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Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Report

Pen y Graig Uchaf

W/11/1361

ACA Project Record 40413

Report prepared for CCW
by ACA

October, 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/11/1361

Address

Pen y Graig Uchaf

NGR

SN707679

Ystrad Meurig, Ceredigion SY25 6AA

TG Project Officer

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Project Record Number 40413

Visit Officer

Nigel Page

Visit Date

25/09/00

TIR GOFAL FARM VISIT REPORT

This report is intended to provide a statement on the condition and recommended management of all known archaeological and historical sites and features on this farm at the time it was visited by Cambria Archaeology. This information will be used to inform the Tir Gofal Management Agreement for the farm.

The report structure is as follows:

- explanation of archaeological site status and management categories used in the gazetteer.
- a brief statement on the historical background to the farm which enables the reader to put the specific sites into context.
- the main body of the report is a gazetteer of sites previously known or identified during the visit. The gazetteer identifies sites by their Primary Record Number (PRN) which is the reference number used in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). It also locates them by National Grid Reference (NGR).
- list of sources consulted during the research for this project.
- explanation of colour coding used on the map.
- site location maps identifying by PRN the location of each site in the gazetteer.
- photographs of specific sites are included where the author considers it useful in order to identify a site or stress a particular management issue.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE STATUS

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 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 historic elements of the landscape.

TIR GOFAL SITE MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

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).

Description of Pen-y-Graig Uchaf Farm, PRN 40664

Pen-y-graig Uchaf is a dispersed farm consisting of several blocks of land around Ystrad Meurig and a separate holding several kilometres away on the coast at Mynachdy'r Graig. All together the farm covers approximately 421 acres (170.5 ha) of mixed upland grazing and enclosed pasture. The farm is probably an 18th century establishment which has developed over the last two centuries by acquiring land from other farms. In the 19th century the land now owned by the farm around Ystrad Meurig belonged to a number of farms and smallholdings. The varied and complex distribution of the farm is reflected in the differing topography and character of the separate holdings. On the coast at Mynachdy'r Graig the land is dominated by a high ridge which runs parallel to the shore and which slopes very steeply to the coast and less steeply inland towards the A487(T) Aberystwyth road. The steep slopes of the ridge are divided into small fields by earth banks faced with stone interspersed with areas of scrub and gorse. Some of the banks are substantial measuring 2m wide and surviving up to 1.5m high. At Ystrad Meurig the land is a mix of large upland enclosures and small irregular fields and settlements. Here the evidence of deserted settlement sites indicates widespread 18th and 19th century encroachment onto the formerly unenclosed upland commons before fairly rapid abandonment of most of the settlements during the late 19th or early 20th century.

Management Recommendations

The current management regime operating on the farm is sympathetic to the historic character and varied nature of the separate land blocks. There is a recognition by the current owners of the importance of the surviving fabric of the landscape, whether that be the variety of boundary types, the layout and form of the tracks and paths, or the structures and enclosures of the settlement sites of many periods which punctuate and define these landscapes. The boundaries across the various land blocks should be retained in order to maintain the character of the different landscapes. Recommendations for the individual sites are included for each site in the gazetteer.

PRN 2037	Site name PEN-Y-FFRWYD LLWYD CAMP	NGR SN70926878
Site type HILLFORT	Period Iron Age	Site Status SAM

Description

Multivallate, D-shaped hillfort with an annexe on the north end. The banks and ditches are in good condition, except for small area of recent erosion on the east bank.

Recommendations

The hillfort is a scheduled ancient monument and is therefore protected by law from deliberate damage and change. Apart from the area of recent erosion on the east bank the monument is in good condition. It should continue to be grazed to retain it as a very visible landscape feature. The area of erosion in the east bank should be repaired and returfed using turf taken from nearby, but away from the scheduled area, to ensure that the established plant and micro-faunal communities are maintained.

