

# CARDIGAN CASTLE, CEREDIGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY, & EVALUATION



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust  
For: Ceredigion County Council,  
Cadwgan Trust / Purcell, Miller, Tritton



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## CARDIGAN CASTLE, CEREDIGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY, & EVALUATION

Gan / By

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**CARDIGAN CASTLE, CEREDIGION  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF,  
PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY AND EVALUATION**

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## **CARDIGAN CASTLE, CEREDIGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY AND EVALUATION**

### **SUMMARY**

*An application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was submitted to Cadw by Ceredigion County Council, in conjunction with Purcell, Miller, Tritton on behalf of the Cadwgan Trust to undertake emergency repairs to the Eastern Curtain Wall and North East Bastion at Cardigan Castle, Ceredigion. Consent was granted with a requirement for an archaeological photographic survey and watching brief during the works. Ceredigion County Council, through Purcell, Miller, Tritton on behalf of the Cadwgan Trust commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake the archaeological works.*

*During the emergency repairs, Cadw requested that further information be gathered regarding the area of the North East Tower of the castle. The aim of this work was to establish the nature of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century garden features and later remodelling, as well as determine the extent of survival of medieval fabric. A further request from Cadw was also made to provide further information on the Fernery, located to the rear of Ty Castell on the western side of the castle grounds. The Fernery had been subject to a small scale evaluation in 2010 by DAT-FS on behalf of the Cadwgan Trust.*

*Overall the photographic survey and watching brief on the Eastern Curtain Wall, Stables and North East Bastion and the investigations of the North East Tower and Fernery have demonstrated good survival of significant archaeological deposits relating both to the medieval period and later garden phase of the castle.*

*The Eastern Curtain Wall is substantially medieval in fabric, with the facade a mix of medieval and later repairs, re-pointing and rebuilding. One area of neatly executed wall facade on the lower part of the curtain wall may be the survival of an original element of medieval facing stonework.*

*It has been determined that the Stables buildings represent three phases of development, starting with the small range of buildings to the northwest, addition of the southwest range, and adaption of an enclosed area to a building and addition of boundary walls, drainage system and a pigsty.*

*Investigation of the North East Bastion has shown the level at which medieval masonry survives. It has also identified two former windows and the presence of the southwestern wall of the bastion which had been buried during landscaping of the gardens in the late 18<sup>th</sup> / early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has also indicated that a substantial depth of archaeological levels still survive below ground in this area.*

*The North East Tower comprises original medieval fabric and features and adaptation to a garden feature during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century / early 19<sup>th</sup> century landscaping. Two possible windows and a chimney flue have been identified within the surviving walls. These works have indicated a depth of over 0.5m of archaeological remains still survive within the tower*

*The investigation of the Fernery has confirmed the good survival of the building, and below ground presence of further information regarding its development and demolition.*

*Given the limited nature of the archaeological investigations undertaken at Cardigan Castle, a substantial amount of new information has been revealed. The works have been successful in demonstrating that a considerable amount of further archaeological information will survive within the castle grounds.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Background**

- 1.1.1 An application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was submitted to Cadw by Ceredigion County Council, in conjunction with Purcell, Miller, Tritton on behalf of the Cadwgan Trust to undertake emergency repairs to Walls 12, 13 and 14 at Cardigan Castle, Ceredigion (at NGR SN 1776 4591). Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was granted, subject to two conditions relating to archaeological recording, Nos. 8 & 9, which stated:

*8: that the applicant shall arrange for the appointment of a professional archaeologist, who shall be approved in writing by Cadw, on behalf of the Assembly, to undertake a watching brief and archaeological record of the conservation work. The archaeologist shall supervise all excavation within the scheduled area and shall record all architectural features revealed during the course of the work*

*9: that before work begins, and again on completion, a photographic record shall be made of the areas affected by the works. The photographs shall be black and white or in colour and shall be labelled, dated and mounted. This photographic record shall be submitted to Cadw within 8 weeks of the completion of the work, and copies deposited in the Historic Environment Record held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF and the National Monument Record held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Crown Building, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 1NJ.*

- 1.1.2 The condition was placed in order to ensure that any existing or exposed fabric or revealed archaeological remains affected by the emergency repairs to the walls could be appropriately recorded. Any such information has the potential to inform understanding of the history and development of the castle and its grounds.
- 1.1.3 The proposals for the emergency repair work include the clearing of debris, excavating some material that is putting pressure on walls, clearing vegetation, removing and replacing sections of masonry, re-pointing and blocking of some openings. These measures required some degree of archaeological recording
- 1.1.4 Ceredigion County Council, through Purcell, Miller, Tritton on behalf of the Cadwgan Trust commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services (DAT-FS) to undertake the archaeological works. The works were carried out between October 2010 and February 2010.
- 1.1.5 An archaeological written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by DAT-FS and approved prior to the repair works commencing. The watching brief work was undertaken with the cooperation and assistance of the site contractors, Tree & Sons Ltd.

### **1.2 Site Location**

- 1.2.1 Cardigan Castle is located on the southern edge of the town of Cardigan, on the southern boundary of Ceredigion (at NGR SN 1776 4591; Figures 1 & 2). It is sited on a rocky promontory overlooking the river Teifi and Cardigan bridge, close to the mouth of the Teifi.
- 1.2.2 The site comprises remains of a medieval stone castle, incorporated into the house and landscaped grounds of a Georgian and Regency mansion (Castle Green House). The house and grounds suffered a long period of

neglect and deterioration throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until it came into council ownership in 2003.

- 1.2.3 The whole site of the medieval castle is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument: Cardigan Castle (CD123). Listed buildings include the remains of the medieval castle (Grade I), Castle Green House (Grade II\*), Gatepiers and gates to Castle Green House (Grade II), Outbuildings at Castle Green House stable yard (Grade II), Retaining wall in Castle Green Grounds to the east of the house (Grade II) and the Boundary wall to Castle Green House, Carriers Lane (Grade II). The gardens are also listed in the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Grade II – PGW (DY) 72 (CER)).

### **1.3 Scope of the Project**

- 1.3.1 A photographic survey of Walls 12, 13 & 14 was undertaken prior to the commencement of the repair work. The aim of this work was to record the state of repair of the walls prior to the remediation work.
- 1.3.2 A 'watching brief' was maintained during groundworks associated with the repair work and during work done to the facades of the walls during repairs. The aim of the watching brief was to ascertain the presence of any archaeological remains within the working areas that could be exposed, damaged or destroyed by the repair works, and appropriately record any such remains.
- 1.3.3 During the work programme for emergency repairs, Cadw requested that further information be gathered regarding the area of the North East Tower of the castle. This lay at the southwestern end of the emergency repair walls. Cadw requested that areas of the tower be cleared of vegetation and garden soils which had been deposited within the area. The aim of this work was to establish the nature of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century garden features and later remodelling, as well as determine the extent of survival of medieval fabric.
- 1.3.4 A further request from Cadw was also made to provide further information on the Fernery, located to the rear of Ty Castell on the western side of the castle grounds. The Fernery had been subject to a small scale evaluation in 2010 by DAT-FS on behalf of the Cadwgan Trust. The results on this piece of work are also included within this report for completeness.

### **1.4 Report Outline**

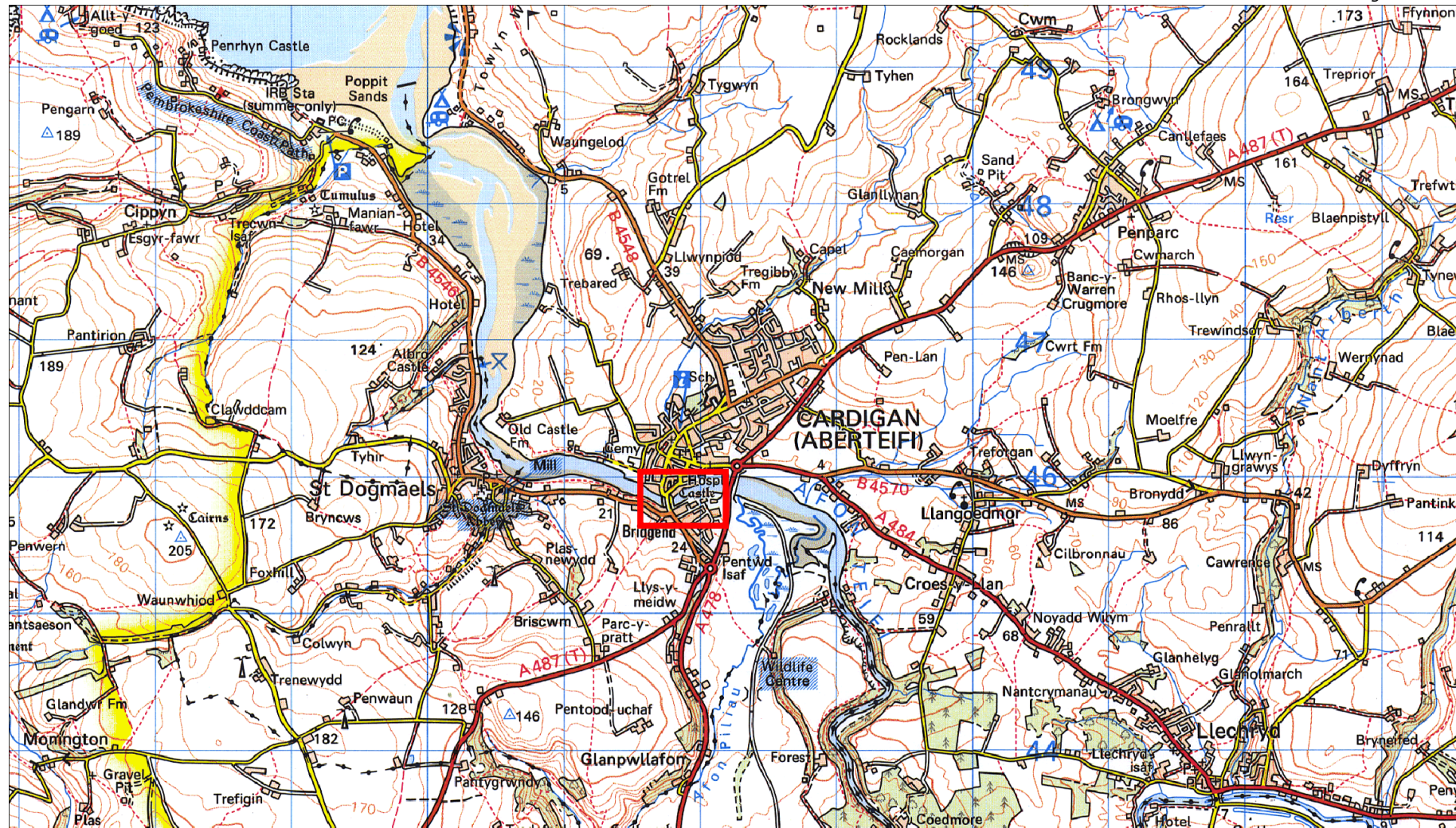
- 1.4.1 This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background before summarising the results of the various phases of work and the conclusions based on those results.

### **1.5 Abbreviations**

- 1.5.1 Regional Historic Environment Record – HER; Primary Record Number – PRN; National Grid Reference – NGR; Scheduled Ancient Monument – SAM; Scheduled Monument Consent – SMC; Dyfed Archaeological Trust – DAT; Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services – DAT-FS; Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI.

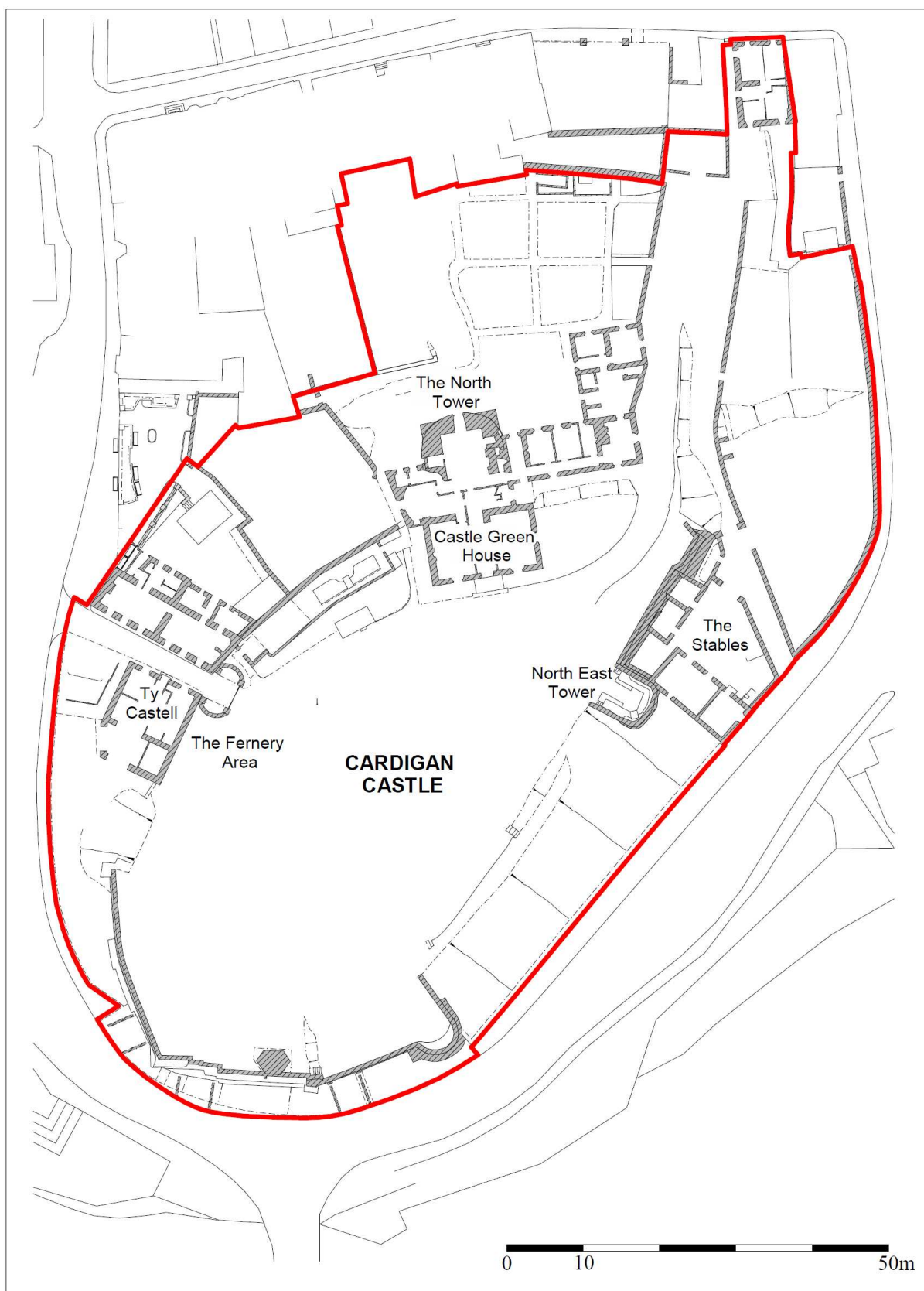
## **1.6 Illustrations**

- 1.6.1 Record photographs are included throughout the text. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale and are illustrative only.



