

Pengwern-Isaf

W/12/3785

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report Call Out



Report No. 2003/115

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CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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Pengwern-Isaf
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report
Call Out

By

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1. INTRODUCTION

A farm visit was undertaken at the request of the Countryside Council for Wales to address specific management issues on this farm. The aim of this report is to make an assessment of these issues in order to provide management recommendations to be incorporated into the Tir Gofal Management Plan. This report is not intended to assess the structural condition or stability of any given site.

The Call Out Report responds to management concerns regarding specific sites, it does not provide management advice for all known sites on the farm, for these recommendations please refer to the Historic Environment Report 1 (He1).

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FARM

Pengwern-Isaf (SN29973999) lies within the community of Cenarth, to the south of the Carmarthenshire border with Ceredigion. The farm was visited by Cambria Archaeology on the 15th October 2003. The farm comprises six holdings, although the home farm of Pengwern-Isaf forms the focus of the present enquiry.

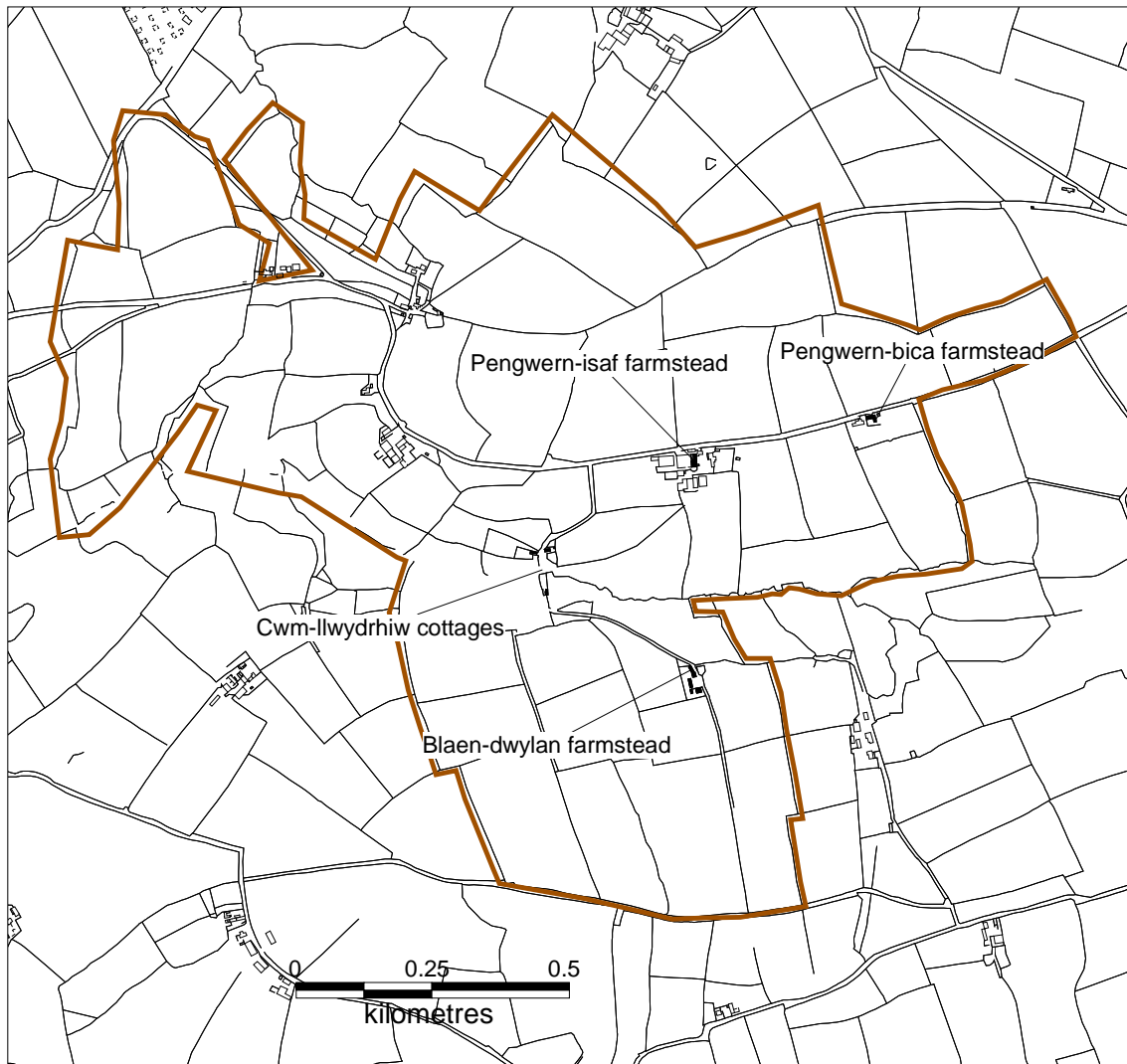
Land slopes down to the Nant Lwyd which bisects the holding in an east-west direction. Hedges in various stages of becoming grown out on earth and earth and stone banks bound the medium-sized irregular fields. What is most significant about the holding is the large number of domestic buildings which it contains. A common component of all these buildings is the use of local Teifi valley slate, which was easily cleaved into rectangular blocks and slabs, suitable for building. Many of these buildings date to at least 1831, and Pengwern-Isaf itself may be late Tudor in origin (Jones, F., 1996).

