



Caerwedros, Ceredigion:

Archaeological Watching Brief



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Report No. 625

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CAMBRIAN
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PROJECTS

Caerwedros, Ceredigion

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report No: **625**

Date: **April 2010**

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Non Technical Summary

This report results from a watching brief undertaken by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd (CAP) for Mr Gethin Thomas, owner and developer of Plot Adjacent to Melyn yr Haf, Caerwedros, Ceredigion. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed to a depth of 0.40m to 0.85m from within an 'L' shaped area measuring approximately 200m east to west by 175m north to south. No archaeological features were revealed.

1 Introduction

1.1 Location and scope of work (Figure 1)

- 1.1.1 In January 2002 Cambrian Archaeological Projects (CAP) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Plot Adjacent to Melyn yr Haf, Caerwedros, Ceredigion (henceforth - the site), NGR: 237490 255886, for Mr Gethin Thomas of Maes yr Wyn, Caerwedros, Llandysul, Ceredigion, SA44 6BN.
- 1.1.2 The work resulted from a development proposal submitted by Mr Thomas to Ceredigion CC (Planning Application No: A090679). The authority obtained archaeological advice in respect of the application from Dyfed Archaeological Trust - Historic Management (Henceforth DAT-HM).
- 1.1.3 A Specification for the work was prepared by Mark Houliston (MifA), Unit Director, CAP, at the request of Mr Gethin Thomas, to provide information on the methodology to be employed by CAP during the work. This was subsequently approved by DAT-HM on behalf of the planning authority.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The natural soils in the area are composed of the Rheidol series defined as glacio-fluvial or river terrace gravels beneath well drained fine loamy soils, shallow in places (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).
- 1.2.2 The underlying solid geology is composed of a sedimentary formation in the Llandovery series from the Silurian era.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The Regional Sites and Monuments Record demonstrates that the site lies within the historic core of Caerwedros, Ceredigion.
- 1.3.2 It is in close proximity to Castell Caerwedros, an earthwork castle, comprising an earthen mound, fosse and a counterscarp bank of considerable height. It is identified as a castle and recorded as being destroyed in 1137. The counterscarp is most prominent in the south & south-east, where there are traces of further works, possibly an outer ditch. It is possible that a bailey occupied the level ground to the north, between the mound and the current road.

- 1.3.3 Although located away from the main castle complex, there is a reasonable chance that significant buried evidence for medieval buildings, other contemporary structures, or domestic or semi-industrial occupation, might be revealed.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The aims of the watching brief were:
- 2.1.1 to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site, paying particular attention to activity of possible medieval date;
- 2.1.2 to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present;
- 2.1.3 to establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features;
- 2.1.4 to appraise the likely impact of the proposal on any surviving archaeological deposits and if appropriate to make suggestions for a mitigation strategy or, where areas contain archaeology of national importance, for preservation *in situ*.

3 Evaluation Methodology

3.1 Scope of Fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken by Hywel Keen (CAP) on 30th March 2010. Machine removal of the topsoil/subsoil and the subsequent cutting of foundation trenches were undertaken under archaeological supervision.
- 3.1.2 All works were undertaken in accordance with both the IFA's Standards and Guidance: for a watching brief (IfA 2006) and current Health and Safety legislation.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered during the evaluation.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental evidence

- 3.3.1 No deposits suited to environmental sampling were located during the evaluation.

4 Watching Brief Results

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 Generally ground conditions were damp to wet and the weather was mixed with intermittent rain during the machining work.

- 4.1.2 Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed to a depth of 0.40m to 0.85m from within an 'L' shaped area measuring approximately 200m east to west by 175m north to south (Plates 1 to 3).
- 4.1.3 Subsequently, foundation trenches were cut into the base of the exposed horizon (Plate 4).

4.2 Description (Figure 2)

Topsoil

- 4.2.1 Topsoil was removed from the entire area. It varied in depth from 0.20m to 0.40m.

Subsoil

- 4.2.2 The subsoil consisted of mid brown, silty, clay mixed with moderate to frequent stone inclusions (weathered bedrock). It varied in depth from 0.20m to 0.30m. It was removed from the western and central parts of the site, but was only partially removed in the east.

Natural subsoil

- 4.2.3 The natural ground surface consisted of mid yellow brown, silty, clay mixed with frequent stone inclusions (weathered bedrock). It was removed to a depth of up to 0.30m in the western part of the site, and was exposed in the central part.

5 Discussion and Interpretation

5.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 5.1.1 The watching brief was unhampered by any modern building or agricultural activity. Conditions were good and the results of the work are considered reliable.

