



# UPLANDS INITIATIVE FIELD PROJECTS 2004-5

## Mynydd Hiraethog (North East) Survey Area

North Wales

### Archaeological Survey Report



**Oxford Archaeology North**

July 2005

**RCAHMW**

Issue No: 2004-5/384

OAN Job No: L9366

NGR:

SH 942 594

**Document Title:** UPLANDS INITIATIVE FIELD PROJECTS 2004-5  
MYNYDD HIRAETHOG (NORTH EAST) - SURVEY AREA

# North Wales

**Document Type:** Archaeological Survey Report

**Client Name:** RCAHMW

**Issue Number:** 2004-5/384

**OA Job Number:** L9366

**National Grid Reference:** SH 942 594 (centre)

Prepared by: Peter Schofield  
Position: Project Supervisor  
Date: July 2005

Checked by: Jamie Quartermaine Signed.....  
Position: Senior Project Manager  
Date: July 2005

Approved by: Alan Lupton Signed.....  
Position: Operations Manager  
Date: July 2005

Document File Location Jamie/Projects/9366wels3/MHir(NE)Rep

## Oxford Archaeology North

Storey Institute  
Meeting House Lane  
Lancaster  
LA1 1TF  
t: (0044) 01524 848666  
f: (0044) 01524 848606

w: [www.oxfordarch.co.uk](http://www.oxfordarch.co.uk)  
e: [info@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)

## © Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd 2005

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford  
OX2 0EA  
t: (0044) 01865 263800  
f: (0044) 01865 793496

Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

### **Disclaimer:**

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

# CONTENTS

---

<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Circumstances of the Project .....	6
1.2 Objectives .....	6
<b>2. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Project Design.....	7
2.2 Desk-Based Survey.....	7
2.3 Identification Survey .....	7
2.4 Gazetteer of Sites.....	8
2.5 Archive .....	8
<b>3. TOPOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Location and Topography.....	9
3.2 Geology .....	9
3.3 Archaeological and Historical Background.....	9
<b>4. RESULTS OF THE DESK-BASED STUDY .....</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 Desk-Based Study Summary .....	12
<b>5. SURVEY RESULTS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	13
5.2 Prehistoric.....	14
5.3 Iron Age / Roman .....	15
5.4 Medieval .....	15
5.5 Post-Medieval.....	16
<b>6. CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>17</b>
6.1 Discussion.....	17
<b>7. RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
7.1 Recommendations for Further Work .....	18
<b>8. BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>19</b>
8.1 Primary sources .....	19
8.2 Published Cartographic Sources .....	19
8.3 Secondary Sources.....	19
<b>APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF NEW SITES .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>ILLUSTRATIONS .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PLATES.....</b>	<b>25</b>

## SUMMARY

An archaeological identification survey of the Mynydd Hiraethog (North East) area of North Wales (SH 942 594 centred) was undertaken in November and December 2004 (Fig 1). The work was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) on behalf of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) as part of the Uplands Initiative. The fieldwork consisted of an identification survey to identify, locate and describe archaeological and historical features within the defined survey area.

The survey area of Mynydd Hiraethog (North East) is located on the northern edge of the Denbigh Moors within the Cambrian Mountains, on the upland section of a large natural block of land between the river valleys of the Clwyd and Conwy. To the south and west the area is also bounded by the reservoirs of Aled Isaf, Llyn Aled and Llyn Brenig, along with extensive tracts of the Clocaenog Forest. Denbigh Moors (C)5 is designated as an Historic Landscape within the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales. Several of the areas of Mynydd Hiraethog to the west of the present study area were previously surveyed by OA North (2003a and 2003b). The OA North 2004-5 survey area comprised c10.5 sqkm of predominantly large tracts of heather moorland, which for part of the twentieth century was part of the 1st Viscount Devonport's shooting estate.

The evidence of prehistoric sites is limited to a small discrete group of funerary monuments which is similar to others in the immediate region although lacking the ceremonial monuments of larger complexes. There are two previously discovered barrow sites and an axe hammer findspot to the east of Rhos Bryn-llwyn in the north of the study area. The present survey identified a further funerary monument to the north-west of the other two and these together form a linear grouping, possibly defining territorial boundary, as well as having a funerary function.

Medieval evidence is limited to two large ribbon-like trackways crossing over the moorland from lower ground. They are well-developed hollow-ways apparently of some antiquity and would have provided routes over the moorland between farms on the lower ground as well as access onto the moorland for grazing, quarrying and peat cutting.

Surviving post-medieval sites are mostly of recent nineteenth and twentieth century origin when the construction of the turnpike road through the study area led to quarrying, the rationalisation of farm and estate boundaries with boundary stones, and the development of a wayside hostelry at the Sportsman's Arms. Evidence of post-medieval agricultural land-use on the moorland is limited; there are a few sites associated with moorland grazing and stock management but the mainstay of the study area at this time was as a recreational heather moorland shooting estate. The shooting estate was used by the 1st Viscount Devonport in the early twentieth century and it was he who built the visually spectacular shooting lodge at Gwylfa Hiraethog. Use of the moor for shooting has left much evidence in the form of numerous trackways and groupings of grouse shooting stands across the open moorland of the study area.

