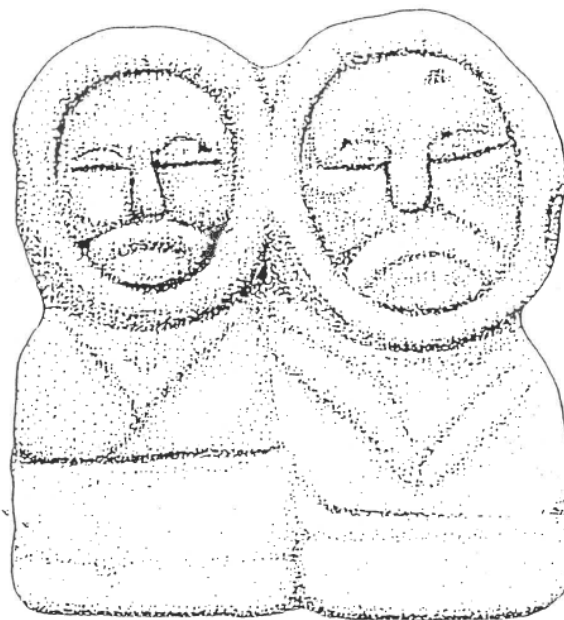


CAMBRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECTS

LAND ADJACENT TO SUNNYSIDE, ARDDLEEN:

Desk top assessment and archaeological evaluation

By Rupert Detheridge MA



CAP Report no 22

**LAND ADJACENT TO SUNNYSIDE, ARDDLEEN:
DESK TOP ASSESSMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

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Project No: 59

Date: 3 September 1997

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Contents

i) Contents	2
ii) List of illustrations	3
1. Introduction	4
2. The desk top assessment and methodology	4-8
3. The archaeological evaluation	8-9
4. The archaeological features	9-10
5. Conclusions	10-11
6. Acknowledgements	11
7. Bibliography	11
APPENDIX 1: Summary of the contexts	12
APPENDIX 2: Maps consulted	12
APPENDIX 3: Aerial photographs considered	12
APPENDIX 4: Summary of finds	13

September 1997

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List of figures

- Fig.1 The proposed development site.
- Fig.2 Part of the Powis Estate Map (M41), c.1792.
- Fig.3 Part of the Powis estate Map (M42), c.1792.
- Fig.4 Part of the 1840 Tithe Map of the parish of Llandrinio.
- Fig. 5 Part of the 1902 2nd Edition 6", Montgomeryshire, Sheet XV1 NW.
- Fig. 6 Plan of the immediate area around the development site, showing sites listed in the County SMR.
- Fig. 7 Plan showing the location of the evaluation trench.
- Fig. 8 Plan of the evaluation trench and sections.

1. Introduction

1.1 This desk-top study and evaluation has been generated as a result of planning proposals for a plot of land, adjacent to "Sunnyside", Arddleen, Powys, Wales.

1.2 The plot is located at NGR SJ 2595 1593, within the parish of Llandrinio.

1.3 As stated, the proposed development lies within the western portion of the parish of Llandrinio. The brief for the Archaeological evaluation emphasises that the site "Falls within an area of high archaeological sensitivity". This refers to the fact that the proposed development will be constructed on a plot of land which is known to contain the remains of a former medieval Holy Well known as Trinity Well (PRN 1251). The brief proposes that the well may have had associated structures or evidence of ritual activity at the well head.

1.4 The curatorial section of Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust have assumed that any preserved archaeological deposits may be partially or wholly disturbed or destroyed by the intended development and have made a recommendation to the local planning authority that an archaeological evaluation be carried out. The results of this evaluation will allow the planning authority to make an informed decision about the archaeological implications of the proposed development. The Curatorial section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust have prepared a brief (CPAT EVB 228) setting out a scheme of work thought necessary to collect the relevant information. The brief requires:-

- A desk based archaeological assessment. Consisting of an appraisal of available primary and secondary documentary, cartographic, pictorial, aerial/ground photographic and oral sources.
- An excavation by recognised archaeological techniques, of two joining trial trenches, forming a T-shaped trench. This is at locations specified by CPAT Curatorial.

2. The desk top assessment and methodology

2.1 The brief called for the following sources to be consulted:

- Records held at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.
- Records held at the county SMR, held at the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust.
- Records held at the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, Aberystwyth.
- Records held at the County Records Office, Llandrindod Wells.
- Records held at the County Records Office, Shrewsbury. In particular the Powys Estate archives and eighteenth century estate plans.

2.2 Limitations and information not available.

The following map was unavailable:

Powis Castle Estate Map(M214), Parish of Llandrinio.

Aerial photograph unavailable: OS Sortie 73-303, 055, 15.6.73.

2.3 Cartographic evidence.

All maps considered are entered in Appendix 2.

The earliest maps showing Arddleen and the area of the proposed development are two Powis Castle Estate Maps, dating from c.1792. One (M41) is of: "Chief part of the Parish of Llandrinio with some lands in the manor of Streetmarshall". (Fig. 2). This map shows Arddleen with detail of the area within the boundaries of the proposed development site and the area close by. The proposed development site is situated in the north-eastern corner of the field marked 265, and is owned by John Kynaston. No well or structures appear in this field, the field being agriculture land and probable pasture. Within the field, is a small plot marked 269, this would not appear to be associated with the well, and is out of the proposed development area. To the north of field 265 is a small triangular field below the junction of the two, this is marked as 271, and has a small building in the north.

