

CPAT Report No 1009

Mynydd Hiraethog

The Scheduling Enhancement Programme



THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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R Hankinson and R J Silvester
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Report for Cadw

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
7a Church Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DL
tel (01938) 553670, fax (01938) 552179
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The photograph on the cover shows the Penbryn-ci enclosure, otherwise PRN 105725 (CPAT 2936-010)

The Scheduling Enhancement Programme: Introduction

In the second quarter of the financial year 2007/8, a scoping study was conducted at the request of Cadw which identified in overall terms the number of sites and features recorded in the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) that might still need to be assessed in order to complete the scheduling enhancement programme for prehistoric and Roman sites in the region, taking the study from the earliest times through to around 400 AD. It was required in order to inform their thinking on priorities for scheduling enhancement in the two years up to April 2010 which at that time was the projected date timetabled for when the provisions of the Heritage Reform White Paper were to be implemented.

The scoping report was submitted to Cadw in September 2007 and was discussed at a meeting of the trusts' directors and Cadw on 3 October. This was followed by a further meeting between the trusts and Dr Mike Yates on 7 November, as a result of which some preliminary work on a general scheduling enhancement programme across the whole of Wales was conducted by some but not all trusts during the remainder of 2007/8. All four trusts are currently involved, at the time of writing, in this programme, with a view to completing it by the end of the financial year 2009/10.

A series of enhancement programmes had already taken place during previous years across Powys and the former county of Clwyd, in some cases going back into the early 1990s, to study thematically a range of monument types including: unenclosed prehistoric settlements identified through their lithic concentrations (2001-2), prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments (from 1997 until 2005/6 with follow-up programmes in three subsequent years), hut circles/round huts (from 1998 to 2008), defended enclosures of Iron Age and Roman date (in 1993, 1995, 1998 & 2006 to 2008) Roman military establishments (2004 to 2008), and Roman roads (2002 to 2004 with follow up work as a result of the projected revision of Nash-Williams and Jarrett's *Roman Frontier in Wales* volume). Such enhancement programmes were designed not only to identify sites which held sufficient potential to qualify them for scheduling as sites of national importance, but also to undertake a rationalisation of the HER, through the validation of authentic sites and rejection of spurious examples, the amplification of existing records as necessary, and the removal of duplicate records.

The scoping study in 2007 utilised a recent extract from the HER to identify: a) all sites and features of prehistoric and Roman date and b) all recorded examples of specific site types such as 'enclosure', 'pound', field system' and the like where the period had been defined as 'unknown'. Sites already assessed during the enhancement programmes of previous years were then removed from this database. Similarly, sites which had nothing more precise than four-figure grid references were removed in the belief that there was no realistic prospect of identifying any such site on the ground, an approach paralleling that followed by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

The study identified over 1600 sites (or cultural heritage assets to use the current phraseology) across Powys and the former county of Clwyd where assessment might be useful. Some site types such as burnt mounds, field systems including pit alignments, and caves appeared to provide in themselves typologically discrete studies, but it was equally clear that there were some areas of east and north-east Wales where concentrations of various types of site suggested that a more geographically defined approach might be a more efficient mechanism for assessment. Where a field element might be involved in the assessment, it was felt that it would be a more economical use of resources to look at the sites of varying types as a group rather than to examine them individually over different years.

One such geographical area is the upland region variously known a Mynydd Hiraethog and as an English variant, the Denbigh Moors. In broad terms this region extends from the Vale of Clwyd westwards to the Valley of the Conwy and in doing so passes from Denbighshire into eastern Conwy in local planning terms. Hiraethog, a word meaning 'long gorse-land mountain' is first attested around about 1200 while the application of 'mynydd' appears rather later, around 1700 (Owen and Morgan 2007, 333). The appellation Denbigh Moors is seen as a familiar term without a significant history behind it.

Overall it covers, at least as far as this study goes, an area of around 400km², but the story of archaeological discovery is very different between the western and eastern portions. The former contain the open moors of Hiraethog which have been the focus of sustained fieldwork since CPAT started work there in 1993 under the auspices of the Upland Initiative (Owen and Silvester 1993) and has also seen some survey as a result of developments that were planned on the moors (e.g. Hankinson 1995). The eastern part of the Denbigh Moors, however, has never been systematically examined for archaeology, in part because a sizeable part of it lies beneath Clocaenog Forest. It is also generally lower than the western moors with more land that has been enclosed in the past.

Table 1: Occurrence of specific sites types against geographical areas

<i>Area</i>	<i>Black Mounts</i>	<i>Brecon Beacons</i>	<i>Clwyd- ians</i>	<i>Elan Valley</i>	<i>Epynt</i>	<i>Mynydd Hiraethog</i>	<i>Severn Valley</i>	<i>Tanat Valley</i>	<i>Vale of Clwyd</i>	<i>West Monts uplands</i>
<i>Site type</i>										
<i>Burnt mounds</i>		■			■					■
<i>Caves</i>		■	■						■	
<i>Mines and quarries</i>										
<i>Cairnfields</i>	■	■		■						
<i>Enclosures</i>	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
<i>Field systems</i>	■	■		■		■	■	■		
<i>Roman settlement</i>							■			
<i>Roman religious sites</i>									■	

Five research objectives, common to all the scheduling enhancement projects, were identified in the proposals for grant-aid submitted to Cadw in their final version in March 2008. These were in order:

- a) an assessment of the archaeological significance of the various site-types and the sites that comprise them, within both the regional and particularly the national framework.
- b) the identification of those sites that might merit further examination through ground survey, geophysical survey and evaluation.
- c) the recommendation of future management strategies, specifically scheduling.
- d) the enhancement of the regional HER and through it the Extended National Database (END) maintained by the Royal Commission.
- e) the dissemination of information through publication if appropriate.

