

# **CYLCH CARON PROJECT, TREGARON, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust  
For: Geraint John Planning Ltd



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# CYLCH CARON PROJECT, TREGARON, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

Gan / By

Philip Poucher

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**INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**  
**BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL**

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf  
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir  
Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF  
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121  
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131  
Ffacs: 01558 823133  
Ebost: [info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk)  
Gwefan: [www.archaeolegdyfed.org.uk](http://www.archaeolegdyfed.org.uk)

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited  
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo,  
Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF  
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121  
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131  
Fax: 01558 823133  
Email: [info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk)  
Website: [www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk](http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk)

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## **CYLCH CARON PROJECT, TREGARON, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

### **SUMMARY**

*An area of land adjacent to the town of Tregaron, Ceredigion (centred on SN 6812 5952) is currently subject to two separate proposed allocations within the emerging Local Development Plan, one for housing and the other an integrated health care centre and housing. Geraint John Planning Ltd are considering the option of submitting an outline planning application for the above uses to accord with the LDP allocation. It was considered that an archaeological Desk-Based Assessment would be beneficial to support the outline planning application. This would ensure that when the application was submitted, an informed decision could be made of the impact of the development on the known and potential archaeological resource within the site area. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned to undertake the archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in January 2012.*

*The desk-based assessment has shown that no known archaeological remains exist within the area of proposed development, however, the potential for hitherto unrecorded archaeological remains has been identified.*

*Prehistoric activity has been recorded in the wider landscape but the potential for prehistoric archaeological remains to exist within the area of proposed development is considered low to moderate, although any such remains could be of regional importance.*

*The area of proposed development lies immediately adjacent to a settlement (Tregaron) that is likely to have its origins in the Early Medieval period. The Early Medieval settlement is likely to have concentrated around the site of St Caron's church, which lies within 70m of the site. The nature and extent of such settlement is currently unknown, but could potentially extend into the proposed development area.*

*Medieval settlement is believed to have concentrated around the church, the crossroads on its far side and also around a former mill at Pentre, which lies within 40m of the northern edge of the site. Again the true extent and nature of medieval settlement is unknown, but could potentially extend into the area of proposed development.*

*Post-medieval settlement activity may also extend into the area of proposed development, although mapping evidence gives no indication of this from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. There is the potential for the remains of the 'Tregaron Elephant', part of a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century travelling menagerie, to be buried within the proposed development site. Recent excavations attempting to locate these remains behind the Talbot Hotel have garnered much public interest in recent years.*

*The archaeological desk-based assessment has not indicated a potential for nationally important remains to be present within the site area which would preclude development of the site, or areas therein.*

*The potential for hitherto unidentified Early Medieval, Medieval or post-medieval settlement activity, along with the possible location of the 'Tregaron Elephant' may be mitigated through further intrusive archaeological evaluation of select areas of the area of proposed development.*

*Any further archaeological mitigation needed can be dealt with by way of a condition on any forthcoming planning approval. The requirements for any such condition for further archaeological survey or recording at the site should be discussed with the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Proposals and Commission**

1.1.1 W & J Lloyd own land (centred on SN 6812 5952) which is currently subject to two separate proposed allocations within the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP); H0701 for housing; and M0701 for an integrated health care facility and housing. Allocation M0701 is currently being supported / promoted by the Local Health Board, following extensive discussions between themselves, the landowner, Ceredigion County Council (CCC) and Welsh Government. Following recent discussions with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), on behalf of the landowners, Geraint John Planning Ltd are considering the option of submitting an outline planning application for the above uses to accord with the LDP allocation.

1.1.2 Geraint John Planning Ltd considered an archaeological desk-based assessment would be beneficial to support the outline planning application. This would ensure that when the application was submitted, an informed decision could be made of the impact of the development on the known and potential archaeological resource within the site area.

1.1.3 The aim of the archaeological desk-based assessment is to determine the nature and location of any known archaeological remains and the potential for hitherto unknown remains to be present within the site.

1.1.4 Geraint John Planning Ltd, on behalf of their clients, commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake the archaeological assessment in January 2012.

### **1.2 Scope of the project**

1.2.1 The assessment comprised the examination and collation of available sources of information including:

- Information on known archaeological and historic sites recorded on the regional Historic Environment Record<sup>1</sup> (HER), including a search of available maps, published and unpublished works, aerial photographs and any relevant web-based information;
- Relevant information held at the National Library of Wales (NLW), the Ceredigion Records Office, Local Archives, the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales (RCAHMW) via the Coflein online computer database;
- A search of Cadw's Listed Building records and Schedule of Ancient Monuments for designated buildings and sites of archaeological and historical importance lying on or in close proximity to the site;
- Site visits to determine the presence or absence of visible archaeology or evidence for previous ground disturbance within the proposed development area.

1.2.2 The results of the assessment contained in this report are intended to identify the extent and character of the known and potential archaeological resource, to assess the likely and potential impacts of any development on that resource and, if required, to outline a possible programme of further works to mitigate those impacts. The assessment should be seen only as the first stage of the archaeological process and does not preclude the possibility that further

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<sup>1</sup> Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire.

archaeological input may be required prior to, or during, any proposed development.

1.2.3 A study area of 1km radius from the area of proposed development has been used to provide an indication of the known and potential archaeological remains in proximity to the proposed development area.

### **1.3 Abbreviations used in this report**

1.3.1 All sites recorded on the regional HER are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Sites recorded by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) are identified by their National Primary Record Number (NPRN). Altitude is expressed to Ordnance Datum (OD).

### **1.4 Illustrations**

1.4.1 Photographic images and printed map extracts are to be found at the back of the report. Note that the printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale and are illustrative only.

### **1.5 Timeline**

1.5.1 The following timeline is used within this report to give date ranges for the various archaeological periods that may be mentioned within the text (Table 1).

<b>Period</b>	<b>Approximate date</b>	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	<b>Prehistoric</b>
Mesolithic –	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4400 – 2300 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.2300 – 700 BC	
Iron Age –	c.700 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	<b>Historic</b>
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1066	
Medieval Period –	1066 – 1536	
Post-Medieval Period <sup>2</sup> –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20th century onwards	

**Table 1:** Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales

<sup>2</sup> The post-medieval and industrial periods are combined as the post-medieval period on the Regional Historic Environment Record as held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust

## **2. SITE LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

2.1 The area of proposed development covers several pasture fields on the edge of the main settlement of Tregaron (centred on NGR SN 6812 5952), on the lower slopes of Pica Bach close to the valley floor of the Afon Brenig. The bulk of the site, covering an area of approximately 5.9ha, lies within an area allocated within the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP) for Tregaron with an additional area of land, approximately 2.1ha in area, attached to the south, outside the LDP, but also put forward as an alternative site for development.

2.2 Tregaron itself is clustered around the river bank close to its confluence with the Afon Teifi. The upland landscape of pasture, moors and plantations of the Cambrian Mountains lies to the east, which changes to a more pastoral undulating landscape of dispersed farmsteads and villages to the west. To the north the Teifi valley opens out to the large expanse of Cors Caron, a series of extensive raised peat bogs.

2.3 The underlying solid geology of this area consists of interbedded mudstones and sandstones of the Devils Bridge Formation, a series of sedimentary bedrock formed under deep seas. Sand and gravels have collected along the lower slopes of the Brenig valley left behind during the Devensian Glaciation (upon which the development site lies). Alluvium (gravel, sand, silt and clays) has collected along the banks of the river that lies close to the site to the west. The soils in this area consist mainly of freely draining acid loamy soils.

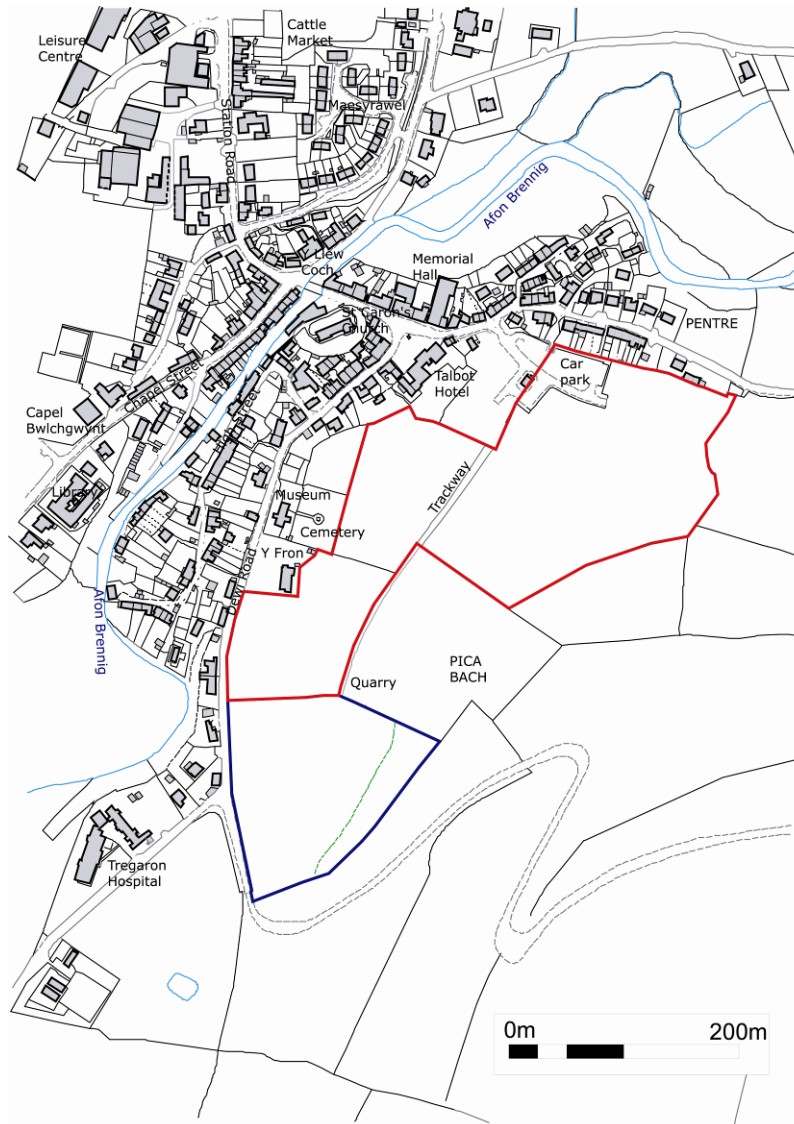




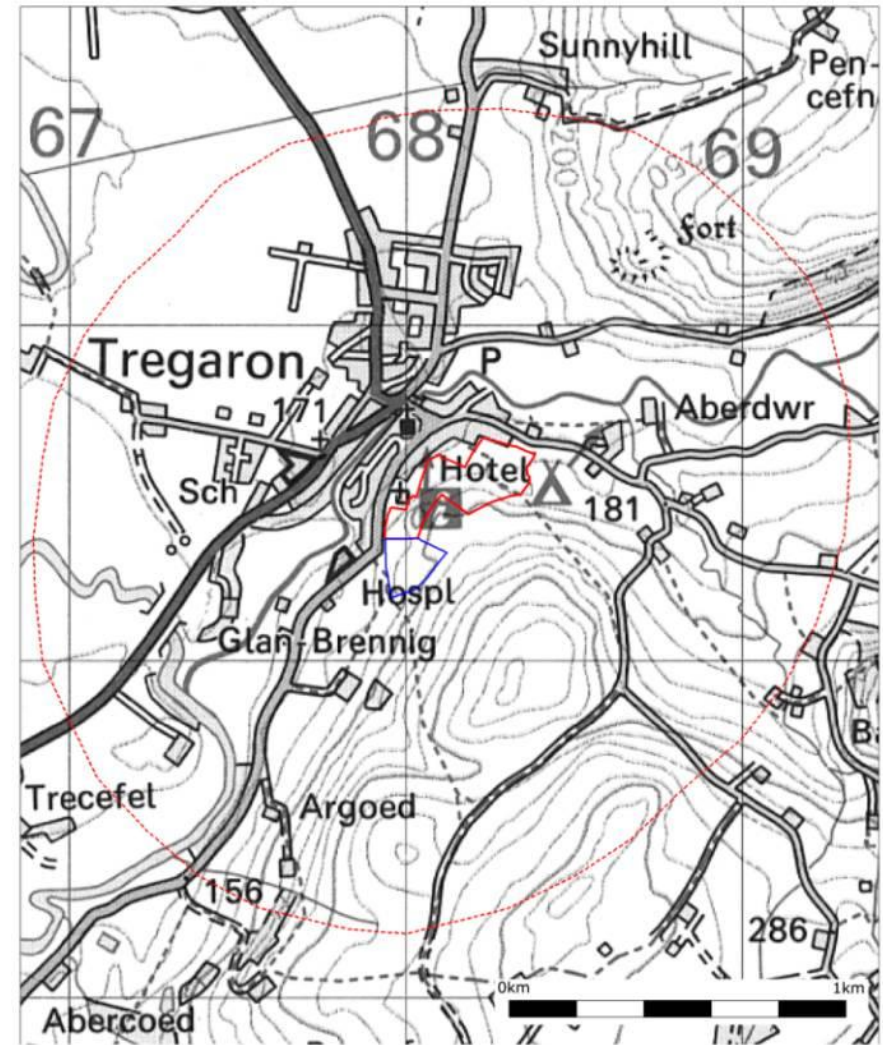
**Figure 1:** Location Map based on the Ordnance Survey, Tregaron marked with red

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**Figure 2:** Location map in detail, showing area of proposed development. Area within the LDP is outlined in red, alternative site for housing development outlined in blue



**Figure 3:** Location map showing area of proposed development. The wider dotted red line represents the study area, a radius of 1km from the area of proposed development.

