

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

**Caersws Pumping Main Replacement
Borehole Investigations
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

CPAT Report No 480

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Borehole Investigations
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W G Owen
June 2002

Report for Severn Trent Water

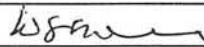
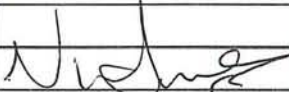

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CPAT Report Record

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 2002 the Contracting Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust was invited to undertake a watching brief during the course of site investigation work, carried out on behalf of Severn Trent Water, along Trefeglwys Road and Station Road, Caersws. The watching brief was undertaken following recommendations by the Curatorial Section of the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust in a letter dated 23 May 2002.
- 1.2 The site investigations were located in close proximity to the Roman fort in Caersws (fig. 1), which is known to have been occupied from the late 4th century AD until the 3rd century. A civilian settlement, or *vicus*, developed outside the fort and excavations have demonstrated intensive activity close to the south gate of the fort (Britnell 1989; Jones 1993).

2 WATCHING BRIEF (figs 1-2)

- 2.1 The works were undertaken on 30 and 31 May 2002 and entailed impact borehole testing of soils at three points along the proposed route of the replacement main. In each case, the core sections extracted were examined and the profiles recorded.

Borehole 1

- 2.2 This was located on the south side of the Trefeglwys Road and was bored through the tarmac surface (1) and stone sub-base (2) of the road, which was 0.40m deep. Below this level, the extracted core consisted of grey gravel in a brown silt matrix (3) which contained brick fragments and which yielded a single small fragment of modern pottery. This layer was succeeded by a slightly stony brown, friable silty clay (4), 0.20m thick which overlay a coarse grey gravelly silt (5) which extended to the base of the borehole at a depth of 3.0m. Both of these layers were interpreted as natural, undisturbed horizons. No definite archaeological deposits were identified.

Borehole 2

- 2.3 This borehole was located on the grass verge on the north side of the Trefeglwys Road, to the east of the railway level crossing. Below the thin turf/topsoil layer (6), a layer of quarried stone (7) overlay a service pipe aligned east-west at a depth of 0.60m. Below this, a dark grey, mottled clay (8) containing a moderate quantity of small water-washed pebble extended to a depth of 1.30m which overlay a light brownish grey, compact clay (9), 0.40m thick. This was succeeded by a light olive-brown coarse gravelly clay (10) which extended to the base of the borehole at 3.15m. All the soils below the base of the service pipe were interpreted as natural horizons. No definite archaeological deposits were identified and no finds were recovered.

Borehole 3

- 2.4 This borehole was located on the grass verge 7.0m east of the junction of the Trefeglwys Road with Station Road. Below the turf layer (15), the soil consisted of a very dark brown, friable, slightly stony loam (11), 0.50m thick, and which contained modern brick fragments. This was succeeded by a very dark greyish-brown silty clay (12), 1.60m thick which contained slate, brick and tile fragments of modern origin. This layer was interpreted as a redeposited horizon and overlay a firm, dark greyish-brown clay (13), 1.0m thick, which was succeeded by a grey gravelly clay (14) which extended to the base of the borehole at 3.70m. Both of the latter two layers appeared to be natural horizons. No definite archaeological deposits were identified and no finds were recovered.

3 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The results from the boreholes have provided no clear evidence of archaeological deposits, although these would have been anticipated for at least Boreholes 2 and 3, which were located in the area of the defensive ditches for the Roman fort. It may be the case that both boreholes were located between the ditches, rather than providing a sedimentary profile of their fills. Experience from previous excavations has shown, however, that it is often difficult to identify a difference between natural deposits and archaeological deposits, which are essentially redeposited natural soils. Borehole 1 was located further to the west in an area where no Roman activity has so far been identified.

4 REFERENCES

Britnell, J E, 1989. *Caersws Vicus, Powys: Excavations at the Old Primary School, 1985-86*. British Archaeological Reports 205.

