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ARCHAEOLOGICAL ELEMENT OF MEITHRIN MYNYDD PROJECT.
REPORT ON YEAR 2 1996-1997.

Landscape Characterisation

Sample Survey

Assessment of Paleoenvironmental Potential of Peat Areas

Scheduled Ancient Monuments - Condition Reports

MEITHRIN MYNYDD



COMMON LAND MANAGEMENT IN UPLAND WALES

Dyfed Archaeological Trust & Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust
for Meithrin Mynydd Project - Brecon Beacons National Park.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Part 1 of the project was completed by April 1996. Having secured agreements on terms of use and access to all existing data sets, a process of collation and checking was carried out. The final data set was built up around the core of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments, Wales (RCAHMW)'s information supplied as both computer-based records and hard copy map overlays. About 350 of the 421 sites initially supplied were within the project area. This was significantly enhanced and extended to comprise 1046 sites. This total also includes the results of a search of other secondary sources to provide additional information on the post-medieval period, mainly for the sites of the principal extractive industries and traces of modern agricultural practices. DAT supervised the down-loading of the collated dataset into Meithrin Mynydd's own GIS-based system as point data. A total of 84 new sites were added from the Sample Survey areas.

On completion of this stage of the project, meetings were held with Meithrin Mynydd project officers and Park Archaeologist, P. Dorling, to decide upon sample survey locations and objectives. Two areas on the south side of the area were chosen where previous archaeological survey had been unsystematic or absent, and an area on the northern edges to, primarily, gather data on visitor and other adverse impacts on the archaeological resource. The boundaries of these areas were defined with reference to the provisional landscape characterisation exercise already completed - a desk-top exercise using the assembled data. Sixty one separate areas containing distinctive types of archaeological sites, loosely based on geomorphological subdivisions, were mapped and described. The descriptions are reproduced in this Report with a reduced copy of the boundaries map. This was produced as an overlay to the O.S. 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure Map 12 (Brecon Beacons Western Area). More work could usefully be done on refining the landscape characterisation methodology. The boundaries for such areas have not been considered to be sufficiently validated to be input onto the project's GIS database.

In addition, at the end of Year 1, a condition Report was compiled on all Scheduled Monuments within the project area, in order to gain some early idea of the range of pressures to which archaeological sites might be subject. This too is reproduced in the Report. The final year's work for the archaeological element will consist of preparing management prescriptions for archaeological sites and areas and Recommendations for future work. The assembly of a selection of colour slides of sites visited is nearing completion and will cover representative site types across the project area and slides of particular problems and pressures affecting the archaeological resource. DAT expects to participate in further project seminars and to help and advise, if required, on the collection and synthesis of cultural heritage and historic data, and be prepared to produce an academic summary, when format and location has been decided upon.

(See Appendix 1 for copy of the initial Brief and Sample Survey section for a specifications for the sample survey itself).

MEITHRIN MYNYDD
LANDSCAPE
CHARACTERISATION

SLOPES OF MYNYDD MYDDFAI

PANT MEDDYGON

FEDW FAWR 47

BRYN PŴLLYGERWN

AFON CLYDACH VALLEY

AROSFA GARREG LWYD

AFON LLECHACH VALLEY

USK VALLEY TRIBUTARY STREAMS

AFON MIHARTACH;
NANT YR YSGWYDD

BREST Y RHOS

SAWDDE FECHAN

CULAN

WAUN LWYD

CEFN TRUMAN
CEFN CYLCHAU

AFON CLYDACH

BLAEV Y CYLCHAU

ROUTE

GARREG LAS

LYN Y FAN PICWSDU

41 BANNHU SIRGAR

CENTRAL UPLANDS

LYN Y FAN FACH

FAN HIR

FFORDD CYNHEBRWIG

54 CWM HAFES

YR PALLEG

61 SLOPES NE OF CWM TWIRCH UCHAF

59 CRIBARTH

AFON AMMAN
TWIN Y MOCH

NANT LYNNFELL

FOEL DEG

QUARTER BACH / FOEL DEG FFORCHAMAN

SE PACING SLOPES OF FOEL DEG - ARSDOL

8 BELOW DRYSCOL GANG FAWR

BERKH

MYNYDD ISAF

BANG CRUCORFOD

MYNYDD ISAF QUARRIES

NANT GWYTHINC

TAIR CARN UCHAF
TAIR CARN ISAF
DRYSCOL AND FOEL DEG ARBEDOL

THE BOHN ROAD

LLYN Y FIGMEN FELLEN

CWAR PENRHU WEN

20 NANT GWA

11 NANT MELYN

UPPER PEDOL

7 BANG WERNWEAN

PANT NANT FFORCHOG

GARREG LAS

BANG WERNWEAN

BLAENCOWEN

13 CWM LLWYD

CLOGAN / RHYN IDU

13 BREST RHUW IDU

13 WAUN LWYD

22 CEULAN

13 SAWDDE FECHAN

36 BREST Y RHOS

38 CARREG YR OGOF

39 GARREG LAS

51 CENTRAL UPLANDS

53 YR PALLEG

54 CWM HAFES

55 CRIBARTH

61 SLOPES NE OF CWM TWIRCH UCHAF

59 CRIBARTH

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27a TURBARY?

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LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION

LIST & SHORT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS

1. MYNYDD ISAF QUARRIES

Small industrial area, former 20th C roadstone/silica quarries

2. MYNYDD ISAF/BANC CRUCORFOD

Rounded hill top and hill slopes with narrow stream valleys draining to N. & S. on poor soil (boulder clay over coal measures) with thinly distributed traces of human activity. Single summit cairn (Banc Crucorod). Other principal features are cross mountain tracks, two in use as minor roads tending to converge at 'mountain gate', farm locations on boundaries of open and enclosed land - principal access/exit points to areas of rough grazing. (Formerly a larger area of commons - reduced on w. side by 19th C. enclosure outside MM area.)

3. NANT GWYTHWCH

Fairly wide, shallowly-incised stream valley, not the norm, because of direction of drainage? Two widely separated locations of ? prehistoric occupation: hut circles, platform & assoc. enclosure.

4. TAIR CARN UCHAF & ISAF, DRYSGOL & FOEL DEG ARBEDOL

Large central upland area of summit ridges and high slopes across the watershed between the N. & S. sides of the Black Mountain. Prominently sited, major concentration of Bronze Age summit cairns, some in groups, on summits or along ridges. Bleak scree slopes & swallow holes at SW end (Pyllau' Fai). Sparse archaeological traces, those visible mainly 19th/ 20th C Survey/Sporting.

5. BERACH

Small, deeply-incised stream valley rising within area 4 above, & descending southwards to Amman valley, with two, isolated longhouses (different in character therefore to 8,9,10). Hafotai beyond edge of enclosed land & holdings in lower Cwm Berach?

6. GARREG LAS/ PART BANC WERNWGAN

Small industrial area, whole relict landscape of mineral extraction & processing - limestone quarrying and burning, densely concentrated, but probably operated on an 'agricultural scale' by and for farmers as fertilizer for their fields - *floruit* 1700-1850 - area contains small enclosures & house sites contemporary with operating period of quarries & kilns.

7. BANC WERNWGAN/PANT NANT FFORCHOG/PENTIR BLAENCENNEN

North-west facing slopes and plateaux on limestone bedrock, with numerous swallowholes, with areas of peat. Degraded soil conditions because there are traces of a prehistoric ?rectilinear field system, surviving as stone wall lines which are sealed below peat over the lower slopes. Boundaries extend up into scree slopes.

8. BELOW DRYSGOL/GRAIG FAWR

South and south-east facing slopes with localized concentrations of ? prehistoric occupation (numerous cairns, a few hut circles) and ? medieval (longhouses) in Graig Fawr area.

9. UPPER PEDOL

Small upper stream valley area, deeply incised, with relict settlement/field boundaries at southern end and beyond into the Pedol valley outside the Park boundary & to be understood with reference to those areas.

10. THE BRYN ROAD

Route corridor - cross mountain route. Unusual survival of early, turnpike road, superseded by A4069 to the east.

11. SE FACING SLOPES OF FOEL DEG-ARBEDOL

Scattered small clusters of sites of different types and periods - enclosures/longhouses, down to the edges of enclosed land at Nant Gwineu (and to be understood in relation to them). In early Middle Ages on /above tree line of the Pedol Forest ?

12. BREST CWM LWYD/CLOGAU/ RHIW DDU

Industrial area, whole relict industrial landscape of limestone quarrying and burning on north facing slopes of narrow limestone band across n. side of Black Mountain; small scale quarrying of crags and outcrops, with adjacent kilns - palimpsest of kilns and access trackways for carts; focus of agricultural demand for lime from a wide area of Carmarthenshire and beyond, *floruit* ? 18th, first half 19th century. Similar to 6.

13. BREST RHIW DDU/FOEL NANT DWFN/WAUN LWYD.

N. facing slopes, poor soils (underlying Old Red Sandstone solid geology) below limestone crags, incised by many small northward-flowing streams. principal historic landscape components are the criss-crossing access/exit trackways for the lime carts to the lime kilns, also some now abandoned 'intakes' on the edge of the open moorland. The northern boundary 'mountain ditch' is an important historic landscape feature in its own right - 16th century in date ?

14. A4069 - MODERN ROAD

Route corridor; principal cross mountain route between the Tywi and Amman valleys; a successful turnpike road in origin, allowing ready access to quarries along its length across the uplands geology (i.e 15, 16, 17, & 18)

15. FOEL FAWR QUARRIES

Industrial area, mineral extraction. large limestone quarries and banks of kilns, industrial scale, operational until ?1950s.

16. CWAR PENRHIW WEN

Industrial area; mineral extraction. roadstone, late 19th/20th C. increasing with pace of industrialization of the Amman valley.

17. LLYN Y FIGNEN FELEN

Turbary. Extensive area of peat, cut on a large scale in first half of 20th C and ? earlier. Latest use as industrial fuel in manufacture of town gas supplies in Amman Valley. still current IDO area ?

18. SLOPES BELOW GARREG FRAITH/CRAIG DERLWYN.

Industrial area, mineral extraction. Two locations of quarries, exploited until 1950's/1960's, for rodstone - dependent on A4069 for access.

19. NANT MELYN

Small, steep-sided stream valley with a scatter of longhouses, medieval?

20. NANT GARW

Major stream valley with four separate clusters of longhouses and associated features, with similar structures and part enclosure boundaries extending onto level areas on valley sides to the east. An important concentration of these distinctive Black Mountain site types ? medieval.

21. AFON CLYDACH

Major stream valley (like 20) with clusters of longhouses at two locations and on sides or perched above sides of tributary streams; ? medieval. Some structures destroyed by A4069 cross mountain road, an access also explaining valley floor sheep fold and edge of mountain,

small holdings (Tro Tyr yr Gat).

22. CEULAN

Small, steeply incised stream valley, draining northwards from below Cefn Truman; two locations for isolated/small cluster of longhouses ? medieval.