Management Category A	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 4829	Site name BANC-Y-MOR	NGR SN561743
Site type INFANTRY TRENCH	Period Post Med	Site Status

Description

This site consists of a shallow trench, c.20m long x 1.5m wide x 0.5m deep, with a bank constructed from the spoil on its south side. The bank is 2m wide x 1m high. The trench is becoming silted and overgrown, but the bank is virtually clear of vegetation.

Recommendations

The trench and its associated bank should be retained as a visible earthwork feature. This could be achieved by regular, but light grazing to prevent it becoming overgrown. A single gorse bush that is currently growing on the bank could be removed.

Management Category C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 4832	Site name MONK'S CAVE	NGR SN555744
Site type FINDS	Period Roman?	Site Status

Description

A pottery figurine, possibly Roman, was found in the past in, or close to the site of Monk's Cave. Also, the placenames Monk's Cave, and the nearby Mynachdy'r-graig (Monastery on the Rock) suggest a medieval, or dark age ecclesiastical foundation in this area. It may be that the cave was used as a monastic cell.

Recommendations

This site, or its immediate environs may contain evidence of past use, including more artefacts. Therefore it is important that access to the cave is denied for all forms of unqualified intrusive investigation, such as metal detecting or excavation.

Management Category C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 9299	Site name PENLLYN	NGR SN71186928	
Site type COTTAGE	Period Post Med	Site Status	

Description

Remains of a three-celled drystone building with a banked garden plot on the east side. The building is aligned north-south and it measures c.10m x 6m; the enclosure is 10m x 10m. The south gable survives to height of c.2.5m, but the rest of the surviving walls are lower. There is a door and window in the south gable. The enclosure bank survives as a low earth bank, c.0.5m high x 1m wide, with some evidence of drystone facing. Trees had been planted on the bank to provide a shelter belt. Penllyn (Head of the Lake) first appears on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560 map published in 1891, and it remained occupied until the 1950s. When it was built it was on the edge of the unenclosed upland common, and it represents a typical small squatter settlement, with its house and garden set within one or two small fields enclosed from the common. ✓

Recommendations

This site is a good example of the small squatter settlements that were prevalent along the fringes of the upland commons during the 18th and 19th century. The trees that were planted on the enclosure banks provide valuable shelter for grazing animals, and the area is suffering from animal trampling and erosion across the banks. However, the damage is not considered to be significant at this stage and the site should be maintained in its present condition.

Management Category C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 9300	Site name PIGYN	NGR SN71206904	
Site type COTTAGE; FARMSTEAD	Period Post Med	Site Status	

Description

Ruinous, rectangular drystone dwelling and associated garden enclosure. The building is c.10m x 6m and the enclosure measures 30m x 15m. The walls of the building survive only to height of up to 1m. Internally the building may have been divided into two rooms. There was no evidence of any internal fixtures or fittings such as fireplaces. The enclosure banks are low, up to 0.75m high x 1.5m wide, and eroded in places, particularly on the east side. Pigyn was shown on the Spyty Ystradmeurig tithe map (1843) when it was called Blaencaeau, but its name had changed to Pigyn by the time the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560 map was published in 1891. It was still shown as roofed, but not necessarily inhabited, on the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition map of 1907. On the tithe map Pigyn, or Blaencaeau as it was then, was shown as having four or five small fields, which suggests that it was probably an 18th century squatter settlement on the unenclosed upland common. Once abandoned the building could have deteriorated to its present condition fairly quickly as the stone, timbers and tiles would have been carted away for reuse elsewhere. ✓

Recommendations

This site should be maintained in its present condition, which means that stocking levels should be retained at their present levels.

