

A SURVEY OF DEFENDED ENCLOSURES IN CEREDIGION, 2006: GAZETTEER OF ORDNANCE SURVEY GRID SQUARES SN54 AND SN55



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A SURVEY OF DEFENDED ENCLOSURES IN CEREDIGION, 2006: GAZETTEER OF ORDNANCE SURVEY GRID SQUARES SN54 AND SN55

Gan / By

K Murphy, R Ramsey and M Page

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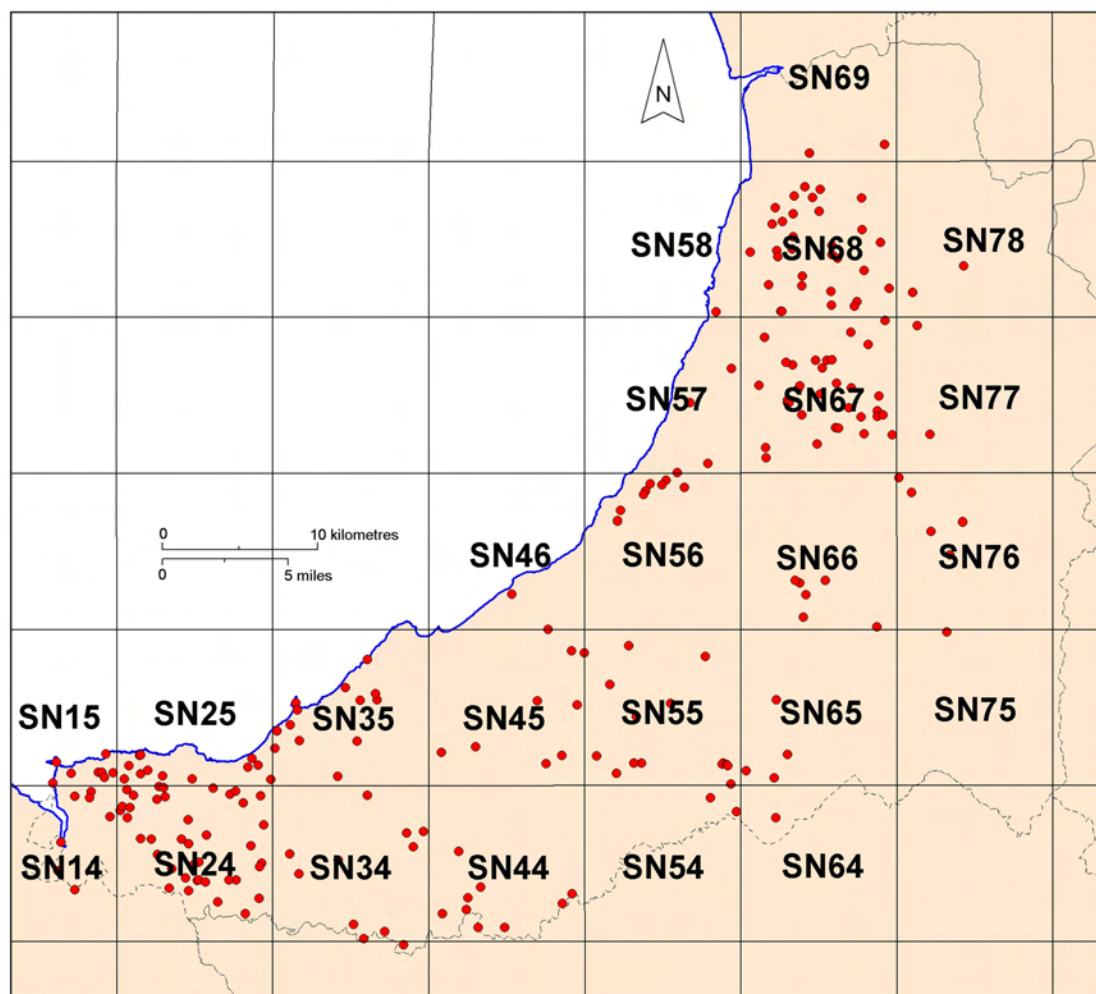
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Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA19
6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Ebost: cambria@acadat.com Gwefan: www.acadat.com

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

SITE GAZETTEER OF 10KM GRID SQUARES SN54 and 55

For ease of handling the site gazetteers have been arranged into Ordnance Survey 10km grid squares. Each gazetteer consists of one or more 1:50,000 maps showing the overall location of each site followed by the individual entries for each site. Each entry comprises: a printout from the Historic Environment Record, including a site description; a 1:500 map; and where available a ground photograph and an aerial photograph.

Many of the 1:500 maps show details of the site plotted from cropmarks shown on aerial photographs. These plots are supplied by RCAHMW Crown Copyright ©.



Index to the gazetteers of defended enclosures and related sites. Gazetteers are arranged by 10km grid squares.



1:50,000 Distribution map of sites in 10km grid square SN54.

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1:50,000 Distribution map of sites in 10km grid square SN55.

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240 DERRY ORMOND

PRN 240 NGR SN58845145

SITE NAME DERRY ORMOND

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE; ENCLOSURE FORM Cropmark

PERIOD Iron Age; Prehistoric CONDITION D

SITE STATUS SAM

DESCRIPTION

This is a circular, bivallate, cropmark enclosure. It is located on fairly flat land, just off the high point of a rounded summit at 210m above sea level. The summit lies a few metres higher 150m to the north. The land falls steeply away from the site to the south and east; more gently to the west. Aerial photographs show two concentric ditches of a circular enclosure, approximately 150m diameter. The ditches are about 10m apart. The ditches show best on the north and west sides. On the southwest side the ditches come to within 30m of the ramparts of the Iron Age fort PRN 4800, where they seem to take a rocky outcrop in their circuit. In 2005, the site was under improved pasture.

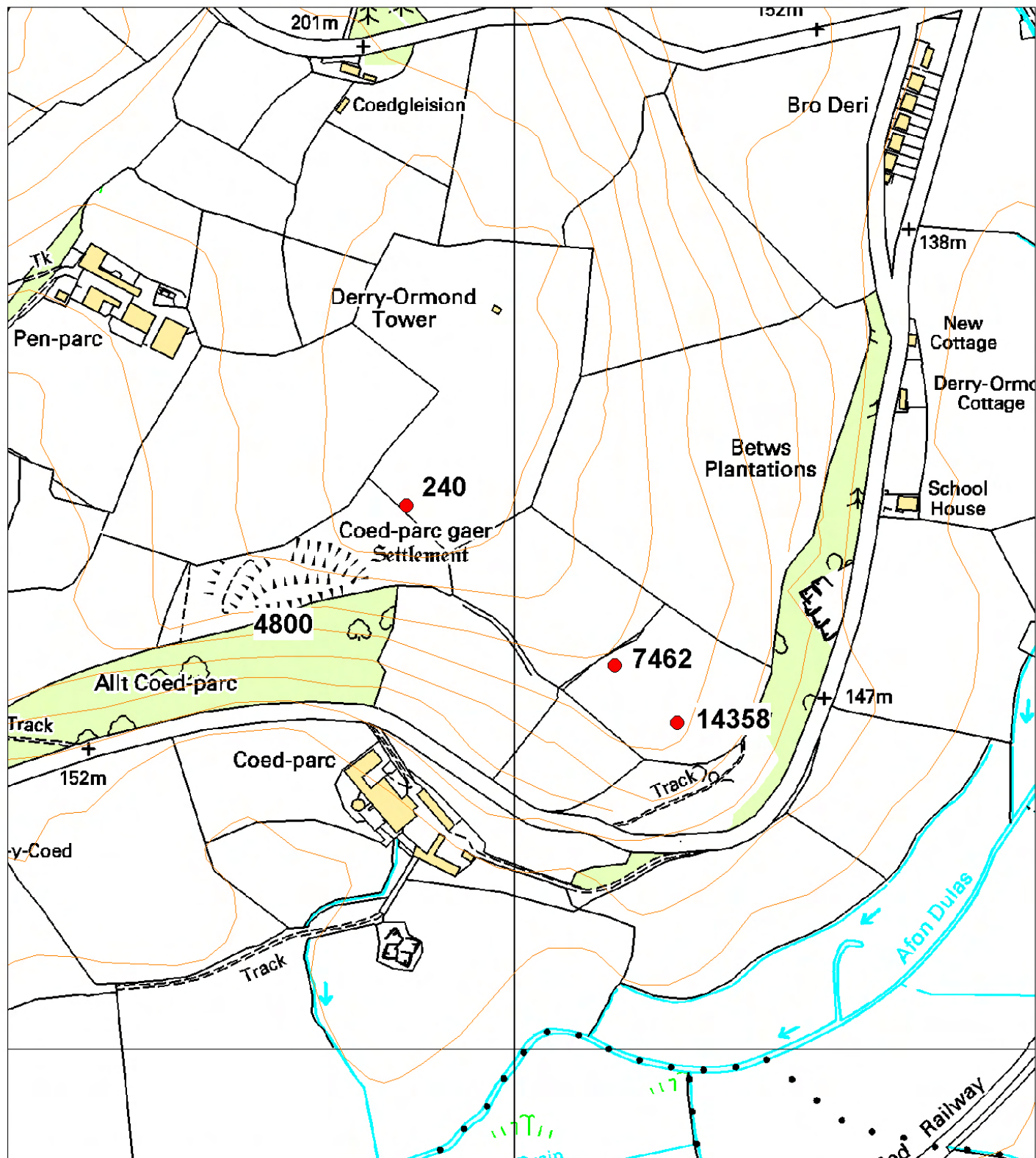
K Murphy 24 May 2005



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



Ground photograph looking over site of cropmark.



