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TIR GOFAL MANAGEMENT PLAN: HERITAGE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION (HE2)



**Prepared for:
Tymawr
Tir Gofal Reference No
W/11/5291**

**ACA Report No. 2005/115
Project Record No. 53743
Prepared by
Philip Poucher**

Other documents enclosed:

**Kenneth Murphy & Neil Ludlow, 2000: Ceredigion Historic Landscape
Characterisation. Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Interest in Wales.
Historic Landscape Character Areas 15 Cambrian Mountains, 16 Cwmystwyth Metal
Mines & 70 Upper Ystwyth Valley.**

A) INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

2. Historic landscape character & archaeological and historical content

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This is an upland farm holding lying near the Ceredigion/Powys border to the east of Cwmystwyth, bounded on the north by Afon Ystwyth. The holding lies within the Upland Ceredigion Area of Outstanding Historic Interest. The majority of the holding also lies within the Historic Landscape Character Area 15 Cambrian Mountains, whilst the north-western edge of the holding lies within HLCAs 70 Upper Ystwyth Valley and 16 Cwmystwyth Metal Mines. These character areas are intended to define places where local land-use patterns have left particularly strong or distinctive evidence in the landscape and the descriptions include general management priorities. The majority of the holding comprises unenclosed upland within HLCA 15. This area is likely to have traditionally been unenclosed land. Once part of the granges of Strata Florida Abbey during the Medieval period, by the late Medieval period it was probably divided between individual farms but presumably remaining unenclosed rough grazing. Several areas of common grazing land have been identified within this area during the later Medieval and Post Medieval periods. The north-west end of the holding on the lower valley slopes and valley bottom (within HLCA 70) has an enclosure pattern of medium sized irregular fields, with a settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads. This area was also part of the granges of Strata Florida Abbey during the Medieval period, divided and leased out to individual farms by the late Medieval period. The irregular nature of the field enclosure is characteristic of the gradual enclosure of farmland, presumably from this late Medieval period onwards. The date for the establishment of the settlement pattern is unclear, a possible farmstead is recorded in the 16th century (Wmffre 2004, see below), and the farmstead of Ty Mawr is shown on an estate map of 1781. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888 also shows numerous cottages in this area, presumably settlement attracted by Post Medieval metal mining activity within HLCA 16, though the lead mining and associated settlement has declined during the 20th century leading to the abandonment of many of these cottages.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTENT

This area of the Ystwyth valley includes one of the most significant areas of metal mining activity in Wales, witnessing mining activity from the Bronze Age to the early Modern periods. The more easily accessible metal ores would appear to have been on the northern side of the valley, outside this farm holding, as this is where the bulk of the Bronze Age, Medieval and Post Medieval mining activity is recorded, although Post Medieval mining remains (PRN 19983) do indicate some metal ores existed within this holding. Mining activity of all periods would have attracted settlement and associated activity to this area, although as yet no archaeology earlier than the Post Medieval period has been recorded within this holding. This holding has seen a

mixture of agricultural and industrial activity. As mentioned above much of this holding appears to have been used for pastoral purposes for much of the Medieval and Post Medieval period. The farmsteads of Tymawr (PRN 54650) and the ruinous Cwm-du (PRN 54654), as well as the farm buildings (PRN 54653) and sheepfold (PRN 54646) all demonstrate the agricultural nature of the holding. Some of these features may be early in date, the name Cwmdu is recorded by Wmffre (2004) from the 16th century onwards although it is not clear if this refers to an actual dwelling in its current location. Tymawr may also be early but is not recorded until marked on an estate map of 1781. More settlement was no doubt attracted to this area by the employment and associated services offered by the extensive mining activity, which probably accounts for the remaining cottages (PRNs 54651, 54652 & 54655) within the holding, known to have been occupied in the 19th century. The recorded mining activity (PRN 19983) within the holding was in operation in the 1870/80s but proved a relatively unsuccessful venture.

KEY OBJECTIVE

The management priority for this farm is to retain the landscape continuity, through the preservation of any metal mining remains that form such a distinctive element of the local historic landscape character. Continuity should also be maintained through the upkeep of traditional buildings, in particular the barn range at Tymawr farmstead.

