

CPAT Report No. 1746

Abbey Grange Hotel Camping Site, Llangollen, Denbighshire

Heritage Impact Assessment



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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	II
CRYNODEB.....	II
1 INTRODUCTION	3
2 LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS, PLANNING POLICY AND PUBLISHED GUIDANCE.....	5
3 METHODOLOGY	6
4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	6
5 BASELINE ASSESSMENT	8
6 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS	13
7 SOURCES	23
8 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION STATEMENT	23
APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSING THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON HERITAGE ASSETS.....	24

Summary

A heritage impact assessment has been conducted by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in connection with the proposed change of use of a small area of agricultural land adjacent to the Abbey Grange Hotel, Llangollen, to a site for camping and touring caravans. The development site lies within the buffer zone of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site and within the Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg registered historic landscape. Within 1km of the site there are two scheduled monuments and 10 listed buildings.

The small size of the development site, which is 0.67ha including the existing access road, together with screening from existing mature trees and buildings, greatly reduces the intervisibility from within the surrounding landscape and heritage assets.

The assessment has determined that in the case of the world heritage site there would be no impact on the site itself, although there would be a negligible impact on the surrounding buffer zone. Negligible impacts have also been identified for Eliseg's Pillar and Tumulus, which is both a scheduled monument and a listed building, Maes-y-llyn farm building and Pant-y-groes historic landscape character area. The significance of these impacts would be slight in each case.

For the remaining heritage assets, including the scheduled and listed Valle Crucis Abbey, there is considered to be no visual impact.

Crynodeb

Bu Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd-Powys yn cynnal asesiad o effaith ar dreftadaeth mewn cysylltiad â newid defnydd arfaethedig i ardal fach o dir amaethyddiol ger Gwesty Abbey Grange, Llangollen, i ddod yn faes gweryslla a charafanau teithiol. Mae'r safle datblygu o fewn parth clustogi Safle Treftadaeth y Byd Traphont Ddŵr a Chamlas Pontcysyllte ac o fewn tirwedd hanesyddol gofrestredig Dyffryn Llangollen ac Eglwyseg. O fewn 1km o'r safle, mae yna ddwy heneb gofrestredig a 10 adeilad rhestredig.

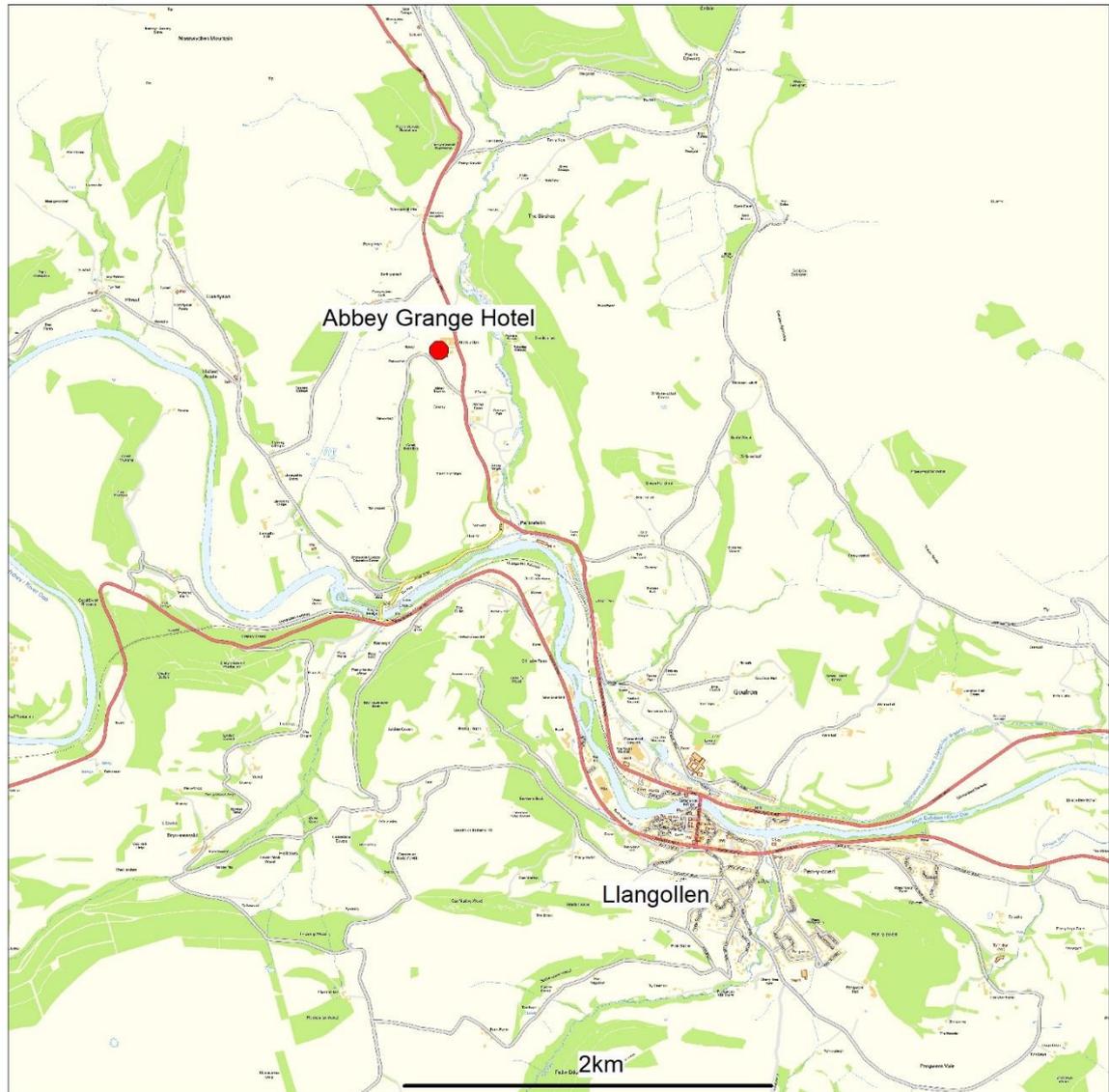
Mae maint bach y safle datblygu, sef 0.67ha gan gynnwys y ffordd fynediad bresennol, ynghyd â'r ffaith ei fod wedi'i sgrinio gan goed aeddfed ac adeiladau sydd eisoes yn bodoli, yn golygu mai prin y gellir ei weld o'r dirwedd a'r asedau treftadaeth o'i amgylch a phrin y gellir gweld y dirwedd a'r asedau treftadaeth ohono.

