

JULY 2003



## **Langdon Mill W/13/3827**

### **Tir Gofal Call-Out Visit Report**



*View from the defended enclosure (PRN 3475), looking east to the village of Jeffreston.*

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Langdon Mill  
Tir Gofal Call-Out Visit Report

By

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Langdon Mill is a large and dispersed farm encompassing six different land parcels which contain a variety of archaeological and historical sites and features. A call-out visit was undertaken to the farm on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003, in order to assess the condition and best management of a two specific areas – the defended enclosure (PRN 3475) in land holding W/13/3827/b and a group of World War II airfield buildings (PRNs 48628 – 48632) in land holding W/13/3827/e. The rest of the farm was not visited on this occasion.

W/13/3827/b

### **Enclosure – PRN 3475**

This land parcel lies at grid reference SN07800630, in the community of Jeffreyston. The landscape around it is one of rolling hills and gently sloping valleys and this lends itself to predominantly agricultural use. In the far west of this land holding (see Map 1, attached) is a small, circular earthwork. Although plough-damaged, the site is visible as a slight round bank, which stands up to around 60 – 70cm in its centre but is very spread by ploughing. The whole site is about 50m in diameter.

On the north side of the site, the extant field boundary has a pronounced curve or ‘bulge’ which follows the line of the earthwork and completes the circle of the enclosure. It is possible that the original enclosure banks were incorporated into this hedgebank when the present field pattern was laid out.

In 1973 the Ordnance Survey recorded a possible entrance through the west part of the bank. They also noted slight traces of a ditch outside the bank on the north side, but neither of these features are currently visible.

The site is thought to be Iron Age (roughly 600BC to 43AD), and is similar to an enclosure at Penycoed (Llangynog, Carmarthenshire) which was excavated in 1983. The site was interpreted as being a late Iron Age farmstead surrounded by a defensive bank and ditch. The area inside the banks contained a large round-house, and was probably sub-divided by fences and palisades into several yards (Murphy, K:1985:p.75-76). It is possible that the enclosure at Langdon Mill served a similar function.



**Plate 1.** *The defended enclosure (PRN 3475). The banks are very slight – the outside of the east bank can be seen as a rise in the ground just to the right of the gate in the hedge.*

### **Management Recommendations**

The condition of the site is currently poor. The banks are heavily plough damaged and denuded, and their condition will continue to deteriorate as long as the land is in arable use. The very north of the site, within the 'bulge' of the hedge, is currently rough ground and seems to be unploughed. The ground in that area is very stony, and this may represent clearance of stones from other areas of the field.

This site and the immediate surrounding area should ideally be taken out of cultivation. This would protect surviving buried archaeology, as well as the slight visible remains of the banks themselves. Once a stable grass surface is established, then light grazing should be sufficient to prevent scrub incursion and maintain an even vegetation cover.

If the site continues to be ploughed, then all visible traces of it will soon be lost. If it is impossible to prevent this, then it should be ensured that future ploughing does not penetrate beyond the depth to which the land has been cultivated in the past. Root crops should not be grown in this field.

**W/13/3827/e**

### **Templeton Airfield**

Land holding W/13/3827/e lies at grid reference SN08551091, in the community of Templeton. The land parcel consists mostly of quite level ground which slopes abruptly down to a stream that runs along the southern boundary. Just east of this land holding lie the scattered remains of Templeton Airfield. The airfield was first used in January 1943, and occupies far from ideal ground since there is a hill in the centre of the triangle formed by the three runways! It was one of a number of airfields which were planned when the war situation was so bad that previously laid-out standards, which regulated the inclusion of gradients and obstructions, were disregarded in the interests of speed (Smith, D:1989: p.60-61).

Although the main part of the airfield lies outside this holding, the slopes along the southern boundary of W/13/3827/e are home to the bomb and incendiary stores for Templeton. A tarmac road leads around the base of the slope, and follows the line of the hedgerow to its south. Airfield paths and roads were laid out deliberately to follow pre-existing linear features, and therefore to be less conspicuous from the air than long, straight paths would have been.

Five small complexes (comprising standing buildings, foundations and earthworks) can be identified along this stretch of roadway. More detailed descriptions and management recommendations for each one are provided in the following gazetteer, and the sites are marked on map 2 (attached).

The buildings themselves are terraced quite deeply into the hillside, and have earth embankments built around them. This would have served two purposes – it acted as a camouflage, again rendering the site less visible from the air, and it also acted as a blast wall. In the case of an explosion – either accidental or as a result of attack – the earth surrounding the buildings would muffle the blast from stored bombs and incendiaries.

