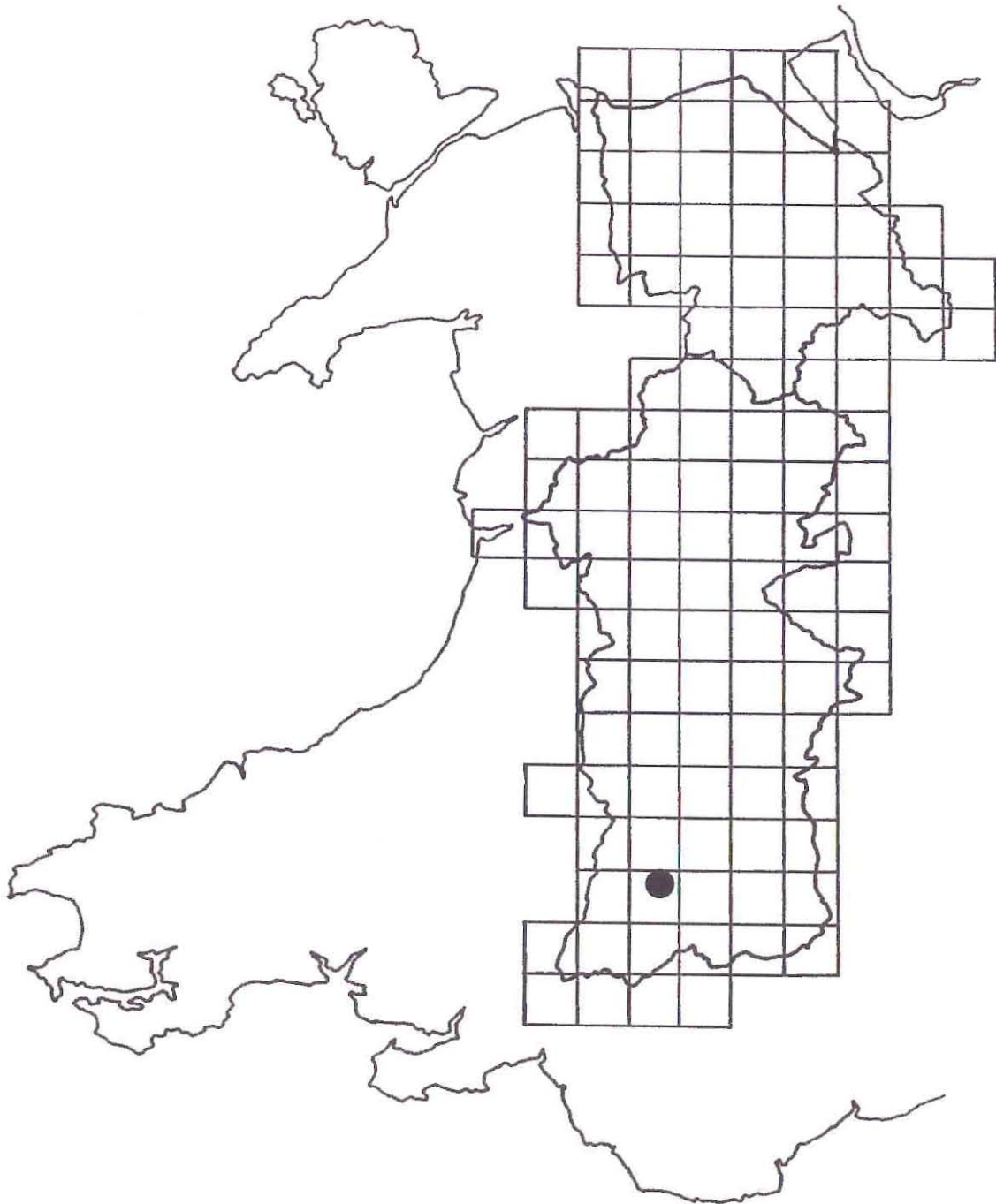


THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Castell-du, Sennybridge, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



CPAT Report No 179

Castell-du, Sennybridge, Powys.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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Report prepared for Mr R. Forsyth

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.** The watching brief at Castell-du, Sennybridge, Powys (SAM B126;PRN 572; Fig 1) was the second phase of archaeological work carried out at the request of Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments following an application for Scheduled Monument Consent by Howard Llewelyn and Company, Solicitors, Brecon acting on the behalf of Mr R. Forsyth of Cam-y-Castell, Sennybridge. The first phase, an evaluation trench, was conducted in late July and early August 1995 (Hankinson 1995), the results of which led to the granting of Scheduled Monument Consent with the condition that a watching brief be conducted during groundworks.
- 2.2** The development consists of a bungalow with an attached garage and is basically 'L' shaped in plan (Fig 2). The garage is to be built in the northernmost part of the plot.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

