

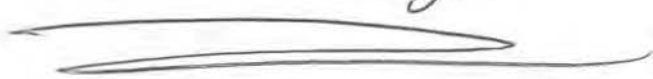
A5 ANGLESEY IMPROVEMENTS - STAGE 2
A5114 NANT TURNPIKE TO WEST OF BRYNGWRAN
Modified Preferred Route from Llangristiolus to N of Bodhenlli.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

G1141

REPORT NO. 103

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Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

prepared for the Welsh Office Highways Directorate

by H. Flook

May 1994

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Report No. 103

A5 ANGLESEY IMPROVEMENTS - STAGE 2, A5114 NANT TURNPIKE TO WEST OF BRYNGWRAN

Modified Preferred Route from Llangristiolus to N of Bodhenlli.

INITIAL REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Office is proposing to upgrade the A5 trunk road across Anglesey. Stage 2 of this work extends from the proposed roundabout at the junction with the A5114 (Llangefni road) at Nant Turnpike to the junction with the road to Llanfihangel yn Nhowyn, west of Bryngwran.

The proposed route runs broadly parallel with, and south of, the existing A5, bypassing the villages of Gwalchmai and Bryngwran and some smaller settlements.

Originally three alternative routes were provided, and an Archaeological Assessment of the then preferred line was carried out (Initial Report No. 71). This route has since been dropped in favour of one of the alternatives, which runs between the assessed route and the present A5, re-joining the assessed route south of Bodhenlli.

2. ASSESSMENT BRIEF

The archaeological and historical background to the area was discussed in the initial report, and this report concentrates on the results of fieldwalking the line of the proposed route where it differs from that report, with some additional documentary work.

3. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

3.1 Desk-top Study

Most of the relevant sources for this study area had already been consulted in the previous study, but some additional sources were consulted where necessary. This particularly involved looking at different collections of aerial photographs, and early estate maps.

3.2 Field Search

This was carried out on 29th April, 1994, by two members of Gwynedd Archaeological Trust staff. The length of the modified preferred route, from Nant Turnpike to just south of Bodhenlli, (where the route rejoins the original line of the proposed alignment), was walked. Conditions for field walking were good: the land was easily accessible and laid down to permanent pasture. The weather was dry and sunny.

Most of the landowners concerned were spoken to along the route; all were helpful but none were able to contribute information of material value.

Sites identified were marked on copies of the maps supplied by Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners, as accurately as possible without surveying. Photographs and detailed notes were taken of all potential sites identified.

3.3 Report

All available information was collated and the points of greatest interest and relevance were transferred onto a single set of maps at a scale of 1:10,000 for ease of reference. The sites were then assessed and allocated to the categories as listed in the initial report.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The only known sites along the line of the proposed road were the field system at Gerllan, and the sites visible on aerial photographs at Cefncwmwd.

A study of additional aerial photographs identified several more potential sites around Cefncwmwd, and another site at the west end of the study area.

Lists supplied by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments were consulted for information about listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments. No statutory protected sites lie within the study area, but there are three listed buildings just outside the area, Llangristiolus church - listed Grade I, Llan-bach - listed Grade II, and Cerrig ceinwen church - listed Grade II.

The fieldwork identified the mound and stone (sites 2 and 3), and the field systems (sites 5,6,8 and 9).

4.2 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The archaeological and historical background to the area has been discussed in the earlier report (GAT Report No 71). No new sites have been reported to add to the information presented in that report.

4.3 Archaeology of modified proposed route corridor.

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

The proposed route area is currently improved pasture, with some pockets of wet, low lying ground. There is considerable evidence of attempts at drainage from all periods. The geology is composed mainly of Pre-cambrian Gwna Green-schists, overlain by boulder clays and brown earths.

A number of the sites identified relate to changes in the layout of field systems which have taken place since Medieval times. The slight remains of ridge and furrow and traces of Medieval field systems on Anglesey are more prolific than previously realised, and this has resulted in the remains around Gerllan (2) being placed in Category C, as opposed to Category B as they were in the earlier report. This means that no known sites of Category A or B status will be affected, although five of the sites are currently Category E, and need further assessment before they can be assigned to a relevant category.

