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Report Prepared for:  
Countryside Council for Wales

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO. 2003/103  
PROJECT RECORD NO. 49081

16<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Upper Neeston  
Tir Gofal Farm Visit Historic Environment Report  
Call Out

By

Alice Pyper

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### **Introduction**

A farm visit was undertaken at the request of the Countryside Council for Wales in order to address specific management issues on this farm. The aim of this report is to make an assessment of these concerns 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 specific management issues on the farm, it does not provide management advice for all known sites on the farm, for these please refer to the Historic Environment Report 1 (He1).

### **General Description of Farm**

Upper Neeston, Pembrokeshire, lies within Herbrandston community, centred on National Grid Reference SM 8777 0777. The farm was visited by Cambria Archaeology on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2003.

The holding of Upper Neeston lies within the Herbrandston Historic Landscape Character Area of the Milford Haven Waterway Registered Historic Landscape, defined as a 'Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest' in the Cadw/ICOMOS 'Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales' (Historic Landscape Characterisation Area 345 in Murphy and Ludlow, 2002; Area HLW (D) 3, Map 5 in Cadw/ICOMOS 1998;). The Historic Landscapes Register is a non-statutory, advisory document assessing the historic significance of the landscape to enable those involved in land care to make informed management decisions. The Registered area is further broken down in Historic Landscape Character Areas which assess components (such as land use, settlement, field pattern etc) within the landscape which give regions their distinctive quality.

Upper Neeston is situated upon a plateau which lies to the east of Sandy Haven, in a prominent position to the west of Herbrandston village. The entirety of the holding is under pasture, made up of regular enclosures defined by hedges on earth and stone banks. The farmstead is substantial, with a large farmhouse and an extensive range of farm buildings around the yard. The farm buildings are in various states of preservation and the owner hopes to be able to restore these buildings and find new uses for them.

## Proposed Works

### Pond Restoration

It is hoped that a pond, which lies to the southeast of the farmstead, can be restored through Tir Gofal. The pond is identified on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889, apparently fed by a spring marked to the northwest of it. The pond is shown to have widened from its source and was retained by a linear bank which defined the southwestern edge. A stream issued from the retaining bank and continued to run in a southwest direction, into the adjacent field parcel.

When visited in September the pond had no standing water, and the course of the stream ran straight through it. The edges of the pond were discernable, there appeared to be no banks as such; the pond appeared to have been merely cut into the ground surface. There was no indication of the retaining bank. Since this area becomes very poached by cattle in the wet, it is possible that any bank, particularly if it was constructed in nothing more substantial than loose earth and stone, would have been heavily eroded.

The owner proposes to construct a new revetment bank with loose rubble and earth along the line of the earlier bank, which should raise water levels sufficiently and avoid the need for dredging the pond.

The main area of archaeological concern with this proposal was the proximity of some burnt mounds that are recorded to the southeast of the pond, in the adjacent field.  
*(Burnt Mounds can date from the Bronze Age (c2000 - 500BC) to the post medieval period. However, they are generally thought to date from the Bronze Age and may have been used as cooking sites or saunas. Burnt mounds are usually identified on the ground as grass covered horseshoe shaped mounds. These mounds consist of heat shattered stone and charcoal. Where sites have been excavated they often have adjacent wooden water tanks. Burnt mounds are located in wet areas where they fill with water unaided. Stone was heated in a fire and thrown into the tank of water. The heated water was used for cooking or bathing. In order to reuse the tank the stone was removed resulting in the mound. In some cases these mounds are very large indicating long-term use of the site.)*

There are two burnt mounds which are recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record; Prn 3031 which lies some 30 metres from the pond to the southeast and Prn 3032 which lies a further 150 metres away, lying adjacent to the watercourse which issues from the spring within Upper Neeston farm. Both these sites lie outside the farm holding, downstream of the pond. A survey of burnt mounds was undertaken in 1994-1995. Each of these sites was visited, a visual inspection was carried out and an auger sample taken (where a probe is cut into the ground surface to extract a core which shows the profile of the subsurface ground makeup). The results of this survey indicate that the burnt mound Prn 3031 could not be identified and the samples that were taken showed only natural ground makeup. However, Prn 3032 did provide very positive results. An oval mound 6 metres by 2.5 and 0.1 metre high was identified lying alongside the stream. Augering of this feature demonstrated burnt debris below the ground surface.

