

Dylife Site History

High Heritage and Archaeological Value

The site lies within Clywedog Valley
Registered Historic Landscape recognised
for its rich mining heritage.

Heritage remains across the site tell the story of two major veins worked here; Esgairgaled in the Nant Dropyns valley and Llechwedd Ddu in the Afon Twymyn valley.

One of the most striking features is the large dressing floor, where rock was crushed and sorted to release valuable minerals (see photographs). Today, it is both an important archaeological site and an area affected by waste from past mining.

Although there are no Listed Buildings on this site, several ancient monuments lie nearby, showing how significant this valley has been in the story of Welsh mining.

Areas of high, medium and low archaeological potential have been identified and mapped digitally by Heneb: The Trust for Welsh Archaeology.

Conservation Work

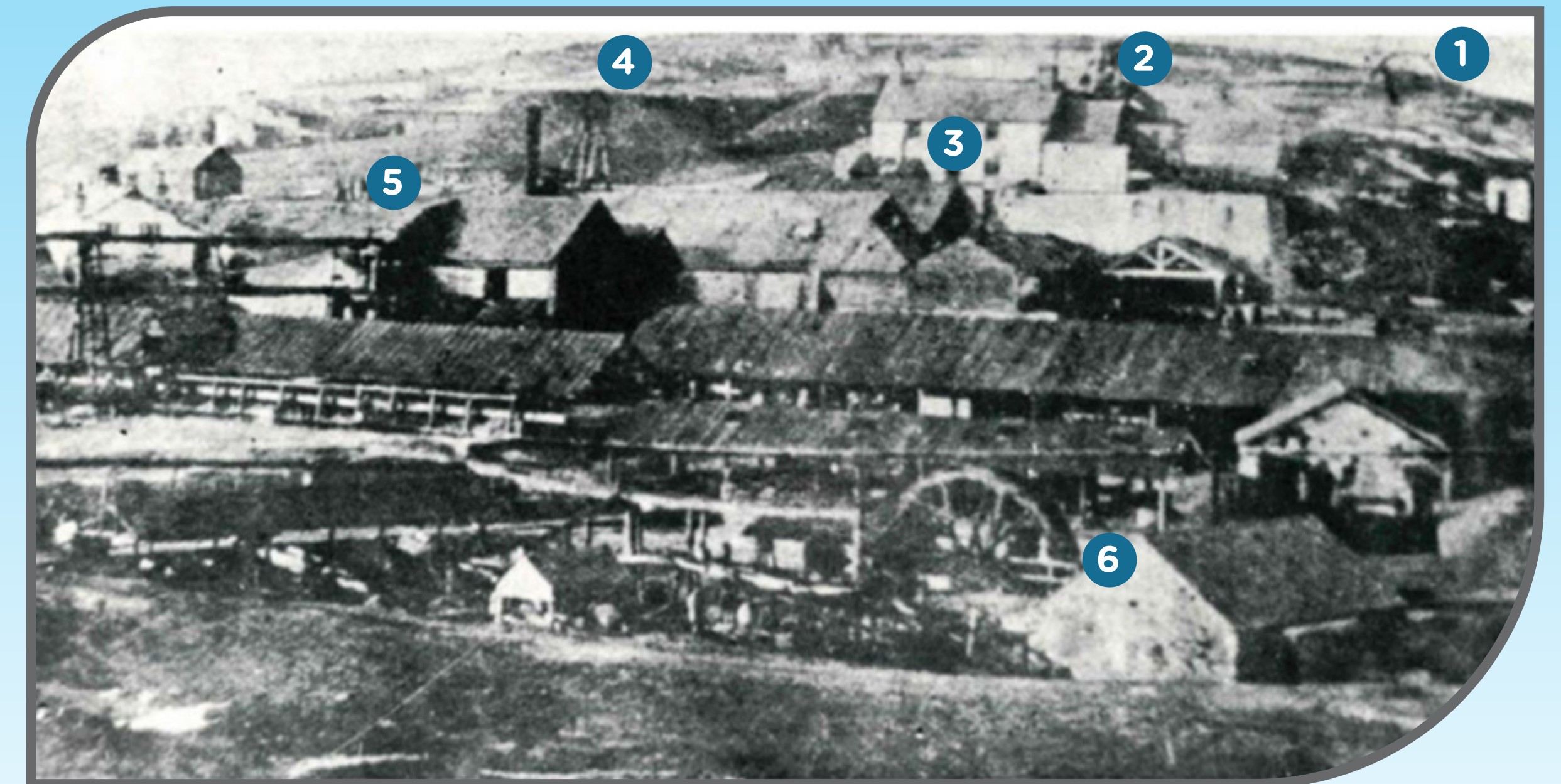
The [Welsh Mines Preservation Trust](#) have had involvement on site and preservation/conservation work has been undertaken including a project in 2007 to remove dumped material from the wheel pit on site and excavation of the adjacent winding house.

