

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Penishapentre, Llanfilo, Powys
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CPAT Report No 203

Penishapentre, Llanfilo, Powys
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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Report for Mr & Mrs B. Price

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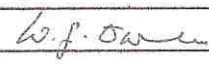
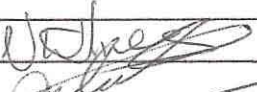

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In April 1996, the Contracts Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (henceforth CPAT) was requested by Mr and Mrs B. Price of Penishapentre, Llanfilo, Powys to provide a specification and a quotation for carrying out an archaeological watching brief during the initial stages of topsoil stripping and foundation trench excavation on the site of a proposed dwelling, formerly the site of a barn at Penishapentre.
- 1.2 A watching brief was considered necessary by the Curatorial Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, acting in their role as advisers to the local authority, as a condition for granting the planning application for the development (Brecknock Borough Council Planning Application B7554). This was due to the location of the proposed development within the historic core of Llanfilo as defined by the Brecknock Borough Historic Settlements Survey (Martin and Walters 1993) which indicated that the plot was situated very close to the anticipated medieval and post-medieval street frontage. In addition, the Settlements Survey identified earthworks in fields adjacent to Penishapentre which were thought to be associated with a shrunken medieval settlement (PARs 2651, 2650, 2999, 2652 and 9957 in Fig 1).
- 1.3 A specification for the watching brief was subsequently prepared by CPAT together with a quotation for carrying out the work, which was accepted by Mr and Mrs Price and the watching brief was undertaken on 17th September 1996.

2 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS

- 2.1 The placename Penishapentre, which translates into English as 'the lower end of the village' quite accurately defines its location on the outskirts of Llanfilo on the unclassified road from Llanfilo to Talgarth. It lies on north-facing, moderately sloping arable ground overlooking the River Dulas, a tributary of the River Wye.
- 2.2 Soils are well-drained, reddish fine loams over reddish-brown stony clay loam derived from Devonian sandstone, siltstone, mudstone or slate (Rudeforth *et al.*, 1984, 190).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Llanfilo is centred on the church, dedicated to St Beilo, whose subcircular churchyard suggests an early medieval origin. The regular appearance of the village plan in documents of the 14th and 15th centuries suggests that it was a relatively important settlement which was larger and more populous than it is at present, a possibility that is partly borne out by the archaeological evidence. To the south-east of the church on the opposite side of the road are earthworks, designated as a scheduled ancient monument (SAM B195), representing the remains of a moated site, possibly a moated vicarage (PAR 4494). Immediately to the north, excavations carried out in 1994 exposed walls which, together with slight earthworks adjacent to the excavated areas suggested the former presence of a building some 15m long. Pottery recovered from the site favoured a medieval date for the building (Thomas 1994a, 9). The surviving street pattern of Llanfilo extends to the north of the church and is characteristically medieval being a linear development which originally may have extended beyond Penishapentre (Martin & Walters 1993, 83). Excavations carried out in 1994 along the street frontage at Tycanol, however, did not reveal any evidence to support this (Thomas 1994b, 5).

4 THE WATCHING BRIEF (Fig. 2)

- 4.1 The surface of the development site was cleared mechanically in advance of foundation trench excavation. Being the site of a pre-existing barn, topsoil had been removed in the past from most of the site. Where it had not been previously removed along the southern and western edges of the site, the topsoil consisted of a reddish brown, friable loam c. 0.25m thick. The foundation trenches were cut to depths varying from 1.0m to 0.6m, into subsoil which varied from a gritty, reddish brown silty clay loam in the southern part of the site to a moderately stony, compact silty clay elsewhere. The

only area of disturbance was in the north-eastern part of the site adjacent to the main farmyard where there was a concentration of moderately sized stone contained in a brown gritty matrix. This material yielded a few pottery sherds of late post-medieval and modern date. This layer was interpreted as a consolidation layer at the entrance to the former barn. Finds from elsewhere were limited to the upper subsoil layers and consisted of a small quantity of modern pottery sherds.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The soils exposed during the excavation were typical of those found elsewhere at Penishapentre (Mr B. Price (pers. comm.).
- 5.2 The excavated trenches yielded no structural or other evidence to indicate that the building plot was located on a medieval street frontage if this extended as far as Penishapentre. It is noted, however, that the excavated area is located c. 14m to the north of the existing road. If this represents the former street frontage, there exists the possibility that any structural remains associated with this assumed frontage lie to the south of the building plot.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1 The writer would like to thank Mr and Mrs Price for their kind assistance during the course of the watching brief.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Rudeforth, C.C., Hartnup, R., Lea, J.W., Thompson, T.R.E., and Wright, P.C., 1984, *Soils and their Use in Wales*, Bulletin No 11, Soil Survey of England and Wales: Harpenden.

Thomas, D., 1994a, *Llanfillo Village, Powys*, CPAT Report No 118.

Thomas, D., 1994b, *Tycanol, Llanfillo, Powys*, CPAT Report No 120.

APPENDIX 1

PENISHAPENTRE, LLANFILO: SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed development at Penishapentre, Llanfilo involves the construction of a new dwelling on the site of a pre-existing timber and corrugated barn.
- 1.2 This area lies in an agricultural setting at the northern extent of the village of Llanfilo (SO11993359). This area lies within the historic core of Llanfilo as defined by the *Brecknock Borough Historic Settlements Survey* (CPAT report No.60, 1993) and in close proximity to an anticipated medieval and post-medieval street frontage. Earthworks representing trackways and house platforms have been located in adjacent fields.
- 1.3 In view of the archaeological sensitivity of the proposed development, the Curatorial Section of CPAT, in their capacity as archaeological curators for the county, have determined that a contracted Archaeological watching brief is necessary to assess the implications of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. Accordingly a brief has been prepared by CPAT Curatorial (No WAT 164 dated 15th April 1996) which describes the scheme of archaeological works required.

2 Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works are:
 - 2.1.1 to record the nature, condition, significance and, where possible, the chronology of any archaeological deposits and/or features revealed within the area of the proposed development during the development works in so far as these aims are possible;
 - 2.1.2 to prepare a report outlining the results of the watching brief.

3 Methods

- 3.1 The watching brief will be carried out according to the guidelines submitted with the Curatorial Brief and will involve the examination of all the groundworks in the archaeological sensitive areas.
- 3.2 All archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the watching brief will be recorded by drawn section and/or photography.
- 3.3 The post-fieldwork programme will be as outlined in section 7 of the Brief.
- 3.4 Following the on-site work and post-fieldwork analysis, an illustrated and bound report will be prepared according to the principles laid out in the Brief (Section 8). 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.
- 3.5 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 Dr A Gibson, 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 the same field archaeologist who conducted the watching brief.
- 4.3** The number of days required will depend on the progress of the Clients' buildings contractor and that the subsequent report would be prepared immediately thereafter, 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. The archaeological curator will be informed of the detailed timetable and staffing levels when agreement has been reached with the client.
- 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.

A.M. Gibson
22nd April 1996



Fig. 1
Location
Scale 1:2500