Particular emphasis in the current study has been placed on objectives a), c) and d). One further objective, though laudable, is not particularly practicable in the present economic climate, though attention should be drawn to the forthcoming Royal Commission book on Mynydd Hiraethog which will highlight good examples of extant sites, not all of which are fully recorded.

SEP Methodology

The preliminary stages of the Mynydd Hiraethog study, following the pattern adopted for previous studies, were wholly desk-top based, defining and checking the integrity of the database, assessing the authenticity of the remaining, unscheduled sites and features within it, and establishing which if any

sites might merit a field visit which in turn might lead to a scheduling recommendation. A basic assumption from the commencement of the project was that no site would be recommended for statutory designation without a field visit being undertaken as a preliminary, an assumption that has underpinned all of the Trust's Scheduling Enhancement Programme studies (SEPs) to date.

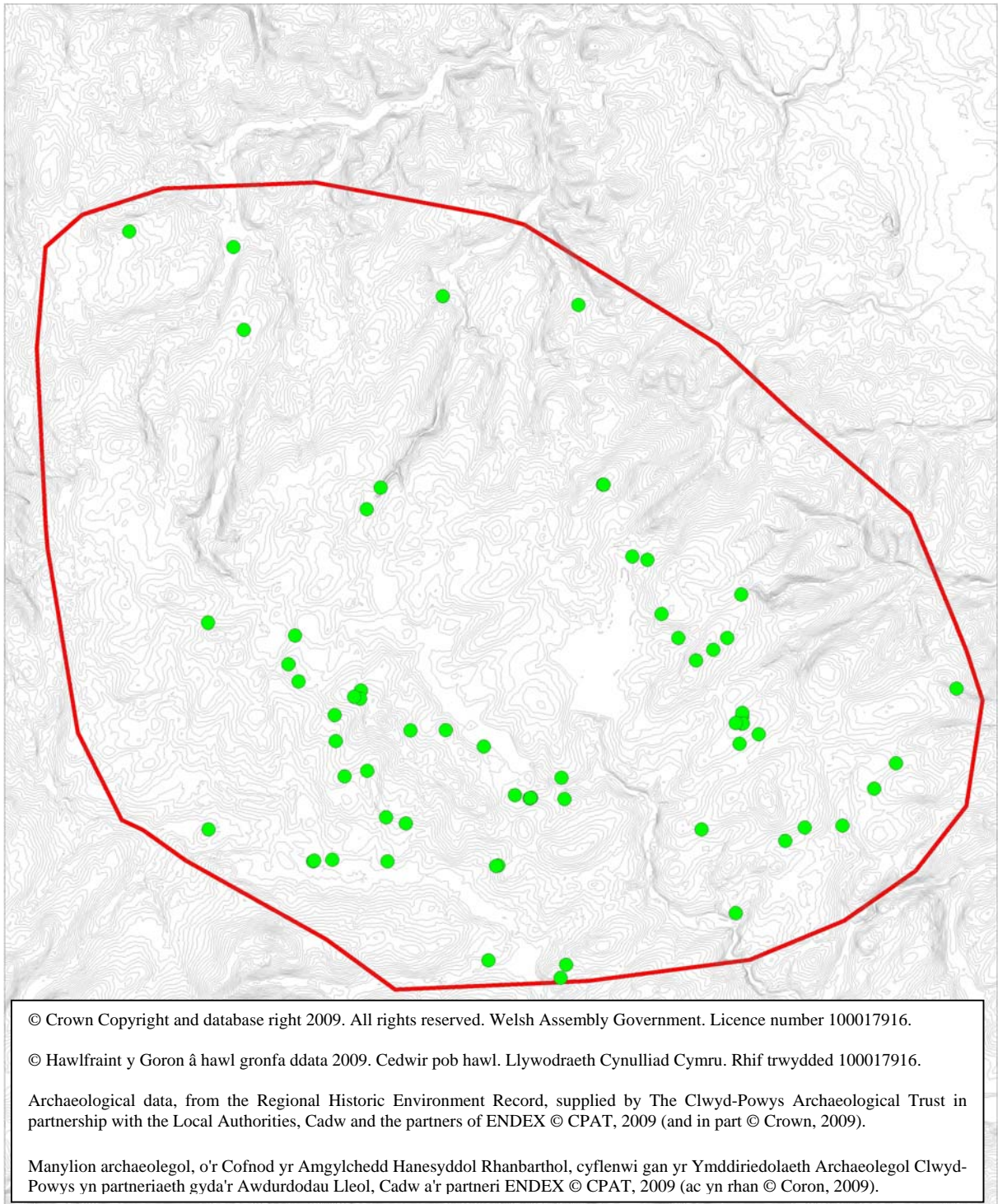


Fig 1 Distribution of unscheduled sites in the Mynydd Hiraethog area not visited during previous scheduling enhancement programmes

An up-to-date extract from the HER was initially provided by the curatorial section of the Trust, and with this as a base, the total archaeological resource in the geographical area of the Denbigh Moors as defined for the purposes of the study was identified.