Management Category C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 9304	Site name GWAR-FFYNNON	NGR SN71606890	
Site type COTTAGE	Period Post Med	Site Status	

Description

Remains of a dry stone building set within a banked enclosure. The building is c.12m x 4m and it consists of three cells, the main central room, c.8m x 4m, and two small rectangular rooms, 2m x 4m, one at either end. The building is located in a small sheltered hollow on a north facing slope above a fast flowing tributary of the Afon Meurig. First shown on the Gwnnws Issa tithe map (1843) as Llest Fach, it had become known simply as Llest by the time the Ordnance Survey first edition 1:10560 map was published in 1891. As the name suggests this site has its origins as a seasonal, shepherds dwelling used when tending the flocks grazing the uplands during the summer months. The use of this site may date back to the medieval period, although the surviving structure is post-medieval. Many sites of this type developed into permanent smallholdings as population increases, particularly during the 17th and 18th centuries, forced a move onto the previously unenclosed upland commons and other marginal areas. ✓

Recommendations

This site should be kept clear of vegetation and maintained as a visible feature. The present management regime operating on this part of the farm appears to be sympathetic to the site and this should continue so that the site can be maintained in its present condition.

Management Category C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 9305	Site name TAN-CNWCH	NGR SN72006878
Site type COTTAGE	Period Post Med	Site Status

Description

Remains of a drystone house and outbuildings within an enclosure. The enclosure is reached along a banked track which formerly led southeast from the road to enter the west end of the enclosure. The surviving length of the track is 3m wide and banked on either side by a low earth bank with hazel trees, possibly coppiced, planted on both. The track itself is currently fairly clear of trees. Both banks are of similar dimensions, c.1m high x 1.5m wide, and there are some traces of stone facing. The enclosure is bounded on its west side by the track, on the north and east sides by a small, fast-flowing stream (a tributary of the Afon Meurig), and a large stone-faced bank, 1.5m high x 1.5m wide. Two smaller drystone enclosures had been constructed against the outer face of the southern enclosure wall. The site is called Cwmffrwd (literally stream valley) on the Gwnnws Issa tithe map of 1843, which also shows it to have a number of fields adjoining the stream. The buildings are shown as unroofed on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560 map of 1891. ✓

Recommendations

The site is becoming very overgrown with trees, some of which are growing on the walls of the buildings and the boundaries. This is having a twofold effect. Firstly, the trees are having an increasingly direct and significant impact on the surviving structures as they mature and grow. Secondly, the trees are being used for shelter by animals grazing the adjoining field, which, whilst a valuable function, is leading to trampling and erosion within the main enclosure. This situation is being exacerbated by the low-lying and wet nature of the site. Accepting the above and recognizing the value of the site as a shelter for grazing animals it is important that the surviving structures are retained in a stable condition. All new tree growth and modern rubbish should be removed from the buildings. It would also be desirable to remove some of the trees closest to the buildings so that the animals seeking shelter are moved away from the surviving structures. The remaining trees would still provide adequate shelter.

Management Category C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 12001	Site name BANC-Y-MOR	NGR SN563745
Site type BURNT MOUND?	Period Prehistoric	Site Status

Description

Not found during farm visit. ✓

Recommendations

The area in which this feature is supposed to lie should be excluded from ploughing.

Management Category D	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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PRN 19647	Site name	NGR SN70796849
Site type QUARRY	Period Post Med	Site Status

Description

Disused 19th century quarry that was developed to exploit the outcropping rock at the southern edge of Pen y Ffrwd-Ilwyd ridge. The quarry was marked on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560 map (1891) and it operated until the early-mid 20th century. ✓

Recommendations

The quarry should be kept clear of rubbish and maintained in its present condition.

Management Category C	Visited by NAP	Visited On 25/09/00
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Tir Gofal Scheme	Tir Gofal Application No W/11/1361
Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites and Management Recommendations: Pen-y-Graig Uchaf, Ystrad Meurig	

PRN 40664 Site name PEN-Y-GRAIG-UCHAF NGR SN70796795
Site type FARM Period Post Med Site Status

Description

See description at front of report.

Recommendations

See recommendations at front of report.

