

PROPOSED PET FOOD FACTORY, PENLAN ISAF, KIDWELLY, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



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Gan / By

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PROPOSED PET FOOD FACTORY, PENLAN ISAF, KIDWELLY, CARMARTHENSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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**PROPOSED PET FOOD FACTORY, PENLAN ISAF, KIDWELLY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

SUMMARY

This report has been prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services in response to a request from Burns Pet Nutrition to provide an archaeological scheme of works to address the potential archaeological impacts of the construction of a proposed new pet food factory at Penlan Isaf Kidwelly (Planning application number W/20391; NGR NGR SN 3969 0815).

The proposed development, consists of a new pet food factory and associated car parking and access routes. The development area is situated in a sensitive archaeological area given that it is located in close proximity to the sites of a probable Bronze Age barrow (PRN 2129; NGR SN 3930 0809) and standing stone (PRN 2125; NGR 397 083). The proposed development site is also located within a much wider landscape of Bronze Age and later prehistoric archaeological interest.

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during ground-works ahead of the development demonstrated that no archaeological remains associated with the Bronze Age period were exposed, damaged or destroyed by the works. No remains or finds of any other periods were revealed during the groundworks.

The archaeological watching brief undertaken during the groundworks associated with the construction of the proposed pet food factory demonstrated that the development has had a minimal impact on archaeological remains.

INTRODUCTION

Project Commission

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned by Burns Pet Nutrition to provide an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a proposed new pet food factory near to Penlan Isaf, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire (NGR SN 3969 0815). The proposed development site is located on agricultural land. The proposed works entailed removal of topsoil and some levelling and ground reduction prior to the construction of the steel framed building, access road and associated car parking area. This specification is in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA¹, 1994, revised 2001) and is designed to satisfy a Condition recommended on this development (Planning Application No. W/18436) by the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) archaeological advisors².

A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services and approved by the archaeological advisor to the planning authority before the commencement of the works.

Scope of the Project

The project was designed to enable investigation and recording of any archaeological features or deposits exposed during episodes of topsoil clearance and ground breaking activity associated with the construction of the new pet food factory, associated parking and access road.

Report Outline

This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background before summarising the watching brief results and the conclusions based on those results.

Abbreviations

Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER³) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM).

Illustrations

Record photographs are included at back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale and are illustrative only.

¹ Institute for Archaeologists.

² Dyfed Archaeological Trust – Heritage Management.

³ Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Shire Hall, Llandeilo.

THE SITE

Location

The proposed development site is located at NGR SN 3969 0815 which is c.1.6km north west of the town of Kidwelly and c.1.2km east of the village of Llansaint. The site is situated on a southeast sloping hill side at a height of c.155m above Ordnance datum (AOD).

Archaeological Background

There are no known archaeological sites or findspots within the boundaries of the proposed development site. However, the site does lie in close proximity to site of Penlan Isaf Bronze Age round barrow (PRN 2129; NGR SN 397 083). At a distance of c.400m to the west of the proposed development area is the recorded site of Maen Llwyd Bronze Age stone (PRN 2125; NGR SN 3931 0810). In addition to the Penlan Isaf round barrow and Maen Llwyd standing stone sites, the wider landscape surrounding the proposed development area has fifteen known archaeological sites of Bronze Age date within a c.2km radius, indicating a considerable amount of activity in this area during the period. In addition to the known Bronze Age sites, four Iron Age sites are also located within this radius.

Given the close proximity of the Penlan Isaf round barrow to the proposed development site boundary and the presence of further archaeological interests of Bronze Age and later Iron Age date in the vicinity, the potential for encountering hitherto unknown archaeological features and deposits of these date was considered to be high. As a result the archaeological condition was placed upon the planning application.

In addition to the known Bronze Age and Iron Age archaeological sites and findspots in close proximity, the proposed development area lies within the Allt Hilltop Historic Landscape Characterisation Area which is described thus:

An area occupying the southern flank of Allt Cunedda, between 100 and 160 m. It is distinguished by a pattern of large, fairly regular enclosures, with earth banks supporting well-maintained hedges, probably established during the 16th- and 17th-century. Land-use is nearly all improved pasture and there is no woodland. Farms are scattered but there is a significant cluster around the former Allt-Cunedda common to the north-east.

