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Ystradwalter W/12/3943

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report



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Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report

By

Polly Groom

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ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA
Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Trefladaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Ebost: cambria@acadat.com Gwefan: www.acadat.com

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: cambria@acadat.com Website: www.acadat.com

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CADEIRYDD CHAIRMAN: B.C.BURNHAM, MA PHD FSA MIFA. CYFARWYDDWR DIRECTOR: E G HUGHES BA MIFA

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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

Ystradwalter consists of two land-holdings, W/12/3943 and W/12/3943/a. Only the first, main holding was visited on this occasion. It lies about two miles northwest of Llandovery, at grid reference SN78673629 in the community of Llanfair ar y Bryn. It was visited by Cambria Archaeology on October 7th, 2003. Part of this farm holding falls into Historic Landscape Character Area 227: Maesllydan. These areas are intended to define places where local land-use traditions have left particularly strong or distinctive evidence in the landscape. This character area was profoundly influenced by the large country house estates, most notably that belonging to Maesllydan Hall. The square, relatively regular fields within the character area are probably the result of landscape re-organisation by these estates in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Ystradwalter farmstead itself (PRN 49187) is situated on the Bran floodplain, in a landscape of regular more-or-less flat improved fields. The floodplain is bisected by the modern A40 road, which follows the line of the Roman road leading into the fort at Llandovery. To the west of the road is another farmstead, Pen y Bont (PRN 49189) which was associated with a small park (PRN 25605) and was clearly a dwelling of considerable social standing. The park still survives in largely the same form, with a considerable diversity of tree species scattered throughout it – presumably the remains of a planted array of specimen trees.

Ystradwalter farmstead sits on the edge of the level ground – behind it, to the east, the land rises sharply onto a steep hillside, climbing to 190m above sea-level at Cefn Crug, in the southeast of the holding, and 220m at the top of the hill in the east. Cefn Crug is a long, narrow promontory of high ground overlooking the surrounding area, and it is no surprise that aerial photography revealed the presence of a small promontory fort at its tip (PRN 14309). From the air, the structure of the hillfort is easy to make out – a large, curving ditch at the north end isolates a wedge-shaped piece of land, and a circular or oval enclosure within that land is linked to the outer defences by another short ditch running southwest-northeast. On the ground, it is harder to make out the shape of the fort. However, the outer bank and ditch survive as a relatively clear earthwork, and at the east end it can be seen that the ditch is rock cut. The inner ditch, surrounding the enclosure, is also visible in places. The whole area is covered in mounds and hollows, and it can be difficult to tell which are natural and which are part of the hillfort.

Ystradwalter itself is a farmstead which was known from the late 16th century. It was owned by the Powell family until the middle of the 17th century after which it passed through a number of different families (Jones,F:1987:p.203-4).

The farmstead as seen on the parish tithe map (Llanfair ar y Bryn, 1841) consists of the stable (PRN 49183), an L-shaped range (PRN 49185) and the house itself (PRN 11486). On the 1891 Ordnance Survey map, a further building had been added (PRN 49184) and the range had been extended into a U-shape which formed the western edge of the farmyard. Another building, now lost, had been added just south of the main farmyard.

In the east end of the main range (PRN 49185) is an interesting survival of water driven milling machinery. The water was conveyed to the farmstead by means of a long channel (PRN 49181)

running from a pond east of the farm (PRN 49180) with a sluice gate controlling flow. It was then piped under the farmyard (a length of cast iron pipe was found by the landowner whilst works were being carried out on the farmyard) and powered a turbine housed in small building (PRN 49186) abutting the east of the main range. It is not known which kind of turbine was in use at Ystradwalter, but probably the most common water turbine was one known as a Pelton wheel: *"...this enabled the power of a water-course to be harnessed and transmitted up to half a mile...The Pelton wheel itself was a small iron disc, mounted onto a shaft, to which were fixed several pairs of metal cups. The water hit the cups from a narrow pipe with considerable force, a turbine then driving a large pulley wheel. A continuous wire ran from this pulley to the desired site...where it powered a long shaft on which was mounted a range of drives leading to the various machines..."* (Wiliam,E:1986:p.173-4).

In this case it seems likely that water-power was harnessed to run threshing and milling machinery. However, the turbine seems to have been a later addition – the pond and leat are shown on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, whilst the building housing the turbine was not. It is possible to speculate that, prior to the turbine being installed, water was in use for threshing machines, but was carried from the leat in wooden launders which are now gone.

Ystradwalter is notable for the planned U-shaped arrangement of the farmyard, and the separation of the house from the working farm. Together with the high quality and large size of the farm buildings, this implies that Ystradwalter was a farm of some status and social position. Another noticeable feature is the high emphasis within the farm buildings on grain production and movement. One building (PRN 49183) consists of a stable and double cartshed, with a granary over. The agricultural range (PRN 49185) also contains stables and cartsheds as well as two threshing floors and, again, a first-floor granary. Unfortunately, land-use is not given in the tithe apportionment, so it is difficult to say whether this concentration on arable production was in place in the mid 19th century. However, the field pattern within Ystradwalter suggests early agricultural improvement - on the tithe map the fields are larger and more regular than those of the neighbouring farms, implying that the older enclosures had been deliberately replaced. This level of arable farming may have purely been the result of the farm's situation – on the edge of fertile, flat land. However, the quantity of crop processing indicated by the number of cartsheds and stables implies that Ystradwalter may have been an estate farm for one of the larger houses, processing crops from a number of smaller farms. Although close by, it does not seem to be part of the Maesllydan Hall estate. The tithe apportionment (1839) gives the owner of Ystradwalter as William Jones, (who also owned a substantial number of nearby properties) whilst Maesllydan was owned by the Harries family (Jones,F:1987:p.127).

It is important to recognise that the farm buildings have a significant group value for their uniformity of style and their semi-formal layout. Whilst the west side of the farmstead is bounded by the range, the east side is surrounded by a stone wall, giving a sense of 'completeness' to the yard. In addition, the survival of elements of the farm machinery as well as the pond (PRN 49180) and water channel (PRN 49181) which powered it further increases the significance of the farmstead as a whole.

MAIN MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

POND – PRN 49180

In the long term, the restoration of this feature and its reinstatement as a pond would be welcomed. Please contact Cambria Archaeology for further advice if this option is being considered.

In the short term, the most immediate concerns relate to vegetation growth which is threatening both the dam wall and the brickwork of the culvert. Saplings and scrub which are growing along the dam wall should be cut back at ground level, and larger roots treated to prevent re-growth. Larger, mature trees should be managed to ensure that they do not fall and damage the stonework. Any branches that are rubbing on the stonework should be removed.

The growth from the tree-stump on the culvert should be cut back and the stump treated to prevent further re-growth. Any restoration works will require that the culvert is consolidated, and this should be carried out using materials which are faithful to the original construction.

Within the pond itself, some scrub clearance should ideally be carried out in order to ensure that the site remains visible. Care should be taken that the banks are not damaged during these works.

LEAT – PRN 49181

The leat is in a stable condition, running through open woodland. Any disturbance to the leat should be avoided, and future woodland management plans should ensure that no ground intrusive activities are carried out along the line of the leat.

PEN Y BONT PARK – PRN 25605

The park should be maintained under pasture as far as possible, and no new field boundaries should be put in place. The landowner has indicated that they may carry out some tree-planting under the Tir Gofal scheme – this is to be welcomed, but future planting should follow the layout of trees seen on historic maps.

GAZETTEER OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

PRN	11486	Site Name	YSTRADWALTER	Grid Reference	SN78723631
Site Type	FARMHOUSE	Period	POST-MEDIEVAL		

Description

The farmhouse of Ystradwalter farmstead (PRN 49187) which has been known since the late 16th century. It was owned by the Powell family until the middle of the 17th century after which it passed through a number of different families (Jones,F:1987:p.203-4).

The farmhouse is very separate from the working farmyard, and is in good condition and inhabited.

Recommendations

Since the farmhouse is inhabited as a private dwelling it is outside the remit of the Tir Gofal scheme. No management recommendations apply.

Site Category C

PRN 14309 **Site Name** CEFN CRUG **Grid Reference** SN78603550
Site Type HILLFORT **Period** IRON AGE

Description

A small promontory fort seen clearly on aerial photographs. The photographs show a large, gently curved ditch cutting off the promontory to the south. Within this area of land is a circular or oval inner enclosure, which appears to be linked to the outer defences by a short length of ditch at the north end.

The site is much less clear from the ground. Although there are earthwork remains, the natural topography is very undulating and the earthworks are very denuded so it can be hard to distinguish between them. However, the outer ditch is clear and is especially well preserved at its southeast end where it can be seen to be rock-cut and around 2.75m wide. The line of this ditch remains as a visible earthwork as it curves around, defining the northern edge of the site. There is a clear bank on the inner (southern) side and traces of an outer bank at the east end of the ditch.

The outer ditch is cut by a north-south ditch, or entranceway, which links the inner and outer enclosures. This appears to be contemporary, rather than a later track cutting through, but it is difficult to be sure. A modern sheep-track now follows this route.

The inner enclosure is much less distinct, although is visible as a ditch with banks either side on the west side. It encloses a small patch of land which slopes gently, from east to west. Although these are the main features of the site, it is worth commenting that there are a large number of other mounds and hollows which may be of natural origin, or may be associated with the hillfort. Some of these are earthworks, others are rock outcrops. The landowner commented that some of the banks used to be higher, but were deliberately flattened out to make the area more useable.

