South Wales RIGS Group Site Record
RIGS Description

SECTION A

General	South Wales
Site Name: Henllys Vale	**File Number: Site_AB_10**
RIGS Number: 775	**Surveyed by:** Rhian Kendall and Adrian Humpage
Grid Reference: SN 762 137	**Date of Visit:** 19th June 2011
RIGS Category: Educational, scientific, historical	**Date Registered:** Owner: Unknown Planning Authority: Carmarthen CBC
Earth Science Category: Stratigraphic, industrial	
Site Nature: Disused quarries and buildings, river valley and moorland	**Documentation prepared by:** Rhian Kendall
Unitary Authority: Carmarthen CBC	**Documentation last revised:** March 2012
OS 1:50,000: 160	**Photographic Record:** Attached
OS 1:25,000: OL12	
BGS 1:50,000: 230	

RIGS Statement of Interest:

The Henllys RIGS includes are range of features of geological and industrial history interest.

The site is important as it illustrates some of the industries that existed the area in the past. These including coal mining, lime burning and quarrying for sillica sand and silica furnace bricks.

The valley of Henllys is also important for its geology. The South Wales Lower Coal Measures Formation, South Wales Middle Coal Measures Formation and the Twrch Sandstone Formation can all be examined on this site. The Twrch Sandstone Formation is the new name for the Basal Grits and is named for this area where the formation attains its greatest thickness.

Geological setting/context:

The South Wales Lower Coal Measures Formation is exposed at SN 7596 1313 and SN 7627 1384 where is it visible as interbedded sandstones and mudstones with reddish brown iron stone nodules. At SN 7619 1361, thin sandstones occur within a sequence of dark mudstones. Sediments of the Lower Coal Measures were deposited in southward prograding deltas (Waters et al 2009).

At SN 7620 1344, large rounded boulders of Twrch Sandstone are seen in the banks of a tributary of the Afon Twrch. They are too large to be moved by the small river so point to transportation by ice during the last ice age. Beneath the boulders, mudstones of the South Wales Middle Coal Measures Formation can be seen.

The quarries around SN 7630 1580 and the river banks of the Afon Twrch expose sandstones which derive their named for this area: the Twrch Sandstone Formation. The Twrch Sandstone Formation was previously named the Basal Grit and reaches its maximum thickness in this area (approximately 190m). The formation is a quartzitic sandstone with thin mudstones/siltstone interbeds. Although, in this area, the formation is predominantly a sandstone, the Twrch Sandstone Formation can is commonly pebbly and conglomeratic, occurring in upwards coarsening cycles or can be found with channelled bases in upwards fining cycles. The rocks were deposited in deltas and fluvial channel conditions. (Waters et all 2009). The Twrch Sandstone Formation is an important local source of silica sand and silica rock which was used in the manufacture of bricks to line furnaces.

The large chimney on this site is one of the last remnants of the engine house, associated with the Henllys Vale Colliery. At approximately 30m high and constructed in brick, the engine was used to haul coal from the colliery. The colliery was established in 1898 and worked until the First World War and in 1904 the colliery employed 141 men. The mine worked the Brass Vein.

This site contains a series of five limekilns which are built into the western side of the Afon Twrch Valley. It is thought that the steep slope is probably artificial and designed for top loading the kilns. The limekilns are important due to their state of preservation and their remote location. Large scale lime production at Henllys was for the iron industry along the northern edge f the coal field in the nineteenth centenary, where lime is used as a flux. Lime was also taken from Henllys to irons works at Ynyscedwyn.

References:

Powell, D. [1992] Industrial Archaeology of Cwm Twrch. In Briggs, CS (Ed) [1992]. Welsh Industrial Heritage: a Review. CBA Research Report No 79. Londone Council for British Archaeology.

Waters, C. N., Waters, R. A., Barclay, W. J., and Davies, J. R. [2009]. A lithostratigraphical framework for the Carboniferous successions of southern Great Britain (Onshore). British Geological Survey Research Report, RR/09/01.

SECTION B

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:
Please score Accessibility and Safety Red Amber or Green

Accessibility:			X
Comment: The lower part of this site is very accessible along good paths. The upper section can be very wet and boggy			
Safety:			X
Comment: The northern part of the site is on open moorland and so appropriate clothing and footwear is required			
Conservation status:			

OWNERSHIP/PLANNING CONTROL:

Owner/tenant: Unknown

Planning Authority: Carmarthen

Planning status/constraints/opportunities: None known

CONDITION, USE & MANAGEMENT:

