

# **Maenarthur**

## **W/11/4067**

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



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Maenarthur  
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

Maenarthur Farm lies at grid reference SN72937294, and falls within the communities of Yspty Ystwyth and Trawsgoed. It was visited by Cambria Archaeology on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003. For the most part the farm occupies an area of high ground immediately north of the Ystwyth valley, but the land at the east of the farm encompasses the wooded slopes running down to Nant Cell.

Much of the farm lies inside Historic Landscape Character Area 48: Maen Arthur which is part of the Upland Ceredigion Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest, as designated by Cadw and ICOMOS UK. These character areas are intended to define places where local land-use traditions have left particularly strong or distinctive evidence in the landscape, and to help identify the historical significance of these places.

The settlement pattern of the area is one of scattered, stone-built farms set within small, irregular field systems. The origins of this landscape pattern are probably 16<sup>th</sup> century (Murphy,K:1999). Maenarthur itself is of considerable antiquity, but its early origins are unknown. It was not one of the granges of Strata Florida Abbey, and was probably a small, independent estate until its acquisition by the Trawsgoed estate in 1568 (Morgan:1997:34). A folk-tale tells how the ladies who owned Maenarthur were tricked out of their lands by Morris ap Richard, Lord of Trawsgoed (see PRN 49934 for details).

Maenarthur was clearly a farm of some substance in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. As well as the farm itself, a cottage (possibly PRN 10006?) and at least one mill (see PRN 42469) were also recorded (Murphy:1999), and a lease of 1654 records that both sheep and cattle were kept at Maenarthur, as well as crops being grown (Morgan:1997:184). The buildings which survive today are probably 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the site is potentially much older.

There is a variety of archaeological and historical interest on this farm, and the current landowner provided a wealth of information on local knowledge and stories about the different sites. The name 'Maenarthur' may refer to the presence of a prehistoric standing stone somewhere on the site (PRN 2065). Several parish boundary stones are marked on historic maps, dividing the parishes of Llanfihangel y Creuddyn and Llanafan, and it was not unknown for prehistoric standing stones to be re-used in this fashion. Only one of the stones is still visible (PRN 49933), and this is now lying at the base of a hedgebank. The stone is split into three pieces, and a hole in its side is allegedly where King Arthur's sword was removed, causing the stone to fall and break. Whether or not this stone originated as a prehistoric monument, it has a place in local history, and the legend surrounding it seems to be well known.

Another site of great interest is the deserted settlement of Neuadd (PRN 49934). This consists of at least one building, and a yard or garden, with a trackway running between them. The nature of an enigmatic semi-circular mound behind the building is unknown, but it has been interpreted as a corral for cattle. Neuadd is potentially a very important site. It is demonstrably of at least early 19<sup>th</sup> century date and may be considerably earlier. However, it appears to have fallen out of use by 1891, and would therefore have not undergone works to modernise it. Given its good, stable

condition and the visible earthworks associated with it, it seems very likely that Neuadd contains excellent archaeological evidence.

Lead-mining played an important part in the development of the area around Pontrhydygroes, and some mining activity – possibly trial workings – is located on the banks of Nant Cell (PRN 25919). Two levels survive, one as an earthwork (PRN 49935) and one as a rock-cut channel next to a waterfall (PRN 49936). The remains of a stone building (PRN 49938) are situated in the woodland, on a level platform next to the stream. The nature of the building is not known – it is close to the levels and may have been associated with the mine. However, local stories relate that this was an illegal distillery and/or drinking house, and was occasionally raided by customs officials!

Maenarthur has clearly been a focus for settlement and activity over a long time-span, and this is reflected in its archaeology. The concentration and diversity of sites found on the farm is remarkable and many different periods of land-use are represented in these remains. Modern sites like the wheel-pit (PRN 49940) and a leat which supplied a hydro-electric power scheme (PRN 49943) lie alongside evidence for 19<sup>th</sup> century lead mining (PRN 49935 and 49936) and a long-deserted settlement (PRN 49934), while the legend of King Arthur's sword and a possible standing stone (PRN 49933) emphasise the time-depth present in this landscape.

