

Archaeology Wales

Awel Deg Community Wind Turbine, Ferwig, Cardigan

Archaeological Appraisal



By

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Report No: 1113

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Summary

Archaeology Wales carried out an Appraisal in March 2013 to examine the archaeological potential of a proposed wind turbine site on land adjacent to Bryn Pedr, Ferwig, Ceredigion. The site lies within Ferwig HLCA, an area within the Lower Teifi Valley Historic Landscape that has extensive views of the Teifi estuary. Although cropmarks indicating early activity are associated with neighbouring fields, there are no clear indications of activity likely to impact on any archaeological remains within the field examined.

1. Introduction

In March 2013 Archaeology Wales was commissioned by Engena Ltd on behalf of Cardigan Fair Wind (Awel Deg, Aberteifi) to carry out an archaeological appraisal on a proposed wind turbine site on land adjacent to Bryn Pedr, near Cardigan, Ceredigion (NGR: SN 17268 49073, fig. 1).

The field is located (92m OD) above the Teifi Estuary, approximately 0.5km east of Bryn Pedr Farm and approximately 2.5km north-west of Cardigan. The proposed site lies within the Historic Landscape of the Lower Teifi Valley and specifically within the Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA) of Ferwig. To the west of the site the Towyn Burrows and Gwbert HLCA covers the West facing landscape above the Teifi Estuary.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust in their capacity as archaeological advisers to the local authority recommended that this Appraisal be undertaken to determine the archaeological potential of the site. This study included an assessment of relevant documentary and cartographic sources at the National Library of Wales, a search of the Historic Environment Record (HER) and a site visit. The work was carried out by Dr Iestyn Jones in March 2013.

2. Site Description

Location, Topography, Geology

The proposed turbine site is located in an enclosed field located on a south-west facing slope on the northern side of the Teifi Estuary (NGR SN 17268 49073). It is located within an agricultural area of improved pasture and arable fields. The sub-square field measures 150m (north to south) by approximately 190m (east to west) at its maximum extent. It has three linear boundaries at its north-western, southern and eastern limit and one curvilinear boundary at its south-eastern limit. The lowest (south-western) end of the field is located at 85m OD and rises approximately 13m to its north-eastern corner at 98m OD.

The field is located within a geological area characterised by Nantmel Mudstone bedrock and Devensian till (BGS 2013).

3. Historical Background

A partly destroyed Bronze Age barrow at Crug Farm approximately 2km north of the farm attests to prehistoric funerary activity in the area. A series of enigmatic cropmarks enclosures, located 440m north of the site, together with a possible enclosure and field system to the south-west suggest activity that predates the tithe map evidence. One attraction of settlement in this location would undoubtedly have been the views afforded over the Teifi Estuary, the river being a significant communication conduit.

In the early medieval period the site was located within the Cwmwd (Commote) of Gwestfa Ferwig within the Cantref (Hundred) of Iscoed. The area was temporarily brought under Anglo-Norman de Clare control during the early twelfth-century but was subsequently held under Welsh rule until the late thirteenth-century when it became part of Cardiganshire, held by the English Crown. Ferwig parish church, known as St Pedrog's, is located 1.5km north west of the proposed site and lends its name to Bryn Pedr Farm, 0.5 km to the east and Felin (Mill) Bedr, 0.5km to the south-east. The Pedrog name element associated with these sites suggests an early origin for the original church and possibly a medieval origin for the farm and mill. The settlement surrounding the church at Ferwig, however, is a nineteenth and twentieth-century development (DAT 2013).

4. Desk-based assessment results

4.1 HER Data

A search of known historical and archaeological sites within a radius of approximately 2 km of the proposed development has been undertaken (fig. 2). This assessment will examine the nearest to the proposed site. Two identified crop-marks lie within a 0.5km. The first, a large (70-80m wide), univallate, polygonal enclosure is shown in a photograph taken in 2003 (NPRN 309073) labelled Towyn Warren. This feature is on a different alignment to the established field system and may be evidence of an early enclosure or field system. Although the RCAHMW's Coflein locates it at NGR SN17294932 the aerial photograph shows it at NGR SN 17321 49511 (440m to the north of the proposed turbine site).

Another cropmark suggestive of a square enclosure and possible field system (NPRN 405922) is located approximately 150m to the south-west of the turbine site (NGR SN 17044 48955) at Waungelod (Waun-golad). A further cropmark interpreted as a possible prehistoric pit alignment at Ty Gwyn (PRN 35725) has also been recorded at NGR SN18359 49280. A Bronze Age lithic find (PRN 1064) at Bryn (Pedr?) Farm, 400m to the east of the site, also suggests prehistoric settlement associated with the area.

