

LAND OFF STATION ROAD, NANTGAREDIG, CARMARTHENSHIRE: SETTING IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Prepared by DAT Archaeological Services
For: Life Property Group Ltd



DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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**LAND OFF STATION ROAD, NANTGAREDIG,
CARMARTHENSHIRE:
SETTING IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

By

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LAND OFF STATION ROAD, NANTGAREDIG, CARMARTHENSHIRE:

SETTING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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**LAND OFF STATION ROAD, NANTGAREDIG, CARMARTHENSHIRE:
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	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1	INTRODUCTION	2
	1.1 Project Proposals and Commission	2
	1.2 Scope of the Project and Methodology	2
	1.3 Abbreviations	4
	1.4 Illustrations	4
	1.5 Timeline	4
2	NATIONAL POLICIES AND GUIDANCE	5
	2.1 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act)	5
	2.2 Planning Policy Wales	5
	2.3 Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment	5
3	STAGE 1: IDENTIFYING THE HISTORIC ASSETS	7
4	STAGE 2: DEFINE AND ANALYSE THE SETTING	12
	4.1 Introduction	12
	4.2 Known Archaeological Record	12
	4.3 Geophysical Survey and Trial Trench Evaluation	17
	4.4 Map Regression	18
	4.5 Aerial Photographs & Lidar	19
	4.6 Site Visit	22
	4.7 Conclusion	31
5	STAGE 3: EVALUATION OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF CHANGE/DEVELOPMENT	33
6	STAGE 4: MITIGATION OPTIONS	34
7	CONCLUSIONS	35
8	SOURCES	37

FIGURES

Figure 1:	Location of development area	9
Figure 2:	Map detailing location of site and Scheduled Monuments	10
Figure 3:	Development proposals	11
Figure 4:	Sites recorded on the regional HER in the locality	16
Figure 5:	Geophysical Survey of the site	17
Figure 6:	Interpretation of the geophysical survey results	18
Figure 7:	Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1888-9	19
Figure 8:	Lidar data	21

TABLES

Table 1:	Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales	4
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1:	Aerial photograph of henge and site	20
Photos 2 – 5:	Views from the proposed development area	23
Photos 6 - 12:	Views to and from the henge monument CM042	25
Photos 13 – 16:	Views to and from the barrow CM328	29

LAND OFF STATION ROAD, NANTGAREDIG, CARMARTHENSHIRE: SETTING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned to undertake an assessment of the potential impact of proposed development in Nantgaredig, Carmarthenshire (SN 49468 21025) on the setting of Scheduled Monuments CM042 and CM328. A four stage process was used, stage 1 identified the historic assets, stage 2 defined and analysed their setting, stage 3 evaluated the potential impact and stage 4 recommended mitigation measures. Overall there was considered to be slight to moderate negative impact upon the setting of CM042, and a negligible negative impact upon the setting of CM328. Further measures to reduce visibility were recommended, in order to further reduce negative impacts.

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Comisiynwyd Gwasanaethau Archeolegol YAD i gynnal asesiad o effaith bosibl datblygiad arfaethedig yn Nantgaredig, Sir Gaerfyrddin (SN 49468 21025) ar osod Henebion Rhestredig CM042 a CM328. Defnyddiwyd proses pedwar cam, nododd cam 1 yr asedau hanesyddol, diffiniodd a dadansoddodd cam 2 eu lleoliad, gwerthusodd cam 3 yr effaith bosibl a cham 4 yn argymhell mesurau lliniaru. Yn gyffredinol, ystyriwyd bod effaith negyddol fach i gymedrol ar osodiad CM042, ac effaith negyddol ddibwys ar osodiad CM328. Argymhellwyd ymchwiliadau mesurau i leihau gwelededd, er mwyn lleihau effeithiau negyddol ymhellach.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Proposals and Commission

- 1.1.1 DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Life Property Group Ltd, to carry out an assessment of the impact of a proposed development on the setting of two Scheduled Monuments (CM042 & CM328), the closest of which lies 55m to the north from the proposed development on land off Station Road, Nantgaredig, Carmarthenshire, centred on SN 49468 21025 (Figure 1). The proposals are currently in the pre-planning stages of development.
- 1.1.2 To the north of the development area lies Ffynnon-Newydd Standing Stones (CM042), a pair of prehistoric standing stones and henge monument, approximately 55m from the proposed development area. To the south lies Maes y Crug round barrow (CM328), a prehistoric Round Barrow, approximately 160m from the proposed development area (Figure 2).
- 1.1.3 Cadw responded to a pre-application consultation on the 1st July 2020, requesting further information in relation to the proposed development. Within the letter Cadw state:

...the impact of the proposed development on their [CM042 Ffynnon-Newydd Standing Stones and CM328 Maes y Crug round barrow] settings will be a material consideration in the determination of this application (see Planning Policy Wales 2018 section 6.1.23): Thus any planning application for this development will require an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the scheduled monuments to be submitted with it. This assessment will need to be prepared by a competent and qualified expert in accordance with the methodology outlined in the Welsh Government's best-practice guidance Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (2017).

- 1.1.4 The purpose of this assessment, which is detailed in the following report, is to provide Cadw and the local planning authority with the information they have requested in respect of the proposed development, the requirements for which are set out in Planning Policy (revised edition 10, December 2018), Section 6, and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017).
- 1.1.5 The archaeological assessment has been a primarily desk-based study of the site area, identifying potential setting impacts on designated archaeological assets in the vicinity, supplemented by information gained through a site walkover. Due to current restrictions related to the Covid-19 outbreak some archive sources have not been accessible, although sufficient information has been gained to provide a comprehensive assessment of the sites.

1.2 Scope of the Project and Methodology

- 1.2.1 The scope of the assessment follows the guidance and methodology offered in 'Setting of Heritage Assets in Wales' (Cadw 2017). This assessment also conforms to the Standard And Guidance For Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment as laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).

1.2.2 The methodology within 'Setting of Heritage Assets in Wales' (Cadw 2017) sets out a four stage approach:

Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a proposed change or development and their significance. Cadw have stated in their initial response that the two sites to be assessed are CM042 and CM328.

Stage 2: Define and analyse the setting to understand how they contribute to the ways in which the historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced.

Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on those settings.

Stage 4: Consider options to mitigate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on those settings.

1.2.3 The report utilises relevant information from a number of sources including:

- Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record data;
- Map regression using earlier cartographic sources;
- Available and relevant reports on any archaeological work undertaken in the area that affects the site or its setting;
- Accessible archive records held at the County Archive, the National Library of Wales (NLW) and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW);
- Aerial photography, satellite imagery and Lidar data;
- Relevant records held by the developer;
- Identification of any Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Historic Landscapes, Historic Landscape Character Areas or Conservation Areas within or in the vicinity of the site area (Cadw, DAT);
- Assessment of the archaeological potential of the area;
- Assessment of the likely impact upon the settings of surrounding features of the historic environment;
- Assessment of likely impacts on any identified remains within the development site (or potential remains) and;
- Suggestions for appropriate archaeological mitigation to address potential impacts.

1.2.4 For the purposes of planning policy in Wales, the historic environment is defined as:

All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed (Welsh Government 2017).

A heritage asset is:

An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic

landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated (ibid).

- 1.2.5 This report contains information about the historic environment and historic assets in the vicinity of the proposed development site, which will assist Cadw and the archaeological advisors to the planning authority in their decision about what, if any, archaeological mitigation will be required. Further guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment and historic assets during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and Listed Building (LBC) applications can be found in *Planning Policy Wales: Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment* (Welsh Government 2017; available online).

1.3 Abbreviations

- 1.3.1 All sites recorded on the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Sites recorded on the National Monument Record (NMR) held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) are identified by their National Primary Record Number (NPRN). Altitude is expressed to a height above Ordnance Datum (aOD). References to cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets throughout the text, with full details listed in the sources section at the rear of the report.

1.4 Illustrations

- 1.4.1 Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale. North is towards the top of the page unless otherwise indicated.

1.5 Timeline

- 1.5.1 The following timeline gives date ranges for the various archaeological periods that may be mentioned within this report.

Table 1: Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	Prehistoric
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	Historic
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1086	
Medieval Period –	1086 – 1536	

Post-Medieval Period ¹ –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20th century onwards	

2. NATIONAL POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

2.1 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act

2.1.1 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 was previously the primary legislation for protecting archaeological remains and Scheduled Monuments. This has more recently been superseded by The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which has three main aims as defined by Cadw:

- to give more effective protection to Listed Buildings and scheduled monuments;
- to improve the sustainable management of the historic environment; and
- to introduce greater transparency and accountability into decisions taken on the historic environment.

2.1.2 The New Act amends the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and also the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It is supported by a number of planning guidance documents. The Act most specifically provides better safeguards for the protection of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Historic Parks and Gardens. It will also include further guidance on place names.

