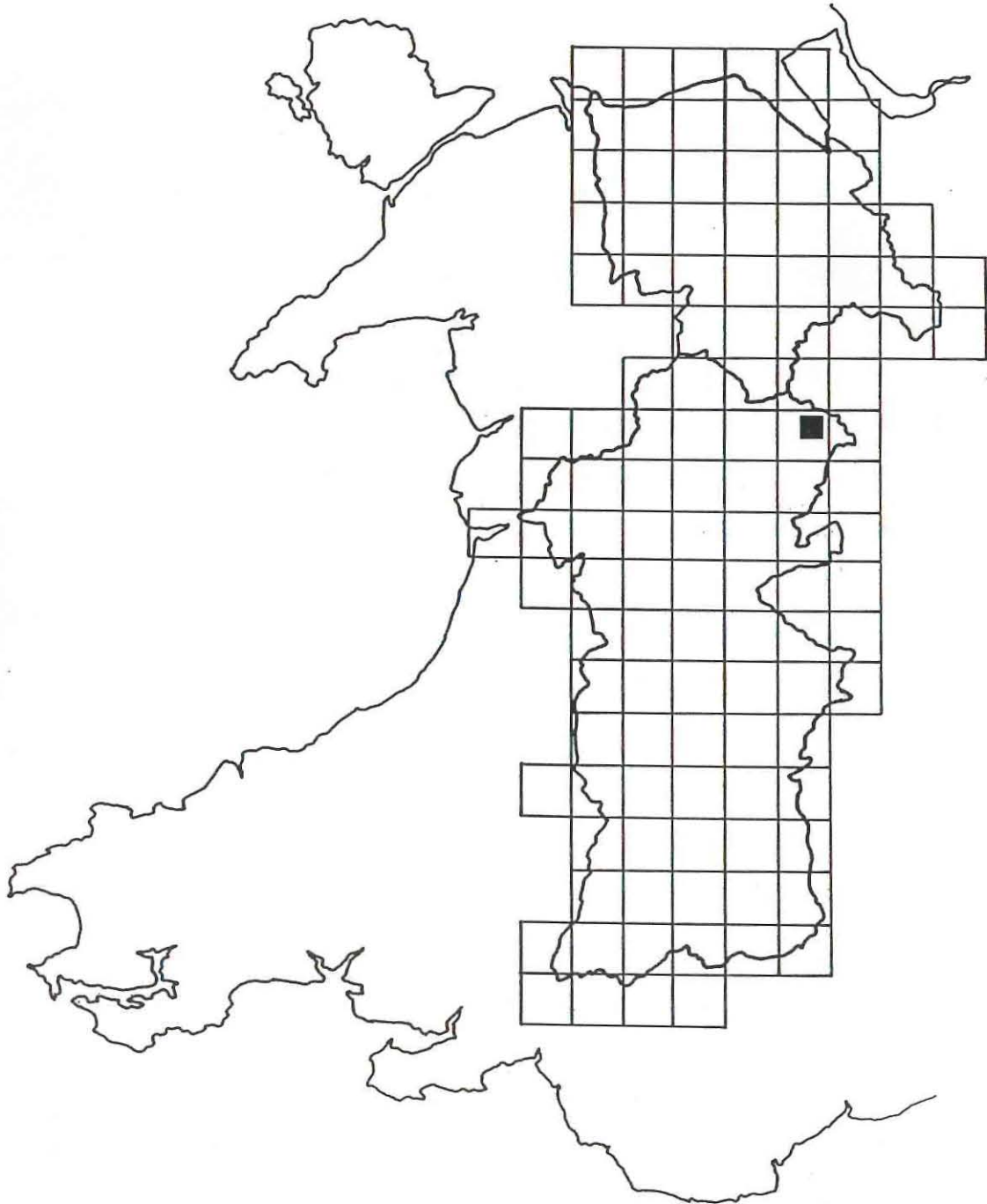


THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

*The Fortex Environmental Assessment*  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



CPAT Report No 50

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

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Report prepared for Cobham Resource Consultants

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## **1 Introduction**

1.1 In January 1993 the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was commissioned by Cobham Resource Consultants (CRC) of Abingdon, Oxfordshire to carry out an archaeological desktop assessment of the area around Penthryn Fach, Llandrinio, Powys (Fig 1) which could be incorporated into an Environmental Statement on behalf of Fortex.