Present use: None

Site condition: Good

Potential threats: None

Site Management: Maintain as at present

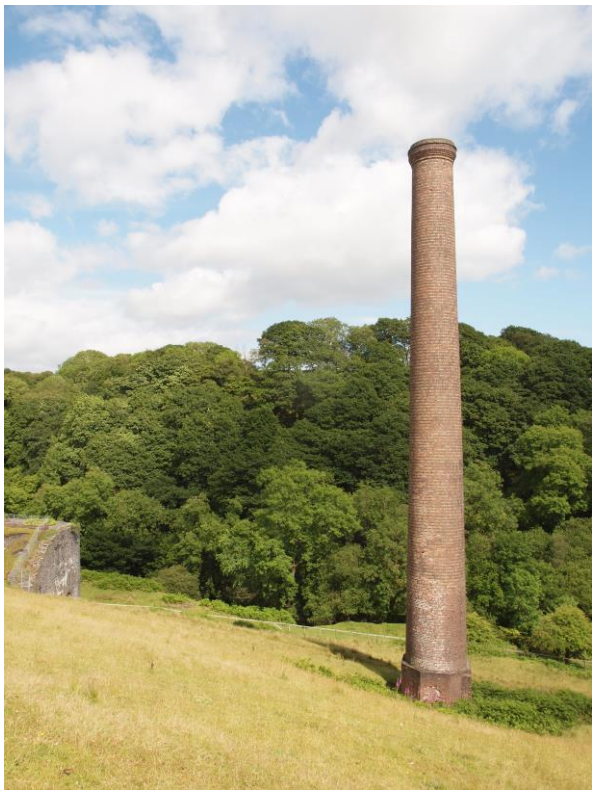
SITE DEVELOPMENT:

Potential use (general): This is an interesting site to study the geology or the South Wales Lower Coal Measures.

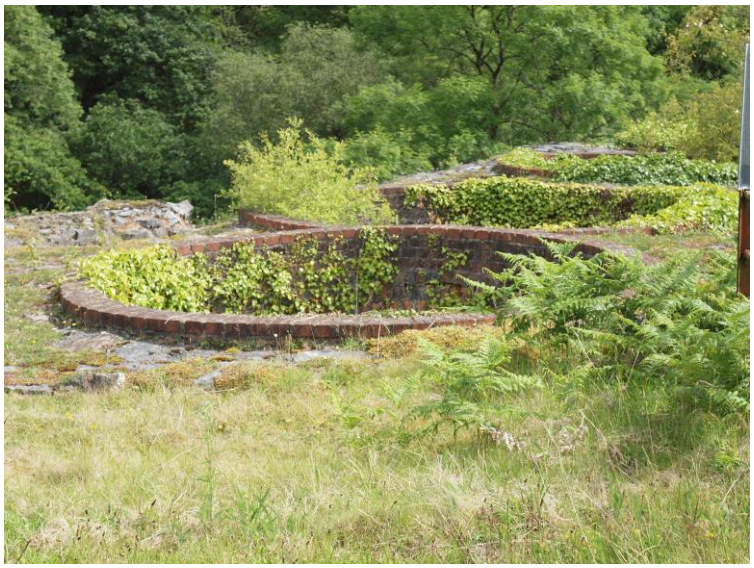
Potential use (educational):

Other comments:

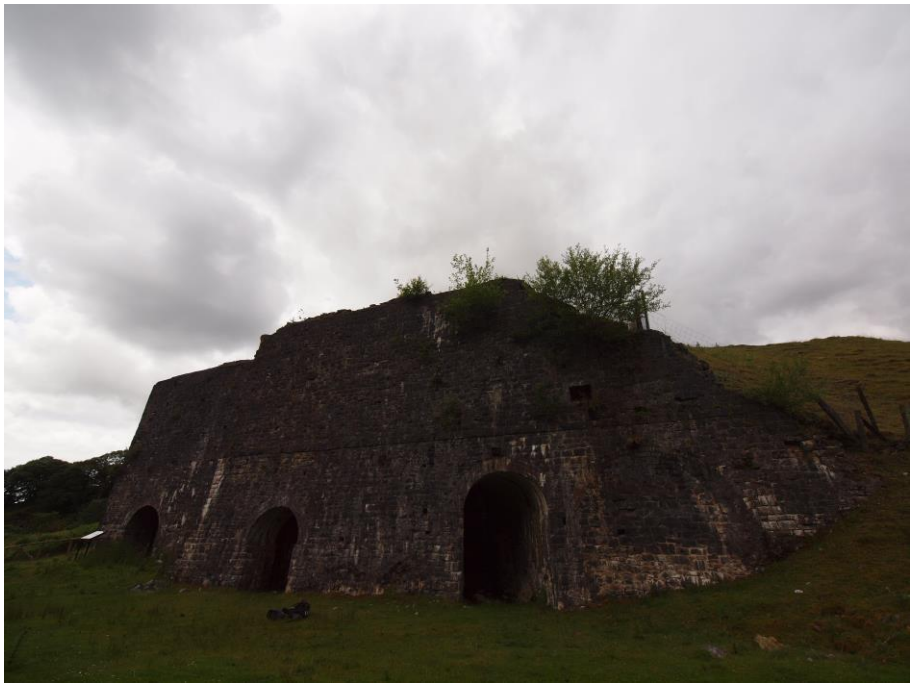
Photographic Record



Large chimney on this site is one of the last remnants of the engine house, associated with the Henllys Vale Colliery

