

**Land adjacent to Coity Bypass
Brackla
Bridgend**

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Lovell Partnerships

CA Project: 3542
CA Report: 11221

September 2011

LAND ADJACENT TO COITY BYPASS BRACKLA BRIDGEND

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 3542
CA Report: 11221

prepared by	Jamie Wright, Project Officer
date	2 September 2011
checked by	Simon Cox, Head of Fieldwork
date	9 September 2011
approved by	Mark Collard, Head of Contracts
signed	
date	9 September 2011
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Fig. 2 Trench location plan, showing archaeological features and Site Investigation results (1:1000@A3)



SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land adjacent to Coity Bypass
Location:	Brackla, Bridgend
NGR:	SS 92255 81252
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	25 August – 1 September 2011
Planning Reference:	P/11/355/Ful
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with National Museum Wales
Site Code:	CBY 11

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in August/September 2011 on land adjacent to Coity Bypass. Ten trenches of 20m length were excavated.

Despite the close proximity of Bronze Age cremation burials, which had been found immediately to the north of the site during the construction of the Coity Bypass, no evidence for any prehistoric activity within the site was recovered. However, the small size and dispersed nature of such remains raises the possibility that they might survive elsewhere on this site between the excavated evaluation trenches.

The earliest artefacts recovered were two sherds of medieval pottery, most likely redeposited within later dumped or subsoil deposits. The only archaeological features exposed probably represent a recently removed field boundary shown on historic and modern mapping. Dumped layers in the western part of the site may relate to a disused quarry and post-medieval limekiln.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August and September 2011 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Lovell Partnerships on land adjacent to Coity Bypass, Brackla, Bridgend (centred on NGR: SS 92255 81252; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application (ref: P/11/355/Ful) for the construction of houses and associated ground works.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a recommendation for archaeological evaluation by Neil Maylan of GGAT Curatorial, the archaeological advisor to Bridgend County Borough Council, and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2011) and approved by Mr Maylan. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006). It was monitored by Neil Maylan, including a site visit on 31 August 2011.

The site

- 1.3 The site comprises agricultural land currently used as pasture lying between the Coity Bypass, to the north, and Brackla Industrial Estate to the south and west (Fig. 2). The site is approximately 2.8ha in size and slopes down from approximately 60m AOD in the south-east to 52m AOD in the north-west.
- 1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as on the interface between the Lower Lias and Penarth Group of, respectively, the Jurassic and Triassic eras (BGS 1989). Horizontally bedded, weathered and rounded limestone in a clay matrix was encountered in all the trenches..

Archaeological background

- 1.5 Within the site boundaries, the only recorded heritage assets are a stone barn (PRN 05053m), of two storeys, and further south a post-medieval limekiln (PRN 05036m), which is shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey map but was not identified during the evaluation. The limekiln may be associated with a possible disused quarry (PRN

05048m) located a short distance to the north-east of it. Site investigations, including trial pits, boreholes and geophysical survey, were carried out in 2010 by Terra Firma (2010). These identified a considerable depth (up to 1.8m) of made ground in the area of the limekiln (test pit and borehole locations, and geophysical survey anomalies, are shown on Figure 2). No other buried archaeological remains are recorded within the site, although excavations along the line of the Coity Bypass identified Bronze Age funerary remains immediately to the north of the site, in the form of three urned cremations, one un-urned cremation and an associated patch of charcoal (one dated by radiocarbon to the Early Bronze Age) located around a large stone, and a separate group of three charcoal-rich pits, two containing human bone (PCAL 2004; PRNs 06267, 06272m and 06278m).

- 1.6 The wider landscape around the site contains a range of funerary monuments from the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age periods, including a chambered tomb and cairns. There is limited evidence for the Roman period, although a Roman road may run 140m east of the site, along the line of Simonstown Road which also forms the historic parish boundary for part of its length. The site apparently lay outside the areas of settlement and other foci of activity in the medieval and post-medieval period and was agricultural land. Much of the field system within the site (hedgerows PRN 05054m and 05055m) apparently dates to at least the 18th century, although there have been subsequent changes and removals of boundaries within the system.

