

LLANELLI GATE, DAFEN, LLANELLI ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-TOP ASSESSMENT



Paratowyd gan Archaeoleg Cambria
Ar gyfer Powell Dobson Architects

Prepared by Cambria Archaeology
For Powell Dobson Architects



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Gan / By

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
INTRODUCTION	2
THE STUDY AREA	2
METHODOLOGY	2
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	3
ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	5
RECOMMENDATIONS	6
SOURCES	7

MAPS

- Map 1. Location of proposed development
- Map 2. Extract from the 1813 Ordnance Survey map
- Map 3. Extract from the 1842 tithe map
- Map 4. Extract from the 1891 Ordnance Survey map
- Map 5. Extract from the 1908 Ordnance Survey map
- Map 6. Extract from the 1921 Ordnance Survey map
- Map 7. Extract from the 1953 Ordnance Survey map

PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photo. 1. Looking north across the site towards the old coal pit, 54730, now covered by a spoil tip.
- Photo. 2. Looking west across site.

SUMMARY

This archaeological desk-based assessment of the Llanelli Gate Site, Dafen, Llanelli, has demonstrated that there are no archaeological constraints to plans to develop the site. Two old coalmine shafts are the only known archaeological elements on the site: one of these lies beneath a modern access road and the other beneath a recent spoil heap. The proposed development lies within an old agricultural landscape, which, during the 19th century, witnessed the development of coalmining industry. All the mines are now abandoned. Dramatic changes to the landscape in the late 20th century include new roads and light industrial estates.

INTRODUCTION

Cambria Archaeology undertook this desk-based archaeological assessment at the request of Powell Dobson Architects in order to determine whether or not there is an archaeological dimension to plans to develop the Llanelli Gate Site, Dafen, Llanelli.

The assessment has been guided by *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1999).

THE STUDY AREA

The Llanelli Gate Site, Dafen, Llanelli (centered on SN536018) consists of a small pocket (c. 6.4 ha) of agricultural land on the northern fringe of the town of Llanelli. A modern road defines the southern boundary of the site, and a second modern road runs north-south 50m to the eastern boundary of the site. Land to the north is currently under development, while land to the northeast and east is undeveloped. The site is now one field with a spoil tip in its northern corner. At the time of a site visit (21 June 2005) the site was under pasture and had just been cut for silage.

METHODOLOGY

This is essentially a desk-based study. The following sources have been consulted:

The County Sites and Monuments Record housed with Cambria Archaeology.

Cartographic sources and other material held by Cambria Archaeology.

Databases compiled by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales (RCAHMW) and Cadw.

Vertical and oblique aerial photographs held by the RCAHMW and Cambria Archaeology.

A site visit was undertaken with the purpose of:

Reviewing the current state of archaeological features and deposits identified during the documentary research.

Identifying new archaeological features and deposits, or areas that may contain them.

Carrying out rapid recording of archaeological sites, features and deposits by photography, site notes and sketch plans, if required.

Assessing the vulnerability of archaeological sites, features and deposits to the proposed redevelopment of the site.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

The numbers quotes are those recorded on the Regional Sites and Monuments Record.

Prehistoric sites

There are two possible prehistoric round barrows, or burial mounds, in the vicinity of the proposed development. Both are recorded only as place-names; there is no physical evidence for them. Cae Garn Bach (4708) is the name of the field recorded immediately to the north of the proposed development. Cae Garn Mawr (696) is the name of the field to the south of the road to the south of the proposed development. There are no other known prehistoric sites in the vicinity.

Roman sites

There are no known Roman sites in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Medieval sites

There are no known medieval sites in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Post-medieval sites

Two 19th century collieries lie close to the proposed development. Clyn Gwernen Pit (7819) lies adjacent to the northern boundary of the proposed development. This mine is recorded in 1803 (Symons 1979 21), but is not shown on the 1842 tithe map. It is shown working (with some elements abandoned) on the Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 1st Edition map of 1891. It had closed by 1908. One of the pits (54730 - see below) of this colliery lay within the proposed development.

