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TIR GOFAL MANAGEMENT PLAN: HERITAGE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION (Call Out) Prepared for: Ffynnon-dderw



Tir Gofal Reference No: 1829

Report Number: 2007/43 Project Record Number: 41531

Prepared by Will Steele

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Call Out Visit

A farm visit was undertaken at the request of the Countryside Council for Wales to address specific management issues on this farm. The aim of this report is to make an assessment of these issues in order to provide management recommendations to be incorporated into the Tir Gofal Management Plan. This report is not intended to assess the structural condition or stability of any given site.

The Call Out Report responds to management concerns regarding specific sites, it does not provide management advice for all known sites on the farm, for these recommendations please refer to the Historic Environment Report 1 (He1).

A site meeting took place at Cwmbrwyno (holding no 1829d) on 6th June 2007 to discuss proposals to make alterations to an historic trackway, which lies within the area of a former lead mine responding to safety concerns. Present at the meeting were Will Steele (Cambria Archaeology) and Dai Thomas, the landowner.

Historic Landscape Character

The landscape surrounding Cwmbrwyno is recognised as being of considerable landscape value falling as it does within the Upland Ceredidigion Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest (HLW (D) 2). This is a non-statutory, advisory designation, which aims to provide information and raise awareness on areas with significant landscape value, to aid their protection and conservation. The area has been further assessed as part of the Historic Landscape Characterisation Project and falls largely within area 18: Banc Bwa-Drain.

The holding forms part of a high, craggy, east-west aligned ridge consisting mainly of unenclosed moorland with some peaty hollows, although large enclosures of semiimproved pasture formed by earth and wire fences are present. The remains of lead mining are conspicuous features of the historic landscape. A wind-farm and powerlines, a communications tower and transforming station are more recent landscape components.

Description

The remains of the Cwmbrwyno lead mine fall within the holding. Although lead ore was recorded by Lewis Morris in the mid 18th-century, no attempt at mining seems to have been undertaken at Cwmbrwyno until 1849. Reservoirs and leats were constructed and adits sunk. The mine was relatively successful with a total recorded output of just over 6000 tonnes of lead ore and 796 tonnes of zinc when operations ceased in 1888 (Bick 1983, 19-20).

A programme of environmental improvements was undertaken in 1999 in order to stop the leaching of metals from the site. Spoil tips at the head of the valley were affected but the buildings, reservoirs, shafts and adits remain as testament to a once important industry.

The Proposed Works

The landowner is keen to make alterations to an historic trackway which forms part of the former Cwm brwyno Lead Mine.

The track is today visible as a level terrace, approximately 3m wide, excavated into the natural bedrock with a vertical bank on the east side a the steep drop on the east down to where the ruinous mine offices stand. It is recorded on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1888 (in the same year that operations ceased at the mine), shown diverting to a quarry and tips at SN71398068 from the main eastwest spinal routeway across the mine.

Today the track is in regular use by tractors during the wetter months as a route for carrying winter feed to level ground above. The bedrock surface is uneven, pitted and slippery during wet and icy conditions. The threat of a serious accident caused by a tractor slipping down the steep slope below is a serious concern.

Impact Assessment

Management Recommendations

There are no objections to the proposed works.

Description and essential historic landscape components

A high, craggy west-east aligned ridge which achieves a maximum height of 389m. It is essentially unenclosed moorland with peaty hollows, although large enclosures formed by wire fences and some disused earth-bank boundaries of unknown date lie at the western end of the area where the ridge summit descends to *c*. 340m. Here there are pockets of improved grazing. The sites of abandoned cottages on the ridge summit at the western end and on the fringes of the area are inconspicuous, but are important elements of the historic landscape. The remains of lead mining at Cwmbrwyno are obvious historic landscape features. In 1999, a programme of environmental improvements was undertaken at Cwmbrwyno. The buildings and reservoirs at the site will remain following these works as testimony to this once important industry. At the eastern end of the area, peat-filled hollows may be evidence of further reservoirs constructed to serve lead mines to the south in area 59. Much of the former remote feel to this area has been destroyed by the construction of a wind-farm and power-lines, a communications tower and transforming station.

