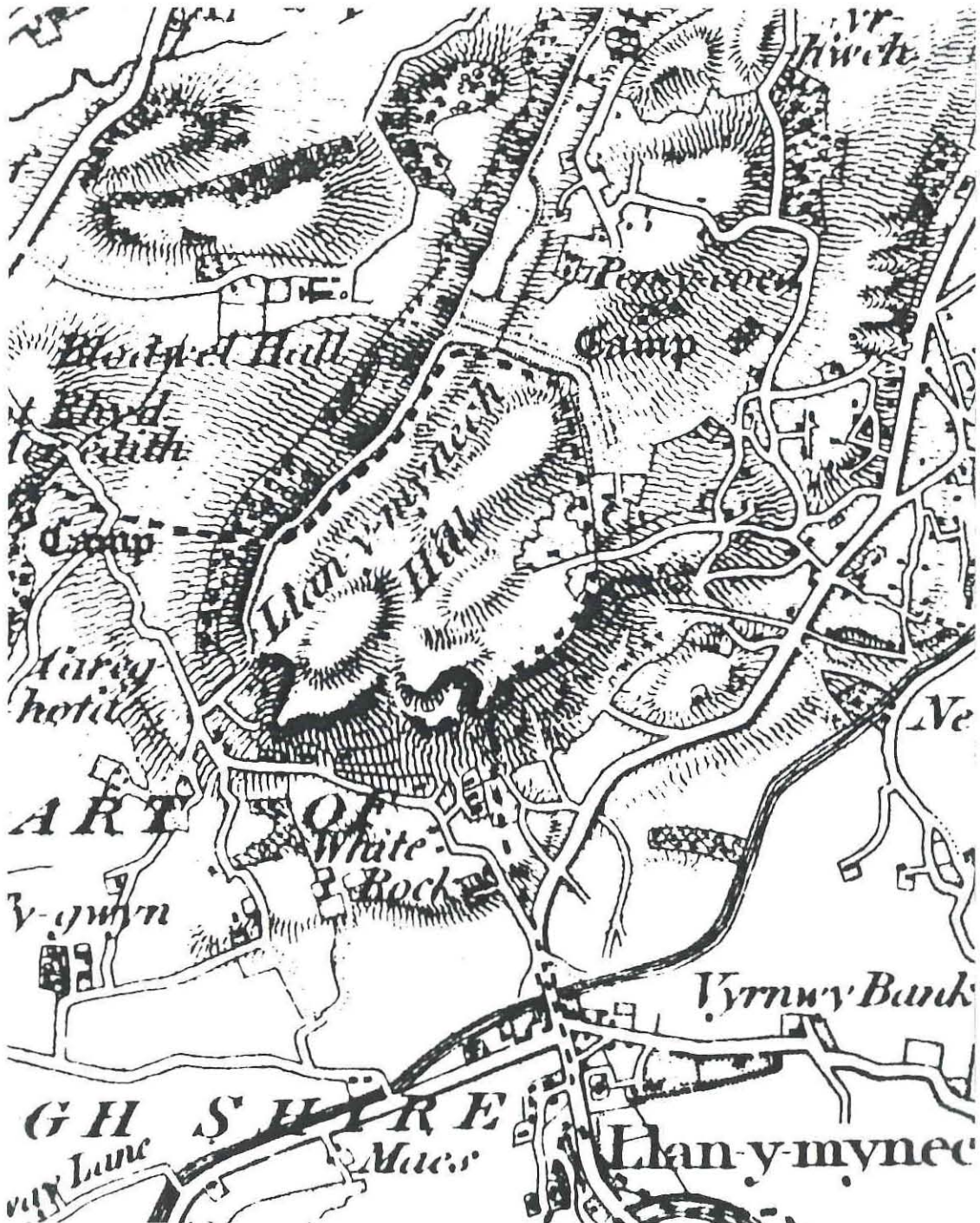


THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

15th Green, Llanymynech Golf Club, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



CPAT Report No 339

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Powys
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

WG Owen
November 1999

Report for Llanymynech Golf Club

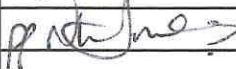
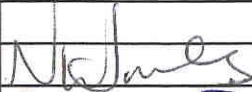

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CPAT Report Record

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The recent groundworks at Llanymynech Golf Club involved the deturfing of the 15th green, which lies within the area of Llanymynech Hillfort, scheduled as a monument of national importance (SAM Mg 30).
- 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 The 15th green is located at SJ 2622 2238 on a north-east/south-west aligned terrace some 50m from the boundary of the Scheduled Area on the north-western side of the hillfort. Areas of mine shafts on the southern and south-eastern sides of the green probably relate to the Ogof workings some 200m to the south-east.
- 2.2 Geologically, Llanymynech Hill marks the southernmost point of a band of Lower Carboniferous Limestone which extends south from the North Wales coast at Prestatyn, Flintshire. Outcrops of this formation are commonly visible throughout the hillfort. In places the limestone is altered to dolomites 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 SJ 26602222. 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 1993). 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 could have been 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) revealed 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 recent small-scale excavation undertaken within the area of the 13th Green revealed important evidence for occupation within the hillfort. This included part of drainage gully for a round hut, together with associated pits or postholes and 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

- 4.1 The archaeological watching brief was carried out on 8th November 1999. A full written, drawn and photographic record was maintained throughout.
- 4.2 The green is rectangular in shape and covers an area of approximately 350 m². On its north-western, north-eastern and south-eastern sides it is enclosed by low banks up to 0.5m high, the green sloping down slightly from north-east to south-west to a bunker just beyond.
- 4.3 Turf, up to 0.03m thick, was mechanically stripped from an area of c. 300m², exposing the subsurface make-up of the green over most of the area. This was composed of a brown to dark brown sandy loam, with isolated areas of yellow sand and peaty-loam within it. Where turf was cut from the lower slopes of the enclosing banks a lighter brown, firmer loam was exposed which appeared to be a undisturbed topsoil.
- 4.4 No archaeological features were revealed during the watching brief, and there were no artefacts present.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The position of the 15th Green relative to the topography in the immediate vicinity suggests that it is located on a natural terrace with slopes to the north-west and south-east which may have been cut into at the north-western end. Whilst this was probably done when the green was first established, the site would seem to present a likely position for settlement within the hillfort and there remains the possibility that the green overlies prehistoric occupation deposits, as have recently been revealed beneath the 13th Green (Owen 1999). However, no structural evidence or finds were exposed during the course of this watching brief to support this hypothesis.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due 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

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed works involve the removal of turf on the 15th Green of Llanymynech Golf Course.
- 1.2 The area lies within Llanymynech hillfort, a site scheduled as an archaeological monument of national importance (SAM Mg30).
- 1.3 Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the National Assembly for Wales, have determined that an archaeological watching brief is necessary to record any archaeological features revealed during the course of the works, and this has been made a condition of the granting of scheduled monument consent (SMC) for this works.

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 this development and to record any archaeological features encountered;
- 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 groundworks relating, to this project. All archaeological contexts 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 monochrome negative and colour slide 35mm format. All drawn records will be related to control points depicted on modern maps where possible.
- 3.2 All archaeological artefacts and environmental samples 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. 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
Projects Officer
29th October 1999

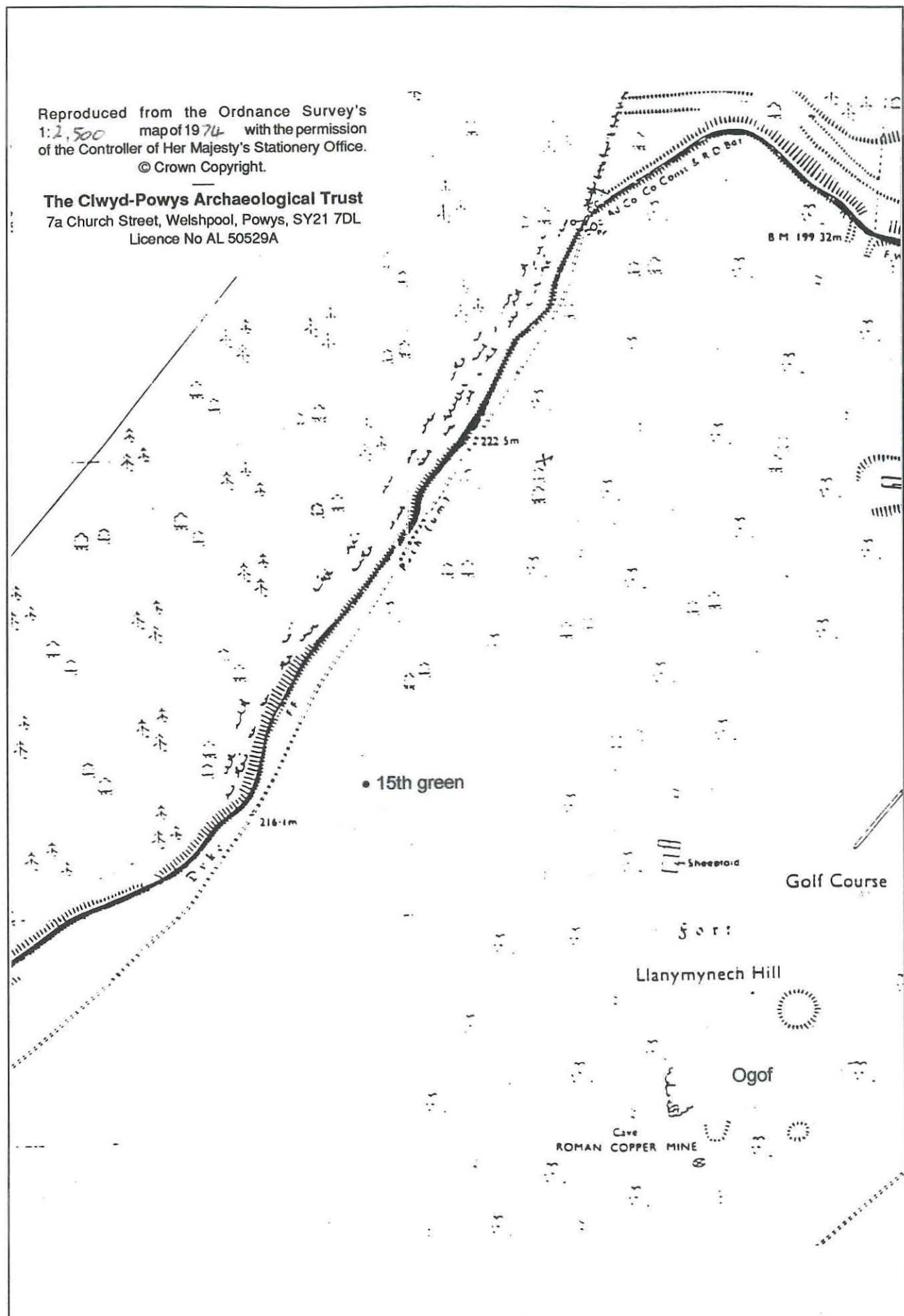


Fig. 1 Site location. Scale 1:2,500