

CPAT Report No. 1707




# Rd154 New Radnor Medieval Town: South West Quadrant

Archaeological Watching Brief



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## Summary

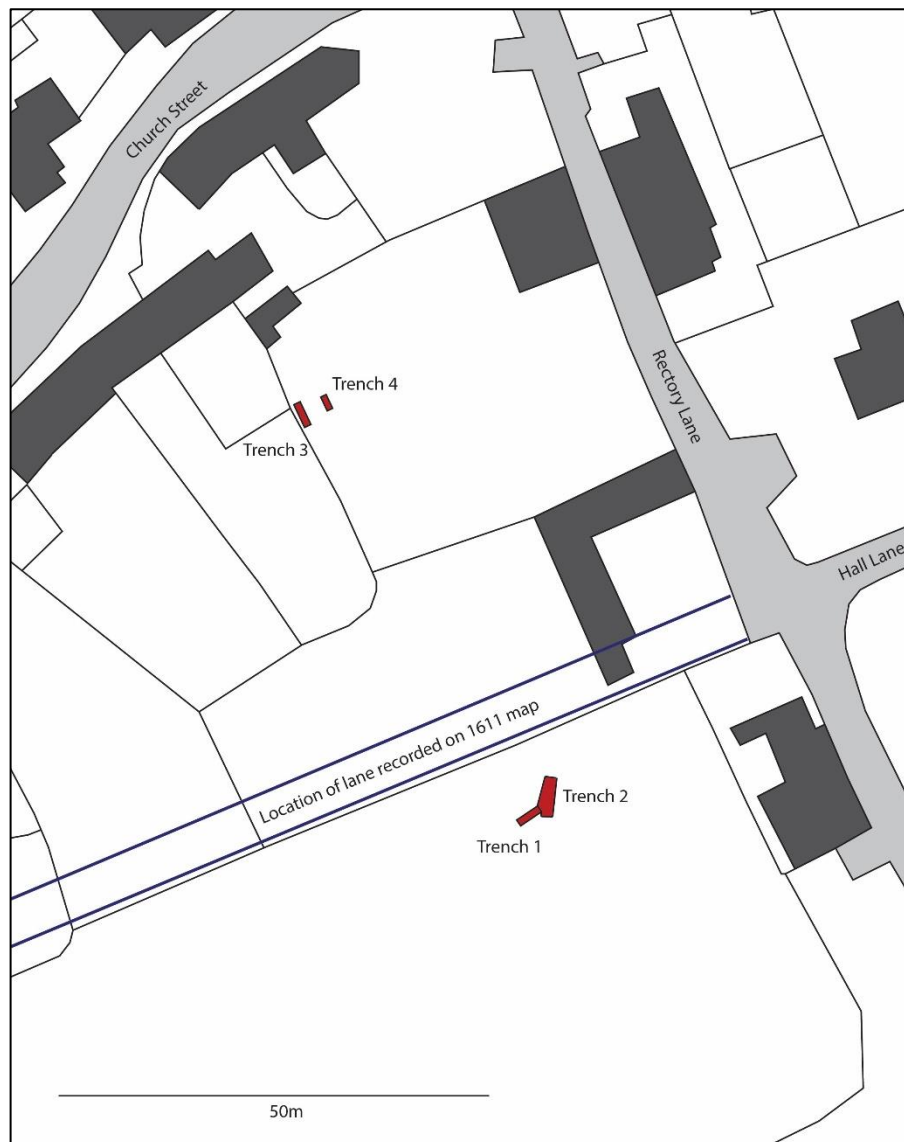
In November 2019 the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological watching brief on behalf of Western Power Distribution during groundworks within the scheduled area of part of the medieval town in New Radnor, Powys. The groundworks were associated with the replacement of two wooden electricity poles in separate locations, the removal of which revealed deep, poorly stratified agricultural soils. No archaeological structures or features were identified.