B2) HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FEATURES

All known historic environment features are marked on Map 1 of this agreement

These are divided into three types:

- i) Archaeological and Historic Features: Archaeological sites, earthwork monuments, ruined structures and individual historic garden features.
- ii) Traditional Buildings: Structures built before 1918 using traditional materials and methods of construction.
- iii) Historic Parks and Gardens: Discrete areas of land laid out in an ornamental way for the pleasure of the owner.

All historic environment features have been allocated categories of importance:

Site Status A: Sites and Monuments of National Importance.

Site Status B: Sites/Features of Regional Importance.

Site Status C: Sites/Features of Local Importance.

Site Status D: Minor and damaged sites.

Site Status U: Sites requiring further investigation.

General requirements

Historic earthworks, stone structures, archaeological sites, traditional buildings, parks and gardens must all be retained and protected against damage. The management of these features must comply with the following general requirements.

- Do not remove any material from archaeological sites or historic features, or deposit spoil, farm waste or rubbish.
- Ensure contractors and all other workers on the farm are aware of the historic environment features and comply with the requirements of this agreement. They should take appropriate measures to avoid accidental damage.
- Do not carry out any excavation, erect any new structure or plant any trees without the prior approval of the Project Officer.
- Do not site new fencing or vehicular tracks on archaeological or historic sites without the prior approval of the Project Officer.
- Ensure that the use of metal detectors and the reporting of discoveries complies with the Treasure Act 1996 and associated codes of practice. The Portable Antiquities Scheme website (<http://www.finds.org.uk>) provides valuable guidance and information.
- Please report all discoveries of archaeological interest to Cambria Archaeology (01558 823131). This enables them to maintain an up-to-date record of archaeological discoveries.

"Scheduled" Ancient Monuments (SAMs) have statutory protection and consent from Cadw may be required for works to these monuments. Consult the Project Officer for advice.

"Listed Buildings" also have statutory protection and permission from the Local Planning Authority may be required for some works. This also applies to

buildings within the curtilage of a listed building. Consult the Project Officer for Advice

In addition to these general requirements you must comply with the specific sets of prescriptions set out below:


i) ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC FEATURES:

Archaeological sites, earthwork monuments, ruined structures and individual historic garden features.

Location and description:

A search of the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) held by the Cambria Archaeology has identified the following sites and monuments which are indicated on Map 1.

Other sites may be known to the landowner and these should be identified to the Project Officer who will pass the information to Cambria Archaeology.

Name (& PRN)	Period/Site type	NGR	Status	SAM/listing	Management required
CWMYSTWYTH MINE SOUTH;GRAIGGOCH; CWMYSTWYTH;YSTWYTH (19983)	Post Med/ Lead mine	SN8074	B		Generic
<p>Remains of a lead mine complex on the south side of the Ystwyth river, opposite the main Cwmystwyth metal mine workings. Explorations of the lode here began in the 1870s, under the management of John Kitto, later managed by Joseph Mitchell in the 1880s. Although John Kitto was an able mining engineer this venture was unsuccessful, the deposit soon failed and the mine was disused by the end of the 19th century. The remains of several shafts and levels are still visible on the hillside, fenced off and mostly blocked with large spoil tips in front. Footpaths and trackways cross the hillside connecting the sites, with a tramway and leat running at the foot of the valley slope just above the river. There are no above-ground mining building remains within this farm holding, although several building are marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888. The mining complex extends to the southwest beyond the limits of this holding. <i>Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)</i></p>					
					
<p>SSE facing shot of a mine level opening at Ystwyth mine PRN 19983, with the tumbled remains of a stone built hut to the right of the entrance.</p>					



SW facing shot of building platforms where much of the ore at Ystwyth mine (PRN 19983) would have been processed.

TY MAWR ([54650](#))

**Post Med/
Farmstead**

SN8149274739 B

Generic

A small working upland farmstead first marked on an estate map of 1781. Farmsteads are archaeologically sensitive areas and may have seen continued occupation over a long period of time. Traditional buildings also survive on this farmstead, described in section ii, that may require additional management (see management prescriptions section ii) *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*

PANT-GLAS ([54651](#))

Post Med/ Cottage **SN8110674652 B**

Generic

A small ruined cottage marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888. The cottage is built of random slate rubble, mortared in places. The gable walls stand to almost their full height, the long walls are partly tumbled and the roof has gone. The cottage measures approximately 7m x 5m, two windows and a central doorway in the northern wall with the chimney-stack surviving against the western gable wall. Tumbled drystone walls mark enclosures to the west. The cottage is probably part of the settlement attracted to this area by Post Medieval mining activity, and may have been abandoned when mining activity ceased in the early 20th century. *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*



SW facing shot of the remains of Pant-glas cottage PRN 54651.

