

Supplementary information for Heritage Appraisal

Introduction

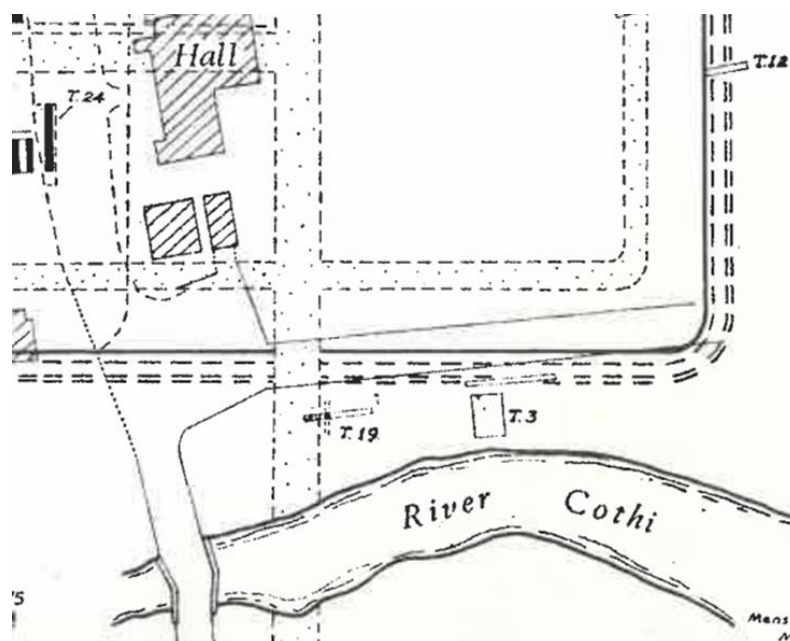
A provisional heritage appraisal for the Waun Maenllwyd wind farm access road junction at Pumsaint was presented to Cadw in October 2022 to inform a pre-application consultation. Following a period of dialogue and submission of additional information a site meeting was conducted on 10th August 2023. Notes from that meeting included a request to procure specialist advice on geophysical prospection techniques so that their applicability for the non-intrusive survey of the scheduled area likely to be affected by the road widening could be assessed, and it suggested some further sources of potential relevant information should be examined to add detail to the provisional heritage appraisal. This document presents a summary of that additional information.

Published articles

Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Historic Environment Record (HER) has copies of the Carmarthenshire Antiquity Journal, including two articles of specific relevance to the south-eastern area of Pumsaint Fort scheduled monument (CM226).

Excavations at Pumsaint: Interim Report 1973 by Barri Jones and J. H. Little summarises rescue excavations within the village exposing evidence of the Roman fort's layout and historic development, and two trenches are shown in the south-eastern corner of the (now) scheduled area: Trenches 3 and 19.

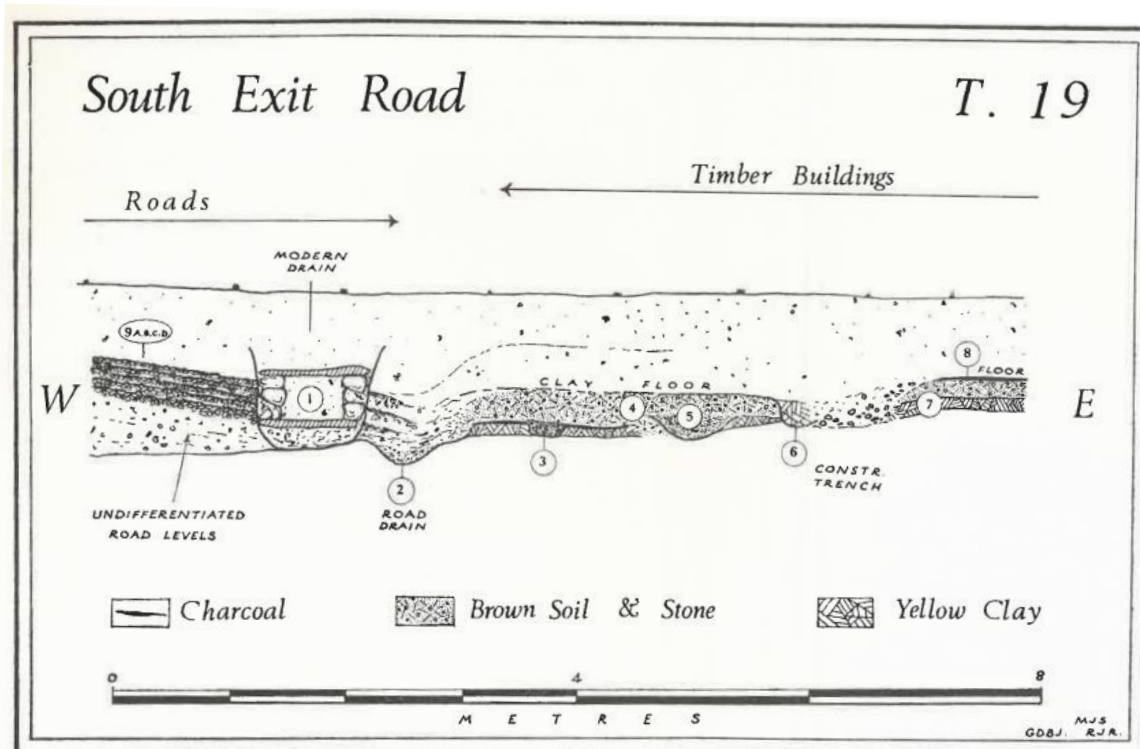
Trench 3 is shown as a blank square in the site plan (Figure 1), and is not described at all in the text. It is therefore assumed the test area was negative. Trench 19, however, produced evidence for four iterations of a roadway, with features from at least three superimposed timber buildings lying to the east of the road, comprising wall slots, clay and charcoal from burnt wooden floor deposits. Intensive root action was noted as probably having destroyed any later buildings.