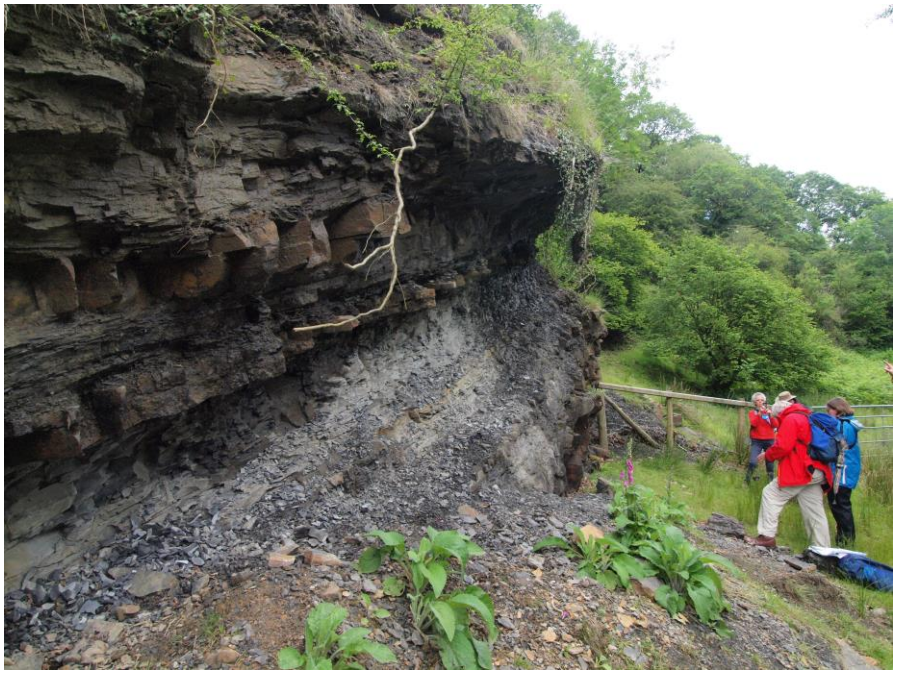


Tops of Limekilns

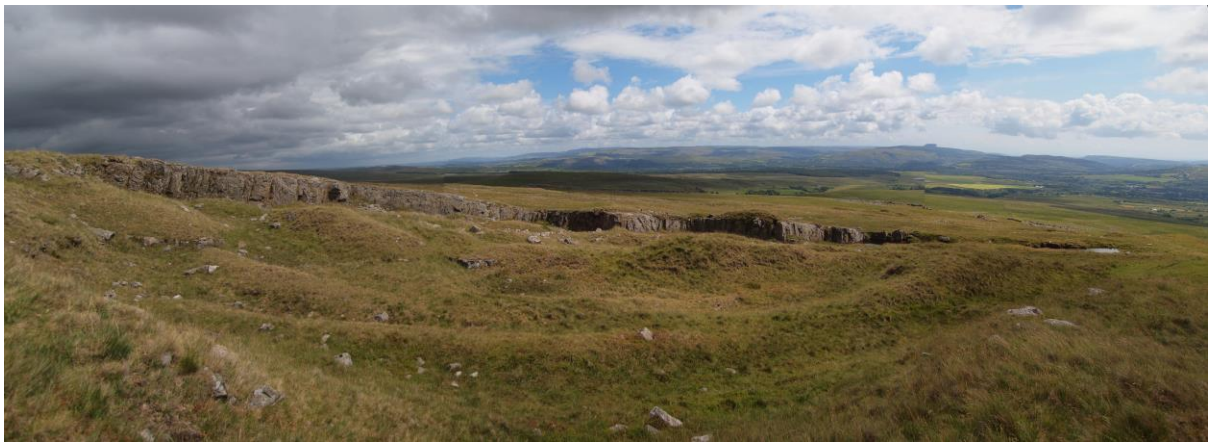


Three Limekilns

Large rounded boulders of Twrch Sandstone are seen in the banks of a tributary of the Afon Twrch, Transported by ice during the last ice age. Beneath the boulders are mudstones of the South Wales Middle Coal Measures Formation.



South Wales Lower Coal Measures visible as interbedded sandstones and mudstones with reddish brown iron stone nodules



Twrch Sandstone Quarries.