintained, the lack of this has caused them to revert to their natural state.

Trees

A number of prominent and mature trees exist on the northern side of Cyfarthfa Park. Tree belts separate the flight of meadows to the north, and have matured from their original planting in 1825. A number of specimen trees mark the road which runs along the northern edge of the park and some of the outline meadow boundaries. A group of mature trees surround the site of the now defunct Bryn Cae Owen Pond for reference. Such features help maintain the woodland setting for Cyfarthfa Park.

Water System



Drainage Channels in Castle Wood

The northern segment of Cyfarthfa Park consists of the Bryn Cae Owen Pond while the Castle Wood Ponds are located fairly centrally, and provide for

an interesting feature. These features, along with the ornamental lake form part of a system of ponds and leats feeding the ironworks. Most features date back to 1825.

A network of small streams, drains and leats collect rainwater run-off from the hillside and feeds it down to the lake and the River Taf. These form a surviving element of the water management system, feeding the wider landscape.

The Bryn Cae Owen pond is the highest surviving point of the former water supply network. However, the kidney shaped pond no longer holds water and was filled during the 1970s for safety purposes. The area is now covered with chippings, grass and rubble.



The lowest of the Castle Wood Ponds

A pond, or number of, which still retains water is the Castle Wood Ponds, which consists of a flight of four elliptical ponds, running down the hillside. These formed part of the water management system, and were fed by the Bryn Cae Owen Pond. Each pond formerly had a sluice which fed into a leat to the south west, however, these have been altered and sluice gates have been fitted,



operating a flow directly between the ponds. Conversely, these are subject to vandalism and have been neglected in recent years. The ponds are seen as a good habitat for wildlife, and a steel platform has been erected to be used for pond dipping exercises.

Movement Corridors



Veteran trees lining the route to the east of the Park

A number of footpaths run through the woodland areas which conform to public desire lines. These are surface in either beaten earth or stone chippings and offer potential walking routes around the woodland area. Any of these paths are recorded on 1875 Ordinance Survey plans and include a walk to the south west of the former Kitchen Gardens through the garden woodland area, and the path running western edge of the elliptical ponds, through the centre of the park.

Sites of Interest

A number of small sites of interest are present within the northern section of the Park, each performed a role and function at the time of construction. Many of which have deteriorated

over time. Although now ruins, these areas provide an excellent insight into the domestic economy and lives of the Castle's owners.

The pine house is the location of the cultivation of the first pineapple in Wales, a horticultural feat which was managed in a purpose-built pine house. The building was constructed of timber and glass on a low wall, on a terrace adjacent to the Kitchen Gardens. The site is now covered in woodland scrub and only the earthwork of the terrace is a remnant of its former use.

The walled garden is located on the terrace just to the east of Cyfarthfa Castle and South East of its pine house. The building was constructed in the early 20th Century and consists of a small wall of rock faced stone, topped with railings. It is currently disused, but contains a number of distinguished trees. Terraces to the east and north of the walled garden were built to accommodate temporary classrooms, constructed in the second half of the 20th century.



Former Ice House within the Castle Woods

The Former Ice House is located on the upper edge of the woodland in a fairly secluded spot, which is

difficult to access by formal footpaths. The 19th century icehouse remains was formerly used as a cold, insulated place in which frozen water from the winter could be stored for months on end. The remains include a large grass mound which surrounds a circular brick-lined chamber, which is exposed. The stone and brick base of a passage leading into the chamber appears to have been preserved, though not in a desirable condition. The base of the mound was surrounded by a stream which proved to cool the structure.

5.4 Taf Fechan Valley

The Taf Fechan Valley is a narrow and steep sided basin, which converges with the Taf Fawr valley south near Pont-y-cafnau. The settlement of Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer runs alongside its western edge,

while some modern housing development is located to the east. This gorged area is covered in copious woodland set alongside quarried limestone cliffs. The river bed, which is a base to this valley, creates a natural corridor – though largely hidden from much of its surrounding area.

The Gurnos Quarry tramway runs along the eastern bank of the Taf Fechan River from the open Gurnos Quarry, which becomes enclosed within the gorge after passing under the higher, modern Heads of the Valleys bridge. The Taf Fechan leat runs along the tramway. Nearer to the south the area becomes more open woodland, eventually leading into Cyfarthfa Park.

The key elements which are essential to this character area are detailed below:



Stone sleepers on the course of the Gurnos Tramway

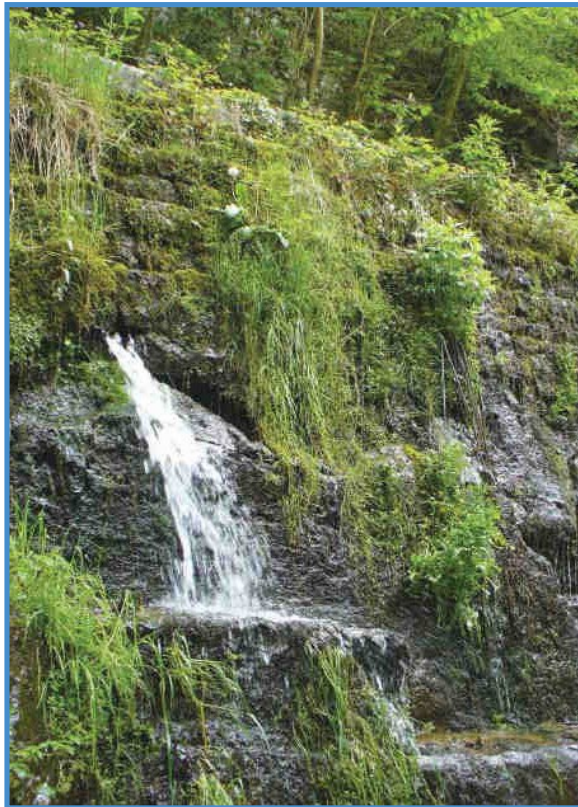


Taf Fechan River

The river flows through the centre of this character area and provides a natural habitat for birds, fish, invertebrates as well as the occasional sighting of otters. Weirs are located along the river, which originally supplied water to the ironworks' leats.

