

PROPOSED WIND FARM  
LLYN ALAW, ANGLESEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT (GAT 1208)

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INITIAL REPORT NO. 100

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd  
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust



**PROPOSED WIND FARM  
LLYN ALAW, ANGLESEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT (GAT 1208)**

prepared for Manweb Generation Holdings Ltd.

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April 1994

**Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Report No 100**



# **PROPOSED WIND FARM, LLYN ALAW, ANGLESEY**

## **INITIAL REPORT**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Planning permission is to be sought for a wind farm to be constructed on land close to Llyn Alaw, in the parishes of Llanbabo and Llantrisant, Anglesey. The application involves two areas of land covering some 1,000 ha, with 102 suggested turbine locations, 61 in the north area and 41 in the south area.

As part of an Environmental Statement being prepared to accompany the application, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (Contracts Section) have been contracted by Manweb Generation Holdings Ltd 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 assessment must comply with the conditions specified in the "Brief for Initial Archaeological Assessment" prepared by Gwynedd Sites and Monuments Record for Anglesey Borough Council.

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. Recommendations regarding the appropriate siting of the turbines, tracks and service trenches were to be made.

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 initial report will contain the results of the desktop study and walkover, with recommendations for further assessment work if this is necessary, and recommended mitigatory measures.

### **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 held by the County Archives in Llangefni (including early Ordnance Survey maps, tithe maps and schedules, Land Tax Assessments) were consulted, and their index was checked for other sites of interest. The archives at UCNW, Bangor, were searched for relevant estate maps and documents. Access to the Baron Hill Mss was not allowed, and this meant that estate maps

relevant to the northern area were not consulted. Aerial photographs were inspected at the offices of the Countryside Council for Wales.

### 3.2 Field Search

This was undertaken between the 4th and 8th of April, 1994, by two members of Trust staff. Conditions for field walking were reasonable, though occasionally overcast and raining. The fields containing proposed turbine locations, tracks and service trenches were walked. The remaining fields within the study area were not systematically walked, although were looked at where possible.

Sites identified were marked on copies of 1:10,000 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 1:10,000 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.

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.

## **4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The Sites and Monuments Record held by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust recorded four sites within the study area: the Cors-y-bol earthwork (6), the adjacent flint scatter (5), the inscribed stone from Chwaen-wen (8) and the inscribed stone Llanol (12). A study of relevant documentary sources did not find any more references to archaeological sites in the area.

A number of possible archaeological sites were noted from aerial photographs, and these were checked on the ground, although only the enclosure north-east of Chwaen Wen was readily identifiable.

Archive material consulted at the Local Record Office, mainly tithe maps, estate records and Land Tax Assessments, were useful for indicating the farm boundaries and landowners during the 17th to 19th centuries, and the early Ordnance Survey maps also helped elucidate changing patterns of farm boundaries and tracks.

Lists supplied by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments were consulted for information about listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments. There is one scheduled ancient monument within the study area, the Cors-y-bol earthwork (site 6). The listed buildings are currently being revised by Cadw, but there are none within the application area, although Fferam Gyd farmhouse, and the small bridge adjacent to Llanbabo church were previously listed Grade III.

### **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*

Prehistoric activity is represented in the area by a number of known sites. From the earlier Prehistoric period (5,000 - 3,000 BC) are the two megalithic burial chambers at Presaddfed, as well as a number of standing stones such as those at Tregwehelydd, Bod Deiniol and Llehcynfarwy. The earthwork at Cors-y-bol may date to this period if it is a henge monument, or slightly later if it is a round barrow. Two definite Bronze Age round barrows (c. 1400 BC), excavated in the 1960's, exist at Bedd Branwen and Treiorwerth. These were shown to have been used to cover a series of cremations, with accompanying pottery vessels. Of similar date are burnt mounds, of which several have been recorded from the area: these were mounds of burnt stone, usually in a horse-shoe shape surrounding a small pit, with the open ends of the horse-shoe typically facing a stream. They are thought to have been used for cooking, by heating stone in a fire and then using the hot stone to heat water in the pit.