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### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Designated Sites and Listed Buildings (Figures 4 & 5)

3.1.1 No scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs) lie within the boundaries of the proposed development site. One scheduled ancient monument lies c.600m to the northeast, the remains of Sunnyhill Wood Camp (SAM CD108), an Iron Age hillfort.

SAM No.	SITE NAME	PRN	NGR	Site Type	Period
CD108	Castell Tregaron; Sunnyhill Wood Camp	5168	SN 687 602	Hillfort	Iron Age

**Table 2:** Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the study area.

3.1.2 There are no Listed Buildings within the boundaries of the proposed development site, however, there are seven sites designated as Listed Buildings within Tregaron, all within c.250m of the proposed development site. These comprise the Parish Church of Saint Caron, Trefelin House, the Henry Richard Memorial, National Westminster Bank, the Talbot Hotel, Telephone Call Box and Bwlchgwynt Chapel. All are Grade II listed.

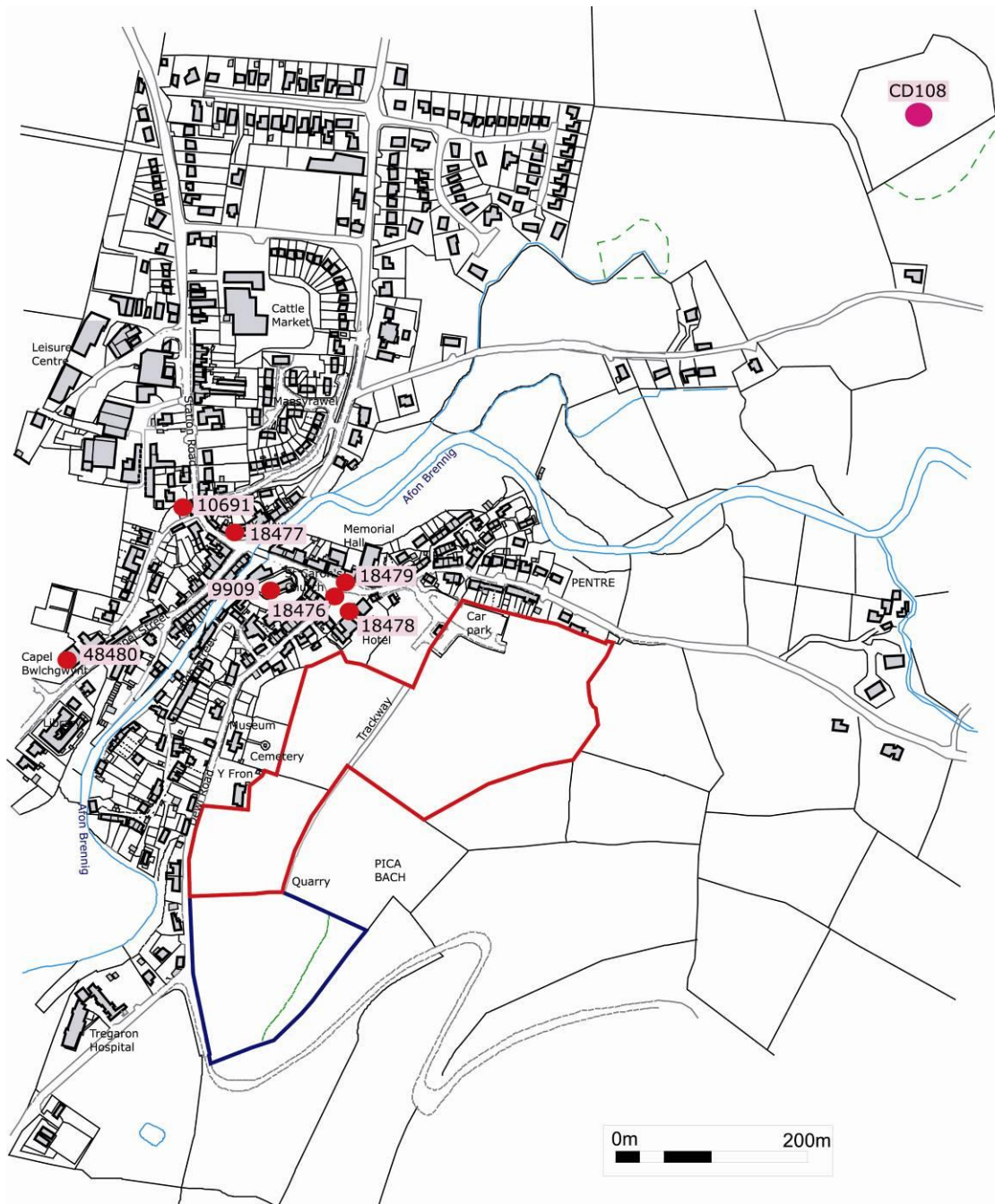
Cadw Ref. No.	Building Name	PRN	NGR	Grade
9909	Tregaron Parish Church; St Caron's Church	5136/ 50161	SN 6799 5969	Grade II
10691	Trefelin House	6842	SN 67902 59781	Grade II
18476	Henry Richard Memorial Statue	8303	SN 68056 59687	Grade II
18477	National Westminster Bank	57948	SN 67955 59754	Grade II
18478	Talbot Hotel	8933	SN 68071 59670	Grade II
18479	Telephone Call Box (by the Memorial Hall)	57949	SN 68068 59699	Grade II
18480	Bwlchgwynt Chapel	19019	SN 67777 59628	Grade II

**Table 3:** Listed buildings within the study area.

3.1.3 A large part of the proposed development site lies on the edge of the Upland Ceredigion Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest (HLW (D) 2), see figure 5. This large landscape area is subdivided into Historic Landscape Character Areas (HLCA), the proposed development site lies within two of these areas, namely HLCA 24 Tregaron and HLCA 97 Afon Groes Valley Floor (Murphy 1999). This is a non-statutory designation and advisory only. Descriptions of the two areas mentioned are reproduced in Appendix 1, and a guide to good practice on using the Historic Landscape Register can be found online:

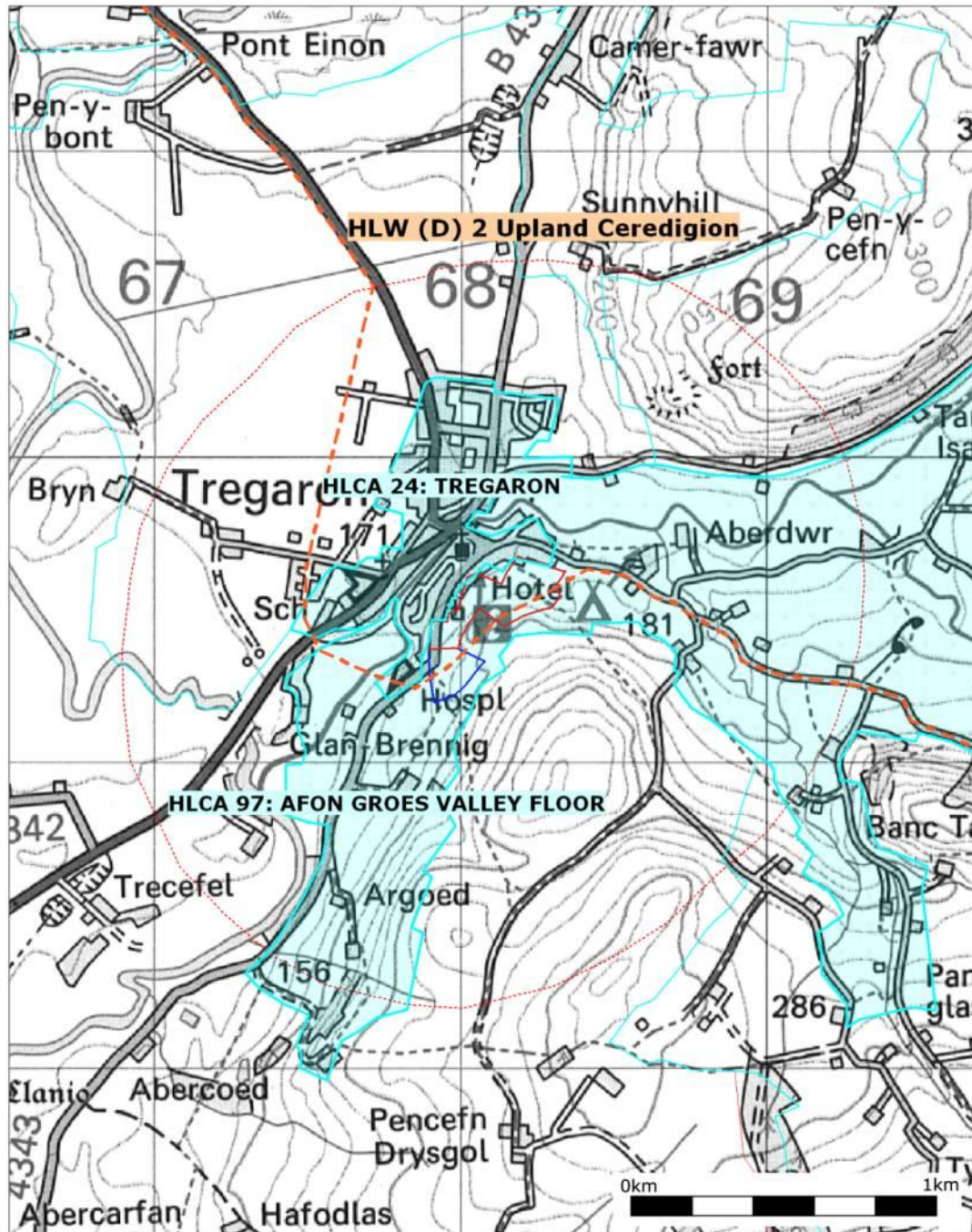
[http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/docs/cadw/publications/LandscapesRegisterGoodPractice\\_EN.pdf](http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/docs/cadw/publications/LandscapesRegisterGoodPractice_EN.pdf)

3.1.4 The proposed development area does not lie within any Conservation Areas. The Afon Brenig that runs through Tregaron, at its closest within 30m of the proposed development site, forms part of the Afon Teifi candidate PSAC. The Gwaun Ystrad Caron SSSI also lies c.660m to the west, but will not be affected by the proposed development.



**Figure 4:** Location of Listed Buildings (red dots) and Scheduled Ancient Monuments (pink dot) within the study area. Extent of listed and scheduled areas not shown, for the true extents please contact Cadw.





**Figure 5:** The boundary of the Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest is outlined in orange, individual Historic Landscape Character Areas (HLCAs) are outlined and highlighted in blue. HLCAs referenced within the text are labelled.

