

CAMBRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECTS LTD.

# Plot 9, Bontgoch Road, Talybont.

Archaeological Watching Brief



By  
**Helen Milne, MA**



CAP Report No. 223

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**Plot 9, Bontgoch Road,  
Talybont**

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## ii) IFA Standards and Guidance

### THE INSTITUTE OF FIELD ARCHAEOLOGISTS (IFA)

#### *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*

##### **The Standard**

An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the *Code of conduct*, *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology*, and other relevant by-laws of the IFA.

##### **Definition of an archaeological watching brief**

The definition of an archaeological watching brief is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive.

This definition and *Standard* do not cover chance observations, which should lead to an appropriate archaeological project being designed and implemented, nor do they apply to monitoring for preservation of remains *in situ*.

##### **Purpose of a watching brief**

The purpose of a watching brief is:

- ◆ to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.
- ◆ to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

A watching brief is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

The objective of a watching brief is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

*The Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief was formally adopted as IFA approved practice at the Annual General Meeting of the Institute held on 14th October 1994.*

## Non Technical Summary

*The following report is the result of work undertaken by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd. on behalf of Mr. I Evans. The work was carried out as part of a condition attached to a planning application for the development of a new residence on Plot 9, on land to the rear of the Black Lion Hotel in Talybont. Archaeological remains have previously been documented in the locality and all development plots were therefore considered to have high archaeological potential. However, during the ground disturbance works, no features or deposits of archaeological significance were located.*

### 1 Introduction

The following text details the findings and work undertaken by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd. on Plot 9, on land to the rear of The Black Lion Hotel, Talybont.

CAP Ltd. were invited to submit a tender for an archaeological watching brief, in accordance with the curatorial project brief prepared by Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology – Heritage Management (ACA-HM). This tender was successful and the work was carried out accordingly by CAP Ltd. on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2002.

All works were undertaken in accordance with both the IFA's *Standards and guidance: for an archaeological watching brief* and current Health and Safety legislation.

#### 1.1 Planning Background

A planning application (No. 991189) was submitted to Ceredigion County Council for the development of nine new residential properties with associated access, services and landscaping on land to the rear of the Black Lion Hotel in Talybont. Ceredigion County Council, acting on advice from ACA – HM imposed an archaeological watching brief condition on this planning application. The details of this condition can be found in the curatorial brief prepared by ACA – HM. Plot 9 lies within the area covered by this condition (NGR 655 892).

#### 1.2 Site Description

The site is located on the eastern side of Talybont village, which is north of Aberystwyth on the A487 (fig. 1). To the south-east Bont Goch Road defines the limit of the development area. Access to Plot 9 is along the southern boundary of Plot 8 (fig. 2), which lies immediately to the east and whose frontage is on Bont Goch road. All sides of the plot are currently defined by post and wire fencing. The land slopes down from east to west, to the flood plain of a small river to the west. The site was maintained as rough pasture prior to development.

#### 1.3 Soils and Geology

According to the Soil Survey of England and Wales the soils present on the site belong to the Denbigh 1 Soil Association which are typical brown earth soils. These tend to be well-drained fine loamy and silty soils. The underlying geology is mudstone and siltstone.

## 1.4 Archaeological Background

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology – Heritage Management have prepared a design brief outlining the requirements for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken on all sites within the development complex during ground disturbance works. This watching brief is necessary as the proposed development plot lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity. The site is located to the south of an area of well documented lead and silver mine workings, and the possibility exists that archaeological evidence pertaining to these workings may be affected by ground disturbance works. A cist burial was also discovered to the south of the site. This was located and investigated during the construction of a gas pipeline in 1986, and it is possible that other burials or associated features may exist in the locality.

It was assumed that any preserved and previously unrecorded archaeological deposits may be partially or wholly destroyed by ground works associated with the intended development.

## 2 Aims and Objectives

In accordance with IFA's *Standards and guidance*, the primary objective of this watching brief was to ensure that any previously unrecorded archaeological features and deposits exposed during the ground disturbance works and subsequent development of the site were adequately recorded and interpreted.

