

ST MICHAEL'S SCHOOL, HEOL Y MYNYDD, BRYN, LLANELLI ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL



Prepared by Cambria Archaeology
For Asbri Planning Ltd.



ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO.2007/103
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO.63283

RHAGFYR 2007
DECEMBER 2007

ST. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL, HEOL Y MYNYDD, BRYN, LLANELLI
ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

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SUMMARY

Proposals for a residential development at St Michael's School, Bryn, Llanelli required an archaeological appraisal. The proposed development site consists of playing fields on the edge of the residential areas of Bryn and Harddfan, villages to the east of Llanelli. A post-medieval industrial coal mine, shown to be disused on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map, is located c.200m north of the site. A post-medieval cottage, shown on the 1891 OS map, stands c.160m west of the site and the post-medieval Brynmawr Farmhouse is located c.300m to the northwest.

Asbri Planning Ltd. commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to undertake the appraisal in December 2007.

The appraisal revealed no known archaeological sites within the proposed development area or immediate vicinity. However, its location to the south of a post-medieval colliery suggests that industrial workings may be present below ground.

If planning permission for the proposed development is given, the report suggests that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during any ground breaking activity.

Plate 1: A general view northwest across the proposed development area.



INTRODUCTION

Project proposals and commission

Proposals for a residential development at Bryn required an archaeological appraisal. An appraisal, which consists of a rapid assessment of readily available sources, was considered to be the most appropriate method of assessing the likely impacts of the proposed development.

Asbri Planning Ltd commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to undertake the appraisal in December 2007.

Scope of the project

The appraisal consisted of the examination of readily available sources of information such as maps, published works and aerial photographs, and a site visit. The results are intended to inform the final design plans for the site and, if required, to outline a possible programme of further works to mitigate the archaeological impact of the proposed development. The appraisal should be seen only as the first stage of the archaeological process and does not preclude the possibility that further archaeological input may be required prior to, or during, the proposed development works.

Abbreviations used in this report

All sites recorded on the county Historic Environment Record¹ (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). New sites have been assigned a PRN and located by their NGR. References to cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets throughout the text, with full details listed in the sources section at the rear of the report.

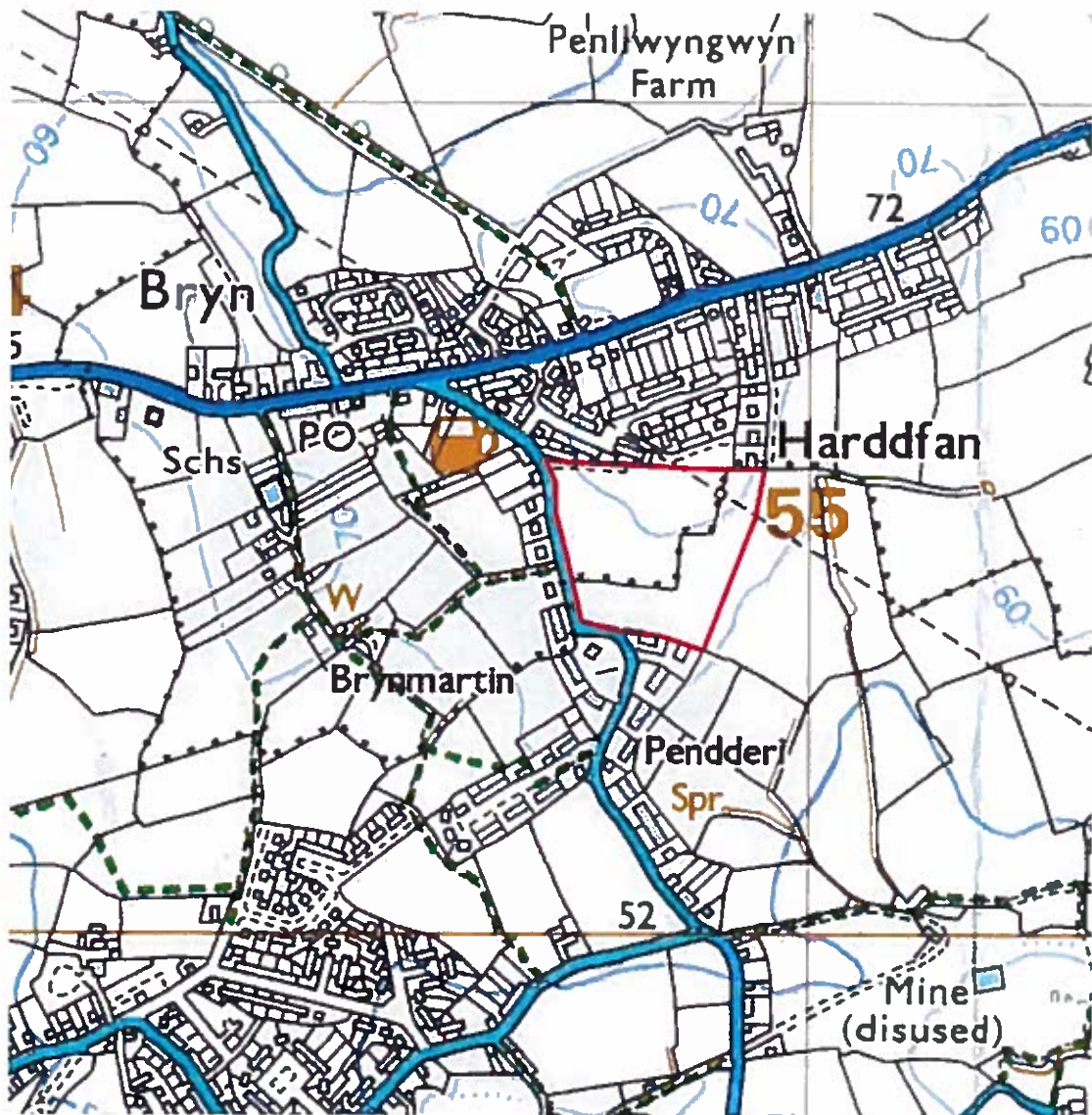
¹ Held and managed by Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo.

