

CPAT Report No 970

Clwyd Gate Restaurant, near Ruthin, Denbighshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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February 2007

Report for Barry Cohen

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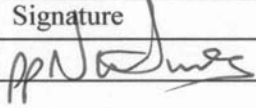
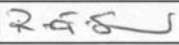
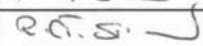
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CPAT Report Record

Report and status

CPAT Report Title	Clwyd Gate Restaurant, near Ruthin, Denbighshire: Archaeological Assessment		
CPAT Project Name	Clwyd Gate		
CPAT Project No	1578	CPAT Report No	970
Confidential (yes/no)	Yes	draft/final	Final

Internal control

	name	Signature	date
prepared by	E Farley		03/02/2009
checked by	R.J. Silvester		03/02/2009
approved by	R.J. Silvester		03/02/2009

Revisions

no	date	made by	checked by	approved by

Internal memo

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2008 the Contracts and Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust was invited by Hunter Architects, acting as agents for Mr B Cohen, to undertake an archaeological assessment in connection with proposals for the construction of five new dwellings on the site of the present Clwyd Gate Restaurant. The Denbighshire Archaeology Service, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the local authority, had determined that an archaeological assessment was required to identify the potential impact on the cultural heritage resource that had been identified in the general area.
- 1.2 The site is adjacent to the entrance to Bathafarn Park, one of the medieval parks and forests associated with the lordship of Dyffryn Clwyd, whose centre (or *caput*) was at Ruthin Castle.

2 LOCATION

- 2.1 The proposed development site is located just to the east of Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd, near Ruthin, in Denbighshire. The site lies on the north side of, and immediately adjacent to the A494 (SJ 31635820).

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Stage One of the assessment involved the examination of readily available primary and secondary documentary, cartographic and photographic sources for the area of the development and its immediate environs. The repositories that were consulted included the following: the regional Historic Environment Record, held by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, in Welshpool; the National Library of Wales, in Aberystwyth; the National Monuments Record, held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, also in Aberystwyth; and Denbighshire Record Office, in Ruthin.
- 3.2 A search of the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) revealed no known archaeological sites within 150m of the proposed development, although the Clwyd Gate Hotel is located within the area of the medieval deer park of Bathafarn, and the site of the eastern gateway to the park (PRN 19499) lies some 300m to the east. Aerial photographs were also examined of the locality of the development. All of the images available were from runs of high-level vertical photographs, held by or accessed at the National Monument Record in Aberystwyth. Without exception they were of no significant use to understanding the past history of the development zone. RAF photographs from 1947 and from 1954 showed the development area prior to the construction of the Clwyd Gate Restaurant as an open area, while Ordnance Survey photographs from the mid-1980s show the building in position. Because of the complete absence of new information in the photographs it has not been judged necessary to detail their reference numbers at the end of this report.
- 3.3 The history and extent of Bathafarn Park has been reported on by Berry (1994) and the following summary is based on that account. During the 13th century, documentary records indicate that over forty areas of parks, forests and reserved woodlands were associated with, and managed by the Lordship of Dyffryn Clwyd. Bathafarn fell within the boundaries of Dogfeiling, an area that contained within it Ruthin Castle, and it would appear that its primary function was as a deer park used by the Lordship for recreational purposes, such as game hunting and falconry. The Lordship imposed Forest Law upon the park, with fairly severe fines and penalties if the Laws were breached or ignored, with cases heard by the four Hundreds court. Foresters and woodwards were employed to ensure that the laws were upheld. Foresters held the forest by becoming tenement farmers and were allowed to build small settlements

within the park boundaries. However, information regarding their size and location appears not to have survived through to the present day.