Archaeological objectives

- 1.7 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist the Bridgend County Borough Council in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

Methodology

- 1.8 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of ten 20m long trenches, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Three trenches were located close to the Coity Bypass and, at the request of Neil Maylan, trench 10 was moved from its originally proposed location to be closer to the site of the previously recovered urned

cremations. Trench 3, originally to be located near the position of the limekiln, was moved to avoid a ground water monitoring station, with the approval of Mr Maylan. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using a Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2009).

- 1.9 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.10 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (2003) but no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (2010).
- 1.11 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. The artefacts will not be retained. The paper and digital evaluation archive will be deposited with National Museum Wales.

2. RESULTS (FIG. 2)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B respectively. Trench 1 contained two features; all the other trenches were devoid of archaeological features.
- 2.2 In Trench 1 a shallow ditch, 104, was 0.57m wide and 0.13m deep. The single fill 105, produced no artefacts. Approximately 0.5m to the south-east and roughly parallel was a poorly defined 0.55m wide and 0.07m deep feature 106, possibly a grubbed out hedge, with a single undated fill 107. Between the two features was a vertical wooden stake. A dark grey silty clay, 103, containing single sherds of both medieval and post-medieval pottery overlay these features, and was sealed by

made ground 101 and redeposited natural clay 102. These were in turn sealed by topsoil 100.

- 2.3 Trenches 2, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 had a virtually stone free topsoil of 0.2m thickness overlying a 0.3m thick subsoil/interface layer, below which was the geological deposit of rounded tabular limestone lying horizontally, apparently in bedding planes, surrounded and separated by a pale yellow brown clay. Modern disturbance was noted for 1m in the south-eastern end of Trench 4, coinciding with undulating ground level. In trench 9 a 0.2m thick charcoal rich layer was intermittently present between the topsoil and subsoil along the whole of the trench, revealing perhaps fills of former furrows or possibly showing worm sorting of the topsoil. A single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from subsoil 901. The inclusion free nature of the topsoil in these trenches gave the impression that they had not been ploughed or otherwise disturbed for a period of decades or longer.
- 2.4 Evidence of truncation and subsequent levelling up was present in trenches 1, 3 and 6. Trench 3 had topsoil overlying a c. 1m thick clay and angular stone layer containing much modern iron and glass, especially to the south. A sondage excavated in the north of the trench revealed another 0.5m of modern make-up overlying layer 303, a dark greyish brown clay. Closer investigation was precluded due to Health and Safety considerations, and therefore it is not known whether layer 303 was associated with the nearby lime kiln or associated quarry, or the later dumping. Post-medieval pottery and roof tile of 18th-century date was recovered from a possible buried subsoil or dumped layer in trench 6.

The Finds

- 2.5 Artefactual material comprising small quantities of pottery and ceramic building material was recovered from four deposits (Appendix B).
- 2.6 Two sherds of medieval pottery were identified, each clearly re-deposited in layer 103 and subsoil deposit 901. Both are unfeathered bodysherds which occur in a similar unglazed sandy coarseware fabric for which broad dating across the 12th to 14th centuries is probable. Later pottery, not dating before the 18th century, was noted from deposits 103, 603 and 800. A fragment of roofing tile from deposit 603 also dates to the post-medieval period.

- 2.7 In view of the relatively recent date of most of the finds and the re-deposited nature of the medieval pottery, none of this material will be retained.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 No cremations were found during the evaluation and it is possible that those recovered in advance of construction of the Coity Bypass represent an isolated small cemetery centred on a stone. However, given the small size of the cremations, and dispersed nature of Bronze Age funerary activity, the evaluation trenches may conceivably have missed such features.

- 3.2 Large parts of the eastern half of the site appear to have been relatively undisturbed during recent times, with artefacts and hints of former ridge and furrow in trench 9 to suggest the site may have been under the plough in the medieval and post-medieval periods. In the western part of the site, disturbed ground and modern dumping in trench 3, potentially extending across the surrounding area as suggested by a large anomaly on the geophysical survey, may relate to the post-medieval limekiln and a possibly associated disused quarry.

- 3.3 The probably truncated ditch in trench 1, with associated hedge and presumed fence coincide with the field boundary shown on Ordnance Survey maps between 1877 and 1991, and also evident on Google Earth satellite imagery dated August 2007. It seems likely that the boundary was removed when the Coity Bypass was built in 2008.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jamie Wright, assisted by Diarmuid O'Seaneachain, Charlotte Haines, Dan Sausins and Andy Loader. The report was written by Jamie Wright and the illustrations were prepared by Jon Bennett. The archive has been compiled by Jamie Wright, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.



5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1989 *Bridgend, 1:50,000 Sheet 262*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 *Land adjacent to Coity Bypass, Brackla, Bridgend County Borough: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

PCAL (Phoenix Consulting Archaeology Limited) 2004 *Archaeological Earthwork and Hedgerow Survey in advance of the Coity Link Road, Coity, Bridgend*

Terra Firma (Wales) Ltd 2010 *Geo-technical and Geo-environmental Ground Investigation report, Proposed Residential Development, Brackla, Bridgend*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil			0.15	
101	Layer	Made ground/subsoil			0.35	
102	Layer	Redeposited natural			0.2	
103	Layer	Grey brown silty clay			0.3	pmed
104	Cut	Ditch	>3	0.57	0.13	
105	Fill	Fill of 104. Dark grey silty clay.	1m exc.	0.57	0.13	
106	Cut	Prob. hedge line	>2	0.53	0.07	
107	Fill	Reddish brown sandy clay	1m exc.	0.53	0.07	

Trench 2

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Layer	Topsoil			0.23	
201	Layer	Subsoil			0.12	
202	Layer	Natural				

Trench 3

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Layer	Topsoil			0.16	
301	Layer	Made ground			0.94	C20
302	Layer	Made ground			0.55	C20
303	Layer	Dark brownish grey with limestone frags. and charcoal			>0.1	

Trench 4

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
400	Layer	Topsoil			0.18	
401	Layer	Subsoil			0.15	
402	Layer	Natural				
403	Cut	Modern service trench			>0.48	
404	Fill	Fill of 403 contained plastic materials			>0.48	

Trench 5

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
500	Layer	Topsoil			0.19	
501	Layer	Subsoil			0.17	
202	Layer	Natural				

Trench 6

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date

600	Layer	Topsoil			0.18	
601	Layer	Made ground			0.35	
602	Layer	Made ground with coke/clinker			0.06	
603	Layer	Made ground of pos. post med sub soil			0.12	C18
604	Layer	Natural				

Trench 7

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
700	Layer	Topsoil			0.29	
701	Layer	Subsoil			0.31	
702	Layer	Natural				

Trench 8

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
800	Layer	Topsoil			0.18	pmed
801	Layer	Subsoil			0.22	
802	Layer	Natural				

