



Heritage Impact Assessment

Bersham Colliery,
Rhostyllen

June 2022 | Project Ref 7666A

HCUK Group is a multi-disciplinary environmental practice offering expert advice in archaeology, heritage, landscape, arboriculture, and planning. It began life in 2010 as Heritage Collective LLP, before becoming Heritage Collective UK Limited in 2014. In the coming years diversification saw the addition of Archaeology Collective, Landscape Collective and Planning Collective, before all strands came together to be branded under a single umbrella: HCUK Group, based on the acronym for the original company. A home working company since the beginning, we are pleased to employ a talented workforce of consultants and support staff, who are on hand to advise our clients.



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1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by HCUK Group on behalf of Bersham (Glenside) Ltd, and follows an Appeal made to the Welsh Ministers in April 2021 for the Variation of Conditions 6 and 26 of Planning Permission P/2015/0337 at Bersham Colliery Tip, Plas Grono Road, Rhostyllen, Wrexham.

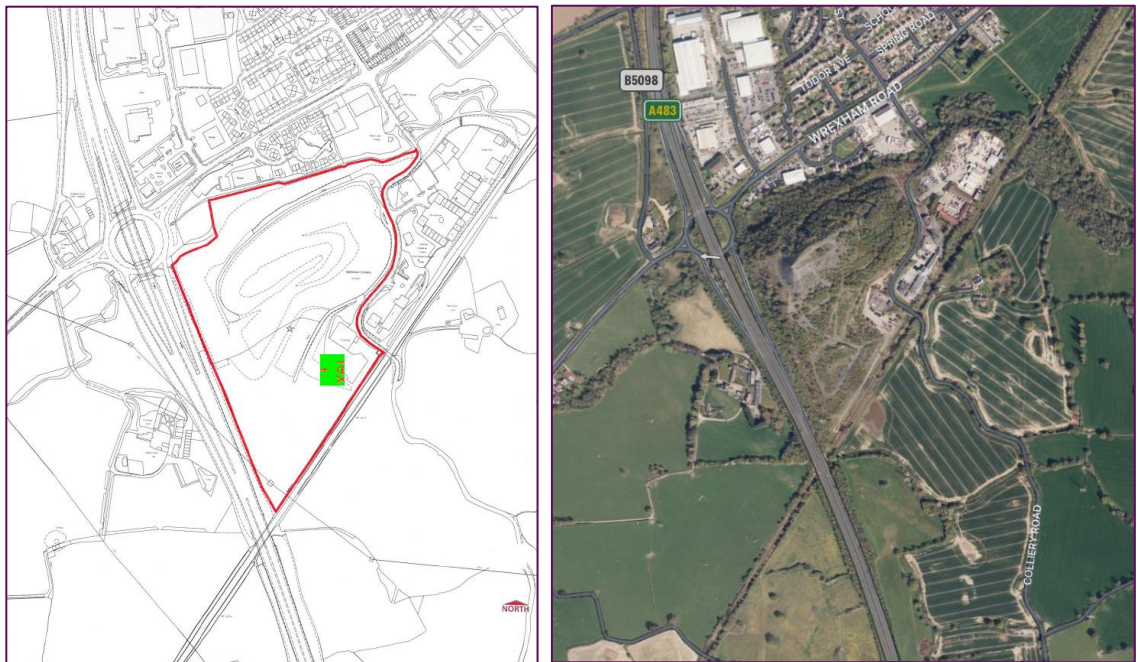


Figure 1: Site location (right – boundary plan and left – aerial image)

1.2 The proposals seek to construct a block making plant as part of the previous consented scheme (approved in May 2018, P/2015/0337). Following receipt of the current application The Planning Inspectorate (now Planning and Environment Decisions Wales, PEDW) advised as follows:

The proposed development includes the reclamation of colliery spoil, together with associated works including the siting of temporary structures and the installation of rail freight sidings and at this most recent application, the proposed inclusion of a block making plant. There are three scheduled monuments, two Grade II and seven Grade II listed buildings within 500m of the proposed development. The colliery spoil tip is a significant feature within the setting of listed buildings 15825 Bersham Colliery Winding Engine House; 15826 Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices and 16567 Bersham*

Colliery No 2 Winding Gear, the latter also being scheduled monument DE199. I therefore consider, based on the size and type of development proposed and its location, that the proposed development is likely to have a significant environmental effect on the setting of those historic assets and that as such, EIA is required in this instance.

Therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Regulation 4 of the Regulations and the authority referred to above, the Welsh Ministers hereby direct that the development subject of this appeal is EIA development within the meaning of the Regulations.

Consequently, this appeal must be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

- 1.3** This Heritage Impact Assessment therefore accompanies a new application for the construction of the Block Making Plant and seeks to assess the potential impact on the historic environment of the installation of the plant at Bersham Colliery Tip as well as forming the Technical Appendices for the Cultural Heritage chapter of the required Environmental Statement.

