

# DEVELOPMENT AT TIR LLANDRE FARM LLANNON, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Prepared  
by  
Cambria Archaeology  
for  
Mr Michael Donoghue



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**DEVELOPMENT AT TIR LLANDRE FARM, LLANNON  
CARMARTHSHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

By  
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**SUMMARY**

*A planning application was submitted by Mr Michael Donoghue (Application number S/15340) for the demolition of existing buildings at Tir Llandre Farm, Llannon, Carmarthenshire (NGR SN53890840) and to replace them with three new residential properties.*

*There are no known archaeological sites within the boundary of the development site. However, the site lies to the south east of the medieval parish church of St Non's (PRN 664: NGR SN53970847). St Non's church would have formed the nucleus of any medieval settlement at Llannon, which may have extended as far as the development site.*

*Given the potential for archaeological remains and deposits to be present on the site planning permission was granted with a condition that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the groundworks for the development. A further recommendation made being the buildings to be demolished prior to any development being carried out, be recorded by photographic survey prior to the commencement of any demolition work.*

*In order to comply with this planning condition Mr Michael Donoghue, commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the archaeological watching brief in February 2008.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Commission**

Plans to demolish existing buildings and to construct three new residential properties at Tir Llandre Farm, Llannon, Carmarthenshire on a site at Tir Llandre Farm, Llannon, Carmarthenshire (NGR SN53890840) required an archaeological watching brief and a rapid photographic survey of the existing buildings prior to demolition. The proposed development site does not contain any known archaeological features or deposits. However, the close proximity of the site to the medieval church of St Non's (PRN 664), which would have formed the nucleus of any medieval settlement at Llannon, resulted in an archaeological watching brief condition being recommended by the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) archaeological advisor <sup>1</sup>. Mr Michael Donoghue, commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the archaeological watching brief in February 2008.

### **1.2 Scope of the Project**

The project was designed to record any archaeological features or deposits exposed during all major episodes of earth moving or ground breaking, such as topsoil stripping and deep cutting. An additional aspect to the design of the project being the undertaking of a rapid photographic survey of the existing buildings on the site prior to demolition.

### **1.3 Report Outline**

This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background (Section 2) before summarising the watching brief results and the conclusions based on those results (Section 3).

### **1.4 Abbreviations**

Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER<sup>2</sup>) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR).

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<sup>1</sup> Cambria Archaeology Heritage Management Section recommended the condition in a letter to Carmarthenshire Planning Department dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

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

## **2.THE SITE**

### **2.1 Location**

The site is located at NGR SN53890840, which is to the south west of the centre of the village of Llannon. Topographically the site is situated on a moderate northeast sloping hillside at a height of 190m above Ordnance datum.

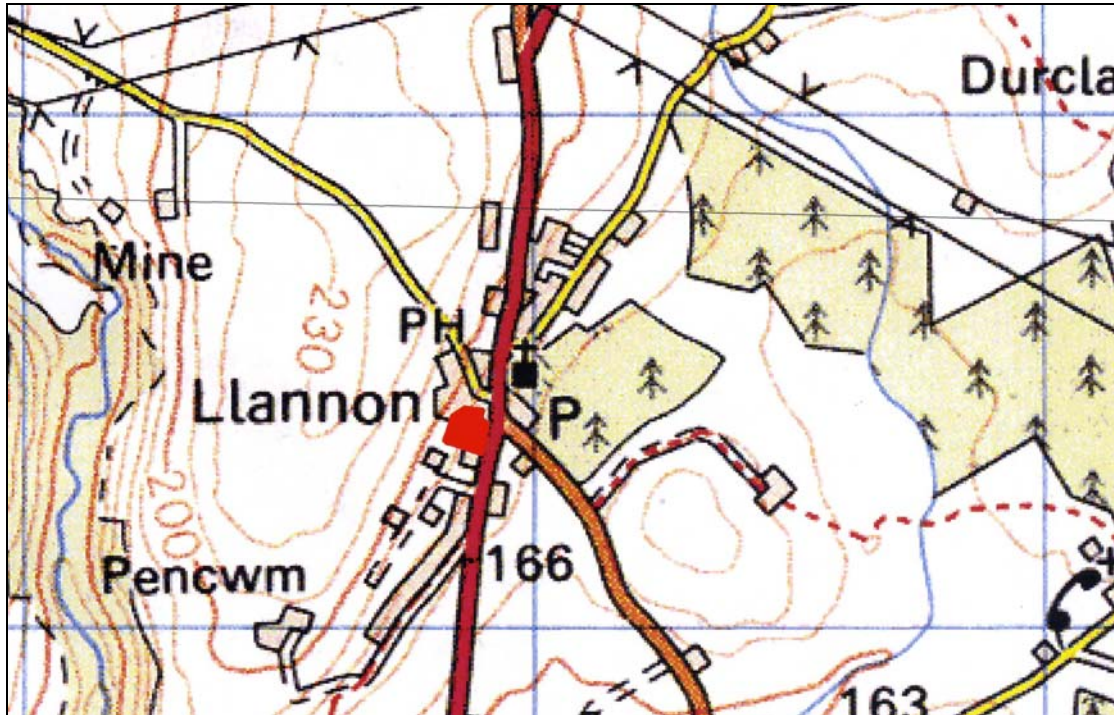


Figure 1: Location map of site with the development area shown in red.

