

Heritage

Recording Services Wales

**Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog,
Carmarthenshire.**

Archaeological Evaluation



By

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March 2010

HRSWales
Report No: 125

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog, Carmarthenshire.

By
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Prepared for:
Mr Noel Richards,
Coedmolen,
Pontyberem,
Llanelli,
Carmarthenshire

On behalf of:

Date: March 2010

HRSW Report No: 125

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Non Technical Summary

The following report is the result of an archaeological evaluation undertaken on pasture land in Llanddarog village, Carmarthenshire on behalf of Mr Noel Richards of Pontybreem, Llanelli. The work was undertaken in response to a planning condition prior to the proposed construction of three (3) detached residential dwellings with attached garages on land known as Banc yr Eos, on the southern side of the A48 road from Carmarthen, southeast of Llanddarog Church.

The evaluation was designed to assess the presence or absence of archaeological features, finds or deposits within the footprint of each of the proposed dwellings.

In total three evaluation trenches were dug, one in each of the proposed building plots. None of the trenches exposed any archaeological features and nor were any finds recovered. However, what each trench did reveal is that the area of land appears to have been meadow or pastureland for some considerable time, with evidence of charcoal flecks in the deeper red sandstone silty clay layers, indicative of either early crop burning or else ash spreading.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The following report is the result of an archaeological evaluation undertaken on pasture land in Llanddarog village, Carmarthenshire on behalf of Mr Noel Richards of Pontybreem, Llanelli. The work was undertaken in response to a planning condition prior to the proposed construction of three (3) detached residential dwellings with attached garages on land known as Banc yr Eos, on the southern side of the A48 road from Carmarthen, southeast of Llanddarog Church (NGR: SN 5028 1649).
- 1.2 After being approached by Mr Richards of Coedmolen, Pontybreem, Llanelli to undertake the archaeological evaluation, HRSW submitted a project specification to Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT), the regional Archaeological Trust in Llandeilo, detailing the schedule of works in late January 2010. This specification was approved and the evaluation work was undertaken on 23rd February 2010.
- 1.3 All works were undertaken in accordance with both the IfA's *Standards and guidance: for an archaeological field evaluation*, and current Health and Safety legislation.

Planning Background

- 1.4 Planning permission has been granted by Carmarthenshire County Council for the proposed construction (Ref: W/19557) subject to an archaeological condition as laid out below.

Planning Permission Condition

Condition: *No development shall take place until the applicant, or the agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

Site Description (see Figs 1, 2, & 3)

- 1.5 The location of the proposed development lies in an area of land southeast of Llanddarog Church, on the southern side of the A48 road that links Llanelli with Carmarthen (NGR: SN 5028 1649). The site lies at approx. 1105m A.O.D in an area of open pasture along on the south side of the A48.
- 1.6 The regional archaeological trust (Dyfed Archaeological Trust - Heritage Management) recommended that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken within the footprints of each proposed dwelling. This work was carried out prior to any development commencing and provides information on the presence or

absence of archaeological material.

Geology

- 1.6 The geology of the area is a sedimentary rock of an Undivided Llandovery series. Local geology indicates an area of red sandstone, silt stone and red/pink clays.

Brief Historical & Archaeological Background

- 1.7 The village of Llanddwrog is described by Samuel Lewis in his Topographical Dictionary of Wales dated 1833 thus:

“LLANDAROG (LLAN-DDAROG), a parish in the hundred of ISCENNEN, union and county of CARMARTHEN, SOUTH WALES, 7 miles (E. by S.) from Carmarthen; containing 1047 inhabitants. The village occupies a bleak and unsheltered situation on the turn-pike road from Carmarthen to Swansea, and commands an extensive prospect . . . Through the parish passes a continuous ridge of limestone, which is burnt in considerable quantities into manure for the supply of the neighbourhood. . . . The church, dedicated to St. Twrog, is a large edifice, internally well arranged, and appropriately fitted up for the accommodation of the parishioners. There was formerly a chapel of ease in the parish, of which there are still some slight remains, called St. Bernard's; it has been in ruins for nearly two centuries. The Baptists, Independents, and Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, have places of worship; and there are three Sunday schools connected with the dissenters, and conducted gratuitously, in which 250 children are taught” (Samuel Lewis 1833).

