

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

THE ROUND HUTS OF CENTRAL POWYS



CPAT Report No 303

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THE ROUND HUTS OF CENTRAL POWYS

FIELD SURVEY and ASSESSMENT

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Report for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

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Round Huts in Radnorshire and Southern Montgomeryshire

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 In 1998/99 Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments agreed to fund a study of the prehistoric (and conceivably Romano-British) round huts that had been recorded in the modern county of Powys and the former county of Clwyd. This followed their resourcing of an earlier study of hut circle settlements in Gwynedd (Smith 1998). A first report, entitled *Round huts in central and north-east Wales* (CPAT no.279; Silvester 1998) was prepared and circulated in May 1998. It considered the desk-top assessment of all the known and possible round huts in CPAT's area, drawing on information held in the regional SMR and also the NMR at Aberystwyth, the nature of the resource, the interpretation of the extant sites and the quality of the records that exist. Recommendations for further work included a systematic study of all relevant monuments on the ground and the creation of records which would be adequate for future assessments of individual monuments and could be used to inform any proposals that might give them extra protection.
- 1.2 The recommendation for systematic study was accepted by Cadw as a valid continuation of the survey and it was agreed that those round huts in the historic county of Radnorshire together with a few immediately to the north in Montgomeryshire should be examined during the second phase of work in 1998/99. This report offers the results of the second stage. Subject to further funding it is hoped to complete the survey of northern Powys in the next financial year, and for that reason this report should be recognised as an interim statement which will be enhanced and completed when the data are complete.
- 1.3 Subsequent to the completion of report no.279, the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust were able to provide CPAT with a copy of their draft report on the Gwynedd hut circle settlement study (Smith 1998). Cognisance has been taken of the results from that study and has led to minor modifications in the way in which the two CPAT reports have been presented. It should also be noted that the Gwynedd report contains brief but useful assessments of earlier work on round hut identification and excavation throughout Wales (Smith 1998, 3ff).

2 Definitions

- 2.1 The following definitions from the first report are adopted here :

Round hut Round huts (also frequently termed hut circles in the records) display a curving perimeter for a significant part of their outer and/or inner faces, the overall impression of the structure being curvilinear rather than rectilinear. In internal diameter they can range from less than 2m to well over 8m. However, perfect circularity is rare and they may be sub-circular or oval, and may even exhibit flattened sides. A round hut may show as an earthen or stone bank, or may be distinguished, much more rarely, by a gully. Round huts are generally attributed to the Bronze Age on the basis of the few excavated examples in the region and their general prevalence as upstanding monuments in the upland regions of Britain. From fieldwork Iron Age huts have also been mooted, and there are some sites for which a later attribution seems plausible.

Round house A term adopted here only for excavated examples of appropriate form, regardless of date.

Hut Group A term used for a close-set group of two or more round huts. The individual huts may or may not be linked by walls but will usually be within 100m of each other and represent what appears in plan to be a fairly coherent complex. Subsidiary structures may also be present.

Enclosed round hut or hut group Used where a boundary bank, wall or ditch totally surrounds one or more round huts. Such enclosures may be of any size. The corollary is that where no such enclosure exists the round hut or hut group is *unenclosed* though this will usually not be stated.

It should be noted that in keeping with the *Thesaurus of Archaeological Site Types* (1992) produced by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), and adopted by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments for Wales (RCAHMW) for the Extended National Database (Endex), the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust has adopted the general term '*hut circle settlement*' for all round huts regardless of whether they are single or multiple sites. *Hut circle settlement* thus offers an alternative nomenclature to that used here.

Scoop On sloping ground the removal of material to create a more level platform on which to build a structure results in a scoop. Scoops used for habitation sites are potentially difficult to distinguish, because other natural (slippage) or man-made (quarry) occurrences can result in features of similar appearance. Few if any have been excavated in Wales but in northern Britain scooped settlements are a recognised phenomenon. The term scoop is preferred here to distinguish such sites from the platforms that accommodated long huts in historic times.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 The first phase of the project generated a database in which all the certain, probable and possible sites of round huts were entered (Silvester 1998, Appendix 1). Fieldwork in the second phase of the study focused on those sites which had either been positively identified as round huts in the past by fieldworkers or those where there was some element of uncertainty in the proposed chronology or function of the monuments concerned.
- 3.2 This phase excluded sites which now lie under forestry and those which had previously been identified as cropmarks, parchmarks or soilmarks. The records relating to these sites have been generated at various times in the past and any relevant photography is now rarely available to be re-assessed. More significantly, past field visits to such sites have rarely been of much value in determining the integrity of a particular round hut, and tend to be informative only about its locational setting.
- 3.3 Fieldwork, then, has concentrated on those sites with upstanding remains, or at least where there were remains when the last recorded site visit occurred. No prospecting for new sites has been attempted: the failure to locate more than the occasional site during systematic fieldwork campaigns (see below), together with a general appreciation that round huts are amongst the more difficult monument types to recognise on aerial photography, dictates that random searching was not an appropriate use of the limited resources. However, several sites not on the initial database have been added either as a result of a chance discovery during (e.g. PRN 36972) or because of a reassessment of existing data (e.g. PRN 36969).
- 3.4 Fieldwork took place during the period from June to August, but visits to a small number of scoop sites on the Radnorshire Commons were postponed until the bracken had died back during the winter.

- 3.5 Detailed records of each round hut were created during the site visit. Standardised recording forms modified from those used for the current Cadw-funded Deserted Rural Settlement survey were adopted. Amongst other aspects these allowed for a full description, the siting and topography of the monument, any associations, details on condition, land use and threats, ownership details, and a consistent set of criteria for judging the significance of the site. In addition, the first report (Silvester 1998, para 10.2.2) revealed the dearth of detailed plans available in the existing records, with no more than 8% of the total number of certain and probable sites in Powys and the old county of Clwyd having been the subject of a measured survey. This was rectified by producing plans at a scale of 1:100 during the site visit when it was considered that the site was of sufficient interest to warrant such a record. Photographs were taken, as much to show the monument in its setting, as to illustrate its morphology, but there were some sites such as PRN 21927 where it was adjudged that a photographic record would be of little value. Information from the record sheets was entered into the project database as soon as possible after the site visit, and the free-field descriptions from that database, together with the plans, are reproduced at the end of this report.
- 3.6 It should be noted at this stage that in every case access to the monuments under discussion was granted by their owners. Only in two instances was it not possible to contact landowners (PRNs 21926 and 21945).

