

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.0.1 The Cambrian Mountains Initiative has been established by HRH, the Prince of Wales, to enhance the rural community of Mid Wales. It aims to stimulate economic diversification whilst preserving the heritage of the area, ensuring the survival of the region's distinctiveness. In addition, the Initiative should, as a result, contribute towards the delivery of the Welsh Assembly Government's Wales Spatial Plan. The area covered by the Initiative extends from upland mid Wales into southern Ceredigion and northern Carmarthenshire.
- 1.0.2 The Cambrian Mountains Initiative includes a Built Environment Phase, which is managed by the Prince's Regeneration Trust. It aims to prioritise building types or geographical areas where there is potential for the Initiative to deliver heritage regeneration, and seeks to find new uses for redundant historic buildings.
- 1.0.3 A Historic Buildings Pilot Project has been set up to develop a broad understanding of farmsteads in their historic and landscape context, and has been made possible by a grant from Cadw. It is recognised that farmsteads are an important component of the historic environment, and contribute to local and regional distinctiveness. However, compared with other rural building types, such as houses and places of worship, farm buildings are comparatively poorly understood. The pilot study is a characterisation of the surviving stock of farm buildings, which draws out themes and patterns in the built heritage, and considers variables such as geographical, social and chronological factors.
- 1.0.4 The pilot area is mainly in eastern Ceredigion, bordered to the north by Lledrod, Llanafan and Pontrhydygroes villages, extending down the western side of the Cambrian Mountains, taking in Strata Florida, as far south as Llanybydder on the Afon Teifi in northern Carmarthenshire (fig 1).
- 1.0.5 A rapid survey aimed to visit every farmstead within the pilot area, as far as was practical. Exceptions were made where access could not be obtained or where a visit was refused. A desk-based initial study gathered available information from the county series Ordnance Surveys and Tithe surveys, listed-building information held by Cadw, Buildings at Risk information maintained by Ceredigion County Council, and Historic Environment Records (including Tir Gofal assessments) held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust and RCAHM Wales. Records were made of 531 farmsteads, smallholdings and related cottages. Results were entered on to a database. The survey looked at the chronology of farmsteads and individual building types; it assessed architectural character, including building types, their plan forms, materials and styles, and identified farmsteads and individual buildings at risk. This report synthesises the findings of the survey, drawing together knowledge gained about farm layout, individual building types and building materials, and divides the survey area into farmstead character areas. It also identifies farmsteads at particular risk, and suggests opportunities for repair or adaptive re-use.

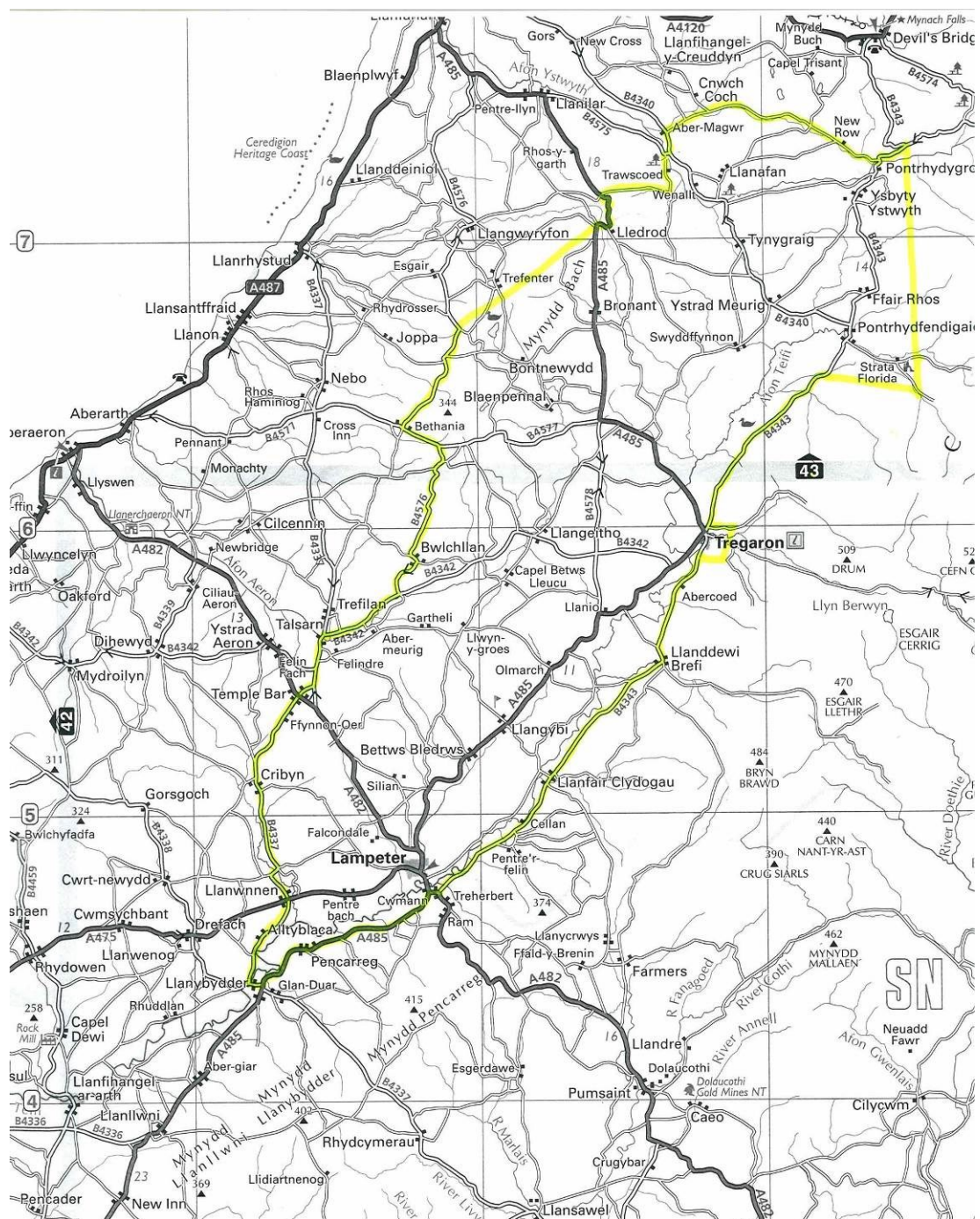


Fig 1. Historic Buildings Pilot Project area.

## **2.0 Farming and farmsteads from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries**

- 2.0.1 The area of the pilot study, mainly comprising eastern and north-eastern Ceredigion, varies between 90m above sea level in the Aeron valley and rises to over 350m on Mynydd Bach. It therefore encompasses a variety of topography and fertility. Samuel Lewis in 1833 offered a reasonable summary of the whole survey area when he described land at Silian as a 'moderate extent of arable and pasture land, which is partly enclosed; the surface is varied, and the soil is in some parts tolerably fertile' (Lewis 1833, Silian). It is under those physical conditions that the area's mixed farming economy was based.
- 2.0.2 Much of the pilot area lay within the estates of major landowners, which in the medieval period were mainly the Vaughan family of Trawsgoed and the Cistercian monastery at Strata Florida. The location of some of the present farmsteads, and perhaps also the water mills (as is claimed for Fullbrook near Tregaron), belongs to this period. There were also native landowners, the *uchelwyr*, whose homes are recorded in praise poems, although none of their houses or farmsteads has survived. Some of them, like Plas Llanfair Clydogau, were picturesque ruins by the early nineteenth century (Lewis 1833, Cardiganshire). Following the closure of the monastery at Strata Florida its estates were sold off, the origin of the later large country estates of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1567 the Strata Florida estates were owned by the Stedman family, who built the Great Abbey Farmhouse. At this time it was, like the late medieval or sixteenth-century house is at Dolwerdd (Llangeitho), a gentry home with no associated contemporary farm buildings (see fig 17). The granges of Strata Florida became part of the Trawsgoed estate in 1630-32 (Morgan 1997, 181). Trawsgoed, owned by successive earls of Lisburne, continued to acquire land and farms until the nineteenth century, and was the dominant landowner in the north-eastern part of Ceredigion, extending over more than half of the survey area, as far south west as Llanfihangel Ystrad. In the district north and west of Lampeter the Falcondale and Derry Ormond estates were the largest land holders in the nineteenth century.
- 2.0.3 The poor state of farmsteads in west Wales was noted by several travellers at the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were characterised, probably with undue bias, as small, poorly built and dilapidated. It is certainly the case that substantial rebuilding took place from this period, part of a nationwide trend towards agricultural improvement, led by pressure groups such as the General Board of Agriculture and the Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture and Industry in Cardigan, which was established in 1784. In Ceredigion the example of Thomas Johnes of Hafod was held as a model way in which unproductive land could be exploited for profit, although in this instance by tree planting rather than improved agricultural methods. Other pressures were being placed upon the rural landscape from the late eighteenth century. The increase in rural population led to many younger sons of farmers seeking their own plot of land, which took them on to hitherto marginal land where they became squatters who gradually improved their holdings. The area around Penuwch is a case in point. Agriculture improvement also coincided

with enclosure of commons and wastes, stimulated by the General Inclosure Act of 1801 and which continued throughout the nineteenth century, creating new farmsteads.

- 2.0.4 Farm holdings can be grouped into three main categories: Farmsteads were the main holdings, where it is usual to find several buildings built to perform specific functions. The average size of farmsteads in the area was approximately 100 acres, and by the late nineteenth century the smallest holding that could hope to be self-sufficient was 30-35 acres (Moore-Colyer 1998, 26). However, there is not always a direct correlation between size and status of farmsteads, especially in the area north of Tregaron bog where there is much poorly drained land and, further east, where there is high-altitude grazing land. Farms between 30 and 100 acres were regarded as the norm in the early nineteenth century, but it has since been argued that the average was larger, approximately 140 acres on the Trawsgoed estate and 160 acres on farms in Llanfair Clydogau and Llanddewi Brefi owned by Thomas Johnes (Davies 1815, 162; Colyer 1976, 121). Anything larger than 30 acres would require extra pairs of hands, if only at harvest time, which was provided by labourers or smallholders. Smallholdings are those of less than 30 acres, which in practice often meant less than 10 acres. Smallholdings were farmed on a part-time basis and were often associated with inns, corn mills, smithies and shops (Colyer 1976, 120). Sometimes smallholders were paid in kind for work on a large farm, being given a strip of land to cultivate potatoes. Smallholdings, or *tyddyn*, usually constitute a small house with an attached cow house. Cottages were built for farm labourers, although some of them had a small portion of land. The distinction between cottage and smallholding was therefore blurred.
- 2.0.5 Only a minority of farmsteads in south-west Wales have buildings erected before 1800. At Gelligarneddau (Llangybi) is a large barn with a seventeenth-century roof that must have served a holding much larger than the present farm (fig 2). It stands in a farmstead loosely organised around a yard. A smaller barn at Pencefn (Tregaron) on the edge of Tregaron bog is dated 1689. It stands behind the late nineteenth-century farmhouse in an illogical position relative to the nineteenth-century farm buildings forming the main yard. The barn may be earlier, but it had been left isolated from the main farm group in nineteenth-century improvement. Another early barn, at Derlwyn Fawr (Llangeitho), has been incorporated into the later farmyard (fig 3). At least two farms, Trefynor Isaf and Tai'n Coed (both Nantcwnlle), have farm buildings of the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century arranged around a yard.
- 2.0.6 Although many of them have an earlier origin, surviving farm buildings mainly belong to the era of farm improvement that began in the early nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century it was customary to let farms on long leases, often for a period of three lives. The cost of building and maintaining farm buildings was borne by the tenant, who had few resources to devote to improvement of the holding. In the nineteenth century the terms of leases changed, becoming progressively shorter until most estates let their farms for annual rent. In addition the landowners took on the responsibility of erecting and maintaining the buildings, which gave them the incentive to



amalgamate two or more holdings and to provide them with one good set of buildings (Moore-Colyer 1998, 27-28). Husbandry clauses were also introduced by Trawsgoed and Derry Ormond by the 1850s, which stipulated the acreage allowed for crops, which in turn influenced the type and scale of farm buildings that were erected. On the Derry Ormond estate farmsteads were improved using estate capital but tenant labour. Trawsgoed allowed tenants to build independently of the estate, the cost of which was deducted from annual rents (Moore-Colyer 1998, 31). In practice it will be seen that most farm buildings could not have been put up without the help of professional builders, but that local traditions persisted in the choice of local building materials. Estate involvement also resulted in an architectural uniformity, in which higher status was expressed less by the use of materials than by scale and layout of farmsteads.

- 2.0.7 Livestock was the mainstay of the local farming economy, but arable remained important until the twentieth century. Consequently Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire both had mixed farms, and farm buildings that reflect it. The earliest farm buildings were built to shelter the farm's most valuable asset, i.e. cattle, but throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was a gradual increase in the number and types of farm buildings erected. Farms needed a barn to store and thresh crops; a cow house, a stable for the working horses, and a cart house to store carts and any other implements. If a farm kept pigs, then pigsties and, if possible, a boiler house to make up the swill, were also desirable, if not essential. Durable accommodation for pigeons, hens and geese was also optional.
- 2.0.8 Wheat grows poorly on the acid soils of Ceredigion, and the chief cereal crops were therefore barley, rye and oats. Unleavened barley bread, bread produced from oats and barley sown together, known as *sipris*, and rye bread were an important component of the local diet. Barley was a main ingredient for brewing beer and cereal crops were also used for livestock feed. Any surplus was sold. Threshing and winnowing was done manually on many farms even in the twentieth century, but there is plenty of evidence for mechanisation on many farms. The use of waterwheels and oil-fuelled engines for threshing is discussed below.
- 2.0.9 Agricultural improvers encouraged turnip cultivation as part of a system of crop rotation, apparently with little success. Local growers grew corn in the same fields year after year, until the soil was exhausted. They were stubbornly resistant to change. By the 1830s some grew turnips, swedes and mangolds but the conditions were considered to be too wet and acidic to grow them well (Moore-Colyer 1998, 36-38). Root houses are therefore uncommon buildings, and are most likely to be found on larger farms. Falcondale Home Farm is a good example of this, where a local landowner tried to encourage best practice by taking a lead. Samuel Lewis also noted that peas and beans were grown by many farmers, and that the peas provided horse feed and pig swill (Lewis 1833, Cardiganshire). In 1914 arable still accounted for 15% of land use in Ceredigion, although this had fallen to 3% by 1990 (Bateman 1998, 117). This period of long decline was halted only between 1939 and 1947 when there was a brief surge in oat cultivation.



Fig 2. Exterior and roof truss of Gelligarneddau barn (Llangybi).



Fig 3. Early barn, later extended on the left side, at Derlwyn Fawr (Llangeitho).



Fig 4. Eighteenth-century barn, stable and cart house at Trefynor Isaf (Nantcwnlle).

- 2.0.10 Cattle were important as a meat and dairy animal. Accommodation for cattle was in loose boxes, although later they were placed into regular stalls. Other variations included provision of separate bullcots, or calf cots. Butter was an important market for farmers in the region. Salted butter was shipped to South Wales to feed the growing industrial population in the early nineteenth century; then unsalted butter was sold further afield when it could be transported by rail. Related to cattle rearing is the building of hay and silage sheds. Hay sheds were built from the mid nineteenth century and continued to be built until the 1960s. Subsequently there has been a shift to feeding cattle on more nutritious silage, which has required the erection of sheds over silage pits. The establishment in 1933 of the Milk Marketing Board, and the introduction of subsidies, encouraged many farms to invest in milk production. By 1942 dairy cattle accounted for 22% of the livestock on Ceredigion farms (Bateman 1998, 120). Alterations to existing cow houses are discussed below, but it is worth noting here that many barns were also converted for milking at this time. Milk production has been in significant decline ever since the introduction of quotas in 1984.
- 2.0.11 Sheep were not housed in buildings on the farm. Pigs were reared for domestic consumption, and in the nineteenth century also for sale. By the 1850s native breeds were in decline, superseded by early maturing English breeds, fed on whey and ‘chat potatoes’, plus the household scraps (Moore-Colyer 1998, 47). Swill was prepared in boiler houses in large cast-iron pans.
- 2.0.12 The other group of buildings that should be mentioned are cart houses and implement stores. Samuel Lewis noticed that farmers’ carts were comparatively small, and also noted that farmers were attached to their old-fashioned ploughs (Lewis 1833, Cardiganshire). Other sources document resistance to new implements and machinery, and also the widespread use of home-made sleds and ‘slide cars’ (Moore-Colyer 1998, 40).

