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Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Report
Gilfach y Bettws
W/12/629

ACA Project Record 39331

Report prepared for CCW
by ACA

February, 2000

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology
Shire Hall,
8, Carmarthen Street,
Llandeilo,
Carmarthenshire
SA19 6AF
Tel: (01558) 823121/823131
Fax: (01558) 823133
Email: cambria@acadat.com



A R C H A E O L E G
CAMBRIA
A R C H A E O L O G Y

Tir Gofal Application Number W/12/629

Address Gilfach y Bettws
Penybont, Carmarthen

NGR SN278282

TG Project Officer Kevin Taylor, Llandeilo

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Project Record Number 39331

Visit Officer Nigel Page

Visit Date 31/01/00

TIR GOFAL SITE MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

As used in accompanying site gazetteer.

Category A - Sites and Monuments of National Importance

Category B - Sites and Monuments of Regional Importance

Category C - Sites/Features of Local Importance

Category D - Sites/Features needing further investigation (including damaged sites or sites with no defined physical presence).

TIR GOFAL COLOUR CODING

As used on accompanying holding maps.

Category A -	Blue	<i>Scheduled Ancient Monuments Grade 1 and 2* Listed Building</i>
	Red	<i>Other Sites and Monuments of National Importance Other Buildings of National Importance</i>
	Red toning	<i>Registered Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest</i>
	Red Banding	<i>Registered Landscapes of Historic Interest</i>
Category B -	Amber	<i>Sites and Monuments of Regional Importance Grade 2 Listed and Other Buildings of Regional Importance</i>
Category C -	Green	<i>Sites / Features of Local Importance Buildings of Local Importance</i>
Category D -	Grey	<i>Sites / Features of Unknown Importance</i>

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE STATUS

Terms used in gazetteer.

SAM.

Scheduled Ancient Monument. SAMs are notified under section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The register of SAMs is maintained and administered by Cadw.

LB1, LB2* & LB2.

Listed Building categories. Listed buildings are notified under section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The list is maintained and administered by Cadw.

HL - Landscapes of Exceptional and Great Historic Interest.

Defined by the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales: Part 2.1 Landscapes of Exceptional and Great Historic Interest. The register is advisory only, and has no statutory powers. The register is being compiled by Cadw in partnership with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and is concerned with man-made, historic elements of the landscape.

HGP - Register of Historic Gardens & Parks.

Defined by the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales: Part 1 - Parks & Gardens. The register is advisory only, and has no statutory powers. The register is being compiled by Cadw in partnership with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and is concerned with man-made, historic elements of the landscape.

Description of Gilfach y Betws Farm, PRN 39332

Gilfachybetws farm is located on a gently undulating plateau at c.170mOD at the top of the steep W facing slope of a narrow N-S valley. The ground to the N of the farm also slopes away steeply. The house and yard are located at the W end of the holding which has been reduced in size since the mid 19th century when the tithe map showed it to consist of several more fields. Comparison between the tithe map of 1844 and the early OS maps shows that the entrance lane to the yard was altered during the late 19th century. The alteration meant that the new line bypassed a series of 90 degree doglegs which took the original track past the medieval chapel, Capel Betws (PRN3946). The original track is a deep hollow way, now with some stone revetment to the banks, which is certainly at least medieval in origins and possibly earlier, if there was an earlier religious foundation on the chapel site. Most of the boundaries on the farm are earth banks, some appear to have had a stone core, with mature trees dotted along them. Around the yard and alongside some of the tracks leading to the farm the boundaries are well constructed stone walls. There are two types of construction. The first is a pitched stone wall made up of flat, thin blocks packed together in an upright position, and the second consists of squared blocks laid in courses. Both types are of dry-stone construction. It seems that the pitched stone wall is the earlier type, although it is not possible to be certain. There is a good surviving section of stone wall alongside the section of the original track that led from the chapel to the farm. The arrangement of the original buildings around the yard is slightly irregular and indicates that the yard was developed in a piecemeal fashion and not as a single planned development. The original entrance to the yard was from the SE through a gate flanked by two rectangular stone gate posts. Both gate posts had a number of holes through them suggesting they were reused from another structure. The yard is surrounded by the original yard buildings which comprise the house on the NE side, a barn on the SW side, a pigsty on the SE side and a cart shed with first floor space on the NE side. Other buildings around the yard are a small cowshed that appears to have been adapted from some other purpose and a number of modern barns. All of the original buildings are stone-built in random rubble. They have all been much altered, particularly internally with the addition of new internal divisions and the removal, in some cases the partial removal, of the floors for the upper storeys. The house is known to date from at least the 18th century and it is possible that the cartshed on the NE of the yard and the barn on the SW of the yard also date from this period.

