

LLANLLYR, CEREDIGION, ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK 2015: INTERIM REPORT



Open Day Event at Llanllyr, July 2015

Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For Cadw



ymdiriedolaeth archaeolegol



archaeological trust

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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LLANLLYR, CEREDIGION, ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK 2015: INTERIM REPORT

Gan / By

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SUMMARY

Llanllyr Abbey was a Cistercian nunnery founded in c.1180 by Rhys ap Gruffudd. The abbey was dissolved in 1535. There are now no surface remains of the abbey or mansion but traces of the chapel/church, and a cemetery enclosure, were apparently visible in the late 19th century although at what exact location is not known. The site of the putative church/chapel (PRN 4786) is marked on the Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1891. This location is now in a field of pasture, the south-east part of which has been built-up as made ground, and concreted over during the late 20th century, possibly concealing any below-ground remains of conventual buildings.

A site for the 16th century mansion building has been suggested by a 1768 estate map that shows formal gardens and parkland to the west of the chapel site. The same building is believed to be illustrated in the notes of Thomas Dineley in 1684, although it is not named. This dwelling was later demolished in c.1830 and a new house (the present house) built 200m to the SE. The park and garden associated with the present dwelling are registered.

In July 2014 Cadw grant aided a project to locate and define the extent and character of the archaeological remains associated with the medieval nunnery and the post-dissolution mansion. It was anticipated that the results of this work would inform management plans and provide scheduling recommendations.

The first year of the project in 2014 comprised a joint undertaking between Dyfed Archaeological Trust and University of Wales Trinity Saint David. In this year an archaeological evaluation was carried out within the area of the putative gardens and buildings shown on the 1768 estate map and the pasture field where a chapel is reputed to have been located. No remains of a chapel were discovered but within and on the edge of scrubby woodland very extensive cobbled surfaces were found closely corresponding to the courtyards and trackways shown on the 1768 map. One trench, Trench 3a, revealed evidence of a possible wall that may be associated with the mansion shown on the 1768 estate map. Although this and other features in Trench 3a were not excavated, during cleaning of the trench fragments of 16th century floor tile were recovered.

In 2015 Dyfed Archaeological Trust returned to Llanllyr for the second year of the Cadw grant aided project. The specific objectives of the fieldwork were to examine in detail the area of Trench 3a exposed but not excavated in 2014, as well as opening a single trench over geophysical anomalies close to where medieval pottery was found in Trench 1 in 2014.

In Trench 3a the remains of a possible stone walled building was recorded. There was no evidence of a wall on the north-west facing side of the building; the side that would have fronted the cobbled yard. Therefore it is possible that it could be the remains of an open sided barn or shed. On the south side of this building were numerous intercutting features including shallow linear gullies, and numerous postholes, although these did not form any identifiable structure or building they did indicate the high level of activity in this area in the past.

To the north-west of the end of Trench 3a a section of the cobbled surface was removed to reveal that spreads of stone and the possible remains of a wall continued underneath it; indicating that they predate the cobbled surface in this area. However, it is quite probable that the recorded cobble surfaces represent more than one phase of construction and/or repair and in the area of Trench 3d there was further evidence of a section of a large wall running under the cobbles.

The pottery appears, upon brief inspection, to cover the medieval to post medieval periods.

In addition, Richard Suggett of the RCAHMW examined the current mansion and associated buildings. An area to the north-east of the current mansion was subjected to geophysical survey; an area where noticeable amounts of building rubble were exposed during excavations for a polytunnel. Unfortunately no significant archaeological features were identified by the survey.

A topographic survey of an area of woodland was undertaken during March 2016; where earthworks of possible ponds and other features conceivably associated with the nunnery or with later elements of the site have been noted.

Therefore although there are hints from the pottery and floor tile of medieval occupation in the vicinity, the fieldwork did not uncover any identifiable structures or features that could be definitely related to the medieval nunnery or even a Tudor mansion. However, the accumulating lack of evidence endorses the hypothesis that the majority of the nunnery buildings may lie beneath the current mansion and farm outbuildings.

INTRODUCTION

Llanllyr Abbey was a Cistercian nunnery founded in c.1180 by Rhys ap Gruffudd. It is rare; one of only two medieval nunneries in Wales, and may reflect a continuity in practice of female religious activity on the site. The abbey was dissolved in 1535 and it is believed at least some of the abbey buildings were converted into a mansion house. There are now no surface remains of the abbey or mansion, but traces of a chapel/church, and a cemetery enclosure, were apparently visible in the late 19th century. The site of a putative church/chapel is marked at SN 5426 5604 on the Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1891 against, and on the south side of a stream that still runs SE-NW through a pasture field to the north of the modern farm buildings, and there are reports of a 'tower' standing here in the 19th century.

An alternative site might exist at NGR SN 5420 5605, which has been suggested as the site of the earliest, 16th century mansion building, as identified in the notes of Thomas Dineley in 1684. This dwelling was later demolished, in c.1830, and a new house (the present house) built 200m to the south-east, at SN 5440 5594. In addition, a 1768 estate map shows formal gardens and parkland. The park and garden associated with the present dwelling are registered. The excavation lies just outside the registered park and garden.

Geophysical survey was undertaken in 2000, with very inconclusive results, but there were indications that buried features might be present but obscured by dumping.

