

Erwbarfe W/11/4052

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report



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CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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Erwbarfe
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report

By

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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

Erwbarfe lies at grid reference SN74897829, in the community of Blaenrheidol. It was visited by Cambria Archaeology on January 7th, 2004. The farm consists of three holdings, of which only the main holding was visited. Please refer to the HE1 report for management recommendations for sites on the other holdings.

The farm falls into three Historic Landscape Character Areas, as shown on the attached map. These areas are 17: Fuches Wen, 58: Bryn Tyn-Llwyn and 60: Ysbyty Cynfyn. Full descriptions are attached (see page 21).

Erwbarfe is just north of Devil's Bridge, on the edge of the uplands east of Cwm Rheidol. The general settlement pattern of the area is one of dispersed farms, many of which are situated in similar spots to Erwbarfe. Erwbarfe occupies three distinct landscape 'zones' which are reflected in the boundaries of the Historic Landscape Character Areas. The farmstead itself (PRN 33193) is set within an area of small to medium cultivated fields on relatively level ground. The site of the now-ruined Danylan farmstead (PRN 33194) also lies on the edge of this 'zone', testimony to the increased population of this area in times of agricultural prosperity.

The land then rises quite sharply to the east, moving into an area of large enclosures which acts as a kind of 'buffer' between the enclosed, cultivated land to the west and the open, unenclosed uplands to the east. This area has changed quite considerably in recent years, with most of the large enclosures being subdivided into smaller fields. The deserted settlement of Banc Erw-Barfe (PRN 34866, SAM Cd176) straddles the boundary between this and the next 'zone' – the open and largely unenclosed uplands.

Although there has been some recent land improvement, tracts of open moorland still survive in these uplands. Banc Erw-Barfe is the most significant site on the farm, and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. This site is of national importance. It probably originated as a *lluest* – a home for a shepherding family, comprising a dwelling, a garden for vegetables and maybe a few animal pens. The occupants would have made their living running sheep on the uplands, and *lluestau* were common across the Cambrian mountains by the 18th century.

ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVE

To ensure that evidence for past settlement of the uplands, which characterises this farm, is maintained in a stable condition, and to ensure that above-ground features remain as visible elements of the landscape.

SITES REQUIRING ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

All of the sites on this farm are covered by the management guidelines given in section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historic Features). A copy of these guidelines is included (see page 6).

However, a few sites require more specific or active management, and recommendations for those are given below:

PRN 34866 – BANC ERW-BARFE DESERTED RURAL SETTLEMENT

Since the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM Cd176) the following recommendations are made in consultation with Cadw:

- i. A regime of light grazing should be continued in order to prevent the incursion of scrub and undergrowth.
- ii. A modern fence line currently cuts through the site. When this fence is due for renewal or repair, then the line of the fence should be moved, to pass to the west of the enclosure (PRN 34870 – see diagram) and outside the Scheduled Area. This will avoid any erosion forming along the base of the fence-line. Old fence-posts should be cut off at ground level and removed, otherwise Scheduled Ancient Monument consent will be required.

PRN 34871 – CLAMP?; SUNKEN SHELTER

Since this site is part of Scheduled Ancient Monument Cd176 (Banc Erw-Barfe, PRN 34866) the following management recommendations are made in consultation with Cadw:

The following comments are specific to this part of the settlement site:

- i. The sheep-scrap should be monitored to ensure that it does not become worse. If it shows signs of becoming more severe, then chicken netting should be temporarily pegged over the area in order to allow the grass to recover.
- ii. The scrap should be removed from the site.

PRN 33194 – DANYLAN FARMSTEAD

The following specific recommendations apply to this site:

- i. The ground is very wet, and could become waterlogged and poached very quickly. To avoid damaging buried archaeology, the site should only be grazed by sheep (no cattle) and will need to be monitored. Stock should be removed if there is any sign of poaching.
- ii. Care should be taken that the farm track does not encroach onto the site. Heavy vehicles should not use the track or the gateways when the ground is very wet.

PRN 34876 – SHEEPFOLD

The following management recommendation also applies specifically to this site:

- i. Care should be taken that no sheep paths or scrapes form at the base of the fence. The site should be temporarily fenced out of grazing if erosion becomes a problem.