The flints found close to Chwaen and Nantanog (sites 5 and 7) indicate activity within the early Prehistoric period, and are dated to between 5,000 BC and 3,000 BC.



An "ancient camp", possibly a small hillfort of Iron Age/Roman date (500 BC - 300 AD), with associated round huts and finds was recorded at Geirn in the 19th century, although no visible evidence survives. The multi-ramparted fort at Werthyr is also probably of Iron Age date, and is one of a number of similar forts to be found throughout Anglesey and Caernarfonshire.

#### *4.2.2 Roman*

There are no Roman finds from the immediate area, although the round huts and forts mentioned in 4.2.1 above often continued in use into the Roman period, and the earthwork at Chwaen Wen (4) may also be of Roman date. Pottery and coins of Roman date are fairly common on Anglesey, and it can be assumed that there would have been some activity of this date within the area.

#### *4.2.3 Medieval and later*

Finds dating from the Early Medieval period (400 - 1066 AD) include the cist burials of 6th century date found adjacent to Llechcynfarwy church, and a Viking spearhead found within Llantrisant parish.

There are very few remains of medieval domestic buildings on Anglesey, and it would be unusual to find a house or farm building older than the 17th century, although earlier buildings could have stood on the sites now occupied by more modern farmsteads. However there are a number of churches with architectural remains of the 12th century, and both Llantrisant and Llanbabo have features from this date, whilst Llanbabo church also has a very fine 14th century monument dedicated to St Pabo.

During the Medieval period land was divided into areas known as townships. These townships can sometimes be equated with the early ecclesiastical parishes, although within the study area there is not an exact relationship. Medieval townships are recorded at Chwaen, Bodynolwyn and Llantrisant in Llantrisant parish, and at Llanol, Gwaunydog and Ucheldre in Llanbabo parish. The lands at Ucheldre and Gwaunydog were granted to the Cistercian Monastery at Aberconway in 1284, in compensation for the removal of the abbey from Conwy to Maenan. The exact location of these settlements is not known, but they are usually assumed to lie under the present farms of the same name. Because of the scarcity of Medieval domestic remains on Anglesey, it is difficult to say how the settlements would have looked, although both consolidated (ie villages) and dispersed (scattered farms) patterns are to be expected. However it is assumed that open (strip) field agriculture would have been practised, sometimes with ridge and furrow cultivation. Elements of these fields are preserved in the early estate maps, although little is now visible on the ground.

#### *4.2.4 Post Medieval*

Estate records in the archives show that by the 16th and 17th centuries the lands within the study area were owned by a relatively small number of families, each intent upon building up large estates. For the study area this included the Stanleys of Penrhos, the Meyricks of Bodorgan, and the Williams of Bodelwyddan. This latter family had held Nantanog and part of Chwaen since the 16th century. The Bulkeley family of Baron Hill owned all the lands in Llanbabo parish within the study area. The individual farms as recorded on the 1840 tithe map were already identifiable by the mid 17th century, as were some of the smaller holdings such as Gorsgoch.

The field systems now visible are shown, in two instances, to date from the early 19th century. Estate maps of Glan-y-gors-bach and Chwaen Wen of the mid 18th century both show fields which bear little relationship to the field boundaries of today, and other examples on Anglesey





show that many field-systems were re-aligned during the early years of the 19th century. However the farm boundaries, particularly where they occur with parish boundaries, remain fairly stable, which makes them of particular archaeological interest, because their method of construction and ecology can often provide useful information concerning the date of construction and previous land use.

#### *4.2.5 Conclusions*

The region around Llantrisant and Llanbabo holds a number of sites of archaeological and historical interest. There is potential for the survival of sites of Prehistoric date within the study area, and elements of the Medieval landscape are preserved within the present pattern of farms and tracks.