Jones, N W, 1993. *Caersws Roman Fort and Vicus, Montgomeryshire, Powys, 1984-92*, *Montgomeryshire Collections* 81, 15-96.

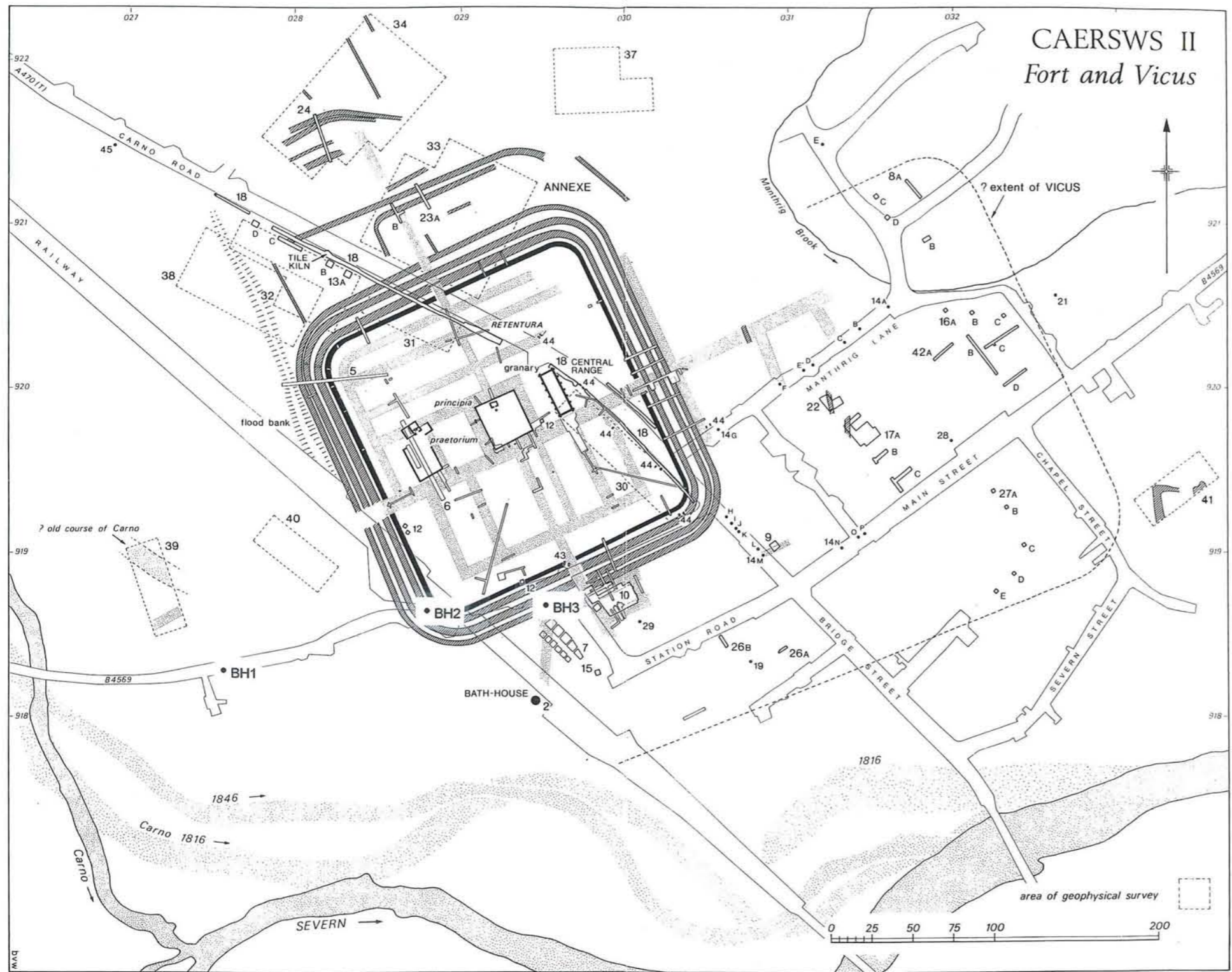


Fig. 1 Location of boreholes in relation to Caersws Roman Fort and Vicus (after Jones 1993, Fig. 2)

