

# Maes Bleddyn, Rachub Gwynedd

## Scheduled Monument Setting Impact Assessment



Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd  
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust



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## Scheduled Monument Setting Impact Assessment

Prosiect Rhif / Project No. G2604

Adroddiad Rhif / Report No.1490

Prepared for: Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Cyf

May 2019

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Gwynedd HER Event PRN: 45406

Front cover image: View from immediate southwest of enclosure and hut circles CN176 along Ogwen Valley (archive reference G2604\_020).



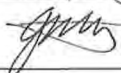
Cyhoeddwyd gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd  
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Published by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust  
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust  
Craig Beuno, Garth Road,  
Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2RT

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Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd yn Gwmni Cyfyngedig (Ref Cof. 1180515) ac yn Elusen (Rhif Cof. 508849)  
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Approvals Table				
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Revision History			
Rev No.	Summary of Changes	Ref Section	Purpose of Issue
1.1	Updated guidance list	1	Cadw request
	Corrected mistake in building count	3.1.1	Cadw request
	Minor modification to text regarding use of viewsheds and ZTV model for clarity	3.1.3	Cadw query
	Added text to clarify effect of accessibility on setting	3.3.1 (Viewpoint 5)	Cadw request
	Added text to take into account impact of deciduous trees on views	3.3.1 (Viewpoint 7)	Cadw request



## CONTENTS

<i>CRYNONDEB ANGH-TECHNEGOL</i> .....	8
<i>NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY</i> .....	8
1 INTRODUCTION .....	10
2 METHODOLOGY .....	13
2.1 Impact Assessment.....	13
2.1.1 Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a proposed change or development .....	14
2.1.2 Stage 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the significance of the historic assets and, in particular, the ways in which the assets are understood, appreciated and experienced. ....	15
2.1.3 Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance. ....	17
2.1.4 Stage 4: If necessary, consider options to mitigate or improve the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance .....	19
3 RESULTS .....	20
3.1 Stage 1: Identify the Historic Assets that might be affected.....	20
3.1.1 The location, size and scale of the proposed development .....	20
3.1.2 The location and nature of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN137 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments.....	21
3.1.3 The visibility of the proposed development.....	23
3.2 Stage 2: Define and analyse the setting.....	24
3.2.1 The current surroundings of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments.....	24
3.2.2 Our present understanding and appreciation of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments.....	27
3.2.3 What if anything survives of their historic surroundings? .....	30

3.2.4	The Significance of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments.....	33
3.2.5	Viewpoints.....	34
3.3	Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.....	35
3.3.1	Field assessment.....	35
3.3.2	Assessment of the impact of the proposed development .....	40
3.4	Stage 4: Consider options to mitigate the impact of the proposed development	42
3.4.1	Mitigation measures .....	42
3.4.2	Assessment of the impact of the proposed development following mitigation.....	42
4	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	43
APPENDIX I - Planning Pre-Application Enquiry Y18/002340 - Land At Maes Bleddyn, Rachub (23/01/2019)		
APPENDIX II - Photographic metadata		
FIGURES		
PLATES		

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 01: The location of the proposed development

Figure 02: Proposed development plan (after Michael Dyson Associates Ltd drawing 001-SK-8416 - Rev B) (nts)

Figure 03: First Edition Ordnance Survey County Series 25 Inch Map, 1891

Figure 04: Scheduled Monuments and Gwynedd HER sites referred to in the text

Figure 05: Multipoint viewshed model showing visibility from The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group Scheduled Monument CN176

Figure 06: Multipoint viewshed model showing visibility from The Hut Circles West of Corbri Scheduled Monument CN287

Figure 07: Zone of Theoretical Visibility multipoint model for the proposed development

Figure 08: Perspective View of Hut No. 3 (reproduced from Owen 1872, Cut 3)

## LIST OF PLATES

Plate 01: View of enclosure and hut circles CN176 from the southeast (archive reference G2604\_011).

Plate 02: Northern hut circle (B) and enclosure CN176 viewed from the west (archive reference G2604\_007).

Plate 03: Northern hut circle (B) CN176 viewed from the west, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_005).

Plate 04: Southern hut circle (A) CN176 viewed from the west, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_006).

Plate 05: View southwest from western side of enclosure CN176 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 (archive reference G2604\_009).

Plate 06: View of Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 over southern part of CN176 field system, taken from roadside east of scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_026).

Plate 07: View towards Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort GAT HER PRN 261, just visible over the rooftops of existing residential development and partly masked by trees, taken from eastern side of field system CN176 (proposed development location highlighted in red) (archive reference G2604\_025).

Plate 08: View from southwest of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development (obscured by Coed Uchaf in the centre of the shot) showing the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN210, CN359 (archive reference G2604\_018).

Plate 09: View east-southeast from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN210, CN359 (proposed development site highlighted red on right of shot) (archive reference G2604\_014).

Plate 10: View eastwards from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 (archive reference G2604\_015).

Plate 11: View from immediate southwest of enclosure and hut circles CN176 along Ogwen Valley, proposed development in front of existing housing arrowed (archive reference G2604\_020).

Plate 12: View towards CN176 enclosure and hut circles from footpath to the north (archive reference G2604\_003).

Plate 13: View towards CN176 enclosure and hut circles from minor road to the east (archive reference G2604\_001).

Plate 14: View from north eastern side of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development (archive reference G2604\_023).

Plate 15: View towards proposed development from northwest of CN176 enclosure and hut circles (archive reference G2604\_008).

Plate 16: View from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the proposed development (highlighted red) (archive reference G2604\_016).

Plate 17: View of CN287 from footpath to the northwest of the scheduled area, looking south-southeast towards the proposed development (archive reference G2604\_035).

Plate 18: View southwestwards over hut circle 1 CN287 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_031).

Plate 19: View southeast over hut circle 4 CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121, the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_034).

Plate 20: View east-southeast towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210 from northeast edge of scheduled area CN287 (archive reference G2604\_029).

Plate 21: View east over hut circle 3 CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_033).

Plate 22: View eastwards from northeast edge of scheduled area CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 (archive reference G2604\_030).

Plate 23: View of CN287 from close to the footpath on the northeast edge of scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_027).

Plate 24: View of CN287 from bridge on minor road to the west of the scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_036).

Plate 25: View of CN287 from minor road to the south-southwest (archive reference G2604\_038).

Plate 26: View south-southeast over hut circle 2 CN287 towards the proposed development, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_032).

Plate 27: View south-southeast towards the proposed development from the highest part of the CN287 scheduled area on its northern edge (archive reference G2604\_028).

Plate 28: View towards CN176 from minor road to the west of the CN287 scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_037).

Plate 29: View over the proposed development area towards the approximate locations of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 (archive reference G2604\_039).

## ***CRYNONDEB ANGH-TECHNEGOL***

Dirprwyodd Ymddiriedolaeth Archeolegol Gwynedd gan Gartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Cyf i baratoi Asesiad Trawiad Gosodiad ymlaen i'r cais caniad tad cynllunio i'r datblygiad o 30 unedau tai preswyl ym Maes Bleddyn, Rachub, Gwynedd. Roedd yr Asesiad Trawiad Gosodiad yn ofynnol gan Gadw oherwydd yr agosrwydd o'r datblygiad awgrymedig i'r Henebion Cofrestredig, Cylch Cytiau Amgaeedig Coed Uchaf CN175 a Chylch Cytiau Gorllewin o Corbri CN287. Mae asesiad pedwar cam wedi cael ei gwblhau mewn cydweddiad hefo'r arweiniad Cadw maen "Lleoliad o Rinwedd Hanesyddol yn Gymru". Mae'r trawiad gweledol ar yr datblygiad awgrymedig wedi gael ei asesu i fod yn gyfyngedig i golygfeydd de-ddwyrain o'r ardal cofrestredig Cylch Cytiau Amgaeedig Coed Uchaf. Ni fydd y datblygiad awgrymedig cael unrhyw drawiad gweledol ar Gylch Cytiau Gorllewin o Corbri. Mae'r trawiadau aflesol ar elfennau angh-gweledol o'r gosodiad a chymeriad o'r henebion fel ei phellter, synnwyr o leoliad a chyfraniad i hunaniaeth diwylliant yn debygol i fod yn isafol. Yn gyfan, mae'r trawiad o'r datblygiad awgrymedig o'r gosodiad ar Gylch Cytiau Amgaeedig Coed Uchaf wedi ei asesu i fod yn 'negative', ond mae'r maint y trawiad hwn yn 'negligible' oherwydd mae'r canlyniad datblygiad awgrymedig yn mynd i neud newidiadau bychain iawn i'r gosodiad o'r henebion yn brin i'w effeithio. Mae'r effaith o'r datblygiad awgrymedig ar osodiad o Gylch Cytiau Gorllewin o Corbri wedi ei asesu i fod yn 'neutral' a'i effeithio mewn dim newidiad i'r gosodiad o'r heneb.

## ***NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY***

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust has been commissioned by to prepare a Setting Impact Assessment in advance of the application for planning permission for a development of 30 residential housing units at Maes Bleddyn, Rachub, Gwynedd. A Setting Impact Assessment was required by Cadw due to the proximity of the proposed development to The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN175 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments. A four stage assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance in Cadw's "Setting of Historic Assets in Wales". The visual impacts of the proposed development have been assessed as being restricted to some south easterly views from The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group scheduled area. The proposed development will have no visual impact on The Hut Circles West of Corbri. Detrimental impacts on non-visual elements of the monuments' settings and character such as their remoteness, sense of place and contribution to cultural identity are likely to be minimal. Overall, the impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group was assessed to be negative, but the magnitude of this impact is negligible as the proposed development will result in very minor changes to setting of the monument that

hardly affect it. The impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Hut Circles West of Corbri was assessed to be neutral and will result in no change to the setting of the monument.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT) has been commissioned by *Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Cyf* to prepare an Archaeological Setting Impact Assessment in advance of the application for planning permission for a development of 30 No social housing units at Maes Bleddyn, Rachub, Gwynedd (NGR SH6200768009; postcode: LL57 3EF; Figure 01; Figure 02).

This assessment is part of a pre-planning consultation with Gwynedd Council and has been undertaken further to feedback from Cadw. In correspondence with *Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Cyf*, Cadw have stated that the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the Scheduled Monument will be a material consideration when determining the outcome of the planning application (Appendix I). Cadw have stated that 22 Scheduled Monuments lie within 3km of the proposed development. A scoping exercise performed by them indicates that 9 of these Scheduled Monuments have no views over the scheme and their settings will not be impacted. A further 11 monuments may have views to the proposed development, but it will, at worst, have a very small impact on their settings.

The remaining 2 Scheduled Monuments lie in close proximity to the proposed development and, as the impact of the proposed development on the setting of these Scheduled Monuments will be a material consideration when determining the outcome of the planning application (Welsh Government 2016), further assessment to establish the impact of the proposed development on their settings is required. Consequently, an assessment of the impact in accordance with the guidance set out in *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (Cadw 2017) has been undertaken for the following Scheduled Monuments (Figure 01):

- The Coed Uchaf Hut Group and Hut Circles West of Corbri (Scheduled Monument CN176; NGR SH6160068400) located 335m to the northwest of the proposed development; and
- The Hut Circles West of Corbri (Scheduled Monument CN287; NGR SH 6167068750) located 730m to the north of the proposed development.

Cadw have stated that even though the site is located within the Ogwen Valley Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest (Ref.: HLW (Gw) 10), the impact of the development on this historic landscape will not be a material consideration in this instance.

The methodology set out in *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (Cadw 2017) is a four stage assessment process (cf. sec. 3.0). Cadw reviewed the findings of Stages 1 and 2 before the assessment proceeded to stages 3 and 4.

