

TY MAWR LEISURE COMPLEX
LLANFAIRPWLLGWYNGYLL (GAT 1191)
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

INITIAL REPORT NO. 90

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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LLANFAIRPWLLGWYNGYLL (GAT 1191)
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

prepared for Morrice Charlton Limited

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Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Report No. 90

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INITIAL REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Planning permission is to be sought for a leisure complex, including accommodation and roadside services, to be constructed on land at Ty Mawr, Llanfairpwll. The application area involves some 40 acres of agricultural land surrounding Ty Mawr, currently laid down to permanent pasture. The house and buildings of Ty Mawr do not form part of the application.

As part of an Environmental Statement being prepared to accompany the application, The Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT) have been contracted by The RGR Partnership to carry out an archaeological assessment.

2. ASSESSMENT BRIEF

An initial report was requested from Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, assessing the likely archaeological impact of the plans and suggesting mitigatory measures.

The basic requirement was for a desk-top survey and field search of the proposed area in order to assess the impact of the proposals on the archaeological and heritage features within the area concerned. The importance and condition of known archaeological remains were to be assessed and areas of archaeological potential and new sites to be identified. Measures to mitigate the effects of the proposed leisure complex on the archaeological resource were to be suggested.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust's proposals for fulfilling these requirements were, briefly, as follows:

- a) to identify and record the cultural heritage of the area to be affected by the proposals;
- b) to evaluate the importance of what was identified (both as a cultural landscape and as the individual items which make up that landscape); and
- c) to recommend ways in which damage to the cultural heritage can be avoided or minimised.

This report covers the work done under the first two stages of assessment, documentary research and walking the route, and includes recommendations for later stages.

3. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

3.1 Desk-top Study

Consultation of maps, computer records, written records and reference works, which make up the Sites and Monuments Record, was undertaken at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Records (including early Ordnance Survey maps, tithe maps and schedules, estate maps and papers and reference works - see bibliography) were consulted in the library and the archives of the University College of North Wales, Bangor, and the County archives at Llangefni. Aerial photographs were inspected at the offices of the Countryside Council for Wales and Anglesey Borough Council.

3.2 Field Search

This was undertaken on the 18 and 19 February 1994 by two members of Trust staff. The whole of the proposed area was walked. Conditions were fair for fieldwork, light and visibility were good for the time of year. The occupier and adjoining landowner were questioned, but neither could contribute information of material value.

Sites identified were marked on copies of 1:2,500 OS maps as accurately as possible without surveying. Forms were filled in assessing each site, and detailed notes made of the more important. Photographs were taken of all potential sites identified.

3.3 Report

All available information was collated, and transferred onto a single set of maps at a scale of 1:2,500 for convenience. The sites were then assessed and allocated to the categories listed below. These are intended to give an idea of the importance of the site and the level of response likely to be required; descriptions of the sites and specific recommendations for further evaluation or mitigatory measures, as appropriate, are given in the relevant sections of this report.

In some cases, further investigation may result in sites being moved into different categories. The criteria used for allocating sites to categories are based on those used by the Secretary of State when considering ancient monuments for scheduling; these are set out in Annex 3 to Planning Policy Guidance 16 (Wales): Archaeology and Planning.

3.4 Categories

The following categories were used to define the importance of the archaeological resource.

Category A - Sites of national importance.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and sites of schedulable or listable quality, i.e. those which would meet the requirements for scheduling (ancient monuments) or listing (buildings) or both.

Sites which are scheduled or listed have legal protection, and it is recommended that all Category A sites remain preserved and protected *in situ*.

Category B - Sites of regional or county importance.

Sites which would not fulfil the criteria for scheduling or listing, but which are nevertheless of particular importance within the region.

Preservation *in situ* is the preferred option for Category B sites, but if damage or destruction cannot be avoided, appropriate detailed recording might be an acceptable alternative.

Category C - Sites of district or local importance.

Sites which are not of sufficient importance to justify a recommendation for preservation if threatened.

Category C sites nevertheless merit adequate recording in advance of damage or destruction.

Category D - Minor and damaged sites.

Sites which are of minor importance or so badly damaged that too little remains to justify their inclusion in a higher category.

For Category D sites, rapid recording, either in advance or during destruction, should be sufficient.

Category E - Sites needing further investigation.