In early 2014, a project design for grant-aid to undertake evaluation excavation was accepted by Cadw, due to the rarity of this type of site and the unknown nature of the buried archaeology. The aims of the evaluation were to locate and define the extent and character of the archaeological remains associated with the medieval nunnery and the post-dissolution mansion, thereby enabling management and scheduling recommendations to be better informed.

The first year of the project in 2014 comprised a joint undertaking between Dyfed Archaeological Trust and University of Wales Trinity Saint David. In this year an archaeological evaluation was carried out within the area of the putative gardens and buildings shown on the 1768 estate map and the pasture field where a chapel is reputed to have been located. No remains of a chapel were discovered but within and on the edge of scrubby woodland very extensive cobbled surfaces with evidence of robbed out walls were found.

It was not possible to fully investigate the exposed archaeology in the time available, but initial results indicated that the remains were of a formal 18th-century garden and associated buildings. Hints of earlier occupation were evident in a number of pieces of medieval floor tile found in Trench 3a within what might have been a former building shown on the 1768 estate map. Overall the 2014 work concentrated on exposing the top of the archaeology, and very little investigation of deeper, earlier features was possible in the time available. However, the excavations proved that archaeological deposits survived in this area.

In 2015 Dyfed Archaeological Trust returned to Llanllyr for the second year of the Cadw grant aided project. The specific objectives of the fieldwork were to examine in detail the area of Trench 3a exposed in 2014, an area where the fragments of medieval floor tile were recovered, as well as opening a single trench over geophysical anomalies close to

where medieval pottery was found in Trench 1 in 2014. It was anticipated that this work would better characterise the archaeological remains exposed but not excavated in 2014 and also demonstrate whether earlier deposits – of the medieval nunnery and of the post-dissolution mansion – survive sealed by the uppermost archaeological deposits.

Further investigations were carried out after the excavation was completed. These included:

- Geophysical survey was undertaken across 2 fields to the north of the current mansion (Figure 3).
- Topographic survey of the area of woodland lying to the west of the current mansion (Figure 4). This is an area where earthworks of possible ponds and associated features conceivably related with the nunnery or with later elements of the site have been noted.
- Richard Suggett of the RCAHMW undertook an examination of the internal details of the current mansion building and its associated out buildings.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Llanllyr is the name given to a house and its estate that are situated on low-lying ground in the Aeron valley, about half a kilometre south of Talsarn, Ceredigion. The current house was built in about 1830.

An estate map of 1768 (Figure 1) shows buildings, formal gardens and parkland to the north-west of the current house. It is thought that this house was demolished to provide building material for the construction of the new mansion house in 1830.

The nunnery at Llanllyr dates back to 1180 when the Lord Rhys ap Gruffydd founded a nunnery here as a daughter house of the Cistercian monastery of Strata Florida. The location of the nunnery is not known and there are no visible remains above ground. It has been suggested that the buildings shown on the 1768 map are a re-use of earlier monastic buildings during the post-dissolution period but there is no documentary evidence to support this.

The site of a putative church/chapel (PRN 4786) is marked at SN 5426 5604 on the Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1891 against, and on the south side of a stream that still runs SE-NW through a field of pasture, and there are reports of a 'tower' standing here in the 19th century.

Relating the 1768 estate map to its present-day position reveals that much of the proposed building and associated courtyards shown on the map are situated in scrubby woodland that lies to the west and south-west of the pasture field.

Modern farm buildings, other modern buildings and yards have been built over or close to the formal gardens shown on the 1768 map.

METHODOLOGY

Excavation

Following the results of the 2014 fieldwork it was proposed that future work should concentrate on excavating the archaeological deposits within Trench 3a in order to characterise and date the underlying archaeology in this area. In 2014 the trench had been opened and all revealed archaeology recorded in plan but no excavation had taken place.

Prior to excavation in 2015 the landowner had kindly strimmed the weeds growing across the area of the cobbles and Trench 3a. The cobbles were then covered with plastic sheeting to limit re-growth.

Trench 3a had been backfilled by the landowner in 2014 and unfortunately this backfill had to be removed by hand (Photos 1 & 2).

After removing the plastic sheeting the remaining weeds had to be removed by hand (Photo 3) to enhance the detail of the cobbled surfaces, prior to the Open Day Event.

On Saturday 11th July, a week after the start of the excavation, it was possible with the landowners help to have use of a mechanical 360° excavator with a grading bucket. This allowed us to extend Trench 3a somewhat, to excavate a new trench; Trench 8, over geophysical anomalies close to where medieval pottery was found in Trench 1 in 2014 and to investigate whether the cobbled surfaces continued to the southwest in the area of Trench 3c (Figure 2).

In the area of Trench 8 the machine removed the topsoil and underlying soils until archaeologically significant deposits or features were reached.

All archaeological deposits and features were recorded by archaeological context record sheet, scale drawing, photography and site notebooks. All individual deposits were numbered using the open-ended numbering system in accordance with DAT Archaeological Services' Recording Manual¹. Significant deposits were recorded by scale drawing (no less than 1:20); drawn plans were related to Ordnance Datum and, where possible, known boundaries. A photographic record was maintained using digital format.

All archaeologically significant artefacts, ecofacts and samples were retained and, where possible, related to the contexts from which they derived.

Volunteers excavated the site under the supervision of experienced Trust staff.

