

A494 WAL GYNNAL TY MAWR, RHYDYMAIN IMPROVEMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

G1804



Report number : 504

Prepared for

Hyder

NOVEMBER 2003

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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A494 WAL GYNNAL TY MAWR, RHYDYMALN IMPROVEMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY

An archaeological assessment was carried out in advance of a road improvement scheme to the north-east of Rhydymal. The road scheme runs through heavily improved pasture containing remnants of earlier transport routes and some agricultural features. The assessment involved consultation of existing records and documents and a field search. Existing records identified eighteen archaeological or historic features recorded on the SMR that were relevant to the assessment of these only one, a ruinous early post medieval cruck barn was located within the study corridor i.e. within 100m of the scheme. The field search identified nineteen archaeological or historic features in the study corridor. Two were categorised as being of regional importance two of district or local importance, twelve of minor importance or damaged/destroyed and three as requiring further assessment.

The features of regional importance are the cruck barn noted above and the remains of a road that fell into disuse in the 18th century. Neither are likely to be directly affected by the road improvements and avoidance is recommended. The sites of local importance are the course of a 18th century turnpike road along with a relict field boundary and trackway. It is likely that there will be some disturbance to a short length of the turnpike road and associated features. Reinstatement and slight realignment are recommended in order to preserve the continuity of the relict route. The field boundary and trackway are on high ground away from the road and avoidance is the preferred option here. Three cairns were identified within the study corridor, these are most likely to be the result of post medieval clearance but there is a possibility that they contain prehistoric features so watching briefs are recommended if they are to be disturbed. The rest of the sites identified in the fieldwork are minor agricultural features and, where relevant, avoidance or reinstatement is recommended.

1 INTRODUCTION

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust was asked by Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd to carry out an archaeological assessment in advance a road widening scheme to the west of Rhydymal, Gwynedd (Fig. 1). The area affected was shown on Hyder Drawing No. 0002-NH50705-NDH01 (July 2003). The road improvement scheme extends from the eastern side of Rydymal at SH80592208, along the A494 for about 500m, to the end of the Drws y Nant improvement at SH81122242. The scheme involves widening the road along its north-west side to create a 7.3m wide carriageway with 0.5m hardstrips and 2.0m wide verges. The area falls within the Snowdonia National Park and lies about 3 km to the east of the Vale of Dolgellau Landscape of Historic Interest. Gwynedd Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological assessment of the adjoining Drws y Nant improvement scheme in 1994 (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, 1994 GAT report no. 78)

2 SPECIFICATION AND PROJECT DESIGN

The basic requirement was for a desktop survey and field search of the proposed area, in order to assess the impact of the proposals on the archaeological features within the area concerned. The importance and condition of known archaeological remains were to be assessed, and areas of archaeological potential and new sites to be identified. Measures to mitigate the effects of the construction work on the archaeological resource were to be suggested.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust's proposals for filling these requirements were as follows:

- Desktop study
- Field walkover
- Report

3 METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

3.1 Desk top study

This comprised the consultation of maps, documents, computer records, written records and reference works, which form part of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), located at GAT, Bangor. The archives held by the Gwynedd Record Office, Dolgellau and The University of Wales, Bangor were also consulted. Aerial photographs were consulted The National Monuments Record of Wales, Aberystwyth and Countryside Council for Wales (Bangor office).

Sites, buildings and find spots listed in the GAT SMR were identified (Fig. 1) within two zones. Those within about 1km of the route were identified to give background information relevant to understanding the area and, those within 100m, which might be physically affected by construction or associated activity.

3.2 Field Search

The field search of the route was undertaken on 23rd October June 2003. The majority of the route runs through improved grassland and conditions were fairly good for survey with bright sunshine and sleet showers.

All sites were recorded on a 1:2500 waterproof map. Written and where appropriate, drawn records were made of each site. Colour photographs were also taken. These were numbered and catalogued. The whole archive is stored at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust under project number G1804.

3.3 Report

The available information was synthesised to give a summary of the archaeological and historic background and of the assessment and recommendations, as set out below. The separate features, their evaluation and recommendations are listed separately, and a summary of the overall assessment of the area is given at the end.

