

LAND SOUTH OF BRONWYDD ROAD, TANERDY, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION (NGR SN4255 2111)



Prepared by DAT Archaeological Services

For: Pobl Group



DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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LAND SOUTH OF BRONWYDD ROAD, TANERDY, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Gan / By

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**LAND SOUTH OF BRONWYDD ROAD, TANERDY, CARMARTHENSHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

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LAND SOUTH OF BRONWYDD ROAD, TANERDY, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land south of Bronwydd Road, Tanerdy, Carmarthen ahead of the determination of a planning application for the proposed development on the site. The proposed development area lies 850m northeast of the Roman town of Moridunum, 600m southwest of the amphitheatre and at a fork between the projected line of two Roman roads leading northeast from the Roman town.

There was considered to be a high potential for Roman remains to be present within the site area and thus a requirement for an archaeological evaluation in advance of the determination of the planning application was requested by the archaeological advisors to the planning authority. The potential for cemeteries associated with the Roman town was highlighted as burials were often located in roadside locations as they were not allowed within the town walls. No Roman cemeteries have yet been found in Carmarthen excluding the occasional find of cremation vessels, despite the size and length of occupation of Roman Carmarthen suggesting that large cemeteries must have existed. The potential for Roman roadside activity was also highlighted.

Other potential archaeology that could be encountered within the development area included possible formal garden features associated with the property of Ty Gwynfa, which are shown on the 1906 Ordnance Survey map. The property was built at the turn of the 20th century and the map shows a possible glasshouse, cold frames and driveway within the development area. The area has remained as gardens ever since, including the survival of a number of mature trees some of which have Tree Preservation Orders upon them.

As part of the evaluation three trenches were excavated across the development area. Each one displayed a similar soil profile of topsoil, subsoil and natural. The subsoil indicates that the area has been formerly ploughed, presumably prior to the early 20th century when it lay within agricultural lands surrounding Carmarthen.

A possible former driveway was uncovered in Trench 2, lying directly below the topsoil. This was presumably associated with an earlier trackway associated with the layout of the gardens in the early 20th century.

Trench three showed signs of landscaping with an area of redeposited natural soil directly overlying a buried soil in the southern portion of the trench and the presence of a revetment wall around the area still extant. At the midsection of the trench a ceramic drainage pipe of modern date, and again this and the landscaping are likely to date to the early 20th century when the gardens were laid out.

Below the drain in Trench 3 was the only earlier archaeological feature, represented by the possible terminus of a gully. No finds or artefacts were retrieved from its fill to provide a date for it.

The archaeological evaluation did not reveal any significant archaeological features and no significant finds were made. No indications of Roman activity were identified. The results of the evaluation suggest that the proposed development site has limited archaeological potential.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by the Pobl Group via Asbri Planning Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation on the site of the proposed residential development on land south of Bronwydd Road, Tanerdy, Carmarthen (roughly centred on NGR 4255 2111; Figures 1 and 2).
- 1.1.2 At this stage the development proposals (Figure 3) are in the pre-application stage, and as part of initial consultation with Carmarthenshire County Council archaeological advice was provided by the archaeological advisors to the planning authority (Development Management section of Dyfed Archaeological Trust). This initial advice requested pre-determination evaluation of the site due to its high archaeological potential.
- 1.1.3 Initially it was recommended that a geophysical survey of the development area should be used to ascertain the presence/absence of possible archaeological remains, the results of which would enable an informed decision to be made on the application in terms of its potential impacts on buried archaeological remains. Following observation of aerial photographs and as confirmed during a site visit, the site area is unfortunately not suitable for geophysical survey due to tree cover and the presence of a large driveway already present on the site which provides access to the adjacent property of Ty Gwynfa. Following further discussion with the Development Management team at Dyfed Archaeological Trust, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the planning authority, it was determined that a trial trench evaluation would be possible in lieu of the geophysical survey.
- 1.1.4 The aim of this evaluation was to provide information on the character and significance of any below ground archaeological remains that may be present within the development area. Should any significant archaeological deposits be revealed, then a programme of mitigation can be formulated prior to a planning application being determined.

1.2 Scope of Project

- 1.2.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological evaluation was prepared by DAT Archaeological Services prior to the commencement of works. This was approved by the archaeological advisors to Carmarthenshire County Council, Dyfed Archaeological Trust – Development Management prior to the start of the works. The WSI outlined the following tasks for the project:
 - Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology for the intrusive trial trench evaluation which DAT Archaeological Services will undertake (this document);
 - To establish the state of preservation, character, extent and date range for the targeted archaeological deposits;
 - To use the information to design future mitigation at the site which will enable any identified remains to be appropriately investigated and recorded where they will be affected by the proposed development;
 - Production of a report and an archive of the results.

- 1.2.2 The overall scheme of works was summarised as: *The implementation of a scheme of archaeological evaluation using trial trenching on land south of Bronwydd Road, Tanerdy, Carmarthen in advance of a planning application being submitted for residential development of the site. Further mitigation is possible where significant remains are identified, the scope of which would be determined following this stage of work. A report shall be prepared on the results of the evaluation and an archive created of all finds, records, photographs and plans created by this mitigation strategy.*

1.3 Report Outline

- 1.3.1 This report provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological evaluation and its results and puts those results within their regional and national context where possible.

1.4 Abbreviations

- 1.4.1 Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record¹ (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). DAT Archaeological Services – DAT-AS; Dyfed Archaeological Trust Development Management – DAT-DM; Scheduled Ancient Monument – SAM; Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI; RCAHMW – Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

1.5 Illustrations

- 1.5.1 Printed map extracts are not necessarily produced to their original scale.