Daeth yr asesiad i'r casgliad, yn achos safle treftadaeth y byd, na fyddai unrhyw effaith ar y safle ei hun, er y byddai rhyw fymryn o effaith ar y parth clustogi o'i amgylch. Rhyw fymryn o effaith a nodwyd hefyd ar gyfer Piler a Gwyddfa Eliseg, sy'n heneb gofrestredig yn ogystal ag adeilad rhestredig, adeilad fferm Maes-y-llyn ac ardal nodwedd tirwedd hanesyddol Pant-y-groes. Byddai arwyddocâd yr effeithiau hyn yn ysgafn ym mhob achos.

O ran gweddill yr asedau treftadaeth, gan gynnwys Abaty Glyn y Groes, sy'n heneb gofrestredig ac yn adeilad rhestredig, y farn yw na fyddai unrhyw effaith weledol.

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust was invited by Jan Bargiel to conduct a heritage impact assessment in connection with a planning application for the change of use of a small area of agricultural land adjacent to the Abbey Grange Hotel, Llangollen, Denbighshire, to a site for camping and touring caravans.
- 1.2. Abbey Grange Hotel lies around 3km north of Llangollen, on the west side of the A542. (Fig. 1; SJ 2005 4464).



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Fig. 1 Location of Abbey Grange Hotel

- 1.3. The development site is currently a pasture field which also contains a polytunnel on its southern side (Figs 2-3). The proposal is for the change of use of land to accommodate 21 camping pitches and 11 touring caravan pitches, together with the siting of two amenity/toilet blocks, a caravan for use as an office a 2m-high timber fence of the south-west side, a storage

compound, internal paths and the installation of a septic tank. The proposals would use the existing access off the A542 with minor changes (see Fig. 18 at the end of the report).



Fig. 2 View to the south-west from within the development site



Fig. 3 View to the north from within the development site

2 Legislative Provisions, Planning Policy and Published Guidance

- 2.1. The cultural heritage is a broad concept that embraces archaeological remains, the built heritage and historic landscapes. Cultural heritage is deemed to include the full range of man-made features that have been imposed on the landscape from the Palaeolithic, more than two hundred and fifty thousand years ago, to the 20th century. Some of these features will be visible as upstanding remains on the ground; others will be buried and only become apparent during ground disturbance. Some will have an archaeological interest and importance; others will be more historical in their origin. Collectively these features are known as heritage assets.
- 2.2. At a national level it is Cadw, the historic environment service within Welsh Government, which holds the remit for the cultural heritage resource. Another national body, Natural Resources Wales, has a particular interest in historic landscapes.
- 2.3. At a regional level, the cultural heritage resource is monitored by the regional Welsh Archaeological Trusts, and in this instance the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust acts as archaeological adviser to Denbighshire County Council.
- 2.4. The legislative framework for the historic environment in Wales was revised by the *Historic Environment (Wales) Act* 2016. The 2016 Act amended the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* 1979 and the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* 1990. It extended the definition of scheduled monuments and enhanced their protection, as well as making changes to the process of scheduled monument consent. Changes were also made to the protection of listed buildings. The 2016 Act also provided for a statutory register of historic landscapes, a statutory list of place names, and imposed a statutory duty on Welsh Ministers to compile and maintain Historic Environment Records (HERs).
- 2.5. National policy within Wales is set out in *Planning Policy Wales* (10th edition, 2018) (PPW). Issues relating to the historic environment are set out in Chapter 6, Distinctive and Natural Places. This notes that the 'protection, conservation and enhancement of historic assets is most effective when it is considered at the earliest stage' of a project; hence the need for a reasonable and proportionate impact assessment to ensure that any proposed development is sustainable and to prevent unnecessary harm to historic assets.
- 2.6. PPW is supported by *Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment* (TAN 24). It is designed to assist local authorities with developing their local plans and for determination of planning applications or listed building consent in relation to historic assets. PPW is also supported by associated Cadw best practice guidance on the historic environment.
- 2.7. The assessment follows guidance produced by Cadw, on behalf of the Welsh Government, for managing historic assets: *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales* (2017); *The Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (2017); and *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales* (2011). The assessment of potential impacts to the Registered Historic Landscape utilises the *Guide to Good Practice on Using the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in the Planning and Development Process* (2nd edition, 2007), produced jointly by Cadw and CCW.
- 2.8. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), Volume 11 Section 3 Part 2, LA 106 (revised 2019), though not specifically focused on developments of this nature, provides a suitable, general framework for assessing the cultural heritage (see Appendix 1).

3 Methodology

- 3.1. The assessment was conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment* (2017). CIfA is the leading professional body representing archaeologists working in the UK and overseas.
- 3.2. A rapid desk-based study was made of readily available internet-based sources only, the regional and national repositories being closed at the time the study was undertaken. The response to the application provided by CPAT Planning Services confirmed that there are no heritage assets within the development site.
- 3.3. Information regarding scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered historic landscapes and registered parks and gardens is based on a Cadw dataset, dated November 2019.
- 3.4. A systematic field survey was conducted for the whole of the development site on 15 June 2020.

