

LAND AT LLANEGWAD, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION 2007



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For: Davies Richards



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Gan / By

Dyfed Archaeological Trust

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**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF PT ENC 8424, LLANEGWAD
CARMARTHENSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION 2007**

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SUMMARY

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Cambria Archaeology (Dyfed Archaeological Trust) Field Services in February/March 2007, on behalf of Davies Richards at the site of a proposed development on land adjacent to St Egwad's Church, Llanegwad, Carmarthenshire (NGR SN 5188 2137). An evaluation excavation in September 2006 revealed archaeological remains of undetermined character and date across the proposed site, and recovered a sherd of prehistoric pottery. Consequently this excavation was intended to ascertain and record the presence, character, extent and date of archaeological remains across the site prior to development.

The topsoil was machine stripped under archaeological supervision and the revealed surfaces cleaned by hand, showing archaeological features that were then excavated by hand. A variety of archaeological features were investigated across the site, although due to the small numbers of finds surviving decisive interpretation has proved difficult. A large ditch crossing the site appeared to act as an enclosure ditch to industrial activity and possible building remains to its south. Further industrial activity, in the form of iron working and a kiln, was also revealed to the north of the possible enclosure ditch. A scattering of pottery sherds across the site from stratified deposits may suggest a medieval date to this activity. Several flints finds and ephemeral curvilinear ditches also suggest prehistoric activity in the area.

INTRODUCTION

Land in Llanegwad was acquired for development by Davies Richards. The site lay adjacent to St Egwad's Church and its surrounding enclosure, which is known to have medieval origins. A medieval castle motte lies roughly 200m to the west. The proximity of known medieval sites lead to planning permission being granted with an initial archaeological constraint requiring an archaeological evaluation of the area to determine any archaeological presence, its condition, extent and character. This evaluation was undertaken in September 2006 by Cambria Archaeology Field Services. Four trenches were opened up across the site, three of them revealing significant archaeological remains although the character and date of the archaeology was difficult to determine within the scope of the evaluation, but it clearly indicated significant archaeology across the site. Consequently a full archaeological excavation was required prior to the development to determine and fully record the character, date and significance of the archaeology. This excavation was undertaken in February and March 2007.

Archive Deposition

Dyfed Archaeological Trust will hold the project archive until deposition with an appropriate body can be arranged.

THE SITE – LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

Llanegwad is a small village situated on the northern edge of the floodplain of the Afon Tywi, roughly midway between the towns of Carmarthen and Llandeilo in the Tywi valley. The underlying geology is one of sedimentary Ordovician rocks with superficial alluvium of sand silt and clay to the north and south. The current line of the river lies around 350m to the south, with ground only 50-60m to the south of the site regularly flooding. Aerial photographs show the village occupies a low headland extending onto the floodplain.

The site itself lies within a field of improved pasture (Fig.5), occupying a gentle north-south slope, before dropping off onto the floodplain proper. The field is bounded to the north by a hedgeline, beyond which lies a narrow trackway giving access to houses and farmland, to the west by a modern property boundary, to the east by the curvilinear stone wall of the churchyard, and it is open to the south. The field itself is undeveloped, and has been ploughed in the past. A cattle water tank lay centrally within the development area, fed by an underground water pipe from the field gateway in the north-east corner.

SITE HISTORY

The site lies in the village of Llanegwad, adjacent to the parish church. The village lies on the south side of the current A40, which roughly follows the line of a Roman road connecting the Roman forts and settlements at Llandeilo and Carmarthen. Both the church and the village are believed to have medieval origins although the early history of both sites is little researched and understood. St Egwad may have been a Welsh saint but there is currently only slight evidence to suggest that the church may have been a pre-Norman foundation. The churchyard appears roughly circular/sub-circular, possibly nuclear to a radial boundary system, which is sometimes characteristic of pre-Norman religious sites. However, this radial boundary system may just be the natural enclosing of the edge of the floodplain. Local tradition suggests the church originally lay in a field a short distance from its current site, although this is unproven. One suggestion is that it lay roughly 120m to the southwest, in the field to the south of the proposed development site, where features appear to be visible on aerial photographs. This would however be on the low-lying floodplain, off the natural low prominence on which the village is sited, suggesting this is unlikely to have been a site of any permanence, and the features may be caused by natural factors. By the time of the tithe map of c.1840 (Fig. 2) the church is shown in its current location, in what appears to be an almost square enclosure. It was entirely rebuilt on the same site in 1849, with further repairs in 1902.

Around 280m to the west of the church lie the remains of a motte. Again little is known about the history of this motte, whether it is earlier or contemporary to the core of the medieval settlement and church in Llanegwad. Such earthen mottes are characteristic of early earth and timber castle introduced during the Norman incursions into this area during the late 11th to mid 12th century. The castle is mentioned in the *Brut y Tywysogion* (*Red Book of Hengist* version) in 1203, when it was attacked and taken by Rhys Ieuanc. Some stonework has been suggested on top of the motte but this has not been proven archaeologically to relate to the castle. There is a suggestion that Llanegwad may also have played host to an English army in 1287 as it moved up from Carmarthen to lay siege to Dryslwyn castle (Lewis), in the wake of Rhys ap Meredudd's revolt. The besieging army, complete with siege engines, is said to have consisted of over 11,000 men and camped in the valley for some time as it surrounded the castle.

One of the earliest maps of the area is Bowen's map of 1729, although at a small-scale. The church is marked, as is Llwyn-y-fortune to the north-east, but otherwise no detail is shown. A small settlement based around a staggered crossroads in front of the church is marked on the Ordnance Survey original surveyors drawing of 1813, but the first map that shows the village in any detail is the parish tithe map of c.1840 (Fig. 2). By this time much of the village that is visible today had been laid out. The village consisted of a church, one, possibly two public houses (the Red Lion an the Farmers Arms), the farmstead of Penygarn, the main house of Castell Howell, as well as 8 houses, divided into 12 dwellings and 4 cottages. The economy of the village during this time would have been predominantly agricultural. The village is surrounded by land belonging to the church, and the farmstead of Penygarn to the north. The particular area of development lay within an undeveloped field at this time, called 'Waundanyreglwys', belonging to the church and bounded along the south by a stream. By the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 3) the village had expanded slightly to the east, and had also acquired a new vicarage, school and post office. Penygarn farmstead appears to have been abandoned but Castell Howell expanded. Recent development has included small-scale expansion westwards and northwards.

Based on this map evidence it seems that the village was arranged around a crossroads with the church as a focal point in the middle. The east-west entrance to the current village that runs past the modern graveyard may be a continuation of an original main road, curving around the northern boundary of Troslyn and through Penygarn, meeting up with the trackway past Arfryn and rejoining the main road in Pont-ar-Gothi. This site therefore lies just off the centre of the medieval village, with the trackway along the northern edge possibly an original route, and one that would have lead to the castle.

METHODOLOGY

The area was machine excavated across the proposed development area, using a toothless grading bucket under archaeological supervision, down to a level where archaeological features became apparent. This was initially undertaken over an area roughly 47m east-west by 17m north-south. A strip roughly 27m wide was then extended southwards by 9m as this appeared to be an area of more definite archaeological features. The spoil remained on site. The site was then hand cleaned to ascertain the presence of any archaeological features, which were then investigated by hand. Due to adverse weather conditions and time constraints many of the features could only be sample excavated. The weather proved to be a detrimental factor throughout much of the excavation, with the very wet conditions making excavation and identification of features difficult.