Pen-Prys Pit (9895) to east of the proposed development is also recorded in 1803 (Symons 1979 21), but again is not shown on the 1842 tithe map. It is recorded as disused on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. However, a tramway or railway line was constructed between 1891 and 1908 running from the colliery towards the west. A modern road follows the line of this railway to the south of the proposed development. Presumably the colliery was re-opened for a short period, as it is recorded as disused on the 1908 Ordnance Survey map. The engine house of this colliery survives and has been designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

A large colliery, St David's Pit (8946) lies 450m to the southeast of the proposed development and was recorded in 1836 (Symons 1979 21). It was working in 1891 but had closed by 1921. Old shafts (54731) recorded on the 1908 Ordnance Survey map in the northwest corner of the proposed development may have been airshafts associated with this mine.

Gelli-gele (25032) a farmhouse 200m to the south of the proposed development is recorded in the 17th century as the home of the Lloyd family (Regional Sites and Monuments Database). The current condition of the house is unknown.

The historic landscape around Llanelli Gate

In the early 19th century the landscape of the proposed development was essentially rural. The landscape shown on the Ordnance Survey 1813 and the tithe map of 1842 is one of scattered farms and small fields. No estate maps predating the 1813 Ordnance Survey map were examined for the development area, however, mid 18th century estate maps of land to the south and east show a landscape of strip fields, some of which were unenclosed and undoubtedly the remnants of a medieval open field system. Some of the strips are shown enclosed into long narrow fields, whilst others have been amalgamated and enclosed into rectangular shaped fields. Clearly the landscape at this time was undergoing a transformation from open fields held communally to that of private farms with small fields. This was a long process, and the tithe map of 1842 records the last remaining strips of the open fields, with some shown to the north of the proposed development.

However, in the 18th century and earlier it is likely that the area of the proposed development lay on the border of common land, on the boundary of the parishes of Llanelli and Llangennech, and that the fields here may have been carved out of this common, rather than having evolved from an open field system as described above. This suggestion is reinforced by nearby farm names such as Gors and Cae-newydd. By 1813, when the Ordnance Survey compiled their first maps of the area the system of farms and fields that continued throughout later industrialisation had been created.

Small-scale coal mining close to the proposed development is recorded in the 19th century, but it was not until the later part of the century that it expanded into several large collieries connected by tramlines and railways to the national infrastructure. By the late 19th century the industry was in decline and by the early 20th century all the mines were abandoned. Unlike some of the other mining areas in Llanelli no settlements developed close to the pits, and therefore outside the coal workings the landscape remained agricultural.

This rural landscape with abandoned mines remained until the late 20th century when new roads and industrial estates began to be constructed. Llanelli Gate is a continuation of this process.

Designated sites

There are no designated sites within the proposed development. Penprys Pit Engine House is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Cm 266) and lies 140m from the eastern boundary of the proposed development.

Individual archaeological sites within the proposed development

Two archaeological sites have been identified within the proposed development. Both are 19th - 20th century coal mining features:

54730 (SN53770196) is recorded as an 'Old Coal Pit' on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map. It presumably formed part of the larger Clyn Gwernen Pit, the core of which lay immediately to the north of the proposed development. It is not shown on the 1908 Ordnance Survey map, and no trace of it is visible on vertical aerial photographs taken in 1946. A substantial spoil tip now covers this part of the proposed development. It is assumed that this was created after 1946, perhaps as a result of the reworking of tips of the old Clyn Gwernen Pit.

54731 (SN53500195) is recorded as 'Old Shafts' on the 1908 Ordnance Survey map, but not on the 1891 map. They were possibly airshafts connected with St David's Pit 450m to the southeast, which was working in the early 20th century, but this is not certain. They are shown on later maps up to 1953, but are not visible on 1946 vertical aerial photographs. Groundworks associated with a new access road into the proposed development has disturbed the location of these shafts - there is no trace of them on the surface.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

A range of criteria has been used to consider the importance of the archaeological resource and the likely impacts on that resource in order to determine the significance of the impact and suggest possible mitigation measures.