Archaeological features include a Bronze Age round barrow and cist to the south, and possible round barrows and standing stones are suggested by field names to the north. A large Iron Age hillfort beyond the northern edge of the area gives the hill its name.

The farms generally appear to be 18th- or 19th-century, stone-built and slate roofed, of two storeys and three bays, and in the vernacular tradition. 19th century stone outbuildings are present on most farms and arranged informally. Farms have extensive modern outbuildings.

This is a well-defined historic landscape area, distinct from the smaller, narrower enclosures of the area to the south, east and west, and the irregular enclosures of the area to the north.

(Murphy and Ludlow, 2000)

WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Methodology

The watching brief consisted of two site visits being made to monitor the groundworks ahead of the construction of a new pet food factory on land at Penlan Isaf near Kidwelly Carmarthenshire. Two phases of groundworks were monitored as part of the archaeological watching brief, the topsoil stripping of an access road and the site for the steel framed building.

Results

Access Road

Aligned northeast – southwest the access road measured 36.3m in length with a width of 3.6m before widening at its south-west end to 12.6m where it connected to an existing trackway. The access road line was excavated to an average depth of c.0.3m. 19th century ceramic and pieces of anthracite coal were noted within the topsoil, but not retained. The modern ceramic and anthracite coal probably represent evidence for former manuring of the site (spreading of organic detritus across the fields, taken from rubbish middens) and are of low archaeological significance.

A later addition to the access road was made which included the excavation of foundations for a turning area southwest of the steel framed building site. The turning area added an additional 10m further to the width of the previous excavation. The road that leads to the steel building was also widened varying from 10m at its maximum width where it joined with the turning area, gradually narrowing when linking with the road to the south-east. The excavation of the turning area and widening of the road was to facilitate access for lorries to the steel building site.

No archaeological features were revealed during the excavation of the access road line.

Steel Framed Building Site

The steel framed building site was aligned north – south on its long axis, measuring 37.3m x 28.1m. The turf had been removed some time prior to the arrival of the attending archaeologist, with grass and weeds beginning to grow on parts of the site. A walk over of the area revealed that the majority of the area was still covered in the remnants of topsoil, and where deeper areas were exposed no archaeological features were present. However, quantities of unstratified 18th – 20th century ceramic and glass were noted across the area which as with the access road probably represent past manuring of the site. A single flint flake was recovered from the spoil heap c.20m to the south west of the steel framed building site.

Archaeological monitoring of the remainder of the topsoil stripping of the steel framed building site, to a depth of c.0.4m revealed no archaeological features or deposits. However, a small trial excavation in the northwest corner of the steel framed building site led to the recovery of an unstratified flint flake from the topsoil horizon. The flint flake is considered to be residual and is likely to have been redeposited in the topsoil through ploughing, and thus its original location is unknown.

Whilst topsoil stripping of the steel framed building site revealed an unstratified flint flake and much modern ceramic and glass, no significant archaeological features or deposits were revealed in this location.

CONCLUSIONS

There was considered a high potential for Bronze Age archaeological remains to be present within the boundaries of the proposed pet food factory site. The archaeological watching brief demonstrated that no archaeological remains of Bronze Age date were present in the areas monitored, although this does not preclude the possibility for Bronze Age remains to be present in the near vicinity.

The access road topsoil stripping revealed natural subsoil and bedrock. Modern ceramic and coal were present in the topsoil, although it is considered that this material was deposited as part of domestic refuse placed in rubbish middens to provide manure for the field and is deemed to be of low archaeological interest.

Topsoil stripping of the steel framed building site revealed the same stratigraphic sequence with 18th and 19th century ceramic and coal from manuring scatters being revealed in the topsoil.

The presence of manuring debris in both areas monitored suggests that the area has been used for arable cultivation over many years, and repeated ploughing is considered likely to have damaged or removed any surviving archaeological features or deposits.