The features were recorded in plan and sections were recorded where warranted. Photographs were taken of all identified archaeological features and deposits. Significant deposits were sampled and various finds were collected. The pottery was sent away to Paul Courtney to be identified; the report is included to the rear. Soil sub-samples were sent to specialists for analysis, but these were negative and no further analysis was undertaken..

EXCAVATION RESULTS

The depth of topsoil varied across the site, with a thicker deposit of hillwash covering the western end. A number of features were recorded across the site, and even though relationships were not always established it is likely there is multi-period activity. The bulk of the features appeared to lie within a possible enclosure ditch (1003), although an area of activity, including kiln 1028 lay to the north (Fig. 6).

Modern features

Several field drain pipe-trenches (1034 & 1093 – not shown on plan) were recorded running across the site, in both a north-south and NE-SW direction. Some of these appear to have been field drains, containing ceramic pipes; others appear to have been associated with the cattle water tank that previously stood centrally within this field.

A large ditch (1082) ran in an NE-SW direction across the site, which cut ditch 1003, but was itself cut by the modern field drains. This large ditch appears in section to have had numerous re-cuts but it contained two fills that sealed the re-cuts. The function of this feature is unknown, but it is presumed to be a fairly recent feature, containing some later post-medieval pottery. It runs towards a stream lying to the south-west.

Possible enclosure

Ditch 1003

Towards the southern end of the site a group of relatively well-preserved features were present to the south of, and possibly enclosed by, an east-west ditch (1003) that extended across the site for c.28m before turning to the south. The eastern end of the ditch also appeared to curve to the south, reinforcing the view that it may have been an enclosure ditch. Where sectioned the ditch was U-shaped, c.2.2m wide and 0.95m deep, with evidence of a possible re-cut along its northern edge. It contained two fills (Fig. 7; 1002 & 1037), which were both similar, brown-grey silty-clays, suggesting a couple of periods of backfilling. Finds from these deposits were relatively scarce and all came from the upper fill

(1002). They included some poorly preserved animal bones and a few fragments of medieval pottery and one sherd of (residual) Roman pottery.

The pottery recovered from the ditch fill is consistent in date with the few pottery sherds recovered from features to the south (the interior of the enclosure). However, the fill lacked the large amounts of charcoal and ferric slag that was more evident in features to the north, again suggestive that the ditch formed an enclosure around an area of industrial activity separate from the activity to the north. A ditch on a similar alignment recorded approximately 18.5m to the south during the evaluation stage of works (Poucher 2006) may have represented the southern extent of the enclosure. As this ditch lay outside the area of development it was not re-examined during this round of works and any relationship remains unproven.

Activity within the enclosure would appear to be industrial in character. If the southward turn suggested at the eastern end of ditch 1003 did represent the eastern side of an enclosure then lying centrally within the enclosure were two large pits (1040 and 1042) and feeding gullies, which were suggestive of possible tanning operations.

Pits 1040 & 1042

Two parallel and adjacent sub-rectangular pits were recorded, dug into the gentle hill-slope (Fig. 7; 1045 & 1042). The easternmost (1040) was slightly larger, measuring 3.21m north-south by 2.37m east-west and 0.43m deep, with steep straight sides and a flat base. Pit 1042 lay 0.93m to the west and measured 2.93m north-south by 1.84m east-west and 0.62m deep but with similar straight sides and a flat base, sloping gently north to south. Both pits were fully excavated. Pit 1042 contained a thin (0.05m thick) primary deposit (1044) of mixed silt and clay seemingly washed in soon after its construction, above which was a thick deposit (1043) of mid grey-brown silty-clay. Pit 1040 also had a thin deposit of silt and clay at its base (1045), overlain by 0.06m of grey-brown silty-clay mottled with natural clay (1041) with the remainder of the pit containing a very similar upper deposit (1039) to the upper fill of the neighbouring pit. Samples were taken from the fills (1044 & 1043 and 1041 & 1039) of both pits to test for evidence of tanning, or any other process. The results of the analysis (undertaken by Dr J Crowther, University of Lampeter) of these deposits revealed no evidence to suggest their former functions, suggesting they were mainly back-filling deposits post dating the period of possible industrial activity. Fill 1043 contained a small amount of animal teeth and burnt bone, two unidentified iron objects, fragments of possible kiln-lining, two flint flakes and two sherds of pottery of medieval date. Fill 1039 produced a small collection of finds, including one piece of burnt bone and a few fragments of possible kiln-lining along with a heat-affected stone.

Pit 1040 appeared to be fed by a shallow V-shaped gully (1011), which ran into its north-western corner. This gully extended south from ditch 1003 and measured 0.6m wide x 0.32m deep. A similarly sized U-shaped gully, 0.57m wide x 0.29m deep (1092), ran south from just outside the southeast corner of the pit, extending beyond the excavation area. Organic material was recovered from the single fill of this gully, of which samples were taken but could not be identified.

Pit 1042 may have had a similar arrangement of gullies but definite relationships had been lost. A gully (1015) ran in a roughly north-south direction for 3.3m towards the north-eastern corner of pit 1042 but the southern, and northern, end of this gully had been truncated by later activity. This U-shaped gully measured 0.36m wide and 0.15m deep and contained a dark grey silty-clay fill similar to that of nearby pit 1090, although with less charcoal. Several pieces of possible

kiln-lining were recovered from this fill, along with two fragments of a bluey-green glass. No gully was observed on the south side of pit 1042 but it lay close to the edge of the excavated area and poor weather conditions may have obscured ephemeral features.

Pit 1081 & ditch 1087

Lying to the north-west of these double pits was a circular pit and ditch. The pit (1081) lay 1.1m to the south of ditch 1003 and was only partially excavated. The pit measured 3.25m by 2.9m, 0.62m deep with steep straight sides with a flat base. It contained a single fill of mixed grey silty-clay with some stone and charcoal inclusions suggesting the feature was backfilled after use. Several finds were recovered from this deposit, including some degraded bone, a small piece of possible kiln-lining, a piece of ferric slag, two iron nails and the base of a late medieval jug. Located centrally along the southern edge of this pit and running in a north-south direction for at least 5.7m was a large ditch (1087). This ditch was sectioned, revealing it to be 1.47m wide although tapering to the south, and 0.5m deep with concave slightly stepped sides down to a flat base. It contained a single fill that produced no finds, suggesting it was backfilled after use. Its position midway along the southern edge of pit 1081 and the fact it does not run further north than this pit would suggest these two features are related, although their function remains unclear. The fact that the ditch also avoids the two large pits (1040 & 1042) may suggest that they are also contemporary.

Other features

Other features were also revealed in this area although their functions and relationships remain obscure. A sub-circular pit 1090 was truncated by pit 1081, indicating an earlier feature, although its lower fill was also very similar to the fill of nearby gully 1015 which would appear to be part of the general semi-industrial nature of the features in this area. Pit 1090 measured 1.35m x 1.2m x 0.1m deep and contained two fills, the lower of which (1017) contained some remains of possible kiln-lining and metal slag. A small posthole (1052, not shown on plan) was also revealed lying in between pits 1040 and 1042. No clear relationship was established, and the fills of the posthole revealed no finds other than possible post-packing, but its proximity to the pit may indicate the two are associated. Located between gullies 1011 and 1015 was a shallow circular pit (1036), measuring 1.47m by 1.38m, and 0.57m deep. The lower fill of this pit, 0.41m thick, was a dark brown silty-clay but contained large amounts of charcoal and coal, which may suggest this is a later feature, no finds were recovered from its fills.