4 Historical Background

- 4.1. This section provides a brief summary of the archaeology and history of the study area and its immediate surrounds, to enable the findings of the assessment to be placed in a wider context. It is based on a description of the area which was produced as part of the historic landscape characterisation for the Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg Registered Historic Landscape, conducted by CPAT in 2005 (Britnell 2005).
- 4.2. Evidence for prehistoric activity in the area is provided by the presence of a kerbed platform cairn, probably dating to around 2000 BC, which was later covered by a larger cairn containing a large cist. The mound was subsequently used in the early medieval period for the erection of a stone cross (see below).
- 4.3. Further evidence of prehistoric activity is suggested by the chance find of a late Bronze Age socketed axe from near Pentredwr, while Roman activity is suggested by the discovery of a small hoard of 2nd-century AD coins from near Maesyrychen-bach.
- 4.4. From about the 7th century the area fell within the kingdom of Powys. Eliseg's Pillar, the lower portion of a stone cross, was set up on a mound at a focal point in the valley in the first half of the 9th century by Cyngen, king of Powys, in honour of his great-grandfather, Eliseg, who had reunited the kingdom by taking land taken by the English. The location of this important and unusual monument, sited either on Eliseg's burial mound or upon an earlier prehistoric monument, suggests the presence of a royal estate here in the valley. The recording of the inscription by Edward Llwyd in the late 17th century has been important to understanding the early history of the kingdom of Powys. From 1191 the commote of Iâl fell within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. The lower portion of the Eglwyseg valley was granted by Madog ap Gruffudd Maelor for the foundation of the Cistercian monastery known in Welsh as Llanegwestl and in Latin as Valle Crucis, the latter at least being named after the earlier cross, Eliseg's Pillar.
- 4.5. The foundation of the monastery involved the displacement of a number of inhabitants of Llanegwestl and their removal to townships in the vicinity of Wrexham and will almost certainly have involved the reorganisation of the landscape in its immediate vicinity. The lands granted to the monastery continued to be administered as a separate monastic manor up until the Dissolution of the abbey in 1537, and included a farm, a corn mill on the river Dee at

Pentrefelin and a fulling mill at Pandy, to the north of the abbey. Following the Edwardian conquest in the later 13th-century the northern portion of the area formed part of the newly-created marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale until the Act of Union in 1536, following which the whole area formed part of the newly created county of Denbighshire.

- 4.6. The Llangollen branch of the Shropshire Union Canal, constructed by Thomas Telford, opened in 1805. From its source at the Horseshoe Falls the canal follows the northern side of the valley before crossing the Dee with the dramatic Pontcysyllte aqueduct. The canal and aqueduct were designated World Heritage Site status in 2009.
- 4.7. Small scale slate working is evident on the surrounding hills, possibly dating from the 17th century onwards. The opening of larger quarries during the earlier 19th century led to great pressures on the local road network and as a consequence a horse-drawn tramway system was constructed. From 1852 the tramway carried slate from the large Oernant, Moel y Faen and Berwyn quarries to the Pentre Felin Slab and Slate Works, sited alongside the canal at Pentrefelin. The tramway included an incline, passing below a road bridge at Maesrychen, a stone-revetted embankment alongside the A452 near Valle Crucis Abbey, and a tramway viaduct across the Eglwyseg river. The tramway is depicted on later 19th-century mapping (Fig. 4), running along the south-western boundary of the development site.

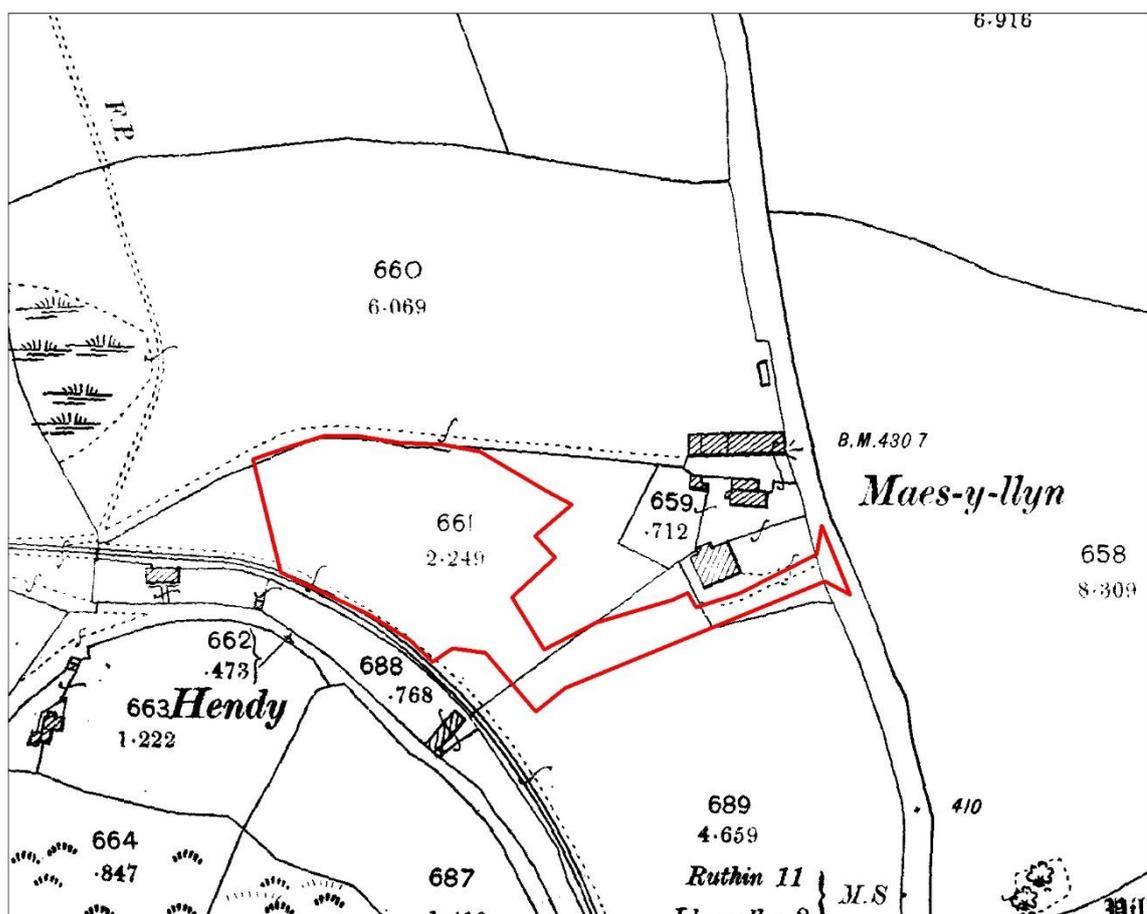


Fig. 4 Extract from the 1899 Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25" mapping showing the development site (in red), with the slate tramway along its south-western side

- 4.8. The development site is part of Maes-y-llyn farm, which dates from the late 18th century. The original farm buildings are listed grade II as a good example of a single range farmbuilding

incorporating a cowhouse and farm stores which was constructed with stone plundered from the nearby abbey, including the re-use of ovolo mullions to form ventilation windows.

