

A SURVEY OF DEFENDED ENCLOSURES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE, 2007-08: GAZETTEER OF ORDNANCE SURVEY GRID SQUARES SN32, SN33 & SN34



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Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
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A SURVEY OF DEFENDED ENCLOSURES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE, 2007-08: GAZETTEER OF ORDNANCE SURVEY GRID SQUARES SN32, SN33 & SN34

Gan / By

F Murphy, R Ramsey, M Page and K Murphy

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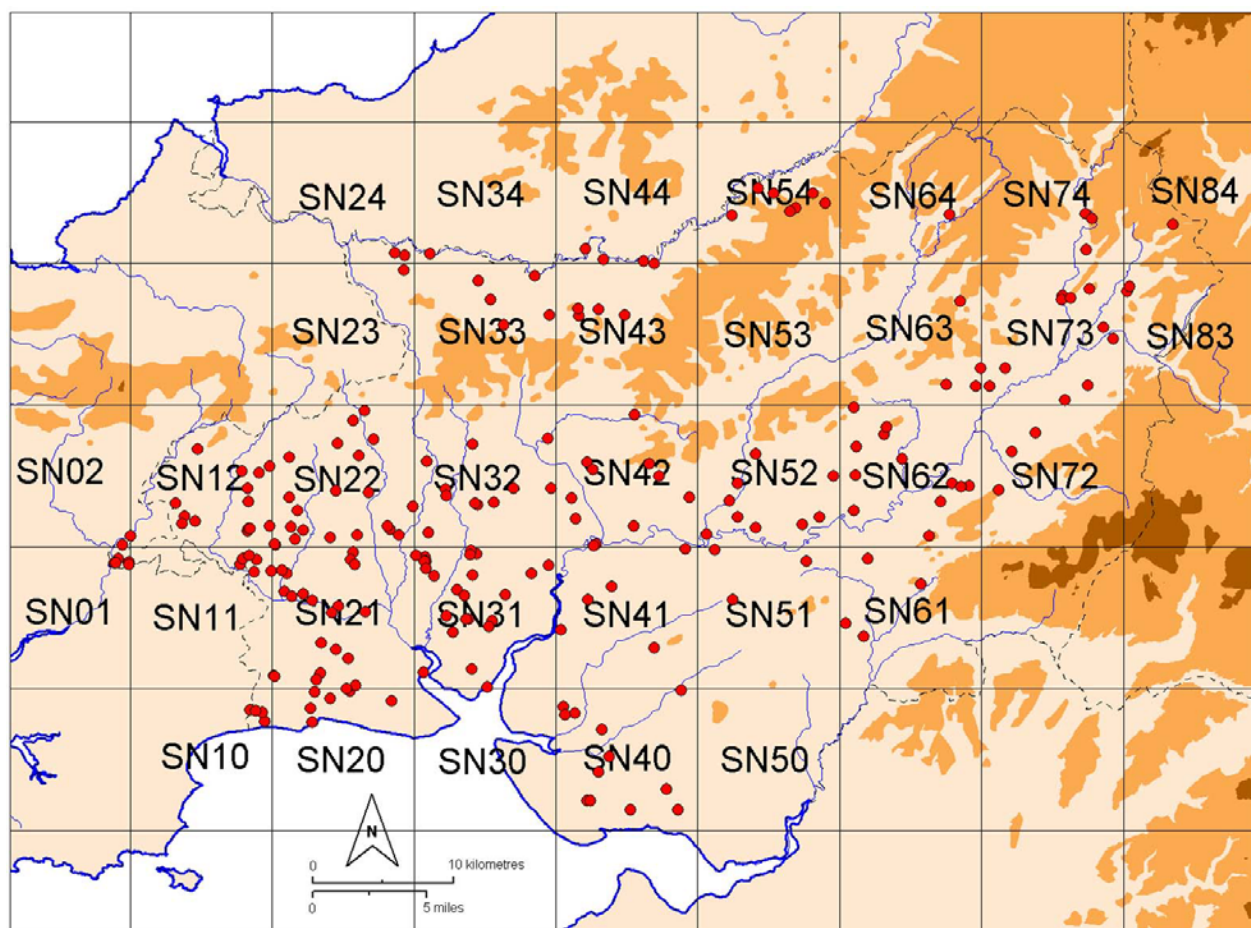
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SITE GAZETTEER OF 10KM GRID SQUARES SN32, SN33 & SN34

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; where available a ground photograph and an aerial photograph; and a 1:5000 map.

Some of the 1:5000 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.



Map based on the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map showing the distribution of sites in 10 km grid square SN32.

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2223 Castell Gorwyn

PRN 2223 NGR SN30892607

SITE NAME CASTELL GORWYN; PARC Y CASTELL MAPSHEET SN32NW

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

This circular, univallate defended enclosure lies in a field called Parc y castell on Castell Gorwyn farm and occupies a gentle northeast-facing slope (almost level) 180m above sea level. Immediately to the north, east and southeast of the enclosure the land falls steeply away. Aerial photographs show a roughly circular enclosure, with an internal diameter of c.30m, defined by a low earthwork bank. On the ground the interior of the site is marked by a dished hollow, up to 0.4m deep with traces of a low spread bank 0.3m high and up to 10m wide, best preserved on the uphill side. There is a simple entrance on the east side. The site lies in improved pasture.

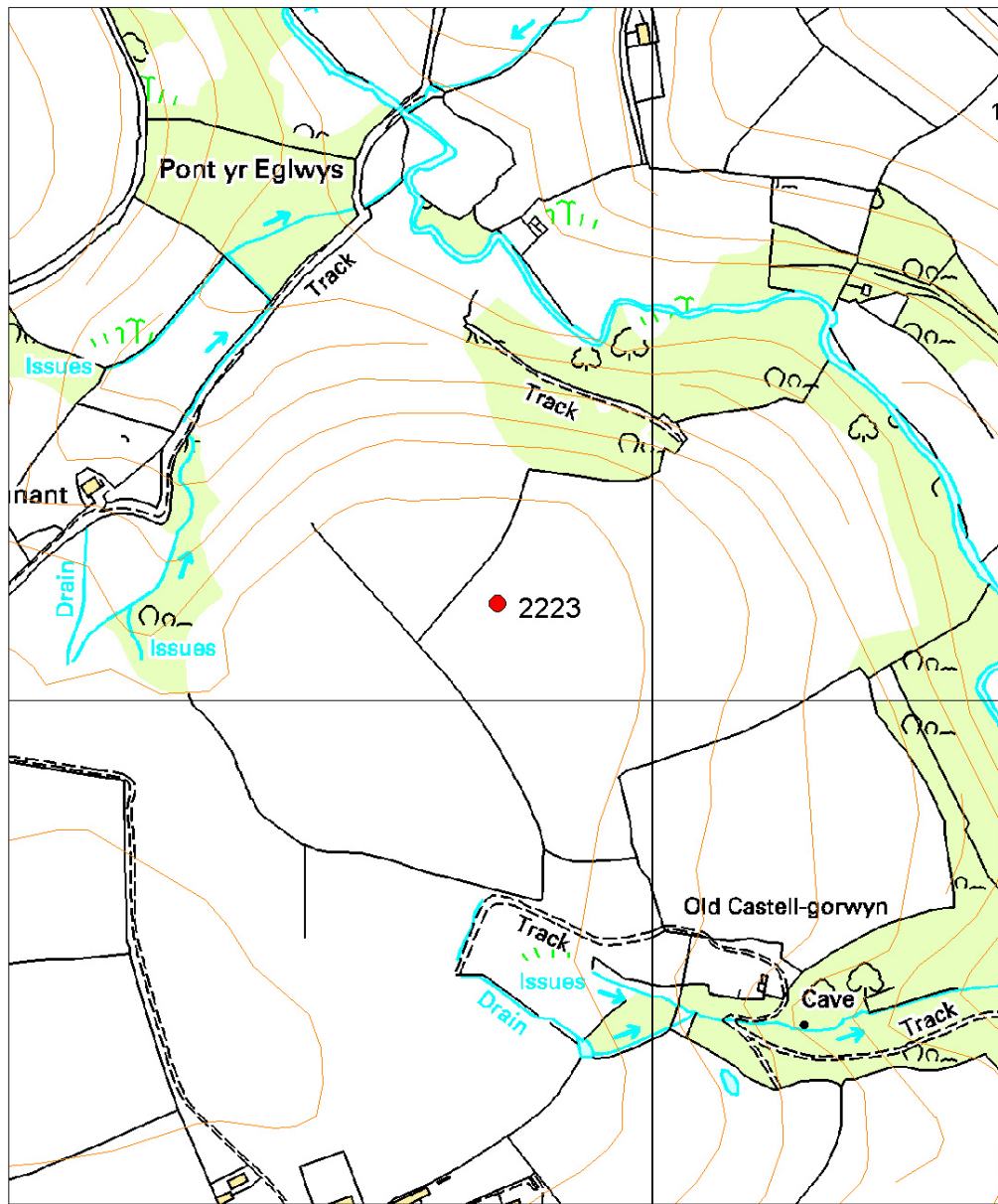
K Murphy and R Ramsey 19 February 2008



Looking N over enclosure.



Aerial photograph of 2223. RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference DI2007_1697.



1:5000

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2224 Pen y Caerau

PRN 2224 NGR SN34132725

SITE NAME PEN Y CAERAU MAWR;BLAEN-Y-COED MAPSHEET SN32NW

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

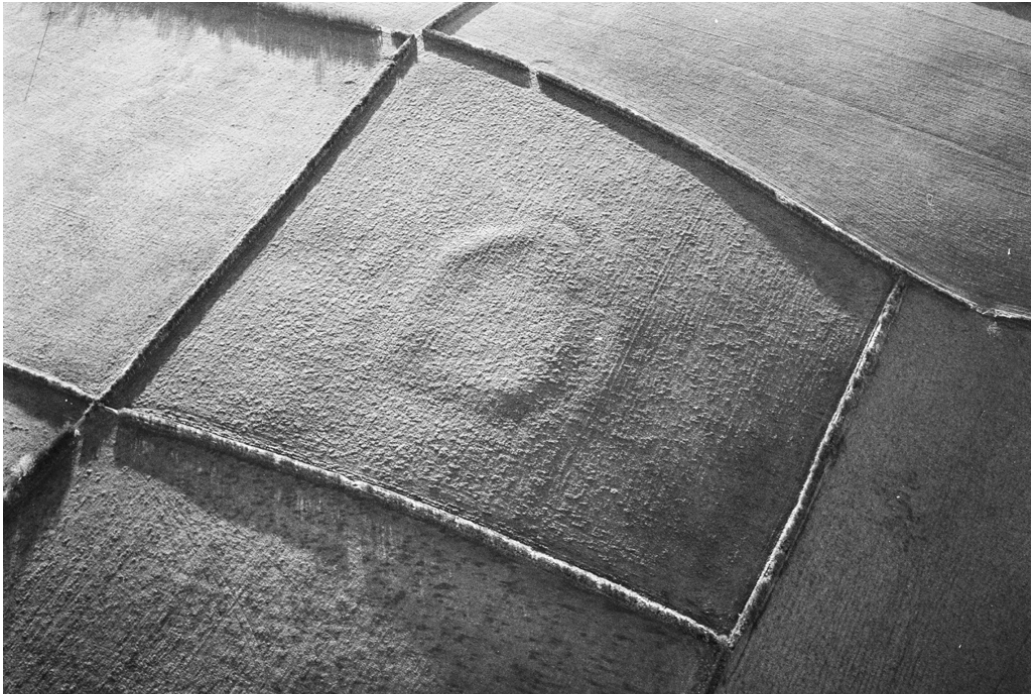
This oval defended enclosure occupies a gentle north-facing slope at 195m above sea level. Immediately to the north and northwest of the enclosure the slope falls more steeply away. The site is best seen on aerial photographs. It measures c.50m E-W by 35m N-S internally, and is defended by a bank with traces of an external ditch. There is a second bank immediately outside the ditch on the north and west sides, and traces of it can be seen on the south side. It would seem that this is a strong counterscarp bank rather than part of a bivallate defence. The photographs seem to show an entrance on the south side, but this is not definite.