These buildings recall a time of increased rural population before farms began the process of consolidation into larger and larger units. Of the farmsteads seen on the historic maps, only Pengwer-Isaf remains occupied and in active agricultural use today. A complex of modern agricultural buildings of concrete and steel construction to the west of the historic farmstead serve the present agricultural requirements of the farm. Blaen-Dwylan farmstead was abandoned in the early years of the twentieth century, and Pengwern-Bica has fallen out of use in recent years.

The cottage sites followed much the same fate and were abandoned towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the early years of the twentieth century. These were built some time between the mid-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, and are likely to have been the dwellings of landless labourers living on a wage, or poor peasants assisted by employment on larger farms. The present landowner, who has a long family history at Pengwern-Isaf believes that the last of these to be abandoned were inhabited by a cobbler and a worker on a neighbouring estate.

The abandoned buildings at Pengwern-Isaf farm are now in various stages of neglect. The call out visit was requested in order to assess how these sites might best be managed in the future in order to ensure their survival in the long-term.

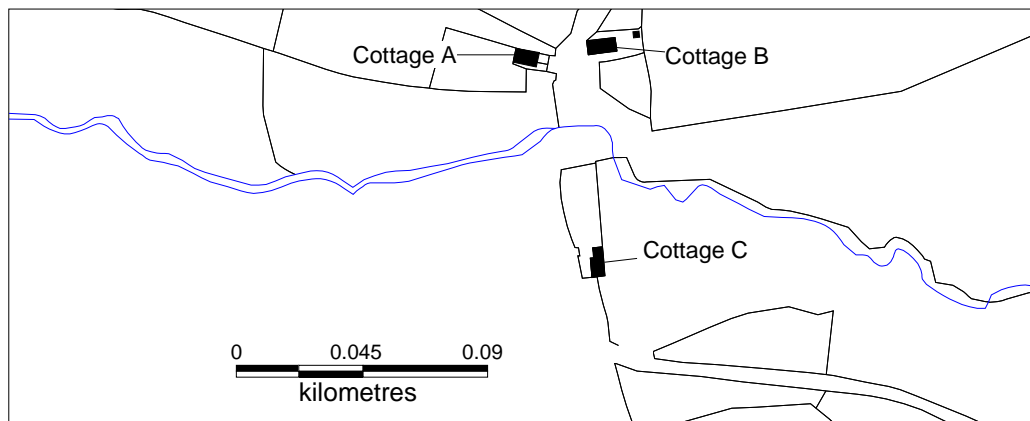
3. FARM MAP



Pengwern-isaf farmstead (produced from Ordnance Survey. Licence Number GD272825G)

4. CWM-LLWYDRHIW COTTAGES

Three cottages, first seen on the 1831, 1 inch to a mile Ordnance Survey map and named Cwm-llwydrhiw. Two buildings are seen on opposite sides of a trackway to the north of the Nant Llwyd. An additional cottage is seen to the east of the trackway to the south of the stream.



Cwm-llwydrhiw cottages (produced from Ordnance Survey. Licence Number GD272825G)

Cottage A.

A cottage on the west side of a trackway approximately 250m to the southwest of Pengwern-Isaf farmstead. It is long abandoned, and now survives as a roofless ruin. Interpreting its original appearance is problematical due to the lack of visible evidence. There are few stylistic signatures with which to date the building. It is first seen on the 1831 Ordnance Survey map and is at least of an early nineteenth century date.

It is sited on a rectangular terrace above the Nant-Llwyd. Its original dimensions can be inferred from the surviving west gable end and low wall footings. It measures approximately 10m by 8m and is rectangular in plan, with walls averaging 0.6m thick. Surviving wall footings indicate that it was divided into at least two units, the larger occupying the western two thirds of the building. A rectangular outshut, measuring approximately 2m by 2m protrudes from the north lateral wall. The significance of this recess is not known, although possible interpretations could include as a privy or kitchen space. A low rubble spread, where the east gable end has collapsed in on itself prevents further interpretation of the original appearance of the building.

The west gable end is the most well preserved part of the building and survives to a near complete height of about 5 metres. This suggests a one and a half storey design. A square splayed window is offset from centre to the left at upper level.



Plate 1- the west gable end of Cottage A. from the interior.

Statement of Condition/ Management Recommendations

The cottage now lies within established woodland, which is grazed occasionally. It is now masked by a combination of young and mature trees. Some of these specimens are potentially threatening to the long-term survival of built structural remains. A young beech tree on the interior east gable end is adding weight and threatening to de-stabilise this wall. A large rhododendron, rooted in the southwest corner is now sprawling over much of the buildings interior and obscuring the site.