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Scale: 1:500

781 CASTELL OLWEN

PRN 781 NGR SN58024923

SITE NAME CASTELL OLWEN

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE; CASTLE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age; Medieval CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

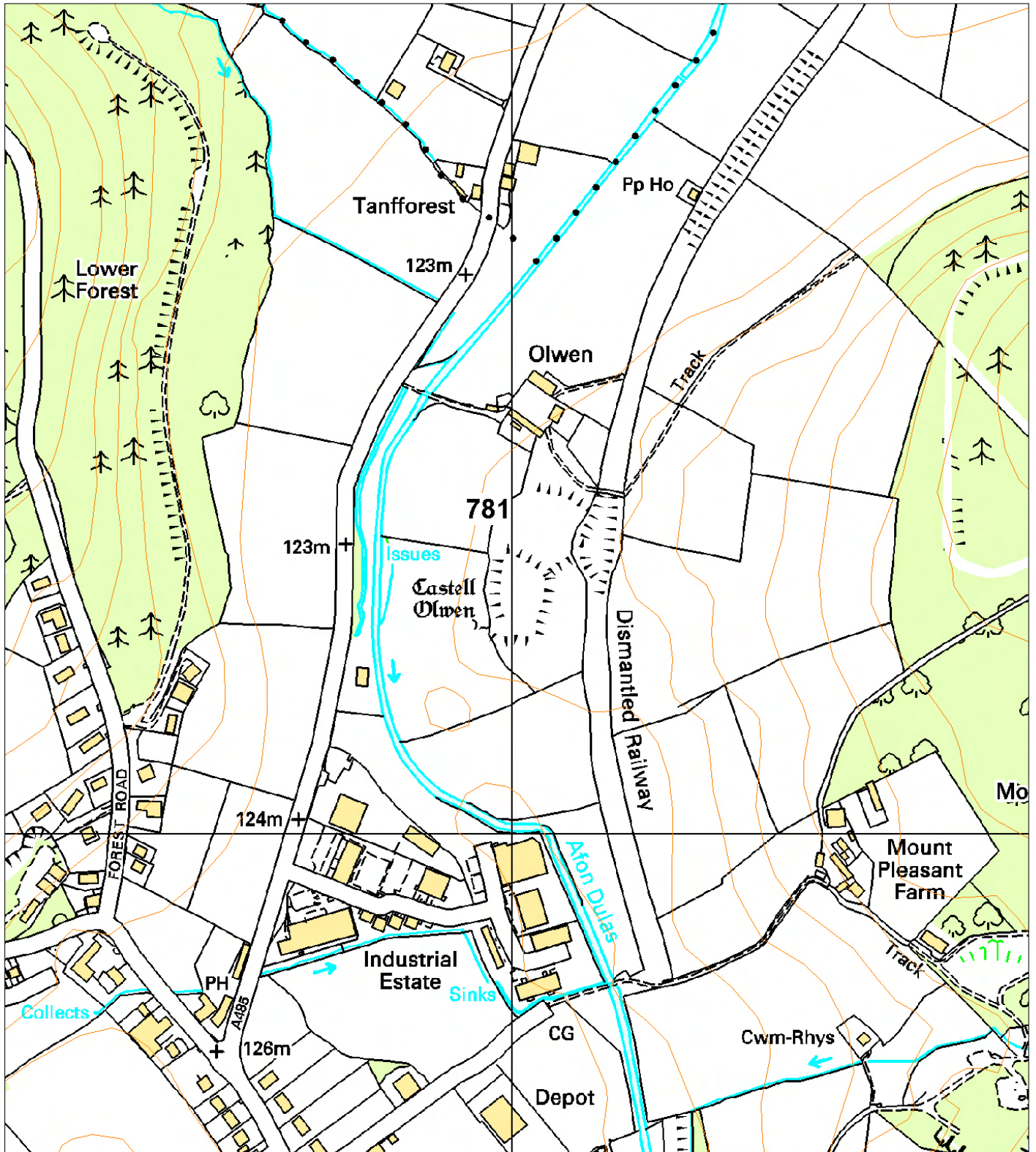
DESCRIPTION

Castell Olwen occupies a prominent bluff above the Afon Dulais at 130m above sea level. Land falls away steeply to the north, west and east down to the valley floor some 10m below, but the site is overlooked from the east. It is a pear-shaped enclosure, 115m north - south and 55m east - west, sub-divided into a north section and south section by what seems to be a natural crease, but which may have been exploited by a ditch to create a bipartite enclosure. A bank and ditch 23m wide and up to 4m high defend the weakest, northern side. These defences fade around the remainder of the circuit, but are largely traceable as a low bank and a terrace or shelf representing the ditch. A gap on the northwest side may indicate an entrance. The site is probably an Iron Age fort, but King lists it as a possible medieval castle site. The interior of the site is under improved pasture and the defences are under woodland.

K Murphy 15 December 2005 - from various sources.



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



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Scale: 1:500

786 BRYN MAEN CAERAU (CELLAN)

PRN 786 NGR SN59704836

SITE NAME BRYN MAEN CAERAU

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

This sub-circular earthwork site is approximately 0.8 hectares in enclosed area, 120m from northeast to southwest and 100m wide from west to east. It is located on a river terrace a few metres above the Teifi flood plain at 120m above sea level. The area of the enclosure is entirely occupied by a part of the modern village of Cellan consisting of mostly 20th century houses but also a 19th century pub and other older buildings including a farm to the northeast of the site. The defensive bank survives for about 80% of its circuit and forms the rear property boundary for the 20th century housing. Because of this access from the road is limited although parts of the bank can be viewed between the buildings. A better view of the earthworks would be gained from the fields surrounding the area or from aerial photographs.

On the river-side the earthwork runs along the edge of the terrace at approximately 2 metres in height. On the other, east, side an earthwork approximately 1 metre high runs behind the houses topped in places with a stonewall/hedge bank, a later feature. A ditch also exists on the east side however it was not possible to view this on the visit. The B4343 runs through the enclosure from south to north possibly via the original entrances. The southern entrance was partially excavated in the various excavations between 1979 and 1988. The report describes a ditched track way entrance approaching from the south although this has now been entirely built over. The location of an opposite entrance to the north is debatable but is unlikely due to the topography.

Excavation Report

During building operation starting in 1979 the Cellan enclosure was excavated, this culminated in a controlled excavation by Cambria Archaeology in 1988. The report is published in Archaeology in Wales 2001 Vol. 41, p. 10-20. The Cellan sites demonstrated a long history of occupation possibly dating to the Neolithic certainly to the early Bronze Age. An older palisaded enclosure was succeeded by a rampart and ditch a common occurrence at sites of this type in Wales in the late Bronze Age/ early Iron Age.

