

# CASTELL GOETRE RESERVOIR CELLAN, CEREDIGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



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by  
Cambria Archaeology  
for  
Dŵr Cymru



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## CASTELL GOETRE RESERVOIR, CELLAN, CEREDIGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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**CASTELL GOETRE RESERVOIR CELLAN CEREDIGION  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

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## **CASTELL GOETRE RESERVOIR, CELLAN, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **SUMMARY**

Proposals to renew a watermain at the Castell Goetre Reservoir, Cellan, Ceredigion (NGR SN59885117) have potentially significant archaeological implications. The proposed works run close to a number of known archaeological sites and features, including the Castell Goetre Hillfort, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (PRN 4019; SAM CD107). Therefore, the regional Planning Archaeologist recommended that a desk-based assessment of the route be carried out to fully assess the implications of the scheme. Dŵr Cymru commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the assessment in December 2007 and January 2008.

The proposed renewal scheme is *c.*1.4km in length and runs around the southern part of the scheduled area of the Iron Age hillfort at Castell Goetre. It also passes close to three cropmark enclosures and crosses the course of the former Manchester and Milford Railway.

None of the cropmark enclosures will be directly affected by the route as proposed, but they are all close enough to the line to be a consideration.

The line of the former railway will be crossed by the scheme.

A watching brief on the major ground breaking operations, particularly close to the cropmark enclosures and in the vicinity of the Castell Goetre hillfort, has been suggested.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Project proposals and commission**

Proposals to renew a watermain at the Castell Goetre Reservoir, Cellan, Ceredigion (NGR SN59885117) had potentially significant archaeological implications. The proposed works run close to a number of known archaeological sites and features, including the Castell Goetre Hillfort, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (PRN 4019; SAM CD107). Following consultation between Dŵr Cymru and the regional Planning Archaeologist it was recommended that a desk-based assessment of the route be carried out to fully assess the implications of the scheme<sup>1</sup>. Dŵr Cymru commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the assessment in December 2007 and January 2008.

### **Scope of the project**

The assessment consisted of the examination of available sources of information such as maps, published works and aerial photographs, and a site visit. The results are intended to assess the likely and potential impacts of the scheme on the archaeological resource and, if required, to outline a possible programme of further works to mitigate those impacts. The assessment should be seen only as the first stage of the archaeological process and does not preclude the possibility that further archaeological input may be required prior to, or during, the proposed construction works.

### **Abbreviations used in this report**

All sites recorded on the county Historic Environment Record<sup>2</sup> (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). New sites have been assigned a PRN and located by their NGR. References to cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets throughout the text, with full details listed in the sources section at the rear of the report.

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<sup>1</sup> The recommendation was made in a letter from the Planning Archaeologist (Charles Hill) to Dŵr Cymru dated 6<sup>th</sup> May 2005 and subsequently reiterated in a second letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Held and managed by Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo.

## 2. THE SITE

### Location and assessment area

The renewal works run from NGR SN59315133 to SN60415089, and the proposed route covers a distance of c.1.4km (Fig. 1). From its west end the proposed route runs east-southeast for c.600m to NGR SN60015123 before turning to the southeast and following a path through the conifer plantation at Longwood. The east end of the route runs around the southern boundary of the Castell Goetre hillfort. For the purposes of this project the assessment area was a 100m wide corridor centred on the line of proposed renewal works.

The route covers a varied topography. The west end slopes east to the floor of the valley of the Afon Dulas, where the land adjacent to the river is low lying and relatively marshy. To the east of the river the land rises gradually from the valley floor before becoming much steeper on the slope through Longwood. From here the route continues to climb to the Castell Goetre hillfort at a height of 235m above Ordnance datum (OD).