23. CEFN TRUMAN/CEFN CYLCHAU.

High rounded hills, devoid of archaeological traces, save for 'contour' tracks across slopes

24. BLAEN Y CYLCHAU

Small settlement; cluster of ruined longhouses, more substantial than other valley clusters; probably limequarrymen/limeburners seasonal dwellings? relates to centre part of 35.

25. SAWDDE FECHAN

Major stream valley, slopes incised by many small tributary streams. Median number of longhouses, concentrated in upper reaches. ? overlain by/? contemporary with another cross mountain route corridor (26).

26. CROSS MOUNTAIN TRACK.

Route corridor; track along flanks of the Afon Sawdde, over the central mountain watershed and descending along the flanks of the Afon Twrch. Origins probably predate 35, unknown relationship to 25; gives access to central mountain sheepfold..

27. GARREG LWYD - FOEL GORNACH - FOEL FRAITH

Large central bloc of mountain summits, ridges and steep upper slopes, continuation eastwards of area 22; sparse archaeological traces - Bronze Age summit cairns, but not on all summits, contains 27a.

27a. TURBARY?

area of peat between Garreg llwyd & Foel Fraith, probable traces of peat cutting, ? date.

28, 30 & 31 SOUTH FACING SLOPES ABOVE AMMAN VALLEY BETWEEN NANT GARW & NANT FYDD

Settlement or cultivation areas, small clusters of possibly prehistoric sites (clearance cairns and possibly related enclosures, some building traces) on gradual slopes below Garreg Lwyd between the deeply incised S. flowing tributary streams of the Afon Amman.

29. TWRCH VALLEY

Major river valley, source in northern half of Black Mountain area flowing SW. Marks an administrative and territorial boundary of at least early medieval origins. At its southern end settlement and enclosure extends up into the open moorland, some now abandoned, but sparse traces further up the stream. Significant that there are no longhouses ? Valley floor sheepfold, and inland sheepfold at cross-mountain track fording points.

32. NANT FYDD.

Small stream valley, with scatter of longhouses, ? medieval.

33. AFON AMMAN/ TWYN Y MOCH

Upper reaches of river valley in the open moorland; concentrations of longhouses, ? medieval. Also valley & Twyn y Moch slopes to the south east locations for sheepfolds and post-med enclosure & farmstead (now abandoned).

34. NANT LLYNFELL.

Small, deeply incised stream valley with some isolated longhouses; at s. end on edge of open moor, traces of small enclosures & principal holding of Ddol Gam outside park boundary.

35. CEFN CARN FADOG/ ABOVE HENLLYS VALE LIMEKILNS & COLLIERY.

Carn Fadog - single summit cairn; principally an industrial area containing relict industrial

landscape components of mineral extraction & transport system. Three principal quarry locations for limestone, northernmost in central area of mountain, supplying large kilns at Henllys Vale by means of well-preserved linking tramways and incline. 19th C.

36. BREST Y RHOS/BREST Y FEDW.

NW facing slopes incised by the rises and course of numerous N. flowing streams, tributary to the Sawdde below, bounded to the N. by the 'mountain ditch' boundary between enclosed and open land. Sparse archaeological traces, including a small settlement; sheepfold at principal access/exit point.

37. PART VALLEY OF THE AFON CLYDACH

Steep eastern side of the Clydach valley, contour line tracks along sides.

38. CARREG YR OGOF

Industrial area, containing relict industrial landscape components for limestone quarrying and burning. Characterised by numerous small quarry faces with adjacent kilns and complex of access tracks for carts - "agricultural scale" operations - ?18th/first half 19th C floruit.

39 GARREG LAS.

Mountain top long ridges; two summit cairns at n. end, BA ritual/burial otherwise natural crags.

40. AFON SYCHLWCH; NANT COCH.

Valley floor and sides; 20th century water engineering constructions and road overlying and partly obliterating sheepfold and scattered longhouse sites

41. BANNAU SIR GAR; LLYN Y FAN

Summit crags and steep slopes, dramatic glaciated scenery, lakes in corries. Some traces of prehistoric ritual sites; important folkloric locations.

42. AFON MIHARTACH; NANT YR YSGWYDD

Steeply incised north flowing streams, valley floor and valley side sites - small clusters of longhouses.

43. AFON LLECHACH.

River valley, broad in vicinity of Roman Marching Camp of Arosfa Garreg, with historic fording points. Further S, together with tributary streams of Nant Ty Bach and Dunant, a small cluster and isolated (?later) longhouse sites.

44. SLOPES BELOW CARMARTHENSHIRE & BRECONSHIRE VANS.

Large area of upland, source of both the Afon Usk (N. draining) and Afon Tawe east draining) numerous tributary streams. Contains a scattered but significant distribution of Bronze Age ritual and funerary monuments - cairns, stone circles across the watershed areas. Bisected by an administrative & territorial boundary (Afon Usk) of at least medieval origin. Locally dense distributions of valley-floor & valley-side sited longhouses. Also localized evidence of modern drainage and grazing improvement, ploughing and sheepfolds. Place-name and historic evidence of former cattle grazing régimes.

45. MYNYDD Y LAN, AROSFA GARREG ROMAN MARCHING CAMP.

Route corridor between the Tywi and Usk valleys in alternating use with 48 across Mynydd Trecastell. Possibly in Roman use (as site of v. large marching camp suggests) and certainly early medieval.

46. AFON USK & TRIBUTARY STREAMS ABOVE THE USK RESERVOIR.

Major river marking an ancient (and modern) administrative and territorial boundary of at least medieval origin. Moderate numbers of isolated and small clusters of longhouses.

47. PANT MEDDYGON, FEDW FAWR, BRYN PWLLYGERWN

A truncated area of undulating hills whose lower slopes and valley side to the north east are outside the BBNP, under afforestation and drowned by the Usk reservoir - formerly open common land beyond small valley farm field boundaries - their sheep walks or cattle grazing land. Extensive traces of post war drainage and ploughing to improve pasture. Sparse prehistoric ritual and funerary monuments - cairns; standing stones now within forestry.

48. MYNYDD BACH TRECASTELL

Route corridor: Roman - 18th century road from Usk to Tywi valleys, alternating use with 45. Marked physical traces of pre-turnpike roads. Dense Roman military sites and also prehistoric ritual and funerary sites.

49. MYNYDD MYDDFAI

Long narrow hilltop ridge with tile stone quarries along its entire length; crossed by tracks via fording point to farms now below forestry & Usk reservoir. Fairly dense distribution of prehistoric summit and hill slope cairns.

50. SLOPES OF MYNYDD MYDDFAI/MYNYDD TRECASTELL.

N.W facing slopes, modern and post medieval use as *fridd*, sheepwalks and cattle grazing common land of dispersed farms in Myddfai parish. Substantial mountain ditch (?late medieval or 16th century in date) firmly demarcates boundary between enclosed and open land.

51. CENTRAL UPLANDS - BREST TWRCH, CARNAU GWYS , FLANKS OF GARREG LAS.

High interior area across watersheds, spring & river rises and areas of bog; some cross tracks, but only (52) separately distinguished. Sparse traces of human landuse, let alone settlement, even seasonal. Isolated sheepfolds and place name evidence indicate post-med use as sheep walks and (at an earlier period) for cattle grazing. No real divide other than geology and landforms with area 53 to the south.

52. ROUTE CORRIDOR - TAW VALLEY ACROSS TO SAWDDE VALLEY

Cross mountain route - survives as track, popularly called *Efordd Cynhebrwng* - for foot and pack animals only, numerous fords necessary.

53. "Y PALLEG" - UPLAND BETWEEN TWRCH & HAFFES VALLEYS, DORWEN AR GIEDD.

Large area incised on its southern side above the Tawe valley with deep river valleys and areas of heavy industrial use. Extensive limestone scenery of crags and swallow holes. Virtually blank of archaeological sites or features of any period, but sample survey shows that this may simply reflect the lack of archaeological field work.

54. CWM HAFFES

part of a discrete area only since the lower valley with ?older enclosed settlements is outside the Park. Clusters of loghouses and associated enclosures, building platforms and cairns (?clearance cairns). Note that SE part of large central area 51 is called *Waun Haffes* demarcated by parish boundary along the Haffes, indicating possession and use of unenclosed upland grazing.

55. CRIBARTH

Major industrial area, whole relict industrial landscape. Mineral extraction, principally limestone, also rotten stone and silica sand with associated transport system of tramways, railways, inclines to and from quarries, and some on site working kilns. principally a source area of raw materials. 19th C.

Subject of in-depth study by S. Hughes in *The Brecon Forest Tramways..*

56, 57, 58 & 59 - GWYS FACH & FAWR, AFON GIEDD & NANT CEILIOG

Narrow stream valleys, only in 56 known evidence of former settlement, longhouses etc. Need to be checked to see whether they differ from similar s'ward flowing streams further west draining into the Afon Amman.

60. QUARTER BACH, FOEL DEG, FFORCHAMMAN

South facing slopes and plateaux between Garreg Lwyd and lower stream valleys and sheepwalks and areas 28,30, 31 & 32. Largely devoid of archaeological traces.

61. SLOPES NORTH-EAST OF CWM-TWRCH UCHAF

ffridd, rough pasture sheepwalks for farms to south, criss-crossed by tracks and sheepfolds/dips.

SAMPLE SURVEY

SPECIFICATIONS FOR SAMPLE SURVEY METHODOLOGY

ref: letter from P. Dorling PAC492/pjd/9625.

AREA 1.

10 team days - Quarter Bach/Foel Deg, landscape areas 60,28,30,31,32.

The area between, but not including, Nant Garw (20) and Afon Aman and below the 400 m. contour. This will fulfil objectives 1 & 2, testing the identified landscape types and the potential for new site types in previously blank areas.

AREA 2

5 team days - Gwys Fawr and Afon Giedd river valleys and the interfluvial ridge, Cefn Mawr, to the 400 m. contour.

Landscape areas 57,58, part 53.

This will fulfil objective no. 2, testing the potential for new sites in areas with no known archaeology.

AREA 3

5 team days - Brest Cwm Lwyd and Brest Rhiw Ddu, areas 12 & 13.

This will fulfil objectives 4 & 5 in surveying areas of high threat from common fringe access and recreational use and surveying specific site types (limeburning features) for detailed management recommendations.

Levels of recording should be similar to RCAHMW upland survey recording. Records should include: Location (GPS), Site Type, Form and very brief description but should not include sketch plans. The objectives can be achieved with minimal recording and recommendations for future work including more detailed recording can form a part of the final management recommendations.

The days allocated will include briefing of field teams and in-putting of the results into the project data-base. The times allocated to each area should be adhered to.

See Landscape Characterisation Map (Fig. 1) for location of sample survey areas.

REPORTS ON SAMPLE SURVEY AREAS

Area 1. Quarter Bach/Foel Deg; landscape areas 60,28,30,31 & 32.

Staff & logistics.