Interpretation

Introduction

A site meeting took place at Dolaucothi Park on the 3rd February 2006 in order to discuss proposals to plant trees in the Grade II Registered parkland as part of the Tir Gofal scheme.

Present at the meeting were: Nigel Williams, Farmer; Candace Browne, Countryside Council for Wales; Emma Plunkett-Dillon, National Trust; Brian Hancock, National Trust; Elizabeth Whittle, Cadw and Alice Pyper, Cambria Archaeology.

Description

The main area of historic parkland is and as far as it is possible to determine always was, to the south and southwest of the house and it is dotted with specimen trees. There are a number of limes, which predominantly occupy the parkland nearest the house, these are thought to be dated to around 1850 (Cadw Parks and Gardens Register; 2002, p 16). In addition there are oak, sycamore, beech and ash trees represented.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map compared with the current condition of the parkland shows that a number of historic parkland trees have been lost in the last century; a view confirmed by the farmer, Mr. Williams. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map also indicates two specimen conifers in the park, but these have been lost.

Recommendations for parkland restoration through the Tir Gofal scheme

The parkland at Dolaucothi is a designed landscape laid out to achieve pleasing views and a suitable setting for the house, it is essential, therefore that any restoration is carried out with an appropriate plan so that the original visual effects are maintained. The following guidelines about parkland restoration were established at the meeting;

- It was agreed that the 25 inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey map is most appropriate and accurate map to be used as the baseline for any future restoration of the parkland and that positions of parkland trees should follow as closely as possible the planting scheme represented on it (Ordnance Survey, 1888. 25 inch. Carmarthenshire sheets 09.13 & 17.01).
- Tree species should be based on the evidence of species represented in the parkland lime / oak / beech / ash. No one species should dominate the

parkland – except that limes appear to prevail in the parkland nearest the house.

- Lime species need to be carefully sourced to ensure that newly introduced trees are of a similar habit to those existing. (Please see guidance information supplied by Liz Whittle [Cadw] appended.)
- The individual tree guards should be placed around each of the planted trees; these should be of an appropriate design within the parkland landscape. The National Trust will advise on the design of tree guards.
- Currently there is provision in Tir Gofal for 5 trees to be planted in the parkland, it was decided that these should be 2 limes, 2 oaks and a beech. These trees will replace those which have been lost since the late nineteenth century. The National Trust will be able to provide five young trees. Their positions have been marked up on the map appended.

There maybe further opportunities within the Tir Gofal scheme to undertake additional parkland restoration. The Year 5 review, which will take place in September 2007, could provide further possibilities. The guidelines which have been established above will provide a starting point for these discussions, however a further site meeting should be arranged to consider planting patterns and priorities for the next phase of restoration.

References

Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments & ICOMOS UK, 2002. Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales, Part 1: Parks and Gardens Ordnance Survey, 1888. 1st edition 1:2500 Carmarthenshire sheets 09.13 & 17.01

Introduction

A farm visit was undertaken at the request of the Countryside Council for Wales in order to address specific management issues on this farm. The aim of this report is to make an assessment of these concerns in order to provide management recommendations to be incorporated into the Tir Gofal Management Plan. This report is not intended to assess the structural condition or stability of any given site.

The Call Out Report responds to specific management issues on the farm, it does not provide management advice for all known sites on the farm, for these please refer to the Historic Environment Report 1 (He1).

General Description of Farm

Upper Neeston, Pembrokeshire, lies within Herbrandston community, centred on National Grid Reference SM 8777 0777. The farm was visited by Cambria Archaeology on the 16^{th} of September 2003.