On the ground this site has not changed since it was described in 1977. The bank is traceable around the enclosure but is best preserved on the south side, where it is up to 0.3m high. The outer (counterscarp) bank is up to 0.6m high on the north side. The enclosure is under improved pasture.

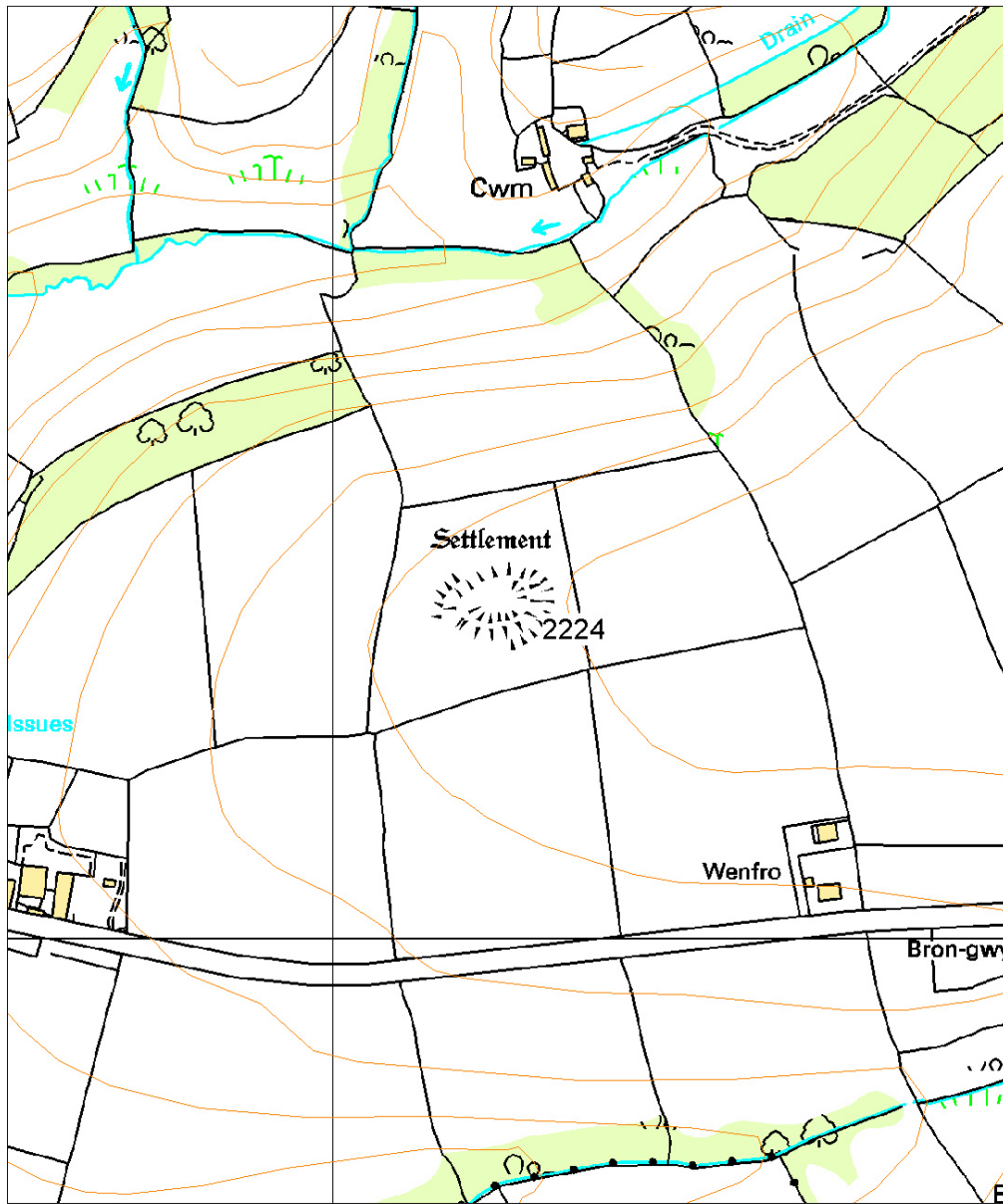
K Murphy and R Ramsey 19 February 2008



Looking SE over enclosure.



Aerial photograph of 2224. RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference DI2007_1735.



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2238 Pen Y Gaer

PRN 2238 NGR SN39412767

SITE NAME PEN Y GAR MAPSHEET SN32NE

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Pen y Gar is a small, inland promontory fort lying at 100m above sea level. The site is naturally well protected to the north, west and south by steep slopes that fall away to streams c. 30m below the fort. The ground rises gently away from the fort to the east, and this side is defended by a single bank and ditch. A hedgebank lies over the defensive bank. The defensive bank is c.45m long and is best preserved along its north two-thirds where it rises up to 1.9m. It diminishes to the south where it is only 0.6m high. There is a probable entrance at the southern end of the bank, where the bank ends short of the steep valley side. The ditch is marked by a shallow linear hollow. The bank is bracken covered with occasional deciduous trees. The triangular-shaped interior is widest behind the bank at c.45m N-S and c.60m E-W. A slight ledge along the north, west and south sides of the fort may be part of the defensive circuit. An old quarry has removed part of the western end of the fort. The fort interior is overgrown.

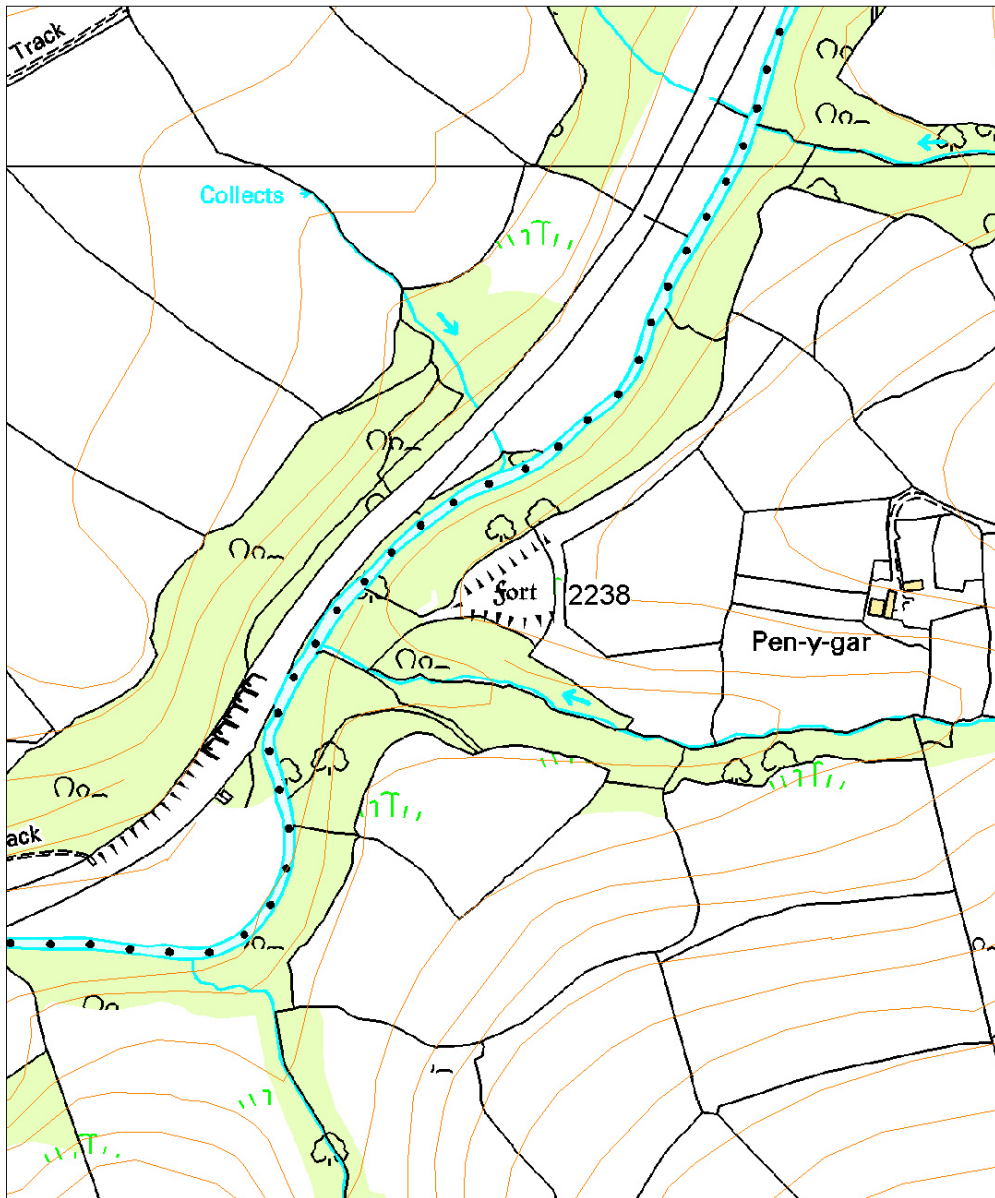
K Murphy and R Ramsey 19 February 2008



Looking S along defensive bank



Looking W at fort defences.



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2239 Pen-y-Gaer

PRN 2239 NGR SN31002101

SITE NAME PEN Y GAER; SARNAUMMAPSHEET SN32SW

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Pen y Gaer is an inland promontory fort lying at 80m above sea level. It is naturally well protected to the north, west and south by slopes that drop steeply down to streams below. It is an unusually long promontory fort, measuring c.220m E-W and 55m N-S internally. It is defended at its easily approachable eastern end by a c.70m long curving bank and ditch. On aerial photographs the bank appears as a parchmark and the ditch as a dark cropmark. On the ground the bank has been spread by ploughing and survives up to 1m high at the north end, diminishing to 0.5m at the south end. This is a reduction since 1967 when the Ordnance Survey recorded the bank as standing up to 1.8m high. The ditch is visible as a slight linear hollow. There is no obvious entrance; it must be at the south or north end of the bank.

Two other lines of defensive banks and ditches, are visible on aerial photographs and these are just visible as very low earthworks on the ground, crossing the interior of the fort. One is c.65m west of the main rampart and the other c.120m west of the main rampart. It seems most likely that these are an earlier phase of defence, rather than contemporary with the main rampart. The site is under improved pasture.