## **MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **PRN 49934: Neuadd Deserted Settlement**

The trees and scrub growing up within the building at Neuadd should be cut off at ground level and removed. To avoid ground disturbance, this work should only be carried out when the ground is dry, and roots should not be dug or dragged out, but should be treated to prevent re-growth. Regular grazing will continue to maintain an even grass sward and prevent future scrub incursion. The semi-circular earthwork behind Neuadd is actually in a separate field from the building and yard, and would be very vulnerable if the field is to be used for arable cultivation. The ideal management would be continue using the site for grazing, as this will continue to maintain the grass cover. If the field is to be ploughed, then a plough margin of at least 10m should be left around the feature, and there should be no ground-intrusive activities undertaken within it. Neuadd is a site of considerable interest and importance and would repay further study and survey.

### **PRN 49933: Standing Stone?**

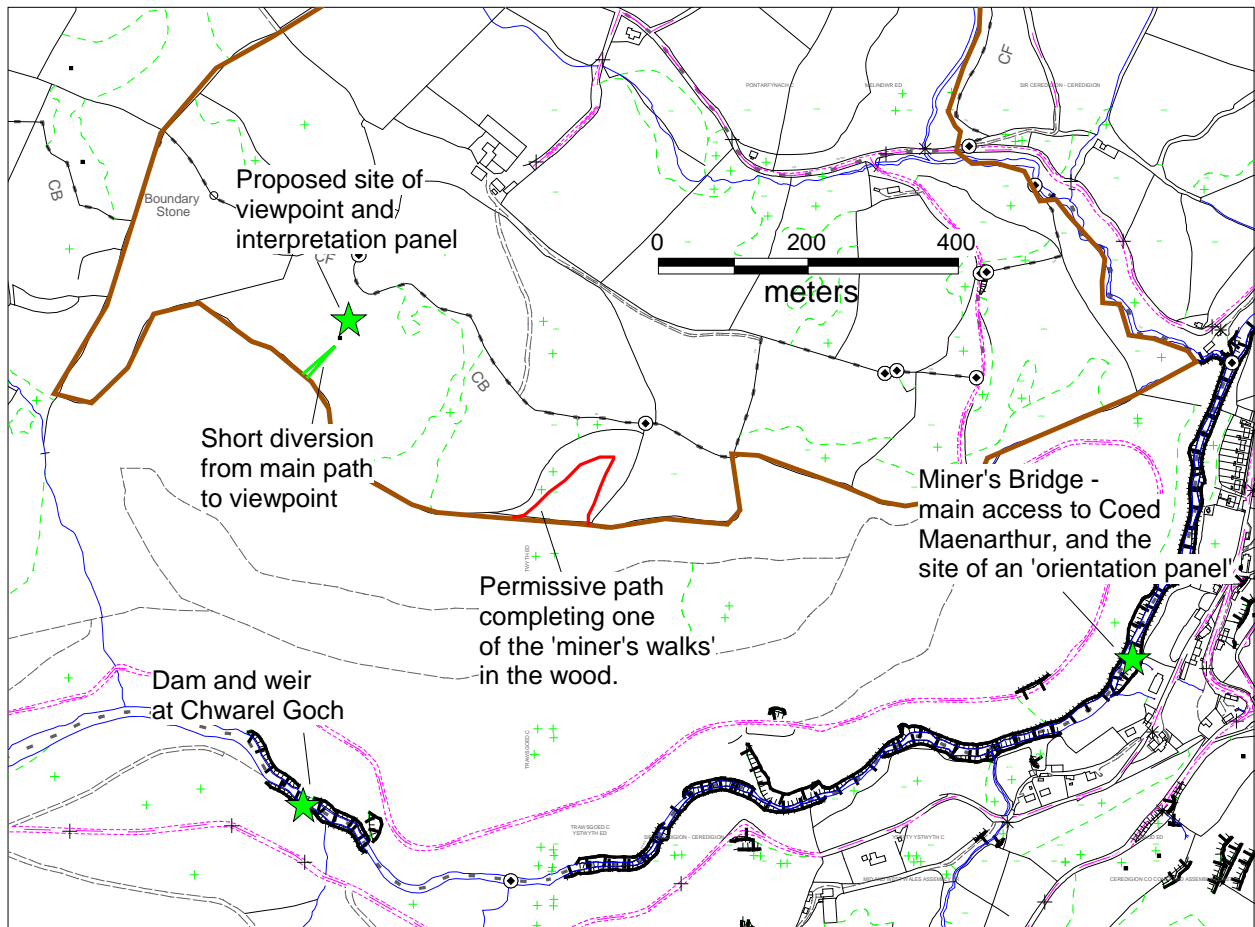
If the stone did originate as a prehistoric standing stone there is a very high potential for buried archaeology associated with the site to survive. Such archaeology may spread over a significant area, and it is important that there is as little disturbance as necessary. The hedge adjacent to the stone is due to be re-laid, and will be double fenced as part of this work. If the stone is included within the fenced area it will quickly be obscured by new vegetation growth and access to clear the growth will be very difficult. Instead, the fenceline should run between the stone and existing hedge, taking care that the fenceposts are as far from the stone as possible. If the field is to be used for arable, then a 5m plough margin should be left around the stone. No ground intrusive works should be carried out within this margin, but the vegetation should be kept in check either by light grazing or through clearance by hand.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERPRETATION

Immediately south of Maenarthur farm is a substantial area of woodland, known as Coed Maenarthur. The woodland runs down steep slopes to Afon Ystwyth, and is criss-crossed with a network of paths shown on historic maps. At the eastern end, where the wood borders the village of Pontrhydygroes, Coed Maenarthur is accessed via the 'Miner's Bridge' – a new bridge high above the valley and overlooking a waterfall. The Miner's Bridge was erected in 2002 with funding from Cyd Coed. It takes the place of a 19<sup>th</sup> century bridge which allowed miners to walk to the Fron Goch and Gro Gwynion mines. The bridge is part of an extensive programme of regeneration which is still on-going in Coed Maenarthur. Through work done by the Nanteos Woodland Group and Forest Enterprise, the historic paths through the wood have been re-made and opened to the public, and a set of interpretation panels are to be put in place at points along the walks. These will identify flora and fauna likely to be encountered in the woods, and a larger panel will provide information about the impressive weir and dam at Chwarel Goch (PRN 38041), built in 1870 to provide water to Gro Gwynion mines.

Maenarthur Farm represents an ideal opportunity for Tir Gofal to link in with an existing community project whilst also fulfilling its own objectives of encouraging permissive access. There are three possibilities to be considered for this farm:

- i. The walks in Coed Maenarthur complete a circular route, and a small section of the path passes through Maenarthur's land. The landowner has agreed to allow permissive access along this route (marked on the following map) and the route will be waymarked on the ground and included on an 'orientation panel' sited at the entrance to the woods, by Miner's Bridge.
- ii. The landowner is also very keen to incorporate an interpretation panel within his Tir Gofal agreement, placed on a high ridge which gives spectacular views to the north. The proposed siting is marked on the following map and would involve a short diversion from the main path leading across a stile or gate and up onto the ridge. The panel would then point out features of interest in the landscape. It would be a worthwhile addition to the existing network of walks since it would allow visitors to open out onto the high ground, and to come above the tree-line for the first time. The views would set the Ystwyth Valley in its landscape context, looking across to Pumlumon and up the valley towards Hafod.
- iii. The Nanteos Woodland Group expressed an interest in providing some form of interpretation of and/or access to the possible standing stone (PRN 49933) which is reputed to be the stone referred to in the name 'Maen Arthur'. This is not a serious proposal at the present time, but is something which could be borne in mind for the future.



**Plate 1** Map showing proposed route of the permissive access (marked in red) and of the interpretation panel/viewpoint.





**Plate 2:** *Views from the site of the proposed interpretation panel. Looking north, and moving clockwise from west to east.*

## GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

<b>PRN</b>	2065	<b>Site Name</b>	MAENARTHUR	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73547246
<b>Site Type</b>	STANDING STONE	<b>Period</b>	BRONZE AGE?		

### Description

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Samuel Meyrick commented that the place-name 'Maenarthur' may refer to a prehistoric standing stone. PRN 2065 is the record of this documentary reference to a possible site. See also PRN 49933.

### Recommendations

No management recommendations apply.

**Site Category** D

<b>PRN</b>	10006	<b>Site Name</b>	MAENARTHUR COTTAGE	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73547247
<b>Site Type</b>	COTTAGE	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

### Description

Maenarthur cottage is seen on the 1845 tithe map for Llanafan Parish. A cottage at Maenarthur was mentioned in 1602 (Morgan, 1997:38) but it is not known whether the cottage which now stands is on the site of the one referred to.

Maenarthur cottage is currently inhabited and is no longer part of the farm.

### Recommendations

The cottage is not included in this Tir Gofal application and no management recommendations apply.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	12204	<b>Site Name</b>	CAE MAENARTHUR	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN72897289
<b>Site Type</b>	FINDSPOT	<b>Period</b>	BRONZE AGE		

### Description

The findspot of a bronze-age stone axe, apparently recovered in 1964.

### Recommendations

No specific management recommendations apply. Any future finds should be reported to Cambria Archaeology.

