

**CPAT Report No 955**

# **A470/A489 Moat Lane Road Junction, Caersws**

**CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT**



**THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST**

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**A470/A489 Moat Lane Road Junction, Caersws**  
**CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT**

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November 2008

Report for Capita Symonds Ltd

**The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust**

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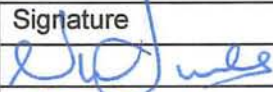
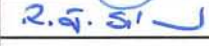


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## CPAT Report Record

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## **NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

A combination of detailed desk-based study and field survey has been used to provide a thorough assessment (termed a Simple Assessment) of the cultural heritage resource within 500m of the Moat Lane road junction, and more specifically in relation to the two proposed options for a new road junction.

A small number of sites have been identified within the general area, including the possible line of a Roman road, a Grade II Listed road bridge, six houses and a railway level crossing.

Only one known cultural heritage asset is likely to be directly affected by both Option 1 and Option 2, a post-medieval trackway considered to be of low value.

In addition to the known cultural heritage assets, there is always the potential for previously unrecorded, buried archaeological features. This is particularly true in valley floor locations such as this where arable cultivation may have removed all surface traces of a monument. Accordingly, a further stage of assessment is proposed, consisting of a geophysical survey of either the preferred option, or the combined area of both options.

## 12.1 INTRODUCTION

- 12.1.1 In October 2008 the Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (henceforth CPAT) was invited by Capita Symonds Ltd to undertake a revised cultural heritage assessment in connection with proposals to improve the road junction at Moat Lane, Caersws, Powys. An initial assessment had been conducted in March 2007 (Jones 2007), examining the cultural heritage within 500m of the road junction, and information from this was taken into account when determining the two options which are currently proposed for the improved junction.
- 12.1.2 The site in question is the junction between the A470 and A489 to the south-east of Caersws (SO 03579138; Fig 12/1).
- 12.1.3 The study area lies on the floodplain, near the confluence of the Rivers Severn and Carno. Soils are generally deep, stoneless, permeable silts of the Teme Soil Association, overlying river alluvium and gravels (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

## 12.2 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### National Policies

- 12.2.1 The principal legislation relating to the archaeological heritage is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) which provides statutory protection to monuments of national importance, otherwise known as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Buildings of significant cultural heritage interest are protected under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), as amended.
- 12.2.2 A survey of historic parks and gardens in Wales was initiated by Cadw in 1992 and completed ten years later. Those considered to be of exceptional (Grade I), great (Grade II\*) and special interest (Grade II) were published in six volumes, that for Powys appearing in 1999, and together they form Part 1 of the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales. The Register is advisory and the inclusion of a particular park or garden does not signify a statutory designation. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that statutory consultation on planning applications concerning gardens and parks on the Register will be introduced in Wales, perhaps during 2010.
- 12.2.3 Some historic landscapes in Wales are considered to be particularly significant and/or well preserved. These have been recorded in a Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest, which is specific to Wales. Classed as either outstanding or special interest these have been published in two volumes which form Part 2 of the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales published in 1998 and 2001. Again this part of the Register is advisory but non-statutory.
- 12.2.4 Historic hedgerows are protected under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997). A hedgerow is deemed historic if it marks a parish or township boundary which pre-dates A.D. 1850, incorporates an archaeological feature, is part of or incorporates an archaeological site, marks the boundary of (or is associated with) an estate or manor which pre-dates A.D. 1600 or forms an integrated part of a pre-parliamentary enclosure.
- 12.2.5 The cultural heritage and archaeological resource is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It is explicitly stated in Planning Policy Wales (2002) that "It is important that the historic environment – encompassing archaeology and ancient monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas and historic parks, gardens and landscapes – is protected (para 6.1.1). More specifically it states that "the desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining a planning application, whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled. Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings are likely to be affected by proposed development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ. In cases involving lesser archaeological remains, local planning

authorities will need to weigh the relative importance of archaeology against other factors, including the need for the proposed development" (para 6.5.1.). Detailed guidance is offered in Welsh Office circulars 60/96 and 61/96.

