

# LAND AT LLWYNHENDY ROAD, LLWYNHENDY, LLANELLI, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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Prepared by:  
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*Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys*

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CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

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**LAND AT LLWYNHENDY ROAD, LLWYNHENDY,  
CARMARTHENSHERE:  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**SUMMARY**

*This report has been prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services in response to a request from Mr B Richards to undertake a pre-determination archaeological evaluation of the potential impacts of a proposed new development (Planning application number S/16364) on a plot of land at Llwynhendy Road, Llwynhendy, Llanelli (centred at NGR SS 5387 9970). The proposal involves the construction of a new residential unit and associated access.*

*The proposed development site is located to the west of the medieval Capel Dewi/Capel Berwick (NGR SS 5389 9968). It is considered likely that archaeological features or deposits relating to the chapel and its associated cemetery may extend into the development area.*

*No evidence for the continuation of the chapel burial ground into the proposed development area was identified during the archaeological evaluation, however a number of archaeological features and deposits were revealed. Located within the south-western end of the evaluation trench were a number of relatively modern features of low archaeological significance, including five post-holes, two linear features and a service trench. In addition to the modern features further features were revealed in the north-eastern end. A possible medieval drain associated with the adjacent chapel was revealed, as were a substantial medieval pit and later post hole.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Project Commission**

This report has been prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services in response to a request from Mr B Richards to provide an archaeological evaluation of the potential impacts of proposed new development (Planning application number S/16364) on a plot of land at Llwynhendy Road, Llwynhendy, Llanelli (centred at NGR SS 5387 9970; Figure 1 and 5). The outline application is for the construction of a new residential unit and associated access.

The following report was produced in response to a pre-determination archaeological evaluation of the site set as a requirement of the planning application by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management in their role as archaeological advisors to Carmarthenshire County Council, to fully inform the Members of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) of the effect of the proposed development upon the archaeological resource.

The proposed development site is located immediately adjacent to the site of a former medieval chapel, Capel Berwick (or Capel Dewi), which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The proposed development site lies outside the Scheduled Area, but it may have formerly been a part of the burial ground associated with the chapel.

During the evaluation, the area had a garage on the street frontage end with an overgrown garden area to the rear, containing a number of semi-mature trees.

### **Scope of the Project**

The evaluation has been designed to provide information on the character, extent, date, state of preservation and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the site area, in order that an assessment of the impact from the development proposals on any remains can be determined. The results of the evaluation will be used to inform the scope of any further required archaeological works required in mitigation of the development impacts.

### **Report Outline**

This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background, summarises the potential impacts of the proposed development before providing a summary and discussion of the archaeological evaluation and its results.

### **Abbreviations**

Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record<sup>1</sup> (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR).

### **Illustrations**

Photographic images are to be found at the back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

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<sup>1</sup> Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo.

## THE SITE

### Location

The proposed development site is located at NGR SS 5389 9968 in the village of Llwynhendy near Llanelli, Carmarthenshire (Figure 1). The site occupies a broadly rectangular plot north-east to south-west sloping plot, c.600m to the north-west of the junction between Llwynhendy Road and Hendre Road (Figure 5).

### Archaeological Background.

No archaeological sites are known to exist within the proposed development site. However, two important archaeological sites are located in close proximity to the development area, Capel Dewi; Capel Berwick (PRN 2072; NGR SS 5389 9968) and St David's Church Llwynhendy (PRN 7267; NGR SS 5392 9971). Of these two known archaeological sites, there was considered to be a high potential that development of the site area could impact on the Capel Dewi/Capel Berwick burial ground, which could well have extended into the development area.

The Capel Dewi/Capel Berwick site is described thus on the Dyfed Archaeological Trust HER:

*'A former chapel-of-ease to Llanelli parish, the surviving masonry of the chapel is believed to date from the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century and consists of part of the west and south walls of the nave, the remainder of the structure is considered to lay beneath the adjacent road. It is known the structure was ruinous by 1833 and once held burial rights. A local resident stated that a churchyard was located next to the chapel and that school children dug up bones from the site. A gravestone was also dug up from a neighbouring garden'.*

The dedication of the chapel to St David a 'Celtic' saint, as opposed to one of the Roman church, may suggest that it was originally founded during the early medieval period prior to the Anglo Norman conquest. The surviving structure possibly represents post conquest rebuilding of the chapel. The 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century date ascribed to the surviving masonry may be significant as during 1275 the body of St David was allegedly discovered at St David's Cathedral in Pembrokeshire during the construction of a new shrine to the saint. (James, 1996, 18-19). There is a possibility that once word had spread of the finding of the body the number of pilgrims to the shrine substantially increased. Capel Dewi lies on a suggested pilgrim route to St David's (John & Rees, 2002, 186-188) and it is possible to suggest that it may have been founded and dedicated to Saint David in reverence for the alleged finding of the body of the saint. The remains of the chapel, and the area between it and Llwynhendy Road, are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM CM324) by CADW.