The Archaeological Setting Impact Assessment was conducted in between February and May 2019 and was undertaken in accordance with the following guidance:

- *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales* (Cadw 2011);
- *Design Manual For Roads And Bridges Volume 11, Section 3, Part 2 HA208/07 Cultural Heritage* (Highways Agency 2007);
- *Guidelines for digital archives* (RCAHMW 2015).
- *Historic Environment Record (HER) Guidelines for Archaeological Contractors* (Version 1.3; draft) (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust 2014);
- *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991);
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015);
- *Planning Policy Wales* (Welsh Government 2018);
- *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (Cadw 2017);
- *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014);
- *Standard and Guidance for Desk-Based Assessment* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014); and
- *Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment* (Welsh Government 2017).

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust is certified to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 (Cert. No. 74180/B/0001/UK/En) and is a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and a member of the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME).

This project was monitored by Cadw and the content of this GAT report must be approved by Cadw prior to final issue.

The Historic Environment Record (HER) Event Primary Reference Number for this project is 45406; the HER Enquiry number is GATHER1076.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Impact Assessment

The impact assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the best-practice guidance set out in *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (Cadw, 2017). As stated in the guidance, the document “outlines the principles used to assess the potential impact of development or land management proposals within the settings of World Heritage Sites, ancient monuments (scheduled and unscheduled), listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens, and conservation areas” (ibid.,: ii). Setting is defined in the guidance as the broader landscape context into which the individual historic asset is set; this context includes physical and cultural factors specific to that location.

The assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the settings of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN175 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments will be carried out following the four stages specified in the guidance document::

- Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a proposed change or development;
- Stage 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the significance of the historic assets and, in particular, the ways in which the assets are understood, appreciated and experienced;
- Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance; and
- Stage 4: If necessary, consider options to mitigate or improve the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.

A draft copy of the findings from Stages 1 and 2 was submitted to Cadw for review and comment before Stage 3 of the process was initiated. This report contains the findings from all four stages of the assessment.

More detailed information regarding the individual assessment stages is included overleaf.

### **2.1.1 Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a proposed change or development**

This was undertaken as follows:

- The location, size and scale of the proposed development was examined; and
- The location and nature of identified historic assets was considered.

The historic assets that might be affected by the proposed development have already been identified in a scoping exercise by Cadw as The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments (Appendix I).

The regional Historic Environment Register ((HER) Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Craig Beuno, Ffordd y Garth, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2RT) was examined for information concerning the affected monument and nearby assets; The National Monuments Record of Wales (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth SY23 1NJ) was also checked for additional data including aerial photographs; and LiDAR digital terrain model data, supplied online by Natural Resources Wales (<http://lle.gov.wales/Catalogue/Item/LidarCompositeDataset?lang=en>), was also examined to provide topographic information.

### **2.1.2 Stage 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the significance of the historic assets and, in particular, the ways in which the assets are understood, appreciated and experienced.**

The setting of a historic asset is made up of:

- its current surroundings
- our present understanding and appreciation of the historic asset; and
- what (if anything) survives of its historic surroundings.

Stage two should clearly identify the key factors relating to setting which contribute to the significance of the historic asset. The Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (Cadw, 2017) provides a series of questions to help define the significance of the asset:

- How do the present surroundings contribute to our understanding and appreciation of the historic asset today?
- Thinking about when the historic asset was first built and developed:
  - what were its physical, functional and visual relationships with other structures/historic assets and natural features?
  - what topographic or earlier features influenced its location/what was its relationship to the surrounding landscape/was it constructed to take advantage of significant views or to be a part of a significant view?
- Thinking about changes since the historic asset was built:
  - has its function or use changed? What is the current condition of the ringwork and how is it managed?
  - what changes have happened to the surrounding landscape/streetscape?
  - have changes happened because of changes to the historic asset or to its historical setting?
  - has the presence of the historic asset influenced changes to the landscape, for example, where a monument has been used as a marker in the layout of a field enclosure/ has the presence of the historic asset influenced the character of the surrounding landscape/streetscape/have historic and designed views to and from the historic asset changed?

- Thinking about the original layout of the historic asset and its relationship to its associated landscape:

where these relationships designed or accidental/how did these relationships change over time?

how do these relationships appear in the current landscape; are they visual or buried features?

- Are there other significant factors, such as historical, artistic, literary, place name or scenic associations, intellectual relationships (for example, to a theory, plan or design), or other non-visual factors such as sounds or smells that can be vital to understand the historic asset and its setting?.

Stage 2 also identifies the viewpoints from which the impact of the proposed change or development should be assessed, taking into account:

- views to, from and across the historic asset that were designed and developed when the historic asset was first created
- views to, from and across the historic asset which are linked with a time in its history
- important modern views to, from and across the historic asset – for example, popular visitor viewing points

### **2.1.3 Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.**

The Setting of Historic Assets in Wales states that at the end of stage 3, the assessment should be able to identify the impact that the proposed development will have within the setting of a historic asset. The impact will be expressed as positive, neutral or negative and an indication of its magnitude given. The photographs from the viewpoints identified in Stage 2 will be used to assess and explain the impact of the proposed development along with the use of MapInfo GIS for data gathering and digital modelling.

For Stage 3, the Setting of Historic Assets in Wales lists 11 factors to be considered:

1. the visual impact of the proposed change or development relative to the scale of the historic asset and its setting;
2. the visual impact of the proposed change or development relative to the location of the historic asset; this will include an assessment of the distance of the development from the asset;
3. whether the proposed change or development would dominate the historic asset or detract from our ability to understand and appreciate it — for example, its functional or physical relationship with the surrounding landscape and associated structures and/or buried remains;
4. the presence, extent, character and scale of the existing built environment within the surroundings of the historic asset and how the proposed change or development compares with this;
5. the lifespan of the proposed change or development and whether or not the impact might be reversible.
6. the extent of tree cover, whether it is deciduous or evergreen, and its likely longevity;
7. the impact of artificial lighting — for example, on night-time view;
8. the capability of a landscape setting to absorb change or new development without the erosion of its key characteristics;
9. the impact of the proposed change or development on non-visual elements of the setting and character of the historic asset, such as sense of remoteness, evocation of the historical past, sense of place, cultural identity or spiritual responses;

10. the impact of non-visual elements of the proposed change or development, such as the removal or addition of noises and smell; and

11. the cumulative effect of the proposed change or development — sometimes relatively small changes, or a series of small changes, can have a major impact on our ability to understand, appreciate and experience a historic asset.

At the end of stage three the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the Scheduled Monuments is expressed as **positive**, **negative** or **neutral**. Following the guidance set out in Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Volume 11, Section 3, Part 2) (Highways Agency 2007), an indication of the magnitude of the impact is given as either **major**, **moderate**, **minor**, **negligible** or **no change** using the criteria shown in Table 1.

<b>Magnitude of Impact</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<b>Major</b>	Comprehensive changes to the setting of an historic asset
<b>Moderate</b>	Considerable changes to the setting of an historic asset that significantly modify the setting and affect the character of the historic asset
<b>Minor</b>	Slight but noticeable changes to the setting of an historic asset
<b>Negligible</b>	Very minor changes to setting of an historic asset that hardly affect it
<b>No change</b>	No change to the setting of an historic asset

Table 1 Criteria used to assess the magnitude of impact of proposed development on setting

The viewpoint impact assessment undertaken as part of stage three requires that field visits are undertaken and a photographic record made. On site observations were recorded on GAT pro-forma sheets, digital photographs were taken in RAW format using a digital SLR set to maximum resolution (Nikon D5100; resolution: 4,928 × 3,264 [16.1 effective megapixels]). A photographic metadata table was completed (Appendix II). Photographic images have been archived in TIFF format; the archive numbering system starting at G2604\_001.

#### **2.1.4 Stage 4: If necessary, consider options to mitigate or improve the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance**

Mitigation is defined as actions taken to avoid or minimise any harm to the significance of the historic asset and its setting, should a negative impact of significant magnitude have been identified at the conclusion of Stage 3. The measures need to be within the planning application boundary being considered and could include relocation of the development or elements therein or the introduction of screening. The impact of the proposed development is then reassessed in the light of mitigation recommendations.

## **3 RESULTS**

### **3.1 Stage 1: Identify the Historic Assets that might be affected**

#### **3.1.1 The location, size and scale of the proposed development**

The proposed development area (centred on NGR SH6200768009, postcode: LL57 3EF) lies on the western side of the village of Rachub, Gwynedd (Figure 01). It covers a trapezoidal area of approximately 1.08 ha and is 205 metres long and 65m wide. It lies in the southern half of a triangular field of predominately semi-improved pasture. A strip of land on the eastern side of the development area forms a narrow boggy valley along which runs a southeast-northwest orientated stream. The land generally slopes gently from south to north and lies between approximately 157 and 164m AOD. It is bounded to the south by Llwynn Bleddyn Road, on the other side of which lies the Maes Bleddyn residential housing estate built in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. More residential housing, part of the Bron Arfon housing estate built in 2009, lies to the east of the proposed development. To the north and west the development is bounded by fields of semi-improved pasture.

The proposed development consists of 30 residential social housing units, each within its own plot and with an attached garden (Figure 02):

- 15 x 2 bedroom double story houses;
- 8 x 3 bedroom double story houses,
- 6 x 3 bedroom single story bungalows; and
- 1 x 3 bedroom disabled persons single story bungalow.

The development will incorporate 60 parking spaces, 2 for each dwelling, an access road leading from Llwynn Bleddyn Road and associated street lighting.

At its closest point, the proposed development lies 335m to the southeast of the edge of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group Scheduled Monument CN176 scheduled area, and approximately 516m to the southeast of the hut group itself. It is located 730m to the south-southeast of The Hut Circles West of Corbri Scheduled Monument CN287 scheduled area (Figure 01).

### **3.1.2 The location and nature of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN137 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments**

The impact of the proposed development on the settings of 22 Scheduled Monuments within a 3km radius of it has been considered by Cadw as set out in a letter to Gwynedd Planning Service dated 23 January 2019 (ref Y18/002340; Appendix I). The impact of the proposed development on the setting of 20 of these monuments is considered to be either 'no impact' or 'very small' due to topography and distance. The scope of this assessment is therefore limited to the impact of the proposed development on the settings of the two historic assets that Cadw have specified require further assessment: These are:

- The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 Scheduled Monument (Gwynedd HER PRN 294; RCAHMW PRN 93640; NGR SH6160068400); and
- The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monument (Gwynedd HER PRN 1190; RCAHMW PRN 275739; NGR SH 6167068750).

#### **The location and nature of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group Scheduled Monument CN176**

The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group consists of an oval enclosure wall 23m long and 27m wide. The enclosure wall is c2.5m wide and constructed of orthostatic facing stones with a rubble core and has an entrance on its eastern side. Inside the enclosure are the remains of two freestanding circular huts facing onto the internal courtyard. Both are of drystone construction, the larger of the two (hut B) (Plate 03) is centrally situated and has a 7.6m internal diameter; the smaller one (hut A) (Plate 04) to its south is built into the enclosure wall and has an internal diameter of 5m. The interior of the enclosure has been disturbed, possibly by 19th century antiquarian excavation (Owen 1872) and some of the walls have been rebuilt. A rectangular building in the enclosure is thought to be later addition. A broadly contemporary system of terraced fields, defined by low stone banks, lie to the south and west of the enclosure wall and join it at various points (Waddington 2013, 185-6).

Coed Uchaf lies in fields on the eastern side of the Ogwen Valley. The scheduled area consists of an irregularly shaped area of 2.81ha, is approximately 240m long and a maximum of 170m wide on ground that slopes gently from east to west. The enclosure and hut circles are so heavily overgrown with gorse that they are mostly inaccessible apart from on the north western side (Plates 01; Plate 02). A mature oak tree is also growing in the south western side of the enclosure. The scheduled area also includes the associated terraced field systems to the south and west of the enclosure and hut circles which are defined by rough walls of loose stone radiating out from the enclosure.

