

JAN 2003



Blaenau Farm E/10/2905

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report



Report No. 2002/101

Report Prepared for:
Countryside Council for Wales

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO. 2002/101
PROJECT RECORD NO. 44100

January 2003

Blaenau Farm
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report

By

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CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Method Statement	3
General Description of farm	4
Main Management Recommendations	4
Gazetteer of Sites and Monuments	5
Site and Area Status Glossary	13
References	13
Quality Assurance Report	14
Farm Map	

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 System 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 time 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

Blaenau farm sits at the head of the Sawdde valley. It encompasses the natural bowl of the valley head before it narrows and the Afon Swadde rises to Llyn y Fan Fach. Most of the holding of Blaenau farm lies to the north of the Afon Sawdde on the south and west facing slopes. Like the rest of the area around Llanddeusant, it comprises small to medium sized irregular fields with a distinct boundary to the upland edge (PRN 47108). The pattern of settlement and field systems in this area must have been developed by at least the early 18th century and would appear to have changed little in the intervening period.

Blaenau farmhouse (PRN 47111) is an interesting example of a modest 19th century vernacular building that has been dramatically altered with the addition of a new front range. Beside the farmhouse are two outbuildings, one of which (PRN 47109) is linked with the construction of the dam at Llyn y Fan Fach and the accommodation of men and horses along the route of the pipe track from the lake.

The farm holding contains evidence of communal activities with the stone surfaced roadway (PRN 47102) and sheepfold (PRN 47101), one of many along the upland fringe in this area, to the south of Blaenau farm. To the north of Blaenau farm there is evidence of a shifting settlement pattern with the still prominent tree lined trackway (PRN47112) and deserted and almost lost cottage sites (PRNs 47105, 47106 and 47107).

MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

PRN 47105, 47106 and 47107 – Cottage sites

Although there is very little visible surviving evidence of cottage structures on these sites, it is possible that much in the way of buried archaeological remains survive. Maintain as existing. No ground breaking works should be undertaken within 15 metres of each of these sites in order to protect any buried archaeological remains.

PRN 47109 – Stable & Cart Shed

This building is in good condition and should be kept in good order. Any repairs or maintenance works should use traditional materials and methods in order to preserve its historic character.

GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

PRN	47101	Site Name	Blaenau Farm	Grid Reference	SN79272382
Site Type	FOLD	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

Complex communal sheepfold with long curving central wall which has recently been rebuilt by the farmer, Mr. Dobbs. It is of dry stone wall construction and is shown on the 1:2500 scale first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 as a complex of irregular pens around a central enclosure. Much of this layout appears to have been lost but some of the original construction still survives, such as ground level openings within the central wall for the division of sheep into individual pens.

Recommendations

This sheepfold only partly lies within the holding of Blaenau farm but is an important part of the historic landscape in this area, and also is one of a series of communal sheepfolds on the edge of the mountain.

Ideally the masonry remains should be repaired and maintained to prevent further loss of the fabric. Any work undertaken should use traditional materials and methods throughout and aim to follow the original construction and layout of the sheepfold. At the very least, ground disturbance in the area around the sheepfold and adjacent sites (PRNs 47102, 47103 and 47104) should be restricted to prevent damage to any buried archaeological remains.

Site Category C

PRN	47102	Site Name	Blaenau Farm	Grid Reference	SN79242396
Site Type	ROAD	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

Stone surfaced road crossing over the Afon Sawdde to the west of Blaenau Farm, and leading past the sheepfold PRN 47101 onto the mountain to the south towards Llyn y Fan Fach. It is labelled as 'BR' (Bridle Road) on the Ordnance Survey mapping.

Recommendations

Maintain as a historic landscape feature.

Site Category C



Plate 1 – Stone surfaced bridle road (PRN 47102),
with some evidence of dry stone side walls present.

PRN	47103	Site Name	Garnant	Grid Reference	SN79282391
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Site Type	COTTAGE	Period	Post Medieval
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Description

Cottage site shown on the 1838 Tithe Map and Apportionment for Llanddeusant Parish and labelled as 'Garnant'. It is now an area of indistinct low stone walls with very little evidence for the exact form of the cottage or surrounding enclosure.

Recommendations

Maintain as existing. There should be no ground breaking works within 15 metres of this site.

Site Category D

PRN	47104	Site Name	Blaenau Farm	Grid Reference	SN79422393
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Site Type	WALL	Period	Post Medieval
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Description

An area of indistinct low stone walls and possible trackways along the southern bank of the Afon Sawdde.

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations.

Site Category D

PRN 47105 **Site Name** Blaenau Farm **Grid Reference** SN79422439

Site Type COTTAGE **Period** Post Medieval

Description

Cottage site on the north side of trackway PRN 47112. Now a low stone and earth bank enclosure with mature trees in its centre. It is shown on the 1838 Tithe Map and Apportionment for Llanddeusant Parish but marked as an open enclosure. It was therefore unoccupied prior to the middle of the 19th Century.

Recommendations

Maintain as existing. No ground breaking works should be undertaken within 15 metres of this site in order to protect any buried archaeological remains.

