

**DALE ROAD, HUBBERSTON,
PEMBROKESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
(SM 8864 0676)**



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Mr Rhodri Williams, Persimmon
Homes Ltd



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DALE ROAD, HUBBERSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Gan / By

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CONTENTS

	SUMMARY	1
1	INTRODUCTION	2
1.1	Project Commission	2
1.2	Scope of the Project	2
1.3	Report Outline	3
1.4	Abbreviations	3
1.5	Illustrations	3
1.6	Timeline	3
2	THE SITE	6
2.1	Location	6
2.2	Archaeological and Historical Background	6
3.	WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY	8
4.1	Fieldwork	8
4.2	Post Fieldwork and Archiving	8
4.3	Timetabling of Fieldwork	8
4.	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	9
5.	CONCLUSIONS	10
6.	SOURCES	11
	APPENDIX I: CONTEXT AND SOIL DESCRIPTIONS	16

FIGURES

Figure 1:	Site Location map based on the Ordnance Survey	4
Figure 2:	Development plan showing area of borrow pit to the north of the residential development area	5
Figure 3:	Extract of 1888 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey Map of the area	7
Figure 4:	Extract of 1905 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey Map of the area	7

TABLES

Table 1:	Archaeological and historical timeline for Wales	3
Table 3:	Known archaeological interests in close proximity to the development site	6
Table 4:	Context and Soil Descriptions	16

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1:	Site boundary stripped prior to arrival.	12
Photo 2:	Trench 1 facing west.	12
Photo 3:	Trench 2 facing east	13
Photo 4:	Modern land drain, Trench 2	13
Photo 5:	Modern land drain, east end Trench 2	14
Photo 6:	Trench 3 facing east	14
Photo 7:	Example of Codd bottle neck showing marble stopper, retaining lugs and rubber washer seal	15
Photo 8:	Examples of complete Codd bottles	15

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SUMMARY

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned by Mr Rhodri Williams, Persimmon Homes Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during topsoil stripping of the site of a borrow pit to provide material for a new housing development. The borrow pit site lies in close proximity to the find stop of a Bronze Age axe and is bounded on the north by a stream and springs which may suggest the presence of burnt mounds and other features of Bronze Age date.

The excavations revealed no archaeological remains of high archaeological significance. No remains of Bronze Age date were revealed. A modern land drain was revealed, but is considered of low archaeological interest.

A number of finds of industrial and modern period date were recovered from the excavated area and included fragments of white ceramic table ware with Esso logo which relate to the latter part of the 20th century when the area was occupied by the Esso Refinery Sports and Social Club. Also found were two broken codd bottles of late 19th – early 20th century date which are considered to be stray finds. The finds are also considered to be of low archaeological interest and were not retained.

It is considered that the groundworks for the borrow pit had a minimal impact on the buried archaeological resource of the area. The proposed development site (for residential housing) had been previously disturbed when the sports ground was constructed and any archaeological remains would have been damaged or destroyed at this time. The potential remains for hitherto unknown archaeological remains of Bronze Age and other periods to lie outside the area monitored during the archaeological watching brief.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

1.1.1 Persimmon Homes submitted a planning application to Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) for the erection of 170 dwellings and associated works on land at Dale Road, Hubberston, Pembrokeshire (SM 8868 0658; Planning Application No 10/0633/PA). The application included the excavation of a borrow pit to the north of the main development site.

1.1.2 Due to the archaeological potential of the site area, an archaeological condition was placed upon planning permission for the development by PCC. The condition attached to the planning permission states:

"No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority."

1.1.3 Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services (DAT-FS) were commissioned by Mr Rhodri Williams of Persimmon Homes Ltd to provide the required archaeological watching brief during groundworks.

1.1.4 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared for the proposed archaeological works, at which time the site area was visited. Due to previous landscaping works for the former sports centre that stood on the site, it was evident that the majority of the development area had previously been significantly disturbed (levelling and terracing works would have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present). It was thus agreed with the archaeological advisors to PCC (Dyfed Archaeological Trust Planning Services), that the watching brief should only be undertaken in the area to the north of the previously disturbed development area where a borrow pit was being excavated. The watching brief was undertaken during the topsoil stripping of this area to the north.

