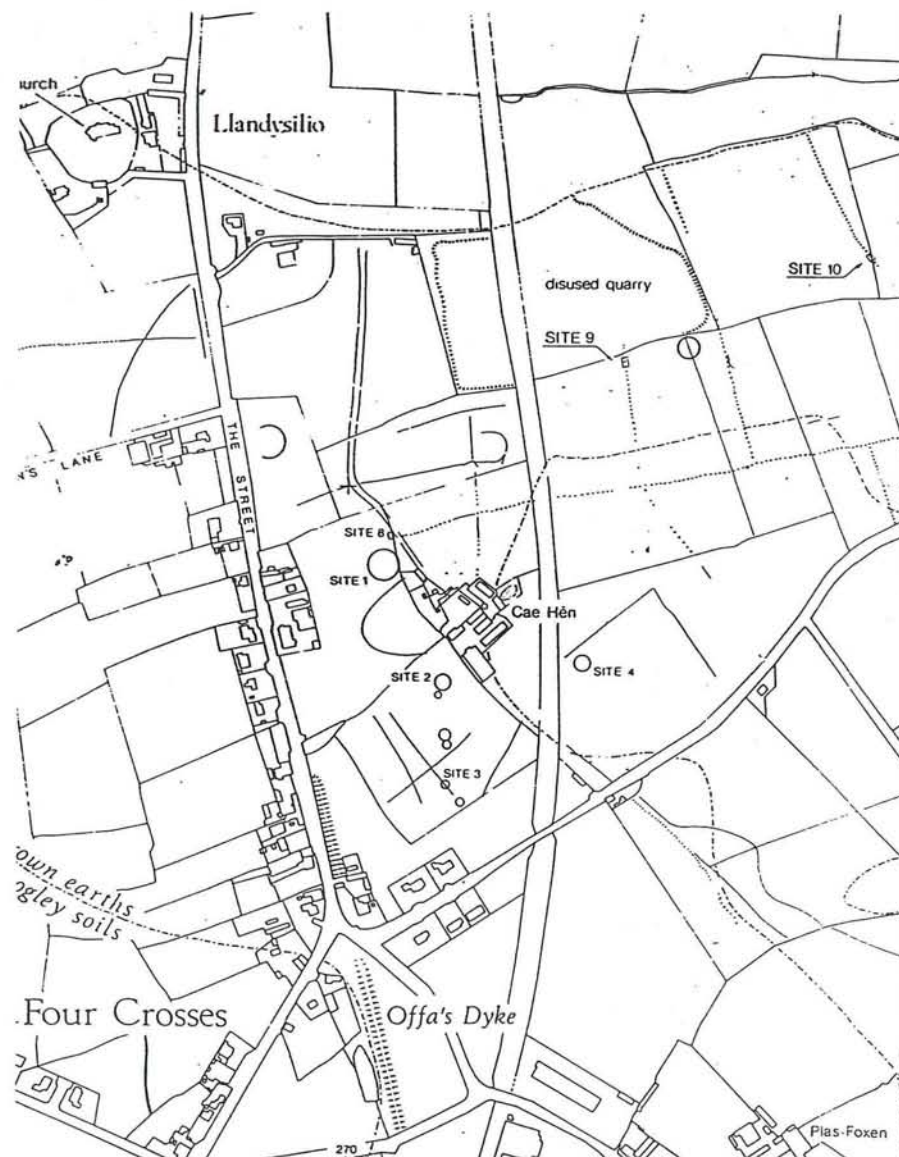


*The Beeches, Domgay Lane,  
Four Crosses, Powys*  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



CPAT Report No 292

*The Beeches, Domgay Lane,  
Four Crosses, Powys*  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

**W.G.Owen**  
September 1998

Report for Mr and Mrs J.Ingram

**The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust**

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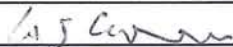
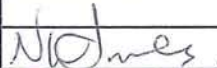

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## CPAT Report Record

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	name	signature	date
prepared by	W.G.OWEN		14/09/98
checked by	N.W.JONES		21/09/98
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### Revisions

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### Internal memo


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Fig. 3 Cropmark sites in the Llandysilio/Domgay area.



## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Contracting Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (hereafter CPAT Contracts) was invited by Mr and Mrs J.Ingram, The Beeches, Domgay Lane, Four Crosses, Powys, to conduct a watching brief during the stages of topsoiling and excavation of foundation trenches involved in the construction of a new dwelling and access driveway at the same address (NGR SJ 2722 1874; 68m OD).
- 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 of permission for the development (Powys CC Planning Application M98108). This was because the proposed development lay within a complex of subsurface remains of prehistoric and possibly medieval date consisting of ringditches, pit alignments, field boundaries and enclosures. The closest of these sites is a ring ditch, 17.5m in diameter, lying 30m to the north of the development plot (Site 4; Fig. 3), and elsewhere in the field are linear cropmarks representing former field boundaries. Given the close proximity of these sites to the development, there was a reasonable possibility that excavation would expose previously unrecorded evidence related to this buried landscape. A Design Brief was subsequently prepared by the Curatorial Section (WAT 277) which described the requirements for the scheme of work.
- 1.3 A specification for the watching brief was prepared by CPAT Contracts and the work was subsequently carried out on 10th and 11th September 1998. This report was prepared immediately afterwards.

## 2 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY (Figs 1 & 2)

- 2.1 The development site is located in a pasture field (OS No 3186) approximately 0.3km north-east of Four Crosses. To the west of the site is a disused railway line and to the south is Domgay Lane.
- 2.2 Topographically, the site lies on the Upper Severn outwash plain which is composed of glacial or fluvioglacial deposits forming shallow depressions and low ridges overlying glaciolacustrine alluvium (Owen & Britnell, 1989, 27). The site itself slopes very slightly from its south-western side towards level ground elsewhere which comprises most of the site.
- 2.3 Soils in the immediate vicinity vary from brown earths over gravelly river or lacustrine drifts to fine silty, stagnogley soils containing mudstone and sandstone derived from Lower Palaeozoic Rocks (Thompson, 1982, 35 and 77-78). At the development site, the soil profile basically consists of c.0.40m of brown humic topsoil over a light buff-coloured fine silt which itself overlies coarse, grey gravel. The gravel varies in depth from 1.20m below turf level on the south-western side of the site to 0.60m on the north-western side. Locally, there were patches of slight iron panning in the silts and an isolated area of manganese staining of the gravel was exposed in one part of the site.

## HISTORIC BACKGROUND (Fig. 3)

- 3.1 Much of the early history of the Four Crosses/Domgay area derives from aerial photographic evidence which suggested the presence of an extensive barrow cemetery and elements of the field system mentioned above (Para 1.2). The excavation of eight of the possible fifteen ring ditches identified on the photographs showed periods of activity dating from the middle to late Neolithic through to at least the middle Bronze Age. Earlier activity dating to the Mesolithic period was suggested by several items of flintwork from ringditches 5 and 6 and two radiocarbon dates from ringditch 2. Evidence of Iron Age activity, evidence suggesting nearby Romano-British settlement, and evidence of re-use during the early post-Roman period also emerged from ringditch 2. Excavation at several sites yielded sherds of medieval and early post-medieval origin. There is evidence, therefore, indicating a span of activity extending over eight millennia in the area (Warrilow *et al.* 1986; Barford *et al.* 1986).
- 3.2 Excavation at four points along the pit alignments (Sites 8, 9, 10 & 11; fig. 3) failed to produce any dating evidence nor were they associated with any surviving contemporary earthworks. The Powys



Sites and Monuments Record attributes a putative Bronze Age date to them but medieval and post-medieval dates have also been suggested in the past (Owen and Britnell 1989, 38; Silvester 1992, 56), although these two latter dates have both been disputed (Hankinson 1995, 4-5). One of the pit alignments lies to the south-east of the development plot on the southern side of Domgay Lane where it forms a more or less continuous feature, 140m long.

- 3.3 At a much later date the Enclosure Award of 1799, the Tithe map of 1840 and subsequent Ordnance Survey maps all show that the development site formed part of an enclosed field with no indication of extant buildings within it.

#### **4 THE WATCHING BRIEF**

- 4.1 On September 10th 1998 topsoil was removed mechanically from the area of the proposed house and garage and part of the driveway, exposing the light buff-coloured subsoil previously mentioned (Par. 2.3). No features of archaeological interest were exposed at this level and no finds other than post-medieval sherds, glass fragments and brick fragments were recovered.
- 4.2 On the following day, a watching brief was maintained during the course of the mechanical excavation of the internal and external wall foundations. The external wall trenches were excavated to a depth of 1.0m and the internal wall trenches to a depth of 0.50m. Apart from at the south-western side where the silt subsoil extended beyond the base of the trench, the external wall trenches cut into gravel. The internal wall trenches were all cut into the silts overlying the gravel. Exposed surfaces in both the silts and gravels were closely examined but no features of archaeological interest were recorded. Similarly, no features were exposed during the course of soil stripping along the driveway.

