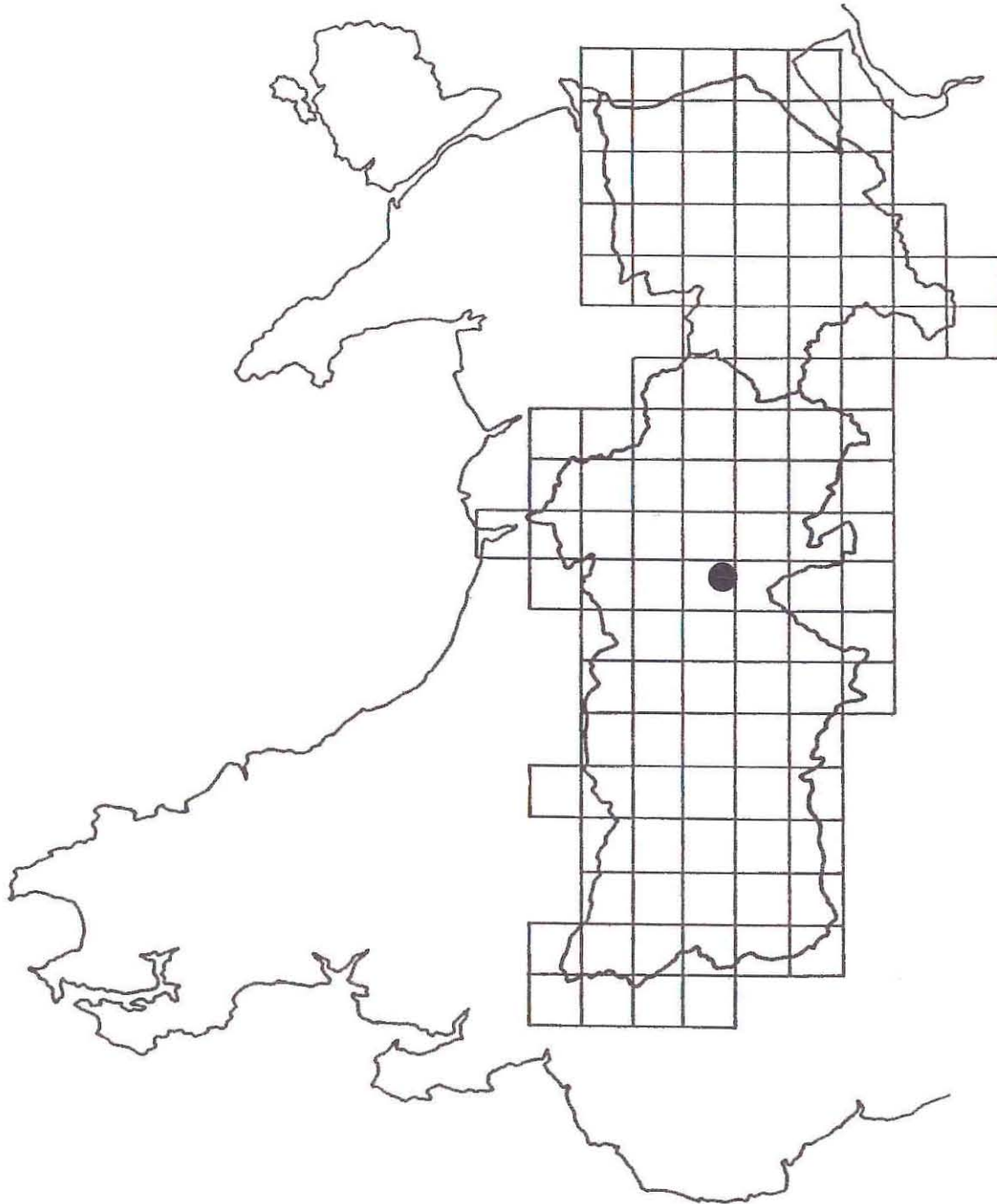


THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

*A 483 Bryn Bedwyn to Glascoed*  
*Road Improvement, Powys*  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



CPAT Report No 134

*A 483 Bryn Bedwyn to Glascoed*  
*Road Improvement, Powys*  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

**by D Thomas**  
April 1995

Report prepared for Highways and Transportation Department,  
Powys County Council

