

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Roman Roads in Mid and North-East Wales

The First Report



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Roman Roads in Mid and North-East Wales

The First Report

DESK-TOP ASSESSMENT

By BOB SILVESTER and WENDY OWEN

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Report for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
7a Church Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DL
Tel: 01938 553670; Fax: 01938 552179
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The Roman Roads of East and North-East Wales

The map of Roman Wales is disfigured by many gaps in our knowledge of the road system....(Jones 1959, 208)

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 The historic background

Roman roads have consistently had a fascination for antiquaries, for archaeologists and even for some who have had no abiding interest in any other aspect of antiquity. And without doubt they have a special appeal to the dilettante as well as the serious researcher.

As in almost every other region of the United Kingdom there is in eastern Wales a long tradition of 'identifying' and reporting on Roman roads, sometimes on the most flimsy of evidence. Edward Lhuyd in his *Parochialia* referred to Roman roads reported by his correspondents at the end of the 17th century, and these views were incorporated into later editions of Camden's *Britannia* (James 1991, 61). The works of our county historians such as Theophilus Jones in Breconshire and Jonathan Williams in neighbouring Radnorshire have their share of Roman road speculation. In 1777, for instance, John Strange had argued for a road between Brecon Gaer and Carmarthen on the northern side of the Usk, while Theophilus Jones contended that it ran along the south side (Jones-Davies 1975, 8). Two hundred years later the argument still seems unsettled. Nash Williams favoured Strange's approach while Jones-Davies himself leaned towards the southern route as a result of some new discoveries (1975, 9), whilst keeping all the options open by positing the possibility of two routes.

The great Wiltshire antiquary, Richard Colt Hoare, considered Roman roads in his work on Giraldu Cambrensis' tour of Wales with Archbishop Baldwin at the end of the 12th century (James 1991, 55), and his manuscript notebooks at Stourhead (Wilts) contain assembled reports and jottings, some of which would repay closer attention, even today (S Briggs: pers comm.). And, with its antiquarian flavour, the term 'Sarn Helen' has been used extensively, almost as Heather James puts it as a 'generic term for Roman roads' (1991, 57). A detailed consideration of the term can be found in an unpublished paper by Richard Morgan (1986).

The first general account of the Roman roads throughout Britain seems to have been prepared by Thomas Codrington in 1903 and reflected the state of knowledge on the road system at the beginning of the 20th century (Margary 1973, 30). The appearance of the Ordnance Survey's first *Map of Roman Britain* (1924) also provided a visual if small-scale picture of the road network as it was then known – the 5th edition of this map appeared very recently in 2001. Periodically, too, other contributions to the identification of Roman roads appeared in print, some derivative, some incorporating more original fieldwork. W J Hemp of the Welsh Royal Commission, for instance, reported on the road from Chester to Caernarvon in an appendix to Wheeler's *Segontium* report (Hemp 1923). Rarely, however, were the courses of particular roads described in any great degree of detail, not surprisingly perhaps as the minutiae of road alignments would not have been of any great interest to the average reader. An article by H E Forrest in 1928 in a little known periodical is typical of the genre, yet it is also symptomatic of the interest in Roman roads that the now defunct Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club, which published his article in its journal, had its own Romans Roads Committee (Forrest 1928, 97).

It was Ivan Margary, of course, who produced the classic statement on the Roman roads of Britain, detailing the results of much first-hand fieldwork and also synthesising the work of others in the first edition of his *magnum opus* which was published in 1955, and revised in 1967 and again in 1973. This forms the basis of any serious study of the road network, even though work has progressed considerably since then.

Codrington and then Margary are seen as the main contributors to the overall picture of roads in Wales. This is to ignore, though perhaps wisely, the efforts of S. O'Dwyer who in the 1930s produced a series of small booklets on the roads in different counties (1934a; 1934b; 1935; 1936; 1937). O'Dwyer offered little detail and it is fairly evident that his proposed routes owed more, at least initially to the study of large-scale Ordnance Survey maps than to fieldwork on the ground. Certainly this was the case with his roads in Radnorshire as he admitted (O'Dwyer 1936, 35).

Even at the time when the first booklet appeared – on Denbighshire and Flintshire – one senses a degree of unease with at least some of O'Dwyer's conclusions in the words of G. E. Evans who penned the foreword. It is unclear whether Margary was even aware of O'Dwyer and time has not looked favourably on his work. The Royal Commission have been fairly critical of O'Dwyer's suggestions in Brecknock (RCAHMW 1986), while in that first booklet on north-east Wales twelve routes were described, less than half of which are now given any consideration by more recent authorities. No attempt has been made here to follow up all of O'Dwyer's routes, although there can be no doubt that the detailed analysis adopted by RCAHMW in Brecknock might usefully be undertaken in the other Welsh counties.

In the 1970s and early 1980s the Ordnance Survey set out to assess the authenticity of Roman roads, not only those recorded by Ivan Margary, but those postulated by other researchers. Presumably this was part of a concerted programme of work throughout England and Wales that was perhaps related to the production of a new edition of the Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain, though we have not sought to verify that this programme was countrywide. The work was not published in any detail, but where it seemed appropriate the recorded evidence was integrated on to modern published Ordnance Survey maps. More importantly, detailed notes on and accompanying manuscript 'Linear Site' strip maps were prepared and these offer what are without any doubt the most thorough records of Roman roads throughout the Principality.

From the 1960s onwards there has also been a greater emphasis on defining single roads. Bill Putnam has produced a set of articles on the roads in and around Montgomeryshire, Professor Barri Jones, before his death in 1999, worked assiduously, on various road lines, and more recently Hugh Toller has made considerable progress on the elucidation of several mid-Wales roads. Richard Morgan, the archivist and place-name specialist, conducted some research on possible roads around Castell Collen, but his report (1986) remained in typescript and was never published. And at the same time published commentaries of greater or lesser detail have come from the likes of A H A Hogg (1973)

Roman road studies have advanced in some regions more quickly than others. The Royal Commission's work in Brecknock (1986) provides a detailed record and analysis which could only be superseded (for some routes) by very much more detailed fieldwork and aerial photo analysis, and in this context it is interesting to note the recent work of the RCAHMW on mapping from aerial photography features such as quarry pits associated with the road from Brecon Gaer across Mynydd Illtyd (T Driver: *pers comm.*).

In north-east Wales, there has been commensurately less work on Roman roads. Edmund Waddelove has over a period of more than twenty years worked on Roman routes, almost a lone voice in the region, and his series of articles has culminated in a recently published volume, *The Roman Roads of North Wales. Recent Discoveries* (1999). No one can doubt Waddelove's enthusiasm or integrity, but the fact remains that much of what he has written needs to be verified by much more detailed analysis, and possibly this may only be achieved through excavation as Hugh Toller pointed out in his review of Waddelove's volume (Toller 1998, 246). Certainly it is fairly clear from plotting Waddelove's roads that his discoveries are extremely dependent on the identification of straight alignments of modern roads, lanes and tracks, and on similar field boundaries and paths (as for instance in his newly identified road that ran from the Corwen area to St Asaph). These may be quite acceptable but there are assumptions which require attention.

In other parts of Wales work has also been intermittent. For Carmarthenshire, Heather James' excellent essay on the roads of the old county (1991) establishes a baseline for that area. Work continues on the road network west of Carmarthen with recent discoveries by the RCAHMW and others. The situation in the south-east of Wales has been assessed in a straightforward desk-top exercise by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (Pearson 2002). But elsewhere little appears to be happening. More generally, however, Roman roads continue to exert a fascination, with books being published fairly regularly. That by Hugh Davies (2002) is only the most recent of what will undoubtedly be a continuing stream.

1.2 Roads: the current situation

The pattern of those Roman roads that have been accepted as authentic has been constructed over many years of work. Individual roads tend to be proposed and worked on by solitary fieldworkers, though occasionally there have been group forays (e.g. the 'expedition' led by Barri Jones in 1956 to identify the road that ran westwards from Caer Gai in Merionnydd (Jones 1959). But most are authenticated not only by incontrovertible physical evidence (whether provided by the original fieldworker, by subsequent researchers and particularly in the past this meant the Ordnance Survey's field investigators, or by the aerial photographer) and also by the approbation of the fieldworker's peers.

The identification and elucidation of specific roads can take years of sustained if intermittent effort, with the fieldworker returning to the line of the route again and again to fill in gaps and look at the evidence under different vegetation or climatic conditions. The route from Caersws to Bala, for instance, has been worked on for a considerable period of time by Barri Jones, Bill Putnam and Hugh Toller, individually and collectively (Putnam and Toller 2001). For the southern stages Jones (1961) was able to draw on a manuscript of 1760 which had been consulted by Richard Colt Hoare in the early 19th century (Jones 1961, 184). Jones' initial research on the route was then modified and refined by both Putnam and the Ordnance Survey to produce the picture we have today, yet a significant proportion of the route, particularly further to the north, has still to be identified.

Roman roads will on occasions generate a level of debate and diatribe rarely matched in other subject areas of archaeology. In this region the Roman road which John Rigg and Hugh Toller proposed from Long Mountain to Mallwyd and Dolgellau (Merionnydd) was the cause of considerable acrimony. Rigg and Toller published their views in the national journal *Brtiannia* (1983) and three years later in a hard-hitting but seemingly relatively fair re-assessment David Browne dismissed the Roman identification. Much of what followed remains outside the public domain, but it appears that John Rigg was sufficiently aggrieved to write not only to the Royal Commission but to the Welsh Office. Other specialists have accepted Browne's refutation, Hugh Toller himself also accepting in print that this route cannot be authenticated (1999).

Published works, perhaps not surprisingly, tend to depict a unified and over-simplified picture of the road network. Taken at face value, Heather James' maps of the road network over the whole of Wales and in greater detail of the south-west of the country (1991, figs 1 & 2) project an ordered pattern onto the map of the Principality. Much the same can be said of A.H.A.Hogg's predictive map (1973, 8), as well as the more recent publications by the Ordnance Survey (2000) and Hugh Davies (2002a; 2002b). Tidy as these are, they are misleading in practice. The courses of few, if any, roads are known in their entirety, and alternative lines for some have been proposed and argued over, yet have never been properly resolved. David Browne's excellent analysis of the road network in Brecknock illustrates well the complexities of the subject, once one moves from the general to the specific (RCAHMW 1986).

The overall picture of the road network in Powys is far from complete and many problems remain unresolved. But it has benefited from the efforts of researchers over the last thirty years and in this respect the situation is reasonably healthy. In contrast, north-east Wales has seen little work other than the solitary efforts of Edmund Waddelove. Much in this area remains to be properly authenticated.

1.3 Roman Forts and Roads

There is an intimate relationship between the forts that were established in Wales in the early years of the Roman Conquest and the roads that linked them (Arnold and Davies 2000, 10). This has been long understood and hardly needs to be elaborated here (see for instance James 1991, 53). As Jeff Davies has stated recently: 'Lying some 17-20 km apart, and linked by an all-weather strategic road system, the garrison posts would have been mutually supporting, with any really serious trouble being tackled by a concentration of auxiliary regiments...' (Arnold and Davies 200, 16). But as he goes on to say 'properly surveyed and engineered long-distance roads on the other hand must have been truly instrumental in opening up the region, supplementing existing and facilitating not only the needs of military transport and supply – their primary function – but thereafter all types of traffic, including the conveyance of newly won minerals and, importantly the distribution of a wide range of consumer goods. [But] there is no evidence that roads in Wales were anything other than military in origin...' (Arnold and Davies 2000, 35).

The relationship, however, can be developed further for it allows much opportunity for speculation on where 'missing' forts might exist (Hogg 1973, 12). Jarratt pointed out that the average distance between forts 'certainly linked by roads and occupied simultaneously' was around 20 km, although the gap of 37 km between Caerhun and Caernarfon was at the periphery of what might be considered reasonable (Jarrett 1969, 145). In east and north-east Wales Hogg tentatively suggested missing forts at or near Trecastell (SN880290), near Sychnant (SN 980775) both in Brecknock, near Llanerfyl at the Banwy crossing or Dolanog near the Vyrnwy crossing in Montgomeryshire, perhaps near Druid (SJ 044437) in modern Denbighshire and near Minera at SJ 245527 in Wrexham, and near the north coast at Betws yn Rhos (SH 908722) in Conwy and near Halkyn (SJ 223703) in Flintshire. Davies, too, has suggested such forts in the Upper Dee valley, west of Corwen, and in the upper reaches of the Banwy, or more likely the Vyrnwy (Arnold and Davies 2000, 16).

The corollary to this is that the confirmation of a Roman fort ought to imply the presence of at least one road serving it. Thus the discovery of the fort at Greensforge near Stourbridge in the western Midlands spurred Houghton into seeking a road westwards into central Wales (Houghton 1967/70). Needless to say he found it. Nevertheless as both Cae Gaer above the Wye Valley to the west of Llangurig, and Colwyn Castle in Radnorshire have no associated roads, their absence might be a spur for further fieldwork and investigation.

It is generally assumed that the road network is incomplete and that much remains to be discovered (Arnold and Davies 2000, 37). But as Davies points out 'logic suggests that the network was conceived and built as soon as was practicable after the establishment of the Flavian garrison posts. That this was a long-term task, which in some cases was left incomplete, is vouched for by the existence of what may be unfinished roads, for example near Cae Gaer in mid Wales' (Arnold and Davies 2000, 38). Some roads of course did have a life after the Roman military had moved on. The principal routes were used by the *cursus publicus* or imperial courier service) and this necessitated *mansiones* (post-stations) at regular intervals (Arnold and Davies 2000, 39).

1.4 Defining Roman roads and the evidence for them

A H A Hogg pointed out (1973, 16) that roads can usually be distinguished as either 'certain' or 'uncertain/inferred'. For some purposes exact definition of the line of a road might not be important, the significant aspect being its general alignment, and this premise of course enables the various general maps of the Roman road network to be compiled. But for other purposes, including the current research precision is required.

The Royal Commission (1986, 157) adduced five kinds of evidence in the identification of roads, namely excavated sections, surviving raised causeways (*aggers*), crop- or parchmarks, milestones and Roman techniques of road construction and their relation to the topography.(see also James 1991, 57).

Missing from the list above is, of course, the fossilisation of Roman roads beneath later road lines. Heather James (1991) for instance has made use of Emmanuel Bowen's map of 1729 which in its compilation pre-dates the majority of turnpike road constructions. In many instances fossilization is a fall-back position, beloved by some road researchers more than others. Cynical it may appear to the reader, but to us there does appear to be a tendency to assume that if a road is not manifested in any physical form, it must be overlain fairly precisely by a later road. This is well seen in the coast road that reputedly runs from Chester towards St Asaph. In general there are fundamental implications about longevity and continuity which cannot really be considered here, but it seems to be true that in north-east Wales where the road system is rather more poorly known than in east central Wales, there is also considerably more dependency on modern roads as guides to Roman predecessors.

Yet the converse may also be true. It is interesting that Barri Jones was of the opinion, early in his career, that the road north of Caersws was 'by far the most difficult of the [Caersws] roads to trace as its course lies mainly across moorland and cuts directly across the existing valley and communication system' (Jones 1961, 178).

2. THE ROMAN ROAD STUDY

2.1 Introduction

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust has had a long-standing interest in Roman roads, accumulating information and ideas from a variety of sources over quite a few years. A start was made on systematising the data some years ago, but this work was not completed. However, our aspirations were given further impetus by recent developments at Cambria Archaeology whose work on the Roman road network in south-west Wales has informed the recently published new edition of the Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain.

The primary aims of the current Cadw-funded project are twofold. Firstly, there is a considerable amount of data available on the Roman road network for north-east and east Wales, but it is disparate, of variable quality and not all of it is readily available. Ordnance Survey records and manuscript mapping offered a starting point, particularly for Powys, and the use of the computerised Geographical Information System (GIS) has enabled us to record details of all the component sections of each road, whether confirmed or predicted, to a common and consistent standard. The quantity of available data is far from insignificant, and we estimate that we have either created or checked some 891 records. The overall aim has been to establish baseline data for all roads in the region, which can then be used, interrogated and enhanced by CPAT and by other organisations and individuals in the future. For the SMR this will also provide a previously unobtainable tool for planning purposes. At the same time we are conscious that Roman roads can generate particularly strong feelings amongst those involved in their identification and study, so our approach, so we believe, has been as even-handed as possible throughout.

Secondly, a cursory examination of the SMR reveals that a remarkably small number of stretches of Roman road are scheduled: we believe that the number may be no more than three, all in Brecknock. A second aim of the project is, therefore, to identify further lengths of road, which would benefit from statutory protection. Fieldwork is, of course, necessary to inform any recommendations, and this is currently an on-going programme. It will form the subject of a second, subsequent report.

This report is primarily a gazetteer, its sheer size demonstrating the number of roads and the variations on those roads, that exist in mid and north-east Wales. And in turn this gazetteer is a paper copy of the data that are now available in electronic form. Those electronic data are, of course, considerably fuller, and offers the opportunity for more academic analyses, such as determining how many miles of incontrovertible Roman road continue to survive as recognisable earthworks. It is hoped that some analysis may be incorporated into the next report, when the fieldwork programme has been completed.

2.2 Methodology

The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) forms the starting point for any study of this nature and initially it was interrogated to produce a project database of all sites which were potentially Roman in date. This included sites where the most likely interpretation (*i.e.* Period 1) was not necessarily Roman, but where other, less likely interpretations (Periods 2 to 3) fell within the scope of the study. For example, the SMR includes a number of roads and tracks which are likely to be post-medieval in origin, but for which an alternative genesis in the Roman era has or might be postulated.

The initial extract produced 1201 sites, which were reassessed, taking into account the SMR description and any readily available published or other written sources. Using GIS, the distribution of various site types was analysed with respect to the existing digital mapping of Roman roads. Particular attention was paid to the relationship between the Roman road network,

forts and other military sites, and settlement evidence. The distribution of Roman finds was also analysed.

Two sources of baseline data were available to the project and these have provided basic digital mapping for some Roman roads in the region. Information for Powys, recorded by the Ordnance Survey and derived from the work of their own Field Investigators as well as other archaeologists and some antiquarian sources, was passed to the Trust in the form of a series of annotated maplets, some considerable time ago, and probably in the 1980s. Some of these data had previously been partially transferred into the GIS by temporary staff in the SMR. The equivalent linear mapping by Ordnance Survey staff in the former county of Clwyd was provided by the National Monuments Record after consultation with the Ordnance Survey.

The so-called “linear files” that contain these maps, continued to be compiled by the Ordnance Survey for their own mapping purposes into the 1980s, until RCAHMW took over the archaeological responsibilities of the Ordnance Survey in 1984 (RCAHMW 1994). An invaluable index of the information in these files was compiled by D. Percival (RCAHMW 1994)

The second set of mapping, this digital, was also made available through the good offices of the National Monuments Record, having been compiled by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments (RCAHMW) to inform the dataset used for the new Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain (2001).

Much of the current project has been conducted through the medium of the GIS, due to the nature of the study and the available data. The digital mapping provided by the SMR was methodically checked and enhanced to produce a consistent set of digital data for Roman roads in the region. Principally, this took the form of checking the existing record against the original Ordnance Survey information and adding or amending the data as necessary. Additional information was then appended from the SMR point data, such as evidence from excavations and surveys, as well as information from existing aerial photographic plotting.

Each Roman road has been digitised as a series of generally adjoining segments, defined in relation to the information that exists for their form and survival. Where information has been taken from the Ordnance Survey files the depicted line-style has normally been accepted as indicating either known or proposed lengths of road, except where there is more recent evidence. Each segment has been given a PRN and data have been attached to the record including, for example, which road line it is part of, the length of the segment, its form, condition, status and survival. The latter two fields have been recorded according to a classification devised specifically for this project (see Appendix 2).

2.3 Roads: their names and numbers

Roman roads tend to be known either by numbers or by paired names. The latter are usually named according to the forts that they linked, or sometimes the point where they branch off an existing road. The former, which are primarily a legacy of Ivan Margary’s work, offer the most precise mechanism for road reference, but equally the least memorable. With the proliferation of prefixes to numbers resulting from the identification or postulation of new roads, and given by different authorities the use of numbers has created a complex situation.

Ivan Margary provided the first numbered listing of Roman roads in Britain. The roads that he described are all prefixed with RR. Subsequently, other probable or possible roads were assessed by the Ordnance Survey. These all have the prefix RRX. Other roads which have subsequently been established or considered are prefixed RRN, a number system which is believed to have been introduced by David Percival of the RCAHMW in order to tidy up the loose ends in the former Ordnance Survey records. This system has been utilised and expanded by CPAT during

the current project in order to provide discrete numbers for now roads. A final category are the miscellaneous records held by RCAHMW for roads which do not appear to relate to any existing routes. These have been given the suffix RRZ by the Royal Commission (1994), and it is not known what validity they have, although at some stage in the future they may warrant some assessment.

2.4 Excluded roads

The work that follows focuses on those routes which have been presented in sufficient detail in either published or unpublished sources to be definable with relative accuracy on a modern map. We have dismissed some roads which can be attributed to antiquarian speculation and where there is little if any specific evidence. Furthermore that must have been many minor roads serving settlements and farms which can no longer be traced or at least distinguished, though they may appear in passing in published works. No attempt has been made to define these cartographically.

Excluded, too, are some roads which have acquired a false 'Roman' appellation in the past. One such is the 'Monks Road' between the medieval abbeys of Strata Florida and Cwmhir which has been claimed as Roman. O'Dwyer certainly thought of it as such, because the monks 'naturally made use of the pre-existing Roman track' (1936, 35). It is shown on the general illustrations (Figs 1-3, as RRX79b, Castell Collen to Trawscoed), but no detailed plot it has been presented here.

2.5 Layout of the Gazetteer

In the gazetteer we have defined cartographically each route according to two criteria: their status and their survival (see also Appendix 2 for definitions). Individual lengths of road have been distinguished and coded, according to these criteria (amongst others), the first one qualitative, the second morphological. A new figure number is given to each criterion for each road (i.e. the status and survival of a particular road will have consecutive numbers such as Fig 12 and 13), but where the route is lengthy and spreads across more than one illustration, decimal indicators are employed (i.e. Fig 12.1 and 12.2). Known, or in some cases, postulated Roman forts have also been shown on the maplets.

The map of each road or route is accompanied by a brief text which gives some idea of the reliability of the available information, the integrity of the road, and the sources that have been used. Each road is indicated by its Margary name, assuming one exists, or by its alternative numeric tag (see section 2.3 above). But at this stage no real analysis has been attempted, either of the individual roads, or of the overall road network.

The roads are ordered alphabetically, usually from east to west or from south to north, and no distinction has been made between those of east Wales (Powys) and those of north-east Wales (the old county of Clwyd). The accompanying tables that precede the gazetteer entries list these routes again in alphabetical order and then also by route name.

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Appendix 2 : The GIS Database developed for the Roman Roads project

The following list of fields has been developed in the Roman road table. It indicates that the level of data that has been entered (where available) for each section of road, based on the Ordnance Survey mapping or in some cases published records (e.g. Waddelove 1999) and supplemented by other sources where these provide useful additional information.

- PRN* = Standard Primary Record Number given to each length of a road, a length being distinguished by its homogeneity, consistent topographical setting etc.
- Part of* = PRN given to the complete length of the road between forts. Note that there may not be a direct one-to-one correspondence with Margary numbers because his roads do not always recognise forts.
- See also* = Used for PRNs which appear for point data in the Sites and Monuments Record applying to Roman roads in vicinity of polyline.
- Name* = Name by which the road is usually known, normally from the forts or more rarely the settlements at its termini.
- Road no* = Road number as given by Ivan Margary where appropriate, together with relevant prefix (RR). Note that where a road has been considered by the Ordnance Survey but not by Margary it is prefixed with RRX. In addition there are two other prefixes RRN and RRZ for which see RCAHMW 1994, i).
- NGR1* = 10-figure grid reference for the beginning of a particular section of road.
- NGR2* = 10-figure grid reference for the end of a particular section of road
- Type1* = Road or trackway. If a boundary, hedge line or other linear feature defines the feature, this will be entered here and *Road* in Type 2. When there is any doubt on the nature of the feature, i.e. the road is assumed rather than recognisable, a question mark may be added.
- Where a Roman road is postulated but there is no specific evidence for its existence *Type 1* may be entered as *Road ?* but *Period 1* will *Roman*.
- Period 1* = *Roman* or whatever is appropriate to the feature immediately visible as Type 1.
- Type 2* = *Trackway/boundary* or *Road* etc depending on present form and use of the feature. *Road* will be used where the presence of the road is assumed but is disguised by a later feature.
- Period 2* = Postulated date of the *Type 2* feature.

Fields relating to the current appearance of the road

Form (based on assessment of the available record)

i) Earthwork

ii) Document (where road has been identified but no indication of its nature; or known to have existed but subsequently destroyed)

- iii) Cropmark
- iv) Buried feature

Condition (based on subject assessment of existing record)

- i) Near intact. Site has suffered only minimal damage
- ii) Damaged. Site has suffered substantial damage
- iii) Near destroyed. Very little of site remains
- iv) Destroyed. No trace of site (above or below ground)
- v) Unknown. Condition not known, usually because of incompleteness of records

Survival (based normally on information provided in the most recent existing record or subjective assessment of that record)

- i) Earthwork. Surviving road showing as an earthwork
- ii) Fossilised. Used where road or road line is believed to have been adopted by a more recent road or hedge
- iii) Cropmark. Surviving road showing as a cropmark or soilmark
- iv) Buried. Identified only through probing or through geophysics
- v) Unknown. Survival not known, usually because of incompleteness of records

Status (based normally on existing record and our assessment of that record together with the overall integrity of line)

- i) Known. Extant earthwork or as well-recorded buried feature. Shown as solid lines on OS strip maps
- ii) Proposed. Conjectural sections either linking known segments or as hypothetical road alignments for which there is some physical evidence. Shown as dashed lines on OS strip maps, and where evidence is reasonably convincing
- iii) Predicted. Virtually no substantive evidence for a road other than someone's belief and/or conjectural road alignment with no known traces. Where the authenticity of a road is in significant doubt this is the highest level of status that can be achieved.
- iv) Discounted. Where a road has subsequently been disproved by a reliable authority or where an alternative line has now been accepted

Physical details

<i>Length</i> =	Established from the terminal points of the section on the GIS map to the nearest 0.1m
<i>Width</i> =	Field used only exceptionally where reliable information exists
<i>Source</i> =	<i>OS linear mapping</i> denotes data from the strip maps. Other sources are titled as appropriate. A list of abbreviations supplements this field.
<i>Real</i> =	An Indicator –either <i>T</i> or <i>F</i> - of whether the road section was accepted by the OS as a genuine Roman road. It has not been filled in consistently, particularly where a road has been better researched or newly identified since the OS's work.
<i>Short text</i> =	Existing text already entered into the field from the OS strip maps (see above)
<i>New text</i> =	Supplementary text added during this project, either from the strip maps (where previously omitted) or as a qualifier to what appears in the <i>Short text</i>

Administrative details

<i>Drawing = method</i>	Freehand
<i>Scale</i> =	1:10,000
<i>Drawn in</i> =	Mapinfo (computer programme)
<i>Compiler</i> =	Initials of the originator of first electronic record
<i>Date</i> =	Date of the first electronic record
<i>Editor</i> =	Initials of person making most recent amendment to the specific record
<i>Update</i> =	Date of most recent amendment to the specific record

Appendix 3: Scheduled Roman Roads and Excavations

A) Roman Roads: Scheduled Lengths

RR622 PRN 14156 Scheduled section Br074

RR622 PRN 14118 Scheduled section Br224

RR622 PRN 47077 Scheduled section Br225

B) Excavations

The following excavations are known to have produced positive results of Roman roads. It must be stressed that this is not exhaustive, and some excavations may have escaped our attention.

RR62aa At SO 00923030 by R E M Wheeler in 1924 or 1925

RR62aa At SO 00452998 by R E M Wheeler in 1924 or 1925

R62b Between SN 838305 and SN 835308 by Mrs E Alcock in 1956 (RCAHMW 1986, 171)

RR64 West of Caersws by CPAT in 1999 by R Hankinson.

RR67a Chester - St Asaph. At SJ 10777557 by CPAT in 2002

RR67a Chester - St Asaph. At c.SJ 10307548. Excavator and date uncertain.

RR67b St Asaph – Caerhun. At SH 93327454 (OS info.) or SH93347454 (Waddelove 1983, 97). By E W Williams in 1963

RR622 Coelbren to Brecon Gaer. At SN 91821576 by C Fox in 1940 (RCAHMW 1986, 161)

RR622 Coelbren to Brecon Gaer. At SN 96072569 by G D B Jones (RCAHMW 1986, 161)

RR622 Coelbren to Brecon Gaer. Between SN 94022327 and SN 93972322 by G D B Jones

RR623 Camarthen - Castell Collen. Between SN 93245144 and SN 93015129 by G D B Jones

RR642 Caersws - Banwy Valley. Between SO 04429836 and SO 04619919

RRX58 Glanfeinion section at SO 0148 8602

RRX121 Corwen to St Asaph. Between SJ 13425272 and SJ 13415382 by CPAT in 1993.

RRX121 Corwen to St Asaph. At SJ10294796 by E Waddelove in c.1977 (Waddelove 1979, 5)

Gazetteer

Table 1: Roman Roads ordered by name

Name	Counties	PRN	Margary/ OS nos	RCAHMW (1986/1994)	CPAT no	Fig no
Abergavenny - Brecon Gaer	Brecons	11100	RR62a			4/5
Balderton – Holywell	Flints	47800	RR67aa			6/7
Beulah eastwards	Brecons		RRX87			
Beulah westwards	Brecons		RRX85			
Bishopsmoat - Forden Gaer	Monts		RRX82g			
Brecon Gaer - Glan Camddwr	Brecons	47300		RR6	RRN10	8/9
Brecon Gaer - Llandovery	Brecons	11300	RR62b	RR5		10/11
Bronllys northwards	Brecons		RRX89			32/33
Caerphilly - Llanfrynach	Brecons					
Caersws - Pennal via Penycrocbren	Monts	11400	RRX63			16/17
Caersws - Caer Gai	Monts	14300	RR642			12/13
Caersws - north-north-westwards	Monts				RRN13	
Caersws - Pennal	Monts	14400	RR643			14/15
Caersws - Trawscoed	Monts		RRX82d			
Caersws - Trefeglwys	Monts	11700	RR64			16/17
Cardiff - Castell Collen	Brecons/Rads	14000	RR621	RR6		18/19
Carno - Penycrocbren	Monts	11500	RRX63a			20/21
Castell Collen - Cae-gaer	Rads	45000	RRX79a			
Castell Collen - Caersws	Rads/Monts	47200	RRX58			22/23
Castell Collen - Trawscoed	Rads	45100	RRX79b			
Chester - Ffrith - Caer Gai	Flints/Denbs	47900	RR66a			24/25
Chester - St Asaph	Flints	46800	RR67a			26/27
Clyro - Castell Collen	Rads		RRX82a			
Clyro - Painscastle	Rads		RRX82b			
Coelbren - Brecon Gaer	Brecons	14100	RR622			28/29
Coelbren – Carmarthen	Brecons					
Coelbren – Llandovery	Brecons		RRX84			
Coelbren - Penydarren	Brecons		RRX86			
Corwen - St Asaph	Denbs	48000	RRX121			30/31
Cwmdu - Llyswn	Brecons	14710	RRX88			32/33
Dolgellau - Machynlleth - Pennal	Monts	11800	RR69b			
Forden Gaer - Caersws	Monts	11700	RR64			34/35
Forden Gaer -Caer Gai	Monts		RRX61			
Greensforge - Bishopsmoat - Newtown	Monts		RR193			
Hindwell - Penybont	Rads	47700			RRN14	36/37
Holt road	Flints		RR660			
Kenchester - Brecon Gaer	Brecons	11200	RR62aa	RR4		38/39
Kenchester - Rhydspence-Brecon	Brecons	11600	RR63b	RR4		40/41
Leintwardine - Bleddfa	Rads	14800	RRX76a			42/43

Table 1: Roman Roads ordered by name (cont)

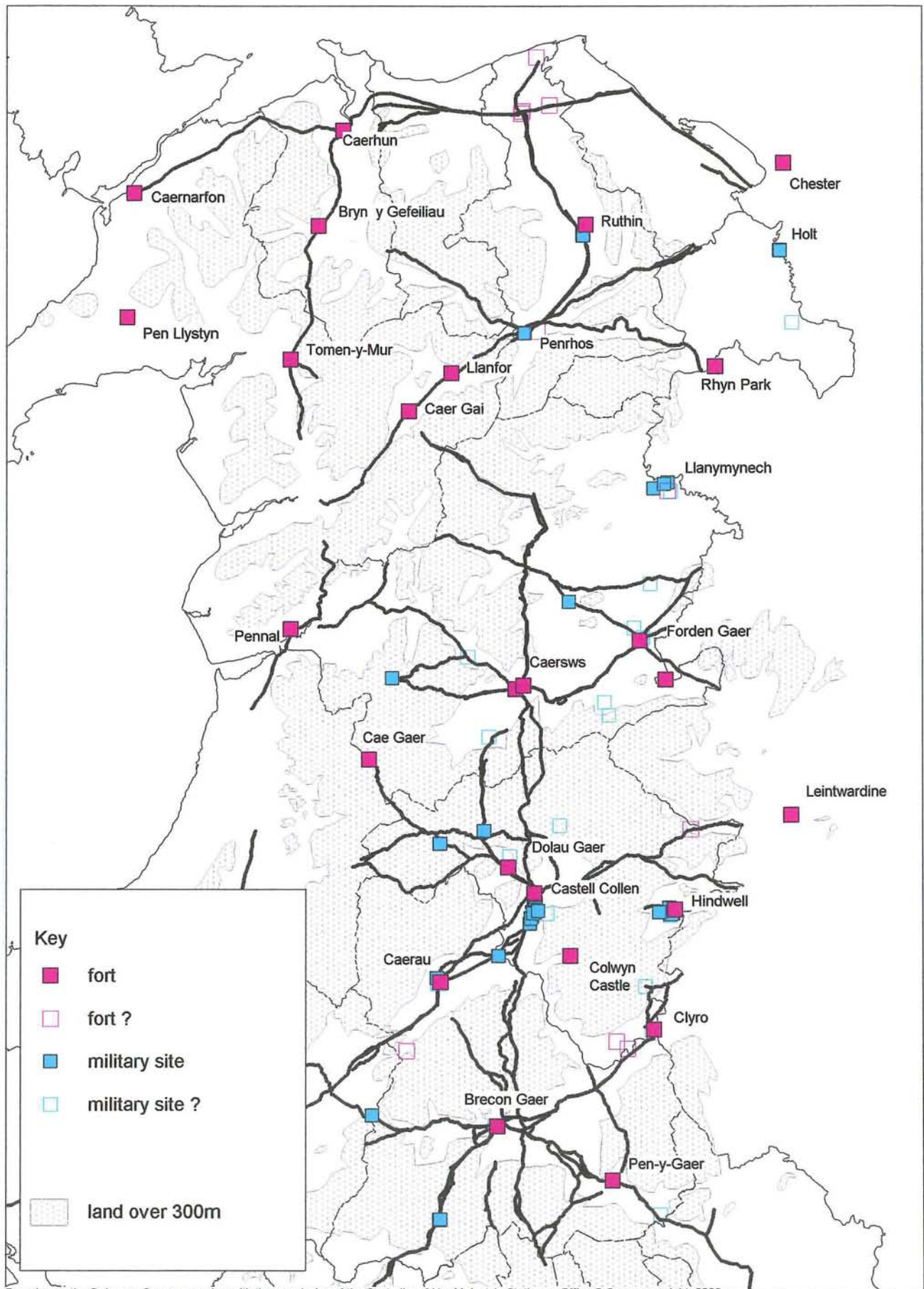
Name	Counties	PRN	Margary/ OS nos	RCAHMW (1986/1994)	CPAT no	Fig no
Llandovery-Beulah-Castell Collen	Brechs/Rads	14200	RRX623	RR7		44/45
Llanrhaeadr - Dolwar Hall	Denbs		RRX82m			
Llanrhaeadr - Rhyn Park	Monts		RRX82j			
Llanrhaeadr northwards	Denbs		RRX82k			
Long Mountain - Mallwyd	Monts	47101			RRN11	46/47
Lydham - Snead - Forden Gaer - Dolgellau	Monts	11900	RRX73			48/49
Mallwyd - Cemmaes Road	Monts	47600			RRN12	50/51
Mortimer's Cross - Castell Collen	Rads	14700	RRX76			52/53
Mortimer's Cross - Clyro	Rads	14600	RRX75			54/55
Penydarren - Brecon Gaer			RRX82c			
Penydarren - Usk Valley	Brechs	14900	RRX77			56/57
Rhyn Park - Rug	Denbs	47500			RRN8	58/59
Rug - Caer Llugwy	Denbs	48200			RRN15	60/61
St Asaph - Caerhun	Flints/Denbs	46800	RR67b			62/63
St Asaph - Meliden	Denbs	48100			RRN16	64/65
St Harmon road	Rads		RRN6			
Taf Fechan - Llanfrynach	Brechs	45200	RR620			66/67
Trecastle - Carmarthen			RRX82e			
Wroxeter - Long Mountain - Forden Gaer	Monts	11700	RR64			68/69
Wroxeter - Westbury - Forden Gaer	Monts	47111	RR64			68/69

Table 2: Roman Roads ordered by number

No	Name	Counties	PRN	Fig no
	Caerphilly - Llanfrynach	Breccs		
	Coelbren – Carmarthen	Breccs		
RR6 RRN10	Brecon Gaer - Glan Camddwr	Breccs	47300	8/9
RR62a	Abergavenny - Brecon Gaer	Breccs	11100	4/5
RR62aa RR4	Kenchester - Brecon Gaer	Breccs	11200	38/39
RR62b RR5	Brecon Gaer - Llandovery	Breccs	11300	10/11
RR63b RR4	Kenchester - Rhydspence-Brecon	Breccs	11600	40/41
RR64	Caersws - Trefeglwys	Monts	11700	16/17
RR64	Forden Gaer - Caersws	Monts	11700	34/35
RR64	Wroxeter - Long Mountain - Forden Gaer	Monts	11700	68/69
RR64	Wroxeter - Westbury - Forden Gaer	Monts	47111	68/69
RR66a	Chester - Ffrith - Caer Gai	Flints/Denbs	47900	24/25
RR67a	Chester - St Asaph	Flints	46800	26/27
RR67aa	Balderton – Holywell	Flints	47800	6/7
RR67b	St Asaph - Caerhun	Flints/Denbs	46800	62/63
RR69b	Dolgellau - Machynlleth -Pennal	Monts	11800	
RR193	Greensforge - Bishopsmoat - Newtown	Monts		
RR620	Taf Fechan - Llanfrynach	Breccs	45200	66/67
RR621 RR6	Cardiff - Castell Collen	Breccs/Rads	14000	18/19
RR622	Coelbren - Brecon Gaer	Breccs	14100	28/29
RR643	Caersws - Pennal	Monts	14400	14/15
RR660	Holt road	Flints		
RRN6	St Harmon road	Rads		
RRN8	Rhyn Park - Rug	Denbs	47500	58/59
RRN11	Long Mountain - Mallwyd	Monts	47101	46/47
RRN12	Mallwyd - Cemmaes Road	Monts	47600	50/51
RRN13	Caersws - north-north-westwards	Monts		
RRN14	Hindwell - Penybont	Rads	47700	36/37
RRN15	Rug - Caer Llugwy	Denbs	48200	60/61
RRN16	St Asaph - Meliden	Denbs	48100	64/65
RRX58	Castell Collen - Caersws	Rads/Monts	47200	22/23
RRX61	Forden Gaer -Caer Gai	Monts		
RRX63	Caersws - Pennal via Penycrocbren	Monts	11400	16/17
RRX63a	Carno - Penycrocbren	Monts	11500	20/21
RRX73/	Lydham - Snead - Forden Gaer - Dolgellau	Monts	11900	48/49
RRX75	Mortimer's Cross - Clyro	Rads	14600	54/55
RRX76	Mortimer's Cross - Castell Collen	Rads	14700	52/53
RRX76a	Leintwardine - Bleddfa	Rads	14800	42/43
RRX77	Penydarren - Usk Valley	Breccs	14900	56/57
RRX79a	Castell Collen - Cae-gaer	Rads	45000	
RRX79b	Castell Collen - Trawscoed	Rads	45100	
RRX82a	Clyro - Castell Collen	Rads		
RRX82b	Clyro - Painscastle	Rads		
RRX82c	Penydarren - Brecon Gaer	Breccs		
RRX82d	Caersws - Trawscoed	Monts		
RRX82e	Trecastle - Carmarthen	Breccs		

Table 2: Roman Roads ordered by number (cont)

No	Name	Counties	PRN	Fig no
RRX82g	Bishopsmoat - Forden Gaer	Monts		
RRX82j	Llanrhaeadr - Rhyn Park	Monts		
RRX82k	Llanrhaeadr northwards	Denbs		
RRX82m	Llanrhaeadr - Dolwar Hall	Denbs		
RRX84	Coelbren – Llandovery	Brecks		
RRX85	Beulah westwards	Brecks		
RRX86	Coelbren - Penydarren	Brecks		
RRX87	Beulah eastwards	Brecks		
RRX88	Cwmdu - Llyswen	Brecks	14710	32/33
RRX89	Bronllys northwards	Brecks		32/33
RRX121	Corwen - St Asaph	Denbs	48000	30/31
RRX623 RR7	Llandovery-Beulah-Castell Collen	Brecks/Rads	14200	44/45



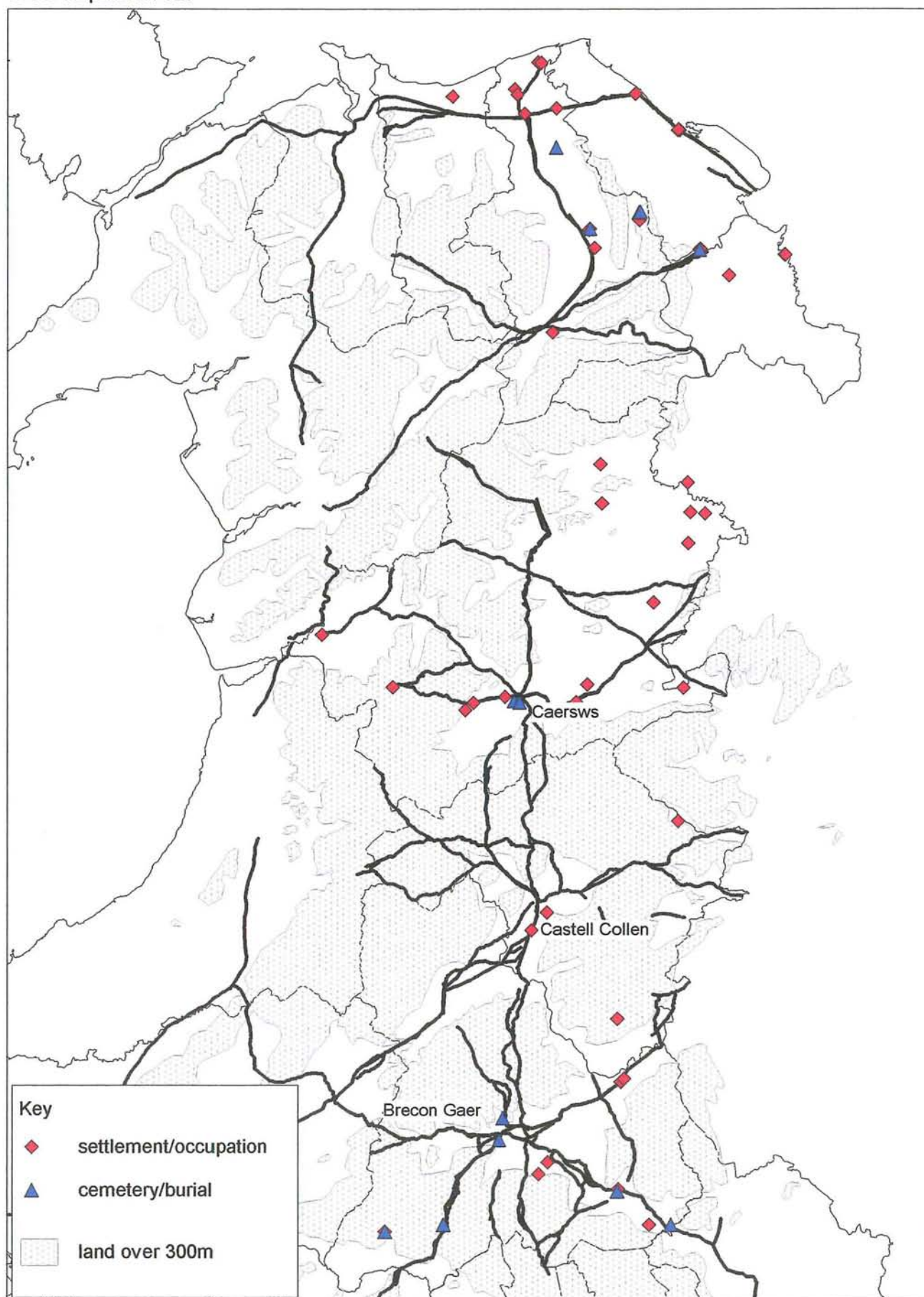
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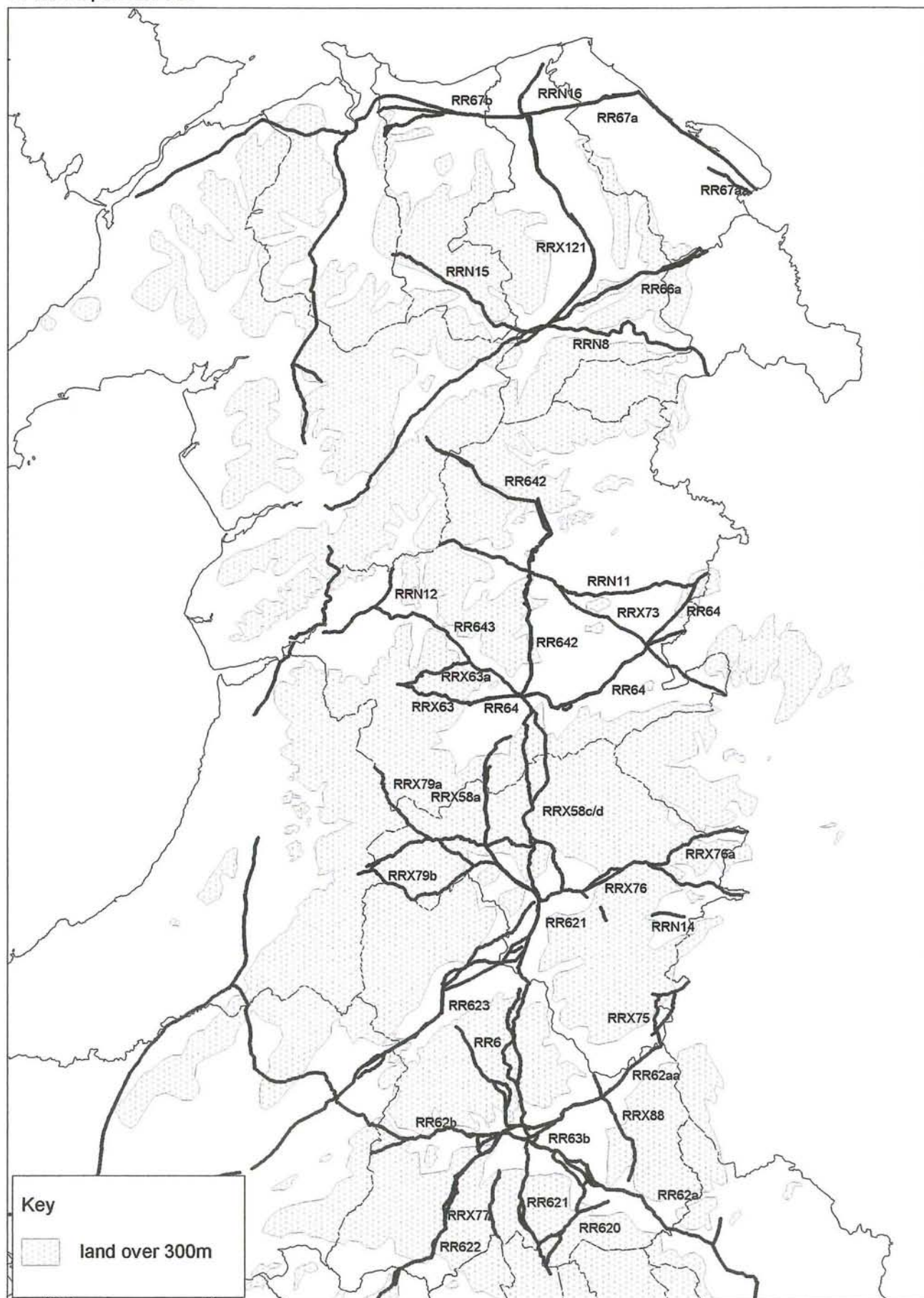
Fig. 1 Roman roads and the distribution of known and possible Roman forts



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Fig. 2 Roman roads and known settlements



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Fig. 3 Roman roads

Appendices

Abergavenny to Brecon Gaer

Margary RR62a PRN 11100

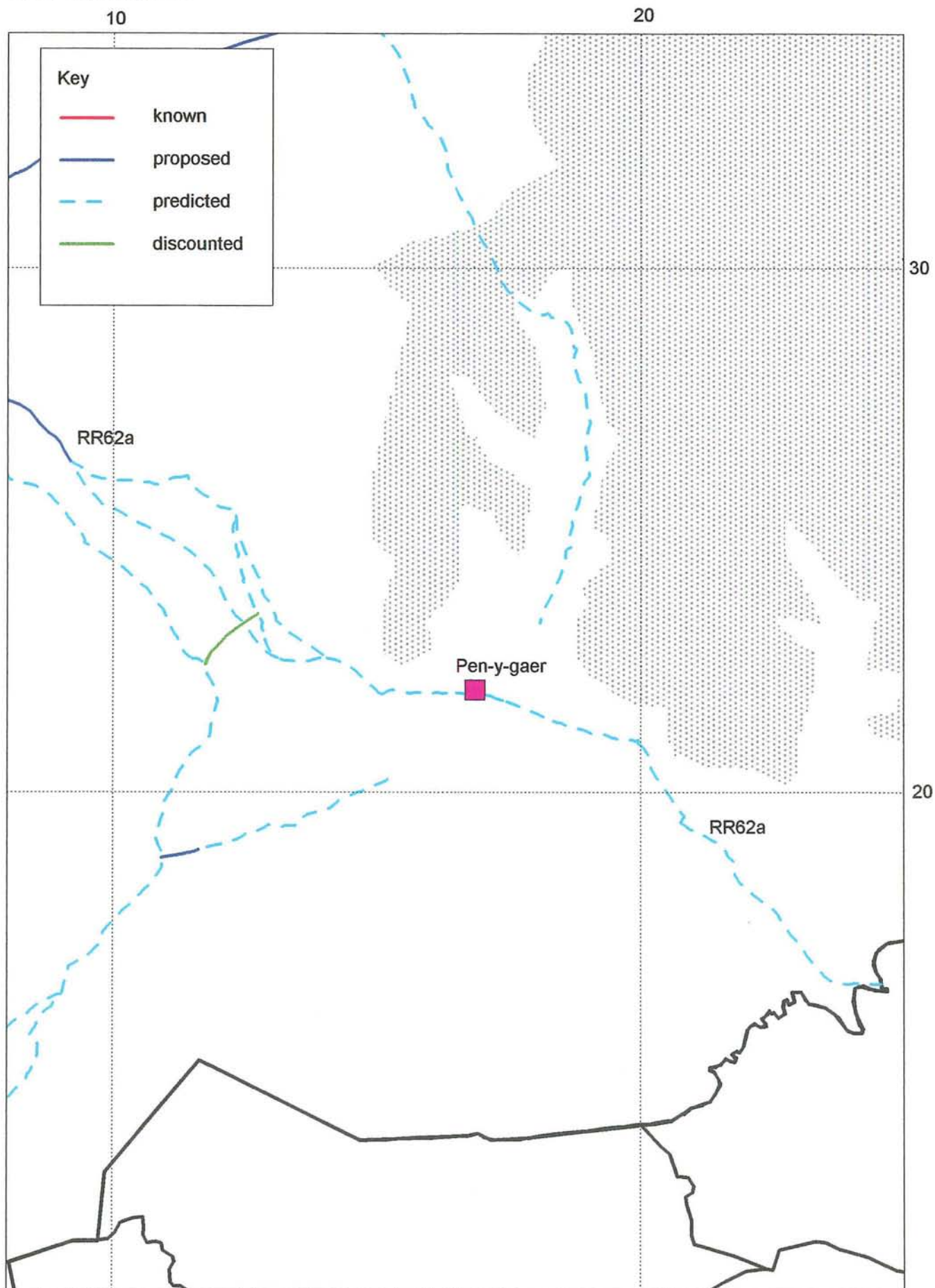
Figs 4 & 5

This is the northern portion of the longer route from Caerleon to Brecon. It was outlined by Margary, and the published RCAHMW analysis adheres to it, but only in part, dismissing some of O'Dwyer's variations as untenable, but also questioning why it would have gone to the top of the ridge east of Llanhamlach when it could have coursed around it. In David Browne's view the tracks over the ridge may be related to the extensive quarrying up there, and it may not be insignificant that the Victorinus stone lies adjacent to the turnpike road. It is thus noticeable that the mapping in Brecknock for the recent Ordnance Survey Roman-period map prepared by the RCAHMW has the road running along the course of the modern A40.