#### **Local Policies**

- 12.2.6 Powys does not currently have an adopted Unitary Development Plan. Its Deposit Draft was issued in October 2004 from which the following policies can be cited.
- 12.2.7 SP3B states that "Proposals for development should seek to protect, conserve and wherever possible enhance sites and features of historic and built heritage importance including those of archaeological, architectural, heritage conservation and historic interest" (Powys County Council 2004, 54).
- 12.2.8 Policy Env14 states that "Proposals for development unacceptably adversely affecting a listed building or its setting will be refused" and then list seven issues that it will take account of in considering such proposals. (Powys County Council 2004, 67).
- 12.2.9 Policy Env16 states that "The council will oppose development proposals which would unacceptably adversely affect the character or appearance of historic parks and gardens and their setting. In considering development proposals, the Council will seek to protect the special historic interest of historic landscapes included in Part 2 of the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales" (Powys County Council 2004, 68).
- 12.2.10 Policy Env17 states that "Development which would unacceptably adversely affect the site of setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or of an archaeological site of national importance will not be permitted and the Council will seek to safeguard other sites of archaeological importance wherever possible" (Powys County Council 2004, 69).
- 12.2.11 Policy Env18 states among other things that "Where preservation in-situ is not possible but the Council is convinced that the merits of the proposal mean that development should proceed, they will impose conditions on any planning consent or seek planning obligations to facilitate archaeological mitigation through such means as a site excavation, survey or a watching brief during the development and the observation and/or recording of remains of archaeological interest" (Powys County Council 2004, 69).

#### **Project Specific Issues**

- 12.2.12 The initial assessment in 2007 was undertaken within the framework provided by the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11, Section 3, Part 2 – Cultural Heritage* (published in 1993) which identified three Stages, tiered at an increasingly detailed level, in the completion of an archaeological assessment. The 2007 study was a Stage 1 assessment, that is the bottom tier of study, but in addition took into account some of the requirements of Stage 2 that appeared to be relevant at the time. In August 2007 a revised and considerably more detailed version of the Highways Agency's *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11, Section 3 Part 2 – Cultural Heritage* (The Highways Agency 2007) was issued. This dispenses with the classificatory Stages 1-3, and adopts instead the terms: Scoping, Simple Assessment and Detailed Assessment. The original Stage 1 assessment was the equivalent of a Scoping report but with some enhancement. The present study is effectively a Simple Assessment and has many points of similarity with what in the old terminology was a Stage 2 assessment. It should be mentioned that there are a suite of archaeological techniques such as geophysics survey that can be adopted as part of a Simple Assessment or can be deferred until the Detailed Assessment phase (The Highways Agency 2007, 5.22). For fuller information the 2007 DMRB should be consulted.
- 12.2.13 The DMRB has promoted the collective term 'cultural heritage asset' (The Highways Agency 2007, 2.7) to cover any and all sites, monuments buildings, landscapes and the like.

### 12.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

- 12.3.1 The assessment comprised a desk-based study, followed by a rapid field survey, to identify and assess all cultural heritage assets within 500m of the Moat Lane road junction. Those assets which have been identified are presented in the gazetteer that forms an appendix to this report, while their locations are depicted as point data on Fig. 12/1.
- 12.3.2 The first stage of the assessment comprised a desk-based study of all the readily available primary and secondary documentary, cartographic, pictorial and photographic sources at the following repositories: the regional Historic Environment Record (HER), held by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in Welshpool; the National Library of Wales (NLW) in Aberystwyth; and the National Monuments Record (NMR) in Aberystwyth.
- 12.3.3 The area of the junction was the subject of a rapid field survey, undertaken on 5 March 2007. It was not possible to gain access to all of the fields within the area, although it was possible to view most of them from adjacent roads and footpaths. Each of the known cultural heritage assets was visited to determine its condition and significance.

- 12.3.4 In accordance with the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11 Section 3 Part 2* (2007), which considers assessments of the cultural heritage the following designations have been considered and/or identified:

i) Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales. The assessment area falls within the Caersws Basin Landscape of Special Historic Interest, as defined in the *Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales* (Cadw 2001).

ii) Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales. No such parks or gardens have been recognized in the area of interest (as defined in Cadw 1995).

iii) Conservation Areas. There are no conservation areas within the assessment area.

iv) Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs). None has been identified within the study, although the village of Caersws contains a number of scheduled ancient monuments relating to two Roman forts and the associated civilian settlement.

v) Listed buildings. The only listed building within the study area is the road bridge over the River Severn.

vi) National Trust inalienable land. No inalienable land is present in or adjacent to the study area.