The criteria used for assessing the value of features was based upon those used by the Secretary of State for Wales when considering sites for protection as scheduled ancient monuments, as set out in the Welsh Office circular 60/96. The definitions of categories used for impact, field evaluation and mitigation are set out below.

3.3.1 Categories of importance

The following categories were used to define the importance of the archaeological resource.

Category A - Sites of National Importance.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings of grade II* and above, as well as those that would meet the requirements for scheduling (ancient monuments) or listing (buildings) or both.

Sites that are scheduled or listed have legal protection, and it is recommended that all Category A sites remain preserved and protected *in situ*.

Category B - Sites of regional or county importance.

Grade II listed buildings and sites which would not fulfil the criteria for scheduling or listing, but which are nevertheless of particular importance within the region.

Preservation *in situ* is the preferred option for Category B sites, but if damage or destruction cannot be avoided, appropriate detailed recording might be an acceptable alternative.

Category C - Sites of district or local importance.

Sites which are not of sufficient importance to justify a recommendation for preservation if threatened.

Category C sites nevertheless merit adequate recording in advance of damage or destruction.

Category D - Minor and damaged sites.

Sites that are of minor importance or are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify their inclusion in a higher category.

For Category D sites, rapid recording, either in advance of or during destruction, should be sufficient.

Category E - Sites needing further investigation.

Sites, the importance of which is as yet undetermined and which will require further work before they can be allocated to categories A - D are temporarily placed in this category, with specific recommendations for further evaluation. By the end of the assessment there should be no sites remaining in this category.

3.3.2 Definition of Impact

The impact of the road development on each site was estimated. The impact is defined as *none, slight, unlikely, likely, significant, considerable or unknown* as follows:

None:

There is no construction impact on this particular site.

Slight:

This has generally been used where the impact is marginal and would not by the nature of the site cause irreversible damage to the remainder of the feature, *e.g.* part of a trackway or field bank.

Unlikely:

This category indicates sites that fall within the band of interest but are unlikely to be directly affected. This includes sites such as standing and occupied buildings at the margins of the band of interest.

Likely:

Sites towards the edges of the study area, which may not be directly affected, but are likely to be damaged in some way by the construction activity.

Significant:

The partial removal of a site affecting its overall integrity. Sites falling into this category may be linear features such as roads or tramways where the removal of part of the feature could make overall interpretation problematic.

Considerable:

The total removal of a feature or its partial removal which would effectively destroy the remainder of the site.

Unknown:

This is used when the location of the site is unknown, but thought to be in the vicinity of the proposed road.

3.3.3 Definition of field evaluation techniques

Field evaluation is necessary to fully understand and assess class E sites and to allow the evaluation of areas of land where there are no visible features but for which there is potential for sites to exist. Two principal techniques can be used for carrying out the evaluation: geophysical survey and trial trenching.

Geophysical survey most often involves the use of a magnetometer, which allows detection of some underground features, depending on their composition and the nature of the subsoil. Geophysical survey is not thought to be suitable for the feature and subsoil types expected at Nefyn.

Trial trenching allows a representative sample of the development area to be investigated at depth. Trenches of appropriate size can also be excavated to evaluate category E sites. Trenching is typically carried out with trenches of between 20 to 30m length and 2m width. The topsoil is removed by machine and the resulting surface is cleaned by hand, recording features. Depending on the stratigraphy encountered the machine may be used to remove stratigraphy to deeper levels.

3.3.4 Definition of Mitigatory Recommendations

None:

No impact and therefore no requirement for mitigation measures.

Avoidance

Where possible, features that may be affected should be avoided. Sometimes this could mean a change in layout, design or route. More usually it refers to the need for care during construction to avoid accidental damage to a feature. This may be achieved by marking features or areas, for example with warning tape, before work starts, or in sensitive cases carrying out a watching brief.

Detailed recording:

Detailed recording requires a photographic record, surveying and the production of a measured drawing prior to the commencement of the works on site.

Archaeological excavation may also be required depending upon the particular feature and the extent and effect of the impact.

Basic Recording:

A photographic record and full description, and limited measured survey where applicable.

Watching brief:

Requiring observation of particular identified features or areas during works in their vicinity. This may be supplemented by detailed or basic recording of exposed layers or structures.