Purpose of this Statement

- 1.4** The purpose this Heritage Impact Assessment is to assist with the determination of the applications by informing the decision makers on the effects of the proposed development on the historic built environment. The historic assets susceptible to impact have been observed and assessed by the author following a site visit in good weather in May 2022.
- 1.5** Value judgements on the significance of the historic assets affected are presented and the effects of the proposals upon that significance are appraised. The report sets out how the proposal complies with the guidance and policy of the PPW.

Key Considerations

- 1.6** There are three scheduled monuments, two Grade II* and seven Grade II listed buildings within 500m of the proposed development.
- 1.7** The colliery spoil tip has been identified in previous applications and by PEDW as a significant feature within the setting of the listed buildings Bersham Colliery

Winding Engine House; Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices and Bersham Colliery No 2 Winding Gear, with the latter also being scheduled monument.

1.8

Site visits undertaken as part of this assessment confirmed that the location of the proposed Block Making Plant is not visible from Erddig Country Park and House (which includes Grade II* and Grade II listed buildings, is itself a registered park and garden, conservation area and scheduled monument), which is located to the east. Previous assessments addressing the potential impact of the reduction of the Bersham Colliery Tip on the group of historic assets at Erddig concluded that *“The country park and house predate the colliery tip having been originally established in the 17th century. The tip is, therefore, a later addition to the skyline visible from the Country Park and House and as such cannot be termed an original feature. The proposed development would therefore create a vista closer to that originally visible from the House prior to the start of the 20th century”* (Chapter 5, Environmental Statement, 2008).

1.9

Holy Trinity Church (Grade II), which is located to the east along Wrexham Road, was constructed in 1876/7 and is therefore an exact contemporary of the colliery and tip. While the location of the proposed Block Making Plant is not directly visible from the grounds of the Church, it is evident that the application site is part of the associative setting of this historic asset and it is therefore further considered within this assessment.

2. Relevant Planning Policy Framework

National Legislation

2.1 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 was previously the primary legislation for protecting archaeological remains and Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Wales. This has been consolidated by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which has three main aims as defined by Cadw:

- a) to give more effective protection to listed buildings and scheduled monuments;
- b) to improve the sustainable management of the historic environment; and
- c) to introduce greater transparency and accountability into decisions taken on the historic environment.

2.2 The new Act consolidates the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and also the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It is supported by a number of planning guidance documents, a number of which are still in preparation. The Act most specifically provides better safeguards for the protection of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Historic Parks and Gardens. It will also include further guidance in future on place names.

Planning Policy Wales – Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment

2.3 Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24 The Historic Environment was adopted on 31st May 2017 which replaced Circular 60/96 'Planning and the Historic Environment and Circular 61/96 'Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas'. This states that '*The purpose of this TAN is to provide guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and Listed Building (LBC) applications. This TAN provides specific guidance on how the following aspects of the historic environment should be considered:*

- a) *World Heritage Sites*

- b Scheduled monuments*
- c) Archaeological remains*
- d) Listed buildings*
- e) Conservation areas*
- f) Historic parks and gardens*
- g) Historic landscapes*
- h) Historic assets of special local interest' (Ibid para 1.4)¹*

2.4 Advice and decisions on planning applications affecting nationally significant historic environment features (or designated historic assets) is provided by Cadw acting on behalf of Welsh Government.

2.5 TAN 24 also notes the importance of The Conservation Principles document (Cadw 2011)² being used for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales *'and provide the basis upon which Cadw discharges certain statutory duties on behalf of the Welsh Ministers'*³. It notes that *'Conservation Principles should be used by others (including owners, developers and other public bodies) to assess the potential impacts of a development proposal on the significance of any historic asset/assets and to assist in decision making where the historic environment is affected by the planning process'*⁴.

2.6 Conservation Principles includes the following six principles.

1. Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values.
2. Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital.
3. The historic environment is a shared resource.
4. Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.
5. Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.

¹ TAN 24, para 1.4

² Cadw 2011, Conservation Principles

³ TAN 24, para 1.10

⁴ Ibid

6. Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

2.7 The significance of a historic asset is defined in TAN 24 as comprising four heritage values which need to be understood before the significance of the asset can be assessed: Evidential value; Historical value; Aesthetic value and Communal value.

2.8 The Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales document⁵ states that the heritage values (significance) of a historic asset can be further defined as follows:

- **evidential value:** the extent to which the physical fabric tells how and when your historic asset was made, how it was used and how it has changed over time. There may be buried or obscured elements associated with your historic asset which may also be an important potential source of evidence.
- **historical value:** your historic asset may illustrate a particular past way of life or be associated with a specific person or event; there may be physical evidence for these connections which it could be important to retain.
- **aesthetic value:** the design, construction and craftsmanship of your historic asset. This can also include setting and views to and from the historic asset, which may have changed through time.
- **communal value:** your historic asset may have particular significance to people for its commemorative, symbolic or spiritual value, or for the part it has played in local cultural or public life. This will be particularly important in the case of buildings in public use or sites where public access must be maintained or improved.

