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RECEIVED 06 MAR 2000
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Cambrian Archaeological Projects

Brief report on the findings of the archaeological watching brief at St. Clears Mound and Bailey Castle, St. Clears, Carmarthenshire.

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Introduction

The St. Clears Juvenile Sports Committee applied for consent to erect playground facilities within the scheduled area of St. Clears Mound and Bailey Castle. Prior to the proposed development the area was already being used as a sports field and playground. The proposed development lies on the line of the castle ditch which has been backfilled during the early part of the last century up to ground level. Although the footing excavations (420mm) were unlikely to disturb the medieval layers the excavations of the foundations and footings required an archaeological watching brief due to the sensitivity of the site.

The work was undertaken between the 4th and 6th of January 2000, and the following is a brief report of the findings of the watching brief.

The Watching Brief

The excavation mainly involved the topsoil clearance of four main areas (Fig 2) to a maximum depth of 0.15m. The topsoil removal and footing excavations in areas 1,2 and 4 revealed the backfill material of the castle ditch deposited during the last century. This largely consisted of building waste and a light silty brown clay. The topsoil clearance in area 3 also only revealed the backfill material of the ditch, but the swing footings on the western side revealed a layer of mid brown, compact silty clay which possibly indicates the previous ground surface at the top of the ditch.

Conclusions

During the excavations of the foundations and footings for the new play area no definite undisturbed archaeological deposits were located. The swing footings to the west of area 3 possibly uncovered an earlier ground surface but no significant features or datable artefacts were uncovered.

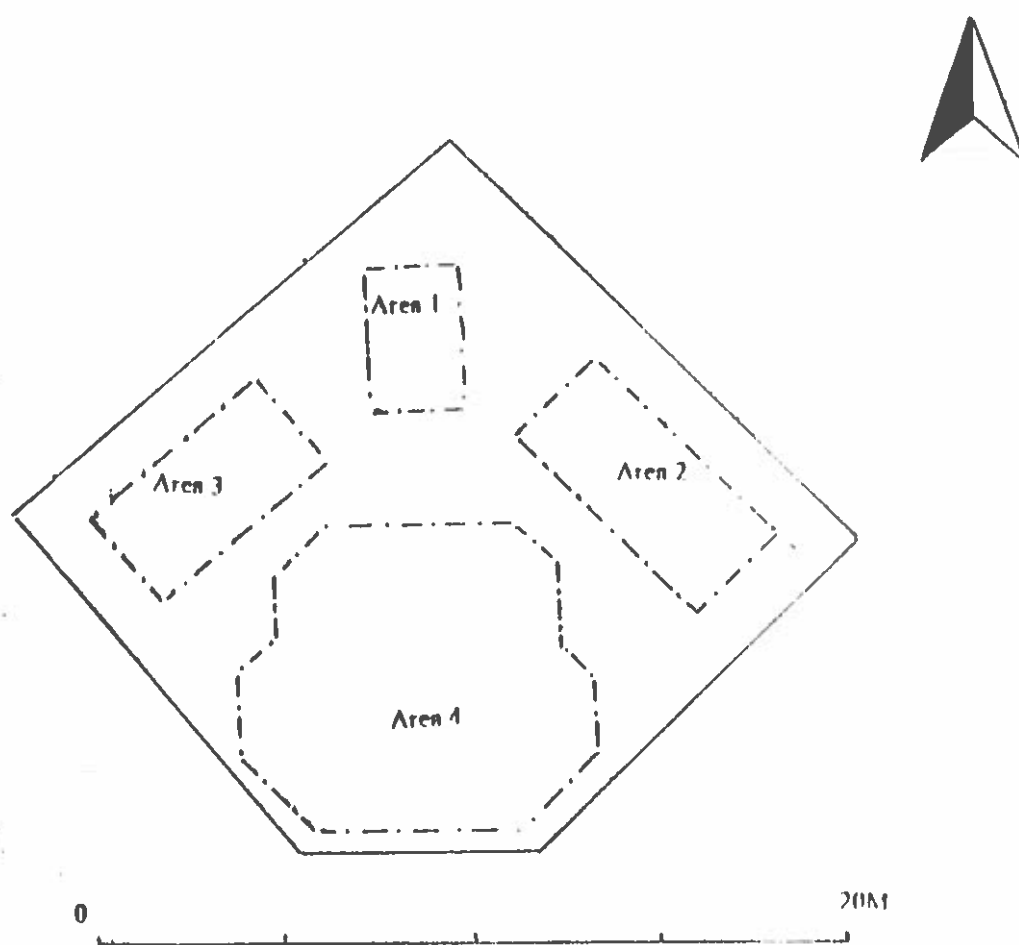


Figure 2: Area(s) of Excavation