Gilfach E/10/3102

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report



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By

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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 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

Gilfach farm (PRN 47655) is situated on undulating land around four kilometres to the east of Llangadog. Land consists primarily of pasture, although narrow pockets of deciduous woodland are also present along the stream valleys, which cross the holding. The Nant Gwrach crosses the holding in a northwesterly direction, whilst the Nant yr Hiddl forms part of the northeast boundary of the holding. Both are tributaries of the Afon Clydach. The farm is divided into irregular small to medium sized fields by hedges, which are in good condition and are well maintained. This together with the small pockets of deciduous woodland gives parts of the farm a woody aspect. Gilfach farm lies in the western margins of the Brecon Beacons National Park, within the two historic landscape areas of Llanddeusant-Capel-Gwynfe (233) and Rhiwiau (229).

The present field pattern originally representing a system of small dispersed holdings, is first shown on the 1839 Llangadog Parish and 1841 Llanddeusant Parish tithe maps although it is likely to have considerably earlier origins. The land, which comprises Gilfach today is shown on the tithe maps to belong to five separate holdings. Lewis Robert owned Cae Sarah and Cwmbrane, which comprised land to the north of the holding and were occupied by John Morgan and Lewis Walters respectively. Pentwyn, to the south of this was owned by Price David Hopkins and occupied by Tomas John. Gilfach itself, confined to a small portion of the modern holding to the west was owned and occupied by Thomas David. Over the border in Llanddeusant Parish tithe map was Gilfach y rhiw, which was owned by David Thomas and occupied by William Thomas. The modern Gilfach farmstead lies within the boundaries of this former holding.

The farmstead of Gilfach (PRN 47656) is first identified on the 1831 Ordnance Survey old series map as Gilfachyblawd, its name changes to Gilfach y Rhiw on the 1841 Llanddeusant parish tithe map and by the time of the first and second edition (1891 and 1906) Ordnance Survey maps it becomes known simply as Gilfach. The 1891 map shows three buildings loosely arranged around a farmyard, with a fourth in a small enclosure near the road to the west. The farmhouse and a building range to the west are the only surviving elements of the original farmstead. Modern agricultural buildings have been added to the north and east of the farmstead.

Gilfach farm is rich in archaeology, and this is dominated by remnants of the silver/lead mining industry, which was at its peak in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the most tangible evidence of this former industry is the remains of the Cornish Engine House at Caesara (PRN 47659), which, although in urgent need of repair is a particularly fine example of its type and is an important landmark in its surrounding landscape.

It is possible that lead mining began at Cae Sara in the 18th century, although large scale development took place from 1851 initially under the management of Henry Gibson as the Great Welsh Silver Lead Mine. The evidence visible on the ground today relates to a brief, although busy period of industry between 1851 and 1870. The characteristic Cornish engine house (PRN 47659), with its high chimney stack dominates the skyline above the former mining complex and survives because of its solid construction necessary to support the heavy beams, which transferred motion from the engine cylinders to the line of pumps running down the engine shaft (PRN 47660). The ruins of several additional buildings survive within the two and a half acre focus of the mine, and others have been lost entirely. A large building (PRN 47663) to the SSW of the

engine house is the most well preserved, although its ruinous condition precludes an interpretation.

Additional buildings to the south and west are in an increasingly ruinous state today and may have been associated with the early stages of the ore dressing process. A little below the engine house is a dressing floor (PRN 47662) for hand sorting the ore, which would then have been carted to the crusher house. The large water wheel pit (PRN 47664) to the south may provide evidence of such water powered crushing machinery. No leats have been identified at Cae Sara and water may have been supplied through *launders*, or raised wooden troughs, which would have provided the flow of water necessary to feed the wheel. Ruinous buildings and structures nearby are heavily overgrown and in worse condition making evaluation difficult, although their proximity may indicate involvement in the dressing process.

An additional zone of activity has been recognised on the margins of the Nant Gwarch. Here successive flooding of the river has denuded some of the earthwork and structural remains. A buddle circle (PRN 47667) may be traced in this area, and a succession of flat platforms terraced onto the shallow slope may also relate to the latter stages of dressing the ore. These processes involved the use of gravity to separate the crushed ore from lighter waste materials. The 1880 prospectus of the Casara Lead Mine Ltd. indicates that the dressing plant consisted of jigging machines and a buddle, driven by water wheels (Hall, G.W. 1993: 32). It is possible that some of the platforms visible here may have supported the water driven jigging machines, which shook the ore up and down in a container part filled with water, and the lighter material removed from the top. Buddles employed rotating brushes to help distribute the material as it was fed in at the centre (Stanier 1988: 22). The lighter waste was washed outwards leaving behind the heavier lead concentrate. Short stretches of remnant revetment wall indicate that the flow and channel of the stream were regulated at this time. The waterwheels mentioned in the 1860 prospectus may have been powered by the tightly managed and controlled flow of the Nant Gwarch at this time. A holding pond approximately 150 metres upstream would have provided a controlled flow of water necessary for such operations.

Evidence of the extraction process is abundant in the wider area. The earlier stages of lead ore (galena) extraction in the life of the mine may be represented by an opencast area to the north of the engine house (PRN 47669). A line of three *stopes* (PRNs 47670, 47671, 47672), shafts sunk into the ground when sufficient material was extracted to be worth taking away, indicate later stages in the extraction process. An *adit* level (PRN 47676) a little over 100 metres to the east of the *lode* defined by this line of stopes would have provided drainage and can be identified with some confidence as the projected deep *adit* started by the Casara Company in 1860 (Hall, G.W. 1993: 35).

Few details are known of the layout of shafts and levels, which lie beneath Cae Sara, although records state that by the mid 1860s, the deepest level were as far down as 50 fathoms, with five *lodes*, or seams of ore being exploited at this time. Financial difficulties were an ongoing characteristic of the mine and a growing lack of confidence meant that Cae Sara lead mine had ceased to operate by 1870 (Hall, G.W. 1993: 35) after a moderate production of lead ore, probably not amounting to as much as 1000 tons (*pers comm*. Welsh Mines Preservation Trust).

