

Scheduled Monument Management Plan May 2021

Melin Mynach, Gorseinon (GM501)



Fig. 1. General view of the remains of the woollen mill (28/04/21)



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Welsh Government

This management plan has been produced within the Historic Environment Branch of Cadw to inform management of the Scheduled Monument.

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<p>SM name and reference number</p>	<p>Melin Mynach, Gorseinon (GM501)</p>
<p>Grid reference</p>	<p>SS592990</p>
<p>Current Cadw funded schemes (MA /AM Grant)</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Cadw FMW and contact details</p>	<p>██████████ Field Monument Warden Cadw Welsh Government Tel: ██████████ Mobile: ██████████ E-mail: ██████████</p>

I. Site Description

The monument consists the remains of a watermill. Water power has been used at this location for a number of industrial purposes for a long period. The earliest mill is thought to be of monastic origin, possibly built after Neath Abbey took over the estate of Cwrt-y-carnau in 1150, and was probably a corn mill. The first documentary reference to a mill was in 1578. In 1772 it was converted for paper making, and was one of the first of its kind in Wales, in use for over a century. It was returned to use as a corn mill in the 1830's, but in 1866 William Lewis converted the mill to woollen manufacture, enlarging it substantially in 1874. From 1888 the site was turned to chemical and tinsplate manufacturing, and the mill itself became disused. The main surviving features are the leat, pond, paper mill, woollen mill, two wheel pits, dye-houses and the mill owner's house.

The monument is of national importance for its potential to enhance our knowledge of water management systems and 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.

The scheduled area comprises the remains described and areas around them within which related evidence may be expected to survive.

Additional information:

Not applicable

2. Current Condition

Last Cadw site visit: 28/04/2021

At the time of the Cadw site visit the monument was found to be in a worsened-severe condition. This is due to the invasive tree and scrub growth growing on the masonry of the mill buildings and within the scheduled area, damage to stonework through vandalism and growth of Japanese Knotweed. The majority of the scheduled area is now difficult to access due to regenerating scrub and young trees. In particular, the remains of the mill house site, post 1879 buildings, mill pond and leats are very difficult to determine at present.

Significantly, the remains of the woollen mill and paper mill are suffering from vandalism and invasive tree/scrub growth. The monument is a focus for anti-social behaviour with areas of fire-setting; littering; graffiti and damage to stonework.

Condition Trend: Worsened-severe

Current Condition: Unfavourable

Vulnerability: High

At Risk Level: High-immediate

Management Issues

- Vegetation growing on the masonry throughout the monument.
- Specific mill features such as the pond and leats are covered in vegetation.
- The scheduled area has become choked with invasive vegetation (including Japanese Knotweed).
- Loose stonework in need of repair.
- Vandalism; fire-setting; littering; graffiti.

4. Management Advice

The following works are recommended to improve the condition of the scheduled monument. Cadw Field Monument Wardens are available to provide help and advice, and can be contacted via details shown on page 4.

Prioritised list of management works:

- Regularly cut back vegetation growing on walls and treat with herbicide to prevent re-growth.
- Remove any invasive species establishing within the scheduled area (e.g. broadleaf regeneration, brambles, Japanese Knotweed etc) whilst maintaining a suitable shading tree canopy. Appropriately located (i.e. not within building footprints) mature trees will shade out invasive vegetation under their tree canopy.
- Within and directly outside the buildings – keep clear from scrub, trees and other invasive vegetation.
- Assess any trees close to upstanding masonry – any at risk of windthrow/shedding limbs should be removed.
- When masonry is cleared of vegetation, employ a suitably qualified conservation architect to assess the masonry and produce a conservation management plan for the mill.
- Undertake regular litter picks to prevent the build-up of rubbish.

The table below summarises the necessary works and required consent procedures.

<p>4.1 Works not requiring SMC</p> <p>These works can be undertaken without scheduled monument consent if they are carried out according to the guidance specified in section 4.1 below.</p>	<p>4.2 Works requiring SMC</p> <p>These works require scheduled monument consent under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.</p> <p>The works may only be undertaken following written consent from Cadw.</p> <p>The works must then be carried out according to conditions specified in the consent.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly cut back & then herbicidally treat non-problematic vegetation growing on any walls. • Keep building areas and mill features such as the pond and leats free from trees/invasive scrub. • Remove any dens; firepits; rubbish. • Periodically survey/manage trees within the scheduled area as appropriate. • Obtain a conservation management plan from conservation architect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any repairs to the masonry remains. • Installing/renewing any fencing; steps; benches; footpaths; interpretation panels; signage etc. • Any installation/renewal of safety railings. • Any other activities which necessitate ground disturbance/disturbance to stonework. • Any tree/vegetation management on masonry remains which requires specialist access/techniques or where there is a risk of damage to stonework /ground disturbance. • Graffiti removal (whether on wheel or masonry). • Re-painting water wheel.

4.1 Works not requiring Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC)

These works can be undertaken without scheduled monument consent provided that they are carried out according to the guidance specified below:

Cut back vegetation on masonry walls

- The walls of the each mill building are covered in many places with invasive vegetation growth such as clumped ivy, buddleja, broadleaf saplings, bramble etc.
- Vegetation roots penetrate mortar joints in walls/masonry remains expanding the joints which separate stonework letting in eroding forces such as water, frost and wind.
- Bushy/clumped vegetation (for example, trees, clumped ivy, buddleja) moves in the wind which in turn moves roots that are embedded within the masonry remains. This contributes to the loosening of stonework.

