

Nantfforchog W/12/4003

Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report Call Out



A large mound, Prn 48723, which occupies the high ground at Holding B.

Report No. 2004/22

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Countryside Council for Wales

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO. 2004/22
PROJECT RECORD NO. 48491

2nd February 2004

Nantfforchog Farm
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report
Call Out

By

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Introduction

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

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

General Description of Farm

Nantfforchog Farm consists of three separate holdings; the main farm holding and another smaller holding which lie within a kilometre of each other on the northwestern edge of Blaen Cennen, National Grid Reference SN69241936 and SN70022033. The third holding of just over 50 hectares lies north of Llansadwrn at National Grid Reference SN69653353.

The call out addressed two separate issues; the proposed restoration of a farm building at Nantfforchog and the discovery of possible burial mounds or cairns on holding b near Llansadwrn.

Building Restoration

The farmstead at Nantfforchog consists of the farmhouse to the east of the farmstead complex and a long combination farm building to the west of the farmyard. To the south of the farmhouse is an intriguing building, possibly a pigsty, which is quite unusual (plate 1), it exhibits architectural pretensions which set it apart from the other farm buildings.

There are proposals through the scheme to undertake the restoration of the door and window fittings of the combination farm building at Nantfforchog (plate 2). The building is a multi-functional farm building of two storeys that appears to be arranged in four main sections. The north end is somewhat obscured by a low building abutting at right angles, however the low wide doorways at this end (one of which has been blocked to form a window) would indicate the use of this section originally as a cow shed. Adjoining this section on the north side is a taller doorway with a high flanking window which would suggest its original purpose was a stable. Beyond this is an almost full height double doorway, flanked to either side by long ventilation slits; undoubtedly this was the barn used for crop processing. At the very south end of the building is another low doorway with a small ventilation slit which would appear to originally have been designed as another animal house.

The barn is in fairly good condition, the roof appears to be sound and the slates are in good order. The building is still in use, both as an animal house and for storage. The owner has also been undertaking the repair of the loft floor.

There are problems with the doors and window frames however, the owner has replaced some of these not long ago, but the bases of the doors are beginning to rot already. The owner hopes to reinstate the wooden fittings which have been lost including the wooden shutters on the windows and to replace those doors which are beginning to rot. It is hoped that this will be undertaken using trees felled on the farm.



Plate 1 – to the north of the farmhouse is this unusual building, a former pigsty?

Management Recommendations

Doors and windows are of great importance to a historic building and their insensitive repair or replacement can lead to the loss of character and authenticity of the building. Wherever possible original doors and windows should be retained and repaired.

There appears to be only one original door which survives at the southern end of the building (plate 3). This door is beginning to suffer some rot at its base where it is continually wet, however in the main the door is still sturdy. This door should be retained and new timber spliced in to the base to make it sound once again.

Many of the other existing doors on the building are already replacements, which although they appear to have followed in the traditional design of the original fittings, and have reused the original furniture, they have been of insufficient quality to withstand intensive use and harsh weather conditions. These doors and windows, which are not original, should be replaced retaining the existing door furniture (hinges and latches).

New shutters for the first floor openings should be constructed using a simple, traditional design.



Plate 2 – the combination farm building at Nantfforchog



Plate 3 – an original door which survives in the south end of the farm building

Holding B

The secondary holding situated north of Llandsadwrn occupies a prominent area of high ground between the Afon Marlais to the west and the Afon Dulais to the east. The summit of this ridge reaches around 300 metres in height and enjoys prominent views in all directions. The landuse for this area is pasture, however there are a couple of old cottage sites and it is likely that in the past this area would have been under cultivation. Situated on this area of high ground are a number of mounds which it has been suspected maybe burial mounds dating from the Bronze Age. The call out visit took the opportunity to investigate these features further in an effort to establish their origins.

Five individual features were identified and located using a GPS (Global Positioning System), and are marked on the attached map.

Prn 48720

A mound approximately 12 metres in diameter and 0.75 metre high. The ground surface of the mound is uneven and consists of a great deal of loose stone, much of it small fragments. Bracken appears to have colonised the mound.



Plate 4 – Prn 48720, an earth and stone mound

Prn 48721

To the east of the Prn 48720, situated on natural rise is a distinctive mound about 10 metres across and 0.5 metre high. The mound is largely grass covered and is very conical in profile with two peaks. Again the surface of the mound is quite uneven and small stone fragments litter the area.

