

**LLANFAIR AR Y BRYN,
LLANDOVERY
CARMARTHENSHIRE
SN 77026 35221**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

March 2011



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Carmarthenshire County Council



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Gan / By

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**LLANFAIR AR Y BRYN, LLANDOVERY, CARMARTHENSHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING**

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LLANFAIR AR Y BRYN, LLANDOVERY, CARMARTHENSHERE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

SUMMARY

This report has been produced by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to present the results of a scheme of archaeological recording following groundworks associated with the erection of an extension to Llanfair Ar Y Bryn, Llandovery, Carmarthenshire (NGR SN 77026 35221). The house lies within the Roman Fort of Alabum but unfortunately planning permission was granted without an archaeological condition being placed upon the works. In recognition that the site area could contain significant archaeological remains Carmarthenshire County Council commissioned a scheme of archaeological recording at the site, after initial groundworks had commenced.

The development area lies within the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Roman Forts at Llandovery. To the northwest of Llanfair Hill the area of the Roman Forts is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM CM188). The Regional Historic Environment Record records the fort as a multi-period complex of defences and internal buildings, annexes and a probable vicus or civilian settlement to the north. The fort is presently dated between the late 1st century AD to early 2nd century AD. Little is known about the internal arrangements of the fort and the archaeological work was designed to retrieve information on this key aspect. It was anticipated that possible remains of timber buildings, roads and evidence for terracing might survive within the exposed faces of the sections that were cut through the site during ground preparation works.

A brief for the required archaeological work was prepared by the Planning Services section of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust – 'Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Llanfair ar y Bryn, Llandovery, Carmarthenshire; Planning Application E/23324'.

Although the archaeological investigations were undertaken after the main phase of ground works had been completed at the site, the results have indicated a considerable amount of archaeology is present within the exposed section. Some archaeological remains will have been damaged or destroyed by the current groundworks, but much of the area had been disturbed at an unknown earlier date when the site was levelled for the construction of a former glass house.

Below the post-medieval and modern contexts a series of features were exposed which are most likely of Roman date and associated with the initial late first century fort (Fort 1) and the slightly later reduced sized fort (Fort 2). Based on the typical layout arrangement of auxiliary forts such as that at Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn, the site area would have been located close to the centre of the early fort (Fort 1). In the Fort 2 phase, the site would have been located on top of the Via Praetoria roadway.

Although conjectural due to the limited nature of the investigation, it is possible that a layer of pitched cobbles may form part of the Via Praetoria roadway associated with the Fort 2.

Below the cobbled surface/road a series of layers and cut features suggest postholes and beam slots, indicating the remains of possible timber buildings associated with the Fort 1 phase at Llanfair Ar Y Bryn.

INTRODUCTION

Project Commission

Carmarthenshire County Council requested that a scheme of archaeological recording should be implemented at Llanfair Ar Y Bryn, Llandovery, Carmarthenshire (NGR SN 77026 35221) following groundworks associated with the erection of an extension. The site lies within the Roman Fort of Alabum and unfortunately planning permission (Planning reference E/23324) had been granted without an archaeological condition being placed upon the works. In recognition that the site area could contain significant archaeological remains Carmarthenshire County Council commissioned a scheme of archaeological works.

The development area lies within the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Roman Forts at Llandovery. To the northwest of Llanfair Hill the area of the Roman Forts is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM CM188). The Regional Historic Environment Record records the fort as a multi-period complex of defences and buildings, annexes and a probable vicus or civilian settlement to the north. The lifespan of the fort is presently dated between the late 1st century AD to early 2nd century AD. Little is known about the internal arrangements of the fort and the archaeological work was designed to retrieve information on this key aspect. It was anticipated that the remains of timber buildings, roads and evidence for terracing might be visible in the exposed sections cut through the site as part of the groundworks.

A brief for the required archaeological work was prepared by the Planning Services section of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust – 'Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Llanfair ar y Bryn, Llandovery, Carmarthenshire; Planning Application E/23324'.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services was commissioned to undertake the archaeological watching brief by Carmarthenshire County Council following the main groundworks associated with the development proposals to retrieve as much archaeological information as possible for the development, even though planning permission had been mistakenly granted without a condition requiring a scheme of archaeological works to be undertaken.

An approved written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services prior to works commencing on-site. A single visit to the development area was undertaken on 3rd March 2011 following excavation of the area for the extension.

Scope of the Project

Archaeological recording of exposed sections following groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension on the southern side of Llanfair Ar Y Bryn house, Llandovery, Carmarthenshire. The groundworks had the potential to expose, damage or destroy any underlying archaeological remains, if present. The project also included preparation of this report and an archive of the results.

Report Outline

This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background before summarising the watching brief results and the conclusions based on those results.

Abbreviations

Regional Historic Environment Record – HER; Primary Record Number – PRN; National Grid Reference – NGR; Scheduled Ancient Monument - SAM.

Illustrations

Record photographs are included at back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

Photographs include general shots (1 to 5) and also a sequence of photos along the exposed section through the site (Photos 6 to 16). These photographs are illustrated from north east curving to northwest, each one labelled as Parts A to K. Due to the nature of the investigation there are no specific photographs of individual features or contexts, but groups of contexts as present in each part.

THE SITE

Location and Topography

The site area lies directly to the southwest of Llanfair Ar Y Bryn House, within its gardens on the southeastern side of the boundary wall. The ground level originally sloped quite steeply to the northeast, but has been subject to a number of phases of ground levelling, the most recent associated with the ground reduction for the new extension.

The new extension is situated on the site of a former glass house constructed many years previously and at which time most of the area in which the new extension was to be constructed was levelled. The groundworks required for the new extension area, which covered a larger footprint than the glass house, had been undertaken prior to the visit to the site by the archaeologist (Photos 1 & 2).

The area available for the archaeological investigation comprised the exposed vertical edges around the levelled footprint of the new extension (Photos 3, 4 & 5). A low retaining wall (around 0.75m in height), had been built against some of the exposed sections, but all surviving archaeological levels were still visible behind or above the top of the wall.

The exposed section curved around the extension area, from the northeastern end curving to the south, then running in a northwestern direction to the tall property boundary wall (see figure 4). In this area the ground level for Llanfair Ar Y Bryn House and the new extension is lower than the road on the opposite side of the boundary. From the machined out level base of the extension footings the exposed section increased in height from 1.10m at the northeast end, to 1.55m at the northwestern end adjacent to the boundary wall.