- 1.9 Saint Twrog was a 6th AD century Welsh saint who founded the church at Maentwrog in Gwynedd. It is believed that Twrog was the son of Ithel Hael o Lydaw of Brittany. He was also the brother of Saint Tanwg of Llandanwg, Saint Tegai of Llandegai and Saint Baglan of Llanfaglan and Baglan. There are two other dedications to Saint Twrog at Bodwrog in Anglesey and at Llanddarog in Carmarthenshire. Outside the church at Maentwrog village in Gwynedd, near to the belfry door is a large stone known as Maen Twrog. Twrog is reputed to have thrown the stone from the top of Moelwyn hill crushing a pagan altar in the valley below. It is said that his handprints can still be seen in the stone. The parish of Maentwrog gets its name from this stone. The village name Maentwrog literally means "Twrog's stone". It is said that if one rubs this boulder one is fated to return to the village in the future. However the name was already in existence at some time before this, as in the Welsh Mabinogion it says in one of the many stories that Pryderi was killed at the Glaslyn river and he was buried at Maentwrog. The boulder supposedly hurled by the giant is the one said to mark Pryderi's grave.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 In accordance with IfA's *Standards and guidance*, the aims of an archaeological field evaluation are to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site (including presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, leading to one or more of the following:
- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource.
 - the formulation of a strategy to initiate a threat to the archaeological resource.
 - the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.
- 2.2 An archaeological field evaluation will determine, as far as it is reasonably possible, the nature of the archaeological resource within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the projects, 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.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 With regards the evaluation, ground work was undertaken by the contractor using a mechanical digger with a 2 meter wide grading bucket and hand shovel, when deemed necessary, under the guidance of the qualified supervising archaeologist. Initially the overlying top soil was removed in 4 meter long increments and if any archaeology became exposed it was excavated to ascertain its character, then recorded and left in situ, whilst digging of the trench continued along its length. Each of the trenches measured approx. 14 metres in length and each was 2m wide.
- 3.2 After the ground work had been completed limited cleaning of the trench was undertaken in order to ascertain the existence or non existence of any archaeological features.
- 3.3 Where features were present limited excavation was undertaken to establish the date, depth, preservation, extent, function and relationship to other features.
- 3.4 Recording of the trench was undertaken in three formats:
- i) *Photographic record* - Photographs were taken in digital format using a 10 mega-pixel digital SLR recording in TIFF file format. Standard 35 mm film format Transparency and Black and White were also at hand should the need have required it.
 - ii) *Drawn record* - Site drawings, plans and sections, were produced at scales of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 on drafting film, where deemed necessary. 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.
- 3.5 An environmental sampling and processing strategy was in place should the archaeological deposits warrant it. However, in this instance it was not felt that the deposits encountered required sampling.
- 3.6 All works were undertaken in accordance with both the IfA's *Standards and guidance: for an archaeological field evaluation* and current Health and Safety legislation.

4 Results of the Field Evaluation (see Figs 3-5)

- 4.1 In the following, numbers contained within brackets (), refer to context numbers allocated during the watching brief. A detailed list of all contexts is given in Appendix III of this report. Three evaluation trenches were put in within the footprint of each proposed building plot.

Trench 1

- 4.2 Trench 1 was positioned in the proposed footprint of Plot 1. It measured approximately 14m x 2m and averaged a depth of approximately 0.70m and ran southeast to northwest. Once the turf (100) was peeled back, the underlying top soil (101) was removed to a depth of approximately 0.20m. This deposit was a fine and soft mid-orange/brown/red sandstone clay alluvial silty soil inter-mixed with occasional small stones of, none no bigger than approximately 0.02m. Directly below this was another fine and soft mid-light orange/brown sandstone clayey alluvial silty sub soil (102) with very few stones of any size. However this deposit did contain, throughout its depth, fine flecks of charcoal that made up approximately 1% of the material, indicative of an early agricultural soil. This deposit averaged a depth of approx. 0.30m. Directly below this deposit was a natural red/orange sandy alluvial silt and clay deposit (103). No archaeological features or finds were recovered from any of the deposits in this trench.

Trench 2

- 4.3 Trench 2 was positioned in the proposed footprint of Plot 2. It measured the same as Trench 1, approximately 14m x 2m and averaged a depth of approximately 0.70m and ran southeast to northwest. Once the turf (200) was peeled back, the underlying top soil (201) was removed to a depth of approximately 0.20m. This deposit was a fine and soft mid-orange/brown/red sandstone clay alluvial silty soil inter-mixed with occasional small stones of, none no bigger than approximately 0.02m. Directly below this was another fine and soft mid-light orange/brown sandstone clayey alluvial silty sub soil (202) with very few stones of any size. However this deposit did contain, as with Trench 1, throughout its depth, fine flecks of charcoal that made up approximately 1% of the material, indicative of an early agricultural soil. This deposit averaged a depth of approx. 0.30m. Directly below this deposit was a natural red/orange sandy alluvial silt and clay deposit (103). No archaeological features or finds were recovered from any of the deposits in this trench.