Site Category C



Plate 2 – Cottage site (PRN 47105)

PRN 47106 **Site Name** Blaenau Farm **Grid Reference** SN79632444

Site Type COTTAGE **Period** Post Medieval

Description

A cottage shown on the 1838 Tithe Map and named on the accompanying Apportionment as 'Homestead' for the farm of 'Tyr y bwch'. This farm appears to have held the northern half of the present holding of Blaenau. However the cottage is not marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891 and very little physical trace of it can be seen today.

It is probable that the cottage was demolished between 1838 and 1891 and the land taken into the

Blaenau holding. According to the farmer at Blaenau, his farmhouse (PRN 47111) was extended in or around 1870, this would fit with the farm of 'Tyr r Bwch' coming under the ownership of Blaenau and the cottage dismantled to provide building materials.

Recommendations

Although there is very little surviving evidence of a cottage on this site, it is possible that much in the way of buried archaeological remains survive. Therefore no ground breaking works should be undertaken within 15 metres of this site in order to protect any buried remains.

Site Category D

PRN	47107	Site Name	Blaenau Farm	Grid Reference	SN79822447
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Site Type	COTTAGE	Period	Post Medieval
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Description

Cottage site high up past the end of the trackway from Gelli-onen (PRN 47112) and the two other cottage sites attached to the trackway (PRNs 47105 and 47106). It is shown on both the first (1891) and second (1907) edition Ordnance Survey maps but marked as an open enclosure. It is therefore likely to be an unoccupied dwelling prior to the end of the 19th Century.

Recommendations

Maintain as existing. No ground breaking works should be undertaken within 15 metres of this site in order to protect any buried archaeological remains.

Site Category C



Plate 3 – Cottage site (PRN 47107)

PRN 47108 **Site Name** Blaenau Farm **Grid Reference** SN79742426

Site Type BANK **Period** Post Medieval

Description

This is a low, irregular stony earth bank that has been identified as being a continuous well-defined boundary delineating the break between the mountain and enclosed fields below.

Recommendations

Maintain as a historic landscape feature.

Site Category C

PRN 47109 **Site Name** Blaenau Farm **Grid Reference** SN79372406

Site Type STABLE; CART
SHED **Period** Post Medieval

Description

Two storey east – west gabled barn with stabling and cart sheds below, and accommodation above accessed by an external staircase at the east end. The farmer believes that this building relates to the construction, between 1914 and 1918, of the reservoir at the head of the valley, Llyn y Fan Fach. It may have been built for accommodation of the men and animals who worked on laying a mains water pipe from the lake to provide a water supply for the Llanelli district.

However, the first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps appear to show a building where this barn stands and they predate the construction of the dam wall. It is possible that the present building is a rebuilding of an existing structure during the period when the dam wall was constructed. Alternatively the building predates the dam wall and may or may not have been used during the construction of the reservoir.

Recommendations

This building is in good condition and should be kept in good order. Any repairs or maintenance works should use traditional materials and methods in order to preserve its historic character.

Site Category C



Plate 4 – Stables and cart shed building (PRN 47109)

PRN	47110	Site Name	Blaenau Farm	Grid Reference	SN79382405
Site Type	SHED	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

Long low one storey range attached to the north end of Blaenau farmhouse (PRN 47111) and forming an 'L' shaped range with stables and cart shed building (PRN 47109). It is now in use as a kennels.

Recommendations

This building is in good condition and should be kept in good order. Any repairs or maintenance works should use traditional materials and methods in order to preserve its historic character.

Site Category C



Plate 5 – Shed (PRN 47110)

PRN 47111 **Site Name** Blaenau Farm **Grid Reference** SN79382404

Site Type FARMHOUSE **Period** Post Medieval

Description

West facing farmhouse with uneven 'M'-shaped roof and large chimney stack at the south east corner. According to the farmer at Blaenau, it was extended in or around 1870 which may relate to the demolition of 'Tyr r Bwch' cottage (PRN 47106) and the use of the building materials from there in the extension works on the farmhouse.

Recommendations

This building is presently used as a dwelling and is not included in the Tir Gofal agreement.

Site Category C



Plate 6 – Rear of Blaenau farmhouse (PRN 47111)

PRN 47112 **Site Name** Blaenau Farm **Grid Reference** SN79382404

Site Type TRACKWAY **Period** Post Medieval

Description

Wide trackway bordered by outgrown hedgerows on either side, leading from Gelli-onen farm (SN79252431) to the west past cottage sites PRN 47105 and 47106 and terminating when it reaches Nant y Creigiau with the cottage site PRN 47107 above.

Recommendations

Maintain as a historic landscape feature.

Site Category C



Plate 7 – Looking west along trackway (PRN 47112)

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.

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**Blaenau Farm
E/10/2905**

REPORT NUMBER 2002/101

January 2003

This report has been prepared by Simon Wardle

Position: Archaeologist (Tir Gofal)

Signature S. Wardle Date 24/2/03



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

Position: Principal Archaeologist (Curatorial)


Signature Louise Aust Date 24/02/03


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


Blaenau Farm
 Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation
 Countryside Council for Wales Reference E/10/2905
 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN 44100
 National Grid Reference SN79402409


 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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