Virtually no incontrovertible sections of this route remain, despite the unarguable presence of the fort at Pen-y-gaer. Indeed the only certain section seems to be that running eastwards from the fort of Brecon Gaer and this could conceivably relate to the road running north-eastwards.

Margary 1973, 333
Ordnance Survey 2001
RCAHMW 1986, 167
RCAHMW 1994, 6

Status - Proposed



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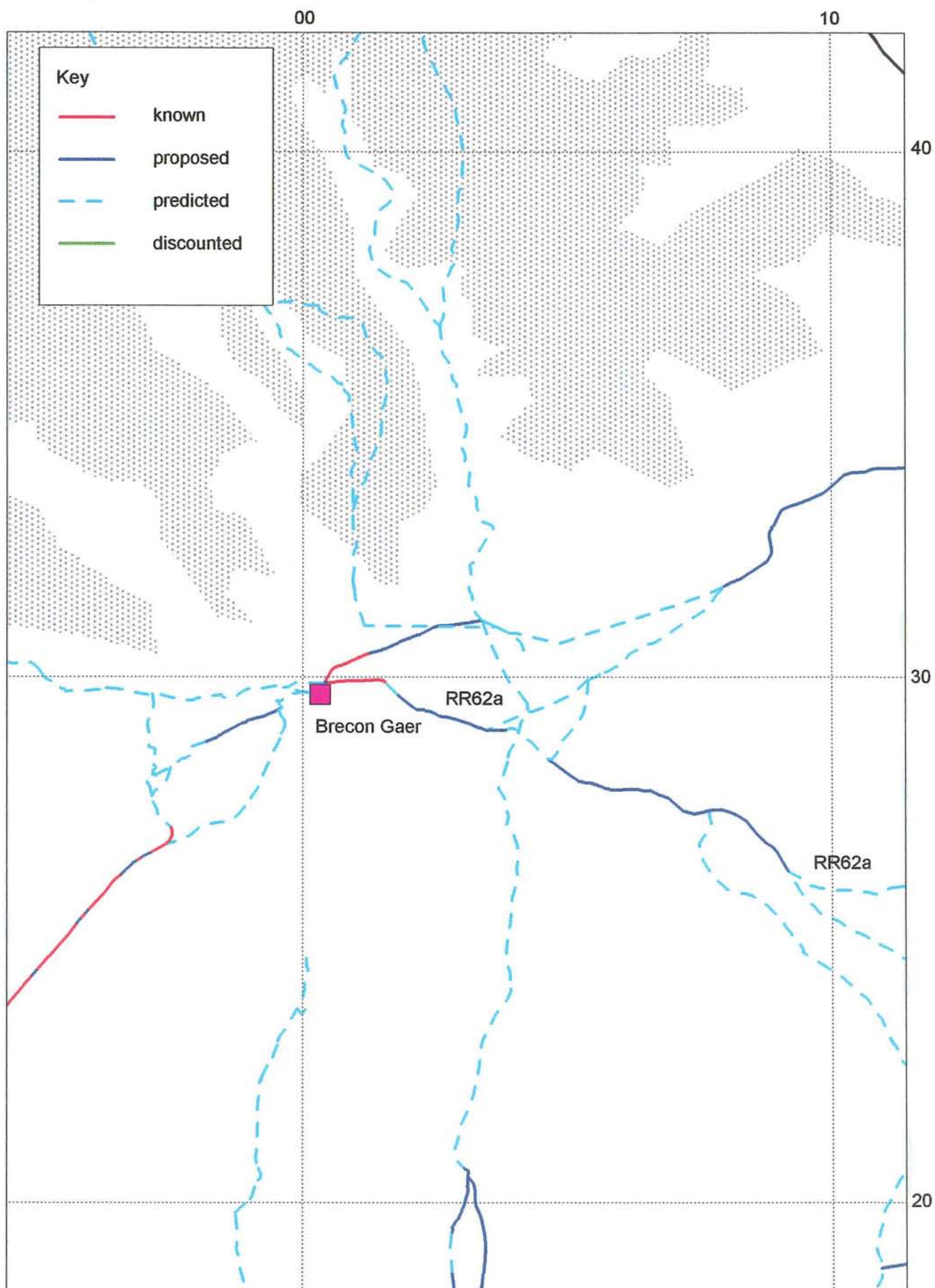
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Fig. 4.1 Roman road RR62a (Abergavenny to Brecon Gaer) Gilwern to Llanhamlach: Status

1:10,000



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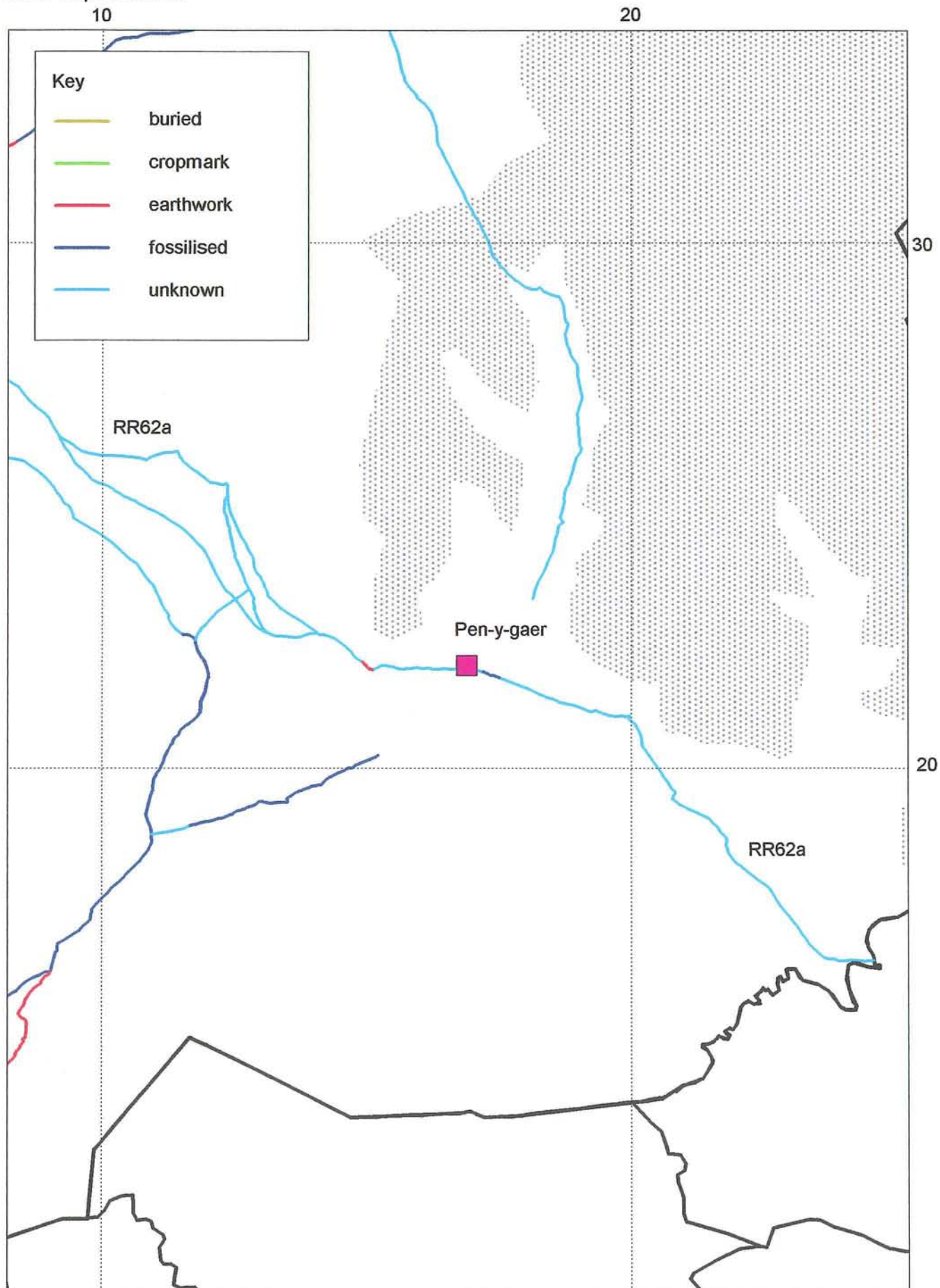
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Fig. 4.2 Roman road RR62a (Abergavenny to Brecon Gaer) Llanhamlach to Brecon Gaer: Status

1:10,000



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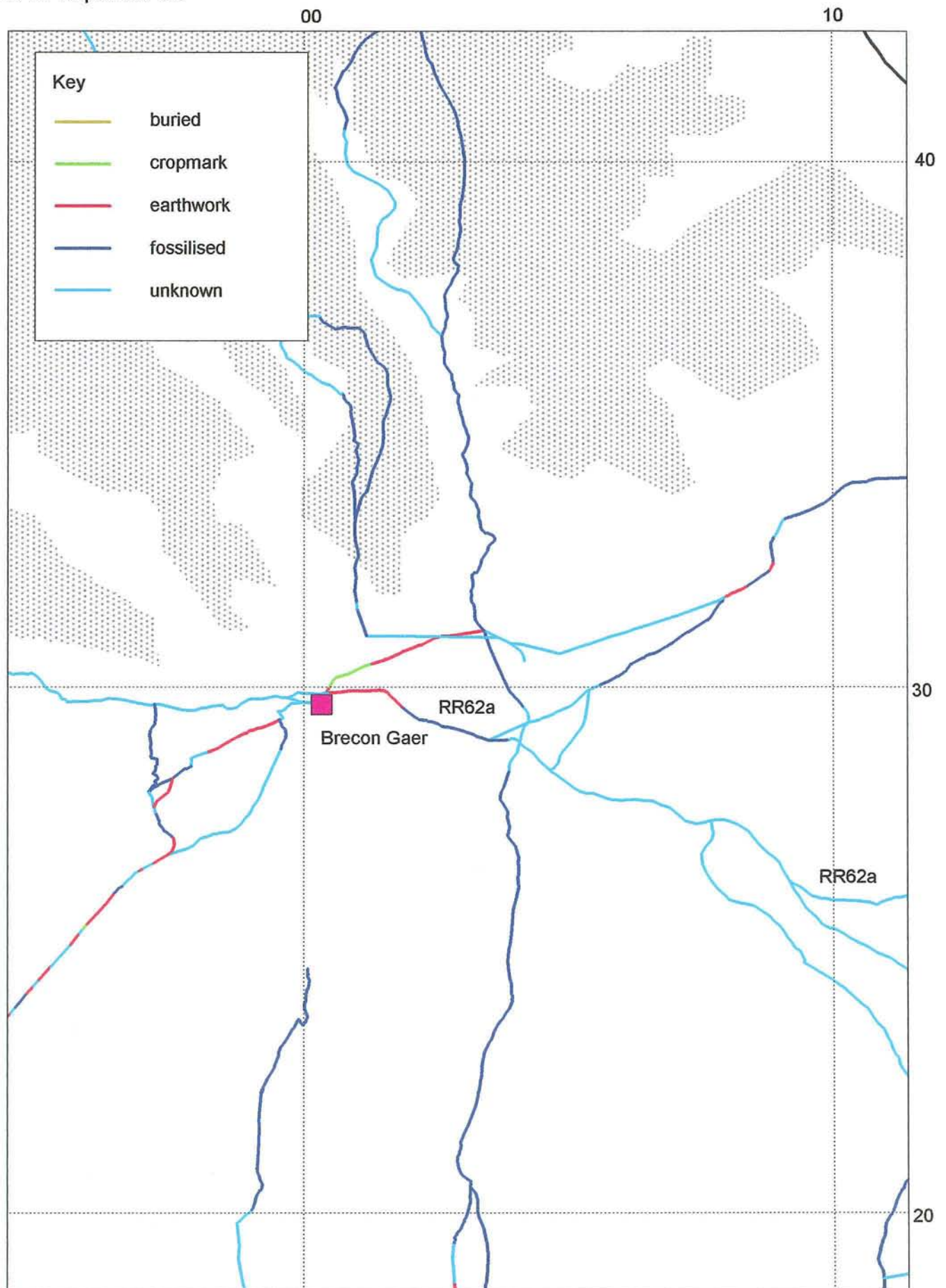
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Fig. 5.1 Roman road RR62a (Abergavenny to Brecon Gaer) Gilwern to Llanhamlach: Survival

1:10,000



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Fig. 5.2 Roman road RR62a (Abergavenny to Brecon Gaer) Llanhamlach to Brecon Gaer: Survival

1:10,000

Balderton to Holywell

Margary RR67aa PRN 47800

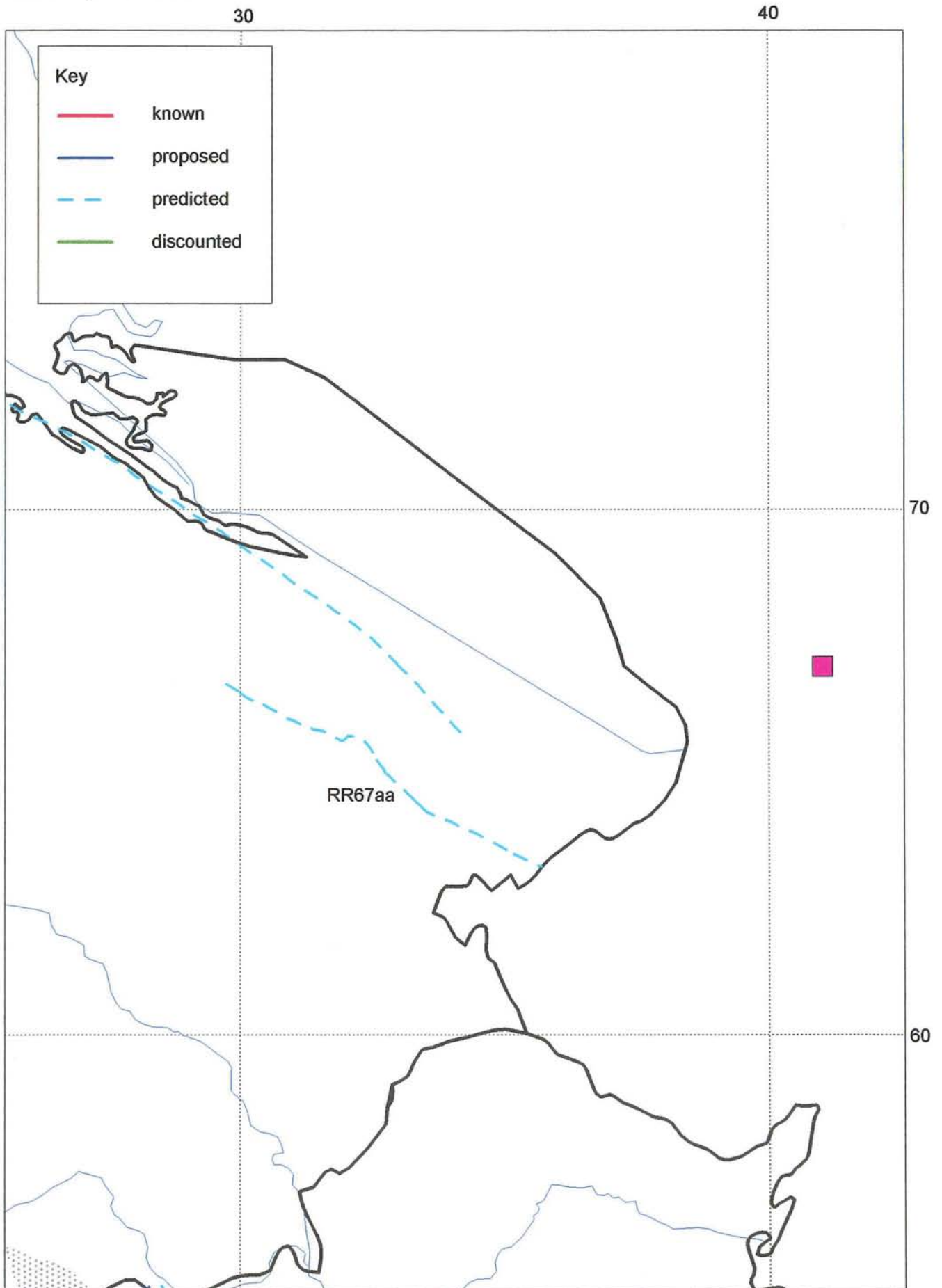
Figs 6 & 7

First mooted by G W Shrubsole late in the 19th century this route has been given some support by both Margary and the Ordnance Survey archaeological division. This is an alternative route to the more northerly course of the main north Wales route along the coast (RR67a).

As with so many of the north-east Wales routes there is very little substantive evidence for its existence.

Margary 1973, 348
RCAHMW 1994, 32
Shrubsole 1892

Status - Predicted



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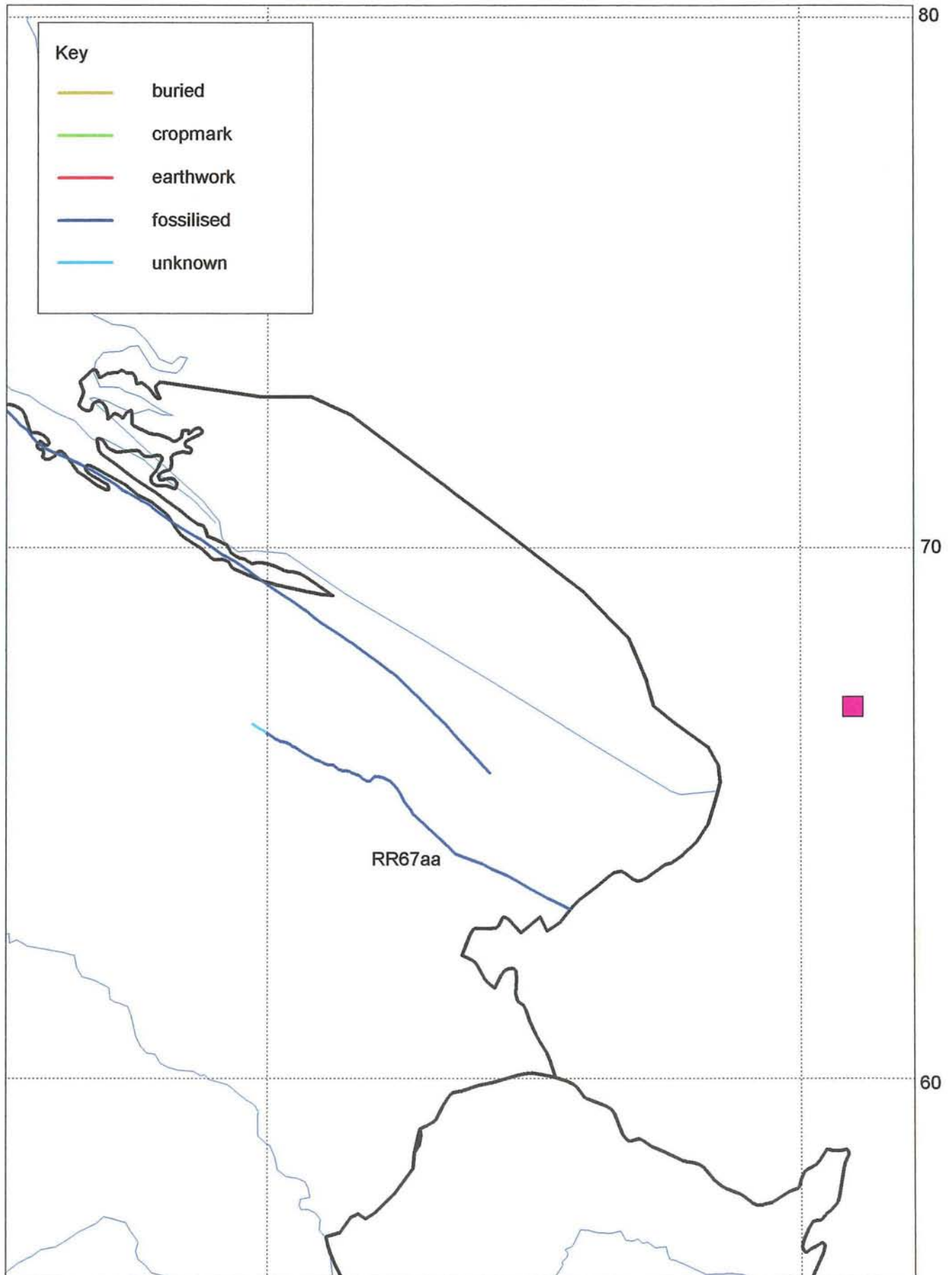
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Fig. 6 Roman road RR67aa (Balderton to Holywell): Status

1:10,000



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Fig. 7 Roman road RR67aa (Balderton to Holywell): Survival

1:10,000

Brecon Gaer towards Beulah.

a.k.a. Brecon Gaer - Glan Camddwr

RR6 PRN 47300

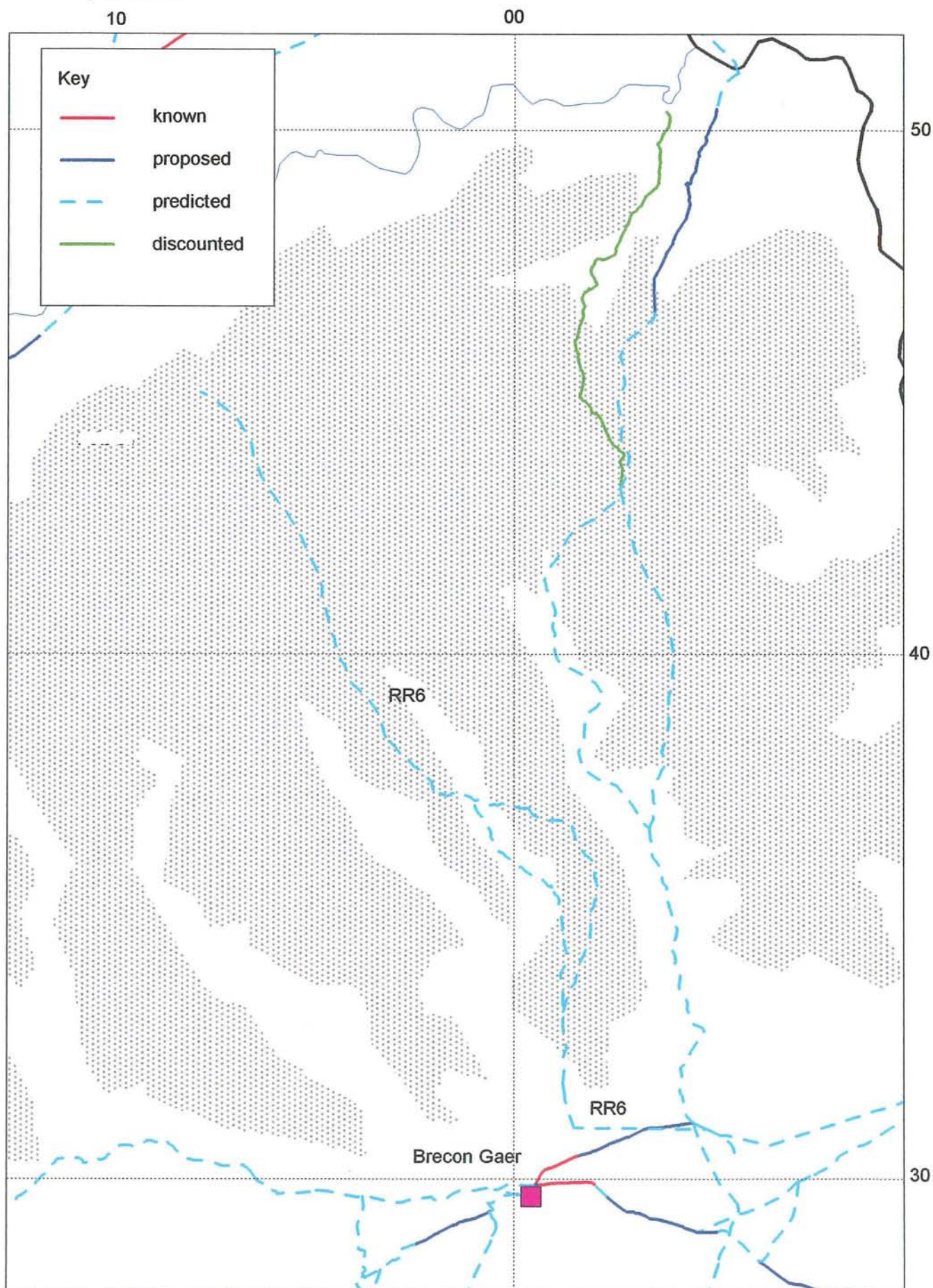
Figs 8 & 9

This route was identified by the Royal Commission who commented on the strategic need for a route from the fort at Brecon Gaer towards that at Beulah (Caerau), whilst admitting that 'no satisfactory evidence for either its existence or likely course' has yet been identified. O'Dwyer appears to have first suggested it and the Royal Commission follow his suggestions in part.

But at present this route is no more than speculative, and the accompanying figures indicate that there are considerable uncertainties even about its terminus at the fort of Brecon Gaer.

RCAHMW 1986, 173

Status - Predicted



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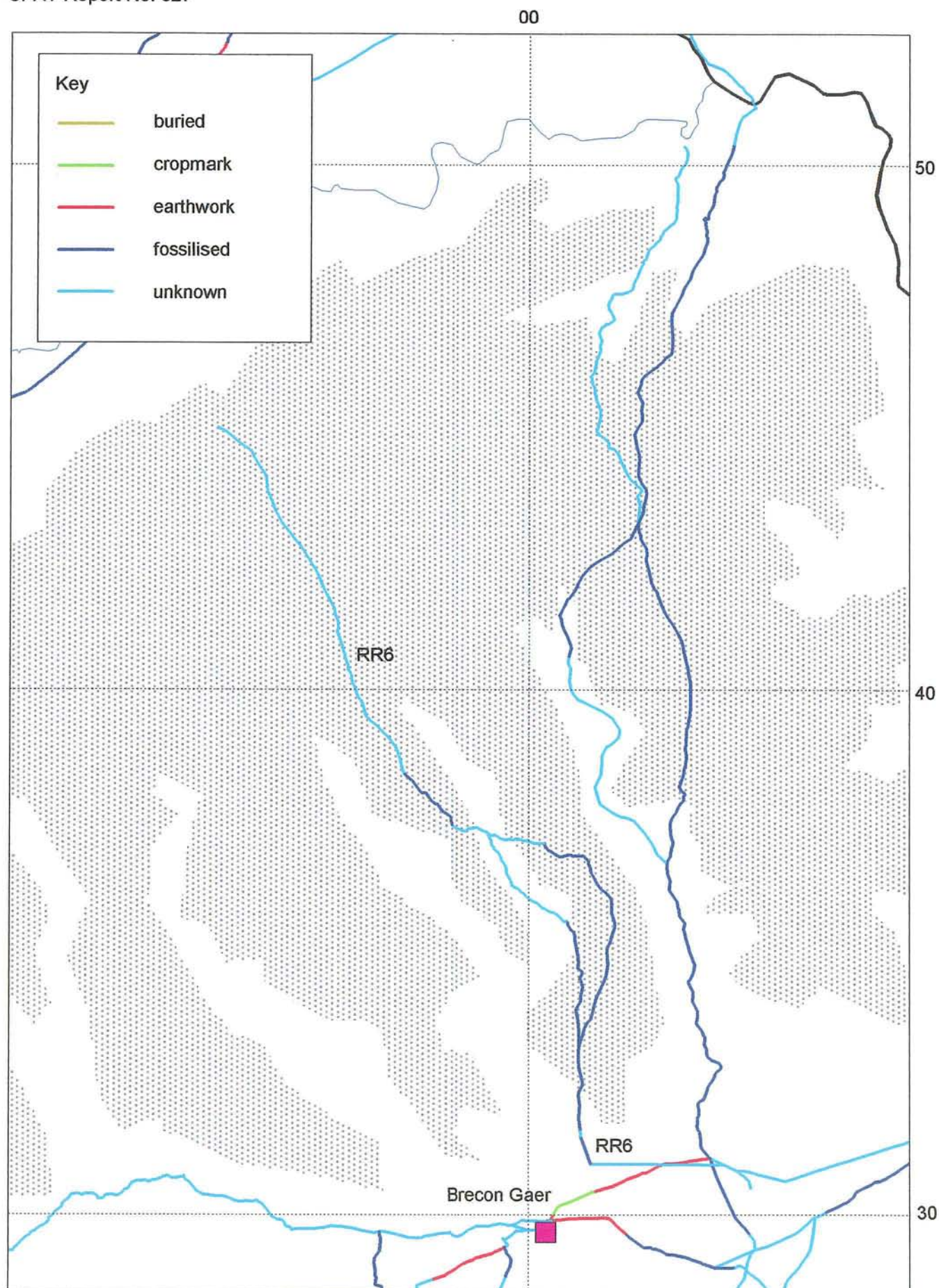
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Fig. 8 Roman road RR6 (Brecon Gaer to Glan Camddwr): Status

1:10,000



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Fig. 9 Roman road RR6 (Brecon Gaer to Glan Camddwr): Survival

1:10,000

Brecon Gaer to Llandovery

Margary RR62b PRN 11300

Figs 10 & 11

The most recent description is in the RCAHMW's Brecknock Inventory, which clearly signals how very little substantive evidence remains for the road west from the Gaer, whilst pointing out that the existence of such a route is unquestioned and that several alternatives have been suggested. The route north of the Usk Valley over Mynydd Trecastell is now favoured, although this was the main coach road until superseded by a valley road (now the A40) in c.1769. This is the more northerly of the two routes shown on the accompanying plans, where the route approaches the Carmarthenshire border. A relatively recent attempt by Canon Jones-Davies following work by J F Jones, to distinguish a more southerly road is classed by RCAHMW as unconvincing, if only in part.

James 1991, 58

Jones-Davies, 1975

Margary 1973, 334

RCAHMW 1986, 171

RCAHMW 1994, 9

Status – Proposed (Known)

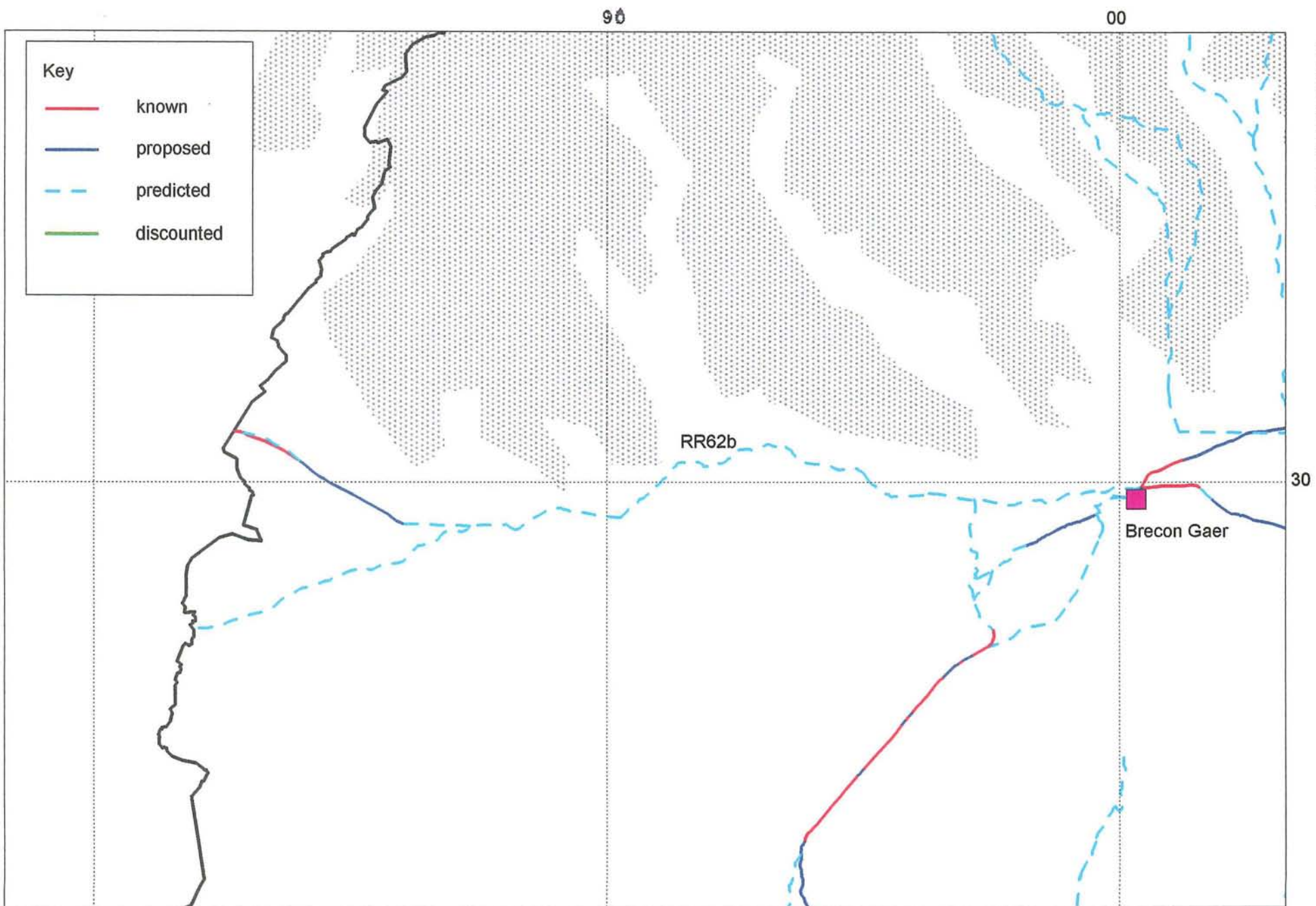


Fig. 10 Roman road RR62b (Brecon Gaer to Llandovery): Status

1:10,000

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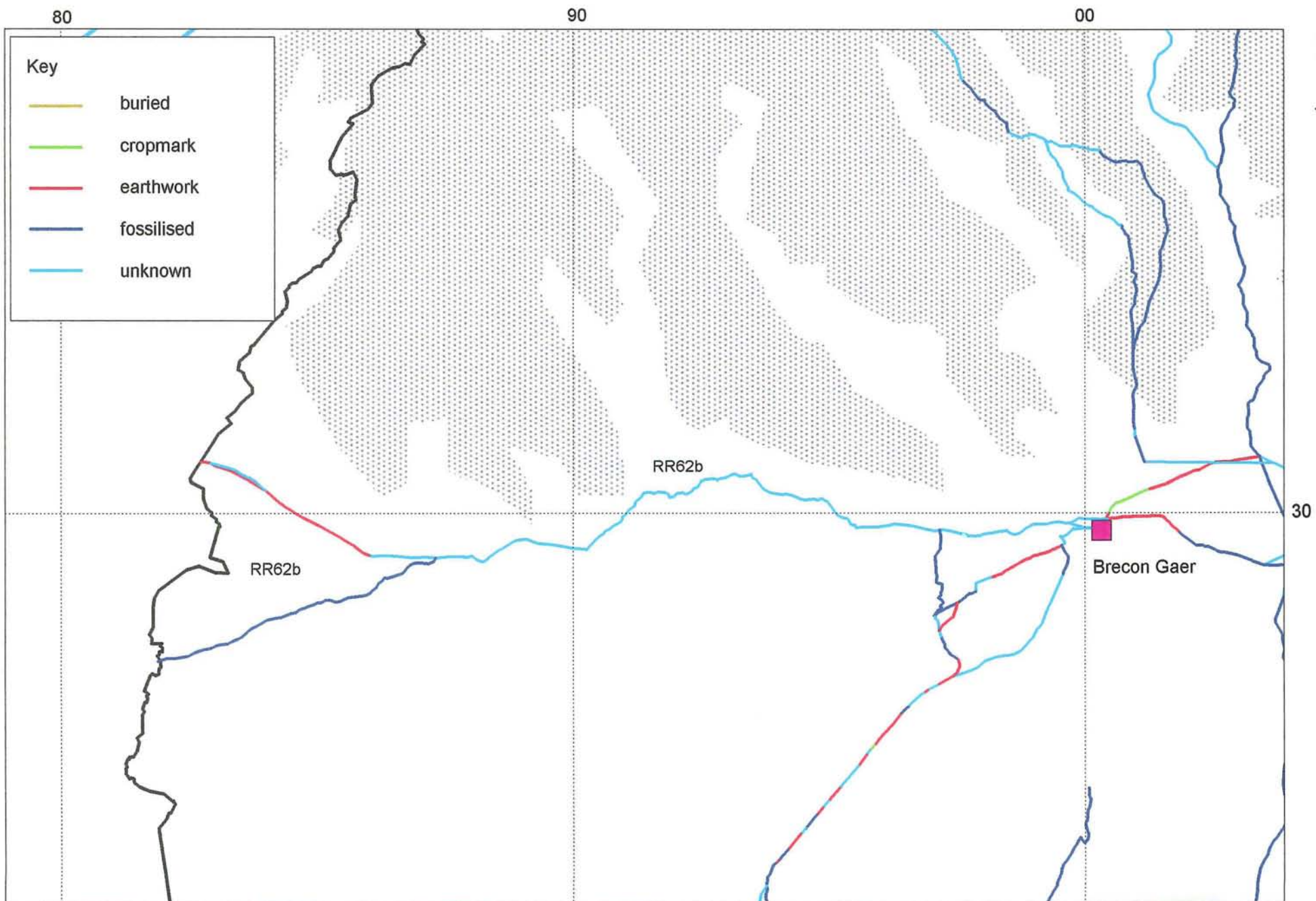


Fig. 11 Roman road RR62b (Brecon Gaer to Llandovery): Survival

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Caersws to Caer Gai (Bala) via Vyrnwy

Margary RR642 PRN 14300

Figs 12 & 13

There is absolutely no doubt about the existence of this road, although Margary was able to record its course for only a short distance to the north of Caersws.

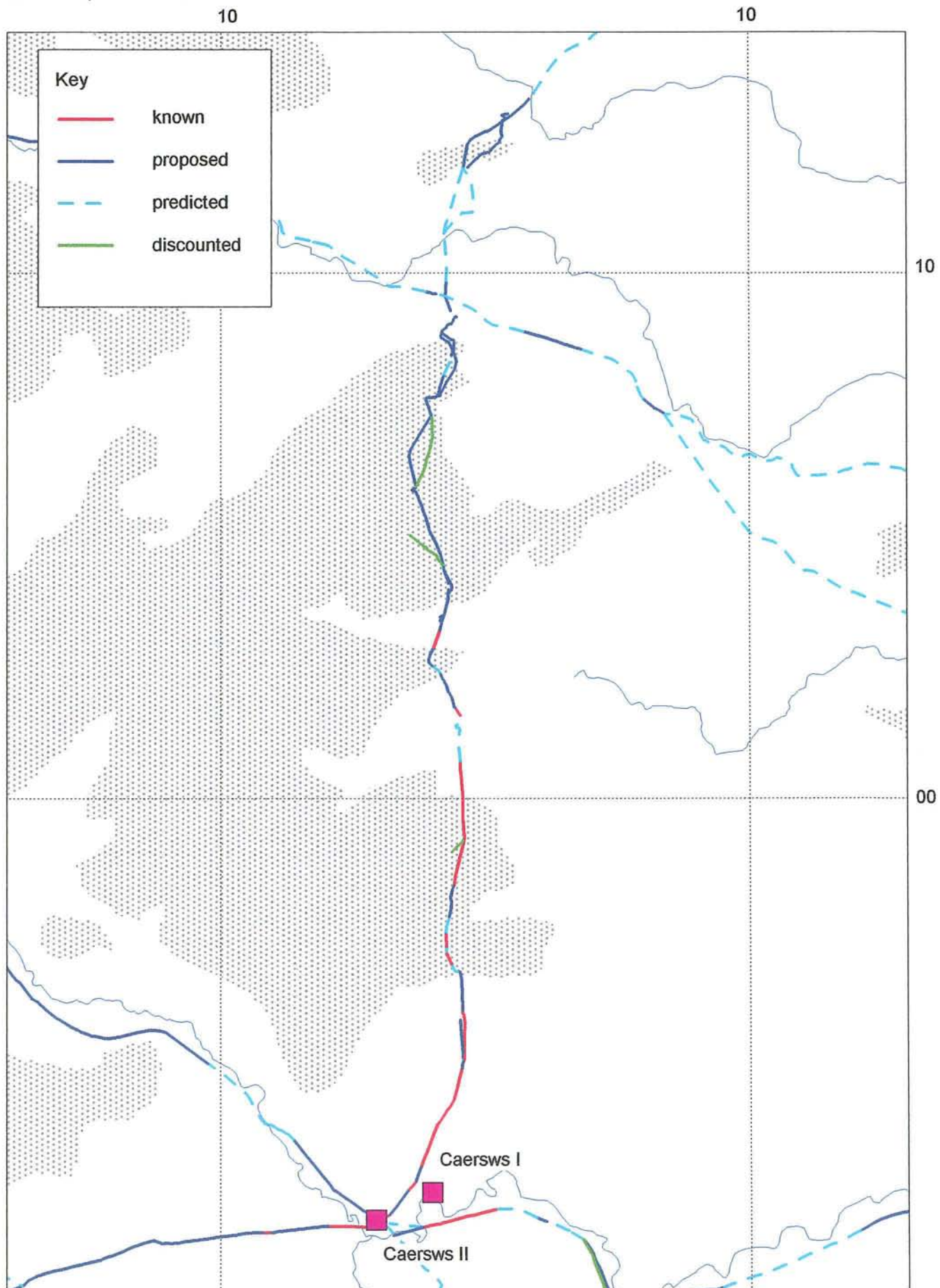
The most up to date but rather general statement comes from Putnam and Toller in the festschrift published in memory of Barri Jones (2001). However, Putnam promises a detailed assessment in the not too distant future (B Putnam: pers comm.). The more southerly stages of the road have been recognised for a rather longer time, Jones using a manuscript document to elucidate the line immediately to the north of Caersws. Consequently, these have been recorded in more detail, in particular through the work of Jones and Putnam. Thus there is positive evidence in the vicinity of Caersws itself, and further north in the Llanfair Caereinion area.

Alternative route lines have been posited in one or two places. Near New House, 3 km to the north of Caersws, Jones suggested a course slightly to the west of the generally accredited route; his argument has not found much acceptance. Again in the hills to the south of Llanerfyl, Jones' more easterly line can be discounted in favour of one to the west where the physical survival of the road is good. Some obvious and distinctive stretches, particularly in the vicinity of Llanerfyl are not depicted on the new Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain. It is the northerly section from the Banwy where the detail is currently thin and needs to be elaborated.

It appears from the records that this route retains some of the best stretches of surviving road in northern Powys.

Browne 1986
Jones 1961, 183
Jones 1993, 37
Margary 1973, 642
Putnam and Toller 2001
RCAHMW 1994, 25

Status - Known



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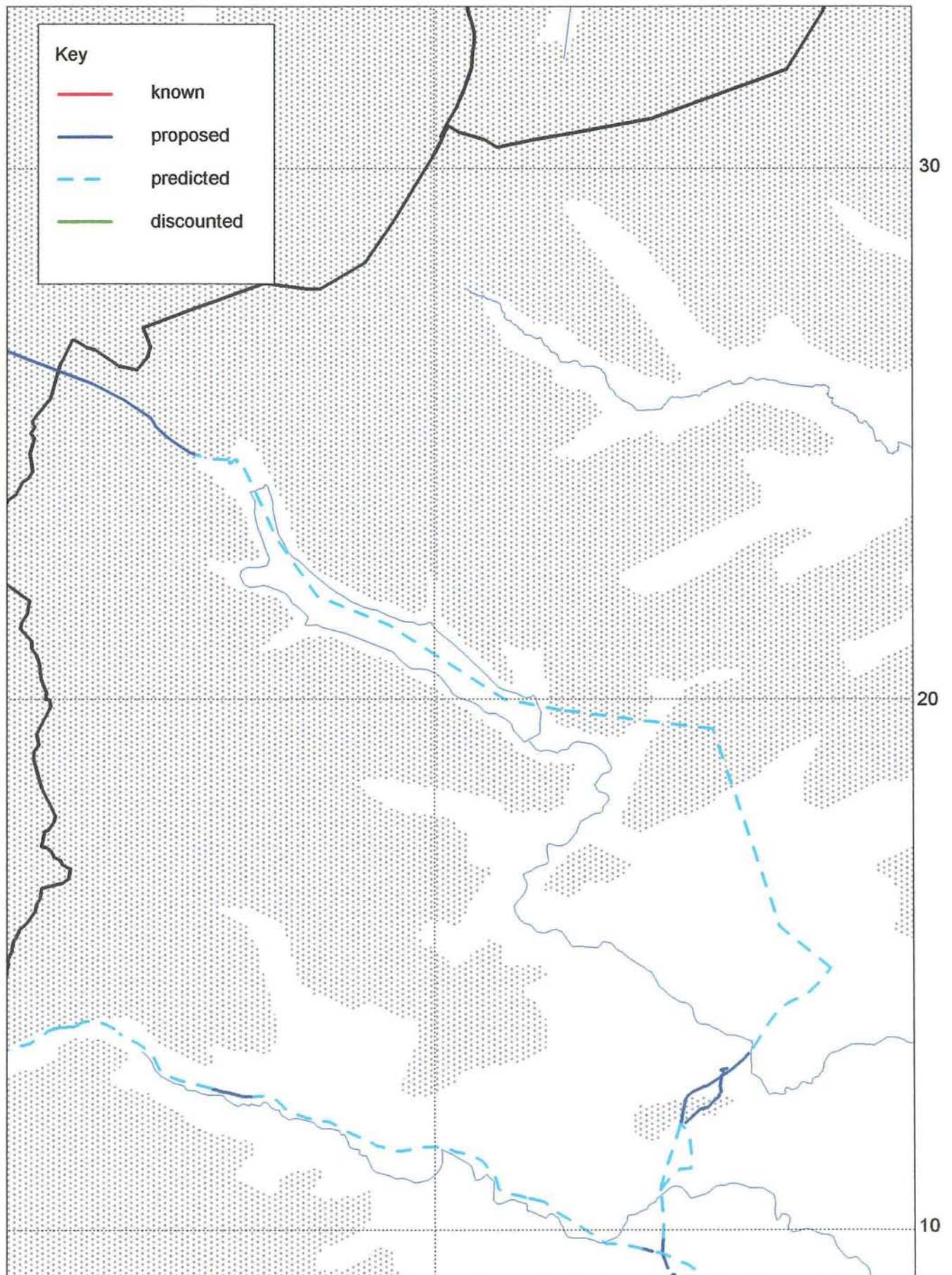
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Fig. 12.1 Roman road RR642 (Caersws to Caer Gai) Caersws to Banwy Valley: Status

1:10,000



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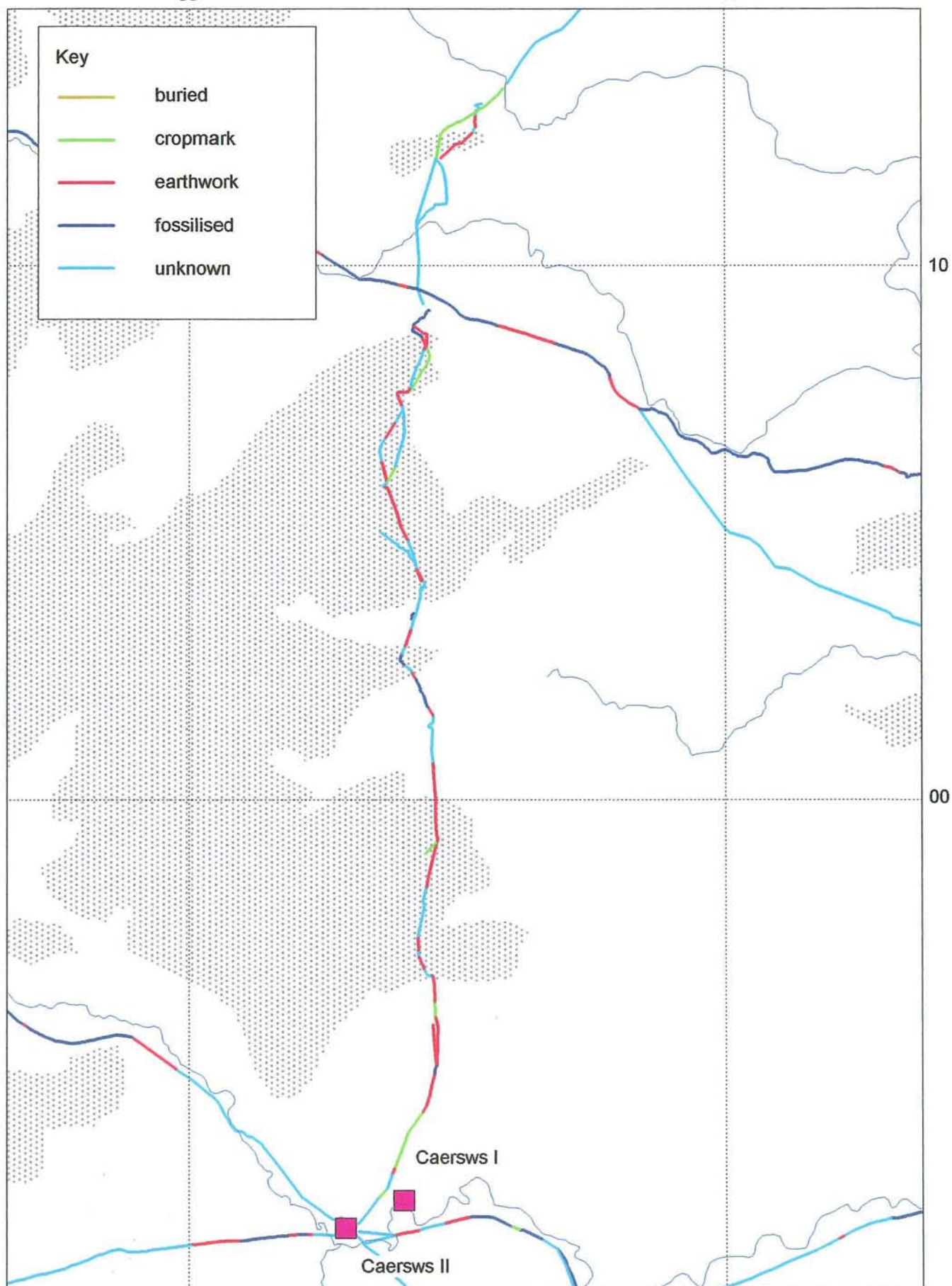
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Fig. 12.2 Roman road RR642 (Caersws to Caer Gai) Banwy Valley to Cefn Coch: Status

1:10,000



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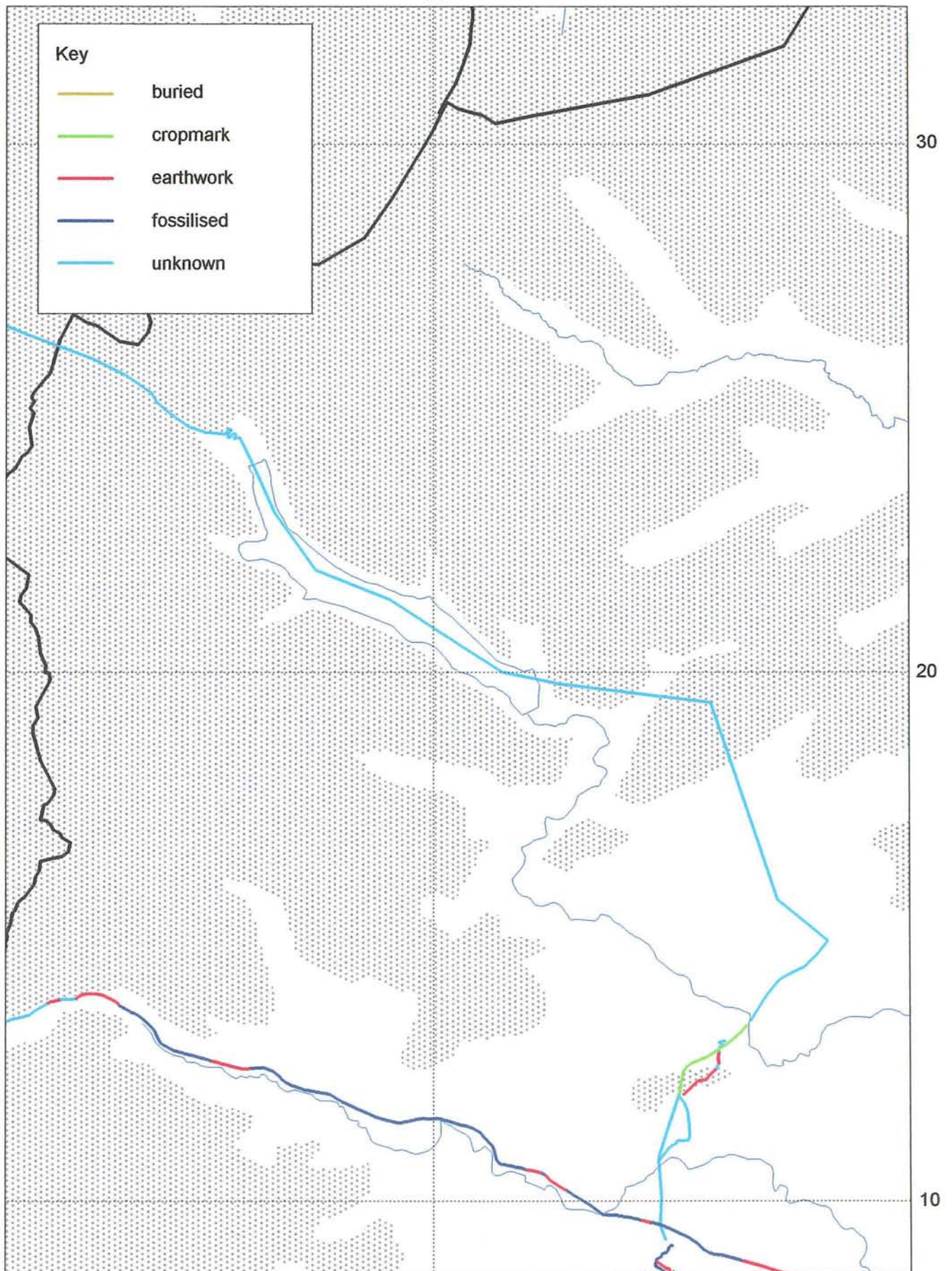
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Fig. 13.1 Roman road RR642 (Caersws to Caer Gai) Caersws to Banwy Valley: Survival

1:10,000



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Fig. 13.2 Roman road RR642 (Caersws to Caer Gai) Banwy Valley to Cefn Coch: Survival

1:10,000

Caersws to Pennal

RR643 PRN 14400

Figs 14 & 15

This road was posited by Margary but he was able to take it only as far as Carno, even though he felt it ought to continue to Pennal. Since Margary's initial delineation further work has been done. Jones described it briefly (1961), but this is in many ways a reflection of the absence of any physical remains of the road, the line supposedly being adopted by modern day roads and green lanes throughout. Bill Putnam promises a detailed paper which takes the road past the fortlet at Pen-y-Crocbren rather than further north. Even then, from his perspective the last stretch to Pennal still remains a mystery.