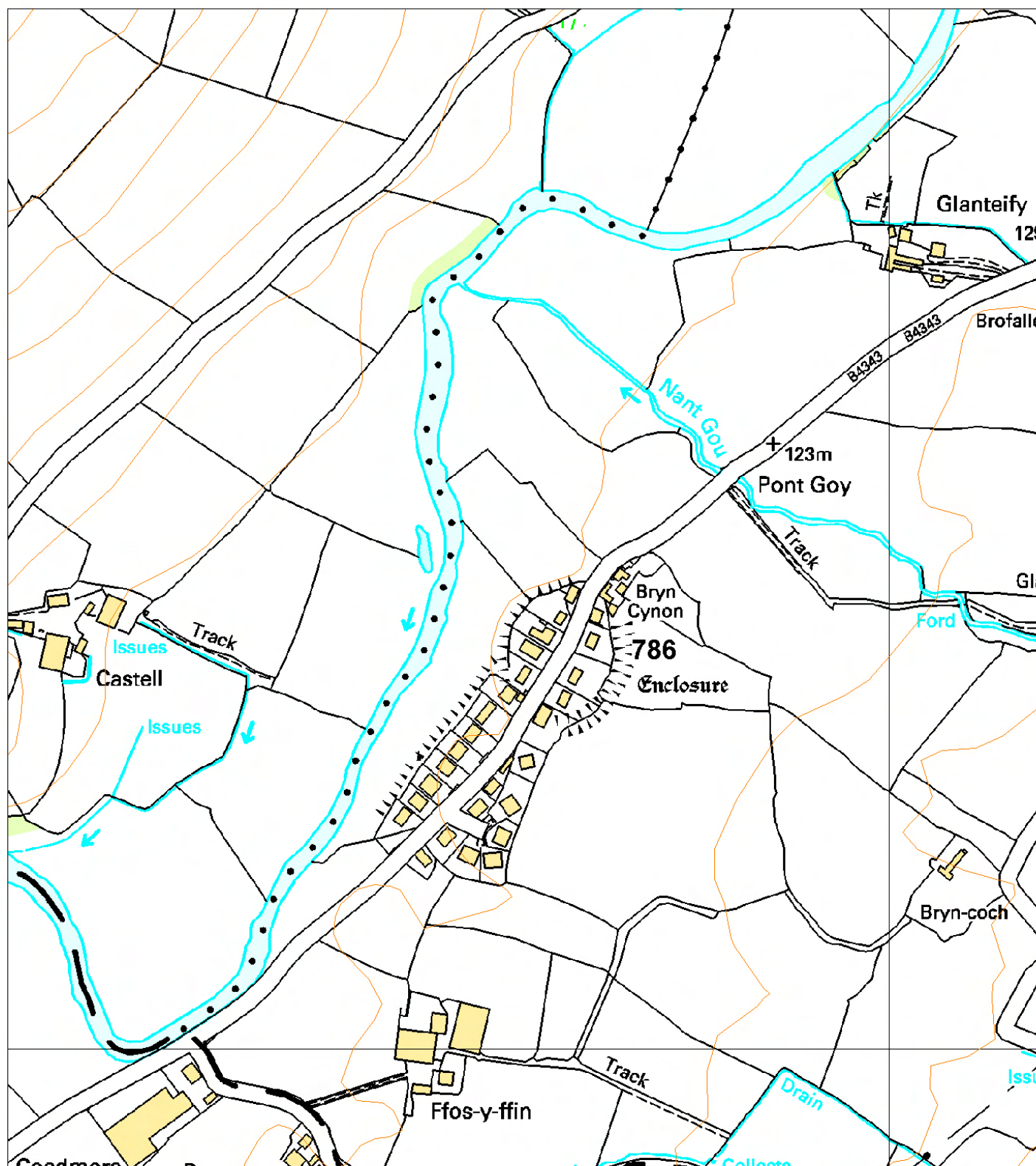
Robert Skinner 27/5/05



Aerial photograph RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference 2002-cs-1639.



Ground photograph within enclosure.



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Scale: 1:500

3987 CASTELL CWMERE

PRN 3987 NGR SN53305442

SITE NAME CASTELL CWMERE

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS SAM;ACK

DESCRIPTION

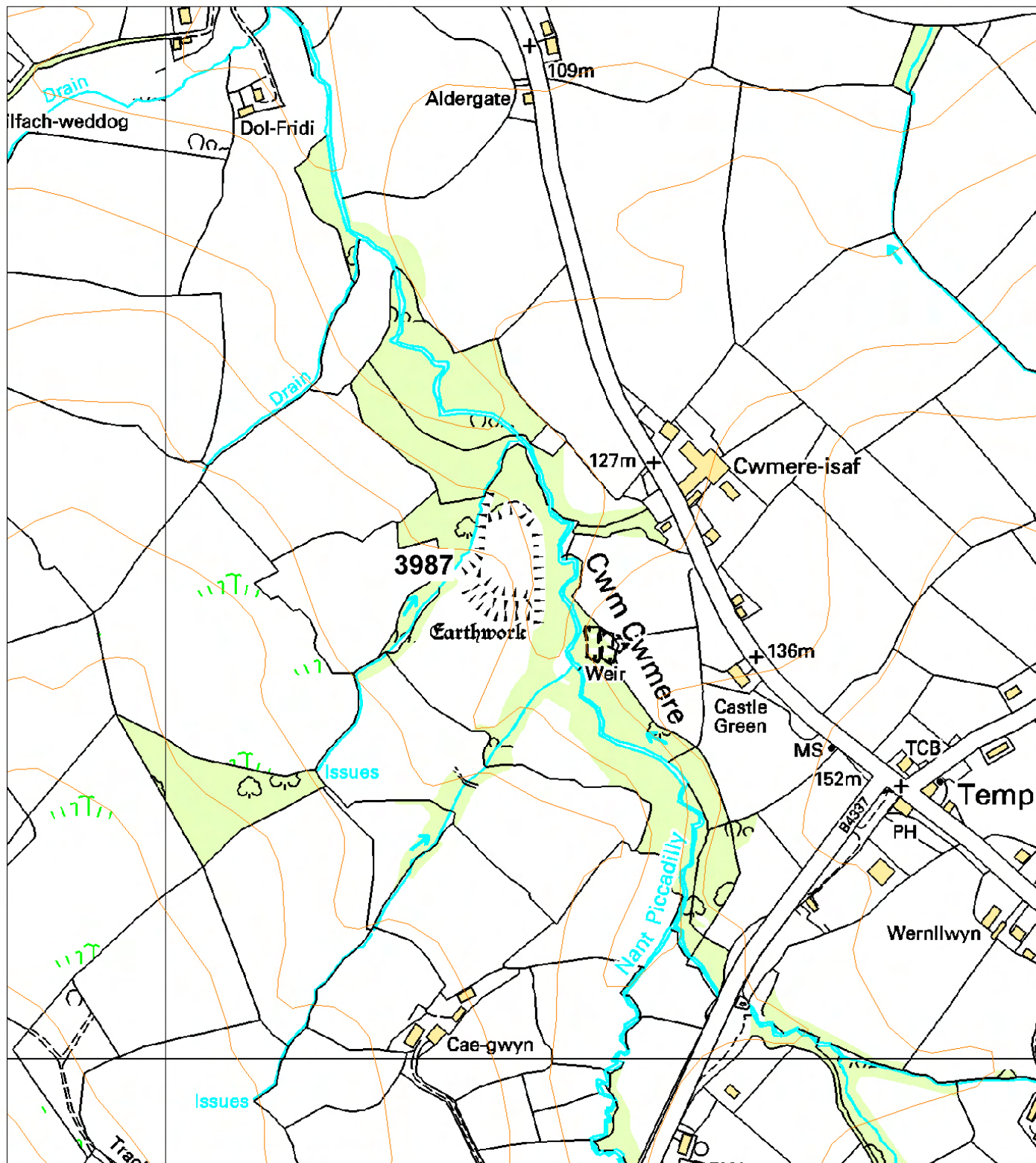
Castell Cwmere is a promontory fort naturally well-defended to the north and east by steep slopes that fall away into Cwmere, and to the west by a steep slope that falls away to a small stream. A substantial curving length of bank and ditch, with traces of a counterscarp bank, defends the easily approachable southern side of the promontory. The bank rises to 3m above the interior of the fort, and 4m - 5m above the ditch. A gap in the defences on the southeast side indicates the position of the entrance. The remainder of the circuit has no obvious built defence except for evidence of scarping on the north end of the promontory, where there may be a secondary entrance. The interior is roughly triangular in shape, 70m north - south and 50m east - west, and slopes from south to north. Hogg rejected this site for an Iron Age fort, and suggested that it is more likely to be medieval in date, on account of the substantial defences. However, aerial photographs show what seems to be a classic Iron Age promontory fort. The interior of the fort is now under improved pasture and the steep slopes and defences under woodland,

K Murphy 15 December 2005 - from various sources



Aerial photograph RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference 99-cs-2368.

