

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Report
Fron Farm
W/12/1751

Report Number 2001/68

**Report prepared for
CCW**

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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FRON FARM
TIR GOFAL FARM VISIT REPORT

By

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Tir Gofal Application Number W/12/1751
Address Fron Farm
Fron Eglwys Fair, Llanboidy, Whitland

National Grid Reference SN19872632
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Visit Date 10/10/01

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INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to provide a statement on the condition and recommended management of all known archaeological and historical sites and features on the 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.

Method Statement

The farm visit consisted of two phases.

Phase 1 was a rapid search of all readily available documentary, cartographic and published sources to try to understand the historical development of the farm and the wider landscape and to identify new sites of archaeological interest. The searches undertaken for this visit include information held in the regional Sites and Monuments Record, the relevant County Records Office and the National Library of Wales. New sites, or areas of interest were plotted onto a GIS-based map for use in the field and for the final report.

Phase 2 was a site visit to assess the extent, character and current condition of the archaeological and historical sites identified during the research phase, although because of constraints, recording is rapid, usually photographs and site notes, and some of the sites may not have been visited. The information gained during the visit has been used to assign the farm and its individual sites to a management category, which have determined the management recommendations for each site.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FARM

Fron Farm (PRN 43656) consists mostly of semi / unimproved pasture on the gentle south facing slopes to the north of the Afon Tigen. The farmstead itself consists of a complex of buildings, situated in the centre of the existing holding. The farmhouse is detached and stands in a prominent position overlooking the farmyard. To the west of the farmhouse is the old garden, which the current owner believes is of botanical interest; apparently previous occupiers of the farm were keen plant collectors and have planted various unusual plants and trees.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1819 names the farm and shows a complex of at least three buildings arranged around a yard at the end of the farm track. The tithe survey of Eglwysfawr A Churig of 1843 shows the farm holding as being at least twice its current size with a broad square field pattern. At this time the farm was tenanted by John Evans and owned by James Bowen. The buildings shown on the tithe map correspond with the position of the farmhouse, two buildings (PRN 43657 and 43660) and also a pond marked to the south of the farmyard (PRN 43835). The tithe survey also shows the cottages at the end of the farm lane as forming part of the holding. At the time of the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, 1891 and 1907 respectively, the farm was named Fron-ganol and the farmstead had established the basic footprint (with one or two additions) which can currently be seen. The smithy also appears marked on the 1st edition map.

The redundant church of St. Marys now belongs to the farm, and an old track, still a public right of way, leads across the farm from the church to the neighbouring farm Fron-isaf. The south eastern end of the track is bounded by high earth banks with overgrown hedgerow trees to either side. The track itself is overgrown in places although the owner has made a start on clearing the obstructive vegetation.

The field boundaries are mostly hedge lined earth banks which in places are no longer stock proof and have grown out into lines of mature trees (plate 1). However the layout of the boundaries still corresponds to those recorded on the tithe map of 1843.

Characteristic of the farm and the farm buildings is the use of slate, in large monolithic pieces. It has been used as a form of wall construction (PRN 43663), internally for stall partitions and feed troughs and externally for gate posts.

MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Archaeological sites which require action, and recommendations which apply to the farm buildings as a whole, are outlined below. Management recommendations for specific buildings or features are detailed in the gazetteer.

The current owner hopes to reuse the farm buildings, which would help to secure their survival and future maintenance. Any alterations or adaptations of the buildings should maintain the historic fabric as far as possible and be carried out using traditional materials to preserve the character of the farmstead. Generally the farm buildings are in reasonable condition, although some roof slates have slipped, and some are becoming rather overgrown with ivy which is affecting the masonry. It is important that repairs are carried out before these structures deteriorate. The vegetation should be removed very carefully, the masonry consolidated and the roofs repaired and made watertight.

PRN 5076 - This church and the associated churchyard is considered to be of national importance. Medieval origins have been suggested in documentary sources and there may be elements surviving both in the upstanding masonry and also as buried remains. The remaining fabric appears to be little altered since the restoration of 1770.

The owner is keen to consolidate the ruins of the church and clear the churchyard of intrusive vegetation with a view to opening it up to the public. This would be a very worthwhile undertaking. Priority must be given to consolidating the masonry which is substantially overgrown and in a vulnerable condition. Great care must be given to the removal of intrusive vegetation which may have penetrated the fabric. It may be necessary to undertake consolidation works simultaneously with the removal of vegetation which may be providing support to the structure. Archaeological advice must be sought if works are to be undertaken on the church, and provision should be made for an archaeological record of the fabric before and after consolidation works. Any clearance within or around the structure must be carried out with care, and attention given to the recovery of architectural fragments or fixtures and fittings which may be amongst the debris. Prior to any work being carried out it would be beneficial to seek specialist conservation advice, for contacts see list appended.