Lying to the west of this area of activity, but still within the bounds of the possible enclosure was a series of stone and soil layers and some ephemeral and truncated curvilinear ditches. A spread (1046) of well-compacted small to medium angular stones covered an area of c.7.3m by c.3.9m in the southwest corner of the site. This may represent some form of surface, although no definite relationship with any cut features was established. This layer is very similar in character to large compacted stone spreads also recorded to the north of ditch 1003, and also within the evaluation trenches in this area. Several finds were recovered during cleaning the stone spread (1046), including one piece of bluish glass, a small fragment of possible kiln-lining, an iron nail, a flint flake and a large sherd of post-medieval pottery. To the north of this stone spread lay two curvilinear ditches or gullies. Gully 1050 ran in a roughly southeast-northwest direction for c.2.8m before curving round to the west for another c.1.4m, averaging 0.45m wide and 0.12m deep, with moderate sides and a flat base. No finds were recovered from the fill of this ditch. Roughly 1m to the east of 1050 was another gully (1097) which ran for roughly 2.6m in a straight north-south direction, 0.4m wide, before curving to the west for another c.1.4m. Again no

finds were recovered from the single fill, which revealed little evidence as to the function of the gully.

Ditch 1009

The eastern side of the area of possible semi-industrial activity within the enclosure appears to have been demarcated by a north-south ditch (1009) running south from ditch 1003 and beyond the area of excavation. This ditch was U-shaped with moderately sloping sides, measuring 1.35m wide and 0.63m deep. It contained two fills, the lower clayey fill suggests a possible natural silting of the lower 0.3m of the ditch with later silty-clay backfill above. Roughly 2m from the northern end of the ditch a rectangular extension (1080) runs out to the east for 1.6m, although a similarity in the fills suggests they may be part of the same feature. No finds were recovered from the fills.

Structure 1005

Evidence of a possible structure lay on the eastern side of ditch 1009. This consisted of an L-shaped ditch (1005) with evidence of at least one post setting in its base. The ditch, 0.75m wide and 0.28m deep, ran east-west for 6.1m (in line with the rectangular extension (1080) of ditch 1009) before turning 90° south to run for c.3.7m. The full southward extent of this ditch was lost to later truncation. The post setting (1084) measured roughly 0.13m in diameter, and 0.1m deep from the base of the ditch. The presence of the post setting and the layout and size of the ditch would suggest the construction cut for a timber structure, although possibly not a very substantial one. No finds were recovered from the ditch fill.

Several small postholes and stake-holes were revealed to the south and east of this ditch, possibly indicating internal structures. These postholes and stake-holes were also fairly small, averaging between c.0.1m and c.0.3m in diameter, and all containing similar charcoal-rich fills. Much of this internal area was under water for long periods of time that could have obscured further postholes and features, although a charcoal-rich spread roughly 1m by 0.89m was recorded roughly 4m south and 4.2m east of ditch 1005.

Ditch 1005 cut into an earlier gully (1007), a wide shallow gully running in a roughly NNW-SSE direction for c.1.7m. This gully was 1.4m wide and only 0.16m deep, extending for c.1.7m before being lost to later truncation. Cut along the western edge was a narrower deeper gully (1078), 0.48m wide and another 0.15m deeper. The greater depth meant it could be traced for 4.6m. The southern ends of these gullies ran beyond ditch 1005, with the northern ends running as far as far as ditch 1003. There was no indication they extended to the north of the ditch but their shallow nature meant they may have been truncated at this end as well, and they also contained a similar charcoal rich fill to a deposit (1019) on the north side of the ditch. The lower fill was contained mostly within 1078 and included a high percentage of charcoal, also produced a few small pieces of burnt bone and a small unidentified iron object.

Kiln 1028

Features to the north of ditch 1003 also demonstrated evidence of industrial or semi-industrial activity, but the abundance of ferric slag in some of the features suggests this may have been a discrete industrial area separate from the enclosure.

Located c.4.2m to the north of ditch 1003 was a sub-oval pit (1028), 1.8m long by 0.5m wide and 0.15m deep. The lower 0.07m was filled with a succession of charcoal rich deposits, overlain by a yellowy-grey sandy-silt. Where the pit had been cut into the natural clay subsoils the clay had been reddened from contact

with high temperatures. This reddened clay and the abundance of charcoal indicates this may have been the remains of kiln.

A small cluster of features were apparent around the possible kiln, although the relationships between these features is difficult to ascertain. Located adjacent to the north-eastern edge of the possible kiln was a small oval pit (1055), measuring 1m by 0.55m, and 0.25m deep. It contained a single sandy-silt fill with little evidence of charcoal or heating activity, no finds were produced. Roughly 0.7m to the southeast of 1028 was another small oval pit (1025), 0.88m by 0.57m and 0.07m deep. The single silty-clay fill contained only a small amount of charcoal inclusions and no finds. A small posthole (1030) was also recorded nearby (c.0.6m south of 1028), measuring 0.26m by 0.2m with evidence of stone packing along its eastern side.

Spread to the south of these features was a large area of mixed silt and charcoal (1019 – not shown on the plan), that formed a crescentic area as it appeared to have collected within a natural hollow. The abundance of charcoal in this deposit and its location down-slope of the possible kiln may suggest a relationship between the two. The southern edge of this deposit was cut by ditch 1003, although as this was not a thick deposit it may have only been cut by the re-cut, however, no obvious charcoal rich deposits were recorded within ditch 1003.

Iron slag features

Around 8.3m to the east of 1028, against the edge of the excavated area, was a 0.03m thick deposit of charcoal and ferric slag (1057). After initial cleaning it appeared to be the fill of a pit but upon excavation it proved to be a layer measuring at least 2.09m by 1.25m overlying the natural subsoils.

On the northern side of this deposit lay a section of ditch 1077 (Fig. 7; 1077). This ditch ran in a roughly east-west direction for at least 7m, measuring 1.65m and 0.94m deep. It ran beyond the area of excavation to the east and was obscured by later drainage channels to the west. The ditch had steep, slightly convex sides, with a concave base. It contained several fills, the lower fill being abundant in ferric slag remains. Overlying this was a succession of grey-brown silty-clays along with some re-deposited natural. The only finds consisted of the ferric slag within the lower fill. The abundance of this slag in both the ditch fill and the adjacent deposit 1057 would suggest a relationship between the two. The proximity of the possible kiln may also be significant, although there was a lack of slag from that cluster of features.

FINDS

1002 (Upper fill of ditch 1003)

Pottery:

1 sherd Dyfed Gravel-Tempered Glazed Ware, ?late 12th – early 16th century.

2 sherds Llanstephan Calcareous Jugs, late 13th – 14th century.

1 sherd Dfed Gravel-Temperered Ridge Tile, ?late 12th – early 16th century.