2.2 Planning Policy Wales

2.2.1 Planning Policy Wales sets out the Welsh Government's land use planning policies. Its primary objective is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation.

2.1.2 Chapter 6, 'Distinctive and Natural Places', explains how planning system must take into account the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations. It also sets out the planning policies for the sustainable management of specific categories of historic assets.

2.3 Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment

2.3.1 This technical advice note provides guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and Listed Building consent applications.

¹ 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

It also provides specific guidance on how the following historic assets should be considered:

- scheduled monuments
- archaeological remains
- listed buildings
- conservation areas
- historic parks and gardens
- historic landscapes
- historic assets of special local interest
- World Heritage Sites

2.3.2 The technical advice note usefully gathers together the selection criteria employed in the designation of scheduled monuments and listed buildings and the registration of historic parks and gardens and historic landscapes.

2.3.3. Advice and decisions on planning applications affecting nationally significant historic environment features (or designated historic assets) is provided by Cadw acting on behalf of Welsh Government.

3 STAGE 1: IDENTIFYING THE HISTORIC ASSETS

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises a residential development of 35 units on land off Station Road in Nantgaredig, centred on SN 49468 21025 (Figure 3). This covers an area of approximately 1.5 hectares, with access from Station Road, which forms the main thoroughfare (the B4310) through Nantgaredig. The site currently comprises a level field of pasture, enclosed by hedgerows. The road forms the western boundary, with new residential dwellings in the southwest corner, existing residential development to the northwest, and further agricultural land forms the remaining boundaries. Modern residential development lines the street frontage opposite the site, and continues to the north and the south along Station Road. Nantgaredig itself is a largely modern ribbon settlement, which has developed from some clusters of traditional buildings around the junction with the A40 to the north, the farmstead and house of Barriwns and Ystrad-wrallt, and the former railway junction to the south.
- 3.2 This assessment is primarily concerned with Scheduled Monuments CM042 Ffynnon-Newydd Standing Stones and CM328 Maes y Crug round barrow, as identified by Cadw in their response to the pre-application consultation.
- 3.3 CM042 Ffynnon-Newydd Standing Stones comprises the remains of two standing stones, probably of Bronze Age date (c. 2300 - 800 BC) and an associated henge earthwork. The two stones stand approximately 0.6m apart, towards the northwest corner of a pasture field. The western stone is approximately 1.8m high, by 1.1m wide and 0.4m deep, rectangular in cross section, with a very irregular top which may well have been split in the past. The eastern stone is approximately 1.5m high, by 0.9m wide and 0.7m deep a rough rectangle in cross section, with a very irregular profile. Both stones have a largely flat northern face, more irregular on the south side. A third stone lies recumbent to the northeast, partially visible amongst the pasture. Excavation in 1980 revealed that these stones stand at a possible entranceway to a prehistoric bank and ditch enclosure. This ditched enclosure forms a henge (PRN 1754), with a diameter of approximately 75m, excavation demonstrated the site comprised a circular, to sub-square bank with internal ditch, with possible associated pits around the periphery of the bank identified on the northern side. The southeast part of the henge is partially visible above ground as a raised earthwork in the field, within which stands the visible stones. Modern housing has been built over the western part of the henge (and much of the interior), which is likely to have extended as far, and possibly into the line of Station Road. The Scheduled area includes the standing stones, and the area of the henge that extends into the fields. The site lies 55m to the north of the development area.
- 3.4 CM328 Maes y Crug round barrow (PRN 1752) comprises the remains of a round barrow, a burial monument probably dating to the Bronze Age (c.2300 BC - 800 BC) and situated in enclosed improved pasture immediately to the southeast of Maes y Crug House. The grass-covered barrow was circular on plan and measured about 19.5m in diameter and at least 0.5m in height. However, the barrow was cut by the construction of a railway line in 1864 (a stone cist is recorded as being found, containing pottery and bronze implements). Only the NNW half of the barrow remains, although much potential for archaeological information remains. This site lies 160m to the south of the development area.
- 3.5 Both sites lie within the low-lying valley base of the River Towy/Afon Tywi to the east of Carmarthen, between 10mOD to 20mOD. The base of the valley is up to 1.5km wide at this point running east to west, with the land

rising to a peak of 170mOD to the north, 130mOD to the south, continuing into undulating surrounding landscapes. The river currently runs along the southern edge of the valley plain, 540m to the south of the round barrow, 840m south of the henge monument. The valley is joined by the River Cothy/Afon Cothi approximately 800m to the east of the monuments/Nantgaredig. Both monuments lie on a gravel terrace that extends into the lower valley floor from the north. The terrace occupies a roughly triangular area up to 1.5km wide to the north, extending roughly 1km into the valley base, with the Cothi forming the eastern boundary.

- 3.6 The main transport routes through the area run along the lower valley, with the A40 running along slightly higher ground along the northern edge, its Roman predecessor taking a similar, slightly more southerly, route. The (former) rail line through the area takes a more central route, truncating the barrow site (CM328). The B4310 crosses the valley base north-south, continuing across the A40 to run up the Cloidach valley and into the hills to the north, and crossing the Towy/Tywi to the south via an 18th century bridge, accessing the higher ground beyond.
- 3.7 The settlement of Nantgaredig is a ribbon settlement that has developed along the B4310. It originally appears to have developed from a few central points around road junctions and major farmsteads, spreading along the roadside in the later 20th century. The village is surrounded by agricultural land spread along the valley base.
- 3.8 The underlying geology comprises mudstone, largely of the Hendre Shales Formation, with bands of limestone of the Mydrim Limestone Formation in the locality. River gravels and alluvium have built up over the bedrock in across the valley base.

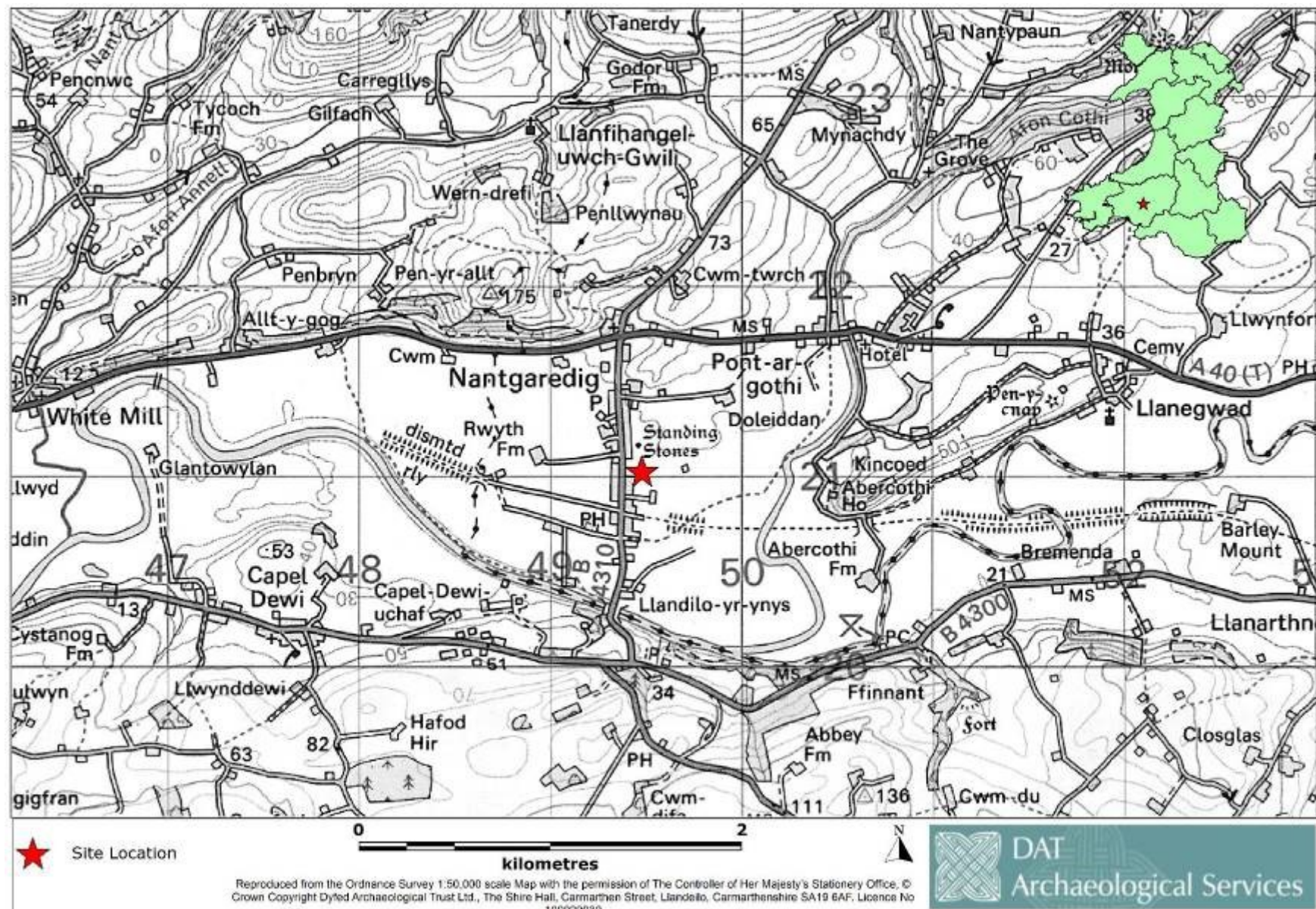


Figure 1: Location of development area.

