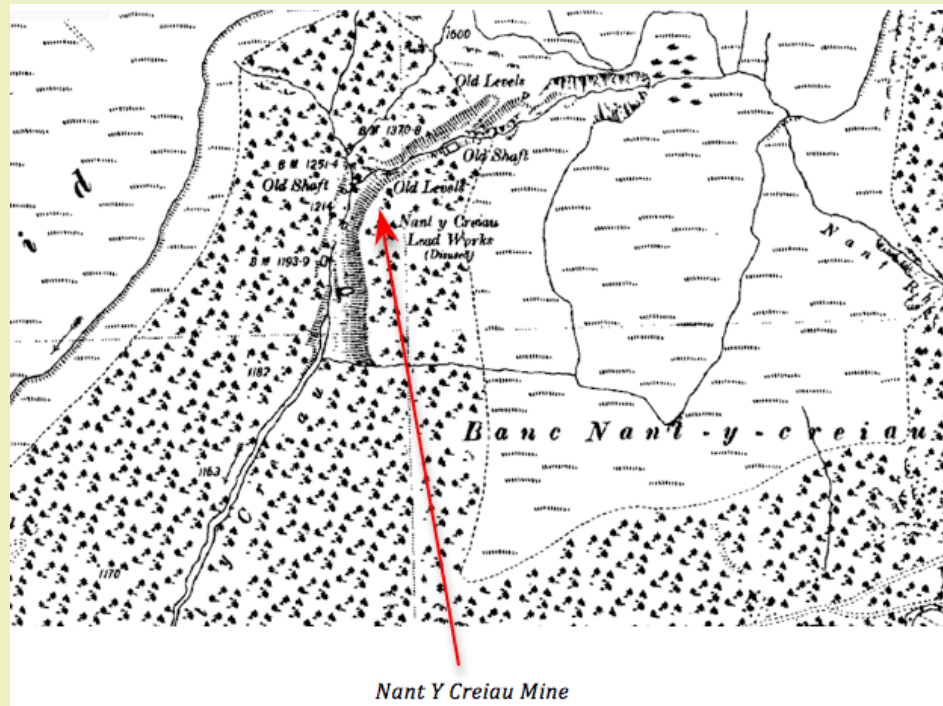


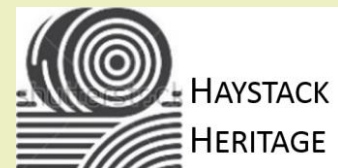


NANT-Y-CREIAU MINE

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN ON BEHALF OF:



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SUMMARY

An archaeological desk-based assessment of Nant-Y-Creiau (also known as Nant-Y-Cria) Mine has been performed by Haystack Heritage Ltd., on behalf of the National Trust. The purpose of this desk-based assessment is to provide a comprehensive report on the conservation and management of the site as it currently stands.

The study area is in the county of Cardiganshire located approximately 5 km north-east of Pontarfynach (Devil's Bridge) in Mid-Wales. It is located on the north side of the twin peaked hill, Draws Drwm and Banc Dolwen. The core study area comprises a 1 km radius around the site, defined by lines of site, and access route potential. Running directly through the core area is the Afon Merin, with many rivulets running down the slopes of the site feeding the main river. The core archaeological site itself is situated in a small gully on the north side of the slope. The hill and the area around site are currently used for agricultural forestry and have a mostly uneven ground surface.

This Mine is on record at the Royal Commission a medieval mine, with possible indications of Roman and pre-historic use. There are no clear records of Archaeological investigations at this site.

The core study area of 1km around the area of the site has identified 3 features/areas of interest, all of them located within sight of Nant-Y-Creiau itself/or on a potential tourist route to the site. Two of those features are of marked importance to the site itself despite none of them being protected by any governing body or authority.

There are not any scheduled monuments, protected sites, national parks/historic gardens, battlefield sites, listed/protected buildings or world heritage sites within the 1km study area. It is important to note that a wider search area would bring up a number of other mines that although not necessarily important to the site, will create complications and effect conservation regulations in this area.

Given the reasonable likelihood of the site holding archaeological remains/historical value, as laid out in the DBA provided by Haystack Heritage Ltd. in April of this year, this report uses guidelines and regulations in keeping with the historical and heritage value suggested and required by the governing welsh authorities in this area.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The mine of Nant-Y-Creiau is situated on the north side of the twin peaked hill, Draws Drwm and Banc Dolwen is in the county of Cardiganshire located approximately 5 km north-east of Pontarfynach (Devil's Bridge) in Mid-Wales. There is little to no local history of the mine or the surrounding area which is currently being used as regenerative pine forestry.

