

Llechwedd, Lledrod, Ceredigion

Archaeological Buildings Record & Watching Brief Report

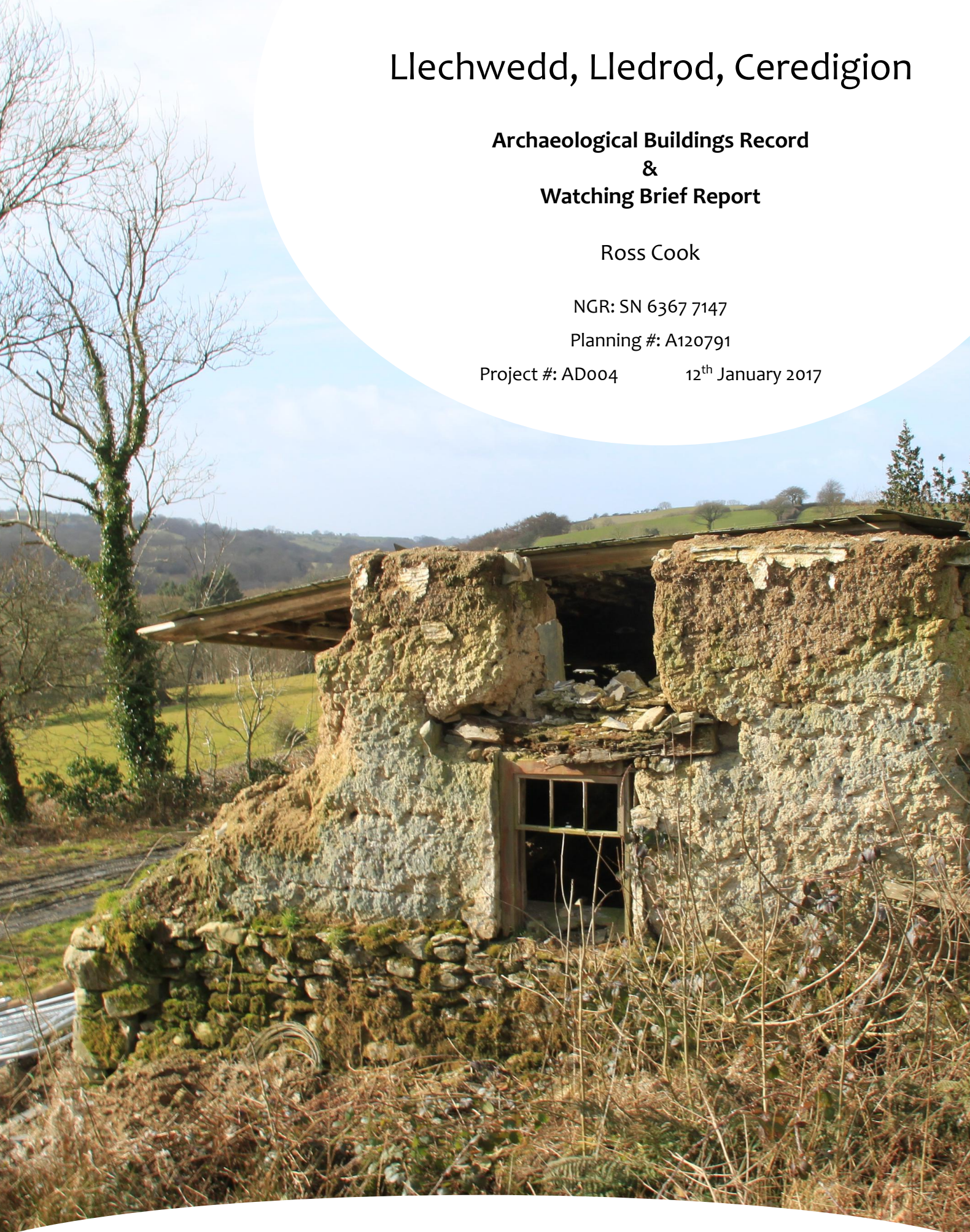
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Llechwedd Farmhouse, Lledrod, Ceredigion

Historic Building Record & Watching Brief Report

Summary

ArchaeoDomus Archaeological & Heritage Services was commissioned by Wayne and Lisa Maguire to undertake a programme of archaeological works during the demolition of an existing clom farmhouse and the groundworks phase of a new dwelling. The results of this work is to undertake an Historic England Level 2 historic building survey of the existing clom farmhouse, and a watching brief to identify and record any subsurface archaeology.

*Planning permission (**A120791**) was granted on 29th September 2012 for the demolition of an early 19th century clom farmhouse and construction of a new build detached house on the same plot of land in the outlying areas of Lledrod. With permission Archaeological Conditions were recommended by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Development Management to the Local Planning Authority, in line with section 23 of the Welsh Office Circular 60/96.*

*The Archaeological Buildings Record was undertaken on 24th February 2015 and comprised of additional measured survey, a photographic record, and an assessment of the buildings construction. This work was undertaken before any demolition took place as per the archaeological conditions set out by Ceredigion Planning Authority (**A120791**) and recommended by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Development Management. A measured survey was undertaken by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales in 2013, which has been updated and included within this report.*

The Watching Brief commenced on 23rd March 2015, continuing on 29th March 2016, 25th-26th April 2016, 6th December 2016, and concluded on 9th December 2016. During the Watching Brief the demolition of Llechwedd, and the excavation of foundations, service trenches and septic tank were monitored for archaeological deposits. A small number of disburshed small finds were recovered, all of which date to the early 19th century or later. No archaeological deposits were uncovered during the watching brief.

Llechwedd was an early 19th century clom (mud and clay) two storey farmhouse, with four notable phases of construction and alteration. The clom farmhouse was constructed in the early 19th century on a late medieval stone platform as a 1½ storey thatched cottage, before undergoing alterations in the mid-late 19th century, turning it into a two storey farmhouse, minor alterations and updates were made in the early 19th century. Llechwedd first appears in the Castle Hill Estate records in 1818, soon after being represented on a map for the first time in 1820. The 1844 Tithe Map, shows Llechwedd registered as a farm holding 80 acres. The house remains occupied throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, but falls out of use in the 1940, after which it becomes derelict.

Acknowledgements

With thanks to Wayne and Lisa Maguire for commissioning ArchaeoDomus Archaeological & Heritage Services to undertake the programme of archaeological recording and investigation, and being so hospitable throughout the work.

Abbreviations used in this report

DAT-DM	- Dyfed Archaeological Trust Development Management
HER	- Historic Environment Record; sites recorded and held by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts.
LPA	- Local Planning Authority.
NGR	- National Grid Reference.
NLW	- National Library of Wales.
NMR	- National Monuments Record.
NPRN	- National Primary Record Number; sites recorded by the Royal Commission and Ancient Monuments of Wales.
PRN	- Primary Record Number; sites recorded by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts.
OS	- Ordnance Survey.
RCAHMW	- Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

All other abbreviations will be referred to in text.

Terminology

Clom	- a natural building material made from a mix of clay/subsoil, water, organic material. Walls are built by compacting successive layers of the material until the desired height is reached, then trimmed and sometimes rendered. Layers of straw are sometimes added between layers to curb rapid drying. Used from prehistory until the early 20 th century in a British context. Also known as cob or cobb in England.
Tithe Maps	- produced between 1838 and 1850 after Parliament passed the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 to ensure tithes were paid in money rather than goods or produce. Over one thousand tithe maps and associated apportionment documents were created during this period, which detail landlord, tenant, land, farm buildings, rent and tithe.
Croglofft	- a loft over half of a cottage, used to provide additional sleeping area. Basic in form and often just consisting of boards placed between tie-beams. Accessed via a ladder.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project

1.1.1 ArchaeoDomus has been commissioned by Wayne and Lisa Maguire to undertake an Archaeological Buildings Record, and Watching Brief during demolition and groundworks at Llechwedd, Lledrod, Ceredigion (**NGR: SN 6367 7147**).