1 sherd Romano-British mortaria

Several animal bone fragments (including 1 piece of burnt bone)

1 piece CBM

1010 (Single fill of gully 1011)

3 fragments of ?kiln lining

2 small pieces of ferric slag

1016 (Single fill of gully 1015)

Large amount of ferric slag

1017 (Single fill of pit 1090)

6 pieces of ferric slag

1018 (Single fill of gully 1097)

1 sherd Dyfed Gravel-Tempered un-glazed Ware, ?late 12th – early 16th century

1 Pb object – possible small weight

3 fragments of ?kiln lining

1039 (Upper fill of pit 1040)

4 small pieces of ?kiln lining

2 pieces of ferric slag

1043 (Upper fill of pit 1042)

2 sherds Dyfed Gravel-Tempered Glazed Ware, ?late 12th – early 16th # century

Several fragments of animal (?bovine) teeth

2 Fe object - unidentified

8 pieces of ?kiln lining

2 flint flakes

1046 (Stony spread)

5 pieces of ferric slag

5 pieces of heat-affected stone

1047 (Silty-clay layer overlying stony spread)

1 Fe object – large ring

6 pieces of ferric slag

1049 (Single fill of gully 1050)

1 piece of ?kiln lining

1053 (Unknown context)

Several small pieces of ferric slag

1057 (Charcoal rich spread)

Large amount of ferric slag

1058 (Upper fill of pit 1081)

- 1 sherd South Glamorgan-type jug, ?14th – 15th century
- 5 fragments of badly degraded animal bone
- 1 Fe object - ?nail
- 1 piece of ferric slag
- 1 piece of ?kiln lining

1059 (Lower fill of gully 1078)

- 1 Fe object - unidentified
- 3 fragments of burnt bone

1083 (Fill of trench 1082)

- 1 sherd Fine Micaceous glazed jug, ?13th – early 15th century
- 1 sherd Lead-Glazed Red Earthenware, late 16th – 19th century

1099 (Clean-up layer over stony spread 1046)

- 1 sherd North Devon gravel-tempered ware, 16th – 19th century
- 1 Fe object - nail
- 1 small piece of ?kiln lining
- 1 piece blue-green glass
- 1 flint flake

Unstratified

- 15 sherds of assorted pottery
- Several pieces of ?kiln lining
- 1 heat-affected stone
- 2 flint flakes
- 2 pieces of thick dark glass
- Several small fragments of animal bone (including some burnt bone)
- 2 Fe objects - unidentified
- 2 Pb straps
- 1 piece of CBM

DISCUSSION

Prehistoric activity

Finds recovered from the evaluation stage of works (Poucher 2006) indicated the possibility of Prehistoric/Romano-British activity on site, although the finds were not definitively tied into any particular features, other than underlying a general stony layer. The full-scale excavation uncovered further Prehistoric and Romano-British finds but these occurred as residual finds in later medieval and post-medieval contexts.

The flint flakes were unworked and therefore cannot be closely dated. Flint does not occur naturally in the area and therefore suggests they were transported to the site, indicating some form of prehistoric activity in the area. The evaluation recorded one large piece of late Prehistoric or Romano-British pottery, although unfortunately it too has not been dated closely. A single sherd of Romano-British pottery recovered during the excavation stage may indicate activity on site during that period, but the proximity of a main Roman road to the north, following the line of the A40 connecting the Roman fort at Llandeilo and the Roman town of Carmarthen (Moridunum) may account for the presence of the pottery on site.

Several ephemeral features recorded across the site could still relate to an earlier prehistoric and Romano-British phase of activity. In the north-east corner of the site initial cleaning suggested a possible curvilinear gully reminiscent of a round house gully. Unfortunately this feature was obscured by heavy rain before it could be recorded and subsequent re-cleaning of this area failed to reveal the feature again, suggesting it either did not exist or was so ephemeral any trace was removed in the cleaning process.

Whilst most features within the possible enclosure ditch 1003 appeared to relate to a period of medieval activity there were some features that could not easily be included in that group, or could be seen to be earlier. At the eastern end ditch 1007 and gully 1078 pre-dated the possible construction cut, although the charcoal-rich fill of 1078 would suggest a link with the main period of later industrial activity. At the western end two curvilinear ditches, 1050 and 1097 may also predate the enclosure but their precise function and date could not be established from the recorded remains.

Industrial activity

The main character of the archaeology across the site would appear to be industrial. Ditch 1003 appears to enclose a discrete area of industrial and related activity but industrial activity appears more extensive. To the north, the heat-reddened bowl 1028 and its charcoal fill seem to represent the base of a kiln. Lying to the south was a wide spread of charcoal (1019 – not shown on plan), whilst a similar charcoal deposit filled gully 1078. Their arrangement close to the kiln would suggest they are contemporary features. The proximity of a charcoal deposit with abundant ferric-slag in nearby ditch 1077 and deposit 1057 may indicate the kiln was used as part of a process of iron working. No finds were recovered from these deposits to date them, and as layer 1019 and gully 1078 are both cut by features associated with the enclosure 1003 it could be said this activity is earlier, although the proximity of two areas of industrial activity would suggest at least a broad contemporaneity.

If the possible return visible at the eastern end of ditch 1003 does represent the limit of the enclosure, then it would measure roughly 28m across. Also if the

similarly sized ditch recorded during the evaluation stage of works to the south represents a southern edge to the enclosure then the enclosed area would measure roughly 28m by 18.5m. Ditch 1009 appears to form an internal division, running at right angles to ditch 1003, and is possibly also demonstrated in the evaluation trench to the south. This forms an area roughly 10m across within which lies the remains of a timber structure represented by ditch 1005 with a posthole setting cut into its base. Pits 1040 and 1042, along with pit 1081 and ditch 1087 and various associated gullies occupy an area roughly 10m wide in the centre of the enclosure, which may indicate internal divisions occurring regularly at 10m.

The precise nature of the industrial activity remains difficult to positively identify. The two adjacent pits are fed by and drained by gently sloping gullies, indicative of some form of water management. The abundance of charcoal and the presence of possible kiln-lining, a baked clay deposit burnt and fired on one side, clearly indicates heating activity. These activities and the layout of the pits may be explained by the processes involved in tanning, where leather would be soaked in different solutions at various stages of the tanning process, often in a series of different pits, as well as being tied to racks, scraped and sometimes smoked. The processes involved in tanning however would often leave behind distinctive residues that were not present on this site. An examination of the soil samples taken from the two pits indicated they were probably from later backfilling and showed no indication of industrial activity. The lack of tanning residue may indicate the pits were lined, or the process was temporary, or that the pits and associated features performed another industrial function.

Associated with this industrial activity were areas of stone packed surfaces, both to the west and north of the enclosure. These surfaces could not be proven to be associated with the industrial activity other than by proximity, indeed there is some suggestion it may have overlain part of the possible kiln 1028, but they may be indicative of hard standing or yard surfaces surrounding the industrial activity.

Several of the features within the enclosure produced a small amount of pottery that is indicative of a medieval date to this activity. The bulk of the pottery occupies a time frame between the late 12th to early 16th century, with some sherds suggesting a slightly narrower time period of the 13th to 15th centuries.

This industrial activity may therefore represent an industrial area of the medieval settlement of Llanegwad. The siting of such an area adjacent to the church and main focal centre of the village, especially if the industry involved the noxious process of tanning, would appear unusual. It is possible that the position of natural resources and local property divisions dictated the siting of this industrial activity but evidence of this has not been found archaeologically. This location may also indicate the site was a temporary one, which is also suggested by the lack of any substantial structures present in this area, and evidence of deliberate backfilling from many of the features.