The Gilfach sliver lead mine (PRN 26636), approximately 800 metres to the east exploited several lodes on both sides of a narrow overgrown dingle of the Nant-yr-Hiddl, and several levels and shafts are visible on the steep valley sides. Initial operations were by an Admiral Lloyd in about 1770, although little more is known of this period. The period after the mid nineteenth century is more well documented and after a short period of activity in 1848, and a subsequent change in ownership, the Lady Eliza Silver Lead Mining company acquired the mine in 1857, starting work the following year. A period of initial exploration recovered several pre-existing shafts and levels, although a decision was made not to exploit this part of the mine further, and instead in 1860 a new adit was opened further downstream in the SW bank (PRN 47892). The remains of the waterwheel (PRN 47894) opposite shaft (PRN 47893), presumably for pumping water suggest that shafts at this time were eventually sunk below the level of drainage adit (PRN 47892). This ruinous water wheel, which lies on the north side of the stream, and outside of the boundary of Gilfach Farm is the only known structural evidence of mining activity at Gilfach. The Lady Eliza company, eventually shut down following financial difficulties in 1863. The mine at Gilfach changed hands several times after this, although achieved little production. A final period of interest in the mine, under the ownership of the Goreau Silver-Lead Mining company resulted in the shaft (PRN 47893) opposite the ruinous water wheel (PRN 47894) being deepened in 1876 (Hall, G.W. 1993: 36,37) After this the mine seems to have been abandoned entirely.

Two levels remain visible on the north side of the steep Nant-yr-hiddl, whilst four shafts and two levels remain visible to the south. A ruinous water wheel pit with some surviving machinery apparatus, which lies on the north side of the stream and outside of the boundary of Gilfach farm is the only surviving structural evidence associated with the mining complex. No relationship has been identified between Gilfach silver-lead mine and Casara silver-leadmine, a little less than a kilometre to the west, despite Henry Gibson, the manager of the Casara mine in 1851 obtaining Gilfach mine, but no activity resulted (Hall, G.W. 1993: 36).

MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The mining complex at Cae Sara is an interesting example of its type, retaining features related to many stages of mining and ore preparation, and in this sense remains a coherent site. The Cornish engine house (PRN 47659) with its impressive circular chimney stack, which dominates the skyline is of particular interest. Its national importance is recognised through its scheduled status and it may be one of only two examples of its type in Wales. This designation has done little to halt the natural processes of decay and the engine house is unstable and in danger of collapsing into the adjacent engine shaft, which would be an irreplaceable loss. Specialist conservation advice needs to be sought if it is to be brought back into a stable condition necessary for its long-term survival.

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority who "aim to conserve, enhance and promote the parks archaeological heritage" plan to lease the fenced core area of the site in order to bring it into positive management. It is a principal aim of theirs to secure Heritage Lottery Funding to pay for necessary repair works on the engine house.

The fenced core area of the site retains a varied assemblage of mining features and structures relating to many stages of ore preparation. These are in various stages of decay and a sustainable management plan is necessary to retain what survives. This area is currently fenced off, neglected and much overgrown and needs to be brought into active management in order to improve visibility within the complex and prevent damage to existing features. A programmed of targeted vegetation control and stabilisation works on remaining structures should be followed up by regular grazing, in order to prevent scrub from becoming re-established.

Cae Sara is undoubtedly an important heritage site with high archaeological potential and is in need of further assessment. A detailed archaeological survey is required to record existing features and identify any additional features, which may have been overlooked during the rapid archaeological assessment.

The historic landscape value, high archaeological importance and ease of access to the site combined present an excellent public access and interpretation opportunity. It is hoped that such a survey will improve understanding of the site as well as identify any areas of potential danger, which will need to be made safe before public access is granted.

The Gilfach mining complex, which preserves several shafts and levels on the steep valley of the Nant yr Hiddl is relatively inaccessible and unlike Cae Sara may not lend itself to public access and interpretation. The visible evidence of past mining activity, which survives here does nevertheless make an important contribution to the surviving metal mining heritage of southern Wales. The levels and shafts, which provide evidence of this site, should be preserved as visible historic landscape features. They should not be infilled.

For detailed management recommendations on the individual features of the mining complexes, and other sites of archaeological interest on Gilfach Farm see the gazetteer of sites and monuments.

GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

PRN 47659 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75362759

CAE SARA

Site Type ENGINE HOUSE Period Post Med Site Status SAM

Cm 283

Description

The Cornish Engine House dominates the skyline the Cae Sara metal mining site. It is constructed of faced stone with a lime mortar bonding. The characteristic circular chimney stack is a little less than five metres diameter at its widest base point, with brick finishing at the top. It is built into the northeast corner of the engine house. The engine house itself is aligned northeast by southwest along its long axis and measures approximately six by four metres. The building is currently in a ruinous condition and only the southeast and southwest elevations survive; the interior now filled with rubble from the collapsed northeast and northwest walls. The complete southeast elevation stands up to full height, and has several windows, steam pipe and girder openings, and a drivers door adjacent to the bob (southwest) wall.

The substantial southwest wall, which would originally have supported the weight of the ten ton balance bob survives at near full height and a central "plug" archway at ground level around three metres high faces the shaft (Burr, H. 1996).

Historic accounts indicate that the 36 inch Cornish pumping engine was obtained from John Hodge of St. Austell, Cornwall and began working in 1854. The installation of the new engine was a high profile affair, accompanied by much ceremony and celebration, including a dinner for mine staff at the Red Lion, Llangadock, much music and games for the children. The celebrations climaxed when Mr. Gibson, accompanied by an engineer climbed to the platform at the top of the engine house "where the ponderous bob, some ten tons in weight, was at a given signal put in motion, when he broke a bottle of champagne and christened it "Hill's engine shaft," amidst the cheers of the assembled multitude, and a salute of 100 guns" (Hall, G.W. 1993: 33).