5 Baseline Assessment

5.1. The baseline assessment has considered all known heritage assets within the development site, together with designated and registered assets which lie within 100m.

Designated and Registered Heritage Assets within 1km of the Development Site

5.2. The following provides details of all designated and registered cultural assets within 100m of the development site, which are summarised in Table 1 and located on Fig. 5.

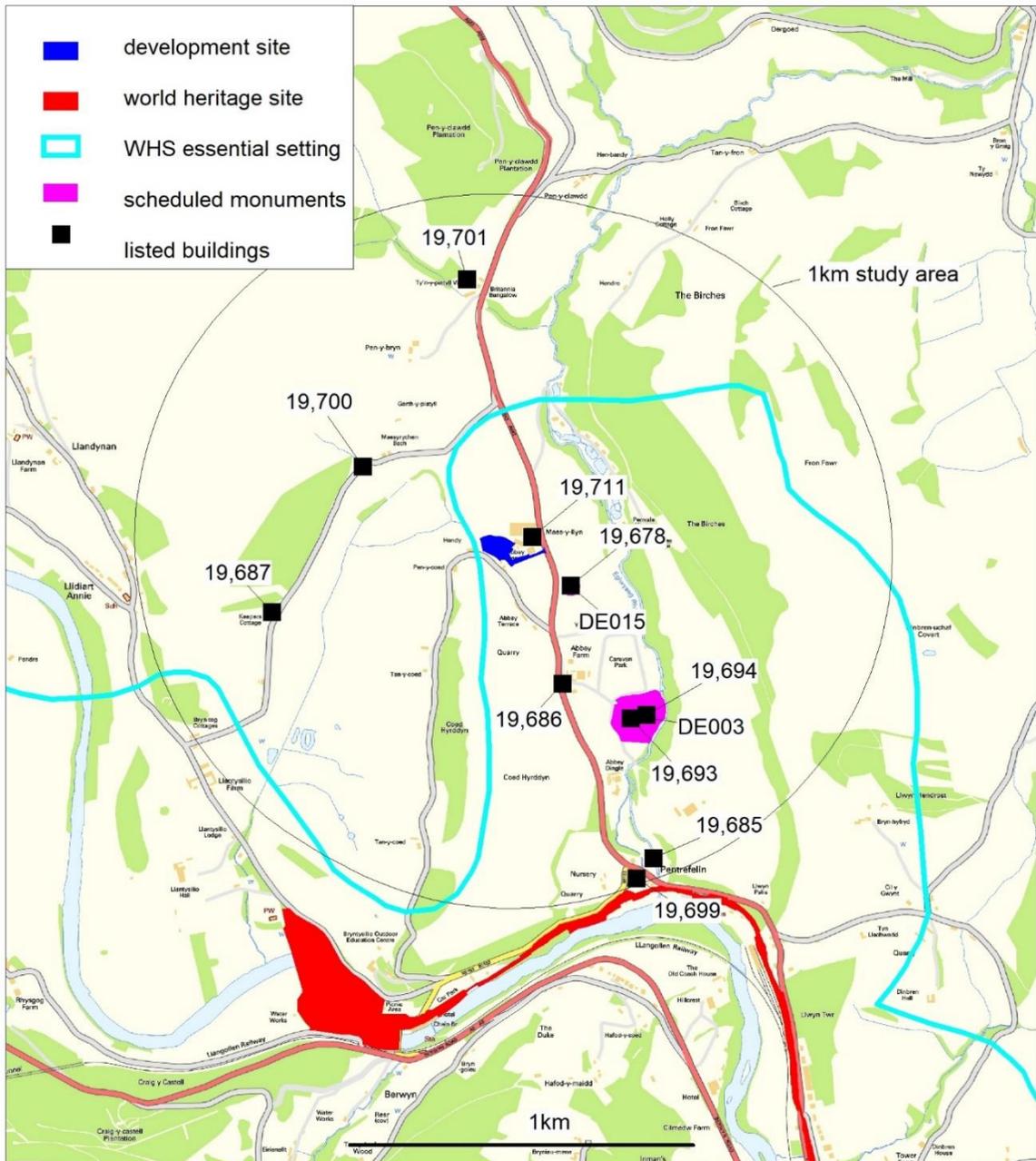


Fig. 5 Designated heritage assets within 1km of the development site

Table 1: Summary of Designated and Registered Heritage Assets within 100m of the Development Site

Designated asset	Within the Development Site	Within 1km
World Heritage Sites	0	0
World Heritage Sites Essential Setting	1	1
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	0	2
Listed buildings	0	10
Registered historic parks and gardens	0	0
Registered historic landscapes	1	1
Conservation areas	0	0

World Heritage Sites (WHS)

- 5.3. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site was designated in 2009 and covers an area of 105ha (core area) and has a buffer zone, the essential setting, of a further 4145ha. To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria.
- 5.4. The World Heritage Site was inscribed using the following UNESCO World Heritage List criteria:
- Criterion (i): The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is a highly innovative monumental civil engineering structure, made using metal arches supported by high, slender masonry piers. It is the first great masterpiece of the civil engineer Thomas Telford and formed the basis of his outstanding international reputation. It bears witness to the production capacities of the British ironmaking industry, which were unique at that time.
 - Criterion (ii): The intensive construction of canals in Great Britain, from the second half of the 18th century onwards, and that of the Pontcysyllte Canal in particular in a difficult region, bear witness to considerable technical interchanges and decisive progress in the design and construction of artificial waterways.
 - Criterion (iv): The Pontcysyllte Canal and its civil engineering structures bear witness to a crucial stage in the development of heavy cargo transport in order to further the Industrial Revolution. They are outstanding representatives of its new technical and monumental possibilities.
- 5.5. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site extends from the Horseshoe Falls in Denbighshire to Gledrid Bridge and includes the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, the Chirk Aqueduct and a number of associated tunnels, cuttings, wharves, bridges and other structures.

