

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

**A494 Improvement at Tafarn y Gelyn,
Denbighshire**
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CPAT Report No 414

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W G Owen
March 2001

Report for North East Wales Trunk Road Agency

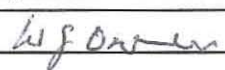
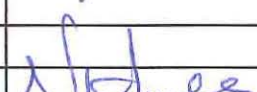
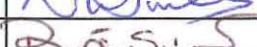
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CPAT Report Record

Report and status

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The development involved road improvements to the A494 at Tafarn y Gelyn, Denbighshire. An archaeological assessment had previously indicated that there was minimal known archaeology, although a lime kiln and former field boundaries have been recorded within the general area. The Environmental Assessment requested that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out during the initial ground clearance and a brief for this work was provided by Denbighshire Archaeology Service, part of Denbighshire County Council, describing the scheme of works required.

2 LOCATION and TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.1 The road improvements are located near the hamlet of Tafarn y Gelyn, Llanferres, Denbighshire (Fig. 1; centred SJ1855 6183). The route corridor (Fig. 2) extends for 1.20km, affecting an area up to 60m wide, and in addition there were ancillary works associated with the relocation of services.
- 2.2 Geologically, the site lies in an area of glaciofluvial and river terrace drift between the shales of the Clwydian Range and the limestone of the Bryn Alyn and Loggerheads area. Soils are coarse, sandy loams of the Wick 1 Association, overlying fine silts and coarse gravels (Rudeforth *et al.* 1984). Topographically, the area a gently undulating landscape which overlooks the River Alyn to the east.

3 WATCHING BRIEF

- 3.1 The watching brief was undertaken as required between January 24th and February 14th 2001. A full written and photographic record was maintained throughout. The curator was kept informed of developments throughout the project and made one visit to the site to monitor progress.
- 3.2 The curatorial brief had specified that the watching brief should be undertaken on two occasions, immediately after the stripping of topsoil, and secondly after the stripped area had been allowed to weather. Following discussions with the curator it was agreed that it would not be practical to undertake the watching brief following a period of weathering as the area would by then have been used as an access route by construction vehicles, compacting the ground and obscuring soil changes.
- 3.3 Topsoil stripping and subsequent grading work had taken place over a significant area before CPAT were invited to undertake the watching brief and therefore could not be adequately examined. The main part of the watching brief was carried out following topsoil stripping in the area to the north-east of Pont y Cacwm (Fig. 2) where approximately 8000m² of ground was examined. Here, up to 0.5m of topsoil and the upper levels of the underlying yellowish-brown subsoil were stripped exposing clayey silts and isolated areas of coarse gravel. No recognisable archaeological features were recorded but two abraded sherds of medieval pottery and one of early post-medieval date were recovered from the subsoil layer. The finds have been temporarily retained by CPAT.
- 3.4 Small areas of previously stripped ground were also examined to the north-east of this area principally in the region of the demolished house site, 'The Nest' (SJ 18746155) but no archaeological features were revealed.
- 3.5 No trace of the lime kiln adjacent to Pont y Cacwm (SJ 18926110) was noted during groundworks in that area (M Jones, Resident Engineer, pers comm.), although this work was undertaken without archaeological supervision.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The examination of areas following topsoil stripping revealed no features of archaeological significance and finds were limited to two sherds of medieval pottery and one of early post-medieval pottery, all of which were unstratified.

5 REFERENCES

Rudeforth, CC, Hartnup, R, Lea, JW, Thompson, TRE, and Wright, PC, 1984, *Soils and their Use in Wales*, Bulletin No 11. Harpenden: Soil Survey of England and Wales.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Mr Mike Jones, NEWTRA Resident Engineer and to Fiona Gale, Denbighshire Archaeology Service, for their co-operation and help during the course of the watching brief.