Although the potential for archaeological remains of Bronze Age date to be present within the boundaries of the proposed development area was considered high, the only significant finds that could possibly be of that date were two flint flakes (waste material struck from a flint core whilst making tools). One flint flake was recovered from the topsoil and not found with any associated Bronze Age remains. The second flint flake was found during a search of a nearby spoil heap.

It is considered that the groundworks undertaken ahead of the pet food factory development have had a minimal impact on the buried archaeological resource.

SOURCES

Cartographic

Ordnance Survey 1890 1:2500 Carmarthenshire Sheet LIII.2

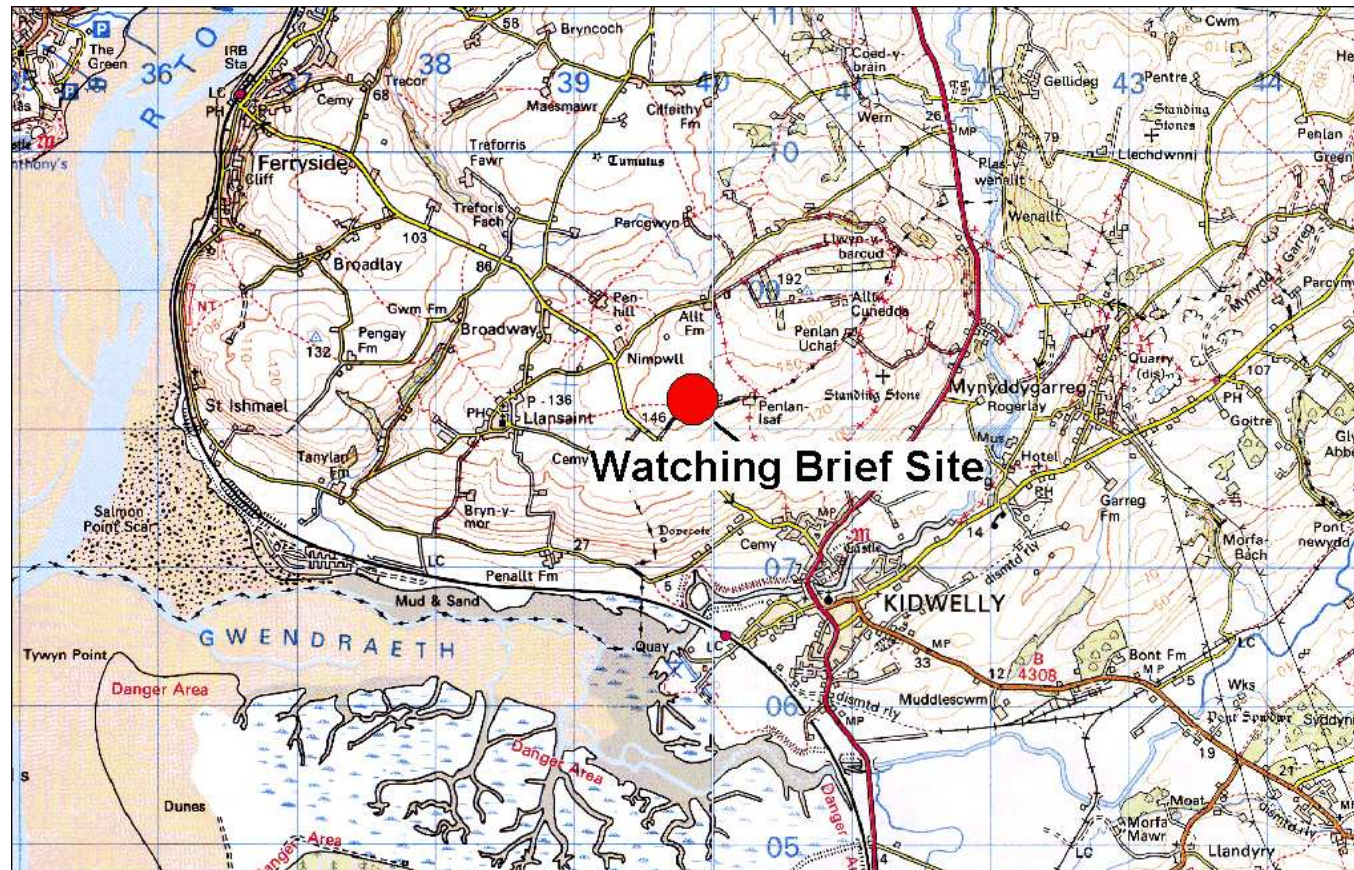
Ordnance Survey 1906 1:2500 Carmarthenshire Sheet LIII.2

