

Drefach Farm W/13/2954

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report



View from the hillfort, Prn 3739, across to Drefach Farm

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CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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Drefach
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report

By
Alice Pyper

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ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA
Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Ebost: cambria@acadat.com Gwefan: www.acadat.com

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: cambria@acadat.com Website: www.acadat.com

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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 (PRN 48687)

Drefach Farm, Carmarthenshire lies within Henllanfallteg Community.

The landscape is composed of medium sized irregularly shaped fields with small pockets of woodland on some of the steeper slopes. The field boundaries are composed of dense hedges often set upon earth banks. The historic field pattern, which is largely still visible today, appears to have been established prior to the surveying of the Llangan tithe map in 1841. Most of these field boundaries survive, although not always in a stock proof condition.

The farmstead itself (Prn 48688) lies close to a spring on the slopes above the Nant Cwmfelinboeth. A further spring to the southeast marks the location of the earlier farmstead (Prn 48691), marked on the tithe map of 1841 as Trefach. This appears to have been replaced by the current farmstead in the mid to late 19th century.

The highest point of the holding, and in a dominant position over the Nant Cwmfelinboeth valley is an iron age hillfort, Prn 3739. There is little indication of the site on the ground, its presence is suggested by an unusual curve in the field boundary and a slight depression which is all that remains of the defensive ditch, however, the lack of visible evidence belies the enormous possibility of archaeological features which survive below the ground surface.

Another area of huge archaeological potential is the southwestern area of the farm close to the early medieval site of Cannas church. Here a number of sites have been plotted from aerial photographs, revealed only by differential growth in the ground covering vegetation (Prns 11787, 11788 & 14341). These 'cropmarks' indicate the presence of enclosures defined by ditches, which may be prehistoric or early medieval sites. These sites lie in close proximity to the early medieval church of Cannas. In addition, the three southwestern fields of the holding may form part of a much larger outer enclosure which may have surrounded the church.

MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The main areas of consideration for the sympathetic management of the historic environment on the farm are the potential farm building restoration at Drefach farmstead, and the protection of subsurface archaeological sites.

Building Restoration

It is hoped that both the traditional farm buildings at Drefach farmstead can undergo restoration through the scheme; the cow shed (Prn 48689) will have the current asbestos sheet roof replaced with slate and essential maintenance will be carried out on the barn (Prn 48690). These restoration works will greatly enhance the historic character of the farmstead and help to keep the buildings viable for many years to come. It is important that, throughout any restoration works, appropriate materials are used which are similar to those used in the original construction.

Areas of Archaeological Potential

There are two areas of high archaeological potential which should be highlighted; the hillfort (Prn 3739) and the fields to the north and east of Cannas church which include various prehistoric or

early medieval enclosures (Prns 11787, 11788 & 14341). In both areas the sites are either not visible at all at ground level, or only slight earthwork remains survive. Over the last millennia and more, agricultural practices will have gradually eroded these sites until they are no longer noticeable on the ground. It is only with the advent of aerial photography that many of these sites have been rediscovered. Although these sites will have undergone a great deal of ground disturbance over the years there will still be archaeological features and deposits which lie below cultivation levels. Therefore, where these sites have been identified, it is recommended that further ground disturbing activities, such as ploughing, should be avoided in order to protect the surviving archaeological deposits.

GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

PRN	3735	Site Name	CANNA'S WELL	Grid Reference	SN17821873
Site Type	HOLY WELL	Period	Medieval		

Description

A holy well, named Canna's Well which was reputed to cure intestinal complaints, was situated to the east of Llangan church. The site is marked as a spring on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1891 & 1908. It is thought that works to the well in the mid 19th century caused it to dry up (Jones 1954, p204). A modern breeze block cistern now appears to mark the site of the spring, situated in an area of rough ground which is rather overgrown.

Recommendations

If any works are to be carried out on this well please inform Cambria Archaeology in advance.

Site Category C



Prn 3735 – a concrete cistern appears to be the only marker of the site of the Holy Well

Prn Desc. Text // Jones, F / 1954 / Holy Wells of Wales,
 PH Map // OS / 1891 / Pembrokeshire XXV.SW
 Prn Map // OS / 1908 / " " "

PRN 3739 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN18881911

Site Type HILLFORT **Period** Iron Age

Description

On the summit of the hill, with commanding views for miles over the surrounding area, are the remains of an iron age hillfort. This site is largely indicated by the existing field boundary which exhibits a distinctive kink and curve echoing the line of earthwork defences. There is also a slight depression, no more than 0.5 metre deep, curving around to the west of the field boundary, suggesting the line of a ditch. The field boundary is composed of a large earth bank on which a hedge sits.