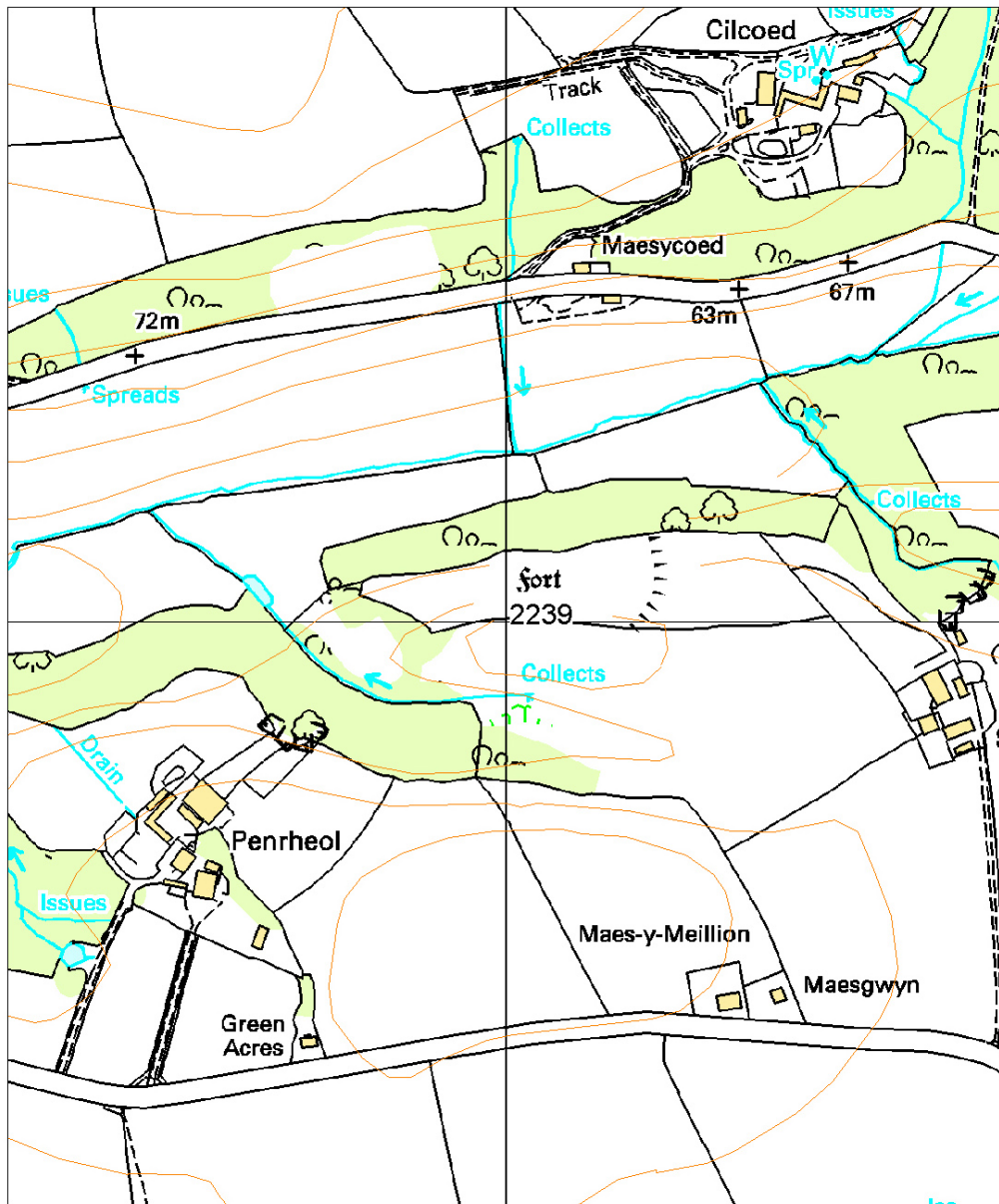
K Murphy and R Ramsey 19 February 2008



Looking W towards fort.



Aerial photograph of 2239. Reference DAT AP89-137.30.



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2241 Parc yr Eglwys

PRN 2241 NGR SN32202411

SITE NAME PARC YR EGLWYS MAPSHEET SN32SW

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age? CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

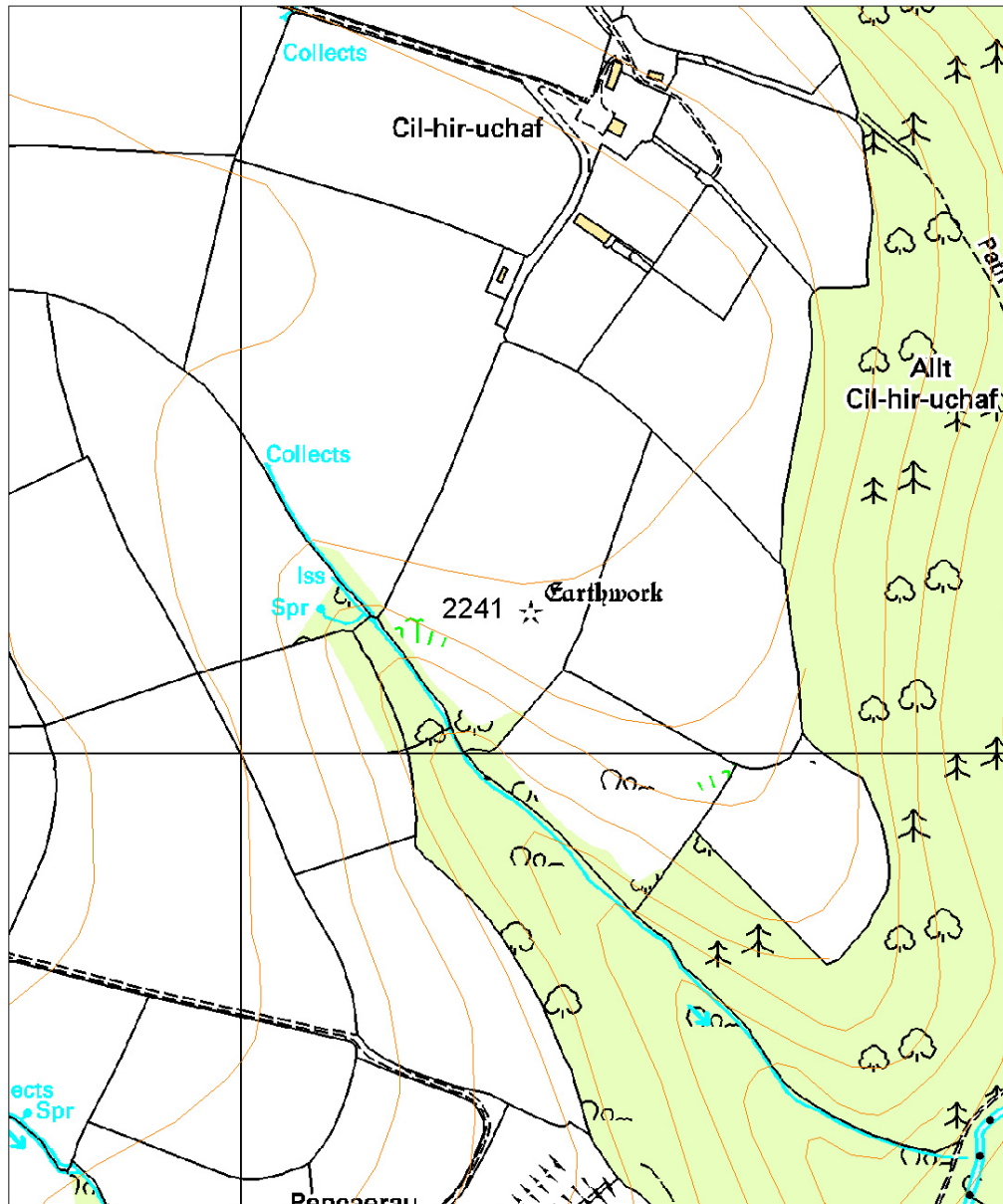
A univallate, sub-circular enclosure situated on the edge of a steep south facing slope at 180m above sea level, that drops to a stream below. In 1984 Dyfed Archaeological Trust recorded that the enclosure was visible as a slight earthwork on the ground. It had a single bank that reached a maximum height of c.1m in places, and elsewhere was visible as a low rise. The enclosure had a diameter of c.50m. No trace of a ditch could be seen. According to the Ordnance Survey aerial photographs clearly show that an entrance is on the east side. They also add that the tithe map shows 'Parc yr eglwys' to be the field immediately southeast of that in which this earthwork actually falls.

In 2008 access to visit the site was denied by the landowner. The site lies within a field under pasture.

F Murphy and R Ramsey 5 March 2008



Aerial photograph of 2241. RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference DI2007_1696.



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2242 Pencaerau Bach

PRN 2242 NGR SN32282361

SITE NAME PENCAERAU-BACH MAPSHEET SN32SW

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Pencaerau-bach is a trivallate inland promontory fort occupying a rather blunt promontory at 150m above sea level. The fort is naturally protected to the north, west and southeast by steep natural slopes. It is an unusually sited fort as it is overlooked by rising ground to the west. The west and south sides are both defended by a curving bank and ditch, c. 150m long, which protects a roughly oval internal area c. 120m N-S and 60m E-W, but the west side is further protected by two additional outer defensive banks. A hedgebank runs along much of the longer inner bank. The inner bank survives to a maximum of c.1.2m and has a well-defined outer ditch. The c.60m long middle bank stands to 1m high with traces of its ditch surviving, and the c. 60m long outer bank is up to 1.7m high with a well-defined ditch. Both the middle and outer defences now terminate abruptly against a removed hedgebank - with just traces of them to the south of this removed hedgebank. The entrance through the inner bank seems to be on the south side. The site is now under improved pasture, but for most of the 20th century the site was under dense woodland.

