

## **Glyn Hebog, Bancyfelin Carmarthenshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief



By  
**Dr Amelia Pannett MIFA**

Report No. 630

Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd  
Old Chapel Farm, Llanidloes  
Powys SY18 6JR  
Telephone: 01686 413857  
E-mail: [info@cambarch.co.uk](mailto:info@cambarch.co.uk)





CAMBRIAN  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECTS

## Glyn Hebog, Bancyfelin Carmarthenshire

### Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared For: Mark Richmond

Edited by

Signed:

*Mark Hall*

Position:

Date:

*Unit Director*  
*7/6/10*

Authorised by

Signed:

*Mark Hall*

Position:

Date:

*Unit Director*  
*7/6/10*

By

Dr Amelia Pannett MIFA

Report No: 630

Date: May 2010

Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd  
Old Chapel Farm, Llanidloes  
Powys SY18 6JR  
Telephone: 01686 413857  
E-mail: info@cambarch.co.uk



## CONTENTS

Summary	1
1. Introduction	1
2. Archaeological and Historical Background	1
3. Aims and Objectives	2
4. Archaeological Evaluation	2
5. Discussion and Conclusions	2
6. Acknowledgements	2
7. Bibliography	3

## ILLUSTRATIONS AND PLATES

Fig. 1	Location of the site
Fig. 2	Layout of excavated area
Plate 1	View of east end of trench looking north
Plate 2	View of middle section of trench looking NW
Plate 3	View of west end of trench looking NW
Plate 4	Detail of burnt area in NE corner of trench looking north

### Copyright Notice:

Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd. retain copyright of this report under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988, and have granted a licence to Mark Richmond to use and reproduce the material contained within.

The Ordnance Survey has granted Cambrian Archaeological projects Ltd a Copyright Licence (No. AL 52163A0001) to reproduce map information; Copyright remains otherwise with the Ordnance Survey

## **Summary**

*In April 2010 Cambrian Archaeological Projects carried out an archaeological watching brief during development at Glyn Hebog, Bancyfelin, Carmarthenshire. The site is located within the historical core of Bancyfelin, adjacent to the Church, and only 30m from the line of the Via Julia Roman Road. Despite the proximity of known archaeology, no features or finds of archaeological interest were revealed.*

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Location and scope of work**

In April 2010, Cambrian Archaeological Projects was commissioned to carry out a watching brief during groundworks at Glyn Hebog, Bancyfelin, Carmarthenshire (NGR: SN 35043 19176; fig. 1). The development comprised the building of an access road designed to serve two houses. The houses are to be constructed at a later date.

The development proposal has been submitted by Mr Mark Richmond. The local planning authority is Carmarthenshire CC and the planning application number is W/09127. The authority obtains archaeological advice in respect of planning application from Dyfed Archaeological Trust - Historic Management (Henceforth DAT-HM).

The development site lies within the hamlet of Bancyfelin, 5km west of Carmarthen. The site is positioned adjacent to the parish Church, within what would have been the medieval core of the settlement. A section of the Via Julia Roman Road is known to lie 500m to the north of the development site. The Iron Age hillfort of Castell-y-Gaer also lies 500m to the north-west of the site. As a result, Charles Hill of the Curatorial Section of Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT-HM) recommended that a watching brief be carried out during groundworks on the site. The purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains were present on the site and to establish their character, distribution, extent, condition and relative significance. This follows the requirements set out in Planning Policy WALES, March 2002, section 6.5 and Welsh Office circular 60/96.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

The development site lies on flat ground at approximately 30m OD, in an area of Llanvirm rocks (mudstone, sandstone and siltstone; British Geological Survey 2001).

## **2. Archaeological and Historical Background**

The proposed development site lies 30m south of the line of the Via Julia as it runs westwards from the Roman fort in Carmarthen to Wiston in Pembrokeshire. For much of the route the Via Julia follows the line of the modern A40, generally being located less than 1km from it.

The Via Julia Roman Road was unknown until the 1980s, when aerial photography revealed several sections as cropmarks (James *et al* 2002), with further sections subsequently identified as extant aggers. Around 38km of road have been identified to date, stretching from the Roman town of Moridvnm (Carmarthen) to Wiston where the road disappears. There are no known forts or settlements further west than Carmarthen, so the ultimate destination of the Via Julia is not known (K. Murphy *pers comm.*).

Excavations carried out on a section of the road at Whitland, in advance of the construction of the bypass, revealed that it had been built in two phases. The primary phase of construction involved the laying of wooden drains and wooden raft foundations on the surface of the peat (James *et al* 2002). Both phases of road were built using cobbles and local flagstones. No finds were discovered, but dating from the wooden structures indicates the road was in use in the late 1<sup>st</sup>/early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (James *et al* 2002).

The segment of road that lies adjacent to the proposed development site forms part of the Ffordd-las to Wenallt section of the Via Julia and is the first evidence for the road west of Carmarthen.