4.3.2 Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites (numbered from west to east)

The sites are described in numerical sequence. Each description is followed by recommendations: for further assessment when the remains require evaluating before full mitigatory recommendations can be made, and for mitigatory measures when the information is sufficient to allow this. A summary at the end of the Gazetteer lists the sites according to their allocated category.

1. Three circular features NE of Bodhenlli. SH42407427 Category E

Three circular features which were clearly visible on two different sets of aerial photographs. Nothing was seen during the field walking stage, however the land has been recently laid to new pasture and the grass was particularly long making it difficult to pick out any possible features. They could represent the remains of a series of round barrows.

Recommendation for further assessment: Measured survey and limited trial trenching to ascertain site status.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: The site will be reclassified following the evaluation.

2. Small mound. SH43077410 Category E

Circular raised area surrounded by bog. Some attempt has been made at drainage by the landowner, and a trench following the contours on the eastern edge has been dug. This has resulted in some land disturbance by a tracked vehicle on the western side of the mound. Amongst the track-marks were a number of burnt and shattered stones which suggests it may be the site of a burnt mound.

Recommendation for further assessment: Geophysical survey of mound and surrounding area for other possible features. Trial trenching to ascertain archaeological status.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: The site will be reclassified following evaluation.

3. Recumbent stone. SH43117411 Category D

Lozenge-shaped stone lying horizontally rather than vertically, ruling it out as either a rubbing stone or a standing stone. This site may be related to the mound (2).

Recommendation for further assessment None

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Geophysical survey around stone to check for associated features. Record by photographic and written description.

4. Circular feature S of Cefncwmwd. SH43467417 Category E

Picked up on aerial photographs, not clearly visible on the ground, though the area was slightly undulated.

Recommendations for further assessment: Measured survey, and limited excavation to ascertain site status, with geophysical survey to check for associated features.

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: The sites will be reclassified following the evaluation.

5. Possible lynchet or hollow way. SH43607415C Category E

This feature was noticed on aerial photographs and is visible on the ground as a shallow ridge running in a south westerly direction from the middle of the field boundary and gradually petering out approximately half way across the field. It is possibly the remains of a lynchet or an early track or hollow way.

Recommendations for further assessment: Measured survey, and limited excavation on areas to be directly affected.

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: The site will be reclassified following the evaluation.

6. Possible early field systems S and E of Cefncwmwd. SH43557416C and SH43707425C Category C

These areas were picked up on aerial photographs checked during the initial documentary search as potential sites. Field walking confirmed the presence of possible early field systems, represented by slight ridges. In the field S of Cefncwmwd, (also containing site 5.), they are relatively easy to follow and run in an E-W direction following the length of the field, but they are less visible towards the southern half of the field.

The neighbouring field, (E of Cefncwmwd) also has the remains of possible early field systems, though not so well defined. The field slopes eastwards, and approximately a third of the way down the ridges change direction and run north-south. These delineations may represent drainage rather than an early field system.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Examine by trial trenching, and record by photographic and written description.

7. Large circular feature SE of Cefncwmwd. SH43687408C Category E

Large circular feature, clearly showing on aerial photographs, which could be the remains of an enclosure, however there was little evidence on the ground to suggest a site.

Recommendations for further assessment: Examine by geophysical survey and trial trenching to ascertain site status.

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: The site will be reclassified following further evaluation.

8. Possible early field systems E of Ystum Werddon-bellaf. SH44187418C Category C

A small number of ridges were visible in the centre of the field, appearing to stop at the remains of an old field boundary, (present on early OS and estate maps, now visible as a slight linear depression), however they could equally represent field drainage.

Recommendation for further assessment: None.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Examine by trial trenching and record as appropriate.

9. Possible field system SW of Waen-hir. SH44457417C Category C

Lines noticed running across the field during field walking, which could be drainage or remnants of an earlier field system.

Recommendations for further assessment: None.

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Examine by trial trenching and record as appropriate.

10. Possible field system in field N.W. of Gerllan. SH44707410C Category C

This field appears to contain remnants of ridge-and-furrow cultivation, visible from the air and, in certain conditions, on the ground. Part of this field was used as a golf course until circa 1950.

Recommendation for further assessment: None.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: A section across the ridge-and-furrow, and through an adjacent field boundary, should be recorded. This would clarify the relationship between the ridge-and-furrow and the present field system. In addition, pottery from midden spreading might help date the cultivation episodes.

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. Trial trenching along the line of the route is therefore often seen as an essential part of the evaluation procedure, with potential for discovering sites which would otherwise go unrecorded.

Recommendation for further assessment: Geophysical survey of 20% of the route, with trial trenching of 2% of the proposed route.

Recommended mitigatory measures: 1. Any sites arising from the geophysical survey and trial trenching will be allocated to categories according to their importance.

2. A continuous watching brief should be maintained during the relevant stages of the road improvement works.

Field boundaries, tracks etc.

Minor and generally linear features such as walls and tracks have not been listed in the Gazetteer as individual sites, for various reasons including sheer weight of numbers, and the fact that the majority of them will only be partially affected, the unaffected portion remaining *in situ* as an adequate record. However, the patterns of fields, tracks and boundaries are nevertheless an important aspect of the historical landscape, and it is worth noting that styles of walls and other field boundaries vary considerably even within this relatively small area, local