- 5.6. At its closest point the WHS lies just over 1km south of the development site. However, the development site lies within the buffer zone which broadly indicates the extent of the likely setting of the World Heritage Site.

Scheduled Monuments

- 5.7. Scheduled Monuments are designated features of national importance. They are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Importance Act, 1979, and their settings are also protected. There are two scheduled monuments within 1km of the development site (Table 2).

Table 2 Scheduled Monuments within 1km of the development site

SM No	Name	Site type	Distance	Direction
DE003	Valle Crucis Abbey	Abbey	500m	SE
DE015	Eliseg's Pillar and Tumulus	Cross	100m	SE

Listed Buildings

- 5.8. These are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016. All listed buildings are nationally important, but are graded in order of significance as Grade I, II* or II. Grade I buildings are considered to be of equal status to Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Local planning authorities must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building regardless of its grade, and it also requires planning proposals to meet the test of determining the extent to which a development affects views to and from a listed building. Planning Policy Wales (10th edition, 2018) requires a 'general presumption in favour of the preservation of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage' (6.5.10).
- 5.9. There are 10 listed buildings within 1km of the development site, of which two are grade I.

Table 3 Listed buildings within 1km of the development site

Number	Name	Grade	Distance	Direction
19678	Pillar of Eliseg	I	200m	SE
19685	Pentrefelin Tramway Viaduct	II	950m	S
19686	Well House at Abbey Farm	II	380m	SE
19687	Maesyrychen uchaf	II	640m	SW
19693	Valle Crucis Abbey	I	580m	SE
19694	Cottage at Valle Crucis Abbey	II	560m	E
19699	Pentrefelin House	II	980m	S
19700	Tramway Bridge at Maes-yr-ychain	II	400m	NW
19701	Ty'n-y-pistyll Villa	II	750m	N
19711	Maes-y-llyn Farm Building	II	60m	E

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

- 5.10. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) placed a duty upon the Welsh Ministers to compile and maintain a register of sites of special historic interest in Wales that includes: parks; gardens; designed ornamental landscapes; places of recreation; and other designed grounds. As amended by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, a statutory register will come into force later in 2020 which will replace the non-statutory register that currently includes 349 historic parks and gardens. The Register will be managed by Cadw. Parks and gardens are graded using the same categories as listed buildings (i.e. I, II*, II).
- 5.11. There are no registered historic parks and gardens within 1km of the development site, although Bryntisilio and Llantysilio Hall lie just over 1km distant, respectively to the south and south-west.

Registered Historic Landscapes

- 5.12. In Wales significant landscapes are catalogued in the two-volume non-statutory Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (1998 and 2001). Unlike parks and gardens, registered landscapes are not graded, but are classified as either 'outstanding' or 'special'. Though registered rather than designated, historic landscapes are treated in the same way as parks and gardens, as indicated in Planning Policy Wales (10th edition, 2018). All the larger registered landscapes have been the subject of detailed analyses in recent years known as historic landscape characterisation.
- 5.13. The development site lies within Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg registered historic landscape and falls within the Pant-y-groes character area, while four other character areas lie within 1km (Table 4 and Fig. 6).

Table 4 Registered Historic Landscapes Character Areas within 1km of the development site.

Name	Number	Distance	Direction
Gafaeliau	1141	60m	W
Maesyrychen	1145	410m	NW
Dinbren	1149	380m	E
Pant-y-groes	1151	0m	-
Llangollen	1152	910m	S



Fig. 6 Historic Landscape Character Areas within 1km of the development site

Conservation Areas

- 5.14. These are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This Act requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of a Conservation Area, and it also requires planning proposals to meet the test of determining the extent to which a development affects views to and from such an area. Planning Policy Wales (9th edition, 2016) states that there 'will be a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments ... which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level' (6.5.19).
- 5.15. There are no conservation areas within 1km of the development site, the closest being Llangollen, 2.5km to the south-east.

Undesignated Heritage Assets within the development site

- 5.16. There are no heritage assets recorded by the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) within the development site, or as a result of a systematic field survey, although the route of a 19th-century horse-drawn slate tramway runs just outside the south-western boundary of the site.

6 Assessment of Impacts

- 6.1. The potential impacts which may result from the development proposals have been assessed in accordance with the DMRB guideline for determining the value of an asset and the potential impacts (see Appendix 1).

Direct Impacts

- 6.2. There are no recorded heritage assets within the development site and the potential of the site to contain previously unrecorded, buried assets is considered to be low. On that basis no direct impacts are predicted.

Indirect Impacts

- 6.3. The assessment of indirect impacts considers the potential visual impacts which might result from the proposed change of use of the field into a camping site.

- 6.4. Field assessment has determined that the development site plays no part in the setting, or contributes to the significance of the following listed buildings:

19685 Pentrefelin Tramway Viaduct

19686 Well House at Abbey Farm

19687 Maesyrychen uchaf

19694 Cottage at Valle Crucis Abbey

19699 Pentrefelin House

19700 Tramway Bridge at Maes-yr-ychain

19701 Ty'n-y-pistyll Villa

- 6.5. The assessment follows guidance by Cadw in *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales* (2017); *The Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (2017) and *Conservation Principles* (2011). The latter defines the following values which help to define the special qualities of historic assets and their significance:

- Evidential value – Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value - Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- Aesthetic value - Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

- Communal value - Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

6.6. The setting of a heritage asset has been defined by Cadw (2017) as:

‘The setting of a historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of an asset.’