2.9 TAN 24 discusses Heritage Impact Assessments and notes *'that they are a structured process that enables the significance of a designated asset to be taken into account when considering proposals for change. Heritage impact assessments should be proportionate both to the significance of the historic asset and to the degree of change proposed, and should include sufficient information to enable both the significance of the asset and the impact of change to be understood. A Heritage Impact Assessment should be summarised in a heritage impact statement which must form part of any listed building consent, conservation area consent and, when requested, scheduled monument consent applications.'*

⁵ Cadw 2017b

- 2.10** Guidelines for the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments in Wales have been prepared by Cadw⁶.
- 2.11** TAN 24 discusses what the setting of a historic asset comprises in para 1.25: *'The setting of an 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 or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. Setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset.'*⁷
- 2.12** It notes that the principles used for determining setting impact are equally applicable to all historic assets, irrespective of their designation. For any development within the setting of a historic asset, some of the factors to consider and weigh in the assessment include:
- The significance of the asset and the contribution the setting makes to that significance;
 - the prominence of the historic asset;
 - the expected lifespan of the proposed development;
 - the extent of tree cover and its likely longevity;
 - non-visual factors affecting the setting of the historic asset such as noise.⁸
- 2.13** Further it recognises that *'There will be cases where a proposed development will enhance the setting of a historic asset and this will be treated as a benefit resulting from the development. Mitigation of damaging effects could be achieved through good design and in some cases screening or landscaping.'*⁹
- 2.14** Archaeological remains are referenced in section 4 of TAN 24. It states that *'The conservation of archaeological remains is a material consideration in determining a planning application. When considering development proposals that affect scheduled*

⁶ Cadw 2017, Heritage Impact Assessments in Wales, May 2017

⁷ TAN 24 para 1.25

⁸ TAN 24 para 1.26

⁹ TAN 24 para 1.28

*monuments or other nationally important archaeological remains, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ, i.e. a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause damage, or would have a significant adverse impact causing harm within the setting of the remains*¹⁰.

2.15 In relation to 'less significant archaeological remains, local planning authorities will need to weigh the relative importance of the archaeological remains and their settings against other factors, including the need for the proposed development'¹¹.

2.16 It should be noted that TAN 24 makes no distinction between Scheduled Monuments and those non-designated archaeological remains that would be considered of national importance. This recognises the fact that not all nationally important sites have been identified, and that there may be some going through the process of scheduling.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) & Other Relevant Policy

2.17 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) advises that SPGs may be taken into account as a material consideration where it has been prepared in consultation with the general public and interested parties and it has been the subject of a Council resolution.

2.18 The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 are intended to protect important countryside hedges from destruction or damage. The Regulations define what a hedgerow is in terms of the regulations, and set out the criteria for determining what an 'important' hedgerow is.

2.19 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) is concerned with improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It requires the public bodies listed in the Act to think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

2.20 The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals;

- A prosperous Wales

¹⁰ TAN 24 para 4.2

¹¹ Ibid

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsive Wales.

2.21 The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet the wellbeing objectives set out above.

2.22 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 - The Environment (Wales) Act puts in place the legislation needed to plan and manage Wales' natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined-up way. Part 1 of the Act sets out Wales' approach to planning and managing natural resources at a national and local level with a general purpose linked to statutory 'principles of sustainable management of natural resources' defined within the Act. The Act has been carefully designed to help secure Wales' long term well-being so that current and future generations benefit from a prosperous economy, a healthy and resilient environment and vibrant, cohesive communities. The protection of historic assets can contribute to many of the objectives of the Act through the sustainable and effective management of heritage and archaeological resources.

Local Policy

2.23 The Wrexham Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) 2013 to 2028 will replace the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011), however it has not yet been adopted. As such, relevant policies within the Unitary Development Plan remain. Of relevance to the proposals are EC9 (Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest) and EC11 (Archaeology), which covers scheduled monuments.

3. Statement of Significance

Assessment of significance

3.1 This chapter of the report establishes the significance of the relevant historic assets in the terms set out in PPW, and (where applicable) it comments on the contribution of setting to significance. This assessment follows the staged approach set out in *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (CADW 2017) and equates to Stage 1 and 2:

- Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a proposed change or development;
- Stage 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the significance of the historic assets and, in particular, the ways in which the assets are understood, appreciated and experienced;
- Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance;
- Stage 4: If necessary, consider options to mitigate or improve the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.