DOL-Y-TWLCH ([54652](#))

Post Med/ Cottage **SN8096874527 B**

Generic

A ruined cottage marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888. Built of mortared random rubble, the eastern gable wall stands to roughly its full height, the remaining walls are partly tumbled. The cottage measures approximately 8m by 6m with a doorway and partly blocked windows in the northern wall and the fairly complete remains of the chimney-stack against the eastern gable wall. A drystone walled enclosure lies in front of the cottage, with farm building remains (PRN 54653) lying at the foot of a short but steep slope in front. It is unclear if the two are associated. The cottage is probably part of the settlement attracted to this area by Post Medieval mining activity, and may have been abandoned when mining activity ceased in the early 20th century. *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*



W facing shot of Dol-y-twlch ruined cottage PRN 54652.

(54653)

Post Med/ Farm SN809147452 B building

Generic

A ruined farm building with associated drystone enclosures to the north. Marked on the 1st (1888) and 2nd (1905) edition Ordnance Survey maps. The main farm building is well built of mortared random rubble, aligned E-W, measures c14m by 6m with two doorways in the northern wall, one in the southern wall and ventilation slits in the eastern end of the building. A small drystone built lean-to has been added to the southern wall, and two attached enclosures with drystone walling lie to the north. A corrugated iron farm building lies at the northern end of the enclosure. *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*

CWM-DU (54654)

Post Med/ SN8126474490 B Farmstead

Generic

A small ruined farmstead complex, marked on the 1st (1888) and 2nd (1902) edition Ordnance Survey maps and Wmffre (2004) records the name from the late 16th century onwards, although it is not clear if this actually refers to a dwelling at this location. The main dwelling lies at the northern end of the complex, measuring c7 x 5m with tumbled drystone walls, central doorway and flanking windows in the northern wall. A small stone built lean-to lies against the western gable wall. A large drystone walled enclosure measuring c7m x 7m lies to the south, with a small ruined barn building (c5m x 3m) at the southern end and a larger ruined barn building/enclosure (c5m x 6m) to the southwest. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map also marks a further two small square buildings at the southern end of the complex, and a small building, possibly a pigsty, to the east of the main dwelling. No above ground remains of these buildings are currently visible. *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*



N facing shot of the ruined Cwm-du farmstead complex PRN 54654.



NE facing shot of the main dwelling at Cwm-du farmstead complex PRN 54654.

PEN-Y-GWNDWN
(54655)

Post Med/ Cottage SN8129474549 B

Generic

A ruined cottage marked on the 1st (1888) and 2nd (1902) edition Ordnance Survey maps. The cottage is a drystone built 2-cell structure measuring c10m x 5m, with a c3m wide lean-to on the western gable wall. The walls are greatly tumbled although the eastern corners still stand close to their original full height. The remains of stone walled enclosures lie in front (to the north) and a stone built raised ford gives trackway access across the stream on the eastern side of the cottage. *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*



ENE facing shot of Pen-y-gwndwn ruined cottage PRN 54655.

(54656)

**Post Med/
Sheepfold**

SN8158474578 C

Generic

A small rectangular sheepfold marked on the 1st (1888) and 2nd (1902) edition Ordnance Survey maps. Tumbled drystone walls 0.5m wide define a well built structure measuring c5m by 3m, long disused. Disused trackways lead from the sheepfold northwards toward Tymawr farmstead, and to the southwest along the line of the current field boundary. *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*

Historic Environment Objectives:

The purpose of the management is to:

- Ensure the survival of visible features.
- Ensure archaeological deposits beneath the ground surface are not disturbed.
- Prevent progressive degradation by adopting sustainable farming practices.