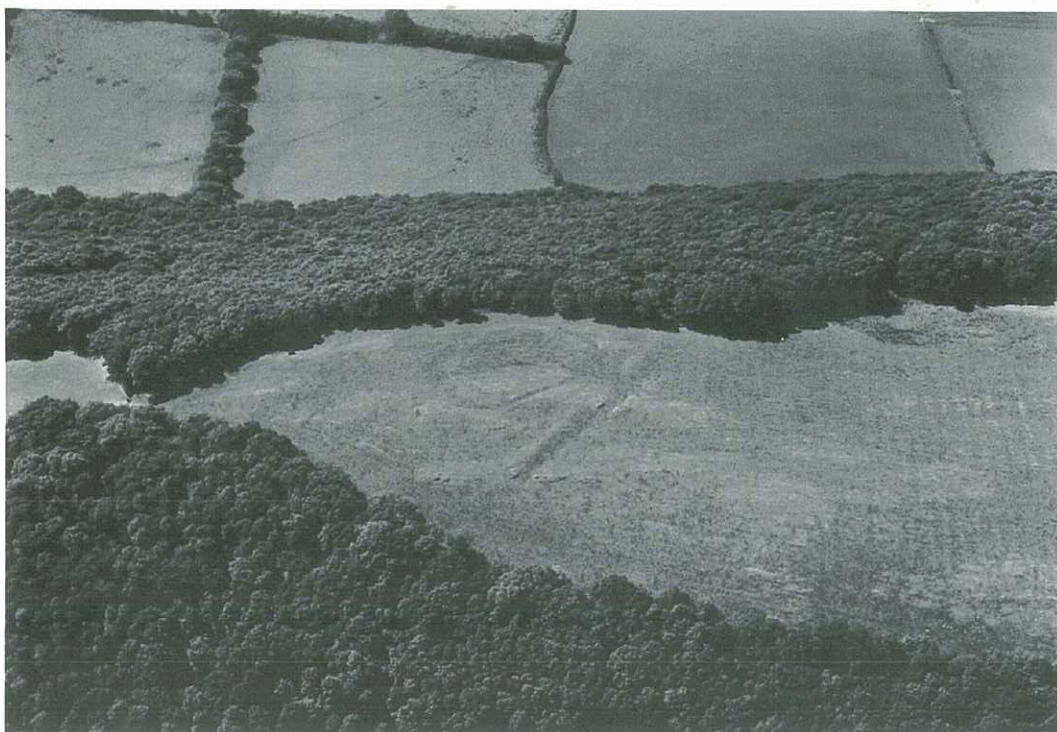
The site is currently under pasture and seems to be in a very stable condition. There is no scrub or gorse encroachment and it is very visible.

Hillforts are generally recorded as having being constructed in the Iron Age (circa 600 BC - 100AD) but scientific dating of some archaeologically excavated sites has indicated that they may be Bronze Age in date (c2000 - 500BC). They are usually viewed as defensive structures built with the intention of defending and securing property. Excavated examples have also revealed dwellings both inside and immediately outside the banks and ditches. These dwellings may have been used on a seasonal or a permanent basis. Hillforts were probably used and re-used over very long periods of time and would, therefore, have been put to a number of different uses.

Recommendations

The site should be maintained in its current condition. No ground-intrusive activities should take place in or near the hillfort and the current regime of light grazing should be continued.

Site Category A?



AP Oblique/DAT/James,T/1989/AP89-120.32/SN7835

Plate 1 (above) *Aerial photography has revealed the shape of this small promontory fort. The northern, outer ditch is still a clear earthwork (see plate 2). The inner, circular enclosure is harder to make out on the ground.*

Plate 2 (below) *View of the east end of the outer ditch. This is the best preserved section and shows the rock-cut construction of the ditch.*



PRN 14310 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN78953595

Site Type CROPMARK **Period** UNKNOWN

Description

Aerial photography in 1989 showed a cropmark consisting of two sides of a rectangle. Nothing was visible on the ground on the day of the farm visit.

Cropmarks which show up as areas of darker vegetation normally represent ditches, where the soil is deeper and more water is available for plants. It is not known what this feature represents, nor what it may date from.

Recommendations

In order to protect any surviving buried archaeology, the field should ideally be left under pasture. If any cultivation is to take place, then ploughing should not exceed previous year's depths.

Site Category D

PRN	25605	Site Name	PEN Y BONT	Grid Reference	SN78123624
Site Type	PARK	Period	POST- MEDIEVAL		

Description

An area of parkland seen on the 1906 Ordnance Survey map. This is only a small park, associated with Pen y Bont farmstead (PRN 49189). Pen y Bont is seen on the Ordnance Survey old series map (1831) as a substantial farmstead. Similarly to Ystradwalter (PRN 49187), the buildings are arranged in a semi-formal U-shape, with the house distinctly separate from the working farm. This layout, combined with the parkland, gives the impression that Pen y Bont was a high status dwelling.

The parkland still has a very open aspect and is used for pasture. A number of trees remain, scattered across the park, and the diversity of tree species represented probably reflects the deliberate planting of specimen trees. Several of the more mature trees are probably original elements of the parkland.

A straight driveway runs through the park and up to the house – the landowner informed Cambria Archaeology that this used to be flanked by iron railings, but these are no longer present.

Recommendations

The park should be maintained under pasture as far as possible, and no new field boundaries should be put in place. The landowner has indicated that they may carry out some tree-planting under the Tir Gofal scheme – this is to be welcomed, but future planting should follow the layout of trees seen on historic maps. Copies of the relevant maps will be included with the report.

Site Category C



Plate 3 *Pen y Bont park includes a number of very mature trees. Some may be original plantings.*

PRN 49177 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN78813559

Site Type QUARRY **Period** MODERN

Description

A small modern quarry at the end of a slate ridge.

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations apply.

Site Category C

PRN 49178 **Site Name** PEN LAN **Grid** SN79153625

Site Type BARN **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL **Reference** **Site status**

Description

The ruins of a stone barn, one of two buildings (PRNs 49178 and 49179) which made up Pen Lan Ystradwalter. These buildings were not seen on the parish tithe map (1841, Llanfair ar y Bryn parish) but are on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. They were still in use on the 1938 Ordnance Survey edition.

The landowner described this building as 'the barn'. It measures around 12m x 5m and the walls stand up to 1.8m in places. The ground plan shows a pair of opposing doors in the long sides – these imply that this was a threshing barn, used for the processing and storage of crops. The barn is of a rubble stone construction, bonded with lime mortar. Faced stone quoins survive at the corners and the door-jams.

The ruins are stable, and much of the tumbled stone remains within the building. The surrounding field is grazed and there is no significant scrub incursion, nor any other immediately visible threats to the site.