Trench 3

- 4.4 Trench 3 was positioned in the proposed footprint of Plot 3, on a gentle southeast facing slope. It measured the same as Trench 1 and 2, approximately 14m x 2m and averaged a depth of approximately 0.75m and ran south to north. Once the turf (300) was peeled back, the underlying top soil (301) was removed to a depth of approximately 0.20m. This deposit was a fine and soft mid-orange/brown/red sandstone clay alluvial silty soil inter-mixed with occasional small stones of, none no bigger than approximately 0.02m. Directly below this was another fine and soft mid-light orange/brown sandstone clayey alluvial silty sub soil (302) with very few stones of any size. However this deposit did contain, as with Trenches 1 and 2, throughout its depth, fine flecks of charcoal that made up approximately 1% of the material, indicative of an early agricultural soil. This deposit averaged a depth of approx. 0.30m. Directly below this deposit was a natural red/orange sandy alluvial silt and clay deposit (303). No archaeological features or finds were recovered from any of the deposits in this trench.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The evaluation trenches within the area of the proposed development in the field in the area known as Banc yr Eos in Llanddarog village exposed no archaeological features or finds at all. No dateable material was recovered from any of the three trenches. The very fine top and sub soils removed from each of the evaluation trenches, were completely *sterile* of any archaeological dateable material. However with the lower sub soil the evaluation did observe charcoal flecks that made up approximately 1% of the deposit. This would imply that the field or meadow has been used solely as agricultural land throughout its history.
- 5.2 A quick investigation of the early Ordnance Survey map of the area shows that no structures or buildings were present in the area of the proposed development.

6 Acknowledgements

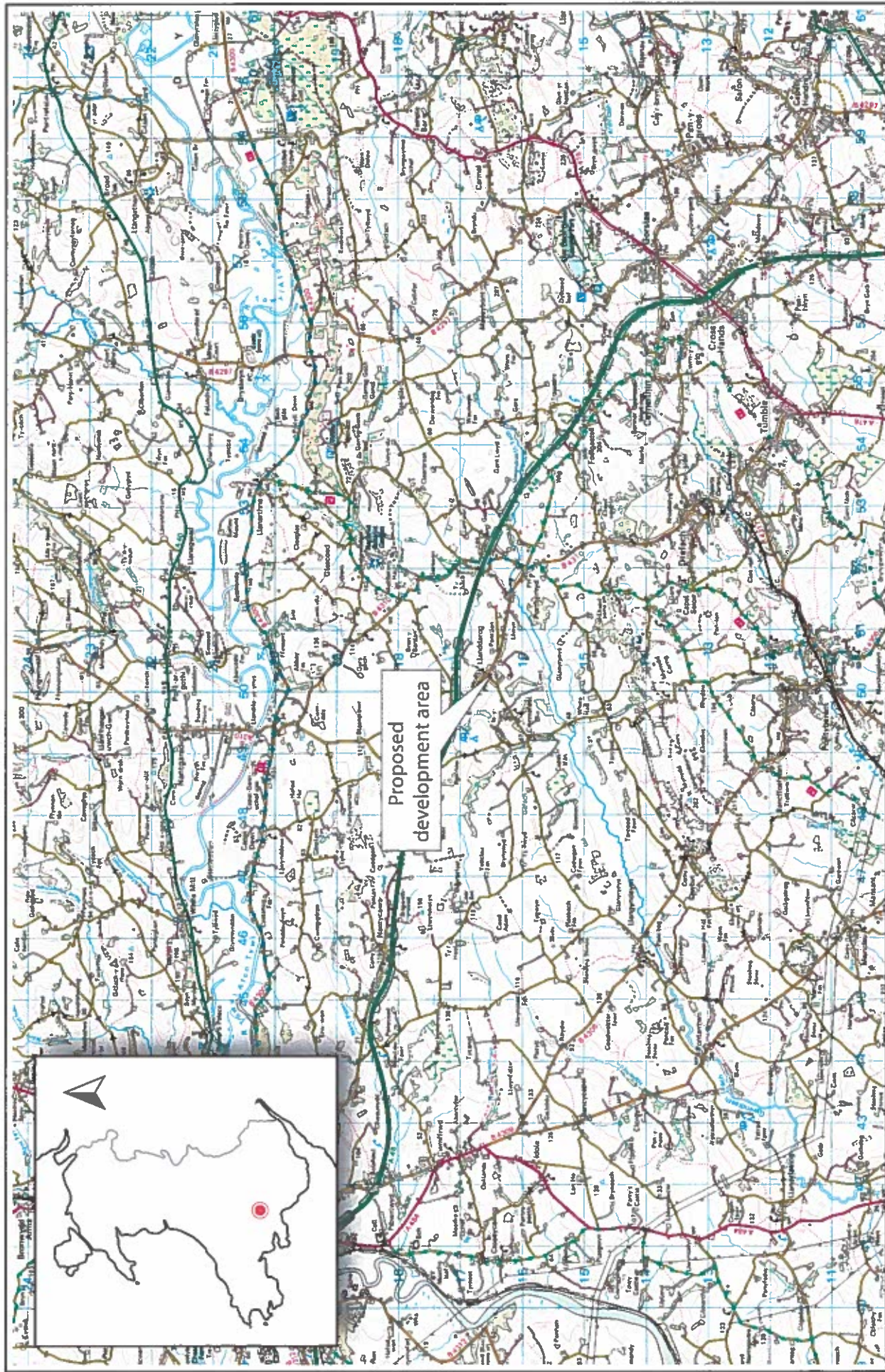
Thanks to; Mr N. Richards , the owner of the land at Llanddarog for allowing access to the site and for his patience during the ground work and recording work.