4 Site Numbers

- 4.1 The assessment covers both those round huts which show as earthworks or stone-built features (Silvester 1998, para 8.1), and the platforms or scoops (Silvester 1998, para 8.4), that may have provided the bases on which timber or even stone huts were erected. A third type defined in the first report, the ring gullies, are not yet represented in this region. For the sake of clarity these sites have been grouped together under the generic term 'round hut' in the discussion that follows unless it is stated otherwise.
- 4.2 In the first report (para 6.5) twenty-three certain, probable and possible round huts were identified in Radnorshire and thirty-three in Montgomeryshire. A total of sixteen sites in the former and six in the latter have been visited, though it must be noted that three of these site visits were to huts which were not listed in the desk-top survey but were added subsequently. Of the visited sites ten in Radnorshire and four in Montgomeryshire can now be classed as certain or possible sites.
- 4.3 This remarkably small number is a silent yet evocative statement on just how limited the resource is in central Powys, and it can be placed in perspective by noting that the Gwynedd Hut Circle Settlement Survey identified more than 1850 round huts (Smith 1998, table 13).

5 Discovery and Identification

- 5.1 There is no tradition of round hut discovery in this region in contrast to earlier activity in areas such as Gwynedd (Smith 1998, 6). The Druid's Circle hut (PRN 264) was recorded on an Ordnance Survey map of 1903 yet this was clearly exceptional. Nant yr Ych (PRN 3758) was identified by the Ordnance Survey field investigators in 1972, the Fualt settlement (PRN 4163) in 1978, but it was only since the mid-1980s that most of the monuments considered here have been recognised, some as those around Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells (PRNs 17536 and 17527) during casual fieldwork, the others such

as Waun Lluest Owain (PRN 6664) during strategic upland programmes. Overall, at least ten of the sites were discovered by CPAT staff between 1986 and the present day, reinforcing points made elsewhere that even in unimproved moorland region of mid-Wales where the conditions favour the preservation of upstanding monuments round huts are scarce. And where they do appear solitary examples appear to represent the norm.

- 5.2 On the basis of the discernible trends it is likely that further discoveries will be made either during general and non-site specific fieldwork programmes, particularly in the uplands, and by chance discoveries. The latter view is reinforced by the writer's discovery of a new hut circle on a Montgomeryshire common while taking his dog for a walk during the Christmas (1998) holiday!

6 Survival

- 6.1 The geographical location of the round huts studied here is necessarily a key element in their preservation. Taking 244m (800') OD as an admittedly arbitrary but frequently cited boundary between lowland and upland, all occur in what must be classed as upland environments, as a cursory examination of the altitude figures demonstrates. In fact not one is found under 328m (1000') OD. Nevertheless, even at such high altitudes many lie in improved pasture - including two at over 500m (1640') OD - and are thus vulnerable to progressive degradation.

Altitude OD	No. of sites	Sites in unimproved upland
0-300m	0	0
301-350m	1	1
351-400m	5	3
401-450m	3	1
451-500m	3	2
over 501m	2	0

- 6.2 The seven identified on common land or otherwise unimproved moorland inevitably have the best chance of survival.

7 Function

- 7.1 It is a sobering fact that there is no more than a handful of sites which can unequivocally be claimed as prehistoric (or perhaps Romano-British) round huts. Only three or perhaps four seem to have a sufficiently diagnostic morphology or distinctive associations for certainty. The Fualt Settlement (PRN 4163) with its appended enclosure falls into this category, despite the fact that much of the round hut is now enveloped by clearance stone and hay. The Llandegley Rocks hut circle (PRN 17527) is another obvious example, as is the fine Foel Uchaf hut circle (PRN 21945). But in each of these cases it is the association of the monument with another feature, either an enclosure or a 'wandering wall', that permits a positive identification. Without associated features perhaps only Foel Uchaf would be entirely convincing.
- 7.2 The remaining sites on the Radnorshire and southern Montgomeryshire list are more equivocal. The site on Pawl Hir (PRN 17542) was interpreted as a round hut when first discovered and indeed was known to the landowner as a 'Goidel hut', but its near-summit

location and the possibility that its apparent north-west entrance is the result of subsequent disturbance could signal a ring cairn. The argument is reversed for the Caer Fawr hut (PRN 36969) one of the sites not on the original database. When he discovered it in 1997, the present writer inclined to a ring cairn interpretation. The advent of the round huts project with all the analysis that this entails, and more significantly the identification during survey work of a fugitive 'wandering wall' approaching the earthwork, has demanded a change of view. Recognition of the Druid's Circle hut (PRN 264) as a round hut has progressed gradually from the first record in 1913 when it was a stone circle with a smaller, ruined circle on its south side (RCAHMW 1913, 117) via Grimes who stated categorically that it was not a stone circle but might be part of a hut circle or the base of a cairn (1963, 148) to the Ordnance Survey in 1972 who identified it as 'probably a hut circle with remains of an enclosure' (OS card SN 96 NE 13). While there can be no doubt that the Ordnance Survey were correct in their interpretation, and that adjacent there is a fine Bronze Age cairn which was utilised as a barrier on the south side, the interpretation of the site as a hut circle must be in doubt in the light of the detailed plan. It could instead be a sub-rectangular structure, probably more at home in the medieval or post-medieval era.

- 7.3 The difficulty of distinguishing medieval or post-medieval from prehistoric is apparent elsewhere. Overall, judgment tends to favour the identification of a round hut to which a long hut was subsequently appended at the Waun Llest Owain settlement (PRN 6664), the relative sizes of the two elements implying that they are not contemporary. But it is not impossible that a long hut was constructed with a sub-circular pen or ancillary structure attached to it. Other putative prehistoric huts are less convincing. Nant y Ffrwd Hut II (PRN 4191) was classified as a possible prehistoric site in the SMR but detailed field examination undermines that interpretation and it is almost certainly post-medieval, contemporary perhaps with the farms and folds along the valley. Chronological uncertainty surrounds small huts such as Garreg Lwyd (PRN 6706), Nant yr Ych (PRN 3758) and Carneddau Hill (PRN 17536). All could be prehistoric, and the presence of a couple of nearby clearance cairns in the case of the last of these tends to reinforce this view, yet a much later date cannot be ruled out. Less convincing are the Drysgol hut (PRN 6711) which was positively identified at the time of its discovery in 1991 and the ring on Mynydd Rhos-fach (PRN 6550) which was not included on the database but was subsequently field checked. Despite its strong curvilinearity the latter is likely to be associated with post-medieval peat cutting, while the former, constructed primarily of peat, seems more likely to be post-medieval than prehistoric.
- 7.4 We are left with a small number of scoops such as Carneddau (PRN 23105), Glasnant (PRN 38306) and the Tynyllidiart platform (PRN 36972), the last of these a new discovery during fieldwork. It is only a presumption, albeit a reasonable one, that curvilinear scoops or platforms supported curvilinear huts. The date of such huts remains unknown, and the potential for confusion with quarries, trials or even natural hollows is considerable. The inability to separate natural from artificial almost certainly means that such features are under-represented, perhaps heavily so, in the record. Whether it is legitimate to cite analogous features from other regions of the British Isles in the absence of Welsh data is also open to question.
- 7.5 Finally there are those sites where a field visit has dispelled any contention of a prehistoric date. The original record of the Fron Top Settlement (PRN 17973) invoking both long and round huts is misleading: only the former are present. The Badland scoop (PRN 6837) is clearly a minerals trial, similar to two others nearby which were not recorded in 1992.
- 7.6 With such a small dataset there is little to be achieved by attempting a formal classification of the round huts in central Powys. In this area at least huts appear as