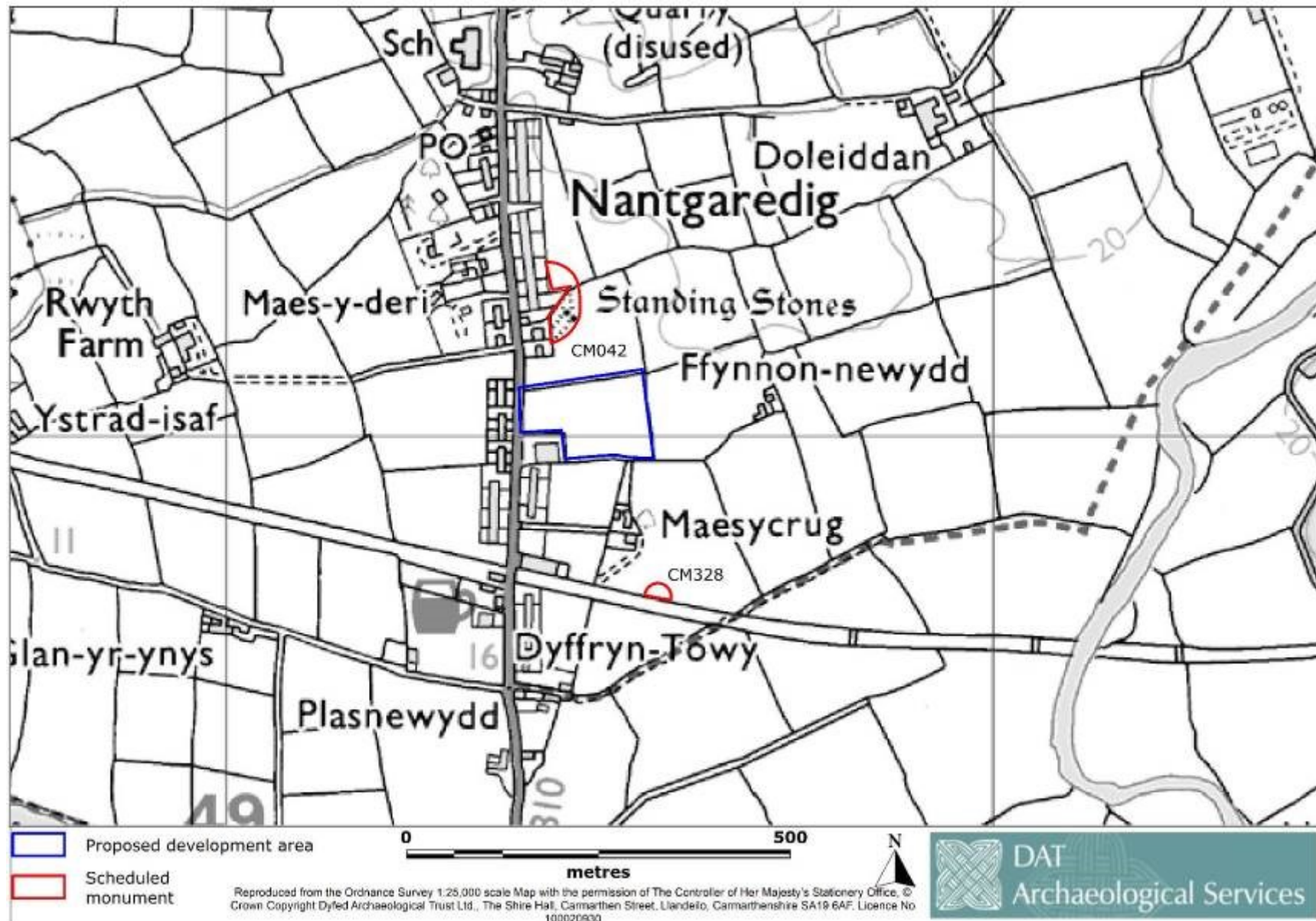


Figure 2: Map detailing location of site and Scheduled Monuments referred to in the report.

Land off Station Road, Nantgaredig:
Setting Impact Assessment



Figure 3: Proposed development plans, produced May 2020, provided by the client. Not reproduced to scale.

4 STAGE 2: DEFINE AND ANALYSE THE SETTING

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The setting of monuments such as these includes 'the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surrounding evolve' (Cadw 2017). As such it often extends beyond the physical boundaries of the monument itself. This may include physical elements in its surroundings, such as boundaries of other monuments, relationships with other historic assets and natural features, or associated agricultural, industrial or other surroundings. Less tangible elements are also included, such as function, sensory perceptions, historical, artistic, literary and scenic associations.
- 4.1.2 In order to understand this setting research has included an examination of the known archaeological record, based on data held in the regional Historic Environment Record and National Monuments Record, as well as reports on relevant archaeological investigations. Research has also included an examination of readily available historical data, including mapping and modern data including aerial photographs and lidar, and finally a walkover survey of the site itself.

4.2 Known Archaeological Record

- 4.2.1 A search of data held by the Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Monuments Record held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales was made of the surrounding area, supplemented by a search of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. The locations of these entries are shown in Figure 4. Of direct relevance to this are several archaeological studies and investigations, details of which are included within the following section.

Mesolithic & Neolithic

- 4.2.2 The two monuments in question are considered to be Bronze Age in date, although some henge monuments have their origins in the Neolithic period, and the only other henge monument in Carmarthenshire to be excavated, at Vaynor Farm 25km to the west, appears to have originated in the Late Neolithic (Barber & Hart 2015), no dating material was recovered from the excavations of Ffynnon Newydd henge. There are few indications however as to activity within this area of the Towy/Tywi valley during the Neolithic period, other than the chance finding of polished stone axes, one to the west (PRN 12876) and one to the east (PRN 720). There is some limited indication of prior activity in the area. To the east a scatter of flint artefacts (PRN 1755) from a concentrated area are largely Mesolithic in date. This is a good indicator that Mesolithic communities would have utilised the resources available on this gravel terrace and chance finds of a similar date may be spread throughout this area (including the development site), but it is likely to be of little direct relevance to the monuments in question.

Bronze Age

- 4.2.3 The two monuments do appear to fit into a complex Bronze Age landscape. Round barrows are typically the most prevalent Bronze Age monuments recorded in the landscape, and there are a number of round barrows in the

area. Generally such monuments are found in prominent upland locations, and whilst the lack of development in these areas may be a contributory factor to their survival it is also often thought that visibility played an important role in their siting. A study of such monuments in east Carmarthenshire suggests "It seems likely that the visibility from and to sites and the visibility between sites was a key factor in the determination of site location...a common topographic location for the round barrows...was on or near a fairly rounded summit on a gently sloping hillslope, which tended to get steeper towards the bottom" (Cook et al 2003). A further study by Davey (2002) also found such sites favoured gentle slopes and high elevations, particularly west and south-facing aspects (avoiding north facing aspects). Similarly standing stones within the Tywi valley had views dominated by distant views and/or opposite slopes rather than views into the adjacent valley bottoms. These views were also generally restricted to a dominant direction of view, rather than an all-round view, generally because they were sited on hillslopes but below ridgetops. Some barrow sites are recorded in the hills to the north and south of the Tywi valley, there are however a number of barrow sites within the Tywi valley, on lower ground, of which CM328 is one, which do not fit this typical pattern of elevated positioning.