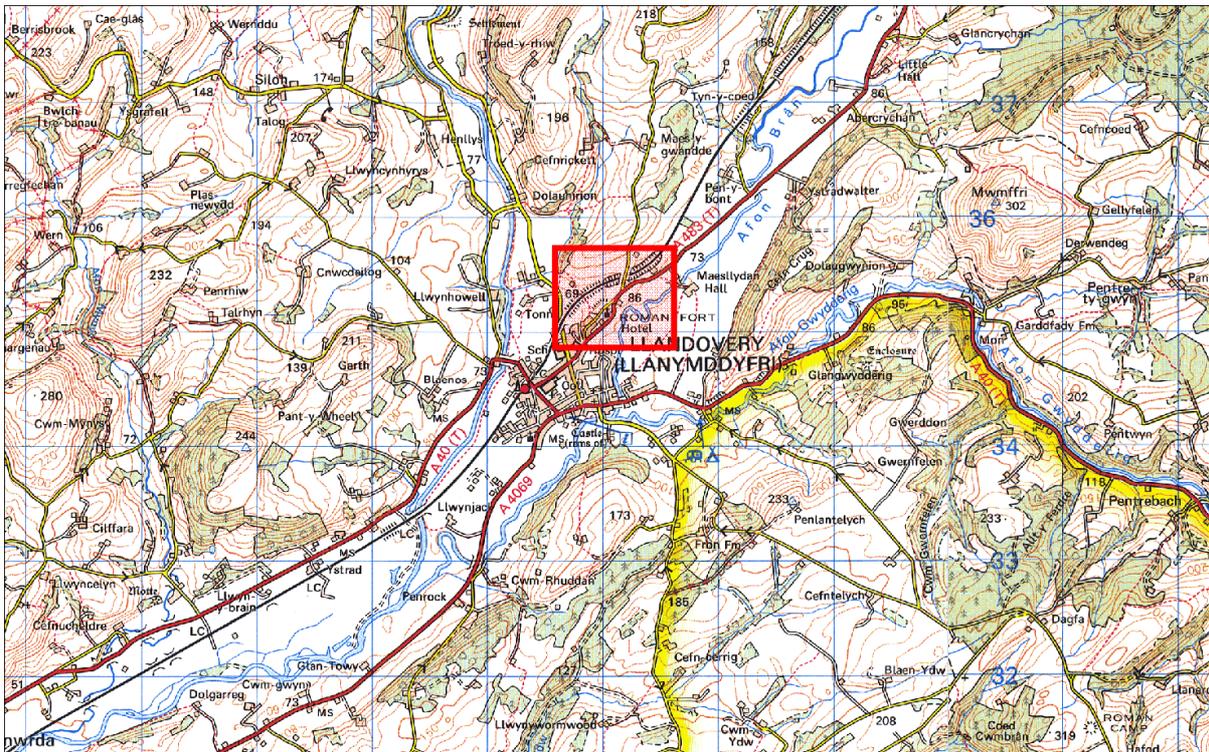


Figure 1: Location map of watching brief site based on Ordnance Survey.

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Archaeological Background

The following information is based heavily on the report produced for an archaeological evaluation previously undertaken within the area of the Roman Fort by Cambria Archaeology, now Dyfed Archaeological Trust (Cook 2006).

The Roman fort at Llandovery occupied a strategic position overlooking the Tywi valley, and close to the head of the Usk valley. It was linked by roads to numerous other forts and sites in south and west Wales, such as the forts and settlements at Llandeilo and Carmarthen to the west-southwest, the marching camp and fort at Y Pigwn and Brecon Gaer to the east-southeast, the forts and gold-mine at Pumsaint and Llanio to the northwest, and the practice camp and auxiliary forts at Caerau and Castell Collen to the northeast. The fort at Llandovery is identified as *Alabum* in the Ravenna Cosmology. The area to the north of the road north of Llanfair Ar Y Bryn is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM CM188), the area of which has been extended following geophysical surveys in 2004 and 2005. The development site lies outside of the Scheduled Area.

An archaeological desk-based assessment (Silvester 2004) of the general area, including that of Llanfair Ar Y Bryn house, highlighted a range of archaeological features in the locale, including the Roman fort and its associated components, in addition to potential medieval settlement around the possible pre-Norman church, as indicated by aerial photographic evidence for ridge-and-furrow arable agriculture to the NW and SE of the fort. However, it was only as a result of two phases of geophysical survey on the northeast side of the known fort at Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn that the true extent of the Roman complex has become apparent.

In 2004, a substantial area of geophysical survey was carried out to the northwest of the A483, between Llanfair Church and Llanfair farm, as part of the Cadw-funded Roman Fort Environs project (Figure 2). This survey suggested the presence of a substantial annexe to the northeast of the visible fort, consisting of three parallel ditches and various other associated anomalies. Other lines of strong anomalies were thought to indicate a series of kilns or ovens. Rectangular structures were also indicated.

In August 2005 an additional area of geophysical survey was carried out on the southeast side of the A483, as part of the archaeological assessment of a proposed road improvement catchment (Hopewell 2005). The results of this survey combined with the earlier 2004 survey clearly demonstrated the presence of a parallel triple ditch system surrounding the main fort area (as suggested by previous analyses), and also indicated the presence of a fourth parallel outer ditch circuiting around 30m outside (Figure 2). The survey reinforced the view that the fort was originally a large playing-card shaped fort, which was subsequently reduced to the size of a smaller auxiliary fort, retaining part of the earlier fort as an annexe. A similar arrangement has also been observed at Llandeilo, located a day's march away from Llandovery (Hughes 2006), with both forts connected by an established road, RR623 (Schlee 2005). Equally too at Castell Collen, roughly 30 miles to the northeast near Llandrindod Wells, an earlier rectangular fort was subsequently reduced, and the earlier defences retained as an annexe (Collingwood 1930). Castell Collen was connected by road to Llandovery via Caerau auxiliary fort, located 15 miles (a day's march) to the northeast of Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn, and 13 miles west-southwest of Castell Collen, with *Alabum* and Castell Collen thus separated by a two day march. In the *Journal of Roman Studies* (XLVII, 1957, p.227, no.5) a stone bearing the inscription 'Vexillatio Leg II Avg F' found at Castell Collen suggests that a flag section of the Second Augustan Legion built at least part of this fort, and may have been responsible also for the fort at Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn.

The geophysical survey also gave clear indications of a road leading off the main Via Julia Montana, which ran northwest before turning to run west-southwest and then southwest into the *porta praetoria* (main entrances) of both phases of the fort, part of which is overlain by the current A483 as it approaches Llanfair Ar Y Bryn House from Llanfair Farm (see Figure 2).



Figure 2: Combined results of the 2004 and 2005 geophysical surveys of the Llandovery Roman Fort

Until the evaluation by Cambria Archaeology in 2006, the only other archaeological excavation of the site had taken place in 1961 and 1962 under the supervision of the late Prof Mike Jarrett. These works suggested four phases to the Fort, starting with an earth and timber phase, which may have burnt down, followed by the construction of a stone revetment to the outer bank of the fort and rebuilding of internal buildings in stone.

Two watching briefs have been carried out at the fort, one by Jarrett in 1969 and one in March 1983 by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, both in response to trenches dug by Welsh Water. The first watching brief indicated the triple outer ditches and the other ditch further out, although there is no clear indication of where this watching brief took place. In March 1983 a trench was cut across part of the fort from the reservoir located opposite the church at Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn, in a northwest direction towards the railway cutting. Four major phases of occupation were recorded from the deeply stratified deposits visible (James, Murphy and

Davies 1983). Although broadly following the earlier phasing, no sign of an added stone revetment was found in the trench.

In June-July 2006 Cambria Archaeology undertook an archaeological trial trenching evaluation of the Roman fort as part of investigations prior to a proposed road improvement scheme. The location of these trenches is shown on Figure 3, in relation to the various features indicated by the earlier geophysical surveys.

Using information gleaned from previous archaeological investigations and combined with the results from the current evaluation, two main phases for the fort within the area of Llanfair Ar Y Bryn house have been identified, Fort 1 and Fort 2.

The Roman fort at Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn was initially a large playing-card shaped fort, likely to date to an initial campaign during the second half of the 1st century AD, with the fort undergoing a series of transformations during its lifetime. Pottery and other finds from the evaluation indicate a likely Flavian date, c.70-100 AD, for the initial establishment of the fort at Llandovery, with few finds indicating it was in use beyond the late 2nd century (*pers. comm.* Peter Webster). The first-phase fort consisted of a triple ditch defensive system, delimiting a projected internal area of some 3.5 ha, with a fourth outer ditch running parallel to these trivallate defences at a distance of c.30m. The area between the fourth outer ditch and the three defensive ditches was most likely utilised as an annexe area outside the confines of the fort itself, in which extra storage buildings could be placed, or where facilities such as workshops could be situated.

The main Via Julia Montana Roman road approached the fort on its SE side, and a well-maintained and well-constructed metalled road, branched off of this road to the northwest, eventually turning to the southwest and leading into the *Via Praetoria* through the *Porta Praetoria*, the front gate of the fort, which faced to the northeast.

Outside of the defences a *vicus* was established alongside this road, the remnants of which were encountered in Trenches 2 and 3 of the evaluation. The *vicus* represents a civilian settlement outside the confines of the military fort. It is likely to have extended the full length of the side-road leading into the fort.