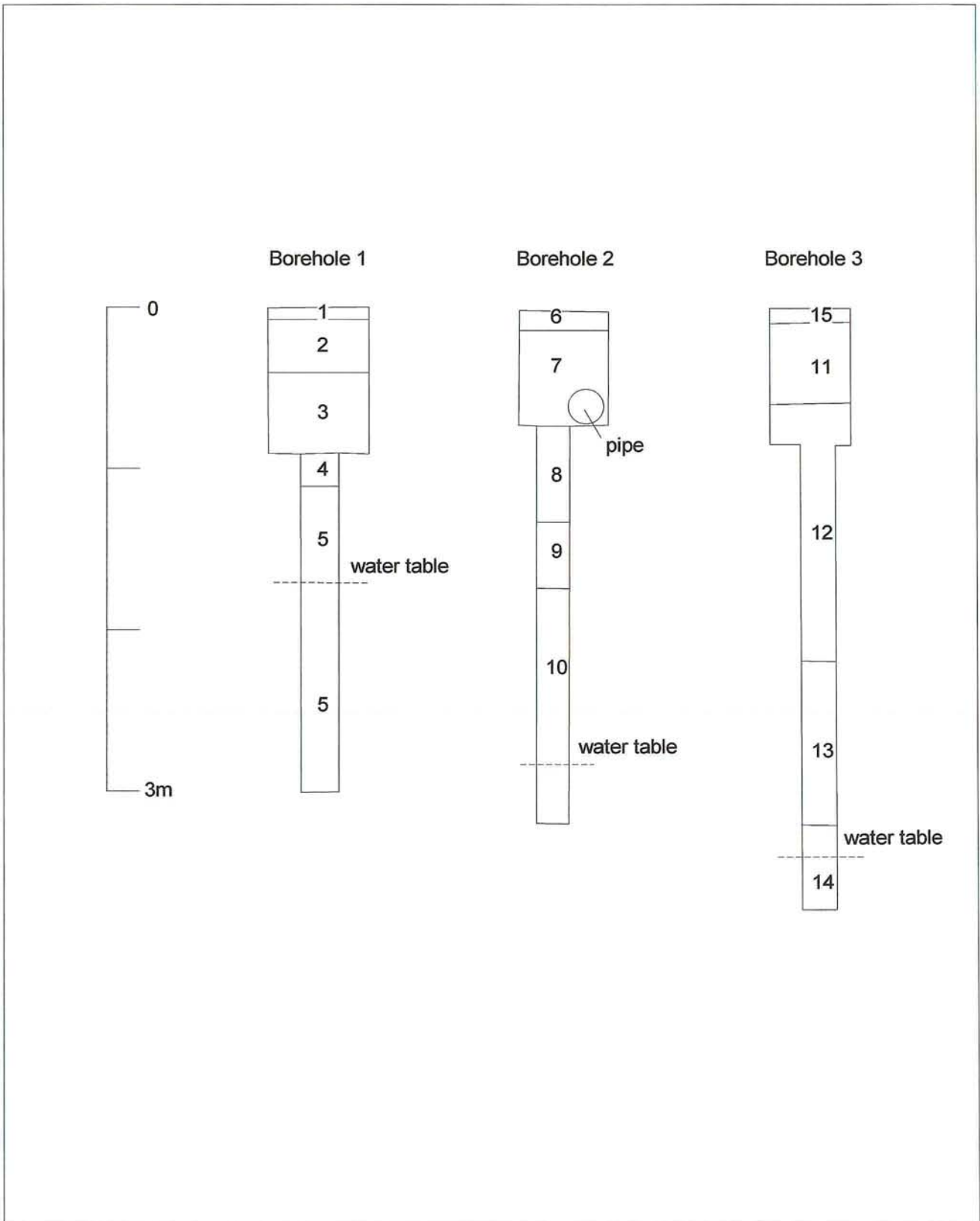


Fig. 2 Borehole profiles