### **3.0 Farm layout**

- 3.0.1 Very few farms can be regarded as surviving in their original planned form, in the sense of being laid out on a fresh site. Farmsteads exist from the eighteenth century, but their appearance has been altered by subsequent additions. Farm plans are therefore the result of historical process rather than a single event.
- 3.0.2 Nevertheless the farm buildings were planned in the sense that they were carefully sited to account for the topography, access routes and the position of pre-existing buildings. Scale of buildings was also thought out to ensure that barns were as big or small as they needed to be, and that when it made practical sense to do so, several functions were combined in multi-purpose buildings. In the nineteenth century there are cases such as Gorwydd (Llangybi) and Pencefn (Tregaron) where earlier buildings appear to have been ignored and new buildings were set up around fresh yards elsewhere on the farm.
- 3.0.3 The most common early farm plan is to have a cow house in-line with the farmhouse. In surviving examples like Trefynor Isaf (Nantcwnlle) and Felinfach (Pencarreg) the extant house and cow house are not necessarily of the same date, having undergone staggered rebuilding (fig 5). Earliest examples are built on the downslope with the cow house at the downhill end, although this type is uncommon in the survey area. Examples include Trefynor Isaf (Nantcwnlle), Allt Ddu (Llanddewi Brefi), Hafod-y-gofaint Isaf (Ystrad Meurig) and the much modernised farmsteads at Blaen Plwyf (Llangybi) and Bryn Goleu (Llanfihangel Ystrad). This downhill linear form continued to be built until the early nineteenth century, for example at Bronfynwent (Lledrod). In most examples where the house and cow house are in line, they are built across the slope, or else on level sites. Pen-y-Gaer (Nantcwnlle) preserves the concept very well, even though the house was extended slightly and the present cow house is a later addition, probably replacing the original (see fig 18). Well-preserved later examples include the early-nineteenth century Felinfach (Pencarreg) on a flat site in the Teifi valley and the hill farm at Maes-y-beudy (Ysbyty Ystwyth) (figs 5, 54). This type was prevalent in the nineteenth century on small farmsteads, but was associated with a lower social status than it had been in the seventeenth century. It was used for smallholdings, including small upland farmsteads at Banc Llanafon and Pen y Coed (both Trawsgoed) that have been thoroughly modernised. On Mynydd Bach it is especially prevalent in an area of small nineteenth-century upland farmsteads, such as Fen Onwyn (Lledrod) (fig 7).
- 3.0.4 Other farmsteads have early house and cow house in-line across the slope, notably at Tanygraig (Llangybi) and Coed Parc (Llangybi), where later buildings changed the character of the farm into a courtyard plan (fig 6). At Tanygraig the building of a new house detached from the farm buildings kept pace with changing fashion in the siting of houses, discussed in more detail below.





Fig 5. Felinfach (Pencarreg), with house in the centre, cow house to the right and later stable on the left.



Fig 6. Old house and cow house at Tanygraig (Llangybi).



Fig 7. Fen Onwyn (Lledrod), with house and cow house of the later nineteenth century.



- 3.0.5 Most farmsteads are arranged around a yard, usually having derived their plans through additions over several years. Whether there are buildings on two, three or four sides depended largely on the scale of the farmstead and, to a lesser extent, on the topography. The origins of this form date at least from the eighteenth century. Trefynor Isaf (Nantcwnlle) had downslope ranges facing each other across the yard, namely house, cow house and a barn and stable (fig 4). Tai'n Coed (Nantcwnlle) was similar and can be dated to the early eighteenth century by remains of former cruck trusses in the farm ranges.
- 3.0.6 On a steep sloping site it is customary to build the house across the slope at the top of the yard. The farm buildings are then arranged on the slope, forming a U-plan or L-plan open at the downhill end to facilitate drainage. There are numerous U-plan farmsteads, for example at Olwen (Lampeter), Nantymedd (Llangybi), Gorwydd (Llangybi) and Llanfair Fach (Llangybi). The same arrangement can be found on flat sites, where the farm buildings appear to be later than the house (at Pontfaen, Lampeter), earlier than the house (at Maes Isaf, Pencarreg, and Drefach, Llanwnnen), or roughly contemporary (at Dolaugwryddon Isaf, Lampeter). The latter is a lowland farm, but the layout was also preferred in upland farms, a good example of which is at Cwmpenllydan (Trawsgoed) at 300m altitude. The widespread use of this layout in the nineteenth-century for upland and lowland farmsteads, whether built on a steep hillside or a level floodplain, demonstrates how the plan was imposed upon the landscape as the most efficient, and perhaps also the most aesthetically appealing, farm layout. Its origin lay partly in theory as well as empirical evolution.
- 3.0.7 The courtyard plan was favoured in the nineteenth century for farmsteads of higher status. Derry Ormond Home Farm (Llangybi) was built in the early nineteenth century and is surprisingly modest, but its courtyard plan and imposing entrance doors were clearly intended to express status. Although it has been significantly altered by the partial conversion to a dwelling, its cow houses are arranged around a yard that must have been cramped for practical purposes. There are examples of where the higher-status courtyard plan incorporated a house, as was probably the case at Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho), but elsewhere the house was built separately, as at Pen-y-bont (Tregaron) and Berthdomled (Lledrod).
- 3.0.8 In the second half of the nineteenth century hay sheds began to appear in significant numbers. Early stone hay sheds, such as Olmarch Isaf (Llangybi) and Llwyn of 1887 (Llanddewi Brefi), were erected behind the farmyard (see fig 36). This trend was continued into the twentieth century when open-sided Dutch barns with corrugated-iron roofs became commonplace.
- 3.0.9 The relative positions of house and farm buildings need a more detailed explanation. Tanygraig (Llangybi) is a good example of how the linear form developed into the U-plan. As stated above its house and cow house belong to the eighteenth century but by 1845 it had downslope cow house and barn to create a U-plan. It also represents the next phase of development, because a new house was built later in the nineteenth century facing away from the farmyard.

- 3.0.10 A later variation of this would be to arrange the farm buildings around the yard and to build the house facing away, either to a front garden or the view. This arrangement is clearly derived from the disposition of minor gentry houses and their farm buildings, such as Cilpyll (Nantcwnlle) of 1768, Dolaugwyrddon Uchaf (Lampeter) of 1837, Wenallt and Deri Odwyn (both Llangeitho) (see fig 52). Allt Goch (Llangybi) shows that this arrangement was current in the early nineteenth century for smaller farms, although here it was perhaps influenced by the topography of the site rather than status of the house. Pentre shon (Llanwnnen) is another early-nineteenth century example. Its house is built across the slope at the top of the site, but faces a small walled garden. The farm buildings are offset to the side of it.
- 3.0.11 The altered relationship between house and farm was intended to raise the status of the house, giving it the appearance of a private country residence. In practice it meant that the farmhouse often backed on to the yard so that the rear entrance was used, while the front entrance facing the landscape gave an aesthetically superior front which was devoid of practical function. There are also many cases where the house faces a road, such as Bettws (Llangybi). Architectural features were also used to express the difference between farm and house, not least in the hierarchy of building materials that is discussed further in section 4.0. Llanio Fawr (Llanddewi Brefi) was a large freehold farm where a U-plan block of farm buildings was built in the late nineteenth century, set apart from the earlier house. The status of the house was emphasised c1900 when the walls were rendered with rusticated basement and quoin strips and pebble-dashed walls. At the entrance to the property are two gateways, which retain square stone piers with moulded caps. One gateway leads to the farm, the other to the house.
- 3.0.12 A more subtle distinction between house and farm was made by including a small walled garden in front of the house. These look incongruous facing a farm yard, and yet were increasingly prevalent in the nineteenth century. Llwynieir (Lampeter) is a U-plan farmstead where the front garden is indicated on the 1839 Tithe survey. In some instances such as Brechfa Fach and Llwyn Colfa Coed of 1897 (both Llangeitho) the garden wall is integral with the house. In other cases, such as Cefn Garthenor (Llangybi) the garden wall is clearly later than the house.
- 3.0.13 One trend that was been identified in the south of the survey area is for redevelopment of the farm buildings to precede the building of a new house. There are examples at Maes Isaf (Pencarreg) where the house is dated 1912, Felinfach (Pencarreg) where the new house was built c1920, and Maes Bach (Pencarreg), where the main farm buildings are dated 1880, the house 1896. There are also important farmsteads where the house was replaced but the old house was retained for farm use, such as Glandulas Uchaf (Llanfair Clydogau), Tanygraig (Llangybi) and Felinfach (Pencarreg), both of which are described above. In the large majority of cases, however, the original house was demolished and it is unclear where it stood, although there are examples of where the present house is a rebuilding and/or enlargement of an earlier

house, such as Gwarcoed (Lampeter), Olwen (Lampeter) and Wenallt (Llangeitho).

- 3.0.14 The last phase of the traditional farmyard layout belongs to the early twentieth century. At Ty'n-y-berth (Tregaron) a barn, stable and cart shed were added to an existing cow shed in 1914 in order to create a courtyard plan separate from the house (see fig 31). Lluest Newydd (Llangwryfon) is said by its owner to have been built in the 1920s, a claim supported by the evidence of the buildings (fig 8). In most respects it is a traditional farmstead. Buildings are constructed of stone with slate roofs. The house is separate from the yard and faces the road. Concessions to modernity include use of brick dressings and concrete lintels. Buildings are arranged in a U-plan around a sloping yard, with a yard wall at the downhill end. It incorporates the traditional building types, but also includes an integral cool house (or dairy) next to the cow house (or milking parlour). Cool houses are a common feature of farmsteads in the region, but most date from the mid twentieth century when milk was transferred to churns for collection. Behind the main building Lluest Newydd also has a hay shed on iron posts, with corrugated-iron wagon roof.

### 3.1 Estate and Planned Farms

- 3.1.1 Estate and planned farms are described separately for two main reasons. In the cases of Wenallt and Falcondale discussed below, they have plan forms and features that do not conform to the main categories of farm layout. Others are not planned farms but show how owners strived to create an impression of uniformity by altering and extending existing groups of buildings.
- 3.1.2 Wenallt (Trawsgoed), formerly home farm of the Trawsgoed estate, is a planned farm of the early nineteenth century and is more radical in its layout than any other farm in the survey area. Instead of being built around a yard, farm buildings are grouped against a large hipped barn, the logic being that all of the animal houses required feed that could be forked directly from the barn. It includes attached gabled stable and cow house, lean-to cart house and bullcot, and a lean-to open cow shelter said to be dated 1816. A passage is left between stable and cow shed to allow access to the wagon bay.
- 3.1.3 Cwmnewyddion Isaf (Trawsgoed) was acquired by the Trawsgoed estate in 1786 (Morgan 1997, 196). It has barn, granary and stable forming an impressive L-shaped block of at least two phases, and possibly of the late eighteenth century (fig 9). In the nineteenth century a long shelter shed was added in line with the stable, which together with a cow house at right angles created a large yard closed by a wall on two sides. This is one of the minority of farms where a fold yard was created, and its presence can be seen both as an expression of higher status and as a statement of good, modern farming practice.



Fig 8. Lluest Newydd (Llangwryfon) was built in the 1920s but retains a traditional farmyard plan.



Fig 9. Shelter shed, fold yard and barn at Cwmnewydion Isaf (Trawsgoed).



Fig 10. Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho), showing cow shed, cart shed and stables.

- 3.1.4 Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho) was described by Samuel Lewis in 1833 as an ancient mansion reduced to a farm. The present house was rebuilt in the 1840s and stands well above the farm buildings. These are arranged in an impressive courtyard plan, which is clearly the result of piecemeal development (fig 10). They include cow house and open-fronted shelter shed across the upper and lower ends of the yard, and a downslope stable and cart house, of which the cart house may have been partly adapted from an earlier C18 house, as it retains a fireplace with lath-and-plaster hood (Lloyd, Orbach and Scourfield 2006, 519). It is possible that this house was still inhabited in the nineteenth century. The latest element is a downslope barn, the roof of which is extended over a covered passage attached to the earlier cow house, that forms the main entrance to the yard.
- 3.1.5 Falcondale (Lampeter) had been owned by J.B. Harford of Blaise Castle, Bristol, since c1819, when he acquired the former Peterwell estate. Falcondale was already the home farm of the estate by the time of the 1839 Tithe survey, when it had a courtyard plan. The Italianate house at Falcondale was built c1859. The farm was subsequently altered, so that today it has a substantial lofted L-shaped block, dated 1885, and a partly covered yard (figs 11, 12). The entrance, through a covered passage between barn and cart house, is an expression of its high status. Its character is that of a planned late nineteenth-century farm – with consistent use of yellow-brick dressings, hipped roofs over the covered yard, a clock and wooden bellcote – but three corners of the yard are taken up by earlier buildings – the house, barn (both on the 1839 Tithe survey) and a coach house of c1859 contemporary with the main house. The farmstead therefore incorporates earlier buildings that have dictated the scale and shape of the yard. The buildings illustrate best practice in the late nineteenth century. They include stores for grain and roots, boiler house for pig swill, and loose housing for a bull. The covered stock yard and midden is not found elsewhere in the pilot study area. It can be seen as an expression of status, and as an example of best farming practice.
- 3.1.6 The Falcondale estate's ideal of a small Ceredigion farmstead can be seen at Berthlwyd (Llanfihangel Ystrad), an isolated farm on the 220m contour, built in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It provides a useful contrast in status with Falcondale Home Farm. Berthlwyd is unusual because the farm buildings are of a single phase, replacing a small farmstead shown here on the 1839 Tithe plan. Farm buildings are arranged in a U-plan, with yard wall across the open north side (fig 13). The house faces the yard, but is built slightly further north where the ground is higher. It has an integral front garden wall. Farm buildings, which are at different heights, are characterised by their hipped roofs, the use of which distinguishes them from the main stock of farm buildings in the locality. They are also consistent in the use of thin quarried shale with yellow-brick dressings. These buildings include cow house, stable, higher barn, open-fronted shelter shed (now infilled with wood panels), boiler house and pigsty. The fall in the ground on the outer side of the barn has allowed a cart shed to be constructed below the barn floor, making it effectively a bank barn.



- 3.1.7 Berthdomled (Lledrod) is a planned farm dated 1870, which has seen almost no subsequent alterations apart from deterioration of the structures. It is larger than Berthlwyd but otherwise has many similarities and was built to perform the same range of functions. The house is set in front of the farm, within a large walled garden with gate piers to the entrance. The buildings form a tight courtyard plan, comprising cow shed and shelter shed, pigsties and boiler house, barn, cart shed and stables (fig 14). The stables and cart shed face outwards, whereas the other buildings face the yard. There is an open entrance beside the pigsties, where cattle might have been brought in to the shelter sheds; but the main entrance is through an arched passageway (now roofless). The buildings are distinguished by the use of hammer-dressed snecked stonework, which is unusual in this area but not unknown. The barn roof trusses comprise king posts with raking struts, which is not a local type, and suggests that the design and construction of the farm was not executed by local builders.

### 3.2 Farmyards

- 3.2.1 The shape of farmyards is strongly influenced by topography. Roughly square yards are found on level sites, but on steeper sites the yard is often narrower and more irregular in shape. Penywernhir (Ystrad Fflur) has roughly triangular shaped yard, made possible by excavating the bank behind the buildings. It is a hill farm but its shape can be seen elsewhere, as at Allt Ddu (Lampeter).
- 3.2.2 Some farmyards were laid with cobbles, but in the majority of cases there is no evidence that the yard was artificially surfaced. A common practice was to provide a cobbled pavement, with kerb, of under 2 metres width, along the front of buildings (fig 15). Hardcore, concrete and tarmac have all been used to cover yards in the twentieth century. A small minority are grass, but not those that are still in use as farms.
- 3.2.3 Walls were built around farmyards in certain cases, but they are not a regular feature of farmsteads in the region. At Berthlwyd (Llanfihangel Ystrad) and Cwmnewydion Isaf (Trawsgoed) the wall is associated with a fold yard. Maes-y-beudy (Ysbyty Ystwyth) has yard walls in an area where there are field walls rather than hedges. Dolbeudiau (Ystrad Fflur) also has a wall to the downhill end of the yard.

### 3.3 Summary of farm layout types

- 3.3.1 Farmstead plans can be summarised into several basic types, which show a progression in social status from i to vi.:
- i) House and cow house built in-line down a slope. The earliest examples are of the seventeenth century (Trefynor Isaf, Nantcwnlle); the latest belong to the early nineteenth century (Bronfynwent, Lledrod).
  - ii) House and cow house built in-line across the slope. This type was current in the seventeenth century (Pen-y-gaer, Nantcwnlle) and continued to be built in the nineteenth century (Rhos Goch, Dyffryn Arth). It was employed for small farms and, by the nineteenth century, is the type most

associated with smallholdings of lower social status, often built upon the marginal land.

iii) Farmyards where parallel downslope ranges face each other across a yard This is a rare type, evolving from the single linear downhill range, and includes farms of the eighteenth (Tai'n Coed, Nantcwnlle) and nineteenth centuries (Llwyn Lwyd, Ystrad Fflur).

iv) Small and medium-sized farmsteads built around a yard on two, three or four sides depending on the scale of the farm. The house is built across the slope at the top of the site.

v) Farmsteads with U-plan farm buildings but with the house offset from it, common in the nineteenth century (Llanio Fawr, Llanddewi Brefi) and continuing into the twentieth century (Lluest Newydd, Llangwryfon).

vi) Courtyard plan, generally reserved for farmsteads of higher status, and used to express that status (Derry Ormond Home Farm, Llangybi).