¹ Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Corner House, 6 Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo SA19 6AE

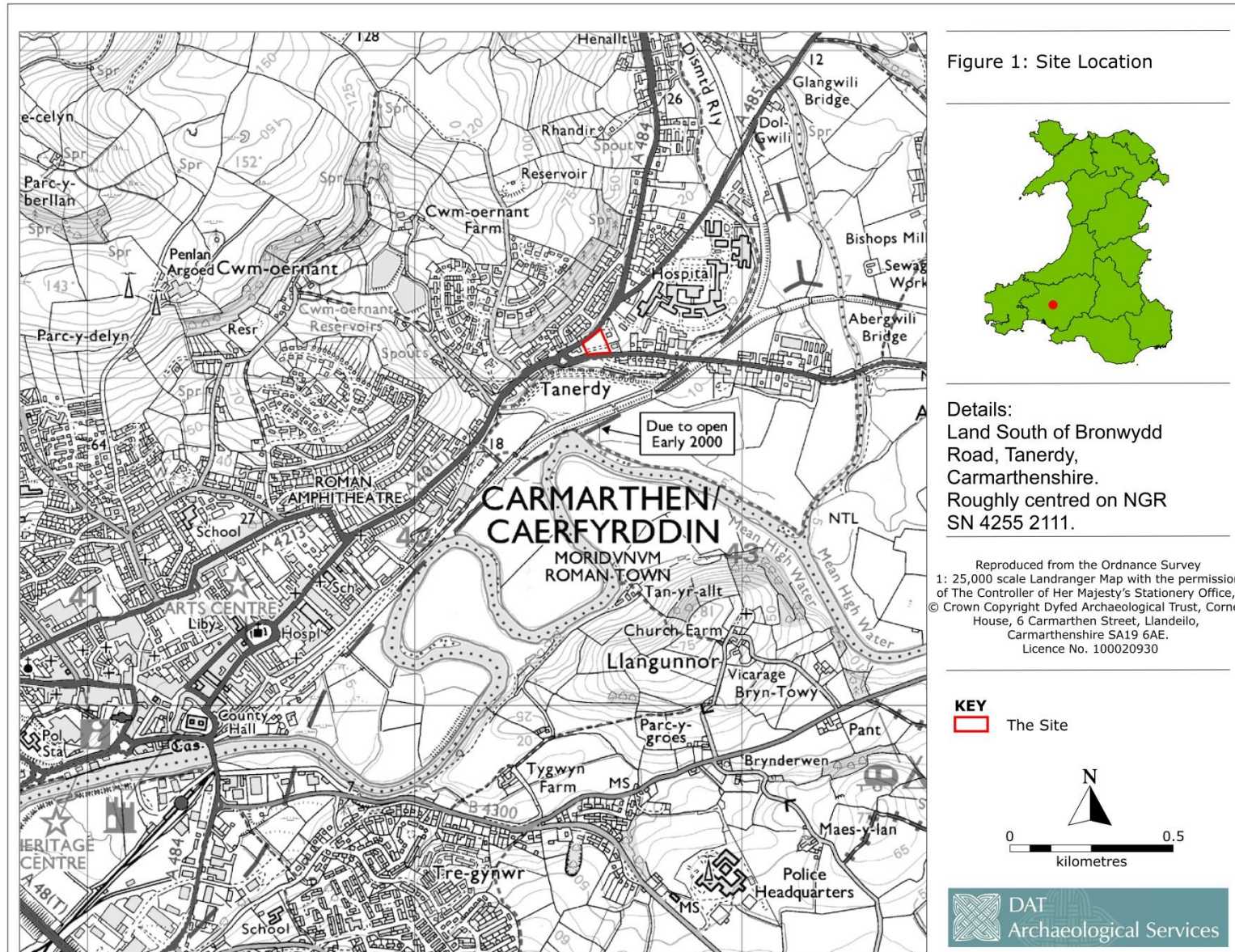
1.6 Timeline

1.6.1 The following timeline (Table 1) is used within this report to give date ranges for the various archaeological periods that may be mentioned within the text.

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4400 – 2300 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.2300 – 700 BC	
Iron Age –	c.700 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1086	
Medieval Period –	1086 – 1536	
Post-Medieval Period ² –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20 th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales.

² The post-medieval and industrial periods are combined as the post-medieval period on the Regional Historic Environment Record as held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust



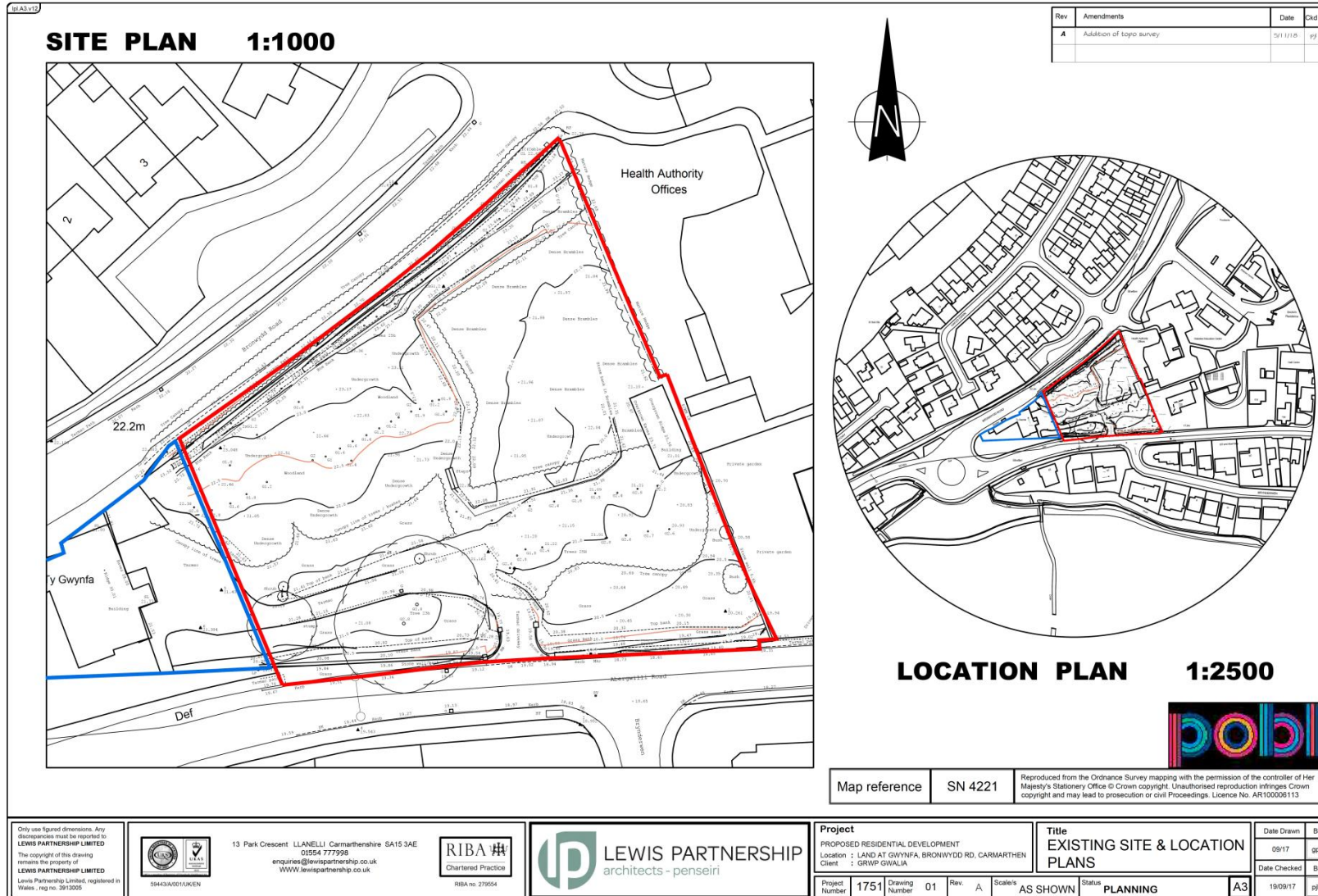


Figure 2: Location map and development area plan (supplied by Asbri Planning). The development area is outlined in red

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2. THE SITE

2.1 Location, Topography and Geology

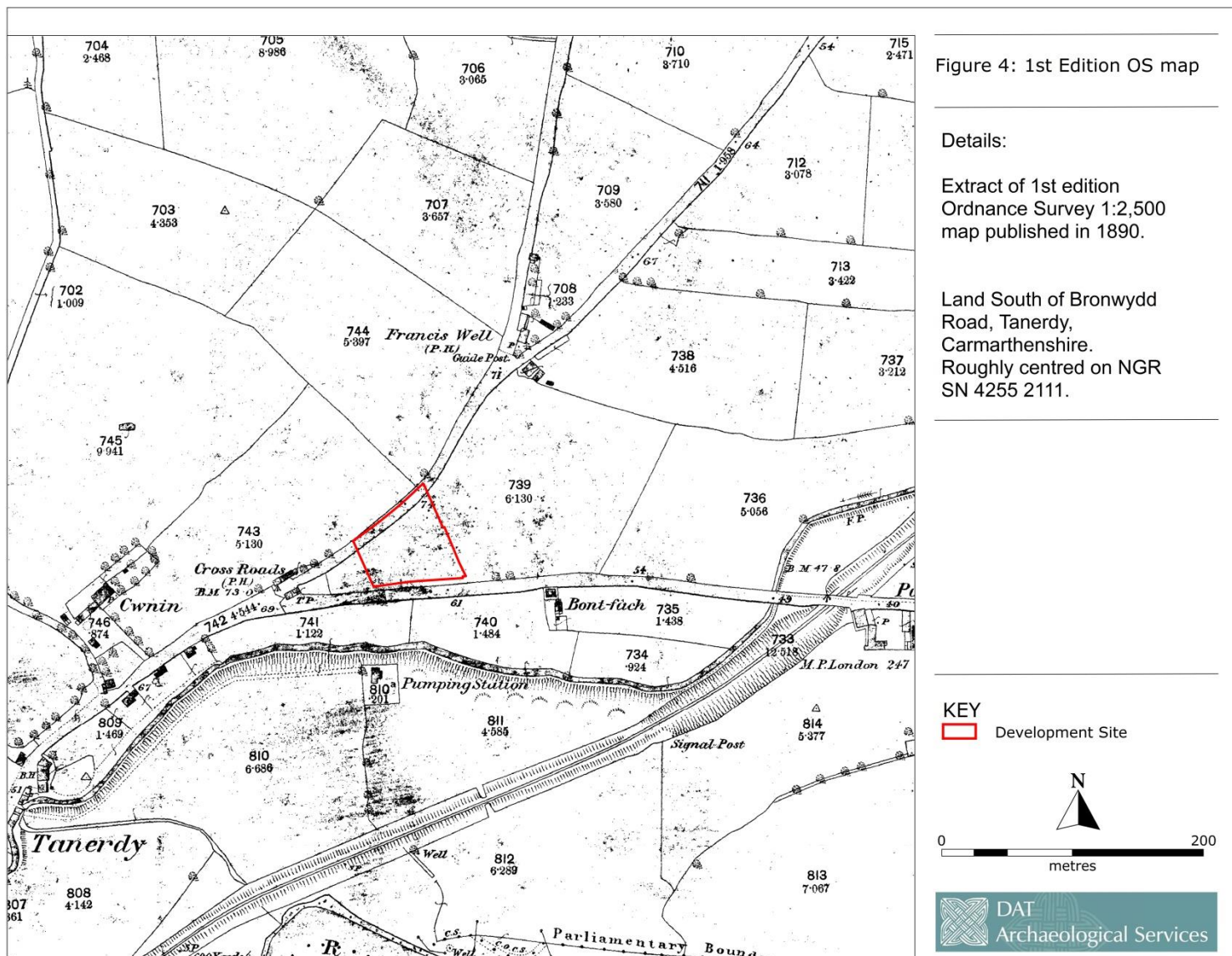
- 2.1.1 The proposed development is on land between Bronwydd Road to the north and Abergwili Road to the south, on the eastern side of Carmarthen (roughly centred on SN 4255 2111; Figures 1 and 2).
- 2.1.2 The site lies on land which drops down slightly from Bronwydd Road to Abergwili Road, lying just above the 20m OD contour. The southern edge of the site appears to be slightly terraced indicating that the formal gardens may have been subject to some landscaping.
- 2.1.3 Mature trees lie along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. A tarmacked driveway runs from Abergwili Road into the site area forming a T shape providing access to the eastern side of the site and the car parking area around Ty Gwynfa. A number of large evergreen trees, which will be retained within the development, lie on the western side of the site area. The northeastern part of the site is partially hedged and also covered in dense vegetation (brambles etc), although a strip of cleared ground was noted on the first day of the evaluation.
- 2.1.4 The underlying solid geology of the site comprises Abergwili Formation mudstones. The superficial geology comprises Devensian Glaciofluvial Deposits of sand and gravel (Source British Geological Survey).

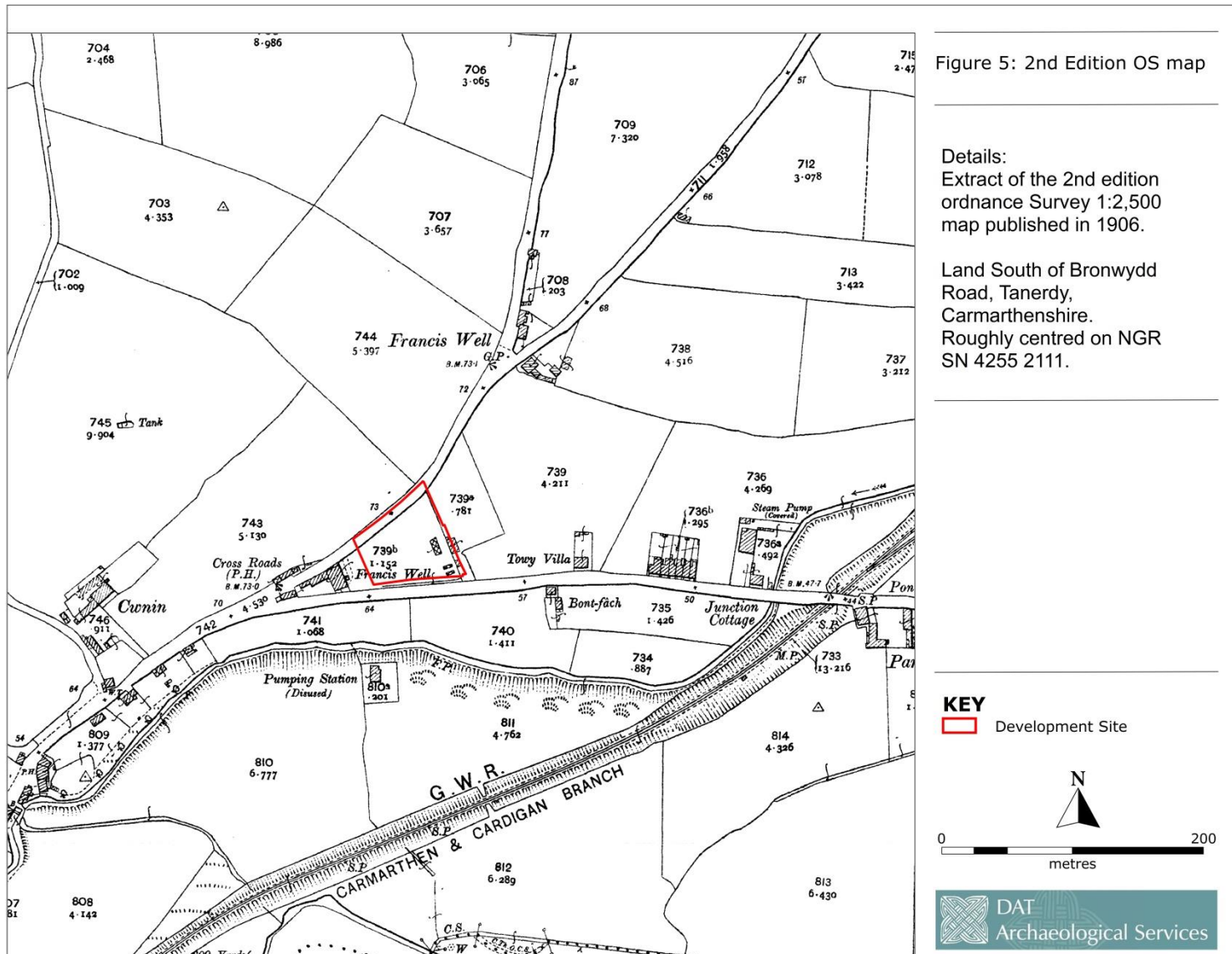
2.2 Archaeological Potential

- 2.2.1 The site area lies some 850m northeast of the Roman town of Moridunum, the east gate of which lay at the junction between Priory Street and Richmond Terrace. A Roman road then led northeast from this gate towards the site area, before it is thought to split into two roads at a point directly west of Ty Gwynfa, around 90m southwest of the proposed development area. One of these Roman roads follows Bronwydd Road heading northeast and the other follows the existing line of Abergwili Road to the south running east to west. The Roman amphitheatre of Carmarthen lies 600m southwest of the development area, along the line of the main Roman road from the town.
- 2.2.2 Burials during the Roman period were not allowed within the lines of the town walls and they were generally placed in cemeteries along the lines of main roads projecting from the towns. Roman cemeteries could include either or both inhumations or cremations. Later Roman cemeteries are more often inhumations following the east to west Christian tradition. No cemeteries have as yet been identified at Carmarthen, excluding the occasional find of individual cremation urns including one directly west of the amphitheatre at Park Hall. The size and length of occupation of Roman Carmarthen is such that extensive cemeteries must have existed.
- 2.2.3 The potential for other Roman roadside activity, including settlement, was also considered to be a possibility in the development area. Settlements could include plot boundary ditches or remains of structures.
- 2.2.4 A review of early maps of the development area indicate that the area was undeveloped and used as agricultural land as recorded on the 1890 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4), with a small building at the junction of Bronwydd and Abergwili Roads to the south west.
- 2.2.5 By the 1906 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 5) the property of Ty Gwynfa had been erected directly southwest of the development site (labelled as Francis Wells). The development area itself also has a number of

structures indicated within its boundary, all of which may be associated with the gardens of the adjacent property. A possible glasshouse is indicated in the central part of the eastern side of the site (indicated by the crosshatched block – typically used for such structures) this may now partially lie beneath the current driveway. Two smaller buildings lie to the south of this which may also be crosshatched, perhaps indicating smaller glass covered cold frames or similar.

- 2.2.6 The development area is likely to have been turned into formal gardens for the adjacent property now known as Ty Gwynfa when it was first built, and as still indicated by the existing driveway and formally planted trees.
- 2.2.7 No further development is indicated on the site on later Ordnance Survey maps. The present area is still maintained as gardens.





3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 To ascertain the significance and state of preservation of archaeological features within the proposed development area, a phase of trial trench evaluation was implemented.
- 3.1.2 It was initially proposed to excavate two trenches, as detailed in the WSI; one located to the northeast of the driveway entrance from Abergwili Road to Ty Gwynfa (Photo 1), the second northwest of the driveway (Photo 2). Both trenches were to be dug through level, lawned areas of the site. When the works started it was noted that an area of the northeastern part of the site had been cleared of vegetation (brambles etc). It was agreed with Pobl Group that a third trench could be placed within this area to make evaluation of the area more robust (Photo 3).
- 3.1.3 A tracked 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed bucket was used to open the three trenches (Figure 6). They were excavated under archaeological supervision. All non-archaeologically significant overburden was removed, and the trenches were excavated down onto archaeological levels or undisturbed natural ground, whichever was reached first.
- 3.1.4 Following machine excavation, the trenches were fully hand cleaned using trowels to best determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains. Certain areas were re-trowelled a number of times to improve the definition of features. Sample excavation was undertaken of features identified during the evaluation.



Photo 1: Area of Trench 1 prior to excavation, viewing roughly east with Abergwili road to the right and driveway leading to Ty Gwynfa in foreground



Photo 2: Area of Trench 2 prior to excavation, viewing northeast with driveway leading to Ty Gwynfa in foreground / right of photo



Photo 3: Area of Trench 3 prior to excavation, showing cleared vegetation strip viewing north with trees bounding Bronwydd Road to rear

3.1.5 All deposits were recorded by archaeological context recording sheet, scale drawing, photography and site note books. All individual deposits were numbered using the open-ended numbering system in accordance with DAT Archaeological Services Recording System. Trench plans and sections

were recorded by means of measured drawings and sketches. A photographic record was maintained using digital cameras.

- 3.1.6 The trenches were located in relation to surrounding features and buildings using a Trimble TST.
- 3.1.7 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the 14th and 15th of January, 2019.

3.2 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

- 3.2.1 The WSI stated that an archive would be prepared if it met the requirements of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust archive retention policy (2018). In this case, due to the negative archaeological results, the project does not meet the requirements and as such this report forms the archive for the project.
- 3.2.2 The results of the fieldwork have been assessed in local, regional and wider contexts. The report includes a desk-based research element to ensure that the site is placed within its wider archaeological context.

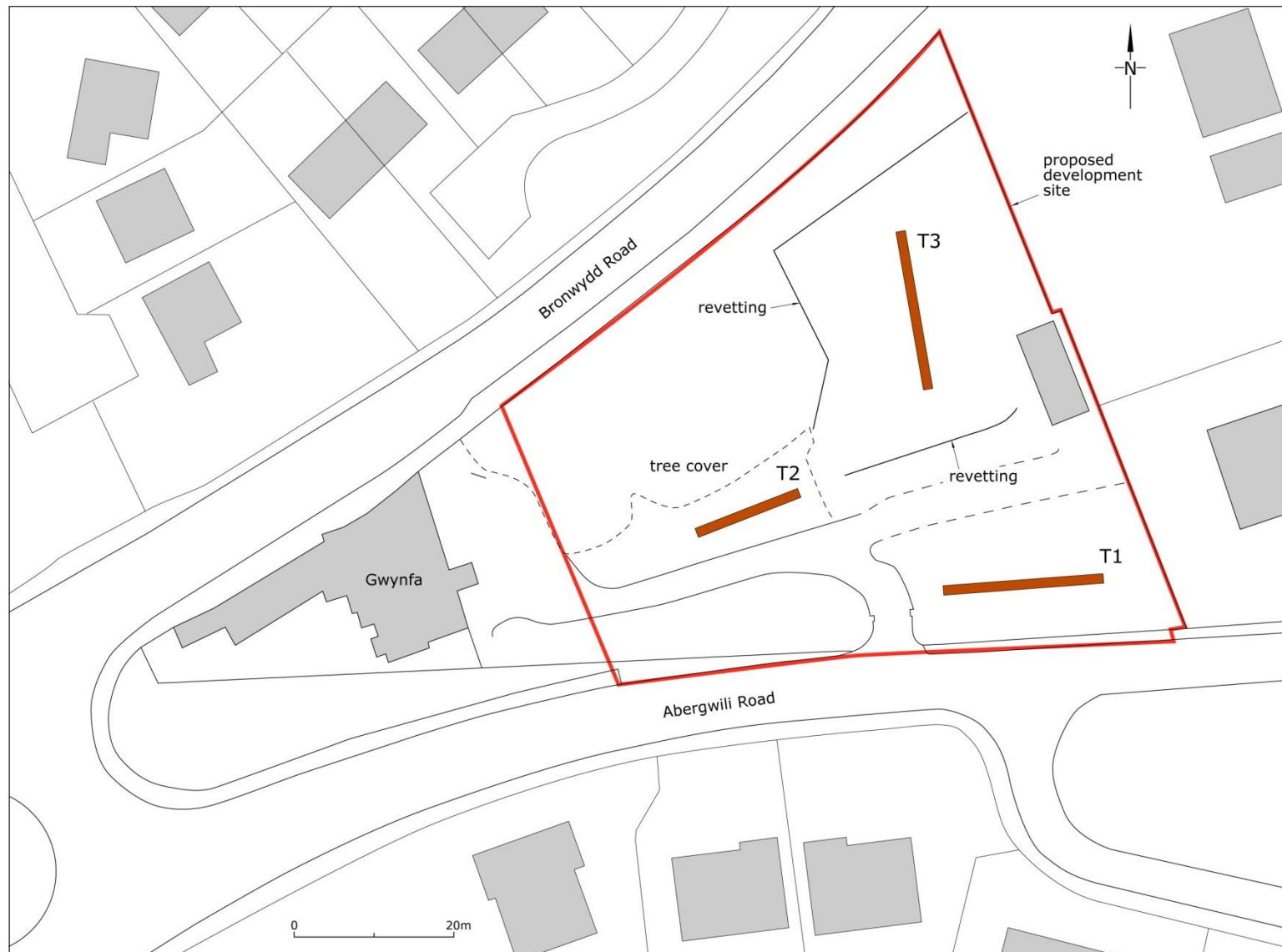


Figure 6: Trench Locations

4. EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 The trenches were recorded with plan and section drawings where appropriate. The results are discussed here in chronological order of events, with the oldest deposit discussed first (typically natural deposits) moving forward to the most recent layers (present ground surface). Archaeological fills and layers are represented in (), whilst cut numbers are represented in []. A context register can be found in Appendix 1.

4.2 Trench 1

Context Number	Thickness	Description/interpretation
101	0.10m	Turf and topsoil.
102	0.50m	A loose brown silt sub soil.
103	N.F.E	A firm orange silty clay – Natural horizon.

Table 2: List of stratigraphic layers in Trench 1

4.2.1 Trench 1 measured 20m x 1.10m and was aligned roughly east to west (Photo 4). It was located in the southwestern part of the site on the northeastern side of the driveway providing access to Ty Gwynfa from Abergwili Road.

4.2.2 The earliest deposit observed within Trench 1 was (103), a firm orange silty clay interpreted as being the natural undisturbed soil horizon. Overlying this was (102), a 0.50m thick layer of loose brown silt subsoil. In turn the entire trench was overlain by a 0.10m thick layer of topsoil and turf. Photo 5 shows a representative section of the soil profile in Trench 1.

4.2.3 No archaeological features or deposits were observed in Trench 1.



Photo 4: Trench 1. View west, 1.0m scale.



Photo 5: South facing section of Trench 1. Topsoil and turf (101), subsoil (102) and Natural horizon (103). 1.0m scale.

4.3 Trench 2

Context Number	Thickness	Description/interpretation
201	0.30m	Turf and topsoil.
202	0.20	Broken shale track
203	0.60	A loose brown clayey silt subsoil.
204	N.F.E	A firm, orange silty clay – Natural horizon.

Table 3: List of stratigraphic layers Trench 2

- 4.3.1 Trench 2 measured 13m x 1.10m and was orientated roughly east to west (Photo 6). The trench was located on the northwestern side of the driveway leading from Abergwili Road to Ty Gwynfa on a level grassed area.
- 4.3.2 The soil profile observed in Trench 2 was similar to that seen in Trench 1 aside from a crushed shale trackway lying beneath the topsoil and turf (202). The natural soil horizon (204) was overlaid by a subsoil (203), with the topsoil and turf above (201), excluding where the crushed shale trackway was located (202).
- 4.3.3 The trackway (202) was approximately 0.20m thick and virtually extended across the whole of the trench. It is likely that this trackway was aligned roughly east to west, perhaps an earlier driveway associated with the formal gardens. Photo 7 shows a small part of the trackway beneath the turf in the south facing section.

4.3.4 No significant archaeological features or deposits were observed in Trench 2.



Photo 6: Trench 2 after excavation. View west, 1.0m scale.



Photo 7: South facing section of Trench 2 showing turf (201), shale trackway (202), subsoil (203) and natural (204).

4.4 Trench 3 (Figure 7)

Context Number	Thickness	Description/interpretation
301	0.25m	Turf and topsoil.
302	0.20m	A loose brown clayey silt subsoil.
303	0.06m	A very pale brown clay deposit with some silt.
305	N.F.E	Firm, mottled orange/brown clay – natural.
306	0.20m	A firm light brown clayey silt interpreted as being a redeposited natural.
307	0.35m	A loose brown silt interpreted as being a buried topsoil.
308	0.30m	Fill of possible gully – orange brown silty clay
309	0.35m	Cut for possible gully – aligned roughly NW – SE. sharp breaks of slope at top, steep sides and a concave base. Dimensions 1.0m x 0.40m.
310	0.35m	Cut for drain (310). 1.15m length visible, aligned roughly east to west. c.0.40m width and c.0.35m depth.

Table 4: List of stratigraphic layers Trench 3

- 4.4.1 Trench 3 shared a similar soil profile to that seen in the previous trenches. It mostly comprised the natural soil horizon (305) overlaid by subsoil (302) and topsoil/turf (301).
- 4.4.2 Towards the southern half of the trench beneath the topsoil (301) there was a 0.20m thick layer of redeposited natural soils (306). Beneath this was a loose brown silt, possibly a buried topsoil (307). These layers were very clean and clearly discernible, which might suggest recent activity. The buried topsoil directly overlay the natural soil horizon (305) (Photo 8).
- 4.4.3 Towards the mid-section of the trench a ceramic unglazed drain pipe was observed orientated roughly east to west cut from the subsoil layer (302), this was tightly packed in with ceramic path curbing tiles, slate and bricks (Photo 9) (301), cut [311]. It extended across the trench with around 1.15m length visible, c.0.40m width and c.0.35m depth.
- 4.4.4 Beneath the drain was layer (303) a pale brown clay deposit, approximately 3.6m wide and present across the width of the trench, with frequent sub-rounded gravels. This was truncated by cut [309], an amorphous shaped feature, measuring approximately 1.0m long and 0.40m wide, possibly representing the terminus (end) of a gully (Photo 10). It was orientated roughly northwest to southeast.
- 4.4.5 The possible gully terminus [309] was filled by (308), an orange/brown silty clay. This was then sealed by the overlying subsoil (302).



Photo 8: West facing section in the southern portion of Trench 3, showing topsoil (301), redeposited natural (306), buried topsoil (307) and natural (305).



Photo 9: Drain (303) in Trench 3, with pale fill of feature cut [309] visible beneath.



Photo 10: Cut [309] possibly the terminus of a gully in Trench 3,
below the drainage pipe (310)/[311]

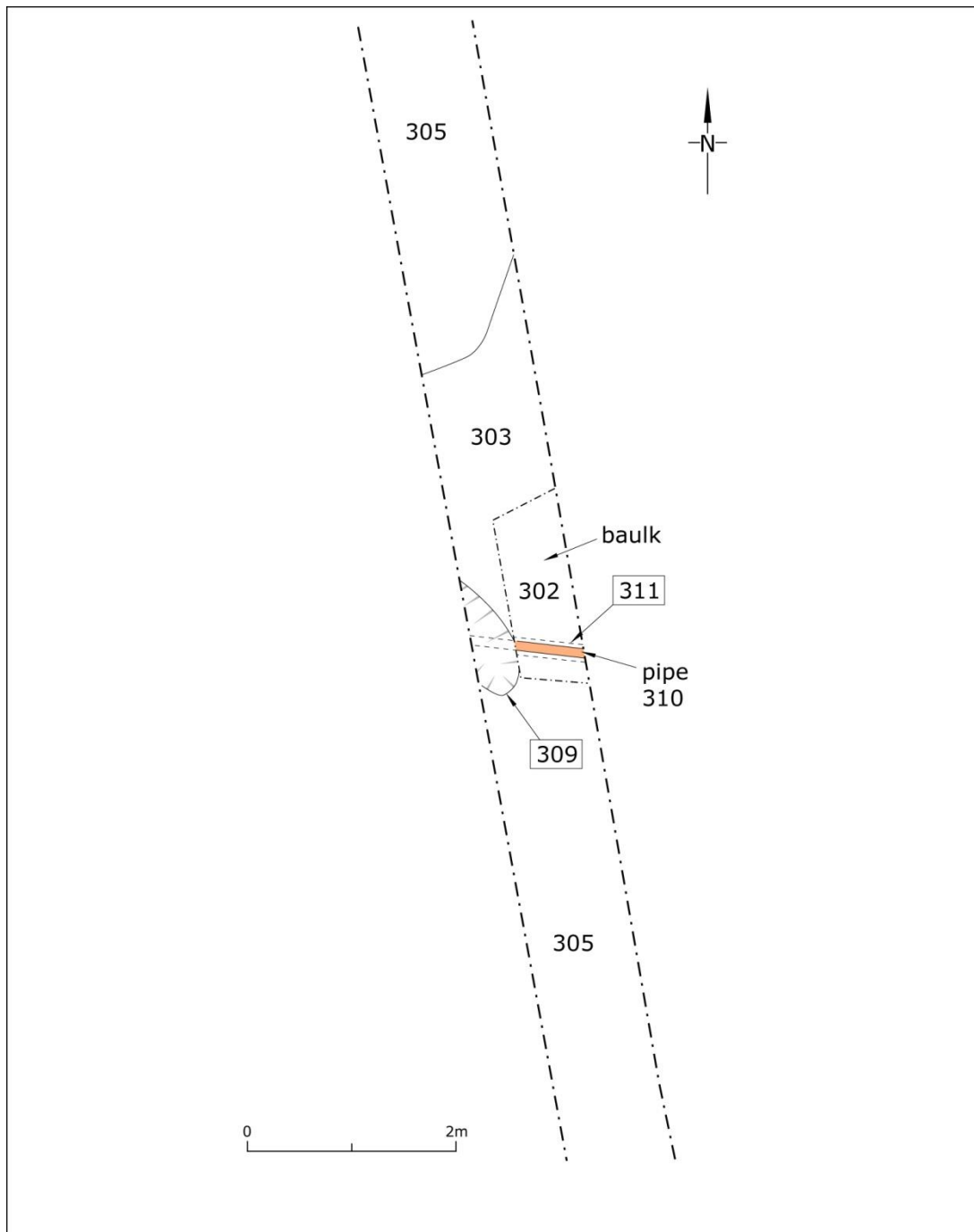


Figure 7: Plan drawing of Trench 3

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The trial trench evaluation within the proposed development site on land south of Bronwydd Road, Tanerdy revealed a sequence of natural and anthropogenic deposits.
- 5.2 Each trench exhibited a similar soil profile with an upper layer of topsoil, overlying subsoil and finally the natural soil horizon. The subsoil was of a depth of around 0.50m to 0.60m in Trenches 1 and 2, yet only 0.20m deep in Trench 3. The depth of subsoil would indicate disturbed soil, typically derived from disturbance through ploughing and would presumably indicate agricultural activity within the site area prior to the laying out of the formal gardens in the early 20th century.
- 5.3 In Trench 2 a broken shale track was observed (202) which could represent a former line of the driveway leading to Ty Gwynfa. It was present directly below the turf and topsoil, overlying the subsoil demonstrating that the feature is of relatively recent date. It presumably dates from the period when the formal gardens were laid out.
- 5.4 In Trench 3 a layer of redeposited natural was recorded overlying a buried topsoil. The buried topsoil lay directly on top of the natural soil horizon. Tied in with the shallow depth of agriculturally derived subsoil seen within the trench, it is likely that this area had been subject to landscaping in the recent past, presumably associated with the early 20th century formal gardens. This is further evidenced by the presence of a revetment wall around the higher ground level in the northeastern part of the site, where Trench 3 was located (Photo 11). Drainage as evidenced by cut [311] and the ceramic pipe (310) would also suggest landscaping and remedial drainage works. The pipe was packed with ceramic edging tiles, a typical feature of formal planting beds, also indicating the association of this area with the early 20th century formal gardens.



Photo 11: Retaining wall to the north of the site with higher ground level behind.

- 5.5 Below the drain in Trench 3 was the only potentially earlier archaeological feature seen in the evaluation, an amorphous cut feature [309]. This was potentially the terminus of a gully, but no artefacts or dating evidence was retrieved from the fill to help characterise or date the feature.
- 5.6 It was possible to increase the proposed number of trenches for the evaluation from two to three once on-site, providing a good spread of archaeological information across the available areas of the site.
- 5.7 Overall the archaeological evaluation did not reveal any significant archaeological features or evidence of Roman remains within the site area. The only finds recorded (but not retained) on the site were the ceramic drain, bricks, slate and drain pipe within Trench 3. No other finds were present.
- 5.8 The lack of any finds or features across the proposed development area suggests that the remainder of the site has limited archaeological potential.

6. SOURCES

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Database

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Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record.

Websites

British Geological Survey mapping portal. Available at:
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> [Accessed 04 Jan, 2019]

7. CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Description
101	Turf and topsoil - A loose, brown silt. Approximately 0.20m thick across the extent of the trench.
102	Subsoil - A loose brown silt. Approximately 0.50m thick across the extent of the trench.
103	Natural - A firm orange silty clay seen across the extent of the trench.
201	Turf and topsoil - A loose brown silt. Approximately 0.30m thick across the extent of the trench.
202	Crushed shale road - approximately 0.20m thick across extent of trench,
203	Subsoil - A loose light brown clayey silt, approximately 0.60m thick seen across extent of trench.
204	Natural - firm orangey silty clay seen across extent of trench.
301	Turf and topsoil - A loose brown silt. Approximately 0.30m thick across the extent of the trench.
302	Subsoil - A loose light brown clayey silt, approximately 0.60m thick seen across extent of trench.
303	Clay deposit - a firm, pale brown clay with some silt. Approximately 0.60m thick. Dimensions 3.6m x 1.10m. Seen in middle of trench.
304	Drain - tightly packed with path curbing, slate and bricks. Pipe made of unglazed ceramic. Orientated roughly E - W.
305	Natural - firm orangey silty clay seen across extent of trench.
306	Redeposited natural - seen in southern end of trench, firm light brown, clayey silt. Approximately 0.20m thick.
307	Buried topsoil - seen in southern end of trench below redeposited natural (306). A loose brown silt, approximately 0.35m thick.
308	Fill of possible gully - orange brown silty clay. Approximately 0.30m thick.
309	Cut for possible gully - aligned roughly NW - SE. sharp breaks of slope at top, steep sides and a concave base. Approximately 0.30m deep. Dimensions 1.0m x 0.40m.
310	Drain through Trench 3. Comprised standard unglazed ceramic pipe of around 0.20m diameter tightly packed in with a dark soil matrix and ceramic edging tiles, bricks and slates.
311	Cut for drain (310), of 1.15m length visible in trench aligned roughly east to west cut from subsoil layer (302), c.0.40m width and c.0.35m depth.

LAND AT HEOL Y PLAS, LLANNON, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 2018

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Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by

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Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 23/01/19

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by

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Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report

