

*A483 Pant/Llanymynech  
Bypass (Preferred Route):  
An Archaeological  
Evaluation*

by H. R. Hannaford

The  
Archaeology Unit  
SHROPSHIRE   
COUNTY COUNCIL  
*Leisure Services Department*

A483 Pant/Llanymynech Bypass (Preferred Route)  
An Archaeological Evaluation (Summary of Report)

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**A483 PANT/LLANYMYNECH BYPASS (PREFERRED ROUTE):**  
**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION (Summary of Report)**

1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The line of the preferred route of the proposed A483 Pant/Llanymynech Bypass (Option 1) runs around the east side of the villages of Llanymynech and Pant.
- 1.2 The northern section of the proposed road will run through the western edge of a dense band of archaeological cropmark sites. Amongst these cropmarks sites are ringditches marking the probable sites of Bronze Age funerary monuments and the enclosures of prehistoric and Romano-British farmsteads.

To the west of the bypass route, the large Iron Age hillfort which encloses the top of LLanymynech Hill has been the site of mining for mineral extraction since prehistoric times. The scars of more recent quarrying for limestone are readily apparent and a number of former limekilns survive. The canals, railways, and tramways which serviced this industry are still a feature of the landscape. Quarrying for aggregates is still carried out at Llyncllys Hill, the site of a smaller Iron Age hillfort, near the northern end of the proposed route.

- 1.3 At Tycoch Farm, Llyncllys, the line of the preferred route cut across the site of a known cropmark enclosure (SA4441) of presumed Iron Age or Romano-British date.
- 1.4 Because of the archaeological importance of the landscape through which the route of the proposed bypass runs, it was deemed necessary to conduct an archaeological evaluation of the corridor of the preferred route.

## **2 THE AIMS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

- 2.1 The aim of the evaluation was to provide information enabling an informed and reasonable planning decision to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed bypass.
- 2.2 The objectives were to locate any archaeological features and deposits likely to be affected; to assess their survival, quality, condition, and significance; to assess the impact of the proposals on these features and to recommend options for the management of the archaeological resource.
- 2.3 The evaluation was required to comprise four elements:
- (i) Documentary research
  - (ii) Fieldwalking of the entire route
  - (iii) A geophysical survey of a cropmark enclosure site at Tycoch Farm, Llyncllys (SA4441).
  - (iv) Trial trenching of SA4441 based on the results of the geophysical survey.
- 2.4 The Archaeology Unit of the Leisure Services Department, Shropshire County Council was commissioned to undertake this evaluation, which was carried out in the summer and autumn of 1992.
- ## **3 ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF THE ROAD ON THE ARCHAEOLOGY**
- 3.1 The documentary survey and fieldwalking revealed the presence of a number of new, previously unrecorded, sites along the line of the preferred route. Together with the known sites, it was demonstrated that at least ten archaeological sites would be directly affected by the preferred route.

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- 3.2 The majority of these sites are not considered to be of great archaeological significance. Nevertheless, many of these will require further recording before their destruction by the new road.
- 3.3 The evaluation demonstrated that the cropmark enclosure site at Tycoch Farm (SA4441) was exceptionally well preserved. The enclosure was dated to the Iron Age, and evidence was found for prehistoric metal working and agricultural activities. Iron Age pottery was recovered from the enclosure ditches, and the potential for obtaining good environmental samples was seen to be high. The preferred route of the bypass would destroy about 50% of the enclosure.
- 3.4 A medieval and post-medieval settlement site at Llyncllys crossroads was revealed by the documentary survey. Further evaluation of this site is required before its significance or the quality of its remains can be assessed.
- 4 IMPACT OF PREFERRED ROUTE ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**
- 4.1 The methods employed in road construction will inevitably involve the destruction of all earthwork remains and all but the deepest archaeological features within the road corridor. Most of the damage is likely to be done during the early stages of construction with the removal of topsoil from the road corridor, and the subsequent disturbance of the subsoil by heavy plant.
- 4.2 The cutting of roadside drains, service trenches, and other ancillary works will further damage any surviving deposits.
- 4.3 Any deposits surviving road construction will be sealed beneath a permanent structure (the road) and will be unavailable for future study and research.

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4.4 The siting of contractors' compounds, topsoil dumps, and borrow pits can also seriously affect archaeological features and deposits lying outside the road corridor.

5 MITIGATING EFFECTS: RECOMMENDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROVISION FOR THE AFFECTED SITES

- 5.1 The archaeological provision recommended for the various sites along the bypass route will vary according to the status of the individual sites, and will range from preservation in situ or by record to the maintenance of a watching brief during the destructive phases of road construction.
- 5.2 It is further recommended that a watching brief be maintained in order to record any previously unknown sites that come to light during the road construction.
- 5.3 Strict adherence to planning procedures by contractors and subcontractors should allow for the siting of compounds, spoil dumps, and borrow pits away from known archaeological sites and features. The archaeological watching brief should be extended to cover all such ancillary works.
- 5.4 The known sites can be categorised into six grades, depending on the level of archaeological provision considered necessary:
- A: Preservation in situ recommended.
  - B: Preservation by record, ie by means of full-scale professional archaeological excavation.
  - C: Earthwork survey.
  - D: Recording by watching brief.
  - E: Further field evaluation required.
  - F: No further archaeological provision necessary.

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5.5 SCHEDULE OF SITES AFFECTED BY THE PREFERRED ROUTE

SMR No.	Grid Ref.	Site description	Grade
New site	SJ269204	Ridge and furrow.	C
	SJ270210	Oswestry and Newtown railway (dis- used) and the Potteries, Shrewsbury, and North Wales railway (disused).	F
New site	SJ281224	Ridge and furrow.	C
New site	SJ281225	Ridge and furrow.	C
New site	SJ283228	Linear earthworks.	C
SA927	SJ283229	Shropshire Union Canal (Montgomery- shire Branch) at Penygarreg.	D
SA4441	SJ283231	Iron Age enclosure at Tycoch Farm, Llynclys.	A/B
SA3713	SJ285238	Cropmark pit alignment. Provision should be made for full excavation should this feature extend into road corridor.	C
SA2276	SJ282238	Linear earthworks southeast of Llynclys crossroads.	F
New site	SJ282240	Possible Roman branch road at Llynclys.	D
New site	SJ282240	Tramway between Whitehaven quarries and Crickheath Wharf.	D
New site	SJ281240	Settlement at Llynclys Crossroads	E

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

by  
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with a contribution by  
Dr P Stamper

A Report for the  
COUNTY SURVEYOR'S DEPARTMENT,  
SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

THE ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT, LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT,  
SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
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## 1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 The Preferred Route

The 7km route of the proposed A483 Pant/Llanymynech Bypass (Preferred Route) runs around the east side of the villages of Llanymynech and Pant (Fig. 1). The bypass would leave the present course of the A483 about 0.5km south of Llanymynech, heading in a north-northeasterly direction. The road corridor follows the line of the former Oswestry and Newtown Railway for 1km before heading across country for a further 3km, rejoining the A483 at Llyncllys crossroads. For the final 2.5km of its length will essentially consist of an upgrading of the present A483, with a slight divergence to the west of the present road in the vicinity of Llyncllys Hall Farm.

### 1.2 The Archaeological Background

The northern half of the new road runs through the western edge of a dense band of archaeological cropmark sites which lie within a triangular area with apexes at Knockin, Maesbury, and Crickheath. Amongst these cropmarks sites are ringditches marking the probable sites of Bronze Age funerary monuments and the enclosures of prehistoric and Romano-British farmsteads.

To the west of the bypass route, the large Iron Age hillfort which encloses the top of Llanymynech Hill has been the site of mining for mineral extraction since prehistoric times. The scars of more recent quarrying for limestone are readily apparent and a number of former limekilns survive. The canals, railways, and tramways which serviced this industry are still a feature of the landscape. Quarrying for aggregates is still carried out at Llyncllys Hill, the site of a smaller Iron Age hillfort, at the northern end of the proposed route.

It is not surprising, therefore, that a number of known archaeological sites should be affected by the proposed route. The majority of these sites are of relatively recent date, and

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are associated with the former transport networks or are of agricultural origin. One major site of antiquity, is affected, and this is a cropmark enclosure at Tycoch Farm, Llyncllys (SA4441), the presumed site of a farmstead of Iron Age or Romano-British date. This site was first discovered in 1990, too late for it to have been included in the preliminary enquiries in 1989.

## **2 THE AIMS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

Because of the archaeological importance of the landscape through which the route of the proposed bypass runs, it was deemed necessary to conduct an archaeological evaluation of the preferred route. The Archaeology Unit of the Leisure Services Department, Shropshire County Council was commissioned to undertake this evaluation. The work was carried out in the summer and autumn of 1992.

### **2.1 Aims and Objectives of the Evaluation**

The aim of this evaluation is to provide information to enable an informed and reasonable planning decision to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed bypass.

The objectives of the evaluation were firstly to locate any archaeological features and deposits likely to be affected by the preferred route; to assess their survival, quality, condition, and significance; and to assess the impact of the proposals on any archaeological features found.

The evaluation would then identify and recommend options for the management of the archaeological resource, including any further archaeological provision where necessary.

### **2.2 Methodology of the Evaluation**

It was proposed that the evaluation should cover four elements:

- (i) Documentary and cartographic research would be undertaken to locate and assess previously unrecorded features within the bypass route. This research was to include a survey of the aerial photographs and primary and secondary sources held at the County Sites and Monuments Record and the County Records and Research Unit

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- (ii) The entire route was to be fieldwalked in order to locate and assess any previously unrecorded features of significance within the route corridor. This element of the evaluation would include field reconnaissance and the sketch plotting of any surviving earthworks thus encountered.
- (iii) A geophysical survey would be conducted of the cropmark enclosure site (SA4441) at Tycoch Farm, Llyncllys.
- (iv) On the basis of the results of the geophysical survey, trial excavations would be carried out on the cropmark site SA4441. The excavations would be limited to the top of significant archaeological deposits, which would then be sampled only where essential for achieving the objectives of the evaluation. A full written, graphic, and photographic record would be made of the findings.