3.2 Stages 2 and 3 are closely connected, so this chapter should be read in conjunction with Chapter 4 (Heritage Impact Assessment).

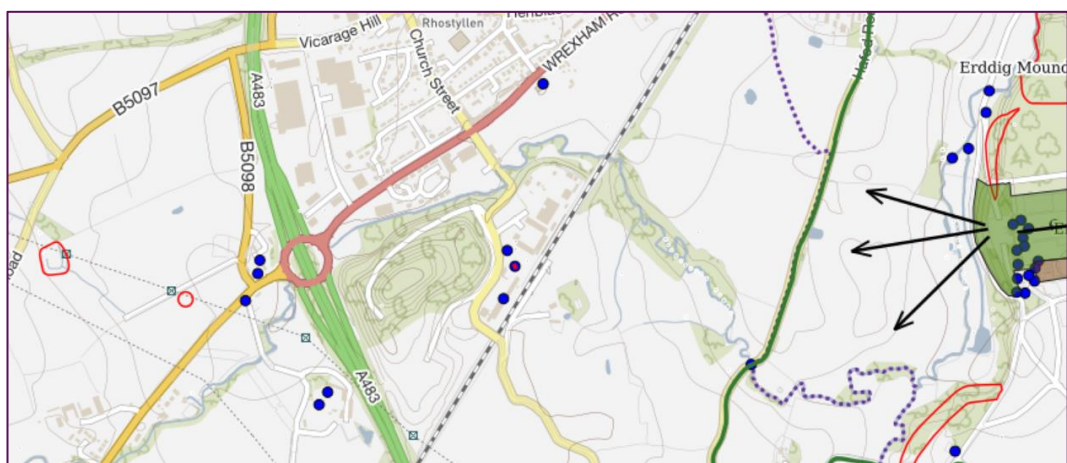


Figure 2: Designated historic assets around Bersham Colliery Tip (LBs indicated by blue dots and SMs indicated by red line boundaries), after CADW, May 2022

Historic Assets

Stage 1

- 3.3** There are three scheduled monuments, two Grade II* and seven Grade II listed buildings within 500m of the proposed development, and a further group of designated historic assets (including Grade II*, Grade II listed buildings, scheduled monuments, a registered park and garden and conservation area) at Erddig, situated between 700m and 1km to the east.
- 3.4** The colliery spoil tip has been identified in previous applications and by PEDW as a significant feature within the setting of the listed buildings Bersham Colliery Winding Engine House; Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices and Bersham Colliery No 2 Winding Gear, with the latter also being scheduled monument. This group of historic assets, which represent the surviving features of the historic Bersham Colliery site, are linked visually and by association with the tip, and are located within 100m of the proposed Block Making Plant site, and are therefore considered further under Stage 2 (below).
- 3.5** Previous assessments addressing the potential impact of the reduction of the Bersham Colliery Tip on the group of historic assets at Erddig concluded that *“The country park and house predate the colliery tip having been originally established in the 17th century. The tip is, therefore, a later addition to the skyline visible from the Country Park and House and as such cannot be termed an original feature. The proposed development would therefore create a vista closer to that originally visible from the House prior to the start of the 20th century”* (Chapter 5, Environmental Statement, 2008).
- 3.6** Site visits undertaken as part of this assessment confirmed that the location of the proposed Block Making Plant is not visible from Erddig Country Park and House (which includes Grade II* and Grade II listed buildings, is itself a registered park and garden, conservation area and scheduled monument), which is located to the east (see Figure 2 below). The undulating local topography, as well as intervening trees preclude any visibility of the application site. The designated historic assets at Erddig have therefore been scoped out of further assessment here.



Figure 3: View towards the Bersham Colliery Tip (indicated by purple arrow) from the front of Erddig (designed vista) – application site concealed by undulating topography

3.7

The Church of the Holy Trinity (Grade II) is located to the east along Wrexham Road, Rhostyllen. The church was constructed in 1876/7 and is an exact contemporary of the colliery and tip. The church also has links to Erddig, and its foundation stone were laid by the Yorke family of Erddig. The increase in the local population brought about by the establishment of the colliery is considered the likely reasoning behind the founding of a new church at this time. The site visits confirmed that the Bersham Colliery Tip dominates views from the church and churchyard when looking westward, and that there are numerous graves and memorials within the church and churchyard associated with individuals who were killed in mining disasters at Bersham Colliery (see Figures 4 – 7 below).

3.8

While the Bersham Colliery Tip therefore forms a meaningful component of this historic assets setting (through its prominent visibility and direct associative links) the application site for the proposed Block Making Plant is concealed entirely by the tip itself, and therefore the construction of a building in this location will not pose any change within the assets setting, or consequentially cause any harm to its significance.