1.1.2 Development was granted on 29th September 2012, under planning number **A120791**. Due to the remaining clom farmhouse, and its historical interest, archaeological conditions were recommended by DAT-DM.

1.1.3 The Archaeological Buildings Record, was undertaken on 28th February 2015. This was undertaken to produce a Historic England Level 2 record (2016), utilising plans previously produced by the RCAHMW and in line with the approved *Written Scheme of Investigation* (ArchaeoDomus 2015), the results of which are contained within this report.

1.1.4 All groundworks were observed by a qualified archaeologist to monitor for any archaeological deposits or features, and amounted to:-

- Demolition of the clom farmhouse.
- Service Trench 1 - From the road to the rear of the plot.
- Service Trench 2 - Drainage from the house to the septic tank.
- Foundation trench for retaining wall.
- Foundation trenches for house.

1.1.5 The fieldwork was commenced on 24th February 2015 and concluded on 9th December 2016, in accordance with the guidance given by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, and the *Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*, and the methodology as specified in the WSI.

1.2 Site and Location

1.2.1 Llechwedd, meaning hillside, is located c. 1.5km north-west from the village centre of Lledrod (**Fig. 1**), and lies on a south facing slop of an unnamed hill at 209m above sea level. The farmhouse runs down hill and is orientated on a north-south alignment. It is bounded by an unnamed road to the south and west, and grazed fields to the north and east. It is accessed by a small B road off the A485 and sits at the end of a former drove way. The site is surrounded by pastoral farmland, comprising of predominantly sheep grazing.

1.2.2 The underlying geology comprises of a Silurian deposit known as Borth Mudstone with superficial Quaternary Devensian - Diamicton deposits (BGS), a soil layer of a medium silty glacial till (UKSO).



Fig. 1 - Location of Llechwedd.
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2017



Fig. 2 - OS Six-inch to One Mile Map, 1953 - Cardiganshire XV.S.E.
National Library of Scotland 2017

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The aim of the Historic Building Record is to undertake an Historic England Level 2 buildings survey of the building prior to demolition.
- 2.1.2 The aim of the Watching Brief is to identify any hidden archaeology and ensure this is accurately recorded and documented.
- 2.1.3 Undertake research using readily available sources to further current understanding of the site.

2.2 Historic Building Recording

- 2.2.1 To objectively record the farmhouse prior to demolition by means of a photographic record and annotated plans.
- 2.2.2 Produce an analysis and interpretation of the building and its development.
- 2.2.3 Bring together materials from available documentary sources into understanding the building.

2.3 Documentary Research

- 2.3.1 Use readily available resourced to identify relevant materials, including maps, photographs and accounts to enable a greater understanding of the farmhouse and to support the interpretation of any archaeological works.

2.4 Watching Brief

- 2.4.1 To determine the nature of any archaeological remains present within the site, in particular to any evidence of the existence of the sites occupation before the early 19th century.
- 2.4.2 To determine the significance of any archaeological remains present.
- 2.4.3 Investigate and record any archaeological deposits uncovered during groundworks.

2.5 Results

- 2.5.1 The objective of the historic buildings record and watching brief is to produce a permanent record of the site and to place this within a public domain through deposition with Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Historic Building Recording

- 3.1.2 On site methodology comprised of three element:-
 - Review and annotation of an existing plan (**Fig 5**), produced by the RCAHMW; licence number **RCPL2/3/60/185**.
 - Photographic survey of the exterior and interior of the building, where safe to do so.
 - Site notes and observations.

3.2 Measured Survey and Drawn Record

- 3.2.1 A Level 2 historic buildings survey, in line with Historic England levels (2016), was undertaken to record the building and understand its phases of construction. A measured survey produced by the RCAHMS will be included within this report, with additional observations and measured survey undertaken by ArchaeoDomus.
- 3.2.2 The plan has been updated to reflect new findings using CAD.

3.3 Photographic Survey

- 3.3.1 The photographic survey was undertaken with a Canon EOS 500D 15.1 megapixel digital camera, tripod mounted, with a Canon EF 18-200mm lens. Scales have been used where appropriate.
- 3.3.2 A general photographic record was made of the farmhouse, which included:-
- General views of the building and its surroundings.
 - Remaining elevations.
 - Detail/features of specific building elements.
 - Interior and exterior general shots.
 - Pre-demolition and post-demolition photographic records.
- 3.3.3 The photographic record has been compiled into an archive, which has been appended to this report (**Appendix 2 & 3**).

3.4 Documentary Research

- 3.4.1 Documentary research was undertaken using the NLW, NMRW and the Regional HER, with additional research aided by map regression and Tithe Map searches. Further research was carried out using NLS and published sources.

3.5 Watching Brief

- 3.5.1 The watching brief consisted of the monitoring of demolition and groundworks as specified in the *Written Scheme of Investigation AD004* (ArchaeoDomus 2015):-
- Levelling of demolition site.
 - Excavation of service trenches.
 - Excavation of foundation trenches.
 - Excavation of septic tank trench.
- 3.5.2 The demolition and excavation was undertaken using a 2, 8 and 12 tonne tracked digger equipped with a 0.75m and 1.5m wide toothless bucket.
- 3.5.3 Demolition of the clom farmhouse was undertaken prior to any excavations on site. The demolition was undertaken under archaeological supervision with the demolished material inspected for further construction details.

- 3.5.4 Topsoil was removed from trenches prior to trench excavation. Trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.30m and 0.75m, the foundations to 0.30m and cesspit to a depth of 2 metres. The excavations were carried out under archaeological supervision until the required level of excavation had been reached. The spoil heaps were inspected for finds.

3.6 Recording

- 3.6.1 Where appropriate recording was undertaken using ROMFA *pro forma* recording system. Finds will be recorded using the site code and find number (AD004-FN##).
- 3.6.2 A digital photographic record was completed during all groundworks using a Canon EOS 500D (15.1 megapixel) coupled with a Canon EFS 18-200mm lens to illustrate the detail of excavated areas and the site as a whole. Photographic scales have been used where possible.

3.7 Health and Safety

All work was carried out in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974* and Health and Safety Advice in Archaeology (BAJR 2005).

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The historical background has been undertaken with readily available material from the National Library of Wales, the RCAHMW, Regional HER and other online resources.
- 4.1.2 The site has previously been recorded and researched in part by the RCAHMW (**NPRN 309584**) within their ongoing Buildings at Risk recording framework. Additional research was also undertaken by ArchaeoDomus Archaeological & Heritage Services.
- 4.1.2 A historic environment search to a radius of 1.5km was undertaken and showed there to be 1 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 3 Listed Buildings, plus 12 sites registered by the National Monuments Record, 19 by the Regional Historic Environment Record, and 0 Findspots by the National Museum Archaeology Collection.