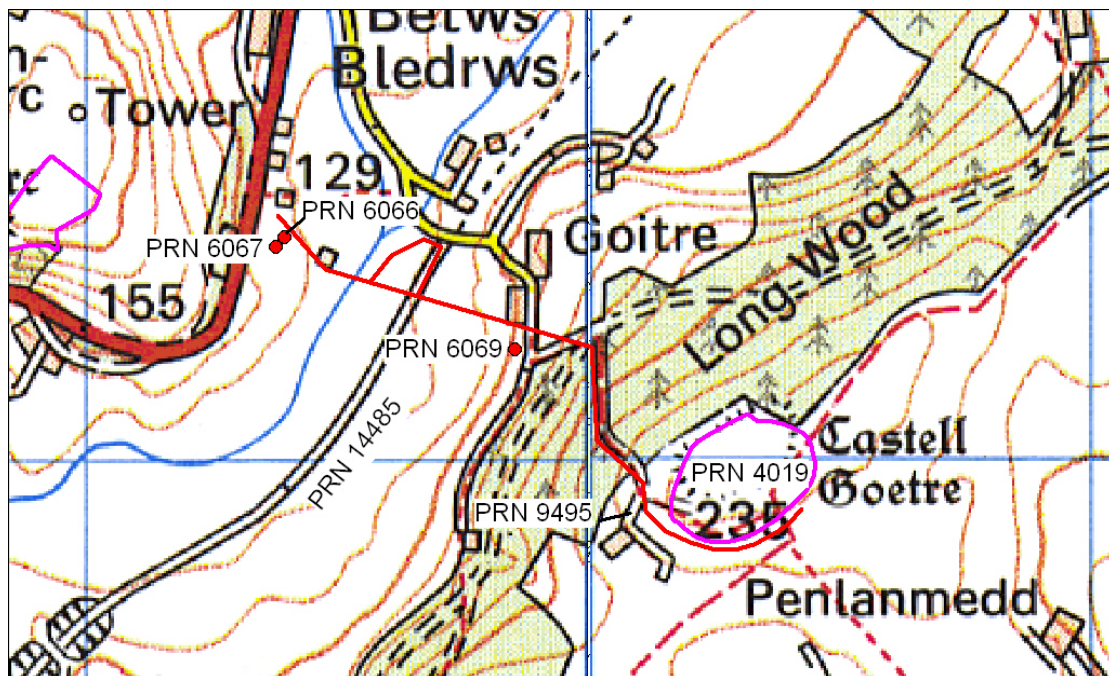


Figure 1: Location plan of proposed water mains renewal scheme (red line) showing the known sites (PRNs) and the Castell Goetre Scheduled Area (purple outline).

Reproduced from the 1988 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale Pathfinder Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A.

### Landscape development

The main components of the present landscape have been in place since at least the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the current layout of fields boundaries and farms was shown on the Llanfair Clydogau and Llanguby parish tithe maps, both produced in 1844. Some boundaries shown on the tithe maps have since been removed to create larger fields. Field boundaries are a mix of hedgebanks and modern post and wire fencing. Towards the southeast of the renewal works route lies an area of conifer plantation, Longwood. This covers the west-facing slope below Castell Goetre hillfort, and this same area was shown as woodland on both tithe maps.

On the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1:2500 maps (1889 and 1905 respectively) Longwood was shown as broadleaf woodland.

Although the present landscape is very much a product of the post-medieval period, there are many traces of much earlier landscapes surviving within it. These range from Mesolithic findspots, to Bronze Age standing stones, Iron Age hillforts – including Castell Goetre (PRN 4019) – and a number of enclosures of probable prehistoric date identified from aerial photographs as cropmarks. The enclosures include three (PRNs 6066, 6067 and 6069) within the assessment corridor and a large number within a few hundred metres of it.

Several trackways that run across, or close to the assessment corridor may have medieval origins and were probably developed as the layout of farms in the area was established (Plate 1).

During the post-medieval period the assessment area was incorporated into the substantial Derry Ormond estate, which was held by John Jones until his death in 1835 and by the Trustees of the estate after that (Jones, 2000, 88). The core area of the estate was to the northwest of the assessment corridor on the west side of the Afon Dulas and it is likely that the Castell Goetre area was maintained as an area of working farms providing income for the estate.

Probably the biggest modern impact on the landscape was the construction of the railway in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The railway was built by the Manchester and Milford Railway as part of a scheme to link the manufacturing centre at Manchester with the port at Milford Haven via the proposed Carmarthen and Cardigan Railway and onto the South Wales Railway.

A small modern pumping station is present towards the west end of the site.





Plate 1: East facing photograph of possible hollow-way leading into Castell Goetre Hillfort.



Plate 2: West facing photograph showing the small pumping station.