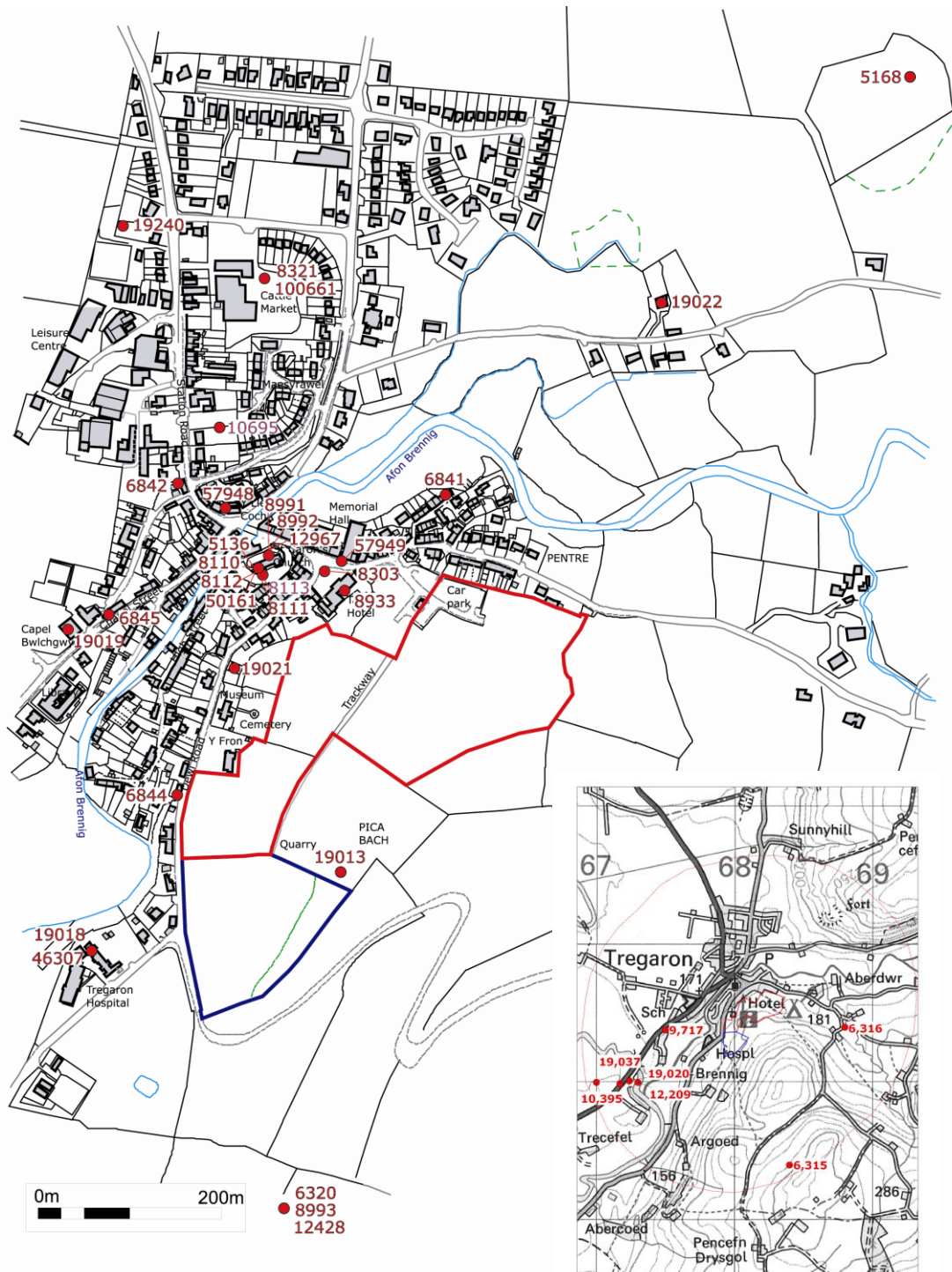
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### **3.2 Known Archaeological Remains**

3.2.1 A search of the Regional Historic Environment Record database revealed that a total of thirty-seven sites of archaeological and historic interest are located within the 1km radius study area around the proposed development area (Table 4, Figure 7). No archaeological sites are recorded on the Regional HER within the boundaries of the application area.

3.2.2 In addition to the recorded HER sites, 20 new sites have been identified within the study area as part of a Tregaron town survey project undertaken in 2006/7 (Cook & Poucher 2007), this report is as yet unpublished and these sites have not yet been added to the regional HER (Table 5, Figure 6). Again, none of these sites are located within the boundaries of the proposed development area.

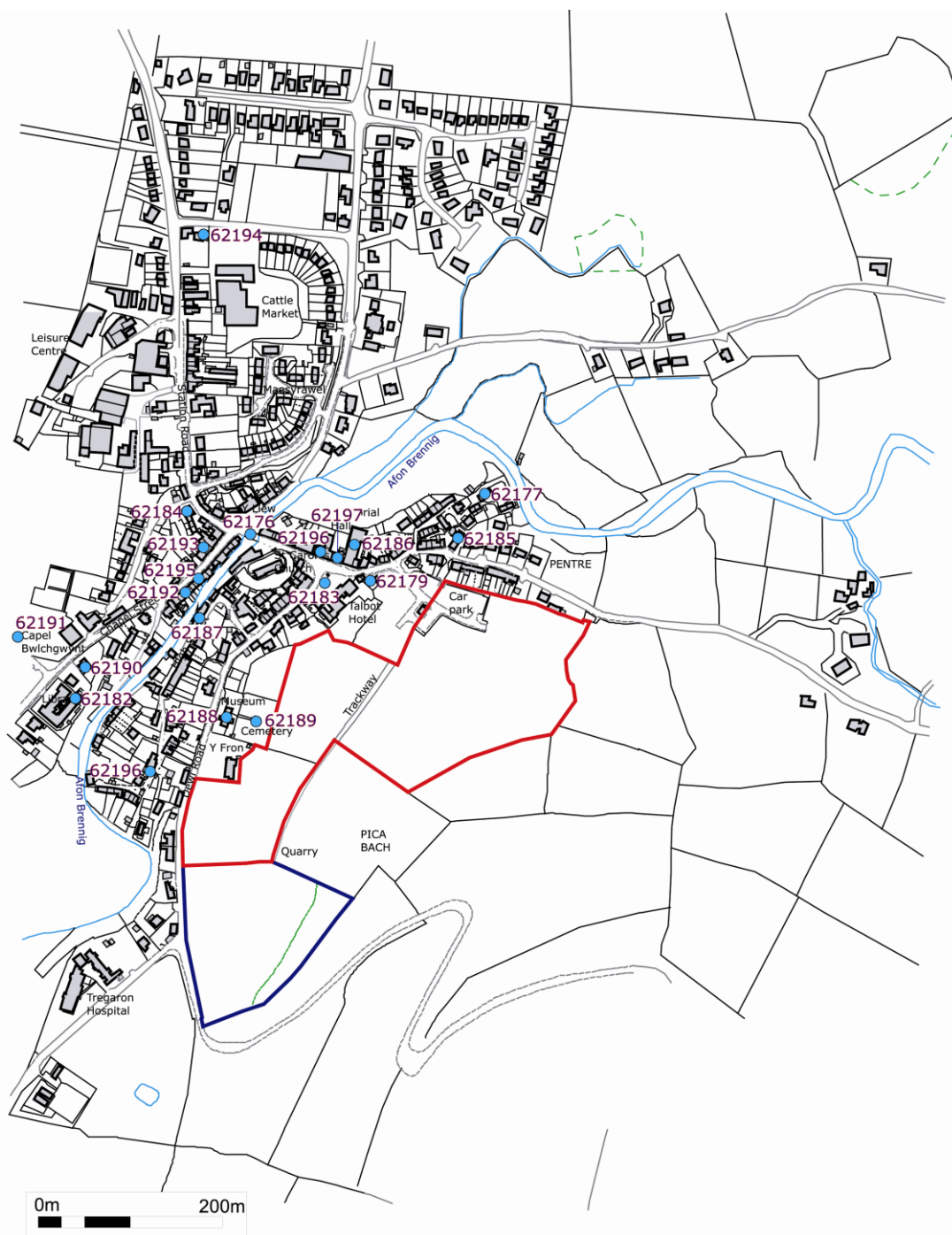
3.2.3 A search of the same study area was undertaken of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) National Monument Record (NMR). This search returned 25 known sites within the study area (Table 6, Figure 7). Sixteen of these refer to the same sites as recorded on the Regional HER and Tregaron Town Survey project. No archaeological sites are recorded on the NMR within the boundaries of the application area.



**Figure 6:** Location map showing archaeological sites listed in the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) within Tregaron. Insert shows additional HER sites within the study area.

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**Figure 7:** Location map showing additional archaeological sites identified and recorded during the 2006 Tregaron historic town survey project (Cook & Poucher 2007).



**Table 4:** Regional HER sites within a 1km radius of the proposed development site.

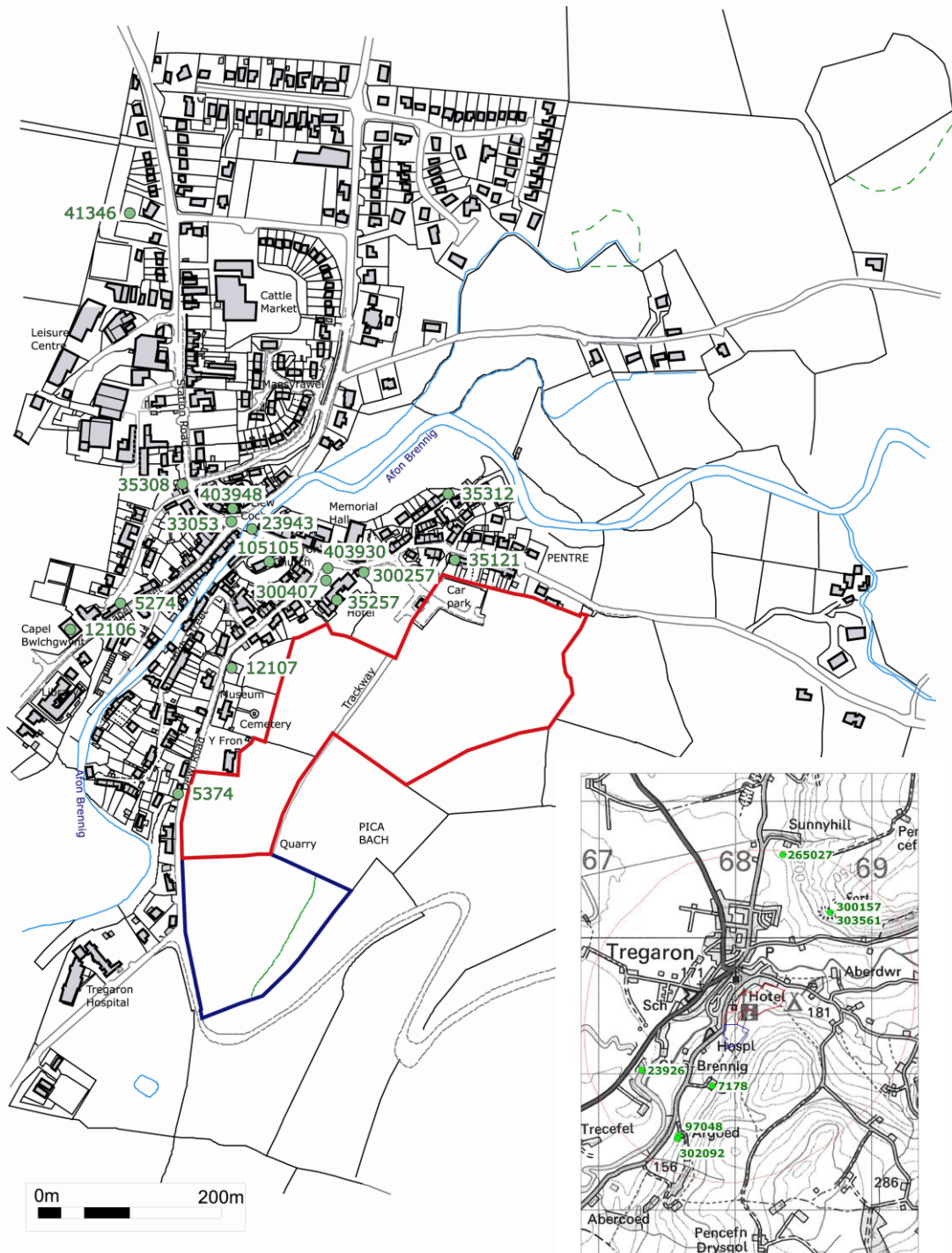
PRN	Name	Type	Description	Grid Ref	Period
5136	Tregaron Parish Church; St Caron's	Church	Medieval parish church, partly rebuilt in c.1826-77.	SN67995969	Post-medieval, Medieval
5168	Castell Tregaron; Sunnyhill Camp	Hillfort	A substantial hillfort constructed on the summit of a high flat-topped promontory.	SN687602	Iron Age
6315	Drysgol	Longhut	Medieval or later longhouse recorded 1978, now destroyed.	SN684584	Post-medieval, Medieval
6316	Fleinog	Standing Stone	A Bronze age standing stone	SN688594	Bronze Age
6320		Finds	Bronze spearhead found near Tregaron	SN6859	Bronze Age
6841	Brennig	Cottage	Pair of 18 <sup>th</sup> century cottages recorded by RCAHM in 1976.	SN68195977	Post-medieval
6842	Trefelin	Dwelling	18 <sup>th</sup> century house recorded by RCAHM in 1976.	SN6790259781	Post-medieval
6844	Dol-dre	Cottage	Pair of cottages recorded by RCAHM in 1976.	SN67895944	Post-medieval
6845	Chapel Street Cottage	Cottage	18 <sup>th</sup> century Cottage recorded as being intact by RCAHM in 1976.	SN67825964	Post-medieval
8110	Potenina Stone	Inscribed Stone	Fragmentary Group I ECM (Latin-inscribed stone), of probable 6 <sup>th</sup> century date. The inscription translates as 'Potenina wife'.	SN67995969	Early Medieval
8111	Eneveri Stone	Inscribed Stone	Group II or Group III ECM (cross-carved stone with inscription), with a possible date-range from the 7 <sup>th</sup> to the 11 <sup>th</sup> centuries, The inscription translates as 'of Eneviri'.	SN67995968	Early Medieval
8112		Inscribed Stone	Lost Group II ECM (cross-carved stone), of probable 7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> century date. It was incised with a linear Latin ring-cross.	SN67995969	Early Medieval
8113		Inscribed Stone	Lost stone, apparently from Tregaron parish churchyard, which is described as a Group II ECM	SN67995968	Unknown
8303	The Henry Richard Statue	Commemorative Monument	Statue of Henry Richard	SN6805659687	Post-medieval
8321		Finds	A flat bronze axe (socketed, double-looped, 5.75" long) and a bronze spearhead found by a shepherd near Tregaron	SN6860	Bronze Age
8933	Talbot Hotel	Inn	Large inn and hotel in Tregaron village.	SN6807159670	Post-medieval
8991		Findspot	Metal brooch, interlaced design, found during clearance works of Tregaron churchyard	SN680597	Medieval
8992		Findspot	A possible Pilgrimage badge found during clearance works in Tregaron churchyard	SN680597	Medieval

