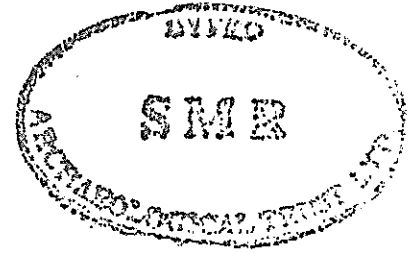


JULY 2002



# **GLASALLT FAWR**

## **W/12/2359**

**Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report**

Report No. 2002/48

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Countryside Council for Wales

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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GLASALLT FAWR  
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report

By

Paul Sambrook

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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 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.

### 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 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 Geographical Information Systems based map for use during the field survey and for the final report.

Phase 2 was a farm visit to assess the extent, character and current condition of the archaeological and historical sites identified during the research phase. Due to constraints recording is rapid and consists of photographs and sites notes. Some of the sites may not have been visited. The information gained during the visit has been used to determine their management recommendations.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FARM

Glasallt Fawr is a small farmstead in the community of Myddfai, to the southeast of the Tywi valley. It is situated at the interface between the broad Tywi valley floor and the hills which begin to rise towards the Carmarthenshire Vans to the south east. Its lower fields (to the west) are at an altitude of c.100m OD, and the higher points of the farm rise to over 175m OD at the eastern margin of the holding. This sudden rise in altitude partly explains a notable historic landscape variation within the holding, namely that the fields to the west of the farmyard are bounded by dense hedgerows set on low earth banks, while the field on the slopes to the east of the farmyard are defined by low earth banks with only occasional mature deciduous trees growing upon them.

In terms of historic land use, the parish tithe map provides some clues to former land use and land characteristics. To the west of the farmyard, field names such as Waun Isaf (No.844) and Waun Fach (No.845) are given, suggesting that some of the land was once relatively poor in quality and that it has been improved since the 18th century. On the higher ground to the east, field names such as Little Back Furze (No.859) and Cae Bank y Lan (No.856) indicate that at this side of the farm the higher ground was formerly rougher grazing, perhaps almost moor-like in appearance until 18th or 19th century improvements were made. This reminds us that the intensively farmed landscape of the 20th century was probably the climax of two or more centuries of technological improvements and practical improvements in agricultural management, which greatly changed the face of the land by extending the area of arable land and improved pasture.

The land is now exclusively used for pasture, apart from several small wooded parcels along the southern edge of the farm, which appear on the mid-19th century parish tithe map. Further wooded parcels shown on the tithe map to have existed between the farmyard and the main road to the west had been lost by the time of the 1891 1:10560 OS map. The field pattern of the holding appears to have undergone significant change during the mid- to late-19th century, as shown by comparison of the 1840 parish tithe map and the 1891 OS 1:10560 map series. The field pattern on the higher ground to the east of the farmyard has changed relatively little since the tithe map, but the fields to the west of the farmyard had been radically altered before 1891; 15 field parcel, two of which were wooded and two others parts wooded, had been transformed into 8 fields, one wooded, by a process of some boundary removal, some new boundaries being raised and most woodland removed. It is notable that a similar change in field pattern occurred during this period to the land of Glasallt Isha, immediately south of the Glasallt Fawr boundary. This suggests that the changes at Glasallt Fawr may have been part of wider movement by local landowners to improve their farming practices.

There are now very few historic buildings within the farmyard complex, only the modernised farmhouse and a single cowhouse appear to survive. Both have

characteristics that suggest them to have been built, or at least modified during the mid- or later- 19th century, and it is possible that an investment in the farm buildings was made around the same time that the new field layout was established.

Glasallt is now an organic farm holding and is not intensively farmed. It is used as a residential centre for young people with learning difficulties, who help farm the land.

The residential centre has developed to include a significant number of new buildings around the historic farmstead core, including hostels and modern agricultural buildings, greatly changing the character of the farmyard and its environs.

## **MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The main recommendation to be applied to the whole farm is that the integrity and appearance of the modern field system and its field boundaries should be maintained as they are reflective

of the historic development of the local landscape. It is important that those field boundaries which are marked by low earth banks and widely spaced mature trees retain that appearance, and selective felling of dead or dying trees and their replacement with new trees following a similar pattern, would be appropriate in future.