Geophysical Survey

Two small areas in fields of pasture to the northeast of the current mansion were subjected to geophysical survey. Area A (Figure 3) lies in a field where noticeable amounts of building rubble, including what appeared to be some dressed stone, were exposed during excavations by the landowner for a polytunnel. Area B lies in the field where Trench 1 in 2014 and Trench 8 in 2015 were excavated.

¹ Dyfed Archaeological Trust use the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available for inspection if required

A fluxgate gradiometer was used for the survey, which detects variations in the earth's magnetic field. Readings were taken at a low resolution on traverses 1m wide and every 0.25m within a grid across the site.

The underlying geology and soils were considered suitable for geophysical survey.

Processing was performed using TerraSurveyor 3.0. The data is presented with a minimum of processing. The presence of high values caused by ferrous objects, which tend to hide fine details and obscure archaeological features, was 'clipped' to remove the extreme values allowing the finer details to show through.

Topographic Survey

A topographic survey of an area of woodland that lies to the west of the current mansion was undertaken during March 2016; where earthworks of possible ponds and other features conceivably associated with the nunnery or with later elements of the site have been noted.

A Trimble single operator total station theodolite with a prismless capability and inbuilt data recorder was used for the topographic survey. The majority of the survey was undertaken with an instrument operator and a second person determining the points to be surveyed to ensure the archaeology was accurately recorded.

Around 10 survey stations were required to complete the survey and create series of traverses. Finer grain detail was captured in the areas of identifiable archaeological elements. The data was presented in a unified manner, making it possible to display and present it to the required scales.

Much of the lower lying vegetation was cleared prior to the survey by the landowner making the majority of the area accessible to survey.

Examination of current mansion house and farm outbuildings

On 11th August an examination of the current mansion house and its surrounding farm buildings was undertaken by Richard Suggett (RCAHMW), Fran Murphy (DAT) and the owner Matthew Gee.

RESULTS

Excavation

The excavation took place from 6th – 18th July 2015.

The following descriptions are only summaries of what was recorded in each trench. It is intended that a full report on the results of the project will be completed in the next financial year.

In the following descriptions the numbers in [] brackets refer to the unique numbers given to each archaeological context recorded during the 2015 excavation.

Trench 3a (Photos 1-17)

Trench 3a lay to the south-east of the cobbled yard (Photo 4). This trench had been opened in Year I but no archaeological features had been excavated, although they been recorded in plan.

The uppermost identifiable layer was a mixed deposit [3542] of dark grey sandy silt containing plastic, pallet nails and other modern debris.

[3542] overlay a layer [3500] of silty clay loam that contained a high percentage of small and large stones, broken slate, mortar, window glass, roof tile and pottery; possibly a layer indicative of a phase of building demolition. A number of fragments of green glazed tile (Photo 6) provisionally dated to the 16th century came from [3500] towards the western end of the trench. They are the same fabric as those found in 2014. This layer was not uniform and varied in depth and in some places was so near the current ground surface in the area of Trench 3a (as seen in the SW facing section) that it had been removed altogether.

A comparable layer, containing large quantities of what appears to be debris from a demolished building, was recorded during 2014 in most of the evaluation trenches immediately below topsoil, apart from Trench 1.

At the western end of the trench [3500] survives as a thin layer, very close to the surface, that is somewhat mixed into the layers of silt below. [3500] appeared to butt up against the edge of the cobbles. Photo 5 shows layer [3500] butting up against the edge of the cobbles to the west of Trench 3a, in the same area that the 16th century tile was discovered. Contained within [3500] can be seen window glass, tile, and copper alloy fragments.

Layer [3500] was cut by a number of features including 2 possible pits; [3538] and [3551].

Underlying rubble layer [3500] was evidence of a thin but prominent layer of cream mortar and charcoal [3541]. In the NE facing section this layer could be seen to be just above the fill of linear feature [3507] and the series of orange/brown silt deposits [3009].

NB. In 2014 after machining a remnant of layer [3541] could be seen across the area.

Below layer [3541] were a number of features cut through a series of very similar compacted sandy silts [3545, 3537, 3543] – comparable to the natural subsoil but containing some charcoal and what looked like small specks of daub.

These features included:

A linear cut [3511] running in a NW-SE direction (Photo 7 & 8) is possibly evidence for a robbed out wall. At the NW terminus of the cut was a large boulder [3014] sitting within the cut. The fill of the cut contained a high percentage of medium and large stones and appreciable amounts of white lime mortar. Some of the mortar still attached to the stones had flattened surfaces. At its southeast the linear cut turns northwards and runs into the section.

There was some slight evidence that cut [3511] lay centrally inside and along a wider cut [3544] that may indicate the original foundation cut for the wall. The edges of this were not easy to see in plan but the fills [3502, 3504] of [3544] did contain more finds than from [3005], the fill of [3511], including a fragment of a Dyfed Gravel Tempered Ware roof ridge tile. Cut [3511] measured 0.60m wide and [3544] was roughly 1.0m wide. The machining carried out in 2014 (not by DAT) had truncated these linear features but they could have been approximately 20-30cm deeper than recorded in 2015.

Upon removing fill [3005] of linear [3511] a posthole [3547] 0.40m in diameter, 0.25m deep filled with identical material to [3005] was discovered at the south-east end of the linear cut, just before it turned northwards (Photo 9). No finds were recovered from this post hole.

From boulder [3014] there was no evidence of a corresponding wall cut running parallel with the edges of the cobbles in a NE-SW direction; suggesting that this could be an open sided building fronting the cobble yard approximately 8.5m wide.