Ordnance Survey

Bibliographic

Murphy, K & Ludlow N 2000 *Allt Hilltop Historic Landscape Categorisation Area*.
Dyfed Archaeological Trust report for CADW Welsh Historic Monuments

Figure 1: Location map based on the Ordnance Survey.



Reproduced from the 1999 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright
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Figure 2: Extract of 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map.

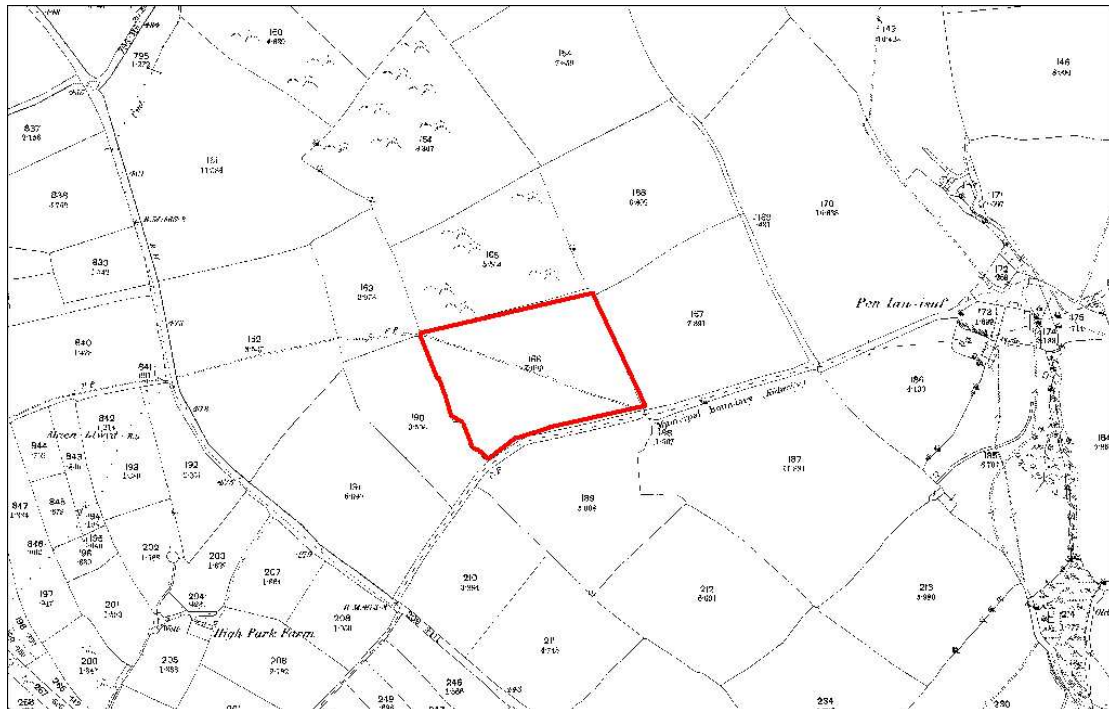


Figure 3: Extract of 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Map.