One isolated building (PRN 48629) was also identified, but its function is unknown.

It is difficult to assess the importance of individual military sites within Pembrokeshire. Most World War II buildings were only designed to be temporary structures, and the majority of them were cleared quickly after the war. Consequently, those that survive today are only a 'snapshot' of the range of buildings which were originally constructed. Although those which do survive are often seen as having little or no aesthetic or architectural value, they are an important part of Pembrokeshire's history.

Reviews of military sites in both England and Wales have stressed two different methods of establishing the importance of sites:

- 1; Links between sites and specific historical events (e.g. Biggin Hill and its association with the Battle of Britain)
- 2; The group value of buildings and features which form coherent landscapes (e.g. the complete airfield lay-out at Duxford).

(Thomas, R:1994:p.69, Lake,J:2003:p.28 – 33).

Although Templeton Airfield is not known for its association with specific historic events, the features within the land at Langdon Mill do have a group value. The survival of the complete bomb and incendiary stores, along with its access road and the earthworks which protected the buildings gives a sense of unity to this area of the airfield.

### **Current condition**

The condition of the site varies from good to poor. The bomb store at the far west (PRN 48632) is a well-preserved, discrete example which is notable for its completeness. By contrast the possible site of another bomb store (PRN 48631) is indicated only by a steep-sided hollow which is probably the foundation of a building. It is covered with impenetrable undergrowth, and it could not be determined whether any remains of the building still survived.

In general the two main threats to these sites are posed by decay and dereliction of the buildings, and vegetation which will eventually completely mask the site and could de-stabilise both earthworks and buildings.



## **Main Management Recommendations**

### **Bomb Store PRN 48631**

To prevent this site being a danger to livestock and people, it should be fenced out of grazing land whilst vegetation control is carried out. Vegetation growing on both buildings and earthworks should be cut back, either flush with the walls or to ground level, and then removed. It should not be dug or dragged out. Light grazing may help to prevent the problem recurring.

### **Bomb Store PRN 48632**

The well-preserved and clearly visible nature of this small bomb store makes it especially significant. It is important that it is maintained in its current good condition.

The vegetation across the east wall should be cut back flush with the wall and removed. If the erosion on the west bank continues to worsen then it may be necessary to restrict access across the earthwork. However, it is probably the accessibility of this site which is allowing vegetation growth to be controlled by grazing livestock, so restrictions should only be imposed if the erosion continues.

### **General Recommendations**

Vegetation control across the whole site will increase the visibility and accessibility of the area, and will aid the long-term preservation of this complex. The tarmac road is still in use and should continue to be maintained as a useable route. At present, earth has been dumped on some of the peripheral tarmac paths. This should be moved, and no farm waste should be dumped in or around the bomb stores.

Cadw have recently undertaken a new survey of the military buildings in Pembrokeshire. Further information and/or management advice may be forthcoming following the publication of this survey.



## Gazetteer of Buildings and Features

PRN	48627	Site Name	TEMPLETON AIRFIELD	Grid Reference	SN08711072
Site Type	BOMB STORE	Period	MODERN		

### Description

The remains of a bomb or incendiary store. Two rectangular concrete platforms remain, which are terraced deeply into the hillside on their north sides. An earth embankment surrounds the other sides. Building rubble is scattered around the site, but the actual buildings themselves have been dismantled. A short flight of concrete steps leads up the embankment on the north side.

The site is overgrown, but is still visible and is in a stable condition.

Roger Thomas identified this site as 178/010 in his 1994 survey of disused military buildings in Pembrokeshire.

### Recommendations

Some vegetation control – possibly through light grazing – would benefit the site. No further building rubble should be removed from this complex.

Site Category B



**Plate 2.** *The remains of a bomb or incendiary store (PRN 48627). The embankment around the site is clearly seen, with the flight of steps surviving on its north side. The building foundations are in the foreground and to the right of the picture.*

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PRN	48628	Site Name	TEMPLETON AIRFIELD	Grid Reference	SN08601070
Site Type	BOMB STORE	Period	MODERN		

### Description

A bomb or incendiary store, formed of two roughly square buildings, each surrounded by a large earth embankment. Brick walls support narrow entrances through these embankments.

Between the two buildings is an empty area with traces of hard-standing on the floor and three upright iron girders at its north end. These may have supported a roof or shelter.