John Rigg, the Ordnance Survey Field Investigator proposed a route north-westwards from Carno and then south-west down the Dyfi Valley (unpublished detailed notes in the CPAT archive). Virtually the whole length of his postulated Roman road lay close or beneath modern roads, and the very few sections where this was not the case are not overly convincing.

The Ordnance Survey's gloss on this road probably prepared sometime in the mid-1970s was: "a road which has been generally accepted, though on comparatively little evidence, and which would inspire more confidence if Caer Noddfa [Carno] were unequivocally Roman in origin. If it does exist the destination would be either Pennal or Brithdir, though the approach to the latter would be difficult".

Browne 1986

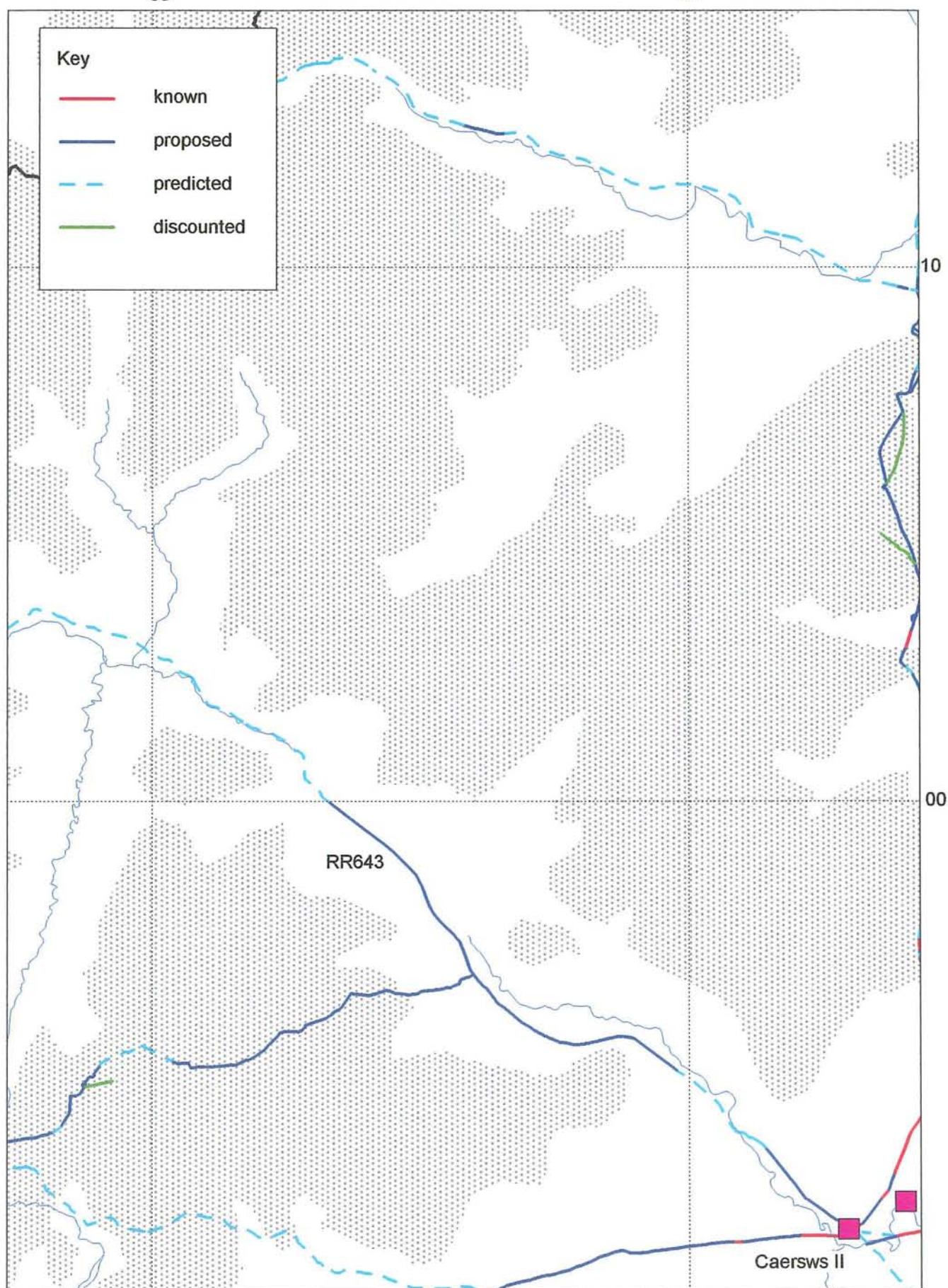
Jones 1961, 182

Margary 1973, 345

Putnam forthcoming

RCAHMW 1994, 27

Status – Proposed ?



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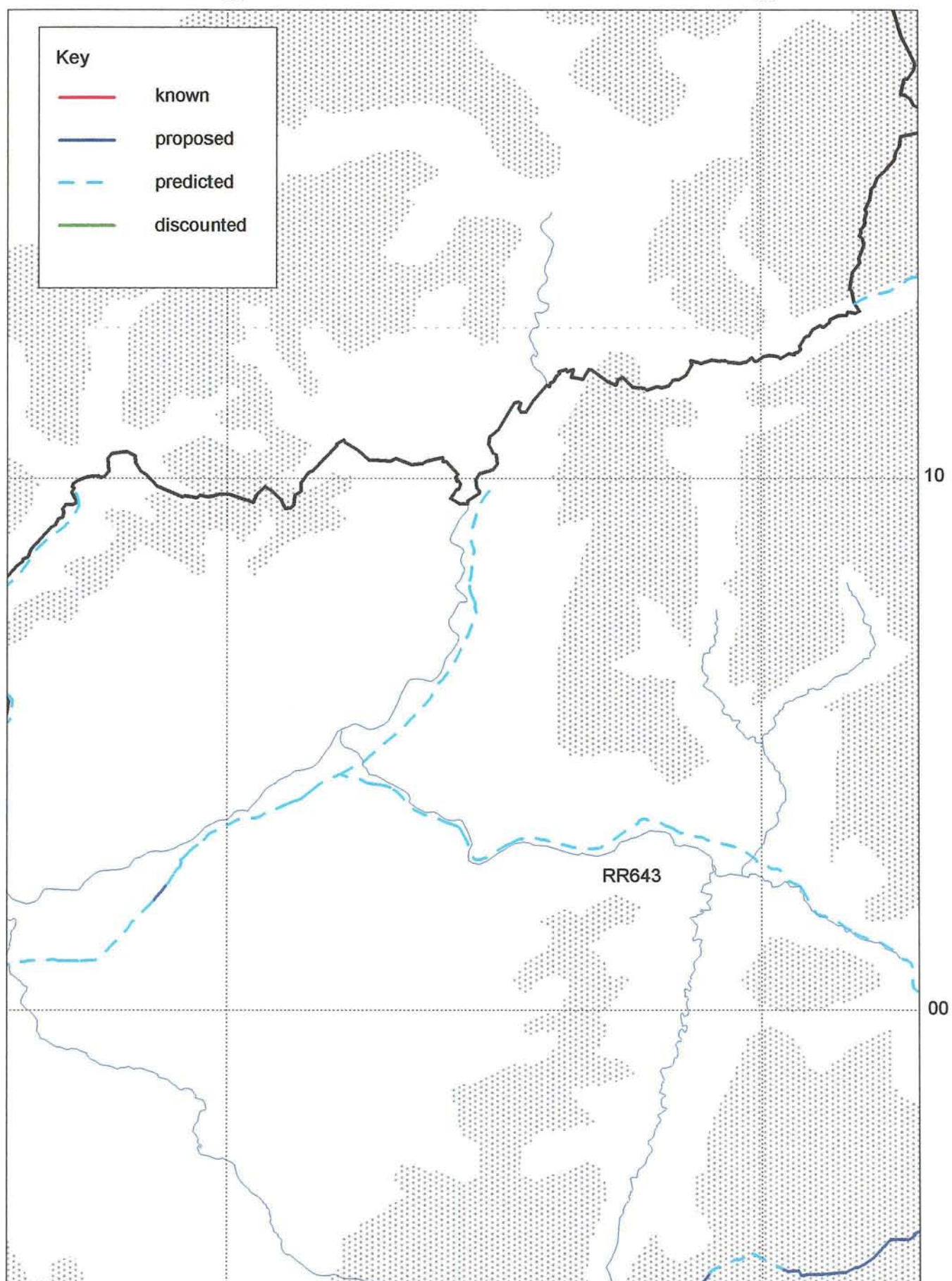
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Fig. 14.1 Roman road RR643 (Caersws to Pennal) Caersws to Llanbrynmair: Status

1:10,000



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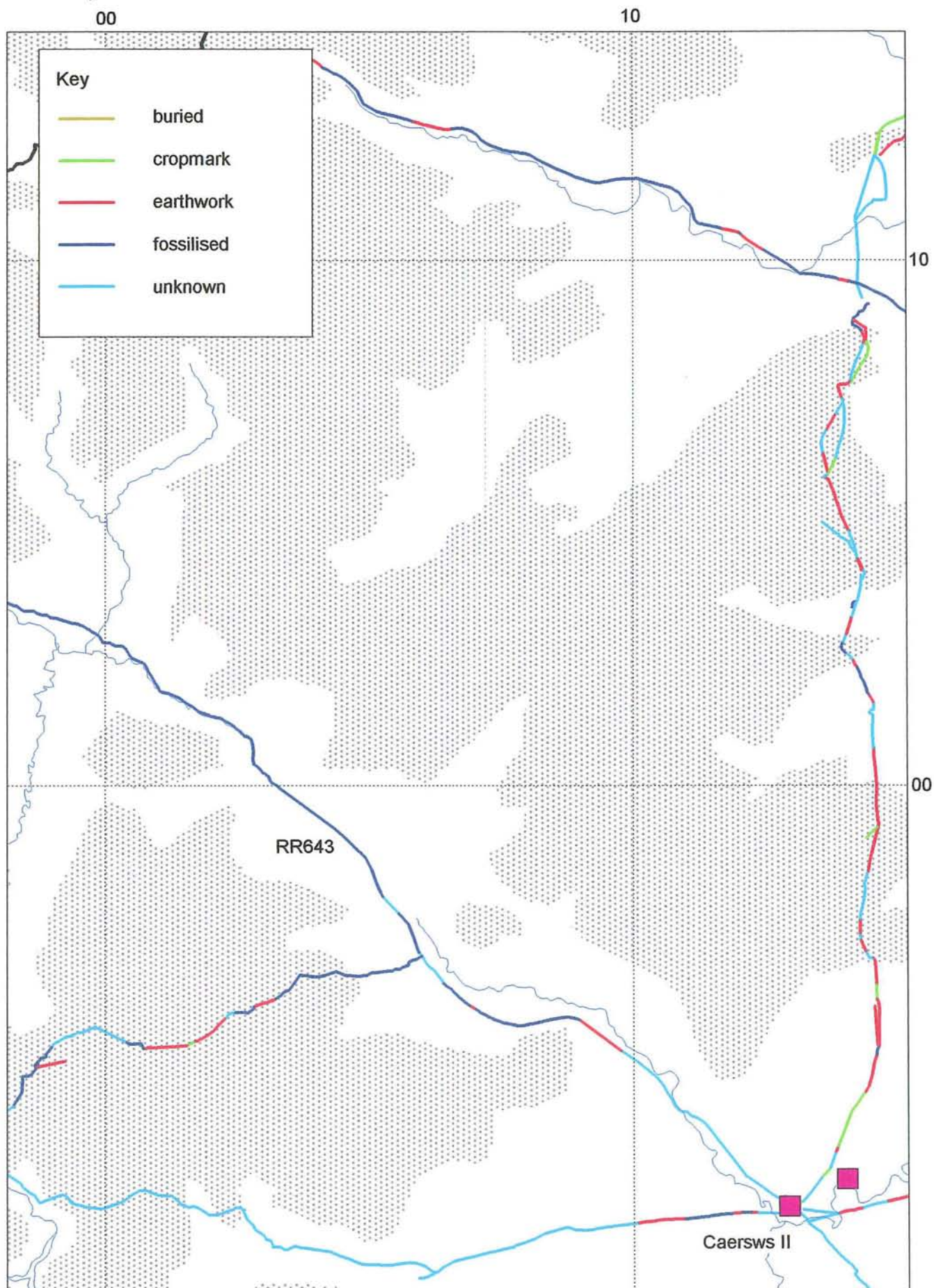
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Fig. 14.2 Roman road RR643 (Caersws to Pennal) Llanbrynmair to the Dyfi Valley: Status

1:10,000



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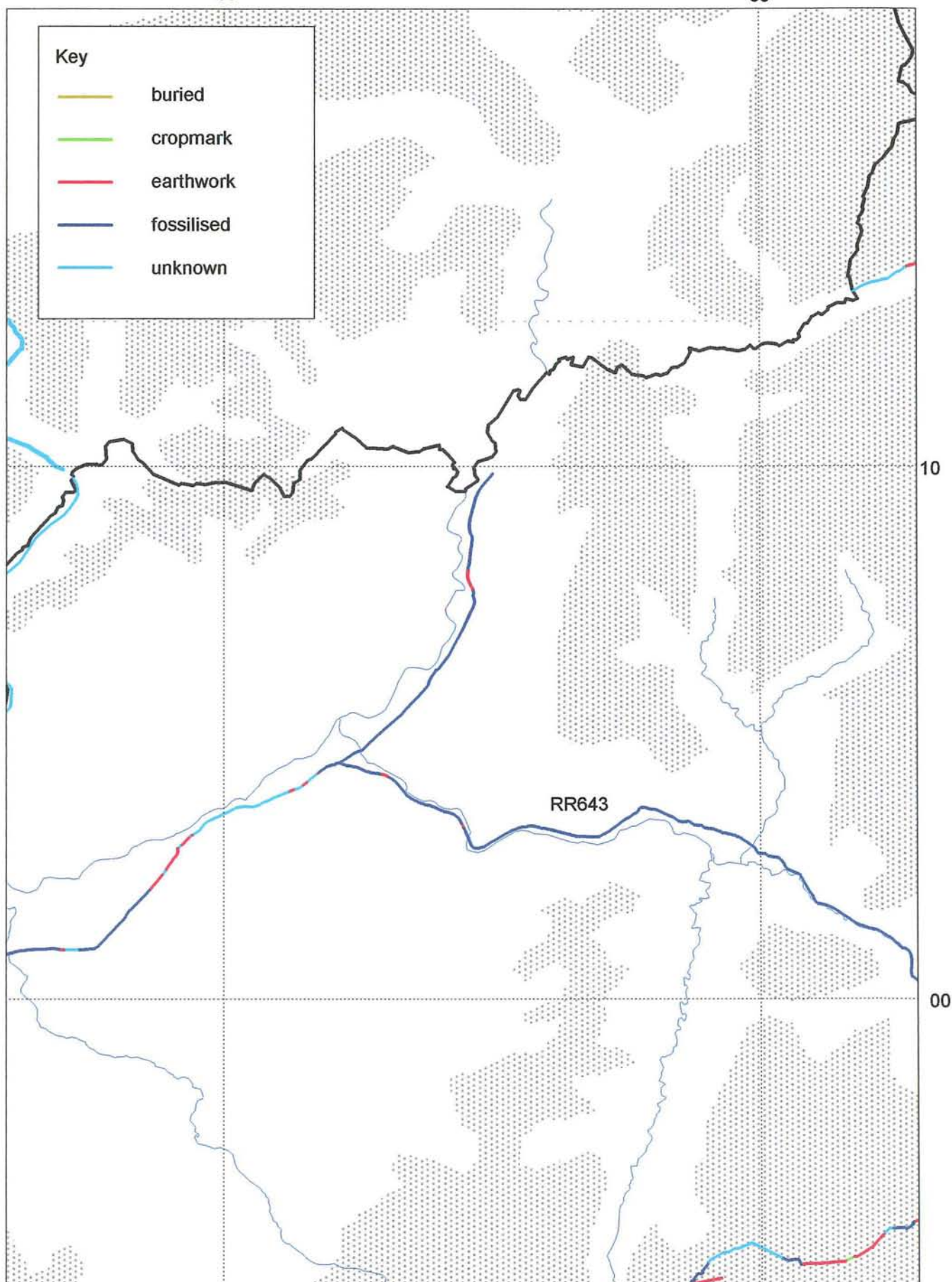
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Fig. 15.1 Roman road RR643 (Caersws to Pennal) Caersws to Llanbrynmair: Survival

1:10,000



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Fig. 15.2 Roman road RR643 (Caersws to Pennal) Llanbrynmair to Dyfi Valley: Survival

1:10,000

Caersws to Trefeglwys

Margary RR64. PRN 11700

Figs 16 & 17

This was described briefly by Barri Jones in 1961, who linked it with putative Roman mining operations in western Montgomeryshire, whilst also flagging up the then recent discovery of the fortlet at Dylife (Penycrocbren). There is seemingly good physical definition for a short stretch of the road immediately to the west of the fort at Caersws, and earthwork evidence further along the route. Otherwise it is currently largely hypothetical.

Jones 1961, 183

RCAHMW 1994, 24

Status - Proposed

Caersws to Pennal via Penycrocbren

OS RRX63 PRN 11400

Figs 16 & 17

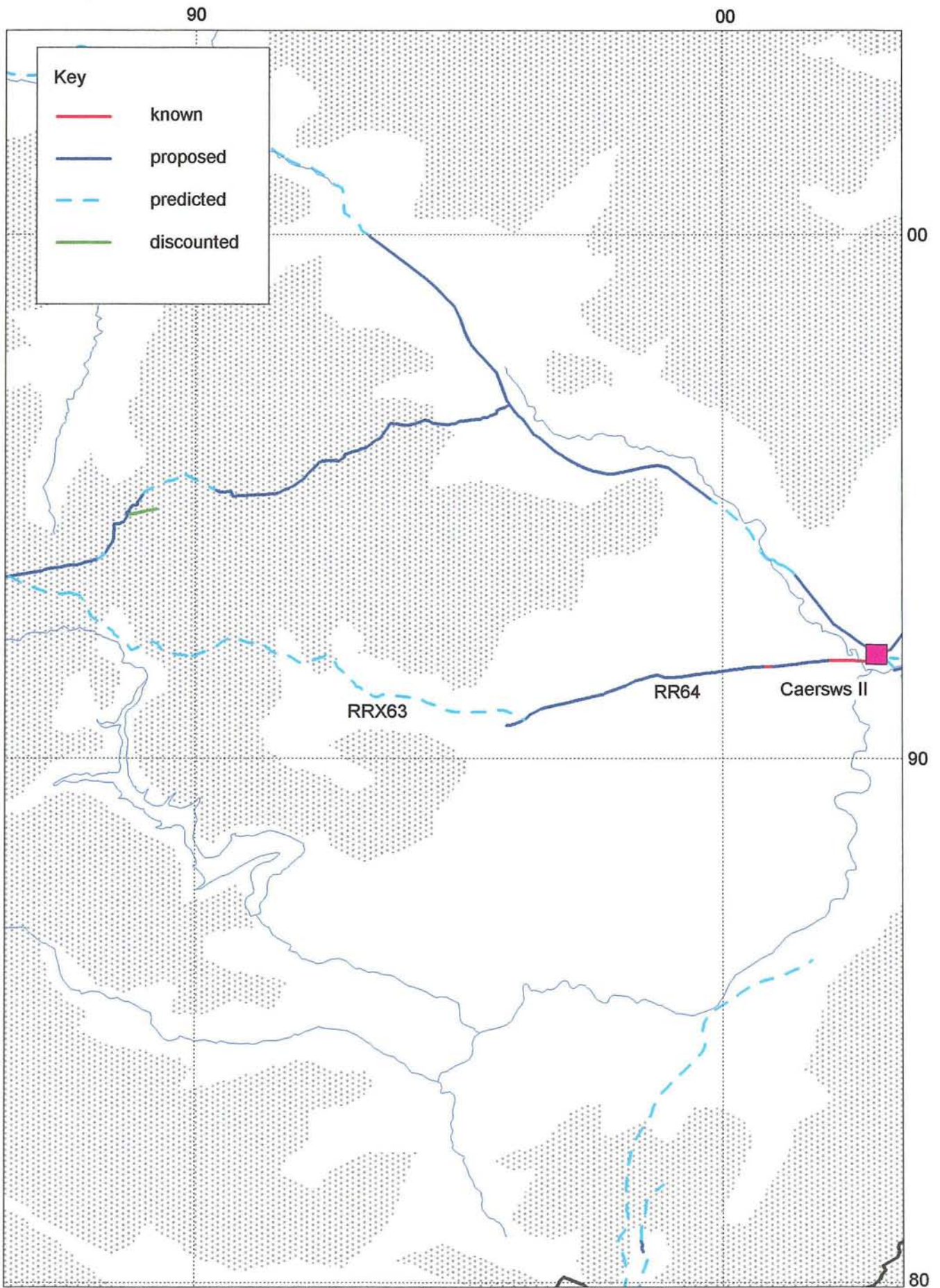
This route was shown at small scale by A H A Hogg on one of his predictive maps and supposedly met another road, RRX63a, just to the east of Penycrocbren. Little specific or detailed information is available about this road, and at best it should be judged as speculative.

Hogg 1973, 9

Ordnance Survey strip maps

RCAHMW 1994, 45

Status - Predicted



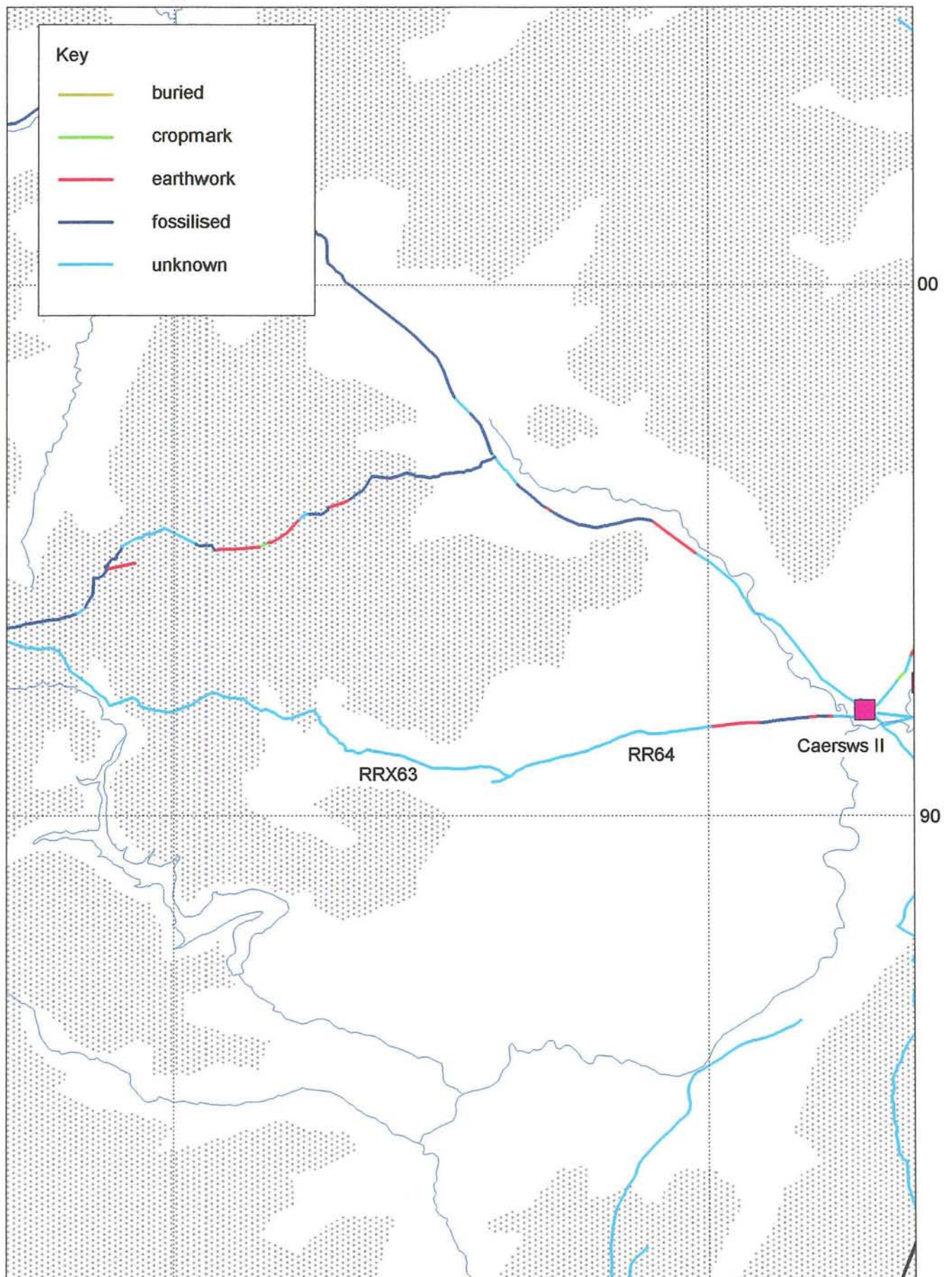
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Fig. 16 Roman roads RR64 (Caersws to Trefeglwys) and RRX63 (Caersws to Pennal via Penycrocbren: Status 1:10.000



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Fig. 17 Roman roads RR64 (Caersws to Trefeglwys) and RRX63 (Caersws to Pennal via Penycrocbren: Survival 1:10,000

Caersws to Trawscoed.

RRX82d

A hypothetical route running south-westwards from a point a few miles to the west of Caersws, via the fort at Cae Gaer, to Trawscoed in Ceredigion. Field investigation by the Ordnance Survey revealed no visible traces, yet there are one or two records in the SMR that may be significant. Hogg thought it a fairly certain route, though lacking in structural or planning evidence.

Currently there are insufficient data to warrant a detailed plot of the proposed line.

Hogg 1973, 10

Ordnance Survey notes

RCAHMW 1994, 53

Status - Predicted

Caersws north-north-westwards

RRN13

A road leaving the north gate of the Caersws II fort in a north-north-westerly direction is clearly visible on aerial photographs (B Putnam: pers. comm.), but its destination is unknown, and it is not clear how this relates to the Caersws to Pennal road (RR643). Currently it is not possible to map this in any way.

Status - Predicted

Cardiff to Castell Collen

aka Penydarren to the Usk Valley

Margary RR620 PRN 45200

Margary RR621 PRN 14000

Ordnance Survey RRX77 PRN 14900

Figs 18 & 19; 56 & 57; 66 & 67

This line of communication offers one of the most complicated sets of alternative routes in the region. Over the years several routes have been suggested but no real consensus has emerged. Different routes have been designated by the RCAHMW (1986) as the eastern and western routes.

The starting point is not in doubt – Penydarren fort in Merthyr Tydfil (Glams), but the terminus is in question, whether it be Brecon Gaer, perhaps the logical choice, or Castell Collen, much further north, by Llandrindod Wells.

Firstly there is the western route running along the higher reaches of the valley of the Taf Fawr (PRN 14900) but only its central section has been defined, initially by A H A Hogg and C Houlder in 1969. It has been given its own code (RRX77), but confusingly in some publications it has been termed the Beulah to Penydarren road, when Penydarren to the Usk Valley would be more accurate.

Further east is RR621, a long route termed the Cardiff to Castell Collen road by Margary. Only in Radnorshire (central Powys) does there appear to be substantive evidence for this road. Further south in Brecknock, the route is much more hypothetical where it follows the valley of the Taf Fechan. Variant routes have been suggested in the vicinity of the Neuadd Reservoir, but neither has been confirmed.

Further east still is what has been termed by Margary the Taf Fechan –Llanfrynach route (RR620; PRN 45200). The most recent description is in the RCAHMW Inventory (1986, 163) and largely follows earlier authorities in its description whilst questioning the route's validity, not least because it appears to run towards the medieval town of Brecon and not to the fort at Brecon Gaer. In addition two alternative routes were flagged up by O'Dwyer near the Usk crossing. Neither of these was described in sufficient detail, either by the RCAHMW or by O'Dwyer himself, to assist in the compilation of accurate descriptions, and consequently we have simply plotted their approximate lines without information.

Overall the RCAHMW were not satisfied with Margary's routes, and also dismissed a northern diversion suggested by O'Dwyer. The alternative route suggested by Hogg seems to have met with a little more favour from the Royal Commission.

Archaeology in Wales 9 (1969), 17

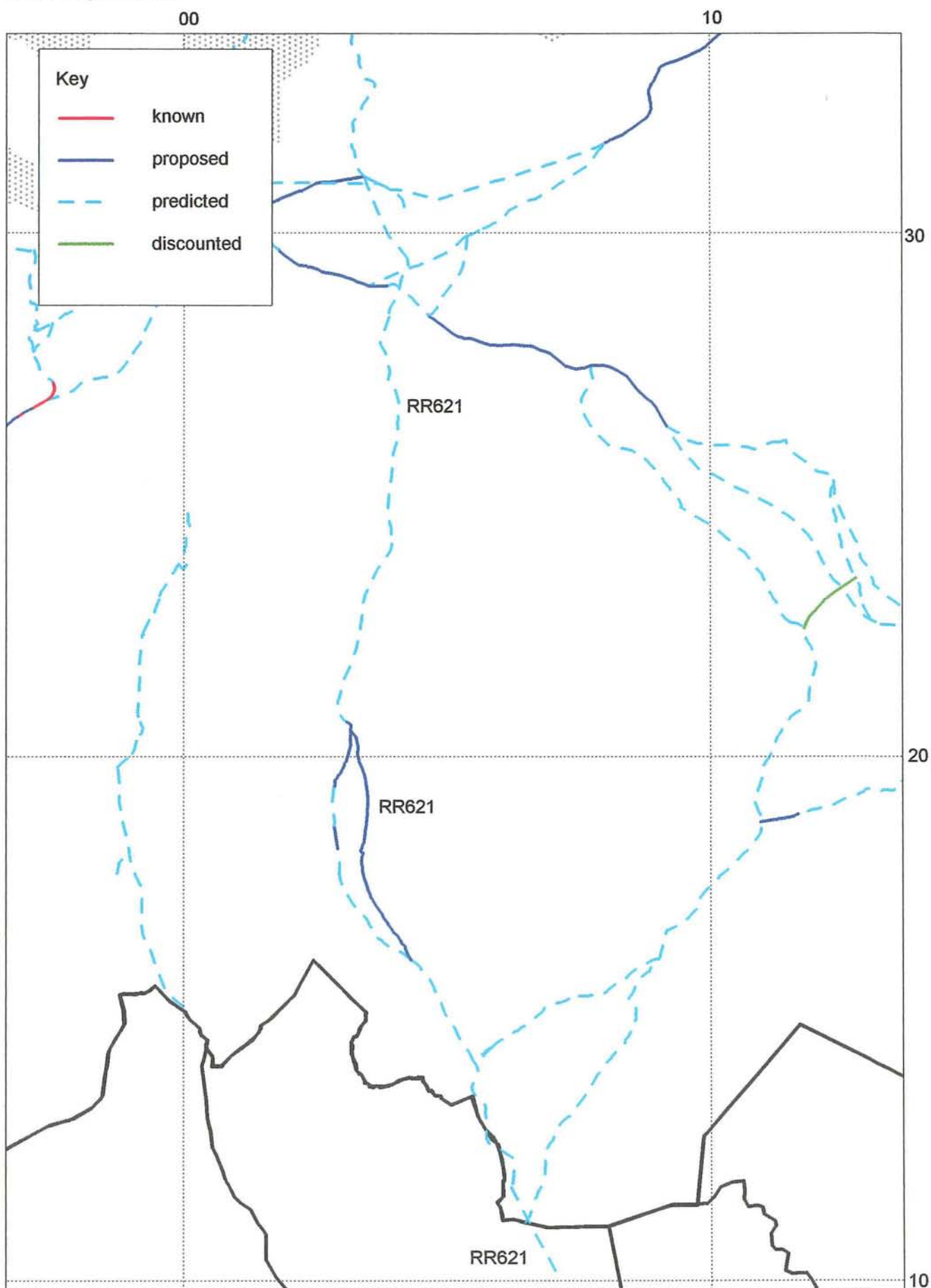
Margary 1973, 336

O'Dwyer 1937

Ordnance Survey strip maps

RCAHMW 1986, 163

Status of western route – Proposed



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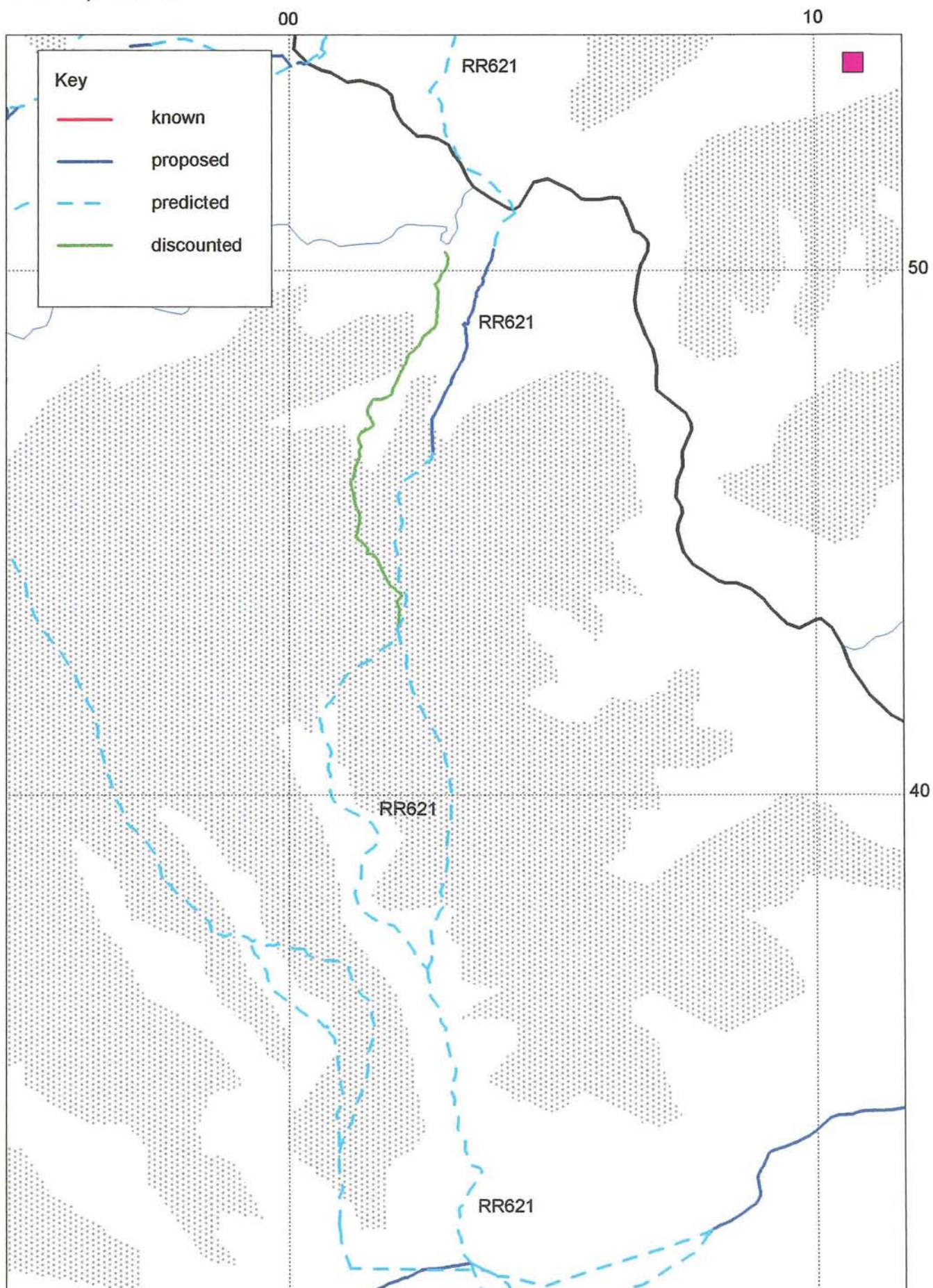
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Fig. 18.1 Roman road RR621 (Cardiff to Castell Collen) Merthyr Tydfil to the Usk Valley: Status

1:10,000



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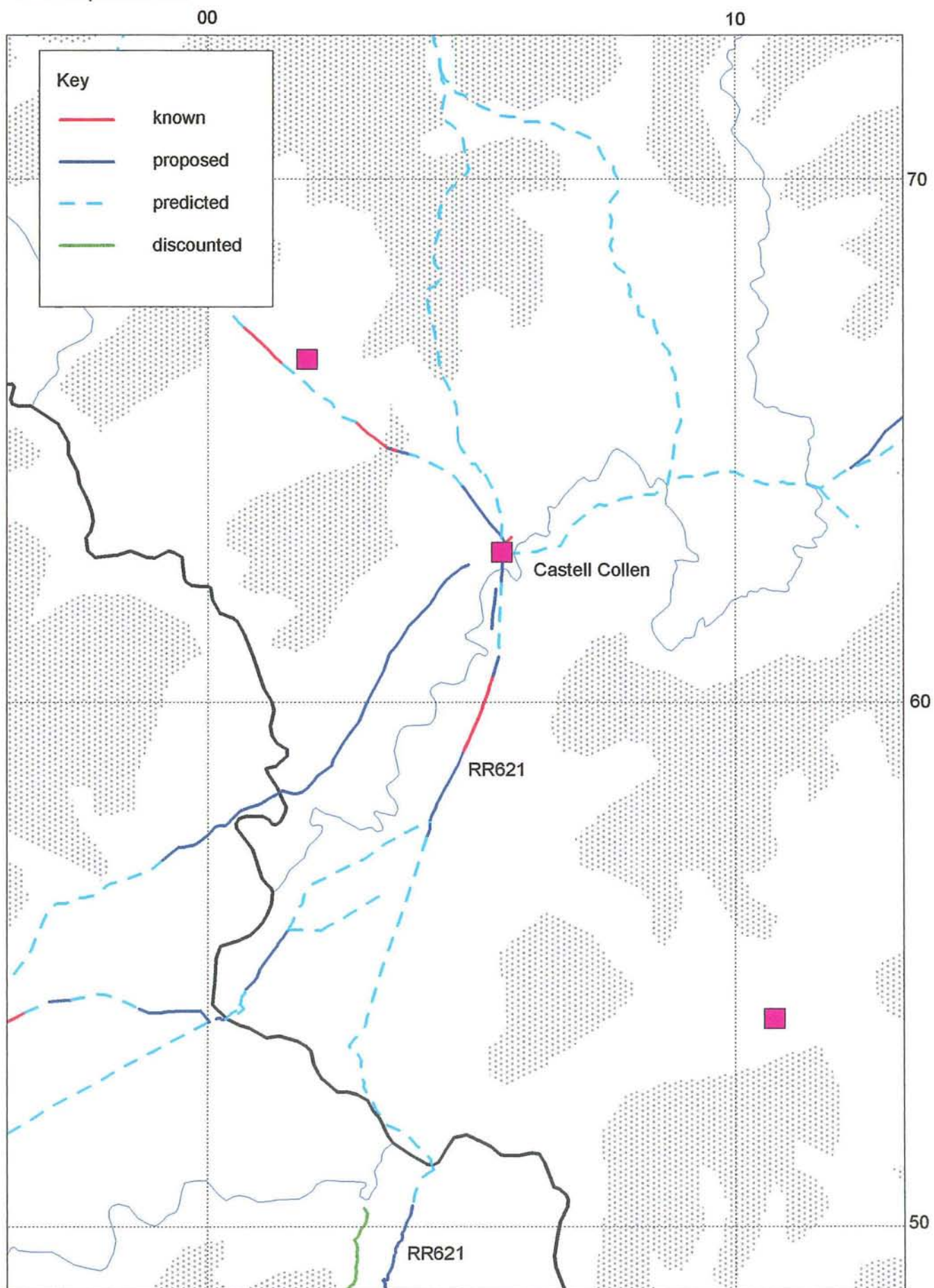
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Fig. 18.2 Roman road RR621 (Cardiff to Castell Collen) The Usk Valley to Builth Wells: Status

1:10,000



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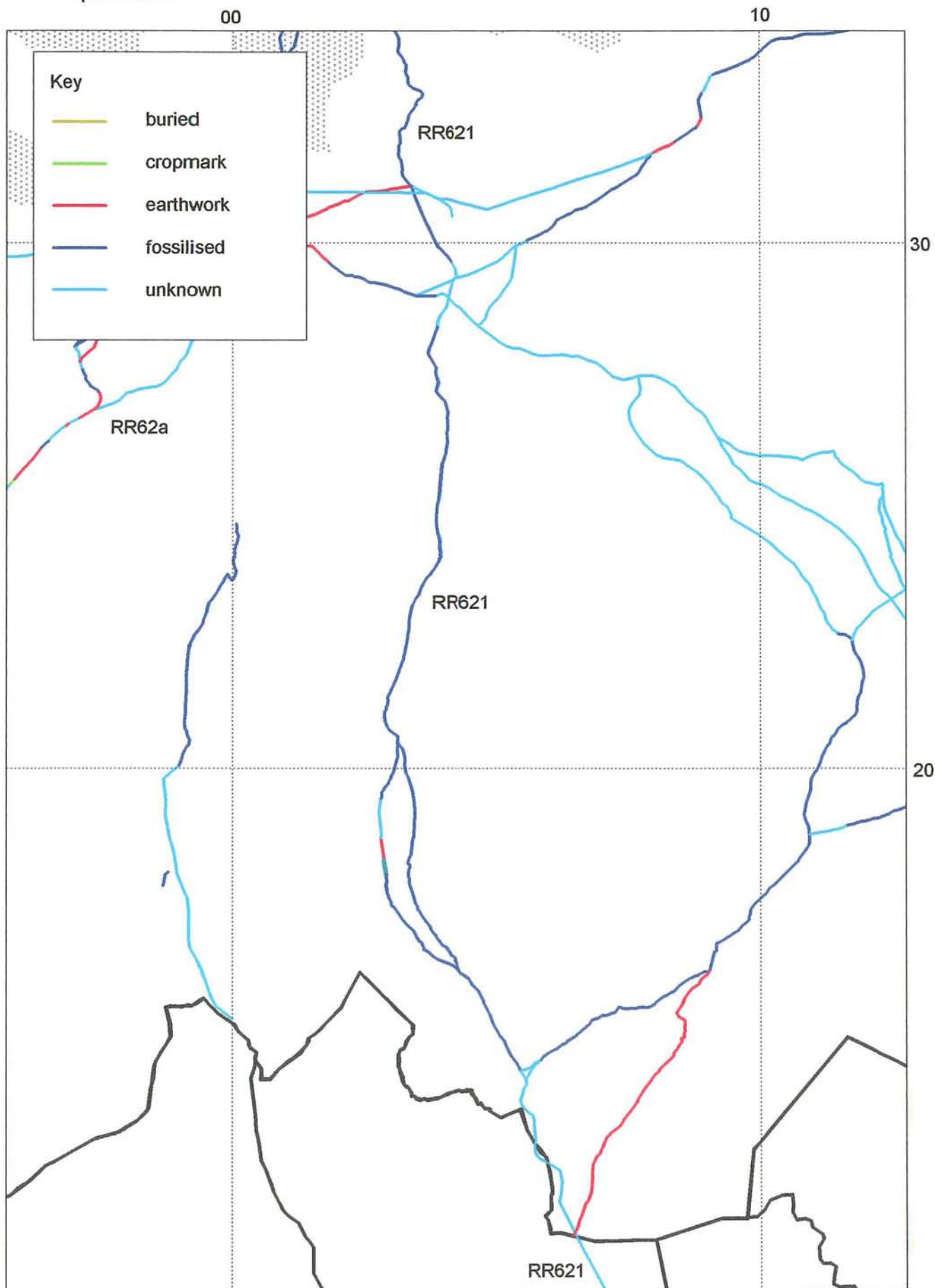
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Fig. 18.3 Roman road RR621 (Cardiff to Castell Collen) Builth Wells to Castell Collen: Status

1:10,000



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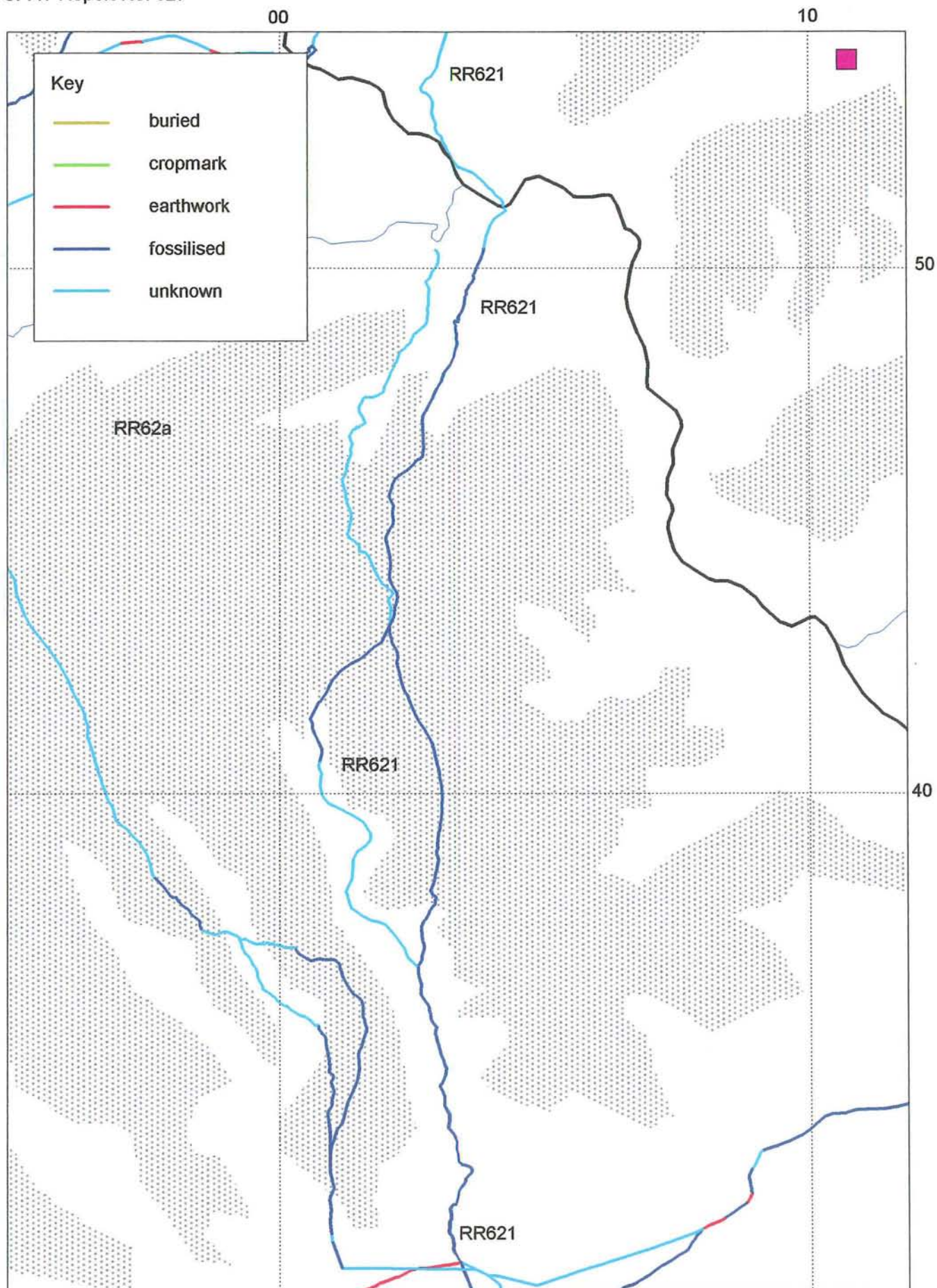
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Fig. 19.1 Roman road RR621 (Cardiff to Castell Collen) Merthyr Tydfil to the Usk valley: Survival

1:10,000



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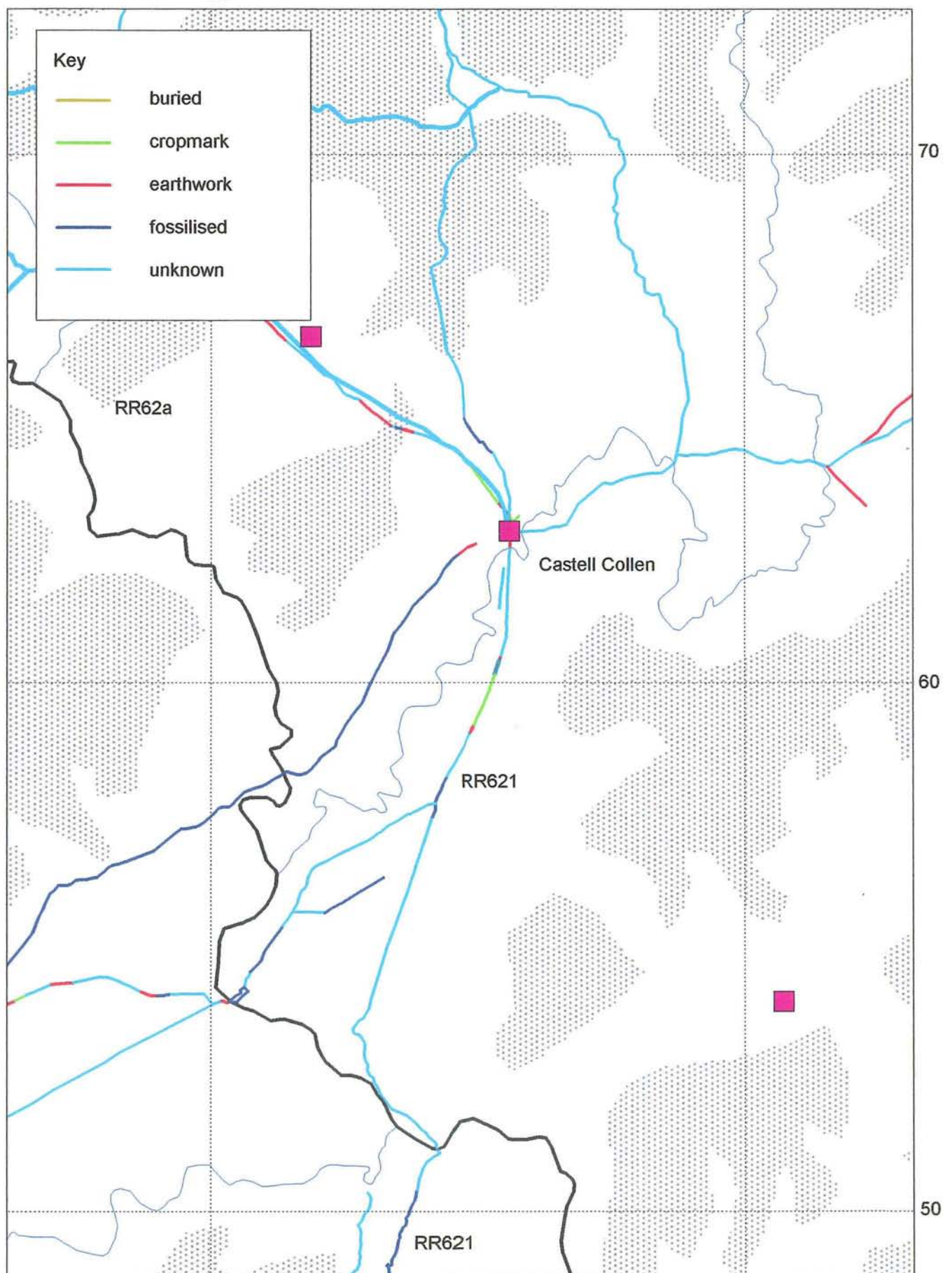
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Fig. 19.2 Roman road RR621 (Cardiff to Castell Collen) The Usk Valley to Builth Wells: Survival

1:10,000



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Fig. 19.3 Roman road RR621 (Cardiff to Castell Collen) Builth Wells to Castell Collen: Survival

1:10,000

Carno to Penycrocbren

Ordnance Survey RRX63a PRN 11500

Fis 20 & 21

A proposed route from Carno westwards to Penycrocbren which then supposedly was picked up and followed for its whole length by the turnpike road from Dylife to Machynlleth.

