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**TIR GOFAL MANAGEMENT PLAN:
HERITAGE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION
(Call Out)**

**Prepared for:
Llystyn**

**Tir Gofal Reference No:
W/12/0719**

**Report Number: 2006/121
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Introduction And Objectives

The farm of Llystyn is centred on NGR SN53023093, in the community of Llanfihangel Rhos-y-corn, Carmarthenshire. The farm has already been subject to an archaeological farm visit in October 2000 and following this a report was compiled in which detailed management recommendations were supplied for each of the identified sites on the farm (Page 2000). A Tir Gofal Management Plan has subsequently been drawn up and implemented.

A further call out visit was undertaken by Cambria Archaeology on 3rd October 2006 at the Tir Gofal 5 year review, following an expressed intention by the owner to carry out restoration work to a traditional barn. The visit was carried out with the aim of:

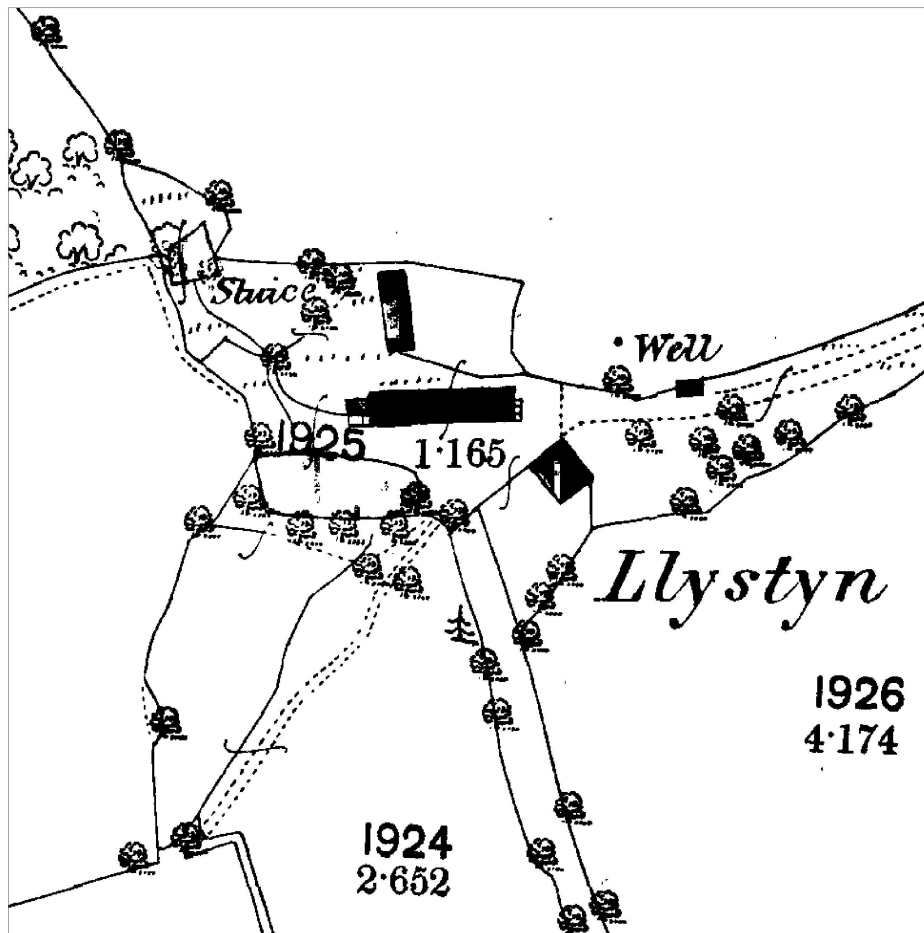
- carrying out a rapid survey of the barn to provide a basic record of the building,
- to obtain information about its historical significance,
- to make an assessment of its condition and provide specific management recommendations relating to the proposed works,

General Description of Farmstead

The farmstead is centred on two detached, 19th century, stone built and slated ranges at right angles to one another on two levels, terraced into a steep south facing slope, with the house and a former pond (see Ordnance Survey 25" map, 1889) to the south. Modern sheds lie behind the historic core to the north and west.

The origins of the farm are unclear but a rental agreement of 1738 names a farm called Llys Tyn David amongst the properties of the Taliaris estate. Early 19th century maps (Ordnance Survey Old Series 1831, Tithe Map 1844) record Llystyn, but not in sufficient detail to clarify its early development. What is certain is that the present layout was already established when the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map was published in 1889. Llystyn is typical of many similar estate, or at least estate influenced farms which became widespread from the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Ordnance Survey 1889 Carmarthenshire Sheet 24.11, 25"



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The Barn

This early-mid 19th century, stone built, slate roofed barn range, positioned across the slope, is situated above the yard at Llystyn at the northern end of the group. The barn is divided by a partition wall into two units of equal size, each with the characteristic high opposing doorways and slit ventilators of a threshing barn. Doorways had wooden lintels originally, although those in the west lateral wall were later reduced in size, part infilled with stone, with yellow brick lintels, in the late 19th /early 20th century. Linking the two units internally is a narrow doorway at the western end of the stone dividing wall. The roof timbers are A-frame trusses with raking struts.

The barn is historically interesting in its unusual layout when compared to other threshing barns in the region, distinguished by its double threshing floors, yet with little provision for storage. Grain was probably stored in the loft of the adjacent stable range situated at right angles, further down the slope, to the south. A footbridge links the yard behind the threshing barn to the loft level of this range through a dormer doorway.