Dingeraint or Pen yr Eryd, located at SN 161489 (1km to the west), is described as a fortified medieval house and a possible early medieval caput. No other details are listed in the HER. More recent post-medieval settlements include Felin Bedr, a listed post-medieval corn mill (PRN 15521), located 0.5km to the south-east of the turbine site and Aberdar, a listed two-storey post-medieval farmstead (PRN 6604) located 0.8km to the south.

4.2 Map Regression

1839/40 Ferwig Parish Tithe Map (fig. 3)

Although the fields around the area appear relatively unchanged, the 1839/1840 Ferwig Parish tithe map indicates that in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site some of the existing field boundaries were inserted between 1840 and 1890. In 1840 the present field forms part of field 93, a large irregular field farmed by Josiah Williams of Bryn Pedr Farm and owned by Philip John Miles Esq. No field names or information on the state of cultivation are indicated on the associated apportionment. A cottage located to the north-west of the site is referred to as Bengal Cottage. It is likely that this exotic name place is a corruption of Pen Goleu as indicated in the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1890 (see below).

OS Map 1:2,500 1889-1890 (fig. 4)

This map shows a track way approaching the proposed turbine field from Bryn Pedr Farm to the south-east. The track, not shown on the 1839/40 tithe map, heads up east to west along the northern boundary of the field and then northwards through a narrow field past a building two fields to the north. Bengal Cottage indicated on the tithe map is probably more correctly referred to as Pen-goleu.

OS Map 1:2,500 1976 (fig. 5)

OS maps between 1890 and 1963 show few changes to these fields. By 1976 the track from Bryn Pedr runs towards the south-eastern edge of the field, but is not shown crossing it. The narrow field boundary and associated building to the north is not shown. Two buildings shown on the edge of the warren to the north-west of the site on the 1890 map and labeled Pen-goleu have also gone by 1976. Today the latter site has been subsumed by Cardigan Golf course.

4.3 Site Visit

A site visit was conducted on the 19th March, 2013, in overcast but dry conditions (fig. 6). The field is currently used as pasture although no stock was in the field on the day of the visit. The site is treeless and unsheltered and consequently enjoys striking views over the Teifi Estuary towards Llandudoch (St Dogmaels) to the south-west and Cippyn, north Pembrokeshire, to the west (fig. 6a). The field slopes gently north-east to south-west (fig. 6d) and apart from some barely discernible relict plough marks there are no visible earthworks. To the north-west, the eastern edge of the Towyn Burrows and Gwbart Historic Landscape is visible in the modern form of Cardigan golf course. The northern and south-eastern field boundaries associated with the field are raised earthen banks with some gorse bushes growing on top and supplemented with modern post and wire fencing (fig. 6a and 6c). These did not appear to be particularly old boundaries and map regression (4.2 above) demonstrated that many are mid to late nineteenth-century in origin. The western-most boundary hedge, however, did have hedgerow growth on its earthen bank suggesting that it was older (fig. 6c). Again, this evidence supports the map regression, which shows that it was extant at the time of the tithe map (1839/40). No significant features of archaeological interest were encountered within the field.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The site is located near the western boundary of the Ferwig Historic Landscape, which is situated between two smaller HLCAs: Towyn Burrows and Gwbert to the north-west and Cardigan, to the south-east. The land is suitable for pasture and arable farming and there are extensive south-westerly vistas from the fields in the area. The area is exposed, although there is some shelter from the predominantly westerly winds that blow in from the Atlantic coast. These topographical characteristics undoubtedly make the site an attractive choice for settlement.

The alignment of some of the cropmarks in neighbouring fields is indicative of early activity on this side of the Teifi Estuary. Similarly, the early name place dedications to Pedrog, such as the church, mill and farm, are suggestive of early medieval and medieval settlement. Although the Ferwig field systems were in existence by the mid-nineteenth century, there has been some enclosure in the late nineteenth-century in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site. This development was presumably instigated by the owners and occupiers of Bryn Pedr Farm between 1840 and 1890 and the land is still associated with the farm. There are no visible earthworks within this field and the cartographic evidence does not indicate any features of historical interest. Adjacent fields, however, have cropmarks indicating early settlement or farming activity, and the existence of smaller or more subtle sub-soil features cannot be entirely discounted.

6. Bibliography

BGS 2013. British Geological Survey viewer. <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/mapViewers/home.html>, (accessed 03/2013).