## Crynodeb

Ym mis Tachwedd 2019, bu Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd-Powys yn cynnal briff gwyllo archaeolegol ar ran Western Power Distribution yn ystod gwaith paratoi tir o fewn yr ardal restredig yn rhan o'r dref ganoloesol ym Maesyfed, Powys. Roedd y gwaith paratoi tir yn gysylltiedig ag ailosod dau bolyn trydan pren mewn lleoliadau gwahanol, ac wrth dynnu'r hen rai datgelwyd priddoedd amaethyddol dwfn, wedi haenu'n wael. Ni nodwyd unrhyw strwythurau neu nodweddion archaeolegol.

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1. In November 2019 The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological watching brief on behalf of Western Power Distribution, in respect of the replacement of two wooden electricity poles within the scheduled area of the medieval town at New Radnor (SM Rd154).
- 1.2. The groundworks were located within the southwestern quadrant of the medieval town (Fig. 1), in two areas, both of which were almost level pasture fields. In the southern area a double pole was replaced with a single pole, while in the northern area a single pole was moved to the edge of the field. The existing poles were cut to ground level..



*Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018*

*Fig. 1 Location of groundworks within New Radnor*

- 1.3. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was granted for the works in August 2019 with the inclusion of the following conditions:

- 
- The applicant shall provide Cadw with reasonable advance notice of commencement of works on site and will afford access at all reasonable times to any Cadw official or archaeologist nominated by Cadw to monitor progress of the works.
  - The approved works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the application form, plans and documents as listed below. No variations are permitted unless they have been authorised in advance in writing by Cadw.
  - No works, including site clearance, shall commence until Cadw has been informed in writing of the name of an appropriately qualified archaeologist operating to CIFA published standards and guidance who is to be present to undertake a watching brief for any works or operation occurring within the scheduled area. No work shall commence until Cadw has confirmed in writing that the proposed archaeologist is acceptable and a written scheme of investigation approved.
  - A digital copy of the watching brief report shall be submitted to Cadw for approval within four working weeks of the archaeological fieldwork being completed.

## 2 Historical Background

- 2.1. The following background is largely reproduced from *Historic Settlements in Radnorshire* (Silvester and Martin 2011).
- 2.2. New Radnor lies about 10km north-west of Kington in Herefordshire and 20km north-east of Builth Wells. It was established on the north side of the Summergil Brook where the stream breaks out of the narrow valley hemmed in by Radnor Forest on the north and Highgate Hill and the Smatcher on the south, to the lower lands of the Walton Basin. A spur projecting into the valley from the southern slopes of Radnor Forest was adapted for the castle earthworks which guarded the approaches to and from one of the more accessible passes into mid Wales. Subsequently the town was laid out on flatter ground below the castle.
- 2.3. New Radnor first appears in the records as Radenore Nova in 1277, though the lordship of Radnor as Radenovere is earlier. Raddrenove is referred to in the Domesday Book (1086) but is generally accepted to refer to Old Radnor, and it has been postulated that the need to distinguish between the two only became imperative when the borough was founded at New Radnor in the late 12th or early 13th century.
- 2.4. The earthwork castle may have been thrown up by Philip de Breos, one of the Marcher barons as early as the last decade of the 11th century, in a prominent location controlling the valley to the south: the size of it would bear comparison with another de Breos motte at Builth Wells. Possibly a settlement began to emerge around it in the decades that followed but not in the form that we see it today.
- 2.5. The borough that emerged at the base of the castle was undoubtedly a deliberately created plantation. Initially slow to establish itself, it underwent a rapid population expansion in the 14th century. The 97 burgesses in the returns of 1301 each paying 2s a year rent, had nearly doubled to 189 holding 262 and a half plots, three years later. A return of 13 pounds on rents and tolls in 1360 indicates a prosperous settlement by the standards of the day. No borough charter survives, but until the second half of the 16th century, it was recognised as a borough by prescription. Elizabeth I granted it a charter of incorporation.

