

**LAND AT BERTHLLWYD FARM,
PONTYPRIDD,
WALES.**

NGR: 307104.188050 (centred)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

July 2016
Report No. 1146



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

On the 21st and 22nd of July 2016 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at Berthllwyd Farm, Pontypridd, Wales (NGR: 307104.188050 - centred). The project was commissioned by Elgin Energy.

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of eight trenches within a proposed solar photovoltaic park.

The archaeological trenching revealed variable natural deposits overlaid by peaty soil layers. There were no archaeological finds, features or deposits present within any of the trenches. The archaeological potential for the evaluated areas is therefore considered low.

It is envisaged that the archaeological representatives of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd. will use the conclusions of this report as a basis for determining whether further archaeological mitigation is required; the results of which would be detailed in a separate report.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from Prehistoric times to the Modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Early Medieval

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

Medieval

The period between AD 1066 and AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43, traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; *Iron Age* – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 until AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on 21st and 22nd July 2016 on land at Berthllwyd Farm, Pontypridd, Wales (NGR: 307104.188050 - centred). The project was commissioned by Elgin Energy.
- 1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2016), CIfA *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014) and *Planning Policy Wales* (PPW edition 6, 2014).
- 1.3 The code of conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists was adhered to throughout.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located on agricultural land immediately east of Black Road, approximately 1km northeast of Pen-y-coedcae.
- 2.2 It is proposed to construct a solar photovoltaic park, along with ancillary development and ecological enhancements at Berthllwyd Farm, under **Planning Application Number 15/0777/10**.
- 2.3 An archaeological desk based assessment of the site was undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in 2014. The assessment concluded that the site was of overall low potential for the recovery of features from the Prehistoric and Early Medieval/Medieval periods, and of low-moderate potential for the recovery of features from the Roman, Post-medieval and Modern periods. The significance of any material recovered from the Prehistoric period was likely to be low-moderate because it was most likely to comprise stray finds. Any Early Medieval and Medieval material recovered was likely to be of low-moderate significance. The significance of material recovered from the Roman period was likely to be at least moderate, if associated with the marching camp and low-moderate otherwise; material from the Post-medieval and Modern periods was likely to have low or negligible significance.
- 2.4 The desk based assessment highlighted that the clear exception to this is the Roman marching camp, which comprises a designated historic asset. The construction of the scheme is likely to have a negligible impact on most of the camp, which is screened from the proposed development by, inter alia, Black Road and quarry earthworks. The proposed pylon may be visible, but it is not anticipated that this will, in itself constitute a significant impact, particularly as the site area already contains a pylon and telegraph poles associated with an overhead power line. Any impacts, however, may be somewhat alleviated due to the fact that the proposed development will be transitory in nature with a maximum duration of 25 years and is fully reversible. The proposals will not impact on the physical remains of the camp.

- 2.5 A geophysical survey of the site (AB Heritage 2014) suggested that the greater part of the site was of generally low potential; however, a number of low positive readings in the northern end of the site may have been archaeological in nature.
- 2.6 The main archaeological potential of the site was therefore for the presence of Roman remains. This did not prejudice the works against evidence relating to other periods.
- 2.7 In light of the potential for archaeological remains to be present, the archaeological representative of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd. requested that a programme of archaeological works be submitted and implemented, in order to ensure that the archaeological resource be suitably investigated and recorded. The initial phase of works comprised an archaeological evaluation, whilst any further mitigation measures would be contingent upon the results of the evaluation trenching.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The general aim of the archaeological evaluation and watching brief was to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits, in order to allow a degree of characterization of the on-site archaeological resource.
- 3.2 This aim was achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) to identify and define the nature of archaeological deposits on site and date these, where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterize the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover information about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) where possible, to define a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefactual and environmental evidence;
 - iv) a specific objective of this project is to establish the depths of archaeologically non-significant overburden within the site; in order to facilitate potential future mitigation of archaeological deposits, with a view to preservation *in-situ*. The archaeological evaluation will, therefore, aim to minimize its impact upon archaeological deposits, whilst still achieving a coherent resource characterisation.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A total of eight 30m long by 1.8m wide trenches were excavated within the site, as shown in Figure 2. The trenches were located in order to provide information relating to the areas of highest archaeological potential, according

to the geophysical results, as well as within the area of the proposed primary substation and at the location of the three proposed CCTV poles, nearest to the Roman camp.

- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of archaeological remains or the underlying natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through the use of a mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Spoil tips were visually scanned for finds.
- 4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the evaluation is presented in Appendix 1. A summary of the results is given below.
- 5.2 Variable natural substrates were present between 0.25m and 0.48m (202.00m and 212.42m AOD) below Modern ground. These comprised a mixture of clay, sand, silt and outcrops of sandstone, with occasional patches of peaty clay. The natural deposits were either sealed by layers of peaty soil, which were situated beneath topsoil, or they were directly overlaid by topsoil. It was uncertain if the peaty soil layers represented colluvial deposits or, perhaps more likely, *in-situ* peat formation.
- 5.3 On-site investigations demonstrated that the possible archaeological features identified by the previous geophysical survey were in fact anomalies related to variations within the natural substrates.
- 5.4 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within any of the trenches.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 In general, visibility conditions were good and there was no evidence for significant truncation or disturbance within the trenches.
- 6.2 The complete lack of archaeological remains therefore indicated that there was a low potential for archaeological activity in the areas of the evaluation trenches. Furthermore, the occurrence of peaty natural deposits, as well as peaty soil layers within the trenches indicated that significant parts of the site are likely to have been wetland, possibly for a considerable degree of time.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The archaeological evaluation has indicated that there is a low potential for the presence of archaeological remains within the evaluated areas.
- 7.2 It is envisaged that the archaeological representatives of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd. will use the conclusions of this report as a basis for determining whether further archaeological mitigation is required; the results of which would be detailed in a separate report.
- 7.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with an appropriate museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS, although this scheme is not supported by the curatorial bodies in Wales.

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9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Land at Berthllwyd Farm, Pontypridd: Archaeological Evaluation

APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data

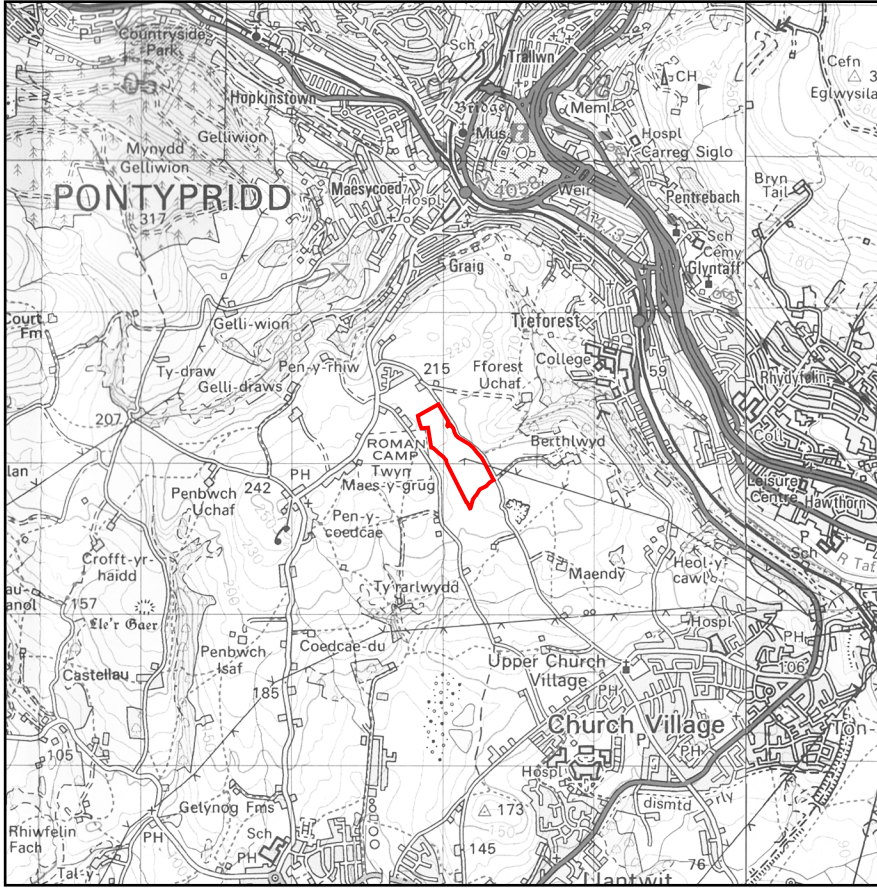
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	LATER THAN	EARLIER THAN
				Trench 1: 33m by 1.8m. Natural = bright yellow beige grey sand clay silt, present at 212.42m (AOD) - 0.25m below Modern ground.		
100	na	na	0.25	Topsoil; very dark grey brown plastic peaty silt clay, which contained occasional small stones.	natural	na
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		
				Trench 2: 33m by 1.8m. Natural = bright yellow beige sand silt clay with occasional outcrops of beige sandstone, present at 212.37m (AOD) - 0.35m below Modern ground.		
200	na	na	0.25	Topsoil; very dark grey brown plastic peaty silt clay, which contained occasional small stones.	201	na
201	na	na	0.1	Layer of mottled grey black plastic peaty silt clay, which contained occasional stones.	natural	200
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		
				Trench 3: 33m by 1.8m. Natural = bright yellow beige sand silt clay with occasional outcrops of beige sandstone, as well as dark brown black peaty clay, present at 212.14m (AOD) - 0.25m below Modern ground.		
300	na	na	0.25	Topsoil; very dark grey brown plastic peaty silt clay, which contained occasional small stones.	natural	na
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		

