

# *Archaeology Wales*

## **Land at Blaengwrog, Beulah, Ceredigion**

### Archaeological Trenched Evaluation Report



Jerry Bond ACIfA

Report No. 1906

# Archaeology Wales

## Land at Blaengwrog, Beulah, Ceredigion

### Archaeological Trenched Evaluation Report

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Report No. 1906

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## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Archaeology Wales Ltd (AW) was commissioned to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation on land at Blaengwrog, Beulah, Ceredigion, SA38 9QS between the 24th and 26th of July 2020, by Gareth Davies Ltd (NGR SN 27773 43754). The works were associated with the proposed development of a bungalow and garage, dog breeding kennels and stables.*

*The evaluation took the form of the excavation of seven archaeological trenches measuring 1.8m wide and totalling 122m in length in order to confirm the nature and date of the possible prehistoric and later archaeology identified during an earlier geophysical survey of the site (Muller, 2020). This survey revealed evidence for several possible archaeological features corresponding with crop marks visible on aerial photographs of the site.*

*The archaeological trenching evaluation revealed that the geophysical anomalies and crop marks were the result of at least two phases of ploughing, combined with natural geological variations. The magnetic responses had been enhanced by the shallowness of the topsoil. Subsequently the archaeological potential of the site has been demonstrated to be low.*

*All work conformed to Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (ClfA 2014) and Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Artefact and Environmental Collection, Documentation Conservation and Research (ClfA 2014).*

## **Crynodeb annhechnegol**

*Comisiynwyd archeoleg Cymru Cyf (AW) i gynnal gwerthusiad archeolegol ar dir ym Mlaengwrog, Beulah, Ceredigion, SA38 9QS rhwng y 24ain a'r 26ain o Orffennaf 2020, gan Gareth Davies Cyf (NGR SN 27773 43754). Roedd y gwaith yn gysylltiedig â'r bwriad i ddatblygu byngalo a garej, cytiau bridio cŵn a stablau.*

*Roedd y gwerthusiad ar ffurf cloddio saith o ffosydd archeolegol yn mesur 1.8 metr o led ac yn rhoi cyfanswm o 122m o hyd er mwyn cadarnhau natur a dyddiad y cyfnod cynhanesyddol posibl a'r archeoleg ddiweddarach a nodwyd yn ystod arolwg geoffisegol cynharach o'r safle (Muller, 2020). Datgelodd yr arolwg hwn dystiolaeth ar gyfer sawl nodwedd archeolegol bosibl sy'n cyfateb â marciau cnwd i'w gweld ar ffotograffau o'r awyr o'r safle.*

*Datgelodd y gwerthusiad trengu archaeolegol fod yr anomaleddau geoffisegol a marciau cnydau yn ganlyniad i o leiaf ddau gam o aredig, ynghyd ag amrywiadau daearegol naturiol. Roedd yr ymatebion magnetig wedi cael eu gwella gan yr uwchbridd. O ganlyniad, gwelwyd bod potensial archeolegol y safle yn isel.*

*Roedd yr holl waith yn cydymffurfio â safon ac arweiniad ar gyfer gwerthuso meysydd archeolegol (ClfA 2014) a safonau a chanllaw ar gyfer arteffactau archeolegol a chasglu amgylcheddol, cadwraeth dogfennaeth ac ymchwil (ClfA 2014).*

## 1. Introduction

Archaeology Wales Ltd was commissioned to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation on land at Blaengwrog, Beulah, Ceredigion, SA38 9QS between the 24th and 26th of July 2020, by Gareth Davies Ltd (NGR SN 27773 43754). The works were associated with the proposed erection of bungalow and garage, dog breeding kennels and stables. (Figure 1 & 2).

The evaluation took the form of seven archaeological trenches measuring 1.8m wide and totalling 122m in length in order to confirm the nature and date of the possible prehistoric and medieval archaeology identified during an earlier geophysical survey of the site (Muller, 2020). This survey revealed evidence for several possible archaeological features corresponding with crop marks visible on aerial photographs of the site.

The trenches were targeted on anomalies identified during the earlier geophysical survey (Figure 3).

The field evaluation was carried out under the supervision of Jerry Bond (BA Hons, ACIfA), with the assistance of Erika Guttman Bond of Archaeology Wales. The project was managed by Dr John Davey (MCIfA MIScT RSci).

All work conformed to *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014) and *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Artefact and Environmental Collection, Documentation Conservation and Research* (CIfA 2014).

## 2. Site description and archaeological background

### 2.1 Location, Topography and geology

The proposed development area is on 1.13 hectares of land at Blaengwrog, Beulah, Ceredigion, SA38 9QS. The proposed development site comprises the northern half of a single gently sloping pasture field on the east side of the small hill at Bryneurin centred on NGR SN 27773 43754. It lies on the western side of a small uncategorised lane linking the hamlet of Rhippinllwyd with the village of Beulah. The site is bounded

on all sides by enclosed pasture fields except on the west where it is bounded by the lane.

The solid geology of the proposed development area comprises rocks of the Nantmel Mudstones Formation; sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 444 to 449 million years ago in the Ordovician Period. There are no recorded superficial deposits (BGS, 2020).

The soil type within the site comprises a Freely draining slightly acid loamy soil (Soilscapes, 2020).

## **2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The site is located immediately adjacent to a series of crop mark features identified through aerial photography and thought to represent the location of a field system or prehistoric enclosure (PRN 35748). This in turn lies adjacent to a Roman defended enclosure (PRN 14319). A further cropmark lies a short distance to the west (PRN 14320). Consequently, there is a strong possibility that archaeological material may extend into the proposed development site. For this reason, DAT recommended that an archaeological evaluation should take place to determine the archaeological potential of the site prior to planning permission being determined. This evaluation has taken a phased approach with a geophysical survey in the first instance, followed by the current trial trenching.

The geophysical survey highlighted the potential for archaeological features within the development site. This was suggested by positive linears identified in the geophysical survey which matched the cropmarks noted by Cambria Archaeology (Murphy et al. 2006). However, it was also noted that these features may be severely truncated through regular ploughing over hundreds of years.

The possible archaeological remains needed to be confirmed through further archaeological investigation (Muller, 2020).

The Llandugydd Parish Tithe Map of 1839 indicates that the field boundaries were slightly different at that time. The current proposed development site straddled two fields, 690 and 691, both known as *Blaengwrog*, both owned by Thomas Lewis esq and both occupied by John Thomas. There is no recorded land use or titheable value.



By the time of the Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2500 scale map of Cardiganshire dated 1889, the modern pattern of field boundaries had been established.

### 3. Aims and Objectives

The objective of the intrusive trial trench evaluation was to locate and describe, archaeological features that may be present within the development area as suggested by the earlier geophysical survey. The work aimed to reveal the presence or absence of archaeological material, its character, distribution, extent, condition and relative significance. The work includes an assessment of regional context within which the archaeological evidence rests and aims to highlight any relevant research issues within national and regional research frameworks.

### 4. Methodology

The work was undertaken to meet the standard required by The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014). The archaeological project manager in charge of the work was satisfied that all constraints to ground works had been identified, including the siting of live services and Tree Preservation Orders.

The agreed evaluation trenches were positioned to maximise the retrieval of archaeological information, to test the anomalies revealed during the geophysical survey and to ensure that the archaeological resource was fully understood.

It was proposed that seven trenches, totalling 122 metres in length and 1.8 metres in width, were machine-excavated within the planned development area (Figure 3). The locations and dimensions of the trenches were agreed with DAT Development Management prior to the commencement of works.

The evaluation trenches were excavated by a machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket under close archaeological supervision. Sufficient excavation was undertaken to ensure that the natural horizon was reached and proven across the site.

## 5. Evaluation results

Seven trenches were excavated by machine to target geophysical anomalies identified in an earlier magnetometer survey undertaken on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020. This survey identified several groups of potential archaeological features: F1-F8, that required further evaluation to better understand their character (Muller, 2020). The position of these anomalies are shown on Figures 3 to 4 and are referred to in the text below.

### **Trench 1 (Figure 4; Plates 1-2)**

Trench 1 was in the southwest part of the site, it was aligned WSW-ENE and measured 26.1m long x 1.8m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.25m. It was positioned to target faint geophysical anomalies that corresponded with visible cropmarks and a potential circular feature (F6).

The natural horizon (Nantmel mudstone formation) bedrock (1002) was encountered at a depth of 0.25m below ground level. The bedrock was fractured along bedding planes running across the site from SW-NE. Above the bedrock was an interface/subsoil layer (1001) which comprised a mid-brown sandy silt, 0.05m thick, containing very frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments.

Several linear plough scars were observed in the base of the trench. Six were parallel and aligned NNW-SSE, each measuring approximately 0.1m in width. One of them [1004] was excavated. It measured 0.46m wide at its widest, narrowing to 0.1m at the base with a steep sided profile and a flat base. Its fill was indistinguishable from the topsoil. This series of parallel plough scars correspond with the group of geophysical anomalies F1. A further plough scar on a different E-W alignment was similar in nature to [1004] and was not excavated. Two sub-circular patches of soil were also recorded toward the east end of the trench but were revealed to be natural variations within the bedrock filled with topsoil.