The HER currently carries in excess of two thousand records for this region, resulting as we have seen from the amount of upland survey and associated record creation that has occurred under the heading of the Uplands Initiative in recent years. Table 2 shows that numbers are high even compared with what might be thought of as the better known areas of the Brecon Beacons and the Elan Valley.

The removal of all sites and features that had been specifically attributed to the post-Roman era (i.e. from the Early Medieval through to the 20th century) left around 380 records.

The majority of these are attributed in the HER to the prehistoric era, but there were 92 which were period-classed as 'Unknown'. From the surviving records, a further 83 already scheduled sites were removed, which curiously was precisely the same number as in the Elan Valley search area covered in the previous enhancement programme, and two descheduled sites, elements of the Bryn Beddau Round Barrow group, which no longer met the scheduling criteria.

Just under three hundred sites and other assets remained. From this total, a number had already been covered in such projects as Roman roads (7), prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments (59), prehistoric hut circles and kindred sites (30), small defended enclosures (10). Removal of all of these classes of previously assessed site left 184 records to be considered in more detail.

Finds in the HER number 54. These cover a wide and rather heterogeneous set of objects and include artefacts that have slipped through the sifting process and are early medieval date, such as those from Winifrede's monastic suite at Gwytherin. No further work was done on this category as it was felt to be entirely outside the remit of the project, although it is quite clear that the record is rather deficient. By way of example considerable work has been done on the so-called Cerrigydrudion 'hanging bowl' in the National Museum in recent years, and it is now considered to have been a helmet, albeit an extremely important and early example. None of this is referenced in the HER.

Seventeen excavated sites appear in the HER, two of them antiquarian delvings. Most of the remainder result from the Brenig campaign, but there is also the Graig Fechan Enclosure, and the Ty Tan-y-foel platforms examined by the National Museum while researching the Cerrigydrudion bowl/helmet cist site in 1992 and 1993. These excavations have never been published, but there is in print more information than is contained in the HER and this has been appended here in the gazetteer under PRNs 17393 and 17394. Around twenty-five sites, on the evidence of visits usually by the Ordnance Survey though occasionally by others, have been or are likely to have been destroyed. Most of these seem anyway to have had a potential prehistoric funerary and ritual quality, but in general it was felt that where a competent archaeologist had declared a site to be destroyed, there was little value in trying to follow up the record with a site visit. There are also three records of palaeoenvironmental studies, three sites where further examination seems pointless because these were specific discoveries in the past which were unlikely to be amplified by any further work, twenty-six placenames, two sites submerged beneath reservoirs, one site which fell not in CPAT's but in GAT's region, two sites in forestry which it is felt would probably not repay a visit, twelve seemingly natural features which had found their way onto the HER for one reason or another, and a further four features classified in the HER as non-antiquities. The removal of all of these sites, sometimes after some desk-top assessment had been carried out, left a residue of only 29 sites. Some were deemed not to warrant a field visit after close analysis of the desk top, but just over twenty were examined in the field. Unfortunately none of them merits a scheduling recommendation.

Table 2 Current state of research on the Scheduling Enhancement Programme 2008/10

<i>Theme/area</i>		HER record numbers	Records assessed	Finds	Records enhanced	Records: minor changes	Site visits	SAM recs.
<i>Vale of Clwyd</i>	CPAT Report 948	726	168	99	25	6	8	0
<i>Roman Settlement</i>	CPAT Report 963	51	41	313	13	12	1	1
<i>Roman Religious Sites</i>	CPAT Report 964	25	21		12	7	2	0
<i>Brecon Beacons</i>	CPAT Report 982	1317	485	71	51	37	108	8
<i>West Montgomeryshire</i>	CPAT Report 983	376	254	3	19	14	4	1
<i>Elan Valley</i>	CPAT Report 1004	1864	431	23	28	49	47	5
<i>Mynydd Hiraethog</i>	CPAT Report 1009	2056	184	54	32	6	22	0

The Detailed Assessment

Mynydd Hiraethog offers rather less scope for the discussion of significant sites than the other areas studied over the last eighteen months. It is the contention of one of the writers (RJS) that Hiraethog is one of the less interesting upland blocks across east Wales in terms of its archaeological content. This is not to downplay the value and interest of the Brenig prehistoric sites and from a later era Hen Ddinbych and Hafod Nant y Criafolen. Rather it is a statement on the totality of the archaeology that is to be found here, particularly on the western moors, and one that has been reinforced by examining Hiraethog in preparation for the Royal Commission's book on it.