Fig 11. Falcondale Home Farm (Lampeter) showing cart house and passage of 1885 linking with earlier barn and house at either end.



Fig12. Multi-purpose range at Falcondale Home Farm (Lampeter), of 1885. The yard is cobbled.



Fig 13. Berthlwyd (Llanfihangel Ystrad), a planned Falcondale estate farm, including walled fold yard and barn with hipped roof.



Fig 14. Berthdomled (Lledrod), showing cow house and barn of 1870.



Fig 15. Cobbled surface, with kerb stones, outside a cow house.



## **4.0 Farmstead Building Types**

- 4.0.1 Before discussing individual building types, certain general points need to be made with regard to architectural character. Hierarchy of buildings is often expressed in the use of materials. Hammer-dressed, rock-faced stones are usually reserved for the house rather than farm buildings. Even when used for houses, the best stone is often reserved for the front elevation, with rubble stone for the end and rear walls.
- 4.0.2 In the latter half of the nineteenth century, when farm ranges continued to be limewashed, roughcast became popular for houses, sometimes scribed and/or painted white. Use of materials was also hierarchical in farm buildings. Occasionally rock-faced or even squared stones are used for the main elevations of farm buildings, as at Trecefel (Tregaron) and Tynloff (Llangybi), with rubble stone used for the ends and rear. Likewise the main elevations may have openings with cambered stone arches, but the rear openings have wooden lintels.
- 4.0.3 Date stones of various types are found on a number of buildings (fig 16). Stone tablets are found on few farm buildings, such as Trecefel of 1836 (Tregaron), but are more common on houses. Some of them record the owners of houses, such as William Price at Dolaugwyrddon Uchaf (Lampeter) of 1837. Maes Llyn (Tregaron), a Trawsgoed estate farm dated 1815, has a tablet recording the tenant, implying that he organised the building of the house himself. Others record the builders. Tablets appear on two buildings at Maes Bach (Pencarreg). One records D Davies of Dolauduon on a multi-purpose range (1880) and the other records E Davies of Faerdrefawr (1896) on the house. Most are set within the stonework but the round-head tablet at Pentre Brain (Llanddewi Brefi), of 1852, is fixed to the wall with iron staples.
- 4.0.4 Most dates on farm buildings are scratched informally on quoins or doorway reveals, and usually on to rubble stone. Sometimes, as at Mynydd Brith of 1830 (Lledrod), they are accompanied by initials. Many examples were discovered but, because of their unobtrusive nature, many more must await discovery. The earliest dated stone is 1663 on a block embedded in the garden wall at Llanio Fawr (Llanddewi Brefi). The earliest dated building is the barn at Pencefn (Tregaron) of 1689; the latest date is 1924 on a rubble-stone engine shed at Cefn Meurig Mawr barn (Ystrad Fflur). The practice was self-evidently a longstanding local tradition. However, their presence does not imply that they were intended to be seen and that their associated buildings were not limewashed. Stones at Wern Fach (1880, Llangybi) and Ochr Garth (1871, Llanddewi Brefi) are more skilfully done in archaic style with large numerals and presumably were intended to be seen.
- 4.0.5 The number and nature of farm buildings on individual holdings varies. Pre-1800 farm buildings are almost all barns or cow houses. In the nineteenth century the types of buildings increased, with housing built for draught animals, pigs and hens, and valuable farm implements. Nevertheless on nineteenth-century smallholdings it is still common to see only a house and cow house. At Felin Fach (Pencarreg) and Rhos Goch (Dyffryn Arth) they



were later extended by the addition of a small stable, a sign of rising status. One former cottage, Cornwall Fawr (Ystrad Fflur) had only a dry-built pigsty. Barns, stables, cart houses and granaries are therefore less common on the poorer marginal land, especially around Mynydd Bach, Penuwch and Ysbyty Ystwyth.

#### 4.1 Houses and cottages

- 4.1.1 Vernacular houses and cottages have been extensively studied by Smith and others (Smith 1988, 1998; Davies 1991). Knowledge of small houses and cottages, especially of the nineteenth century, is principally derived from Cadw listing surveys. Compared to other districts in Wales there are few substantial post-medieval houses, although there are exceptions, such as the restored house at Dolwerdd (Llangeitho), which has a lobby-entry plan, although even this was an adaptation of an earlier plan (fig 17). Dolwerdd and Great Abbey Farmhouse (Ystrad Fflur) were both gentry houses that later became farmhouses.
- 4.1.2 Only one longhouse was identified, the now deteriorating Allt Ddu (Llanddewi Brefi). Other houses, however, have end entrances, a feature derived from passages between house and cow house. Pen-y-gaer (Nantcwnlle) is a good example of a cube-shaped early cottage where the entrance was in the gable end beside the main fireplace (fig 18). Direct descendants of this were still constructed in the nineteenth century at the northern end of the survey area, for cottages and farmhouses of lower social status. The best small example is the now abandoned Maes-y-Llyn (Lledrod), an isolated cottage on Mynydd Bach (fig 19). Talfryn (Ystrad Meurig) and Tan-fryn (Lledrod) are two-storey versions of the same idea, and are listed. Many others survive as small farmhouses on poorer land, as at Cruglas (Ystrad Fflur) and Pantyddafad (Lledrod). An isolated example of this in southern Ceredigion is at Drefach (Llanwnnen). Another nineteenth-century variation was to place the doorway in the end wall of a continuous outshut. Three examples of this type were identified, all of them for smallholdings of modest status. Cwrt Bach (Lledrod) is unaltered and has been listed, as has Blaenbeidiog (Llangwryfon), although the outshut has recently been removed. Tanyresgair (Lledrod), which was altered in the late twentieth century, is another, less well preserved example. Blaenbeidiog and Tanyresgair are both located on marginal land above 300m.
- 4.1.3 Single-storey houses, or houses with a *croglofft*, were also built in the nineteenth century for smallholdings or small farms. At Maes-y-beudy, Storehouse (both Ysbyty Ystwyth) and Rhos-goch (Dyffryn Arth) they have attached cow houses (see fig 54). These are all modest houses on marginal land. At Cefn Coed (Llangeitho) is a separate range at right angles (see fig 53).



Fig 16. Date stones of 1852 at Pentre Brain (Llanddewi Brefi), 1869 at Wenallt (Llangeitho) and 1880 at Wern Fach (Llanddewi Brefi)



Fig 17. Dolwerdd (Nantcwnlle).



Fig 18. Pen-y-gaer (Nantcwnlle).



Fig 19. Maes-y-llyn (Lledrod).



Fig 20. Georgian-style farmhouse at Berthlwyd (Ystrad Meurig).

- 4.1.4 Houses influenced by the urban Georgian style appear in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, at first in the homes of the minor gentry. Cilpyll (Llangeitho) is dated 1768. The principle of these houses is to provide a central entrance with rooms of equal size on either side of it. In practice the openings are offset from the centre because of the large fireplace in the kitchen. Where the openings are not evenly placed they reveal unequal internal planning, which is also a descendant of the sub-medieval house. The two-storey house, with two or three windows in the upper storey, is the predominant farmhouse type of the nineteenth century. Small examples are even found in the marginal areas where the vernacular tradition described above persisted in the nineteenth century (fig 20). Higher status three-storey houses are in the same style, such as Pen-y-bont, Trecefel (both Tregaron) and Hafod (Nantcwnlle). Dimensions of the buildings change over time, so the earlier examples are broader and lower, the later narrower and taller.
- 4.1.5 Henfeddau (Lampeter) is the only farmstead where a unit system can be identified positively. It has two nineteenth-century houses side-by-side facing the yard. Deri Garon (Tregaron) is more interesting because it has two houses in different parts of the farm complex that might have been assigned individual cow houses but shared a barn, and probably stables as well. Secondary dwellings were noted close to former gentry houses. Ffos (Ystrad Meurig) is a house of the late eighteenth century, behind which is a former bakehouse that was also probably a dower house. Another is at Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur), standing next to the sixteenth century house. It has also been argued that the building in front of the house at Dolwerdd (Llangeitho) was also once a dwelling.

## 4.2 Cow houses

- 4.2.1 The cow house was the most important of the animal houses and is more or less universal on farms and smallholdings. There are many pre-nineteenth century cow houses attached to and in-line with the house. Others are freestanding. Early examples have tall lofts, ventilated by a line of loops, as at Hendre (Lledrod) and Cwmllechweidd (Ystrad Meurig) (fig 21). These each have two doors and the cattle were probably not kept in stalls. Until the advent of the hay shed in the late nineteenth century all hay was stored in a loft, but lofted cow houses continued to be built after that. The loft loading door is usually in the gable end.
- 4.2.2 The internal arrangement of the cow shed is often reflected on the outside by the position of the doorways. Nineteenth-century cow houses with three or five doorways facing the yard are likely to have had one or two transverse feed passages, and muck passages. Well-preserved three-door cow houses are found across the survey area, as at Bronfynwent (Lledrod), Felinfach (Pencarreg), Pantscawen (Lampeter), and at Tynffynnon (Lampeter) of the early twentieth century (figs 5, 22). Cefn Coed (Llangeitho) shows how fragile such buildings can be when they are earth-walled (see fig 53). Five-door cow houses are common in the north of the survey area, with good examples at Cwmpenllydan (Trawsgoed), Penlan Gwnnws and Broncaradog (Ystrad

Meurig), all of which are on relatively high ground between the 250m and 300m contours (fig 23). However, small cow houses are associated with the small upland holdings. The ruined example at Blaenbeidiog (Llangwryfon), and the one attached to the cottage at Rhos Goch (Dyffryn Arth), have only a single door. Some cow houses at the north end of the survey area, such as Ynys Morgan, Berthddu and Tynlon (all Ystrad Meurig), and Maes-y-beudy (Ysbyty Ystwyth), have two doorways to the yard, and a rear doorway to a feed passage across the back of the building (see fig 54). Occasionally this internal arrangement has survived, as at Tanllan (Llangeitho). The transverse-passage plan went out of favour in the twentieth century because it appears to have accommodated less stock.

- 4.2.3 In many cases the cow house also included loose housing, which could be used for calves or for a sick animal, either as an integral component of the main range, or in a lean-to. Specific accommodation for bulls was not noted, except at Falcondale Home Farm (Lampeter).
- 4.2.4 From the later nineteenth century, windows with ventilators began to appear in cow houses. In many three- and five-door cow houses some of the doorways were converted to windows (fig 23). A good example of this arrangement is at Glandulas Isaf (Llangybi), which has replacement windows, superseding an earlier form of unglazed openings that can still be seen at Felinfach (Pencarreg) (fig 5). Windows and ventilators took two main forms. Neuadd Fawr (Llanwnnen) has small-pane glazing above vents with horizontal-sliding covers. Cefn Llwyn and Berthdomled (both Lledrod) have small-pane glazing above louvered vents (fig 24). In the twentieth-century steel-framed hopper windows became the standard type.
- 4.2.5 Raised walkways are a distinctive feature associated with cow houses and are found across the survey area where the yard is a sloping site. At Llwyn Bwch (Lledrod) the associated cow house is dated 1809. Walkways are most often associated with cow houses built across the slope, such as Allt Goch (Lampeter), Tynlon, Ffos (both Ystrad Meurig), Pen-y-wern-hir (Ystrad Fflur), and have stone retaining walls. At Llwynmwyn (Ystrad Fflur) the walkway is partly paved with irregular slabs, and partly cobbled (fig 25).
- 4.2.6 Changes in the twentieth century have been brought about mainly by the adoption of milking from the 1930s. In order to fulfil hygiene standards new stalls were built of smooth-rendered concrete. Similar smooth rendering was applied to the floors and walls. Cool houses, or dairies, were built, usually as a lean-to against the front of the cow house, in brick or blockwork. Lluest Newydd of the 1920s has an integral dairy; in other cases they are (arguably ugly) additions to older buildings (fig 8). These are ubiquitous across the survey area and show how prevalent milk production became in the mid-twentieth century (fig 23). Related features are the churn stands built in this period at the entrances to farms. Cool houses and churn stands remained in use until bulk tanks were introduced from the 1970s, rendering the churn stands obsolete, although the cool houses were sometimes adapted for housing part of the milking machinery.





Fig 21. Cow house at Hendre (Lledrod) with vents in loft.



Fig 22. Nineteenth-century three-door cow house at Bronfynwent (Lledrod).



Fig 23. Five-door cow house at Broncaradog (Ystrad Meurig). Two doorways later became windows and a cool house was added in the mid twentieth century.





Fig 24. Sliding and louvered wooden vents in cow house windows.



Fig 25. Raised walkway in front of cow house at Llwynmwyn (Ystrad Fflur).

### 4.3 Shelter sheds

- 4.3.1 Shelter sheds were built in the nineteenth century, especially on large and higher-status farms, examples of which have already been noted. These were open-fronted and were constructed in conjunction with a fold yard for livestock. The shed was used to provide shelter where necessary, and for feeding. Major examples such as Cwmnewydion Isaf (Trawsgoed) retain related walls enclosing the stock yard (fig 9). At Deri Garon and Pen-y-bont (both Tregaron) they face away from the main yard. Shelter sheds are not always in good condition, as the examples at Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho) and Navy Hall (Lledrod) show. Both have been so substantially altered that the original form of the building is open to question. Cefn goyan (Llanddewi Brefi) has a small probable shelter shed of only three bays, the front of which is carried on round rubble-stone piers. Most, however, have wide, depressed arches. Falcondale Home Farm (Lampeter) is the only example of a covered yard.

### 4.4 Barns

- 4.4.1 Barns were used to store the year's crop and for threshing. The earliest farm buildings revealed in the survey are barns – Gelligarneddau (Llangybi), Pencefn (Tregaron), Tai'n Coed (Nantcwnlle) and Derlwyn Fawr (Llangeitho) (figs 2, 3). In these cases opposing doors are evidence that they were used for threshing.
- 4.4.2 The familiar form of lofted barn was established by the eighteenth century. Cilpyll (Llangeitho) is probably contemporary with the house of 1768 (fig 26). In these lofted barns the doorways could be wide enough for a wagon to pass through the building, or they could have one wide opening for a wagon to back into the barn for unloading (figs 27, 28). In such cases there is a smaller winnowing door in the opposite wall, which facilitated a through draft for threshing. This second type is common throughout the area (fig 29). Smaller barns may have only winnowing doors to the front and the rear. The type of doorways found in a barn is generally a factor of size rather than date, and size of barn is generally in proportion to farm size and topography. The majority have wagon doors on one side and a winnowing door on the other. There is a contrast between the impressive barns on the larger farms such as Cwmnewydion Isaf (Trawsgoed) and Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) which have wagon bays, and the small barns found on farms at higher altitude, for example those in Ystrad Meurig community at Tegfriw Fawr, Bryn Meherin and Llwyn y gog (dated 1853), and in Ystrad Fflur at Cwm Meurig Isaf and Pen-y-wern hir (figs 9, 29). Opposed doors were not universal. In two examples, at Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho) and at Deri Garon (Tregaron) the wagon bay is in the gable end, with another door (only a small door at Cwrt Mawr) in the side wall.
- 4.4.3 Wagon bays have double wooden doors, although some, such as at Bryndulas (Llangybi), have been replaced by a sliding metal door on rollers. Front and rear doors are not usually of equal height. The higher doors were for the loaded wagons, the lower doors for the empty wagons. There are numerous

surviving threshing floors, of slate or flagstones, such as Allt Ddu (Ystrad Fflur), Garthenor (Llangybi) and Tylau (Nantcwnlle). However, a smooth threshing floor was not essential. An alternative was to lay down temporary deal threshing boards which, in the early nineteenth century, were typically 9-14 feet by 6-8 feet. They could be used inside the building, but they also served as an additional threshing facility that could be used outdoors to hasten the process. Loft floors are built on either side of the threshing bay and often with internal doors connecting to adjacent stables or grain stores. The storage parts of the barn are ventilated by loops, some of which have dripstones and sills, for example at Maes Glas (Tregaron) and Felindre Uchaf (Llangeitho). At Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) some of the stonework of the vents was reclaimed from Strata Florida Abbey. The stone and clom barn at Penlan Fach (Llangeitho) has triangular stone vents, not otherwise a local type.

- 4.4.4 In the twentieth century, as crop-growing declined, some barns were converted for milking. These can be identified, like the barn at Meini Gwynion (Llangeitho), by the addition of lean-to cool houses, and by smooth-rendered interiors.