Map evidence has revealed that the proposed development site has been undeveloped since the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century (Jones, 1751; Figure 2). In 1751 the site formed part of a field known as 'Cae Lervelin Ycha' and was owned by Sir Edward Mansel, Baronet (*ibid*). By 1842 the site was recorded in the Tithe Apportionment as 'Car Lleu y Bryn Uchaf' owned by John Llewellyn, but occupied by William Rees (Tithe Map and Apportionment, 1842). By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century a single structure has been constructed at the south-western end of the proposed development site (Ordnance Survey, 1880; Figure 3). By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the structure is no longer present (Ordnance Survey, 1906; Figure 4). Between 1906 and the present day a corrugated iron and brick shed was constructed along the frontage of the proposed development site.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

### **Methodology**

The archaeological evaluation required the excavation of one 15 x 1.5m trench across the proposed development site (Figure 5). Excavation was undertaken using a tracked mini digger to the top of archaeological features and deposits. Following mechanical excavation, the trench was hand cleaned prior to the investigation of archaeological features and deposits revealed.

### **Results of the Evaluation**

The archaeological evaluation undertaken at the proposed development site returned positive results in that it identified a number of hitherto unknown archaeological features and deposits.

All features are shown on the trench plan Figure X. Layers and fills are demarcated in round brackets (018); cuts for features are represented with square brackets [020]. A full context and description list is included in Table 1 at the end of the report.

Towards the south-western end of the trench a series of three post-holes were investigated. These were found to be modern in date given the presence of late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramic from the fill of [007] (Photo 1 and 3) and coal fragments from [009] (Photo 1 and 3) and [012] (Photo 4 and 5). Two linear features ([005]; [011]; Photo 1 and 2) in close proximity to the post-holes were also investigated. Both linear features were found to contain modern material. It is probable that the post-holes and linear features investigated may relate to the structure marked on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1880 and demolished by 1907.

In addition to the features investigated at the south-western end of the trench a linear feature [013] was revealed approximately mid way along the length of the evaluation trench and considered to be a modern service trench (Photo 6).

An area of large flat stones was revealed (018) (Photo 7 and 8) and prior to excavation was believed to be a cist grave. However, on excavation it became clear the stones formed the capping of an east – west aligned shallow linear [020] (see section A) that continued beneath the south-east and north-west sides of the trench (Photo 7, 8, 9 and 10). Excavation of the fill of [020] led to the recovery of a fragment of heavily degraded ceramic building material. It is considered likely that the feature forms a drain and may relate to Capel Dewi, although it was not possible to conclusively prove this.

Immediately the north-east of drain [020] a spread of medium to large stone (017) was present (Photo 8). This deposit appeared to represent a dump of stone over a former wet area to provide an improved surface and is considered to be contemporary with capping stones (018).

A substantial pit [023] (see section B) was revealed at the north-eastern end of the evaluation trench (Photo 11, 12, 13 and 14). The fill of the pit (022) appeared to have been cut by a further post-hole [025] at an unknown date (Photo 12). A layer of shale fragments (021) was also present in the top of (022) and continued beneath the south-east side of the trench. Excavation of [023] was undertaken to a depth of 0.9m but could not be excavated any further for health and safety reasons (depth of trench). Prior to the abandonment of the excavation of [023] a single sherd of green glazed medieval pottery was recovered from the fill. The full extent of pit [023] was unknown as it appeared to continue beneath the north-east, north-west and south-west sides of the trench.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The archaeological evaluation undertaken at the proposed development site in Llwyhendy identified a number of previously unknown archaeological features and deposits.