TIR GOFAL FARM MANAGEMENT PLAN SECTION B2; ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL FEATURES.

The management of all sites should comply with the following general requirements for the **maintenance and protection of archaeological and historic features**:

- Historic earthworks, stone structures, and archaeological sites must be retained and protected against damage.
- Unless the land has previously been used for arable crops, do not plough earthworks or archaeological sites, or cultivate so close as to cut into the surface profile of earthworks or cause damage to stone structures. On existing arable land, do not increase the depth of cultivation.
- Do not install any new drainage or underground services. Maintain an even cover of low growing vegetation and stock at a level that prevents any poaching or erosion. Do not site supplementary feeding areas or water troughs on archaeological or historic features.
- Do not site new fencing or vehicular tracks on archaeological or historic sites without prior approval. Avoid using heavy machinery on such areas.
- Do not remove any material from archaeological or historic features or deposit any spoil or farm wastes.
- Remove any dead or unstable timber from the vicinity of earthworks or stone structures. Agree with the project officer a suitable method for repairing any damage caused by storm events such as wind-throw trees.
- Ensure that all rabbits are kept under control and do not cause damage to earthworks and archaeological sites.
- Do not carry out any excavations, erect any new structures or plant any trees without prior approval from the project officer.
- The use of metal detectors on land subject to agreement must be in accordance with the Treasure Act, 1996.
- Where surface archaeological finds have been discovered, the findspots should be treated with the same care as buried archaeological remains. Chance discoveries made during the course of your agreement should be notified to your local Archaeological Trust.

Traditional Buildings

- Traditional buildings, which are weatherproof and structurally sound, must be maintained in a weatherproof condition. Those traditional buildings, or parts of traditional buildings, that have not been modified previously must be maintained using traditional materials.
- Traditional buildings that have been modified previously may be maintained using compatible materials.
- Do not disturb any bats or barn owls that use the buildings. If these species are present you will need a licence from CCW to carry out any work on the building.

GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

PRN	25906	Site Name	YSBYTY- CYNFYN	Grid Reference	SN76107870
Site Type	LEAD MINE	Period	POST- MEDIEVAL		

Description

Traces of a small lead mine, marked on the 1891 and 1906 Ordnance Survey maps as 'level'. The remains are on both sides of the stream which marks the farm boundary. A substantial spoil heap lies on the north bank of the stream (outside Erwbarfe), and is surrounded by traces of smaller tips. On the south side of the stream are three open cuts – probably adits – and several spoil tips. One of the cuts has surviving traces of a stone lining, and other building stone is scattered around the area.

The site seems stable, and is probably bracken covered in the summer, though the vegetation was low on the day of the farm visit.

Recommendations

The feature should be maintained in a stable condition. See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features).

Site Category C



Plate 1 *Some of the lead mining remains by Nant Ysbyty Cynfyn. This cut or adit is partially stone lined and is set in an area full of small spoil tips.*

PRN 33193 **Site Name** ERWBARFE **Grid Reference** SN74897829

Site Type FARMSTEAD **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

Erwbarfe farmstead is set within the Historic Landscape Character Area of Ysbyty Cynfyn, part of the Upland Ceredigion Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. It is one of a number of dispersed farms scattered throughout the area and is shown on the Ordnance Survey drawings of 1820-21 as 'Erw Berfa'. Three buildings are depicted on the 1906 Ordnance Survey map, and are still seen in the present-day layout of the farm. These are the house itself, a barn and an agricultural building which probably originated as a cowshed or a stable.

The surviving buildings are stone built and slate roofed, and appear to be in good condition.

Recommendations

Traditional buildings should be maintained using appropriate materials and techniques. See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Traditional Buildings).

Site Category C



Plate 2 Map showing the layout of Erwbarfe farmstead.

PRN	33194	Site Name	DANYLAN; LAN FAWR	Grid Reference	SN75367881
Site Type	FARMSTEAD	Period	POST- MEDIEVAL		

Description

A deserted farmstead site consisting of the farmhouse (PRN 34874), a garden or enclosure (PRN 34875), a sheep fold (PRN 34876) and a possible long hut adjacent to the sheep fold (PRN 34877).

