



# **Grondre Fach W/13/3174**

## **Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report**



Report No. 2002/67

Report Prepared for:  
Countryside Council for Wales

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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18<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Grondre Fach  
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report

By

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## **CALL OUT VISIT**

Following a site visit by a Tir Gofal project officer to the farmstead of Grondre Fach, a follow up visit by Cambria Archaeology was requested to establish the condition of the semi derelict building next to the main farmhouse, with the possibility of removing the vegetation growth in and around the building.

### **General Description of the farmstead**

Grondre Fach (SN11101791) lies to the south west of Grondre House (PRN 33879) and consists of a farmhouse and one additional outbuilding, both are late 19<sup>th</sup> century / early 20<sup>th</sup> century in date. The outbuilding would appear to be a combined cowshed / pigsty and/or stables and cart shed.

Although the house and surrounding grounds are in good order, the outbuilding has been derelict for some years. It has become severely overgrown by vegetation, ash trees have become established in and around the building and despite being cut back, some trees are showing signs of rapid regrowth. Of more particular concern is the problem of structural soundness, as two main areas of instability have developed following the loss of the buildings roof and the intrusive growth of vegetation. The lintel and area of stonework above the eastern window, and the collapsing wall of the pigsty are both in a very dangerous condition.

### **General Management Recommendations**

In order to preserve the historic character of the farm the most preferred option would be to restore the structure to a usable and sustainable building by clearing the vegetation, stabilising and repairing the masonry, restoring the roof, and then putting the building back into use. If this work is not to be undertaken, the building and immediate area should be made safe and the structure stabilized. This may require partial reconstruction of the most unstable areas. Any vegetation growth should then be cleared to prevent any further deterioration.

A preliminary archaeological record was made during the call out visit, this included a brief annotated sketch plan and some digital photographs, but in the case of any structural intervention works then further recording works are recommended in order to enhance the existing record and add any new information.



### **Grondre Fach**

The farm building at Grondre Fach is at present a roofless, gabled one storey unit on an east west orientation, with an additional outshoot to the front forming an 'L' shape, and a double pig sty and a lean-to shed to the side. Stone is used throughout the construction, with low brick arched window and door openings with timber lintels behind, and sloping slate window sills. No evidence of doors, door fixtures or furniture survive. The windows consist of five glazed lights across the top with vertical timber slats below.

The front (south) wall only extends for half of the frontage, and contains a window and wide doorway with ventilation slit beside. The other half is extended to the south by an outshoot forming an 'L' shape in plan. It is not clear to what height this section was built or how it was roofed. The west gable contains a door in the north side, and the north wall contains a doorway and two window openings. There is a window in the east gable with a decayed timber lintel and unstable stonework above. An opening (?drain) exits through the wall at ground level below this window. Attached to the east wall against the north corner is a stone built lean-to with a doorway in its north face, small window in the east and covered by a slate roof. There is a double pigsty built against the east face of the outshoot and incorporating a sloping feeding shoot in its south face.

The present structural condition makes it difficult to ascribe functions to the building although the main section was probably a cow house with additional ?cart/?stable accommodation in the outshoot to the front.



Plate 1 – the building from the south east

The main threat to the building are a range of very large trees growing very close to the walls and also within the building, as well as some ivy and bramble growth.

### **Management Recommendations**

The prospect of consolidating this building is to be welcomed. The building evidently suffers from a number of structural faults as well as extensive intrusive woody growths, but attempts should be made to make safe and stabilise the structure.

Where vegetation growth has caused a particular structural fault, most notably to the stonework on the south side of the pigsty, consideration should be given to more specific repair and consolidation work in order to ensure the safety of the building. The decayed lintel over the window in the east wall is of particular concern, the stonework above is in an extremely precarious state as it is no longer bonded, and together with the lintel, is supporting much of the weight of the gable and any further deterioration would bring about a serious collapse of stonework. In both of these cases general vegetation clearance should not take place until the structure of the building is stabilised.



Plate 2 – decayed lintel and stonework above

The trees surrounding, and also within the building should be cut down and at the same time any damaged masonry that is revealed should be repaired using traditional materials. Attention should also be paid to the treatment of tree stumps to prevent re-growth in further seasons and thereby preventing potential problems caused by roots.