8993	Penlan Farm	Burnt Mound	Existence of "mound of burnt stone" on Penlan Farm reported to GH Williams	SN6859	Prehistoric
9717	Ffynnon Garon	Holy Well	Recorded by Francis Jones (1954) as a holy well near Glanbrenig Farm, Tregaron.	SN67505938	Medieval
10695	Llys-Einion	Llys	A place-name that may suggest the former location of a 'Llys'.	SN67955984	Medieval, Early Medieval
12209		Finds	A pottery urn found at Pont Trecavel near Tregaron Fawr	SN673590	Bronze Age
12428	Mill Race	Water Mill	Water Mill, formerly two stood in close proximity.	SN6859	Medieval
12967	Tregaron	Town	The town of Tregaron	SN680597	Post-medieval, Medieval
19013		Quarry	19 <sup>th</sup> century quarry	SN68075936	Post-medieval
19018	Tregaron Hospital	Hospital	A 20 <sup>th</sup> century hospital and former 19 <sup>th</sup> century workhouse (PRN 46307)	SN67805928	Post-medieval
19019	Bwlchgwynt Chapel	Chapel	A grade II listed chapel	SN6777759628	Post-medieval
19020	Pont Tre-Cefel	Bridge	A former road bridge across the Teifi	SN67245901	Post-medieval
19021		Chapel	A Wesleyan Methodist chapel	SN67965959	Post-medieval
19022	Tregaron Vicarage	Vicarage	19 <sup>th</sup> century vicarage for Tregaron	SN68425998	Post-medieval
19037		Gravel Pit	A 19 <sup>th</sup> century gravel pit	SN67175899	Post-medieval
19240	Tregaron Station	Railway Station	A railway station on the former Manchester to Milford Railway. The station opened in 1871, closing in 1965.	SN67856006	Post-medieval
46307	Tregaron Union Workhouse	Workhouse	Workhouse built by Tregaron Poor Law Union in 1867.	SN67805928	Post-medieval
50161	Tregaron Parish Church; St Caron's	Church	Churchyard occupied by Tregaron parish church PRN 5136. The church was probably a Welsh foundation, of the 12 <sup>th</sup> /13 <sup>th</sup> centuries but may have early medieval origins.	SN67995969	Early Medieval
57948	National Westminster	Bank	Built in 1924-6 as the National Provincial Bank. Grade II listed.	SN6795559754	Post-medieval
57949		Telephone Call-box	A red painted cast-iron phone box. Built in 1952 to the standard 1936 K6 design of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Grade II listed.	SN6806859699	Modern
100661		Find	A Bronze Age looped and socketed spearhead. Described as a "framea" or light javelin. Found with two palstaves.	SN6860	Bronze Age

**Table 5:** Sites identified during the 2006/7 historic town survey (Cook & Poucher 2007) within a 1km radius of the proposed development site. These sites have not yet added to the regional HER.

PRN	Name	Type	Description	Grid Ref	Period
62176	Tregaron Bridge	Bridge	Road Bridge crossing Afon Brennig.	SN67985974	Post Med
62177	Plas Bach	Dwelling	A small stone-built cottage recorded by the RCAHMW.	SN68235977	Post Med
62179	Gelli-Gron; Ivy Bush Hotel	House; Public House	18 <sup>th</sup> or early 19 <sup>th</sup> century 2-storey house, former public house.	SN68105968	Post Med
62182	County School	School	County School established in 1897. Built to house 200 pupils. It was enlarged in 1909, and again in 1950.	SN67795956	Post Med
62183	Tregaron Market	Market Place	The market place in Tregaron. A weekly market is mentioned in Kelly's directory of 1895, along with cattle and horse fairs.	SN68065968	Post Med
62184	5-7 Station Road	Blacksmiths Workshop	A blacksmiths workshop in Tregaron, marked on the tithe map of c.1842.	SN67915976	Post Med
62185	Tregaron Mill	Mill	A corn mill with an associated mill leat and pond. Recorded on the 1842 tithe map.	SN68205972	Post Med
62186	Tregaron Town Hall; Memorial Hall	Town Hall	The town hall built in 1877 by the Powells of Nanteos	SN68085971	Post Med
62187		Blacksmiths Workshop	A blacksmiths workshop on the riverbank built between the tithe map of c.1842 and the 1889 OS map.	SN67925965	Post Med
62188	Tregaron School; National School; Ysgol-Eglwys Tregaron	School	The former Tregaron National School. Built in 1872/3 to house 145 children and renovated in 1879.	SN67945953	Post Med
62189		Cemetery	A cemetery on the east side of Tregaron, adjacent to the former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (PRN 19021). The chapel was built in 1840.	SN67985953	Post Med
62190	Ffynnon Garon	Police Station	A police station in Tregaron marked on the 1 <sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889.	SN67795960	Post Med
62191	Blaencaron School	School	Blaencaron School built to the rear of the Calvinistic Methodist chapel (PRN 19019) in 1883 to hold 54 children.	SN67695964	Post Med
62192		Blacksmiths Workshop	A blacksmiths workshop first recorded on the 1889 Ordnance Survey map.	SN67915967	Post Med
62193		Post Office	A 19 <sup>th</sup> century post office on Chapel Street, Tregaron,	SN67925972	Post Med
62194	Railway Hotel	Hotel	The Railway Hotel, presumably built at some point between the 1866 and	SN67946005	Post

			1889.		Med
62195		Bank	A late 19 <sup>th</sup> century bank on Chapel Street	SN67935970	Modern
62196		Bank	One of two late 19 <sup>th</sup> /early 20 <sup>th</sup> century banks on Tregaron market square, one of which was Barclays Bank.	SN68055971	Modern
62197		Bank	One of two late 19 <sup>th</sup> /early 20 <sup>th</sup> century banks on the market square	SN68075971	Modern
62198		Blacksmiths Workshop	A blacksmiths workshop first recorded on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1905.	SN67865948	Modern



**Figure 8:** Location of sites recorded in the National Monuments Record held by the RCAHMS (green circles). Insert shows additional NMR sites within the study area.

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**Table 6:** Sites identified on the National Monument Record held by the RCAHMW, with a radius of 1km from the proposed development area.

NPRN	Name	Type	PRN	Description	Grid Ref	Period
5274	Chapel Street Cottage	House	<b>6845</b>	Small stone built cottage, possibly 18 <sup>th</sup> century. The interior has a Victorian slate fireplace to the 1 <sup>st</sup> floor and a cast iron oven to the ground floor. (CHN 2004)	SN6782259648	Post Medieval
5374	Dol-dre cottage	House	<b>6844</b>	Pair of derelict cottages: single storey plus attic with rubble walls in mortar and slate roofs. (CHN 2004)	SN6788959447	Post Medieval
7178	Argoed Baptist Chapel	Chapel		Argoed Baptist Chapel, built in 1760 and a Sunday School added in 1810. Demolished by 1998. (RCAHMW 2009)	SN6783558914	Post Medieval
12106	Bwlchgwynt Chapel (Welsh Calvinist Methodist)	Chapel	<b>19019</b>	Bwlchgwynt Methodist Chapel, built in 1775, enlarged in 1809 and rebuilt in 1833. This chapel is now Grade 2 Listed as one of the larger Calvinistic Methodist Chapels in Ceredigion and with a good interior. (RCAHMW 2011)	SN6777759628	Post Medieval
12107	Tregaron Methodist Chapel (Weslyan),	Chapel	<b>19021</b>	Tregaron Methodist Chapel, built 1840 and rebuilt in 1873 in the Gothic style with a gable entry plan. Tregaron Methodist was demolished in 1997. (RCAHMW 2011)	SN6795659583	Post Medieval
23926	Pont Trecefel	Bridge		Over river Teifi. One opening, iron gliders - 62 ft. One arch 16 ft. 6 in. span. One arch, 11 ft. 6 in. span.	SN6731859029	Post Medieval?
23943	Tregaron Bridge	Bridge	<b>62176</b>	Three arches over the River Caron. One arch 22 ft. 6 in. span, two arches each 12 ft. span.	SN6797659732	Post Medieval?
33053	Tregaron	Town	<b>12867</b>	Market town in the county of Ceredigion, Mid Wales, lying on the River Brenig (also Brennig), a tributary of the River Teifi. According to the United Kingdom Census 2001, Tregaron's population was 1,183.	SN6795659739	Unknown
35121	Plas Bach	Dwelling	<b>62177</b>	A small stone cottage with a pitched slate roof and gable end stone stacks. (CHN 2004)	SN682597	Post Medieval?
35257	Talbot Hotel	Inn	<b>8933</b>	An early 18 <sup>th</sup> century, stone-built, 2-storey Inn of central-entry, end-chimney plan.	SN6806959670	Post Medieval
35308	Trefelin	Dwelling	<b>6842</b>	Early to mid 18 <sup>th</sup> century house.	SN6790359781	Post Medieval?
35312	Tregaron Houses	House	<b>6841</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> century pair of stone built houses, one with wickerwork hood.	SN68195977	Post Medieval?
41346	Tregaron Railway Station	Railway Station	<b>19240</b>	Wayside station on the former Manchester & Milford Railway (nprn 91660) between Pencader Junction and Aberystwyth. This section of	SN6785360076	Post Medieval