SUMMARY OF THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

The site location

The site occupies c.11 acres to the south of the residential areas of Bryn and Harddfan, on the eastern edge of Llanelli. It comprises a playing field bounded on the north, south and west sides by modern housing and by arable and pastoral fields on the east side.

The site slopes down from northwest to southeast.



Reproduced from the 1998 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale Explorer Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A.

Landscape development

The present layout of the proposed development area had been established by the late 19th century. The principal boundaries are all shown on the Ordnance remained unchanged since then, although there has been some modern development around its boundaries.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

Known archaeological sites

There are no known archaeological sites within the proposed development area or immediate vicinity. The closest known sites are an industrial coal mine, East Pit, (PRN 16722; NGR SN54740078) c.200m to the north of the site, post-medieval cottage "Cae Du" (PRN 24287; NGR SN54530054) c.166m to the west of the site and post-medieval farmhouse "Bryn Mawr" (PRN 21445; NGR SN54400070) c. 300m to the north west of the site.

Bryn Mawr is shown on both the 1841 Llanelli rural parish tithe map and 1843 Llangennech tithe map, surrounded by fields, but the proposed development area lies off the edge of both maps. East Pit and Cae Du cottage are shown on the 1891 and 1921 Ordnance Survey maps. East Pit, part of the St David's colliery complex to which it was connected by tramway, is shown as being disused on the 1891 map.

RAF Aerial photographs (CPE/UK/1997/13APR.47 : 4130-4131) did not reveal any cropmarks in the proposed development area or immediate vicinity.

The site was visited on 18/12/07, on a clear, cold day. The playing field was seen to be generally flat and under short grass, bounded by an established hedge, stone-core hedge bank and post and wire fence. The area to the east and south of the hedge were under rough pasture and, in the southwest corner, marshland. There was no visible surface evidence to suggest that the site had archaeological potential.

The boundaries of the site could be termed important under the Historic Hedgerows Regulations 1997 as part of a field system in place before the Inclosure Award.

Archaeological potential

The buried archaeological resource is unknown and frequently unpredictable. The site appears to have survived intact during the industrial development of the area so earlier remains could potentially have been preserved. There is also the possibility that the industrial processes to the north of the site could have encroached beneath the proposed development area in the shape of mine shafts and tunnels, in which case any earlier remains would most likely have been destroyed.



Figure 2: Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:2500 map (1891) with proposed development site.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Without specific design plans it is not possible to be definitive about the impact of development on the archaeological resource within the proposed development area. However, the processes of construction are well enough known to be able to make general statements that can be used to inform the final design plans.

New building involves a range of processes that have immediate and obvious archaeological implications. The main processes are:

1. Site Clearance
2. Demolition of standing remains.
3. Excavations for new foundations and service trenches.
4. Construction of new roads.
5. Landscaping.
6. Heavy machinery moving across the site.

Although it is not intended to discuss all of the above processes it is worth expanding on a few of them in order to highlight the potential negative implications for the archaeological resource that such developments may have.

All building works require physical intervention, from site clearance works, to topsoil stripping, levelling, through to the excavation of foundation and service trenches prior to construction. All of these have the potential to damage or remove previously unknown buried archaeological features or deposits.

Potential impacts on the historic landscape

Any development of this type will fundamentally alter the existing rural agricultural character of the site, although as urban expansion has already been established around much of the site development is not without precedent.

Potential impacts on the buried archaeological resource

The nature and extent of any underlying archaeological deposits is at present unknown.

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Archaeological potential

The extent of the buried archaeological resource is unknown. Therefore, it is suggested that a watching brief be maintained on all ground breaking operations carried out during the development.

SOURCES

Published sources

Hall J. & Sambrook P. 2003 Bynea Heritage Audit

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RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2007/103

Rhagfyr 2007
December 2007

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

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on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: HEAD OF FIELD SERVICES

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date 21/12/2007

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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