As elements of the historic landscape, the remaining woodland parcels should be managed and preserved, but the essentially open, pastureland appearance of the land across the larger part of the holding should also be retained as far as possible in keeping with the management regime of the past two centuries across the wider district.

The character of the two remaining historic buildings (the farmhouse PRN41564 and the cowhouse PRN41565) needs to be safeguarded as examples of typical 19th century farmstead buildings within the district.

## GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

<b>PRN</b>	12088	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN72883015
<b>Site Type</b>	Natural Feature?	<b>Period</b>	Unknown		

### Description

This site was visited during July 2002. A circular earthwork c.45m in diameter was previously noted from aerial photographs. Surface evidence suggests that what appears on the aerial photograph is probably a natural feature associated with natural drainage patterns.

### Recommendations

Although this is potentially a natural feature it is recommended that the area is not subject to ground breaking actions.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	25057	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73073016
<b>Site Type</b>	MAJOR DWELLING	<b>Period</b>	Medieval;Post Med		

### Description

Glasallt Fawr is recorded by Francis Jones (1987) as having been occupied by the descendants of the medieval lord Elystan Gloddrudd from as early as 1508, when one David ap Richard resided here. The name of his grandson Owen ap Rees was taken by subsequent generations as their surname, and the Owen line continued until the death of the last male heir, Charles Owen, in 1784.

The Glasallt estate, which in 1761 included 19 properties, was then transferred to Charles Owen's mother's cousin Thomas Lewis, who also took the Owen name as his own. As Thomas Owen of Hanover Square, London and Glasallt, he served as High Sheriff of Carmarthen in 1802.

Undoubtedly, the most significant member of the Owen family was Morgan Owen D.D., who became Bishop of Llandaff in 1640. However, the Civil War and his Royalist allegiance forced his early retirement and he died at Glasallt in 1644-5 and was buried at Myddfai.

The inclusion of a Bishop and a High Sheriff in the Owen pedigree indicates that Glasallt Fawr was no ordinary Carmarthenshire farmstead and was probably a high-status homestead during early post-medieval times. However, its status apparently declined after 1814, when Glasallt Fawr and its estate were let to tenant farmers.

We have no firm evidence today as to the appearance or exact location of the original house at Glasallt and the Tir Gofal farm visit made during 2002 produced little additional evidence to inform us of its fate or position. However, one key clue may appear on the parish tithe map.

Parcel No.850 is named by the accompanying tithe schedule as "Houses", even though the only building shown associated with it is that on the site of the present cowhouse (PRN45165). It is possible therefore that the original dwelling stood in the area of the cowhouse or in the area to the southeast of the original farmyard, rather than in the area of the present farmhouse. The latter area, including a building on the site of the present farmhouse, is denoted merely as "Buildings" by the tithe schedule, and was apparently therefore not a dwelling area in the 1830s.

#### **Recommendations**

The location of the historic home at Glasallt is uncertain, but there is a possibility that significant archaeological potential may exist at its site. Any excavation work around the historic farmstead core, including within the area of the field parcel numbered 851 on the parish tithe map, should be kept to a minimum and where it is necessary accompanied by an archaeological watching brief.

**Site Category** B

<b>PRN</b>	41564	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73093017
<b>Site Type</b>	FARMHOUSE	<b>Period</b>	Post Medieval		

#### **Description**

Well maintained and renovated farmhouse building, now used for residential purposes. The front elevation of the building bears the characteristics of a typical north Carmarthenshire 19th century farmhouse building, not dissimilar to the sketch of the house which appears in Francis Jones "Historic Carmarthenshire."

The house appears to be located close to the position of a building shown on the Myddfai parish tithe map, although it is not possible to be certain that the match is precise. This is within the field parcel numbered 851 on the tithe map and described as "Buildings" by the accompanying tithe schedule. It is unlikely that the building shown at this location on the tithe map was a dwelling therefore.