Taf Fechan Leat

The leat was constructed in 1825, contemporaneous with the Castle, in order to supply Cyfarthfa Park's lake with water. The leat is supplied by the Taf Fechan River at the Gurnos Quarry where a weir diverts water into its sluice controlled by a modern galvanised steel lifting unit. It runs from the start of the tramway walk, and provides water for the lake in Cyfarthfa Park.



Breaches in the Taf Fechan Leat

Most of the leat's course is formed by a ledge cut into the rock face of the cliff with a low limestone wall of uncoursed rubble forming the exposed side. This forms a retaining wall in some areas. The wall appears to be originally mortared with hydraulic lime, but in modern times it has been culverted where it passes just to the north east of Bridge House, and under Gurnos Road. The leat is a unique remains of the Ironworks' water supply system, and provides water for Cyfarthfa Park's lake. Unfortunately, many areas of the Taf Fechan Leat have been breached, and there are leakages visible from the tramway walk. This, in turn, may affect the lake's water supply.

Gurnos Tramway



The Old Cefn Bridge

The tramway runs down the Taf Fechan valley from Gurnos Quarry towards Cyfarthfa Ironworks, via Pont-y-Cafnau bridge. The tramway was constructed in 1792-4 by Watkin George and was originally a horse drawn plateway. The tramway is marked by the terrace created for a route alongside the Taf Fechan, and the survival of a number of stone sleepers.

The tramway provides a popular walking route through the Taf Fechan Character Area arriving to the Taf Fechan Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Tramway travels southbound at a decline and joins the remainder of the Conservation Area near Pont y Cefn Bridge. The tramway then passes the disused limekilns near Cyfarthfa Ironworks in an overgrown area.

Along the course of the Gurnos tramway is a high retaining wall of local limestone rubble and lime mortar which serves to separate land between the tramroad and the leat. The wall contains a number of interesting indentations which appear to be associated with former buildings. The wall has collapsed in several locations, which may require rebuilding.

Limekilns South of Cefn Bridge



Disused Lime Kilns to the south of Cefn Bridge

The Grade II Listed Limekilns stand on the eastern edge of a field that overlooks the Taf Fechan River. The kilns were originally used for reducing limestone from the Gurnos Quarry to produce lime for the lime mortar used in the ironworks' buildings. The kilns exceed over 7 metres in

height and are built of dress stone. The structure was built into the hillside. Each kiln has a large opening at their base, and formerly had iron doors extending from their fronts. This is no longer present. To date, the Kilns are in a negligible condition, and a number of vegetation continues to grow out of the brickwork of the kilns along with it being subject to vandalism.

Old Cefn Bridge

This Grade II Listed single span stone bridge was constructed in the late 18th Century and is built of coursed rubble limestone with thin stone voussoirs and a low rubble stone parapet. Its iron railings along the parapet are not an original construction, though it still retains much of its original charm. The bridge was replaced in 1908-09 by the Pont-y-Cefn as the main route from Cyfarthfa Castle to Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer. The old Cefn Bridge offers an attractive approach to the 19th Century Cottage of Bridge House (formerly the bridge toll house) and the footpath of Gyrnos Quarry Tramroad.

Pont y Cefn Bridge

The bridge was constructed in 1908-09 to replace the Old Cefn Bridge and to facilitate the extension of the tram routes from Merthyr Tydfil to Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer. The bridge was the first ferro-concrete bridge in the area, this type of construction making possible considerable savings in weight and cost. The bridge is a single open-arched structure with vertical piers in spandrels between the arch and carriageway. The balustrades and rails have been modified or replaced during the 1980s. The bridge was built on a considerable skew over the Afon Taff Fechan



5.5 Cyfarthfa Ironworks and Taf Fawr Valley



Entrance to the rear of the furnace bank

This character area largely consists of the expanses to the west of the River Taf. This includes the western part of the former ironworks and the sloping area which borders Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer. The area retains a number of historic features such as the Pont-y-Cafnau bridge, former Blast furnaces, Cefn Viaduct, Tai Mawr Leat and the Cyfarthfa Fingertip. Most of the area remains wasteland with areas of self-seeded scrub, woodland and heathland with a number of residential properties and highways providing for its setting.

The Taf Trail winds up this valley which is accessed from Swansea Road and an underpass through the A470 to the south and through Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer in the north. The area provides for extensive views across Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer, up

the valley towards Brecon Beacons and down the valley towards Cyfarthfa Castle and Park.

The key elements which are essential to this character area are detailed below:

Rivers

The Taf and Taf Fawr flow to the eastern flank of this character area and makes a large contribution in terms of its setting and function. The Taf Fawr, which flows from the north of the character area is more notable for its value to wildlife, and demonstrates a more natural flowing pattern. To the south of the character area, along with its convergence with the Taf Fechan creating the Taf demonstrates a more man-made approach to harnessing the river. The river banks appear to have been straightened and some of the shelving banks and beaches beside the river have been removed.



Riverside walls built during the 19th Century

A number of historic bridges previously existed alongside the river Taf in order to serve as a connection between the east and west of the Ironworks. Six of these bridges were present

during 1900, however the amount had decreased to two, with the Pont-y-Cafnau being one of them.

Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge

Pont-y-Cafnau crosses the River Taf below the confluence of the Taf Fechan and Taf Fawr. The bridge is believed to have been constructed in 1794 by engineer Watkin George to carry the Gurnos Quarry Tramway across the river, and as such, is thought to be the oldest iron railway bridge in the World. The bridge is Grade II* Listed as well as being a Scheduled Ancient Monument.



Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge

The bridge is constructed of coarse rubble abutments and supports an A-frame structure, which offers a unique appearance, replicated on a public footbridge in Rhydycar. The bridge hosts a tram bed including cast iron chairs that supported the rails. The handrails of the bridge have been modernised with the exception of the handrail on the approach to the bridge.

Later history suggests that a large steel pipe, which carried the water supply from the river to Cyfarthfa Castle still survives, though the pumping

house had been demolished which once stood on the south side of the river.