It can be further defined as comprehensive (present during all ground disturbance), intensive (present during sensitive ground disturbance, intermittent (viewing the trenches after machining) or partial (as when seems appropriate).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Topographic description

The study corridor runs from the eastern side of Rhydymain to a point 200m south-west of Pont Esgair-gawr. The fields to the north-western side of the road are heavily improved and slope fairly gently toward the south-east. A recently resurfaced tarmac road runs along a break of slope and connects Pont Rhydymain to Pen-y-rhiw and Wenallt. The fields in the south-east part of the corridor, at Cefn Henfaes, are also improved and slope very steeply down to the road. The Afon Wnion sweeps toward the road to the north-east of this. The fields step down from the road to the flood plain in this area with a pronounced terrace being marked by a row of mature oak trees.

4.2 Archaeological and historical background

There are no known sites dating from the prehistoric period within 1 km of the road corridor. A Bronze Age standing stone at SH82602361 indicates prehistoric activity in the area. It should be noted that survival of many types of prehistoric and medieval sites as visible monuments is relatively uncommon in heavily improved land.

It is very likely that the Roman Road between Caer Gai and Brithdir runs along this valley. The route is probably marked by the line of various tracks and the remains of a ford close to Lletty Wyn to the south of the Afon Wnion (Jones 1959, 210 and OS Linear Files RR66b 1973). The line of the Roman road then appears to follow a resurfaced lane from Coed Pant-y-cleider to cross the Afon Wnion close to Drws y Nant station. It is thought that it then joins the alignment of the present A494 running to the east (OS Linear Files 1973).

The Afon Wnion marks the border of two medieval townships, Nannau to the north-west and Brithdir Uchaf to the south-east. Nannau was in the parish of Llanfachraeth and Brithdir Uchaf was in Dolgellau all of which were in the commote of Tal y Bont (Beverly Smith and Beverly Smith 2001, 726). A denuded long hut and possible associated enclosure at Lletty Wyn (PRNs 11795 and 11789) are the only known sites within the study corridor dating from the medieval period.

Documentary and place name evidence show that this area was among the holdings of the Cistercian Order at Cymer Abbey prior to the Dissolution. A grant of lands to the Cistercian monks is recorded in the late 12th century Cymer Abbey Charter (Gresham 1984, 142). It appears that the whole of Brithdir Uchaf was given to the monks including 'all of Bryn Bedwyn [and] y Ddôl-wen with all their boundaries and limits and appurtenances' (ibid. 143). Brynbedwyn Grange included lands at Esgair-gawr (SH81602240) (Williams 1990, 42). The farm of Wenallt consists of Post-Medieval buildings (NPRN 28,884) but has earlier origins. It is mentioned in the 13th Century Extent of Merioneth and Nannau indentures from the late 16th century (UWB Nannau number 176-181) record that it was formerly in the possession of Cymer abbey. A further connection with the Cistercians is preserved in the place name Pistyll Hen-fynachlog (Spring of the Old Monastery, PRN 4847) to the north of Ty Cerrig farm. Much of the land around Rhydymain was incorporated into the Nannau estate in the wake of the Dissolution (Thomas 2001, 220-221).

The tithe map of the area, dated 1846, records that the whole of the study area and most of the surrounding lands were the property of Sir R.W. Vaughan (of Nannau). The maps are unusually sketchy and show few details. Unfortunately the Nannau estate maps were not included in the papers obtained by UWB archives and are not available for public consultation.

The parishes of Llanfachraeth and Brithdir contain many examples of the distinctive architecture associated with the Nannau estate. The most notable in the study area is the unusual Y shaped barn at Lletty Wyn (PRN 11895). Further post medieval buildings of note are the grade two listed house Llwyn-y-cynfal (NPRN 373) and an early post medieval cruck barn (4846). The barn is now ruinous, although the remains of the crucks are still visible. A 1946 RAF aerial photograph (106G/UK14684MAY46F/36"/540SQDN 3246-8) shows the barn with an intact roof indicating that the building has fallen into disrepair fairly recently.