**Site Category** D

<b>PRN</b>	19722	<b>Site Name</b>		<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN72937334
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<b>Site Type</b>	QUARRY	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL
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**Description**

The site of a small disused quarry. The feature was not visited on this occasion.

**Recommendations**

Maintain as a visible historic landscape feature. Quarry sites should not be infilled or used for dumping.

**Site Category** D

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<b>PRN</b>	19730	<b>Site Name</b>	YSGOL MAENARTHUR	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73447288
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<b>Site Type</b>	CHAPEL	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL
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**Description**

A non-conformist chapel, now converted into a dwelling.

**Recommendations**

Since this is now a private dwelling, it is not included in this Tir Gofal application and no management recommendations apply.

**Site Category** C

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<b>PRN</b>	24581	<b>Site Name</b>	CAPEL SAESON	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73277294
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<b>Site Type</b>	CHAPEL	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL
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**Description**

The site of a ruined chapel. The site no longer belongs to Maenarthur Farm, but the landowner informed Cambria Archaeology that the chapel had been constructed to serve the nearby mining community, and was originally on land leased from Maenarthur. There was, apparently, an agreement that if the chapel ceased to be used the land would revert to Maenarthur's ownership, but this was not honoured!

**Recommendations**

This land is not included in the Tir Gofal application, and no management recommendations apply.

**Site Category** C

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<b>PRN</b>	25919	<b>Site Name</b>	PONTRHYDYGROES MINE	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73607280
<b>Site Type</b>	LEAD MINE	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

#### **Description**

Pontrhydygroes mine was a small 19<sup>th</sup> century lead mine. The extent of the mine is not known but it included two levels (PRNs 49935 and 49936) which are within the boundaries of Maenarthur Farm. Protheroe-Jones (1992, sheet no. 166) suggests that this was either a very minor site or trial workings.

The mine is not marked on the attached map.

#### **Recommendations**

No specific management recommendations apply.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	26647	<b>Site Name</b>	FFERM MAEN ARTHUR	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73107290
<b>Site Type</b>	MINE	<b>Period</b>	POST- MEDIEVAL		

#### **Description**

A disused metal mine is recorded in this field, but no traces of any mining remains were seen on the day of the field visit.

#### **Recommendations**

No specific management recommendations apply. Please contact Cambria Archaeology if any evidence for mining is discovered.

**Site Category** D

<b>PRN</b>	42469	<b>Site Name</b>	MAENARTHUR MILL	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73767261
<b>Site Type</b>	MILL	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

### **Description**

The presumed site of a mill. A corn mill and a tucking mill are both recorded at Maenarthur from 1566, and a smelting mill was also present by 1608 (Murphy,K:1999). There is no mention of the mill after 1762.

The precise location of the mill is unknown, and this site was not visited on the day of the field visit. It is possible that this site is mis-located, and that it should be further north in the farm, close to a possible mill pond (PRN 49939).

### **Recommendations**

Any above-ground remains or earthworks should be maintained in a stable condition and should not be subjected to any ground intrusive activities. Please contact Cambria Archaeology if anything is known about this site.

**Site Category** D

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<b>PRN</b>	49933	<b>Site Name</b>	MAEN ARTHUR	<b>Grid</b>	SN73267258
<b>Site Type</b>	STANDING STONE?	<b>Period</b>	PREHISTORIC?	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Site status</b>

### **Description**

A recumbent stone lying on the edge of a hedgerow. The stone is one of a line of stones seen on historic maps which were used to mark the boundary between Llanafan and Llanfihangel y Creuddyn parishes. This stone seems to be the only one still visible. Its age is unknown. It is possible that this was a prehistoric standing stone (though it is now fallen) which was re-used as a boundary feature. The place-name 'Maen Arthur' was in use from at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and the 'maen' element may refer to the 'standing stone' (stones?), implying that it has long been an important feature of the farm.

The stone is now lying on the edge of a hedgebank and is split into three pieces. Local tradition holds that a hole in the side of the stone was where the sword of King Arthur was pulled out – as the sword was removed, the stone fell, causing it to split. The landowner informed Cambria Archaeology that another possibility was that the hole in the stone was caused by a rock-drill, and one of the miners from the nearby Fron-Goch mines blew the stone apart using explosives. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the place-name 'Maen Arthur' was noted as being the possible site of a standing stone. This was recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record as PRN 2065. It is not known which of the boundary stones marked on historic maps was being referred to.