Guidance on cutting back vegetation growing on castle walls

- Any vegetation growing out of walls/masonry should be carefully cut back flush with the masonry. The stumps should be left in situ and treated with herbicide to prevent regeneration. No stonework should be disturbed.
- In areas where problematic vegetation is encountered and/or where there is a risk to the underlying stonework through vegetation removal, please contact Cadw before proceeding with any works.
- Only clumped ivy should be cut back and the brash removed. Close growing ivy should be left in place and not pulled off the masonry. Pulling close growing ivy off stonework can cause damage.
- Any access/cutting equipment should not come in to contact with walls etc.
- Work such as vegetation cutting should be carried out in dry weather so as to minimise ground disturbance.
- All brash should be removed from the scheduled area and no burning should take place within it.

- All contractors should be made aware of the location of the scheduled area, its sensitivity and constraints.
- ****The removal of Japanese Knotweed should be undertaken by the local authority.****

Tree management within the scheduled area

- A number of mature and semi-mature trees are growing within the scheduled area. Tree roots cause damage to below-ground and upstanding archaeological remains.
- Any trees which pose a threat of wind throw/shedding limbs, should be assessed and the appropriate steps taken (see below).
- Regular maintenance is important with tree management. Dealing with trees whilst they are at seedling/sapling stage is much easier and cost efficient than with large, mature trees.
- The aim is to keep the building areas/leats/pond free from trees/scrub, whilst maintaining an appropriate shading tree canopy outside of these areas.
- This guidance does not convey any approval or consent required under any enactment, bylaw, order or regulation other than the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. It is the responsibility of the landowner/manager to obtain any such approval or consent where necessary.
- In areas where problematic trees are encountered and/or where there is a risk to the underlying/nearby stonework/archaeological features through tree removal, please contact Cadw before proceeding with any works.

Guidance on tree management within the scheduled area

- Dead, diseased and/or unstable trees that could be susceptible to wind throw/shedding limbs should be carefully felled and removed from site.
- Where possible, trees/tree limbs should be directionally felled away from the monument (in particular, the walls of the buildings).
- Arbour/brush mats can be used to minimize the impact of falling timber.

- Trees should be felled above ground level with stumps treated with herbicide to prevent regeneration and left to rot in-situ. No grubbing up of stumps should occur.
- Any trees growing out of walls/masonry should be carefully cut back flush with the masonry. The stumps should be left in situ and treated with herbicide. No stonework should be disturbed.
- Any overhanging trees which may be touching (or very close to) walls etc should be carefully removed.
- Any access/cutting equipment should not come in to contact with walls etc.
- Any seedling/sapling regeneration needs to be cut and removed on a regular basis so as to prevent the re-wilding of the scheduled area.
- Work on trees should be carried out in dry weather so as to minimise ground disturbance.
- All cut timber/brash should be removed from the scheduled area and no burning should take place within it.
- No timber should be stored within the scheduled area.
- All contractors should be made aware of the location of the scheduled area, its sensitivity and constraints.

4.2 Category 2 Works

Significant or Intrusive Works such as these require full Scheduled Monument Consent to be granted in writing by Cadw prior to the works being undertaken.

Application form available at: <http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/historicenvironment/help-advice-and-grants/makingchanges/schedmonconsent/?lang=en>

Upon receipt of scheduled monument consent the works outlined below must then be carried out according to the conditions specified in the consent.

Not applicable.

4.3 Long-term Management Recommendations / Best Practice

- To maintain the monument by the timely removal of any seedling/sapling trees/scrub vegetation within buildings/leat/pond areas whilst maintaining a suitable shading tree canopy where appropriate outside of these features.
- To carefully remove any vegetation growing on walls (as per guidance above).
- To undertake any necessary tree management (as per guidance above).
- Long term aim to keep the walls and buildings/leat/pond features free from invasive vegetation/trees and the rest of the scheduled area free from invasive understorey whilst maintaining a suitable shading tree canopy where appropriate.
- Graffiti removal from water wheel.
- Employ a suitably qualified conservation architect to produce a conservation management plan for the mill site.
- In consultation with Cadw (and by prior Scheduled Monument Consent from Cadw) design a long term plan to conserve the masonry remains.

5. Photographs



Fig 2. The eastern wall of the woollen mill showing damage to stonework by vandalism (28/04/21)



Fig. 3. Invasive vegetation & trees growing out of stonework of retaining wall (28/04/21)



Fig. 4. Panorama of the interior of the woollen mill showing invasive vegetation, dumping & fallen stonework (28/04/21)



Fig. 5. View north towards the paper mill showing invasive vegetation, evidence for burning and dilapidated interpretation panel (28/04/21)

7. Requirements

7.1 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979 & Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Scheduled Monuments (SMs) are monuments deemed to be of national importance and as such are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979 as amended by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016. It is an offence under the legislation to cause damage or disturbance to a SM.

Damage or disturbance would include – any unauthorised works that involve ground disturbance (including fencing), but also importing material into the scheduled area, metal detecting, rewetting, burning etc.

Any operations involving ground disturbance, the importation of material or rewetting require Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) to have been approved by Cadw prior to the works being undertaken.