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## **TIR GOFAL MANAGEMENT PLAN: HERITAGE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION (HE2)**

**Prepared for:  
Abermeurig Mansion**



**Tir Gofal Reference No  
W/11/5496**

**ACA Report No. 2005/119  
Project Record No. 54210**

**Prepared by  
Helen Milne**

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## **A) INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2. Historic landscape character & archaeological and historical content**

#### *Historic Landscape Character*

The farm and mansion of Abermeurig are situated on the banks of the Aeron close to the hamlet of the same name in Nantcwnlle community, Ceredigion. The farmland includes a mixture of floodplain and valley slope, rising from 80m to over 150m AOD at the highest point. Parkland and belts of plantation woodland give an estate quality to its immediate environs. Above the valley, behind the farm the land takes on a more open character with large rectangular fields and grown out hedges present. Landscapes such as these are typically the result of parliamentary enclosure when many thousand acres of upland or marginal land were enclosed from the later eighteenth century onwards. Map evidence shows a landscape that has changed little in the last 100 or so years, although some minor boundary loss has occurred.

#### *Archaeological and Historic Content*

Abermeurig has been the home of the Edwardes, Rogers and Rogers Lewis Families and was once an estate of over 3000 acres. The present house dates mainly to around 1800 when it was substantially rebuilt, although elements of an earlier residence have been retained (Jones 2000, 7). Abermeurig is now Grade II listed as a good country house of the Georgian period, which has retained its regional character. The principal archaeological interest on this holding relates to features associated with estate planning as identified on nineteenth century maps (OS 1831, 1888, 1889) but which may be contemporary with the rebuilding. The house is within a secluded setting of plantation trees and gardens with a separate range of outbuildings to the south. The views towards the Aeron and beyond overlook a large park with mixed deciduous and coniferous trees present. Elements of this planned landscape survive today, although some of the features identifiable on historic map sources have disappeared.

#### *Key Objective*

As a group, the mansion, gardens and parkland at Abermeurig are of considerable interest, and historical importance. Priority should be given to preserving the overall appearance of this estate landscape, and to ensuring that surviving estate features are appropriately and sympathetically maintained.

A key part of retaining the estate quality of the landscape will be the maintenance of former parkland to the north of the house, through the re-establishment of an appropriate planting regime. This planting regime will supplement the surviving specimen trees.

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## **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
1	<b>ABERMEURIG FARMSTEAD</b> ( <a href="#">55068</a> )	<b>Post Med farmstead</b>	<b>SN56365650</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Specific</b>
	The Georgian mansion and home farm of Abermeurig. Includes a range of outbuildings around a farmyard to the south. The site of this farmstead has a long history, which pre-dates the current range of buildings, and remains of earlier buildings may survive beneath the current ground surface. For this reason the farmstead should be treated as an archaeologically sensitive area. <i>Visited</i> 06/10/2005 (HGM)				
	<b>ABERMEURIG</b> ( <a href="#">53115</a> )	<b>Post Med lodge</b>	<b>SN5639056522</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Generic</b>
	A building to the north-east of Abermeurig Mansion, now roofless and covered with creepers. This building is called 'the lodge' by the owner. The roof was lost when a tree fell on it several years ago, and it is now retained as a decorative garden feature, and is covered with creeping plants. <i>Visited</i> 06/10/2005 (HGM)				



**'The Lodge'**

An old quarry is marked on the OS 1st edition map of 1889, apparently having fallen out of use by that time. It is not identified on later maps. Current condition unknown, not seen during archaeological farm visit.

## **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)

## **Specific Management Requirements for individual archaeological and historic features.**

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

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

If any excavation work is to be carried out in the vicinity of the farmstead, please contact Cambria Archaeology.

## 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
2	CAE-MELYN ( <a href="#">10050</a> )	Post Med cottage	SN56445626	B	Specific

A small building is marked in this location on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1889), and on the second edition (1905), but is not named on either. It also appears to be marked on the Old Series Ordnance Survey map of 1834. It was described, when visited by RCAHMW in 1981 as 'a small cottage with clay walls and a slate roof'.



**Cae Melyn roadside cottage**

Clay, or 'clom' (as it is called in Wales) was a cheap and versatile building material, and is likely to have been sourced locally. The vernacular nature of the building makes it probable that it was originally roofed with thatch (a material which was also readily sourced from nearby). The RCAHMW record from 1981 states that it was roofed with slate, which may have replaced an earlier roof of thatch. At the time of the Tir Gofal archaeological farm visit the building was entirely roofed with corrugated tin.

Unfortunately it was not possible to get into the building to view the roof construction, or assess the internal structure and condition. These may hold important information about the development of the building, and allow a more accurate assessment of its origins. The present owner of Abermeurig recalls that it was used by chapel-goers to stable horses during services. It seems unlikely that the building was originally intended for this use (it certainly does not resemble nurse-built stables), but was re-used for this after Canel

Abermeurig, was built. Its proximity to the road, and the clom construction both suggest that it may have originated as a small road-side squatter dwelling. Abermeurig house has owned the surrounding land for centuries, and it seems unlikely that this cottage was officially a part of the estate.



**The southern gable-end of the cottage**

More recent attachments of corrugated tin outshuts have been added over the years, and these have served to protect parts of the original building against which they stand. These additions should not be disregarded as modern, and therefore unimportant, but rather as part of the evolving building. The present owner of Abermeurig remembers the tin extension at the north-east end, being built as a garage to house a neighbour's car. The hinges on the doors of this element are very large and quite ornate, and have clearly been re-used from a much grander building, probably from within the estate.



**Detail of hinges, probably re-used from an estate building**

The cottage is now unused, but has survived in reasonable condition, and every effort should be made to prevent further deterioration of the fabric of the structure. This is especially important as it is constructed of clom. The overall importance of buildings such as this is high, as the survival rate for clom buildings is generally low. Other examples are known from the surrounding area, and this part of Ceredigion may be special, both in terms of the incidence of survival of clom buildings, and also the extent to which clom was used regularly as a building material. Every effort should be made to maintain the building appropriately, to help ensure its future survival. *Visited 06/10/2005 (HGM)*

**3** **ABERMEURIG** **Post Med** **SN56365650 A LB2** **Specific**  
**FARMSTEAD** ([55068](#)) **farmstead**

The Georgian mansion (PRN 7017) and home farm of Abermeurig. Historic map sources show outbuildings grouped around a yard to the south of the house. The layout of the remaining farmstead is based on the plan seen on the Ordnance Survey first edition (1888. 89). Some of the buildings shown on this source have now

been demolished or abandoned. The range at the southwest end of the farmstead, which included a stable and pigsties, was demolished in the late twentieth century. A group of small buildings, (marked on the first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps, to the south of the house) are recalled by the owner as having been pens for ducks and geese, and a woodshed - these are now gone.

The remains of the historic farmstead now consist of an estate-style one-and-a-half storey coach house and cow shed, built of rubble-stone, to a T-shaped plan. The north wing has a chimney at the south end, and two tall entrances for coaches in its north-west elevation. The area at the front of the coach house entrance retains a cobbled pavement.



**The north wing, showing coach entrances with modern doors, and cobbled pavement**

The original doors on this carriage-house have been removed, and replaced with galvanised steel doors. The fate of the pre-existing doors is unknown, but the large, ornate strap hinges, which can now be seen supporting the doors of the corrugated iron annex on the clom cottage (PRN 10,050) may originally have supported the coach house doors. Where original door and window openings survive, these are gently arched, with stone voussoirs. However, some have been substantially modified, and the replacement openings have straight lintels. An evenly spaced row of small arch-heads with stone voussoirs, in the southern elevation of the western wing, appears to represent blocked up windows or ventilation openings. Visited 06/10/2005 (HGM)



**Row of small arch-heads, with more recent openings below**

**ABERMEURIG HOUSE** Post Med major SN56405625 A LB2  
[\(7017\)](#) dwelling

Abermeurig is a three-storey country house, Grade II listed by Cadw (ref. BA 6(4)) as a 'good Georgian country house of c1800 which has retained its regional character'. It was recorded by the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments Wales (RCAHMW) in 1976. It is described by Cadw as a late eighteenth to early early nineteenth century country house, owned by the Edwards family in the early eighteenth century, and probably rebuilt in the later eighteenth century by John Edwardes (1723-96), who inherited in 1780. The house is said to have been burnt and rebuilt in about 1800, and around that time passed by marriage to the Rogers family of Hafod, Nantcwnlle. Dr John Rogers (1786-1846) owned the house in the early nineteenth century, and the present owner is a descendant of this family. The house itself is three-storey, roughcast with slate roof, and stone chimney end stacks, the north stack is very large and has an external chimneybreast. On the north-east elevation, are sash windows with louvred wooden shutters. There is a central 6-panel door with a timber columned porch. On the south-east elevation a twentieth century conservatory has been added. To the rear (south-west) side is a two-storey outshut. A single storey wing to the north-west end is unusually apse-ended. The Cadw listing records that it was a dairy, although the present owner believes it to have been a private chapel. A high status dwelling has existed on this site for a long time, and earlier elements are present within the fabric of the building now extant. The house, as a dwelling, falls outside of the Tir Gofal scheme. *Visited 06/10/2005 (HGM)*

## **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 2 on MAP 1

CAE-MELYN ([10050](#))

SN56445626

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

Every effort should be made to maintain the building appropriately, to help ensure its future survival.