**Figure 1:** Location plan showing location of Cardigan Castle, based on Ordnance Survey

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office,  
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**Figure 2:** Plan of the general layout of Cardigan Castle  
(Adapted from survey undertaken by Purcell Miller Tritton)

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

- 2.1 The archaeological works methodology followed that laid out in the WSI as approved by Cadw prior to the works commencing. The tasks outlined included the following.

### **2.2 Archaeological Background Research**

- 2.2.1 The following sources have been used to provide information regarding the historical background of Cardigan Castle:
- Historic Town Surveys of Cardigan & Tregaron (Cook & Poucher 2007 [Draft copy]);
  - Cardigan Castle GIS Survey (Cook & Poucher 2006 [Draft copy]); and
  - Other background material.

### **2.3 Photographic Record of Walls 12, 13 & 14**

- 2.3.1 The building recording survey complied with the standards as defined in the *English Heritage Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good practice* 2006 publication. The work complied with the relevant standards and guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA).
- 2.3.2 A digital photographic record of the existing walls was made at the commencement of works and following completion of the repairs.
- 2.3.3 Photographs were taken of the main castle walls (12, 13 and 14) as well as shots detailing how they join with the stable buildings and bedrock. Overall shots were attempted, although clear shots were not possible in many cases due to limitations of views caused by the stable buildings sitting in front of the castle walls.

### **2.4 Archaeological Watching Brief During Emergency Repair of Walls 12, 13 & 14**

- 2.4.1 A 'watching brief' was undertaken at the commencement of groundworks at the site which had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains. An assessment of the level of intensity of the watching brief was made following an understanding of the works being proposed.
- 2.4.2 The archaeologist outlined the significance of the monument and the obligations of all contractors working on the repairs at the outset of the project and established lines of communication in the event of significant remains being exposed. This worked well with the site contractors Tree & Sons contacting DAT-FS on a number of occasions prior to groundworks commencing, and when walls or features were exposed that were unexpected or appeared to be of significance.
- 2.4.3 A few areas of topsoil removal were undertaken by the site contractor under archaeological supervision. Time was allowed for the archaeologist to record any exposed remains and exposed elevations of walls.
- 2.4.4 Archaeological features and deposits revealed during the groundworks were examined and recorded to an appropriate level. No buried archaeological features were exposed that required excavation.

- 2.4.5 Recording of archaeological features and deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual<sup>1</sup> used by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services.
- 2.4.6 All archaeologically significant finds were retained and, where possible, related to the contexts from which they derived. Finds are temporarily stored by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services in stable conditions.
- 2.4.7 Where areas of walls were exposed following removal of vegetation, or where material needed to be removed from the facade of the wall, DAT-FS were made aware and the repairs observed where necessary.

## **2.5 Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of the North East Tower**

- 2.5.1 The evaluation involved the removal of the depth of soil cover which had been placed across the tower, in three areas. The three areas included one on the northeastern side, one within the middle of the southeastern apsidal end and one on the southwestern side. An additional area was also opened across the centre of the tower (linking the areas to the southwest and northeast) to try and ascertain the nature of the ground surface within the tower.
- 2.5.2 Photographs were taken of the tower before the work commenced, during and after. Photographs of details of the walls were made. The area was surveyed and hand drawn elevations of some of the exposed walls were carried out where survey and photograph were not considered adequate.
- 2.5.3 All finds were initially retained from the opened areas within the tower, to provide spot dates for potential phases of activity within the tower. The finds were mostly of later 19<sup>th</sup> century and 20<sup>th</sup> century date.

## **2.6 Further Archaeological Investigation of the Fernery**

- 2.6.1 Minimal groundworks were undertaken across the area of the Fernery to establish the layout of walls following the earlier evaluation in 2010. The wall lines were followed and exposed, where they were present.
- 2.6.2 Photographs before, during and after the work were taken.
- 2.6.3 The area was surveyed to add to the information established from the previous evaluation.

## **2.7 Analysis of Results and Report Preparation**

- 2.7.1 All digital photographs have been indexed and manipulated into TIFF format. Photographs have been located on plans of the building. Hand drawings have been collated and digitised. Written descriptions have been collated.
- 2.7.2 This document provides a report on the results of the historic building and archaeological works. It attempts to provide some chronological information regarding the development of the site, as can be ascertained from the works undertaken. Areas of original fabric or elements of other historically significant fabric are identified. Descriptions of significant features are included. The report is supported by relevant plans, photographs and illustrations.

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<sup>1</sup> Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services have adopted the new Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available on-site for inspection if required.

- 2.7.3 All records will be collated into an archive using appropriate systems. The deposition of the archive is yet to be ascertained. It is likely that it will be with the National Monuments Record housed with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monument for Wales in Aberystwyth. If this is so, then the archive will be prepared according to NMR guidelines.

### **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 Historical Background**

3.1.1 The following information comes from a range of sources, but relies heavily upon the historical assessment of Cardigan castle and town within the Historic Town Surveys of Cardigan & Tregaron (Cook & Poucher 2007 [Draft copy]) and Cardigan Castle GIS Survey (Cook & Poucher 2006 [Draft copy])

3.1.2 During the 11<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Norman armies were raiding deep into west Wales. In 1093 Welsh chroniclers record the raid of Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, into Ceredigion. To secure his position he chose a site, called Din Geraint, close to the mouth of the Teifi to build a timber castle. This site, often equated with the defensive earthworks visible at Old Castle Farm less than a mile downstream from Cardigan, was short-lived but proved to be an impetus for the founding of Cardigan a few years later.

3.1.3 In 1110 Gilbert fitz Richard de Clare was commissioned to retrieve Roger's possessions and following another successful invasion established another castle on the Teifi, this time likely to be the site of the current Cardigan castle. This was to become Gilbert's power base north of the river, and the foundations of a settlement at Cardigan were established. The town would have been planned and constructed as an integral part of the castle: such an inter-relationship was a deliberate part of social, political and economic policy, especially in 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century Wales, where there was a preference for the centralisation of economic and administrative activity to enable a greater manipulation of political power<sup>2</sup>. The first documentary reference to the town itself comes from reports of the nearby battle of Crug Mawr in 1136, when a large Welsh force from Gwynedd and Deheubarth defeated an Anglo-Norman army and went on to plunder the town and break the bridge, although failed to gain access to the castle.

3.1.4 As the battle of Crug Mawr indicates the first 150 years in the history of the town and castle were a tumultuous period, the castle being geographically situated on the frontier between the warring Anglo-Normans to the south and the independent Welsh to the north, with both sides in almost constant battle. As a consequence, the castle underwent several changes of hands during this time<sup>3</sup>, and both the castle and its town were razed and rebuilt in equal measure. It would seem that following its initial construction the castle was repaired in 1159 by Roger de Clare, and then fell to Rhys ap Gruffudd in 1164, who then constructed the first stone and mortar castle on the site in 1171. Rhys also confirmed the rights of a small Benedictine Priory that had been established a short distance to the east of the small settlement.

3.1.5 Under Rhys Cardigan cemented its newly acquired position as the centre of power for this part of Wales. It was also the place in 1176 that was witness to what many regard as the first national Eisteddfod within the grounds of the castle. After the death of Rhys in 1197 the castle was sold back to the English crown in 1199, but was also subsequently granted its first royal charter bestowing various privileges on the burgesses to further consolidate power and encourage settlement expansion. By the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Griffiths (1990, p113) regards the settlement at Cardigan as a "privileged, fortified island of commercial activity, broad horizons, administrative autonomy and strategic importance".

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<sup>2</sup> Such centralisation allowed for trade to be taxed, the population observed and the authority of the lord constantly affirmed by the presence of the castle itself.

<sup>3</sup> Documentary sources suggest that the castle changed hands some sixteen times during this initial phase.

3.1.6 In 1196 William de Braose burnt the town, but was unsuccessful in his attempt to take the castle. Following several more changes of hands<sup>4</sup> and having undergone recorded repairs in 1204-5, 1208 and 1227-8, the castle was eventually captured by Walter Marshal in 1240, who commissioned the building of a Great Tower, with Robert Waleran continuing the works from 1241 onwards, expending much on the new keep and also on the construction of a town wall. When Gilbert Marshal died in 1241, Henry III regained possession of the castle and it was refortified at royal expense. According to Hague (1975) and others, these works cost £400, with a further £150 needed in 1261 for the town walls, and £284 for raising the keep a further stage.

3.1.7 In 1268 a town survey records the town being divided into c.130 burgages. The town area also included 2 mills. The establishment of direct royal control in the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century indicated Cardigan was to become a major centre of royal power in West Wales. In 1271 Edward I had made the castle the administrative centre for the newly founded county of Cardiganshire and granted the town a charter to strengthen the burgesses control over the towns commerce and attract further settlement. In 1279 Cardigan, along with Carmarthen, became a seat of Royal administration in south Wales in the newly formed 'Principality of Wales', and in addition the castle became an important springboard for Edward's campaigns in his Welsh wars and the final subjugation of the Welsh under Llewelyn the Last. A survey of 1302 records a small but relatively densely packed urban area.

3.1.8 The late 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> century appears to have been the height of medieval urban activity at Cardigan. The subsequent history of medieval Cardigan was one of slow decline, in common with many towns throughout late 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century Wales and England. Maritime trade appears to have dwindled, contact with its main trading partners of Bristol and Ireland lessened, accompanied by a general economic slump and disruptive military activity. A survey for the Black Prince in 1343 records the castle as the worst of all Royal castles, the 'Great Watch Tower' and the curtain walls were in a state of complete decay and all the domestic buildings were in ruins, with repair costs estimated at £814. Pleas sent to Richard II in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century show the town had lost many of its privileges, although a charter in 1395 restored their right to hold the courts at Cardigan, and the right to choose their own Bailiff and Mayor. Following the Owain Glyndwr rebellion in 1400 Cardigan was to return no revenue to the crown for 5 years, and the disruption meant no fairs were held, although in 1410, work began on the construction of a new hall and stable at the castle at a cost of £19, with an estimate for a new tower at £129 (Austin and James 1984). During the latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century extensive repairs and renovations were made to the 'Great Round Tower' and other buildings, and the castle was presented to Catherine of Aragon as part of her dowry when she married Prince Arthur, brother of Henry VIII. The town itself however continued its stagnation during this period, and by the 1530s Leland reports that Aberystwyth is now a 'better market then Cairdigan' and by 1540 the town is said to be a third the size of Carmarthen, and half that of Tenby.

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<sup>4</sup> In 1198 Maelgwyn ap Rhys (son of Rhys ap Gruffydd) handed his own brother over to the Normans in return for possession of the castle. However, in 1200 King John offered Ceredigion to Maelgwyn in return for the castle: Maelgwyn accepted, and the castle then became a Royal Stronghold. Various men were given temporary control of the castle on behalf of the Crown until 1214, when it was given to William Marshal. Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (Llywelyn the Great) swept through south Wales in December 1215 and took the castle at Cardigan by force. In 1218 Llywelyn gave homage to Henry III and in return was entrusted with the castle until Henry came of age. However, in 1223 hostilities broke out and William Marshal the Younger captured Cardigan once more. Henry – realising the strategic importance of the site – requested the castle back from Marshal and entrusted it to his own officers. In 1229 Marshal was invested with the lordships of Carmarthen and Cardigan, but in 1231 Llywelyn ap Iorwerth once again regained the castle following a siege. He died in 1240 and the castle was retaken again by the Marshal family.

3.1.9 The first cartographic evidence of the layout of Cardigan comes from Speed's map of 1610, helping to illustrate the layout of the medieval town and the condition of the castle. The North Tower (almost certainly the keep built by Waleran in 1250<sup>5</sup>) is shown as half tumbled. Speed has carefully represented a massive half-round tower of three stages, even though his orientation is somewhat askew. In the 1640s during the Civil War the castle was pressed into action for the last time. Fortified with ordnance from a wrecked frigate and the construction of 'half-moon' entrenchment within the castle it suffered a 3-day bombardment by Parliamentary forces before falling. This is likely to have resulted in the partial destruction of the curtain wall between the east and south-east towers and the castle defences once more falling into ruin.

3.1.10 The importance of the castle within Cardigan faded during this time. Parts were still used for local administrative purposes until the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and housed the town gaol, but the focus of administrative and civil functions gradually moved further into the town, as Cardigan itself was enjoying a period of relative prosperity buoyed mainly by an increase in maritime activity throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Maritime trade and fishing led to Cardigan becoming the most important port in Ceredigion, resulting in Cardigan boasting a combined fleet of nearly 300 vessels by 1833. By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the mayors' parlour and assize court had moved into the new Shire Hall within the town. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the market had shifted away from the castle entranceway to new market halls, and even the gaol moved out of the castle into a Nash-designed building by the 1790s.

3.1.11 The castle retained some element of private residence during this period however, with a variety of owners recorded. Sir John Lewis of Coedmore acquired the site in 1633, and in 1673 it was recorded as the home of Abel Griffiths, a church warden in Cardigan, who rented it from the Parry family (Charles-Jones 2000: 44). In 1713 the ground within the castle underwent its first landscaping when the then mayor, Lewis Price, had the grounds sculpted to create a bowling green, from whence the name 'Castle Green' was first applied to the site, with the estate open to the public.

3.1.12 The first mention of a 'Castle House' was in 1799, when John Bowen was leasing it to Thomas Colby. Bowen had purchased the site in 1785, although it is likely that this residence was demolished to make way for what later became 'Castle Green House' in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1801 and 1815 there was a period of intense development within the castle grounds, establishing much of the building and garden layout that can still be seen today. Castle Green House, initially of Georgian style, was built within the castle yard and incorporated the North Tower into its fabric: Meyrick noted that:

*'The castle and the ground contained within its outer walls (called the Castle-green)...now belongs to John Bowen, Esq. who is erecting a house on the site of the keep, the dungeons now serving as his cellars.'*

3.1.13 A survey of the house commissioned by Ceredigion District Council in 1988 and conducted by Ove Arup and Partners in 1990, suggested that the rectangular east annexe, which incorporated the dungeons of the North Tower as cellars within its build, represents the extent of the house as built by Bowen. Considerable landscaping of the grounds also took place, with what appears to have been substantial quantities of earth brought into the site to level the area to the front and back of the new house, to the extent that the second stage of the

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<sup>5</sup> The new keep as built by Waleran in 1250 is almost certainly the same structure as the 'Great Watch Tower' and the 'Great Round Tower' referred to in various histories of the castle, and corresponds to what is known today as the North Tower, incorporated into Castle Green House. However, Speed depicts a free-standing keep, whereas the North Tower was clearly part of the defensive circuit of the castle at Cardigan.

medieval North Tower is now at ground level<sup>6</sup>. The driveways were laid out, along with a stable block to the south, coachhouse to the north and gardeners cottage close to the house. Various garden features were also established during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These included a large lawned area with defined walkways to the front of the house and compartmented gardens to the rear. In 1811 the south side of the castle was recorded by Carlisle in his *Topographical Dictionary*, in which he described 'the wall between the two towers being lowered and the Green sloped down so as to form a hanging Garden'. It is likely that the Turkey oak, now an immense tree standing at the top of the slope to the Hanging Garden behind the North-east Bastion, was also planted by Bowen at this time. Bowen died in 1815, but is credited by Lewis (1833) as having converted the outer ward of the ruined castle 'into a verdant lawn, tastefully disposed in pastures'.

3.1.14 In c.1827 the site was sold to Arthur Jones, then High Sheriff of Ceredigion, who added the square-built Regency façade that gives Castle Green house its distinctive appearance today. This additional frontage also further incorporated the North Tower into its fabric, but the foundations for this build were at a much shallower depth than those for the earlier east annex, which had been built at a similar level to that of the North Tower, on lower ground prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century landscaping. Mr Jones also commissioned the building of an additional wing, which is probably that seen on the west side of the house, abutting the medieval North Tower. Sale Particulars of 1832 described a 'Capital modern mansion' and Samuel Lewis (1833) called it a 'handsome modern villa'. Further garden features were added during this period, including an 87ft hothouse and pinery between the house and the main entrance, and a nearby fernery.

3.1.15 The property was bought by David Griffiths Davies of Carnarchenwen, Fishguard in 1836. Davies was a wealthy man and High Sheriff of the county in 1841. It remained in the Davies family until 1924. Map evidence and engravings from this period show the gardens had become well established during this period but little further landscaping or development was undertaken within the castle grounds. The Davies family were influential members of the local community; David Davies founded the Cardigan Mercantile Company, although the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a decline in the maritime importance of Cardigan as it was once more eclipsed by Aberystwyth as the main county town. Despite this decline the population of Cardigan expanded, with industrial areas expanding along the Mwdan and across the bridge at Bridgend. New civic buildings were established in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, including a new Guild Hall, Grammar School, Reading Room, Corn Exchange and Market Hall. New streets were laid out, lined by terraced cottages; many built using local brick from extensive brickworks established at the north end of town. Large numbers of ornate chapels were also constructed to administer to the ecumenical needs of the expanding population.

3.1.16 In 1924 the Castle Green estate was sold to Cardigan auctioneer John Evans. During the 1920s, a new period of aggrandisement began, which saw considerable changes made to the castle site and its environs. One major change was the acquisition by John Evans of a substantial part of the land adjoining Carriers' Lane, which saw the cottages there demolished and the land incorporated into the Castle Green estate as additional gardens to the east of the Carriageway. Crenellated boundary walls enclosing the new areas were constructed, and it is likely that a set of false crenellations were also added to the castle walls at the same time. The walls retaining the Hanging Garden are also attributed with a 20<sup>th</sup> century date (Ove Arup 1991: 1.2) and may have been rebuilt at the same time as the walls retaining the additional gardens were

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<sup>6</sup> It is likely that some of this levelling also took place a century earlier in 1713 when the bowling green was first constructed.

constructed. It was also during this period that the fernery and hothouse were dismantled (1927-8), with the latter replaced by a lily pond and Italianate garden in 1931. A tennis court was also established on the front lawn in the 1920s. Outside the castle walls on the southern and western sides, a number of the 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages were demolished during the widening of Bridge Street. This work saw the demolition of part of Green Street, the Bridge Street frontage and all the properties abutting the walls of the castle on its south side. A portion of land immediately to the west of Castle Green House, lying behind the high wall dividing it from the former hothouse, had also been brought into the Castle Green estate by this time, and made into a croquet lawn.

3.1.17 The house and grounds fell into a state of neglect during the last private possession of the site by the Wood family, which spanned 1940 to 2003, when the Cardigan Castle site was brought back into public ownership. During the Second World War the East wing of Castle Green House was requisitioned by the War Office and was never reoccupied afterwards, and a concrete pillbox was erected in the grounds to guard the bridge. In 1974 the large steel raking shores and concrete haunches around the perimeter walls of the castle on its southern side were erected as a precaution against any possible masonry collapse during piling works for the construction of a new footbridge over the river. In 1984, Miss Wood moved out of Castle Green House and into a caravan within the heavily overgrown grounds, as this once grand property was deemed unfit for human habitation.

3.1.18 The late 20<sup>th</sup> century has seen further expansion in the town's population. The large area of former open common land that had bordered the town to the north-east since the medieval period had already been enclosed and had seen limited development by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. During the late 20<sup>th</sup> century the entire area was given over to development, which also extended further into the former agricultural hinterland to the north. New housing estates were also established around the periphery of Bridgend. Industrial activity, always on the periphery of urban development, gradually also moved out to new estates on the edge of the expanding town with former industrial sites along Mwldan being redeveloped.

3.1.19 Today the historic core of Cardigan still retains many traditional buildings from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, although little of the medieval fabric of the town is still visible above ground. The High Street is still a busy thoroughfare and the centre of much commercial activity, although much of the passing traffic has now been moved to a new bypass. As Aberystwyth has become the main administrative centre for Ceredigion Cardigan has lost many of its regional administrative functions and buildings. Tourism and leisure now play an important role in its economy.

#### **4. IDENTIFICATION OF WALLS, ROOMS AND AREAS**

4.1 The following information identifies the various elements rooms and walls discussed in the text (Figure 2). These are based on the labels given by Cadw and the architects, Purcell, Miller, Tritton, with additional room numbers etc assigned as part of the preparation of this report.

##### **4.2 The Stables** (Figure 3)

4.2.1 In front (east) of the main eastern curtain wall of Cardigan Castle leading from the North East Tower up to the North East Bastion are a group of buildings known as The Stables. These are located at road level, and have been built against the front of the massive wall of the castle.

4.2.2 **Room 1** lies towards the northeastern end of the eastern curtain wall of the castle. It forms the end room of a small range of two storey buildings built on to the outside of the castle wall. The upper floor has collapsed.

4.2.3 **Room 2** lies to the southeast of Room 1. It was of two stories, but the upper floor has collapsed.

4.2.4 **Room 3** lies in the corner formed by the North East Tower and the main castle wall. It was of two stories, but the upper floor has collapsed.

4.2.5 **Room 4** lies to the northeast of Room 1. This structure is of a different build to Rooms 1 to 3. It is of single storey and adjoins the boundary wall and gateway of the Stables courtyard area. The building is constructed onto the North East bastion at the end of the curtain wall.

4.2.6 **Room 5** is situated to the southwest of Room 1 in a different range of buildings, perpendicular to the range comprising rooms 1 to 4. It was of two storeys and the majority of the upper floor has collapsed.

4.2.7 **Room 6** is situated to the southwest of Room 5, again of two storeys with the upper floor mostly collapsed. The southeastern wall forms part of the outer boundary of the castle grounds along the Strand.

4.2.8 The **Courtyard** lies in front of the Stables buildings which lie to the north and west, and is bounded on the south side by a wall along the Strand and by a further stone wall running at an angle along the pathway leading from the Strand up towards the castle.

##### **4.3 Eastern Castle Walls** (Figure 3)

4.3.1 **Walls 12, 13 and 14** represent the eastern side of the curtain walls running around Cardigan Castle. The walls are of substantial depth appearing to have been built against a natural cliff in the underlying bedrock. They are aligned roughly northeast to southwest. The individual wall numbers have been assigned by Cadw, but it is not clear which specific lengths of walls they represent.

4.3.2 The **North East Bastion** lies at the northern end of the curtain wall. It is the area where the curtain wall changes direction to head to the northwest towards the North Tower at the rear of Castle Green House.

##### **4.4 North East Tower** (Figure 3)

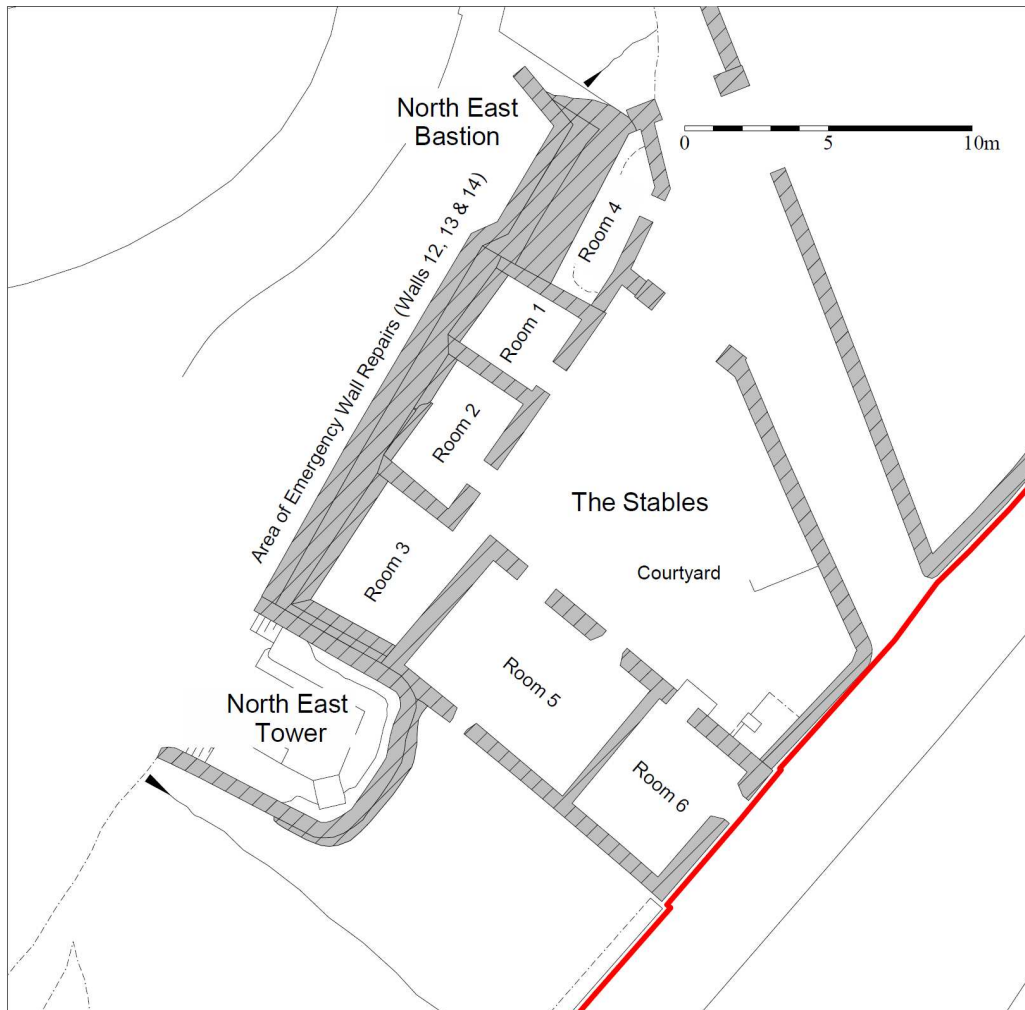
4.4.1 The **North East Tower** lies at the southwestern end of the eastern curtain wall. The tower has two staircases running down through the walls of the tower to a garderobe at the base.

#### 4.5 Castle Green House and The North Tower

4.5.1 The early 19<sup>th</sup> century castle Green House lies in the northern part of the original Castle grounds, and was built to incorporate the massive remains of the originally 13<sup>th</sup> century North Tower.

#### 4.6 The Fernery

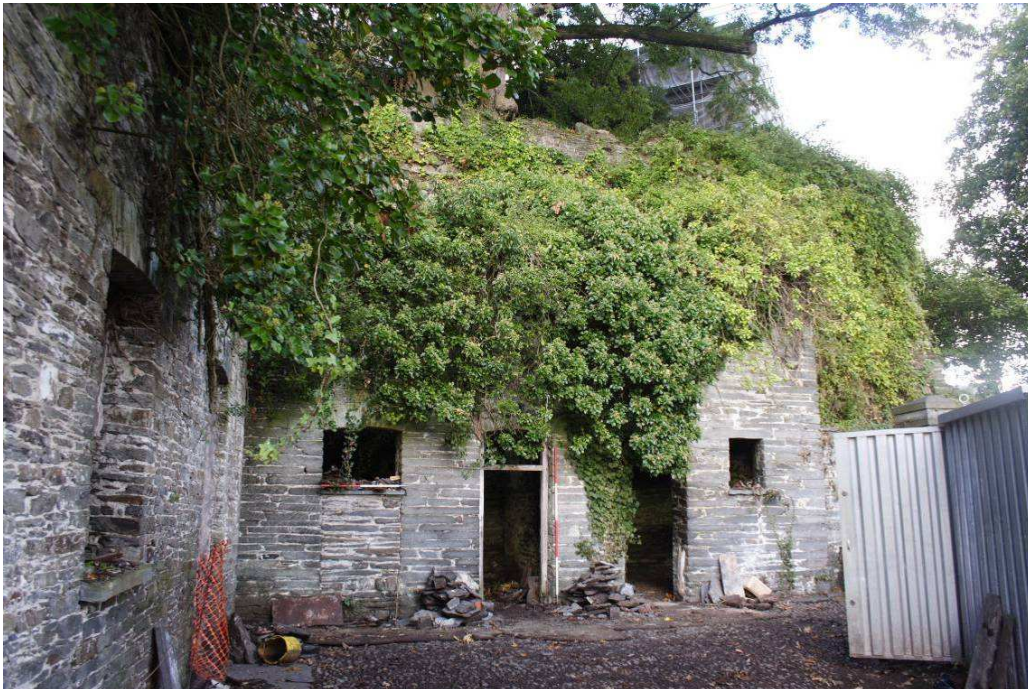
4.6.1 The location of the former **Fernery** lies on the western side of the Castle grounds. It lies directly to the east of Ty Castell, on the southern side of the present main castle entrance along Green Street.



**Figure 3:** Location of the Stables, Eastern curtain wall, North East bastion and North East Tower

## **5. PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF EASTERN CURTAIN WALL AND STABLES**

- 5.1 The main aim of the photographic survey was to take present-state photographs of the curtain wall prior to the emergency repairs. The majority of the eastern facades of the walls were obscured by the Rooms 1 to 4 of the Stables. These buildings had been constructed onto the front of the curtain wall in the post-medieval period. They are of significant interest in the development of the castle during this period and are briefly included in the following descriptions.
- 5.2 The majority of the curtain wall was obscured by the rooms of the Stables (Photo 1), and photographs had to be taken at very oblique angles. As the curtain wall was of rubble stone (constructed of the local mudstone and sandstone/Cilgerran Shales) and features were lacking (such as window lights or arrow slits) then the record is considered adequate. The photographs below include composite elevations of the facades of the walls within the buildings. These obviously suffer from perspective distortion the higher up the elevation. The upper parts of the photos also suffer from glare due to the dark conditions within the rooms of the stables.
- 5.3 The description of the walls and accompanying photographs are described in order from the wall of the North East tower visible within Room 5 and Room 3 of the Stables, then following along the curtain wall through Rooms 3, 2, 1 and 4 and up to the North East Bastion.



**Photo 1:** Southeastern facade of Rooms 1 and 2 of the Stables, with Eastern Curtain Wall of Cardigan Castle behind, 2m scale

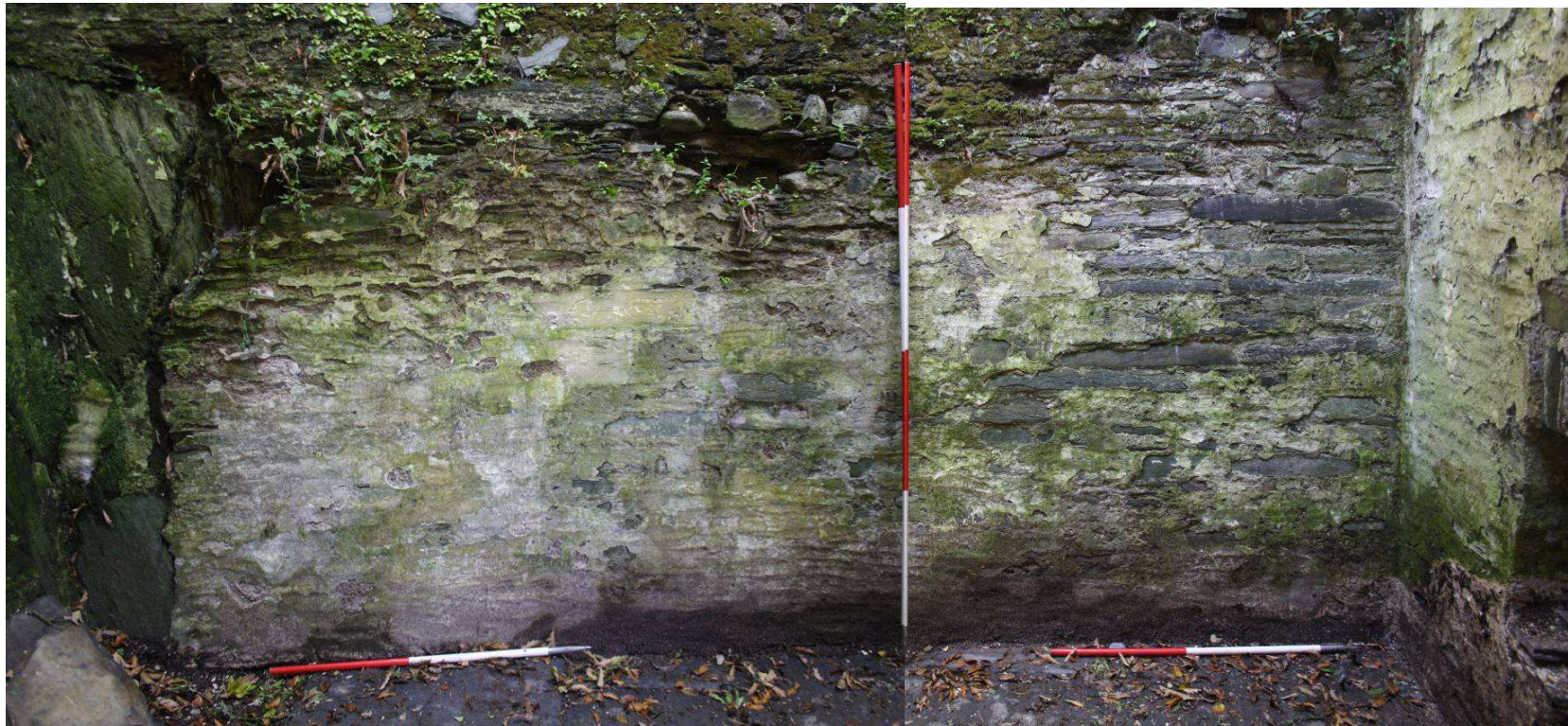
### **5.4 Eastern Curtain Wall**

- 5.4.1 Room 3 lies to the southwest of Rooms 1 & 2 (hidden to the left of Photo 1). The room has part of the northern elevation of the North East Tower within it (Photo 2). The elevation is of rubble stone construction with no clearly medieval

features visible within it. Two rows of beam slots are present in the elevation which relate to the former first floor and loft level of Room 3. Further beam slots are apparent towards the upper part of the elevation which relate to the former roof of the Room 3 (as can be seen with the surviving beam on the left hand side of Photo 2). The tower wall was relatively vertical, with only a slight splaying of the base of the wall. An outcrop of bedrock is visible in the lower right hand side of Photo 2 onto which the tower and Eastern Curtain Wall are built.



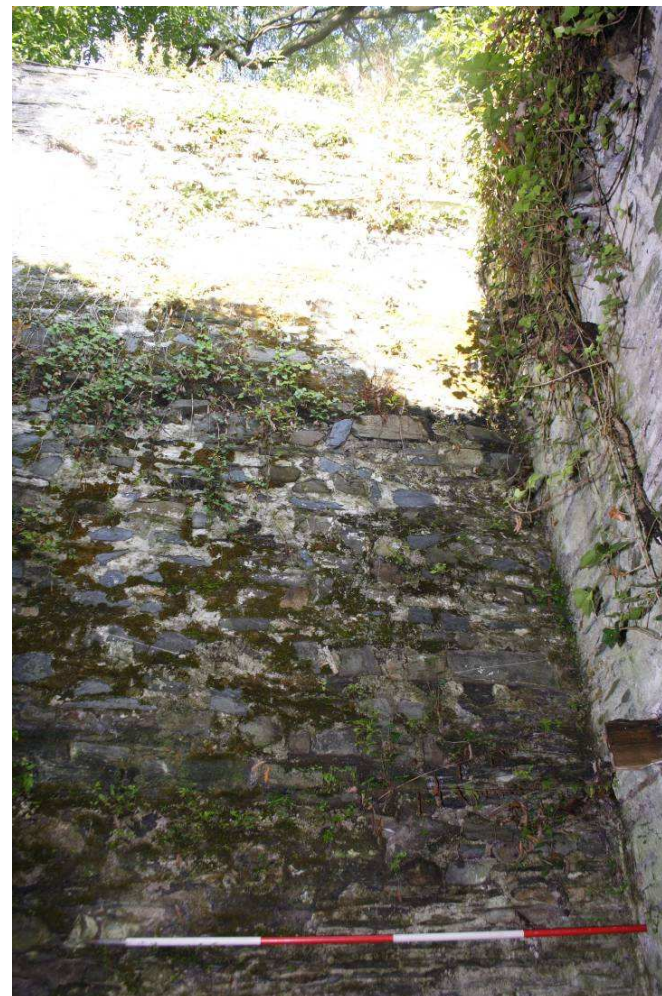
**Photo 2:** Composite photograph showing northern elevation of North East Tower within Room 3 of Stables, 2m scale



**Photo 3:** Composite photograph showing southeastern elevation of base of curtain wall in Room 3 of Stables, 2m and 1m scales



**Photo 4:** Southwestern half of southeastern elevation of Upper part of curtain wall in Room 3 of Stables, 2m scale



**Photo 5:** Northeastern half of southeastern elevation of Upper part of curtain wall in Room 3 of Stables, 2m scale

5.4.2 The southeastern elevation of the main Eastern Curtain Wall is also visible in Room 3, forming the northwestern wall of the room. A larger section of exposed bedrock is visible in this elevation, present in the southwestern base of the wall (Photo 3). It can be clearly seen in this area that much of the base of the curtain wall is merely a stone wall facade butting against the natural bedrock. This area of the wall was in a poor state of repair with the built facade beginning to peel away from the bedrock. The appearance of the lower part of the wall (Photo 3) is that it was rendered at ground floor level, presumably when the structure of Room 3 was in use. The pointing of the wall and relatively neatly laid stone in the lower part suggests that this area had been repaired and rebuilt previously.

5.4.3 The upper sections of this wall (Photos 4 & 5) also indicate areas of the facade having been rebuilt or re-pointed. No significant features were visible within this part of the wall, other than the two phases of wall rebuild associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> century use of the castle grounds. The base of the Eastern Curtain Wall splays out significantly (as can also be seen in the right hand side of Photo 2).

5.4.4 Within Room 2 of the Stables the base of the facade of the Eastern Curtain Wall has been significantly altered with the insertion of two alcoves (Photos 6 & 7). These were presumably constructed during the use of the structure of Room 2. Exposed bedrock is visible in the area between the two alcoves.

5.4.5 The southwestern alcove is formed by a large brick headed arch which springs from exposed bedrock on either side (Photo 6). The alcove measures c.2.2m in width and c.2.4m to the full height of the underside of the arch. A double recessed alcove is present, with stone walling facing the first recess, partly built onto exposed bedrock (c.0.6m wide to the southwest and c.0.54m wide to the northeast). The second is deeper and forms a rectangular recess with bedrock forming the back, c.1m in width and c.1.5m in height from a cut bedrock base. The bedrock was uneven in this area and has been partially levelled with mortared stonework. On top of this base is an area of un-mortared but neatly laid stone slabs (potentially the mortar has washed away).

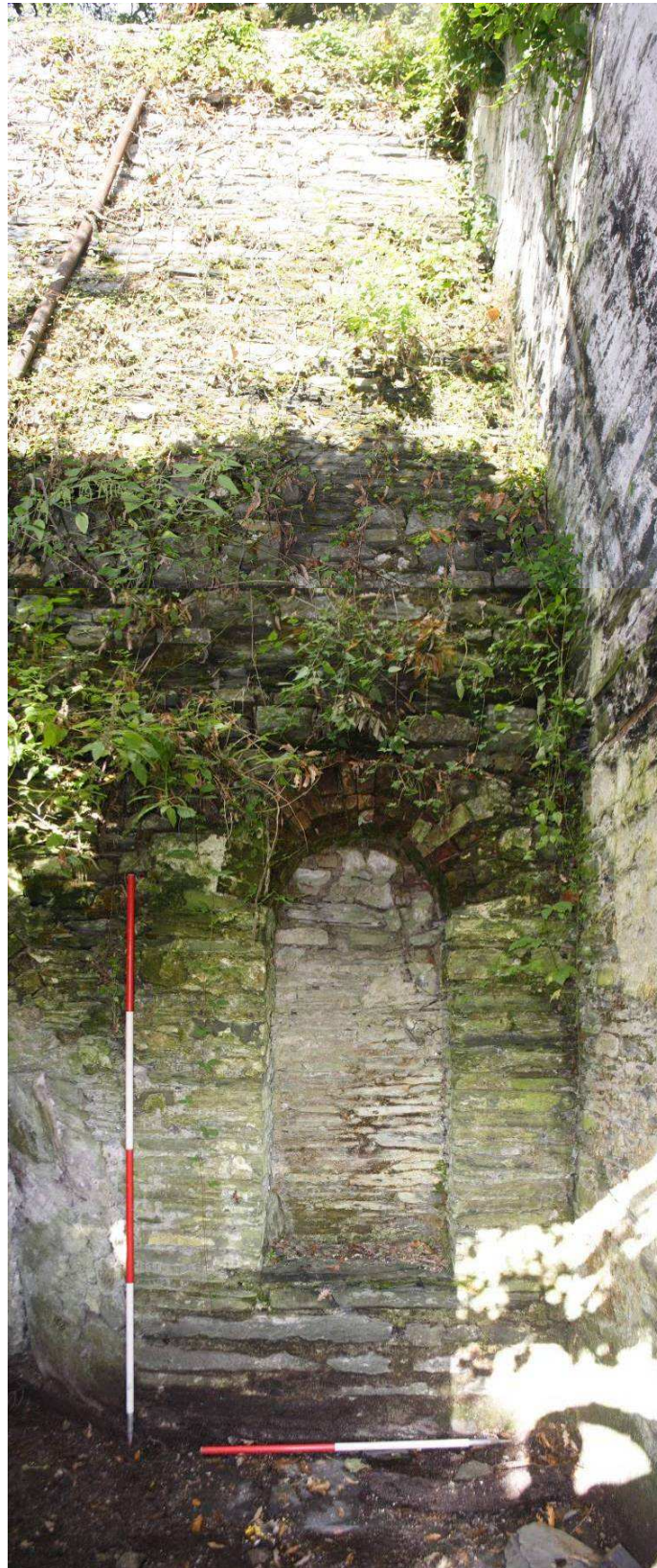
5.4.6 The function of the alcove is uncertain; it looks similar in appearance to a chimney, although there was no clear evidence for a flue running up through the Eastern Curtain Wall. Behind the brick arch was a mix of loose rubble and uneven brickwork. It is possible that a former garderobe chute had been adapted to form a chimney, but as the top of the curtain wall had been significantly altered during the 19<sup>th</sup> century this could not be confirmed and is merely conjectural.

5.4.7 The northeastern alcove was far narrower, measuring c.1.94m in height and c.0.7m in width (Photo 7). The base of the alcove was at a similar level to the adjacent one, but was stone built. The arch was again built of brick. The back of the alcove was of neatly laid mortared stonework constructed of thin slabs. There was clearly no possibility of a flue behind this feature, as the brick arch was neatly mortared to the stonework behind.

5.4.8 No features were visible in the upper parts of the walls, other than at the very top where the two different phases of 19<sup>th</sup> century rebuild were present. A former metal pipe runs down the outside of the wall, and presumably postdates the use of the Stables.