The buildings themselves are single storey, brick-built and cement rendered. Iron girders reinforce the cement roofs, and ventilation grilles are visible near the floors and the ceilings.

The site is very overgrown, but seems to be in a stable condition. Both buildings have water troughs in them, and appear to have been used for animal shelters in the past. The earth banks surrounding the buildings are still clearly visible, though the one on the west of the site is degraded along its west edge.

Roger Thomas identified this site as 178/009 in his 1994 survey of disused military buildings in Pembrokeshire.

### Recommendations

Vegetation control would benefit the site, increasing its visibility and aiding the preservation of the buildings. Vegetation growing on both buildings and earthworks should be cut back, either flush with the walls or to ground level, and then removed. It should not be dug or dragged out.

The best way to ensure the long-term preservation of buildings is generally to bring them back into use. The usefulness of these buildings for agricultural purposes is very restricted due to their small size and the difficulty of access into them. However they may be of use for sheep shelters or storage.

**Site Category** B



**Plate 3.** A brick supported entrance through the blast wall which surrounds a bomb store (PRN 48628). The building itself is behind the vegetation, just to the left of the entrance.



<b>PRN</b>	48629	<b>Site Name</b>	TEMPLETON AIRFIELD	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN08551070
<b>Site Type</b>	MILITARY BUILDING	<b>Period</b>	MODERN		

### **Description**

The remains of a military building. The building was originally constructed of low breeze-block walls which supported an arched roof of corrugated asbestos. A cement-rendered gable at the south end still stands and would have helped to support the roof. The breeze-block walls on either side also stand to their original height, though the roof is now gone. Traces of internal divisions are still discernible.

The remains of this building are in a stable condition and rubble in the interior of the structure is probably original construction material.

### **Recommendations**

Building rubble should not be taken out of this building. Vegetation should continue to be kept in check around the site.

**Site Category** B



**Plate 4.** *The remains of a military building (PRN 48629). This building would have had an arched corrugated metal roof – the walls and gable stand to their full height.*

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<b>PRN</b>	48630	<b>Site Name</b>	TEMPLETON AIRFIELD	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN08461073
<b>Site Type</b>	BOMB STORE?	<b>Period</b>	MODERN		

#### **Description**

A small complex of earthworks and building remains which probably made up a bomb or incendiary store. The site lies on a loop of tarmac track, just north of the main part of the airfield road which runs through the whole bomb dump. The foundations of at least one building are present, running east-west, parallel with the main road and terraced deeply into the hill on the north side. The other sides are protected by earth banks which are now heavily overgrown. A short stretch of brick walling is just visible at one point, supporting an entrance to the complex through the east end of the embankment. At the west end of the complex is the probable site of another building. A small quarry is dug into the hill at this point, and it is unclear if this served to allow the building to be terraced more deeply into the hill, for protection and camouflage, or whether this represents later quarrying. A low brick wall at the south end indicates where the front of the building probably stood.

The site is heavily overgrown with gorse and other undergrowth. Both the earthworks and the built features, especially those at the east of this group, are at risk of being completely obscured and de-stabilised by invasive vegetation.

#### **Recommendations**

Vegetation control is strongly recommended for this complex. Vegetation growing on both buildings and earthworks should be cut back, either flush with the walls or to ground level, and then removed. It should not be dug or dragged out. Some light grazing would help to control future vegetation growth.

**Site Category** B

<b>PRN</b>	48631	<b>Site Name</b>	TEMPLETON AIRFIELD	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN08391076
<b>Site Type</b>	BOMB STORE?	<b>Period</b>	MODERN		

#### **Description**

A possible bomb store indicated only by a pronounced, steep-sided hollow and the remains of a sunken road or track. The site is completely overgrown with impenetrable gorse and undergrowth and is potentially dangerous since it is impossible to see where the building foundations and earthworks are. It is unknown if there are any building remains in this complex.

#### **Recommendations**

To prevent the site being a danger to livestock and people, it should be fenced out of grazing land whilst vegetation control is carried out. Vegetation growing on both buildings and earthworks should be cut back, either flush with the walls or to ground level, and then removed. It should not be dug or dragged out. Light spring grazing may help to prevent the problem recurring.

**Site Category** B

<b>PRN</b>	48632	<b>Site Name</b>	TEMPLETON AIRFIELD	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN08331076
<b>Site Type</b>	BOMB STORE	<b>Period</b>	MODERN		

### Description

A small and well-preserved bomb store, consisting of one brick-built, cement rendered building completely surrounded by a large earth and rubble bank. A narrow entrance through the bank is supported by brick walls.