- 12.3.5 In evaluating the cultural heritage resource each site of cultural heritage interest, or asset, identified during the desktop study and field survey which lies within the study area has been classified according to its perceived significance as it appears to us at present. The categories are those given in the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11 Section 3 Part 2* (2007, section 5.30). The value of each asset has been ranked according to the following scale:

*Very High:* World Heritage Sites and other assets which are either of international importance or which can contribute significantly to international research objectives.

*High:* Monuments that are scheduled and protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979); those suitable for scheduling; listed buildings of Grade I and Grade II\*; and those considered by us using professional judgment to be of national importance but not covered by the official criteria for scheduling; and parks and gardens identified in the Historic Parks and Gardens Register. It is assumed that these sites can provide a significant contribution to national research objectives.

*Medium:* Sites listed in the Historic Environment Record (HER) or other sources which are of

a reasonably well-defined extent, nature and date and are significant examples within the regional context, or which contribute to regional research objectives; also listed buildings in Grade II; Conservation Areas; and National Trust gardens.

*Low:* Sites listed in the HER or other sources that are of local importance, which may contribute to local research objectives. These may be of limited value or are compromised by poor preservation and/or survival; some landscapes and features designated as of historic or archaeological value in a Local Plan (note: subject to their value, these may be of greater, regional or national importance).

*Unknown:* Sites whose importance has not been ascertained, and where further work will be required to establish their true nature.

## 12.4 BASELINE CONDITIONS

### *Historical background*

- 12.4.1 A search of the HER identified only two recorded sites within the assessment area and a further nine sites were added during the desk-based study. Each site has been identified by its Primary Record Number (PRN).
- 12.4.2 The study area falls within the Caersws Basin which has been identified as a Landscape of Special Historic Interest (Cadw 2001, 84-86). The broad flood plain at the confluence of the Rivers Severn, Carno and Trannon is surrounded by low hills, and the topographical setting has made the basin an area of exceptional strategic and historical importance. This was most clearly demonstrated during the Roman period when a network of roads emanated from the Roman fort at Caersws.
- 12.4.3 Although there are no known prehistoric sites within the assessment area cropmark evidence and excavations elsewhere in the Upper Severn Valley, notably to the south of Welshpool, have revealed significant evidence for prehistoric funerary and ritual activity dating to the late Neolithic and Bronze Age, and the potential for similar activity in this area cannot be discounted. Indeed, cropmarks have revealed a number of prehistoric burial features just to the south-east of the study area.
- 12.4.4 The Roman influence began with the early campaigns against the native tribe, the Ordovici, and a campaign fort was constructed to the east of the present village. By around AD 75 this was replaced by a new fort sited near the confluence of the Rivers Severn and Carno. A civilian settlement, or *vicus*, developed around the fort and along the four roads which led from it. The exact Roman crossing points of the Severn are not known and have been lost as a result of later river movement, although beyond the river sections of the road to the east still survive as an earthwork, notably around Maesmawr Hall. A possible Roman road has also been identified within the study area, to the south of the River Severn. Excavations in the 1960s in the area of the present football field revealed a possible road (PRN 79193) leading to the south-south-east, and, although its precise course beyond this is not known, there are apparent traces of an earthwork, or agger, in an arable field nearby (PRN 83581) (Toller 2000, 75).
- 12.4.5 The earliest available cartographic source for the area is the Tithe Survey for Llandinam parish of 1847 and its earlier Apportionment (1845), which show the area before the construction of the railway, divided into fairly regular fields and under mixture of arable and pasture. Recorded field names, however, offer no further insight into land use or potential archaeological sites. The general field pattern appears to be much as it is today, although more land divisions are evident between the A470 and the River Severn, to the east of the road junction.
- 12.4.6 The first edition Ordnance Survey 25" map, published in 1885-6, shows a similar situation to the Tithe Survey, with the addition of the Newtown to Machynlleth Railway, which opened in 1863 (Baughan 1980, 152-3).
- 12.4.7 Examination of vertical aerial photographic coverage taken between 1948 and 1981 revealed no evidence for any archaeological sites, although it was possible to identify a number of former river courses, indicating the extent to which the rivers Severn and Carno have undergone significant variation since the last glaciation (around 10,000 year ago). Cartographic sources indicate that there has been significant change to the course of the River Severn since around 1840 and the field assessment has identified a series of more recent channels to the east of Caersws Bridge. It therefore appears likely that the archaeological potential within these areas is very low.
- 12.4.8 At the time of the field assessment the majority of the fields were down to pasture. The only previously unidentified site noted during the visit was a trackway (PRN 83583).