When a portion of the cobbled surface to the NW of boulder [3014] was removed a linear spread of stone [3503] was uncovered that included at least 4 boulders within it (Photo 10 & 11). The spread measured approximately 0.80-0.90m wide. The spread appeared to continue north westwards along the same alignment as that of wall cut [3511], although with a slight curve westwards. In section it did appear that this spread of stone sat within a shallow cut, although there was not time to investigate this fully. The relationship between [3511] and [3503] was not clear but there was a clear terminus to [3511] visible in plan. Also the spread of stone [3503] and the fill [3005] of cut [3511] were completely different in character.

To the south of [3503] was another spread of stone that appeared to lie within a deeper cut just caught in section. However, the extent of this spread of stone was not fully exposed.

Underlying rubble layers [3500, 3539] and the mortar and charcoal [3540] were a large number of intercutting features. Their meaning was difficult to characterise within such a small area but their number indicates the high level of activity in the past in this region.

Two very deep postholes [3010] and [3520] c.0.50m deep lying 3.2m apart were both tightly and very neatly packed with stone to support narrow posts. No finds were recovered from either post hole (Photo 12).

Post hole [3010] cut a series of compacted yellow/orange/brown deposits [3009] of sandy silt that appeared to fill a large sub-circular depression or cut (Photo 13 & 14).

Post hole [3520] (Photo 15) cut a very shallow linear cut [3507] (Photo 12 & 16) that ran in an approximate E-W direction across the width of the trench. Linear cut [3507] also cut through deposits [3009] as well as another very shallow linear [3509] running NE-SW.

A large posthole or pit [3552] 0.20m deep whose full extent is unknown as it was obscured by the trench section cut the fill [3508] of linear [3507] at its eastern end.

There were also a number of other shallow post holes and small lengths of gully recorded in this area.

Trench 3c (Photos 18-20)

Trench 3c was opened to expose a further area of cobbles to ascertain whether they continued into the woodland. After machine excavating the modern trackway above the cobbles it was apparent that the cobbles continued into the woodland. The cobbles also continued to the south-east under the trench edge but a clear well defined north-west edge to the cobbles was exposed. All the finds from cleaning this surface were 19th/20th century in date and included a large number of iron nails.

Trench 3d (Photos 21-24)

In 2014 a number of large boulders were first exposed just to the north of the north-west corner of the large cobbled area. In 2015 this area was investigated further. After cleaning the surrounding area it became apparent that the cobbles overlay the larger stones and a section of cobbled surface was removed (Photo 21). Removing a layer of dark brown silty loam and loose stones [3528] that abutted the cobbled surface [3530] exposed the remains of a possible stone wall [3521] running in an approximately NE-SW direction underneath the cobble surface (Photo 22 & 23)). The stones on the eastern edge of the wall were clearly faced but there was no evidence that the stones were sitting in a cut. To the west of the wall was a spread of small stones [3529] compacted into a sandy silt matrix. To the east of the wall was a compacted spread of angular stone [3533] that butted up against the cobble surface. The finds from the excavation of context [3528] included post medieval pottery, iron nails and glass fragments.

Trench 8 (Photos 25-28))

The trench was excavated by a mechanical 360° excavator with a grading bucket.

Trench 1 excavated in 2014 had been located to investigate linear geophysical anomalies recorded by geophysical survey in 2014. Pottery provisionally dated to the 13th/14th century was recovered from the fill of a ditch crossing the trench. It was intended that Trench 8 should investigate these anomalies further. The location of Trench 8 was problematic because of the position of high voltage electrical cables at the east end of

the field and their associated copper earth wires. This resulted in the position of the trench being somewhat altered (Figures 1 & 4).

A homogenous layer of plough soil [800] lying below the turf was removed by the mechanical excavator. Below this was revealed the natural subsoil of sands and gravels. Cut into the sands and gravels was a small sub-circular cut [803] at the south-western end of the trench. The cut measured c.0.4m in diameter and 0.2m deep. No finds were recovered from its fill.

Crossing the trench at the north-eastern end of the trench was a ditch [805] orientated east-west. The ditch cut was c.0.8m wide and 0.45m deep and contained 2 fills [804 & 806]. One very small piece of pottery was found in the upper fill [804]. A bulk sample was taken from the lower fill [806].

Geophysical Survey

The geophysical survey was carried out on 8th October 2014. The weather was sunny and dry, with little wind. DAT staff spent a day carrying out the survey with the aid of 2 volunteers who helped lay out the grids. Primarily the aim was to investigate Area A and area B was surveyed because there was some time left in the day and the volunteers were very keen to keep working.

The results are presented in Figure 3 as a greyscale plot on a graded scale of ± 8 nT (nanoTesla).

In area A no magnetic anomalies could be identified that might indicate significant archaeological features in this area. Unfortunately the magnetic influence of the metal frame of the polytunnel meant that no readings could be taken in its immediate vicinity, and this was just where the majority of stone had been recovered by the landowner. However, to the east of the polytunnel where it was possible to survey an expanse of open ground no significant archaeological features were recognised.



Area B was subjected to a quick geophysical survey in the hope that we might pick up features not seen in the previous survey carried out in 2014. The backfilled Trench 1 excavated in 2014 and the former position of its spoil heap could be identified but no new archaeological features, other than those previously identified were recorded. At this stage Trench 8 was still an open trench, therefore neither the trench nor its spoil heap could be surveyed.