#### 4.5 Waterwheels, engines and engine houses

- 4.5.1 In the nineteenth century mechanical threshing was introduced, powered initially by waterwheels and horses. Although mechanical threshing is quicker and more efficient than the traditional method using a flail, many farmers reported having seen manual threshing undertaken until the mid twentieth century. Waun Nanny (Llanwnnen) retains the leat, wheelpit and race of a probable undershot waterwheel. The remainder, where evidence of water power is apparent, were all overshot waterwheels with cast-iron frames, which dates them later than 1850. Llanio Fawr (Llanddewi Brefi) and Llanfair Fach (Llanfair Clydogau) both retain cast-iron overshot waterwheels *in situ* (fig 30). At Llanfair Fach the wheel is in what seems like an incongruous position in the yard close to the house, but it is clearly in its original position because the tailrace can be seen leading away from it. In other examples it can be seen that the waterwheel was also offset from the barn wall, the most extreme example being at Esgairhendy (Lledrod), where the wheel was at a distance of 140 metres, the power having been transmitted to the barn by means of chain, rope or belt. A later alternative to the use of waterwheels was to use a Pelton wheel. Evidence of such a wheel was found at Penlan (Lledrod), where the pipe laid across the yard can still be discerned, and where there is a bearing box built into the barn wall.
- 4.5.2 There is less evidence of the use of horse engines. Behind the barn at Pen-y-wern hir (Ystrad Fflur) is the platform of a former horse engine. At Llwynmalus (Ystrad Meurig) is a raised horse walk in the farmyard, with a stone slab marking the position of the axle. Berthlwyd (Llanfihangel Ystrad) also has a raised platform at the rear of the barn. Portable steam or oil engines could also be used to power machinery in the barn, but evidence for this is slight, usually just an aperture in the barn wall, as at Gwarcoed (Lampeter), or an external belt wheel, as at Olmarch Fawr (Llangybi) and Pentre Brain (Llanddewi Brefi).





Fig 26. Eighteenth-century barn at Cilpyll (Llangeitho)



Fig 27. Barn, incorporating stable and pigeon loft, at Llwyn (Llanddewi Brefi).



Fig 28. Nineteenth-century barn with wagon bay at Gelli-Gwenyn (Llangybi).





Fig 29. Small barn of 1836 at Tegfriw Fawr (Ystrad Meurig).



Fig 30. Barn waterwheels at Llanfair Fach (Llanfair Clydogau) and Llanio Fawr (Llanddewi Brefi).



Fig 31. Barn of 1914 at Tyn-y-berth (Tregaron), with integral lean-to engine house.

- 4.5.3 At Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) the internal combustion engine superseded the waterwheel to power threshing machinery. Offset from the barn wall is a lean-to feeding a former waterwheel. However, a later lean-to against the wagon bay housed an engine. In this instance it is also self-evident that the practice of driving a wagon through the barn had been discontinued. Other barns show evidence of former engines in stone lean-tos, such as Gorwydd (Llangybi). At Ty'n-y-berth (Tregaron) the lean-to engine house is an integral component of a barn built in 1914 (fig 31). The latest dated example found was at Cefn Meurig Mawr (Ystrad Fflur), of 1924. Other twentieth-century engine houses were of corrugated iron, as at Tanllan (Llangeitho) and Dolbeudiau (Ystrad Fflur).
- 4.5.4 Evidence of mechanical threshing is also found inside barns, especially line shafting attached to the walls, with belt wheels and occasionally the belts as well. Threshers, chaff cutters, pulpers and millers were seen in various places, with a complete surviving range of equipment, as well as the engine, at Tynwaun (Tregaron).

#### 4.6 Stables

- 4.6.1 Most farms appear to have used horses as draught animals by the end of the eighteenth century. They continued to be used until at least the mid twentieth century. Broncaradog (Ystrad Meurig) had ten working horses in 1947. Smaller farms such as Pendre (Ysbyty Ystwyth) could accommodate four horses. Stables are found at all farmsteads and some smallholdings, and in many cases nineteenth-century wooden stalls have been retained. Stables sometimes face outwards rather than into the yard, as at Berthdomled (Lledrod) and Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho). However, of all the farm-building types, stables are most likely to be found as part of multi-purpose ranges (fig 27). To combine the barn with the stable allowed straw to be forked down from one to the other.

#### 4.7 Cart sheds and granaries

- 4.7.1 Farmers had traditionally used horse-drawn sledges, but by the early-nineteenth century wheeled carts had begun to appear. These were small, with a wheel span generally of no more than 5 feet. A farmer would have a single set of wheels that could be interchanged with more than one wagon bed (Davies 1815, i, 205-7). As the use of carts and other large and valuable implements, like cast-iron ploughs, increased, there was a need to protect them from the weather. Cart sheds therefore emerge in the nineteenth century as a direct consequence of farm improvement, and they can be found on medium and large-scale farms. On planned farms such as Berthlwyd (Llanfihangel Ystrad) and Berthdomled (Lledrod) they face outwards to a farm track rather than inwards to the yard. However there is no evidence of systematic placing of cart sheds, although many of them are situated close to the farmyard entrance. Timber lintels were used to span the wide openings for each bay in the earliest examples, but in the nineteenth century stone and brick arches

were more common. The depressed stone arches at farms like Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) are common and a distinctive feature of the area.

- 4.7.2 Cart sheds are usually lofted buildings, the loft space housing a grain store or granary. Absence of granaries on Ceredigion farmsteads was noted in the late eighteenth century. Some grain was kept in sacks in farmhouses but lack of suitable storage space often obliged farmers to sell their grain in winter when the price was lowest, and then buy food in spring when the price was highest (Davies 1815, i, 133). The appearance of granaries in the nineteenth century was a direct product of farmstead improvement, and a sign of increased rural prosperity. Farmsteads in Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire did not grow enough grain to warrant erection of separate granaries. Instead, the loft above the cart shed was used. It was reached by external steps in the gable end, was comparatively dry and free from vermin. Some granaries retain louvered vents, as at Cwmnewyddion Isaf (Trawsgoed) (fig 32).

#### 4.8 Pigsties and boiler houses

- 4.8.1 Pigsties are still to be found on many farms, built in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Keeping a pig was not labour intensive and so they could be kept by part-time farmers – the mills at Felin Rhydypany (Llangeitho) and Felin Coed (Nantcwnlle) both had pigsties (see fig 39). A dry-built pigsty was identified next to a former cottage known as Cornwall Fawr (Ystrad Fflur), but otherwise they were not found at smallholdings. The most likely reason is that, although smallholders kept pigs, they did not provide permanent accommodation for them. Pigsties follow a standard pattern, usually of two sties which open to small walled pens, and some have chutes through which the swill was poured. Pigsties were built of rubble stone. At Felin Rhydypany the pens are constructed of stone slabs. Associated boiler houses are often next to the sties and form an integral group, but not always. At Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) the boiler house is a former out-kitchen or secondary dwelling.
- 4.8.2 There are some interesting variations in the position and layout of sties. At Great Abbey Farm they are built against the rear of the cow house; at Trefynor Isaf (Nantcwnlle) they are lean-tos against the rear of the house (fig 33). At Mynydd Brith (Lledrod) there are two sties but the pens are built against different walls rather than being placed side-by-side. In this case the pigsties also combine a small hen house (fig 34). Hen coops were commonly combined with pigsties. Usually, as at Denmark Farm (Llangybi) and Maes Isaf (Pencarreg), there is a small hole with ledge in the upper wall or gable of the sty.





Fig 32. Granary entrance above cart shed at Cwmnewydion Isaf (Trawsgoed), retaining original louvered vents.



Fig 33. Pigsties at rear of Trefynor Isaf (Nantcwnlle). Pens have been removed.



Fig 34. Pigsties and hen house at Mynydd Brith (Lledrod).

#### 4.9 Pigeon houses

- 4.9.1 Dovecotes were not recorded as separate structures. Many multi-purpose farm ranges incorporate pigeon holes in the gable end (see fig 49). Occasionally the pigeon holes are placed in the main elevation, as at Llwyn (Llanddewi Brefi) and Trecefel (Tregaron), where they are an important component of the architectural character of a building, and perhaps also a status symbol (fig 27).

#### 4.10 Hay sheds

- 4.10.1 Open-sided hay sheds appear from the latter half of the nineteenth century. Hay was traditionally stored in the lofts of cow houses or stables. When production of hay increased, as a consequence of introducing grass into crop rotation, larger structures were needed.
- 4.10.2 Evidence of three types of stone hay barn was identified (fig 35). Their distribution is localised. One type is constructed of rubble-stone tapering piers, which had gabled slate roofs. Olmarch Isaf retains a near-complete example, in its traditional position behind the yard (fig 36). In other cases, however, only some of the piers have survived. At a number of farms west of Llanddewi Brefi – Cefngoyan, Penllwyn, Llanio Fawr (all Llanddewi Brefi) the pillars stand in isolation. A variant was to use tall stone orthostats to support the roof. These, quarried from the hillside east of Llanddewi Brefi, also have a very localised distribution. They were found at several farms, including Llwyn, Cefngoyan, Cefn-Llwyn, Pentre Brain (all Llanddewi Brefi) and as far west as Garthenor (Llangybi). The only complete structure of this type is at Cefn Llwyn (fig 37). One of the orthostats at Llwyn is dated 1887. The third and least-well preserved type is constructed of stone walls to the ends and rear, and open fronted, and seems to belong to the end of the nineteenth or beginning of the twentieth century. Cruglas (Ystrad Fflur) has tall piers on its open side but is much renewed; and at Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) the structure is ruinous, although the owner remembers the open front being supported on timber posts.
- 4.10.3 From the early twentieth century stone hay sheds were superseded by open-sided sheds, or ‘Dutch barns’, on steel uprights – often disused railway track – or on telegraph poles, with gabled or wagon roofs of corrugated iron (see fig 48). They were traditionally placed behind the main yard buildings, as earlier stone sheds had been, with good early examples at Lluet Newydd (Llangwryfon) and at Esgairhendy (Lledrod), which has hay and corn sheds of similar style, adjacent to the cow house and corn barn respectively, which are shown on the 1906 Ordnance Survey.
- 4.10.4 Silage sheds are similar in appearance to hay sheds and are also sited beyond the farmyard. They began to appear in the 1960s, since when silage has been preferred to hay as a more reliable and consistently nutritious feed. In silage sheds green fodder was compressed in a pit to expel air, but was sheltered from the weather by a roof.

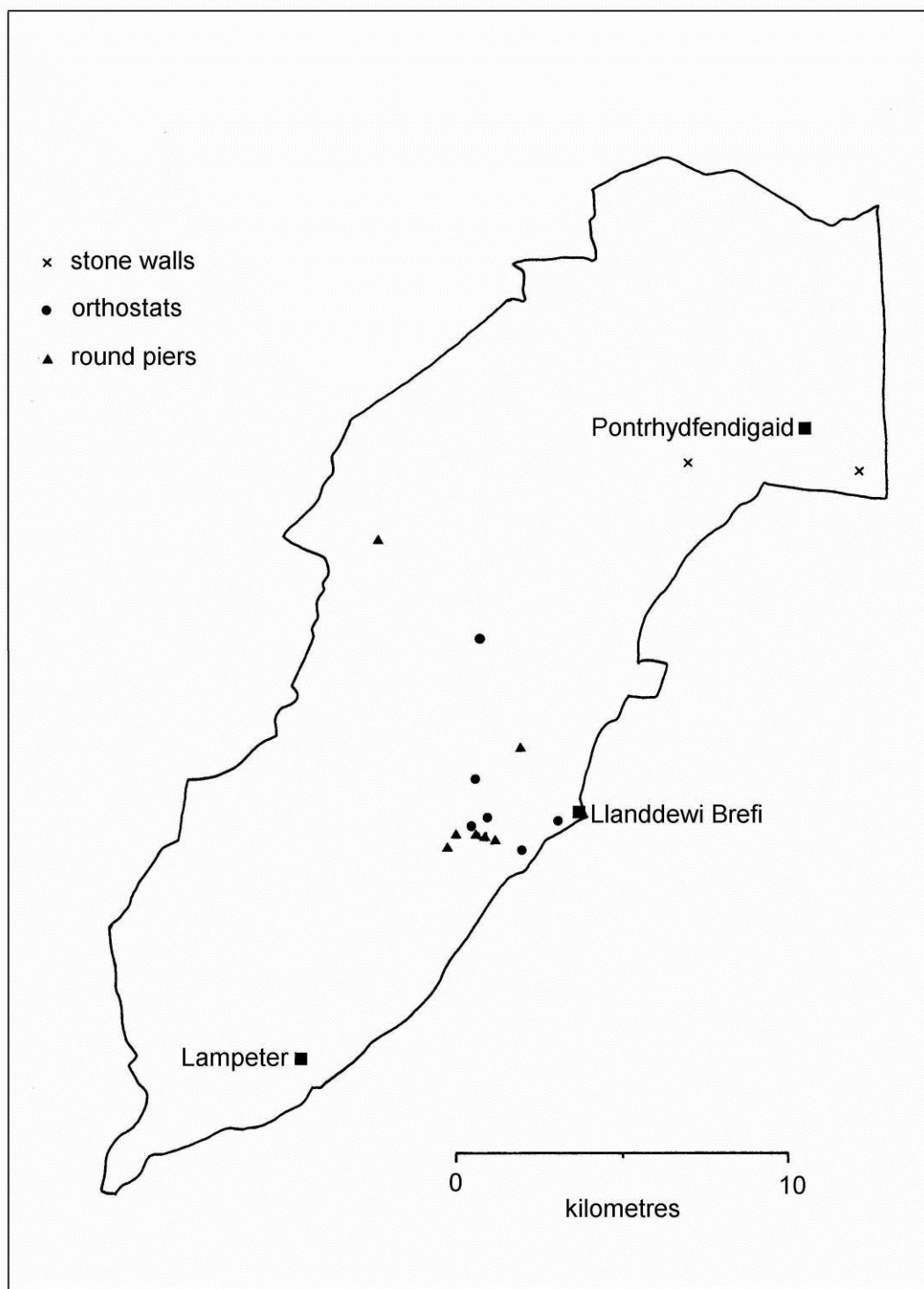


Fig 35. Distribution of stone hay sheds.





Fig 36. Hay shed at Olmarch Isaf (Llangybi).



Fig 37. Stone hay shed at Cefn Llwyn (Llanddewi Brefi).



## **5.0 Other Rural building types**

- 5.0.1 Other rural buildings identified in the survey include roadside smithies, woollen mills and a butter factory. Yr Efail (Llangeitho) is a roadside smithy, now converted, with an accompanying house dated 1811. A smithy at Ffynnon Geitho (Llangeitho) is apparently disused and retains a distinctive character (fig 38). Woollen Mills, by contrast, have been much altered, are difficult to identify, and consequently do not contribute greatly to the character of the rural building stock. Butter was an important part of the dairy economy of Ceredigion until the switch to milking in the 1930s. A butter factory was built beside the Tregaron-Aberystwyth railway line at Pont Llanio (Llanddewi Brefi) in 1897. A range of that date has survived, together with larger twentieth-century extensions, although the site was not accessible during the survey.

### **5.1 Corn Mills**

- 5.1.1 Corn mills were an important part of the farming economy and they have been recorded in many places. Many retain machinery, but so far only one, at Felin yr Aber (Llanwnnen), has been fully restored. Similar plans to restore are at Felin Coed (Nantcwnlle) and Felin Fach (Lledrod).
- 5.1.2 Felin Coed retains a miller's house, but also remnants of pigsties and cow house. Felin Fach (Lledrod) was part of an 88-acre holding with farm buildings, and at Felin Rhydypany (Llangeitho) are pigsties (fig 39). Corn mills can therefore be seen as part of a group of buildings, where mill work was supplemented by farming. At Felin Coed (Nantcwnlle) the corn-drying kiln and drying house have survived in part. Other corn-drying sheds are at Fullbrook Mill (Tregaron), Felin yr Aber and Felin Fach (Lledrod).
- 5.1.3 Waterwheels survive at a number of mills, all of which are overshot wheels with cast-iron frames. They can be seen at Felin Fach (Lledrod), Felin Fach (Nantcwnlle), Felin yr Aber (Llanwnnen) and partially buried at Felin Fawr (Llangeitho). Fullbrook Mill has a double Pelton wheel, which replaced the waterwheel in the 1920s when the mill was converted for electricity generation. Felin Coed (Nantcwnlle) and Felin Rhydypany were both converted to saw mills in the mid twentieth century. Machinery and millstones survive at Felin Rhydypany, Felin Fach (Lledrod) and Felin yr Aber (Llanwnnen).



Fig 38. Nineteenth-century roadside smithy at Ffynnon Geitho (Llangeitho).



