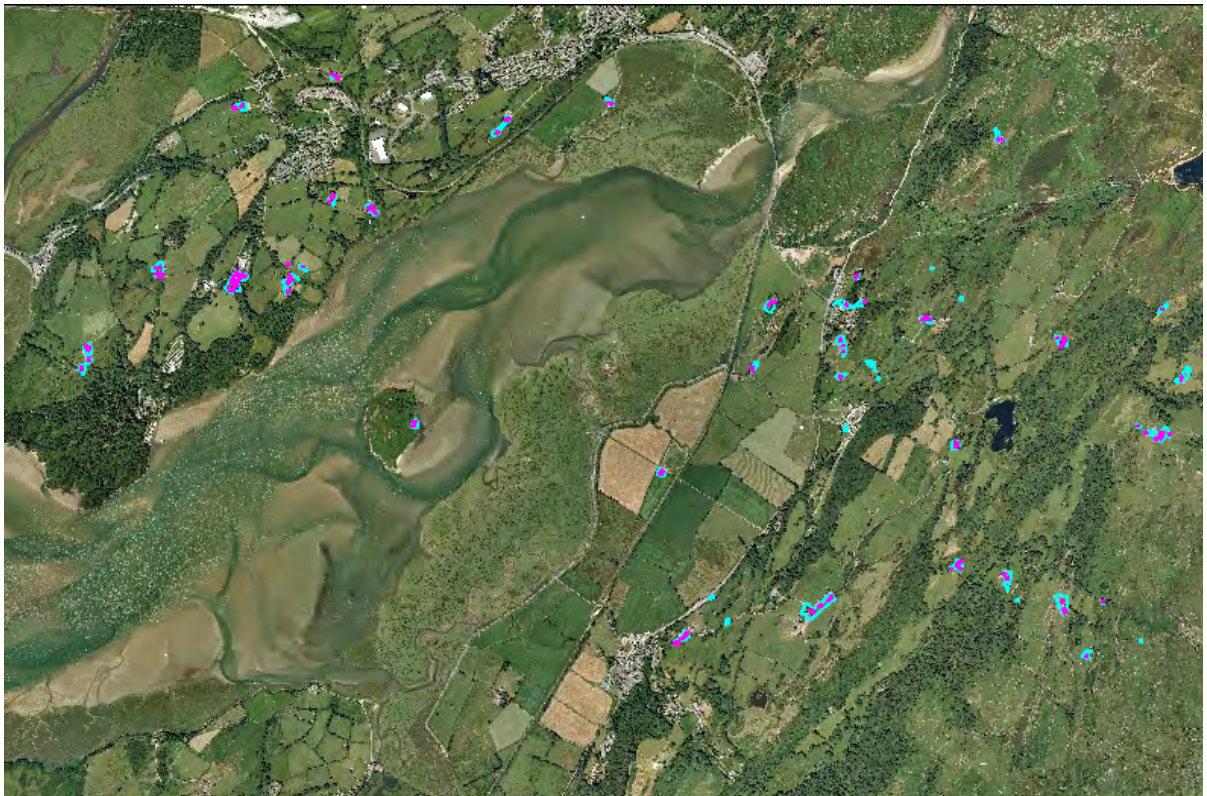


Recording Traditional Farm Buildings and Historic Farmsteads

Ardudwy 2020-21



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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Ardudwy 2020-21

Project No. G2496

Report No. 1585

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Cover photograph: Aerial photograph of historic farmstead polygon's over Penrhyndeudraeth and Llandecwyn.

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FIGURES

G2469 RECORDING HISTORIC FARMSTEADS 2020-21

Location: Ardudwy

Crynondeb Prosiect

Mae'r prosiect hwn yn rhan o fenter Cymru gyfan sydd â'r bwriad o greu cyfres o bolygonau GIS o adeiladau fferm traddodiadol sydd wedi goroesi er mwyn cael data ar gyfer cynlluniau amaeth-amgylcheddol nawr ac yn y dyfodol. Mae ail elfen y prosiect wedi creu cofnod o gymeriad y ffermydd sy'n cynnwys yr adeiladau traddodiadol gan ddilyn y dull a nodwyd mewn dogfen ganllaw a luniwyd gan English Heritage. Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd-Powys wedi llunio methodoleg gyffredinol mewn astudiaeth beilot flaenorol, a rhoddwyd y dull hwn ar waith yn ne Ynys Môn ac y Carneddau wrth fynd i'r afael â'r prosiect hwn. Mae'r adroddiad hon yn seiliedig ar gweddyllion ardal Ardudwy (yn ddilyn astudiaeth beilot Gogledd Ardudwy 2017-2018). Mae mwyafrif y ffermydd yn yr ardal yn cyd-fynd â chynlluniau cyrtiau llac gyda chyfran sylweddol o ffermydd cynllun unionlin ac all-ffermydd adieladau sengl.

Project summary

This project forms part of a pan-Wales initiative designed to create a set of GIS polygons of surviving traditional farm buildings in order to produce data for current and future agri-environmental schemes. A second element of the project has produced a record of the character of the farmsteads containing the traditional buildings following the approach laid out in a guidance document produced by English Heritage. An overall methodology had been devised by Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in a previous pilot study, and this was later applied to Southern Anglesey and the Carneddau in previous projects. This report will focus on historic farmstead in the remainder of the Ardudwy area (following pilot project of the North Ardudwy 2017-2018). The majority of the farmsteads in this area conformed to loose courtyard plans along with a significant proportion of linear plan farmsteads and single building outfarms.

1. INTRODUCTION

The project was designed with the principal aim of producing polygons of traditional farm buildings that would inform management within the Glastir agri-environmental scheme. A program of polygonisation of features in farmland and woodland had previously been carried out by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts.

The repair of farm buildings as part of the Glastir scheme has been widespread. A large proportion of farms retain *traditional farm buildings*; a category defined by Glastir as buildings predating the end of the First World War. The current project aims to record buildings falling into this category thus providing a register of *traditional farm buildings* that may be eligible for Glastir grant-aid.

A pilot project was carried out by Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in 2015/16 which examined an area in Radnorshire (CPAT Report No 1359). This allowed an efficient methodology to be formulated. The project was continued in Wrexham (CPAT Report No 1501) in 2016/17, North Ardudwy (GAT report No 1422) in 2017/18, South Anglesey (GAT report No 1478) in 2018/19 and Carneddau (GAT report 1502) in 2019/20.