Dylife Mining History

Mining at Dylife dates from Roman times or possibly earlier, however, it was mainly mined during the 19th century.

It originally included three engine houses, a dressing mill, ten working shafts, two small reservoirs and associated stores and offices. The remains of these may still exist under the mine spoil.

The mine supported a thriving village at Dylife with chapels, St David's Church and vicarage, a school, as well as a smithy and several inns (the Star Inn building still being present today).



Dylife dressing floors in the late 19th-century (above, Bick 1985) and as they are today (below).

Source: Jones, N. W., 2016. Dylife Lead Mine, Powys: Archaeological Assessment. CPAT Report 1405.

- 1: Black Wheel
- 2: Bradford's Shaft
- 3: Mine Office
- 4: Eastern Shaft
- 5: Crusher wheel
- 6: Dressing floor wheel



Outline Design

In March 2024 we shared our outline design

The design was revised based on feedback from the community and wider stakeholders. The final design is detailed on the confirmed work board.



Phase 1

Lining of the Nant Dropyns channel, construction of a culvert to divert the Nant Dropyns flow away from the dressing floor and road drainage works.

Phase 2

Lining of the dressing floor, construction of surface water drainage.

Phase 3

Lining of the Afon Twymyn channel and construction of a groundwater cut-off barrier.

Phase 4

Regrading, new drainage and stabilisation of the Hirant and Great Tips.

Key

- Existing Culverts
- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Phase 3
- Phase 4



Project updates



In March 2024 we held an information event at Staylitttle to discuss our proposals for remediating the Dylife Metal Mine. The event was well attended, and we received a number of queries in response to our design. Following the event we have updated our design and responses to your queries.

	You said...	We're doing...
Landscape and visual	Concerned about unnatural concrete canvas in the rivers. Worried the works might worsen the visual appeal. Wanted a more natural and improved look.	We are placing natural riverbed gravels on top of the canvas - this will allow it to bend into the natural surroundings. The exposed channel lining will weather green over time. Replacing temporary rock rolls with constructed stone walls that blend into the historical landscape. The design respects industrial heritage and rare ecology of the site.
Ecology	How flora and fauna would benefit from the works. Could the visual aspect be improved if there was additional grass and plants.	We have designed the scheme with caution regarding open areas of spoil as these can often be home to rare species. Although these may appear unsightly, they are very important for the rare lichens and mosses which are an important biodiversity feature of the site. We have undertaken surveys to ensure that we protect and enhance the sites ecology.
Archaeology and cultural heritage	How will the heritage of the site be preserved. Will the site still look like a mine.	We have undertaken heritage surveys across the site, and the preservation of heritage features will be prioritised wherever possible. All works will be carried out under an expert 'watching brief'. This will ensure any finds uncovered as part of the works will be protected and recorded. Completed works have been designed to respect the heritage value of the site.
Hydrology and ground conditions	Asked if the new culvert would be large enough. Concerned about flooding at the dressing floor. Wondered about historic culverts below council road affecting new drainage.	We have revised the design to remove the additional culvert and make the dressing floor resilient to flooding. This will continue to make use of important storm water attenuation that prevents higher flood levels in the village of Pennant. Reviewing opportunities for natural flood solutions further upstream of the site. GI was carried out in the car park area along the line of the proposed culvert; we did not find any such structures. In addition, no impact is now expected as design has changed, and the proposed culvert is not part of final design.