A series of modern post-holes and linear features investigated are considered to relate to an unknown structure marked on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey Map of the area and are deemed to be of low archaeological significance (postholes [007], [009], and [012]; linear features [005] and [011]. The building is not indicated on earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century maps, and thus the structure is considered to be of mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century date. A probable service trench [013] was also identified and not investigated this was also deemed to be of low archaeological significance.

The linear feature that probably represents a drain [020], may be of medieval date and relate to Capel Dewi given its comparable alignment with the chapel. In addition, rubble layer (017) is also considered to be contemporary with drain [020]. The full extent of [020] and (017) are unclear as both continue further into the development area. The feature and layer are considered to be of moderate archaeological significance.

A further feature of medieval date was also investigated, pit [023], which contained fragments of medieval pottery. It is also conceivable that the pit is contemporary with drain [020] and rubble spread (017). It was not possible to determine the full extent of [023] given its depth and as it continued beyond the edges of the evaluation trench. The pit is considered to be of moderate archaeological significance.

Post-hole [025] was of later date than pit [023] given that it was cut into the fill of the pit. It is possible that it may date to the post medieval period although it was not possible to fully substantiate this. The post-hole is considered to be of moderate archaeological importance.

Given the limited nature of the evaluation trench it is considered possible that further archaeological features and deposits are present within the proposed development area. The medieval features that were revealed are considered to be of moderate importance, and suggest contemporary activity occurring in the area to the west of the chapel. No burials were revealed, indicating that it is unlikely that any burial ground associated with Capel Dewi extended into the development area. No early medieval features (pre-Norman) were revealed, although this does not preclude an earlier medieval foundation for Capel Dewi, and may indicate that the plot boundary for the chapel (which defines the eastern boundary of the development area) was established during this period and remained throughout its use.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Database**

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record.

### **Map**

Jones W 1751 A Description of Lands Near and About Berwick Chappel in Llanelly Parish Carmarthenshire.

Tithe Map and Apportionment 1842 Llanelly Parish.