The beech and rhododendron trees, which are obscuring the site and threatening to de-stabilise built structural remains should be cut off at the roots and spot treated to prevent re-growth. Fencing the site off into un-grazed woodland has been proposed within the Tir Gofal scheme. This is to be welcomed. Future management of the site should involve the monitoring and management of exiting trees in order to prevent damage to structural remains by root damage or falling trees. Young trees should be prevented from becoming established over the site. No ground intrusive activities should be undertaken within the enclosed area of the site.

Cottage B.

This cottage faces cottage A. across a trackway and lies a few metres to the north of the Nant Llwyd. It is first seen on the 1831 Ordnance Survey map and is shown to be abandoned by the time of the 1907 edition. It is identified as Cwm-llwydrhiw on these sources.

Few built structural remains survive and a detailed interpretation of its original layout is problematical. A flat building platform, terraced into the side of a hillslope and measuring approximately 8m E-W by 6m N-S indicates its former extent. Something of its original layout can be determined from remnant walls and wall footings. A ruinous gable fireplace, which survives to a height of approximately one metre, can be observed in the east wall. A break in the surviving wall footings suggests a doorway in the centre of the south lateral wall. A low spread of rubble now covers the interior of the cottage and details of any internal partitions cannot be interpreted.

A flat platform measuring approximately 4m N-S by 4m E-W joins the east gable wall of the cottage. This may indicate an ancillary unit, tacked onto the cottage at a later date. Its original function is not known, although it may have served a domestic function.

Another square platform lies about six metres to the east of the cottage. This also measures 4m N-S by 4m E-W. Low rubble walls are visible to a height of approximately 0.6m. This was undoubtedly another building. Its original function cannot be interpreted given the lack of available evidence.

Cottages of this type with an end chimney, central doorway plan were relatively common in southwest Wales from about the middle of the eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century. These were typically of a one and a half storey design, with the living room at one end heated by a gable fireplace and one or two service rooms at the other end (Smith, P. 1988, 313).

Statement of Condition/ Management Recommendations

The site now lies within established woodland, which is grazed occasionally. Fencing the site off into ungrazed woodland has been proposed within the Tir Gofal scheme. This is to be welcomed. Future management should involve the monitoring and management of existing trees in order to prevent damage to structural remains by root damage or falling trees. In order to retain visibility, young trees should be prevented from becoming established over the site. No ground intrusive activities should be undertaken within the enclosed area of the site.

Cottage C.

A cottage on the side of a trackway to the south of the Nant Llwyd. It has long since been abandoned, and is now in a roofless and ruinous condition. The remnant walls, which survive to a maximum height of about a metre would appear to indicate a cottage, with abutting annex.

The cottage is first seen on the 1831 Ordnance Survey map, and is identified as Cwm-llwydrhiw. It is likely to be at least of an early nineteenth century date. The tithe map (1839) and 1891 Ordnance Survey maps indicate fields associated with the cottage to the north and east. This arrangement might indicate the home of a poor peasant farmer, perhaps with a supplementary income from a neighbouring estate. The present landowner, who has a long family history at Pengwern-Isaf believes that the cottage was last inhabited by either a cobbler or a worker on a neighbouring estate.

It follows a typical plan, which was common from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century. The cottage is the southernmost of the two buildings. It measures approximately 6m E-W by 8m N-S. The gable chimney survives to approximately 1.4m in the south gable end. The doorway is situated in the centre of the west lateral wall. The low spread of rubble and leaf mould, which now covers the site hinders further interpretation. Cottages of this type were typically divided into at least two units. The living room was usually heated by a gable fireplace, with a parlour or two small rooms at the other end (Smith, P. 1988, 312).

The remnants of an ancillary building, measuring approximately four by six metres, abut the north end of the cottage. Its original function is not known, but it could have served as either a domestic building or a byre.



Plate 2- looking east towards the remnant walls of the annex (Cottage C)

Statement of Condition/ Management Recommendations

The cottage now lies within woodland, which appears to be grazed occasionally. Mature trees have become established around the site and some are rooted in the surviving walls. These appear stable at present and pose no threat to surviving built structural remains. Some saplings and scrubby vegetation growth are interspersed between these mature trees.

If any trees do become unstable in future, these should be cut off at the roots and prevented from falling naturally in order to prevent roots from uprooting structural remains.