1.1 AIMS

The main aim of this Management plan is to assess the conservation needs of the Nant-Y-Creiau Mine, and the provide National Trust Wales with a set of guidelines and objectives that allows the conservation and further protection of the site. In providing conservation guidelines the aim is to protect the potential archaeology and historic significance of the site.

The secondary aims of the Conservation Management Plan are:

- Establishing the significance of the site.
- Identify vulnerabilities and conservation needs and its potential effects.
- Suggest a stable and sustainable approach to the management of the potential archaeology and visitations to the site.
- Provide National Trust Wales with realistic objectives, to aid the sites continued conservation and management.

1.2 POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS

As outlined above, the aim of this plan is to provide National Trust Wales with a Management Plan and further objectives to assist in the conservation of Nant-Y-Creiau Mine. Detailed historical research was performed to assist in the creation of this report, and the pre-mentioned DBA performed earlier this year by Haystack Heritage Ltd. on the same site. References that informed this historical research can be found in the Bibliography. This report is informed by information available to the public and the private catalogue of UWTSD Library.

1.3 *PLAN STRUCTURE*

The guidance notes that the Heritage Lottery Fund, CADW and English Heritage produce have provided the model for the structure of this plan which provides information on:

- Site Description – historical and archaeological background, current activity and ownership.
- Management – identifying key management protocols for this site.
- Provide suggestions – addressing management issues.
- Provide Objectives – to implement practices to assist in the maintenance and further conservation of the site.

The sites significance is outline by background research (references provide in the bibliography) and any previous DBA's done of the site prior to the creation of this report. Its significance is also outlined by *Heritage Conservations Principles (2008)*, which requests we consider Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal contributions the site makes.

2 **STUDY AREA**

2.1 *LOCATION*

The study area is in the county of Cardiganshire located approximately 5 km north-east of Pontarfynach (Devil's Bridge) in Mid-Wales. It is located on the north side of the twin peaked hill, Draws Drwm and Banc Dolwen. The core study area comprises a 1 km radius around the site, defined by lines of site, and access route potential. Running directly through the core area is the Afon Merin, with many rivulets running down the slopes of the site feeding the main river.

The site itself is situated in a small gully on the north side of the slope. The hill and the area around site are currently used for agricultural forestry and have a mostly uneven ground surface.

Within a 1km radius of the site 3 features/areas of interest have been identified, all of them located within sight of Nant-Y-Creiau itself/or on a potential tourist route to the site, but none of them protected by any governing body or law.

There are no scheduled monuments, protected sites, national parks/historic gardens, battlefield sites, listed/protected buildings or world heritage sites within the 1km study area. It is important to note that a wider search area would bring up a number of other mines that although not necessarily important to the site, will affect building and conservation regulations in this area.

2.2 *CORE STUDY AREA*

The core study area (Map 1) is found in the county of Cardiganshire and is approximately 3km from the nearest small village named Ysbyty Cynfyn. The site itself however is remote and has no nearby local town or habitation affiliated with the site today. The site of the mine itself is situated in a gully or small valley and as such has no real line of sight affiliated with it (Figure 3). During wet seasons these gullies have multiple tributaries that feed into Afon Merin (River Merin), located at the base of the site. The land surrounding the site is mostly managed woodland (Figure 10).

In this core area of study there were three other features of interest within the 1 km radius.

Two of these are described as deserted modern/post-medieval rural settlements on the Royal Commission, named Nant Yr Helygen, and Lluest Nant Y Creiau, and are simply noted as features in the area. There is no protection or governing body that would consider these early industrial homes as needing protection, however these settlements more than likely were in use during the same period when the mine was in use, and one which is very close to the site is still easy discernable from satellite imagery of the area today (Figure 11).The other a south-west tunnel

entrance to the Manchester and Milford railway, the site is noted to be shown on old ordinance survey maps as 'Old Quarry' and the tunnel dates to the 19th century. It is currently filled in and has no status of protection.

2.3 *UNDERLYING GEOLOGY*

The geology in the area is predominantly a bedrock of Mudstone and Sandstone (Map 3). There are also peat deposits found nearby and directly on the site in question an unspecified mineral vein is noted (Map 2).