**Photo 6:** Composite photograph showing southeastern elevation of Eastern Curtain Wall within southern half of Room 2 of Stables, 2m and 1m scales



**Photo 7:** Composite photograph showing southeastern elevation of Eastern Curtain Wall within southern half of Room 2 of Stables, 2m and 1m scale



**Photo 8:** Composite photograph showing southeastern elevation of Eastern Curtain Wall within southern half of Room 1 of Stables, 2m and 1m scale

5.4.9 The eastern Curtain Wall facade within Room 1 displays far more regular coursing in its upper levels using courses of thin slabs, interleaved with courses of larger boulders (Photo 8). Although this may be partially as a result of less vegetation obscuring the stonework, there does appear to be a marked change in the construction of the wall in this area. The lower part of the wall is also better constructed using neatly laid and mortared thin stone slabs for a height of around 2m (it may have also been whitewashed during the use of Room 1). This stonework is similar in character to that at the back of the northeastern alcove in Room 2. At the base of the wall in the southwestern corner of the room, a single large outcrop of bedrock is present which has been neatly cut to continue the neat facade of the Eastern Curtain Wall.

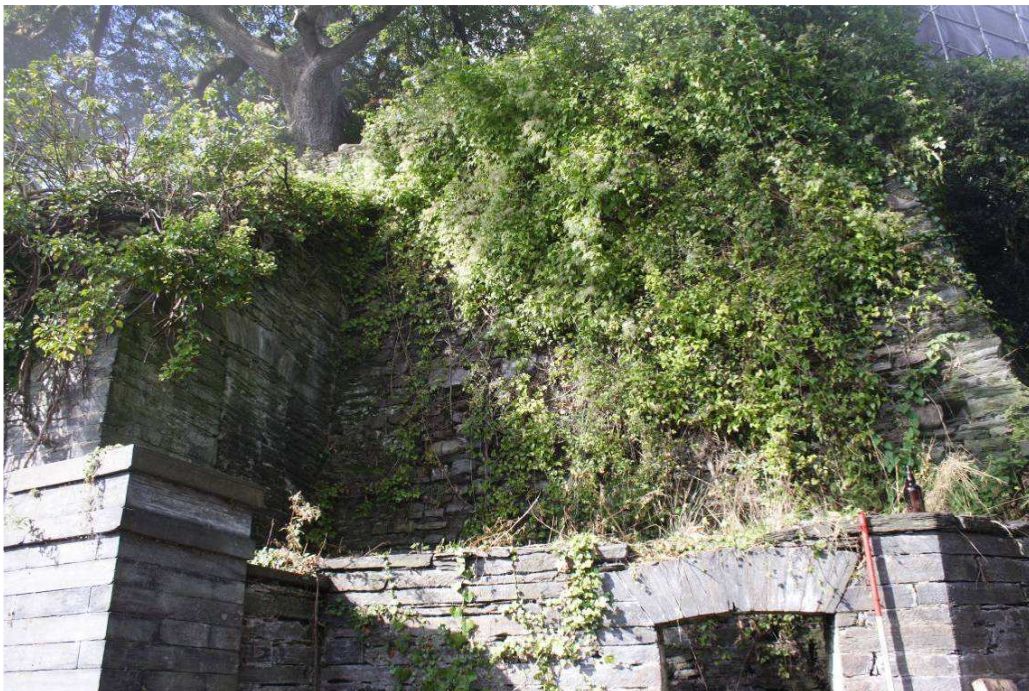
## 5.5 North East Bastion

5.5.1 Room 4 lies directly southeast of the North East Bastion, and the room was far narrower than Rooms 1 to 3 due to the increased width of the base of the wall here. The base of the Bastion splays out both to the southeast and to the

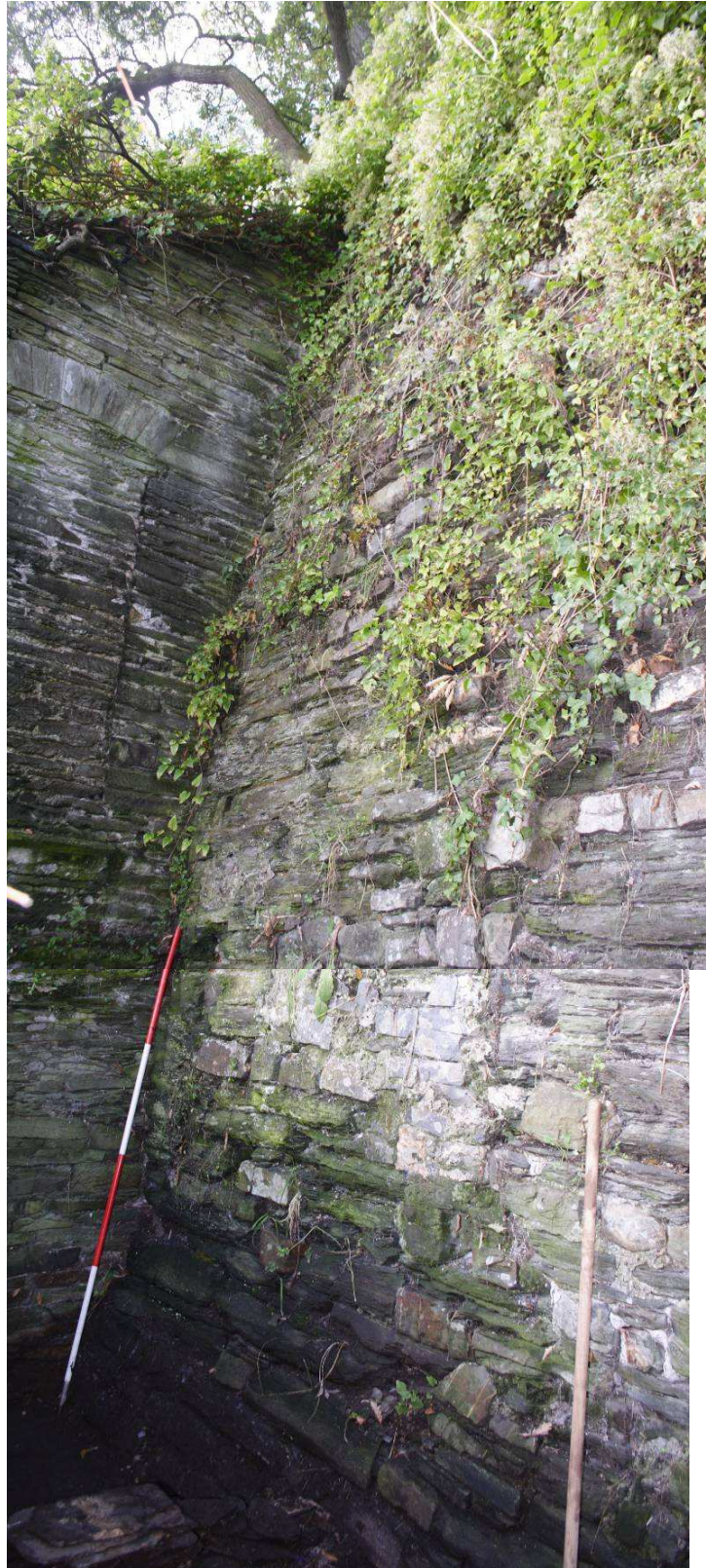
northeast where the return is situated (Photo 9). The very base courses of the bastion are very notably splayed (Photo 11).



**Photo 9:** Southeastern facade of Room 4 of the Stables, with Eastern Curtain Wall of Cardigan Castle behind, 2m scale



**Photo 10:** Southeastern facade of North East Bastion part of Eastern Curtain Wall of Cardigan Castle, 1m scale



**Photo 11:** Composite photograph showing southeastern elevation of North East Bastion within southern half of Room 4 of Stables, 2m scale



**Photo 12:** Lower part of southeastern elevation of North East Bastion within northern half of Room 4 of Stables, 2m scale

5.5.2 The wall of the Bastion is of different build than the Eastern Curtain Wall as seen in the adjacent Room 1, being of rougher coursing using a mix of thin slabs and larger stones. The northeastern end wall of Room 1 has been built against that of the Bastion, as can be clearly seen within the southern end of Room 4 (Photo 13) where the larger and more weathered stones of the Bastion and the thinner stones of the end wall of Room 1 can be seen to be independent constructions.

5.5.3 An area of apparent repair in the North East Bastion wall was visible in the southwestern part of the room, identified as a patch of rougher and less neatly mortared stonework (Photo 11). A number of small holes were visible in the wall facade which appeared to have been purposefully made, but which were too small and irregular to be associated with a structural function. It is possible they may have been made to attach shelving, or for some form of hanger or similar.

5.5.4 The northern facade of the North East Bastion (Photos 14 and 15) demonstrates how the curtain wall has been built against the natural rock escarpment on which the castle sits. This facade also suggests a number of previous repairs and rebuilds, most clearly at its base where neat coursing of thin slabs suddenly changes to areas of larger, less well mortared stone (Photo 14). A number of fissures in the wall indicate subsidence and instability (since repaired). The upper part of the Bastion has a number of walls at slightly different alignments which relate to rebuilding during the 19<sup>th</sup> century works.



**Photo 13:** Detail of North east bastion Wall (facing) and the northeastern end wall of Room 1 butting against it, 1m scale



**Photo 14:** Composite photo of the northern elevation of the North East Bastion wall, 1m scale



**Photo 15:** Base of the northern elevation of North East Bastion wall and bedrock, 1m scale

## **5.6 The Stables**

### ***Room 1***

5.6.1 As shown above in Photo 1, the structures of Rooms 1, 2 and 3 are built directly against the southeastern facade of the North East Curtain Wall.

5.6.2 The evidence suggests that Room 1 and 2 form part of a single build added against the curtain wall (Photos 1, 16 & 21). The facade of the structure is constructed of neatly cut locally sourced mudstones, generally comprising long, flat slabs. The doorways and windows were neatly finished (angular), with arches comprising the small regular blocks cut of the same stone. The floor of this Room had a neat arrangement of cobbles with red sandstone lines (Photo 18). A drain lay in the southwestern corner of the room.

5.6.3 The doorway into Room 1 is in its original location, with the room having a single window to the northeast (Photo 16). This would appear to have been inserted at a later date, as a former blocked fireplace lies beneath it with a blocked flue visible above a rotten wooden lintel in the top of the window (Photo 17). On the exterior this window has a single stone slab lintel (as opposed to a stone arch like the others). A single window is present at the upper level directly above the doorway. A blocked doorway led into Room 2 to the southwest, with further blocked doorways at first floor level leading to the southwest (Photo 19) and to the northeast.



**Photo 16:** Doorway and window of Room 1,  
2m and 1m scale



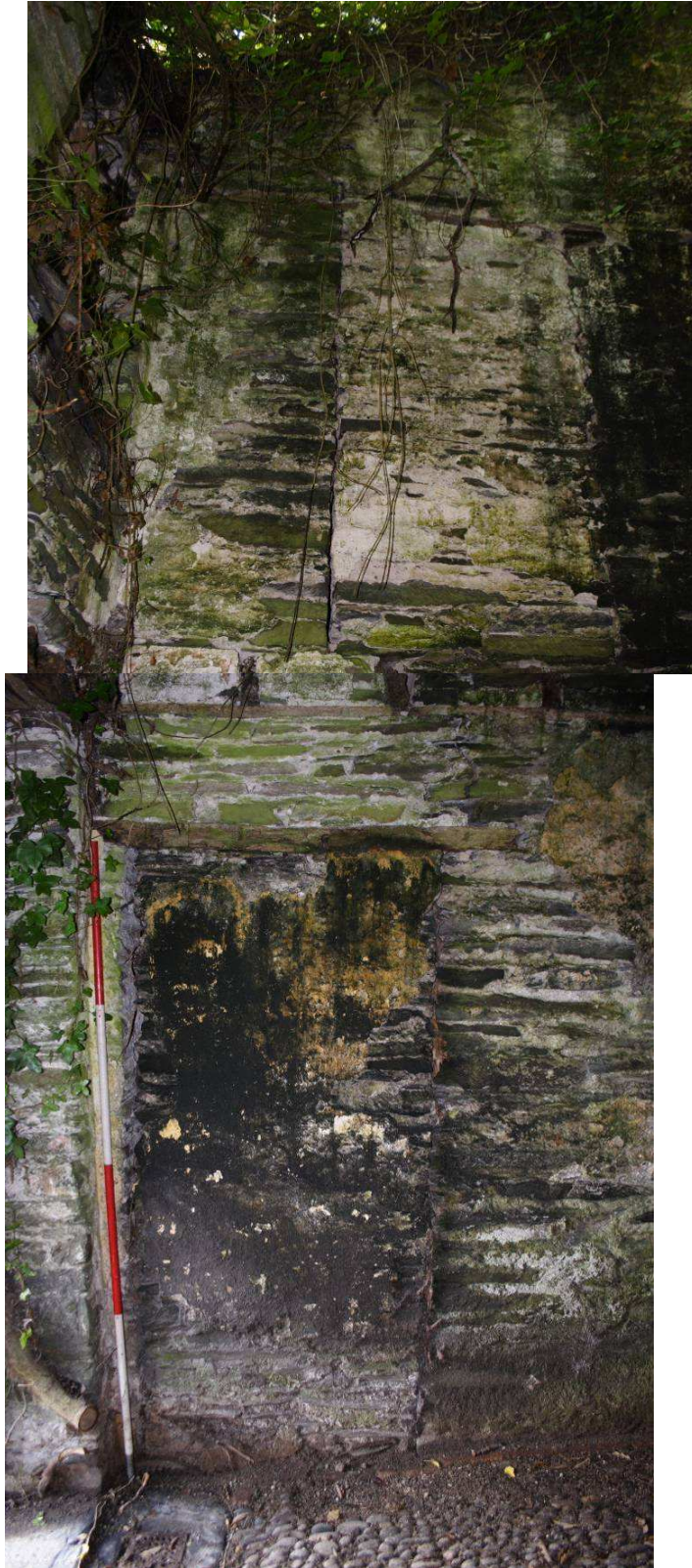
**Photo 17:** Internal view of window and earlier fireplace,  
1m scale



**Photo 18:** Cobbled floor of Room 1 from doorway, 2m and 1m scale



**Photo 19:** Blocked flue of chimney above decayed wooden lintel



**Photo 20:** Composite photograph of northeast facing internal wall of Room 1 with blocked doorways to ground and first floor level, 2m scale

## **Room 2**

5.6.4 The facade of Room 2 indicates that it had two doorways leading into the room, but the southwestern opening has been blocked (Photo 21). Both doorways have the stone arches over. A single window was present at the first floor level directly above the blocked doorway. The floor of Room 2 comprised compacted small stone chippings with occasional small patches of cobbling.