The other Powis Castle Estate Map from c.1792, is (M42): "Plan No.IV Parish of Llandrinio". This map (Fig. 3) is important, as the well appears for the first time. In this map the well marked situated in the northern corner of the large rectangular field now numbered 56, and owned by J. Kynaston Esq. The well is surrounded by a possible wall extending from the road (now the B4392) to the west then turning north-east to meet the boundary of field 55 (the field numbered 271 in the above map).

The 1799 Apportionment map:

"Llandrinio, Llandysilio, Llansantffraid Devddwr, 11th July 1799", shows the area of the proposed development within field 56 belongs, which belongs to John Kynaston. The field appears as agricultural land with no evidence of a well or associated buildings. This map could not be reproduced.

The 1840 Tithe Map for the parish of Llandrinio (Fig. 4), covers the area of the proposed development, situated within the field numbered 273 and owned by Sir John Kynaston. The well is not marked but two possible structures/buildings are visible. These are on the western edge of the proposed development site area, next to the road (now the B 4392). Furthermore the map shows new buildings in field 271, and the establishment of field 270.

Two maps of Arddleen Estate, have good coverage of the area, but unfortunately reproduction of these was not permitted. One map dated to the C19th, of: "Sales Particulars of properties at Arddleen, belonging to W.R.O Kynaston ESQ". Covers the area of the proposed development site, but does not show the well or any other features.

The other map is from 1868, and is:

"The Plan of the Arddleen Estate in the parishes of Llandrinio and Guildsfield in the County of Montgomery belonging to the Rev.W.C.E Kynaston". Here the development site appears in field 4, "Canal Field", occupied by the tenant George Savage. Significantly, this map shows the position of the well taken up by either a pond or standing water. The two buildings seen on the road front on earlier maps appear again.

The Ordnance survey maps covering Arddleen were also considered, and provide information about the later history of the development site. The 1st Ed 25" map (1886), marks the position of the well and a building near the road (B 4392). The building is in the same position as the buildings on the 1840 Tithe map. Unfortunately reproduction of this map was not permitted.

The 2nd Ed 25' map (1902), shows the position of the well, clearly marked as 'Arddleen Well', no associated structures appear. Unfortunately reproduction of this map was not permitted. The 2nd Ed 6" Map (1902), marks only the well, and no associated structures appear (Fig. 4).

2.4 The Evidence from the Aerial Photography.

The aerial photographic cover for the area of Arddleen and the parish of Llandrinio is limited, and only three photographs were relevant.

The two earlier aerial photographs;

RAF CPE/UK/2492, FRAMES 4253 to 4254, 11.3.97, show the development plot to be overgrown, with no other SMR sites in the vicinity being visible (Fig. 6).

OS 81-008, FRAME 025, 15.4.1981, Shows the proposed development site but at a very small scale. The area is cleared of vegetation, well is possibly visible as a small dot with a circular area of raised ground surrounding it, which could possibly be associated with the well structure. No other structures were visible, that may have been associated with the well. Some of the earthwork of PRN 4626 (Romano-British enclosure), could be seen from this frame, one part of the earthwork passes to the east of Oaklands (Fig. 6).

RAF 540/27, FRAME 5052, 16.5.1948, provided no relevant evidence.

2.5 Evidence from the SMR search.

Apart from the Well at Arddleen, the SMR search failed to locate any further sites within the boundaries of the proposed development site (Fig. 6).

The SMR search did reveal a number of sites in the vicinity (Fig. 6).

PRN 4627, Arddleen enclosure (NGR SJ 2607516020), is the closest of these to the development site. This site would appear to encroach on the two fields directly to the east of the development site (Fig. 6). This site was excavated in 1979 by CPAT (CBA 1979, 33) and was revealed to be a Romano-British enclosure. This was of probable sub-rectangular shape and was double ditched, the interior of the feature having some features. Pottery and C14 dating suggest a Romano-British date for the enclosure.

PRN 2446 Maerdy Brook enclosure (NGR SJ2594116375), is situated to the north west of the above site. This is a double-ditched sub-rectangular enclosure, 100m by 54m, which may be of Iron Age date.

PRN 3634 and PRN 5114 are situated west of the proposed development

PRN 3634 Penthryn Lane enclosure (NGR 2515515943), is a possible Iron Age sub-circular enclosure, 50m in diameter, with attached antennae. There is a ring-ditch within this enclosure.

PRN 5114, Penthryn Lane Cropmark (NGR SJ 253157), is another possible Iron Age enclosure. This may be a possible wrong-siting of PRN 3634.

PRN 4638, Arddleen Ridge and Furrow (NGR SJ 259159), is situated to the west of the development site, and is an area of Medieval Ridge and Furrow.

2.6 Background information.

Jones (1992, 199), states that within Llandrinio parish there were three holy wells; "Trinity Well", or Arddleen Well, within the proposed development area.

"Bennion's Well" at Maerdy Farm (SJ21 NE, 259168).

"Nicholas Well" (SJ21 NE 26961616), situated at Trederwen Farm.

Regarding "Trinity Well", the Montgomeryshire Inventory 1911 (Entry 365), states that a visit to the well on 16th April 1910, showed that the well at that time was not a public well. Furthermore up to 1899 at least (Jones 1992, 199), people drank sugared water there on Trinity Sundays.

There is certainly a possibility that "Trinity Well", was with land granted to the Cistercian abbey of Strata Marcella, founded in 1170.