1.2 The assessment was carried out in the middle of February and this report was prepared immediately afterwards.

## **2 Approach**

2.1 The assessment was compiled using existing data in the Powys Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), and by consulting historic maps of the area including earlier large-scale Ordnance Survey maps, the Tithe Map of 1841, an estate map of c1792 and such secondary written sources as were considered relevant. At this stage of the development, fieldwork was not considered to be appropriate.

## **3 Topography, Land Use and Soils**

3.1 The assessment area which covers an area of approximately 52ha of mixed arable and pasture is situated in the Upper Severn floodplain. The land is bisected by the Maerdy Brook which flows in an easterly direction and which joins the Severn at a point approximately 0.5km to the south-east.

3.2 Soils fall into two main groups. Predominating on the slightly lower lying eastern half of the area are stagnogley loams and fine silts of the Cegin series whilst the western half is dominated by brown earths of the Denbigh/Sannan series. Bisecting both types from east to west is a narrow tongue of alluvial gley soil of the Conway series related to the course of the Maerdy Brook.

## **4 Archaeology (Figs 2 and 3)**

4.1 The Llandrinio district, particularly north of Domgay Lane, Four Crosses, is notable for the high concentration of cropmark of archaeological sites that have been discovered by means of aerial photography. These predominate in areas of free-draining soils overlying gravels and gravelly silts where the potential soil moisture deficit is highest. Where the underlying drift is deeper and less permeable the incidence of cropmarks is lower. This tendency holds true for known cropmark sites around and within the assessment area for they occur only in the more freely-draining soils of the Denbigh/Sannan series in the western half of the area.



4.2 A group of four ring-ditches (Fig 2) which, characteristically, are of prehistoric, probably Bronze Age, origin and were probably used for burial and ritual purposes have been recorded in the area to the west and north-west of Penthryn-fach. These are listed as Powys Archaeological Record (PAR) nos 3606, 4625, 4626 and 5257.

4.2.1 One of the four falls within the proposed development area:

PAR 4626 SJ 2672 1690. Ring ditch, <30m in diameter, partly destroyed by railway cutting, now infilled.

4.2.2 It should be noted that other sites of similar or allied type and hitherto unrecognised may be present in areas within the eastern half of the area where soils are less conducive to cropmark formation.

4.3 Various field patterns are detectable within the development area, some of which may represent medieval survivals. In 1792 narrow strips known as quilleys (PAR 7769), which in the medieval period probably covered large tracts of the Severn valley floor, still existed here, notably in the modern field OS 0649. Some of the present straight or slightly curving field boundaries may represent fossilised quillet boundaries. More irregular boundaries such as that edging the east side of field OS 2247 hint at enclosures carved out of the large fields, perhaps in the late medieval or early post-medieval period.

4.4 Several buildings, some now demolished, are recorded on the estate map of c.1792. No building recording work has been carried out in the development area as far as can be ascertained. Consequently it is not possible to determine the age of the remaining standing buildings.

PAR 7764	SJ 2683 1698	?Barn, now demolished.
PAR 7765	SJ 2700 1710	Two buildings, function unknown. Now demolished.
PAR 7766	SJ 2717 1732	Building, perhaps a cottage, now demolished.
PAR 7767	SJ 2701 1702	Penthryn-fach farm complex. Standing buildings.

4.5 Other archaeological features of a more recent origin falling within the assessment area can be summarised as:

PAR 7763	SJ 2676 1705	Former course of railway between Welshpool and
	- 2670 1678	Oswestry, planned in the 1850s and built by 1862.
		Now removed.
PAR 7768	SJ 2707 1730	Fieldname 'Wellfield' on the Tithe Map of 1841

4.6 Located just outside the development area to the east of the School Brook is the great early medieval earthwork known as Offa's Dyke. In the vicinity, a

300m length of this is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Mg 33).

## **5 Potential Impact**

5.1 The development could result in the destruction of a prehistoric ring ditch, the sites of several, now demolished, buildings of uncertain origin, an existing farm, field systems of potentially medieval or perhaps even earlier date, and the line of a railway.

