Llangau
Access Road to Cyrchynan Ucha
Llanarmon D C
LL20 7LL

Proposed Ancillary Artist's Studio

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Contact:
Sunand Prasad
sunand@btopenworld.com

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1. Introduction and Methodology

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) assesses the impact of the proposed ancillary studio building on the significance and setting of Llangau, a Grade II listed cottage. There is a separate, concurrent application for Planning & Listed Building Consent for repair and alteration works to the Grade II listed cottage at Llangau, with a separate HIS for those works.

This assessment has been prepared with reference to:

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)
- Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment
- Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (2011)
- Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (Cadw, 2017)

In accordance with TAN 24, the significance of the listed building has been assessed with reference to evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values**,** and the effect of the proposal on those values, and on how the significance of the asset is appreciated and understood, has been evaluated. Additionally, the setting of listed building and the contribution it makes to the significance of the building has been assessed, and the effect the proposal could have on this significance has been evaluated.

This Heritage Impact Statement is to be read alongside the **Design & Access Statement** (which includes photographs of the site and listed cottage and key external views of the proposal in context), submitted **drawings**, and **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal**.

Llangau is located approximately 1.5km from the Llarmon DC crossroads. The oldest part of the building, the 'one-up one-down' cottage with an attached barn, was probably built in the mid to late eighteenth century. The southward extension was built by John Jones, the grandfather of one of the two joint owners of the cottage and its grounds, in the early 1900s. The current owners bought the cottage in 1977 and, unable to use the historic vehicle access, purchased additional land in 1992 and built a new access track up from the adopted road. The barn, which formed the north end of the building, was collapsing at the time of purchase and was made safe by taking down the roof and walls to a safe level.

Little has been done to the cottage since 1977 other than occasional repair and the dwelling remains without mains electricity, water, gas and sewage. The owners now wish to make some essential improvements to the cottage to make it more habitable and ensure its continued preservation. (These improvements are being submitted concurrently for Listed Building Consent). They would also like to build an Artist's Studio as an outbuilding to extend the functional use of the small cottage without detriment to its historic value by way of an extension.

2. The Heritage Asset and Its Significance

Llangau is a modest vernacular stone cottage designated at Grade II for its special architectural and historic interest. Its significance derives from its simple form, traditional materials, agricultural origins and rural setting rather than architectural display.



Fig 1 Denbighshire OS maps from 1880 (surveyed 1874) showing the cottage and barn without the later extension to the south

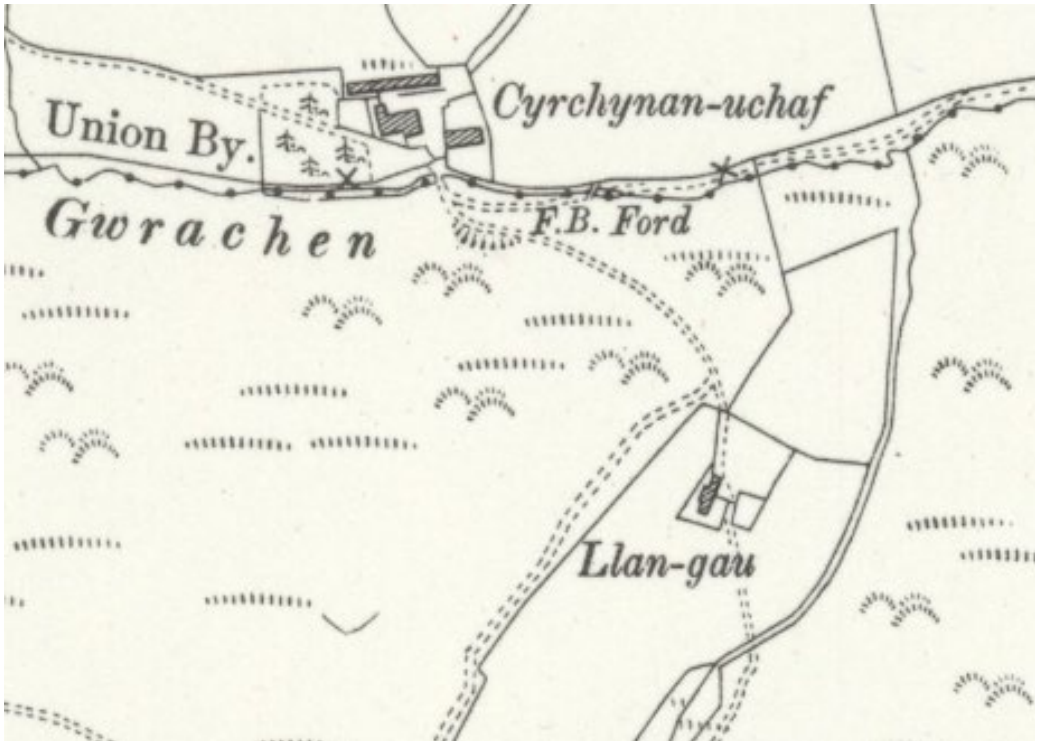


Fig 2 Denbighire OS OS maps maps from 1914 (surveyed 1910) Showing southern extension to cottage

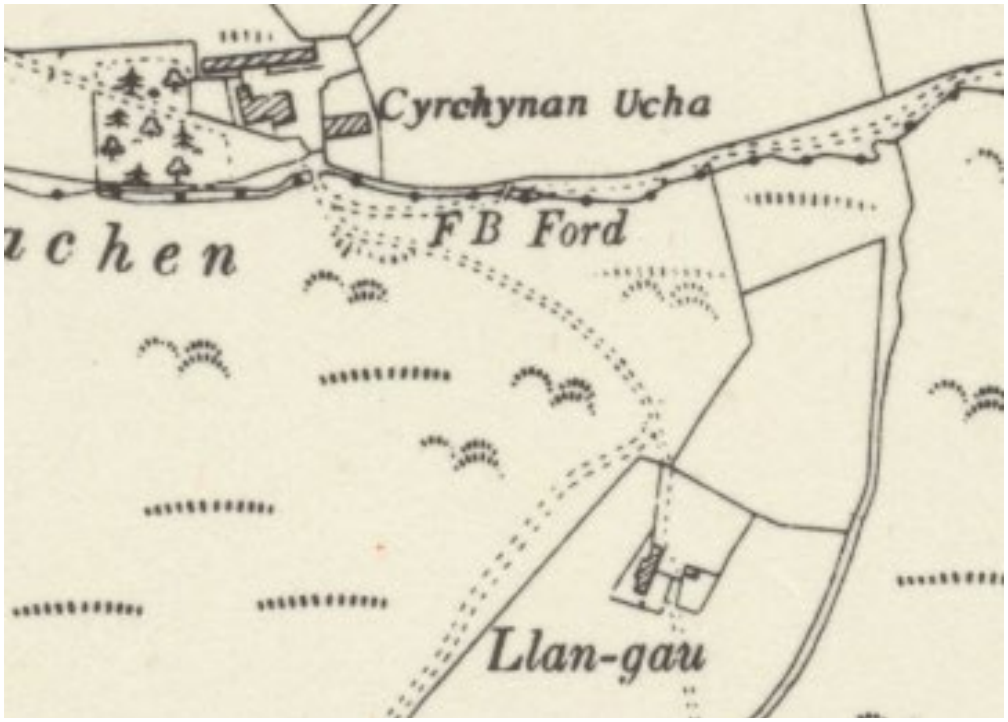
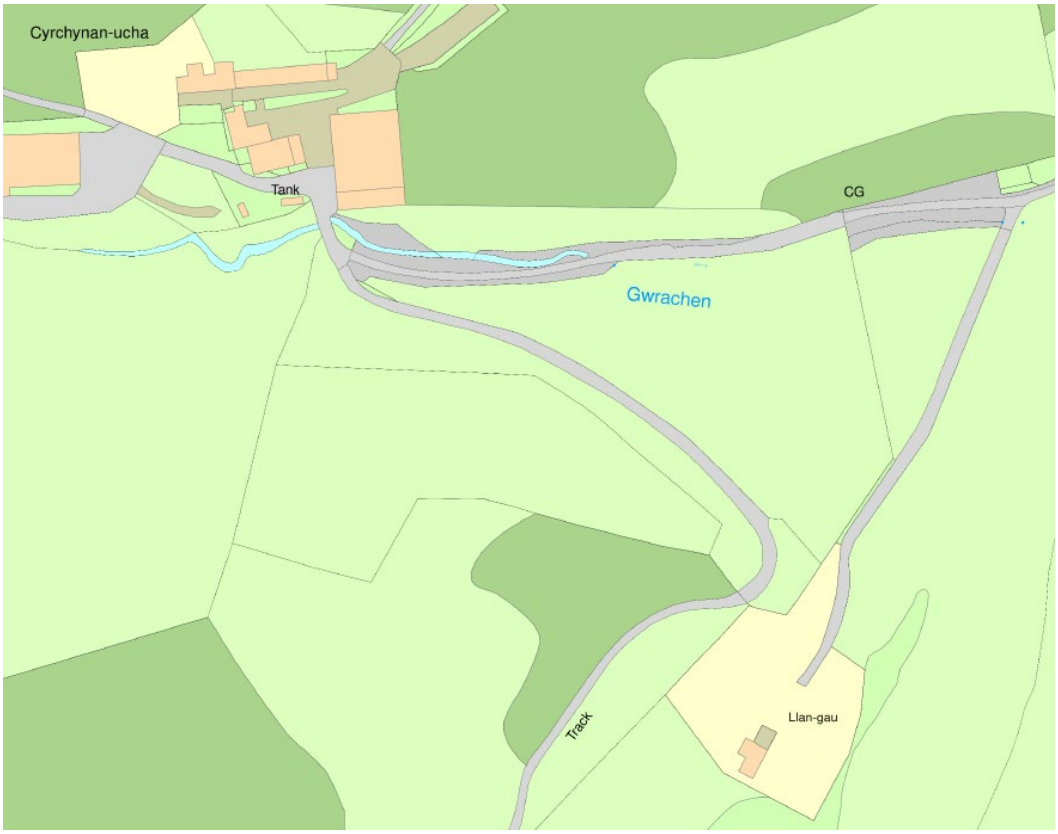


Fig 3 Denbighshire OS maps from 1954 unchanged from previous map except addition of small structure in vegetable garden to the west of the cottage



Current (2026) OS map Showing barn ruin in grey and 1992 access road to Llangau

Historic Ordnance Survey mapping provides evidence of the incremental development of the cottage. The 1880 OS map (top) indicates that the building originally comprised a smaller dwelling occupying the northern half of the present footprint, with an attached agricultural barn (now a ruin), consisting of a kitchen with a room above. The southern extension appears on the 1914 map (surveyed 1910), an Edwardian phase of enlargement and domestic improvement, reflecting the present arrangement with a ground floor living room, first-floor second bedroom above, and a new connecting stair. The 1954 OS map (bottom) shows the same plan form and the trace of an outbuilding in the lower garden. This pattern of gradual expansion is typical of rural vernacular buildings, where dwellings evolved over time in response to changing domestic needs while retaining a simple overall form.

Evidential value

The cottage retains historic fabric and form typical of small upland dwellings. The remains of the former attached agricultural barn survive as a ruin and provide direct physical evidence of historic agricultural use and development of the site.

Historical value

The building forms part of a historic farmstead pattern characteristic of the Ceiriog Valley, comprising a modest dwelling with associated agricultural structures. This relationship is legible in historic mapping and the surviving barn ruin.

Aesthetic value

The aesthetic value of the listed building lies in its restrained vernacular character, modest scale, simple roof form and its visual relationship with the surrounding rural landscape. The hierarchy between the dwelling and ancillary buildings is a key component of this value.

Communal value

The cottage contributes to local rural character and identity. Continued occupation and sensitive adaptation sustain this communal value by keeping the building in active use.

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3. The Setting of the Listed Building

Cadw's *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* defines setting as the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and which contribute to its significance.

The site lies in the lee of the valley, sheltered from the south-westerly winds. It is visible from the Llanrhaeadr Road that lies over 200m westward. It is not visible from any other public highways or footpaths (ref fig 4 below). Over the last forty years the owners of the property have planted occasional trees throughout the site, including willow, field maple, silver birch, larch, fir and walnut. Aspen and ash trees also lie to the south and north of the listed building. The trees give a distinct character to the site and the setting of the cottage, in contrast to the upland grazing pasture and managed plantation immediately surrounding the site on all sides (ref fig 5 below).



Fig 4 site context showing access lane to neighbouring Cyrchynan Ucha (blue highlight), Llanrhaeadr Road (yellow highlight) and the Llangau site (red)



Fig 5 site seen from Llanrhaeadr Road, demarcated from the surrounding grassland by the concentration and variety of trees

The setting of Llangau contributes to the Grade II listed building's significance by informing how it is appreciated and understood within its rural context. This includes spatial relationships between the dwelling, the former barn, ancillary structures and surrounding land.

4. Description of the Proposed Studio

The proposal comprises a single-storey, ancillary studio building to support the function of the existing dwelling, within the curtilage of the listed cottage. The studio is sited on previously disturbed ground close to the access lane and is physically and visually separate from both the cottage and the barn ruin. It is positioned in geometrical alignment with the listed cottage, sited 11m to the north of the end gable and setback 0.7m from the front building line, which is the maximum allowed by the land form.

The site is not connected to mains utilities and the proposal includes a free standing array of solar panels on the lower ground of the garden to the east of the listed building, serving both the proposed studio and the existing cottage.

5. Assessment of Impact

Impact on evidential value

The proposal does not affect historic fabric or archaeological remains. The barn ruin will be retained and stabilised (as part of the separate application for works to the cottage), preserving its evidential value.

Impact: neutral

Impact on historical value

The studio does not replace or obscure the historic barn and is sited so that the relationship between dwelling and agricultural structure remains legible. The historic farmstead pattern can continue to be understood.

Impact: neutral

Impact on aesthetic value

The studio has been deliberately designed to be modest in scale and subordinate to the listed cottage, which is challenge as the cottage is quite small. Its footprint is less than 60% of the cottage's**,** and internal floor area 30% of the cottage's. It has an appreciably lower ridge and eaves height, reinforced by slightly a lower ground level. Its simple barn-like form and recessive materials, contrasting with the cottage's ensure that it does not compete visually with the listed building.

Impact: neutral

Impact on communal value

The studio supports continued use of the site without extending or placing pressure on the listed building, sustaining its role within the living rural landscape.

Impact: positive

Impact on setting

Applying the principles set out in *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*, the proposal preserves the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the listed building.

- Key spatial relationships and the historic hierarchy of buildings are maintained
- The form and design fit sympathetically with the adjacent grade II Listed Building, replicating the typology of agricultural outbuildings in the area but at a very much smaller scale
- The trees on the site that contribute to the character of the setting are retained
- No external lighting is proposed for the studio building, maintaining the character of the site and the setting of the listed building (and preserving wildlife)
- The solar panel installation is low profile, sited away from the immediate curtilage of the listed building, does not affect the fabric of the listed building, and is reversible.

The proposal does not affect how the significance of the listed building is appreciated and understood**.**
Impact: neutral

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6. Conservation Principles and Justification

The proposal accords with the Conservation Principles by:

- sustaining heritage values through minimal intervention (Principle 1);
- being based on a clear understanding of significance and setting (Principle 2);
- enabling continued viable use of the site (Principle 3);
- representing reasonable, transparent and proportionate change (Principle 5).

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7. Summary of Impact and Compliance

The proposed studio and associated free standing solar panels results in no harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. The setting is preserved through the studio's modest scale, careful siting and clear subordination to the principal dwelling. The proposal is consistent with national and local heritage policy and guidance.

Dr Gillian Horn
Specialist architectural consultant & researcher
January 2026