In total, the survey identified 99 new sites, but also involved the enhancement of 18 previously identified sites, which together made a total of 117 sites overall from within the study area. The new sites included a funerary cairn, four field boundaries and field-systems, four boundary stones, one building (possibly a shepherds shelter), nine

quarries, 16 trackways, three areas of peat cutting, two sheepfolds/shelters and 55 grouse shooting stands.

**The survey has highlighted only a small prehistoric funerary resource, which may reflect that peat cover has restricted site visibility. There is, consequently, a need for selective intensive survey, sampling, excavation and dating to discover further information about the monuments, potential contemporary settlement activity, and the wider landscape covered beneath the moorland peat.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank the Staff of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW), in particular David Leighton, David Thomas, Tom Pert and Medwyn Parry, and also the staff of the reader services of the National Library of Wales. OA North is also grateful to all the landowners who generously allowed the survey team onto their land. In particular, Major Tom Smith of Gwaeynog and Mr Frank Roberts of Cwm-y-rhinwedd.

We would also like to thank Danny Connolly of Rural Estates at the Crown Estates, and their managing agents at Knight Frank, and we must also thank Jeff Spencer of the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust for providing SMR details.

The field survey was undertaken by Peter Schofield, and assisted by Pip Kok. The report was written by Peter Schofield, and the illustrations were by Peter Schofield. The report was edited by Jamie Quartermaine and Alan Lupton. The project was managed by Jamie Quartermaine.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Circumstances of the Project

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was invited to undertake an archaeological identification survey of the north-east portion of the Mynydd Hiraethog survey area (SH 942 594 centred) of North Wales on behalf of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) as part of the Uplands Initiative.

## 1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The objectives of the project were:
- to promote a wider and deeper understanding of upland areas and their role in Welsh history, in accordance with the aims of the Uplands Initiative
  - to provide an accurate Level 1 survey of all identified monuments (OA North, 2002).
- 1.2.2 To achieve these objectives the study area was subject to a desk-based assessment and walk-over survey. The desk-based study, carried out in May 2004, consisted of a search of both published and unpublished records held by the National Monuments Record of Wales, Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust and the library and archives at OA North's offices in Lancaster. The field work was carried out to fit in with access availability and weather conditions; and it was undertaken in November and December 2004.
- 1.2.3 This report sets out the results of the work, accompanied by a summary gazetteer of new sites (*Appendix 1*).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Project Design

- 2.1.1 A project design was submitted by OA North in response to a request for archaeological surveys of extensive areas of the Welsh Uplands; it was designed to meet the requirements of a brief by RCAHMW. The project design provided for an initial archaeological desk-based study, followed by a field identification survey for the following areas: Mynydd Hiraethog, Eastern Snowdonia and North Berwyn; the present report relates to the Mynydd Hiraethog (North East) area only (Figs 1 and 2), and the survey of Eastern Snowdonia is presented within a separate report (OA North 2005). The survey In all respects the work has been carried out in accordance with the project design (OA North 2004).

### 2.2 Desk-Based Survey

- 2.2.1 **National Monuments Record (NMR):** an assessment was made of data held by the RCAHMW, Aberystwyth, which was overlain onto digital 1:10,000 mapping for the study area.
- 2.2.2 **Aerial Photographs:** aerial photography from the NMR office was also consulted along with RCAHMW aerial photographic interpretation of the study area. Information relating to possible new sites was annotated onto the field walking maps in GIS format.
- 2.2.3 **Sites and Monuments Record (SMR):** an assessment was made of data held by the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT), which was also overlain onto the digital base map for the area.
- 2.2.4 **Ordnance Survey Mapping:** first and/or second edition mapping was available for the entire survey area, and was examined for indications of historic sites not previously represented in the NMR and SMR databases.
- 2.2.5 **World Wide Web:** historic landscape characterisation, parish records, census data and transcripts of some public records were obtained from archives and local histories on the internet. More modern data on the parish was also gleaned, which provided information about recent developments in the area.

### 2.3 Identification Survey

- 2.3.1 An identification survey to Level 1 (OA North 2002) was undertaken the Mynydd Hiraethog (North East) study area. The identification survey represents the minimum standard of record for field investigation, and is aimed at the discovery of previously unrecorded sites. Its objective is to record the existence, location, and extent of any archaeological site. The emphasis of the record lies on the written description, which, in this instance, includes comments on character and condition, and sites have been graded in terms of condition and archaeological significance. Sites already identified within the study area by the NMR and SMR were checked and recorded at the same level of consistency as the newly discovered sites. The whole survey area, including both the unenclosed commons and surrounding improved and enclosed fringes, was



examined. The survey aimed to identify, locate and record archaeological sites and features on the ground and involved four elements: reconnaissance, mapping, description and photography. This generated core information for entry into the NMR and additional archive information, in accordance with the RCAHMW Data Standard for Upland Survey (RCAHMW 2004).