PRN 43835 - If the intention is to restore the pond it is advised that any ground breaking works are undertaken with archaeological supervision.

See gazetteer for detailed management recommendations.

KEY TO MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES

Category	Importance	Colour on map	Detail
Category A	Sites and Monuments of National Importance	Blue	Scheduled Ancient Monuments Grade 1 and 2* Listed Buildings
		Red	Other Sites and Monuments of National Importance Other Buildings Of National Importance
		Red Toning	Registered Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest
		Red Banding	Registered Landscapes of Historic Interest
Category B	Sites and Monuments of Regional Importance	Amber	Sites and Monuments of Regional Importance Grade 2 Listed Buildings and Other Buildings of Regional Importance
Category C	Sites and Monuments of Local Importance	Green	Sites and Features of Local Importance Buildings of Local Importance
Category D	Sites and Monuments of Unknown Importance	Brown	Sites and Features needing further investigation includings damaged sites or sites with no physical definition

SITE AND AREA DESIGNATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in the gazetteer to refer to site and area status designations.

SAM Scheduled Ancient Monument

SAMs are notified under Section 1 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The schedule of SAMs is maintained and administered by Cadw.

LB1, LB2* and LB2 Listed Buildings

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. Local Authorities are statutory consultees for listed buildings.

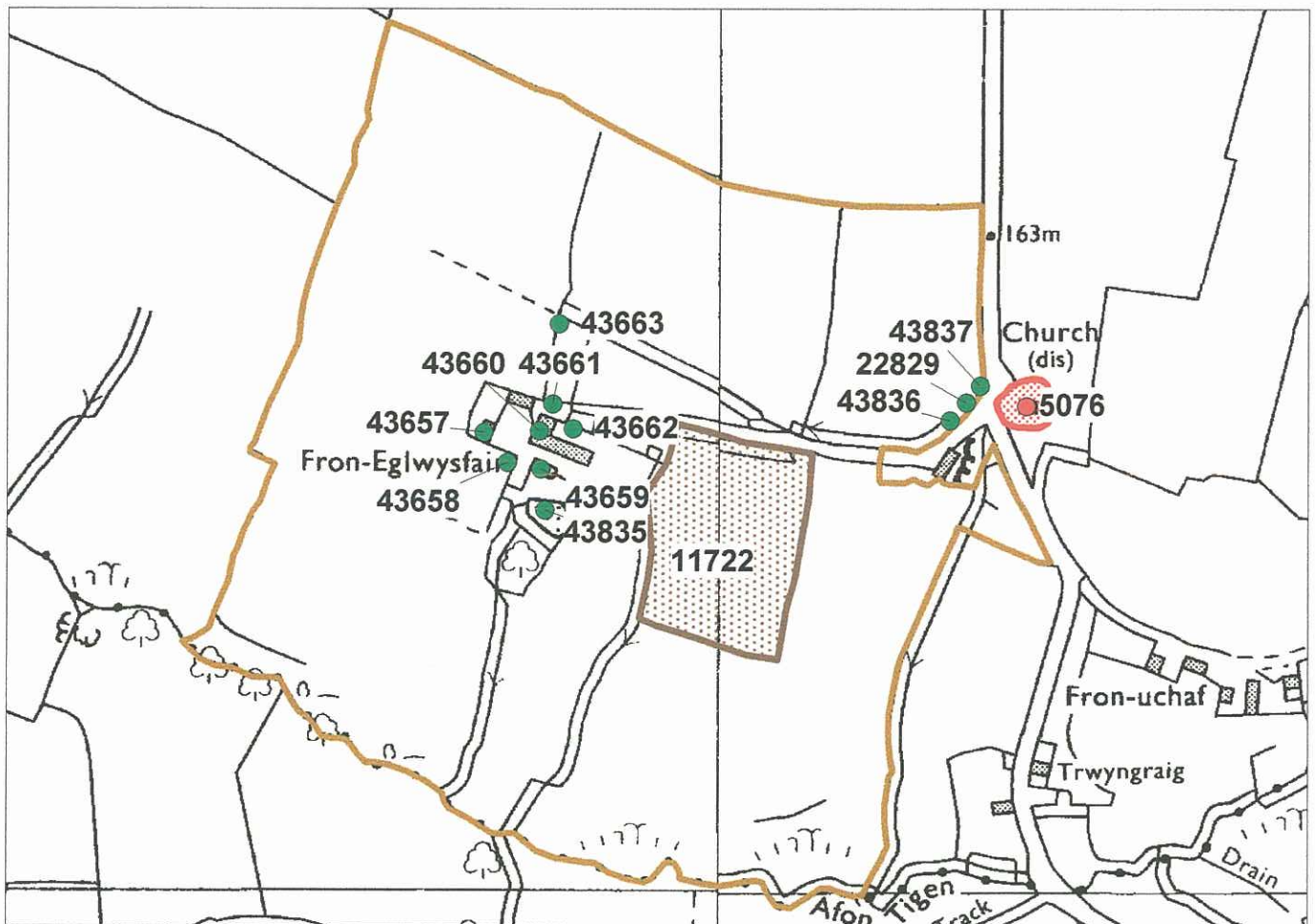
HLW Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales

Defined by the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales, Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales: Part 2.1 Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest; Part 2.2 Landscapes of Special Historic Interest. The register is advisory only and has no statutory powers. The register was compiled by Cadw in partnership with the Countryside Council for Wales and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

HGP Register of Historic Gardens and Parks

Defined by the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales, Part 1 Parks and Gardens. The register is advisory only and has no statutory powers. The register was compiled by Cadw in partnership with the Countryside Council for Wales and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

Fron Farm Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation
Countryside Council for Wales Reference Number W/12/1751
Cambria Archaeology Reference Number 41730
National Grid Reference SN19872632
Scale 1:5,000



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GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

PRN 5076 **Site name** ST MARY & ST CURIG'S; EGLWYS **NGR** SN20212634
FAIR; LADY CHAPEL

Site type CHURCH **Period** Medieval; Post Med **Site Status**

Description

A small church of presumed medieval age which was restored in 1770. It is a simple nave and chancel devoid of any decoration, with a bell-cote at the west front. The restoration in the 18th century saw the addition of brick arches (in a pitched gothic style) to the windows of the nave. The roof of the nave has collapsed (after a tree fell on it in the 1950's), and the chancel roof is in a poor state. Most of the rendering on the inside walls had fallen off revealing a blocked window in the south wall of the nave. The walls are crudely built of local shale. There is a broad curving arch separating the nave from the chancel. The graveyard perimeter is a bank of rubble stone construction, but this may not be of great antiquity as aerial photographs show that in 1946 it was delimited by a ring of trees. It is difficult to establish if the churchyard was in origin circular, the present wall has definite angles forming corners, and the configuration of roads and track approaching the southern side cannot be said to pass 'around' the graveyard. There is evidence of a silted ditch in the adjacent field following the line of the present wall - although this could be a result of making the present boundary bank. There is a reference to an Early Christian Monument (an engraved stone) at this church in 1876 (*Archaeologia Cambrensis* p40) but it does not appear to have survived, and there are no descriptions of it. The graveyard is so overgrown that close inspection of the church walls was not possible, so it may survive, mortared into an exterior (or interior) wall of the church. (T.A. James, 1980.)

The roof is now missing completely, and although overgrown with ivy the walls remain standing to roof height (plate 2). Internally the nave has a central aisle flanked to either side by raised pew platforms (plate 3) and an octagonal pulpit plinth to the south of the chancel arch. The chancel has a raised slate dais at the east end and sockets within the side walls indicate the position of an altar rail. Internally the walls still retain some render finishes with a scar visible behind the pulpit at dado level. The remains of some decorated woodwork remain scattered about within the chancel.

Recommendations

This church and the associated churchyard is considered to be of national importance. Medieval origins have been suggested in documentary sources and there may be elements surviving both in the upstanding masonry and also as buried remains. The remaining fabric appears to be little altered since the restoration of 1770.

The owner is keen to consolidate the ruins of the church and clear the churchyard of intrusive vegetation with a view to opening it up to the public. This would be a very worthwhile undertaking. Priority must be given to consolidating the masonry which is substantially overgrown and in a vulnerable condition. Great care must be given to the removal of intrusive vegetation which may have penetrated the fabric. It may be necessary to undertake consolidation works simultaneously with the removal of vegetation which may be providing support to the structure. Archaeological advice must be sought if works are to be undertaken on the church, and provision should be made for an archaeological record of the fabric before and after consolidation works. Any clearance within or around the structure must be carried out with care, and attention given to the recovery of architectural fragments or fixtures and fittings which may be amongst the debris. Prior to any work being carried out it would be beneficial to seek specialist conservation advice, for contacts see list appended.

