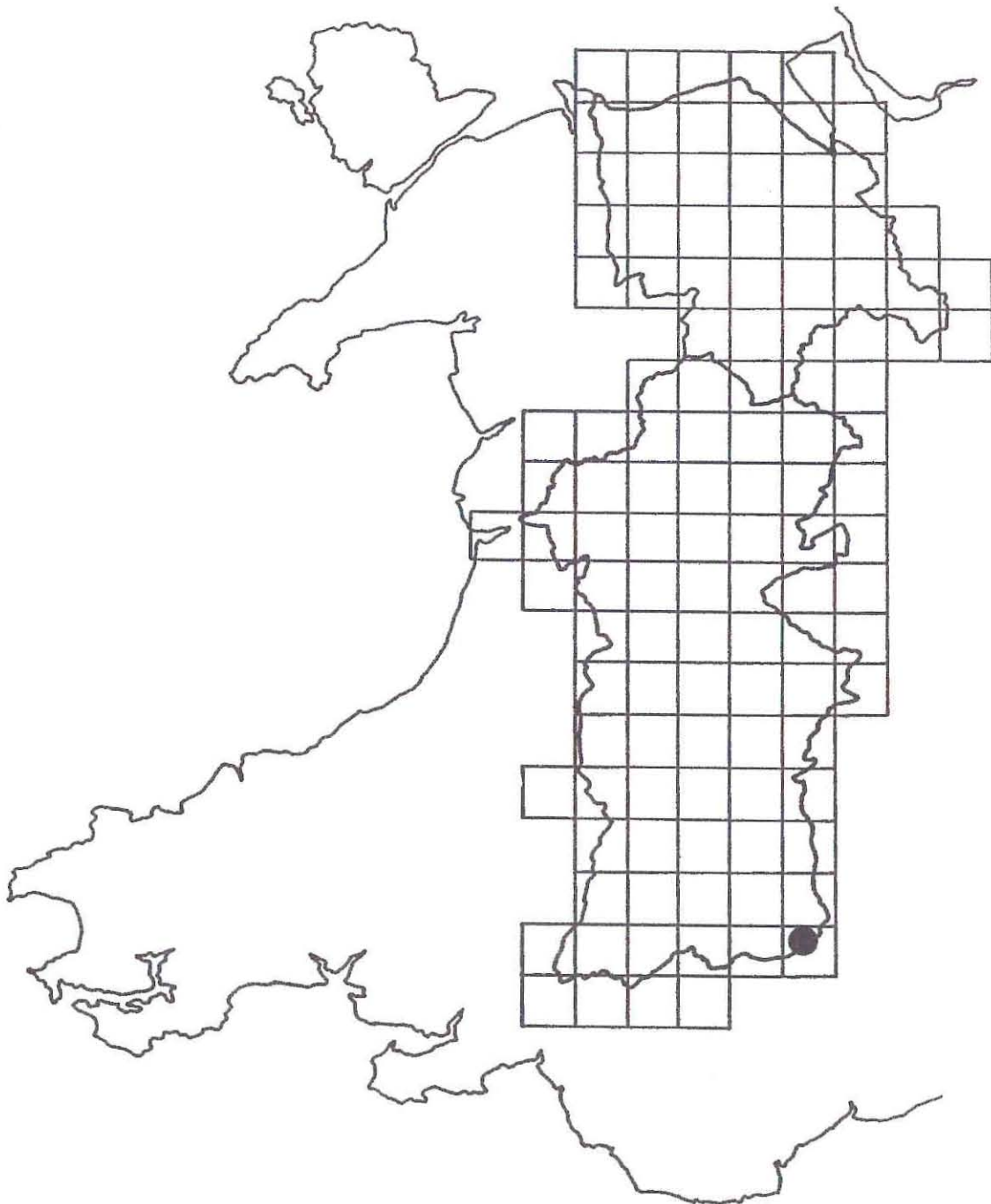


Beaufort Street, Crickhowell, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AUGUST 1994



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by **NW Jones**
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Report prepared for Brecknock Borough Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was invited in July 1994 by Brecknock Borough Council to prepare a specification and tender for an archaeological evaluation to determine the archaeological sensitivity of the proposed siting of a new sports pavilion on land off Beaufort Street, Crickhowell (Brecknockshire District Council planning application K13724).
- 1.2 This was in response to recommendations made by the Curatorial Section of CPAT, who maintain the County Sites and Monuments Record for Powys. Their brief (CPAT EVB 97) recommended the use of a limited trial excavation to identify a significant sample of the surviving archaeological evidence. An earthwork bank survives to the west of the cricket ground, and it was assumed that the proposed pavilion might lie just within, or on the outer perimeter of, an enclosure associated with the castle. Reports from earlier this century suggest that earthworks were disturbed during the construction of the cricket ground, which may have been the remains of timber ancillary buildings associated with the castle.
- 1.3 The castle itself was founded during the 11th or 12th centuries and subsequently declined following the attack by Glyndwr in 1403.