There is evidence that Wnion valley has been used as a transport corridor since the Roman occupation (see above). The possible route of the Roman road (PRN 3849), to the south of the river, appears to have been one of the main routes through the valley until post medieval times. A bridge at Lletty Wyn is known locally as Roman Bridge (PRN 11832). This, however, appears to be a post medieval packhorse bridge. The Merioneth

Turnpike Trust was formed in 1777 and in the latter years of the 18th century most of the main roads in the county including the route along the Wnion valley were adopted (Dodd 1925, 132-133 and 139). John Evans' map of Wales from 1795 (Fig. 3) shows the road running to the north-west of the present A494. This appears to follow the line of the present road from Pont Rhydymain to Pen-y-rhiw and Wenallt. A short spur is also shown running due east from Rhydymain towards the Wnion. The turnpike road was in use by 1816 as part of the coaching route from Barmouth to Corwen (Dodd 1925, 145). The information on the tithe map of 1846 (Fig. 4) is rather sparse but clearly shows that the line of the road had changed and was following the route of the present A494. The dotted loop of road towards the north-east of the map presumably represents part of the earlier route along with the track to Ty Mawr.

The Merionethshire OS 1st edition 6" map of 1890 (Fig.5) shows the road following its present route along with the Bala and Dolgellau Railway running to the south of the river. The Bala and Dolgellau Railway received royal assent in 1862 and the line was opened in 1868. The line was amalgamated into Great Western Railways in 1877. The station at Drws y Nant (NPRN 41310) initially consisted of nothing but a small booking hut. Considerable improvements were carried out in 1895 when a brick-built booking office and waiting room were constructed along with a passing loop, down platform, goods lock up and a 23 lever signal box. The track was closed in 1965 after the Beeching report (Baughan 1991, 136-147) and all of the buildings apart from the Station House were demolished. A detailed Gazetteer of the surviving railway features, none of which should be affected by the present scheme, is included in the A494 Drws y Nant Assessment report (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Report No 78, 1994).

TABLE 1. LIST OF SITES RECORDED ON THE SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD WITHIN 1KM OF THE ROAD SCHEME					
PRN/NPRN	SITENAME	NGR	SITETYPE	PERIOD	SITESTAT
373	LLWYN-Y-CYNFAL	SH80042247	DWELLING	Post Medieval	LB2
3849	ROMAN ROAD, CAER GAI TO BRITHDIR	SH81372203	TRACKWAY	Romano-British	
4846	BARN	SH80762213	BARN	Post-Medieval	
4847	PISTYLL HEN-FYNACHLOG	SH80652307	MONASTERY	Undetermined	
6352	HENGWRT FARM, N. OF COED BRYN IFOR	SH79982198	HOUSE	Modern	
6354	FIELD HOUSE, HENGWRT FARM	SH79782215	HOUSE	Undetermined	
8472	RHYD-Y-MAIN WELSH INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, RHYD-Y-MAIN	SH80422216	CHAPEL	Post Medieval	
11780	BARN, LLETY WYN, RHYDYMAIN	SH80962156	BARN	Post-Medieval	
11789	ENCLOSURE, LLETY WYN, RHYDYMAIN	SH80942156	ENCLOSURE	Undetermined	
11795	HOUSE PLATFORM, LLETY WYN, RHYDYMAIN	SH80962154	HOUSE PLATFORM	Medieval	
11832	BRIDGE, LLETY WYN, RHYDYMAIN	SH80942167	BRIDGE	Post-Medieval	
11895	BARN, LLETY WYN, RHYDYMAIN	SH81092188	BARN	Post-Medieval	
28501	HENGWRT UCHAF	SH79982187	DWELLING	Post Medieval?	
28822	TY MAWR	SH80782266	DWELLING	Post Medieval?	
28884	WENALLT	SH81602309	HOUSE	Post Medieval?	
41310	DRWS-Y-NANT STATION	SH81762288	RAILWAY STATION	Post Medieval	
265204	HENGWRT-UCHAF	SH79962197	GARDEN (UNKNOWN TYPE)	Post Medieval	
265205	HENFAES	SH80472188	COUNTRY HOUSE GARDEN	Post Medieval	

4.3 The Archaeological Survey (Fig 1)

Eighteen features were identified directly within or contiguous with the survey corridor (within 100m of the road improvement scheme). These are listed below with recommendations for further assessment and mitigatory measures, where appropriate.