Management Category C Visited by NAP Visited On 25/09/00

PRN 40665 Site name MYNACHDY'R-GRAIG NGR SN55857432
Site type SHEEPFOLD Period Post Med Site Status

Description

A circular sheepfold, c.9m diameter, with an entrance 1.5m wide in its north side. The fold which was shown on the Llanddeiniol parish tithe map (1841) is built into the sheltered east face of a prominent ridge above the shore line. The fold survives as a low stoney circular bank, 1.5m wide x 0.6-0.7m high. To the south of the fold is a rectangular platform, c.14m x 6m, cut into the side of the ridge. There is no evidence for any structures on the platform and its original function is unclear. It may have been associated with the fold.

Recommendations

The ridge-top position of the fold has protected it from any destructive farming operations such as ploughing, and the current stocking levels are not having a significant impact on the site. The present management regime should be maintained and the site grazed to retain it as a visible landscape feature.

Management Category C Visited by NAP Visited On 25/09/00

PRN 40666 Site name MYNACHDY'R-GRAIG NGR SN55807479
Site type FARM Period Post Med Site Status

Description

Mynachdy'r-graig, literally meaning 'Monks House on the Rock' is a farm situated on a coastal terrace above a steep, but low cliff which drops to a sand and shingle foreshore. The farm, or at least the house, dates from the 18th century, although the surviving farm buildings are 19th century and most have been renovated. The house is no longer in the possession of the farm owners. A renovated animal shed and cartshed remain part of the farm. There is also a ruined range of 19th century buildings on the north side of the yard area in front of the house. The farm's name and the nearby Monk's Cave (PRN 4832) suggests that there was some form of ecclesiastical foundation on or this site, possibly of early medieval date. It is possible that there was a monk's cell, either in the cave or nearby.

Recommendations

The standing buildings at Mynachdy'r-graig are in good condition and the surviving complex should be retained in its present condition.

Management Category C Visited by NAP Visited On 25/09/00

PRN	40667	Site name	MYNACHDY'R-GRAIG	NGR	SN55807479
Site type	TRACKWAY	Period	Post Med	Site Status	

Description

A well defined trackway running from the A487(T) Aberystwyth road to Mynachdy'r-graig. The track runs west from the road for a distance of 550m across fairly flat land before descending the very steep coastal slope. To negotiate the slope the track first turns north for c.200m, all the while hugging the slope, before turning west to cross a small plateau. From here the slope becomes very steep and the track swings south to run along the ridge for approximately 250m before a hairpin bend takes the track northwards again. The final 700m are on a fairly gentle but continuous slope which runs across the base of the coastal slope to the farm. The track is a combination of shallow hollow way on the flatter areas towards the southeast end and well-made terraces where it traverses the steep slopes. Towards the farm the track is roughly 2.5m wide and bounded on its downslope side by an earth bank, 0.75m high x 1.5m wide, which exhibits drystone facing on its outer face.

Recommendations

The track is in regular use and in it should be retained in its present condition.

Management Category	C	Visited by	NAP	Visited On	25/09/00
PRN	40668	Site name	MYNACHDY'R-GRAIG	NGR	SN55737422
Site type	CEMETERY?	Period	Post Med	Site Status	

Description

The present owners reported a tradition of burials, possibly two, having been recovered from this area. There is no other information and no visible evidence of anything on the ground.

Recommendations

The exact location of the reported burials is unknown. The area from which they were supposed to have been recovered is unlikely to be ploughed or be subject to any other form of destructive farming operation. No specific management recommendations required.

Management Category	D	Visited by	NAP	Visited On	25/09/00
PRN	40669	Site name	CAE DU	NGR	SN56467487
Site type	DRS?	Period	Post Med	Site Status	

Description

Cae Du a smallholding shown on the Llanddeiniol tithe map (1841), but abandoned by the time the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560 map was published in 1891. Not visited during the farm visit.

Recommendations

This site was not visited during the site visit, but if there are any standing remains of the buildings and enclosures they should be retained as visible features within the landscape.