The barn is associated with the slight remains of another building (PRN 49179) and the faint earthwork traces of an enclosure (PRN 49191) which ran around Pen Lan Ystradwalter.

Recommendations

Maintain as existing. The fallen stone should not be removed from the building and no ground intrusive activities should take place within the enclosure (PRN 49191).

Site Category C

PRN	49179	Site Name	PEN LAN YSTRADWALTER	Grid Reference	SN49163625
Site Type	BUILDING	Period	POST MEDIEVAL		

Description

The slight remains of a building, one of two (PRNs 47178 and 49179) which made up Pen Lan Ystradwalter. These buildings were not seen on the parish tithe map (1841, Llanfair ar y Bryn parish) but are on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. They were still in use on the 1938 Ordnance Survey edition.

This building has now gone, and is represented only by some tumbled masonry and the faint earthwork 'footprint' of the walls. Running roughly north-south, it was larger than the barn (PRN 47178) and of a simple rectangular plan. It may have contained the house itself, and possibly also cowsheds and other agricultural units.

The building is associated with the ruins of a barn (PRN 49178) and the faint earthwork traces of an enclosure (PRN 49191) which ran around Pen Lan Ystradwalter.

The site is currently under pasture, and appears to be very stable.

Recommendations

Maintain as existing. No ground intrusive activities should be carried out within the enclosure (PRN 49191) which runs around Pen Lan Ystradwalter.

Site Category C

PRN 49180 Site Name Grid Reference SN78793615

Site Type POND Period POST-MEDIEVAL Site status

Description

A roughly triangular pond shown on the 1891 and 1906 Ordnance Survey maps.

The pond is fed by two small streams which run into its east corner. The west side is held by a large earth and stone revetment wall which stands, in places, to around 2m in height. In the centre of the wall is a gap which, according to the landowner, used to contain a sluice gate. The remains of an arched brick culvert survive on the outside (west side) of the dam wall.

A modern track now lies immediately west of the pond, but in the woodland opposite the culvert is a channel (PRN 49181) which carried water down a controlled gradient into Ystradwalter farmstead (PRN 49187) where it powered both threshing and milling machinery.

Although the structure and shape of the pond is still visible, it is very overgrown. Mature and semi-mature trees are growing within the silt of the pond, and the stone revetment wall is partly tumbled in several places. It is also overgrown, with vegetation obscuring and destabilising the stonework. The channel through the wall is still clearly visible, but no trace of the sluice mechanism survives. The brick-built culvert is in a poor state, with only the southern half surviving. A large tree-stump is on top of the masonry. Its roots have partially penetrated the structure, and new growth from the stump is threatening the brickwork.

Recommendations

In the long term, the restoration of this feature and its reinstatement as a pond would be welcomed. Please contact Cambria Archaeology for further advice if this option is being considered.

In the short term, the most immediate concerns relate to vegetation growth which is threatening both the dam wall and the brickwork of the culvert. Saplings and scrub which are growing along the dam wall should be cut back at ground level, and larger roots treated to prevent re-growth. Larger, mature trees should be managed to ensure that they do not fall and damage the stonework. Any branches that are rubbing on the stonework should be removed.

The growth from the tree-stump on the culvert should be cut back and the stump treated to prevent further re-growth. Any restoration works will require that the culvert is consolidated, and this should be carried out using materials which are faithful to the original construction.

Within the pond itself, some scrub clearance should ideally be carried out in order to ensure that the site remains visible. Care should be taken that the banks are not damaged during these works.

Site Category C



Plate 4 (above) *The brick arch of the culvert which leads away from the pond (PRN 49180). New shoots from an old tree-stump are leaning heavily on the masonry.*

Plate 5 (below) *The line of the leat (PRN 49181) leading west away from the pond, towards Ystradwalter farmstead (PRN 49187)*



PRN 49181 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN78723619

Site Type LEAT **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

A clearly visible water channel or leat bringing water from a pond (PRN 49180) into the farmstead (PRN 49187) in order to power both milling and threshing machinery housed in the main range (PRN 49185) at Ystradwalter farmstead.

The leat is visible as a cut in the hillside, running at quite a steep gradient. It runs parallel to the stream but the gradient is much more controlled: the stream falls sharply at the east end and then rapidly levels out into a narrow, steep-sided valley. The leat runs along the side of the valley at a higher level.

Recommendations

The leat is in a stable condition, running through open woodland. Any disturbance to the leat should be avoided, and future woodland management plans should ensure that no ground intrusive activities are carried out along the line of the leat.

Site Category C

PRN 49182 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN78573595

Site Type COTTAGE **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

A cottage seen on the parish tithe map (1841, Llanfair ar y Bryn) but not on later maps. Only a slight platform in the woodland now remains, and a small group of hazel trees which probably mark the line of the enclosure around the cottage.

Recommendations

No ground intrusive activities should take place within five metres of the site.

Site Category D

PRN	49183	Site Name	YSTRADWALTER	Grid Reference	SN78663627
Site Type	STABLE; CARTSHED	Period	POST-MEDIEVAL		

Description

A stable, with a double cartshed attached at north end and a first floor granary running the length of the building. The granary is accessed by external steps at the north gable and the building is terraced into a hillside so the first floor is accessed directly from ground level at the rear (south) of the building.