Jones (1992), provides much useful background information on holy wells, suggesting that Holy Wells were among a number of Pagan sites that were converted to Christian sites (p 23), and that the survival of the well cult was partly due to Christianity, and to their supposed healing qualities. Furthermore in early Christian times people were baptised at wells, and early Christian Saints were connected with wells, many taking their names from Saints.

Jones (1992, 24), cites 200 examples of where Churches were built on or near holy wells. He refers to eight in Montgomeryshire. Jones (1992, 28), refers to the possibility of structures associated with the wells. The very early holy wells Jones (1992, 28) suggests may have had a well chapel, or the well may have been enclosed by a small rectangular building. Sometimes there may have been an oval, vaulted and corbelled hut associated with the Saint, to whom the well was dedicated.

Such structures may well have fallen into disrepair, and the stone robbed. This is especially true of the Reformation Period, when the Authorities proscribed Well pilgrimages and practices. In the Eighteenth century holy wells, experience a period of revival (Jones, 1992, 68), due to Antiquarian Interest and their possible healing properties. At this time some holy wells had buildings and residential houses built around them.

The holy wells had different functions, these included; healing, bathing, drinking, divination and the lifting and laying of curse. Offerings were certainly connected with the wells (Jones, 1992, 92f), these were usually cast in the well head. They could also be given to a local dignitary, placed in a box in the church, or sometimes placed in a

niche at the well head. These offerings were usually; clothes, rags, pins, buttons, buckles, thorn-points, flowers and stones.

2.7 Discussion of the results of the desk-top assessment.

The well appears first on a map from 1792 (Fig. 3), surrounded by a possible wall. The 1840 Tithe Map (Fig. 4), marks buildings against the road, to the south-west of the Well. The buildings appear again on the 1868 Arddleen estate map, but here the position of the well is taken up by what looks like standing water, or a pond. No evidence of the well, but a building in the same position as the above mentioned buildings appears on the 1886 OS 1st Ed 25", map.

The 1902 OS maps, mark only the well, and no associated buildings.

So there is early evidence of the area of the proposed development site. In c.1792, the well enclosed by a wall. The maps from 1840 to 1886, do not mention this wall but show buildings. After 1902 the maps show no evidence for these buildings.

It can be concluded, that there may be structures associated with the well, that will only be revealed by excavation.

The aerial photographs considered, were unable to show any evidence of the wall or building provided by the cartographic evidence. They did reveal, a possible area of raised ground around the well head.

The SMR search, revealed substantial Iron Age and Romano-British activity in the area in the vicinity of Arddleen, in particular Arddleen Enclosure, PRN 4627. This is very close to the eastern side of the development site. Thus the possibility of encountering Prehistoric or Romano-British features and finds should not be ruled out.

From the background information regarding holy wells, there are is a possibility of associated Medieval or eighteenth Century structures. These if present may occur in the Northern portion of the development site, especially near to the road (B4392). Regarding the well head itself, there may be a circular area of raised ground surrounding. The chance of finds near the well head appears to be high, with the possibility of a surviving niche in the well head for such offerings.

3. The archaeological evaluation

3.1 Methodology

The evaluation was carried out by Cambrian Archaeological Projects on 27-28 August 1997.

The project brief called for:

1. The stratigraphic excavation of one T-shaped trench.

This trench was located in the position suggested by CPAT (Fig. 7). The trench measured 12x2 metres across the hedge line of the development site, with a 6x2 metre

long extension at right angles. The junction of the T-shaped trench crossed at the site of the well location.

2. The following techniques were employed in the excavation of the trench;
 - a) Removal of topsoil and modern overburden by JCB with a toothless bucket down to the first recognisable archaeological horizon.
 - b) Limited excavation of features and deposits followed, with at least one area of the trench being excavated down to the level of non-archaeological levels within the trench.
 - c) All exposed surfaces were planned to a scale of 1:20. These were related to the Ordnance Datum.

4. The archaeological features

4.1 *The natural bedrock (Fig. 8)*

(context 12). The natural bedrock was encountered in the north-western corner of the 12m trench, and in the east of the 6m trench. The natural bedrock was a grey shale stone.

4.2 *The natural sub soil (Fig. 8)*

(context 11). The natural sub soil was encountered in the north eastern corner of the 12m trench and the western end of the 6m trench. The natural sub soil was a brown loose silt, in some places having a grey lens between the natural.

4.3 *The well (Fig. 8)*

The structural cut of the well (context 6) was excavated. The structural cut of the well had a diameter of 3.5m. The section excavated through the feature revealed that the cut was straight sided and flat bottomed for 1m, before dropping down gradually to the well centre. The well cut had a maximum depth of 0.75m (to limit of excavation).

The wall of the well was found to be robbed, presumably to remove the masonry associated with the well, this robber cut (context 8) had a width of 0.46m and a depth of 0.38m.

The intact fill of the structural cut of the well was encountered (context 7), this was a brown/grey compact fill, with inclusions of mortar and white flecks. This suggests that the well had a masonry structure with an estimated diameter of 3.30m

The fill of the well (context 10) was recorded, this was a light brown/grey silty clay with inclusions of small angular stones and broken brick. One sherd of pottery was found in this fill dating to the 19th century (Appendix 4).

4.4 *The Robber cut and sequence (Fig. 8)*

The robber cut (context 8) was straight sided and flat bottomed. The cut has a width of 0.46m and a depth of 0.38m. The cut is presumably to remove the masonry around the well head.