The topsoil/plough soil layer (1000) comprised a mid-brown sandy silt, 0.2m thick, containing frequent small angular stones derived from the underlying natural bedrock. A single rim sherd of modern white china pottery was recovered from this layer.

Archaeological evidence for potential prehistoric feature F6 was not forthcoming from this trench. It is thought that the pattern of geophysical anomalies identified in the survey and visible as cropmarks in aerial photographs (Murphy et al. 2006) was produced by a selective combination of SW-NE geological trends (F3) together with modern plough scars (F1).

### **Trench 2 (Figure 4; Plates 3-4)**

Trench 2 was located to the east of trench 1 close to the southern edge of the proposed development area. It was aligned NW-SE, measured 16.2m long x 1.8m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.45m. Trench 2 was positioned to target geophysical anomalies F4 and F5.

The natural bedrock (2002) was encountered at a depth of 0.22m-0.45m below ground level. This comprised a weathered shale/mudstone more than 0.05m thick overlying solid bedrock.

A total of five SW-NE aligned linear variations in the natural were observed within the base of Trench 2, ranging in width from 0.85-1.6m. Four of them coincided with geophysical anomalies F4 and F5, however these represent natural geological variations rather than archaeological features.

Above the natural was the subsoil/interface layer (2001) which measured 0.2 – 0.25m thick and comprised a mid-brown sandy silt containing very frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments. The plough/topsoil layer (2000) measured 0 – 0.2m thick and comprised a mid-brown sandy silt containing frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments.

### **Trench 3 (Figure 4; Plates 5-6)**

Trench 3 was located in the southern central area of the site, it was aligned NW-SE, and measured 20m long, 1.8m wide and was machined to a depth of 0.2m. Trench 3 had been positioned to sample groups of geophysical linear anomalies F3 and F4.

The natural bedrock layer (3001) was encountered at a depth of 0.2m below the ground surface. It comprised weathered mudstones/shale, overlying a more solid bedrock. The topsoil/plough layer (3000) sat directly above the natural and measured 0 – 0.2m thick and comprised a mid-brown sandy silt containing frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments.

No interface horizon and no archaeological finds or features were noted during the recording of trench 3. It was noted that the alignment of the linear geophysical anomalies exactly corresponds with that of natural faulting in the bedrock.

### **Trench 4 (Figure 6 & 7; Plates 7-11)**

Trench 4 was located in the NW part of the site, targeted over two linear anomalies (F8) identified during the geophysical survey. The trench was aligned NNE-SSW and measured 20.1m long x 1.8m wide and was machined to a maximum depth of 0.28m.

The natural bedrock layer (4002) of weathered mudstone/shale was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.25m below ground level. At the southern end of the trench was a linear spread of badly weathered mudstone/shale (4001) which measured less than 0.24m thick on top of the more solid underlying bedrock Figure 7; section 15). This was interpreted as a natural variation in the bedrock. Toward the central area of the trench was a small linear spread of similar weathered shale/mudstone also interpreted as natural variations in the geology. Both are interpreted as zones of weathered rock along geological fault lines and correspond with a group of linear anomalies (F3) identified during the geophysical survey.

Three possible archaeological features were observed cutting into the bedrock. At the northern end of the trench a sub circular patch of mid brown soil and weathered mudstone/shale was interpreted as a small tree bole. It was sub circular in shape with irregular sides and a concave base, measuring c. 0.6m x 0.5m with a depth below the plough soil of 0.12m.

Toward the northern end of the trench, a curvilinear feature [4003] was recorded. It measured more than 1m long x 0.28m wide x 0.24m deep with steep sides on the west but a shallower more irregular edge on the east (Figure 7; section 3). Its base was irregular and rose up toward each end, seemingly in two terminals. It contained a single fill (4004) a dark brown clayey silt with frequent poorly sorted stones and gravels, it was firm but friable. No finds were recovered from this feature and it did not correspond with any geophysical anomalies.

A single modern N-S aligned plough scar was also observed, it measured at least 1.6m long and 0.1m wide.

Above the natural was a subsoil/interface layer (4001) measuring 0.05m thick and comprising a mid-brown sandy silt with very frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments. The topsoil/plough soil layer (4000) measured 0.2m thick and comprised a mid-brown sandy silt containing frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments.

No evidence for geophysical anomalies F8 were recorded in the trench and it is likely that the magnetic responses were the result of natural variations in the bedrock.

### **Trench 5 (Figures 6 & 7; Plates 13-15)**

Trench 5 was located centrally to the site, it was aligned E-W, and measured 16.5 long x 1.8m wide and was machined to a maximum depth of 0.3m. It was positioned to target a possible faint circular anomaly (F7) identified on the geophysical survey.

The natural bedrock layer (5002) of weathered mudstone/shale was encountered at a depth of 0.25m below ground level.

**Feature [5004]** was cut in to the natural at the west end of Trench 5. It measured up to 0.56m deep x 0.8m wide with a length of 0.85m, although it appeared to continue to the north beyond the limit of excavation. Its profile was very irregular as was its shape in plan. It was filled by (5003), a yellow brown clayey silt, containing very frequent poorly sorted stones, weathered bedrock and gravels (Figure 7; section 4). The position of this feature coincided with an area of disturbed natural, adjacent but on the south side of the trench. Together, these features approximately correspond with the position of the west side of the faint curvilinear anomaly (F7) identified during the geophysical survey. The return of this anomaly was not seen at the eastern end of the trench. Thus, it remains unclear whether anomaly F7, as a whole, is caused by archaeological or geological activity or a combination of both. In either case it has been severely truncated by modern ploughing rendering reliable interpretation impossible.

Three plough scars were also observed cutting the natural, two were aligned NW-SE and one was aligned NE-SW, none were excavated.

Above the natural was a subsoil/interface layer (5001) measuring 0.05m thick and comprising a mid-brown sandy silt containing very frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments. The topsoil/plough soil layer (5000) measured 0 – 0.2m thick and comprised a mid-brown sandy silt containing frequent small angular mudstone/shale fragments.

### **Trench 6 (Figures 6 & 7; Plates 16-18)**

Trench 6 was located in the eastern most part of the site, it was aligned NE-SW, and measured 10.2m long x 1.8m wide and was machined to a depth of 0.21m. It had been positioned to test a part of the site where no geophysical anomalies had been recorded other than plough scars.

The natural bedrock layer (6001) of mudstone/shale was encountered at a depth of 0.2m below ground level.

A single feature **[6003]** was recorded cutting the bedrock within this trench; a shallow linear ditch aligned NW-SE. It had a U-shaped profile with a concave base, measured 0.8m wide and 0.2m deep. It contained a single fill (6002) a mid-yellow brown, sandy silt containing frequent small angular bedrock fragments, more in evidence on the uphill side, to the west of the feature (Figure 7; section 3). Its position corresponds closely with a modern plough scar (F1) visible on the geophysical survey.

The topsoil/plough soil layer (6000) sat directly on top of the natural and comprised a mid-brown sandy silt containing frequent small angular stones derived from the underlying natural.

### **Trench 7 (Figures 6 & 7; Plates 19-21)**

Trench 7 was located in the northern most area of the site, it was aligned NW-SE, and measured 10.1m long x 1.8m wide and was machined to a maximum depth of 0.4m. It had been positioned to test a part of the site where no geophysical anomalies had been recorded other than plough scars.

The natural bedrock (7002) was encountered at a depth of 0.2-0.4m below ground level.

Two parallel linear spreads of disturbed or looser material, aligned approximately NE-SW, were observed within the bedrock. They were excavated in two interventions with fills numbered (7003) and (7004) classed as the fill of single cut [7005]. The two fills were very loose and comprised c.80% shale/mudstone within a mid-yellowish-brown sandy clay silt matrix. The cut had no clearly defined edges, with a maximum width of 6m, and a depth of 0.4m. This disturbed area follows a natural geological trend identified in other trenches and corresponds with the group of geophysical anomalies F3.

Above the natural was a subsoil/interface layer (7001) of dark brown sandy silt with very frequent small angular stones measuring 0.2-0.25m thick. The topsoil/plough soil

layer (7000) measured 0.2m thick and comprised a mid-brown sandy silt containing pea grits, gravels and angular stones derived from the bedrock.

## 6. Discussions and Conclusions

The archaeological evaluation by excavation of seven trial trenches at Blaengwrog, Beulah has demonstrated that the site has been greatly disturbed in modern times through ploughing. The topsoil/ploughsoil is very thin (approximately 20cm across the site) and contains frequent angular stones derived from the natural bedrock. The upper surface of the bedrock is itself scarred with modern plough scars which account for two sets of geophysical trends or alignments identified in the earlier survey. These include the most prolific F1 alignments which are most clearly visible in the survey and in the evaluation, and a second fainter set of alignments F4 running perpendicular to them. In addition, it has been possible to identify a series of parallel natural trends F3 which were also picked up by the geophysical survey.