Field staff: K. Murphy & I.D. Darke (DAT), R. Hankinson (CPAT)

An initial induction day was held in DAT offices with an afternoon site visit, led by H. James. The area was walked in regular east-west transects by two fieldworkers, 50 m. apart. This distance was considered sufficient for the generally open and level terrain of these slopes and plateaux. Sites and features located were checked by both field workers and their position fixed by taking a series of GPS readings using DAT's Garmin 45. The area was covered in 8 days, including record creation and database in-putting.

The new site data was entered directly onto both Trusts' SMR databases and plotted onto Record Maps. It has since been in-put onto the Meithrin Mynydd database in the agreed forms compatible with the previously-input, collated archaeological data set.

Geology, soils, relief and drainage

The area measured some 3 kms from east to west and 1.5-2 kms from North to south - some 6 sq. kms in all. Below the crags of Garreg Lwyd to the north, the land consists of south-facing slopes and a wide plateau, incised by south-south west draining streams, all tributary to the Afon Aman across the valley below. The soils of the area are slowly permeable; a peaty surface horizon overlaying fine loamy soils. These are underlain by Millstone Grit bedrock.

Archaeological content prior to field survey.

The valley floor and valley sides of Nant Garw on the western boundary of the sample survey area contain numerous 'longhouses', recently surveyed and studied by Ward, 1983 & 1995. The smaller and narrower Nant Fydd valley to the east has a more dispersed and smaller complement of similar sites. Between the major valleys demarcating the eastern and western boundaries of the study area are three small concentrations of clearance cairns, with possible associated hut circles and enclosure banks. Also recorded are sites of post-medieval industrial activities, mainly quarries.

Archaeological Content following rapid field survey.

Summary.

A total of 42 new sites and features were recorded during the survey. These are summarily listed in the appended Gazetteer. These new records have now been added to the Meithrin Mynydd project's GIS database. Field survey, in conjunction with the project's vegetation mapping, strongly suggests that these south facing upper slopes of the Amman valley contain a buried landscape, masked by the extensive blanket bog cover, especially dense over the lower part of the present open moorland. (see following report on peat areas for evaluation).

Bronze Age. c.2000 - 800 BC.

Although recorded as being of unknown date, the clusters of clearance cairns, boundaries, enclosures, possible and definite buildings in areas 28,30 and 31, are probably prehistoric and if pre-dating the onset of blanket bog, Bronze Age. Additional sites recorded on the fringes of these concentrations, such as clearance cairns 33391 & 2, suggest a more extensive buried archaeological landscape, possibly with traces of cultivation.

Medieval. 500 - 1500 AD.

The longhouses of the Afon Garw and Nant Fydd valleys are assumed to be of medieval date. In his most recent study of the Nant Garw group, Ward considers most of them to be "satellite outstations", *hafodydd* or *lluestydd* from which upland summer grazing was exploited (Ward 1995). Although morphologically similar, there are two distinct groups of these structures over

the Black Mountain - concentrations in river valleys, and more isolated sites, or a scatter in a minor valley. This might reflect a difference in the period of usage - the more scattered structures being used in early modern times perhaps. It was not within the survey brief to search the valley sides again, but only to check the eastern edges of the Garw and the environs of the Nant Fydd; only one possible new longhouse was found (33408) and this suggests that the total numbers and locations of these structures have now been reasonably established.

Post-Medieval. 1500 -

Sites and features from c. the later 17th, 18th, 19th and indeed 20th centuries over this area, as in other parts of the Black Mountain fall into three main functional groups:

evidence for upland grazing management and improvement of pastures (sheepfolds, drainage works), also use for fuel (turbaries). In this survey area 'field system' - perhaps for stock control - 33382, also enclosure bank 33423; drain 33387.

industrial - primarily quarrying - in this survey area mainly for silica rock and general roadstone later 19th century in date on any scale. But note isolated limekiln 33429. Also works associated with water supply to Amman valley industrial operations and early Water Board works. Quarries 33417, 33418, 33419, leats 33424 & 33425 also roads and tracks.

military and leisure - grouped only because the physical traces are often similar. In the survey area the shooting butt recorded (33431) was the sole example. In other areas of the Black Mountain, there are traces of WWII army training activities.

References.

Ward, A. H. 1983. 'An Archaeological Field Survey of part of the Black Mountain in South-East Dyfed: A Contribution to the Interpretation of Economy and Settlement in the Region from Prehistory to the early modern period'. Ph.D. Nottingham.

Ward, A.H. 1995. 'An Incipient Upland farmstead at Tro'r Derlwyn?' *Carms. Antiq.* XXXI, 17-33.

List of new sites in Area 1 : DAT prn, site type, NGR & period.

33382	0	SN73201655	Field System	Post Med
33383	0	SN73151648	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33384	0	SN73171642	Drainage Ditch	Post Med
33385	0	SN73011757	Track	Post Med
33386	0	SN72851746	Enclosure	Unknown
33387	0	SN73161638	Drain	Modern
33388	0	SN75211619	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33389	0	SN75361545	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33390	0	SN75261483	Clearance	Unknown
33391	0	SN75141492	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33392	0	SN74971549	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33393	0	SN73171604	Shelter	Unknown
33394	0	SN72501655	Shelter?	Unknown
33395	0	SN72991610	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33396	0	SN72951597	Shelter	Unknown
33397	0	SN73441585	Shelter	Unknown
33398	0	SN73471505	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33399	0	SN74241547	Clearance	Unknown
33400	0	SN74091543	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33401	0	SN74071535	Shelter	Unknown
33402	0	SN74181511	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33403	0	SN74161490	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33404	0	SN73871489	Shelter	Unknown
33405	0	SN74011463	Shelter	Unknown
33406	0	SN74191461	Quarry	Post Med
33407	0	SN73811436	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33408	0	SN73691430	Long Hut ?	Unknown
33409	0	SN73601437	Shelter	Unknown
33410	0	SN73511431	Field Wall	Unknown
33411	0	SN73661549	Shelter?	Unknown
33412	0	SN72701579	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
33413	0	SN72611583	Bridge	Unknown
33414	0	SN73031410	Wall	Post Med
33415	0	SN73101409	Machine base	Modern
33416	0	SN73021477	Hut?	Unknown
33417	0	SN72551538	Quarry	Post Med
33418	0	SN72541489	Quarry	Post Med
33419	0	SN72611438	Quarry	Post Med
33420	0	SN72621440	Ditch	Post Med
33421	0	SN72641437	Enclosure bank	Post Med
33422	0	SN72691441	Clearance Cairn	Post Med
33423	0	SN73021404	Enclosure bank?	Post Med
33424	0	SN72311979	Leat	Post Med
33425	0	SN71881968	Leat	Post Med
33426	0	SN72381941	Track	Post Med
33428	0	SN71921942	Track	Post Med
33429	0	SN72591983	Limekiln	Post Med
33430	0	SN71801976	Track	Post Med
25539	0	SN70891977	Field System	Post Med
33431	0	SN72381890	Shooting butt?	Post Med
33432	0	SN72341890	Quarry	Post Med
33433	0	SN71051906	Quarry	Post Med
33434	0	SN70811919	Road	Post Med
33435	0	SN70761930	Track	Post Med

*Area 2: Gwys Fawr & Afon Giedd valleys & Cefn Mawr ridge between.
Landscape areas 57, 58, part 53.*

Staff and Logistics.

This area was less easy of access than Area 1 and the two days saved on the projected timing of Area 1 were necessary to add to the 5 allocated for Area 2 in order to complete the field survey. Survey was also hampered by poor weather conditions. Cefn Mawr was examined by means of east-west transects, 50 m. apart. In the river valleys parallel transects were walked to a distance of 100-150 m. from the centre of the watercourses. Two fieldworkers, I. Darke (DAT) and R. Hankinson (CPAT) carried out the survey. Position fixing was again by GPS.

Geology, soils, relief and drainage.

The area measured some 3Km by 1 km - 3 sq. km. in all, about 50% of Area 1. The valleys of both south-south west draining streams of the Gwys Fawr and Afon Giedd are narrow and steep sided; they descend some 150 m. across the sample area. The ridge between (Cefn Mawr) has a rounded profile. The soils of the area are slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged, fine loamy and fine loamey over clayey upland soils with a peaty surface horizon. These soils are underlain by Millstone Grit rocks of the Carboniferous period.

Archaeological Content prior to field survey.

Unlike Area 1, this area had no previously recorded sites within it.

Archaeological content following Field Survey.

Summary.

Though sparsely distributed, the survey recorded 30 new sites, which indicate multi-period occupation and landuse (seemingly exclusively pastoral). It demonstrates the potential for further survey of the environs.

Bronze Age c. 2000 - 800 BC.

A total of 6 sites which are most likely to date to this period were recorded. Three probable hut circles (prns 34907, 34922 and 34923) were discovered in the Gwys Fawr valley suggesting that it was a focus for occupation, while on Cefn Mawr two burial sites (PRNs 34902 and 34917) were recorded.

In addition to the above, a low, irregular, wall (PRN 34920), which is intermittently covered by subsequent peat growth, was also recorded on Cefn Mawr. It appears to be prehistoric and may well be contemporary with the sites noted above, suggesting some form of agricultural activity related to the adjoining area of occupation. Perhaps also of relevance to this potential agricultural activity, although as yet undated, are a number of clearance cairns (eg prn 34903).

Medieval 500-1500 AD.

Five sites are thought to date to this period. These include two longhouse/longhut sites, two huts, and possibly a sheepfold. This combination of sites suggests that the area was occupied and used for pastoral agriculture. It seems most likely that the occupation was seasonal and used the "hafod" system of summer upland grazing.

Post-Medieval 1500 - AD.

A total of 12 sites, including shelters, walls and sheepfolds, are thought to belong to this period. They demonstrate that the river valleys were being used for pastoral agriculture and it is possible that this represents a continuation of seasonal occupation from the medieval period.

