

# **LLANBADARN BODY REPAIR CENTRE, LLANBADARN FAWR, CEREDIGION**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, 2004**

Paratowyd gan Archaeoleg Cambria  
Ar gyfer J Thomas  
Prepared by Cambria Archaeology  
For J Thomas

Project Record No. 52113  
Report No. 2004/87



# **ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY**

**RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2004/87**  
**RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 52113**

**Medi 2004**  
**September 2004**

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### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**Gan / By**

**Hubert Wilson**

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Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau sydd  
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**LLANBADARN BODY REPAIR CENTRE,  
LLANBADARN FAWR, CEREDIGION**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, AUGUST 2004**

**Project Record No. 52113**

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## **1.0 SUMMARY**

*A watching brief was undertaken, on behalf of J Thomas, Property Developer and Building Contractor, on the Body Repair development site, near Llanbadarn Fawr parish church, Ceredigion. The site lies within the putative limits of the early medieval monastic site. However, no deposits earlier than the 19<sup>th</sup> century were observed.*

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Development proposals and brief**

J Thomas, Property Developer and Building Contractor, proposed to erect a dwelling at the former Body Repair Centre at Llanbadarn Fawr, Ceredigion. Due to the proximity of the site to the important early medieval ecclesiastical centre at Llanbadarn Fawr parish church, and its location within the later medieval settlement of Llanbadarn Fawr, the site is thought to have important archaeological potential.

The site was subject to a previous planning application in 2001, when a desk-based assessment and field evaluation was undertaken by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd. (Evans 2001). The evaluation comprised a single trench in which 19<sup>th</sup> century deposits lay directly upon the natural bedrock. However, such evaluations are rarely conclusive relying on information obtained from very limited areas, and a watching brief on the current development groundworks was accordingly recommended by Cambria Archaeology Heritage Management (CA – HM), 27 March 2004.

J Thomas contacted Cambria Archaeology Field Operations on 7 June 2004, requesting a costed specification for the watching brief. This was submitted and accepted on 25 June 2004. The watching brief was carried out on 23 August 2004.

### **2.2 Abbreviations used in this report**

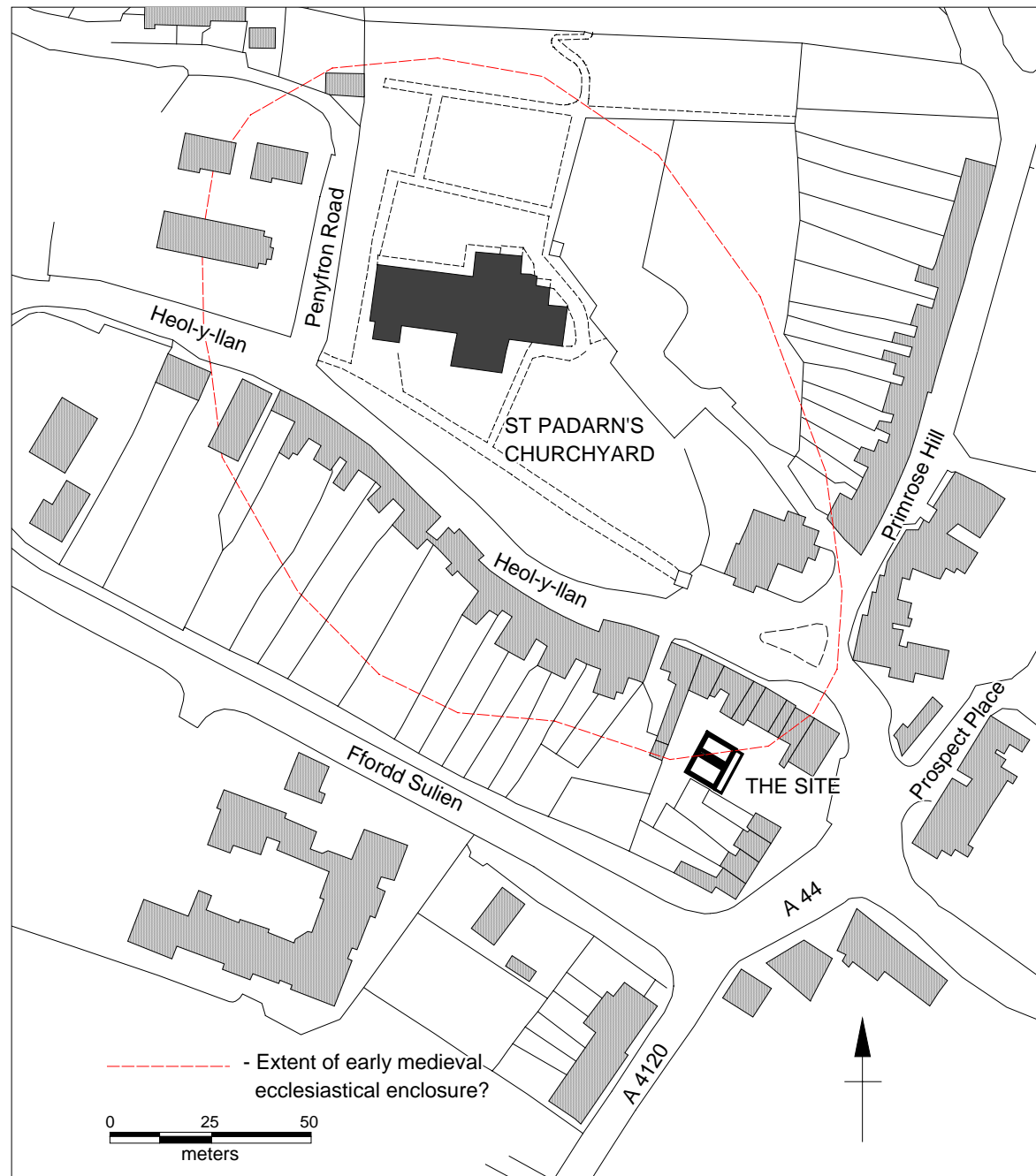
Sites recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record for Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire (SMR) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR) and height above sea level (OD). Hen Gaer is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).