The fill of the robber cut (context 9), was a grey loose silty clay. The inclusions much of comprised; 20% broken white lime mortar, 15% small to medium angular stones and 5% charcoal. The fill illustrates therefore from its shape and composition that there was a masonry structure in its position. Pottery was found within this fill dating to the 19th century (Appendix 4).

A spread of mortar (context 5) was located to the south of the well in the 12m trench, this was some 1.9m long, and 0.8m of its width were exposed, this carrying on into the western edge of the trench (Fig. 8). The layer/spread comprised of a light yellow loose silty/clay mortar, containing 30-40% small stones and building rubble. This layer must relate to when the structure (masonry) of the well was demolished and robbed out.

4.5 *The later sequence (Fig. 8)*

The next action, after the robbing of the well, appears to be the establishment of a pond or area of standing water, over most of the area where the T-shaped trench was position. This was established through consideration of a substantial silt layer (context 4), which consisted of a mid brown compact silty clay. This had some 10% inclusions of small angular stones, general rubbish pottery and glass. The layer had a length of 10.6m (its eastern extent not being excavated), and a width of 6.30m (its northern limit not excavated). The fill was excavated to a depth of 1m (to limit of excavation). We can presume that the pond or area of standing water was circular, and its depth can be estimated as 1.2m. Pottery was found within this fill dating to the 19th-20th century (Appendix 4).

The next event, after the complete silting up of the pond was the establishment of a topsoil layer (context 3). This layer was a friable dark brown silt, having 10% inclusions of small angular stones. This layer is very shallow and has been compressed by the later layers above (contexts 1 and 2). This former top soil layer extended throughout the T-shaped trench.

A layer of ash and burnt material (context 2) was encountered only on the east facing section of the 12m trench. This comprised of; dark brown ash, grey ash, and red ash with patches of charcoal within this. This has a length of 6.41m, and a maximum depth of 0.51m. The width of this as/burnt layer could not be established as it extends into the eastern facing section of the 12m trench. This may possibly be a dump layer from a smithy to the east of the development sites.

The most modern context encountered was a rubble layer (context 1). This appeared to cover the whole development site. This layer comprised of a light brown loose silt, with inclusions of rubble, modern building material, bricks stone and assorted rubbish, making up 60% of the fill. Modern pottery and metal were found within this fill. The rubble layer had a maximum depth of 0.78m, and presumably relates to the demolition of buildings in the vicinity.

5. Conclusions

5.1 The deposits fall into four phases.

Phase 1. Contexts associated with the natural bedrock (context 12), and the sub soil (context 11).

Phase 2. Contexts associated with the well construction (context 6), and the subsequent silting (contexts 7 and 10). The silt fill has been dated from the finds to the 19th century (Appendix 4).

No associated structures or possible offerings, as suggested as possibly be being present by the desk-top assessment were encountered.

Phase 3. Contexts associated with the robber cut of the well (context 8), the fill of this cut (context 9), and the mortar spread (context 5).

Phase 4. Contexts associated with the later activity at the proposed development site. The pond silt (context 4), the former top soil layer (context 3), the ash layer (context 2), and the rubble layer (context 1).

5.2 The chance of encountering an earlier well in the position indicated by CPAT should not be ruled out. This though would be at quite a depth and presumably directly beneath the pond silt (context 4). The pond silt has been recorded as extending down to a depth of 1.8m on the north facing section of the 6m trench.

6. Acknowledgements

Thanks to Gregory Price who supervised the evaluation, to Mark Walters for his advice and to Kevin Blockley for his advice on text and composition.

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 Haslam, R, 1992, *The buildings of Wales, Powys*, Penguin.
 Entry 365, 1911, *Montgomeryshire inventory*, HMSO.
 Jones, F, 1992, *The Holy Wells of Wales*, Univ. of Wales Press.

APPENDIX 1:**Summary of the contexts**

- 1 Rubble layer.
- 2 Ash/burnt material layer.
- 3 Former top soil.
- 4 Pond silt.
- 5 Mortar spread.
- 6 Structural cut of the well.
- 7 Fill of well structural cut.
- 8 Robber cut.
- 9 Fill of robber cut.
- 10 Fill of well cut.
- 11 Sub soil.
- 12 Natural.

APPENDIX 2:**Maps consulted**

- 1771 Powis Castle Estate Map, "A plan of Coppice Farm".
- 1778 Powis Castle Estate Map, "Penthrin Farm and part of Penrhose Demesne Land"
- 1778 Powis Castle Estate Map, "Plan of Penrhose Demense and Penthrin Farm.
- 1792 Powis Castle Estate Map, "Chief Part of the parish of Llandrinio with some lands in the Manor of Streetmarshall".
- 1792 Powis Castle Estate Map, "Plan NoIV, Parish of Llandrinio".
- 1799 Apportionment Map, "Llandrinio, Llansantffraid Deuddwr".
- c.1800 Powis Castle Estate Map, "Lands in Llandrinio Parish near Penrhos Hall".
- 1802 Powis Castle Estate Map, "Lands near Penrhos belonging to John Owen".
- 1807 Powis Castle Estate Map, "Lands near Penrhos belonging to John Owen".
- 1840 Tithe Map for Llandrinio.
- 1868 "Plan of the Arddleen Estate, in the parishes of Llandrinio, and Guildsfield in the County of Montgomery belonging to the Rev W.C.E Kynaston".
- C19th "Sales particulars of properties at Arddleen, belonging to W.R.O Kynaston".