This building is seen on the 1841 parish tithe map (Llanfair ar y Bryn parish) but seems, at this stage, to have only consisted of the stables. By 1891 it had taken its current form. It has undergone a few alterations, with a new brick surround around the door in the south gable and the replacement of several wooden lintels in concrete. A further intriguing feature is a small fireplace at the rear of one of the cartshed bays. It is not known why this is present, and there is now no chimney in the building. Fireplaces are sometimes found in feed or tack-rooms next to stables, and it is possible that this part of the cartshed was originally used for this purpose. However, the current structure of the cartshed consists of two bays, separated by a stone pillar and supported with a single wooden lintel. One of the cartshed openings is now half bricked-up. Although the interior of the granary was not visited, it could be seen that some of the plaster still remains.

In common with the rest of the buildings in the farmstead, the stables are rubble stone built with faced-stone quoins and a slate roof. A distinctive feature of the buildings in this yard is the fact that the fascia boards are covered, with half-slates nailed over them presumably to protect them from the weather.

The building is in fair condition, and it is very encouraging to see that it is being well maintained. At present it is only in use for some light storage.

Recommendations

Any future maintenance or repair works should continue to be carried out using materials and techniques appropriate to the original construction of the building. Ideally, the best long-term protection for this building would be to bring it back into regular use.

Several cracks in the stonework are beginning to appear between the two halves of the building, and these will need monitoring to ensure they does not threaten the structural stability.

Consolidation may be necessary in the future.

Site Category C

PRN	49184	Site Name	YSTRADWALTER	Grid Reference	SN78683630
Site Type	AGRICULTURAL BUILDING	Period	POST-MEDIEVAL		

Description

This building in the east of the farmstead is seen on late 19th century Ordnance Survey maps, but is not on the tithe map. Its original function is not known, but it may have served at one stage as a cartshed with a loft above it. This does not appear to have been its original function – the majority of cartsheds had granaries above them, and the loft has no visible ventilation so would not have made a suitable grain store. However, a pitch hole in the north gable shows that the loft was used for storage of some description – maybe hay or animal feeds. The west elevation, facing into the farmyard, is largely open-fronted with a wooden lintel above the opening, suggesting the building's use as a cartshed. Part of the opening is now blocked. A door to the ground floor and the pitch hole from the loft are found in the north gable, both of these have faced stone surrounds. In common with the other buildings on the yard, this is rubble stone built with faced-stone quoins and a slate roof. The building is in fair condition and in use.

Recommendations

Future maintenance and repair works should utilise materials and techniques appropriate to the original construction of the building. In order to retain the character of the building, some consideration should be given to the appearance of the west side. Although it was probably originally open-fronted, part of it is now blocked with corrugated metal, and half with wooden doors. Future works should consider using wooden doors on both sides, in keeping with the rest of the farm buildings.

Site Category C

PRN	49185	Site Name	YSTRADWALTER	Grid Reference	SN78633627
Site Type	COMBINATION FARM BUILDING	Period	POST-MEDIEVAL		

Description

This long L-shaped range consists of two parts – one running roughly north-south and comprising stables, a now-blocked cartshed entrance and two threshing floors, and one, at the south end, running roughly east-west and comprising a further probable threshing floor and two cartshed bays. The current extent of the building is only part of what was shown on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. However, it is probably the original extent of the building as seen on the parish tithe map of 1841.

On Ordnance Survey maps, another range was shown attached to the north end of the building, running east-west and forming a U-shape. This range has now been mostly re-built with modern materials, although part of the outer wall consists of original stonework.

The north-south range probably represents at least two phases of building. The earliest part is probably the stable end, comprising two stables and three cartshed bays. One of these is now blocked and the others were knocked through when a full height double door was put in. An upstairs hayloft or granary runs along the length of the building, with pitching eyes above the stables and cartshed entrances.

The next phase of building probably involved extending the stable/cartshed range at the south end and adding a threshing barn. A substantial stone wall currently provides an internal division between the cartsheds and the barn – this was probably the original exterior wall. This section of the barn contains only one threshing floor, but it may have been at this stage that part of the cartshed was converted to a barn, and the large double doors knocked through. The east-west range at the south end was also added at this time or shortly afterwards, adding a further two cartshed bays (replacing the ones lost through the construction of the barn?) and more loft space. This gave the building its L-shaped appearance, which is seen on the Ordnance Survey Old Series map of 1831, and the parish tithe map of 1841.

As previously discussed, by 1891 the building was U-shaped, with an east-west range at the north end. This has now mostly gone, but it may have housed cowsheds – otherwise notably absent on this farm.

The building is, in common with the others on the yard, rubble-stone built with faced stone quoins. However, it is worth noting that the arches above the cartshed entrances on the north-south range are stone, rather than wooden lintels, and very different from the others. This supports the idea that they belong to a different building phase – possibly while the farm was in different ownership. An interesting feature survives at the southwest end of the building – part of a set of water-driven milling machinery. Water was conveyed to the farmstead by means of a long channel (PRN 49181) running from a pond (PRN 49180) with a sluice gate controlling flow. It was then piped under the farmyard (a length of cast iron pipe was found by the landowner whilst works were being carried out on the farmyard) and powered a turbine housed in small building (PRN 49186) abutting the east of the barn. It is not known which turbine was in use at Ystradwalter, but the most commonly used turbine was probably the Pelton wheel:

“...this enabled the power of a water-course to be harnessed and transmitted up to half a mile...The Pelton wheel itself was a small iron disc, mounted onto a shaft, to which were fixed several pairs of metal cups. The water hit the cups from a narrow pipe with considerable force, a turbine then driving a large pulley wheel. A continuous wire ran from this pulley to the desired site...where it powered a long shaft on which was mounted a range of drives leading to the various machines...” (Wiliam,E:1986:p.173-4).