Fig 39. Corn mill at Felin Rhydypandy (Llangeitho)

## **6.0 Building materials**

### **6.1 Stone**

- 6.1.1 Almost all traditional farmstead buildings are constructed of stone from local sources. Little evidence was found for the use of lime mortar, although in most cases it was not possible to examine how the stones were bonded. In the main, only earth-fast masonry was recorded, and only two dry-built structures were noted – a pigsty beside a former cottage known as Cornwall Fawr (Ystrad Fflur) and a probable implement store at Bryn Gwyn (Nantcwnlle). Stonework was not intended for pointing but for weatherproofing with limewash, except where special masonry techniques were used on houses. A distinction can be made between field stone, i.e. stone gathered from fields and rivers, and quarried stone.
- 6.1.2 Field stone was used in lower-lying areas such as the Teifi and Aeron valleys, but not exclusively so. It is characterised by rounded boulders and large blocks broken up to yield stones of manageable sizes, although boulders are often used for footings. It also features stones of different geological formations, so it is not unusual to see quartz in a wall of sedimentary stones. Field stone is laid in courses of varying regularity, but is not laid as ‘random rubble’. The tradition of using found material continued to the latter half of the nineteenth century. Field-stone walls of the nineteenth century were combined with the use of bigger quoins, which were probably quarried and were roughly squared, and the use of dressed-stone voussoirs for doorways and windows (fig 40).
- 6.1.3 Quarried stone was used where suitable stone could be exploited or where field stone was unavailable. In Llanwnnen and Llanfihangel Ystrad communities buildings from the mid nineteenth century onwards are constructed of poor-quality shale from quarries that yielded only relatively thin stones (fig 41). In Nantcwnlle, on the high ground north of the Aeron valley, quarried stone is used in a range of different sizes. One consequence of this was the technique of building in ‘snecked stone’, which became more popular in the later nineteenth century.
- 6.1.4 Snecked stonework was sometimes used for the front of a building, with stonework of lesser quality used for end and rear walls. In these cases stonework has been used to express status. At Tynydomen (Llanddewi Brefi) the front of the house is built of snecked rock-faced stonework, of the kind often seen in railway engineering, with plainer quarried stone used for the ends and rear. Mynydd Bach also has several houses of snecked rubble, a consequence of the availability of stone rather than social status. Tynwaun (Tregaron) has rock-faced quoins, but the main walls are field stone and quarried rubble. Examples of dated snecked or rock-faced stone house fronts include Ffynnon Fair of 1879 (Llanwnnen), and Glan Aeron of 1911 (Lledrod).





Fig 40. Field stone with large roughly squared quoins at Frith Wen (Nantcwnlle) and on a barn of 1853 at Llwyn-y-gog (Ystrad Meurig)

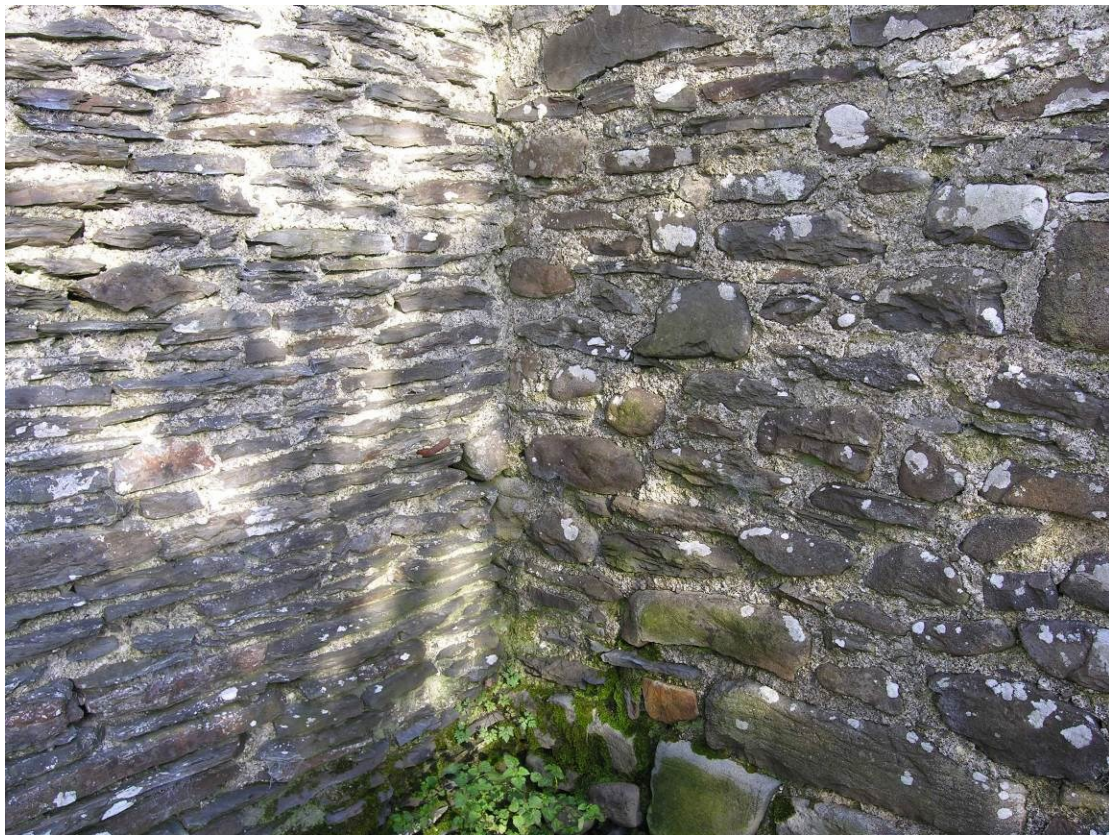


Fig 41. Field stone of the mid nineteenth century on the right, with later nineteenth-century thin quarried rubble on the left side, at Waun Nanny (Llanwnnen).



- 6.1.5 Arches of dressed stone voussoirs are common until the mid nineteenth century, when they were largely superseded by cheaper brick. Among many examples in the area of Ystrad Meurig and Lledrod, the arches of the cow house and stables at Mynydd Brith (Lledrod), part of which is dated 1830, show the skill and care with which these buildings were constructed. Likewise stone lintels are also common in the early nineteenth century, becoming less so later in the century. There are few frivolous touches in these stone buildings. Ventilation loops on barns were given unnecessary dripstones and sills in a small number of cases, such as Felindre Uchaf (Llanfihangel Ystrad) and Maes Glas (Tregaron). On the barn at Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur), the loops have dripstones of dressed stone salvaged from the abbey ruins.
- 6.1.6 There are few farm buildings built of superior masonry. Berthdomled (Lledrod) has buildings of hammer-dressed stonework, the same as was used on the house, which distinguishes it from other local buildings (fig 14). Trecefel (Tregaron) demonstrates how superior materials could be used to display status in farm buildings. It has one range, the central part of which is a cart shed and pigeon house of coursed square rubble blocks. Depressed arches to the cart openings have raised impost blocks and keystones, and a stone tablet is engraved with the date 1836. This section was an extension of an earlier range on one side and was subsequently extended on the other side – both the earlier and later parts are built of inferior field stones.
- 6.1.7 Stone is used as a floor material in the form of cobbles and flagstones. Cobble floors have been found inside and outside of buildings. Slate flagstones are used to pave threshing bays in some barns, probably imported from Pembrokeshire or the slate quarry at Eglwys Fach in the north of Ceredigion.

## 6.2 Timber

- 6.2.1 No timber-framed buildings were discovered during the survey. However the earliest houses and farm buildings are distinguished by their skilled joinery. The arched-brace principals in the barn at Gelligarneddau (Llangybi), scarfed crucks in the barn at Derlwyn Fawr (Llangeitho) and in houses such as Trefynor Isaf (Llangeitho), show that joinery skills were at least as important as masonry skills (fig 2). The house at Dolwerdd (Llangeitho), of sixteenth-century origin, also retains three raised crucks (Lloyd, Orbach and Scourfield 2006, 399) (fig 17). The well-developed joinery skills evident in these buildings suggest that they might represent a final phase of a tradition of timber construction, earlier phases of which have now been lost.
- 6.2.2 Later buildings show a decline in the quality of joinery. Roof trusses were roughly shaped with adzes, or split branches were used. The date of these roofs is sometimes difficult to establish, but most are probably nineteenth-century work. Sawn trusses appear in the early nineteenth century, at first secured with wooden pegs, and subsequently with iron bolts. However, even early buildings are most likely to have been re-roofed in the nineteenth century. Pantyscawen (Lampeter) stable has a roof dated 1826, but there is little that could be considered earlier than that. The collar-beam truss was the

standard design of the nineteenth century. Its absence at Berthdomled (Lledrod) is a principal reason for arguing that builders were brought in from outside of the area.

### 6.3 Clom

- 6.3.1 Earth-walled buildings (cob or clom) were among the earliest of the regional buildings to attract notice, particularly as mud became synonymous with rural simplicity and poverty. Study of these buildings has been focused largely upon early small houses and cottages, with a consequence that the extent of later earth-walled houses has been underestimated. Earth-walled buildings are common in the Aeron valley, to the extent that most of the farmsteads visited have or had at least one example. There are also outliers, notably Ffynnon Oer (Llanfihangel Ystrad) which has been restored, and at Tynffynnon (Llanwnnen) and Blaen Pant (Lampeter) on the former Falcondale estate.
- 6.3.2 Clom is a mixture of clay, with rushes and small pieces of shale to bind it. It is laid at minimum on a low sill of coursed field stones. In practice the clom is often confined either to the upper sections of wall, like the barn at Penlan Fach (Llangeitho), or to the rear elevation, as seems to be the case at Pen-y-gaer (Nantcwnlle). The earliest recorded examples are small houses, of a single storey with croglofft, for example at Felin Coed (Llangeitho), Trefynor Isaf and Pen-y-gaer (both Nantcwnlle). Trefynor Isaf has a farm range of comparable date, while at Tai'n Coed (Nantcwnlle) there are two eighteenth-century ranges.
- 6.3.3 Clom continued to be used in the nineteenth century for two-storey houses such as Tal-Fedw (Llangeitho) that are still essentially vernacular in character, and later in the century for Georgian-inspired two-storey farmhouses, notably at Trefynor Isaf where two generations of earth-walled buildings can be seen side-by side. Pant-y-rhew and Brynblodau (both Nantcwnlle) are substantial nineteenth-century farmhouses in the Georgian tradition that incorporate a significant amount of earth walling (fig 43). The majority of surviving earth-walled houses probably belongs to this category. Although the association of clom with low status needs to be corrected, it is nevertheless noticeable that the gentry houses in the area where clom is most prevalent – Hafod of c1800 and Cilpyll of 1768 (both Nantcwnlle) – are of stone.
- 6.3.4 Felin Fawr (Llangeitho) is dated 1862, showing the survival of the tradition into the second half of the nineteenth century. The house is rubble stone in the lower storey and rendered in the upper storey, indicating that the clom was confined only to the upper parts. This technique can be seen more clearly at nearby Lletty Ddu Uchaf (Llangeitho), which is derelict and where the materials are exposed (fig 44). Constructed of field stone in the lower storey, the upper storey is clom, except for the gable-end chimney, which was of stone and has been dismantled.

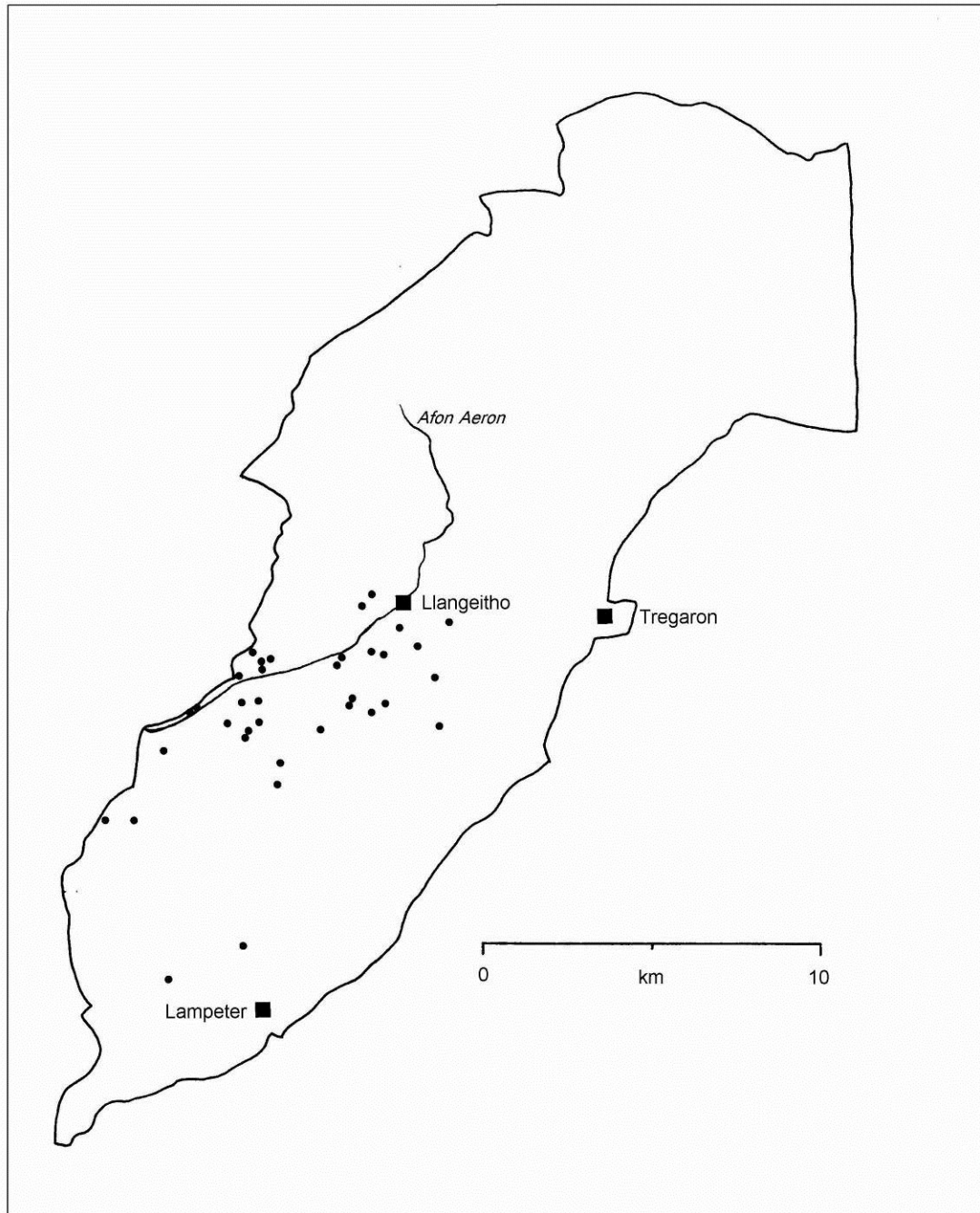


Fig 42. Distribution of cottages, smallholdings and farms with surviving clom buildings.

- 6.3.5 Most of the surviving earth-walled buildings are farm buildings, especially cow houses and barns (fig 45). It is also used in corn mills. At Felin Fawr the upper storey of the mill was of clom but has been largely taken down, with a significant loss of its historical integrity. Felin Coed (Nantcwnlle) has a two-storey mill of stone, with attached corn-drying shed, of which the kiln is housed in a lower storey of stone, and the corn-drying room retains an eroded and overgrown earth-walled gable end. Its front and rear walls have collapsed, but the building documents the combined use of stone and clom in the nineteenth century.



Fig 43. Nineteenth-century farmhouse at Pent-y-rhew (Nantcwnlle), partly clom built.



Fig 44. Nineteenth-century house at Lletty-du Uchaf (Llangeitho), the upper storey of which is clom.



Fig 45. Barn at Penlan Fach (Llangeitho), of c1830.