This route has probably engendered more discussion than any other in recent years. It was originally recorded on Trannon Moor in the 1970s and the Trust undertook excavations there in 1995. At the time we were satisfied that it was a Roman road.

Putnam, in correspondence, has been scornful of the attribution, arguing that the Trannon Moor road was 19th-century in origin, an access road linking a local farm to the newly built railway station in the Carno valley, as well as arguing that topographically it makes no sense because Carno (Caer Noddfa) was not a permanent fort. Certainly there are anomalous aspects to this proposed road – a change of alignment where the road passes through a post-medieval boundary, and the remarkable condition of several culverts which still function as drains – and the weight of current thinking almost certainly favours the much more recent date.

Bebb et al 1973

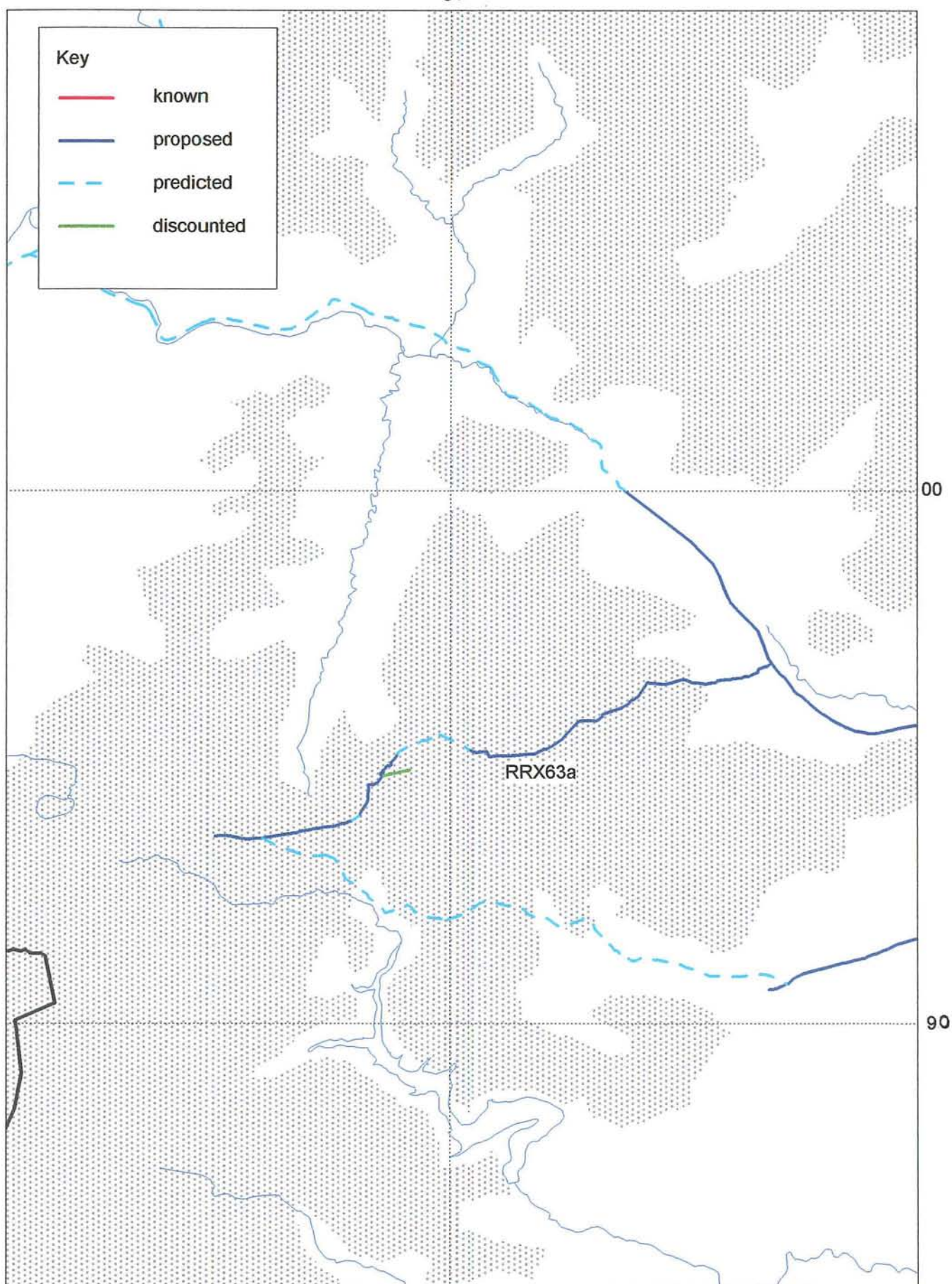
Ordnance Survey strip maps

Silvester 1995

Hankinson *et al* 1998

RCAHMW 1994, 46

Status - Predicted



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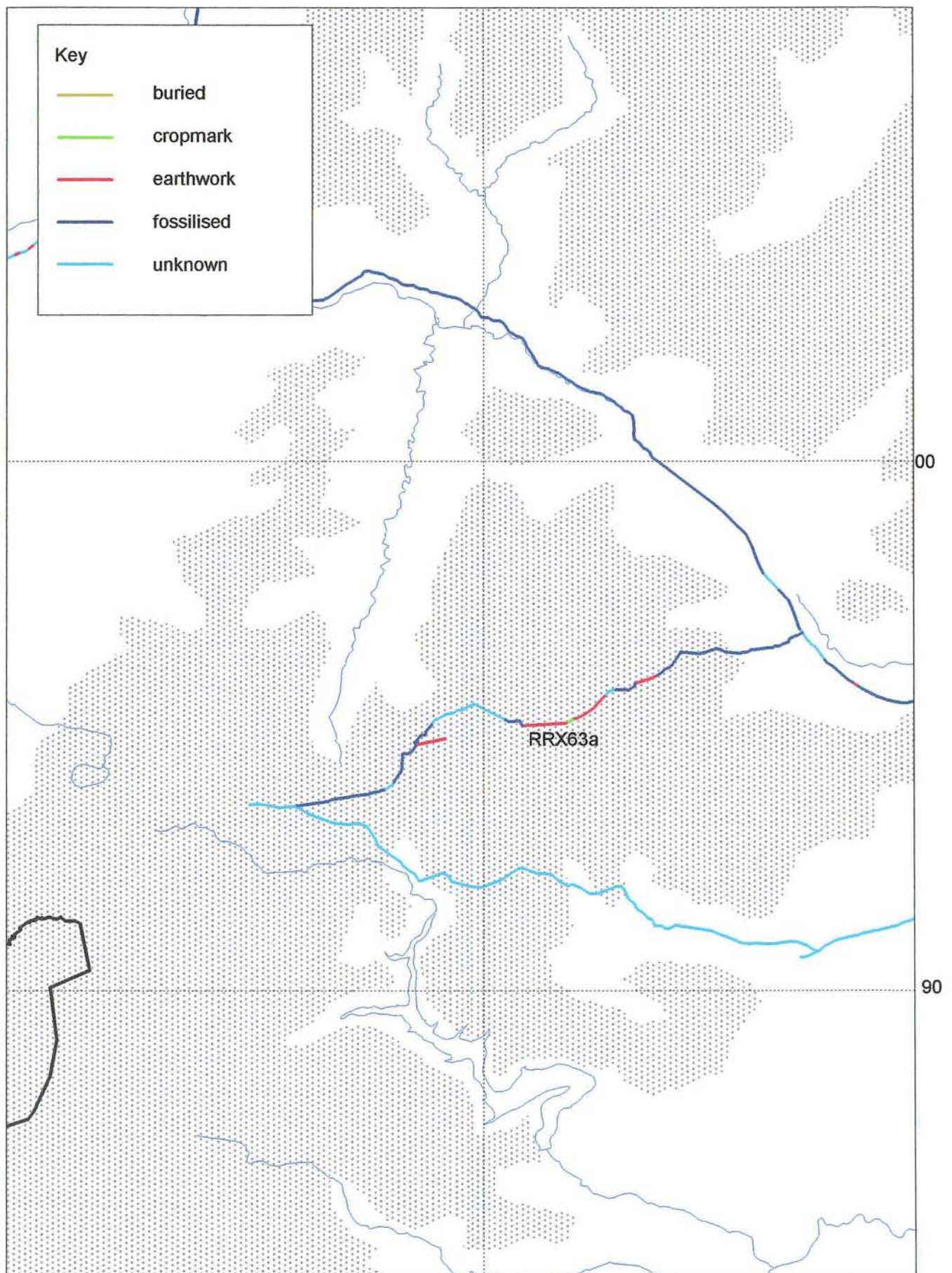
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Fig. 20 Roman road RRX63a (Carno to Penycrocbren): Status

1:10,000



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Fig. 21 Roman road RRX63a (Carno to Penycrocbren): Survival

1:10,000

Castell Collen to Caersws.

Ordnance Survey RRX58 PRN 47200 (and also PRN 11000)

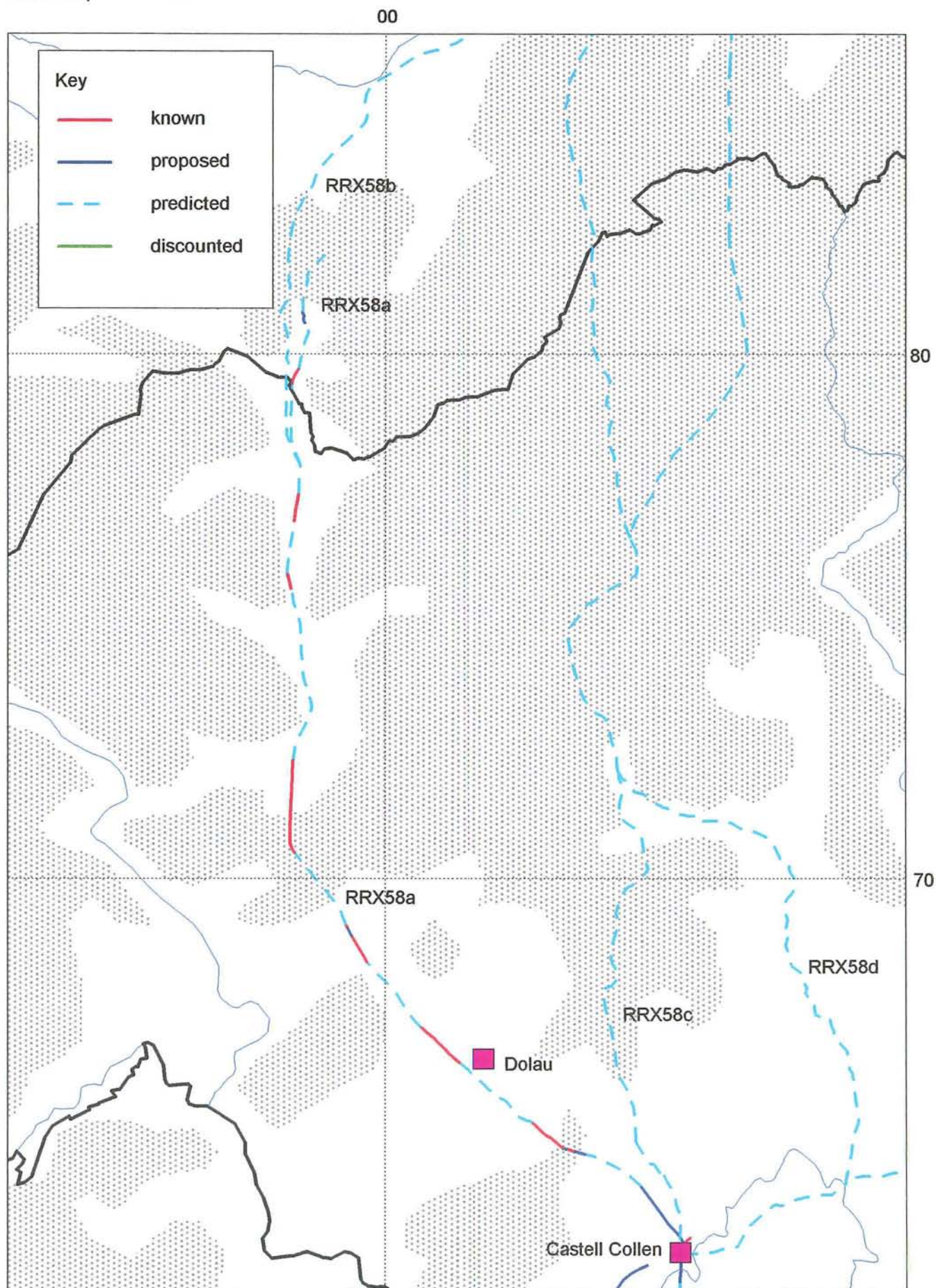
Figs 22 & 23

There is general agreement that a road must have linked these two forts in central Wales, yet little unanimity over its course. Codrington regarded it as a road, yet Margary seems not to have done. Both Barri Jones and Bill Putnam were involved in elucidating this road from the 1960s, and references are to be found in Toller (1997). No less than four routes have been suggested and for convenience we have termed these RRX58a-d, on the understanding that others might wish to use different designations.

Two variants of a more direct eastern route, which runs almost due north to south, have been suggested (RRX58c and RRX58d: PRN 11000), but neither seems to be currently accepted. A more westerly route, adopting an easier but longer course, is now the favoured one, although it currently stops short of Caersws, near Llwydiarth (Monts). The most recent assessment of the route is by Hugh Toller (1997) and offers the best evidence yet available (RRX58a). The RCAHMW have adopted an alternative route (RRX58b) in the vicinity of Llwydiarth and into the Severn Valley which found its way on to the Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain (2001), but the reasoning behind this line is uncertain and no clear explanation has been given by the RCAHMW, other than the need to link with the stretch of road identified at Glanfeinion, south of Llandinam.

Codrington 1919, 294
Ordnance Survey strip maps
Ordnance Survey 2001
RCAHMW 1994, 44
Silvester 1994, 57
Toller 1997

Status (Western Route) - Known



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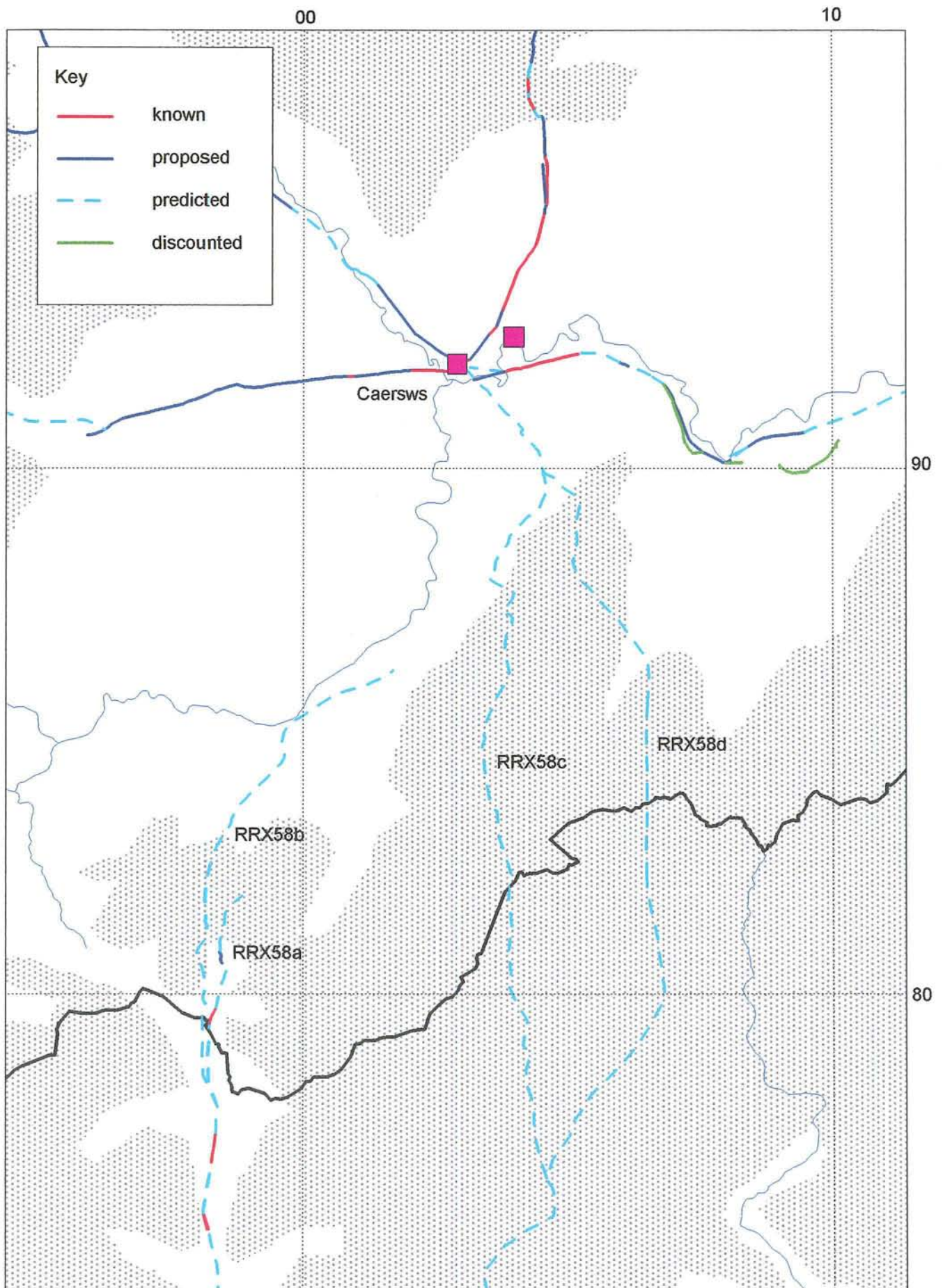
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Fig. 22.1 Roman road RRX58 (Castell Collen to Caersws) Castell Collen to Llangurig: Status

1:10,000



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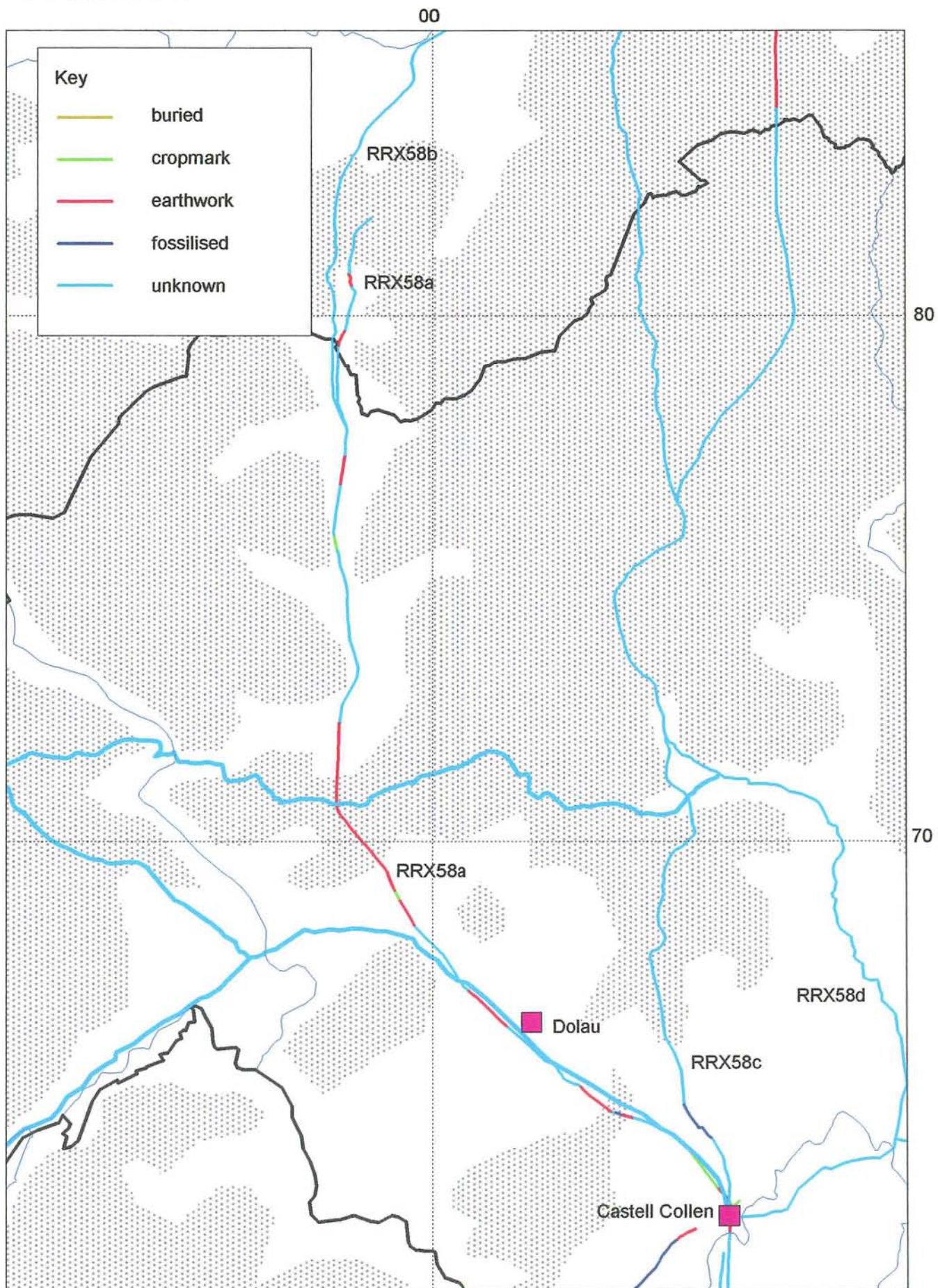
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Fig. 22.2 Roman road RRX58 (Castell Collen to Caersws) Llangurig to Caersws: Status

1:10,000



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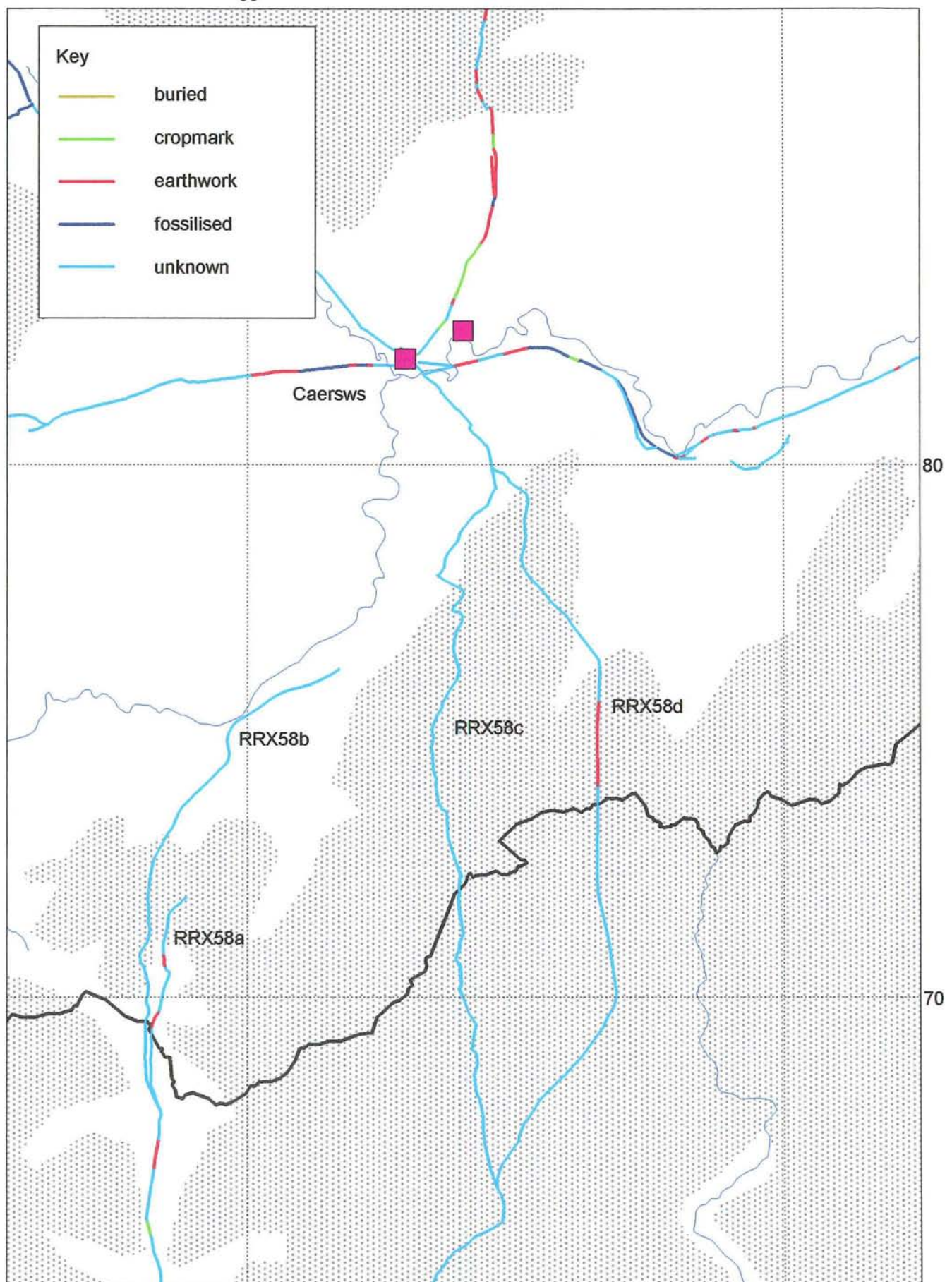
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Fig. 23.1 Roman road RRX58 (Castell Collen to Caersws) Castell Collen to Llangurig: Survival

1:10,000



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Fig. 23.2 Roman road RRX58 (Castell Collen to Caersws) Llangurig to Castell Collen: Survival

1:10,000

Castell Collen to Cae-gaer

Ordnance Survey RRX79a PRN 45000

No significant details are available for this route and its integrity cannot be assessed. In the RCAHMW Radnorshire Inventory the road is claimed to have passed through the fortlet at Dolau and paving stones had been dug up, but this is now the accepted line for the Castell Collen to Caersws road and thus invalidates any argument for the Cae-gaer line. But the conjectural course is considered to have been followed by later roads, and in 1977 the Ordnance Survey stated that 'there is no evidence of Roman construction along this route'.

No plot has been attempted, although the route is depicted on the general plans at the beginning of this report.

RCAHMW 1913, 117

RCAHMW 1994, 50

Status - Predicted

Chester to Caer Gai via Ffrith

Margary RR66a PRN 47900

Figs 24 & 25

Detailed information on this road is sporadic. Very little is known of the earlier stages of the route from Chester down to Hope and Ffrith, and no course, satisfactory or otherwise, can be plotted for this section (see figs).

Prior to 1954, H C Irvine argued the course of the road from Ffrith south-westwards, a typescript of which is housed in the NMR, and a little more recently both Barri Jones and Henry Potts published assessments, the former dealing primarily with the road to the west of Bala, the latter a chatty travelogue. There is some unpublished Ordnance Survey information as well, of course, as Margary's gloss on the road. For much of the route there seems to be general agreement, even if little of the road is visible. However, to the west of Bwlchgwyn (SJ2653) alternative courses have been suggested, with apparently little to choose between them.

Irvine 1954

Jones 1959

Margary 1973, 346

Ordnance Survey notes

Potts 1964

RCAHMW 1994, 27

Status - Proposed/Known

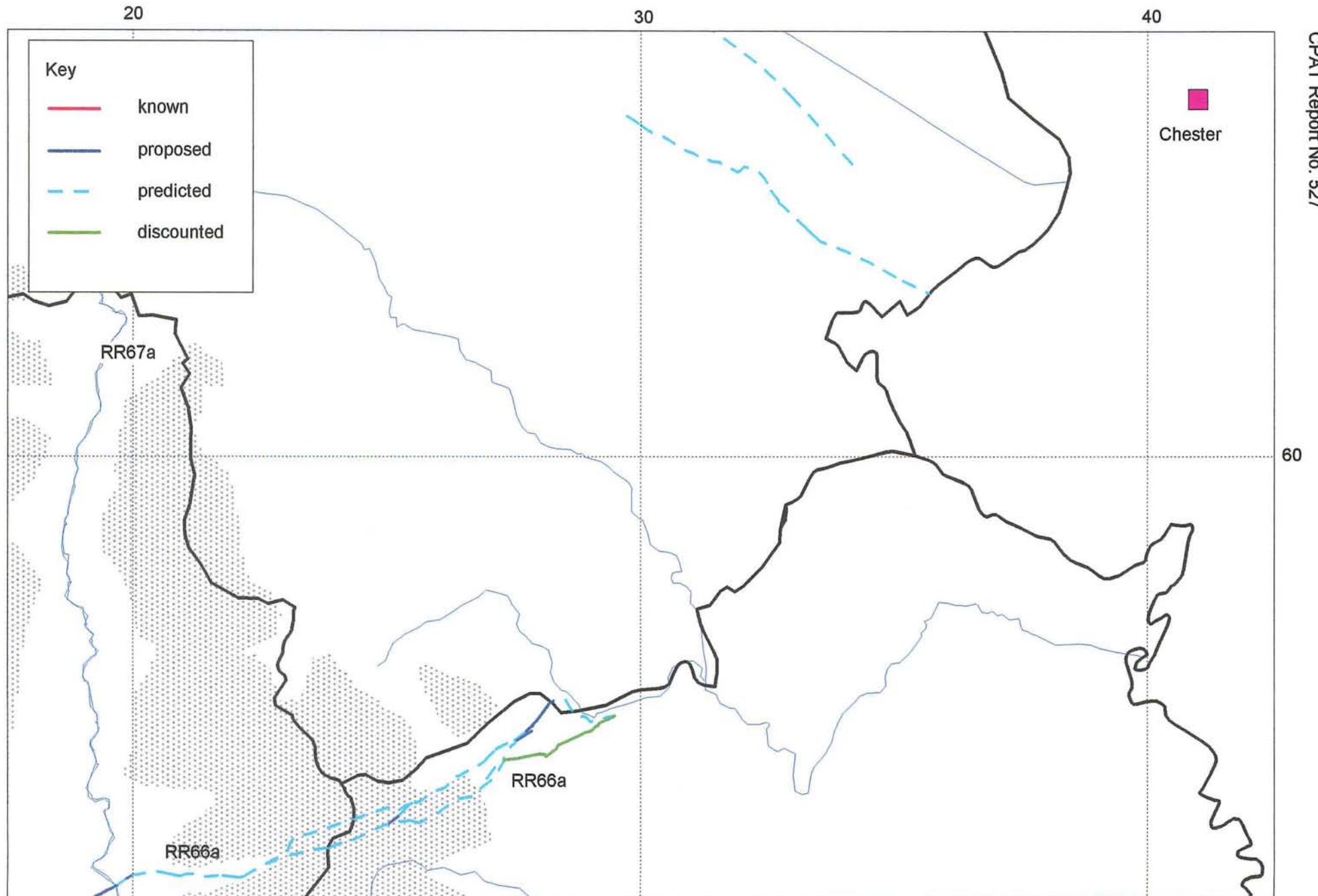


Fig. 24.1 Roman road RR66a (Chester to Caer Gai): Status

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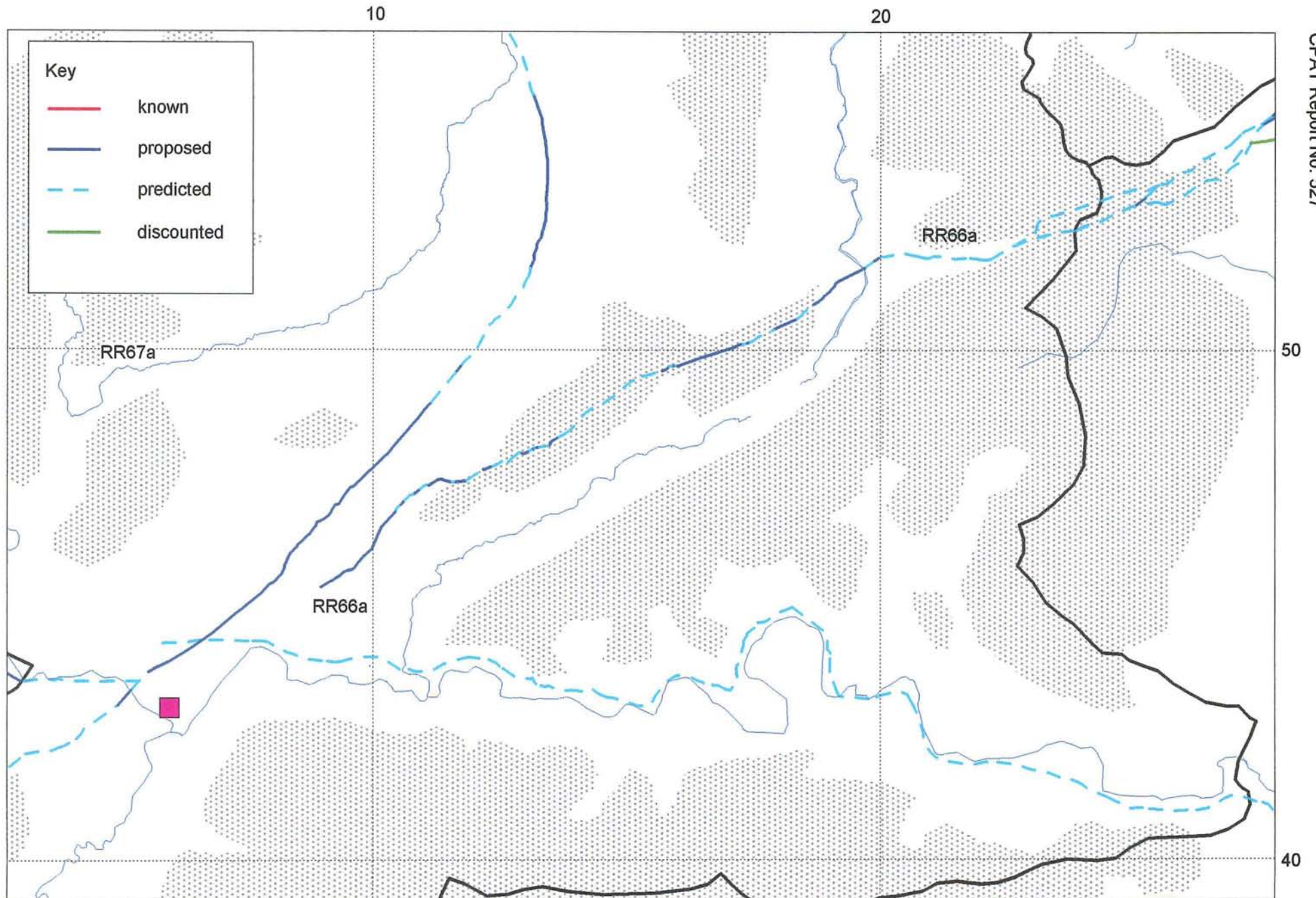


Fig. 24.2 Roman road RR66a (Chester to Caer Gai): Status

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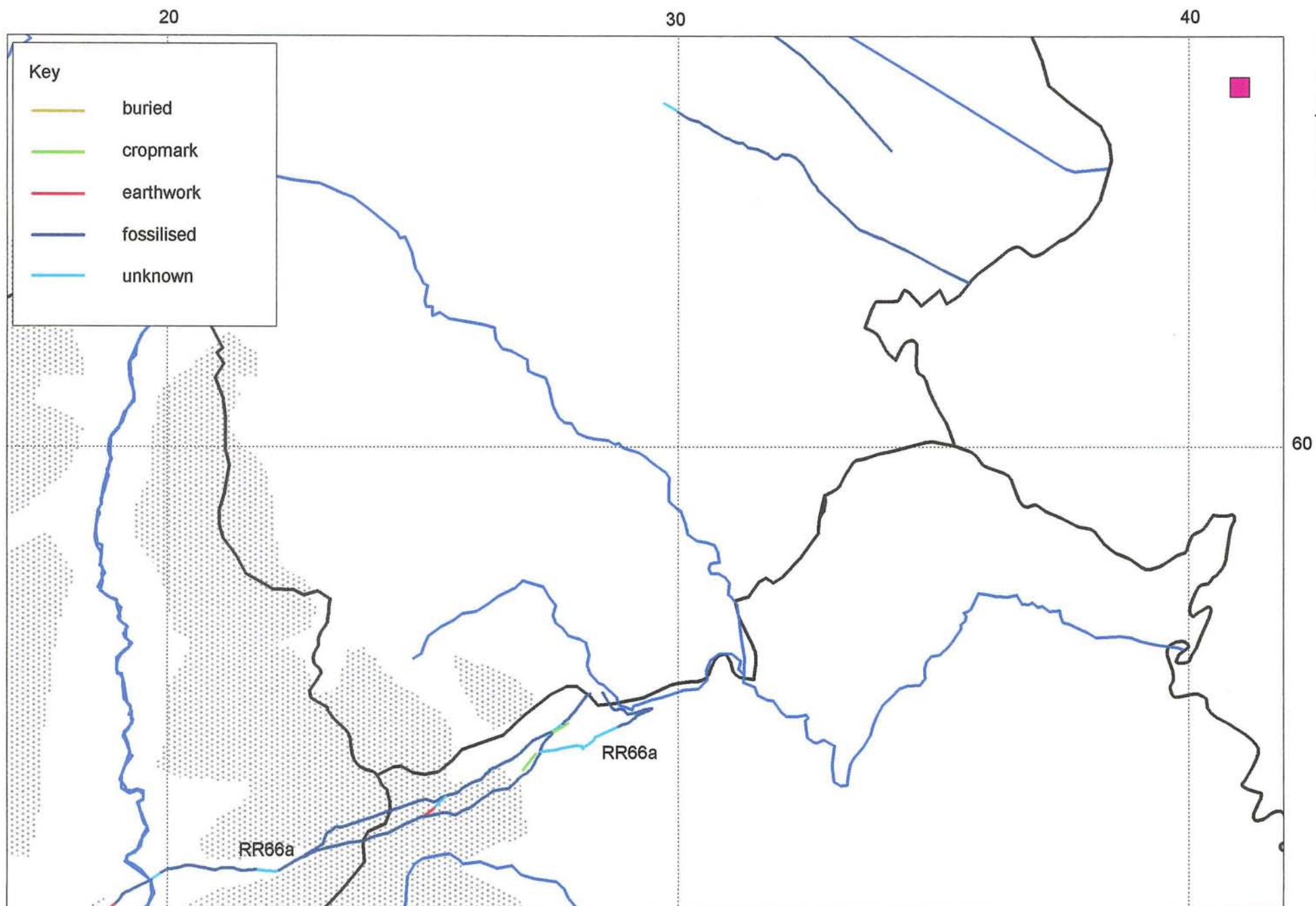


Fig. 25.1 Roman road RR66a (Chester to Caer Gai): Survival

1:10,000

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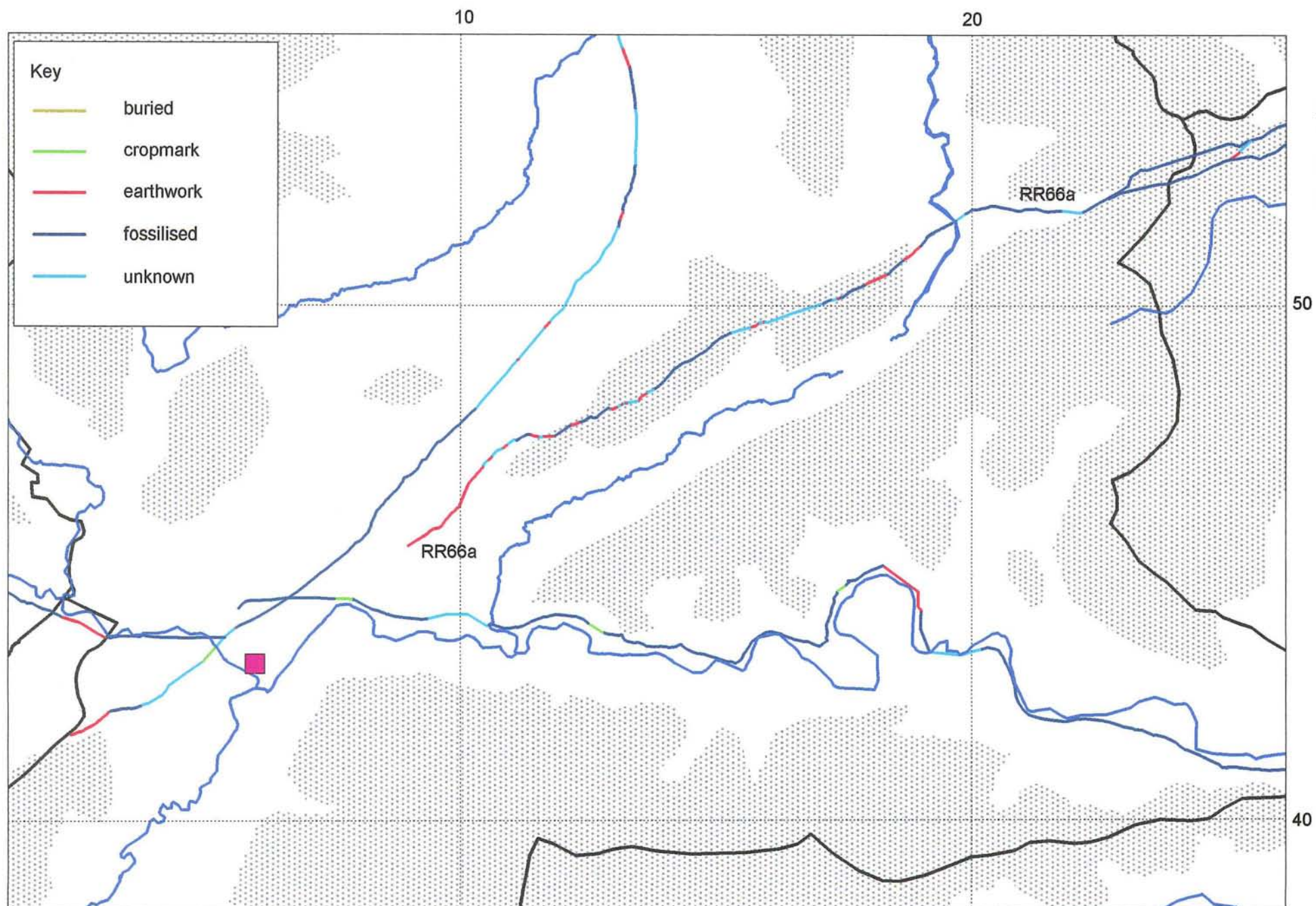


Fig. 25.2 Roman road RR66a (Chester to Caer Gai): Survival

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Chester to St Asaph

Margary RR67a PRN 46800

Figs 26 & 27

This is one of the better authenticated roads in north-east Wales, linking Chester with the unlocated fort at *Varis* which appeared in the Antonine Itinerary on *Iter XI*. The standard authorities, Rivet and Smith were happy to follow others in placing *Varis* at St Asaph, particularly as the mileage in *Iter XI* was exact, even though indications of the fort were and remain elusive (Rivet and Smith 1979, 487).

The route as generally perceived (see, for example, Ordnance Survey 2001) leaves Chester, and then swings north-westwards along the edge of the Dee Estuary. At Holywell, it alters direction, the Greenfield Valley allowing access to the higher ground and enabling the road to follow a western course across the northern tail of the Clwydians to drop down into the Vale of Clwyd and a river crossing of the Clwyd itself at St Asaph. In itself this is fine, yet much of the course of this road is speculative with the straight post-medieval road (now the A548) running along the north coast was assumed to be on the course of a predecessor (see Pritchard 1964, 75); and over the years there has been considerable discussion based on very little hard evidence about its line (see for instance Hemp 1922), going back into the 19th century for G W Shrubsole listed no fewer than six alternatives for the route to *Varis* which as far as he was concerned had to be equated with Caerwys, its medieval planned grid pattern for him being obviously Roman.

Observations at Oakenholt near Flint epitomize the dilemma. A section of road surface was examined on the north side of the A548 in 1993 (though at a point where the main road curves inland slightly). It had no side ditches, but a cambered surface constrained by edge stones. Though not certainly dated it is a firm contender for a Roman road and was traced by auguring for about 100m where its alignment shifted (Greuter n.d.). However, if it is RR67a, its location conflicts with another possible section of road photographed by Barri Jones in 1977 which lay south of the A548 (Frere 1977, 358). There is also the possibility – with a Roman settlement known at Oakenholt – that there could have been secondary roads here.

Further west beyond the Greenfield Valley Margary proposed that the road was marked by footpaths and lanes, and the Ordnance Survey through one of its field investigators has produced intermittent evidence of the road line. At least one length of it has now been confirmed in recent evaluation trenches which revealed a road with shallow flanking ditches, 7m wide (Hankinson 2002). Further west where it picks up a minor lane about one kilometre to the east of Rhualt on the lip of the Clwyd Vale, nothing is known of it. While its general course cannot be doubted many of its details remain obscure.

Frere 1977

Greuter, n.d.