The farmstead is seen on an estate map of 1764 and on the Ordnance Survey surveyor's drawings (1820–21), when it is named as Ty'n Lan Fawr. On the tithe map (1846, Llanbadarn Fawr parish) it is seen to consist of two buildings (PRNs 34874 and probably 34877), but by the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1891) the most westerly (?PRN 34877) had fallen out of use. It is possible that Danylan originated as a *lluest* similar to Banc Erw-Barfe (PRN 34866). This would have consisted of a building (the possible long-hut, PRN 34877) and an enclosure (PRN 34876). Later, the farmhouse and garden were added and at the long-hut fell out of use. The original enclosure associated with the long-hut could then have been re-used as a sheep-fold. The complex survives as a series of earthworks partially terraced into a rocky outcrop. The site is generally in fair condition, although the ground is very wet and there were some signs of poaching. A farm track runs through the northern edge of the farmstead and there are two gateways into adjoining fields situated very close to the site.

Recommendations

Management should aim to preserve the whole complex as a visible, stable feature. It should also safeguard buried archaeology associated with the farmstead.

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features). The following specific recommendations also apply to this site:

- i. The ground is very wet, and could become waterlogged and poached very quickly. To avoid damaging buried archaeology, the site should only be grazed by sheep (no cattle) and will need to be monitored. Stock should be removed if there is any sign of poaching.
- ii. Care should be taken that the farm track does not encroach onto the site. Heavy vehicles should not use the track or the gateways when the ground is very wet.

Site Category B



Plate 3 Earthworks from the deserted farmstead of Danylan. The farmhouse (PRN 34874) and enclosure/garden (PRN 34875) are in the foreground, with the sheep-fold (PRN 34877) crossed by the fence-line on the far side of the track. The small rectangular feature in front of the fold may have been a long hut (PRN 34877).

PRN	34865	Site Name		Grid Reference	SN75407813
Site Type	BOUNDARY BANK	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST- MEDIEVAL?		

Description

A substantial earth boundary bank with a silted up ditch on the east side. The Nanteos estate maps show a boundary here and this is possibly the old *clawdd eithaf* or boundary between the common and the enclosed land.

The site was not visited on this occasion.

Recommendations

The boundary should be maintained as a visible feature.

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features).

Site Category D

PRN	34866	Site Name	BANC ERW-BARFE	Grid	SN75637811
Site Type	DESERTED RURAL SETTLEMENT	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST-MEDIEVAL?	Reference Site status	SAM Cd176

Description

A deserted settlement comprising a longhut (PRN 34867), an enclosure containing evidence for lazy bed cultivation (PRN 34868), a further enclosure (PRN 34870) and a boundary bank (PRN 34869). Two shallow cuts in the hillside a few metres away are also probably associated, and may be storage clamps for root crops (PRNs 34871 -2).

The site may be described as a classic '*lluest*' site. *Lluestau* were home to shepherding families, and many were located in remote locations, high in the Cambrian Mountains. The typical *lluest* included a dwelling, a small field or garden for vegetable cultivation and a few small ancillary structures – perhaps animal pens, storage clamps, sheep folds, goose pens and the like. This site is not marked on the parish tithe map of 1846, so had presumably fallen out of use prior to that date. This site is generally in a good, stable condition. Most of the individual features are marked out by low earth and stone banks and are clearly visible.

The site is currently split between two fields and a modern fence cuts through it, passing to the west of the dwelling (PRN 34867).

Banc Erw-Barfe is a Scheduled Ancient Monument of national importance, and is therefore protected by law.

Recommendations

Banc Erw-Barfe should be maintained as a stable, visible feature. All associated buried archaeology should be protected from disturbance.

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features).

In addition to these general guidelines, the following recommendations are made in consultation with Cadw:

- i. A regime of light grazing should be continued in order to prevent the incursion of scrub and undergrowth.
- ii. A modern fence line currently cuts through the site. When this fence is due for renewal or repair, then the line of the fence should be moved, to pass to the west of the enclosure (PRN 34870 – see diagram) and outside the Scheduled Area. This will avoid any erosion forming along the base of the fence-line. Old fence-posts should be cut off at ground level and removed, otherwise Scheduled Ancient Monument consent will be required.