There are a number of houses and farms dating from at least the early eighteenth century, though possibly older, which together with their associated farm buildings, enclosures and field boundaries form an important element in the historic landscape.

### **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 a mixture of improved pasture and arable, with some wet, low lying ground. The soils are mainly brown earths lying on boulder clay, overlying Ordovician shales.

The majority of the sites in the gazetteer are features of unknown date and function, which require further assessment before their archaeological status can be clearly defined. However Prehistoric activity is clearly represented by the flint finds (4 and 6) and the Cors-y-bol earthwork (5). The two inscribed stones (7) and (12) suggest continuing activity through from the 6th century AD into Medieval times, when documentary evidence becomes available.

The present landscape is made up of a number of discrete farms, largely consolidated into the present pattern during the 15th and 16th centuries, although the site of some of the present farmsteads (e.g. Ucheldre, Chwaen Wen, Gwaunydog) may be Medieval in origin. Similarly, some of the farm boundaries could be Medieval in origin, although most of the present rectilinear field systems appear to date from the 19th century.

#### *4.3.2 Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites*

##### *South Area (Llantrisant)*

##### **1. Linear mound** SH 36418308 *Class E*

A very slight low linear mound running along the contour at the bottom of the slope. About 14 m wide, it tails off in an indeterminate manner to the east, but ends fairly abruptly at the west end. It may be a natural (glacial) feature.

##### **2. Linear depression** SH 36658301 (centre) *Class E*

A linear sinuous depression, 1.0 - 1.5 m deep, and about 15 m across. Again possibly a natural feature, although it could be a sunken track, in which case it would pre-date the existing rectilinear field system.

##### **3. Sub-rectangular enclosure** SH 36768298 *Class E*

A sub-rectangular enclosure on the crest of a low hill. Visible as a low bank 30 m by 25 m,

with rounded corners, and an entrance on the east side.

**4. Flint scatter, Chwaen Ddu** SH 36108265 (centre) *Class E*

A number of flints were picked up from a recently ploughed field. They include one broken flint blade and one convex end scraper, with two chert cores. They are probably Neolithic (5000 - 3000 BC) in date.

**5. Earthwork, Cors-y-bol** SH 37508433 *Class A*

A circular earthwork, defined by a low bank 0.5 - 1.0 m high and 29 m in diameter, with slight evidence of an external ditch. It has been suggested that this site was a Bronze Age cairn, although surface remains are not consistent with this. Parallel from elsewhere may suggest a henge monument of Neolithic date. A scheduled ancient monument (ref. no. An 91).

**6. Flint scatter, Cors-y-bol** SH 37708440 (centre) *Class E*

Flints have been found in the field east of the earthwork (5), but there is no record of their current location or of any other details.

**7. Chwaen-wen-isaf inscribed stone** SH 36308270 *Class D*

An inscribed stone of unknown derivation, but was formerly at Chwaen Wen. Now lost, the stone is recorded as commemorating Conbarrus. Probably 6th century in date.

**8. Linear feature north of Chwaen-ddu** SH 37468319 *Class E*

A linear feature visible on aerial photographs. Date and function unknown, although could be a natural feature.

**9. Circular enclosure south-east of Nantanog** SH 38788357 *Class E*

An enclosure c. 80 m diameter visible on aerial photographs, with further undulations to the south west. Date and function unknown.

**10. Linear feature north-west of Nantanog** SH 38068449 *Class E*

A linear feature visible on aerial photographs, cutting across two field boundaries and appearing to pre-date them. Date and function unknown, but may be a disused track.

**11. Linear feature north of Nantanog** SH 38558440 (centre) *Class E*

A linear feature visible on aerial photographs, cutting across a field boundary and appearing to pre-date it. May be part of an enclosure.

*North Area (Llanbabo)*

**12. Llanol inscribed stone** SH 37758828 *Class D*

An inscribed stone, formerly situated at the farmhouse of Llanol, but now in Bangor Museum. The inscription originally read ETTORIGI HIC IACET (the stone of Ettorix, he lies here), although the lower half is now missing. Sixth century AD in date. A scheduled ancient monument (ref. no. An 026).