It is likely that since the fields to either side of the hedgebank have been cultivated in the past, that archaeological deposits will have been disturbed to some extent. However, below cultivation levels and where the hedgebank is situated, it is possible that there is survival of archaeological features.

The hedgebank is no longer completely stockproof and it appears that, in places, stock are beginning to break down the hedge and the supplementary fencing.

Recommendations

The hillfort should be retained in an undisturbed state. Ground disturbing activities such as ploughing or tree-planting could potentially damage the very sensitive archaeological deposits which survive and therefore should be avoided in this area.

The hedgebank should be restored to a stockproof condition, if works to the hedgebank involve ground disturbance please inform Cambria Archaeology.

Site Category A



Prn 3739 – the remnants of the defensive ditch can be seen on the west side of the hillfort (left) while the hedgebank appears to indicate the line of the defences to the east.

PRN 11787 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN17741888

Site Type ENCLOSURE **Period** Iron Age

Description

The site of an enclosure has been identified from aerial photographs. A curving ditch which touches the western edge of the field, but lies primarily under the road and in the field to the west of the holding, has been plotted from aerial photographs.

There is no visible trace of an enclosure on the ground surface, however any upstanding remains may have been removed over many years of cultivation. At the time of the farm visit this field had recently been reseeded.

Recommendations

The nature and extent of this feature are unknown, however it is likely that archaeological deposits survive below cultivation levels and possibly to a greater extent under the adjacent road. In order to prevent further erosion of archaeological deposits, further ground disturbing activities should be avoided in this area. This could be achieved, if further cultivation of the adjacent field is undertaken, by leaving a wider field margin of 5 metres in this area.

Site Category D

PRN 11788 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN17881866

Site Type ENCLOSURE **Period** Prehistoric?
Roman?

Description

The site of a possible enclosure has been identified from aerial photographs. A roughly rectangular enclosure, lies within the current field boundary to the southeast of Canna's Well (Prn 3735). This feature is approximately 110 by 60 metres on a north-northwest - south-southeast orientation with a possible internal subdivision. It has been suggested that this cropmark might not be an antiquity since part of it runs parallel to a former hedgebank (DAT 1984, p24). However, it is possible that it is an iron age or Roman settlement site.

Recommendations

Further investigation of this site would undoubtedly reveal its origins, however until this takes place then archaeological deposits which may survive below cultivation levels should be preserved. In order to protect the site further ground disturbing activities should be avoided.

Site Category D

PRN 13149 **Site Name** LLWYN-DU **Grid Reference** SN18001874

Site Type COTTAGE **Period** **Post**
Medieval

Description

A cottage and its associated enclosure is recorded on the tithe map of Llangan parish (1841) and again recorded on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1891 and 1908, where it is named Llwyn-du. The maps show that the cottage was orientated northeast to southwest, situated within a triangular enclosure which took in the eastern corner of the field.

There is now no visible trace of this cottage. The only indication of the cottage is a group of three mature trees situated at the end of a field boundary which may survive from the enclosure.

This field appears to have been periodically cultivated and at the time of the farm visit had recently been reseeded.

Recommendations

Although this area has been cultivated in the past, there may still be archaeological deposits surviving below cultivation levels. In order to protect the site further ground disturbing activities should be avoided.

Site Category D



Prn 13149 – the site of Llwyn-du cottage lies in the corner of this field.

PRN 14341 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN17911917

Site Type ENCLOSURE **Period** **Bronze Age?**
Iron Age?

Description

The site of a possible enclosure has been identified from aerial photographs. A roughly circular ditched enclosure, approximately 20 metres in diameter, is overlaid by the present road and extends into the northwestern edges of the field.

There is no indication of the existence of an enclosure on the ground. This field had recently been reseeded at the time of the farm visit.

Recommendations

The nature and extent of this feature are unknown, however it is possible that archaeological deposits survive below cultivation levels. In order to protect sensitive archaeological deposits from erosion further ground disturbing activities should be avoided. This could be achieved, if further cultivation of the adjacent field is undertaken, by leaving a wider field margin of 10 metres in this area.

Site Category D

PRN 23332 **Site Name** HENLLAN **Grid Reference**

Site Type HOUSE **Period**

Description

A house named 'Henllan House' is marked on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps (1891 & 1908).