**Summary of Cultural Heritage Assets**

- 12.4.9 Each of the cultural heritage assets identified during the desk-based study and field survey which lies within the study area has been classified according to its perceived significance, according to the scheme of classification described in section 12.3.5.

*Very high value assets*

- 12.4.10 There are no very high value assets within the assessment area.

*High value assets*

- 12.4.11 The assessment has identified two sites which can be regarded as being of high value.

PRN	Name	Site type	Period	Condition	NGR
13124	Caersws bridge	Bridge	Post-medieval	Damaged	SO0323791721
83578	Maes Mawr	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	SO03429129

**PRN 13124 Caersws bridge**

The present bridge (PRN 13124) over the River Severn was designed or erected by Thomas Penson around 1821 to carry the First District turnpike to Machynlleth (now the A470). The bridge, which is listed Grade II, is constructed in stone with three elliptical arches, and replaced an earlier stone bridge which was then in a very poor state.

**PRN 83578 Maes Mawr**

Maes Mawr is a large and impressive brick-built house dating from around 1840, to the rear of which is a range of farm buildings. Although of regional significance, the house is not a listed building.

*Medium value assets*

- 12.4.12 The assessment has identified six sites which can be regarded as being of medium value.

PRN	Name	Site type	Period	Condition	NGR
20884	Caersws, 'Bridge House'	House	Post-medieval	Intact	SO0321591605
83575	Maes Mawr Cottages	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	SO0402591565
83576	New House	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	SO0369091365
83580	Moat Lane Level Crossing House	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	SO03562938
83582	Moat Lane Level Crossing	Level Crossing	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	SO03569137
83583	Moat Lane track	Track	Post-medieval	Damaged	SO03509153

**PRN 20884 Caersws, 'Bridge House'**

Bridge House is a Type C, lobby-entry house of two bays with a central-chimney. The front appears to be half-timbered in squares, but it has been largely rebuilt in brick.

**PRN 83575 Maes Mawr Cottages**

Originally adjoining brick-built cottages dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, they now form a single property known as Greenfields House.

**PRN 83576 New House**

New House is of brick construction, now rendered, and probably dates to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The associated small holding originally had more extensive outbuildings than at present.

**PRN 83580 Moat Lane Level Crossing House**

A brick-built railway cottage alongside the level crossing, presumably dating from 1863 when the line was opened. The house now has a modern brick-built extension and a conservatory.

**PRN 83582 Moat Lane Level Crossing**

The level crossing where the Newtown to Machynlleth Railway is crossed by the A470 has large single gates on either side of the track.

**PRN 83583 Moat Lane track**

A broad, low linear earthwork, c.3m wide, runs from a gate at SO 0349391515 to SO 0354991577.

*Low value assets*

12.4.13 There is only one low value site within the assessment area.

PRN	Name	Site type	Period	Condition	NGR
83577	Maes Mawr pound	Pound	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Near destroyed	SO03579134

**PRN 83577 Maes Mawr pound**

An animal pound is depicted on the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25" map of 1885. A depression marking the site is visible in the corner of the field, measuring c.33 by 15m, and surrounded by a low, slightly curving bank along the west side. The site is now planted with ornamental trees.

*Unknown value*

12.4.14 The assessment has identified four sites whose importance cannot be assessed from existing information, and where further work may be required.

PRN	Name	Site type	Period	Condition	NGR
1578	Cae Clawdd Bach placename	Road ?	Roman	Unknown	SO038910
79193	Castell Collen - Caersws Roman road, Caersws	Road	Roman	Unknown	SO03119154
83579	Bridge House buildings	Building	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	SO03189164
83581	Castell Collen - Caersws Roman road, Caersws	Road	Roman	Unknown	SO032910

**PRN 1578 Cae Clawdd Bach placename**

While the placename is suggestive of a dyke, the current view is that it refers to a Roman road which is believed to divide the fields thus named.

**PRN 79193 Castell Collen - Caersws Roman road, Caersws**

Excavations in the 1960s in the area of the present football field revealed a possible Roman road leading from Caersws to the south-south-east.