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site

- 6.7. There are no elements of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site within 1km of the development site, the closest being just over 1km to the south, with no direct intervisibility owing to the topography.
- 6.8. The development site does, however, lie within the Buffer Zone, towards the northern end, where it extends into the Eglwyseg valley, which is one of the main access routes into the WHS. The buffer zone has been drawn around the WHS to allow historic, cultural and landscape elements which contribute to the authenticity and integrity of the Site and therefore to its Outstanding Universal Value to be conserved. The UNESCO designation states that ‘the integrity of the landscapes and the buffer zone of the property contributes to the expression of the value of the property.’
- 6.9. The development site does not contain any elements which contribute to the historic and cultural value of the WHS, although the route of a 19th-century slate tramway connecting quarries with the canal at Pentrefelin does lie just outside the south-western boundary of the site.
- 6.10. The development site occupies a very small area (the campsite would occupy around 0.5ha), which is surrounded by hedged boundaries with mature trees. However, in views from the northern end of the buffer zone (Fig. 7) the existing polytunnel within the field is just visible, indicating that there would be some visibility of tents and touring caravans.
- 6.11. In closer views from within the buffer zone, along the A542 north of Maes-y-llyn farm, the development site is entirely screened by the farm buildings (Fig. 8), while from a point south of Abbey Grange Hotel the site is also screened from roadside views by mature trees and farm buildings (Fig. 9). Similarly, the site would be screened in views northwards from the A452 near Valle Crucis Abbey, at the point where the stone revetment wall for the slate tramway runs alongside the road (Fig. 10).
- 6.12. The assessment therefore considers the visual impact on the WHS and its setting to be **negligible**, the significance of which would be **slight**, given that the value of the WHS is taken as being very high.



Fig. 7 View south from the northern extent of the WHS buffer zone. The existing polytunnel within the development site is just visible (arrowed)



Fig. 8 View south from the A542 north of Maes-y-llyn farm. The development site is completely screened by farm buildings



Fig. 9 View north-west from the A542 south of Abbey Grange Hotel. The development site (arrowed) is completely screened by existing mature trees and farm buildings



Fig. 10 View north-west from the A542 near Valle Crucis Abbey showing the stone revetment wall for the 19th-century slate tramway. The development site (arrowed) is completely screened by existing mature trees and farm buildings

Eliseg's Pillar and Tumulus

- 6.13. The site is both a scheduled monument (DE015) and a grade I listed building (19678). Eliseg's Pillar is the lower portion of a stone cross dating from the first half of the 9th century. It stands on the summit of a Bronze Age burial cairn.
- 6.14. The monument has high evidential value, in the form of the pillar itself and the burial cairn below, which makes an important contribution to the overall significance of the site. Similarly, the historical, aesthetic and communal values are also considered to be high, each contributing to the overall significance. The monument plays an important part in our understanding of the early history of the kingdom of Powys and provides a tangible link with what is often a little appreciated period of history. The site also attracted the attention of antiquarians during the 18th and 19th centuries, notably Edward Llwyd, while it also represents an important local landmark.



Fig. 11 Eliseg's Pillar, viewed from the west.

- 6.15. The pillar lies on agricultural land 375m north-north-west of Valle Crucis Abbey and its setting takes in the floor of the valley across two fields. The setting does not extend as far as the development site, the area between the two being occupied by the A542, the existing camp site south of the Abbey Grange Hotel and a car park. It is best appreciated from the field gate on the east side of the A542 (Fig. 11) in a view which faces away from the development site. The burial cairn on which the pillar stands provides a fine viewpoint to appreciate the setting of the monument and its surrounding landscape, taking in part of the Pant-y-groes historic landscape character area. However, the proposed camping site lies at a distance of 100m to the north-west and would be screened by mature trees and buildings (Fig. 12).
- 6.16. The assessment therefore considers the visual impact to be **negligible**, the significance of which would be **slight**.



Fig. 12 View north-west from Eliseg's Pillar. The development site (arrowed) is completely screened by existing mature trees and farm buildings

Valle Crucis Abbey

- 6.17. The abbey is both a scheduled monument (DE003) and a grade I listed building (19693). The Cistercian abbey at Valle Crucis was founded in 1201 by Prince Madog ap Gruffydd. At the time of the Dissolution in 1537 it was the second richest monastery in Wales after Tintern Abbey.
- 6.18. The evidential value of the abbey is high, with impressive structural remains and surrounding buried features which add greatly to the significance of the site. The standing remains assist in the interpretation of the site and provide an important connection with the past, the historical value also being high. Romantic ruins such as this have long been a source of sensory and intellectual stimulation and a focus for the local community and visitors alike, such that the aesthetic and communal values are also high. Collectively, each of these aspects provide important contributions to the overall significance of the monument.
- 6.19. The location of the abbey, in what was then a remote valley, is typical of the Cistercian order and while this setting plays an important role in the significance of the abbey it has been compromised by the intrusive nature of the adjacent caravan site (Fig. 13). Nevertheless, the setting of the monument is extensive, with the best overall views being obtained from the Velvet Hill, to the west.
- 6.20. There is very limited intervisibility between the development site and the abbey, a distance of 500m, and then only from the access road and not within the area of the proposed camping site itself (Fig. 14).
- 6.21. The assessment therefore considers the visual impact on the abbey to be **no change**, the significance of which would be **neutral**.