## 3 Methodology

A mechanical excavator with a 2m wide ditching bucket was used for the removal of topsoil, surface material and vegetation to a maximum depth of 0.5m. Due to the sloping nature of the land, more material was removed from the northern side of the development plot, in order to level the area.

The archaeological contractor then '*field walked*' the area to recover any dateable material which was evident on the surface and to identify any exposed features.

After this initial ground clearance, the footings were excavated using a mechanical digger with a 0.6m bucket, to a maximum depth of 1.15m below the present ground surface.

Inspection and limited cleaning of the trenches was then undertaken in order to ascertain whether or not archaeological features were present.

Where features were present, limited excavation was undertaken to establish the date, depth, preservation, extent, function and relationship to other features.

Recording of the trenches was in three formats:

- i) *Photographic record* - Photographs were taken in 35mm Colour slide, colour print and black and white formats.
- ii) *Drawn record* - Site drawings, plans and sections, were produced at scales of 1:10, 1:20 or

1:50 on drafting film. Finished drawings have been related to Ordnance Survey datum and published boundaries where appropriate.

- iii) *Written record* - Written records were produced using a continuous numbering sequence for all contexts.

An environmental sampling and sampling and processing strategy was in place should the archaeological deposits warrant it.

All works were undertaken in accordance with both the IFA's *Standards and guidance: for an archaeological watching brief* and current Health and Safety legislation.



## 4 Results of the Watching Brief

In the following text, numbers contained within brackets ( ), refer to context numbers allocated during the watching brief. A list of all contexts is given in Appendix I of this report.

The topsoil (01) was on average 0.2m – 0.3m deep. It was described as a friable mid brown silty clay loam, with coarse sand and sub-angular stone inclusions (small pebbles, c.10-20mm).

The area was then inspected for any archaeological features, and photographed (plate 1).

The contractor then proceeded to excavate the footings (Fig. 3, plate 2). This cut through the subsoil (02), which was described as a friable orangish brown silty clay, with stone and gravel inclusions (< 30%) and extended to a maximum depth of 0.4m. Occasional clay patches and iron panning were noted within the deposit.

The natural (03) material beneath this consisted of coarse sands, rounded gravels and larger sub-rounded stones. As was suggested in the report for plot 8, the rounded nature of the material suggested that the material was derived from fluvial or glacio-fluvial depositional processes (Halfpenny, CAP Report No. 187).

After the footings had been excavated the archaeological contractor inspected the bases and sections of the trenches. No features of archaeological significance were located.

## 5 Conclusions

No deposits or features of archaeological significance were located during the course of this watching brief. During the watching brief a significant area was stripped down to a level that would have revealed any archaeological deposits had they been present on the site.

No pottery was recovered from the site, and given the relatively large size of the area that was stripped, it seems unlikely that significant levels of domestic occupation or activity had occurred in the past on this particular part of the development complex.

It seems that despite the sites close proximity to well documented archaeological features, the site itself is archaeologically sterile. The deposits exposed during the excavation of plot 9 were almost identical in description to those exposed during the excavation of plot 8 immediately to the east (see CAP Report No. 187). The deposits exposed were natural, and appear to derive from plots 8 and 9 being located directly within a fluvial course (CAP Report No. 187).

## **6 Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Kevin Blockley for his help and advice during the compilation of this report and Attila Csaba for help and advice with the illustrations. Thanks to Mr. I. Evans and also to the on site contractors for their help and compliance.

## **7 References**

### **7.1 References**

Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief, Land at Talybont (ACA-HM)

CAP Report No. 187

IFA Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief

### **7.2 Cartographic Sources**

British Geological Service, 1979, *Geological Survey Ten Mile Map: South Sheet*. BGS.

Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983, *Soils of England and Wales: Sheet 2 Wales*. SSEW.