**PRN 83579 Bridge House buildings**

The Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25" map depicts two buildings in the field to the east of the railway. There are no upstanding remains, although the area is uneven and has some amorphous earthworks.

**PRN 83581 Castell Collen - Caersws Roman road, Caersws**

Traces of an earthwork, or agger, have been identified in an arable field which it has been suggested might be associated with the Roman road (Toller 2000, 75).

## 12.5 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND MITIGATION

- 12.5.1 The potential impact of Options 1 and 2 have been considered in relation to the known cultural heritage assets identified in the Baseline Conditions. There is little difference between the footprints of Option 1 and Option 2 (Fig. 12/1) and any potential impact on the cultural heritage is likely to be the same for either option. The only known site where there is likely to be a direct impact is a post-medieval track (PRN 83583), which is considered to be of low value.
- 12.5.2 There is, however, the potential for previously unrecorded buried archaeological features which may be impacted on by either of the proposed options.
- 12.5.3 Consideration must be given to a further stage of assessment for the cultural heritage, comprising a programme of geophysical survey of the whole area likely to be affected by either of the preferred options, or the combined area of both options, in line with the recommendations in the *Design Manual* (DMRB 2007, 5.14). The results from this could signal the need for subsequent trial excavation should those results reveal any features of archaeological interest.

## 12.6 CONCLUSIONS

- 12.6.1 A combination of detailed desk-based study and field survey has been used to provide a thorough assessment of the cultural heritage resource within 500m of the Moat Lane road junction, and more specifically in relation to the two proposed options for improving the road junction.
- 12.6.2 A small number of sites have been identified within the general area, including the possible line of a Roman road to the west of the railway. Of the thirteen sites which are currently known, there is one listed structure, the road bridge across the River Severn, six are houses, and one is the Moat Lane level crossing. Only the bridge and one of the houses, Maes Mawr, are considered to be of high value, neither of which will be directly impacted on by either proposed option.
- 12.6.3 There is little difference in the ground area affected by Option 1 and Option 2 and any potential impact on the cultural heritage is considered to be the same for both options. The only known site which is likely to be directly affected by both proposals is a post-medieval track (PRN 83583), considered to be of low value.
- 12.6.3 In addition to the known cultural heritage assets, there is always the potential for previously unrecorded buried archaeological features. This is particularly true in valley-floor locations such as this one which are favourable sites for arable cultivation which may, over the centuries, have removed all above ground traces of a monument. Cropmark evidence and excavations elsewhere in the Upper Severn Valley, notably to the south of Welshpool, have revealed significant evidence for prehistoric funerary and ritual activity dating to the late Neolithic and Bronze Age, and the potential for similar activity in this area cannot be discounted. Indeed, cropmarks have revealed a number of prehistoric burial features just to the south-east of the study area.
- 12.6.4 The field assessment, together with cartography evidence, has indicated that there are areas close to the present river course which contain a number of former river channels which appear to be relatively recent and it may be presumed that in such cases the archaeological potential is low.
- 12.6.5 The identification and evaluation of the known cultural heritage assets within this report is considered to have a high confidence rating. Data contained within the regional HER has been checked during the desktop and field survey stages and newly recorded assets are considered to be based on reliable sources of information. It is always likely to be the case that previously unrecorded, buried, remains may be present for which no visible trace is

evident and it cannot therefore be assumed that the assessment includes the totality of cultural heritage assets.

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Cadw, 2001. *The Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales. Part 2.2. Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales*. Cadw: Cardiff.

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Jones, N W, 2007. *A470/A489 Moat Lane Road Junction, Caersws: Stage 1 Cultural Heritage Assessment*. CPAT Report No. 857.