Ordnance Survey 1880 1:10560 Carmarthenshire Sheet LIX NW

Ordnance Survey 1906 1:10560 Carmarthenshire Sheet LIX NW

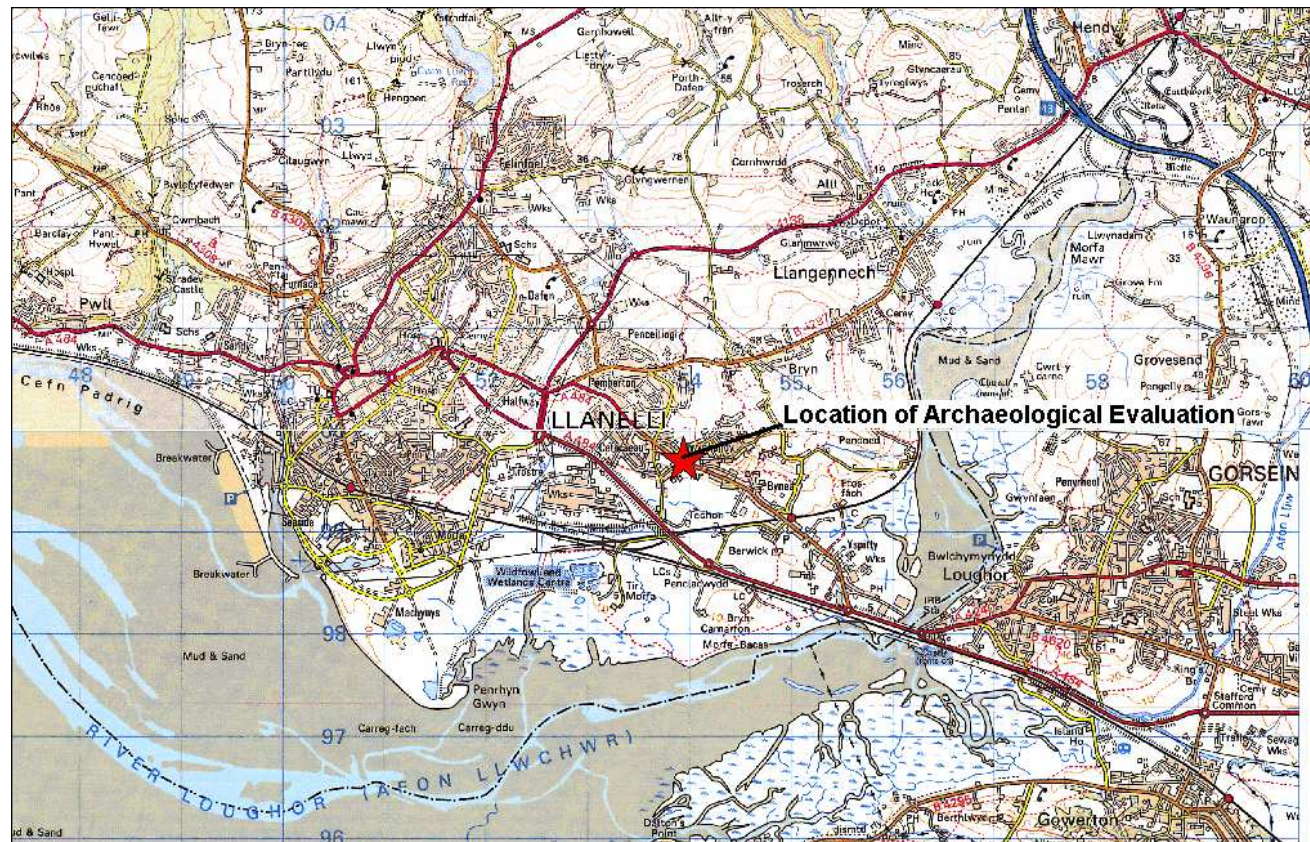
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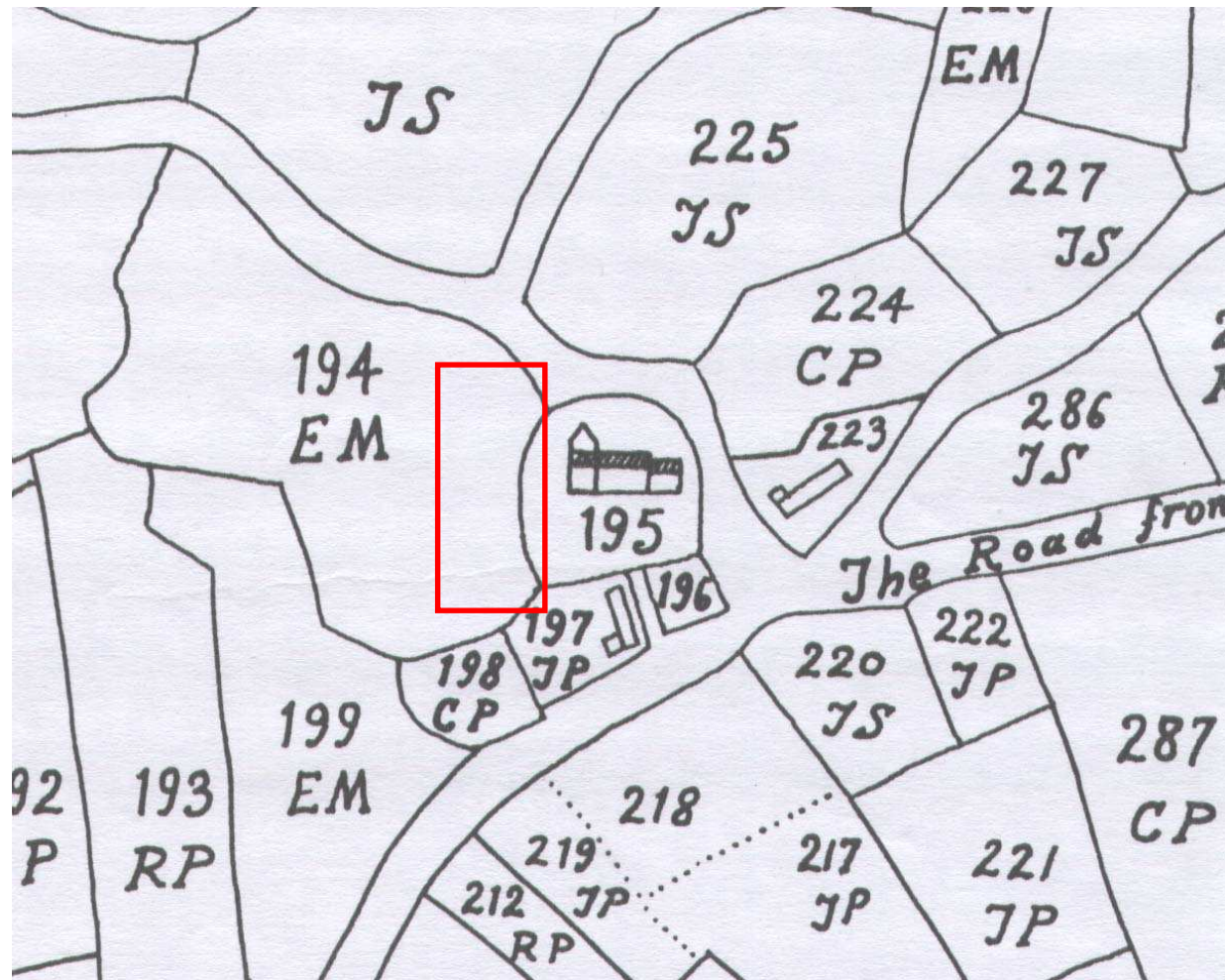
John T and Rees N 2002 *Pilgrimage: A Welsh Perspective*. Llandysul. Gomer Press.



