

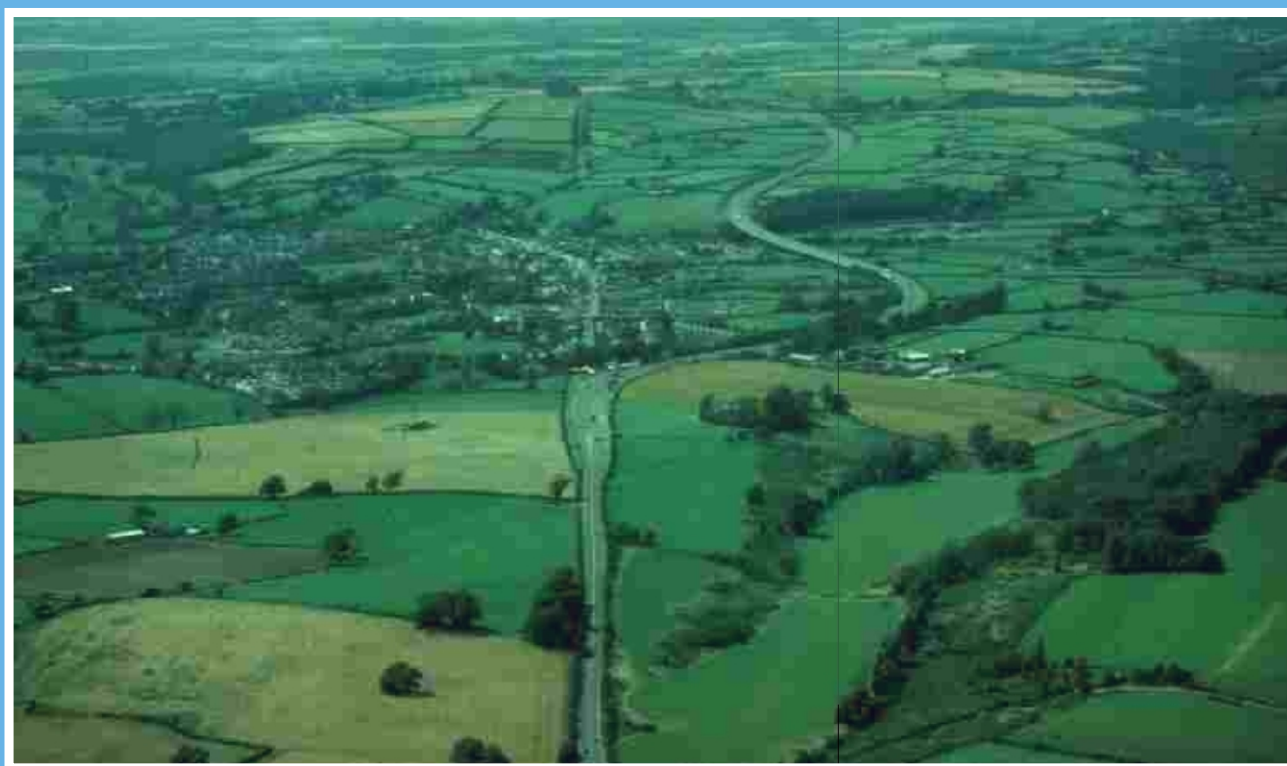
Roman roads in Southeast Wales

Desk-based assessment with recommendations
for fieldwork

September 2004

A report for Cadw
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Summary

This report takes the form of a gazetteer of Roman roads within the former counties of Glamorgan and Gwent. Where possible, information on the line has been presented in map form, and the maps for each road are accompanied by a short description. There is a short assessment of the potential of each proposed road for further work. Appendices present details of roads for which there is insufficient information to permit mapping.

Acknowledgements

This report was written by Edith Evans BA PhD MIFA and Andy Sherman BA. The maps were compiled by Andy Sherman. The authors are grateful to the staff of the National Monument Record for access to OS data and providing copies of relevant material, and to Bob Silvester for advice on methodology. The report was read by Andrew Marvell, who made useful suggestions; any remaining mistakes are our own. The maps are based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd 100017916 2004. Additional annotations © GGAT and Cadw.

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¹ Incorporates RRX 41 and RRX41a (RCAHMW 1995,42)

Introduction

The Roman background

Roman military action against the Silures, the tribe recorded as occupying southeastern Wales, began in the late 40s and had been completed by the end of the 70s. The extent of the tribal territory is uncertain, particularly to the west (see Manning 1981, 15-23), but the timescale of establishment of Roman control over neighbouring areas appears from archaeological evidence to have been completed by the latter date, when the whole of the area covered by this survey was under Roman rule. The legacy of this conquest was a fortress for the Second Augustan Legion at Caerleon and a network of forts consisting at least Abergavenny, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Coelbren, Gelligaer, Loughor, Neath, Penydarren and Usk (the last replacing an earlier fortress, probably for the Twentieth Legion Valeria Victrix), and possibly also Chepstow, Caerwanaf (Miskin) and Monmouth. Earlier models of Roman administration in Wales envisaged that the area had been largely demilitarised by the end of the 2nd century (see Nash-Williams 1969, 19-27, figs 4-9), but more recent work has shown that some of the forts which had been thought to have been decommissioned continued in use into the 3rd or even 4th century. A civilian infrastructure, which was Romanised to at least some degree, developed alongside the military; the familiar elements of villas and 'small towns' can be recognised, but the largest portion of the population must have been engaged in subsistence agriculture and were probably living in a way which had changed little from pre-Roman times (Evans 2001).

The Romans developed the road network initially as an instrument of conquest and consolidation. It is generally agreed that the prime requisite was for a system of communication between forts, and routes which have been generally accepted as Roman do precisely this: they connect Caerleon, Cardiff, Neath and Loughor (RR60/RRX41); Neath, Coelbren and Brecon (RR622); Cardiff, Caerphilly, Gelligaer, Penydarren and Brecon (RR621); and Caerleon, Usk, Abergavenny and Brecon (RR62a). Other roads have been proposed to connect Caerleon with Caerphilly (RRX65) and Monmouth with Usk (RR612b), but with less evidence on the ground. The extent to which east-west communications north of RR60 were developed between forts will have depended on the need to move troops quickly from one to another, mainly across the grain the land. Roads have been proposed on the ridgeways of the Coalfield or climbing from one valley to another across the ridges (RRX43 i and ii), but none of them have produced clear evidence for Roman origins.

The completeness of the military network as currently proposed must depend on the extent to which all the forts have been discovered. The possible fort at Caergwanaf, Miskin, proposed on the basis of geophysical survey and under trial excavation at the time of writing, is well away from any known road, unless the two fragments of metallurgy noted in RR GGAT 010 form part of a road from Cardiff. This installation appears to be connected with the exploitation of iron ore deposits, but would also be well placed to defend the gap in the coalfield escarpment where it is breached by the River Ely, forming a natural communication corridor into the uplands: if this is the case, another possible location for an undiscovered fort is at Coity, where a major medieval castle² is located on the possible line of a road (RR GGAT 005) heading straight for the point at which the next gap occurs in the escarpment a few miles away at the River Ogmere.

The conjectural road network presented below in this report will only have been a part of the full picture in Roman times. It must have been supplemented by a network of minor roads,

² There is significant overlap in the location of Roman forts and medieval castles. This would appear to be because the strategic imperatives were the same for the Norman invaders as they had been for their Roman predecessors.

lanes and trackways which were never deliberately surveyed, may never have been metalled, and will in most cases not be recognisable on the ground as Roman, even with excavation.

Previous work in southeast Wales

The earliest scholarly work on the roads of the area was carried out by William Harris who in 1773 published an account of the Gloucester -Carmathen road (RR 60), known to antiquaries as the *Via Julia*, in the second volume of *Archaeologia* (Harris 1773). He used a combination of information from the Antonine Itinerary, place-names and archaeological evidence in attempting to map its course. A certain amount of antiquarian investigation and conjecture took place during the course of the 19th and early 20th century), and led to the identification of the main generally accepted routes, as well as other which are much less well founded (see Bradney 1906; 1907; 1921; 1933; Coxe 1801; EH 1872; Wood 1922). However, the history of modern work on the road network starts in the 1950s, when there were two developments. One was the production of I D Margary's *Roman roads in Britain* (Margary 1955) which codified all the information known to date about the road network. His work in our area consisted of synthesis only, and did not include any fieldwork; this was left to archaeological fieldworkers employed by the Ordnance Survey, who systematically examined all proposed routes and recorded their observations in the form of notes and annotated maps. For Glamorgan, this work was built on by the Royal Commission whose investigators reviewed the evidence in the historic county of Glamorgan for the first volume of the *Glamorgan Inventory* (RCAHMW 1976), and for the parishes of Pendoylan and Vaynor for the *Brecknock Inventory* (RCAHMW 1986). Selection by RCAHMW for both counties was rigorous: the criteria as laid down for the Brecknock volume were (a) excavated structural remains; (b) unexcavated agger or paving;³ (c) milestones, not necessarily *in situ* but found close to a likely line; (d) terracing, usually in conjunction with other evidence and with (e) fairly long alignments and changes of direction on sighting points.

There has been no comparable work for Gwent.⁴ Manning (1981, 57-8) included a short consideration of the roads leading to Usk as part of his report on the fortress excavations, but he added little to Margary's account, and there was no new field survey. Comparatively little work has been done in either county by local enthusiasts, and much of that which has been carried out has not been informed by sufficiently critical fieldwork. The main contributor of well-thought out material has been Brian Trott, though some of his proposals unfortunately lack definitive evidence.

Methodology

The methodology broadly follows that set out in Silvester and Owen (2003, 6). The data for this survey has been drawn from two principal sources., the regional SMR and the files of data originally compiled by the Ordnance Survey and now held in the National Monuments Record. The latter consist of annotated strip maps covering the course or possible alternative courses for each individual route, together with the standard OS cards, and sometimes supplemented photographs, measured surveys and other notes. Most of these seem to have been compiled initially in the 1950s, but some had been updated more recently. None, however, contained much in the way of recent information. A catalogue of the files is available (RCAHMW 1994).

There is some overlap between the OS material and the SMR, some entries of which were also derived from OS cards, but the SMR also contains other material, especially entries derived from excavations and other projects carried out since the 1980s. A search was carried out using the criteria: type - road, period - Roman. This produced 62 entries, some for lengths of roads of variable length, others for isolated sightings of features believed to relate to Roman roads. Separate searches were made for entries on Roman milestones and bridges, forts, settlements

³ This term seems to have been used for metalling.

⁴ Other than for the parish of Llanelli, now in Monmouthshire but previously in Brecknock, which was surveyed for the *Brecknock Inventory*.

with urban characteristics, villas and other settlements with good evidence, as defined by the Romano-British Lowland Settlement Survey (Evans 2001). Given the very large numbers of entries for Roman finds, particularly in the lower-lying areas of the survey where they were studied as part of the Romano-British Lowland Settlement Survey, it was not considered worthwhile to consider their distribution in relation to the roads.

Data from both the SMR and the OS files were then plotted on Mapinfo, using the conventions established by CPAT. A separate table was established for each road. The only roads to be mapped were those where there was sufficient information to establish a reasonable line; other postulated alignments. Plausible routes where there is insufficient evidence to allow for mapping can be found in the Appendix 1, along with suggested road alignments which have been examined in the field by the OS and RCAHMW and rejected with good reason. Isolated sightings of road-related features with no context are listed in Appendix 2. Sections of road within settlements have not been mapped unless they can be shown to be part of a through road rather than a local street system.

We have included here some possible additional routes for which no fieldwork has been carried out. The criteria adopted here were less rigorous than RCAHMW's. Lengths of modern alignment which may represent possible fossilised road have been included so that it may be possible in the future to test them according to RCAHMW criteria. By their very nature, little evidence can be expected to have survived centuries of use, repair and widening, although there is scope for fieldwork at the ends of these sections, and on trying to establish possible sighting-points. By and large, such alignments have only been accepted if there is supplementary evidence. Straight alignments of modern roads following known Roman routes are the easiest to accept, such as that over Crack Hill in RR 60c, or at other locations where the road makes for a fort or settlement of known Roman date, such as Lower Machen (RRX 65). Other indicators are the Roman style laying-out practice noted in Ffordd y Gyfraith by RCAHMW (1976, 105-6), or where sections of road go up to and away from important features of medieval date which stand on their line, with the present road forming a kink around them before resuming its straight course. This has been noted at Llansannor (RR GGAT 006) where the road kinks around a church of possible pre-Norman origin (Evans 2003, 71), and at Coity (RR GGAT 005), where there is an important Norman castle. In other cases, a relatively straight alignment over the medium distance has been forced on communications by the topography, but the non-Roman nature of such roads is betrayed by the obvious lack of a coherent system of setting out.

Names and numbers

Roads are generally referred to by forts at the beginning and end of their routes. This can cause some confusion, since different segments of the same road may be referred to by different fort names. The solution adopted here has been to name all the forts along the route, enabling segments to be identified more easily. In some cases, alternative lines have been suggested for the same routes. These are referred to by topographical features, as 'Caerleon - Usk west bank route'.

No record has survived of the Roman name for any Roman road; the name *Via Julia*, sometimes used for RR 60 is an antiquarian construct, presumably because it was thought to have been made by Julius Frontinus. The Neath - Coelbren - Brecon (RR622) bears the traditional name of Sarn Helen.

The numbering system follows that established by Margary and RCAHMW.

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Description</i>
RR	Those routes considered to be Roman by Margary; the numbers correspond to those given in Margary 1955
RRX	This is described by Percival (1994) as ‘consisting of those routes considered by the Ordnance Survey to be Roman or probably Roman but not listed by Margary’. In fact they also include a number of roads proposed as Roman on the basis of antiquarian research but rejected by the OS.
RRN	Those routes considered to be Roman or probably Roman but which have not been allocated RR or RRX prefixes by the OS

To these have been added a further class:

RR GGAT Roads not catalogued by RCAHMW

None of the roads prefixed RRZ (miscellanea) by RCAHMW occur within the survey area.

Excluded roads

The following categories of material have not been plotted (see Appendices):

1. Ridgeway routes, unless there is clear evidence that they were incorporated within the formal Roman road network.

There is little doubt that all or most of these are of ancient origin, as evidenced for example by the cross dykes at Bwlch yr Afan at the head of Mynydd Llangeinor and Clawdd Mawr at Blaengarw. They continued in use until industrialisation of the valleys changed the emphasis from communications through the uplands to communications along the valleys themselves (see Yates’s 1799 map of Glamorgan). In some cases, there is clear evidence that Roman roads ran along the ridgeways. The Neath - Coelbren road runs along the crest of the ridge to the southwest of the Vale of Neath; the Gelligaer - Penyardren road is clearly attested running along the ridge of Gelligaer common; these two roads (RR621, RR622) are plotted here. Other suggested roads have been excluded.

The PRNs located at Blackwood and Hafodyrynys are for areas of paving noted on ridgeways. Paving is known on some Roman roads in the north of England (Davies, 2002) but there is no clear evidence for its employment within our area, where all datable exposures have been of metalling. Given this fact, and the long history of use for these routeways, extending into the post-Medieval period, the existence of paving cannot be considered as a reliable indication of Roman date.

2. Isolated exposures of metalling which could be Roman from their form, but which do not lie on any known or conjectured routes.
3. Records of roads, or elements of roads, whose position is not recorded in sufficient detail to allow them to be plotted accurately. These can be found in Appendix 1.

Terminology

The following terminology is used:

Status:

- i) Known. Extant earthwork or well-recorded buried feature. Shown as solid lines on OS strip maps.

- ii) Proposed. Conjectural sections either linking known segments or as hypothetical road alignments for which there is some physical evidence. Shown as dashed lines on OS strip maps, and where evidence is reasonably convincing.
- iii) Predicted. Virtually no substantive evidence for a road other than someone's belief and/or conjectural road alignment with no known traces. Also used in cases where undated road metalling of Roman type, bearing no relation to the post-medieval road network has been found during excavation or noted in watching brief, but there is no further information concerning line or potential destination. Where the authenticity of a road is in significant doubt, this is the highest level of status that can be achieved.
- iv) Rejected. Used for sites described as Roman roads in the SMR, but for which there is no reliable evidence.

Each mapped route has been given an overall status, depending upon a general assessment of the value of the status of individual sections.

Condition (based solely on information available from the existing record, or subjective assessment of the record)

- i) Near intact. Site has suffered only minimal damage
- ii) Damaged. Site has suffered substantial damage.
- iii) Near destroyed. Very little of the site remains
- iv) Destroyed. No trace of the site (above or below ground)
- v) Unknown. Condition not known, usually because of incompleteness of records

Each mapped route has been given an overall status, depending upon a general assessment of the value of the status of individual sections.

Survival (used for mapping)

- i) Earthwork. Surviving road showing as an earthwork
- ii) Fossilised. Used where road or road line is believed to have been adopted by a more recent road, path or hedge. (In some cases where there fossilisation is considered likely but cannot be proved, this convention has been overlaid above the 'unknown' convention)
- iii) Air photograph. Surviving road shows as a line on an air photograph unrelated to any modern landscape features, and there is no evidence for an earthwork
- iv) Buried. Identified only through probing, geophysical survey or excavation
- v) Unknown. Survival not known, usually because of incompleteness of records

Each category is shown as a line of a different colour, except where spot points are involved; these are marked by a symbol of the appropriate colour.

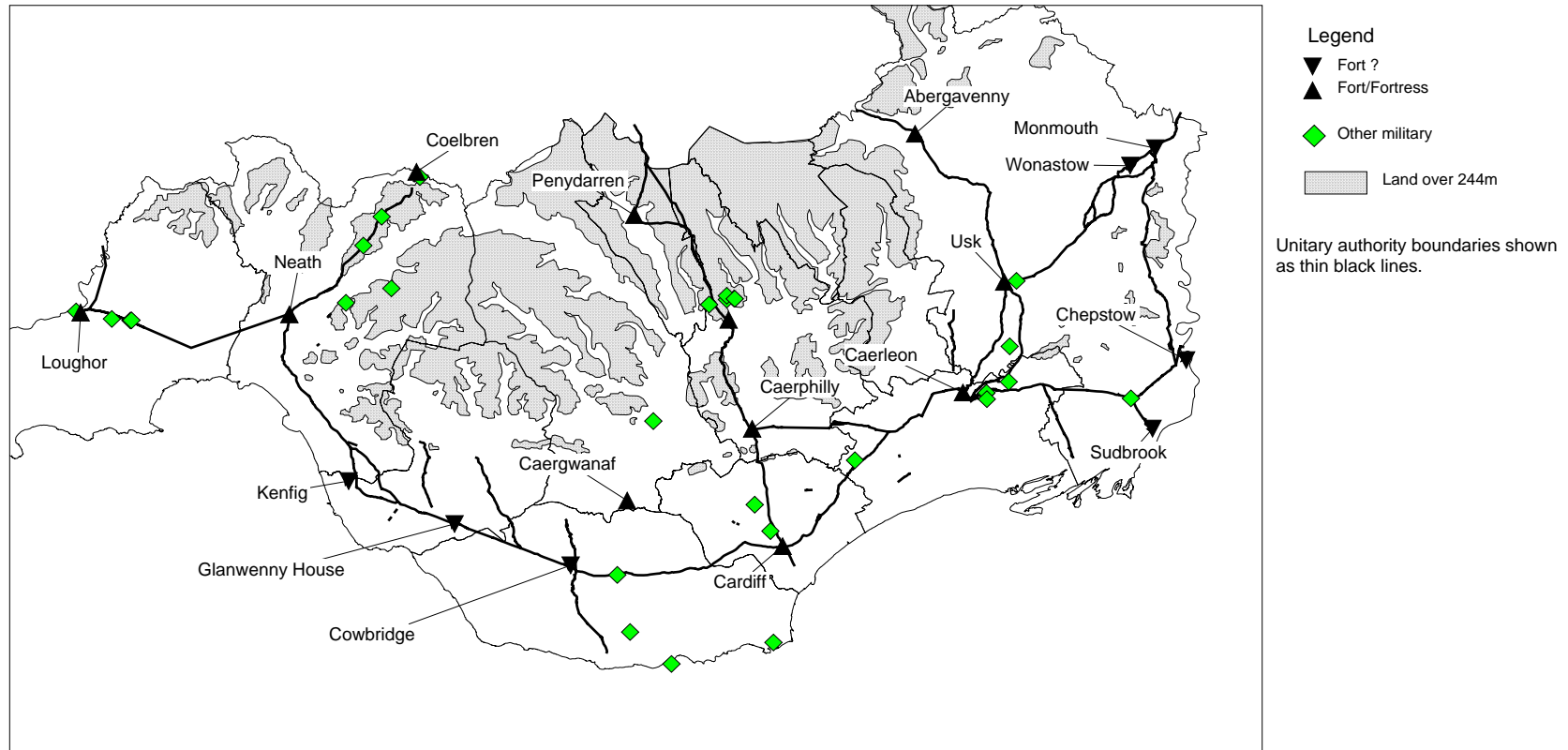
Map format

The maps accompanying this report are indicative only, and it is expected that, for any serious study, the routes will be used in their GIS form and overlaid on full modern detail. The GIS system linked to the regional SMR does not include a separate layer showing rivers, and the constraints of the project did not permit the generation of such a layer as part of the project. The only element of physical topography available as a separate layer is the 244m contour, though the modern unitary authority boundaries have also been included for clarity. In the absence of detailed physical topography, it was necessary to choose a scale for the maps which provided sufficient information to make the route of each road intelligible. Scales therefore vary from map to map, and most are at a relatively small scale.

Forts, fortresses and sites with urban characteristics, both known and suggested, have been labelled, but other military sites and civilian settlements normally have not, unless this was necessary for clarity. The industrial sites shown are limited to those where industry appears to

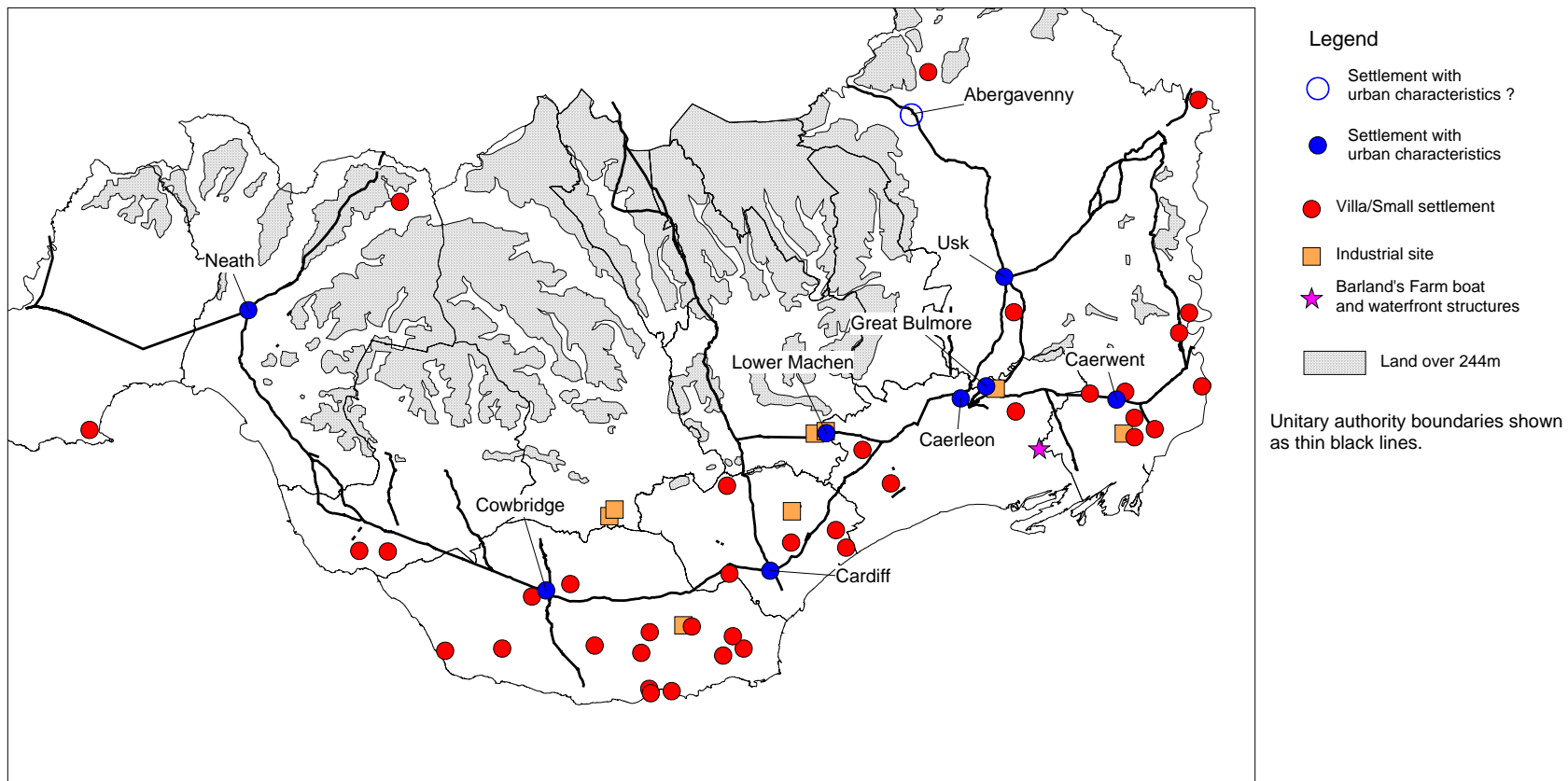
have been the most significant aspect of the site; these are the kiln sites, mines, and those sites adjacent to mines where metal processing appears to have been carried out on a significant scale. Although the presence of slags demonstrate that metalworking was being carried out at Caerleon, Cowbridge and many of the rural farmsteads, it seems here to have been just one component of a larger economy.