It has also been noted that aerial photographs of the site indicate the presence of cropmarks within the proposed development area. These cropmarks have now been shown to have arisen from a selective combination of the three trends outlined above. The magnetic responses from these variations appears to have been enhanced on the survey due to the shallowness of the topsoil.

A series of faint geophysical anomalies tentatively interpreted as potential archaeological enclosures and structures (F5-F8) have not been positively identified following the evaluation. There are glimpses of a possible feature (F7) within Trench 5, although it has clearly been severely disturbed and truncated by modern ploughing and cannot be positively characterised.

There was also a stark lack of archaeological artefacts recovered across the entire site which might further argue against the presence of a settlement within or close to the development site.



It must be concluded, following the evaluation, that the archaeological potential of the proposed development site is low.

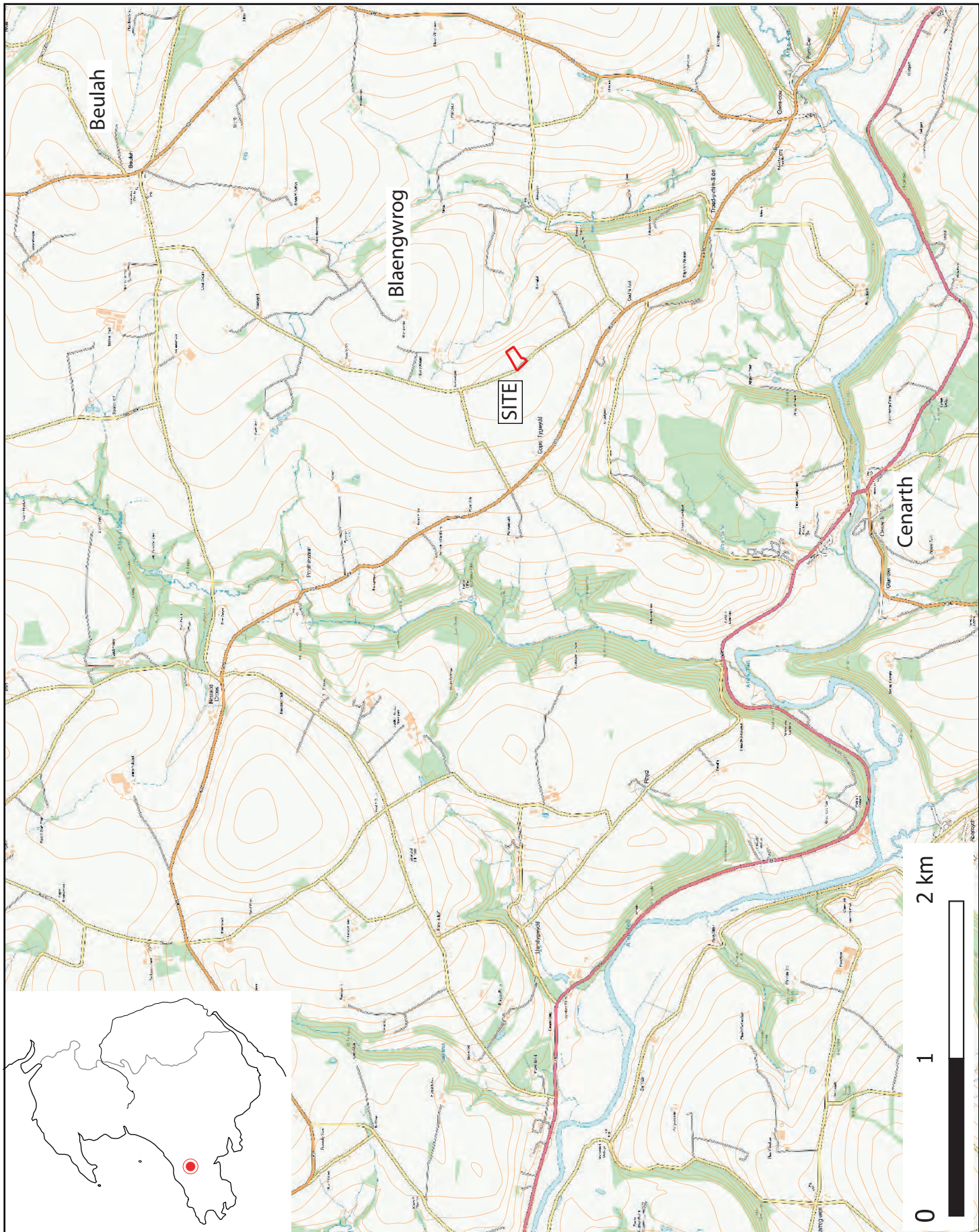
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Figure 1: Location plan,

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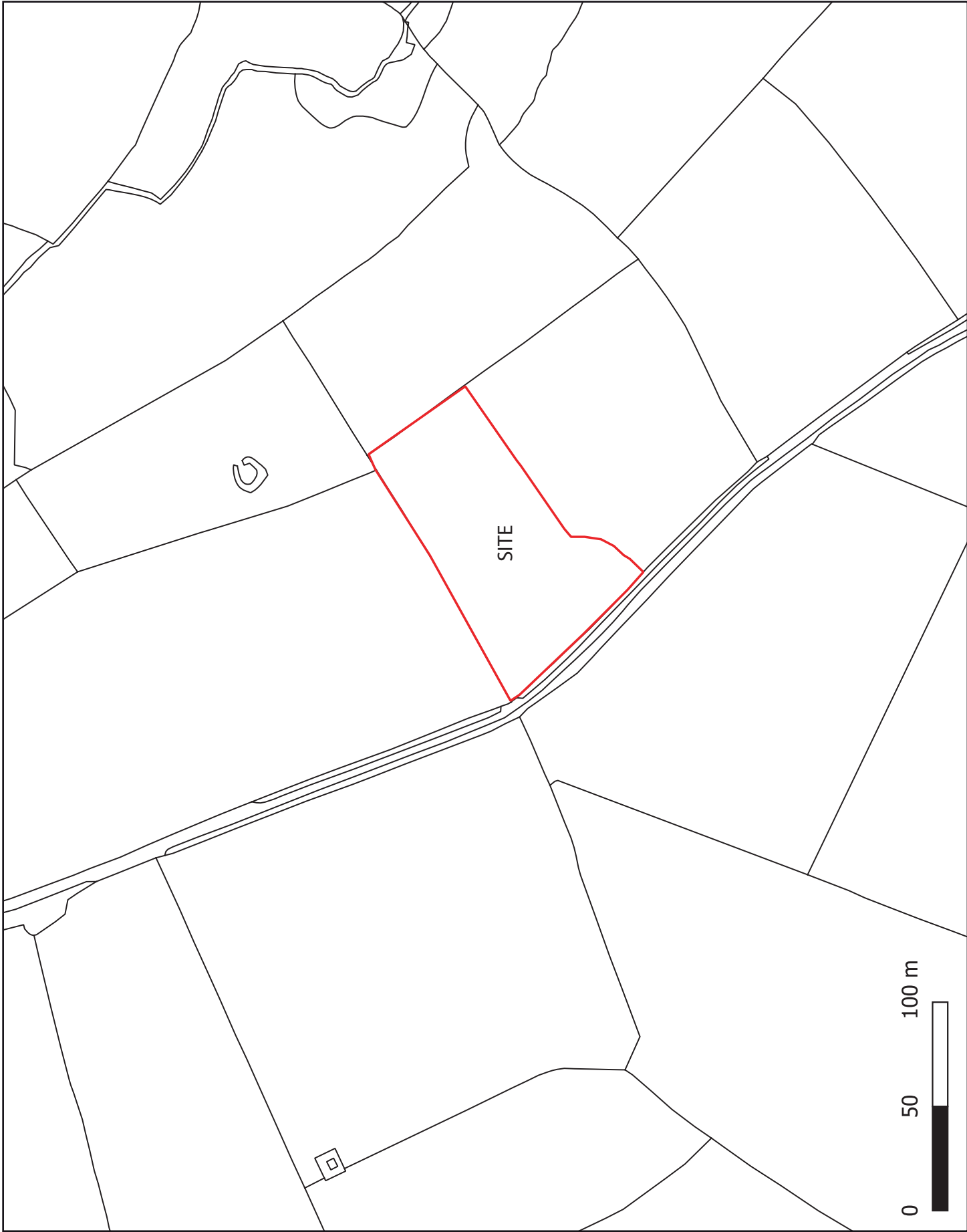