Topographic survey

The topographic survey was undertaken over 3 days: 1st March, 3rd March and 11th March 2016.

An area of approximately 1.6 hectares was surveyed and the unprocessed results are shown in Figure 4. It is intended to examine and report on the results of the survey, particularly in relation to available historic maps more fully in the future.

Examination of current mansion house and farm outbuildings

The examination of the current mansion house provided clear evidence that some materials, particularly wooden beams, used in the construction of the mansion, were a re-use of materials from an earlier building, of probable 16th century date. Some of the beams showed evidence of carving indicative of a 16th century date and this would support the theory that an earlier mansion building was demolished to build the current one in 1830.

Richard Suggett is in the process of writing a full report and this will be included in the final reporting.

FINDS

The following tables list the types of finds recovered and samples taken during the excavation in 2015.

Stratified

TRENCH	CONTEXT NO	FIND TYPE
3a	3500	Animal bone
		Charcoal
		Floor tile: glazed
		Iron nails
		Metalwork: copper alloy
		Pottery: glazed; unglazed
		Slate
		Window glass
3a	3502	Mortar fragments
3a	3504	Animal bone
		Clay pipe
		Iron nails
		Metalwork: fe
		Plaster fragments
		Pottery: glazed; glazed
		Roof tile: glazed
		Window glass
3a	3005	Animal bone
		Glass
		Metalwork: fe
		Mortar fragments
		Shell: oyster
8	801	Pottery
	802	Metalwork: fe
	804	Animal bone?
		Pottery

Un-stratified

TRENCH	CONTEXT NO	FIND TYPE
3 – cleaning of cobbles	Un-stratified finds	Brick
		Bottle glass
		Floor tile: glazed; unglazed
		Metalwork: fe
		Pottery: glazed; unglazed
		Slate
		Window glass

SAMPLES

TRENCH	CONTEXT NO	PURPOSE
8	806	Carbon 14 dating

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation was directed by F Murphy of Dyfed Archaeological Trust with support from H Wilson of Dyfed Archaeological Trust. Grateful thanks go to Dee Williams for her comments on the pottery and tile, and the numerous volunteers for their hard work during the excavation.

The Trust is indebted to the Gee family for allowing the excavation to take place on their land. The report was written by F Murphy and H Wilson.