Ground photograph



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Scale: 1:500

3988 CRIBYN CLOTA

PRN 3988 NGR SN53625146

SITE NAME CRIBYN CLOTA

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS SAM;Former ACK

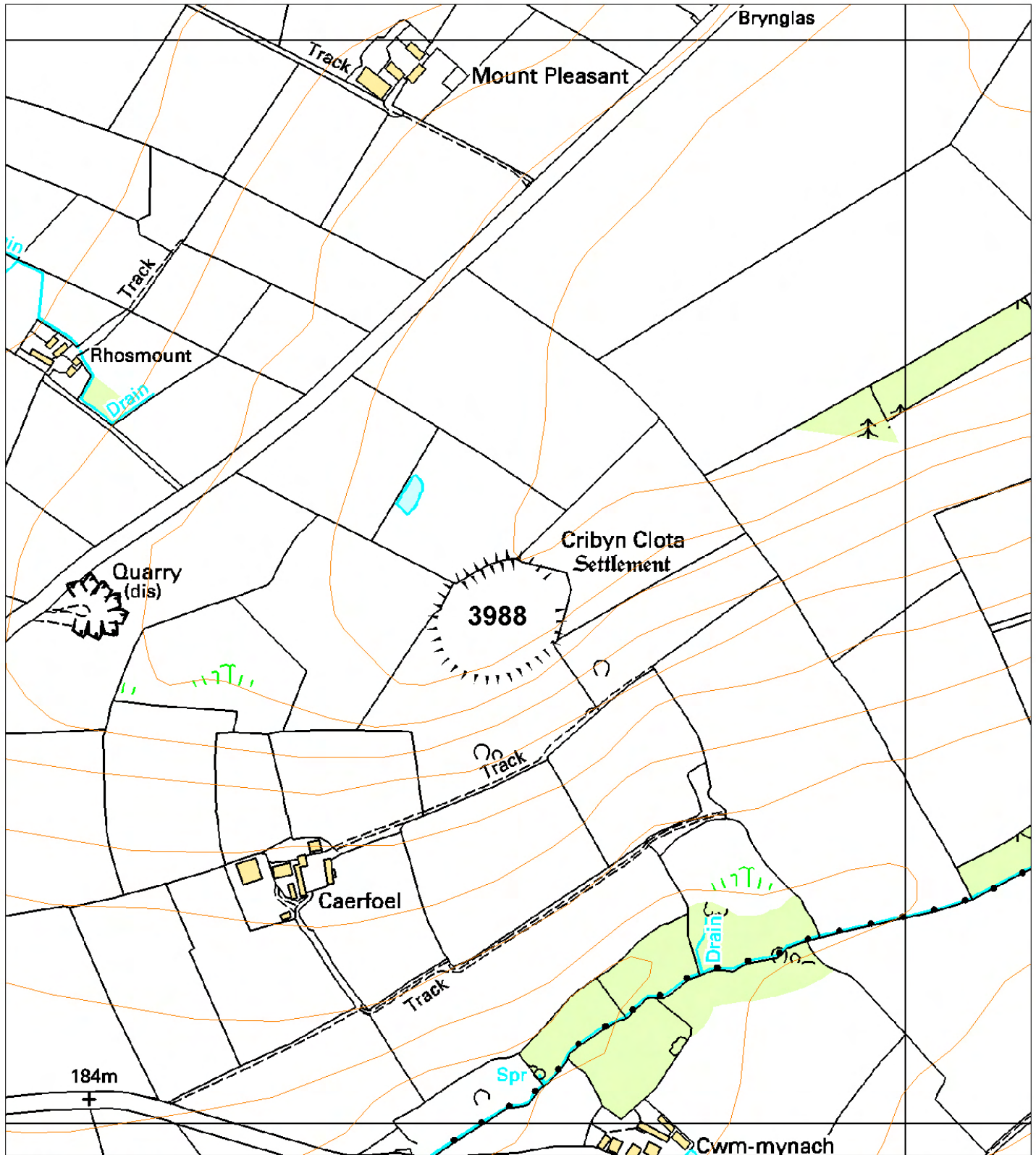
DESCRIPTION

Cribyn clota (Cribyn Clotas) is a sub-circular defended enclosure located towards the end of a rounded hill at 250m above sea level. To the north, west, south and east of the site land slopes gently away, but to the northeast there is a gentle rise of a few metres onto the highest point some 400m distant. It is a univallate site, with a weak bank up to 0.8m above the interior and 1.8m high externally. There is little trace of a ditch, and the location of the entrance is unclear. Internally the site is approximately 112m diameter. The interior is under improved pasture and the gorse and bracken.

K Murphy 15 December 2005 - taken from various sources.



Aerial photograph RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference 99-cs-2336.



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Scale: 1:500

3989 CAER-FACH

PRN 3989 NGR SN53135147

SITE NAME CAER-FACH

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age; Medieval CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

The site consists of a small oval earthwork located on a west-facing slope at approximately 226m. The bank is in good condition standing at approximately 2 metres high and 4-5 metres wide. It is well-defined and narrow, approximately 1 metre wide at the crest suggesting that this is not the original earthwork, which would likely to have been more worn down. A post Iron Age remodelling is likely possibly at the time in which the later cottage described below was constructed.

The site has been left as waste ground with a natural invasive growth of deciduous trees, notably sycamore, as well as dense undergrowth, nettles, brambles etc. There are two entrances to the enclosure to the north and south both of which are about 5 metres wide and as such are probably of a late date and are depicted on an 1889 OS map. Due to the unbroken state of the bank one entrance may mask the original. There is a trace of a ditch visible on the north and south side but it is more prominent on the south. The site is depicted on the 1889 OS map with a cottage occupying the west side. This appears roofless on the map suggesting that it was already abandoned at this time. An internal terrace boundary is also visible on this map dividing the area from north to south. The site of the terrace boundary is still visible on the ground but at the time of the visit, May, the cottage was indiscernible. At a previous visit, in February, when the undergrowth was not so substantial the foundations of the cottage could still be made out.

The site is located 410m west, down hill, from the larger hill top site of Cribyn Glota (3988.) It is also only 1.2km from the hill top site Cribyn Gaer (4794) which is visible lying to the southwest.

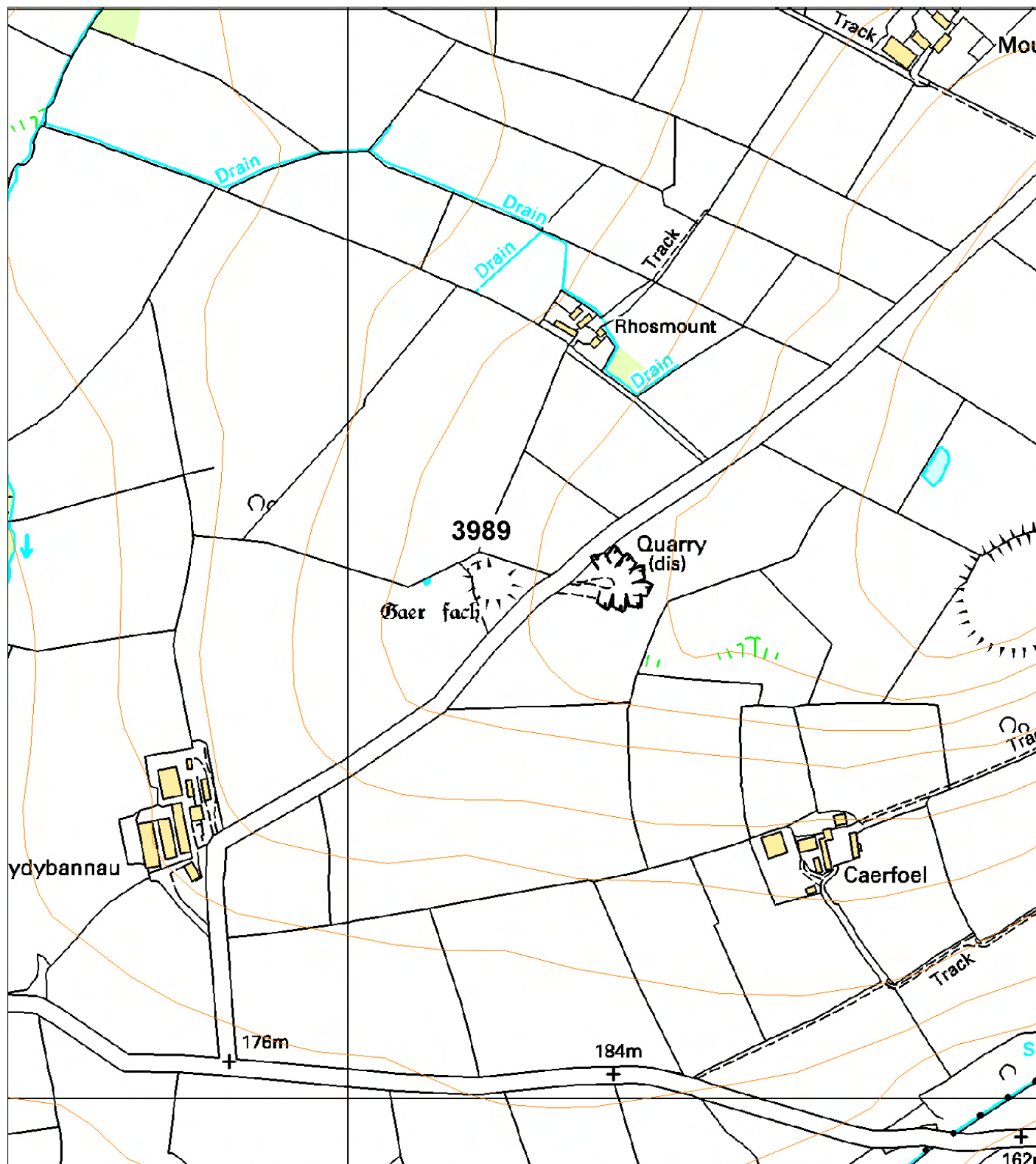
Robert Skinner 27/5/05



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Ground photograph within enclosure showing bank.