- 4.2.4 Of particular note are discoveries that came to light during excavations between 2012-15 near at Love Lodge Farm, Ffairfach, Llandeilo, further up the Tywi valley. Situated on a gravel terrace in the lower valley floor was evidence for Bronze Age settlement, unenclosed cemeteries and standing stones, and subsequent early Iron Age ring ditches or barrow sites. There would appear to be a continuation of use in this landscape, with a Bronze Age burial respecting the site of a Neolithic ring ditch, and a continuation of burial activity from the Bronze Age into the Iron Age. There was a suggestion that settlement activity in the area during the Bronze Age and Iron Age may have respected the boundaries to the cemeteries, a rare discovery of settlement and cemetery in close proximity, and also that standing stones may have been used in association with the unenclosed Bronze Age cemeteries (Hourihan, Long & Simpson 2015). These findings indicate an intense degree of prehistoric activity on the interface area between gravel terrace and floodplain in the lower Tywi valley, which had not previously been identified.
- 4.2.5 This is of particular relevance as both the henge monument with its standing stones (CM042), and the barrow (CM328) to the south, all occupy a similar location on a gravel terrace on the edge of the valley floodplain. An archaeological investigation of the henge monument carried out in 1980 (Williams 1984) noted the prevalence of prehistoric activity across this gravel terrace around Nantgaredig. An examination of the HER reveals a scattering of standing stones around Nantgaredig, two to the northwest (PRNs 1748 & 10213), and one to the south (PRN 11053), all located on the lower valley gravel terrace. One note of caution however is that none of these sites still exist, with two suggested merely through place-name evidence, although antiquarian references suggest standing stones may have been more prevalent throughout the valley in the late 19th century (Nicholas 1892). Two further barrow sites are recorded with a bit more certainty. To the east of Maes y Crug lies a barrow (PRN 1758), with some Bronze Age flint found in its vicinity (PRN 1757) amongst a larger collection of Mesolithic flint mentioned above (PRN 1755). A cropmark (PRN 8894) also lies in between the two barrows, but its significance is unknown. To the north a third barrow site is recorded (PRN 9958) close to the crossroads at the northern end of Nantgaredig.

- 4.2.6 Henge monuments are a relatively rare occurrence, within Carmarthenshire Fynnon Newydd is one of only two confirmed through excavation (the other being Vaynor Farm 25km to the west), with a further five possible henge sites recorded spread throughout the county. Given its rarity CM042 may have acted as a focal point throughout the Bronze Age. The henge monument has both benefitted from archaeological investigation in 1980 (Williams 1984) but has also suffered from 20th-century development. The two standing stones are considered to stand at an entrance to the henge, facing ESE. It is possible the site had an opposing entrance, but this area has been lost to modern development. If an entrance did exist on the opposing side, however, then this may indicate a former standing stone to the west (PRN 10213) may have been of significance lying in line with that entrance. Two external pits were noted on the north side of the henge, believed to be contemporary, and possibly representative of ritual activity associated with the henge. The Vaynor Farm henge occupies a more prominent upland location, but the excavators there have drawn parallel with CM042, suggesting both occupied relatively elevated positions in their locality, intervisible with certain areas of high ground and significant watercourses (Barber & Hart 2015).

Iron Age

- 4.2.7 Unlike the Love Lodge Farm site discussed above, there is little to indicate this was a prominent area of activity during the subsequent Iron Age. A number of defended enclosures are recorded in the surrounding hills, but relatively widely dispersed in this area, the closest lying on high ground between the Tywi and Cothi valleys to the east of Nantgaredig.

Romano-British

- 4.2.8 During the Romano-British period a road (PRN 33946) was built across the valley plain, connecting the Roman forts of Llandeilo to the east and Carmarthen to the west. The road was a well-built and well-used feature of the landscape. The route took it to within 200m to the north of the henge monument, but there is no indication within the recorded evidence of this route that either the henge or the round barrow acted as a landmark or feature of significance. The excavation results from the Vaynor Farm henge suggest the ditches that defined that henge had gone out of use and had been largely infilled by this period.

Early Medieval / Medieval

- 4.2.9 It is likely the Roman road continued to be major thoroughfare along the valley following the collapse of Roman administration in the 4th to 5th century. It also appears likely an early medieval ecclesiastical site (PRN 7557) had been established at Llandeilo yr Ynys, adjacent to the current crossing of the B4310 of the Tywi to the south. This site may have been one mentioned as early as the 8th century, and it appears likely a medieval chapel existed here by the 12th century. The location of the Roman road and this ecclesiastical site suggests the B4310 may also have early origins linking the two. Unlike the Roman road to the north, the proximity of this road would suggest the henge, and potentially the barrows may have been visible features at this time.

- 4.2.10 A number of other religious sites are recorded in the general area throughout the medieval period, comprising chapels and holy wells, with a potential cluster around the lower Cothi valley to the east. It is likely the landscape was being farmed during this period, and a medieval grange and farmstead are recorded to the east. Llanegwad is the nearest known concentrated settlement. Some of the current land divisions may have their origins during this medieval period.

Post-medieval / Modern

- 4.2.11 The record of the post-medieval period highlights the expansion of the agricultural landscape and an increase in settlement across the area. On the opposite side of the road to the henge and standings stood Ystrad Wrallt mansion (PRN 20920), rebuilt in the early 19th century, and therefore an older site. A number of farmsteads are recorded close by, including Ffynnon Newydd (PRN 115305) to the southeast, and Tynyffordd (PRN 21126) to the northeast of the henge, and Llandeilo fach (PRN 115311) to the southeast of the barrow. Many of the field boundaries in the area have the semi-regular appearance of a later post-medieval establishment, one of which formerly traversed the site of the henge. A slight kink in the line, as recorded in the henge excavations of 1980 (Williams 1984), suggests the boundary followed the inner edge of the henge bank, indicating it was still at least partially visible at this time. In 1864 the railway was constructed through the valley, and a new station (PRN 16487) was built on the road junction, a short distance west of the barrow (CM328). The construction of the railway itself cut through the barrow remains, and it is from this episode that records of the cist burial within came. What would seem apparent from these records is that the prominence of the monuments within the post-medieval landscape was diminished, and they were no longer considered to be of particular significance.

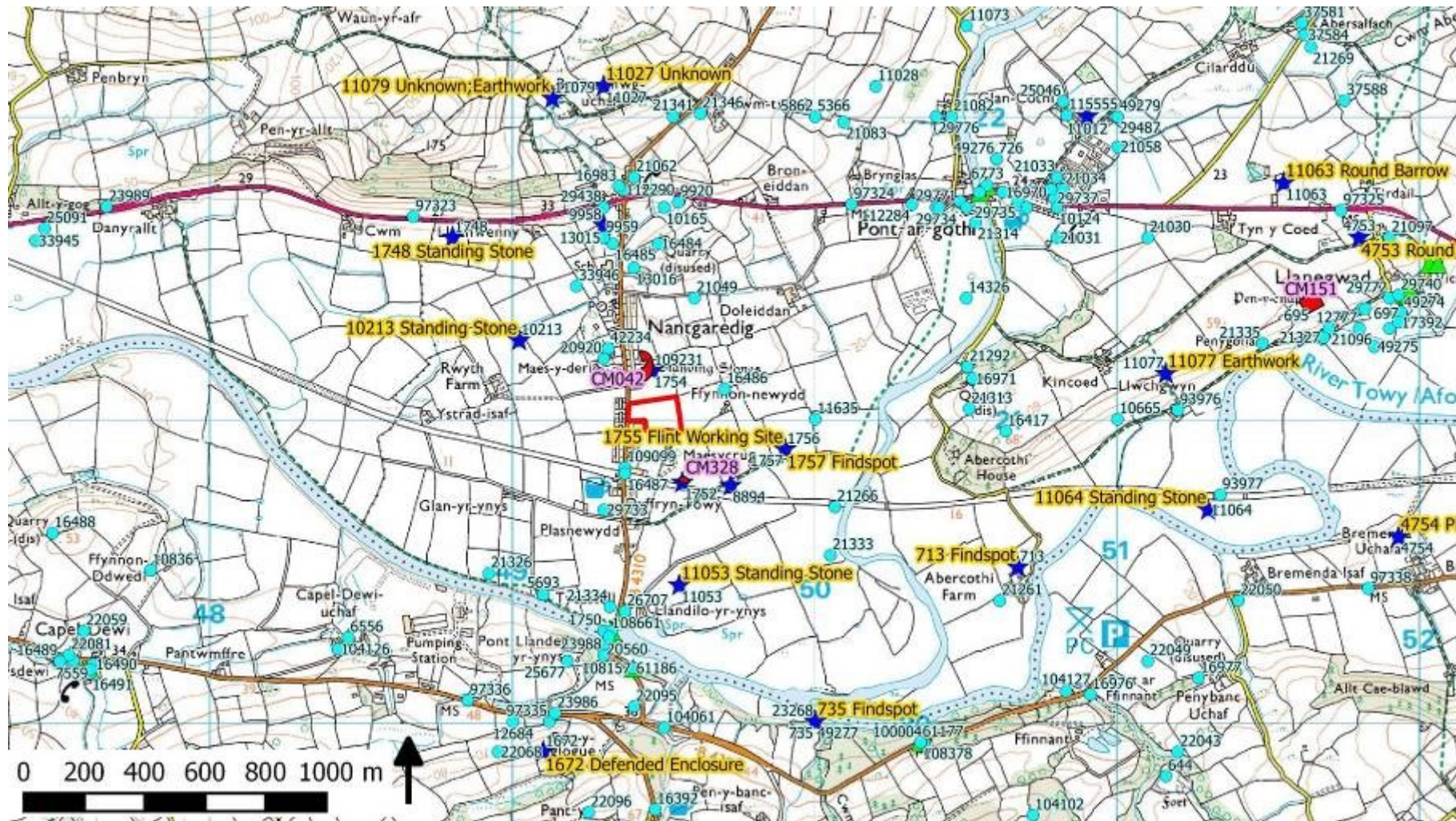


Figure 4: Sites recorded on the regional HER (blue dots) within 2.5km of the development site (in red). Prehistoric sites are shown as blue stars, with PRN and description highlighted in yellow.