- 3.4 During the sixteenth century, Bathafarn Park was leased out more and more to tenant farmers by the Lordship, and during the years 1553-1592 the park was utilised and exploited to increase agricultural production. Such an action provided tax payments to both the Lordship and the Crown.
- 3.5 Sometime prior to 1592, Bathafarn Park was sold to a John Thelwall. The deeds to this sale recorded the precise location of the park and its boundaries (see Figure 2). The latter consisted of an earthen bank and associated ditch that was topped with a timber fence. Both the names Bwlch-y-parc and Plas-yn-rhal appear in the 1592 deeds and also on the modern day Ordnance Survey mapping. The park is then mentioned in deeds dating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, and it appears that the park boundary changed very little during this time.
- 3.6 In 1919 Llanbedr Hall and the Bathafarn Park Estate (as it had become known) was sold. The sale map shows that very little had changed within the boundary, the land predominantly being used for agrarian purposes.



Figure 1. View of Clwyd Gate Restaurant from the East (Photo CPAT 2007-024)

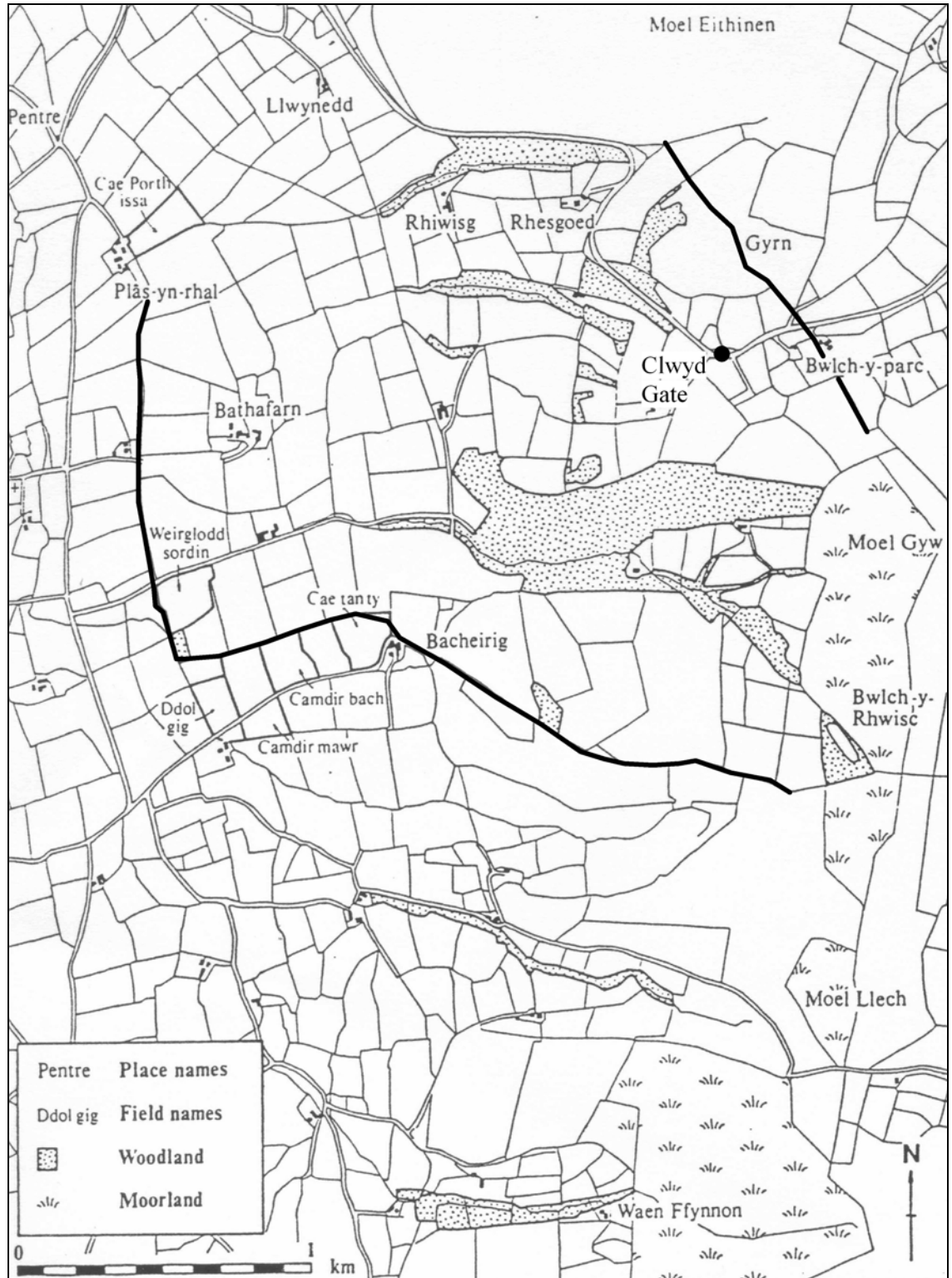


Figure 2. Location of Clwyd Gate showing the known boundary of Bathafarn Park (after Berry 1994).