Fig. 13 View of Valle Crucis Abbey from Velvet Hill



Fig. 14 View south-east from the access road to the development site showing Eliseig's Pillar (arrowed left) and Valle Crucis Abbey (arrowed right)

Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg Registered Historic Landscape

- 6.22. The Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg historic landscape has been divided into 17 character areas, of which the development site lies within Pant-y-groes. This area has been described as one of ‘anciently enclosed farmland and scattered farms in the valley of the Eglwyseg river, below the Horseshoe Pass, including the historically important remains of Eliseg’s Pillar and Valle Crucis abbey and significant remains of the slate industry’ (Britnell 2005). The HLCA covers around 350ha, of which the development site accounts for only 0.67ha including the existing access road – around 0.2% of the HLCA.
- 6.23. In views from within the Pant-y-groes HLCA the only direction in which the development site would be partially visible is from the north, where the existing polytunnel can be seen through trees, suggesting some visibility for the proposed tents and caravans (Fig. 15).
- 6.24. In views to the north from Velvet Hill, one of the more important local viewpoints which lies in the adjacent Gafaeliau HLCA, the development site is heavily screened by existing trees (Fig. 16).
- 6.25. The assessment therefore considers the visual impact on the Pant-y-groes HLCA **negligible**, the significance of which would be **slight**.



Fig. 16 View south from within Pant-y-groes HLCA, looking towards Maes-y-Ilyn farm, with Velvet Hill (Gafaeliau HLCA) to the right. The existing polytunnel within the development site is just visible (arrowed)



Fig. 15 View north from Velvet Hill looking towards Maes-y-llyn farm and Abbey Grange Hotel. The valley floor lies within Pant-y-groes HLCA, while the development site (arrowed) is largely obscured by trees.

Maes-y-llyn Farm Building

- 6.26. Maes-y-llyn farm building is a grade II listed building (19711), which dates from the late 18th century. The farm buildings are a good example of a single range farmbuilding incorporating a cowhouse and farm stores which was constructed with stone plundered from the nearby abbey, including the re-use of ovolo mullions to form ventilation windows.
- 6.27. The building contains stonework from Valle Crucis Abbey, as well as structural evidence for its use and development and as such the evidential value makes an important contribution to the significance of the building.
- 6.28. The building is best appreciated from the A542 (Fig. 16). The development site is part of the surrounding farmland and as such falls within the setting of the listed building. However, it is separated from the development site by modern farm buildings, with no intervisibility (see Figs 16-17), while the development site does not make a significant contribution to the setting.
- 6.29. The assessment therefore considers the visual impact to be at most **negligible**, the significance of which would be **slight**.



Fig. 16 Maes-y-llyn farm building viewed from the A542. The development site lies behind the buildings, with no intervisibility



Fig. 17 View east from within the development site towards Maes-y-llyn farm building (arrowed) which lies behind modern buildings, with no intervisibility

7 Sources

Britnell, W. J., 2005. *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg Historic Landscape Characterisation*. Unpublished report. CPAT Report No 683.

Cadw/ICOMOS, 1995. *Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in Wales. Part 1: Parks and Gardens – Clwyd*. Cardiff: Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments.

Cadw, 2017. *The Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

Cartographic sources

1845 Tithe apportionment for the townships of Laesyruchain, Llandynan, Cymmo Dupart and Cymmo Tryan in the parish of Llantisilio

1875 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1st edition Denbighshire 36.04

1899 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 2nd edition Denbighshire 36.04

8 Archive deposition Statement

- 8.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the ClfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The archive is entirely digital and will be deposited jointly with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the National Monuments Record (RCAHMW).

Archive summary

CPAT Event PRN: 140344

32 digital photographs, CPAT film no 4761

Appendix 1: Methodology for assessing the potential impacts of development on heritage assets

General

The primary aim of any assessment is to identify the heritage assets within a development site in as far as constraints such as varying land-use allow, and to provide a report on them which should enable the reader to understand their historical context, offer guidance on their level of importance, whether national, regional or local, identify the significance of impact that the development might have upon them, and recommend mitigation to limit the impact of the development on them.

Impacts and Effects

The development may affect a heritage asset in one of several ways:

- i) **Direct Impact:** A direct impact upon a heritage asset involves the physical alteration or destruction of the latter as a result of the construction, operation or decommissioning of a development. Direct impacts could include the site clearance, reduction of levels, foundations, services, access roads etc.
- ii) **Indirect Impact:** Sometimes known as a secondary impact. An indirect impact arises where the connection between the development and the asset is remote or unpredictable and can affect an asset lying outside the development site. An indirect impact can be physical or visual, and in certain circumstances noise, smell and the like might also be considered under this heading. It should be noted too that in Wales, visual intrusion is normally considered to be indirect, but in England it appears to be classed as a direct impact.
- iii) **Cumulative Impact:** A cumulative impact may arise from the multiple effects of the same development on a single asset, or the multiple effects of the development and of other developments on an asset.

It should be noted that the terms impact and effect are frequently used interchangeably, although there are fine gradations in the meanings of the two words. On occasions these are both used in reports though without explanation.

The Assessment Methodology

It is a general tenet in conservation strategies that heritage assets represent a non-renewable resource, and should be avoided wherever this is feasible in order to avoid damage or destruction. All sites can be classified according to a system based on that provided for the assessment of heritage assets in the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (revised 2019) (Volume 11, Section 3, Part 2).

The relative value (importance) of a heritage asset, as given in greater detail in DMRB (2019) is laid out in Table 1.

Table 1: Factors for Assessing the Value of Heritage Assets (based on DMRB 2019, Table 3.2N)

Factors for Assessing the Value of Heritage Assets	
Very High	Very high importance and rarity, international scale and very limited potential for substitution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Heritage Sites (including those nominated). • Assets of acknowledged international importance. • Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged international research objectives.
High	High importance and rarity, national scale, and limited potential for substitution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled Monuments (including those proposed). • Non-designated monuments of which could potentially be worthy of scheduling. • Listed Buildings. • Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged national research objectives.
Medium	Medium or high importance and rarity, regional scale, limited potential for substitution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Areas. • Designated or non-designated assets that contribute to regional research objectives.
Low	Low or medium importance and rarity, local scale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-designated assets of local importance. • Assets compromised by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations. • Assets of limited value, but with the potential to contribute to local research objectives.
Negligible	Very low importance and rarity, local scale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets with very little or no surviving heritage interest.
Unknown	The importance of the resource has not been ascertained.

