

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

# Relaying of Two Greens at Llanymynech Golf Club, Shropshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



CPAT Report No 457

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# Relaying of the 2nd Green at Llanymynech Golf Club, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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January 2002

Report for Llanymynech Golf Club

**The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust**

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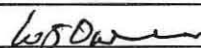

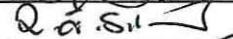
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## CPAT Report Record

### Report and status

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## **CONTENTS**

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY
- 3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
- 4 WATCHING BRIEF
- 5 CONCLUSIONS
- 6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
- 7 REFERENCES

## **APPENDIX 1 SPECIFICATION**

## **ILLUSTRATIONS**

Fig. 1 Location, 1:2,500



## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Recent groundworks at Llanymynech Golf Club involved the relaying of the 2nd green to improve the drainage. The green lies within the area of Llanymynech Hillfort, scheduled as a monument of national importance (SAM Mg 30). The works form part of an on-going scheme to improve the drainage on the greens, under which a number greens have so far been re-laid under archaeological supervision.
- 1.2 The Inspectorate of Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, in their capacity as archaeological advisers to the National Assembly for Wales, had determined that an archaeological watching brief was necessary to record any archaeological features or finds revealed during the course of the works. The Committee of the Llanymynech Golf Club invited the Contracts Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust to undertake the watching brief.

## 2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 Geologically, Llanymynech Hill marks the southernmost point of a band of Lower Carboniferous Limestone which extends south from the North Wales coast at Prestatyn. Outcrops of this formation are visible throughout the hillfort. In places the limestone is altered to dolomite with mudstone bands, and both lead and copper ores, with cerussite and malachite as secondary oxidation products, occur in a lode which strikes north-north-east from underground workings known as the Ogof Mine at SJ2660 2222. Soils in lower-lying areas and on terraces between outcrops characteristically overlie drift derived from Palaeozoic sandstone and mudstone (Rudeforth *et al*, 1984).

## 3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Llanymynech hillfort lies on a prominent outcrop of carboniferous limestone on the western edge of the Shropshire Plain overlooking the confluence of the Vyrnwy, Tanat and Cain Rivers to the south-west and the Severn Valley to the south-east. The three-kilometre circuit of the ramparts encloses an area of approximately 57 ha, making it one of the largest hillforts in England and Wales. Although the majority of the hillfort lies within Wales, the English border follows the line of the defences on the eastern side, with the north-east defences lying across the border in Shropshire.
- 3.2 Llanymynech Hill has a long history of copper and lead mining dating back to at least the Roman period (Walters 1994). Quarrying of exposed limestone outcrops has also occurred no doubt over long periods, though precise definition is impossible.
- 3.3 Archaeological investigation of the hillfort has so far been rather limited. In 1981 a section through the ramparts was recorded during the laying of a pipe trench adjacent to the approach road to the golf-course, which revealed the stone rampart and ditch of the inner defences, and metalworking debris behind the rampart. Radiocarbon dating of charcoal associated with two separate pits showed that the metalworking was probably undertaken during the period from the 4th century BC to the 1st century AD (Musson 1981; Musson and Northover 1989, 20).
- 3.4 Apart from the study of peat deposits in a pond (at SJ 269221; Martin 1992), the interior of the fort has been the subject of a number of small-scale evaluations in recent years, conducted in connection with applications for scheduled monument consent. An evaluation close to the clubhouse in 1995 revealed no structural evidence of prehistoric occupation, but did recover sherds of Iron Age pottery, metalworking debris and calcined bone from a possible old ground surface (Thomas 1995). Further investigation within the same area in 1997 (Owen 1997) exposed several features of likely Iron Age date, including the inhumation of a small child which was radiocarbon dated to between 770 BC and 370 BC (Owen 1997).
- 3.5 A small-scale excavation undertaken within the area of the 13th Green during October 1999 revealed important evidence for occupation within the hillfort. This included part of a drainage gully for a round hut, together with associated pits or postholes. There was also evidence of prehistoric metalworking, with fragments of furnace lining and part of a crucible, together with metallurgical residues, demonstrating that copper smelting took place somewhere in the immediate area (Owen 1999).