Trench 9

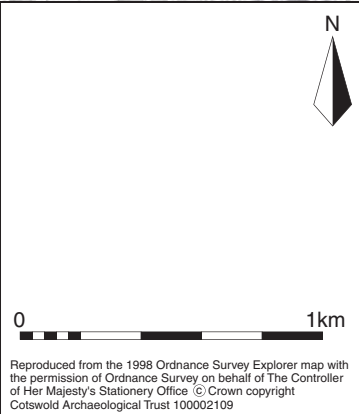
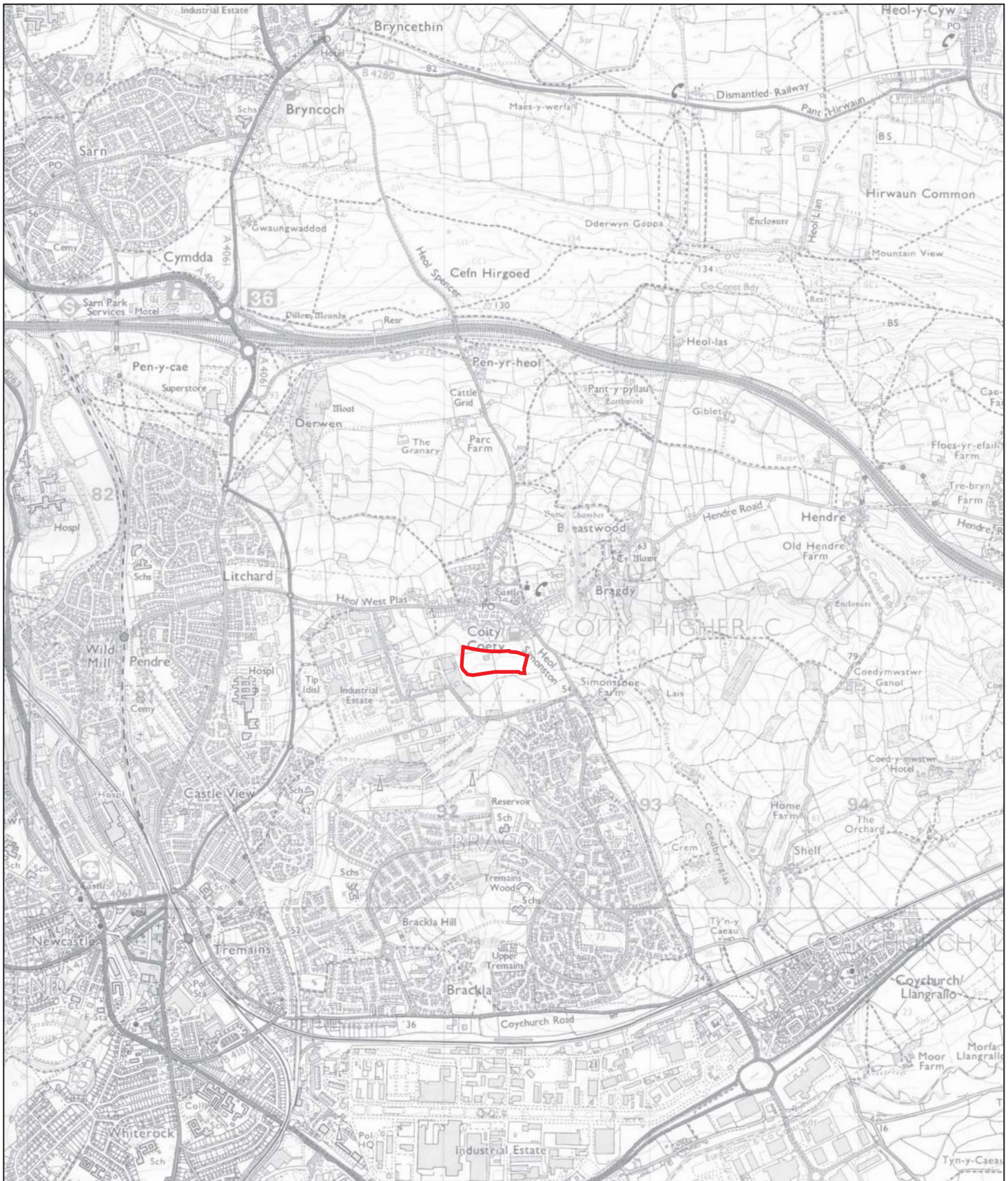
No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
900	Layer	Topsoil			0.20	
901	Layer	Subsoil			0.30	med
902	Layer	Natural				
903	Layer	Thin and intermittent charcoal rich layer between 900 and 901			0.02	

Trench 10

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1000	Layer	Topsoil			0.22	
1001	Layer	Subsoil			0.30	
1002	Layer	Natural				

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Count	Weight(g)	Spot-date
103	Medieval pottery: coarse sandy unglazed coarseware	1	4	pmed
	Post-medieval pottery: internally-glazed red earthenware	1	17	
	Fe obj	1	6	
603	Ceramic building material: curving, sanded	1	104	C18
	Post-medieval pottery: Staffs yellow slipware; glazed earthenware; white salt-glazed stoneware	5	11	
800	Post-medieval pottery: internally-glazed red earthenware	1	62	pmed
	Fired clay	2	10	
901	Medieval pottery: coarse sandy unglazed coarseware	1	9	med