Plate 3 – vegetation around north face

Once the building is stabilised any loose masonry should be secured and the wall tops capped using traditional materials and methods.

At the very least this building should be structurally stabilized and cleared of vegetation growth to prevent its' further deterioration. However, in the long term this building also provides an opportunity through further restoration to be brought back into use and enhance the historic character of the farmstead.



Plate 4 – vegetation around east face

It is understood that the owners have taken photographs of the farm since moving to it. Attached are guidelines for the 'General Photographic Surveys of Buildings' as prepared by Cambria Archaeology. In addition it is recommended that an archaeological photographic record is made as any clearance or other works are undertaken in order to more fully record the building and also to record any new features that are revealed.

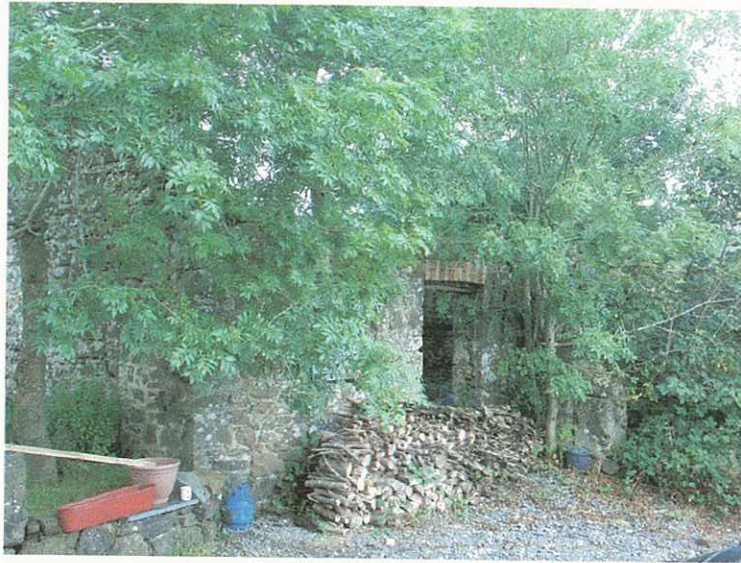


Plate 5 – south face and doorway

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18<sup>th</sup> September 2002

This report has been prepared by Simon Wardle

Position: Tir Gofal Archaeologist

Signature

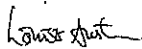


Date 18<sup>th</sup> September 2002

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 18<sup>th</sup> September 2002

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have  
on the content or presentation of this report



## **Tir Gofal Traditional Buildings**

### **Requirements for General Photographic Surveys of Buildings**

The purpose of the survey is to produce a photographic record of the building prior to any demolition, alterations or renovation being started, as well as recording any fixtures, fittings or features which come to light during the works. This survey may be the only record of the original form of the building available for future reference. The survey will then be referenced within the Regional Site and Monuments Record for Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion (held and managed by Cambria Archaeology), and deposited with the National Monument Record in order that the information is publicly available for study and reference.

Photographs should be taken using 35mm format colour print film (preferably Kodak or Fuji). ASA 200 film is a good standard for most light conditions but ASA 400 should be used where light conditions are poor. 36 exposure film should be used in all cases and at least one whole film must be exposed. Alternatively, a digital camera may be used. Please contact Cambria Archaeology for further information on the quality of digital image required.

Photographs should be taken of all exterior and interior wall elevations which are affected by the proposed works together with photographs of the interior roof detail where this is altered. Features of particular interest (e.g. obvious differences in wall makeup, windows and doors whether blocked up or not, fireplaces, timber framing) should also be fully photographed. If available a scale, of noted measurement, should be placed within any detailed shots but this is not essential.

A plan of the building is also required to record the direction in which each of the photographs has been taken. Architectural drawings can be used where available or a sketch plan can be produced. Location reference numbers on the plans should be copied onto the backs of the prints together with brief descriptive details of the location. If using a digital camera this information should be used to name the photographs.

A copy of the survey should be provided to Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6HU either directly or via the Countryside Council for Wales Tir Gofal Project Officer.