Ordnance Survey

- 1816 2" NO 199, "Part of Shropshire.
- 1830 NO 328, "The Meifod Plan".
- 1836 1" Engraving, Sheet 41.
- 1886 1st Edition 25", Montgomeryshire, Sheet XV1.1
- 1902 2nd Edition 25", Montgomeryshire, Sheet XV1.1
- 1902 2nd Edition 6", Montgomeryshire, Sheet XV1 NW

APPENDIX 3:**Aerial photographs considered**

- RAF CPE/UK/2492, FRAMES 4253 TO 4254, 11.3.1948.
- RAF 540/27 FRAME 5052, 16.5.1948.
- OS 81-008, FRAME 025, 15.4.1981

APPENDIX 4: Summary of finds

A. The pottery

FABRICS

Post-medieval fabrics:

BC (Bone China). Semi-porcelainous ware. 19th century.

BSW (Brown-glazed stonewares). Probably English. 19th century.

CW (Creamware). 19th century industrial ware with off-white creamy glaze.

LRE (Local red earthenware). Lead glazed redwares with large grit inclusions. 19th century.

CATALOGUE

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Context 1</i>	<i>Context 4</i>	<i>Context 9</i>	<i>Context 10</i>
BC	2 sherds	12 sherds		1 sherd
BSW		2 sherds		
CW		3 sherds		
LRE		7 sherds	1 sherd	
Misc (clay ball)		1		
Fire brick		2 fragments		

B. The ironwork

Context 4 - 1 strap hinge.

C. The Glass

Context 4 - 5 vessel fragments.

Context 1 - 1 bottle fragment, 1 window glass fragment.

D. Bone

Context 4 - 1 ? sheep bone.