				line opened in 1866 and the station in 1871. Tregaron Station and the railway closed in 1965 (Malaws 2002)		
91660	Manchester to Milford Railway	Railway	<b>14485/28222</b>	The southern section of the Manchester and Milford Railway opened throughout on 12 August 1867 from Pencader Junction (SN 4460 3674) to a terminus (SN 5855 8152) in Aberystwyth station. It closed between Aberystwyth and Strata Florida station due to flooding at Llanilar on 14 December 1964; closed officially between Aberystwyth and Pont Llanio (nprn 41351) on 22 February 1965. (Malaws 2010)	SN63	Post Medieval
97048	Argoed Hall	Building			SN67595855	Post Medieval
105105	St Caron's Church	Church	<b>5136</b>	Late 14 <sup>th</sup> century church, nave built 1879.	SN6799159694	Medieval; Post Medieval
265027	Sunnyhill	Garden		This garden is depicted on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1905. Its main elements include woodland, walk, well, pond, parkland, covert and possible kitchen garden. (Briggs 2005)	SN6835260613	Post Medieval
300157	Sunnyhill	House			SN68386065	Post Medieval
300275	Gelli-Gron; Ivy Bush Hotel	Building	<b>41358</b>	An 18/19 <sup>th</sup> century, 2-storey, stone-built, end-chimney house (Ward 2000).	SN6810159687	Post Medieval
300407	Tregaron Square	Square			SN6805859679	Post Medieval
302092	Argoed Hall	Country House Garden		A garden depicted on the 1905 OS map, and described in 1989 as 'a delightful walled garden with fruit trees, vegetable growing beds and lawns.'	SN6758058525	Post Medieval
303561	Castell Tregaron; Sunnyhill Wood Camp	Hillfort	<b>5168</b>	Castell, Tregaron, is a strong and impressive fort, constructed around a flat-topped, rocky promontory with precipitous slopes to the W and S, with two curving ramparts cutting off the landward side to the north east. It was probably augmented by an outer ditch, now silted up. Sections of decayed stone walling suggest that the outer face was once fully walled. The interior of the fort provides a good, level area suitable for settlement. On the outcrop itself, several plateau areas are visible. (Driver 2005)	SN6869760188	Iron Age
403930	Henry Richards Statue	Statue	<b>8303</b>	1893 bronze memorial statue by Albert Toft of London (1869-1949), cast by Moore of Thames Ditton. Memorial to Henry Richard (1812-88), native of Tregaron, Liberal MP for Merthyr, called 'the Member	SN6805659687	Post Medieval

				for Wales' and 'the apostle of Peace'. (SLE 2006)		
403948	National Westminster Bank	Bank	<b>57948</b>	1924-6 bank built for the National Provincial bank. (SLE 2006)	SN6795659754	Modern
409873	Dolfelin Settlement Earthworks	Deserted Rural Settlement; House Platform		Rectangular earthwork enclosure partly truncated, containing one centrally-placed house platform. Likely to represent a deserted medieval settlement. Discovered during RCAHMW aerial reconnaissance on 9th November 2009. (Driver 2009)	SN68935989	Medieval
410443	Argoed	Field System		Denuded remains of linear earthworks and other enclosures, recorded during RCAHMW aerial reconnaissance. These would appear to be the remains of an early field system, perhaps of medieval or earlier date. (Driver 2010)	SN67945854	Medieval



### **3.3 Historical Development**

#### **3.3.1 Palaeolithic (c.450,000 – 10,000 BC)**

Nothing of Palaeolithic date has been recorded within the study area or the immediate environs.

#### **3.3.2 Mesolithic and Neolithic (c. 10,000 – 2300 BC)**

Nothing of a Mesolithic date has been recorded within the study area, although Mesolithic flints discovered on the edge of Tregaron bog to the north indicate groups of hunter-gatherers could have been moving through this landscape, evidence of their presence is often rather ephemeral.

A search of the regional databases also records nothing of a Neolithic date in the area, however local sources record the discovery of a stone axe<sup>3</sup> within the study area, close to the southern edge of the proposed development site. The exact location, context and date of the find is unclear, but it is presumably of Neolithic or Bronze Age date, and may be an indication of activity in this area during the Neolithic period.

#### **3.3.3 Bronze Age (c.2300 – 700 BC)**

The discovery of numerous stray finds dating to the Bronze Age (PRNs 6320, 8321, 12209 & 100661) in and around Tregaron is a clear indication of activity within the study area during this broad period. The presence of numerous burnt mounds around the fringes of Cors Caron to the north suggests possible settlement in the area. One of these mounds, at Felin Fullbrook, has been radiocarbon dated to the start of the second millennium BC. Although these sites lie outside the study area, there is one unconfirmed record for the presence of one of these burnt mounds on Penlan Farm within Tregaron itself (PRN 8993).

Bronze Age burial mounds also dot the surrounding hills, and it has been suggested that the raised circular area of St Caron's churchyard (PRN 50161) may be the site of one of these burial mounds, although its valley base location makes this unlikely. Bronze Age ritual activity in the area is suggested by the presence of a standing stone (PRN 6316) some 500m to the east of the proposed development site at Feiniog.

#### **3.3.4 Iron Age (c.700 BC – 43 AD)**

Activity and settlement in the area during the Iron Age appears to have been somewhat intermittent. Although there was occupation in the wider area during the Iron Age, the rapid growth of the raised bog at Cors Caron from c.700 BC onwards as a result of climatic change and increased wetness (Davies 1994: 220, in Davies and Kirby (eds)) is suggested to have caused a temporary depopulation of the area. Palaeoenvironmental evidence for deforestation in the neighbourhood of Cors Caron in c.400 BC suggests a period of recovery and the establishment of new settlements and farms, and as such the earliest agricultural origins of Tregaron town might stem from this period (Cook & Poucher 2007). The only positively identified Iron Age settlement within the study area comes from the impressive Castell Tregaron/Sunnyhill Camp (PRN 5168), a hillfort overlooking Tregaron town from the north. The site lies c.600m to the northeast of the proposed development site, but is clearly visible from it.

#### **3.3.5 Roman (AD43 – c. AD410)**

During the Roman occupation of Ceredigion there were forts at both Llanio and Trawscoed, the former defending the Sarn Helen Roman road where it crossed the river, some 4.8km southwest of Tregaron. At this distance there appears to

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<sup>3</sup> According to Curiad Caron, this was discovered near the site of the present hospital, and now deposited in the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff (1985:2).

have been little impact on Tregaron and its indigenous population from the Roman invaders. There is likely to have been a substantial vicus (civilian settlement) around the fort at Llanio, where the indigenous population from the wider locale could trade with the Roman soldiers. However, there are no known Roman artefacts recovered from in and around the Tregaron area, and in this area at least, it would seem that the patterns of settlement and fields would have continued as they were since prehistoric times, with very little in the way of Roman influence on the lives of its inhabitants. The only Romano-British influences, which can be said with any certainty to have filtered through to the Tregaron area, were the adoption of Christianity and the usage of Latin personal names. It is possible that a Roman road may have passed through Tregaron on its way to skirt the eastern edge of Tregaron bog to the north, as a possible Roman defended site lies close to Pontrhydfendigaid.

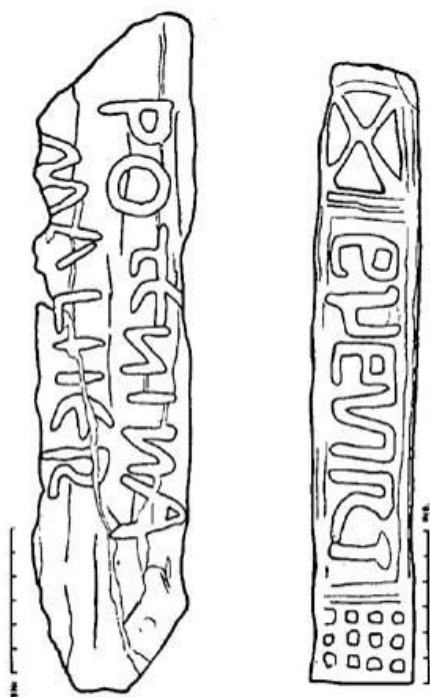
### **3.3.5 Early Medieval (c.AD410 – AD1066)**

The early medieval period was a crucial time in the development of the rural demographic in Wales, both in physical terms, as evidenced archaeologically by the spread of memorial stones, wells and chapels, and also in social terms, through the foundations of modern settlement patterns and administrative boundaries (Cook & Poucher 2007). It is thought probable that settlement at Tregaron has its origins during this period.

The well of Ffynnon Garon (PRN 9717), which lies just 400m to the west of the proposed development site, may have been a focal point of pre-Christian ritual practice, as the water within it was believed to contain healing properties. As Rees notes, pre-Christian 'holy wells' posed a delicate problem to the early Christian missionaries, with these 'sacred' pagan sites needing to be carefully appropriated into the Christian tradition: as such, they were often consecrated and used for baptism even before the building of a parish church (1936: 62).

Certainly the known archaeological evidence of early Christian inscribed stones associated with St Caron's Church (PRN 5136/50161) would suggest that there was already an early religious foundation for the town. The inscribed 'Potentina' stone (PRN 8110), dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century, was noted within the south wall of St Caron's Church and another shaped and decorated stone (PRN 8111), bearing an ornamental Celtic cross on one face and a single-word inscription 'ENEVIRI' ('the grave of Enevir') on its edge, dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century or later, was also found at the church (figure 8). Both decorated stones are now within the National Museum of Wales, although the whereabouts of two other stones (PRNs 8112, 8113) also recorded at the church are unknown. It would therefore seem that there was at least some form of church or early Christian religious site established at Tregaron certainly by the 6<sup>th</sup> century, and it is likely that a small nuclear settlement gradually grew out of this association, with the church as its focus, over the next few centuries (Cook & Poucher 2007). The extent of any such settlement has never been established, but as the churchyard lies within 70m of the edge of the proposed development site it has to be considered a possibility that such activity may have extended into this area.

The regional HER records the possibility of a Llys (PRN 10695) within northern Tregaron. A llys is a palace, or lordly residence, often the home to native Welsh princes and leaders during the medieval and early medieval periods. The only suggestion of such a site on what would have been the edge of the medieval settlement of Tregaron is a preservation in the name of a farm 'Llys Einion'. No archaeological evidence has come to light to confirm the presence of such a site here.



**Figure 9:** Inscribed early Christian stones from Tregaron church (after Nash-Williams).

### 3.3.6 Medieval (1066 – 1485)

During the Norman period, generally a tumultuous time in Welsh history, Tregaron (town PRN 12967) was seemingly spared the ravages of war and destruction afforded to other Ceredigion towns. This was largely a result of its origin as an indigenous Welsh settlement, as Tregaron had grown organically out of much earlier foundations, as opposed to having developed through an association with defensive castles, as was the case at Aberystwyth, Cardigan, and Lampeter, the nearest castle being at Llanio. Tregaron appears to have had a more peaceful and stable community, allowing for steady economic and social growth. During the patronage of the powerful 12<sup>th</sup> century Welsh prince Rhys ap Gruffydd work began on the construction of the current site of Strata Florida Abbey in 1184. Traffic to and from this important abbey is likely to have boosted trade and commerce within Tregaron, highlighted by the discovery of a possible brooch and pilgrims badge (PRNs 8991 & 8992) in Tregaron churchyard. After a rebellion against Edward I by the local lord was defeated in 1292 the lordship of Caron was given to the Clement family, and Edward also bestowed a Royal Charter allowing a weekly market and an annual fair to be held at Tregaron, which greatly influenced the future development of the town.

The Talbot Hotel (PRN 8933) in the main square of the town boasts an origin as an old drover's inn dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and has been serving the needs of travellers and the community ever since. It is likely, too, that the water-corn mill (PRN 12428/62185) in the Pentre area of the town was also first established at this time, with small workers' cottages clustering around the mill, creating a small settlement separated from the rest of the town by the main market square. The proposed development site lies on the edge of the main clusters of medieval settlement, and although no archaeological remains have yet come to light it is possible settlement activity extended into the proposed development area.

Acting as host to a weekly market and annual fair assured Tregaron's place as one of the key agricultural market towns in Ceredigion, trading in sheep, cattle, horses and poultry. Very little information is available for the historical development of the town during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, although it remained

in the Clement family, and can be presumed to have been largely stable (see Rees 1936: 13-15).