Figure 2:  
Detailed Site Plan

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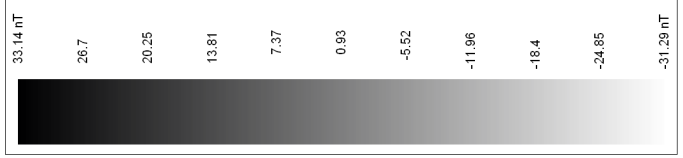
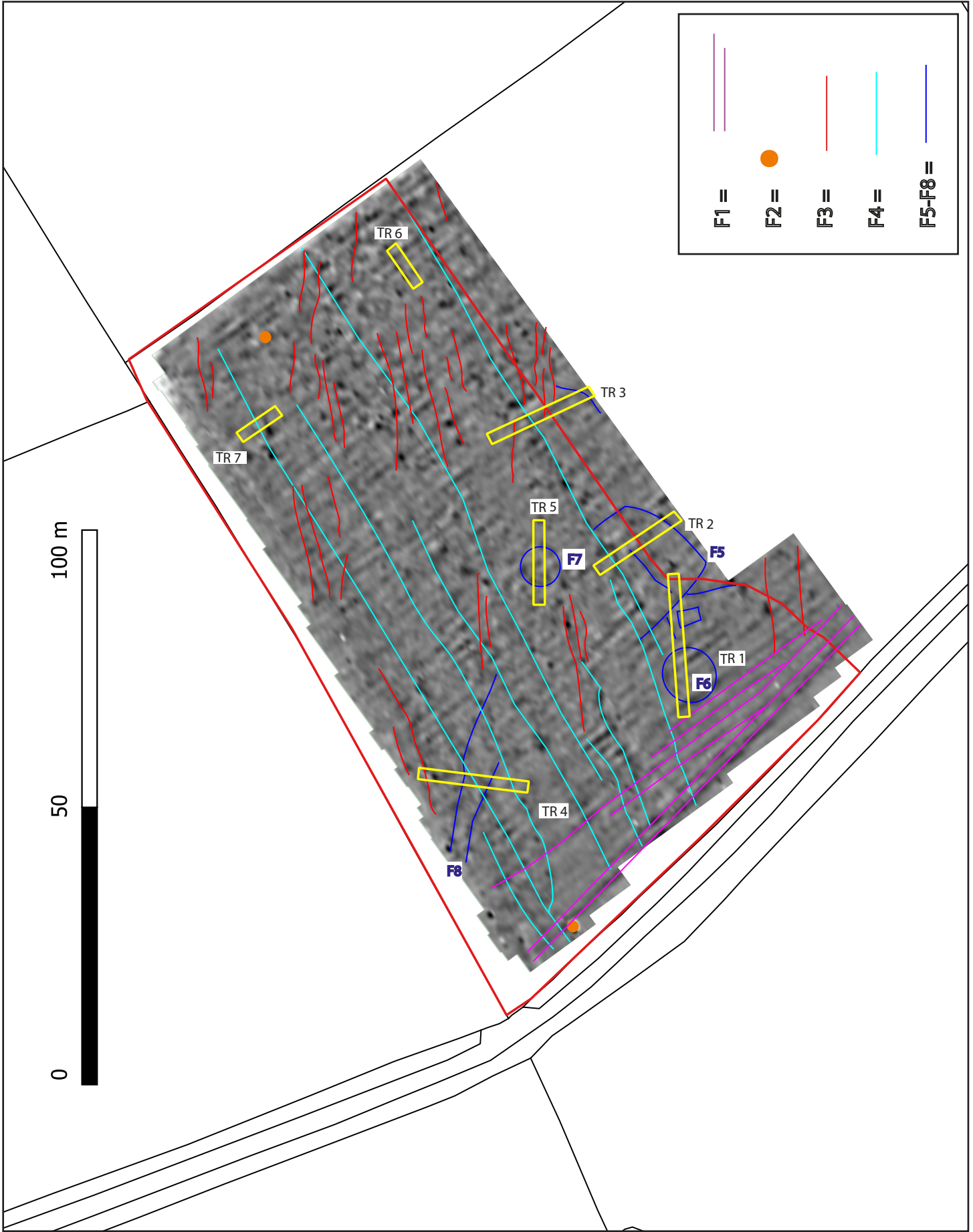
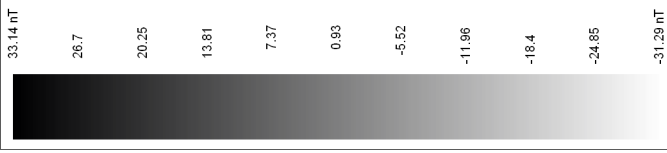


Figure 3:  
Proposed Trench Layout

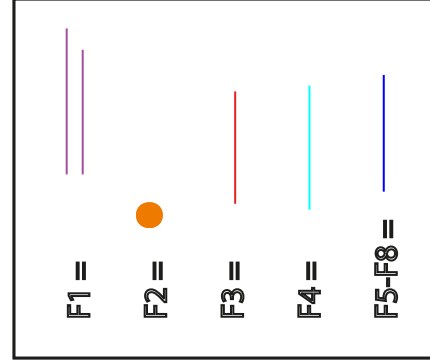
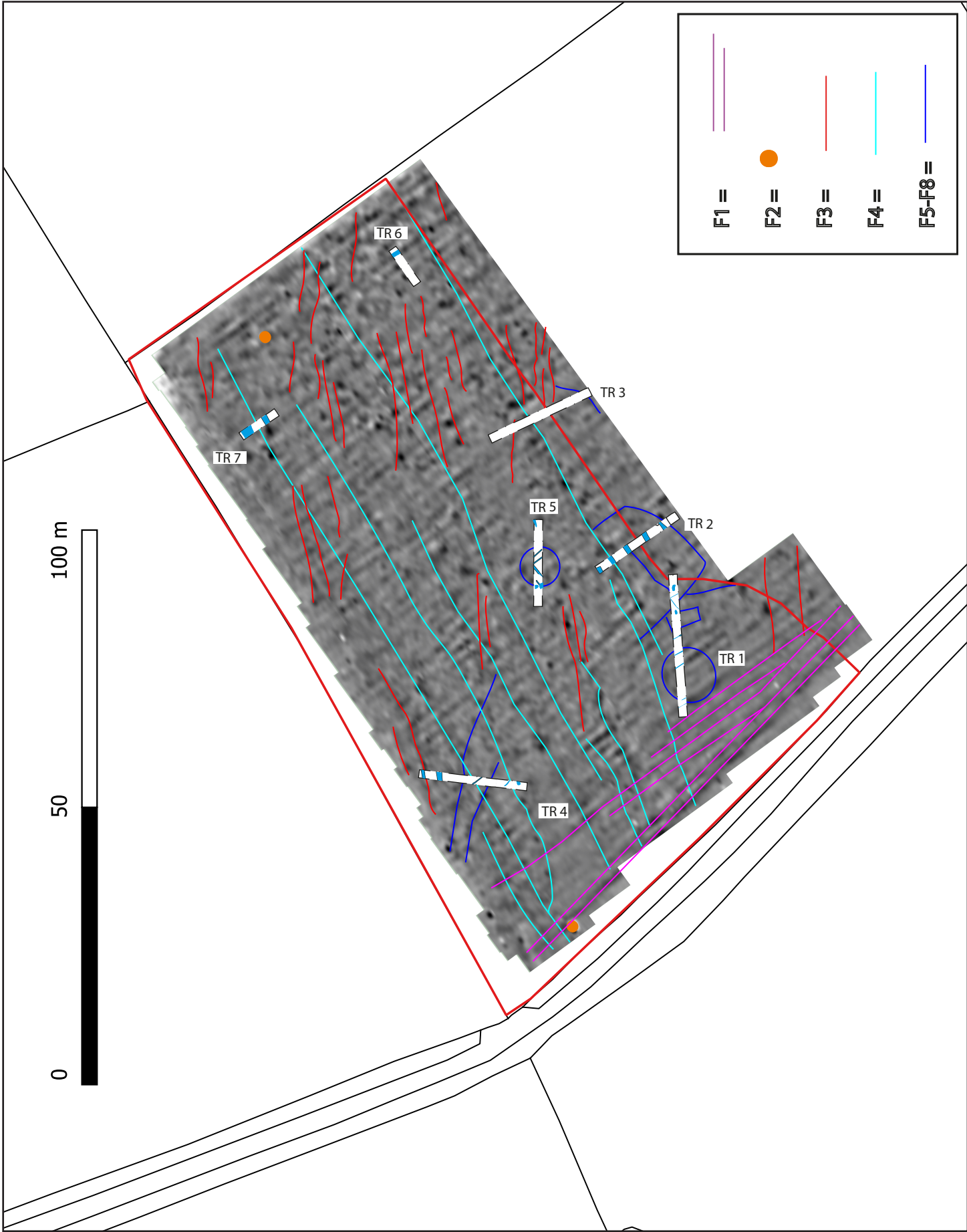
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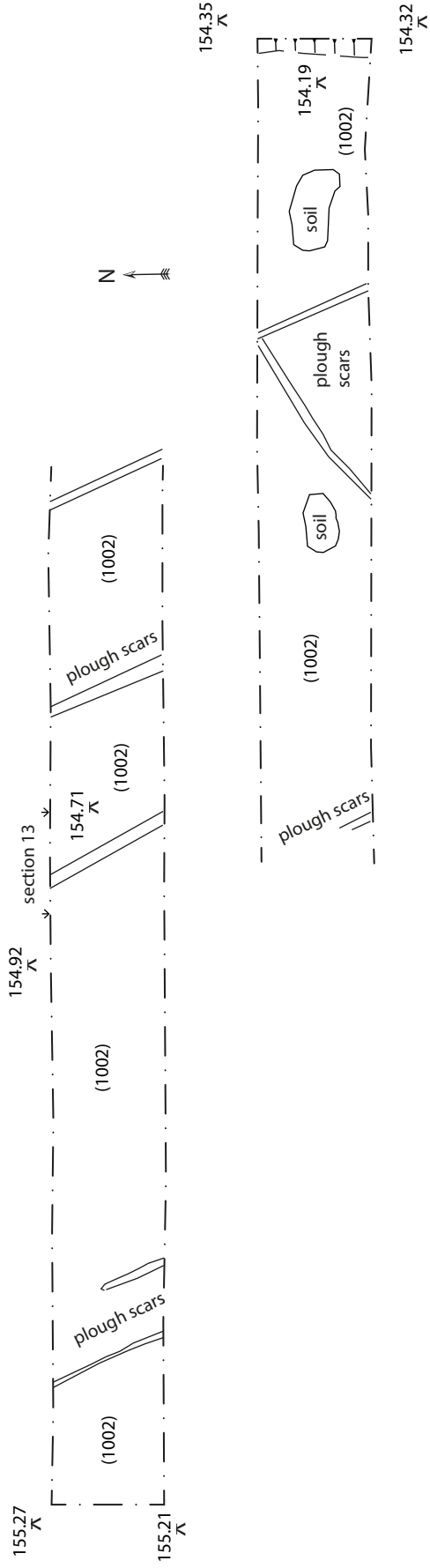
**Figure 4:**  
Evaluation Results  
overlayed on Geophysical  
survey