Such pumping engines were "normally erected in a house placed so that the pump rod- made of thick timber lengths bolted together-could hang down the shaft where it worked plunger pole lifts....As the beam and rod descended, so water was forced up through iron pipes in stages in the shaft. To counteract the enormous weight of the pump rod, balance bobs were attached at the surface and also underground in a deep shaft....Tall shears were erected at the shaft to handle the heavy pitwork and pumping gear, being worked by a large capstan" (Stanier 1988: 18). The Cornish Engine at Cae Sara drained the mines when levels and shafts were driven below the *adit* drainage levels and would have pumped surplus water from the mines either to the surface or to the *adit* drainage levels.

Nothing remains of the Cornish beam engine and associated machinery apparatus today, which may have been removed soon after the mine ceased to operate in 1865. The 1887 and 1891 Ordnance Survey maps show a long building abutting the southeast elevation of the engine house, which is likely to have been the boiler house. These were of a less sturdy construction and typically housed up to four long Cornish boilers. They were usually demolished when the boilers

were removed (Stanier 1994: 28). Ordnance Survey maps suggest that this event took place sometime between 1891 and 1907 and the building is shown to be ruinous on the 1907 edition.

The engine house at Cae Sara is currently in a ruinous and unstable condition. The chimney stack and southwest elevation are almost entirely covered with ivy which continues to weaken masonry bonds, adding weight to an already weakened structure. The collapse of the northeast wall has taken away part of the base structure of the chimney, which is no longer self supporting. Water ingress, washing out lime mortar bonds will continue to undermine this part of the structure if stabilisation works are not carried out. Brickwork at the top of the stack is weatherbeaten and crumbling and needs replacing. A serious structural fault has been identified in the west side of the substantial southwest "bob wall", which is being undermined by the engine shaft. The western part of this wall is now at diminished height and the apex of the central arch is now broken. Water ingress continues to erode lime mortar bonds here, further weakening the structure.

Recommendations

Although not large in comparison with some of the Cornish examples, the engine house at Cae Sara is a fine example of its type and a nationally important monument. These structures were never common in South Wales, although they were present at Llanfyrnach in Pembrokeshire, Vale of Towy, near Carmarthen, Nantymywn in the Towy Valley and Cae Sara. The Vale of Towy engine house has been pulled down and that at Llanfyrnach was reported to be "in a ruinous state" in 1992 (*pers. comm.* Welsh Mines Preservation Trust). It is certainly unique with the Brecon Beacons National Park, and may be one of only two examples surviving in Wales.

Vegetation growth continues to displace masonry, whilst water ingress is washing out masonry bonds, further weakening the structure. Acute threats are visible to the southwest where the structure is being undermined by the engine shaft, and to the northeast, where displaced stonework at the foot of the chimney stack threatens collapse. Specialists in building conservation and stabilisation will need to be consulted and their help enlisted if the structure is to be brought back into a stable condition necessary for its long-term survival.

Buried archaeological remains may lie beneath the building debris, which surrounds the structure. The proposed stabilisation works provide an opportunity to gain additional information about associated structures or machinery fittings, which may lie within these buried deposits. It is suggested that an archaeological record is carried out during clearance work around the building. Please contact Cambria Archaeology in advance of the clearance works for further advice.

The engine house is an important and distinctive landmark within its region and a feature of national archaeological importance. Permission of access to the engine house and its surroundings would be welcomed, after the structure and its surroundings have been made safe. This feature also presents an excellent opportunity for an interpretation panel in order to explain its significance as a monument of national importance and its role in the mining process.



Plate 1- looking north towards the Cae Sara engine house (PRN 47659)



Plate 2- structural damage to the NW elevation of Cae Sara engine house (PRN 47659)

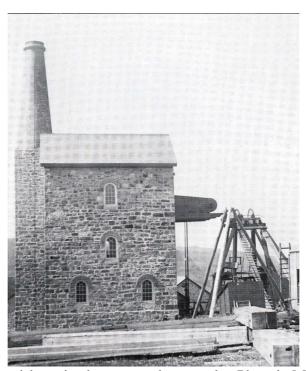


Plate 3- a complete Cornish engine house- newly erected at Phoenix Mine in 1907 with shaft timbering in foreground ready to be fitted (Stanier 1988: 19).

PRN 47886 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75362759
CAE SARA
Site Type BOILER HOUSE Period Post Med Site Status SAM
Cm 283

Description

The 1887 and 1891 Ordnance Survey maps show a long building abutting the southeast elevation of the engine house (PRN 47659), which is likely to have been the boiler house. These were of a less sturdy construction than the engine house and typically housed up to four long Cornish boilers. They were usually demolished when the boilers were removed (Stanier 1994: 28). Ordnance Survey maps suggest that this event may have taken place sometime between 1891 and 1907 at Cae Sara and the building is shown to be ruinous on the 1907 edition. No structural remains of the boiler house survive at Cae Sara. A flat building platform measuring approximately ten metres by four metres adjacent to and following the same alignment as the engine house is all that remains. The boiler house currently lies within a pasture field, which is grazed periodically.

Recommendations

No specific threats were identified from the current management regime. The area within 15 metres of the edge of this site should not be ploughed, subjected to any ground intrusive activities or used as a location for feeding livestock.

PRN	47660	Site Name	CASARA;	Grid Reference	SN75352758
			CAE SARA		
Site Type	SHAFT	Period	Post Med	Site Status	SAM
					Cm 283

Description

This shaft is adjacent, to the SW of the engine house at Cae Sara and is approximately nine metres in diameter. It would have housed the pumping apparatus necessary for keeping the mines free of water. Motion would have been transmitted via the substantial balance bob, worked by a the 36 inch Cornish beam engine, to iron pumps below, pumping either to the surface or drainage adit levels. Timber frames over the shaft collar may have helped to support the pumps, which extended to the bottom of the shaft. Timber revetments would have supported the deep shaft walls (Stanier 1988: 18). The mouth of the shaft is now partially collapsed, and no evidence of any structural remains survive around the shaft collar.