4.2 Designated and Undesignated Sites

- 4.2.1 The site is located within the landscape of mid-Ceredigion, a area associated with Iron Age Hillforts and enclosures, but archaeological finds are uncommon and disbursed.
- 4.2.2 Heritage Assets identified within the surrounding area:
Gaer Fawr Iron Age Hillfort - PRN: 1997 - SN 64880 71880
Nauadd House - PRN: 58085 - SN 63796 70787
Garth Fawr Outbuildings - PRN: 17322 - SN 63590 71820
Rhos-y-Garth Medieval Settlement - PRN: 10922 - SN 63630 72490
St Michael's Church / Llanfihangel Lledrod - PRN: 12434 - SN 64560 70180

4.3 Archaeology and History

4.3.1 Neolithic (3500-2000BCE)

Although it is likely that this area would have been settled by the Neolithic period, there have been no archaeological finds in the Lledrod to currently support an earlier settlement phase than the Bronze Age. The nearest Neolithic finds are found at a number of sites within the wider archaeological landscape; Neolithic Pot Sherds, Llanilar (**PRN 100685**); Meini Chambered Tomb, Llanfarian (**PRN 776**); Ffosrhydgaed Felsite Axe, Llanfarian (**PRN 9981**); Polished Greenstone Axe, Pontrhydfendigaid (**PRN 10579**); Mill Pond Arrow Head & Flint Working Site, Tregaron (**PRN 8987; 8986**), Allt-Lwyd Axe, Llansantffraid (**PRN 30897**).

4.3.2 Bronze Age (2600-600BCE)

The earliest archaeological sites found in and immediately around Lledrod have been dated to the Bronze Age; Ty'n-yr-Eithin Round Cairn (**PRN 8816**), Pantcamddwr Round Cairn (**PRN 7466**), Gaer Fawr Standing Stones (**PRN 9719; 5178; 45008**), Unnamed Standing Stone (**PRN 43517**), and several Bronze Age finds; Sarn Helen Bronze Axe (**PRN 8288**), Stone Mace Head (**PRN 100671**), Llanafan Dolerite Macehead (**PRN 12200**).

4.3.3 Iron Age (600BCE-CE43)

The archaeological landscape of mid-Ceredigion is home to a large number of Iron Age Hillforts, of which 4 sit within a 5km radius of Llechwedd; Pen-y-Castell Group (**PRN 8381**), Caer Argoed (**PRN 1996**), Gaer Fawr (**PRN 1997**), and Pant Mawr (**PRN 1987**). The hillforts were in use throughout the Iron Age, seeing their demise during the Roman conquests of Wales between CE 77 -410.

4.3.4 Roman (CE43-410)

The nearest Roman site sit to the north-east, in a small cluster around Abermagwr, the most notable of which is the Roman Villa (**PRN 100561**). The villa was excavated over a number of seasons by the RCAHMW from 2010, showing it to have been occupied during the late 3rd and early 4th centuries CE. Sarn Helen Roman Road passes through Lledrod on its route between Llanio and Trawscord forts, roughly following the B4578 from near Llanddwei Brefi, and B485 from Blaenpennal up to Lledrod, where the route is lost.

4.3.5 Early Medieval (CE410-1066)

Although likely to have been continuously occupied from the end of the Roman period, no early medieval sites or find have been identified within Lledrod or its greater area. It has been suggested that St Michael's Church may have early medieval origins, with the dedication of Michael often being a pre-Conquest, however no further evidence has been found to support this.

4.3.6 Medieval (CE1066-1550)

St Michael's Church, Llanfihangel Lledrod, has its origins within the Medieval period, probably being founded during the 12th or 13th centuries whilst Ceredigion was still in Welsh hands. Evidence of cultivation during this period is made apparent by the remains of the Ty Nant ridge and furrow field systems (**PRN 27939**), c. 1.5km to the south-west. Occupation and medieval domestic developments are not seen, though not through non-existence, but rather the redevelopment of plots for later housing. One site that has been identified is Rhos-y-Garth medieval settlement (**PRN 10922**). On early maps Lledrod is named as Llanfihangel Lledrod, the first a contraction of the latter and the latter a corruption of Llanfihangel Llether y troed, meaning Church of St Michael at the Bottom of

4.3.7 Post-Medieval (CE1550-1800)

A hand-colored map of the Llanylar region, showing mountains, rivers, and various settlements. The map is titled "THE DIMETÆ" in the center. Settlements include Llanunachairn, Llanyhangle yerothē, Llanavon, Llanyler, Llanthynol, Llanunnes, Llanrusted, Lanihagle Lledrod, Istradmyrik, and Rosfai. Rivers shown are Weray flud, Istradslere, Merik flud, and Tywy flud. The map is bordered by "S H" on the left and "H U" on the right.

4.3.8 Nineteenth Century

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These farm building are again shown on the Llangwryfon Tithe Map of 1844, showing a rent of 84 acres consisting of a farmhouse, farm buildings, yard, garden, waste, plantation, pasture, meadow, arable land and a cottage with garden, being paid by David Richards to a Sarah Elizabeth Williams. Of the 81 acres the larger proportion is arable (minus the waste, farmyard and plantation), suggesting the farm was primarily turned over for the production of crops. At this time the area is owned by a Sarah Elizabeth Williams, the then owner of the Castle Hill Estate, Llanilar (Nicholas 1872: 205), and rented by David Roberts. The 1841 census records that there are 7 people registered as living at Llechwedd; David Richards (b.1801), Mary Richards (b.1806), Daniel Richards (b.1835), Jane Morgan (b.1837), William Jones (b.1826), Catherine Lewis (b.1821) and Margaret Jones (b.1827); however it is likely that they were all occupying the farmhouse, so part of the group can be attributed to living in the cottage listed on the tithe.

Llechwedd continues to be occupied through the 19th century, however, by the 1887 First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map, the farm of Llechwedd is shown to have been reduced to just the farmhouse. Subsequent editions in 1906 confirms that the farm buildings as listed on the 1844 tithe are no longer in existence. Suggesting the Llechwedd is no longer the centre of a small farm, but instead an agricultural workers dwelling for one of the larger local farms.

4.3.9 **Twentieth Century and Demise**

Local knowledge tells us that the cottage was occupied until c. 1941, until which point a husband and wife were working a small parcel of land around the house. Shortly after its abandonment the doors were salvaged by a local man from Lledrod for reuse and the house was left to fall into a ruinous state. Locals remember playing in the house as children.

- 4.4** In 2010 the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales published *The Welsh Cottage* (Wiliam), in which Llechwedd appears on pages 9 and 204

5 Historic Buildings Record

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The historic buildings record was undertaken on 15th April 2015 and comprised of a visual inspection and photographic record. No measured survey was undertaken as plans were produced by the RCAHMW in August 2013 (**NPRN 309584**), along with a photographic record.
- 5.1.2 The site consisted of a single clom farmhouse constructed on a large uncoursed limestone downslope platform on a north-south alignment, with a small limestone extension to the western lateral elevation. Where the walls are not of clom, they are constructed in roughly shaped and coursed limestone with a basic mud-clay mortar.
- 5.1.3 Llechwedd was demolished on 23rd March 2015 and the site levelled above the floor height. The stone platform was not demolished and remains in its entirety underneath the

new house, untouched by foundations.

- 5.1.4 The house was probably built in this location due to its proximity to a water source; a field spring to the rear; its access to farmland, and it being located next to an historic droveway.
- 5.1.5 The scope of the historic buildings record is to provide a written, drawn and photographic account of the buildings to a Level 2 Record as specified by Historic England (2016), prior to its demolition.
- 5.1.6 The drawn record is available in **Appendix 1** and the photographic in **Appendix 2**.