**13. Field boundary north of Fferam Gyd** SH 37308760 (centre) *Class C*

A sinuous field bank, forming the boundary between Ty'n Rhos, Llanol and Fferam Gyd. Obviously earlier than the present rectilinear field system, and may be the boundary to the medieval hamlet of Gwaunydog.

**14. Enclosure south-east of Llanol** SH 37708826 *Class E*

A circular enclosure c. 60 m in diameter, visible on aerial photographs, although not visible on the ground. Also visible on the aerial photograph is a straight line crossing the enclosure from south-east to north-west: this looks like a modern field boundary, but is not marked on the 1900 OS 1:2500.

**15. Enclosure east of Fferam Gyd** SH 37928810 *Class E*

A circular enclosure c. 50 m in diameter, visible on aerial photographs but not visible on the ground.

## **16. 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 stone faced bank surmounted by a thorn hedge, although drystone walls are also present. Those boundaries which surround the individual farms could be Medieval in origin (eg site 13 above), but the majority of the internal field boundaries are 19th century in date.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 General**

In this section, it is necessary to assess the likely impact of the proposed scheme on the cultural heritage, and to make recommendations to mitigate that impact. Specific recommendations are made for standing buildings, field banks, and where there is enough information to assess the importance of an archaeological site. However where the status of the site is not yet known (Category E sites), then recommendations are made for further assessment to establish the status of that site. It will only be necessary to carry out this further assessment if the site is to be disturbed. In addition, the high density of sites has implications for those areas of unknown archaeological potential, and recommendations are also made for assessing these areas.

### **5.2 Recommendations for further assessment**

#### **5.2.1. Known sites**

- 1. Linear mound** This feature lies to the west of turbine VII-1. The preferred option would be to avoid disturbing this feature, but if this does not prove possible then it should be examined in advance by trial trenching to assess its archaeological status.
- 2. Linear depression** This feature is to be crossed by the track and service trench for turbine string VII. It would be difficult to avoid the feature all together, and so it is recommended that it is examined by trial trench in advance to assess its archaeological status, at which point further recommendations can be made.
- 3. Sub-rectangular enclosure** This site is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development, and future plans should make every effort to avoid disturbing this site.
- 8. Linear feature north of Chaen-ddu** This site is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development, but should be examined by excavation if disturbance becomes necessary.
- 9. Circular enclosure south-east of Nantanog** This site lies very close to turbine string X and its associated track and service trench. It is recommended that the area is examined by geophysical survey and trial trenching to assess the archaeological status of the site. Further recommendations should be made following this work.
- 10. Linear feature north-west of Nantanog** This site is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development, but should be assessed by trial trenching if it becomes necessary to disturb it.
- 11. Linear feature north of Nantanog** This site is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development, but should be assessed by trial trenching if it



becomes necessary to disturb it.

**14. Enclosure south-east of Llanol** This site is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development, but should be assessed by trial trenching if it becomes necessary to disturb it.

**15. Enclosure east of Fferam Gyd** This site is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development, but should be assessed by trial trenching if it becomes necessary to disturb it.

### **5.2.2 Areas of unknown archaeological potential**

Previous results have shown that many sites can only be detected by excavation. Geophysical survey can offer a way of evaluating areas without excavation, although results vary according to the soil and underlying rock type. It is recommended that the line of each of the turbine strings is examined by geophysical survey, with subsequent trial trenching of potential features. However if the geophysical survey is not effective, then certain areas should be examined by trial trenching to check for archaeological sites. This should include those fields containing known flint scatters (sites 4 and 6), and also where disturbance is going to occur fairly close to a known site, for example site 3.

## **5.3 Recommendations for mitigatory measures**

### *5.3.1 Known sites*

**5. Earthwork, Cors-y-bol** This site is Scheduled as a monument of national importance, and therefore protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. Any disturbance within the scheduled area would require Scheduled Monument Consent from Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments. It is recommended that no development work takes place closer than the present location of turbine string IX, and that the service trench between strings VIII and IX is not moved any further west than currently shown.