Feature 1 Spring, banks and mounds (Fig. 6)

SH80562211 (C)

Period: Modern

Category: D. Impact: Significant

The south-western end of the field between the village hall and the road is very uneven and stony and contains two low curving banks and two mounds. A spring is visible in a muddy area at the junction between the banks. The 1946 aerial photograph shows this area as a featureless open field. It is therefore likely that the banks and mounds are modern perhaps associated with the construction of the village hall and associated access roads in 1962. This may also have altered the drainage in the area; a spring marked on the 1st ed. OS map about 60m to the south-west appears to have dried up. The stones in the field are best interpreted as an attempt to infill a wet area.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: None

Feature 2 Cairn (Fig. 6)

SH80632216

Period: Post-medieval/Bronze Age.

Category: E. Impact: Unlikely

Probable clearance cairn, 2.4m in diameter and 0.6 m high, beneath field wall. The field wall appears to date from the early 19th century so the cairn must predate this. There is a possibility that it is a small Bronze Age burial cairn.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance or intensive watching brief if disturbed.

Feature 3 Relict field boundaries (Fig. 6)

SH80632217 (C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Unlikely

Field boundaries are shown on the 1890 1st ed. OS map to the north of the minor road between Rhydymain and Wenallt. Two short lengths of denuded bank still remain, enclosing a small area of rough ground and field clearance. Further field clearance and probable remnants of the boundaries can be seen behind the village hall.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Reinstatement if disturbed

Feature 4 Cairn (Fig. 6)

SH80582219

Period: Post-medieval/?Bronze Age.

Category: E. Impact: Unlikely

A substantial grassed over cairn is visible the north of the minor road between Rhydymain and Wenallt. It stands to a height of 1.0m and is 7.0m in diameter. This could be interpreted as a Bronze Age cairn but when

viewed alongside the heavily improved grassland and nearby field clearance it is most likely to be further post medieval clearance or dumping.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance or intensive watching brief if disturbed

Feature 5 Drystone wall (Fig. 6)

SH80632216 (C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Significant

A well built drystone field wall runs to the south of the minor road between Rhydymain and Wenallt (feature 8). The style of building suggests that it dates from the early mid 19th century.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Reinstatement and realignment using original materials and construction methods.

Feature 6 Gate/footpath (Fig. 6)

SH80682217

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Considerable

A footpath and iron gate (modern) lead from the minor road between Rhydymain and Wenallt (feature 8) to the current A494, probably reflecting the line of an earlier track or road running further to the south, shown as a spur on Evans' 1795 map (Fig. 3 and feature 15).

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Reinstatement of path thus preserving relict rout.

Feature 7 Drystone wall (Fig. 6)

SH80752226(C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Significant

A well built drystone field and revetment wall runs to the south of the minor road between Rhydymain and Wenallt (feature 8). The style of building suggests that it dates from the early mid 19th century.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Reinstatement and realignment using original materials and construction methods.

Feature 8 Line of late 18th century turnpike (Fig. 6)

SH80732224(C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: C. Impact: Slight

The late 18th century turnpike formerly ran along the line of the present minor road between Rhydymain and Wenallt. This was superseded by the time the tithe map of 1846 (Fig. 4) was compiled. The road continued to be used as an access to the farms of Ty-Mawr, Pen-y-rhiw and Wenallt. It is now a minor road with a tarmacadam surface.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Intensive watching brief. Reinstatement and realignment thus maintaining the continuity of the route

Feature 9 Field Clearance (Fig. 6)

SH80752233(C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Unlikely

This field is dotted with massive heaps of stone initially appearing to be mining waste. A lack of workings suggests otherwise, the stones are generally rounded and range in size from less than 10cm across to small boulders. The stones are probably the result of very intensive field clearance.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: None

Feature 10 Slate cattle trough (Fig. 6)

SH80852228

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Unlikely

Slate cattle drinking trough, constructed from 5 slabs linked using housing joints and held together by two longitudinal iron rods with lateral bolts at either end.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance or reinstatement if disturbed.

Feature 11 Possible relict boundaries and track (Fig. 6)

SH80872235 (C)

Period: ?Medieval/Post-medieval.