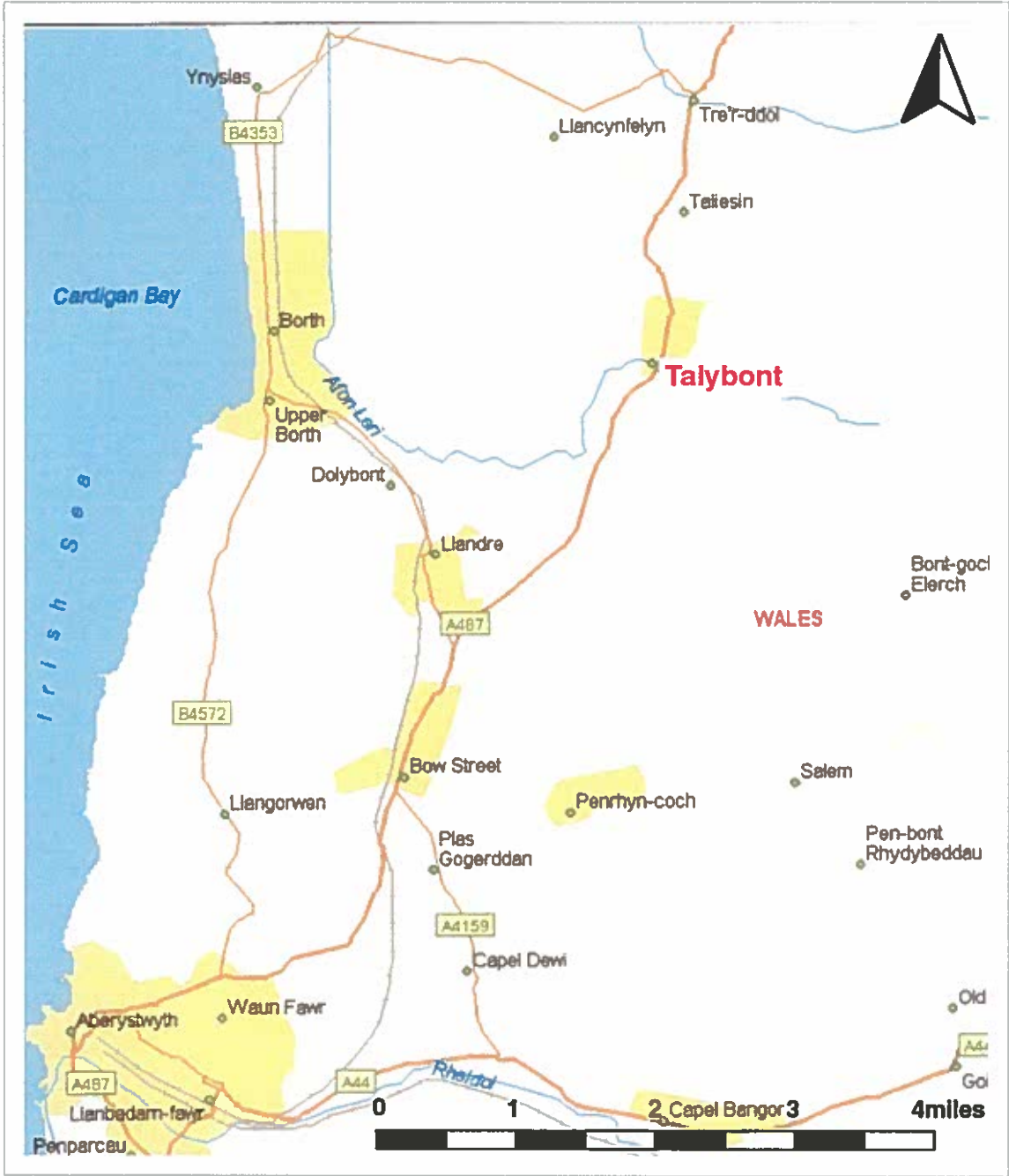


Figure 01: General Location Map