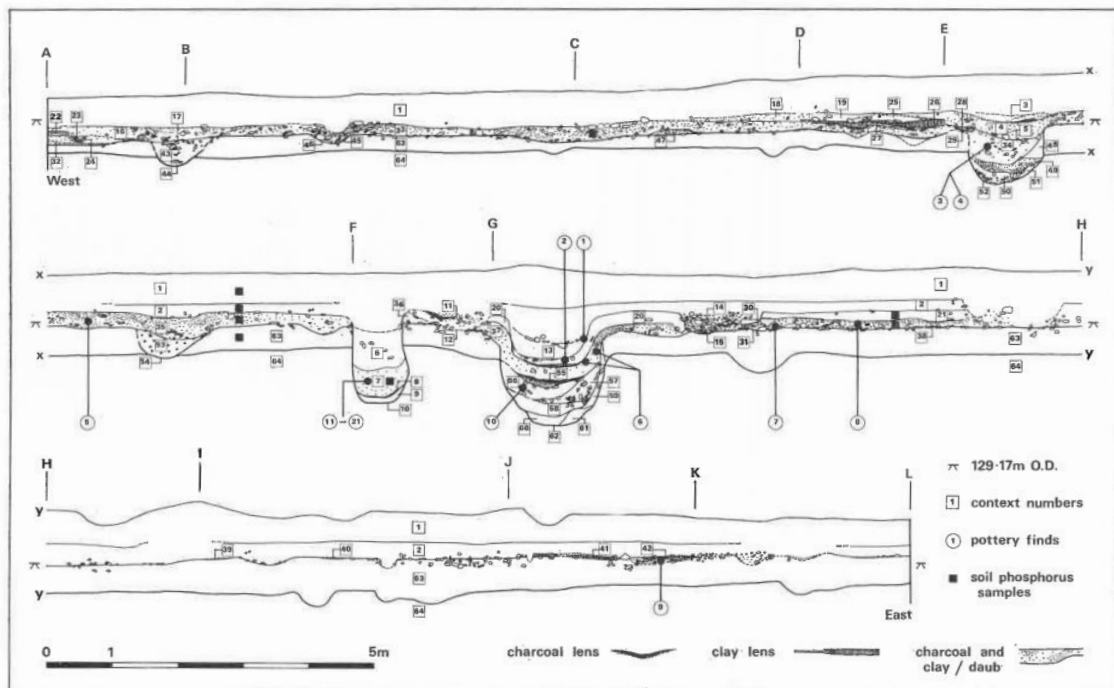
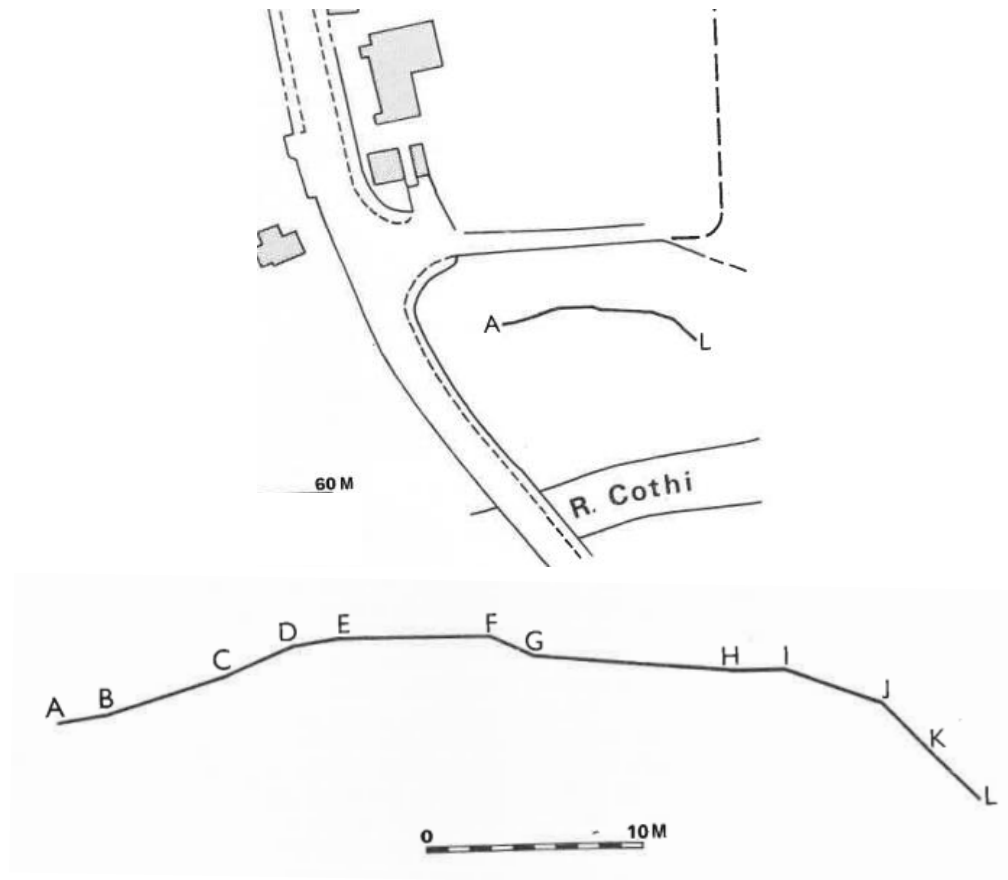
The interpretation placed on this evidence was that a substantial *vicus* (civilian settlement) not only survives to the east of the fort, but also to the south-east, and that the original river crossing was further east than the historic road, but which probably became obsolete due to erosion from the River Cothi.