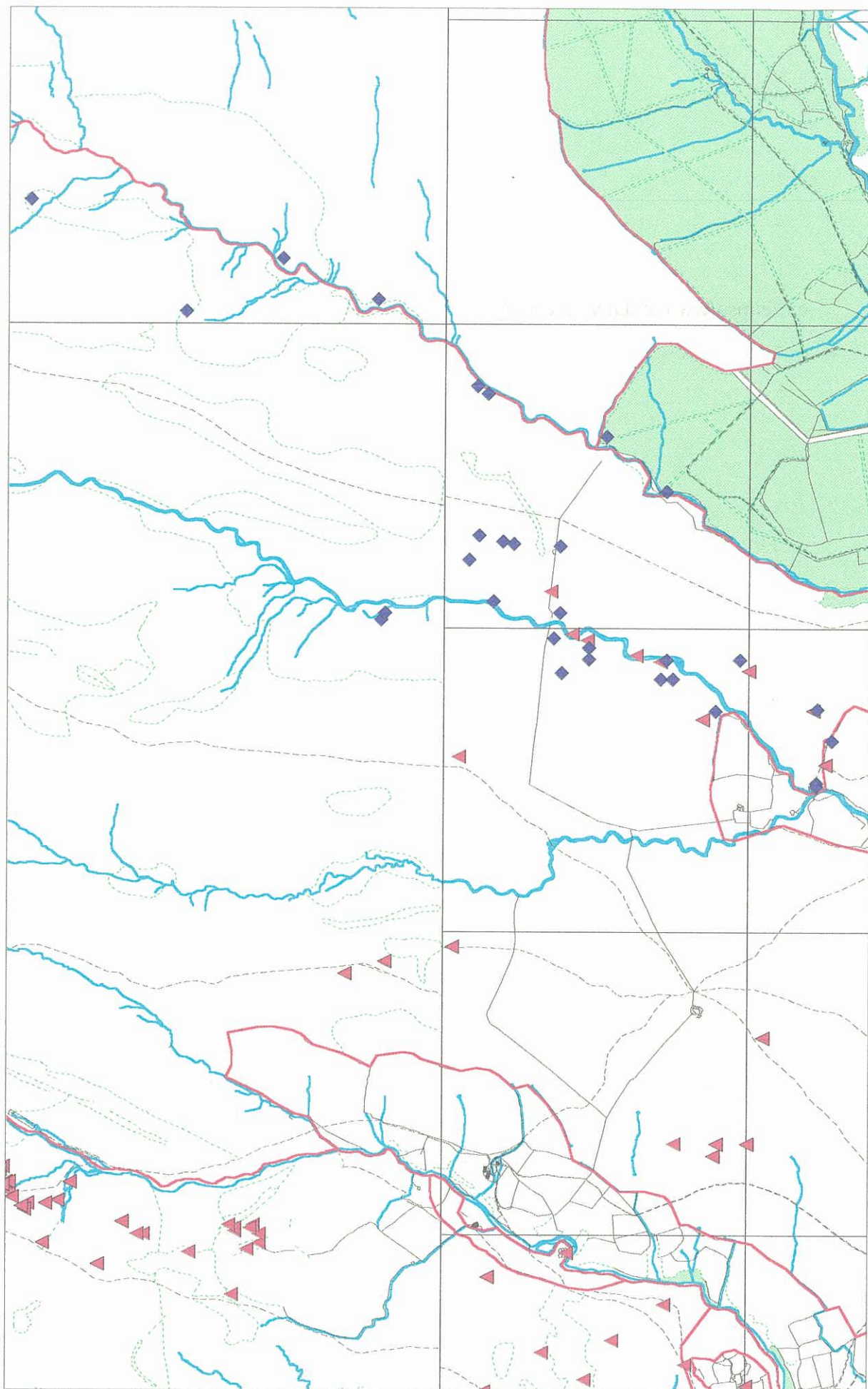
An interesting feature which belongs to this period is the boundary wall (PRN 34901) which appears to define an encroachment onto the common; examination of modern Ordnance Survey maps shows that it relates to the farm of Cwm-fforch-wen, c.0.3km to the west of the survey

area, not named on the most recent 1:25,000 map and therefore possibly abandoned. The date of this farm would be of some interest in relation to the utilisation of the survey area; its construction is likely to represent a shift from seasonal to year round occupation of the area, which may have ended with its hypothetical abandonment.

Unknown.

As has been noted previously, there are a number of sites which remain undated, totalling 7 in all. These include clearance cairns (prns 34913, 34916, 34918, 34919, 34903) an incomplete enclosure (prn 34911) and an anomalous wall (prn 34915) which does not tie in with any other features in the area. Where they may be relevant, these sites are included in one of the previously described periods.

Gwys Fawr/Afon Giedd Study Area



C. Meithrin Mynydd, 1996.

List of new sites in Area 2: CPAT prn, NGR, site type and period.

34900	SN79271462	Fold	Post Med
34901	SN79051462	Wall	Post Med
34902	SN78891403	Cist cairn	Bronze Age
34903	SN78731377	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
34904	SN78491378	Fold	Post Med
34905	SN78481378	Bridge	Post Med
34906	SN78721410	Wall	Post Med
34907	SN78831425	Hut circle	Bronze Age?
34908	SN78891427	Longhouse	Medieval
34909	SN78961464	Hut?	Medieval?
34910	SN78851461	Shelter	Post Med
34911	SN78931452	Enclosure	Unknown
34912	SN78891452	Fold	Post Med
34913	SN78831428	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
34914	SN78631373	Fold	Post Med
34915	SN80401636	Wall?	Unknown
34916	SN80041585	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
34917	SN79221492	Cairn	Bronze Age
34918	SN79281480	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
34919	SN79301488	Clearance Cairn	Unknown
34920	SN79271477	Wall	Prehistoric?
34921	SN79081484	Shelter	Post Med
34922	SN79021520	Hut circle	Bronze Age?
34923	SN79041519	Hut circle	Bronze Age?
34924	SN79771485	Fold	Medieval?
34925	SN79791489	Hut	Medieval?
34926	SN80211553	Fold	Post Med
34927	SN80081522	Longhouse ?	Medieval?
34928	SN79451427	Wall	Post Med
34929	SN79631447	Wall	Post Med

Area 3: Brest Cwm Llwyd and Brest Rhiw Ddu, Areas 12 & 13.

Staff & Logistics.

The objectives of this sample survey area were quite different to those of Areas 1 & 2. Areas adjacent to roads and tracks were looked at in detail, also the access points onto the common to assess visitor and user impacts. Here, on the northern limestone ridge of the Black Mountain, the evidence of limequarrying and burning is ubiquitous. It would be a very large task to plan in detail all the quarries, kilns and access tracks. A diagnostic group was selected which typifies the sequence of development and the early (prob. mid 18th - mid 19th century) lime-burning kilns. This was planned by means of an EDM survey and a surface levels profile taken across the group. Fieldworkers: I. Darke & R. Hankinson. 2 days on impact survey, 1 day on writing up, also checking AP cover for all 3 areas; 2 days on survey and production of plan.

Geology, Relief and drainage.

The area extends below the limestone crags of Clogau Mawr, & Clogau Bach, between 300 & 400 m. OD and across the more rounded, lower, north-facing slopes with a solid geology of brownstones of the Brecon Series at the upper, Devonian, end of the Old Red Sandstone. The survey area covers c. 1.4 sq. km. The slopes are incised by numerous small north draining streams with deposits of boulder clay in their valleys and alluvial fans on the northern edges of the area. The soils are mainly brown rankers of the Crwbin series.

A minor road runs westwards from a sharp bend in the A 4069 a kilometre west of the car park and viewing point near Herbert's Quarry. This was originally a road to the limekilns and it is the A4069, a turnpike road extending southwards across the mountain from the junction, that is the newer road.

Known Archaeological Content.

The remains of limestone quarrying and burning extend densely along the whole length of the limestone crags of Pen-rhiw-ddu, Clogau Bach, Clogau Mawr and Banc Melyn. The individual quarries are mostly small scale, the result of simply working back from a craggy outcrop. The kilns, although often quite large, were of simple earth construction, with stone structure restricted to the drawhole. However, since none have been excavated it is possible that they may be better constructed and of greater variety than the present ubiquitous horseshoe-shaped mounds of earth and central tumble of stone, with a large spoil heap of spent lime and fuel ash, indicate. This certainly proved to be the case for similar, rather amorphous, earth mounds of lime kilns at Garn-Ffrwd Farm, some 10 km. to the west along the limestone ridge (outside the Meithrin Mynydd project area) recently excavated by DAT and Trinity College (Manning 1996).

The minor road along the foot of the crags, mentioned above, is the latest of the access tracks to the kilns; the access points are at Rhiw-ddu Farm at the eastern end and Gelly Bevan farm at the west of the study area. Earlier systems approached a more localized kiln group from the north, zig-zagging their way across the slopes of Brest Rhiw-ddu and Foel Nant-Dwfn. The resulting palimpsest of cart tracks is thus the third component of the suite of limestone quarrying and burning features.

Archaeological Survey.

This large area of quarries, kilns and access tracks has never been planned in detail. Impressive as they are on the ground, a good overall impression is gained from air photographs. With only 2 - 2.5 days available for Survey, part of the western end of the kiln and quarry group 27,607 was chosen for an EDM survey and a ground surface profile.

This is a good, typical, easily accessible and understandable sample area to illustrate the processes and development of lime-quarrying and burning. It can be seen how the working was

extended upwards towards the higher areas of the limestone crags, with zig-zag cart tracks cutting across earlier spoil tips. The sequence of working is thus from north to south.

New sites

Although field-walking to discover new sites was not the principal object of survey in this area, 12 new sites or features were identified and recorded, all of post-medieval date. (see list below).

Survey of threats.

Just to the east of the survey area are the popular stopping places of the Car Park and viewing point alongside the A4069 and Herberts Quarry. There are some problems of rubbish, fly-tipping and off-roading in areas adjacent to the quarry and the road.

All areas alongside roads and tracks within the survey area were carefully inspected. Some litter and some evidence for disturbance caused by off-road parking was found. Some parts of the kiln and quarry complexes showed traces of trail-biking, but only at a low level. There is a small car park on the minor road at Brest Cwm Llwyd (SN 708192). Significantly, adjacent to the car park, particularly within the small quarries nearby, there are some problems of litter and dumping, also camp fires. Here too were clear traces of removal of turf and the theft of garden rockery-size boulders. All this is on a small scale, and would only present a serious problem if the activities were to increase significantly.