### **Recommendations**

If the stone did originate as a prehistoric standing stone there is a very high potential for buried archaeology associated with the site to survive. Such archaeology may spread over a significant area, and it is important that there is as little disturbance as necessary. The hedge adjacent to the stone is due to be re-laid, and will be double fenced as part of this work. If the stone is included within the fenced area it will quickly be obscured by new vegetation growth and access to clear the growth will be very difficult. Instead, the fenceline should run between the stone and existing hedge, taking care that the fenceposts are as far from the stone as possible. If the field is to be used for arable, then a 5m plough margin should be left around the stone. No ground intrusive works should be carried out within this margin, but the vegetation should be kept in check either by light grazing or through clearance by hand.

**Site Category** D





**Plate 3 (above):** PRN 49933. Stone used as a parish boundary marker. It may have originated as a prehistoric standing stone, but is now recumbent and split into three pieces. Legend has it that the sword of King Arthur was pulled from this stone, causing it to shatter.

**Plate 4 (below):** PRN 49934 – see below. A now deserted settlement named 'Neuadd' on historic maps. This is the entranceway into the main building.



<b>PRN</b>	49934	<b>Site Name</b>	NEUADD	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73467264
<b>Site Type</b>	DESERTED SETTLEMENT	<b>Period</b>	POST- MEDIEVAL		

### Description

A deserted settlement comprising at least one building, a yard and possibly a trackway. The visible building is around 15m x 6m, running roughly east-west. A tumbled central wall divides it in two. The building is partially terraced into a slope, and the level of the interior is lower than the surrounding ground level. The walls stand to around 1m tall in places, though at other points they are almost gone. They are constructed of narrow slabs of stone, bound with lime mortar. Massive quoins are notable features of the building, visible at the southeast and southwest corners.

A small area of levelled ground – perhaps a yard – lies just to the southeast of the building and is edged by trees. To the north of the building is a semi-circular raised area which is quite well defined and distinct from the rest of the field. It is unknown what this feature is, but it is clearly associated with Neuadd. It has been suggested that the feature is a kind of ‘corral’ for livestock, and that the mound was formed of animal dung over years of use.

The building and ‘yard’ seem to be separated by a trackway which is visible running for a short distance to the southeast. The settlement also contains other slight earthworks which are difficult to interpret (possibly another building?) as well as indications of small-scale stone extraction.

Neuadd is seen on the 1834 Ordnance Survey Old Series map; and on the tithe map for Llanfihangel y Creuddyn (1847) it is one of the markers which indicates the boundary with Llanafan parish. It appears to be shown on the Ordnance Survey surveyor’s drawings of 1823, but the drawings are unclear so it is not possible to be definite about its inclusion.

The site is generally in good condition and stable, and is currently lightly grazed. However, there is some scrub and tree growth within the ruins of the building.

Morgan (1997:34 –35) relates a folk-tale telling how Morris ap Richard, Lord of Trawsgoed acquired Maenarthur for the Trawsgoed estate in 1568. It tells that the ladies who owned Maenarthur were invited to a meal at Trawsgoed but on their return home servants from Trawsgoed arrived, demanding to search their possessions. They ‘discovered’ silver from the mansion and the ladies were taken back and given the choice of surrendering their rights to Maenarthur or facing trial for theft. Since the sentence could have been hanging, they chose to give up their lands. It is assumed that the ladies lived either at Maenarthur Farm (PRN 49942) or Maenarthur Cottage (PRN 10006) but the landowner believes that the folk-tale actually relates to the settlement at Neuadd.

Neuadd is potentially a very important site. It is demonstrably of at least early 19<sup>th</sup> century date and may be considerably earlier. However, it appears to have fallen out of use by 1891, and would therefore have not undergone works to modernise it. Given its good, stable condition and the visible earthworks associated with it, it seems very likely that Neuadd contains excellent archaeological evidence.

### Recommendations

The trees and scrub growing up within the building at Neuadd should be cut off at ground level and removed. To avoid ground disturbance, this work should only be carried out when the ground is dry, and roots should not be dug or dragged out but should be treated to prevent re-growth. Regular grazing will continue to maintain an even grass sward and prevent future scrub incursion. The semi-circular earthwork behind Neuadd is actually in a separate field from the building and



yard, and would be very vulnerable if the field is to be used for arable cultivation. The ideal management would be continue using the site for grazing, as this will continue to maintain the grass cover. If the field is to be ploughed, then a plough margin of at least 10m should be left around the feature, and there should be no ground-intrusive activities undertaken within it. Neuadd is a site of considerable interest and importance and would repay further study and survey.