- 2.1** Castell-du is a supposed medieval castle with surviving masonry which lies on a small local summit overlooking the village of Sennybridge. The site is thought to relate to a castle at Sennybridge known from documentary sources constructed in the 13th century, although some commentators suggest a Norman date (Lewis 1833, i). The castle is the focus of the proposed historic core of the settlement (Silvester and Dorling 1993, 78). Two civil defence bunkers were inserted into the ruins in August 1940 (Hankinson 1995, 1).
- 2.2** Previous archaeological investigation to the north of the development site, carried out in 1991 and consisting of geophysical survey and trial excavation, revealed geophysical anomalies thought to represent defences, but which on excavation proved to be non-archaeological (Jones 1991, 39). The evaluation trench excavated as the first stage of the response to the current application similarly revealed no archaeological features related to the Scheduled Ancient Monument or the historic settlement.

3. RESULTS OF THE WATCHING BRIEF

- 3.1.** In accordance with the Scheduled Monument Consent the machine excavation of all the foundation trenches was supervised. Finds were noted, but as all were modern they were not retained. Features of potential archaeological significance were investigated by hand.
- 3.2.** Topsoil varying between 0.2 to 0.3m in depth was revealed in all the trenches except in the trench which lay closest to the boundary wall of the adjoining property to the north. Here it was c. 1m deep, probably caused by dumping when the wall was constructed. The topsoil overlay a narrow band of mixed reddish sandy clay which varied in depth from 0.1m to 0.4m. This contained small fragments of modern pottery and glass and probably represents a modern ploughsoil layer. It immediately overlay the variable sandy clay natural subsoil which contained fragments of fractured sandstone. The stratigraphy was very similar to that revealed in the evaluation trench (Hankinson 1995, 1).

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. The watching brief revealed no features associated with the Scheduled Ancient Monument, Castell-du or with the supposed historic core of the settlement of Sennybridge. The stratigraphy and scarcity of finds from all periods suggests that the plot was historically farmland, as it was prior to the recent building developments in the area, although it is possible that archaeological deposits have been removed by more recent ploughing. The lack of archaeological evidence is surprising as the plot lies so close to the supposed castle and within the proposed historic core.

5. REFERENCES

Hankinson, R. 1995. *Castell-du, Sennybridge, Powys. Archaeological Evaluation*. CPAT Report 149

Jones, Nigel. 1991. Sennybridge Castle, Sennybridge in *Archaeology in Wales* 31, 39

Lewis, S. 1833. *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales* (2 Vols). London

Silvester, R.J., and Dorling, P.J. 1993. *Historic Settlements in the Brecon Beacons National Park*. CPAT Report 44