7 Bibliography

LEWIS, S. 1833. *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales 1833*.

APPENDIX I:

Figs & Illustrations



Proposed development area Location map.

Figure Title:

Project Title: Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog

Scale: OS 1:50000 map

Date: March 2010

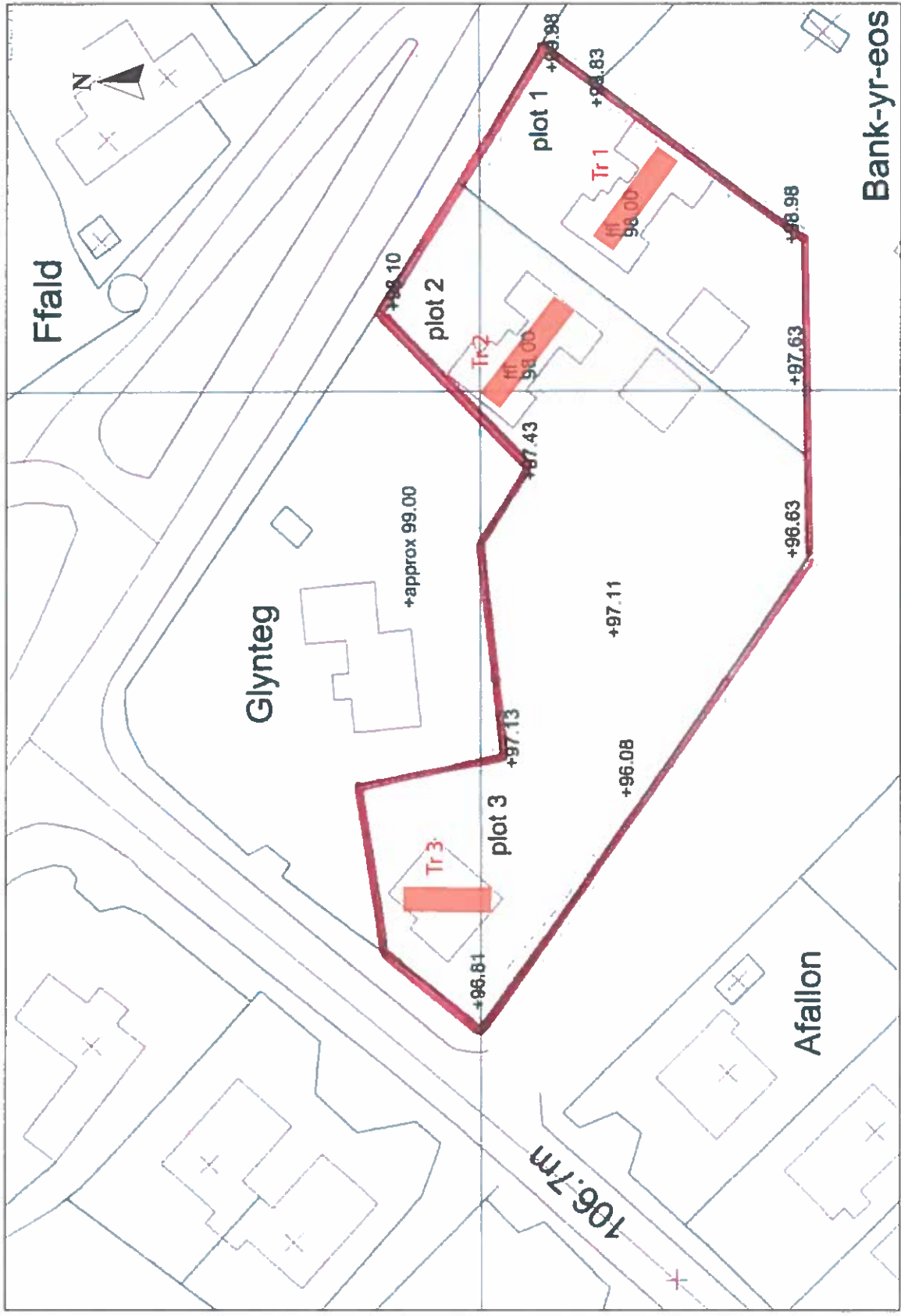
Figure No. 1

Drawn by: Richard Scott Jones

Drawing No.



<div> <div>Heritage</div> <div>Recording Services Wales</div> </div>		<div>Figure Title:</div> <div>Aerial Photo of proposed development area known as Banc yr Eos</div>	
<div>Project Title:</div> <div>Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog</div>	<div>Scale:</div> <div>Approx. 1:2500</div>		
<div>Date:</div> <div>March 2010</div>	<div>Figure No.</div> <div>2</div>		
<div>Drawn by:</div> <div>Richard Scott Jones</div>	<div>Drawing No.</div> <div></div>		



Project Title: Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog		Scale: Original 1:10000		Figure Title:	
Date: March 2010		Figure No. 3		Site plan showing positions of proposed Plots 1, 2 and 3 with evaluation trench positions highlighted in red.	
Drawn by: Richard Scott Jones		Drawing No.			



Plate 1. View of position of proposed evaluation Trenches 1 and 2 in area of Plots 1 and 2. Looking southeast.



Plate 2. View of position of proposed evaluation Trenches 1 and 2 in area of Plots 1 and 2. Looking northwest.



Plate 3. Trench 1 in area of Plot 1. Looking southeast.



Plate 4. Trench 1 in area of Plot 1. Trench 2 in area of Plot 2 in background. Looking northwest.

Project Title:	Banc yr Eos, Llanddârog
Date:	Archaeological Evaluation