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### SUMMARY

CPAT Contracting has carried out an assessment of the archaeological resource affected by the proposed Bryn Bedwyn to Glascoed improvement of the A483 Swansea to Manchester Trunk Road. The assessment consisted of field assessment and desk-top study of all readily available documentary, cartographic and aerial photographic sources to assess the implications of the scheme on the archaeological resource of the corridor so that an appropriate mitigation response can be determined.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Contracting section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (hereafter CPAT) was commissioned in March 1995 by the Highways and Transportation Department of Powys County Council to carry out an archaeological assessment of a proposed road improvement scheme on a stretch of the A483 trunk road between Bryn Bedwyn and Glascoed, near Dolfor in Powys (from approximately SO 09308774 to SO 08738850). The A483 runs from Swansea to Manchester and is one of the main north to south routes through Wales. The scheme is required to straighten a stretch of road which includes a severe bend and affects a corridor which is approximately 1km long and 200m wide.

1.2 The archaeological assessment was requested by the Highways and Transportation Department of Powys County Council on the advice of the Curatorial section of CPAT acting in their role as archaeological advisors to the Council. A brief for the archaeological assessment prepared by the curatorial section of CPAT recognised the archaeological potential of the area and proposed a programme of work consisting of fieldwork and desk-top study to assess the impact of the proposed improvement on the archaeological resource of the corridor. CPAT Contracting was invited to submit a specification and quotation for the work, which was subsequently accepted by Powys County Council Highways and Transportation Department. A copy of the specification is included in this report as Annex 1.

1.3 The desktop assessment involved a study of all readily available cartographic, documentary and aerial photographic archives relating to the area of the scheme, while the fieldwork consisted of a structured and methodical examination of the road corridor as specified in the brief. This report presents a summary analysis of the fieldwork and desktop studies to provide an assessment of the implications of the proposed scheme on the total archaeological resource of the corridor which will be used by the archaeological curator to formulate an appropriate mitigation response.

## 2. DESK-TOP STUDY

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The desk-top study included consultation of the County SMR and aerial photographic archive held at the CPAT offices in Welshpool, the map archive held at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, the National Monument Record and aerial photographic archive held at



the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales (RCAHMW) also in Aberystwyth, and archives held at the Powys County Archives Office and Powys County Library in Llandrindod Wells.

## **2.2 Cartographic Sources**

**2.2.1** There are no early estate maps relating to the area in either the National Library of Wales or the Powys County Archive. The earliest map of the area is the Enclosure map of Kerry parish produced in 1826, while the Tithe map and apportionment of the parish date to 1842.

**2.2.2** The road corridor is covered by two sheets of the first edition of the 25" series of the Ordnance Survey map, both of which were surveyed in 1885 and published in 1886. The second edition of the 25" series was also studied. This was revised in 1902 and published in 1904.

## **2.3 Documentary Sources**

**2.3.1** The site records provided by the SMR and the NMR were studied as a basis for the assessment.

**2.3.2** The records held at the National Library in Aberystwyth and the Powys County Archive were searched for any primary documentary sources relating to the road corridor, but a search of the indices of collections relating to the area failed to produce anything of relevance to the assessment.

**2.3.3** The relevant local and national journals were searched for material relating to the area. This search was based on the bibliography provided by the SMR at CPAT. Other publications relating to the area were also studied.

## **2.4 Aerial Photographic Archive**

**2.4.1** Three collections of aerial photographic records were consulted. The first of these is a series of site-specific oblique photographs held at CPAT. The other two, the RAF and Ordnance Survey collections, are held at the RCAHMW offices in Aberystwyth and are vertical photographs at a scale of 1:10,000.

### 3. FIELD ASSESSMENT

3.1 Access was arranged with the landowners by Powys County Council. The area of the corridor was walked in transects with a 50m-wide spacing, and any features were briefly noted and assessed. Particular attention was given to the two sites listed in the SMR and highlighted in the brief.

### 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Very little is known of the archaeology of the immediate area of the proposed scheme as it has not previously been the subject of a systematic archaeological survey. There are only two monuments listed in the corridor in the SMR. These are the Glascoed mound (PRN 5758), and the former site of Little Glascoed (PRN 6997). Both were visited as part of the field assessment and are described below. More is known of the surrounding area, in particular the upland areas to the south and east of Dolfor where there are a number of surviving monuments dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age. In addition there are significant assemblages of flint work dating from these periods as well as small assemblages of Mesolithic flint from the sites of the later barrows at Two Tumps (SO SO118851) and Caebetin (SO 126866).