In order to achieve this you will need to observe the following:

Generic Management Prescriptions - see also General Requirements - Section B2

1. Maintain the agreed stocking level to encourage a sound grass sward or low growing vegetation, without poaching or causing erosion.
2. Do not install new drains or underground services.
3. Locate feeding and watering stations away from archaeological and historic features.
4. Avoid using heavy machinery on sites or close to archaeological and historic features, especially in wet weather.
5. Do not plough archaeological or historic features, or cultivate so close as to cut into the remains. A minimum buffer zone of 2m is advised. In the case of monuments already under cultivation and where the agreement does not exclude the monument from cultivation, ensure that the depth of cultivation is not increased.
6. Remove any dead and unstable trees from the vicinity of archaeological and historic features with care, leaving roots to rot in situ. Ensure that machinery does not cause further disturbance. Agree with the Project Officer a suitable method for repairing any damage caused, for example, by wind-throw.
7. Control scrub on archaeological and historic features by cutting. Roots must be left in the ground and must not be pulled or dug out. Treatment with an approved herbicide may, exceptionally, be permitted in agreement with the Project Officer. (Capital Works Option).
8. Do not burn materials on site.
9. Ensure that rabbits are kept under control, but not by excavating within an archaeological or historic feature.
10. Consult your Project Officer a suitable method for repairing any damage caused by burrowing animals. (Capital Works Option)

ii) TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS:

Location and Description:

Traditional buildings are those built before c.1918 using traditional materials and methods of construction, to serve the needs of customary farming practices. Typically, they will use locally available materials and skills, though mass-produced materials (bricks, corrugated iron) may sometimes be locally characteristic.

The following traditional buildings have been identified:

	Name (& PRN)	Period/Site type	NGR	Status SAM/listing	Management required
1	TY MAWR (54650)	Post Med/ Farmstead	SN8149274739	B	Specific

A small working upland farmstead first marked on an estate map of 1781. The detached farmhouse stands at the north-eastern corner of the farmstead. Traditional farm buildings consist of a single range aligned roughly E-W, built of mortared random rubble, slate roofed at the western end, with a corrugated iron roof on the slightly lower eastern end. The western half of the building contains wooden cattle stalls and a hay loft, the eastern end contains the former threshing barn. A former 2-bay pigsty lies against the eastern gable wall. Modern farm buildings have been built against the southern wall of this building. The traditional farm buildings are still in use and in a well maintained condition, although the corrugated iron roofing is possibly beginning to deteriorate in places. *Visited 05/10/2005 (PP)*



SW facing shot of the traditional barn range at Tymawr farmstead PRN 54650.



SE facing shot of the traditional barn range at Tymawr farmstead PRN 54650.

Historic Environment Objectives:

The purpose of the management is to:

- Promote the survival of traditional buildings on the farm
- Prevent progressive decay of traditional buildings through neglect.
- Promote the sympathetic use of traditional buildings within sustainable farming practice.

In order to achieve this you will need to observe the following:

Generic Management Prescriptions - see also General Requirements section B2

1. Those traditional buildings in a weatherproof and a structurally sound condition must be maintained in a weatherproof condition.
2. Those traditional buildings or parts of traditional buildings that have not been previously modified must be maintained using traditional materials and methods of construction.
3. Characteristics and features which reflect history and function of the traditional buildings identified in this agreement must not be removed.
4. Wherever practicable, repair original features rather than replace them. (Capital Works Option)
5. Repairs should be unobtrusive and make use of appropriate traditional materials and methods of construction. (Capital Works Option)
6. When repair is not possible, replacement features must be modelled on the originals, using the same materials and methods of construction. (Capital Works Option)
7. Ensure the retention and sympathetic repair of historic coverings and finishes such as lime-wash, lime-render or weather-boarding. The appropriate traditional materials must be used. (Capital Works Option)
8. Do not disturb protected species (such as bats or barn owls) that use the building. If these species are present you will need a licence from CCW to carry out any work on the building.

Specific Management Requirements for individual Traditional Buildings:

The following individual traditional buildings are subject to specific management prescriptions which are in addition to and (in the case of conflict) take precedence over these generic requirements:

Site 1 on MAP 1

TY MAWR (54650)

SN8149274739

In addition to the Generic Management Prescriptions listed above the following management is recommended.

The aim of the management for this site should be to ensure the survival of the traditional buildings and maintain the historic character of the complex of farm buildings as a whole. The farmstead buildings are still in use and generally in a good state of repair, although the corrugated iron roof may be beginning to deteriorate.