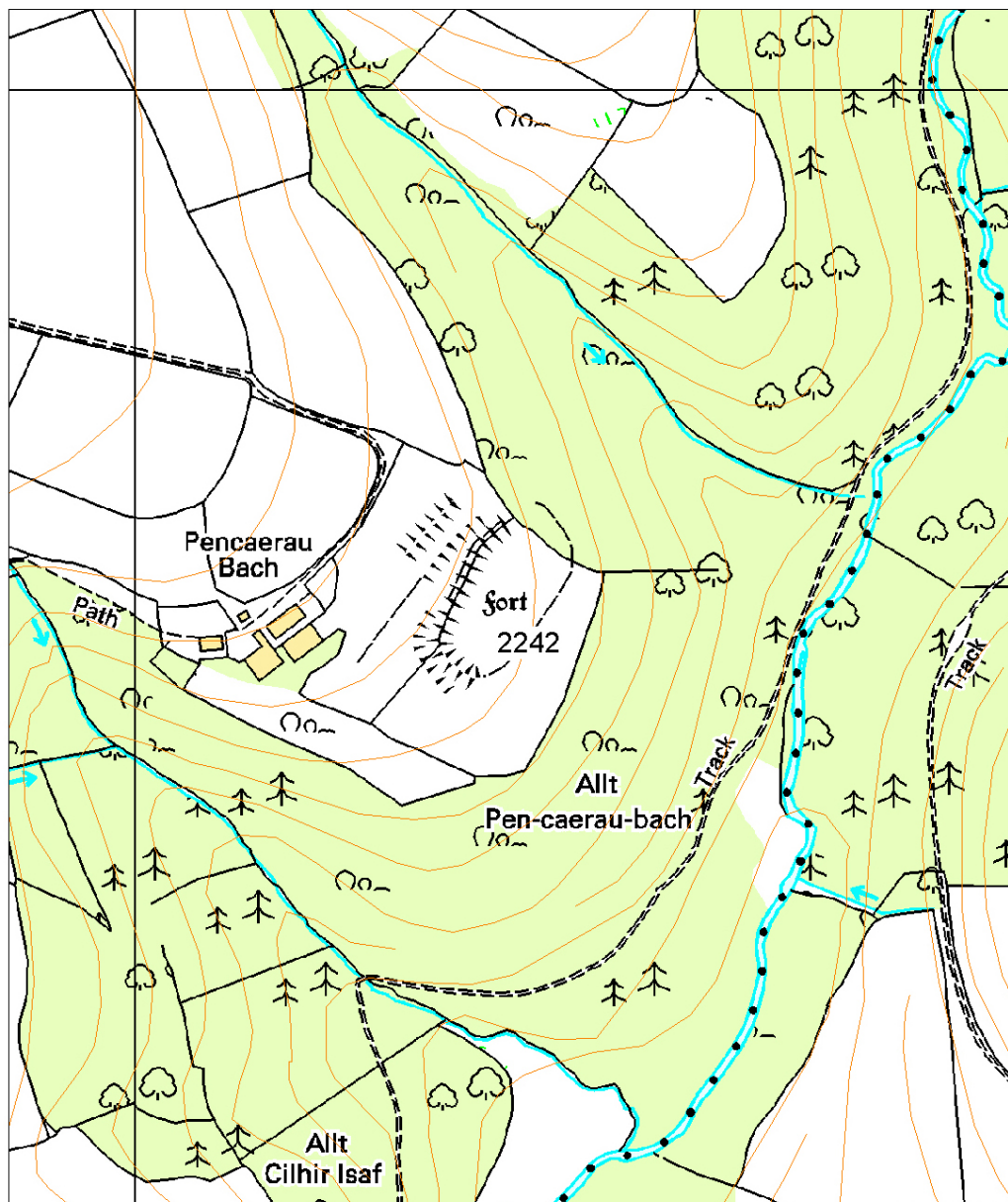
K Murphy and R Ramsey 19 February 2008



Looking E towards fort.



Aerial photograph of 2242. RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference DI2007_1702.



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2245 Llainau

PRN 2245 NGR SN34482300

SITE NAME LLAINAU MAPSHEET SN32SW

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE? FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Prehistoric?; Iron Age? CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Savory in 1954-56 noted on aerial photographs a small defended enclosure at this location. 1946 APs show a clear, oval, earthwork enclosure c. 40m E-W by 30m N-S internally, defined by a low bank and shallow ditch, with a possible hollow-way approaching the site from the south. In 1966, the Ordnance Survey recorded it as an oval earthwork enclosure defined by a very faint bank with a slight counterscarp to the north side up to 0.2m high. In 2008, only a slight depression on a west-facing slope at 130m above sea level marked the site. The site is under improved pasture.

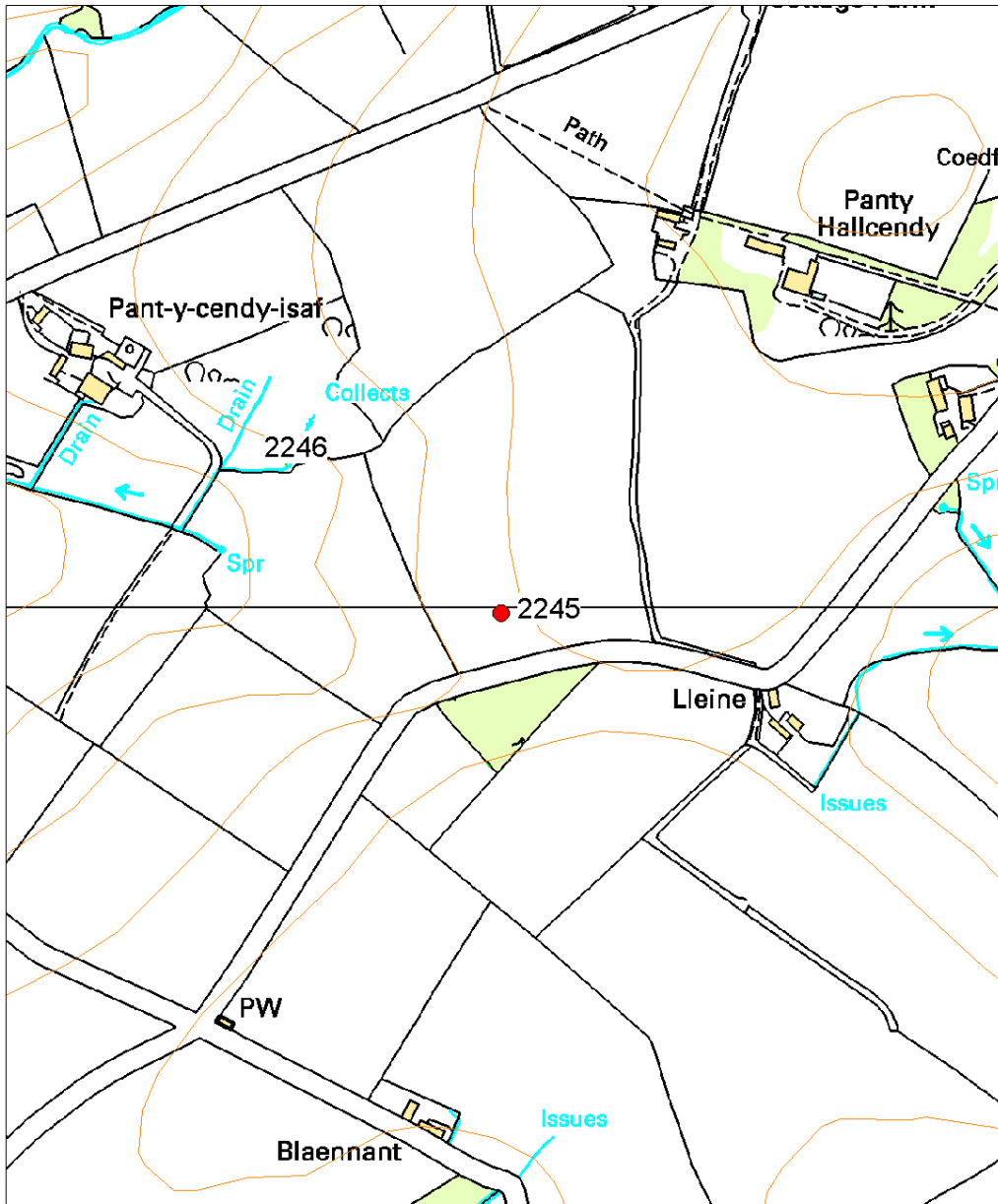
K Murphy and R Ramsey 25 February 2008



Looking NE over enclosure - marked by slight hollow.



1946 aerial photograph of 2245. Reference RAF46 106G-UK-1625 2096.



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2246 Pant y Cendy

PRN 2246 NGR SN34292312

SITE NAME PANT-Y-CENDY-ISAF MAPSHEET SN32SW

SITE TYPE ENCLOSURE? FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age?; Roman? CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

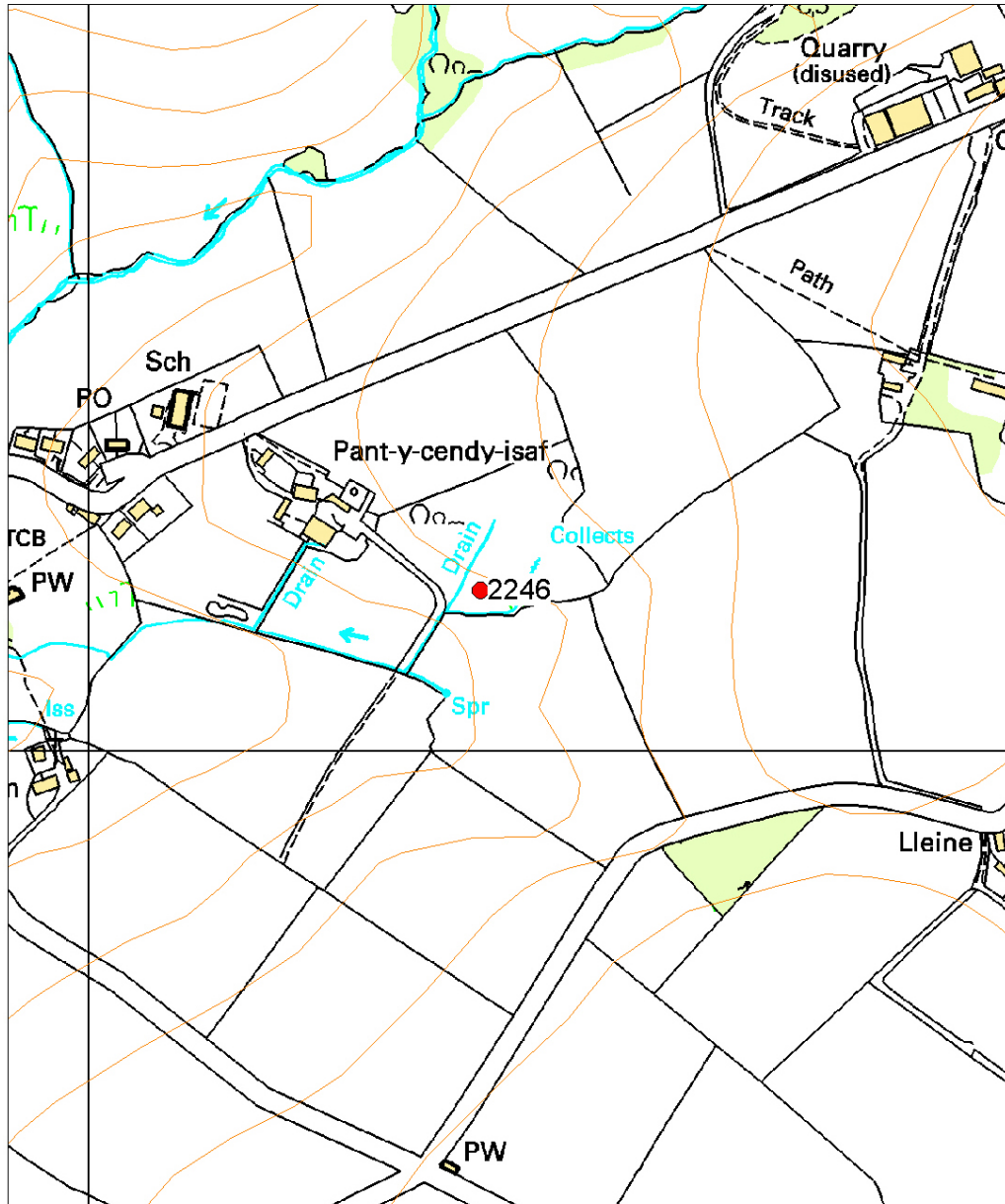
DESCRIPTION

A small rectangular earthwork was recorded by Savory in 1954. He supplied no description but noted that it had not been recorded before, and that it was situated on a slope overlooking a brook. The grid reference he gave puts the site on a south facing slope at 110m above sea level, within a field of scrubby, marshy ground, overlooking a brook to the south. The Ordnance Survey visited the area in 1967 and found no trace of an earthwork, as did Dyfed Archaeological Trust in 1984. In 2008 no trace of an earthwork was visible on the ground.