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4.3 Geophysical Survey & Trial Trench Evaluation

- 4.3.1 As part of the current development proposals a geophysical survey was carried out across the proposed development site to investigate the archaeological potential of the site (Enright 2020). The survey identified a former field boundary and modern linear features, but also tentatively identified three possible circular or sub-circular features that, given the context of the surrounding archaeological landscape, may have represented further prehistoric burial mound enclosures (Figure 5 and 6).
- 4.3.2 The character and date of these potential features were then tested through intrusive archaeological evaluation (Jenkins 2021) and found to be the result of natural variations in the superficial geology or underlying bedrock and not archaeologically significant. This was unexpected as the archaeological potential of the development area was considered high but it may be noteworthy that the potential features were less distinct than prehistoric features identified during the geophysical survey at the Love Lodge Farm site near Llandeilo (Hourihan 2015).
- 4.3.3 Evidence for a former modern ditched field boundary running across the area was confirmed in the trial trench evaluation but it was considered to be of local importance only. The ditch is a continuation of a field boundary first recorded on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 25" map published in 1888.

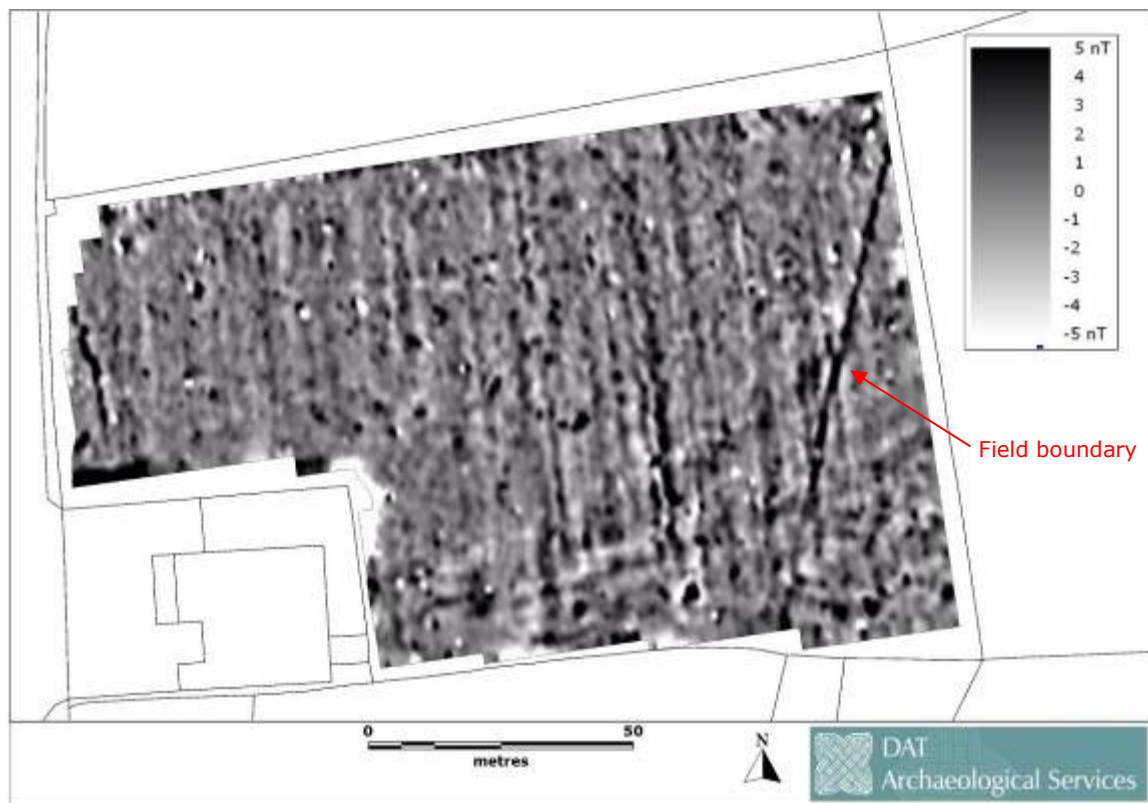


Figure 5: Geophysical survey results of the development area (Enright 2020).

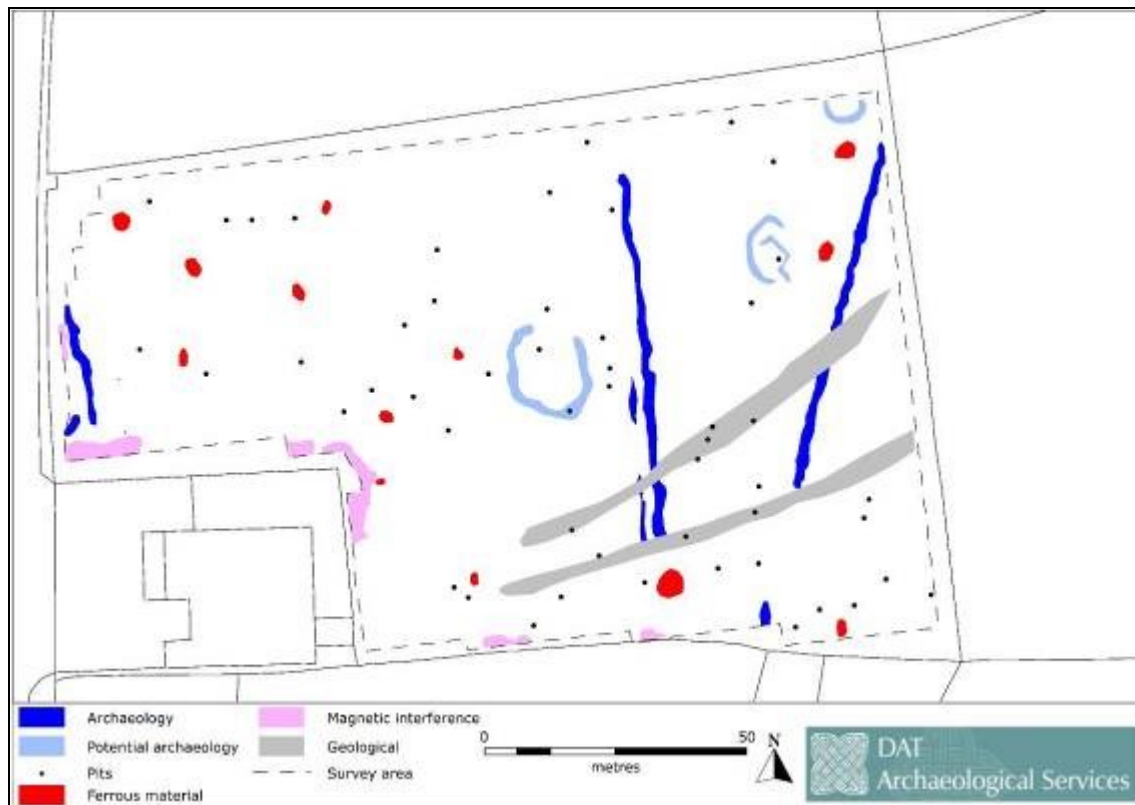


Figure 6: Interpretation of geophysical survey results (Enright 2020).

4.4 Map Regression

- 4.4.1 Some of the earliest maps of the area are the Ordnance Survey drawings of 1811-13. These maps depict an agricultural landscape of enclosed farmland, with many of the surrounding farmsteads and mansions established, along with the current routeways through the area. Neither the henge, standing stones nor barrows are depicted on the map.
- 4.4.2 The Llanegwad parish tithe map of 1841 shows the area in more detail, and demonstrates that the current field layout had been established by that point. The monuments are not marked or labelled on the map, and no field names are recorded around the site of the henge/standing stones and barrow to give a hint as to their presence. However, the square field to the south of the barrow (south of the public footpath) is recorded as 'Caecerig', roughly translated as stone (cerrig) field (cae). Given its situation on an alluvial plain it would seem unlikely to refer to stony ground, but may suggest the presence of a stone mound as might be found in association with a barrow, or to standing stones as are apparent at the henge site. As a settlement Nantgaredig was largely confined to the mansion of Ystradwrallt to the west, and a collection of dwellings around the junction of Station Road and the track to Doleiddan, formerly Ty'n y ffordd (which incidentally likely follows the line of the Roman road).
- 4.4.3 The first edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1888-9 is a more detailed record of the landscape and will often record sites of archaeological interest (Figure 7). There is no indication of the henge, although one of the standing stones associated with it is marked but as a single stone. The original line of the field boundary does change angle as it passes the stone, the subsequent study of the henge (Williams 1984) indicates that this boundary changed course to run around part of the

inner edge of the henge bank. By this time the railway had truncated the remains of the barrow, which is still not shown, but a new cottage constructed nearby has taken on the name 'Maes-y-crug', likely to be a reference to the presence of the barrow. There is no further indication of associated features in the surrounding landscape. The subsequent map of 1906 marks the two standing stones at the henge.