### 3 ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES IN THE PREFERRED ROUTE CORRIDOR

#### 3.1 The Documentary Survey

by Dr P Stamper

A search of the aerial photographs held at the Shropshire County Sites and Monuments Record did not reveal the presence of any new sites along the bypass route. Aerial photographs were examined showing the cropmark remains of an enclosure (SA4441) of probable Iron Age date (Fig. 3, e), and of linear earthworks (SA2276) southeast of Llyncllys crossroads (Fig. 3, c), both of which lie partially within the road corridor. The cropmark remains of a probable pit alignment (SA3713, below) just outside the road corridor southeast of Llyncllys (Fig. 3, d) are also recorded on aerial photographs in the collection.

Documentary information was available for the canals and railways affected by the preferred route, which have in any case been the subject of previous research (see below). In addition, the documentary survey brought to light the presence of several previously unrecorded sites.

#### (i) A Settlement at Llyncllys Crossroads (Fig. 3, a)

Llyncllys is a township of Llanyblodwell parish. In 1272, as later (Slack 1951, 29-30, 36), that township (there called 'Lenkolrys') was one of the constituent and subordinate elements of the large, composite manor of Duparts. It then paid 5s assized rents, 32s.6d. Trethmorcu, and 19s.6d. Trethcanidion. Detailed interpretation of those rents, with Trethmorcu representing payment in lieu of military service and Trethcanidion payment in lieu of a cattle render, is difficult, if not impossible. Nevertheless, they do indicate that Llyncllys was then a well developed, and probably ancient, agricultural estate.

Later records, of the 14th and 16th centuries, indicate that there were then seven 'gwely', or farms, in the township, that

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number apparently having fallen to five by 1602 (Slack 1951, 30).

The records do not allow those sites to be located within the landscape. However, one of the most attractive locations for settlement in the township would always have been at Llyncllys crossroads, where the Welshpool - Oswestry road meets that from Llanfyllin to Knockin, and close to a water supply.

The earliest cartographic representation of the crossroads hamlet (Rocque 1752; see Fig.5a) shows buildings at all four angles of the crossroads: two to the northwest; two to the northeast; one to the southwest; and one to the southeast. No indication is given of the buildings' functions. The next map (Baugh 1808; see Fig. 5b) shows only a building in the southeast angle of the crossroads, but Baugh's map is less concerned than is Rocque's with small detail and that negative evidence should not be relied upon.

The first large scale survey is the tithe map and apportionment, for Llyncllys made in 1846-7 (S.R.O. 4261/T/1; see Fig. 5c). That records one building in the northwest angle of the crossroads, and three, in a single east - west range, in the southeast. The westernmost of the three dwellings was then used as a toll house by its owners the trustees of the Llanymynech Turnpike Trust. Called Llyncllys gate house, it was occupied by John Duncan; he, or his family, would have collected the tolls. The central and eastern parts of the range, described as two houses and gardens, were owned by Philip Jennings and occupied by Thomas Roberts. Those three properties stood until at least 1926 (OS 1:2500, XIX.14 (1901, 1926 edns.)); 1:10,560, SJ22.SE (1954 edn.) See Fig. 5d).

No photographs, or other details, of that range of buildings, exist in the county collections. It is, therefore, unknown whether it had always been a row of cottages, or if it had

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begun life as a farmhouse which before 1846-7 had been subdivided. It is similarly unknown whether the building extant in 1846-7 was that marked by Rocque in 1752, although it seems quite probable.

Comparison of the cartographic evidence suggests that the proposed new roundabout at Llyncllys will impinge, in its northern arc, on the central and eastern units of the above range of buildings. The former toll house may, at least partially, lie under the existing road junction. As the bypass leaves the roundabout to the north it will cross the site occupied by the two buildings northeast of the crossroads shown in 1752 but not subsequently.

**(ii) Canals**

Northeast of Llanymynech the by-pass line crosses the Shropshire Union Canal Montgomeryshire Branch (Fig. 3, f). The Llanymynech branch of that canal (originally the Ellesmere Canal) was constructed 1794-6. Its purpose was to give access to the area's important limestone quarries (Morris 1991, 35-41). The canal fell into disuse in the 1930's (Morris 1991, 61).

**(iii) Railways**

North and south of Llanymynech the by-pass line impinges on, or crosses, the line of the former Oswestry and Newtown railway (opened c.1860) and on the east side of Llanymynech the western terminus of the Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales railway (opened c.1866). Both railways closed in the 1960's (Morris 1985).

**(iv) Tramway at Llyncllys (Fig. 3, b)**

Also, just to the south of Llyncllys crossroads, the 1901 edition OS 1:2500 sheet shows a tramway running approximately west to east. The tramway linked the quarries at Whitehaven and limekilns at Porth-y-waen with Crickheath Wharf on the



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Shropshire Union Canal. The tramway was still in existence in 1926, but by 1949 had disappeared east of Llynclys (OS 1:2500, XIX.13 and 14, 1901 and 1926 edns; 1:10560, SJ22NE 1954 edn). The line of the bypass will cross that of this former tramway at SJ282240.

**(v) A possible Roman road at Llynclys (Fig. 3, k)**

A possible Roman road has been suggested to the east of the preferred Bypass road corridor (B. Trott, correspondence). The line of this possible Roman road is now largely followed by a minor road running south-southeast from Brookhouse, Morton Common (SJ295250), to Redwith, Llwyntidmon (SJ286211), and thence presumably to the River Vyrnwy (at approximately SJ287201). Whilst the line of this possible Roman road is not affected by the preferred Bypass route, there is a further suggestion that there may be a branch road running west from the Roman road in the Llynclys area into Wales. There is, however, no cartographic or documentary evidence to support this suggestion, nor was any trace of any earthwork feature which might be interpreted as a Roman road encountered during the fieldwalking of the preferred route. Any remains of this suggested Roman road could be adequately recorded as part of a watching brief.

**(vi) A possible Roman fort at Llynclys (Fig. 3, l)**

The same source suggests the presence of a Roman fort or marching camp on the low hill at SJ286236. No supporting evidence was provided for this suggestion. The site in any case lies some distance from the preferred route.

### 3.2 The Fieldwalking

The entire line of the preferred route of the new bypass was fieldwalked. No major new sites were encountered during the fieldwalking, but a number of minor features were visible.

To the south and east of Llanymynech, the first 1km of route followed the line of the former Oswestry and Newtown and the Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales railways. No features of any archaeological significance were visible here. The final 2.5km stretch of the route north of Llyncllys crossroads, where it runs alongside the present A483, was also devoid of visible archaeological features.

The remainder of the land through which the route runs is largely given over to permanent pasture, most of which is improved pastureland, and was under grass at time of survey. The remains of several earthwork sites were located within this pastureland to the east of the villages of Pant and Llanymynech.

- (i) At the southernmost end of the proposed route, at SJ269204, where the new road will leave the present A483 to join the line of the former Cambrian Railway, there are slight traces of ridge and furrow ploughing of probable medieval date (Fig. 4, j).
- (ii) Slight earthworks are also visible at SJ281224, and are also likely to represent ridge and furrow, though these remains have been much reduced, probably by more recent ploughing. An area 200m long by 50m wide of these earthworks lie within the road corridor (Fig. 3, i).
- (iii) At SJ281225 there are further traces of medieval ridge and furrow ploughing; the earthworks here are better preserved than the two other examples noted above. The

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Proposed new road will cut a swathe 190m long by up to 50m wide through these earthworks (Fig. 3, h).

- (iv) At SJ283228, the road carriageway will cut through some slight earthworks, probably representing a former field boundary and a track leading westwards down to a hollow between the proposed road carriageway and a stream (Fig. 3, g). The hollow may represent the site of a former quarry of unknown date.
- (v) SA2276 (Fig. 3, c): This is a known earthwork site (at SJ282238), in an area of wet and boggy ground and was at one time thought to consist of the east, south and west sides of a possible enclosure. As a result of a more recent inspection, the earthworks are now considered to be drainage ditches possibly associated with former field boundaries (entry on SMR). The site is no longer considered to be of any antiquity. A sketch plot of the ditches was made at 1:2500 scale during the fieldwalking exercise.

### **3.3 The Geophysical Survey and Trial Trenching of the Cropmark Enclosure SA4441 at Tycoch Farm, Llyncllys (NGR: SJ283231)**

#### **(i) The cropmark enclosure**

The cropmark enclosure at Tycoch Farm, Llyncllys (Fig. 3, e, and Fig. 6), was discovered in 1990 by aerial photography (SMR: AP nos. CPAT 90/MB/759&760 - SMR SJ2823-E&F). From the plot of the aerial photograph (Geophysical Surveys Report No. 92/68, Fig. 1), the enclosure appeared to be D-shaped with an entrance on its straight (northern) side, and a second, funnel shaped entrance on its southwest side. The enclosure would thus be of a type in this region distributed mainly in the Oswestry, Montgomery, and Knighton - Ludlow areas (Whimster, 1989), and usually ascribed to the Iron Age/Romano-British periods. No site of this particular type has, however, been excavated to date in this region, and so the dating and function of the enclosure at Tycoch Farm remained uncertain prior to the evaluation.

#### **(ii) The Geophysical Survey**

The geophysical survey of the site of the cropmark enclosure was carried out on behalf of the Archaeology Unit by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford. A full report on the geophysical survey appears as a separate document (Geophysical Surveys, Report Number 92/68), but the results of the survey will be drawn on below to supplement the evidence from the trial excavations, and to provide an integrated summary of the overall significance of the evaluation.

The geophysical survey successfully located the enclosure recorded by the aerial photographs. It was shown to be of a type classified by Whimster as a D-shaped hybrid enclosure (Whimster 1989), double ditched on its eastern, southern, and possibly western, sides (Fig. 7), and covering an area of about 0.2ha (0.5 acres).

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The survey also recorded a number of other archaeological features both within and immediately outside the enclosure.

**(iii) The Trial Excavations**

Three trenches were laid out in order to intercept features identified by the geophysical survey (Fig. 7). The topsoil from each of the trenches was removed by JCB mechanical excavator. The trenches were then cleaned and the features and deposits revealed were sampled by hand. A full written, graphic, and photographic record was made of these excavations.

**Trench A:** The earliest feature encountered in this trench was a semicircular hollow (Fig. 8; 1757) 3.25m in diameter by 0.34m deep. The hollow was surrounded by a patchy spread of cobbles and pebbles, and was filled with a reddish brown silty sand containing flecks of charcoal but no other finds (Fig. 9c).

Both the inner and outer ditches of the enclosure were revealed in this trench. They corresponded precisely to the plotted positions of the linear anomalies identified by the geophysical survey as the ditches of the cropmark enclosure (Geophysical Surveys, Report No. 92/68).