## **The location and nature of The Hut Circles West of Corbri Scheduled Monument CN287**

The CN287 Scheduled Monument Full Report for The Hut Circles West of Corbri states that it consists of the well-preserved remains of up to three closely spaced drystone built circular huts of 'massive construction', associated narrow curvilinear enclosures or yards, and indications of an early field system (CN287 Scheduled Monument Full Report). The largest of the huts is c.7-8m in diameter with walls 1-2m wide and 0.5-1m high, and a possible entrance on the east. A second hut in the centre of the group is of similar size to the first but with slightly higher, better defined walls. The third, and smallest hut, lies to the northeast and is 5-6m in diameter with the wall circuit less well defined although having clear orthostatic facing along the east (outer) side (Gwynedd HER Record PRN 1190). Site visits conducted as part of this assessment identified four possible hut circles in the southwest corner of the scheduled area (Plate 18; Plate 19, Plate 21; Plate 26) but as no survey of the site is available, it was not possible to relate them to those recorded in the monument report.

The Hut Circles West of Corbri are located 250m to the north of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 on the northern side of the Afon y Llan valley. The scheduled area covers a sub rectangular area of approximately 0.34ha and encompasses the remains of the hut circles and their enclosures. It is 70m long and 53m wide and lies on ground that slopes gently from east to west. The entire scheduled area is densely overgrown with scrub and trees obstructing views in all directions but north-westwards (Plate 17; Plate 24; Plate 25). The Afon y Llan stream forms the south western boundary of the site and the ground within the scheduled area is marshy and partially waterlogged making access difficult.

### **3.1.3 The visibility of the proposed development**

The proposed development lies in fields to the south east of the monuments, 335m from CN176 and 730m from CN287 (Figure 01). A GIS and Lidar derived digital terrain model data were used to construct multipoint digital terrain model viewsheds and simulate potential views from each of the monuments to ground level (observer eye-level height 1.8m) (Figure 05; Figure 06). In addition, a zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) model for the proposed development was constructed to model the potential visibility of the proposed development within the surrounding landscape once it has been built (maximum development height 8m, observer eye-level height 1.8m) (Figure 07). None of the models account for the obstruction of views by vegetation or buildings and as such provide 'maximum potential visibility' models.

#### **The visibility of the proposed development from The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group Scheduled Monument CN176**

A multipoint viewshed model was constructed using 21 points distributed across the CN176 scheduled area (Figure 05). The viewshed demonstrates that the western side of the footprint of the proposed works will be potentially visible from all 21 of the assessment points within the Scheduled Monument. The eastern side of the development area footprint, the location of the small valley, is slightly less visible but can potentially be seen from between 17 and 19 points in the scheduled area. The ZTV model suggests that at a maximum height of 8m from the current ground surface, the 15 points within the development area will be potentially visible from the entire scheduled area of CN176 (Figure 07).

#### **The visibility of the proposed development from The Hut Circles West of Corbri Scheduled Monument CN287**

A second multipoint viewshed model was constructed using 16 points distributed across the CN287 scheduled area (Figure 06). The viewshed demonstrates that only the south western edge of the footprint of the proposed development is potentially visible from just 3 of the assessment points within the Scheduled Monument. The ZTV model suggests that at a maximum height of 8m from the current ground surface, the development will be potentially visible from the north eastern half of the scheduled area only, its visibility increasing as the observer moves from southwest to northeast across it reaching a maximum at the highest, extreme north eastern end of the monument (Figure 07).

## **3.2 Stage 2: Define and analyse the setting**

### **3.2.1 The current surroundings of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments**

Both of the monuments are located on the eastern side of the Ogwen Valley at the western edge of the Carneddau mountain range. Both monuments are located in a landscape characterised by field systems of various ages. Many of the fields are large, often with a regular pattern indicative of Post-medieval improvement and reorganisation together with smaller irregular enclosures and lynchets with earlier, prehistoric origins (Gwyn and Thompson 2000; Evans 2009; Figure 01; Figure 03). The general settlement pattern is of large dispersed farms with small, late, nucleated settlements at Llanllechid and Rachub, 500m or so to the east and southeast of the monuments. Both sites have views to the Carneddau uplands to the west, while to the south the workings of the Penrhyn slate quarries (GAT HER PRN 15840) are visible on the opposite side of the Ogwen Valley with the Glyderau mountain range beyond to the south and south west (Plate 11). Though not visible from the sites, the Ogwen River and the 19th Century A5 run road through the base of the wooden Ogwen valley approximately 300m to the east of CN176 and 550m east of CN287. A north south aligned minor road, running from Bethesda to Tal-y-bont, skirts the eastern side of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and the western end of The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287. Neither site has any direct public access; views of them from this road are accessible to the general public.

The hut circles at The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176, overgrown with gorse, are set within the surviving remnants of its associated field system, a series of open pasture fields defined by low stone walls which lie to the south and west and west of the monument (Plate 15). A footpath runs along the northern edge of the scheduled area from the minor road to the east, and beyond it, a mixture of smaller, irregular fields and larger enclosures lie to the north and northwest. CN287 is located on the opposite side of the minor road and the Afon Llan 250m to the north. A Post-medieval farmstead bounds the scheduled area at its south western corner, joined by an east-west aligned lane to the 17th century farmstead and Grade II Listed Building of Coed Uchaf (GAT HER PRN 12070), 45m from the south eastern corner of the scheduled area (Figure 04). The western edge of the village of Rachub lies just over 400m to the south east of the scheduled area. The village grew in parallel with the slate industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and following the addition of more recent housing on its western side at Maes Bleddyn and Bron Arfon, has seen small scale expansion along its western edge through the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present.

The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 are located within an area of scrub and woodland surrounded by fields of semi improved pasture, 250m to the north of CN176 (Plate 17; Plate 28). The southern edge of the scheduled area is defined by the Afon y Llan which runs through the village of Llanllechid 480m to the east before reaching the edge of the monument. Llanllechid Parish Church, Llanllechid (GAT HER PRN 7026) lies 480m to the east of CN287 (Figure 04). Though completely rebuilt in the 19th Century it is known from documents to have had a Medieval foundation though the rest of the village dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Gwyn and Thompson 2000). The extent of the village and the surrounding pattern of fields have changed little since then. A footpath leads from the minor road to the west of the scheduled area across the higher ground adjacent to its northern edge. With no direct access to the monument, this is the most likely represents the most accessible way to view the monument.

Though the sites are located in a largely improved Post-medieval fieldscape, numerous examples of Medieval activity are located in proximity to CN176 and CN287 (Figure 04). The Medieval foundation of Llanllechid Parish Church, Llanllechid (GAT HER PRN 7026) was mentioned above. Two Medieval long hut sites (GAT HER PRNs 298, 299) along with the remains of possibly contemporary field systems (GAT HER PRN 30489) are located just less than 300m to the east of CN176. A possible Medieval rectangular house platform is located 630m to the west of CN287 (GAT HER PRN 7364).

The remains of Medieval settlement activity, including a house platform (GAT HER PRN 7530), lynchets (GAT HER PRN 3677-8), and traces of ridge and furrow (GAT HER PRN 6197), are in evidence amongst the prehistoric remains within the Scheduled Monument Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121, 1.16km to the east of CN287. Two rare examples of Early Medieval rectangular hut platforms (GAT HER PRNs 275-6) are also located on the south eastern side of the same scheduled area.

The Scheduled Monument Settlements and Enclosures on the south and east sides of Moel Faban CN210 also contains a Medieval deserted rural settlement (GAT HER PRN 7566), 2km east of CN176, and another Medieval long hut and enclosure (GAT HER PRN 300) is located 30m to the south of the Moel Faban Cairn Cemetery Scheduled Monument CN359.

Two Possible Medieval Long Huts (GAT HER PRNs 304, 15040) are located just to the east of Tan y Foe, 1.9 km south east of CN176 and the remains of further Medieval deserted rural settlements are located on the eastern side of the Bryn Hafod y Wern slate quarry, 2km to the east of CN176 (GAT HER PRNs 280-1, 7532 – 7534).

The general impression of the landscape settings of both The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 is that of overgrown prehistoric monuments surviving in a pleasant, largely improved Post-medieval agricultural fieldscape on the edge of an unenclosed upland landscape. With the exception of small scale residential expansion from the nearby settlement of Rachub, the landscape settings of the sites remain largely unchanged from the nineteenth century (Figure 03).

### **3.2.2 Our present understanding and appreciation of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments**

Both The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments are prehistoric settlement sites. They represent the remains of small stone built homesteads and over 1000 such sites are known in northwest Wales (Smith 1999, 22). In 1999, Smith wrote that 55 of the hut group sites had been subject to archaeological excavation, and most of these have produced evidence of occupation during the Romano-British period. However, a small number of modern excavations with the benefit of scientific dating have been able to show that the Romano-British material represents a later phase of use of the more recently excavated sites, and many may have earlier Iron Age origins in the middle of first millennium BC (Smith 1999). For this reason, undated but morphologically similar sites such as CN176 and CN287 tend to be broadly designated to the Iron Age and Romano-British Periods, with their occupation and use spanning the periods before and after the historically documented Roman invasion and conquest of North Wales in the first century AD. The hut group settlements are broadly contemporary with, and economically and socially complimentary to hillforts, larger sites that may have had a defensive and a higher status or perhaps a communal function.

In 1964 The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales (RCAHMMW 1964, lxxxix – xc), building on earlier work by Gresham, Hemp and Griffiths, classified the hut group sites in Caernarvonshire into four broad types, most of which were further subdivided:

- I Huts not associated with fields or enclosures
- II Huts within enclosures (subdivided into types a-c)
- III Concentric Circles (subdivided into types a and b); and
- IV Huts associated with terraced fields (subdivided into types a - e).

Smith, writing in 1999 (1999, 8) developed a further classification system that concentrated on the form of the hut-circle rather than any associated field system or enclosures which he classified separately:

- 1 Single Hut (subdivided into types 1.1 -1.6)
- 2 Scattered hut settlement (subdivided into types 2.1 - 2.3)

- 3      Circular / Concentric settlement (subdivided into types 3.1 - 3.2)
- 4      Nucleated / Enclosed Settlement (subdivided into types 4.1 - 4.5)
- 5      Unclassified probable settlement (subdivided into types 5.1 – 5.2)

The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 is classified by the RCAHMMW as a type IV (bii) site, a thin-walled oval homestead associated with terraced fields. It is classified by Smith as a type 4.2 – a nucleated / enclosed settlement within a curvilinear enclosure. It is one of the few of these sites to have been excavated, albeit in 1871 (Owen 1872). The excavator discovered a stone lined hearth in the smaller of the two circular huts along with charcoal rich occupation horizons and large quantities of metal slag and fire cracked stone (Owen 1872, 243-4; Waddington 2013, 186). Much smaller quantities of charcoal and slag were also noted in the deposits over the remains of a possible stone floor surface in the interior of the larger hut, along with a spindlewhorl. The location of another possible hearth was identified in the centre of the later, rectangular building along with a whetstone, slag, heat cracked stones and charcoal (Owen 1872, 243-4). The monument is designated as nationally important for its potential to enhance knowledge of prehistoric settlement and defence. Despite the earlier excavations, it still retains significant archaeological potential, and the hut circle structures may be expected to contain archaeological information concerning chronology and building techniques. There is also a strong probability that associated archaeological features and deposits survive.

The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monument is classified by the RCAHMMW as a type IV(c) site, a small compact group opening onto a courtyard with associated terraced fields. It is classified by Smith as a type 4.3, an unenclosed nucleated settlement set within yards rather than an enclosure. The site contains a wide range of surviving structural features, and, as it has not been subject to archaeological excavation, remains relatively undisturbed. This increases the likelihood of surviving archaeological features, including internal and external occupation levels, and environmental remains. The waterlogged nature of much of the site means that potential for survival of organic material and environmental evidence is further increased and the site is of national importance for its potential to enhance our knowledge and understanding of prehistoric settlement practices and the prehistoric landscape.