A large Roman military ditch was encountered some way to the northeast, which appeared to be demarcate a much larger enclosure containing built structures, as seen also within the results from the 2005 geophysical survey. The projected internal area of this enclosure is estimated to be c.1.8 acres and might represent the remains of a practice camp or parade ground.

The layout of the fort at Llanfair Ar Y Bryn would have followed the typical lay-out of an auxiliary fort. Roman forts usually faced either the enemy, the line of march, or east (Breeze 2002:7), with the fort at Llanfair facing NE, towards Castell Collen, another auxiliary fort on a line of march. The interior of the fort was divided up by a series of internal roads and the placement of different buildings, with barrack blocks tending to occupy the front third of the fort's interior. Four gates gave entrance through the defences of the fort: the main *Porta Praetoria* at the front of the fort; the *Porta Decumana* at the rear of the fort; and the *Porta Principalis Dextra* and *Sinistra* on the opposite sides. These latter two gates were connected by an internal road, the *Via Principalis*, with an intervallum road, the *Via Sagularis*, running round the whole circuit of the fort inside the rampart.

Within the central range of buildings in the interior of the fort were the *Principia* or headquarters buildings, which usually opened onto the *Via Principalis*. Adjacent to this was the commanding officer's house, the *Praetorium*, with a granary often flanking the *Principia* on its other side. These buildings would have

been situated roughly in the area occupied by Llanfair Ar Y Bryn House and garden. At the rear of the fort there were further barrack blocks, storehouses and stables, in the area where the church now stands, with the *Porta Decumana* opening to the SW. The current unclassified road leading to Llanfair Church appears to largely overlie the former *Via Praetoria* and *Via Decumana*, with the A483 itself respecting the line of defences of the reduced fort on its SE side.

At some point, possibly within just a few months or years, the large campaigning fort was abandoned and de-commissioned. At a later date, possibly also after a period of just a few months, the fort was re-established, but was reduced in size to c.2.2 hectares. This second-phase fort also shifted location slightly, maintaining the same orientation as the earlier fort, but taking advantage of the natural topography, so that the new front defences and *Porta Praetoria* were located at the highest point in the landscape, just over 90m back (southwest) from the original main gate. These defences are partly visible today as earthworks in the field to the north of Llanfair Ar Y Bryn House, which itself lies just inside the projected location of the main gate-house for the reduced fort. Within this later fort, the new *Porta Praetoria* lay behind the old *Via Principalis* of the earlier fort, and it is possible that this metalled surface was maintained and utilised for the duration of the fort's life, providing a useful surface and additional access road to the *Via Julia Montana* downslope.

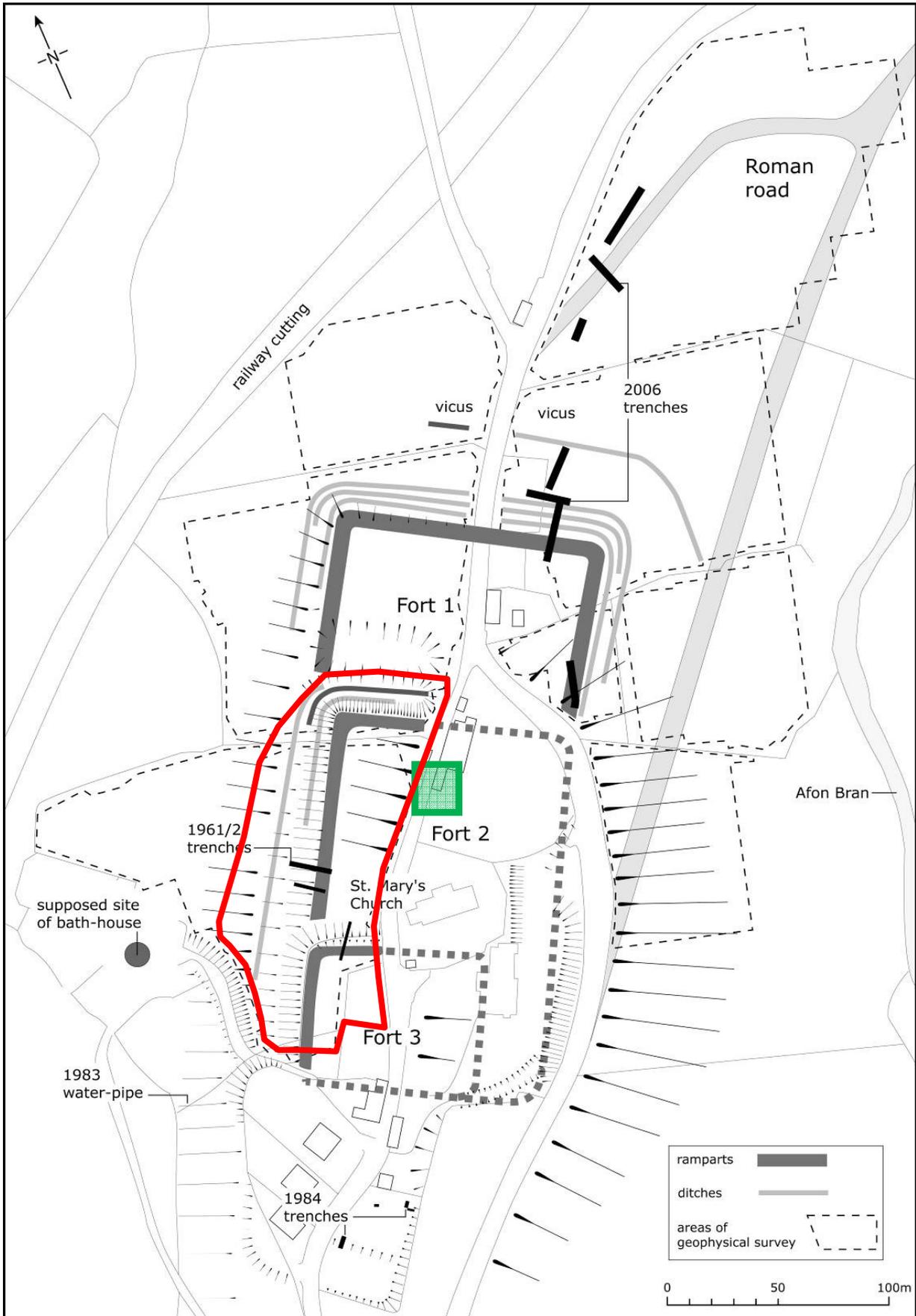


Figure 3: Three fort phases at Llandovery, showing site location (green box) and approximate area of original Scheduled Ancient Monument (red boundary)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

Methodology

The archaeological recording consisted of a single visit on the 3rd March 2011 to record the sections exposed during groundworks. Prior to the recording almost all groundworks had been undertaken, including levelling of the extension area, and the excavation and insertion of footings.

The exposed sections were hand cleaned from the topsoil to the top of the natural undisturbed subsoil before photographic and drawn records were made. Records were made of all identifiable soil contexts and features. A small number of finds were collected from the section, many of which were of later post-medieval or 20th century date (these were collected, identified and discarded). Finds of potential Roman date were retained.

It was not possible to excavate any of the exposed features and contexts visible in the section. The surviving archaeological deposits will be preserved behind the completed retaining wall.

The site area was measured in using measured offsets and tapes. An archive will be prepared of all records taken for this scheme of archaeological recording.