In this case it seems likely that water-power was harnessed to run threshing and milling machinery. However, the turbine seems to have been a later addition – the pond and leat are shown on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, whilst the building housing the turbine was not. It is possible to speculate that, prior to the turbine being installed, water was in use for threshing machines, but was carried from the leat in wooden launders which are now gone.

Recommendations

In general, this building is in good condition and is in use. However, several of the openings have been blocked with breeze-blocks. Any future maintenance and repair works should use materials and techniques appropriate to the original construction of the building. The east-west part of the building has been largely obscured by modern farm buildings, and some consideration should be given to the siting of any more new buildings in order to prevent the ‘planned’ character and stylistic uniformity of the farmstead from becoming invisible.

The milling machinery is an interesting aspect of the building’s function, and should be left in place. Any future development of this building should ensure that the machinery is protected, and its future assured.

Site Category C



Plate 6 (above) *The north-south range (north end) of the combination farm building, (PRN 49185). This houses stables and a now-blocked cartshed entrance. The modern doors (left of picture) cut through another cartshed entrance.*

Plate 7 (below) *South end of the same range, showing a number of phases of building. The stables and cartsheds may be the original building, whilst the modern doors are a later insertion. The southernmost end (left of picture) is probably also a later addition, but it is seen on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. An interior dividing wall marks the original south external wall and there is a slight break in the roofline (see between the two doors, directly above the tyres)*



PRN	49186	Site Name	YSTRADWALTER	Grid Reference	SN78653626
Site Type	AGRICULTURAL BUILDING	Period	POST-MEDIEVAL		

Description

A small stone building abutting the southeast end of the main building range (PRN 49185) in the farmstead. This building is not seen on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, and it is unclear whether it is present on the 1938 provisional edition. An internal doorway connects it to the range, and the building also contains a circular pit, which is now infilled with concrete. The landowner informed Cambria Archaeology that the pit was part of the housing for a turbine, powered by water supplied from a pond (PRN 49180) and carried by a long leat (PRN 49181) into the farmstead. The turbine would have been used to drive farm machinery – parts of a set of milling machinery survive in the east end of the barn range (PRN 49185)

Recommendations

The building is in good condition, and no management recommendations apply beyond ensuring that future repair and maintenance works use materials and techniques which are appropriate to the construction of the building.

Any future uses of this building should ensure that the circular shape of the pit remains visible in the floor, since it is an integral part of the building's original function and character.

Site Category C

PRN	49187	Site Name	YSTRADWALTER	Grid Reference	SN78673628
Site Type	FARMSTEAD	Period	POST-MEDIEVAL		

Description

Ystradwalter (or Ystradwallter) farmstead has been known since the late 16th century. It was owned by the Powell family until the middle of the 17th century after which it passed through a number of different families (Jones, F:1987:p.203-4).

The farmstead as seen on the parish tithe map (Llanfair ar y Bryn, 1841) consists of a stable (PRN 49183), an L-shaped range (PRN 49185) and the house itself (PRN 11486). On the 1891 Ordnance Survey map, a further building had been added (PRN 49184) and the range had been extended into a U-shape which formed the western edge of the farmyard. Another building, now lost, had been added just south of the main farmyard. A later addition is the small stone building to the east of the range (PRN 49186) which contains a filled-in circular pit – apparently housing the mechanism for water-driven farm machinery. Parts of the milling machinery still survive in the east end of the range, which is connected to this small building by an internal doorway. It seems likely that water also powered a threshing machine.

Ystradwalter is notable for the planned U-shaped arrangement of the farmyard, and the separation of the house from the working farm. Together with the high quality and large size of the farm buildings, this implies that Ystradwalter was a farm of some status and social position. Another noticeable feature is the high emphasis within the farm buildings on grain production and movement. The stable (PRN 49183) consists of a stable and double cartshed, with a granary over. The agricultural range (PRN 49185) also contains stables and cartsheds as well as two threshing floors and, again, a first-floor granary. Unfortunately, land-use is not given in the tithe apportionment, so it is difficult to say whether this concentration on arable production was in place in the mid 19th century. However, the field pattern within Ystradwalter suggests early agricultural improvement - on the tithe map the fields are larger and more regular than those of the neighbouring farms, implying that the older enclosures had been deliberately replaced.

It is important to recognise that the buildings have a significant group value for their uniformity of style and their semi-formal layout. Whilst the west side of the farmstead is bounded by the range, the east side is surrounded by a stone wall, giving a sense of 'completeness' to the yard. In addition, the survival of elements of the farm machinery as well as the pond (PRN 49180) and water channel (PRN 49181) which powered it further increases the significance of the farmstead as a whole.

Recommendations

Recommendations have been made for individual buildings under the appropriate PRNs. In general Ystradwalter farmstead is in good condition and the buildings are well maintained. Inevitably, modern buildings have been added to the farmstead, but the overall, planned appearance has not been lost. Some consideration should be given to the siting of any further new buildings to ensure that the character of the farmyard is not substantially altered.

Site Category B

PRN 49188 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN78163612

Site Type BOUNDARY STONE **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

A parish boundary stone, dividing Llandingat parish (south) from Llanfair ar y Bryn (north). It is marked on the 1891 and 1906 Ordnance Survey maps. The stone is still surviving on the verge on the west side of the road. It is, though, badly damaged with most of the top half gone – presumably as a result of damage from verge cutting machinery.