The walls should be protected from further deterioration, in particular the north-west wall, which has lost all of its protective coating of lime, and is currently undergoing weathering of the core earth fabric. Ideally this should be achieved by re-applying a protective render, but in the short term, preventing further deterioration is the main aim, and this could be achieved by creating a canopy over the wall with corrugated tin. It should be ensured that this does not involve damaging the existing earth wall further by using large numbers of fixings - the aim is to create a protective canopy, rather than a permanently fixed cover.

Leaf litter and other dead vegetation should be cleared away from the base of the wall, as debris may be preventing adequate run-off, and causing damp to penetrate the wall base. Scrub control may be necessary to ensure that the fabric is not damaged by roots, and creeping plants.

Site 3 on MAP 1

ABERMEURIG FARMSTEAD ([55068](#))

SN56365650

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

This building has been granted planning permission to be converted for use as holiday cottages. However, until the conversion is undertaken, the building should be maintained in a stable condition, and fabric, fixtures and fittings should not be allowed to deteriorate.

## iii) HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS:

### Location and Description:

A historic park or garden is a discrete area of land laid out in an ornamental way, originally for the pleasure and use of its owner. A sub-category of park is the deer park, laid out for management and containment of deer.

Historic parks of national importance are included on the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales. There are also many non-registered parks of lesser quality but which, nevertheless, form an important component in the historic environment and require appropriate management.

The following parks and gardens have been identified:

	Name (& PRN)	Period/Site type	NGR	Status SAM/listing	Management required
4	ABERMEURIG ( <a href="#">55069</a> )	Post Med park	SN5634256615	A	Specific

To the northwest of Abermeurig house is an area of former parkland, which is currently used for grazing. On

the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1888, 1889), a large field is depicted, with scattered coniferous and deciduous trees marked, protected from the north and west by a shelter belt of trees. The area is still dotted with surviving specimen trees, and these will be retained (a Canadian redwood which has died also survives in an upright position). The present owner can remember the house from his childhood, and is able to remember the species of many of the specimen trees, and their locations, including several which have now gone from the park.



**View of the park, to the north of Abermeurig Mansion**

This oral history, in conjunction with positional information available on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, can be used to establish an appropriate planting regime for the parkland. The first edition Ordnance Survey map is sufficiently detailed to show the location of individual trees, and whether they were coniferous or broadleaf. The species still represented include Canadian Redwood, Oak, and Spruce. The owner remembers that several of the specimens were Elm, but these will have to be replaced with another appropriate species, such as Beech, because of the problem of Dutch Elm Disease. *Visited 06/10/2005 (HGM)*

**5** **ABERMEURIG ([55070](#))** **Post Med garden** **SN56405650** **A** **Specific**

A walled garden to the east of Abermeurig Mansion. Rectangular in plan, and depicted on the Ordnance Survey first edition map with formal divisions between beds, created by a grid pattern of paths. The walled garden would have been used to grow produce for the house. The surviving eastern wall is constructed of stone, and has been rebuilt in a number of places. The north wall is one of the most interesting features of the garden. It is constructed of earth (or 'clom' as it is known in Wales). This wall is currently overgrown with vegetation, and it is difficult to ascertain its overall condition, although there was evidence of collapse in some areas. The top of the wall has a corrugated iron cap shaped as a roof with a central ridge. This would have protected the wall from water penetration, which causes clom to deteriorate rapidly.

Clom was often used where stone was in short supply, however, in the context of the Abermeurig estate, it seems unlikely that its use was an economy measure. It is more probably a recognition of the thermal properties of clom, which is very effective at retaining heat, and does not get as cold as stone. The inner side of the wall is south facing and this combined with the thermal properties of clom, would have created a more favourable growing environment for less hardy, more delicate plants, perhaps some exotics. The collection of exotic plant species was fashionable amongst the wealthy during the nineteenth century, and their successful cultivation became a badge of social status.