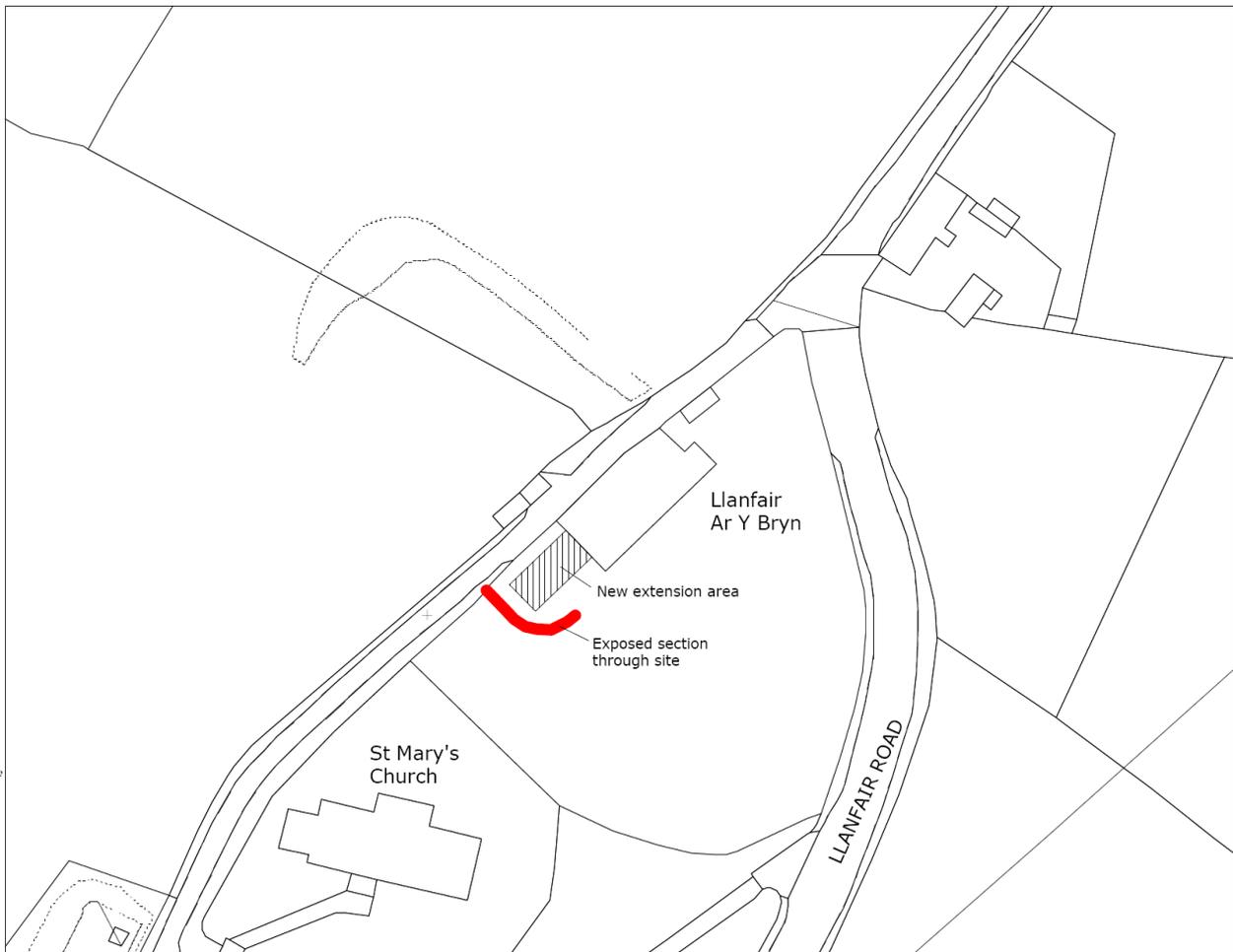


Figure 4: Llanfair Ar Y Bryn showing location of the extension area and approximate location of the exposed section through the site

Results of Archaeological Recording (Figures 5 – 7, Photos 5 to 16)

The following results are described in approximate stratigraphic order. A matrix is included in Appendix 1 along with more detailed context descriptions. Context numbers for soils and fills are recorded in round brackets e.g. (101), cut numbers for features in square brackets e.g. [128].

The ground level rose to the southwest, such that the northeastern end of the section was lowest. The turf and topsoil (101) was of c.0.25m depth and was present for all of the section except at the northwestern end where it had been previously removed down to the subsoil.

The subsoil (102) was present across the majority of the section, excluding the north-western end. It was similar in character to the topsoil, but contained more decayed/crushed stone. Two lenses of burnt material (139 and 140) were present above the subsoil within the topsoil. At the northeastern end of the section a line of clay in the subsoil (102) divided it from the adjacent subsoil (130). The contexts were identical and probably both relate to the same subsoil context.

A pathway of post-medieval (19th century?) date, comprising crushed stone, grit and gravel was cut through the topsoil (101) and into the subsoil (102) at the northwestern end of the section. This path could be seen in the garden leading to the southwest towards a former blocked entranceway from the garden into the adjacent churchyard (it is unknown if this was a real entrance or merely constructed to look like a former entrance, the ground level of the churchyard being significantly higher than the garden).

Cutting through the subsoil on the northwestern end of the section was the foundation trench cut for the large boundary wall, which stood to a total height of some 3.4m from the base of the levelled area. The cut was steep sided [125], filled with loose material similar in character to the subsoil (124). The lower part of the boundary wall foundation cut comprised a minimal removal of natural ground to create a neat bedding trench for the wall. The top of the cut for this wall was not clearly discernible, as the fill and the subsoil appeared to merge into one.

Along the western end of the section a 7.5m wide layer (110) lay directly below the subsoil and mostly on top of the natural geological deposits, but also sealed a collection of features to the northwest and a small U-shaped feature at its eastern end. The small U-shaped feature, cut [114], measured 0.3m wide and 0.20m in depth. It contained three fills (111), (112) and (113), the upper and main fill (111) contained a small sherd of glazed pottery of post-medieval date.

Also below layer (110) at the western end of the section was another cut also truncated by foundation cut [125]. This feature, cut [123], was an irregular based feature with a single fill (122). It measured 1.10m in width and 0.55m maximum depth, with only the eastern side of the feature visible (the western side truncated by the boundary wall). The feature contained a few small stones, but no finds were recovered. The colour of the fill, its texture and similarity to other features recorded in other parts of the section suggested it was of likely Roman date. The relationship of this fill to layer (110) was somewhat uncertain, but (123) is considered earlier.

Feature [123] truncated a smaller V-shaped feature, c.0.40m in width and c.0.3m in depth. The feature contained a single fill with a few stone inclusions and a number of lumps of clay and sand. Feature [123] truncated a further feature to the east, cut [119]. This feature had 45 degree sloping sides, with a very flat base, measuring 0.65m in width and 0.30m in depth. It was filled by a main upper fill (116), which contained numerous small stones and cobbles, with a lighter fine fill on its eastern edge (117) and a fill with a few stones in its base

(118). The feature showed up very clearly in section. The upper fill (116) merged on its eastern edge with a layer of small pebbles, potentially representing a small metallised surface (115). No clear relationship between these two contexts could be identified.

Crossing the central part of the exposed section was a pitched cobbled surface which showed up very clearly, comprising cobbles (103) and surrounding loose fill (104). This surface contained a small fragment of eroded brick, but was otherwise mostly made up of water worn pebbles with a few more angular stones also. For the most part the surface was sealed by the subsoil (102), although was stratigraphically below a small layer (147), which was similar in character to layer (110) to the west. An area at the western end of the cobbled surface could not be interpreted with any degree of confidence. The cobbles appeared to stop abruptly, with an area of subsoil (102) then being present, before layer (110) appeared below.

The eastern end of the cobbled surface (103)/(104) was far less well constructed than that in the central part where the pitched cobbles were neatly laid. This may be as a result of the eastern part of the curving section exposing an area of the edge of the surface, where it petered out (in sharp contrast to the abrupt stop to the west). The layer also appeared to slump somewhat into an underlying feature.

The cobbled surface lay stratigraphically above layer (105), a light silty layer containing a few stones. Layer (105) lay above (106), a slightly darker and less stony context. Layer (106) lay above fill (107) of feature cut [108] a small U-shaped cut, 0.21m in width and 0.24m in depth. A sherd of amphora and a second sherd of possible amphora with part a repair staple adhered to it were recovered from either layer (105) or (106).

Cobbled surface (103)/(104) also sealed context (126), a layer or fill seemingly located in a steep sided cut, which could only be seen on its western side [146]. Potentially this may represent a small terrace cut into the slope of the ground, but this is by no means certain due to the constraints of the investigation.