Recommendations

It is not known whether the landowner has any responsibility for the upkeep of this site. Ideally it should be maintained as a visible feature, and care should be taken that no further damage is done.

Site Category C

PRN 49189 **Site Name** PEN Y BONT **Grid Reference** SN78083637

Site Type FARMSTEAD **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

Pen y Bont is seen on the Ordnance Survey old series map (1831) and later maps as a substantial farmstead. Similarly to Ystradwalter (PRN 49187), the buildings are arranged in a semi-formal U-shape, with the house distinctly separate from the working farm.

Just to the east of the farm buildings is a small park (PRN 25605) which, combined with the building layout, suggests that Pen y Bont was a high status dwelling.

The landowner informed Cambria Archaeology that only one stone building survives now, and the house is privately occupied. The site was not visited on this occasion.

Recommendations

Wherever possible, farm buildings should be kept in use and should be maintained in a weatherproof condition using materials and techniques which match the original building construction.

Site Category D

PRN 49190 **Site Name** **Grid Reference** SN79103634

Site Type QUARRY **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

The site of an old quarry, marked on the 1891 and 1906 Ordnance Survey maps. The quarry is now filled in.

Recommendations

No specific management recommendations apply.

Site Category D

PRN 49191 **Site Name** PEN LAN **Grid Reference** SN79163622
YSTRADWALTER

Site Type ENCLOSURE **Period** POST-MEDIEVAL

Description

The remains of an earth and stone bank which enclosed a parcel of land around the buildings at Pen Lan Ystradwalter.

Recommendations

Maintain as existing. No ground intrusive activities should be carried out within the enclosure (PRN 49192).

Site Category C

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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AP Oblique/DAT/James,T/1989/AP89-120.31/SN7835

Ordnance Survey Old Series, 1831, sheet 41

Ordnance Survey 1891 Carmarthenshire XVIII.SW

Ordnance Survey 1906 Carmarthenshire XVIII.SW

Ordnance Survey 1904, revisions 1938 Carmarthenshire XVIII.SW

Tithe map 1841 Llanfair ar y Bryn parish

Tithe apportionment 1839 Llanfair ar y Bryn parish

Tithe map 1840 Llandingat parish



Jones,F:1987:*Historic Carmarthenshire Homes and their Families*


William,E:1986:*The Historical Farm Buildings of Wales*


Ystradwalter


Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation
 Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/12/3943
 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN48465
 National Grid Reference SN78673629

 Farm Boundary
 Historic Landscape Character Area

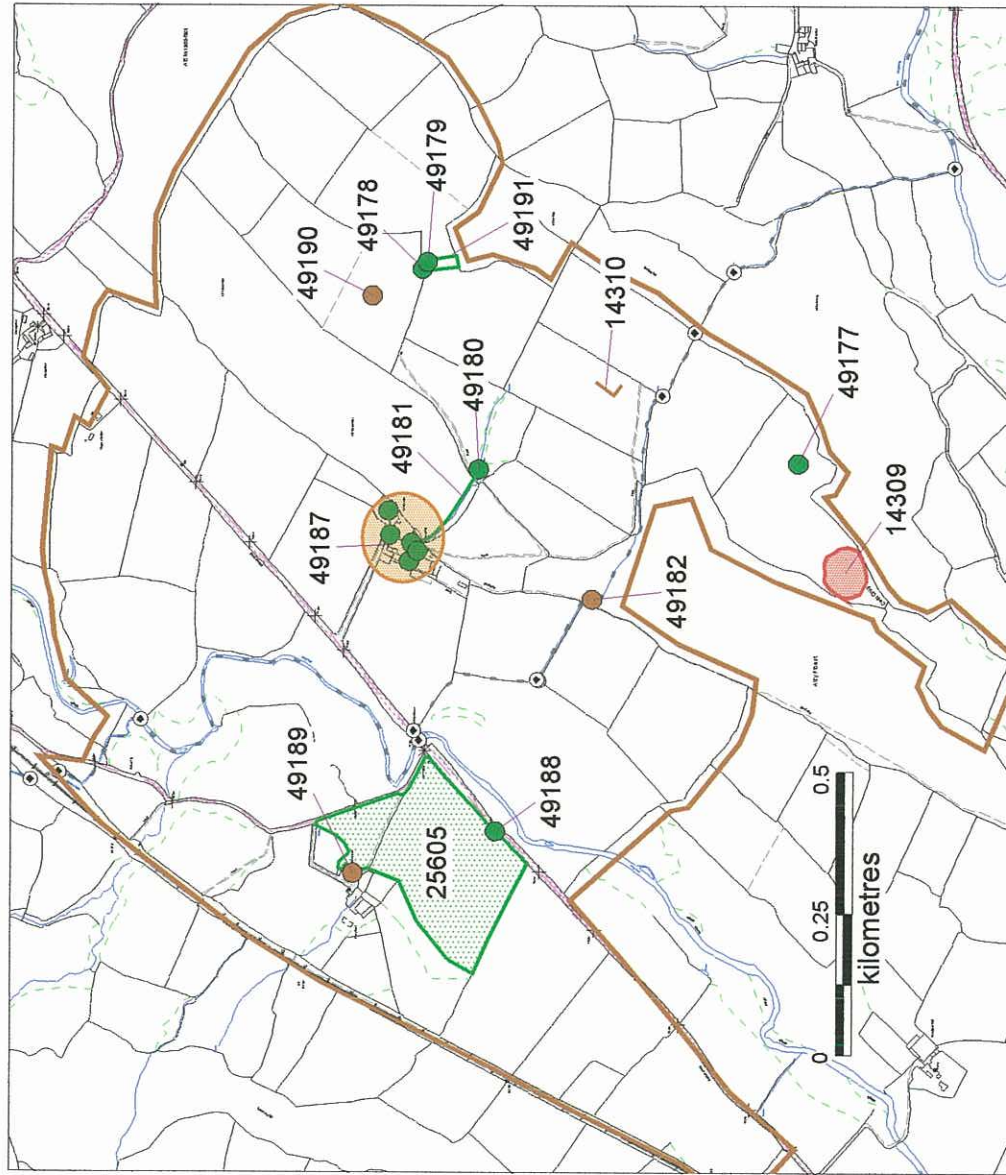
Site Category A - National Importance
 Scheduled Ancient Monuments
 Grade 1 and Grade 2* Listed Buildings
 Sites and Buildings of National Importance
 without a statutory designation