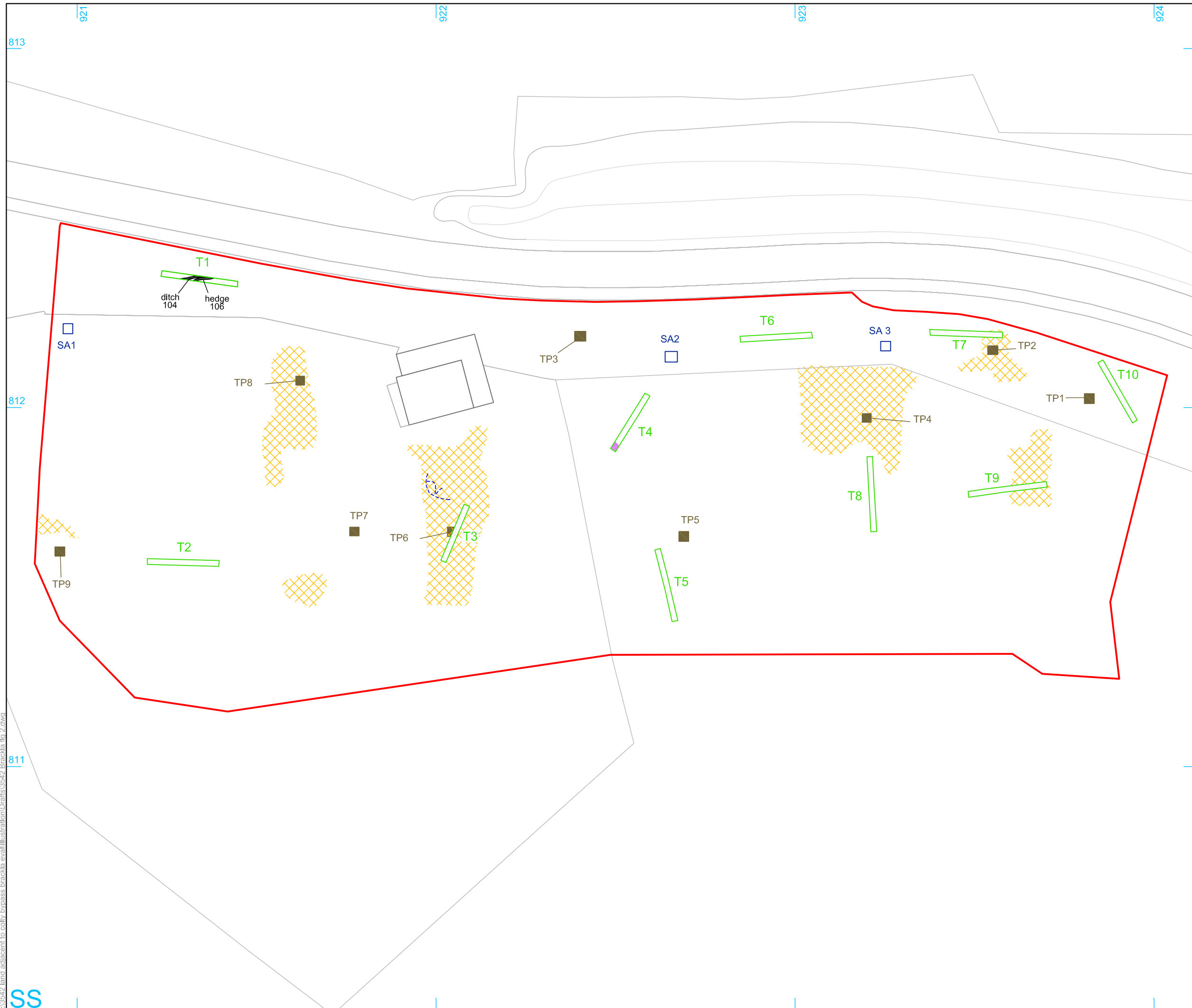

Cotswold Archaeology
 t 01285 771022
 f 01285 771033
 w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 Land adjacent to Coity bypass, Brackla
 Bridgend

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 3542	DATE 08-09-2011	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY JB	REVISION 00	
APPROVED BY PJM	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	1

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- ▬ site
- ▬ evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- modern
- - - approximate location of lime kiln depicted on 1919 Ordnance Survey map
- XXXXX geophysical anomaly
- borehole locations
- test pit locations



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 t 01285 771022
 f 01285 771033
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 Land adjacent to Coity bypass, Brackla Bridgend

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan, showing archaeological features and Site Investigation results

PROJECT NO.	3542	DATE	08-09-2011	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	JB	REVISION	00	2
APPROVED BY	PJM	SCALE@A3	1:1000	

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