

BRYN CEFNI INDUSTRIAL PARK
UNIT 2

RESULTS OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report No. 312

Produced for
Bowen Dann Knox
On behalf of
Welsh Development Agency

November 1998

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust
Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd

UNIT 2, BRYN CEFNI INDUSTRIAL PARK, LLANGEFNI, ANGLESEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Introduction

An extension to Unit 2, Bryn Cefni Industrial Estate, has been proposed. Archaeological assessment carried out in advance of the extension of the Industrial Estate south of Unit 2 identified a rock mound situated close to Unit 2 as the possible site of a Prehistoric chambered cairn, known as Tregarnedd (GAT Report No. 302). Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service (GAPS) therefore advised the Local Planning Authority that an archaeological evaluation of the site should be undertaken to ascertain the status of the mound.

Bowen Dann Knox, acting on behalf of WDA, appointed Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (Contracts) to carry out the evaluation.

Methodology

Two trenches were excavated into the mound, one from the south-west (Trench 1) and one from the north-west (Trench 2). Trench 1 measured 10m by 4m, and trench 2 measured 20m by 2m. Both trenches were excavated initially by a mechanical excavator (JCB 3CX) to remove the turf and topsoil. Excavation then proceeded by hand. All features and trench locations were surveyed using a Geodimeter 400 Total Station, as also were the limits of the mound.

Results

Trench 1

At the upper, north-east, end of the trench the natural limestone rock (003) was found to lie immediately under the turf and topsoil (001), although the uneven nature of the surface of the rock meant that there were deeper pockets of soil. The rock shelved down steeply, and south-west of the edge of rock, the turf and topsoil lay on a red/brown silty clay subsoil (002). On the slope immediately south-west of the limestone was an intermediate layer (005) which was less red, and with a compacted surface. This layer was difficult to see, but it was possible to feel it during trowelling. Modern pottery was found on this layer. Further to the south-east, at the base of the slope of the mound, the subsoil lay directly under the topsoil, with no intervening layer. Lying upon the subsoil in a series of patches was a layer of burning (004), consisting of burnt clay and charcoal. The layer of burning was shallow, and did not penetrate the subsoil. One piece of post-medieval pottery was found on the burnt layer.

Interpretation of trench 1

The compact layer (005), which did not extend fully over the bedrock (003), was interpreted as a former ground surface, composed partly of decomposed bedrock, which was overlain by the present turf with accumulated top-soil. The burning (004), because it was a thin layer without very dense areas of burning or charcoal, is thought to have resulted from a single large fire, or a small number of large fires, which had penetrated the surface of the subsoil to produce the burnt clay. No features (pits or post-holes) were noted in association with the burning, and a single piece of 19th century pottery showing signs of burning was the only find.

Trench 2

The upper (south-east) part of this trench contained limestone bed-rock (003) either immediately below the turf and topsoil (001), or separated from it by a thin layer of clay (002). As in Trench 1, the surface of the limestone was very pitted, and there were deep pockets of the underlying clay (002). North-west of the limestone, the turf and topsoil overlay a red/brown subsoil which was similar to layer (003) in trench 1. There was slight evidence for an intermediate layer (008) between the topsoil and the subsoil which was up to 500 mm deep at the north-western end, but the colour difference between the two was very slight, and it was only the difference in texture which was noticeable. Cutting through (008) and (003) in a south-west to north-east alignment and at the approximate edge of the mound was a linear cut (007) filled with stones in an orange/brown sandy silt (006). A modern pipeline was visible cutting across the north-western part of the trench, which was not examined further. Two small waste flint

flakes were found immediately above the limestone rock between (001) and (002) at the south-east end of the trench, one of which was a struck flake.

Interpretation of trench 2

The topsoil and turf are a relatively recent accretion, and (008) a former soil which had accumulated over the subsoil (003). The linear feature (006/7) was difficult to interpret, as the actual cut was not clearly visible, and was only recognised by the presence of the stony fill. A drain is the obvious explanation, but it was poorly formed and it is difficult to imagine it functioning efficiently as such. It is unlikely to be a slot defining the edge of the mound, as there was no evidence for it in Trench 1, and it appeared to be running in a straight line, rather than curving.

