

BECA BAKERY NUMBER 6, EFAILWEN, CARMARTHENSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
SEPTEMBER 2005



Paratowyd gan: Archaeoleg Cambria
Ar gyfer: Michael Fussell
Prepared by: Cambria Archaeology
For: Michael Fussell



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ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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Gan / By

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Photo 1: General view of hard-standing at the northern end of the site,
before digging footing trenches

Photo 2: Southern footing trench, hard-standing makeup on spoil-tip

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SUMMARY

A single day watching brief was undertaken while footing trenches were excavated for a new house. This was one of six development plots proposed on the site of a former bakery in Efailwen. Evidence suggests that the surrounding area is the largest prehistoric monument complex in west Wales. However, nothing of archaeological interest was recording during the watching brief.

INTRODUCTION

Cambria Archaeology-Heritage Management, as advisors to Carmarthenshire County Council Planning Department, identified potential impacts on the archaeological resource during groundworks, on the proposed six houses on the area occupied by the former Beca Bakery site at Efailwen, Carmarthenshire. An archaeological condition was therefore required in relation to Planning Application W/07001 and W/09642 for the whole development, SN13546/25394

This watching brief is for plot number 6 only (centred on SN 1357525395) and was commissioned by Mr Michael Fussell, the owner and developer of this plot. The watching brief took place on the 8th August 2005 under good weather conditions while the footing trenches for the house were excavated.

The surrounding area contains a number of recorded sites in the regional Sites and Monuments Record. Prehistoric or potential prehistoric sites are listed below using their Primary Record Numbers (PRN). More recent medieval and post medieval sites are not included:

- PRN 1034 (SN1317252), Maenpoica. Standing Stone, probably Bronze Age. Recently a series of "folly" standing stones have been positioned in the field on the other side of the track, one of which shows signs of having been used as a gatepost.
- PRN 13236 (SN113074), White Stone. Boundary stone, probably not prehistoric, a medieval or post-medieval is more likely
- PRN 1063 (SN13852540), Rhos Maen Hir; Capel Nebo Stone. Standing Stone. Probably Bronze Age. A fine standing stone used as a gatepost on a boundary.
- PRN 14299 (SN138256), Yr Allor. A stone axe factory. Probably Neolithic. A large amount of material recovered in 1991.
- PRN 9771 (SN13662580), Maen-Gwyn. Round Barrow. Probably Bronze Age. Degraded by ploughing and with a hedge-line across its centre.
- PRN 14280 (SN13152497), Lan. Round Barrow. Probably Bronze Age. Now very reduced in height. Lumps of white quartz may have originally been part of the structure.

At least twenty more sites, of a prehistoric ritual and funerary nature continue to the north, for about 2km, to Glandy Cross and beyond.

The objectives of the watching brief were to characterise and record the extent, chronology and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits identified during the groundworks.

RESULTS

A mini tracked digger using a toothed bucket undertook all excavation. External footing trenches were 0.6m wide while internal trenches were 0.4m wide. Depths of trenches were around 0.75m deep, below the ground surface but in parts they were up to 1m deep. The total length of footing trenches was about 80m.

Plot 6 was mainly in the area of the hard standing for the former bakery. The surface for this hard standing had been removed leaving a machine trampled stony make-up; this makeup was from 0.4m to 0.6m deep. The northern end of the footings were dug through turf and topsoil around 0.3m deep. Below these upper deposits was natural orange brown clay. Just encountered in the bottom of the footing trench was a lower natural layer of shaley clay.

Any large archaeological features cut in the subsoil, would have been visible. No such features were identified. Any small features such as postholes or shallow gullies, most likely would have been destroyed when the site was developed, probably in the 1970s, as a bakery. It would also appear that in the 1970s topsoil from the hard standing area was removed to the southern part of the site where up to 1m of topsoil may now exist.

CONCLUSIONS

No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified during the watching brief on this plot. However, given the size of the whole development prehistoric activity could be encountered elsewhere. Any such features are likely to have been severely disturbed in the area of the bakery building and hard standing. Therefore, in the area of the hard standing and former building it is recommended that the footing trenches be inspected after excavation. In the other areas affected by the development, the groundworks should be continuously observed by an archaeologist, unless it becomes obvious that there is very little or no chance, of there being any surviving ancient remains.



Photo 1: General view of the hard-standing at the northern end of the site, before the excavation of foundation trenches.



Photo 2: Southern foundation trench, hard-standing makeup on spoil-tip

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on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw
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