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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Ystradwaler Farmstead
 Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation
 Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/12/3943
 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN48465
 National Grid Reference SN78673629

 Farm Boundary
 Historic Landscape Character Area

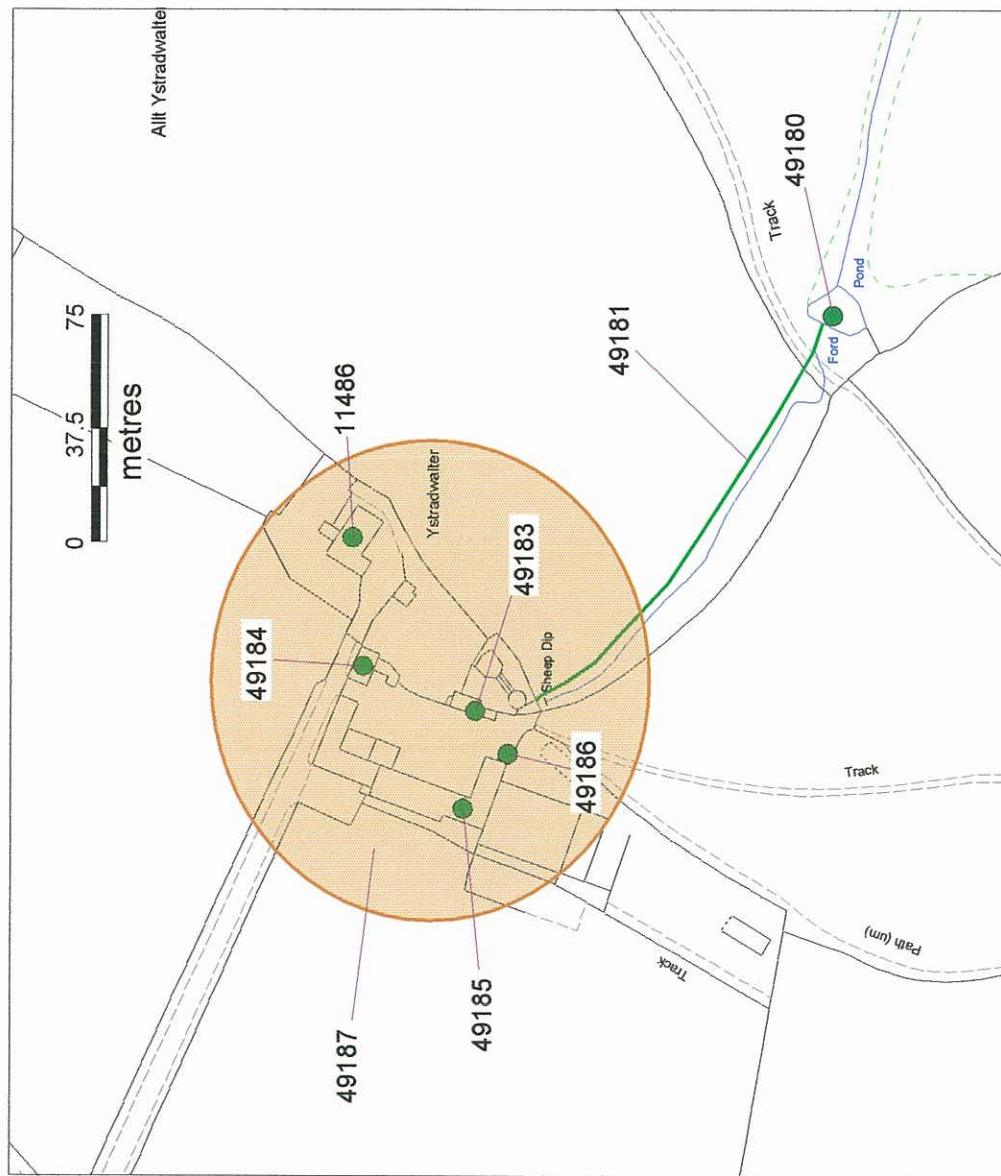
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**Ystradwalter
W/12/3943**

REPORT NUMBER 2003/110

October 2003

This report has been prepared by Polly Groom

Position: Tir Gofal Archaeologist

Signature P. Groom Date 4/11/03

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

Position: Principal Archaeologist (Curatorial)

Signature Louise Austin Date 5/11/03

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