Site Category A

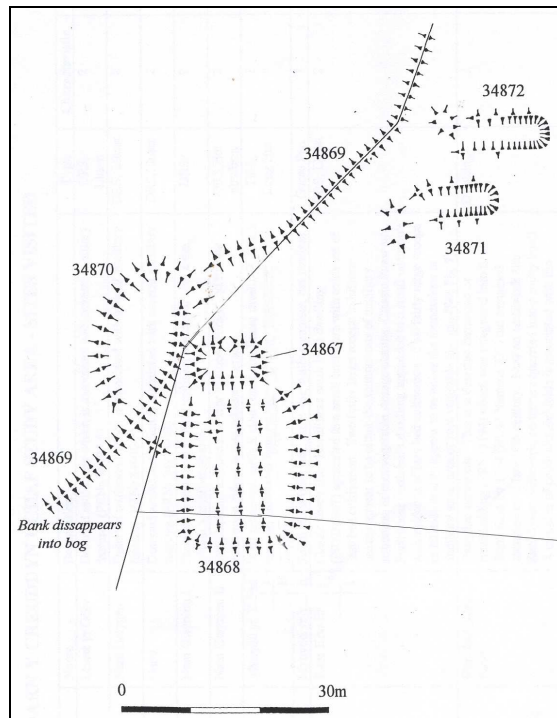


Plate 4 (above) Plan of Banc Erw-Barfe (PRN 34866) showing individual features (Sambrook, P: 1998:46). Modern fence-lines added in solid lines.

Plate 5 (below) Earthwork showing the long hut (PRN 34867) at Banc Erw-Barfe deserted rural settlement.



PRN	34867	Site Name	BANC ERW- BARFE	Grid	SN75627812
Site Type	LONG HUT	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST- MEDIEVAL?	Reference Site status	SAM Cd176

Description

Earth and stone banks picking out the 'footprint' of a long hut, part of Banc Erw-Barfe deserted settlement (PRN 34866). The long hut measures around 9m x 5.5m, with an entrance on the north side.

The site is in a good, stable condition.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features), and the management recommendations made for PRN 34866.

Site Category A

PRN	34868	Site Name	BANC ERW- BARFE	Grid	SN75637811
Site Type	GARDEN	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST- MEDIEVAL?	Reference Site status	SAM Cd176

Description

A garden just to the south of the long hut (PRN 34867), part of Banc Erw-Barfe deserted settlement (PRN 34866). The garden is marked out by a roughly rectangular earth bank with ridges running across the interior, indicating its use for lazy-bed cultivation of root-crops.

A fence cuts across the southern section of the garden, and the most southerly section is indistinct as it disappears into a boggy area of ground.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features), and the management recommendations made for PRN 34866.

Site Category A

PRN	34869	Site Name	BANC ERW- BARFE	Grid	SN75627813
Site Type	BOUDARY BANK	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST- MEDIEVAL?	Reference Site status	SAM Cd176

Description

A boundary bank, running around and through the western part of Banc Erw-Barfe deserted settlement (PRN 34866). It is not clear how this bank relates to the enclosure (PRN 34870). The complexity of banks and enclosures here may indicate that the site was occupied and re-occupied over a considerable length of time and consequently was re-organised at least once.

The bank is turf covered and in good condition. At its north end, a modern fence runs along the bank.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features), and the management recommendations made for PRN 34866.

Site Category A

PRN	34870	Site Name	BANC ERW- BARFE	Grid	SN75617812
Site Type	ENCLOSURE	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST- MEDIEVAL?	Reference Site status	SAM Cd176

Description

A curving enclosure marked out by low earth banks and appended to the western side of Banc Erw-Barfe deserted settlement (PRN 34866). Indistinct cultivation ridges can be made out inside this enclosure, but the situation is made more complex by the boundary bank (PRN 34869) which runs through the enclosure. The complexity of banks and enclosures here may indicate that the site was occupied and re-occupied over a considerable length of time and consequently was re-organised at least once.

