



15/02/96

# DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST LTD



## BBC UHF RELAY STATION AT PENRHYNCOCH CARDIGANSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Project Record No. 2015 ~~32470~~

FEBRUARY 1996

Commissioned by: British Broadcasting Corporation

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON THE BBC UHF RELAY STATION AT  
PENRHYNCOCH. DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST PRIMARY RECORD  
NUMBER 2015 32470.**

A watching brief was carried out on the above project on 12 February 1996 for the BBC, in compliance with the condition of planning consent that an archaeologist should be present during any excavation. The reason for this condition was the close proximity of Hen Gaer (also named as Pen Gaer) hillfort, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, No CD26. Nothing of archaeological significance was seen.

This watching brief was commissioned by the British Broadcasting Corporation, Transmission Projects and Site Development, and carried out by Peter Crane, Project Manager, of Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

The site is situated approximately 1km west of Bow Street which is 5km north west of Aberystwyth and lies in the parish of Tirymynach, Cardiganshire. The Ordnance Survey national grid reference is SN633844 (figures 1 and 2).

Hen Gaer is a small univallate hillfort, or large defended farmstead, probably Iron Age in date. The enclosure is sub-oval in shape, with a large steep bank, but only has a visible ditch on its western and northern sides. The northern ditch has a counterscarp bank on the outer edge (figure 3), normally formed during cleaning out of the ditch. The internal area of the fort is approximately 0.85 hectare. There may be three entrances to the fort (figure 1) but those on the north and east may not be original. Outside the western entrance there is a large mound. This mound has been recorded as a possible tumulus (burial mound) PRN 2016, but is probably a defensive bank covering the entrance.

The nearest point of the BBC relay station to the monument is about 25m north east of the counterscarp bank of the fort. This bank is only clearly visible on the northern side (figure 3). The weather conditions at the time of this watching brief were gale force winds with sleet and rain showers. The ground conditions for excavation were, however, reasonable.

The construction of the relay station required the removal of about 5m of hedge bank, down to surrounding ground level. The bank at this point was about 500mm high, slightly less than at either side, where it is up to 750mm. The width of the bank is about 1500mm.

The bank is turf covered and made up of brown loam with a good amount of angular stone up to 100mm in size. No large stones were seen in this part of the hedge bank, although they are apparent further to the north east.

At the south west end of the 5m length of the hedge bank being removed, nearest the monument, a 1900mm by 1900 hole was excavated, to 400mm below the depth of the surrounding ground surface. Within this excavated area a central hole 900mm by 900mm was dug down to 1100mm (possibly to be excavated further) below the general depth of the surrounding ground surface.

Below the construction of the bank, starting on nearly the same level as the adjacent field to the north, there appears to be a buried soil of brown loam with small angular stones. What could be seen of this soil was fairly mixed and loose, possibly due to previous ploughing; however there is root disturbance, and evidence for ploughing is not clear. This buried soil went down to 450-500mm below the surrounding ground surface and could be seen in the upper part of the deeper hole excavated. Below the soil was a geological soil of apparent clay and stones.

There are slight surface indications that the hedge bank may have had a small ditch on its southern side. This was not touched by the excavation.

The hedge bank is very straight, and appears to only have scrubby hawthorn(?) growing on it. Its date is likely to be within the last 200 years.

The considered conclusion is that neither the hedge bank, or the buried soil below, are of any antiquity. No other man made features were seen in the excavation. Therefore, the construction of this relay station has done no archaeological damage.