The outer ditch (1756) showed as a band of dark reddish brown sandy silt 2.75m wide, running on a southwest/northeast alignment. The ditch cut the edge of the hollow 1757 and the band of pebbles and cobbles surrounding it. This outer ditch was not sampled here, as a section of it was sampled in Trench D (below, p.14).

The inner enclosure ditch (1758) also ran on a southwest/northeast alignment; a metre wide section was cut at right angles through the ditch, which proved to be 3.25m wide and 1.35m deep, with a V-shaped profile (Fig. 9a and Plate 1). One of the earliest fills of the ditch (1766) produced a sherd of Iron Age pottery with very coarse white mineral inclusions. A

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number of the later fills (1761, 1762, and 1764) also produced a few fragments of ceramic salt containers (or briquetage) of probable Iron Age date (Britnell, pers.comm.). Many of the fills also contained significant amounts of charcoal (fill 1762 was particularly rich in this respect), suggesting a good environmental potential for these deposits. Fills 1762 and 1764 also produced fragments of crushed and burnt stone, possibly the residue from metal smelting.

Beyond the inner edge of the ditch ran a low bank of large pebbles and cobbles, surviving to a height of 0.13m above the natural subsoil. This bank probably represented the truncated remains of a defensive earthwork formed of cobbles, pebbles, and, presumably, upcast from the excavation of the ditch. The presence just inside the inner lip of the inner ditch of a small circular pit or posthole (1773) suggests that the bank may have been strengthened with a timber palisade or box framework.

At the extreme southwest corner of the trench was a linear gully running northwest/southeast. The gully was 0.85m wide by 0.27m deep, and its dark, humic fill produced a sherd of post-medieval slipware pottery. This feature corresponded in position and alignment to a linear feature identified by the geophysical survey as a possible field drain or pipe trench (Geophysical Surveys, op.cit.).

**Trench B:** This trench was located in order to investigate an amorphous anomaly recorded by the geophysical survey within the inner enclosure. In this instance, no feature could be identified that corresponded to the geophysical anomaly, although a number of other archaeological features were revealed.

Inside the western edge of the trench was a curvilinear gully (Fig. 8, 1779) about 0.35m wide by up to 0.24m deep. The gully

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was filled with a greyish brown sandy silt; no finds were recovered from the excavated segments of this gully. The form of this feature suggests that it may represent an eaves-drip gully around a hut.

Running across the trench from the southwest to the northeast corners was a band of pebbles and cobbles (1794) up to 1.5m wide, possibly the remains of a pathway within the enclosure (Plate 3).

A number of small pits and postholes cut through this pebble and cobble spread and the natural boulder clay subsoil on either side. A number of the postholes still contained their post packing of cobblestones. Several of these small pits and postholes were half sectioned, though none produced any dateable finds.

**Trench D:** In this trench, as with Trench A, the outer ditch of the enclosure was encountered in precisely the location suggested by the geophysical survey. The ditch was sectioned and was seen to be 3.5m wide by 1.65m deep and was V-shaped in profile (Fig. 9b and Plate 2). The lowest fills (1792 and 1793) contained a significant quantity of charcoal and the environmental potential of these deposits is likely to be good. The ditch appears to have been recut at least once, the line of this recut being marked by the interface between fills 1790/1791 and fill 1785. The uppermost fill, as with the segments of the enclosure ditches exposed in Trench A, was of a dark brown silty sand, which showed up well against the yellowish brown boulder clay subsoil. No finds were recovered from the sampled fills of this ditch.

Just inside the inner edge of this ditch was a large roughly oval shaped pit (1768). Again, this feature corresponded in location to an anomaly recorded by the geophysical survey. The pit was half sectioned and proved to be about 0.34m deep. The

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uppermost and lowest fills of this feature (Fig. 9d, 1786 and 1799) contained fragments of daub and flecks of charcoal.

At the northern edge of this pit were three small postholes, and at its northwest corner the remains of a small hearth (1770) whose remains consisted of a small square pad of burnt clay.

Running from north to south across the western end of the trench was a linear feature (1771). The definition of this feature was however poor, and it was not sampled.

In all three trenches the features and deposits of Iron Age date were sealed by a layer of a greyish brown sandy silt up to 0.2m deep. This deposit formed a distinct layer beneath the much darker and more humic ploughsoil, and produced a quantity of abraded sherds of Roman and medieval pottery.

#### (iv) Discussion

The geophysical survey successfully located the cropmark enclosure, and suggested the presence of a number of internal and external features.

The trial excavations confirmed the accuracy of the plot of the results of the geophysical survey as far as major features were concerned. However, the excavations further revealed the presence of a number of smaller features, all in a good state of preservation, within the enclosure which were not picked up by the geophysical survey.

There had apparently been little truncation of the enclosure ditches. The inner enclosure ditch survived to a depth of 1.35m in Trench A in the area where the strongest responses were recorded by the geophysical survey. The outer enclosure ditch survived to an even greater depth (1.65m) in Trench D on the eastern side of the enclosure. The potential for environmental



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analysis of the palaeobotanical remains within the fills of these ditches would appear to be very good, as would the possibility of obtaining good samples for carbon-14 dating. This contrasts with recent excavations on Iron Age sites in the Wroxeter Hinterland (Heath, forthcoming), where the environmental evidence recovered was indifferent.

The pottery recovered from the fills of the enclosure ditches would suggest an Iron Age date for the enclosure, and although the quantities retrieved were small, this follows the pattern established by excavations on similar sites in this region. The fills of the outer enclosure ditch also produced some evidence of possible metal working, again a feature of similar sites in the region (Britnell, pers.comm.).

By way of contrast to similar sites excavated recently in the Wroxeter Hinterland (Ellis et al, forthcoming), the preservation of features within the enclosure relating to domestic or other activity appears to be good. The site has not been subsoiled or deep-ploughed, and the buried ploughsoil (see above, p.15) appears to have afforded some degree of protection from modern ploughing.

The possibility of achieving good Carbon 14 dates for the site has already been mentioned, but the survival of at least one hearth also means that there is potential for thermoluminescence and archaeomagnetic dating. This would be of particular importance if features or structures associated with metal working survived.

#### **4 IMPACT OF PREFERRED ROUTE ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

##### **4.1 Impact of road construction methods**

The methods employed in road construction will inevitably involve the destruction of all earthwork remains and all but the deepest archaeological features within the road corridor. Most of the damage is done during the early stages of construction with the removal of topsoil from the road corridor, and the subsequent disturbance of the subsoil by heavy plant. The cutting of roadside drains, service trenches, and other ancillary works will further damage any surviving archaeological deposits. Even where the finished road is to be embanked, the initial site preparation is likely to involve the removal of topsoil and other unsuitable material from the road corridor. Any deposits surviving road construction will be sealed beneath a permanent structure and will be unavailable for future study and research.

##### **4.2 Impact on specific sites**

In total, ten known and two possible archaeological sites will be affected by the proposed new road (see paragraph 5.5 for a schedule of these sites).

###### **(i) Earthwork remains**

Those parts of the earthwork remains at SJ269204, SJ281224, SJ281225, SJ283228, and SJ282238 (SA2276) that lie within the road corridor will be obliterated with the initial topsoil removal phase of road construction.

###### **(ii) The Iron Age enclosure (SA4441) at Tycoch Farm.**

The proposed new road will affect the eastern half of the Iron Age farmstead enclosure (SA4441) at Tycoch Farm. Although the road is to be slightly embanked at this point, initial groundworks are likely to destroy all archaeological features within the enclosure, and all but the lowest deposits within the enclosure ditches. The cutting of trenches for roadside

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drainage and other services will further damage these deposits. Thus that part of the enclosure lying within the road corridor will be effectively totally destroyed by the roadworks.

**(iii) Canal, railways and tramlines**

A short section of the Shropshire Union Canal (Montgomeryshire Branch) (SA927) will be infilled at Penygarreg, SJ283229, and a new cutting will be created. The proposed new road will follow the line of sections of the disused Oswestry and Newtown and Potteries, Shrewsbury, and North Wales railways. The line of the tramway between the Whitehaven quarries and Crickheath Wharf will be crossed by that of the new road at SJ282240. There are no visible remains of the tramline at this point.

**(iv) Other sites**

The effects of the new road on the possible westward extension of the pit alignment (SA3713) southeast of Llyncllys, on the possible Roman branch road at Llyncllys, and on the surviving remains (if any) of the settlement at Llyncllys crossroads are unquantifiable at this stage. If archaeological remains do exist at these locations, however, they are likely to be at least partially damaged during road construction, and will in any case be sealed beneath the new road.

**4.3 Contractors' compounds, spoil dumps, and borrow pits**

The siting of contractors' compounds, topsoil dumps, and borrow pits can also seriously affect archaeological features and deposits lying outside the road corridor.

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5 MITIGATING EFFECTS: RECOMMENDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROVISION  
FOR THE AFFECTED SITES

5.1 Grading of Affected Sites

The archaeological provision recommended for the various sites affected by the proposed new road will depend upon their status, and will range from preservation in situ or by record to the maintenance of a watching brief during the destructive phases of road construction.

The known sites can be categorised into six grades:

Grade A: These sites are considered to be of sufficient significance as to merit preservation in situ. They should be avoided if possible, otherwise treated as Grade B sites.

Grade B: These sites are of such importance to require preservation by record, ie by means of full-scale professional archaeological excavation. Sufficient funding for for this should be allocated within the construction budget, and time for the completion of such excavations be built into the pre-construction timetable.

Grade C: An earthwork survey should be conducted on the threatened parts of these sites before their destruction.

Grade D: Sites which can be adequately recorded during the course of development by means of an archaeological watching brief.

Grade E: Further field evaluation is required on these sites before recommendations for further archaeological provision can be made.

Grade F: No further archaeological provision required.

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**5.2 Recommended Archaeological Provision**

**GRADES A and B: Sites requiring preservation in situ or by record:**

SA4441 The first option for the Iron Age enclosure at Tycoch Farm should be preservation in situ. The quality of the artefactual and environmental material from the enclosure ditches appears to be unusually good when compared to the findings from the small number of similar settlement sites excavated in Shropshire to date. Again, the degree of preservation of features and deposits within the enclosure evidenced by the trial excavations is also unusual on these sites. The only immediate threat to this settlement at present is the construction of the Bypass (although gradual erosion by modern agricultural practices is a long term threat). For these reasons, it is felt that this site merits preservation in situ and should be avoided by the roadworks.