1.2 Scope of the Project

1.2.1 The WSI was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust prior to the commencement of the works, which was approved by the Archaeological Advisor to the Local Planning Authority. The WSI stated that the project objectives were:

- Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology by which Dyfed Archaeological Trust will address the planning condition placed on the proposed development;
- To monitor groundworks in order to identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits;
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed groundworks;
- To appropriately investigate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundworks; and
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

1.2.3 The overall aim of the work was to undertake archaeological attendance during the proposed groundworks at the site that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains, and undertake appropriate investigation and recording of any such remains if revealed. As laid described above (1.1.4) only the area of the borrow pit had the potential for archaeological remains to survive.

1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background, and provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological evaluation and its results.

1.4 Abbreviations

1.4.1 Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record¹ (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR).

1.5 Illustrations

1.5.1 Photographic images are to be found at the back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

1.6 Timeline

1.6.1 The following timeline is used within this report to give date ranges for the various archaeological periods that may be mentioned within the text (Table 1).

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4400 – 2300 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.2300 – 700 BC	
Iron Age –	c.700 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1066	
Medieval Period –	1066 – 1536	
Post-Medieval Period ² –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales

¹ Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo SA19 6AF.

² The post-medieval and industrial periods are combined as the post-medieval period on the Regional Historic Environment Record as held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust

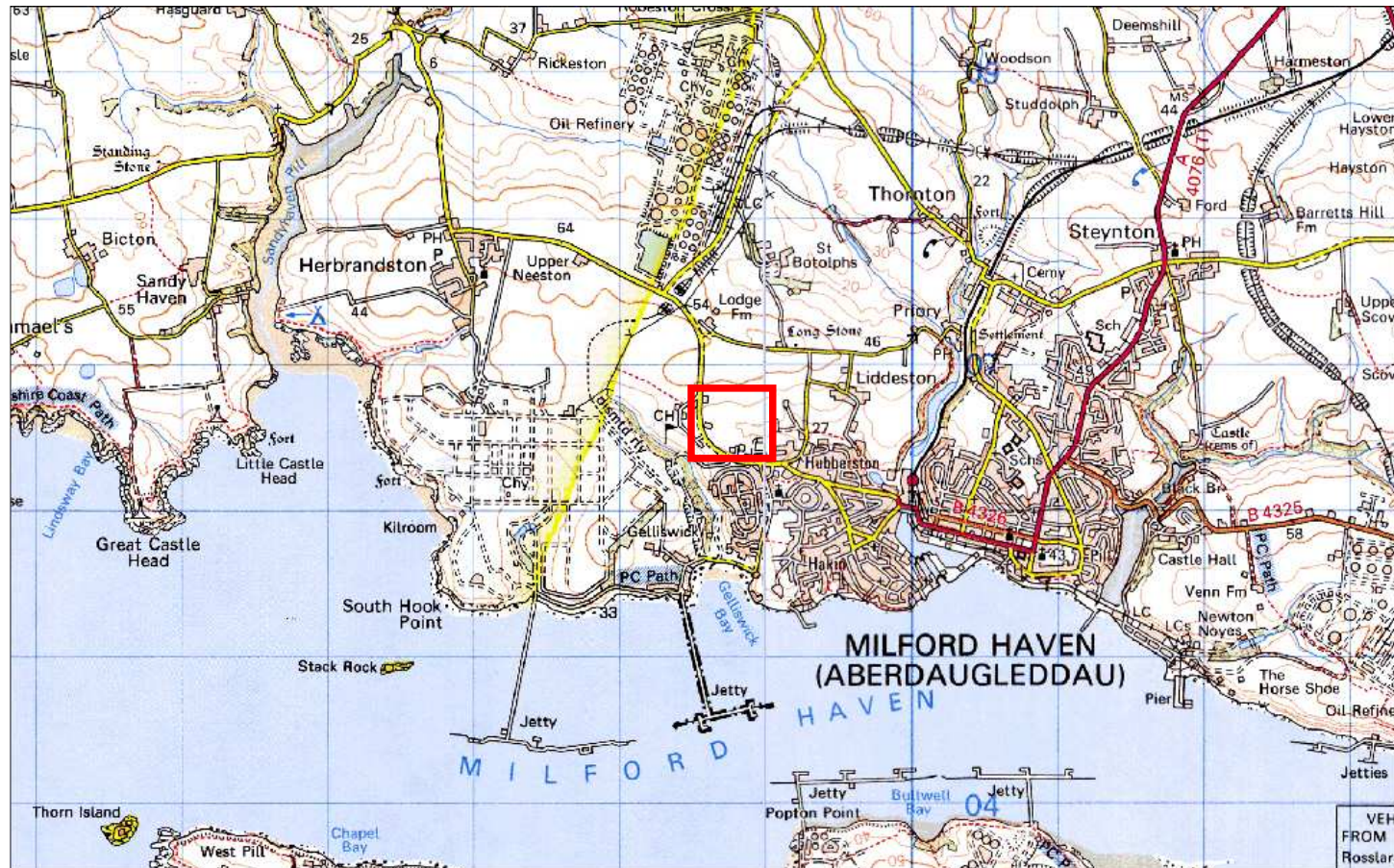


Figure 1: Site Location map of watching brief site from the Ordnance Survey

Reproduced from the 2003 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The proposed residential development area lies on land to the northwest of Hubberston on the Dale Road, opposite (east of) the Milford Haven Golf Club (NGR SM 8868 0658; Figure 1).

2.1.2 The site has undergone various changes and developments over time, including the construction of a ports centre and numerous sports pitches, which have led to a large proportion of the land surface and underlying deposits already having been disturbed or completely destroyed. The northern part of the site, proposed as a borrow pit, however, appears to have been little disturbed (Figure 2). A stream runs along the northern boundary of the development area.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.2.1 The proposed borrow pit site lies in close proximity to one archaeological site recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record.

PRN	Site Name	Description	NGR
3036	Sunnyhill	Find spot of Bronze Age palstave axe	SM 888 065

Table 2: Known archaeological interests in close proximity to the development site

2.2.2 The Bronze Age palstave axe was discovered in waterlogged deposits close to the site area. The presence of a nearby spring and stream along the north edge of the development area increased the potential for features such as burnt mounds to be present in the development area. Burnt mounds are typically of Bronze Age date and are evident as an accumulation of heat affected stone, often associated with a small trough or pit. It is likely that the stone was heated in a bonfire before being dropped into the water trough or water filled pit, rapidly heating the water. Once cooled, the stone was removed and piled up nearby. It is uncertain if the pits represent ritual cooking sites (feasts or celebrations) or a means by which steam was produced for saunas or industrial processes (bending wooden staves etc).

2.2.3 Ordnance Survey mapping of the area indicates that the borrow pit site was undeveloped land from the late 19th century until the latter part of the 20th century (Figures 3 & 4).

2.2.4 The 1974 Ordnance Survey map of the area shows the sports ground had been constructed to the south of the borrow pit site, covering much of the area of the proposed residential development. It is understood that this was the social club and sports ground of Esso Oil Refinery which opened to the west of the site in 1960 before closure in 1983. The South Hook Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal now occupies the former refinery site.

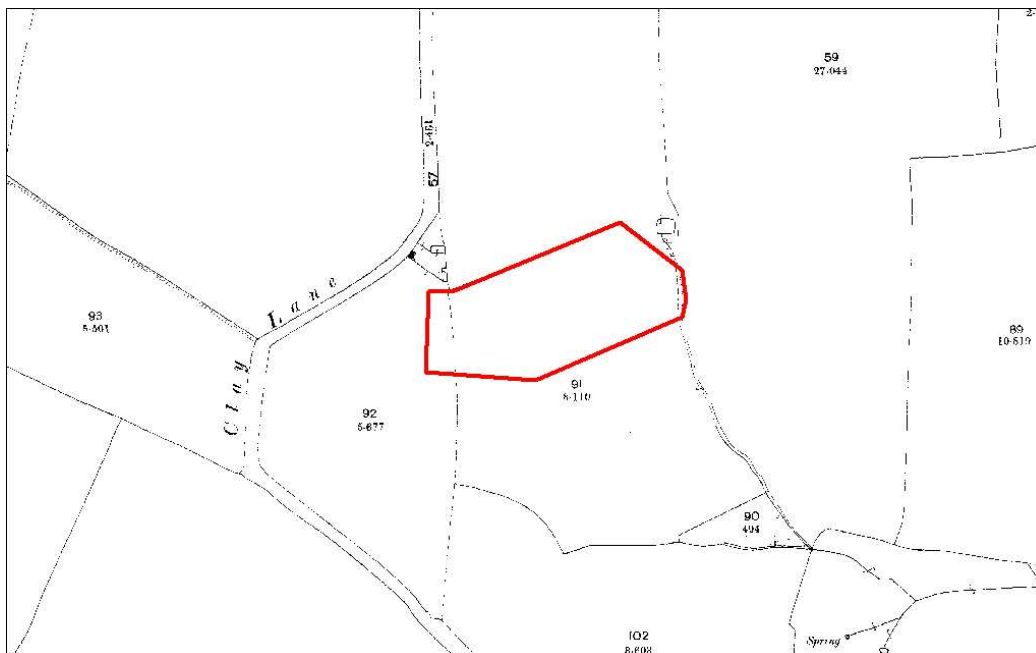


Figure 3: Extract of 1875 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey Map of the area, with red boundary marking the area of the watching brief on the site of the borrow pit