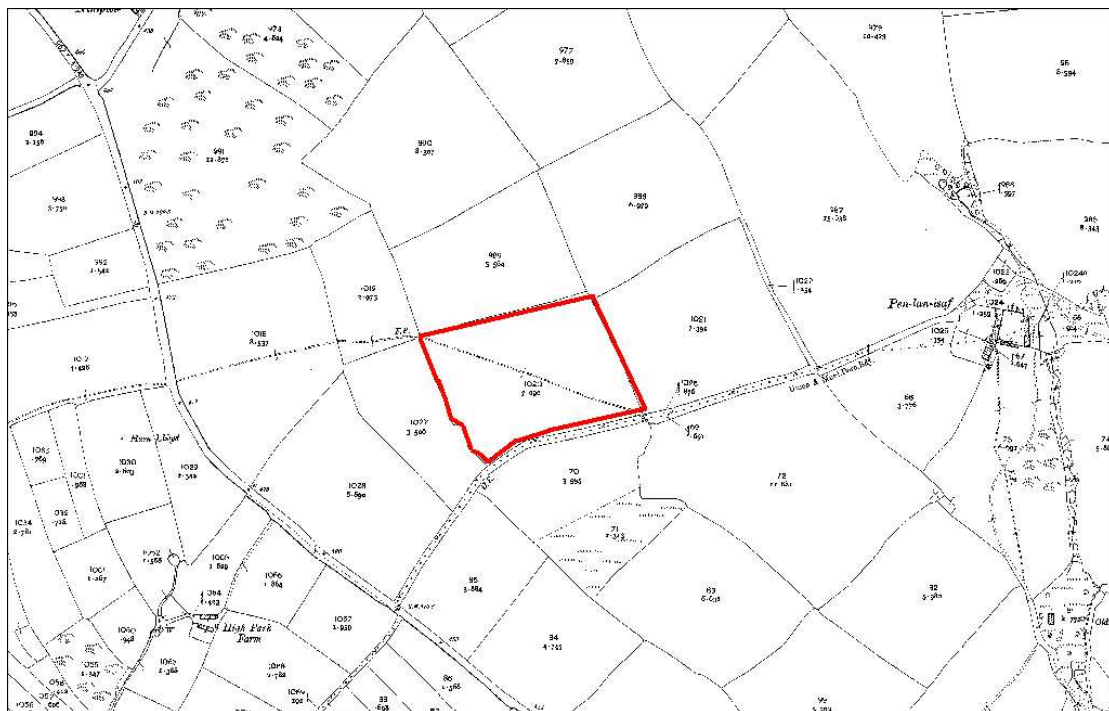
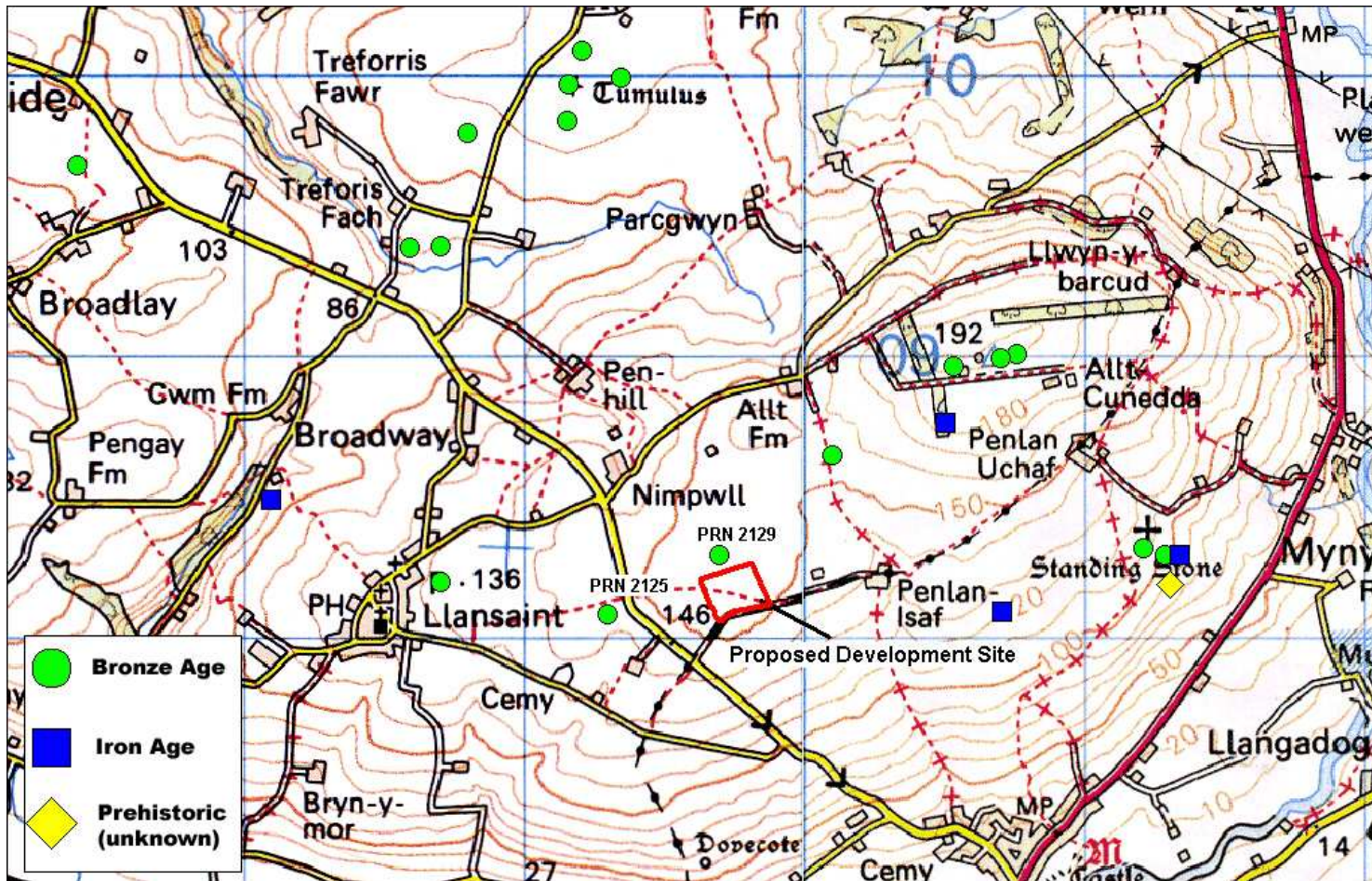