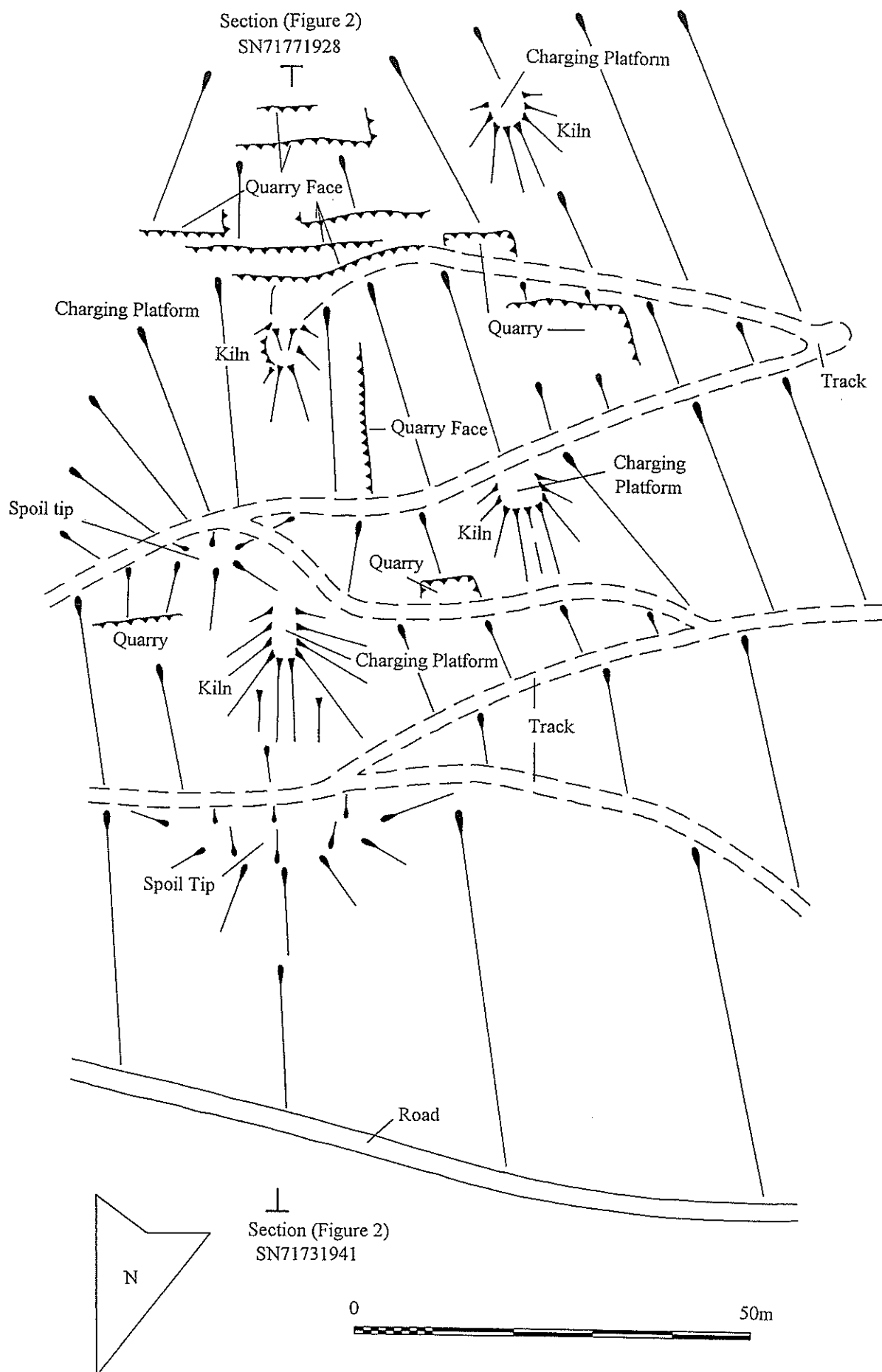
As in all commons fringe areas, the access and exit points for stock, ATVs tractors, lorries can cause damage. This is because these points have been fixed in the same position for at least the last three centuries. So there are the earthwork remains of numerous tracks and hollow ways all focussing on this one point. There may also be sheepfolds and even mountain-edge dwellings at these points which are also vulnerable

A case could therefore be made for detailed survey, since change and development at these access points will continue for all the legitimate uses of the upland commons.

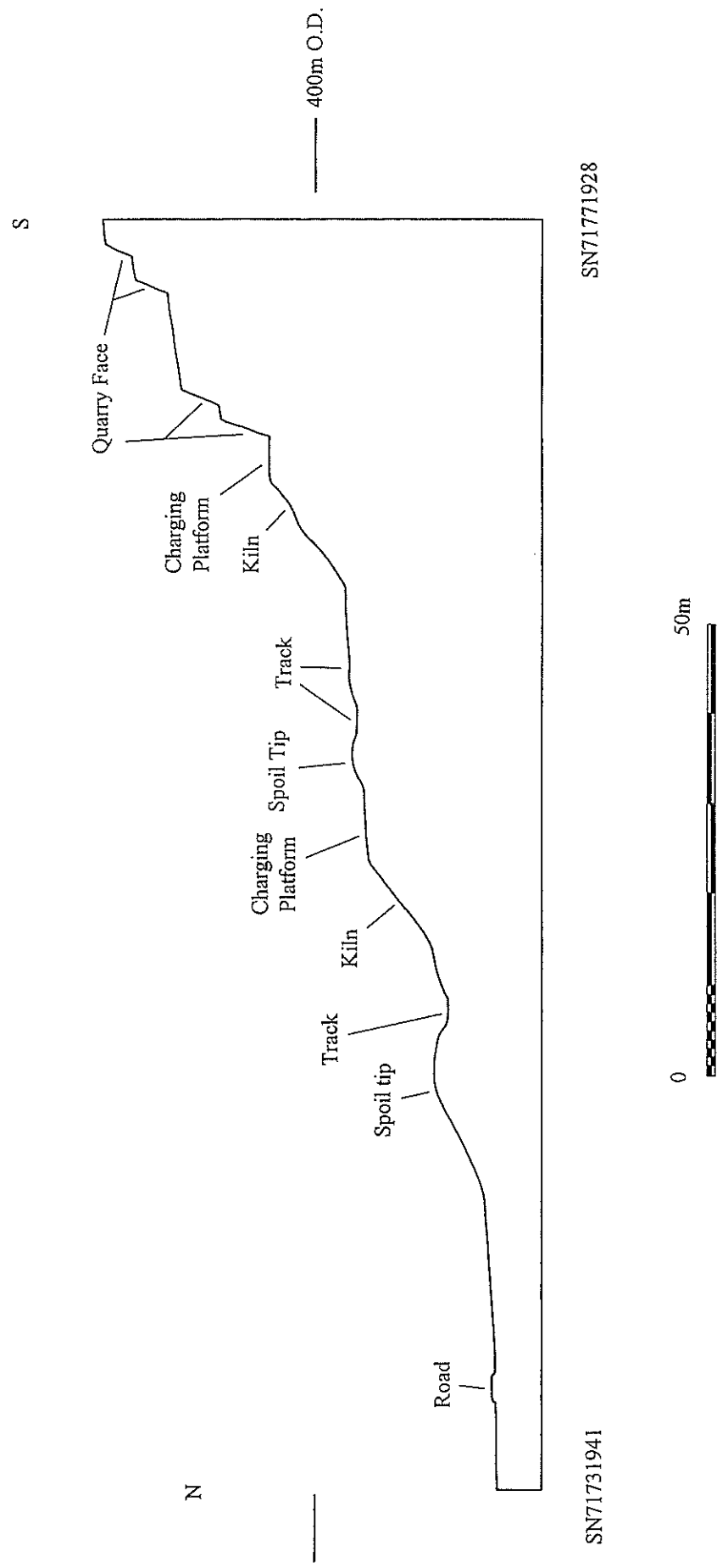
Reference:

Manning, A. 1996. *Kilns at Garn-Efrwd Farm* unpublished DAT report (project record number 32836).

WESTERN END OF P.R.N. 27607



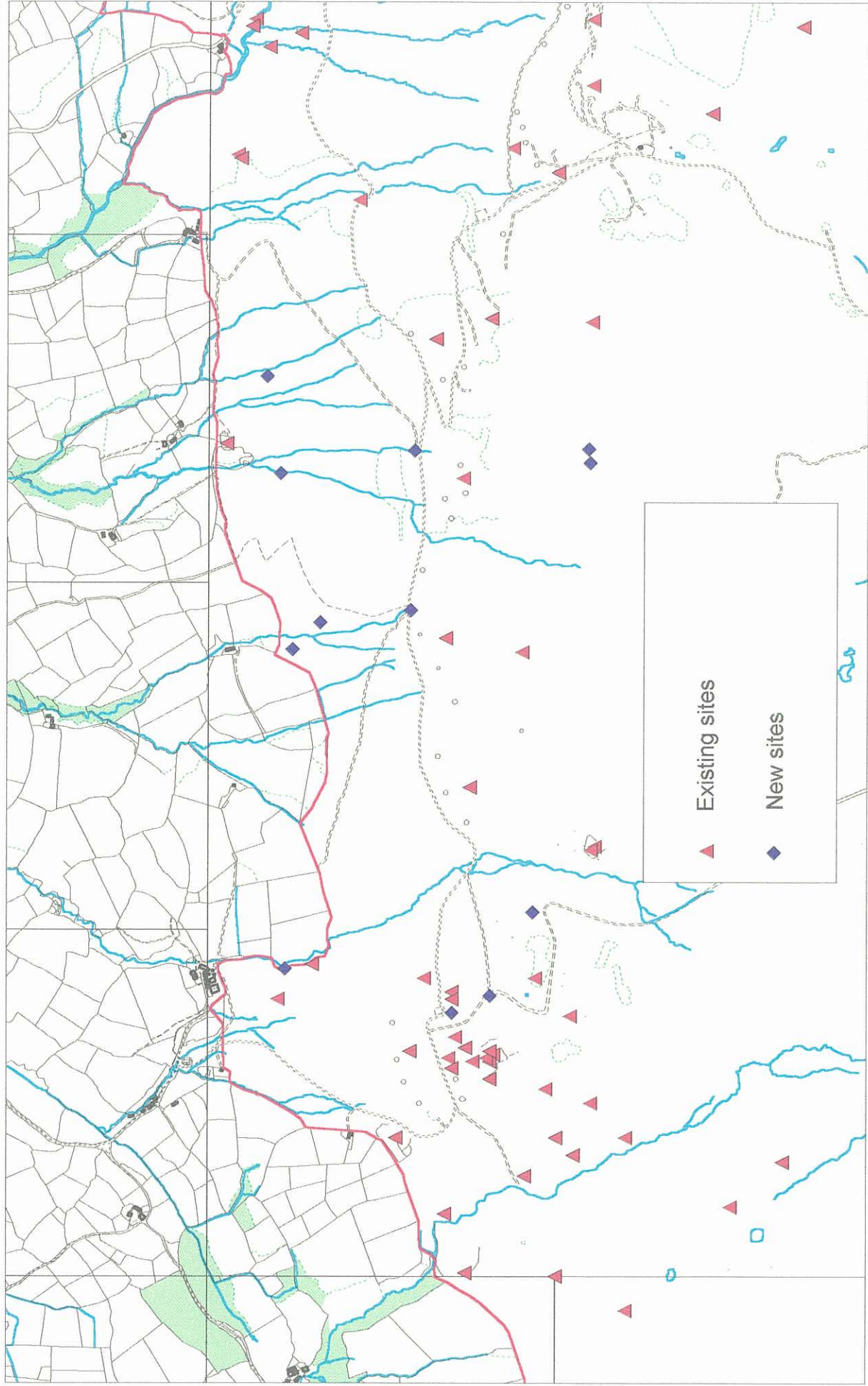
NORTH - SOUTH SECTION THROUGH P.R.N. 27607