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Scale: 1:500

4780 CASTELL PERTHI -MAWR

PRN 4780 NGR SN52805899

SITE NAME CASTELL PERTHI-MAWR

SITE TYPE HILLFORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS SAM

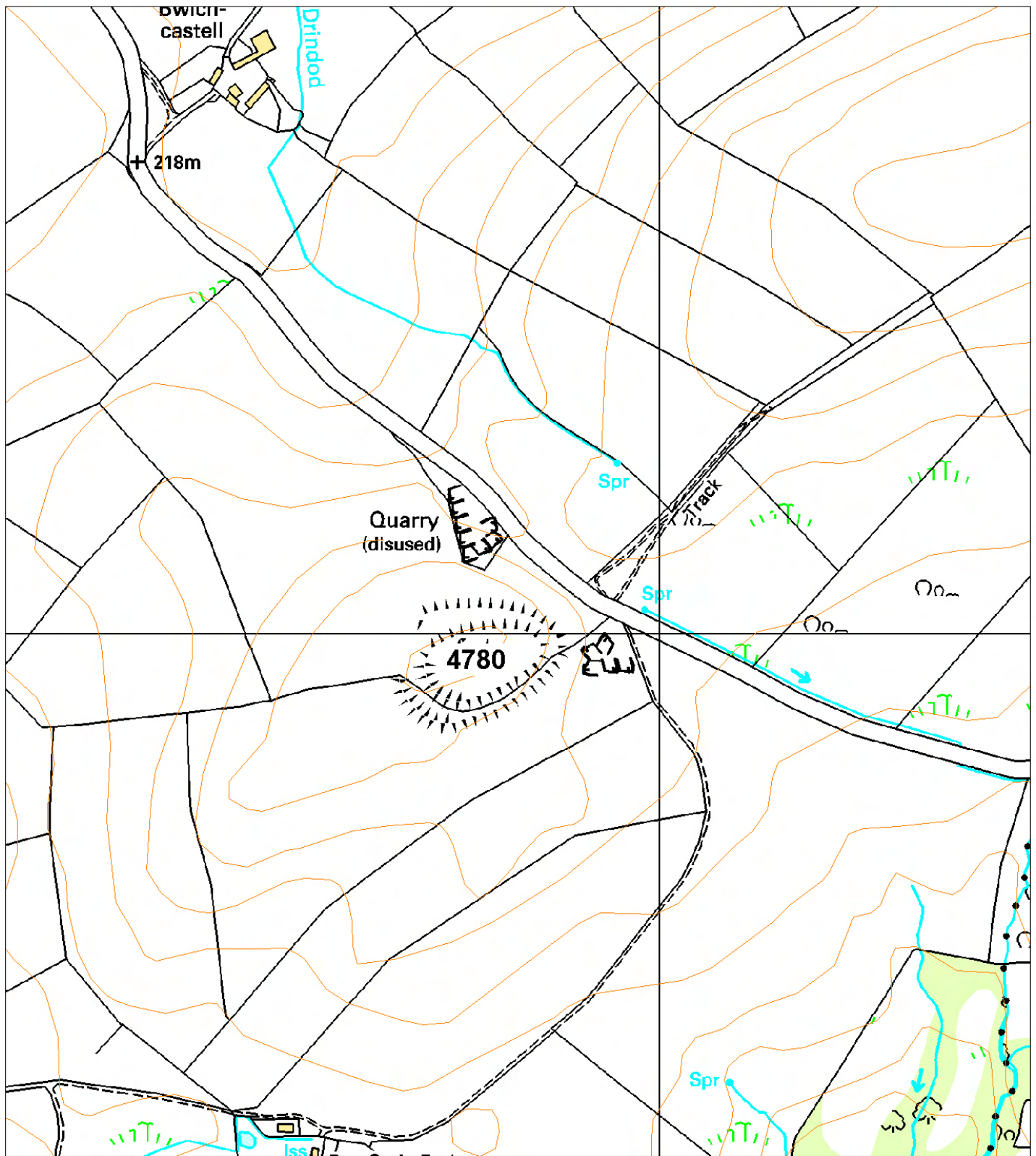
DESCRIPTION

Castell Perthi-mawr is a bivallate hillfort occupying a commanding position at 270m above sea level. The hill slopes steeply away from the site in all directions, but particularly to the east. The ramparts are widely spaced and consist of banks up to 2m high, but with no obvious traces of a ditch. The inner rampart shows traces of dry-stone walling - it is probably likely that both are stone built. The entrance lies on the northwest side. The outer terminals at the entrance are slightly overlapping and possibly club-ended, and the simple gap through the inner bank is off-set from the outer, giving a slight zig-zag entrance arrangement. The oval internal area measures approximately 112m by 60m, and does not seem to have been cultivated. The footings of a round-house 6m in diameter can be made out below the turf, and hollows may mark the site of further houses. Under rough pasture. There is some erosion on the inner face of the inner bank on the west side.

K Murphy 15 December 2005 - taken from various descriptions.



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



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Scale: 1:500

4790 PEN CLAWDD-MAWR

PRN 4790 NGR SN555553

SITE NAME PEN CLAWDD-MAWR

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

This site is situated on the end of an inland promontory. The land falls away sharply to the south, west and north. The level approach to the east is defended by a single earthen bank and ditch. The distance between the inner side of the earthwork and the western slope is approximately 100m. The distance between the south and north slope is approximately 80 metres. The approximate area of the internal site is 0.5 hectares. The remains of the bank are substantial, approximately 2.5m high and about 12m - 15m wide. There is a trace of a ditch of about 0.5 - 1m deep and about 4m wide. A single, simple entrance cuts through the bank on the east side. There is no trace of any defence around the other three steep sides of the site. The interior is flat and taken up with improved pasture. Half of the bank is located within the pasture and has a covering of some gorse. The other half, south of the entrance, is under an overgrown, later hedge bank. The site is largely unthreatened although cattle clearly use the entranceway, which shows signs of having been trampled. Partial access is possible via a public footpath that crosses the field to the southeast of the hedged embankment.

In the Cardigan County History A. Hogg describes the width of the earthwork as 15m. He also quotes Evans from 1931 describing an additional two-three banks and ditches however evidence of these is not apparent today, and given that the field boundaries have not changed for over a century, then this is unlikely.

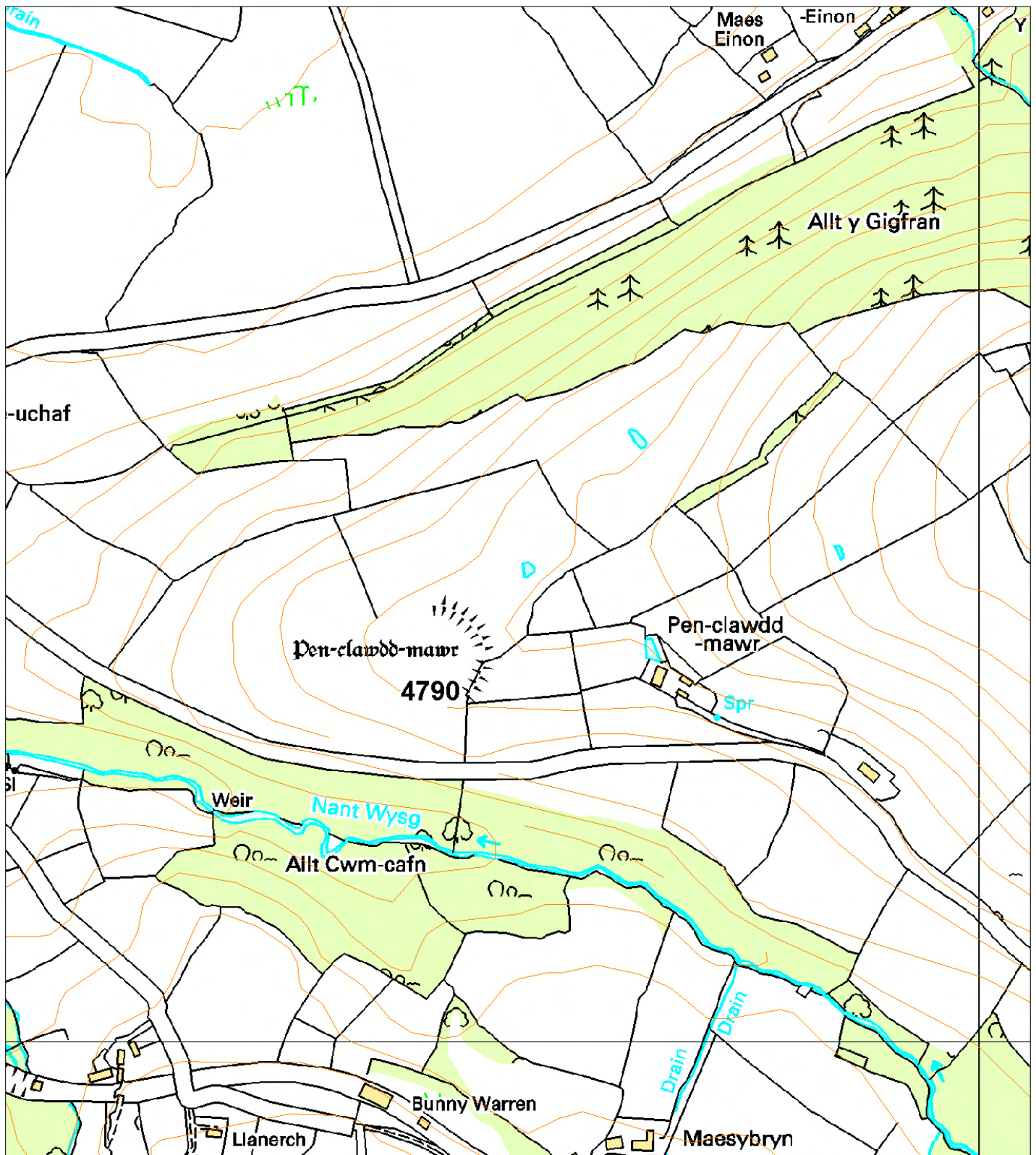
R Skinner 25 May 2005



Aerial photograph RCAHMW Cambria Archaeology.



Ground photograph looking along defensive bank.