Recommendations

The shaft is currently in a dangerous and unstable condition. Its collapse is undermining the wall footings of the engine house to the NE and threatening its collapse. Ideally the scheduled area of the engine house and engine shaft should be brought back onto a stable condition. Specialist advice should be sought in order to carry out these operations. General management recommendations around the fenced area of the mining complex include targeted vegetation control followed up by a programme of regular grazing in order to prevent scrub from becoming re-established. This brings with it inherent dangers and the engine shaft (PRN 47660) will need to be fenced in order to eliminate the risk to livestock.

Site Category A

PRN	47661	Site Name	CASARA; CAE SARA	Grid Reference	SN75352758
Site Type	SHAFT	Period	Post Med		

Description

This shallow shaft opening, which measures approximately four metres diameter is situated approximately five metres to the south west of the engine shaft (PRN 47660) at Cae Sara. It appears to be in a stable condition and a tree is growing out of the centre of the shaft.

Recommendations

The shaft opening should be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature, and should not be infilled.

PRN 47662 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75372757

CAE SARA

Site Type DRESSING Period Post Med

FLOOR?

Description

This flat rectangle terraced into a gentle slope measures approximately ten metres by eight metres. It is first shown on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map, approximately 20 metres southsoutheast of the Cornish engine house and is likely to be a dressing floor. The dressing process took place in several stages, comprising hand sorting and crushing, the separation of ore from lighter waste by *jigging* (plunging a sieve into water), and *buddling* of finer deposits in a stone lined trench (Willies 1994: 22). This possible dressing floor would have been involved with the initial stage of the sorting process. This feature is situated within a pasture field that is regularly grazed.

Recommendations

No specific threats were identified from the current management regime. The area within 15 metres of the edge of this site should not be ploughed, subjected to any ground intrusive activity or used as a location for feeding livestock.



Plate 4- dressing floor (PRN 47662) looking west

PRN 47663 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75332753

CAE SARA

Site Type MINE BUILDING **Period** Post Med

Description

This three bay building is situated around 60 metres SSW of the Cornish engine house at Cae Sara. It is rectangular, 21 by seven metres and is aligned NNE to SSW along its long axis. It is of rubble construction with lime mortar bonding. The building is currently in a ruinous condition with remnant walls standing to a diminished height. The north bay is most intact and part of the north and east walls stand upto around 2.5 metres. Slots for floor joists indicate that this was originally a two-storey building. The eastern lateral wall survives to diminished height the length of the building. Only the footings survive of the western lateral wall. The site is currently overgrown, with areas of heavy ivy growth on the walls, which are weakening masonry bonds and promoting building instability. Water ingress is also washing out masonry bonds. Little evidence exists with which to interpret the original function of this building.

Recommendations

The ruin is currently in an unstable condition. The ivy should be cut off at the roots, allowed to die and spot treated to prevent re-growth. This should be followed up reconsolidation and repointing of the masonry where necessary. Ideally the walls should be capped with a traditional lime mortar mix in order to prevent water ingress form further damaging the structure.

PRN 47664 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75312748

CAE SARA

Site Type CRUSHING Period Post Med

MILL?

Description

The crushing mill at Cae Sara is situated a little over hundred metres to the south of the Cornish engine house and is built into the side of the steep slope. It is approximately six by four metres in plan, aligned NE by SW on its long axis and is of lime mortar bonded rubble construction. A wheel pit approximately one metre wide abuts the southeast wall of the building. No evidence of a leat was identified during the archaeological farm visit, although it is possible that *launders*, or raised wooden troughs would have provided a flow of water necessary to turn the wheel. This building is first shown on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map. Historic records indicate that a 26 foot water wheel, and crushing rollers were erected under the new management of Casara Lead Mine Ltd. in 1860 (Hall, G.W. 1993: 33). It is not known whether this is the pit for the wheel referred to. The ores was crushed, or *stamped* before the heavy lead was separated from lighter waste material by *jiggjng* or in *buddle pits*.

The crushing mill is currently in a ruinous condition. The rear (NE) lateral wall, which is terraced into the back of the hill survives at diminished height up to around three metres at its highest point. The side (SE and NW) walls have been almost entirely demolished, whilst the front (SW lateral) wall has been removed completely, and much of the stone has been removed from the site. The interior of the building is filled with building debris. No evidence for the waterwheel or any machinery apparatus was identified.

Recommendations

The crushing mill is currently in a ruinous condition. Young trees are growing out of the rear lateral walls and the southeast lateral wall and displacing part of the wall structure. Localised ivy growth is also a problem and threatens to damage masonry bonds and promote building instability. Ideally, the young trees and ivy should be cut off at the roots and spot treated to prevent regrowth. The ivy should be allowed to die, then removed. This should be followed up by a programme of masonry reconsolidation and repointing where necessary. Ideally the walls should be capped with a traditional lime mortar mix in order to prevent water ingress from further damaging masonry bonds and weakening the building structure.



Plate 5- SW elevation of possible crushing mill (PRN47664) at Cae Sara

PRN 47665 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75312750

CAE SARA

Site Type MINE BUILDING Period Post Med

Description

This ruinous building is situated around 100 metres to the south of the engine house at Cae Sara. It is rectangular, aligned NW by SE and measures approximately seven metres by four metres. The site is currently heavily overgrown and detailed examination is difficult. The remnant wall footings of the south lateral wall are the only structural remains to survive. The ruinous condition of the building makes it difficult to assign a function. Its proximity to the possible crushing mill suggests that it may have been involved with some aspect of the dressing process.

Recommendations

Heavy vegetation growth is currently masking the building remains making further evaluation difficult. Ideally the area should be cleared of vegetation growth in order that this feature can be made visible.

PRN 47666 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75302750

CAE SARA

Site Type MINE BUILDING Period Post

Medieval

Description

This ruinous feature is built into the side of a steep slope at Cae Sara. It is now largely destroyed and evaluation of its former function is difficult. A chimney, approximately two metres diameter at the base is situated to the SE of the rear wall of a building, which survives at diminished height upto around two metres. The wall length is incomplete, and its original length is not known. A flat "platform" in front of the structure may indicate the extent of a former building, although no buildings are shown at this location on the 1887 Ordnance Survey or any other map sources. The ruinous condition of this feature makes its interpretation problematical.