5.2 Plan

- 5.2.1 The building (**Fig. 5**) is a two storey-two bay clom walled farmhouse of a central-entry plan type, with a later rear stone extension, built upon a large downhill stone platform, of limestone. The two lateral walls and southern gable of the farmhouse are of clom construction, whilst the northern gable is built of limestone. The extension is built entirely of limestone. The main façade of the farmhouse faces east.
- 5.2.1 At **ground floor** the farmhouse is split into a two units, a kitchen and parlour, with a passage between. The parlour occupies the north end of the building and the kitchen the south. The rear extension, to the western lateral wall, appears to have been a single room and with no internal access to the farmhouse is likely to have been a small cowshed.
- 5.2.2 The kitchen houses a brick chimney breast and stone/brick bread oven set into the clom gable, and winder stair to the first floor, which is provided by an open joisted floor. The ground floor is finished in red and black quarry tiles, in a chequerboard pattern. The walls are of clom, which sit upon the stone platform.
- 5.2.3 The parlour, although collapsed, was stone walled to the northern gable and partially to the lateral walls. A tile floor of the same material and pattern covers the floor.
- 5.2.4 The passage, formed by two stud walls covered with lathe and plaster, has a small pantry to the west end and, like the parlour and kitchen, has a floor of black and red quarry tiles.
- 5.2.5 At **first floor** the space was divided into two chambers by a panelled partition, with access provided via the stair from the kitchen. The smaller chamber, to the north end of the building, was accessed from the larger, at the south end.
- 5.2.6 The **roof** is formed of simple principle rafter-and-collar trusses, which carry double cleated purlins to the west and east pitch, in turn supporting common rafters and slate.
- 5.2.7 The **extension** is constructed of stone and abuts the earlier farmhouse. The south-west corner is rounded. A doorway provides access from the south elevation. The floor appears to have been tamped earth.

5.3 External

- 5.3.1 The building as it stands is in a ruinous state, having been unoccupied since the 1940s, the building has seen a long period of decline, with its clom walls being weathered and eroded until their partial collapse.
- 5.3.2 The **north elevation (Plate 11)** sits at the uphill end of the building and almost entirely collapsed, only a small stone stub survives along its length, but to a height of a c 1 foot to the buildings corners, where it is strongest. The stonework was held in place with a clay or mud based mortar, with no lime being present.
- 5.3.3 The **east elevation (Plates 1-3)**, also being the farmhouses main façade, is the best surviving of the buildings elevations, though it is very limited. The surviving clom wall rises from the limestone platform and houses two windows, one nine light window to the kitchen and second to the larger first floor chamber over. The ground floor window has it's wooden lintel remaining, which has been levelled in the clom by using small packing stones. The reveal to the former front door can be seen to the northern end of the remaining wall, with window over. Holes in the clom can be seen remaining, used to help adhere a thin layer of lime render to the wall, which can still be seen in small patches (**Plates 23-24**). This render layer was then lime-washed to give the house a white colouring.
- 5.3.4 The **south elevation (Plate 10)** rises from the down hill end of the site, with the stone platform rising from the slope into the remains of the clom gable. The only surviving element of the gable to survive is the stump of the chimney, which is supported by the internal remains of the brick chimney and bread oven.
- 5.3.5 The **west elevation (Plate 7)** of the farmhouse is largely collapsed, with some elements of the clom wall surviving, primarily supported by the stone infill of an earlier doorway to the kitchen and the stone backing to the pantry.
- 5.3.6 The **extension elevations (Plates 17-18)** are reduced to footing level, with only one small section remaining to a height of a couple of feet; this has one side of a window splay. The relationship of this addition to the farmhouse suggest that the a catslide roof will have topped this structure. The stones are held with a clay mortar.

5.4 Internal

- 5.4.1 Due to the ruinous nature a full internal inspection was not carried out, however, the internal rooms were visible through wall collapse, thus making a visual inspection from outside possible.
- 5.4.2 At **Ground Floor** farmhouse is entered into a small passage from the east elevation, also the main façade. The passage is divided by a lath and plastered partition wall to the north and south (**Plates 28, 35-36**), each with a single doorway. The rear section of the partition between the parlour and passage is constructed of woven hazel laths around pine uprights and coated in clom (**Plate 35-36**). Directly ahead of the entrance is a small pantry (**Plate 44**), with pantry slate remaining in situ. The door to the north partition leads into the parlour, which is not accessible due to the collapse of the roof; the south leads into the kitchen.

- 5.4.3 The **kitchen**, entered from the north via the passage, has a single east-facing 9 light sash window (**Plates 3, 26**) and a blocked doorway (**Plate 27**) to the west. A black and red painted brick fireplace and bread oven (**Plates 30-21, 46-47**) take up most of the southern wall, which rises through the gable in a half brick-half clom construction. A pine winder stair (**Plates 32-33**) occupies the south-east corner. The kitchen has an open joisted ceiling of pine (**Plate 26**), which have a large number of nails for hanging. The floor is finished in red and black quarry tiles (**Plate 45**) in a chequerboard pattern. The walls are plastered with a thin coat of lime, then painted blue.
- 5.4.5 All walls and reveals at ground floor have been lime plastered and painted white or blue.
- 5.6.1 The **first floor** is accessed by the stair from the kitchen directly into the larger of the two chambers (**Plates 32-33**), to the southern end of the building. Two small east-facing windows, probably of 6 light sashes though now gone, provide light to this large chamber, with one window opening surviving in its entirety and a single reveal remaining for the second; the west and south walls have no windows or features. The smaller chamber was accessed from the larger chamber, divided from the larger by a pine panel partition, now collapsed. The roof is supported by three pine trusses (**Plates 27, 38-39**), which support purlins and common rafters, also all of pine. The walls have a thin coating of lime plaster, painted blue (**Plate 41**), and the underside of the slates are limed to provide additional weather protection (**Plate 37**).

6 **BUILDING DATING AND ANALYSIS**

6.1 **Introduction**

From fieldwork it was apparent that Llechwedd Farmhouse had undergone four phases of construction, changing to meet the requirements of the occupants and farm as the centuries passed. These can be broken down into four main phases:-

- **Late Medieval:** Stone platform built with hall house.
- **Early 19th century:** Hall demolished and clom farmhouse built.
- **Mid-Late 19th century:** Roof lifted to create first floor and extension added.
- **Early 20th century:** Modernisation.

- 6.1.2 Although little can be found of Llechwedd's early history, it's large down-slope stone platform suggests an earlier date to that of the clom cottage which sits upon it. During the late medieval period it was common to site a hall with the long axis running downslope, but by the 16th century we start to see the abandonment of this form (Smith 1988). It is not clear whether it is indeed a late medieval platform, but it's form is of a more archaic form, requiring considerably more effort and time to construct compared to the cross slope form seen from the 16th century.
- 6.1.3 Map regression shows that in 1820 Llechwedd Farmhouse had two farm buildings associated, which is also demonstrated by the Tithe Map and Inventory of 1844. By the First Edition 6 (1887) and 25 (1888) inch Ordnance Survey Maps, Llechwedd is shown without these farm buildings, but the 25 inch map clearly shows the addition of the rear extension by this point.

6.2 Late Medieval

- 6.2.1 Although little more evidence than the large stone platform survives to demonstrate Llechwedd's earlier origins, the platform and its marked downslope siting demonstrate the archetypal form found during this period. The upper end of the building would have likely been set into the bank, but modern levelling of the site has removed evidence for this. The remains of a stone gable to the up-slope end of the house may be remains of this earlier phase. Houses of this form in Ceredigion typically date from 1500-1550.
- 6.2.2 It is worth noting that during this period the area surrounding Llechwedd is likely to have been covered with woodland, with field systems occupying the lower areas of the small valley in which it sits.