However, in the event of preservation in situ proving not possible then it is recommended that the site should be preserved by record by means of full-scale archaeological excavation. The interior of the enclosure should be fully excavated, including that part which lies to the west of the road corridor. This would be essential for a proper understanding of the nature of the settlement. The sections of the enclosure ditches threatened by the roadworks should also be excavated, although the unthreatened sections would only require sampling. In view of the good environmental potential and the evidence for early metal working on the site, provision for specialist input should be considered at an early stage in the pre-excavation planning process.

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**GRADE C: Sites requiring an earthwork survey:**

New Ridge and furrow at SJ269204 (Fig. 4, j), at SJ281224  
sites (Fig. 3, i), and at SJ281225 (Fig. 3, h).

New Earthworks at SJ283228 (Fig. 3, g)  
site

**GRADE D: Sites on which a watching brief should be maintained:**

SA927 Shropshire Union Canal (Montgomeryshire Branch) will be  
infilled at Penygareg (SJ283229), and a new channel cut  
to run from the present basin north of the existing  
canal (Fig. 3, f). These works should be monitored, and  
provision made for the recording of any wharves or  
associated features revealed during the course of these  
works.

SA3713 The cropmark pit alignment at SJ285238 (Fig. 3, d) lies  
outside the line of the road carriageway. It is  
possible, however, that this feature may extend further  
to the west. Provision of time and resources should be  
made for full excavation should this feature prove to  
extend into area of road corridor.

New Tramway between Whitehaven quarries and Crickheath Wharf  
site at SJ282240 (Fig. 3, b).

New The possible Roman road branch road in the Llyncllys  
site area.

**GRADE E: Sites requiring further field evaluation:**

New Possible structures at Llyncllys crossroads. This site,  
site whose existence was revealed by the documentary survey,  
will require further evaluation before any  
archaeological provision can be recommended.

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**GRADE F: Sites requiring no further archaeological provision:**

SA2276 The linear earthworks southeast of Llyncllys crossroads  
(Fig. 3, c)

No further provision need be made for the affected section of the former Oswestry and Newtown Railway and the Potteries, Shrewsbury, and North Wales Railway.

**5.3 Further recommendations**

The proposed bypass route crosses a landscape predominated by permanent or improved pasture. Such land use is not conducive to the production of cropmarks visible from the air. There must remain a distinct possibility that there will be other, as yet unrecorded, sites that will only be revealed once construction work on the road has been started. It is therefore further recommended that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during the destructive phases of road construction in order to record any such sites. Adequate resources in terms of both funding and time should be allowed for the recording of these sites. The watching brief should be extended to cover groundworks associated with the siting of contractors' compounds, spoil dumps, and borrow pits. It is also recommended that construction companies and sub-contractors inform their employees of the need to report as soon as possible any archaeological finds and features discovered during works.

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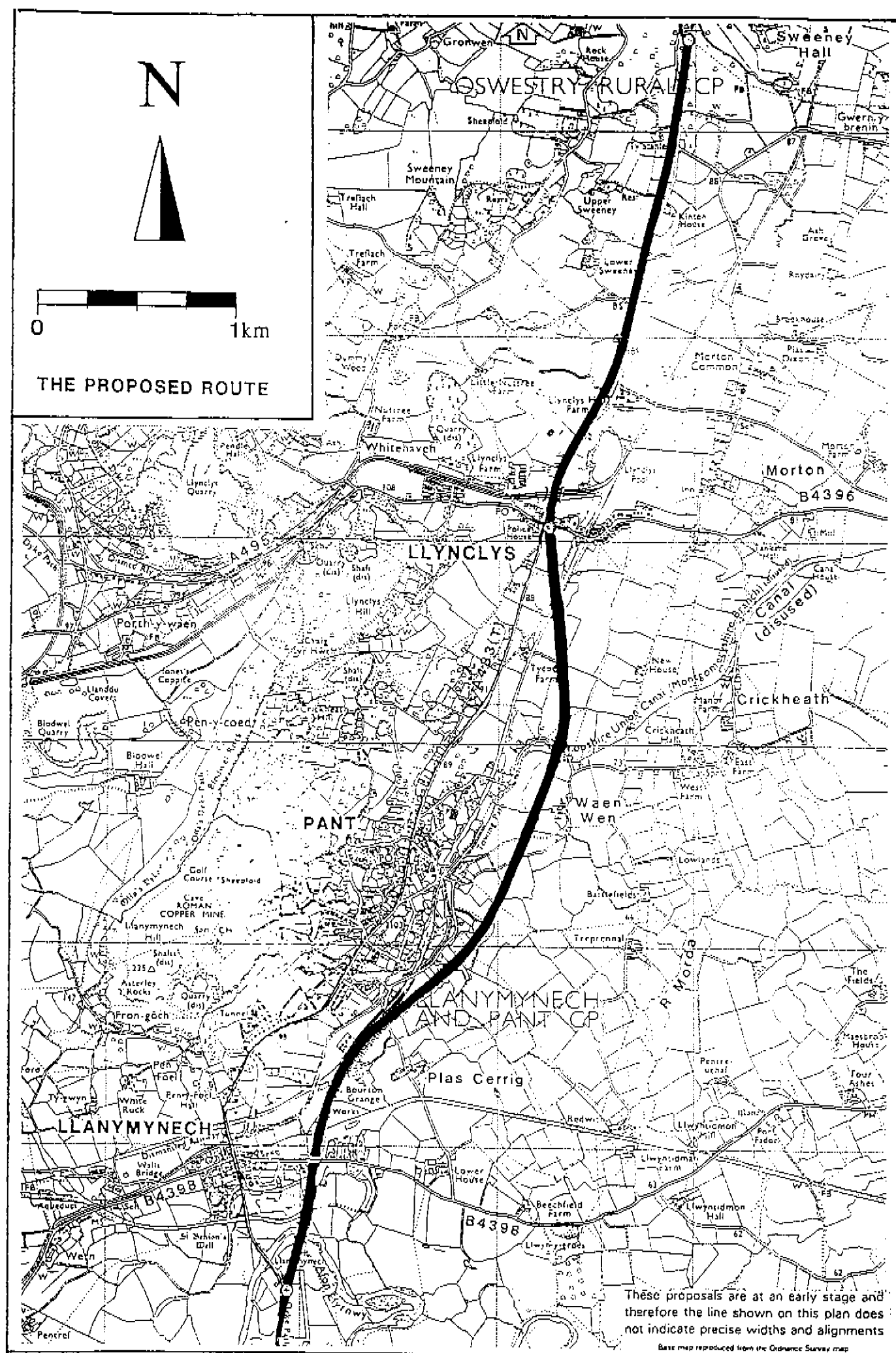


Fig. 1: The proposed route (1:25,000 scale)

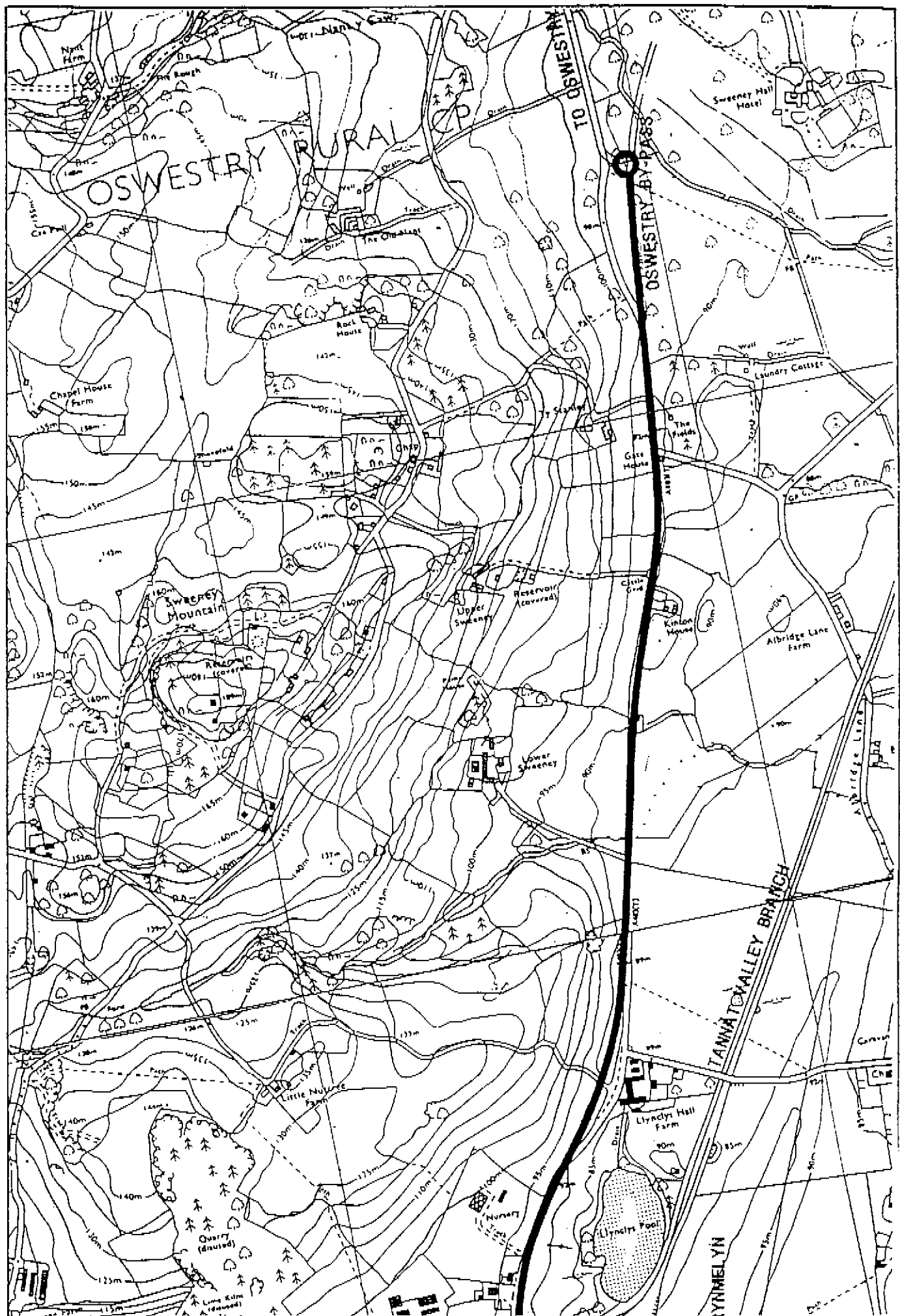


Fig. 2: The proposed route: northern section (1:10,000 scale)