## 6.4 Limewash

- 6.4.1 Lime was widely used by farmers to reduce the acidity of the soil. In 1810 Richard Warner claimed that farmers were profligate in their use of it, which at least suggests that it was a familiar material. There are no sources of limestone in Ceredigion. Lime kilns were built on the coast, sometimes by farmers themselves, who burned their own limestone. However, most of the limestone used in agriculture appears to have been imported from Caldey Island, mainland Pembrokeshire, or the Gower. More expensive slaked lime was brought from Llandybie by toll road, but its mode of transport made it more expensive than supplies shipped in coastal waters and it was mainly used in the southern part of the county (Lewis 1833, Cardiganshire; Moore-Colyer 1998, 38).
- 6.4.2 In the nineteenth century most farm buildings appear to have been limewashed, and whitened farm buildings are part of the area's rural character. Waun Nanny (Llanwnnen) is a very good example and, when compared to farmyards where the practice has lapsed, shows that a significant degree of character is lost when the buildings are no longer whitened. Most varieties of stonework were not intended to be pointed and so limewash was an essential form of weatherproofing, applied to stonework and to clom. Only the snecked and rock-faced stonework of the later nineteenth century appears to have been designed for pointing, but this was usually reserved for houses rather than farm buildings. Likewise roughcast and other forms of render have always been reserved for use on the houses only. The limewashing tradition is kept up in many districts, especially in the Teifi valley between Lampeter and Llanwnnen. Farmers who still maintain their buildings in this way say that it needs to be applied regularly at between one and three-year intervals. Instead of limewashing the whole building it is sometimes confined to the farmyard elevations only, which has the added effect of brightening the yard.
- 6.4.3 Where buildings are no longer limewashed on a regular basis there have been three main consequences. In many buildings limewash traces can still be seen and exposed sections of stonework have either been roughly pointed or left exposed. Sometimes an alternative white, sand-based application has replaced limewash on the basis that it is more durable. The extreme of this thinking is at Rhydygof Isaf (Llangybi), where the barn is rendered and pebble-dashed. The third alternative is to sandblast the wall to remove all limewash traces, and then point the stonework.

## 6.5 Brick

- 6.5.1 Brick is used in the nineteenth century for the dressings on stone buildings. In almost all cases they are machine-moulded bricks dating from the second half of the nineteenth century. Hand-moulded bricks were found spanning the porch entrance at Carreg Wen (Llangybi), a single-storey roadside cottage that might have been the original Bettws farm house. Brick dressings are typically used for segmental or cambered heads above windows and doors and, later in the century, also for quoins. Brick heads superseded the earlier use of stone

voussoirs, but there was an overlap between the use of these materials and therefore they do not conform to a simple chronology. Nevertheless brick appears to have enjoyed a similar status to stone. In many farm buildings there is a hierarchy of materials according to their visibility, such as Rhydiol Uchaf (Nantewnllle), where brick is used for the farmyard elevation, but timber lintels are found at the rear. Yellow, red and blue bricks are all common, of which the blue bricks clearly date from the second half of the nineteenth century and were probably imported from Staffordshire. Blue bricks even overlap with clom, for example at Lluest-y-newydd (Llangybi). Buildings of the Falcondale estate typically have yellow brick, although such bricks are by no means exclusive to that estate.

- 6.5.2 Brick is not used as a principal building material until after 1918. Bryn (Tregaron) was a new farm built in the 1920s with brick stable and cow house. Tanllan (Llangeitho) retains a 1950s brick cow shed under an asbestos-cement roof. At Pencefn (Tregaron) the house was re-faced in brick in 1932. Farm buildings from the 1930s, such as Lluest Fach (Lledrod), to the 1950s, as at Ffos (Ystrad Meurig), were sometimes rebuilt in brick. Since then blockwork has been preferred for new small structures and repair work. Large sheds are steel-framed and clad in galvanised metal sheets. Brick is therefore only of minor importance.

## 6.6 Iron/steel framing

- 6.6.1 Cast and wrought iron were not found as major building materials. Dutch barns on I-section girders, or made from discarded railway track, are of steel (fig 49). No examples were identified earlier than 1900.

## 6.7 Slate

- 6.7.1 Slate is the most common roofing material, and seems to have become almost universal by the mid nineteenth century. It was the first ‘imported’ material to gain widespread use, first from Pembrokeshire quarries and then, in the twentieth century, from North Wales.
- 6.7.2 An important variation on slate roofing is the *to-brat* roof (fig 46). In this style of roofing every third slate is left out, which gives the roof slope a distinctive visual pattern (fig 47). For obvious reasons it was also sometimes known as a *to-cybydd* or ‘miser’s roof’ but it had a practical function in allowing ventilation of a building. For that reason it is found on various animal houses, usually cow houses or, at Maes Isaf (Pencarreg) on a pigsty. *To-brat* roofs are concentrated at the south end of the survey area, in Llanfihangel Ystrad, Lampeter, Llanwnnen, Llangybi and Pencarreg communities. At Tynloff (Llangybi) the cow-shed roof was re-done in this style in the 1950s. Blaen plwyf Lodge (Llangybi) has a *to-brat* roof on a twentieth-century brick cow house.

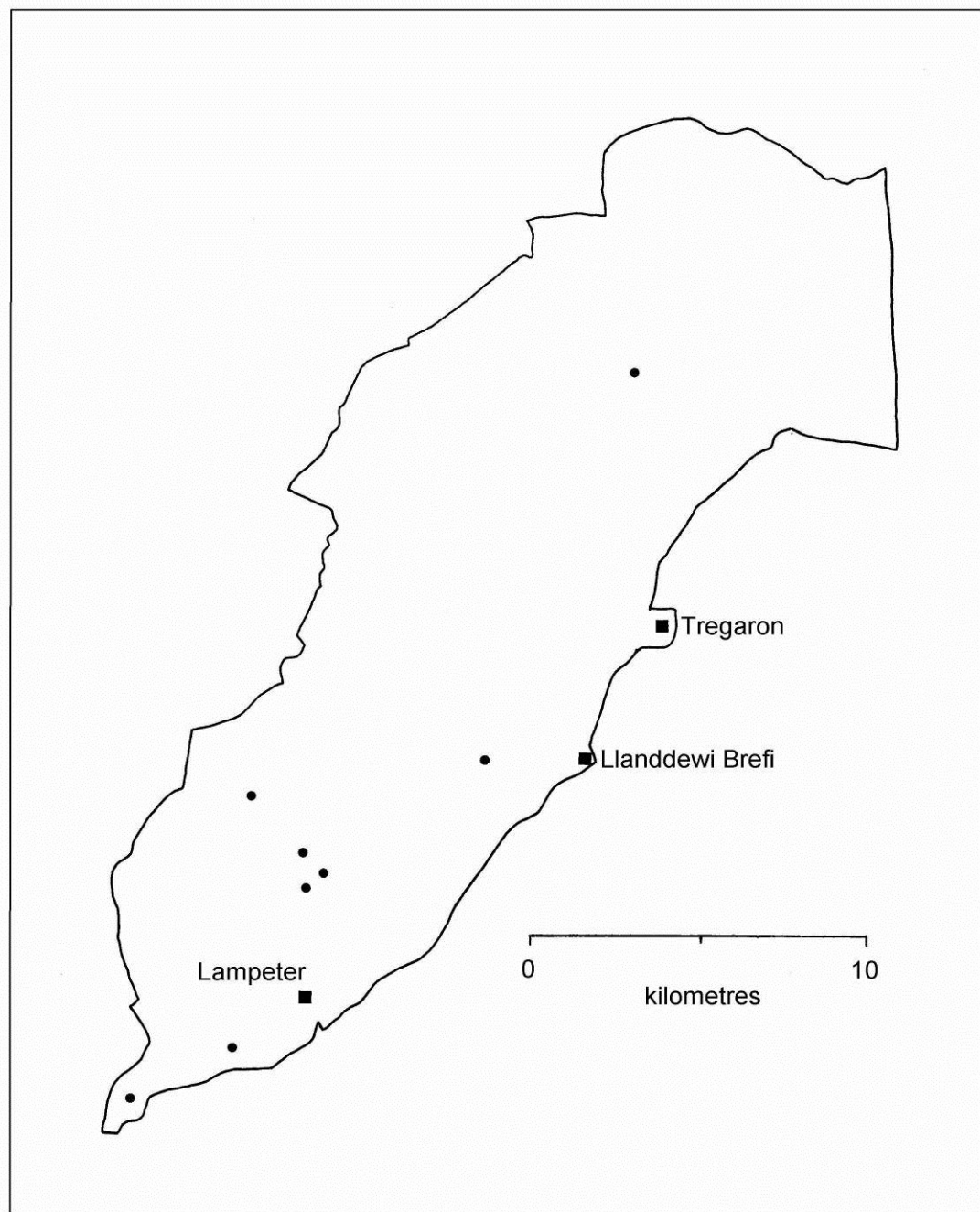


Fig 46. Distribution of *to-brat* roofs.



Fig 47. *To-brat* roofs.



Fig 48. Corrugated-iron Dutch barn at former Hendre Las farm (Llanfihangel Ystrad).



Fig 49. Boarded loft door with strap hinges and red paint.



## 6.8 Thatch

- 6.8.1 Thatch was a traditional building material in west Wales, although there are few surviving examples, some of which, such as Hendy (Llanwnnen), are ruinous (fig 50). The lifespan of thatch is such that it requires regular replacement and therefore surviving old thatch is now rotten, as at Cwarel Isaf (Llanfihangel Ystrad). When thatch deteriorates it is customary to weatherproof it by adding corrugated-iron sheets. The local tradition was to construct roofs with gorse underthatch, and then to use wheat straw or reeds for the main thatching material. Wattle and thatch chimneys, held in place by pegged straw ropes, were once common in this part of Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire, but no surviving examples were identified, apart from the restored roof and chimney at Ffynnon Oer (Llanfihangel Ystrad) (Wiliam 1993, 20-22; Davies 1991, 35-36).
- 6.8.2 Some buildings have renewed thatch roofs, such as Ffynnon Oer and the altered Bryn Goleu (both Llanfihangel Ystrad). No thatched farm buildings were identified.

## 6.9 Corrugated iron and asbestos-cement

- 6.9.1 Although corrugated iron came into use in the nineteenth century, no examples were found that can be dated before 1900. The initial appeal of corrugated iron was that it was light and strong, and could be used to construct self-supporting roofs with little professional skill. These roofs were used to cover open-sided hay sheds and have a distinctive semi-circular or segmental wagon-roof shape (fig 48). In practice, however, by no means all of these sheds had wagon roofs. Many have corrugated-iron pitched roofs. Corrugated iron continued to be used into the 1960s. Thereafter its use has declined, but modern variations of galvanised metal roofs (known as zinc or tin roofs) have remained in widespread use.
- 6.9.2 Corrugated iron is also used to cover thatch roofs, as already noted. Examples are at Tan yr Allt (Llangeitho), Cwarel Isaf (Llangybi) and Penpontpren (Lledrod), all of which are listed. Elsewhere it has been used to replace thatch, as at Felinfach (Pencarreg) and Pen-y-gaer (Nantcwnlle). As a roofing material it is easy and quick to build and so has found widespread use as replacement covering on farm buildings, in work that does not require professional builders.
- 6.9.3 Corrugated iron is also used as an effective form of cladding, sometimes used to house the engines used for threshing. Llys Aeron (Lledrod) is a single-storey house of c1920, and the best-preserved example of how corrugated iron was used in prefabricated design.
- 6.9.4 Corrugated asbestos-cement sheets became available after 1945 and were widely used until the 1960s. The versatility of asbestos-cement is comparable with corrugated iron, as it is capable of covering pitched roofs and of self-supporting wagon roofs.

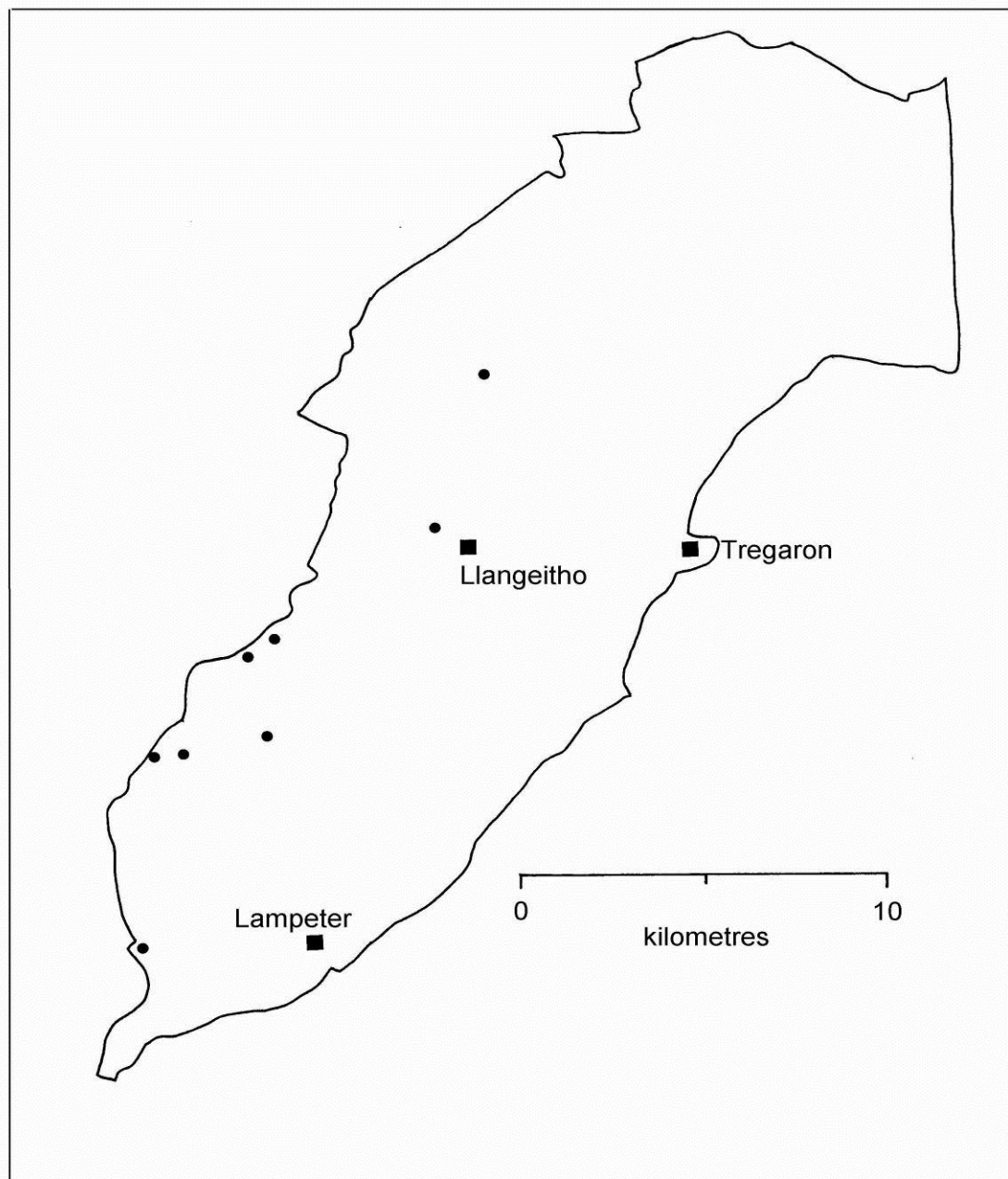


Fig 50. Distribution of thatch roofs.

## 6.10 Doors and windows

6.10.1 Many farm buildings retain nineteenth-century doors and windows. Boarded doors with iron strap hinges were used universally in the nineteenth century (fig 49). The Trawsgoed estate made its own wrought-iron hinges at its smithy in Abermagwr. At two farms – Penywernhir (Ystrad Fflur) and Nant byr Uchaf (Lledrod) – hinges stamped ‘LL’ (Lord Lisburne) were identified. Nineteenth-century wood frame windows have small-pane glazing. There are a variety of vents used, either sliding or louvered, already discussed. The twentieth century saw the introduction of metal hopper windows, found most often in cow houses, but sometimes also in stables.

6.10.2 Paint schemes are an important component of farmstead character, and most farmsteads show internal consistency in this respect. Red is the most common colour for painting woodwork, followed by black, but the origin of the tradition was not satisfactorily resolved. Most farmers claim that the popularity of red originates from the availability of red-oxide paint, and that black paint originates from treating the wood with pitch. Blue is occasionally used, as at Nant-y-Dderwen (Llanddewi Brefi), which is said by some farmers to have been the colours of the Trawsgoed Estate. However, it is clear that only a minority of its estate farms could have had blue-painted woodwork.



## 7.0 Farmstead character areas

- 7.0.1 The survey area has been divided into eleven character areas (fig 51). The general nature of farmsteads varies little across much of the survey area. For example there are mixed farms to be found in all types of landscape, regardless of soil or altitude, where the buildings comprise house, cow house, storage barn, stables and cart house. However, there are more subtle differences based upon the date of farmsteads, materials used, size and density of farms. Much of what follows is intended to bring out those differences, in addition to differences consequent upon fertile or marginal land.
- 7.0.2 Where they overlap, the character areas are related to the landscape character areas in the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales.