### **3. Aims and Objectives**

The specific aim of the archaeological watching brief was to establish the nature of the archaeological resource existing on site.

### **4. Archaeological Watching Brief**

The archaeological watching brief was carried out in early April 2010 on a warm and sunny day.

The groundworks comprised the excavation of a T-shaped area eastwards across the site from the road edge (fig. 2 and plates 1, 2 and 3). The excavated area measured 42m in length by 28m, and 8m wide. The area was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m.

Underlying the turf and topsoil across the entire trench a mid red brown clay silt subsoil (002) was revealed. This contained frequent stone inclusions and extended to a maximum depth of 0.5m. The subsoil overlay the red brown clay natural (003).

In the north-east corner of the trench, a deposit of dark gray clay silt (004) was revealed (plate 4). This measured 2.5m in diameter and contained charcoal, brick fragments, glass and modern pottery and is likely to be the result of a recent episode of burning and dumping. None of the finds were retained.

Two modern service trenches were revealed, both containing water pipes.

The western edge of the trench, running parallel with the road edge, had been highly disturbed by the removal of trees.

### **5. Discussion and Conclusions**

No sub-surface features or non-modern finds were identified during the watching brief. Despite the proximity of the site to the line of the Via Julia Roman Road, no traces of associated or contemporary activity were revealed. This section of the road lies several kilometres west of the Roman town and fort at Carmarthen, beyond the limits of any vicus settlement. It was therefore considered unlikely that any evidence for contemporary occupation or roadside activity would be found (K. Murphy *pers comm.*).

### **6. Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Hywel Keen for undertaking the watching brief.

## 7. **Bibliography**

British Geological Survey 2001. /Solid Geology Map. UK South Sheet. 1:625000 Scale. 4th edition

James, H., Murphy, K. and Page, N. 2002. *The Discovery and investigation of a Roman Road West of Carmarthan*. Cambria Archaeology Report No. 2002/4.





z

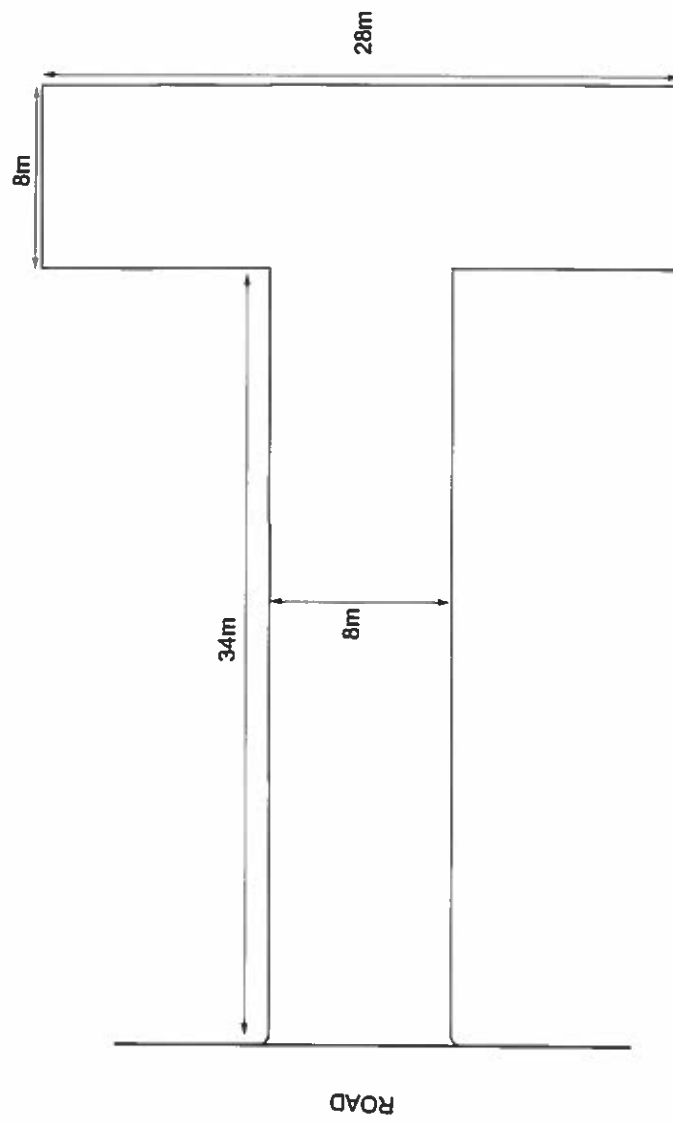


Fig. 2  
Layout of  
excavated area







Plate. 1  
View of East end  
of Trench.  
Looking North

Scale = 2m





Plate. 2  
View of middle  
section of  
Trench.  
Looking NW

Scale = 2m





Plate. 3  
View of West  
end of Trench.  
Looking NW

Scale = 2m





Plate. 4  
Detail of burnt  
area in NE  
corner of Trench  
Looking North.

Scale = 2m