One suggestion is that the site may be associated with a temporary military presence within the village, as indicated by the suggested presence of a large English army in Llanegwad prior to the siege of Dryslwyn castle in 1287 (Lewis). The original historical reference describing the presence of the army within Llanegwad at this time has not been verified, but a large military presence could account for iron and leather working activity as well as the temporary nature of the site and its position seemingly ignoring the presence and significance of the adjacent church site.

CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological excavation uncovered evidence of medieval industrial activity, as well as evidence of prehistoric and possible Romano-British activity, in Llanegwad village, close to the church and the traditional core of the village.

At the southern end of the site several pits, ditches and gullies appear to be located within an enclosure ditch, displaying evidence of semi-industrial activity, possibly including tanning, and possibly also temporary in nature. Pottery from some of these deposits suggests a medieval date to this activity, some time between the 12th and 16th centuries. To the north a possible kiln and other features containing large amounts of ferric slag indicate more extensive industrial activity, undated but presumably broadly contemporary. Although only broadly dated a possible connection with a 13th century military occupation of the village is suggested.

Later post-medieval and modern ditches cutting across the site would appear to be part of the later agricultural drainage of the site.

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APPENDIX 1; POTTERY REPORT

Llanegwad Pottery, Paul Courtney (12/2007)

DGTG Dyfed Gravel-Tempered Glazed Wares

This fabric group jug sherds. One reduced rim and two predominantly oxidised body sherds. Inclusions were moderate, rounded to sub-rounded and ill-sorted quartz up to 0.5 mm, and moderate to abundant, flattened siltstone rock fragments up to 3mm. Similar wares across Dyfed and multiple kiln sites are likely. ?late 12th-early 16th century (Papazian and Campbell 1992, 56; O'Mahoney 1995, 9-11).

3 shs; 20g

DGRT Dyfed Gravel-Tempered Ridge Tile

Glazed ridge tile with fabric and date as DGTG.

1 sh; 22g

DGTU Dyfed Gravel-Tempered un-glazed Wares

A single sherd from an unglazed cooking pots/storage jar. Inclusions were moderate, rounded to sub-rounded and ill-sorted quartz up to 0.5 mm, and abundant, flattened siltstone rock fragments up to 3mm. Similar wares across Dyfed and multiple kiln sites are likely. ?late 12th-early 16th century (Papazian and Campbell 1992, 56; O'Mahoney 1995, 9-11).

1 sh; 21g

SGTJ South Glamorgan-type jugs

A single body sherd from a green-glazed Glamorgan-type medieval jug or chafing dish was recovered. The fabric had oxidised surfaces and a reduced core with a brown streaked olive-green glaze on both interior and exterior. Inclusions included abundant ill-sorted, rounded and multi-coloured quartz mostly up to 0.3mm and occasional red iron mineral inclusions. This generic and currently ill-defined type was probably produced at several centres in south Glamorgan, including Cardiff where a Crockerton suburb indicates a medieval pottery. Its distribution extends into the Carmarthen area in small quantities. The flanged base imitating metal prototypes and internal glaze suggest a late medieval date (?14th-15th centuries) (Papazian and Campbell 1992, 65 and fig.30: fabric Kenfig-A; O'Mahoney 1995, 22: B19).

1sh; 22g.

LLAN Llanstephan Calcareous Jugs

Two sherds probably from a single wheel-thrown jug in hard, reduced fabric with oxidised red inner surface with rilled exterior surface. Numerous small rounded leached-out calcareous inclusions, probably late 13th-14th centuries (Papazian and Campbell 1992, 65-8; O'Mahoney 1995, 17-9: B9&B11)

2 shs; 7g.

FMGJ Fine Micaceous glazed jugs

A single sherd from a soft and fine, oxidised fabric with green glaze on rilled exterior. The fabric has occasional rounded quartz up to 0.5mm fine mica inclusions and is probably from the Old Red Sandstone geology of the Gwent-Herfordshire area. ?13th-early 15th century (Papazian and Campbell 1992, 64-9; Vince 1985: fabric series A)

1 sh; 1g.

LGRE Lead -Glazed Red Earthenware.

One sherd from an internally green-glazed vessel with oxidised red fabric with few visible inclusions, probably from Glamorgan or Somerset, late 16th-19th centuries.

1 sh; 4 g.

NDGT North Devon gravel tempered ware.

One sherd from internally-glazed vessel in predominantly orange, oxidised fabric with greenish-brown glaze. Inclusions are coarse, angular quartz gravel with biotite flakes. Produced at Barnstaple and Bideford in North Devon, 16th century - 19th centuries, though most common in 17th-18th centuries (Allan 1984, 28-32; Grant 2005).

1 sh; 33g.

Discussion

The site produced 8 sherds of medieval pot and a sherd of ridge tile from medieval contexts as well as a Romano-British mortaria rim (context 1002). The wide range of sources include Dyfed (LLAN, DGTG and DGTU), Gwent or Herefordshire (FMGW) and the vale of Glamorgan (SGGW). This probably reflects the position of the site on the main routeway from Carmarthen to Brecon. The base of a jug or chafing dish in South Glamorgan-type (SGGW) ware probably dates to the 14th or 15th centuries. Context 1083 can be dated to the post-medieval period on the presence of a single sherd of glazed red earthenware (LGRE).

Quantification

Context	Fabric	Sherds	Wt (g)	Form	Date
1002	DGTG	1	7	Jug rim	med
1002	LLAN	2	7	Jug	med
1002	DGRT	1	22	Ridge tile	med
1002	RB pot	1	31	Mortaria rim	Roman
1018	DGTU	1	21	c.pot/jar	med
1043	DGTG	2	13	Jug	med
1058	SGGW	1	76	Base of jug/chafing dish (l. med)	Late med
1083	FMGW	1	1	Jug	med
1083	LGRE	1	4	Int. glazed	Post-med
1099	NDGT	1	33	Int. glazed	Post-med