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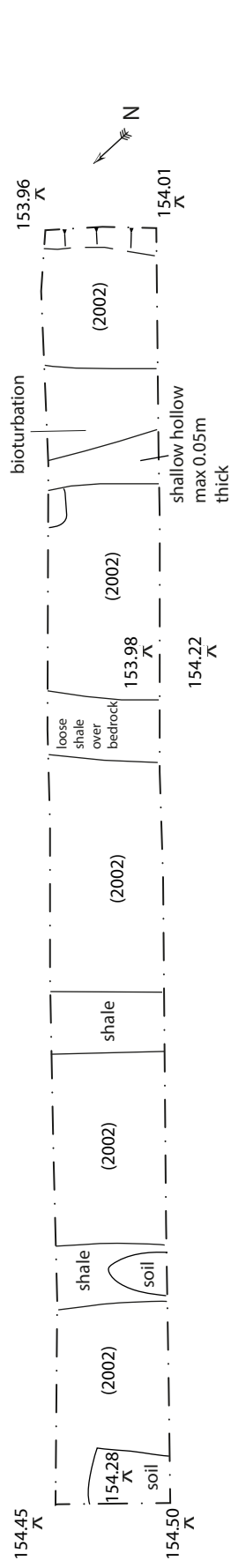




### Trench 1 Plan



### Trench 2 Plan



### Trench 3 Plan

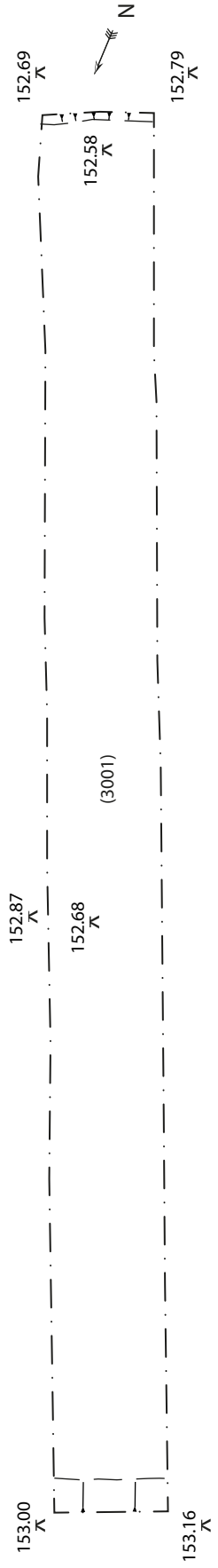
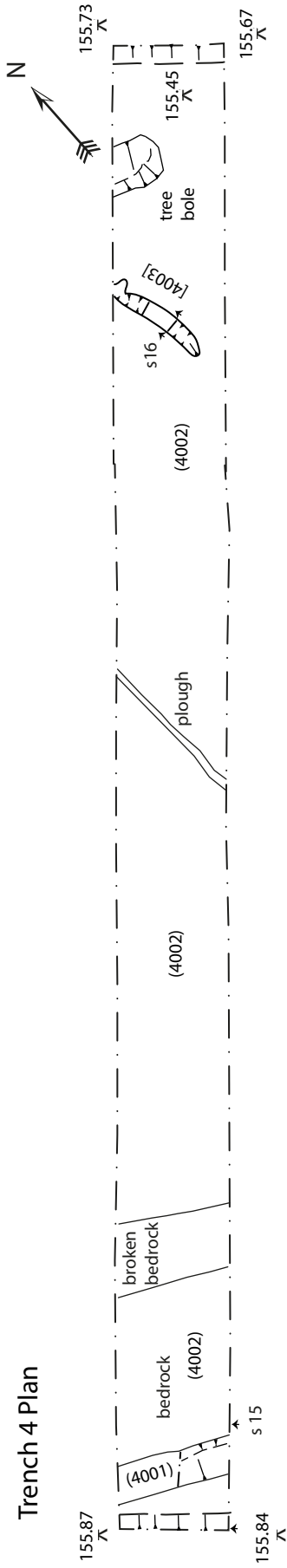
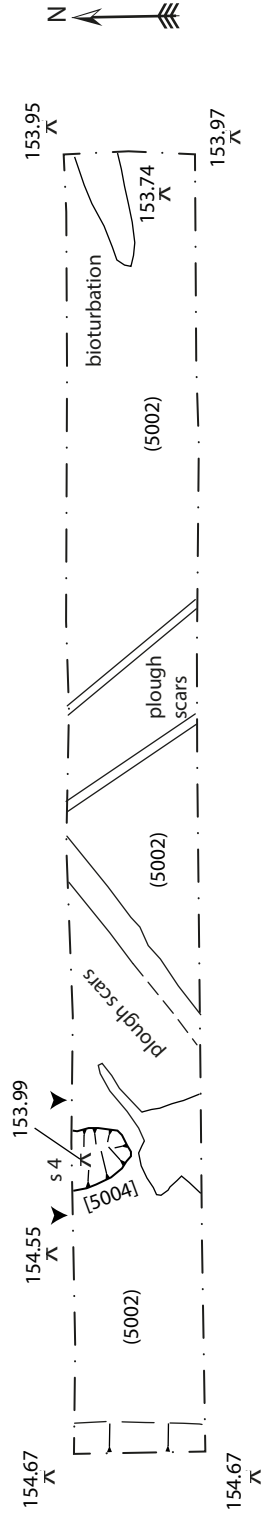


Figure 5: Trenches 1-3 plans

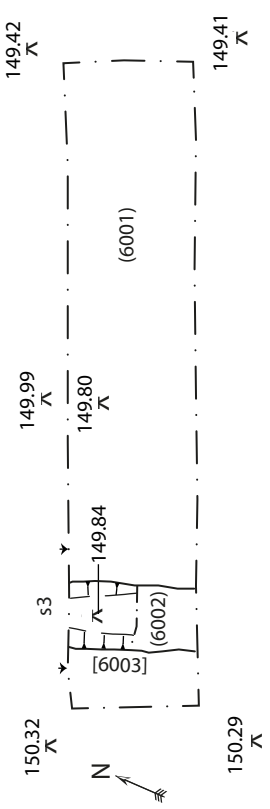
### Trench 4 Plan



### Trench 5 Plan



### Trench 6 Plan



### Trench 7 Plan

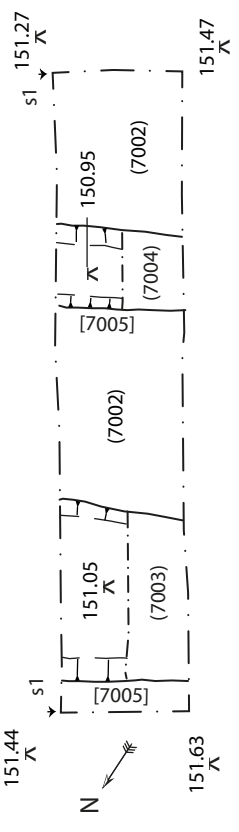
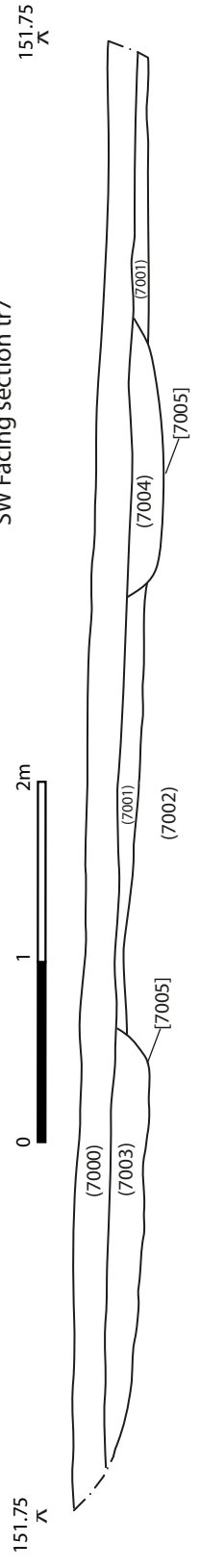