Sites whose importance is as yet undetermined and which will require further work before they can be allocated to categories A - D are temporarily placed in this category, with specific recommendations for further evaluation. By the end of the assessment there should be no sites remaining in this category.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Archive material consulted during the desk-top study provided dating evidence for known sites (e.g. Ty Mawr (1752), Cae Dwy Adwy (now Bryn Awelon) (1752), and maps of successive dates allowed an appreciation of the development of the landscape. There were no Estate maps available for Ty Mawr, but Ordnance Survey and tithe map coverage of the area was good.

Lists supplied by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments gave information about listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments. There is one scheduled ancient monument within the application area (the collapsed megalithic chamber), but there are no listed buildings.

Aerial photographs both confirmed the positions of known sites and showed up some possible new sites.

Many of the fields walked in the course of the fieldwork had been repeatedly ploughed. This meant that results were sometimes disappointing, nothing being visible on the ground even in fields where features show up on aerial photographs. It is clear that under these circumstances field walking may not be the most efficient way of identifying new features.

Sites noted from documentary sources were identified in the field where possible, and in addition a number of previously unrecorded sites were identified. These are included, with the rest of the sites, in the gazetteer. The total of sites allocated numbers in the gazetteer was 14.

4.2 The Archaeological Background

This section provides a summary of the archaeology and history of the surrounding area so that the findings of the assessment can be put into a wider context.

4.2.1 Prehistoric

The Prehistoric period is well represented in the area by finds and sites, particularly in the area around Castellior to the north-east, and also by field systems of the later prehistoric period to the south-east. The Ty Mawr burial chamber, a megalithic chamber now collapsed, comprises a capstone resting on the ground, one upright in situ, two fallen upright stones and a number of small stones. The chamber would originally have been covered by a cairn, with a passage entrance into the chamber through the cairn. It dates from the Neolithic period, around 3,500 - 4,000 BC. The carved stone head, which for many years comprised part of the garden wall at Hendy, is thought to represent a local Celtic deity. The head is carved from a sandstone block and has a small hole drilled in one side of the mouth and a flattened head.

Based on stylistic comparisons it is thought to have been carved in the pre-Roman Iron Age, between 50 and 500 BC. The head was recently donated to Oriel Ynys Mon, where it is now on permanent display.

4.2.2 Roman

There are no Roman finds from the immediate area, although the settlements and field systems mentioned in 4.2.1 above around may well have continued in use throughout the Roman period. Recent excavations by the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust at sites adjacent to Castellior indicated occupation within the Roman period, and isolated finds from the area around also suggest occupation at this date.

4.2.3 Medieval and Later

Settlement of the area during the Medieval period is fairly well documented but not well represented on the ground. The area lies within the Commote of Dindaethwy in the Cantref of Rhosyr. The land formed part of the township of Pwllgwyngyll, and is mentioned in an Extent of 1306 as forming part of the lands of the Bishop of Bangor. In post-medieval times the land appears to have formed part of the Plas Llanfair estate, although the first detailed documentation shows the land having been bought by Thomas Williams, well known for his activities in the copper industry and a prolific buyer of land in the late eighteenth century. The Ty Mawr land was still owned by the same family in the mid nineteenth century, when the recorded owner is Thomas Prees Williams of Craig y Don, grandson of Thomas Williams.

Prees Houses and farms in the area date from at least the late 17th century onwards, some of them being buildings of intrinsic merit and some having group value with their associated outbuildings and walls. Others, such as Tan-y-bryn on Ty Mawr land, are now deserted and ruinous.

4.2.5 Conclusions

The region around Ty Mawr holds a number of sites of archaeological and historical interest belonging to the Prehistoric and Roman periods. The medieval period is reasonably well chronicled, but there are no known remains. There are a number of houses and farms dating from at least the eighteenth century in the area, of which Ty Mawr is one.

4.3 Archaeology of proposed development area.

4.3.1 Introduction (N.B. the numbers refer to the site numbers in the gazetteer)

The area proposed for the development is currently fairly well drained pasture on Gaerwen soils of the brown earth group, overlying pre-cambrian schists, of which there are large outcrops, and which is always fairly close to the surface. When the new Llanfairpwll by-pass was built in the early 1980's, large quantities of spoil were dumped in the field immediately to the east of Ty Mawr, this is now levelled and grassed over. Also the field west of Ty Mawr was used as a storage compound, and a number of field boundaries were removed at this time.

There are several sites of interest within the area of study, the principle site being the Ty Mawr burial chamber. This site is scheduled as a monument of national importance, and therefore falls into Category A.