As permanent agricultural settlements, both The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 appear to have been located on relatively good agricultural land, possibly in a more defensible position away from the floor of the Ogwen Valley, but also at low enough altitude to be viable for year round use. The viewshed models

(Figure 05; Figure 06) suggest that neither site commands good views along the potentially strategically important Ogwen Valley, either southwards into Snowdonia or northwards towards the coast. If they were in contemporaneous use, the viewshed models also suggest that total indivisibility between the two settlements was not an important factor when deciding on their respective locations; proximity though may still have been. The same viewshed models do confirm that both of the sites potentially have good views to the broadly contemporary Scheduled Monument the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 (GAT HER PRN 223) (Figure 05; Figure 06) which stands overlooking the River Ogwen on its opposite, western bank, 520m to the southwest of CN176. Another hillfort, Pen y Gaer (GAT HER PRN 261; Figure 04) and its associated fieldsystems (GAT HER PRN 55835) lies 1.53km to the south east of CN176 and the two viewsheds again confirm that both sites have potentially clear views of it. The views towards local hillforts from contemporary settlement sites might be expected as hillforts appear to have been strategically located to command good views over the surrounding landscape.

The only identified artistic depictions of either monument are those of the elements of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 published by Owen in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* in 1872. The written description of his excavations of the site are complimented by a number of drawings, most of which are stylised plans of the site and the individual huts, though a more artistic piece entitled 'Perspective View of Hut No. 3' is also included (Owen 1872, Cut 3; Figure 08). The view concentrates on the individual hut however and does not show it in the context of the rest of the site or the wider landscape. No further significant artistic depictions, or historic or literary references that may contribute to our understanding and appreciation of either of the monuments has been identified.

### **3.2.3 What if anything survives of their historic surroundings?**

Both sites lie in an area rich in archaeological remains dating from the Bronze Age through to the Medieval period and would have been built and occupied in a landscape with visible evidence of earlier occupation (see Figure 04). Viewsheds suggest that the Bronze Age Scheduled Monument, the Moel Faban Cairn Cemetery CN359 (GAT HER PRNS 310-1), three disturbed funerary cairns on the western slopes of Moel Faban, 1.46km to the east of CN176, would have been a familiar landmark for the occupants of both The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287. More Bronze Age funerary cairns form part of the Scheduled Monument Settlements & Enclosures on the South and East sides of Moel Faban CN210 (GAT HER PRNs 306-308) and these too would have been potentially visible on the crest of Moel Faban from both sites. The Scheduled Monument the Bwlch Ym Mhwll-le funerary cairn CN343 lies just to the north of CN210 and, though in a less prominent position than the Moel Faban cairns, it too would have been potentially visible from both CN176 and CN287. Another Bronze Age cairn cemetery (GAT HER PRN 309) is located just 100m further south of CN359 though it is unclear whether this would have been visible from either.

Bronze age burnt mounds are also evident in the landscape however they tend to be found next to watercourses, often on lower ground, and less therefore visible due to intervening topography. The scheduled area of CN210 contains a Bronze Age burnt mound (GAT PRN 3661) on the lower eastern slopes of Moel Faban 2.2km to the west of CN176; other examples of burnt mounds (GAT HER PRNs 312, 7385) are located to the south of it but none would have been visible from CN176 or CN287.

Nearby evidence for settlement broadly contemporary with CN176 and CN287 include the Scheduled Monument the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 and the Pen y Gaer hillfort (GAT HER PRN 261), both of which were mentioned earlier. Another defensive site, the Roman period fortified enclosed hut circle settlement, the Scheduled Monument Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 (GAT HER PRN 293) lies to the east of Rachub, 1.16km from CN176. As with the Pen Dinas and Pen y Gaer hillforts, viewsheds suggest that its prominent position in the landscape means it is potentially visible from both CN176 and CN287.

Numerous broadly contemporary prehistoric hut circle and field system sites are also located nearby. Three prehistoric hut circles lie just to the west of CN176 between 290 and 430m distant on the eastern side of the Ogwen Valley (GAT HER PRNs 5743, 5744, 5745). While GAT HER PRNs 5744 and 5745 may have been visible from CN176, GAT HER PRN 5743 is not visible from either CN176 or CN287.

The Rhiw Goch enclosed hut group Scheduled Monument CN056 (GAT HER PRN 295) lies 500m to the north of CN287 though it is not visible from it.

The Hut Group and associated terraced fields at Cae Llwyn Grydd, Llanllechid (GAT HER PRN 296) lie 760m to the east of CN176 and is potentially visible from both sites. A Roman period Hut circle (GAT HER PRN 313) was located 1.13km to the west of CN175, however it appears to have been destroyed in the late 20th Century.

The Scheduled Monument, Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 (GAT HER PRNs 261-3, 264-74, 277, 293, 59876) an extensive system of terraced fields and associated huts and hut groups, is located 1.16km to the east of CN287. The southern part of the monument is potentially visible from CN287 and CN176 has potential views to all but its south eastern corner.

The Parc Gelli Hut Group and Ancient Fields Scheduled Monument CN202 (GAT HER PRN 260), an unenclosed hut group and associated field systems are located 1.29km to the west of CN176, the extreme western end of the scheduled area is potentially visible from both CN176 and CN287.

Another hut circle settlement; Enclosed Hut Group, Llwyn Pendu (GAT HER PRN 3667) was identified in the 1970's, 1.31km to the northeast of CN287, and another, Hut Circle Settlement, Site of, Bronwydd (GAT HER PRN 3663) lies slightly further away at 1.66km to its northeast. Viewsheds suggest that neither site is visible from CN176 or CN287.

The Scheduled Monument Hut Circles and Field System, Ffos Coetmor CN263 (GAT HER PRN 288), is located just to the north of Pen y gaer hillfort, 1.57km to the south east of CN176. Viewsheds suggest that the settlement is not visible from CN176 or CN287.

The Scheduled Monument Settlements & Enclosures on the South and East sides of Moel Faban CN210, mentioned earlier, also contains broadly contemporary hut circles and fieldsystems (GAT HER PRN 287). Again, viewsheds suggest that these settlement remains are not visible from either The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 or The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287.

Most of the sites listed above were identified during the course of fieldwork during the 19<sup>th</sup> and mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries; however more recent work in the vicinity of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments has revealed further prehistoric settlement evidence. A desk based assessment and field walkover survey was carried out in 1995 in advance of the laying of a new sewer pipeline in an area to the immediate north of the proposed development (Davidson 1995;

Roberts 1996). An area of previously unknown preserved late prehistoric or Romano British enclosed field system (GAT HER PRN 5891) was identified on the western side of the stream that runs along the eastern edge of the proposed development area, though it is located just to the north of the proposed development footprint. The site lies 360m to the southeast of CN176 and 690m to the south southeast of CN287 but is only potentially visible from CN176.

### 3.2.4 The Significance of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments

Conservation Principles (Cadw 2011, 10) identifies four component values which contribute to the significance of an historic asset: its **evidential** value; its **historical** value; its **aesthetic** value, and its **communal** value.

As Scheduled Monuments, the significance of both The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 are rated as **high**. Both are of national significance for their **evidential** value as rare type of archaeological site with significant potential to enhance our knowledge and understanding of prehistoric settlement and, in the case of CN176, possibly defence. They are both of high **historical** value as they were most likely occupied during the nationally important and documented Roman invasion of North Wales and the Roman conquest of the British Isles. The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 **aesthetic** value derives from their location in a pleasant multi period agricultural fieldscape on the edge of an unenclosed upland landscape, a landscape that has changed little since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Their **communal** value is high because of their potential origin in the Celtic Iron Age and the importance that a sense of Celtic identity plays in shaping modern concepts of Welsh national identity.

The primary contribution of the settings of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments to their significance is **aesthetic**.

### 3.2.5 Viewpoints

The viewpoints listed in Table 2 have been identified as those from which the impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments should be assessed.

Viewpoint		Reason
1	View southwest from CN176 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120	Historic viewpoint
2	View southeast from CN176 towards the Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort (GAT HER PRN 261)	Historic viewpoint
3	View southeast from CN176 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210	Historic viewpoint
4	View east from CN176 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121	Historic viewpoint
5	Views of CN176 from the footpath along its northern edge	Modern visitor viewpoint
6	Views of CN176 from the minor road to the east	Modern visitor viewpoint
7	View southeast from CN176 towards the proposed development	Potentially impacted modern view
8	View southwest from CN287 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120	Historic viewpoint
9	View southeast from CN287 towards the Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort (GAT HER PRN 261)	Historic viewpoint
10	View southeast from CN287 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210	Historic viewpoint
11	View east from CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121	Historic viewpoint
12	Views of CN287 from the footpath along its northern and western edges	Modern visitor viewpoint
13	Views of CN287 from the minor road to the west	Modern visitor viewpoint
14	View southeast from CN287 towards the proposed development	Potentially impacted modern view

Table 2 Assessment viewpoints

### **3.3 Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed change or development on that significance.**

#### **3.3.1 Field assessment**

Field visits, undertaken in April 2019, were conducted in order to assess the impact of the proposed development on the settings of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments, in particular the impact on the key viewpoints identified in Table 2. Forty photographs of views to, from and across the monuments and associated features were taken (Appendix II).

The field assessment largely confirmed the findings of the viewshed and ZTV models. However, in practice, the dense gorse bushes overgrowing the hut circles and enclosure of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 restrict the visibility of the surrounding landscape from this part of the monument in all directions (Plate 01). It was however possible to find points within the scheduled area where each of the key views from the monument could be assessed. The woodland location of the entire scheduled area of The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 means that, with the exception of northwesterly views, the visibility of the surrounding landscape from the monument is even more restricted (Plate 17). The results of the viewpoint assessments are detailed below.

#### **Viewpoint 1: View southwest from CN176 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 (Plate 05; Plate 06)**

The Coed Uchaf settlement and the Pen Dinas hillfort may both have been strategically located to have good views to and from each other. These historic views towards the tree covered Hillfort are available from the eastern side of the hut circles and enclosure, though they are partially obscured by trees (Plate 05). Better views are available from within parts of the fieldsystem. The proposed development lies to the south east of the Scheduled Monument however and will not interfere with currently available southwest views from the scheduled area towards the Hillfort (Plate 06).

#### **Viewpoint 2: View southeast from CN176 towards the Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort (GAT HER PRN 261) (Plate 07)**

The Coed Uchaf settlement and the Pen y Gaer Hillfort may also have been strategically sited to be intervisible. The historic views from the hut circles and enclosure towards Pen Y Gaer are obscured by gorse, and from the parts of the fieldsystem closest to the hut circles and enclosure, by deciduous trees. The best views to the Hillfort are located on the eastern

side of the fieldsystem where it is just visible, partly masked by trees, over the rooftops of the existing housing development at Maes Bleddyn (Plate 07). The proposed development will be visible in views to the hillfort but it will not interfere with or obstruct them and the character of the views will remain essentially the same as they are at present,

**Viewpoint 3: View southeast from CN176 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210 (Plate 08; Plate 09)**

The potential historic views to three scheduled monuments to the south-southeast of the Coed Uchaf Scheduled monument have also been assessed. Long range southeast views towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210 are obscured by existing tree cover to the east of the scheduled area and gorse and trees within it from many parts of the monument. They are however visible from southwestern and eastern parts of the scheduled area (Plate 08; Plate 09). The topography of the landscape to the southeast and existing buildings and tree cover mean that parts of the proposed development will be visible in some of these views, however it will not obscure or block views to the monuments. The location and scale of the proposed development means that it will appear as an extension of the existing settlement at Rachub with little impact on the character of current views towards CN211, CN359 and CN210.