Figure 4 (above) and Figure 5 (below): Church of the Holy Trinity (Grade II), Rhostyllen





Figure 6 and Figure 7: View from the churchyard to the Bersham Colliery Tip (above, tip indicated by purple arrow), and photograph of one of the tombstones (below)



3.9 Hafod-y-Bwch Hall (Grade II* timber-framed house and Grade II timber-framed barn and gate piers) is located to the west of the application site and is situated beyond the A483.



Figure 8: Image taken from the A483 showing the different topographic level of Hafod y Bwch on the left (rooftops indicated by purple arrow) and the Bersham Colliery Tip on the right (application site not visible, approximate location indicated by arrow)

3.10 Hafod-y-Bwch Hall was established prior to the commencement of excavation at the colliery, originally being founded in the late medieval period and the existing house largely 17th century in construction. While the Bersham Colliery Tip dominates the skyline to the north-east of the Hall, this asset significantly predates the colliery and tip. The intervening road, lower topographic siting, slope of the tip, and dense tree screening all mean that the application site for the proposed Block Making Plant is not visible from this asset, and is not visible together with the asset in any wider views. The image above from the A483 (Google images, Figure) illustrates the difference in levels.

3.11 The group of assets comprising Hafod-y-Bwch have therefore been scoped out of further assessment here as the proposals will not pose any change within the assets setting which could consequentially cause harm to their significance.

Stage 2

Bersham Colliery historic assets: Bersham Colliery Winding Engine House; Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices and Bersham Colliery No 2 Winding Gear

3.12 The following is an extract from Shropshire Mines¹² which summarises the history of the Bersham Colliery site:

"The site was originally known as Glanrafon Colliery and sinking was started in 1864 by Messrs Barnes & Co of Liverpool who traded as the Bersham Coal Company. The site was originally a brickworks and some of the hand-made bricks were used to line the shafts. Sinking proved to be difficult and was not completed until 1869, with the first coal not being sold until 1874. In 1912, Bersham Coal Company became a subsidiary of Broughton & Plaspower Coal Co Ltd but continued to operate independently. In 1936 the parent company was acquired by Lancashire Steel Corporation Ltd and it then absorbed the subsidiary to operate the colliery directly. In 1947, in company with a huge number of private firms, the National Coal Board took over Bersham and in 1986 they changed their name to British Coal Corporation. The last coal was brought up in December 1986 when it was closed by British Coal as being uneconomical. Work continued into early 1987 to salvage equipment from underground but quite a lot was abandoned.

There were two shafts which originally had steam winding engines but these were replaced by electric ones in later years. No.1 Upcast Shaft was 10ft diameter and 1,260ft deep. No.2 Downcast Shaft was 12ft in diameter and 1,269ft deep. It had a 300h.p. electric winding engine and was mostly used for winding coal and materials. Its maximum load at a time was 2 tonnes and it averaged around 2,000 tonnes per day.

The worst disaster was in 1880 when there was an underground explosion that killed eight men, including the manager Mr Pattison. A ninth man died of his injuries nine days later. There is a memorial to these men in Rhostyllen Church.

In 1933 the headgear on the main shaft caught fire and had to be replaced by the surviving metal one, which came from Gatewen Colliery. There was another

¹² www.shropshiremines.org.uk/bmd/berhist.htm

serious fire around the shaft head in 1937 but this was fortunately without loss of life.

The underground workings stretched as far as Erddig Hall and a large section of solid coal was left underneath it to prevent subsidence. Despite this, however, serious damage was caused through adjacent subsidence, the kitchen roof having to be held up with girders. The National Coal Board had to pay out compensation for this.

Coal was mined by hand up until 1935 when mechanised extraction was introduced. In 1961, in the Quaker Seam, mechanisation was brought in on a large scale and in 1963 it was used to drive two dipping tunnels from the existing pit bottom to the Ruabon Yard and Queen Seams.

Originally spoil was placed on their own tip (Bersham Colliery Tip) but in the later years it was transported by road to the old Hafod Colliery tip and Pen-y-Bont Quarry at Newbridge. Until the 1930s, Bersham drew its workforce from the local area, i.e. Rhos, Ponciau and Rhostyllen. This led to a strong family tradition of mining with sons following fathers into the pit, in which Welsh was the main language. This changed, however, as nearby pits closed and men were transferred in, with the workforce then being drawn from an area between Chirk and Mold.

The largest workforce on site was in 1958 when there were 1,011 workers. This gradually dropped to around 500 in the later years, with coal being won from the Queen Seam and then the Two Yard Seam. Prior to 1950, Bersham coal went to a variety of markets including heavy industry, railways and a firm making dye stuffs for soap making. In the latter years about 90% of the coal went by rail to the John Summers Steelworks at Shotton for making coke. The rest was supplied to the Central Electricity Generating Board.