Hankinson 2002

Margary 1978, 348

Ordnance Survey (J Rigg) typescript notes (1961)

Ordnance Survey 2001

RCAHMW 1994, 31

Shrubsole 1892

Status - Known

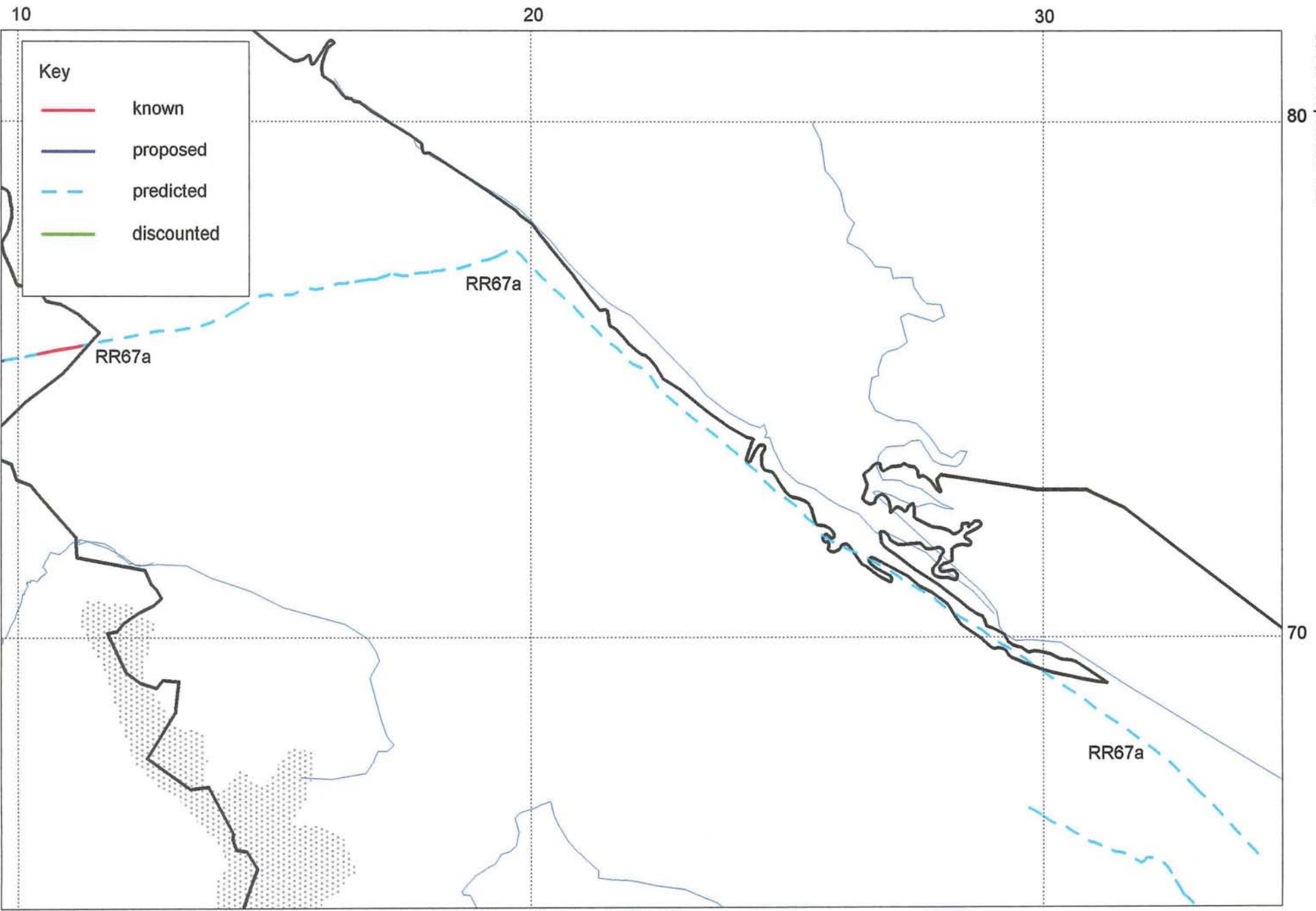


Fig. 26.1 Roman road RR67a (Chester to St Asaph): Sandycroft to Rhualt: Status

1:10,000

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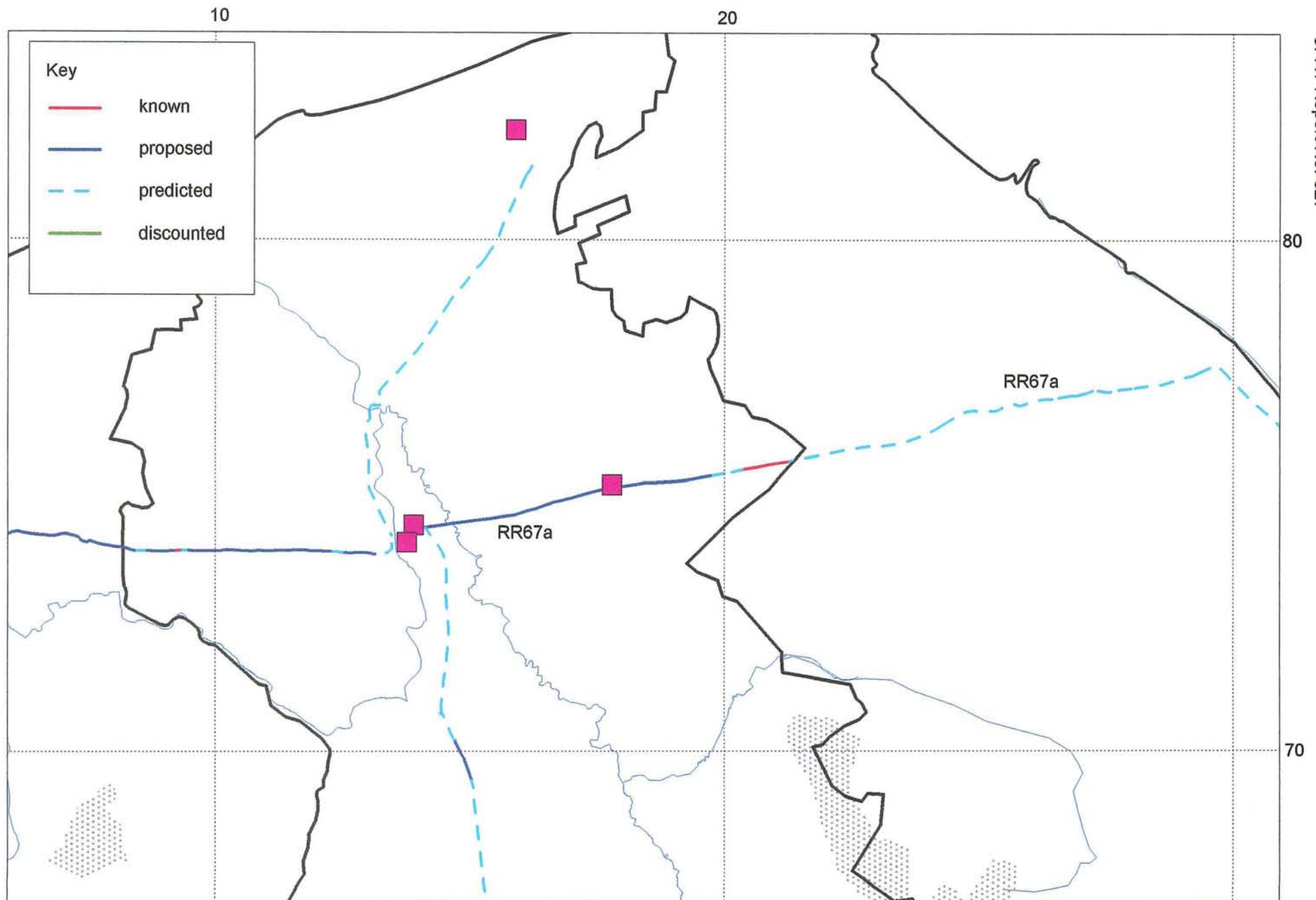


Fig. 26.2 Roman road RR67a (Chester to St Asaph): Rhualt to St Asaph: Status

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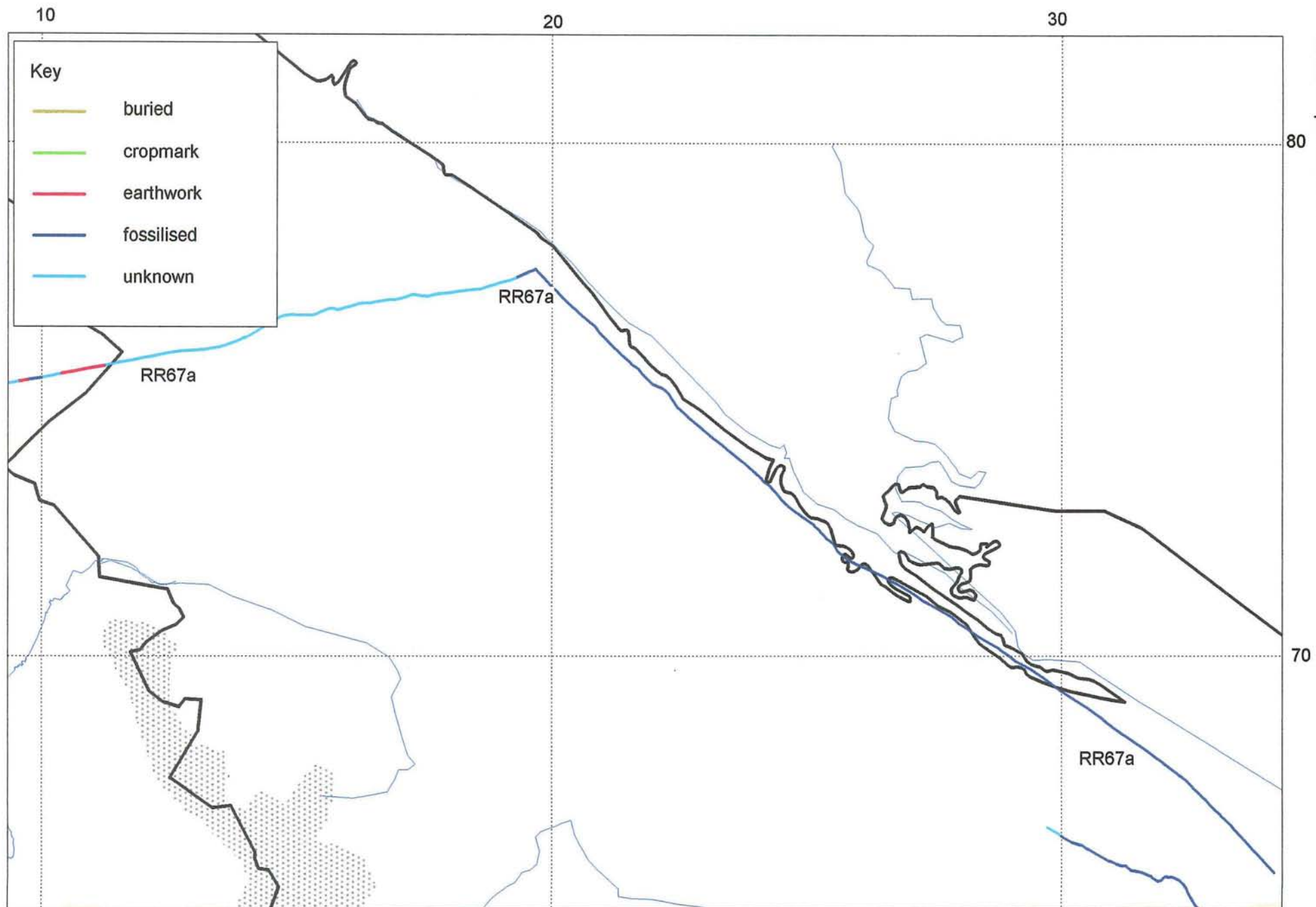


Fig. 27.1 Roman road RR67a (Chester to St Asaph) Sandycroft to Rhualt: Survival

1:10,000

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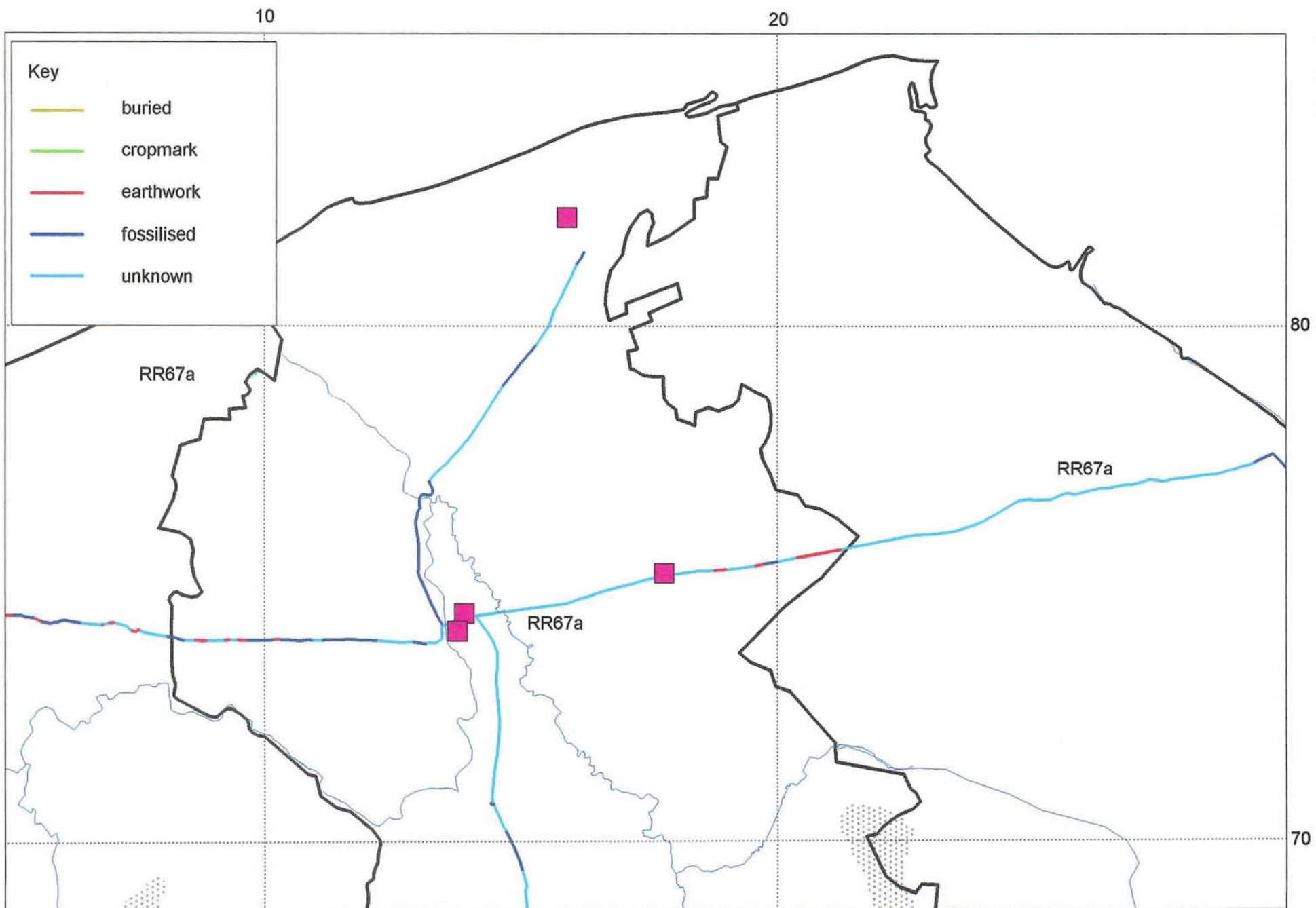


Fig. 27.2 Roman road RR67a (Chester to St Asaph) Rhualt to St Asaph: Survival

1:10,000

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Coelbren to Brecon Gaer

Margary RR622 PRN 14100

Figs 28 & 29

The most recent description of this road – Sarn Helen - which originated at the fort in Neath (Glamorgan) and runs to Brecon Gaer in the Usk Valley is in the RCAHMW inventory from 1986, building on the foundations provided by Barri Jones' work and that of others whose observations go back into the 18th century. Some fine sections of road still survive, short lengths of which are scheduled, and it is probably true to say that this is the best surviving Roman road in the region.

One diversion, near Bryn Melyn in the western Brecon Beacons can probably be discounted. Alternative routes have also been advocated immediately to the south of the Usk Valley. That over Mynydd Illtyd is perfectly acceptable, although the other along the south side of the Usk itself is poorly defined.

Jones 1957

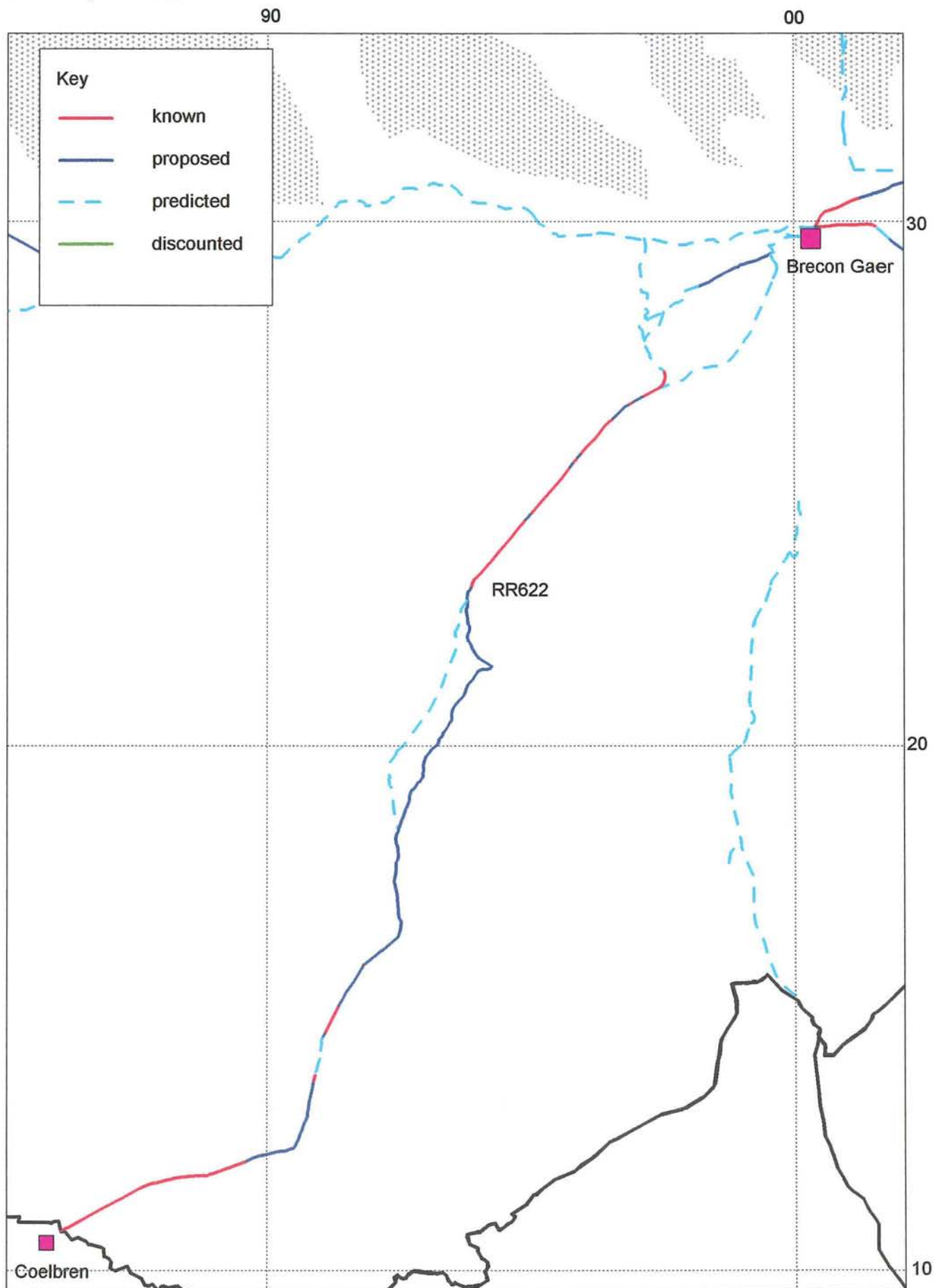
Margary 1973, 338

Ordnance Survey strip maps

RCAHMW 1986, 158-63

RCAHMW 1994, 14

Status - Known



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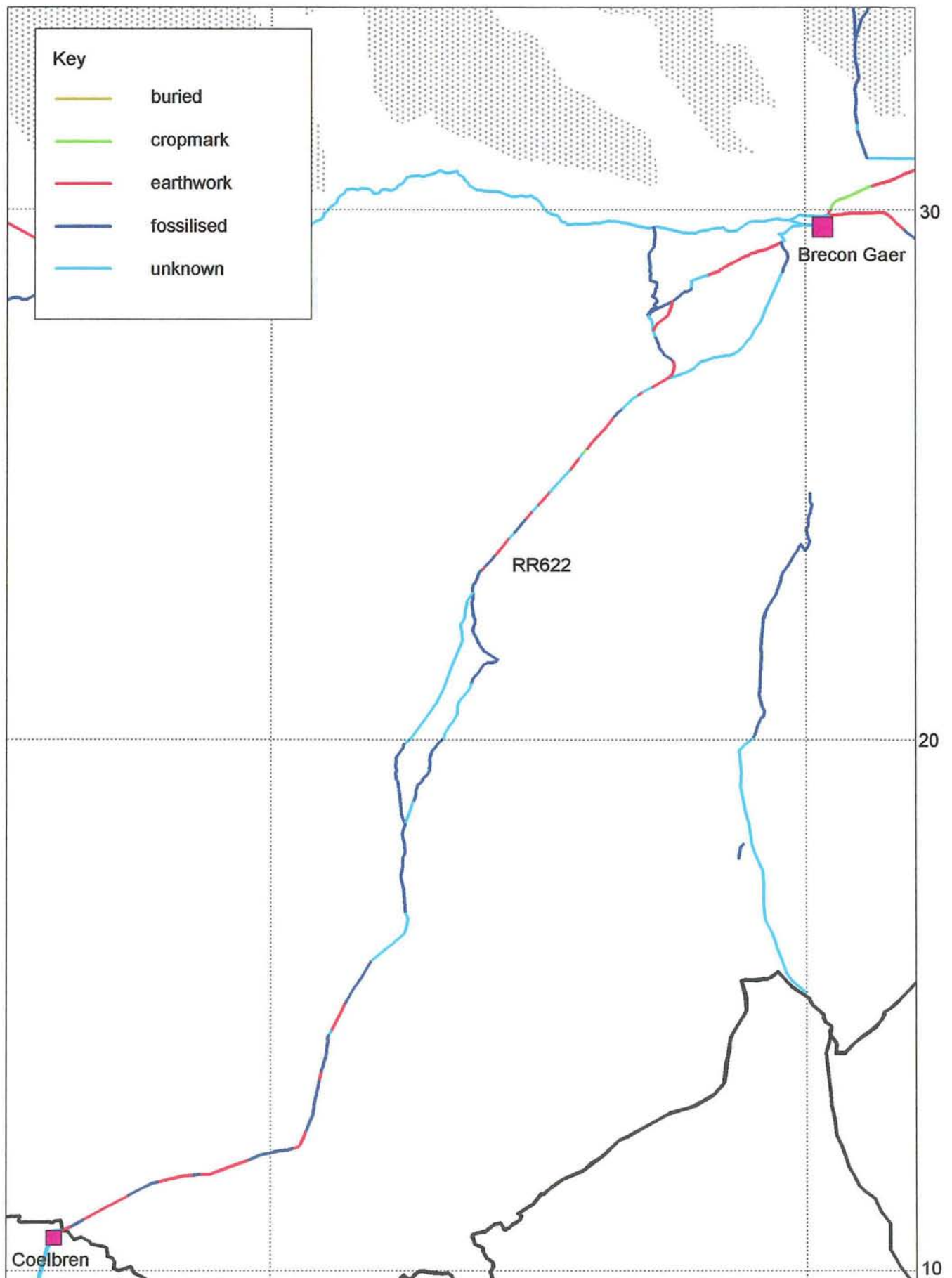
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Fig. 28 Roman road RR622 (Coelbren to Brecon Gaer): Status

1:10,000



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Fig. 29 Roman road RR622 (Coelbren to Brecon Gaer): Survival

1:10,000

Coelbren to Penydarren

Ordnance Survey RRX86

According to the Royal Commission, this route would not have been impossible, cutting across the southern tip of Powys. However, there is no ground evidence for it.

Hogg, unpublished typescript notes
RCAHMW 1986, 177
RCAHMW 1994, 56

Status – Predicted

Corwen to St Asaph

Ordnance Survey RRX121 PRN 48000

Fig 30 & 31

This route was first proposed by Edmund Waddelove in a published booklet in 1979, following his fieldwork in 1977, and has received accreditation from the Ordnance Survey in its newly published map of Roman Britain. Waddelove excavated one section at Cefn-y-groes and identified others road-like features in service trenches.

The route is heavily dependent on surviving straight alignments of tracks, boundaries and footpaths, and casual observations, together with an appreciation of the local topography. It has not been assessed by the Ordnance Survey or as far as we can establish by any other Roman road researchers.

Regrettably very little substantive evidence has been found for its existence. Limited excavations on one section of its route in 1993 close to Llwyn-ynn Hall, south of Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd confirmed the presence of a metalled but far from straight trackway, but did not produce any corroborative evidence of a Roman road (Hankinson 1993).

In our view its authenticity remains to be verified and much more fieldwork needs to be conducted on its line.

Hankinson 1993

RCAHMW 1994, 58

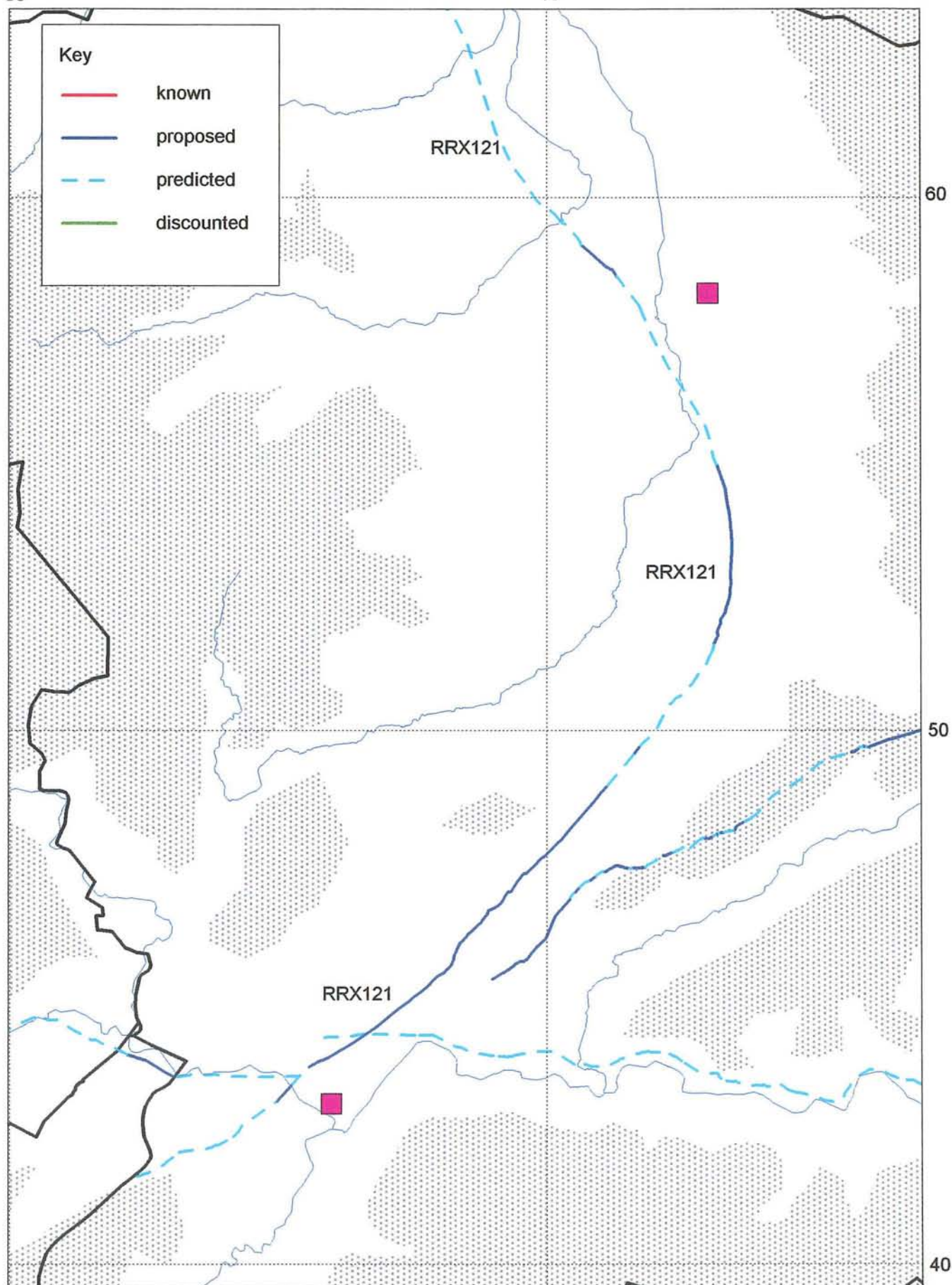
Waddelove 1979

Waddelove n.d.: annotated strip maps (NMR)

Status – Proposed ?

00

10



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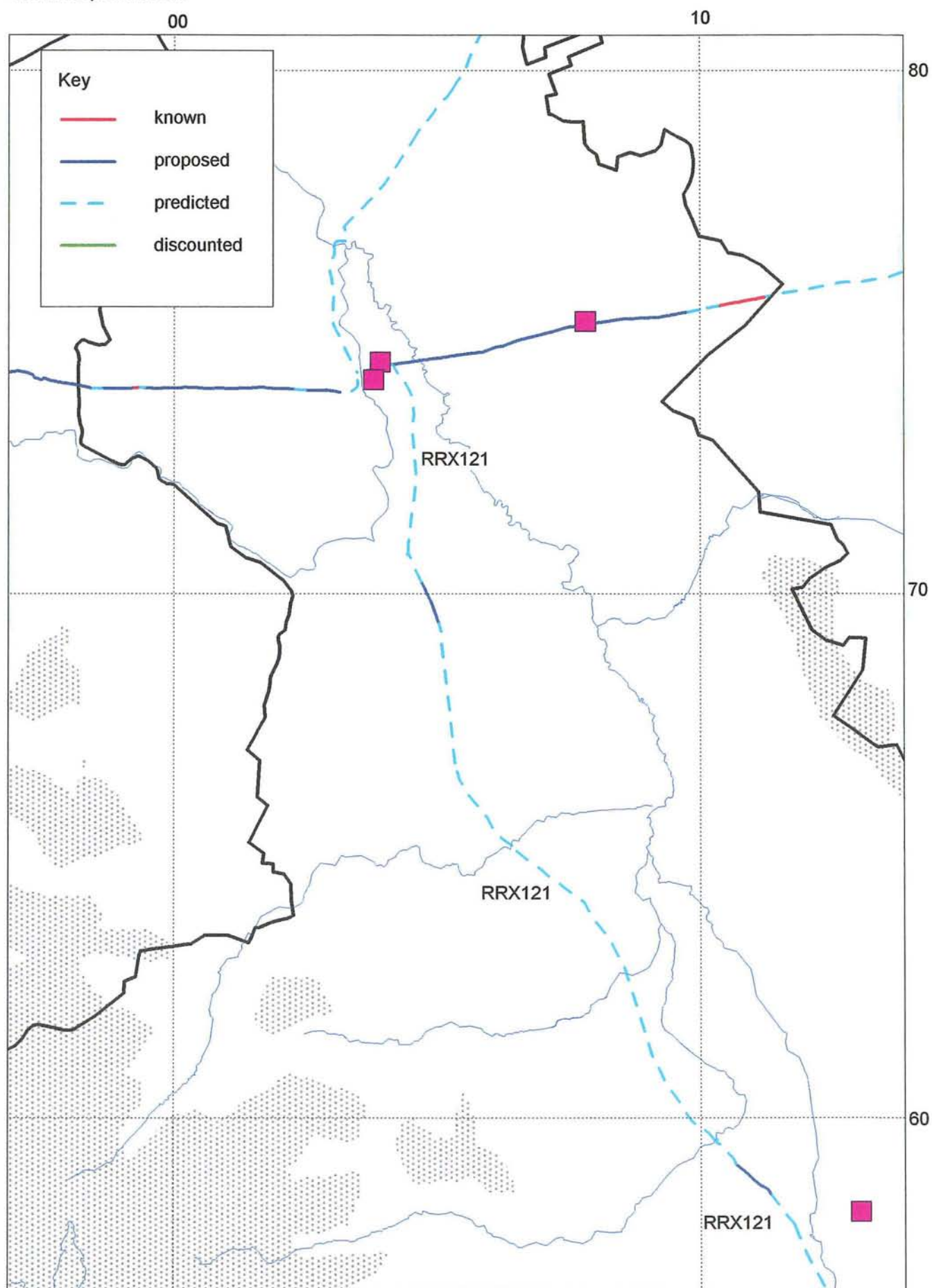
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Fig. 30.1 Roman road RRX121 (Corwen to St Asaph): Status

1:10,000



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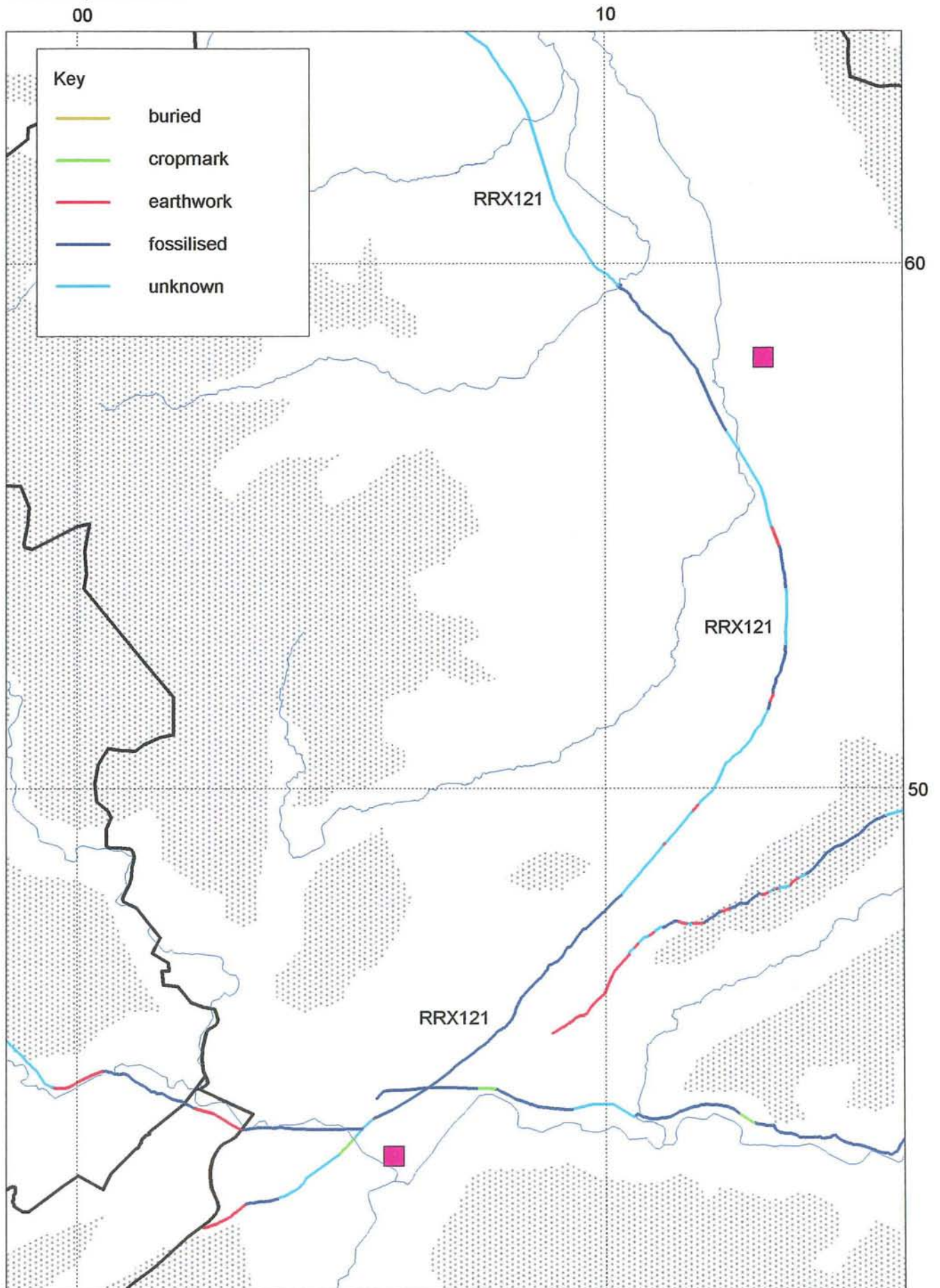
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Fig. 30.2 Roman road RRX121 (Corwen to St Asaph): Status

1:10,000



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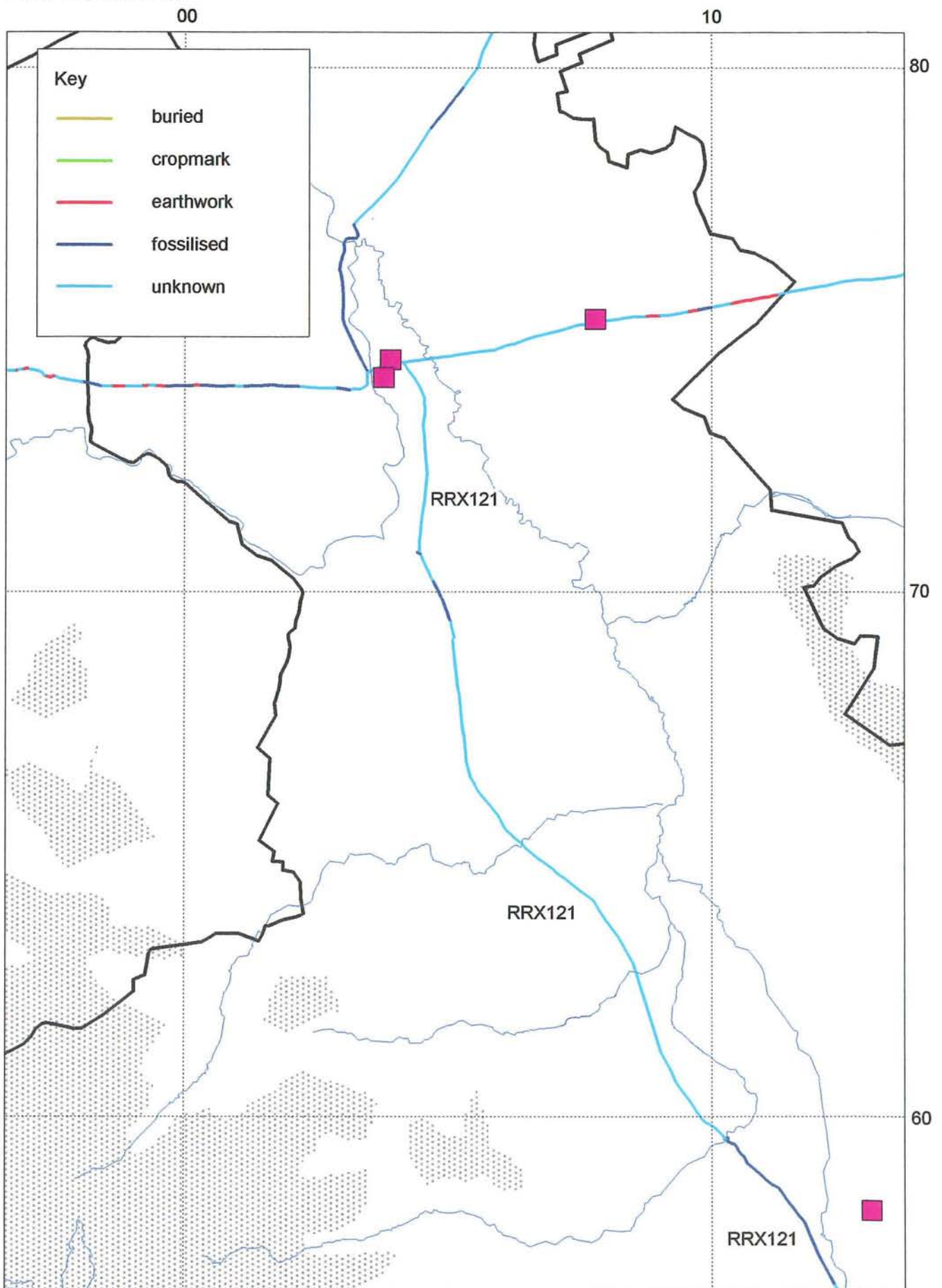
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Fig. 31.1 Roman road RRX121 (Corwen to St Asaph): Survival

1:10,000



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Fig. 31.2 Roman road RRX121 (Corwen to St Asaph): Survival

1:10,000

Cwmdu to Llyswen

Ordnance Survey RRX88/RRX89 PRN 14710

Fig 32 & 33

This route, postulated by A H A Hogg, partly on the basis of an unproven lost fort at Bronllys, has been considered by the Royal Commission. It follows existing lanes and the like for much of its course, but remains unauthenticated with absolutely no substantive evidence to support it.

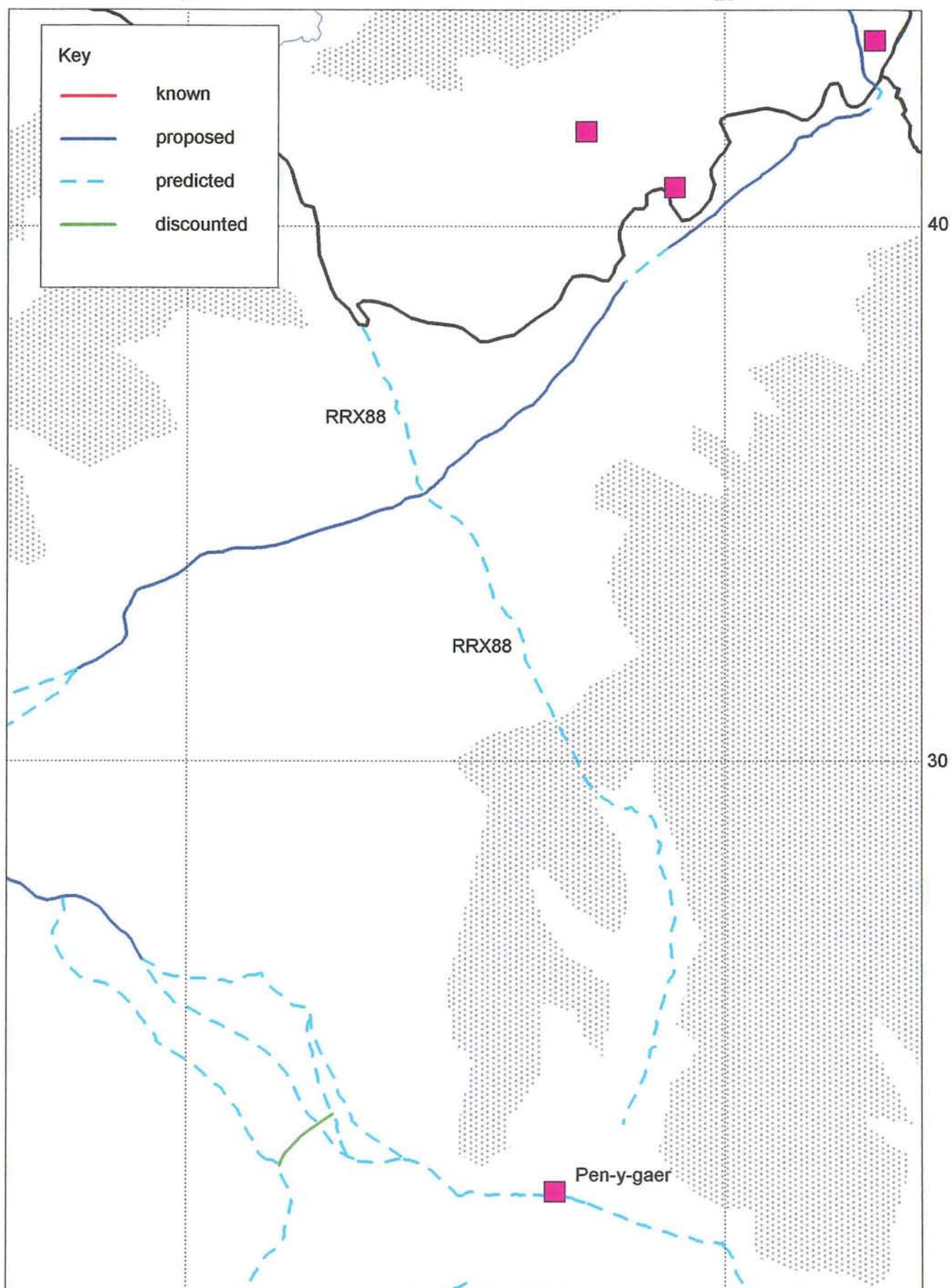
Hogg, unpublished typescript notes

Ordnance Survey strip maps

RCAHMW 1986, 177

RCAHMW 1994, 56

Status – Predicted



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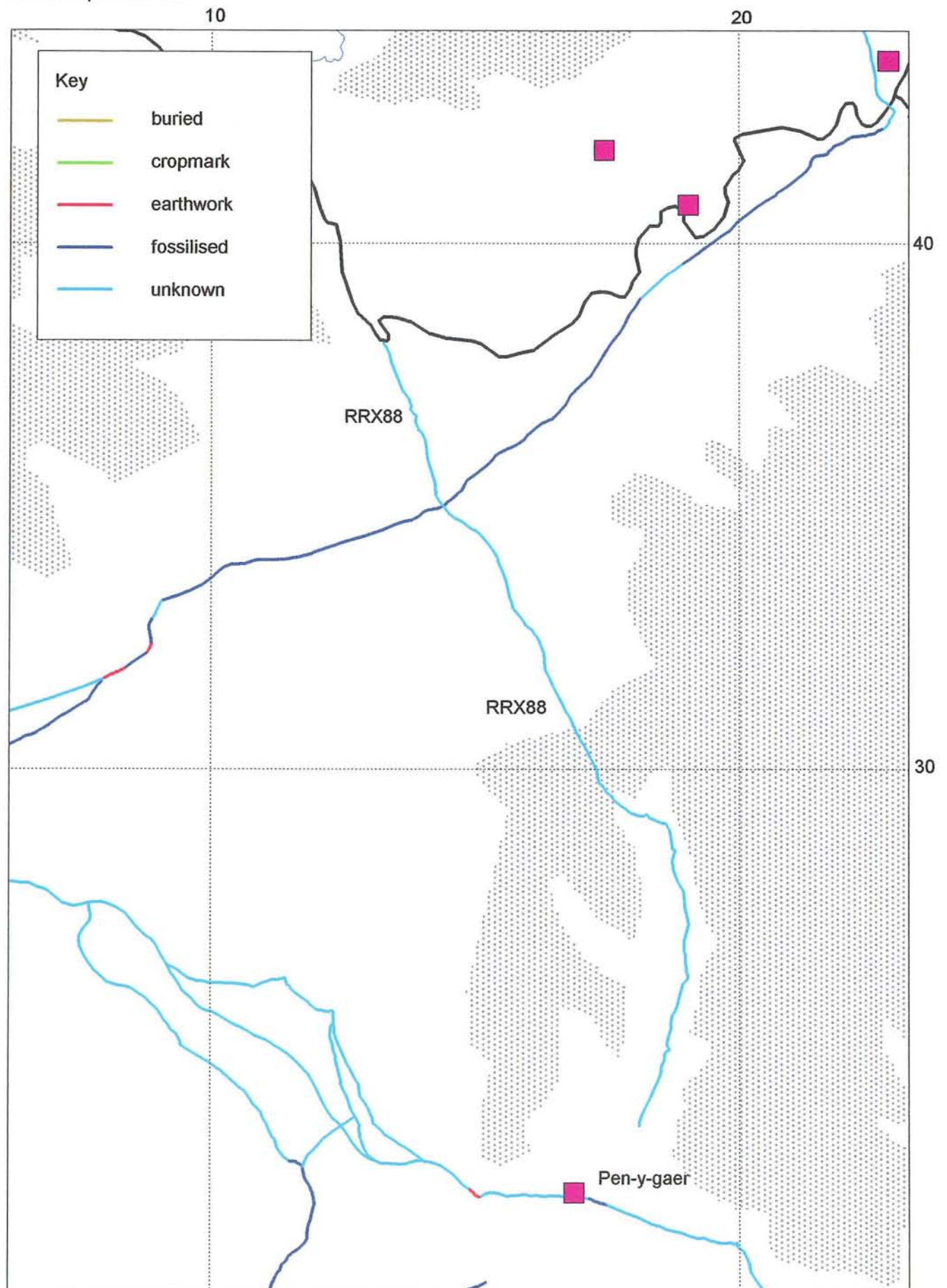
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Fig. 32 Roman road RRX88 (Cwmdu to Llyswen): Status

1:10,000



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Fig. 33 Roman road RRX88 (Cwmdu to Llyswen): Survival

1:10,000

Dolgellau to Pennal via Machynlleth

Margary RR69b PRN 11800

This road, known for part of its course as Sarn Helen and linking the forts of Tomen y Mur and Pennal, both in Gwynedd, strays into Powys to the north of Machynlleth, where it reputedly follows the valley of the Dulas. However, no visible traces of this part of the route survive and consequently no plotted has been attempted.

Margary 1973, 354
Ordnance Survey strip maps
RCAHMW 1994, 38

Status – Predicted

Forden Gaer to Caersws

Margary RR64. PRN 11700

Figs 34 & 35

This represents a part of Margary's longer road that ran westwards from Wroxeter into central Wales, linking the two well-known forts at Forden Gaer and Caersws.

This road has been relatively well-established with work by Barri Jones (1961) and Bill Putnam (1962). It follows the valley of the Severn, and such deviations that it makes from a straight course result from the meanderings of the river. Only one major length has been suggested as an alternative - by Barri Jones - to the west of Newtown, and this can now be disregarded on the advice of Bill Putnam who has indicated that, before his death, Jones had accepted Putnam's arguments. Putnam's records are also at variance with the Ordnance Survey on occasions, as with his recognition of a short length of *agger* in Abermule.

Much disturbance to the road line, apparently unchecked, has occurred as the industrial estate on the A483 to the east of Newtown has developed.

Good lengths survived as earthworks between Penstrowed and Caersws, but even detailed examination in the immediate vicinity of Caersws has revealed that, particularly to the east of the fort, the nature of the alluvial deposits and the changing pattern of the river channel may have had a destructive effect on the archaeology.

Jones 1993, 37

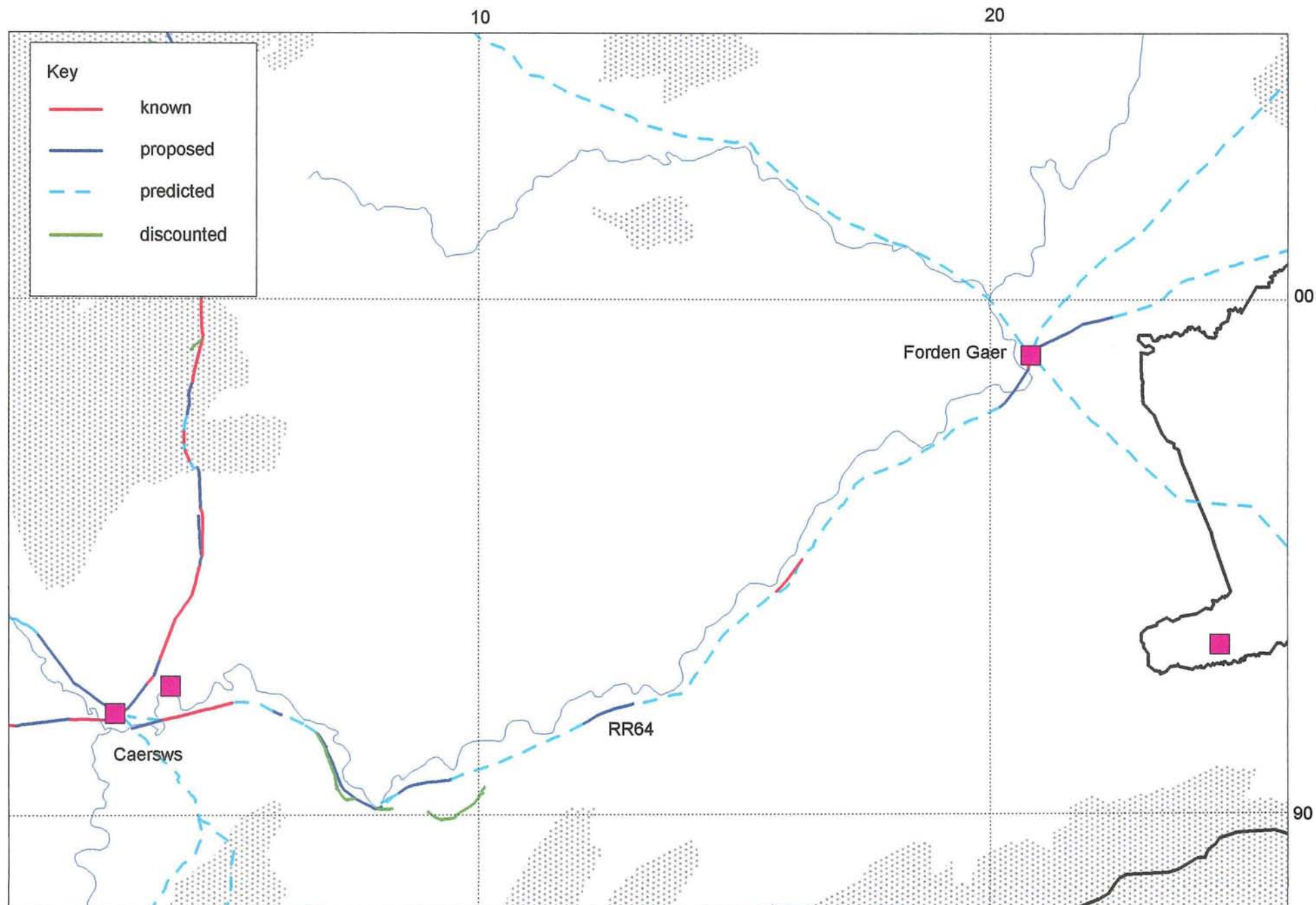
Ordnance Survey strip maps

Putnam 1962

Status - Known

Fig. 34 Roman road RR64 (Forden Gaer to Caersws): Status

1:10,000



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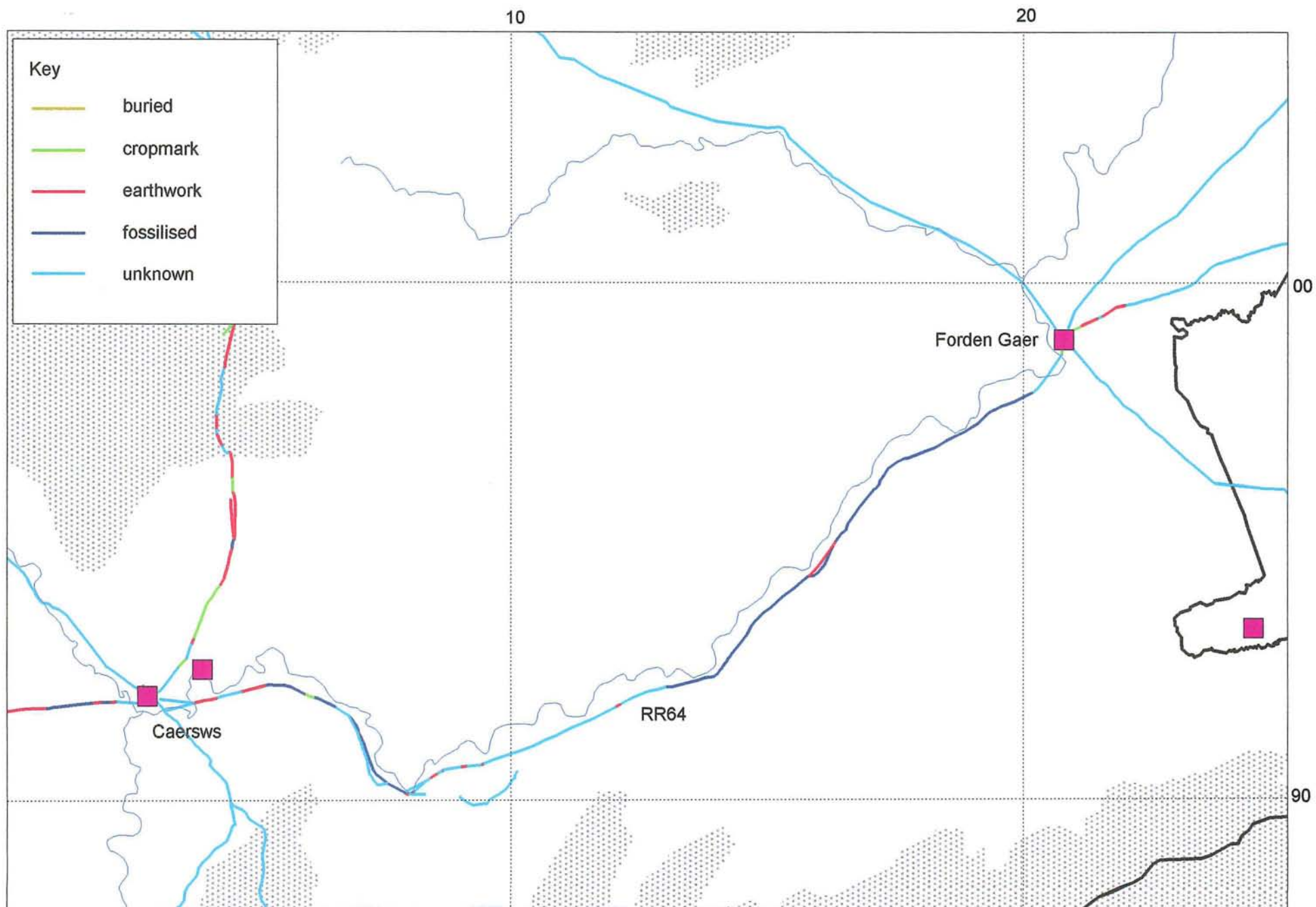


Fig. 35 Roman road RR64 (Forden Gaer to Caersws): Survival

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Forden Gaer to Caer Gai (Bala)

Ordnance Survey route RRX61.