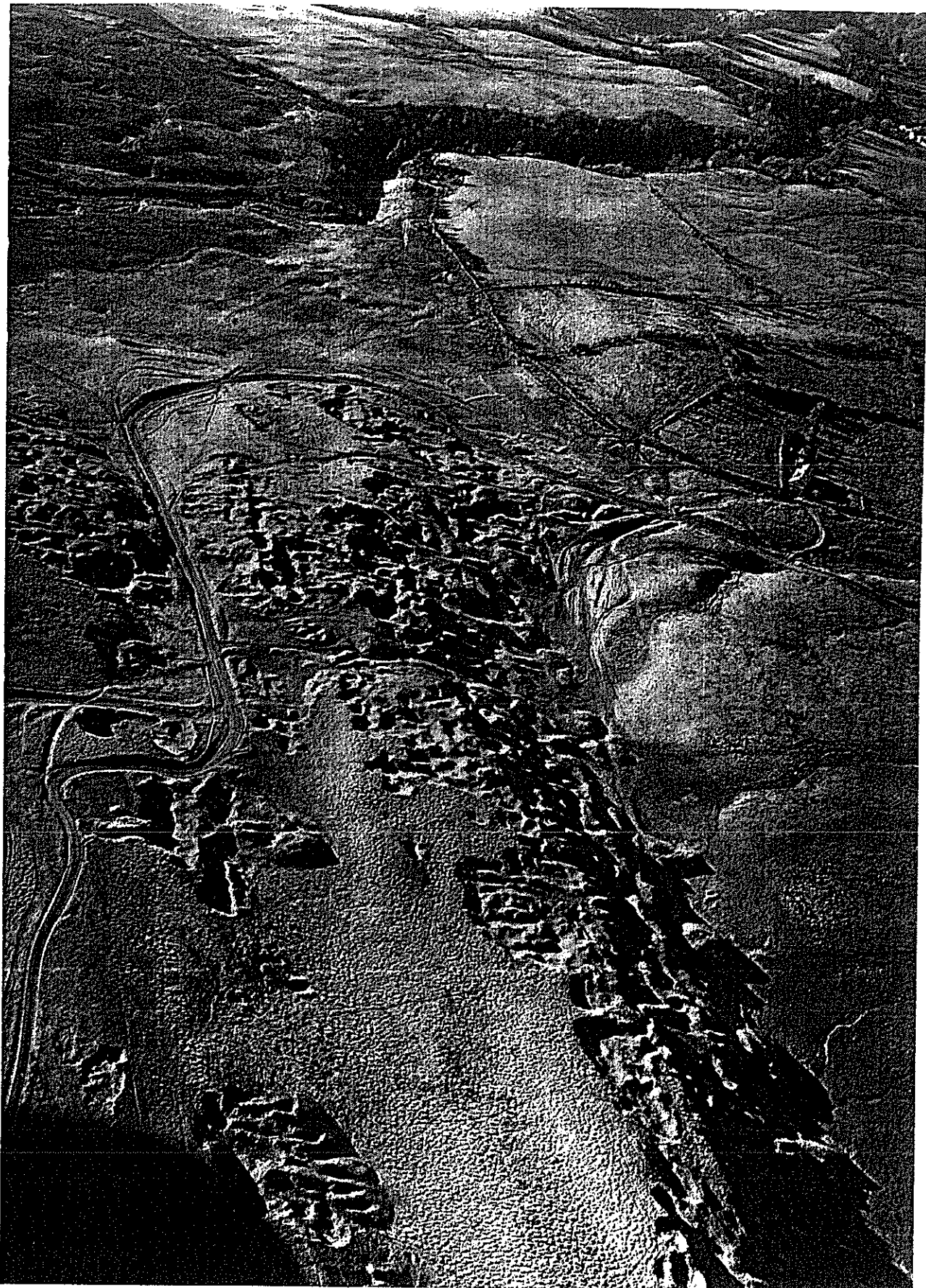


List of new sites in Area 3: DAT prn, site type, NGR & period.

33424	0	SN72311979	Leat	Post	Med
33425	0	SN71881968	Leat	Post	Med
33426	0	SN72381941	Track	Post	Med
33428	0	SN71921942	Track	Post	Med
33429	0	SN72591983	Limekiln	Post	Med
33430	0	SN71801976	Track	Post	Med
25539	0	SN70881977	Field System	Post	Med
33431	0	SN72381890	Shooting butt?	Post	Med
33432	0	SN72341890	Quarry	Post	Med
33433	0	SN71051906	Quarry	Post	Med
33434	0	SN70811919	Road	Post	Med
33435	0	SN70761930	Track	Post	Med

Brest Cwm Llwyd/Brest Rhiw-ddu Limestone Study Area





Air photograph of the Brest Cwm lwyd Lime quarrying and burning complex, DAT AP88-145.9. SN7019.

AREAS OF PALEOENVIRONMENTAL POTENTIAL

See Brief, Appendix 1, Part 1b.6).

INTRODUCTION

Areas of peat and bog within Brecon Beacons National Park, including those within the Meithrin Mynydd project area at the western end of the Park, are potentially important archaeologically and historically for four reasons:

- a) As reservoirs of plant macro- and micro- fossils giving dateable information on past environments, particularly on dates of climatic change and changes in vegetation type such as extent of grasslands or woodland and the impact of human factors (burning, clearances etc).
- b) As areas with potential for the preservation of organic material, including human bodies, and timber structures and artefacts.
- c) As areas sealing and burying earlier Bronze Age or even Neolithic field systems & settlements.
- d) As resource areas for fuel and building materials - peat and turf, particularly in the medieval and early modern periods - rights of turbary.

LOCATION, CONDITION & NATURE OF PEAT DEPOSITS.

The archaeological element to the Meithrin Mynydd project is at present principally concerned with (a) above. Areas of peat, bog and degraded bog have been identified from the project's vegetation survey, made available for analysis as hard-copy colour print-outs. This allows for a preliminary listing and assessment. A more detailed evaluation would require a programme of sampling to establish depths of deposit, before any programme of pollen analysis was contemplated.

The criterion used here for assessment is principally location - proximity to known archaeological sites, particularly of the prehistoric period.

It is perhaps surprising to find how small a proportion of the total survey area is occupied by peat, bogs and degraded bogs. But the environs of the areas listed often contain blanket peat deposits capable of sampling for pollen analysis below present day grassland or other vegetation. This is demonstrated by the areas sampled by Cloutman in 1983 around Pen-Rhiw Wen (centring SN728178) which are east of the Vegetation Map's peat and bog at Llyn y Fignen Felen. Most areas of peat appear to have been subject to cutting in the past, and are thus rather broken up.

PREVIOUS PALEOENVIRONMENTAL WORK.

Little previous paleo-environmental work within the Brecon Beacons, has been carried out at the western end of the upland range, over Mynydd Ddu and Mynydd Myddfai. Cloutman's work for his Ph.D. thesis is the exception. The current state of knowledge has been summarized by D. Leighton, in his *Mynydd Du and Fforest fawr: A study of an Upland Landscape in Wales* to be published as an RCAHMW monograph. The Trust is grateful for access to this unpublished material in the course of the archaeological work for the Meithrin Mynydd project. Leighton observes that "most of this work (i.e. analysis of pollen-bearing deposits) was not integrated with any archaeological investigations, though changes in the vegetation succession portrayed on pollen diagrams are frequently attributed to the effects of

human groups." Cloutman's work (for location of samples see list below) may be briefly summarized as indicating that the Black Mountain area was largely clear of woodland through the most of the historic period and that pastoral activity, with perhaps some cultivation in the earlier prehistoric period, was predominant. But pastoral activity is difficult to detect with absolute certainty. Furthermore three-dimensional pollen analyses show how complex vegetational history can be even within a single locality and how difficult it may be to separate human from natural causes.

Cloutman's thesis has been consulted and read as background for this rapid preliminary assessment of the paleo-environmental potential of areas of peat and bog.

There can be no doubt that more work, integrated with archaeological evidence, would prove valuable.

E. Cloutman "Studies of the Vegetational History of the Black Mountain Range, South Wales." unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Wales 1984.

LIST OF SITES

These are listed from west to east in north to south order and numbered on the small-scale key map. They are given 6 figure central grid refs. and cross referenced to the landscape characterisation area within which they fall, or to which they are relevant. Since this is very much a preliminary assessment, there seemed little point in imposing an over-precise ranking. The potential is thus graded as high, medium and low.

1. BANWEN GWYTHWCH - from SN666158 to SN 689179.
Within landscape areas [3] & [4].

A very extensive linear area of bog on the NW facing slopes of Mynydd Isaf, extending NE wards across the S side of the Nant Gwythwch valley below the Tair Carn Isaf and Uchaf ridge, widest at its north eastern end.

High paleoenvironmental potential, both from proximity of probable. prehistoric hut circles and enclosures and through sealing areas of buried landscape.

2. DRYSGOL - centring SN690155 & smaller at SN680159 .
Within landscape area [4], but adjacent & relevant to areas [5] & [9].

Medium sized area of bog on NW side of upper Cwm Pedol, south east facing slopes, below Tair Carn Isaf and Uchaf ridge.

Medium archaeological potential for general extent of medieval Pedol Forest, dates of mountain edge and valley enclosures (advance and retreat). Also for evidence of former arable cultivation in upper valleys at different periods.

3. LLYN Y FIGNEN FELEN , BLAEN PEDOL: - centring SN716181.
Within landscape Area 17.

Large area of peat bog, still with active IDO for cutting of peat, intended in 1950s to be burnt for Amman valley own gas supplies. Permission was granted to Llandeilo RDC - very unlikely now to be implemented? Not known when peat-cutting began but it has been extensive.

The archaeology of immediate area is dominated by fairly modern quarrying for silica sand to the east and south. The turnpike road, 'The Bryn Road' crossing the mountain (which is well preserved as it was never developed or surfaced) cuts across the western end of the bog. There are cairns (presumably Bronze Age) on the two crags east and west of the northern part of the bog in the saddle between them - Carn Pen-y-Clogau and Carn Pen Rhiw-ddu. But the bog can only have general archaeological potential if assessed against proximity of evidence for

8. WAUN DDU - centring SN 823303.

Within landscape area 47 Pant Meddygon to Cwm Ffos Ddu.

An extensive area of deep bog between Mynydd Myddfai and Mynydd Trecastell. Now just N of large area of afforestation around the Usk reservoir, created in 1950s. A rich area archaeologically with multi-period evidence from Bronze Age ritual & funerary monuments, Roman camps and road (Y Pigwn), medieval farmsteads with traditional evidence of upland land uses, through to modern quarrying, trackways and upland agricultural improvements.

High potential therefore for paleo-environmental evidence.

9. MAWNBWLL-DU-MAWR - centring SN811270.

Within landscape area 47 - Bryn Pwlllygerwn and adjacent tupper part of 37, Afon Clydach valley.

One of a small group of bogs in the area with the name *mawnbwll* - indicating peat-cutting.

Medium-sized, fenced-off area of fairly deep bog. Under 1 km NE of large Roman marching camp of Arosfa Garreg and close to cross mountain road of early med. if not Roman origin. Close to the west, isolated loughouses and attached enclosures, probably of medieval date and similar longhouses to SE in Usk valley.

High potential for multi-period paleo-environmental evidence, particularly if sampled with 8 above and 10-13 below.

10. NANT TARW - centring SN822255.

Within Landscape 44, close to 46, Usk-Nant Tarw valleys.

Two small linear areas of bog on the southern side of the Nant Tarw, close to the gently sloping open area containing cairn and stone circles (Neolithic - ?Early Bronze Age date).

High potential for sampling for environment contemporary with these mounuments, which are fairly inconspicuously sited, so could have been in a more shrubby, tree-covered environment than at present - i.e no indication that they were intended to occupy sky line positions.

11. MAWNBWLL-LLOI - centring 811254.

Within landscape area 44, but bordering 45, Arosfa Garreg Llwyd and 43, Afon Llechach valley.