**13. Field boundary north of Fferam Gyd** This boundary is going to be crossed by turbine string II. If any of the existing boundary is to be disturbed, then it is recommended that a section through it is recorded, and the buried soils beneath it should be examined in an attempt to date the boundary and record the previous land use.

**16. Field boundaries** It is recommended that where a significant part of any field boundary is to be disturbed, then it should be recorded in advance by photograph and written description.

### *5.3.2 Recommendations for standing buildings*

The plans for the development do not show any disturbance of existing standing buildings. If it is decided to carry out any development work which will affect any upstanding remains, then the present building should be fully recorded by measured survey, photograph and written description. This applies to the existing farmsteads, and also to those cottages and farm buildings now deserted but marked on the site plans (fig's 2 and 3), for example Glan-y-gors-bach and Glan-hafren.

### *5.3.3 Recommendations for areas of unknown archaeological potential*

In addition to the evaluation work recommended in 5.2 above, it is also recommended that a continuous watching brief is undertaken during soil stripping operations for the turbines and associated services. This is an important part of the mitigatory strategy, with potential for discovering sites which would otherwise go unrecorded.

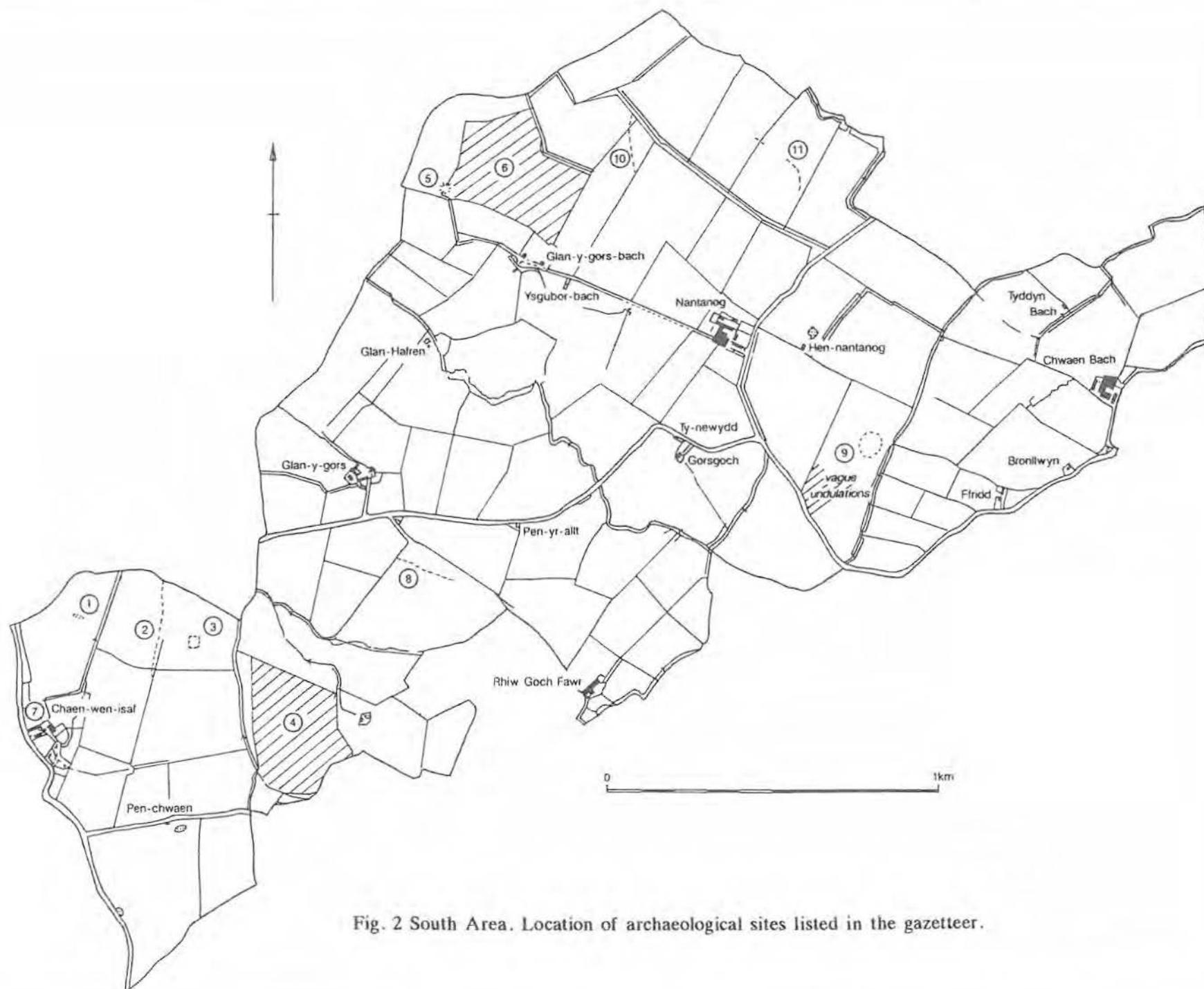


Fig. 2 South Area. Location of archaeological sites listed in the gazetteer.