#### **5 CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 The subsoils exposed during the course of excavation were typical of the soils encountered elsewhere in the Domgay Lane area. Apart possibly from the deeper silts on the south-western side of the site, the soils would have been suitable, under the right conditions, to reveal cropmarks and/or parchmarks indicative of sub-surface archaeological features. Examination of available aerial photographs suggested that no archaeological features were present in the development area and excavation confirmed this to be the case.

#### **6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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

#### **7 REFERENCES**

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## APPENDIX 1

### SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed development at The Beeches, Domgay Lane, Four Crosses involves the construction of a new dwelling and access (Powys County Council Planning Application No. M 98108).
- 1.2 This area lies immediately adjacent to a group of cropmarks which represent buried remains of ring ditch burial mounds, former ditched field boundaries and pit alignments.
- 1.3 The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in their capacity as archaeological curators for the county have determined that an Archaeological watching brief is necessary to record the archaeological resource during the development. Accordingly a brief has been prepared by M.Walters (No CWAT277 dated 30/7/98) 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 archaeologically sensitive areas.
- 3.2 All archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the watching brief will be recorded by drawn section and/or photography as appropriate.
- 3.3 Following the on-site work 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). Following agreement with the landowner arrangements will be made for the long term storage of all artefacts in an appropriate local or county museum.

#### 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 the same field archaeologist who conducted the watching brief.



- 4.3 It is anticipated that the watching brief will take no more than 2 days in all 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.