### **3.3.7 Post Medieval (1485 – 1900)**

Under the lordship of the Clement family the development of the town must have been steady and sustained, as by the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Tregaron had become the chief town of the Pennarth Hundred, suggesting it was not only a commercial centre, but an administrative centre as well, with free courts administering justice. The annual Ffair Garon was at one time also one of the largest fairs in Wales. Tregaron also achieved greater notoriety in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as the birthplace of the so-called Welsh 'Robin Hood', Twm Shôn Catti. The Dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII in 1539 however may have affected the passage of visitors through Tregaron to and from nearby Strata Florida abbey, reducing the passing trade.

During the Civil War in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Tregaron suffered at the hands of Col. Gerard, who on passing through Tregaron on his way from Montgomeryshire to Haverfordwest, is reported to have swept away everything he could lay his hands upon (Anon. 1909), despite the county's general loyalty to the Royalist cause. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the area also suffered from the notorious 'Plant Matt' bandits, the two sons and a daughter of Tregaron publican Bartholomew Evans. The brothers allegedly terrorised a wide area for many years until eventually they were caught following the murder of a Judge travelling to preside over Sessions at Rhayader.

Documentary evidence for life in Tregaron begins to increase during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. An entry in 1678 records an Act of Parliament passed by Charles II, which demanded that the dead of the parish should be buried in woollen shrouds, in an attempt to bolster the woollen industry. The woollen industry did indeed grow to be one of the main industries in the area in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the hosiery and flannel woven by the women of Tregaron gaining a reputation for its quality far afield. A list compiled of the male residents of Tregaron in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century mentions 40 separate names (Rees 1936: 33).

A dispute regarding the borough status of the town in 1730 records comments such as "not above forty houses" and "about sixty or seventy cottages in the town" which Wmffre (2004; 558) believes suggests a more likely average of around fifty households within Tregaron town at this time. Despite the growth of the woollen industry by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Tregaron was still only a relatively small and nucleated settlement, with a cluster of houses around the mill at Pentre and on the crossroads bridging the river and around St Caron's Church, although there is likely to have been some additional urban expansion in the second half of the century. The main square in front of the Talbot Hotel separated the Pentre cluster from the other zones, and would have played host to the weekly market. The other larger fairs held during the course of the year, including the hire fairs, sheep fairs and Ffair Garon, were held on fields on the edge of the town.

Tregaron continued to be depicted on various 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century maps although it is Cary's 1794 map which shows the town spanning both sides of the river for the first time (see Figure 10). His depiction is in insufficient detail to accurately plot the extent of the settlement, although it does appear to show significant dwellings clustered around the crossroads and bridge, and illustrates a greater level of settlement compared to just the churches which are depicted for neighbouring villages.



**Figure 10:** Extract from Cary's map of Cardiganshire in 1794.

### 3.3.8 19<sup>th</sup> century

In his article on 'The Tregaron of Henry Richard', Jones (1990: 147) describes the Tregaron of 1809 as follows:

'To most visitors it was a nondescript huddle, grouped around a church of surprisingly noble proportions and a very large churchyard, a square of houses which looked more like a triangle, and a straggle of decrepit cottages on the banks of the river and strung along the roads into and out of the place.'

However, its significance as a market town and place of trade saw the opening of the Aberystwyth and Tregaron bank in 1810, which issued bank notes with black sheep symbolically representing the value of the note. Although this initial bank went bankrupt in 1814, a century later Tregaron boasted four separate banks, testimony to its economic importance as a place of trade.

The Ordnance Survey original surveyors drawings in 1820-21 (Figure 11) depicts a number of houses clustered around the Church and to the south, in an area between the river and west of the road out to Llanddewi Brefi (Dewi Road). The town square is clearly marked, as are buildings fronting the square on its northern and eastern sides, with the settlement around the mill at Pentre depicted as extending as far as the banks of the Breninig. By this time there was also urban settlement on the western side of the river, in two small areas enclosed by roads. Nothing of note can be seen within the proposed development area, although it is clear the lower lying strips of land have been enclosed as fields. A drawing of Tregaron was published in 1827 and depicts the town with a mixture of thatched cottages and houses and a resplendent church tower, following its rebuilding in 1805 (Figure 12).

Early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century commercial Directories describe Tregaron as consisting 'chiefly of one street, the houses of which are irregular, and many of them ancient buildings of stone. It is a place of very little trade but the fairs are well attended....with the March fair...also a large one for stockings.' (Pigot 1835;796). Tregaron is mentioned within various historic directories spanning a period from

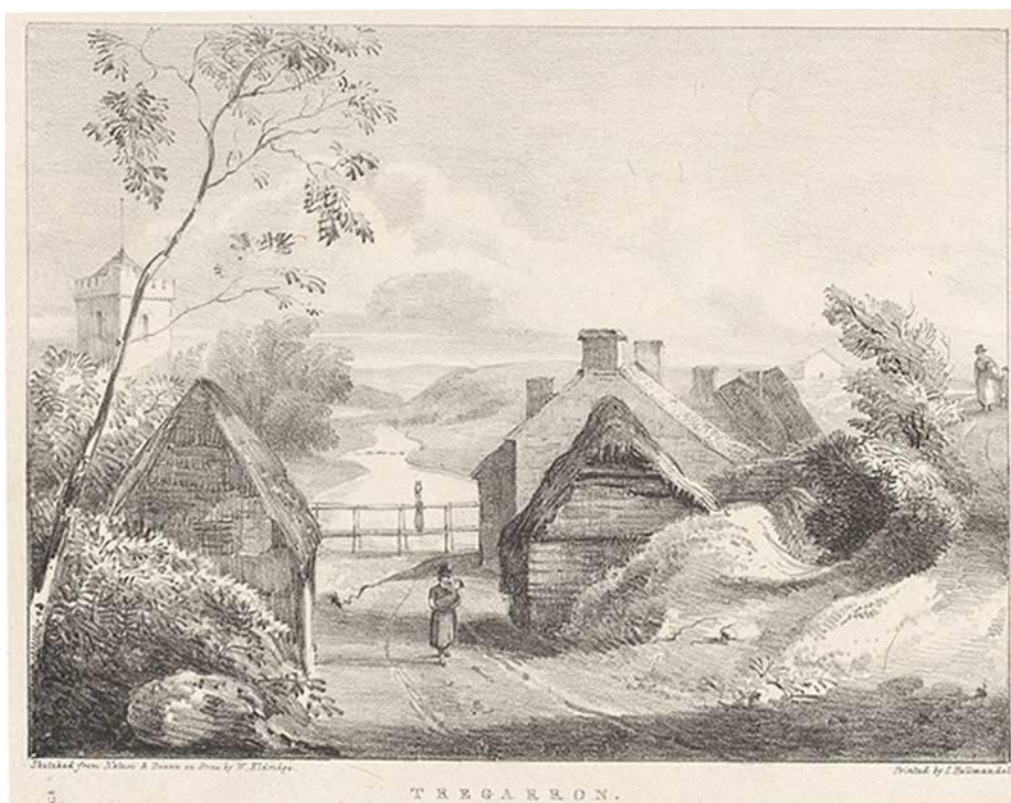
1835 to 1926, which charts the expansion of Tregaron in socio-economic terms. According to Lewis (1833) Tregaron town had 655 inhabitants in 1833, and the town can be assumed to have contained more than the 50 houses recorded a hundred years previously.

The Tithe Map and Apportionment of 1842 (Figure 13) records the individual plots and dwellings in detail for the first time. When compared to the extent of the town as indicated in the 1820 OS surveyors' drawings (as seen in Figure 11), the intervening twenty years shows a gradual expansion of the town, a trend which was to gather considerable pace throughout the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Land to the south as far where the hospital now stands, between the river and Dewi Road, is shown as common land. A Wesleyan Methodist chapel had also been built on the Dewi Road in the intervening years, with a pound adjacent. Many of the current field boundaries within the proposed development area had clearly been established by this time, although the southern additional area was still part of a relatively large area of open land. No development is shown within these fields, although development borders the area along Pentre to the north. The fields were at this time all part of Ty Gwyn farm. This was a relatively small farm, the farmers cottage stood roughly where the entrance to the new car park is now, and was incidentally where Henry Richards was born, whose statue now stands proudly in Tregaron Square. At that time the farm was part of the extensive estates of Colonel Powell of Nanteos, and was rented by a William Rees. No further information is given as to the use of the fields or any features within them.