The site is in a fair condition, though currently derelict. There is some erosion of the west bank, and vegetation is beginning to colonise the east wall of the building.

### Recommendations

The well-preserved and clearly visible nature of this small bomb store makes it especially significant. It is important that it is maintained in its current condition.

The vegetation across the east wall should be cut back flush with the wall and removed. If the erosion on the west bank continues to worsen then it may be necessary to restrict access across the earthwork. However, it is probably the accessibility of this site which is allowing vegetation growth to be controlled by grazing livestock, so restrictions should not be imposed unless the erosion continues to worsen.

**Site Category** B



**Plate 5.** Incendiary store (PRN 48632). Although some vegetation is beginning to colonise the building, the earthwork enclosure around it is well preserved and the building itself is stable.

## **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.

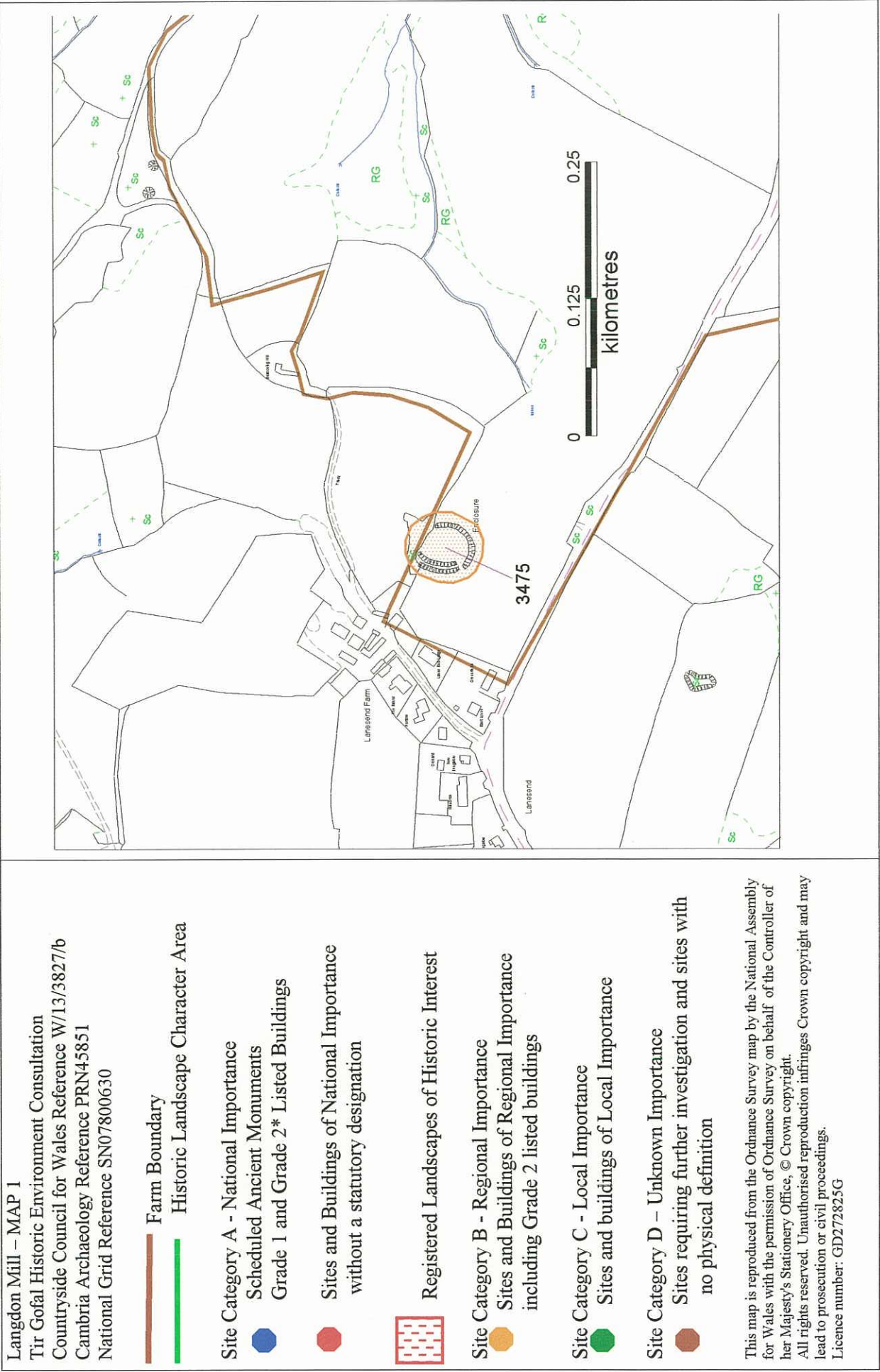
### **PGW - Parks and Gardens of Wales**

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.