Glastir is a sustainable land management scheme in Wales launched by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2012. Its goals include "combating climate change, improving water management and maintaining and enhancing biodiversity". A targeted element has been focussing on six areas of concern: soil carbon management, water quality, water quantity management, biodiversity, the historic environment and improved access. The scheme is funded by the Welsh Government and the European Union. The introduction of Brexit has implications for future of the scheme. The government has stated that it will support agri-environmental schemes at their current level of funding until 2020.

The Agriculture (Wales) White Paper was published on 16 December 2020. The White Paper sets out proposals to replace the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and other EU agri-environment schemes with a single direct support scheme for farming, the *Sustainable Farming Scheme*. The paper contains little detail concerning the historic environment but includes the following statements establishing general principles

"We propose the Bill should contain provisions establishing Sustainable Land Management as the overarching principle for future agricultural policy, including future support."

"The cultural importance of landscapes and archaeological or historical features adds another layer of meaning to the definition and implementation of SLM. Although landscape change is inevitable over time through natural processes, change brought about by SLM practices should not undermine the cultural value derived from individual features or the context provided by their surrounding landscape."

The paper is currently under consultation

A second element was added to the project in the form of a study of the character of farmsteads following a methodology developed by English Heritage (now Historic England).

This aims to “provide a consistent understanding of farmstead character at a landscape level, through recording the distribution, plan-type and degree of change seen between historic mapping and the present” (Lake 2014 and Lake and Edwards 2017).

2. COPYRIGHT

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3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Pilot projects were carried out by Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in 2015/16 and 2016/17. The rest of the Welsh Archaeological Trusts (WATs), including GAT started work on the project in 2017/18 in the form of limited pilot projects designed to develop and implement a consistent methodology for the identification and recording of historic farmsteads across Wales. A meeting was held in the CPAT offices before the project commenced. Abi McCulloch and Chris Martin described the methodology that they had developed for the polygonisation of buildings and Jeremy Lake, who had previously worked on the English Heritage farmstead characterisation project, presented a manual for recording historic farmstead character (Lake and Edwards 2017). It was recognised that the characterisation element was potentially the most time consuming element of project so this was streamlined and 14 different fields were identified as the core features that should be recorded. Jeremy Lake subsequently visited all of the WAT offices in order to provide guidance for the characterisation project.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust agreed to carry out a pilot project covering an area of Northern Ardudwy in 2018. The methodology established by CPAT and Jeremy Lake was used and CPAT provided a template MapInfo Table for the characterisation process. It was, however, necessary to add an additional 18 fields of metadata to conform to Gwynedd Historic Environment's spatial data standards. All digitisation was carried out using MapInfo desktop geographic information system (GIS) and two tables were produced, G2496_traditional_farm_buildings containing individual building polygons and G2496_farmsteads containing the farmstead characterisation data.

The methodology established in the pilot project has been adopted by GAT for subsequent phases of the project. The current phase of the project produced characterisation for the parts of Ardudwy that were not surveyed in the pilot.

3.2 Digitisation

The data was derived from Epoch GIS registered versions of the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition (1900-1901) 25" to the mile maps for Anglesey. The 2nd edition maps were used because they were the closest to the end of the First World War cut-off point for the designation of traditional farm buildings by Glastir. These were overlaid with building polygons that were extracted from the *Topographic Area* layer of Mastermap 2012. These were used in a MapInfo workspace along with recent Next Perspectives Aerial photographic cover.

Any Mastermap 2012 polygons that corresponded to buildings on the 25 inch map were copied and pasted into the traditional_farm_buildings table. These were then manually cross referenced with existing HER data and any existing Primary Record Numbers (PRNs) were added to the table. Those buildings that were not already recorded in the HER were then allocated new PRNs. The rest of the standard HER data fields were then filled in for each entry. NGRs and X-Y coordinates were derived automatically from MapInfo. Other

politico-geographic data was derived from existing MapInfo tables along with spatial correspondences to Cadw's listed buildings database.

The farmstead characterisation data was added to a second MapInfo table. The extent of each farmstead was defined by a single polygon drawn around the buildings and yards. Each farmstead was assigned a new PRN and data fields relating to layout and condition as defined in table 1 below were manually filled in. Additional metadata fields were added to the table to conform to Gwynedd Historic Environment Records spatial data standards.

Farmstead Mapping Attribute Table

PRN	Unique No.	Unique reference number to fit with any existing data sets
Site Name	Modern Name (historic name)	Modern farm name with historic name (if different) recorded in brackets
Classification Primary Attribute	FARMSTEAD OUTFARM	Defined as a site with farmhouse and associated working buildings and areas for the working of a farm Defined as a site (outfarm) or individual building range (field barn) remote from the farmstead
PLAN TYPE	This results from combination of Primary and Secondary Plan Attributes e.g. LC3 = Loose Courtyard with buildings to 3 sides of yard; RCmy = Regular Courtyard multi-yard plan	
Plan Type Primary Attribute	DISP LC LIN LP PAR RC ROW SING UNC	Dispersed Loose Courtyard Linear L-plan (attached house) Parallel Regular Courtyard Row Plan Single building (use for field barns etc. where there is no yard) Uncertain