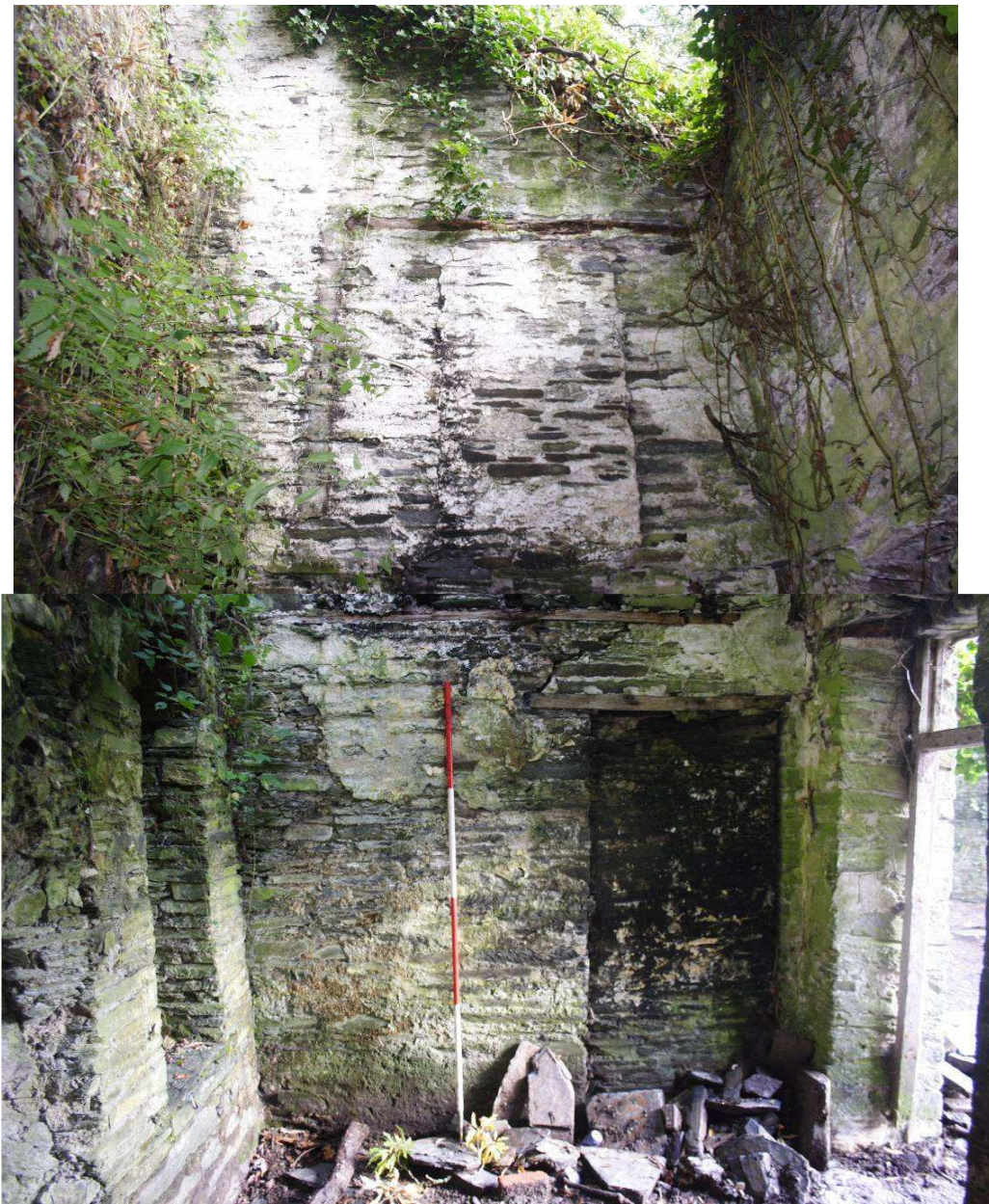
5.6.5 The southwest facing internal elevation has blocked doorways at ground and first floor levels corresponding with those seen in Room 1. The upper part of the elevation does indicate that a larger opening was formerly present, which was then partially blocked to create the narrower doorway (Photo 22).

5.6.6 The northeast facing internal elevation of Room 2 has the remains of a scored base coat render at ground floor level, indicating the room had been plaster finished. At first floor level a blocked doorway was present leading to the southwest (Photo 23).

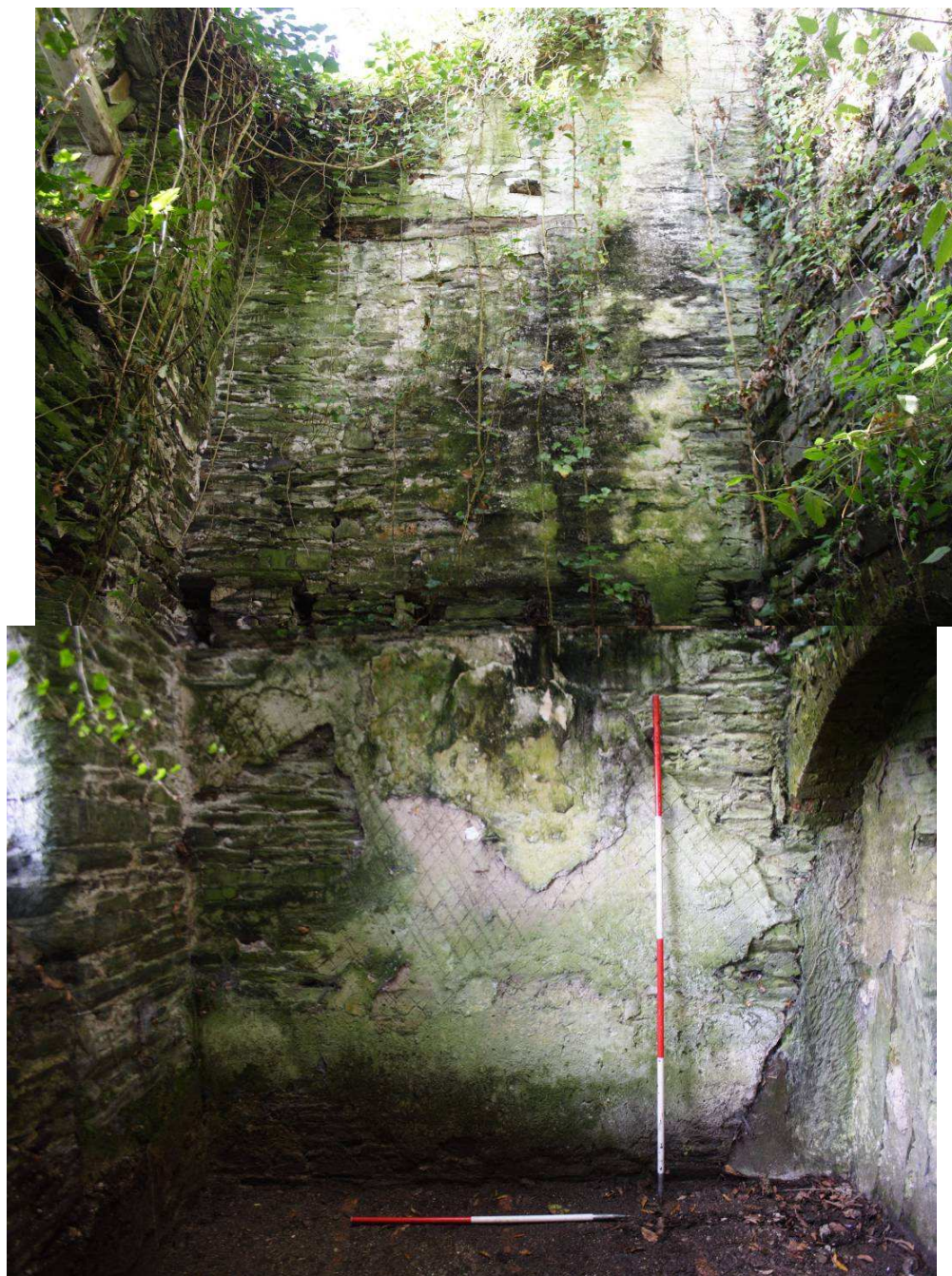
5.6.7 Room 2 has the two alcoves constructed into the facade of the Eastern Curtain Wall, the functions of which are unclear (see above). No evidence for a former internal division was visible within the room that may have been associated with the two doorways and two alcoves.



**Photo 21:** Doorway and window of Room 2,  
2m and 1m scale



**Photo 22:** Composite photograph of southwest facing internal wall of Room 2 with blocked doorways to ground and first floor level, 2m scale



**Photo 23:** Composite photograph of northeast facing internal wall of Room 2 with blocked doorway or window to first floor level, 2m and 1m scale

### **Room 3**

5.6.8 Room 3 is obscured by the perpendicular building range containing Rooms 5 & 6. Only the entrance doorway is visible on the northeast facing facade of the southeastern range (Photo 24). The structure has lost its upper floor and roof as discussed above.



**Photo 24:** Entrance doorway into Room 3 (right hand side)  
and doorway into Room 5

5.6.9 As noted above the wall North East Tower forms the southwestern side of the room, and the Eastern Curtain Wall the northwestern side. The end wall of Room 2 forms the southeastern side of the room, and the end wall of Room 5 the southwestern. This room was evidently constructed after the adjacent Rooms 1 & 2 and Rooms 5 & 6 had been built, in effect just inserting a floor level and roof over an enclosed space. The difference in the two builds of the adjacent structures can be seen in Photo 24, with the front wall of Room 2 projecting behind the end wall of Room 5. This gap has been used for the doorway into Room 3.

5.6.10 Internally the southwest facing wall of Room 3 also demonstrates that the end wall of Room 2 has been adapted (Photo 24). It can be seen that beam holes have been cut into the wall for joists (as has been done in the opposite wall of the North East Tower).

5.6.11 The doorway and window of Room 3 have been created by building small projecting lengths of walling between the two buildings (Photo 25). The stone arches have been wedged between the walls, with a stone slab and timbers inserted above the door. A slightly taller length of walling has been built above the window to bring the wall to the height of the eaves of the adjacent buildings.

5.6.12 A chimney is present at ground floor level within Room 3, with evidence suggesting that the end wall of Room 2 was modified and rebuilt to create the flue. The doorway seen at first floor level in the end wall of Room 2 is not visible, which may be due to the insertion of the chimney flue and subsequent rebuilding.

5.6.13 A doorway gives access into Room 5 to the southeast, though it is unclear if this was inserted at a later date or is contemporary with the original construction of Room 5.

5.6.14 Remnants of a stone flagged floor survive in the room (Photo 26).



**Photo 25:** Southwest facing internal elevation of Room 3, showing the adapted end wall of Room 2, and that of Room 5 to the right, 2m and 1m scale



**Photo 26:** Floor of Room 3, 2m and 1m scale

#### **Room 4**

5.6.15 Room 4 appears to have been added at the same time as the perimeter wall around the stable courtyard. The facade of the building was constructed of much larger and more angular blocks, the same as are used in the gateposts within the boundary of the stables and entrance from the Strand (Photo 9).

5.6.16 The walls of the structure were of a single storey, with no clear evidence for a roof having been present. The wall of the southwestern end of the room was formed by the end wall of Room 1, with a blocked doorway visible at first floor level (Photo 27).

5.6.17 The room had a flagged stone floor (Photo 28). At its southwestern end a low partition wall crossed the northern half of the room. The wall was built of small thin stones with a loose earth and mortar bonding, but did not survive to its full height.

5.6.18 At the northern end of the room, a channel had been constructed through the stone wall (photo 29). Here the wall was made of very regular and angular stone blocks (more akin to the facade of the wall than the rest of the internal face). The channel itself was formed by narrow, long slabs projecting through both sides of the wall.

5.6.19 As noted above, a number of small square holes had been cut into the face of the North East Bastion within the room, but these were not regular enough to have been for structural purposes.



**Photo 27:** Southwestern wall of Room 4 with blocked doorway at first floor level leading from building of Room 1, 2m scale



**Photo 28:** Flag stone floor of Room 4  
and partial stone partition wall, 2m scale



**Photo 29:** Stone channel through end wall  
in northern corner of Room 4, 2m scale

### **Rooms 5 & 6**

5.6.20 The building containing Rooms 5 & 6 was again of two stories, with the upper floor having collapsed, although a few joists remained. The ground floor of the buildings was covered in debris and vegetation and the original flooring was not seen. The facade had two doorways at either end, one accessing Room 5 and the other Room 6 (Photo 30). A central window was present in Room 5, with three windows at first floor level directly above the ground floor openings. Neatly cut angular stones were used in the arches around the windows and for the sills.

5.6.21 The rear wall of Room 5 had large beam slots at a low level placed within the walls, presumably for former wooden partitions (stalls) for horses. Recesses were present at the end of each stall, but it was unclear if these were blocked windows.



**Photo 30:** Composite photograph showing northeast facade of Rooms 5 & 6

### **Courtyard**

5.6.22 The above buildings and perimeter wall surrounded a courtyard area floored with neatly laid cobbles (Photos 31 & 32).

5.6.23 Around the perimeter of the cobbles, and in front of the stables buildings, ran a drain covered by large slate slabs (Photo 33). The drain dropped to a point in the southwestern corner off the courtyard where it fell into a larger sump and presumably drained across/under the Strand into the Teifi.

5.6.24 Within the drain run a number of metal grilled drain covers were present (Photo 33). Also present were at least two access covers cut into slate slabs (Photo 34). These were cut from the same slate stone and fitted neatly into the recessed hole within the underlying slab. The covers were removed through the use of a metal lug which laid flat into a recess when not in use.

5.6.25 In the southeastern part of the courtyard the cobbles sloped to the southeast. A kerb of slate slabs formed the edge of this slope (Photo 32). The function of this slope is uncertain.



**Photo 31:** Cobbled courtyard of The Stables, northern half, 2m and 1m scale



**Photo 32:** Cobbled courtyard of The Stables, southern half



**Photo 33:** Drain running around perimeter of stables buildings, view northwest, 2m scale



**Photo 34:** Small slate drain access cover (with 4" pointing trowel)

## **5.7 Discussion**

5.7.1 In general the majority of the fabric of the North East Tower, Eastern Curtain Wall and North East Bastion is of medieval build. Each of these elements has indications of extensive repairs and rebuilds on its facade, which have been documented throughout the castle's history, and most notably in 1343 when the curtain walls were said to be in a very poor state of repair.

5.7.2 The North East Tower has been altered to facilitate the construction of the stables, with the cutting of beam slots for the floors and roof of Room 3, as well as for the construction of the adjacent structure of Room 5. No specific medieval wall features were seen within the height of the wall, other than a possible part of a window arch seen near the top of the tower and discussed below (in the section regarding the North East Tower investigations).