Overall Management Recommendations Gilfach y Betws Farm, PRN 39332

The house and most of the farm buildings are in daily use and are in good condition. The cartshed on the NE side of the yard is currently being substantially rebuilt for holiday accommodation. Where possible the original yard buildings should be retained, and if rebuilding or renovation works are required they should retain the character of the original buildings. There are no current plans to remove any of the existing boundaries on the farm. Most of the boundaries appear to date to at least the 18th century and those alongside the entrance track are almost certainly medieval in origin. Where possible all boundaries should be retained and maintained in their present condition.

There are outline proposals to open the site of the SAM Capel Betws to the public. To do this it will be necessary to construct an access track to the chapel. There are two ways in which this can be achieved: first the original track can be re-opened; or second a new track can be constructed from the existing farm track to the chapel. The latter is

probably the best solution. To re-open the original track would possibly cause damage to any surviving elements of the medieval track, whereas, the second option only requires the removal of a short section of a modern boundary and the construction of a short length of access track.

There will certainly need to be a significant archaeological input into the scheme to open the chapel site. The nature and level of that archaeological input will presumably be decided by Cadw when dealing with the Scheduled Monument Consent application.

PRN 39330	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN28112823
Site type DRS	Period Post Med	Site Status

Description

A small house and garden marked on the Trelech-y-Betws tithe map published in 1844. The tithe map shows a small sub-rectangular enclosure with a house in the NE corner. The enclosure was visible and clearly defined on aerial photographs taken in the mid-1950s, although, tree cover obscured the site of the house. The site has since been cleared and levelled. There is no definite evidence on the ground for either the house or its enclosure.

Recommendations

There are no surviving above ground remains for the house or enclosure, but there are likely to be some buried remains on the site. Therefore this area should be excluded from processes such as ploughing which can damage or destroy buried archaeological evidence. The stock levels on the farm are low so there will be no problems of erosion through over grazing or animal trample.

Management Category D	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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PRN 39331	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN28112823
Site type PROJECT RECORD	Period	Site Status

Description

Recommendations

Management Category	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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PRN 39332	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN28112823
Site type FARM	Period Post Med	Site Status

Description

See main description.

Recommendations

Management Category B	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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PRN 39333	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN28102818
Site type BURNT MOUND?	Period Bronze Age?	Site Status

Description

Three low grass covered mounds in an area of wet boggy ground. The mounds are all of a similar size, c.3m x 2m x 0.3m high. It is possible that these mounds are burnt mounds, although, no burnt stones were evident in the area of the mounds.

Recommendations

There are no immediate plans to plough or drain this area of the farm so the mounds are fairly safe from erosion or damage at the moment. Stock levels on the farm will not have a significant effect on the mounds so they should be left as they are and the area around them excluded from any destructive processes.

Management Category D	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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PRN 39334 Site name GILFACHYBETWS NGR SN27802824
 Site type LEAT Period Post Med Site Status

Description

Well defined ditch, up to 2m wide x 0.3-0.5m deep, cut along a north facing slope leading from a pond (PRN39335) to the farm yard. Spoil from the leat was deposited on the north, downslope, side of the leat to form a bank which survives up to 2m wide in places. A small spur was run off this leat to run through the outside toilet to act as a flushing system. On OS maps of the 1960s the leat is shown running into the building at the N of the yard, where it presumably powered a waterwheel and some form of machinery.

Recommendations

The leat survives in good condition for much of its length and it should be maintained in its present condition.

