

### 3.3 Field along road into Llanmaes: trenches 19-21

Three trenches were excavated in the field to the west of the main road into Llanmaes, just after it bridges the brook to the south (Figure 1). The field was in use as pasture for cattle and all three trenches were aligned northeast-southwest, parallel to the hedge bordering the main road.

The topsoil was a fine, plastic dark greyish-brown with grass roots throughout (contexts 1900, 2000, 2100). It was slightly thicker (0.30m) in the northernmost trench, Trench 19, and thinner (0.10m) in the two more southern, downhill trenches.

In Trenches 19 (Plate 7) and 20 the subsoil was a clayey mid-orange brown with occasional small rocks and occasional deeper roots (contexts 1901, 2001), thicker (0.95m) in the northernmost trench, Trench 19, and thinner (0.45) downhill in Trench 20. The subsoil overlay a limestone bedrock (contexts 1902, 2002).

Trench 21 (Plate 8) was located in a depression in the southeastern corner of the field, which the landowner recalls previously being a pond. A pond is not shown on any of the historic mapping reviewed for the desk-based assessment (Baron *forthcoming*), but the topography shows that this area was likely part of the previous course of the brook and prone to being water-logged. The subsoil (context 2101) was similar to that in Trenches 19 and 20, but had a fine orange lens running through it. The subsoil overlay an 0.80m thick layer of very wet, soft, clayey light greyish-white sand with frequent small (<0.05m) rounded stones (context 2102). Bedrock was not seen as the bottom of the trench was submerged (the water table was noted at 1.20m below the surface), but was 'felt' by the machine driver at around 1.30m.

General observation of the field near the depression in the southeastern corner showed a change in vegetation around a spread of rubble aggregate concrete chunks and rocks (up to 0.35m). The eastern area of the spread formed a flat-topped circular cairn (context 2103) approximately 4.0m in diameter and up 0.5m height (Plate 9). There was a further, more irregular spread of rocks to the west for a further 9m. This may represent an attempt to reclaim some of the depression by levelling out the field with rubble and is visible on the LiDAR (Figure 3) but this interpretation is uncertain.



Plate 7. West-facing section of Trench 19. View to the east. Scale in 0.5m increments



Plate 8. West-facing section of Trench 21. View to the east. Scale in 0.5m increments



Plate 9. Possible clearance cairn or reclaimed land (2103). View to the north. Scale in 0.5m increments

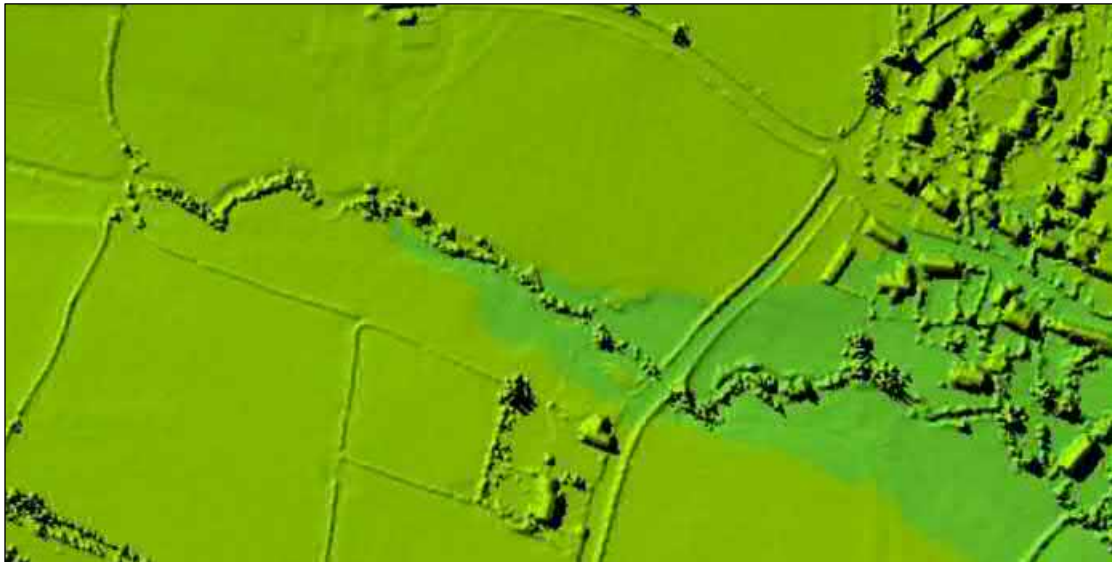


Figure 3. Excerpt of 1m DSM LiDAR data for NGR SS9769, showing outcrop (2103) in centre, north of treeline bordering brook running from left to right. North to top

## 4. Conclusions

Twenty-five trenches were excavated along the route of proposed swales to the west of Llanmaes in order to assess ground conditions along the proposed route and to inform the final design of a Flood Risk Management Scheme.