The structure appears to have been deliberately destroyed in the past, and the building stone removed. Surviving remains are overgrown and in a poor condition. Vegetation growth and mature trees are growing out of the chimney displacing masonry bonds, and weakening the structure.

Recommendations

The structural remains are currently in a poor condition. Ideally scrubby vegetation growth and mature trees should be cut down and treated to prevent regrowth. This should be followed up by a programme of masonry consolidation where necessary. The walls should be capped in order to prevent water ingress from washing out masonry bonds, and further weakening the structure.

PRN 47667 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75262750

CAE SARA

Site Type MINING Period Post Med

FEATURE

Description

This area, on the margins of the Nant Gwrach may have been involved in some of the later dressing processes, where crushed ore was separated from light waste by gravity. Here successive flooding of the river has hidden some of the earthwork and structural remains. A succession of flat platforms terraced onto the shallow slope may also relate to the latter stages of dressing the ore. A buddle circle visible as a roughly circular depression, with a short section of remnant rubble walling to the east, may also be traced in this area. The prospectus of the Casara Lead Mine Ltd. formed in 1860 described a dressing plant consisted of jigging machines and a buddle, driven by water wheels (Hall, G.W. 1993: 32). It is possible that some of the platforms may have supported the water driven jigging machines, which shook the ore up and down in a container part filled with water, and the lighter material removed from the top. Buddles employed rotating brushes to help distribute the material as it was fed in at the centre (Stanier 1988: 22). The lighter waste was washed outwards leaving behind the heavier lead concentrate. Short stretches of remnant revetment wall indicate that the flow and channel of the stream were regulated at this time. The waterwheels mentioned in the 1860 prospectus may have been powered by the tightly managed and controlled flow of the Nant Gwarch at this time. A holding pond approximately 150 metres upstream would have provided a controlled flow of water necessary for such operations. Behind this area, and running parallel to the river is an earthwork bank, which survives up to a metre high.

The area is currently under rough pasture, with some maturing trees. It is not grazed. Silty deposits and erosion over this part of the site may have changed the appearance of some of these features making their interpretation difficult.

Recommendations

The area alongside the Nant Gwrach at Cae Sara is an important, though presently little understood area of the mining complex. The area should be preserved, and not subjected to any ground intrusive activity. Silty deposits and erosion caused by successive flooding events continues to mask fragile earthwork remains. A detailed archaeological survey is recommended in order to record these features.

PRN 47668 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75302743

CAE SARA

Site Type DRESSING Period Post Med

FLOOR?

Description

This circular feature, 12 metres in diameter is situated approximately 15 metres to the west of the Nant Gwrach. Little evidence exists with which to interpret a function although it may have been a dressing floor for hand sorting ore before it went to the crusher house. It currently lies within a pasture filed, which is periodically grazed.

Recommendations

This should be preserved as a historic landscape feature. The area within 15 metres of the edge of this site should not be ploughed, subjected to any ground intrusive activity or used as a location for feeding livestock.



Plate 6- possible dressing floor (PRN 47668)

PRN 47669 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75322761

CAE SARA

Site Type OPENCAST MINE **Period** Post Med

Description

Cut into the side of a south facing slope opposite the engine house (PRN 47659), this former area of opencasting is roughly semicircular in shape measuring about 50 by 30 metres. Hall gives account that in 1851, when Henry Gibson restarted (the area) as the Great Welsh Silver Lead Mine- "very rich ore was found at a shallow depth, one block weighing a quarter of a ton before being sent to London for inspection" (Hall, G.W. 1993: 32). The tops of *lodes* were often initially worked to a shallow depth in this way forming an opencast mine before the point came when drainage was necessary. At this point *adit* or drainage levels were driven in from the lowest point to follow the *lode* or reach it. Shafts were sunk on the *lode* or to intercept it far below. This process is visible at Cae Sara, where three shafts (PRNs 47670,47671,47672), now collapsed remain visible as shallow depressions (up to around two metres diameter) in the ground surface at intervals approximately 18 metres apart.

The opencast area currently lies under pasture, which is grazed periodically. No specific threats were identified from the current management regime.

Recommendations

The opencast area should continue to be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature. It should not be infilled. No ground intrusive activities should be allowed to take place within 15 metres from the edge of the site.



Plate 7- opencast area (PRN 47669)

PRN 47670 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75322762

CAE SARA

Site Type SHAFT **Period** Post Med

Description

This is the southernmost of three shafts, which were sunk into the main northsouth *lode* at Cae Sara. It is possible that these shafts are *stopes*, sunk into the *lode*, when it contained sufficient material to be worth taking away. Two additional *stopes* (PRNs 47671, 47672) of similar diameter lie at 18 metre intervals to the north. If continued in a southerly direction, the line of the three *stopes* projects through the wide engine shaft (PRN 47660) to the southwest of the engine house. This is known to be the line of the *lode* referred to in the historical records as Blue or Old Lode at Cae Sara. Reports in the *Mining Journal* of 1857 describe levels driven into this lode at depths of ten and twenty fathoms under the management of the Great Welsh Silver-Lead Mine, with a deeper 30 fathom level driven under the management of Casara Lead Mine Ltd, in 1860. By 1861, when the mine was again under new ownership "the 10 fathom (fm) level extended 27 fms north and the same distance south, the 20 55 fms north and 35 fms south, and the 30 47 fms north and 26 fms south" of the wide engine shaft (Hall, G.W. 1993: 34).

This shaft, which is visible as a shallow depression approximately 1.5 metres in diameter lies within a pasture field, which is periodically grazed. It appears to have collapsed or become infilled and is currently in a stable condition. No specific threats were identified from the current management regime, although this has been ploughed in the past.

Recommendations

The shallow depression, which defines the location of a former shaft should be retained as a feature of the mining industry, which formed a significant impact on the landscape in the late nineteenth century. The shaft should not be infilled or subjected to any ground intrusive activity.