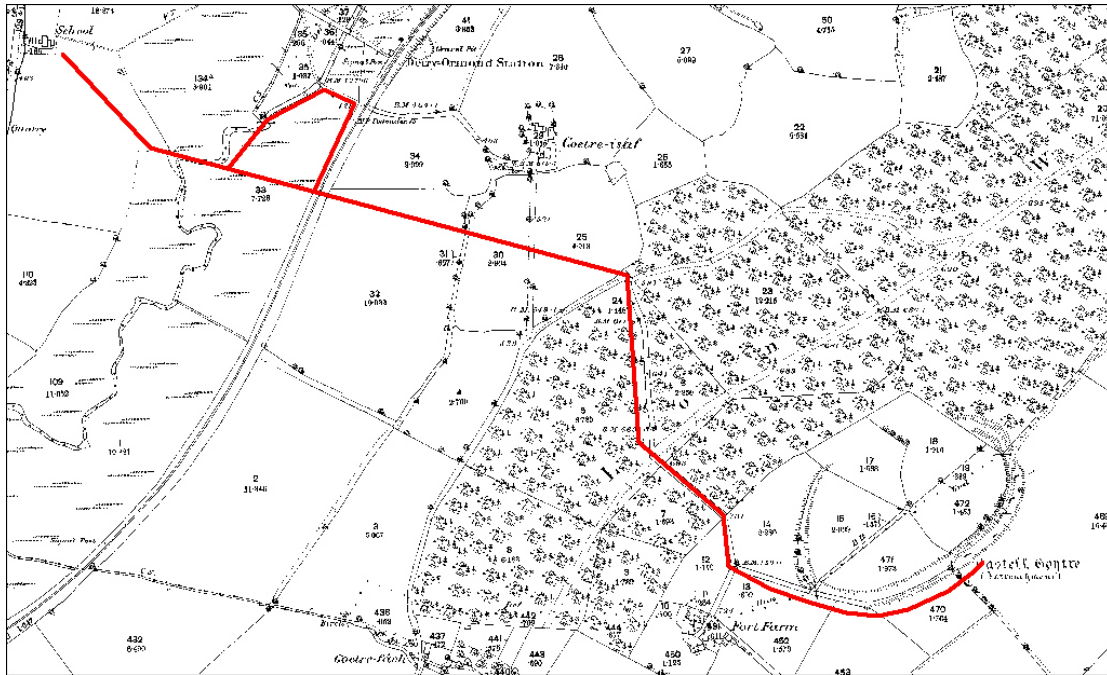


Figure 2: Assessment area displayed on 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey Map (1891).