Photo plates:	1-4



Plate 5. Typical view of stratigraphic section in Trench 1. Southwest facing.



Plate 7. Trench 2 in area of Plot 2. Looking northwest.



Plate 6. Trench 2 in area of Plot 2. Trench 1 in Plot 1 in background. Looking southeast



Plate 8. Typical view of stratigraphic section in Trench 2. Southwest facing.

Project Title: Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog	
Achaaeological Evaluation	
Date: March 2010	
Photo plates: 5-8	

APPENDIX III:

Context Register

APPENDIX IV:

Levels Data

APPENDIX III:
Context Register

APPENDIX IV:

Levels Data

LEVELS DATA

Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog, Carmarthenshire.

Trench 1

IH – 1.50m

1. 1.51
2. 1.51
3. 1.52
4. 1.52
5. 2.24
6. 2.26
7. 2.23
8. 2.23
9. 2.22
10. 2.23

Trench 2

IH – 1.50m

1. 1.55
2. 1.56
3. 1.53
4. 1.53
5. 2.35
6. 2.34
7. 2.35
8. 2.33
9. 2.32
10. 2.32

Trench 3

IH – 1.50m

1. 1.53
2. 1.53
3. 1.62
4. 1.62
5. 2.52
6. 2.52
7. 2.63
8. 2.63
9. 2.54
10. 2.55

APPENDIX V:
Archive Cover Sheet

ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog, Carmarthenshire.

ARCHIVE DESTINATION – RCAHMW

Site Name:	Banc yr Eos, Llanddarog, Carmarthenshire.
Site Code:	BYE/10/FE
PRN:	
NPRN :	N/A
SAM:	N/A
Other Ref No:	HRSW Report No. 125
NGR:	SN 5028 1649
Site Type:	Potential Medieval settlement
Project Type:	Field Evaluation
Project Officer:	Richard Scott Jones
Project Dates:	March 2010
Categories Present:	N/A
Location of Original Archive:	HRSW
Location of duplicate Archives:	DAT, Llandeilo
Number of Finds Boxes:	N/A
Location of Finds:	N/A
Museum Reference:	N/A
Copyright:	HRSW
Restrictions to access:	None