5.2 In addition there may be sites of archaeological significance which may only be recognised through fieldwork.

## **6 Mitigation Proposals**

6.1 A fieldwork evaluation should be conducted, prior to the determination of planning permission, to ensure that the full archaeological resource is determined. This evaluation should also seek to assess the nature of the remaining field divisions, the age and significance of Penthryn-fach and the possibility that the demolished buildings are of interest. This survey in turn may lead to additional mitigation proposals.

6.2 The site of the ring-ditch (PAR 4626) should be preserved and protected from development as a matter of a priority.



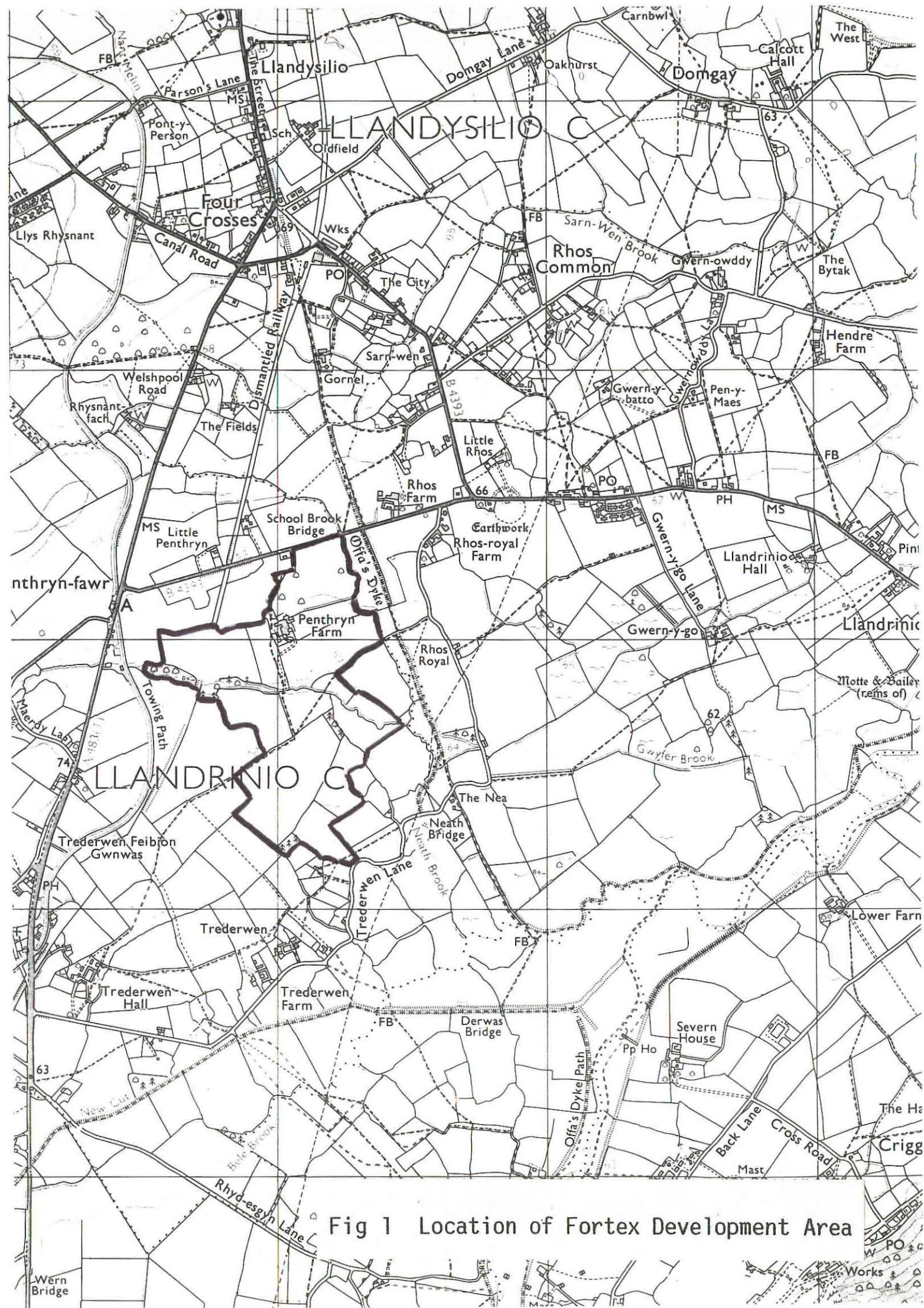
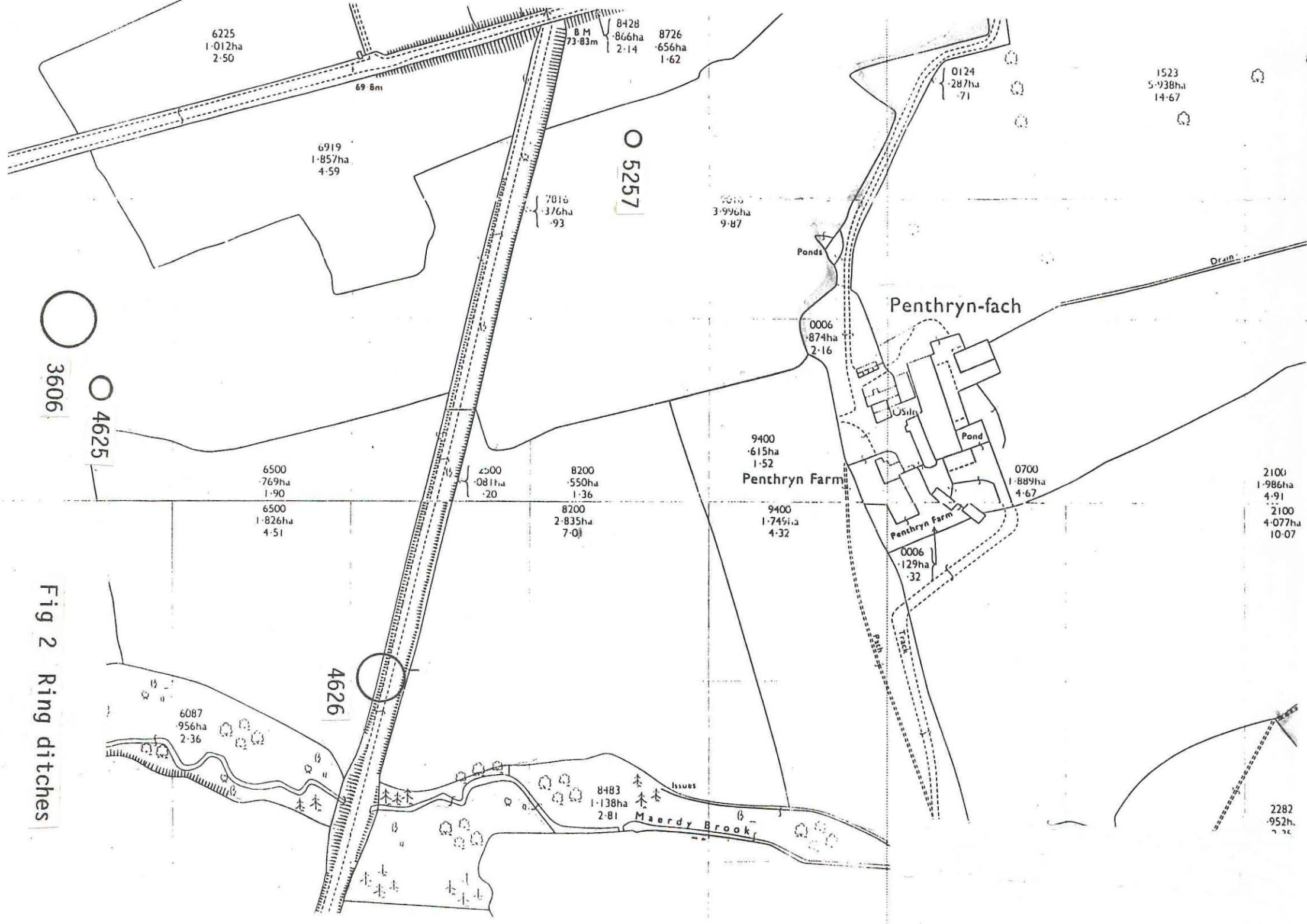




