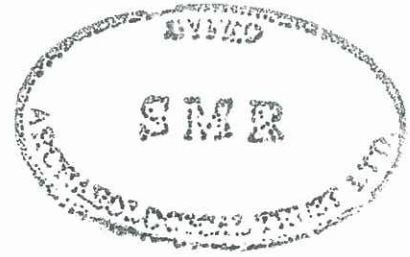


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Nantycastell W/12/2844

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report



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CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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Nantycastell
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report

By

Simon Wardle

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INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to provide a statement on the condition and recommended management of all known archaeological and historical sites and features on this farm at the time it was visited by Cambria Archaeology. This information will be used to inform the Tir Gofal Management Agreement for the farm.

Method Statement

The farm visit consisted of two phases:

Phase 1 was a rapid search of all readily available documentary, cartographic and published sources to try to understand the historical development of the farm and the wider landscape and to identify new sites of archaeological interest. The searches undertaken include information held in the regional Sites and Monuments Record, the relevant County Records Office and the National Library of Wales. New sites, or areas of interest were plotted onto a Geographical Information Systems based map for use during the field survey and for the final report.

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

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FARM

Nantycastell farmstead (PRN 25408) lies just over 3 kilometres to the north west of the village of Cynwyl Elfed at a height of 230 metres on a promontory of land with deep sharp wooded valleys to the north and south east and an area of upland to the west.

The farmstead at Nantycastell is described by Francis Jones in 'Historic Carmarthenshire Homes' as being home of the Williams family in the late 17th century, and indeed the existing farmhouse (PRN 45707) may date to that period. The tithe map and apportionment of 1841 for the parish of Cynwyl Elfed shows what is presumably the existing farmhouse, as well as a further individual farm (?) building, tenanted by a Thomas Griffiths and owned by a Morris Edward.

The present day farmstead of Nantycastell is shown in its current form on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1891). Therefore during the middle and later stages of the 19th century the current range of farm buildings (PRN's 45708 – 45713), as well as the pond (PRN 45715), and the well (PRN 45717) became part of the farm landscape. The three ponds to the north of the farm were excavated in turn during the middle of the 20th century in order to provide a lasting water supply to the farm. Modern sheds have been constructed around the older elements of the farmstead, but the 19th century core remains and along with the farmhouse forms an architecturally attractive and historically interesting farmstead.

The pattern of field boundaries as shown on the 1841 tithe map has remained largely unchanged, some field boundaries have been lost (PRN 45718 – ridge & furrow), whilst areas shown as fields in the middle of the 19th century have become overgrown and wooded since. Also the pattern of trackways and paths as depicted in 1841 remains to the present day.

MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

PRNs 45707 – 45713 NANTYCASTELL FARMSTEAD

The buildings at Nantycastell form a good example of a historic farmstead and survive in most parts in good condition. The continual upkeep and maintenance of the farm buildings is to be welcomed and indeed the farmers intention to keep the buildings watertight is commendable. Where repairs are to be carried out to ensure the soundness of the roof and fabric it is recommended that traditional materials and methods are used throughout in order to help retain the historic nature of the farm.

PRN 45718 RIDGE & FURROW & PRN 2236 ?HILLFORT

Although no visible traces of the hillfort have been identified on the ground, archaeological deposits may remain below the current ground level. In order to protect any buried archaeological remains within the area of the hillfort and the surviving fragments of ridge & furrow should not be disturbed.

GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

PRN	2236	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN35182978
Site Type	HILLFORT?	Period	Iron Age		

Description

This site is located on the south side of a steep, narrow valley, facing a further valley extending northwards. It has been identified from an aerial photograph as a double semi-circular parch mark (cropmark) to the west of a field boundary and stream, extending to a maximum of around 60 metres west from the field boundary, along the central 120 metres of its length. Presumably it continued to the east of the field boundary but no crop marks have been recognised in this area.

During the site visit no visible signs of the cropmark could be seen, although the long grass cover at the time of the visit would have made this difficult. On the western side of the field boundary there did appear to be a break of slope corresponding with the cropmark and a levelled area within the enclosed area of the cropmark. To the east of the field boundary only the natural valley break of slope to the north could be seen.