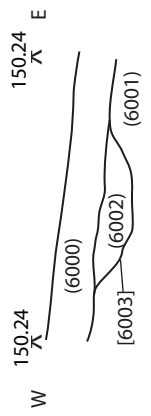
Figure 6: Trenches 4-7 plans



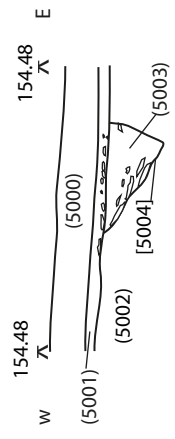
Section 1  
SW Facing section tr7



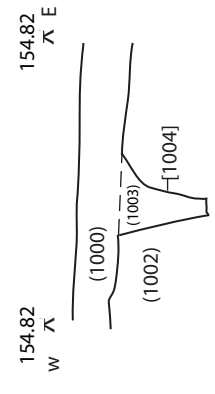
Section 3  
SE Facing section of [6003]



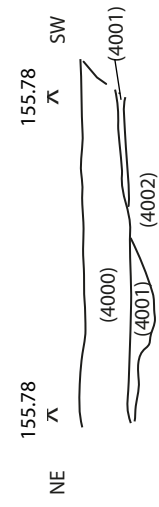
Section 4  
S Facing section of (5003)



Section 13  
S Facing section of (1004)



Section 15  
NW Facing section of (4001)



Section 16  
E Facing section of [4003]

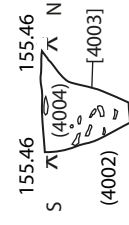


Figure 7: Sections





Plate 1: Trench 1, view to the West, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 2: Trench 1, view to the East, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 3: Trench 2, view to the South East, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 4: Trench 2, view to the North West, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 5: Trench 3, view to the North West, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 6: Trench 3, view to the South East, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 7: Trench 4, view to the North East, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 8: Trench 4, view to the South West, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 9: Trench 4; possible tree bole, unexcavated, view to the South East, 1m and 0.3m scales.



Plate 10: Trench 4; possible plough scar, half sectioned (section 15), view to the East, 2m and 0.5m scales.



Plate 11: Trench 4; Curvilinear feature [4003], view to the North West, 1m and 0.3m scales.



Plate 12: Trench 5, view to the West, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 13: Trench 5, view to the East, 1m and 2m scale.



Plate 14: Trench 5; Feature [5004] excavated, view to the North, 1m & 0.5m scales.



Plate 15: Trench 5; Feature [5004] excavated together with adjacent area of plough disturbance to the south, view to the North, 1m & 0.5m scales.



Plate 16: Trench 6; view to the WSW, 1m & 2m scales.





Plate 17: Trench 6; view to the ENE, 1m & 2m scales.



Plate 18: Trench 6, Feature [6003] excavated, view to the NNW, 2m & 0.3m scales.



Plate 19: Trench 7; view to the South East, 1m & 2m scales.



Plate 20: Trench 7; view to the North West, 1m & 2m scales.



Plate 21: Trench 7, Oblique view of feature [7005], view to the South East, 2m & 0.5m scales.

# *Archaeology* *Wales*

## **APPENDIX I: Context Inventory**

## Context Inventory

trench	context	description
1	1000/layer	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
1	1001/layer	Subsoil/interface layer, mid brown sandy silt with very frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0.2 – 0.25m thick
1	1002/layer	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock
1	1003/layer	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
1	1004/layer	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock
2	2000/layer	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
2	2001/layer	Subsoil/interface layer, mid brown sandy silt with very frequent small angular mudstones/shales 0.2 – 0.25m thick
2	2002/layer	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock
3	3000/layer	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
3	3001/layer	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock
4	4000/layer	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
4	4001/layer	Subsoil/interface layer, mid brown sandy silt with very frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0.2 – 0.25m thick
4	4002/layer	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock
4	4003/cut	Curvilinear cut [4003], > 1m long x 0.28m wide, a depth below the plough soil of 0.24m with steep sides on the west, a shallower more irregular edge on the east. Its base was irregular and rose up toward each end seemingly in two terminals. Filled by (4004), cuts (4002).
4	4004/fill	Fill of [4003] Dark brown clayey silt with frequent poorly sorted small angular stones and gravels, firm but friable. Below (4001)
5	5000/layer	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
5	5001/layer	Subsoil/interface layer, mid brown sandy silt with very frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0.2 – 0.25m thick
5	5002/layer	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock
5	5003/fill	Fill of [5004], yellow brown clayey silt, with very frequent poorly sorted stones, weathered bedrock and gravels. Below (5001)
5	5004/cut	Cut with V shaped profile, it was 0.56m deep, 0.8m wide with a length of 0.85m, but continues to North beyond the limit of excavation. Its profile was very irregular as was its shape in plan. Filled by (5003), cuts (5002)
6	6000	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
6	6001	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock

6	6002/Fill	a mid-yellow brown, sandy silt containing frequent small angular bedrock fragments, more in evidence on the uphill side, to the west of the feature. Fill of [6003], below (6000)
6	6003/Cut	Cut for a shallow linear ditch aligned NW-SE. It had a U-shaped profile with a concave base, measured 0.8m wide and 0.2m deep. Cuts (6001), Filled by (6002).
7	7000	Plough/topsoil, mid brown sandy silt with frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0 – 0.2m thick
7	7001	Subsoil/interface layer, mid brown sandy silt with very frequent small angular mudstones/shales, 0.2 – 0.25m thick
7	7002	Geological natural bedrock, weathered shale/mudstone overlying solid bedrock
7	7003/Fill	Fill of cut [7005] very loose, comprising c.80% shale/mudstone within a mid-yellowish-brown sandy clay silt matrix. Fills [7005], same as (7004), below (7001)
7	7004/Fill	Fill of cut [7005] very loose, comprising c.80% shale/mudstone within a mid-yellowish-brown sandy clay silt matrix. Fills [7005], same as (7003), below (7001)
7	7005/Cut	Cut with no clearly defined edges, with a maximum width of 6m, and a depth of 0.4m. Represents a disturbed area of natural, follows a natural geological trend. Filled by (7003/7004), Cuts (7002)

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## **APPENDIX II: Written Scheme of Investigation**

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**Written Scheme of Investigation  
for an Archaeological Trenched  
Evaluation:  
On Land at Blaengwrog,  
Beulah, Ceredigion.**

**Prepared for:  
Mr G Davies  
Project No: 2813**

July 2020

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## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

*This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) details the proposal for archaeological evaluation of land at Blaengrwog, Beulah, Ceredigion, SA38 9QS. It has been prepared by Archaeology Wales Limited for Gareth Davies Ltd following consultation with Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management (DAT-HM).*

*The application is for the erection of bungalow and garage, dog breeding kennels and stables. DAT have requested a phased approach to the archaeological mitigation, starting with geophysical survey, which has been completed. This survey revealed evidence for several archaeological features that corresponded with cropmarks revealed through aerial Photography potentially relating to a Prehistoric field system or enclosure in the field adjacent to the site to the north. After consultation with DAT-HM it was decided that the next phase of mitigation should be archaeological evaluation by means of the excavation of seven 1.8m wide archaeological trenches totaling 122m in length in order to confirm the nature and date of the possible prehistoric and medieval archaeology.*

## 1. Introduction

This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) details the methodology for a programme of archaeological evaluation to be undertaken at the site. The site is located on 1.13 hectares of land at Blaengrwog, Beulah, Ceredigion, SA38 9QS, (Figure 1 and 2) centred on NGR SN 27773 43754 (henceforth "the site"). The survey is being undertaken prior to determination of planning permission (Ceredigion County Council Planning Application Ref A200403 and following consultation with DAT

On further consultation with DAT-HM a phased mitigation approach was requested. This would involve geophysical survey in the first instance. Any further stages would depend on the results of this initial survey. The geophysical survey was undertaken on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2020. Many magnetic anomalies were detected. The strongest responses were due to modern ploughing. A series of moderately strong linear anomalies were also recorded on two different alignments, likely to result from the presence of subsurface archaeology in the form of post medieval and/or earlier ploughing. A fourth group of weaker responses also possibly relate to subsurface archaeological features and include linear and curvilinear features that may correspond with AP evidence for A prehistoric field system or enclosure in the field to the north of the site (Muller, 2020).