6.3 Early 19th Century

- 6.3.1 The earlier structure that once occupied the platform is demolished, probably through poor condition, to make way for a new farmhouse, probably by the 1820s. It is possible that the late medieval phase was unoccupied or derelict by this time.
- 6.3.2 During this phase the farmhouse is constructed as a 1½ storey dwelling from clom, being made apparent by a subtle change in colour and make-up of the top c. 50-70cm of the wall; **Plate 21** demonstrates this clearest of all. The original plan of this period remains, with its parlour to the upslope end and kitchen to the downslope, with entrance passage in between. Only a small section of this early passage survives in the west end of the northern partition (**Plate 35-36**), made evident by its woven hazel and clom plaster construction. A doorway to the rear of the house provided access directly into the large kitchen (**Plate 27**), a characteristic feature of farm cottages during this period. At this time a wickerwork fire hood was used to help extract smoke from the hearth in the kitchen, evidence for the hood beam which is seen bedded into the wall of the later bread oven (**Plate 31**), which would have spanned the width of the room. A passage, remaining today, was formed to create the distinct parlour and kitchen arrangement synonymous with cottages of this period. It is likely that a *croglofft* was created over the parlour to provide additional sleeping space, accessed by a ladder. The roof, in the vernacular tradition of the area, will have been thatched, with a gorse or woven under-thatch, and a thatched stack. A small stone-backed pantry was created at the end of the entrance passage, made evident by the lack of lintel or lintel slot.
- 6.3.3 By 1844, the farm is shown on the Llangwryfon Tithe Map, showing a rent of 81 acres consisting of a farmhouse, farm buildings, yard, garden, waste, plantation, pasture, meadow, arable land and a cottage with garden. It is probably that the farm buildings either pre-date this phase.
- 6.3.4 In *The Place-Names of Cardiganshire* (2004), Iwan Wmmfre notes that Llechwedd first appears in records during this early part of the 19th century, which is likely to be the Castle Hill Records, as noted in 4.3.8. However, this is not to say that Llechwedd did not exist prior to this, but rather a note of its first appearance in written records.
- 6.3.5 Surviving local examples of this form of cottage can be seen at Felin Coed, Talsarn (**PRN 18565**; **NPRN 5413**); Cnwc-y-Gneuen, Llangeitho (**PRN 23462**; **NPRN 123111**);

Pant-y-Wilco, Llanwnnen (**PRN 9549; NPRN 267**); and Penlon Farmstead (**NPRN 308229**).

6.4 Mid-Late 19th Century

6.4.1 Several distinct alterations were made to Llechwedd during this period, including the raising of the eaves to create a full first floor, the insertion of a stair to provide access from the kitchen and latterly the addition of a rear cowshed. The raising of the eaves is made apparent by the marked change in make-up of the clom, having large amounts of straw included, to the upper *circa* 50-70cm of the walls (**Plates 21, 50**), plus a distinct weathered line where these sections meet. The roof trusses were replaced with the raising of the eaves, made apparent by their form and use of imported pine, rather than local materials, which are commonplace in the early part of the century, however, the roof probably remained thatched. A brick chimney is inserted in the kitchen (**Plates 10, 20, 30-31, 46-47**), although only forming the breast, which would have housed a small iron range, the addition of a stone built, brick lined bread oven is also made; this containment of the cooking area allowed for a beam and lodged-joist floor to be inserted (**Plates 26-28**), the combination of beam and joist being typical to this period. A red and black quarry tile floor is laid throughout the ground floor (**Plate 45**). This alteration work creates a two storey, double fronted farmhouse which became the popular style during mid 19th century Ceredigion.

6.4.2 Examples of similar farmhouses include Pemprys, Ysgubor-y-Coed (**PRN 97005; NPRN 420950**); Pen-Lan-Isaf, Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn (**PRN 58078; NPRN 308842**); and Bryn Garw, Lledrod (**PRN 21332**). Most strikingly similar is that of Pemprys, which, unlike the latter two, has developed on the site of a late medieval house and as such, it has the same downslope siting.

6.4.3 By the 1888 First Edition 25 Inch Ordnance Survey Map, Llechwedd is shown to have the addition of a rear extension. This extension is built entirely of limestone (**Plate 17-18**), demonstrating a distinct change in the building material available, and therefore a change in local economy. With the addition of this rear extension, the former rear doorway into the kitchen is blocked off (**Plates 7, 27**), suggesting that the unit did not serve a domestic function. It is reasonable to suggest its use as a small cowshed, perhaps only housing one or two animals. With the loss of the farm buildings, it points to a decline of Llechwedd as the main farmhouse, instead becoming subsidiary to one of the larger local farms.

6.5 Early 20th Century

6.5.1 A final phase comes in the early 20th century, which sees the roof slated for the first time, made apparent by the machine cut 4x2 timber used, and the small kitchen range removed, the subsequent fireplace then being made smaller (**Plate 46**). The truss collars are raised to provide better access at first floor level, made apparent by the now empty lap-bed to the low end of the principle rafters (**Plate 27**); though it is not clear whether this happened during the late 19th or early 20th centuries. The purlins and common rafters can also be attributed to this period, all being machine cut and planed. The underside of the slates are limed (**Plate 37**) to help protect against the ingress of water and draughts, but also to lighten the first floor.

6.5.2 During the 1940s Llechwedd was abandoned and fell into ruin.

7 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 In this section the results of the watching brief are presented. The location of the excavations is shown in **Appendix 1 - Fig. 1** and the photographic archive in **Appendix 3**.

7.1.2 The watching brief oversaw the:

- Demolition of the clom farmhouse **Plates 42-53**.
- Service Trench 1 - From the road to the rear of the plot **Plates 54-57**.
- Service Trench 2 - Drainage from the house to the septic tank **Plates 82-97**.
- Foundation trench for retaining wall **Plates 58-70**.
- Foundation trenches for house **Plates 71-81**.

7.1.3 Two elements of excavation were not overseen by an archaeologist, these elements were:

- Unrecorded Date - The excavation across the rear of the site for drainage for a spring/field drain-off - archaeologist not informed.
- 10th February 2016 - Excavation of inspection holes for Ceredigion County Council Building Control - archaeologist not provided with adequate notice.

7.2 Stratigraphy

7.2.1 The stratigraphic sequence has been disturbed at the top end of the site by site levelling sometime in the late 20th - early 21st centuries, purported to have been undertaken by the farmer prior to the advertising the land for sale. This has caused the loss of top and most of the subsoil layers on part of the site.

7.2.2 The sequence over the remainder of the site comprises a thin layer of humus, a topsoil, clay deposits and bedrock of Borth Mudstone.

7.2.3 No sections have been taken during the course of the watching brief.

7.3 Archaeological Result

7.3.1 The watching brief was undertaken on 23rd March 2015, 29th March 2016, 25th-26th April 2016, 6th & 9th December 2016, during all excavations in as outlined 7.1.2.

7.3.2 The area of watching brief comprised Llechwedd and its surrounding plot, all being identified as an area of archaeological interest, an area of c. 0.38 acres. Where topsoil was to be found, it was first stripped by machine, before the removal of subsoil and weather rock layers.

7.3.3 Spoil heaps were inspected for finds and a metal detector was used to search the spoil for

metallic objects.

7.3.4 During excavations for the retaining wall on 29th March 2016, two pine fence posts stubs (**Plates 60-65**) were uncovered within the subsoil deposit, the line of which correspond to that shown on the 1899 25 Inch Ordinance Survey Map.