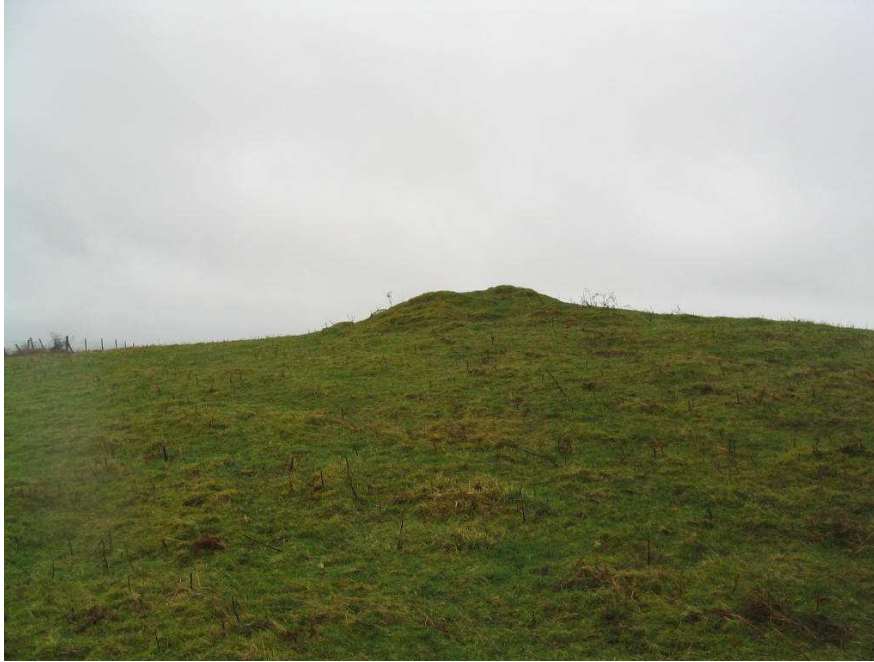


Plate 5 - Prn 48721, a conical shaped mound

Prn 48722

East again of the two previous features is a gently raised mound about 0.5 metre high and 10 metres across. The profile of this mound is gentle but pronounced, and the ground surface is slightly uneven. It is mostly turfed, but some stone projects through the grass cover.



Plate 6 – Prn 48722, largely turf covered and with a fairly smooth profile

Prn 48723

A large roughly circular feature about 27 metres in diameter is situated to the south of this group of features. It has a very uneven surface (see photo on frontispiece) and is covered in bracken. Again there is a great deal of loose stone lying on the ground surface.

Prn 48724

To the north of this group is a small mound about 4 metres in diameter, largely turf covered. This mound is situated on a north facing gentle slope.



Plate 7 –Prn 48724, the smallest of the mounds in this area

Conclusion

It is likely that these features are burial mounds dating to the bronze age (2000-600BC), and they form a distinct group which could be termed a barrow cemetery. These mounds occur in very prominent locations, largely on the summit of a hill with extensive panoramic views; a situation in which it is common to find burial mounds. In most cases, especially Prns 48720 & 48722, they have very distinctive profiles, which stand out on the skyline. The mounds appear to be largely composed of fairly small stone fragments with some earth and turf covering. Their uneven nature maybe the result of various actions over time; they may have been disturbed by the removal of stone to supply the construction of nearby field boundaries, and equally they also may have been added to in a haphazard manner by field clearance at a time when the fields were cultivated.

Ideally now these features have been recorded further survey and more detailed investigation should be carried out.

Management Recommendations

These features may contain very fragile and sensitive archaeological layers, and potentially burials or cremations could lie within the mounds. In order to protect these deposits no ground disturbing activities should take place within 5 metres of each of these features, and watering points or feeding stations should be sited well away in order to prevent erosion from livestock. Fortunately, this area is under permanent pasture at present and this landuse is to be continued for the foreseeable future.

It is believed that bracken clearance will be undertaken as part of the scheme, this will be beneficial for these features and the potential archaeology in this area as the rhizomes produced by bracken are thought to be very damaging to below ground deposits.

References

Maps

Ordnance Survey (6" to 1 mile) Sheet SN63SE, 1965

Ordnance Survey 1st. Ed. Carmarthenshire (6" to 1 mile) Sheet XLII NW; 1891.

Ordnance Survey 1st. Ed. Carmarthenshire (6" to 1 mile) Sheet XXVI NW; 1891

Ordnance Survey 2nd. Ed. Carmarthenshire (6" to 1 mile) Sheet XLII NW; 1907.