2 Location (Fig 1)

- 2.1 The proposed development lies c.120m to the SE of the castle, on the Recreation Ground adjacent to the cricket ground.

3 THE EVALUATION

- 3.1 The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust was commissioned to undertake the evaluation, which was carried out between August 1st and 4th 1994. In accordance with the evaluation brief (CPAT EVB 97), a single trial trench was excavated to determine the extent of the surviving archaeology and to evaluate the significance and likely dating of any features revealed (Fig 2). The trench was excavated initially by machine, with subsequent cleaning and investigation of features by hand. A full drawn, written and photographic record was maintained throughout the evaluation. The results from the excavations were as follows:
- 3.2 **Trench A** (15 x 2m with 4.6 x 2m extension. Fig 3). Numbers in brackets refer to Figures 3 and 4.
 - 3.2.1 The trench was located entirely within the area of the proposed sports pavilion, with the long axis parallel to the boundary with the cricket ground. The specifications laid down in the evaluation brief were modified slightly, with the consent of the Curator, to avoid disturbance to a tarmac path.
 - 3.2.2 A machine was used to remove c.0.3m of topsoil (1), which revealed a layer of red-brown, firm, sandy loam (2). On investigation, this proved to contain pottery of 18th century date, and was also removed by machine onto the surface of the natural subsoil. No features were evident cutting through layer 2, which was up to c.0.4m thick.
 - 3.2.3 Cleaning the surface of the natural revealed a single feature, a

ditch (3), aligned roughly north-south in the eastern extension of the trench. Excavation revealed the ditch to be c.1.6m wide and up to 0.65m deep, with sloping sides and a roughly flat base (Fig 3). Along the western side of the base was a small gully c.0.25m wide and up to c.0.12m deep. The ditch was filled by a single layer of firm red-brown sandy loam (4) with occasional mostly rounded stones up to c.30cm across. The stones were concentrated largely along the western side of the ditch, and within the shallow basal gully. The most likely interpretation would seem to be that of a boundary ditch, originally with a bank on the western side which may have been topped by a wall, accounting for the concentration of stones which could have tumbled from it into the ditch. No dating evidence was recovered from the fill, and there was no clearly defined relationship with layer 2 as both had a similar matrix, the only difference being the amount of stone present within the fill.

- 3.2.4 The evaluation was monitored by Mr P.Dorling, the archaeologist for the Brecon Beacons National Park, on behalf of The Curatorial Section Of CPAT.

4 THE FINDS

- 4.1 The excavation produced a total of 20 sherds of post-medieval pottery, of likely 18th-century date, together with two fragments of clay pipe bowls, all from layer 2. A small sharpening stone with a slightly smoothed surface and several grooves was recovered from the fill of ditch 3.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The results from the evaluation provided no evidence for occupation on the site. The only feature revealed was a probable boundary ditch which remained undated. Artifacts recovered from layer 2 would suggest that this was a post-medieval cultivation deposit, or buried ploughsoil.
- 5.2 An unprovenanced map of Crickhowell dated 1760, a copy of which was obtained from Mr Louis Hurley of the Crickhowell Civic Society, shows a field boundary in approximately the same position and alignment as ditch 3.

Appendix 1

LAND OFF BEAUFORT STREET, CRICKHOWELL, POWYS SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

1.1 It is proposed by Brecknock Borough Council to erect a new sports pavilion on land to the south of Beaufort Street in Crickhowell to serve the adjacent sports pitches. This site is close to the surviving earthworks and masonry structures of Crickhowell Castle and it is possible that originally either the castle or any extra-mural settlement associated with it may have extended into the area of the development.

1.2 The Brecon Beacons National Park have decided on the advice of their own archaeological officer and the Curatorial Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) that an evaluation is necessary to assess the implications of the proposal on the archaeological resource in order that these can be taken into account during the determination of the planning application. Accordingly a brief (CPAT EVB 97) has been prepared by the Curatorial Section of CPAT on behalf of the Brecon Beacons National Park which describes the scheme of archaeological works required.

