

→ SMR Assoc. Docs.
Comegarth Lodge, Gorthleck
NHSINW 002

Mr J. Wood

AJRW/JAB

703669

7 July 1994

Ms Joanna Burnett-Stuart,
Elizabeth Banks Associates Ltd.,
13 Abercorn Place,
LONDON, NW8 9EA.

Dear Ms Burnett-Stuart,

Thank you for your letter of 22nd June. Some details from our Sites and Monuments Record are enclosed but they do not add to what you have noted already.

The hut circles are the most sensitive areas. These are likely to date from the period from about 3000 BC to about 500 BC. These would be best conserved by leaving them unplanted and maintaining a light grazing regime to prevent scrub encroachment. Existing shrubs and trees on the circles should be cut down, and the roots left in situ to rot naturally. This will prevent unnecessary damage to the stratified floor levels and other archaeological buried features.

The surrounding field system has not been surveyed in detail - its extent has been identified from aerial photographs. A survey would of course be extremely valuable both from a purely archaeological and a conservation point of view, but this would cost approximately £600 - £800 to do, depending on the archaeologist employed.

If you would like me to arrange a survey of the field system, or to recommend suitable archaeological contractors able to carry this out, please let me know.

If this is not a practical proposition, it would be advisable at least to try to identify the boundary banks, field clearance cairns and lynchets on the ground and avoid planting or digging into them. The fields themselves are not likely to contain much of archaeological significance, although prehistoric ploughmarks can sometimes be identified by excavation, and the visible field systems can also mask earlier phases of more concentrated activity.

I would therefore recommend engaging an archaeologist for a couple of days to visit the site and advise whoever actually does the tree-planting and pond-digging of areas of interest on the ground (and how to avoid them). He or she should also observe the excavations and report any features or finds of importance that may come up. This need not hold up the work at all, and would mean that any discoveries could be quickly and efficiently dealt with. There would be a small cost involved: depending on the archaeologist used, and the number of visits needed, this could range from about £150 to about £500. Obviously a survey and watching/advisory brief could be combined to provide a more cost-effective solution than if done separately. Again, please let me know if you would like to pursue this.

I am sorry not to be able to supply detailed information but I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A. J. R. Wood
Regional Archaeologist F:\ARCH\JW\LETTERS\STUART.JAB

Nick.

Could you please check the
SMR urgently and let
me have any information?

Thanks!

JW

1/7/94

John,

Map showing
extent of f/s +
but circles + site cards.

is this Ok.?

Nick

letter in
typing

JW 5/7/94