- 2.3.2 Each area was walked in transects of between 20m and 50m, depending on local topography and ground cover. The archaeological detail was mapped using Leica differential GPS equipment, which used post-processed corrections from a base station to achieve an accuracy of  $\pm 0.25\text{m}$ . The digital survey data was transferred, via DXF file format, into a CAD system (AutoCAD14), and was then superimposed onto the digital base map (Fig 3). The descriptive records were input on-site into a database on a Psion portable palm computer; the more complex sites were also sketched onto paper *pro-forma* sheets. A photographic record of the sites was maintained in 35mm black and white print format, colour slides, and also using digital colour photography; the digital photographs were used to accompany the present report.

## **2.4 Gazetteer of Sites**

2.4.1 ALL OF THE INFORMATION CONCERNING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES WITHIN THE ASSESSED AREA WAS COLLATED INTO A GAZETTEER (*APPENDIX 1*), WHICH PROVIDES BRIEF DETAILS OF THEIR LOCATION, PERIOD, CHARACTER AND ALTITUDE. LOCATIONS ARE GIVEN AS EIGHT-FIGURE NATIONAL GRID REFERENCES WHERE POSSIBLE, AND THE POSITION OF EACH SITE IS INDICATED ON FIGURE 3.

## **2.5 Archive**

- 2.5.1 A full archive has been produced to a professional standard in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (1991) and the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. The archive is provided in the English Heritage Centre for Archaeology format, both as a printed document and digitally. A synopsis, including the index to the archive and a copy of the report, will be placed in the National Monuments Record, RCAHMW at Aberystwyth and the Clwyd-Powys Sites and Monuments Record, CPAT, Welshpool.

### **3. TOPOGRAPHICAL and historical Background**

#### **3.1 Location and Topography**

- 3.1.1 The survey area of Mynydd Hiraethog (North East) (SH 942 594 centred) consists of the north-eastern corner of the moorland massif, also known as the Denbigh Moors, which is situated at the northern end of the Cambrian Mountains and comprises the upland section of a large natural block of land between the river valleys of the Clwyd and Conwy in central North Wales (Fig 1). To the south and west the area is also bounded by the reservoirs of Aled Isaf, Llyn Aled and Llyn Brenig, along with extensive tracts of the Clocaenog Forest.
- 3.1.2 The study area consists of gently sloping moorland which rises from approximately 330m to 450m towards the south-east with streams descending to the lakes in the east and into the Afon Hyrdd to the north. The highest point of the whole area is a maximum of 496m on the hill of Bryn Trillyn. The area is broadly characterised as open heather moorland fringed by enclosure on lower farmland to the north and north-east, with further, relatively late, enclosure relating to nineteenth century rationalisation of the landscape with straight-edged enclosure act boundaries. The landscape of the study lies on the eastern fringe of the Denbigh Moors Historic Landscape, designated (C)5 within the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales.

#### **3.2 Geology**

- 3.2.1 The solid geology of the study area consists of Silurian shales and grits. The overlying soils are predominantly of the low base status, poorly drained podzols, gleys and peaty gleys derived from the Silurian drift (Neville George and Smith 1961; Soil Survey 1983).

#### **3.3 Archaeological and Historical Background**

##### **3.3.1 *EARLY PREHISTORY:***

THERE WAS VERY LITTLE EVIDENCE OF HUMAN ACTIVITY IN THE IMMEDIATE STUDY AREA DURING THE EARLIER PREHISTORIC PERIOD WHEN COMPARED WITH AREAS ADJACENT TO IT. TO THE WEST A LARGE ASSEMBLAGE OF

MESOLITHIC FLINTS HAS BEEN EXPOSED BY DROUGHT CONDITIONS WITHIN LLYN ALED RESERVOIR (BRASSIL 1989) AND A MESOLITHIC/NEOLITHIC FLINTWORKING AREA WAS EXCAVATED IN THE BRENIG VALLEY TO THE SOUTH-EAST (LYNCH 1993). SUCH EVIDENCE FROM THE PRESENT STUDY AREA MAY BE COVERED BY EXTENSIVE TRACTS OF UNDULATING PEATLAND WHICH MAY HAVE MASKED THE EVIDENCE (PLATE 1), AND THE ONLY FINDSPOT IN THE ENVIRONS IS A PERFORATED AXE HAMMER (NMR 280013) FOUND IN 1957, PRESUMABLY RECOVERED IN THE COURSE OF IMPROVING FIELDS ABOVE NANT-Y-CWM FARM IN THE CENTRE OF THE STUDY AREA.

- 3.3.2 **Bronze Age:** very little activity of this period has been identified within the study area, which is in marked contrast to the extensive funerary and ceremonial landscapes identified and excavated to the south-east of the study area within the Brenig Valley (Lynch 1993) and the small but significant cairn cemetery immediately overlooking the eastern edge of the study area from the summit of Gorsedd Bran (Davies 1929). Evidence from the Mynydd Hiraethog survey area that was specifically dated to the Bronze Age consisted of two relatively large barrows located in the north of the study area at Blaen-y-cwm and Rhiwiau (NMR 303513 and NMR 303514). The barrows were clearly associated as they are located just over 600m apart and in similar positions on either side of the small tributary valley feeding into Afon Hyrdd to the north. Rhiwiau barrow is located just outside the present study area within an enclosed field immediately adjacent to Rhiwiau farm. It was opened by antiquarians three times between 1830 and 1851, revealing a kerb within the mound and three cremation urns and a bronze dagger -(Davies 1929). Blaen-y-cwm barrow (Plate 5) is 34m in diameter by 4.5m in height and is apparently undisturbed, it is located on the west side of the valley on the open heather moorland and the Scheduled Monument description (De 124) indicates that it was associated with two further

smaller barrow-type monuments. Francis Lynch has stated that these monuments form a smaller version of the Brenig cemetery that is set in a similar environment at the either side of the head of a shallow valley (Lynch 1993, 39-40).