#### 4 WATCHING BRIEF (Fig. 1)

- 4.1 The archaeological watching brief was carried out on 14 January 2002. A full written and photographic record was maintained throughout. The green is located in the north-eastern part of the course on a low ridge with slopes falling away on all sides. The border with England lies some 35m to the east.
- 4.2 Approximately 630m<sup>2</sup> of turf, c. 2.5cm thick, was mechanically stripped, exposing a layer of sand and peaty loam (1), c. 20cm thick, forming the sub-surface make-up of the green. This was removed by machine (plate 1) under archaeological supervision to reveal a compacted greyish-brown clay loam (2) which contained modern material such as plastic sheet strips and brick fragments, indicating that this soil was imported to level-up the green. Limited investigation indicated that this layer was up to 25cm thick towards the centre of the green and that it overlay an orange-brown sandy loam, probably a buried natural horizon. The only archaeological feature that was revealed consisted of a drainage gully (3) cut through the modern levelling material (2) (plate 2). Finds were limited to the modern material noted above.
- 4.3 The new make-up for the green consisted of a layer of stone chippings ranging from 5 to 10cm in diameter, beneath a layer of sand and loam which formed the base for the new green, the intention being to raise the general level and improve the drainage.

#### 5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The watching brief showed that the general make-up for the green consisted of a layer of sand and peat, lying above a layer of clay loam which had been deposited to level up the area prior to the construction of the green. The continual process of top-dressing had subsequently deposited a layer of sandy loam immediately beneath the turf which formed the base for the turf layer itself.
- 5.2 The stripping of the turf and the mechanical removal of the turf make-up did not extend beneath the modern sand and peat base of the greens. Consequently, no archaeological deposits were disturbed and no artefacts were recovered during the course of the work. The original levelling material and the recent raising of the general level of the green is likely to have enhanced the protection of any buried archaeological deposits.

#### 6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Mr David Thomas, the Club Secretary and to Mr Alan Lewis and the ground staff of Llanymynech Golf Club for their assistance and co-operation.

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**APPENDIX 1: SPECIFICATION****LLANYMYNECH GOLF CLUB GREENS  
SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST****1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The proposed works involve the removal and re-laying of turf on a number of greens at Llanymynech Golf Course. The area lies within Llanymynech hillfort, a site scheduled as an archaeological monument of national importance which straddles the English/Welsh border.
- 1.2 The proposed works form part of an on-going scheme to improve the drainage on the greens, under which a number of greens have so far been re-laid. The previous works were undertaken according to Scheduled Monument Consent granted by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the National Assembly for Wales. A condition of consent was for an archaeological watching brief to be maintained during groundworks, this in each case being undertaken by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT).
- 1.3 CPAT has again been approached by Llanymynech Golf Club to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the remainder of the proposed groundworks within the Welsh section of the hillfort, in accordance with Scheduled Monument Consent granted by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments.

**2 Objectives**

- 2.1 The objectives of the watching brief are:
- 2.2 to undertake a watching brief on all groundworks within the scheduled area relating to the proposed removal and relaying of turf on a number of greens, and to record any archaeological features revealed;
- 2.3 to prepare a report outlining the results of the watching brief.

**3 Methods**

- 3.1 A watching brief will be maintained to monitor all related groundworks. All archaeological contexts will be recorded using the standard numbered context system employed by CPAT. All significant contexts to be planned and/or drawn in section as appropriate, and photographed in 35mm format black and white negative and colour slide. All drawn records will be related to control points depicted on modern maps where possible.
- 3.2 All archaeological artefacts and environmental samples will be 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 the appropriate local or regional museum, subject to agreement being reached with the landowner and the museum curator.
- 3.3 Following the on-site work an illustrated and bound report will be prepared. This will be in A4 format and contain conventional sections on: Site location, Topography and Geology; Historic Background; Catalogue of sites identified with notes on their condition and significance, Conclusions and Recommendations and References, together with appropriate appendices on archives and finds.



Further publication of the results in an appropriate regional or national journal will be undertaken at a later date and as considered appropriate depending on the nature of the findings.

- 3.4 The site archive will be prepared to specifications laid out in Appendix 3 in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991).

#### **4 Resources and Programming**

- 4.1 The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled and experienced archaeologist. Overall supervision will be by Mr R.J. Silvester, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 4.2 All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist who conducted the watching brief.
- 4.3 The duration of the watching brief will depend entirely on the developers programme of work. The subsequent report will be prepared immediately following completion of on-site recording, 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 agreed with the client, and will be dependent on the state of the site and negotiated access. Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments should be informed of the detailed timetable by the client in advance of works being undertaken.
- 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.
- 4.6 CPAT is an IFA Registered Organisation and undertakes to abide by the *IFA Code of Conduct*.