- 4.4.4 The 1972 1:2500 map now depicts the henge in detail, marking the earthwork remains in the field, and plotting the northern circuit up to the roadside. This increase in detail may be a consequence of the (presumably relatively recent) construction of housing along the east side of the road, truncating much of the western extent of the henge. The surviving portion within the field, which is now scheduled, is marked as a raised bank, with the upright stones standing adjacent to each other on the top of the bank. There is still no indication of the presence of the round barrow.

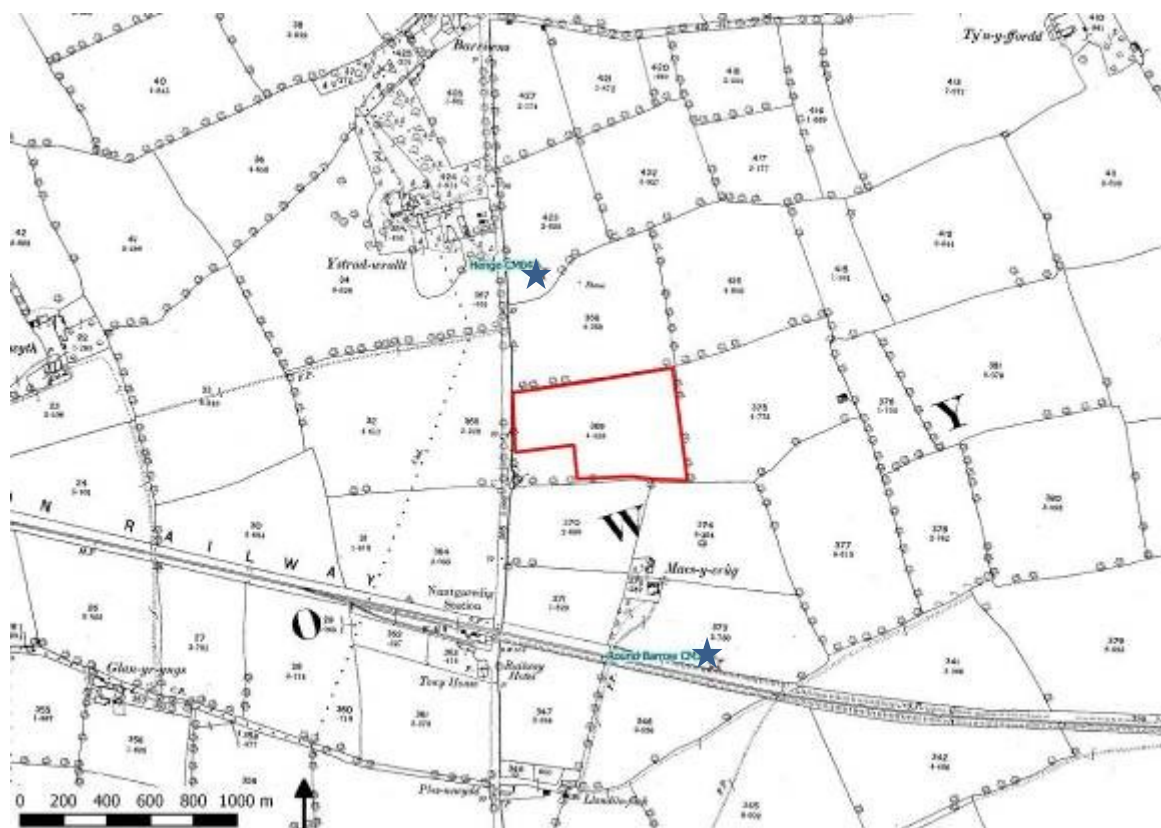


Figure 7: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1888-9, showing location of proposed development site (in red) and the two Scheduled Monuments (blue stars).

4.5 Aerial Photographs & Lidar

- 4.5.1 Historic and modern aerial photographs and satellite imagery has been examined. The remains of the henge monument are clearly visible, but no associated archaeological features in the immediate surrounds, or within the proposed development area, are visible (Photo 1).

- 4.5.2 Lidar data at 1m DTM has been examined (Figure 8). The earthwork remains of the henge are visible as a spread curving bank within the field,

extending partly into the rear gardens of properties fronting Station Road. No features are identified in the immediate area surrounding the monument, or within the proposed development area. The barrow is not as clearly defined on the lidar results, although it does suggest is lay on the edge of the gravel terrace, with ground dropping away to the southeast, the change in gradient now marked by a trackway. There is no indication of associated features in the area.



Photo 1: Oblique aerial photograph from 1989, facing south, showing the outline of the henge CM042, with the development area to the top of the picture. No features are visible within the development area. © DAT

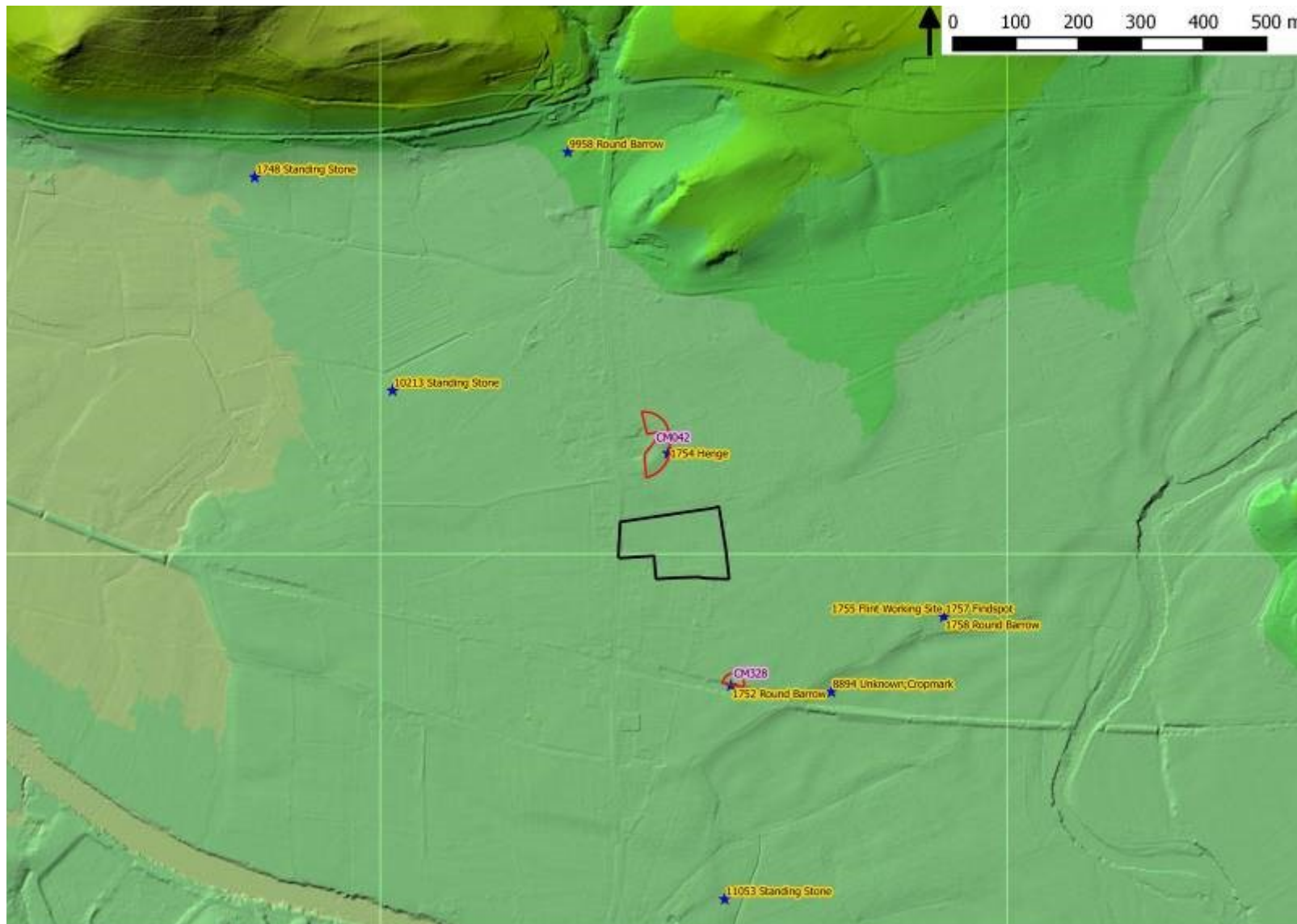


Figure 8: Lidar data at 1m DTM showing the general landform and earthwork features in the locality, overlaid with the location of the proposed development area, the Scheduled Monuments (outlined in red), and potential contemporary prehistoric features in the surrounding landscape. Contains Natural Resources Wales information © Natural Resources Wales and database right

4.6 Site Visit (Photos 2 – 16)

- 4.6.1 A site visit was carried on the 22nd October 2020; the weather was dry and sunny, after a period of prolonged rainfall.
- 4.6.2 The proposed development site comprises a level area of improved pasture (Photo 2). No discernible earthworks or visible archaeological remains at ground level have been identified in this area. The site is bounded by hedgerows. The west is bordered by Station Road, with modern development extending along it to the north and south, visible from the site, and ongoing development bordering the site to the southwest (Photos 3-5). The site is connected to fields to the east and north, including the field containing the henge monument (CM042). Further farmland lies to the south, but farmed separately with higher hedgerows. From ground level there are no clear views of either monument, although from raised (1st floor) level the henge monument and associated standing stones to the north will be visible from the eastern edge of the development area.
- 4.6.3 The henge monument (CM042) was visible as a low bank extending into a pasture field, with the two standing stones prominent within the field, a third lying recumbent to the northeast (Photos 6-9). The interior of the henge was at a lower level. The line of the henge has been lost to modern development along Station Road, with rear garden properties within the area of the henge.
- 4.6.4 The surviving low bank lay within a pasture field surrounded by hedgerows, the fields to the south and east were accessible from this field. No associated archaeological features other than those described were identified in the immediate vicinity of the henge. In terms of viewpoints, views west and north are interrupted by modern housing, with development along the eastern side of Station Road visible both to the north and south (Photos 10-12). The field hedgerows limit views at ground level, with no inter-visibility with the barrow (CM328) or other identified archaeological sites, or the river to the south or east, but higher ground along the northern edge of the river valley is still clearly visible, with high points at SN 4953 2157 approximately 350m to the north, and at SN 4868 2196 approximately 1km to the northwest particularly distinctive. Higher ground along the southern edge of the valley is also visible, but features are indistinct at this distance.
- 4.6.5 In terms of views into the henge (CM042) the standing stones are the most distinctive elements, but these are not visible from any publically accessible viewpoint in the surrounding landscape. The stones are also lower than the surrounding hedgerows and therefore are not visible at ground level from outside the field, and they are overshadowed and lost within the modern backdrop when viewed from the east.
- 4.6.6 The round barrow (CM328) was not fully accessible during the site visit, there is no direct access between the two sites, but it was viewed from the boundaries of the surrounding fields (Photos 13 and 14). A public footpath passes close to the south, but the site is not visible or accessible from it. The site itself is as described, but it is not a prominent feature in the landscape and is not a prominent landmark when viewed from the edge of the field. Surrounding hedgerows are high and well maintained. The field it lies in is one of improved pasture, part of a relatively small farmed area, backed by a mature hedgerow with the former railway track behind, now used as a secure storage yard. No associated archaeological features were identified in the immediate surrounding area. The house of Maes-y-crug is a prominent feature in the foreground, with mature tree growth to the north and south of it. In terms of views these are relatively limited. To the

west Maes-y-crug and mature trees are prominent, with modern residential development along Station Road visible behind. Views south are blocked by embanked ground and mature tree growth along the adjacent boundary. Views north are partially blocked by mature tree growth around Maes-y-crug (including views toward the henge), with hedgerows limiting views at ground level north and east (Photo 15). High ground to the north is still visible, although mainly just the higher point at SN 4868 2196. Higher ground on the south edge of the valley is also visible, although again it appears relatively indistinct. Ground levels drop slightly a short distance to the south, possibly indicating the edge of the gravel terrace (Photo 16).



Photo 2: *View east across the development area from the Station Road entrance.*



Photo 3: View southwest across the development area, showing modern development to the southwest, and continuing development along Station Road behind.



Photo 4: View north from the development area towards site CM042, not visible behind the hedgerow.



Photo 5: View south from the development area towards the site CM328, not visible behind the hedgerow, and behind the mature trees standing to the left.



Photo 6: View northwest from the field boundary separating the development area and field containing henge CM042. The henge and standing stones are difficult to discern in front of the backdrop of modern development.



Photo 7: View northwest towards henge monument and standing stones CM042. The henge is visible as a low bank just in front of the boundary to the rear, the stones lying just to the right of the white garage building to the centre.



Photo 8: View north from the standing stones at the henge entrance CM042, local high ground visible to the rear. 1m scale.



Photo 9: View northwest from the standing stones and henge entrance CM042, prominent high ground visible to the rear. 1m scale.



Photo 10: View east looking out of the entrance to the henge CM042.



Photo 11: View south from the standing stones and henge CM042 showing the current view of modern development along Station Road. Barrow site CM328 lies beyond the mature trees on the left. The proposed development will lie beyond the hedgerow across the middle of the shot.



Photo 12: View south showing the standing stones and henge CM042. The proposed development will lie beyond the hedgerow behind, from the gateway to the left, to the modern housing to the right.



Photo 13: View south towards barrow CM328, lying against the rear hedgerow, behind the mature trees and Maes-y-crug house on the right.



Photo 14: View west along the boundary and former railway line truncating barrow CM328, which lies on the right side of the mature trees.



Photo 15: View north from point a short distance to the east of the barrow CM328, looking towards standing stones and henge CM042 (not visible) with prominent high ground on the northern edge of the valley to the rear.



Photo 16: View southeast from point adjacent to barrow site CM328, showing the falling ground at the edge of the gravel terrace in the foreground, and the high ground on the south side of the valley to the rear.

4.7 Conclusion

- 4.7.1 Although it is not known how contemporary the henge monument (CM042) and the round barrow (CM328) are, to a large extent they will have a shared setting as part of a Bronze Age funerary and ritual landscape. Research suggests there may be a focus of this activity on the gravel terrace across the valley floor, a relatively extensive area that includes a number of similar potential Bronze Age sites, suggesting the interface between low-lying terrace and nearby floodplain and river is an important area of activity during this period (the Bronze Age). Due to the relative rarity of henge monuments in the area, it would appear reasonable to assume that the Ffynnon Newydd henge (CM042) would have been a focal point within this landscape.
- 4.7.2 Traditionally it has been thought that views to and from such Bronze Age monuments would have formed an important factor in their setting. However, given the low-lying nature of these monuments such viewpoints have proven difficult to establish. Inter-visibility between the monuments, both the scheduled sites and other recorded barrow and standing stone sites upon the gravel terrace, may have been factors, although this would rely on a landscape largely devoid of high vegetation or structures.
- 4.7.3 As henge monuments are traditionally thought to be earlier features than barrows, views from the henge to the barrows may not have been as important. The henge appears to have an entranceway marked by the standing stones, at approximately 110 degrees east, which may be linked to celestial events, such as the rising sun (currently aligning with sunrise in late October and mid-February). Excavations of a henge at Vaynor Farm 25km to the west suggest views from important rivers may have been a factor, but it would appear difficult to distinguish the site from the current river course to the south, and the gravel terrace would suggest the course is unlikely to have deviated significantly. Views of these monuments from higher ground may be a factor, although no specific viewpoints represented by similar monuments have been identified on the surrounding higher ground. The higher ground on the southern side of the valley lies approximately 1.5km distant, and views of the site from this direction would appear poor. Higher ground to the north is more prominent, with particularly distinctive high points at SN 4953 2157 (40mOD) approximately 350m to the north of the henge, and at SN 4868 2196 (175mOD) approximately 1km to the northwest of the henge. No contemporary archaeological features have been identified at either site, which were not accessible at the time of the visit. Station Road itself is thought to be a longstanding route, potentially in use during the early medieval period, with the possibility that its origins may be much older. Due to their proximity, views of the monuments from this route may also have been an important factor in its location.
- 4.7.4 The factors mentioned above however have clearly been altered through the subsequent development of the surrounding landscape, largely during the 19th and 20th centuries. By the post-medieval period the gravel terrace had become a rural agricultural landscape, with little indication that the monuments formed an important component of this landscape. Throughout the 20th century, Nantgaredig has developed as a settlement focused on Station Road, and many of the prehistoric monuments have either been lost or become subsumed into this landscape, as a result current modern development also forms a major part of the setting for both monuments. Both henge (CM042) and barrow (CM328) have been truncated by modern development that has fundamentally altered their setting, visibility and access. Modern residential development exists within

the bounds of the henge monument and forms a distinct backdrop to the existing remains. This residential development has largely blocked access to and limited view of and from the monument. Agricultural development in the surrounding landscape has further served to remove inter-visibility between surrounding monuments on the gravel terrace. The barrow has been truncated by a 19th-century railway, the railway itself since removed but remains as an area of hardstanding, with ground levels clearly indicating archaeological remains are unlikely to survive in the immediate area to the south of the barrow. High vegetation associated with the boundaries that surround the site also serve to ensure viewpoints no longer factor in its present setting, and there are no longer any visual links between the monuments or other identified contemporary features, and access to the site is also clearly limited. Physical links are also limited, it is difficult to move between monuments, and in the surrounding landscape standing stones have been removed, and barrows are either ploughed flat, or occupy partly developed (playground) areas. The modern development surrounding these monuments has diminished the ability to understand their place within their original setting.

4.7.5 The elements of the setting for the two monuments outlined above can be summarised as follows:

- Original setting – extensive Prehistoric landscape across the gravel terrace
- Original setting – henge monument as a focal point on the terrace
- Original setting – inter-visibility between monuments, views from barrows to henge perhaps more significant than vice versa
- Original setting – views from henge through the entrance to the ESE
- Original setting – views of monuments from high ground to the north
- Present setting – monuments denuded features within a post-medieval agricultural landscape
- Present setting – views and access blocked by agricultural boundaries
- Present setting – modern development along Station Road a prominent backdrop
- Present setting – modern truncation of monument remains

5 STAGE 3: EVALUATION OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF CHANGE/DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The proposed development comprises new residential development. The plans include 35 dwellings occupying the full extent of the development area, two-storeys in height, with dormer windows in plots 11, 15 and 16. Four dwellings will face Station Road, with access from the road to the remaining dwellings to the rear which will face an internal road. Existing boundaries to the field will be maintained. The proposed layout is illustrated in Figure 3.
- 5.2 The proposed development will introduce a new, relatively large, area of modern residential development into what had previously been a field of low pasture. There will be no direct impact upon the two monuments of CM042 and CM328, but development in this location is likely to impact upon the setting of both sites.
- 5.3 The development site lies on the gravel terrace that forms part of an extensive setting to both monuments, with the henge itself being a potential focal point. It is possible associated, but less well-defined, archaeological remains are spread throughout the extensive area, and any development in such an area has the potential to detrimentally impact upon potential archaeological remains and the part they play in the setting of these monuments. Potential features identified during geophysical survey were targeted during trial trench evaluation and found to be the result of natural variations in the superficial geology or underlying bedrock and not archaeologically significant. Therefore, there was no evidence that significant below ground archaeology survived within the proposed development area.
- 5.4 Views are likely to feature in the setting of both monuments. From henge (CM042) a view of the ESE may be of significance, this will remain unaffected, similarly views of prominent high ground to the north will also remain unaffected. Views from the henge of contemporary features may be of a lesser significance, including CM328. The proposed development will block views southward toward CM328, but views of this monument and any contemporary features are already compromised and will therefore remain unaltered. The proposed development will however expand the view of modern development in this direction along the width of the field to the south, partially replacing the current view of mixed development and agricultural land, broadening the sense of development in the area surrounding the monument.
- 5.5 Views of the henge monument CM042 are limited and have largely already been compromised by surrounding development and field boundaries. Views from the south will be affected, but as previously discussed the feature is likely to be indistinct from the river to the south and high ground beyond.
- 5.6 Views from the barrow CM328 toward the henge CM042 may have more setting significance. As mentioned, views from the south will be affected, however these views have already been compromised by Maes-y-crug house, surrounding trees and hedgerows, and new development will cause limited further change. The development will be less visually obtrusive from the barrow, and will more readily sit within the backdrop of modern development along Station Road, thereby having a reduced visual impact.
- 5.7 In terms of altering the current setting of Nantgaredig, which forms a prominent part of the backdrop to both monuments, the proposed development does continue the existing street frontage development typical of the settlement. The extension eastward from the street frontage

is somewhat more comprehensive than typically seen in Nantgaredig, but this form of infill development directly accessing Station Road can be seen almost opposite the site at Clos y Deri. The surrounding agricultural landscape remains relatively well-preserved. Lighting and noise from modern development will likely already affect the setting of henge (CM042), although it is possible this may increase with new development.

- 5.8 In summary the main potential negative impacts of the proposed development is considered to be:
- A detrimental impact on the views to and from the south of the henge CM042, and to a much more limited extent an impact on views from barrow (CM328) towards henge (CM042).
 - An increase in the sense of modern residential development surrounding henge CM042, and potential increase in noise and lighting.
- 5.9 Overall this is considered to be a slight to moderate negative impact upon the setting of henge monument CM042, and a negligible negative impact upon the setting of barrow CM328.

6 STAGE 4: MITIGATION OPTIONS

- 6.1 The potential for archaeological remains within the development area has been highlighted. Further intrusive archaeological mitigation in the form of trial trench evaluation was undertaken. The evaluation established that potential archaeological features identified by geophysical survey within the development area were likely to be the result of natural variations in the superficial geology or underlying bedrock. Apart for evidence for one former modern ditched field boundary running across the area, no features of archaeological significance were recorded during the trial trench evaluation. The lack of archaeological remains reduces the significance of the area in terms of its place in the contemporary associated landscape setting.
- 6.2 In terms of visual impacts the main impact is on the visibility from the henge monument (CM042) and the increasing sense of modern development in the area around the site. It is proposed within the design scheme to avoid the use of stark white render, using darker brick instead and a typical dark slate roofing, to reduce the visible impact on new modern development. A tree planting regime along the northern boundary is also proposed. Although the boundary is currently a maintained hedgerow, mature trees form the backdrop to the southern side of the development area when viewed from the henge monument, and therefore the intention is to extend this along the northern boundary to further soften the visual impact of new development. Care should be taken however that any planting regime does not simply serve to obstruct the view by other means, such as with a continuous boundary of tall and dense, or non-native, vegetation.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This report assesses the impact of the proposed development upon the site and setting of Scheduled Monument CM042 and CM328, which lie on either side of the proposed development area. This impact has been assessed using the guidance and methodology outlined in the 'Setting of Heritage Assets in Wales' (Cadw 2017), which outlines a four stage approach.
- 7.2 Stage 1 identified the historic assets. Through consultation with Cadw this study is primarily concerned with the site of Ffynnon Newydd standing stones (CM042) and Maes-y-crug round barrow (CM328). Ffynnon Newydd standing stones form part of a henge monument, part of the same scheduled monument, considered to be Bronze Age in date. The henge extends partly into a pasture field, approximately 55m to the north of the development site, with the western part of the henge lying under modern development. Maes-y-crug barrow forms the remains of a Bronze Age burial mound lying 160m to the south of the development site. The barrow extends into a pasture field; the southern half of the monument has been truncated by a former railway line.
- 7.3 Stage 2 defines and analyses the setting of the monuments. The main elements of the original setting include an extensive prehistoric landscape across the gravel terrace in the valley base, with the henge as a focal point. Inter-visibility between Bronze Age monuments in particular may have been significant, with particular views from the henge out of the entrance to the ESE, and to and from high ground along the northern edge of the valley. Views from the barrow toward the henge may also have been significant, and views from Station Road. These views have however been largely lost to subsequent development, the monuments becoming denuded features within a post-medieval agricultural landscape. Hedgerows and land divisions have blocked views of and access to and between these monuments. More recently modern development has truncated both monuments and form a prominent component of their current settings.
- 7.4 Stage 3 evaluates the potential impact of the proposed development. This development comprises plans for a new residential development of 35 units occupying a former pasture field of approximately 1.5 hectares, fronting Station Road to the west. This development had the potential to directly impact upon associated archaeological remains within the extensive gravel terrace landscape extending into the development area, but intrusive trial trench evaluation recorded no evidence for significant archaeological features or deposits within the area, even though this was initially suggested from geophysical survey. Therefore the proposed development will have a negligible adverse direct impact upon the known buried archaeological resource.
- 7.5 In terms of visual impacts the proposed development will affect views between the two monuments, and of the henge CM042 from the south, although these views have already been heavily compromised. Development is likely to increase a sense of modern development in the area around henge CM042, with an associated increase in noise and lighting. Overall this is considered to be a slight to moderate negative impact upon the setting of henge CM042, and a negligible negative impact upon the setting of barrow CM328. These impacts could be further reduced through mitigation measures.
- 7.5 Stage 4 suggests mitigation options associated with the proposed development. The potential for archaeological remains within the

development area has already been investigated and found to be negligible. Visual impacts could be addressed within the proposed design scheme, which serves to reduce the visibility of the development through the choice of building materials, and in extending an appropriate tree planting regime along the northern boundary.

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