Land at Berthllwyd Farm, Pontypridd: Archaeological Evaluation

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	LATER THAN	EARLIER THAN
				Trench 4: 30m by 1.8m. Natural = yellow beige sand silt clay with occasional outcrops of beige sandstone, as well as dark brown black peaty clay, present at 211.54m (AOD) - 0.25m below Modern ground.		
400	na	na	0.25	Topsoil; very dark grey brown plastic peaty silt clay, which contained occasional small stones.	natural	na
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		
				Trench 5: 33m by 1.8m. Natural = beige sand silt clay with occasional outcrops of beige sandstone, present at 210.92m (AOD) - 0.42m below Modern ground.		
500	na	na	0.2	Topsoil; black peaty silt clay, which contained occasional small stones.	501	na
501	na	na	0.05	Layer of orange brown peat humus, which contained frequent partially rotted former vegetation.	502	500
502	na	na	0.17	Layer of brown peaty clay silt, which contained occasional small stones.	natural	501
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		
				Trench 6: 33m by 1.8m. Natural = mottled beige grey orange plastic clay silt, present at 208.07m (AOD) - 0.28m below Modern ground.		
600	na	na	0.16	Topsoil; black peaty silt clay, which contained occasional small stones.	601	na
601	na	na	0.12	Layer of mottled grey brown plastic peaty silt clay, which contained occasional small stones.	natural	600
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		