N.W. Jones  
Senior Project Archaeologist  
13th July 2001



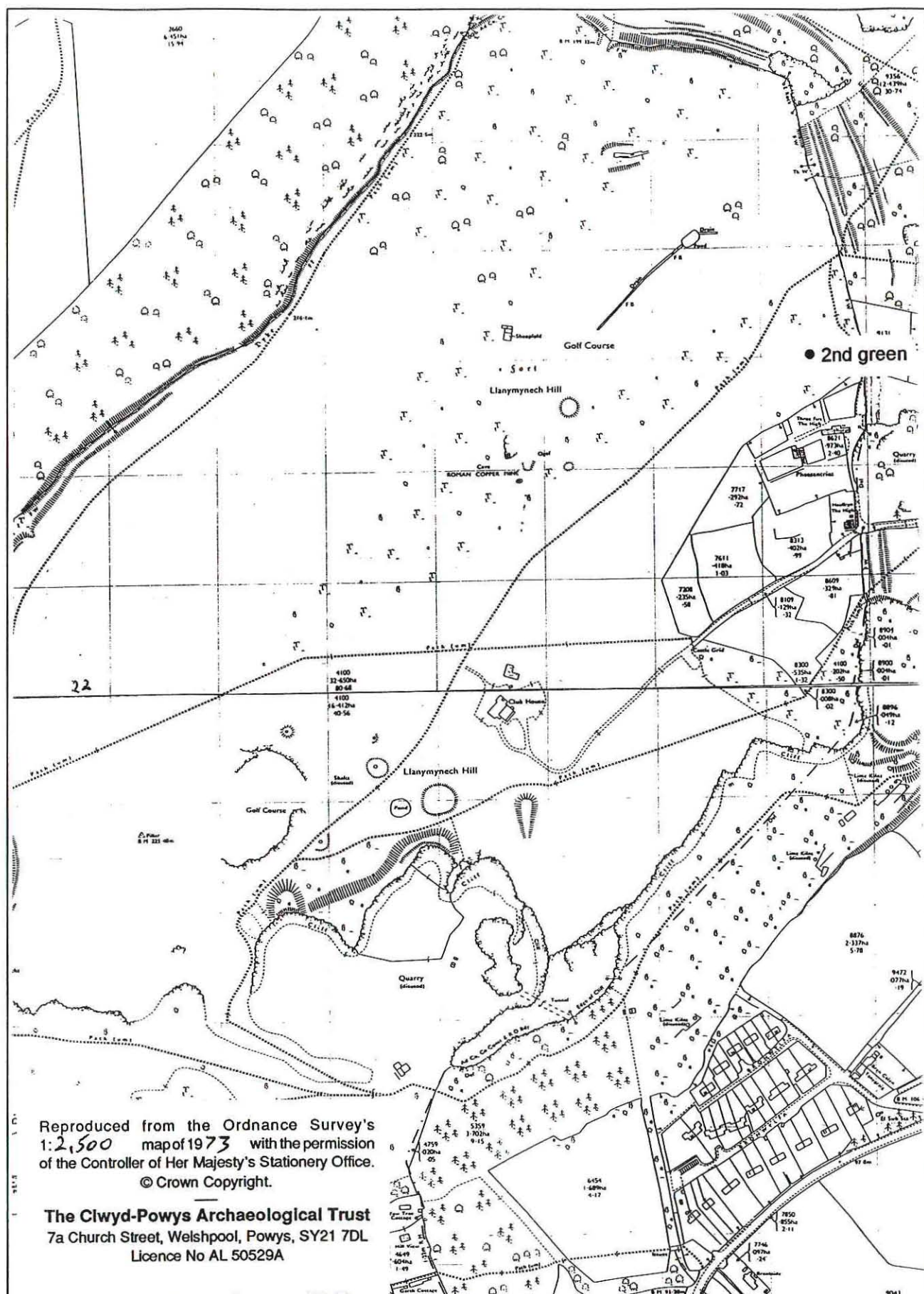


Fig. 1 Location of 2nd Green, 1:5000





Plate 1 Mechanical stripping of sand/peat make-up (1). Photo CPAT 1134. 24



Plate 2 Drainage gully (3) and modern levelling (2) after removal of sand/peat (1). Photo CPAT 1134.23