Category: C. Impact: Unlikely

The upper part of a sloping field contains a well-defined, meandering, break of slope and what appears to be a very denuded terrace running down the slope. This could be interpreted as a relict field bank and trackway. This hypothesis is supported by the survival of a line of trees and a bank in the field to the north-east on the same alignment. These boundaries were not shown on the OS 1st edition 6" map of 1890 and presumably predate the current heavily improved field system. The meandering boundary/terrace may have originated during the medieval cultivation of this area.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance, intensive watching brief and detailed recording if feature is to be disturbed.

Feature 12 Field bank and clearance (Fig. 6)

SH80992243 (C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Slight

A denuded field boundary consisting of a low stony bank runs down the north-east side of a stream. The area around the stream contains stone from field clearance.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Reinstatement of bank if disturbed

Feature 13 Relict field boundary (Fig. 6)

SH81042242 (C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: Unlikely

Remains of low bank and possible wall presumably originally a continuation of the boundary around the woodland to the east shown on the OS 1st edition 6" map of 1890.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Reinstatement of bank if disturbed

Feature 14 Drystone wall (Fig. 6)

SH81082243 (C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: D. Impact: None

Drystone wall partially reinstated during Drws y Nant improvements.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: None

Feature 15 Line of old road (Fig. 6)

SH80902226 (C)

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: B. Impact: Slight

A 3m wide terrace runs along the top of a 9m high slope above the river. A row of mature (at least 100 years old) oak trees run along the south-east side, presumably grown-out remnants of a hedgerow. The terrace is probably the remnants of the spur of road shown on Evans' map of 1795.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance, detailed recording and intensive watching brief if the feature is to be disturbed

Feature 16 Early post-medieval cruck barn. PRN 4846 (Fig. 6)

SH80762213

Period: Post-medieval.

Category: B. Impact: Unlikely

Ruinous barn with rotted and fallen remains of roof crucks. The walls are of lime mortared field stone. The external dimensions of the building are 10.2m x 6.3m and the walls stand close to their original height in places. A 1946 RAF aerial photograph (106G/UK14684MAY46F/36"/540SQDN 3246-8) shows the barn with an intact roof indicating that the building has fallen into disrepair fairly recently.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance

Feature 17 Cairn (Fig. 6)

SH80572203

Period: Post-medieval/?Bronze Age.

Category: E. Impact: Unlikely

A 3m wide and 1m high cairn of rounded stones is visible beneath the current boundary. This is most probably field clearance but its position near to the break of slope in a prominent position could indicate that it is a small Bronze Age burial cairn.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance.

Feature 18 Ploughed out field boundary (Fig. 6)

SH80572199(c)

Period: Post-medieval

Category: D. Impact: Unlikely

A recently removed field boundary (shown on 1978 1:10000 OS map) is visible as a low bank.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance

Feature 19 Farm machinery (Fig. 6)

SH80612202

Period: Modern.

Category: D. Impact: Unlikely

An item of 1940s/50s farm machinery has been abandoned at this NGR.

Recommendations for further assessment: None

Recommendations for mitigatory measures: Avoidance.

5 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The road scheme runs through heavily improved pasture containing remnants of earlier transport routes and some agricultural features.

- The minor road between Rhydymain and Wenallt (feature 8) follows the route of the late 18th century turnpike-road that was superseded by 1846. This is likely to be disturbed along with associated walls (features 5 and 7) and a gateway (feature 6). An intensive watching brief is recommended in order to record any early surviving features. It is recommended that the road should be reinstated (and realigned where necessary) in order to maintain the continuity of the 18th century route. The drystone walls running along the south of the road should be reinstated using original materials and construction methods.
- The disused road running to the south of the present A494 (feature 15) is shown on Evans map of Wales of 1795. Detailed recording and an intensive watching brief is recommended if the feature is to be disturbed
- It is recommended that all field boundaries and agricultural features disturbed by the road scheme (including features 5,7,10,12,13 and 14) should be reinstated using original materials and construction methods in order to preserve the character of the historic landscape.
- Several features lie to the north of the road but are probably far enough away to be avoided by the works. The preferred mitigatory recommendations for these features is therefore avoidance. If this is not possible, an intensive watching brief is recommended for the two cairns (features 2 and 4) detailed recording and an intensive watching brief is recommended for the possible relict boundaries and track (feature 11) and reinstatement is recommended for the relict field boundaries (feature 3).
- Four sites stand on the high ground to the south-west of the road scheme and are unlikely to be affected by the works. The mitigatory recommendation for these features is therefore avoidance.