One might presume that this particular route would run over the hills past Llanfair Caereinion, perhaps taking in the fortlet on Gibbet Hill and then continuing towards the Vyrnwy where it could meet the Caersws to Caer Gai road (RR642). However, its suggested line is in fact via Welshpool, Guilsfield, Llanfyllin and Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant and then up Cwm Rhiwarth.

Ordnance Survey strip maps exist for this route but there is no substantive evidence for such a road and its hypothetical course has not been digitised during the present project. The Ordnance Survey saw it as a 'conjectural route with little factual evidence but some interesting possibilities... It filled a gap in the Welsh network and, at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, about half-way along its course, provides a good site and strategical siting for a hypothetical fort' (C Wardale 1973).

Archaeologia Cambrensis 2 (1856), 195
RCAHMW 1994, 45

Status - Predicted

Greensforge via Bishopsmoat to Newtown

Margary RR193, but the Kerry Ridgeway section is also known as RRX74.

Postulated by the Shropshire antiquary A W J Houghton as a link between the then newly identified fort at Greensforge in the west Midlands and the forts at Forden Gaer and Caersws on the one hand and Castell Collen on the other, the route in part followed the Kerry ridgeway. Houghton did not deal with the course of his road outside Shropshire, other than in the most general terms, and there is apparently little if any evidence for this route, other than in surviving lanes and tracks. It has been suggested that Houghton claimed to have found traces of an *agger* to the west of Bishops Castle, although a re-reading of his text implies that he was referring in reality to an *agger* near Forden. Notwithstanding the absence of positive evidence, Margary seems to have accepted the authenticity of this route without question.

There are no detailed plans of the course over the Kerry hills and no plot has been attempted during this project. Until such times as more substantive evidence is produced for the presence of a Roman road, this route must be treated with considerable caution, but should not be dismissed out of hand.

Houghton 1957-60, 233

Margary 1973, 296

RCAHMW 1994, 1; 54 (where classed as RRX 82g)

Status - Predicted

Hindwell to Penybont Common.

Route RRN14 PRN 47700

Figs 36 & 37

Proposed by Hugh Toller in 1980, this route runs from RRX76 at Penybont, south-eastwards to a crossing of a tributary of the River Edw nearly three kilometres south of Llandegla. On Penybont Common itself it showed as a terraceway. Toller did not (in 1980) undertake any fieldwork to the south of this point but speculated that the road would have run to New Radnor and into the Walton Basin where a military site had been identified at Hindwell.

No further fieldwork on this road has occurred as far as can be ascertained at the western end of the route, but some has now been undertaken at the eastern end in the vicinity of the Hindwell fort and although the intervening section of the route cannot be determined, both known and proposed sections are presumed to belong to the same road until proved otherwise.

Gibson 1999, 39

Toller 1980

Status – Proposed

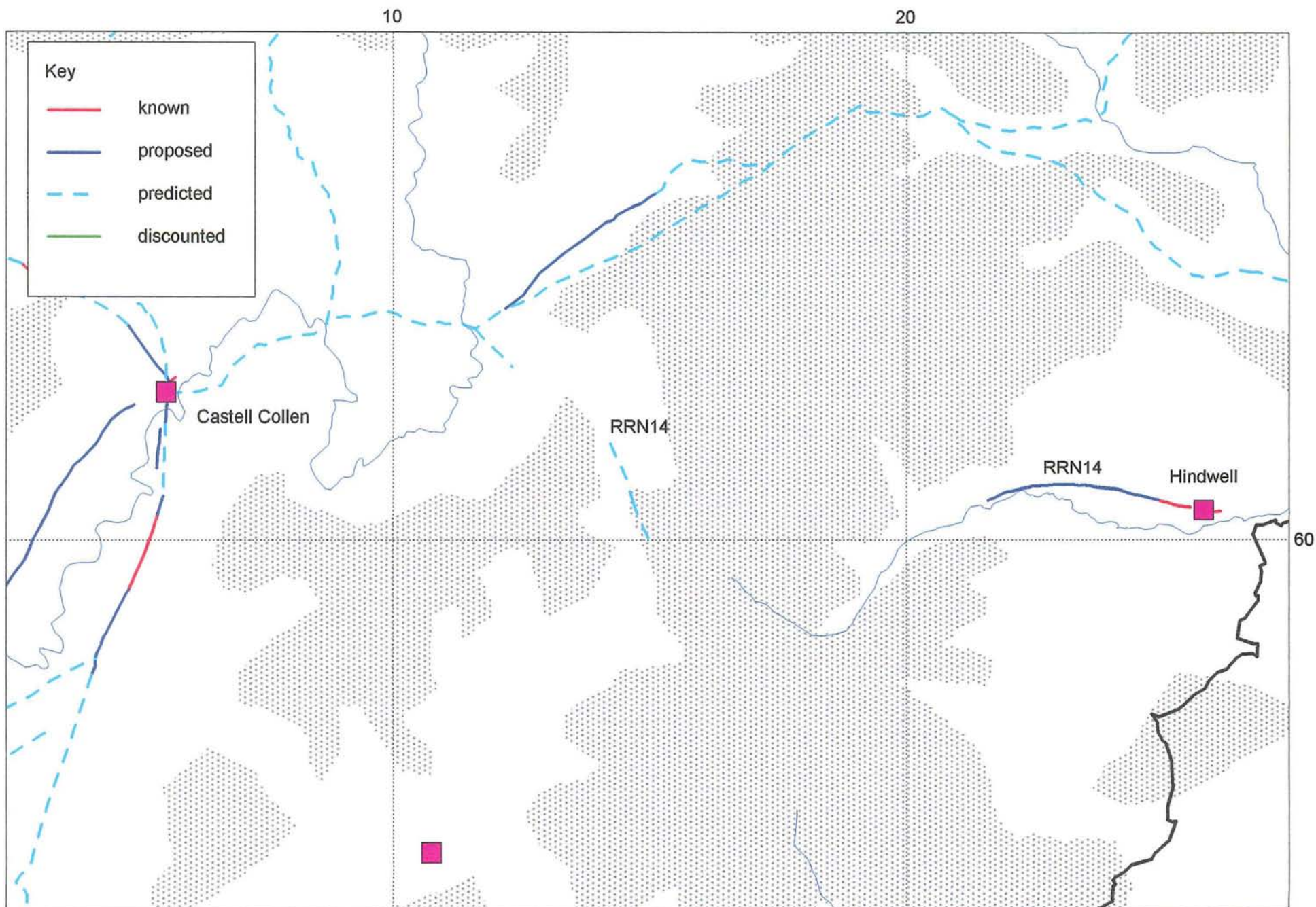


Fig. 36 Roman road RRN14 (Hindwell to Penybont): Status

1:10,000

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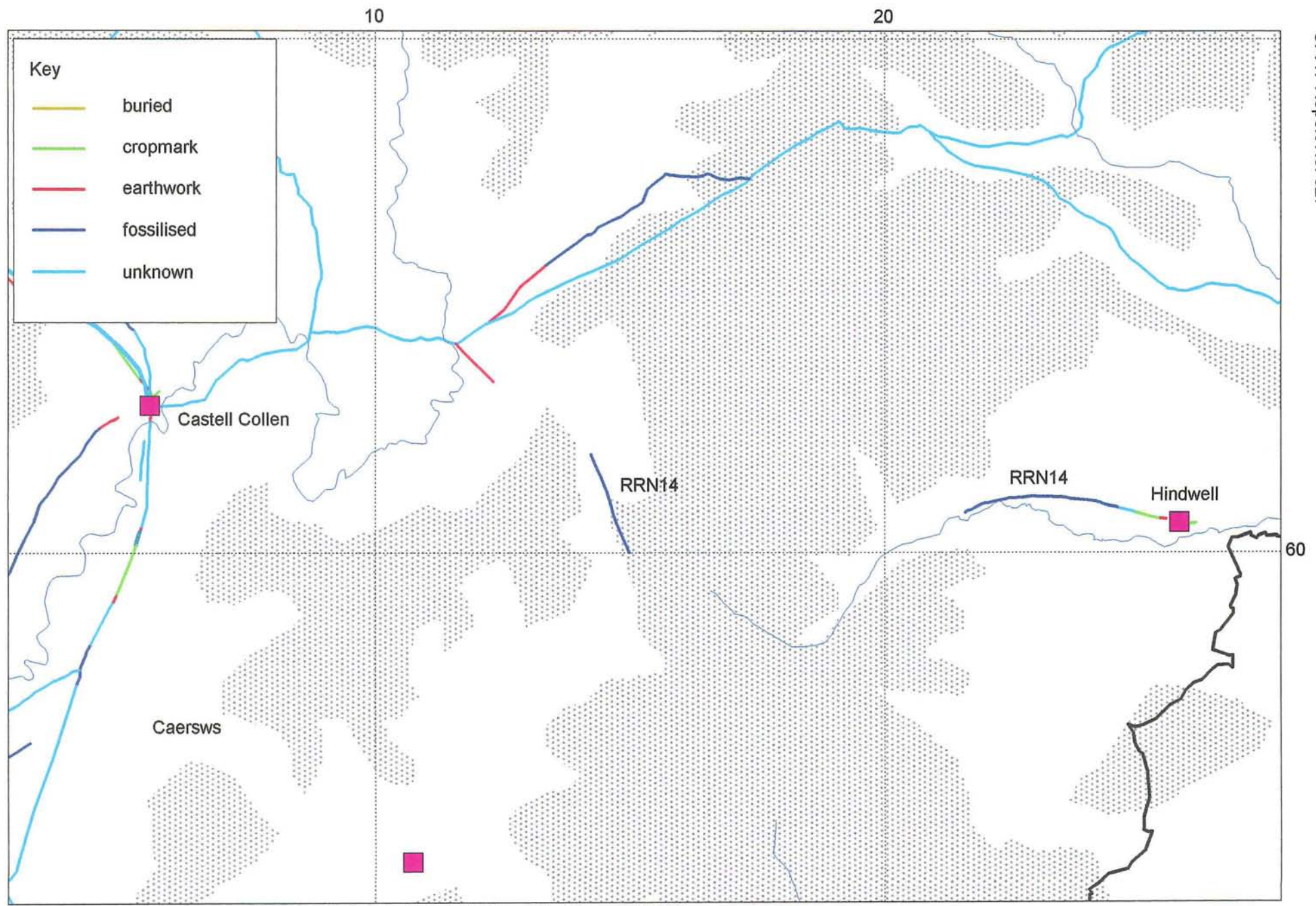
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Fig. 37 Roman road RRN14 (Hindwell to Penybont): Survival

1:10,000



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Holt westwards

Margary RR660

Little has been written about this road other than by Margary himself. He claimed to have found a length of *agger*, but unfortunately the details that he provided are too vague to be plotted.

In view of the importance of Holt, this road should be examined further, and it is perhaps surprising that Edmund Waddelove has not turned his attention to it.

Margary 1973, 348
RCAHMW 1994, 31

Status – Proposed

Kenchester (Herefordshire) to Brecon Gaer

aka Brecon Gaer spur road to Tair Derwen, north of Brecon.

Margary RR62aa. PRN 11200.

Figs 38 & 39

A road that supposedly linked Brecon Gaer and another route, RR621 from Cardiff to Castell Collen road. In 1994 the Royal Commission stated that Wheeler had verified the road through excavation but no field investigation of the course had then been completed. The most recent description is in the RCAHMW Inventory which sees this linking to the longer route between *Brecon* and *Kenchester* (RR63b). It was pointed out that there was little direct evidence except in the vicinity of Brecon Gaer, but speculation that it ran eastwards through Llanddew, and then beneath modern A roads.

Margary 1973, 333
RCAHMW 1986, 169
RCAHMW 1994, 8

Status – Proposed

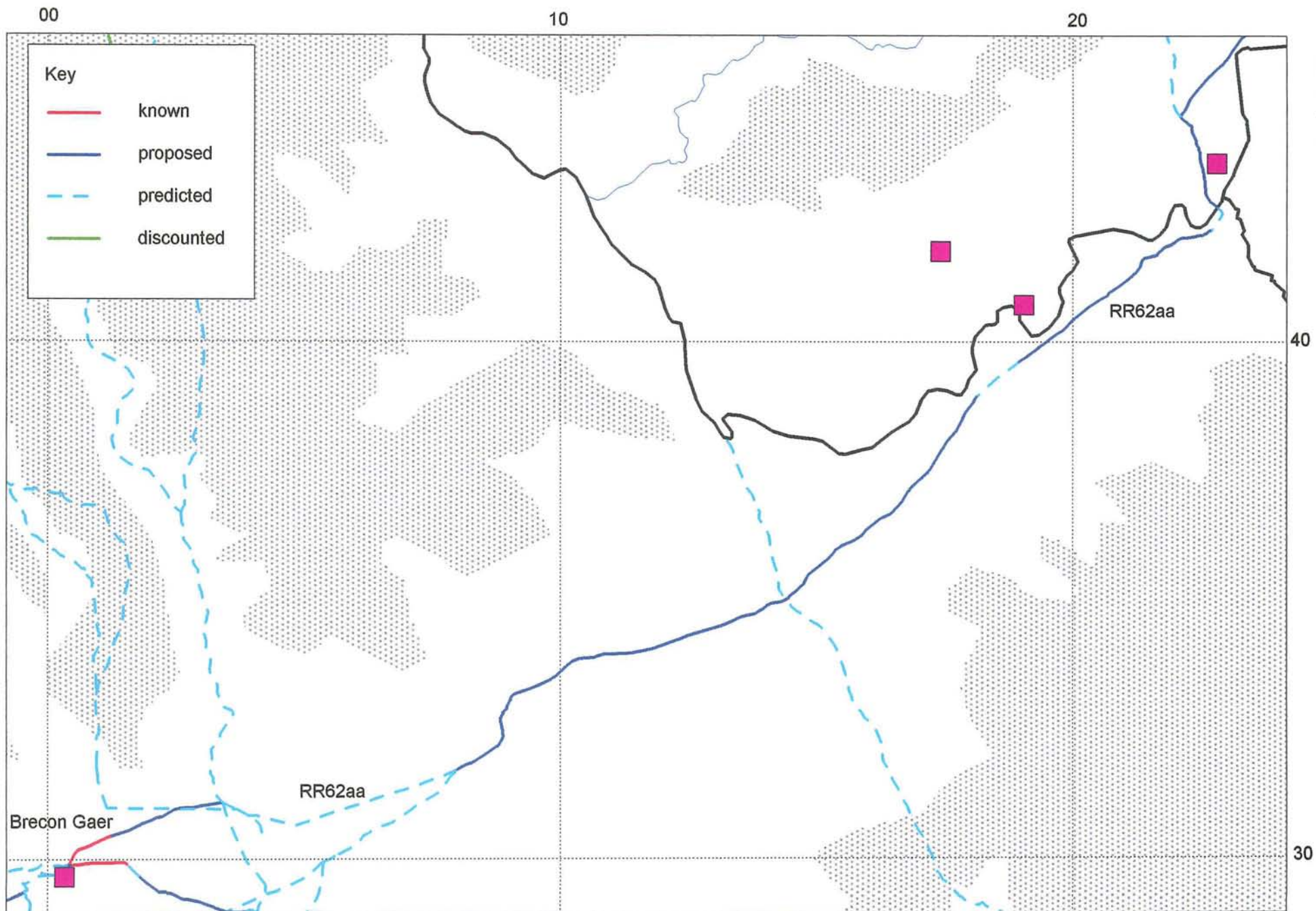


Fig. 38 Roman road RR62aa (Kenchester to Brecon Gaer): Status

1:10,000

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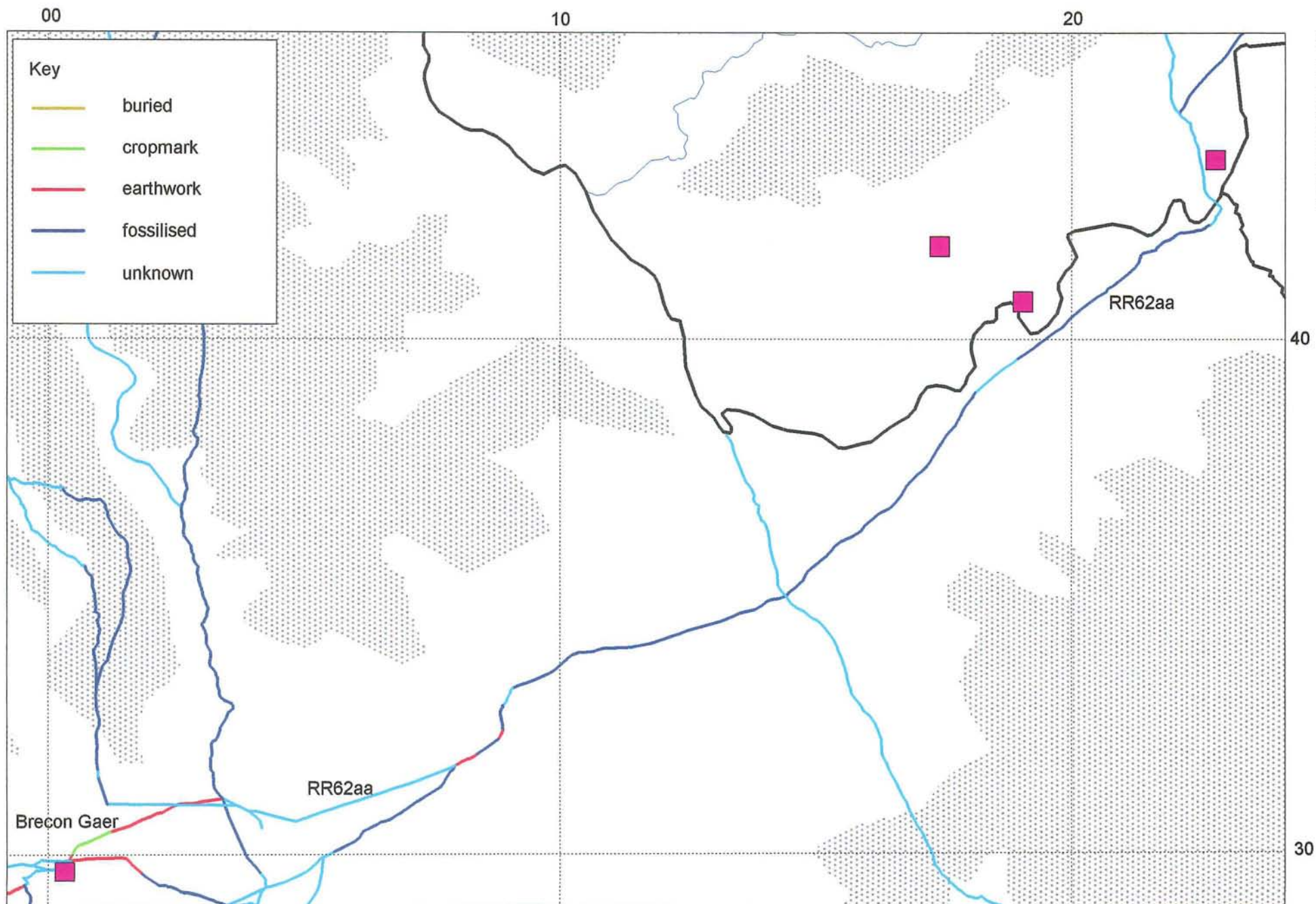


Fig. 39 Roman road RR62aa (Kenchester to Brecon Gaer): Survival

1:10,000

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Kenchester to Brecon via Rhydspence

Margary RR63b PRN 11600

Figs 40 & 41

Margary defined this route, first described by local Herefordshire antiquaries, as following the south side of the River Wye. This did not find favour in the RCAHMW's *Brecknock Inventory*, and this particular route illustrates the problems of identifying routes through fossilised landscape features.

Hogg 1973

Margary 1973, 341

RCAHMW 1986, 170

RCAHMW 1994, 20

Status – Predicted/Proposed

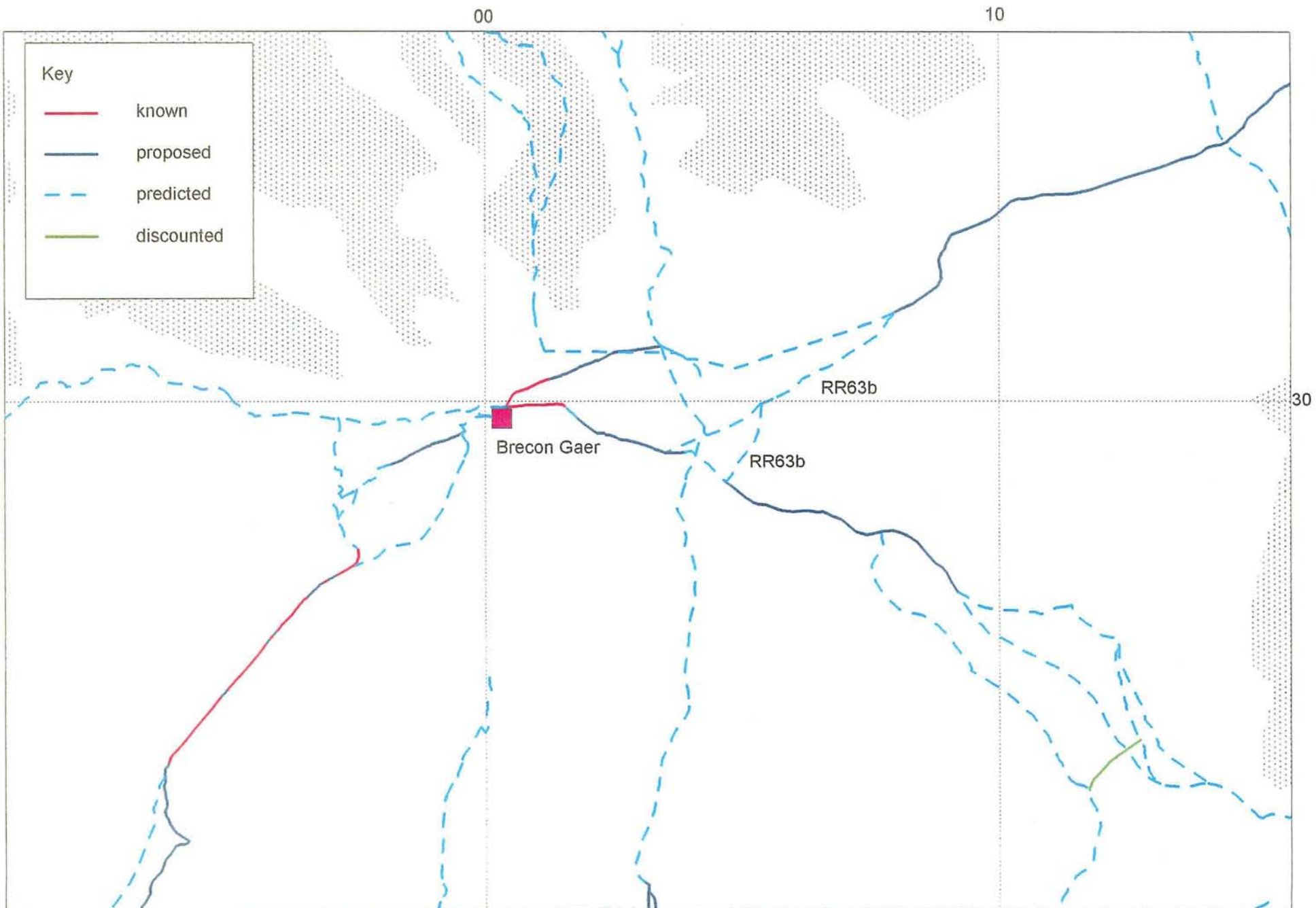


Fig. 40 Roman road RR63b (Kenchester via Rhydspence to Brecon): Status

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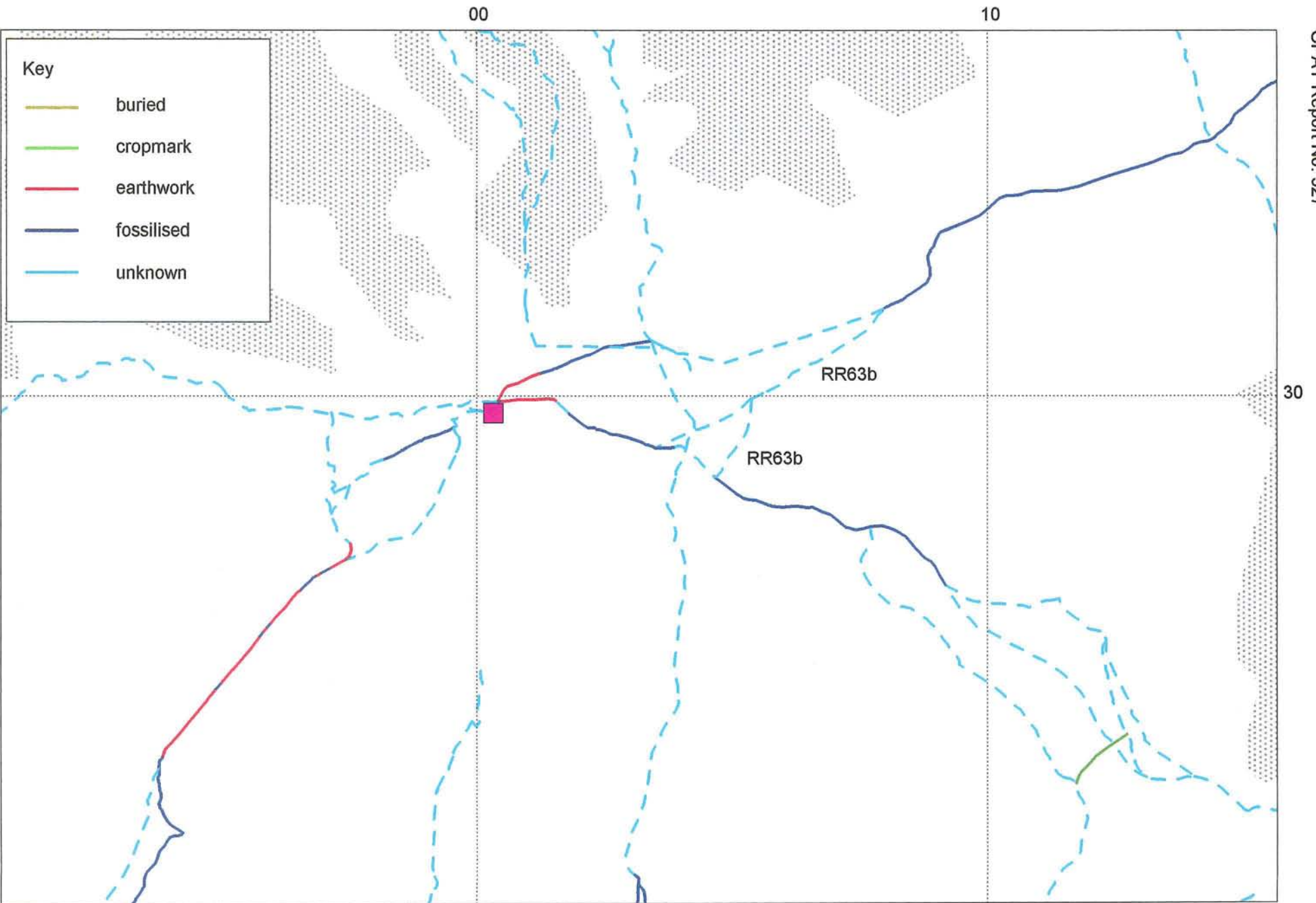


Fig. 41 Roman road RR63b (Kenchester via Rhydspence to Brecon): Survival

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Leintwardine (Herefordshire) to Bleddfa

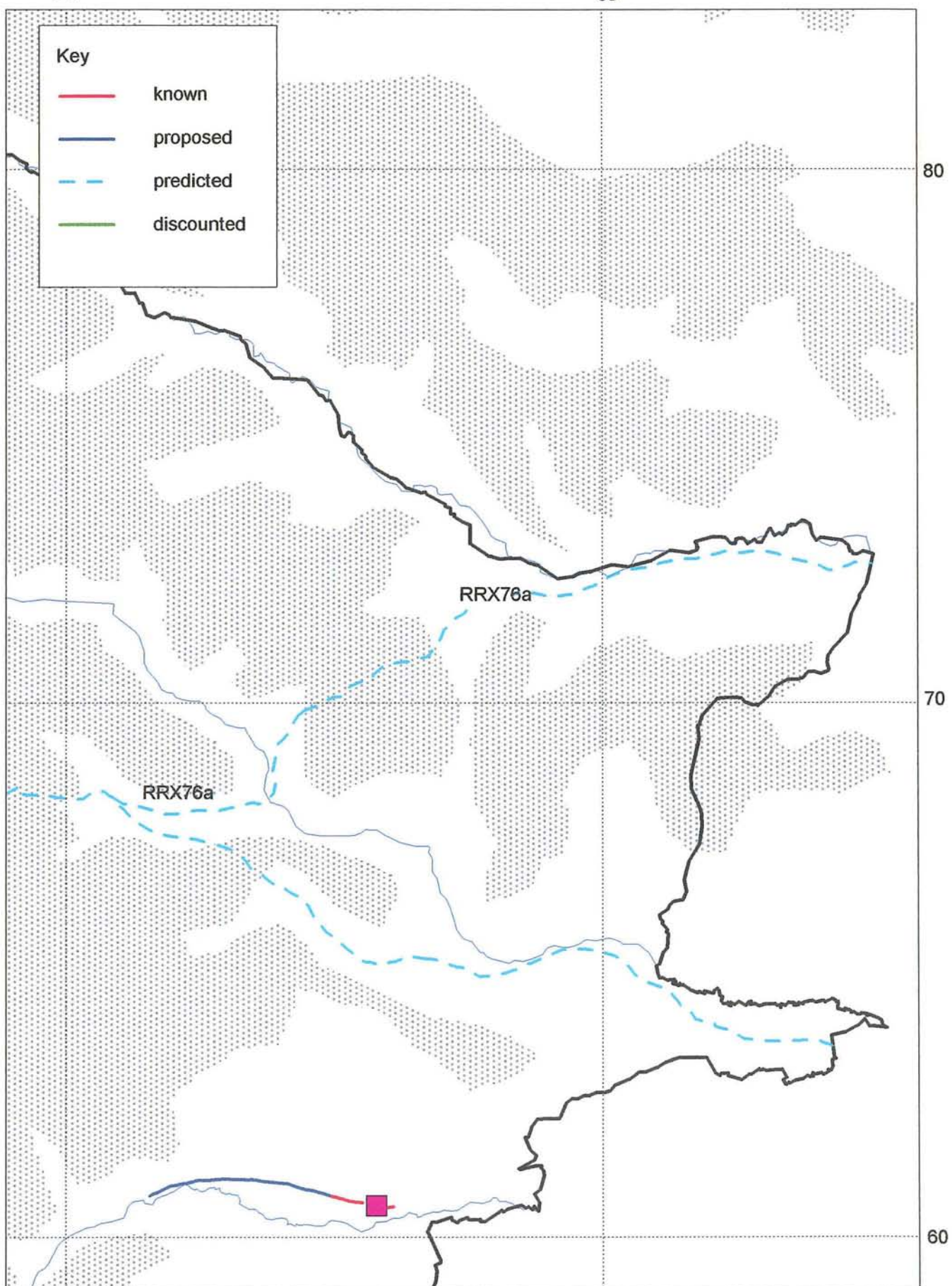
Ordnance Survey RRX76a PRN 14800

Figs 42 & 43

A conjectural route running from the Leintwardine fort in Herefordshire westwards to Bleddfa where it meets RRX76. Little work appears to have been done on this road and to the east of Knighton the Ordnance Survey found no visible evidence of such a road.

Ordnance Survey notes
RCAHMW 1994, 49

Status – Predicted



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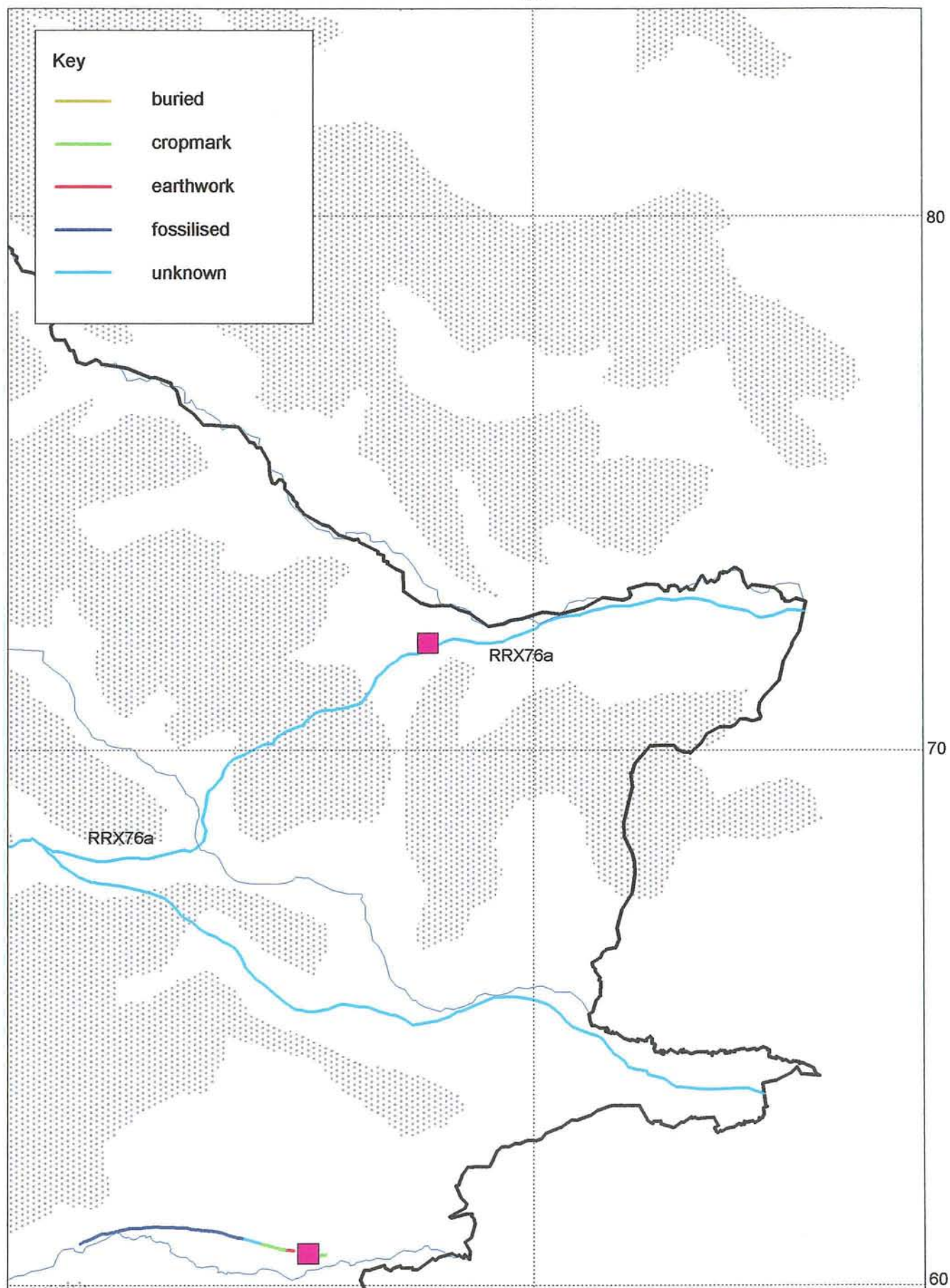
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Fig. 42 Roman road RRX76a (Leintwardine to Bleddfa): Status

1:10,000



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Fig. 43 Roman road RRX76a (Leintwardine to Bleddfa): Survival

1:10,000

Llandovery to Castell Collen via Beulah

Margary RR623 PRN 14200

Figs 44 & 45

Ultimately linking Castell Collen and Carmarthen, this route has had several alternative courses proposed for it through Radnorshire and north-eastern Brecknock, but to the south of the fort at Caerau the line of this road is generally agreed upon. The Brecknock section has been most recently covered by RCAHMW (1986).

The course of this is tolerably well identified according to RCAHMW, even if there are few visible traces of the road itself. Browne argues that the road must post-date the permanent establishment of Caerau fort. North-east of the Camarch crossing there are stretches of *agger* and together with green lanes and tracks they form a coherent and plausible route. The southern extension of the route in Carmarthenshire is considered by Heather James (1991).

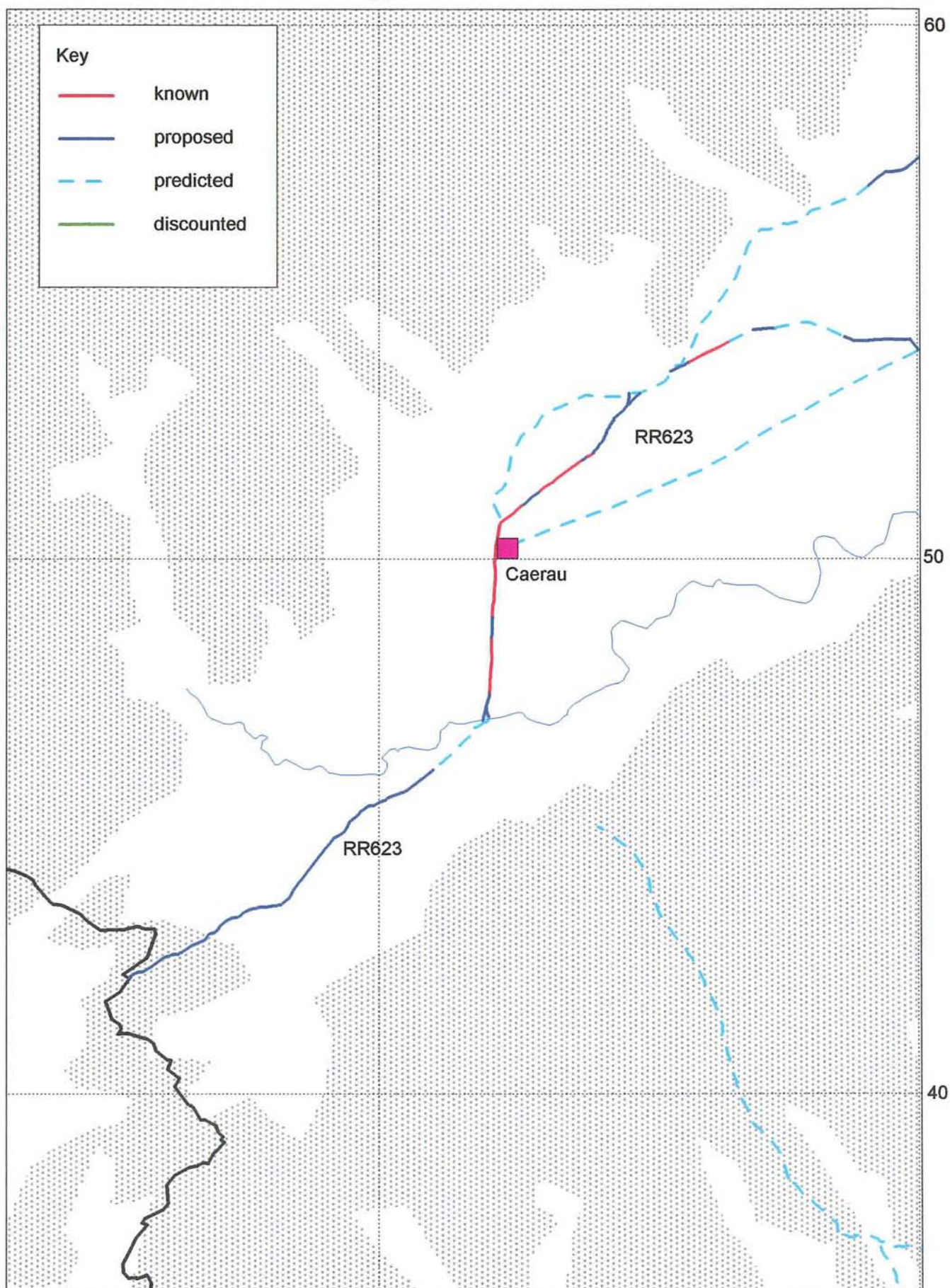
James 1991

Margary 1973, 329

RCAHMW 1986, 174

RCAHMW 1994, 17

Status – Known



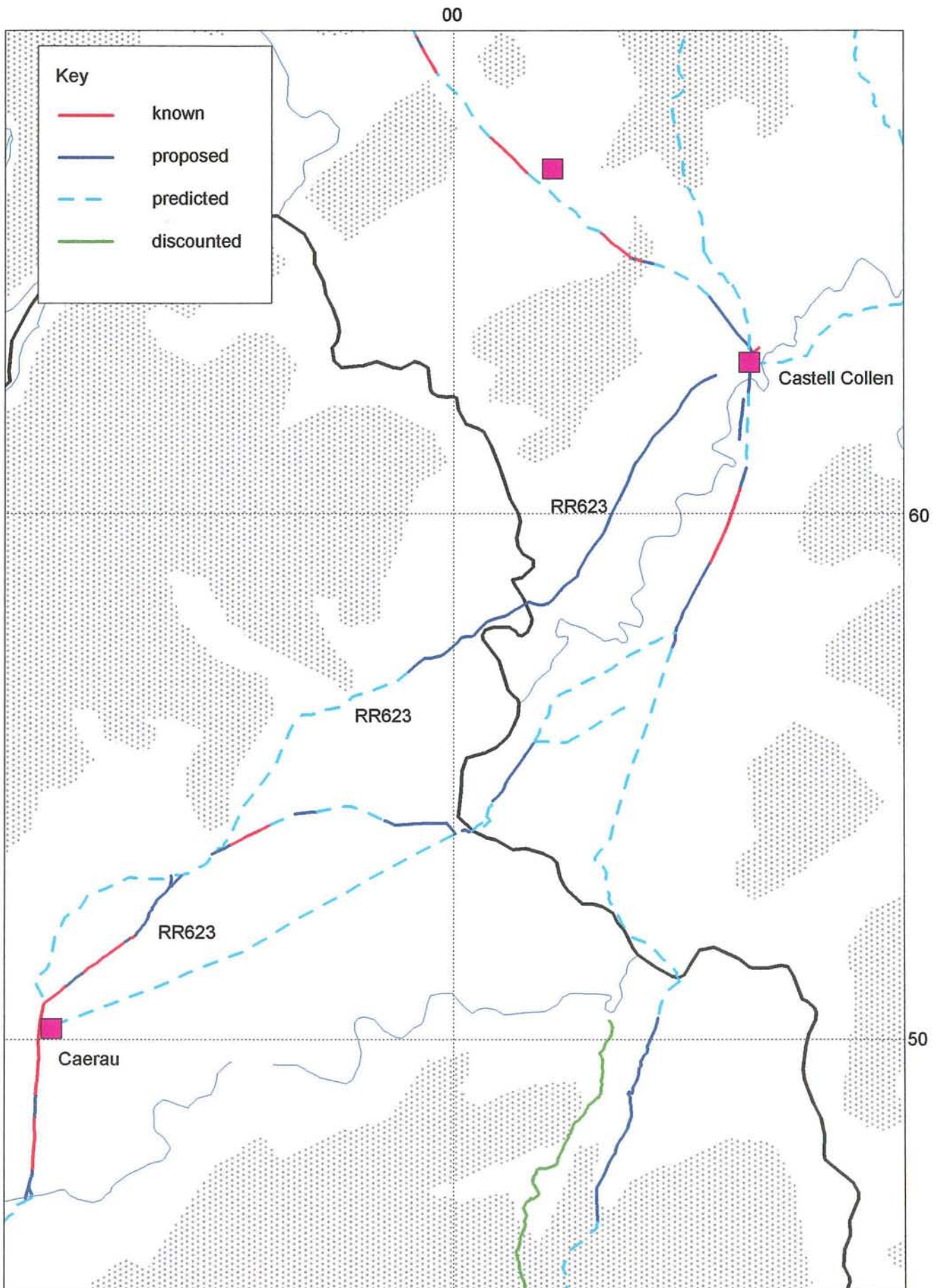
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Fig. 44.1 Roman road RR623 (Llandovery via Beulah to Castell Collen) Llandovery to Beulah: Status 1:10,000



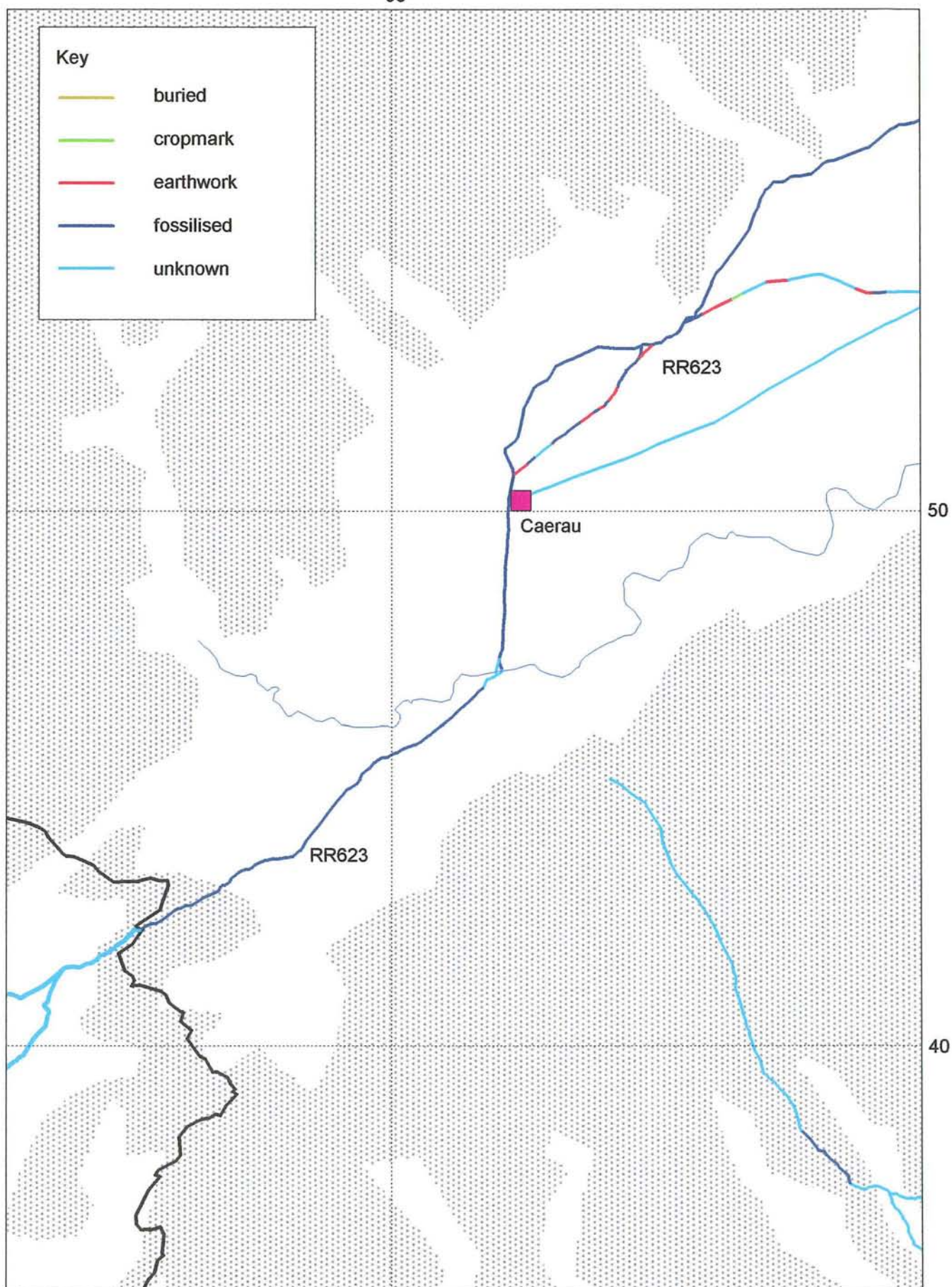
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Fig. 44.2 Roman road RR623 (Llandovery via Beulah to Castell Collen) Beulah to Castell Collen: Status 1:10,000



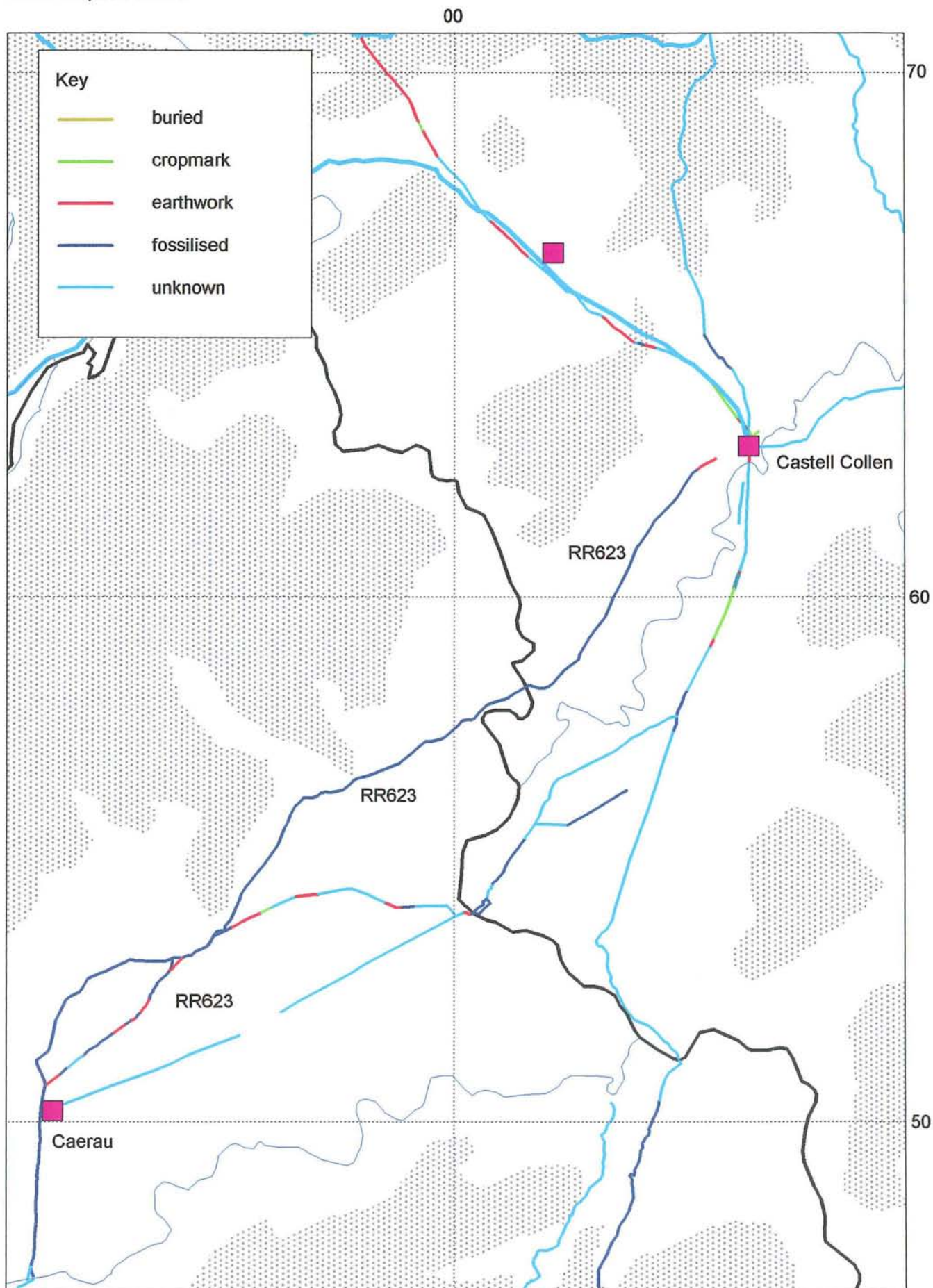
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Fig. 45.1 Roman road RR623 (Llandovery via Beulah to Castell Collen) Llandovery to Beulah: Survival 1:10,000



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Fig. 45.2 Roman road RR623 (Llandovery via Beulah to Castell Collen) Beulah to Castell Collen: Survival 1:10,000

Long Mountain to Dolgellau.

RRN11 PRN 47101

Figs 46 & 47

Published in detail by John Rigg and Hugh Toller in *Britannia*, this was subsequently dismissed in unequivocal terms by David Browne, and led to considerable subsequent acrimony. In Browne's view much of what was recorded was abandoned stretches of turnpike road.

Browne's comments are worth quoting here: 'It is important to understand Rigg's technique, for the assignation of Roman status to Hope road is an example of the use of his assumptions. He starts with the general notion of a Long Mountain to Dolgellau road. Having shown his starting point (Middle Sylvaen) he then, quite properly considers the topographic constraints on the progress of the route and where remains of old routes or modern roads with no surviving earlier alternatives are found in appropriate positions these are usually assigned a Roman date. Where alternatives exist a choice is made on grounds such as supposedly likely Roman engineering practice or associated features' (Browne 1986, 23).