The holding of Upper Neeston lies within the Herbrandston Historic Landscape Character Area of the Milford Haven Waterway Registered Historic Landscape, defined as a 'Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest' in the Cadw/ICOMOS 'Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales' (Historic Landscape Characterisation Area 345 in Murphy and Ludlow, 2002; Area HLW (D) 3, Map 5 in Cadw/ICOMOS 1998;). The Historic Landscapes Register is a nonstatutory, advisory document assessing the historic significance of the landscape to enable those involved in land care to make informed management decisions. The Registered area is further broken down in Historic Landscape Character Areas which assess components (such as land use, settlement, field pattern etc) within the landscape which give regions their distinctive quality.

Upper Neeston is situated upon a plateau which lies to the east of Sandy Haven, in a prominent position to the west of Herbrandston village. The entirety of the holding is under pasture, made up of regular enclosures defined by hedges on earth and stone banks. The farmstead is substantial, with a large farmhouse and an extensive range of farm buildings around the yard. The farm buildings are in various states of preservation and the owner hopes to be able to restore these buildings and find new uses for them.

Track Alteration

A call out visit was requested in order to discuss the problem of an eroding trackway

Pond Restoration

It is hoped that a pond, which lies to the southeast of the farmstead, can be restored through Tir Gofal. The pond is identified on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889, apparently fed by a spring marked to the northwest of it. The pond is shown to have widened from its source and was retained by a linear bank which defined the southwestern edge. A stream issued from the retaining bank and continued to run in a southwest direction, into the adjacent field parcel.

When visited in September the pond had no standing water, and the course of the stream ran straight through it. The edges of the pond were discernable, there appeared to be no banks as such; the pond appeared to have been merely cut into the ground surface. There was no indication of the retaining bank. Since this area becomes very poached by cattle in the wet, it is possible that any bank, particularly if it was constructed in nothing more substantial than loose earth and stone, would have been heavily eroded.

The owner proposes to construct a new revetment bank with loose rubble and earth along the line of the earlier bank, which should raise water levels sufficiently and avoid the need for dredging the pond.

The main area of archaeological concern with this proposal was the proximity of some burnt mounds that are recorded to the southeast of the pond, in the adjacent field.

(Burnt Mounds can date from the Bronze Age (c2000 - 500BC) to the post medieval period. However, they are generally thought to date from the Bronze Age and may have been used as cooking sites or saunas. Burnt mounds are usually identified on the ground as grass covered horseshoe shaped mounds. These mounds consist of heat shattered stone and charcoal. Where sites have been excavated they often have adjacent wooden water tanks. Burnt mounds are located in wet areas where they fill with water unaided. Stone was heated in a fire and thrown into the tank of water. The heated water was used for cooking or bathing. In order to reuse the tank the stone was removed resulting in the mound. In some cases these mounds are very large indicating long-term use of the site.)

There are two burnt mounds which are recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record; Prn 3031 which lies some 30 metres from the pond to the southeast and Prn 3032 which lies a further 150 metres away, lying adjacent to the watercourse which issues from the spring within Upper Neeston farm. Both these sites lie outside the farm holding, downstream of the pond. A survey of burnt mounds was undertaken in 1994-1995. Each of these sites was visited, a visual inspection was carried out and an auger sample taken (where a probe is cut into the ground surface to extract a core which shows the profile of the subsurface ground makeup). The results of this survey indicate that the burnt mound Prn 3031 could not be identified and the samples that were taken showed only natural ground makeup. However, Prn 3032 did provide very positive results. An oval mound 6 metres by 2.5 and 0.1 metre high was identified lying alongside the stream. Augering of this feature demonstrated burnt debris below the ground surface.

Management Recommendations

The only potential threat to the recorded burnt mound Prn 3032 from the pond restoration, is any erosion caused by an increase in the rate or quantity of water flowing through the adjacent stream fed by the spring within Upper Neeston holding. Since the proposed works should not increase the rate or quantity of water issuing downstream it is considered that the restoration of the pond does not constitute a threat to the burnt mound Prn 3032. Indeed the construction of a revetment bank with outlet pipes could allow an even flow of water avoiding the severe fluctuations in the stream flow which could potentially cause erosion.