Phase 1 and 2 Confirmed Design

Phase 2

Nant Dropyns

- 1 Scour protection to be installed at the base of the tip to protect it from eroding into the watercourse
- 2 180m length of Nant Dropyns channel to be lined with a concrete canvas to prevent river water entering below ground mine workings
- 3 The lining in the lower section of the watercourse covers the entire valley bottom with an anchor trench at each side
- 4 The lining in the upper section will be a minimum of 3m wide

Phase 2

Dressing floor

- Area of proposed GCL capping
- Approximate area of exposed bedrock and/or angular stone requiring additional sub-base
- 1 Proposed filter drains
- 2 Proposed channel walls to tie in to existing channel walls
- 3 Existing channel to be formalised and lined
- 4 Existing rock culvert to be retained
- 5 Proposed drainage pipe to replace existing drainage channel
- 6 Anchor trench for proposed GCL capping
- 7 Rock roll mattresses for scour/erosion prevention

Approximate location of worked mineral lode

Phase 1

Road drainage works

- 1 Highway/land drainage
- 2 Proposed highway drainage

Area of Metallophyte plant species

Contractor and works info



Dates of works:

Phase 1

Works to start in early 2026.

Phase 2

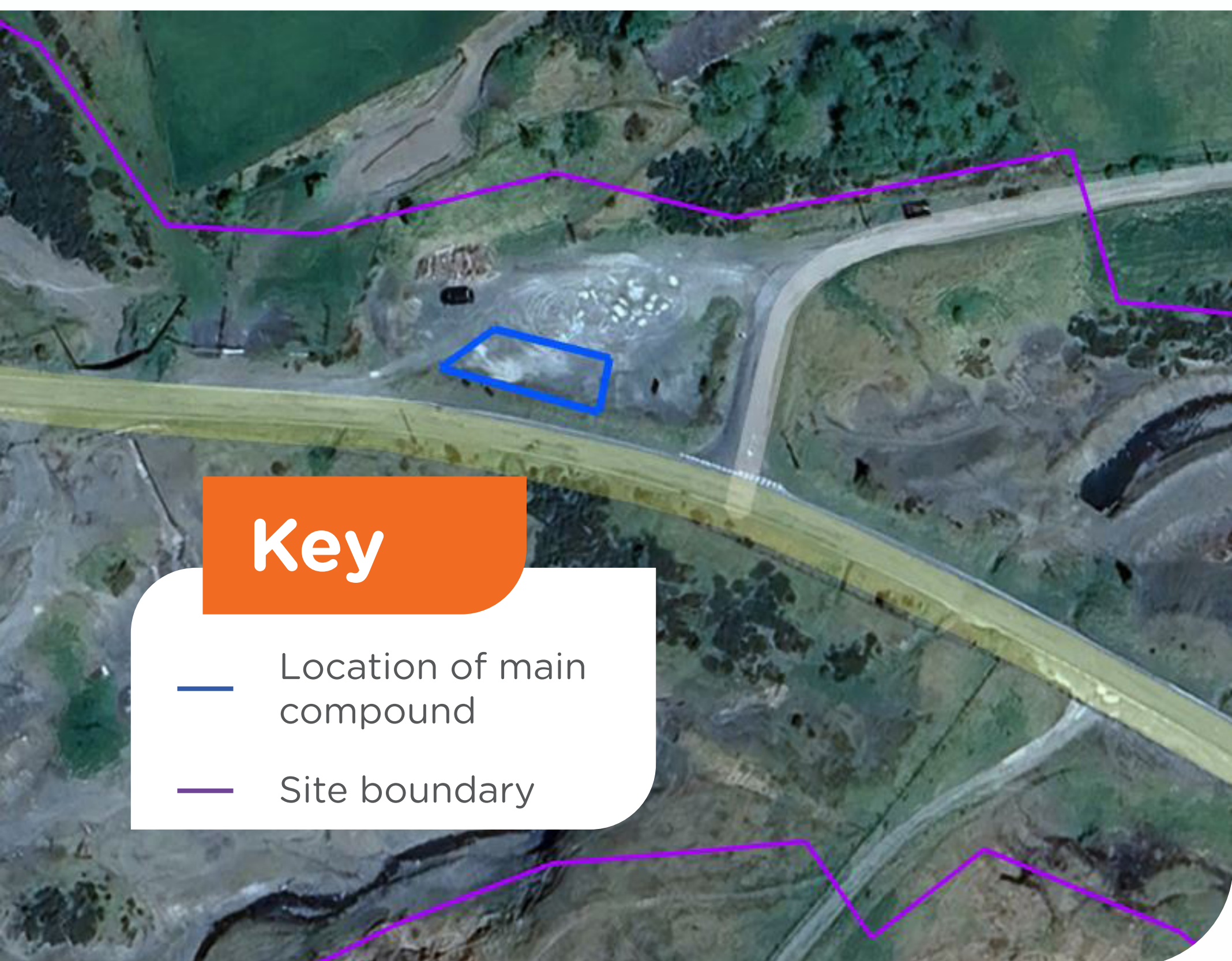
Works will start when the weather improves, currently planned for Spring 2026.