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FIGURES

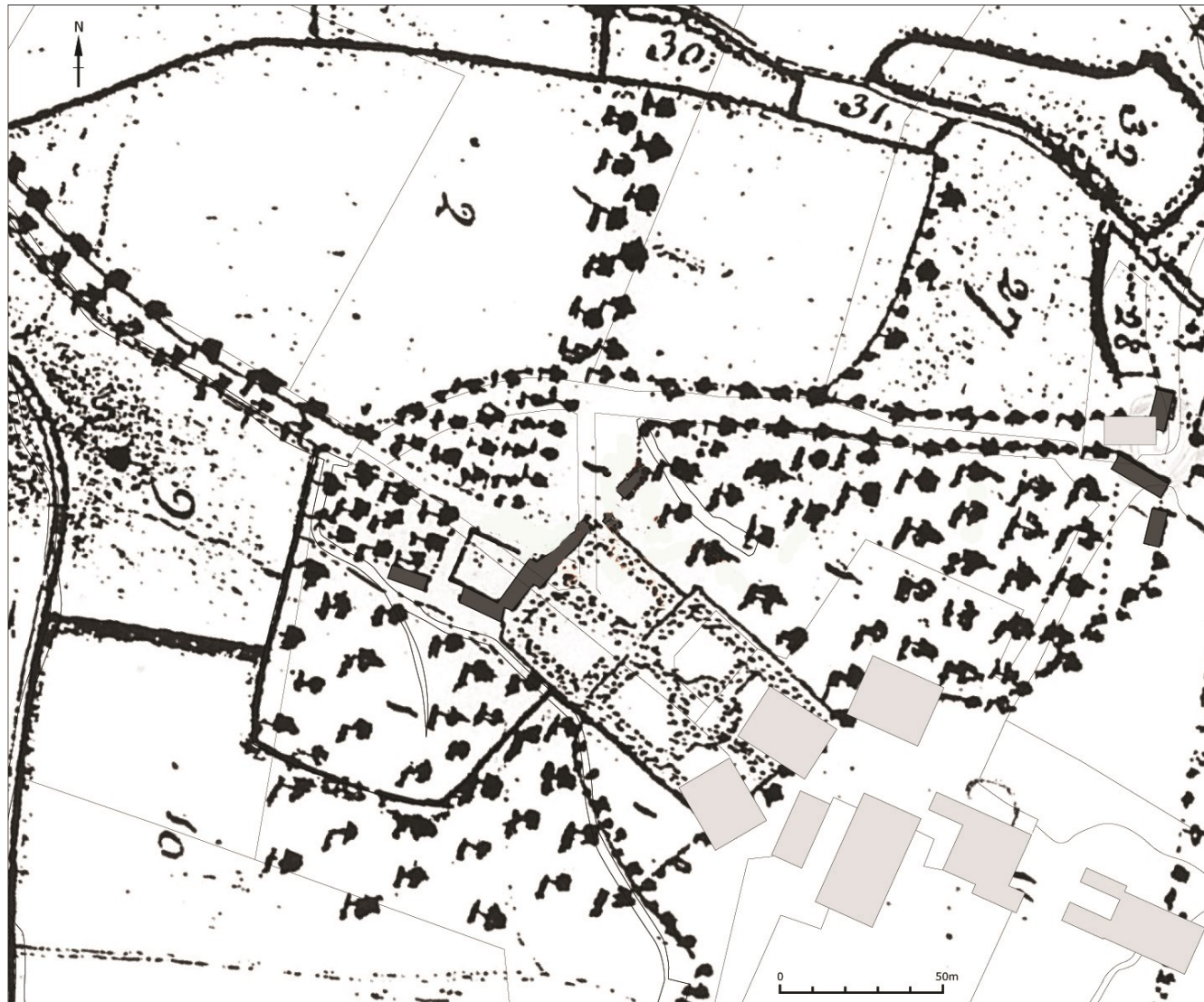


Figure 1: Extract of the 1768 estate map showing its position in relation to existing modern farm buildings (shaded in grey).



Figure 2: Trench location plan; showing location of trenches excavated in 2014 (red) & 2015 (blue). Trench 3 (grey) shows the area of cobbled surface.

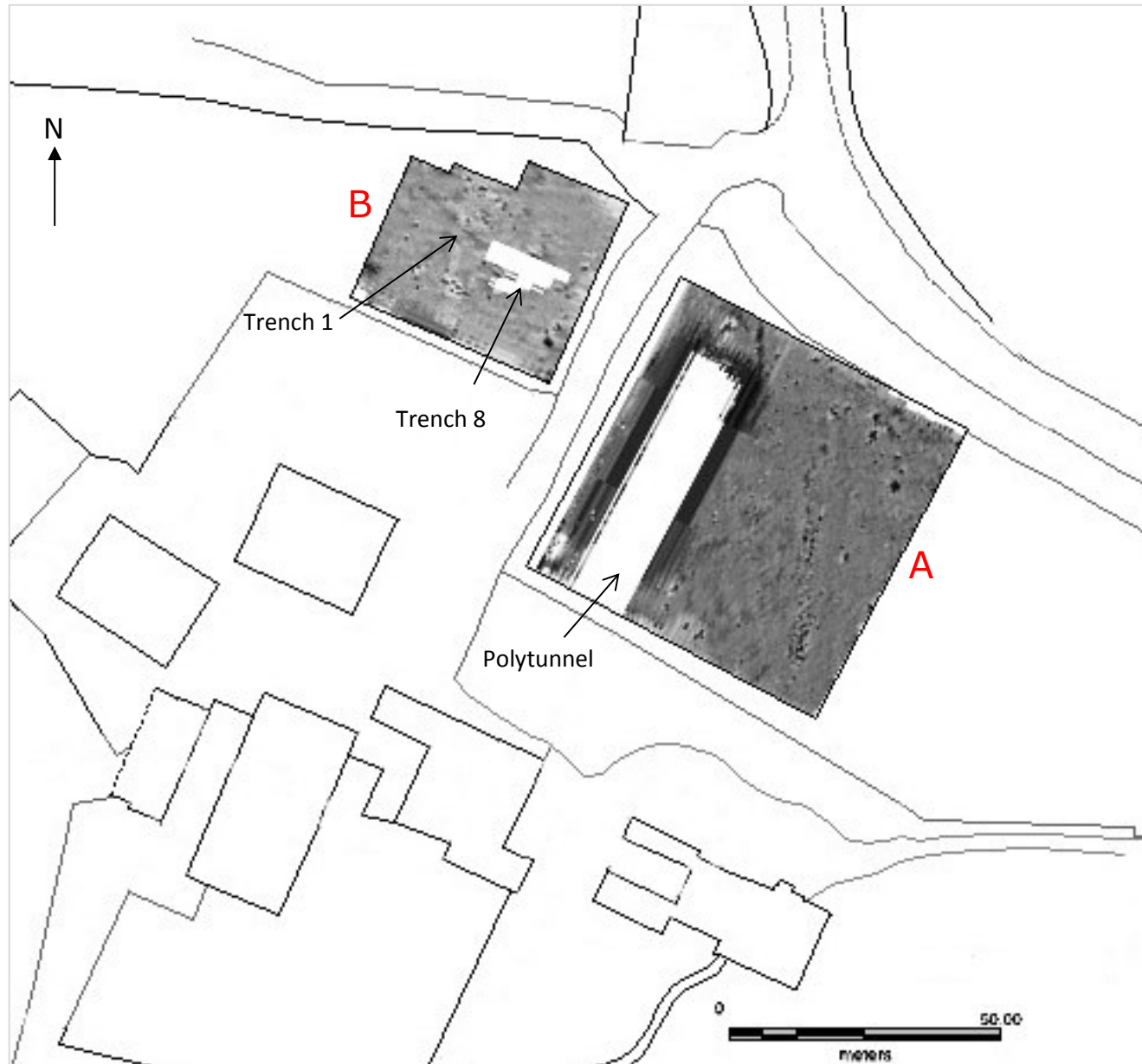


Figure 3: The results of the geophysical survey carried out in September 2015.