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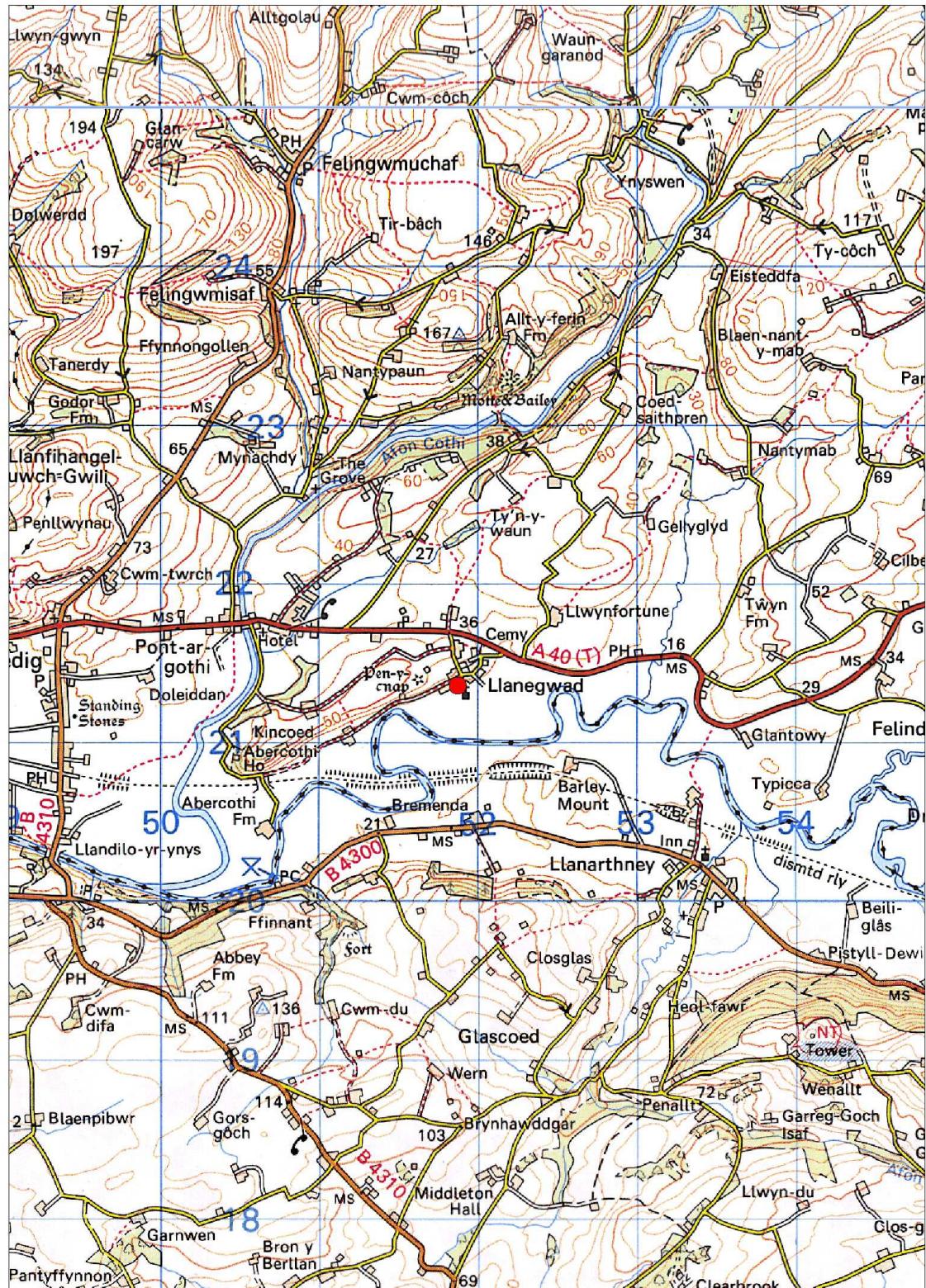


Figure 1. Location map, based on the Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 1995 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

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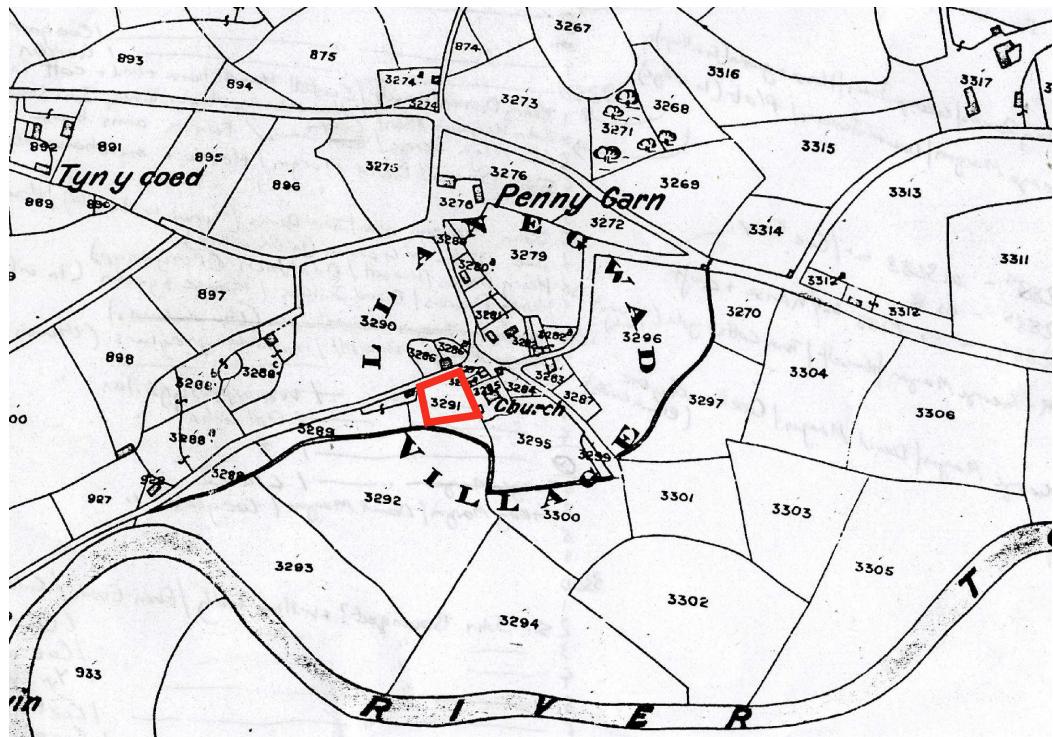


Figure 2: Extract from the parish tithe map of c1840, with the development site outlined in red.

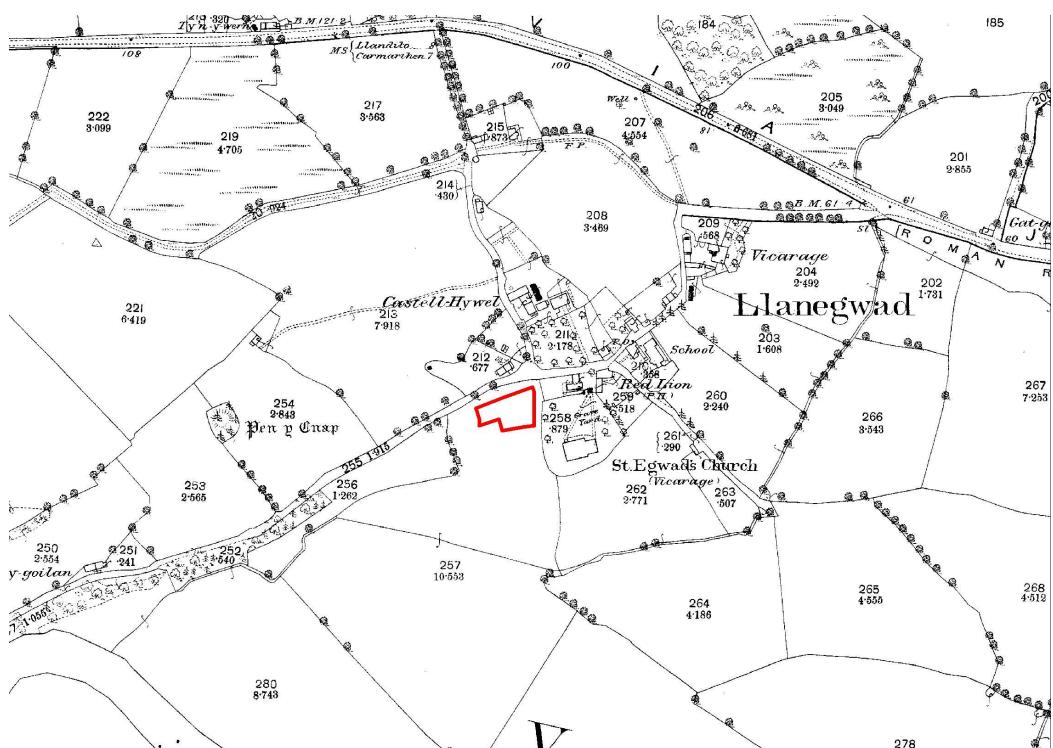


Figure 3: Extract from the 1st edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1888. The development area is outlined in red.