Figure 1: Roman roads and the distribution of known and possible Roman forts and fortresses



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Figure 2: Roman roads and the distribution of settlements and industrial sites



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Conclusions and recommendations

This survey is essentially an appraisal of existing data on Roman roads in southeast Wales, with strong emphasis on mapping routes in a form which is readily accessible for SMR searches and no fieldwork. Only limited conclusions can be drawn with respect to the road network itself. The main basis of the road network has probably been established, with roads linking most of the known and presumed forts, though in some areas there is very little physical evidence for suggested routes, and there is as yet no road linking the Caergwanaf fort into the system. A certain amount of excavation work has been done in the near vicinity of Caerleon, Usk and Bulmore on roads as they come into the settled areas, but there has been very little work done away from forts and towns. There is therefore little information on the form taken by roads in the countryside.

Another probable lacuna is in communications with shipping places. The forts of Loughor, Neath, Cardiff, Caerleon and Chepstow are on the lower reaches of navigable rivers, but these are unlikely to account for all the havens for shipping. Although there are roads leading the Sudbrook and Magor and possible roads to Aberthaw and Porthcawl, all documented as havens for shipping in the medieval or post-medieval period, there were probably other havens in use, for example at Llantwit Major and Swansea. No road is known connecting the Barlands Farm boat, which presumably lay at a shipping place, within the wider road network.

Recommendations

Further fieldwork is required in respect of most of the routes before they can be properly established. In respect of those already examined by RCAHMW and the Ordnance Survey between the 1950s and 1970s, field visits would establish the present condition of the surviving earthwork remains (where these exist), since during this period there has been considerable degradation of many archaeological earthwork sites of all types as a result of afforestation and changes to agricultural regimes. In respect of those sites where no field visits have been made at all, or where there has only been rapid assessment, this will provide an opportunity to assess the validity of the route, to look for surviving earthwork features and possibly to test for buried surfaces by probing.

Aerial photography is another possible way forward. Although the geology and soil cover in this area have not generally been suitable for revealing cropmarks, these do sometimes occur when conditions are right, as for example on the River Neath east bank route (RR GGAT 007). John Sorrell's work on the Newnham - Caerwent road (RR 60a) has provided useful new detail concerning earthwork and fossilised remains of this road.

Detailed recommendations are given under the entry for each road. In the case of routes where extensive rapid field survey has already been carried out by OS fieldworkers and RCAHMW, further work of this nature seems unlikely to produce more positive results. There are two possible ways forward for such roads. One is to carry out a programme of monitoring from the air in the hope of identifying possible stretches of alignment, which can then be tested by fieldwork on the ground. The other is to test conjectured alignments by limited excavation at suitable points along the length or at either end. There is a much greater potential for those roads where very little fieldwork has been done previously. Although some of this group were initially identified as minor roads, further consideration suggests that the majority run between forts, or between forts and potential shipping places. Full detailed study is recommended, involving regression, air photograph search and fieldwork.

Roads for which a full study is recommended

RR 60d Loughor- Pontarddulais section only
RRX 65 Bassaleg - Lower Machen - Caerphilly
RR GGAT 003 Sor Brook Valley Road
RR GGAT 005 Heol Spencer (including Coity Castle)
RR GGAT 006 West Aberthaw - Llanharry
RR GGAT 007 Road on east bank of River Neath
RR GGAT 008 Road on Stormy Down/Newton Down
RR GGAT 010 Road at Llandaff
01040.0w Neath - Llandeilo⁵

For details of proposals, see individual entries

Roads for which more limited fieldwork is recommended

RR 60aa Crick-Sudbrook (geophysical survey and/or excavation)
RR 62 (variant) Caerleon - Usk (River Usk east bank route) (geophysical survey and/or excavation)
RR GGAT 011 Possible road at Pantllaca (possibly geophysical survey)

For details of proposals, see individual entries

Roads where work should be limited to monitoring from the air, or monitoring of groundworks during any modification or land use change

RR 6d Monmouth - Chepstow
RR 60a Newnham-Caerleon
RR 60b Caerleon-Cardiff
RR 60c Cardiff -Neath
RR 60d Neath- Loughor section
RR612a Ariconium - Monmouth
RR612b Monmouth - Usk
RR 62a and RR 62a variant Y Gaer- Usk - Caerleon
RR 621 Castell Collen - Cardiff
RR 622 Neath - y Gaer
RRX 80 Penhow - Magor Pill
RR GGAT 004 Ffordd y Gyfraith

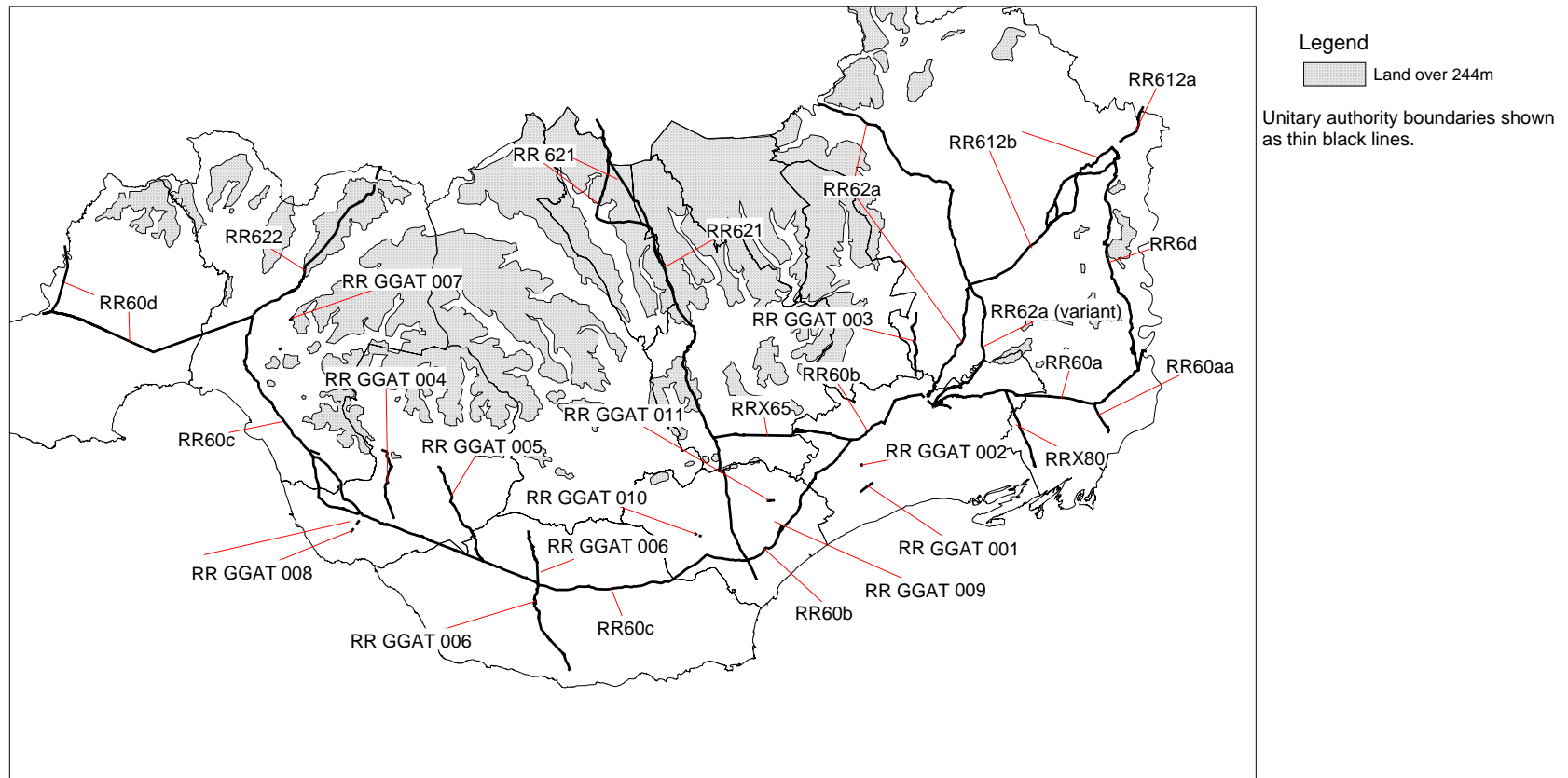
For details of proposals, see individual entries

Roads where evaluation should be carried out prior to the determination of any planning permission

RR GGAT 001 Wheel Lane
RR GGAT 002 LG Semicon Road

⁵ There was insufficient information to plot this road, and it was therefore not given an RR-prefixed number.

Figure 3: Roman roads



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Gazetteer

RR6d **Monmouth - Chepstow**

SO504124 to ST526931

PRN(s)	02460g, 06213g, 06214g
Mapped	Figure 4
Status	Proposed
Condition	Unknown

Route recorded by both Margary and the Royal Commission, although the exact course is unknown. This road probably follows the same conjectured route out of Monmouth as RR612b (see below p28), following Cinder Hill Street and Beach Road before joining the B4293 to cross the river. The route leaves the course of the RR612b at approximately SO5055711542 just before the tollhouse, continuing to follow the course of the B4293. This road however was turnpiked in the 19th century, the Roman road probably follows the course of the road which was in use in 1765, and which still survives as a hollow-way running parallel to the turnpiked section of the road. The course of the 19th century turnpike and its predecessor merge at approximately SO5057311119 and the Roman road is generally accepted as following the route of the B4293 to SO5004909381, where the route diverges to follow the line of the older road through Lydiart and Redwern Wood to SO4970808401. At this point the route of the road follows the line of a footpath until SO49695508016, where the footpath rejoins the line of the B4293 to run through Trellech. Once through Trellech, Margary states that the route is probably marked by a hollow-way and field boundaries to Trellech Cross; it is difficult to establish which features Margary had in mind, although those between SO5000105114 and SO4963004240 would appear to run in the right direction. The route is then assumed to follow the line of the modern road through Parkhouse and Old Park Farm to Tintern Cross. Between SO5081300171 and SO5134599548 the road is assumed to follow a hollow-way between Tintern Cross and Fair Oak, where the road rejoins the line of the modern road running from Banton to St Arvans. Between SO5193497188 and SO5205796810 Bradney believed the course of the Roman road left the modern road and followed a hollow-way down to the line of the modern A466, and from here the route is generally assumed to follow the line of the A466 into Chepstow. Bradney believed that between ST5220795372 and ST5223994539 the course of the road briefly leaves the line of the A466 to follow a winding hollow-way, before rejoining the course of the A466 into Chepstow.

Sources:

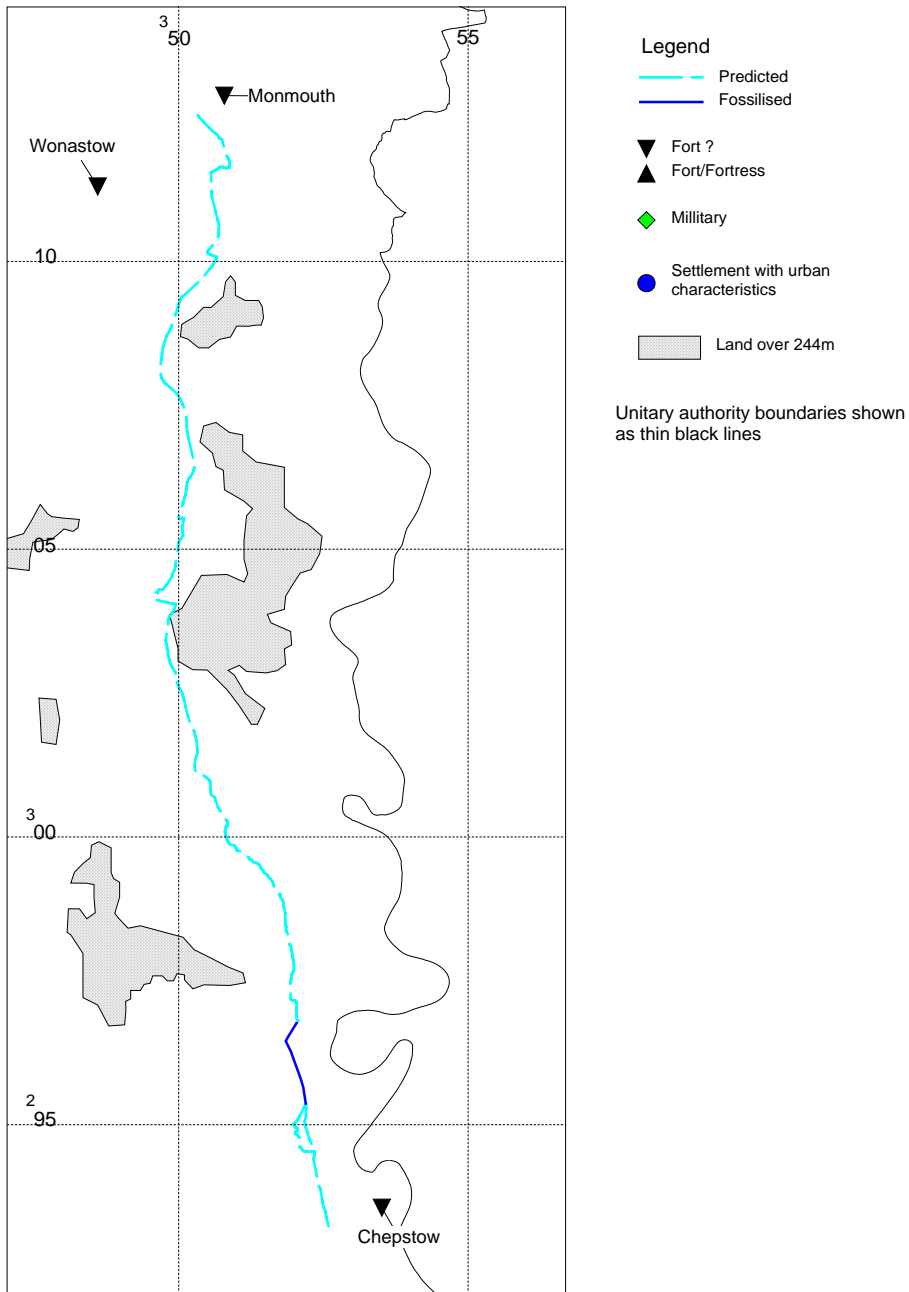
Bradney 1933, 36
Margary 1957, 54-5
RCAHMW 1994, 1

Ordnance Survey strip maps.
OS Record Card 1958, SO51SW 27

Recommendations for further work

This road has already been the subject of fieldwork by OS fieldworkers, and further field survey at this stage is unlikely to be very profitable. Air photography would appear to afford the best means to provide new information, but could be followed by fieldwork if new information emerges. Also monitor any ground disturbance along the route.

Figure 4: Roman road RR6d (Monmouth - Chepstow)



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RR60a **Newnham-Caerleon**

ST5299994799 to ST3417990380

PRN(s) 00561g, 01016.1g, 01160g, 05316.0g, 05319.0g, 07048g, 07049g, 01016.17w
Mapped Figure 5
Status Known/Proposed
Condition Damaged

This is the eastern section of a much longer route from Chepstow to Loughor, part of Iter XII of the Antonine Itinerary. It was outlined by Margary, and the published RCAHMW analysis mainly adheres to the Margary route. However the course through Chepstow is totally unknown and it is only after the Beechwood roundabout that a route can be traced. The line here has been established by Sorrell from the air, and confirmed by fieldwork to exist in earthwork form as a short stretch of *agger* to the west of the roundabout; beyond Pwllmeyrick it is marked by field boundaries. West of Crick, the road is assumed to follow the route of the modern A48 through Caerwent, though the section between Crick and Cat's Ash is almost all purely conjectural, except where it passes through Caerwent where it is confirmed by the position of the gates. Although modern A48 consists of a series of straight alignments, these may owe their origin at least in part to turnpiking. To the west of Penhow Castle, Ordnance Survey fieldworkers excavated a short section of *agger* but little further information was recorded about the results of the excavation. To the west of Cat's Ash the route becomes clearer, as metalled road surfaces have been excavated by Maynard in 1996 and Yates in 1997.⁶ The route has also been traced as field boundaries by Richards in 1985 and Maynard in 1996. As it approaches Caerleon it appears to be fossilised as Isca Road, which is on the direct line of the *via praetoria*. It is assumed to enter the fortress at the *porta praetoria* over a bridge across the River Usk.

Sources

GGAT 1992,
Locock 1992a
Locock 1992b
Margary 1973, 56
Maynard 1996
Mein 1990
RCAHMW 1994, 2
Richards 1985
Sorrell 2004
Yates 1997

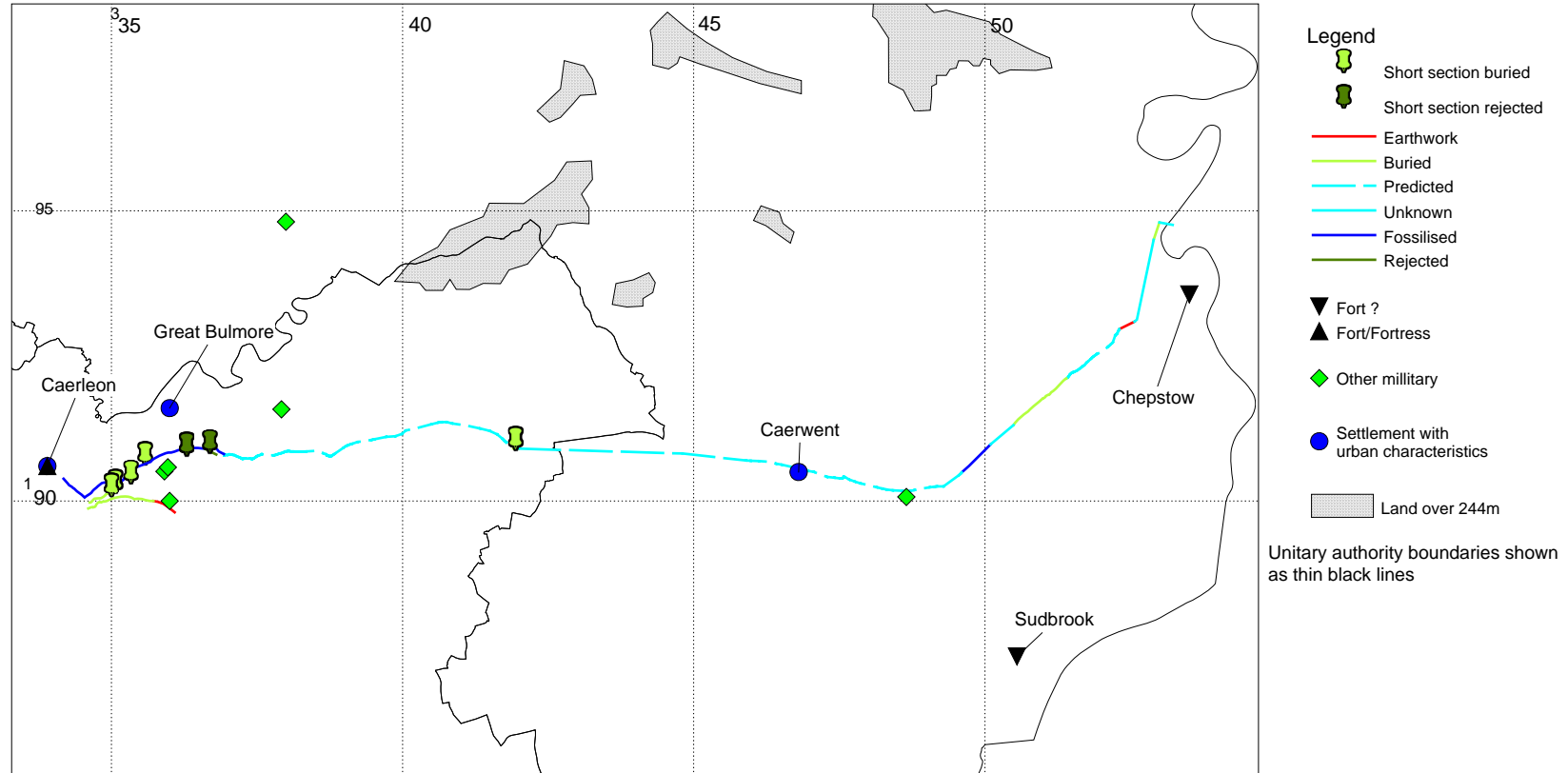
Ordnance Survey strip maps

Recommendations for further work

Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along the A48 and other modern roads, although deviations might be apparent as cropmarks under suitable conditions. The largest lacuna lies between Five Lanes and Penhow Castle, where air photography might be particularly useful. The most likely method of obtaining additional information is through the monitoring of any ground disturbance along the route. Further excavation to the west of Catash would probably provide additional information on the exact course of the road over Belmont Hill, but is considered to be of relatively low priority in any programme of work on Roman roads as a whole, since this end of the route is relatively well understood.

⁶ Three further sections of metalled road surface in the Cat's Ash area have been excavated by Mein in 1990 and Locock in 1992, but these probably belong to roads other than the RR60a.

Figure 5: Roman road RR60a (Newnham - Caerleon)



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RR60aa **Crick - Sudbrook**

ST4879087637 to ST4995787694

PRN(s) 07761g
Mapped Figure 6
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

Road, proposed by both Margary and the Royal Commission, as leaving the main Newnham-Caerleon road at Crick, heading towards a probable port situated at either Black Rock or Sudbrook. The Iron Age fort at Sudbrook seems to have been the site of an early Roman fort. The route is believed to be fossilised in the modern Crick Road as far south as St Mary's Church and then by the Sudbrook Road, though there is no other supporting evidence; however once past Sudbrook the route of the road is not known.