isolated structures. Hut groups are unknown, the closest being the paired huts (PRNs 21926 and 21927) above Nant Troedyresgair. In broad terms two groups seem to emerge, the primary criteria being size and, to a lesser extent, association. PRNs 4163, 17542, 21945 and 36969 are all around 10m in external diameter, and with the exception of PRN 17542 are associated either with 'wandering walls' or enclosures. At the opposite end of the scale are small structures such as PRNs 3758, 6706 and 17536 which might be classed as little more than shelters. Lying between the two extremes is PRN 17527, and anomalous sites such as PRN 21926. But even from such a limited sample it is apparent that there is considerable variation in form.

8 Management

8.1 We have noted above that seven sites are on common land or unimproved moorland and are therefore assumed to be secure from damage unless exceptional circumstances come into play. Only one site is considered to be vulnerable:

- PRN 17542 is adjacent to a track which is abused by 4x4 off-roading vehicles. Damage is minimal at present (though there has been some unrelated disturbance on the north-west side in the past) but might occur in the future.

8.2 Of the six on enclosed and improved land, all are considered to be potentially vulnerable to on-going or future operations that are essentially agricultural in their nature. For two, PRNs 264 and 21926, and possibly for PRN 36969, the risk of further damage in the near future is considered to be high.

- PRN 264 (on the evidence of the interrupted enclosure bank) has been damaged by improvement in the past and must be classed as vulnerable.
- PRN 4163 has been damaged by improvement in the past and must be classed as vulnerable. In addition it is now used as a hard-standing for stock fodder, and there is a possible future threat from a trail-biking course on the hill.
- PRN 6664 has been omitted from the pasture improvement scheme in the last ten years, probably on the initiative of the landowner. Such a sympathetic approach cannot of course be assumed in the future.
- PRN 21926 has also been degraded by agricultural operations in the past and is likely to be further effected, possibly in the near future
- PRN 23105 has probably avoided damage because of the size of the earthwork. The presence of gorse bushes on the platform, however, might warrant improvement in the future.
- PRN 36969 has been damaged by improvement in the past and must be classed as vulnerable.

9 Recommendations

- 9.1 Though the number of sites visited is relatively small, the rarity value of those that have been identified is a cogent factor in recommending sites for statutory protection. Four sites are viewed by the writer as serious contenders, two others as possible examples.
- PRN 4163 Despite the strictures above, this site retains its integrity: the enclosure bank is still obvious, and it is quite likely that a recognisable round hut underlies the decaying fodder and clearance stone that has been dumped on it.
 - PRN 6664 The combination of round hut and long hut is unusual and the monument might be considered on this basis.
 - PRN 17527 A small but clearly defined round hut with an attached enclosure in relatively good condition. Note too that elsewhere on Llandegley Rocks there are cairns which might merit consideration for statutory protection.
 - PRN 17542 The possibility that this is a ring cairn has already been mooted. The site exhibits a reasonable degree of preservation and merits consideration as a prehistoric monument even if its function is not absolutely certain.
 - PRN 21945 A fine example of a hut circle with a 'wandering wall' running off it, without doubt the best round hut seen during the current field programme. In excellent condition, and because of its remote location, not under any obvious threat. Despite enquiries we were only able to discover the owners' names, not where they could be contacted.
 - PRN 36969 Not a particularly obvious monument, and it has certainly suffered from agricultural degradation. It does, however, have an association with a wandering wall. It is recommended also on the basis that it lies a short distance from a group of long huts (PRNs 34819 and 50225-50227) which were recommended for scheduling in 1997/98, and immediately below the ramparts of a hillfort, Caer Fawr, which is believed to be unscheduled.

10 Acknowledgments

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11 Bibliography

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Plates

Plate 1	PRN 264 Druid's Circle hut from the south (CS98/22/06)
Plate 2	PRN 3758 Nant yr Ych hut from the south-west (CS98/19/37)
Plate 3	PRN 4163 Fualt settlement from the south-east (CS98/19/35)
Plate 4	PRN 6664 Waun Lluest Owain settlement from the west (CS98/22/22)
Plate 5	PRN 17536 Carneddau Hill hut site from the south-east (CS98/22/20)

Appendix 1: List of Round Huts in Central Powys

<i>PRN</i>	<i>Site Name</i>	<i>Grid Ref</i>	<i>Map</i>	<i>Planning</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>Altitude(m)</i>
264	Druid's Circle Hut	SN98676614	SN96NE	PCC/R	Nantmel	472
3758	Nant yr Ych Hut	SN90187256	SN97SW	PCC/R	Rhayader	373
4163	Fuallt Settlement	SO02547927	SO07NW	PCC/R	Llanbadarn Fynydd	526
6664	Waun Lluest Owain settlement	SO03698418	SO08SW	PCC/M	Llandinam	515
6706	Garreg Lwyd hut circle	SN93867370	SN97SW	PCC/R	St Harmon	460
17527	Llandegley Rocks hut circle	SO12996141	SO16SW	PCC/R	Llanfihangel Rhydithon	400
17536	Carneddau Hill Hut circle	SO06555524	SO05NE	PCC/R	Disserth and Trecoed	390
17542	Pawl Hir	SO10145959	SO15NW	PCC/R	Llanbadarn Fawr	405
21926	Nant Troedegair Round Hut II	SN86907924	SN87NE	PCC/M	Llangurig	420
21927	Nant Troedegair Round Hut I	SN86917924	SN87NE	PCC/M	Llangurig	420
21945	Foel Uchaf hut circle	SN80799117	SN89SW	PCC/M	Cadfarch	470
23105	Carneddau hut site	SO06045344	SO05SE	PCC/R	Llanelwedd	363
36969	Caer Fawr hut	SO05905316	SO05SE	PCC/R	Llanelwedd	380
36972	Tynyllidiart platform	SO06425573	SO05NE	PCC/R	Disserth and Ricoed	335

Appendix 2: Site Ownership

<i>PRN</i>	<i>Owner</i>
17527	Mr W Bayliss, Linden Lea, Penybont, nr Llandrindod Wells.
17536	Glanusk Estate, Glanusk Park, Crickhowell
17542	Mr Kendrick, Cwmbrith, Cefnlllys.
21945	Trustees of the Bugeilyn Estate, Temple Gardens, London EC4Y 9AB (no further details)
38306	Mr S Marsh-Smith, Gromain, Erwood, nr Builth Wells.
4163	Mr T Breese, Cwmdernw, Bwlch-y-Sarnau.
6664	Mr S Kinsey, Redhouse Farm, Dolwen
36969	Mr Hackley, Carneddau Farm, Llanelwedd

A hut, known as the Druid's Circle, of irregular form with attached enclosure, both butting up against a kerb cairn. It is not clear that this is a prehistoric occupation site; in particular the shape of the hut might suggest a more recent date.