Summary of recommendations

Further assessment

- None

Mitigatory recommendations

- Avoidance, Features 16, 17, 18 and 19
- Avoidance (preferred option), Features 2, 3, 4, 10, 11 and 15, secondary options below in italics.
- Intensive watching brief, Feature 8, (*2, 4, 11, and 15 as secondary, non preferred option*)
- Detailed recording, *Features 11 and 15 as secondary, non preferred option*
- Re-instatement, Features 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 (*3 as secondary, non preferred option*)
- None, Features 1, 9 and 14

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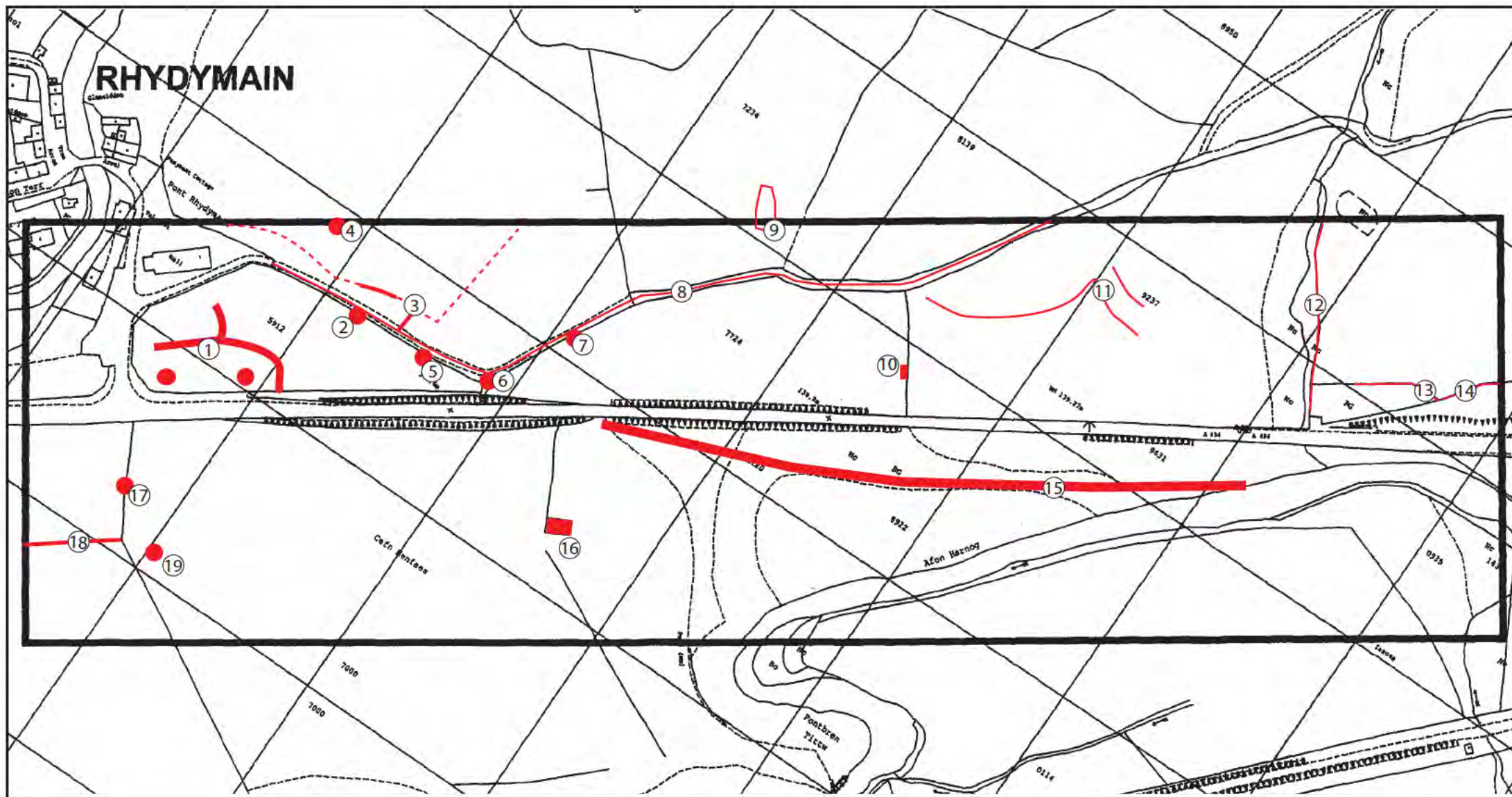