5.2 Overall interpretation

- 5.2.1 The watching brief suggested that no archaeological features were located within the development area.
- 5.2.2 It seems reasonable to assume that the development area lies away from any earthworks that might have formed part of Castell Caerwedros, or with any other features that might have formed as a result of associated activities.

6 Bibliography and references

Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983

ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

Caerwedros, Ceredigion – CAP Report 625

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Site Name: | Caerwedros, Ceredigion |
| Site Code: | CC/10/WB |
| PRN: | N/A |
| NPRN : | N/A |
| SAM: | N/A |
| Other Ref No: | CAP project No. 991 |
| NGR: | 237490 2555886 |
| Site Type: | Urban |
| Project Type: | Archaeological Watching Brief |
| Project Officer: | Mark Houliston |
| Project Dates: | 30 March 2010 |
| CAP report number: | 625 |
| Categories Present: | N/A |
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| Location of duplicate Archives: | N/A |
| Number of Finds Boxes: | N/A |
| Location of Finds: | N/A |
| Museum Reference: | Not assigned |
| Copyright: | CAP Ltd |
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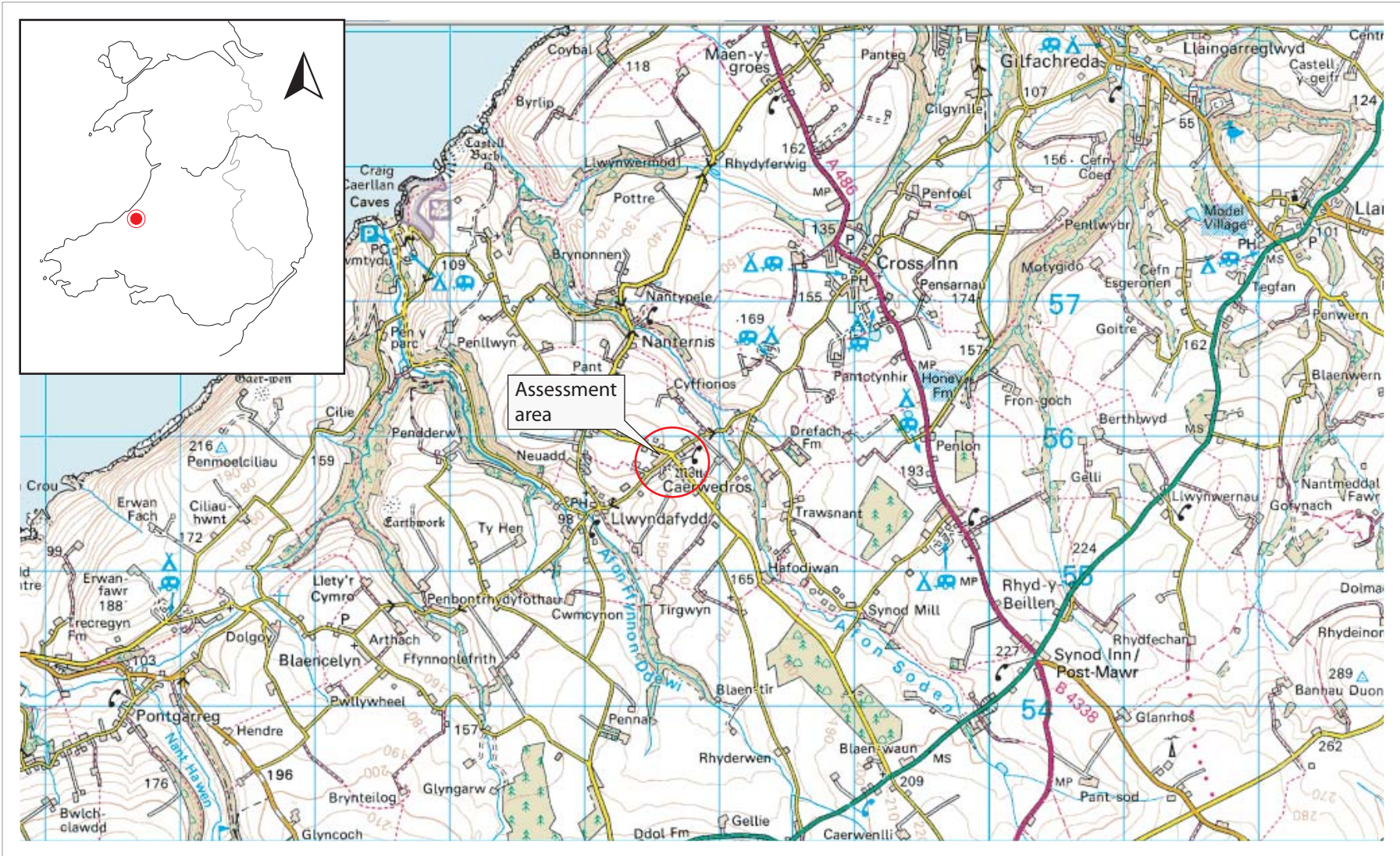