Description. The hut has an irregular form as the plan shows, and is now more rectangular than circular, though the possibility that this is due to differential collapse needs to be considered. The wall is predominantly of stone with a covering of grass though many stones project through this cover. Several stones may be on edge though there are no indisputable facing slabs. There is no obvious entrance, though there are several places where the level of the wall has been lowered. Possibly the most likely entrance is at the NW end. Some large blocks of stone lie in the interior.

Dimensions. 5.8m WNW/ESE by 5.0m SSW/NNE externally. Internally 2.8m x 1.1m. Height is no greater than 0.2m generally though the inner measurement of the hut on the SW side is perhaps 0.3m. The external diameter of the enclosure (see below) is about 17m NNE/SSW by an unknown distance. Internally it is about 12m x 10m.

Associations. Abutting the hut is an enclosure, sub-circular in design but incomplete for the bank tails out on the N side. Elsewhere the bank is better defined than the hut, and though not visible some facing seems to be implicit in the tightness of the bank line. On the SE side it looks as though the stone matrix of the adjacent kerb cairn may have fulfilled the function of enclosure boundary.

Nearby are traces of further activity. One small cairn and possibly a short stretch of low wall are evident. The main feature, however, is a kerb cairn known as Carn Wen, and the hut and its enclosure is immediately below this.

Location. The hut is set just below the crest of the ridge at about 475m OD. The ground falls away steeply a few metres to the south-east, and some metres to the north-west drops away to a saddle before the ground rises to Gwastodyn Hill. There has probably been some improvement to the pasture in the past, even though rock outcrops are visible, and on the saddle to the north-west there are modern clearance cairns. On and around the site, the grass is close-cropped though bracken is beginning to encroach on the ridge.

Condition and threats. The hut itself is in reasonable condition and may have been largely avoided during any improvement on the hill top. In contrast the enclosure has suffered considerably. Further improvement which is perhaps not likely in the near future is the only likely threat.

PRN 4163

A well-defined enclosure accompanies a less obvious round hut, the former well-preserved, the latter in poorer condition.

Description. The round hut is largely grass covered with stones protruding through the surface. Some of the stones are quite large, up to 0.4m, though there are no convincing facing stones. The interior is irregular, particularly the western segment, and this together with the fact that the farmer uses the round hut as a hard standing for stock feeding (so that it is permanently covered with straw, bailer twine etc), means that it is particularly difficult to define the inner edge of the hut. The entrance too is not obvious. It might lie on the NW side where it is difficult to detect an outer edge (though this could be due to general degradation), or it could be on the SE where stone has been tipped over the hut. Only on the N side is there evidence of both inner and outer sides of the hut, suggesting a ring bank about 1.2m wide.

Dimensions. Externally 10.2m NE/SW and NW/SE. Internal dimensions cannot be gauged. Nowhere is it more than 0.2m high.

Associations. The enclosure bank is more pronounced. It is low and flat, again with stones protruding. Internal facing stones visible on the W side. There is also a break in the bank - 0.5m wide - on this side but given the adjacent shallow scoop in the bank top, it is likely that stone has been removed here. There is little evidence of an external ditch or gully, but on the E there are hints of a scoop outside the bank. Enclosure bank terminals where it meets the hut are the most indistinct parts of the perimeter. Nevertheless the original entrance is more likely to be immediately to the E of the round hut. Interior undulates, particularly in the NW sector, though much is masked by rushes. It would be worth conducting an EDM survey of the enclosure to complement the plan of the round hut.

Location. It is on a gentle SE facing slope just below the ridge crest at a surprising 540m OD; fine views from the NE through the S to SW.

Condition and threats. The monument appears to be in reasonable condition, particularly if the enclosure bank is taken as a guide, though the use of the round hut as a hard standing for fodder and the consequent poaching by stock will cause some damage. A further threat is motorcycle scrambling on the hill: at the moment the nearest part of the course is a little under 20m away.

PRN 3758

A man-made feature of uncertain function, but it could be a shelter from the historic period rather than a prehistoric hut circle.

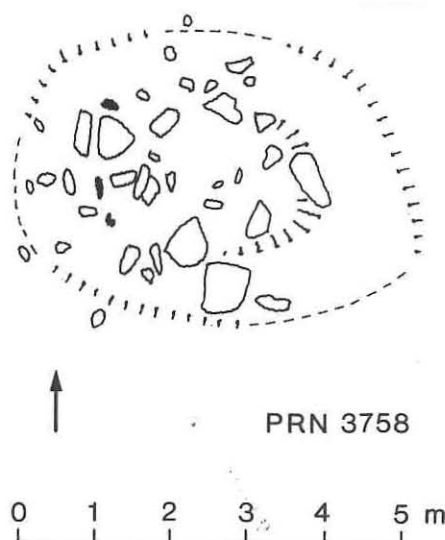
Description. The origin of this is undoubtedly artificial. Its shape as shown by the surface stone together with the absence of stone elsewhere on the flank of this small valley make this uncertain. However, while the surface stone creates a near circle, probing seems to show a more oval feature though as usual it is impossible to determine how much of this is spread, not least because there is some indications that peaty deposits have formed over some of the stone.

The site thus consists of a concentration of small to medium-large stones with others covered over, particularly by moss. On the W side there are one or two stones on edge but the majority are flat. There is no obvious entrance and the stone in the middle gives a cairn-like impression though this could be misleading. The interior slopes from E to W and there is no indication of any artificial terracing. It exists in isolation and there are no associated features.

Dimensions. Externally 5.4m E/W x 3.8m N/S. Internally it could be about 2.7m by 2m. Nowhere is it higher than 0.2m.

Location. It is located on a valley floor, slightly above but less than 10m from the stream, Nant yr Ych. It is on the N side of the stream, but is W facing in that the stream joins its larger counterpart, Nant y Ffald, little more than 100m to the W. Its aspect is thus limited to reasonable views to the W and NW, but it is also sheltered from both the S and the N by the rising sides of the valley.

Condition and threats. Not a prepossessing site yet it is unlikely that it is much disturbed, and its diminutive form probably reflects the materials used. No obvious threats.



PRN 6664

A relatively small oval hut with a long hut appended to it, sited in improved pasture and now in the middle of a windfarm.

Description: an oval hut which may subsequently have functioned as a pen or very small enclosure. The perimeter bank is grass-covered though a few stones protrude, and probing suggests that many more lie just below the surface, indicative of a wall rather than an earth and stone bank. Few if any facing stones are evident. The wall dips in its N quadrant but this is less likely to represent an entrance than the similar, rush-filled dip in the S quadrant. The bank is higher than that of the adjacent long hut to the E, and there is inconclusive evidence of a shallow gully around the outside of the wall - pasture improvement which has avoided the huts confuses the interpretation.

Dimensions: externally the hut is 7.5m N/S by about 6m and internally 4.2m by 2.5m. The maximum height of the bank is about 0.5m.

Associations: abutting the SE side of the oval hut is a long hut, presumably the rectangular enclosure of the original report. This is approximately 12m long by 6m wide. The original report also referred to associated fields. Whatever their form may have been when first identified, nothing of their layout can now be detected.

Location: the hut is located on a gentle hillslope with a bog filling the basin immediately to the E. A small stream runs past the hut little more than 15m away. There is a little shelter with the ridge top to the W and SW cutting out the prevailing winds. The aspect is excellent with wide views to the NE, E and S.

Condition and threats: it appears that the field in which the site lies has been improved in recent years, but that the site itself was avoided during these works. This may have been a deliberate decision on the part of the owner who mentioned the presence of the long hut to the writer.

PRN 6706

A small embanked ring much disguised by heather, bilberry and some bracken.

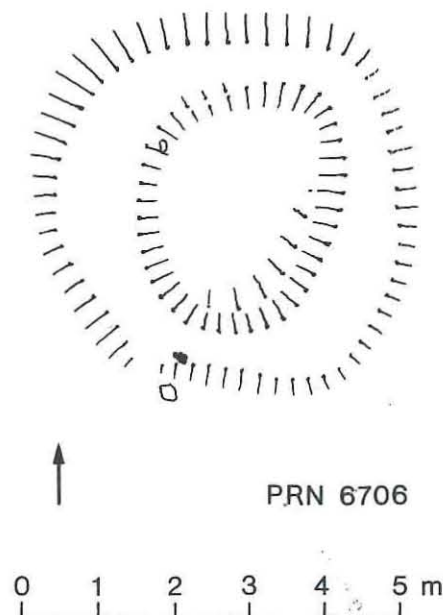
Description: the bank is small and low and not an exact circle, though a protrusion from the NE quadrant may be natural or a dump of stone. Probing indicates that the bank consists of stone but little of this is now visible on the surface, though in terms of depth it contrasts with the deeper soil around the site. One upright slab on the inner face on the S, otherwise no evidence of facing stones. It is conceivable that a natural rock outcrop has been incorporated - one stone on the W is very firmly embedded. There is no clear entrance - a gap on the S side beside the upright slab is a possibility, and the NE sector of the bank is also low enough. This could conceivably be a ring cairn but a hut circle still seems the most likely.

Dimensions 5.0m W/E x 5.3m N/S, and a maximum of 0.3m high. Internal dimensions are no more than 2.0m W/E x 2.5m N/S.

No associations with any other features.

Location: set on a flat natural shelf with the ground generally sloping towards the NW. Excellent aspect over a saddle and the next ridge crest to the NW, and also some distant views over the Wye Valley to the WNW.

Condition and threats: condition reasonable and no obvious threats.



PRN 17527

A well-defined round hut with a contiguous enclosure to the SW.

Description. The hut is almost exactly circular and is terraced into a slope. Probable facing stones are visible, both internally and externally, on the N side of the hut, but elsewhere it is defined by a grassed-over bank with stones projecting from it. An entrance is on the ENE.

Dimensions. The hut is 6.0m NE/SW by 5.5m NW/SE externally. Internally it is 4.0m x 3.5m. The foundations are thus around 1.0m wide, and 0.3m high. The entrance is about 0.8m wide. The enclosure (see below) is 12.3m NE/SW and 6.5m NW/SE externally. Its wall varies in width from 0.6m to 1.3m and its height is a maximum of 0.3m.

Associations. To the SW are the remains of a sub-rectangular enclosure defined by an intermittent and in places fugitive wall or bank. Its entrance is likely to be towards the N end of the long NW side.

Location. The site occupies a gentle NW-facing slope below the crest of a ridge and is shielded by a rock scarp on the S side. Its aspect is to the W and N. Llandegley Rocks provides rough grazing, the site itself being under cropped grass.

Condition and threats. Condition general good and no obvious threat.

PRN 17536

A small oval hut set on a sheltered saddle of land at the north end of Carneddau Common.

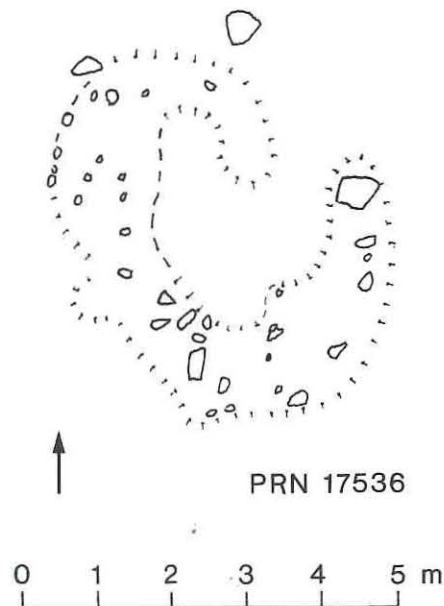
Description. The bank defining the hut is oval, with some stone (up to 0.4m long) projecting through the turf, and inevitably more stone just below the surface. How much earth is mixed in with the stone cannot be gauged. There is no convincing evidence of facing slabs. The gap on the NE side suggests some disturbance with material seemingly pushed into the centre. This however, could also be the location of the entrance. The interior is level.

Dimensions. Externally the hut is 4.7m N/S x 4.2m E/W while internally it is 3.0m by 2.5m. Generally its height is no more than 0.2m, rarely 0.3m.

Associations. Immediately to the SW is a cairn, presumably a result of clearance, and another lies to the SSE. It is also noticeable that the surrounding ground is largely devoid of surface stone. However, it cannot be assumed that the hut and the cairns are contemporary.

