

Executive Summary

The following report presents the results of a program of building recording, equivalent to English Heritage Level I, of the remains of an early 20th Century shop-front attached to the front façade of the property known as London House, Beach Road, Penclawdd, Swansea, prior to removal and alteration as part of a proposed development.

This Level I recording work was requested as a planning condition by the City and County of Swansea prior to any works commencing at the property in order to make a lasting archive of a significant feature associated with the early 20th century Penclawdd sea front, which lies within the Penclawdd Conservation Area.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The following report presents the results of a program of building recording, equivalent to English Heritage Level I, of the remains of an early 20th Century shop-front attached to the front façade of the property known as London House, Beach Road, Penclawdd, Swansea, prior to removal and alteration as part of a proposed development.
- 1.2 This Level I recording work was requested as a planning condition by the City and County of Swansea prior to any works commencing at the property in order to make a lasting archive of a significant feature associated with the early 20th century Penclawdd sea front, which lies within the Penclawdd Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The specific objectives of this work were to:
- Appropriate a series high resolution photographs of the remains of the shop-front at London House, Beach Road, Penclawdd.
- 1.4 The Technical Appendices for this Chapter contains the following information:
- *Appendix I: Figures;*
 - *Appendix II: Photographs*
 - *Appendix III: Archive Cover Sheet*
- 1.5 The photographic work entailed a site visit to London House to appropriate the required photographs of the shop-front positioned facing north along Beach Road, Penclawdd.

Site Location & Description

- 1.6 London House is positioned along Beach Road and faces north over the Loughor Estuary (centred on NGR: SS 5418 9582). The house is split into two properties with the main house occupying the east side and the former shop occupying the ground floor of the west side. The house in its entirety is constructed from block stone with fenestration in the front façade outlined in yellow brickwork with sash windows with one modern inserted PVC window above the shop-front. Local sources suggest that the shop was formerly a shoe shop or cobblers up until the 1980s. At the time of the site visit the shop-front had been painted a mid grey, but inspection of the façade suggest that it was originally red or burgundy in colour. The architectural style of the shop-front remains suggests that the shop-front is early 20th century in date.

Penclawdd Conservation Area

- 1.7 The Penclawdd Conservation Area (Ref CA:015) was notified in 1976.
- 1.8 Penclawdd is set on the south-eastern side of the Loughor Estuary, Penclawdd nestles below a chain of hills, which, with slight interruption, bound Loughor Bay till they terminate, with a certain degree of grandeur in Llanmadoc hill. The village surrounds the remains of the harbour and looks out

over the flat and marshy estuary. Penclawdd is primarily residential, although there is a strong mix of local industry, shops and pubs. A certain amount of boating and fishing still exists. Unlike the rest of Gower, Penclawdd historically has been Welsh speaking and has been based on industry and shipping in the 18th and 19th Centuries rather than agriculture. It has long been famed as the processing centre for cockles and laverbread – in the middle of the 19th Century it is recorded that the town was processing over 5 tons of cockles per day. Owing to pollution in the estuary, the cockles are now brought largely from King's Lynn. Copper was smelted in Penclawdd as early as 1788 and the Cheadle and Brasswire Company were working copper and lead between 1792 and 1811. Lead and silver were also worked in the 1870's, along with tinsplate. Penclawdd straddles a deep coal seam, and many collieries existed through the town. Most of the terraced houses were built for local industrial workers and their families. Penclawdd has no examples of classically fine architecture, although its indigenous character as an entity is strong and bold, and very expressive of the traditional semi-industrial Welsh townscape, with its chapels still dominating the terraces. The Bethel Chapel and Sunday School, which overlooks the town from the vantage point of the hill, is an excellent example of a well maintained chapel. Penclawdd is unique, with the number of pedestrian lanes which run steeply up the incline and connect to the settlements on top of the hill.

Development Proposals

- 1.9 Demolition of existing rear extensions, construction of two storey rear extensions, fenestration alterations, first floor rear Juliet balconies to both numbers 1 & 2 London House and re-location of entrance door to side elevation of No. 2 London House.

2 Methodology and Consultations

2.1 Planning History & Consultations

- 2.2 Following the submission of a planning application (2019/0273/FUL) to the City and County of Swansea (CCS) full planning permission was granted on 30th April 2019 for the proposed development, but with the condition (Condition 4):

“Prior to the commencement of any works on site, a historic recording (to English Heritage level 1) of the existing shopfront shall be undertaken and a copy of the recording shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure surviving documentation exists of the existing shop-front prior to their removal.”

- 2.3 HRS Wales were commissioned by JA Rewbridge, acting on behalf of Mr and Mrs Banfield to undertake the required building recording.

Methodology of Baseline Survey

- 2.4 A Level I record is essentially a basic visual record, supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the building's location, age and type. This is the simplest record, not normally an end in itself but contributing to a wider aim. Level I surveys will generally be of exteriors only,

although they may include superficial interior inspection for significant features. Only if circumstances and objectives allow will any drawings be produced, and these are likely to take the form of sketches.

- 2.5 In accordance with the ClfA's *Standards and guidance*, the purpose of the photographic record is to examine a specified building, structure or complex, and its setting, in order to inform:
- To seek a better understanding, compile a lasting record, analyse the findings/record, and then disseminate the results.
- 2.6 All work was conducted in compliance with the *Codes of Practice* of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2010).

Photographs

- 2.7 Photographs were taken in digital format, using an 18 mega-pixel DSLR camera, with photographs stored in RAW format. All RAW formats were then exported into TIFF files in preparation for archiving.

Archive

- 2.8 The site archive will be prepared in accordance with MAP 2, Appendix 3 (English Heritage 1991). It will comprise all the photographs appropriated during the site visit and shall be quantified, ordered and indexed and will be internally consistent. The archive will be deposited with the RCAHMW in Aberystwyth. A further copy of this report will also be forwarded to the Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust.