

# TALLEY ROAD, LLANDEILO

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

### MARCH 2007



Prepared by Cambria Archaeology  
For Mr Robert Morris



# ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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## TALLEY ROAD, LLANDEILO ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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**TALLEY ROAD, LLANDEILO  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**REPORT NUMBER 2007/16**

**March 2007**

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gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

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**TALLEY ROAD, LLANDEILO  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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## **TALLEY ROAD, LLANDEILO ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

### **SUMMARY**

*A planning application was submitted by Keystone Developments (Llandeilo) Ltd to build two lots of semi-detached dormer houses on a plot of land on the corner of Talley Road, Llandeilo at SN6334823322. The plot lies within a short distance of the known course of the Roman road from Llandovery to Llandeilo, and was also immediately adjacent to the site of a former Toll House. Planning permission was granted with a condition that required an archaeological watching brief be carried out during any groundworks on site.*

*To comply with the condition Mr Robert Morris commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the watching brief in March 2007.*

*No features of archaeological interest were noted.*



## INTRODUCTION

### Project Background

A planning application (E15136) was submitted by Keystone Developments (Llandeilo) Ltd. to build two lots of semi-detached dormer houses on a plot of land at the corner of Talley Road, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire (NGR SN6334823322) (see Figure 1). Planning permission was granted with a condition attached requiring an archaeological watching brief. This required the developer to ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist was present during the undertaking of any ground works in the development area, and to facilitate the implementation of the archaeological watching brief in accordance with the standards laid down by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA).

To comply with the condition Mr Robert Morris contracted Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the watching brief in March 2007.

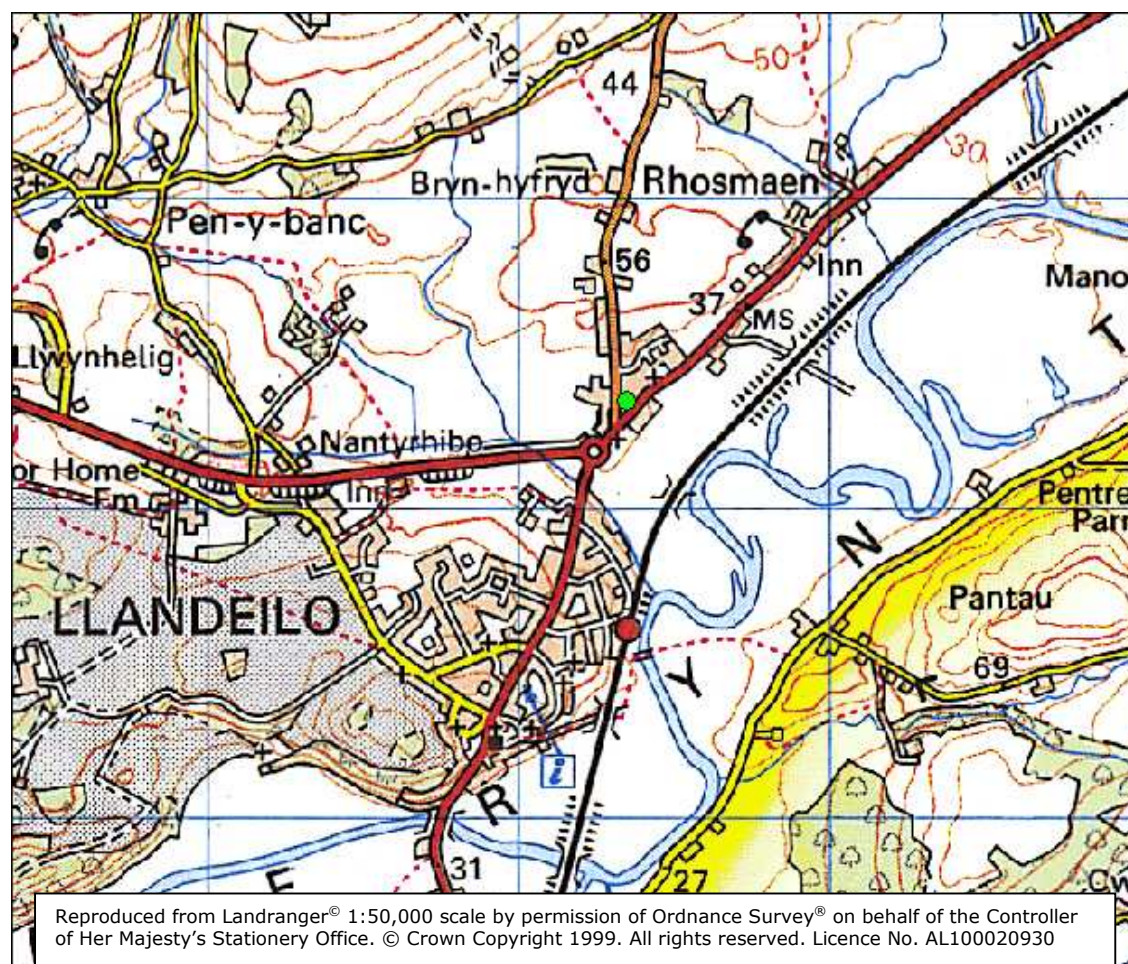


Figure 1 Location of proposed development

### Watching brief specification

The objectives of the watching brief project were to observe, investigate and record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the ground preparation works and digging of footings for the proposed new development. The results of the fieldwork were to be assessed and related to their local,

regional and wider contexts, with a report summarising the results submitted to Mr Morris on completion of the watching brief.

### **Methodology and scope of report**

The watching brief consisted of two site visits during the groundworks, which had involved clearing and levelling the site across the whole development plot, the creation of a new access into the development area off the Talley Road, and the excavation of footings to ready the ground for construction.

This report summarises the archaeological background to the site and discusses the results of the watching brief.

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

The proposed development area lies close to the buried remains of a known segment of the Roman Road (RR623) linking Llandovery with Llandeilo (PRN 11089) (see Figure 2), which is overlain today by the main A40 road. Following recent plotting of cropmarks from aerial photographic survey, the route of the road on this stretch is now quite well defined (James 1983; James 1974; Schlee 2004).

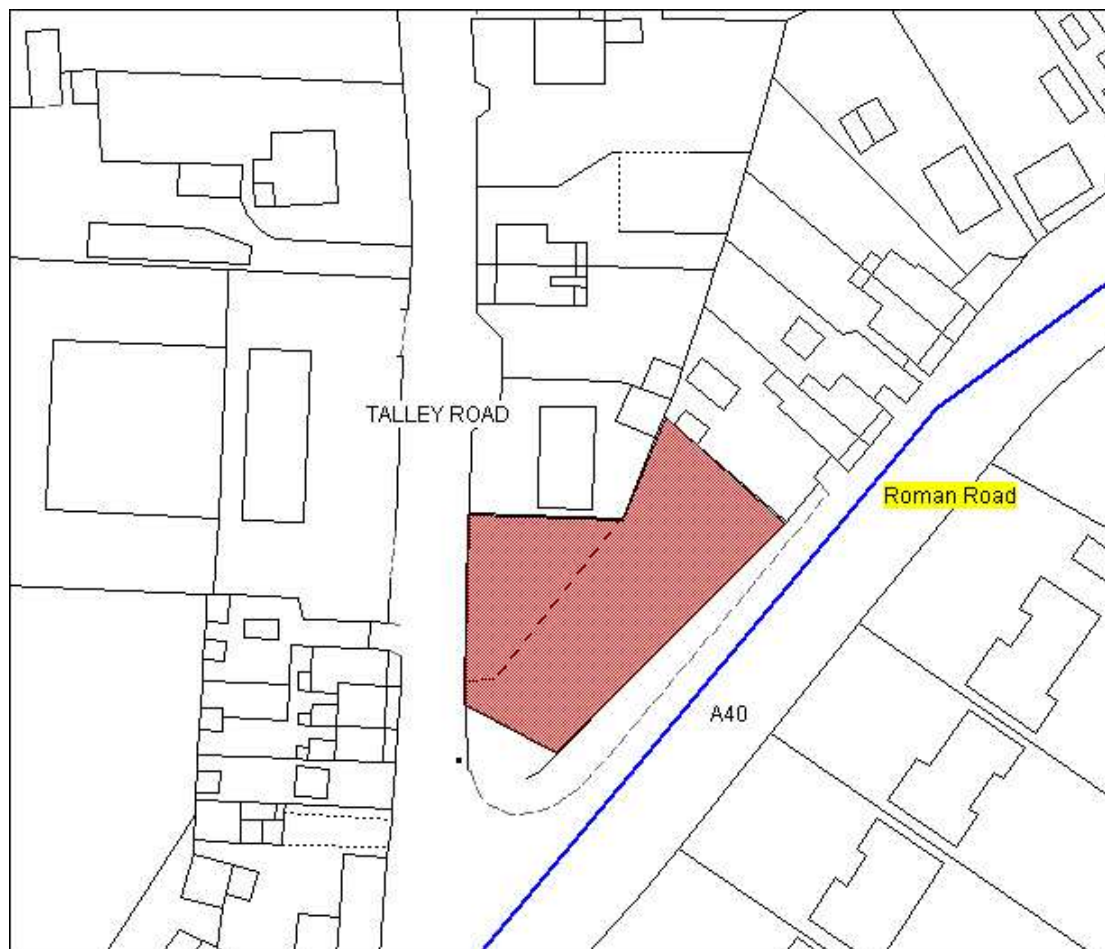


Figure 2 Location of development in relation to the Roman Road

The Ordnance Survey 1st and 2nd Edition 25" maps published in the late 19th and early 20th century show this land to be undeveloped pastureland, with the site lying close to the Gurrey-fach toll point immediately to the southwest of the site (see Figures 3 and 4). The precise date of the toll house is unknown, but it appears on the Tithe Map and apportionment of 1841, and the turnpike road itself is likely to date to the late 18th century. The proposed development land had been sold by auction in 1879, and had formed part of plot 12 of the Tygwyn estate, described simply at that time as 'meadow'. The plan of the Tygwyn estate drawn up for auction in 1879 showed the area of lot 5 on the opposite side of the road from the current development as being pasture, with no dwellings indicated. This suggests that Cil-Cennen Terrace was therefore built some time between 1880 and 1891, when the 1st edition OS was published, and that, until this point, the junction of the Talley Road and the current A40 was undeveloped, with the only built structure here being the toll booth.

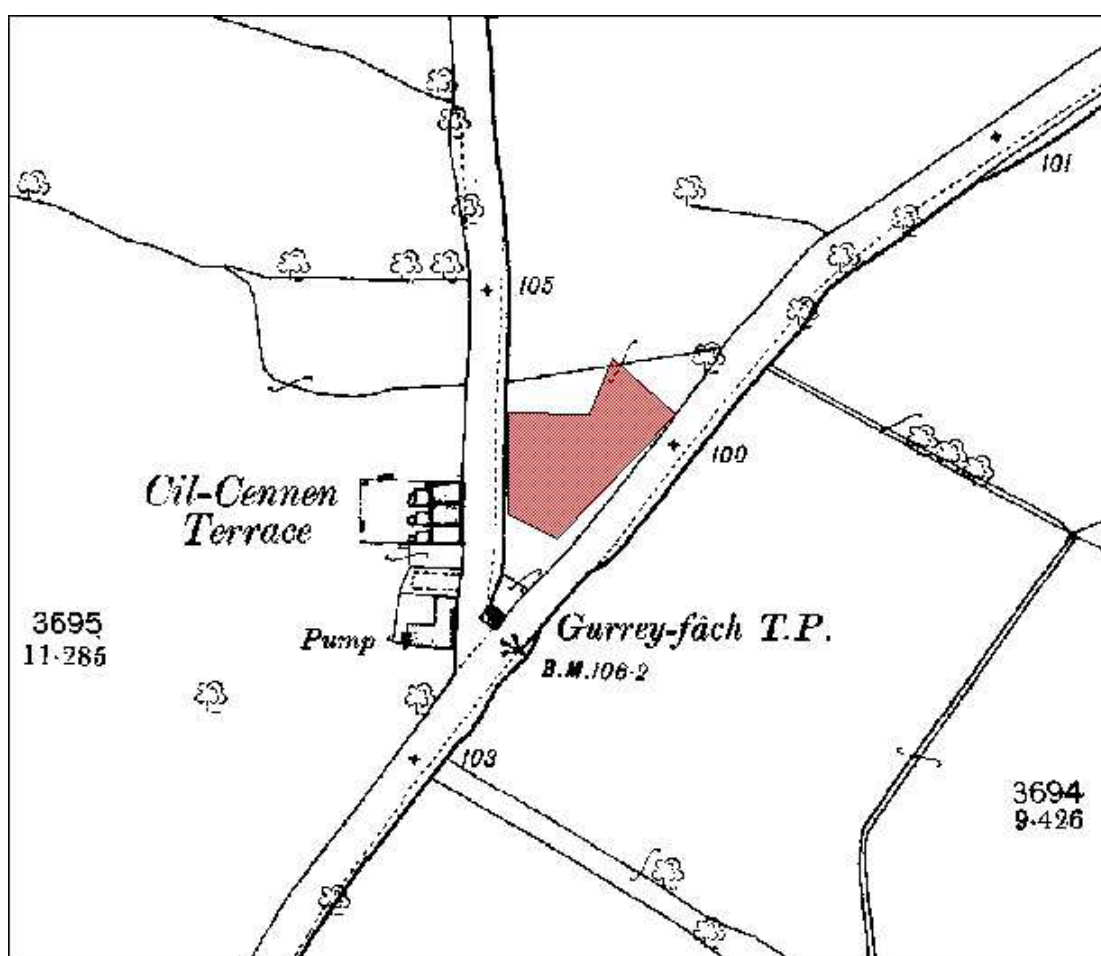


Figure 3 Extract from the OS 1st Edition 25" map, published 1891

By the time the 2nd edition OS 25" map was surveyed in 1907 there had been considerable growth in the area (see Figure 4), including the houses adjoining the development area on its northeast side. Comparisons between the 1st and 2nd edition maps also illustrate the urban development of the junction between the modern Talley Road and A40 trunk road, with a significant increase in housing stock in the area, as well as the building of a Sunday School. 'LB' on the 2nd edition map denotes the presence of a letter box here by 1907, although the current development area appear to have remained undeveloped and as open grassland.



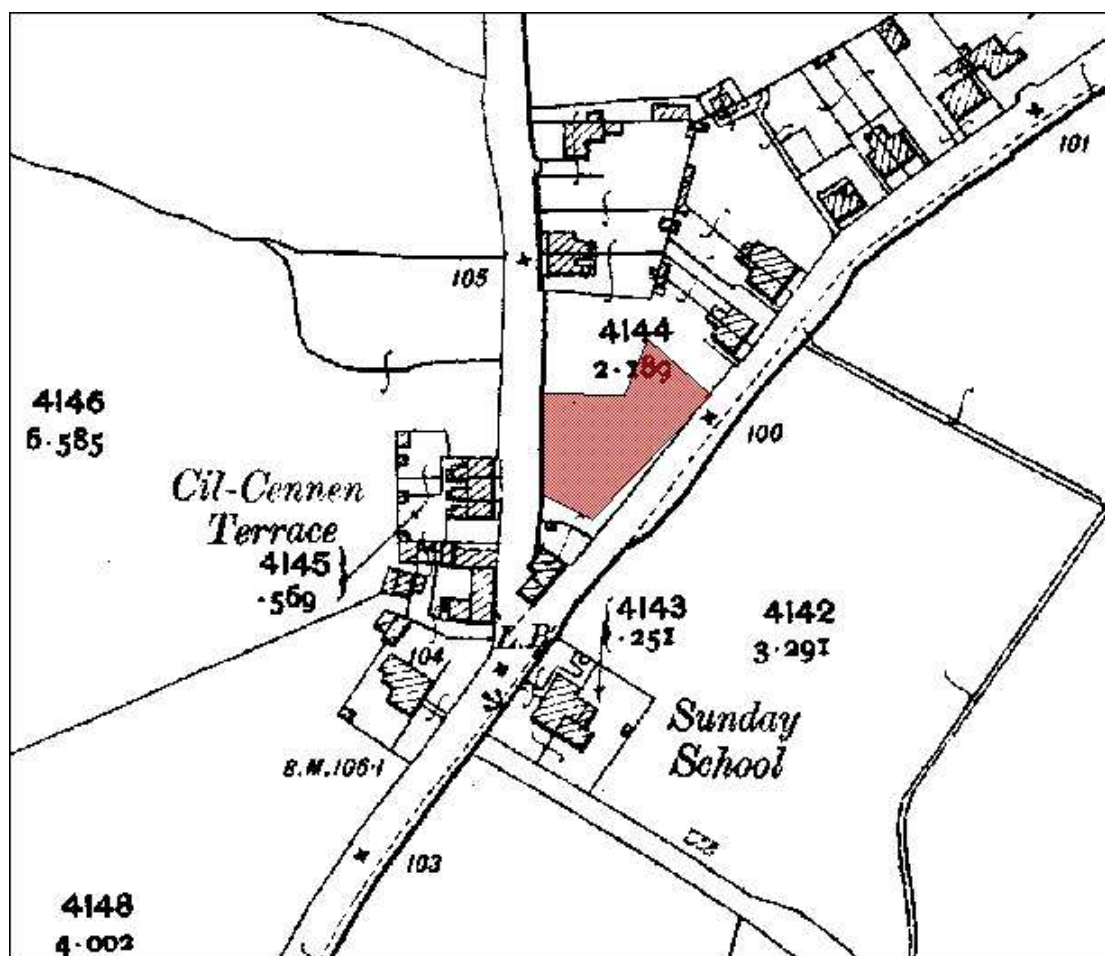


Figure 4 Extract from the OS 2nd Edition 25" map, published c.1910

## WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

Visits were made to the site on March 5th and 6th 2007. The area of land under development is situated on the corner of the Talley Road where it meets the A40, and is centred at SN6334823322. By the time of the initial site visit groundworks had already commenced on site, with the opening of a new access onto the Talley road, a few metres to the north of the previous gateway into the plot of land (see Plate 1). There had also been some limited clearance works, although none of these had impacted on the potential archaeological resource. The former gateway had been also been infilled with the hedgerow previously grubbed out to make the new entrance.

In more recent times the development plot had been used as a car park for the Beechwood industrial estate located a few metres away on the opposite side of the Talley Road. Consequently, the entire plot was, for the most part, covered with a c.0.2m deep layer of degraded tarmac and chippings.

During the first watching brief visit on 5th March work had already commenced in digging the footings for the first pair of houses at SN6336823332, with a 0.75m deep trench dug forming the southeastern extent of the dwellings. This trench ran parallel to the projected course of the Roman Road, which is located within some 6m of the development (Plate 2). Despite its proximity to the Roman Road there were no archaeological features noted within the imprints of the proposed





Plate 1: View across the watching brief area showing the new entrance



Plate 2 Line of footings dug running parallel to the Roman Road



dwelling: indeed, it appeared in section that the site had been earlier dug and levelled prior to the laying of the tarmac, with a clear banding of deposits visible across the site (see Plate 3).



Plate 3 Sections visible within the imprint of the first pair of houses

A second visit was made to the site on 6th March to observe the digging of the footings for the second pair of houses, located in the southwestern corner of the development area at SN6334123317. This area was of interest because of a late 18th-early 19th century toll house noted here from cartographic sources, which is no longer extant. However, it appeared that a modern stone-built wall with concrete footings, running WNW-ESE across the site was revetting an area of earth containing some small shrubs and bulbs, thought to delimit the extent of the former toll-house plot and garden (see Plate 4).



Plate 4 Wall delimiting extent of former toll-house plot and garden



The footings of the new houses ran up to, but did not affect, the wall, which may have been built when the toll-house itself was demolished to improve the mouth of the Talley Road at its junction with the A40. Immediately beyond the extent of the development area there is a wooden bench, a similarly-built stone wall and patch of grass, which seems likely to represent the site of the former toll-house building (see Plate 5), with its associated yard/garden lying just within the development area, now as a raised area of planting (as seen in Plate 4).



Plate 5 Site of former toll-house

No archaeological features were noted within the imprint of the second pair of houses, although in section there was less banding of material compared to that recorded at the northeast end of the site. There was also less degraded tarmac.

## **CONCLUSION**

No archaeological features were noted within the development area, which had been previously utilised as an over-spill car park for the Beechwood industrial estate opposite. Historic cartographic sources showed no previous development of the land, although the development did lie within 6m of the projected course of the Roman Raod linking Llandeilo with Llandovery. Previously at the southwestern extent of the development there once stood a toll house, but the new development did not appear to impinge upon this site. It is unlikely that the development has had any significant impact on the archaeological resource.



## **Sources**

James, H & T 1983 *Archaeology in Wales*, No.23,p.35

James, H & T 1984 'Aerial Survey and the Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery', *Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, Vol.XX, p.23-27,

Schlee, D 2004 '*Roman Military Roads, Forts and Vici*' unpublished Cambria Archaeology Report no. 2004-95, Llandeilo: Cambria Archaeology

## **Cartographic sources**

Tithe Map and Apportionment	1841
1st Edition 25" OS Map	1891
2nd Edition 25" OS Map	1910 (surveyed 1907, revised 1909)

## Site photos



Plate 6 Sections observed within imprint of second pair of houses



Plate 7 View of site looking east, following clearance and before excavation of footings