Location. The site is set on a saddle at the base of a minor re-entrant between rising ground to the north and south. The ground here is level and the aspect is limited and largely to the NW, while it is sheltered from most directions though primarily the SE.

Condition and threats. It appears that the site has undergone some degradation in the past though there is now no obvious threat to the site.



PRN 17542

A single monument, which could be either a round hut or a ring cairn.

Description: the monument consists of a well defined and substantial bank, predominantly of stone, and broad in relation to its height. It is oval rather than round in outline. The bank is broken on the NW side but this could be conceivably be a result of vehicle damage from a green lane which passes immediately to the N. Though there is now no sign of encroachment this could have happened in the past, and it cannot be assumed that the gap is an original entrance. Quite large blocks of stone have been used for revetting the internal face: five perhaps six are visible, up to 0.4m long. Nothing similar is visible for the outer face; instead there is simply a scarp. Otherwise the bank appears to be of stone, much of it grassed over. The interior is choked with stone, again grassed over in places. It is not clear whether this is later clearance material, collapsed walling or possibly original cairn material. More stone is exposed in the NE quadrant, and in the NW quadrant there are indications that either a part of the interior has been hollowed out or less material has accumulated here. The feature is set on a very gentle slope, dropping from S to N, but it is impossible to determine whether the interior has been levelled. To the owner it is known as a pre-Bronze Age 'Goidel hut'.

Dimensions: externally it is 10.0m N/S by 11.7m E/W. The internal equivalents are approx 7.5m x 7.3m. At it highest the bank is 0.5m (on the SE), but this is exceptional and more commonly it is around 0.3m.

Associations: none.

Location: it is set on one of the low eminences that protrude from a ridge. Its position is exposed for there is marginally higher ground nearby, but lower ground (by 2m) immediately to the N. There are excellent views to the E, the NW and the W. But the position is remarkably exposed and the altitude of 400m OD is high.

Conditions and threats: some disturbance to the fabric of the site but otherwise reasonable. Some concern about the use of the adjacent green lane which might have an impact on the site itself.

PRN 21926

A scooped earthwork on a S-facing hillside with another of similar form (PRN 21927) nearby.

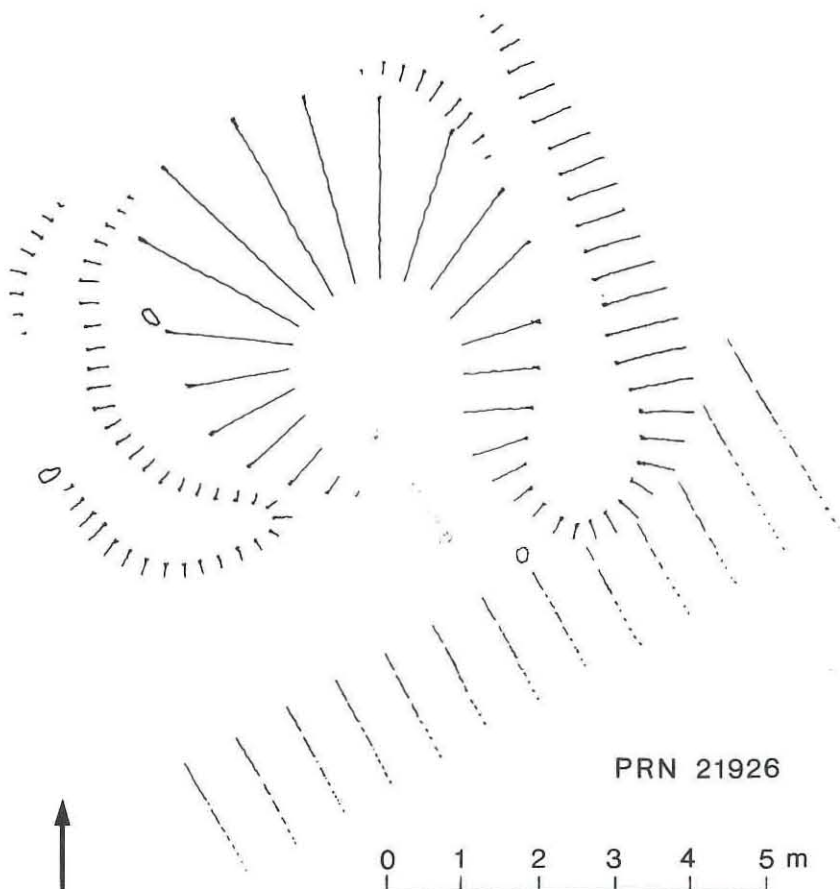
Description: the site basically consists of a scoop cut into the hillslope, relatively small with a pronounced fan at the rear of a small level platform. Two large rocks and several smaller ones break the surface of the fan and platform, though there is little indication that these have any structural significance. Around the edge of the scoop is a low and intermittent bank of material, distinguished by a slight rise of no more than 0.2m but larger than the usual amount of moss. The bank is more evident on the E where it is uninterrupted, it is intermittent on the W and there is virtually no sign of it above the fan on the N. At the front of the platform is a flattish area of ground projecting forward: this could be natural but might be spoil thrown outwards. This could be a house platform yet the interpretation is not wholly convincing. The spoil round the lip is reminiscent of mining trials. Taken together with its more convincing neighbour (PRN 21927) it may be a hut site but is hardly typical.

Dimensions: the maximum dimensions of the feature are 8.7m W/E by c.7m N/S. The maximum size of the scoop is 6m by 6.5m and the level platform within it is only 2.3m by c.3m. The maximum height of the fan is around 0.6m.

Associations: a second similar sites lies nearby (PRN 21927).

Location: it is cut into a moderate sloping hillside with a stream - Nant Troedyresgair - about 150m away running along the valley floor. It has a generally good aspect from W through S to E.

Condition and threats: the condition is moderate to poor, and further improvement of the pasture will initiate greater degradation.



PRN 21927

A scooped earthwork on a S-facing hillside.

Description: the site appears to be similar to PRN 21926 though better preserved. However, as it is now set almost wholly within an overgrown 'wayleave' beside a conifer plantation, the vegetation cover makes it extremely difficult to determine the details. It is certain that the entrance was on the S, and the scoop is fairly flat-bottomed, with a bank around the lip, most evident where it protrudes into the pasture field to the W. No stone is visible. It is interpreted as a circular house site, perhaps with a scooped interior?

Dimensions: none were established during the current fieldwork, but previous work in 1987 suggested an external diameter of 7.5m and an internal diameter of c.6m, which indicates a feature very similar in scale to PRN 21926.

Associations: a second similar sites lies 29m uphill and to the NNW (PRN 21926).

Location: it is cut into a moderate sloping hillside with a stream -Nant Troedyresgair - about 130m away running along the valley floor. It has a generally good aspect from W through S to E.