F Murphy and R Ramsey 5 March 2008



Looking S across area of putative rectangular enclosure



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2256 Pen-y-Gaer

PRN 2256 NGR SN35602316

SITE NAME PEN-Y-GAER MAPSHEET SN32SE

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION D

SITE STATUS SAM;ACK

DESCRIPTION

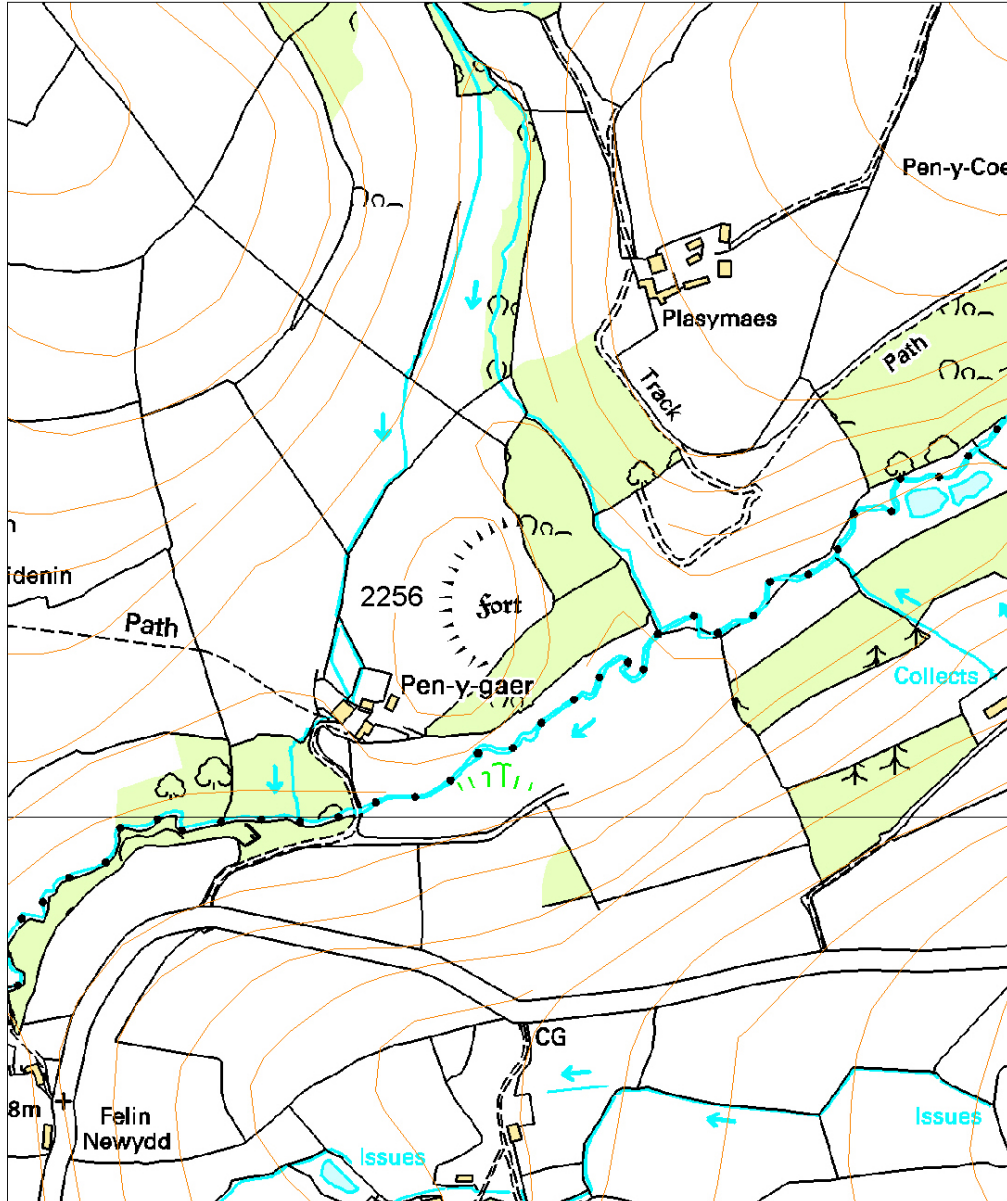
Pen-y-Gaer is an inland promontory fort occupying the high point, at 90m above sea level, of a blunt promontory. The fort is well protected by natural steep slopes to the east and south, which fall away to streams some 25m below the site, and by a curving, 150m long defensive bank to the west and north. The flat enclosed area measures c.100m N-S and 70m E-W. The bank is c.1.3m high, with no trace of a ditch. The RCAHM in 1917 suggested that the entrance lay to the west, where there was an absence of a bank. The site is now under improved pasture.

The RCAHM also recorded the tradition that this site is connected with Cromwell's army.

K Murphy 25 February 2008 - compiled from several sources.



Aerial photograph of 2256. RCAHMW Crown Copyright © reference DI2007_3284.



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2257 Cilcrug

PRN 2257 NGR SN37002416

SITE NAME CILCRUG MAPSHEET SN32SE

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

A large oval shaped, univallate earthwork that has been much ploughed down over the years. It is situated on a hilltop at 170m above sea level. The enclosure measures approximately 100m NE-SW and 70-80m NW-SE. The bank is best preserved on the southwest where it has an internal height of up to 0.5m and an external height of 1.8m. A faint trace of an outer ditch is just visible on this side. As the bank continues around to the southeast it shows as a scarp 2m high which as it continues becomes lower and little more than a break in slope. There is no further trace of an outer ditch. Farm buildings have been constructed over the defences on the north side. In 2008 it was apparent that vehicular traffic and the over-wintering of animals are causing further erosion of the earthwork.

The enclosure is situated within fields under improved pasture. Part of the defences on the north lie under outbuildings and the garden of a farm.

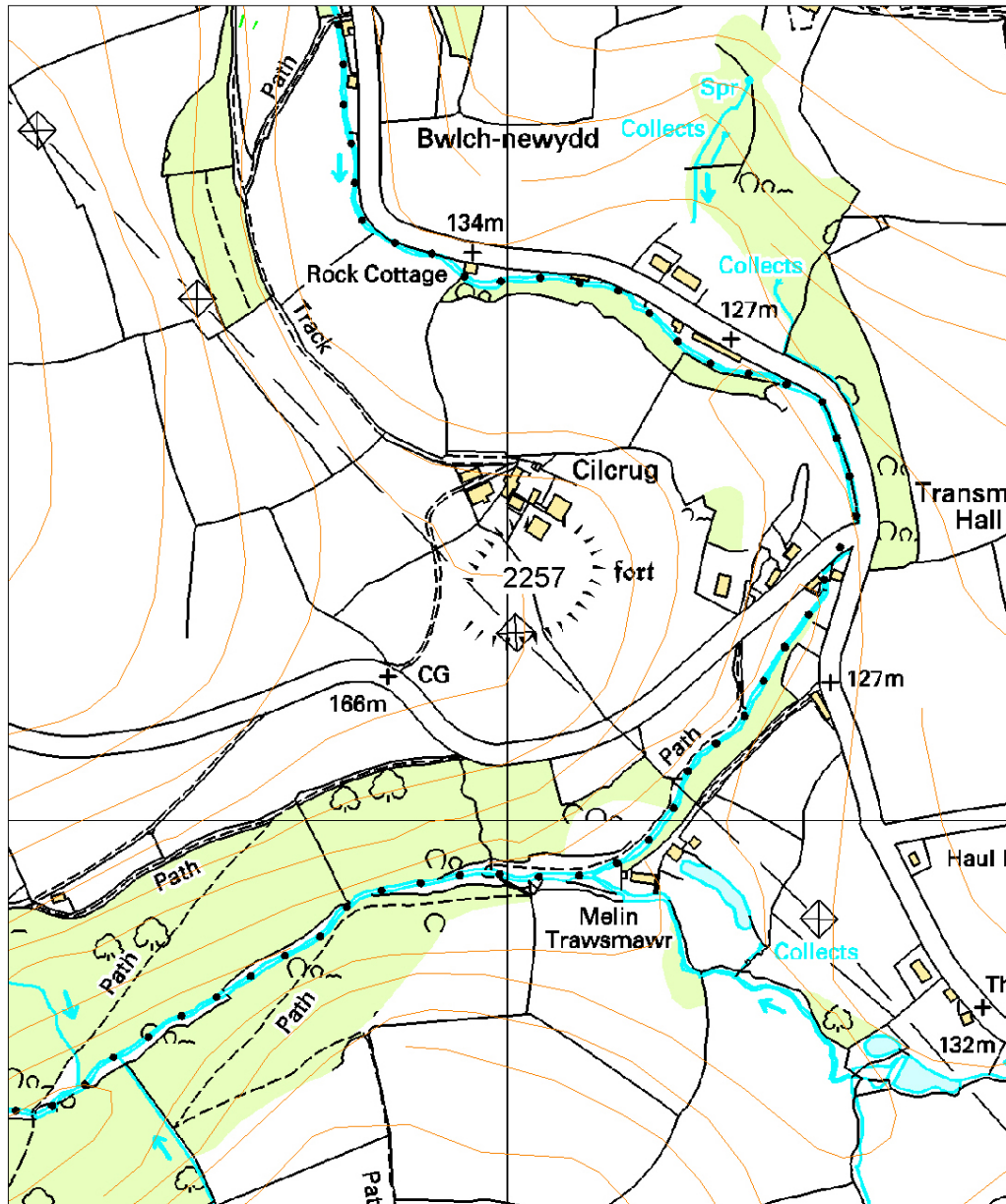
F Murphy and R Ramsey 5 March 2008



Looking ENE across area of earthwork enclosure



Aerial photograph of 2257. RCAHMMW Crown Copyright © reference DI2007_1716.



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2270 Garn Fawr

PRN 2270 NGR SN39632416

SITE NAME GARN FAWR CIRCLE MAPSHEET SN32SE

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE?; HENGES? FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age?; Neolithic? CONDITION D

SITE STATUS SAM

DESCRIPTION

This circular earthwork enclosure occupies a rounded hilltop at a little over 200m above sea level and close to two round barrows (PRNs 2259 & 2260). It measures a little over 50m internally. Its surrounding bank is overlain by hedgebanks on the northeast, east and southeast sides. Elsewhere the bank is quite low. The internal area is slightly raised with a slightly higher central area c.16m diameter. In 2008 the site was under improved pasture.