The ruin of a small hydro-electric generating station stands directly to the south of the bridge which produced electricity for a local company during the early 20th Century. This two storey structure, constructed of red brick provides for an interesting feature of the landscape, which displays industrial exploitation of the river.

Tai Mawr Leat

The leat runs from a weir constructed to the south of the Cefn Viaduct and was constructed between 1766 and 1767 by Charles Wood, who oversaw the building of Cyfarthfa Ironworks. This appears to be the best remaining element of the ironworks before the Crawshay dynasty's involvement.



The Tai Mawr Leat

Originally the leat ran along the cliff from near Cefn Viaduct along the cliff side to the east of the river, however, since the 1850s, it has been placed within a rock tunnel extending to the Cyfarthfa Finger Tip. The channel is generally well preserved, particularly as it runs alongside the



Finger Tip as a steep-sided man-made gorge. The further south the leat travels, its preservation becomes negligible, and south of the Pont-y-Cafnau, becomes unidentifiable and is presumed to have been filled in.

Cyfarthfa Finger Tip



Surface of the Cyfarthfa Fingertip

The colloquially known and Locally Listed 'Finger Tip' is a large cinder tip or slag heap which was formed in the mid to late 19th Century. It now forms an unusual area of landscape. The tip is surfaced unusually where marks and ripples have occurred from poured slag. The area itself is currently not covered in significant vegetation, however the presence of Japanese Knotweed in the immediate surrounding area may destroy the Fingertip's unusual surface.

Cefn Viaduct

The impressive Grade II* Listed Viaduct was built in 1866 by Messrs Savel and Ward at the cost of £25,000, and was designed by Alexander Sutherland, a friend of Robert Thompson Crawshay. The viaduct was built to carry the

former Merthyr-Brecon Railway line over the Afon Taf Fawr and Cefn and is the third largest in Wales. The structure was built in a gentle curve to satisfy specifications to not cross his land.

The viaduct consists of fifteen semi-circular arched openings on tapering piers, the tallest of which is 30m in height. The bridge was built by stonemasons, though the arches are unusual in that they are constructed of brick underneath and stonework on the upper half. The bridge was intended to be built entirely of limestone, however a trade union strike by stonemasons in 1866 caused the company to purchase 800,000 bricks from Hirwaun and Welshpool and used bricklayers to finish the arches.



The impressive Cefn Viaduct

The bridge is a very large structure which is prominent in views from both sides of the valleys. The setting of the viaduct is important to the attractiveness of these views. The viaduct also acts as a landmark entry into the built up areas of Merthyr Tydfil from the Heads of the Valleys Road. The bridge is used to carry the Taf Trail across the valley towards the Brecon Beacons.

Other Bridges

Other bridges within this character area consist of the Pont-y-Capel Bridge and Nant Cwm Ffwrdd Bridge. These were constructed in 1855 following the destruction of earlier bridges, rumoured to be by a devastating flood.

The bridges are constructed of limestone with single elliptical arches from stone springing and with low parapets capped with rectangular blocks. Both bridges add to the attractiveness of the secluded area at the foot of Cefn Viaduct.

The Furnace Bank

The furnace bank is located to the south of the Ironworks character area, and is the most visually evocative surviving element of the Ironworks. This is the centrepiece of a Scheduled Ancient

Monument designation which consists of this feature and its wider area. The Furnace bank is considered to be of national importance, and has the potential for international recognition.

The seven furnaces were built separately between the late 18th and 19th Century, and were merged into one large unit in the later 19th Century through infilling. A furnace was removed during the site's conversion to a steel works, leaving a large opening. The openings at the base of each furnace housed hearths from which the brick lined surface rose up through the masonry structure to a charging hole at the top.

The furnaces stand over 10 metres high and are built in coursed rock-faced stone. The structure consists of six arched furnaces with a large opening removed from the sixth furnace revealing a large opening which is bridged by broad brick



Railway Arch above the furnace bank

and masonry arch. The southernmost furnace retains a well preserved furnace hearth. A long passage cut into the rock-face of the hillside runs along the back of the furnace bank with a high arched roof of stone. The terrace above the furnace bank has been partially fenced off to prevent access to areas deemed to be unsafe.



The interior of Furnace Bank No.4

A long retaining wall runs up to the furnace bank from the south east and acts as a retaining wall to the hillside. This is built of coursed rock-faced stone and stands on top of an exposed limestone base. This wall reaches a maximum height of 15m high where it adjoins the furnace bank and diminishes in height towards its southern end. It is supported by three large stone buttresses. An interesting stone arch formerly provided a passage into the hillside at the wall's south western edge, which was for the entrance of a tramway under the line of Swansea Road. The long wall adds further value to the setting of the Furnace Bank.

Additional Ironworks Remains

Below the Scheduled Furnace Banks, a number of remains are still present which make a contribution to the character of the Ironworks

area. The remains of an engine house are located directly to the north of the furnace bank. This includes a masonry structure of a hearth and a chimney, standing over 3m high. The structure is surrounded by rubble, which hides much of the structure.



Former Casting Arch at Cyfarthfa Ironworks

To the north and west of the Furnace Banks, a number of other structures exist which represent parts of the boiler houses, representing further elements of the Ironworks. Some of these stand as masonry structures of over 10 metres high, acting as retaining walls to the hillside to the west.

Above the furnace bank, a number of structures survive in ruinous state. These include the end walls of ranges supplemental to the coking ovens, a railway tunnel and a bridge house which extended from the calcining ovens. The prominent frontage of these structures is covered in vegetation and trees which omit from the top of the blast furnaces, reducing their prominence from the main eastern viewpoint. The northern range of the coking ovens lay far to the north of the Ironworks Furnaces.

Directly to the east of the Furnace Banks, a low brickwork and masonry structure represents the base of the air tanks that fed the blast furnaces. The fragmentary remains of these bases, along with flues appear to have survived a number of decades. These are marked by a two rings of brickwork.