Land at Berthllwyd Farm, Pontypridd: Archaeological Evaluation

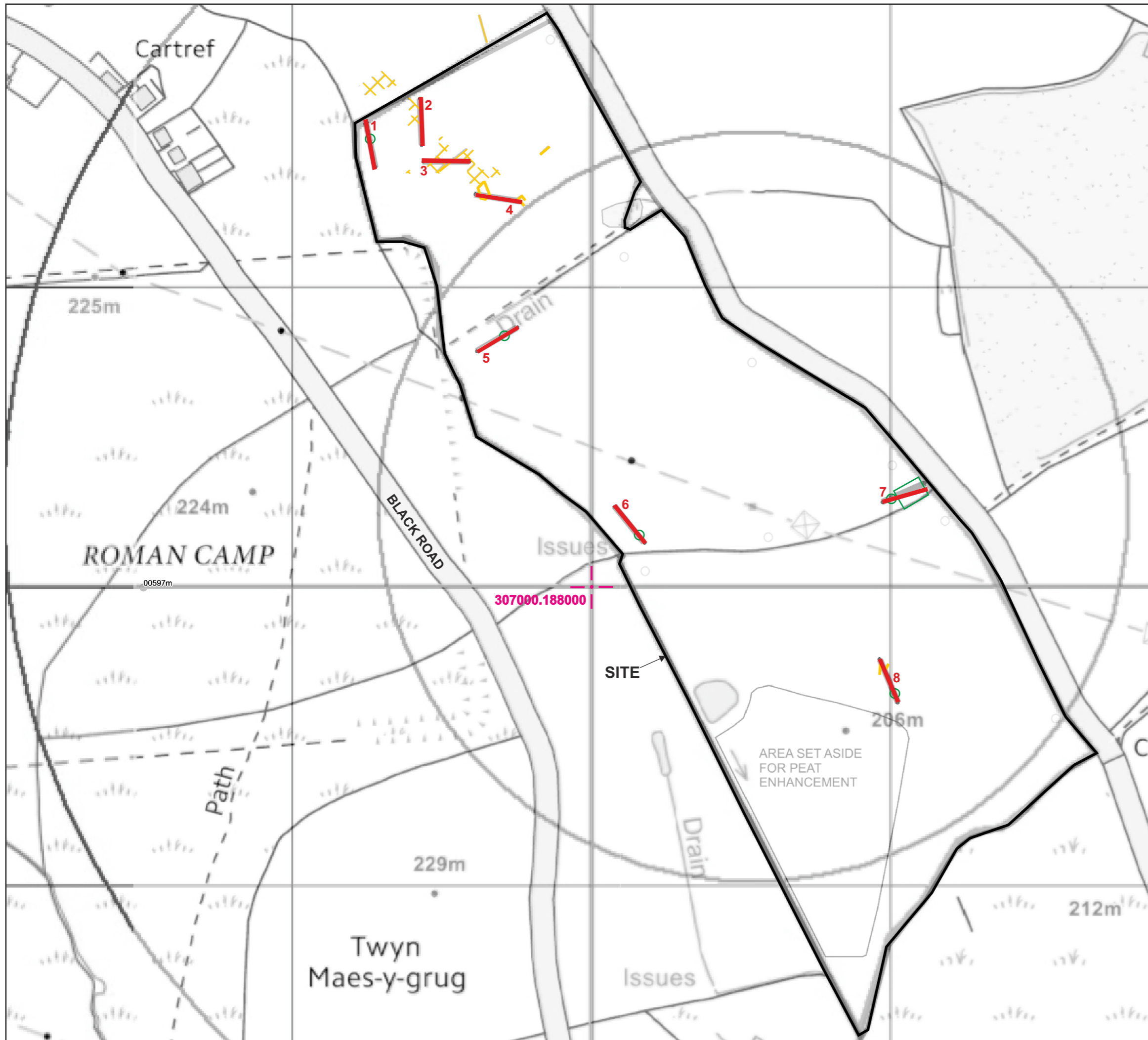
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	LATER THAN	EARLIER THAN
				Trench 7: 31m by 1.8m. Natural = light orange brown plastic clay silt with frequent outcrops of beige sandstone, present at 202m (AOD) - 0.48m below		
				Modern ground.		
700	na	na	0.23	Topsoil; dark grey friable silt clay, which contained frequent small stones.	701	na
701	na	na	0.25	Layer of orange brown sand silt.	natural	700
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		
				Trench 8: 32m by 1.8m. Natural = variable grey orange brown plastic clay silt		
				with frequent outcrops of beige sandstone, occasional large boulders		
				and occasional patches of peaty clay, present at 205.22m (AOD) - 0.25m below		
				Modern ground.		
800	na	na	0.2	Topsoil; dark grey friable sand silt clay, which contained frequent small stones.	801	na
801	na	na	0.05	Layer of orange brown grey plastic sand clay silt, which contained frequent small stones.	natural	800
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trench.		



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Site Code: BFP16
Accession Code:

FIGURE 1: Site Location



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Site Code: BFP16
Accession Code:

— 5 = EVALUATION TRENCH (AS DUG)
+ = GEOPHYSICAL ANOMALY
○ □ = LOCATION OF CCTV/SUBSTATION TESTED BY EVALUATION TRENCHING

N

0m 100m

FIGURE 2: Trench Locations