**Site Category** B

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<b>PRN</b>	49935	<b>Site Name</b>	PONTRHYDYGROES	<b>Grid</b>	SN73617279
			MINE	<b>Reference</b>	
<b>Site Type</b>	LEVEL	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

### **Description**

A sunken earthwork showing the route of a level cut into the ground. This feature is part of a small 19<sup>th</sup> century lead mine (PRN 25919).

The earthwork is now flanked with trees, and appears to be in a good, stable condition. Grazing is ensuring that the feature is not becoming overgrown or obscured by vegetation.

### **Recommendations**

The existing management suits this feature well and should be continued. There should be no ground disturbance or infilling of this site.

**Site Category** C



**Plate 5:** *Earthwork marking an old level (PRN 49935) from the Pontrhydygroes mine (PRN 25919)*

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<b>PRN</b>	49936	<b>Site Name</b>	PONTRHYDYGROES MINE	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73667287
<b>Site Type</b>	LEVEL	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

#### **Description**

Rock-cut level running close to a waterfall. This level was probably part of a small 19<sup>th</sup> century lead mine (PRN 25919).

#### **Recommendations**

The site is very stable and is under no threat. It should be maintained in its existing condition.

**Site Category** C

<b>PRN</b>	49937	<b>Site Name</b>	PANT Y DAIL	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73517287
<b>Site Type</b>	COTTAGE	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

#### **Description**

A cottage site, now mostly destroyed by a modern forestry track. On the tithe map (Llanfihangel y Creuddyn parish, 1847) the cottage is shown and named ?Castell y dail. By the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1891), it was named Pant y Dail.

A small earthwork and some building stone at the side of the track is now all that survives of this site.

#### **Recommendations**

The remains should not be disturbed, and no building stone should be removed from the site.

**Site Category** D

<b>PRN</b>	49938	<b>Site Name</b>		<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73687285
<b>Site Type</b>	BUILDING	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

#### **Description**

The remains of a small building some 5m x 3.5m. The 'footprint' of the building is picked out in earth and stone on a level platform next to Nant Cell. The building is not seen on historic maps. It is close to the remains of two levels (PRN 49935 and 49936) and may have been associated with Pontrhydygroes mine (PRN 25919). However, local stories relate that this was an illegal distillery and/or drinking house, and was raided by customs officials.

The remains are in a lightly wooded area and appear to be very stable.

#### **Recommendations**

Maintain in its existing condition. No ground intrusive activities should be carried out in this area.

**Site Category** D

<b>PRN</b>	49939	<b>Site Name</b>	MAENARTHUR MILL	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN73607291
<b>Site Type</b>	MILL POND?	<b>Period</b>	POST- MEDIEVAL?		

### **Description**

The earthwork remains of a possible pond and small stretch of leat. The feature is on level ground next to Nant Cell and consists of a slight depression with a low stone bank at the downstream end. The bank has a gap in the centre and there are faint traces of a possible leat leading away from this gap.

A corn mill and a tucking mill are both recorded at Maenarthur from 1566, and a smelting mill was also present by 1608 (Murphy,K:1999). Morgan (1997:38) reports that, in 1602, arbitrators settled a dispute between Edward Vaughan (the landowner) and his grandmother. The arbitrators decided that Edward should pay his grandmother the sum of four pounds a year for life, and that she should hold the Maenarthur grist mill and cottage. There is no mention of a mill at Maenarthur after 1762 (Murphy,K:1999).

The location of the mill(s?) at Maenarthur is not precisely known, but a mill is recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record (PRN 42469) on the southern boundary of Maenarthur farm. It is possible that this is mis-located, and that further milling remains survive as buried archaeology associated with this probable pond.

The feature is in a lightly wooded area, and is stable. However, if there is much more tree or vegetation growth, then the 'pond' will start to be obscured, and deeply penetrating roots could damage buried archaeology.

### **Recommendations**

At present, the feature appears to be in a stable condition and there are no immediate management concerns. However, the site should be occasionally monitored in order to check that the vegetation is not significantly increasing. If there is a notable increase in tree or undergrowth development, then vegetation should be cut back to ground level and removed, and treated to prevent re-growth. Roots should not be dug or dragged out, and there should be no disturbance within the feature.