Sources

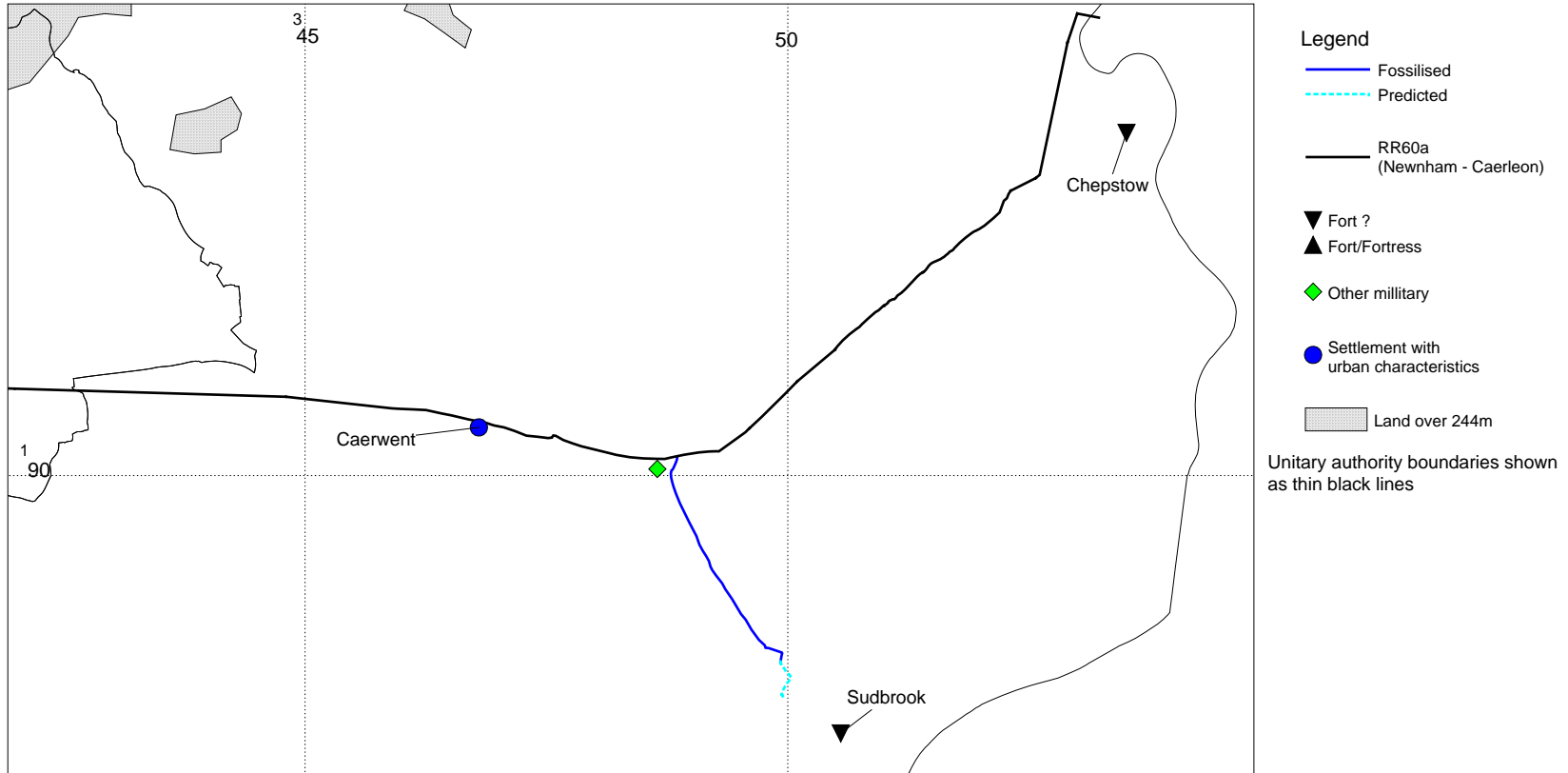
Margary, 1957, 56
Manning 1981, 42
RCAHMW 1994, 2

Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along the A48 and other modern roads, although deviations might be apparent as cropmarks under suitable conditions. The most likely method of obtaining additional information is through the monitoring of any ground disturbance along the route. To the south of Sudbrook church, however, it is possible that the Roman line continued the line further north rather than following along the course of the modern road. If this is the case, geophysical survey or excavation at this point would help to confirm that this road is Roman.

Figure 6: Roman road RR60aa (Crick - Sudbrook)



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RR60b **Caerleon - Cardiff**

ST3374990779 to ST1800876456

PRN(s) 01016.2w, 01016.13w, 01016.16w, 03020s
Mapped Figure 7
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

Route recorded by both the RCAHMW and Margary. It is assumed to form part of that stretch of the Antonine Itinerary *Iter XII* between Caerleon and Neath, since there is a Roman fort at Cardiff which must have been connected to the road network. However, there is little physical evidence for its existence. The route that this road takes on leaving the north gate of Caerleon is not known, although the presence of cemeteries over the lower slopes of Lodge Hill indicates that it probably ran along here. It was originally thought to follow the line of a linear bank, but Courtney has demonstrated that this is probably a medieval park boundary. Excavations in the cemetery area by Evans and Maynard in the area of what was locally believed to be the road found only areas of ill-defined and poorly founded metalling, which were considered to represent handstandings rather than the road. In 1967 the Ordnance Survey excavated a short section of *agger* between ST322907 and ST324908; unfortunately little further information about this stretch of the road was recorded, and it is not clear whether this is the earthwork which Courtney has rejected. In 1991 Maylan suggested that the route of the road might cross the Pill-Mawr stream at approximately ST312904 by a wooden or stone bridge, for which no evidence is known. After this point the route is unknown until approximately ST3029888465 where the modern road known as Allt-yr-yn Avenue begins. From this point Margary and the Ordnance Survey record the route as following a series of modern roads into and through Bassaleg: The Ridgeway, Glassllwch Lane, Park View and Caerphilly Road.

The route after Bassaleg is uncertain. The Ordnance Survey strip map shows the route leaving the modern road known as The Griffin northeast of its junction with the lane leading to Croes-heolydd, and then running north to an old quarry as a hollow-way and embanked road, before turning northeast and running along a field boundary as a hollow-way to meet a footpath which joins the Pentrepoeth Road just to the east of The Knoll House. However the Royal Commission rejected this route in 1991, since no Roman material had been found along it. Locock followed this route during fieldwork during 1994 and states that no definite evidence to support the route was visible. Margary suggests that the route simply follows The Griffin for its entirety. No doubt this opinion was influenced by its notable straightness, but the road was turnpiked in the 19th century and cannot therefore be used in evidence; however in default of any other plausible route, the line of The Griffin road has been followed for the purposes of this gazetteer.

To the east of Michaelstone-y-Vedw the route of the road becomes more certain: the Ordnance Survey based its probable route between ST2499084442 and ST2429384045 and again between ST2424883756 and ST2422983647 on the evidence of aerial photographs. In 1978, Trott noted the line of the road as it passes Michaelstone-y-Vedw, again from aerial photographs, at ST244842 or slightly to the northwest of where the Royal Commission notes it. After the second of these aerial photographs the route again becomes more uncertain. The general assumption has been that the route is fossilised by the Druidstone Road until ST2376583089 where a course has again been plotted on aerial photographs as far as ST2370482918, where it is again assumed to follow the route of the modern Druidstone Road. The route is then general assumed to follow the modern line of Ty Winch Road, Newport Road, Chapel Row, Oldhill, and the Newport Road again. In 1960 during the widening of Newport Road, a well-metalled road surface was noted lying beneath turf and topsoil at ST21007875 by workmen. After title maps for the area had been examined, it was decided that this surface marked the route of the

Roman road. After this point the exact course is lost again , but route is assumed to follow the route of the Newport Road, Queen Street, Duke Street and Castle Street.

Sources

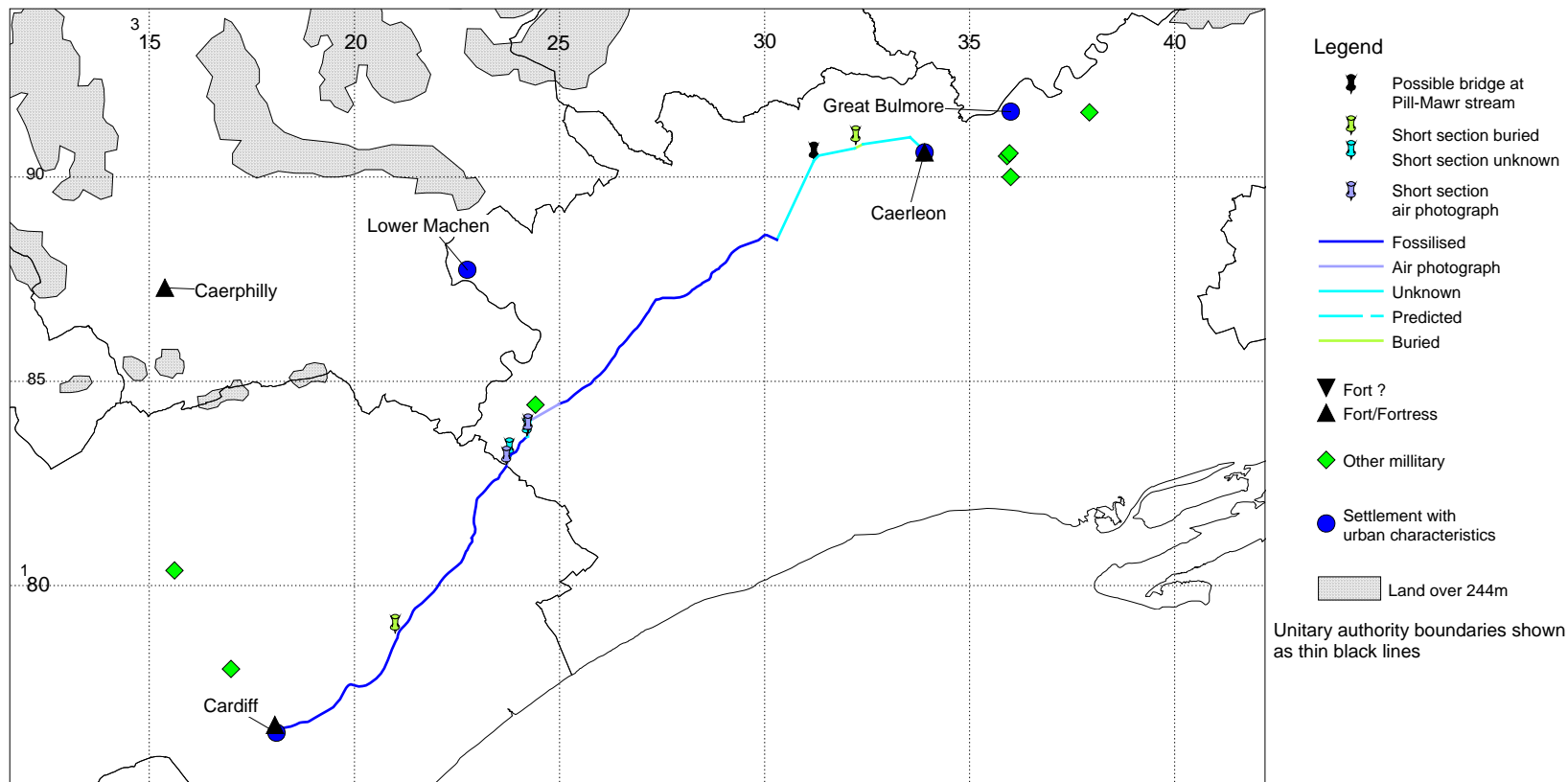
Courtney 1983
Evans and Maynard 1997, 172
GGAT 1998a
Locock 1994
Margary 1957, 57
Maylan 1991
RCAHMW 1976, 106
RCAHMW 1994, 2-3
Trott 1978

Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along modern roads, since most of it lies within built-up areas. The most likely method of obtaining additional information is through the monitoring of any ground disturbance along the route. The two main exceptions to this are the eastern end where the route leaves Caerleon, and the section between the built-up areas of Newport and Cardiff, where a couple of deviations from the line of the modern road have been observed from the air at Michaelston-y-Fedw and Druidstone Road. These cropmarks could be tested by excavation. Little success has so far attended attempts over a considerable length of time to find the exact course of the eastern end of the road on Lodge Hill, Caerleon, in spite of the fact that fairly extensive sections of the eastern end of the hill have been developed. There are now few development pressures on the remaining parts of the hill other than on the hospital site, where predetermination archaeological assessment will be required.

Figure 7: Roman road RR60b (Caerleon - Cardiff)



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RR60c **Cardiff - Neath**

ST31819876506 to SS7481897770

PRN(s) 01016.14w, 02738w
Mapped Figure 8
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

Route recorded by both the RCAHMW and Margary along the line of the modern A48. It is assumed to form part of that stretch of the Antonine Itinerary *Iter XII* between Caerleon and Neath, since there is a Roman fort at Cardiff which must have been connected to the road network. Other than the line, and the fact that it was adopted as a boundary by several parishes, there is little evidence for its existence. There are, however, four points on this route where some physical evidence has been noted:

- In 1957 the Ordnance Survey record that sections of the road have reportedly been noted in the banks of the River Ely, in Cardiff, close to the location of the modern Ely bridge at approximately ST145768.
- What was interpreted as the ditch on the north side of the road, and buildings aligned on it, have been excavated where it runs through Cowbridge (the most probable site of the otherwise unrecorded *Bomium* the only stage between Caerleon and Neath given in the Antonine Itinerary).⁷
- Between the Rivers Ogmore and Ewenny, on the 200m length of *agger* running from SS904782 to SS902783 (RCAHMW 1976, 107). Here, an unpublished excavation ‘close to the correct line of sight’ is noted by RCAHMW (1994), but no details are available.
- In 1976 Trott noted that the crest of Stormy Down at SS845804 would appear to have been a sighting point for the route of the RR60c as it ran east-west across Newton Down and Stormy Down. (MM Record Card, OS 1957, Glam 41 SW 14) .

Passing out of Cardiff to the east of the Roman fort, the road is generally assumed to follow the course of the modern A48 except in five places.

- Just east of St Nicholas, the route is assumed to follow a road known as Grants Field between ST1150474669 and ST1040174529. This road follows the boundaries between the parishes of St George-super-Ely and St Lythans.
- Between ST0552873939 and ST0432274200, the route again follows a road that marks the boundary between two parishes, Llantrithyd and Welsh St Donats. However it should be noted that in 1919, when Codrington investigated a quarry (now disused) on its assumed line, no evidence of it had been noted by the quarry personnel.
- At Cowbridge the modern road bypasses the town, whose high street preserves the original line.
- Between SS8718579447 and SS8613879179; in 1957 the Ordnance Survey suggested that the route followed a series of aligned field boundaries.

⁷ RCAHMW (1976, 121-2) suggests a possible location further west at Glanwenny House, but no evidence has been found to support the presence of a Roman site here.

- Between the NGRs SS84250180630 and SS8010085550, to the south of North Cornelly, the route is assumed to take a more eastern course closer to the coast, crossing Kenfig Sands to the east of Kenfig Castle and following the route of the modern road known as Water Street. Kenfig has been suggested as the site of an early fort on the basis of finds, but the besandment of this area has made it impossible to establish whether this is the case. We would suggest an alternative route following the modern course of the A48 north through Pyle and then running northeast towards Margam. This would bring the road closer to SS82698222 and SS81608485, the locations at which two milestones, respectively RIB 2251 (PRN 00142m) and RIB 2255 (PRN 00790m) were discovered.⁸

Sources

Margary 1957, 58

Marvell and Page 1994

RCAHMW 1976, 106-8

RCAHMW 1994, 3-4

Parkhouse and Evans 1996, 80-9

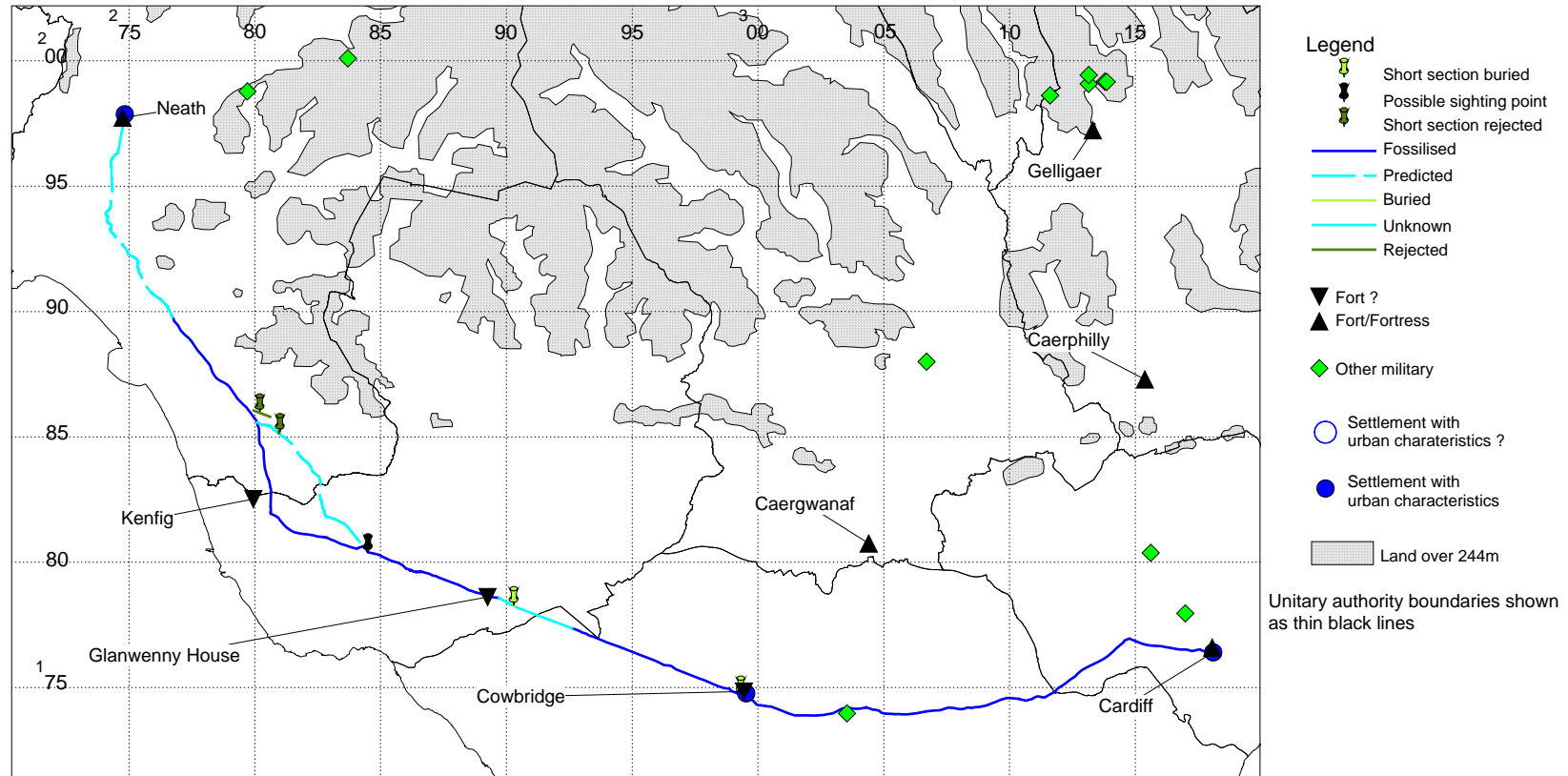
Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along the A48 and other modern roads, although deviations might be apparent as cropmarks under suitable conditions. Also monitor any ground disturbance along the route. The section of the road around North Cornelly, Pyle and Margam is least well understood, and air photography may have the potential to provide most information. Also monitor any ground disturbance along the route. Otherwise, this road has been extensively studied over an extended period of time (most recently by RCAHMW for the *Glamorgan Inventory*), and without any new information, further fieldwork is not likely to be very profitable.

⁸ This alternative route incorporates two earthworks that have previously been identified as possible elements of Roman roads, one at SS8095085170 (PRNs 01016.14w. 02738w) and one between SS80608580 and SS79958605 (P-TM6). However, both of these earthworks were excavated in 1994 by Marvell and Page and were determined to be of later date.

Figure 8: Roman road RR60c (Cardiff - Neath)



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RR60d **Neath - Loughor -Pontardulais -Carmarthen⁹**

SS7479097800 to SS5648098040

PRN(s) 01016.0w, 01040.0w, 05306w, 05311w
Mapped Figure 9
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

Route recorded by both the Royal Commission and Margary; whilst little physical evidence is known for this road and the exact route is uncertain its existence is attested by the Antonine Itinerary (*Iter XII*). Very little of this route is known and the only generally accepted section of the road is fossilised as the B4620 (Swansea Road and Loughor Road) between SS6195096580 and SS5648098040, where it passes to the south of the two practice works on Carn Goch Common and to the north of the large practice work on Stafford Common. The route is then generally assumed to follow the route of modern A484 into the east gate of Loughor fort. The only feature probably relating to it that has been recorded is the well-constructed ford across the Tawe, discovered whilst excavating for the Pottery Lock on the Swansea Canal; the exact location is uncertain, but RCAHMW (1976) suggests that it was around SS66119468.

Beyond Loughor, Rivet and Smith suggest that the mileages in the Antonine Itinerary imply that the most likely course of the road would have run northwards up the east bank of the River Loughor to an easier crossing between Pontarddulais and Hendy at around SN5855002980. Although there is no physical evidence for a road, its importance as a crossing in the Middle Ages is indicated by the existence of two earthwork castles, one on either side of the river, and the church of Llandeilo Talybont on the proposed line, which was a stage in the pilgrimage route to St Davids.

It should also be noted that a section of this road is described as having been excavated in 1988 by the Neath Antiquarian Society somewhere in the region of Glyn Leiros, on a south-west alignment (Neath Antiquarian Newsletter no:2). However, insufficient information was provided to make it possible to map this section of road.

Sources

Margary 1957, 59
Marvell and Owen-John 1997, 222-3
RCAHMW 1976, 108
RCAHMW 1994, 4-5, 42
Rivet and Smith 1979, 174-5

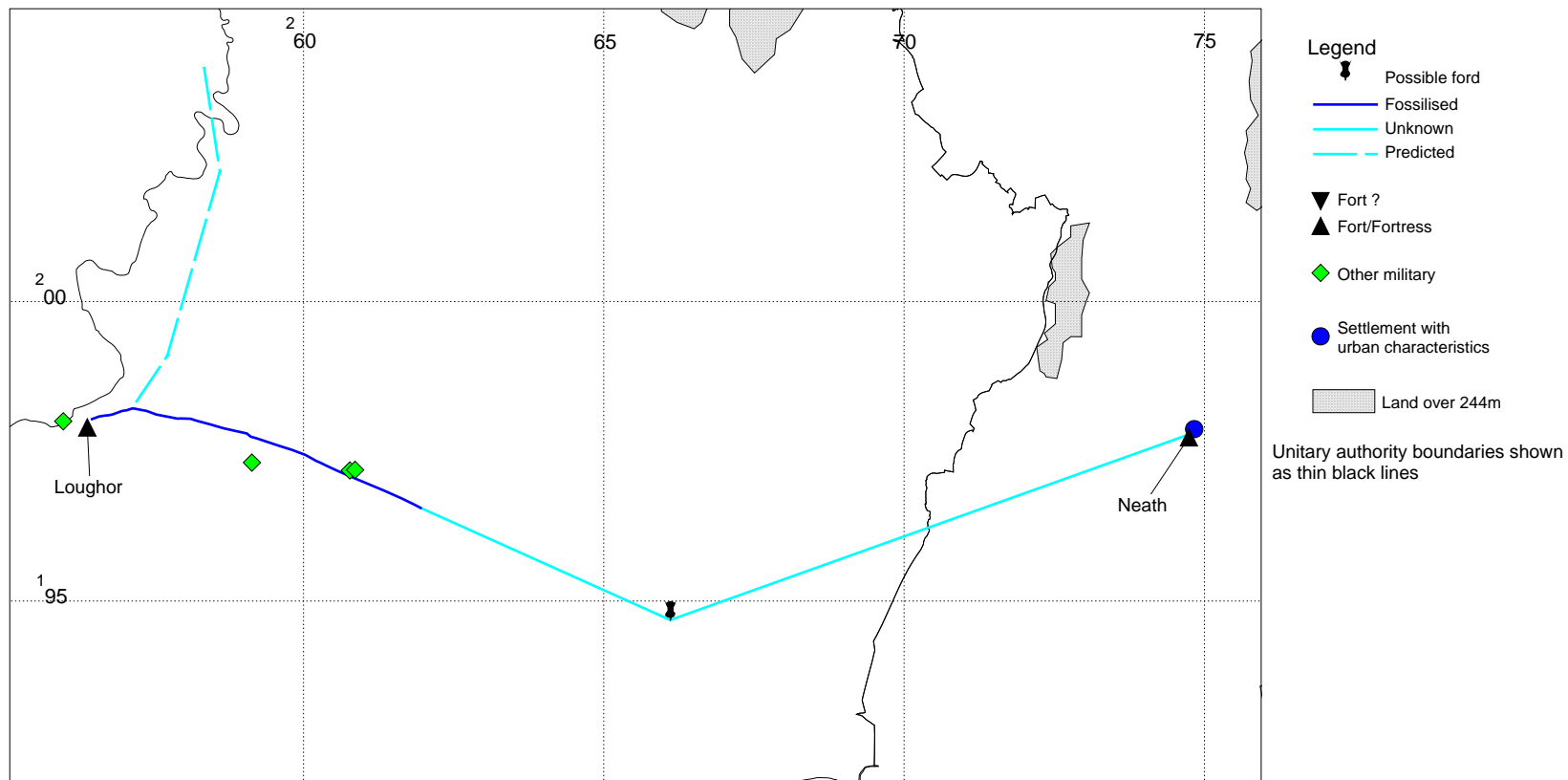
Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

Much of the any likely line of the road east of Garn Goch, where it is essentially unknown, is built up and therefore unlikely to produce additional information from further air photography. A possible exception is between Skewen and Bon-y-maen. Otherwise, this part of the route has been extensively studied over an extended period of time (most recently by RCAHMW for the Glamorgan *Inventory*), and without any new information, further fieldwork is not likely to be very profitable. However, virtually no work has been carried out so far on the postulated section between Loughor and Pontarddulais, and a full programme of map regression, air photograph search and fieldwork is recommended. Elsewhere, monitor any ground disturbance along the route.