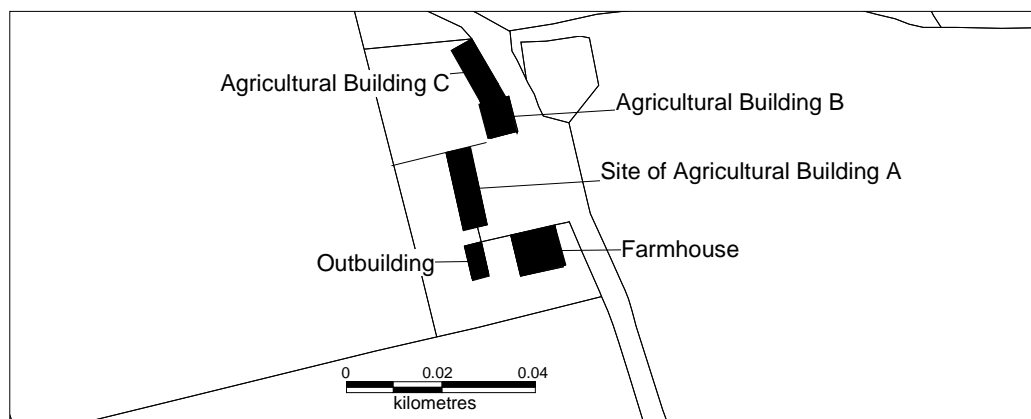
Fencing the site off into ungrazed woodland has been proposed within the Tir Gofal scheme. This is to be welcomed. Vegetation growth should not be allowed to obscure the surviving walls of the cottage and annex.

5. BLAEN DWYLAN FARMSTEAD

Blaen-dwylyan is a well planned farmstead, first seen on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. A unifying characteristic here is the abundant use of local Teifi valley slate, which was easily cleaved into rectangular blocks and slabs, suitable for building. Buildings here are predominantly of uncoursed rubble, although chisel-squared regular slabs are used in the farmhouse. Yard, garden, and field boundary enclosure walls are also made up of slate rubble and incorporate variants on the “herringbone pattern.” Together these give the farmstead a feeling of cohesiveness and unity.

No sign of the farmstead appears on the 1839 Cenarth Parish tithe map, although an irregular field boundary and the fieldname “Park y hendry” combine to suggest that domestic and agricultural buildings would have existed here before this time. The earliest detailed map of the farmstead is the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891, and buildings are shown arranged around two farmyards at this time. The “dwylyan” element of the name may be a reference to these two farmyard enclosures.

The well-planned layout and stylistic unity suggests that the farmstead may have been planned and built over a short period of time, perhaps around a single building event. Nevertheless, the possibility for the inclusion of earlier architecture into elements of the later nineteenth century buildings cannot be ruled out, and there is good potential for buried archaeological remains relating to earlier phases of occupation surviving here.



Blaen-dwylyan farmstead (produced from Ordnance Survey. Licence Number GD272825G)

Statement of Condition/ General Management Recommendations

Blaen-dwylyan farmstead was abandoned during the early years of the twentieth century. Buildings here are in various stages of neglect. The farmhouse, outbuilding and agricultural building B are now roofless ruins, and all visible traces of agricultural building A have since been lost. Only agricultural building C remains in a weatherproof condition. This is particularly interesting, not only in the rare preservation of a thatched roof and historic internal layout but also in the assemblage of historic carts and farm machinery which remains undisturbed inside the building.

Surviving elements of the farmstead should be retained. No specific threats to the buildings and enclosure walls, which make up this farmstead, were identified. Tree growth is a potential cause for concern, however. Mature beech trees now surround the site. At present, these are in a stable

condition and pose no significant threat to the surviving buildings. It is important that these trees are monitored for signs of instability in future. Any unstable specimens should be felled or pruned in a controlled manner before being allowed to cause damage to built remains. Young trees growing on the walls, or out of wall footings also risk destabilising masonry. Such specimens should be cut off at the roots and spot treated to prevent re-growth in order to minimise this threat and enhance visibility of the sites.

In order to prevent damage to surviving elements of the farmstead and buried archaeological remains, no ground intrusive activities should be undertaken within the enclosed area of the farmstead. Ring feeders should not be placed within five metres of any below ground, or standing building remains.

The occasional light grazing of the site by cattle is benefiting the site by keeping vegetation under control. No evidence of damage to the buildings by livestock was observed. Livestock numbers here should be kept at a low level in order to prevent damage to these fragile buildings. Detailed management recommendations on the individual sites are provided below.

5.1 THE FARMHOUSE AND OUTBUILDING

Farmhouse

This farmhouse occupies the southern side of a rectangular farmyard at Blaen-dwyllan. It was abandoned during the early years of the twentieth century and is now a roofless ruin. It is square in plan and measures 10m E-W by 10m N-S with a rectangular outshut in the south lateral wall measuring 2m E-W by 4m N-S. It is constructed entirely of local Teifi Valley slate built to rough courses, with walls averaging 0.5m thick.

The front wall of the farmhouse faces south onto a rectangular garden enclosure and it would appear that the house was approached across the garden from the farmyard. This wall does not survive beyond ground floor height. A window is situated to the right of a central door opening. Both have wooden lintels.

In contrast the north gable end survives to full height indicating two storeys beneath a slate gabled roof. A single chimney serving two fireplaces, which are offset from centre at both ground floor and first floor level, can be observed. A small rectangular window, also offset from centre but to the right, pierces the wall at loft level.

Little survives of the west wall, which fronts onto the farmyard. It now survives to a height of about 1.4m, and window dressings indicate that it featured two evenly spaced window openings at ground floor level.