Importance

The importance of all sites visited will be categorised according to the following criteria:

- A** - sites of national importance - usually Scheduled Ancient Monuments and listed buildings
- B** - sites of regional or county importance
- C** - sites of district or local importance
- D** - minor sites or sites so badly damaged that too little now remains to justify their inclusion in a higher grade
- E** - sites about insufficient is known to assign them to a higher grade

Likely impacts

The likely physical impacts of the proposed road on each site have been assessed according to the following criteria:

- Total** - complete destruction of the site
- Very severe** - loss of most of the major components of a site
- Severe** - loss of some of the major components of a site
- Medium** - loss of some components of a site
- Slight** - some loss of some minor components of a site
- None**
- Beneficial**
- Unknown**

Impact assessment

<i>Site PRN</i>	<i>Importance</i>	<i>Likely Impact of The development</i>	<i>Recommendation for further work</i>
54730	D	None - destroyed	None
54731	D	None - destroyed	None

RECOMMENDATIONS

No further archaeological work is required.

SOURCES

Databases

The Regional Sites and Monuments Record, housed with Cambria Archaeology

CARN - Core Archaeological Record Index hosted by the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales

Maps

Llanelli Parish tithe map and apportionment, 1842

Ordnance Survey 1813, Original Surveyors' Drawings, 2" to 1 mile, Sheet 188

Ordnance Survey 1830, 1" to 1 mile, sheet 37

Ordnance Survey 1891, 6" to 1 mile, Carmarthen LVIII.NE 1st Edition

Ordnance Survey 1908, 6" to 1 mile, Carmarthen LVIII.NE 2nd Edition

Ordnance Survey 1921, 6" to 1 mile, Carmarthen LVIII.NE 3rd Edition

Ordnance Survey 1953, 6" to 1 mile, Carmarthen LVIII.NE 4th Edition

Aerial photographs

All in the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth.

106G/UK/1400 frames 4061-63 11 April 1946

3G/TUD/UK/120 frame 7092 3 April 1946 - relevant frame missing

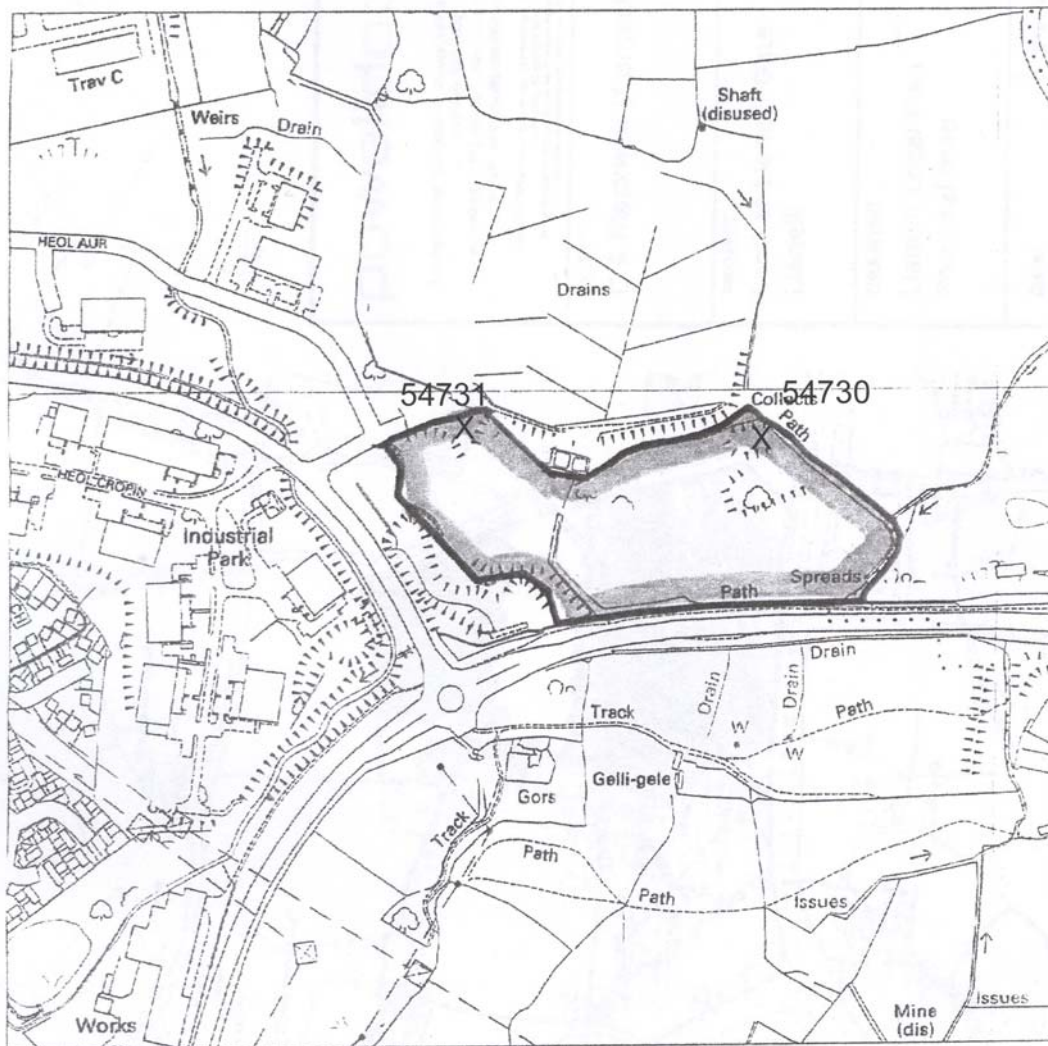
106G/UK/1419 frame 3082 15 April 1946- relevant frame missing