The archaeologically significant deposits were buried beneath c.0.5m of overburden to current ground surface. (See section drawing below).



A second article published by Barry Burnham and Helen Burnham in 1987 describes recording of a 45m section of the eroded and frost-damaged exposed terrace section to the south-east of Trench 19 in 1985 (see figure below). This mentions Flavian period pottery recovered previously from the area, with occupation dated between 70 – 96 AD. The western end of the recorded section revealed layers of dumped deposits, with concentrations of charcoal and daub, and a four phase stratigraphic sequence was established consisting of pits cut into the natural geology, which were buried by the dumped deposits, into which timber buildings had been cut, with later activity overlying this. The underlying pits were largely filled by sterile sands, and there was no evidence of structures, whilst the dumping was probably a deliberate act at levelling the site before construction of timber buildings comprising clay-filled beam slots and clay floors. Dating evidence from pottery suggests the dumped deposits may have occurred in the early 2nd century AD, probably contemporary with the reduction in size of the fort, and that development of the roadside timber buildings and probable *vicus* was of slightly later date. There is no evidence for the road, which must have lain west of the recorded section.

The top of the archaeologically significant deposits lay c.0.4 – 0.5m below current ground surface.



(a larger version of the section drawing can be found as an A3 landscape page at the end of this report)

HER data

There are six non designated heritage assets listed in the Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Historic Environment Record around the general area of the road junction. These include the *vicus* (44461) located to the east of the fort, the village (29656), an early medieval ecclesiastical site now deleted (10160), the bridge over the River Cothi (8437) and its revetment (3631), and a foul sewer replacement (32471). There are no specific records of any finds or investigations within the area south of the forestry road and the river.

Barry Burnham

Barry Burnham was consulted on 8th September 2023, and apart from referring to the two articles summarized above, his comments were *"This is a potentially sensitive area, lying just outside the south side of the fort and in an area which might have been impacted by the reduction of the site to that of a fortlet. The evidence for a possible road and the existence of timber buildings and clay floors in this area raises interesting questions about the character, extent and dating of any civilian settlement on this side of the fort; hence the need to consider how best to mitigate any development work or to ensure an appropriate archaeological intervention."*

Sources

Burnham, B.C. and Burnham, H.B. 1987: 'Recent survey on the fort and vicus at Pumsaint', *Carmarthenshire Antiquary* 22 (1986), 3-13
Jones, G.D.B. and Little, J.H. 1974: 'Excavations at Pumsaint 1973: Interim Report', *Carmarthenshire Antiquary* 10, 3-16

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