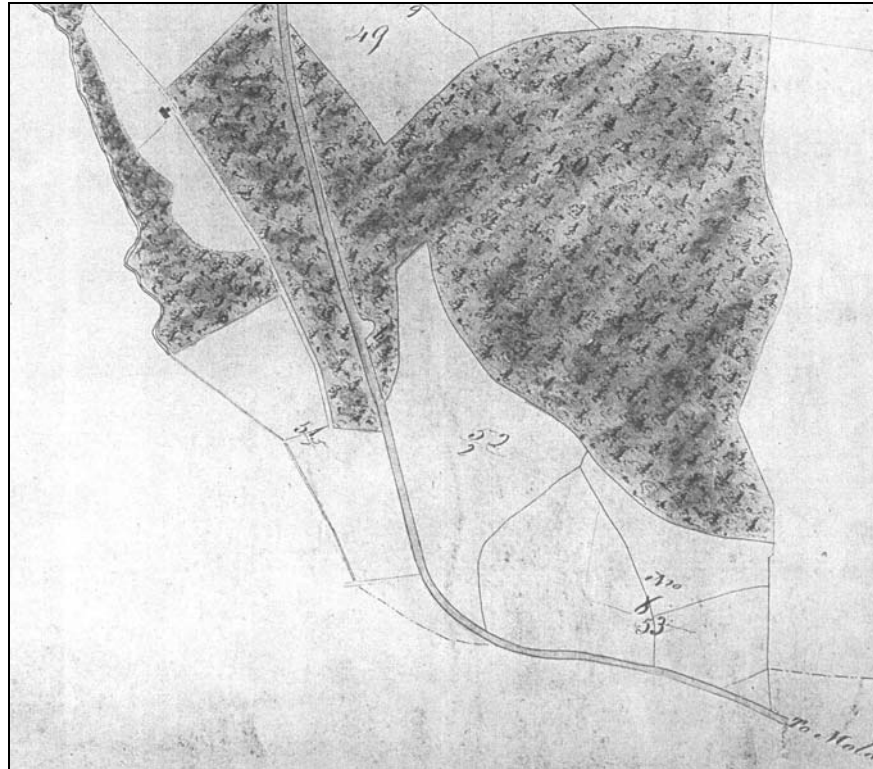


Figure 3. 1837 Tithe Survey (north-west to top)