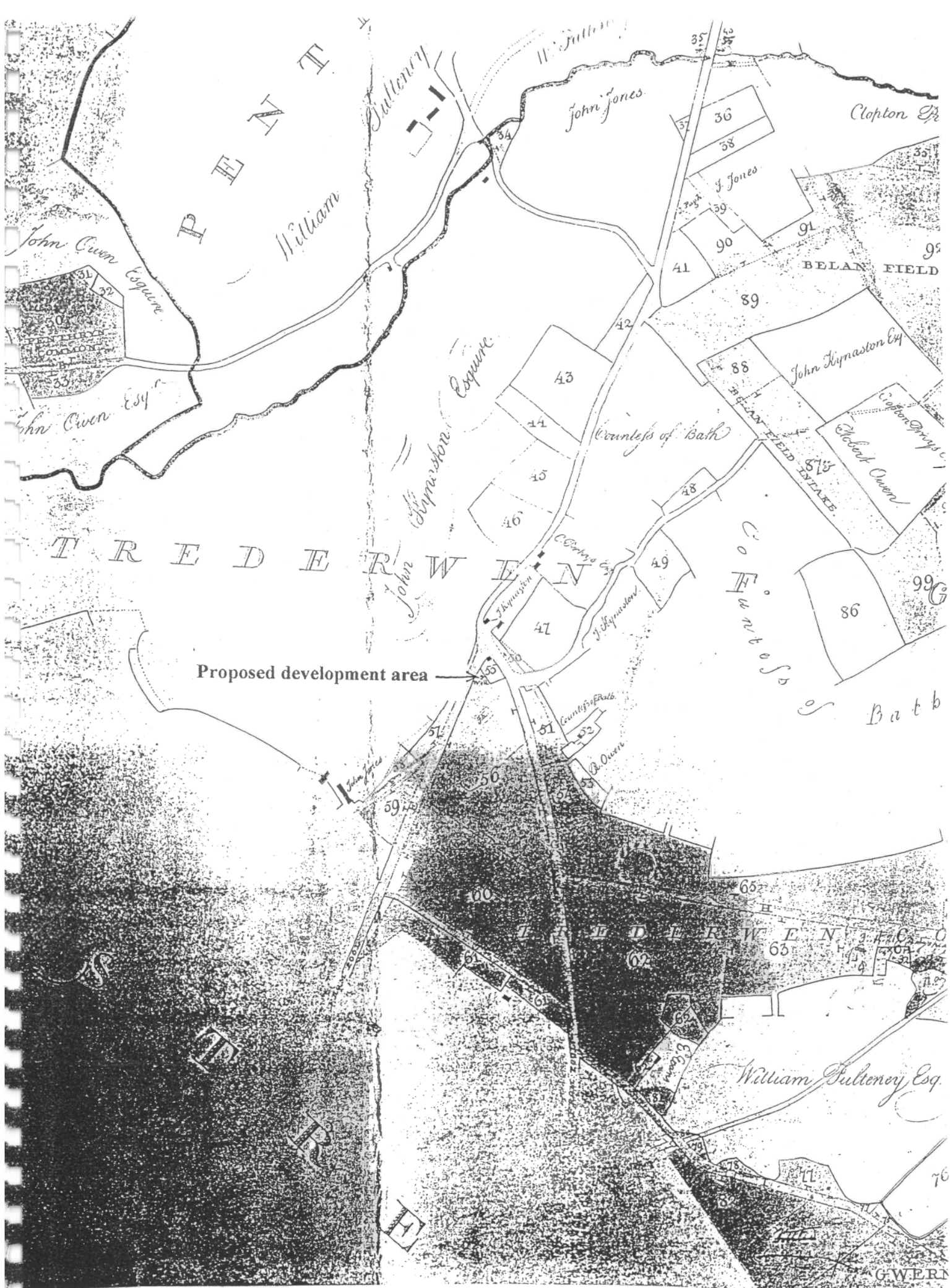


Fig. 3 Part of the Powis Estate Map (M42), c.1792

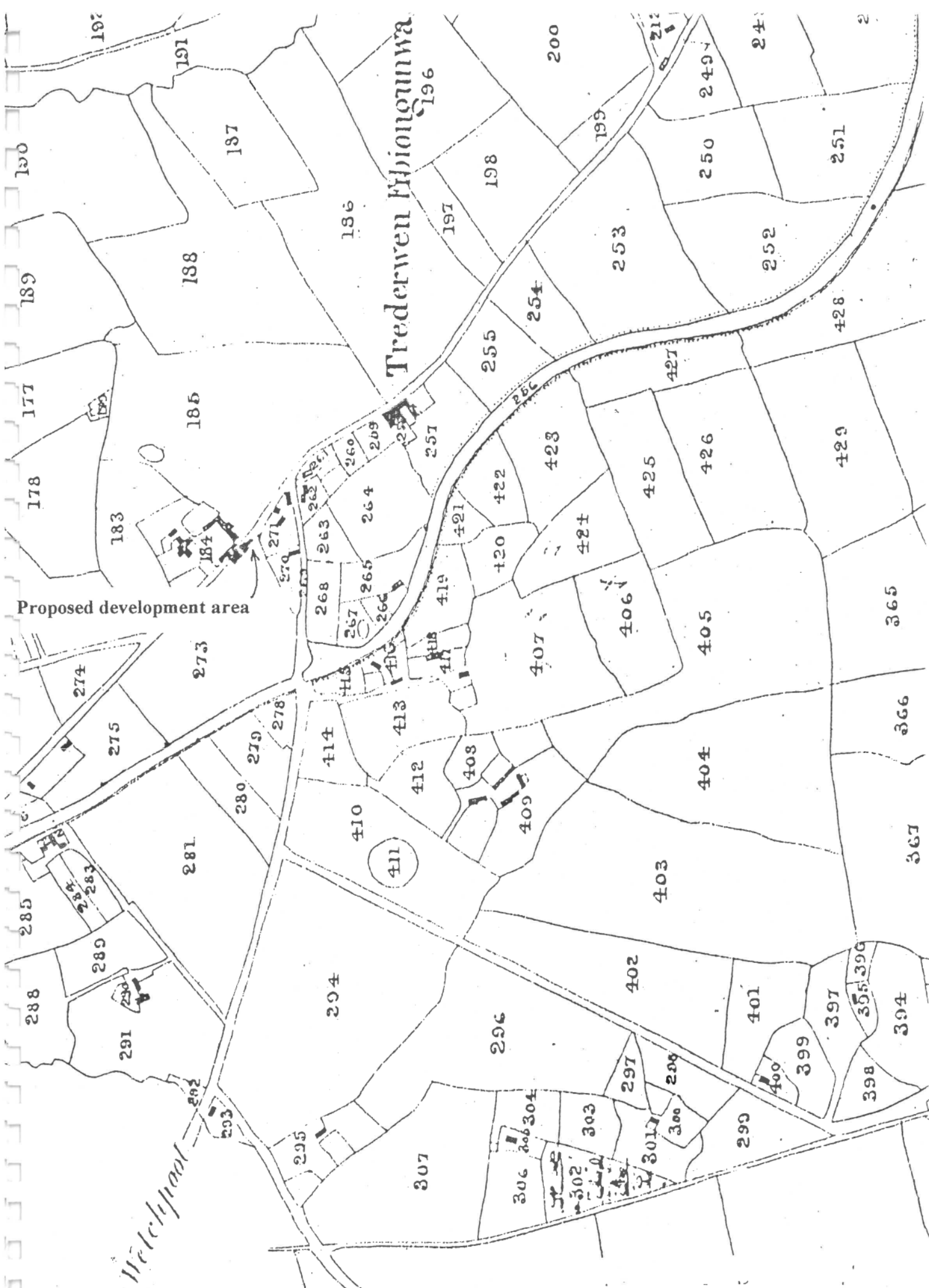


Fig. 4 Part of the 1840 Tithe Map of the parish of Llandrinio.