5.7.3 The Eastern Curtain Wall could be seen to have been constructed directly against and in parts on top of the exposed bedrock in each of the rooms. Due to the irregular nature of the exposed bedrock, stone walling was added or the bedrock was cut back to create a relatively level facade. Within Room 3 it was evident that the stonework was beginning to peel away from the bedrock behind.

5.7.4 The lower part of the Eastern Curtain Wall had been significantly altered within the lower part of Room 2, with the insertion of two alcoves, one of which could conceivably have been a fireplace utilizing a former garderobe chute. The larger of the two arches spanned across two areas of exposed bedrock, with the medieval facade stonework held above. It is possible that a collapse of the wall facade was the impetus for the construction of the arch (being used as a relieving arch) and adapting the exposed bedrock behind following removal of the collapsed medieval masonry. Whether these alcoves were constructed at the same time as the structure of Room 1 & 2 is uncertain, but it is most unlikely that they were constructed beforehand.

5.7.5 Within Room 1 the Eastern Curtain Wall survived in the best state of repair and with the most neatly coursed area of walling. It is possible that this was the original form of construction of the Curtain Wall of Cardigan Castle, the outward neatness of the stonework being a symbol of its status and wealth. If this is the case then the generally random and less neat construction of the majority of the remainder of the wall could be as a result of numerous ad hoc repairs, rebuilds and replacements from the at least the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. This cannot be confirmed, but is perhaps supported by other elements of original neatly built medieval walling that have been exposed during the repair works on the inside of the castle, and which are discussed further below.

5.7.6 The North East Bastion projects out from the Eastern Curtain Wall by around 1.5m. It is very splayed at its base, where it is also constructed of neatly coursed flat slabs. The facade of the wall as seen within Room 4 and the small stretch seen on its northeastern stretch indicates that it has been in a poor state of repair. This may have been exacerbated by its construction on to the steeply rising bedrock on its northeastern edge leading to it being less stable on this side due to the reduced amount of stonework, the width being just less than 1m as opposed to over 1.5m on its southwestern side. There is a step towards the top of the North East Bastion wall on the southwestern side, where the width of the wall diminishes considerably and the 19<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding has taken place on top.

5.7.7 The structure containing Rooms 1 & 2 is considered to have been the earliest of the Stables buildings. The construction style is relatively simple, but neat and may relate to the very late 18<sup>th</sup> century or early 19<sup>th</sup> century when the stables are first recorded as being laid out by John Bowen. It is probable that Room 2 would have been subdivided to create two stables, each with its own

doorway although all evidence for a partition has gone (a thin wooden partition would not require significant fixings). Room 1 may have originally been used as a tack room and accommodation for a groom/stable hand, which would explain the presence of the fireplace. The upper floor of the building may have been used as accommodation, hay loft and storage area, with entrances at the upper level through the two doorways in the end walls accessed by wooden steps of which nothing now remains.

5.7.8 The structure containing Rooms 5 & 6 was probably added some time after 1836 when the Castle was bought by David Griffiths Davies who is described as a wealthy man from an influential family. His ownership corresponded with an increase in the wealth of Cardigan. It is presumed that he required more stabling, leading to the new building being constructed. Room 5 contained the remains of four wooden partitions creating five animal stalls. It may be that at this time Room 1 is converted to another stable, with the fireplace blocked and a new window added, and the doorway in Room 2 is part blocked to create a window. Room 6 may then have been used as the new tack room. The upper floor above Room 5 & 6 may again have been used as accommodation, hay loft or for storage. The addition of the roof and upper floor of Room 3 may have been done to create further accommodation for grooms/stable hands.

5.7.9 The drainage run around the cobbled courtyard may have been added at this time, as the neat stone work is more akin to the window arches and sills of Rooms 5 & 6, the perimeter walls (including those of Room 4) and the gate posts of the stables area. Even though merely a functional drain, the craftsmanship of the slate access covers would suggest they also served to demonstrate the status of the owner.

5.7.9 Room 4 is presumed to be a pigsty: the small wall at the southwestern being the remains of a small covered area for shelter; the channel through the wall being a chute for food to be dropped.

## **6. WATCHING BRIEF DURING REPAIRS TO EASTERN CURTAIN WALL AND NORTH EAST BASTION**

6.1 The majority of the repairs undertaken to the castle walls involved removal of vegetation, removing decayed mortar and re-pointing with lime mortar. No significant archaeological remains were revealed during these works on the exterior of the castle wall, other than allowing a basic phasing of the upper parts of the wall to be made.

6.2 Larger areas of repair at lower levels on the exterior were carried out to cause the minimum of disturbance to the historic fabric. Again, these works revealed no significant archaeological remains.

6.3 The main works that were monitored during the watching brief involved the excavation of soil behind the North East Bastion, required to firstly relieve pressure on the castle wall and also to determine the location of roots of the large Turkey Oak tree that sits behind the top of the Eastern Curtain wall.

6.4 Further exploratory excavation work was carried out on to the south of the North East Bastion, where former stone revetment walls had collapsed, and also at the base of the bastion where significant amounts of debris and soil had accumulated over the years obscuring much of the face of the wall.

6.5 The removal of debris covering the floors of Rooms 1, 2, 3 & 4 of the Stables was also monitored. Numerous pieces of scrap metalwork, bottles and ceramics were noted. The majority of the material was of 20<sup>th</sup> century date, including fixings for gutters, various braces and straps, as well as more modern debris which had been discarded in more recent years (such as a mobile phone).

### **6.5 Base of North East Bastion**

6.5.1 Hand excavation of soil and rubble that had accumulated at the base of the North east Bastion (north of Room 4) was undertaken to expose the northeastern facade of the wall to determine its stability and allow repairs.



**Photo 35:** drain cover revealed at base of North East Bastion Wall, 1m scale

6.5.2 The exposed facade of the wall has been previously discussed. The removal of the material allowing the steep slope of the natural bedrock, against which the bastion was built, to be seen.

6.5.3 At the base of the wall a metal grided drain cover was exposed (Photo 35). This had many similarities with the drains around the stable courtyard and they are presumably contemporary.

6.5.4 The material removed from this area contained numerous semi-circular slate slabs (Photo 36). The function of these stones is uncertain, but is presumed to have been decorative associated with the formal gardens.



**Photo 36:** Sample of the semi-circular stone slabs found in backfill, 1m scale

6.5.5 To the north of the North East Bastion further debris of the former retaining wall that ran alongside the sloped walkway from the stables to the castle was removed. The remains of a well had been exposed following the collapse of the retaining wall, which exposed a section through part of the vertical stone shaft (Photo 37). It was constructed of un-mortared stone with rough coursing, comprising rubble stone with dispersed levelling layers of thinner stones. The full depth of the well is unknown as it was covered for safety reasons.



**Photo 37:** Remains of well situated through former retaining wall to north of North East Bastion, 1m scale

## **6.6 Area Inside North East Bastion**

6.6.1 Hand excavation of accumulated garden soil was undertaken on the inside of the North East Bastion to the north of the Turkey Oak tree. This was done by both the site contractors Tree and Sons, the site contractors under the supervision and with the assistance of the attending archaeologist.

6.6.2 A maximum depth of 1m of material was removed from behind the North East Bastion, covering an area of 5m in length and 2m in width from the wall (sloping upwards to the southwest).

6.6.3 The material removed from the area comprised almost entirely of a dark greyish brown, garden soil. Numerous small angular stones and occasional larger stones and fragments of mortar were present within the soil. A number of fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> century and later ceramics were also noted within the topsoil, but not retained, representing general detritus mixed in with cultivation of the garden soils.

6.6.4 At the southwestern end of the excavated area a very large, but truncated stone wall was exposed (Photos 38 & 39). The wall was perpendicular to the bastion wall aligned roughly northwest to southeast. It was built of the same stone as the walls, but had a notably lighter lime mortar bonding. The wall was of at least 1.5m in width, but extended beyond the edge of the excavated area to the southwest. It was neatly faced on the exposed northeastern edge, using long thin stone slabs, with a rough rubble core. The wall was exposed to a height of 0.8m, but evidently continued below the base of the excavated level. An exposed length of 0.9m of the wall was exposed, projecting to the northwest under the edge of the excavation area and adjacent path (towards the North Tower).

6.6.5 The exposed stone wall projected into the North East Bastion wall, as could be seen by an area of rough rubble stone and very white mortar in the face of the North East Bastion wall, which lay directly above the rubble core of the

exposed stone wall. A single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the surface of the wall of probable 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century date.



**Photo 38:** Profile of Exposed wall at southwest end of excavated area (Turkey Oak visible to the rear on the right) viewing southwest, 1m scales



**Photo 39:** Top view of exposed wall at southwest end of excavated area (with North East Bastion wall at top of photo), 1m scales

6.6.6 As the inner face of the bastion was exposed a recessed feature became apparent, hidden behind the depth of garden soils, built neatly into the inside of the North East Bastion wall (Photo 40 & 41; Figure 4). The recess was of 1.55m width. Evidently it had been infilled with rubble and garden soil, and a patch of later walling inserted to level the facade of the wall, presumably when either the 18<sup>th</sup> century or 19<sup>th</sup> century gardens were built. This was suffering from subsidence. The original alcove was edged with chamfered stones to a height of 1.15m from the base of the excavated area, above this point the wall had been rebuilt and the chamfered edge stopped. This was the same on both sides.

6.6.7 The base of the excavated area corresponded with a slight step out of c.0.10m in the bastion wall. The base of the alcove was also at this level, stepping back 0.19m from the front of the wall. The back of the alcove was sloped and lay c.0.47m from the front of the wall, where it could be measured (the higher part was obscured by the infilled stone work). A basic projection of the angle would indicate that it would measure around 0.61m at the top of the surviving wall.

6.6.8 As the garden soil was excavated adjacent to the short surviving stretch of the northeast wall of the Bastion, a similar feature was observed in the exposed wall (Photo 42). Only the southeastern edge of this feature survived, but it again had chamfered edges and a sloping back rising from the same level as the other alcove. The surviving width of the alcove measured c.1.25m. The wall had been truncated in height in this area to a ledge 0.65m above the level of the excavated area. The two alcoves were of the same construction style and are presumably contemporary.



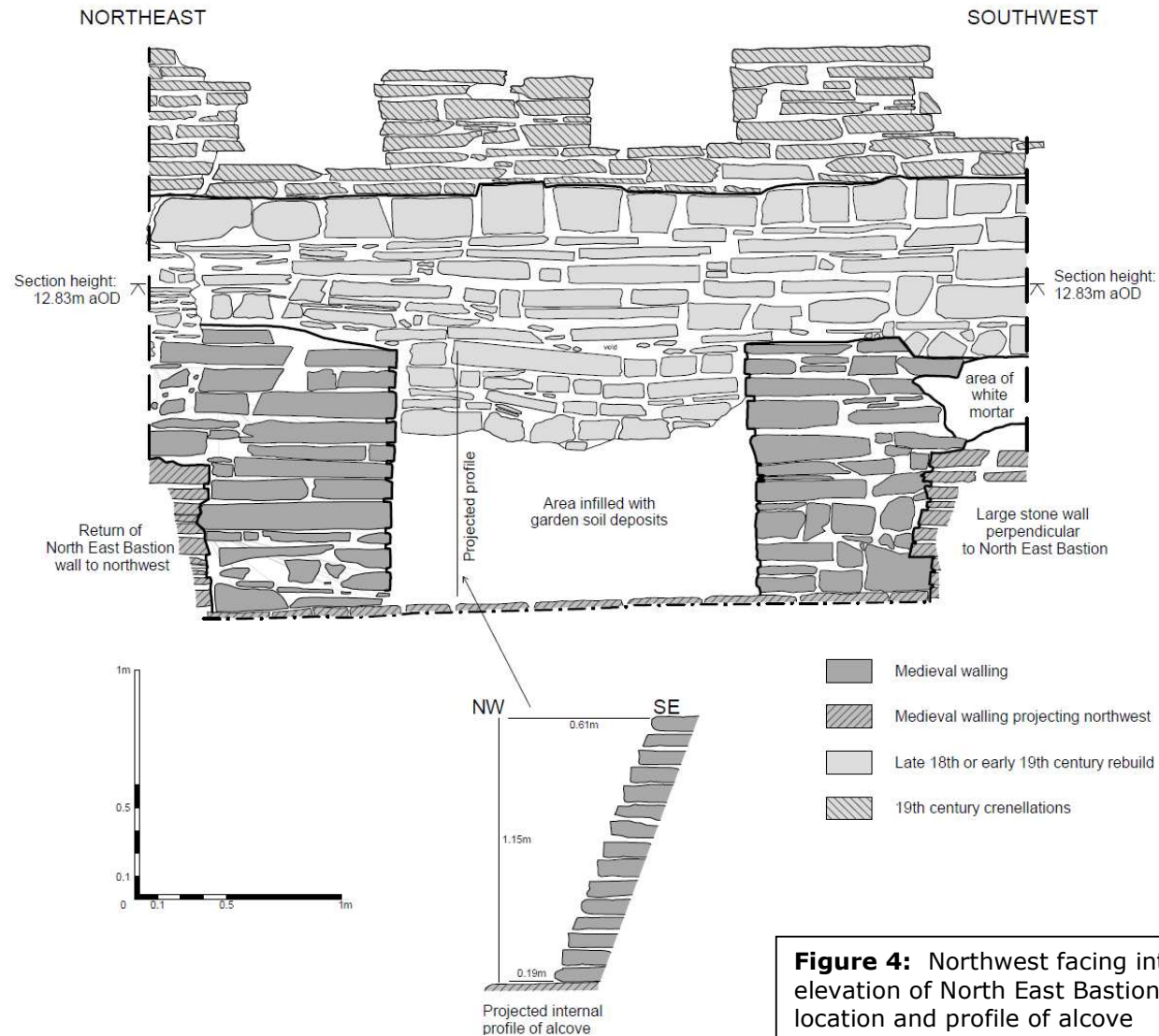
**Photo 40:** Alcove on inside of North East Bastion wall  
when first exposed, 1m scales



**Photo 41:** Alcove on inside of North East Bastion wall following removal part of infill prior to rebuild, 1m scale



**Photo 42:** Alcove on inside of northeast wall of North East Bastion, 1m scales



**Figure 4:** Northwest facing internal elevation of North East Bastion showing location and profile of alcove



**Photo 43:** View south showing exposed northeast wall and both alcoves on inside walls of North East Bastion, 1m scale

6.6.9 The northwest facade of the wall was recorded, which demonstrated two phases of rebuild of the parapet of the wall, relating to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century gardens within the castle. An initial rebuild was constructed on the top of the wall, from the top of the chamfered stone edge of the alcove to an obvious course of substantial stones. This rebuild corresponds with the infilling of the alcove and insertion of walling filling its upper part. The second phase of rebuilding comprised the wall above this large stone course and crenellations above. The mortar used within this upper part of the wall was failing and the major focus of the repair works for the parapet.