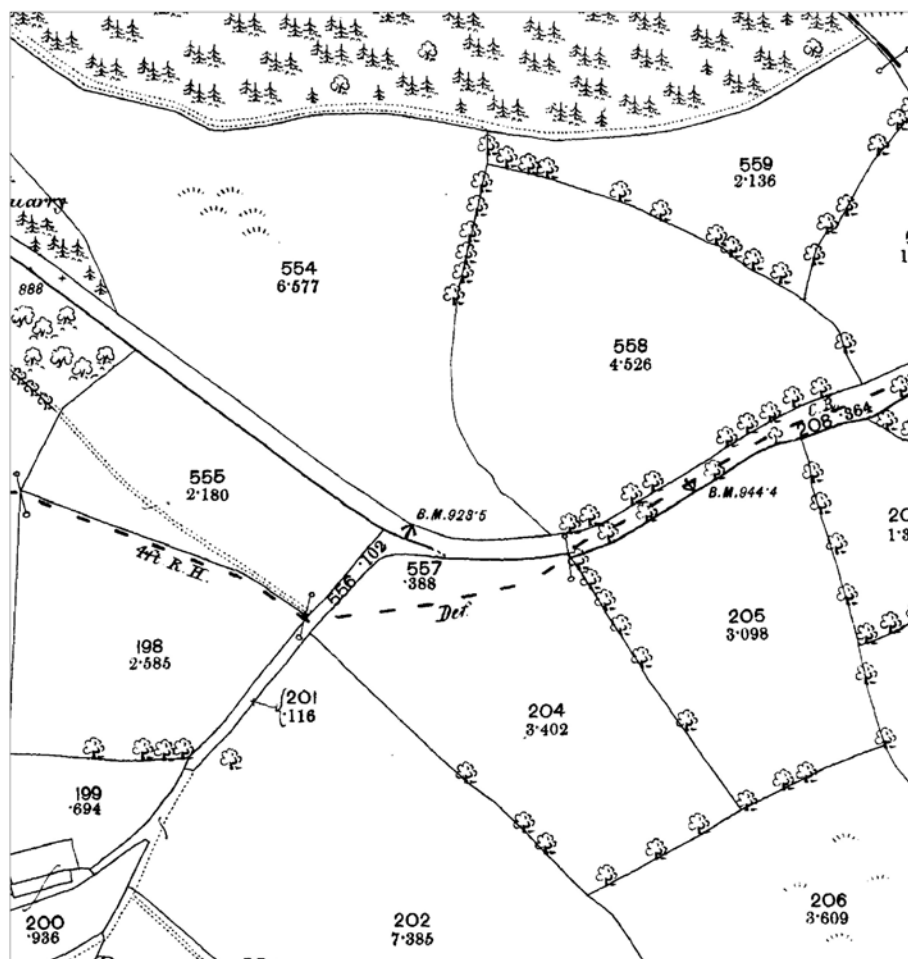


Figure 4. Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2,500 map of 1871

4 FIELD SURVEY

- 4.1 A field survey was undertaken over the footprint of the proposed development area in December 2008. The entire footprint of the proposed development is currently occupied by the Clwyd Gate Restaurant and car park. It is evident that the area has been previously landscaped to accommodate these features.



Figure 4. View of Clwyd Gate Restaurant from the south-east. (Photo CPAT 2700-004).



Figure 5. View from the north-east of surrounding countryside, with the A494 immediately below. (Photo CPAT 2700-013).

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The proposed development site, which is currently occupied by the Clwyd Gate Restaurant, lies within the boundaries of the former Bathafarn Park, one of the medieval parks associated with Ruthin Castle. Sections of the boundary ditch and bank that surrounded Bathafarn Park still survive, although the nearest to the proposed development site lies 300m to the east, and will therefore not be affected by the proposals. The desk-based assessment and field survey revealed no evidence for any other known archaeological sites within the immediate area.
- 5.2 It is clear that the development area has been substantially landscaped during and possibly even before the construction of the present restaurant and car park, and it is unlikely that site retains any significant archaeological potential.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1 The writer would like to thank Nigel Jones of CPAT for his help and assistance with the desk top study. Also the staff of the following repositories for their help with the desk-top study; the Historic Environment Record, CPAT, Welshpool; the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth; the National Monument Record, RCAHMW, Aberystwyth; the Denbighshire Records Office, Ruthin; and the Denbighshire Archaeology Service.

7 REFERENCES

Published Sources

Berry, A Q, 1994. The Parks and Forests of the Lordship of Dyffryn Clwyd. *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions* 43, 7-25.

Cartographic Sources

- 1919 Sale Plan of Llanbedr Hall and Bathafarn Park Estate, Denbighshire Records Office, Ruthin. PD/44/1/19
- 1871 Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2,500 map of 1871
- 1837 Tithe Map for Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd parish
- 1834 Deeds Map, Denbighshire Records Office, Ruthin. DD/DM/50/1

Other Sources

- 1884 Mortgage Deeds, Denbighshire Records Office, Ruthin. DD/TD/250
- 1715-1831 Various Deeds relating to Llanbedr Hall and Bathafarn Park Estate, Denbighshire Records Office, Ruthin. DD/TD 1-7, 250

Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd Parish Histories