- Deteriorating corrugated iron roofing could be replaced with traditional materials appropriate to the farmstead and its locality (slate and corrugated iron).

iii) HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS:

There are no Historic Parks and Gardens in the Cambria Archaeology Historic Environment Record for the application area

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This HE2 report supercedes the information given in the HE1 report for this farm.

Sources consulted:

Cambria Archaeology Sites and Monuments Record

Hughes, S.J.S. 1979 'The Decline of Mining at Cwmystwyth' Journal of the Ceredigion Antiquarian Society, VIII, No.4, pp419-437.

Murphy, K. & Ludlow, N. 2000: Ceredigion Historic Landscape Characterisation. Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Interest in Wales.

Historic Landscape Character Areas 15 Cambrian Mountains, 16 Cwmystwyth Metal Mines & 70 Upper Ystwyth Valley.

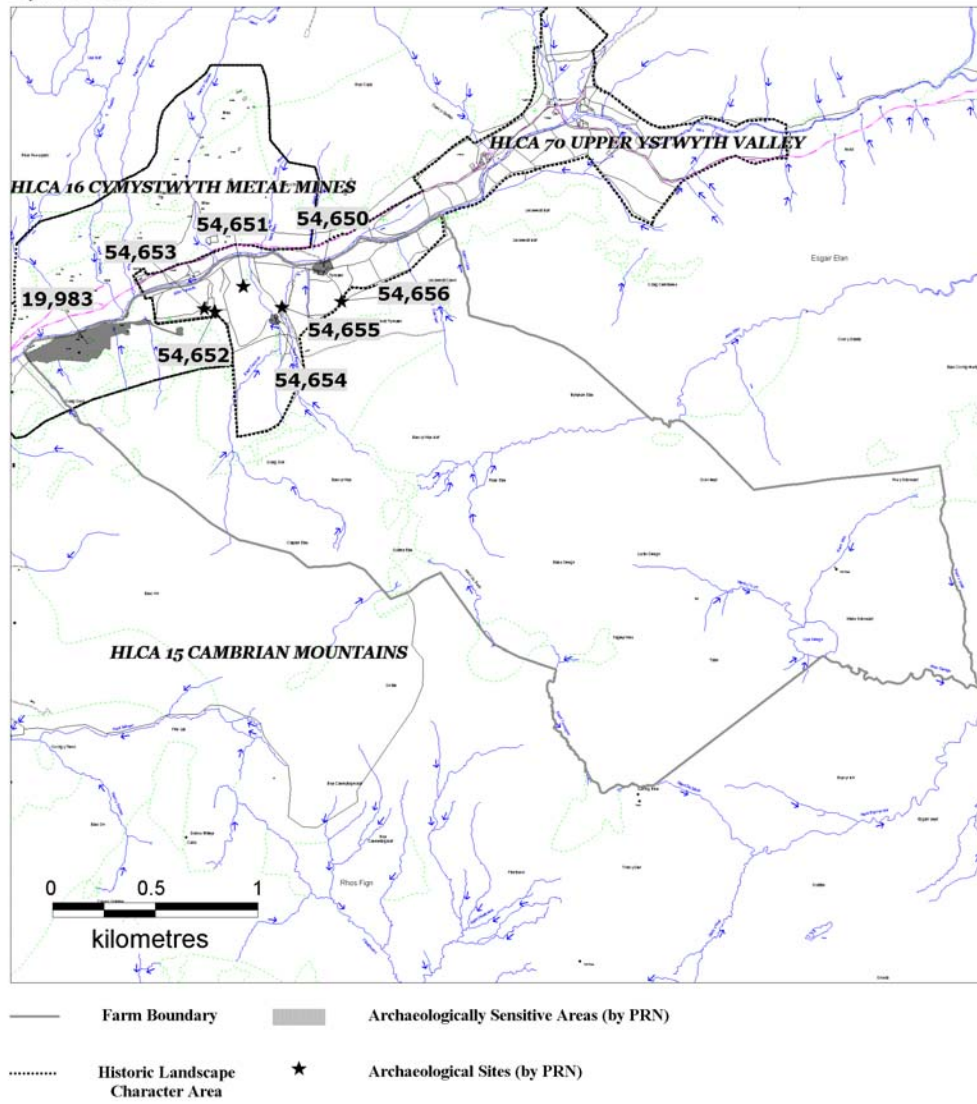
Ordnance Survey 1833 Old Series 1" map, No.LVI