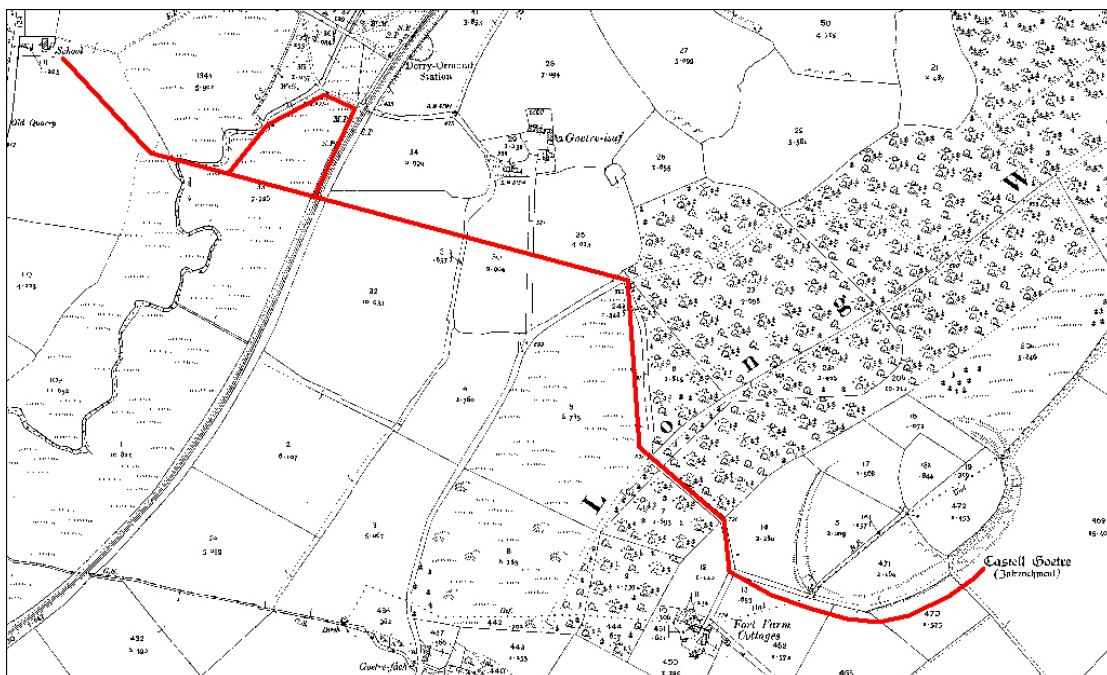


Figure 3: Assessment area displayed on 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey Map (1906).

### 3. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

#### **Known archaeological sites within the assessment area**

There are five known archaeological sites that could be affected by the route of the proposed water mains renewal scheme. These are the Castell Goetre hillfort (PRN 4019. NGR SN60305100. SAM CD107), Derry Ormond Station undated rectangular enclosure (PRN 6069 NGR SN59875122), two further undated enclosures (PRN 6066 NGR SN59405145 and PRN 6067 NGR SN59395144) and the course of the former Manchester & Milford Railway (PRN 14485). A trackway (possibly PRN 9495) of possible medieval origin will also be crossed.

#### ***Castell Goetre (PRN 4019; SAM CD107)***

Castell Goetre may possibly be of multi phase construction, with the first phase consisting of a broadly circular enclosure that was incorporated into the defences of a larger secondary fort. Without excavation it is difficult to date the first fort at Castell Goetre, although, because of its relatively strong naturally defensible position, its univallate defences and its relatively small size it has been dated to the Iron Age (Lynch et al, 152).

The fort is a scheduled ancient monument (CD107) and is currently under pasture.

#### ***Derry Ormond Station enclosure (PRN 6069)***

A rectangular cropmark measuring c.40m by 25m identified by the Ordnance Survey in July 1974 from vertical aerial photographs taken by the RAF in 1946. The enclosure is situated on the lower slopes of the small valley containing the Afon Dulas. The Ordnance Survey visited the site in the 1970s and noted 'irregularities' in the ground surface. However, these irregularities were not visible during the site visit for this assessment.

#### ***Bettws Bledrws cropmark (PRN 6066)***

This is one of a series of mostly circular cropmarks (see also PRN 6067) identified by the Ordnance Survey in July 1974 from vertical aerial photographs taken by RAF in 1947. The cropmarks are located on the lower slopes of the small valley containing the Afon Dulas. A site visit carried out by the Ordnance Survey in February 1976 failed to find any trace of the cropmarks (Ordnance Survey, 1976i). There were no surface indications for this site during a site visit carried out for this assessment. The field in which the cropmark was noted in 1974 was sold in 1950 during the dispersal of the Derry Ormond Estate and was sold on condition the adjacent school maintained the right of emptying refuse on an unspecified area of the field (Nicholas & Francis, 17).

#### ***Bettws Bledrws cropmark (PRN 6067)***

Another cropmark identified by the Ordnance Survey in July 1974 from vertical aerial photograph taken by RAF in 1947 (Ordnance Survey, 1976i). No surface evidence was visible during the site visit undertaken for this assessment. The cropmark was noted in 1974 in the same field sold in 1950 where the school had right of emptying refuse (*ibid.*)

***Abandoned railway (PRN 14485)***

The railway was constructed by the Manchester and Milford Railway as part of a scheme to link the manufacturing centre at Manchester with the port at Milford Haven via the proposed Carmarthen and Cardigan Railway and onto the South Wales Railway. The line closed in the 1960s and today it is used as a farm track. The track bed survives, and the nearby Derry Ormond Station survives in fairly poor condition.

***The trackways***

Several trackways that run across, or close to the assessment corridor may have medieval origins and were probably developed as the layout of farms in the area was established. The proposed renewal scheme crosses one of the tracks just to the north of Fort Farm Cottage. The trackways are wide and flanked by low earth banks topped with mature trees, presumably the remnants of former hedges and one was recorded on the HER (PRN 9495).

**Archaeological potential**

The buried archaeological resource is unknown and frequently unpredictable. With a project such as this, there is the potential for buried remains to be present almost anywhere along the route. The presence of the hillfort and the enclosure sites identified from aerial photographs further highlights the significant archaeological potential of this area.

**Archaeological sites close to the assessment area**

There are a number of sites close to the assessment area, which whilst not being directly affected themselves are further evidence of the archaeological potential of the area.

| <b>PRN</b> | <b>Site name</b>                      | <b>Grid Reference</b> |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 240        | Derry Ormond defended enclosure       | SN89515               |
| 4555       | Gaer Coed Parc hillfort<br>SAM CD166  | SN58795143            |
| 4800       | Gaer Coed Parc Mesolithic findspot    | SN588514              |
| 6068       | Derry Ormond rectangular enclosure    | SN59445185            |
| 7462       | Bettws Plantations defended enclosure | SN59105137            |
| 14358      | Derry Ormond defended enclosure       | SN59155130            |

Figure 4: Table of known archaeological sites close to the assessment area.

#### **4. POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF PROPOSED SCHEME**

The processes of construction on a scheme of this type are well enough known to be able to make general statements that can be used to inform mitigation measures required.

New building involves a range of processes that have immediate and obvious archaeological implications. The main processes are:

1. Site Clearance
2. Topsoil stripping
3. Heavy machinery moving across the site.

All renewal operations involve physical intervention, from site clearance works, to topsoil stripping, to heavy machinery moving across a given site. All of these have the potential to damage or remove previously unknown buried archaeological features and deposits.

##### **Known archaeological sites**

The proposed scheme could affect five known archaeological sites. However, if the scheme is a complete replacement of an existing water main on the same line then it is probable that significant damage has occurred to these sites and the replacement works could be confined to the damaged areas. That said, the archaeological implications are significant and should be addressed through a programme of further archaeological works.

The eastern end of the works will skirt the southern section of the scheduled area of Castell Goetre Hillfort (PRN 4019). Therefore, the hillfort should be unaffected by the works.

The full extent of the cropmark enclosure sites (PRNs 6066, 6067 and 6069) is uncertain and therefore they, or any associated buried features, could be affected. However, the route lies to the north of these sites, so the likely impact is small.

The former railway line (PRN 14485) will be crossed by the works, but as this section will be carried out through splitting the existing pipe and not through an open cut, this is not considered to be significant.

The possible medieval trackway (PRN 9495?) will be crossed by the works, although this is not considered to be significant.

##### **Potential impacts on the buried archaeological resource**

The nature and extent of any underlying archaeological deposits is at present unknown. However due to the presence of known and possible archaeological features within the assessment area and in the surrounding landscape the likelihood of the proposed scheme having an impact on the buried archaeological resource is high.

## 5. SUGGESTED FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

The further archaeological works outlined below are suggestions only at this stage. The final decision regarding the scope and extent of any further works will be taken by the regional archaeological curator.

### Known archaeological sites

The scheduled area of the Castell Goetre Hillfort (PRN 4019) should be avoided where possible. If it is not possible to avoid the scheduled area then Scheduled Monument Consent must be obtained from CADW prior to any works being undertaken. Even if the works do not directly affect the scheduled area vehicles, plant and machinery should be excluded from it to avoid any accidental damage to the monument occurring. An archaeologist should be present during all ground-breaking operations in the vicinity of the fort to record any archaeological features exposed.

The cropmark enclosures PRNs 6066, 6067 and 6069 lie to the south of the proposed works and should therefore be unaffected. A watching brief should be carried out on any ground-breaking operations close to these sites.

A targeted watching brief should be carried out on those parts of the route where the works cross the former railway line (PRN 14485) as it is known in certain cases railway lines have features such as culverts constructed within them. A targeted watching brief should also be undertaken on possible medieval trackway (PRN 9495).

### Archaeological potential

The extent of the buried archaeological resource is unknown. Therefore, it is suggested that a watching brief could be maintained on all major ground breaking operations carried out during the scheme.



Plate 3: East facing general photograph of proposed route of works (2008).



## APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND FEATURES WITHIN THE ASSESSMENT AREA

### PRN 4019 Castell Goetre Hillfort (NGR SN60305100)

Castell Goetre hillfort is located on a broad rounded ridge top *c.*235m aOD. Topographically the land falls away at a steep angle into a valley to the north and west, whilst to the south and east it is less steep (Murphy, 2006). The enclosed area of the fort occupies a relatively substantial 2.8ha making it one of the largest hillforts in the area (Davies & Kirby, 237).

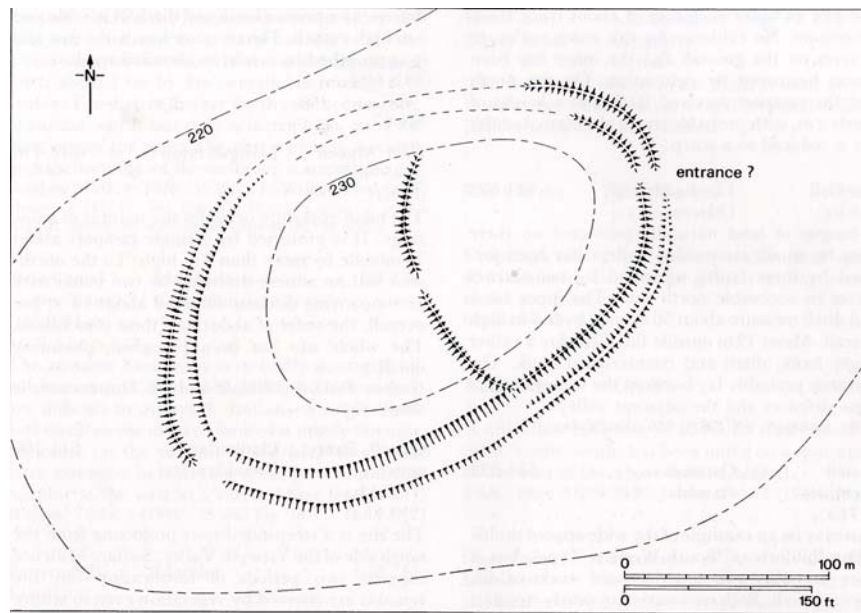


Figure 5: Plan of Castell Goetre hillfort (Davies & Kirby 1994, 259)

The structure is probably of multi phase construction having possibly developed from an existing earlier enclosure. The first phase consisting of a broadly circular enclosure measuring *c.*100m on its north south axis by 90m enclosing an area of 1.1ha (ibid, 237). It has been suggested all that remains of this primary phase of construction are a curving cross bank and ditch (CADW). The surviving bank being very slight but pierced with what appears to be an entrance approximately half way along its length (Murphy et al, 2006).

A further hypothesis regarding the cross bank is that it is a later addition to the larger hillfort (Davies & Kirby, 1994, 259). However in all likelihood it represents the remains of the earlier enclosure, the remainder of the defences being incorporated into the defences of the larger secondary fort but without excavation it is impossible to be certain (ibid, 258). Without excavation it is also very difficult to date the first fort at Castell Goetre however given its relatively strong naturally defensible position, its univallate defences and relatively small size it may be possible to tentatively offer an early Iron Age date of *c.*550-400 cal BC (Lynch et al, 152).



Plate 4: Oblique aerial photograph of Castell Goetre taken from South West (Musson, 1992).

The suggested secondary construction phase at Castell Goetre resulted in a fort with an enclosed area in the region of 240 x 140m equating to 2.8ha. Defensively this was much stronger than the suggested earlier fort, this being still evident to this day, especially to the eastern area of the site. Here the defences comprise of a substantial inner bank 10m in width and surviving up to 2.2m above the ditch bottom with a counterscarp bank of about half the dimensions of the main rampart. The defensive system being approximately 20m across. A c120m section of the northern defences have been destroyed although their former line can be traced (Murphy et al, 2006). The defensive evolution and enlargement of the fort may possibly have occurred during the Middle Iron Age 400-150 cal BC as many hillforts in Wales show similar development (Lynch et al, 154). The motivation behind this development is somewhat unclear, one theory suggesting that it indicates evidence of the introduction of cattle raising as a specialised activity, the retained cross bank and ditch of the earlier fort possibly demarcating the living area of the fort with one for cattle storage (Davies & Kirby, 238). This may be significant as this could also suggest that the fort was important in the social structure of the time and may represent the crystallisation of territories and the centralisation of power vested in an elite (Cunliffe, 1991).