⁹ Incorporates RRX 41 and RRX41a (RCAHMW 1995,42)

Figure 9: Roman road RR60d (Neath - Loughor - Pontardulais - Carmarthen)



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RR 612a **Ariconium (Weston under Penyard) - Monmouth**

SO5299616062 to SO5103313120

PRN(s) 02954.0g
Mapped Figure 10
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

Route forming the first section of the Antonine Iter XIII, recorded by both Margary and the Royal Commission; however only the last 4km of the route come within the boundaries of this study. Very little of the route is physically confirmed, although it is generally assumed to follow the course of the modern A40. RCAHMW notes that N P Bridgewater excavated a section of the road in 1958, slightly to the west of the course of the A40, at SO526151. The route probably leaves the course of the A40 briefly between SO5265114670 and SO5227313867 to follow the course of the older Newton Court Lane. At SO5167113558 the route leaves the course of the A40 and follows Dixton road into the Monmouth.

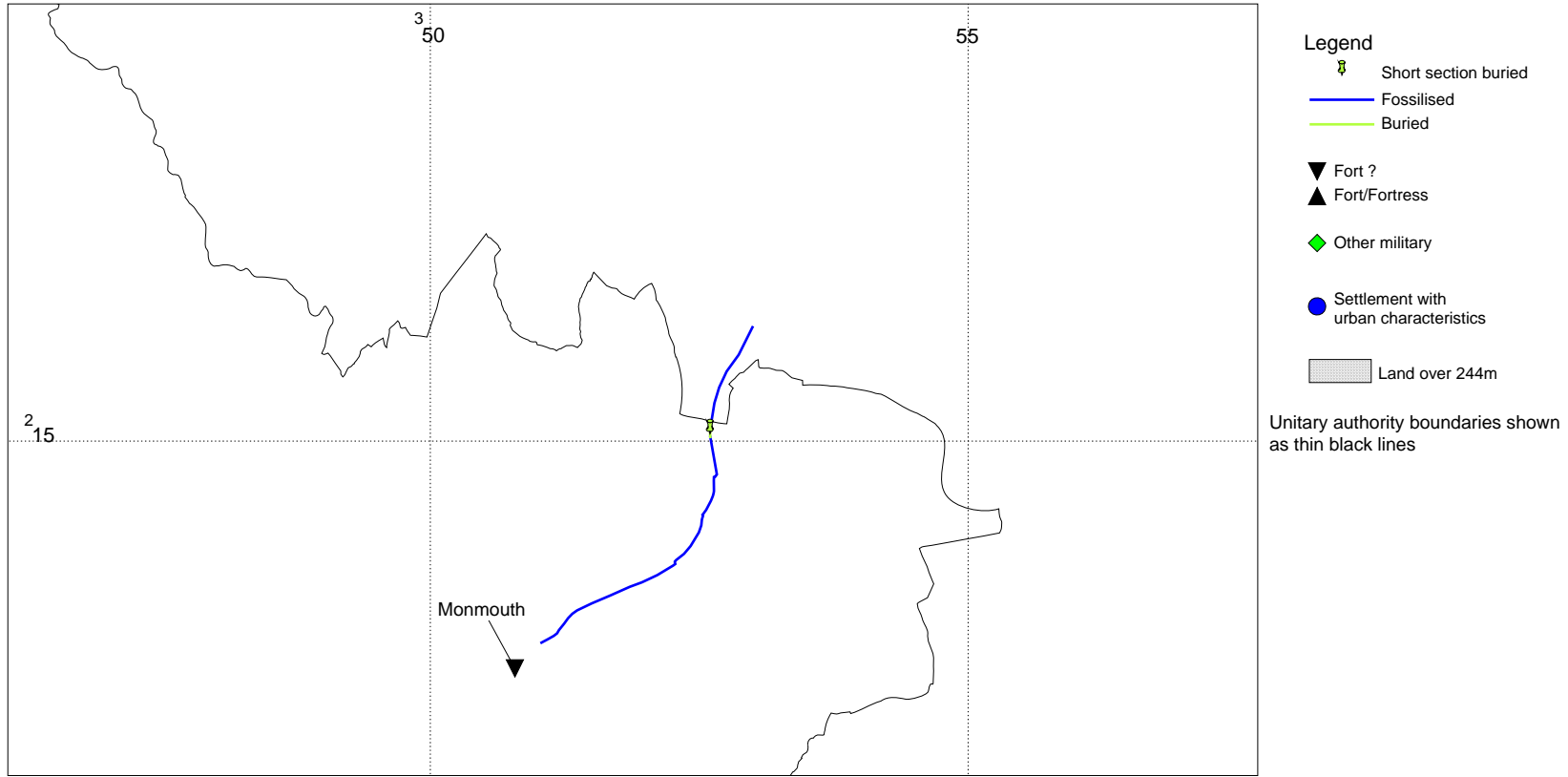
Sources

Margary 1957, 62
RCAHMW 1994, 5
Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

This road has already been the subject of fieldwork by OS fieldworkers, and further field survey at this stage is unlikely to be very profitable. Air photography is also unlikely to provide further information if the road follows the postulated route along the A40 and other modern roads. The most likely method of obtaining additional information is through the monitoring of any ground disturbance along the route.

Figure 10: Roman roads RR612a (Ariconium - Monmouth)



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RR612b **Monmouth - Usk**

SO5029012560- SO3378000600

PRN(s) 02460g, 4772.0g
Mapped Figure 11
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

The existence of this road is attested by the Antonine Itinerary (Iter XIII) although the exact route is unknown. Margary suggests a route which passes along Jingle Street, to Dingestow, and on through Raglan to Usk. However he includes little specific route information, stating that much more extensive fieldwork is required. For this reason, Margary's route is not mapped for this gazetteer beyond Jingle Street. Coxe preferred a route which crosses the river Trothy to the south of Jingle Street, passes west of The Bourne and through Pen-y-clawdd on its way to Usk; however his route is dismissed as illogical by the Ordnance Survey in 1958. In the same source the Ordnance Survey also note and dismiss a possible route which runs almost due south after leaving Pen-y-clawdd, passing Trecastle to the east and running to London Cottage. Although the above routes are all noted by the Royal Commission and mapped in the Ordnance Survey's linear files, the most likely route they record is that favoured by both Manning and Maynard. This is the most easterly of the routes mapped and passes through Gwaylodyae, Great Llan Thomas, London Cottage and The Crosshands on its way to Usk. It is this route which is described below.

The exact course of the road as it leaves Monmouth is unknown; the Ordnance Survey records two possible routes. The first of these routes leaves Monmouth to the east and follows the line of the modern Wonastow road through Over Monnow, towards the recently discovered fort at Wonastow and Jingle Street, turning south to cross the river Trothy and joining the Mitchel Troy road at The Red House Farm. The second route leaves Monmouth to the south, following Cinder Hill Street and Beach Road before joining the B4293 to cross the river. This route then leaves the B4293 to follow the Mitchel Troy road, passing through Mitchel Troy to The Red House Farm. The route then crosses the Cwm Carfan Brook before turning south at SO4726310253 and passing through Gwaylodyae, at SO4721108614 it turns and heads in westerly direction to run through Great Llan Thomas. At SO46240681 the route diverges from the course of the modern road and follows the line of a 2m high, 10m wide bank until SO46440681. At the point where the route leaves the modern road, the annotation on the Ordnance Survey strip map records that light ploughing has uncovered patches of metalling. This same ploughing has also disturbed pieces of slag supposedly of a Roman date from the edges of the bank. The route then rejoins the line of the modern road and runs towards London House. However, although significant stretches of the modern roads on this route are straight and look as though they may have had a Roman origin, they have been turnpiked and cannot be regarded as providing reliable evidence.

Between SO4545706365 and SO4521106171 the route follows the line of a spread hollow-way, described as being 15m wide and between 2-4m deep; after the hollow-way the route is lost crossing an open field. It is picked up again in a field boundary running between SO4499006007 and SO4481705813, then follows a tree and shrub covered hollow-way, which is on average 15m wide and between 2-4m deep, to SO4481705813. Here the route is interrupted by an unnamed brook crossed by the London Bridge, where the route is again lost for a short distance. It is re-established at SO4481105780 where it takes the form of a well-constructed terrace which ascends a fairly steep hillside as far as SO4467005539. This terrace is formed by cutting into the hillside to an average depth of 2m in the northwest, with a build up in the southeast to an average depth of 2m to form a level surface. Probing of the topsoil along sections of the terrace, not planted with crops, discovered no evidence for metalling. The route then re-aligns with the course of the modern road to pass through Four Ash, Llanishen Court,

The Cross Hands, Pergoed Farm and Pont Pill to become the Monmouth Road at SO4100001797. After this point the route of the road is totally unknown.¹⁰

Sources

Margary 1957, 62-3
Manning 1981, 56-58
Maynard 1991
RCAHMW 1994, 5-6

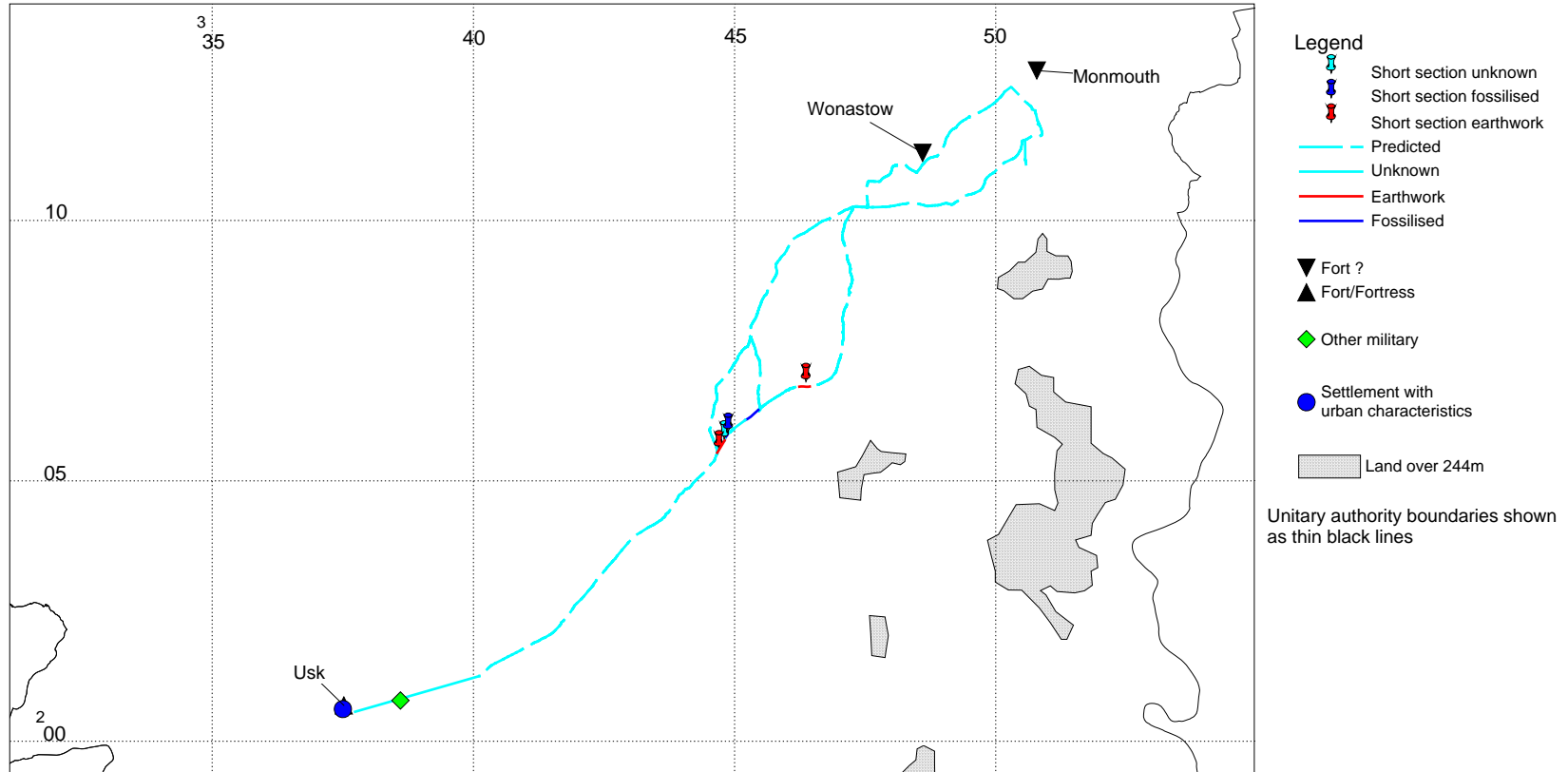
Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

This road has already been the subject of fieldwork by OS fieldworkers, and further field survey at this stage is unlikely to be very profitable. Air photography would appear to afford the best means to provide new information, but could be followed by fieldwork if new information emerges. Also monitor any ground disturbance along the route.

¹⁰ It should be noted that a short section of road has been proposed leaving the Michel Troy road at SO5056011541. This route has only be conjectured as far as SO50580211081 and is supposed to follow the 'pre-turnpike' route of the B4293, now preserved as a hollow-way, although no suggestion has been made as to its destination.

Figure 11: Roman road RR612b (Monmouth - Usk)



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RR62a **Y Gaer (Brecon) - Caerleon**

SO2458016350 to ST34130901810

PRN(s) 02902g, 04457g, 05892.0g, 05894.0g
Mapped Figure 12
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

Route running from Y Gaer (Brecon) to Caerleon, recorded both by Margary and the Royal Commission; the section of this route northeast of Gilwern is not within the boundaries of this study area. Although the exact course of this route is unknown, it is generally assumed to follow the course of the modern A40 trunk road, entering the study area at Glangrwyney and into the town of Abergavenny along Brecon Road. It is then lost for a short distance, but leaves the town along Cross Street and Monmouth Street.¹¹

At SO3075012480 the route of the Roman road leaves the A40 trunk road and follows the B4598 to SO3217010488. At this point the Ordnance Survey believes the route diverges from the modern road system to follow a series of field boundaries before again merging with the route of the B4598 at SO3325010220. At SO3472009630 the route leaves the B4598 and follows the minor road towards Clytha Park. Here, at SO3632008820 the road turns in a southerly direction, running through Bettws Newydd and Troestry Court. Between SO3650004100 and SO3670003600 the route follows the line of a bank which varies in width between 17m and 22m; probing under the surface of this feature identified a metalled surface approximately 8m wide at a depth of 0.2m below ground level. At SO3678003450 the route is assumed to rejoin the line of the modern road through Llancayo, which rejoins the B44598 at SO3687003040 to run into Usk.

The Royal Commission handlist notes that in 1877, W T Watkins excavated a section of the road at SO364005 as it ran through Usk; unfortunately no further details are given. In the early 1970s, Manning excavated in a similar area and uncovered what he believed to be a section of the *via decumana*. Numerous other excavations inside Usk have located the *via decumana* as it passes through the fort; these are omitted here since roads within forts have not been mapped for this project. Although the crossing-point over the River Usk is not known, it is general assumed that the road by NGR SO3755000160 it has crossed over the River Usk to follow the course of the modern road through Llanbadoc and Llangybi. At ST3758399278 the Ordnance Survey strip map notes two buildings, Helmaen Hotel and Helmaen Cottage; and suggests that Helmaen = Heol Maen (Stone Road). At ST3682095310 the route leaves the course of the modern road and follows the line of a footpath to the village of Croes Llywarch, from which point it follows the line of the road through Llanhennock onto Caerleon, but is lost for a short distance at approximately ST3323090190. At ST3429091020 a localised deep band of cobbles can be seen eroding out of the east bank of the Afon Lwyd, and probably represents the road as it crosses the river to enter Caerleon. In 1987 Evans excavated a section of road on this line, between approximately ST3412790812 and ST3424790905, where it formed a continuation of the *via principalis sinistra* running through the settlement outside the fortress. The first road laid out in this section was constructed over a raft of brushwood, with a carefully laid and

¹¹ It should be noted that whilst PRN 04457g (NGR SO30361474) might be associated with the route of this road, it is not possible to be certain. Information on the SMR states that sections of a Roman road (former linear PRN A33), associated with a coin hoard (PRN 1370g) and burials (PRN 1375g), were found during the construction of housing on the outskirts of Abergavenny in c1848. However, with only a single NGR it was not possible to determine whether it could have been connected with a possible alternative course for this road.

compacted surface of graded cobbles and pebbles, which had a slight camber. An unlined road ditch was recorded to the north. It had been remade at intervals.¹²

Sources

Evans 2000, 35-8

GGAT 1991

Manning 1989, 56-58

Margary 1957, 65-6

RCAHMW 1986,

RCAHMW 1994, 6-7

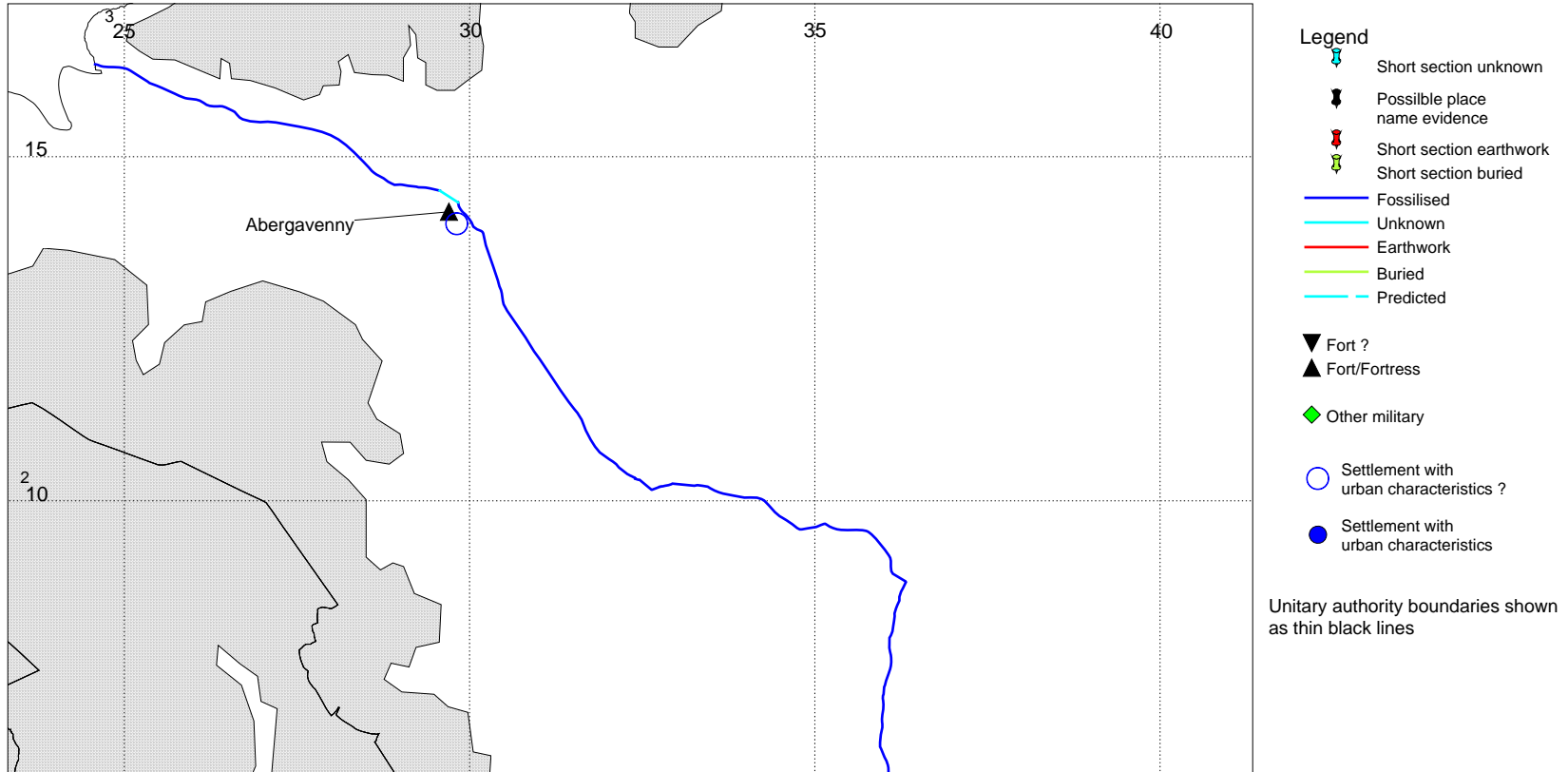
Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

Since most of the postulated line of this route is assumed to follow modern roads and footpaths, there is little scope for further work, though the part immediately outside Caerleon as it crosses the River Usk may produce results. However in this area the river has clearly a changing pattern of meanders over time, and at least some of the road has probably been lost to erosion on the lower ground, and to the 19th century abortive railway cutting on the higher ground. Elsewhere along the route, monitoring from the air is a possible tool for determining whether it did indeed run along modern roads, or whether any possible deviations can be seen which could then be the subject of further fieldwork. Also monitor any ground disturbance along the route.

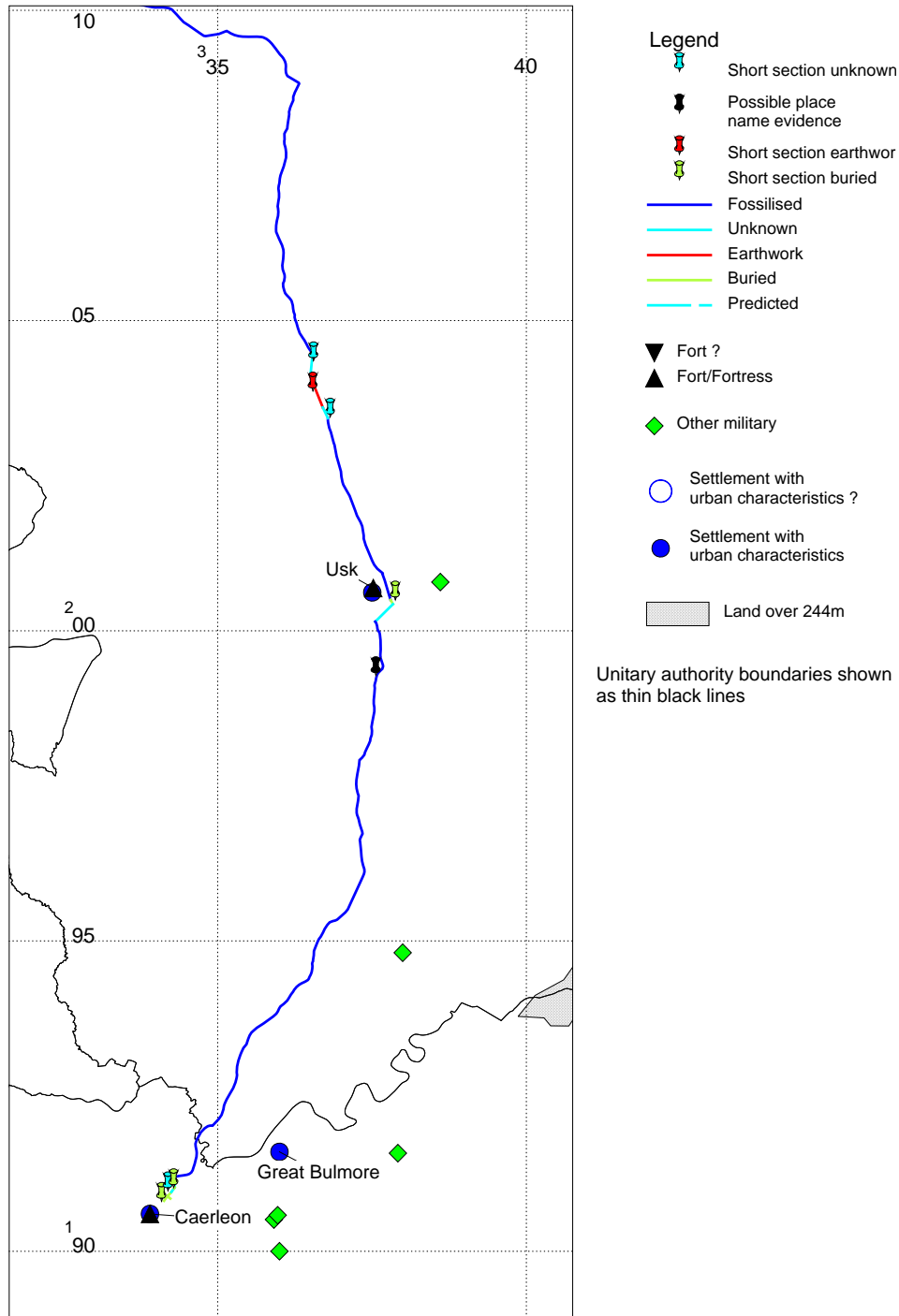
¹² The map for this section includes part of the excavated street system of the civil settlement associated with this road.