PRN 47671 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75312764

CAE SARA

Site Type SHAFT Period Post Med

Description

This is the central of three shafts, which follow a northsouth alignment away from the wide engine shaft, and may define the strike of the Blue or Old Load at Cae Sara (Hall, G.W. 1993: 34). It is possible that this shaft may be a *stope* sunk into the *load* when it contained sufficient material to be worth taking away. Records indicate that this part of the Old Lode to the north of the engine shaft was stoped in 1863 when the Cwm Brane mining company were increasing production. Sales of upto 20 tons of ore a month are described (Hall, G.W. 1993: 34). It is not known whether these levels were *stoped* before this time.

The shaft appears to have been infilled at some time in the past, and is visible as a shallow depression in the ground surface of approximately 1.5 metres diameter. It lies within a pasture field, which is periodically grazed.

Recommendations

The shaft is an important element of the late ninetennth century mining industry and should be preserved as a historic landscape feature. It should not be infilled, ploughed, or subjected to any ground intrusive activity.



Plate 8- shaft (PRN 47672)

PRN 47672 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75292766

CAE SARA

Site Type SHAFT **Period** Post Med

Description

This is the northernmost of three shafts, which follow a northsouth alignment away from the engine shaft (PRN 47660), and define the strike of the Blue or Old Load at Cae Sara (Hall, G.W. 1993: 34). This is likely to be a *stope* sunk into the load when it contained sufficient material to be worth taking away. Contemporary records suggest that this part of the mine may have been *stoped* during a time of increased production under the new management of the Cwm Brane mining company in 1863.

Today the shaft is identified as a shallow depression in the ground surface approximately two metres in diameter. A low spoil deposit, several metres across was observed to the northwest of the shaft.

Recommendations

The shaft is an important element of the late nineteenth century mining industry and should be preserved as a visible historic landscape feature. It should not be ploughed, infilled or subjected to any ground intrusive activity.

Site Category B

PRN 47673 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN752	282770
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CAE SARA

Site Type SHAFT? **Period** Post Med

Description

This possible shaft is located between 30 and 40 metres to the northeast of the line of the three *stopes* (PRNs 47670, 47671, 47672) on the Blue or Old Load at Cae Sara. It is circular, eight metres in diameter and it visible as a shallow depression. It has obviously been infilled at sometime in the past, and past ploughing indicated by a ploughscar in the corner of the field has also obscured the extent of this site making it barely visible today. It lies within a pasture field, which is periodically grazed.

Recommendations

The shaft should be preserved as a historic landscape feature. The area within 15 metres of the edge of the site should not be ploughed, infilled or subjected to any ground intrusive activity.

PRN 47674 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75412755

CAE SARA

Site Type MINE BUILDING **Period** Post Med

Description

This small building is situated approximately 60 metres ESE of the engine house at Cae Sara. It first becomes visible on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map, although it is absent from map sources after 1891. It is aligned ESE along its long axis and measured approximately five by three metres. The remnant rubble wall footings of the east lateral wall survive in the hedgerow to less than half a metre in height. No additional structural remains survive, although its original extent can still be identified by the building platform.

The original function of the building is not known. Its initial appearance on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map shows that the building may have been of contemporary construction to other elements of the mining complex, which are not recorded on map sources before this date.

Recommendations

The area within 15 metres of the edge of this site should not be ploughed, subjected to any ground intrusive activity or used as a location for feeding livestock.



Plate 9- looking east towards mine building (PRN 47674)

PRN 47675 Site Name TY- Grid Reference SN75222760

NEWYDD-CAE-SARA

Site Type COTTAGE Period Post Med

Description

Ty-newydd-cae-Sara is first shown on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map around 100 metres to the northwest of Cae-Sara Lead Mine. A cottage and associated garden enclosures are accessed by a short trackway from the road. By the time of the 1906 Ordnance Survey map, the cottage is shown to be in a derelict condition. The cottage was contemporary with the neighbouring lead mining complex and the name *Ty-newydd-cae-Sara* suggests an association with the mine.

Few remains of the cottage survive. The surviving building platform and remnant wall footings define an area of approximately eight by six metres following a northsouth alignment. No evidence of the associated garden enclosures remain, although the short trackway which provided access to the cottage survives and is currently used as an access trackway to the field. The cottage site lies in a pasture field, which is grazed periodically. It is currently used as an area for storing fencing materials.

Recommendations

No serious threats to the survival of the cottage remains were identified from the current management regime. The area 15 metres from the edge of the site should not be ploughed, used as a location for feeding livestock or subjected to any ground intrusive activities. The fencing materials are preventing the site from being grazed evenly and should, ideally be removed. Future management should aim to establish a stable grass sward over the site with no breaking of the ground surface.



Plate 10- Ty-newydd-cae-Sara PRN (47675) looking north.

PRN 47676 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75222754

CAE SARA

Site Type LEVEL Period Post Med

Description

It is probable that this may be the projected deep *adit* situated in the "north dingle" started by the Cae Sara company in 1860 (Hall, G.W. 1993: 33, 34). The rock-cut entrance is approximately 1.5 metres high and 1.2 metres wide and is reputed by Hall who visited the site before 1971 to be 45 paces long. A short leat (PRN 47677) continues in the direction of the *adit* for approximately 15 metres before meeting a stream. This adit is likely to have been one of many new developments of the Casara Lead Mine Ltd., who took over from the Great Welsh Silver-Lead Mine company in 1860. The entrance to the *adit* level is currently masked by scrub. It continues to carry water.

Recommendations

The level should be maintained as a historic landscape feature. It should not be infilled.

PRN 47677 Site Name CASARA; Grid Reference SN75212754

CAE SARA

Site Type LEAT Period Post Med

Description

This leat, approximately one metre wide follows the line of adit level (PRN 47676) for approximately 15 metres before meeting the Nant Gwarch. It is currently overgrown with some shallow silt deposits, although it continues to carry water.

Recommendations

The leat should be maintained as a historic landscape feature. No ground intrusive activities should be allowed to take place within 15 metres of the leat.