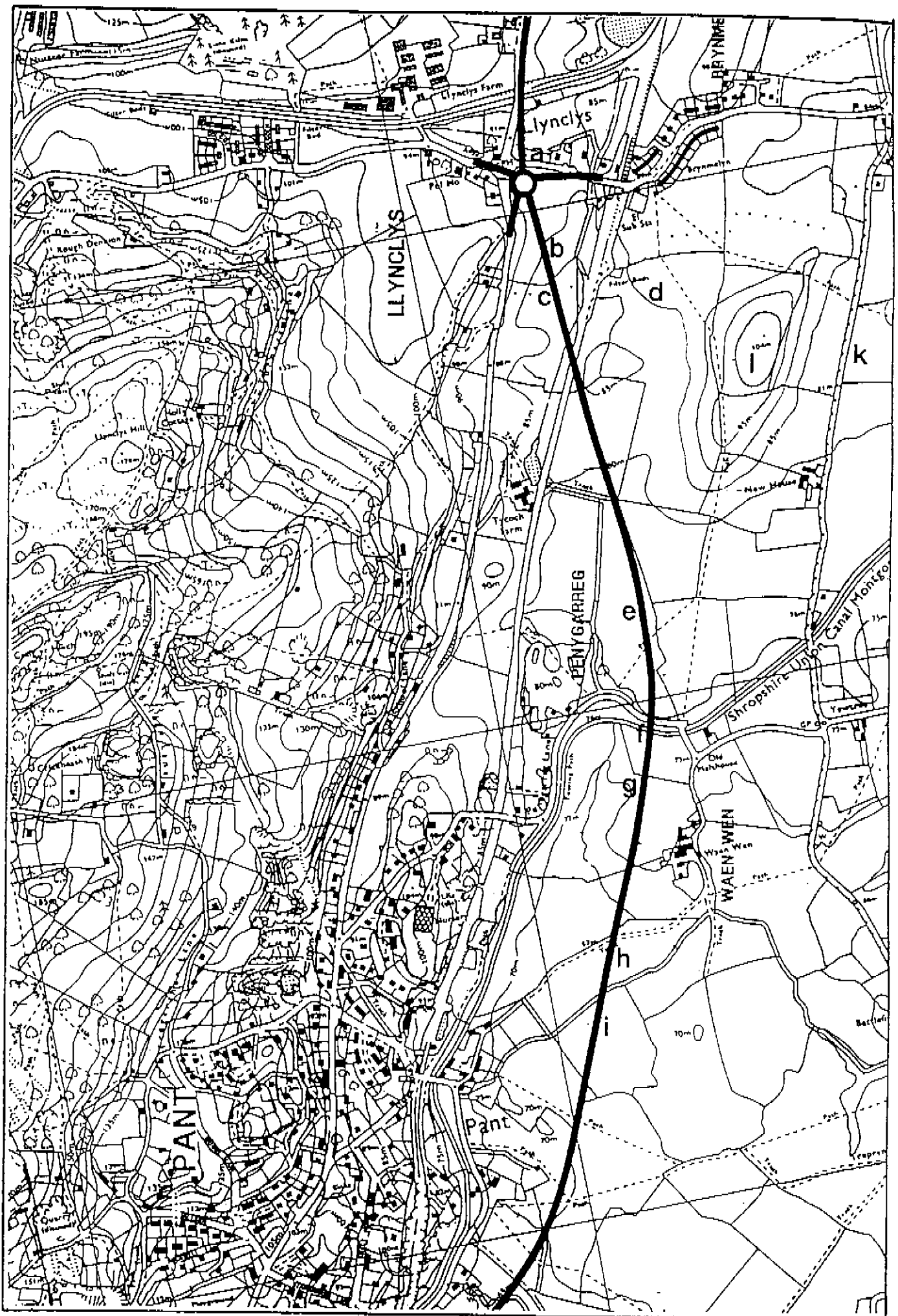


Fig. 3: The proposed route: central section, locating sites referred to in the text (1:10,000 scale)

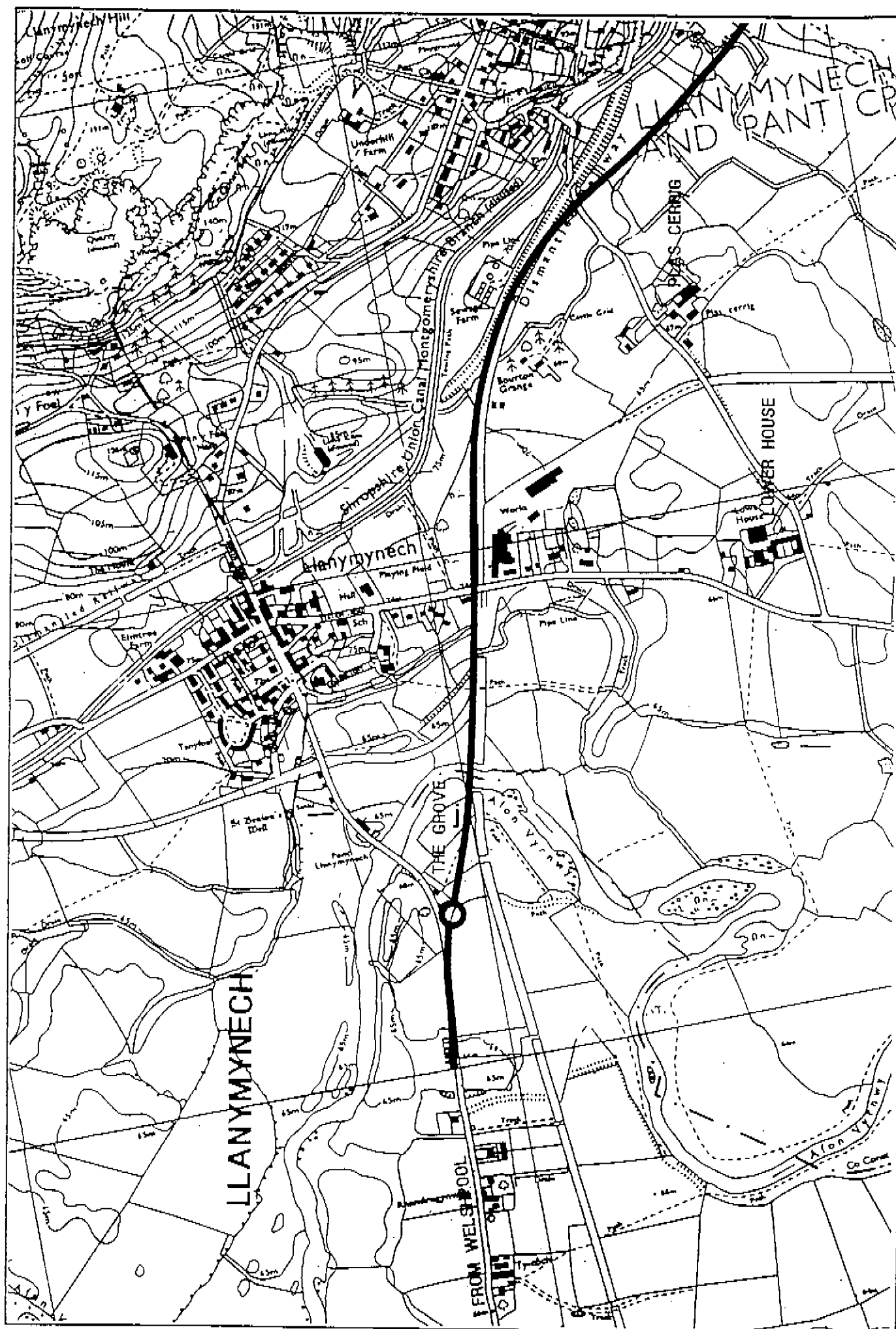
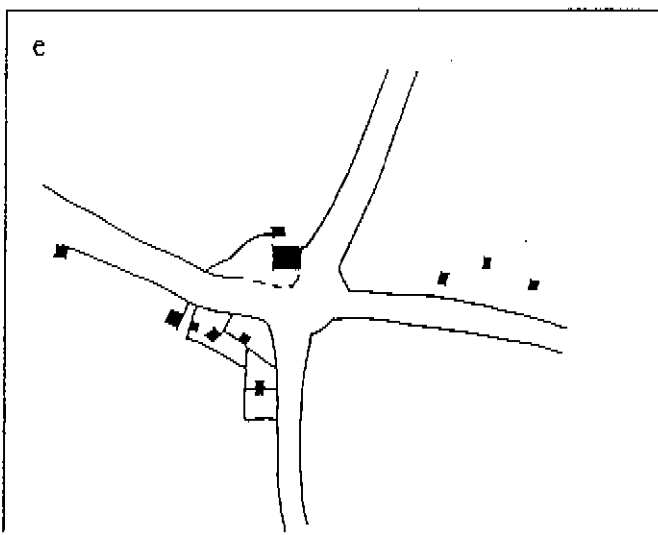
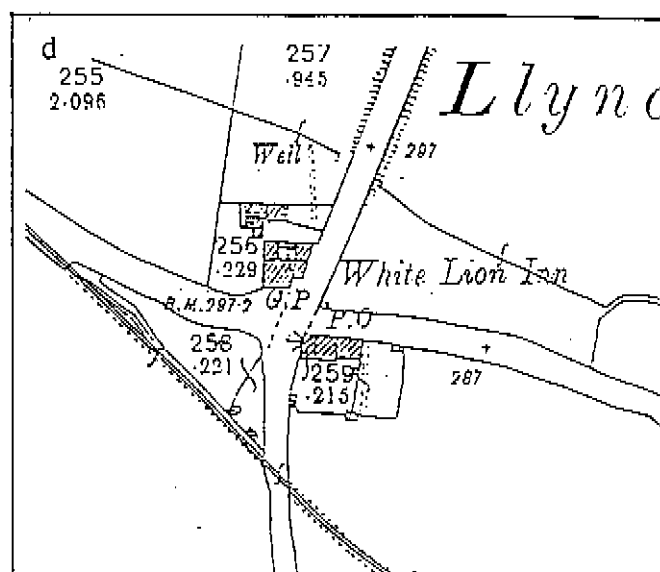
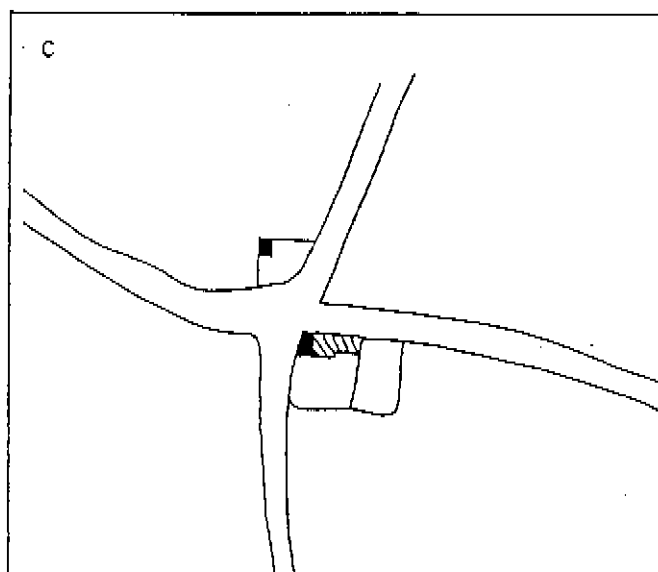
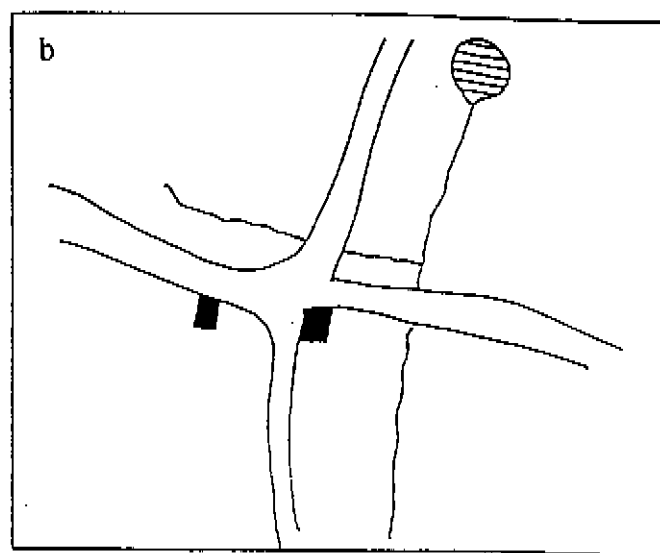
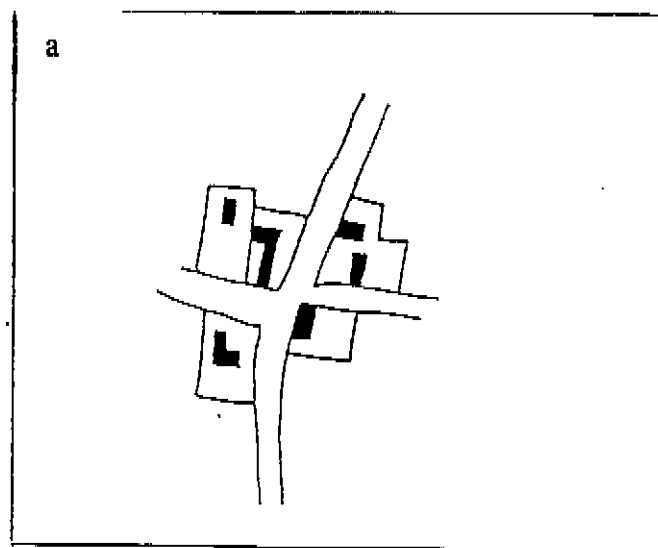