N.W.Jones  
6th August 1998



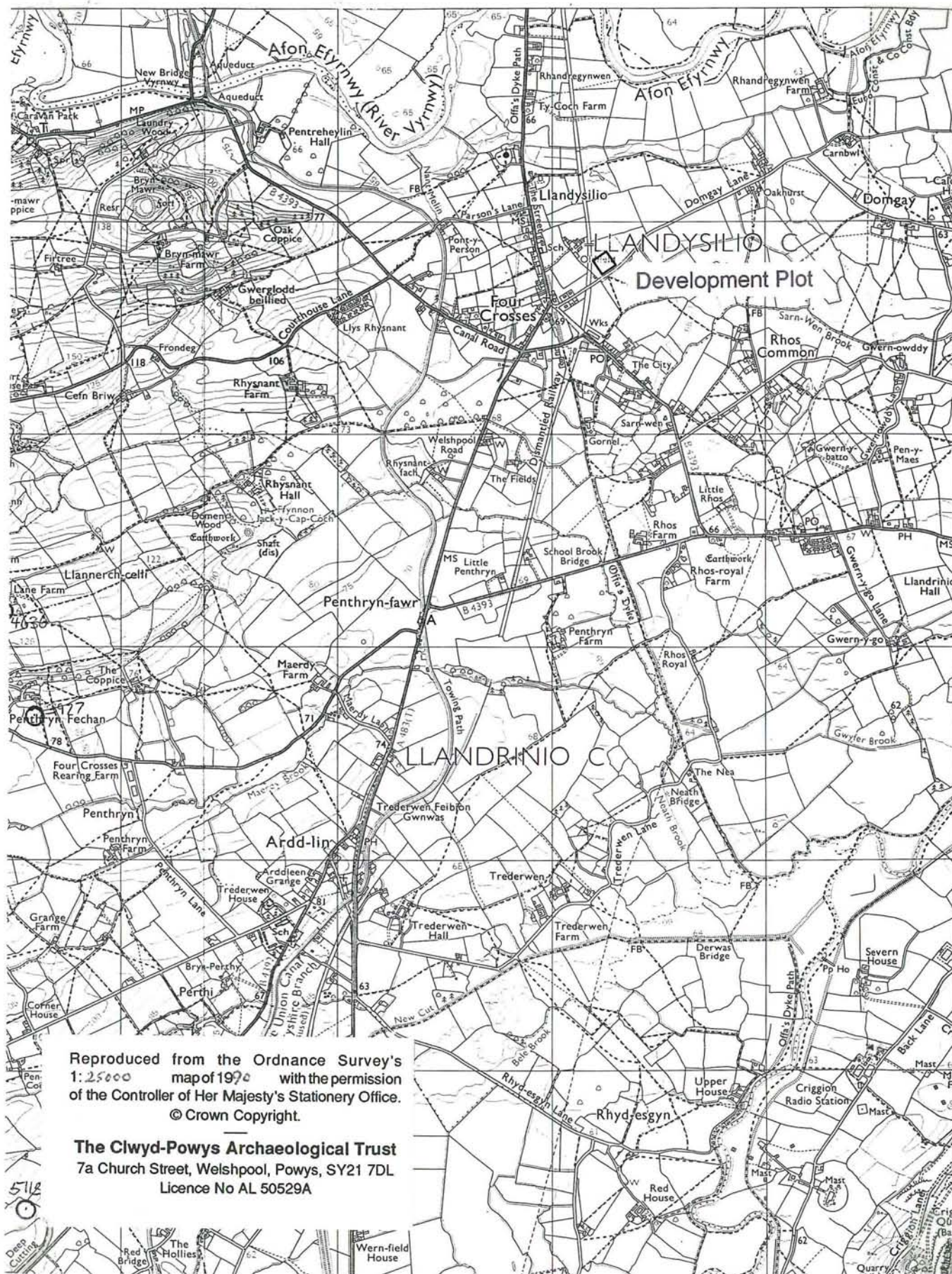


Fig. 1 Location, Scale 1:25000



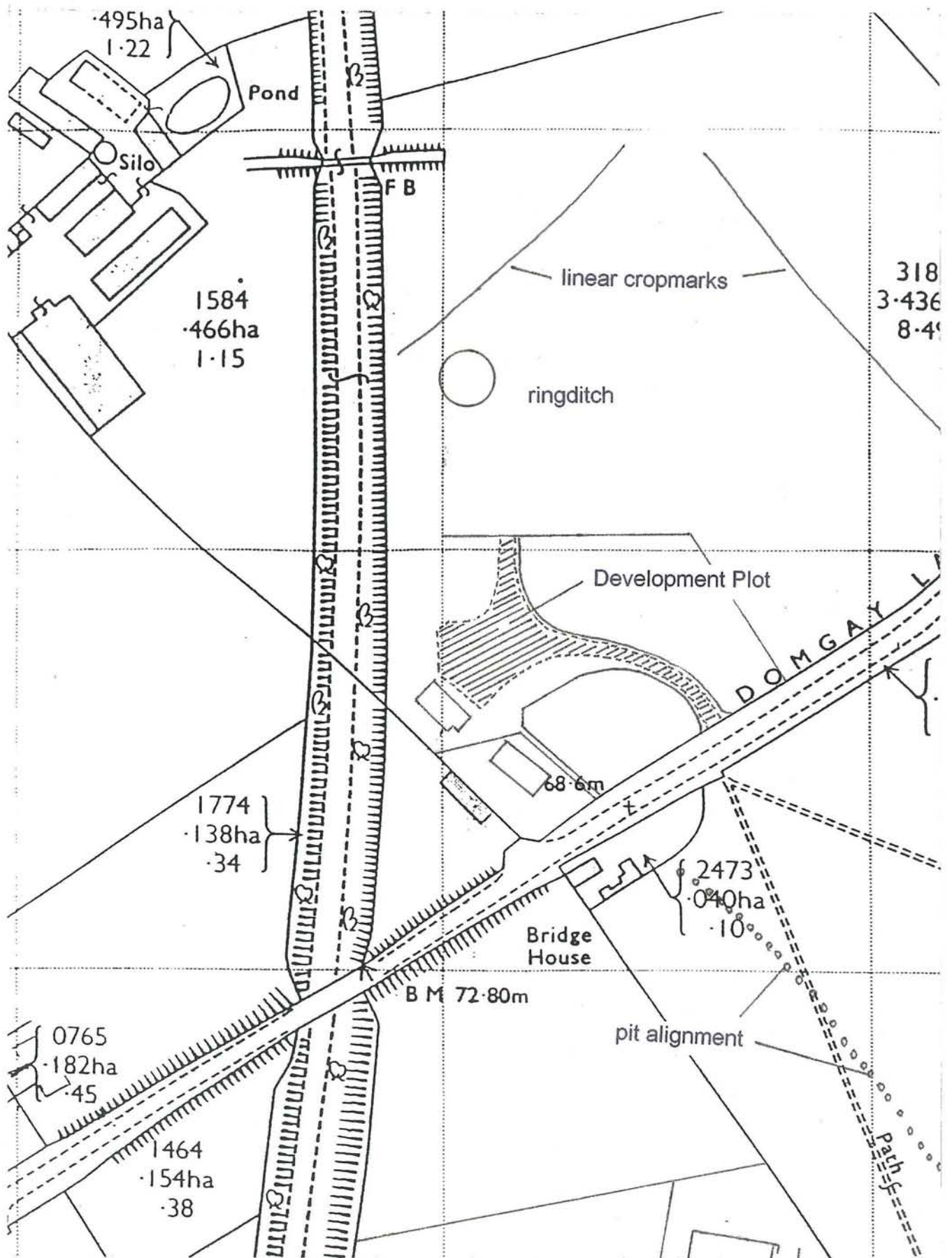


Fig 2: Location of Development Area Scale 1:1250





Fig. 3 Cropmark sites in Llandysilio/Domgay Area  
(after Owen and Britnell 1989, fig. 1)