Figure 12.1: Roman road RR62a (Y Gaer - Caerleon) Y Gaer - Clytha Park



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Figure 12.2: Roman road RR62a (Y Gaer - Caerleon) Clytha Park - Caerleon



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RR62a (variant) Caerleon - Usk (River Usk east bank route via Llantrisant)

ST3475590254 to SO3791600377

PRN(s) 04921g, 04922.0g, 04426g, 05596.0g, 05597.0g, 05666.0g, 06053.0g
Mapped Figure 13
Status Known
Condition Damaged

This road is an alternative route between Usk and Caerleon, running along the opposite side of the river from RR62a, which was the only route considered by Margary. However, it appears in the Royal Commission handlist, and the physical evidence supporting it is compelling. The description given here runs south-north.

This route probably joins with RR60a at the junction between Isca Road and Bulmore Road, and then follows Bulmore Road to Bulmore. Excavations carried out by Yates in 1999 at Little Bulmore failed to find conclusive evidence for the road, though metalling in two trenches at ST35679133 near the line of the modern road could be connected. At Great Bulmore, a long section was examined by Zienkiewicz during excavations in 1984 between ST35839146 and ST35949151 (approx). Further sections of metalling were recorded by Maynard during a watching brief in 1988, at ST36259160 and at ST35989152; and during field evaluations in 1996, between ST36409166 and ST36859172.¹³ Tuck recorded a further section of metalling on the route at ST36999179 during observations on a service trench in 1999. Beyond Bulmore, Copeland has documented a section of trackway which runs between ST3898697257 and ST3916298149, and probably represents the fossilised course of the route between Llantrisant and Llanllywell. The course of the route between White Hall and Llantrisant has also been noted during recent aerial photograph flights by Sorrell (pers comm M Tuck), although no detailed information has yet been made available to the SMR.

Further excavation information becomes available as the road approaches Usk. A section of metalling on the northern end of this route was excavated by Maynard at SO37970025 (approx) in 1993 (Maynard and Marvell 1994), and part of another road, possibly a legionary patrol track running around the fortress, at SO37970025. A metalled surface noted in an east-west stream bank at approx ST371916, and a short section of hollow way at ST36959165 may have been part of a route linking the Bulmore road to the Caerwent-Caerleon road, but are more likely to be sections of a trackway running to a Post medieval quarry at ST37089175. However, it is possible that the Caerwent-Caerleon road and the Bulmore road might have been linked in some way, and there may have been metalled trackways connecting the sites in this area of the Usk valley (pers comm Tuck).

Sources

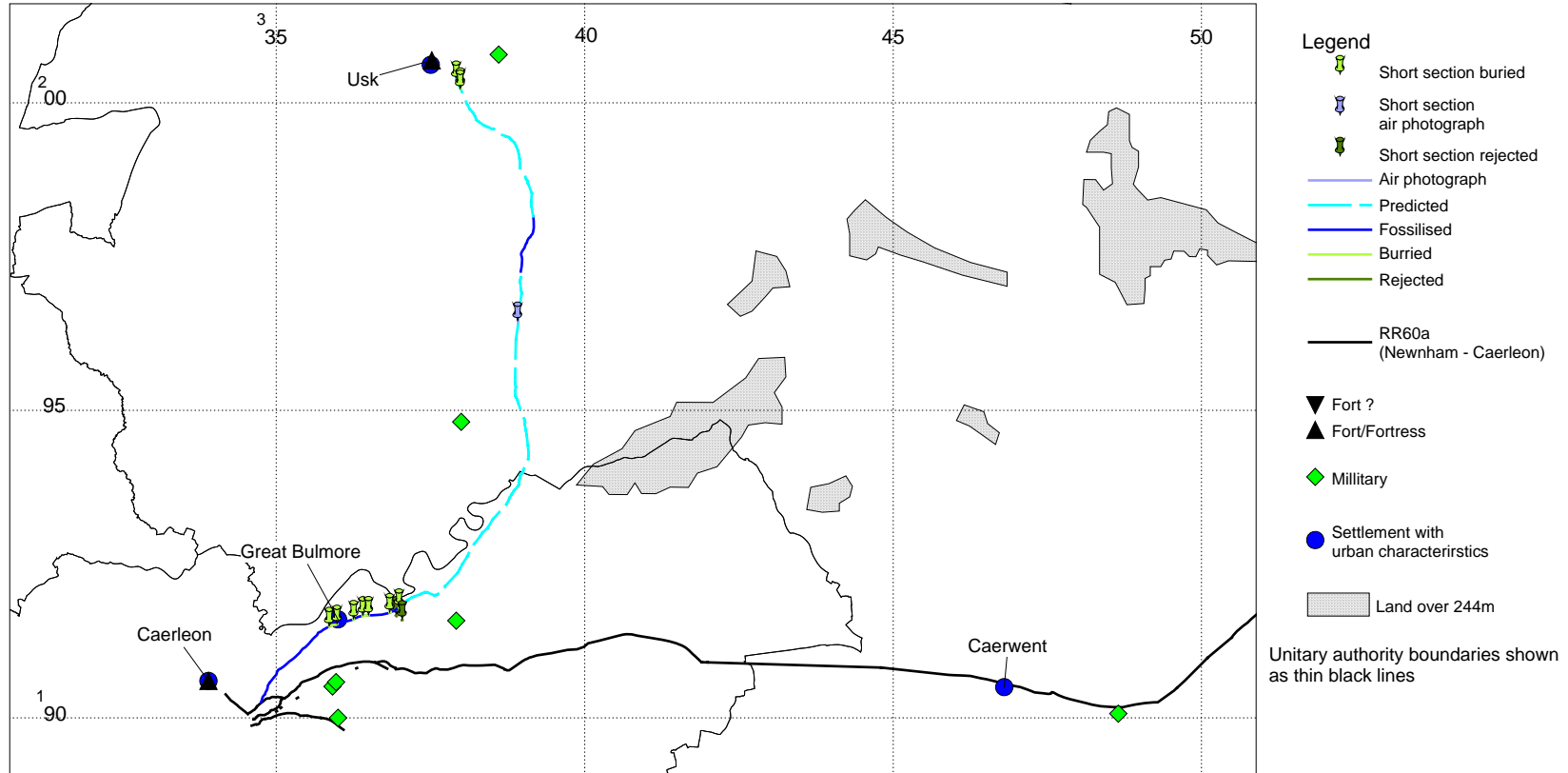
Copeland 1980
Maynard 1988
Maynard 1993b
Maynard 1996a
Maynard 1996b
Maynard and Marvell 1994
Maynard and Marvell 1995
RCAHMW 1994, 7
Tuck 1999
Yates 1999
Zienkiewicz 1984, 4-8

¹³ Maynard has also recorded a third section of metalling on this route in 1996, although the exact location is not recorded due to an error in the NGR.

Recommendations for further work

The southern end of the route as it passes through Bulmore, and the northern end as it approaches Usk, make this one of the best understood and recorded of all Roman roads in southeast Wales. The central section is, however, still largely conjectural. Air photography is already providing additional information about this road. It may run, as shown, on the line of the modern road, but Post-medieval improvements to this make it unclear whether it is actually of Roman origin. There are however sections around Llantrisant and south of Llanllowell where geophysical survey and excavation to confirm the line might be possible.

Figure 13: Roman road RR62a variant (Caerleon - Usk) River Usk east bank route via Llantrisant



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RR621 **Castell Collen - Cardiff**

SO0505014970 to ST1908074870

PRN(s) 00898s
Mapped Figure 14
Status Proposed
Condition Unknown

The section of this route between Castell Collen and Pont Cwm-y-fedwen is not within the boundaries of this study area, and the northern most section of the route within the study area is totally conjectural. Both the Royal Commission and the Ordnance Survey state that there are no visible remains north of SO099052 until past the Taf Fechan reservoir. Margary, who was unaware of the fort at Penydarren, proposed a route running straight across Merthyr Common and the northern portion of Gelligaer Common, between SO0609011480 and SO0955005730, which is now known to be unlikely, particularly since recent survey work by GGAT on Merthyr Common, although by no means exhaustive, failed to find any traces.¹⁴ Most authorities now postulate a route through Penydarren; however the rapid expansion of Meythr Tydfil in the 18th and 19th centuries have disguised all evidence for the road and the route is purely conjectural.

The first physical evidence for this road occurs between SO099052 and SO099051 in the form of a terrace. This line is continued by a cropmark which runs between SO099051 and SO100050, and then by a hollow-way which runs between SO100050 and SO101048. These three features are noted by the RCAHMW (1976), but no further information is given. A further pair of features is also noted without further description: an *agger*/terrace running between SO101037 and SO103032, and a terrace/hollow-way/*agger* which runs between SO103032 and SO104030. The *agger* is described in more detail in the documentation supporting the scheduling of the site (Cadw 2003): it takes the form of an *agger* some 4m wide and 0.5m in height, flanked by ditches 2m wide and 0.5m deep, and provided with external counterscarp banks 2m wide and 0.5m high. However the grid reference (SO10460308 to SO10150390) differs from that recorded in 1994. The route is then supposed to follow the course of a cropmark, which runs between SO104030 and SO105028, and then what is described as an *agger*/terrace which runs between SO105029 and SO106027. There is however some inconsistency with these grid references as the features run parallel to each other for a short distance rather than leading one into the other.

From here the route follows a terrace 2.5m wide and then a bank which varies in width between 3-4m, with an average height of 0.3m. This bank has on both sides shallow side ditches, which are on average 1m wide, and the bank runs between SO106027 and SO106026. The line of the route is then lost for a short distance before continuing as a terrace and bank, which run between SO108024 and SO108023. The terrace is 6m wide at its northern end, narrowing to 4m wide at its southern end. The bank which runs along the terrace is almost 5m wide at its southern end, narrowing as it runs south, flanked on both sides by shallow ditches 3m wide and 0.5m deep. The route is again lost for a short distance before being visible as a section of *agger* running between SO112010 and SO112009, which is described as a slight bank. No further physical evidence is known for this road and the route is again lost before being assumed to merge with the course of the modern road across Gelligaer Common at ST1173899981.

The route beyond this point is again totally conjectural being assumed to follow the course of the modern Heol Adam into Gelligaer past the practice works and running to the west of the forts. The route then turns south following the course of Church Road and Penybryn Terrace before being lost at ST1344095590. The route is again lost between ST1325095231 and ST1344395586, presumably has been destroyed by the spoil tip. Beyond this point, the route is

¹⁴ It is however possible that extensive peat fields may obscure any remains.

assumed to follow the course of a footpath, then the Heol Pont-y-Saison and a series of unnamed tracks and minor roads across Mynydd Eglwysilan before joining the course of the Heol Las at ST1401089740. The more fragmented of these have not been mapped as fossilised. Once into Caerphilly the route is lost at approximately ST1481088060, being assumed to pass somewhere to the southeast of the fort, being re-discovered at ST1553086870. From here it is assumed to follow the route of the modern Castle Street, Cardiff road, Mountain Road and Thornhill Road into Cardiff. The route is then assumed to follow Caerphilly Road and North Road before turning onto the Kingsway and Working Street. From here it is assumed to run down to the harbour following the course of The Hayes, Hayes Bridge and Bute Street.

Sources

Cadw 2003

Margary 1957, 68-9

RCAHMW 1976, 108-9

RCAHMW 1986, 163-4

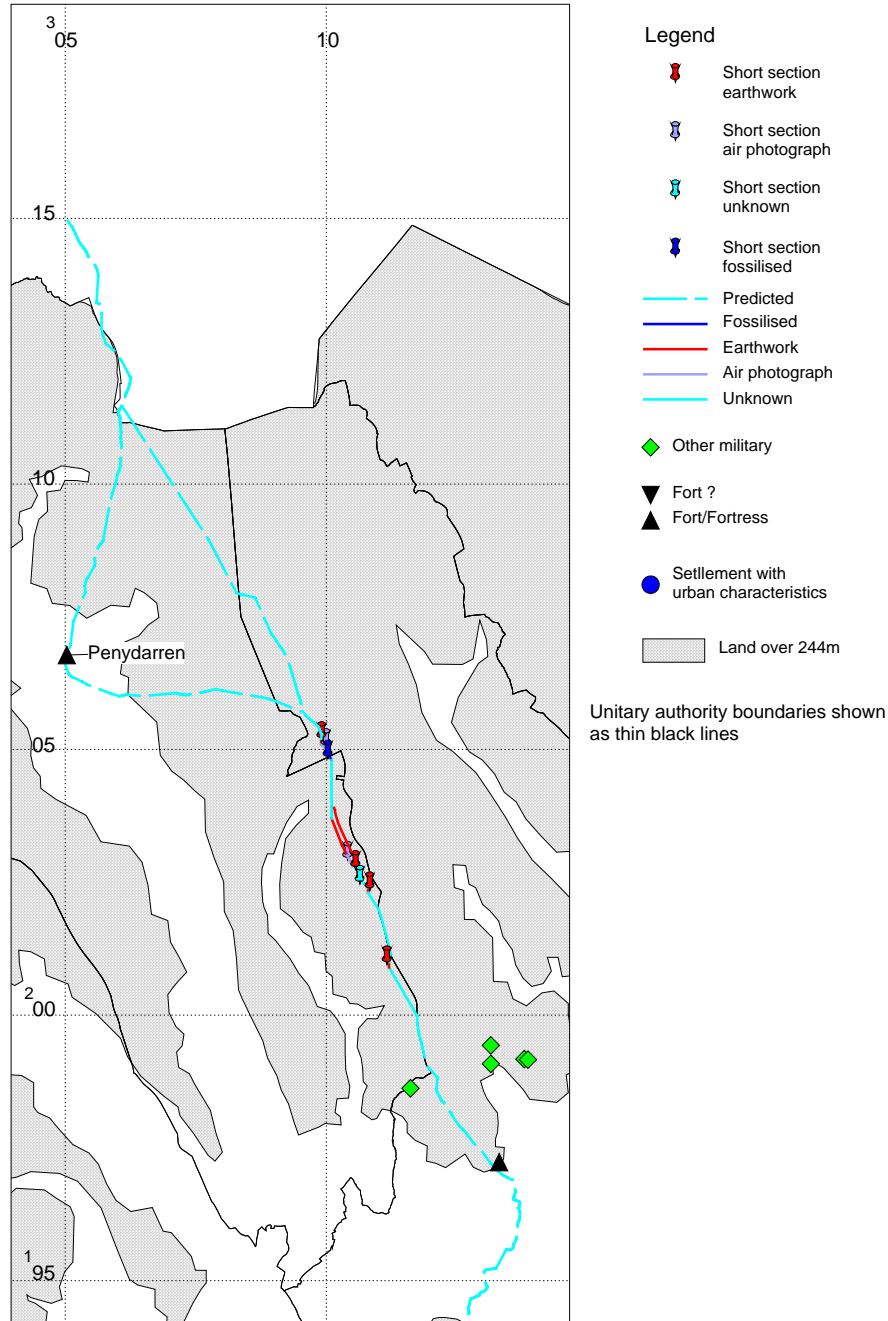
RCAHMW 1994, 9

Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

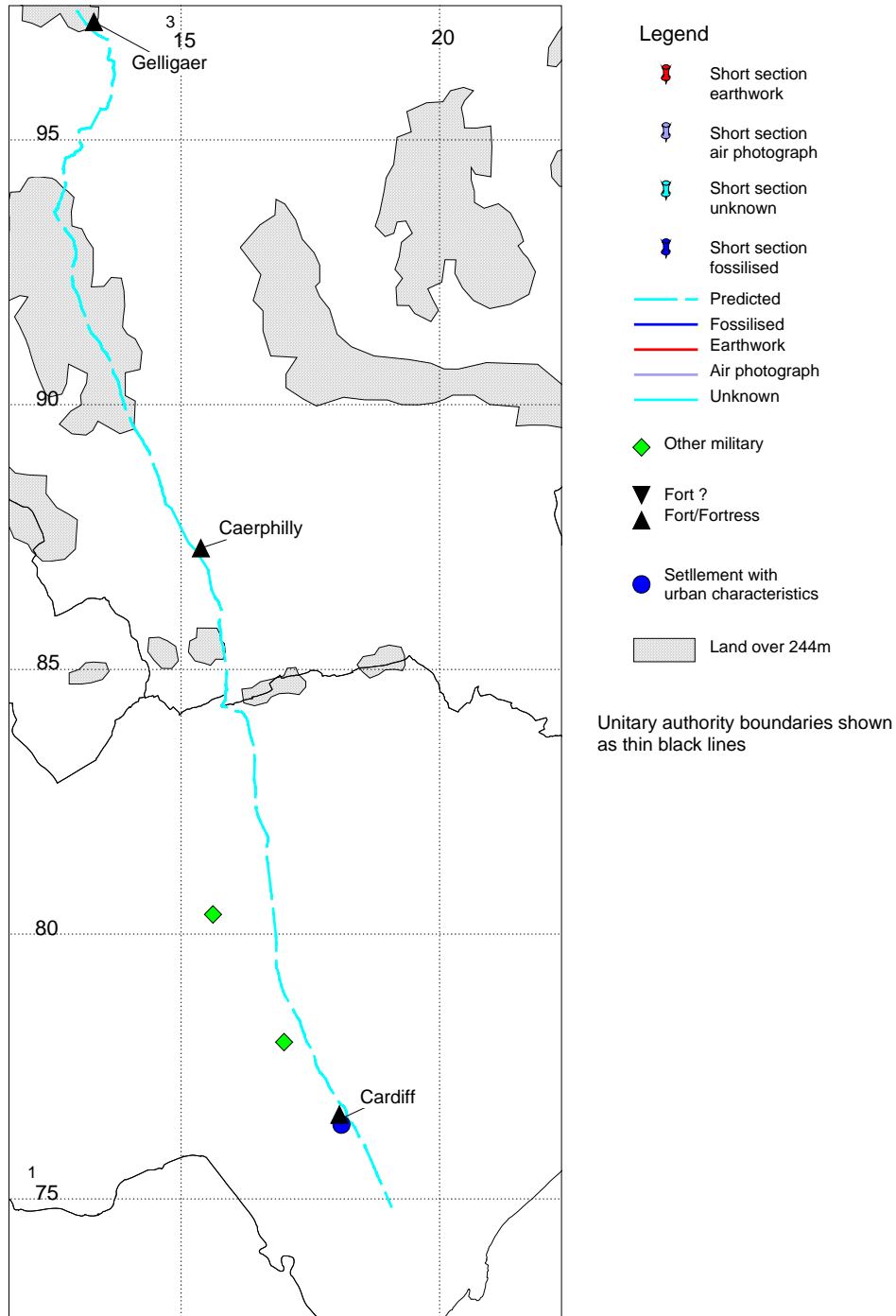
This road has been extensively studied over an extended period of time (most recently by RCAHMW for the Glamorgan *Inventory*), and without any new information, further fieldwork is not likely to be very profitable. Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along modern roads, although deviations might be apparent as cropmarks under suitable conditions. Towards the northern end of the route, more fieldwork on Merthyr Common in the area north of that examined recently might identify any road bypassing the Penyardren fort. Also monitor any ground disturbance along the route.

Figure 14.1: Roman road RR621 (Castell Collen - Cardiff) Taf Fechan reservoir - Gelligear



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Figure 14.2: Roman road RR621 (Castell Collen - Cardiff) Gelligear - Cardiff



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RR622 **Neath - Y Gaer, Aberyscir**

SS7496098030 to SN8609510870

PRN(s) 01025.0w, 01025.1w, 03738m
Mapped Figures 15
Status Known
Condition Damaged

Route which runs between the forts of Neath and Y Gaer, conventionally known as Sarn Helen; recorded by both Margary and the Royal Commission. Unlike the vast majority of roads in the Glamorgan-Gwent area this route has a number of well defined physical features; however its exact route out of Neath is not known and it is generally assumed to follow the course of the modern A4230 as Cadoxton Road, Main Road, Church Road and Cadoxton Terrace, then at SS7693499235 the route follows the A4109 through Aberdulais.

At SS7779999783 the Ordnance Survey suggests two different routes for the road. The more obvious follows the course of the B4242 until SS7801799835 where it is assumed to run across a series of fields to SN7843700060. Here this first route joins the course of an old lane, which forms the boundary between two parishes and runs up a hill in what the Ordnance Survey describes as being a 'relatively easy ascent'. The second, less favoured, route leaves SS7779999783 to run across a lightly wooded hillside to SS7779999783 along what the Ordnance Survey describes as a slight and mutilated terrace which is considered to be 'too steep for vehicular traffic, general direction inconsistent with Roman line.' Between SN7829200103 and SN7846200110 the course of this second route is confused by what the Ordnance Survey describe as a series of 'complicated terrace-ways and hollow-ways', all running in slightly different directions.¹⁵ These two possible routes merge at SN7846200111 to follow the course of the old lane until SN7909800929.

Once the route reaches Lletty'r-afel-fach at SN7909800929, it becomes well defined. At SN7913801004 the road is marked by a well-engineered terrace 7m wide. Between SN7916101031 and SN8522108498 the route of the road lies on a modern trackway used by the forestry commission and seasonally by recreational off-road vehicles, but despite this use sections of *agger* can clearly be seen in places as follows:

- Between approximately SN7940501642 and SN7942501848; grass covered *agger* averaging 6m wide and 0.4m high.
- Between approximately SN7945802169 and SN7948802231; grass-covered *agger* 6m wide and 0.2m high; ditch 3m wide and 0.2m deep on the northwest side.
- Between SN7953902299 and SN7959802374; grass-covered *agger* 0.2m high and 6m wide; ditch 3m wide and 0.2m deep on the west side.

At SN8024002916 the road enters the modern forest of Rheola and has been replaced by a modern track for about 3km; at SN8123904009 the road passes to the northeast of Hirfynydd signal station. At approximately SN8219005320 the track emerges from the forest back onto the moorland to follow the forest's western edge until approximately SN8497008520, and at SN8284006630 the road passes to the southeast of a second signal station. As the road follows the edge of the forest to the north its route is marked by the line of a modern wall, which supposedly shows the extent of the road and its medieval successor. Along this stretch of road, the *agger* can be seen in a number of places. This *agger* varies between 3m-11m in width and

¹⁵ None are noted by Margary or the Royal Commission, and the Ordnance Survey does not know which of these features, if any, relate to the road.

between 0.2m-0.6m in height, but none of these stretches have evidence for the accompanying ditches. Centred at approximately SN8452107909 is a section of terracing which follows the contours of a hillside with a 1 in 3 slope. This terrace is on average 4m wide and in places has had large boulders placed along its outer edge for reinforcement.

Between SN8522608493 and SN8542328726 the course of the road has largely been obliterated by open-cast coal mining; notes on the Ordnance Survey strip map state that although section of the road can be seen 'here and there' it is difficult to trace its exact course. Between SN8542328726 and SN8566209749 the route follows the line of the modern road through Banwen. In 1997 Williams excavated a section of the road which ran between approximately SN8566209749 and SN857009903. The road was constructed from a layer of medium sized cobbles which lay directly on top of the natural clay. This layer of metalling extended c0.6m beyond the eastern edge of the current road, and running parallel to the metalling was a clay cut drainage ditch of unknown depth, c0.5m wide. From SN857009903 the route is generally assumed to follow the course of the modern Camnant Road passing through the southern gate of Coelbren fort before crossing the Nant y Bryn at SN8609510870 and passing out of the boundaries of this study area.