Fig. 4: The proposed route: southern section, locating sites referred to in the text (1:10,000 scale)



0 100metres

LLYNCLYS  
CROSSROADS



a) Rocque 1752 (redrawn); b) Baugh 1808 (redrawn);  
c) S.R.O. 4261/T/1, 1846-7 (redrawn); d) O.S. 1:2,500, Salop  
XIX.14, 1901; e) O.S. 1:10,000, SJ 22.SE, 1980

Fig. 5: Settlement at Llyncllys Crossroads

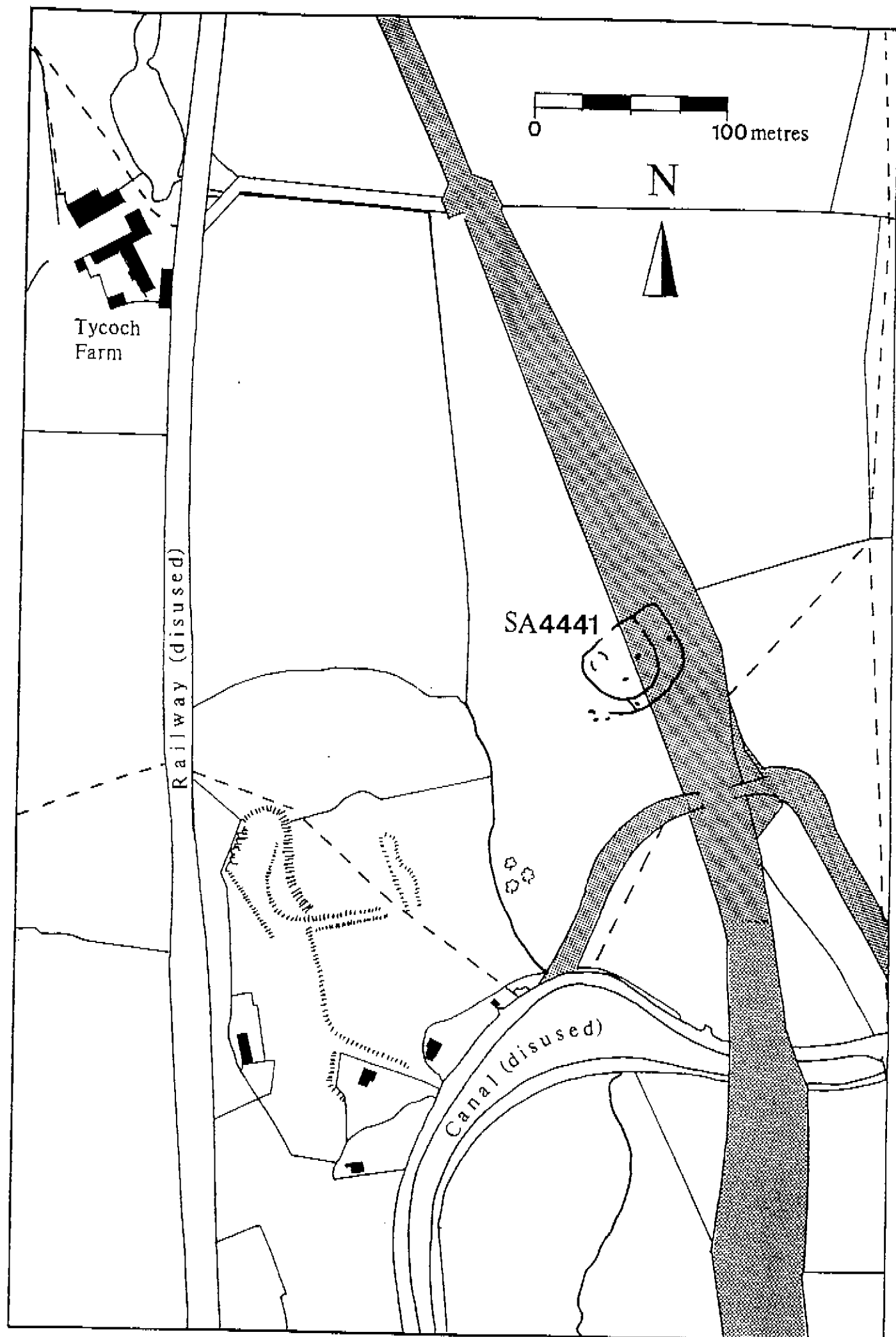


Fig. 6: Cropmark enclosure SA4441: location plan (1:2500 scale)



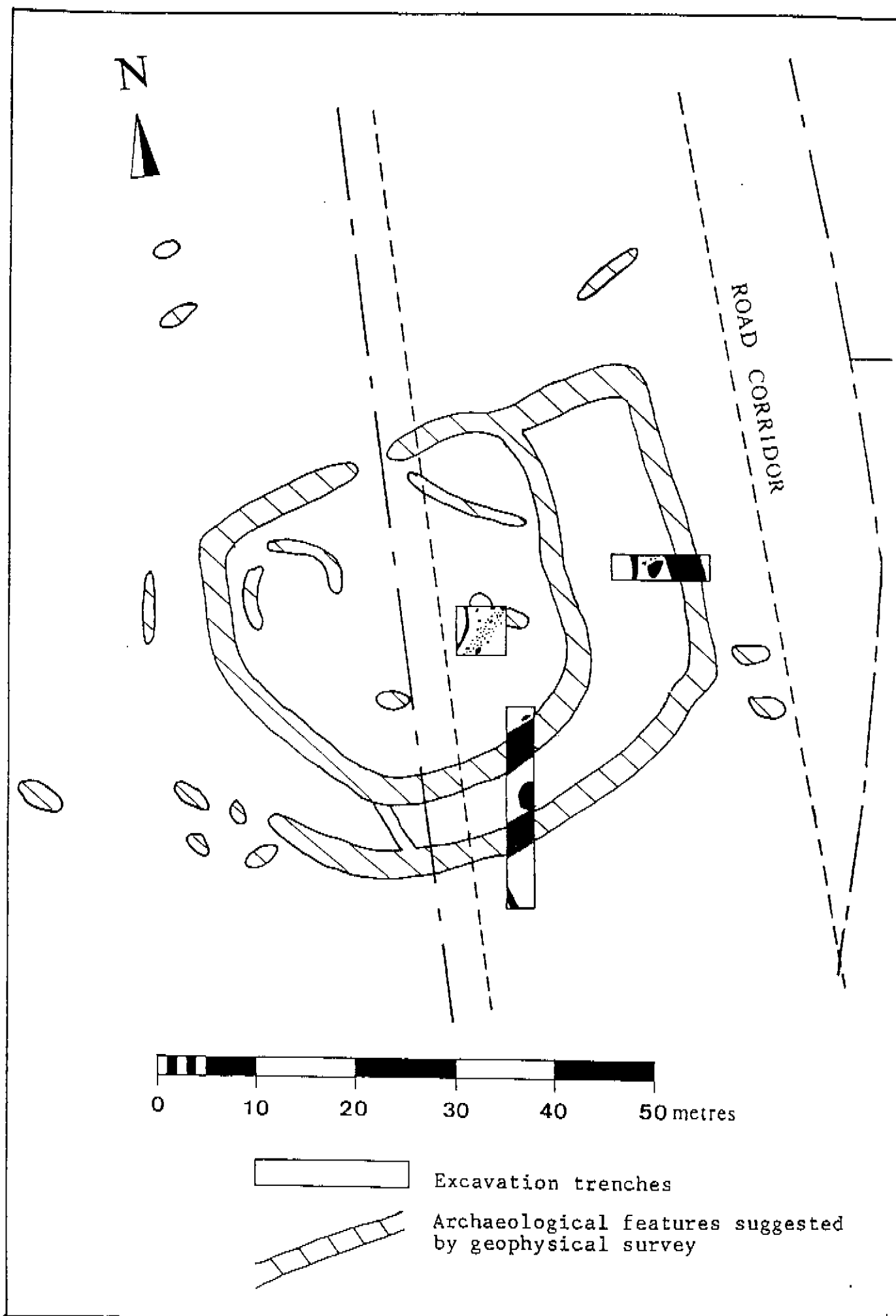


Fig. 7: SA4441: trench location plan with plot of geophysical survey results (1:500 scale)