Ordnance Survey 1888 1st edition 1-2500 Cardiganshire.XII.10, 12 & 14

Ordnance Survey 1902/5 2nd edition 1-2500 Cardiganshire.XII.10, 12 & 14

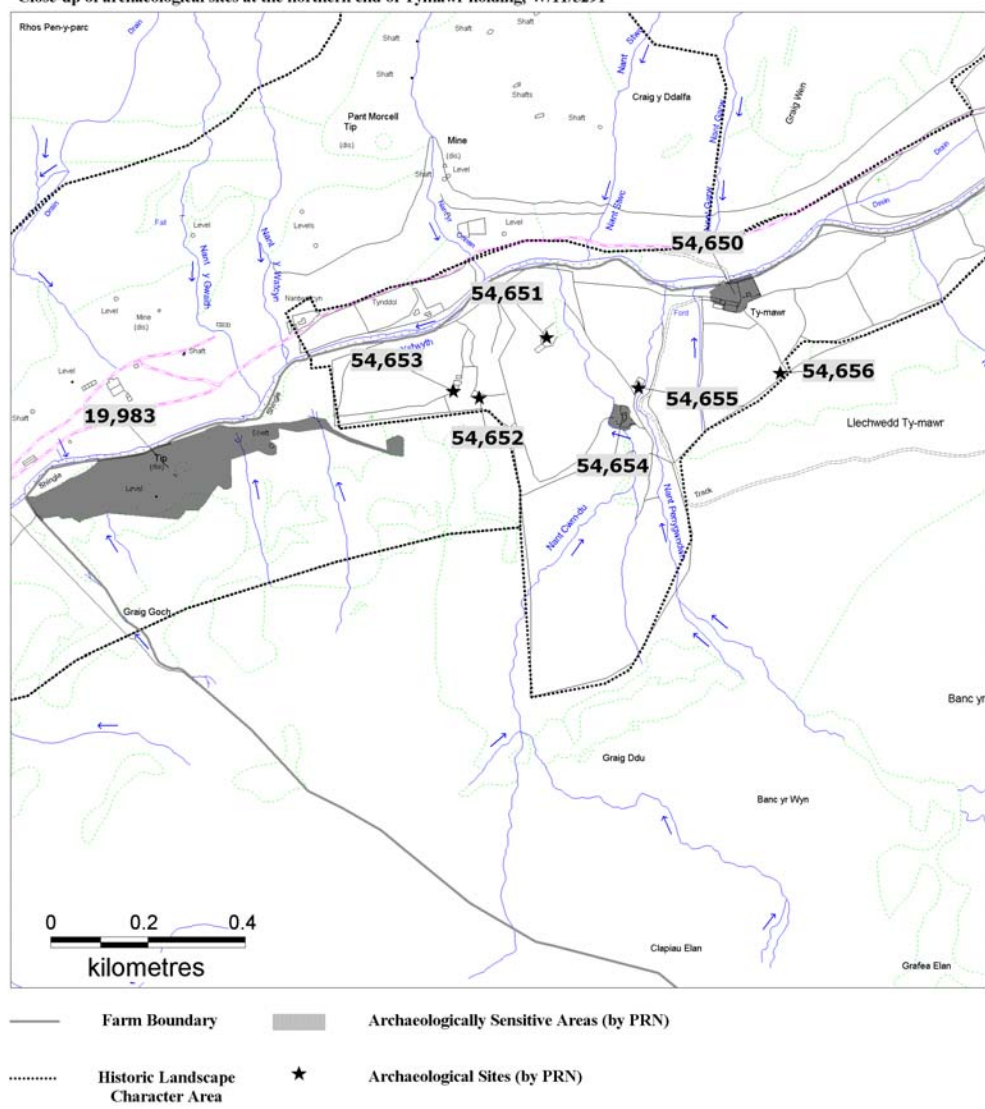
Wmffre, I. 2004. The Place Names of Cardiganshire