Management Category C Visited by NAP Visited On 31/01/00

PRN 39335 Site name GILFACHYBETWS NGR SN28182818
 Site type POND Period Post Med Site Status

Description

Small pond which feeds leat PRN39334. The pond is fed from several springs in the area and it appears to have been constructed to provide a good head of water along the leat. There are remains of a stone-built sluice at the NW end of the pond where it connects into the leat.

Recommendations

The pond could be cleared of weeds and the condition of the sluice structure should be examined. If the sluice is in reasonable condition it could be consolidated and restored.

Management Category C Visited by NAP Visited On 31/01/00

PRN 39336 Site name GILFACHYBETWS NGR SN27982824
 Site type LEAT? Period Post Med Site Status

Description

A short length, c.70m, of a well defined ditch, up to 2m wide x 0.3-0.5m deep, cut along a north facing slope leading from a pond (PRN39337) to the SE corner of a small stand of woodland. From this point it seems that the ditch may have turned north and run downhill to connect with leat PRN39334. As with leat PRN39334, the spoil from the ditch was deposited on the north, downslope, side to form a bank which survives in places up to 4m wide. On the tithe map of 1844 the line of this feature is shown only as a boundary, and it appears that the pond PRN39337 was dug against the S side of that boundary sometime during the later 19th or early 20th century. This suggests that the ditch was dug along the old boundary line, to possibly act as a leat from the pond. However, there is nothing to indicate why the pond or the leat were constructed in this location and what the water was intended to feed. The relationship between the possible leat and the pond was not established because of thick vegetation around the pond.

Recommendations

The leat survives in good condition until it reaches the corner of the small stand of woodland. The surviving section should be maintained in its present condition

Management Category C Visited by NAP Visited On 31/01/00

PRN 39337	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN27992824
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Site type POND	Period	Post Med	Site Status
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Description

Small pond which may feed the possible leat PRN39336., It is not clear where the pond is fed from, nor is it clear if there is a direct connection between the pond and the possible leat (PRN 39336)., This pond is not clearly visible on aerial photographs of the mid 1950s, but it may have been completely choked with vegetation., There is no immediately obvious reason for constructing a pond, or a leat, in this particular location., The pond is currently overgrown and the edges are covered in thick vegetation., Modern dumping has also taken place and there is a lot of modern rubbish in the pond

Recommendations

The pond could be cleared of vegetation and rubbish. Also the relationship between the pond and the possible leat (PRN 39336) should be investigated to establish if PRN 39336 really was a leat fed by the pond. Once cleared the pond should be kept clear.

Management Category	C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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PRN 39338	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN27852823
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Site type EARTHWORK	Period	Post Med	Site Status
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Description

A slight earthwork consisting of two low (c.0.15m high), narrow (c.0.4-0.5m wide) banks which meet at 90 degrees. They formed the S and E sides of an area of ground that may have been levelled. This site may represent the remains of a former building, or small enclosure. There is no indication of any features in this position on the OS or tithe maps

Recommendations

This site is in an area of the farm where it is generally protected from any destructive processes and the stocking levels on the farm do not pose a threat when this area is grazed. The site should be maintained in its present condition

Management Category	D	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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PRN 39339	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN27852823
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Site type MILL POND	Period	Post Med	Site Status
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Description

A small pond known as the mill pond located at the NW corner of the farm yard. The pond was possibly shown on the tithe map (1844). There is a large hollow at the SW end of the pond which may be a silted up waterwheel pit. A stone sluice, now much altered and concreted, would have controlled water flow to the possible wheel. A drain runs north from the pond down to a small stream in the bottom of the valley. It is difficult to understand at present what a waterwheel at this location would have been used for.

Recommendations

The pond has recently been cleaned, and is now only partially filled with water. It may be desirable to clear the area of the possible wheel pit to try to determine if it was a wheel pit and to try to assess its possible uses

Management Category	D	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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PRN 39340	Site name GILFACHYBETWS	NGR SN27782824
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Site type TRACKWAY	Period	Post Med	Site Status
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Description

A track terraced into the north facing slope of the steep valley to the N of the farm. The track is part of a much longer track that originally ran for several kilometres along the valley and linked a number of farms. The track survives as a c.4m wide, grass-covered terrace. Where it passes immediately to the N of the farm the terrace is reveted by a pitched stone wall. The track runs past two small quarried cut in to the slope just NE of the farm.