There are though hints that the high moors are perhaps the wrong place to be looking for the informative remains of the past. There has long been a hint that it is on the lower slopes below the high ground, long enclosed of agrarian purposes, where interesting archaeology may reside. There is the complex of earthworks north of the A5 which has been termed Fron Bellaf and which we drew attention to more than ten years ago; these are probably medieval but a prehistoric element cannot be ruled out (Silvester 1997); there are the two curious monuments at Ffridd Can Awen, just north of Pentrefoelas and the Hafod-y-dre stones about seven hundred metres to the east. The former comprises around 450 small stones protruding generally no more than 0.1m high from the ground and set in irregular rows over an area less than one hundred metres square; excavations in 1884 uncovered burials in three cists but these are now visible only as shallow depressions in the ground. The Hafod-y-dre stones form rows have recently been re-surveyed by the Royal Commission and will be published in the Hiraethog book. And then there are other sites which have come within the purview of this project. The Ty Tan-y-foel platforms are significant because they represent one of the very few proven physical manifestations of open settlement in the pre-Roman Iron Age from north-east Wales. It is deeply regrettable that the National Museum has not been able to muster the resources to publish their excavations there. There is too an enclosure which lies surrounded by the turbines of the Tir Mostyn windfarm south of the A543 which crosses the moors towards Denbigh. We have termed this the Marial Gwyn enclosure (PRN 113752). It was first discovered by Toby Driver flying for the Royal Commission in 2007, and in this respect highlights the inadequacy of the environmental impact assessment that was conducted for the windfarm several years earlier. It could be a seasonal settlement of medieval date or a small late prehistoric homestead enclosure, and it is the latter that we tend to favour. It lies in enclosed pasture, and it is the agricultural improvement that has occurred here that

prevents a scheduling recommendation. Although, as the photograph shows, it is still discernible on the ground as an earthwork.



Marial Gwyn enclosure (PRN 113752)

A field visit has clarified the picture of the Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin sites in a shallow valley cutting through Mynydd Poeth. Ellis Davies first noted some of these in the 1920s and John Manley accurately recorded them in the 1980s. Unfortunately subsequent transcribers and field observers have confused the existing records and effectively created new 'sites' all of which have made it into the HER. Davies and Manley are happy to put a prehistoric date on these, but one of us (RJS) is a little suspicious of this linear group of monuments, all in the bottom of a small valley close to a fence line, and wonders whether some at least might not be the result of initial stone clearance when the field above had its pasture improved.

It was Ellis Davies, too, who had difficulty comprehending the mounds in the marshy ground to the south of the A5 at Llwyn Onn, though their inclusion in his book on *The Prehistoric and Roman Remains of Denbighshire* appears to indicate what his view of their date was (PRNs 100419-100420). He recognised six mounds but in the early 1960s the Ordnance Survey seem able to have picked out only the two, and they favoured a more prosaic association with peat cutting. We would concur with this later interpretation. Although a mound more than 15m long is quite large in comparison to some stacks of peat that have been seen in the Welsh uplands, the presence of the stones on top of the mound can be explained by the need to weigh down a cover that assisted the drying process.

Appendix 1 – Site List ordered by name

<i>Name</i>	<i>PRN</i>	<i>NGR</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Period</i>
Ty Tan-y-foel platform II	17393	SH94765025	Platform	Iron Age
Ty Tan-y-foel stone platform II	17394	SH94765025	Platform	Prehistoric
Llwyn Onn Mound A	100419	SH8989350360	Mound	Post Medieval
Llwyn Onn Mound B	100420	SH8992350379	Mound	Post Medieval
Y Gaer earthwork	100421	SH87155120	Non antiquity	Unknown
Rhaeadr-y-bedd cist	100552	SH91676017	Cist	Bronze Age
Gorsedd Bran barrow VII (site of)	100563	SH97516025	Round barrow	Bronze Age
Gorsedd Bran barrow VIII (site of)	100564	SH97536025	Round barrow	Bronze Age
Broncyn Melyn cairn (site of)	100629	SH99055685	Round barrow	Bronze Age
Bryn Maen-cleddau Stone	100633	SH99495623	Standing stone	Bronze Age
Cernioge Cists	100649	SH904504	Farm	Bronze Age
Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Cairn A	100658	SH9558752018	Round barrow (cairn)	Bronze Age
Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Hut A	100659	SH95595201	Hut	Medieval
Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Hut B	100660	SH9560152024	Hut	Medieval
Maen Hir Stone Circle	100742	SJ04645227	Hut circle	Prehistoric
Y Krin Viryn cairn	100788	SJ0149	Round barrow (cairn)	Bronze Age
Afon Fechan Cropmark	101443	SH98095667	Enclosure	Prehistoric
Clocaenog Moor Stone	101553	SJ05215294	Inscribed stone	Prehistoric
Maen Hirion Inscribed Stone	101563	SH94504776	Inscribed stone	Prehistoric
Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Cairn C	101794	SH9562452036	Round barrow (structured cairn)	Bronze Age
Bwlch y Garnedd clearance cairns III	105188	SH91155485	Clearance cairn	Prehistoric
Foelas Estate mound	105191	SH9113054638	Clearance cairn	Prehistoric
Bwlch y Garnedd mound	105236	SH9097354684	Mound	Unknown

Appendix 2 – Gazetteer of newly assessed sites

17393 Ty Tan-y-foel platform II SH94765025 Platform Iron Age

Old description

Platforms noted during geophysical survey and exploration for site of Cerrigydrudion cist. Ring groove of house located on one platform with central hearth and VCP (Brassil, K., 1992a, 58).