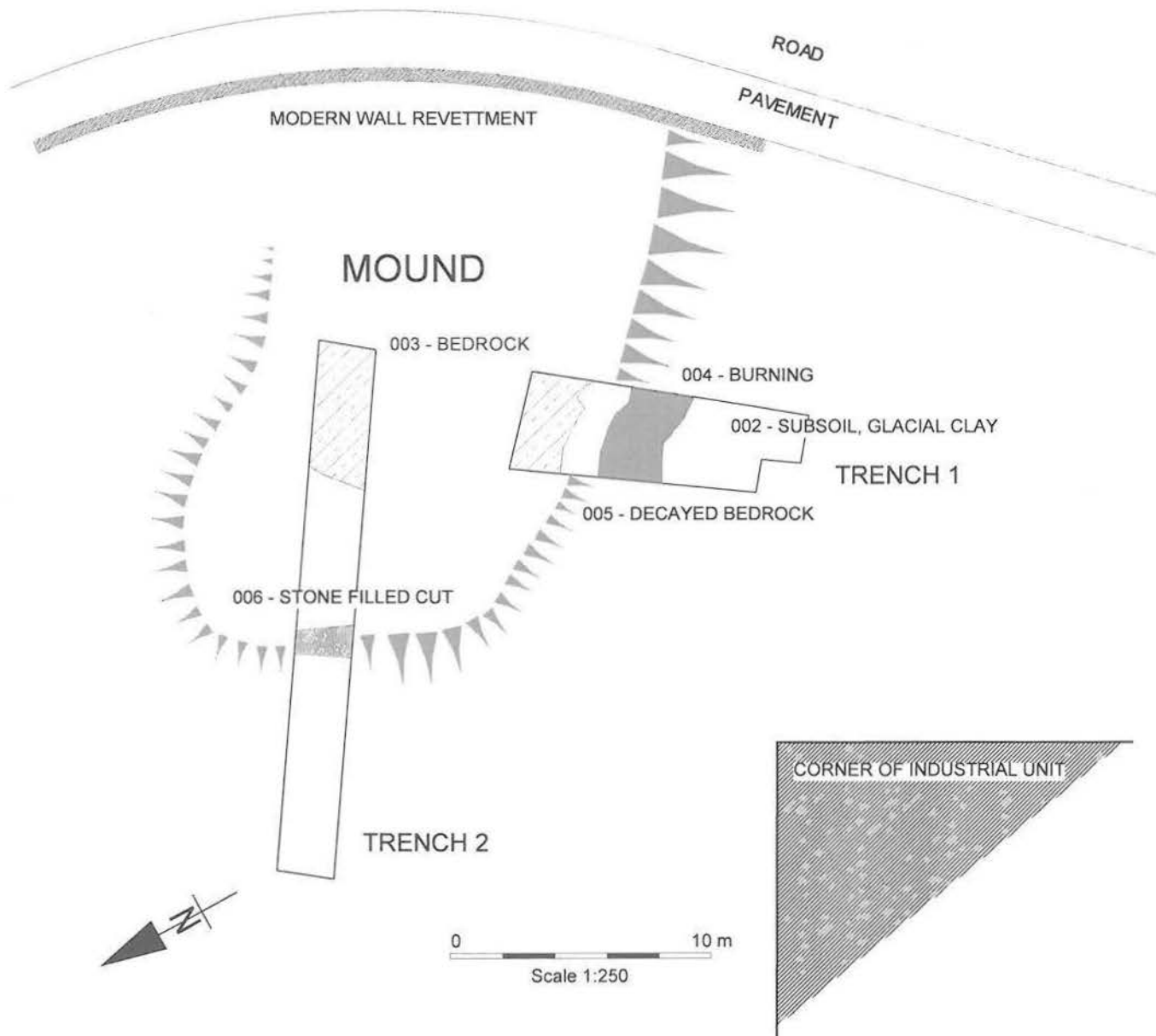
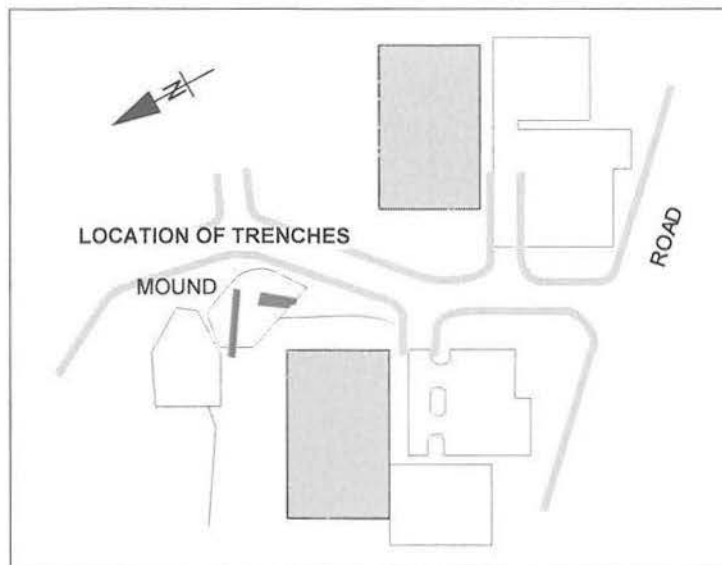
Conclusions

The excavations, despite the relatively large area examined, have not been conclusive. However, the lack of positive evidence leads to the conclusion that, on the basis of the area examined to date, the mound is a natural limestone outcrop, and was not used as a place of burial in Prehistoric times.

A note of caution must be added, however. Tregarnedd cairn is recorded as being removed in the 19th century, and systematic removal of the stone would leave very little evidence to be recovered, if the evaluation trenches were not positioned directly over the site of a chamber. Excavations on the site of a Neolithic cairn at Din Dryfol, on Anglesey, produced only 27 very small pieces of Neolithic pottery, nearly all of which were from the floor of the primary chamber. A number of waste flint flakes were, however, found within the cairn material. The identification of the mound as a natural outcrop does not prevent it also having been used as a burial site. A large number of Neolithic burial mounds utilised rock outcrops as part of the cairn.

It is therefore possible that the site is that of a Neolithic burial cairn, although the evaluation excavations would suggest that, even if this were correct, there is very little archaeological evidence left to recover. However a watching brief during earth moving operations in the immediate vicinity would be justifiable, and it is recommended that one be maintained with the principal aim of attempting to locate Prehistoric evidence within the vicinity of the mound.

Title	Unit 2, Bryn Cefni Industrial Estate Archaeological Evaluation		
Project	BRYN CEFNI EARTHWORK (G1556)		
Client	Bowen Dann Knox (on behalf of the Welsh Development Agency)		
Drawing No.	1556/01 (1of1)	Drawn by	LAD
Scale	1 : 250	Date	31/11/98
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The mound from the south-west prior to excavation.



The mound from the north-west prior to excavation.



Trench 1 from south-west. The limestone is visible at the top end, and a red layer of burnt clay across the centre of the trench.



Trench 2 from north-west, showing the limestone rock at the furthest end, and feature 004 just above the ranging rod.



Trench 2 from the north-west, showing feature 004 which crosses the trench just above the ranging rod.



Trench 2 Feature 004 from north-west. This shows a section excavated across the stone filled slot.

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