Sites deemed to be of local importance (Category C) are the remains of Tan-y-bryn, and Area 1, with the remains of two buildings and additional features, to the north-east of Ty Mawr.

The majority of the remaining sites identified within the corridor are minor sites only, but nonetheless form an intrinsic part of the cultural landscape.

Three possible sites, (6), (7) and (8), the latter two noticed on aerial photographs, will need further evaluation before their archaeological status can be confirmed, and are therefore placed in Category E. Following further assessment, these sites will be re-categorised.

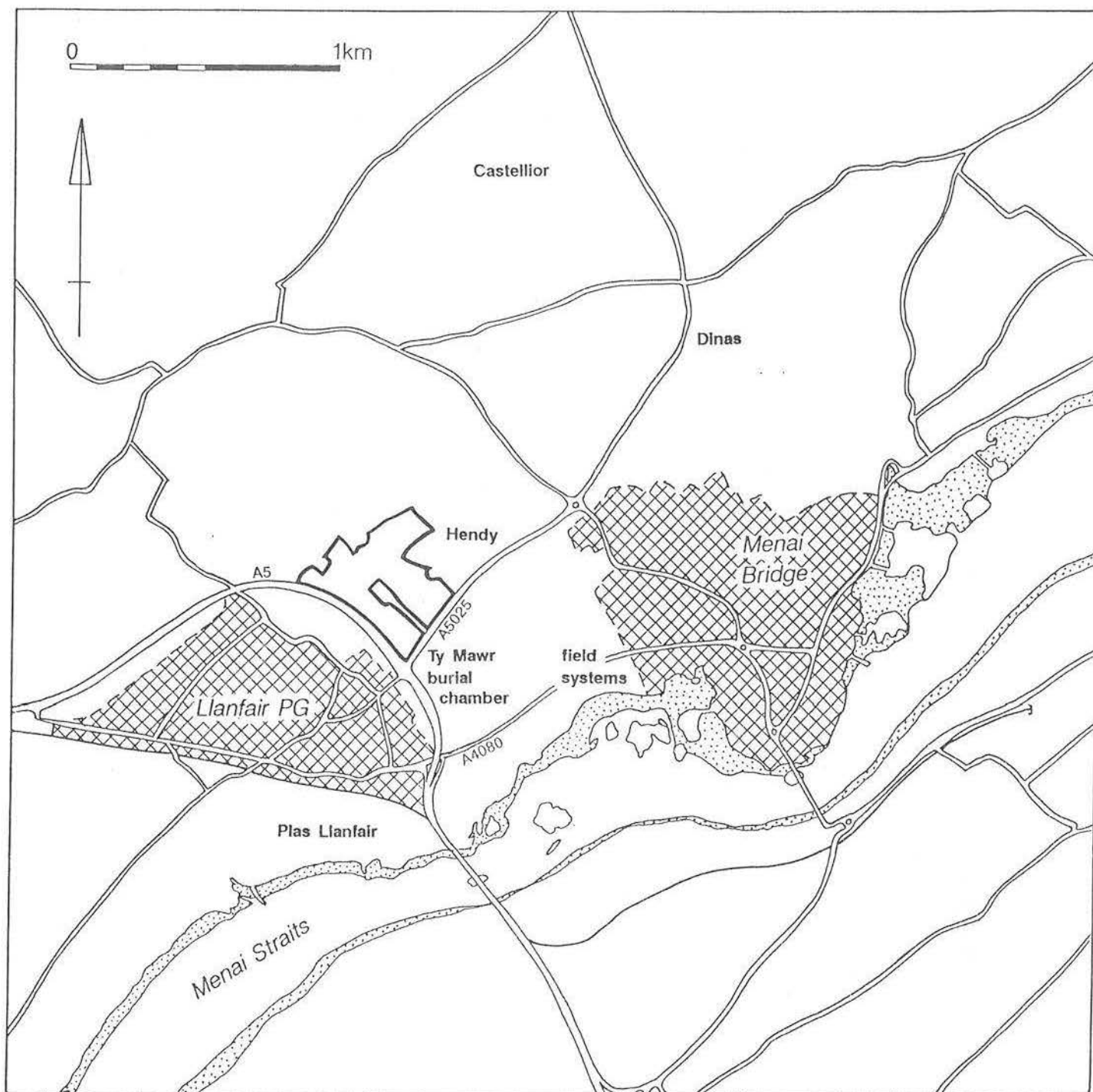


Fig. 1 Location map showing sites of archaeological and historical importance.