New description

First identified through anomalies in geophysics which were then linked to slight hollows and scarps visible on the ground surface. Evidence for several platforms but no information as to how many. The first one to be excavated is the only one for which any useful information has reached the public domain.

Initial excavations on a sub-circular platform consisted of a 6m by 2m trench and two 2m by 2m trenches which revealed a ring-groove, in the form of a curving slot containing edge-set stones, about 10m in overall diameter. Further excavation comprised the opening of an area measuring 15m square, which revealed paired entrance post-holes, a central hearth around which there appears to have been small ceramic fragments embedded in the floor material which could be VCP. A separate report hints at other pits containing charcoal and briquetage. There were few other finds but there were three flints, perhaps of Neolithic origin. Further curvilinear grooves, slots and pits truncated by the plough were considered to be indicative of additional structures. (Brassil 1992, 58)

17394 Ty Tan-y-foel stone platform II SH94765025 Platform Prehistoric

Old description

Stone platform (II) located during geophysical survey and exploration for site of Cerrigydrudion cist (Brassil, K., 1992, 58).

Excavation 1993 revealed part of a presumed ring groove structure and a stone walled roundhouse. (Brassil, K 1993, 50).

New description

Excavation was limited to the partial sectioning of the collapsed stonework of the roundhouse, which was located on an adjacent platform to that examined in the previous year (Brassil 1993, 50). No further information on this site has been forthcoming from the NMW.

100419 Llwyn Onn Mound A SH8989350360 Mound Post Medieval

Old description

An oval turf covered mound of stones 17m by 20m and 1.5m high. Possibly associated with peat digging. (Davies, E 1929, 386).

New description

One of a group of 6 mounds in this area, measuring 18yds by 14yds and 5ft high, Ellis Davies (1929, 386) was at a loss as to the origin of this and the other mound. The Ordnance Survey examined it in 1963 reporting that there was an oval turf-covered mound of stones, many of which are exposed, measuring 17m ENE/WSW by 12m and 1.5m high. They thought it possibly associated with peat digging. (OS 1963).

An oval mound of peat measuring 15m NE/SW by 9m NW/SE and 1.0m high. There is a surface covering of stone, but the peat was probed to at least a depth of 0.5m. A later rectangular slot, measuring 8m NE/SW by 3m NW/SE and 0.3m deep, seems to have been cut into the top. The feature is probably an old peat stack/mound, the explanation for the presence of surface stone perhaps being that the stones were used to weigh down a covering rush mat used to aid the drying process. (RH 09/11/2009)

100420 Llwyn Onn Mound B SH8992350379 Mound Post Medieval

Old description

A slight oval mound with stones exposed 6m by 4.6m 0.3m high of doubtful antiquity. Possibly associated with peat digging. Davies noted other mounds in swamp but these are shapeless peat mounds. (Davies, E 1929, 386).

New description

One of a group of 6 mounds in this area. Measures 46yds in circumference and 1.5ft high. (Davies, E, 1929, 386). The Ordnance Survey examined it in 1963 reporting a slight oval mound with stones exposed. Orientated ENE/WSW and measures 6.0m by 4.6m and 0.3m high. Possibly associated with peat digging. (OS 1963)

This is the possible location of a former peat stand comprising a few stones on a drier patch of ground. Measures approximately 6m ENE/WSW by 4m and 0.2m high. No real structure evident. Location altered from SH 8985 5040. (RH 09/11/2009)

100421 Y Gaer earthwork SH87155120 Non antiquity Unknown

Old description

A curved bank about 130m long on NE side of hill known as Y Gaer. There are however many natural scarps and banks in the area which could be mistaken for earthworks (Davies, E 1929, 412).

New description

The hill known as 'Y Gaer' has gradually sloping sides, with its summit lying about 30m above the surrounding land. It is in an advantageous position for a camp, but the remains of fortifications are meagre and uncertain. What appears most like an artificial defence is a stretch of curved bank (c.130m long) on the NE side of the hill, some 180m from the buildings which crown its summit. Writing in the 1850s, the Rev J Evans, then vicar of Pentrefoelas, stated that lines of ancient earthworks could be distinctly traced at the N and NW base of the hill, near the River Nug. (Davies E, 1929, 412)

There are scarps and banks which could reasonably be mistaken for earthworks, but there is no trace of an antiquity in the vicinity. (OS 1963)

Examination of two oblique aerial photographs (CPAT 87-MB-326 & 327) which show the earthwork suggest that it is more likely to be a field bank or lynchet running parallel with the contours. The 'ancient earthworks' mentioned by the Rev Evans appear to be a series of broad banks which are likely to be of either fluvial, or more probably fluvio-glacial, origin on the valley floor. (RH 29/07/2009)

100552	Rhaeadr-y-bedd cist	SH91676017	Cist	Bronze Age
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Old description

A stone cist containing an inhumation found in 1906 on the NW bank of the Aled in a gorge. The skeleton lay between a 1.8m long wall and a rock covered by slabs, the exact site is unknown.

New description

A stone cist containing an inhumation burial was found about 1906 a few yards from the River Aled on its NW bank, about 270m below Rhaeadr Mawr or Rhaeadr-y-bedd. It was at the foot of a precipitous slope 135m (in elevation) below the surrounding fields in a narrow and deep gorge. The grave was exposed during the collection of stones to make a fence alongside the river and consisted of a drystone wall about 1.8m long parallel with a rock and connected to it by a number of flat stones. The grave only contained the remains of a skeleton, specifically portions of a skull and some bones from the hand, all of which turned to powder within a few days of their exposure. Subsequent to the removal of the grave covering, rubble came down the slope from above and covered the site. (Davies, E, 1929, 352)

No surviving trace of the feature and no local knowledge of it. (OS 1974)

100563	Gorsedd Bran barrow VII (site of)	SH97516025	Round barrow	Bronze Age
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Old description

Barrow noted by Davies as being on the OS map but he could not see it on the ground. The OS in 1971 noted a disturbed area here, it has since been afforested.

Visit 24/11/98. Not located in dense plantation

New description

The Ordnance Survey marked two barrows (tumuli) on their 25" map in 1874. Davies reported in 1929 that this one (the more westerly) no longer existed, and qualified this by saying 'if it ever did', suggesting that he was sceptical (Davies 1929, 377).

No visit was attempted by fieldworkers in preparation for the Gorsedd Bran wind farm report, due to the density of tree cover (RS 10/2009)..

100564	Gorsedd Bran barrow VIII (site of)	SH97536025	Round barrow	Bronze Age
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Old description

Like CAR 520G (PRN 100563), a barrow shown on the OS map. Davies noted a disturbed area which may once have been a barrow. The area has since been deep ploughed and afforested.

Visit 24/11/98. Not located in dense plantation

New description

The Ordnance Survey marked two barrows (tumuli) on their 25" map in 1874. Davies reported in 1929 that this one (the more easterly) was a grass-covered patch with a lumpy surface, seemingly suggesting the possibility of an authentic barrow (Davies 1929, 377).

No visit was attempted by fieldworkers in preparation for the Gorsedd Bran wind farm report, due to the density of tree cover (RS 10/2009).

100629	Broncyn Melyn cairn (site of)	SH99055685	Round barrow	Bronze Age
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Old description

Davies noted a circular platform about 456m N of Hen Ddinbych (CAR 580). However the OS could not locate the site in this area and believe that Davies may have meant site CAR 595.

New description

Davies (1929, 311) was quite specific about the location of the site which was noted as a stone circle or circular platform 80 paces in circumference (c.22.5m diameter) and 500yds N of Hen Ddinbych. The internal area was said to be covered with a layer of stones which were visible where the floor had been dug into. The stones did not, apparently, form a pavement. The Ordnance Survey were not able to locate it in dense undergrowth in 1971, and the position is probably now within forestry.

It was thought by the OS in 1974 to be a misplaced reference to PRN 100636, although this was excavated and found to be natural in the same year. A much more likely contender is Brenig 51 (PRN 100640), which though only 280m to the N is at a rough estimate around 70 to 80m in diameter and thus of the right size. Furthermore, Ellis Davies made no other reference to Brenig 51, a large and rather obvious monument, in his volume (RH 28/07/2009).

100633	Bryn Maen-cleddau Stone	SH99495623	Standing stone	Bronze Age
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Old description

Large boulder 2.35m by 1.8m by 1.8m which Davies thought to be a pillar stone. Probably not archaeologically significant.

New description

Davies (1929, 311-2) describes a large fragment adjacent to the stone which had apparently fallen from its top, so it was presumably once a more prominent monument. It was apparently sited in the corner of a sheepfold. He also recounts a local legend that the fragment had been sliced off by a giant with his sword. (RH 28/07/2009)

Alternative location SH 9947 5626 (OS 1962). Now no trace of a sheepfold. (OS 1971)

100649	Cernioge Cists	SH904504	Farm	Bronze Age
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Old description

In the 1850s, the then vicar of Pentrefoelas (Rev. John Evans) wrote of a complete cist and remains of others in 'the stony field opposite the Wesleyan Chapel'. These were once covered by cairns, the stones of which were used for walls and roads. No remains were visible in 1913 (Davies, E 1929, 381).

No trace in 1963. Ground broken up by outcrop rock (OS site visit).

New description

Davies also noted (though this was inexplicably left out of the original SMR record) that two upright pillars that had been used to form part of the complete cist were subsequently removed and built into the walls of Cernioge Cottages, 'the furthest cottages on the right hand side of the road, less than 200yds after passing Cernioge Farm in the direction of Bettws-y-coed'. The stones were not visible in 1913, the houses being covered by render, but were remembered by residents at that time. (Davies, E, 1929, 381)

The houses are still covered in cement render, so no evidence of the stones is visible. (RH 17/08/2009)

100658 Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Cairn A SH9558752018 Round barrow (cairn) Bronze Age

Old description

Probable cairn marked by bank 2.5m wide 0.2m high, forming circle 7m in diameter.