DAT 2013. Ferwig Historic Landscape Characterisation. Dyfed Archaeological Trust. <http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/HLC/lowerteifivalley/ferwig.htm> (accessed 03/2013)

Cartographic Sources

1839/40 Tithe Map and apportionment for Ferwig Parish
1889/1890 OS 1:2,500 Map
1976 OS 1:10, 560 Map

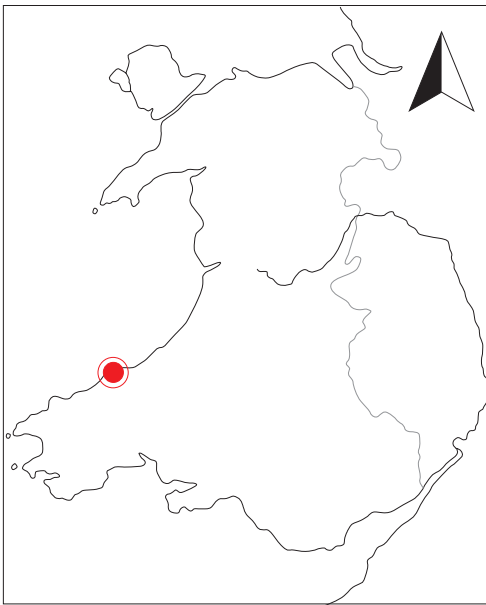


Fig. 1
Location of
proposed
development
site (red circle)
and Ferwig HLCA
(bold red line)