There is no longer any indication of the existence of this building and the site is currently occupied by an electricity sub-station.

Recommendations

Since this site is now currently occupied by a utilities building, it presumably does not fall within the scheme.

Site Category D

Site Type	FARMSTEAD	Period	Post Medieval
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Description
The current farmstead of Drefach appears to have originated in the mid to late 19th century. A farmstead named Trefach is indicated on the tithe map (1841), but in a location to the southeast of the current complex, see Prn 48691. A solitary, un-named building is recorded on the tithe map at this location but does not appear to relate to any of the current buildings at the farmstead. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891 indicates a substantial complex had been constructed, composed of at least three buildings. The second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1908 shows the layout of the farmstead almost as it is found today, although there have been further large sheds constructed to the north of the farmstead.

Recommendations

Please see individual records for management recommendations.

A photograph of a residential street in a rural area. On the left is a two-story white house with a dark roof and a chimney. A car is parked in front of it. To the right is a long, low stone building, possibly a barn or workshop. The street is paved and leads towards a green field in the background under a cloudy sky.

Prn 48688 – Drefach farmstead, with barn (Prn 48690) to the right

PRN 48689 **Site Name** DREFACH **Grid Reference** SN18591963

Site Type COW SHED **Period** **Post**
Medieval

Description

The cow shed is constructed in rubble stone walling with low brick arches over the openings. It has a central doorway with windows flanking to either side. A low level drainage opening issues from the corner of the main elevation. A doorway at first floor level is positioned in the southwest gable, suggesting that originally the cow shed was, at least in part, lofted. The roof is a simple collar truss construction with metal fixings and corrugated asbestos sheeting.

At the time of the farm visit the cow shed was in use as a feed store and in a fair and weatherproof condition.

Recommendations

It is intended to restore this building to a slate roof and use the building as storage for a new bulk tank for the dairy unit. This would be a very worthwhile undertaking and would help to restore the historic character of the farmstead.

Hygiene regulations will undoubtedly be imposed on such a proposal, and may present problems for the restoration of an unlined slate roof. In this case it may be sufficient to satisfy health and hygiene regulations to line the roof with a breathable membrane.

Site Category C



Prn 48689 – the cow shed to the northeast of the farmhouse at Drefach

PRN 48690 **Site Name** DREFACH **Grid Reference** SN18591961

Site Type BARN **Period** **Post**
Medieval

Description

A barn is situated to the east of the farmstead and appears on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891. Subdivided into two sections and positioned across the slope, the upper (west) end is open to the roof while the lower section is two storey. The upper end has the traditional opposing doorways to enable a through draught for threshing with a ventilation slit to the side.

The roof is a collar truss construction and was reslated approximately 10-15 years ago. The barn is in good condition and in use as a workshop. However, some slates have slipped and the masonry would benefit from repointing.

Recommendations

It is hoped to carry out essential repairs to this barn through the scheme, in order to maintain the barn in good condition. Any repairs should be carried out using traditional materials, similar to those used in the original construction.

Site Category C



Prn 48690 – the barn at Drefach farmstead is in use as a workshop

PRN 48691 **Site Name** TREFACH **Grid Reference** SN18911946

Site Type FARMSTEAD **Period** **Post**
Medieval

Description

A farmstead, named Trefach, is shown in this location on the tithe map of 1841. Two buildings are shown situated within a roughly square enclosure at the end of a trackway. The apportionment shows that it was occupied by David William and owned by a man named Poyer. The farmstead appears then to have been removed, since there is no indication of any structures on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891, and a new farmstead named Drefach appears to the northwest (Prn 48688). The only indication of the original farmstead is the crooked field boundaries which belie the earlier enclosure. During the farm visit no upstanding remains or earthworks, which could be attributed to this settlement, were observed.

Recommendations

Although there are no visible remains surviving of the early farmstead of Trefach, there may well be features which survive below the ground surface, for this reason activities which disturb the ground surface should be avoided in this area.

Site Category D

PRN 48692 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN18711907

Site Type COTTAGE **Period** **Post**
Medieval

Description

A cottage is marked on the tithe map of 1841, and appears to fall within the farm holding of Talvan at this time. The cottage seems to have fallen out of use at some time in the mid to late 19th century since there is no indication of any structure on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891. The site of this cottage was not seen during the farm visit, so the current condition of this site is unknown.

Recommendations

Since no building has been recorded in this location for over a century and a half it is presumed that no upstanding structure survives. However, there may well be archaeological features relating to the cottage which survive below ground level. In order to protect these features ground disturbing activities should be avoided in this location.