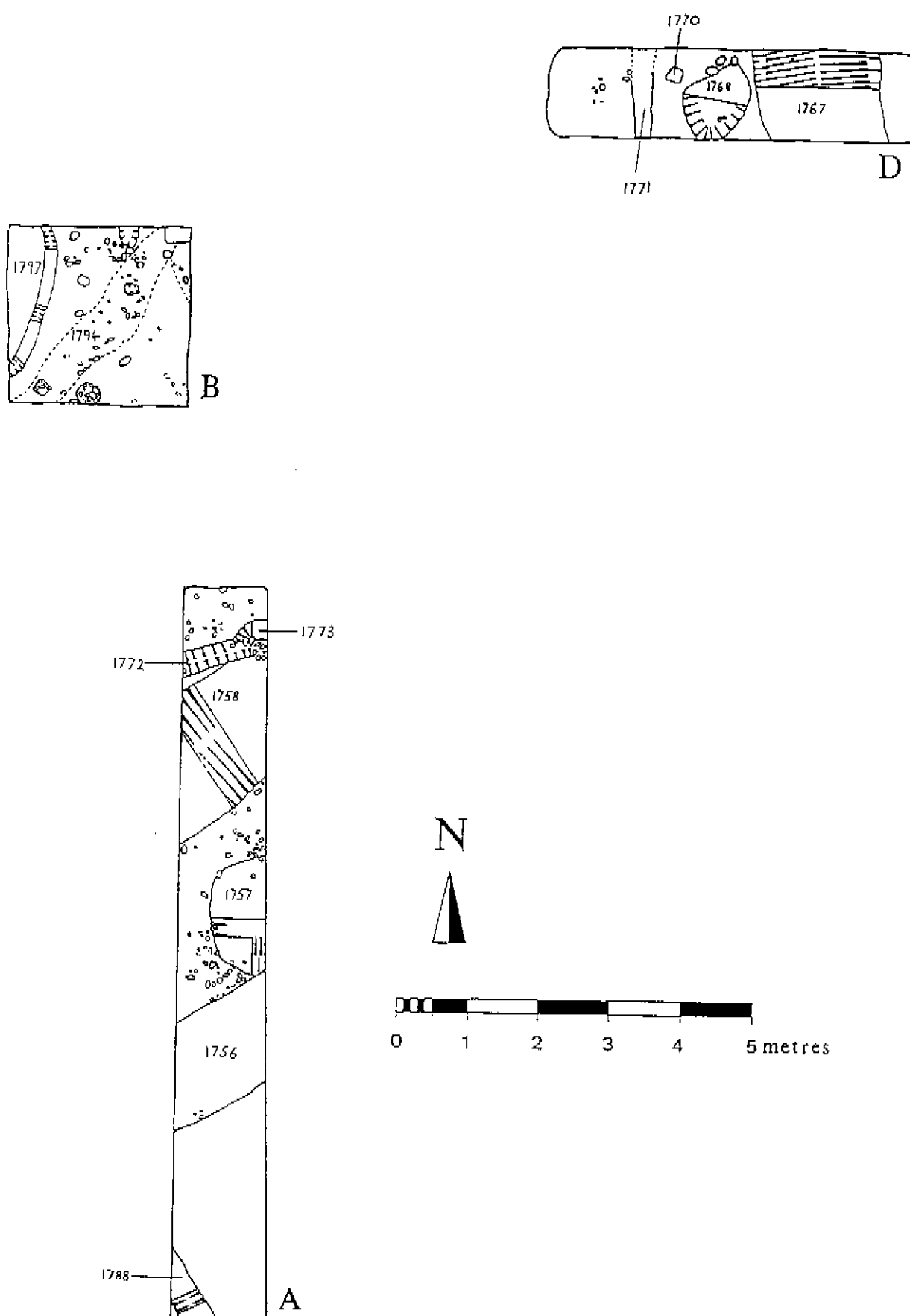


Fig. 8: SA4441: plan of excavated features.

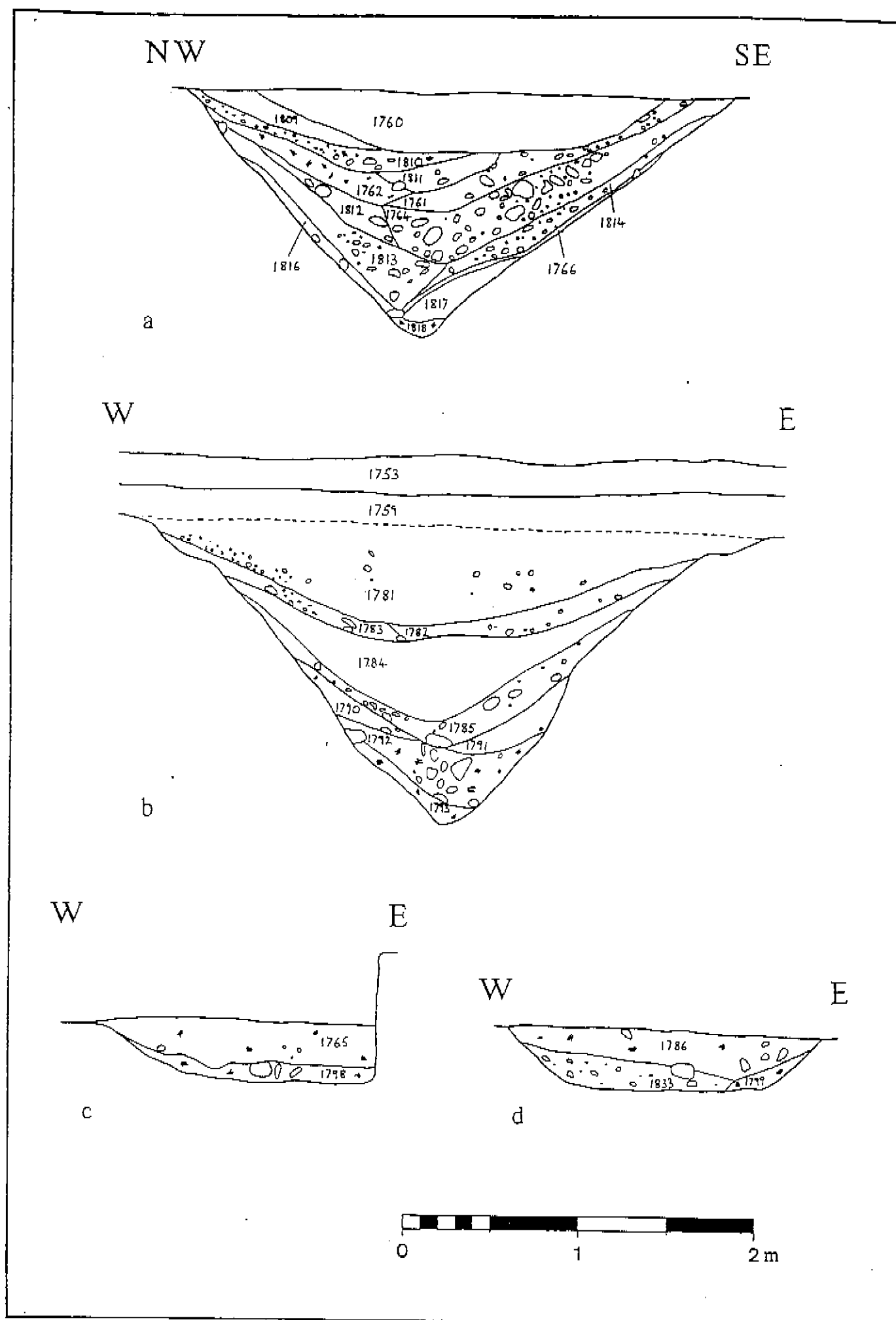


Fig. 9: SA4441: sections through features. a) ditch 1758;  
b) ditch 1767; c) hollow 1757; d) hollow 1768