Castell Goetre fort is a scheduled ancient monument (CD107) and is currently under pasture.

#### **PRN 6066 Bettws Bledrws cropmark (NGR SN59405145)**

Located in a low lying field in close proximity to a stream which suggests possible flooding a mostly circular series of cropmarks identified by Ordnance Survey in July 1974 from vertical aerial photograph taken by RAF in 1947. A site visit carried out by the Ordnance Survey in February 1976 failed to find any trace of the cropmarks (Ordnance Survey, 1976i). A site visit undertaken in January 2008 also failed to find any trace of the cropmarks. However the former right of the adjacent school to dispose of refuse on an unspecified area of the field (Nicholas & Francis, 17), may explain the presence of the possible feature.

**PRN 6067 Bettws Bledrws cropmark (NGR SN59395144)**

Located in a low lying field cropmarks of unknown form identified by Ordnance Survey in July 1974 from vertical aerial photograph taken by RAF in 1947 (Ordnance Survey, 1976i). Again no traces were able to be found of the cropmarks during a site visit undertaken during January 2008. Being located in the same field as PRN 6066 it is quite possible the right of the former school to dispose of refuse in the vicinity (*ibid*) may go some way to explain the presence of the cropmark.

**PRN 6068 Derry Ormond Station Enclosure (NGR SN59875122)**

Located in a low lying field near a stream, a rectangular cropmark measuring circa 40m by 25m identified by Ordnance Survey in July 1974 from vertical aerial photograph taken by RAF in 1947. A site visit carried out by the Ordnance Survey in February 1976 noted irregularities in the ground surface which were responsible for the cropmarks (Ordnance Survey, 1976ii). During a site visit undertaken during January 2008 these irregularities were not visible.

**PRN 14485 Abandoned railway line**

The abandoned railway line survives as a linear feature orientated southwest - northeast within the landscape.

The railway line was constructed by the Manchester and Milford Railway as part of a scheme to link the manufacturing centre at Manchester with the port at Milford Haven via the proposed Carmarthen and Cardigan Railway and onto the South Wales Railway. From the outset the plan was optimistic given that it would have to cross the Cambrian Mountains however it was decided to amend the route by running through Tregaron down the Yswyth Valley to Aberystwyth the view being that it would be less of a task to cross Caron Bog than the Cambrian Mountains (Morgan, 2006, 278-279).

On New Years Day 1866 the section of line between Pencader and Lampeter was opened but being built as a standard gauge line of 4 feet 8 ½ inches, the section built between Pencader and Carmarthen by the Carmarthen and Cardigan Railway being broad gauge, 7ft ¼ inch as favoured by Brunel. To remedy this situation a mixed gauge system was introduced whereby a third rail was laid at to enable the connection to be made (*ibid*, 279).

By August 1867 the link with Aberystwyth was completed but by this time The Manchester and Milford Railway was in financial trouble, with services fraught with difficulty. Passengers travelling on the line from Manchester to Milford would have to endure an over night stop en route. Whilst even the relatively short 40mile journey between Aberystwyth and Pencader would take between three and four hours. By 1875 the company was in receivership but continued to operate. Sometime after 1900 the company made the attempt to lease the line to either the Great Western Railway or Cambrian Railways. The Great Western Railway took over in 1906 and subsequently absorbed the Manchester and Milford Railway in 1911. The line continuing to be operated by the Great Western Railway until nationalisation in 1947 when it passed to British Railways. (*ibid*, 279-280).



Plate 5: North East facing photograph of former Manchester and Milford Railway (2008)

By the early 1960s the line was in serious decline. The Beeching report of 1963 signalled the end with freight services being withdrawn the same year, passenger services ending in 1965 (ibid, 338). A site visit undertaken in January 2008 noted that the former line is now being used as a farm track it was also noted that the nearby Derry Ormond railway station and platform survive, but in a poor state of preservation.



Plate 5: Former Derry Ormond Railway Station (2008).



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**RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2008/3**

**Ionawr 2008  
January 2008**

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by Simon Ratty

Swydd / Position: Archaeologist

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Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith  
This report has been checked and approved by

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on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

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Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

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gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

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