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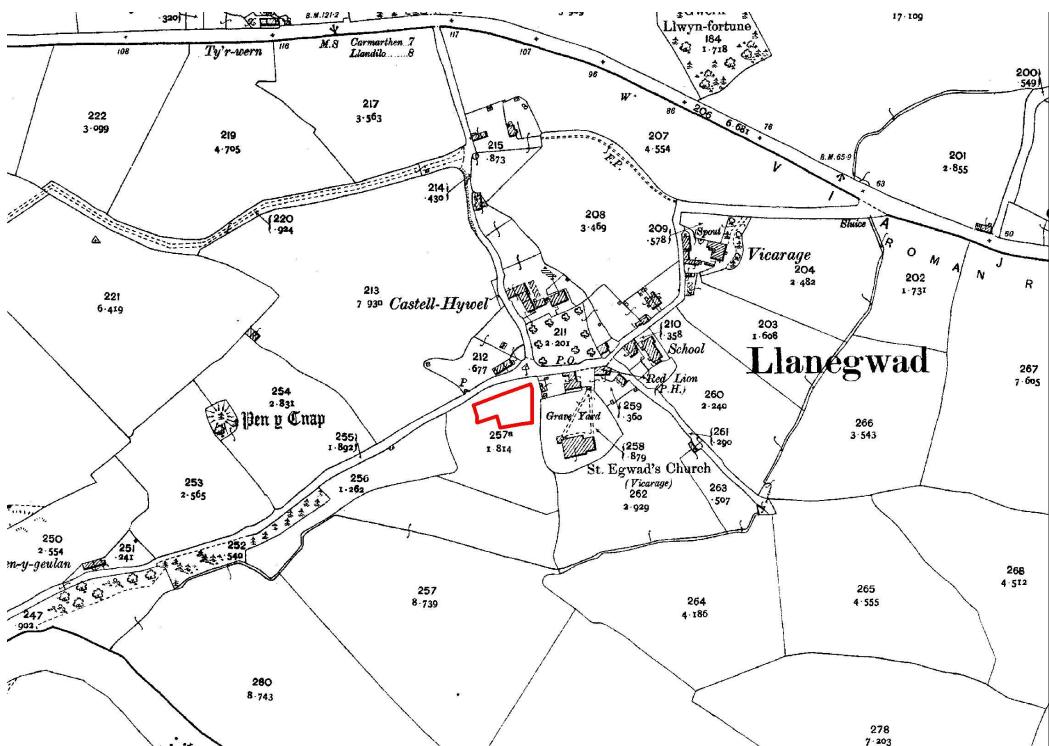


Figure 4: Extract from the 2nd edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1906. The development area is outlined in red.

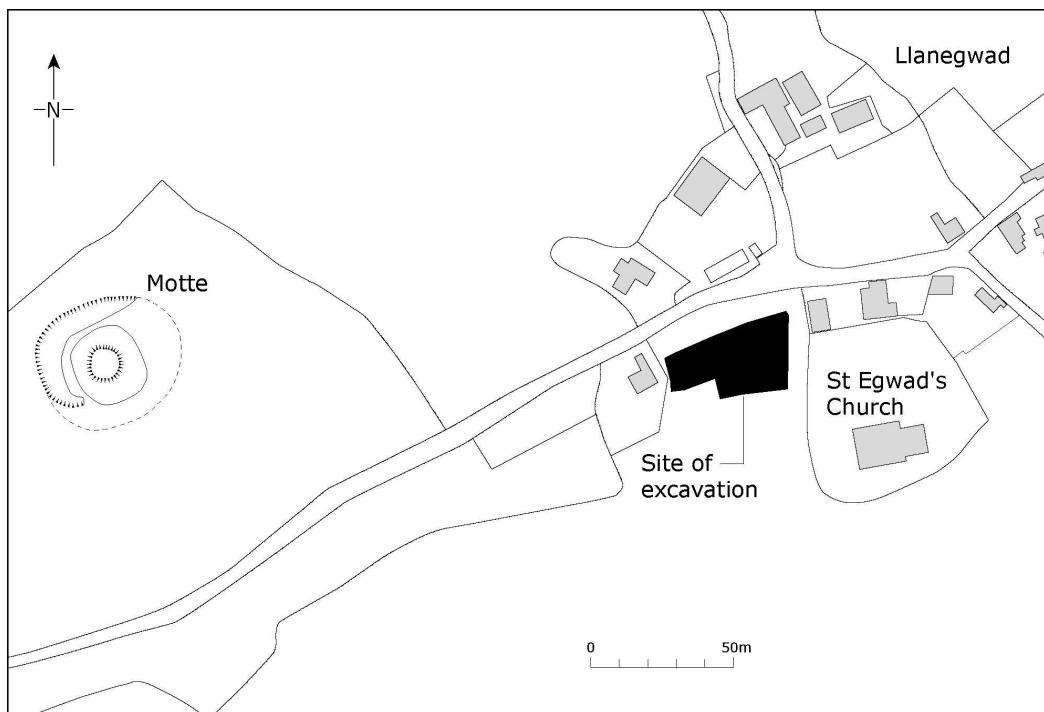


Figure 5: A plan of the village of Llanegwad, showing the area of excavation as well as the site of the church and the medieval castle motte.