Recommendations

Although no visible traces of this cropmark have been identified on the ground, archaeological deposits may remain below the current ground level. In order to protect any buried archaeological remains this area (to include both sides of the field boundary) should not be disturbed.

Site Category D

PRN	45707	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34952958
Site Type	FARMHOUSE	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

This is a fine historic farmhouse retaining much of its early character and fabric, it was described by Francis Jones in 1987 as being occupied by the Williams family in the 17th Century, and was later extended in the 19th Century.

Recommendations

This farmhouse is at present in use as a dwelling and as such is not included in the Tir Gofal scheme.

Site Category C



Plate 1 – Nantycastell farmhouse (PRN 45707)

PRN	45708	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34962957
Site Type	DWELLING	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

This is a former stable attached to the farmhouse (PRN 45707) extension, and dates to the middle or end of the 19th century. It has now been converted into a dwelling.

Recommendations

This former stable is at present in use as a dwelling and as such is not included in the Tir Gofal scheme.

Site Category C

PRN	45709	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34952960
Site Type	SHED	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

This is a small one storey gabled building attached transversely to the north wall of the farmhouse (PRN 45707), and it has a lean to extension against its north wall. It is now accessed by a wide, off-centre door in its east wall which has a reused timber as a lintel. This doorway must be a later insertion following the construction of the lean to, and the timber lintel is possibly a reused ceiling (spine?) beam. Above this doorway are the remains of a flue exiting through the apex of the gable, now covered and blocked by a slate roof. There is a door and window in the south wall, and a ventilation slit in both the north and west walls.

The flue is probably the remnants of a ground floor fireplace (boiler?) and indicates that this building could have been a service wing to the house dating to the middle or later part of the 19th century.

Recommendations

This building is in use as a shed, is currently in a fair to good condition and should be maintained in its current condition.

Site Category C



Plate 2 – Shed (PRN 45709)

PRN	45710	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34962961
Site Type	SHED	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

A low south faced cowshed attached to the west gable of PRN 457111. Accessed by a wide central doorway in its south face and with windows (blocked doorways) to either side. Openings have low brick arched heads. The construction is of late 19th century in date.

Recommendations

This building is still in use as a farm building and it's continual upkeep and maintenance is to be welcomed. Where repairs are to be carried out to ensure the soundness of the roof and fabric it is recommended that traditional materials and methods are used throughout.

Site Category C



Plate 3 – Shed (PRN 45710)

PRN	45711	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34972961
Site Type	SHED	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

Lofted south facing shed with two stone headed doorways and two windows in the south face, and a further doorway and central brick arched first floor window (former door) in the east gable wall. The west gable wall has been demolished to allow internal access between this building and the later shed to the west (PRN 45710). The construction is of mid to late 19th century in date.

Recommendations

This building is still in use as a farm building and it's continual upkeep and maintenance is to be welcomed. Where repairs are to be carried out to ensure the soundness of the roof and fabric it is recommended that traditional materials and methods are used throughout.

Site Category C



Plate 4 – Shed (PRN 45711)

PRN	45712	Site	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34982961
Site Type	SHED	Name			
		Period	Post Medieval		

Description

A combined stable (north) and barn (south) lofted west facing range. The stables are accessed by a door and lit by a window (blocked door) in the west wall, and internally retains a well worn slate partition. The south barn section contains opposing doors in the west and east walls with adjacent sockets within the internal wall face, and it also retains parts of a drive shaft through the width of the structure. This drive shaft is thought to have been powered by water from the pond to the north of the farm (PRN 45715), although no evidence of any leat or race structure could be seen. The construction is of mid to late 19th century in date.

Recommendations

This building is still in use as a farm building and it's continual upkeep and maintenance is to be welcomed. Where repairs are to be carried out to ensure the soundness of the roof and fabric it is recommended that traditional materials and methods are used throughout.