Sources

CPAT 1998

Margary 1957, 70-1

Neath Antiquarian Society 1986

RCAHMW 1976, 109

RCAHMW 1994, 16-7

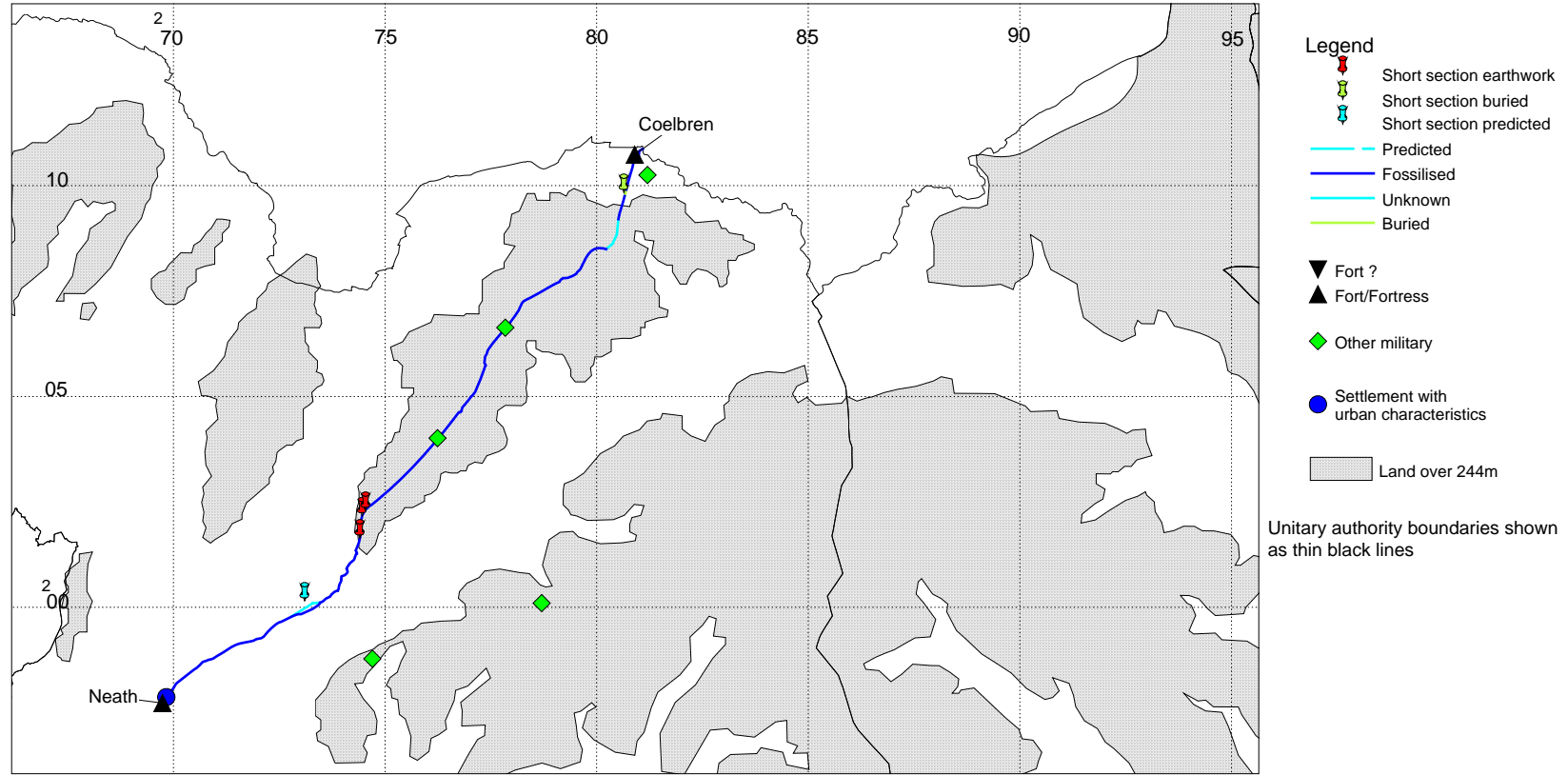
Williams 1997a

Ordnance Survey strip maps.

Recommendations for further work

This road has been extensively studied over an extended period of time (most recently by RCAHMW for the Glamorgan *Inventory*), and without any new information, further fieldwork is not likely to be very profitable. Any ground disturbance along the route should be monitored. Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along modern roads and tracks, although deviations might be apparent as cropmarks under suitable conditions. However, the presence of extensive areas of forestry along the much of the route makes air photography impractical except at the southern end.

Figure 15: Roman road RR622 (Neath - Y Gaer, Aberyscir)



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RRX65 **Bassaleg - Lower Machen-Caerphilly**

ST274870 to ST153872

PRN(s) 00024g, 02892.0m, 07762g
Mapped Figure 16
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

Route which runs from Bassaleg, through the metal working settlement at Lower Machen (centred at approximately ST2289087780) connecting the road between Caerleon and Cardiff (RR60b) to the fort at Caerphilly; proposed by Boon in 1972. There is no certain evidence for this road. The Ordnance Survey road files accept as reasonably likely the section east of Lower Machen, where there is a three-mile straight section of modern road (A468) in the valley bottom which could conceivably eventually connect with RR60b (and Caerleon) at Bassaleg, but beyond Lower Machen they state that the terrain is difficult and no line can be established. The line of the road has been taken from the 1st edn 6" OS map, which is rather less straight than the present line.¹⁶

In 1978 the Ordnance Survey noted the presence of linear cropmarks seen on aerial photographs running to the south of the modern settlement of Lower Machen, at ST227877 (Record Card 1978, ST 28 NW). However there is little evidence to suggest that these represent the course of a road, and they are slightly off the line of the A468. Capel and Marvell note an old trackway running east-west between ST1797187513 and ST1797187513 through Gwern-y-Domen, which they considered might follow in part the route of the Roman road.

Sources

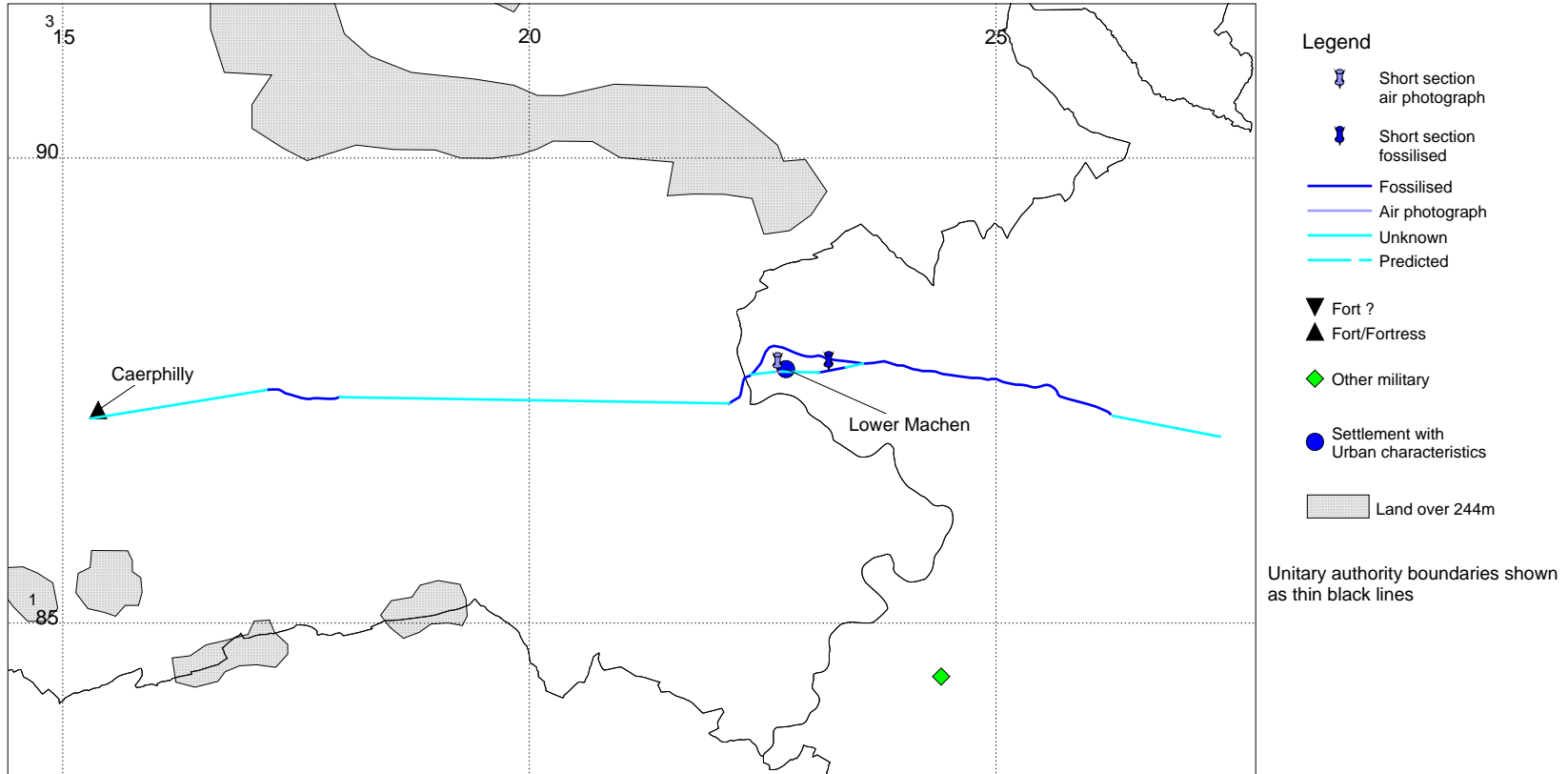
Boon 1972, 16
Capel and Marvell 1991, 14
RCAHMW 1994, 46
Ordnance Survey road files.

Recommendations for further work

Relatively little work has been done on this road, and therefore a full programme of map regression, air photograph search and fieldwork is recommended. Of particular interest is the linear cropmark south of Lower Machen; excavation here would establish whether this is indeed the line of the Roman road, or whether it is more likely to lie on the line of the modern road.

¹⁶ No information was available as to whether or not this road had been turnpiked.

Figure 16: Roman road RRX65 (Bassaleg - Lower Machen - Caerphilly)



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RRX80 ***Penhow - Magor Pill***

ST4091088185 to ST4356486847

PRN(s) 06257g
Mapped Figure 17
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

A section of medieval-modern road running from the higher ground near Caerwent and across the Gwent Levels; proposed as possibly Roman in origin on the basis of straight alignments and its apparent destination point

This route, connecting the Caerwent-Caerleon road (RR60a) to the supposed port site at Magor Pill, was suggested by Rippon in 1996. The RCAHMW record it in their handlist, (as ST409926 - 434845), but it is not included by Margary or the Ordnance Survey. It is formed by what Rippon describes as ‘a remarkable alignment of roads and field boundaries’, which leaves the Caerwent-Caerleon road just to the west of Penhow to run in straight line down to the edge of the Levels at Magor. Depending upon the post-Roman history of the Level at Magor, the section to the south of the village may potentially also be Roman.

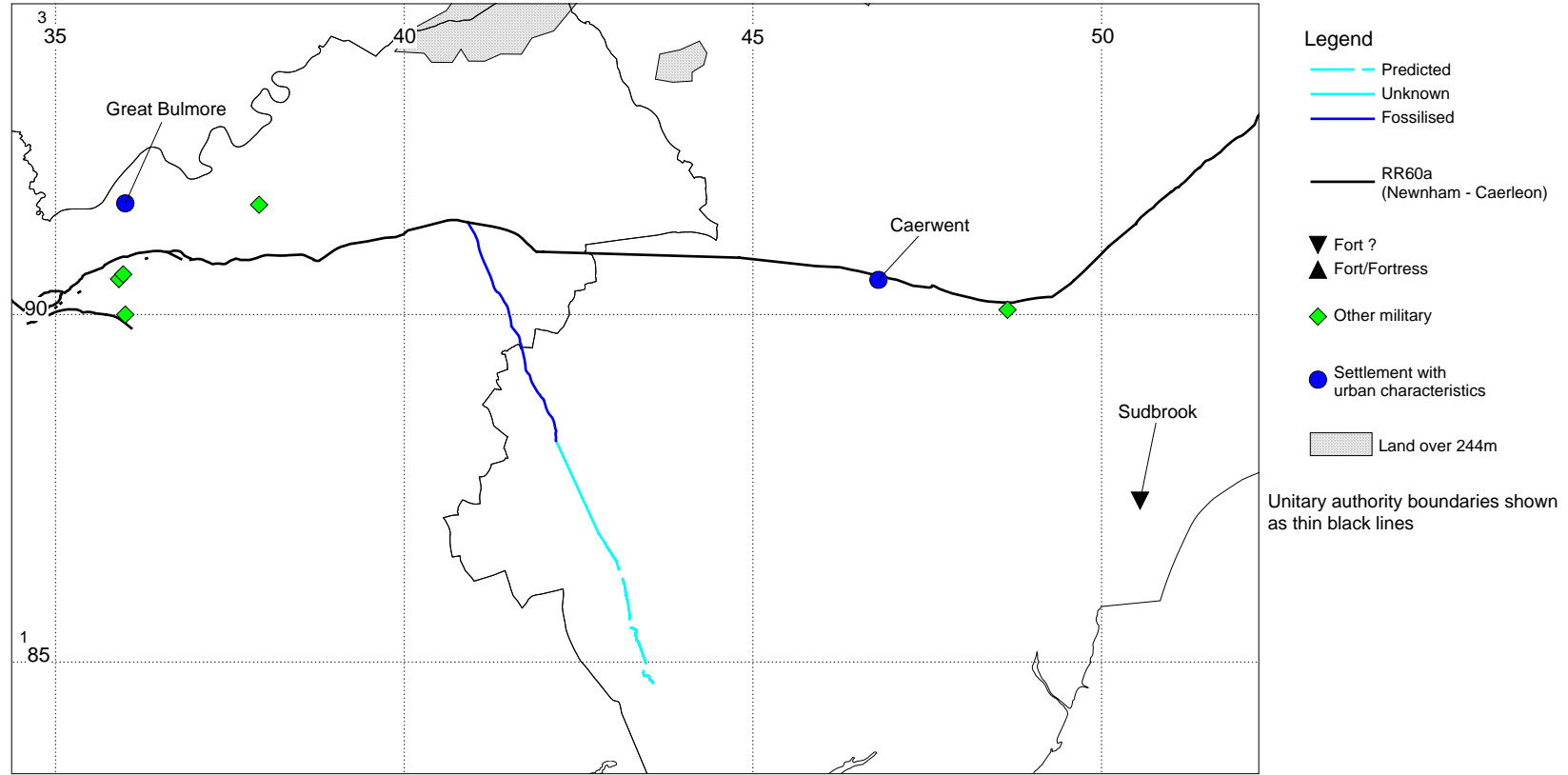
Sources

Nayling and McGrail 2004, 102-109
RCAHMW 1994, 51
Rippon 1996a, 32-33

Recommendations for further work

Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along modern roads. The most likely method of obtaining additional information is through the monitoring of any ground disturbance along the route.

Figure 17: Roman road RRX80 (Penhow - Magor Pill)



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RR GGAT 001 Wheel Lane

ST2826082492 to ST2922383212

PRN(s) 05199.0g
Mapped Figure 18
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

Minor road, Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. A section of medieval-modern road running across the Wentloog levels. This route is represented by a short section of trackway running northeast-southwest across the Wentlooge levels, which formed an important communication route in the Medieval period. While there is no direct evidence that this route is Roman, Rippon argues that the northeast-southwest boundaries on the Gwent levels are continuations of elements of the Roman landscape and that therefore Wheel Lane reflects this earlier landscape.

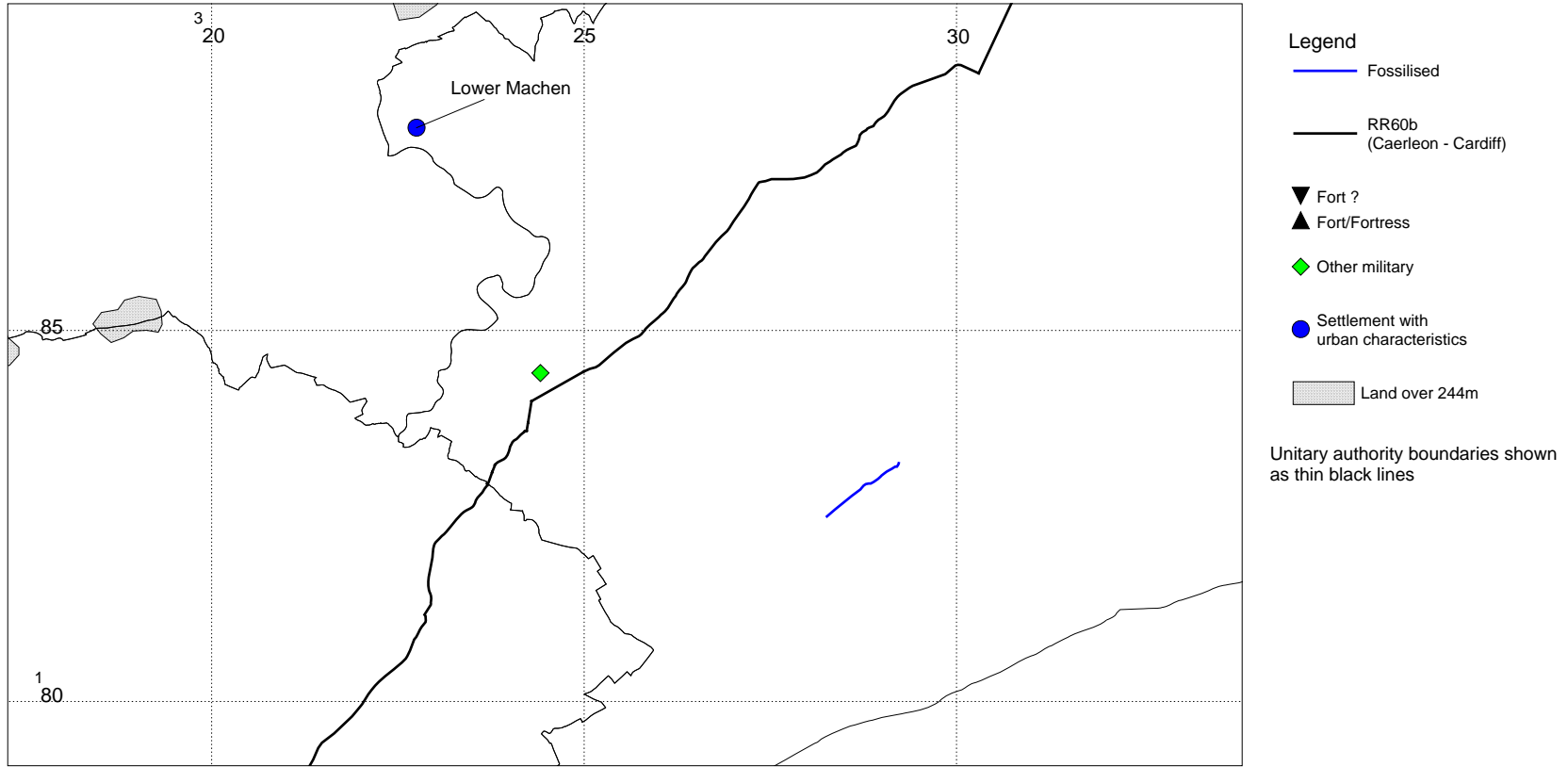
Sources

Rippon 1996b, 54
Yates 1996

Recommendations for further work

Given the ground conditions on the Levels, there would not appear to be any scope for fieldwork or air photography. However, the Levels are being affected by development, and any proposed development on the line of this road or its possible continuation at either end should be the subject of predetermination archaeological assessment to determine whether physical remains can be identified.

Figure 18: Roman road RR GGAT 001 (Wheel Lane)



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RR GGAT 002 LG Semicon Road

ST28308484 to ST28328478

PRN(s) 06279.0g
Mapped Figure 19
Status Known
Condition Damaged

Minor road, Roman date certain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. Route running in a south-southwestern direction towards the Wentlooge Levels, though entirely on the solid geology of the fen-edge; partially excavated by Williams in 1997. Almost 90m of metalled road were excavated across two trenches. The first of these sections consisted of a surface constructed from small, mainly rounded stones, which had been laid directly onto the underlying natural. Evidence of two probable wheel ruts were noted within this metalled surface. In the second trench a similar metalled surface of small, rounded stones was overlain by a band of larger cobbles. Both sections of road had a narrow ditch running parallel to them on the northern side. The only finds excavated from both of these trenches were of Roman date. This section of road has been interpreted as part of a lesser route running from the main Caerleon-Cardiff road towards the settlement site excavated at Great Pencarn Farm (Yates 2000).

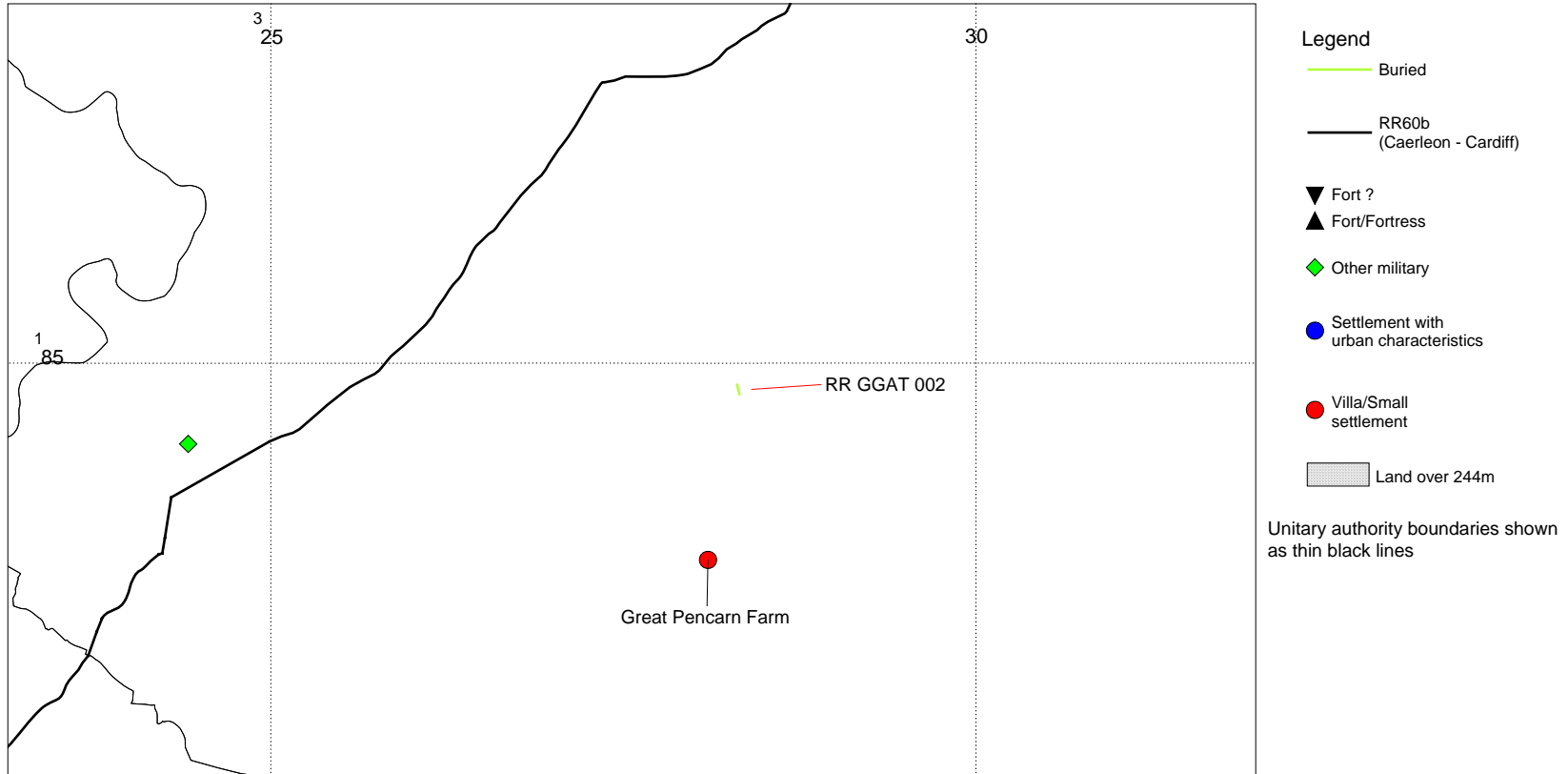
Sources

Sell 1997,
Williams 1997b
Yates 2000

Recommendations for further work

Given the ground conditions on the Levels, there would not appear to be any scope for fieldwork or air photography. However, the Levels are being affected by development, and any proposed development on the line of this road or its possible continuation at either end should be the subject of predetermination archaeological assessment to determine whether physical remains can be identified.