Condition and threats: it is presumed to be in reasonable condition but a long-term threat must be envisaged when the plantation is cleared.

PRN 21945

A large hut circle with a wandering wall attached, located in a remote valley.

Description: the hut circle wall is well-defined and composed of rubble with very little turf covering. External facing stones are visible, particularly on the south and east, and there is some evidence of internal facing on the north. An entrance gap, 0.7m wide, remains in the north-east quadrant. The thickness of the wall is reasonably consistent except in the north-west where it narrows. There is a small amount of internal stone but it is difficult to determine whether this defines internal features.

Dimensions: externally these are 9.7m N/S by 10.1m E/W, and internally 5.3m by 5.5m, with a maximum height of about 0.5m. The width of the wall is in excess of 2m.

Associations: meandering north-westwards from the hut circle is a rubble stone wall which abuts the hut circle just to the west of the entrance. This runs for around 40m before disappearing in natural rock outcrops, and there are two subsidiary walls running eastwards off the main wall. Approximately 30m to the NNE of the hut circle is a curving length of wall, also of rubble, about 6m long which might be a fragment of an oval hut, possibly 5m by 3m externally.

Location: the hut is placed on the side of a valley, mid-slope with the aspect to the S and SE. Rock outcrops shelter the site from the N. A stream runs in the bottom of the valley less than 50m away.

Condition and threats: in excellent condition with no obvious threats.

PRN 23105

A single terraced platform perched just above Gaer Fawr bog.

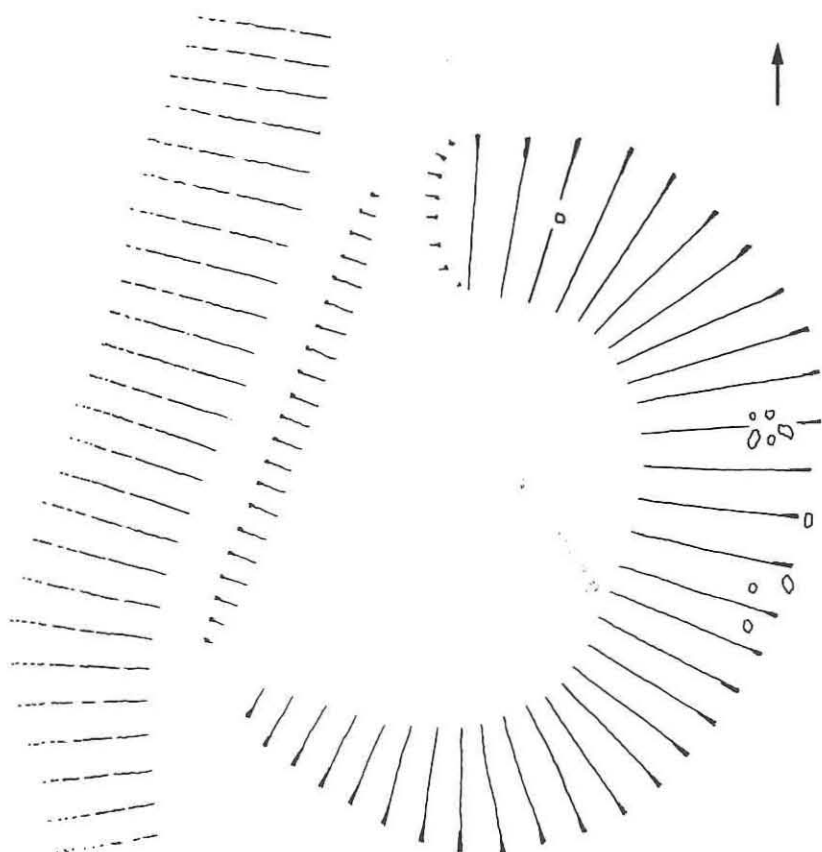
Description: the platform is defined by a moderately shallow fan on the E side (though this is difficult to appreciate because it is swamped by gorse bushes). There is certainly some stone projecting from this fan and the earlier record suggests some stone on the back of the platform. The fan curves around to form sides on the N and S. On the W there is a drop down to the bog and a hint of an inner slope giving a faint bank but this is complicated by an animal track running along the bog edge. The overall plan suggests a sub-circular feature.

Dimensions: externally it is about 7.1m SE/NW by 9.5m SW/NE, internally 4.5m by 5.8m. The fan is c.1m high, the apron at the front about 0.65m, though this is largely a natural slope rather than a manmade earthwork.

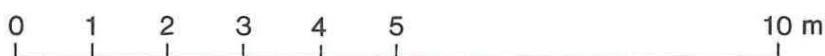
Associations: there are no obvious associations.

Location: the ground rises gently behind the earthwork, giving some shelter from the SE and E. In front is a bog, though this is relatively small compared with many upland bogs. The aspect is wide-ranging if not particularly distant. The ground on which the site lies has been enclosed in a field which has seen some improvement.

Condition and threats: in as far as it can be assessed the site is in reasonable condition, but the long-term threat of improvement should be invoked.



PRN 23105



PRN 35345

A scoop of sub-circular form occupying an isolated position in an upland valley.

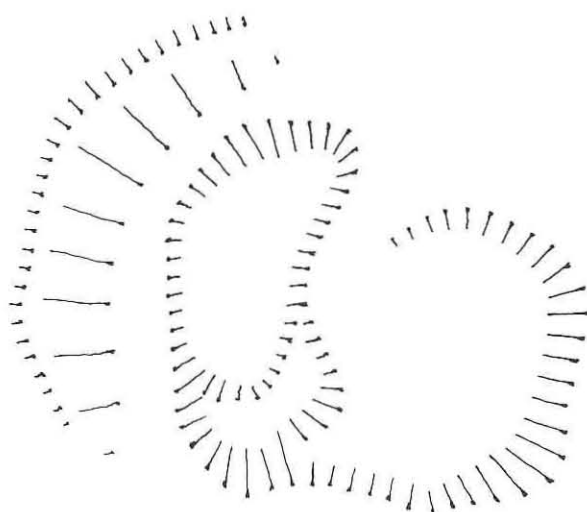
Description. The scoop shows as a broadly oval platform defined on the NE, E and S sides by a well-defined curving fan which is about 0.4-0.5m deep. Probing suggests that the underlying rock mirrors what can be seen on the surface suggesting that the fan is rock cut. A gap, c.1m wide, at the north end of the fan could be the site of the entrance. An anomaly exists on the N side of the platform where a scarp exhibiting a rather flattened curve drops to a shallow crescent-shaped hollow edged by a low broad bank.