2 Objectives

2.1 The objectives of the evaluation are:

2.1.1 to reveal by means of two carefully located excavation trenches, the nature, significance and, where possible, the chronology of the archaeology within the area of the proposed development in so far as these are possible;

2.1.2 to record any archaeology so revealed;

2.1.3 to prepare a report outlining the results of the evaluation and incorporating sufficient information on the archaeological resource for the planning authority to assess the implications of the development.

3 Methods

3.1 The evaluation will take the form of a T-shaped trench, one arm of which will be 15m x 2m, the other 6m x 2m, as specified in the evaluation brief. The trench will have the topsoil and any modern overburden removed mechanically, with this phase of the work being supervised closely by the archaeological team leader. This will be followed by manual excavation of all areas deemed to be of potential archaeological significance within the trench. All features encountered will be examined as fully as appropriate within the constraints imposed by time and safety considerations.

3.2 The excavation will be undertaken using standard evaluation procedures:

3.2.1 removal of modern overburden and sterile lower levels

3.2.2 evaluation of the archaeological deposits by hand trowelling to establish their importance and integrity, but avoiding any unnecessary disturbance of the deposits.

3.2.3 all archaeological contexts recorded using the standard numbered context system employed by CPAT. All significant contexts to be planned and/or drawn in section at appropriate scales (as defined in the Evaluation Brief), and photographed in monochrome and colour. All drawn records will be related to control points depicted on modern maps.

3.2.4 all archaeological artefacts and environmental samples recorded and processed in a manner appropriate to the material involved. Those requiring conservation or other specialist treatment will be stored in a stable environment until such times as they can be examined by a specialist. All finds, except those deemed to be Treasure Trove, are the property of the landowner. It is anticipated that they will be donated to an appropriate museum, subject to agreement being reached with the landowner and the museum curator.

3.3 Following the on-site work a report will be prepared according to the principles laid out in the Evaluation Brief.

3.4 The site archive will be prepared to specifications laid out in Appendix 3 in the Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991), to be deposited in the Powys County Sites and Monuments Record.

4 Resources and Programming

4.1 The evaluation will be undertaken by a small team of skilled archaeologists under the direct supervision of CPAT's Projects Officer who is an experienced field archaeologist. Overall supervision will be by the Deputy Director of CPAT. Both are members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

4.2 All report preparation will be completed by the Projects Officer.

4.3 It is anticipated that the evaluation will take up to five days and the subsequent report would be prepared immediately thereafter and submitted to the client within 15 working days of the completion of the fieldwork. This will be dependent on the client's instructions and the arrangement of a suitable timetable. The date of commencement, at the time of writing, has yet to be finalised.

4.4 Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.

4.5 CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance.

R. J. Silvester
26 July 1994

Appendix 2

EXCAVATION ARCHIVE

SITE CODE: CH94

4 Context Records
2 A4 plans
1 Black and white film with contact sheets and record cards
18 colour slides
Photographic catalogue
Correspondence

The Finds:

20 sherds of post-medieval pottery from layer 2
2 fragments of clay pipe from layer 2
1 sharpening stone from fill of ditch 3