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.

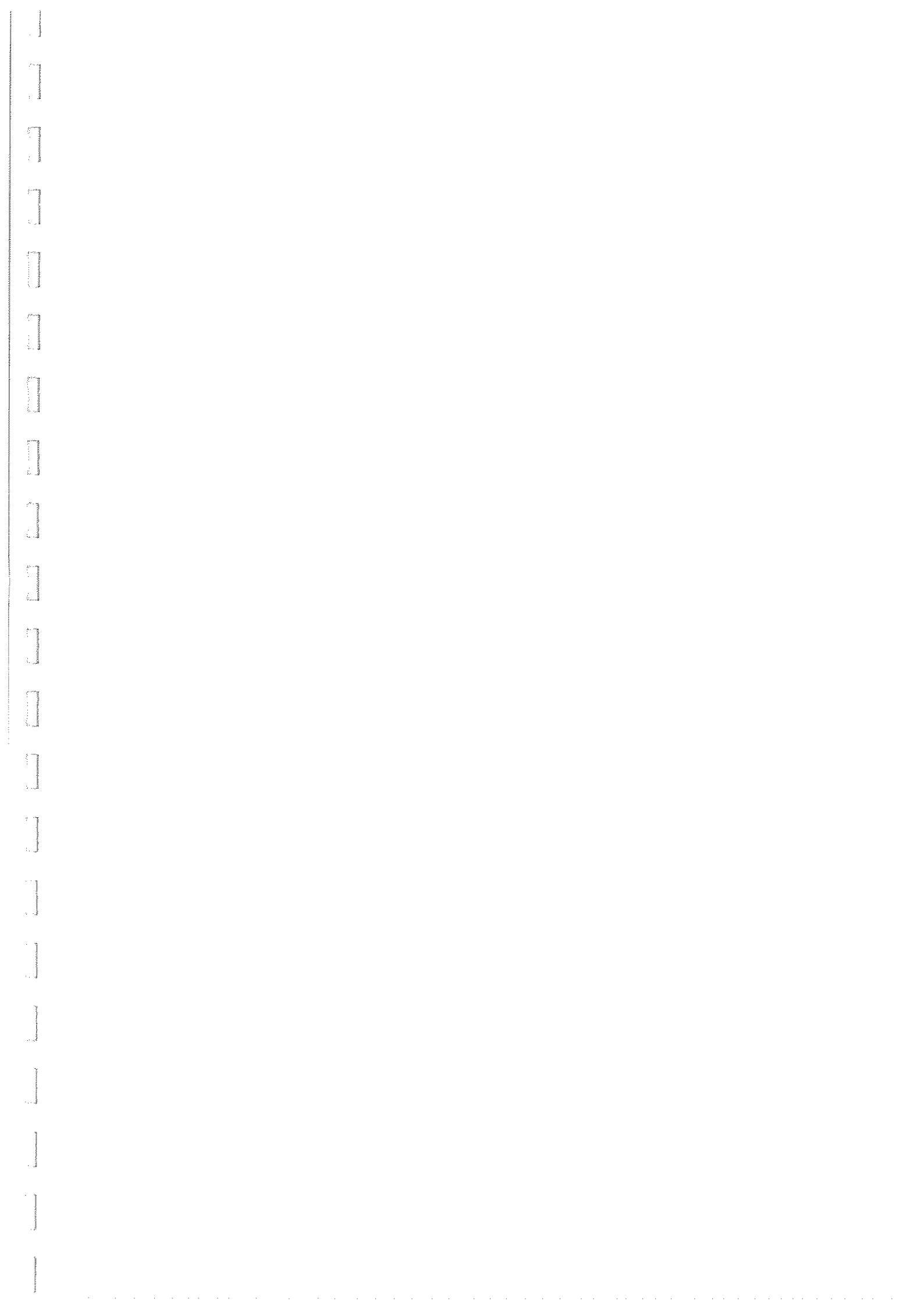
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Jones, F. 1954 *Holy Wells of Wales*
Sites and Monuments Record



Map Sources

James, TA 1984 Aerial Photograph-SN1718; AP-84-73.2-4
Ordnance Survey 1891 Pembrokeshire sheet XXV.SW
Ordnance Survey 1908 Pembrokeshire sheet XXV.SW
Tithe Map and Apportionment of Llangan Parish 1841