2.4 *LAND OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT*

The land of this site is under private ownership, but the land is protected for its resource of pine, by Natural Resources Wales. The pine forest and tracks are a public right of way but are both managed by the Forestry commission division of Natural Resources Wales and therefore and guidance they provide on conservation and health and safety must be adhered to.

3 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The core study area of 1km around the area of the site has identified 3 features/areas of interest, all of them located within sight of Nant-Y-Creiau itself/or on a potential tourist route to the site. Two of those features are of marked of importance to the site itself despite none of them being protected by any governing body or authority.

There are not any scheduled monuments, protected sites, national parks/historic gardens, battlefield sites, listed/protected buildings or world heritage sites within the 1km study area. Bellow briefly describes the wider study areas findings in each period of history:

3.1 *PREHISTORY*

No features of a pre-historic nature have ever been found at the site. From its earliest days in the industrial period it was referred to as an 'Ancient Mine', thought now to be a reference to evidence of Roman occupation, but that has never been substantiated by historical or archaeological analysis.

3.2 *ROMAN – MEDIEVAL*

The mention of the mine being 'Ancient' refers to some features that were never described and made public, and the finding of stone hammers, that have since been dated to the Roman period. It is reasonable to believe that on some scale the mine was worked during the roman periods. It is unclear if those features still exist, or if there are further artefacts or features to be found there.

3.3 *POST MEDIEVAL – EARLY MODERN*

There is no clear evidence that the mine was worked until c1750. As a result, most of the features at the site are those of an early industrial mine. It was closed soon after (no specific date available) and reopened for 50 years in 1845 before shutting down production in 1895.

The surface remains at the site currently include; level entrances, shaft mouths, the remains of a wheel pit and crusher-house, building fragments, and some remains of the tramway, dressing floors and tips.

4 SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 *EVIDENTIAL*

The evidential evidence is only present in the historical mapping of this site and the few artefacts found there. As the Mine ceased production in the early industrial period, it has escaped the attentions many similar sites might have attracted. During the 1960's the mine shafts were covered and filled in properly to safeguard any public interest.

4.2 *HISTORICAL*

The main historical value is in its use as a pre-industrial mine. Mines that continue to be used during the industrial period and after, lose any historic value as the evidence of earlier mining techniques are destroyed in the process of mining the area further. The advantage to this site is that it remains untouched from the late 1700's, and as such the indications of pre-historic features that locals exploring the mines have made since then, are arguably still in-tact, protected beneath the fill.

4.3 *AESTHETIC AND COMMUNAL*

There is little to no aesthetic or communal value to this site as it stands. The interior aesthetic potential to the mine shafts themselves is debatable, and as the site stands above a small town, it is unlikely to draw heavy footfall a Heritage site of interest.

5 CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

In consideration of the conservation of the mine this section examines the conservation management issues informed by the Description and Significance sections discussed above. These issues define the type of conservation needed and how to proceed with the protection of the site.

5.1 *CONDITION OF SITE*

The condition of the site today is poor. The location is remote but fly tipping has clearly occurred in the area and as such the valleys used to house buildings and machinery have since filled with shale and miscellaneous rubbish (Pic 1 +2). However, the fill has covered the entrances to the shafts that have also been backfilled.

5.2 *RECCOMENDATIONS*

Currently any significant historical remains are buried in the shale fall and litter on the site, as such it is very well protected as hikers are few and far between and the site is off the main causeway for the lorries. It is recommended, if active preservation of this site is necessary, that the relevant excavations of the mine shafts and surrounding areas are commenced to ascertain the full significance of the site.

Supporting struts and structures may be required to maintain the stability of the shafts, with a mind to replace with permanent features in future to allow the potential for safe visitations to the location. The excavation of the early industrial buildings and machinery on site should be excavatable using traditional and economic archaeological techniques.

5.2.1 MONITORING

The recommendation is that the site remains a satellite location, unmanned but maintained by CADW, who will provide signage explaining the historical history of the location and maintain one visitation shaft that will be open to the public and physically supported with materials within Heritage and Conservation guidelines. It is recommended that such a site be visited once a week to check structural safety.

5.2.2 RECORDING

A full fieldwork report should be provided, and documentation should be taken at each stage of excavation to accurately define the historical discoveries of the site.

5.3 *SECURITY/DAMAGE LIMITATION*

The site is reasonably remote but may suffer from vandalism

5.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to provide a bin and a seating area on this site to mitigate any immediate vandalism. A sign should be placed as a deterrent and a gate placed at the entrance to any shafts not supported and safe for the public to view.

