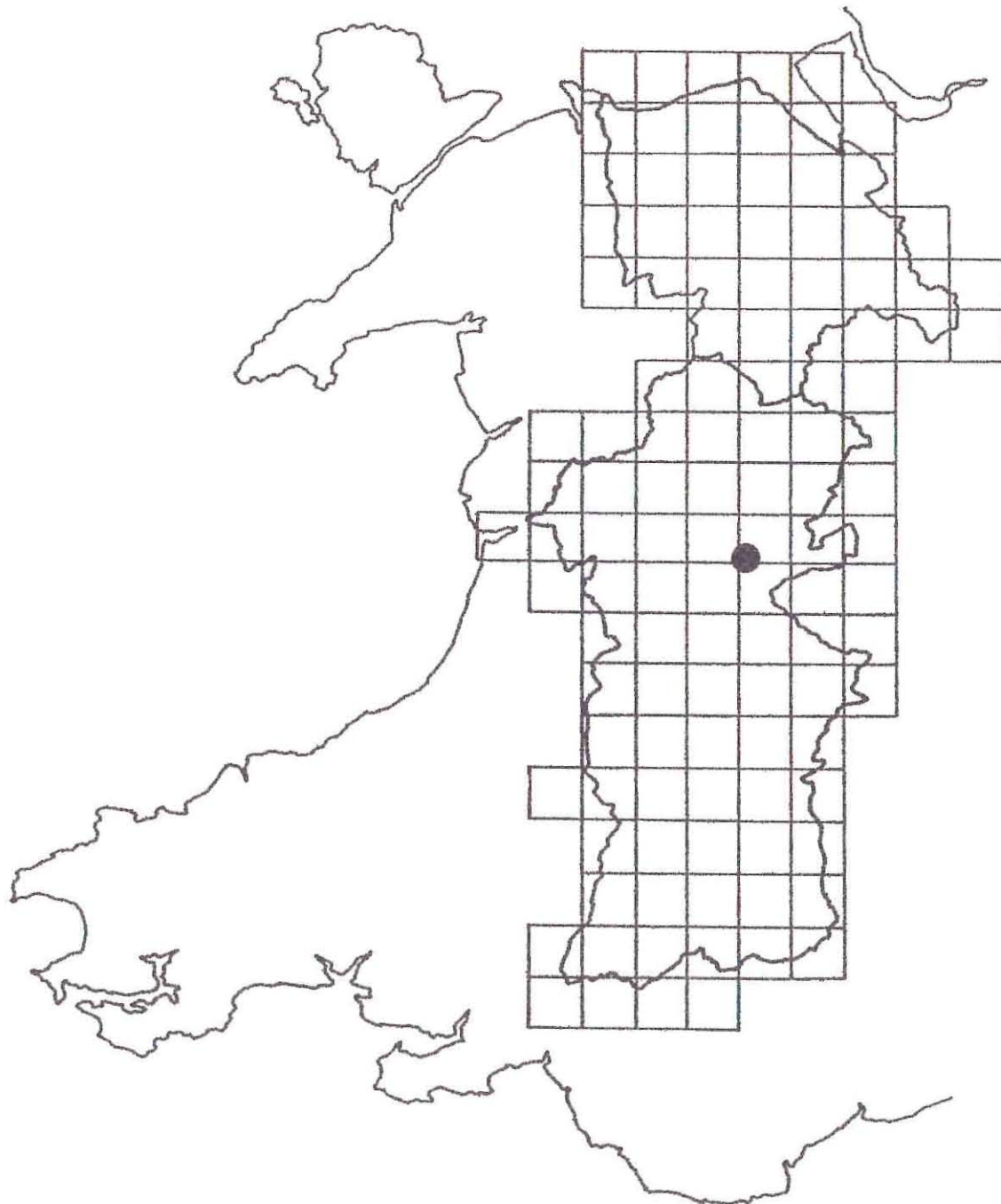


THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Carno-Newtown 132kV Overhead Powerline
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AND WATCHING BRIEFS



CPAT Report No 195

Carno-Newtown 132kV Overhead Powerline

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AND WATCHING BRIEFS

by **N.W. Jones**

September 1996

Report prepared for Manweb plc

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

7a Church Street Welshpool Powys SY21 7DL

tel (01938) 553670, fax 552179

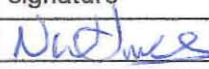
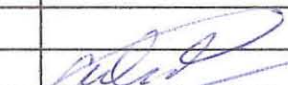
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The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

7a Church Street Welshpool Powys SY21 7DL

tel (01938) 553670, fax 552179

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Fig. 1 Site Locations

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 1996 the Contracting Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) undertook a desk-top and fieldwalked assessment of a proposed overhead electricity transmission line running between Parc y Sarn, west of Carno (SN 9450 9640) and Cil Gwrgan Farm, Aberbechan (SO 1480 9365), in Powys.
- 1.2 The results of the assessment were presented in a report (Hankinson 1996) which made several recommendations regarding the preferred archaeological response for a number of sites along the route of the powerline. Following discussions with Peter Holmes, Wayleaves Officer for Manweb, the position of several of the poles was amended to take account of the archaeology and consequently no further response was required.
- 1.3 The present report details the findings of a series of works undertaken as small scale evaluations prior to the commencement of the scheme and also of several watching briefs which were carried out during excavations for the erection of poles.