Although no surviving banks associated with the pond were noted during the farm visit, the proposed method of restoring the pond (by reconstructing a revetment bank in which to control the water level in the pond), would seem to have the least impact on any surviving features which may survive below ground surface.

Well

A well is marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891, although there is no trace of any structure today, and indeed although the ground appeared damp underfoot there is not a significant amount of running or standing water either. The owner does not know of its whereabouts.

Management Recommendations

The owner hopes to clear a ditch which runs adjacent to and west of the field boundary. The Ordnance Survey indicates that the well lies between 5-10 metres to the west of the hedgeline and should not be impacted by the proposed ditch clearance. However, any works to the ditch along the hedgeline should be mindful of the location of the well and should any masonry or timber structures be discovered then Cambria Archaeology should be informed. The ditch clearance should be undertaken when ground conditions are reasonably dry and firm in order to avoid damage to the site of the well.

Farm buildings

The owner has expressed an interest in restoring some of the disused farm buildings and converting them for alternative uses. Farm buildings which are no longer used for agricultural uses fall outside the remit of the Tir Gofal scheme and therefore not subject to management recommendations, however, it would be of great benefit for the restoration programme and also a significant archaeological resource if a photographic record were carried out of the buildings, both prior to and during any restoration works (this may also be a requirement of any planning consent given for conversion). A copy of the guidelines for photographing farm buildings is attached.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Condition

Recommendations

REFERENCES Maps Other Sources

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 18 BANC BWA-DRAIN

GRID REFERENCE: SN 723799 AREA IN HECTARES: 451.4

Historic Background

At least part of this area of high unenclosed land lay within Cwm-hir Abbey's Nantyrarian Grange, an important pastoral property in 1291 (Williams 1990, 40). By the 18th century, and probably earlier, most of the land in this area was the property of Nanteos estate or Gogerddan estate. Late 18th- and early 19th-century estate maps (NLW Vol 45, 21-22, 35; Vol 37, 57, 60) show it as unenclosed sheep-walk - it is unlikely that it has ever been anything other than marginal land and moorland - with what appear to be two or three squatter houses surrounded by small enclosures. These have now gone. Although lead ore was recorded by Lewis Morris in the mid 18th-century, no attempt at mining seems to have been undertaken at Cwmbrwyno until 1849. Reservoirs and leats were constructed and adits sunk. Production ceased in 1888 (Bick 1983, 19-20). A communications tower, wind-farm and electricity transforming plant have all been constructed in this area in recent years.

Description and essential historic landscape components

A high, craggy west-east aligned ridge which achieves a maximum height of 389m. It is essentially unenclosed moorland with peaty hollows, although large enclosures formed by wire fences and some disused earth-bank boundaries of unknown date lie at the western end of the area where the ridge summit descends to *c*. 340m. Here there are pockets of improved grazing. The sites of abandoned cottages on the ridge summit at the western end and on the fringes of the area are inconspicuous, but are important elements of the historic landscape. The remains of lead mining at Cwmbrwyno are obvious historic landscape features. In 1999, a programme of environmental improvements was undertaken at Cwmbrwyno. The buildings and reservoirs at the site will remain following these works as testimony to this once important industry. At the eastern end of the area, peat-filled hollows may be evidence of further reservoirs constructed to serve lead mines to the south in area 59. Much of the former remote feel to this area has been destroyed by the construction of a wind-farm and power-lines, a communications tower and transforming station.

In addition to metal mine remains, the recorded archaeology consists of abandoned settlement, probably of pre 19th-century date and Bronze Age round barrows. The latter provide time-depth to this landscape.

This block of high, unenclosed land is well-defined; lower-lying enclosed land (areas 59 and 69) lie to the south, and areas 68 and 84 to the north.

Ground photographs: 10, 11

Aerial Photographs: 49, 50, 78, 79, 82