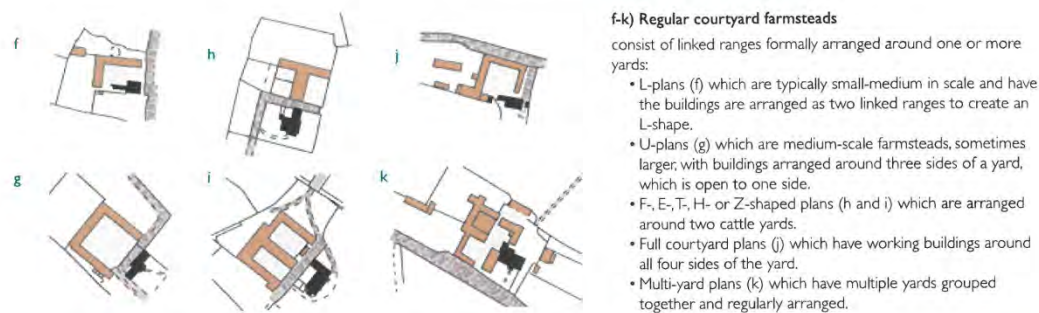
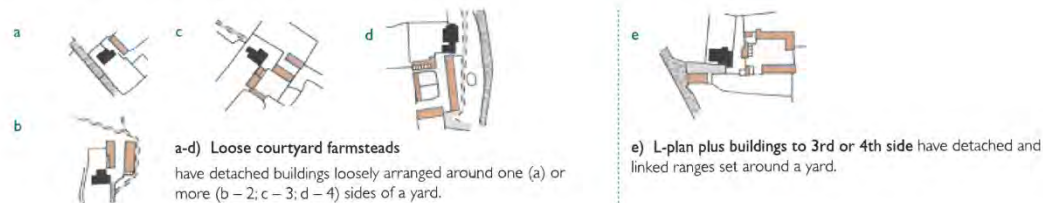
Plan Type Secondary Attribute	1, 2, 3, 4 L3 or L4 L u e ful cl dw my cov d y	No. of sides to loose courtyard formed by <i>working</i> agricultural buildings Yard with an L-plan range plus detached buildings to the third and/or fourth side of the yard (may be used with LC or RC dependent on overall character) Regular Courtyard L-plan Regular Courtyard U-plan Regular Courtyard E-plan Full Regular Courtyard plan Cluster (Used with DISP) Driftway (Used with DISP) Multi-yard (Used with DISP or RC) Covered yard forms an element of farmstead Additional detached elements to main plan Presence of small second yard with one main yard evident
Tertiary Attribute	Codes as per Secondary Attribute table e.g. LC1d = Loose Courtyard with building to one side of yard with additional detached buildings; DISPMYL = Dispersed multi-yard group including a prominent Regular L-plan within it	
Survival	EXT ALT ALTS DEM HOUS LOST	Extant – no apparent alteration Partial Loss – less than 50% change Significant Loss – more than 50% alteration Site remains but no OS 2nd edition buildings legible Farmhouse only survives No evident trace of farmstead/outfarm site
Sheds	SITE SIDE	Large modern sheds on site of historic farmstead – may have destroyed historic buildings or may obscure them Large modern sheds to side of historic farmstead – suggests farmstead probably still in agricultural use
Farmhouse Position	ATT DET UNC	Attached to agricultural range Detached Uncertain (cannot identify which is farmhouse)
Confidence	H M L	High Medium Low
Area	Rapid polygonal capture of the area of the farmstead, capable of analysis after an area mapping project has completed	
Notes	Free text field to add notes relating to the character or identification of a record or confidence score	

Farmstead yard layout plans

NATIONAL FARMSTEADS CHARACTER STATEMENT

These drawings show the full range of farmstead plans which are encountered across England.

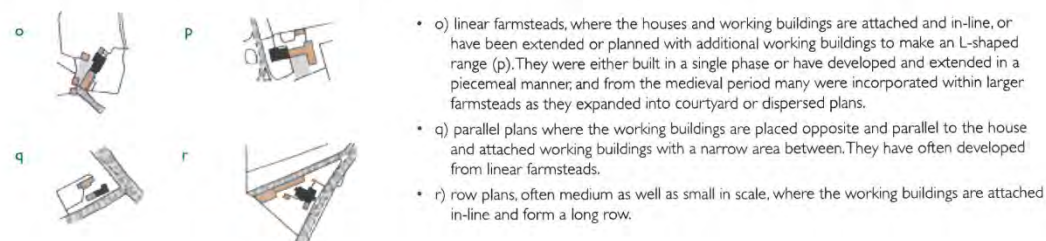
Courtyard plans are the most common forms of farmstead layout, where the working buildings are arranged around one or more yards. The largest courtyard farms are found on high-status sites, estate farms and in the arable vales, wolds and downlands of England, and the smallest in stock-rearing and dairying areas. Cattle yards either developed as areas for treading straw from the threshing barn into manure, or – especially in upland areas – an area for moving cattle and storing the manure. They may have scatters of other farm buildings relating to routes and tracks, usually cart sheds and other ancillary buildings.



Dispersed plans have no focal yard area and the working buildings are dispersed along a routeway or within the boundary of the farmstead. They are concentrated in upland and wood pasture landscapes including areas close to common land for holding stock. They vary greatly in scale and are often bisected by routeways and public footpaths.



Linear and other farmstead types are most closely associated with upland and common-edge farmsteads.



The majority of the fields describe variations in the layout of the farm. The fields were filled using the range of farmstead plans identified in the National Farmsteads Character Statement (Lake 2014, 10).

The completed tables were submitted to the Historic Environment Record at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust.

3.3 Fieldwork

In previous phases of the project a small amount of targeted fieldwork was included in the work programme. This was designed to assess the accuracy of the desktop survey by visiting selected farms and to record any regional architectural characteristics. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of COVID 19 and lockdown restrictions imposed within the Gwynedd's Tier 4 system, it was deemed unwise to travel and visit the farmsteads for further investigation.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Study area

Ardudwy is an area of Gwynedd, lying between Tremadog Bay and the Rhinogydd mountain range with a fertile swathe of land stretching from Barmouth to Harlech which was historically and currently used as pasture. The Ardudwy area includes a wide range of topography extending from coastal dunes at the west, through fertile undulating farmland, to the uplands at the east. The whole of the area of Ardudwy has been identified on the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales by Cadw, CCW and ICOMOS, HLW(Gw) 2, (Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, 1998, p 74).

The 2017-2018 pilot project of covering the North of Ardudwy digitised farmsteads over an area of approximately 55 square kilometres, comprising 361 building polygons in 104 farmsteads (Hopewell 2018). This year's survey covered an additional 257 square kilometres and added 740 building polygons within 264 farmsteads and outfarms. This included full characterisation of the farmsteads within all 25" map squares that fall within or partly within the Ardudwy boundary area (Figure 01).

4.2 Attribute analysis and distribution

The analysis of the data produced by the 2020-21 project only considers the results from the current phase and does not incorporate data from the pilot project.

The majority (37.5%) of farmsteads conformed to a loose courtyard plan i.e. with detached buildings arranged around one or more sides of a yard. Of these, 66% had buildings on three sides and 34% had buildings on two sides. These buildings were typically stables, granaries, sheds, stores and animal pens. The majority of the loose courtyard farmsteads incorporated additional yards; 31% included secondary yards and 43% conformed to a multi-yard plan. Just under 19% of the multi-yard farmsteads were associated with driftways, most of which were in the foothills of the Rhinog mountains and were alongside the main routes into the uplands (Figure 02).

Linear farmyard plans were the second most common layout (11.4%). These farmsteads were not particularly large and could almost be classed as small holdings as most covered an area between c. 0.03 – 0.20 hectares. Almost 67% of these smaller linear farmsteads incorporated additional smaller detached buildings (Figure 03).

Regular courtyard plans were unusual in Ardudwy with only 6% conforming to this layout. The majority of these were located along the western coastline. The regular courtyards were laid out as U-shaped or L-shaped plans along with the occasional full courtyard. The majority (67%) had multi-yards attached, suggesting that they predominantly farmed live-stock (Figure 04).

Other farmstead layouts were recorded although all were uncommon. These comprised dispersed plans (6%), row plans (5%), L-plans (4%) and parallel plans (1%). A total of 85 of

the 264 farmsteads (32%) were outfarms i.e. a building or a range of buildings remote from the main farmstead. These mostly (87%) comprised a single barn with a yard.

The main concentrations of farmsteads are along the eastern coastal plain and on the lower west-facing hillslopes below the upland grazing of the Rhinogydd. The farmstead distribution extends into the uplands. Here the farms are smaller, somewhat dispersed in nature and often have one or two accompanying outfarms, which mark the upper extent of the current settlement pattern. There are extensive areas of the remote uplands that contain no farmsteads or outfarms (Figure 01).

4.3 Survival and condition

Survival and condition were determined from the mapping and aerial photographic evidence. The data for the converted field was derived from aerial photography and in some cases a brief Google search of the place name, or estate agents' property information. This approach gave a reliable estimate of the general survival of buildings.

The survival of farm buildings shown on the 25" map was generally high although some had been lost or could be seen on aerial photographs as ruins, particularly within the Rhinog mountain range. The survey showed that 38% of farmsteads were more or less intact with no significant loss of structures and 29% had less than 50% alteration. Roughly 22% of historic farmsteads have been lost (5%), demolished (1%) or are in whole (14%) or partial ruin (3%). The majority of the lost farmsteads, i.e. where no evident trace remains, seem to be a result of the abandonment of the smaller upland farms, probably due to topographical constraints and changes in agricultural patterns. Other losses may be due to clearance for caravan and campsites during the emergence of the tourism industry in lowland areas.

Only 30% of the farmsteads have been converted and only 1% have been reduced to the point where the farmhouse is the only remaining feature. The majority of farmsteads that have been converted are along the coastline and have predominantly been reused as holiday lets or as camp and caravan sites. This is most apparent in southern Ardudwy, particularly around Barmouth where a cluster of former farmsteads have been assimilated into caravan parks (Figure 05). Other converted farmsteads are no longer functioning as farms but are in use as residential dwellings. This is particularly common in the case of smaller loose courtyard farmsteads where land-holdings have been consolidated into larger parcels and the farmsteads subsequently sold without attached land.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 The digitisation process

The project followed the methodology established in 2017-18 thus ensuring an efficient workflow and making sure that outcomes were compatible with the Gwynedd HER. The digitisation of the individual farm buildings is a relatively swift process. The input table contains 52 fields but only 3 require manual entry and the rest can be batch filled at the end of the project. This process was the main purpose of the project.

The farmstead characterisation was added as a secondary element but is more complex and time consuming than the digitisation of individual buildings. The input table contains 34 fields but crucially 12 of these fields require manual input and the process includes reference to aerial photographs, the existing HER, Cadw listed building records and RCAHMS records. The categorisation process requires confirmation of the current status and condition of the buildings, the identification of the farmhouse, and the allocation of the plan to one of 8 basic plan types and 18 sub-plan types.

The main categories of farmstead plans as defined in the Historic Farmsteads manual (Lake and Edwards, 2017) proved to be readily identifiable although smaller more irregular farmsteads could sometimes be interpreted in more than one way. It was in many cases possible to reliably identify secondary and tertiary attributes such as multi-yards, drift-ways, clusters and numbers of buildings around courtyards. Some of the other attributes seem to require more subjective judgement and could be regarded as being on a continuum of loose court yard plans.

5.2 Conclusions

The farmsteads within the Ardudwy survey are typically small and irregular with a high proportion of associated outfarms consisting of a single barn with accompanying yard. The presence of barns in fields some distance from the main farmsteads is a characteristic of the Meirionnydd area and is particularly common in Ardudwy. This pattern is not seen in upland areas in northern Gwynedd such as the Carneddau. Typically, they are built end-on to the hill slope, and the lower part, accessed by a doorway at the lower end, was used to over-winter cattle, while hay and fodder was stored on an upper level access from the opposite gable end. They appear to be late 18th or early 19th century in date and although some remain in use, many of them are now in a ruinous condition, particularly in the more remote upland locations.

Much of the settlement in Ardudwy is on the west-facing slopes between the coastal plain and the mountains of the Rhinogydd. Here the settlement pattern is characterised by farms set along route ways into the uplands and probably has its roots in transhumance farming of the medieval hafod and hendre system. The practice of transhumance gradually declined between the 16th century (or earlier) and the 19th century and many of the hafodydd on the upland margins developed into permanent separate farmsteads some of which are still occupied. Place name evidence allows some of these farmsteads to be identified e.g. Hafod-

y-Coed (PRN 82,221). Other hafodydd may have continued in use as outfarms. Many of the earlier and more remote hafodydd associated were abandoned and can be seen preserved in the uplands as long hut settlements.

The settlement pattern in Ardudwy in many ways resembles that of the upland margins of the Carneddau (Jones, 2020) with small loose courtyard and linear farms predominating. The complex settlement pattern is summarised in the Historic Landscape Characterisation report. (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, undated). Many of the farmsteads can be traced back to the 16th Century and there is a preponderance of early (pre 19th cen.) farm-buildings in many of the farmyards. Good examples can be seen at Caerwch (PRN 82,138), Hendre Fechan (PRN 82,849), and Taltreuddyn-fawr (PRN 82,577) (Figure 07). The influence of large estates is less than in the Carneddau and Anglesey study areas with many farms having their origins in earlier settlement patterns that extended into the uplands from townships in the fertile lowlands. This was mostly achieved by encroachment onto the commons and Crown lands. Wealthy landowners benefitted most from the enclosures but the poor quality land was not conducive to amalgamation into large farms. These processes resulted in a landscape containing large numbers of smallholdings and tenanted farms.

The main estates in the area were Cors-y-gedol, Maes-y-Newydd and Glyn Cywarch and their influence can be seen in the larger courtyard farmsteads in the lowlands such as the L-plan yards associated with the 16th century Cors-y-gedol Hall (PRN 82,674) which was the seat of the Vaughan family (Figure 06). Llandwywe farm (PRN 82, 743) is a good example of a medium sized lowland farm with its complex of well-preserved agricultural buildings including a barn, cart shed, beudy and potato clamp (Figure 08). This stands alongside the medieval drovers' road from Bwlch y Rhiwgr to Dolgellau and formed part of the Cors-y-Gedol estate. It developed into a drovers inn and was used as a public house until 1903

The farmsteads of Ardudwy are an important part of a distinctive landscape characterised by extensive tracts of rough grazing. The poor agricultural land has resulted in a landscape of small farmsteads that has developed over many centuries. The larger farms associated with the estates of the gentry are mostly confined to a relatively narrow strip of good agricultural land towards the coast.

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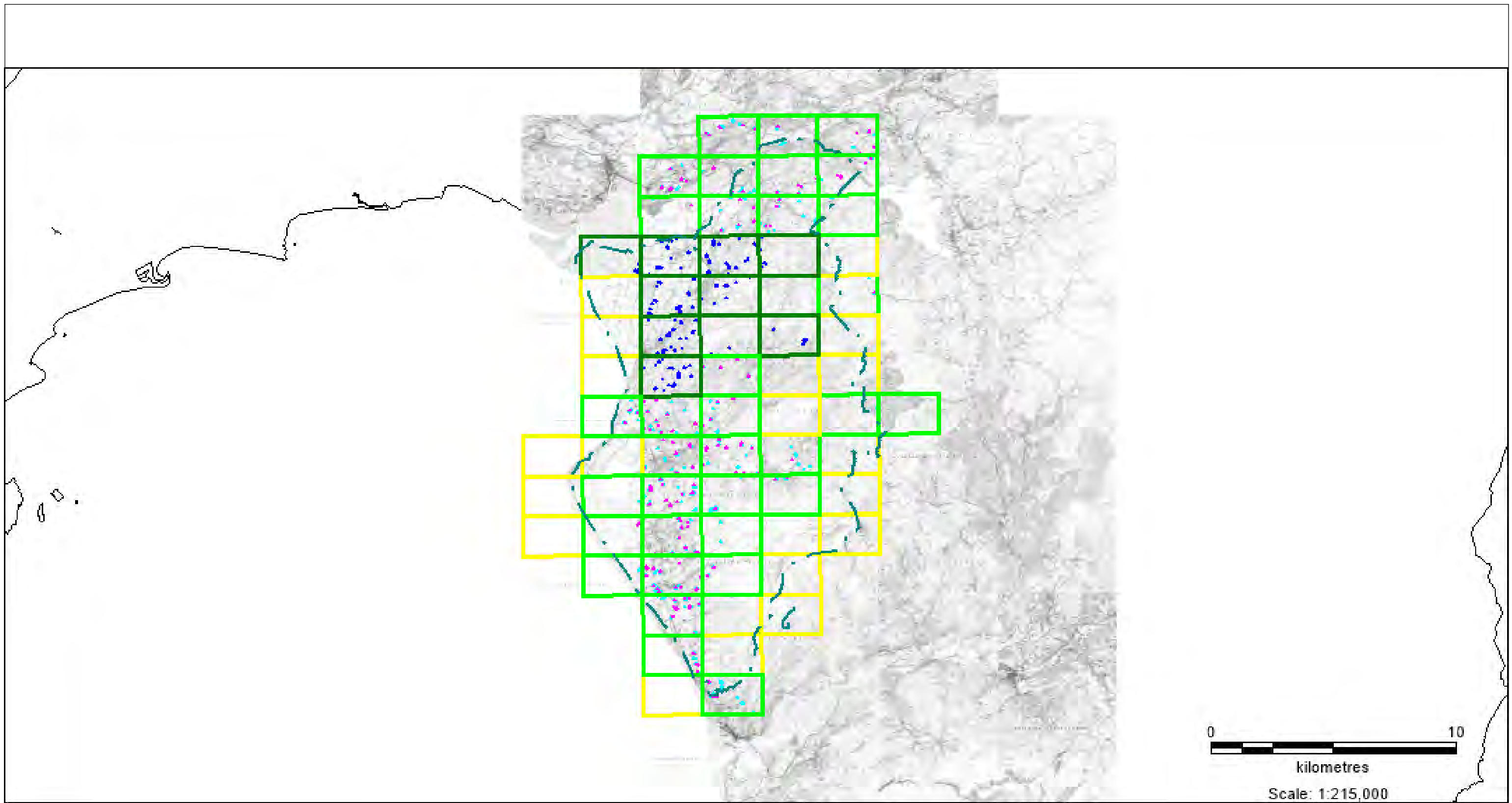
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Key:

	Study area with historical farm/outfarm		Farmbuilding polygon		North Ardudwy Pilot Farmbuilding polygon
	Study area void of historical farm/outfarm		Farmstead polygon		North Ardudwy Pilot Farmstead polygon
	North Ardudwy Pilot Study Area		Ardudwy boundary		

Figure 01:

View of historic farmsteads and outfarms with in Ardudwy study area, including farmsteads from the North Ardudwy Pilot project 2017/18.



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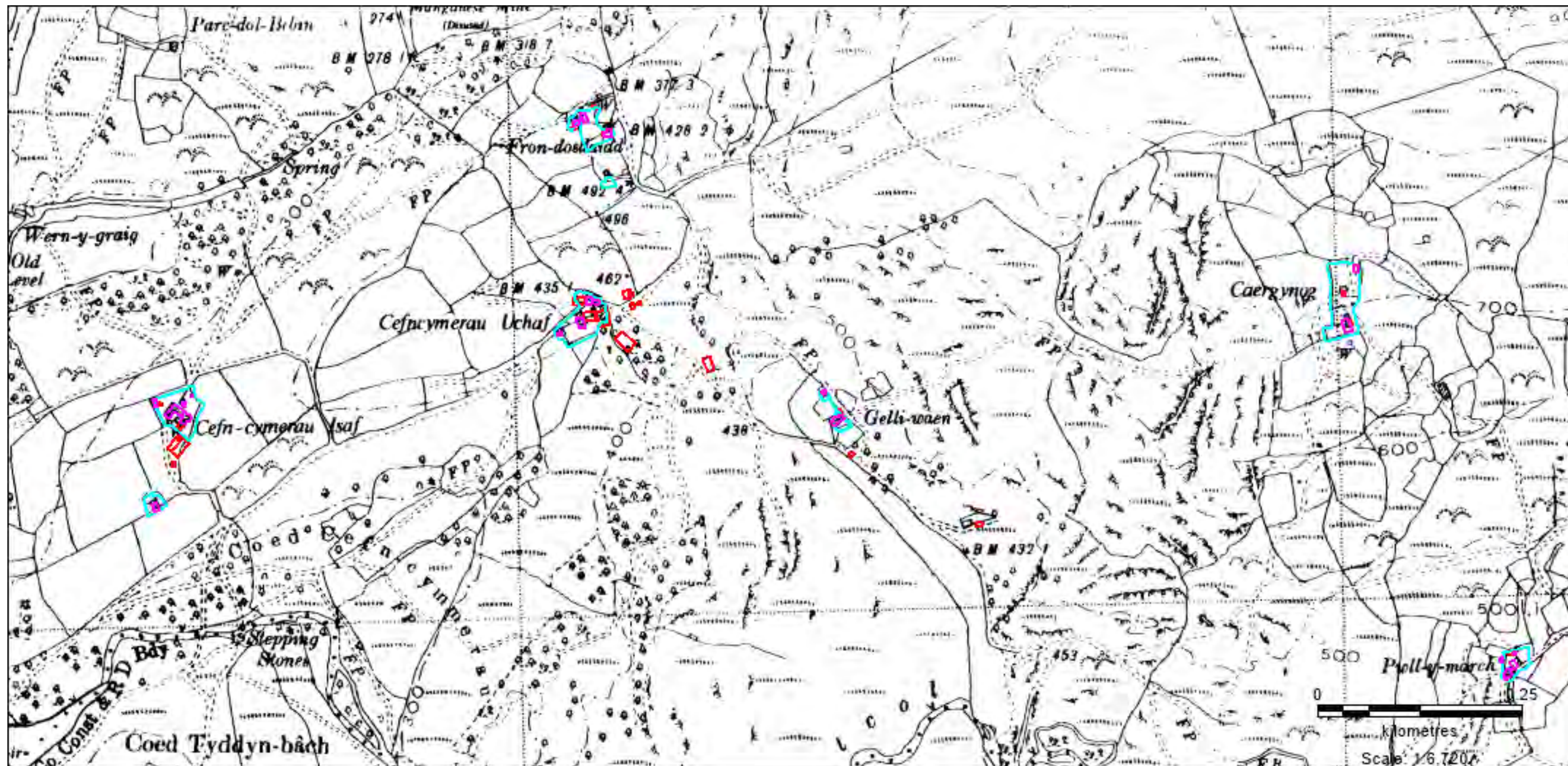


Figure 02:

Loose court yard plans and associated outfarms at footings of Llanbedr Mountain; Cefn-Cymerau Isaf (PRN 82,390), Cefncymerau Uchaf (PRN 82,379), Gelli-waen (PRN 82,406), Caergynog (PRN 82,374), Fron-dosdaidd (PRN 82,383) and Pwll-y-march (PRN 82,411)



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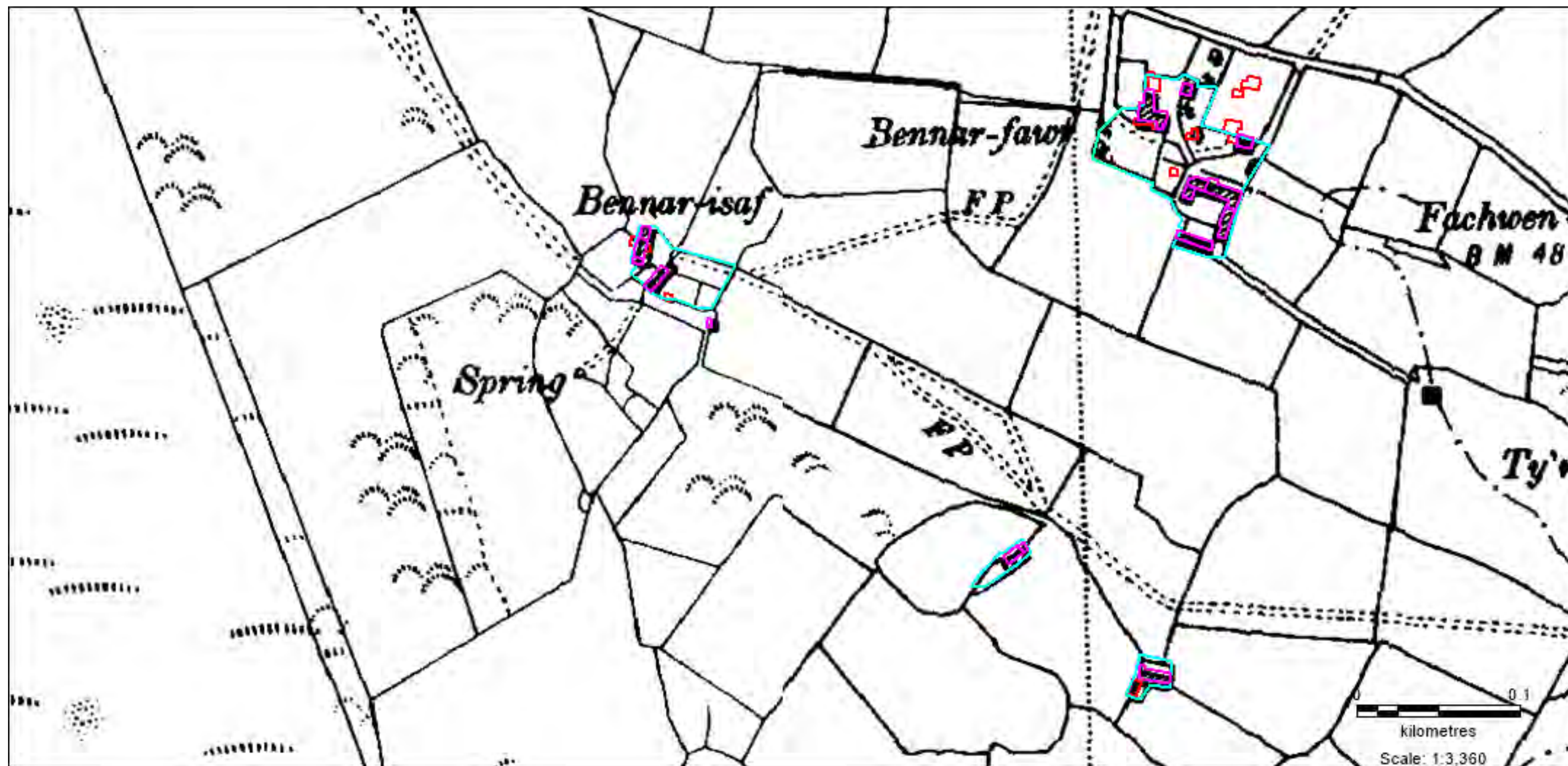


Figure 03:

View of Linear court yard plan of Bennar-isaf, Llanddwywe (PRN 82,708).



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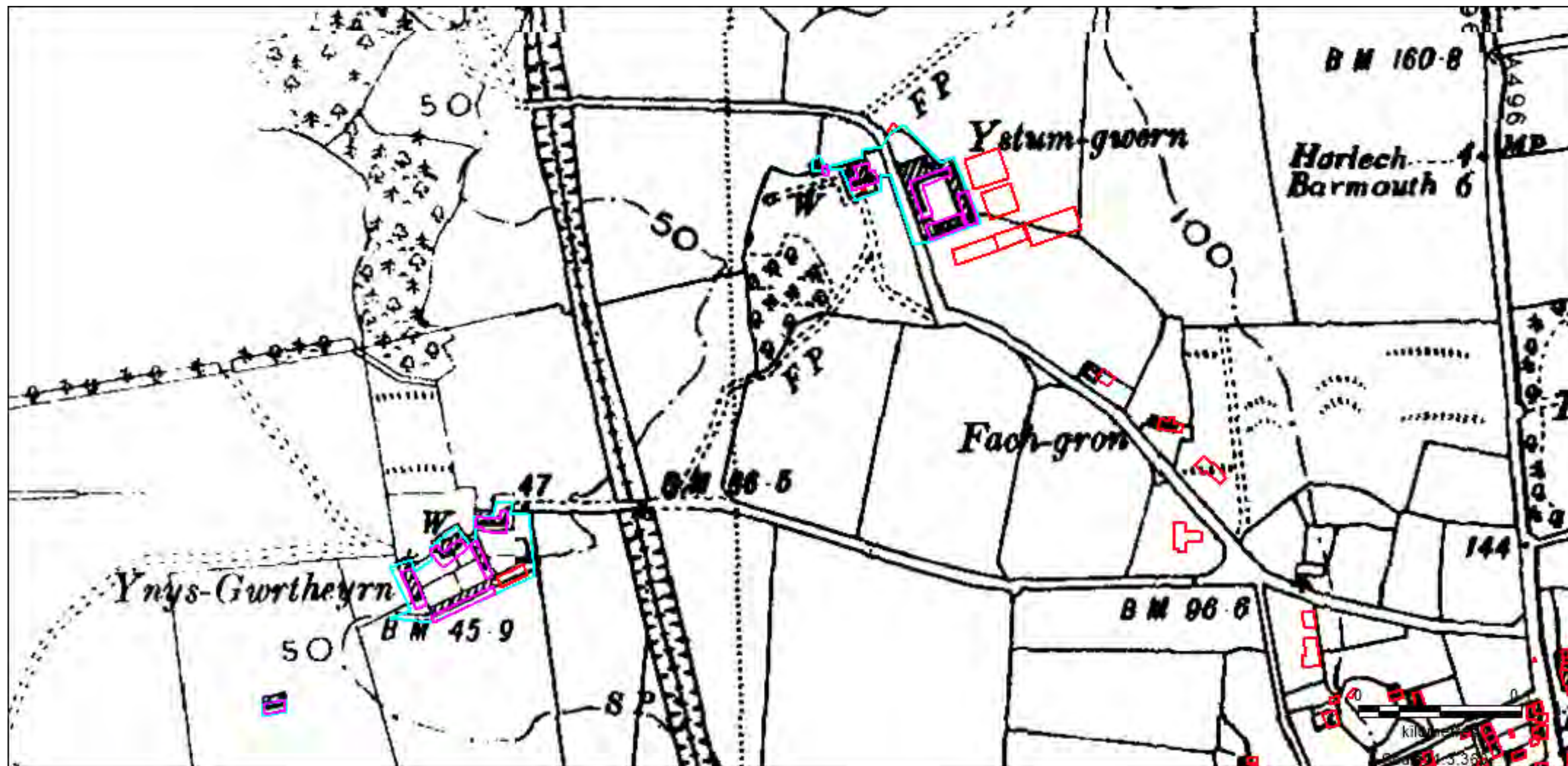


Figure 04:

View of Regular Courtyard (U-plan) farmstead, Ynys-Gwrtheyryn (PRN 82,635) and Ysum-Guern (Full courtyard plan) farmstead (PRN 82,642), Llanenddwyn.



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Figure 05:

View of Sarnfaen (PRN 82,871), Tyddyn-gronw (PRN 82,875), Cae'r-elwa (PRN 82,881) and Dalar (PRN 82,884) farmsteads which are now integrated and converted as part of a caravan park holiday let in Barmouth.