5.4 *ACCESS/LOCAL BUSINESS MITIGATION*

The only nearby activity and need for access nearby the site is the pine forestry production nearby. As the vehicles used in this industry are heavy duty and they maintained the local roads well, it is unlikely that any additional footfall on the site will affect the occasional truck passing through, and vice versa.

6 SOURCES

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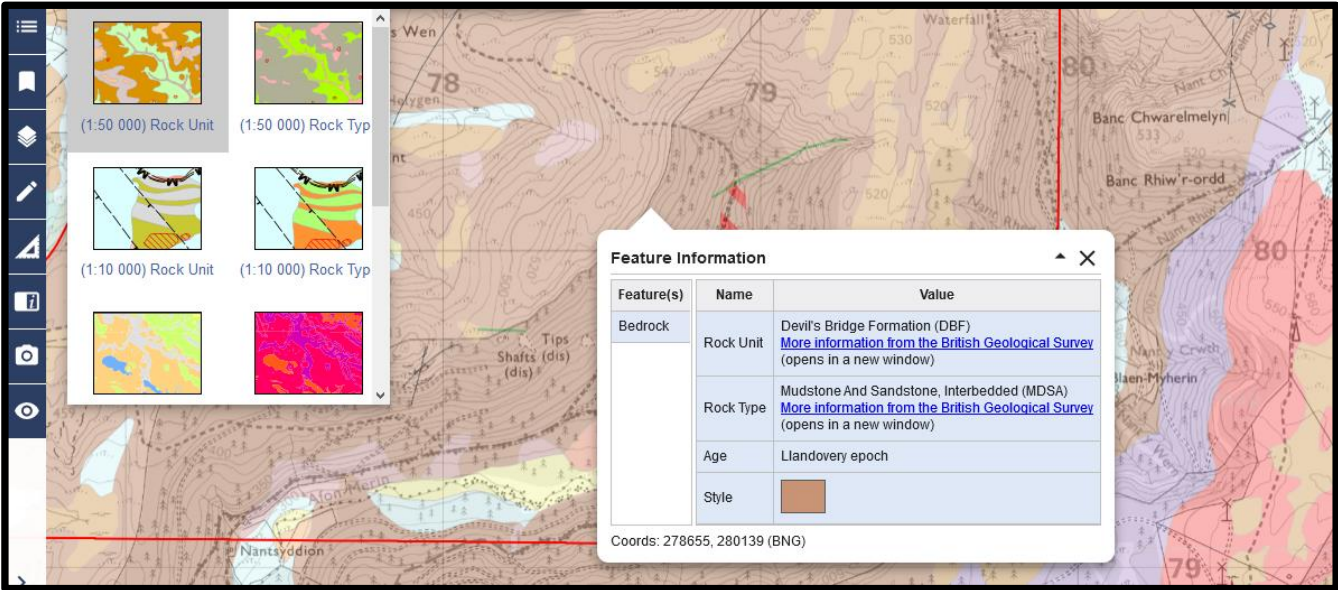
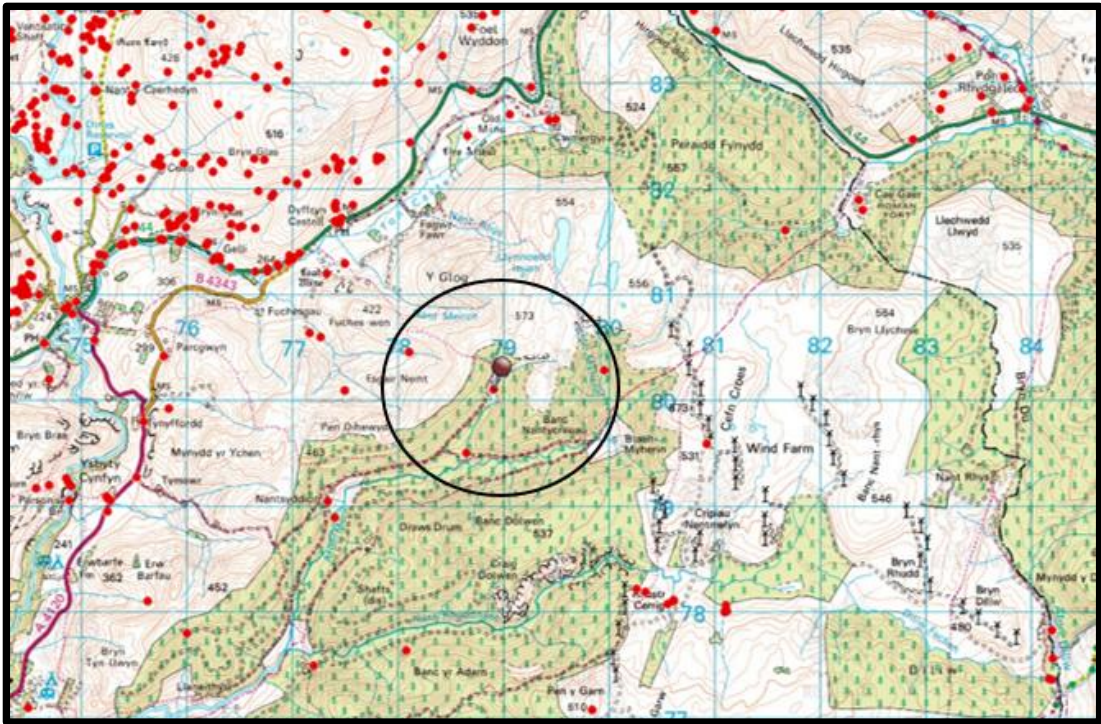