In 1999, members of Shropshire Mines Trust visited the site and were concerned at the deteriorating condition of the building. They met with Wrexham County Borough Council to discuss ways that the headgear and engine house could be preserved and it was agreed that a local Trust should be set up to lease the site from the Council. The site was made safe and the engine and building cleaned. The Trust was wound up in 2002 through lack of local interest. The site, which is

now owned by Wrexham County Borough Council is within an industrial estate and the security staff have keys to the engine house.

Obvious surface remains include the headgear with wheel which is still in place. The red brick engine house next to this is complete and houses the original electric winding engine. Other buildings have now been taken over as part of a small industrial estate. The headgear and engine house have been surrounded by a security fence and placed on the ground within the compound are large mining artefacts such as the Point of Ayr winding engine, chocks and a panzer."



Figure 9 (left), Figure 10 (right) and Figure 11 (below): Extracts from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1879 (left) and Revised edition 1915 (right) and Revised edition 1954, showing the growth of the colliery and tip



3.13 The Bersham Colliery Winding Engine House (Grade II), Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices (Grade II) and Bersham Colliery No 2 Winding Gear (Grade II* and Scheduled Monument) are located within 100m of the application site, situated on the opposite side of Colliery Road (see aerial image below, Figure 12). The existing substation (to be retained) intervenes between the application site and the historic assets.

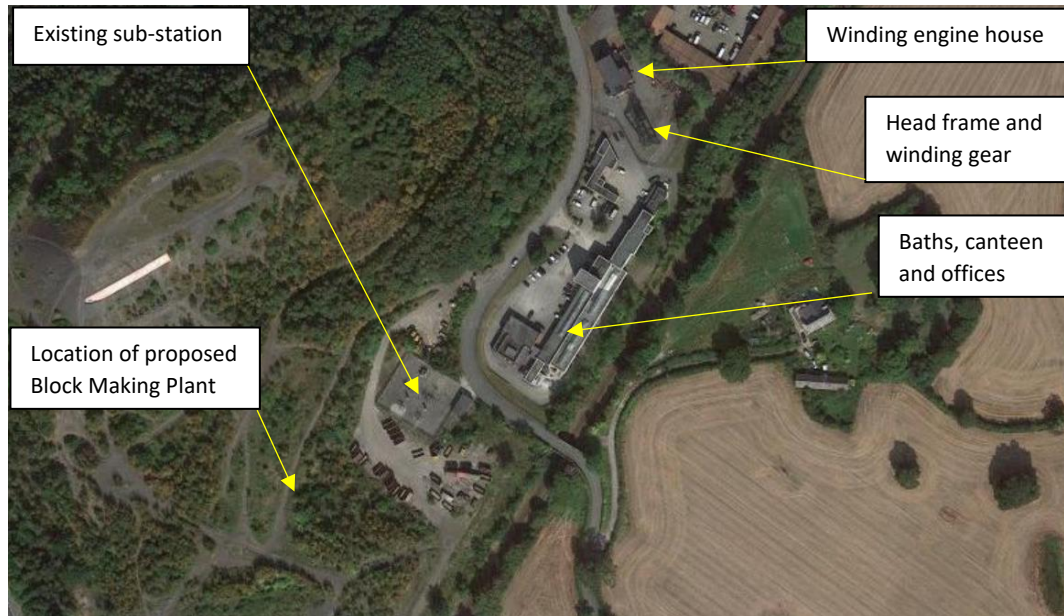


Figure 12: Bersham Colliery – location of the historic assets and existing built form in relation to the application site



Figure 13: View of the historic assets at Bersham Colliery from Colliery Road (adjacent to substation entrance)

3.14 Each of the historic assets at Bersham Colliery possess individual merit and significance, however it is evident that their value and significance as a grouping is greater, and that each asset directly contributes to the understanding and appreciation of the others. While the Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices have been converted to modern offices and retail units, and all of the historic assets are now situated within the Bersham Enterprise Centre, they retain a high degree of readability as a group of historic colliery structures. The winding gear is a particularly prominent feature within the wider area (Figure 13, above and Figure 14, below), and it only exceeded in height by the Bersham Colliery Tip.

3.15 The list descriptions of the historic assets and the reasons for their designation are provided below:

Historic Asset	Reasons for designation (CADW)
Bersham Colliery Winding Engine House (Grade II)	Listed for group value with the colliery headframe (Scheduled Ancient Monument De199) and as an exceptionally complete example of an early twentieth century winding house with its equipment.
Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices (Grade II)	Listed for group value with the colliery headframe (Scheduled Ancient Monument De 199) and winding house, as an example of a post-war baths building.
Bersham Colliery No 2 Winding Gear (Grade II* and Scheduled Monument)	Listed grade II* as a rare surviving colliery headframe, the only one remaining in the Denbighshire Coalfield, and for group value with the buildings of Bersham Colliery (part of Scheduled Ancient Monument De199).