Fig 1: Location 1:2000

Fence

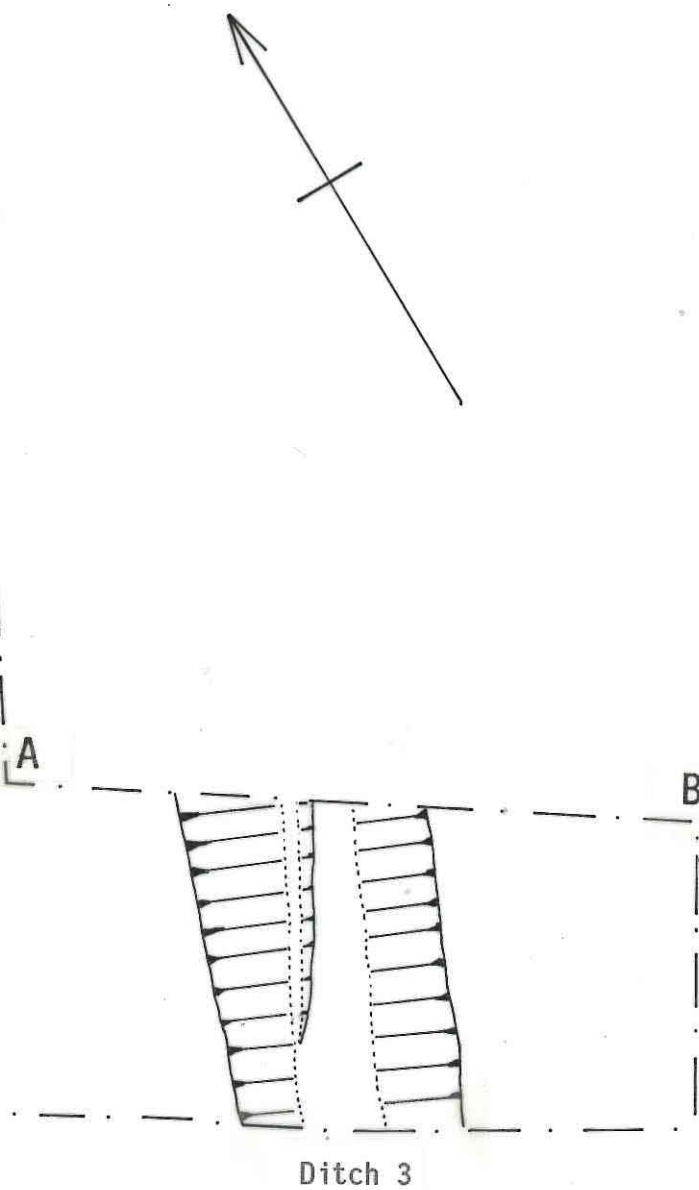


Fig 2: Trench A

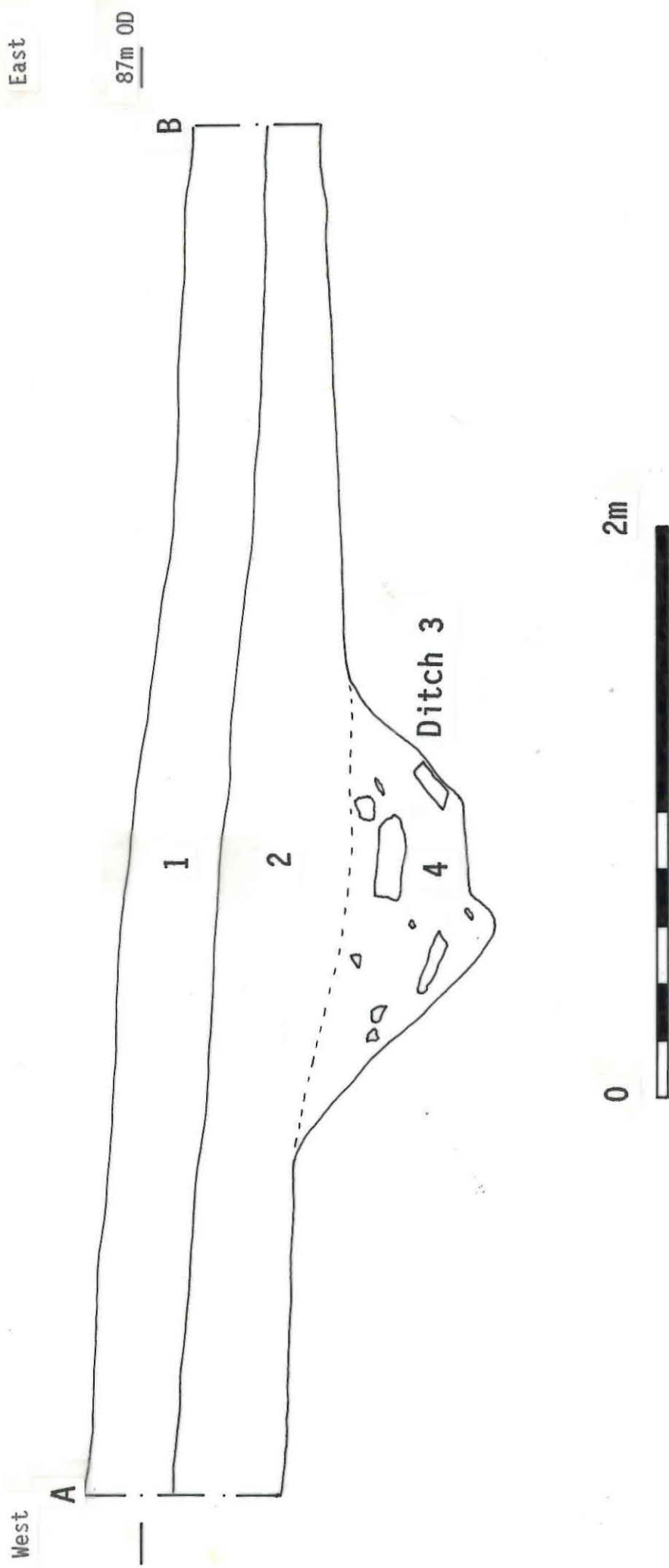


Fig 3: Section A-B