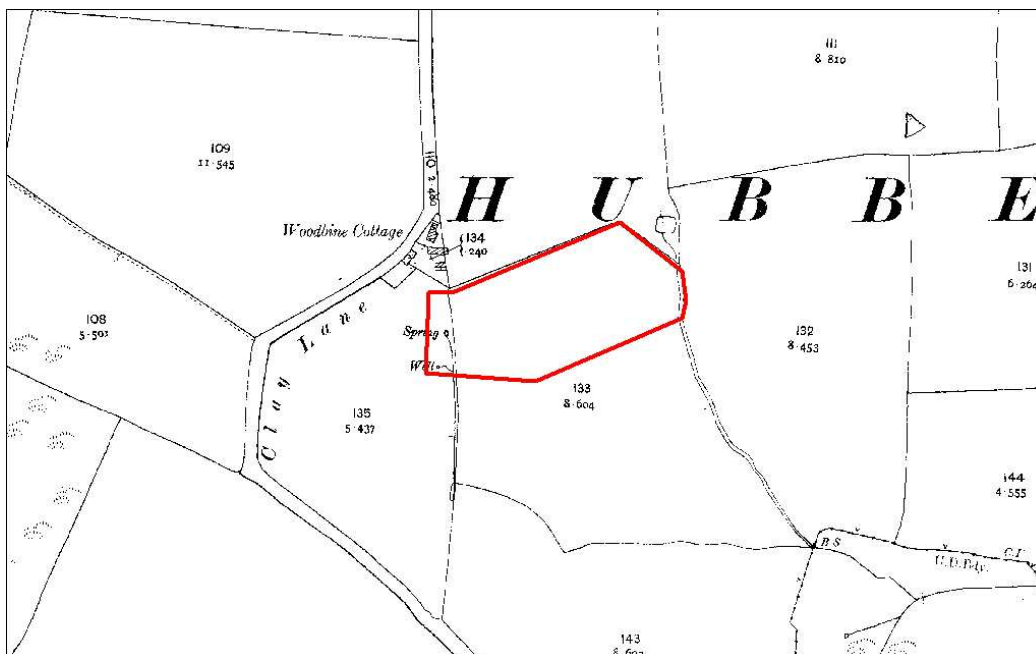


Figure 4: Extract of 1908 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey Map of the area, with red boundary marking the area of the watching brief on the site of the borrow pit

3. WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

The detailed methodology for the watching brief was laid out within the WSI. The relevant methodology can be summarised as follows.

3.1 Fieldwork

3.1.1 A 'watching brief' was undertaken during ground level reduction works at the site which had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains.

3.1.2 All archaeological deposits revealed during the groundworks were examined and recorded to an appropriate level.

3.1.3 Recording of all archaeological features or deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual³ used by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services.

3.2 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

3.2.1 All data recovered during the fieldwork will be collated into a site archive structured in accordance with the specifications in *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2007), and the procedures recommended by the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth.

3.2.2 The results of the fieldwork have been assessed in local, regional and wider contexts.

3.2.3 This report is fully representative of the results of the fieldwork.

3.3 Timetabling of Fieldwork

3.2.7 A single site visit was made to the site to observe topsoil stripping of the area of the proposed borrow pit on 4th August 2011.

³ Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services have adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available on-site for inspection if required.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 A single site visit was made on 4th August 2011 to monitor topsoil stripping of the proposed borrow pit site.

4.2 On arrival it was found that a 13m wide strip had been excavated around the boundaries of the borrow pit site (Photo 1). A walk over of the stripped area revealed no archaeological features or deposits. A number of sherds of white ceramic plate bearing the Esso logo were found on the surface, these were not retained.

4.3 Following the walkover of the stripped area it was found that the on site contractor proposed to strip the remainder of the site using a bulldozer to ensure the area was cleared in a short time. Following negotiation it was agreed that a tracked 360° excavator would be made available for a period of a few hours whilst the bulldozer was employed on earth moving operations within the disturbed area outside the area of archaeological interest.