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Scale: 1:500

4791 PEN-Y-GAER

PRN 4791 NGR SN577583

SITE NAME PEN-Y-GAER

SITE TYPE HILLFORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Situated on a plateau at the end of a promontory at 230m above sea level, Pen y Gaer is an oval-shaped hillfort. To the north, west, south and southeast land falls away steeply from the site, providing wide-ranging views. To the northeast the land falls away a few metres from the site into a shallow saddle before rising gently but steadily to a rounded summit 350m away. The fort is oval, approximately 130m northeast to southwest and 50m northwest of southeast. The interior is level. On the northwest and southeast sides, where the slope is at its steepest, there is no obvious trace of a defensive bank, but the break of slope is here very sharply defined, and one suspects that excavation would reveal a bank. The most easily approachable side, the northeast end, is defended by a bank, up to 2m high externally, but level with the interior. There is no trace of a ditch, but a simple gap in the northwest end of the bank marks the entrance. A slighter bank running at a right angle, northeast, for 20m from the northeast corner of the fort may be also have a defensive function. The southwest end of the fort, which could be approached up the 'nose' of the promontory, is defended by a bank, up to 2m high externally, and ditch. In 2005, the site was under improved pasture. Gorse clearance had just taken place on the steep southeast slopes towards the top of the slope.

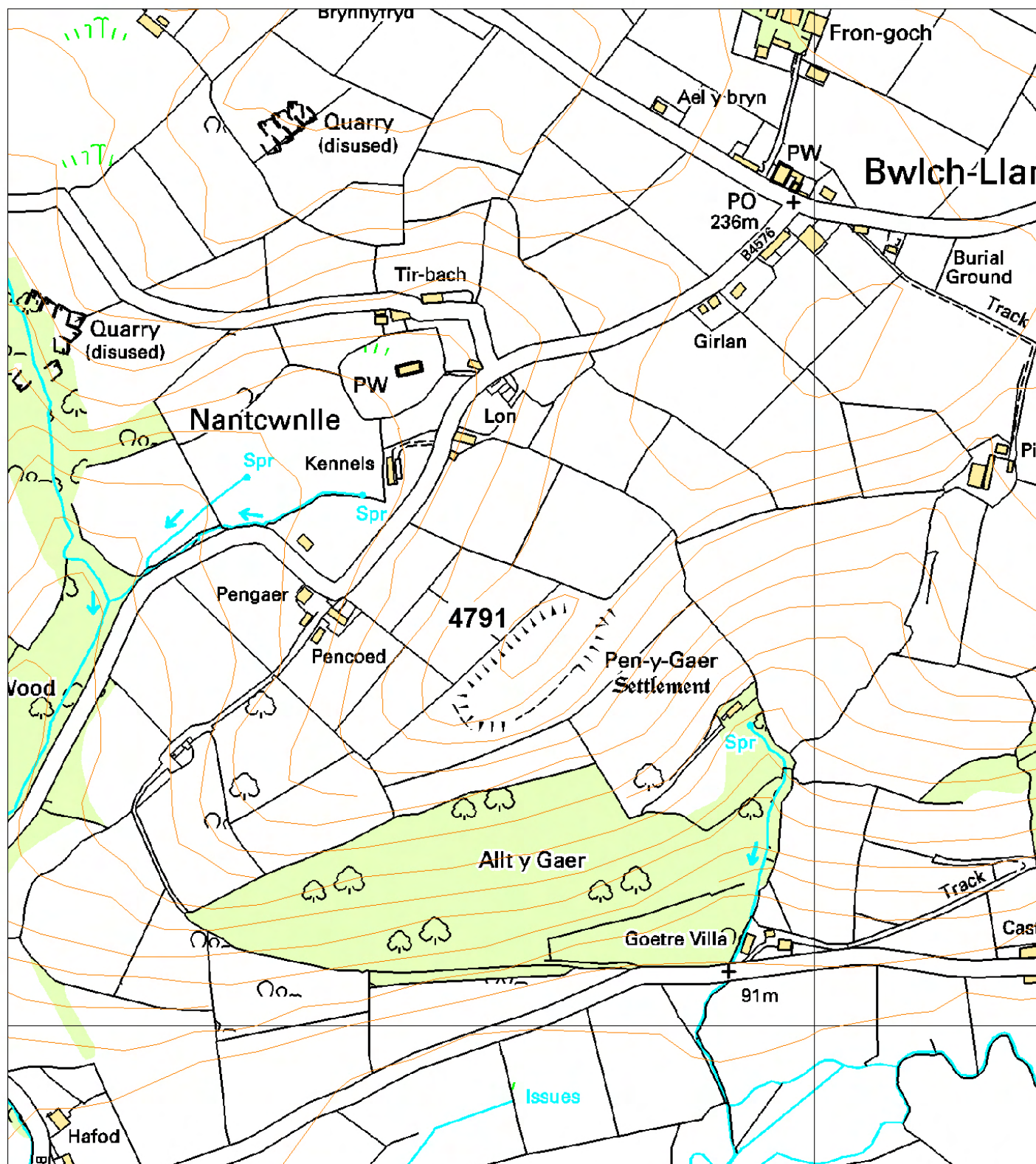
K Murphy 23 November 2005



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



Ground photograph looking towards site.



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Scale: 1:500

4794 CRIBYN GAER (CAER MAESMYNACH)

PRN 4794 NGR SN520508

SITE NAME CRIBYN GAER; CAER MAESMYNACH; GAER MAESMYNACH

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS SAM

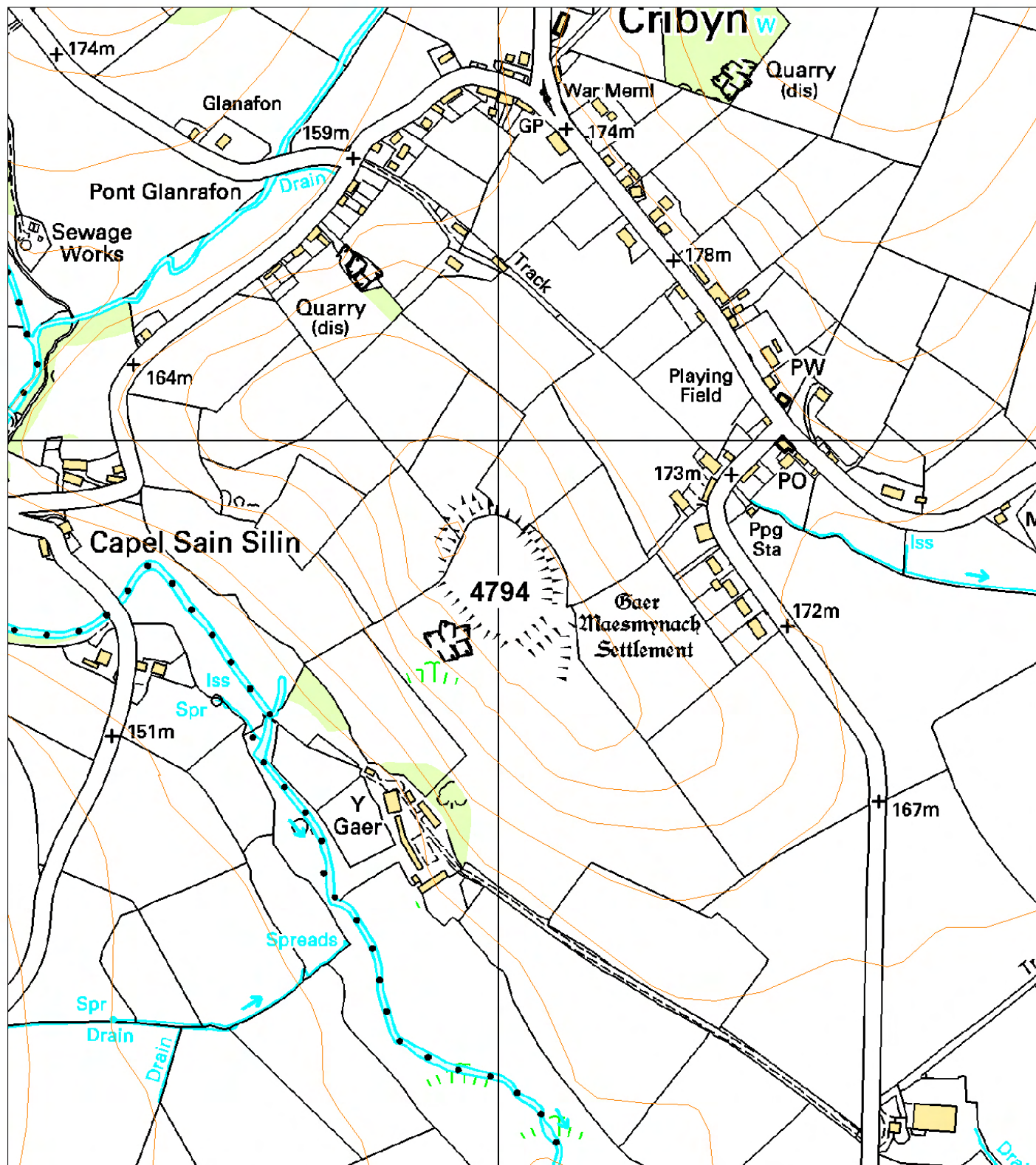
DESCRIPTION

Cribyn Gaer (Gaer Maesmynach) is a ridge-top univallate defended enclosure lying at 210m above sea level. The site is naturally protected by steep slopes on the west, north and east. On the southeast side the approach is fairly level and is protected by a short length of outer bank. The inner defence consists of a bank and ditch 15m wide and 5m high overall. These are partly levelled on the north and northwest and replaced by a scarp slope on the southwest. The outer bank and ditch to the southeast is c. 45m long, 14m wide and 3m high overall. A slight bank and ditch curves away from the east end of this outer ditch, presumably enclosing an annexe. The extent of this annexe is unclear. The main enclosure is sub-circular in shape, approximately 100m north - south and 80m east - west. A simple entrance lies on the southeast side. The interior of the enclosure is under improved pasture; the banks are under scrub.