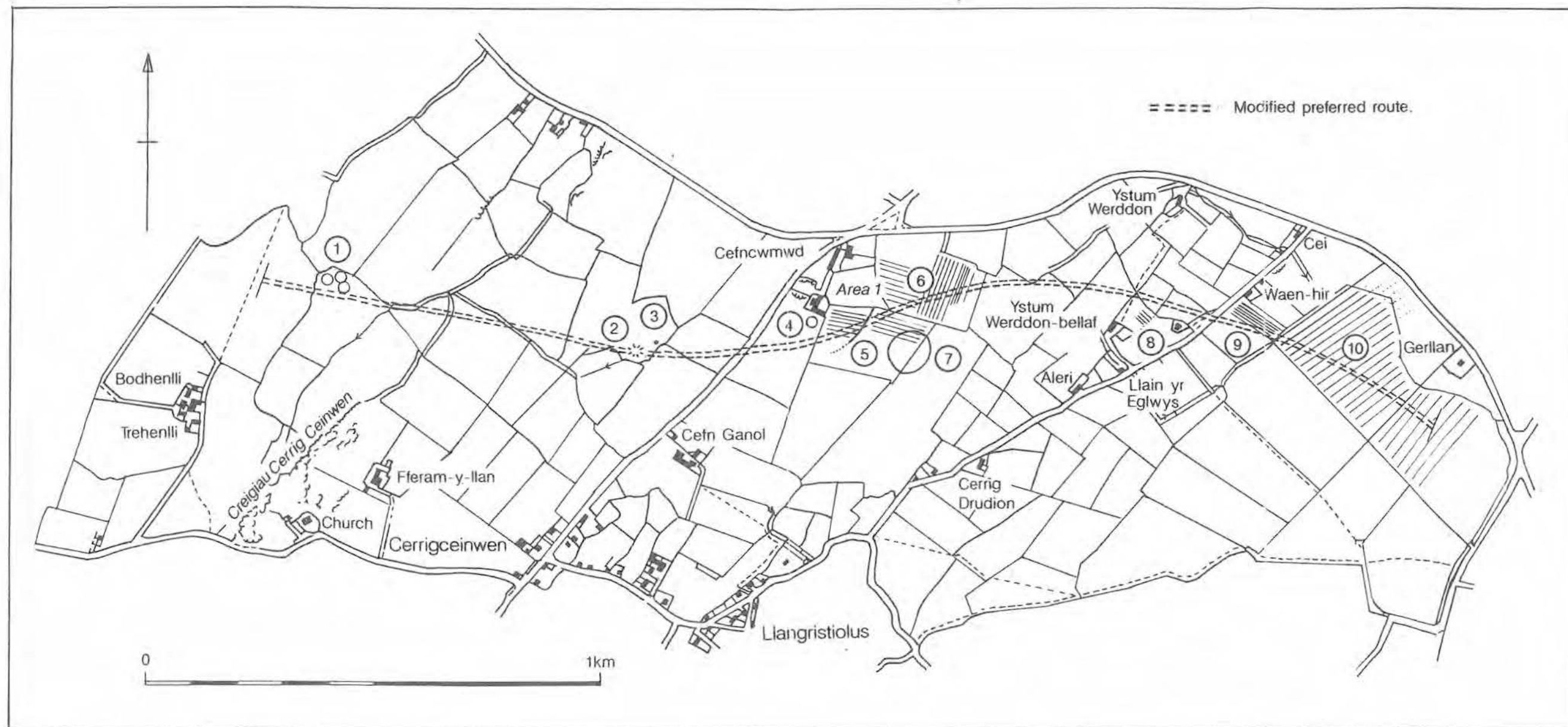


Fig. 1 Location of sites listed in the gazetteer.

differences quite possibly having their roots in historical factors. In particular, field boundaries which coincide with parish boundaries, which are clearly cut by the imposed 1820s A5, or which are associated with groups of small fields may be of significant age and thus particular interest. The large, open fields characteristic of much of the route are probably of 19th-century origin (and tend to be within large estates), and have swept away the boundaries of many of the original small fields, but the latter still exist around Ystum Werddon.

Recommendation for further assessment: None.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: A descriptive survey should be carried out of all traditional field boundaries to be affected, including measured profiles and photographic recording. It is also recommended that an ecological survey accompanies the archaeological survey. The information gained from this survey would provide both a suitable record of historic features and contribute to the re-instatement of landscape features.

5. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORK AND MITIGATORY MEASURES

5.1 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.

1. Three circular features	Measured survey and trial trenching.
2. Small mound.	Measured survey and trial trenching.
4. Circular feature	Measured survey and trial trenching.
5. Lynchet or hollow way	Measured survey and trial trenching.
7. Large circular feature	Measured survey and trial trenching.

Areas of unknown archaeological status : Geophysical survey and trial trenching

5.2 Mitigatory Measures

This section lists the remaining sites according to category. The categorisation identifies the level of archaeological response which is recommended prior to the construction of the road (see p. 3, 3.1 Categories).

Category A - Preservation in situ

None

Category B - Detailed recording

None

Category C - Recording by photograph and description

6. Cefncwmwd field system
8. Ystum Werddon-bellaf field system
9. Waen-hir field system
10. Possible field system in the field NW of Gerllan

Category D - Watching brief sites

3. recumbent stone

The whole route should be the subject of a watching brief during the road construction works: see Project Design (Appendix I) and descriptions of categories

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7. NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

An initial assessment of the area has resulted in identifying a number of sites, the majority of local interest, but some which require further assessment before their importance can be judged.

The known sites are, in the main, remains of field systems of different dates, possibly incorporating relict Medieval fields. It is recommended that these are investigated by trial trenching and geophysical survey, so that the remains can be placed into their historical context, and that they are then recorded by measured survey, photograph and written description.

It is also recommended that an archaeological and ecological survey of the field boundaries within the corridor of interest be undertaken, expanding, where necessary, to allow the boundaries to be put into context.

Five of the sites require further assessment before full mitigatory strategies can be recommended. These consist of: two circular features south of Cefncwmwd; a group of three circular features on land north-east of Bodhenlli; a possible burnt mound on land north of Cefn Ganol; and a lynchet or hollow way close to Cefncwmwd. It is recommended that these sites are examined by trial trenching and geophysical survey to establish their archaeological status.

As many sites can only be discovered by ground investigation, it is recommended that some 20% of the route is examined by geophysical survey, and that 2% of the proposed route is examined by trial trenching. In addition a watching brief should be maintained during the initial stages of construction.