Further remains may be sought to the south of the Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge, where three brick kilns and a house were present. The remains of these structures have been exposed by recent erosion on the banks of the River Taf.

The survival of ruinous structures in the Ironworks site indicates a high probability of additional remnants being present underground. The

presence of such ruins around the Conservation Area in general adds significant character and justifies the ancient quality of the landscape.



Sleepers on the BPont-y-Cafnau bridge



6 Management Framework

6.1 Preface

The previous sections within this document describe the elements of the Conservation Area which contribute to its character and broadly identify areas for enhancement. This section outlines these in further detail and sets out ways in which these negative factors can be mitigated for the benefit of the Conservation Area.

6.2 General Condition

The general condition of the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area is an area of contention. On one hand, the Area is in good condition, given the continually developing landscape, the general state of retained buildings and its continuing function as a tourist attraction. However, the area has lost a number of significant buildings and features over time by means of natural deterioration or by deliberate demolition or removal. This lack of appreciation for some buildings has changed the landscape of the Conservation Area permanently, and in comparing it to its condition 100 years ago, there is a significant change.

In its present condition, the remaining buildings of the Conservation Area are maintained well, offering a positive aura in terms of character. The public highways and footpaths of the Conservation Area remain in good condition. The original layout of Cyfarthfa was not built to accommodate motor vehicles, and the encroachment of the modern car has not changed its character significantly. A single main route, dividing the Conservation Area appears to be the only evidence that the vehicle is accommodated, while former horse tracks and

courtyards have been amended to hold parked vehicles in the park.

The open countryside remains openly accessible via a number of routes, and the open setting remains in good condition, with the exception of some additional housing developments. However, these add to the audience of the park.

6.3 Use of the Appraisal

The primary function of this appraisal is to express the potential for the enhancement of the Conservation Area. The appraisal, in turn, informs a management plan which will serve as a guide for future development and maintenance within the Area and to preserve or enhance the Area's special qualities.

Being informed by this appraisal, the Management Plan will list how the Conservation Area could be enhanced or improved with the support of the Local Authority, residents and other agencies. It should be seen as a working document that:

- Encourages future planning applications that respect and promote the elements that are special about the Conservation Area;
- Seeks to improve or remove totally any negative elements;
- Encourages 'ownership' of the area by local residents and Council officials;
- Promotes closer working between all parties with vested interests in the Conservation Area including Local Authority departments, the



local communities and business owners;

Both the Conservation Area Appraisal and the Management Plan will be subject to monitoring and reviews periodically.

6.4 Cyfarthfa Conservation Management Plan

The Cyfarthfa Conservation Management Plan was published by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in September 2009 in consultation with stakeholders including individuals with an interest in the park, Councillors and various Council departments.

The Management Plan will inform the future management of the Conservation Area to ensure the protection of its heritage assets and their appreciation and enjoyment by the public. The document will be used by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's staff including the Planning Policy, Development Control, Estates, Regeneration, Parks and Environment Departments / Sections. It will also be used by stakeholder organisations and individuals with an interest in the management of the Conservation Area and the conservation of its heritage assets.

A strategy for the future management of the Conservation Area's heritage assets is presented within the Conservation Management Plan report as well as management proposals which include overarching policies to guide the management of the Area as well as site specific proposals.

6.5 Key Areas for Change

The Cyfarthfa Conservation Management Plan had identified a number of areas for management and conservation. These are detailed more clearly in the approved document, however; a summary of actions may be detailed below:

6.5.1 Policies

The Cyfarthfa Conservation Management Plan sets out a number of overarching policies. These aim to provide a framework within which the area will continue to be used for a variety of uses. In addition, the policies recognise the special interest and value of the Conservation Area's historic features.

Policy 1 - Vision

The future management of the Plan area will work towards a unified vision, linked to the Council's strategic vision for Merthyr Tydfil. This will aim to protect and exploit the manmade heritage and natural beauty of the whole Plan area as an integrated resource for leisure, sport, learning and business, thereby helping to make Merthyr Tydfil a safe, healthy and exciting place to live and visit

Policy 2 - Management

The Plan area includes numerous resources, features and properties for which a number of groups and Council departments have responsibility. The Council will establish a Management Forum for the Plan area, including land owners, representatives of community organisations and Council officers, which will co-



ordinate the work towards achieving the vision.

Policy 3 - Information

The Council will place the management of the Plan area's historic features on a secure footing by implementing a programme of regular surveying of the historic structures to assess their condition and monitor change. The information from these surveys will be reported to the Management Forum, and will inform a programme of ongoing major restoration and more minor ongoing maintenance, repairs and enhancements.

Policy 4 - Preservation

The Council will work with stakeholders, funding bodies and community organisations to ensure the preservation of the Plan area's historic features, including their ongoing repair and maintenance. Given the large scale and national importance of many of the Plan area's historic features, the Council will work with the National Assembly for Wales to identify funding opportunities for major repair programmes.

The Council will ensure that all works undertaken to statutorily protected heritage assets including listed buildings and scheduled monuments have received appropriate consent from the Welsh Assembly Government and following discussion with Cadw.

Policy 5 - Community involvement

The Council will involve local people in the preservation of the Plan area's historic features. They will identify opportunities for community use

and management of resources and identify education and training opportunities to overcome any impediments to community involvement.

Policy 6 - Providing use

The Council will identify suitable new uses for the disused land and buildings within the Plan area that are sympathetic to the historic features of the area, benefit from their presence, and ensure their positive management and maintenance. The Council will ensure that new uses build towards achieving the vision across the whole Plan area.

Policy 7 - Access

The Council will work with stakeholders including landowners, community groups, and funding bodies, to increase public access across the Plan area and to increase the amount of time for which facilities are available.

Policy 8 - Amenity

The Council will improve the amenity of the environment throughout the whole Plan area and aim to achieve a common level of environmental quality to work towards the vision. This may perhaps be through a uniformed signage and furniture scheme in character with the park's historic features and traditional forest green and gold colouring.