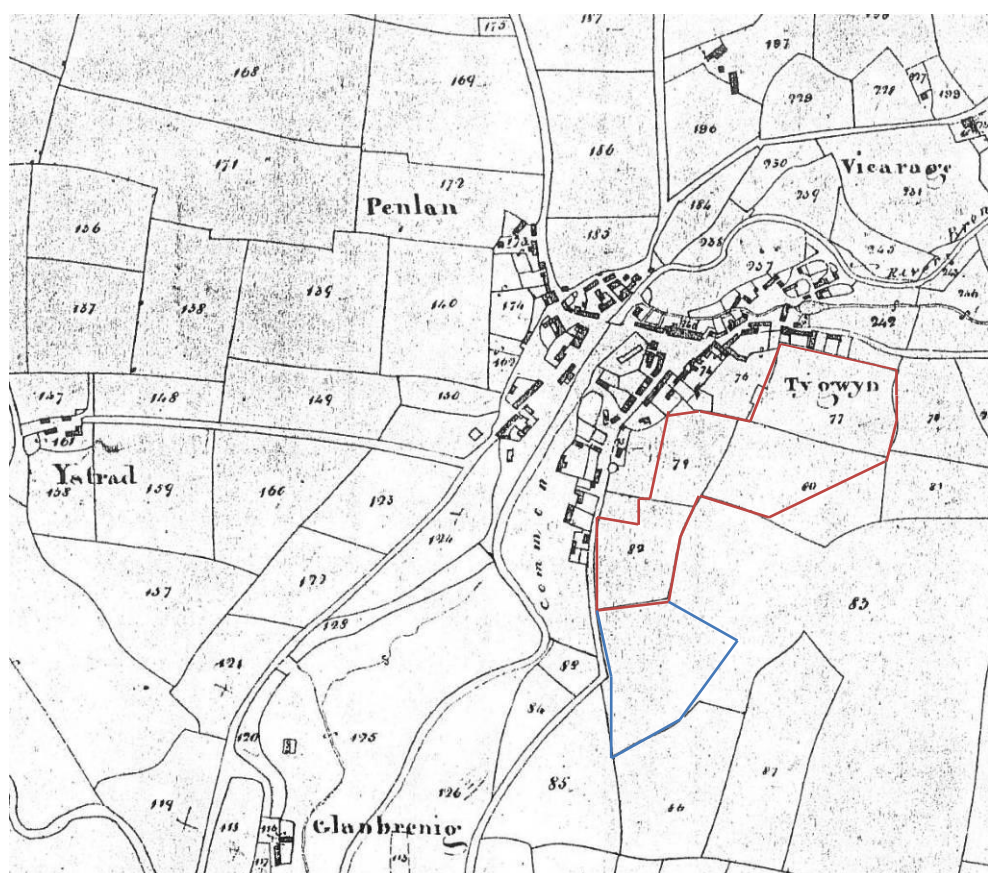


**Figure 11:** Extract from the Ordnance Survey original surveyors drawings of 1820-1.

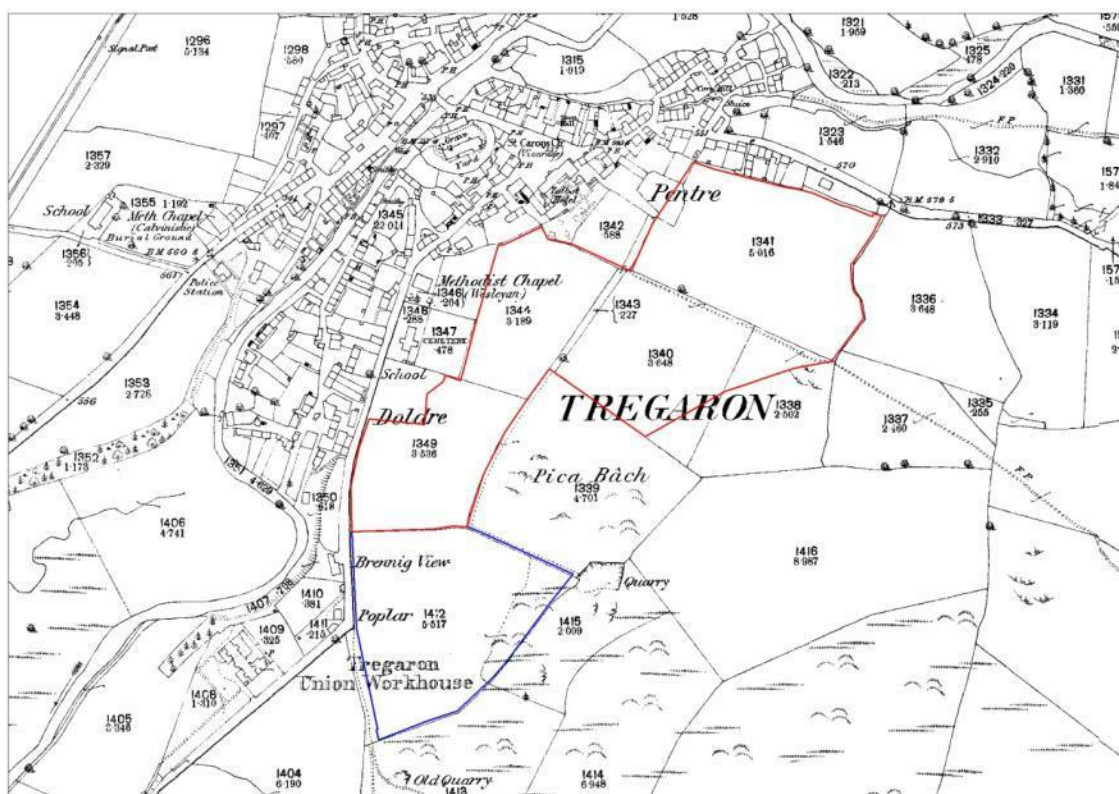




**Figure 12:** Lithograph print of Tregaron by W. Eldridge, published 1827 (NLW 13558182)



**Figure 13:** Extract from the Caron Parish tithe map of 1842 showing area of proposed development.



**Figure 14:** Extract from the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1889 showing area of proposed development.

Tregaron as a town particularly flourished in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century through its importance as a centre for droving. Animals bought in south Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire converged on Tregaron, from whence they were driven across the mountains via Abergwesyn and Hereford, or via Llandovery and Brecon, to enter England and to graze on the lush pastures of Northamptonshire and the Home Counties (Moore-Colyer 2002). The animals were shod in a compound behind the Talbot Hotel, with Tregaron the last lowland station before the start of the arduous upland route across the mountains and to the English fairs. At its height this industry supported six different blacksmiths in the town, and shows the importance of droving to the local economy. The town also supported 11 pubs and various hotels, not to mention the various other commercial outlets and industries such as grocers, drapers, carpenters, hosiers, and shoemakers.

In 1833 the population of the town is estimated to have been 665 inhabitants (Lewis 1833): by 1844 there were about 800 in town (Pigot 1844), an increase of 20% in a decade. The number of traders listed in 1844 had more than doubled from 27 to 64 in under ten years. By 1851 there were three woollen factories operating in Tregaron, employing 176 knitters and 63 tailors.

One particular local story that has garnered much interest in recent years is the recorded death of a circus elephant in 1848. The elephant was part of a travelling menagerie, but died from lead poisoning whilst staying in Tregaron. The elephant was then supposedly buried somewhere behind the Talbot Hotel. Recent attempts to locate these remains have so far proved unsuccessful (see section 3.5).

By the 1860s Tregaron was a thriving small town and enjoying its zenith. In 1866 the railway arrived, this was followed by noticeable urban expansion



northwards. However, it also signalled the end of traditional droving, and facilitated the trend of economic migration of the young to employment opportunities now available in south Wales and London. The Tregaron Union Workhouse opened in 1876 on the southern fringes of the town, and the 1881 census records 15 residents (3 staff and 12 inmates), although only one was listed as from Tregaron.

During the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century there had been a particular flurry of urban expansion in the Dol-dre area of town, formerly Common Land. 'Squatter settlements' became common, temporary structures erected over one night to eventually be replaced by more permanent cottages. The canalising of the river also facilitated the development of the town along both Chapel Street and High Street.

The settlement of Tregaron virtually doubled in the fifty years between 1840 and 1890. During this time a number of earlier cottages and buildings were demolished and rebuilt, and new areas were colonised. As such, the prevailing architecture visible in the centre of Tregaron today dates largely from this mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century period of economic and urban growth, having been built over the earlier foundations of the medieval-18<sup>th</sup> century town.

The detailed 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889 (Figure 13) shows that within the proposed development site, the field to the south had now been enclosed. The building that now houses the museum had also encroached onto the fields. The trackway that runs across the fields towards the quarry of Pica Bach was also now in place, as was a footpath that crosses the area, which is still used as a public footpath.

### **3.3.9 Modern**

By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century traditional droving had ended, and the woollen industry had declined to such an extent that by 1929 all five mills which had been operating in 1880 had closed. However, the market and fairs continued to flourish, and Tregaron retained its importance as an agricultural market town. The railway also served as a means of importing goods, and the position of Tregaron as an administrative centre was also consolidated. A new council school was built in 1913, and in 1914 the Workhouse was closed, and was converted instead into a TB sanatorium. The Town Hall was built in 1877 by the Powells of Nanteos, who owned most of the town until 1918, when their Sunny Hill estate was divided into lots and sold, which includes the area of the proposed development site. The lands within the proposed development area were sold as a single lot along with its small farmstead of Ty Gwyn (described as two small adjoining cottages with a cowhouse and yards to the rear), the Talbot Hotel and a stone quarry.

Development in Tregaron between 1905 and 1918 saw only very small pockets of urban expansion. The inter-war years saw some expansion on the fringes of the town, particularly along Lampeter Road.

The post-war era has seen two key phases of urban development, the first in the 20 years immediately after the war, which saw the construction of small pockets of council housing in the town, mainly on its northern edge.

Post-1965 there has been renewed development within the town. The railway closed in the 1960s and the area of the former station and goods yard has since been redeveloped as an industrial estate and bowling green. Much of the former railway line has been built over. On the north side of town there are two modern private housing estates, Rhyd-y-Fawnog and Pwllswyddog/Lon Caron, the latter having been built over an area of medieval settlement, removing the early row of cottages which once stood there. Redevelopment of housing in the Pentre area of

the town has seen the disappearance of the medieval mill-pond and leat associated with the water powered Corn mill, which had also seen continuous occupation since at least the 15<sup>th</sup> century, if not earlier. The former workhouse, which had been a TB Sanatorium since 1914, was converted into a hospital in 1960s.

Little seems to have changed within the proposed development site itself throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At some point Dol-dre has been built in the corner of one of the fields, and the field boundary enclosing the cemetery for the Wesleyan Methodist chapel has been extended northwards.

### **3.4 Site Visit**

3.4.1 A site visit was undertaken on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012. The area consisted of four fields of improved pasture enclosing mostly gentle slopes on the edge of the main settlement of Tregaron. The ground rises to a summit along the eastern edge of the northern field, and again rises steadily to the east within the southern field (Photos 1 & 6).

3.4.2 Some field boundaries to the west, particularly those along the trackway to Pica Bach quarry, and fronting Dewi Road towards Tregaron hospital, consist of hedgebanks surmounting dry-stone walling (Photos 3 & 4). The remaining traditional field boundaries consist of hedgebanks (Photo 2). Map evidence suggests many of these boundaries have been in place for at least 170 years.

3.4.3 The trackway to the quarry, first marked on the 1889 Ordnance Survey map, is still clearly visible and in use (Figure 14). The footpath crossing the northern field, also first recorded on the 1889 Ordnance Survey map, is visible as a slight ridge along the sloping ground (Photo 5). The field boundary this formerly ran alongside is now gone.

3.4.4 There is a small but significant drop in the levels onto the line of the Dewi Road towards the hospital, and also to the rear of properties fronting this road within the centre of the town (Photos 7 & 8). This would suggest that any settlement connected with the town that needed access to this route would have to be terraced quite significantly into the sloping ground, but no such terracing is visible within the proposed development area. This falling ground would suggest these fields are likely to have remained outside the main areas of settlement that developed around St Caron's church. To the north, however, the land slopes more gently towards Pentre, which is believed to be another hub of early settlement. Expanded settlement in this area may not therefore be so readily identifiable in the current ground surface.

3.4.5 No other features of archaeological note were recorded during the site visit.



**Photo 1:** General view across the northern part of the proposed development area. Any Early Medieval or Medieval settlement activity that may have extended into the area is likely to have occurred on the lower lying ground bordering the main current settlement of Tregaron in this area.



**Photo 2:** One of the somewhat denuded historic field banks within the proposed development area.





**Photo 3:** Remnants of dry-stone walling beneath the hedgebank forming part of the boundary to the quarry trackway through the area.



**Photo 4:** Dry-stone walling fronting Dewi Road (B4343) bordering the proposed development area.





**Photo 5:** Removed field boundary and line of public footpath through the area, visible as a slight linear mound in the centre of the photo.



**Photo 6:** General view looking northwards across the southern area of proposed development.





**Photo 7:** From the southern area looking over Tregaron, the rooftops illustrate how the ground levels fall towards the centre of Tregaron.



**Photo 8:** View of falling ground levels from the area of proposed development at the tree line to the right, down to levels fronting the Square in Tregaron on the left.





**Photo 9:** General view across the neighbouring cemetery with part of the area of proposed development on land behind.

### **3.5 Previous Archaeological Work**

3.5.1 There has been a variety of archaeological works undertaken within the wider study area, including two previous excavations close to the edge of the proposed development site.

3.5.2 In 2007 Dyfed Archaeological Trust undertook an evaluation excavation on a plot of land at Talbot Yard (Cook 2007), bordering the current proposed development area to the northwest. A total of six trenches were excavated. They demonstrated a typical sequence of ploughsoil between 0.3 and 0.5m in depth, overlying naturally occurring subsoils. Within Trench 1 a disturbed cobbled surface directly overlying the bedrock was recorded, but this was not considered of archaeological importance. In Trenches 2 and 4 three linear ditches were recorded cutting into the subsoils, interpreted as a series of former post-medieval field boundaries. Modern services were also recorded in Trenches 2 and 3.

3.5.3 In 2011 University of Wales Trinity St David undertook an excavation with local community involvement on land behind the Talbot Hotel (<http://www.trinitysaintdavid.ac.uk/en/archaeologyhistoryandanthropology/community/tregaronelephantproject/>). This was a small-scale project designed to engage the local community in an excavation attempting to locate the burial place of a circus elephant, under the direction of Dr Jemma Bezant and student Olwyn Pritchard. The elephant was part of 'Batty's travelling menagerie' that passed through Tregaron in 1848. It supposedly died of lead poisoning and was buried behind the Talbot Hotel. The excavation was unable to locate the animals' burial place.

3.5.4 There have also been three archaeological watching briefs on work undertaken within Tregaron close to the proposed development site.

3.5.5 In 2000 Cambrian Archaeological Projects undertook a watching brief on the demolition of 'Gelli-gron', The Square, Tregaron (c.70m from the edge of the proposed development site), as part of a road widening scheme (Jones 2000). The watching brief revealed the likelihood that the property was first established at some time in the mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The only significant artefacts recovered were those discovered beneath the floorboards in the Parlour room, none earlier than the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As part of this archaeological work the RCAHMW recorded the standing structure prior to its demolition.

3.5.6 In 2008 Cambrian Archaeological Projects undertook a watching brief on vegetation clearance and topsoil stripping on land on the western bank of the Afon Brennig, Tregaron, c.125m to the west of the proposed development site (Smith 2008). The topsoil was only partially removed, nothing of archaeological interest was noted.

3.5.7 In 2009 Cambrian Archaeological Projects (Jones 2009) undertook a watching brief during Environment Agency flood alleviation work on the Afon Brennig in Tregaron (c.120m from the proposed development site). The work entailed the dredging of some 200 metres of the river. Work alongside the bridge exposed no significant features or deposits. However a large sample of finds was recovered from the bed of the river, including metal objects of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century date and two fragments of Romano-British pottery.

3.5.8 As well as the site work there has also been several desk-based assessments on areas within the current study area. The most relevant of which is a town survey on Tregaron (Cook & Poucher 2007) undertaken in 2006 & 2007, although this report is still in draft form.