Ordnance Survey 2nd. Ed. Carmarthenshire (6" to 1 mile) Sheet XXVI NW; 1907

Tithe Map Llangadog Parish, Carmarthenshire; 1839.

Tithe Map Llansadwrn Parish, Carmarthenshire; 1839.

Nantfforchog

Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation



Countryside Council for Wales Reference


W/12/4003/b

Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN48491


National Grid Reference SN69613335

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

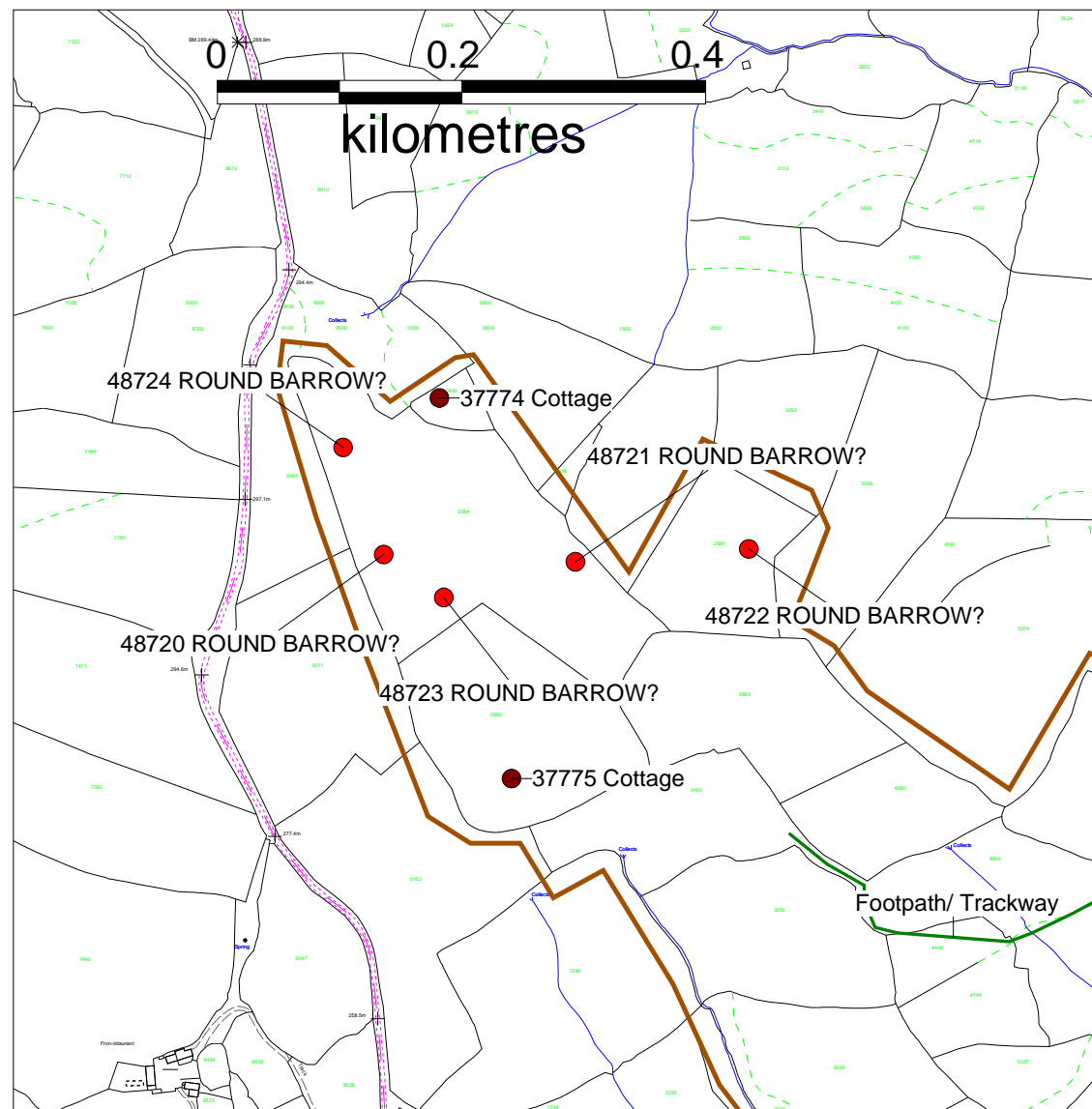
Site Category D – Unknown Importance

-  Sites requiring further investigation and sites with no physical definition

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Signature Date

This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin on behalf of Cambria
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