### Cartographic sources

1847 Tithe Survey and Apportionment (1845) for Llandinam parish

1885 Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25", Montgomery 35.16

1886 Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25", Montgomery 42.04

1902 Ordnance Survey 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25", Montgomery 35.16 and 42.04

1983 Soil Survey of England and Wales map (Sheet 2 - Wales) and Legend (1:250,000 scale)

1994 British Geological Survey map of Wales (Solid edition at 1:250,000 scale)

### Aerial photographic sources

Vertical aerial photographs

CPE/UK/2531/4064, 24/03/1948

541/59/3046 to 3049, 09/06/1948

72-331-848, 1972

76-120-144, 1976

81-007-005, 1981

# **APPENDIX** **GAZETTEER OF SITES WITHIN 500m**

PRN	Name	Type	Period	Condition	Category	NGR
13124	Caersws bridge	Bridge	Post-medieval	Intact	high	SO0323791721
83578	Maes Mawr	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	high	SO03429129
20884	Caersws, 'Bridge House'	House	Post-medieval	Intact	medium	SO0321591605
83575	Maes Mawr Cottages	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	medium	SO0402591565
83576	New House	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	medium	SO0369091365
83580	Moat Lane Crossing Cottage	House	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	medium	SO03569138
83582	Moat Lane Level Crossing	Level Crossing	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Intact	medium	SO03569137
83583	Moat Lane track	Track	Post-medieval	Damaged	low	SO03509153
83577	Maes Mawr pound	Pound	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Near destroyed	low	SO03579134
1578	Cae Clawdd Bach placename	Road ?	Roman	Unknown	unknown	SO038910
79193	Castell Collen - Caersws Roman road, Caersws	Road	Roman	Damaged	unknown	SO03119154
83579	Bridge House buildings	Building	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Unknown	unknown	SO03189164
83581	Castell Collen - Caersws Roman road, Caersws	Road	Roman	Earthwork	unknown	SO03159101