- 2.6. A murage grant for constructing town defences was obtained in 1257, and is apparently the first mention of the town in the official records, with further grants in 1280, 1283 and 1290. A weekly market was operating early in the 14th century, and a charter for a yearly fair was obtained in 1306. A record from 1336 mentions a market and two fairs, the burgages and other rents at this time being worth 10 pounds.
- 2.7. There was a decline in the prosperity of the town during the later Middle Ages. Speed's plan of 1611 shows large open areas within the town, reflecting a considerable reduction in the number of burgage plots recorded in the early 14th century.
- 2.8. New Radnor was made the shire town for Radnorshire in 1536, perhaps because it was the only place in the county that preserved the semblance of a castle, and the only one that could be used as a prison. From 1562 it had borough status, signalled by the first extant charter. But by 1731 only 7 burgesses were left and the charter was suspended, though seven years later a new charter of incorporation was issued. The parliamentary constituency was dissolved in 1880, the borough in 1886.
- 2.9. The area where the groundworks were located was situated within the south-west quadrant of the historical settlement. Historical mapping indicates that this area has undergone little or no development since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. However John Speed's plan of 1611, which incorporates a cartouche depicting New Radnor within a map of the county of Radnor shows this quadrant as being bisected by a road, probably a continuation of Hall Lane to the west (Fig. 1). The groundworks themselves are located within infill areas within the medieval street grid, which appear to have remained undeveloped.

### 3 Watching Brief

- 3.1. The watching brief was conducted on November 4th 2019 in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) (2014) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. (2017), monitoring the excavation of four trenches (Fig. 1)
- 3.2. Trench 1 was oriented broadly east-west and measured 2m x 0.6m x 2m. The topsoil comprised a soft greyish loam (101), 0.2m thick, overlying a moderately compacted greyish clay silt (102), 0.8m thick. Medieval and early or mid-post-medieval pottery was recovered from this deposit. Underlying (102) was a soft greyish yellow clay > 1m in thickness.





*Fig. 2 View from the south of Trench 1 Photo CPAT 4715\_1*

- 3.3. Trench 2 was a continuation of Trench 1 to the east and north measuring 4m x 1.8m x 1m.



*Fig. 3 View from the west of Trench 2 Photo CPAT 4715\_4*

- 3.4. Trench 3 was oriented broadly north-south and measured 2m x 0.6m x 2m. The uppermost deposit comprised loose rubble and stone (301), 0.3m thick, containing frequent ceramic building materials and pottery of late post-medieval date. Underlying this was a soft greyish clay silt 1m in thickness (302), overlying a greyish yellow clay >0.5m thick.





*Fig. 4 Mid excavation view of Trench 3 from the east Photo CPAT 4715\_6*

- 3.5. Trench 4 was located approximately 3.5m to the east of Trench 3 and measured 1.6m x 0.6m x 1.75m. The soils deposits comprised a continuation of those within Trench 3.



*Fig. 5 View from the west of Trench 4 Photo CPAT 4715\_10*

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The groundworks revealed no evidence for in situ occupation at either location. Evidence from 17<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century mapping shows that both sites were unoccupied and it is possible that

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this part of the town was never fully occupied. The unusually deep deposition revealed at both locations has been interpreted as poorly stratified agricultural soils, which was sealed beneath late post-medieval or modern rubble/demolition in Trenches 3 and 4.

## 5 Sources

Silvester, R. J. and Martin, C. H. R., 2011, *Historic Settlements in Radnorshire*. Unpublished report. CPAT Report No 1088

### **Cartographic sources**

1611 John Speed Map of New Radnor

1889 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1st edition Radnorshire 24.11

## 6 Archive deposition Statement

- 6.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The digital archive only will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the paper/drawn/digital archive with the National Monuments Record (RCAHMW). The artefacts will be deposited with Powys Museums Service in due course.

### **Archive summary**

CPAT Event PRN: 140321

00 watching brief forms

11 digital photographs, CPAT film no 4715

1 sherd of medieval pottery from context (102) (not retained)

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## Appendix 1: CPAT WSI 2115