The compound will be set up in January 2026.

Location of compound:

The contractor's main compound will be in the existing car park. Space will be maintained for public parking. It will be roughly 10mx25m.

It will likely contain 2 steel containers and space for storage of materials. It will be self-contained and fenced off.



Key

- Location of main compound
- Site boundary

Permitted working hours:

7.30am - 6pm Monday to Friday

The Contractor shall not undertake weekend or Bank Holiday working without prior agreement from the Project Manager.

Deliveries to Site shall be organised to avoid busy periods the times to be avoided are:

8am - 9.15am Monday to Friday

3pm - 4pm Monday to Friday

There shall be no deliveries on Bank Holidays or weekends without permission from the Client.

Plant, equipment and materials shall be offloaded within a designated area (the site car park) wholly contained within the boundaries of the site.

The contractor:

Will plan and manage the delivery of plant and materials to the site to minimise items and materials stored on-site, and adverse impact to residents and other highway or public access users.

Will be responsible for, and ensure, that the Public Highway, Public Access and Public Footpaths are kept free of parked vehicles and plant (associated with the construction works) debris, mud, construction materials, flooding, construction waste and any other impairment to the safe and unobstructed passage of the public.

Parking:

Parking for any vehicles including private vehicles, shall be limited to a specified and signed area.

Vehicles associated with site activities shall not be parked on public roads and highways.

All site vehicles (excluding private vehicles) shall be fitted with reversing alarms.

Public right of way:

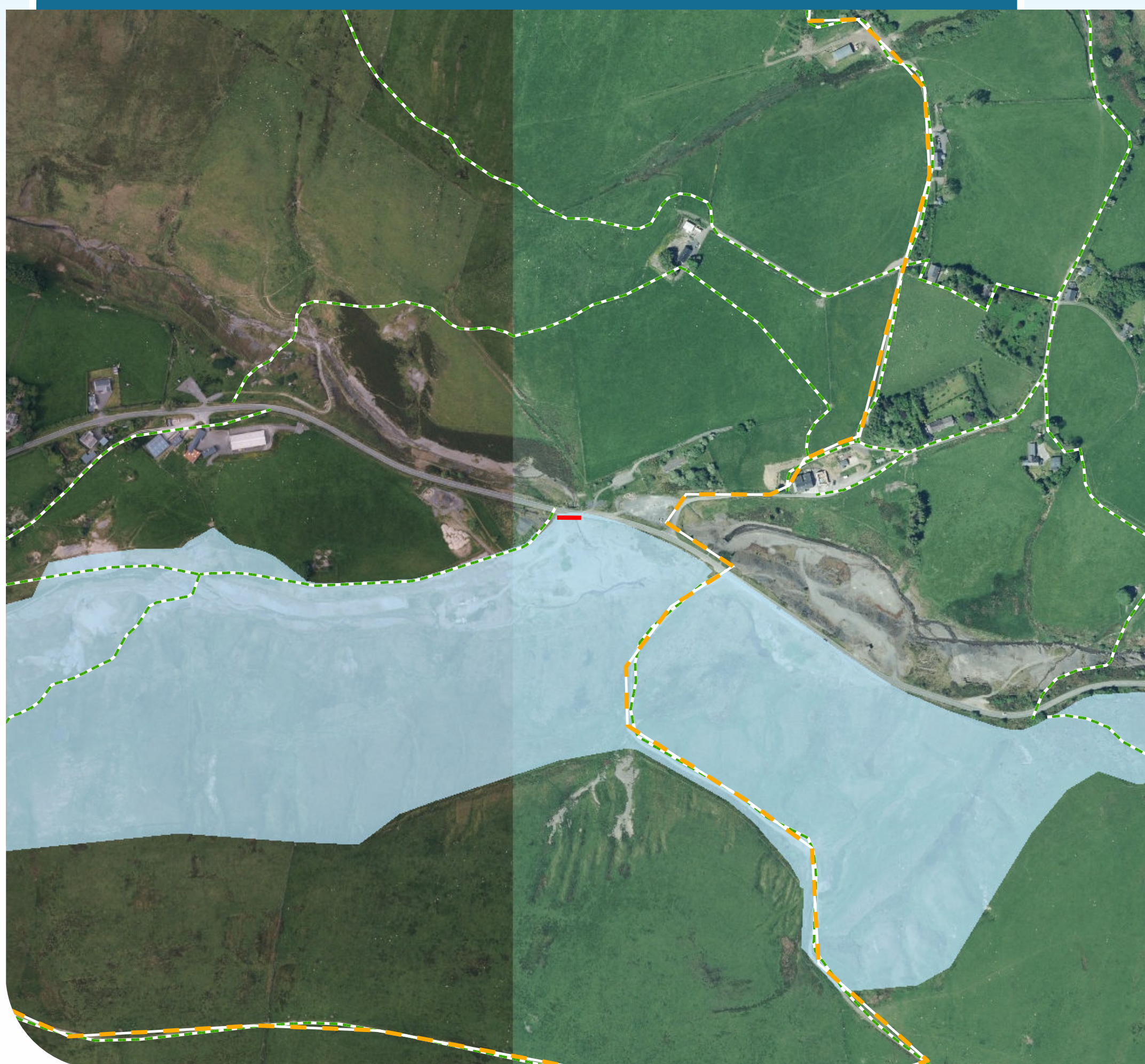
There will be no closure or diversion of the Glyndwr's Way.

There will be some restricted areas within the open access land, which will be managed alongside the works.

Access to the dressing floor construction site will cross the footpath by the existing access gate.

Key

- Glyndwr's Way
- Access Gate
- Public Right of Way
- Open access land



Heritage and environment considerations



During our works:

A heritage specialist will be supervising the works activities to ensure that there is no accidental damage to any of the remaining features of the mine.

If any previously undiscovered features are unearthed during excavations, these will be recorded and, when possible, preserved in situ.

We'll report any findings through a report to Heneb: The Trust for Welsh Archaeology.

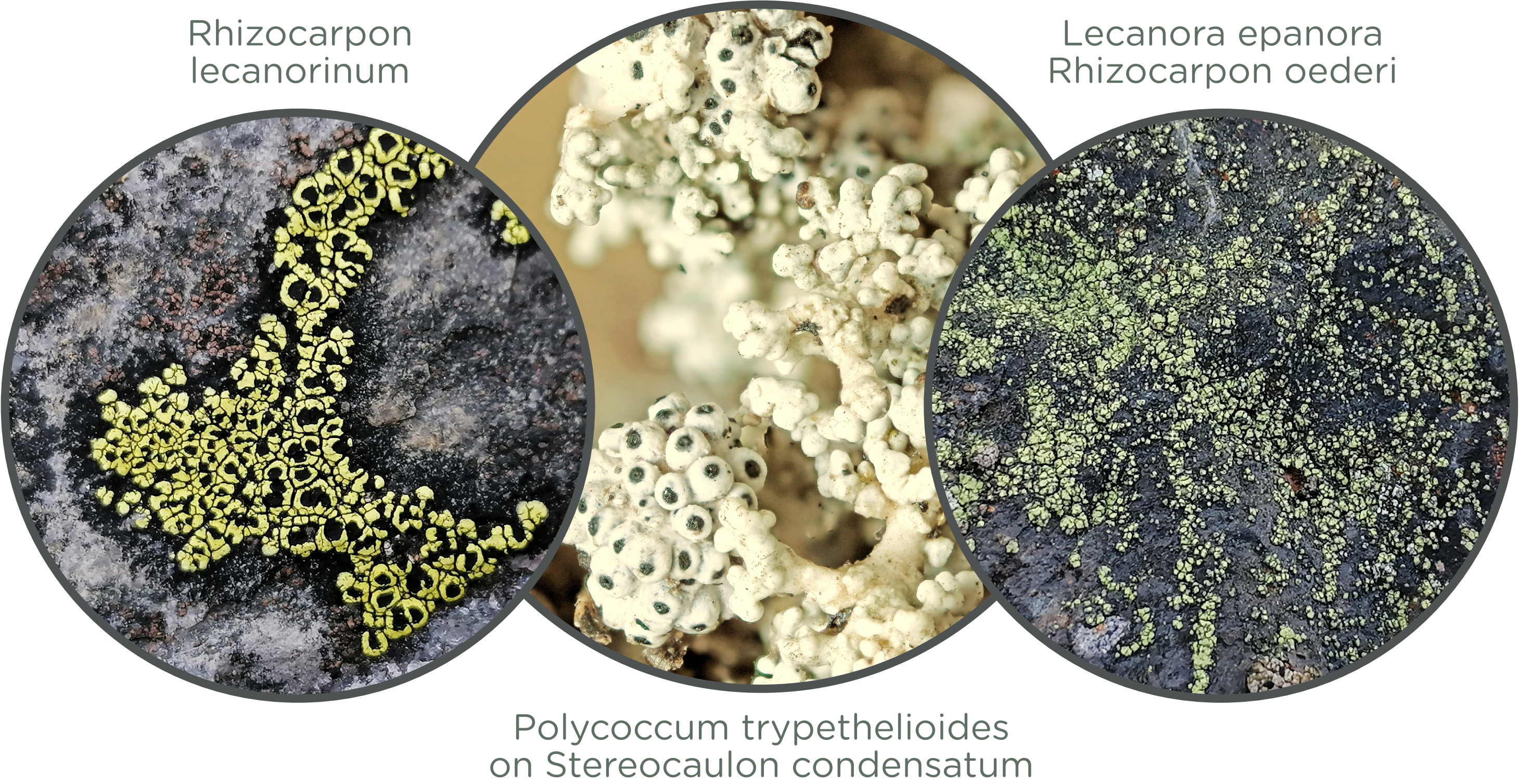
The main processing area 'The dressing floor' has seen much recent damage caused by the demolition of foundations. Nevertheless, surviving remains are apparent, including wall foundations, the masonry tunnel, timber drains and a wooden pipe.

Protection of Heritage

The earliest known reference to mining at Dylife dates to the early 1600s, with the earliest workings consisting of opencuts, levels, trials and shafts. These were superseded by a series of five main shafts from which ore was transported by a number of trackways to processing areas within the valley bottoms of the Afon Twymyn and Nant Dropyns, which continued operating up to the 1920s. There are visible remains of most of the mining and working processes, though the processing areas are now relatively poorly preserved.



Dressing floor with tree trunk pipe



Protection of Biodiversity