7.3.5 *No further archaeological deposits, features or remains were observed during the watching brief.*

7.3.6 Arbitrary context numbers have been applied to the site (**101**) for topsoil finds.

7.3.7 A small finds assemblage was recovered from the excavated topsoil (**101**), all from within the waste service trench running along the west end of the site. These finds have been assessed and recorded by ArchaeoDomus and presented in the table below.

Context	Material	No.	Wt (g.)	Comments
101	China	20	172	Early 19 th through early 20 th century china.
101	Pottery	10	561	Early 19 th through early 20 th century china.

7.3.8 The small finds, all china or pottery, date from the early 19th century or later.

7.3.9 Given the nature of the finds, no further work has been taken on them. The finds will be retained and form a part of the Project Archive.

7.3.10 No evidence for any hidden archaeology associated with the the earlier phase of Llechwedd was uncovered during excavation works. The modern levelling to the rear of the site have caused any archaeology in this area to be destroyed, in particular reference to the barns as shown on the map of 1820 and Tithe Map of 1844.

7.3.11 A photographic record was maintained throughout the watching brief (**Appendix 3**), which have been compiled as follows:-

- AD004-D1 - Day 1: demolition of house and excavation of electric service trench.
- AD004-D2 - Day 2: excavation of pad for retaining wall.
- AD004-D3 - Day 3: excavation of foundations and internal service trenches.
- AD004-D4 - Day 4: excavation of waste service trench.
- AD004-D5 - Day 5: excavation of waste service trench and septic tank pit.

7.4 Environmental

7.4.1 No environmental deposits for sampling were identified during the watching brief.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Although no further archaeological evidence was uncovered during the watching brief, there is little to doubt Llechwedd late medieval period origins, made evident by the large downslope platform on which the later clom house sits.
- 8.2 Llechwedd was an established farm, with labourers in an associated dwelling by 1844, when the Tithe Map for Llangwryfon Parish is produced, though is likely to have been in existence since at least the Castle Hill Records of 1818.
- 8.3 The form of the farmhouse, the map regression, records, and small finds assemblage, provide compelling evidence that the clom farmhouse originates as a dwelling in the early 19th century.
- 8.4 The structure of the farmhouse demonstrates its alteration and improvement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, until falling out of use in the 1940s.
- 8.5 The watching brief demonstrated that, although a small finds assemblage was recovered, no archaeological features or deposits were present within the areas excavated.
- 8.6 The levelling of the site surrounding Llechwedd in the late 20th-early 21st century, is the likely cause for the low frequency of archaeological material, particularly when considering the farm buildings adjacency to the farmhouse, of which no evidence was uncovered during the watching brief.

9 ARCHIVING

- 9.1 The results of the watching brief is a written report and a photographic archive. This will be held by ArchaeoDomus Archaeological & Heritage Services and will be deposited with the regional HER with DAT-DM and a further copy to the RCAHMS for archiving. Field notes and finds assemblage will be stored by ArchaeoDomus. A PDF copy of the report will be made available from www.archaeodomus.co.uk.

10 SOURCES

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British Geological Survey: www.bsg.ac.uk
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Accessed: December 2016

Cynefin Project - The Tithe Maps of Wales: www.cynefin.archiveswales.org.uk
Accessed: February 2015

Historic Wales: www.historicwales.gov.uk
Accessed: January 2017

RCAHMW: www.coflein.gov.uk
Accessed: December 2016

UK Soil Observatory: www.ukso.org.uk
Accessed: February 2015

10.2 Maps

1887 OS Six-inch to One Mile Map Second Edition - Cardiganshire XV.NE
Source: <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101607988>

1906 OS Six-inch to One Mile Map Second Edition - Cardiganshire XV.NE
Source: <http://maps.nls.uk/view/102188004>

1953 OS Six-inch to One Mile Map Second Edition - Cardiganshire XV.NE
Source: <http://maps.nls.uk/view/102188001>

Ordnance Survey Surveyors Drawing, 1820
Source: www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/ordsurvdraw

Appendix 1 - Site Plan & Drawn Record

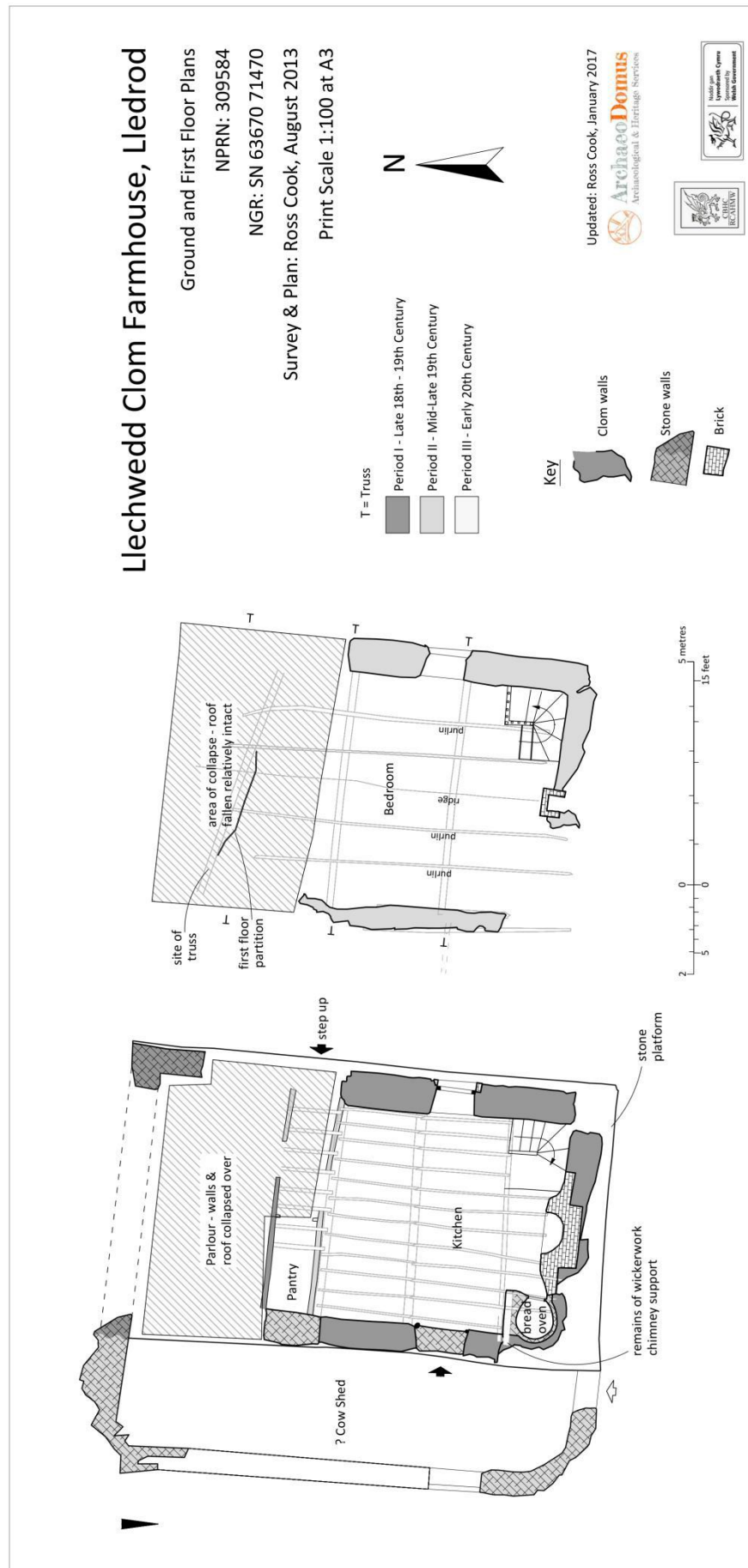


Fig. 5 - Survey Plan of Llechwedd Farmhouse.