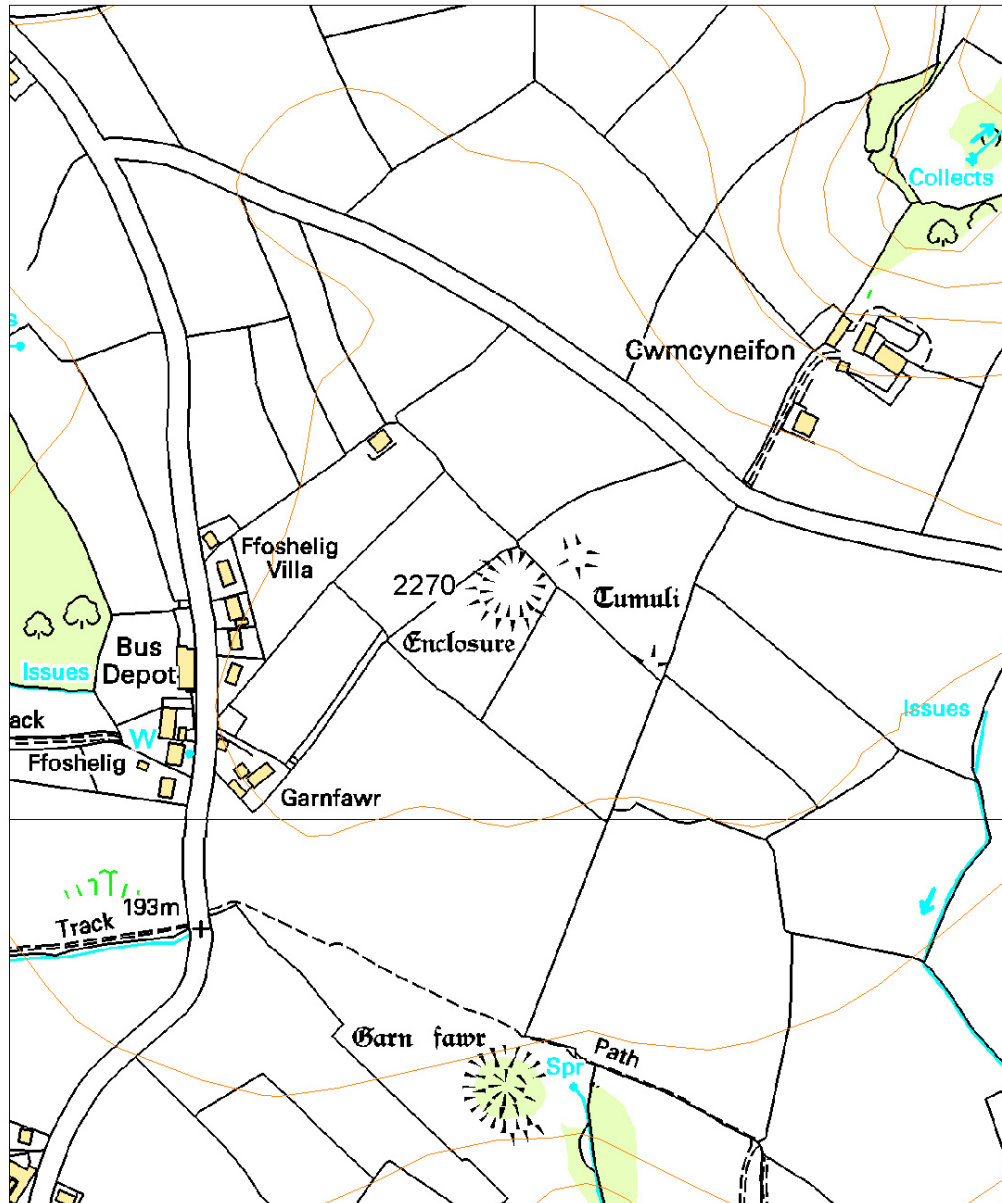
In 1917 the RCAHM recorded (quoting a History of Newchurch, 154) that up to 1860 the site was defined by: 'a wall of small stones six feet wide and about five feet high'. The stones were entirely removed for road metal and nothing but the outline of the wall remains in the soil.

The character of this site is uncertain. Its size suggests an Iron Age defended enclosure, but the slightly raised interior and its proximity to Bronze Age funerary monuments suggests an earlier prehistoric date, perhaps a Henge ?

K Murphy 25 February 2008 - compiled from several sources



Aerial photograph of 2270. Reference DAT AP86-111.33.



1:5000

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Map based on the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map showing the distribution of sites in 10 km grid square SN33.

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2277 Dinas Bran

PRN 2277 NGR SN34523879

SITE NAME DINAS FAWR; DINAS BRAN MAPSHEET SN33NW

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION D

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Dinas Bran is a semi-circular shaped enclosure whose 'flat' southeast side abuts the steep scarp-edge of a NE-SW ridge. The earthwork is almost ploughed out but on the southwest side a ditch, c.8m wide and c.0.4m deep, with a slight trace of an inner bank runs from the scarp edge for some 30m turning to the northeast before petering out. To the northeast a curving hedge line perpetuates the line of the perimeter bank to the scarp edge. No trace of an entrance was identified.

Within the interior of the enclosure a number of undulations in the ground can be seen, but their identification is obscured by bedrock breaking through the ground surface.

The site lies within a field of improved pasture at 100m above sea level.

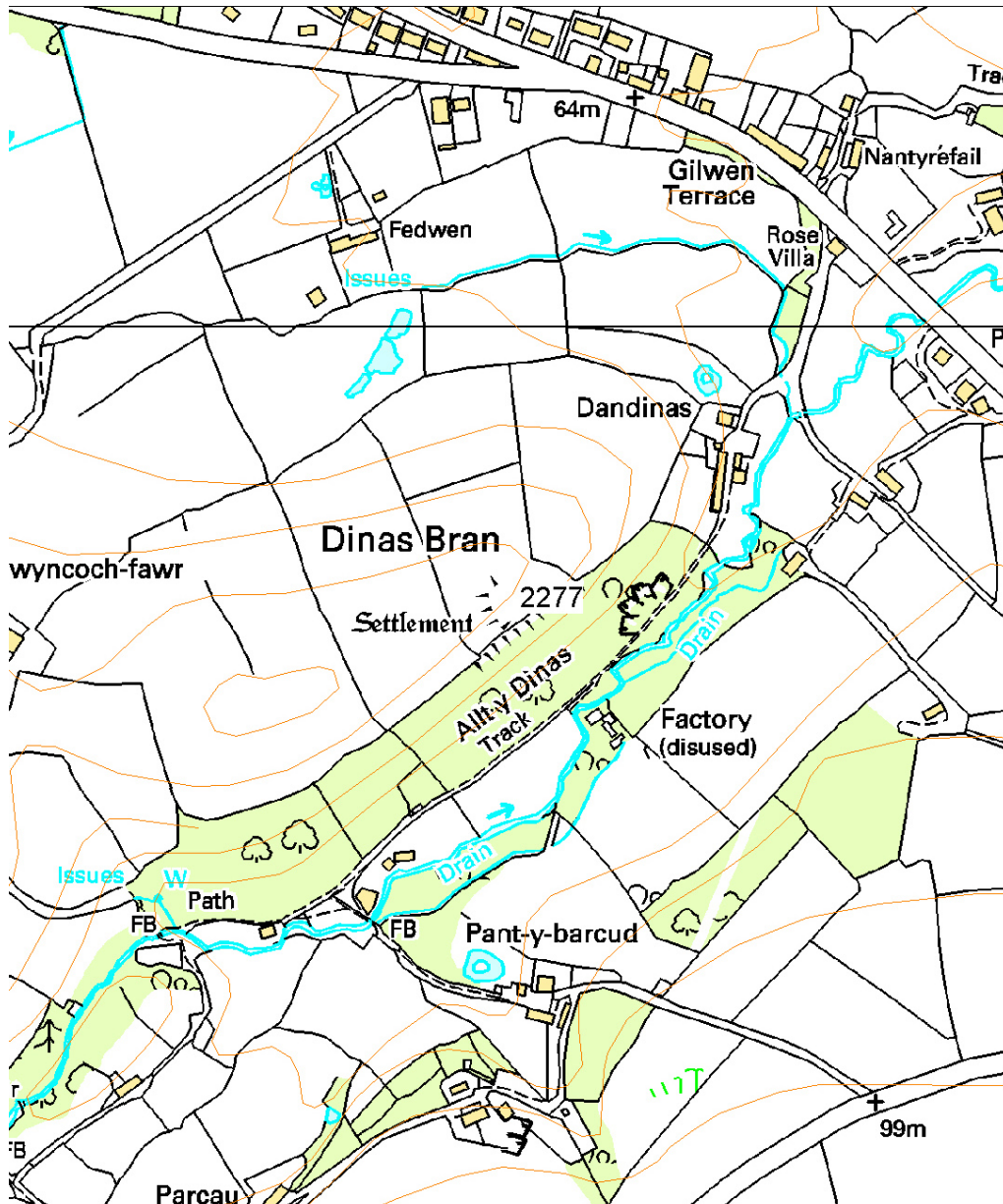
F Murphy November 2007



Looking NE across site showing indications of ditch and rampart - ploughed out



1955 aerial photograph of 2277. Reference – Meridian 230-230 37583.



1:5000

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2280 Caer Blaen Minog

PRN 2280 NGR SN36283565

SITE NAME CAER BLAEN MINOG MAPSHEET SN33NE

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

A fine example of an Iron Age promontory fort. The fort is situated on a triangular spur of land that on two sides (east and west) is defended by steep slopes falling to streams below that unite at the point of the promontory. The more vulnerable third (south) side of the enclosure is defended by three massive banks with intervening ditches. The innermost bank is the largest being c.6-7m high and its ditch c.7-8m wide. The entrance is on the east side where all three banks stop short of the edge of the steep natural slope. This entrance is currently used as a trackway into the enclosure area, and it is possibly this that has damaged the banks at their eastern ends.

Unusually, towards the northern point of the promontory a bank and ditch mark the limit of the internal area, and is a defensive work in addition to the natural slopes of the promontory. Between this bank and ditch in the north and the massive ramparts to the south is an oval shaped enclosed area of 0.5 hectares, with axes of approximately 90m and 60m.

The defensive banks and ditches of Caer Blaen Minog are covered with large trees and scrub. The internal area of the enclosure is under pasture. The site is situated at 160m above sea level.

Caer Blaen Minog is perhaps one of the finest promontory forts in the county.