The only archaeological feature encountered was a possible demolished stone wall foundation in Trench 16 (context 1601), in line with a rectangular earthwork/cropmark visible on LiDAR and satellite imagery of the northwestern corner of one of the fields, and interpreted as a potential sheepfold.

An incidental observation of a possible clearance cairn was made near Trench 21, at the edge of a former pond in the southeastern corner of a field just north of the present course of Llanmaes Brook. This could also represent an attempt to reclaim some of the depression by in-filling with rubble.

The lack of any stratified finds was surprising, given the richness of the archaeological record and number of stray finds recorded by the HER, National Museum of Wales and Portable Antiquities Scheme throughout and around Llanmaes. However, the proposed swales stretch over a distance of approximately 1.3km, and the trenches averaged only 1.6m x 0.60m x 1.5m in size. Thus, there remains potential for buried archaeological features being present along the proposed scheme, outside of the excavated trial trenches.

## Bibliography

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## Appendix I: Inventory of contexts

KEY: D = deposit S = Structure

Trench	Context	Form	Depth in metres below ground	Description
1	0100	D	0-0.2	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
1	0101	D	0.2-0.5	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
1	0102	Bedrock	0.5-1.0+	limestone
2	0200	D	0-0.2	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
2	0201	D	0.2-0.7	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
2	0202	D	0.7-1.20	firmer, and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock
2	0203	Bedrock	1.20+	limestone
3	0300	D	0-0.2	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
3	0301	D	0.2-1.3	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
3	0302	Bedrock	1.3-1.5+	limestone
4	0400	D	0-0.25-0.30	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
4	0401	D	0.25-1.05	firmer, and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock. Fragments of degraded limestone at interface
4	0402	Bedrock	1.05+	limestone
5	0500	D	0-0.2	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
5	0501	D	0.2-1.30	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese and angular grit. A few yellower, sandier patches, probably degraded limestone or sandstone
5	0502	Bedrock	1.30+	limestone
6	0600	D	0-0.25	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
6	0601	D	0.25-0.65	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
6	0602	D	0.65-1.05	firmer, and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock

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6	0603	Bedrock	1.05+	limestone
7	0700	D	0-0.2	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots. Very dry.
7	0701	D	0.2-0.6	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese. Very dry – appears slightly lighter.
7	0702	D	0.6-1.0	firmer, clayey and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock. Very dry.
7	0703	Bedrock	1.0+	limestone
8A	0800	D	0-0.20	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
8A	0801	D	0.20-1.30	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
8A	0802	D	1.30-1.45 to 1.50	firmer, clayey and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock
8A	0803	Bedrock	1.50+	limestone
8	0804	D	1-0.30	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
8	0805	D	0.30-0.80	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese and roots. Fragment of ridged whiteware (Post Medieval marmalade jar)
8	0806	D	0.80-1.10	firmer, clayey and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock
8	0807	Bedrock	1.10+	limestone
9	0900	D	0-0.2	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
9	0901	D	0.2-0.8	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese and roots
9	0902	D	0.8-1.0	firmer, clayey and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock. Some roots.
9	0903	Bedrock	1.0-1.10+	limestone
10	1000	D	0-0.30	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and frequent roots
10	1001	D	0.30-0.90	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese and one fragment of charcoal.
10	1002	D	0.90-1.00	firmer, clayey and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock
10	1003	Bedrock	1.30 - 1.75+	limestone, deeper at northern end
11	1100	D	0-0.30	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
11	1101	D	0.30-0.80	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese

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11	1102	D	0.80-1.15	firmer, and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock
11	1103	Bedrock	1.15+	limestone
12	1200	D	0-0.30	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit, flecks of manganese and roots
12	1201	D	0.30-0.90	firm mid-orangish orange and brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
12	1202	Bedrock	0.90+	limestone
13	1300	D	0-0.25 to 0.30	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots. Fragment of ceramic building material with red glazed interior, 0.015-0.02m thick found on surface near trench. Wet conditions
13	1301	D	0.25-0.75	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese. Wet conditions
13	1302	D	0.75-0.95	clayey and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock, wet conditions
13	1303	Bedrock	0.95+	limestone
14	1400	D	0-0.20	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with rare angular grit and roots
14	1401	D	0.20-0.80	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
14	1402	D	0.80-1.0	firmer, clayey and lighter coloured subsoil matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock
14	1403	Bedrock	1.0+	limestone
15	1500	D	0-0.14	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit (<0.01m) and roots
15	1501	D	0.14-0.34 to 0.40	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
15	1502	D	0.34-0.84	firmer, clayey and lighter coloured matrix for angular and sub-rounded stones up to 0.35m interface between subsoil and bedrock
15	1503	Bedrock	0.80+	limestone
16	1600	D	0-0.10	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
16	1601	S	0.10-0.60	possible drystone wall foundation with unfinished and sub-angular stones surrounded by a firmer subsoil (1602), up to 0.25m length seen. Two snails and piece of charcoal. Visible in both sections (i.e. at least 0.60m wide) but continues as cropmark/earthwork to east and west outside trench.
16	1602	D	0.10-0.60	mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
16	1603	Bedrock	0.60+	limestone
17	1700	D	0-0.10	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots. Very dry.



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17	1701	D	0.10-0.50	mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese with occasional mixed cobbles, gravels and clay. Very dry.
17	1702	Bedrock	0.50+	limestone
18	1800	D	0-0.20	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
18	1801	Surface/layer	0.20-0.33	concrete slab
18	1802	D	0.20-0.90	mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese with occasional mixed cobbles, gravels and clay. Finds: stainless steel spring and corroded iron object (parts missing, approximately 0.25m long), fragment of probable ceramic brown-glazed electric pylon insulator 0.10m thick.
18	1803	D	0.90-1.4+	light grey clay with small rocks and gravel
19	1900	D	0-0.30	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
19	1901	D	0.30-1.25	clayey mid-orangish brown with occasional small rocks and occasional deeper roots
19	1902	Bedrock	1.25+	limestone
20	2000	D	0-0.10	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
20	2001	D	0.10-0.55	clayey mid-orangish brown with occasional small rocks and occasional deeper roots
20	2002	Bedrock	0.55-0.65+	limestone, rising at southern end. Quite smooth surface.
21	2100	D	0-0.10	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
21	2101	D	0.10-0.70	clayey mid-orangish brown with occasional small rocks and occasional deeper roots with a fine orange lens running through it
21	2102	D	0.70+	wet, soft, clayey light greyish-white sand with frequent small (<0.05m) rounded stones
21	2103	D	0.5 above surface	flat-topped circular cairn approximately 4.0m in diameter and 0.5m or less in height
22	2200	D	0-0.2	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
22	2201	D	0.2-1.85	firm mid-orange brown clayey silt with occasional small stones
22	2202	Bedrock	1.85+	limestone
23	2300	D	0-0.15	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
23	2301	D	0.15-0.85	firm mid-orangish brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese, stones increasing in interface with bedrock from about 0.55m from surface
23	2302	Bedrock	0.85+	limestone

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24	2400	D	0-0.20	fine, plastic dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional angular grit and roots
24	2401	D	0.20-1.55	firm mid-orangish orange and brown clayey silt with occasional flecks of manganese
24	2402	Bedrock	1.55+	limestone

## Appendix II: Trial pit coordinates

Trial Pit	Easting	Northing	Elevation
1	297819.61	170151.21	62.70
2	297826.15	170106.64	63.02
3	297833.39	170072.04	62.87
4	297839.74	170040.93	62.62
5	297850.51	170016.47	62.12
6	297846.92	169973.18	61.65
7	297860.84	169947.62	61.25
8	297881.42	169875.77	60.07
9	297819.08	169870.65	60.50
9a	297791.29	169857.13	60.50
10	297769.98	169846.19	60.25
11	297760.91	169804.26	59.67
12	297707.15	169804.50	59.68
13	297695.57	169742.50	58.70
14	297639.36	169754.87	58.90
15	297576.90	169762.29	58.97
16	297575.30	169743.10	58.44
17	297544.80	169670.40	54.52
18	297546.49	169626.78	52.44
19			
20			
21			
22	297814.64	170186.59	62.33
23	297778.43	170349.53	64.42
24	297759.29	170424.32	



**Glamorgan-Gwent  
Archaeological Trust Ltd  
(Projects Department)**



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