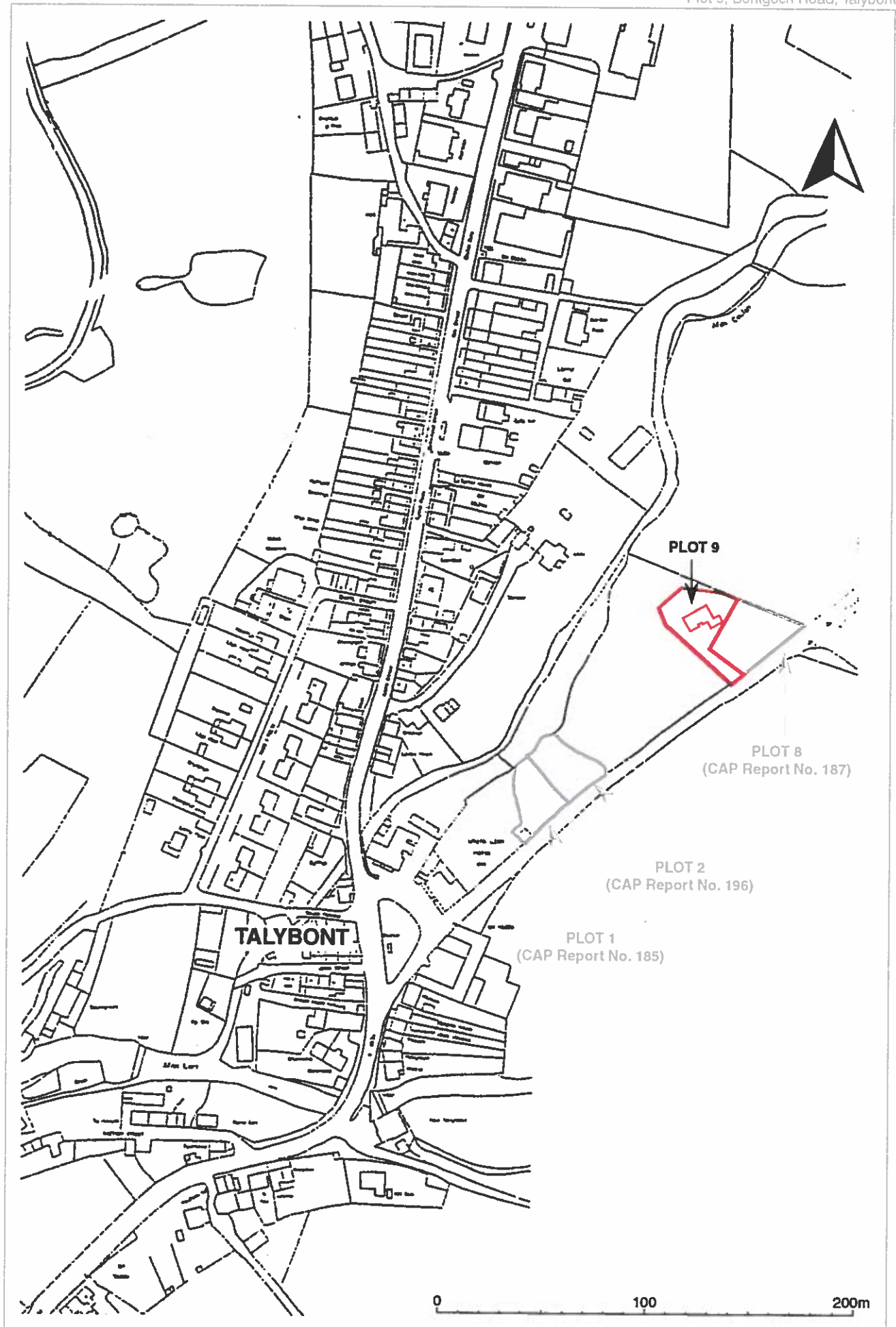


Figure 2: Map Showing Location of Plot 9.

