



Jonathan Bell
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23rd July 2018

Dear Jon,

Pembrey Forest Resource Plan

Thank you for contacting us for comments on the final draft of the Pembrey Forest Resource Plan. We appreciate being consulted to help inform the future management of the forest. Following our telephone conversation earlier I would like to highlight aspects of the historic environment for inclusion into the plan.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust hold the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) which contains information on all known sites and artefacts of archaeological and/or historical interest in the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, ranging in date from the earliest known human habitation in the region up to the period of the Cold War. It also contains information on archaeological work carried out in the region. The HER is a dynamic record and is updated constantly when new information becomes available.

As regional archaeological curators DAT's Heritage Management Section provides information, advice and assistance in understanding, appreciating and managing the historic environment of southwest Wales.

A great deal of work has been carried out in the last 5 years looking at the historic environment of the Pembrey peninsular and work is ongoing, particularly to understand the significance of the more recent remains which date from the First and Second World wars. The results to date have shown that there is a great deal of significant archaeology which does not benefit from statutory protection, but which is of great historical significance and which also provides opportunities for public interest and engagement and contributes significantly to a 'sense of place'.

The appended map shows a snapshot of the HER, National Monuments Record (held by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments for Wales: RCAHMW) and Historic Landscape Character Areas. It should be noted also that this area lies in the Taf and Tywi Estuary Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest (HLW (D) 9).

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Research suggests that the Pembrey peninsular has been subject to significant changes since the end of the last Ice Age, and both natural and anthropogenic processes have contributed to the expansion of land seawards. Most of the peninsular has developed since the 1500s. Consequently the archaeological record begins in the early post medieval period and relates to the reclamation of land by the construction of sea walls, drainage of the salt marshes and the enclosure of fields for agricultural use.

The use of the peninsular for industrial purposes began in the 1880s with the establishment of the Stowmarket Explosives Company dynamite factory which although a short lived venture, was a precursor to the later development of HM Munitions Factory and the National Filling Factory during the First World War. Some of the factory site was later redeveloped in the Second World War to become the Royal Ordnance Factory Pembrey which remained in use until 1964. These industrial episodes have left an important archaeological imprint of built structures, earthworks and buried archaeology, within Pembrey Forest and the Country Park, and some areas are considered to be of national importance.

These remains provide an opportunity for public engagement and interpretation. A recent project carried out by DAT and local volunteers, funded by Cadw and the Heritage Lottery Fund, has resulted in a series of exhibition panels and a leaflet to help provide interpretation of the archaeology of the park (<http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/ww1/pembreymunitions.html>) and an article about the history of munitions manufacture has been published in the journal, The Carmarthenshire Antiquary; <http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/ww1/pembreymunitions/munitionspembrey.pdf>.

In addition to munitions production there are other important 20th century military remains within the forest; some relate to the airfield - a significant fighter station during the Second World War - and also functioned as air gunnery school and bombing range and continued in use into the 1950s. Features from the bombing range survive within the forest and on Pembrey Sands Air Weapons Range. Other recorded features include a minefield and military hutted camp which are visible on 1946 aerial photographs and lie deep within the forest. Research into the military archaeology of the area is ongoing and it is expected that further information on the military camps and ranges of the 20th century will be incorporated into our records over 2018-19.

I hope this gives you a sense of the rich archaeological legacy which survives within Pembrey Forest. Many sites are obvious, however others are less apparent and some as yet undiscovered. All are vulnerable to inappropriate management and Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management, as curators of the historic environment, welcome the opportunity to provide further information and detailed advice on management and operations taking place within the forest as and when appropriate.

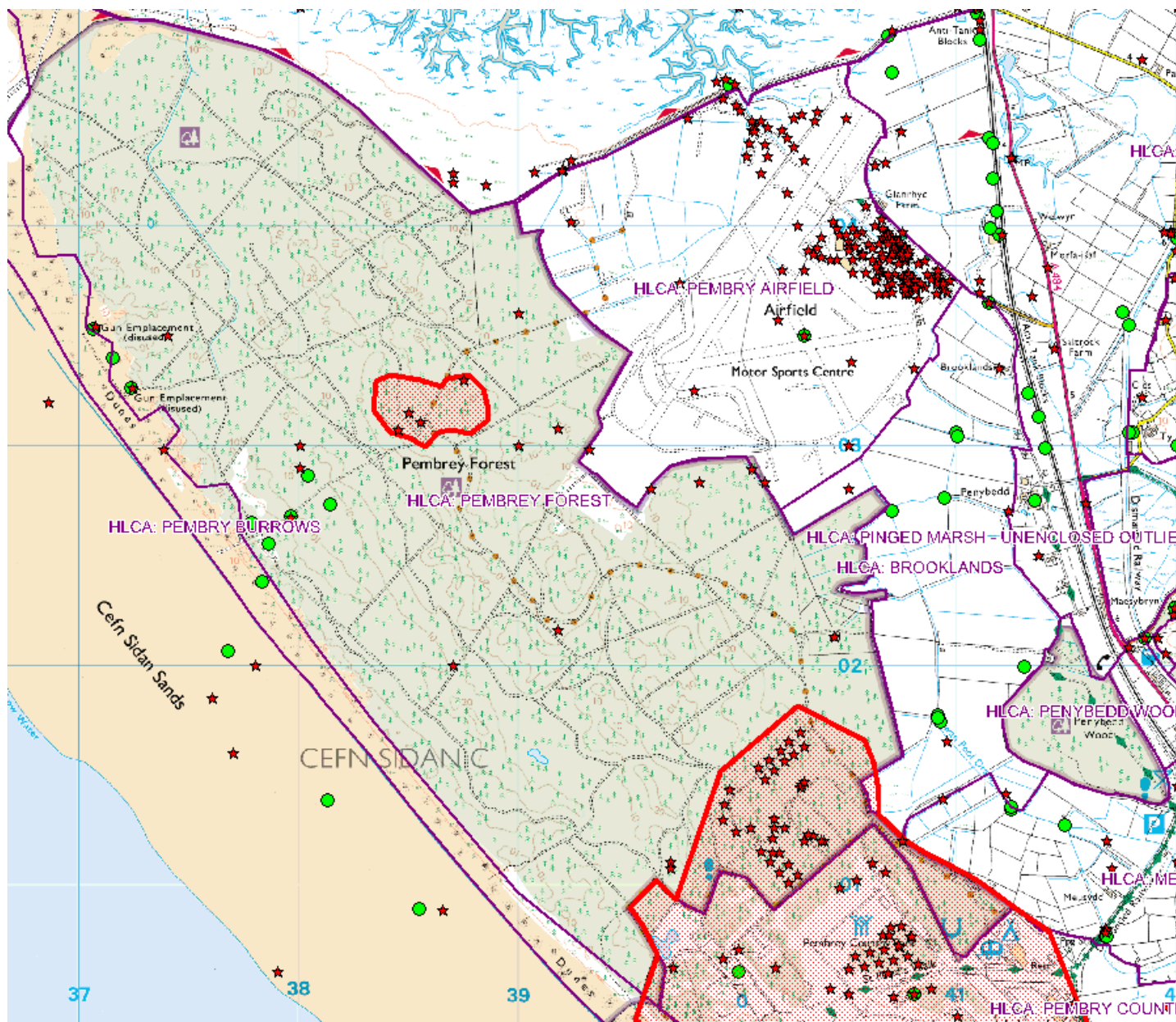
Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss any of issues or would like further information at this stage.

Alice Pyper

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- ★ Historic Environment Record
- HER polygon
- Historic Landscape Character Area
- Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales