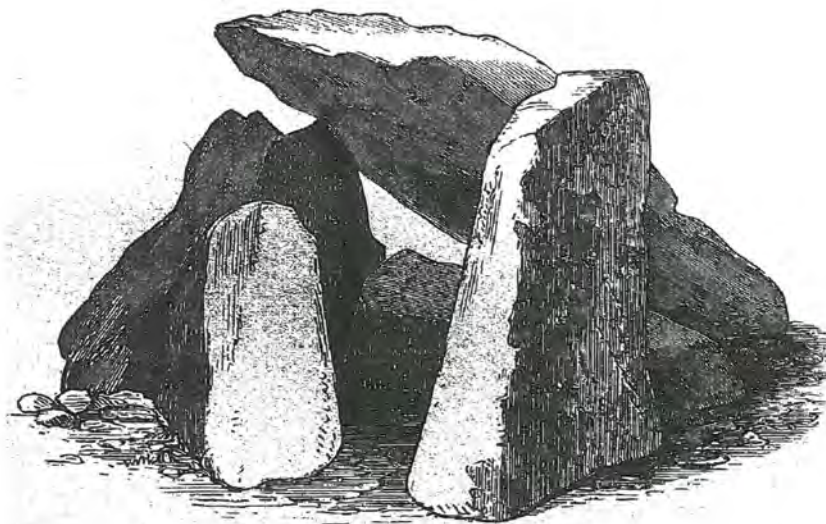


CROMLECH, Y FFOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report number: 362



CROMLECH ON CROMLECH FARM, NEAR PŴLLHELI.

Prepared for

Mr H G Williams

G1637

April, 2000

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

Effert PRN:
40546

CROMLECH, Y FFOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION (G1637)

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By

Andrew Davidson

April, 2000

CROMLECH, Y FFOR, PWLLHELI

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION (G1637)

Introduction

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (Contracts Section) were asked by Mr H G Williams to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land on the farm of Cromlech, Y Ffor (NGR SH396384), where it was proposed to erect a new veterinary surgery. The need for the evaluation arose from the near location of a Neolithic burial chamber, and the possibility of associated prehistoric remains in the area of the proposed surgery. The work was required as part of a planning condition, and was monitored by Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service, PRN 437

Aims

The aims of the evaluation were to ascertain the nature of any archaeological remains which could be disturbed by the construction of the new surgery.

Archaeological background

The proposed surgery lies some 180m south-west of the burial chamber, although in the same field. The cromlech consists of a rectangular chamber, its north and west sides formed by two large orthostats, and its south side by a large slab on edge. The east side probably formed the entrance, and is partly closed by a stone which does not reach the capstone. There is now no sign of the mound which would originally have covered the chamber.¹ The present condition of the chamber dates from 1936, when the chamber was restored following its collapse in the 19th century. No finds were recovered during the work.² An early description by Farrington in 1772 says 'to the north [of the chamber] some remains of erected stones [are] visible', which hints at the possibility that the chamber lay within a complex of other monuments.³

Methodology

The proposed surgery is to occupy a site in the south-west corner of the field, in a rectangular area 85m by 56m, aligned ESE – WNW. Traditional stone faced banks separate the field from the road to the west, and from the adjoining plot (now a plant nursery) to the south. Following discussion with Neil Johnstone of Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Services it was proposed to evaluate the area by excavating two trial trenches each 20m by 2m within the centre of the area. These were aligned SSW – NNE, that is the long side of the trench was parallel to the shorter side of the building plot. The first trench lay 20m from the west boundary, and 12m from the south boundary, the second trench lay 35m from the west boundary and 12m from the south boundary. Both trenches were excavated by machine, using a toothless rear bucket, to the natural glacial clay. The features revealed were examined by hand. Following excavation both trenches were backfilled by machine.

Findings

Western trench. This trench was excavated to a depth of 400mm. The first 200mm consisted of plough soil, which overlay 150mm of siltier light brown sub-soil with less than 10% small stone inclusions. This layer gradually gave way to the glacial clay which was very light brown to yellow in colour, with a higher percentage of small stone. A small number of features were visible cut into the clay, but upon examination these were found to be either small animal burrows, or holes from former tree roots. No finds were recovered.

Eastern trench. The clay lay slightly higher in this trench, which was excavated to a depth of 300mm. The plough soil was 150mm deep, and with a silty soil similar to that in the western trench beneath between 50mm and 100mm deep. One feature in this trench was examined in greater detail. This consisted of a group of rounded stones, up to 500mm in diameter, which occupied an area some 2m in diameter. These were situated

¹ For a full description see RCAHMW *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Caernarvonshire, Volume III* (1964), 16

² The restoration is described in Glyn Daniel 'The Four Crosses Burial Chamber, Caernarvonshire' *Archaeologia Cambrensis* Vol XCII Part 1 (1936), 165-166

³ Farrington's description is reprinted in 'Rhyl Mss – Celtic Antiquities No. II' *Archaeologia Cambrensis* Vol IV Part 1 (1849), 4

10m from the south end (mid way along the trench) on the east side. An additional area 3m by 3m was opened to examine the full extent of the stones. No finds or charcoal was visible, and there were no cut features associated. The stones did not appear to extend beyond the area examined. It was concluded that the stones were a natural feature, possibly dating from the glaciation. No other archaeological features or finds were visible within the trench.

Summary and conclusion

A trial excavation consisting of two trenches each 20m by 2m was excavated within the area of the proposed surgery. No archaeological features or finds were noted, and it is therefore concluded that there will be no impact upon the archaeological resource as a result of the construction of the surgery.



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
CROMLECH, Y FFOR

PROPOSED SITE OF
VETERINARY SURGERY

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PLAN No. G1637/1