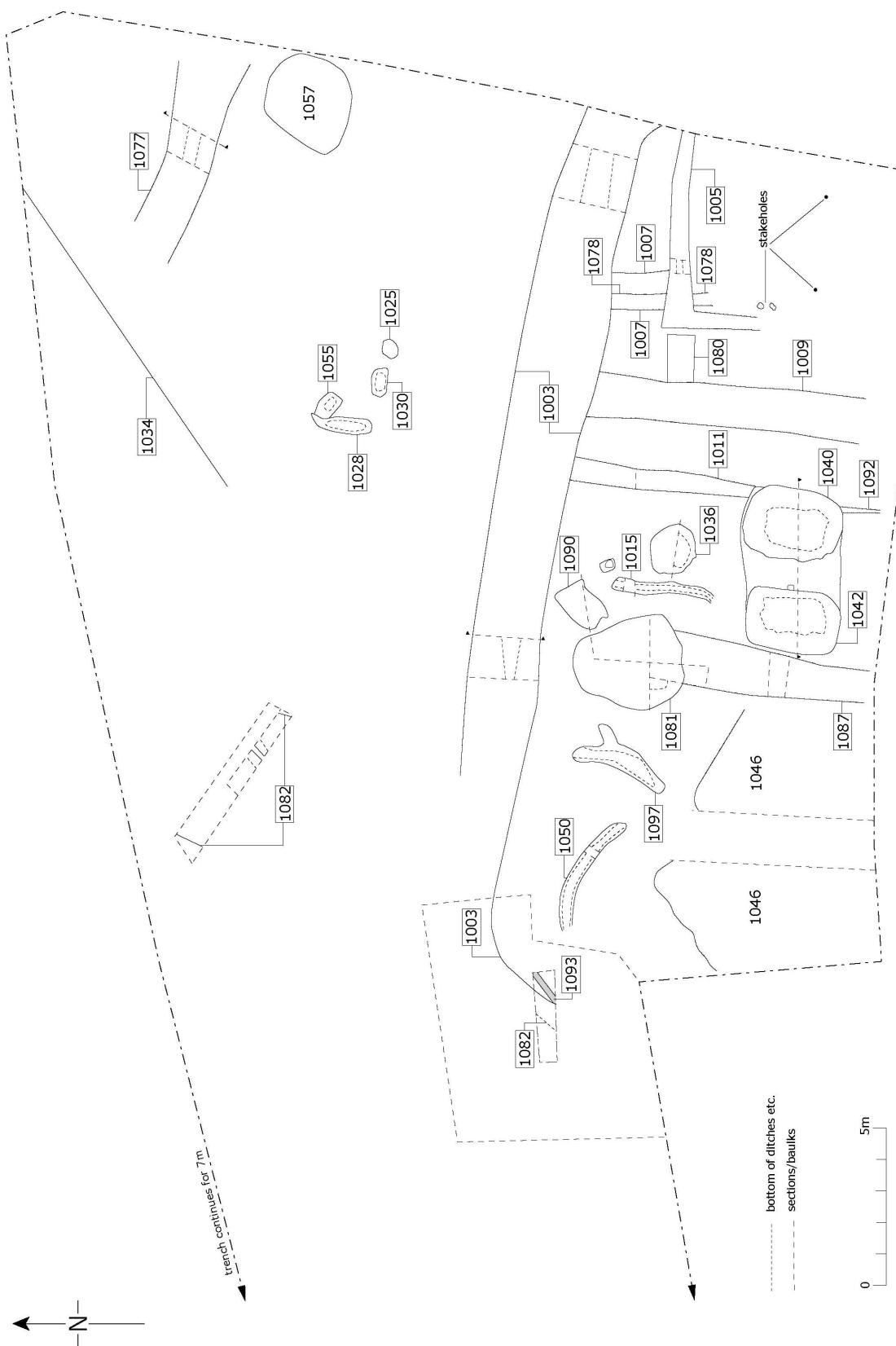


Figure 6: Site plan, showing archaeological features.

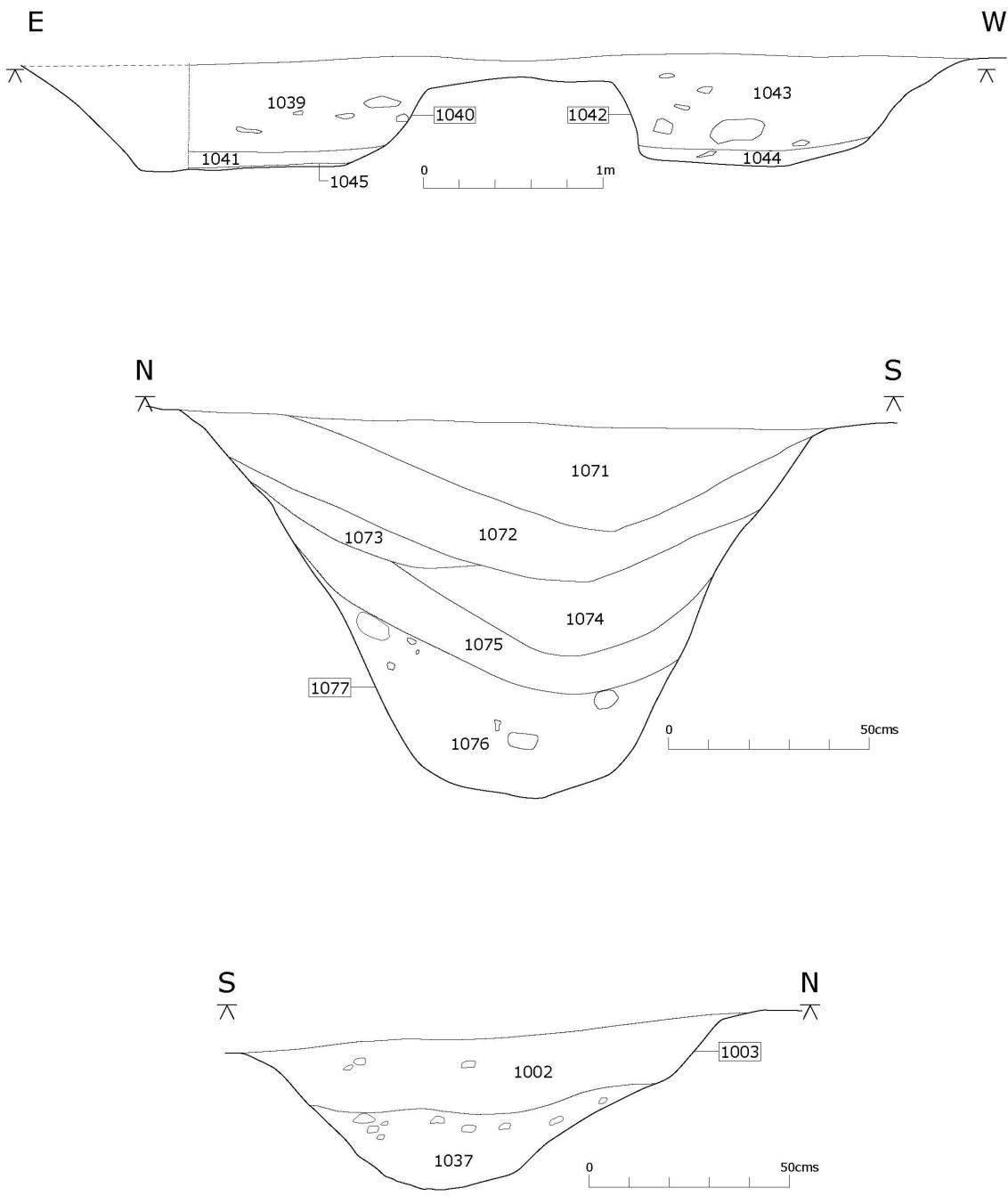


Figure 7: Sections of archaeological features, including at the top the two adjacent pits 1040 & 1042, in the centre the northernmost ditch 1077 and at the bottom the enclosure ditch 1003.



Plate 1: General shot looking south-east across the area of excavation, with Llanegwad church in the background.



Plate 2: General shot looking west across the site during initial cleaning.



Plate 3: South-west facing shot of part-excavated modern ditch 1082 that crosses the site. 2x2m scale.



Plate 4: West facing shot of a section through the enclosure ditch 1003. 2x2m scale.



Plate 5: South facing shot looking down gully 1015 towards the two pits 1040 and 1042. Half-excavated pit 1036 lies to the left of the gully. 1x1m scale.



Plate 6: North-east facing shot showing the two pits 1040 and 1042.



Plate 7: North facing shot along ditch 1087 ending in pit 1081, part-excavated. 2x2m scale.



Plate 8: West facing pre-excavation shot of ditch 1009. 1x1m & 1x0.5m scale.



Plate 9: North-facing shot of ditch 1005 showing the post setting within the ditch.
1x1m scale.



Plate 10: North facing shot of kiln 1028 and pit 1055. 1x1m scale.



Plate 11: West facing shot of the charcoal and ferric-slag rich deposit 1057. 2x1m scale.



Plate 12: West facing shot of the section through ditch 1077. 1x1m scale.

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RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2008/70

**Mehefin 2008
June 2008**

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Philip Poucher BA (Hons) PIFA

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Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by

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on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position:

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau sydd
gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

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have on the content or presentation of this report