- 3.3.3 ***Iron-Age – Medieval:*** prior to the present survey no sites had been identified between the end of the Bronze Age and the end of the medieval period.
- 3.3.4 ***Post-Medieval:*** few pre-survey sites were recorded in the NMR/SMR from this period, with the majority being identified in the SMR through cartographic evidence. The farming settlement of the period was generally located in the lower fringes of the study area, which were serviced by small chapels such as the one at Pen-y-Cefn (NMR 7807) and there was only limited encroachment of human activity onto the barren moorland. The construction of the Pentrefoelas to Denbigh turnpike road through the study area in the early nineteenth century opened up the region to some extent, and it encouraged the the construction of a farm beside the road called Tan-bryn-trillyn, which was later re-named the Sportsman's Arms (NMR 280003). This was probably set up specifically as a coaching inn to serve travellers and increasingly sport shooters on the heather moorland (CPAT nd, *HLCA 1109*).
- 3.3.5 The parcelling-up of the moorland and the development of heather moorland shooting estates at this time can be seen by the numerous boundary stones located on the Henllan parish boundary (Plates 2 and 8) and other boundaries (NMR 280001, NMR 280002 and NMR 280007-280011). These demarcated the grazing and shooting lands of farms and estates within the locale, and as there are only two possible sheepfolds identified within the study area (NMR 280006 and NMR 280012) the latter activity may have taken precedence. Indeed, by the twentieth century the bulk of the study area was under the ownership of Hudson Ewbanke Kearley, the 1st Viscount of Devonport, a Merseyside entrepreneur who built a shooting lodge at Gwylfa Hiraethog between 1908 and 1913 (NMR 23045/27254 - Plates 3 and 4), which dominates the view across the Hiraethog Moors for miles around. It took its present form in 1913 when it was enlarged to a design by the architect Sir Edwin Cooper, taking the form of a three-gabled front in seventeenth century vernacular style with cross wings and long mullioned windows and stone-flagged roof. It was sold in 1925 and is now in a ruinous state (Hollett 2000; Lloyd 1986).

## 4. Results of The Desk-Based Study

### 4.1 Desk-Based Study Summary

- 4.1.1 ***Cartographic Evidence:*** examination of the historic maps, and the Ordnance Survey (OS) first and subsequent editions of the 6" to 1 mile map provides an insight into the development of the enclosed lands; however, there is little significant difference between the first edition mapping (1879) and that of today, as the earlier map post-dates the parliamentary enclosure in the area which was the last large-scale re-arrangement of boundaries within the area. The study area comprises predominantly north-facing elevated undulating heather moorland on the northern end of Mynydd Hiraethog. Settlement is limited to lower ground especially in small tributary valleys draining for the most part towards the north, with the study area skirted by islands of farm enclosure around Ty isaf, Taipellaf, Cwm y Rhinwedd, Clytiau-gleision, Rhiwiau, Dolau and Bryn-llwyn. Little of archaeological importance is shown on the OS mapping; however both Blaen-y-cwm and Rhiwiau tumuli are shown from the first edition OS mapping onwards. Other features identified include the Henllan parish boundary with its' boundary stones, several well established trackways criss-crossing the moorland, the turnpike road with the associated construction quarries and Sportsman's Arms public house (NMR 280008), and on later OS mapping the site of Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge (NMR 23045).
- 4.1.2 The RCAHMW aerial photographic interpretation identified many of the trackways crossing over the heather moorland in addition to the ones identified from the OS mapping; it also identified a few grouse shooting stands and extensive tracts of peat cutting. The interpretation suffered due to the extensive heather moorland which has covered the majority of the study area throughout the twentieth century and, consequently, it was found that much of the peat cutting was difficult to identify on the ground. In addition, many of the grouse shooting stands associated with Lord Devonport's shooting lodge at Gwylfa Hiraethog had been missed by the aerial photographic interpretation.
- 4.1.3 ***GWYNEDD SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD (SMR), NATIONAL MONUMENTS RECORD OF WALES (NMR):*** IN TOTAL, 18 UNDUPLICATED SITES WERE IDENTIFIED BETWEEN THE SMR AND NMR, COMPRISING THREE BRONZE AGE SITES, AND 15 OF POST-MEDIEVAL DATE (TABLE 1, FIG 3). DIGITAL AIR PHOTO MAPPING WAS SUPPLIED BY THE RCAHMW UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UPLANDS INITIATIVE, AND ANY INFORMATION RELATING TO POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

WAS TRANSCRIBED ONTO THE FIELD WALKING  
MAPLETS.

## 5. survey results

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The study area incorporated approximately 10.5 sqkm of enclosed and unenclosed land and the survey examined both known and previously unknown sites which ranged in date from the prehistoric to the post-medieval periods. While there were examples of single monuments, many were part of larger groups of sites, which, for the most part, were associated with sport shooting. All the sites identified by the documentary study were examined, their locations and extent were updated where required on the mapping and the site descriptions were enhanced. Both new and old sites are indicated on Figure 3.
- 5.1.2 **Previously Recorded Sites:** the desk-based study identified 18 pre-survey sites, comprising five NMR sites and 13 unduplicated SMR sites that were also updated and given NMR numbers. The greater majority of the known sites were confirmed by the identification survey but a small number, despite extensive searching, could not be located.
- 5.1.3 **New Sites:** in total, 99 new sites were identified representing a substantial numerical increase in the number sites within the study area (they are summarised according to their broad date below in Table 1).

Period	Pre-Survey Number	Post-Survey Number	Numerical Increase
Bronze Age	3	4	1
Medieval	0	2	2
Post-Medieval	15	109	94
Unknown	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>99</b>

Table 1: Pre- and Post-Survey Site Numbers

- 5.1.4 **Altitude range of sites:** the overall site density was 11 sites per sqkm, which was spread according to altitude as shown in Table 2. The greatest density of sites was spread between the 425-449m and 450-474m OD ranges.

Height Range	Existing Sites	New Sites	Total
325-349m	1	2	3
350-374m	1	6	7
375-399m	3	14	17
400-424m	3	18	21
425-449m	3	24	27
450-474m	3	24	27
475-499m	4	11	15

<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>117</b>
--------------	-----------	-----------	------------

Table 2: Pre- and Post- survey site numbers with respect to altitude

5.1.5 **Range of site types:** the sites identified from the present survey, and previously identified within the record fall into 14 general types, which are defined as shown in Table 3.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Existing Sites</b>	<b>New Sites</b>	<b>Total</b>
Barrow, Cairn	2	1	3
Boundary Bank, Enclosure,	0	4	4
Boundary Stone, Boundary Cairn	7	4	11
Bridge	1	0	1
Buildings	4	1	5
Clearance Cairns	0	1	1
Coat of Arms	0	1	1
Earthwork	0	2	2
Findspot	1	0	1
Peat Cutting	0	3	3
Quarry	1	9	10
Sheepfold, Sheep shelter, Shelter	2	2	4
Shooting Stand	0	55	55
Trackway	0	16	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>117</b>

Table 3: Range of Site Types

## 5.2 Prehistoric

5.2.1 There was relatively little evidence of prehistoric activity from within the study area and the monuments previously discovered were contained within a small group of barrows in the north of the study area at Blaen-y-cwm and Rhiwiau (NMR 303513 and NMR 303514, Plate 5); these sites were revisited and the records were enhanced. The Scheduled Monument description (De 124) stated that there were two further smaller barrows located close to the southern end of the main large barrow (NMR 303514); however, upon inspection these were in fact grouse shooting stands which formed part of a linear grouping of such sites upon Rhos Brin-llwyn (NMR 280021 - NMR 280027). The present survey did, however, discover one further potentially undisturbed funerary cairn on the north-western edge of the study area (NMR 280030, Plate 6), which was on open moorland on the western side of a small tributary stream feeding down towards the Nant Merddyn (in the woodland outside the study area) (See Table 1). The site survived as a thinly peat-covered stone mound measuring approximately 11m in diameter by up to 1m in height with no sign of intrusion into it. The



location of the new monument, when compared with the others previously discovered in the area, are in a similar position overlooking lower ground, and the sites may form a small linear sepulchral group that runs north-west to south-east for some 1500m. The grouping may potentially also have acted as territorial markers that were visible to communities living on the lower ground below on the northern side of the moor (CPAT nd, *Agricultural Landscapes*).

## 5.3

## Iron Age

- 5.3.1 No Iron Age or Roman sites were documented within the immediate study area. The absence of Iron Age activity reflects either that the monuments have not been recognised, or that there was an episode of abandonment of the moorlands, potentially as a result of the climatic decline in the early Iron Age (Lamb 1981, 55). The end of the Bronze Age marked the end of the period of ceremonial and funerary monument building on the moorland of Hiraethog (and thus the readily identifiable sites) and there was a corresponding move towards weapon deposition within burials, which reflects potentially a period of increased tension/hostility (Lynch 1993).

## 5.4 Medieval

- 5.4.1 Sites ascribed to the medieval period are few within the study area. These consist of two long sections of ribbon-like trackway, which run up and over the moorland linking the farms and lower land on the fringes of the moorland. These farms potentially had medieval origins but are just outside the study area. One of the trackways runs upslope as a series of deeply grooved hollow-ways to the south of Hafod Dafydd Mynydd (NMR 280082, Plate 7) and, further to the east, a long trackway running up from the enclosed lands of Afon Uchaf (NMR 280055). The trackways are difficult to date to a specific period but these particular sites are well established routeways; indeed, many, if not most, of the trackways across the moorland are of some great antiquity as they allow easy passage for drovemen transporting herds of animals and can also provide access to moorland grazing and to areas of peat for fuel.

## 5.5 Post-Medieval

- 5.5.1 In total, 109 sites have been ascribed to the post-medieval period, and form the majority of the total number of identified sites (see Table 1). The sites reflect the relatively recent exploitation of large tracts of the open peat moorland that forms the central block of the Hiraethog Moors. Some sites reflect the dispersed exploitation of the moorland for raw materials including extensive areas of peat cutting associated with moorland trackways, most notably in the south of the study area around Cefn Tan-y-graig and on the west side of Bryn Trillyn (eg NMR 280037 and NMR 280040). There are also small localised quarries used in the construction of field walls on the lower land fringing the study area and, more importantly, used in the construction of the turnpike road and the Sportsman's Arms public house and Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge (eg NMR

280004, NMR 280063, NMR 280083-NMR 280085 and 280111). Also associated with the road is a small turnpike bridge (NMR 280005).

- 5.5.2 The enclosure and demarcation of moorland for agricultural grazing and shooting estates can be seen with the survival of several boundary marker stones along the Henllan parish boundary (Plate 2) and other boundaries. A good example shows the boundary of Hafod Elwy farmstead/estate (Plate 8), which runs along the parish boundary and demarcates the land to the south of it. The marking of grazing lands is one factor in this process; however, there is also a paucity of stock management features in the area, with only two stock enclosures, one modern sheepfold/washfold (NMR 280006, NMR 280012 and NMR 280035) and a small shepherds shelter (NMR 280034) located in the south of the study area and closely associated with sheltered ground around the Nant y Foel-ddu and Nant Fach streams.
- 5.5.3 In comparison, there is a profusion of archaeological sites associated with the exploitation of the moorland as a recreational shooting estate. Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge survives in a much ruinous state (NMR 23045/27254, Plate 4), although an additional ancillary brick build structure and small enclosure pen survive on the eastern side of the house (NMR 280061 and NMR 280062). The most numerous sites are the 55 grouse shooting stands which form lines and clusters associated with trackways on the northern half of the study area (on the northern Llansannan side of the Hellan/Llansannan parish boundary), and were probably once all part of Viscount Devonport's estate.

## **6. Conclusion**

### **6.1 Discussion**

- 6.1.1 The survey has identified a moderate density of sites within the north and centre of the study area, mostly associated with post-medieval grouse shooting, with more sparsely spaced sites to the south. Previous survey had highlighted few sites which were predominantly identified through cartographic evidence, and the present survey has increased the number of identified monuments by 650%.
- 6.1.2 In terms of prehistoric sites there was no evidence for settlement remains which may reflect either the marginality of the land or the amount of peat coverage. However, it is significant that there are also relatively few funerary monuments either, which normally abound in upland areas. There are two funerary barrows and the one newly identified round cairn, which together potentially formed a distinct, but small, linear funerary cemetery grouping that runs along the edge of the moorland plateau with a vista to and from the valley below.
- 6.1.3 The study area has a significant but localised resource of medieval to post-medieval trackways which cross over the moorland and which provided access between settlements, enabled moorland grazing and accessed extensive peat cutting areas. The agricultural exploitation of the study area would seem to be relatively limited and relatively late in date, notably after the opening of the turnpike road. The establishment of the heather moorland as a shooting estate in the twentieth century for the 1st Viscount Devonport further impeded the agricultural usage of the land.

## **7. recommendations**

### **7.1 Recommendations for Further Work**

- 7.1.1 The survey has identified a small but significant sepulchral landscape in the form of a Bronze Age linear cemetery upon the moorland; yet by comparison, there is a dearth of associated settlement and agriculture as layers of peat overly the area. Lynch has argued (1993) that these types of sites may be at a distance from the main habitation sites and that they may form a boundary-type feature on the edge of a territory predominantly based on lower land. Recent studies into peat deposits (OA North forthcoming) have demonstrated that peat both restricts site visibility, but also early peats formation has in some instances inhibited prehistoric settlement and agricultural activity. It is therefore recommended that investigation in the form of palynological sampling be conducted adjacent to the funerary sites still located on heather moorland and across the moorland as a whole to test whether there has been agricultural exploitation in the vicinity. In addition, in order to examine the detailed character of these sites, further survey should be carried out to examine the inter-relationship of the monuments and examine the vistas out from them. Such a study could potentially expand on the methodology developed for the Simonside Survey, Northumberland (LUAU 1999). This survey was an objective recording programme linked into a phenomenological study of the inter-relationships of the component monuments and was an attempt to determine whether the monuments formed part of a cohesive and contemporary funerary landscape.
- 7.1.2 It is also recommended that a building survey be carried out on the surviving remains of Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge and associated ancillary buildings before the site has completely fallen down. The site is of regional importance as a significant visual landmark across the Hiraethog moors, and, despite its relatively recent age, it provides a snapshot of the early twentieth century development of a shooting estate.

## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 8.1 Primary sources

#### 8.1.1 *Aerial Photographs*

*Digital Air Photograph Mapping: Mynydd Hiraethog (North East)*, RCAHMW

#### 8.1.2 *National Monuments Record*

NMR/DE/Domestic/SH95NW/ Gwylfa Hiraethog Early Photographs

NMR/DE/Earthworks/SH96SW/ Blaen y Cwm CADW Scheduled Ancient Monument Record

### 8.2 Published Cartographic Sources

Landmark digital copies of 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey 1879-80 (Provided by RCAHMW)

Ordnance Survey (OS) first edition 6" Denbighshire Sheet XII SE

Ordnance Survey (OS) first edition 6" Denbighshire Sheet XVII NE

Ordnance Survey (OS) first edition 6" Denbighshire Sheet XVII SE

Ordnance Survey (OS) 2000 *Vale of Clwyd - Explorer 264, 1:25,000*

Soil Survey, 1983 *Soils of England and Wales, Sheet 2, Wales, 1:250,000*, Soil Survey of England and Wales

### 8.3 Secondary Sources

Berry, D, 2001 *Walks Around Hiraethog Moors and Lakes*, Welshpool

Brassil, KS, 1989 Llyn Aled Isaf, Mynydd Hiraethog, *Archaeology in Wales*, **29**, 46

CPAT, nd *Mynydd Hiraethog - Historic Landscape Characterisation*, unpubl rep ([www.cpat.org.uk/projects/longer/histland/hiraeth/mhiraeth.htm](http://www.cpat.org.uk/projects/longer/histland/hiraeth/mhiraeth.htm))

Cadw/CCW/ICOMOS, 1998a *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales : HLW (C) 5 Denbigh Moors* ([www.ccw.gov.uk/Generalinfo](http://www.ccw.gov.uk/Generalinfo))

Davies, E, 1929 *Prehistoric and Roman Remains of Denbighshire*, Cardiff

Davies, E, 1977 Hendre and Hafod in Denbighshire, *Trans Denbighshire Hist Soc*, **26**, 10-34

English Heritage, 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edn, London

Hollett, D, 2000 *The Clwydian Way, The Ramblers Association - North Wales Area*, Wrexham

Lamb, HH, 1981 Climate from 1000BC to 1000AD, in Jones, M and Dimbleby, G, (Eds) *The environment of Man: The Iron Age to the Anglo-Saxon period*, BAR Brit Ser, **87**, Oxford

- Lloyd, T, 1986 *The Lost Houses of Wales: A Survey of Country Houses in Wales Demolished Since c1900*, London
- LUAU, 1999 *Simonside Archaeological Landscape Project: Archaeological Survey*, unpubl rep
- Lynch, F, 1993 *Excavations in the Brenig Valley - A Mesolithic and Bronze Age Landscape in North Wales*, Bangor
- Neville George, T, and Smith, B, 1961 *British Regional Geology: North Wales, 3rd edition*, London
- OA North, 2002 *Survey Levels*, unpubl doc
- OA North 2003a *Uplands Initiative Field Projects 2002-2003, Llyn Aled and Gwytherin Survey Area - Archaeological Survey Report*, unpubl rep
- OA North 2003b *Uplands Initiative Field Projects 2002-2003, Mynydd Hiraethog Survey Area - Archaeological Survey Report*, unpubl rep
- OA North 2004 *Upland Initiative Field Projects 2004-05: Project Design*, unpubl doc
- OA North 2005 *Uplands Initiative Field Projects 2004-2005, Eastern Snowdonia (Central) Survey Area - Archaeological Survey Report*, unpubl rep
- OA North forthcoming *Upland peats: a study into the threats to the peat and the underlying archaeological resource*, unpubl rep
- Owen, WG, and Silvester, RJ, 1993 *The Mynydd Hiraethog Survey, Clwyd*, CPAT Report No. 64, unpubl rep
- RCAHMW, 2004 *Data Standard for Upland Survey 2004-2005*, unpubl doc
- UKIC, 1990 *United Kingdom Institute for conservation: Guidelines for the preparation of archives for long-term storage*