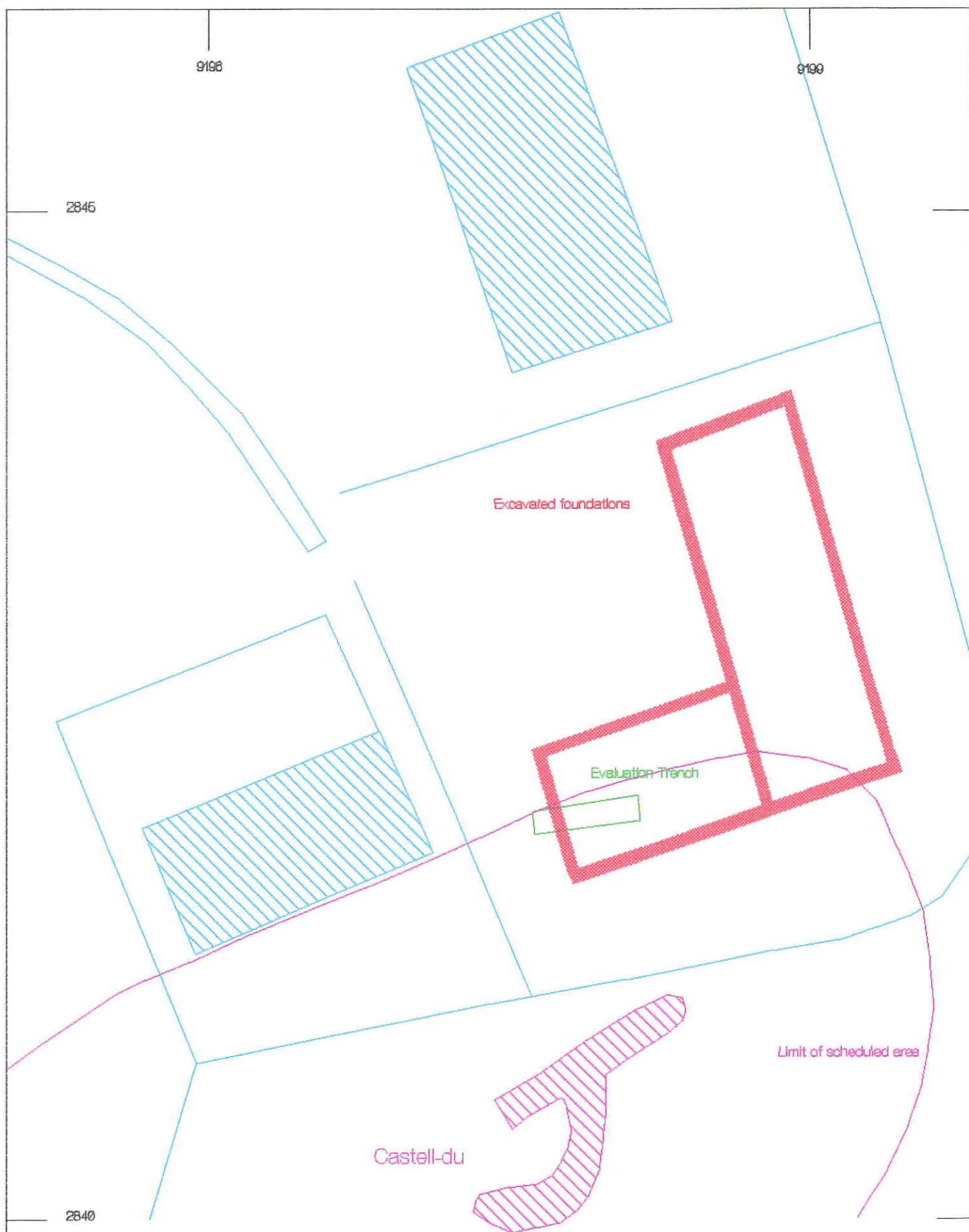


FIG 2: Plan of site and excavated foundations

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APPENDIX 1

SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT WORKS AT CASTELL DU, SENNYBRIDGE.

SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

1.1 The proposed development at Castell Du, Sennybridge, involves the construction of a new dwelling.

1.2 This area lies within the area designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. B126) which carries statutory protection.

1.3 The Ancient Monuments Inspectorate of Cadw in their capacity as archaeological advisers to the Secretary of State for Wales have determined that an Archaeological watching brief is necessary to assess the implications of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. Accordingly a watching brief by a suitably qualified and approved archaeological organisation was made a condition of the granting of Scheduled Monument Consent.

2 Objectives

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works are:

2.1.1 to record the nature, condition, significance and, where possible, the chronology of any archaeological deposits and/or features revealed within the area of the proposed development during the development works in so far as these aims are possible;

2.1.2 to prepare a report outlining the results of the watching brief.

3 Methods

3.1 The watching brief will be carried out according to the guidelines submitted with the SMC and will involve the examination of all the groundworks in the archaeological sensitive areas.

3.2 All archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the watching brief will be recorded by drawn section and/or photography.

3.3 Following the on-site work an illustrated and bound report will be prepared according to the principles laid out in the SMC (condition 4). This will be in A4 format and contain conventional sections on: Site location, Topography and Geology; Historic Background; Catalogue of sites identified with notes on their condition and significance, Conclusions and Recommendations and References, together with appropriate appendices on archives and finds.

3.5 The site archive will be prepared to specifications laid out in Appendix 3 in the Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991).

4 Resources and Programming

4.1 The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled and experienced archaeologist. Overall supervision will be by Dr A Gibson, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

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

4.3 The watching brief will coincide with the period of groundworks and the subsequent report would be prepared immediately thereafter, dependent on the client's instructions and the arrangement of a suitable timetable. The date of commencement, at the time of writing, has yet to be agreed with the client, and will be dependent on the state of the site and negotiated access. The archaeological curator will be informed of the detailed timetable and staffing levels when agreement has been reached with the client.

4.4 Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.

4.5 CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance.

A.M. Gibson
11th March 1996