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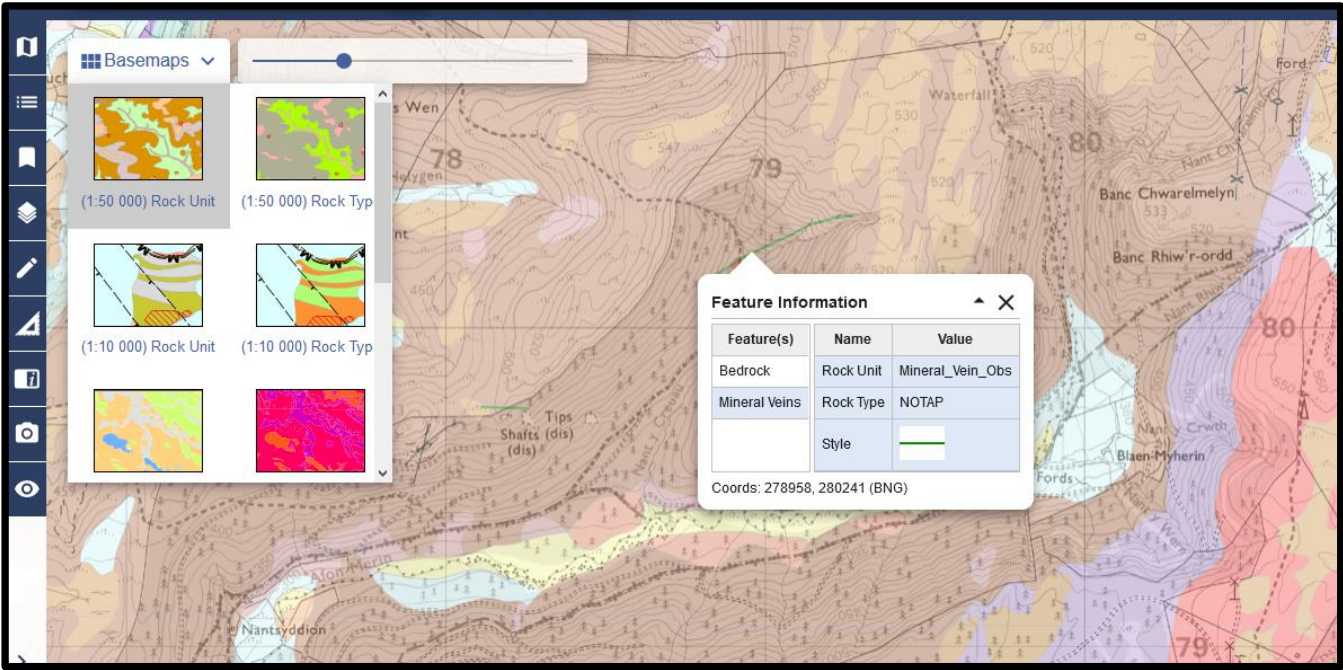
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6.2 MAPS

- Map 1: Coflein OS 2018 map (core survey area circled with areas of interest marked in red)
- Map 2: Digimaps 2018 map (geological deposit in the area)
- Map 3: Digimaps 2018 map (mineral veins in the area)





7 APPENDICES

Picture 1: picture of Nant-Y-Creiau Mine - Building

Picture 2: picture of Nant-Y-Creiau Mine - Valley