**Viewpoint 4: View east from CN176 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 (Plate 10).**

East facing views towards the extensive Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 Scheduled Monument are obscured by existing tree cover to the east of the CN176 scheduled area from all of the assessment points that were visited (Plate 10). If the CN121 Scheduled Monument was visible from Coed Uchaf CN176, the location of the proposed development to the south would not form part of the view.

**Viewpoint 5: Views of CN176 from the footpath along its northern edge (Plate 12)**

The views of Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group Scheduled Monument CN176 from the footpath to the north were identified in Stage 2 of the assessment as accessible modern visitor viewpoints of the monument, based upon its appearance on Ordnance Survey mapping. During the field assessment it became clear that the footpath is not accessible to the general public, a locked gate prevents access from the roadside and the path is not marked as a public footpath. *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (Cadw 2017, sec 4.2) states that setting does not depend on current ability to access the viewpoint and the impact of the development on the setting has therefore still been assessed from this location. Views of the

overgrown enclosure and hutcircles and the northern part of the fieldsystem are available from it over a high drystone wall however (Plate 12). The proposed development will not be visible to the southeast however due to topography and tree and gorse cover, and it will not impact views from the footpath.

**Viewpoint 6: Views of CN176 from the minor road to the east (Plate 13)**

The views of Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group Scheduled Monument CN176 from the minor road to the east represent the most accessible visitor viewpoints of the monument (Plate 13). The proposed development to the southeast will not impact these west facing roadside views.

**Viewpoint 7: View southeast from CN176 towards the proposed development (Plate 07; Plate 08; Plate 09; Plate 11; Plate 14; Plate 15; Plate 16).**

The ZTV model suggested that the proposed development area is potentially visible from the entire scheduled area of the Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group Scheduled Monument CN176. In practice, the visibility of the proposed development area varies across the monument. It is not visible from the north east or north western sides of the enclosure and hutcircles due to tree and gorse cover (Plate 14; Plate 15) though this would. It is however visible in some south eastern views from locations within the field system (Plate 07; Plate 08, Plate 11), particularly on its eastern side (Plate 09; Plate 16). It should be noted that the visibility of the proposed development will most likely be increased from these parts of the monument during the winter months as deciduous trees lose their leaves. These views however already incorporate glimpses of the existing residential housing at Rachub, and the proposed development will be absorbed into these views without heavily impacting their character.

**Viewpoint 8: View southwest from CN287 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 (Plate 18)**

The location of the Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monument within woodland and its relatively low elevation means that views are restricted in all directions apart from to the northwest. The Pen Dinas Hillfort CN120 can just be made out in southwesterly views from the southern edge of the scheduled area (Plate 18), however, these historic views will not be impacted by the proposed development to the southeast.

**Viewpoint 9: View southeast from CN287 towards the Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort (GAT HER PRN 261)**

The historic view southeast towards the Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort is obscured by trees at all of the assessed locations within the scheduled area.

**Viewpoint 10: View southeast from CN287 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210 (Plate 19; Plate 20)**

The historic views southeast towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210 are obscured by trees at all almost all of the assessed locations in the scheduled area (Plate 19). The Moel Faban Cairns CN359 are just visible over the drystone wall at the higher, northern side of the scheduled area (Plate 20). The proposed development will not impact this view however.

**Viewpoint 11: View east from CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 (Plate 21; Plate 22)**

The historic views east towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 are obscured by trees at almost all of the assessed locations within the scheduled area (Plate 21). Intervening topography, vegetation and field walls means that CN287 is not visible from the higher, northern side of the scheduled area either (Plate 22).

**Viewpoint 12: Views of CN287 from the footpath along its northern and western edges (Plate 17; Plate 23)**

The views from the footpath have been identified in Stage 2 as accessible modern visitor viewpoints of the Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monument. The view from the northwest gives a clear view of the site and its setting within an area of woodland (Plate 17). Views southwards from the footpath across the scheduled area are restricted by trees within it (Plate 23). None of the views from the footpath will be impacted by the proposed development to the southeast of the monument.

**Viewpoint 13: Views of CN287 from the minor road to the west (Plate 24; Plate 25)**

The east facing views towards the Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 from the minor road to its west are also accessible modern visitor viewpoints of the monument (Plate 24; Plate 25). Again, none of the views from the road will be impacted by the proposed development to the southeast of the monument.

**Viewpoint 14: Views southeast from CN287 towards the proposed development (Plate 17; Plate 26; Plate 27)**

The ZTV model suggested that the south eastern edge of the proposed development will be potentially visible from the north eastern half of the Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 scheduled area only, its visibility increasing as the observer moves from southwest to northeast across it reaching a maximum at the highest, extreme north eastern end of the monument. In practice, dense tree cover within the scheduled area obscures the view to the proposed development from all of the assessed locations within it (Plate 17; Plate 26; Plate 26).

### **3.3.2 Assessment of the impact of the proposed development**

The visual impacts of the proposed development on the significance and the settings of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments are restricted to its negative impact on some south easterly views from the field system of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176. There will be no visual impact on the significance and setting of the Hut Circles West of Corbri Scheduled Monument.

The negative impacts on some south easterly views from CN176 are increased in magnitude due to the close proximity of the proposed development, however given the relatively small scale of the proposed development and its location surrounded on two sides by existing housing, it will appear as an extension of existing residential land use and will result in only very minor changes to the setting of CN176.

The key characteristics of the current setting of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 Scheduled Monument, located as it is within a largely improved Post-medieval agricultural fieldscape on the edge of dramatic, unenclosed upland landscape with dispersed farmsteads and visible evidence for small scale modern settlement on the western side of Rachub, (Plate 11), will remain the same. The proposed development can be absorbed into the existing landscape with little impact on its key characteristics.

Given the proximity of CN176 to existing residential housing and the scale of the proposed development, bringing residential development 60m closer to the scheduled monument will not negatively affect non-visual elements of the setting and character of monument such as remoteness, evocation of the historical past, sense of place or cultural identity.

Further non-visual impacts of the proposed development, such as the introduction of noises or smells are likely to be minimal. Thirty new houses at the site will undoubtedly result in an increase in vehicle traffic along Llywyn Bleddyn Road, the main road link between Rachub and the A5 to the west which runs 400m to the south of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 scheduled area. It is however highly unlikely that it will result in an increase in traffic on the minor road that runs to the east of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group or the west of The Hut Circles West of Corbri Scheduled Monuments. The scale of the proposed development compared to the current size of the settlement at Rachub suggests that any increase in traffic will be barely noticeable, it is also unlikely to significantly increase ambient noise levels experienced at either of the Scheduled Monuments.

The cumulative effect of the expansion of nearby residential housing in proximity to both Scheduled Monuments, particularly The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176, is noted, and the expansion and encroachment of residential activity on the once exclusively rural setting of the monuments is acknowledged. However it is not felt that the cumulative impact of the changes in land use represent a major impact on either the character of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 or The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monuments or our ability to understand, appreciate and experience them.

Overall, the impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 has been assessed to be **negative**, and the magnitude of this impact **negligible**, as the proposed development will result in very minor changes to setting of the monument that hardly affect it

The impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monument has been assessed to be **neutral**, and the magnitude of this impact **no change** as it will result in no noticeable change to the setting of the monument.

### 3.4 Stage 4: Consider options to mitigate the impact of the proposed development

#### 3.4.1 Mitigation measures

The guidance *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (Cadw 2017) states that ‘depending on the level of impact, mitigation measures to reduce the negative impact of the proposals should be considered’ (Cadw 2017, sec 4.4). Given the negligible negative impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and the neutral impact of the proposed development on The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287, mitigation measures may not be necessary.

Despite this, mitigation measures might still be considered. Planting locally common species of tree along the northern and western boundary of the proposed development will provide an effective screen as the trees mature in the medium to long term. It also has the additional benefit of screening, or at least breaking up, views of the existing housing at Maes Bleddyn for visitors to The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 Scheduled Monument.

#### 3.4.2 Assessment of the impact of the proposed development following mitigation

The impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 requires re-assessment in light of the proposed mitigation. The proposed mitigation will undoubtedly reduce the visual impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176, however the impact will still be **negative** and the magnitude of impact **negligible**, as the changes will still be very minor and magnitude is not low enough to qualify as *no change*.

The impact of the proposed development on the setting of The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 Scheduled Monument following mitigation remains **neutral**, and the magnitude of this impact **no change**.

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**APPENDIX I - Planning Pre-Application Enquiry Y18/002340 - Land  
At Maes Bleddyn, Rachub (23/01/2019)**

## **Jones Llinos (AMG)**

---

**From:** Cynllunio/Planning  
**Sent:** 23 January 2019 11:22  
**To:** Jones Llinos (AMG)  
**Subject:** FW: Planning Pre-application enquiry Y18/002340 - Land at Maes Bleddyn, Rachub, Bethesda

---

**From:** Nicholas.Segust@gov.wales <Nicholas.Segust@gov.wales>  
**Sent:** 23 January 2019 11:19  
**To:** Cynllunio/Planning <CYNLLUNIO@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>  
**Subject:** Planning Pre-application enquiry Y18/002340 - Land at Maes Bleddyn, Rachub, Bethesda

Dear sir/Madam

This advice is given in response to a non-statutory pre-planning application enquiry for a proposed residential development of 30 social houses on land at Maes Bleddyn, Rachub.

**CN056 Rhiw Coch Camp**  
**CN119 Sling Burial Chamber**  
**CN120 Pen Dinas Camp**  
**CN121 Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid**  
**CN144 Huts 90m N of Cil Twllan**  
**CN176 Coed Uchaf Hut Group**  
**CN195 Caer Pencraig Fort**  
**CN202 Parc Gelli Hut Group and Ancient Fields**  
**CN210 Settlements & Enclosures on S & E sides of Moel Faban**  
**CN211 Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub**  
**CN214 Hut Circle Settlement in Cwm Ffridlas**  
**CN219 Ty'n Twr**  
**CN252 Hut Circle Settlement NW of Tan-y-Marian**  
**CN258 Hut Circle at Twll Pant-Hiriol**  
**CN259 Hut Circle Settlement East of Bryn Hall**  
**CN263 Hut Circle Settlement at Ffos Coetmor**  
**CN268 Enclosed Hut Circle Settlement at Cororion Rough**  
**CN287 Hut Circles West of Corbri**  
**CN297 Slate Gwaliau at Felin Fawr, Penrhyn**  
**CN343 Bwlch ym Mhwll-le cairn**  
**CN359 Moel Faban cairn cemetery**  
**CN393 Carnedd Howel Round Cairn**

The above scheduled monuments are located inside 3km of the proposed development. However, the views between the development and scheduled monuments, CN056, CN120, CN144, CN195, CN202, CN259, CN268, CN297 and CN393 are blocked by intervening topography, buildings and vegetation. Consequently, the proposed development will have no impact on the setting of these scheduled monuments.

There may be views of the proposed development from scheduled monuments CN119, CN121, CN210, CN211, CN214, CN219, CN258, CN263, CN343, CN359 and CN252. In all of these cases, the proposed development will be seen either over the buildings of Rachub or with them in the background and therefore the proposed development will be seen as a small

extension of the existing settlement. This will cause, at worst, very small impact to the settings of these scheduled monuments.

Scheduled monument CN176 Coed Uchaf Hut Group is located some 310m to the northwest of the proposed development whilst scheduled monument CN287 Hut Circles West of Corbri is some 700m to the north. Views between the proposed development and the scheduled monuments will be partly screened by existing trees but these are insufficient to ensure that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the settings of the scheduled monuments. The impact of the proposed development on the settings of these two scheduled monuments will therefore be a material consideration in the determination of any planning application for the proposed development. (see Planning Policy Wales section 6.1.23). Consequently the applicant should commission an appropriately qualified expert to prepare an assessment of this impact in accordance with the guidance given in Welsh Government document "Setting of Historic Assets in Wales" and the resulting report should be submitted with the planning application.