The spoil heaps within the Dylife Mine site are designated as a geological SSSI as the mine waste provides an important and highly specialised habitat for a number of metal-tolerant lichens. This habitat is referred to as Calamanarian Grassland. The projects scope and surveys have supported the identification and protection of this rare ecology. The images above were taken from the Dylife study area.

During our works:

The works will be supervised by an ecologist specialised in identifying and protecting the rare mosses and lichens present on site.

'No-go' zones will be designated for particularly sensitive areas to prevent disturbance by construction.

Community opportunities

As part of our commitment to the communities we are working in, we have a number of opportunities we are seeking to progress.

Exploring the story of Sion y Gof - Blacksmith of Dylife

In the 18th century, a blacksmith named Sion y Gof is said to have worked near the Dylife. Local legend tells a dark tale: Sion allegedly murdered his family, hiding them in a mine shaft, and was later executed at nearby Gallows Hill.

Stories claim he had to forge his own gibbet irons before his death. Some accounts have suggested that a skull connected to the story was kept at the Museum of Welsh life in Cardiff but we have since confirmed this is not the case.

We are collecting information with the aim to produce a public board summarising the local story and we want to hear from you

- Did you grow up hearing stories about Sion y Gof?
- Do you know any versions of the tale?
- Have your family or community passed it down?

Please share any other ideas you have for promoting and preserving heritage on the site.

Dylife Gorge Lookout Board

We are seeking to repair the base and provide an updated board for the look out point.