Another *mawnbwll* name, interestingly linked with cattle, not sheep - taken from stream name Nant y Lloi. Medium sized area of bog. Area of a few isolated longhouses (?hafotai) - cattle name - also large Roman camp in near vicinity. This is a fairly open rolling plateau area on N. side of Bannau Sir Gar, nowhere far from enclosed land below, close to a cross mountains route.

High potential for multi-period paleo-environmental evidence - group value (see note on 9 above).

12. MAWNBWLL - centring SN798249.

Within Landscape area 47, but close to edge of valley 46

More isolated than 11 above but otherwise similar. In a decade of hill walking, this is the only area where Heather & Terry James have noted tree stumps within peat exposures.

High potential - group value.

13. WAUN LWYD - centring SN818246.

Within landscape Area 44, slopes below Carmarthenshire and Breconshire Vans.

Three areas on east and west sides of the Usk, close to its source area, above 400 m. altitude. Sparse archaeological traces.

Although extensive, probably of low potential for late prehistoric and more recent past, due to remoteness and high altitude.

14. TRINANT - centring SN831247.
Within landscape area 44.

Small area of bog and wet heath over NE facing slopes below Rhyd-wen fawr.

Remote, sparse archaeological traces.

Low potential.

15. NANT SYCHNANT - NANTt MELYN: centring SN806239.
Within Landscape Area 44, but adjacent to valley area 40.

Small area of bog in triangle of land at the confluence the two tributary streams to the main valley of the Afon Sychlwch and Llyn y Fan Fach. Individual longhouses and concentration on floor of Sychlwch valley .

Medium potential.

16. MAWNOG CARN'AU GWYS - centring SN812197.
Within Landscape Area 51 Central Uplands, but adjacent to route corridor 52.

Another peat bog name, with surface indications of peat cutting -perhaps accessed from the 'Ffordd Cynhebrwng' cross mountain track - central uplands - main archaeological evidence is of sheepwalks - upland sheepfolds.

Medium potential.

17. UPPER AFON TWRCH VALLEY n. side of Bwlch y Ddeuwylt - centring SN788187.
Within Landscape Areas 29 (Twrch valley) & flanked by 51 and 53.

Extensive arc of peat, bog and wet heath on south side of the Twrch valley, over rolling plateaux just before the river flows SW into a steep-sided gorge - crossed by ancient track and fording point, possible areas of peat-cutting. Sparse archaeological traces in these high central upland areas.

Medium potential.

18. BWLCH Y DDEUWYNT - centring SN788168.
Within Landscape Area 53 Y Palleg, but adjacent to 29, Twrch valley.

High altitude, headwaters area of Gwys Fach below crags. Very few previously recorded sites, but Sample Area 2 is close by and shows potential for prehistoric and medieval landuse and occupation.

Medium potential therefore.

19. BELOW CARREG LEM - centring SN803168.
Within landscape Area 53.

Similar siting to 18 between headwaters of Gwys Fawr and Afon Giedd - north of sample Survey Area 2 over Cefn Mawr and valley sides.

High potential because of sample survey evidence.

20. & 21. WAUN FIGNEN FELEN - centring SN 822180 and area 1 km to S. nr. Castell y Geifr.

Within landscape Areas 51 and 54 Cwm Haffes.

This was the second area extensively sampled by Cloutman as part of his thesis work. Mesolithic flints were recovered from the base of one of his samples (B125N). The results summarized at the end of this list give a good overview of the vegetational changes and extent of human impact over the last 8000 years.

High potential already demonstrated.

22. CARREG A'R GAP - centring SN824160.

Small area of wet heath and small pond.

Same potential for general results as 20 and 21, but high altitude, barren rocky area, and remote from known archaeological traces.

23. NW SIDE OF CRIBARTH - centring SN832150.

Small area of wet heath around source of Nant y Gwared.

To the S. lies an area heavily affected by industrialisation (see S. Hughes, *The Brecon Forest railways*, RCAHMW). Evidence of Neo/Bronze Age use (Saith Maen standing stone).

High potential for the micro-environment of a small valley.

Summary of Conclusions on pollen samples from Waun Fignen Felen (20) - from E. Cloutman "Studies of the Vegetational History of the Black Mountain Range, South Wales." unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Wales 1984.

Phase 1: Pre-Boreal woodland > 8000bp.

fairly open birchwoods, with ferns and grasses. May be human reasons for this, since the area is seen by EC as 'a natural focus for both men & animals in this part of the Black Mountain range' - attracted by the large glacially formed lake, now gone.

Phase 2: Podsol Development under heather (8000bp-6500bp)

Ample evidence to implicate mesolithic man in the vegetational changes - scatter of microliths at base of one sample (B125N). Areas now cleared within birchwood where *mor* humus accumulated under *juncus* dominated vegetation; heather areas nearby. Cloutman assumes human clearance by burning, which may have encouraged a spread of hazel with birch and pine in upland woodland.

Phase 3: Rise of Alder (c. 6500bp-5300bp).

Mixed oak woodlands expand from the lowlands into uplands; the ameliorating Atlantic climate evidenced by spread of lime, elm also present in the upland woodland - more peat developing around the margins of the large lake.

Phase 4: Elm decline (c. 5300bp - 3800bp).

Occurs in 3 distinct periods or peaks - for which Cloutman argues anthropogenic causes, esp. since they are followed after 3rd decline, 3800bp, by the start of a consistent pollen curve for plantain (weeds of cultivation). Elm cleared with birch and hazel on uplands; drying lake colonized by a fen carr. C14 dates suggest clearances by neolithic peoples utilizing land for arable and pastoral purposes. Mixed oak woodlands of lower slopes & valleys still uncleared.

Phase 5: The rise of Plantains (c. 3800bp - 2700bp).

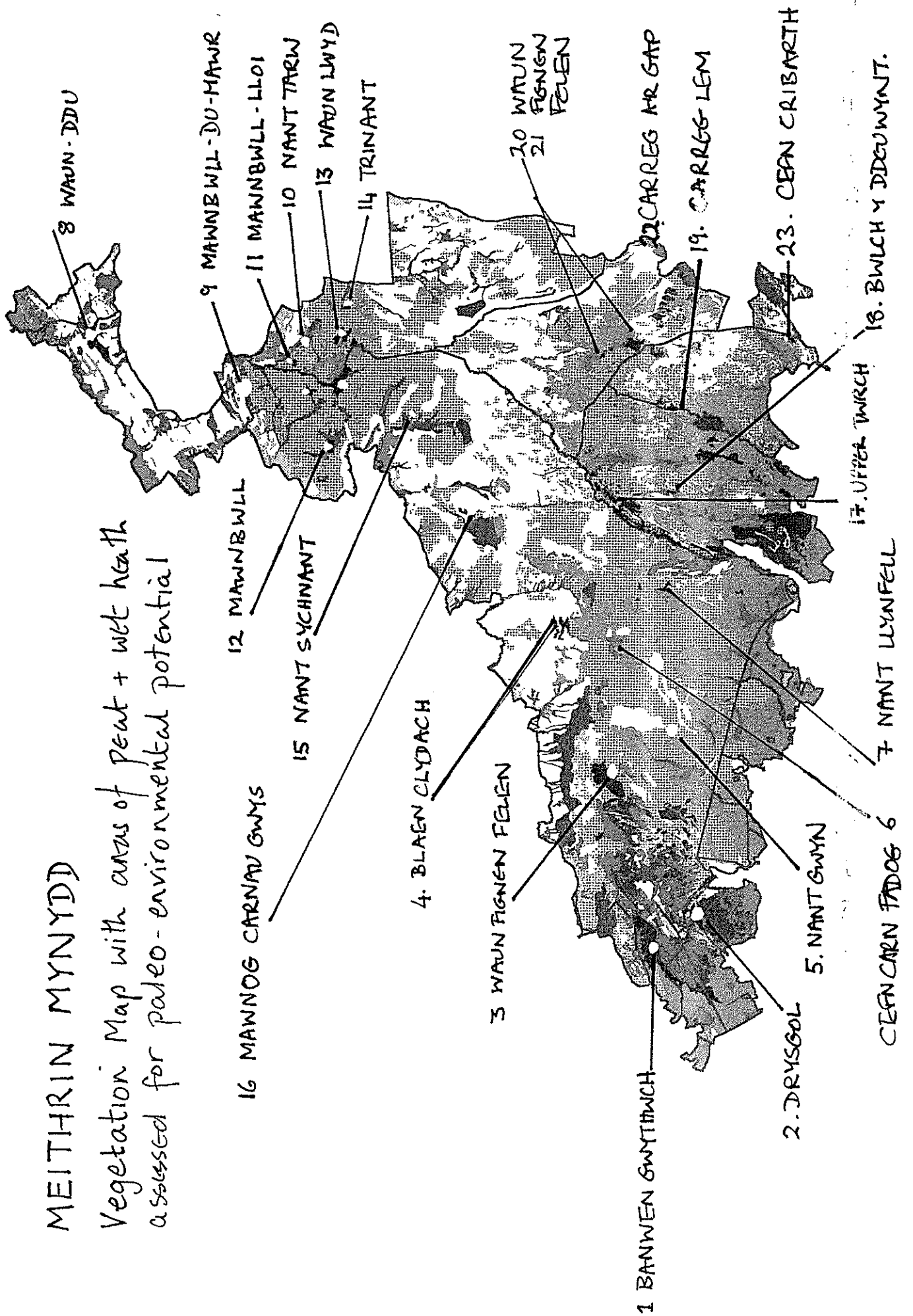
Continuous pollen curve for plantains from now on, alder remains on heavier soils. No evidence for arable farming (i.e cereal grains) at Waun Fignene Felen, unlike Pen-rhiw-wen at same period.

Phase 6: Birch, Ash and Narthecium 2700bp →.

Shift to a cooler, more oceanic climate at Waun Fignen Felen between 2900bp and 2600bp, developing bog - burning on its surface; birch and ash expanding into cleared oak woodlands; evidence for human pressure, but NB local preference for pastoral, not arable farming - lake now a small pool.

MEITHRIN MYNYDD

Vegetation Map with areas of peat + wet heath assessed for paleo-environmental potential



SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS - CONDITION REPORT.

INTRODUCTION

This was completed by April 1996, in order to give an early indication of the kind of pressures archaeological monuments might be subject to, using the small group of statutorily protected sites and monuments. This information will be utilised and extended both in proposing possible remedial works and in formulating management prescriptions for the archaeological resource as a whole. The sites are referenced by name, Cadw Monument number and by prn. It is the last number that can be used to access the Meithrin Mynydd database.

LIST OF SITES SCHEDULED AND VISITED.

PRN 4037 CM172 CARN PEN-RHIW-DDU

The cairn is situated on the edge of a natural shelf, is constructed of grit stone rubble, and lies in an area of sheep grazed open moorland. The cairn measures 12m. in diameter and stands 2m high. Modern disturbance by visitor cairn, with angular sloping sides, on top.