Tymawr W/11/5291



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Close-up of archaeological sites at the northern end of Tymawr holding, W/11/5291



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15 CAMBRIAN MOUNTAINS

GRID REFERENCE: SN 879665

AREA IN HECTARES: 298840

Historic Background

This very large area of high upland straddles the Ceredigion-Powys county boundary. The largest proportion lies within Powys, and, as this is outside the study area, has not been examined in detail. Historically the largest part of this area lay within Strata Florida's granges of Pennardd, Mefenydd, Cwmteuddwr and Cwmystwyth (Williams 1990, 56-57). By the end of the Medieval Period, and perhaps earlier, the granges had been separated into farms, leased out and farmed on a commercial basis. It is uncertain how the upland sections of the granges would have functioned. Parts of the upland fringes undoubtedly comprised farms - a document of 1545-50 (Morgan 1991, 5-7) names farms now abandoned in an upland situation - but presumably most upland served as rough pasture, perhaps used on a seasonal basis. Williams (1990, 59) cites a document that indicates transhumance in Mefenydd Grange. Other monastic uses included peat cutting and a fishery in the Teifi Pools. It is likely that on the dissolution the Crown would have claimed unenclosed land, with farmed land first leased and later purchased by incipient estates, notable in this area were Crosswood and Powis Castle estates. Land acquired by the latter in and around Cwmystwyth eventually formed the Hafod estate. These estates were eager to increase the extent of their holdings, and engaged in the illegal enclosure of unenclosed Crown land, a process that was at its most active in the late 18th- and early 19th-centuries. Legal means were also employed. Enclosure Acts were sponsored. The two within this area, Gwnnws of 1815 and Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn of 1866 (Chapman 1992, 50, 53), included vast tracts of upland, as did an 1815 proposed act for the area of Teifi Pools (NLW Crosswood 347), but their physical effect on the landscape was minimal. In the 20th century, land improvement hand in hand with enclosure has nibbled away at waste and moorland. It was by these legal and illegal means that the limits of unenclosed land were rolled back to their present extensive, but in historic terms relatively modest, extents. Crossing the area are several important trans-mountain natural route-ways linking farming communities and the markets of Ceredigion with lands and towns to the east. These trans-mountain route-ways are most celebrated for their use by drovers in the historical period, but they are likely to be of great antiquity. They not only provided communication across the Cambrian mountain chain, but allowed access onto the high moorland for the establishment of permanent or seasonal settlement, for the grazing of animals and for peat cutting. The route-way from Cwmystwyth to the east to Rhayader and beyond was converted to a turnpike in 1770 (Colyer 1984, 176-82), but was superseded by the opening of a new turnpike (the current A44) to the north in 1812.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This is a very large upland area. It achieves peaks of over 500m, is on average approximately 400m high and rarely falls below 300m. Craggy outcrops on some of the higher summits and around Llyn Teifi provide much needed drama in an otherwise drab and monotonous landscape. Unimproved very rough grazing dominates with blanket bog at higher levels and peaty deposits in most hollows and valleys. There is some improved grazing, mostly on lower slopes where occasional wire fences divide the area. There are a few widely dispersed farms, in particular on the Powys side of the border. These are traditionally stone built, surrounded by a collection of modern farm buildings, and situated within a system of a few fields whose boundaries consisted of earth banks, but where wire fences now provide the stock-proof barriers. The fields attached to these farms now comprise improved pasture, and there are further blocks of unenclosed improved pasture close by. This is a treeless landscape. Overall this is a landscape of unenclosed moorland.

Recorded archaeology is only described here and shown on the accompanying maps for the Ceredigion portion of this area. Archaeology adds greater time-depth to the landscape. Numerous Bronze Age round barrows and a standing stone suggest occupation within this area even at high levels, though no settlement sites are known. However, post-Medieval settlement sites and other sites of the period such as folds, enclosures, shelters and field systems indicate that the lower-lying fringes of this area were occupied, through to the 19th century. Metal mining remains are also present.

This is a very well-defined area and is either bordered by large blocks of upland forestry (areas 3, 5, 6, 7), or by lower-lying enclosed and settled land (for example areas 17, 34, 44, 70, 83).