Management Category A **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 11722 **Site name** PARK Y FFOS **NGR** SN200263

Site type TRACKWAY? **Period** Post Med? **Site Status**

Description

Field name recorded on the Tithe map of 1843, which suggests a ditch or possible sunken trackway. The name probably refers to the farm track which runs along the northern edge of the field.

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations.

Management Category D **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 22829 **Site name** EGLWYS FAIR **NGR** SN20182634

Site type SMITHY **Period** Post Med **Site Status**

Description

The smithy is a single cell coursed slate construction with a 4 bay pitched corrugated iron roof (plate 4). A large double doorway in its east elevation is dressed with brick jambs and a timber lintel. At its north end is the remains of a large external chimney which has been reduced in height to below roof level and capped over with a single pitch corrugated iron roof. Internally the hearth has a reused timber lintel, scorched at its western end, probably indicating the position of the bellows to the east of the hearth. To the east of the hearth is a vertical depression chased out of the masonry. In the west elevation is a small ventilation window. The floor is rammed earth and lime. It has become very overgrown at both gable ends and the roof over the hearth is no longer watertight.

Recommendations

The vegetation which is engulfing the smithy should be carefully cut back and allowed to die before removal, and the masonry consolidated using traditional materials. It is vital that the roof is repaired and made watertight to prevent damage to the masonry.

Management Category C **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 43657 **Site name** FRON FARM **NGR** SN19842632

Site type COW SHED **Period** Post Med **Site Status**

Description

This is a single storey cow shed to the west of the farm yard, constructed in coursed slate with a white wash finish and a pitched corrugated iron roof (plate 5). The east elevation has low doorways at either end and a central double doorway which has been partially blocked in with breeze block; no original fittings appear to survive internally. Internally it has a concrete floor and breeze block partitions. The roof is constructed with timber pegged, collared trusses and strengthening braces have been added longitudinally to prevent the roof racking. At its south end is a lean-to, slate walled on the east and west side and a breeze block south wall with a pent roof. There is a rough cobbled floor, and a slate feed trough along the cross wall.

Recommendations

The cow shed is becoming quite severely overgrown on its gable walls and in some of the wall tops. The vegetation should be carefully removed from the masonry and in particular the wall tops, which should then be consolidated using traditional materials. The slate feed trough in the lean-to at the end should be retained.

Management Category C **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 43658 **Site name** FRON FARM

NGR SN19852630

Site type COW SHED

Period Post Med

Site Status

Description

This single storey cow shed is constructed in coursed slate with slate lintels and brick dressings and a pitched, corrugated iron roof (plate 6). The tithe map of 1843 shows a footprint of a building which corresponds with the position of the current building, although the current building appears to have undergone modernisation and remodelling. Internally the roof is a modern (20th century?) collar truss roof of 7 bays. The cow house has a longitudinal feed passage against the east wall, and the feed trough is partly constructed out of large slate slabs, the stall partitions and floor are concrete. Two low doorways at either side of the north gable end provide entry to the feed passage and to the rear of the stalls, above is a small ventilation window to the centre of the gable. Two low doorways in the west wall provide entry into breeze block lean-tos. A vertical building break in the southern gable end indicates an earlier phase to the building. Internally there are two small recesses set into either side of the southern gable wall.

Recommendations

The cow shed is currently in reasonable order, and should continue to be maintained in this condition. Any repairs should be carried out using traditional materials. It would be desirable to retain the slate lined feed trough if possible.

Management Category C

Visited by AMP

Visited On 10/10/01

PRN 43659 **Site name** FRON FARM

NGR SN19862630

Site type CART HOUSE

Period Post Med

Site Status

Description

To the east of the farm yard is a two-storey cart house orientated on a northwest-southeast axis, with a low brick arched cart entrance in the west gable wall (plate 7). The building is constructed with coursed slate and quartz with brick dressings and a pitched slate roof. The first floor openings have a polychromatic brick scheme including a small dovecote built into the south wall. The south elevation has a symmetrical arrangement of openings; a central doorway, flanked by windows and with doorways at either end, all with low brick arches and chamfered jambs. Internally the ground floor has iron hayracks against the north wall with a modern breeze block feed trough beneath and the floor is concrete. The first floor loft is accessed by a low ramp to a side door in the north elevation. A collar truss roof has the roofing batons laid directly on the back of the trusses with no rafters in between.