BBC PLAN No./S&P/

13503

Extract from O.S. Sheet

135

Issue

1984

Scale

1:50,000

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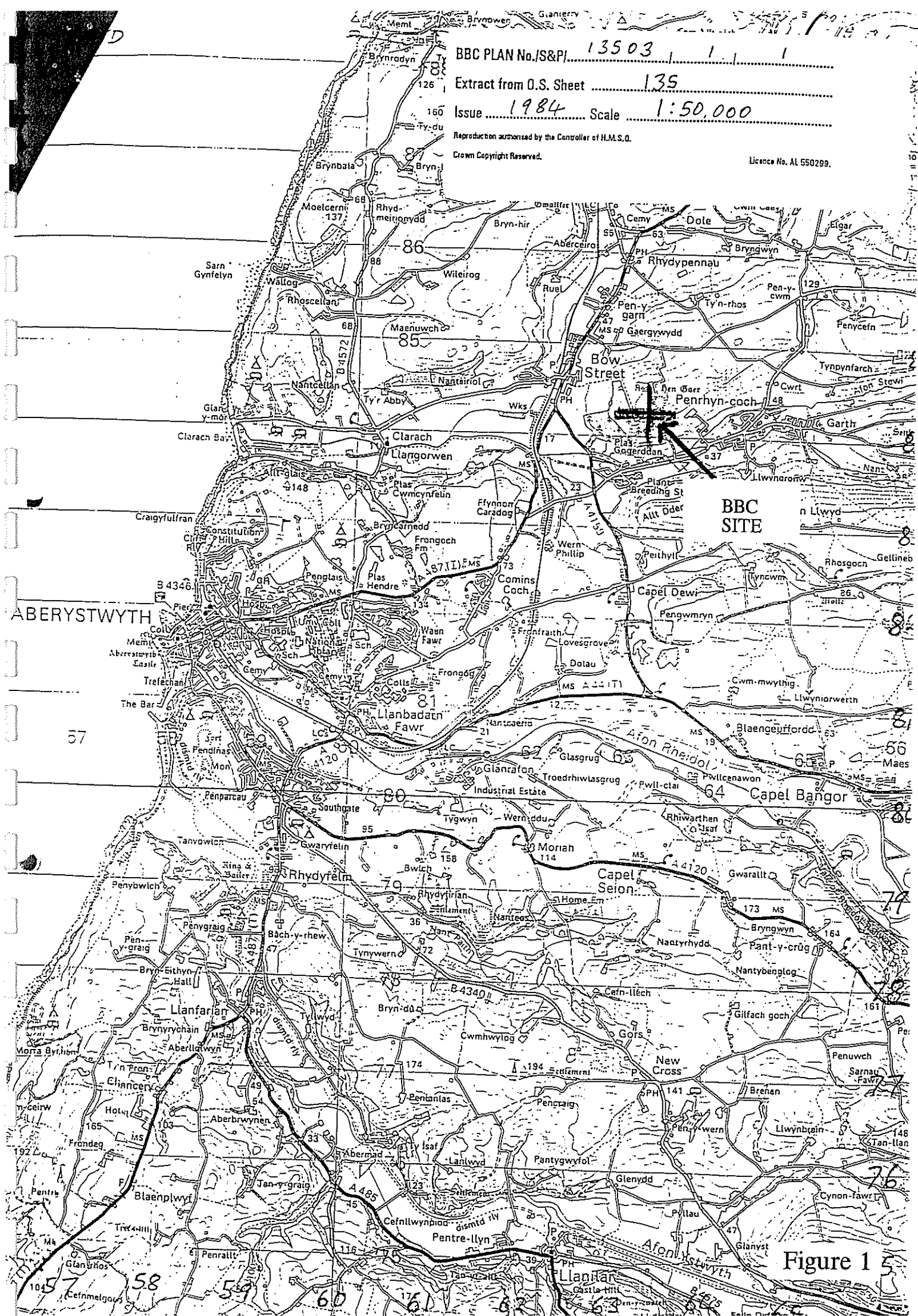
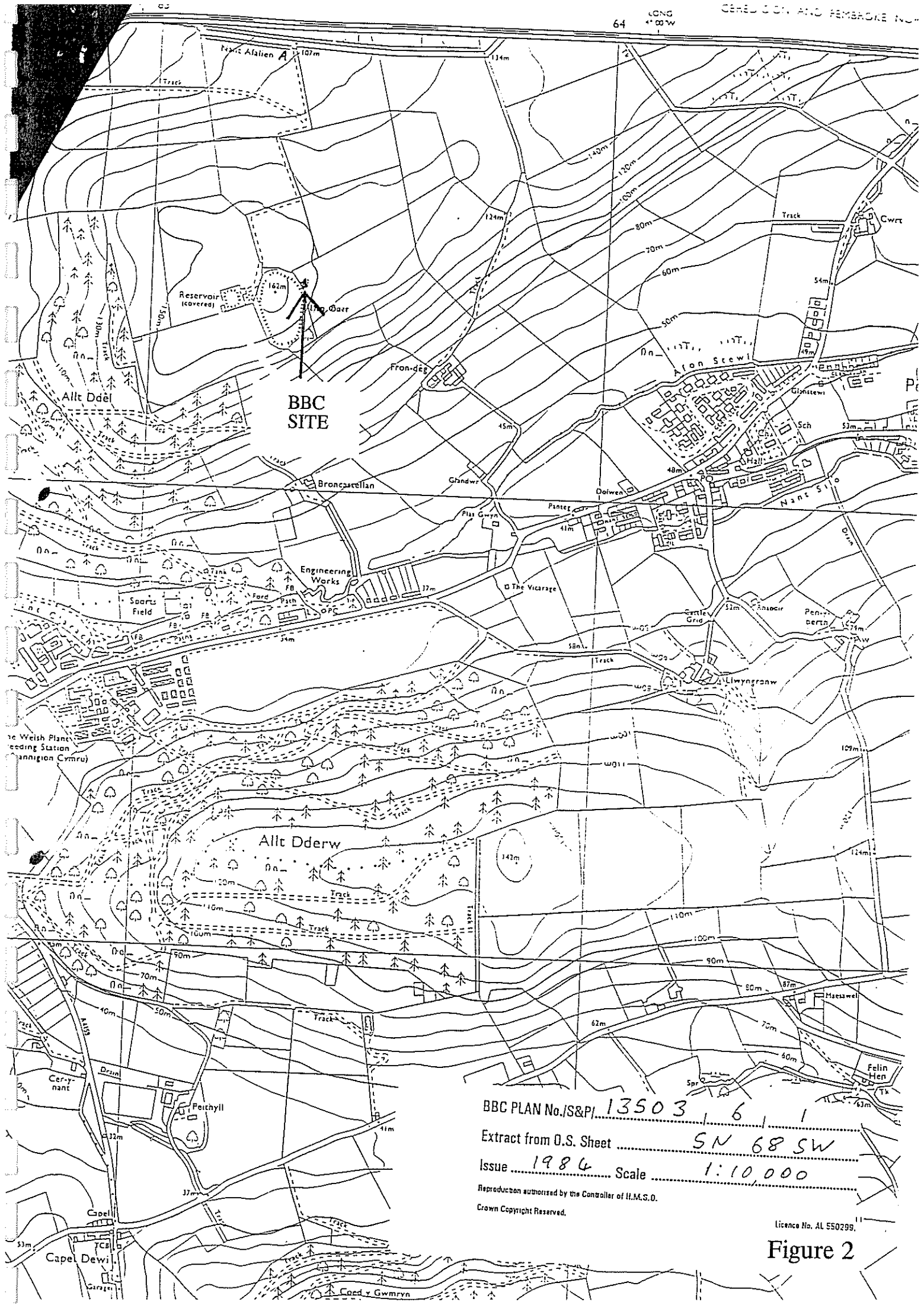


Figure 1



BBC PLAN No./S&P/ 13503 6 1  
 Extract from O.S. Sheet SN 68 SW  
 Issue 1984 Scale 1:10,000

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Figure 2

BBC PLAN No: *PENRHYN-COCH P+D*

TSD: *13503* : *25* : *1*

Extract from O.S. Sheet *511 6384*

Issue *-* Scale *1:2500*

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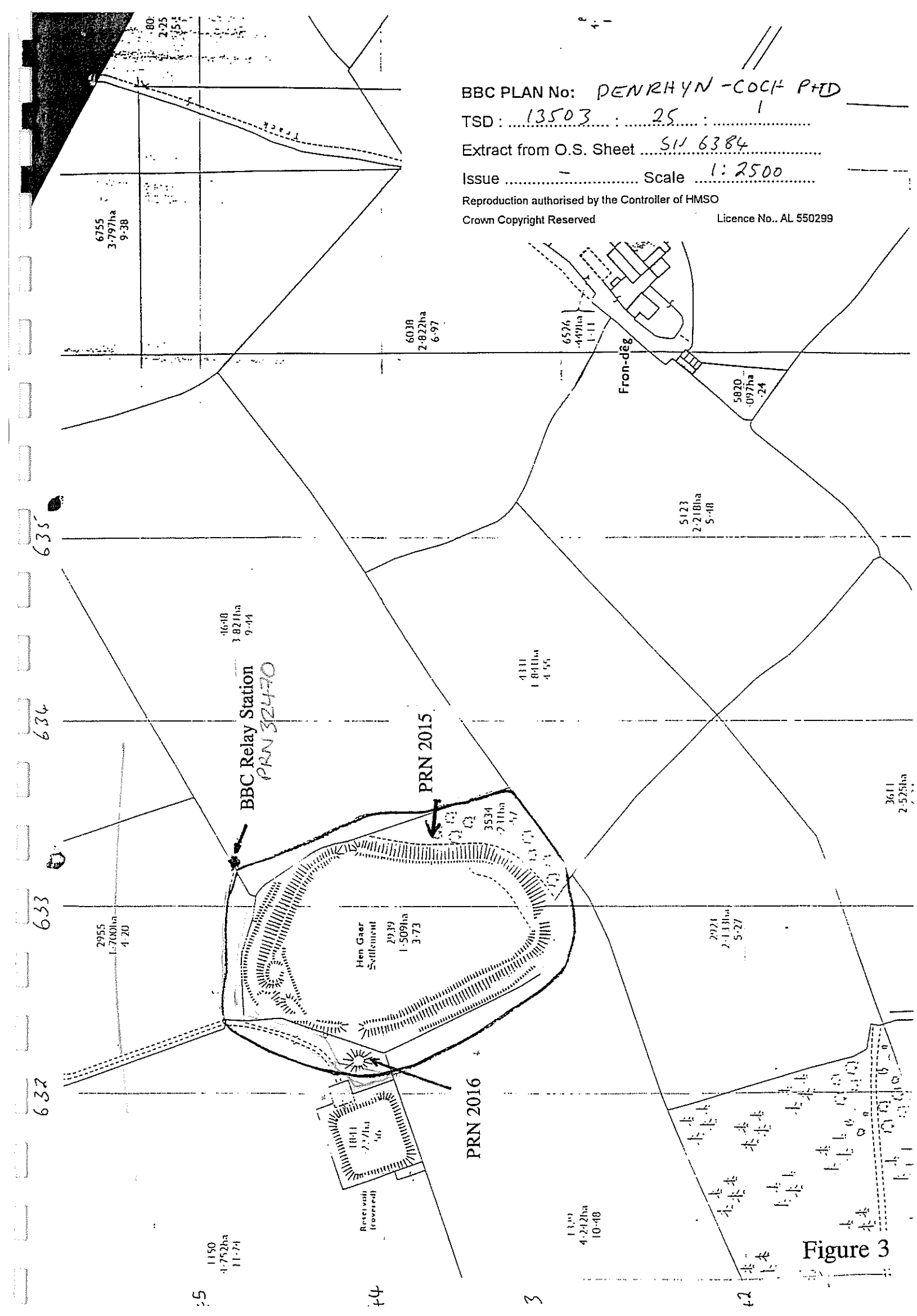


Figure 3