Site Category B

PRN 47678 Site Name GILFACH Grid Reference SN76142737

Site Type CART SHED Period Post Med

Description

This cart shed, on the roadside next to Gilfach farmhouse forms the eastern bay of a two unit building range. It is of uncoursed stone rubble construction with lime mortar bonding and a pitched corrugated asbestos roof. It is accessed in the south elevation, from the road by a wide cart entrance with stone *voussoirs*. A lower entrance of similar width, with a wooden lintel would have provided access to the farmyard to the north. The eastern gable end of the building has been rebuilt out of brick, and the building is currently in a stable condition. A modern breeze block shed has been added to the north lateral wall which appears to have been used as a cowshed in the past. The building, which is first shown on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map is likely to be of a mid to late nineteenth century date.

Recommendations

The cart shed is currently in a reasonable condition. It should continue to be maintained in a stable condition using traditional building techniques and materials.



Plate 11- south elevation of combination farm building (PRN 47679)

PRN 47679 Site Name GILFACH Grid Reference SN76132737

Site Type COMBINATION Period Post Med

FARM BUILDING

Description

This two storey building, on the roadside near to the farmhouse at Gilfach forms the western bay of a two unit building range. It is of uncoursed stone rubble construction with a pitched roof. The southern pitch of retains a traditional slate covering, whereas the north pitch has since been replaced with corrugated iron. The lower level is divided into two bays. The western cartshed bay is accessed by a wide cart entracnce with a substantial wooden lintel, whilst the eastern bay, formerly a carthshed preserves three concrete stalls with halter bars. The upper storey hay loft is accessed by a low set of stone steps in the centre of the south lateral wall by the roadside.

The building, which is first shown on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map is likely to be of a mid to late nineteenth century date. It is currently in a reasonable condition, although some problems need addressing if it is to be maintained in a stable condition necessary for its long-term survival.

Recommendations

The west gable end of the building and part of the south lateral wall are currently masked by heavy ivy growth, which threatens to damage masonry bonds and promote building instability. The ivy is also penetrating under the roof eaves and displacing roof tiles. The ivy should be cut off at the roots, treated and allowed to die. This should be followed up by a programme of masonry consolidation where necessary using a traditional lime mortar mix. The roof should also be repaired using materials faithful to its original construction.

PRN 47680 Site Name GILFACH Grid Reference SN76122738

Site Type PIGSTY Period Modern

Description

This pigsty is situated to the north of the farm entrance trackway opposite combination farm building (PRN 47679). It follows a typical Welsh pigsty "in and out type" with a small yard containing the feeding trough leading into a sleeping section (Wiliam 1986: 29). The pigsty is absent from the 1907 and earlier map sources and is likely to be of an early twentieth century date.

It is currently roofless, in a ruinous condition, with walls surviving to a diminished height. Water ingress continues to weaken lime mortar bonds. The site is currently used as a store for discarded farm rubbish.

Recommendations

The pigsty is currently in a poor condition. Ideally, masonry should be consolidated and wall tops capped with a lime mortar mix in order to prevent further collapse.



Plate 12- pigsty (PRN 47680)

PRN 47887 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76252767

NANT-YR-

HIDDL

Site Type LEVEL Period Post Med

Description

This level, visible as a one metre wide opening is now partially blocked by earth deposits, which have been washed down from the steep hill slope above. It is currently obscured by scrubby vegetation growth. It is situated on the north bank of the steep Nant yr Hiddl valley approximately three metres above water level.

Recommendations

The level should be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature. It should not be infilled. The level is situated on the north bank of the Nant-yr-hiddl and it is not known whether it lies within the Tir Gofal application area.



Plate 13- the opening of level (PRN 47888)

PRN 47888 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76192766

NANT-YR-

HIDDL

Site Type LEVEL **Period** Post Med

Description

This level is situated on the north bank of the steep Nant-yr-hiddl valley around six metres above the water level. The opening remains clearly visible, obscured by little vegetation growth. Hall, who visited Gilfach mine sometime before 1971 noted that it "has been driven 33 paces to the junction with the third lode, 10 paces beyond and 57 paces altogether on the cross load" (Hall, G.W. 1993: 36).

Recommendations

The level should be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature. It should not be infilled. This level is located to the north of the Nant-yr-hiddl and it is not known whether it lies within the Tir Gofal application area.



Plate 14- looking south towards level and shafts (PRNs 47889, 4789, 47891)

PRN 47889 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76192766

NANT-YR-

HIDDL

Site Type LEVEL **Period** Post Med

Description

This level is situated on the south bank of the steep valley of the Nant-yr-hiddl. It lies opposite level (PRN 47888), and above a shaft (PRN 47891), the line of these features clearly indicating the strike of the north-south lode (Hall,G.W. 1993:36). Hall quotes that "the south level is 117 paces long on the north-south lode, and 25 paces in there is a turning to the right, which is at first very constricted but then opens out, and meets a vertical shaft communicating with the surface." The entrance to the level remains visible, although it has become partially obscured by soil washed earthy deposits from the steep slope above.

Recommendations

The level should be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature and should not be infilled.

Site Category B

PRN 47890 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76192766

NANT-YR-

HIDDL

Site Type SHAFT Period Post Med

Description

This shaft lies on the south bank of the steep valley high above the Nant-yr-hiddl, and is sunk onto the main northsouth load of the Gilfach mine. The wide shaft opening is several metres across with a light covering of scrubby vegetation and ivy.

Recommendations

The shaft should be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature. It should not be infilled.

PRN 47891 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76192767

NANT-YR-

HIDDL

Site Type SHAFT Period Post Med

Description

This shaft is situated on the south bank of the Nant-yr-hiddl at stream height in between two opposing levels, (PRNs 47888. 47889) which clearly indicate the strike of the main northsouth *load*. This shaft may be a *winze* (or small shaft connecting two levels on a lode, one above the other) cleared out by the Lady Eliza company in 1858 as part of an initial assessment of the site. G W Hall quotes "the Lady Eliza company cleared out an *old winze* six fathoms deep. At the bottom, they found a level driven seven fathoms northeast, and three fathoms southwest, and two *winzes* sunk to a greater depth (Hall G.W. 1993: 36). These findings prompted the company to develop the mine and records give account that they erected a water wheel in the autumn of 1859, the location of which is no longer known. The *winze* described did not receive further attention after the companies' initial explorations (Hall G.W. 1993: 36). The shaft, which measures approximately two metres across currently contains some fallen tree debris and is filled with water.