4.4 To provide the best indication of the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the remaining area to be topsoil stripped, it was agreed to excavate three 100m x 2.2m wide trenches aligned west– east across the area. These trenches were spaced approximately 10m apart and excavated using a flat bladed bucket under constant supervision of the attending archaeologist (Photos 2, 3 & 6).

4.5 No archaeological features or finds of high archaeological significance were revealed within any of the trenches excavated across the site. However, a series of modern land drains were exposed, although these are considered to be of low archaeological interest (Photos 4 & 5).

4.6 A quantity of golf balls were recovered from the topsoil, but these were not retained. In addition, two aqua codd bottle necks were recovered. This form of bottle were first patented by Hiram Codd in 1871 and continued in use in the mineral water trade in the UK up until the 1940s. They generally came in both 10oz and 6oz capacity. The bottle was sealed by a marble enclosed within the neck, and when the bottle was filled, the marble held in place at the bottle mouth by the pressure of the carbonated drink, the seal being completed by a rubber washer. When opened, the marble would drop into the neck and was retained by two lugs for ease of pouring. Colloquially this form of bottle is also known as a '*pop alley bottle*', with alley referring to the marble. There is some suggestion that the term '*codswallop*' owes its origin to the bottle, with *wallop* being a term for beer. The term may possibly have been coined by beer drinkers as a sarcastic play on words for the non alcoholic contents the codd bottle was designed to hold.

4.7 Such bottles were avidly sought by children, who broke them in large numbers to retrieve the marble inside. Whilst the examples found during the archaeological watching brief were made of aqua glass they do exist in much smaller numbers in amber, blue, clear and green glass the majority of which have hand finished lips although occasionally examples occur that are fully machine manufactured (Photos 7 & 8). The codd bottle is still manufactured and used in India today for cottage industry produced *banta* or *goli* soda sold by street vendors. A Japanese brand of soft drink also uses the bottle design.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The archaeological watching brief undertaken at Dale Road Hubberston revealed no features or deposits of high archaeological significance. No evidence for Bronze Age activity associated with the palstave axe or possible site of a burnt mound was found. The possibility of hitherto unknown features and deposits within the area surrounding the borrow pit and development site is undiminished.

5.2 A series of modern land drains were revealed running across the site, but these are considered of low archaeological interest.

5.3 A number of industrial period and modern finds were recovered from the excavation area including sherds of Esso branded white ceramic table ware. These will relate to the period when the site was the location of the Esso Oil Refinery Sports and Social Club from the 1960s to the 1980s. The numerous golf balls recovered from the topsoil may also relate to this period.

5.4 Two broken codd bottles of late 19th – early 20th century date were also recovered from the topsoil. The presence of such bottle fragments is of low archaeological significance.

5.5 The groundworks undertaken during the construction of the borrow pit have had a minimal impact on the buried archaeological resource of the area. The area of the proposed residential development has been previously disturbed, and it will thus have a negligible impact on the archaeological resource of the area. There is still a potential for archaeological remains to be present outside the proposed development site.

6. SOURCES

6.1 Map

Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 1st Edition Cardiganshire 1888

Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 2nd Edition Cardiganshire 1905

6.2 Databases

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: Site boundary stripped prior to arrival.



Photo 2: Trench 1 facing west.



Photo 3: Trench 2 facing east



Photo 4: Modern land drain, trench 2.



Photo 5: Modern land drain at east end of trench 2



Photo 6: Trench 3 facing east.



Photo 7: Example of Codd bottle neck showing marble stopper, retaining lugs and rubber washer seal.



Photo 8: Examples of complete Codd bottles.

(6oz amber; 10oz and 6oz aqua; 10oz aqua machine made, 10oz clear; 10 oz green)

APPENDIX I: CONTEXT AND SOIL DESCRIPTIONS

Number	Description	Depth
Layer 100	Topsoil Mid reddish brown clay silt containing occasional small subangular stone. Golf balls, modern ceramic material and industrial period glass recovered but not retained.	0.32m
Layer 101	Natural Firm mid reddish brown clay containing occasional small shattered sandstone bedrock fragments..	

Table 3: Context and Soil Descriptions

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Awst 2011
August 2011

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ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: HEAD OF FIELD SERVICES

Llofnod / Signature  Date 28/09/2011

*Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn*

*As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any
comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report*

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