The barn has experienced little significant change during its lifetime and its proportions remain essentially unchanged. Recent repairs include re-roofing and a re-inserted lintel above the south east threshing doorway. None of the threshing doors survive. The most visible modifications are in the area of the north threshing floor, comprising concrete cattle stalls, feed passage and a mainly glazed opening to the former east threshing door, inserted during the mid-20th century. The opening now includes a low wall of brick, a standard width plank doorway and wooden glazing bars above.

Building Restoration

The following advice responds to specific management concerns highlighted by the owner:

1. Repointing
 - Repointing is premature until mortar has weathered back to a depth equivalent to the joint width or is very loose. Based on these criteria some areas of the building would require localised repointing.
 - New pointing should match the material and finish of existing pointing as closely as possible. A nearly flush finish is appropriate for the barn at Llystyn.
 - Cementitious pointing has been used on some wall faces (eg. around the area of the south east threshing doorway.) Cementitious pointing can potentially lead to faster deterioration of the stones as they become the most permeable part of the wall and more vulnerable to weather action. Removal of cementitious pointing should only be carried out if trial indicates that it can be worked loose without damage. Otherwise it would be best left to work loose naturally. It would be acceptable to leave cementitious pointing to work loose naturally in this instance.
 - Ivy covers much of the south gable wall of the barn. Vegetation root growth can potentially threaten stability by expanding masonry joints. Monitor ivy growth. Consider cutting ivy off at ground level, allowing it to die followed by removal then repointing and masonry consolidation.

Mechanical or hand pointing?

The owner has enquired about the suitability of a mechanically repointing service using a mechanical grinder to remove existing pointing and pumps to refill joints. The following advice is provided following consultation with a traditional buildings specialist from Cadw.

- It is a concern that the use of a mechanical grinder to “rake out” old pointing is potentially damaging to the surface of the masonry. This risk may be more acute on rubble stone walls with uneven joint width. Any raking out of existing mortar should be done by hand.
- Filling and finishing off joints should be carried out by hand to ensure a consistent fill and finish using mortar that matches the material and finish of existing mortar as closely as possible.



Ivy covers much of the southern end of the building.

2. Structural concerns. Structural concerns were highlighted above the internal doorway between the former threshing floors where the lintel is rotted through and there are movement cracks in the wall above. Stout wooden posts now provide additional support.
- Any replacement materials used should be on a like for like basis.
 - If in doubt about structural integrity seek specialist advice (eg. from a suitably qualified builder or a structural engineer).



Facing north towards the internal doorway.

3. Woodworm. Evidence of woodworm activity was highlighted on the timber roof structure. It is not known if the woodworm remain active.
- Establish whether woodworm is still active. Active infestation is difficult to confirm but some idea can be established by clogging holes with furniture polish or tightly covering holes with paper. Active beetles will create new holes.
 - Conditions favouring woodworm infestation may have passed since the barn was re-roofed. Woodworm require more moisture than is generally found in a well maintained building. The drier the wood, the longer it takes the larvae to grow; the adult beetles are smaller and they lay fewer eggs.
 - Insect damage, is often historical and does not always require treatment. The insects often attack the sapwood but are rarely able to penetrate heartwood unless it has been chemically modified by fungi. This is particularly the case in older softwoods which were slower grown with proportionately more heartwood growth.

- If in doubt seek specialist structural advice (eg. from a suitably qualified builder or structural engineer).
4. Door replacement. Threshing barns typically had large doors to enable carts to enter. None of the large doors or their frames survive at Llystyn although an imprint from one of the frames is embedded in the mortar in the south east threshing doorway. Standard sized doors opposite remain but are decaying or damaged.
- Replacing the doors is not considered essential but if done sympathetically it would be a welcome enhancement to the barn.
 - Where possible replacement features should be modelled on the originals using the same materials and methods of construction. Where possible old door furniture such as hinges and latches should be retained.
 - As the appearance of the original threshing doors is not known it may be necessary to seek replacements based on comparison with other threshing barn doors. Photographs of some examples are included.



An imprint of the threshing door frame remains embedded in mortar.

5. Future usage. The barn is currently used for storage. Options were discussed for its future use including:

a. removing mid-20th century concrete cattle stalls, feed passage and mainly glazed opening within the northern threshing floor to reinstate a level, more usable surface with good access.

- As a general rule characteristics and features which reflect the history and function of traditional buildings must not be removed during the lifetime of the Tir Gofal agreement.
- The scheme also promotes the sympathetic use of traditional buildings within sustainable farming practice.
- The concrete cattle stalls, feed passage and mainly glazed opening to the former east threshing door are all contemporary, inserted during the mid-20th century. They are non-traditional features and as such are of lesser historical significance.
- Standard conservation guidelines recommend that a record is made in the event that historic features are to be removed. The sketch plan, field notes and digital photographs taken during the visit are considered adequate if these features are to be removed.



The glazed frame in the north east threshing doorway with contemporary cattle stalling in the foreground.

b. Opening up the original threshing doorways in the west wall ie. removing late 19th /early 20th century modifications when the threshing doorways were partly infilled to standard size with yellow brick lintels. The stated intention is that this will provide easier access

- Though not an original feature of the building, these modifications are nevertheless traditional and historically significant, being carried out with traditional materials and traditional methods of construction before c.1918.
- Ideally these doorways should be retained unless clear justification is given for not doing so.

Sources

Tithe Map 1844 Tithe Map and Apportionment Llanfihangel Rhos-y-corn

Ordnance Survey 1811 Original Surveyors Drawings Sheet 187

Ordnance Survey Old Series Map 1831 Sheet 41, 1"

Ordnance Survey 1889 Carmarthenshire Sheet 24.11, 25"

Ordnance Survey 1906 Carmarthenshire Sheet 24.11, 25"

Page, N. 2000 Tir Gofal Farm Visit Report for Llystyn. Unpublished report by Cambria Archaeology for Cadw.