After consultation with DAT-HM it was agreed in a letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020, that the next phase of archaeological mitigation should comprise the targeted archaeological evaluation of the anomalies detected during the geophysical survey in order to confirm the nature and date of the possible prehistoric archaeology.

This WSI has been prepared by John Davey, Archaeology Wales Ltd (henceforth - AW) at the request of Gareth Davies Ltd. It provides information on the methodology that will be employed by AW during an archaeological evaluation of the site. This WSI is to be approved by DAT-HM, prior to the evaluation being undertaken, in its capacity as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority.

The purpose of the proposed programme of intrusive trial trench evaluation is to provide the local planning authority with the information they have requested from the client in advance of their planning application, the requirements for which are set

out in Planning Policy (revised edition 10, 2019), Section 6.1 and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017). The results of the evaluation trenching should be provided with any planning application submitted, so that an informed decision can be made regarding any mitigation.

All work will conform to the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (CIfA December 2014) and will be undertaken by suitably qualified staff to the highest professional standards.

## 2 Site Description & Archaeological Background

The proposed development area is on 1.13 hectares of land at Blaengrwoeg, Beulah, Ceredigion, SA38 9QS. The proposed development site comprises the northern half of a single gently sloping pasture field on the east side of the small hill at Bryneurin centred on NGR SN 27773 43754. It lies on the western side of a small uncatagorised lane linking the hamlet of Rhippinllwyd with the village of Beulah. The site is bounded on all sides by enclosed pasture fields except on the west where it is bounded by the lane.

The solid geology of the proposed development area comprises rocks of the Nantmel Mudstones Formation; sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 444 to 449 million years ago in the Ordovician Period. There are no recorded superficial deposits (BGS, 2020).

The soil type within the site comprises a Freely draining slightly acid loamy soil (Soilscapes, 2020).

The site is located immediately adjacent to a series of crop mark features thought to represent the location of a field system or prehistoric enclosure (PRN 35748). This in turn lies adjacent to a Roman defended enclosure (PRN 14319). A further cropmark lies a short distance to the west (PRN 14320). Consequently, there is a strong possibility that archaeological material may extend into the proposed development site. For this reason, DAT recommended that an archaeological evaluation should take place to determine the archaeological potential of the site prior to planning permission being determined. This evaluation should take a staged approach with a geophysical survey in the first instance with the results of this survey informing any subsequent phases of evaluation such as trial trenching.

## 3 Objectives

This WSI sets out a program of works to ensure that the Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation will meet the standard required by The Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (2014)*.

The objective of the intrusive trial trench evaluation will be to locate and describe, archaeological features that may be present within the development area as suggested by the earlier geophysical survey. The work will elucidate the presence or absence of archaeological material, its character, distribution, extent, condition and relative significance. The work will include an assessment of regional context within which the archaeological evidence rests and will aim to highlight any relevant research issues within national and regional research frameworks.

A report will be produced that will provide information which is sufficiently detailed to allow the archaeological resource to be better understood. The information could then be used to help inform further archaeological work undertaken in association with the

proposed development.

## 4 Timetable of works

### 4.1 Fieldwork

The programme of intrusive trial trench evaluation will be undertaken prior to the submission of the planning application associated with the proposed development. A start date of the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 is preferred, dependent on approval of this WSI. Archaeology Wales will update DAT-HM with the exact date.

### 4.2 Report delivery

The report will be submitted to the client and to DAT-HM within three months of the completion of the fieldwork. A copy of the report will also be sent to the regional HER.

## 5 Fieldwork

### 5.1 Detail

The work will be undertaken to meet the standard required by The Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2014).

The archaeological project manager in charge of the work will satisfy him/herself that all constraints to ground works have been identified, including the siting of live services and Tree Preservation Orders.

The agreed evaluation areas (Figures 2 and 3) will be positioned to maximise the retrieval of archaeological information within accessible areas, and to ensure that the archaeological resource is understood.

The site is located in a green field site on the northern half of a single gently sloping pasture field on the east side of the small hill at Bryneurin. There are no known constraints affecting the placement of evaluation trenches although on site adjustments may be required if constraints are revealed during their excavation.

It is proposed that 7 1.8m wide trenches totalling 122m in length, will be machine-excavated within the planned development area (Figure 3), positioned in areas where the geophysical survey indicated the potential presence of archaeological features.

The exact positioning of the trenches will depend on the position of any extant services or other obstructions that come to light during the initial phase of ground works. The locations and dimensions of the trenches has been agreed with DAT-HM prior to the commencement of works.

The evaluation trenches will be excavated to the top of the archaeological horizon by a 360° excavator or similar machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket under close archaeological supervision. All areas will be subsequently hand cleaned using pointing trowels and/or hoes to prove the presence, or absence, of archaeological features and to determine their significance. The excavation of the minimum number of archaeological features will be undertaken, to elucidate the character, distribution, extent and importance of the archaeological remains. As a minimum small discrete features will be fully excavated, larger discrete features will be half-sectioned (50% excavated) and long linear features will be sample excavated along their length - with investigative excavations distributed along the exposed length of any such feature and to investigate terminals, junctions and relationships with other features. Should this percentage excavation not yield sufficient information to allow the form and function of archaeological features/deposits to be determined full excavation of such features/deposits may be required.

Sufficient excavation will be undertaken to ensure that the natural horizons are reached and proven, where this can be practically and safely achieved. If safety reasons preclude manual excavation to natural, hand augering may be used to try to assess the total depth of stratification within each area. The depth of the excavation will conform to current safety requirements. If excavation is required below 1m the options of using shoring will

be discussed with the client and DAT-HM, but the intention would be to stop at safe depths.

### Contingency

Should potentially significant archaeological features be encountered during the course of the evaluation then DAT-HM and the client will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity. DAT-HM may subsequently request that further archaeological work is undertaken in order to fully evaluate areas of significant archaeological activity. Such work may require the provision of additional time and resources to complete the archaeological investigation. The scope of such work will be agreed with DAT-HM and the client prior to any extended works being undertaken.

## **5.2 Recording**

Recording will be carried out using AW recording systems (pro-forma context sheets etc) using a continuous number sequence for all contexts.

Plans and sections will be drawn to a scale of 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 as required and related to Ordnance Survey datum and published boundaries where appropriate.

All features identified will be tied in to the OS survey grid and fixed to local topographical boundaries.

Photographs will be taken in digital format with an appropriate scale, using a 12MP camera with photographs stored in Tiff format.

The archaeologists undertaking the evaluation will have access to the AW metal detector and be trained in its use.

## **5.3 Finds**

The professional standards set in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological (2014)* will form the basis of finds collection, processing and recording.

All manner of finds regardless of category and date will be retained.

Finds recovered that are regarded as Treasure under *The Treasure Act 1996* will be reported to HM Coroner for the local area.

Any finds which are considered to be in need of immediate conservation will be referred to a UKIC qualified conservator (normally Phil Parkes at Cardiff University).

## **5.4 Environmental sampling strategy**

Deposits with a significant potential for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental material will be sampled, by means of the most appropriate method (bulk, column etc). Where sampling will provide a significant contribution to the understanding of the site AW will draw up a site-specific sampling strategy alongside a specialist environmental archaeologist. All environmental sampling and recording and will follow English Heritage's *Guidelines for Environmental Archaeology (2002)*.

## **5.5 Human remains**

In the event that human remains are encountered, their nature and extent will be established, and the coroner informed. All human remains will be left *in situ* and protected during backfilling. Where preservation *in situ* is not possible the human remains will be fully recorded and removed under conditions that comply with all current legislation and include acquisition of licenses and provision for reburial following all analytical work. Human remains will be excavated in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's *Excavation and Post-Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains: Technical Paper Number 13 (1993)*.

## **5.6 Specialist advisers**

In the event of certain finds, features or sites being discovered, AW will seek specialist opinion and advice. A list of specialists is given in the table below although this list is not exhaustive.