Factors that need to be considered in assessing the magnitude of the impact are given in Table 2, based on the DMRB (2019, Table 3.4N), but in modified form, for each historic environment sub-topic (archaeological remains, historic buildings, historic landscapes etc) has its own set of factors, which are set out in great detail in the Design Manual.

Table 2: Magnitude of impact and typical descriptions

Magnitude of impact (change)		Typical description
Major	Adverse	Loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; severe damage to key characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Large scale or major improvement of resource quality; extensive restoration; major improvement of attribute quality.
Moderate	Adverse	Loss of resource, but not adversely affecting the integrity; partial loss of/damage to key characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Benefit to, or addition of, key characteristics, features or elements; improvement of attribute quality.

Minor	Adverse	Some measurable change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Minor benefit to, or addition of, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements; some beneficial impact on attribute or a reduced risk of negative impact occurring.
Negligible	Adverse	Very minor loss or detrimental alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Very minor benefit to or positive addition of one or more characteristics, features or elements.
No change		No loss or alteration of characteristics, features or elements; no observable impact in either direction.

The significance of the impact of a development on a particular heritage asset is then established from the matrix (Table 3) also taken from the DMRB (2019, Part 4: LA 104, Table 3.8.1).

Table 3: Significance Matrix

Magnitude of Impact	Value/Sensitivity of Heritage Asset				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Major	Very Large	Large/ Very large	Moderate/ Large	Slight/ Moderate	Slight
Moderate	Large/ Very Large	Moderate/ Large	Moderate	Slight	Neutral/ Slight
Minor	Moderate/ Large	Moderate/ Slight	Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral/ Slight
Negligible	Slight	Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral
No change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

The degree to which the significance of the effect might the decision-making process can be summarised in Table 4, which is taken from the DMRB (2019, Part 4: LA 104, Table 3.7).

Table 4: Significance categories and typical descriptions.

Significance category	Typical description
Very large	Effects at this level are material in the decision-making process
Large	Effects at this level are likely to be material in the decision-making process.
Moderate	Effects at this level can be considered to be material decision-making factors
Slight	Effects at this level are not material in the decision-making process
Neutral	No effects or those that are beneath levels of perception, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error

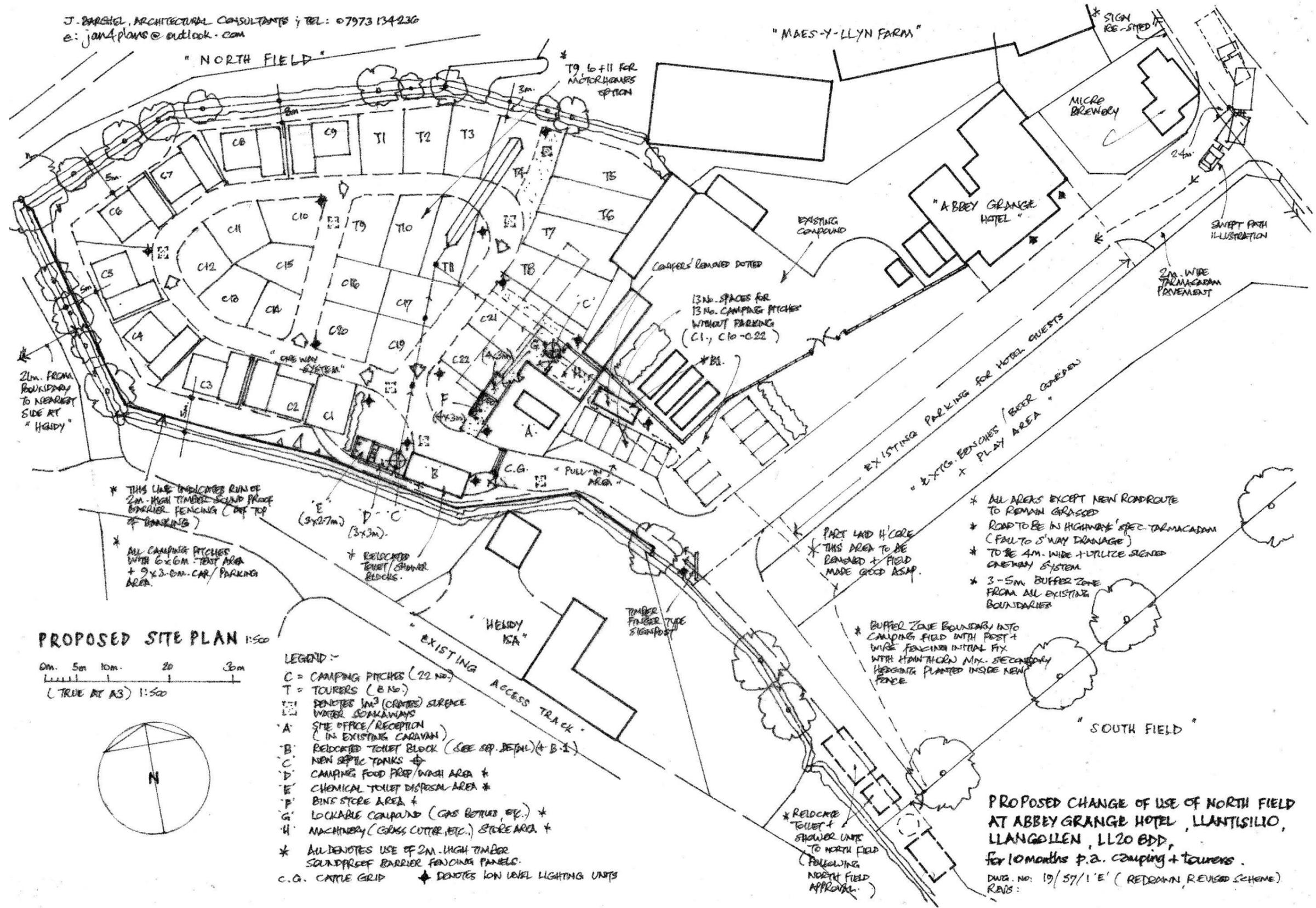


Fig. 18 Layout of the proposed camping site