The present house does appear to be shown on the 1891 OS 1:10560 map however. It is possible that the farmhouse was built in the mid - late-19th century to replace an earlier building, therefore, but it is not possible to say if the present farmhouse stands on the site of the earlier post -medieval residence at Glasallt Fawr.

The building has a new two-storey extension to the rear, which does not markedly change its character.

#### **Recommendations**

As an occupied dwelling this building lies outside the scheme.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	41565	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73093014
<b>Site Type</b>	COWHOUSE	<b>Period</b>	Post Medieval		

### Description

Former cow-house (beudy) which has been partly converted into an office. The building is of uncertain date in origin. A building appears to be shown at this location on the Myddfai parish tithe map, at the northwestern edge of field parcel No.850, named "Houses" by the accompanying tithe schedule.

No building is shown at this location on the OS 1:10560 map of 1891 (surveyed c.1877). The use of a buff-yellow brick in the arches above the doors and windows points to a late -19th century date for the cowhouse, which would be in agreement with the OS map evidence. However, it is also possible that it has been built on the site of, or represents the renovation of, an earlier building which may have been the early 19th century farmhouse and possibly the earlier post-medieval dwelling.

The essential character of the 19th century cow-house has not been lost. It is a long and narrow building with a slate roof. The doors and windows in the south-west facing wall, with a single doorway in the upper part of the north-western gable end, facing the farmhouse. The cow-house has been built on a platform cut into a moderate slope, so this latter doorway gave access to the loft from the top of the slope into which the building has been set.

The south-eastern half of the beudy has been converted into office space, although this has not greatly changed the outward appearance of the building. The north-western half of the building is used for storage and retains many internal features associated with its use as a mid - to late-20th century milking parlour, such as cubicles, feeding troughs and some metal pipework. The concrete breeze block coolhouse which served this milking parlour stands attached to the ground floor of the north-western gable end.

### Recommendations

This building is one of only two historic buildings recognisable at Glasallt and its character needs to be retained and perhaps enhanced. Any future external changes or maintenance work carried out on the building must be carried out sympathetically, and with the use of appropriate building materials. Where possible surviving internal features should be retained. One door opening in the centre of the south-west facing lateral wall has been knocked out to create a large, incongruous window extending upwards to wallplate height. The future restoration of this opening to its original dimensions, and the replacement of the brick-arch above the original doorway, would greatly enhance the appearance of the building facade.

Any excavation work within or in the vicinity of this building should be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief. Cambria Archaeology should be contacted prior to any ground works being carried out in this area. Tithe map evidence suggests that the cowhouse may be on, or



close to, the site of the original Glasallt Fawr dwelling.

**Site Category** B

<b>PRN</b>	41566	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73073022
<b>Site Type</b>	TRACKWAY	<b>Period</b>	Post Medieval		

#### **Description**

An old trackway running up, and sunk into, a moderate slope. It is shown on the Myddfai parish tithe map as connecting the farmyard area of Glasallt Fawr with field parcel 859, which is upslope and to the north-east of the farmhouse. It is no longer in use, but is clearly visible as an earthwork feature up to 6m wide and 1.5m deep. It is blocked off by a fence and garden plot at its south-western end.

#### **Recommendations**

This trackway should be retained as an historic landscape feature. There should be no future infilling of its course, but otherwise the present land management of the pasture field in which it stands does not appear to in any way threaten its survival.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	41567	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73183012
<b>Site Type</b>	BOUNDARY BANK	<b>Period</b>	Post Medieval		

#### **Description**

The line of the boundary bank which divided field parcels 852 and 853 on the Myddfai parish tithe map is still traceable in the field as a very slight, upstanding linear earthwork feature, with a parallel linear hollow to its south-eastern side. The fields had been altered greatly by the building of a trackway across the slope by 1891 (as shown on the 1:10560 OS map of 1891), indicating that a significant rearrangement of field parcels across Glasallt Fawr had been undertaken during the mid- to late-19th century.