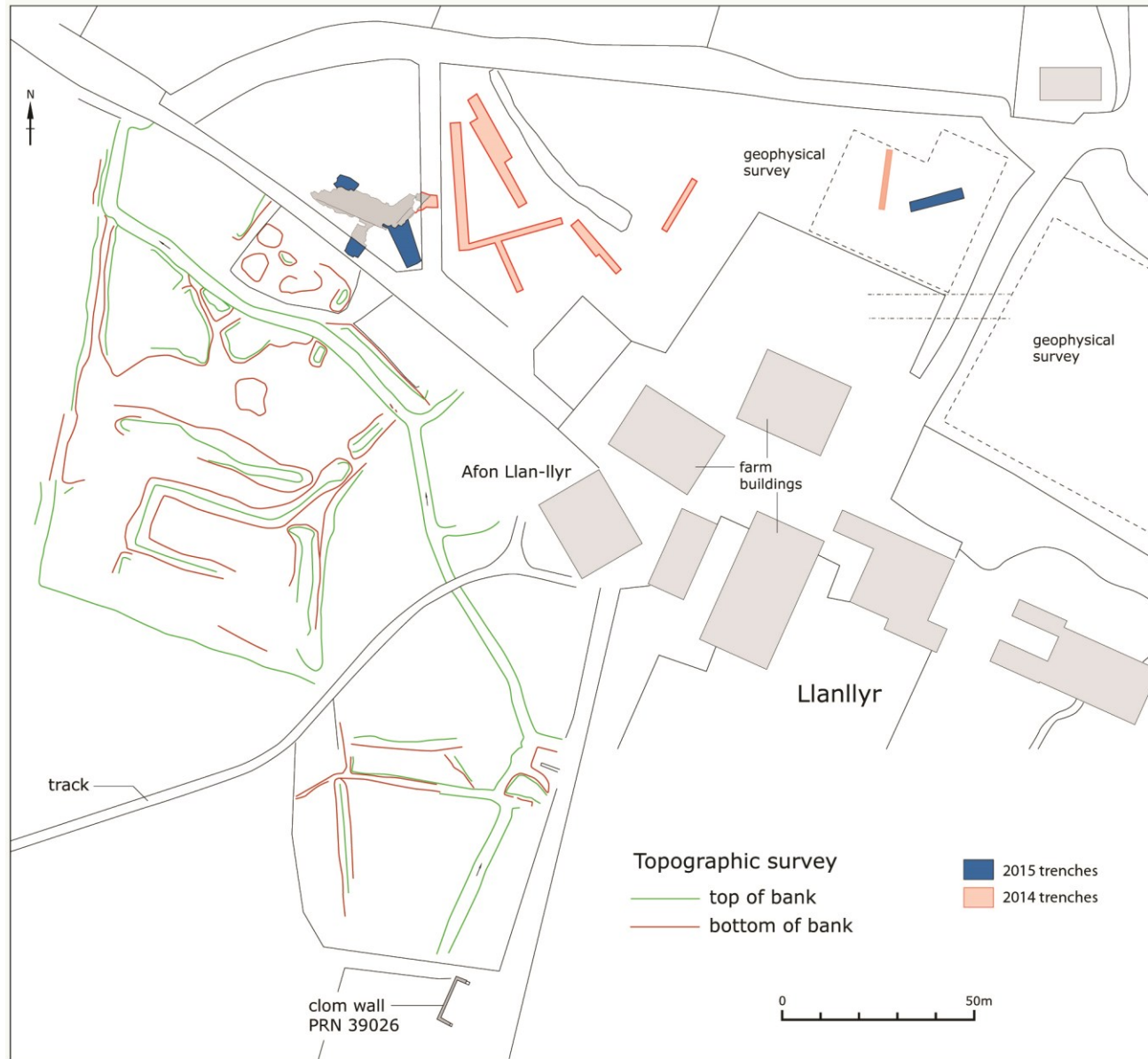


Figure 4: A plan showing the location and results of the topographic survey carried out in March 2016.

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Trench 3a



Photo 1: Removing the backfill by hand from Trench 3a.



Photo 2: Trowelling Trench 3a after removing all backfill.



Photo 3: Weeding the cobbled surfaces.



Photo 4: An aerial photograph of the cobbled areas after weeding had been completed. Trench 3a can be seen in the top left hand corner.



Photo 5: The fragments of tile, window glass and fragments of copper alloy within layer [3500]. The edge of this layer lay butting up against the edge of the cobble surface [3530].



Photo 6: Fragments of green glazed tile provisionally dated to the 16th century that came from context [3530].



Photo 7: Trench 3a – showing linear feature [3511] running diagonally across the northern side of the trench from the stone boulder [3014]. Looking north-west.



Photo 8: Looking NW at the section across the remains of linear cut [3511]. Looking approximately west. 1m scale.



Photo 9: Excavated post hole [3547] revealed after the removal of fill of [3511] and [3554]. Looking west. 1m scale.



Photo 10: Exposing the earlier spreads of stone under the cobbled surfaces at the northwest end of Trench 3a. Looking roughly north. 1m scale.



Photo 11: Spreads of stone [3503] and [3536] exposed after the removal of cobbles [3530] at the north-west end of Trench 3a. Looking east. 1m scale.



Photo 12: Trench 3a – showing the section excavated through linear feature [3507] that demonstrates just how shallow the cut is. The photograph also shows the 2 stone packed postholes [3010] and [3520] after removal of post pipe fill. Looking west.



Photo 13: Trench 3a – showing post hole [3010] prior to excavation. 0.50m scale.



Photo 14: Post hole [3010] during half sectioning of stone packing [3535].



Photo 15: Post hole [3520] after half sectioning of stone packing [3534]. 0.50m scale.