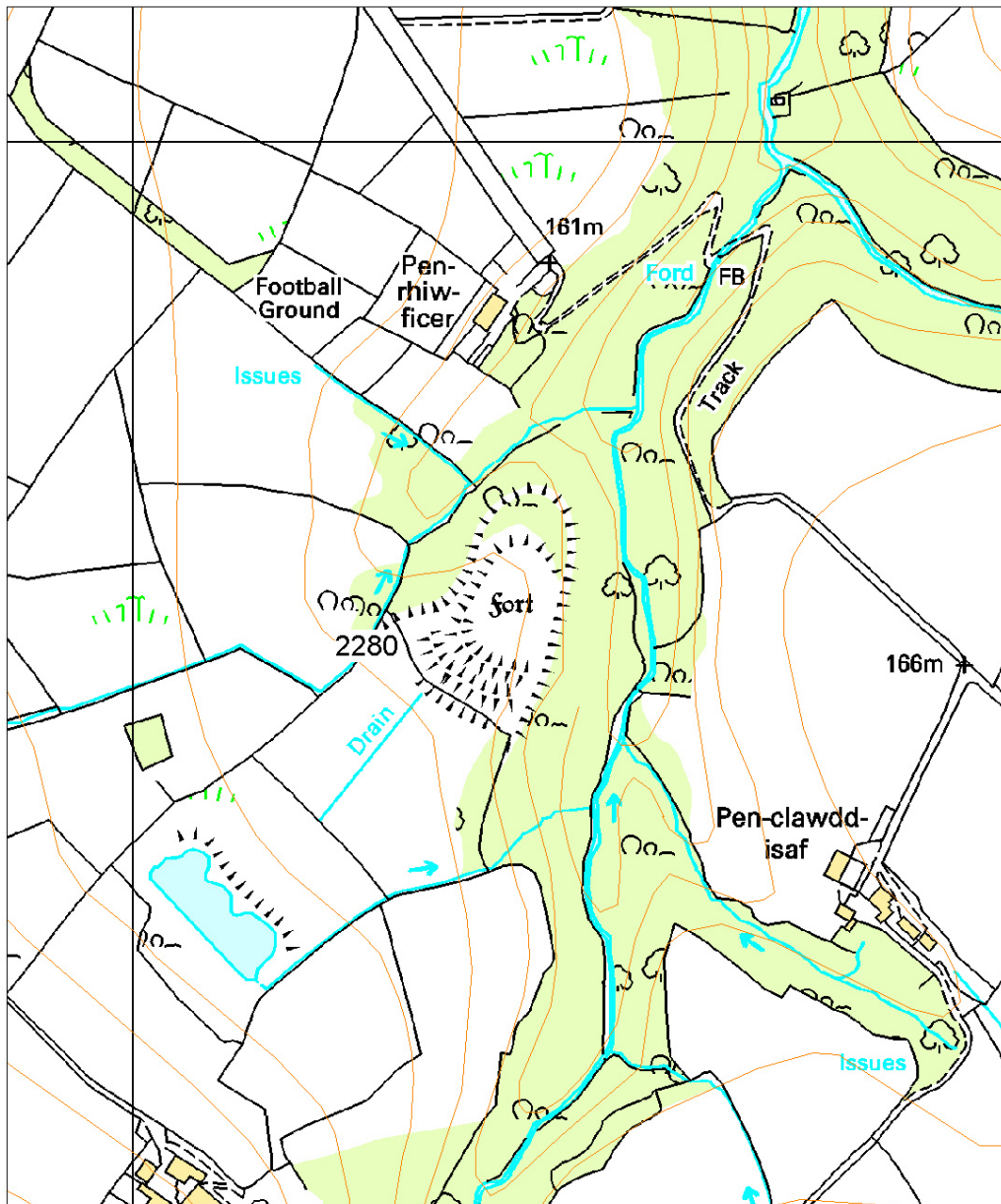
F Murphy November 2007



Facing N with the massive middle and inner ramparts in view



1955 aerial photograph of 2280. Reference Meridian 230-230 23655.



1:5000

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2282 Caer Llwyn Bed

PRN 2282 NGR SN35403744

SITE NAME CAER-LLWYN-BEDW; GAER YMAPSHEET SN33NE

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE? FORM Topog; Document

PERIOD Prehistoric?; Iron Age? CONDITION U

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

The Ordnance Survey first edition 1" map of 1831 shows what appears to be a bivallate enclosure at this location. Semi-circular or "D" shaped, it is situated on the scarp edge of a ridge, with its 'flat' northwest side abutting the SW-NE edge of the ridge. By 1917 the RCAHM record no trace of an earthwork, and subsequent visits in the 1960's and 1970's by the Ordnance Survey record that the only evidence for an enclosure at this location is a semi-circular hedge that would appear to mark the position or conceal the position of one of the earlier banks. In 2007 there was no change from previous site visits. The hedge line remains unchanged and there was no trace of another bank, or of any other earthworks in the vicinity of the area.

The site lies within a field of improved pasture at 140m above sea level.

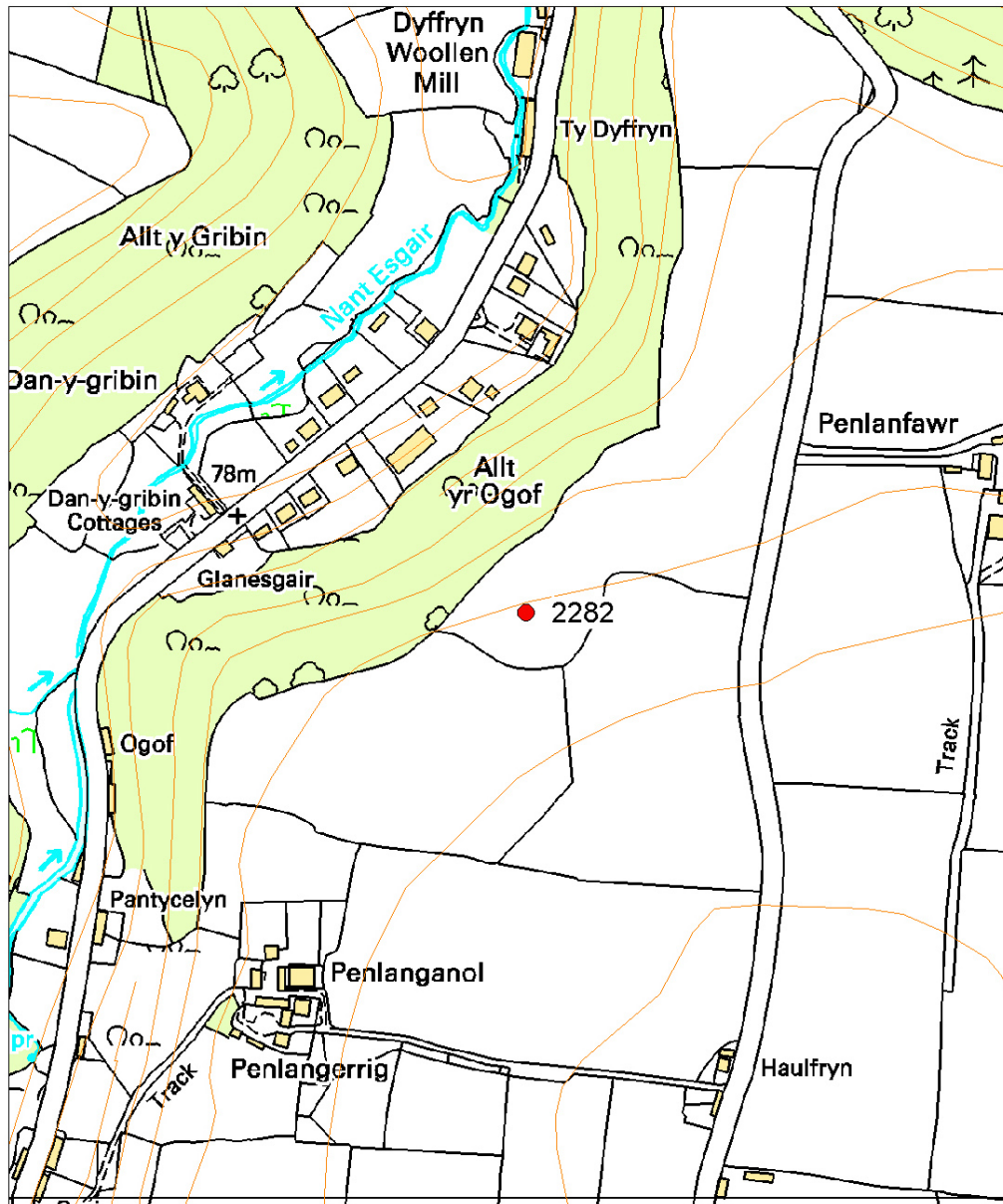
F Murphy November 2007



Looking NE across site



1955 aerial photograph of 2282. Reference – Meridian 230-230 23659.



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2283 Y Gaer Wen

PRN 2283 NGR SN39533636

SITE NAME GAER WEN Y MAPSHEET SN33NE

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Y Gaer Wen encompasses the remains of a circular bivallate Iron Age defended enclosure. It occupies a commanding position on the top of a broad high ridge. To the east the ground drops steeply to a tributary of the Afon Teifi.

The site has been much mutilated over the years, and the western half has been nearly levelled. Visits by the Ordnance Survey in 1977 and Dyfed Archaeological Trust in 1984 both record that on the east the banks are better preserved but on the west they have been reduced to rubble spreads. The inner bank measured approximately 35.0m in diameter and the outer 60.0m in diameter. The banks appeared to be constructed of earth and stone rubble. The ditches were not clearly visible. On the east there were two large upright stones - possibly part of an orthostatic revetment, and a gap in the defences to the ENE is proposed as an entrance. Beyond the outer rampart on the northeast there is evidence of a ditch 0.9m deep bounded by a third low bank.

The 2008 site visit found the site completely overgrown with bracken, brambles and gorse. As far as could be seen the visit confirmed that the banks and ditches survive on the east but not on the west. The enclosure lies in the southeast corner of a field of improved pasture, at 170m above sea level. It is currently fenced off from the surrounding field.