The enclosure is in good condition, but is separated from the long hut (PRN 34867) and the garden (PRN 34868) by a modern fence.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features), and the management recommendations made for PRN 34866.

Site Category A

PRN	34871	Site Name	BANC ERW-BARFE	Grid Reference	SN75667815
Site Type	CLAMP?; SUNKEN SHELTER?	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST-MEDIEVAL?	Site status	SAM Cd176

Description

One of two open-ended, shallow cuts in the hillside some 30m northeast of Banc Erw-Barfe deserted settlement (PRN 34866). It is around 10m in length, with a small pile of spoil at the open end. There seem to be traces of a stone construction in the scoop – probably a stone lining, although it is possible it was a free-standing stone structure of some description.

The most likely explanation is that this is a potato clamp, associated with the lazy bed cultivation (PRN 34868) at Banc Erw-Barfe. However, other interpretations of this feature are also possible including building foundations or animal pens.

The feature is generally in good condition. However, there is a small amount of scrap in the clamp, and there is a partially healed sheep-scape on one side of the interior.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features), and the management recommendations made for PRN 34866. The following comments are specific to this part of the settlement site:

- ii. The sheep-scape should be monitored to ensure that it does not become worse. If it shows signs of becoming more severe, then chicken netting should be temporarily pegged over the area in order to allow the grass to recover.
- iii. The scrap should be removed from the site.

Site Category A

PRN	34872	Site Name	BANC ERW-BARFE	Grid Reference	SN75667815
Site Type	CLAMP?; SUNKEN SHELTER?	Period	MEDIEVAL?; POST-MEDIEVAL?	Site status	SAM Cd176

Description

One of two open-ended, shallow cuts in the hillside some 30m northeast of Banc Erw-Barfe deserted settlement (PRN 34866). It is around 10m in length, with a small pile of spoil at the open end. There is some stone rubble present inside the feature, but no clear evidence for any structure.

The most likely explanation is that this is a potato clamp, associated with the lazy bed cultivation (PRN 34868) at Banc Erw-Barfe. However, other interpretations of this feature are also possible including building foundations or animal pens.

The feature is in good condition and is in a lightly grazed pasture.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features), and the management recommendations for PRN 34866.

Site Category A

PRN	34874	Site Name	DANYLAN; LAN FAWR	Grid Reference	SN75357878
Site Type	FARMHOUSE	Period	POST- MEDIEVAL		

Description

The site of Danylan farmhouse, part of a now-deserted farmstead complex (PRN 33194). The farmhouse survives only as a rectangular earthwork, terraced into a rocky hillside. The Nanteos estate maps show that the house was occupied in 1764. See plate 3.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features) and the management recommendations made for Danylan Farmstead (PRN 33194).

Site Category B

PRN	34875	Site Name	DANYLAN; LAN FAWR	Grid Reference	SN75367880
Site Type	GARDEN?; ENCLOSURE	Period	POST- MEDIEVAL		

Description

The site of a garden or enclosure, lying just north of Danylan farmhouse (PRN 34874) and part of a now-deserted farmstead complex (PRN 33194). The boundaries of this enclosure survive as low earth and stone banks forming a roughly rectangular 'paddock'. No features were observed inside the enclosure. A slightly sunken track runs between the house and the 'garden'. See plate 3. The earthworks are in good condition and have a stable vegetation covering.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features) and the management recommendations made for Danylan Farmstead (PRN 33194).

Site Category B

PRN	34876	Site Name	DANYLAN; LAN FAWR	Grid Reference	SN75347884
Site Type	SHEEPFOLD	Period	POST- MEDIEVAL		

Description

A roughly rectangular enclosure marked as a sheepfold on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. The fold lies just north of the deserted Danylan farmhouse (PRN 34874) and is part of the farmstead complex (PRN 33194). See plate 3.

On the 1820-21 Ordnance Survey drawings, 'Ty'n Lan Fawr' is the name of the farmstead and only one enclosure and one building are seen. It is likely that these are the sheepfold, and the long hut (PRN 34877) adjacent to it. These would therefore be the earliest parts of the farmstead, and may have originated as a *lluest*.

The fold is in stable condition, but a modern fence cuts across it.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features) and the management recommendations made for Danylan Farmstead (PRN 33194). The following management recommendation also applies specifically to this site:

- i. Care should be taken that no sheep paths or scrapes form at the base of the fence. The site should be temporarily fenced out of grazing if erosion becomes a problem.

Site Category B

PRN	34877	Site Name	DANYLAN; LAN FAWR	Grid Reference	SN75357884
Site Type	LONG HUT	Period	POST- MEDIEVAL		

Description

A rectangular earthwork next to the sheep fold (PRN 34876). This is probably the remains of a long hut, or of an outbuilding associated with Danylan Farmstead (PRN 33194). See plate 3.

On the 1820-21 Ordnance Survey drawings, 'Ty'n Lan Fawr' is the name of this farmstead, and only one enclosure and one building are seen. It is likely that these are the sheepfold, and the long hut adjacent to it. These would therefore be the earliest parts of the farmstead, and may have originated as a *lluest*.

Recommendations

See section B2 of the Tir Gofal Farm Management Plan (Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological and Historical Features) and the management recommendations made for Danylan Farmstead (PRN 33194).

Site Category B

PRN 34880 **Site Name** TY COCH **Grid Reference** SN74837880

Site Type COTTAGE **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

The site of Ty Coch cottage. This is recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record as an “abandoned dwelling and garden enclosure – almost no trace of house above ground” (Sambrook,P:2003). The site was not found on the day of the field visit, but is apparently located in a area of woodland.

Recommendations

There is potential for buried archaeology to survive at this location, and management should aim to preserve this.

As long as the site is maintained under woodland, then no specific management recommendations apply. Please consult Cambria Archaeology if the land-use is to be altered.

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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produced for Cadw


Erwbarfe


Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation
Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/11/4052
Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN47883
National Grid Reference SN74907833

 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 Landscapes of Historic Interest


Site Category B - Regional Importance

 Sites and Buildings of Regional Importance
including Grade 2 listed buildings

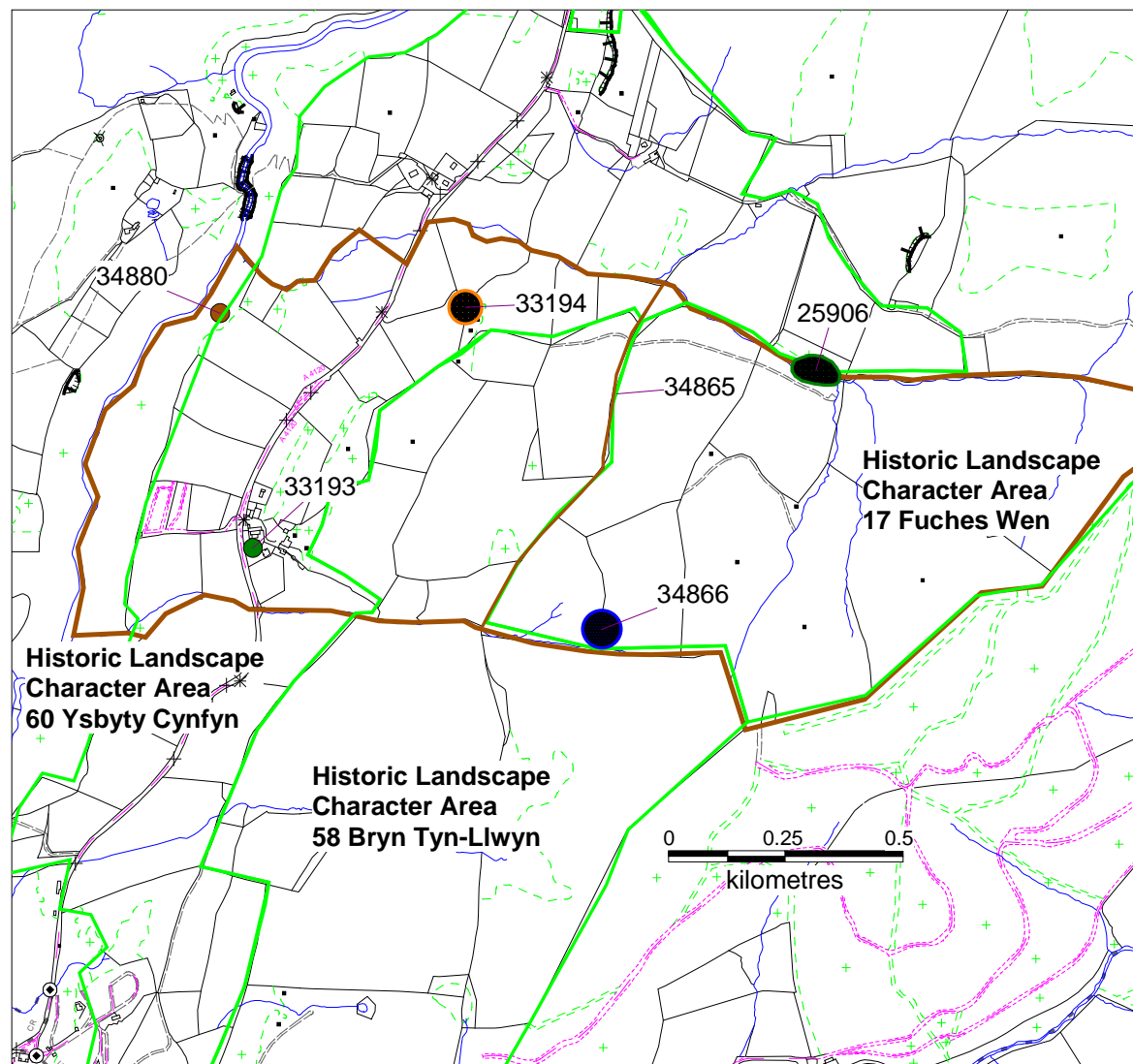
Site Category C - Local Importance

 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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HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

UPLAND CEREDIGION

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 17 FUCHES WEN

GRID REFERENCE: SN 836799
AREA IN HECTARES: 1585

Historic Background

For most of the historical period, the unenclosed character of this area probably ensured that it was considered Crown land. The only pre-tithe map of the area, dated to 1819, shows Fuches Wen as unenclosed sheep-walk. The tithe map shows a similar pattern; a pattern that has in general persisted to the present day.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This is a large block of undulating upland, mostly consisting of north- and northwest-facing slopes with a height range of 300m at its northern edge to over 500m at its high points. Craggy outcrops occur on the summits. Traditionally it consists of unenclosed moorland, with blanket bog at higher levels and peaty deposits in hollows and valleys. Earth boundary banks are present on the northern lower slopes close to Dyffryn Castell, but the enclosures formed by these are now largely redundant, and wire fences divide the area into very large enclosures. Large-scale land improvement over the past few decades has resulted in the transformation of much of the lower slopes, and some high level plateaux, into grassland grazing.

Recorded archaeology of this area consists mainly of post-Medieval sites. The greater proportion of these comprise deserted settlements and associated agricultural features such as folds, enclosures, pens and tracks, indicating a populated, albeit sparsely, upland area through to the 19th century. Metal mine remains are also present. A greater time-depth element to the landscape is provided by Bronze Age round barrows.

This is a well-defined area. To the northeast and east is the lower-lying enclosed settled land of Dyffryn Castell and Ponterwyd (areas 43, 60, 84), while to the south and east are extensive tracts of upland forestry.

UPLAND CEREDIGION

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 58 BRYN TYN-LLWYN

GRID REFERENCE: SN 753776

AREA IN HECTARES: 126.6

Historic Background

Historically this area has functioned as a 'buffer' zone between occupied and cultivated lower-lying land to the west, and unenclosed high land to the east. Its early history is unknown, but in more recent times it has served as sheep-walk to Erwbarfe and other farms. The first large-scale map of the area dates to 1819 (NLW Vol 45, 28) and shows a landscape similar to that of today - large enclosures, some labelled 'sheep pasture'. In times of agricultural prosperity and population expansion the limits of enclosure in this area would have been pushed higher up the slopes, but in times of depression limits of enclosed land would have receded.

Description and essential historic landscape components

A steep and in places craggy west- and south-facing slope rising from 250m up to a maximum of 420m. Improved grazing dominates, with rougher grazing and bracken on the steeper slopes and higher levels. The area has been divided into a series of enclosures. These tend to be small and irregular on the lower slopes, larger at higher levels, and are divided by earth banks, some topped with hedges. Hedges are now only present on the lower slopes, and here they are overgrown and derelict. At higher levels hedges have gone. Wire fences running along the old earth banks now form stock-proof boundaries. Small stands of broadleaf trees are present on the lower slopes. There are no occupied buildings in the area.

Recorded archaeology indicates a once settled landscape. The sites of four house sites of probable post-Medieval date have been recorded together with a deserted farmstead. Rural industry in the form of charcoal burning areas have also been recognised. A flour mill and woollen mill lie on the extreme southern boundary of the area.

This is not a particularly well-defined area to the west, north and south where it merges with more intensively farmed, settled lower-lying land (area 60). To the northeast definition is better with the boundary of unenclosed land (area 17), and is clear with the junction of forestry (area 6) to the east.

UPLAND CEREDIGION

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 60 YSBYTY CYNFYN

GRID REFERENCE: SN 749784

AREA IN HECTARES: 185.4

Historic Background

The early history of this area is unclear. Unlike much of the surrounding land it was not part of one of Strata Florida Abbey's granges. The pattern of dispersed farms is probably of at least Medieval date. Most the area came into the possession of the Nanteos estate. Early 19th-century estate maps (NLW Vol 45, 24-28) show it much as it is today: dispersed farms, small, irregular enclosures and larger enclosures on higher ground. There has been some retreat of settlement, with a farm to the east of Ty Mawr now gone, and at Erwbarfe scattered and intermixed holdings are shown; perhaps indicating the presence of a former sub-divided field system out of which the modern landscape evolved. The small church at Ysbyty Cynfyn was a chapel-of-ease and may have been a possession of the Knights Hospitaller, or may have been associated with Strata Florida Abbey. The church was rebuilt in 1827 on the site of the Medieval building (Ludlow 1998). The site of the church is of interest; several standing stones built into the churchyard wall may be of prehistoric date, though this suggestion has been challenged by Briggs (1979). A visit to the church and the Parson's Bridge waterfalls to the east in area 55 was an essential item on the itinerary of late 18th- and 19th-century tourists to north Ceredigion.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This area lies on a terrace on the east bank of the Afon Rheidol at 220m - 300m. Although mostly composed of smooth ground, it contains a craggy hill close Ysbyty Cynfyn Church. To the west land falls away sharply into the Rheidol valley, to the east the land rises steeply. Improved pasture is dominant, though pockets of rougher ground are present in hollows. The field patterning is of small, irregular enclosures. These are divided by earth banks topped with hedges. Apart from those on the roadside which are in good condition, most hedges are overgrown and some are becoming derelict. All are supplemented by wire fences. Close to the church field boundaries consist of dry-stone walls. These walls are in fair condition. There are small stands of broadleaf woodland. The settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads is characterised by stone-built, slate-roofed dwellings with modern houses of rendered concrete. A small caravan park is present. This area lies on a major north-south route-way, now the B4343. Though no doubt an ancient road, it was converted to a turnpike in 1770 (Lewis 1955, 43-45).

Recorded archaeology of the area mostly consists of post-Medieval settlements. The presence of several deserted sites indicates a much more densely populated landscape in the historic past. Metal mining remains are also evident. Bronze Age finds and a Bronze Age standing stone at Ysbyty Cynfyn Church provide a time-depth to the landscape.

This area is well-defined to the west and south where it borders both woodland on the steep valley side of the Rheidol and unenclosed high ground (areas 55, 18), and to the east where unenclosed land or large enclosures rise steeply to high moorland (areas 17, 58). To the north definition is less clear where this area merges with enclosed land around Ponterwyd (area 84).

**Erwbarfe
W/11/4052**

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Signature Date

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

Signature Date.....

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on the content or presentation of this report