Drefach

Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation
 Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/13/2954
 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN 44236
 National Grid Reference SN18431924

 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


Site Category B - Regional Importance

 Sites and Buildings of Regional Importance
 including Grade 2 listed buildings

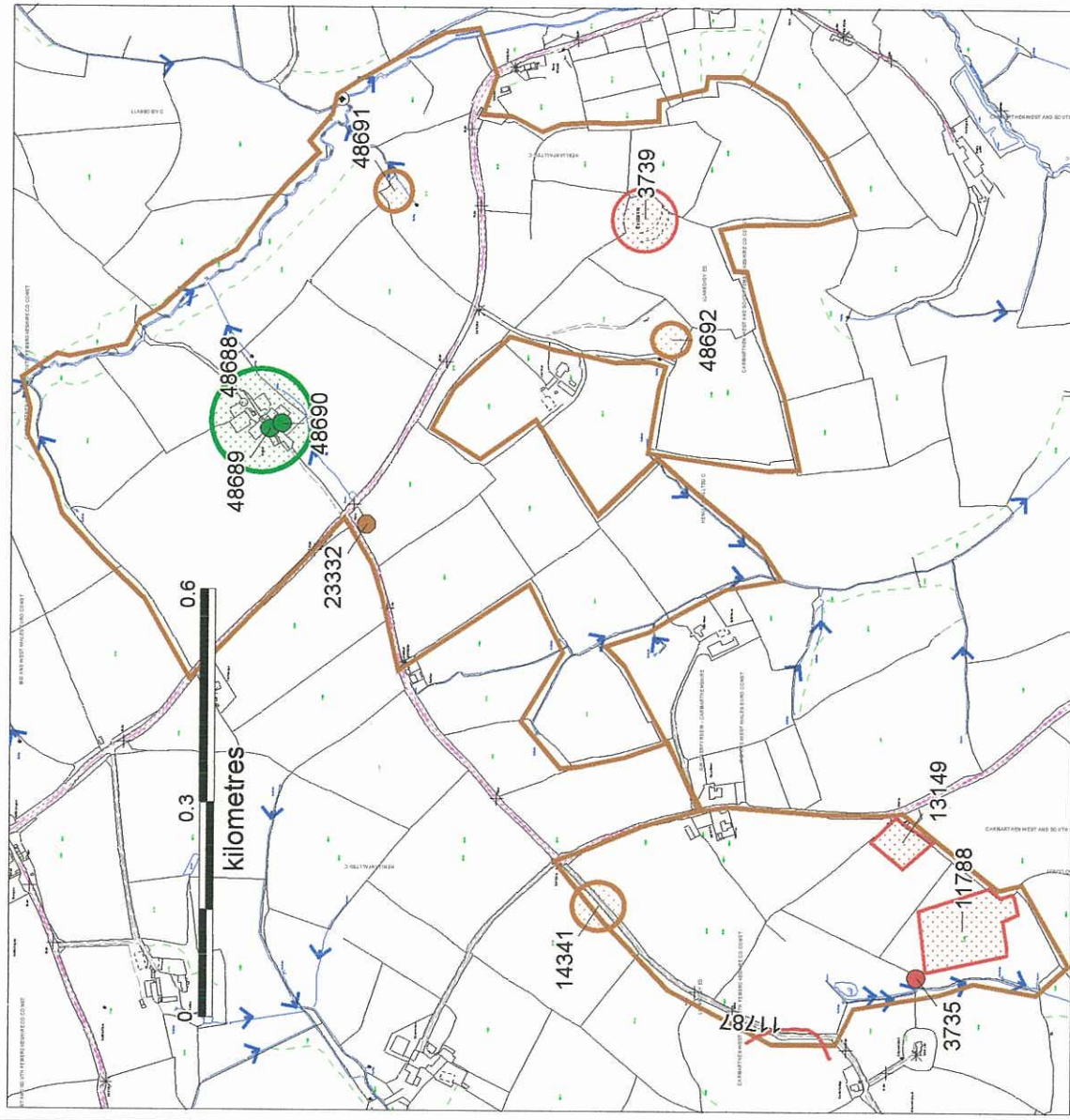
Site Category C - Local Importance

 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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Drefach Farm
W/13/2954

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This report has been prepared by Alice Pyper

Position: Heritage Management Archaeologist (Tir Gofal)

Signature Alice Pyper Date 18th November 2003

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

Position: Principal Archaeologist (Field Operations)

Signature [Signature] Date 18/11/03

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on the content or presentation of this report