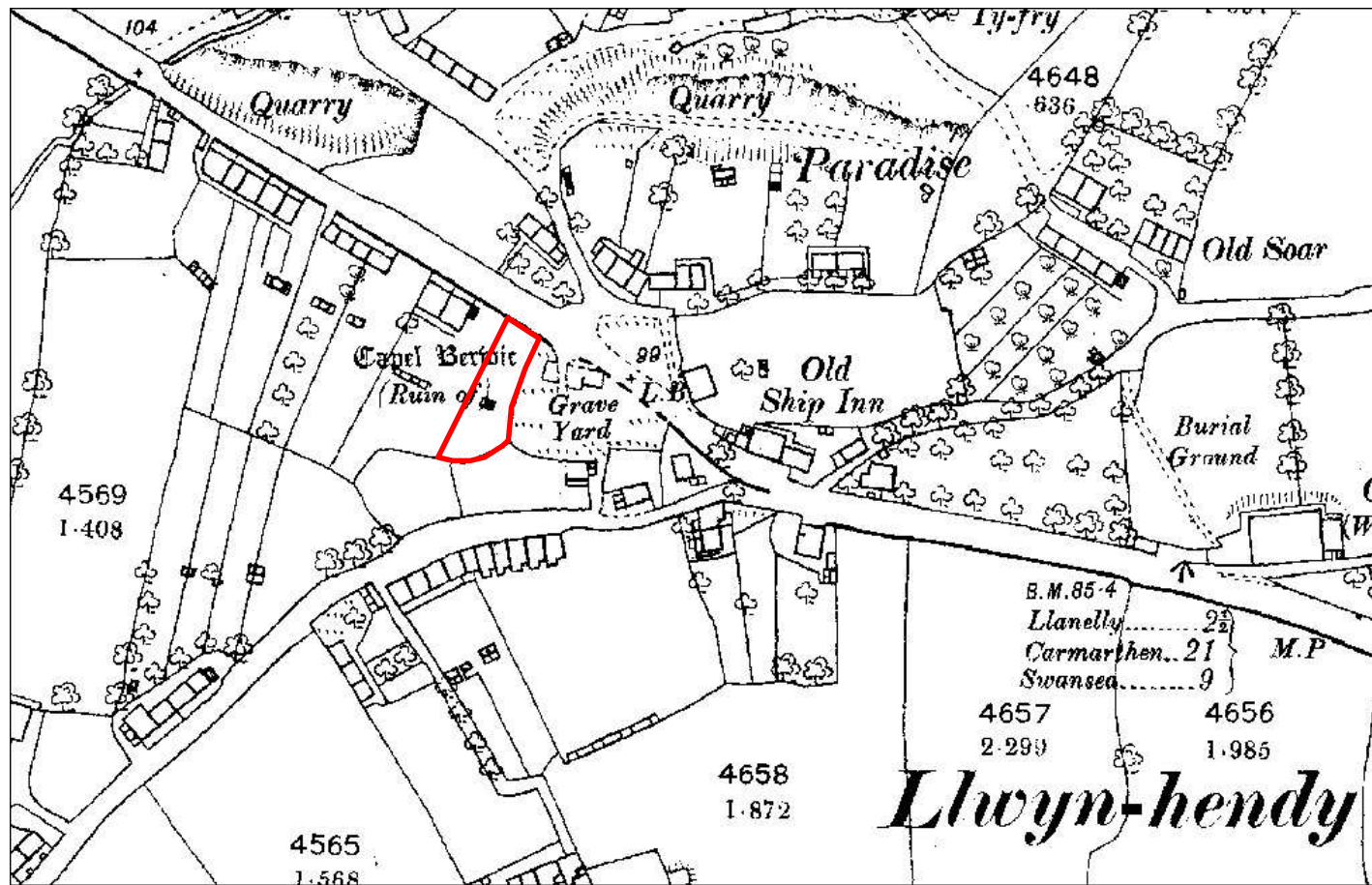
**Figure 1:** Location map based on the Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 1987 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger 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