Site Category C

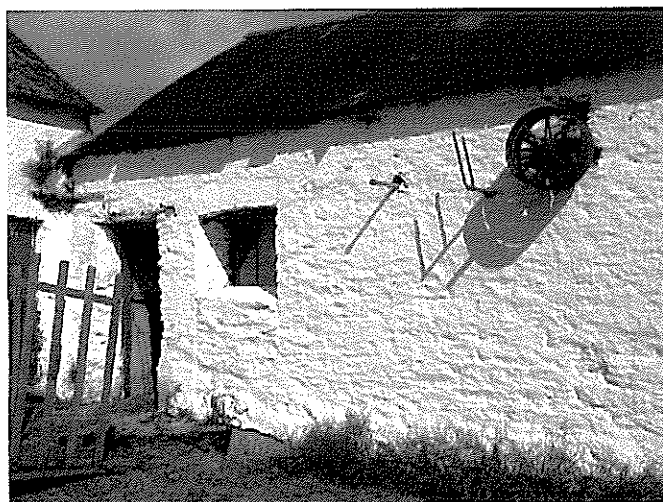


Plate 5 – Shed (PRN 45712)

PRN	45713	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34982960
Site Type	SHED	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

A one cell extension to the south of shed PRN 45712. It contains ground floor doors in its west and south walls, and a central door at first floor level in its south face, although no evidence of external stair access or internal floor structure survives. It was presumably lofted and could have served as a granary or hay loft. It is now in use as a stable. The construction is of late 19th century in date.

Recommendations

The brick arch and jambs belonging to the upper level doorway in the south face are beginning to deteriorate. It is essential to maintain this and other areas of the fabric in order to retain the historic nature of the farm and to help prolong to life of the structures. These areas should be monitored and where necessary repaired using traditional materials and methods.

Site Category C

PRN	45714	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN35152951
Site Type	Quarry	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

Quarry site located in a heavily overgrown and steep sided valley, measuring 10 by 5 metres and 1.5 metres high/deep where it is cut into the valley side.

Recommendations

There are no specific management recommendations for this site. Any future woodland management in this area should seek to identify any further sites in this area.

Site Category C

PRN	45715	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34912965
Site Type	POND	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

Overgrown, roughly circular pond to the north of the farmstead, measuring approximately 20 metres in diameter. It is possible that this pond relates to 19th century or earlier water management at Nantycastell.

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations. If any works are to be carried out on this site, please contact Cambria Archaeology in advance.

Site Category C

PRN	45716	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34792966
Site Type	PONDS	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

A set of 3 'in-line' ponds to the north of the farmstead. Developed during the 20th century to meet the water demands of the farm

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations. If any works are to be carried out on this site, please contact Cambria Archaeology in advance.

Site Category C

PRN	45717	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN34902961
Site Type	WELL	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

The area of this site is at present a wet muddy depression but it could relate to 20th century water management at Nantycastell.

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations. If any works are to be carried out on this site, please contact Cambria Archaeology in advance.

Site Category C

PRN	45718	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN35282959
Site Type	RIDGE & FURROW	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

A short section of ridge and furrow earthworks with associated field bank survive along the edge of an open improved field, extending for a length of around 27 metres and projecting into the field by 1-1.5 metres. They clearly relate to an earlier pattern of field systems that have since been lost. The survival of these earthworks is an indicator of the change in agricultural practices during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Recommendations

There should be no ground disturbance within this area.

Site Category B

PRN	45719	Site Name	Nantycastell	Grid Reference	SN35552974
Site Type	QUARRY?	Period	Post Medieval		

Description

This is a low circular depression, approximately 16 metres across and near to the line of a lost field boundary. It could be a quarry or a tree bole from the lost field boundary.

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations.

Site Category D

SITE AND AREA STATUS GLOSSARY

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

SAM - Scheduled Ancient Monument

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

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

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

HLW - Historic Landscapes of Wales

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

PGW - Parks and Gardens of Wales

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

REFERENCES

- Tithe map and Apportionment for the Parish of Cynwyl Elfed (1841)
1st edition Ordnance Survey map, 1891, Carms sheet XXII.SE
2nd edition Ordnance Survey map, 1907, Carms sheet XXII.SE
Jones, F. 1987 *Historic Carmarthenshire Homes* p.136

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This report has been prepared by Simon Wardle

Position: Archaeologist (Tir Gofal)