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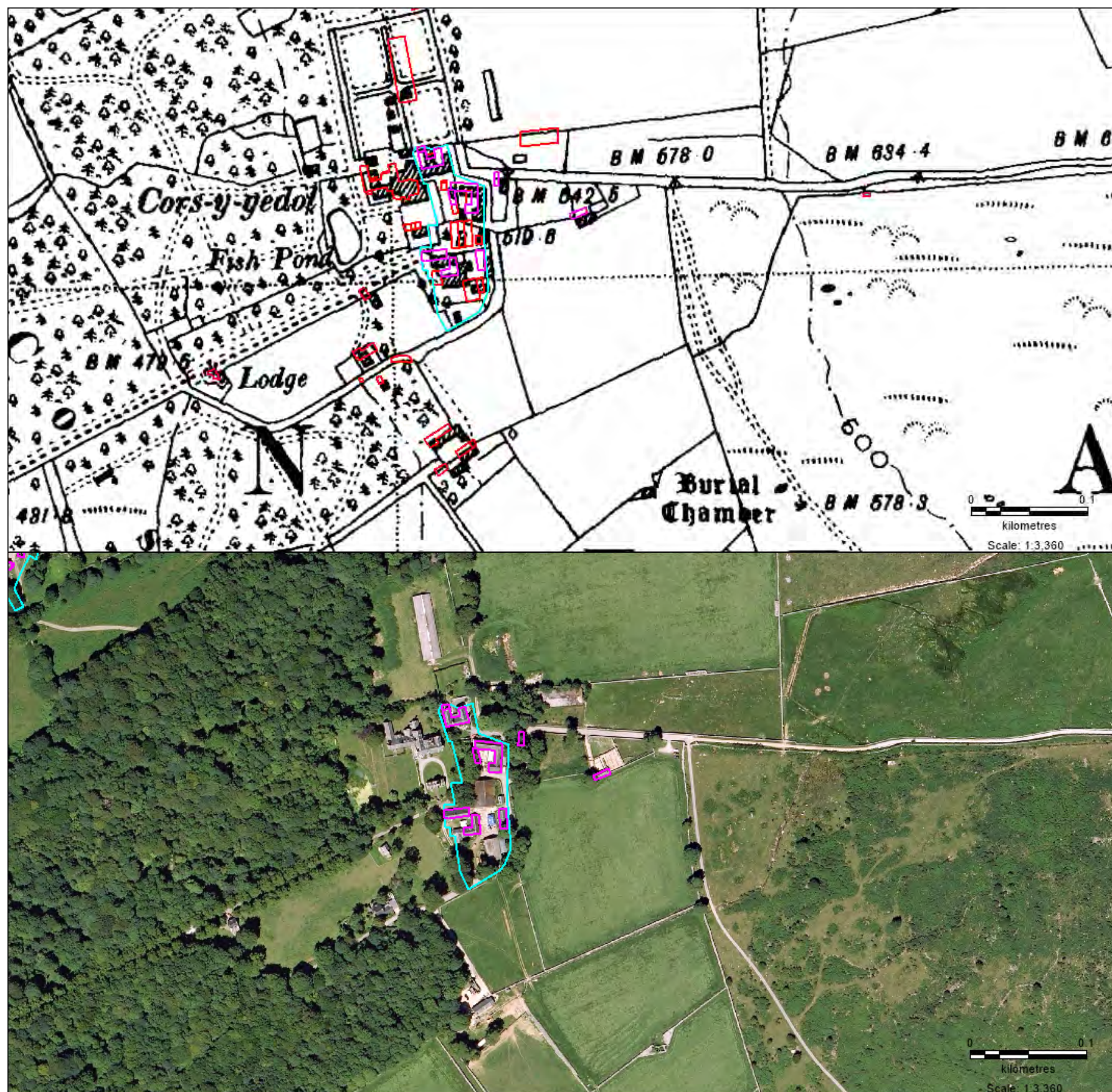


Figure 06:

View of 16th century Cors-y-Gedol hall and associated farmstead with L-plan and U-plan loose regular court yards (PRN 82,674).



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Figure 07:

View of 17th century Taltreuddyn-Fawr farm house and 19th century Regular (U-plan) court yard (PRN 82,577) in Llanenddwyn.



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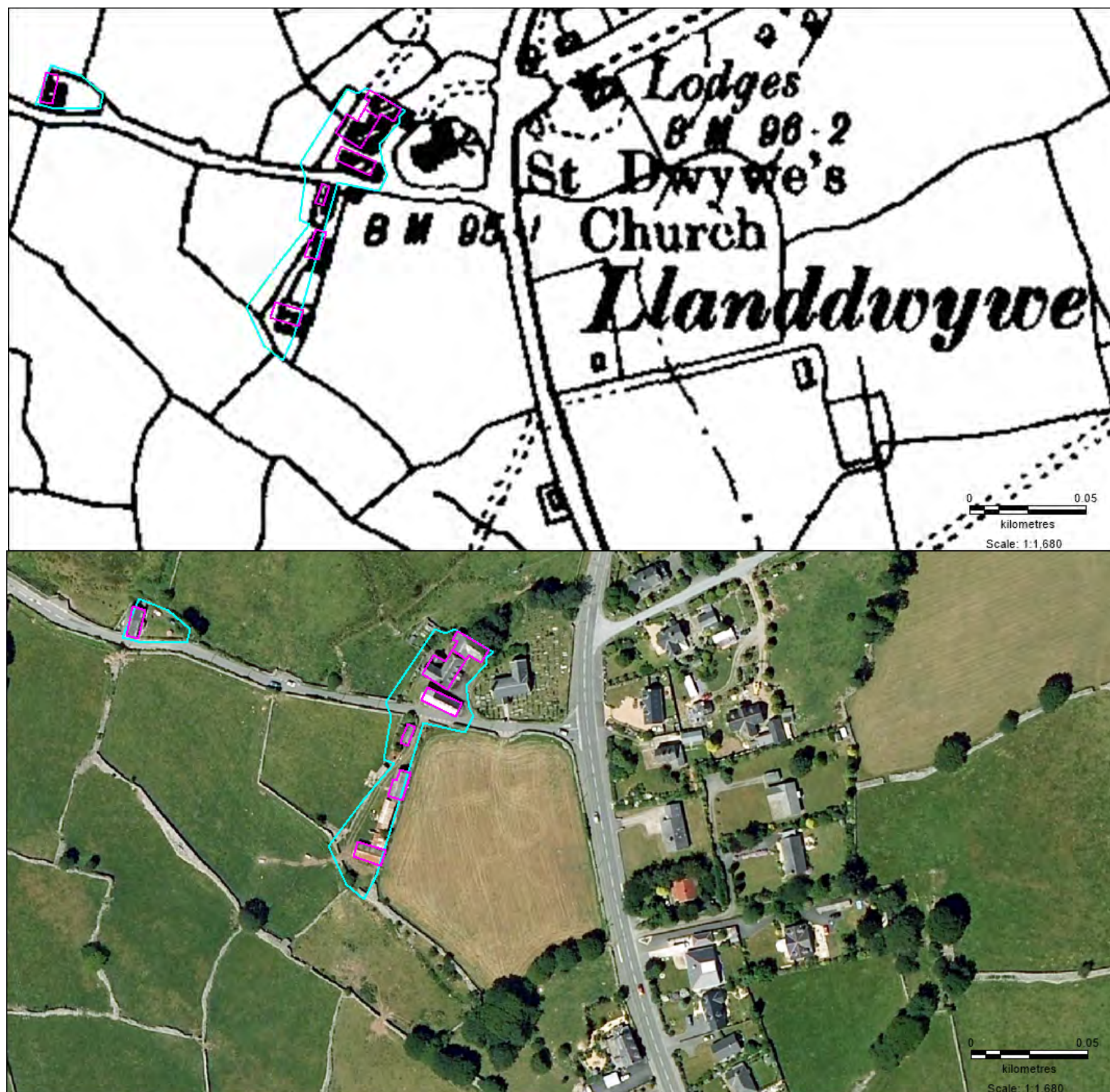


Figure 08:

View of 16th century Llanddwywe farmstead (PRN 82,743) and outfarm, consisting of a single barn and associated yard (PRN 82,736).



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Gwynedd Archaeological Trust



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Welsh Government



Gwynedd Archaeological Trust
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