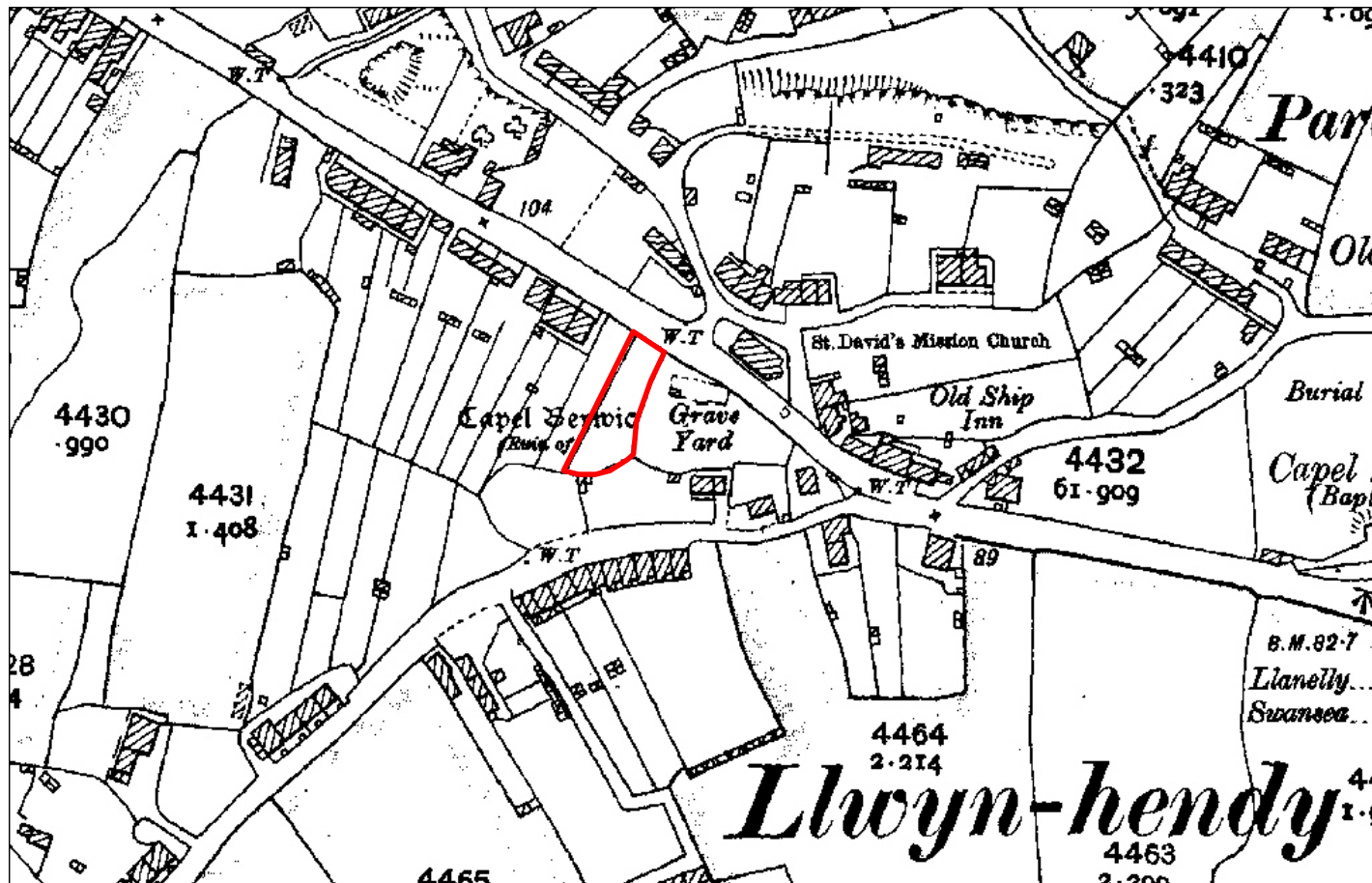




**Figure 2:** Extract of Jones Map 1751, showing approximate location of site area.

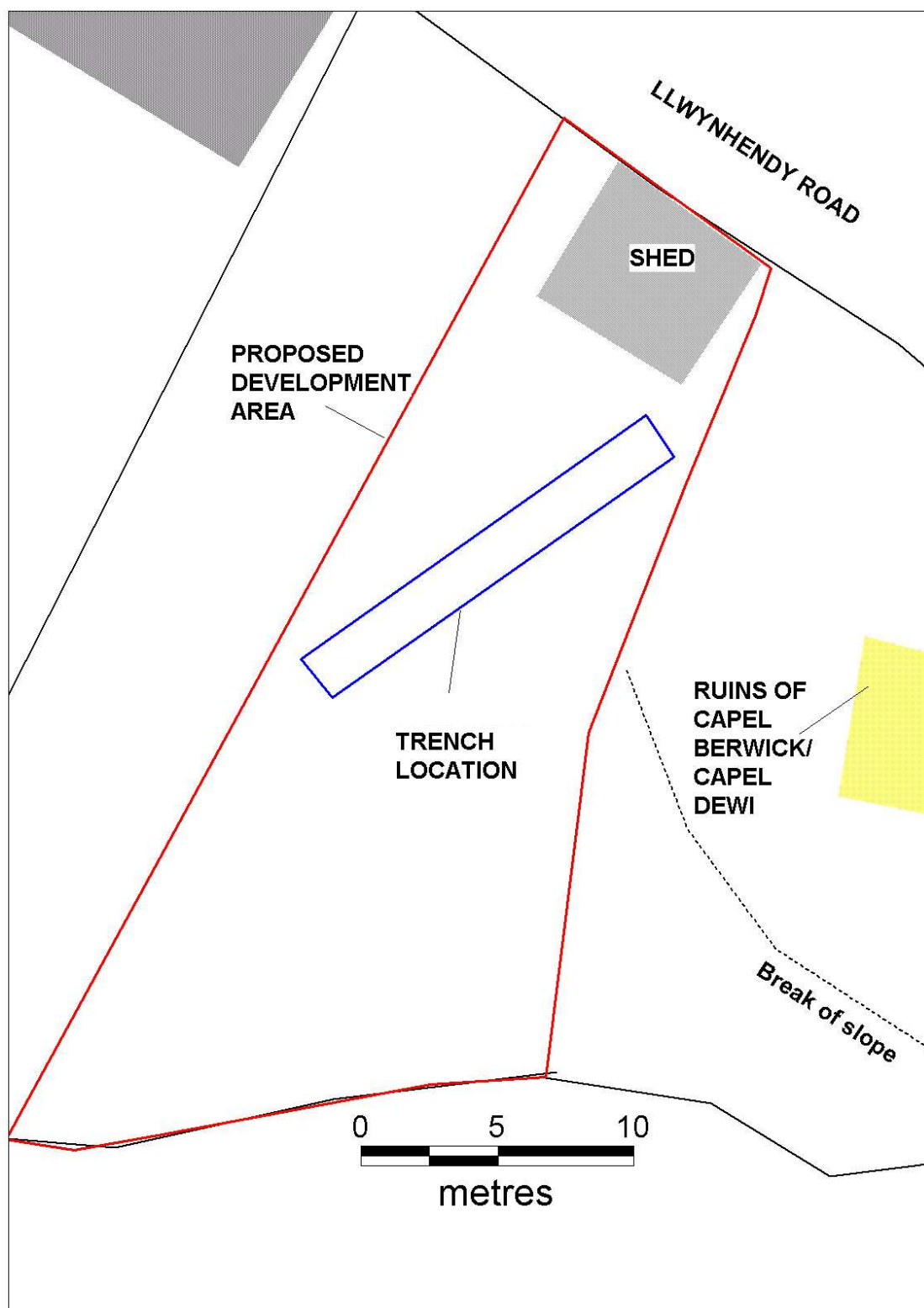


**Figure 3:** Extract of 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey Map 1880, showing site area.



**Figure 4:** Extract of 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey Map 1906, showing site area.





**Figure 5:** Location plan of evaluation trench.





**Photo 1:** Pre excavation view of linear features [005] and [011]. Post-holes [007] and [009] between.



**Photo 2:** Post excavation view of linear [005].





**Photo 3:** Post excavation view of post-holes [007] and [009].



**Photo 4:** Post excavation view of linear [011].





**Photo 5:** Post excavation view of post hole [012].



**Photo 6:** Service trench [013] facing north-west.





**Photo 7:** Pre excavation view of drain [020] showing capping (018). Facing southwest.



**Photo 8:** Drain [020] showing capping (018). Stony layer (017) to right. Facing northwest.





**Photos 9 & 10:** Post excavation view of drain [020] facing southeast (left) and northwest (right)





**Photo 11:** Northwest facing pre excavation view of pit [023].



**Photo 12:** Overall post excavation view of pit [023]. Post-hole [025] visible in bottom left.





**Photo 13:** Southwest facing view of pit [023].



**Photo 14:** Southwest facing section of pit [023].





**Photos 15 & 16:** Overall view of trench facing southwest (left) and northeast (right).

Context No	Description	Depth