Fig. 2
Map showing
HER data and
site location

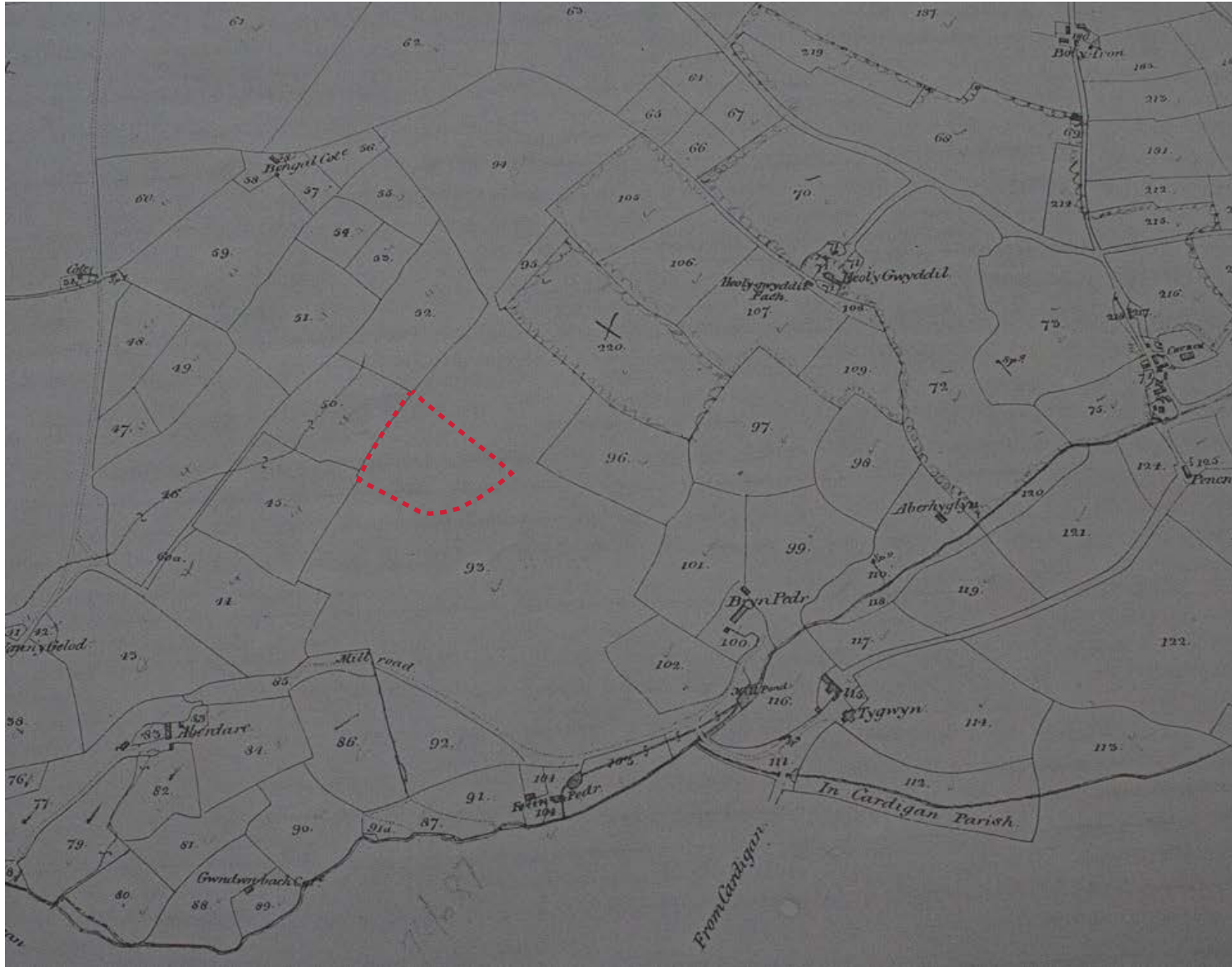


Fig. 3
Ferwig Parish
tithe map (1839 &
1840). Later field
shape in red.

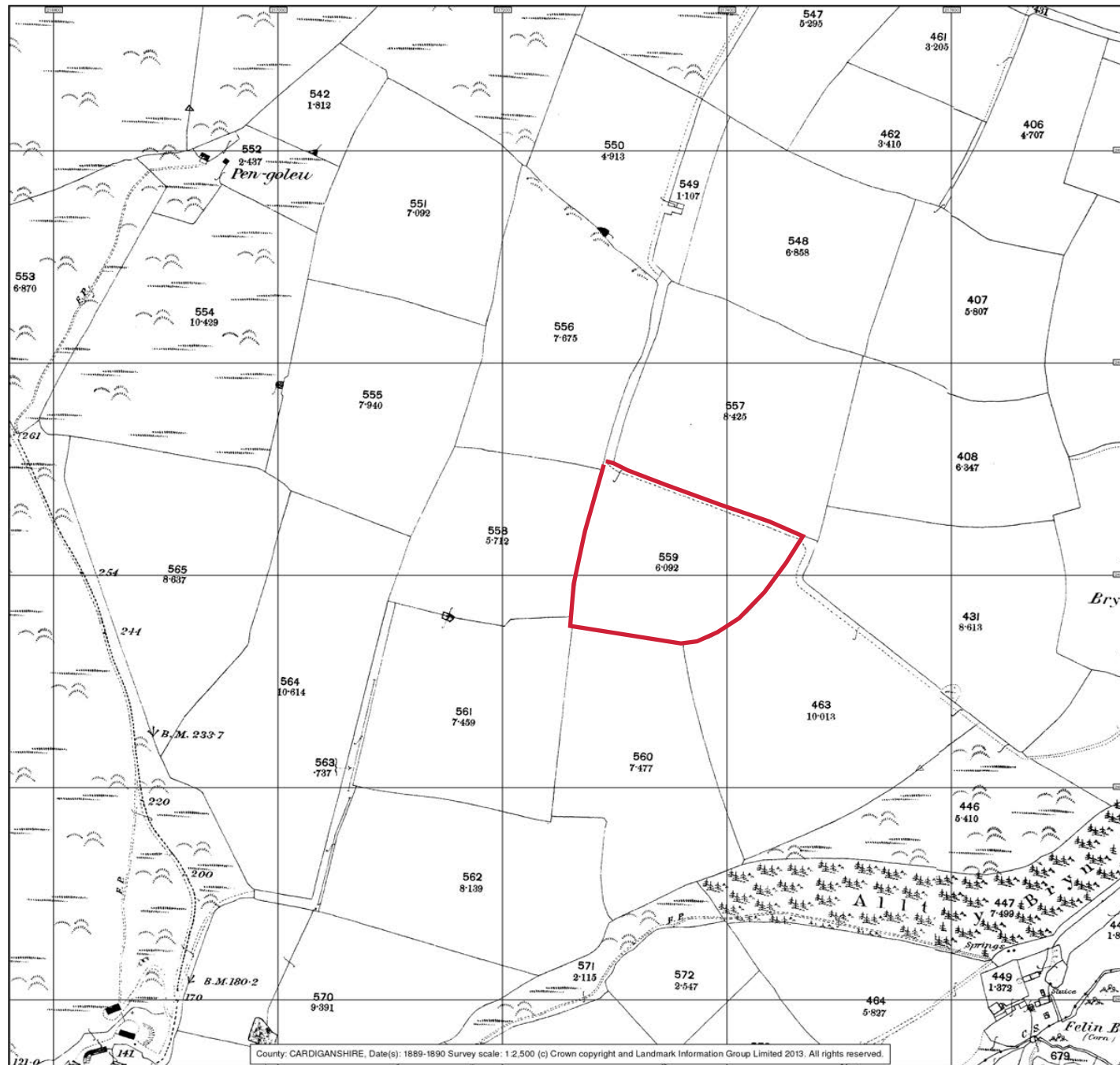


Fig. 4
1889-1890 OS
map showing site
location

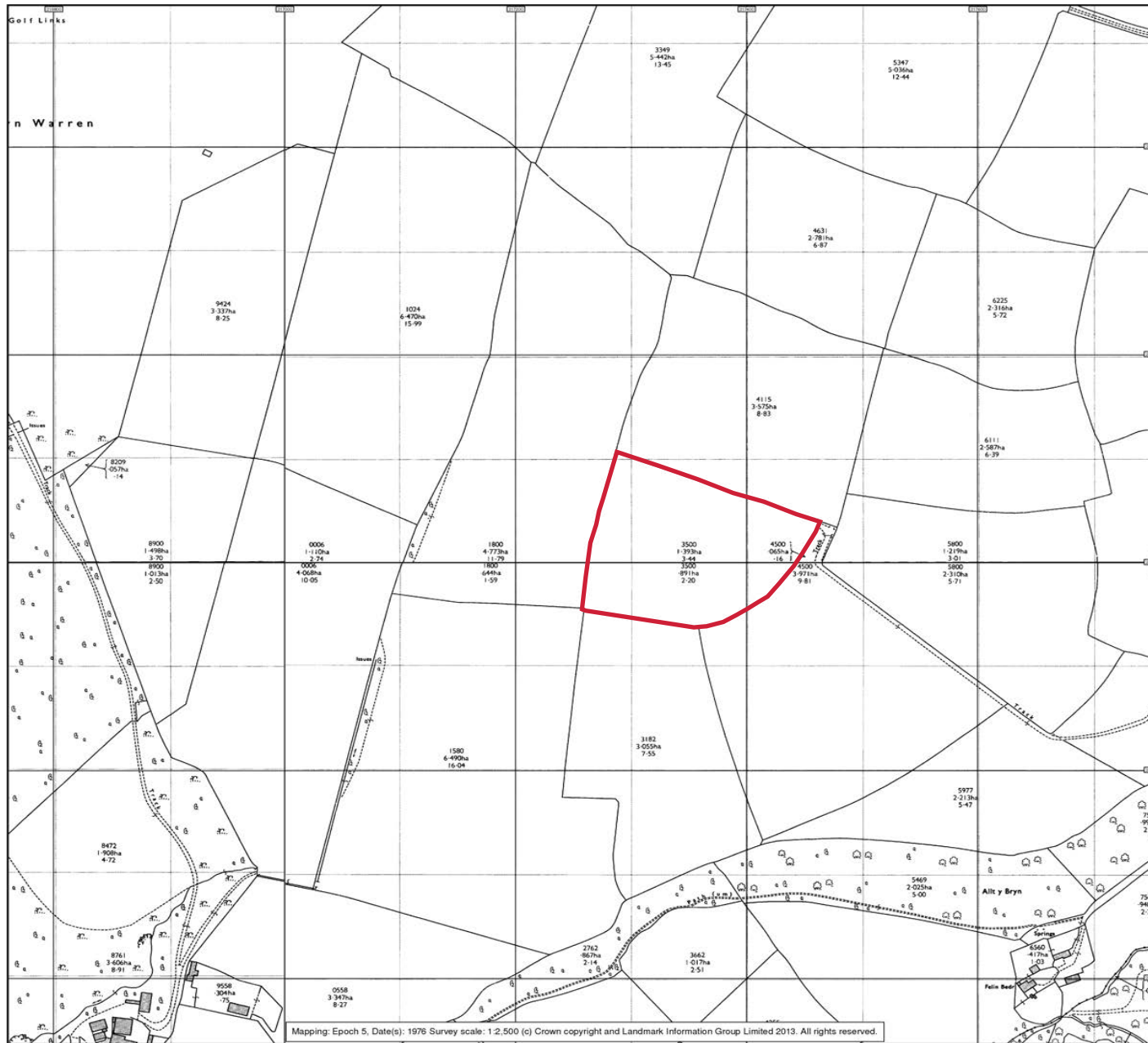


Fig.5
1976 OS map
showing site
location.



6a. View towards the Teifi Estuary from north-eastern end of field (looking south-west)



6b. Looking south along nineteenth-century earth bank and fenced field boundary.



6c. Looking west towards older field hedgrew (background) along nineteenth-century bank (right)



6d. View from lower south-western end of field (looking north-east)

Fig. 6
Site visit
photographs

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