	The monument consists of the remains of an industrial monument, dating to the 18th or 19th century. The winding gear is formed from a steel lattice girder headframe with four near-vertical legs and two shear legs bracing it on the engine house side. The lattice girders are joined by rivetted plates. The two sheaves are still in place, together with braces above. Steps up one of the shear legs give access to a platform around the sheaves. The shaft has been capped. Bersham Colliery was one of the most important in the Denbighshire Coalfield during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was first sunk in 1867 but was substantially adapted and re-built in both the 1930s and the 1950s before closing in 1986. The headframe was installed on the site in 1935. The monument is of national importance for its potential to enhance our knowledge of 18th or 19th century industrial practices. It retains significant archaeological potential, with a strong probability of the presence of associated archaeological features and deposits. The structure itself may be expected to contain archaeological information concerning chronology and building techniques. An industrial monument may be part of a larger cluster of monuments and their
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	importance can further enhanced by their group value.
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3.16 The Bersham Colliery Tip mound forms an important component of the setting of these historic assets as a group, and visually marks their location within the wider landscape (as the most visually prominent, recognisable and conspicuous feature amongst them). The application site is situated on the southern side of the mound, and while the current dense level of vegetation means that the site is not readily visible, it is evident that the clearance of the site for construction and the installation of a Block Making Plant would create additional built form within the settings of these historic assets. This group of historic assets are therefore considered further under Stage 3 of the settings assessment in the next chapter (Chapter 4 of this report).



Figure 14: View from Colliery Road of the Bersham Colliery tip (visible beyond immediate tree cover and forming skyline on the left) and the winding gear protruding above the trees on the right

4. Heritage Impact Assessment

Introduction

4.1 This chapter of the report assesses the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic assets identified in the previous chapter, including (where applicable) effects on the setting of those assets. It equates (where applicable) to Stage 3, which has a close connection with Stage 2. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the preceding chapter.

Proposals

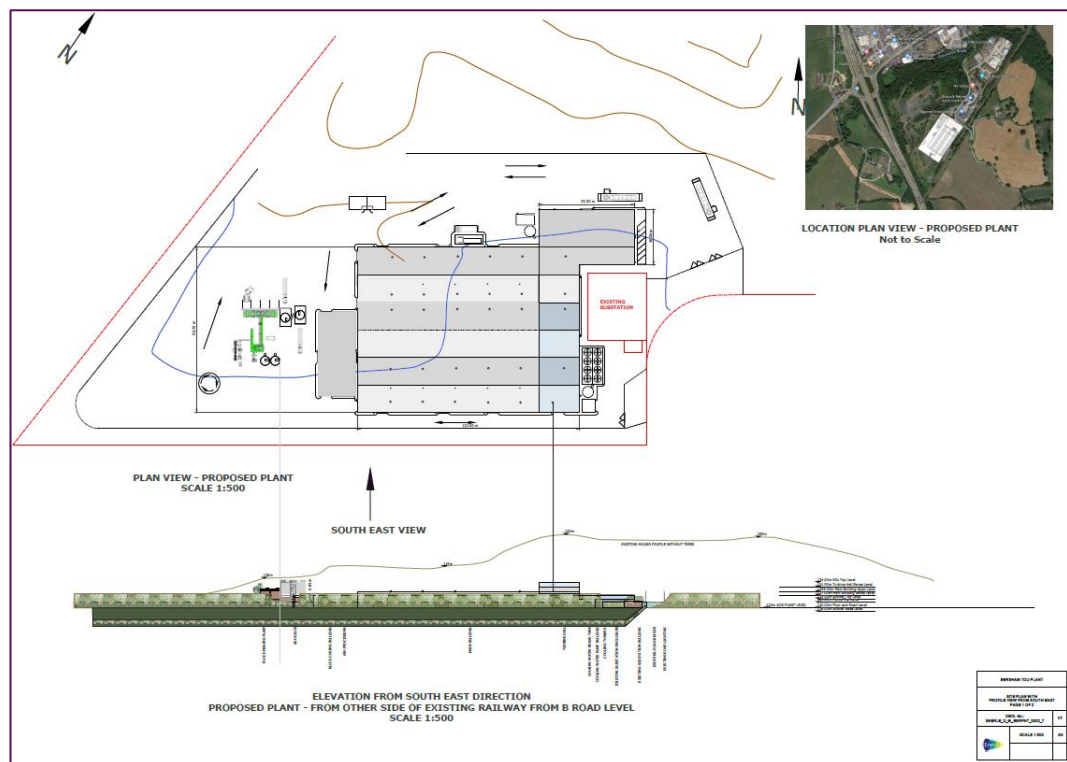


Figure 15: Proposed Block Making Plant (plan and elevation)

4.2 The proposals comprise the construction of a Block Making Plant on the southern side of the Bersham Colliery Tip, immediately west of the existing sub-station. Tree-screening is to be retained to the south of the Block Making Plant in order to reduce visibility from Colliery Road.