Layer 001	Topsoil	0.5m
Layer 002	Fill of posthole [003] Friable mid grey brown clay silt containing rare small sub-angular stone	0.25m
Cut [003]	Posthole Sub oval cut with near vertical sides and slightly concave base	0.25m
Layer 004	Fill of pit [005] Dark grey brown clay silt of friable compaction containing rare small sub-angular stone. Modern ceramic recovered	0.08m
Cut [005]	Pit Sub-rectangular cut aligned east – west with moderately sloping sides and concave base. Cut continued beneath northwest side of trench.	0.08m
Layer 006	Fill of square posthole [007] Friable dark grey brown clay silt containing rare small sub-angular stone	0.06m
Cut [007]	Square posthole Near vertical sides with very slight concaved base	0.06m
Layer 008	Fill of posthole [009] Firm mid grey brown clay silt containing rare small sub-angular stone	0.19m
Cut [009]	Posthole Sub-circular cut with near vertical sides and concave U shaped base	0.19m
Layer 010	Fill of linear [011] Dark grey brown clay silt of friable compaction containing rare small sub-angular stone.	0.14m
Cut [011]	Linear Rounded terminal of east – west aligned linear. Moderately sloping sides tapering to concave U shaped base. Cut continued beneath northwest side of trench.	0.14m
Layer 012	Fill of posthole [013] Mid grey brown clay silt of friable compaction.	0.14m
Cut [013]	Posthole Sub-circular cut with near vertical sides and slightly concave base. Cut continued beneath south east side of trench	0.14m