The road as defined by Rigg has been plotted in this programme. His strip maps of 1980/1 are available, as of course, is the article in *Britannia* (1983). Browne's comments have been appended as appropriate.

For most of the proposed course it is followed by modern roads, only occasionally diverging from them. In the vicinity of Welshpool the route is entirely speculative as Browne pointed out. But in one place on Bwlch y Fedwen, Rigg identified two phases of Roman road.

Putnam has rejected the road as Roman, as has Toller himself, who has elaborated the case for it being turnpike road.

Brown 1986

Rigg and Toller 1983

Toller 1999

Status - Discounted

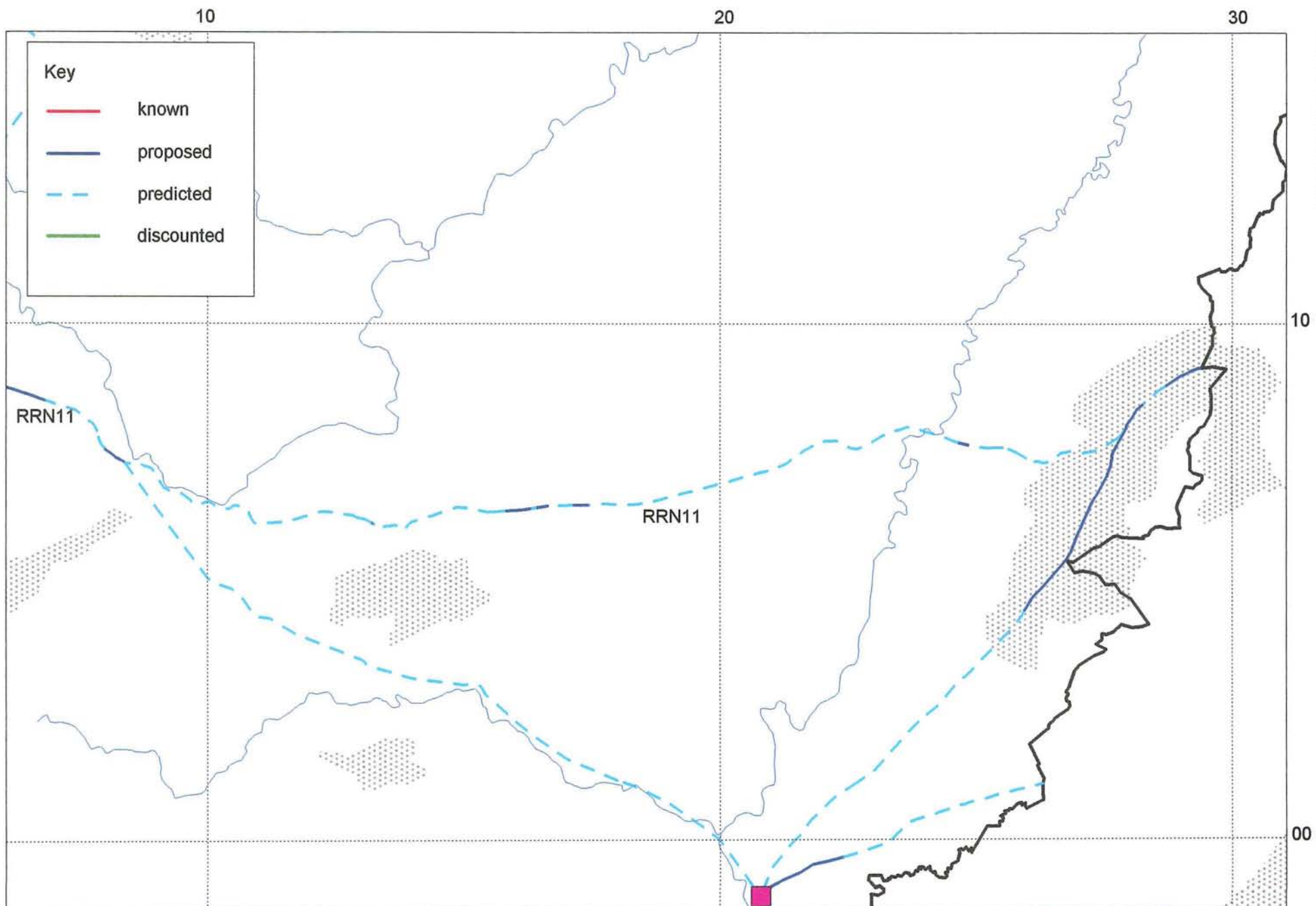


Fig. 46.1 Roman road RRN11 (Long Mountain to Malwyd): Status

1:10,000

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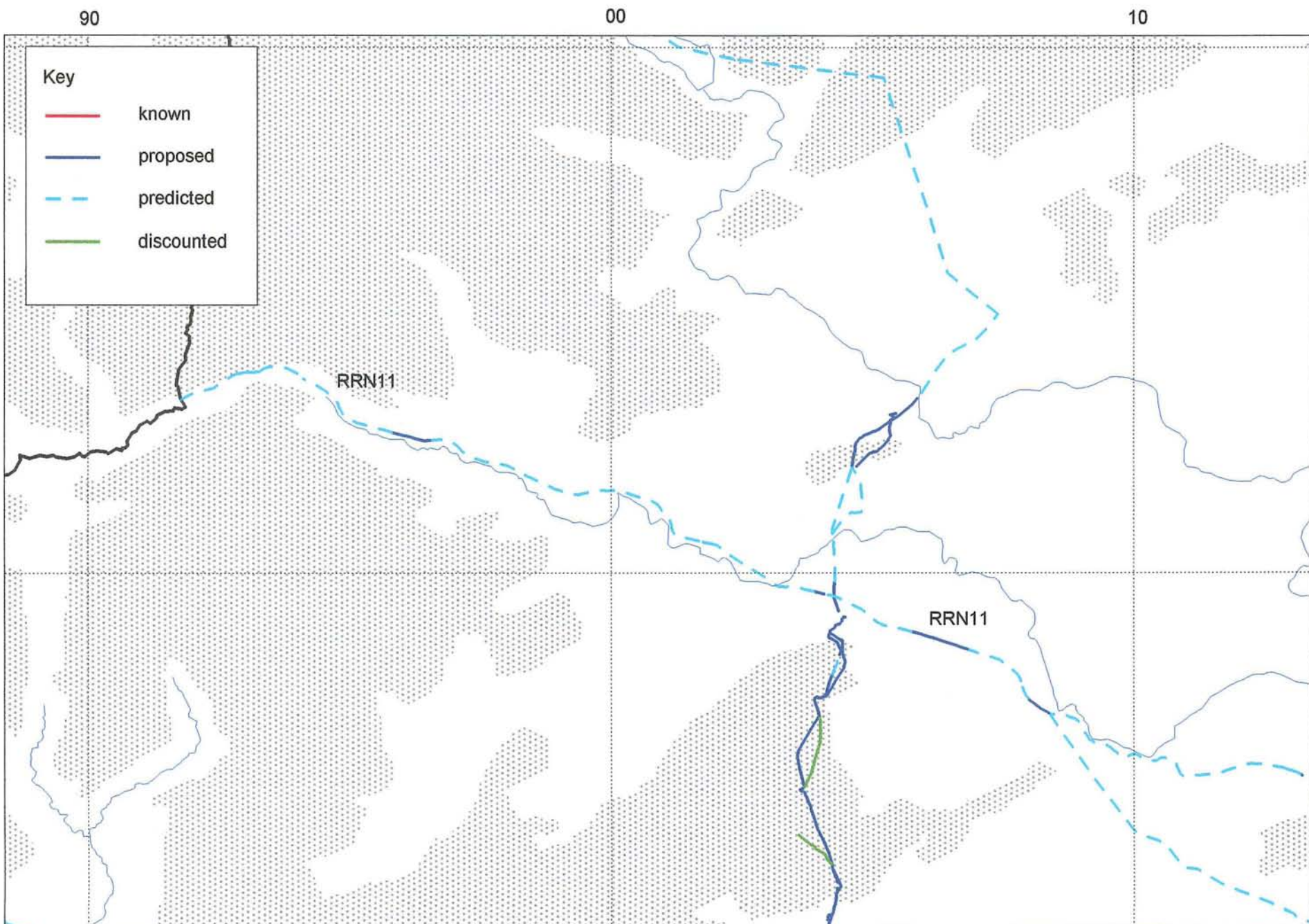


Fig. 46.2 Roman road RRN11 (Long Mountain to Mallwyd): Status

1:10,000

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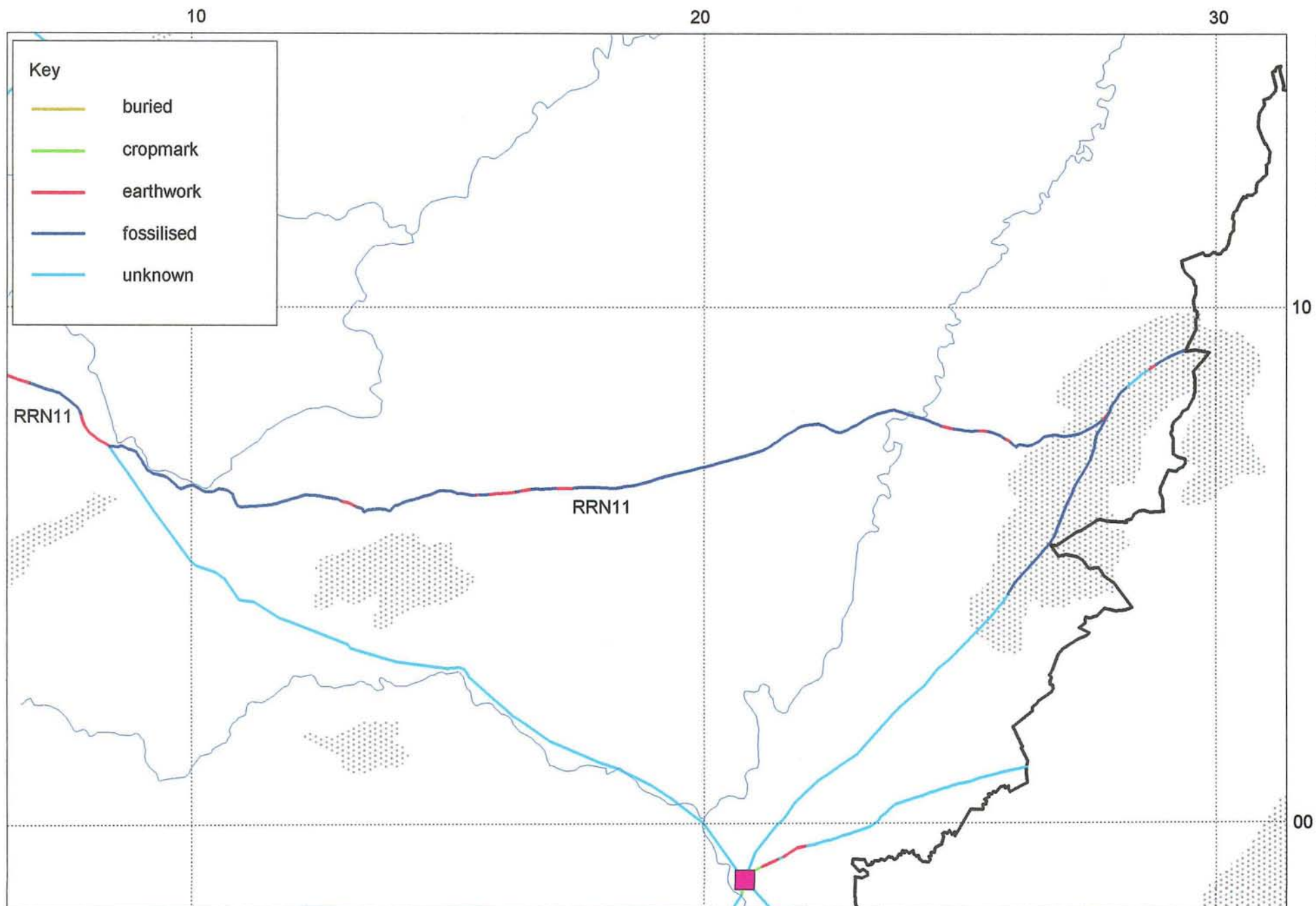


Fig. 47.1 Roman road RRN11 (Long Mountain to Mallwyd): Survival

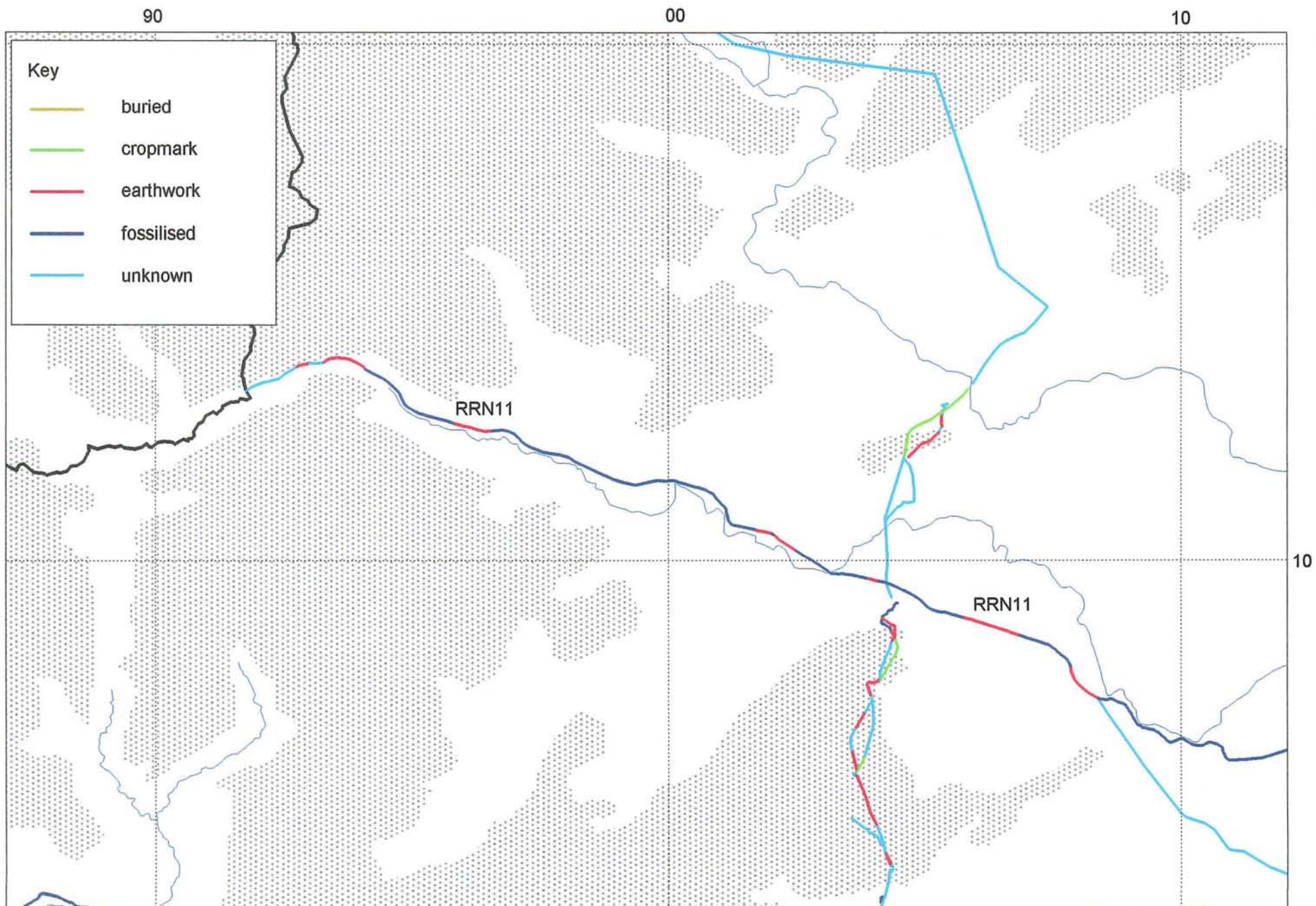
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Fig. 47.2 Roman road RRN11 (Long Mountain to Mallwyd): Survival

Lydham to Dolgellau via Forden Gaer

Ordnance Survey RRX73. PRN 11900

Figs 48 & 49

Little convincing evidence and very few details of this route are available. Comments are found in Putnam's article of 1963. The road is supposed to have been located between Lydham and Forden Gaer but no supporting evidence has been produced, it was said that the road is visible north of the Severn at Forden (perhaps by the south gate of the fort), and there is an unsubstantiated report of it crossing RR642 at Llanerfyl.

The route then appears largely hypothetical, but it shares with RRN11, the discredited Long Mountain to Mallwyd road, a common course in western Montgomeryshire, supposedly on the line of the modern A458.

Ordnance Survey strip maps

Putnam 1962

Putnam 1963

RCAHMW 1994, 46

Status - Predicted

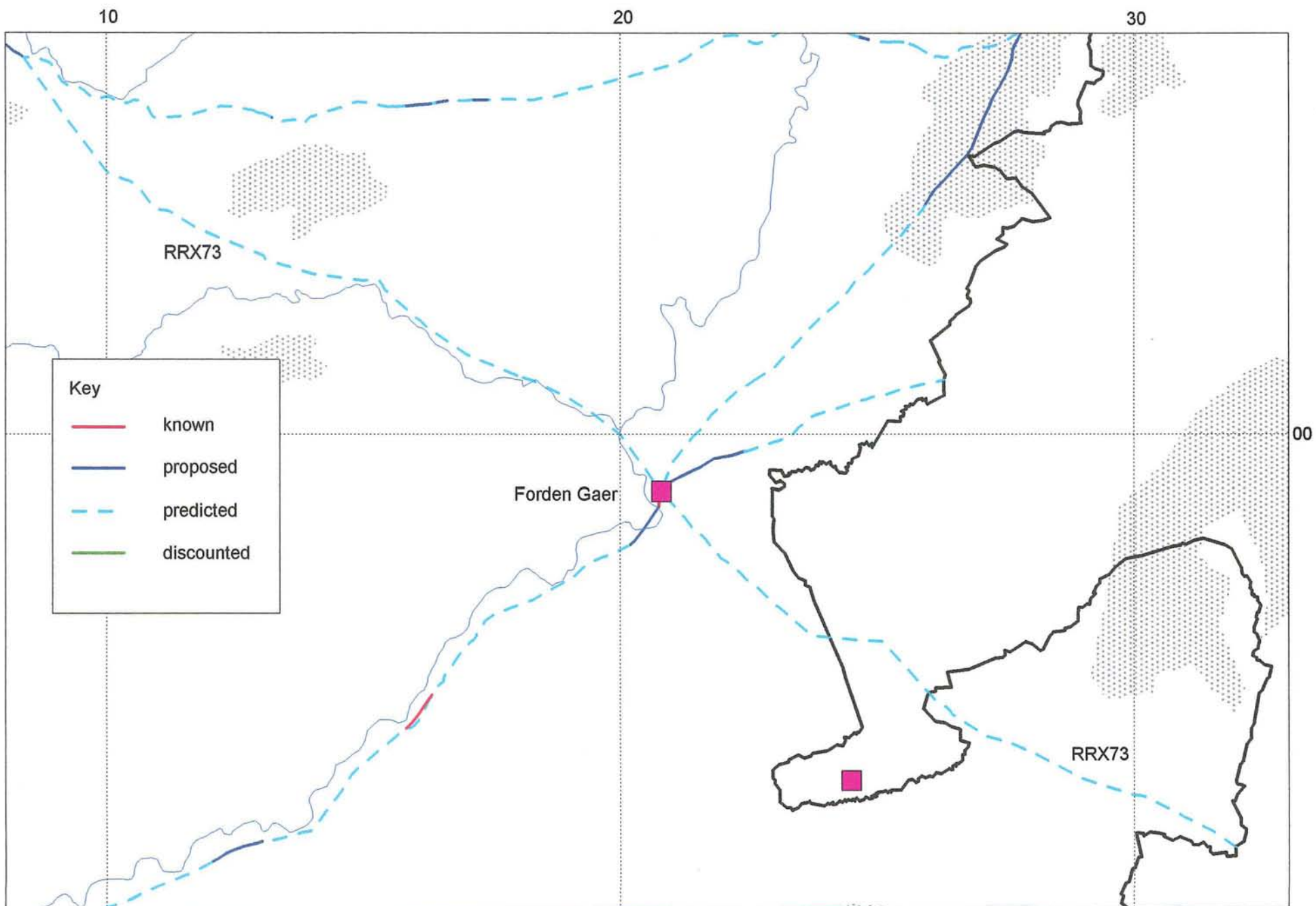


Fig. 48 Roman road RRX73 (Lydharn via Forden Gaer to Dolgellau): Status

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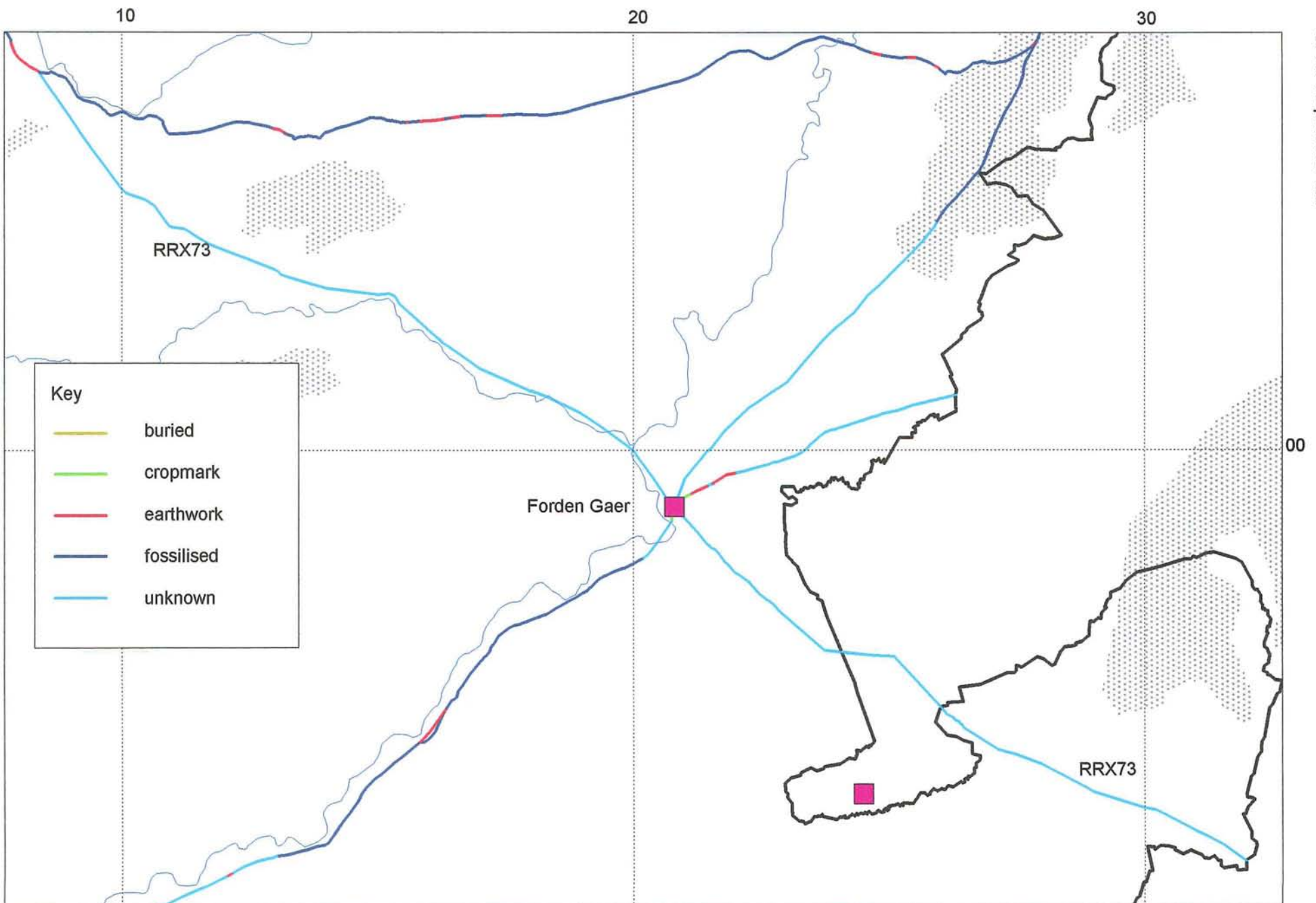


Fig. 49 Roman road RRX73 (Lyddham via Forden Gaer to Dolgellau): Survival

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Mallwyd to Cemmaes Road

RRN12 PRN 47600

Figs 50 & 51

This route was proposed by the former OS Field Investigator, John Rigg, some years ago, and his detailed strip maps exist to support the southern portion of it. No equivalent strip maps have been found for the portion immediately to the south of Mallwyd, although it is shown as a dashed line in Rigg and Toller's article of 1983. To the best of our knowledge, no supporting commentary, other than on the linear strip maps was produced by Rigg.

There is virtually nothing to corroborate the existence of this road. In the main it adopts the course of the A4084 down the east side of the Dovey valley, with very minor divergences from the modern road's course.

The route was disregarded by the RCAHMS when compiling data for the new Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain, and indeed it is difficult to identify a purpose for it unless Rigg saw it as a link between the forts of Caer Gai (near Bala) and Pennal, north of Machynlleth.

Rigg and Toller 1983

Status - Predicted

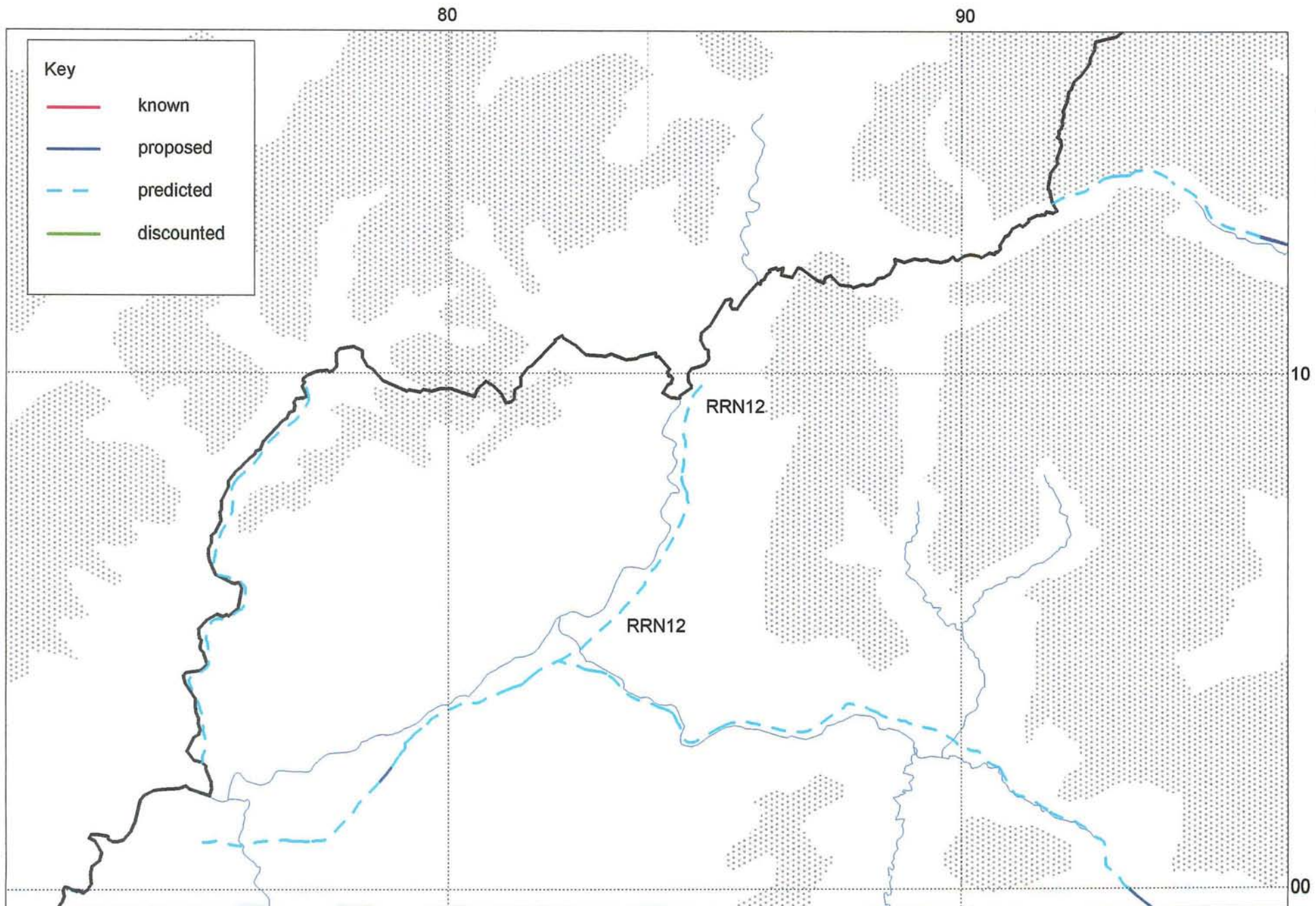


Fig. 50 Roman road RRN12 (Mallwyd to Cemmaes Road): Status

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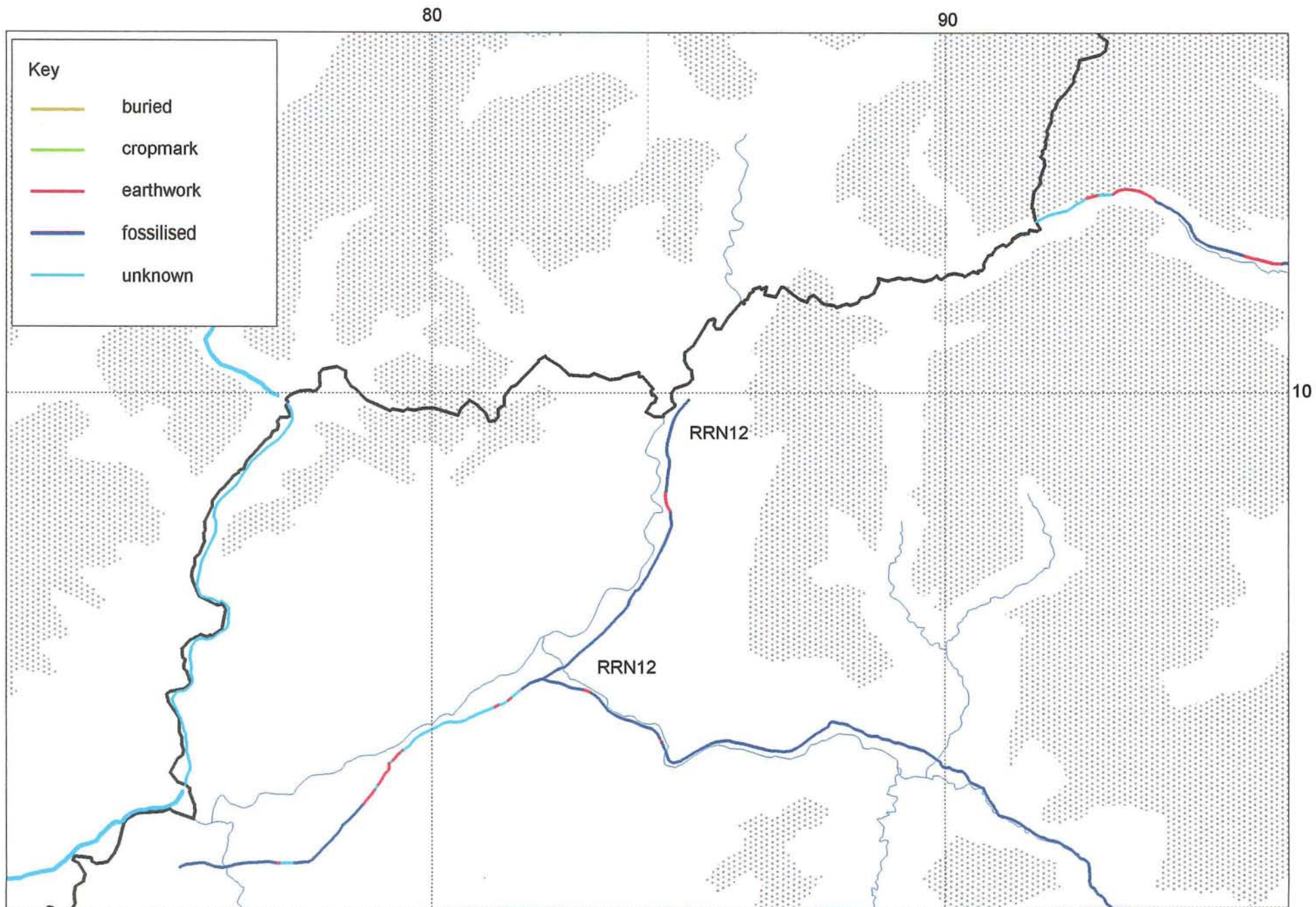


Fig. 51 Roman road RRN12 (Mallwyd to Cemmaes Road): Survival

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Mortimers Cross (Herefordshire) to Castell Collen

Ordnance Survey RRX76 PRN 14700

Figs 52 & 53

Initially this consists only of a short stretch of road, running eastwards from Castell Collen (SO 055 628 to SO 064627). It then merges with one of the Castell Collen to Caersws routes (RRX58d), but then picks up again eastwards from Llanbadarn Fawr where it runs towards Presteigne (Rads). The route is very largely conjectural and it appears that virtually no substantive evidence for such a Roman road has been identified on the ground or from the air.

An alternative course for about 6.5 km has been mooted eastwards from Penybont Common. Its earliest advocate was Professor St Joseph for identified from aerial photography a short stretch of road on the common. This has been traced by H Toller whose record (October 1980) claims it to be one of the finest stretches of Roman road in Wales, with an *agger* up to 1m high and side ditches occasionally visible. Beyond that it was predicted as passing through the village of Llanfihangel Rhydithon and then meeting the earlier course 2 km to the east on the lower slopes of Radnor Forest. None of this more easterly course has been confirmed.

In support of this route, logic dictates that the fort at Castell Collen would have been linked by road to forts further east.

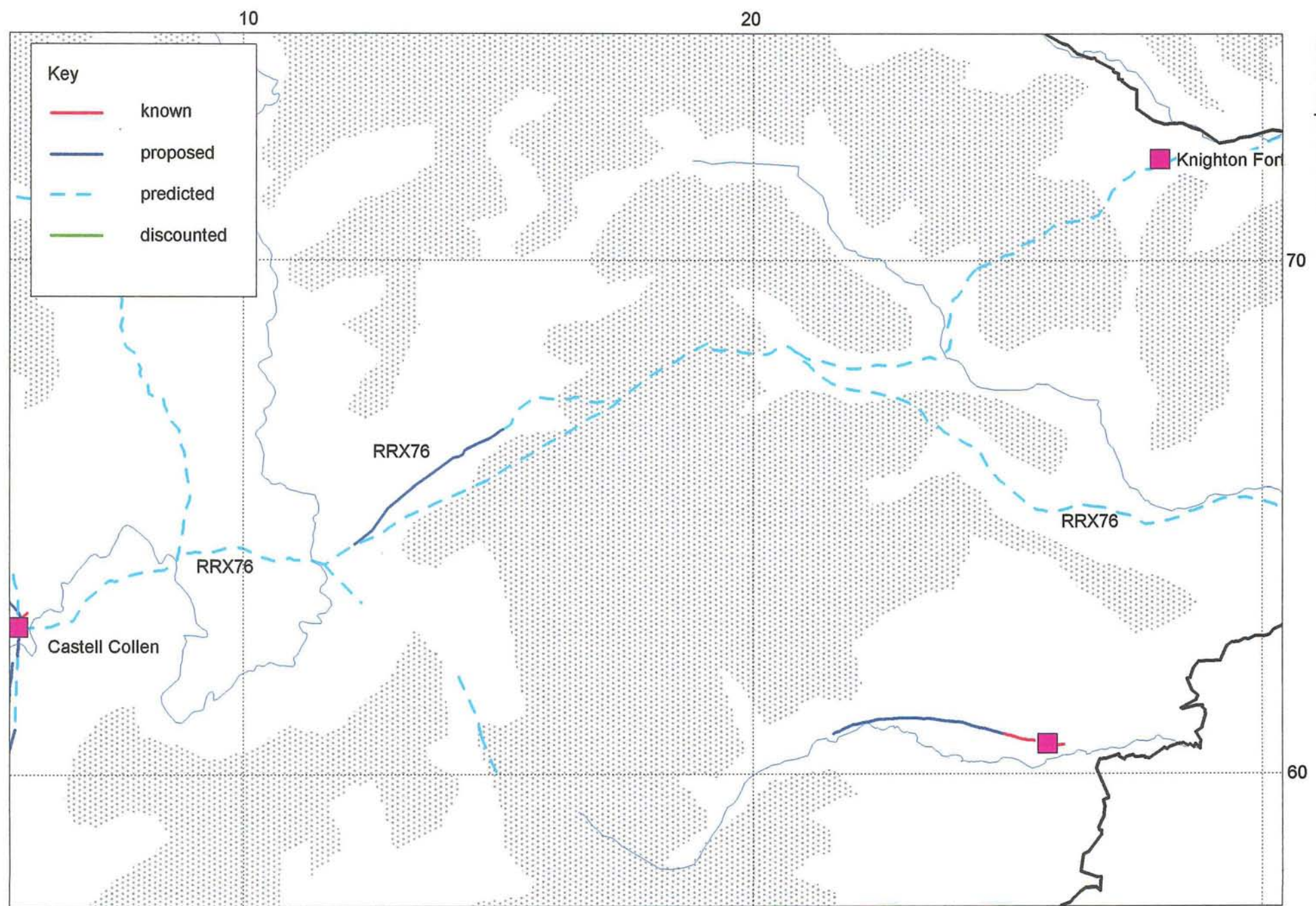
RCAHMW 1994, 47

Toller 1980

Status - Proposed

Fig. 52 Roman road RRX76 (Mortimer's Cross to Castell Collen): Status

1:10,000



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Mortimers Cross (Herefordshire) to Clyro

Ordnance Survey RRX75 PRN 14600

Figs 54 & 55

A predicted road from Mortimer's Cross, north-west of Leominster, to the fort at Clyro was promoted by Jonathan Williams in the 19th century, described by Hale and more forcefully by Lord Rennell of Rodd. It enters Radnorshire on Brilley Mountain (SO 267513) and continued to Gwlfra-ar-heol where it joined with RR63b at SO 221443.

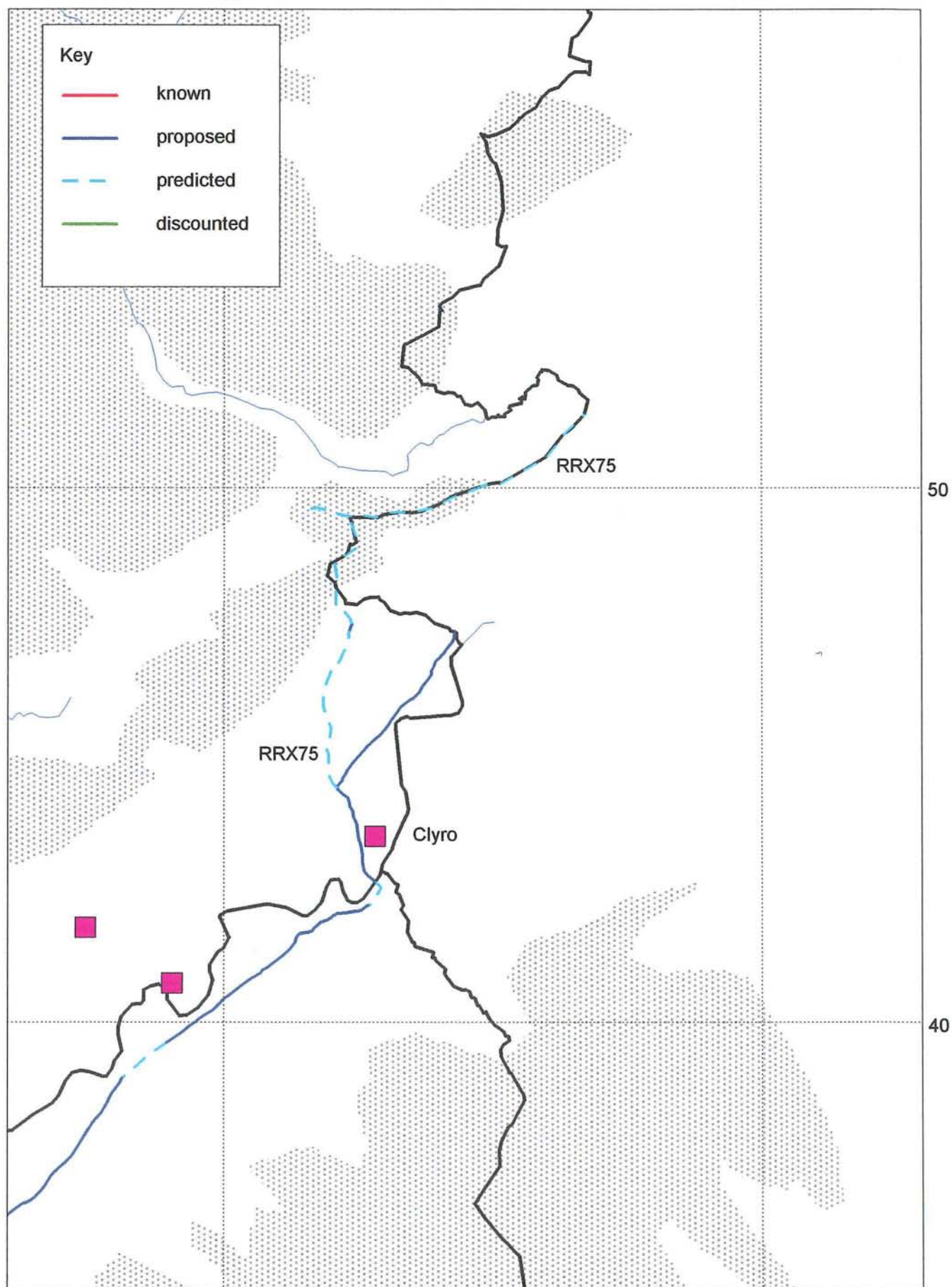
Considering only one particular section of this proposed route, the Ordnance Survey suggested there was virtually no substantive evidence for a road (OS card SO 24 NW 7). However there are places where it might usefully be evaluated.

Hale 1968

RCAHMW 1994, 47

Rennell of Rodd 1970, 36

Status - Proposed



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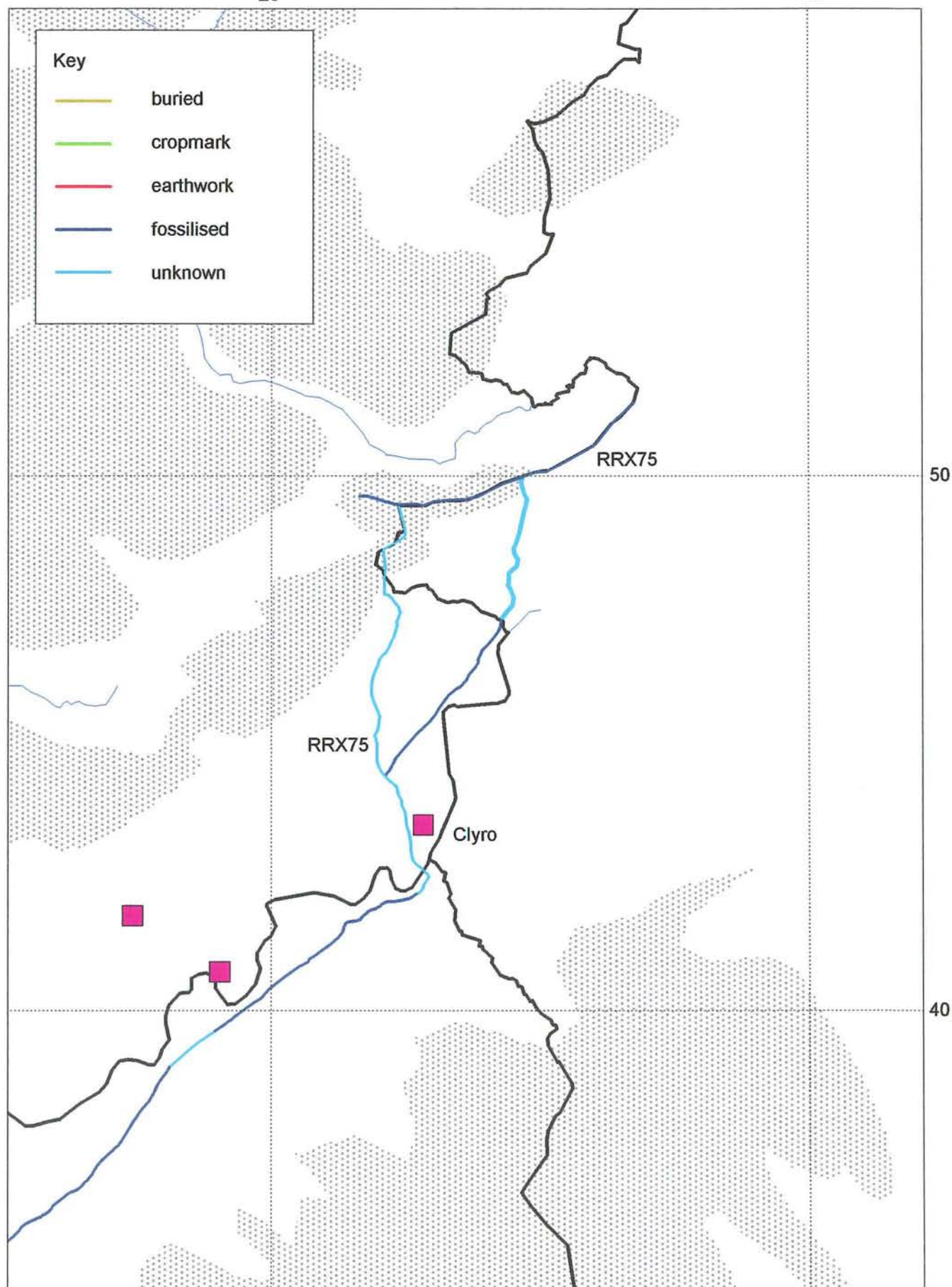
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Fig. 54 Roman road RRX75 (Mortimer's Cross to Clyro): Status

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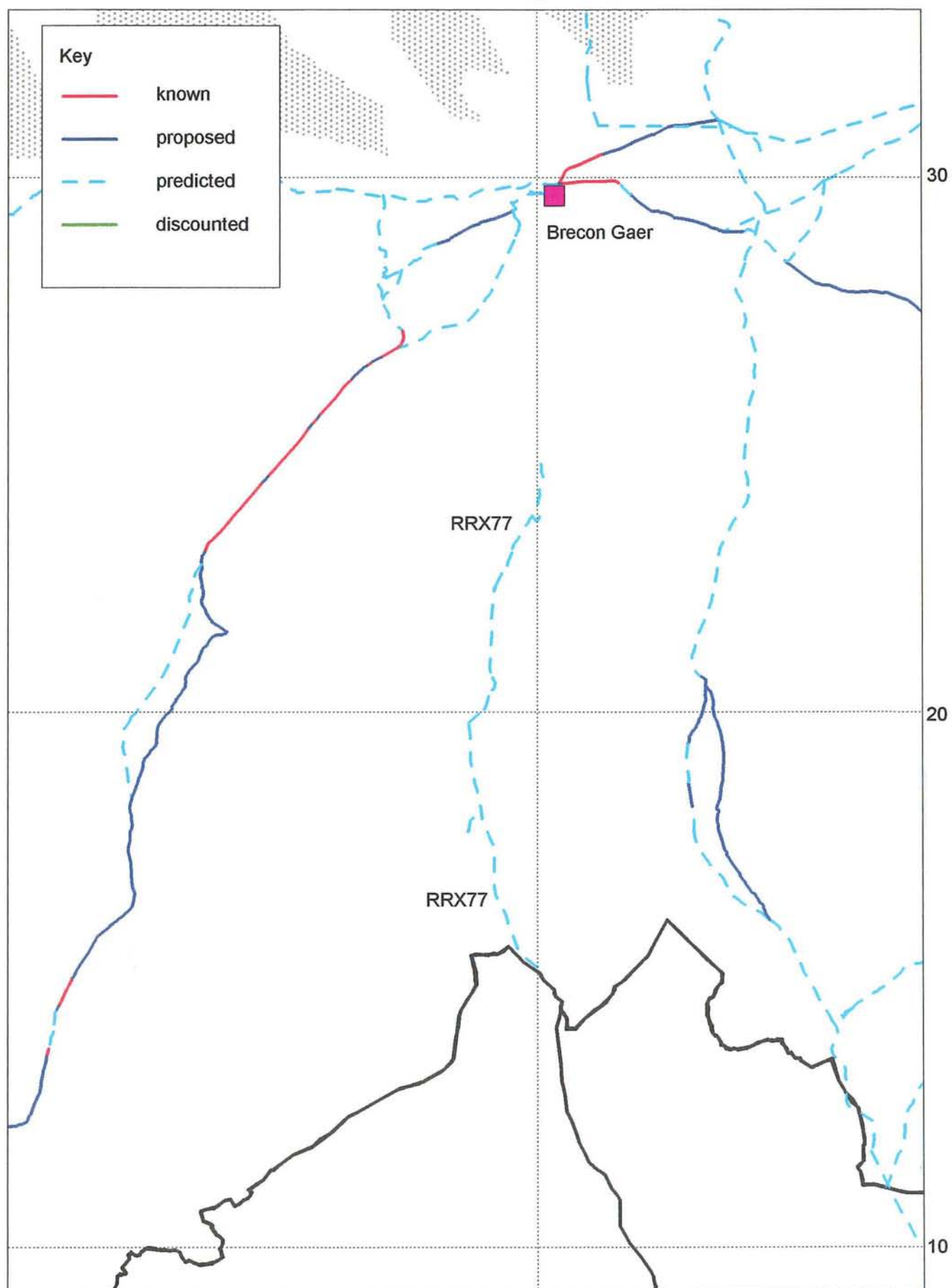
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Fig. 55 Roman road RRX75 (Mortimer's Cross to Clyro): Survival

1:10,000



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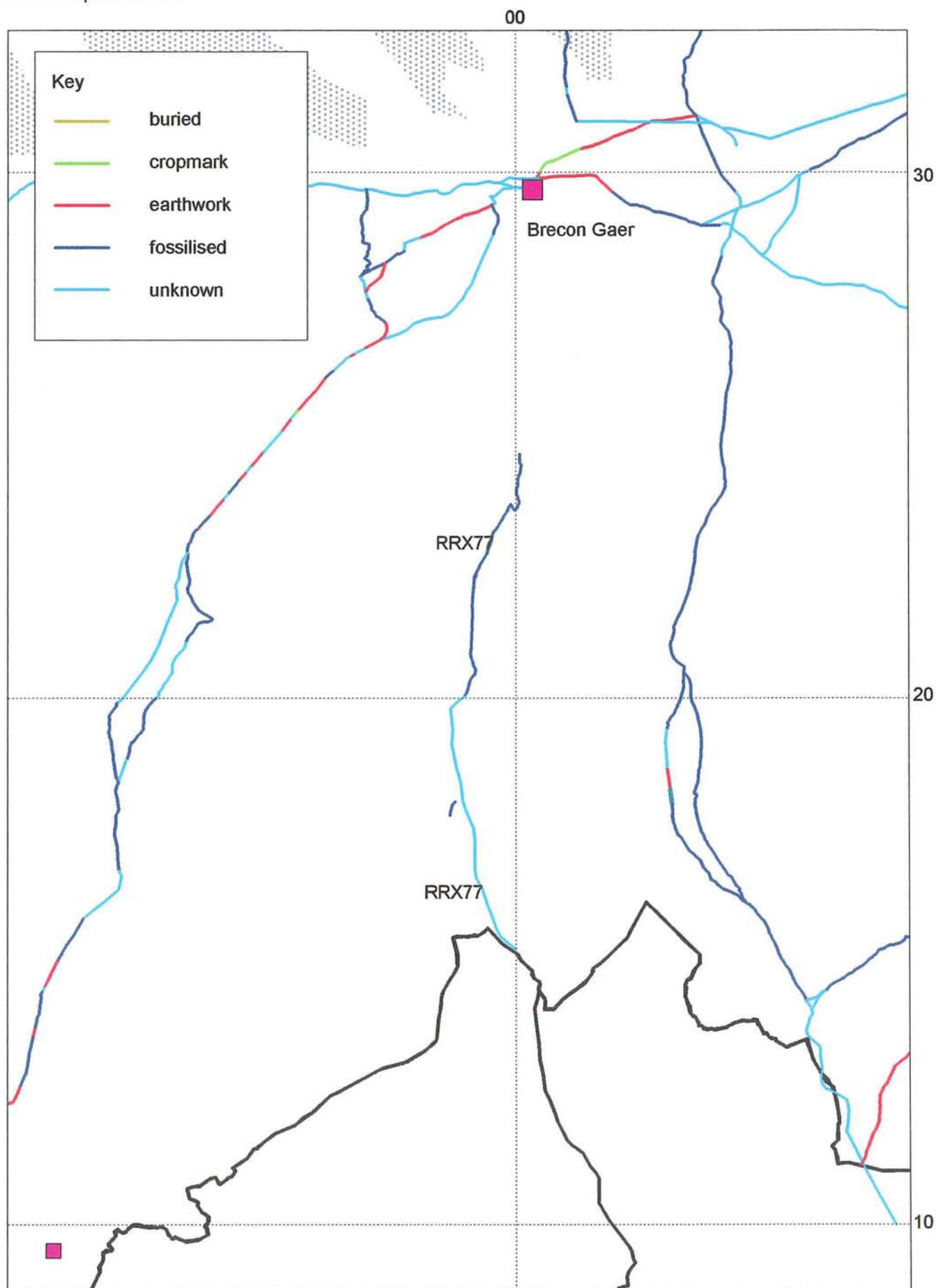
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Fig. 56 Roman road RRX77 (Penydarren to the Usk Valley: Status

1:10,000



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Fig.57 Roman road RRX77 (Penydarren to the Usk Valley): Survival

1:10,000

Rhyn Park (Shropshire) to Rug

CPAT RRN8 PRN 47500

Figs 58 & 59

This is an excellent example of the extrapolation of a Roman roadline from the presence of two forts. Unfortunately, there are few apparently unequivocal traces of the road on the ground. At its extreme western end there now appear to be alternative lines through Rug Park, promoted at different times by Edmund Waddelove (1979 and 1999).