**Site Category** D

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**PRN** 49940 **Site Name** MAENARTHUR **Grid Reference** SN72977311

**Site Type** WHEEL PIT **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL?;  
MODERN?

**Description**

A stone-lined wheel pit situated around 150m north of Maenarthur farmstead (PRN 49942). The landowner informed Cambria Archaeology that the wheel powered threshing and processing machinery in Maenarthur farmstead, via an overhead cable which ran between the two sites.

Water was apparently supplied from a pond (PRN 49941) west of the pit.

The wheel-pit is in good condition, set in a patch of rough ground within a pasture field. There are no immediate threats visible, but there is some fallen wood and brash lying to one side of it.

**Recommendations**

It should be ensured that there is no dumping into the wheel-pit, and, ideally, the brash next to it would be moved. Otherwise, the current management seems to suit the site and should be continued.

**Site Category** C

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**PRN** 49941 **Site Name** MAENARTHUR **Grid Reference** SN72867321

**Site Type** POND **Period** MODERN?

**Description**

The site of a pond which supplied water to drive a water wheel in a stone-lined wheel-pit (PRN 49940). The site was not visited on this occasion, but the landowner informed Cambria Archaeology that it is still visible.

**Recommendations**

The pond should be maintained as a historic landscape feature. Ground intrusive activities should be avoided in the area.

**Site Category** D

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<b>PRN</b>	49942	<b>Site Name</b>	MAENARTHUR	<b>Grid Reference</b>	SN72937294
<b>Site Type</b>	FARMSTEAD	<b>Period</b>	POST-MEDIEVAL		

### Description

The early history of Maenarthur is unknown – it was not one of the granges of Strata Florida Abbey, and was probably a small, independent estate until its acquisition by the Trawsgoed estate in 1568 (Morgan:1997:34). A folk-tale tells how the lady owners of Maenarthur were tricked out of their lands (see PRN 49934 for details) by Morris ap Richard, Lord of Trawsgoed.

Maenarthur was clearly a farm of some substance in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. As well as the farm itself, a cottage (possibly PRN 10006?) and at least one mill (see PRN 42469) were also recorded (Murphy:1999), and a lease of 1654 records that both sheep and cattle were kept at Maenarthur, as well as crops being grown (Morgan:1997:184).

The farmstead is seen in its current site on the 1823 Ordnance Survey surveyor's drawings but historic maps suggest that the farmstead was modified in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A double-bayed cartshed with a granary over and a large barn still stand. Both seem to be in stable conditions.

An interesting survival is found in the barn – the remains of the machinery which used to power threshing and crop processing machines. This was powered indirectly by a water-wheel (PRN 49940) some 150m away from the building. The wheel ran an overhead cable which conveyed power to a pulley system in the barn, which, in turn, powered the machinery.

### Recommendations

Future maintenance and repairs to the buildings should utilise materials and techniques which match the building's original construction. Remnants of farm machinery should not be removed, but should be left *in situ*.

**Site Category** B



**Plate 6:** *The cartshed and granary at Maenarthur farmstead (PRN 49942).*



**PRN** 49943 **Site Name** MAENARTHUR **Grid Reference** SN73707277

**Site Type** LEAT **Period** MODERN

**Description**

A leat, traceable as an earthwork running alongside Nant Cell. The landowner says that this leat used to power a hydro-electric scheme for the village in the 1930s.

The leat is terraced into a lightly wooded hillside and is a clearly visible feature. It appears to be in a stable condition and is under no threat.

**Recommendations**

The leat should be maintained in its existing condition.

**Site Category** C



**Plate 7:** PRN 49943. A leat running through the woods alongside Nant Cell. This apparently powered a hydro-electric scheme which was in operation in the 1930s.

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## **SITE AND AREA STATUS GLOSSARY**

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

### **SAM - Scheduled Ancient Monument**

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

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

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

### **HLW - Historic Landscapes of Wales**

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

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

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



## **REFERENCES**

Ordnance Survey Surveyor's Drawings 1823, sheet 314  
Ordnance Survey 1891 Cardiganshire XI.SE  
Ordnance Survey 1906 Cardiganshire XI.SE  
Ordnance Survey 1891 Cardiganshire XVI.NE  
Ordnance Survey 1906 Cardiganshire XVI.NE  
Tithe map 1845 Llanafan Parish  
Tithe map 1847 Llanfihangel y Creuddyn Parish  
Tithe apportionment 1844 Llanfihangel y Creuddyn Parish





Cadw and ICOMOS UK: 1998: *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales*  
Morgan, G: 1997: *A Welsh House and its Family – the Vaughans of Trawsgoed*  
Murphy, K: 1999: *Upland Ceredigion Historic Landscape Characterisation*. Cambria  
Archaeology report produced for Cadw