As noted above, cobbled surface (103)/(104) was overlain to the east by another layer, (129), which itself merged into the adjacent layer (132) and may represent the same context. These layers were themselves overlain by a further layer below the subsoil, (131). All of these layers (129), (131) and (132) had soil textures and characteristics very similar to the archaeological features seen in the section that are considered to represent Roman activity.

A feature into which cobbled layer (103)/(104) may have slumped, was truncated by the possible terrace cut [146]. The underlying feature, cut [128] was 1.00m in width and survived to a maximum depth of 0.23m. It contained a single fill (127), which was similar in character to the loose fill of the cobbled surface (104), but was more compacted in this area. A number of larger rounded stones or cobbles were present within the fill.

Layer (132) sealed two further features, a small U-shaped cut [134] filled by (133) and a shallow scoop, cut [136] filled by (135). Cut [134] measured 0.22m in width and 0.10m in depth. Cut [136] was 0.26m in width and 0.07m in depth.

To the north of these features a further thin layer was present sealing archaeological features below. This layer (145) comprised a very dark soil. It sealed three underlying features, including a U-shaped cut, [144], of 0.34m width and 0.20m depth, containing fill (143). A further small U-shaped cut [142] was also present 0.10m in width and 0.08m in depth, containing a single fill (141). At the northeastern end of the section a shallow scoop was also present sealed by layer (145), cut [133] containing a single stony fill (132). This scoop measured 0.47m in width and 0.08m in depth.

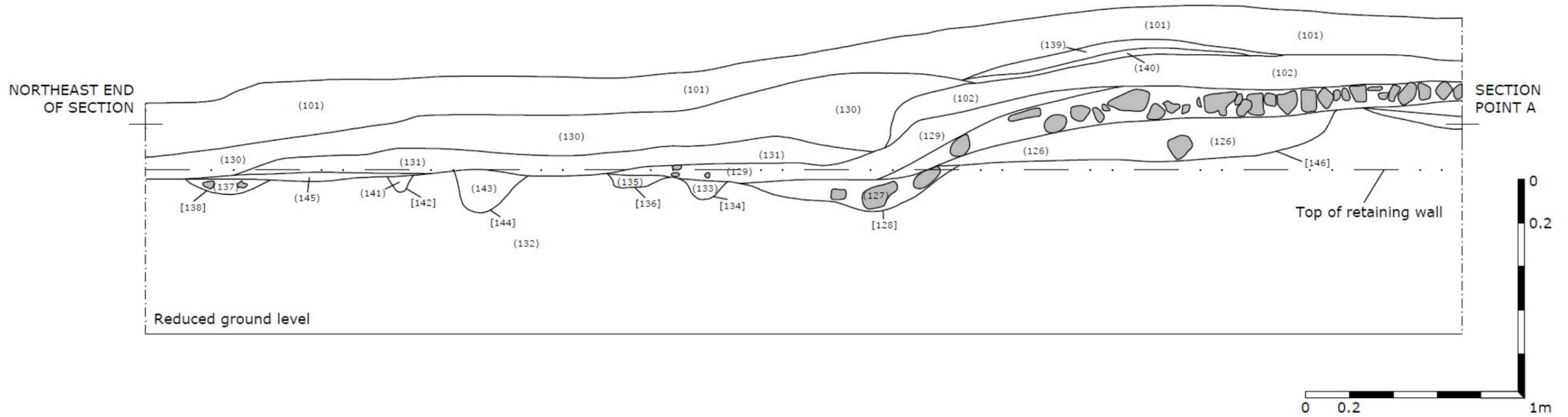


Figure 5: Northeastern end of exposed section through site (0m to 6m) (Photos 6 to 10 / Parts A to E)

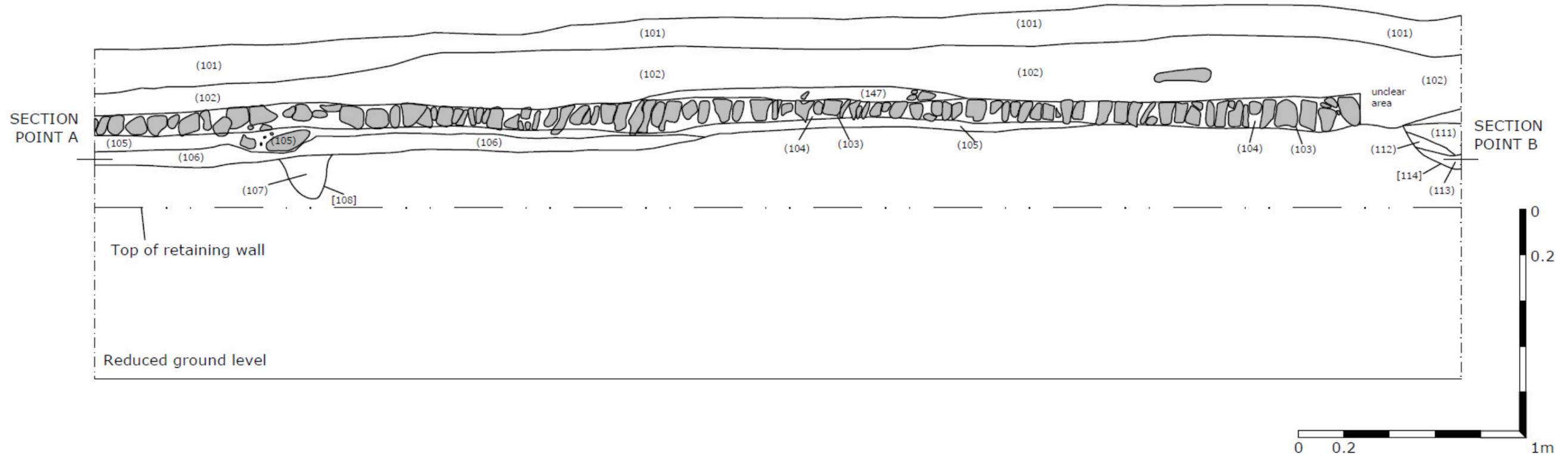


Figure 6: Central part of exposed section through site (6m to 12m) (Photos 11 to 14 / Parts F to I)