Dimensions. Externally the scoop 7.7m WNW/ESE by 6.0m NNE/SSW. Internally it is 5.1m by 3.4m, assuming that the hollow in the W side is an integral part of the feature.

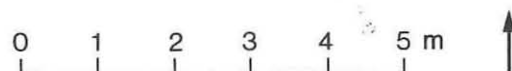
Associations. None recognised.

Location. On common land on a gently WNW-facing slope, immediately above a break of slope, below which the ground pitches steeply down to the valley of the Glas Brook. The site is enveloped by heather with some bracken and is difficult to identify from a distance.

Condition and threats. No obvious threats perceived.



PRN 35345



PRN 36969

A circular earth and stone feature occupying a low spur with excellent views towards the Wye Valley to the S.

Description: from a short distance away this appears to be a near circular feature, most of the circuit of which can be determined. It is, however, more difficult to distinguish when walking across the site itself. There appears to be an earthen bank with occasional stones showing, though probing indicates significant amounts of stone just below the surface. The bank is low and of what might be termed intermediate width, with no obvious facing stones. It is particularly spread on the uphill (ENE) and downhill (WSW) sides and this is probably the result of pasture improvement which is evident from the appearance of the surrounding ground. There are two gaps in the bank, one on the N side which might conceivably be due to agricultural activity and is certainly unlikely to be the entrance on the basis of its orientation, and one on the west a more likely candidate. The interior is reasonably level and has evidently been terraced back. On the S side of the earthwork is a shallow natural scarp with rock protruding and it is above this that the earthwork has been set.

Dimensions: externally it is about 11m N/S by 10.5m E/W. Internally it is 6.9m by 6.5m. The bank achieves a maximum height of 0.3m.

Associations: merging with the N side of the earthwork is a stony bank which then meanders up hill to the E. Below the earthwork it is not really in evidence though its line is continued in the natural slope. It is best interpreted as an associated enclosure or field bank.

Location: the earthwork is set on a spur with a natural gully to the S and a broad dry U-shaped valley to the N. The defences of Care Fawr lie immediately to the SE. The site has an excellent aspect down the valley to the S and SW.

Condition and threats: the feature has been degraded and will suffer further damage during future improvement.

PRN 36972

A small curvilinear platform with a fine view, at the northern end of Carneddau Common.

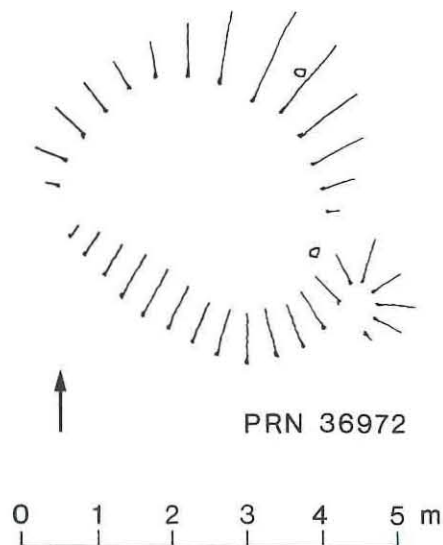
Description: the site comprises a small, almost D-shaped terrace, its base sloping only slightly from SW to NE. At the rear is a distinctive if low fan, at the front an obvious apron. This has a fairly curvilinear appearance but the fan describes a straight line. There is no evidence of a structure on the platform, and only the occasional lump of stone projects from the fan and apron, though it is evident that rather more stone lies just below the surface. There can be no doubt that this is a man-made earthwork. Its date, however, remains uncertain.

Dimensions: the external dimensions of the platform are 4.7m NW/SE by 4.5m NE/SW. Internally, it 3.5m by 2.5m. The fan achieves a height of no more than c.0.35m, the apron about 0.5m.

There are no obvious associations.

Location: the platform is set into a faint hollow on the hillside which faces towards the NW, and the ground rises to the S, E and, for a short distance, to the W. Thus there is some shelter from prevailing winds as well as a good aspect.

Condition and threats: the condition is reasonable and there are no obvious threats.



PRN 38306

A scoop of sub-circular form occupying an isolated position in an upland valley.

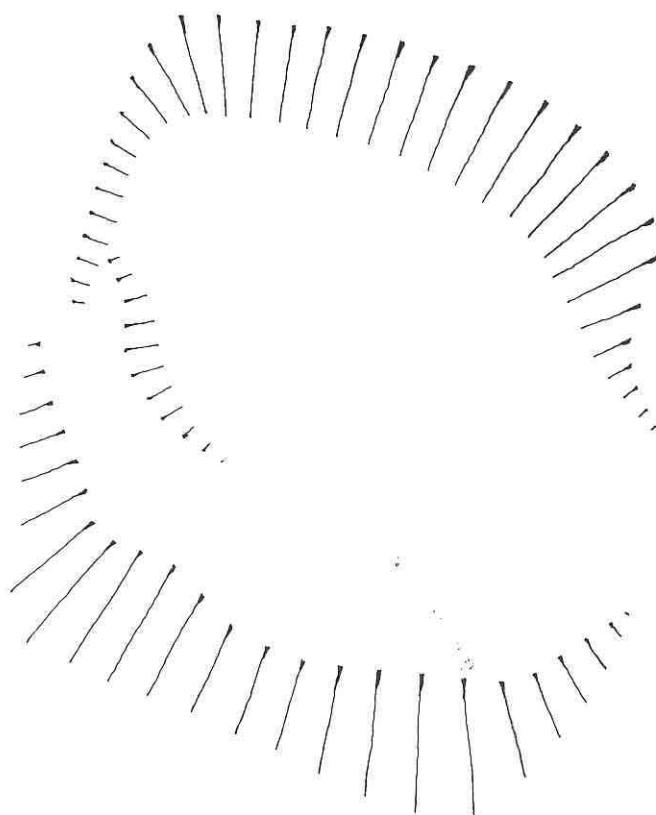
Description. The scoop shows as an approximately oval platform terraced into shelving ground. The fan at the rear of the platform is quite distinctive but has been disturbed by a sheep track which cuts across it, and its full extent is not entirely clear. The W side of the apron commences near the end of the fan and runs in a curve around the S before fading out. A 2m-wide gap in the earthwork on the E side may indicate an entrance.

Dimensions. Externally the scoop is 8.2m WNW/ESE by 9.5m NNE/SSW. Internally it is about 7m by 6.8m.

Associations. None, though there is a stone circle, the Six Stones Circle (PRN 353), in the valley about 200m to the SE.

Location. On common land on the moderately sloping S-facing side of a valley, along which runs the Glasnant stream. The site is bracken-covered and difficult to recognise from a distance.

Condition and threats. Some limited erosion to the site but generally sound. No obvious threats perceived.



PRN 38306

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