Figure 4: Location map of known Bronze and Iron Age archaeological sites and findspots.



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Table 1: Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales.

PERIOD	APPROXIMATE DATE
Palaeolithic	c.225,000 BC – 10,000 BC
Mesolithic	c.10,000 BC – c.3500 BC
Neolithic	c.3500 BC – c.2000 BC
Bronze Age	c.2000 BC – c.600 BC
Iron Age	c.600 BC – 43 AD
Roman	43 AD – 410 AD
Early Medieval	410 AD - 1066
Medieval	1066 - 1485
Post Medieval	1485 – c.1900
Modern	c.1900 onwards

Table 2: Known archaeological interests within a 500m radius of the proposed development site.

PRN	NGR	Site Name	Type	Period
2125	SN 3930 0809	Maen Llwyd	Standing Stone	Bronze Age
2129	SN 397 083	Penlan Isaf	Round Barrow	Bronze Age

Access Road

Table 3: Soil descriptions for access road.

Number	Description	Depth
100	Topsoil/ ploughsoil Dark red brown clay silt of moderate compaction containing occasional small subangular stone. Coal and modern ceramic recovered	0.28m
101	Subsoil Firm mid orange brown sandy clay containing occasional small angular stone	0.03m
102	Natural Shattered old red sandstone bedrock.	

Photo 1: North facing representative section of access road.



Photo 2: West facing view of access road.



Steel Framed Building Site

Table 4: Soil descriptions for steel framed building site.

Number	Description	Depth
200	Topsoil/ ploughsoil Dark red brown clay silt of moderate compaction containing occasional small subangular stone. Coal and modern ceramic recovered	0.36m
201	Subsoil Firm mid orange brown sandy clay containing occasional small angular stone	0.04m
202	Natural Shattered old red sandstone bedrock.	

Photo 3: South facing view of steel framed building site after turf removal.



Photo 4: East facing representative section of steel framed building site.



Photo 5: West facing view of steel framed building site following topsoil stripping.