Artefact type	Specialist
Flint	Kate Pitt (Archaeology Wales) / Elizabeth Walker (National Museum Wales)
Animal bone	Richard Madgwick (Cardiff University)
Clay pipe	David Higgins (Freelance)
Glass	Rowena Hart (Archaeology Wales)
Cremated and non-cremated human bone	Rhiannon Joyce (Archaeology Wales) / Malin Holst (University of York)/Richard Madgwick (Cardiff University)
Metalwork	Kevin Leahy (University of Leicester)
Metal work and metallurgical residues	Dr Tim Young (GeoArch)
Leatherwork	Quita Mold (Freelance)
Neo/BA pottery	Dr Alex Gibson (Bradford University)
Prehistoric pottery	David Mullin (Freelance)
IA/Roman pottery	Jane Timby (Freelance)
Roman Pottery	Rowena Hart (Archaeology Wales)/ Peter Webster (Freelance)
Post Roman pottery	Alice Forward (Freelance) / Paul Blinkhorn (Freelance)
Post Roman finds	Alice Forward (Freelance) / Sian Iles (National Museum Wales)
Brick, tile, mortar & plaster	Martin Locock (University of Wales)
Charcoal (wood ID)	Dana Challinor (Freelance)
Waterlogged wood	Nigel Nayling (University of Wales – Lampeter)
Pollen	Rhiannon Philp (Archaeology Wales)
Charred and waterlogged plant remains	Wendy Carruthers (Freelance)
Palaeoenvironmental Analysis	Rhiannon Philp (Archaeology Wales) / Martin Bates (University of Wales – Lampeter)
Insect Remains	Enid Allison (Canterbury Archaeological Trust)

### 5.6.1 Specialist reports

Specialist finds and palaeoenvironmental reports will be written by AW specialists, or sub-contracted to external specialists when required.

## 6 Monitoring

DAT-HM will be contacted approximately one week prior to the commencement of site works, and subsequently once the work is underway.

Any changes to this WSI that AW may wish to make after approval will be communicated to DAT-HM for approval on behalf of the Planning Authority.

DAT-HM will be given access to the site so that they can monitor the progress of the work, they will be kept regularly informed about developments, both during the site works and subsequently during the post-fieldwork programme.

## 7 Post-fieldwork programme

### 7.1 Archive assessment

### 7.1.1 Site archive

An ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared in accordance with: Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (Historic England 2006) and The National Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales (the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales, 2019) upon completion of the project.

The site archive (including artefacts and samples) will be prepared in accordance with the National Monuments Record (Wales) agreed structure and deposited with an appropriate receiving organisation, in compliance with CIfA Guidelines (*Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, 2014) and with elements to be submitted to the regional HER also prepared in accordance with *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records* (WAT 2018). The legal landowner's consent will be gained for deposition of finds.

### 7.1.2 Analysis

Following a rapid review of the potential of the site archive, a programme of analysis and reporting will be undertaken. This will result in the following inclusions in the final report:

- Non-technical summary, in English and Welsh
- Location plan showing the area/s covered by the evaluation trenching, all artefacts, structures and features found
- Plan and section drawings (if features are encountered) with ground level, ordnance datum and vertical and horizontal scales.
- Written description and interpretation of all deposits identified, including their character, function, potential dating and relationship to adjacent features. Specialist descriptions and illustrations of all artefacts and soil samples will be included as appropriate.
- An indication of the potential of archaeological deposits which have not been disturbed by the development
- A discussion of the local, regional and national context of the remains by means of reviewing published reports, unpublished reports, historical maps, documents from local archives and the regional HER as appropriate.
- A detailed archive list at the rear listing all contexts recorded, all samples finds and find types, drawings and photographs taken. This will include a statement of the intent to deposit, and location of deposition, of the archive.

## 7.2 Reports and archive deposition

### 7.2.1 Report to client

Copies of all reports associated with the intrusive trial trench evaluation, together with inclusion of supporting evidence in appendices as appropriate, including photographs and illustrations, will be submitted to the client and DAT-HM upon completion.

### 7.2.2 Additional reports

After an appropriate period has elapsed, copies of all reports will be deposited with the relevant regional Historical Environment Record (HER), the National Monuments Record and, if appropriate, Cadw. All material deposited with the HER will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records* (WAT 2018).

### 7.2.3 Summary reports for publication

Short archaeological reports will be submitted for publication in relevant journals; as a minimum, a report will be submitted to the annual publication of the regional CBA group or equivalent journal.

### 7.2.4 Notification of important remains

Where it is considered that remains have been revealed that may satisfy the criteria for statutory protection, AW will submit preliminary notification of the remains to Cadw.

### 7.2.5 Archive deposition

The final archive (site and research) will, whenever appropriate, be deposited with a suitable receiving institution. If artefacts are recovered, and dependent on the size of the final archive, the preferred receiving institution would be a suitable local institution, in this case the Ceredigion Museum, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. Arrangements will be made with the receiving institution before work starts.

Although there may be a period during which client confidentiality will need to be maintained, copies of all reports and the final archive will be deposited no later than six months after completion of the work.

Copies of all reports, the digital archive and an archive index will be deposited with the *National Monuments Record*, RCAHMW, Aberystwyth.

Wherever the archive is deposited, this information will be relayed to the HER. A summary of the contents of the archive will be supplied to DAT-HM.

### 7.2.6 Finds deposition

The finds, including artefacts and ecofacts, excepting those which may be subject to the Treasure Act, will be deposited with the same institution, subject to the agreement of the legal landowners.

## 8 Staff

The project will be managed by John Davey (AW Project Manager) and the fieldwork undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced AW archaeologists. Any alteration to staffing before or during the work will be brought to the attention of DAT-HM and the client.

## Additional Considerations

## 9 Health and Safety

### 9.1 Risk assessment

Prior to the commencement of work AW will carry out and produce a formal Health and Safety Risk Assessment in accordance with *The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999*. A copy of the risk assessment will be kept on site and be available for inspection on request. A copy will be sent to the client (or their agent as necessary) for their information. All members of AW staff will adhere to the content of this document.

### 9.2 Other guidelines

AW will adhere to best practice with regard to Health and Safety in Archaeology as set out in the FAME (Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers) health and safety manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology (2002)*.

#### Covid 19 specific Health and Safety Considerations

- If an AW Staff member believes they are at an increased risk from the virus they are to contact management.
- Please see attached Site Operating Procedures for full details and work in accordance with them.
- If anyone is showing symptoms of Covid-19 they are to go home immediately and notify the appropriate people.
- Staff must drive to site in a private vehicle alone or with someone from their household only. If sites require multiple staff members to attend, they will travel separately and will try to avoid the use of public transport (walking, cycling etc)
- Staff must stay at least 2m away from any person, who does not live within their own household, AT ALL TIMES. This includes on site, within office space, in the canteen and all other parts of the compound.
- Wash hands regularly and thoroughly, especially on arriving to site, leaving site and before eating.

- The staff members should take their own food and drink to site.
- Once returning home, appropriate care should be taken to ensure that contamination does not spread (change clothes, shower etc)
- Staff must avoid touching surfaces if possible. If they have to touch a surface, such as a door handle or toilet seat, staff must either wear gloves or wash their hands/ relevant body part with sterilising hand wash immediately afterwards. DO NOT touch your face after touching any surface. Staff should also disinfect surfaces before and after touching. Staff must bring their own sterilising handwash, wipes and gloves and dispose of them safely after use.
- All staff must read, sign and adhere to the separate AW Covid – 19 risk assessment.
- If any AW staff, contractor or any other persons on site are not abiding by these rules, the staff member will remove themselves from the risk and contact the PM immediately.

## 10 Community Engagement and Outreach

Wherever possible, AW will ensure suitable measures are in place to inform the local community and any interested parties of the results of the site investigation work. This may occur during the site investigation work or following completion of the work. The form of any potential outreach activities may include lectures and talks to local groups, interested parties and persons, information boards, flyers and other forms of communication (social media and websites), and press releases to local and national media.

The form of any outreach will respect client confidentiality or contractual agreements. As a rule, outreach will be proportional to the size of the project.

Where outreach activities have a cost implication these will need to be negotiated in advance and in accordance with the nature of the desired response and learning outcomes.

## 11 Insurance

AW is fully insured for this type of work and holds Insurance with Aviva Insurance Ltd and Hiscox Insurance Company Limited through Towergate Insurance. Full details of these and other relevant policies can be supplied on request.

## 12 Quality Control

### 12.1 Professional standards

AW works to the standards and guidance provided by the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists*. AW fully recognise and endorse the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*, *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* and the *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (Cifa 2014)* currently in force. All employees of AW, whether corporate members of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists or not, are expected to adhere to these Codes and Standards during their employment.

### 12.2 Project tracking

The designated AW manager will monitor all projects in order to ensure that agreed targets are met without reduction in quality of service.

## 13 Arbitration

Disputes or differences arising in relation to this work shall be referred for a decision in accordance with the Rules of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators' *Arbitration Scheme for the Institute for Archaeologists* applying at the date of the agreement.



## 14 References

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- www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html - Accessed 14/07/2020*
- www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/ - Accessed 14/07/2020*
- www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\_Application.aspx?resourceID=1006 - Accessed 14/07/20*



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