Management Category	D	Visited by	NAP	Visited On	25/09/00
PRN	40670	Site name	TRE-ISAF FACH	NGR	SN70776742
Site type	FARM	Period	Post Med	Site Status	

Description

Original site of Tre Isaf shown on late 18th century estate maps and the mid 19th century Spytty Ysradmurig tithe map. The site had become Tre-Isaf Fach on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560 map (1891) indicating that the present Tre-Isaf, on the other side of the road, had become the principal farm. The site is not shown on later OS maps and today there is no visible evidence of the farm.

Recommendations

Even though there are no above ground remains there may be some buried features surviving on the site. Therefore, ground disturbance should be kept to a minimum across the site.

Management Category	D	Visited by	NAP	Visited On	25/09/00
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<i>PRN</i>	40677	<i>Site name</i>	CARMARTHEN-CARDIGAN RAILWAY	<i>NGR</i>	SN6863673
<i>Site type</i>	RAILWAY	<i>Period</i>	Post Med	<i>Site Status</i>	

Description

Short length of the former Carmarthen- Cardigan railway line just north of the now demolished Strata Florida station. The tracks have been removed, but the line itself survives as a cutting and an embankment. The embanked section is now used as an access track for farm vehicles, but the cutting is blocked off and has trees growing on its banks. Neither situation is causing significant damage to the line.

Recommendations

The cutting and the embankment should be maintained in their present condition.

<i>Management Category</i>	C	<i>Visited by</i>	NAP	<i>Visited On</i>	25/09/00
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Aerial Photograph

Musson CR, 1992, AP92-47.52 Close up from NW good definition of multiple banks and hollows, -

Musson CR, 1992, AP92-48.53 Excellent close up from SE, -

Musson CR, 1992, RCAHMW 925069-52, -

Map

Tithe Map, 1841, Llanddeiniol tithe map and apportionment, -

Tithe Map, 1843, Spytty Ystradmeurig tithe map and apportionment, -

Ordnance Survey, 1891, sheet Cards.XVI.SE, -

Ordnance Survey, 1891, 1st edition 1:10560, sheet Cards.IX.SW

Ordnance Survey, 1891, 1st edition 1:10560, sheet Cards.XVI.SW

Ordnance Survey, 1906, sheet Cards.XVI.11, -

Ordnance Survey, 1906, 2nd edition 1:10560, sheet Cards.XVI.SW

Ordnance Survey, 1964, -, SN76NW

Written Description

Rees S, 1992, Dyfed: A guide to Ancient & Historic Wales, p.89-90

CADW, 1993, AM107, SAM file Cd 33

Williams G, 1995, Cardigan Bay Survey, -

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.

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LB1, LB2* & LB2.

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HL - Landscapes of Exceptional and Great Historic Interest.