Recommendations

The track is in good condition and it still provides access for some areas of the farmland it should be maintained in its present condition.

Management Category	D	Visited by NAP	Visited On 31/01/00
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Tir Gofal Scheme	Tir Gofal Application No W/12/629
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PRN 39341 *Site name* GILFACHYBETWS *NGR* SN27932828

Site type QUARRY *Period* Post Med *Site Status*

Description

Two small quarries cut into the north facing slope of the steep valley to the N of the farm. The quarries are located alongside the track (PRN39340) and their small size suggests that they were used to supply stone for the farm only and not as part of a commercial operation. The quarries are today overgrown with trees and shrubs.

Recommendations

The quarries are clear of modern rubbish and the vegetation growing in them will not cause them significant damage. They should be maintained in their present condition.

Management Category C *Visited by* NAP *Visited On* 31/01/00

Map

Tithe Map, 1844, Tithe map and apportionment for the parish of Trelech ar Betws, -

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Report
Gilfachybetws
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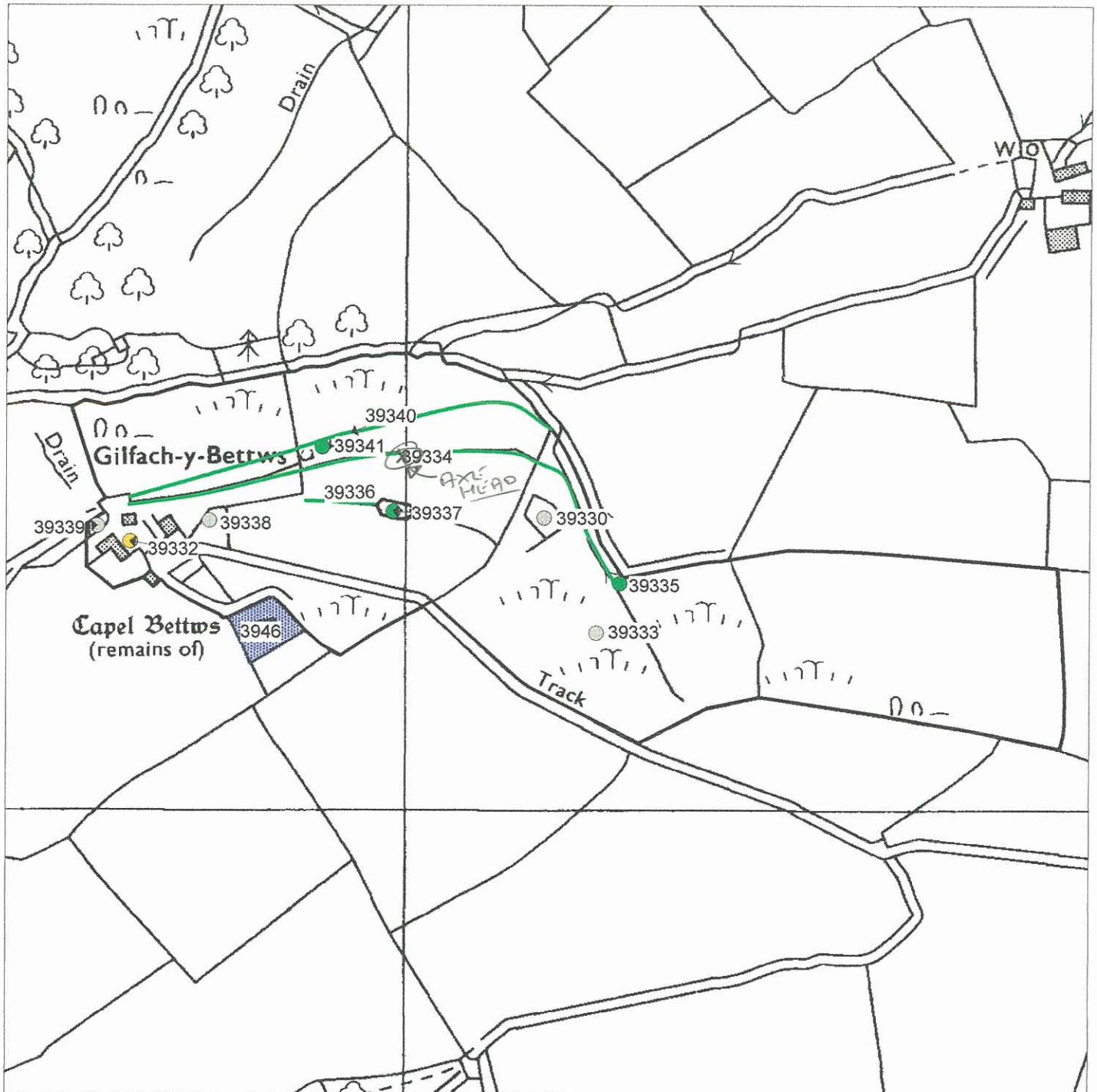