Recommendations

The shaft should be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature and should not be infilled.



Plate 15- level (PRN 47892)

PRN 47892 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76132769

NANT-YR-HIDDL

Site Type LEVEL Period Post Med

Description

This level forms part of the mine workings furthest downstream. The entrance, approximately 1.5 metres wide and 1.9 metres high leads into an arch shaped level. Further details on its length and internal characteristics are not known, although it is situated approximately 15 metres to the east of shaft (PRN 47893) and a probable function as an *adit* level for drainage is likely. The level is partially filled with water and the entrance is currently obscured by scrubby vegetation growth.

Recommendations

Maintain as a visible historic landscape feature. Do not infill.

Site Category B

PRN 47893 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76122769

NANT-YR-

HIDDL

Site Type SHAFT Period Post Med

Description

This shaft, sunk on the course of the lode appears to have initially been drained by a short *adit* level (PRN 47892). The remains of the water wheel opposite, presumably for pumping water suggest that the shaft was eventually sunk below the level of the *adit*. The shaft was not seen during the archaeological farm visit.

Recommendations

The shaft should be maintained as a visible historic landscape feature. It should not be infilled.

Site Category B

PRN 47894 Site Name GILFACH; Grid Reference SN76132771

NANT-YR-

HIDDL

Site Type WATER WHEEL **Period** Post Med

Description

This ruinous water wheel pit is situated on an area measuring approximately six by six metres, which is terraced into a steep northwest facing slope above the Nant-yr-hiddle. The wheel pit of stone rubble construction to the north west of this terrace is overgrown and in a ruinous condition. The two walls, up to approximately 1.8 metres high would have supported the wheel. Part of the northwest wall survives to full height. Other parts of the structure are now in a semi collapsed state. Some machinery apparatus can be identified in the vicinity of the wheel pit. No additional structural remains were identified at this location. No evidence of an associated leat or any other water management features could be identified.

Recommendations

Maintain as a historic landscape feature. The machinery apparatus should be retained in its current location. This feature is located to the north of the Nant-yr-hiddle and it is not known whether it lies within the Tir Gofal application area.

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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Gilfach E/10/3102

REPORT NUMBER 2003/50

10th April 2003

This report has been prepared by William Steele
Position Archaeologist (Tir Gofal)
Signature Date
This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.
Position Principal Archaeologist (Curatorial)
Signature Date
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

Gilfach

Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation Countryside Council for Wales Reference E/10/3102 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN 44109 National Grid Reference SN75462750

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

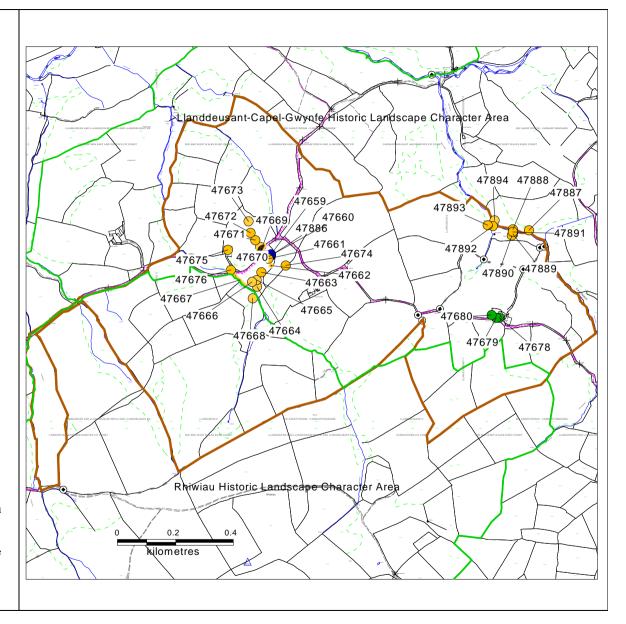
 $Site\ Category\ D-Unknown\ Importance$

Sites requiring further investigation and sites with no physical definition

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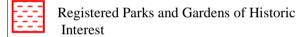
Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/10/3102 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN44109 National Grid Reference SN75462750

Farm Boundary
Historic Landsc

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 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

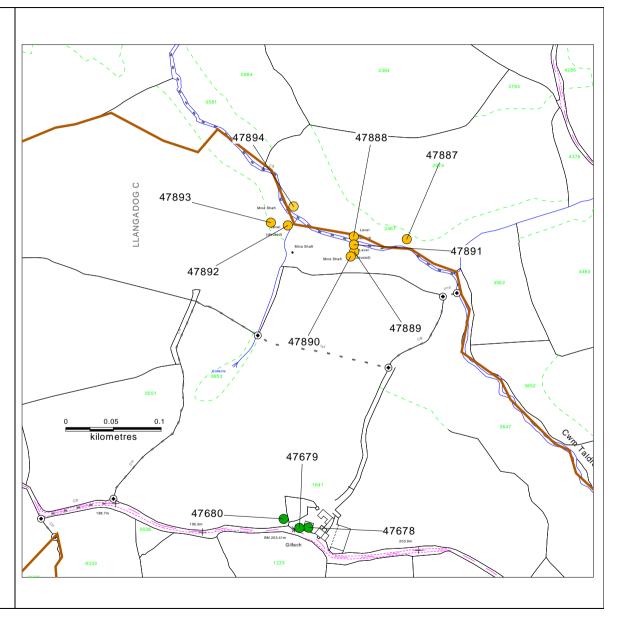
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Sites requiring further investigation and sites with no physical definition

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Cae Sara

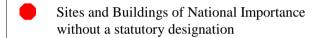
Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/10/3102 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN44109 National Grid Reference SN75462750

Farı Hist

Farm Boundary Historic Landscape Character Area

Site Category A - National Importance

Scheduled Ancient Monuments
Grade 1 and Grade 2* Listed Buildings





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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