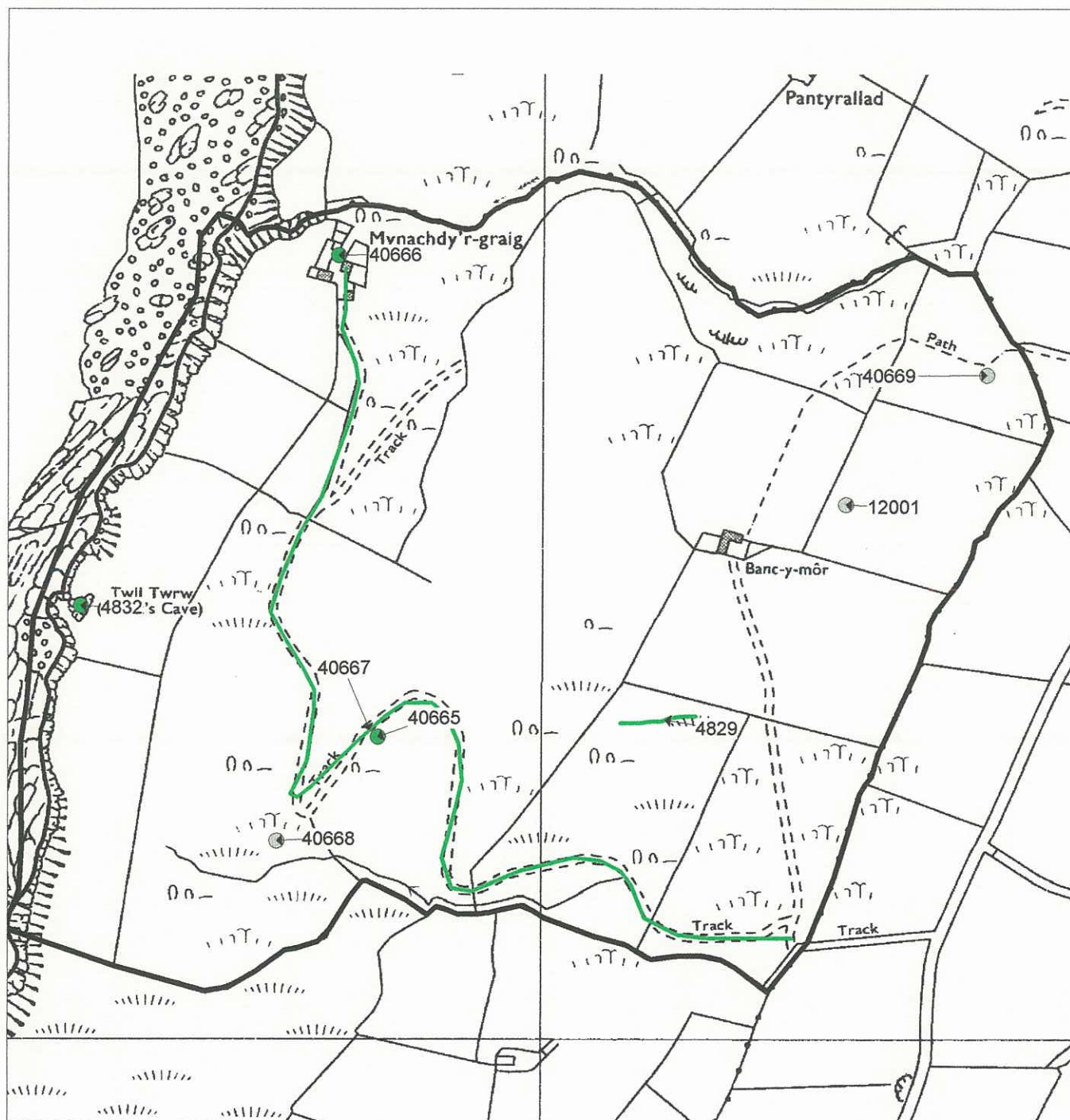
Defined by the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales: Part 2.1 Landscapes of Exceptional and Great Historic Interest. The register is advisory only, and has no statutory powers. The register is being compiled by Cadw in partnership with the International Council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

HGP - Register of Historic Gardens & Parks.