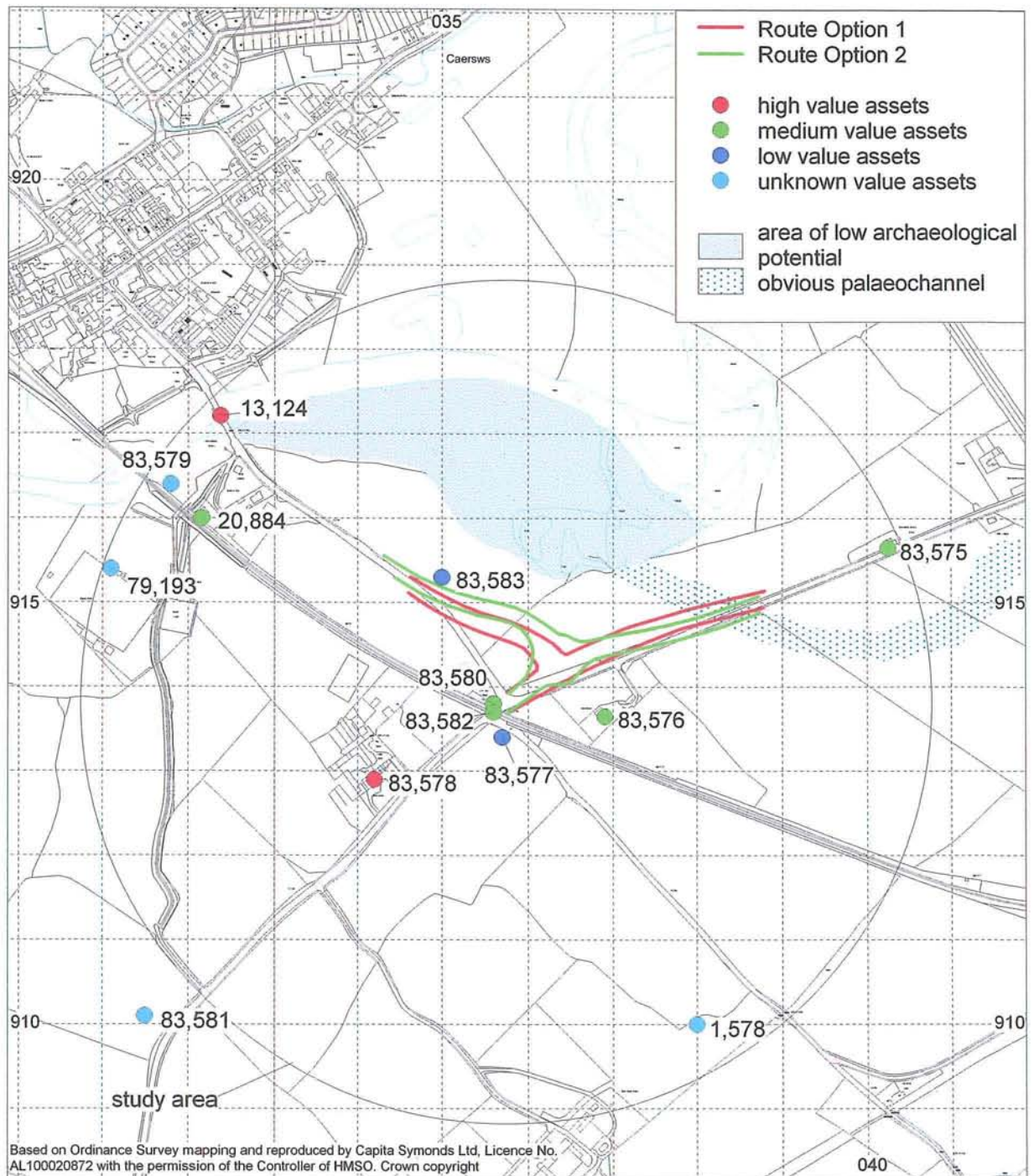
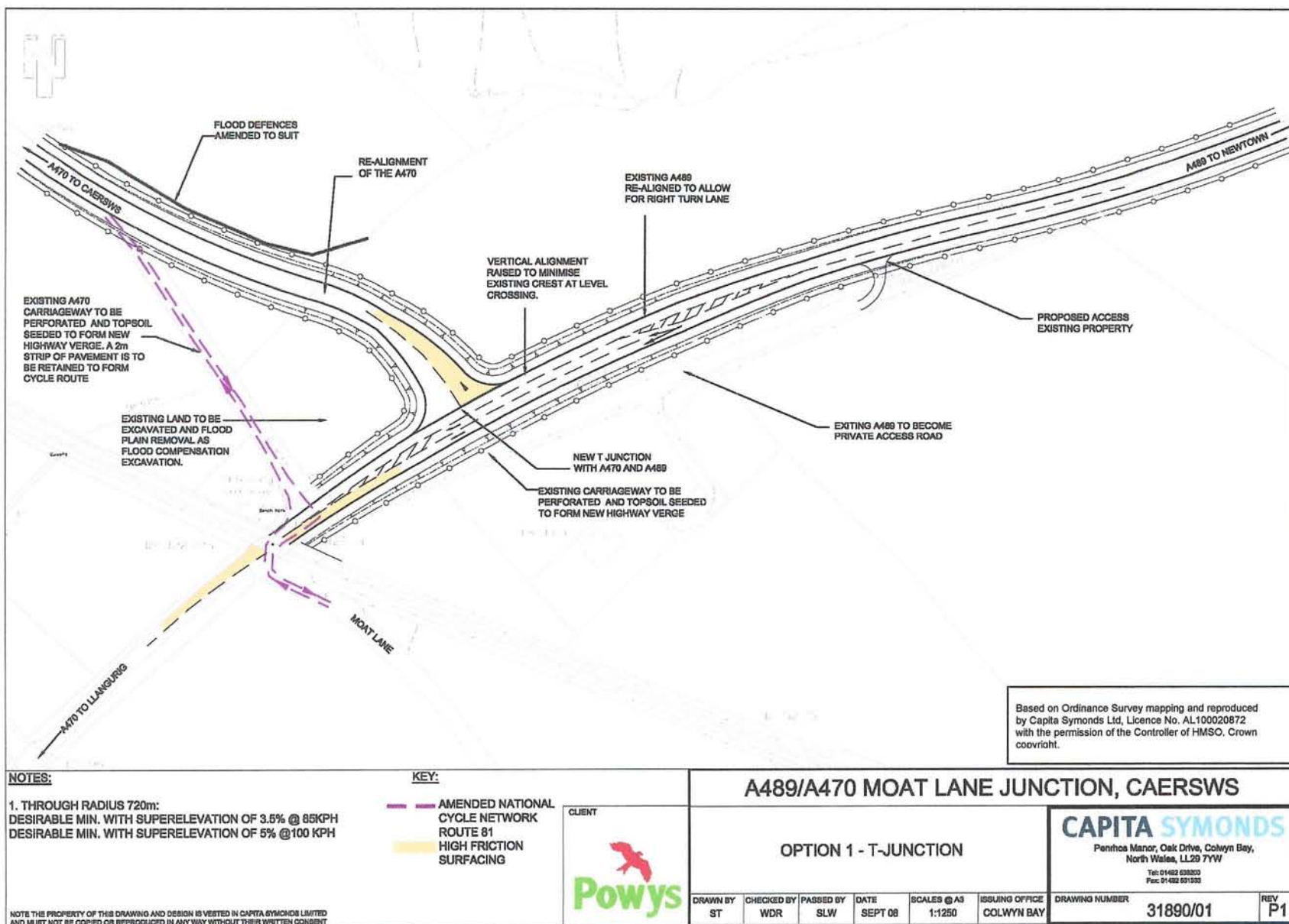