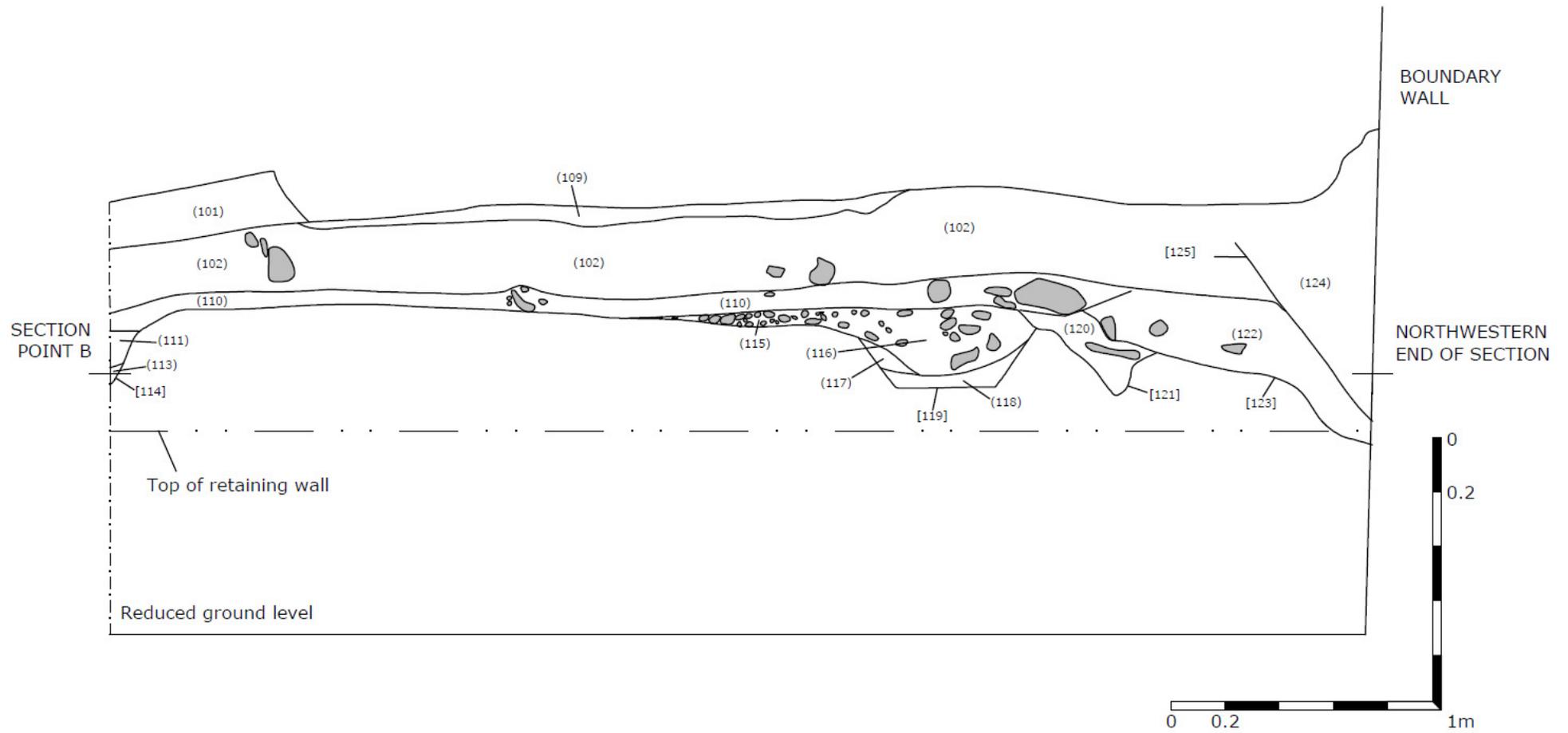


Figure 7: Northwestern end of exposed section through site (12m to 16.68m) (Photos 14 to 16 / Parts I to K)

CONCLUSIONS

Although the archaeological investigations were undertaken after the main phase of ground works for the new extension had been completed, and some archaeological remains will have been damaged, most of the damage is likely to have occurred during the former construction of a glass house on the same site. It was never the less possible to record a considerable amount of archaeology visible in the exposed section. The archaeological investigation only involved the cleaning and recording of the exposed vertical section around the new extension area. It was not possible to excavate any features or to cut the section back in areas where stratigraphic relationships were unclear. Given the constraints of the archaeological works, the following interpretations are thus very much conjectural and are open to debate.

The topsoil (101), subsoils (102) and (130), pathway (109), lenses in topsoil (139)/(140), layer (110) and the small U-shaped feature containing glazed pottery [114] are all modern or post-medieval in date. All other layers on the site would appear to be of greater antiquity and are most likely of Roman date.

Based on the typical layout of auxiliary forts such as at Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn, the site area would have been located close to the centre of the early fort (Fort 1) close to the principal headquarter buildings (Figure 8). By the time of the reduced size Fort 2, the site would have been located on top of the Via Praetoria roadway (Figure 8).

The series of layers (131), (145), (132)/(129) and (147) all seal archaeological deposits and features that have been cut into the underlying natural. These layers may therefore represent evidence for a phase of disuse between the two main phases of the Fort.

Below the layers of the disuse phase, a pitched cobbled surface (103)/(104) probably represents a well made roadway or yard area. Beneath surface (103)/(104) are a number of earlier cut features. Based on our current understanding of the phasing of Fort 2, the Via Praetoria is likely to have been located in this position. The cobbles may thus represent the remains of this roadway, although a pitched cobbled surface is not a typical construction method for Roman roads. Similarities in the road construction do exist, including that recorded during the evaluation in 2006 to the northeast of the fort (within Trench 1) which was constructed of cobbles of a similar type and size to those of (103), although they did not seem to have been laid as well. These cobbles can be found in the area within river and stream beds, and would have been an easily acquired local resource during the construction of the fort. Roman roads may often be formed of cobbles as a base on top of which layers of compacted clay and gravels are laid, such as that recorded at Llwynfortune Farm, Nantgaredig (Schlee 2004). It is possible that any similar upper surfaces of the road at Llanfair Ar Y Bryn could have been truncated away. The cobbles of (103) were best laid in the centre of the exposed section, and faded out to the east, and potentially slumping in to an adjacent ditch like feature [128] (which may represent a road side ditch). The abrupt end of the cobbles to the west coincides with an area that was not clearly understood due to the constraints of the investigation. It is possible that post-medieval or modern disturbance associated with feature [114] could have removed all remains of the surface in this area.

Although only a single course thick, the cobbles would have provided a good road surface. As the life of Fort 2 was not particularly long, it is unsurprising that there is no evidence for subsequent episodes of resurfacing or repair. It is of course possible that the surface represents a later medieval or post-medieval feature, but the coincidence of its location cannot be ignored. The fragment of

eroded brick or tile of possible Roman date found within the surface cannot be used to securely date the cobbles.

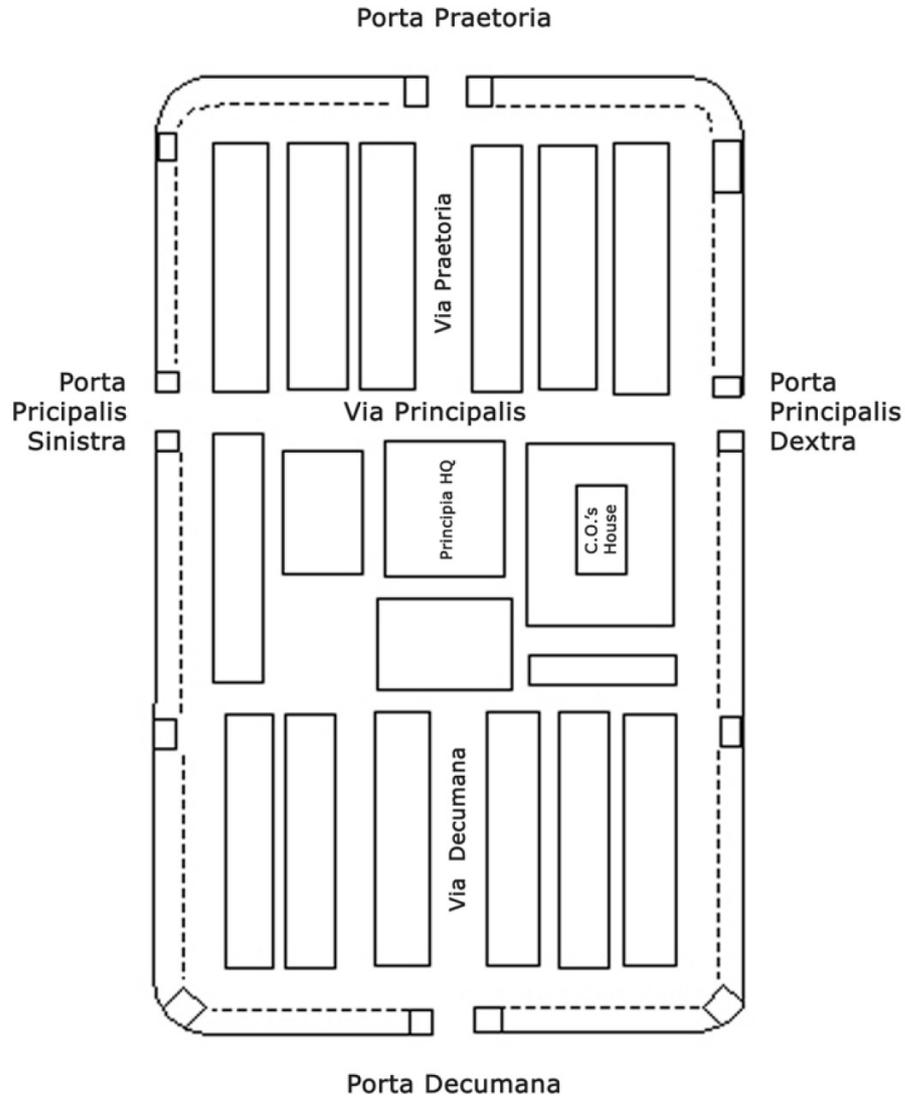


Figure 8: Typical layout of a Roman Auxiliary Fort (after Breeze 2002)

Beneath the cobbled surface were a series of layers and a U-shaped features including [108], [134], [144] and [142]. If the u-shaped features are postholes they may be evidence of timber buildings or temporary structures relating to the Fort 1 phase. The shallow scoop features, such as [134], [136] and [138] could potentially represent perpendicular sections through beam slots, and may thus also be associated with timber structures. The fills of all of these features were certainly, in the opinion of the author, of some antiquity based on their texture and character, and the fills were also similar to those recorded during the 2006 evaluation which have been dated to the Roman period.