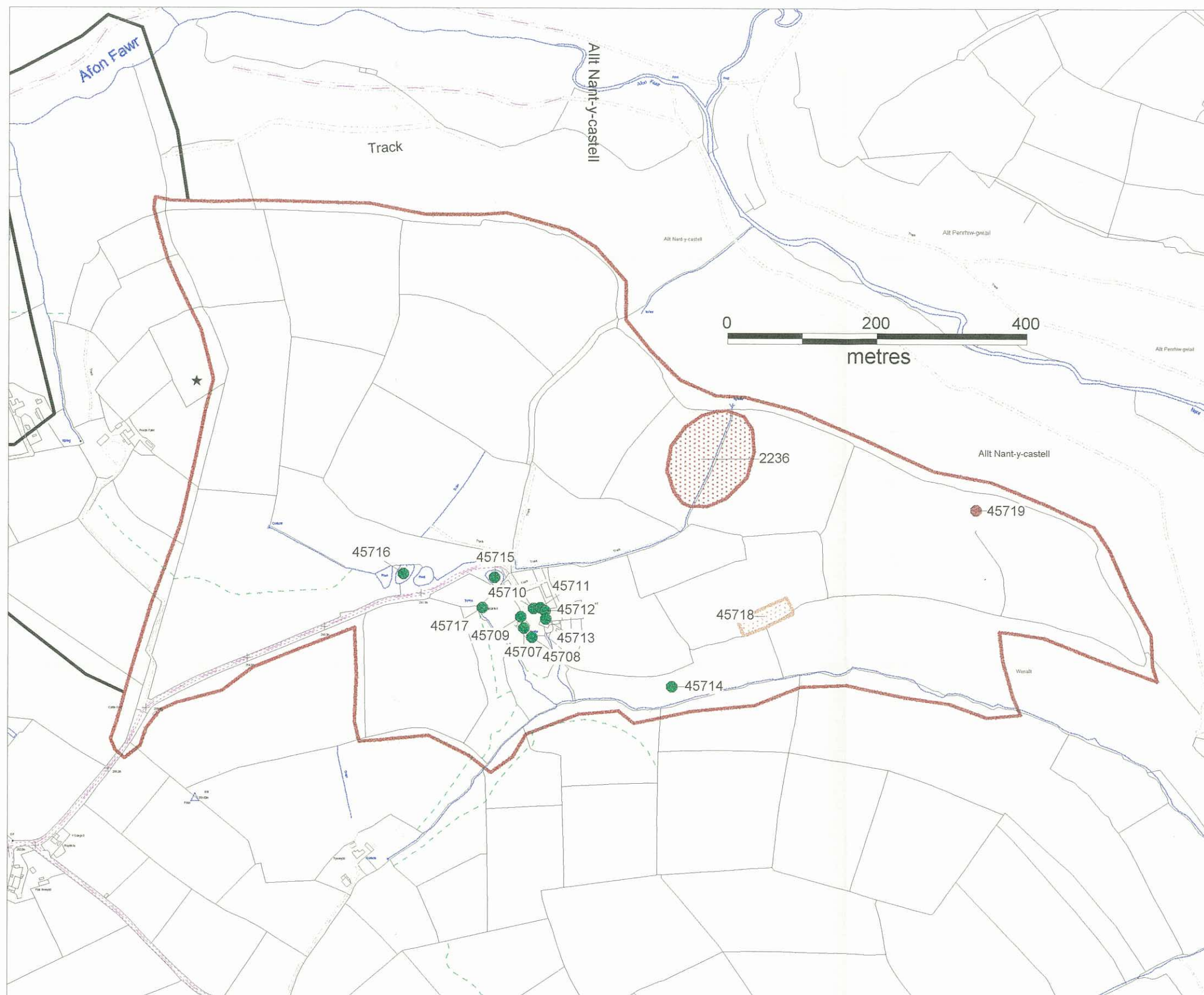
Signature S. Wardle Date 21/11/02

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

Position: Principal Archaeologist (Curatorial)

Signature Pr. B. J. J. Date 21/11/02

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



Nantycastell
Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation
Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/12/2844
Cambria Archaeology Reference Number 44257
National Grid Reference SN34992970

Key

- Farm Boundary
- Historic Landscape Character Area

Site Category A - National Importance

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

Site Category B - Regional Importance

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

Site Category C - Local Importance

- Sites and buildings of Local Importance

Site Category D - Unknown Importance

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

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