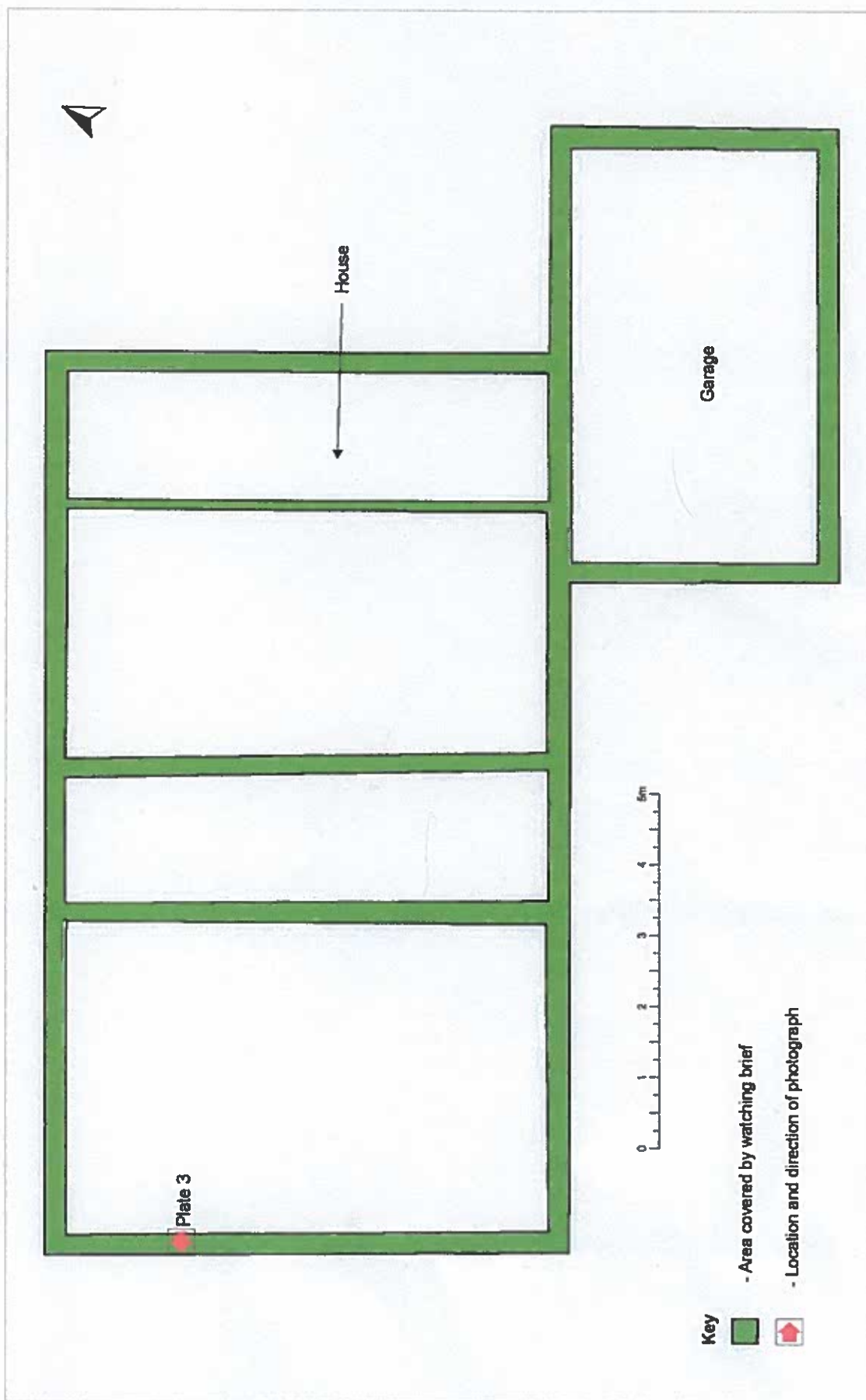


Fig 3: Plan showing layout of plot 9



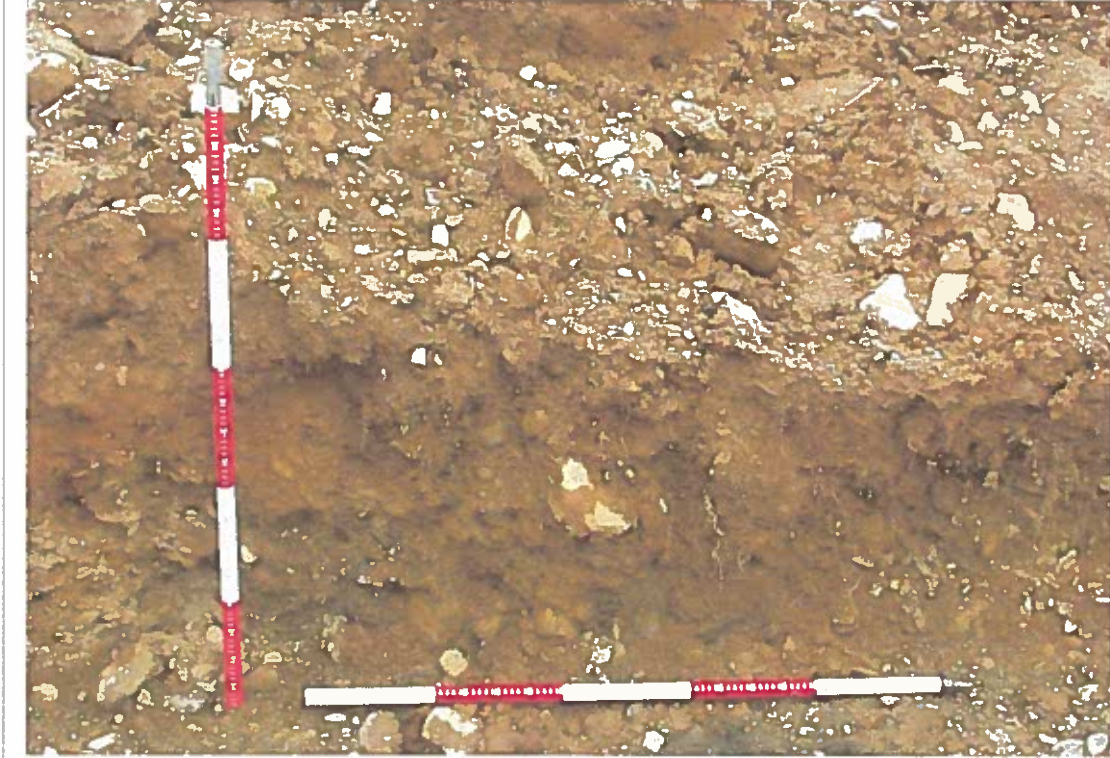


**Plate 1:** Plot 9 after removal of topsoil, looking south.



**Plate 2:** Plot 9 after excavation of foundation trenches, scale 2m, looking south.





**Plate 3:** Shot of average stratigraphy, scale 1m x 1m, looking south.



## **APPENDIX I:** **Chronological Divisions**

\_\_\_\_\_ MODERN (1901 - )

\_\_\_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL ( 1700 - 1901 )

\_\_\_\_\_ POST-MEDIEVAL ( 1547 - 1700 )

\_\_\_\_\_ MEDIEVAL ( 1066 - 1547 )

\_\_\_\_\_ EARLY MEDIEVAL ( AD 450 - 1066 )

\_\_\_\_\_ ROMAN BRITAIN ( AD 43 - AD 450 )

\_\_\_\_\_ IRON AGE ( 700 BC - AD 43 )

\_\_\_\_\_ BRONZE AGE ( 2300 - 700 BC )

\_\_\_\_\_ NEOLITHIC ( 4000 - 2300 BC )

\_\_\_\_\_ MESOLITHIC ( 10,000 - 4000 BC )

\_\_\_\_\_ PALAEO LITHIC ( 500,000 - 10,000 BC )

Chronological Divisions as used by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA),  
in the *British and Irish Archaeological Bibliography*.



## **APPENDIX II:** **Archive Cover Sheet**

## ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

**Plot 9, Bontgoch Rd. Talybont (TYB9/02/WB)**

Site Name:	<b>Plot 9, Bontgoch Road Talybont.</b>
Site Code:	<b>TYB9/02/WB</b>
PRN:	<b>43142</b>
NPRN :	<b>N/A</b>
SAM:	<b>N/A</b>
Other Ref No:	<b>CAP Report No. 223</b>
NGR:	<b>SN 655 892</b>
Site Type:	<b>Possible Industrial &amp; Prehistoric Remains.</b>
Project Type:	<b>Archaeological Watching brief</b>
Project Officer:	<b>Helen Milne</b>
Project Dates:	<b>July 2002</b>
Categories Present:	<b>N/A</b>
Location of Original Archive:	<b>To be arranged</b>
Location of duplicate Archives:	<b>N/A</b>
Number of Finds Boxes:	<b>N/A</b>
Location of Finds:	<b>N/A</b>
Museum Reference:	<b>Not assigned</b>
Copyright:	<b>CAP Ltd</b>
Restrictions to access:	<b>None</b>



## **APPENDIX III:** **Context Register**



## Summary of Contexts

### Plot 9, Bontgoch Rd. Talybont (TYB9/02/WB)

Context No.		Description
01	-	Topsoil
02	-	Subsoil
03	-	Natural

