

DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PLANNING OFFICER 1PM

July 29, 2011 GGAT Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011 archaeological planning officer, Caerphilly, Caerphilly District Miners Hospital, Caerphilly Miners Hospital, GBP, greenfield site, The Beeches, Wales

I have written a letter in response to a planning application for a residential development at the Caerphilly Miners Hospital. The hospital is an important feature in the local history and culture of Caerphilly. It was opened in 1923 after the local miners had collected money by means of a levy on their weekly wages in order to buy a large house, The Beeches, on the outskirts of the town and they converted it into a hospital. Some £30, 000 was collected by the miners (the mine owners contributed £3000!). Wards were added to the original building and initially there were 23 beds, but this soon increased to 84. At first the hospital was only for the miners and their families but in 1942 it became available to everybody and further expansion occurred.

The proposed development will see all of the additions to the original building demolished and it will be converted for community use with a residential development being built around it. As such we have no objection to the proposals (the Beeches was built on a greenfield site and the extensive latter additions will have destroyed any buried archaeological features); however, the historical development of the site is of interest and in my letter I have recommended that a condition ensuring that a photographic record of the buildings is compiled before demolition commences and that the information is then placed in the HER.