Site visit 7/1/99. This cairn consists of a very low cairn identifiable by a circle of stone which, apart from turf, fills the area. There is no trace of a bank enclosing the cairn (as previously described). Probably cut by fence on N side. Located on S side of a stream with slopes ascending to S.

As described above. (CPAT Tir Gofal assessment, 2002)

New description

As far as the writer can establish there is considerable confusion here between PRNs 100658 and 100659.

The description given here is satisfactory. Whether this is a cairn or a hut, and, if the former of what date it is, is another matter. This is John Manley's CAR 613 as published in the Mynydd Poeth report (BBCS 1986). He follows Elwyn Davies in classifying it as circular, and in its current appearance one could not argue with this. The NGR has been corrected by the present writer through a GPS reading (RS 10/2009).

100659 Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Hut A SH95595201 Hut Medieval

Old description

Sub-rectangular stone bank with spread walls 1m thick 0.2m high. This one is mounted on a platform and has sides about 4m in length. Probably medieval. Just visible as a slight rise within the turf, no stones visible, but could be felt under the turf. (CPAT Tir Gofal assessment, 2002)

New description

This carries the same NGR as PRN 100658, and is I think the same site though with a different description and hence interpretation, although the platform appearance is correct.

This then is a duplicate record. The error may have originated when the Clwyd Archaeology Service were entering data in the 1980s, but has been compounded by the Tir Gofal visit; contrary to what was written in 2002, stone is readily visible (RJS 10/2009).

100660 Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Hut B SH9560152024 Hut Medieval

Old description

Sub-rectangular stone bank with spread walls 1m wide 0.2m high. The spread walling gives it an oval appearance with axes of 5m and 4m. Probably a medieval hut. This site could not be located due to dense reed undergrowth. (CPAT Tir Gofal assessment, 2002)

New description

This is John Manley's CAR 1771 as published in the Mynydd Poeth report (BBCS 1986). Its is still visible at least on the S and E, contrary to the Tir Gofal 2002 statement. Manley did not think it medieval and I would agree with him. The NGR has been corrected by the present writer through a GPS reading (RS 10/2009).

100742	Maen Hir Stone Circle	SJ04645227	Hut circle	Prehistoric
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Old description

An irregular circle of partially buried stones possibly a cairn or hut circle. Area now planted with tall trees and site probably destroyed.

New description

An irregular circle of partially buried stones of varying sizes. Possibly the remains of a cairn or circular hut. (RCAHMW Denbighshire Inventory 1914, 47)

Not found within a forestry plantation. Thought to have been destroyed by ploughing. (OS 1963).

RAF aerial photos taken before afforestation (106G/UK.1454/4051-2; 2 May 1946) reveal two near circular and reasonably clear features at approx SH 0451 5224 and 0434 5216, one around 55m across, the other over 40m across (PRNs 100734 and 100735). (RS 11/2009).

The HER location for this site lies in an enclosure containing Przewalski horses, to which there is no access. It is not impossible that this is a mis-placed reference to the scheduled Bryn Beddau stone circle (PRN 101697), some 280m to the N, although the original reference from RCAHMW (1914, 47) implies that the given location is correct. The site is not mentioned by the Rev. Ellis Davies in 1929, which intimates that the site was not then evident, as he had recorded all the other main features in the locality. (RH 09/11/2009)

100788	Y Krin Viryn cairn	SJ0149	Round barrow (cairn)	Bronze Age
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Old description

A tumulus and circle of stones mentioned by Llwyd probably refers to the remains of a cairn comprising 2 disturbed concentric circles 0.38m high. Situated in a hollow between 2 low hills, visited last in 1914.

New description

Llwyd's reference to a 'tumulus and circle of stones' was thought by the RCAHMW in 1921 (Merioneth Inventory) to refer to a site comprising two concentric circles, 5.2m in overall diameter, situated in a hollow between the low hills of Derwydd Mawr. There are two versions of the OS record card which respectively ascribe locations of SJ 006 499 (on the slopes of Derwydd Mawr) and 'within a quarter mile of Yr Orsedd (SJ 0160 4900)'.

The former is more appropriate for the location described by RCAHMW, but Llwyd's reference specifically states 'Y Krig Viryn (Craigfryn ?) where there is a tumulus and an intrenchment. Within a quarter of a mile from this lies Yr Orsedd, now a name of a house', so it is evident that RCAHMW were incorrect in their suggestion and the site is or was approximately 400m from SJ 0160 4900. An area of stone is visible on a vertical aerial photograph at SJ 0141 4898, but its nature is unknown. The site recorded by RCAHMW should presumably be recorded under a separate PRN. (RH 29/07/2009)

101443	Afon Fechan Cropmark	SH98095667	Enclosure	Prehistoric
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Old description

Site noted on RCAHM record map and on air photo by Joseph.

New description

This site was recorded by J K S St Joseph from the air in 1972 (CUCAP BJA 64), and was subsequently submerged beneath the waters of Llyn Brenig later in the 1970s. There is a single

photograph only, and the evidence for an enclosure is somewhat equivocal, nor is there any guide from St Joseph as to what he believed he had recorded. The best fit is what appears to be the fragmented line of a near square enclosure at SH 9809 9667 which may or may not have some authenticity (and it should be noted that within CPAT field services there is no agreement as to whether there is a site present) (RS 10/2009).