2 EXCAVATIONS

PRN 1778 SN 9530 9795

- 2.1 A 2.0 x 0.5 trench was excavated on 20th May 1996 some 10m north-east and downslope of the earthwork bank which forms a part of a putative enclosure which has been suggested to be of Roman origin. At this position it was possible that features consistent with an external ditch would be exposed. Removal of the brown topsoil which extended to a maximum depth of 0.35m exposed a stiff buff-yellow coloured silty clay which was apparently undisturbed. At this depth no features of archaeological interest were exposed. The trench was excavated further to a depth of 0.55m but with negative results. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

PRN 1041 Aberbechan Dyke (SO 12809464)

- 2.2 A 3.0m x 0.5m trench was excavated on 20th May 1996 at the above position which was approximately 20m south-west of the southernmost visible part of the scheduled Aberbechan Dyke (Mg 061) and immediately outside the scheduled area. Removal of the mid-brown coloured topsoil which extended to a maximum depth of 0.40m exposed a grey silty clay with orange pan lines and manganese streaks and concretions in it and containing in the southern half of the trench waterwashed pebbles. This layer extended to the base of the trench at a depth of 0.56m. The exposed subsoil at this depth revealed no features which would have been consistent with a southern extension of the dyke at this point. No finds of archaeological significance were found.

3 WATCHING BRIEFS

CN12 Aberbechan Leat, Pole 181 (SO 12409466)

- 3.1 Although a watching brief was arranged during the machine excavation for a new supply pole, when CPAT were called out to undertake the work it was discovered that the relevant pole had already been erected. However, since the pole was positioned alongside the leat there was only minimal disturbance of the archaeology.

Roman Road RR64, Pole 190 (SO 14929359)

- 3.2 A watching brief was maintained on 28th May 1996 during the mechanical excavations for a supply pole alongside the A483. The pole was located within the field immediately against the roadside hedge. The post pit was excavated to a depth of 2.5m. A layer of gravel metalling was noted in the eastern (road-side) section, sealed beneath c. 1.0m of topsoil. There appeared to be two or three layers visible within the metalling, possibly representing different surfaces. The metalling extended for a thickness of between 0.3 and 0.4m, beneath which was clean, sterile clay. In the south section the metalling

extended for 1.5m from the eastern end of the trench, thinning out to the west. This was also noted in the northern section, although the metalling extended for only 0.75m from the eastern end.

- 3.3 This metallised surface would be consistent with the construction which might be expected for a Roman road and may therefore provide supporting evidence for the existence and location of Roman Road RR64. There was no evidence for an accompanying ditch.

Roman Road RR643, Pole 22 (SN 95259793)

- 3.4 A watching brief was maintained during the machine excavation of a trench 2.9 x 0.8m for the erection of a new supply pole on 9th July 1996. The trench was excavated under supervision, removing up to 0.2m of topsoil, beneath which was a layer of yellow brown clay with small stones at the NE end of the trench. This layer had been cut by a large pit extending beyond the limit to the SW, and containing large stones and some brick. The clay layer was excavated to a thickness of 0.6m, revealing a compacted stone surface composed of small river gravel in a clay-silt matrix. The layer extended the width of the trench and for 1.2m from the NW end until it was cut by the large pit. This layer, which was up to 0.2m thick, was consistent with the construction for a Roman road, and appeared to have been laid directly on the natural river gravels which extended to the base of the trench at 2.5m.

- 3.5 The results of the watching brief would therefore appear to have confirmed the existence of Roman road RR643 running along the SW side, and possibly extending underneath, the present A470. The location of this road may add further weight to the suggestion of a Roman fort (PRN 1778) immediately to the NW.

PRN 1424 Craigfryn Cropmark, Pole 27 (SN 95779823)

- 3.6 A watching brief on Pole 27, located within an area of quarrying, was not conducted since the area had recently been infilled and the pole erected in this material.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The results from two of the watching briefs would appear to confirm the existence of two sections of hitherto putative Roman Road. The section at Carno has some implications for the significance of the suggested Roman Fort (PRN 1778) which lies immediately to the north-west. However, trial excavations on the line of the supposed defences failed to identify any features of archaeological significance.
- 4.2 The excavations conducted at the Aberbechan Dyke failed to identify any features consistent with a southerly extension of the Dyke at that point.

5 REFERENCES

Hankinson, R., 1996 *Proposed Carno-Newtown 132kV Overhead Powerline: Archaeological Assessment*, CPAT Report No 170.