The east wall is still at near full height. Openings at ground floor level include a central doorway and a wooden framed window. A rectangular fireplace measuring 4m N-S by 2m E-W protrudes from the southern part of this wall. Upper level openings are confined to a pair of window openings, also with wooden frames, directly above the ground floor door and window openings. The chimney obscures the southern part of this wall at first floor level.

The interior of the building now lies under a thick spread of rubble from the inwards collapse of the south and west walls. Nothing of any internal partitions or the staircase survives. An interpretation of the original internal layout would be tenuous at best.

The positioning of a one-and-a-half storey high gabled fireplace in the east wall is an unusual feature in this two-and-a-half storey building. One suggestion is that the farmhouse may in fact represent at least two phases of construction, where elements of a pre-existing structure were incorporated into a later phase of building.

No evidence of a farmstead is seen at this location on the 1839 Cenarth Parish tithe map. Nevertheless, an irregular field boundary and tithe apportionment fieldname “Park y hendry” combine to suggest that domestic buildings would have existed here before the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1891) where the farmhouse is first shown. This would appear to support an interpretation of pre-existing architecture being incorporated into the structure, which survives as a ruin today.



Plates 2 & 3- the southern elevation is now heavily overgrown with ivy; internal view of the fireplace from the north.

Outbuilding

This outbuilding faces the farmhouse at Blaen-dwyllan across a rectangular garden. It is a long, low one and a half storey building measuring approximately eight by four metres. It is now ruinous, and scattered building debris suggest that it would originally have supported a slate roof. It is divided into two units, which are separated by a gabled partition wall. Only the southern unit remains intact. It is accessed by a narrow doorway in the eastern lateral wall. Joist slots in the gable ends indicate that it would have been lofted. A small window pierces the south gable end at loft level. Of the northern unit, only the remnant wall footings and part of the eastern lateral wall survive. These

indicate that it would have mirrored the southern unit in plan. Interestingly, the walls of the building are keyed into those of the garden enclosure, which it faces.



Plates 4 & 5- Blaen-dwylan farmhouse and outbuilding from the north.

Statement of Condition/ Management Recommendations

The ruin is now in a precarious and unstable condition. Mature beech and sycamore trees, interspersed with saplings, have become rooted around the site. Not only are these masking standing remains, but when rooted in the wall footings they are a potential source of instability. Heavy ivy growth, particularly around the south and eastern sides of the building is adding weight to an already weakened structure. Added to this is the problem of natural decay through water ingress, and frost action which is eroding lime mortar masonry bonds in the unprotected walls.

Mature trees should be monitored for signs of instability in future. Any unstable specimens should be felled or pruned in a controlled manner before being allowed to cause damage to built remains. Some of the bushy ivy growth should be cut back from the walls in order to reduce weight and wind resistance on this already weakened structure. This should only be undertaken if it is considered safe to do so.

A ring feeder is positioned five metres to the north of the structure. Spent bale wraps and other agricultural debris have been dumped inside the ruin. No visible damage to the ruin or other elements of the historic farmstead was observed from cattle congregating here. This should not be moved to within five metres of any built or buried structural remains.

5.2 THE YARDS AND AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

Blaen-dwylan farmstead is arranged around two adjacent farmyards, which for the purposes of this report can be identified as the north yard and the south yard. The south yard was bordered on the west and north sides by agricultural buildings (A and B), with the farmhouse and outbuilding defining its southern extent. This layout is no longer intact following the loss of agricultural building A to the west. The layout of the adjacent north yard remains unchanged. It is outlined on all but the east side by stone walls, of local Teifi valley slate construction. A range of agricultural buildings (B and C) faces the yard from the east.

Agricultural Building A.

This building is first seen on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map but is absent from map sources after 1907. It is aligned N-S and is shown to occupy the western side of the yard. No above ground remains of the building survive today.

Management Recommendations

There is good potential for buried archaeological remains surviving here. In order to protect buried archaeological remains, the area within 5 metres of the site specified should not be used as a location for feeding livestock. No ground intrusive activities should be undertaken within enclosed area of the farmstead.

Agricultural Building B.

This agricultural building occupies the northern side of the farmyard. It also forms part of a long range, together with agricultural building C, which faces west onto an additional farmyard enclosure to the north. It is first seen on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map and is likely to be of a nineteenth century date. It is now ruinous, and interpreting its original appearance is problematical.

It is a square one and a half storey building measuring approximately 8m by 8m on a general N-S alignment. Only the north gable end and part of the west lateral wall survive today. The building was accessed from the farmyard through a splayed doorway in the centre of the east lateral wall. No further openings survive. A low rubble spread now covers the interior of the building and nothing of the original internal arrangements survives. The lack of available evidence prevents an accurate interpretation of its original function, although it may have served as a cow shed or a stable.

The walls are exposed and vulnerable to erosion. The north gable end is becoming increasingly unstable. This gable end supports the wall plates of an abutting agricultural building (C) to the north.



Plate 6- west elevation of ruinous agricultural building (B)

Management Recommendations

It is important that this gable end is stabilised in order to ensure the long-term survival of the abutting building to the north. This could be achieved by re-pointing and capping the wall tops in order to prevent water ingress from further de-stabilising masonry.

Agricultural Building C.

This agricultural building occupies the eastern side of the northern yard at Blaen-dwyllan farmstead, and is a later abutment to agricultural building (B) to the south. It is first seen on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map and is likely to be of a nineteenth century date. It is particularly interesting, not only in the rare preservation of a thatched roof and historic internal layout but also in the assemblage of historic carts and farm machinery which remains undisturbed inside the building.

It is a long, low one and a half storey building measuring approximately 15 by 6m beneath a thatched roof. It is divided into three bays; a cow shed, a cartshed and a storage bay. Like other buildings at Blaen-dwyllan it is constructed of local Teifi valley slate, which lends itself well to being cleaved into slabs

A rare surviving feature is the internal slab divisions and stall partitions. In the southernmost cow shed unit, these mark out the original stall partitions and indicating that animals were tethered facing the lateral walls. The surviving cobbled floor further respects this arrangement, and a lateral cobbled walk separates the stall partitions. Some of the original fittings survive and iron halter bars are set into these partitions.

Neighbouring the cow shed and separated by upright slab partitions is the long double cartshed bay. It is accessed by two wide cart entrances in the west lateral wall. The building is of simple design and the wooden lintels also serve as wall plates. A historic assemblage of historic carts and traps survive undisturbed inside. The floor in this part of the building is also cobbled.

A low rubble wall separates this from the northernmost bay of the building. This is accessed through a narrow doorway in the east lateral wall. The original function of this part of the building is not known, although housing for livestock is unlikely, as the slate floor would have proved slippery for hooved animals.

The most interesting aspect of this building is the roof, which was originally of thatch. The timbers are pegged and made of roughly twisting branches, with unstripped bark. Much of the original straw thatch roof covering remains, and is preserved beneath a modern corrugated iron roof.

The building remains in a stable and weatherproof condition, although lime mortar bonds are washed out in places. A possible source of future instability can be identified towards the southern end of the building. Here, the wall plates are supported in the gable end of neighbouring agricultural building (B). This gable end is exposed and becoming unstable. If this were to collapse it is likely to compromise the long-term survival of the building.



Plates 7 & 8- Agricultural Building C; internal slate partitions, interior looking north.

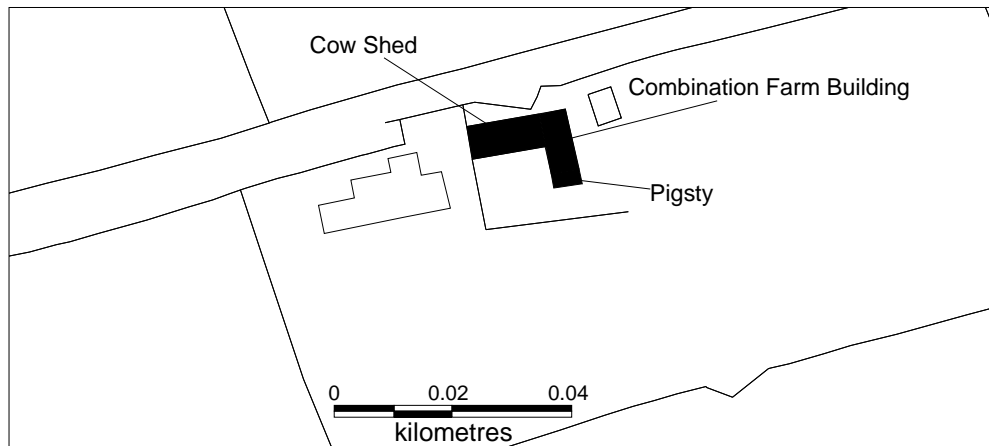
Management Recommendations

The importance of this building lies not only in the rare survival of the thatch roof and internal slate partitions, but also in the assemblage of historic carts and farm machinery, which remains undisturbed inside. It is important that it continues to be maintained in a weatherproof and watertight condition in order to protect these elements.

Ideally, the abutting south gable wall, which supports the wall plates at this end of the building should be stabilised by re-pointing and capping of the wall tops using a traditional lime-mortar mix.

6. PENGWERN-BICA FARMSTEAD

Farmstead first seen on the 1831, 1 inch to a mile Old Series Ordnance Survey map. The earliest large scale accurate map of the farmstead is the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891. The farmhouse is seen to the west, with a single building range bordering the northern side of a rectangular farmyard. By the time of the 1907 edition, this has developed into an L-shaped range, flanking the farmyard on both the north and east sides. All buildings here are of local Teifi Valley slate construction. Door and window dressings are mostly of red brick.



Pengwern-bica farmstead (produced from Ordnance Survey. Licence Number GD272825G)

Statement of Condition/ General Management Recommendations

Pengwern-Bica farmstead has fallen out of use in recent years. Farm buildings here remain in a reasonable condition, although they are at risk of becoming neglected. Slate roofs are showing early signs of neglect and vegetation is becoming established around the site.

In order to prevent these buildings from falling into disrepair some consideration should be given to how they can best be used in future.

Combination Farm Building

This combination farm building, which occupies the eastern side of a rectangular yard is of two storeys beneath a slate gabled roof. It measures approximately 10m N-S by 6m E-W, with walls averaging 0.5m thick. It is of uncoursed stone rubble construction with roughly squared quoins, and is divided into two units at ground floor level. Door and window dressings are of red brick. The building faces west onto a rectangular farmyard. The southern cart shed is accessed by an arched cart entrance with brick dressings. Neighbouring this to the north is a larger bay. Opposing heavy wooden framed doors are located in the south of both the east and west lateral walls. This may have served as a threshing floor and storage space. A heavy wooden framed door at upper storey level indicates that the northern part of this unit was originally lofted. A loft above the cart shed survives. A central heavy wooden framed doorway at upper level provides access from the threshing floor.

The building is now redundant, although remains in a reasonable condition. Young ash trees have become established around the site and are growing out of the wall footings of the east lateral wall

and north gable end. Root action is displacing masonry and is a potential source of building instability.



Plate 9- looking east towards the combination farm building and pigsty at Pengwern-Bica.

Pigsty

A pair of pigsties abuts the southern gable end of the combination farm building, and is a later addition to the range. These are also of uncoursed stone rubble construction, although with a single pitched corrugated asbestos roof. Heavy walled pig-pens, divided centrally by slate slab partitions occupy the space in front of the sties. Access to the interior is gained by narrow doorways, with red brick lintels.

Management Recommendations

The young trees which have become established around the site should be cut off at the roots and spot treated in order to prevent re-growth. This should be followed up by a programme of re-pointing and masonry consolidation where necessary. Branches, which are currently rubbing against the roof and walls of the building should be pruned. Mature trees and their branches should be monitored for signs of instability, and felled or pruned in order to prevent damage to the buildings. In order to ensure that the building does not become neglected, some consideration should be given to how it can best be used in future.

Cow Shed

This long low cow shed occupies the northern part of the rectangular farmyard at Pengwern-Bica. Its original appearance has been modified, although it would originally have measured 10m E-W by 6m N-S, with walls averaging 0.5m thick. Like other buildings at Pengwern-Bica, it is of stone rubble construction with roughly squared quoins. It is accessed from the farmyard through two narrow doorways, interspersed with wide metal-framed windows. Door and window dressings are of red brick in keeping with other buildings at Pengwern-Bica. They are later additions to this building and may have replaced wooden lintels. The interior is concrete rendered. A concrete stall platform, with galvanised steel stall partitions flanks the north lateral wall and runs the length of the building. Further alterations to the building are apparent. The west gable end has since been removed and it has been extended westwards for three metres. This area may also have housed livestock during the

working life of the building. The building is now redundant, although it remains in a stable condition. A few roof tiles have become displaced, and several others are loose.

Management Recommendations

The building should continue to be maintained using materials and techniques, which are faithful to those of its original construction. Trees surrounding the site should be monitored for signs of instability, and felled or pruned if necessary in order to prevent damage to the buildings.



Plate 10- the interior of the cow shed at Pengwern-Bica looking west

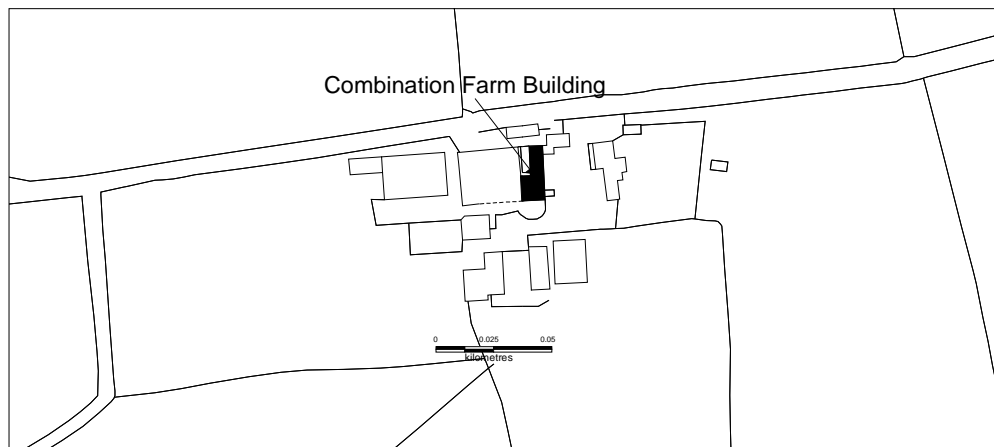


Plate 11- part of the east elevation of the combination farm building at Pengwern-Isaf

7. PENGWERN ISAF FARMSTEAD

Farmstead first seen on the 1831, 1 inch to a mile Old Series Ordnance Survey map. The earliest large scale accurate map of the farmstead is the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891. The farmhouse is seen to the east of a rectangular farmyard, with agricultural buildings defining the north and west sides of the yard. Two smaller buildings line the road to the north. The farmstead is mentioned in Jones, F (1987) "Historic Carmarthenshire Homes and their Families" by virtue of Pengwern Issa house (PRN 25430) which had been in the Morris family for three generations in 1625, when it passed to the Parry family. The origins of the house are not known, although it dates at least to the 17th century.