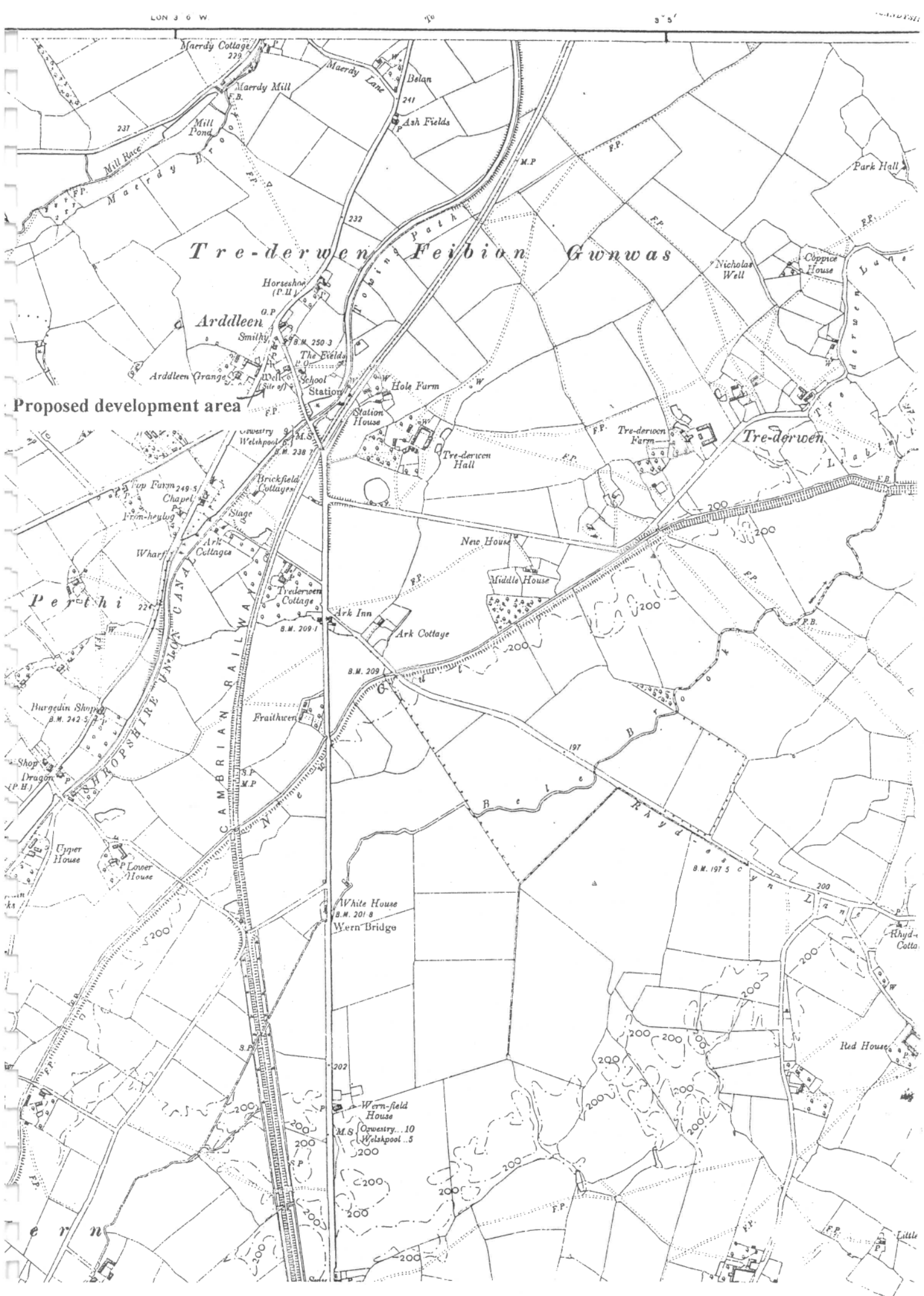
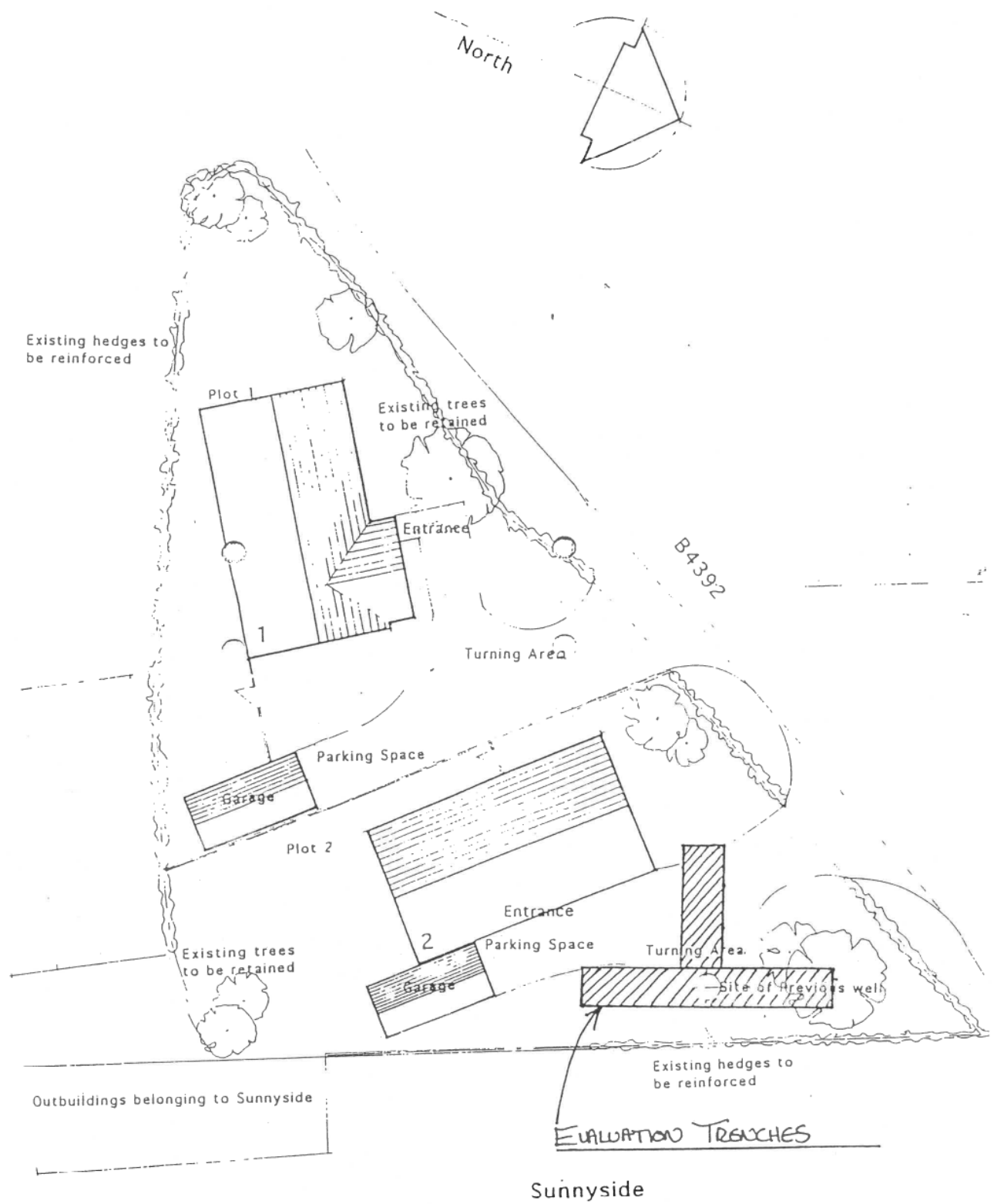