APPENDIX 1: SPECIFICATION

A494 IMPROVEMENT AT TAFARN Y GELYN SPECIFICATION FOR A CONTRACTED ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF BY THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The development involves road improvements to the A494 at Tafarn y Gelyn, Denbighshire (centred SJ18556183). An archaeological assessment indicated that there was minimal previously known archaeological information although a lime kiln and former field boundaries have been recorded within the general area. The Environmental assessment requested that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out during the initial ground clearance and a brief for this work was provided by Denbighshire Archaeology Service, describing the scheme of 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 undertaken to include the initial topsoil stripping and any other relevant groundworks. The programme of work will largely be determined following a site meeting with the client and the archaeological curator.
- 3.2 Limited excavation of all significant contexts will be undertaken where possible following negotiations with the developer. All significant archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the watching brief will be recorded by drawn plan/section at an appropriate scale and photographed in 35mm format black and white print and colour slide. All features will be tied in locationally to the Ordnance Survey as accurately as possible. A contingency sum has been allowed to enable preliminary study of any environmental or technical evidence which may be forthcoming.
- 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 References, together with appropriate appendices on any 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.
- 3.5 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 conservation and storage of all artefacts in an appropriate repository.

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.
- 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
16th January 2001

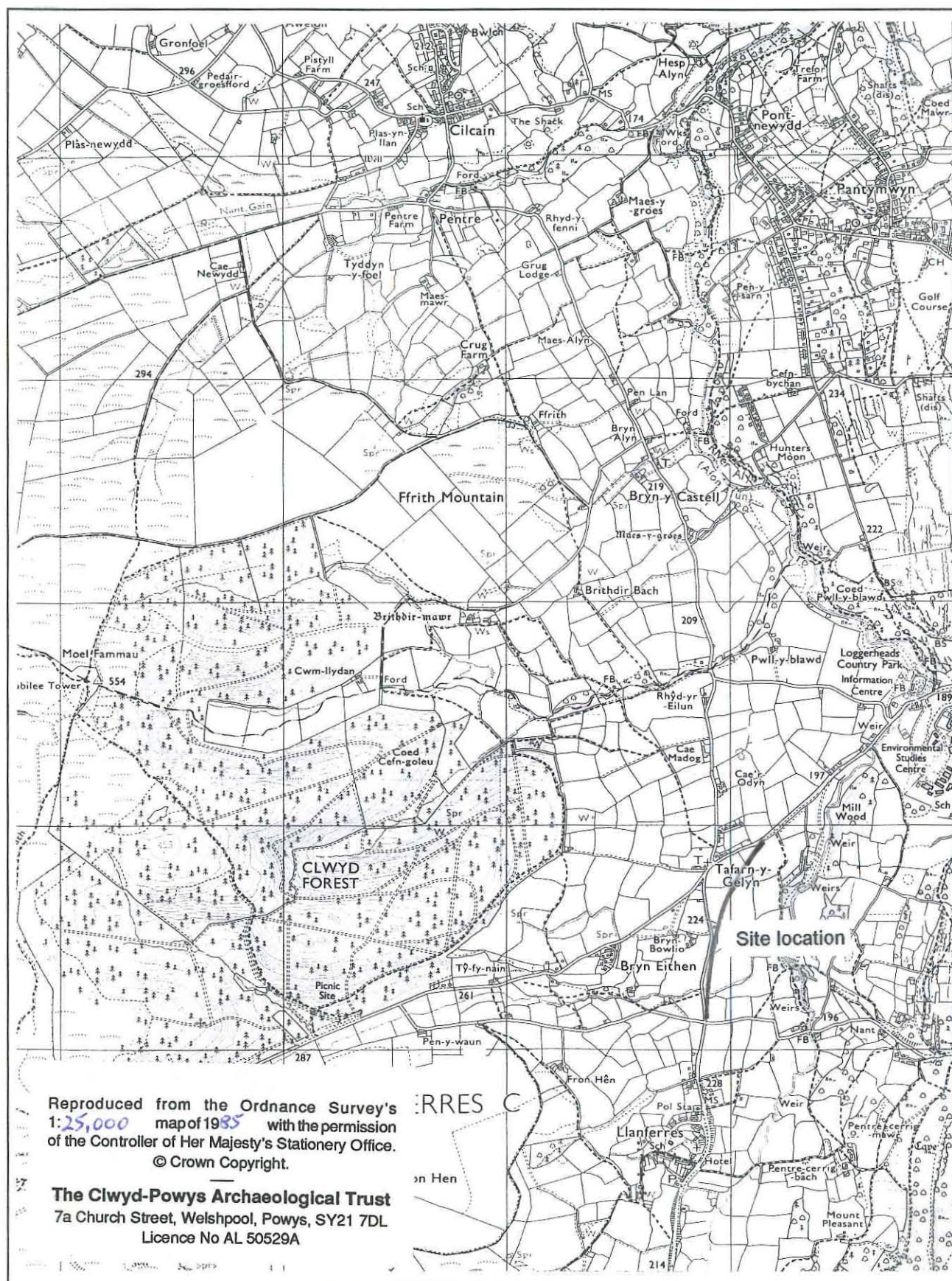


Fig. 1 Site location. Scale 1:2,500

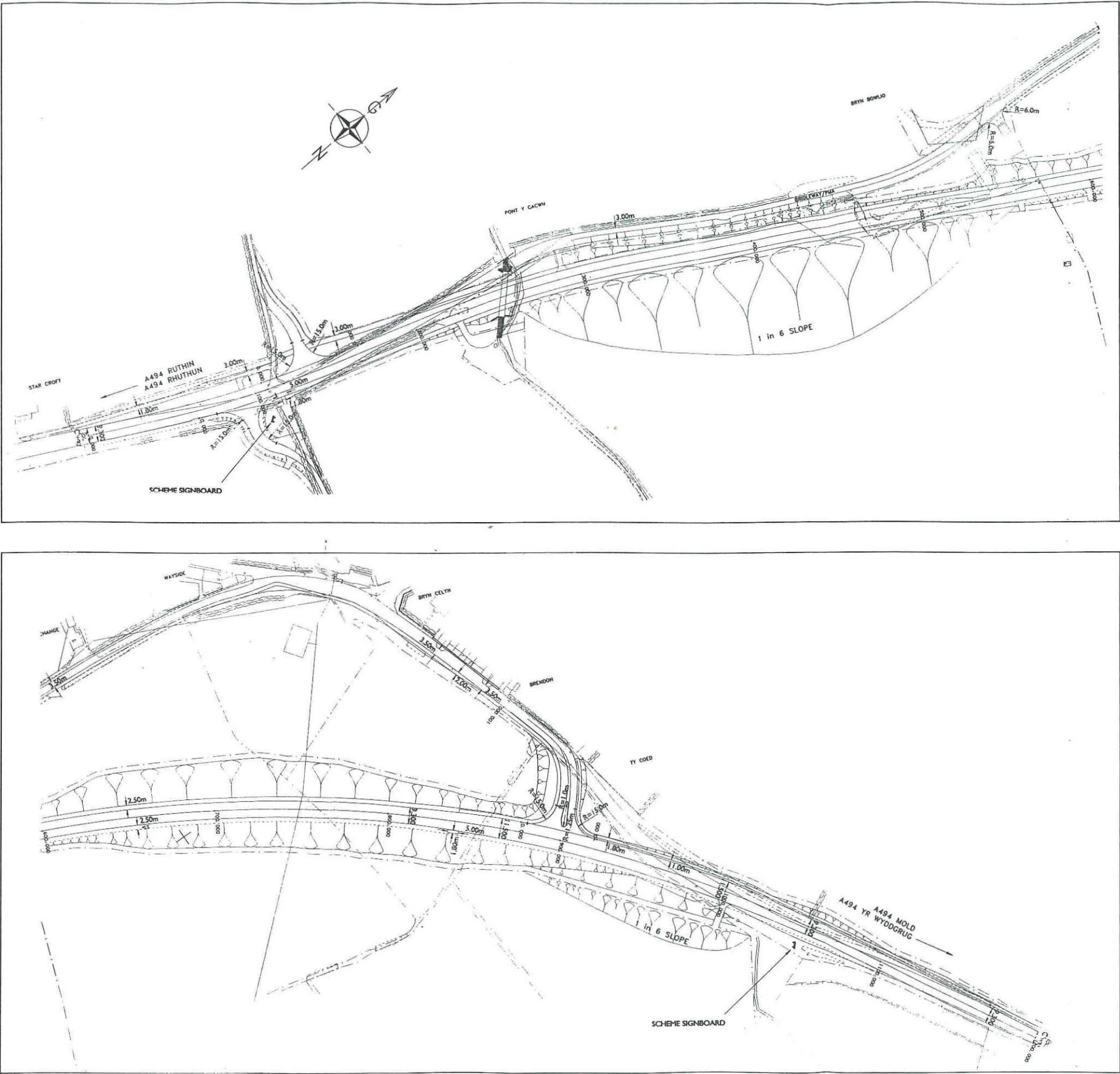


Fig. 2 Plan of road corridor, scale 1:2,500