### **2.2 Historic landscape development**

A search of the regional HER revealed no known archaeological sites within the area covered by the watching brief, although it is in relative close proximity to the medieval church of St Non's which would have formed the focus for any medieval settlement. Map regression has revealed the site was known as Tiryllandre on the Llannon parish tithe map (1841), although there did not appear to be any buildings on the site. A single structure had been constructed on the site by the time the 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map was published in 1878. The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition map (1906) shows the structure still present but it appears another structure had been constructed adjacent to it.

Modern 1:10000 Ordnance Survey maps show a further structure, known as Tir Llandre Bungalow, had been constructed on the site. The landowner, Mr Michael Donoghue indicated this had been constructed in the 1940s.

Map regression has also revealed the field boundaries have not changed since the latter part of the 1800s although it is quite possible they might be in fact earlier.



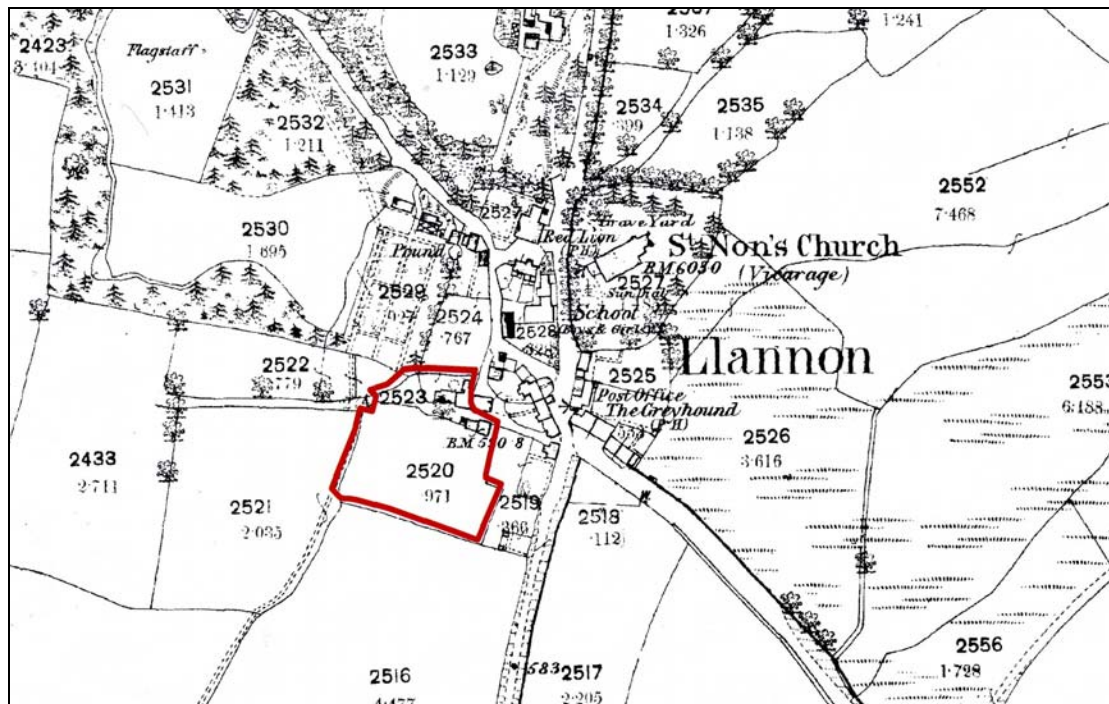


Figure 2: Extract of 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map with the development area shown in red.

