

BUILDING PLOT OPPOSITE TY YFORY LLANFAIR CLYDOGAU, CEREDIGION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

APRIL 2008



Report prepared
by
Dyfed Archaeological Trust
for
Mr Julian Bransden



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April 2008

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By

R Ramsey

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited.

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This report has been prepared by R Ramsey

Position: Archaeologist

Signature Date

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Position: Head of Field Services

Signature Date

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may
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SUMMARY

A planning application (A060965) was submitted by Mr Julian Bransden to develop land adjacent to the minor road from Llanfair Clydogau to Lampeter, on the west side of the Teifi valley, at NGR SN61004999. The development site lies close to the projected line of a Roman road running south from Llanio (Bremia) Roman fort to Carmarthen. Given the potential for the presence of archaeological features or deposits associated with the Roman road on the site, planning permission was granted with a condition that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the ground preparation work for the new development.

In order to comply with the planning condition Mr Bransden commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to carry out the watching brief in April 2008.

The whole site was stripped of turf and topsoil and the footprint of the building was test excavated down to the top of the natural subsoil. In addition an entrance gateway and driveway were excavated down to the top of the natural subsoil.

No archaeological features were encountered during the watching brief.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

A planning application (**A 060965**) was submitted by Mr Julian Bransden to develop a plot of land near to Llanfair Clydogau at NGR SN61004999 (Figures 1 and 2). The development site, part of a field given over to pasture, lies close to the projected line of the main Roman road that runs south from the Roman fort of Llanio (PRN 5998 at NGR SN644564) to Moridunum (Roman Carmarthen). It is possible, therefore, that significant archaeological features associated with the Roman road may survive below ground on or close to the development site.

In view of the potential archaeological sensitivity of the development area, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management, as advisors to the Planning Department of Ceredigion County Council, recommended that a watching brief condition should be attached to the planning application in order to protect potential archaeological interests.

Planning permission was granted with a condition that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the groundworks for the new building development.

To comply with the condition, Mr Julian Bransden commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to carry out the watching brief in April 2008.

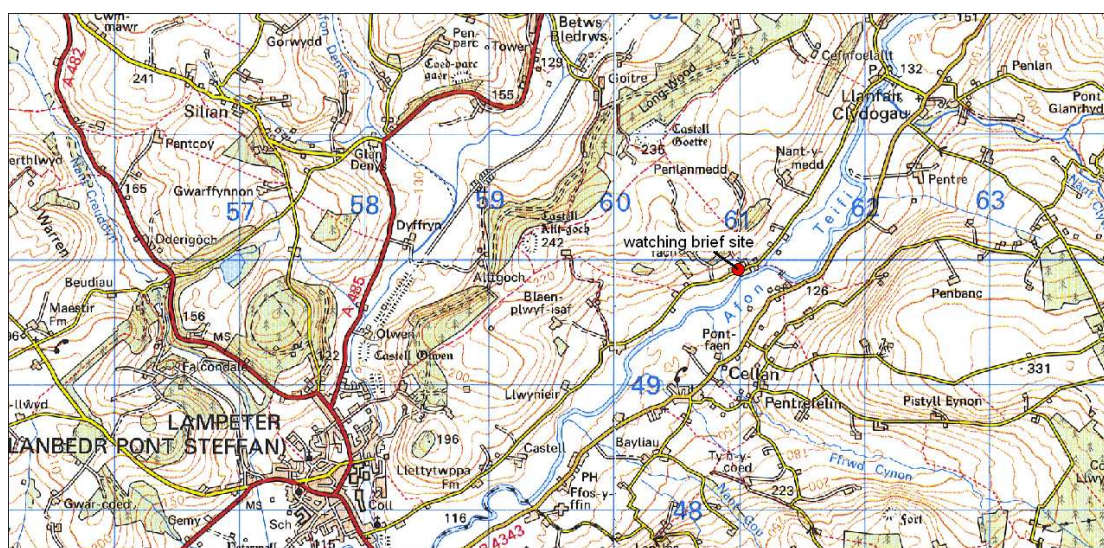


Figure 1. Location map, based on Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 1995 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd., The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

1.2 The watching brief methodology and scope of the report

The watching brief consisted of the on-site attendance, over the course of one day, of an archaeologist during the ground preparation for the new building. Any archaeologically significant features and deposits would be recorded and photographed, and where possible, or relevant, measured plans drawn.

This report summarises the background to the site before discussing the results of the watching brief.

deposits associated with it. There is no evidence on the ground for the Roman road within the development area.

The generally accepted view amongst historians and archaeologists is that west Wales was conquered by the Romans during the Flavian campaigns of AD74 and AD75 and it is after this time that the road between Carmarthen and Llanio fort would have been constructed.

Regarding later history in the vicinity, map evidence from the late 19th and early 20th centuries shows the former presence of a mill race or leat serving both a fulling mill and a corn mill close to the location of the proposed building plot. In addition, the early Ordnance Survey maps show a factory site and associated cottages situated immediately to the northeast of the new development. The factory cottages were sited where the property now known as Ty Newydd lies.

No other archaeological sites are listed in the HER.

3. WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

The development site comprised a rectangular parcel of land measuring 30m by 35m with the longer side fronting onto the road to the southeast. The plot slopes downhill from the northwest to the southeast, becoming less steep for some 12m or so towards the road. The hedge bank boundary on the roadside edge of the development site was raised some 1m above the level of the road. The plot itself was formerly part of a much larger, undeveloped field under pasture.

All groundwork excavations on the site were undertaken by a 360 degree tracked digger with a toothless grading bucket, with a certain amount of hand cleaning of exposed sections and surfaces in order to identify soils and potential archaeological features.

The whole plot was stripped of turf and a friable reddish brown silty clay topsoil containing 20% small angular and sub-angular stone fragments, to an average depth of 0.2m. The topsoil was shown to overlie a less friable orange brown silty clay subsoil containing 35% small and medium sized angular shale fragments. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed in either the topsoil or cut into the subsoil.

An entrance (Plate 2) was excavated through the roadside boundary to a depth of 1m, and again only natural deposits were revealed. A driveway was excavated to a depth of 0.3m and this also revealed the same profile of natural topsoil and subsoil horizons.

The footprint of the new building was located approximately centrally within the plot but closer to the adjoining property, Ty Newydd, on the northeast side. In order to establish that there were no archaeological deposits beneath the loose upper subsoil a test trench (Plate 3) was excavated across the northeast margin of land adjacent to the building footprint. The subsoil was shown to be continuous across the site with an average depth of 0.30m and overlying a compact natural shale-rich light greyish brown bedrock interface. There was no evidence for the Roman road or any other archaeological features.

4. CONCLUSION

The building plot was identified as lying close to the route of the projected main Roman road between *Moridunum*, Roman Carmarthen, and the Roman fort at Llanio (*Bremia*), however, no archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the groundwork excavations on the site.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Plate 1: View of site, looking south, during groundworks



Plate 2: View of excavated entrance and drive, looking north



Plate 3: View of test excavation, looking northwest

SOURCES

Database

The Regional Historic Environment Record, housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust in Llandeilo

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Aerial photographs

Meridian Airmap SN64NW 260/240 Frame Nos. 12792, 12793 & 12794
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