The Council will ensure that all access conforms with the requirements of current health and safety regulations



Policy 9 - Interconnection

The Council will work with other landowners, community groups and funding bodies to improve the physical and intellectual interconnection of the features across the Plan area, by promoting access between the area's historic features and awareness of their shared history.

Policy 10 - Setting

Through its planning functions, the Council will ensure that developments in the setting of the area provide integration and access to its historic features, develop links with other resources, and protect or enhance the character, interest and amenity of its industrial heritage and natural beauty.

6.5.2 Proposals

The management proposals, as stated in the Cyfarthfa Conservation Management Plan details, are summarised below. These are based on the fact that there are a number of overarching issues in the Conservation Area based on preservation, access, appearance, setting and interconnection.

The proposals may be funded through a number of grant schemes towards the overall achievement of the above policies. The proposed sub-projects are set out below:

Sub-project 1 - Regeneration of Cyfarthfa Castle

Works include the repair and enhancement of the various historic features and the preparation of detailed histories and gazetteers of the Castle.

The eventual aim is to facilitate the phased removal of Cyfarthfa High School from the building for use as an enlarged museum with ancillary facilities such as offices, a café and business use.

Sub-project 2 - Enhancement of Cyfarthfa Park

The survey, management and repair of the various historic features of the Park such as its lake, gulleys, woodland and footpaths will facilitate the enhancement of Cyfarthfa Park. The long term action will eventually be the removal of unsympathetically designed buildings within the park and the rebuilding of some key demolished historic structures.

Sub-project 3 - Regeneration of Cyfarthfa Ironworks

In order to regenerate this area, a number of surveys and maintenance proposals have been put forward. The eventual aim is to secure the Ironworks' site as a tourist attraction in its own right with the incorporation of a tourist point, car park, the making safe of the area and to improve the general quality of the area and its access.

Sub-project 4 - Protection and Enhancement of the Taf Fechan Valley

Tree clearance and repair work to the Taf Fechan Leats is proposed in order to facilitate the protection of the Taf Fechan valley and leat. This will eventually secure the improvement of the Gurnos Quarry Tramway and allow for better access to the area to enjoy the breathtaking views.



Sub-project 5 – Protection and Enhancement of the Tai Mawr Leat

The long-term aim is to secure better access to the Tai Mawr Leat to help walkers and anglers gain access to the banks of the River Taf Fechan. The work to facilitate this will include regular surveying of knotweed, vegetation maintenance and a structural survey of the Leat.

As detailed, the above proposals are detailed further in the Cyfarthfa Conservation Management Plan, and it should be read in conjunction with this document.

Appendix A



Sources



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Appendix B



Public Consultation Report



1. Methodology

The Cyfarthfa Conservation Area Character Appraisal was written between June and October 2009, following a number of surveys undertaken in April and June 2009. A Designation Statement was also prepared and approved by full Council in June 2009.

The Character Appraisal was drawn up following the approval of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Built Heritage Strategy and Action Plan by the County Borough Council in December 2008. Public consultation was undertaken to take into regard public opinion on the desirability of designating a conservation area and on the accuracy of the contents of the draft character appraisal, including the key positive characteristics of Cyfarthfa and key issues to be addressed.

The public consultation ran for 22 days from 13th November to 4th December 2009. A consultation event was held at Cyfarthfa Castle on the 19th November 2009 and copies of the Character Appraisal and proposed boundary was made available to the public at Merthyr Tydfil Public Library, the Council's Town Planning Division and on the Council's website. A questionnaire was also made available via all of the above media and during the consultation event.

2. Publicity

An advertisement was delivered to all properties within the area affected by the proposed conservation area. Furthermore, the local Heritage Trust was notified as well as the amenities societies, friends of Cyfarthfa Park, Communities

First representatives and other Council departments on the 10th November 2009. This information informed the above groups and persons of the consultation process and inviting them to attend the consultation event or to view the documents online.

3. Public Consultation Event

The public consultation event took the form of a walk in surgery held within Cyfarthfa Castle on 19th November from 10.00am until 4.00pm. The Council's Heritage and Conservation Officer was available to explain the background to the proposed designation of the proposed Conservation Area, its consequences and to answer any queries the public had. An exhibition included copies of the draft character appraisal and boards explaining the process and reasons for designating a conservation area, the changes in planning consequent to designation, characteristics of the conservation area and the key issues to be addressed by its designation.

A questionnaire, which provided questions to guide responses from attendees, was made available and attendees were encouraged to fill it in at the event or to return it later. Approximately 22 members of the public attended the event and included local residents, business and property owners.

4. Questionnaire

To encourage stakeholders to provide their views on the proposed Conservation Area designation, a Questionnaire was prepared and made available at the Public Consultation Event, at the Council's



Town Planning Division and from the Council's website. The questionnaire included one question that required a basic yes/no response to ascertain whether respondents agreed with the principal of designating the conservation area and three 'open' questions to elicit qualitative responses. The open questions asked for views on the accuracy of the Draft Character Appraisal, factors contributing to the special historic or architectural interest of Cyfarthfa and negative features or issues that detracted from its special interest.

5. Response

One written response was returned by the 4th December 2009. This response, as well as views received at the public consultation event confirmed that Cyfarthfa has a special historic or architectural interest worthy of Conservation Area status. Below is a summary of all issues and concerns raised by consultees during the consultation process. The Town Planning Division's response is noted in italic font following each comment:

Management

Concerns were expressed that the Council lacks the necessary resources to effectively manage the Conservation Area.

The Council's Regeneration Department in collaboration with the Town Planning Division has submitted a Parks for People bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Conservation Area designation and character appraisal aims to support this.

Vandalism

A response noted that vandalism is rife within Cyfarthfa Park.

The Council acknowledges that vandalism is a particular problem in Cyfarthfa Park. This has been noted within the Conservation Area Appraisal, and has also been noted as a priority issue within the Cyfarthfa Conservation Management Plan, commissioned by the Council's Regeneration Department.