Recommendations

The cart house is currently in reasonable order, and should continue to be maintained in this condition. Any repairs should be carried out using traditional materials.

Management Category C

Visited by AMP

Visited On 10/10/01

Site type BARN

Period Post Med

Site Status

Description

A large barn is positioned to the east of the farm yard on a north east-south west axis, constructed in coursed slate with brick dressings. It has a pitched slate roof, hipped at the south end. To the west side are two additions, to the south is a 20th century brick built outshoot with pent roof, which housed a dairy unit. To the north is a slate built wing with brick dressings and a pitched half-hipped roof. Neither of these additions appear on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1907. Between these extensions a large double doorway has been inserted with an RSJ lintel. Internally the southern end of the barn is open to the roof and there are no first floor openings. Along the east wall is a longitudinal feed trough with a hay rack above behind which are four openings. A low doorway provides access through the west wall to the dairy unit.

The north end of the barn is two storey with a granary entered by external stone steps and a central doorway in the north gable end (plate 8). Within the north end of the granary a small room has been partitioned off with beaded tongue and groove and the roof lined with lathe and plaster presumably to provide workers accommodation. A doorway through the partition wall leads into a loft space where a chaff cutter has been mounted above a shoot to the floor below. The chaff cutter would appear to be an early 20th century apparatus, although it is not obvious how it was powered. The ground floor of the barn is split level with the upper end containing some slate stall partitions and slate flooring. A water course runs beneath the western extension which the owner believes may have driven a water wheel at one time. This extension has two doorways in the south elevation with a window in between. The north elevation has just two small ventilation windows. Internally a slate lined feed passage runs along the north wall, and the floor is concrete with some slate.

Recommendations

The barn is currently in good order, and should continue to be maintained in this condition. Accommodation in the granary is an uncommon feature and the internal fixtures should be repaired and retained, using sympathetic materials. Other historical internal fittings such as the chaff cutter, the slate slab feed troughs and the stall partitions should also be retained.

Management Category C

Visited by AMP

Visited On 10/10/01

Site type OUTBUILDING

Period Post Med

Site Status

Description

A small building to the east of the farmhouse which is constructed out of coursed slate with brick dressings and a pitched slate roof (plate 9). It has single doorway in the south elevation and a small window to the west of the doorway. A boiler is situated to in the north west corner of the building with a chimney rising at the back of the building. To the east of the gable end is a small timber extension with a slightly lower pitched corrugated iron roof. A large rectangular sump is positioned in the floor of this extension. The function of this building is unclear, and may have had different functions at different times, it may have been a wash house or mash house and the owner suggests that the rectangular vat or sump in the east extension may be a scalding tank for processing carcasses.

Recommendations

The outbuilding has loose and missing slates around the chimney which are allowing water ingress, these need to be repaired and made watertight. Some pointing is showing signs of erosion, these areas need to be repointed. The internal fixtures are an integral part of the building which should be retained.

Management Category C

Visited by AMP

Visited On 10/10/01

PRN 43662 **Site name** FRON FARM **NGR** SN19902630

Site type BARN **Period** Modern **Site Status**

Description

To the east of the farmstead set below the farm track is a large hay barn, enclosed on the south and west sides (plate 10). It has a corrugated iron pitched roof supported on H-sectioned iron supports. A building is shown in this position on the 2nd edition OS map (1907), which must have been a precursor to the current building.

Recommendations

The hay barn is currently in good order, and should continue to be maintained in this condition.

Management Category C **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 43663 **Site name** FRON FARM **NGR** SN19882640

Site type SHED **Period** Post Med **Site Status**

Description

At the north end of the paddock above the house, beside the footpath, are the remains of a small building, constructed out of large monolithic pieces of sawn slate, supported with timber corner posts and fixed together with iron straps. There is no roof remaining but the appearance of the side walls would indicate that the roof would have been of single pitch. The north wall was constructed in corrugated iron, which was probably also the roofing material.

Recommendations

The shed is now very overgrown and ruinous; the roof no longer exists. The vegetation should be removed to expose the structure as a visible feature.

Management Category C **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 43835 **Site name** FRON FARM **NGR** SN20872626

Site type POND **Period** Post Med **Site Status**

Description

A large artificial pond is positioned to the south of the farmstead which appears on the tithe map of 1843. It is now largely drained and overgrown in places (plate 11).

Recommendations

If the intention is to restore the pond it is advised that any ground breaking works are undertaken with archaeological supervision.

Management Category C **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 43836 **Site name** FRON FARM **NGR** SN20172633

Site type COAL SHED **Period** Post Med **Site Status**

Description

To the south west of the smithy is a small coal shed constructed out of coursed slate and a corrugated iron pent roof (plate 12). It has two small windows in the east and south wall and a low doorway in the south wall.

Recommendations

The coal shed is currently very overgrown with ivy. The vegetation should be removed with care and the masonry consolidated.

Management Category C **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

PRN 43837 **Site name** FRON FARM **NGR** SN20182635

Site type CHURN STAND **Period** Post Med **Site Status**

Description

To the north of the smithy is a churn stand constructed in coursed slate.

Recommendations

The churn stand is currently overgrown with ivy, this should be removed with care and the masonry consolidated.

Management Category C **Visited by** AMP **Visited On** 10/10/01

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Plates



Plate 1 – An old field boundary to the south west of the farmstead



Plate 2 – St. Mary's Church (PRN 5076) from the north east

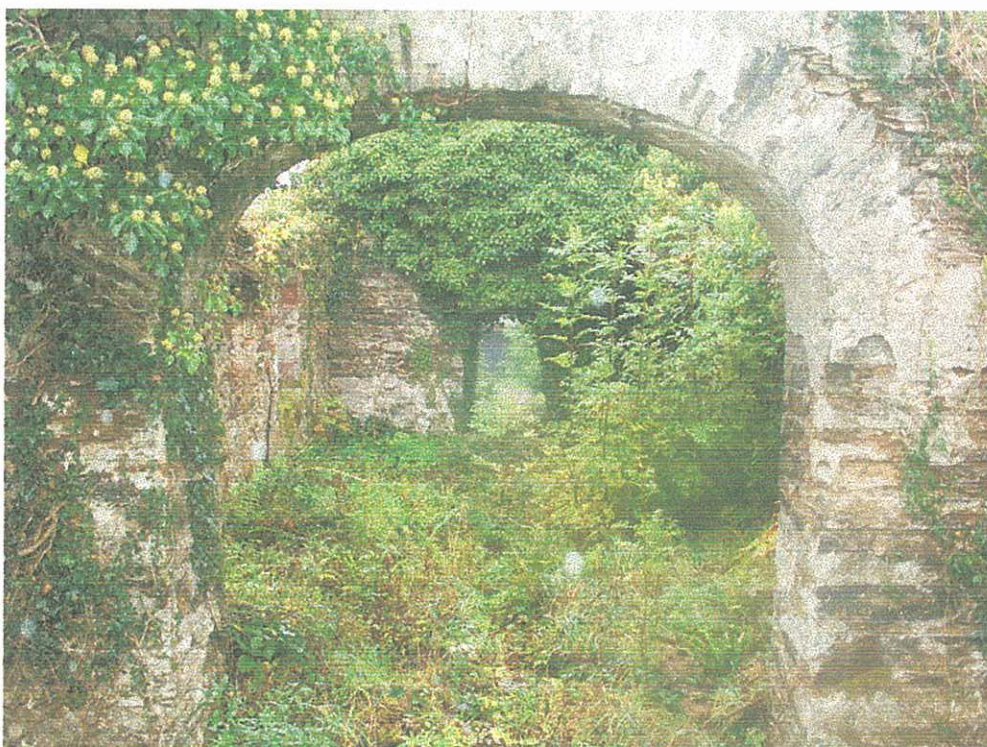


Plate 3 – the interior of St. Mary's Church (PRN 5076) looking west



Plate 4 – the smithy (PRN 22829)



Plate 5 – cow shed (PRN 43657) to the west of the farmyard



Plate 6 – cow shed (PRN 43658) to the south of the farmyard



Plate 7 – cart house (PRN 43658) to the south of the farmyard



Plate 8 – the granary at the north end of the barn (PRN 43660)



Plate 9 – the small outbuilding (PRN 43661) to the east of the farmhouse



Plate 10 – the hay barn (PRN 43662) to the south of the farm track



Plate 11 – the pond (PRN 43835) situated to the south of the farmyard



Plate 12 – the coal shed (PRN 43836) to the south west of the smithy

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This report has been prepared by Nigel Page, Alice Pyper

Position: Tir Gofal Archaeologist

Signature Alice Pyper Date 25/01/02

This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,
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Position: Principal Archaeological Officer (Curatorial)

Signature Louise Aust Date 25/01/02

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.