K Murphy 15 December 2005 - taken from several sources.



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



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Scale: 1:500

4799 CASTELL ALLT GOCH

PRN 4799 NGR SN59335011

SITE NAME CASTELL ALLT-GOCH

SITE TYPE HILLFORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS SAM

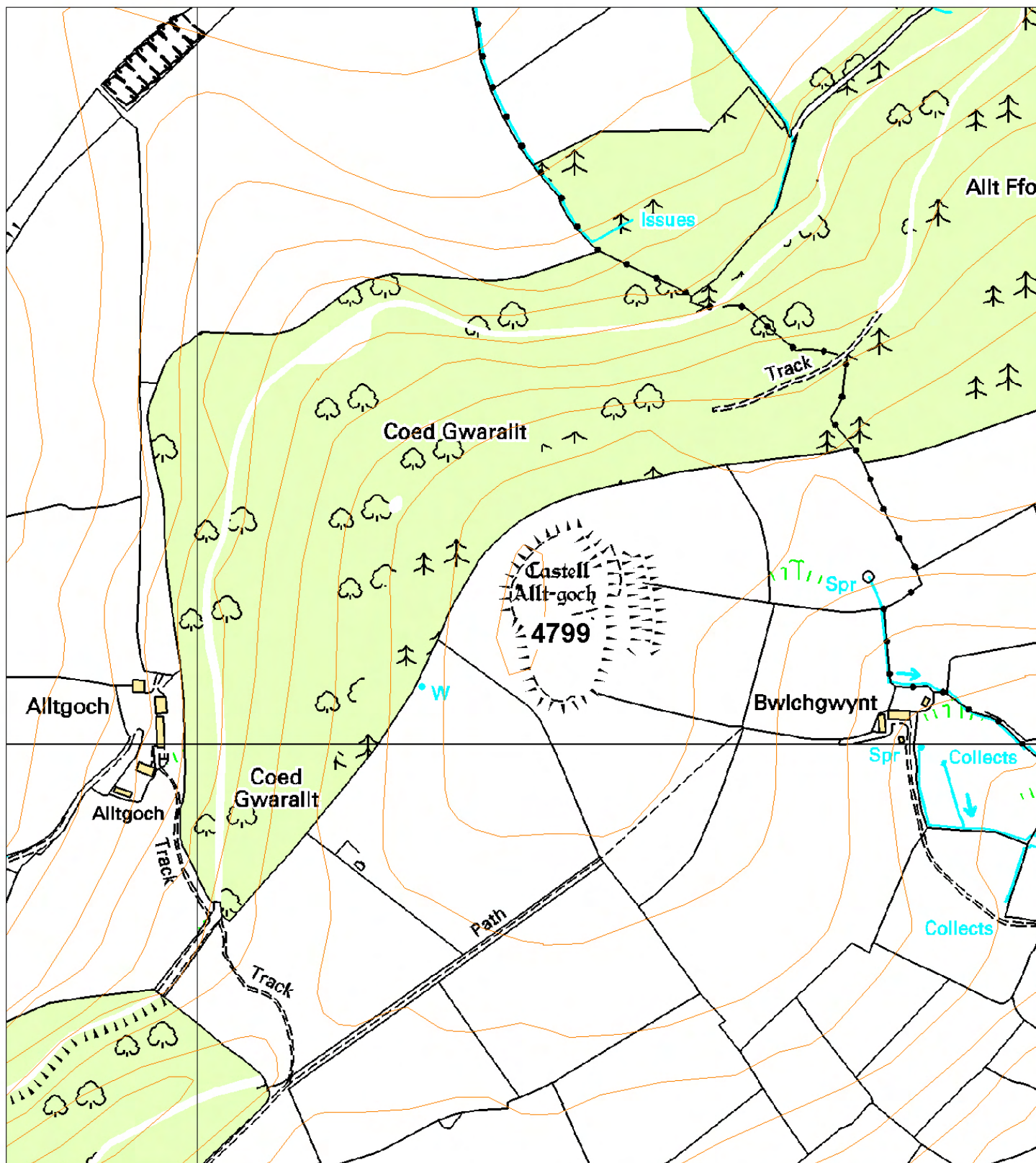
DESCRIPTION

Castell Allt-goch is a univallate fort protected on its most vulnerable side by a second, outer rampart, situated on the western side and highest point of a broad hill, at 240m above sea level. The inner bank is best preserved on the northeast where it rises to 1m above the interior of the fort. Elsewhere it is just 0.3m high. There is a c. 6m wide silted ditch on the east side, but elsewhere the bank is more of a scarp on the steep hillside. The outer defence cuts off the easily approachable side to the fort and consists of a counterscarp bank to the inner ditch, a bank and an outer ditch. This bank protects the entrance through the inner bank, which on aerial photographs shows as a slight in-turning of the bank terminals. The interior is oval in shape, 160m north - south and 90m east - west. Aerial photographs show a narrowing of the enclosure towards the centre with traces of a cross-bank running east-west across the interior, indicating that the fort may be of two phases - an initial northern enclosure later expanded to the south and the outer defence added. The site is under improved pasture with a little scrub on the inner bank.

K Murphy 15 December 2005 - compiled from several sources.



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



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Scale: 1:500

4800 GAER COED PARC

PRN 4800 NGR SN588514

SITE NAME GAER COED PARC; COED PARC GAER

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS SAM

DESCRIPTION

Coed Parc Gaer fort lies on the edge of a steep, high scarp slope at 200m above sea level. This slope provides the defensive element to the south side of the fort. The fort is overlooked and is located on sloping ground, approximately 300m distant and 20m below a rounded summit. It is a multivallate fort, with three lines of defence. All three lines are only visible on the west side. The inner rampart is the most obvious and consists of a bank up to 2m high and 7m wide, with an external ditch. This is best preserved on the east side. It defines a roughly triangular-shaped internal area 110m by 50m. A second line of bank is closely-spaced to the inner and is clearly visible, but slighter than the inner, on the west side. What is probably a third line is more widely-spaced and lies further out to the northwest. There is a simple entrance through the inner bank on the east side. Rocky outcrops are present within the fort. Hollows and scoops behind the rampart on the north side, as well as flat areas in the interior may be house sites. In 2005, the site was under improved pasture.

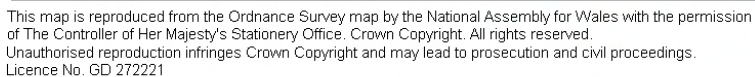
K Murphy 24 May 2005



Aerial photograph RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference 99-cs-0205.



Ground photograph looking over earthworks.



Scale: 1:500

5885 PEN-Y-GAER

PRN 5885 NGR SN51605651

SITE NAME PEN-Y-GAER;CAER-LIFRY

SITE TYPE HILLFORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Pen-y-Gaer lies along the crest of a ridge-like summit at 220m above sea level. According to a local person, the defences were levelled in the late 1990s. Immediately to the north and south of the fort the land falls steeply away. To the east and west the ridge-top continues for a further 150m before falling away steeply. It is, therefore, a good naturally defended site. The main enclosure of the fort is roughly rectangular in shape, 120m from east to west and between 40m and 50m north to south. A sharp break of slope marks the line of the defensive circuit on the steep north and south sides. The western end of the fort is defended by a bank of spread stone (shattered shale), 6m wide and up to 0.5m high, with slight traces of an external ditch. The eastern end is similarly defended, but here the bank has been almost destroyed and is represented by a wide spread of shattered shale. The ditch, however, is better preserved, 6m wide and up to 0.5m deep. The internal area of the fort is ridged, with two platforms cut in towards the east end of the south side, which may be house platforms. An annexe lies to the east of the main enclosure. It is defined by a bank 45m east from the eastern bank of the main enclosure. The annexe defence has not been levelled. It is built along a slight natural break of slope and is up to 2m high externally, 0.5m internally, with traces of an external ditch. An entrance through this bank may be original. In 2005, the site was under improved pasture.

K Murphy 24 June 2005



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



Ground photograph looking towards site.

7462 BETWS PLANTATION

PRN 7462 NGR SN59095136

SITE NAME BETTWS PLANTATIONS

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Cropmark

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

This is a cropmark site only. It is a concentric enclosure. There are no earthworks or other visible surface evidence. It is located on a southeast-facing slope at 190m above sea level. At the site itself the slope levels out into a platform. Aerial photographs show a roughly circular cropmark ditch, approximately 50m diameter, with a wide south-facing entrance. An outer ditch, concentric to the above, with a diameter of 120m is also visible, but this is fainter. The site is under improved pasture.