Figure 16: View towards the Bersham Colliery Tip and the application site from Colliery Road (looking north)

Impact Assessment

Stage 3

- 4.3** Four designated historic assets, The Bersham Colliery Winding Engine House (Grade II), Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices (Grade II) and Bersham Colliery No 2 Winding Gear (Grade II* and Scheduled Monument) are located within 100m of the application site, situated on the opposite side of Colliery Road. These are the only historic assets identified as being potentially susceptible to impact by the proposals following Stages 1 and 2 of the settings assessment. In accordance with Stage 3, this section of the report evaluates the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.
- 4.4** As discussed in the preceding Section (3), The Bersham Colliery Tip mound forms an important component of the setting of these historic assets as a group, and visually marks their location within the wider landscape (as the most visually prominent, recognisable and conspicuous feature amongst them).
- 4.5** The application site is situated on the southern side of the mound on level ground to the immediate west of Colliery Road and the historic assets. The current dense level of vegetation means that the application site is not readily visible, however it

is evident that the clearance of the site for construction and the installation of a Block Making Plant would create additional built form within the settings of these historic assets that would be visible from within their vicinity.

4.6 None of the historic assets concerned possess designed views or indeed long-range vistas relevant to their significance, however their visual coherence as a group and intervisibility with one another directly contributes to their significance and has been retained despite the growth of the Bersham Enterprise Centre to their north-east and their conversion to offices and commercial (retail) units. Therefore their setting remains sensitive to changes in their immediate surroundings which may alter their cohesion and readability.

4.7 The application site for the proposed Block Making Plant is situated within their shared setting, although as noted it is concealed from the historic assets by the existing substation and current tree and vegetation coverage on the mound. The addition of another element of built form in this location, particularly one of industrial character, while likely to be visible from the immediate vicinity is not considered to pose a change within the setting of these assets which could consequentially harm their significance. Due to its proposed location the Block Making Plant will not intercept in any views between the historic assets forming the group, and will not be visible alongside them. It will not alter their visual prominence, their cohesion as a group, or be conspicuous when looking towards the historic assets. The proposals will also not alter the current domination of the skyline by the Bersham Colliery Tip mound itself, or the winding gear.

4.8 The proposals will therefore not alter the setting of these assets in a manner which would cause harm to their significance either individually or as a group, and they will not alter their appreciation as part of a former colliery site, or the over-riding industrial and commercial character of their surroundings.

Stage 4

4.9 Stage 4, whereby if necessary settings assessments should consider options to mitigate or improve the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance is not considered to be necessary in this instance. Given that the proposals (as a potentially visible element of new built form within the vicinity of the assets) will not cause harm to the significance of the historic assets, mitigation

is not required. However, the retention of tree and vegetation screening from more general views towards the Bersham Colliery Tip from Colliery Road (to the south) as is proposed would be beneficial in reducing the level of visual change caused by the Block Making Plant.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1** This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by HCUK Group on behalf of Bersham (Glenside) Ltd, and has assessed the potential impacts of the construction of a Block Making Plant at Bersham Colliery Tip, Plas Grono Road, Rhostyllen, Wrexham.
- 5.2** While a number of historic assets were identified within the area surrounding the Bersham Colliery Tip, following Stage 1 and 2 of the settings assessment it was established that only four designated historic assets, namely The Bersham Colliery Winding Engine House (Grade II), Former Bersham Colliery Baths, Canteen and Offices (Grade II) and Bersham Colliery No 2 Winding Gear (Grade II* and Scheduled Monument) were potentially susceptible to impact by the proposals.
- 5.3** Following Stage 3 of the settings assessment it was found that while the proposed Block Making Plant is located within the broader settings of these historic assets, its construction and any potential visibility it may have within their vicinity will not alter any aspect of the assets settings which directly contributes to their significance, or cause consequential harm to their significance either individually or as a grouping.
- 5.4** The proposals are therefore considered to be compliant with the policies contained within PPW and the guidance provided by TAN 24, and there will be preservation for the purposes of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Standard Sources

<https://maps.nls.uk>

<https://cadw.gov.wales>

Cadw, 2011. Conservation Principles

Cadw 2017a. Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, Welsh Government (dated May 2017)

Cadw 2017b. Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, Welsh Government (dated May 2017)

CIfA, 2014a. Code of conduct, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CIfA 2017 (rev 2019). Standard and guidance for the preparation of Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessments

National Planning Policy Wales, available at: <https://beta.gov.wales/planning-policy-wales>