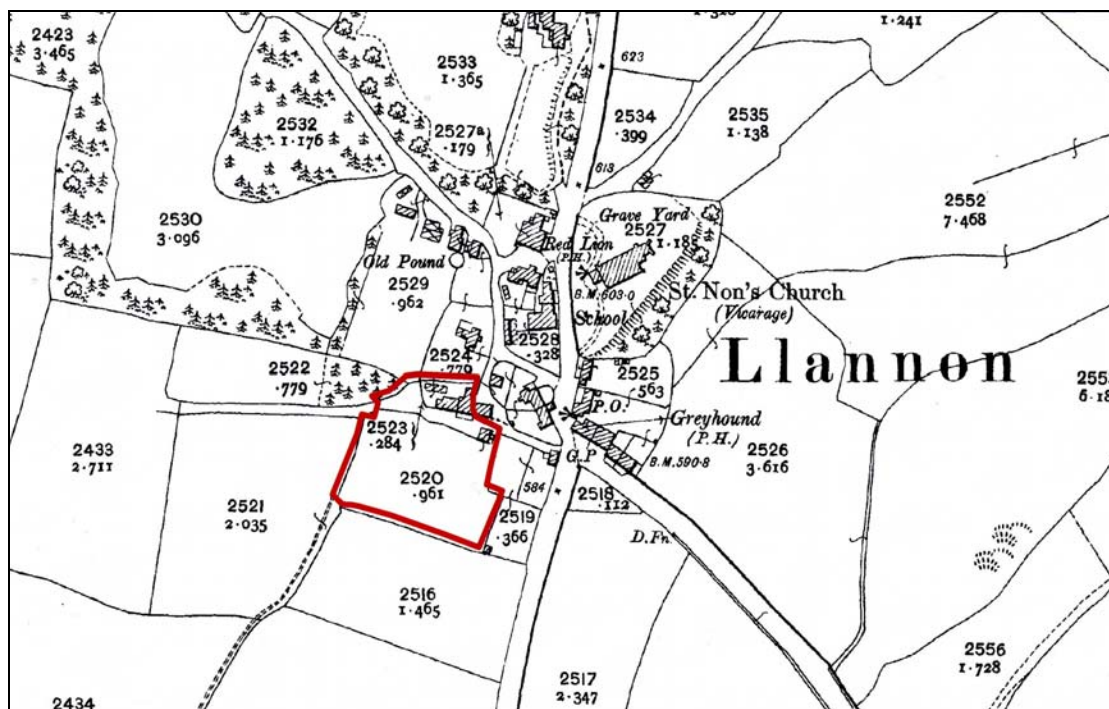


Figure 3: Extract of 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS map with the development area shown in red.

### **3.SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS**

#### **3.1 Watching Brief Methodology**

The watching brief methodology comprised of a site visit to monitor any major episode of earth moving or ground breaking such as topsoil stripping and deep cutting. In addition a rapid photographic survey was to be undertaken of the existing buildings prior to their demolition.

#### **3.2 Results**

On arrival it quickly became clear the existing buildings had already been demolished with the exception of one, which is now to be retained. This building was formerly used as a stable. Its construction phases suggesting it has been heavily altered during its lifespan. The earliest construction phase is of rough stone and mortar, which may indicate the remnants of an earlier building. This construction phase is particularly evident in the lower section of the southwest facing gable end of the building and also in the southeast facing wall where it is still present up to the roof line. The remainder of the structure is of brick and corrugated iron construction and appears to be in a very bad state of repair.



Plate 1: Surviving existing building within development plot.

The only traces of the demolished buildings noted during the site visit were the terraces where they were once located. One short length c.4.5m of surviving wall was noted to survive on the upper terrace orientated southwest – northeast and was of two distinct phases of construction. The earliest phase of construction appears to be of rough stone and mortar which survived to a height of 1m, with a length of 2.75m, it was not possible to date the wall as it may be constructed from reused material. The secondary phase of construction was of brick and mortar, of which two courses were surviving to a height of 0.18m. This secondary wall appears to abutt the earlier stone built wall and is probably indicative of repair work. Both walls appear to be acting as retaining walls given the terraced nature of the site.





Plate 2: Gable end of existing building showing stone and brick construction.



Plate 3: Surviving brick and stone retaining walls following demolition of bungalow.

In addition to the two walls already discussed, a further wall running perpendicular to and abutting the stone wall was noted. Structurally it appeared very similar to the stone wall with the exception it does not appear to have been mortared. This wall survived to a height of c.1m. As with the other walls it would appear this was a retaining wall.





Plate 4: View of surviving brick and stone walls, with unmortared stone wall in background.

It was very difficult to identify any stratigraphical sequence across the site because of the heavy disturbance caused by the demolition and the movement of a large tracked excavator. In addition, large heaps of demolition debris in the form of brick, concrete block, wood, corrugated iron and household appliances such as a cooker hob occupied a large portion of the site which had been already been cleared. However, it was possible to note in one small area a visible section through the dark reddish brown silty clay topsoil cut to a depth of 0.38m: no archaeological features were noted in this section.

Immediately to the southeast of the large demolition heap a small area of topsoil had been skimmed off to a depth of 5cm with no archaeological features being visible. The remainder of the site was still covered in grass at the time of the site visit.

A search of the building demolition heaps revealed a large proportion of the bricks were of local manufacture. By far the highest proportion being from the Emlyn Works of Penygroes. The remainder being from Machynys Llanelly, Trimsaran and Swansea brickworks

### **3.3 Conclusion**

The extent of the works prior to the watching brief has clearly had an impact on the archaeological resource as two of the buildings had been demolished before recording was possible. The stone walls recorded in the surviving building suggest that it may have been the earliest structure on the site. The demolition rubble across the site indicates that the structures removed were largely constructed from brick, concrete and corrugated iron, suggesting that they were fairly modern.

Where the underlying stratigraphy of the site was exposed there were no deposits to suggest any archaeological features were present.





Plate 5: Location of demolished bungalow showing terraced nature of site



Plate 6: Location of cottage and house following demolition.



Plate 7: Overall view of site with demolition rubble to upper left.



## **SOURCES**

### **Map**

Llannon parish tithe map and apportionment (1841)  
Ordnance Survey 1878 Carmarthenshire Sheet LIV NE 1:2500.  
Ordnance Survey 1906 Carmarthenshire Sheet LIV NE 1:2500.  
Ordnance Survey 2002 Landranger 1:50000.

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This report has been checked and approved, on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed  
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