4.2 The lack of archaeological sites closer to the road corridor may be the result of the more intensive agricultural land use of recent years, but it is possible that the distribution of find spots and monuments does reflect a real settlement pattern as early farmers would not have been attracted to the sloping ground which characterises the area. Later archaeological evidence both within the corridor and in the vicinity is very sparse. There are no known Roman sites nearby, and only the remains of Wantyn Dyke on Kerry Hill indicate a 'Dark Age' presence in the area. During the medieval period the area would have been part of the Lordship of Ceri, but there are no archaeological sites that reflect this.

4.3 The post-medieval period probably saw the establishment of the farms and associated fields that are still present. None of these features have any obvious earlier origins and only one field boundary in the corridor has a significant lynchet (see below, Site 1). The present road was constructed in the 1830s as part of the Newtown to Llandrindod Wells road constructed by Telford. No road on the present alignment is shown on the Enclosure map, but a road to Newtown ran c350m to the east of the corridor. The line of this road is still traceable from the alignment of lanes and field



boundaries, but it lies outside the scope of the assessment. The main route from Dolfor to Newtown depicted on the Enclosure map of 1826 was a turnpike road, now known as the Middle Dolfor Road.

## 5. RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT.

5.1 The sites are described below as they are in the County SMR in order of their Primary Record Number. Five new sites have been recognised as a result of the present assessment, and these are listed after those already recorded in the SMR. The sites have also been classified according to categories which refer to the archaeological significance of the site and its implications on schemes which may affect it. All these categories are defined below, although not all are relevant to the present assessment.

**Category A** Sites of national importance sufficient to merit avoidance by any proposed development, including Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Registered Historic Parks, or those that meet the criteria for scheduling or listing.

**Category B** Sites of regional importance which do not merit scheduling or listing but for which preservation in-situ is preferred.

**Category C** Sites of local importance which merit adequate recording if their destruction is necessary.

**Category D** Sites of minor importance for which rapid recording would be sufficient, usually as part of a Watching Brief.

**Category E** Sites for which Stage 1 of the assessment was not sufficient to assess their significance. Further work would be needed if they were to be directly affected by the proposal.

**Category F** Those sites which have previously been noted as possible sites, but which are now thought to have little or no archaeological significance. Also those sites which have been noted but for which there is no precise location.

**5.2 PRN 5758 Glascoed Mound (SO 08808848)**  
**Category D**

5.2.1 The site of a mound which is set in a field boundary to the north of Glascoed. It has been suggested that the mound could represent an archaeological feature (Bird 1977, 76), but on the basis of this assessment it is suggested that the site is most likely to represent a natural mound with little archaeological importance. The site could not be clearly identified during the fieldwork, and the features that were recognised were almost certainly natural. It does remain possible however that the site has undergone erosion since Bird's observations and that it was once more recognisable as a possible archaeological feature.

**5.3 PRN 6997 Little Glascoed House (SO 08778833)**  
**Category C**

5.3.1 Little now remains of the former site of Little Glascoed which was a 17th to 18th-century building with 19th-century additions. The timber framing of the southern part of the building which was probably a barn still survives and is now covered by corrugated iron and is used as a byre. The northern part of the building is of stone and brick construction and was probably the house. It is now derelict. Previous field visits (RCAHMS, 1968 and CPAT, 1980) suggest that the buildings have decayed significantly in recent years, particularly the northern portion which still had a roof in 1980.

**5.4 Site 1 Lynchet Bank (From SO 09008808 to SO 09038825)**  
**Category C**

5.4.1 The lynchet bank forms part of a still extant field boundary. The formation of the lynchet, from soil erosion and accumulation on either side of a boundary, may suggest that this boundary is older than the other boundaries in the development corridor which have no significant lynchet formation. The steepness of the slope would cause a rapid development of the bank, but the lynchet is significant enough to suggest that it could represent an element of an earlier landscape which has been eroded or obscured by recent farming practices. Only the southern end of the bank would be affected by the road improvement.



**5.5 Site 2 Quarry (SO 08988803)**  
**Category C**

5.5.2 The site of a small quarry , probably used to obtain stone for local purposes such as farm tracks. The site is now partially overgrown.

**5.6 Site 3 Quarry (SO 08988818)**  
**Category C**

5.6.1 The quarry is similar in size to site 2, and was probably used for the same purpose.

**5.7 Site 4 Newtown to Llandrindod Wells Road (From SO09308774 to SO 08738850)**  
**Category C**

5.7.1 The road is of some historical significance as it was constructed by the famous engineer Thomas Telford in the 1830s. It replaced earlier roads further to the east.

**5.8 Site 5 Milestone (SO 08938813)**  
**Category C**

5.8.1 The milestone is one of a series which lie alongside the road constructed by Telford. It is approximately 0.68m high and indicates the distance to Newtown as 3 miles and the distance to Builth 32 miles.

**6 CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 Little of obvious archaeological significance lies within the proposed improvement corridor. Most of the sites listed above are of local or minor significance and would merit only a brief record if they were to be destroyed as part of the proposed scheme.

## 7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CPAT Contracting wishes to thank the staff of the National Library, the RCAHMS, Powys County Record Office and the Powys County Library for their assistance.

My own thanks go to Mr James Barfoot of Machynlleth for his information on Telford's road from Newtown to Llandrindod Wells.

## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

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Mackney, D., Hodgson, J.M., Hollis, J.M. and Staines, S.J. (1983), Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (Hawarden)

### Manuscript Sources

Enclosure Map of Kerry Parish, 1826 (Powys Record Office)

Tithe map and Apportionment of Kerry Parish, 1842  
(National Library of Wales)

1st Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25" map, Sheets 43.6; 43.10 (National Library of Wales).

2nd Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25" map, Sheets 43.6; 43.10 (National Library of Wales).

## ANNEX 1

### A483 TRUNK ROAD: BRYN BEDWYN TO GLASCOED IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

#### SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT TO BE CONDUCTED BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

##### 1.0 Background

1.1 The Engineering Consultancy in the Department of Highways and Transportation of Powys County Council are looking at improvements to approximately 1.0km of the main A483 Trunk Road near Bryn Bedwyn to the south of Newtown (from approximately SO 093 877 to SO 087 885). This entails straightening various sections of the present road within a road corridor of 200m width.

1.2 It is considered by the Curatorial Section of CPAT who maintain the regional Sites and Monuments Record for Powys and act as archaeological advisers to local authorities in the region, that an archaeological assessment of the corridor within which the road improvements will occur is required because of its archaeological potential.

1.3 These aspects has been covered in a brief (CPAT ASB 135) prepared by the Curatorial Section of CPAT for the Engineering Consultancy of Powys County Council and dated to 6 September 1994.

##### 2.0 Objectives

2.1. The initial objective of the assessment is to establish the total archaeological resource of the new road corridor from a combination of existing sources and fieldwork.

2.2 A further objective is the identification of archaeologically sensitive areas, followed by the production of broad recommendations where the archaeological resource is affected by the road proposals.

2.3 Where damage to the resource appears inevitable, an appropriate scheme of further work will be detailed.



### 3.0 Methods

3.1 The first stage of the assessment will involve the examination of primary and secondary source material including early maps, the Powys County Sites and Monuments Record and, if available, vertical and oblique aerial photography.

3.2 Fieldwork will take the form of a structured and methodical field examination of the road corridor as defined on draft Drawing 0112/PE02/101 accompanying the archaeological brief.

3.3 Following 3.1 and 3.2 an analysis of all data accompanied by an appropriate plan will be prepared as a report for the client, incorporating sufficient information on the archaeological resource for the archaeological adviser to the planning authority to assess the implications of the scheme. Appropriate recommendations will be included in the contractor's report.

### 4.0 Resources and Programming

4.1 The sources search and fieldwork will be conducted by an experienced field archaeologist from CPAT under the supervision of the Deputy Director of that organisation.

4.2 All report preparation will be completed by the same field archaeologist who conducted the fieldwork.

4.3 It is anticipated that the sources search and the fieldwork together with a report covering these elements will be completed within three weeks of the commencement of the project. It is anticipated that the project could be commenced within a minimum of one week and a maximum of four weeks from the time that CPAT's quotation is accepted, dependent on such variables as the weather, access and CPAT's other commitments.

R. J. Silvester  
06 February 1995

DRAWING NO.

0112/PE02/101

Fig 1: Location of Archaeological Sites  
Mentioned in the Text



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A483 Bryn-Bedwen — Glascoed  
Improvement.

Environmental Stage 1 Assessment  
Cultural Heritage.

DRAWN BY	A.P.		
TRACED BY			
CHECKED BY			
DATE	JAN 1995.	REVISIONS	DATE
SCALES	1 : 5000	DRAWING NO.	0112/PE02/101