To the west of the cobbled surface close to the boundary wall of the property lay a further series of possible Roman features including a larger pit or ditch [123], truncated by the post-medieval boundary wall foundation trench [125]. This feature truncated an earlier V-shaped feature [121] which could be the remains

of a small gully. Truncated by [121] was a very distinct feature with 45 degree sides and very flat base, cut [119]. The feature is similar to recorded remains of bedding trenches for timber wall beam (as seen within the 2006 evaluation in Trench 2, cut 228). To the east of this feature and merging with its upper fill was a small patch of a metallated surface comprising compacted small pebbles (115). This may represent a surface associated with the building, whether internal or an external yard.

Although the above interpretations are open to question due to the limited nature of the archaeological investigation, overall it has provided evidence that excluding the levelled area for the house and new extension, there is very high potential for the survival of a considerable quantity of archaeological features associated with the Roman forts surviving within the gardens of Llanfair Ar Y Bryn house. . Possible evidence for timber buildings and ditches within the central part of the earliest and largest Roman fort (Fort 1), and the survival of the possible road surface for the Via Praetoria of the later reduced sized fort (Fort 2), have both been identified. No evidence was found to suggest that this part of the earlier fort had been burnt down.

Finds recovered from the cleaning of the section included two fragments of possible amphora from layers (105) or (106). The sherds could not be more securely located as they fell from the section during cleaning. A fragment of heavily abraded brick or tile recovered from within the make-up of the cobbled surface (103), could be of Roman date (this fragment has unfortunately been lost). A probable fragment of curved imbrex and a smaller fragment of tegula were recovered from the topsoil (101) and subsoil (102) respectively. A number of smaller fragments of unidentifiable red ceramic were also recovered from the section during cleaning, and although these may be highly abraded Roman tiles, they may also be fragments of post-medieval/modern brick and tile. A single sherd of later medieval green glazed pottery was also recovered.

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Map

- Ordnance Survey 1880s 1:2500 – Pembrokeshire
- Ordnance Survey 1880s 1:500 - Pembrokeshire
- Ordnance Survey 1906 1:12500 – Pembrokeshire
- Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Land Ranger No.157

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: Overview of site with exposed section along left hand side of photograph (viewing southwest)



Photo 2: Area of extension, showing ground level and inserted foundations with boundary wall behind (viewing west)



Photo 3: Eastern side of exposed west facing section



Photo 4: Central part of exposed north facing section



Photo 5: Western side of exposed north facing section



Photo 6: Part A of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (130), (131), (145), (137) and [138]



Photo 7: Part B of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (130), (131), (145), (141), [142], (143) and [144]



Photo 8: Part C of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (130), (131), (135), [136], (133), [134] (127) and [128]



Photo 9: Part D of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (139), (140), (102), (103), (104), (129), (127), [128], (126) and [146]



Photo 10: Part E of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (139), (140), (102), (103), (104), (126) and [146]



Photo 11: Photo F of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (102), (103), (104), (105), (106), (107) and [108]



Photo 12: Photo G of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (102), (103), (104), (105), (106), (107) and [108]



Photo 13: Photo H of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (102), (103), (104), (147), (105) and (106)



Photo 14: Photo I of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (101), (102), (103), (104), (110), (111), (112), (113) and [114]



Photo 15: Photo J of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (109), (102), (110), (115), (116), (117), (118) and [119]

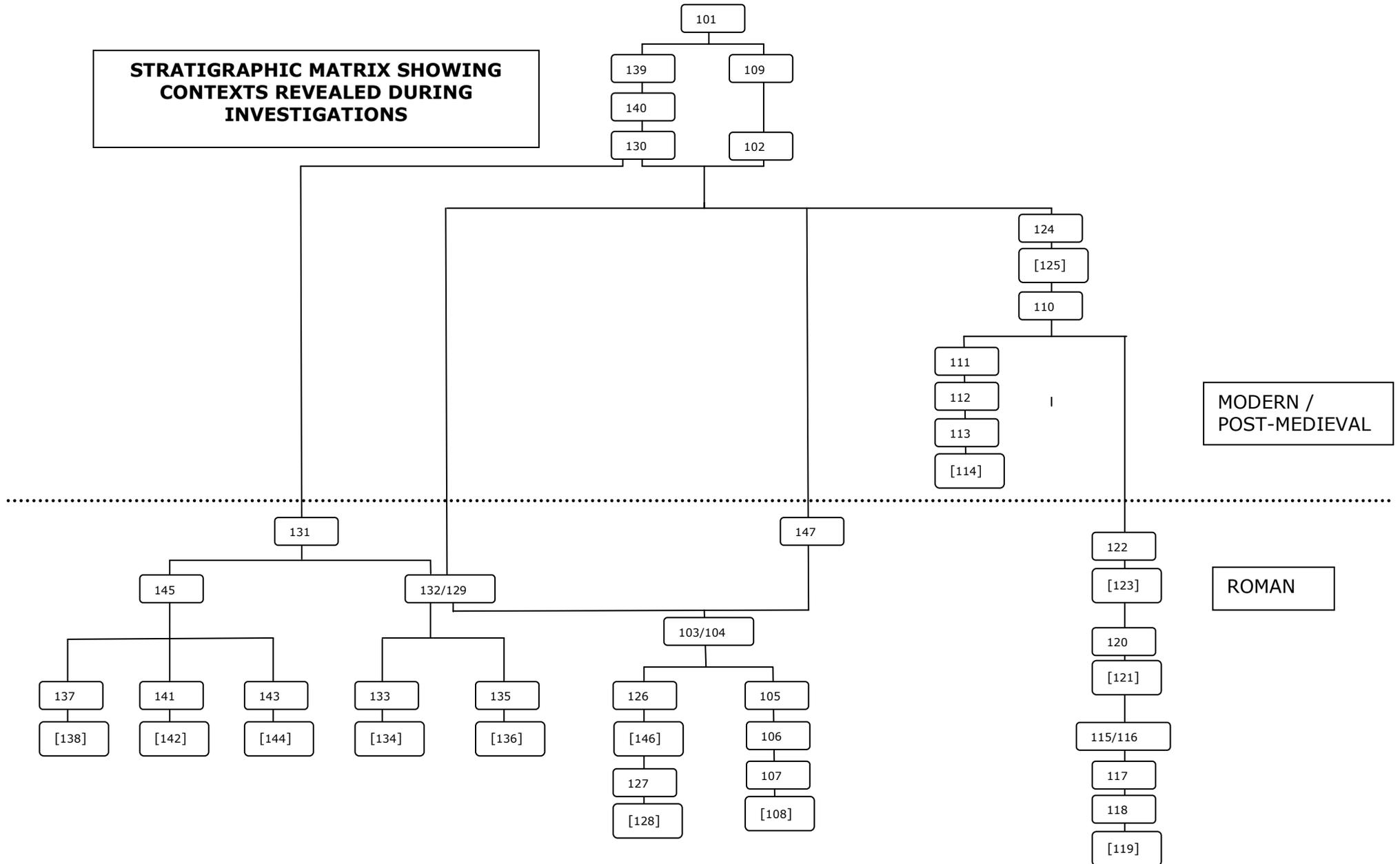


Photo 16: Photo K of exposed section from northeast to northwest contexts (102), (124), [125], (122), [123], (120) and [121]