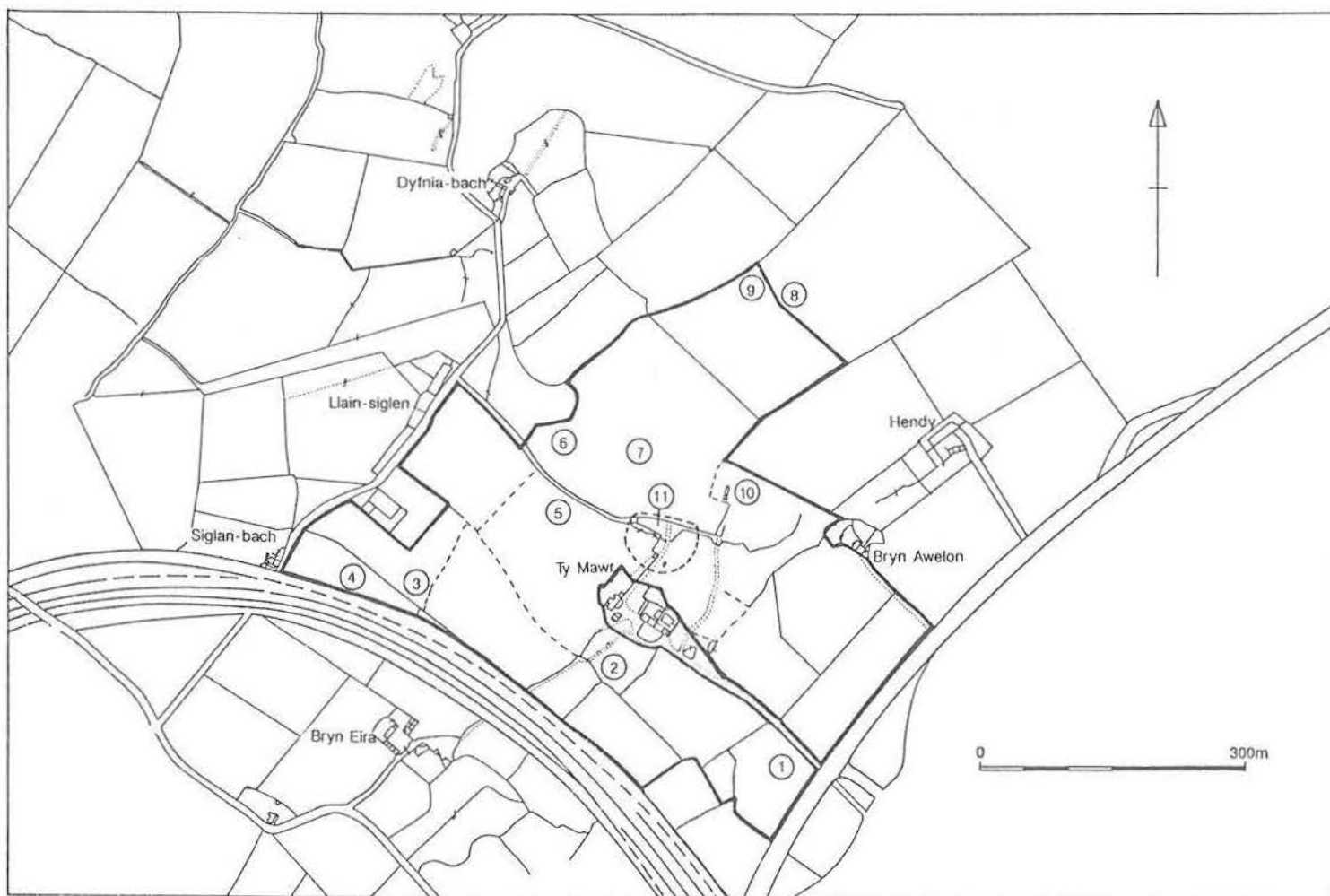


Fig. 2 Location map showing sites listed in gazetteer.

4.3.2 Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites

1. Ty Mawr Burial chamber SH53877216 *Category A*

The collapsed remains of a Neolithic passage grave consisting of a massive capstone, one upright in situ, two fallen uprights and a number of small stones. Scheduled Ancient Monument.

2. Stone steps SH53667227 *Category D*

A set of stone steps which have been incorporated into the construction of the wall, linking Ty Mawr with a footpath, which no longer exists, to Bryn Eira.