Fig. 12/1 Study area and Route Options showing known cultural heritage assets



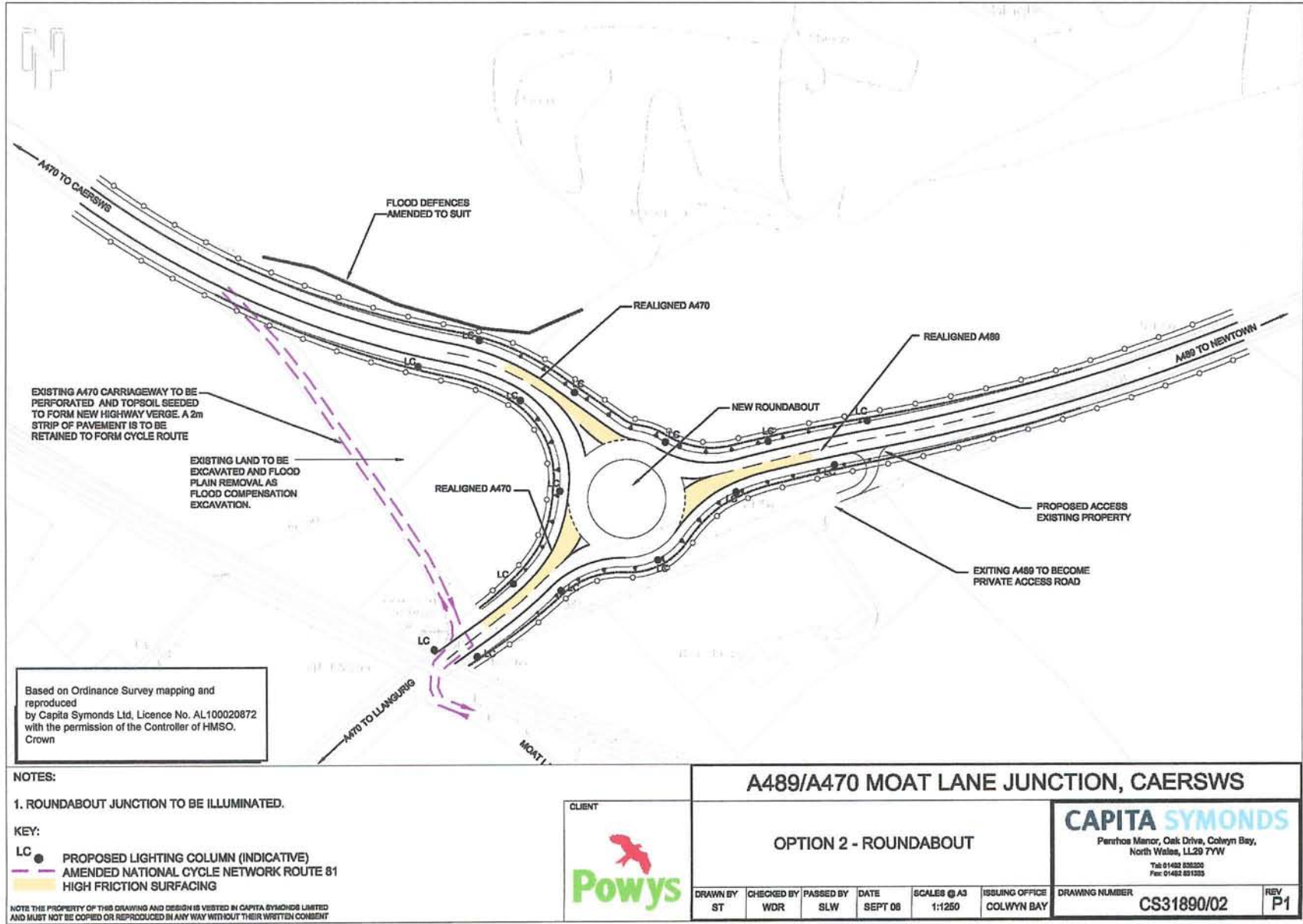


Fig. 12/3 Route Option 2