Appendix C

Useful Addresses



Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Design, Heritage and Conservation Officer

Ty Keir Hardie,

Riverside Court

Avenue de Clichy

Merthyr Tydfil

CF47 8XF

Tel: 01685 726268

heritage&conservation@merthyr.gov.uk

Cadw

Welsh Assembly Government

Plas Carew

Unit 5/7 Cefn Coed

Parc Nantgarw

Cardiff

CF15 7QQ

Tel: 01443 33 6000

Fax: 01443 33 6001

**The Royal Commission on the Ancient and
Historical Monuments of Wales**

National Monuments Record of Wales

Plas Crug

Aberystwyth

SY23 1NJ

Tel: 01970 621200

Fax: 01970 627701

nmr.wales@rcahmw.gov.uk

The Victorian Society

1 Priory Gardens

London

W4 1TT

Tel: 020 8994 1019

Fax: 020 8747 5899

admin@victoriansociety.org.uk

The Georgian Group

6 Fitzroy Square

London

W1P 6DX

Tel 087 1750 2936

info@georgiangroup.org.uk

Twentieth Century Society

70 Cowcross Street

London EC1M 6EJ

Tel: 020 7250 3857

Fax: 020 7251 8985

caseworker@c20society.org.uk

Council for British Archaeology

St Mary's House

66 Bootham

York YO30 7BZ

Tel: 01904 671417

Fax: 01904 671384

Ancient Monuments Society

St Ann's Vestry Hall

2 Church Entry

London

EC4V 5HB

Tel: 020 7236 3934

office@ancientmonumentsociety.org.uk

The Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings

37 Spital Square

London

E1 6DY

Tel: 020 7377 1644

Fax: 020 7247 5296

info@SPAB.org.uk



Garden History Society

70 Cowcross Street

London

EC1M 6EJ

Phone: 020 7608 2409

enquiries@gardenhistorysociety.org

International Council on Monuments & Sites UK

70 Cowcross Street

London

EC1M 6EJ

Phone: 020 7566 0031

admin@icomos-uk.org

The Royal Town Planning Institute

41 Botolph Lane

London

EC3R 8DL

www.rtpi.org.uk

Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust Ltd

Ynysfach Engine House

Ynysfach Road

Merthyr Tydfil

CF48 1AG

Mtheritagetrust@aol.com

Appendix D



Glossary of Architectural Terms



ABUTMENT Solid masonry placed to counteract the lateral thrust of a vault or arch and so give the arch or vault strength.

ARCH A structure forming the curved, pointed, or flat upper edge of an open space and supporting the weight above it, as in a bridge or doorway.

APEX The highest, pointed part of a gable

ARCHITRAVE / ARCHIVOLT A moulded surround to a door or window opening. An archivolt refers to an arched opening.

ASHLAR Worked stone with flat surface, usually of regular shape and square edges. As opposed to rough stone, which is not squared off. Due to its expense, you will often find buildings made of rough stone or rubble with quoins of Ashlar at the corners of the building, often laid alternately with their long-side and short side facing out; this is a common feature of Regency architecture.

BALUSTER A short post or pillar in a series that supports a rail, forming a balustrade. May be curved or straight.

BARGE BOARD Timber boards fixed to a gable end of a roof, can be ornamental in detail

BATTER An inclined face of wall; hence battered.

BATTLEMENT A parapet with upstanding pieces and indentations. For instance, Castellated or Crenellated, like the turrets of castles.

BAY , BOW and ORIEL windows These windows project out from the front or side of a house. Oriel windows generally project from an upper story, supported by a bracket. Bay windows are angled projections that rise up from the ground on the first floor. Bow windows are rounded projections, often formed of the window glass itself.

BUTTRESS A mass of stone or brick built against, or as part of a wall, to provide additional strength to it.

CASEMENT WINDOWS Windows with a hinged opening

CILL The horizontal feature at the bottom of a window or door which throws water away from the face of a building

COLUMN An upright vertical member which usually stands clear of the main body of a building. Usually circular in cross-section and is a common motif of classical architecture

CONSOLE An ornamental scrolled bracket, normally in stone or timber usually supporting a fascia

COPING Stones, usually large and hard-wearing, placed at the top of for example walls, in order to take the brunt of the weather and protect the more delicate stone-work below.

CORBEL A projecting block which supports a parapet or sill. Often carved.



COLUMN A vertical weight-carrying architectural member, circular in cross section and consisting of a base (sometimes omitted), a shaft, and a capital.

CONSERVATION AREA An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance

CORNICE Any projecting ornamental moulding that finishes or crowns the top of a building, wall, arch, etc.

COURSED A continuous layer of building material, such as brick or tile, on a wall or roof of a building.

DORMER A window which projects from the pitch of a roof

DRESSED STONE Blocks of stone that have been trimmed and given a smooth face, i.e. ashlar stone.

DRESSING Carved stonework around openings

DUTCH GABLE A term to describe gables which are curved

EAVES That part of a sloping roof which is overhanging.

EDWARDIAN Period during the reign of King Edward VII (1901-1910) where architecture was chiefly influenced by arts and crafts and natural materials.

ELEVATION One of the external faces of a building; also, an architect's drawing of a facade, set out to scale.

FACADE The front of a building.

FANLIGHT Glazed area above a doorway, designed to brighten the hallway inside

FASCIA The broad horizontal board over a shopfront which carries the name of a shop, often flanked by corbels.

FINIAL A sculptured ornament, at the top of a gable, pinnacle, or similar structure. Common in Victorian architecture

GABLE The generally triangular section of wall at the end of a double-pitched roof, occupying the space between the two slopes of the roof. By extension, sometimes refers to the whole end wall of a building or wing having a pitched roof.

GEORGIAN Covering the period from 1714 to 1830 where architecture was influenced by the principles of Rome and Ancient Greece. Regularly spaced openings and 8 pane timber sash windows are common.

GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE A style of architecture that was prevalent in Western Europe from about 1200 until 1550. Gothic Revival refers to the Victorian revival of Gothic architecture, characterised by pointed and arched openings.