Photo 16: Trench 3a – showing clearly linear feature [3507] running diagonally across the trench. Looking west.



Photo 17: Trench 3a – completing recording on penultimate day of excavation.

Trench 3c



Photo 18: Cleaning the additional area of cobbles exposed in 2015 across modern trackway. Looking approximately west.



Photo 19: Aerial shot of the cobbled surface showing the additional area exposed in 2015 across modern trackway outlined in red.



Photo 20: Detail of aerial shot showing the additional area exposed in 2015 across modern trackway.

Trench 3d



Photo 21: Trench 3d –area after initial removal of an area of cobbles [3530]. Looking approximately southwest. 1m scale.



Photo 22: Trench 3d –area after further cleaning showing remnant of possible wall [3521] and spread of stone [3529]. Looking approximately south-west. 1m scale.



Photo 23: Recording and planning the earlier spreads of stone in Trench 3d.
Looking approximately south-east. 1m scale.



Photo 24: Trench 3d – after removal of all loose stone showing remaining remnant of possible wall [3521]. 1m scale.

Trench 8



Photo 25: Trench 8—initial cleaning after completion of machining.
Looking roughly north-east



Photo 26: Trench 8 – showing the excavation of sections through linear cut [8005].
Looking east



Photo 27: Trench 8 – showing the completed excavation of sections through linear cut [8005]. Looking east. 2m scale.



Photo 28: Trench 8 – showing the west facing section through ditch cut [8005]. 0.50m scale.

VOLUNTEERS AND OUTREACH

Volunteers

The excavation at Llanllyr was undertaken with the assistance of volunteers. The excavation was advertised in preceding months. Information on last year's work and the aims of this year's work were supplied to all interested volunteers, together with practical information on working on site.

There were in total 13 working days where volunteers could work on the excavations between Monday 6th July and Saturday 18th July. Although we did not have as many volunteers as in Year I, this year saw a hardy core group of between 6 and 7 people who turned up every day for the whole 2 weeks, supplemented by volunteers who participated on fewer days and in the first week by a number of students on work experience who came from secondary schools across Dyfed. In total 23 volunteers worked on the site throughout the 2 weeks of the investigations.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednes- day	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
06/07/14	07/07/14	08/07/14	09/07/14	10/07/14	11/07/14	12/07/14
6	12	11	10	10	11	10
13/07/14	14/07/14	15/07/14	16/07/14	17/07/14	18/07/14	
8	7	9	8	9	7	

Volunteer numbers per day on-site

Many of the volunteers had worked on a number of archaeological projects with DAT or other organisations and so were quite experienced. For some volunteers this was the first archaeological site they had worked on. Opportunities were provided for volunteers to learn excavation techniques from site cleaning using trowels, mattocking and shovelling, through to hand excavation of archaeological features. Opportunities were provided to carry out recording through drawn, written and photographic record techniques. Training in the use of and opportunities to use the level and electronic distance measurer was provided. Training was carried through direct supervision from a member of DAT staff or via the use of simple instruction sheets where a volunteer felt more confident to work more independently. DAT staff were always available to ask questions or provide assistance. Not all volunteers wished to do all tasks available. Copies of the site recording manual were also provided on-site.

Outreach

Throughout the excavation a dig diary was maintained and updated on the DAT website.

Over the 2 weeks of the project we had approximately 30 visitors who having heard about the excavation turned up to visit the site. They comprised mostly members of the local community, or friends and family of volunteers, staff or the Gee family who own Llanllyr, as well as reporters from local newspapers.

On the last day of the excavation DAT organised an Open Day event as part of the Festival of Archaeology. This had been advertised through many different avenues including social media and Festival of Archaeology publications.

ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol
DYFED
archaeological trust

DIWRNOD AGORED CLODDIADAU
LLANLLYR
EXCAVATION OPEN DAY

GŴYL ARCHAE OLEG 2015
FESTIVAL OF ARCHAE OLOGY 2015
25 YEARS

Dydd Sadwrn 18ed Gorffennaf 11-4
Saturday 18th July 11-4

Teithiau tywys
Cloddiadau blant
Gweithgareddau i blant
Arddangosfeudd
Arteffactiau
Croeso i bawb
Mynediad am ddim

Site tours
Children's excavation
Children's activities
Exhibitions
Artefacts
All welcome
Admission free



Llanllyr, Talsarn, Lampeter, SA48 8QB (B4337)
01558 825993 /
a.pyper@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk



Council for British Archaeology
Visit us online for more information
www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk

Cadw
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

The day was a great success with over 150 visitors attending the event. The visitors included many people from the local community, as well as members of Llansantffraed History Society, staff from the School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology, University of Wales Trinity Saint David and David Williams the expert on the Cistercian order in Wales. Guided tours were undertaken during the day, finds from the excavation were on show which people were encouraged to inspect and identify, and a range of children's activities were enjoyed. Visitors appreciated seeing how an excavation was carried out with staff and volunteers continuing to work on site throughout the day. Many of the volunteers

joined in answering questions from visitors and explaining what they were doing.









LLANLLYR, CEREDIGION, ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK 2015: INTERIM REPORT

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2015/47

CADW PROJECT NO: DAT 134

March 2016

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by F Murphy

Swydd / Position: Project Manager DAT Archaeological Services

Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date

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

ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Director Dyfed Archaeological Trust

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

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any
comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report