101553 Clocaenog Moor Stone SJ05215294 Inscribed stone Prehistoric

Old description

A mutilated incised figure 0.3m long with a bulbous part .075m long .063m wide .025m deep lies between 2 longitudinal cracks on the sloping side of a stone. Area since afforested.

New description

The 1912 field record in the Royal Commission's archives is reproduced on the OS record card with a photocopy of the original drawing. The dimensions were given in imperial = 12" long with the bulbous part 3" long, and the 'incision' about 1" deep. The sketch indicates a dumb-bell shape with one end larger than the other. The site was examined by an anonymous Royal Commission investigator on 1 October 1912 on Clocaenog Moor, who also commented that a somewhat similar figure was cut on one of the outer stones of the double circle on Derwen Moor (RH 29/07/2009).

The feature was not found at or near the given location. The area has been recently thinned of confers so visibility was good. Two large stones were examined nearby but there was no trace of any markings on either. Presumably the stone has been moved, destroyed or buried. (RH 09/11/2009)

101563 Maen Hirion Inscribed Stone SH94504776 Inscribed stone Prehistoric

Old description

In field 'Dol y fawydd'. A large irregular boulder inscribed with a circle and cup mark with an oval figure on its E side.

New description

Large irregularly rounded stone measuring 3.6m long by 2.1m and 0.75m high at one end, only 0.3m high at the other. It lay in the NW corner of a meadow called Dol y fenydd near Tai'n-y-rhos farm. On its W side there was an incised circle or groove, 48cm in outside diameter and from 6cm to 12cm deep, enclosing a knob or rounded cup 32cm in diameter. On the E side is an incised oval figure, 20cm by 17cm and 7cm deep, the middle empty and rough as though it contained a cup which had been cut out. The above information comes from RCAHMW, who visited the site in 1912 (OS record card), but there is no evidence that there has been any examination since (RH 07/2009).

The only 'dol' field name in the Tithe schedule is for the field NW of Pont Tai'n-rhos, which suggests that the location for this site should perhaps be about 100m to the S at SH 9450 4766. Permission could not be obtained at the time of the visit but it was apparent from the nearby road that some large stones were present in the field, one of which may be the recorded stone. (RH 17/11/2009)

101794 Cerrig-y-gwr-cethin Cairn C SH9562452036 Round barrow (structured cairn) Bronze Age

Old description

Irregular, roughly circular area demarcated by large erratic stones. Site not on mound. 4m in diameter. Could be a clearance cairn but proximity to PRNs 100658 and 101802 suggest a kerb cairn.

Site visit 9/1/99. Site as described except that it is more like 5m wide. Max 0.25m high. Located close to corner of fence.

As described above. (CPAT Tir Gofal assessment, 2002)

New description

This site = John Manley's CAR 1772. The NGR has been corrected (RJS 10/2009).

105188 Bwlch y Garnedd clearance cairns I SH91155485 Clearance cairn Prehistoric

Old description

Clearance cairn, probably prehistoric close to three hut circles (PRNs 105187, 105189 & 105190). (Silvester, B 1993, 39).

Two possible clearance cairns, max diameter 2.0m x 0.2m high. A just a scatter of stones. B circular and mainly turf covered (Owen, WG & Silvester, RJ 1993)

New description

Site not found within 50m of the given NGR. It could be natural, misplaced or hidden by dense rushes, its alleged connection to PRNs 105187, 105189 and 105190 was only a suggestion on the original record form which did not confirm they were in close proximity. (RH 04/09/2009)

105191 Foelas Estate mound SH9113054638 Clearance cairn Prehistoric

Old description

Clearance cairn, probably prehistoric close to three hut circles (PRNs 105187, 105189 & 105190). (Silvester, B 1993, 39).

Oval shaped entirely turf covered cairn, 3.5m N/S x 3.0m E/W x 0.3m high. Stone below. 26m NE of site 5. Probable clearance cairn (Owen, WG & Silvester, RJ 1993)

New description

Oval mound 3.5m NE/SW by 2.8m and 0.5m high. Very well-defined which suggests it is unlikely to be prehistoric. The below surface stone noted in 1993 seems to be restricted to a strip to the NW of the centre line, perhaps signifying a shooting butt covered in spoil. (RH 04/09/2009)

105236 Bwlch y Garnedd mound	SH9097354684 Mound	Unknown
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Old description

Curious mound, 15.6m N/S (overall) x 9.4m E/W x 0.3m high, flat topped beside track (Bwlch y Garnedd). Possible 'entrance' & two low banks up to 0.3m high forming 'track'. Opposite side of track is rectangular hollow. (Owen, WG & Silvester, RJ 1993)

New description

Note from checking visit form - the description should read forming 'handle' not 'track'.

Careful examination of the feature suggests it is probably caused by a conjunction of trackways crossing the pass. This has been created by the funnelling effect of some boggy ground to the NE which has led to a number of parallel routes converging into one, the resulting feature is a tapering mound of the stated dimensions, aligned approximately NE/SW. The trackways form part of the original coach road across this part of Mynydd Hiraethog, abandoned in the 19th century. (RH 04/09/2009)