HIPPED ROOF Pitched roof without gables, where all sides of the roof meet at an angle



HOODMOULD Projecting moulding over an arch or lintel designed to throw off water

KEystone A wedge-shaped or tapered stone placed at the top of an arch or vault. In vaulting it occurs at the intersection of the ribs of a ribbed vault.

LANCET or LANCET WINDOW A long, narrow window with a sharply pointed head.

LEAN-TO ROOF A roof which is built up against a vertical wall and has one slope only

LINTEL A horizontal structural member spanning an opening (e.g. window or door). Usually made of wood, stone or steel (such as a beam). Carries the weight, and provides support to, the wall above the opening.

LISTED BUILDING A building or structure of specific architectural or historic importance and which is afforded statutory protection by Cadw

MORTAR A material used in construction to fill gaps between stones or bricks and bind them together

MOULDING A continuous, narrow surface (projecting or recesses, plain or ornamented) designed to break up a surface, to accent, or to decorate.

OCCULUS A small circular panel or window

ORIEL A projecting window in a wall. Originally the term was given to a form of porch, often of wood.

PANEL A portion of a surface, often a wall lining or in a door, that is usually rectangular and can be recessed or above another surface.

PARAPET A low protective wall or railing along the edge of a raised structure such as a roof or balcony.

PEDIMENT A low-pitched gable over porticos, doors, windows, etc

PILASTER A flat, rectangular, vertical member projecting from a wall of which it forms a part. Usually has a base and a capital and is often fluted. It is designed to be a flat representation of a classical column in shallow relief.

PLINTH The projecting base of wall.

POINTING The joints between the stonework, often in lime mortar

PORTICO A porch in the form of a Classical colonnade, usually described in terms of the number of columns.

QUATREFOIL A traceried opening made of four cusps or lobes

QUOINS The dressed stones at the corners of buildings, usually laid so their faces are alternately large and small. Usually in contrasting colour of brick from the rest of the wall. Common feature of Georgian buildings.



REGENCY Strictly the period from 1811 to 1820 when George, Prince of Wales was Prince Regent due to the madness of his father George IV. In architecture it is more generally considered the period from the 1790's to about 1840.

RENDER To coat (brick, for example) with plaster or cement.

REVEAL The part of the side of a window or door opening that is between the outer surface of a wall and the window or door frame; the jamb.

RIDGE TILES Tiles that cover the highest point of the roof

ROCK FACED Stonework dressed in such a way to make it look natural

ROOF LIGHT A glazed opening set in a roof

RUBBLE STONE Stones of irregular shape and size

RUSTICATED The treatment of stone in a way which emphasises its appearance. This is usually done by leaving the visible stone rock faced or rough

SANDSTONE A sedimentary rock formed by the consolidation and compaction of sand and held together by a natural cement, such as silica. Pennant stone, common in Merthyr Tydfil, is a type of sandstone

SASH WINDOW A window formed with sashes i.e. glazed wooden frames which slide up and down in vertical grooves by means of counterbalanced weights. The standard form has two moveable sashes and is termed a "double-hung sash."

SNECKED Coursed stonework where the squared stones have not been fully dressed and the coursing is varied by smaller filler stones or 'snecks'

SOFFIT The exposed undersurface of any overhead component of a building such as an arch, balcony, beam, cornice, lintel or vault.

STRING COURSE A continuous projecting horizontal band set in the surface of a wall and usually moulded. Often in a different coloured brick or stone, and used for decoration.

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (TPO) Provides protection for trees specified in the order.

TREFOIL Ornamental tracery in the form of a flower with three symmetrical petals.

TURRET A small, often ornamental tower projecting from a building, usually at a corner.

TYMPANUM The ornamental recessed space or panel enclosed by the cornices of a triangular pediment. Also, a similar space between an arch and the lintel of a portal or window.

VERNACULAR An indigenous building constructed of locally available materials, to local detail, usually without the benefit of an architect.



VESTRY A room in, or attached to, a church where the clergy put on their vestments and where these robes and other sacred objects are stored; synonymous with a sacristy.

VISTA A distant view through or along an avenue or opening

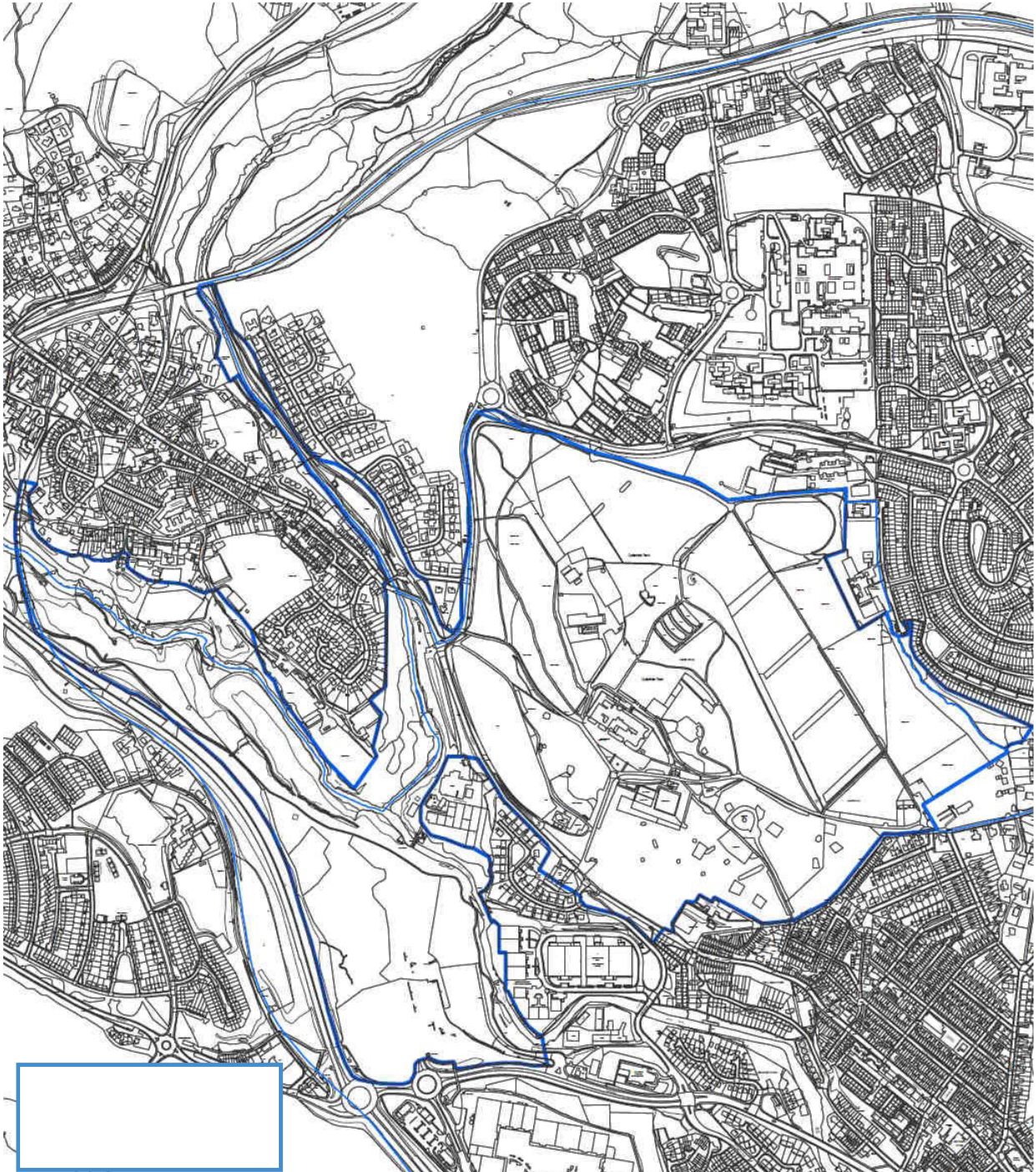
VOUSSOIR The radiating wedge-shaped blocks forming an arch