#### **Recommendations**

The earthwork should be retained and ground breaking activity which could erode the bank should not takeplace. The present management regime appears appropriate.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	41568	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73223025
<b>Site Type</b>	SPRING	<b>Period</b>	General		

#### **Description**

A wet, reed filled hollow alongside a small and apparently stagnant pool appear to represent a natural spring and possibly the site of a small pond intended for watering stock, as seems to be shown on the 1964 1:10560 OS map. There appears to be some stone revetment of the slope immediately around the water source, and a simple drainage cut runs a few metres downslope to allow some run-off.

#### **Recommendations**

The infilling or unsympathetic alteration of this feature should be avoided. The present management regime appears appropriate. Maintain in current condition. If work is to be undertaken on this site please inform Cambria Archaeology.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	41569	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73113023
<b>Site Type</b>	Trackway	<b>Period</b>	Post Medieval		

#### **Description**

A grassed over trackway rises diagonally across the steep slope here, apparently linking two modern farm gates, suggesting the trackway may be a relatively recent feature.

#### **Recommendations**

No specific recommendations. The present management regime appears appropriate. Maintain in current condition. If work is to be undertaken on this site please inform Cambria Archaeology.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	41570	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73333023
<b>Site Type</b>	CAIRN?	<b>Period</b>	Bronze Age?		

#### **Description**

A slight mound c.6m in diameter, atop a prominent hillock. Long grass made the feature difficult to assess at the time of the field visit, but it is almost certainly a natural feature. However, this prominent hillock is in view of Bronze Age monuments to the south -east and north-west and the possibility that a denuded cairn or barrow occupies the site should not be excluded.

#### **Recommendations**

All forms of groundbreaking operations should be avoided on top of this small hillock. The present management regime appears appropriate.

**Site Category** D

<b>PRN</b>	41571	<b>Site Name</b>	Glasallt Fawr	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73503016
<b>Site Type</b>	CAIRN?	<b>Period</b>	Bronze Age?		

#### **Description**

A very slight mound c.6m in diameter, on a small hillock at the top of a steep, south -west facing slope. The grass cover was short at the time of the field visit but it was difficult to assess if this was a natural feature or a badly denuded cairn or barrow site. It is felt that this was almost certainly a natural feature, but the location affords views of Bronze Age monuments to the south -east and the possibility that a badly denuded barrow occupies the site should not be excluded.

#### **Recommendations**

All forms of groundbreaking operations should be avoided across this small hillock. The present management regime appears appropriate.

**Site Category** D

## **SITE AND AREA STATUS GLOSSARY**

The following abbreviations are used in the gazetteer to refer to site and area status. These schedules, lists and registers are compiled and maintained by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments.

### **SAM - Scheduled Ancient Monument**

This is a statutory designation. Scheduled Ancient Monuments are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

### **LB1, LB2\* & LB2 – Listed Building 1, 2\* & 2**

This is a statutory designation. Listed buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

### **HLW - Historic Landscapes of Wales**

Historic Landscapes of Wales are defined by the *Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales: Part 2.1 Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest and Part 2.2 Landscapes of Special Historic Interest*. The register is advisory and has no statutory powers.

### **PGW - Parks and Gardens of Wales**

Parks and Gardens of Wales are defined by the *Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales: Part 1 Parks and Gardens*. The register is advisory and has no statutory powers.

## **REFERENCES**

Jones, F. 1987, *Historic Carmarthenshire Homes*

Ordnance Survey, 1891, 1st edition 1:10560 OS map Carms. Sheet XXVI SE

1964 1:10560 OS map

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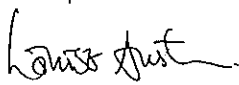
This report has been prepared by Paul Sambrook