### 7.1 Lower Teifi Valley

- 7.1.1 This section of the valley is between Llanfair Clydogau and Llanybydder, between 100m and 235m AOD, including the valley sides and the flat valley floor above the floodplain. Size and density of farms is high, but there are few smallholdings, and only a small number of cottages, such as single-storey Penrhiw (Pencarreg) of the mid-nineteenth century and Greenwell (Lampeter) of the late-nineteenth century. There is an eighteenth-century house at Troedyrhiw (Pencarreg) with nineteenth-century farm buildings, and an early-nineteenth century house with cow house in-line at Felin Fach (Pencarreg). However in their present form the farmsteads date mainly to the nineteenth century, when there was considerable investment made in farm improvement. There are U-plan farmsteads of the early nineteenth-century, such as Olwen, Llwynieir (both Lampeter) and Nant-y-medd (Llanfair Clydogau). However in the low-lying, flat land south-west of Lampeter the size of yards and scale of buildings indicate enlargement of holdings after 1850. Large square yards are to be found in some farms on both sides of the Teifi, in Carmarthenshire at Maes Isaf and Maes Bach (both Pencarreg) and in Ceredigion at Dolaugwyrddon Isaf (Lampeter). Farmsteads here do not suffer greatly from the visual encumbrance of large modern sheds.
- 7.1.2 Building materials are generally of field stone with slate roofs, including *to-brat* roofs – Maes Isaf has a *to-brat* roof over the cow shed and pigsties and is the largest roof of its kind in the pilot study area – and the tradition of limewashing is still strong here. Stone arches are used on buildings up to the mid nineteenth century, as at Drefach (Llanwnnen), with brick used thereafter, as at Maes Bach of 1880 (Pencarreg), Glynhir (Lampeter) and Cwmderi (Llanwnnen).

### 7.2 Cribyn-Silian-Llangybi

- 7.2.1 This area of rolling hills lies between 150m and 230m AOD. It includes two important country estates of Falcondale and Derry Ormond. There are roadside cottages such as Cwarel Isaf, Ffynnon oer (Llanfihangel Ystrad) and Ty Newydd (Llangybi). Roadside smallholdings existed here, but few of them retain much historic character. Blaen-plwyf Lodge (Llangybi) has a twentieth-

century brick cow house with *to-brat* roof. There is a small farmstead of the seventeenth or eighteenth century at Bryn Goleu (Llanfihangel Ystrad), now converted to holiday lets, but there is little else that can be dated before 1800, apart from the seventeenth-century barn at Gelligarneddau (Llangybi), of which there is nothing similar elsewhere in the pilot-study area.

- 7.2.2 The scale of farmstead enlargement in the later nineteenth century is well represented at Tanygraig and Bettws (both Llangybi). Tanygraig has an eighteenth-century house with cow house in-line, extended to a U-plan farmstead in the nineteenth century. At Bettws a single-storey house was replaced by a two-storey house offset from the farmyard. At Gorwydd (Llangybi) a new yard was created in the second half of the nineteenth century uphill from the earlier yard.
- 7.2.3 Medium-sized farmsteads predominate, the majority of which owe their present appearance to the mid-late nineteenth century. U-shape and L-shape farm plans are common. At Pentre shon (Lampeter) is an early-nineteenth century farm where the house has been offset from the yard, a form that becomes increasingly prevalent later in the century. There are planned farms at Falcondale Home Farm (Lampeter), which has a covered yard, at Derry Ormond Home Farm (Llangybi), which has a courtyard plan, and Berthlwyd (Llanfihangel Ystrad), which has a U-plan (figs 11, 12, 13).
- 7.2.4 Materials are generally field stone until the mid nineteenth century, after which thin quarried shale supersedes it, with much use of yellow brick for arched openings. Some buildings remain limewashed but the tradition is generally in decline here, except at the south end. Waun Nanny (Llanwnnen) shows the use of both types of stone at different times and, with nearby Neuadd Fawr, is a fine example of how limewashing enhances the character of a farmyard. A small number of clom buildings are widely scattered – only the restored Bryn Goleu and Ffynnon oer (both Llanfihangel Ystrad) are in good condition. These two houses are the also only restored examples in an area that has the densest concentration of thatch roofs. Most roofs are slate, with a tradition of *to-brat* roofs still evident.

### 7.3 Middle Teifi Valley

- 7.3.1 This covers the area from Llanfair Clydogau to Tregaron, including Llanddewi Brefi, between 140m and 210m AOD. Allt Ddu (Llanddewi Brefi) is an eighteenth-century longhouse, and there is a substantial eighteenth-century house at Trecefel (Tregaron), but most farmsteads belong to the nineteenth century. There is a dearth of surviving cottages and smallholdings, although Cockshead Hall (Llanddewi Brefi) is a later nineteenth-century house with earlier cow house. It is an area of medium-sized farms. There are well-preserved L-plan farmsteads such as Clwtypatrwn (Llanfair Clydogau) and Gogoyan (Llanddewi Brefi), U-plan farmsteads at Cefngoyan (Llanddewi Brefi), Llain-goch and Glandulas Uchaf (Llanfair Clydogau), of which the latter retains an eighteenth-century house. Courtyard plans are found at Llwyn (Llanddewi Brefi) and Glandulais Isaf (Llangybi).

7.3.2 Building materials are generally field stone with slate roofs. The tradition of limewashing has declined sharply. A special characteristic of this area is the survival of open-sided stone hay sheds on piers or orthostats, the best examples of which are at Llwyn, Cefn Llwyn (both Llanddewi Brefi) and Olmarch Isaf (Llangybi) (figs 36, 37).

7.3.3 This area includes the Upland Ceredigion landscape character area of Ystrad Caron.

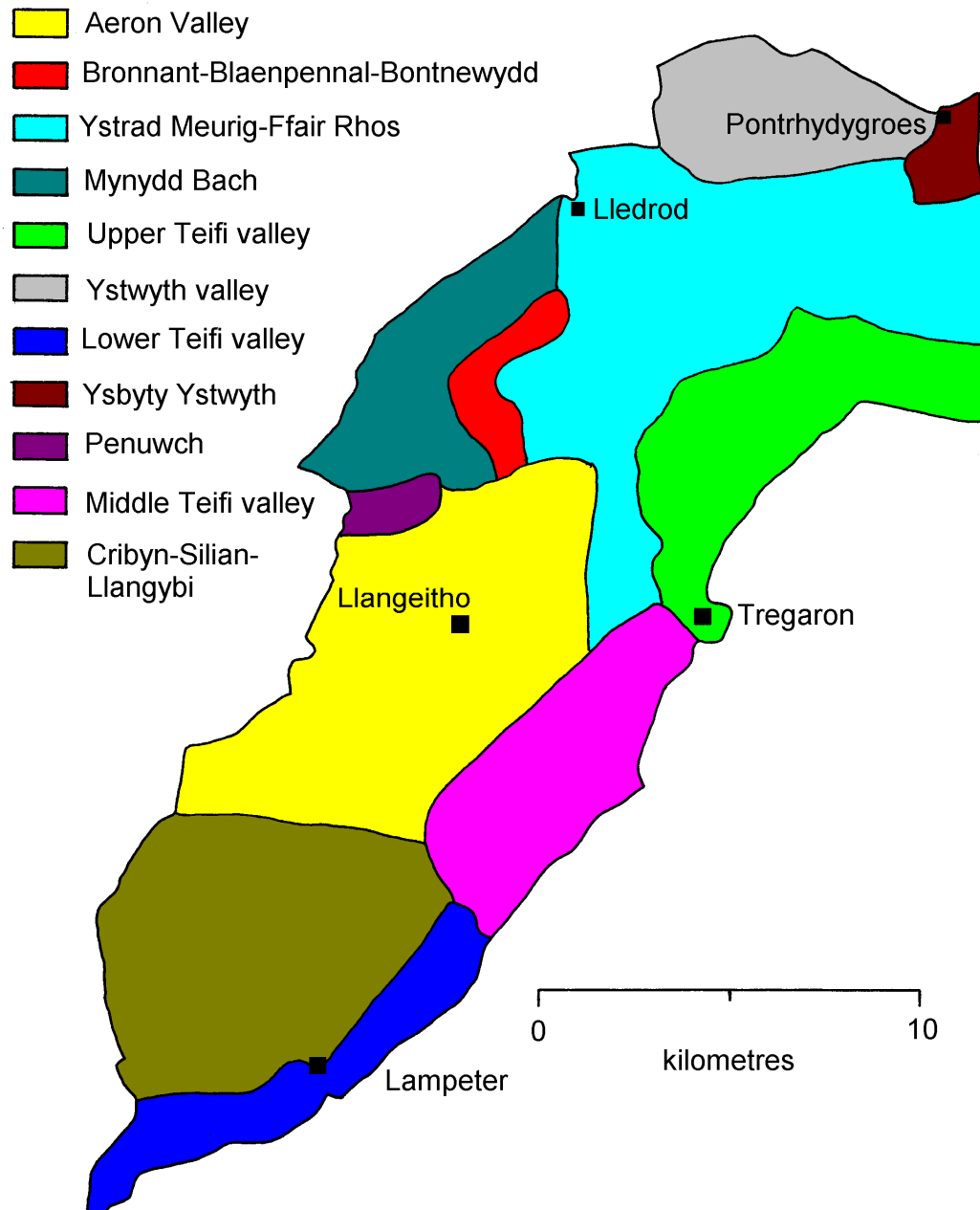


Fig 51. Farmstead character areas.

## 7.4 Aeron Valley

- 7.4.1 The Aeron valley, mainly in Nantcwnlle and Llangeitho communities, is one of the lowest-lying areas within the survey, from 90m AOD on the valley floor, rising to 250m. The area has a dense concentration of farmsteads, mostly on the valley sides and hence on sloping sites. The Aeron valley is where the majority of the pre-1800 farmsteads and farm buildings were identified, such as Tai'n Coed, Trefynor Isaf, Dolwerdd, Pen-y-gaer (all Nantcwnlle) and Derlwyn Fawr (Llangeitho) (figs 3, 17, 18). Farmsteads had generally taken their present form by the 1840s, as indicated on the various Tithe maps for which information on buildings is available. There is a higher number of surviving cottages here than elsewhere in the survey area, including Tanyrallt Uchaf, Fron Dolau (both Nantcwnlle) and Tanyrallt (Llangeitho), all of which are of special interest because of their use of building materials. Smallholdings such as Pen-y-Gaer, Tanyrallt Isaf (both Nantcwnlle) and Bro Llyndu (Llangeitho) are also found which retain historic character and have house and cow house in-line (fig 18). At Cefn Coed (Llangeitho) the house and cow house are at right angles (fig 53).
- 7.4.2 Some farms have ranges of buildings facing each other across a yard, such as Tai'n Coed, Ty'n-y-fron and Trefynor Uchaf (all Nantcwnlle), and others have irregular layouts grouped loosely around yards, such as Pant-y-rhew (Nantcwnlle), Llwyn Bwch (Lledrod) and Cilrhyg (Llangeitho). Cilpyll (Nantcwnlle) is one of the earliest examples where the house is offset from the farmyard, of which there are several other example including Dolwerdd (Nantcwnlle), Wenallt and Deri Odwyn (both Llangeitho) (see fig 52). U-plan and L-plan farmsteads are less evident than they are in the Teifi valley, although there are impressive examples of U-plan large farmyards at Cefn Banadl (Llangeitho) and medium-sized yards at Felindre Uchaf (Llanfihangel Ystrad) and Brechfa Fach (Llangeitho).
- 7.4.3 The special feature of this area is its building materials. One or more buildings either partly or substantially built of clom are to be found at many farmsteads, and from conversations with farmers it appears that many more such buildings were lost in the twentieth century. Related to the use of earth walling, and buildings of early date, is the use of coursed field stone and scarfed crucks. Most of the scarfed crucks identified during the survey were found in this area. There is much evidence of limewash on stone and earth-walled buildings, but the practice is in decline. By no means all buildings in the Aeron valley are of clom, however. Buildings of field stone are found throughout the area, especially on the higher ground on the north side of the valley. Farmsteads of superior status such as Cilpyll (c1768) and Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho), are also of stone (figs 10, 26). Larger farm buildings of the nineteenth century, with the exception of the stone and clom barn at Penlan Fach (Llangeitho) of c1830 (see fig 45), are also built of stone. This area also includes important surviving corn mills, as at Felin Rhydypany (Llangeitho), Felin Fach and Felin Coed (both Nantcwnlle) (fig 39).



## 7.5 Penuwch

- 7.5.1 Penuwch is a small area east of Bethania, between 260m and 310m AOD. Penuwch was settled in the nineteenth century in an area of poor soils and peat. As a consequence of settlement by squatters and peat cutters, the landscape is characterised by small fields and the buildings by a dense cluster of nineteenth-century cottages and smallholdings. Smallholdings usually comprise house and cow house, with few barns. Pengraig Fach (Llangeitho), where buildings occupy three sides of a yard, is the best preserved, and includes cow house and stable but no barn. Pengraig (Nantcwnlle) has a well-preserved house, but two farm ranges are ruined.
- 7.5.2 Buildings are mainly of field stone with some locally-quarried stone, and slate roofs. However, most houses have undergone significant alteration, leaving few buildings to retain original character.

## 7.6 Ystrad Meurig-Ffair Rhos

- 7.6.1 This is a large area north-west of Tregaron Bog, encompassing Swyddffynnon, Ystrad Meurig, Ffair Rhos and Tynygraig. It comprises comparatively poor soils and some poorly drained land between 200m and 350m AOD, with hill farms on the eastern fringe. Farmsteads are dispersed.
- 7.6.2 Small and medium-sized farmsteads predominate, with few cottages, except on the higher marginal land above Tynygraig, such as Talfryn (Ystrad Meurig). There are also few smallholdings. Those that do survive, such as Constant (Tregaron) and Pen-bryn (Lledrod) have been altered. Pencefn (Tregaron) has a small barn dated 1689, Hendre Felen (Ysbyty Ystwyth) is a house of seventeenth-century origin, and Ffos (Ystrad Meurig) is a house of eighteenth-century origin. In general, however, farmsteads belong the nineteenth century. Farmhouses are mostly in the Georgian tradition, but variation is noted on the poorer ground. Cruglas (Ystrad Fflur), on the eastern slopes above Ffair Rhos, has a gable-end entry, as does the cottage at Talfryn (Ystrad Meurig). At Penlan Gwnnws (Ystrad Meurig) the entrance to the old house is offset at the left end.
- 7.6.3 U-plan and L-plan farmsteads are the most common. Llwyn Lwyd (Ystrad Fflur) has downhill ranges facing each other across the yard. Penlan (Ystrad Meurig), near Swyddffynnon, is a courtyard plan with house offset, as is the planned farm at Berthdomled (Lledrod). Broncaradog (Ystrad Meurig) is also a U-plan with the house set above the farm. Ty'n-y-berth (Tregaron) demonstrates the persistence of the U-plan layout to 1914 (fig 31). It also retains a twentieth-century engine shed, as does Cefn Meurig Mawr (Ystrad Meurig), but the area is notable for its small barns, which clearly reflects the difficulty of arable farming here. Small barns without wagon bays include those Llwyn-y-gog of 1853 (Ystrad Fflur) and Bryn Mehefin (Ystrad Meurig). The area is also notable for an absence of pigsties.
- 7.6.4 Buildings are constructed of field stones, or of quarry stone where it was available locally, with slate roofs. Stone arches and stone lintels were

prominent until the mid nineteenth century, after which stone was superseded by brick. Of the former category there are many fine early-nineteenth century farm buildings, like those at Mynydd Brith (Lledrod), Broncaradog, Ffos and Tegfriw Fawr (all Ystrad Meurig). The nature of the quarried stone was to yield stones of different sizes, which made it natural to lay it in courses with sneck stones. Buildings used to be limewashed, but the practice has all but disappeared.

- 7.6.5 This area includes the Upland Ceredigion landscape character areas of Fullbrook, Swyddffynnon, Berthddu, Tan-y-Banadl, Ystrad Meurig, Penygraig, Blaen Sychnant, Cefn Meurig, Cwmgwyddil, Ffair Rhos, Craig Ystrad Meurig, Llwynmalus, Tanygraig, Tyngraig, Craig Bwlch, Geufron Hendrefelen and Mynydd Bach Ystwyth Valley.

## 7.7 Bronnant-Blaenpennal-Bontnewydd

- 7.7.1 This small area is in Lledrod community, varying between 180m and 330m AOD, clustered around the small hamlets of Bronnant, Blaenpennal and Bontnewydd. The landscape is characterised by small fields, and nineteenth-century holdings. It is generally a dense arrangement of smallholdings and small farmsteads retaining some early-nineteenth century farm buildings, with additions and alterations from later in the century. Many of the holdings and cottages are either modernised or have fallen into ruin, but there are some examples where the nineteenth-century character has survived.
- 7.7.2 There are some nineteenth-century cottages, including the pair at Penpontpren, and small farmsteads of vernacular character. Cwrt Bach is a smallholding where the house is entered in the end wall of the outshut. Tanfron and Bronfynwent had gable-end entrances. These smallholdings have small cow houses. At Cilgarn is a Georgian style small farmhouse where the outbuildings have been taken down. There is a small U-plan farmstead at Gilfach Goch, but otherwise the predominant form is the smaller L-plan.
- 7.7.3 Quarried stone, including snecked stone, is common, as is the use of stone arches and lintels. Roofs are of slate..

