

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST LTD



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PROPOSED EXTENSION

of the

LLANDDAROG ROAD LAND-FILL SITE

NANT-Y-CAWS, CARMARTHEN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

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PROJECT RECORD No. 32115

Commissioned by: Geoanalysis

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SUMMARY

An application to extend the Llanddarog Road land-fill site at Nant-y-Caws, Carmarthen, required an Environmental Impact Assessment, which called in part for an archaeological desk-based assessment of the potential impact of the proposals. Consequently Geoanalysis commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Operations to carry out the assessment. The research revealed a landscape of probable early 19th date, resulting from the land enclosures acts (Llangunnor Parish 1810). Within the survey area the only buildings to be affected is the farmstead Ty Hên (PRN 32117; NGR SN 4695 1780) which will be demolished to make way for the Phase III extension. A farm was shown on the site of Ty Hên in 1811, and the name meaning old house suggests that it may be significantly older, with at least 18th century origins.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project proposals and commission

As part of Environmental Impact Assessment on the effects of a proposed extension to the Llanddarog Road land-fill site Geoanalysis commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Operations to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of the archaeological implications.

1.2 Scope of the project

The project was designed to assess the full archaeological impact of the proposed scheme. To do this effectively a range of operations were necessary: a search of the regional SMR to check for known and existing sites; examination of aerial photographic coverage of the area held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Llandeilo; searches of primary documentary and cartographic data held by the County Records Office, Carmarthen; searches for published data on the site; a field visit to identify any new archaeological sites or features. A report, representative of the archaeological implications of the proposed scheme, was prepared based on the results of the above.

1.3 Report outline

This report describes the physical environment of the study area (Section 2) before summarising the archaeological resource (Section 3) and the likely impact of the proposed scheme on that resource (Section 4). Recommendations based on the results of Sections 3 and 4 are given in Section 5.

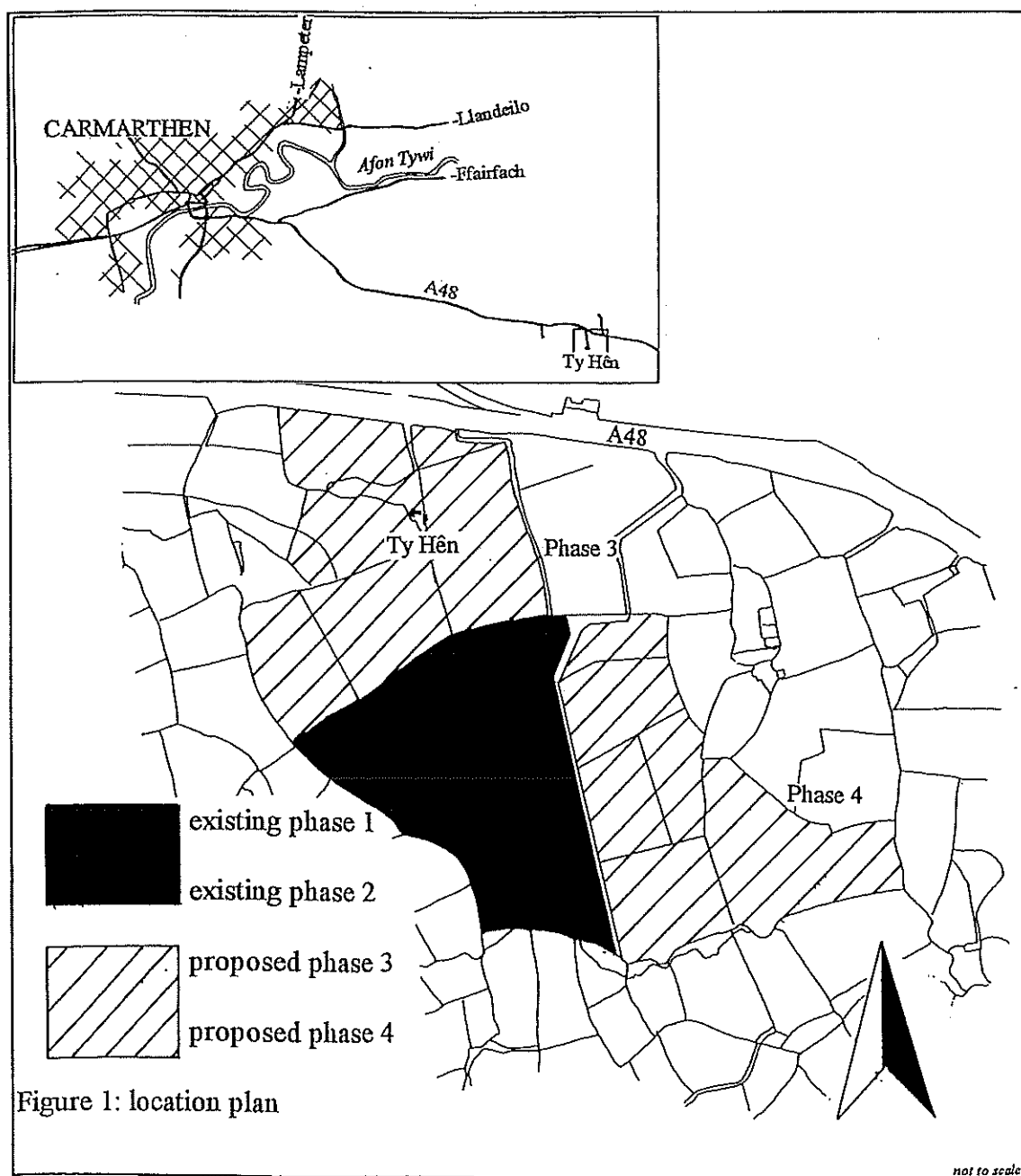
1.4 Abbreviations used in this report

All sites recorded on the county Sites and Monuments Record will be identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Any new sites will be assigned a PRN and located by their NGR. References to primary cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets, full details will be found in the bibliography.

2. THE STUDY AREA

2.1 Location (Fig. 1)

The proposed land-fill site lies south of the A48 in an area of rough pasture land. There is existing land-fill already on the site, and the proposals are for an extension of that site. They would extend to the north and to the southeast, tripling the existing area. The proposed extension sites have a general southern slope and are on average 120m - 140m aOD. Phase III would stretch from the A48 to the northern limit of the existing Phase II, and includes the site of Ty Hên Farm. Phase IV runs from the western limit of the existing Phase I towards Llety Dau Filwr. On the second edition Ordnance Survey maps (1907), and later editions, much of the land within the survey area is shown as poor, wet pasture, a situation that still exists today.



3. SUMMARY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

3.1 Landscape development

Cartography shows that the present layout of field boundaries, farms and roads (excepting the obvious modern developments) has been established since at least the early 19th century, almost certainly as a result of the parliamentary enclosures act (1810). The tithe plan for Llangunnor Parish of 1841 clearly shows that the landscape was already well established in its present form (Fig. 2). If, as is likely, the landscape results from the early 19th century enclosure acts the field boundaries have an archaeological and historical significance, being datable features. It is also likely that some of the boundaries are pre-enclosure act (i.e. pre-1810) which have been incorporated into the enclosed field pattern. Therefore, investigation of the boundaries may reveal pre-enclosure boundaries giving a glimpse of an earlier landscape.

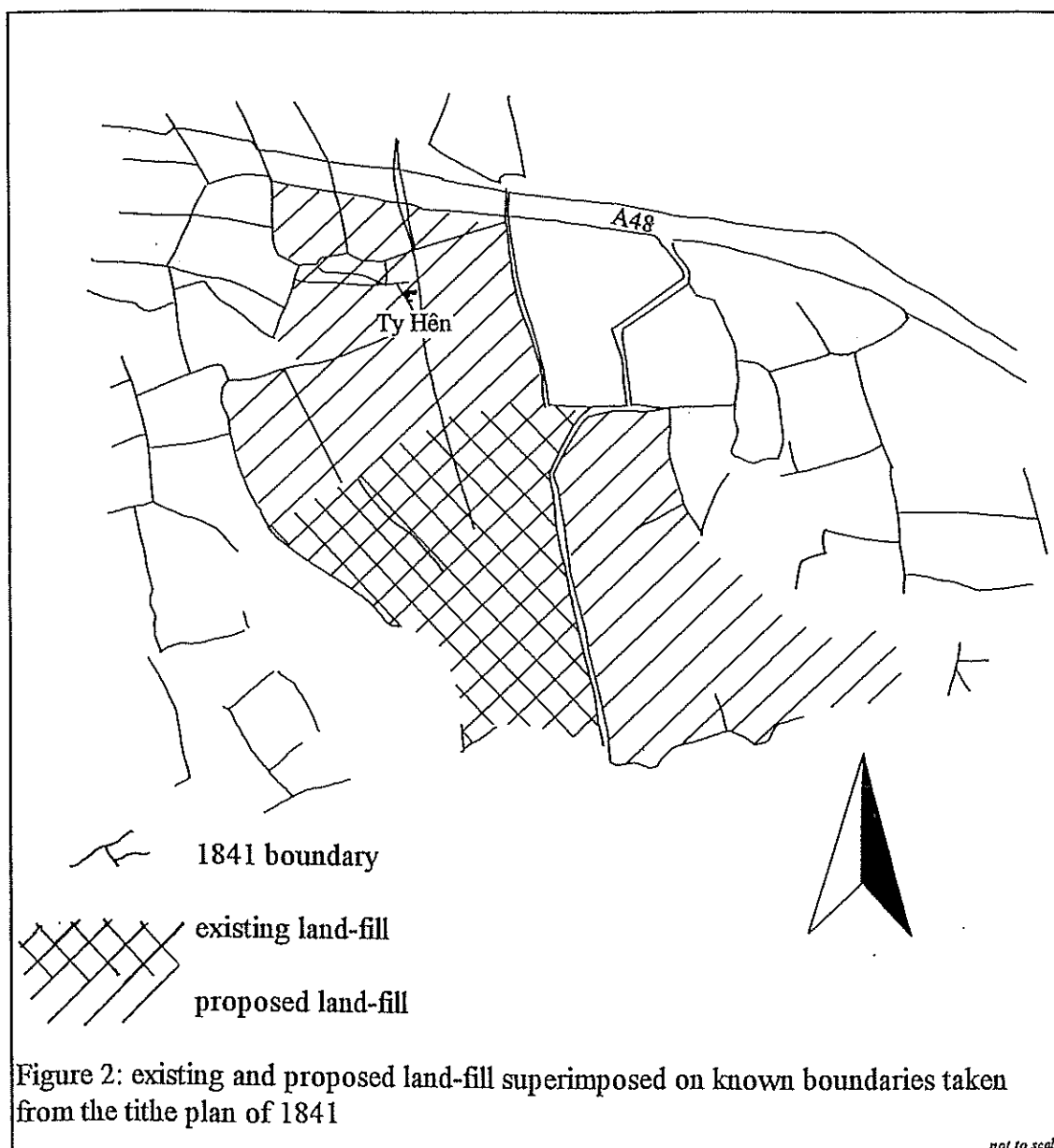


Figure 2: existing and proposed land-fill superimposed on known boundaries taken from the tithe plan of 1841

The Ordnance Survey original surveyors drawings, surveyed in 1811-12, show a farm present on the site of Ty Hên, unfortunately it is not named.

3.2 Ty Hên

The use of the name Ty Hene (translates as *old house*) on the tithe plan of 1841 suggests that a house had stood on the site for considerably longer than the 30 years between the Ordnance Survey surveyors drawings and the tithe plan. So the site of Ty Hên can be placed back to at least the 18th century. As it stands Ty Hên is typical of many post-medieval farmsteads being now a mixture of original and new buildings. The house itself stands on the site of the house shown on the OS original surveyors drawings (1811). A range of outbuildings flank the house and yard.

3.3 Previously recorded archaeological sites

There are no previously recorded archaeological sites within the survey area. However, there are two recorded just outside the southern fringe: the first (PRN 22200; NGR SN 4790 1690) is a field name Cae Fynnon (*Spring Field*) indicating there was a spring rising in the field which presumably fed into Nant Cwm-ffrwd, and other was cottage (Pentrebach) (PRN 23635; NGR SN 4640 1680) shown on the 1907 Ordnance Survey coverage, no record of this cottage was found during this research.

4. IMPACT OF PROPOSED SCHEME ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

4.1 Impact on the landscape

Archaeological sites do not exist in a vacuum, they are integral parts of a wider landscape, where they have an affect on, and are affected by their surroundings. Therefore, in archaeological terms a landscape is a palimpsest of inter-related sites and features which together form a unified whole. In this case the landscape within the survey area has been established in its present form since at least the early 19th century, with some elements certainly older. So the proposed expansion of the land-fill site from 60 acres to 184 acres within a proven historical landscape has significant archaeological implications.

The full impact on the landscape is of course dependent upon the final level of land-fill. If, for example, field boundaries were removed that would have significantly more archaeological implications than if the boundaries were left mostly intact as fields were filled to be later returned to agricultural use.

4.1.1 Ty Hên

The site of the farmstead is due to be incorporated into the Phase III extension. This means that the site will be totally obliterated, and it has been shown that there was a house on the site since at least the 18th century. The present house, although showing signs of modernisation, appears to be on the original site, and may be the original house. Post-medieval farms such as Ty Hên are an important and disappearing resource. Although still fairly numerous these farms are coming under increasing pressure from a range of sources such as, modernisation, or in many cases demolition to make way for a new house or bungalow as well as large-scale development or redevelopment schemes. So it is crucial that sites such as Ty Hên are not simply disregarded and lost.

4.2 Conclusions

As proposed the scheme will remove an entire farm and associated landscape from the archaeological record. Whilst this is a significant archaeological loss there are some factors which minimises the effect of the loss. The integrity of this landscape block has already been compromised by the existing land-fill. Therefore the implementation of a programme of mitigatory archaeological works (see below Section 5) is considered an appropriate level of response to the proposed scheme.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggested recommendations are regarded as an appropriate archaeological response to the proposed scheme. They are designed to preserve by record the significant archaeological/historical landscape features.

5.1 Ty Hên Farm

Recording Ty Hên can be broken down into three related areas:

Topographical survey of Ty Hên farmstead and its surroundings prior to demolition.

The survey will include all standing buildings to establish ground-plans and to determine the development sequence of the buildings and farmstead.

Small-scale archaeological excavation of any areas identified during the topographical survey as having the potential for buried remains.

A watching brief on demolition works.

5.2 Field boundaries

A watching brief on the removal of any field boundaries within the survey area to allow rapid recording of boundary construction and to identify the presence or otherwise of pre-boundary features.

APPENDIX ONE: CATALOGUE OF RESEARCH ARCHIVE

The project archive has been indexed and catalogued according to National Monument Record (NMR) categories and contains the following:

A. Copy of the report.

B. Notes from site visits.

I. Draft copies of report.

J. Publication drawings.

M. Miscellaneous correspondence

There is no material for classes **C, D, E, F, G, H, K, L** and **N**.

The project archive is currently held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Operations, Llandeilo, Dyfed as project number 32115.