Layer 014	Fill of service trench [015] Firm mid yellow brown clay containing rare small to medium sub-angular stone	0.39m
Cut [015]	Service trench East – west aligned service trench. Vertical sides with flat base.	0.39m
Layer 016	Not used	
Layer 017	Dump Firm mid grey brown silty clay containing abundant medium to large sub-angular stone	0.1m
Layer 018	Fill of drain/ gully (?) [020] Firm mid grey brown silty clay containing abundant very large angular stone slabs	0.1m
Layer 019	Fill of drain/ gully (?) [020] Friable mid grey brown clay silt containing rare small to medium sub-angular stone. Rare charcoal fleck. Small fragment of degraded brick/tile recovered	0.18m
Cut [020]	Drain/ gully (?) U-shaped linear cut with moderately sloping sides and concave base. Cut aligned east –west and continued beneath northwest and southeast sides of the trench	0.28m
Layer 021	Fill of pit [023] Mid grey brown clay silt of firm compaction containing abundant small shale fragments	0.08m
Layer 022	Fill of pit [023] Firm mid grey brown clay silt containing occasional medium to large sub-angular stone and rare charcoal fleck. One sherd green glaze pottery recovered. Not fully excavated	0.65m
Cut [023]	Pit Sub-circular cut that continued beneath northeast, southeast and northwest sides of trench. Not fully excavated.	0.65m
Layer 024	Fill of posthole [025] Firm mid grey brown clay silt	0.18m
Cut [025]	Posthole Sub-circular cut with moderately sloping sides and concave U-shaped base	0.18m

**.Table 1:** Context and soil descriptions for evaluation trench.