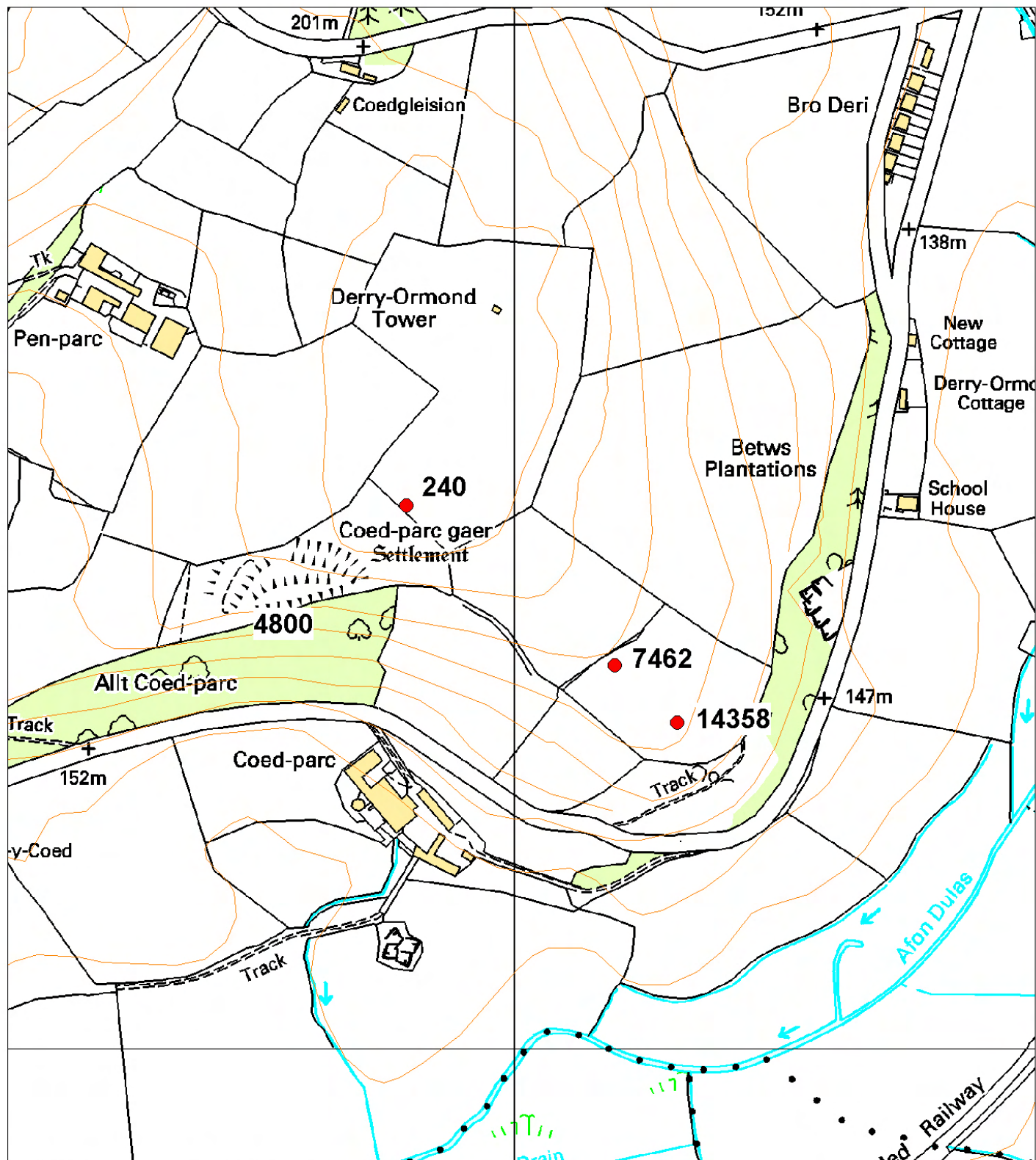
K Murphy 24 May 2005



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



Ground photograph looking over cropmark enclosure.



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Scale: 1:500

14358 DERRY ORMOND

PRN 14358 NGR SN59155130

SITE NAME DERRY ORMOND

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Cropmark

PERIOD Iron Age; Roman CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Faint cropmarks of what could be part of a rectangular enclosure lie on sloping ground towards the end of a wide inland promontory at 180m above sea level. The cropmarks are faint, but seem to show the south and part of the east and west sides of an enclosure c. 30m across. There are other cropmarks close by. In 2005, the site was under improved pasture.
K Murphy 24 May 2005



Aerial photograph Cambria Archaeology.



Ground photograph looking over site of cropmark enclosure.

56248 PONT MARCHOG

PRN 56248 NGR SN50755192

SITE NAME PONT MARCHOG

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE? FORM Cropmark

PERIOD Iron Age; Roman CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

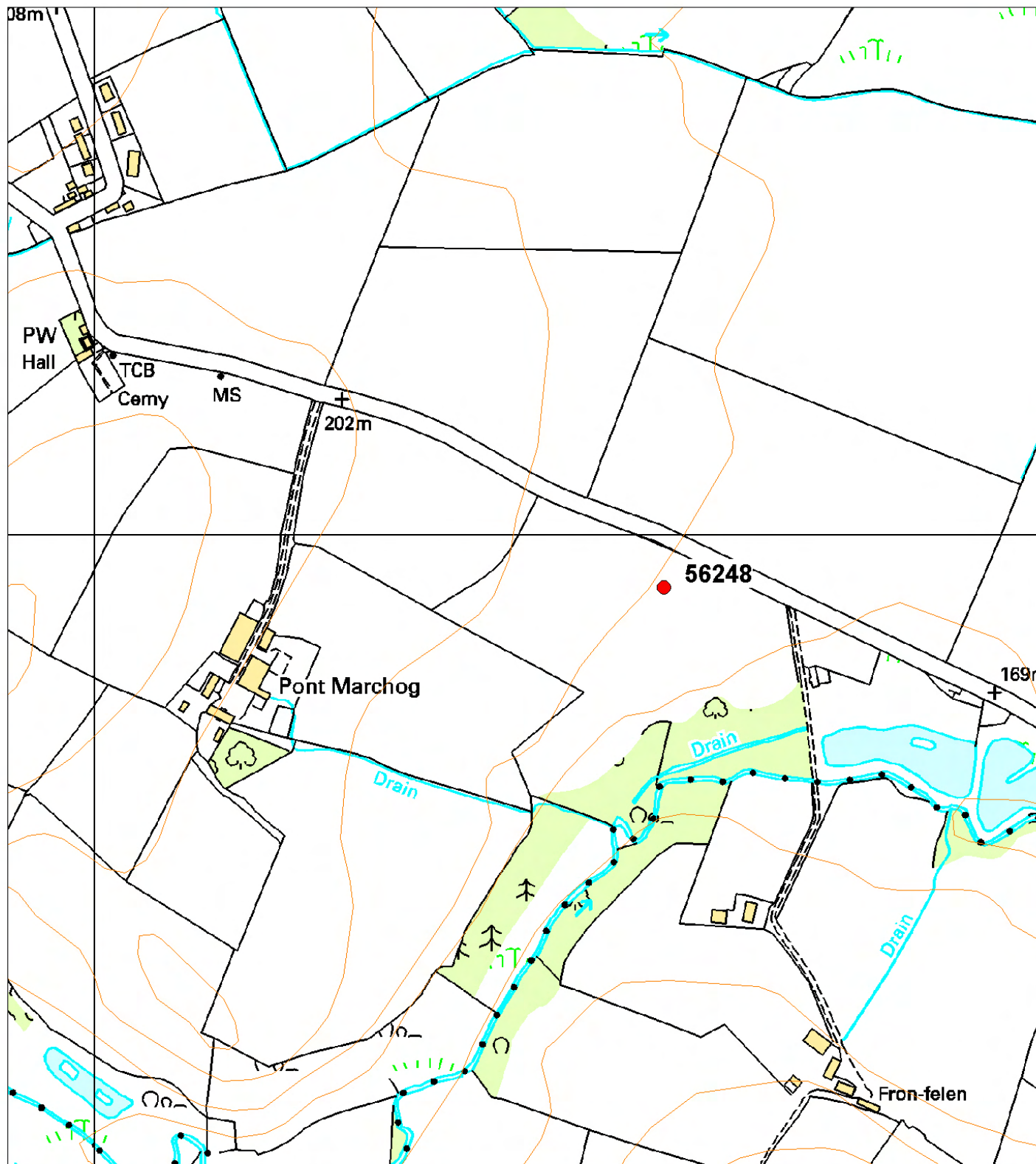
DESCRIPTION

This site was seen from a hillside 500m to the east in the spring of 2005. The field was then ploughed, and what seemed to be a soilmark of a circular ploughed out enclosure approximately 30m diameter was visible. There was no obvious entrance or ditch. The site lies towards the foot of a gentle north-facing slope at SN5075 5192.

K Murphy 13 March 2006.



Ground photograph with soil mark visible in ploughed field.



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Scale: 1:500

REJECTED SITES

Three sites originally recorded as defended enclosures or similar on the Historic Environment were rejected:

6034 recorded as a ditch of unknown date, a site visit failed to reveal anything of interest.

8922 recorded as a possible defensive site, this is a tree ring of recent date on a hilltop

9536 recorded as a ditch on aerial photographs. A re-examination of the photographs showed nothing of interest.

9541 recorded as a hillfort/defended enclosure, a re-examination of the aerial photographs and a site visit revealed nothing of interest.