3. Blocked gateways SH53457235 *Category D*

Three upright stones, two originally gateposts, mark the entrance into the field, now blocked off.

4. Slate stile SH53437236 *Category D*

A number of cut slate slabs set in the wall at angles. They may represent a crude stile, although they seem rather precarious for this.

5. Hollow Way SH53607248C *Category C*

A hollow way, connecting Llain Siglan with Ty Mawr. This track is marked on the 1:2500 OS, 1900 edition and is listed in the 1963 edition of Public Paths on Anglesey. It has been partly filled in to create a throughway from one field to another, and the stream which runs along the same course as the track has been piped along the centre of the track. Leading towards Ty Mawr the edges of the trackway are very well defined by steepish banks, which are walled in places, and topped with fairly large trees. At the south end the track widens out into a funnel shaped area.

6. L-shaped feature SH53637253 *Category E*

Visible on the ground as a break in slope forming a distinct large L-shaped feature, possibly natural. It may be related to site 7 below.

7. Cropmark site SH 53727251 *Category E*

Large round feature which showed up on aerial photographs, as did a smaller round feature to the west of it. There is a possibility this could represent a hut with a circular enclosure, though it could also be a natural feature.

8. Cropmark site SH 53887268 *Category E*

A possible circular enclosure, which showed up on aerial photographs, although was not visible on the ground. The field wall appears to bend round the enclosure. This feature is just outside the proposed development area, but associated archaeological remains may lie in the field within the development area.

9. Slate tank SH53887268 *Category D*

A slate tank used as a drinking trough. There are two others set in the next field (belonging to Hendy), alongside a small enclosure containing an old hand pump.

10. Tan-y-bryn (remains of) SH53817247 *Category C*

Remains of a small-holding known as Tan-y-bryn. The main dwelling has been without a roof for some time, one gable is still standing to a height of approximately 4 m. The building consists of two rooms, the north end appears to be an addition, and has a small fireplace set in the wall. The main part of the building has a much more substantial fireplace with a sloping chimney breast. Three associated outbuildings, marked on the 1900 OS county series are no longer there, although the boundary around the complex is still visible on the ground as a slightly raised ridge. The trackway from Tan-y-bryn to Ty Mawr is still visible, although it is much overgrown.

11. Area 1 SH53747241 Category C

This area contains the remains of two small buildings and a number of associated enclosures, with a stream running through them. The hollow way (site 5) enters the area and extends into a funnel-shaped enclosure, the entrance marked by two large stone gateposts. The stream runs through this area, with a bridge carrying a track over it from Ty Mawr into the adjacent field. In the field west of the enclosure built into the corner, is what appears to be the remains of a purpose built duck pond, with small holes built into the field walls for access.

There are two outbuildings associated with the area. The largest building is a small rectangular structure, with its south gable still standing. The north end has been altered, and the present wall is a later insertion, now in a bad state of repair. There is a window in the gable end still standing, and the remains of a smaller window in the west wall, whilst in the east wall is a doorway. There is evidence of an upper floor, holes for supporting beams being clearly visible in the tall gable end.

The second building, of which one wall and part of a small entrance remain, is built against a steep rocky outcrop east of, and across the track to, the building just described. Its function is unclear.

12. Field boundaries, etc.

The pattern and nature of field boundaries are an important part of the historic landscape. Their construction, linear plan and ecological diversity can provide valuable information about the landscape and its evolution. The most common type of field boundary in this area is the drystone wall, with adjacent thorn hedge, but there are also examples of stone faced banks, usually topped with modern sheep-fencing.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Recommendations for further assessment

Three sites require further assessment before their archaeological status can be established. Two of the sites (7) and (8), are visible only on aerial photographs, and the third (6) is marked by a break of slope in the ground. The lack of soil coverage would mean that trial trenches would be a better method of assessment than geophysical survey, and therefore this is the recommended approach for these three sites. As sites (6) and (7) are physically very close, or overlying one another, then the assessment trenches for these two sites would be contiguous. Site 8 is just outside the area under consideration, but because it is very close, and the boundary appears to move round it, then the area adjacent should be examined for archaeological remains.

Recommendations for further work are as follows:

- 6. L-shaped feature.** Trial trenching to establish the nature of the site.
- 7. Cropmark site.** Trial trenching to establish the nature of the site.
- 8. Cropmark site.** Trial trenching to establish if any archaeological remains exist.