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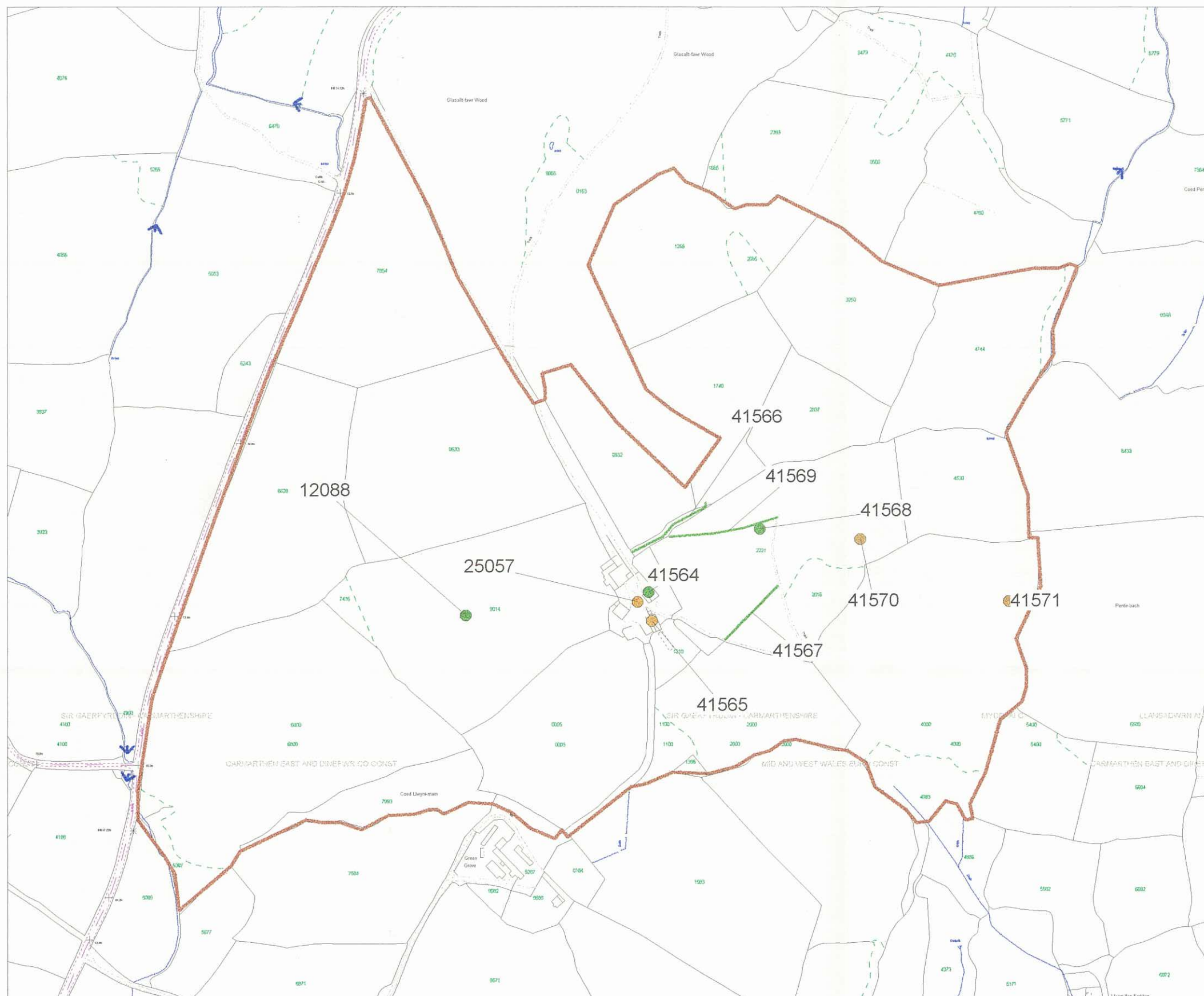
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This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,  
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position: Principal Archaeological Officer

Signature  Date...14 August 2002.....

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



Name Glasallt Fawr  
 Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation  
 Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/12/2359  
 Cambria Archaeology Reference Number 41802  
 National Grid Reference SN73033027  
 Scale 1:5,000

### Key

- Farm Boundary
- Historic Landscape Character Area

### Site Category A - National Importance

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments  
Grade 1 and Grade 2\* Listed Buildings
- Sites and Buildings of National Importance without a statutory designation
- Registered Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest
- Registered Landscapes of Historic Interest

### Site Category B - Regional Importance

- Sites and Buildings of Regional Importance including Grade 2 listed buildings

### Site Category C - Local Importance

- Sites and buildings of Local Importance

### Site Category D - Unknown Importance

- Sites requiring further investigation and sites with no physical definition.

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