3.5.9 As part of the Tir Gofal agri-environmental scheme, desk-based assessments were undertaken on farm holdings, of which four lie within the study



area. These include land belonging to Abercarfan (Groom 2003), c.170 to the northeast. Nothing of archaeological interest was recorded on that holding.

3.5.10 Land around Penrallt farm, c.520m to the southwest, was also examined (Milne 2003). This highlighted sites included in the regional HER, but also identified the presence of some 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings and the farmstead itself, along with the post-medieval road and bridge and the possible site of a limekiln.

3.5.11 Bronwydd farm holding, c.550m to the east, and a holding belonging to Ffosgoy farm c.600m to the north were also examined but recorded nothing of archaeological interest.

#### **4. ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND IMPORTANCE**

4.1 The archaeological desk-based assessment has indicated that there are no known sites of archaeological significance within the proposed development area. However, the report has highlighted the following potential archaeological resources within the site area. An assessment of their most likely archaeological importance is also made<sup>4</sup>.

4.2 The potential for remains of Palaeolithic date to be present in the site area is considered to be very low as no such remains have been recorded within the study area, and are known to be scarce in the wider area. If found to be present such remains would be considered to be of at least regional importance.

4.3 The potential for remains of Mesolithic or Neolithic date to be present within the site area is considered to be low as no such remains have been recorded within the study area. Although not recorded on the HER a possible Neolithic stone axe is said to have been recovered, although its exact location and provenance is uncertain. Other finds are known to exist in the wider area. If found to be present such remains would be considered to be of at least regional importance.

4.4 The potential for activity of the Bronze Age period within the proposed development site is considered low to moderate, as chance finds, a potential burnt mound and a standing stone have been recorded in the wider study area, indicating Bronze Age activity in this region. If further remains of this period are present they would be considered to be of regional importance.

4.6 The potential for remains of Iron Age date to be present in the site area is considered to be low to moderate. No remains have been recorded within the proposed development site, but are known to exist in the wider study area. If found to be present such remains would be considered to be of at least local to regional importance.

4.7 Little Roman activity is recorded on the HER within the vicinity of the site area, other than a few sherds of Romano-British pottery recovered from dredging works in the Afon Breninig. Roman activity is usually quite finds rich and easy to recognise, this general lack of known Roman sites would suggest the potential for hitherto unknown remains to survive within the development site is low. Should such remains be found they would be considered to be of regional importance.

4.8 The potential for Early Medieval activity to be present within the site area is considered moderate. Such remains are often focussed on known church sites, and the nearby St Caron's Church is believed to have Early Medieval origins given the presence of early Christian inscribed stones and the circular nature of the churchyard. The layout and extent of any potential associated Early Medieval settlement is unknown, but there is always the possibility that elements of such settlement could have extended into the proposed development site. If such remains are present within the site area they would be considered to be of regional importance.

4.8 The potential for medieval settlement remains to be present within the site area is considered to be moderate. Tregaron is a known medieval settlement, but the full layout and extent of that settlement is unknown. It is likely to have been focused around the church to the west and a former mill in Pentre to the north. It is possible settlement remains or associated activity extended into the proposed development area, although concentrated to the north and northwest. It should be noted that no such evidence was uncovered during evaluation work in 2007 (Cook 2007) on the site of the new car park, and topographically much of

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<sup>4</sup> The potential for remains of higher or lower archaeological importance for all periods cannot be discounted.

this area would appear unlikely for settlement. The majority of the development site is more likely to have lain within surrounding agricultural lands used by the medieval settlement. Settlement remains would be considered of regional importance. Agricultural remains would be of low archaeological importance.

4.9 Post-medieval remains would follow a similar pattern to medieval remains, again the site area predominantly being used as agricultural land, and remains of such being of low importance. Evidence for post-medieval settlement may be present, which would be considered to be of more archaeological importance the earlier it is.

4.10 The presence of the buried remains of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century 'Tregaron elephant' could potentially lie within the area of proposed development. Although historic references state it was buried behind the Talbot Hotel, it is possible it was buried in the fields behind the Hotel, especially as both the hotel and farm land were under the same ownership at that time. It may be considered more likely that such a large animal would be buried further away from the hotel itself, to avoid any issues associated with its decay. Although 19<sup>th</sup> century animal remains do not normally constitute important archaeological features, publicity and public interest surrounding previous attempts to locate this animal makes any such remains of regional importance.

## **5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **5.1 Previous Impacts**

5.1.1 Mapping since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century suggests that for nearly 200 years the proposed development area has been undeveloped farm land. This could indicate both a lack of activity, but also the potential for preserving archaeology below the topsoil, undisturbed by later development. Any features close to the surface are likely to have been disturbed as, although pasture at the moment, it is improved pasture and therefore it has been ploughed, and may have been subject to more intensive agricultural regimes in the past.

5.1.2 Two former hedge-banks within the northern field have been removed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see Figure 14), although the line of the main hedge-bank is still preserved in the line of the public footpath across the field (see Photo 5).

5.1.3 A large pile of topsoil has been deposited within the northern field. This may have taken place during the previous development of the car park in the corner of the proposed development area in 2007.

5.1.4 Urban development does lie along the northern edge and in part along the western edge of the proposed development area, but there is no indication this development has impacted upon site.

### **5.2 Potential Impacts from Development**

5.2.1 The site contains no upstanding remains of buildings or structures associated with early settlement or farming. There is some potential for below ground remains associated with earlier settlement and agriculture to be present on the site. Such remains could range from former agricultural boundaries or enclosures, through to earth cut remains of former settlement activity (for example postholes, wall lines or rubbish pits). Any of the following activities that might be associated with future development of the site area could therefore expose, damage or destroy any such remains:

- Enabling works, such as installation of contractor's compound, construction of access roads, parking areas, storage areas, borrow pits and associated services;
- Landscaping and terracing works;
- Topsoil stripping;
- Foundation excavation;
- Construction of roads and infrastructure; and
- Service installation.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 The archaeological assessment has shown that the proposed development site at Tregaron lies within a landscape with a long and continuous history of human activity from at least the Bronze Age to the present. The main concentration of archaeologically significant activity lies within the Early Medieval through to the post-medieval periods.

6.2 Although no known archaeological remains are present within the proposed development site, the potential for hitherto unknown remains has been identified. There is the potential for hitherto unidentified Early Medieval and Medieval settlement activity to have extended into the proposed development area, particularly to the north and northwest. It should be noted however that previous archaeological evaluations in this area (Cook 2007) found no evidence of such activity, although evaluations have the potential to miss archaeological remains. Much of this area is more likely to have been used for agricultural purposes than settlement.

6.3 No archaeological sites of prehistoric or Roman date have been identified within the area of proposed development, although scattered remains are recorded within the 1km radius study area centred upon it. The overall archaeological potential for remains of these dates to survive is considered low, especially in terms of later disturbance from agricultural activity.

6.4 Other than historic field boundaries, no features of archaeological interest were noted during a site visit to the proposed development area.

6.5 The archaeological desk-based assessment has indicated that no known nationally important archaeological remains are present within the site area which would preclude development of the site, or areas therein. However, this does not mean such remains may not be present; there always remains the possibility for any such previously unrecorded remains to become apparent during any further intrusive archaeological investigations or during the course of groundworks associated with the proposed development.

6.6 The potential for hitherto unidentified Early Medieval, Medieval or post-medieval settlement activity, along with the possible location of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century 'Tregaron Elephant' could be ascertained through intrusive archaeological evaluation of select areas of the proposed development site. The results of the evaluation would then enable a mitigation strategy to be designed to deal with any such remains if identified.

6.7 Any further archaeological evaluation or mitigation needed may be dealt with by way of a condition on any forthcoming planning approval. The requirements for any such condition for further archaeological survey or recording at the site should be discussed the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority.

## 7. SOURCES

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## **APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS**

### **UPLAND CEREDIGION**

#### ***HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:***

##### **24 TREGARON**

**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 679597

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 37.1

#### **Historic Background**

The dedication of the church to Caron, the presence of three early Christian monuments and a circular churchyard indicate an early foundation for Tregaron Church (Ludlow 1998). The church may have encouraged the development of a small settlement in the pre Anglo-Norman period. In 1290, Edward I granted to Geoffrey Clement the privileges of holding a weekly market and two annual fairs at Tregaron (Soulsby, 1983, 255). The town developed from this. A considerable boost was given to the town by the drovers' trade; Soulsby (1983, 256) records the period 1820-40 as one of considerable growth. Further growth was promoted by the opening of the Milford and Manchester Railway in 1866. The town has not developed greatly outside its historic core during the 20th century

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The small town of Tregaron. The historic core is centred on a market square where the fine Talbot Hotel is sited, and the church, with secondary development found on the west bank of the Brennig towards the former railway station. Older buildings are of local stone with non-local slate roofs. Some are cement rendered. The town is still a compact, nucleated settlement, with very little ribbon development on its fringes. Modern buildings are mostly limited to the periphery of the town and consist of residential development, schools, a hospital and light industrial units. There has been little in the way of modern redevelopment in the historic centre. A variety of materials are represented in the modern buildings: including concrete, brick and steel.

Apart from buildings and monuments the only other recorded archaeology in this area comprises finds of Bronze Age date.

Urban development of Tregaron is very well-defined - there is no over-spill into the surrounding agricultural historic landscape areas (areas 25, 27, 97).

## **UPLAND CEREDIGION**

### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:**

#### **97 AFON GROES VALLEY FLOOR**

**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 692596

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 375.6

### **Historic Background**

The early history of this area is unclear. It may have formed part of one of the granges of Strata Florida Abbey, or alternatively part of the demesne of the abbey. The granges were granted to the Earl of Essex on the Dissolution, who sold them to the Crosswood estate in 1630. In the late 18th-century some of this area was in the possession of Crosswood, and may have been obtained by this route. Abbey demesne was acquired by John Stedman in 1567. However, Richard Stedman died intestate in 1746 and the estate passed to the Powells of Nanteos. Nanteos had considerable holdings here in the 19th century. It is likely that by the end of the Medieval Period, if not earlier, abbey granges and demesne were divided into farms which were leased out on a commercial basis. This may have been the origin of the settlement pattern we see today. The Caron Tithe Map of 1845 shows the landscape area very much as today. Earlier maps - late 18th century and early 19th century estate maps (NLW Crosswood Deeds Vol 1, 20 and Vol 2, 1; NLW Vol 45, 54, 55, 69; NLW Crosswood 332) - shed some light on landscape development. 1819 maps of the area to the east of Tregaron and around Aberdwr show some interspersed, enclosed fields, and small strip-like enclosures around Penffordd. This intermixing of holdings and enclosed strips suggests that the landscape of small irregular fields evolved out of a subdivided field system, and the 1819 estate maps captured the very end of this process of evolution.

### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area lies across the valley floors and partly up the lower valley sides of the Afon Groes, Afon Brenig, Afon Berwyn and Nant Fleinog between 175m and 200m. It comprises scattered farms set in a matrix of small irregularly-shaped fields. Boundaries consist of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally in good condition, though a few are no longer stock-proof and are reinforced with wire fences. There are many distinctive trees on the boundaries; these together with the scattering of small woods across the area give an impression of a moderately wooded landscape. Farmland is mainly improved pasture, though there is some unimproved pasture, rough grazing and rushy - brwyn - ground. The older traditional buildings of stone with slate roofs are now interspersed with rendered concrete houses with slate and/or concrete tile roofs.

Recorded archaeology consists of just a few sites, and these are mainly post-Medieval extant dwellings, and other minor landscape components of similar date. A possible standing stone of Bronze Age date provides the only time-depth element to the area.

The boundaries of this area are not generally sharp. There is a slow merging between this area and areas 106, 109, 110 and 111. To the west the town of Tregaron, (area 24) provides a clear break, and to the north the steep valley side demarcating area 28 is also distinct.

# **CYLCH CARON PROJECT, TREGARON, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2012/5  
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 102591

Chwefror 2012  
February 2012

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by

**PHILIP POUCHER**

Swydd / Position: ARCHAEOLOGIST

Llofnod / Signature ..... Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith  
This report has been checked and approved by

JAMES MEEK

ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.  
on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: HEAD OF FIELD SERVICES

Llofnod / Signature ..... Date

*Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau  
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn*

*As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any  
comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report*

ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol



archaeological trust