58/671/ frame 3084 17 April 1951- relevant frame missing

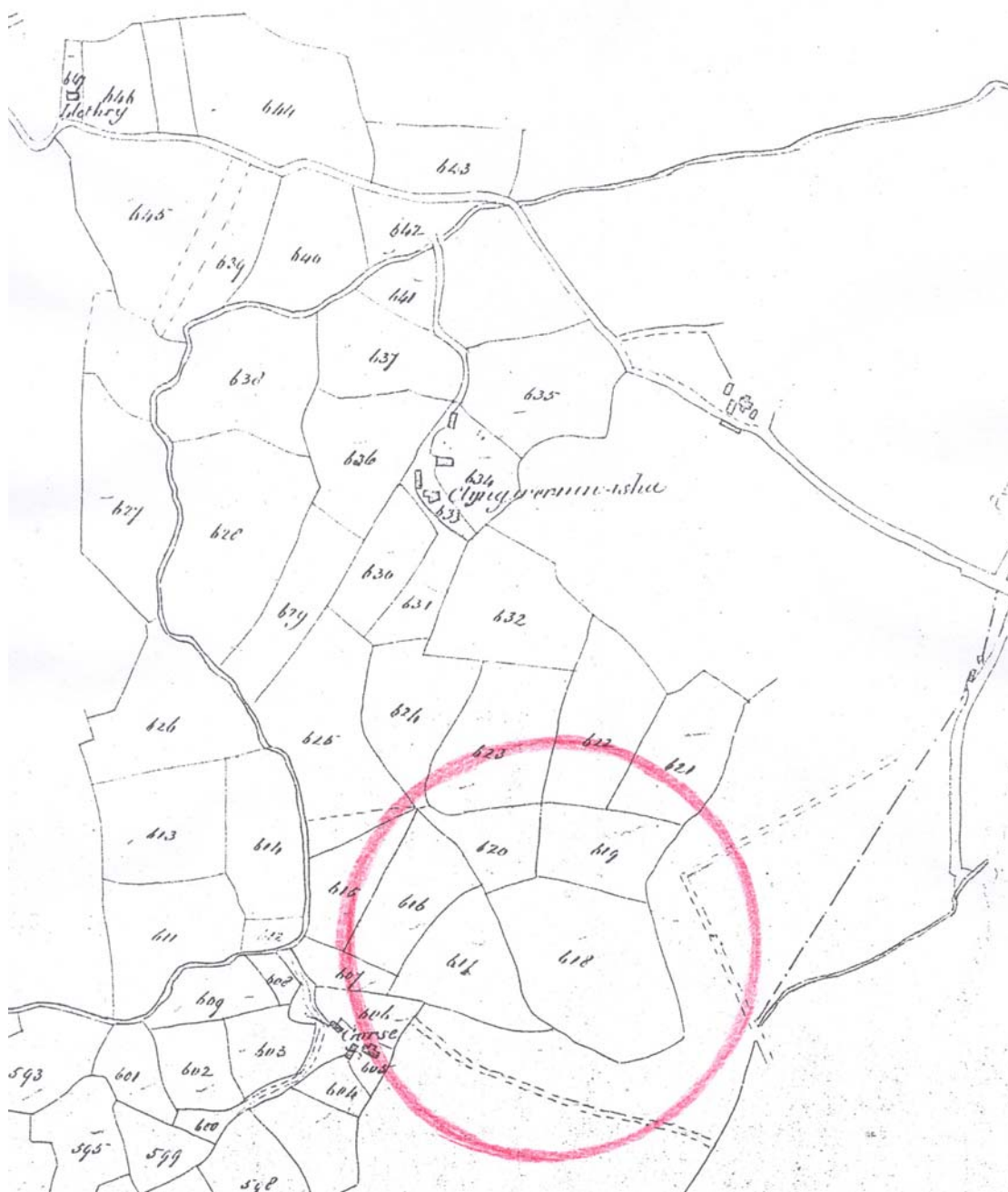
540/525 frames 3195-96 5 June 1951- relevant frame missing

Published sources

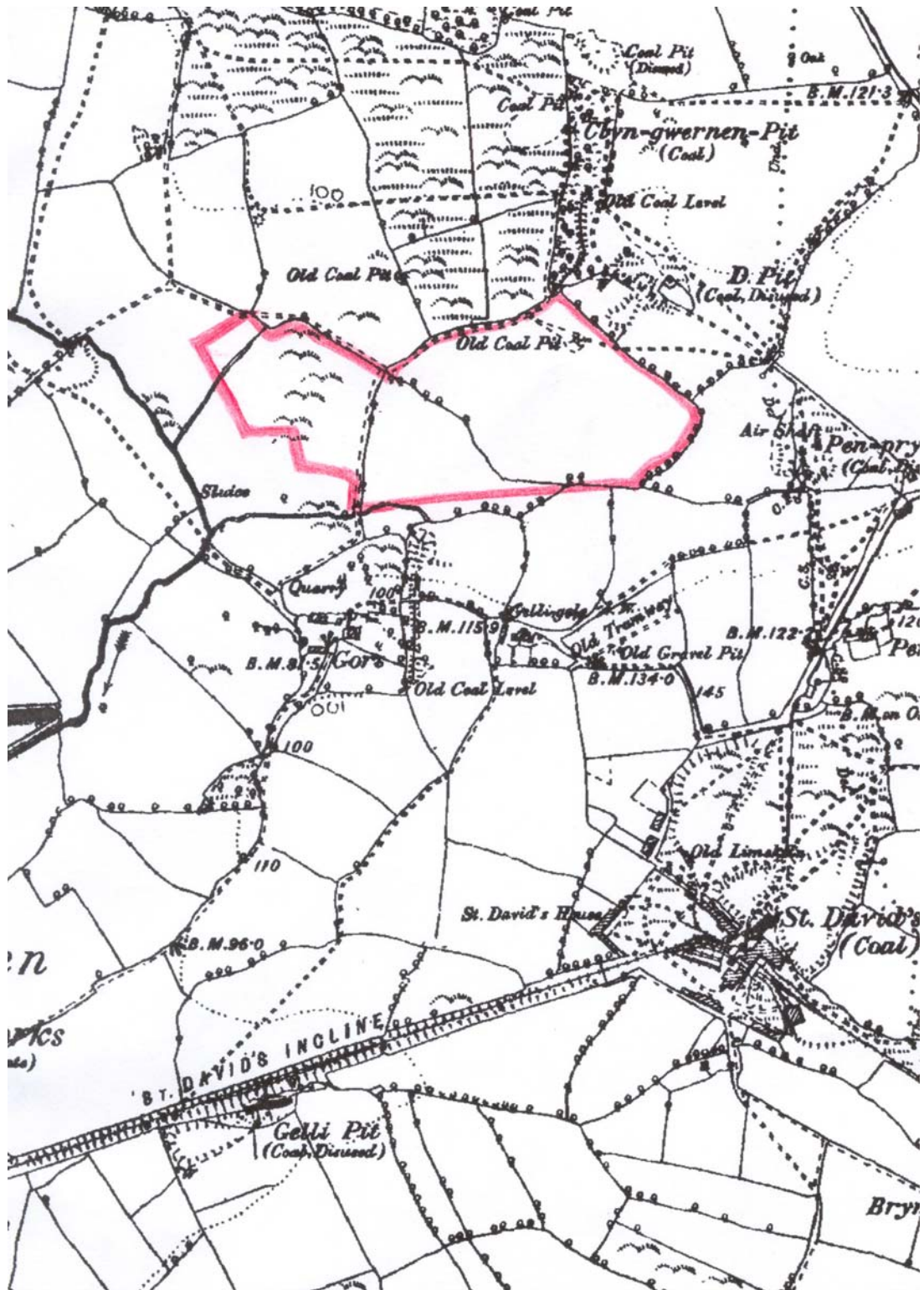
Symons M V 1979. *Coal Mining in the Llanelli Area. Volume One: 16th century to 1829*. Llanelli Borough Council



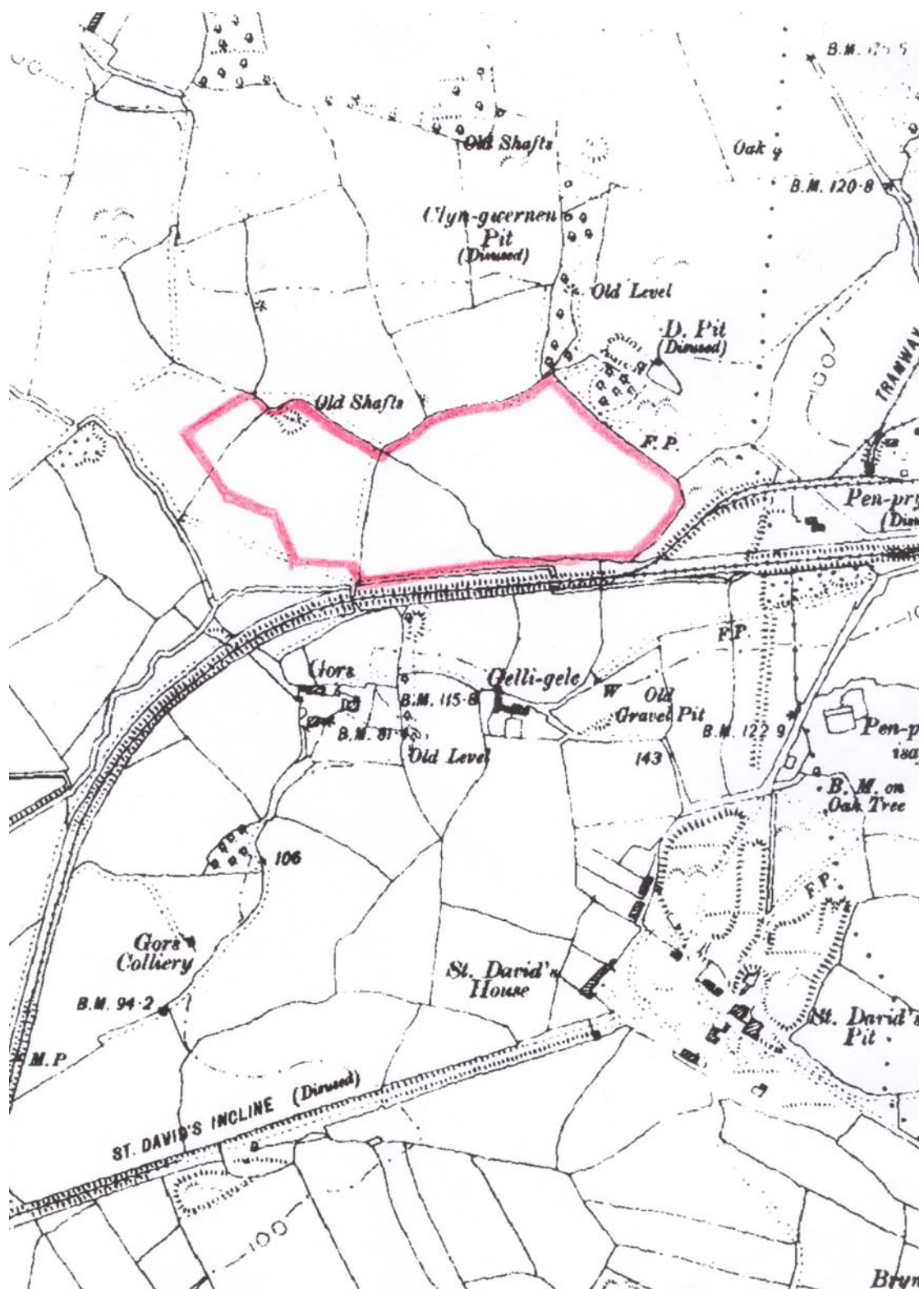
Map 1. Location of proposed development showing archaeological sites.



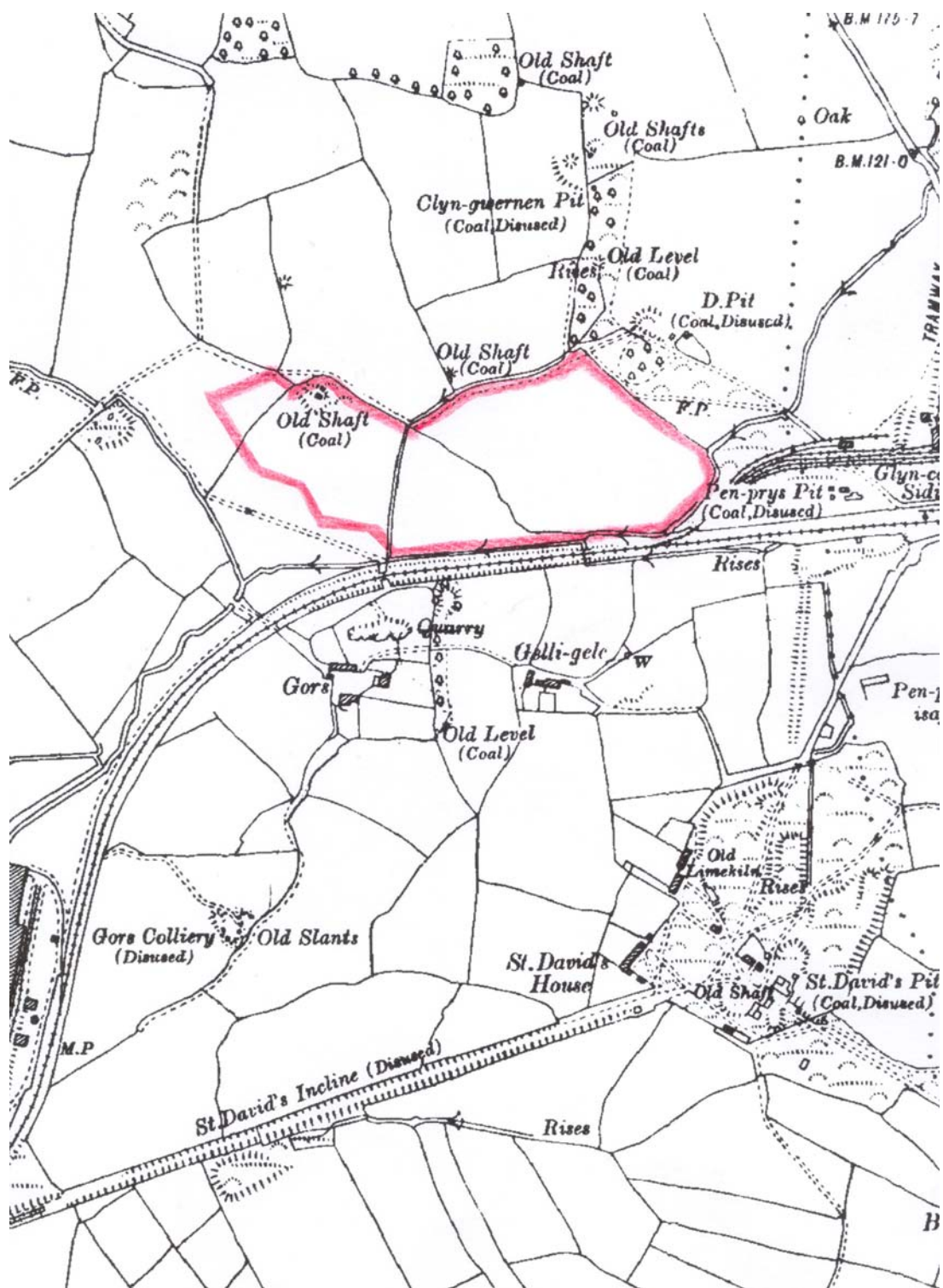
Map 3. Extract from the 1842 tithe map



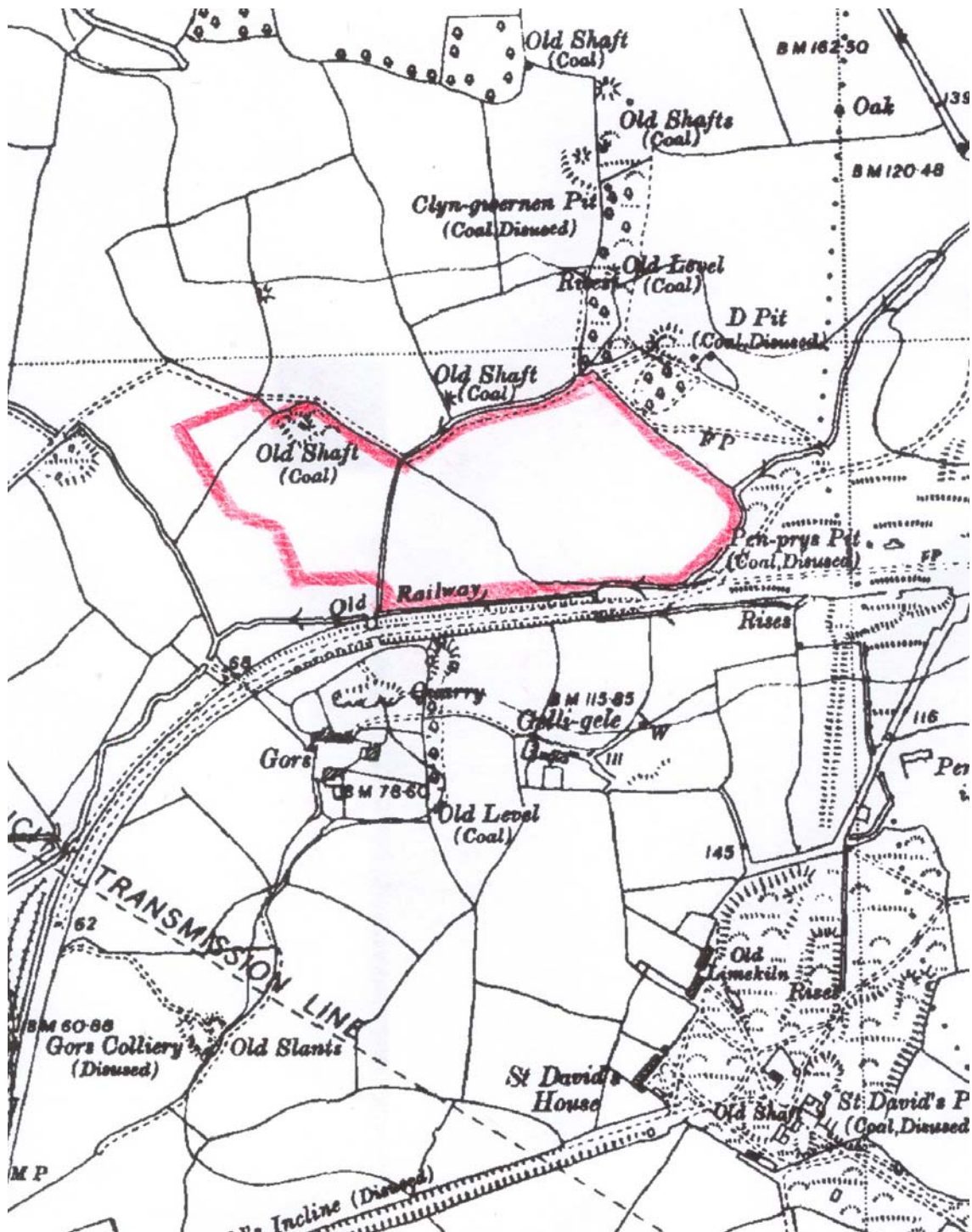
Map 4. Extract from the 1891 Ordnance Survey map



Map 5. Extract from the 1908 Ordnance Survey map



Map 6. Extract from the 1921 Ordnance Survey map



Map 7. Extract from the 1953 Ordnance Survey map



Photo. 1. Looking north across the site towards the old coal pit, 54730, now covered by a spoil tip.



Photo. 2. Looking west across site.

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

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Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

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

ar ran Archaeoleg Cambria, Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Director

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

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

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have on the content or presentation of this report