Figure 19: Roman road RR GGAT 002 (LG Semicon)



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RR GGAT 003 Sor Brook Valley Road

ST3296092639 to ST3268696854

PRN(s) 05229.2g
Mapped Figure 20
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

Possibly a minor road, Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. A section of medieval-modern road proposed as possibly Roman in origin on the basis of straight alignments, and because the line runs directly towards Caerleon. It is not clear, however, where the destination would have been at the northern end, unless it is an alternative route to Abergavenny. There is no physical evidence. There are two straight sections with a common alignment, one running between Ponthir and Common Cefn-llwyn and the other on the other side of the valley at the northern end of the mapped section near Whitehall. If this is a Roman road, it is unclear what route the intervening section would have taken across the valley to cross the brook possibly by a ford; it is possible that it may have followed the course of the modern road, which winds its way by easy gradients across the topography, particularly since the section on the north side of the valley forms part of the boundary of Llandegfedd parish.

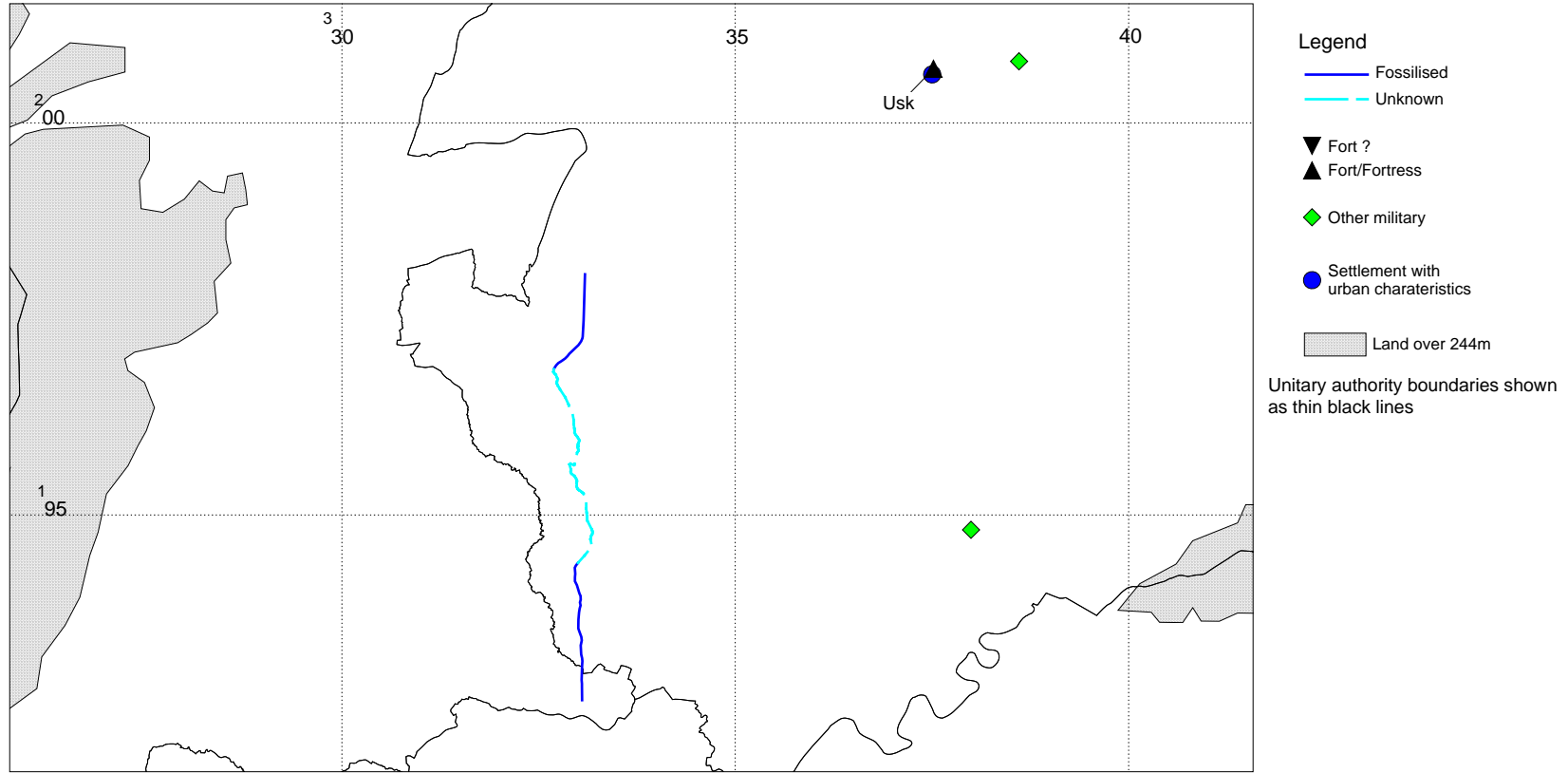
Source

Lawler and Page 1992

Recommendations for further work

Relatively little work has been done on this road, and therefore a full programme of map regression, air photograph search and fieldwork is recommended, to see whether it is indeed an alternative route to Abergavenny.

Figure 20: Roman road RR GGAT 003 (Sor Brook Valley)



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RR GGAT 004 Ffordd y Gyfraith

SS8721980212 to SS8619185992

PRN(s) 03112m
Mapped Figure 21
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

Minor road, Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey or Margary. A section of medieval-modern road running to and up Mynydd Baiden; proposed by the Royal Commission as possibly Roman in origin on the basis of straight alignments and the observance of Roman principles of setting out, though it has no obvious destination points in either direction.

In the introduction to the section on Roman roads in the *Glamorgan Inventory*, RCAHMW describes it thus: 'The relevant part runs from just north of Laleston to Mynydd Baiden, where it becomes a normal ridgeway. This length of 5.5 km, is set out essentially in three straight sections, with angles on Cefn Cribwr and on a southern spur of Mynydd Baiden; it also uses sharp zig-zags to descend steep slopes. These features are characteristic of known Roman Roads, but it is difficult to see how this track could fit into the general network.' Because of the doubt as to its origin, the road was not given a separate number in the *Inventory*, neither was it included in the RCAHMW handlist; as a result this route has neither a RCAHMW number nor a Margary number.

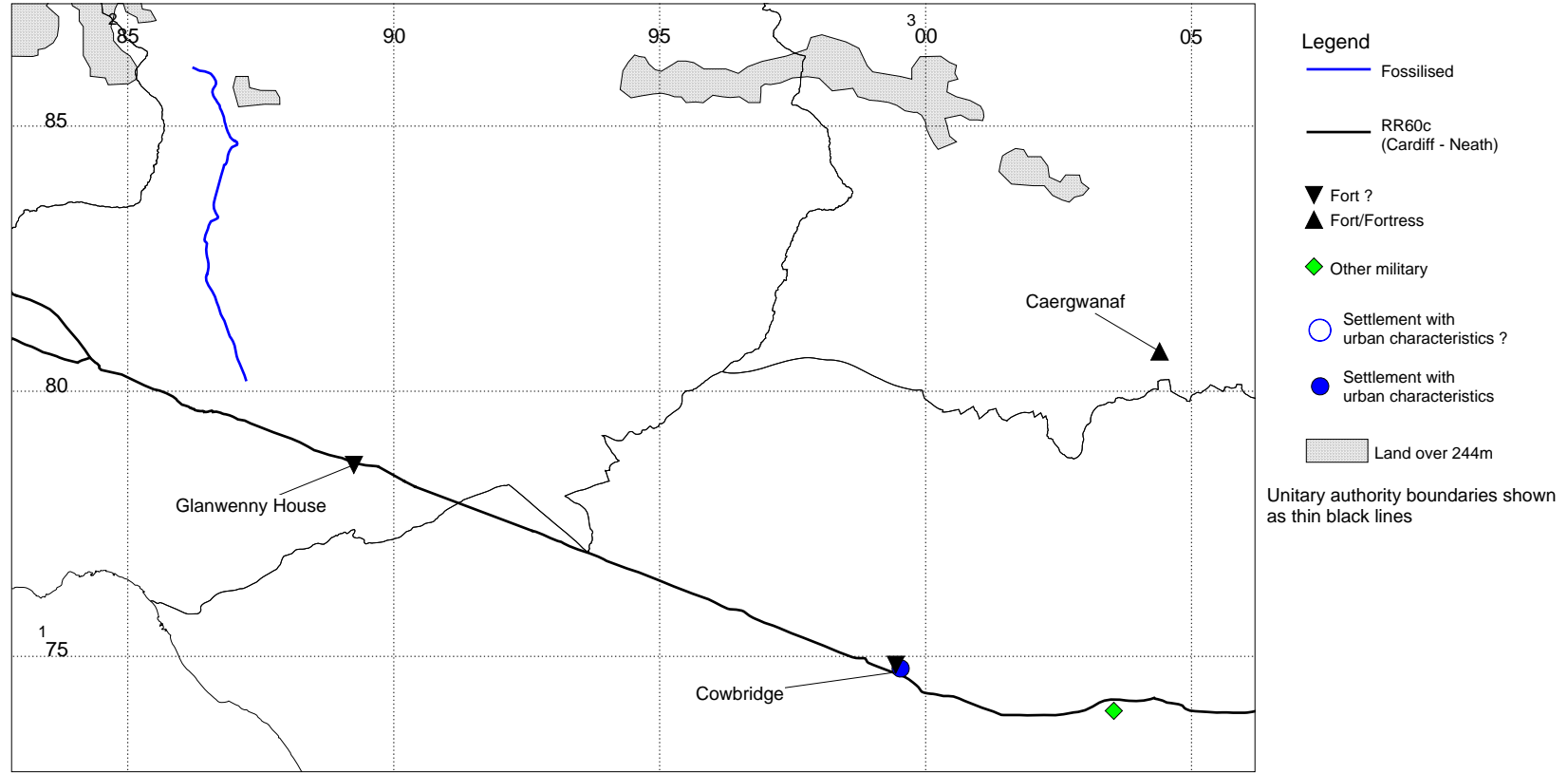
Source

RCAHMW 1976, 104-6

Recommendations for further work

Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along modern roads. The most likely method of obtaining additional information is through the monitoring of any ground disturbance along the route, including also the ridgeway along Mynydd Margam which is the potential continuation of the engineered section identified by RCAHMW.

Figure 21: Roman road RR GGAT 004 (Ffordd y Gyfraith)



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RR GGAT 005 Heol Spencer

SS9116479622 to SS9506277039

PRN(s) 04087m
Mapped Figure 22
Status Predicted
Condition Medium

Minor road, Roman date uncertain. Not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. A section of medieval-modern road running from Llangan, through Coity and across Cefn Hirgoed towards the point at which the River Ogmere and its tributaries emerge from the Coalfield escarpment; proposed as possibly Roman in origin on the basis of straight alignment and its potential strategic importance in controlling a series of major early routeways out of the upland. There is no physical evidence. Coity Castle stands either astride or immediately alongside the line of this road. This castle is one of those of strategic importance founded by the Normans as part of their conquest of Glamorgan; other castles of this type (eg Caerphilly, Cardiff, Loughor) occupy sites which had previously been used for Roman forts, and this could also be true of Coity, through no excavation has been carried out there to confirm or deny the hypothesis. Heol Spencer, and its southerly continuation Heol Simonston, are of remarkable straightness and appear on the earliest maps of the area; part of the boundary of the historic parish of Coety runs along Heol Simonston.

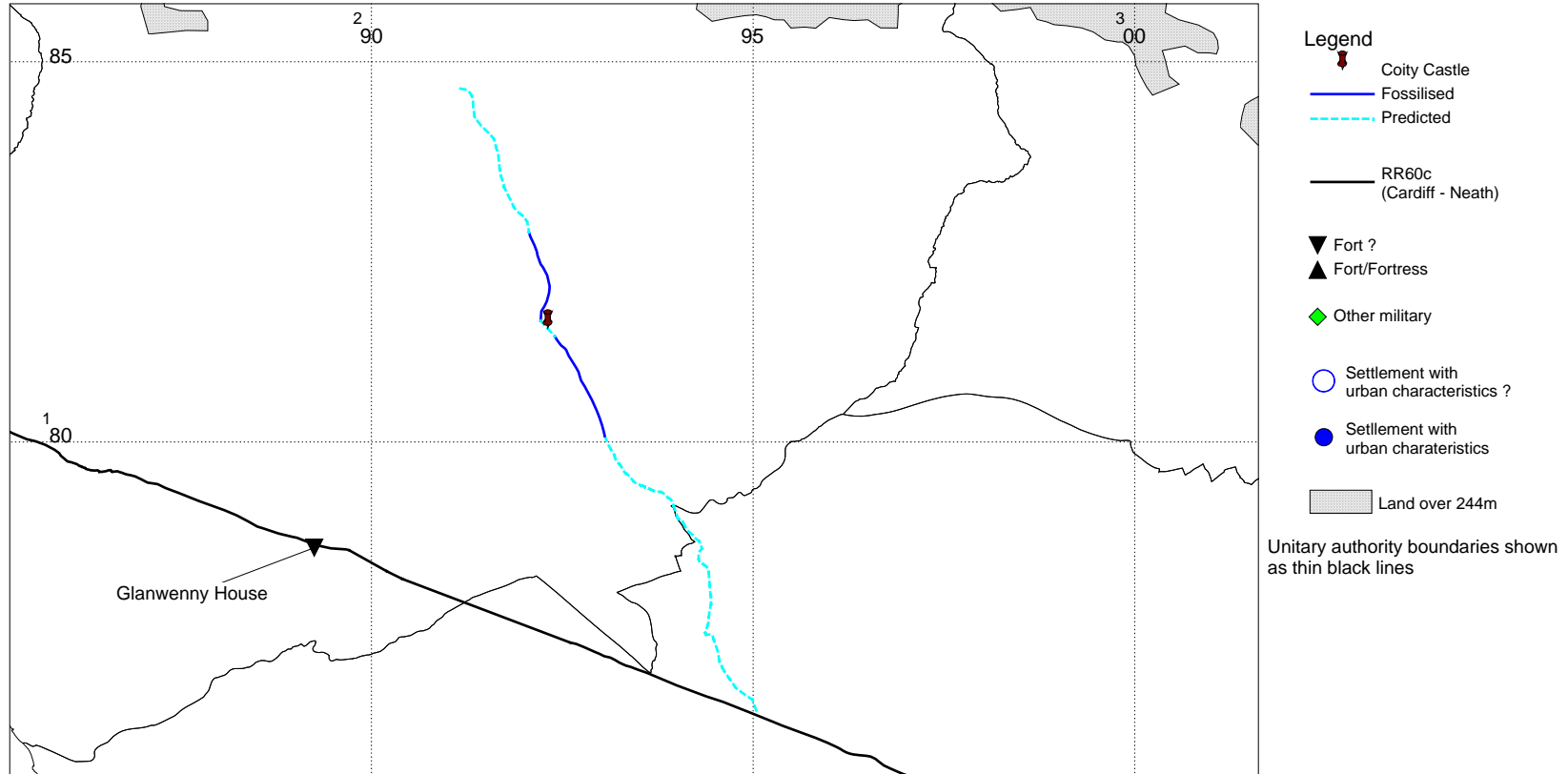
Sources

Lawler and Andrews 1992
Evans 2002

Recommendations for further work

Air photography is unlikely to provide further information for much of the route if the road follows the postulated route along modern roads. The most likely method of obtaining additional information is through the monitoring of any ground disturbance along the route. The identification of Heol Spencer as being Roman in origin is partly dependent upon the hypothesis that it served a fort controlling the mouth of the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmere valleys. Investigation of the area of Coity Castle might establish whether this is the site of such a fort, particularly the linear feature in the field to the north of the church which has previously been interpreted as a siegework of early 15th century date.

Figure 22: Roman road RR GGAT 005 (Heol Spencer)



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RR GGAT 006 West Aberthaw - Llanharry

ST0261966904 to SS9905078975

PRN(s) 01037.0s
Mapped Figure 23
Status Predicted
Condition Near destroyed

Minor road, Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. Route running inland from the mouth of the River Thaw to the settlement at Cowbridge and beyond, roughly following the course of the river. It is not clear where the destination would have been at the northern end. Proposed as possibly Roman in origin on the basis of a number of straight alignments to the north and south of Cowbridge, and the fact that significant proportion of excavated structures in Cowbridge (including the bath-house, which was probably an official building) follow this alignment rather than that of the Cardiff - Neath road (RR60c), along which the Roman settlement at Cowbridge was built. The mouth of the Thaw was a haven for shipping in post-medieval times; there is evidence for settlement at East Aberthaw including 4th century coinage not normally associated with simple rural sites. However, the proposed route at this point runs up the western side of the river, following the existing roads, though there is as yet no evidence for any other Roman activity here. During limited fieldwork carried out in 1985, a V-shaped ditch was noted in the section of the cutting of the railway line from Barry to Llantwit Major at the point where it crosses the predicted route. North of this point, the modern road between ST002704 and ST009695 forms part of the boundary between the parishes of Eglwys Brewis and Flemingston. Other features noted were a number of hollow-ways following hedge lines and a stony bank on the right alignment which could form an old hedge bank. There is also the placename Pen-yr-heol (top of the road), although *heol* names are not necessarily an indicator that a road is great age. Around Llandough-juxta-Cowbridge (NGR SS995729), where the terrain is difficult, the line is lost. At Llansannor, the church, which is a possible Early Medieval foundation, sits astride the line of the road, which is diverted round it at SS99377751.

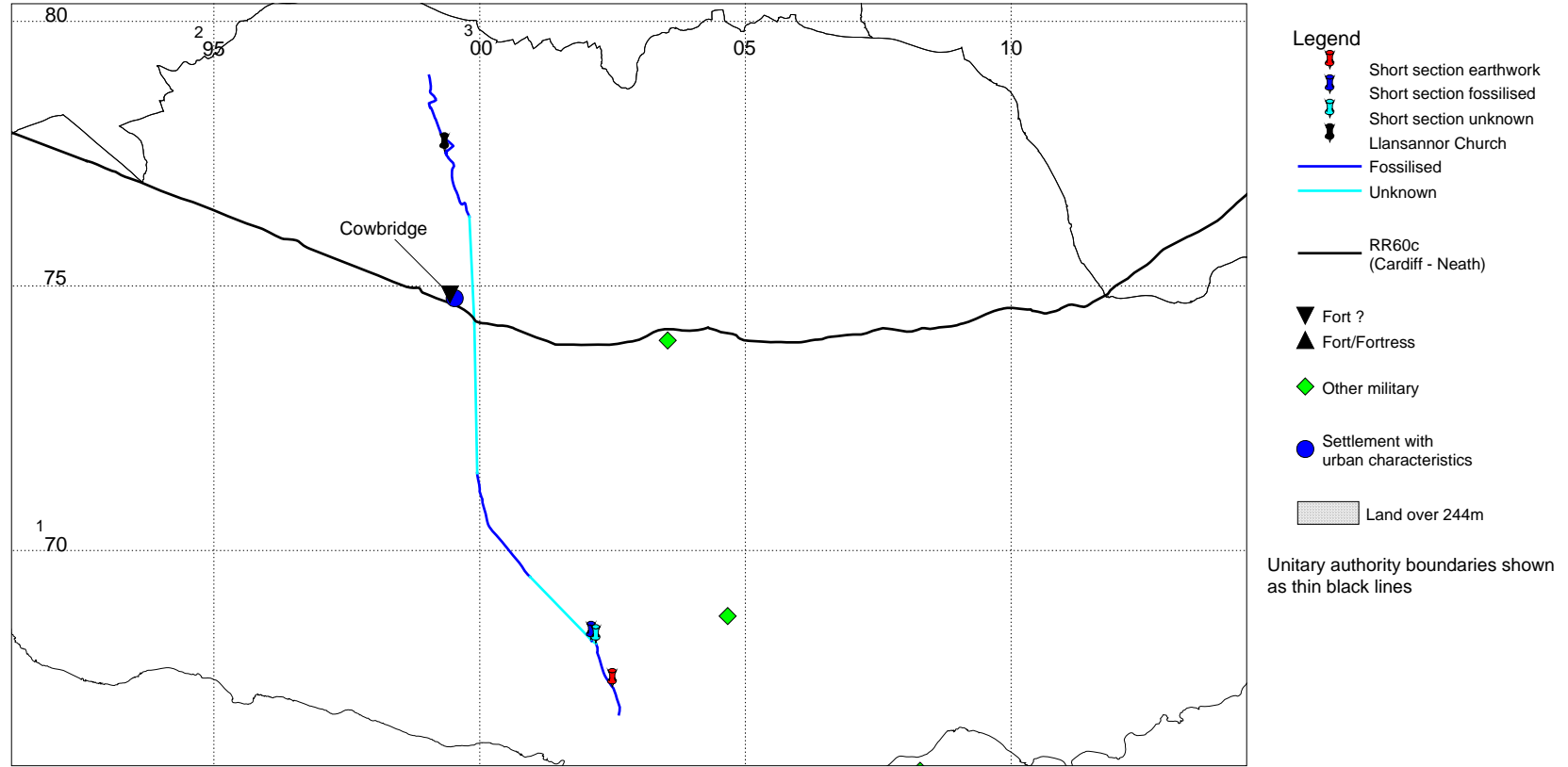
Source

Evans 1985

Recommendations for further work

Relatively little work has been done on this road, and therefore a full programme of map regression, air photograph search and fieldwork is recommended.

Figure 23: Roman road RR GGAT 006 (West Aberthaw - Llanharry)



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RR GGAT 007 Road on east bank of River Neath

SS7723594923 to SS7819097569¹⁷

PRN(s) None yet allocated (Sites 3 and 8 in Network Archaeologies report no: 303)
Mapped Figure 24
Status Proposed
Condition Near destroyed

Possible conquest-period road, but identification and Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. Proposed as Roman on the grounds that it lies on a possible route between the fort at Neath and the Blaen-Cwmbach marching camp and between Neath and the fort at Penydarren. The road as excavated is 11m wide across the flanking ditches; deposits 0.88m thick were noted in both excavated sections, though neither had any metallurgy, and there was no dating evidence. However, the line of this proposed road can be made out as an earthwork on aerial photographs at approximately SS7819097569. It should however be noted that during the Second World War a decoy site was constructed in this area to lure enemy aircraft away from the petrol refinery at Jesery Marine, and this involved the building of numerous unmapped roads in the vicinity, now grassed over (R Lewis pers comm).

Sources

Network 2004.

Recommendations for further work

Relatively little work has been done on this road, and therefore a full programme of map regression, air photograph search and fieldwork is recommended.

¹⁷ The second of the above NGRs is only approximate, as the information provided to the SMR was inaccurate. The correct NGR was reconstructed by comparing, Network plans, air photographs (taken as part of GGAT61 and not yet catalogued) and modern Ordnance Survey maps.

Figure 24: Roman road RR GGAT 007 (Road on east bank of River Neath)



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RR GGAT 008 Road on Stormy Down/Newton Down

SS845804 to SS835790

PRN(s) 00333.0m, 02494m
Mapped Figure 25
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

Minor road, identification and Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. Proposed on the basis of alignments of air photograph and earthwork features. Possible route of road running northeast-southwest across Stormy Down and Newton Down between the Cardiff - Neath road (RR60c) and the coast at Porthcawl, where a haven for shipping is recorded from at least the early post-Medieval period, and there is a known villa, at Danygraig (Higgins 1968, 20-1, 27, 32, 136).

Two parallel cropmarks, approximately 20m apart, were noted on aerial photographs by Trott at SS840797, and confirmed on the ground. They were aligned at about 215 degrees to grid north, pointing northeastwards at the proposed sighting point for the RR60c on the crest of Stormy Down, and southwestwards towards a small valley on the same alignment at SS835790, which descends a steep escarpment on Newton Down and is so straight as to suggest it is artificial.

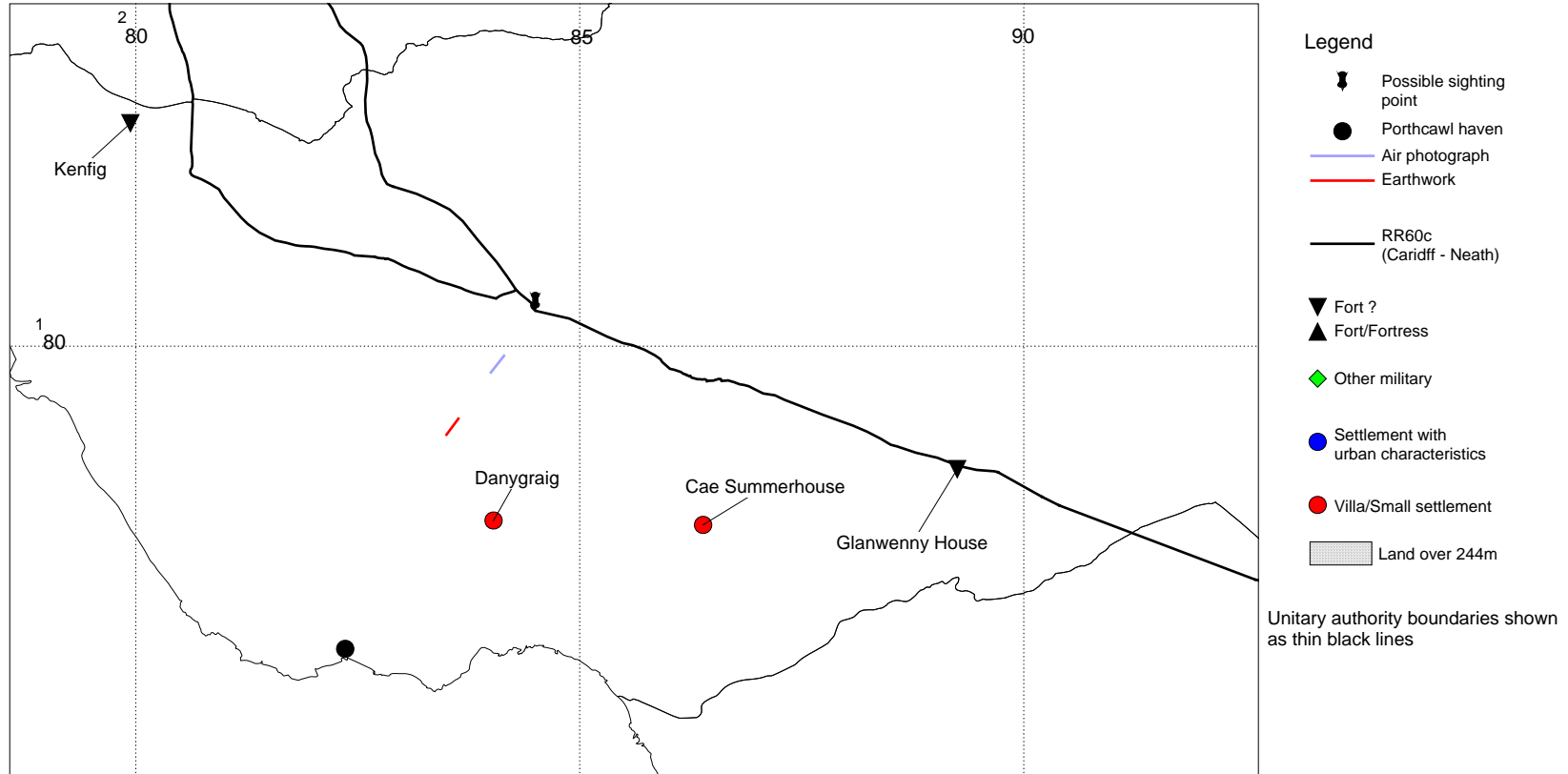
Source

Trott 1976a

Recommendations for further work

Relatively little work has been done on this road, and therefore a full programme of map regression, air photograph search and fieldwork is recommended. Fieldwork should include a thorough examination of the 'small valley' on Newton Down, suggested as an artificial cutting,

Figure 25: Roman road RR GGAT 008 (Road on Stormy Down/Newton Down)



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RR GGAT 009 Road at Rumney

ST2127944 to ST21037893

PRN(s) 00816.0s
Mapped Figure 26
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

Minor road, Roman date uncertain; not recorded in the Ordnance Survey road files, or by Margary or the Royal Commission. This road was reported at the beginning of the 20th century by Ward (1908) as being 'a causeway buried some 4-5 ft (1.2-1.5m) below ground level', frequently encountered during ground disturbance; minutes of evidence presented to the Royal Commission note it as not relating to any known road system and extending in a southerly direction from Pen yr heol in Rumney village towards the River Rumney, where 'it came to the back of a public house known as the Rumney Castle'. A route from Pen-yr-heol to the Rumney Castle public house leads *away* from the river, and it is more likely that the correct Rumney Castle is the site of the early earthwork castle situated on the river to defend the crossing (Lightfoot 1992, 96-7), presumably on an existing routeway. The only discrepancy is that Ward describes the causeway as being 'half a mile below Rumney Bridge', whereas the 1st edition 6" Ordnance Survey map shows it as being above Rumney Bridge. This map also marks the modern road running in the same direction but slightly further east as 'Roman road', whereas it is clear that this cannot be associated with the buried causeway. For the purposes of mapping, the first part of the line immediately south of Pen-yr-heol has been projected down a hedgeline aligned in roughly the right direction.

Sources

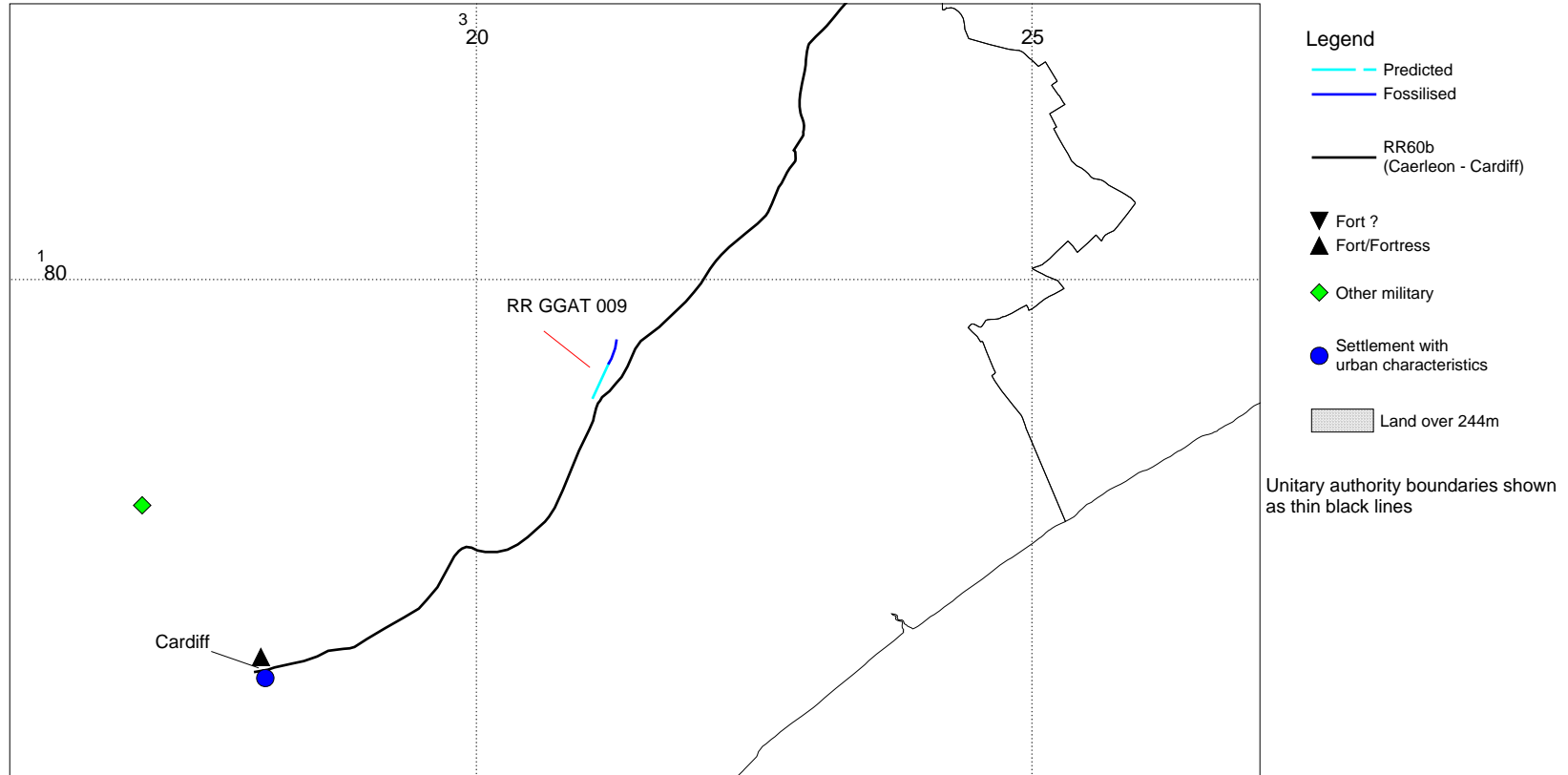
Ward 1908

OS record card ST 27 NW 9, quoting Minutes of Evidence to the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouth (1912) vol 1, no.2001

Recommendations for further work

No fieldwork is possible, since this area is now built up, but a watching brief condition should be put on any developments along the proposed line of the 'causeway' and on any likely line in the section immediately south of Pen-yr-heol, as well as any possible line immediately north of Pen-yr-heol.

Figure 26: Roman road RR GGAT 009 (Road at Rummney)



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RR GGAT 010 Road at Llandaff

ST13717881 to ST14147860

PRN(s) 00935.0s

Mapped Figure 27

Status Predicted

Condition Unknown

Road, Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. Two areas of possible road metalling noted in section, one in a north-south facing section at ST14147860, during works to a footpath in Llandaff, and the other at ST13717881 during the widening of Waterhall Road. The metalling was 8m wide and 0.5m in thickness with a convex surface. Trott believed them to be parts of the same Roman road, although there is no evidence apart from general similarity to prove they are that parts of the same road, or that they are of Roman date.

This has always been assumed to be a minor road, but may possibly represent the road between the forts at Cardiff and Caergwanaf (Miskin).

Sources

Trott 1981

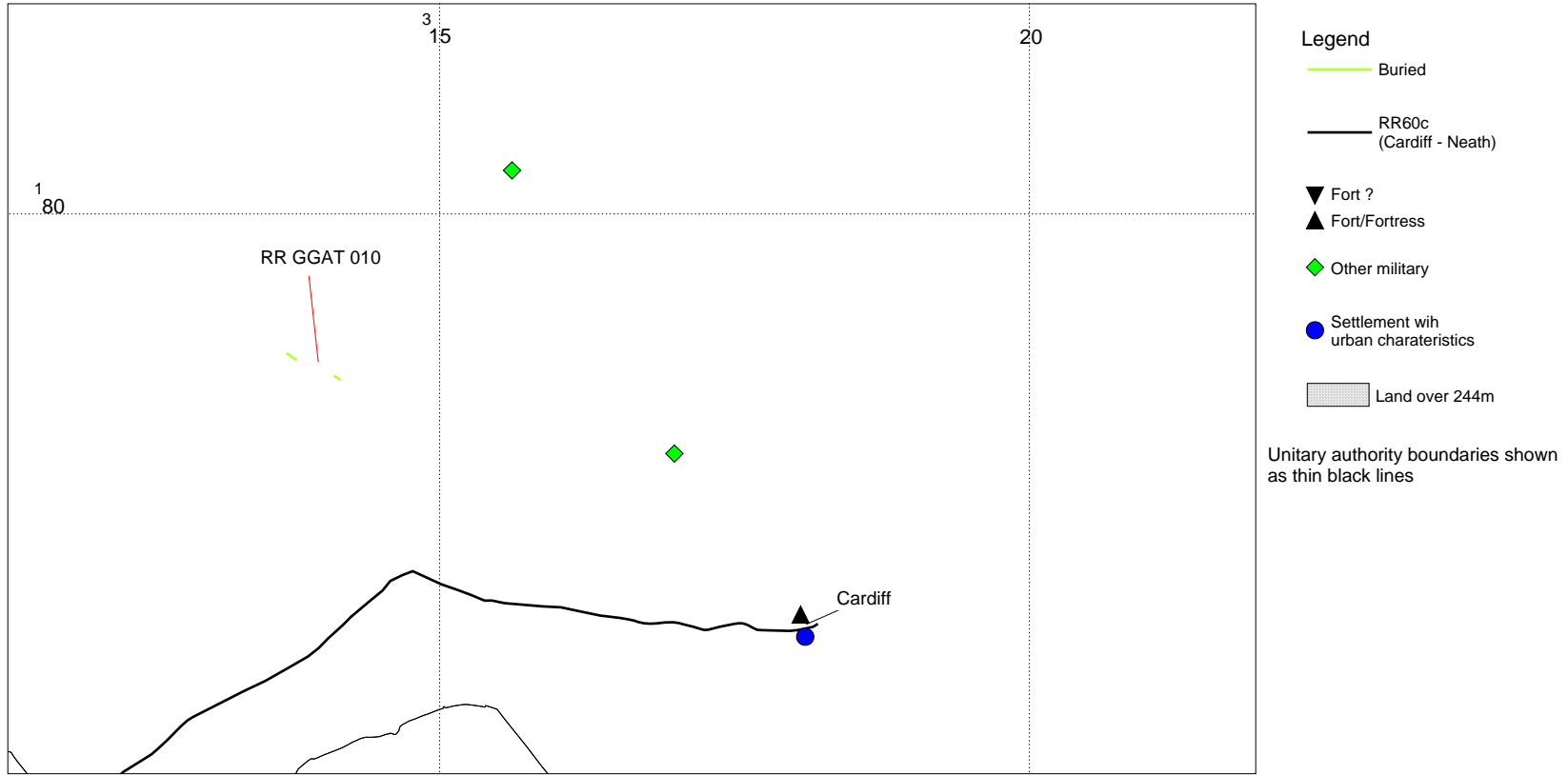
Trott 1982

Recommendations for further work

The two sections of metalling noted lie on either side of two properties with large grounds largely unencumbered by buildings. These should be assessed to see whether geophysical survey is feasible.

Map regression should be carried out to determine whether this postulated road is likely to run between the forts at Cardiff and Caergwanaf, followed by fieldwork and possibly additional air photography in the area to the west where there has been no development.

Figure 27: Roman road RR GGAT 010 (Road at Llandaff)



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RR GGAT 011 Possible road at Pantllaca

ST202817 to ST20228170

PRN(s) 00812.0s
Mapped Figure 28
Status Predicted
Condition Unknown

Minor road, Roman date uncertain; not recorded by the Ordnance Survey, Margary or the Royal Commission. Two sections of metalling noted close to the site of a Roman kiln and two coin hoards (all located around ST199813). The metalling at ST202817 was some 120ft (36m) in length, and was 12ft (3.5m) wide, cambered and composed of small stones. The other section of metalling, at ST20228170, was 200ft (300m) in length, straight, and descended gently to a stream. Trott believed them to be parts of the same Roman road, although there is no evidence apart from general similarity to prove they are that parts of the same road, or of Roman date.

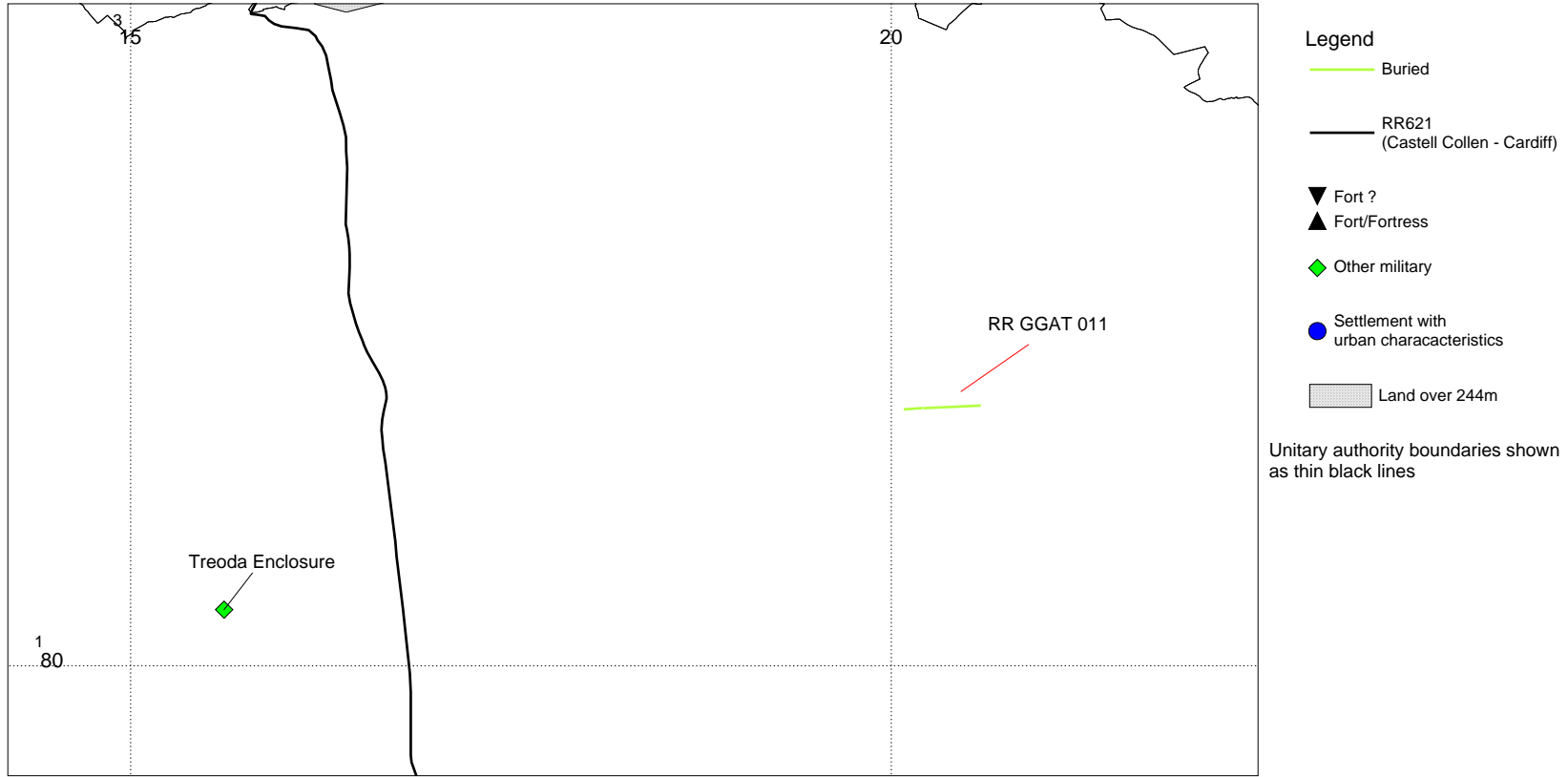
Source

Trott 1976b

Recommendations for further work

No fieldwork is possible between the two sightings and to the east, since this area is now built up, but a watching brief condition should be put on any developments along the proposed line. To the west is Llanishen golf course. This should be examined to see whether there is likely to be any survival of road metalling or ditches below any landscaping, and if it seems possible, a programme of geophysical investigation could be devised to try and locate it.

Figure 28: Roman road RR GGAT 011 (Possible road at Pantllaca)



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Appendix 1: Roads in OS files for which there is insufficient evidence to map

RR630 Northwards from Abergavenny (SO299140)

Margary (1957, 75) suggests a line to the east of the Skirrid, then running over Campston Hill to Llangua bridge. The OS file contains a map making the the present main road up the east bank of the River Monnow Llanfihngel Crucorney – Pandy – Llangua Bridge. Neither has any certain evidence, and the alignments are not particularly compelling.

RCAHMW 1994, 21

RRX11 Bryn – Tredegar (ST169946 - SO1441011)

A ridgeway route, a ‘causeway over Mynydd Bedwelty’ suggested by Coxe (1801, 261) and Wakeman. Rejected by OS fieldworkers as exhibiting no signs of Roman origin, and more likely to be medieval.

RCAHMW 1994, 41-2

RRX42 Monmouth - Abergavenny (SO441097 - SO362088)

Jingle Street – Dingestow – Wern-y-cwrt – Clythan Park. Suggested by Wakeman; entirely conjectural. Rejected by OS as excessively winding, with no traces in fields at minor bends where they could be continuing line, no reported Roman finds from the area, no parish boundaries, and no other traces of antiquity.

RCAHMW 1994, 42

RR43ii Mamhilad – Gelligaer (SO306035 - SO219020)

Section of ridgeway Llanhilleth – Abersychan –Mamhilad is an antiquarian proposal (EH 1872), followed by Bradney (1906, 463). Examined by OS fieldworkers who rejected it as being too angular and meandering, and having no traces of Roman construction.

RCAHMW 1994, 42

RR43ii (PRN 05625.0g) Pontypool – Aberdare (SO 274017 - ST180953)

Pentwyn-mawr – Pontypool – Newbridge – Pontllanffraith – Nelson - Aberdare – Neath valley suggested by Savory (1954) on the basis of a handful of finds, not all of which are necessarily of Roman date. No evidence for Roman origins, and no possible course beyond Pontllanffraith.

RCAHMW 1994, 43

RRX44 Tintern – Usk (SO530001 - SO379007)

Brockweir – Angidy valley – Tintern Cross – Trellech Grange – Llanishen - Usk. Suggested by Wood (1922). Rejected by OS fieldworkers who preferred an alternative route from Usk to Lower Maerdy (SO40030126) and then on to Monmouth, but were not able to provide any firm evidence. ‘Modern road on traces of paving’ was noted connected with a slight hollow-way at SO480027 and SO404025, but there were no traces of any certainly Roman remains, and that there did not appear to be any reason for this route.

RCAHMW 1994, 43

RRX72 Caerwent – Sea Mills (ST468905 - ST550750)

A series of conjectural passages across the Bristol Channel from Caerwent. These are based on the premise that the coastal conditions in Roman times were identical to their present state. One of the suggested road lines is Crick – Portskewett – Sudbrook; another follows the driveway through St Pierre Park. The others appear to be entirely conjectural.

RCAHMW 1994, 46

Appendix 2: PRNs for isolated sightings of possible Roman road, and rejected sites

02280g Rumble Street (SO33510281 - SO33530373)

Proposed by Bradney (1921, 71) on the basis of the name. OS fieldworkers examined the route in 1957 and described it as 'a narrow modern metalled road which is partly sunken. It winds unnecessarily and follows no significant route' (OS record card SO 30 SW 27). There appears to be no reason to regard it as Roman. Rejected

02510g Site name not known (SO3220)

Proposed on the basis of a statement by Coxe (1801, 18): 'In the course of my tour I observed vestiges of several [roads] which appeared to be of Roman origin particularly in the neighbourhood of Llanvihangel Crickhornell, where the names of Lower and Upper Stanton seem to indicate the site of a Roman road, and where the remains of numerous entrenchments, which have served as exploratory camps, are still manifest.' OS fieldworkers examined the area in 1957 and were unable to find any traces of Roman roads (OS record card SO 32 SW 19). Rejected.

02986g Site name not known (SO21170148 - SO22530210)

This site is both paved and on a ridgeway and has therefore been discarded as a Roman road. Rejected.

06258g Bishton Church West (ST38488729)

Proposed in an annotation on a map held by NMGW: Metalled road surface containing limestone blocks found at depth of 3ft while making new approach road. Fieldwork carried out as part of the Romano-British Lowland Settlement Survey indicated that the earthworks in this field were too complex and extensive to suggest that this was a road; it is more probably part of a settlement site. Rejected.

05895.0g Site name not known (ST3362090270 - ST3342090470)

While the electronic record lists an eight-figure NGR for both the start and finish of this proposed road, the electronic record contains no description, route details or source. The further information file for this PRN is also missing. It is therefore impossible to check the accuracy of the report and it has not been mapped.

07643g Site name not known (ST33769064)

The electronic record for this site lists a single eight-figure NGR, the description given is of a trial trench revealing, a well-made Roman road surface with some Medieval intrusion. The further information file for this PRN is missing, therefore with no description, no reliable dating evidence, no source material and only a single NGR it has been decided not to map this feature.

07779g Royal Road Hollow-way (SO5304014400 to SO5295013610)

A deep hollow-way recorded as a Roman road on the 1st edition OS map. Fieldwork by Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust failed to find any supporting evidence, other than the fact that there is a villa a short distance to the north (Thomas 1996). Rejected.

02680.0s Cliffwood Cottage (ST08656695)

A well-made and finely metalled road some 4-6m wide, identified in 1992. This appears to continue the line of the medieval road leading past Cliffwood Cottage. Rejected.

01040.0w Mynydd y Gwair (Tor Clawdd) SN6607

A short section of possible roadway visible as an earthwork flanked by ditches running northwest-southeast across moorland. Usually regarded as part of the Tor Clawdd dyke system, but potentially part of a road between the forts at Neath and Llandeilo. Not mapped as none of the rest of a potential route has been established.

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