The garden has been ploughed in the past, but this does not preclude the survival of subsurface remains of the paths marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. Evidence from other formal gardens demonstrates that paths can survive in areas which have been ploughed quite heavily. The owner remembers that the northern part of the garden used to be an orchard. It is therefore more likely that buried evidence of the formal layout survives in this area. The importance of this garden as part of the estate landscape around Abermeurig Mansion is high. Every effort should be made to preserve the remaining walls, in particular the northern clom wall. whose fabric hints at the pastimes and preoccupations of the owners of the house during

the nineteenth century. *Visited 06/10/2005 (HGM)*



**Through thick vegetation, the corrugated tin 'roof' on the clom wall of the garden can be seen**

[\(53114\)](#)

**Post Med ha-ha**

**SN5632156550 B**

**Generic**

A deep ditch runs around at least part of Abermeurig House, separating it from the parkland to the north-west. This may have functioned as a drainage ditch, as the area to the north of the house is quite boggy and susceptible to flooding. However, the location suggests it had a role within the designed estate landscape as a 'ha-ha'. Ha-has were created as a means of separating the park from the garden, and immediate environs of the mansion. They were deep ditches, with a slope to the park side, and a vertical scarp on the side of the house. This prevented animals that roamed in the park from entering the area immediately next to the house, whilst allowing uninterrupted views of the park, without any visible hedges or fences. The aim was to create an environment, which appeared completely natural. These 'naturalised' landscapes had usually been designed, often at great expense to the owner, with clumps of carefully selected, and positioned trees, and were viewed as a reflection of the refined taste, and therefore status of the owner. *Visited 06/10/2005 (HGM)*

## **Historic Environment Objectives:**

The purpose of the management is to:

- Maintain or restore the historic configuration and visual character of the historic garden or parkland.
- Ensure the long-term preservation of features associated with the historic garden or parkland.

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

## **Generic Management prescriptions**

1. Original features identified in the agreement must be retained and maintained. Repairs (including repairs to walling and fences) should be unobtrusive and make use of appropriate traditional materials and methods of construction. (Capital Works Option)
2. When repair is not possible, replacement features must be modelled on originals, using the same materials and methods of construction. (Capital

Works Option)

3. Drives and historic tracks together with associated walling, revetment and bridges identified in the agreement must be maintained and, where necessary, restored using appropriate traditional materials and methods of construction. (Capital Works Option).

4. New tracks should not be created.

### **Specific Management Requirements for individual Park and Garden features:**

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

**Site 4 on MAP 1**

**ABERMEURIG ([55069](#))**

**SN5634256615**

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

The planting regime for former parkland to the north of Abermeurig house should be prioritised within the Tir Gofal management plan.

The following is a list of specimen positions, based on information marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, and the recollections of the owner (see locational map):

1. SN56,414 56,598 Canadian Redwood, surviving upright, but dead, leave as habitat, and replace when necessary\*.
2. SN56,396 56,619 Elm, now gone. Replace with different appropriate species (oak/ beech)
3. SN56,435 56,618 Oak, still alive.
4. SN56,343 56,640 Elm, now gone. Replace with different appropriate species (oak/ beech)
5. SN56,349 56,679 Oak, now gone. Replant.
6. SN56,293 56,627 Ash, still alive.
7. SN56,296 56,636 Unknown, conifer. No longer extant. Replace with other coniferous species (at owner's discretion).
8. SN56,376 56,654 Spruce coppice - still extant but with several trees missing from the original group. Replant missing trees by using old photograph (in owner's possession) as reference.

\*The dead Canadian Redwood can be retained for its habitat value, and can be replaced with a living specimen when the owner wishes.

**Site 5 on MAP 1**

**ABERMEURIG ([55070](#))**

**SN56405650**

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

The importance of the walled garden is high. Ideally, the northern clom wall should be renovated, and failing this every effort should be made to protect it from further deterioration. (See management prescription for Cae-Melyn Cottage PRN 10050)

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*This HE2 report supercedes the information given in the [HE1 report](#) for this farm.*