As far as can be ascertained no other work has been done on its line.

Waddelove 1979

Waddelove 1999, 15

Status – Predicted

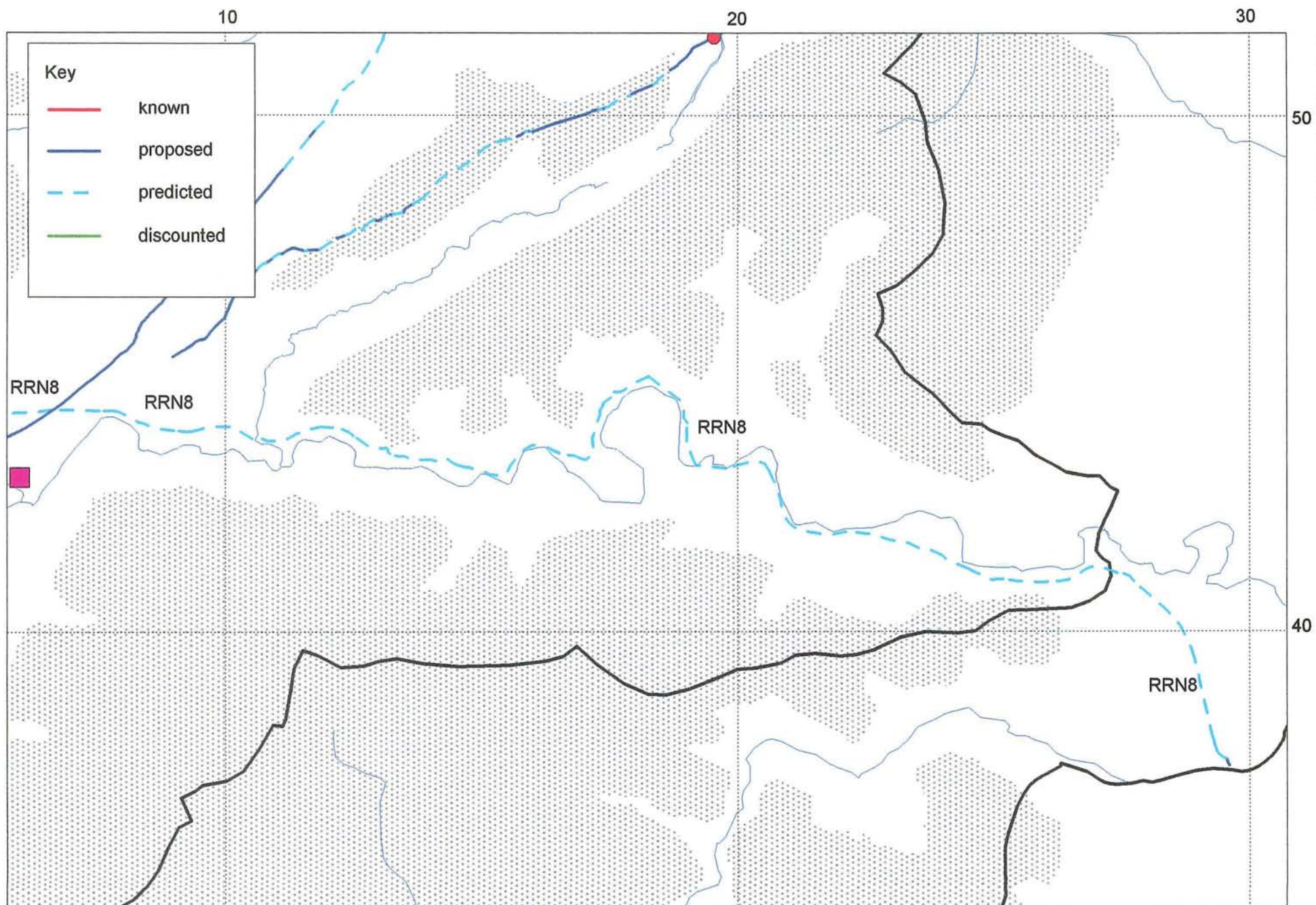


Fig. 58 Roman road RRN8 (Rhyn Park to Rug): Status

1:10,000

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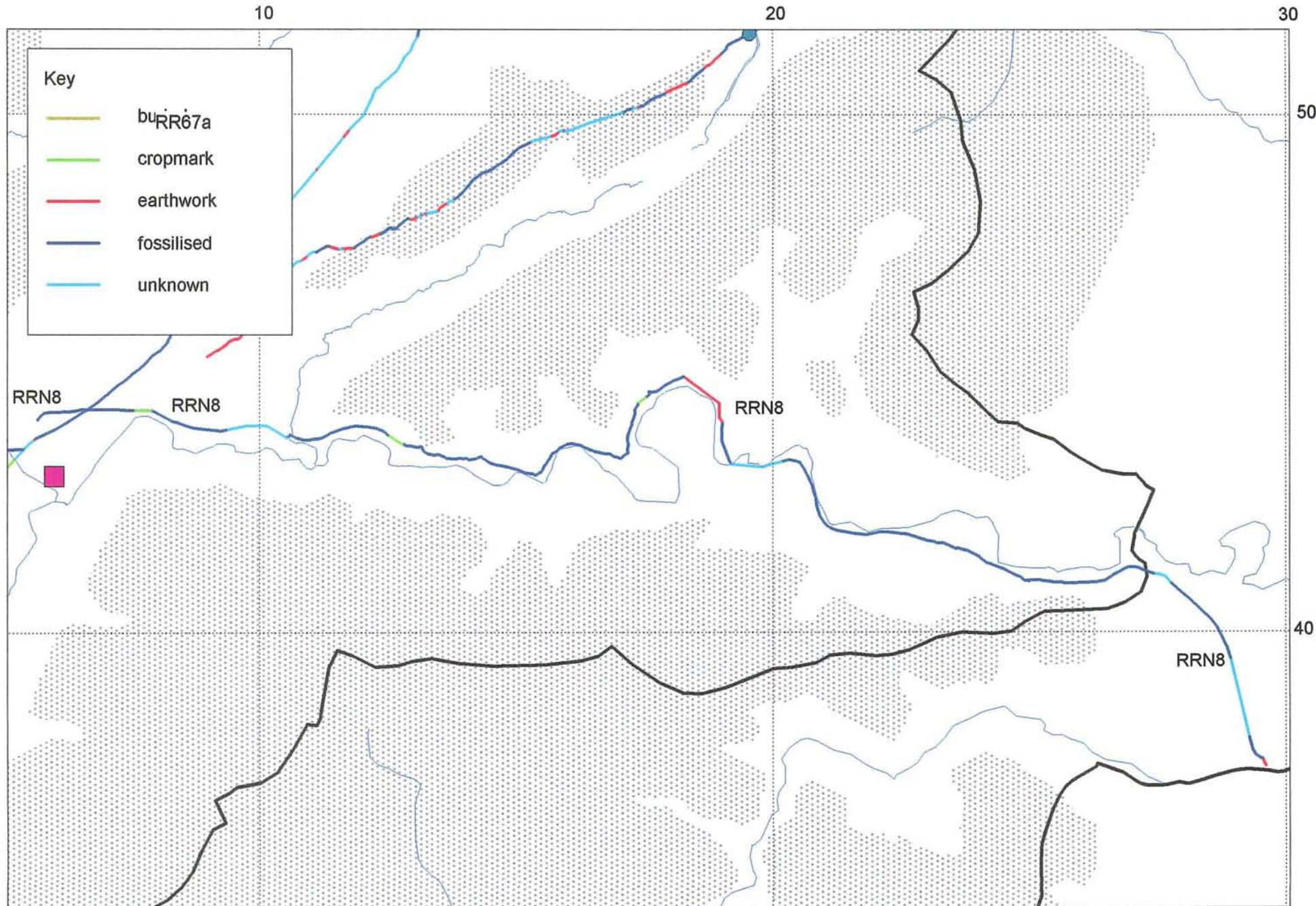
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Fig. 59 Roman road RRN8 (Rhyn Park to Ruq): Survival

1:10,000



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Rug to Caer Llugwy

CPAT RRN15 PRN 48200

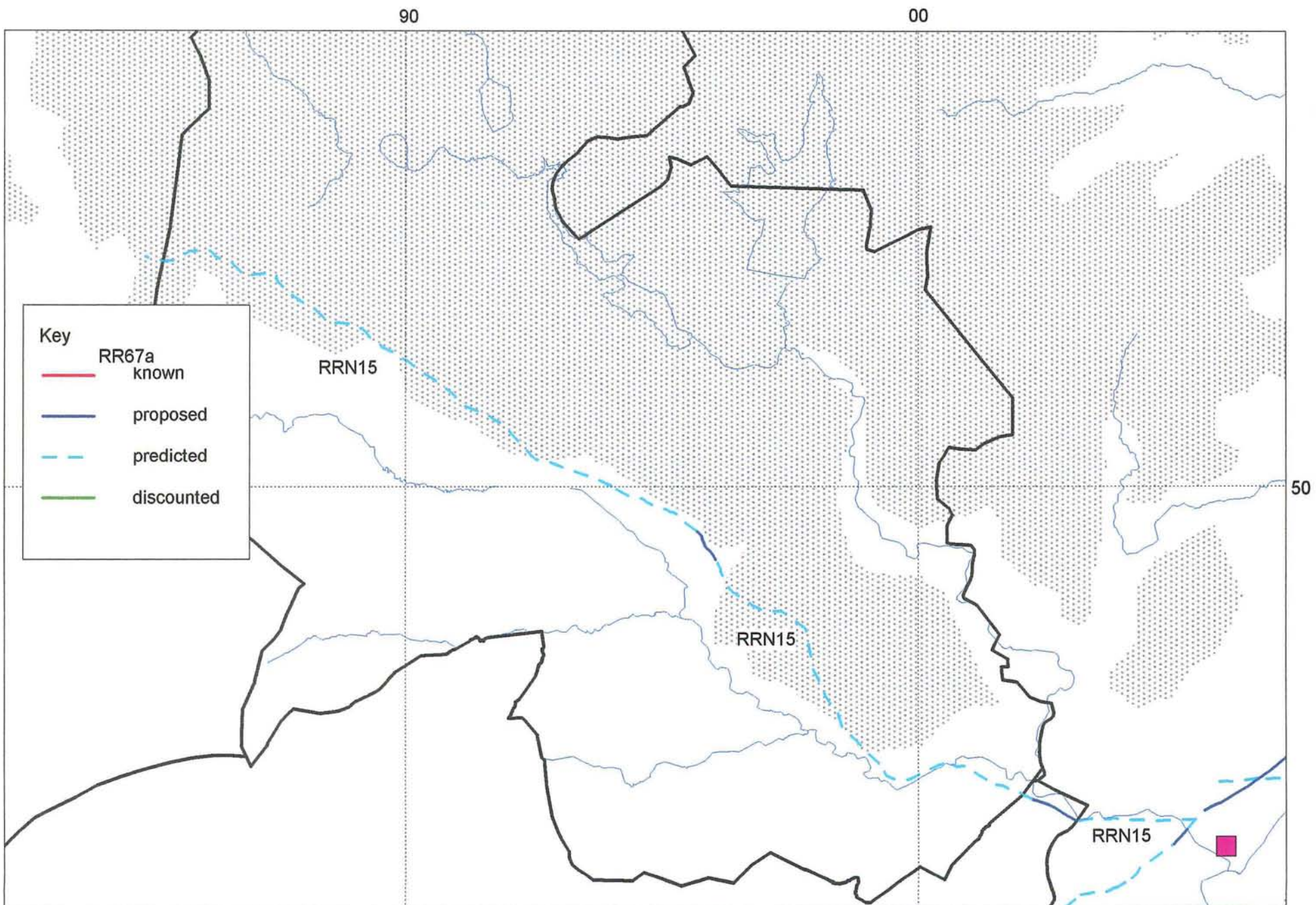
Figs 60 & 61

This is another route westwards, proposed by Edmund Waddelove from a known (or in this case strongly advocated) fort site. But again there is little solid evidence, even if there are earthworks along the route which may fossilise the road.

Further detailed work will be necessary to confirm this road.

Waddelove 1999, 37

Status – Predicted



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Fig. 60 Roman road RRN15 (Rug to Caer Llugwy): Status

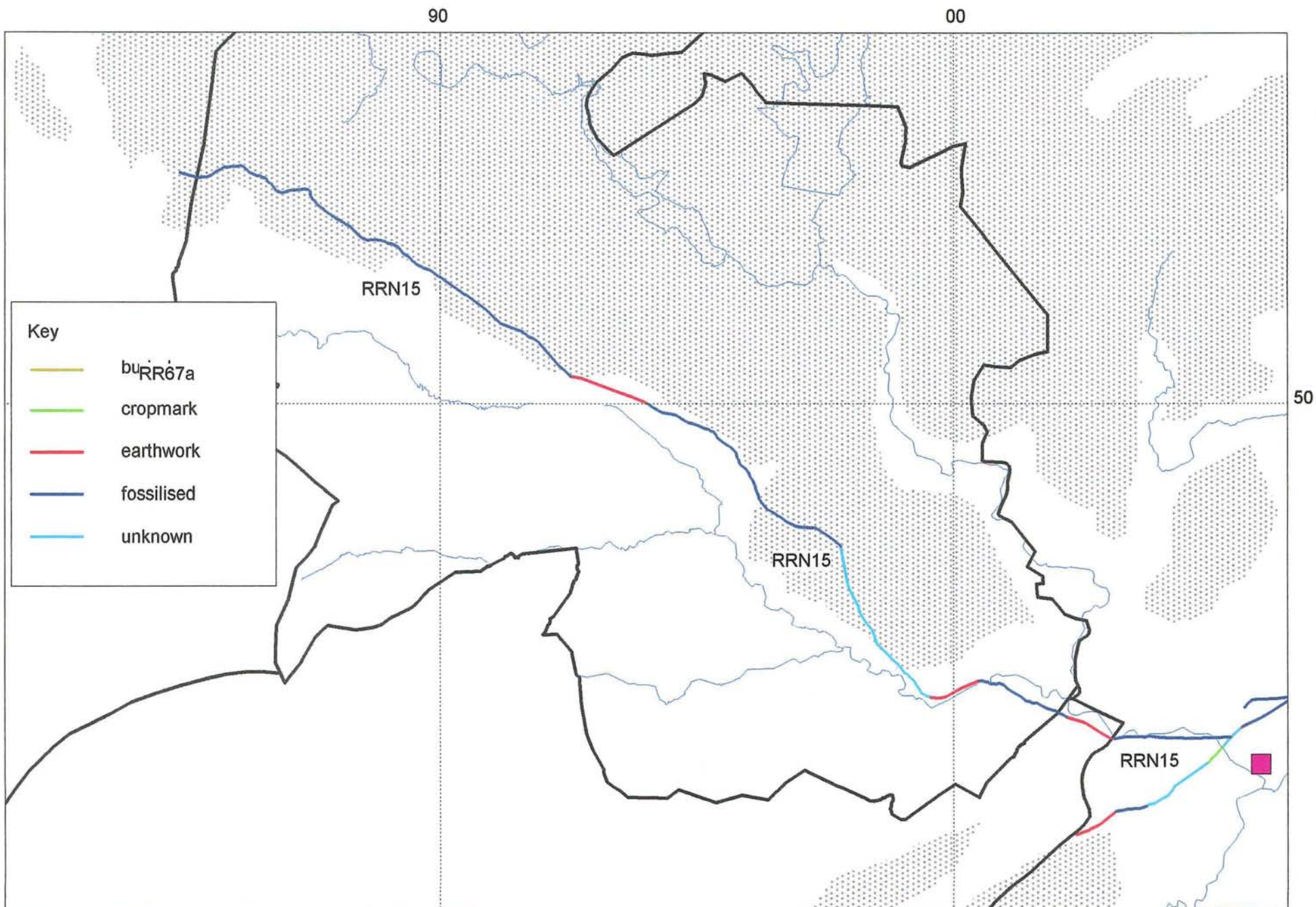


Fig. 61 Roman road RRN15 (Rug to Caer Llugwy): Survival

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St Asaph to Caerhun

Margary RR 67b PRN 46800

Figs 62 & 63

Various attempts have been made to follow what must indubitably be an authentic route across north Wales from the 'lost' fort of *Varis*, generally assumed to be beneath St Asaph, to Caerhun. This route formed part of *Iter XI* in the Antonine Itinerary (Chester to *Segontium*)

A remarkably straight modern road runs westwards from St Asaph for around 9 km, accompanied in many places by parish boundaries, and there appears to be little doubt that this marks the course of the original Roman road. On section was excavated across a surviving length of *agger* in 1963, seemingly confirming its existence, although no detailed report on the work has been encountered.

Beyond this it fades out and the Ordnance Survey were moved to remark in the 1970s following fieldwork in 1962/3 that the proposed course in the western section was tortuous, and that although the evidence was suggestive, nowhere was there substantive proof. Their investigation at the time was 'very thorough and the course [was] almost certainly the best that [could] be deduced' though it was little more than hypothetical. Where physical traces were identified they were not wholly convincing.

Later, Edmund Waddelove produced a detailed paper on the western part of the road, following his fieldwork in March 1980. This concurred with the Ordnance Survey assessment almost as far as Betws-yn-Rhos, but Waddelove then proposed a straighter route to the west. More logical though this is, the number of positive identifications of the road that Waddelove was able to advance was small.

In practice there are then alternative routes which for the last 9 km diverge so that by the time they reach the boundary of the study area they are more than 3 km apart. Neither can be convincingly evidenced, though Waddelove's is arguably the stronger and appears to have been accepted by the Ordnance Survey on their new map of Roman Britain (2000). But this stretch of the St Asaph to Caerhun is an excellent example of how different conceptions built on very little firm evidence can lead to wholly different routes being proposed.

In summary it is suggested that the route as currently proposed is correct in broad terms as far as Betws-yn-Rhos, although few relict traces remain. Considerably more needs to be done to clarify the course to the west of Betws. How such clarification could be achieved remains a moot point.

Margary 1973, 349

Ordnance Survey linear mapping and typescript notes (1962/3)

RCAHMW 1994, 32

Waddelove 1983

Status – Known

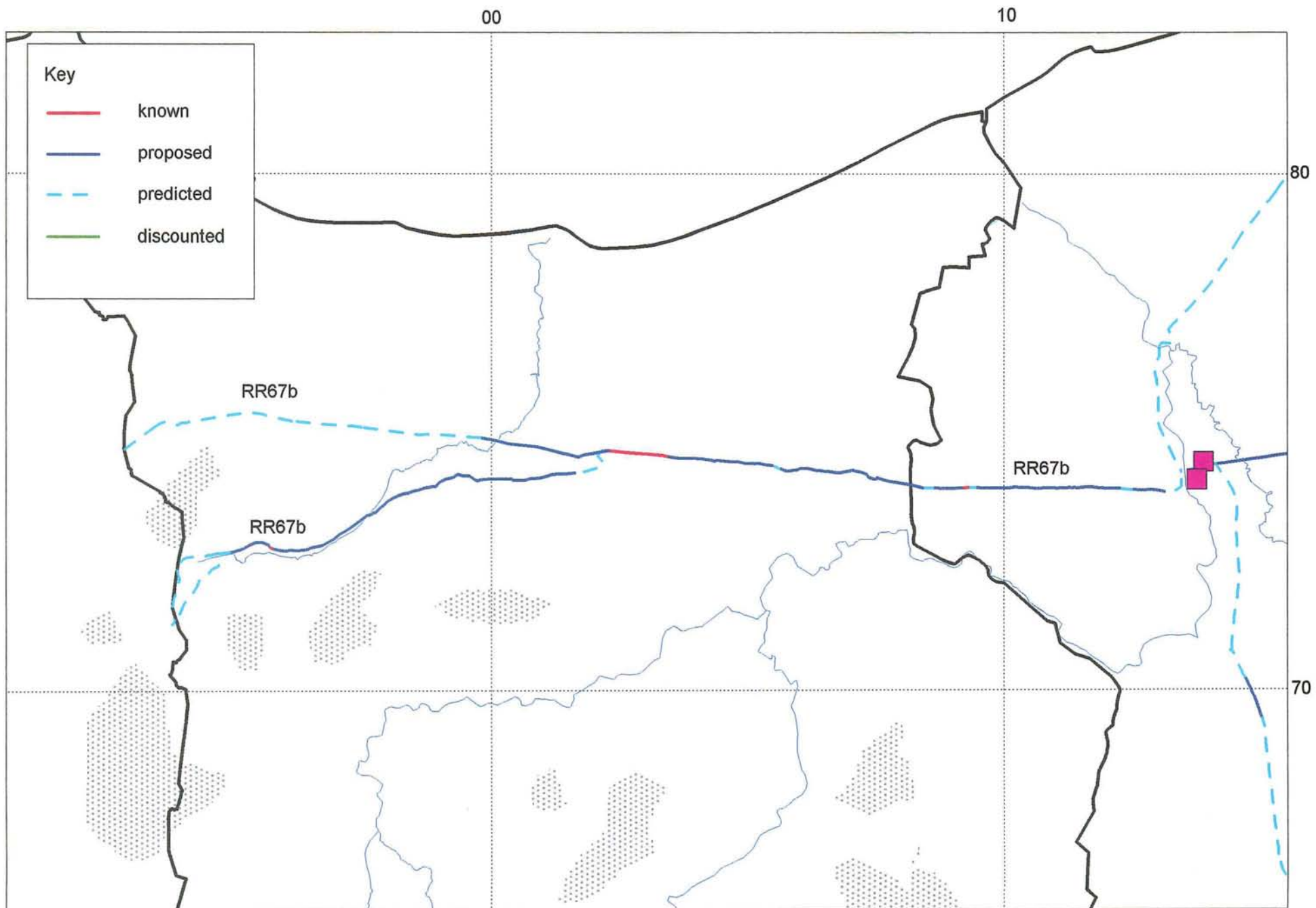


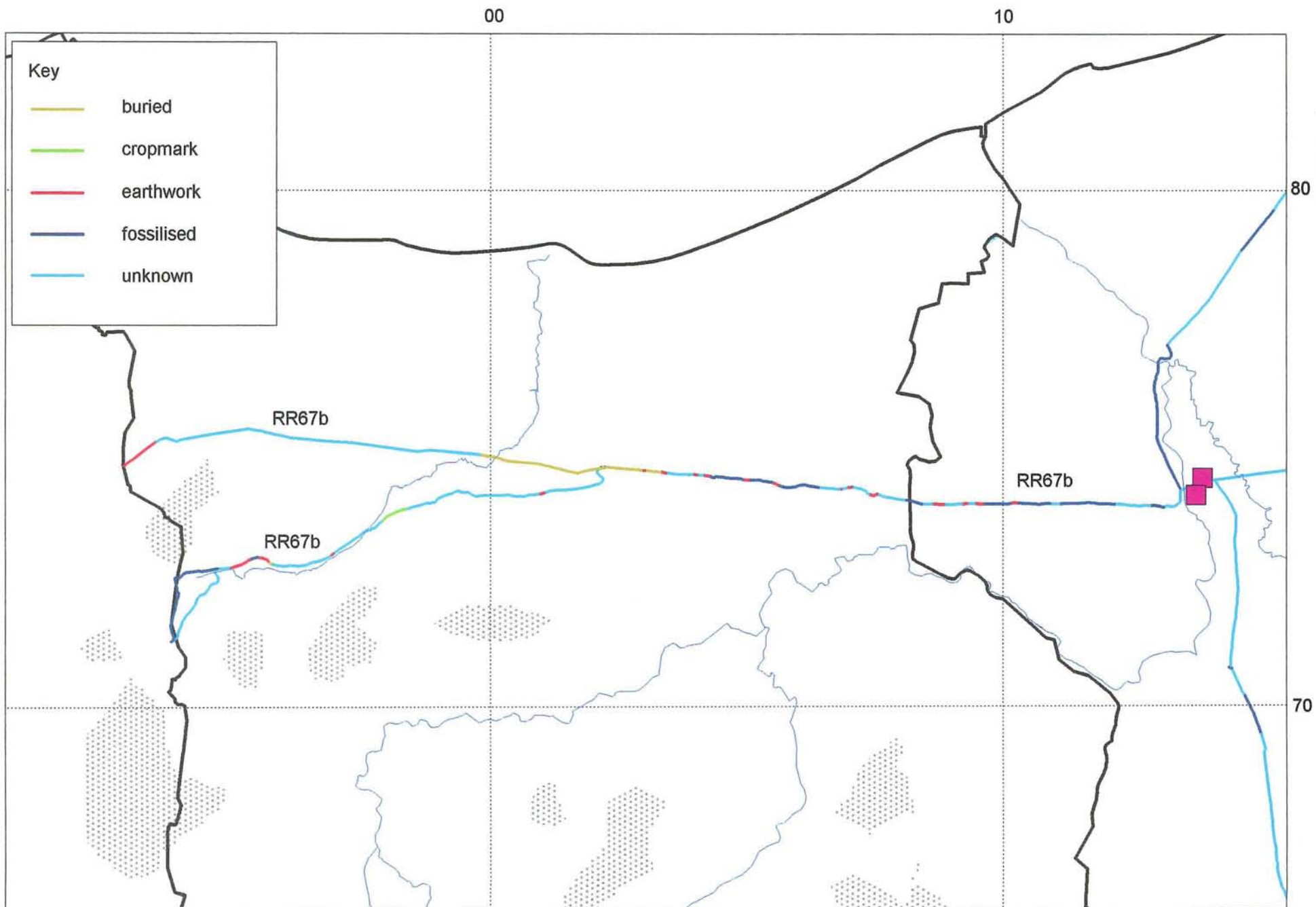
Fig. 62 Roman road RR67b (St Asaph to Caerhun): Status

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Fig. 63 Roman road RR67b (St Asaph to Caerhun): Survival

St Asaph to Meliden

CPAT RRN16 PRN 48100

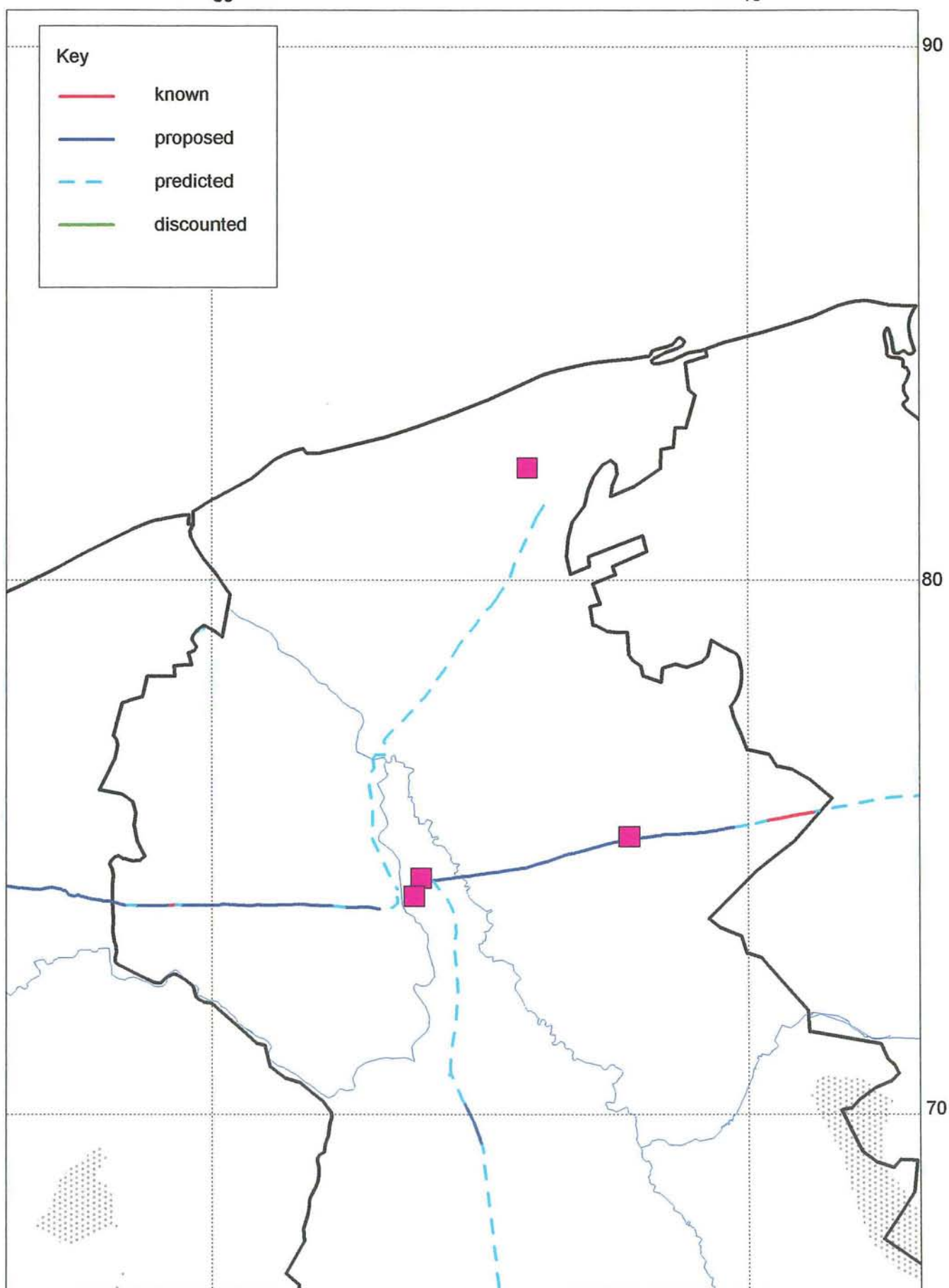
Figs 64 & 65

Proposed by Edmund Waddelove to link the putative fort of *Varis* (St Asaph) with the Roman activity around Meliden and Prestatyn, there is little evidence of substance to support this line as yet.

Further detailed work will be required.

Waddelove 1991

Status – Predicted



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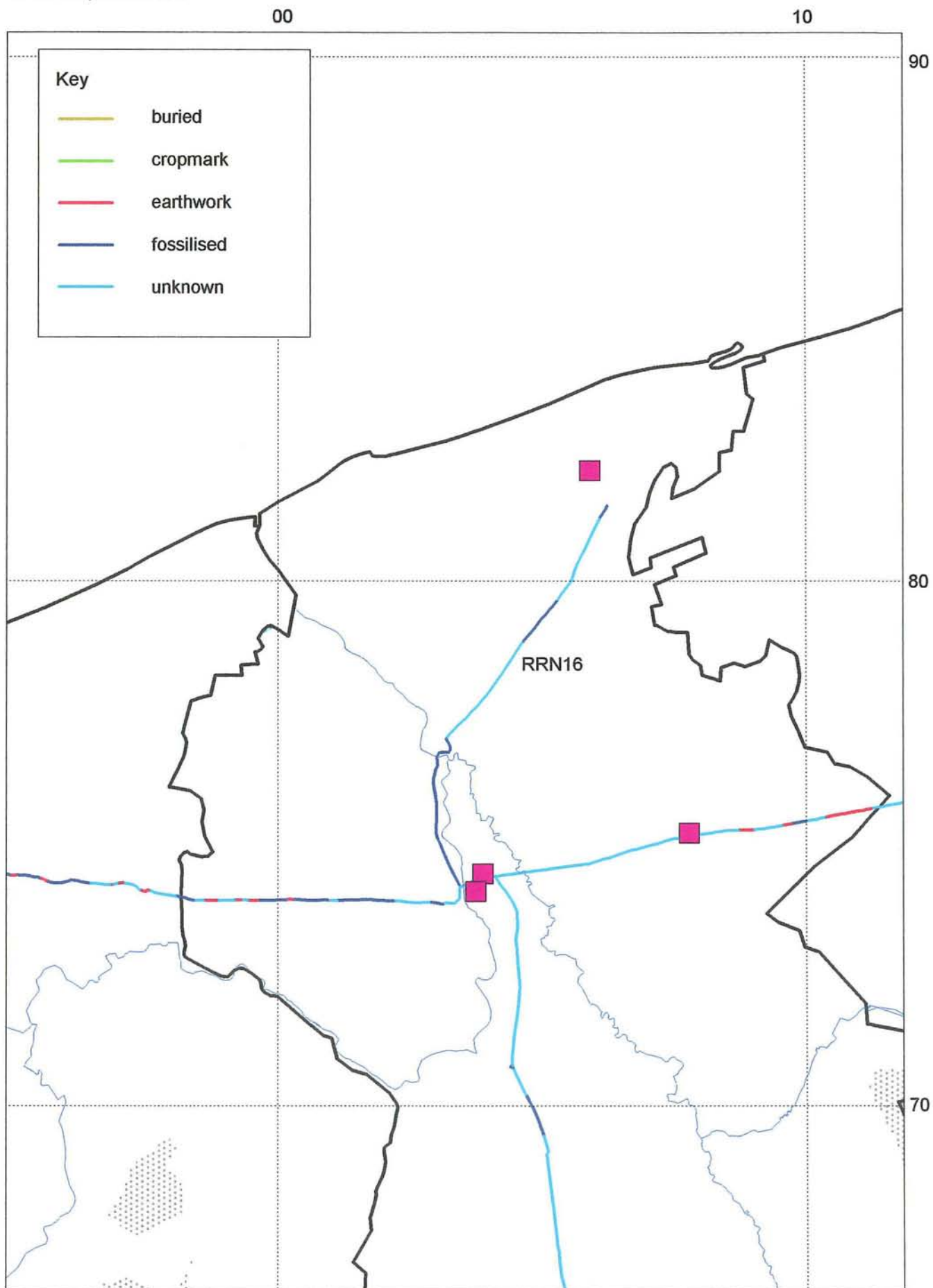
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Fig. 64 Roman road RRN16 (St Asaph to Meliden): Status

1:10,000



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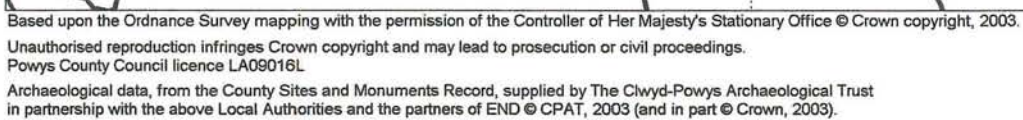
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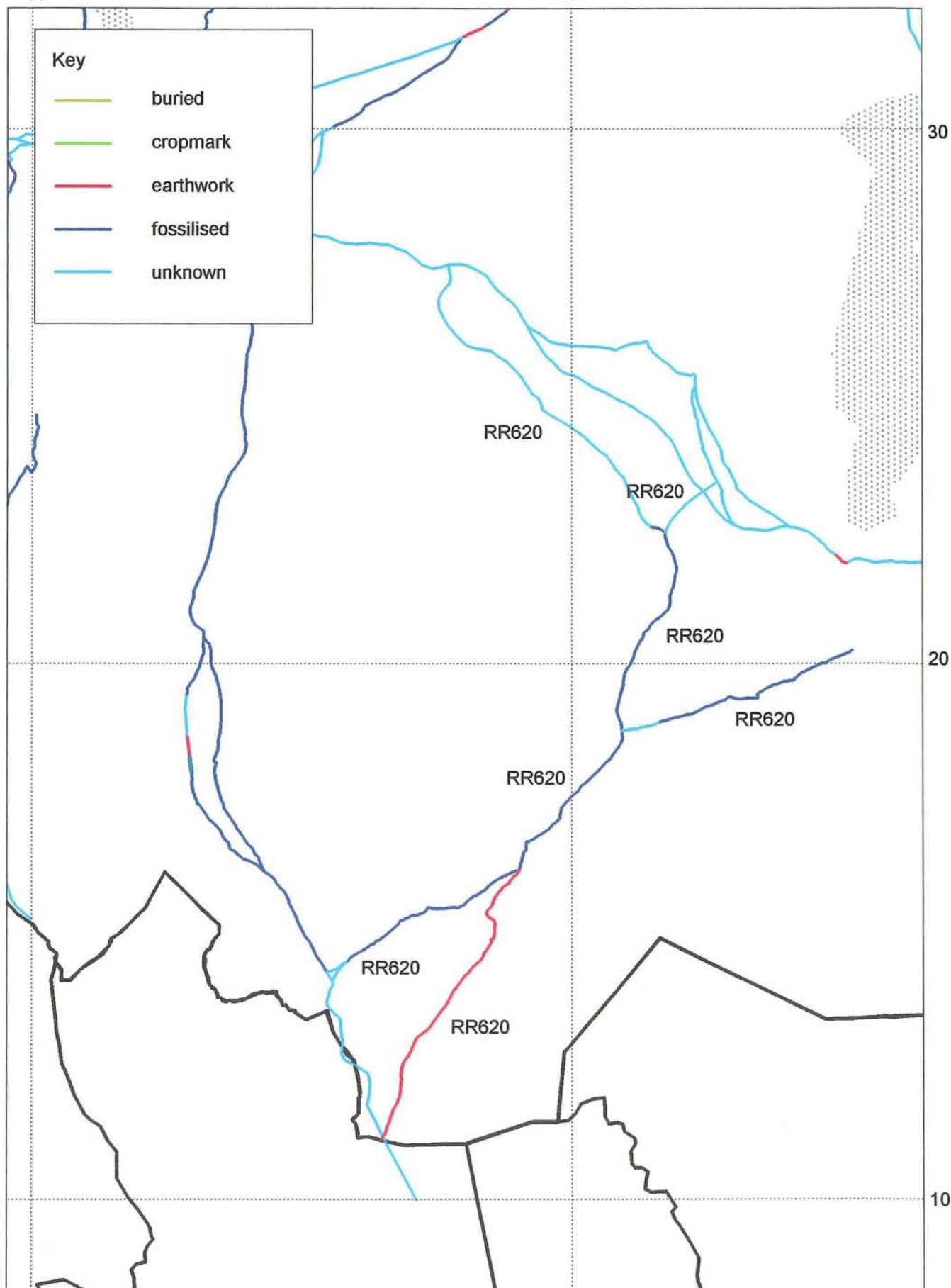
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Fig. 65 Roman road RRN16 (St Asaph to Meliden): Survival

1:10,000



1:10,000



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Fig. 67 Roman road RR620 (Taf Fechan to Llanfrynach): Survival

1:10,000

Wroxeter to Forden Gaer via Westbury

Margary RR64. PRN 47111

and

Wroxeter to Forden Gaer via Long Mountain

Margary RR64. PRN 47111

Figs 68 & 69

Regardless of its course much of this route, part of Margary's longer road from Wroxeter to Trefeglwys, runs through Shropshire, entering Wales only a few miles from the fort at Forden Gaer.

Alternative routes have been suggested. One route from Westbury (Salop) south-westwards along the Camlad Valley has been elucidated by Bill Putnam, with Cambridge aerial photographs confirming the line in the vicinity of the fort at Forden. An alternative route westwards from Westbury and then down the spine of Long Mountain has been advocated for rather longer, with Margary describing it, and John Rigg working on that section of it that was relevant to his Long Mountain to Mallwyd road. But the Long Mountain route was dismissed by Putnam who saw it as a ridgeway, and Toller has stressed that it is dubious. Nevertheless, Putnam was concerned to hedge his bets on this route as his comment (1969, 91) indicates:

‘There remains a slight possibility that an early military road of light construction ran along the Long Mountain ridge before extensive clearance of the valleys and while security was of prime importance. However, it is certain that by the time the permanent fort system was established and lead ore was perhaps being hauled from the Plynlimon mines, the Roman road ran along the route described below’.

The new Ordnance Survey of Roman Britain shows both options. It does not, however, give any credence to Barri Jones' suggestion of a Roman fort beneath Westbury village.

Jones 1969 (in an appendix to Putnam 1969)

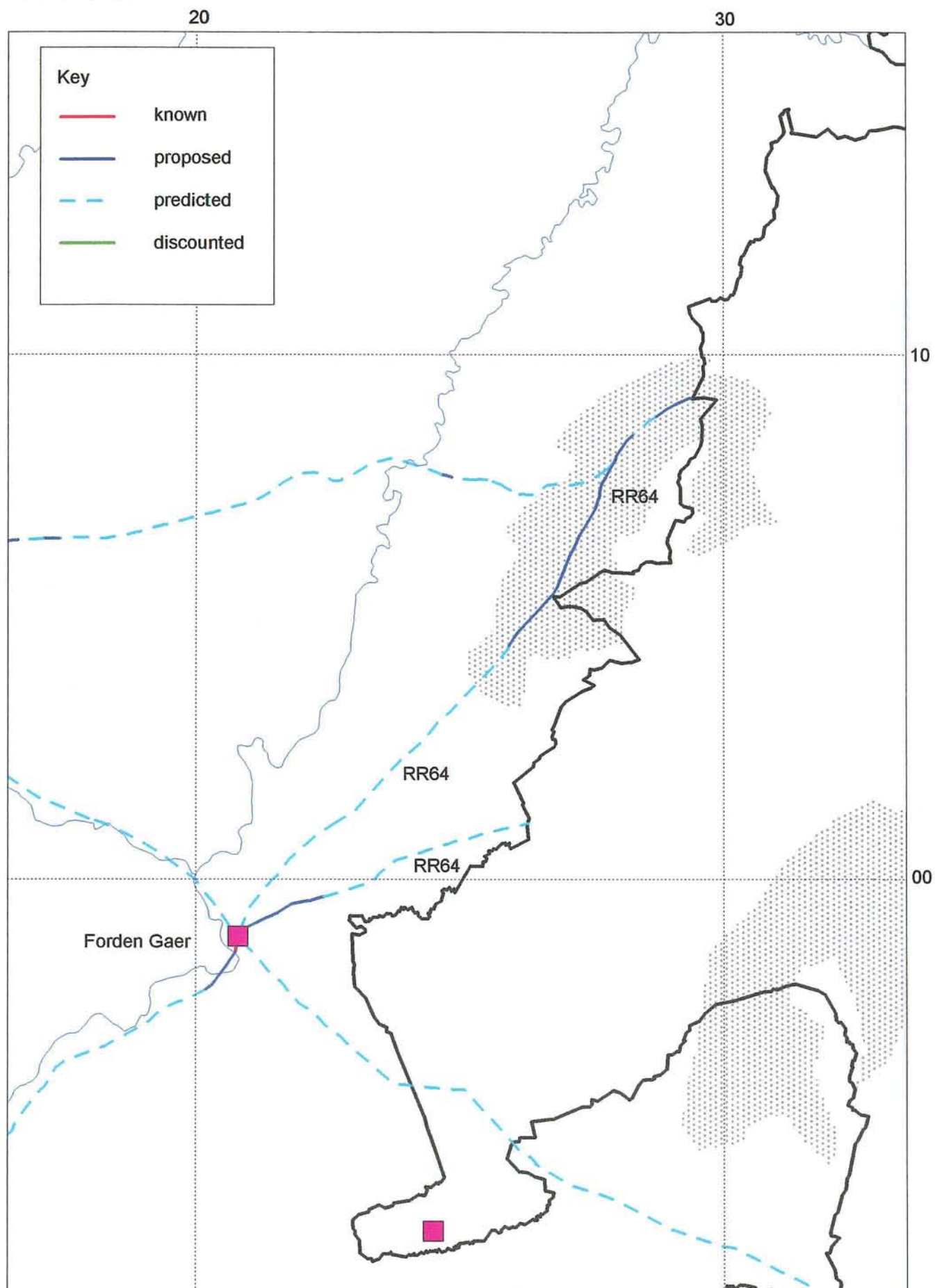
Ordnance Survey 2001

Putnam 1969

RCAHMW 1994, 22

Toller 1999, 300

Status - Proposed



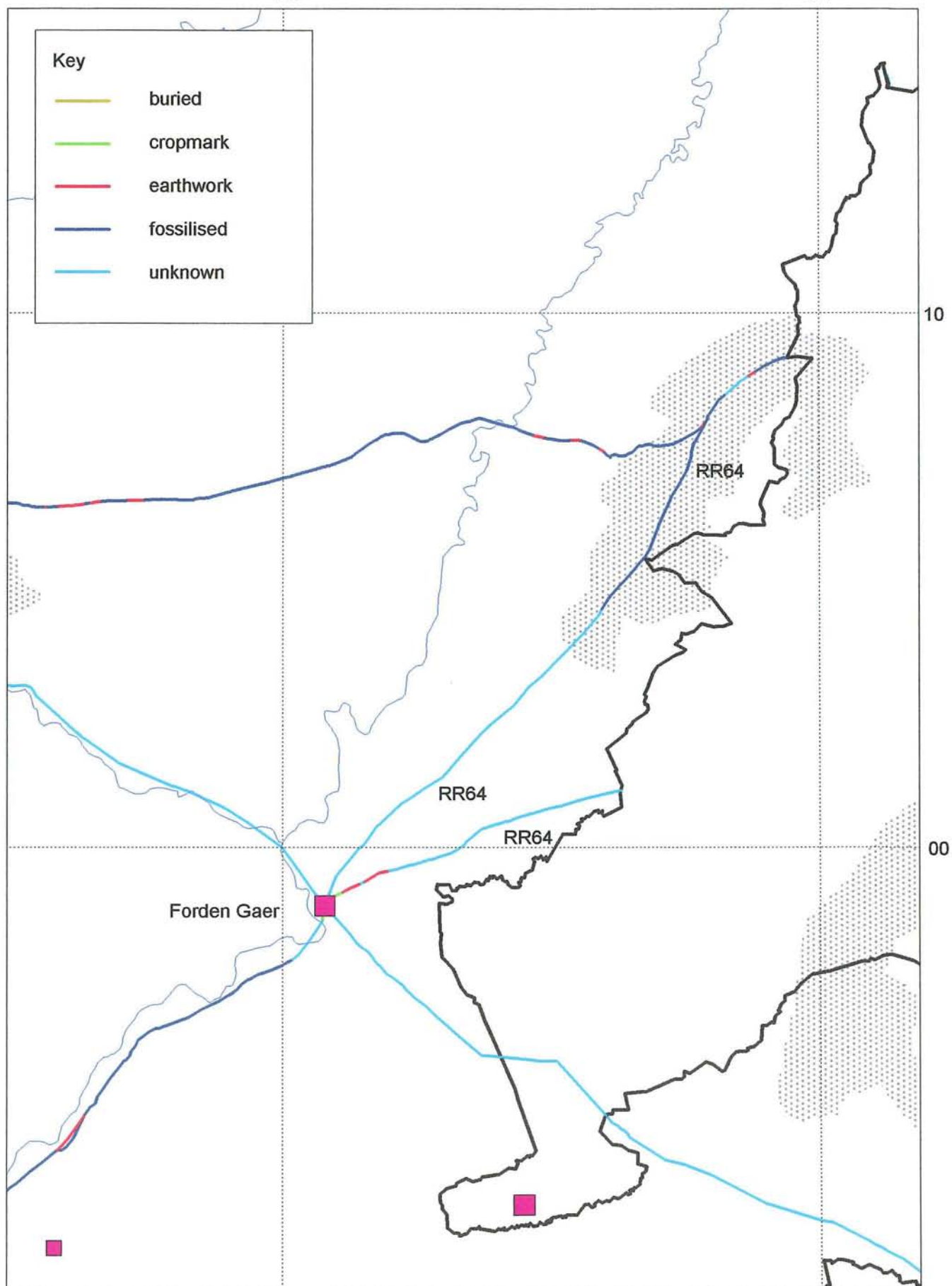
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Fig. 68 Roman road RR64 (Wroxeter to Forden Gaer via Long Mountain and via Westbury): Status 1:10,000



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Fig.69 Roman road RR64 (Wroxeter to Forden gaer via Long Mountain and via Westbury): Survival 1:10,000

Other routes not validated (and not plotted)

1) Beulah eastwards.

Ordnance Survey RRX87.

The Royal Commission dismissed this as a conjectural road and refused to countenance O'Dwyer's road between Llangammarch Wells and Builth Wells

RCAHMW 1986, 178

RCAHMW 1994, 56.

2) Beulah westwards.

Ordnance Survey RRX85.

The Royal Commission dismissed this as a conjectural road with no indication of any source material.

Hogg, unpublished typescript notes

RCAHMW 1986, 178

RCAHMW 1994, 56

3) Bishopsmoat to Forden Gaer

Ordnance Survey RRX82g

A projected Roman road running a short distance to the south of, and converging with RRX73 at Forden Gaer. No substantive information is readily available about this route.

Houghton 1957-60, 240

Ordnance Survey notes

RCAHMW 1994, 54

4) Caerphilly to Llanfrynach.

A route first suggested by Rev Henry Payne in 1804, but which the Royal Commission have dismissed as 'unlikely'.

RCAHMW 1986, 177

5) *Castell Collen to Trawscoed*

Ordnance Survey RRX79b.

O'Dwyer suggested an upland route between Newbridge and Strata Florida (Ceredigion), and another has also been mooted in the past. These have been rejected by the Royal Commission.

No plot has been attempted here, although the routes are depicted on the general plans at the beginning of this report.

RCAHMW 1986, 178

RCAHMW 1994, 50

6) *Clyro to Castell Collen*

Ordnance Survey RRX82a

No information is readily available about this route, which appears to have proposed first by Jonathan Williams in the 19th century.

Ordnance Survey notes

RCAHMW 1994, 52

7) *Clyro to Painscastle*

Ordnance Survey RRX82b

No information is readily available about this route which seems to have been conjured up by I Cohen in the 1950s and published in the *Woolhope Transactions*..

Ordnance Survey notes

RCAHMW 1994, 52

8) *Coelbren to Carmarthen*

The integrity of such a route seems to be founded solely on a couple of pieces of disparate information. Whilst not discounting it the Royal Commission are evidently unconvinced

RCAHMW 1986, 176

9) Coelbren to Llandovery

Ordnance Survey RRX 84

This route seems at least in part to have been one of O'Dwyer's suggestions. The Royal Commission implied that this was absolutely no evidence for it.

RCAHMW 1986, 177

RCAHMW 1994, 55

10) Penydarren to Brecon Gaer

Ordnance Survey RRX82c

This appears to be a roundabout route to Brecon Gaer, using existing tracks and lanes, which ties in, at least in part, with RR63b.

Hogg, A H A, typescript notes

Ordnance Survey notes

RCAHMW 1994, 47

11) Llanrhaeadr to Dolwar Hall

Ordnance Survey RRX82m

No information is readily available about this hypothetical route which supposedly ran southwards from Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant.

Ordnance Survey notes

RCAHMW 1994, 55

12) Llanrhaeadr northwards

Ordnance Survey RRX82k

No information is readily available about this hypothetical route.

Ordnance Survey notes

RCAHMW 1994, 55

13) Llanrhaeadr to Rhyn Park

Ordnance Survey RRX82j

No information is readily available about this route which appears to have followed modern roads. W J Hemp seems to have supported it.

Ordnance Survey notes
RCAHMW 1994, 54

14) St Harmon road

RCAHMW RRN6

No information is readily available about this route, but the RCAHMW claim that field survey identified an *agger*.

RCAHMW 1994, 61

15) Trecastile to Carmarthen

Ordnance Survey RRX82e

It is not clear how this road, first claimed by Theophilus Jones, relates to RR62b, which should be heading in the same direction.

RCAHMW 1994, 53

16) Westbury (Salop) to Llanymynech

This route postulated by Bill Putnam ought to cut across a small portion of Powys). However, no trace of any such road has been recognised.

B Putnam: *pers comm*