## Maenarthur


Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation  
Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/11/4067  
Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN 48419  
National Grid Reference SN72937294

-  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

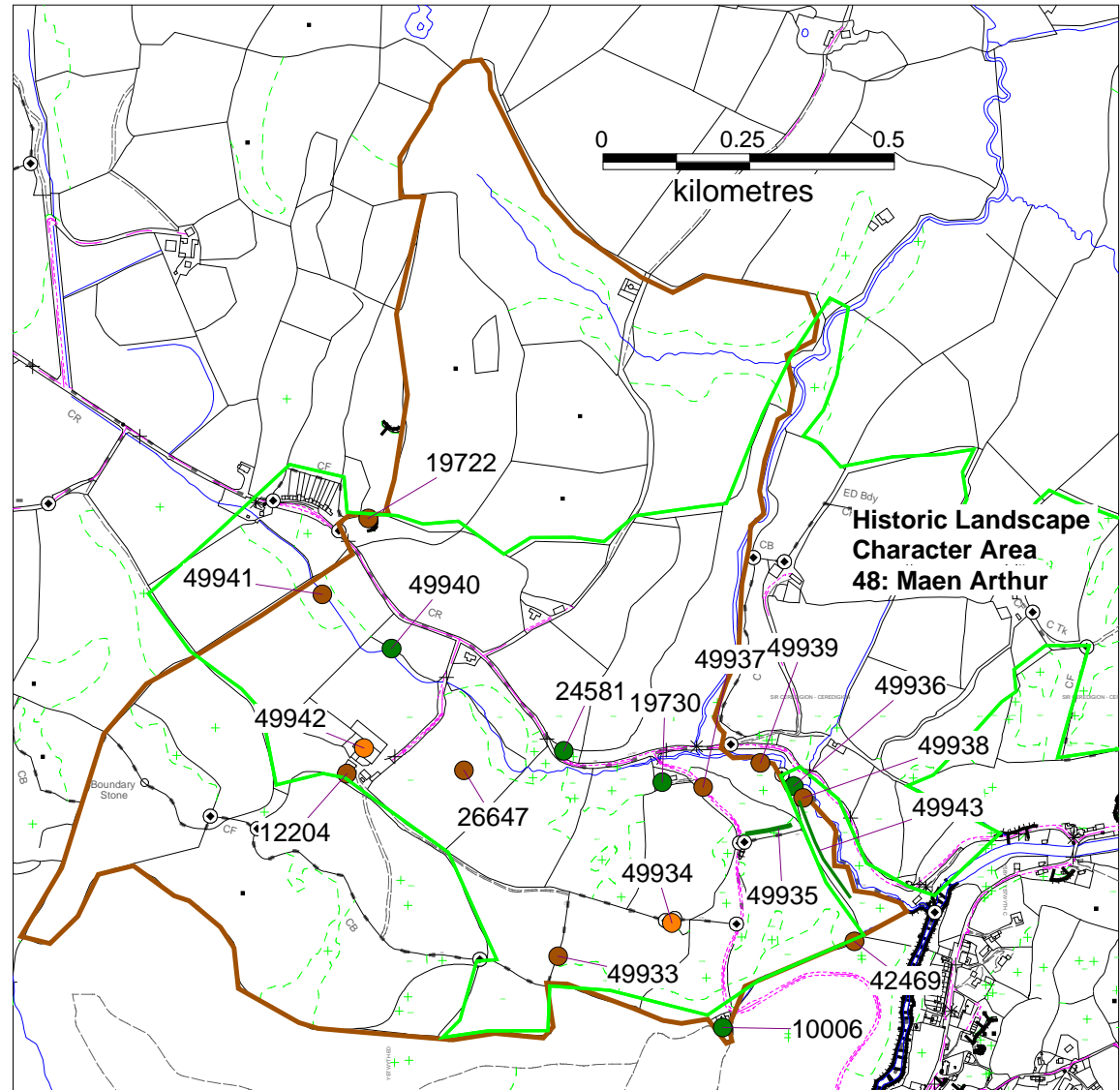
### Site Category C - Local Importance

-  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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**MAENARTHUR  
W/11/4067**

**REPORT NUMBER 2003/132**

**December 2003**

This report has been prepared by Polly Groom

Position: Tir Gofal Archaeologist

Signature ..... Date .....

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

Position: Principal Archaeologist (Curatorial)

Signature ..... Date.....

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have  
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