*Sources consulted:*

**Maps**

**Ordnance Survey Old Series, Sheet LVII, 1834**

**Ordnance Survey 1st. Ed. Cardiganshire (25" to 1 mile) Sheet XXV.12; 1888**

**Ordnance Survey 1st. Ed. Cardiganshire (25" to 1 mile) Sheet XXVI.09; 1889**

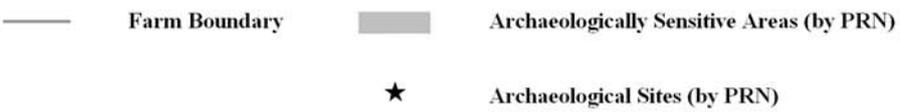
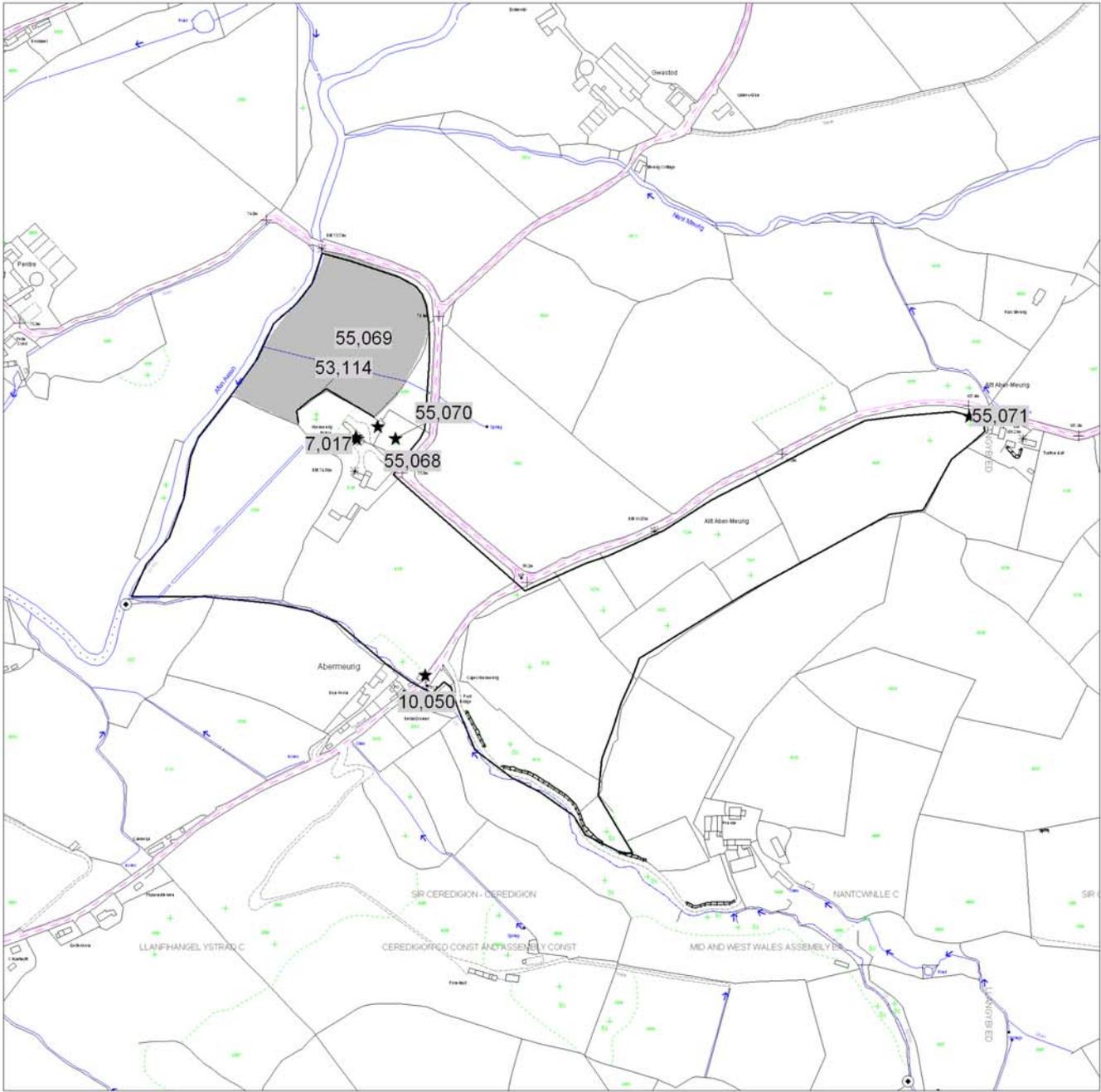
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**Hugh and Caroline Charles-Jones 2000: 'The Francis Jones Late Wales Herald at Arms Historic Cardiganshire Homes and their Families'. Brawdy Books, Newport Pems.**

**Cadw listed building descriptions: Abermeurig. Ref. BA 6(4)**

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