### 3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 3.1 Site location

The site lies at NGR SN 599 810, approximately 50m southeast of the present Llanbadarn Fawr parish churchyard, central to the present settlement of Llanbadarn Fawr (Fig. 1). It is situated approximately 11m above sea level, on gently rising ground, just north of the Afon Rheidol floodplain which it overlooks. The underlying solid geology is represented by palaeozoic shales.

Fig. 1 - Location map of site





### **3.2 Site description**

The proposed development lies outside the curtilage of the present Llanbadarn Fawr churchyard (St Padarn's), but the church is a known centre of early Christian worship with a recorded history from 988 AD onwards. It was monastic by the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, at least, and possesses two important Early Christian Monuments. A characteristic of such early monastic sites were large religious enclosures (Ludlow 2004), of which the present churchyards often occupy just a small part, the original enclosures having been encroached on over time. Such a large, ecclesiastical enclosure has been suggested at Llanbadarn Fawr by Richard Avent, Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Cadw, and is reproduced in Evans 2001. It is therefore highly probable that deposits relating to early Christian activity – perhaps including burials – extend well beyond the present Llanbadarn Fawr churchyard, and possibly into the development area.

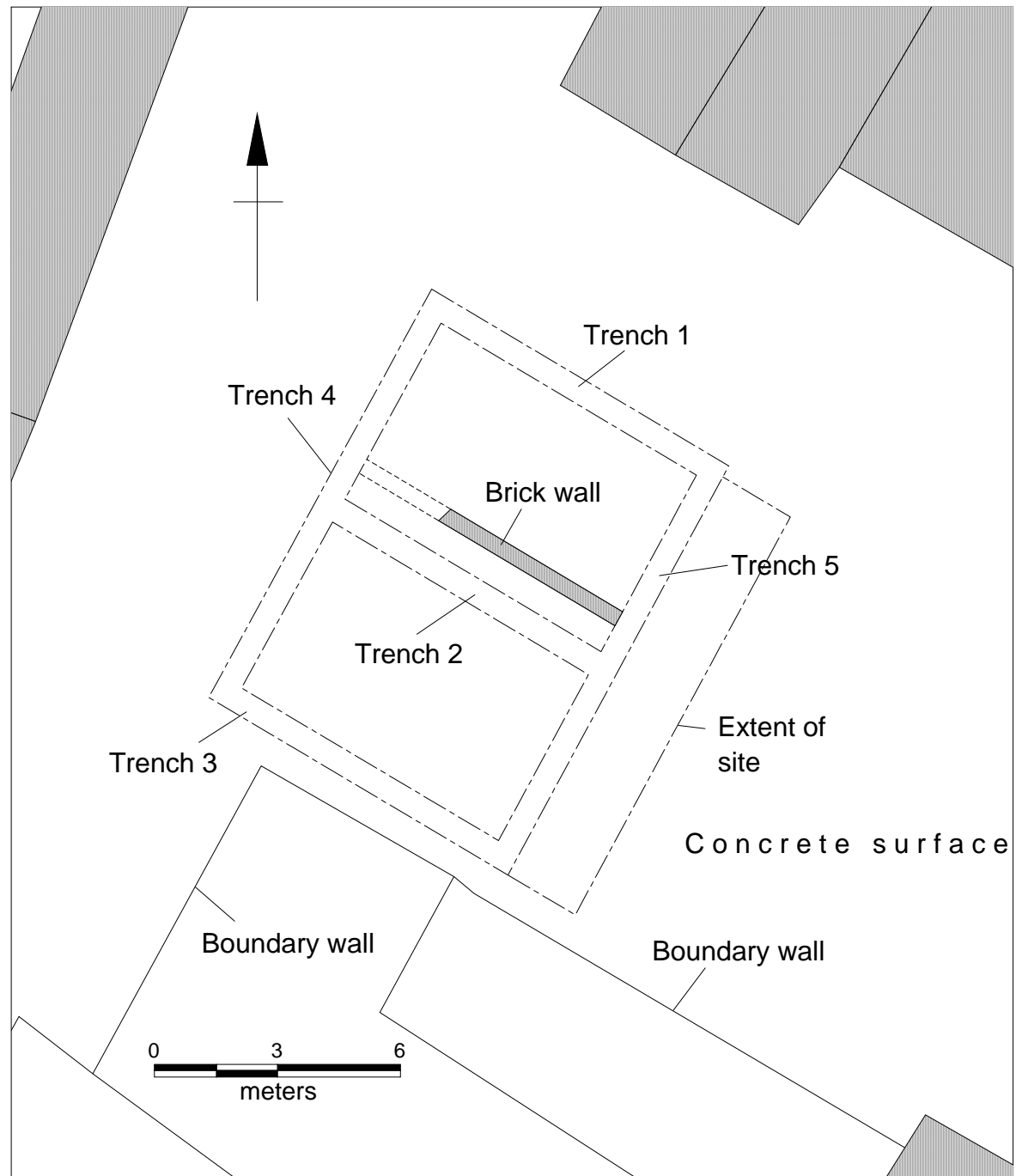
The nature, and form of later medieval settlement at Llanbadarn Fawr is not known, but a settlement is thought to have developed at the churchyard gates by at least the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Deposits relating to medieval and post-medieval domestic occupation may therefore be present beneath the development area.

## 4.0 METHODOLOGIES AND RESULTS

### 4.1 Methodologies

Five foundation trenches were cut to accommodate the footings of the proposed dwelling. Three of the trenches (Trenches 1 - 3) were aligned northwest – southeast and measured 8.4m by 0.6m. The other two (Trenches 4 and 5) were aligned southwest – northeast and measured 11.3 by 0.6m. Each trench was cut by a toothless grading bucket.

*Fig. 2 - Plan of site showing trenches and exposed wall*



## **4.2 Observations and results**

Much of the area consisted of made-up ground overlying a dark brown loam deposit (ie. garden soil) which in turn overlay a compact layer of dark brown silty clay at the level of the bottom of the trench. Cut into the garden soil deposit were numerous drainage pipes, with a brown salt glaze dating from the 19th century, and 20th century plastic pipes.

The only feature of note that was observed occupied the southeast facing section of Trench 5 (Photo 1). A stone foundation course was observed, supporting an east-west brick wall, 0.4m wide, running for 6.80m from the southwestern end of the trench at a level 0.3m above the trench bottom. This wall, which was also observed during the 2001 evaluation (Evans 2001, 5) reflects the alignment of a building shown on the 1937 O.S map (see plan of site). This building is not shown on any earlier editions and appears to have been erected between 1905 and 1937. Its use is unknown. Apart from this no other archaeological features were located in the trenches.

## **5.0 THE FINDS**

No stratified artefactual material was recovered from sealed contexts during the watching brief.

## **6.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION**

The archive, which will be indexed according to the National Monuments Record (NMR) material categories, is held by Cambria Archaeology, Llandeilo, and contains the following:-

- A.** Copy of the final report and disk
- B.** Field notes
- C.** Copies of planning specifications
- G.** List of references
- J.** Final drawings
- L.** General administrative notes
- M.** Project correspondence

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

## **7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The fieldwork and reporting were undertaken by Hubert Wilson of Cambria Archaeology. Thanks to J Thomas, Property Developer and Building Contractor. Thanks also to Neil Ludlow of Cambria Archaeology for project management and for assistance with the report.

## **8.0 REFERENCES**

Evans, P., 2001 'Body Repair Centre, Llanbadarn Fawr: Archaeological Desk-based Assessment and Field Evaluation' (unpublished Cambrian Archaeological Projects report: copy held in Sites and Monuments Record for Carmarthenshire. Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire).

Ludlow, N. D., 2004 'The Cadw Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites Project, Ceredigion' (unpublished Cambria Archaeology report: copy held in Sites and Monuments Record for Carmarthenshire. Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire)

*Photo 1 – Trench 5 from northeast*



*Photo 2 – Trench 1 from west*