The present farmhouse is a tall square box like house, fitted with tall windows, arranged symmetrically about a central doorway. A lean-to is situated to the rear of the house. Externally visible features such as brick chimneys, slap-work dressings and a pebble dash rendering suggest that it was built, or at least largely re-worked during the Victorian period. It is possible that elements of the earlier farmhouse may be incorporated into the present dwelling at Pengwern-Isaf.



Pengwern-Isaf farmstead (produced from Ordnance Survey. Licence Number GD272825G)

Statement of Condition

Pengwern-Isaf farmstead remains in active agricultural use today. A programme of building consolidation works was undertaken several years ago and buildings here mostly well maintained and in a stable condition, with no specific management concerns.

The landowner expressed some concern over the condition of the roof of a large combination farm building which occupies the western side of the farmyard, during the call out visit. A statement of condition and management recommendations for this particular building are provided below.

Combination Farm Building B.

The landowner has expressed an interest in re-roofing part of the long combination farm building range, which occupies the western side of the farmyard at Pengwern-Isaf. It is seen on the 1839 Cenarth Parish tithe map, although is first seen in accurate detail on the 1891 six inch to a mile Ordnance Survey map. It is likely to be of a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century date.

This long, two storey building measures approximately 24m by 6m beneath a pitched slate roof. It is concrete rendered externally, although where masonry is exposed internally, it can be seen that like other buildings of the region, it is of local Teifi valley slate construction. Large parts of the range have been altered from their original appearance, and the southern half of the building now incorporates a milking parlour and associated apparatus. It is divided into three units, the herringbone parlour to the south, a small central unit for the bulk tank, and storage space to the north. A pair of long, narrow annexes abut the length of the west lateral wall.

A herringbone milking parlour occupies the southern half of the building and nothing of the original historic arrangements survives. The walls are concrete rendered, and the roof is panelled. Nothing of the original roof timbers can be seen. The original door and window openings have also been modified for ease of livestock handling. The south gable end faces onto livestock handling facilities. Two wide doorways, with sliding metal doors provide access for cows to the lateral milking bays. The east lateral wall faces onto the farmyard. Access is gained through a similar doorway in the north end of this wall. An identical opening faces this in the west lateral wall. Two wide, rectangular metal paned window openings are equally spaced to the south of the door. These are now partly obscured by a small, square, brick built shed with a single pitch corrugated roof. This appears to be a modern addition to the range. Neighbouring this to the north is the bulk tank. This space is also concrete rendered and is accessed by a wide door, with concrete lintel from the farmyard. This is also linked internally to the milking parlour by a narrow door in the partition wall. The neighbouring unit to the north appears relatively unmodified from its original appearance, and would originally have served as a threshing floor, with associated storage space. A characteristic wide doorway provides direct access to the stone slabbed threshing floor. Sliding sheet metal doors are a modern addition. A large storage bay is situated to the north of the threshing floor. This might have held loose straw after threshing. A loading door at upper storey level in the north gable end indicates that the space above the threshing floor at least would have been lofted. Nothing of this loft remains today, however. In contrast to the southern two units of the building, which are concrete rendered the interior walls here are whitewashed.

Two long narrow lean-tos abut the west lateral wall. The southernmost of these is seen on the 1891, 1907 six inch to a mile Ordnance Survey maps, and may be an original feature of the building. This also is of local Teifi Valley slate construction. It is a low structure, formed by an extension of the western pitch of the roof. Internally, it comprises a long, narrow unit which is divided laterally by a central breeze block partition. Access is provided by doors in the north and south walls. The original function of this part of the building is not known. Possible interpretations may be as storage space or as a loose box for housing of fatstock. A brick-built annex faces this and abuts the northern part of the east lateral wall. This is not shown on map sources before 1907 and is a modern addition to the farmstead.

Statement of Condition/ Management Recommendations

This building, which makes an important contribution to the group value of the farmstead remains in active agricultural use and is, generally well maintained. A few roof tiles above the milking parlour are loose, whilst several are missing over the original lean-to. Correspondingly, roof battens and purlins here are showing signs of rot. The landowner has expressed an interest in re-roofing this part of the building. This is to be welcomed. Any restoration works should take care to retain as much of the original fabric of this part of the building as possible. In order to retain the historic appearance of the building, materials and techniques used should be compatible with those of its original construction.

8. REFERENCES

- Jones, F. 1987 Historic Houses of Carmarthenshire and their Families Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society Cultural Services Department, Dyfed County Council
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**Pengwern-Isaf
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This report has been prepared by William Steele

Position: Archaeologist (Heritage Management)

Signature Date

This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,
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Position: Principal Archaeologist (Heritage Management)

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