## 7.8 Mynydd Bach

- 7.8.1 Mynydd Bach is a small western outlier of the Cambrian Mountains, between 300m and 360m AOD, and including some unenclosed moorland. Mynydd Bach was not enclosed until the nineteenth century. As one of the latest areas of rural settlement it was also one of the first to experience retreat from the marginal uplands. Settlement is sparse and comprises small farmsteads, smallholdings and cottages.
- 7.8.2 Many former roadside cottages are now ruinous, for which reason those that survive, for example at Maes-y-Llyn (Lledrod), are of special interest (fig 19). Smallholdings characterise this area, although most have been modernised if they remain inhabited. Different house types are in evidence: Rhos Goch is a single-storey cottage with central entrance; Blaen Beidiog (Llangwryfon) and

Tanyresgair (Lledrod) are two-storey houses with entrance in the end wall of the outshut; Fen Onwyn (Lledrod) is double-fronted in the Georgian tradition (fig 7). All have associated cow houses. Farmsteads have small-scale buildings, some of which are well preserved. U-plans are common but in many cases they do not have barns. Lluest Newydd and Pantlleinau (both Llangwryfon) have small barns, but their land extended further west to lower ground. Tan Cwarel, at 310m AOD, has a barn, but neighbouring farms at Pantchynogorian and the abandoned Hafod Gruffydd (all Llangwryfon) do not.

- 7.8.3 Building materials are generally quarried stone, including snecked stone, with slate roofs. Openings have either stone heads (Blaenbeidiog), timber lintels (Hafod Gruffydd) or, in the late nineteenth and twentieth century, brick dressings (Fen Onwyn, Lluest Newydd).

## 7.9 Upper Teifi valley

- 7.9.1 The Upper Teifi valley extends from Tregaron in the south west upstream to Strata Florida, and includes Tregaron Bog and its immediate surroundings. It varies between 160m and 230m AOD. The area is characterised by nineteenth-century medium-sized farms, although generally smaller and more thinly spread than further downstream. There is a notable absence of surviving smallholdings and cottages.
- 7.9.2 There are U-plan farmsteads at Dolbeudiau, Brynhope and Cefn Gaer (all Ystrad Fflur), which have small barns with wagon bays. Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) is larger, and formerly had buildings on four sides. At here and Dolbeudiau the house is separate from the yard. Maes Llyn (Tregaron) has a more irregular layout based upon phased development in the nineteenth century.
- 7.9.3 Building materials are mainly field stone with slate roofs. Openings have stone heads in the first half of the nineteenth century, as at Brynhope and Great Abbey Farm, where the stone heads are in an unusual local buff-coloured stone. Subsequently brick replaced stone for dressings, as at Dolbeudiau.
- 7.9.4 This area lies within the Upland Ceredigion landscape character areas of Ystrad Fflur, Pontrhydfendigaid, Heolfryn & Dolbeudiau, Dolbeudiau Dolyrychan, Cors Caron and Fullbrook.

## 7.10 Ysbyty Ystwyth

- 7.10.1 This area within Ysbyty Ystwyth community constitutes the high ground east of Ysbyty Ystwyth and Pontrhydygroes, between 220m and 360m AOD. A landscape of a few small farms and smallholdings, together with numerous cottages, settlement here was associated with nineteenth-century mining. Surviving cottages were therefore probably inhabited by people combining agricultural and industrial labour, the best example of which is a now uninhabited cottage south-east of Pantyrhedyn. Most of these cottages, however, are now ruinous and in many places there is little evidence of their

former existence. Gwarddol appears to be a row of two cottages with buildings in-line that deserves further study. Pendre, which had a U-shaped plan, is the only medium-sized farmstead, and had a small barn. Of other smaller holdings, at Maes-y-beudy, Storehouse, Hafodgau Uchaf and Gistfaen, neither has an identifiable barn. Maes-y-beudy is a late example of the simple plan type in which a single-storey house and cow house are in-line under a single roof (fig 54). Hafodgau Uchaf has a similar plan but the house is late-nineteenth century. Buildings are constructed of quarried stone with slate roofs.

- 7.10.2 This area lies within the Upland Ceredigion landscape character areas of Ysbyty Ystwyth Pontrhydygroes, Capel Helaeth and Ysbyty Ystwyth Fields.

### 7.11 Ystwyth Valley

- 7.11.1 This area extends from Pontrhydygroes downstream to Abermagwr, and includes Llanafan village and the valley of Nant Cwmnewydion. Farm density is low. Cwmnewydion Uchaf may have a house of the eighteenth century (access not obtained), but otherwise farmsteads, smallholdings and cottages belong to the nineteenth century.
- 7.11.2 There are several well-preserved single-storey cottages in this area. Rhydygarreg (Trawsgoed) was built in the early nineteenth century, whereas other good examples at Troedrhiwfelen, Gwarcwm and Gwar cwarel (all Trawsgoed) belong to the late nineteenth century. Smallholdings, generally characterised by a two-storey house and lower cow-house in-line, have been modernised with loss of character. U-plan farmsteads are at Maen Arthur (Pontarfynach) and Cwmpenllydan (Trawsgoed), and L-shaped plans are at Pengrogwynion and Tynfron (both Trawsgoed), but of these upland examples only Maen Arthur has a barn. On lower ground are the well-planned large estate farms at Wenallt and Cwmnewydion Isaf, and other farms such as Dolgwibedyn (all Trawsgoed) which have barns with wagon bays (figs 9, 32).
- 7.11.3 Buildings are constructed of field stone with slate roofs. Roughly dressed stone is used for the heads of openings, superseded by brick in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Cwmnewydion Isaf has excellent examples of both (figs 9, 32).
- 7.11.4 This area lies within the Upland Ceredigion landscape character areas of Wenallt, Trawsgoed, Talyfan, Llanafan, Pantyhaidd, Grogwynion & Gwaithgoch, Pengrogwynion & Brynafan, Maen Arthur, Cwmnewydion, Mynydd Bach Ystwyth Valley and Lletty Synod & Frongoch.



## **8.0 Condition of Buildings and Recommendations**

- 8.0.1 Condition of farm buildings is variable, for different reasons, and their long-term future is uncertain (fig 52). Where individual buildings or whole farmsteads have been abandoned, they will not survive without efforts to find new uses for them. Farm owners do not have the resources to repair failing buildings, and they have no incentive to do so. There have been many cases where buildings have fallen into ruin, even though their owners understand and respect the heritage they represent, and have regretted their demise. Characterisation of the built environment in the pilot-study area has shown that historic farmsteads are a key component in local distinctiveness and provide an essential historical dimension to the rural landscape. The challenge is to find ways of preserving this rural distinctiveness, and to reverse the trend toward abandonment and dereliction that has been identified in some places.
- 8.0.2 Approximately half of the farmsteads visited in the survey are no longer farms. Most farm buildings are used occasionally but a significant number of owners do not undertake repairs. This is especially the case with Dutch barns, for which there is little alternative use. In some cases, particularly where the farmsteads are rented out to non-farmers, it has led to deterioration and collapse of farm buildings. Different risks are posed by those which are still farms. They are prone to alteration, particularly to enlargement of openings that would allow entry of machinery. In many cases there are elderly farmers who have little expectation of being followed by a younger generation. It means that some farms are likely to be sold off or rented out at some time in the near future, and that these farmsteads will be taken out of agricultural use. This can be a catalyst for rapid decay or alteration.
- 8.0.3 Vulnerability of building types varies. Even on working farms pigsties are now rarely used (except possibly as kennels), with a result that they are often the first buildings to fall into ruin. On non-working farms Dutch barns are the most obvious example of structure likely to decay because there is no alternative use. Farmyards make excellent car parks, but once they have been laid with tarmac or, more usually, concrete, the character of a yard changes.

### **8.1 Potential for adaptive re-use**

- 8.1.1 Potential for adaptive re-use varies according to a number of factors. Roadside farmsteads can and have been adapted to various business premises, as seen at Tre Isaf (Ystrad Meurig). However where farmsteads are isolated, or are only accessible by means of long private tracks or roads, there is less scope for many alternative uses. Similarly, a working farm where the yard is still in use would preclude adaptive re-use of buildings within the yard for non-farm use.



Fig 52. Ruined house at Deri Odwyn (Llangeitho)



Fig 53. Earth-walled cow house at Cefn Coed (Llangeitho).



Fig 54. Uninhabited farmstead at Maes-y-beudy (Ysbyty Ystwyth).

- 8.1.2 The adaptability of specific building types varies. Lofted ranges such as barns, cow houses, stables and cart houses have a number of potential alternative uses, including alternative farm uses. It has been noted that many barns and stables have been converted to cattle sheds, some cow sheds have been converted to stables, while cart sheds still have a use as garages, particularly in an area where small, old tractors predominate. By contrast, the limited adaptability of pigsties and Dutch barns has already been noted.
- 8.1.3 Many farm buildings have been converted. Conversions range from houses, holiday lets, artists' studios, workshops and a music recording studio. Conversion to a house or holiday accommodation generally makes a high impact on agricultural buildings and, from the point of view of retaining historical integrity, has not always been successful. However, there have been some very successful, expert repairs made to vulnerable houses, in particular Ffynnon Oer (Llanfihangel Ystrad) and Dolwerdd (Nantcwnlle), that have used the traditional skills of earth walling and thatching. Numerous farm buildings were recorded that have been repaired under the Tir Gofal scheme, often by simply making good the roof. This has successfully extended the life of many farm buildings.

## 8.2 Buildings at Risk

- 8.2.1 The proportion of farmsteads reckoned to be in poor condition was sixty-three (12%). Ninety-nine farmsteads (18%) were reckoned to be in variable condition, with at least one building in poor condition (figs 50, 51). However, many more farmsteads have individual buildings that are at risk for different reasons, such as abandonment of the farm or the desire to demolish and build modern sheds.
- 8.2.2 The following farmsteads have buildings at risk and are highlighted here either because they are of special interest as a group or because they have individual buildings of special interest.

*Blaenbeidiog (Llangwryfon)* is a partially dismantled listed building where the outshut has been removed.

*Allt Ddu (Llanddewi Brefi)* is an eighteenth-century longhouse where restoration appears to have been abandoned.

At *Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho)* slates have been removed from one of the ranges of a substantial farm group, making it vulnerable in the medium term (fig 10).

*Berthdomled (Lledrod)* was a carefully planned farm of 1870 but its buildings are disused and falling down (fig 14).

*Cwarel Isaf (Llanfihangel Ystrad)* and *Penpontpren (Lledrod)* are both listed roadside cottages in derelict condition, although a rear wing is being added to the latter in a programme of repair and enlargement.

*Maes-y-llyn (Lledrod)* is a small labourer's cottage on Mynydd Bach, at present uninhabited but in good condition, although its long-term future must be in doubt (fig 19). It is not listed. The owner lives at nearby Bancelllyn.

At *Esgair y Gors (Ystrad Meurig)* the house and one farm range are already ruinous.

*Tai'n Coed (Llangeitho)* is an abandoned farm with two early ranges. There is no vehicle access to the site. The owner lives at Dolwerdd, where the house has been well restored.

*Maes-y-beudy (Ysbyty Ystwyth)* is a small upland farmstead retaining early character, but abandoned (fig 54).

*Hendre Felen (Ysbyty Ystwyth)* is an abandoned house of seventeenth-century origin.

*Hafod Gryffudd (Llangwryfon)* is an abandoned mid nineteenth-century farmstead of medium size, retaining early character.

### 8.3 Recommendations

- 8.3.1 From the list above, the following vulnerable farmsteads have some potential for adaptive re-use and their owners expressed some interest, at least informally, of reviving them.

Tai'n Coed (Llangeitho) is described above in sections 8.2 and 3.0.

Cwrt Mawr (Llangeitho) is described above in sections 8.2 and 3.1.

Falcondale Home Farm (Lampeter) is a working farm with listed farm ranges, described in section 3.1 (figs 11,12). Buildings are generally in good condition but its stable ranges are in very poor condition.

Cwmnewydion Isaf (Trawsgoed) is an impressive large farm group, with well-preserved but disused buildings, which is described in section 3.1 (fig 9).

Great Abbey Farm (Ystrad Fflur) has been added because, although the buildings are generally in a reasonable condition, there has been some minor deterioration and the buildings are little used. It is a large farmstead with an impressive group of buildings, which are listed and are of interest in their own right. The farm also stands close to, and contributes to the historical setting of, Strata Florida Abbey.



## 9.0 Conclusion

- 9.0.1 Historic farmsteads and related buildings constitute one of the most important aspects of rural character in the pilot-study area. The character of the rural built heritage has been shown to have been influenced by topographical, social and chronological factors. The large majority of holdings in Ceredigion and northern Carmarthenshire belong to an extended period of farm improvement during the nineteenth century, a characteristic that is not shared in every region of Wales to the same extent. The disappearance of some building traditions, such as the use of scarfed crucks and thatched roofs, can be set against the continuing tradition of using locally available building materials throughout the nineteenth century. We can also see the basic linear arrangement of house with attached cow house, and vernacular house plans, that emerged in the seventeenth century and persisted in the nineteenth century, but increasingly as marginalised forms of lower social status. So the cottage type represented by Pen-y-Gaer (Nantcwnlle) of the seventeenth century is a direct ancestor of the poor cottage built on marginal land on Mynydd Bach in the nineteenth century at Maes-y-llyn (Lledrod).
- 9.0.2 Rural buildings were found to conform to three broad types: cottages, smallholdings and farmsteads. These reflect the social structure of the area, but a further distinction can be drawn between tenant farms and the freehold and minor-gentry farms, and the home farms of large gentry houses such as Falcondale (Lampeter), Derry Ormond (Llangybi) and Trawsgoed. Cottages are a particularly vulnerable group of buildings. Many were found in poor condition or ruined, although the best examples have been protected by listing. In some cases they were tied to farmsteads, but many were identified on the margins of cultivable land, in places that were often the last to be settled and the first to be abandoned. Smallholdings, usually comprising just a house and a cow house, were also prevalent, particularly in roadside locations, but have suffered from modernisation to an even greater extent than cottages.
- 9.0.3 Farmsteads are defined as any holding that was historically larger than 30 acres. They comprise a house and usually a cow house, barn, stable, cart house, granary, and occasionally pigsty, although in practice the barn, stable, cart house and granary are often grouped into a single multi-purpose building. Cow houses are found at all farms and their size is unaffected by topography. Barns vary in size, dependent upon the size of the holding and also on the suitability of the ground for growing crops. The largest barns are found on lower ground, whereas some upland farmsteads do not have them. Evidence was found at many barns of mechanical threshing, powered by waterwheels or diesel engines. Pigsties and twentieth-century Dutch barns were identified as buildings at particular risk once they are no longer required for their original function. Other, more 'loose-fit' buildings are easier to adapt to other uses.
- 9.0.4 Farm layout conformed mainly to some basic plan forms. The linear plan of a house with attached cow house in-line is the earliest. Some eighteenth and nineteenth century holdings comprised two ranges facing each other across a yard, which is clearly a development of the single linear range. The most common type of layout was the U-plan or L-plan (depending on the number

and size of buildings), where the house is built across the slope at the top of the site, with farm ranges at right angles to it. Larger farms, and some high-status estate farms, have a courtyard plan with buildings on four sides. In the nineteenth century a tendency emerged, deriving from the relationship of gentry houses to their farmsteads, of building the house away from the farmstead. This was a sign of social status that was increasingly adopted on smaller farms. Other special plans were found on estate of home farms, the most notable of which is the novel layout of Wenallt (Trawsgoed), in which all of the farm ranges are attached to a central barn.

- 9.0.5 Much of the character of historic farmsteads is derived from their use of locally available building materials. Many examples of earth-walled buildings were identified in the Aeron valley, which gives its stock of farmsteads an obvious distinction. It has also been shown that clom was not confined to buildings of lowly status, but was used in the construction of substantial farmhouses in the first half of the nineteenth century. Elsewhere the tradition of building with found materials remained strong throughout the nineteenth century, and has made an important contribution to the character of farm buildings in the Teifi valley. Likewise areas where stone was quarried, such as Mynydd Bach, gives those buildings their own distinctiveness. Limewash was an integral component of farmsteads in the nineteenth century, and the effect of a lapse in the tradition can be seen by comparing the whitewashed farmsteads of the lower Teifi valley with the farmsteads of Ystrad Meurig.
- 9.0.6 Decline of limewashing is only one indicator of change. Neglect of redundant farm buildings is a major factor in long-term decline. Erection of modern metal sheds can overwhelm older buildings visually, and detract from the overall character of the landscape. Many farms are no longer in agricultural use, or have been abandoned altogether. These are the challenges facing the preservation of the area's rural character.

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