## **Ogwen Valley**

The proposed development is also located in the Registered Ogwen Valley Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest but is not of a scale where an environmental impact assessment will be required. Consequently, Planning Policy Wales, section 6.2.21 indicates that the impact of the proposed development on the registered historic landscape will not be a material consideration in the determination of the planning application for this proposed development.

Kind regards.

Nick Segust  
Swyddog Gwaith Achos / Casework Officer  
Diogelu a Pholisi / Protection and Policy  
Gwasanaeth Amgylchedd Hanesyddol (Cadw) / Historic Environment Service (Cadw)  
Cadw / Cadw  
Llywodraeth Cymru/ Welsh Government  
Plas Carew / Plas Carew  
Uned 5/7 Cefn Coed / Unit 5/7 Cefn Coed  
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## **APPENDIX II – Photographic metadata**

PHOTO RECORD NUMBER	PROJECT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	VIEW FROM	SCALE(S)	CREATOR	DATE OF CREATION
G2604_001	G2604	View towards CN176 enclosure and hut circles from minor road to the east	E	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_002	G2604	View along footpath north of CN176 enclosure and hut circles from minor road to the east	ESE	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_003	G2604	View towards CN176 enclosure and hut circles from footpath to the north	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_004	G2604	View over CN176 field system from footpath to the north	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_005	G2604	Northern hut circle (B) CN176 viewed from the west	W	2x1m	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_006	G2604	Southern hut circle (A) CN176 viewed from the west	WNW	2x1m	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_007	G2604	Northern hut circle (B) and enclosure CN176 viewed from the west	W	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_008	G2604	View towards proposed development from north west of CN176 enclosure and hut circles	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_009	G2604	View south west from western side of enclosure CN176 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120	NE	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_010	G2604	View of enclosure and hut circles CN176 from the south	S	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_011	G2604	View of enclosure and hut circles CN176 from the south east	SE	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_012	G2604	View east south east from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211	WNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_013	G2604	View east south east from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211	WNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_014	G2604	View east south east from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210	WNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019

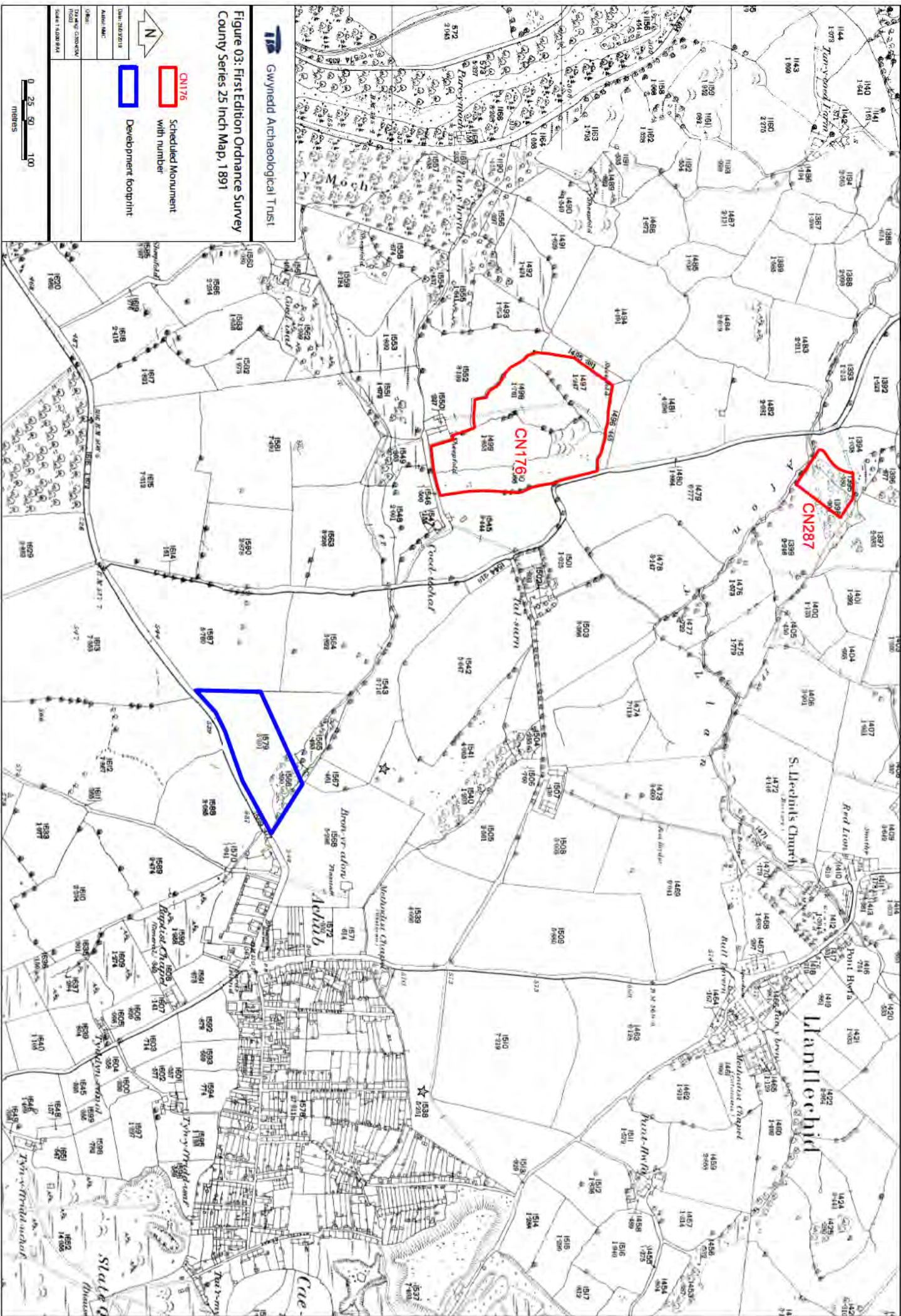
PHOTO RECORD NUMBER	PROJECT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	VIEW FROM	SCALE(S)	CREATOR	DATE OF CREATION
G2604_015	G2604	View eastwards from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121	W	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_016	G2604	View from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the proposed development	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_017	G2604	View from south west corner of field system CN176 towards the proposed development	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_018	G2604	View from south west of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_019	G2604	View from immediate south west of enclosure and hut circles CN176 along Ogwen Valley	NNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_020	G2604	View from immediate south west of enclosure and hut circles CN176 along Ogwen Valley	NNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_021	G2604	View from eastern side of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_022	G2604	View from eastern side of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_023	G2604	View from north eastern side of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_024	G2604	View from north eastern side of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210	WNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_025	G2604	View towards Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort GAT HER PRN 261 obscured by residential development, taken from eastern side of field system CN176	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_026	G2604	View of Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 over southern part of field system, taken from roadside east of scheduled area	NE	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_027	G2604	View of CN287 from north east edge of scheduled area	NE	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_028	G2604	View south south east towards the proposed development from north east edge of CN287 scheduled area	NW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019

PHOTO RECORD NUMBER	PROJECT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	VIEW FROM	SCALE(S)	CREATOR	DATE OF CREATION
G2604_029	G2604	View east south east towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210 from north east edge of scheduled area CN287	WNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_030	G2604	View eastwards from north east edge of scheduled area CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121	W	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_031	G2604	View south westwards over hut circle 1 CN287 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120	NE	2x1m	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_032	G2604	View south south east over hut circle 2 CN287 towards the proposed development	NNW	2x1m	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_033	G2604	View east over hut circle 3 CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121	W	2x1m	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_034	G2604	View south east over hut circle 4 CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121, the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210	NW	2x1m	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_035	G2604	View of CN287 from footpath to the north west of the scheduled area, looking south south east towards the proposed development	NNW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_036	G2604	View of CN287 from bridge on minor road to the west of the scheduled area	W	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_037	G2604	View towards CN176 from minor road to the west of the CN287 scheduled area	N	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_038	G2604	View of CN287 from minor road to the south south west	SSW	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_039	G2604	View over the proposed development area towards The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287	SE	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019
G2604_040	G2604	View of PRN5891 on the north eastern side of the proposed development area, taken from the roadside to the south	SSE	Not used	Neil McGuinness	25/04/2019

## FIGURES







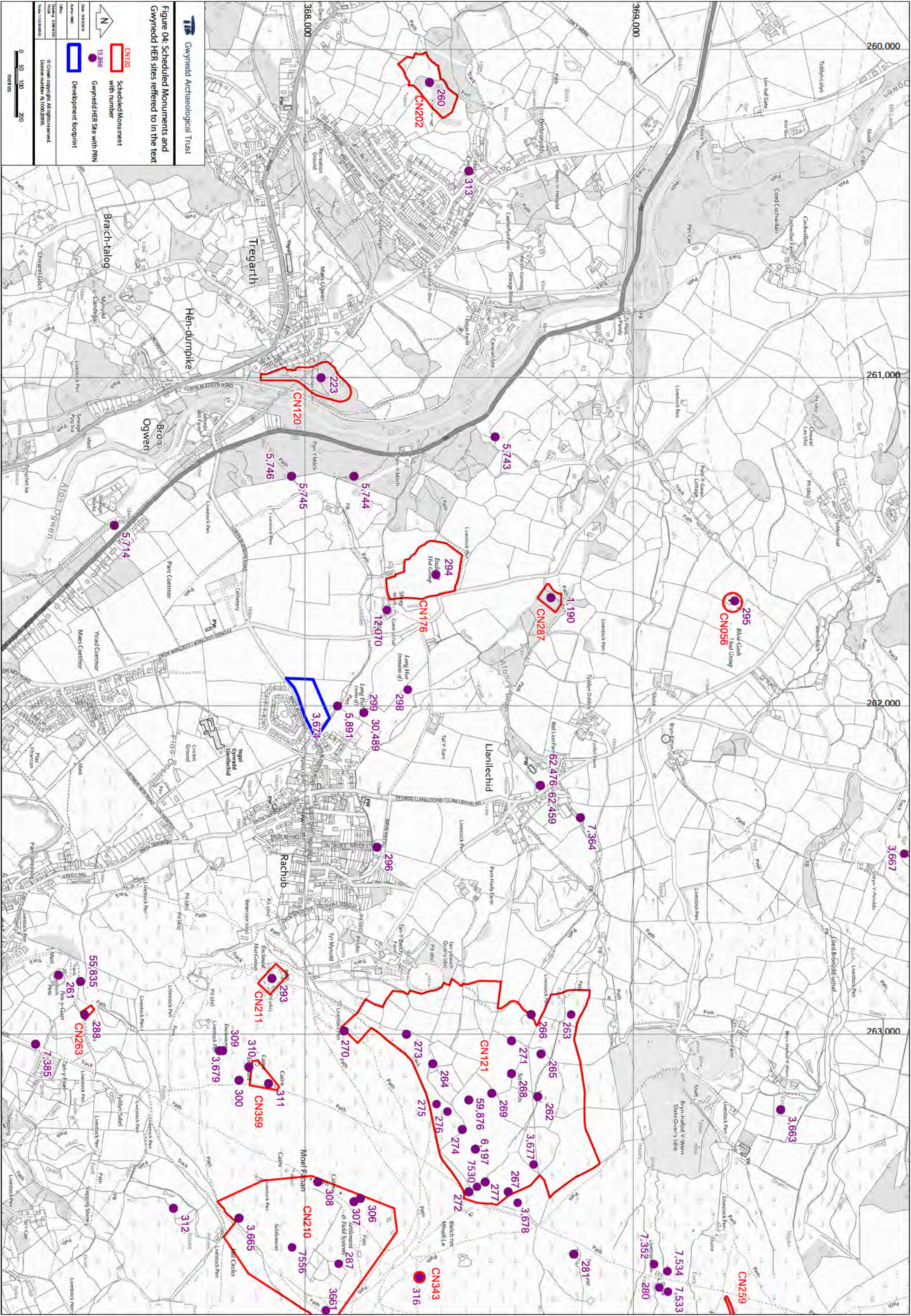
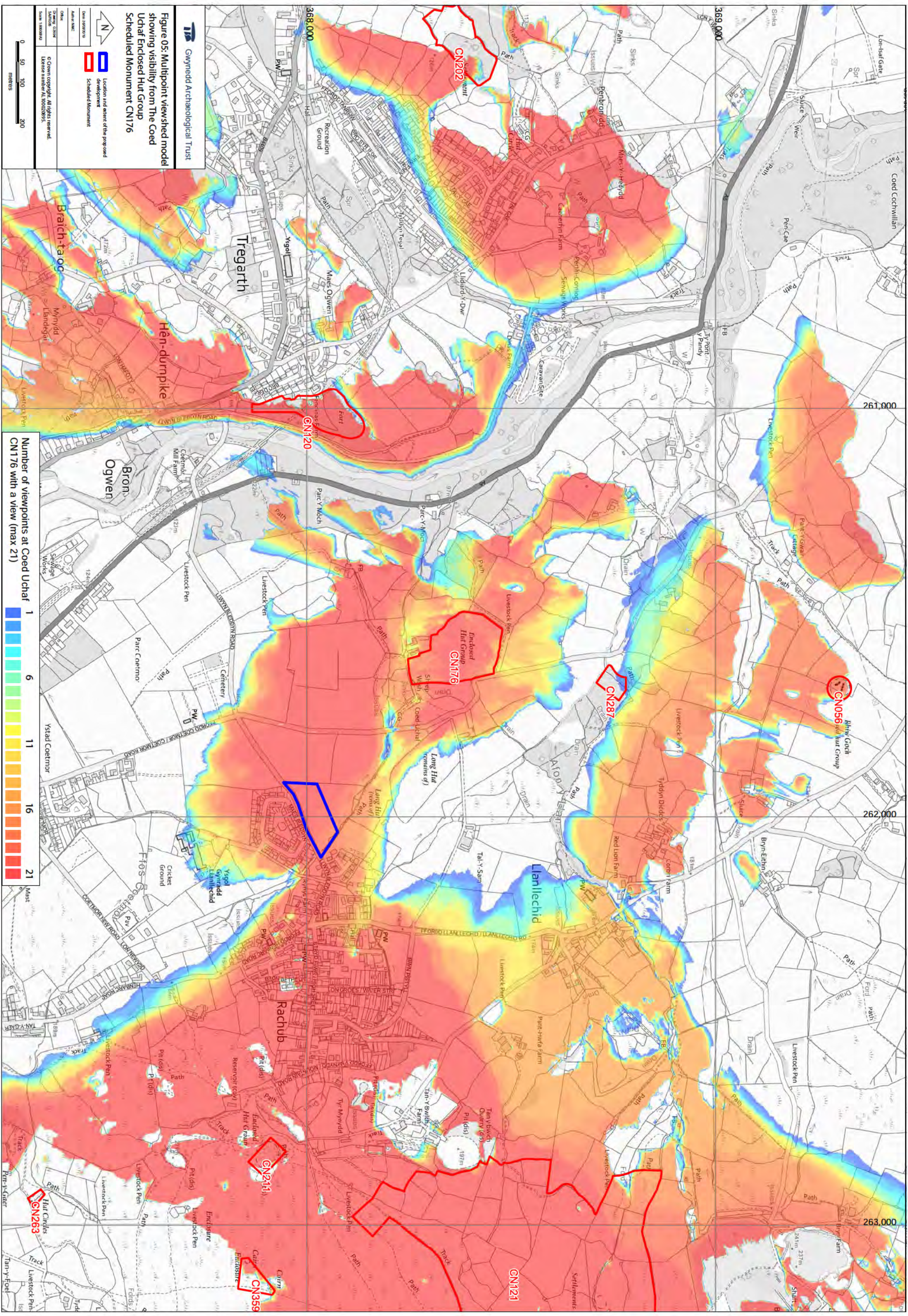


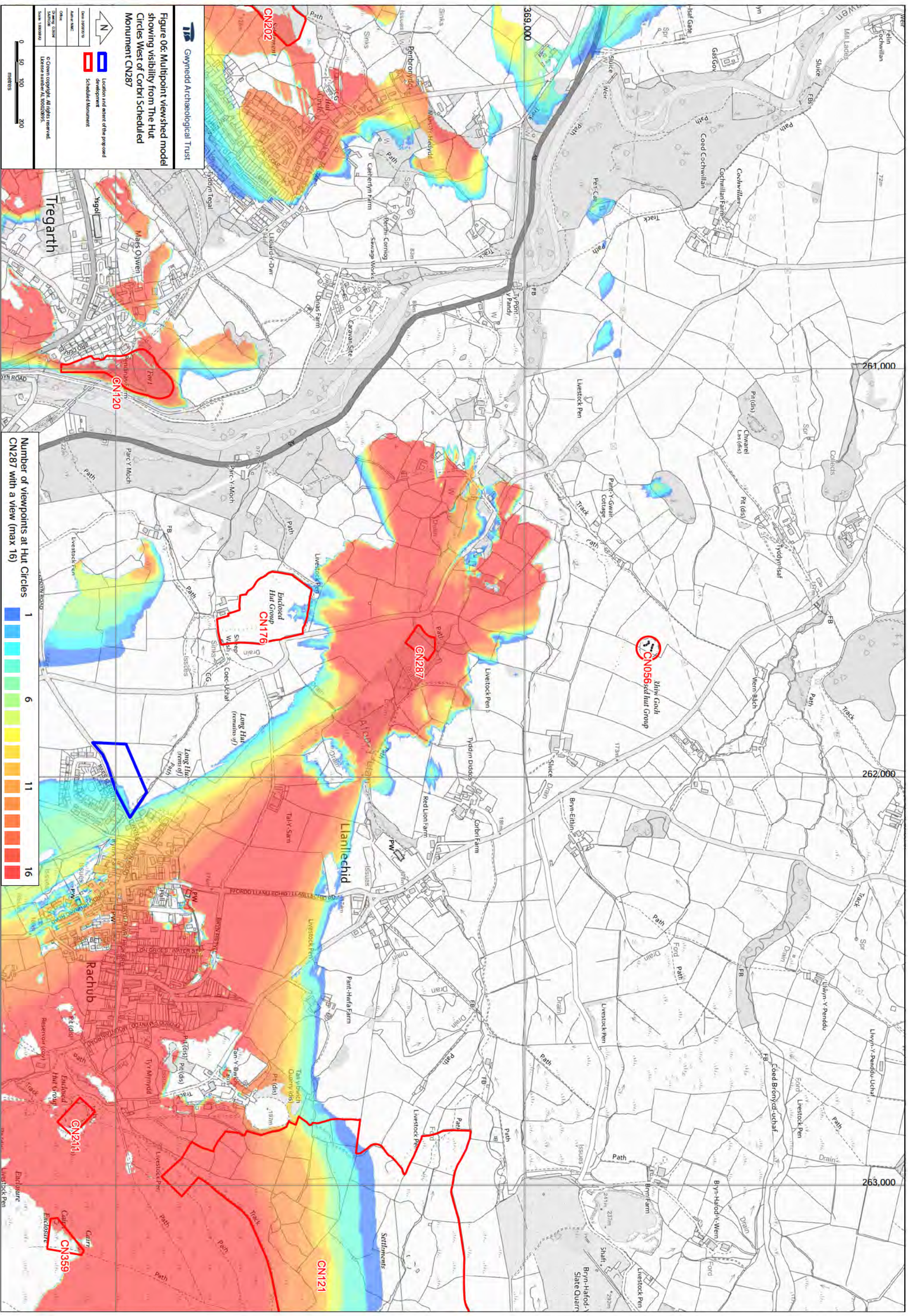
Figure 04: Scheduled Monuments and Gwynedd HER sites referred to in the text

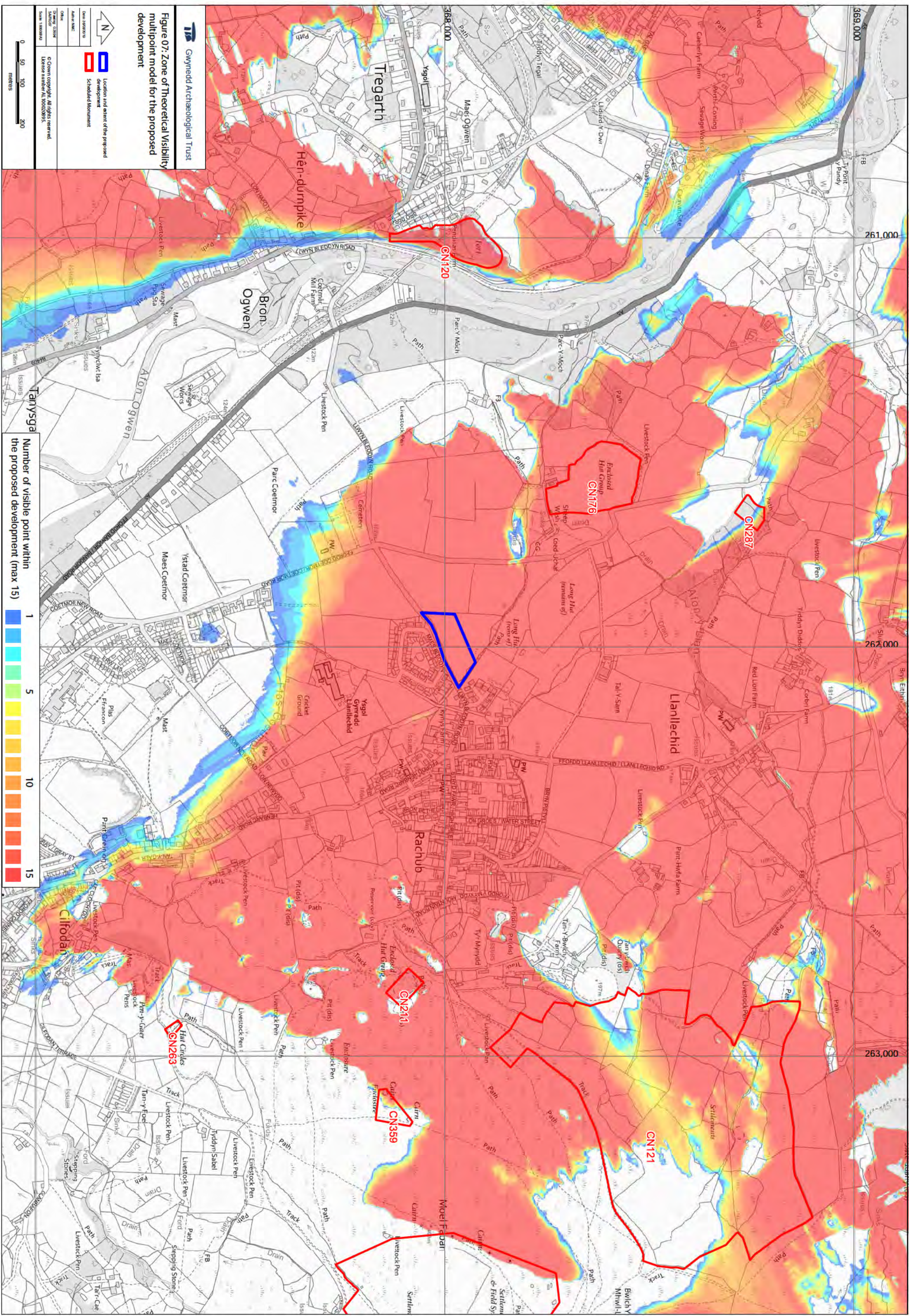
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

Legend:  
CN120 Scheduled Monument with number  
15866 Gwynedd HER Site with PRN  
Development footprint

Scale: 1:10,000  
0 50 100 200 meters









Cut 3.—PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF HUT NO. 3.



Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

Figure 08: Perspective View of Hut No. 3  
(hut A)  
(reproduced from Owen 1872, Cut 3)

Date: 20/03/2019

Author: NAC

Office:

Drawing:

Scale:

## PLATES



Plate 01: View of enclosure and hut circles CN176 from the southeast (archive reference G2604\_011).



Plate 02: Northern hut circle (B) and enclosure CN176 viewed from the west (archive reference G2604\_007).



Plate 03: Northern hut circle (B) CN176 viewed from the west, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_005).



Plate 04: Southern hut circle (A) CN176 viewed from the west, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_006).



Plate 05: View southwest from western side of enclosure CN176 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 (archive reference G2604\_009).



Plate 06: View of Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120 over southern part of CN176 field system, taken from roadside east of scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_026).

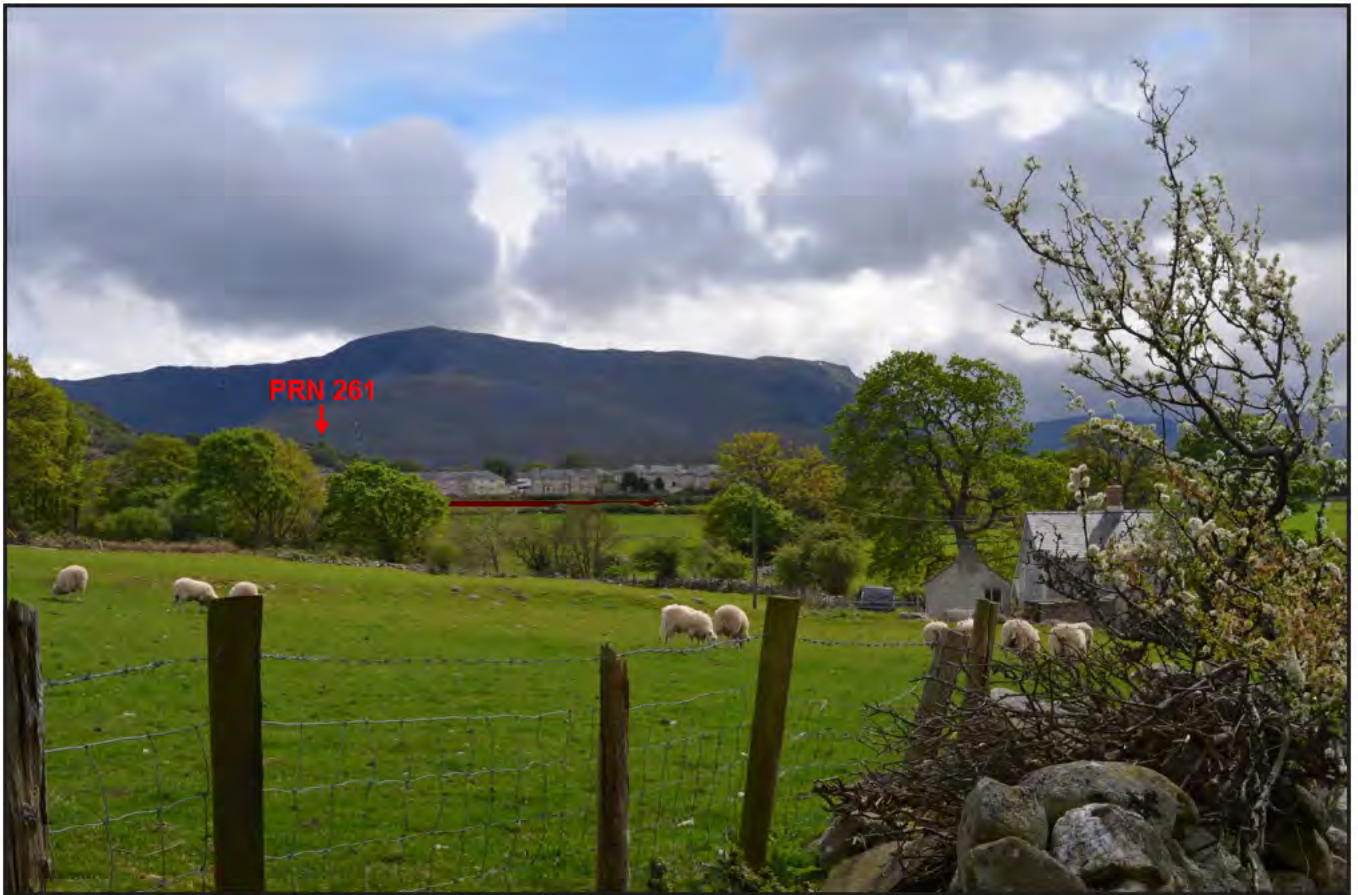


Plate 07: View towards Pen y Gaer Iron Age Hillfort GAT HER PRN 261, just visible over the rooftops of existing residential development and partly masked by trees, taken from eastern side of field system CN176 (proposed development location highlighted in red) (archive reference G2604\_025).



Plate 08: View from southwest of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development (obscured by Coed Uchaf in the centre of the shot) showing the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN210, CN359 (archive reference G2604\_018).



Plate 09: View east-southeast from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN210, CN359 (proposed development site highlighted red on right of shot) (archive reference G2604\_014)



Plate 10: View eastwards from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 (archive reference G2604\_015).



Plate 11: View from immediate southwest of enclosure and hut circles CN176 along Ogwen Valley, proposed development in front of existing housing arrowed (archive reference G2604\_020).



Plate 12: View towards CN176 enclosure and hut circles from footpath to the north (archive reference G2604\_003).



Plate 13: View towards CN176 enclosure and hut circles from minor road to the east (archive reference G2604\_001).



Plate 14: View from north-eastern side of enclosure and hut circles CN176 towards the proposed development (archive reference G2604\_023).



Plate 15: View towards proposed development from northwest of CN176 enclosure and hut circles (archive reference G2604\_008).



Plate 16: View from eastern side of field system CN176 towards the proposed development (highlighted red) (archive reference G2604\_016).



Plate 17: View of CN287 from footpath to the northwest of the scheduled area, looking south-southeast towards the proposed development (archive reference G2604\_035).



Plate 18: View southwestwards over hut circle 1 CN287 towards the Pen Dinas Iron Age Hillfort CN120, scale = 2x1 m (archive reference G2604\_031).



Plate 19: View southeast over hut circle 4 CN287 towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210, scale = 2x1m (archive reference G2604\_034).



Plate 20: View east-southeast towards the Fortified Hut Settlement above Rachub CN211 and the Moel Faban Cairns CN359 and CN210 from northeast edge of scheduled area CN287 (archive reference G2604\_029).



Plate 21: View east over hut circle 3 CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 scale = 2x1 m (archive reference G2604\_033).



Plate 22: View eastwards from northeast edge of scheduled area CN287 towards the Early Fields and Dwellings East of Llanllechid CN121 (archive reference G2604\_030).



Plate 23: View of CN287 from close to the footpath on the northeast edge of scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_027).



Plate 24: View of CN287 from bridge on minor road to the west of the scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_036).



Plate 25: View of CN287 from minor road to the south-southwest (archive reference G2604\_038).



Plate 26: View south-southeast over hut circle 2 CN287 towards the proposed development, scale = 2x1 m (archive reference G2604\_032).



Plate 27: View south-southeast towards the proposed development from the highest part of the CN287 scheduled area on its northern edge (archive reference G2604\_028).



Plate 28: View towards CN176 from minor road to the west of the CN287 scheduled area (archive reference G2604\_037).

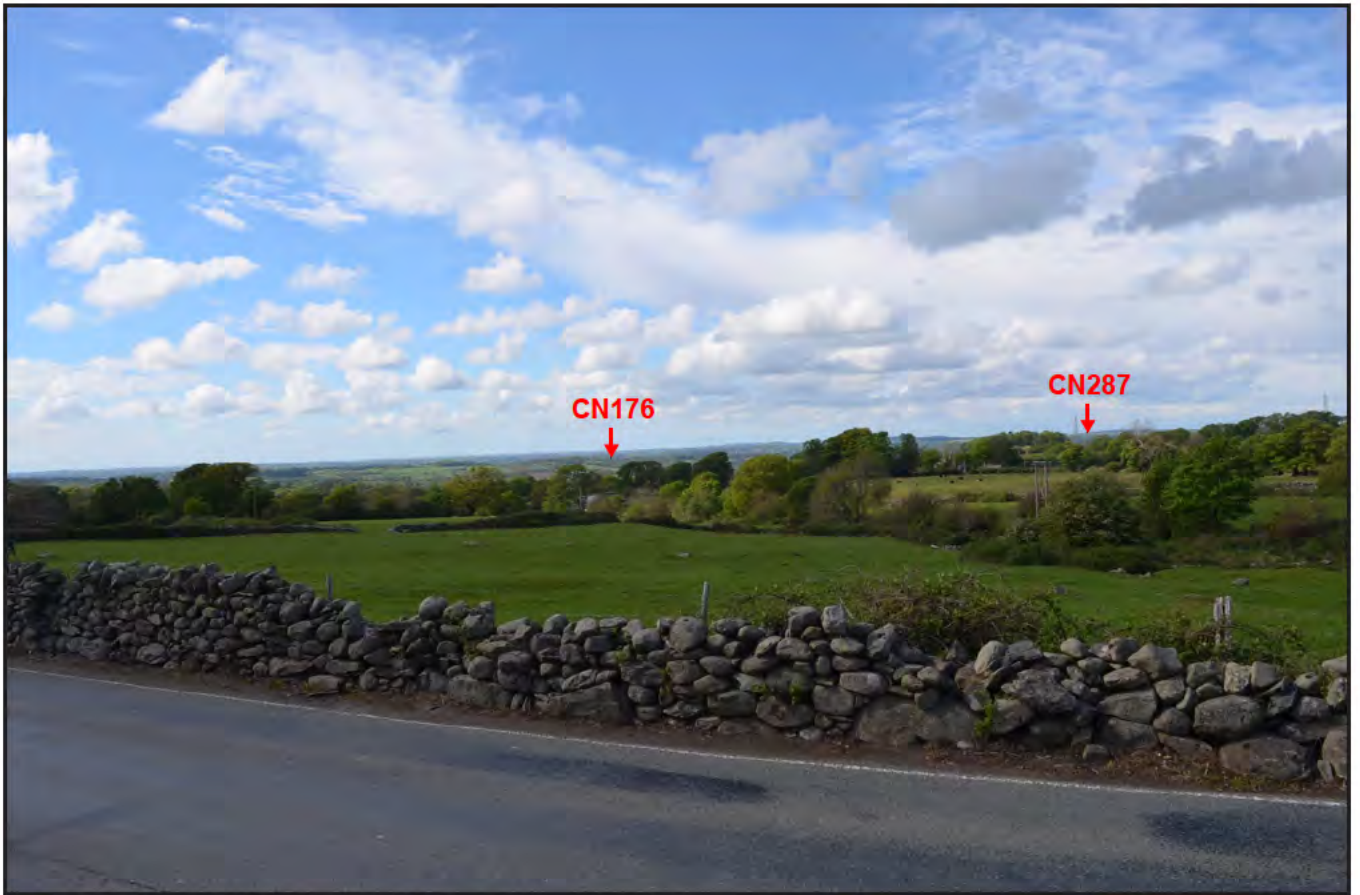


Plate 29: View over the proposed development area towards the approximate locations of The Coed Uchaf Enclosed Hut Group CN176 and The Hut Circles West of Corbri CN287 (archive reference G2604\_039).







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