Fig 2 Ring ditches



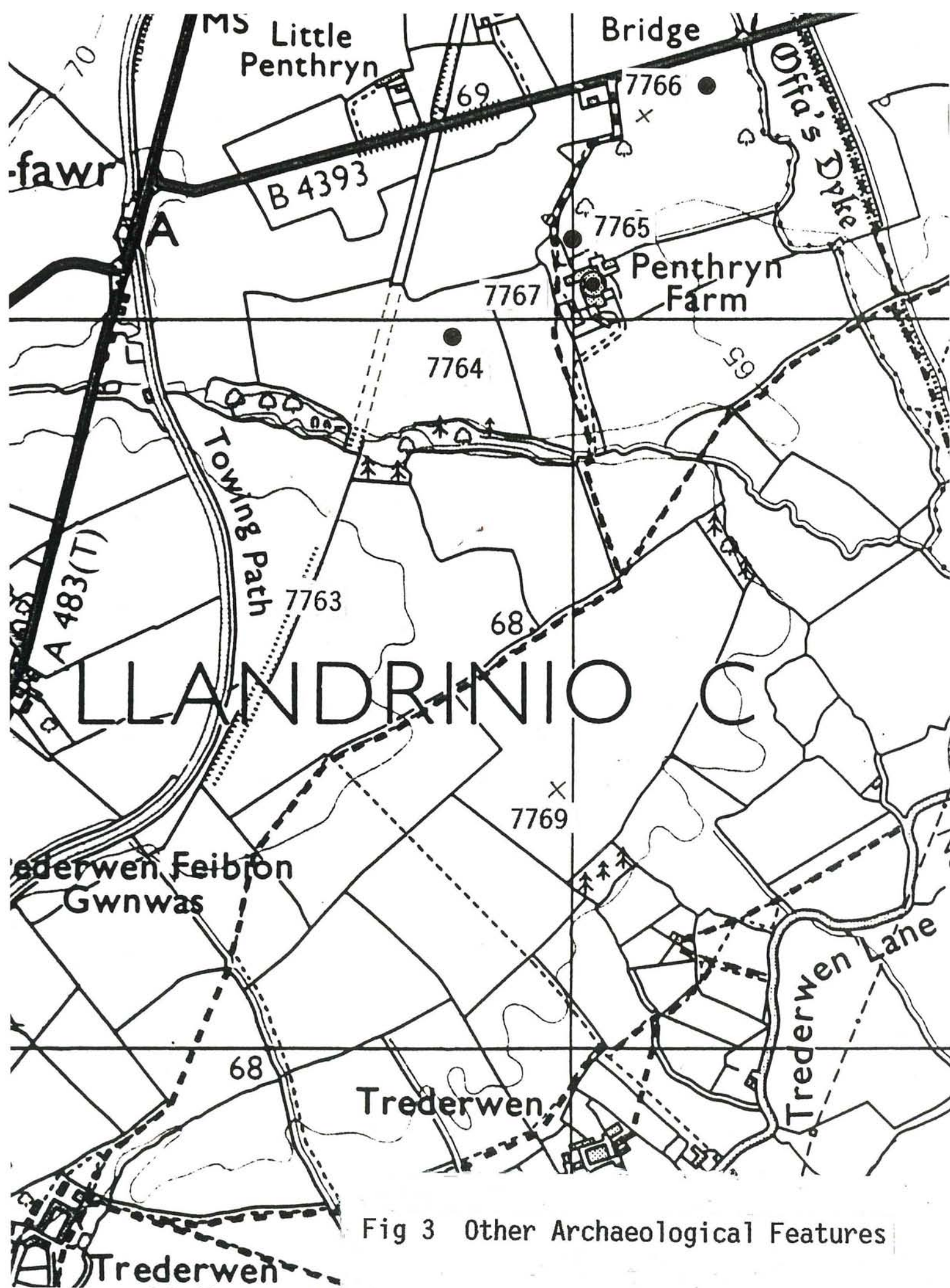


Fig 3 Other Archaeological Features