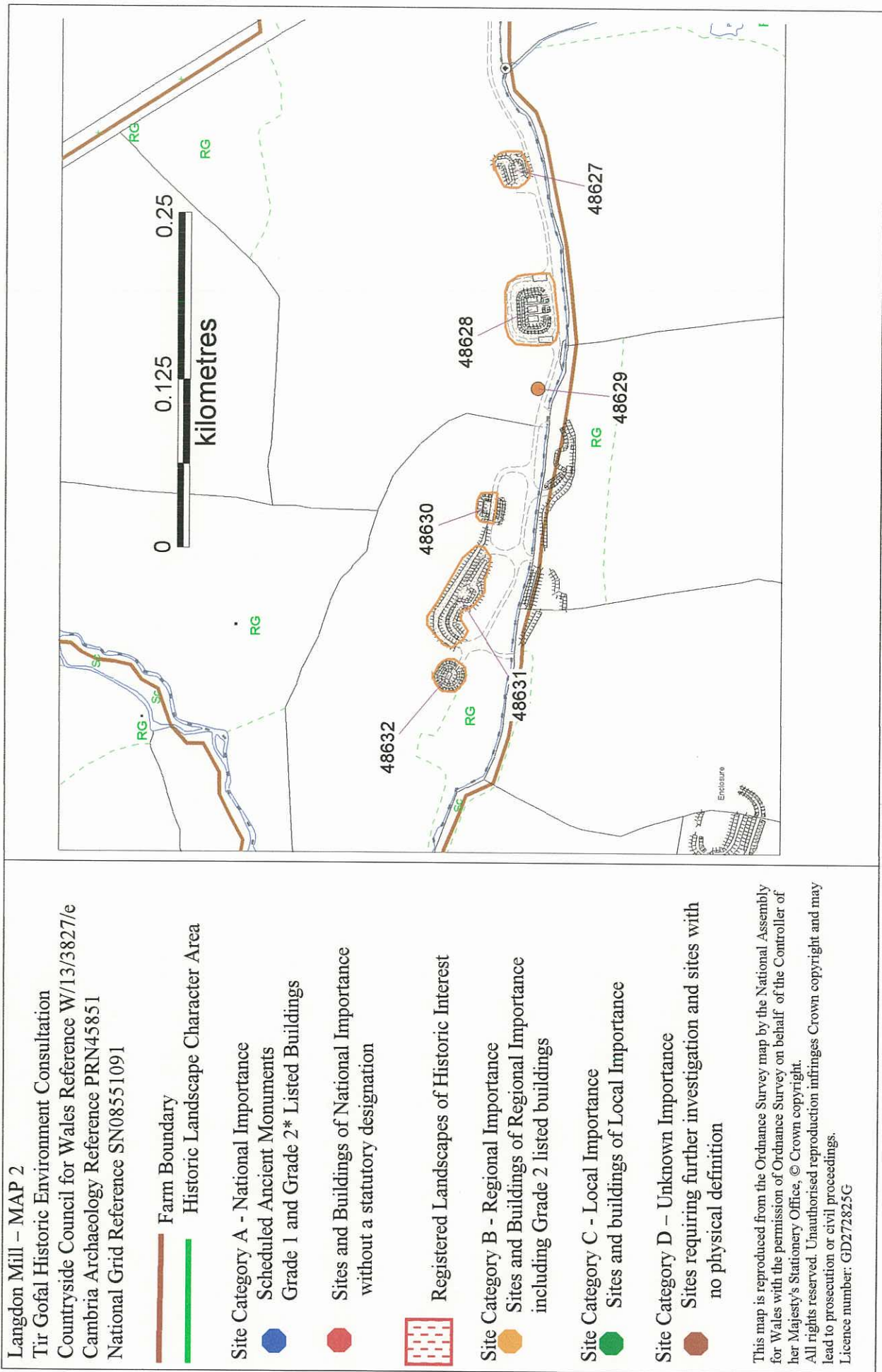
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Tithe Map 1844 Jefferston Parish









**Langdon Mill  
W/13/3827**

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This report has been prepared by Polly Groom

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This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,  
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on the content or presentation of this report