UPLAND CEREDIGION

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 16 CWMYSTWYTH METAL MINES

GRID REFERENCE: SN 806748

AREA IN HECTARES: 137.6

Historic Background

This is a mining landscape; the historic landscape area is defined by the industrial archaeology. Archaeological excavations have demonstrated that open-cast copper mining was undertaken here in the Bronze Age (Timberlake 1995), and lead has been mined here since at least Roman times (Bick 1974, 19-23; Hughes 1981). Metal was probably worked under the control of Strata Florida Abbey in the Middle Ages as this area lay within Cwmystwyth Grange. In the 18th century prospecting for lodes by scouring the surface of the ground by a sudden rush of water - hushing - was practised; the channels and reservoirs of this process can still be seen. Metal mining in the 18th- and 19th-century have bequeathed a bewildering array of remains, an industrial archaeologist's paradise, including: tips, shafts, tramways, inclines, open-casts, crusher houses and other buildings. In the late 19th-century the search for blende resulted in the construction of a large crusher house - the rusting remains of which have only recently been swept away - and other installations. Work finally ceased at Cwmystwyth in 1921.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This area which is entirely defined by industrial archaeology lies across both valley sides and the valley floor of the Ystwyth. The valley here has a deep U-shaped profile, with the floor at 300m and the sides rising to over 500m. The sides are craggy, even cliff-like on the northern side; the many scree slopes are more likely to be the result of mining than natural processes. Mining remains are everywhere. These are varied and most are of a robust character. However, the surviving remains of buildings are in a perilous condition.

Recorded archaeology comprises remains directly associated with the metal mining industry, including finds of Roman date, or remains indirectly associated with the industry such as abandoned cottages.

This is a well-defined area comprising industrial archaeology of the metal mining industry. To the north and south is high, unenclosed moorland (area 15), and the enclosed and settled valley floor of the Ystwyth to the east and west (areas 70, 83).

UPLAND CEREDIGION

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 70 UPPER YSTWYTH VALLEY

GRID REFERENCE: SN 830749

AREA IN HECTARES: 129.2

Historic Background

In the Medieval Period this area formed part of Strata Florida Abbey's Cwmystwyth Grange (Williams 1990). By at least the later Middle Ages the grange had been divided into farms which were leased out and farmed on a commercial basis. A document of 1545-50 (Morgan 1991) records farms in this area. By 1590, the Herbert family had acquired most of the land in Cwmystwyth. Herbert land passed into the Johnes family in 1704. Strata Florida land not acquired by the Herberts was granted to the Earl of Essex and subsequently sold to the Crosswood estate in 1630. Crosswood estate maps of 1781 (NLW Crosswood Vol 1, 35, 73) show Ty llwyd and Ty mawr farms set in a landscape of small irregular fields on the valley floor. There has been very little change since that date. A chapel was constructed here in 1856 (Percival 1998, 518). The Ystwyth valley provides a route-way onto high ground to the east and over to Rhayader and beyond. In 1770, a turnpike road was constructed through the valley (Colyer 1984, 176-182); this was the main route from Ceredigion to the east for 40 years until it was superseded by a new turnpike, the present A44, some miles to the north. The road through Cwmystwyth is now a minor route much used by tourists in the summer months.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This area consists of the flat valley floor of the upper Ystwyth, together with the lower valley sides which consist of enclosed land. From the valley floor, which lies at 230m to 300m, the valley sides rise steeply to over 500m. Apart from enclosed land on the lower slopes which is included in this area, the valley sides are composed of rough, unenclosed land. Area 70 has been divided into irregular-shaped fields. These fields are bounded by dry-stone walls and stony banks. Only a few of the banks now support hedges, and these are in a derelict condition. Wire fences now run along most of the older boundaries. Some of the boundaries have distinctive trees on them and there are small stands of scrubby woodland. Farmland mostly consists of improved grazing, but there are many patches of rougher, rushy ground on the valley floor, and some of the fields on the lower slopes are beginning to revert to moorland. The settlement pattern is of dispersed farms and cottages, some of which are deserted. Extant buildings are of stone with slate roofs or modern rendered concrete.

Recorded archaeology of this area is not numerous or diverse. Of interest are the remains of a small metal mine.

This is a very distinct and well-defined historic landscape area. To the west lies the massive mining remains of Cwmystwyth (area 16), on all other sides is high, unenclosed moorland (area 15).