## APPENDIX 1

### Gazetteer of new sites

NPRN	NGR	TYPE	PERIOD	ALTITUD
280001	SH94905860	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	460
280002	SH95575751	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	410
280003	SH95255907	PUBLIC HOUSE	Post-Medieval	455
280004	SH94655868	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	470
280005	SH94235795	BRIDGE	Post-Medieval	440
280006	SH93325850	SHEEPFOLD	Post-Medieval	415
280007	SH95996016	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	420
280008	SH95715962	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	475
280009	SH94465891	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	475
280010	SH93865855	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	435
280011	SH93525833	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	445
280012	SH95865767	SHEEPFOLD	Post-Medieval	395
280013	SH93806038	FINDSPOT	Bronze Age	385
280014	SH93435991	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	440
280015	SH93435992	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	440
280016	SH93405984	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	445
280017	SH93335980	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	449
280018	SH93466009	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	425
280019	SH93526026	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	415
280020	SH93106031	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	420
280021	SH93666070	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	385
280022	SH93766075	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	380
280023	SH93816078	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	375
280024	SH93866081	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	375
280025	SH93916084	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	370
280026	SH93976087	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	365
280027	SH94016089	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	360
280028	SH94056097	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	355
280029	SH93406089	EARTHWORK	Unknown	375
280030	SH93226138	CAIRN	Bronze Age	345
280031	SH93405909	EARTHWORK	Unknown	440
280032	SH93625845	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	440
280033	SH93555846	PEAT CUTTING	Post-Medieval	443
280034	SH93485864	SHELTER	Post-Medieval	420
280035	SH93465864	SHEEP SHELTER	Post-Medieval	420
280036	SH93815911	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	460
280037	SH93585898	PEAT CUTTING	Post-Medieval	450
280038	SH93795911	BOUNDARY CAIRN	Post-Medieval	460
280039	SH95235833	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	450
280040	SH95375821	PEAT CUTTING	Post-Medieval	450
280041	SH95385812	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	445
280042	SH95095752	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	450
280043	SH94905802	CLEARANCE CAIRN	Post-Medieval	470
280044	SH95626084	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	385
280045	SH95666064	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	405
280046	SH95676068	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	400

280047	SH95676073	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	400
280048	SH95686077	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	395
280049	SH95686079	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	390
280050	SH95676081	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	390
280051	SH95686084	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	390
280052	SH95696089	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	380
280053	SH95686093	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	375
280054	SH95696094	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	375
280055	SH95335996	TRACKWAY	Medieval	390
280056	SH95916048	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	410
280057	SH96305976	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	440
280058	SH96355998	COAT OF ARMS	Post-Medieval	410
280059	SH96295984	BOUNDARY BANK	Post-Medieval	430
280060	SH94705911	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	494
280061	SH94795913	OUT BUILDING	Post-Medieval	490
280062	SH94795910	ENCLOSURE	Post-Medieval	490
280063	SH94765902	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	493
280064	SH94655914	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	490
280065	SH94865929	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	480
280066	SH94825928	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	480
280067	SH94785927	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	480
280068	SH94745925	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	485
280069	SH94905930	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	480
280070	SH94955932	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	475
280071	SH95005933	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	470
280072	SH95355965	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	460
280073	SH94485959	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	430
280074	SH94505957	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	435
280075	SH94525954	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	440
280076	SH94545951	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	450
280077	SH94555948	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	460
280078	SH94585945	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	460
280079	SH94605942	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	465
280080	SH94625938	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	470
280081	SH94625938	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	470
280082	SH93615923	TRACKWAY	Medieval	450
280083	SH95155882	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	460
280084	SH95205896	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	460
280085	SH95135902	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	470
280086	SH95946012	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	425
280087	SH95445956	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	465
280088	SH95445960	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	463
280089	SH95445964	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	460
280090	SH95445968	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	460
280091	SH95876018	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	425
280092	SH95896019	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	425
280093	SH95926018	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	425
280094	SH95856019	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	420
280095	SH95866021	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	420
280096	SH95836024	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	420
280097	SH95786020	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	430



280098	SH95796020	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	430
280099	SH95826019	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	420
280100	SH95786020	BOUNDARY BANK	Post-Medieval	420
280101	SH95716024	TRACKWAY	Post-Medieval	420
280102	SH95746026	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	420
280103	SH95696023	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	420
280104	SH95656021	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	420
280105	SH95616019	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	425
280106	SH95576016	SHOOTING STAND	Post-Medieval	425
280107	SH95006057	BOUNDARY BANK	Post-Medieval	365
280108	SH95086112	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	350
280109	SH94946153	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	345
280110	SH96135989	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	440
280111	SH96235957	QUARRY	Post-Medieval	450
280112	SH96255964	BOUNDARY STONE	Post-Medieval	445

# illustrations

Figure 1: Location Map

Figure 2: Mynydd Hiraethog (North East) Study Area

Figure 3: Site Distribution showing both pre- and post-survey sites

## Plates

- Plate 1: General view across the Hiraethog Moors
- Plate 2: View up the Llansannan/Henllan parish boundary towards Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge
- Plate 3: Photograph of Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge c1913 (NMR 23045)
- Plate 4: Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge (NMR 23045)
- Plate 5: Blaen-y-cwm barrow (NMR 303513)
- Plate 6: Nant Merddyn cairn (NMR 280030)
- Plate 7: Hafod Dafydd Mynydd trackway (NMR 280082)
- Plate 8: Cefn-Llys-Gwr boundary stone I (NMR 280010)



**Plate 1: General  
view across the  
Hiraethog Moors**



**Plate 2: View up the  
Llansannan/Henllan parish  
boundary towards Gwylfa  
Hiraethog shooting lodge**



**Plate 3: Photograph of Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge c1913 (NMR 23045)**



Plate 4: Gwylfa Hiraethog shooting lodge (NMR 23045)



Plate 5: Blaen-y-cwm barrow (NMR 303513)



Plate 6: Nant Merddyn cairn (NMR 280030)



**PLATE 7: HAFOD DAFYDD MYNYDD TRACKWAY (NMR 280082)**



**Plate 8: Cefn-Llys-Gwr, boundary stone I (NMR 280010)**