WHITEWASH A mixture of lime and water, often with whiting, size, or glue added, that is used to whiten walls, fences, or other structures.

Appendix E



Conservation Area Boundary Map

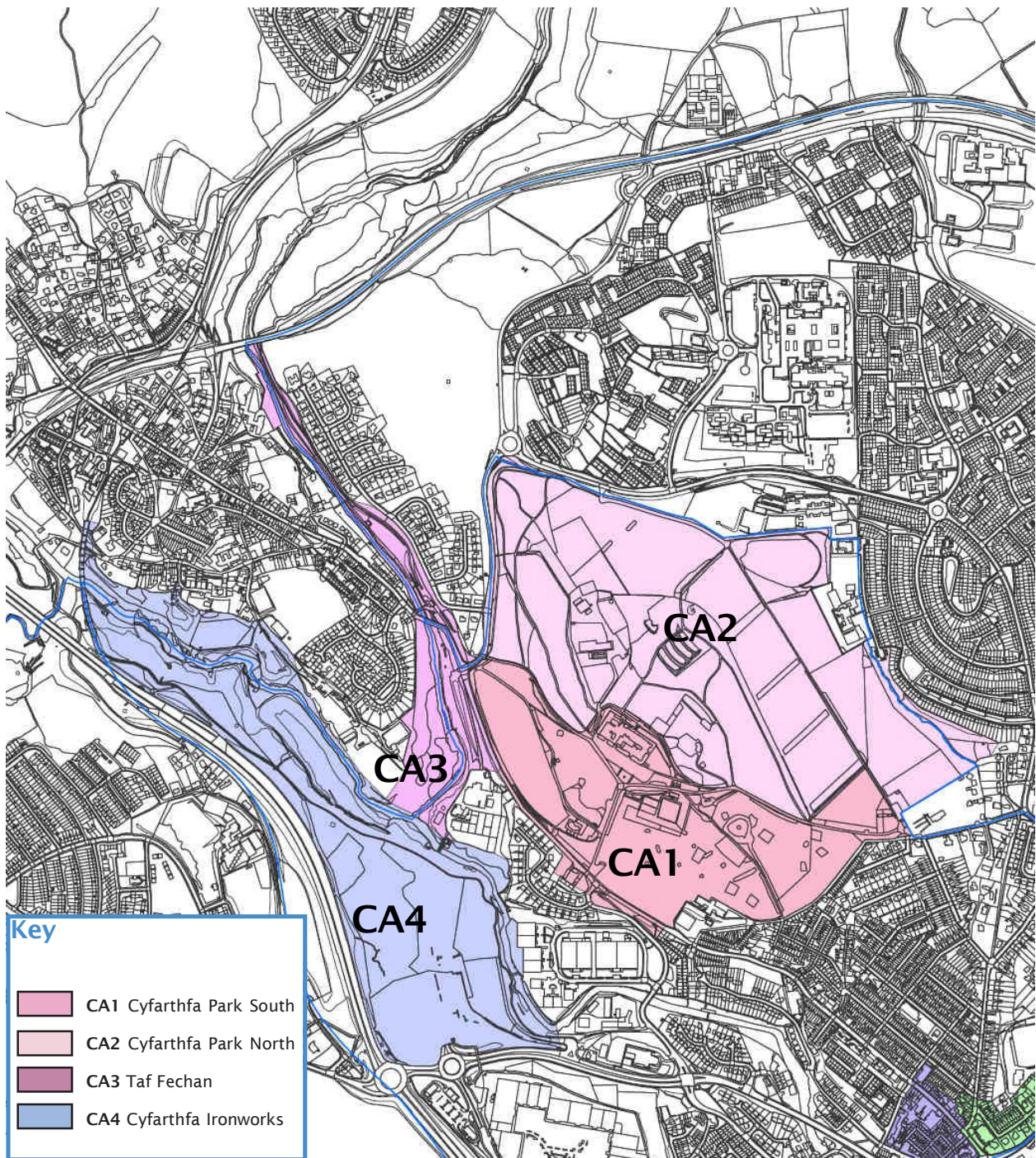


Conservation Area Boundary Plan

Appendix F



Conservation Area Character Areas



Conservation Area Character Areas