Fig. 6 - Trench Location Plan.



Appendix 2 - Buildings Photographic Record



Plate 1 - AD004-BR-001 - View of east elevation, showing remains of ground and first floor windows.



Plate 2 - AD004-BR-002 - View of east elevation. N.B. the change in clom colour to top of wall.



Plate 3 - AD004-BR-003 - View of west elevation. N.B. the change in clom colour to top of wall.



Plate 4 - AD004-BR-004 - View of farmhouse looking south-west.



Plate 5 - AD004-BR-005 - View of farmhouse looking south-west.



Plate 6 - AD004-BR-006 - View of farmhouse looking south - upslope end.



Plate 7 - AD004-BR-007 - View of east elevation remains.



Plate 8 - AD004-BR-008 - View of farmhouse looking south.



Plate 9 - AD004-BR-009 - View of farmhouse showing elements of upslope stone gable wall.



Plate 10 - AD004-BR-010 - South elevation, showing stone platform and decayed clom gable.



Plate 11 - AD004-BR-011 - Remaining stone wall to north-east corner.



Plate 12 - AD004-BR-012 - Clom wall in section, west lateral wall. N.B. the 'break' where the later layer of clom was added.



Plate 13 - AD004-BR-013 - Section of east lateral clom wall. N.B. the change in colour and texture to top *circa* 70cm of the wall.

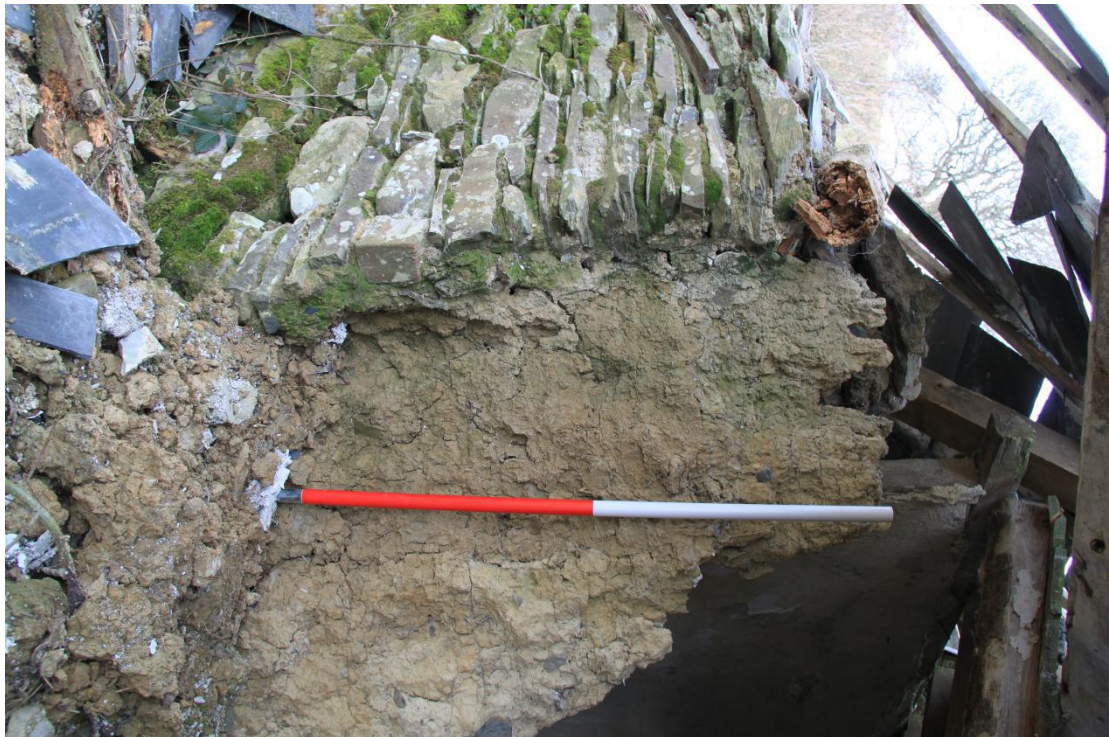


Plate 14 - AD004-BR-014 - Joint between stone and clom in west lateral wall.



Plate 15 - AD004-BR-015 - Joint between later stone infill and clom wall to former kitchen doorway.



Plate 16 - AD004-BR-016 - Remaining window splay to rear extension, west elevation.



Plate 17 - AD004-BR-017 - West elevation of stone extension, showing window reveal.



Plate 18 - AD004-BR-018 - View of south elevation of extension, showing doorway formed between new stone wall and existing platform.



Plate 19 - AD004-BR-019 - South elevation, showing rear of brick fireplace.



Plate 20 - AD004-BR-020 - South elevation, revealing rear of stair.



Plate 21 - AD004-BR-021 - Section of east lateral wall, showing difference in upper clom composition and lower.



Plate 22 - AD004-BR-022 - Section of east lateral wall, showing difference in upper clom composition and lower.



Plate 23 - AD004-BR-023 - Detail of 'pug holes' to support the adherence of render, east elevation.



Plate 24 - AD004-BR-024 - Detail of 'pug holes' to support the adherence of render, east elevation.



Plate 25 - AD004-BR-025 - Remains of thin lime render.



Plate 26 - AD004-BR-026 - Kitchen, viewed towards the east.



Plate 27 - AD004-BR-027 - Kitchen, viewed towards the west.



Plate 28 - AD004-BR-028 - Kitchen, viewed towards the west.



Plate 29 - AD004-BR-029 - Kitchen, viewed towards the south-west.



Plate 30 - AD004-BR-030 - Brick fireplace and bread oven.



Plate 31 - AD004-BR-031 - Brick fireplace and bread oven. N.B. the later brick infill to fireplace.



Plate 32 - AD004-BR-032 - Doorway to staircase.



Plate 33 - AD004-BR-033 - Underside of stair, clad with bead-and-butt boards.



Plate 34 - AD004-BR-034 - Remains of front doorway, east elevation.



Plate 35 - AD004-BR-035 - Passage side of kitchen partition, in lathe and plaster.



Plate 36 - AD004-BR-036 - Passage side of kitchen partition, in lathe and plaster, also showing parlour partition in woven hazel and clom.



Plate 37 - AD004-BR-037 - Limed underside to slated roof.



Plate 38 - AD004-BR-038 - Purlin cleat remaining on principle rafter.



Plate 39 - AD004-BR-039 - Nut and bolt fixing to apex of principle rafters.



Plate 40 - AD004-BR-040 - Spiked end to later common rafter.



Plate 41 - AD004-BR-041 - Northern window reveal at first floor and internal wall. Showing wall plate.

Appendix 3 - Watching Brief Photographic Record



Plate 42 - AD004-D1-042 - Demolition of farmhouse, viewed towards north.



Plate 43 - AD004-D1-043 - Demolition of farmhouse, viewed towards north-west.



Plate 44 - AD004-D1-044 - Pantry prior to demolition.



Plate 45 - AD004-D1-045 - Black and red quarry tile floor to kitchen.



Plate 46 - AD004-D1-046 - Fireplace; black painted bricks a later infill.