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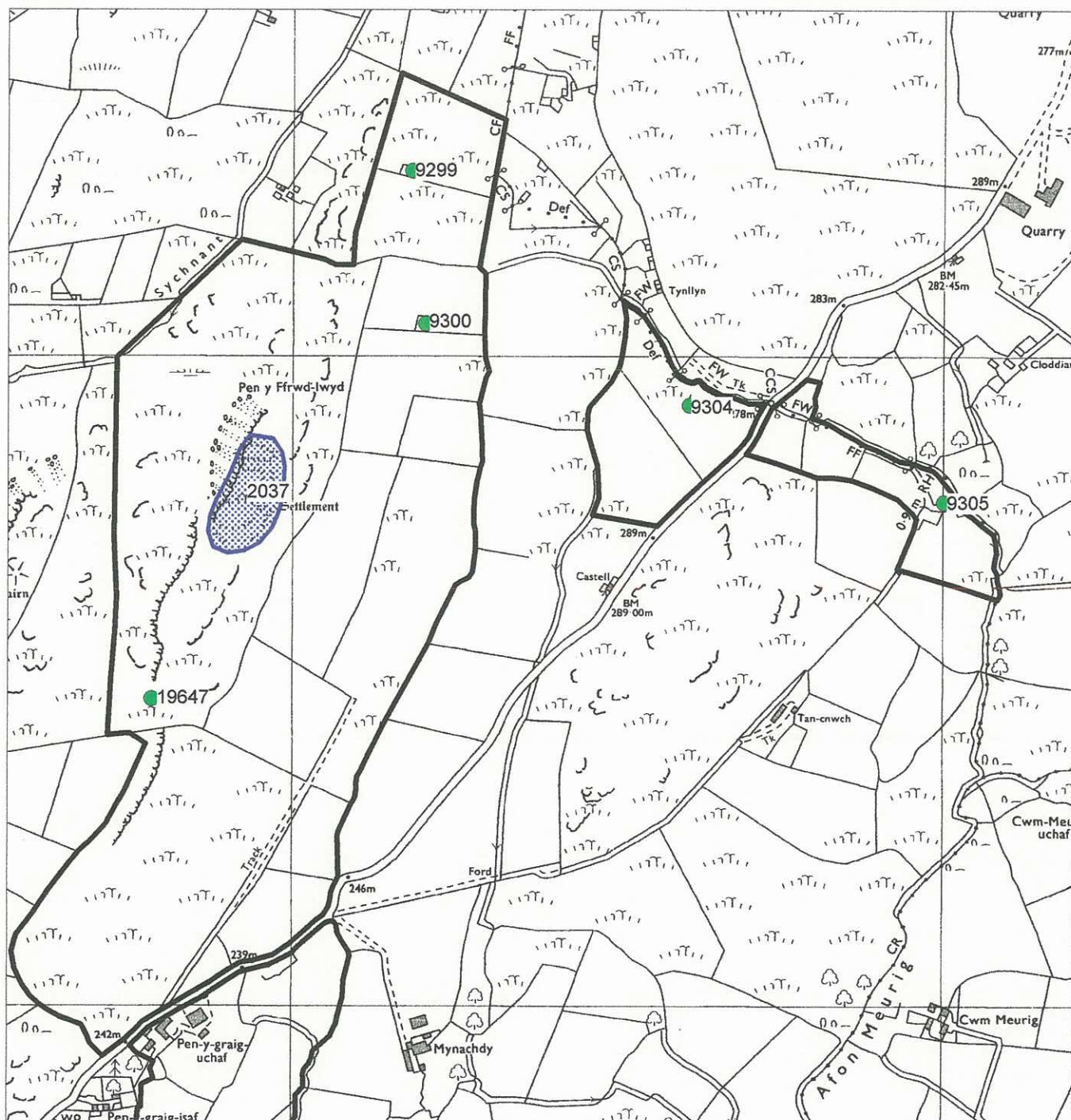
not to scale