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust has been invited by Western Power Distribution to undertake an archaeological watching brief in connection with the replacement of two wooden electricity poles within the scheduled area of the medieval town defences at New Radnor (SM Rd154).
- 1.2. The monument comprises the southwestern quadrant of the well-preserved remains of New Radnor medieval town. The two areas affected by this application are almost level pasture fields within the defences. This scheduled monument consent application is for the replacement of two wooden electric poles located within the level pasture enclosed by the town defences. That to the south is a double pole to be replaced with a single, the northern pole will be moved to the edge of the field. The existing poles will be cut to ground level. The excavations for the two poles will measure 18" wide by 6ft long and deep with a 6ft square and 3ft deep excavation for a stay on one of the poles.
- 1.3. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was granted for the works in August 2019 with the inclusion of the following conditions:
  - The applicant shall provide Cadw with reasonable advance notice of commencement of works on site and will afford access at all reasonable times to any Cadw official or archaeologist nominated by Cadw to monitor progress of the works.
  - The approved works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the application form, plans and documents as listed below. No variations are permitted unless they have been authorised in advance in writing by Cadw.
  - No works, including site clearance, shall commence until Cadw has been informed in writing of the name of an appropriately qualified archaeologist operating to CIFA published standards and guidance who is to be present to undertake a watching brief for any works or operation occurring within the scheduled area. No work shall commence until Cadw has confirmed in writing that the proposed archaeologist is acceptable and a written scheme of investigation approved.
  - A digital copy of the watching brief report shall be submitted to Cadw for approval within four working weeks of the archaeological fieldwork being completed.

### 2 Methodology

#### Fieldwork

- 2.1. The watching brief will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014). The watching brief will be undertaken to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of the new extension. The excavation of any archaeological features or deposits will be undertaken by hand using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation:
  - The presence or absence of archaeological features encountered during the ground works will be noted.
  - Where features of archaeological interest are identified during the ground works they will be systematically investigated by hand with sufficient work being undertaken to

determine their date, character and function, using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation and in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance.

- All features will be located as accurately as possible on an overall plan of the development at an appropriate scale, showing boundaries depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping.
- Contexts will be recorded on individual record forms, using a continuous numbering system, and be drawn and photographed as appropriate.
- Plans will be drawn on permatrace to a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate.
- All photography will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a minimum resolution of 12 mega pixels, including a metric scale in each view, with views logged in a photographic register.
- In the event of human burials being discovered the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will be informed. The remains will initially be left in situ, and if removal is required, a MoJ licences will be applied for under the Burial Act 1857.
- In the event of finding any artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasures Act 1996, the appropriate procedures under this legislation will be followed.

## Artefacts

2.2. All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:

- All stratified finds will be collected by context, or where appropriate, individually recorded in three dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.
- All finds and samples will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance.
- Arrangements will be made to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples.
- Any artefacts recovered during the recording process will be deposited with the nearest regional or county Museum, subject to the permission of the owner. The artefacts will be deposited along with a copy of the site report including a detailed list of all artefacts recovered.

## Site archive

2.3. The overall archive will conform to guidelines described in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE), Historic England 2015, the CIfA (2014) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* and *The National Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales* (NPAAW, 2017) and *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records* (HERs) V1 (July 2018).

2.4. The paper and digital archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record (NMR), RCAHMW, including a copy of the final report. This archive will include all written, drawn, survey and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken. A copy of the digital archive only will also be lodged with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust.

## 3 Report

3.1. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:

- 
- Non-technical summary
  - Introduction
  - Site location
  - Archaeological Background
  - Evaluation
  - Conclusions
  - References
  - Appropriate appendices on archives and finds
- 3.2. The report summary will be provided in English and Welsh, in accordance with the *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records* (HERs) V1 (July 2018).

## 4 Resources and programming

- 4.1. The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Nigel Jones, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). CPAT is also a CIfA Registered Organisation and as such agrees to abide by their *Code of Conduct* (2014) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (2014).
- 4.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the site work. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client and the regional Historic Environment Record within one month of the completion of on-site works. If appropriate, a short report will be published in *Archaeology in Wales*.
- 4.3. The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services. Any further work over and above the original watching brief and report would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing. The following figures provide an indication of the types of additional services and indicative costs which might be required, for which the client is advised to make some provision.

Curatorial monitoring	£150 per visit
Finds conservation etc	£285 per day
Radiocarbon dating	£330 each
Finds specialist	£285 per day

- 4.4. Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 4.5. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance.

N W Jones

18 September 2019