Plate 47 - AD004-D1-047 - Bread oven.



Plate 48 - AD004-D1-048 - Demolition, view towards south.



Plate 49 - AD004-D1-049 - Demolition, view towards south.



Plate 50 - AD004-D1-050 - Clom east elevation. N.B. Horizontal lines denoting construction layers.



Plate 51 - AD004-D1-051 - Demolition of farmhouse, viewed towards west.



Plate 52 - AD004-D1-052 - Post demolition, view across site towards east.



Plate 53 - AD004-D1-053 - Post demolition, remains of stone platform, viewed towards north-west.



Plate 54 - AD004-D1-054 - Electric service trench, viewed towards east.



Plate 55 - AD004-D1-055 - Electric service trench, viewed towards east.



Plate 56 - AD004-D1-056 - Electric service trench, viewed towards east.



Plate 57 - AD004-D1-057 - Electric service trench, viewed towards east.



Plate 58 - AD004-D2-058 - Excavation of for retaining wall foundation slab.



Plate 59 - AD004-D2-059 - Excavation of for retaining wall foundation slab.



Plate 60 - AD004-D2-060 - Pine post hole with stub, no. 1.



Plate 61 - AD004-D2-061 - Pine post hole with stub, no. 1.



Plate 62 - AD004-D2-062 - Pine post hole, no. 2.



Plate 63 - AD004-D2-063 - Pine post stub, no. 2.



Plate 64 - AD004-D2-064 - Pine post hole with stub, no. 3.



Plate 65 - AD004-D2-065 - Pine post hole with stub, no. 3.



Plate 66 - AD004-D2-066 - South section of foundation trench.



Plate 67 - AD004-D2-067 - North section of foundation trench.



Plate 68 - AD004-D2-068 - General view of foundation trench, viewed towards north-east.



Plate 69 - AD004-D2-069 - General view of foundation trench, viewed towards east.



Plate 70 - AD004-D2-070 - General view of foundation trench, viewed towards south.



Plate 71 - AD004-D3-071 - View west across levelled site.



Plate 72 - AD004-D3-072 - View east across levelled site.



Plate 73 - AD004-D3-073 - Waste services trench, north-south.



Plate 74 - AD004-D3-074 - Foundation trench, running east-west.



Plate 75 - AD004-D3-075 - Foundation trench, running north-south.



Plate 76 - AD004-D3-076 - Foundation trench, running north-south.



Plate 77 - AD004-D3-077 - Foundation pit, for steel post.



Plate 78 - AD004-D3-078 - Foundation pit, for steel post.



Plate 79 - AD004-D3-079 - Foundation pit, for steel post.



Plate 80 - AD004-D3-080 - Foundation pit, for steel post.



Plate 81 - AD004-D3-081 - Waste service trench, running north-south.



Plate 82 - AD005-D4-082 - Excavation of waste service trench, east end of site.



Plate 83 - AD005-D4-083 - Excavation of waste service trench, across south of site.



Plate 84 - AD005-D4-084 - Excavation of waste service trench, east end of site.



Plate 85 - AD005-D4-085 - Excavation of waste service trench, east end of site.



Plate 86 - AD005-D4-086 - Section of waste service trench, east end of site.



Plate 87 - AD005-D5-087 - Excavation of waste service trench, west end of site.



Plate 88 - AD005-D5-088 - Excavation of waste service trench, west end of site.



Plate 89 - AD005-D5-089 - Section of trench, west end of site.



Plate 90 - AD005-D5-090 - Excavation of waste service trench, west end of site.



Plate 91 - AD005-D5-091 - Section of trench, west end of site.



Plate 92 - AD005-D5-092 - Excavation of waste service trench, west end of site.



Plate 93 - AD005-D5-093 - Excavation of septic tank pit.

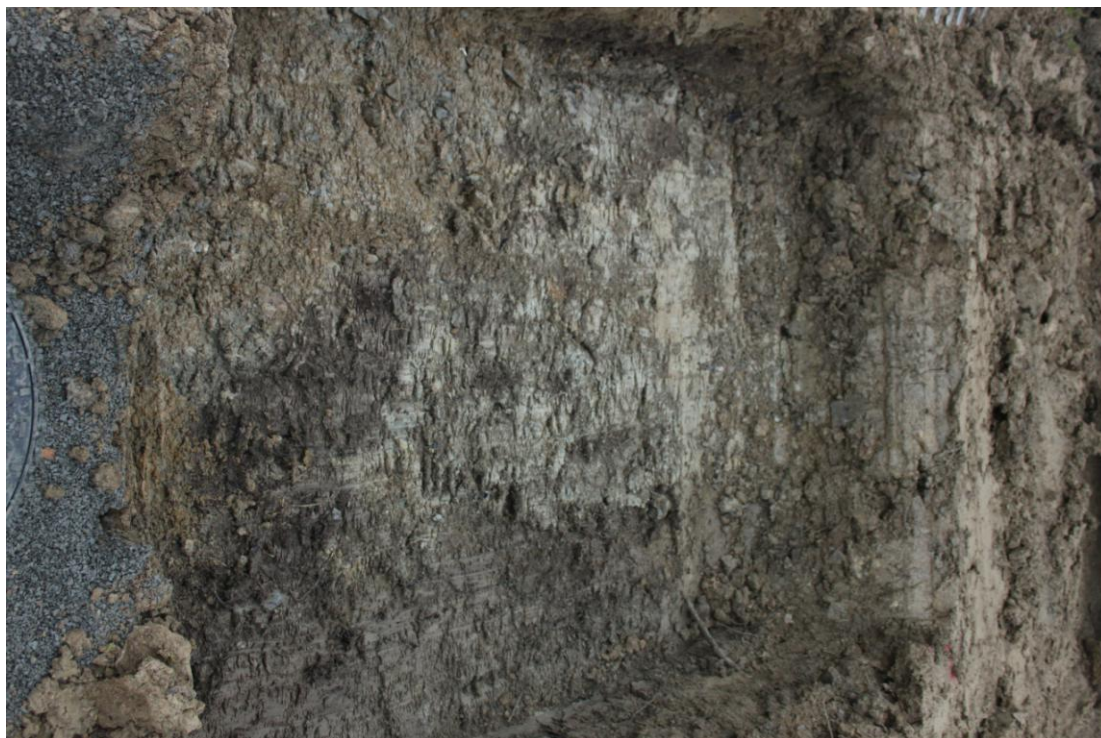


Plate 94 - AD005-D5-094 - Excavation of septic tank pit.



Plate 95 - AD004-D5-095 - Excavation of septic tank trench, looking north.



Plate 96 - AD004-D5-096 - Excavation of septic tank trench, looking west.



Plate 97 - AD004-D5-097 - Excavation of septic tank trench, looking east.

Appendix 4 - Misc

Period	Approximate Dates
Palaeolithic	<i>circa</i> 225,000 BCE - 10,000 BCE
Mesolithic	<i>circa</i> 10,000 BCE - 3500BCE
Neolithic	<i>circa</i> 3500 BCE - 2000 BCE
Bronze Age	<i>circa</i> 2000 BCE - 600 BCE
Iron Age	<i>circa</i> 600 BCE - 43 CE
Roman	43 CE - 410 CE
Early Medieval	410 CE - 1066 CE
Medieval	1066 CE - 1550 CE
Post Medieval	1550 CE - 1700 CE
Early Modern	1700 CE - 1900 CE
Modern	1900 CE - Present

Table 1 - British Archaeological and Historical Time Periods.

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