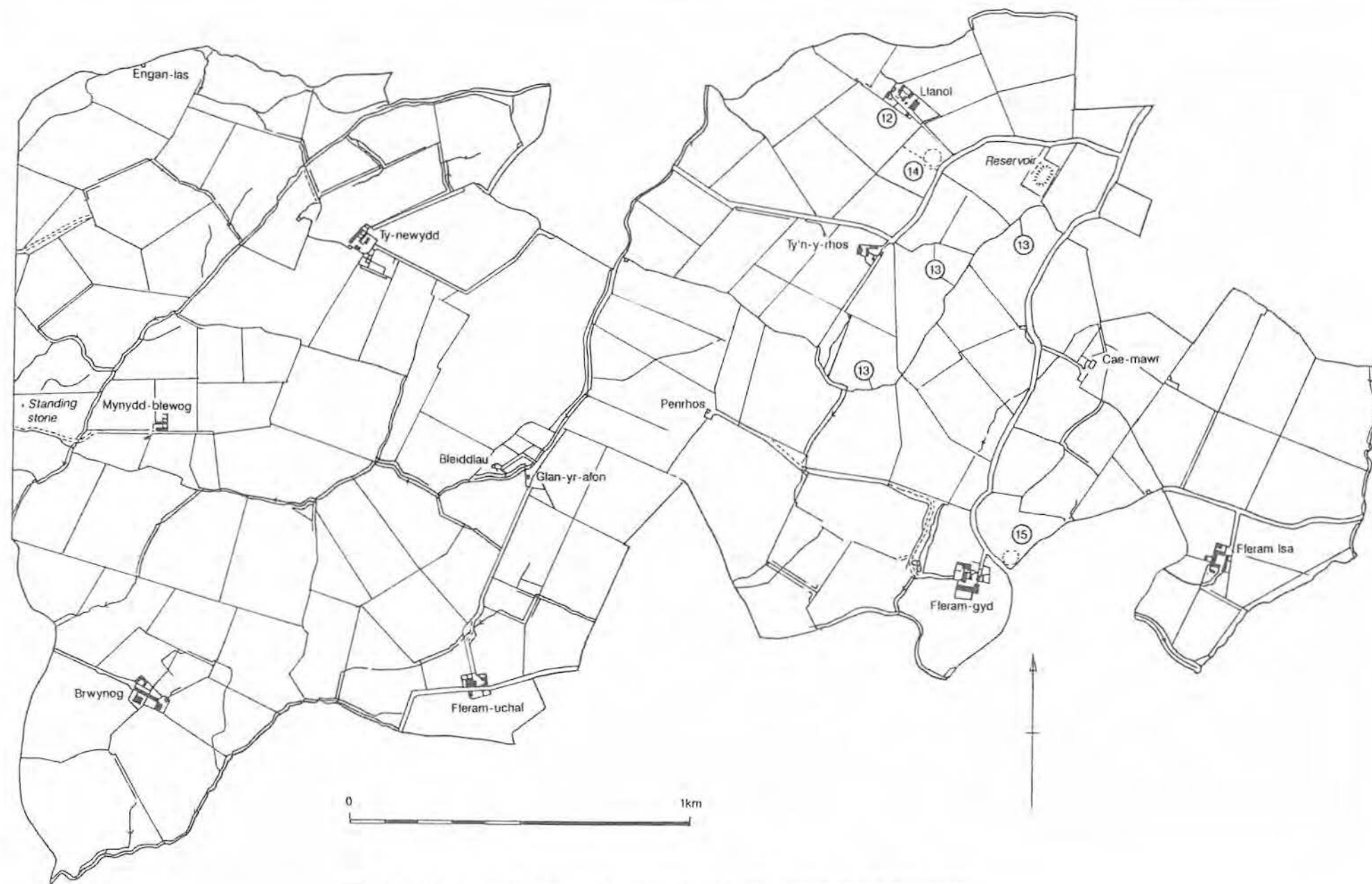


Fig. 3 North Area. Location of archaeological sites listed in the gazetteer.



## 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. If it is necessary to disturb these areas, then they will be reclassified and suitable mitigatory measures suggested following evaluation.

#### *Category E - Sites needing further investigation*

- |                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Linear mound                       | Trial trenching             |
| 2. Linear depression                  | Trial trenching             |
| 3. Sub-rectangular enclosure          | Trial trenching             |
| 4. Flint scatter, Chwaen Ddu          | Geophysical/trial trenching |
| 6. Flint scatter, Cors-y-bol          | Geophysical/trial trenching |
| 8. Linear feature north of Chwaen-ddu | Trial trenching             |
| 9. Circular enc. SE of Nantanog       | Trial trenching             |
| 10. Linear feature NW of Nantanog     | Trial trenching             |
| 11. Linear feature north of Nantanog  | Trial trenching             |
| 14. Enclosure south-east of Llanol    | Trial trenching             |
| 15. Enclosure east of Fferam Gyd      | Trial trenching             |

### 6.2 Mitigatory Measures

This section lists the remaining sites according to category (as described in Section 3.4 above).

#### *Category A - National importance*

5. Earthwork, Cors-y-bol

#### *Category B - Regional importance*

None

#### *Category C - Local importance*

13. Field boundary north of Fferam Gyd

#### *Category D - Minor and damaged sites*

7. Chwaen-wen-isaf inscribed stone  
12. Llanol inscribed stone

## 7. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 7.1 Unpublished Sources

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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, and mitigatory measures are recommended for the remaining sites.

Eleven sites of unknown archaeological status have been identified, and further assessment in the form of geophysical survey and trial trenching will be required if the sites are to be disturbed by the development. The present plans would suggest that sites 2, 4, 6 and 9 will be affected by the development, and that evaluation work will therefore be required on these sites. Ideally this should take place before the final positioning of the turbines is decided upon, so that the information gained from the evaluation can be used to help minimise the impact on the archaeology. Because of the relatively high density of sites in the area, it is also recommended that those areas of unknown archaeological potential which are to be disturbed are also evaluated by geophysical survey and trial trenching. The results of this work should also be used to help inform the location of the turbines.

There is one category A site in the area (site 5), which is scheduled as a monument of national importance. It is recommended that no development work takes place closer than currently shown on the plans.

One field boundary has been identified as possibly Medieval in origin, and it is recommended that details of this boundary are recorded when it is crossed by the service trench.

The development plans do not show any disturbance to standing buildings, but it is recommended that should any building remains be disturbed, then they should be fully recorded in advance of work starting.

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.