Fig.2 Features identified during the field search (Background from Hyder Drawing No.0002-NH50705-NDH01)

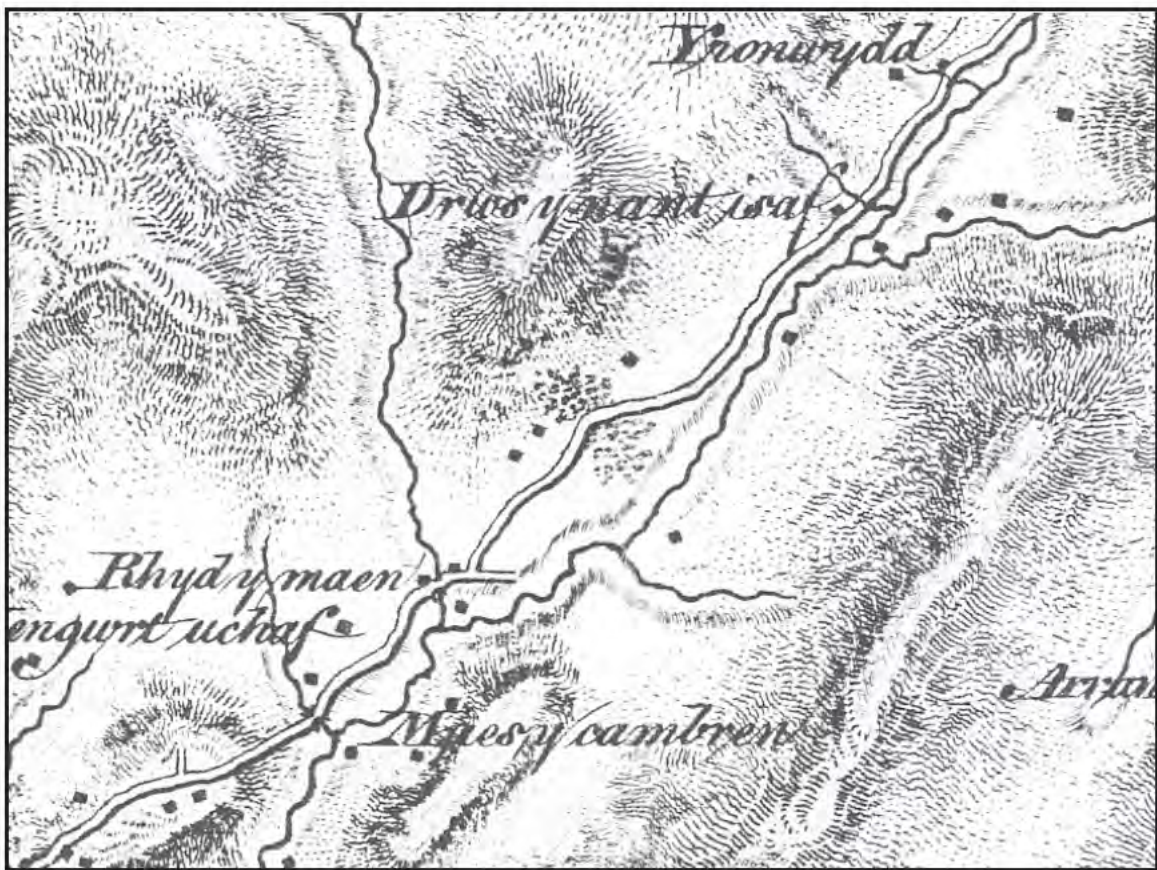


Fig. 3 John Evans, 1797 Map of North Wales



Fig. 4 Tithe Map for Dolgellau Parish 1846



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