Fig 1: Map showing general location of assessment area

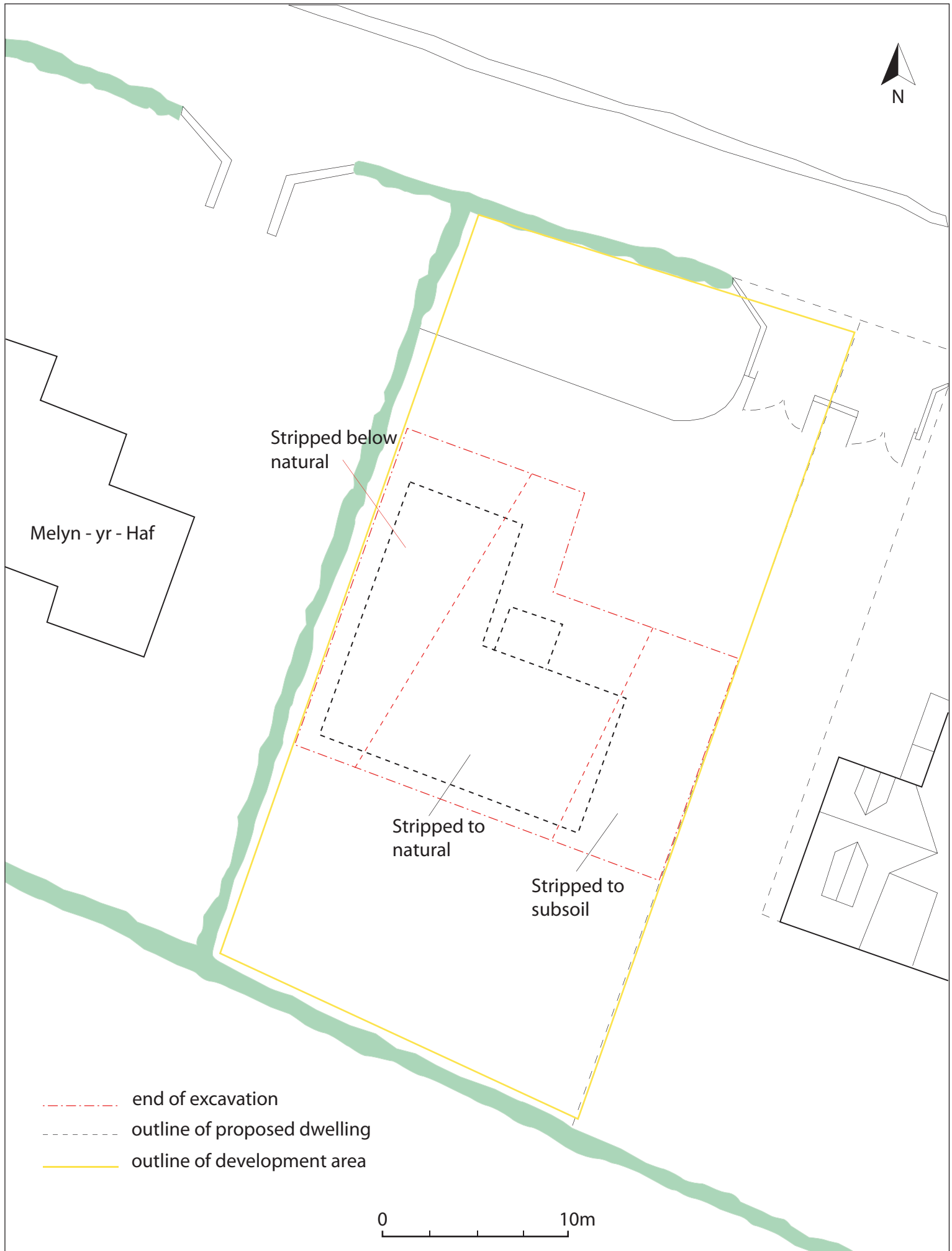


Fig 2: Plan of excavation area



Plate 1: West end of site after removal of topsoil, looking north east. Scale 2m



Plate 2: East end of site after removal of topsoil, looking north east. Scale 2m



Plate 3: Detail of west section, looking west. Scale 2m



Plate 4: Southern foundation trench, showing subsoil removed to the top of the natural, looking east. Scale 2m



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