5.2 Recommendations for mitigatory measures

The majority of sites included in the gazetteer are of local interest only, but it is recommended that these are recorded at a level sufficient to allow future students of the landscape to be aware of the existence and nature of the features concerned. For the building remains, this should include a measured survey, but for the lesser features it is considered necessary only to photograph them and provide a brief written description.

Recommended mitigatory measures for each of the sites are as follows:

1. **Ty Mawr burial chamber.** This site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and it is therefore an offence (under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979) to disturb the site. In addition, PPG 16(Wales) recommends "the desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting...". It is therefore recommended that this site be preserved *in situ*, and that there are no immediate adjacent works which would affect the setting of the monument.
2. **Stone steps.** These should be recorded by a photographic and written description.
3. **Blocked gateway.** If this boundary is to be disturbed, these should be recorded by photograph and written description.
4. **Slate stile.** Record by photograph and written description.
5. **Hollow way.** This should be recorded by photograph, and if it is to be disturbed a section across the foundations should be examined and recorded, the latter by measured drawing if appropriate. The upper (southern) end falls into the recommendations for Area 1.
9. **Slate tank.** Record by photograph and written description.
10. **Tan y Bryn.** The remains of this cottage should be recorded by photograph and measured plan and elevations.
11. **Area 1.** The features within this area should be recorded by measured survey and photograph.
12. **Field boundaries** It is recommended that where a significant part of any field boundary is to be destroyed, then it should be recorded in advance by photograph and description.

5.3 Recommendations for areas of unknown archaeological potential

Previous results from similar projects have shown that many sites can only be detected by excavation, particularly in areas such as this where surface indications are slight due to ploughing. It is recommended that a continuous watching brief is undertaken during soil stripping. This is an important part of the mitigatory strategy, with potential for discovering sites which would otherwise go unrecorded.

6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORK AND MITIGATORY MEASURES

6.1 Further assessment work

This section summarises the work which is recommended to evaluate those archaeological remains whose status and extent are not yet established, i.e. sites in Category E. They will be reclassified and suitable mitigatory measures suggested following evaluation.

Category E - Sites needing further investigation

6	7. L- shaped feature	Trial trenching
7	8. Large circular feature	Trial trenching
3	12. Large circular feature	Trial trenching

6.2 Mitigatory Measures

This section lists the remaining sites according to category. The categorisation attempts to quantify the importance of the archaeological resource, as suggested in the 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' Volume 11, Section 3, Part 2.

Category A - National importance

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ty Mawr Burial Chamber | Preservation <i>in situ</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|

Category B - Regional importance

None

Category C - Local importance

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 6. Hollow way (from Llain-siglen to Ty Mawr) | Recording and survey |
| 10. Tan-y-bryn (remains of) | Recording and survey |
| 11. Area 1 | Recording and survey |

Category D - Minor and damaged sites

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2. Stone steps | Photographic and written description |
| 4. Blocked gateways | Photographic and written description |
| 5. Slate stile | Photographic and written description |
| 9. Slate tank | Photographic and written description |
| 12. Field boundaries | Photographic and written description |

A continuous watching brief should be maintained along the whole route during relevant stages of the work, as some sites will not be suspected until topsoil stripping reveals them, and sites identified in advance of the works may require further recording during construction.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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8. NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

An initial assessment of the proposed development area has identified a number of actual and some possible sites. Recommendations for further assessment are made for those sites whose archaeological status is not yet known.

Recommendations proposed for mitigatory strategies range from preservation *in situ* to the provision of a continuous watching brief during soil stripping operation.

Three of the sites require further evaluation before appropriate mitigatory measures can be recommended. It is suggested that these sites are investigated by trial trenching to see if any archaeological remains are present.

One site, the Ty Mawr burial chamber (1), is scheduled as a monument of national importance, and should be preserved *in situ*.

The remaining sites identified within the area are mainly agricultural features of a relatively recent date. It is recommended that three of these, the cottage at Tan-y-bryn (10), two small buildings with associated features north-east of Ty Mawr (Area 1) and the hollow way (6), are recorded by measured survey and photograph before disturbance. Recommendations for the remainder of the sites noted are for recording by written description and photograph.

As with all schemes of this nature, the potential for further discoveries once soil removal commences is a possibility. Taking into account the wealth of archaeological remains in the locality (outlined in 4.2 above) it is recommended that a continuous watching brief be undertaken during soil stripping operations.