### **Management Recommendations**

The only potential threat to the recorded burnt mound Prn 3032 from the pond restoration, is any erosion caused by an increase in the rate or quantity of water flowing through the adjacent stream fed by the spring within Upper Neeston holding. Since the proposed works should not increase the rate or quantity of water issuing downstream it is considered that the restoration of the pond does not constitute a threat to the burnt mound Prn 3032. Indeed the construction of a revetment bank with outlet pipes could allow an even flow of water avoiding the severe fluctuations in the stream flow which could potentially cause erosion.

Although no surviving banks associated with the pond were noted during the farm visit, the proposed method of restoring the pond (by reconstructing a revetment bank in which to control the water level in the pond), would seem to have the least impact on any surviving features which may survive below ground surface.

### **Well**

A well is marked on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891, although there is no trace of any structure today, and indeed although the ground appeared damp underfoot there is not a significant amount of running or standing water either. The owner does not know of its whereabouts.

### **Management Recommendations**

The owner hopes to clear a ditch which runs adjacent to and west of the field boundary. The Ordnance Survey indicates that the well lies between 5-10 metres to the west of the hedgeline and should not be impacted by the proposed ditch clearance. However, any works to the ditch along the hedgeline should be mindful of the location of the well and should any masonry or timber structures be discovered then Cambria Archaeology should be informed. The ditch clearance should be undertaken when ground conditions are reasonably dry and firm in order to avoid damage to the site of the well.

### **Farm buildings**



The owner has expressed an interest in restoring some of the disused farm buildings and converting them for alternative uses. Farm buildings which are no longer used for agricultural uses fall outside the remit of the Tir Gofal scheme and therefore not subject to management recommendations, however, it would be of great benefit for the restoration programme and also a significant archaeological resource if a photographic record were carried out of the buildings, both prior to and during any restoration works (this may also be a requirement of any planning consent given for conversion). A copy of the guidelines for photographing farm buildings is attached.





# Upper Neeston


Tir Gofal Historic Environment Consultation  
 Countryside Council for Wales Reference W/13/4167  
 Cambria Archaeology Reference PRN 49081  
 National Grid Reference SM 8777 0777


 Farm Boundary  
 Historic Landscape Character Area

Site Category A - National Importance  
 Scheduled Ancient Monuments  
 Grade 1 and Grade 2\* Listed Buildings

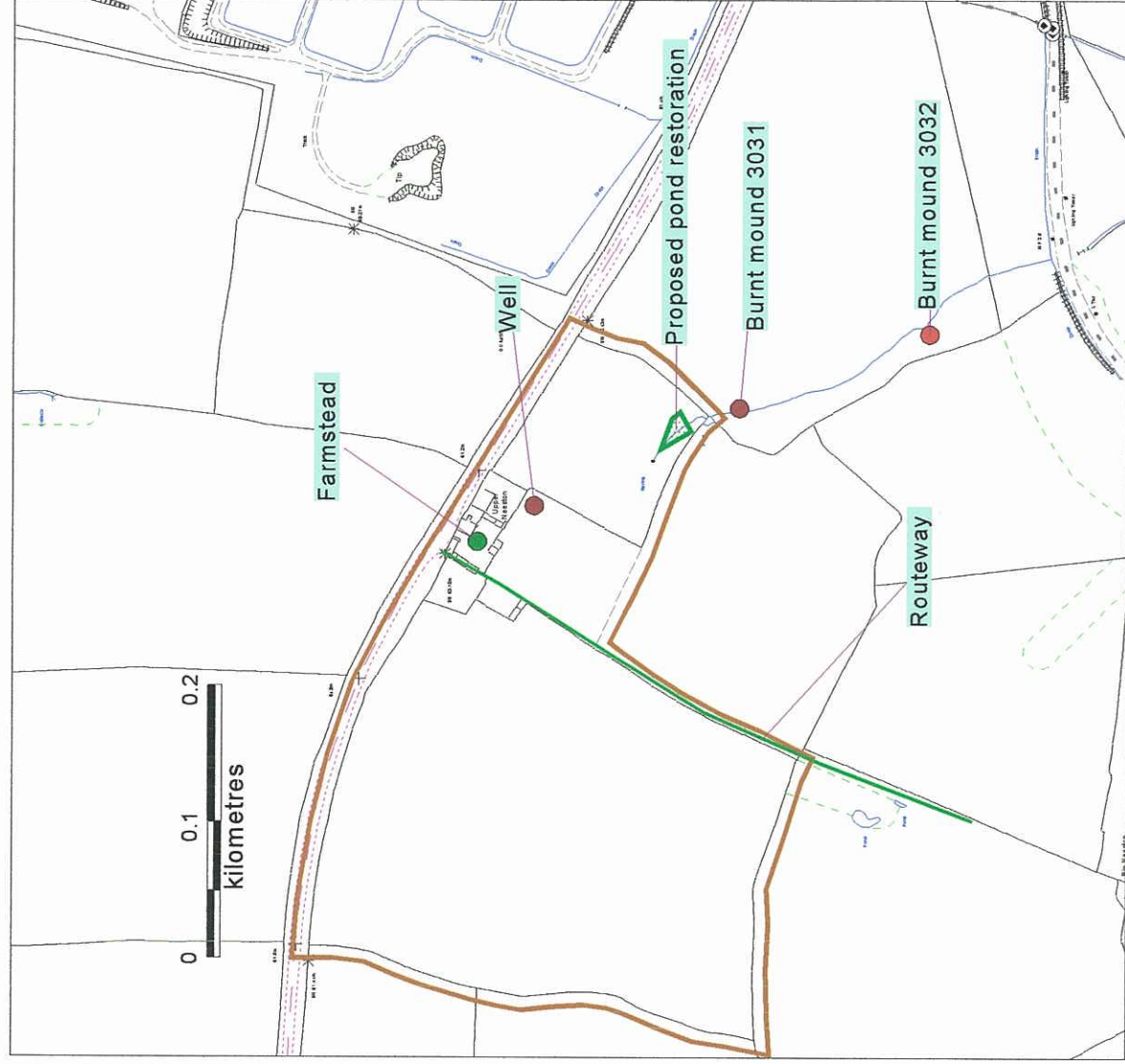
 Sites and Buildings of National Importance  
 without a statutory designation

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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## **References**

### **Maps**

Ordnance Survey 1st. Ed. Pembrokeshire (6" to 1 mile) Sheet XXXIII NE; 1891.  
Ordnance Survey 2nd. Ed. Pembrokeshire (6" to 1 mile) Sheet XXXIII NE; 1909.  
Tithe Map Herbrandston Parish, Pembrokeshire; 1838.  
Apportionment Herbrandston Parish, Pembrokeshire; 1839.

### **Other Sources**

Kenneth Murphy & Neil Ludlow, 2000: *Pembrokeshire Historic Landscape Characterisation for Cadw Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Interest in Wales. Historic Landscape Character Area 345: Herbrandston. Milford Haven.*



**Upper Neeston  
W/13/4167**

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16<sup>th</sup> September 2003

This report has been prepared by Alice Pyper

Position: Heritage Management Archaeologist (Tir Gofal)

Signature Alice Pyper Date 6<sup>th</sup> November 2003

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 12/11/03

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

# **Tir Gofal Traditional Buildings**

## **Requirements for General Photographic Surveys of Buildings**

The purpose of the survey is to produce a photographic record of the building prior to any demolition, alterations or renovation being started, as well as recording any fixtures, fittings or features which come to light during the works. This survey may be the only record of the original form of the building available for future reference. The survey will then be referenced within the Regional Site and Monuments Record for Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion (held and managed by Cambria Archaeology), and deposited with the National Monument Record in order that the information is publicly available for study and reference.

Photographs should be taken using 35mm format colour print film (preferably Kodak or Fuji). ASA 200 film is a good standard for most light conditions but ASA 400 should be used where light conditions are poor. 36 exposure film should be used in all cases and at least one whole film must be exposed. Alternatively, a digital camera may be used. Please contact Cambria Archaeology for further information on the quality of digital image required.

Photographs should be taken of all exterior and interior wall elevations which are affected by the proposed works together with photographs of the interior roof detail where this is altered. Features of particular interest (e.g. obvious differences in wall makeup, windows and doors whether blocked up or not, fireplaces, timber framing) should also be fully photographed. If available a scale, of noted measurement, should be placed within any detailed shots but this is not essential.

A plan of the building is also required to record the direction in which each of the photographs has been taken. Architectural drawings can be used where available or a sketch plan can be produced. Location reference numbers on the plans should be copied onto the backs of the prints together with brief descriptive details of the location. If using a digital camera this information should be used to name the photographs.

A copy of the survey should be provided to Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6HU either directly or via the Countryside Council for Wales Tir Gofal Project Officer.