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS AND SITE MATRIX

Number	Type	Description
101	Topsoil	Dark greyish brown, friable, sand silt clay. Abundant small to very small stones.
102	Subsoil	Very dark greyish brown silt sand clay, soil. Contains abundant decayed and crushed natural stone. Seemingly redeposited natural material excavated from the area of the original glass house, with the resulting material dumped on the adjacent bank to the south. Occasional lumps and lenses of clay within the soil.
103	Cobbled surface	Extensive pitched cobble surface extending across the majority of the exposed section. Comprises both angular stones and rounded pebbles, as well as a single brick or tile fragment.
104	Soil around cobbles	Dark greyish brown, friable, silt sand clay. This soil layer lay within and around the cobbles of (103). Possibly soil accumulation during the use of the surface or alternatively following disuse.
105	Layer	Greyish brown clayey sand silt with small grits within. Some lighter brown patches also evident.
106	Layer	Brownish grey, clayey sand silt with common small angular stones
107	Fill of posthole?	Fill of [108], brownish grey silt sand with no inclusions.
108	Cut of posthole?	U-shaped cut, 0.22m in width and 0.19m in depth. Possible forms cut of posthole pre-dating cobbled surface.
109	Crushed stone pathway	Area of crushed stone and grits seen at base of pathway leading towards the church to the south, around 2.20m in width. Post-medieval feature. Topsoil had been removed to lay this path.
110	Layer	Very dark greyish brown, fine, sandy silt clay. Lies beneath layer (102). Seals a number of features.
111	Fill of posthole?	Greyish brown, clayey sand silt with occasional small rounded pebbles. Also a single small sherd of modern glazed pottery was recovered from the fill in the section. Above (112)
112	Fill of posthole?	Dark greyish brown, clayey sand silt, occasional small pebbles. Above (113), below (112).
113	Fill of posthole?	Light grey sandy silty clay. Similar fill to underlying natural.
114	Cut of posthole?	U-shaped cut of possible posthole. 0.35m wide and 0.20m deep.
115	Cobbled surface	Small area of cobbles seen to the east of cut [119]. May have been a small path or surface adjacent to the probable structural bedding trench of [119].
116	Fill of beam slot	Dark greyish brown, clayey sand silt containing common rounded pebbles. Upper fill of [119], above (117). May be truncated
117	Fill of beam slot	Dark yellowish brown, silty sand clay. Fill on east side of feature only, no inclusions. Fill of [119] above (118), below (117).
118	Fill of beam slot	Dark greyish brown silt sand clay fill of beam slot [119]. Occasional small pebbles within fill. Below (117).
119	Cut of beam slot	Cut of probable structural trench – beam slot. 0.65m wide and 0.30m deep. Around 50 degree sides with a very flat base.
120	Fill of feature	Dark greyish brown, sand silt clay fill with occasional small angular stones and frequent sandy clay lumps. Fill of [121]. Truncated by [123] on its eastern edge.
121	Cut of feature	Cut of feature, possibly a gully. May truncate fill (116) cut [119]. Around 45 degree slope to east and partial similar slope to west before truncation. 0.5m width minimum and 0.31m depth.
122	Fill of feature	Greenish brown slightly sandy silt clay, with a few medium sized pebbles. Very fine soil and friable. Fill of [123]. Large feature on western end of exposed section. Truncated by wall foundation trench [125] of boundary wall.
123	Cut of feature	Cut of wide feature adjacent to western boundary wall of Llanfair ar y Bryn. Stepped side to east. Truncates fill (120) cut [121].
124	Fill of boundary wall foundation	Very dark greyish brown silt sand clay fill of boundary wall foundation trench [125]. Very friable, and very similar fill to topsoil, contains a number of small to medium stones.
125	Cut of boundary wall foundation	Unclear line of cut for boundary wall foundation to Llanfair ar y Bryn. Visible on the eastern side of the wall, possibly around 60 degree slope. Truncates fill (120), cut [121].
126	Fill of feature	Dark greyish brown clay sand silt with some small stones and occasional larger pebbles. Fill of feature [146] which may represent an area of possible terracing.
127	Fill of feature	Dark greyish brown sand silt clay with larger stones, very like cobbles in surface (103). Fill of cut [128]. Could be a redeposited stone material from cobbled surface.

128	Cut of feature	Cut of wide feature seen in section, but unclear as to function or orientation etc. 1.00m in width and 0.25m depth maximum. Filled with (127)
129	Layer	Dark greyish brown sand silt clay, with a few small pebbles. May merge with or be the same context as (132), but slightly less stony in this area.
130	Subsoil	Very dark greyish brown silt sand clay, soil. Occasional lumps and lenses of clay within the soil. Similar subsoil to (102) but with far less stone.
131	Layer	Dark greyish brown sand silt clay with common small pebbles. Similar to subsoil (130), but slightly lighter.
132	Layer	Dark greyish brown sand silt clay, with common small pebbles. May merge with or be the same context as (129), but more stony in this area.
133	Fill of posthole?	Dark yellowish brown clayey silt sand with no inclusions. Fill of [134]. Could be base of small posthole, seemingly sealed by layer (129)/(132).
134	Cut of posthole?	Possible cut of small posthole beneath (129)/(132). 0.20m wide and 0.09m deep. U-shaped cut.
135	Fill of feature	Dark yellowish brown clayey sand silt. Fill of small feature adjacent to [134] also sealed by (129)/(132). Fill of [136].
136	Cut of feature	Cut of small scoop, filled by (135). 0.29m in width and 0.07m in depth. Sealed by layer (132).
137	Fill of feature	Dark greyish brown, sand silt clay, friable with common small rounded pebbles. Fill of small scoop [138] at northwestern end of section.
138	Cut of feature	Shallow U-shaped cut 0.38m x 0.08m deep. Filled by (137).
139	Lens in topsoil	Very dark greyish brown lens in topsoil containing crushed coal and ash
140	Lens in topsoil	Light yellowish brown lens in topsoil of sandy clay material, with common small stones. Similar to crushed natural.
141	Fill of feature	Dark yellowish brown, sand silt clay fill of feature [142]. No inclusions.
142	Cut of feature	Steep sided small U-shaped cut, could be base of posthole. Filled by (141). 0.10m in width and 0.09m in depth.
143	Fill of feature	Dark yellowish brown sand silt clay fill of feature with no inclusions. Fill of [144].
144	Cut of feature	U-shaped cut, slightly steeper to north. 0.34m wide and 0.20m in depth. Filled by (143).
145	Layer	Very dark greyish brown, organic and very silty layer on top of natural, sealing features (137)/[138], (141)/[142] and (143)/[145].
146	Cut of terrace	Possible cut beneath cobbled surface (103) and (104). The location of the cut suggests a possible area of terracing into the slope of the hillside. Uncertain though. Filled by (126)
147	Layer	Layer over top of part of the cobbled surface (103). Very dark greyish brown, fine, sandy silt clay. Lies beneath layer (102). Seals a number of features



**LLANFIAR AR Y BRYN, LLANDOVERY,
CARMARTHENSIRE, SN 77026 35221**
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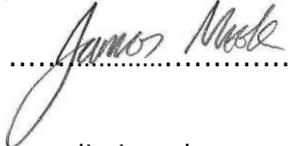
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Mai 2011
May 2011

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

James Meek

Swydd / Position: Head of Field Services

Llofnod / Signature  Date 23/05/2011

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

Duncan Schlee

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

Swydd / Position: Project Manager

Llofnod / Signature  Date 23/05/2011

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

ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol