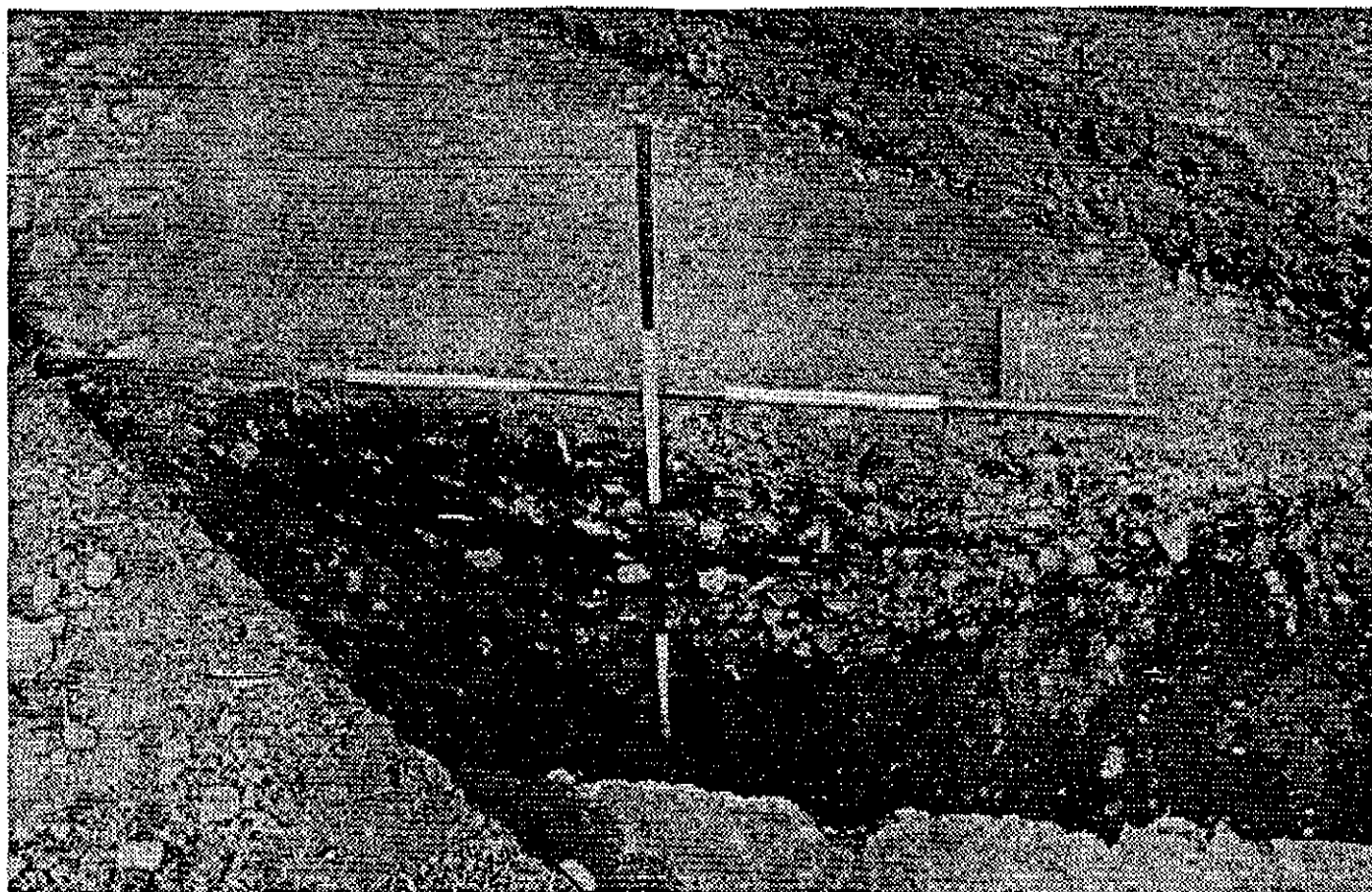


Plate 1: Section through ditch 1758

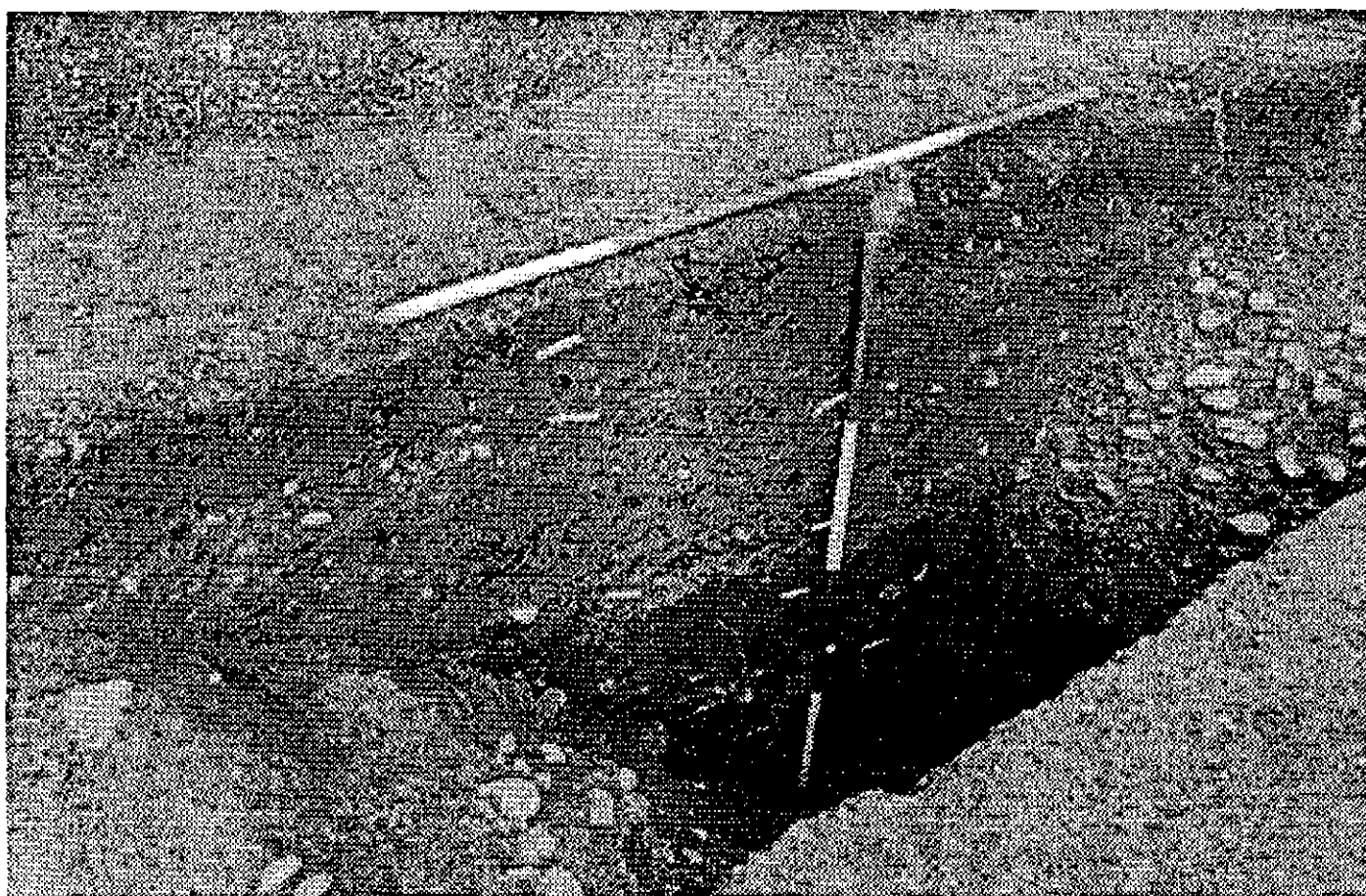


Plate 2: Section through ditch 1767

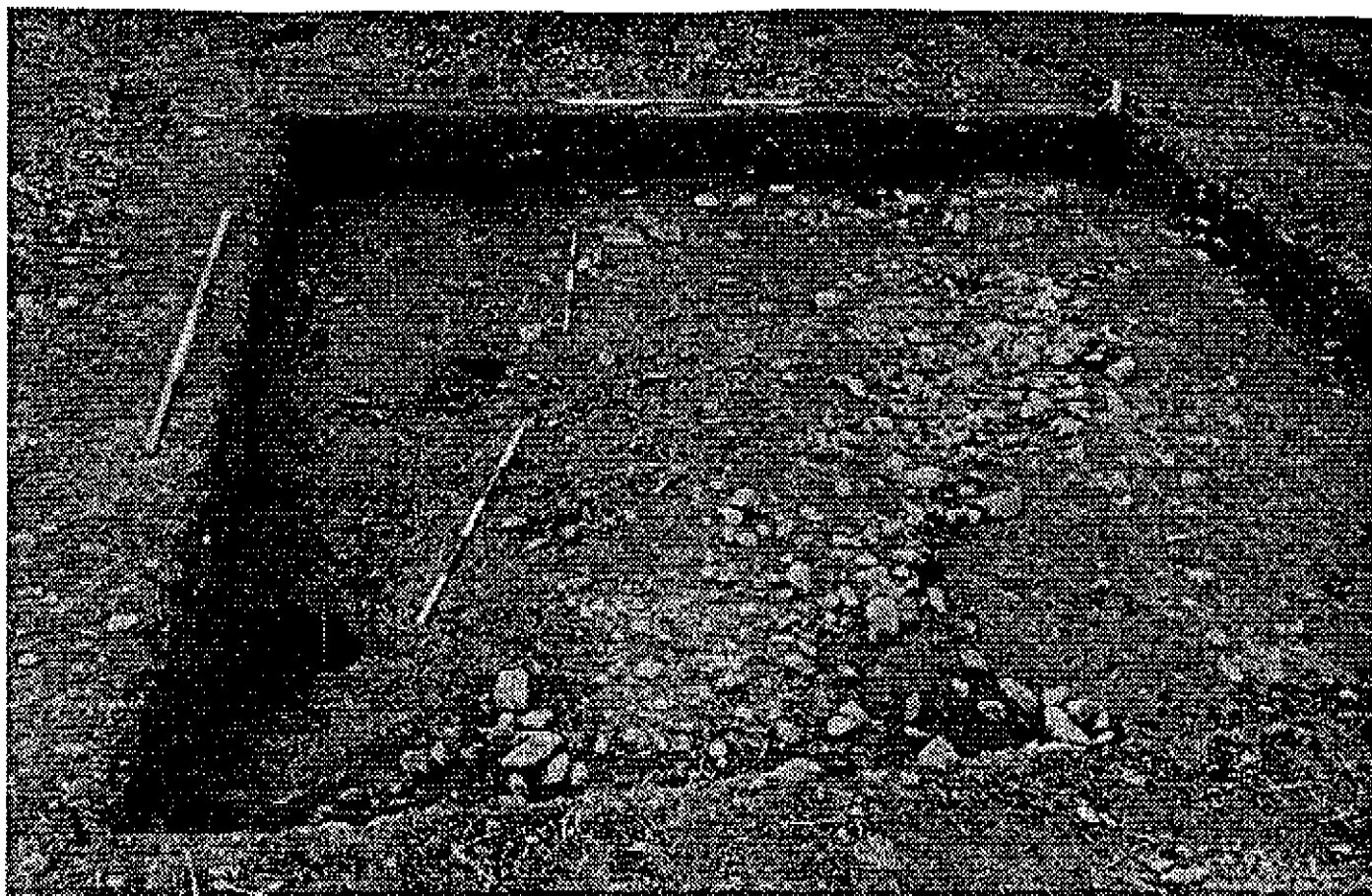


Plate 3: Eaves drip gulley and pebble surface in Trench B