Plate 1: PRN 39334 - view east along the leat where it passes through a field boundary



Plate 2: PRNs 39340 & 39341 - the two small quarries alongside the track, looking east

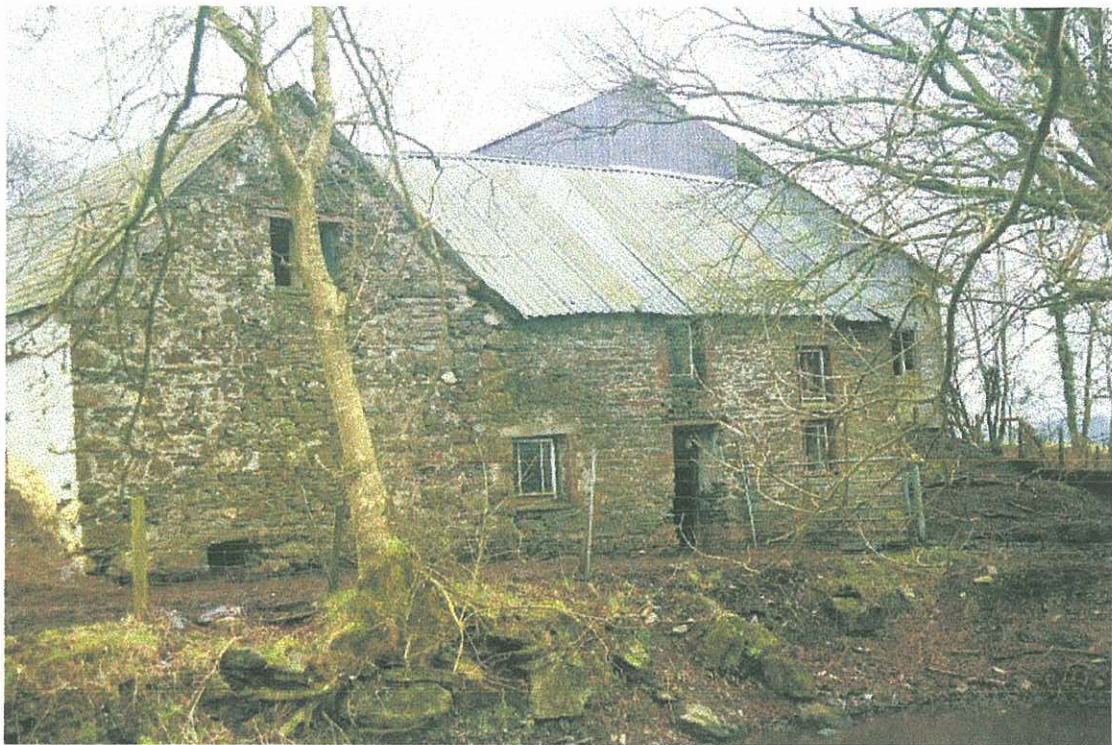


Plate 3: The northwest gable of the cowhouse, probably 18th century with a more recent extension on the rear.



Plate 4: barn/cartshed undergoing extensive rebuilding