PRN 4142 CM 174 AROSFA GAREG-LLWYD ROMAN CAMP

The camp lies on irregular, sloping, open moorland. The area is heavily grazed by sheep and horses grazed. The ramparts consist of a low bank 2m wide and 0.5m high with indications, in places, of the outlying ditch. The north-west corner is cut by a modern road and is difficult to detect in this area. The northern bank becomes more apparent as the ground rises to the east. Some minor sheep scrapes are evident in the bank, facing the road. A modern track crosses the site in a north-west to south-east direction causing some erosion in the centre of the north bank and again towards the north of the east bank. The outworks on the east side remain well preserved, as do the *claviculae* (inturned entrances) at the east and south entrances. A wide, rutted modern farm track crosses the south bank near the south-west corner rendering a section undetectable. The west bank crosses a small V-shaped ravine with several sheep scrapes and tracks resulting in considerable erosion, and no trace of the bank remains in this area.

PRN 4152 & 4161 CM 194 ROMAN FORTLET

The fortlet lies on rough, sheep-grazed, open grassland occupying a prominent position with extensive views to the north, and is 540m west of the Roman camp of Y Pigwn. The site is defined by a low square shaped bank 0.75m high externally and 0.25m internally. It is less well evident in the north-western side. In the north corner is a low mound 1.2m higher than the rest of the earthwork. this has a diameter of 25m, angular sloping sides, and a flat top. There is a dish shaped depression 3m diameter x 0.4m deep in the centre of the mound. There appears to be no evidence of animal or visitor damage.

PRN 4000 CM 204 GARREG LAS HUT GROUP

The site is terraced into the side of rough, sheep-grazed moorland sloping gently to the north-west. It consists of a roughly circular enclosure 20m in diameter with a small, 6m diameter, hut circle on the south-western side, with an opening from the enclosure. The hut circle lies half within and half without of the enclosure. The walls of both the enclosure, and the hut circle consist of low, spread, stony banks. These are partly turf-covered and are on average 1.5m wide and 0.3m high with no signs of a face. The bank is slightly lower and more spread on the north-western side. There are traces of further walls to the south-east. There appears to be no evidence of animal or visitor damage.

PRN 4013-5 CM 255 TAIR CARN UCHAF CAIRNS

The site consists of 3 impressive and reasonably well-preserved cairns of grit stone rubble construction set in a boulder strewn area on the hogsback summit of Tair Carn Uchaf.

Cairn A, the easternmost cairn measures 18m in diameter and 2.5m high and suffers from collapse on the north-east side. There is a central depression 8m in diameter and 1.5m deep of long standing with several small visitor cairns around the rim. There is some slight modern disturbance within the depression, stones being rearranged to form "seats".

Cairn B, the central and largest cairn measures 22m in diameter and 2.6m high with partial collapse of the south side. There is a small central depression 3m in diameter and 0.5m deep.

Cairn C, the westernmost cairn, measures 17m in diameter and 2.6m high with slight disturbance or collapse on the S side. There is a central oval depression 4m x 3m x 1m deep of long standing.

This set of cairns show some sign therefore of modern visitor disturbance.

PRN 5969-5972 CM 256 TAIR CARN ISAF CAIRNS

The site consists of 4 gritstone rubble cairns 1km south-west of the Tair Carn Uchaf group, and lie on the same ridge.

Cairn A, the westernmost cairn is situated 40m below the remaining 3 cairns, which maintain a more prominent position on the ridge. The cairn consists of a low spread mound which measures 8m in diameter and 1m high. There is a depression 1.5m diameter in which 3 large boulders are revealed surrounding the probable central burial chamber.

Cairn B, the southernmost cairn measures 12m in diameter and 2.5m high. The central part of the cairn is steep-sided with a visitor cairn on top. The rest of the cairn is badly mutilated with recent disturbance on the south side and several visitor cairns around the eastern edge.

Cairn C, the central cairn on the ridge measures 11m in diameter and 1.5m high. There is a steep sided oval depression, 3m x 2m x 1m deep, north-west of centre, and some collapse or disturbance on the south side.

Cairn D, the northernmost cairn measures 8m in diameter and 1.2m high. Very little remains of the south-west corner. There is a large oval depression, of long standing, south-west of centre which measures 4m x 3m x 1m deep. There is a more recently made depression in the north side which measures 1.5 x 1m x 0.75 deep.

This group of cairns has suffered considerably from modern visitor disturbance.

PRN 4039 CM 257 CARN PEN-Y-CLOGAU

A summit cairn on boulder-strewn heath-covered moorland constructed of grit stone rubble. the cairn measures 18m in diameter and 3.4m high. There is some disturbance or collapse on the south and west sides and lesser disturbance on the east side. There is a central depression 3m in diameter and 0.75m deep. In the base of the north side there is disturbance in the shape of a small wind break shelter.

PRN 4062-3 CM 258 CARNAU'R GARREG LAS

The site consists of a pair of impressive cairns constructed from grit stone rubble situated on a boulder strewn ridge above sheep grazed moorland. The northern cairn measures 15m in diameter and 2m high. There is a large, oval, central depression which measures 6m x 5m x 1m

deep. The depression has shallow sloping side on all but the east side where there is a near vertical edge which appears to have been rebuilt. This rebuilding is of long standing. On the west side a small sub-rectangular annexe, again of long standing, measuring 4m x 3m has been constructed.

The southern cairn measures 13m in diameter and 2m high with a dish shaped central depression 6m in diameter and 1m deep.

There is no evidence of modern visitor disturbance.

PRN 9997 CM 260 STONE SETTING ON WAUN LWYD

The site is situated on a flat saddle of peat-covered, sheep-grazed upland. It consists of a circle, 20m in diameter, of upright and recumbent stones with a group of larger stones on its south-east arc. This group consists of 2 upright and 2 recumbents partially surrounded by a water filled sheep scrape; the remainder of the setting consists of 4 uprights, 2 recumbent and 6 just visible at the surface.

The site is well preserved and shows no sign of visitor disturbance.

PRN 4159-60 B003 Y PIGWN ROMAN CAMPS

This impressive site is situated on open sheep and horse grazed moorland on the summit of Mynydd Bach Tre Castell. There are 2 marching camps superimposed one upon the another, and with slightly different orientations. The ramparts of both consist of low banks on average 2m wide and 0.5m high and the outer ditches are clearly visible. The ramparts and the *claviculae* of the inner camp are well preserved on 3 sides. The main central section of the south-east bank and ditch and associated *claviculae*, and part of the north-east bank and ditch have been destroyed by tilestone quarrying. The southern corner has a modern farm track crossing the rampart and this has caused some erosion in this area. The outer camp is cut in the south corner by the inner camp and also by a rutted track, originally the old Brecon to Llandovery coach road. The majority of the north-east, north-west and south-west banks and associated *claviculae* are well preserved. The south-west bank although traceable, is once again heavily disturbed by the tilestone quarrying. The north corner becomes difficult to trace due to the fact that the ground slopes away in this area and becomes quite boggy. Apart from the modern farm track crossing the site remains free of other animal or visitor disturbance.

PRN 4034 & 4163 B009 MYNYDD BACH-TRECASTELL STONE CIRCLES

The site is situated on peat-covered, sheep and horse grazed open moorland and consists of 2 stone circles and an avenue of smaller stones.

The larger circle measures 22m in diameter and consists of 16 small uprights, 3 larger uprights in the south-west arc, 8 empty sockets and a group of stones in the west arc. This group consists of 2 large recumbents, 2 large uprights and 2 small uprights.

The smaller circle lies to the southwest. The setting measures 8m in diameter. The north and east semi-circle contains 4 large uprights each partially surrounded by sheep scrapes, and one stone just visible at the surface. The remainder of the setting consists of 3 sunken stones and 1 socket. An avenue of small stones runs tangentially to the south-east edge of the setting. 3 stones to the north-east and 4 to the south-west.

The whole site is very well preserved and shows no sign of modern visitor damage. Due to its unobtrusive nature, there are often reports that the stones have 'disappeared', but this is because of difficulties of location when the vegetation is up.

PRN 3438 & 4147 B070 NANT TARW STONE CIRCLES

The site is situated on open sheep and horse grazed peat covered moorland, and consists of a cairn and 2 stone circles.

The cairn consists of 2 low irregular spread mounds of sandstone rubble. A small visitor cairn is present. The remains of a ring ditch can be traced around the south and east of the mound having a diameter of 18m.

The stone circle to the west of the cairn measures 19m in diameter and consists of 16 upright stones. 2 stones on the south-east arc have sheep scrapes around them and are leaning towards the centre of the setting. A very large recumbent lies due east of the circle.

The stone circle to the south of the cairn measures 20m in diameter and consists of 14 small uprights, 2 large recumbent and 1 large stone leaning 60 degrees from the vertical, around which there is an area of sheep scrape. There is another area of sheep scrape around one of the small uprights in the western arc. This stone is now loose and it seems likely that it will soon fall.

The cairn suffers from long standing disturbance. The stone circles are suffering some degree of animal disturbance. There have been reports of 'ploughing' around these sites. It is clear from examination of these furrows on the ground, from air photographs and from oral evidence given to the SMR, that these 'furrows' are the remains of upland drainage with lines of furrows as feeder drains leading into larger channels. This has been observed in several locations in the upper Usk valley and dates to World War II and immediately after the War. One informant has told DAT that it was carried out by Italian prisoners of war. The intention was to improve the drainage, and thus the early production of upland pasture.

CPPRN 798 B071 CERRIG DUON STONE CIRCLE

This site is situated on a small flat saddle of peat covered sheep grazed moorland. The site consists of a stone circle, Maen Mawr standing stone and an avenue of small stones.

The stone circle measures 18m in diameter and consists of 22 small uprights and 1 medium sized recumbent set in the eastern arc. Maen Mawr is an impressive standing stone measuring 1.2m x 0.8m x 1.85m high which is situated 8m to the north-east of the circle. There are 2 small uprights beyond the standing stone. To the south-west of Maen Mawr there is an avenue of 14 small stones leading off in a north-easterly direction.

This whole site is very impressive and shows no serious sign of animal or visitor disturbance.

PRN 4162 B142 MYNYDD BACH-TRECASTELL ROUND CAIRN

The cairn is situated on a small knoll on peat covered, sheep and horse grazed open moorland. The cairn measures 8m in diameter and is 1.2m high with a small depression in the centre. It is entirely grass covered and shows no sign of animal or visitor disturbance.

CPPRN 19329 B194 DESERTED SETTLEMENTS 800M NORTH OF BLAENAU FARM

The site is situated on sheep grazed moorland either side of a stream cutting the steep south-east facing slope of Fan Hir. The site consists of a group of building platforms, some with the remains of buildings on them, some short banks and a few small stone piles.

There are 8 platforms, each terraced into the hillside. The remains of stone structures are present on 4 of these platforms. 5 small stone piles, 2 banks and 7 vaguely defined hollows are set among the platforms. At the southern end of the site lies a modern sheepfold with associated banks leading to the platforms.

The whole site is fairly well preserved and shows no signs of recent animal or visitor disturbance.