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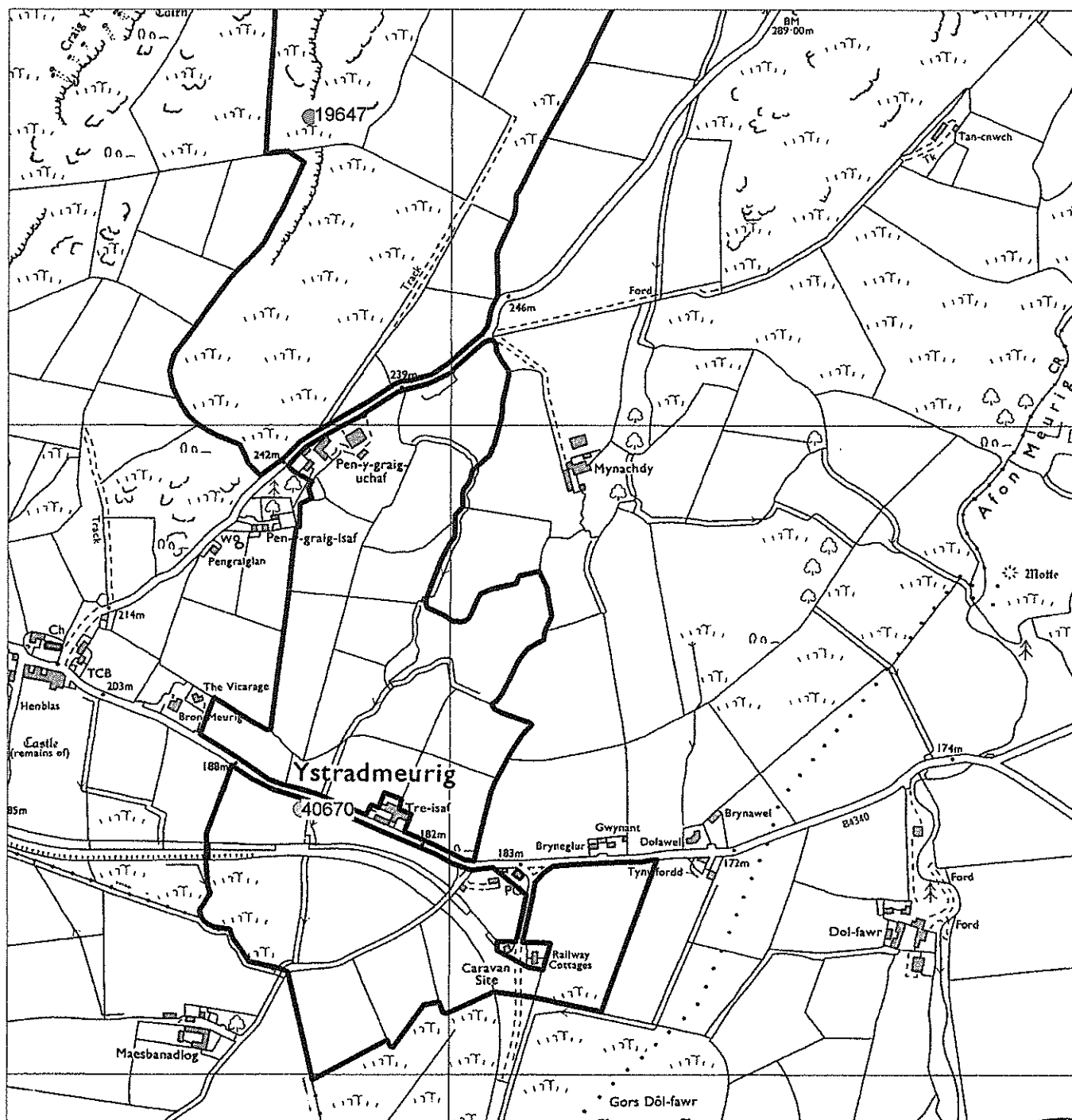
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PRN 60665 - Post-medieval sheepfold showing the entrance in the N side.



Plate 2: PRN 9299 - Penllyn cottage. The main house unit survives to full gable height.



Plate 3: PRN 9304 - Lluest Fach, small post-medieval homestead possibly on the site of a medieval shepherd's hut.



Plate 4: PRN 9305 -Internal detail of the house at Tan-Cnwch.

TIR GOFAL FARM VISIT REPORT: PEN Y GRAIG UCHAF

PROJECT RECORD NUMBER 40413

AUGUST 2000

This report has been prepared by Nigel Page

Position Project Manager

Signature  Date 16/10/2000

This report has been checked and approved by Gwilym Hughes on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position Director

Signature  Date 16/10/00

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