Fig. 5 Part of 1902 2nd Edition 6", Montgomeryshire, Sheet XV1 NW



Site Plan 1:200

Fig. 7 Plan showing the location of the evaluation trench.

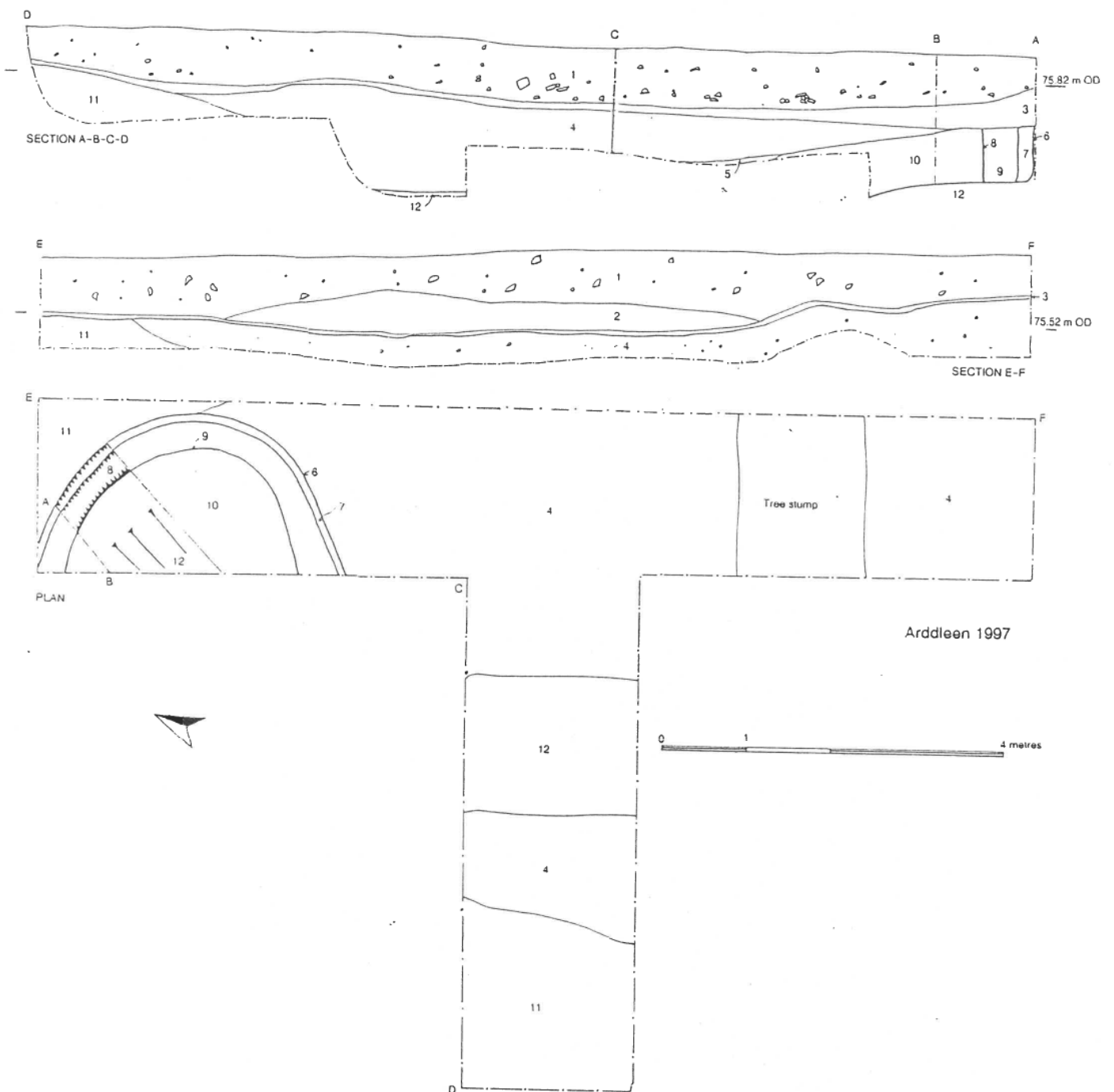


Fig . 8 Plan of the evaluation trench and sections.



**Plate 3 North-south arm of trench looking south
with well (unexcavated) in foreground. Scale 2m.**



Plate 4 Test trench through well. Scale 1m.