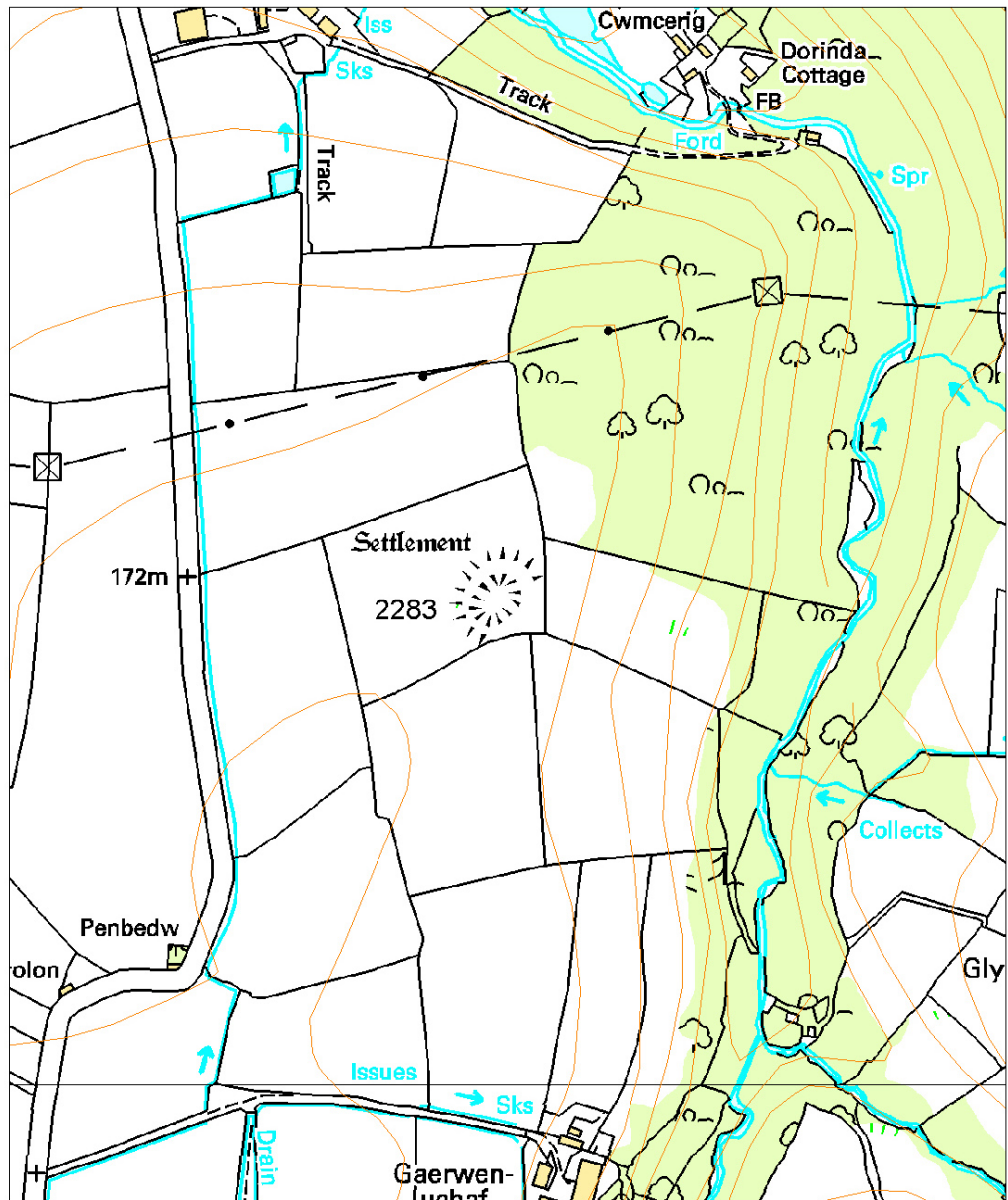
F Murphy and R Ramsey 18 March 2008



Looking SE across overgrown defensive banks of circular enclosure



Aerial photograph of 2283. Reference DAT AP86-107.12.



1:5000

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2287 Castell Henfryn

PRN 2287 NGR SN38483913

SITE NAME CASTELL HENFRYN MAPSHEET SN33NE

SITE TYPE DEFENDED ENCLOSURE FORM Earthwork

PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION C

SITE STATUS

DESCRIPTION

A semi-circular or "D"shaped, univallate enclosure situated on a scarp edge above the Afon Teifi, within fields of improved pasture at 90m above sea level. The enclosure's 'flat' northeast side abuts the NW-SE edge of the ridge. The western half of the earthwork has been completely levelled, but the bank and ditch on the east is still traceable. The bank is no more than c.0.5m high and the ditch c.1m deep. There is no trace of an entrance.

It is similar in form and topographical position to that of Dinas Bran (PRN 2277) and Caer Llwyn Bedw (PRN 2282), both of which are less than 4km west of Castell Henfryn.

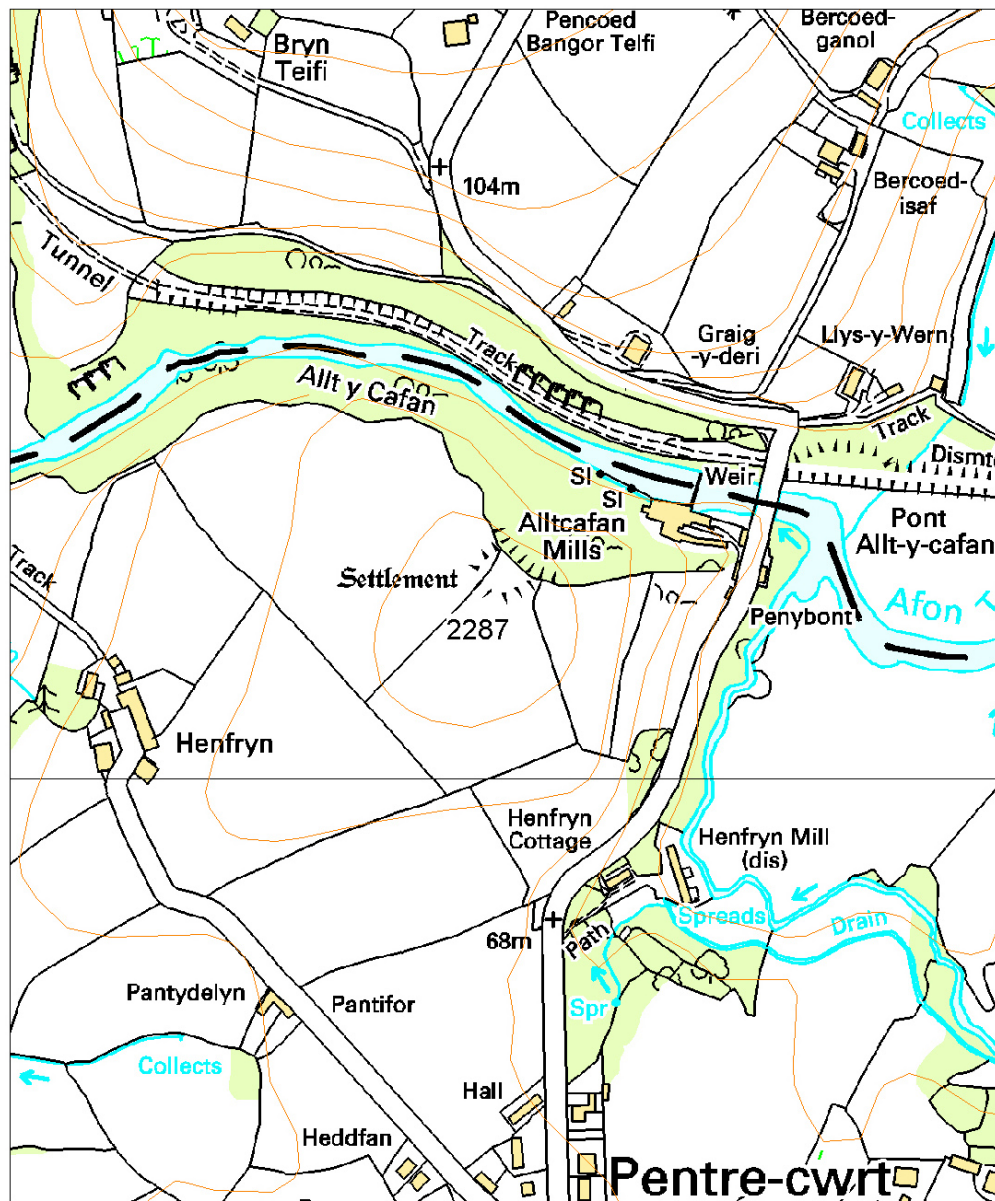
F Murphy November 2007



Looking E across western section of ploughed out earthwork site



1955 aerial photograph of 2287. Reference – Meridian 230-230 24821



1:5000

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Map based on the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map showing the distribution of sites in 10 km grid square SN34.

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2336 Newcastle Emlyn

PRN 2336 NGR SN31134072

SITE NAME NEWCASTLE EMLYN CASTLE MAPSHEET SN34SW

SITE TYPE PROMONTORY FORT? FORM Earthwork

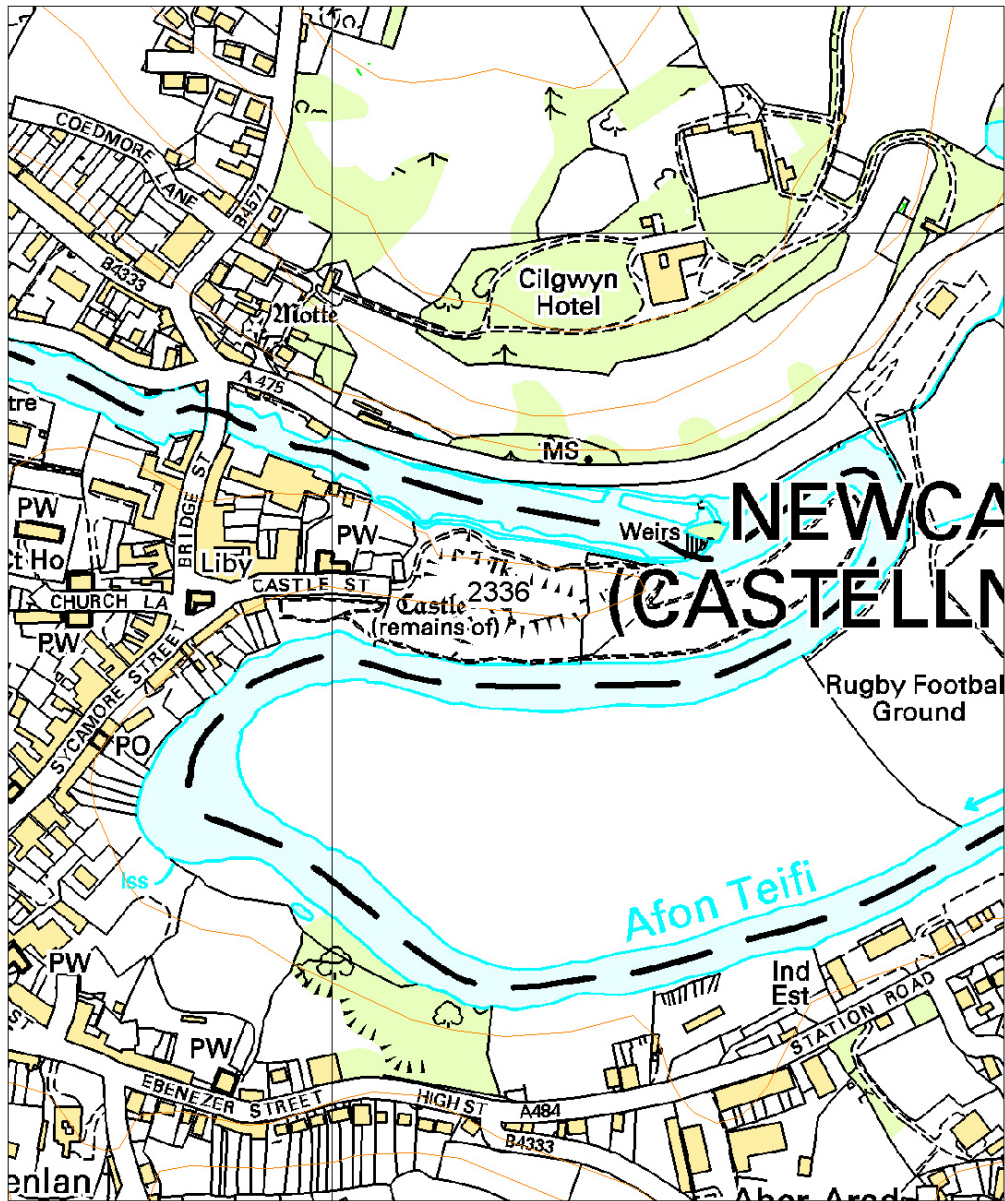
PERIOD Iron Age CONDITION B

SITE STATUS SAM

DESCRIPTION

The Ordnance Survey have suggested that the site and layout of the medieval castle banks suggest that this is probably the site of an earlier promontory fort. However, there is no specific evidence for this theory.

F Murphy 27 February 2008



1:5000

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