6.6.10 On the outer side of the wall it could be seen that the upper part of the wall/parapet was far thinner than the main wall of the North East Bastion below which had been truncated to a roughly even level where it could be seen. The upper part of the wall measured c.0.5m in width and between 0.75 and 0.85m in height. The top of the surviving part of the truncated North East Bastion, on which this had been built, was c.1.3m in width, and its top corresponds with the top of the surviving part of the alcove on the inside of the wall.

6.6.11 The northwest to southeast return of the North East Bastion wall had been partially demolished in the past, but it was possible to follow the inner edge of the wall where it had been exposed for a maximum length of 3.2m (Photo 43). Above this level the wall significantly altered, presumably when the garden features were built, such that only part of the alcove survived (as noted above) and the end of the wall was left ragged. Above the alcove the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century garden wall had been built, again much narrower than the wall beneath and it was also aligned slightly differently. Due to previous collapse it was not possible to determine the lengths of the later wall.

6.6.12 The crenellations at the top of the 19<sup>th</sup> century wall were only 20cm deep, with the courses of stonework behind sloping down to the top of the main part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century wall.

6.6.13 On the northeastern side of the North East Bastion a series of walls were known to have been present, but recently collapsed. During the clearance work for the wall repairs the base of a wall projecting northeast from the rear of the surviving stone wall of the bastion was revealed. It was quite narrow (0.5m maximum), with facing courses of stones on both sides with a very loose rubble infill.

## **6.7 Discussion**

6.7.1 The watching brief within the area of the North East Bastion has confirmed the presence of a substantial amount of original medieval fabric of probable 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century date. It is clear that during the conversion of the castle to gardens during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the ruins of the castle were substantially altered to accommodate new walls and make room for planting schemes. The Turkey Oak, which is thought to have been planted in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, was originally planted at a lower level than its current base, but has subsequently been buried by garden soil during different episodes of garden design. It should be noted that no roots from the oak tree were observed within the excavated area, and the main roots are presumably present at a lower level.

6.7.2 Removal of the garden soil from within the North East Bastion ceased at a level where the character of the soil changed from a dark humic layer to a lighter and sandier soil. It is presumed that this represents the top of non-garden phase archaeological layers. The original garden phase ground surface probably corresponded with the base of the stone walling that was placed to infill the alcove in the southeastern wall.

6.7.3 When the gardens were created it is apparent that the ruined North East Bastion walls were reduced to a rough level across the visible areas of the northeast and southeast wall lines. This level was then used as a base for the erection of the original garden walls in the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Over time it was decided to raise the wall heights and add romanticised crenellations to the top of the walls. It is likely that this occurred in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, either when Castle Green House was erected or sometime after 1836 when the stables were enlarged. The drain at the base of the bastion was probably inserted at the same time as the drainage system was constructed within the stables courtyard.

6.7.4 The well observed to the northeast of the bastion could not be dated. It lies on the line of a revetment wall that was presumably constructed sometime after the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when the gardens were laid out. The wall would have retained the higher ground to the south of Castle Green House, an area where an inclined roadway had been constructed to give access from the Strand and the stables up to the house and gardens. During the medieval period this area is likely to have been where the substantial castle moat crossed, and so the wall and well must have post-dated the backfilling of the moat.

6.7.5 The two alcoves revealed by the works are both the remains of former window openings within the North East Bastion. They would have provided views to the northeast, across the area of the presumed moat and to the southwest towards the Teifi estuary. The surviving parts represent the splayed reveals on the sides of the windows, and with splayed cills below. Neither of these alcoves had the remains of the window openings themselves, the medieval castle walls having been truncated to a level below them.

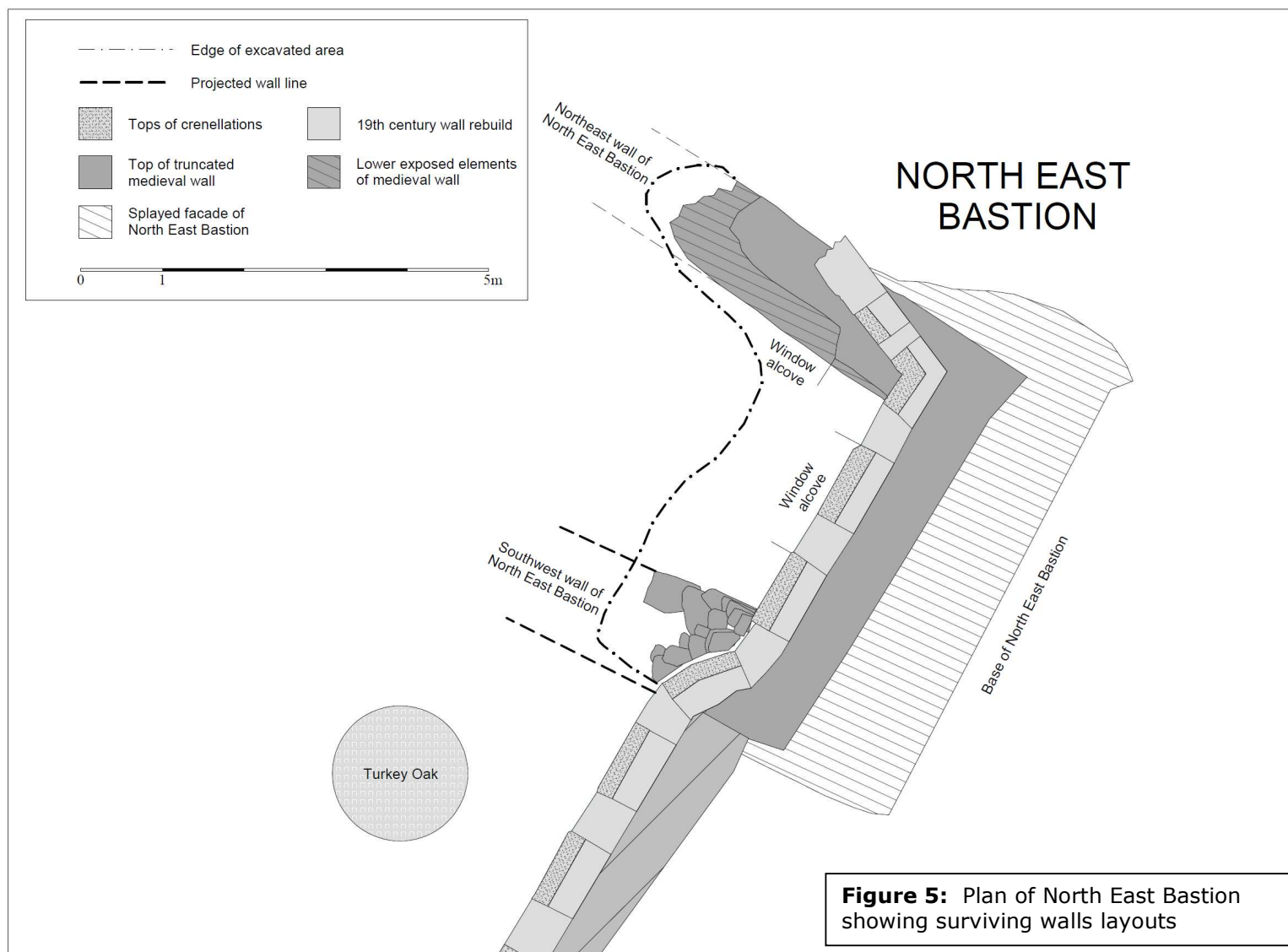
6.7.6 The windows are evidently contemporary with the construction of the bastion, as there was no evidence to suggest that they had been cut through at a later date. The openings were both made neatly, using well cut slabs of stone to carry the angle of the splayed reveals through the height of the openings. The quality of the stonework is similar to the base of the bastion itself and perhaps that on the facade of the Eastern Curtain Wall within Room 1 of the stables.

6.7.7 Although the course of stone work below the windows projected slightly from the face of the wall above, no indication of a floor for the room within the bastion was revealed. The fact that the window openings had splayed cills would suggest they had been made to provide light at a level below the base of the openings, in which case this would suggest that the floor level for this room would have been well below the excavated level. This would indicate that there is likely to be a substantial depth of masonry and archaeology surviving below ground in this area.

6.7.8 The projecting stone wall seen at the southwestern end of the excavated area lies equidistant from the window opening to the return wall on the northeastern side. The projecting wall was bonded to the southeastern wall of the bastion, and it is surmised that it represents the southwestern wall of the structure. This can be clearly seen in plan (Figure 5). Whether this wall had been previously demolished towards the end of the use of the castle, or during the garden phase is unclear. The top of the wall corresponds to the level of the base of the stonework in the adjacent infilled alcove, and would thus have been below the ground level of the first phase of gardens.

6.7.9 The northeastern wall of the bastion had also been substantially levelled. During the medieval period it would likely have continued to the northwest (leading into the northern curtain wall) towards the North Tower. The moat would have laid to the northeast of this wall. The end of the surviving wall as exposed during the works lay close to the pathway that led up from the stables to Castle Green House. It is therefore possible that any above ground elements of the wall were cleared and substantially reduced in height to allow construction of the eastern wing of Castle Green House and enable the construction of the inclined roadway from the Stables to the house.

6.7.10 As part of the repair works the ground within the North East Bastion has been left low to leave the alcoves exposed. These have been re-pointed and a lintel placed over the one in the southeast wall. The exposed stonework of the southwestern side of the bastion has also been stabilised and left exposed.



## 7. THE NORTH EAST TOWER INVESTIGATION (Figures 6 & 7)

### 7.1 Results of Investigation

7.1.1 At the start of the investigation of the North East Tower the area was covered in soil, rotting vegetation and other detritus that had accumulated over the years (Photo 44). Following discussion with Purcell Miller Tritton, Tree & Sons and Cadw it was agreed limited excavation should be undertaken within the area to establish the state of preservation of the tower and attempt to determine the presence of any medieval archaeology or features associated with the late 18<sup>th</sup> / early 19<sup>th</sup> century garden phase.

7.1.2 Areas on all three sides of the tower were investigated, as well as a shallow trench across the middle of the tower to determine the presence of a floor level.



**Photo 44:** View southeast into North East Tower prior to investigation, 1m scale

7.1.3 The southwestern side of the tower had an embankment of garden soil resting against the tower wall behind, and with a small retaining wall inside the tower. This wall was in a poor state of preservation. The face of the retaining wall lay 1.2m from the inside face of the 19<sup>th</sup> century crenellated wall of the tower. Excavation demonstrated that the wall was only c.0.25m in width, made of a series of long thin slabs (Photo 45).

7.1.4 The garden soil was deeper to the northwest, being over 0.30m deep (it was not fully excavated so as not to compromise the structure of the retaining wall further. In the excavated section to the southwest, the soil was less than 0.10m in depth, sitting upon an area of mortared rubble. This rubble projected under the 19<sup>th</sup> century crenellated wall above, into the fabric of the original medieval wall. More substantial walling continued beyond the edge of the excavated area to the southeast, demonstrating this was part of the mortared rubble core of the tower wall.

7.1.5 The southern corner of the tower the wall had a slight angle creating a north facing area of the facade of c.1m width. This contained a tapering recessed feature surviving within the substantial wall of the tower to a height of 1.15m and

with a depth of c.0.95m. In the base of the feature loose stonework had been placed which were stepped up to the east. These were evidently later than the recess; they were not bonded into the fabric of the wall.



**Photo 45:** Southeastern side of tower, showing small retaining wall, embanked garden soil and area of rubble core, 1m scales



**Photo 46:** Southern corner of tower, showing thickness of walling, and tapering recess with stepped stone infill

7.1.6 The substantial width of the southeastern end of the tower comprised a straight section of the tower wall being c.1.2m from its facade to the internal facade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century crenellated wall (Photo 47). The face of the wall was neatly constructed with rough coursing of long stone slabs. A joint was visible on the northeastern side of the wall, with only a slight hint of one to the southwest. The area between had been infilled with smaller and less well cut stonework.



**Photo 47:** Southeastern end of tower, showing substantial walling, possible area of infill and depth of garden soil above, 1m and 0.2m scales

7.1.7 Excavation through the garden soil embanked on the top of the wall indicated a depth of around 0.65m of soil lying over a level area of stonework. At the base of the garden soil a small rectangular stone lined hole was recorded (Photo 48). It measured at least 0.30m by 0.40m in width. It was excavated to a depth of 0.15m maximum, removing further garden soil with lots of roots. This indicated that the southeastern edge was formed by well laid and cut stone work, corresponding with the joint seen in the facade of the wall. This also seemed to be the case for the small stretch of the southwestern part of the hole exposed. The northwestern edge was formed by smaller and looser stonework.

7.1.8 The facade of the exposed area of wall behind the garden soil comprised rough, but well bonded stonework. Roots had caused some damage to the wall (Photo 47).

7.1.9 The facade of the northeastern wall of the tower, once exposed indicated that it had been deliberately stepped up from northwest to southeast (Photos 49 & 50). Two vertical joints were visible in the facade and also in plan on top of the exposed wall. Between the joints an area of different build was evident, comprising larger stones and liberal use of mortar, which is later infill. The area of wall to the northwest had been reduced in height and the area to the southeast left at quite a high level.



**Photo 48:** Rectangular stone lined hole in the top of the southeastern end of the North East Tower, 0.2m scale



**Photo 49:** Full height of northeastern wall of the North East Tower, 1m and 0.2m scales

7.1.10 The facade of the crenellated wall had suffered damage from root action and had already been partially repaired obscuring the face of the wall.



**Photo 50:** Facade of northeastern wall of the North East Tower, 1m scales

7.1.11 In front of the northwest end of the wall was a low plinth, constructed of thin slabs of stone (Photo 50 and 51). The top level of this plinth was lower than the first step of the wall behind. The stones used on the top of this plinth were very well cut and neatly finished.

7.1.12 Excavation of a shallow depth of soil across the centre of the tower revealed the remains of a matching plinth on the southwestern side (Photo 51). This had slumped forward, with the majority of the upper slabs dislodged. This allowed the construction of the plinths to be recorded (Photo 52). Both plinths were c.0.5m in width, with the northeastern being 2.4m in length and the southwestern 3.7m. The upper slabs covered the entire width of the plinth, with narrower stones forming the front edge of the construction with soil infill behind.

7.1.13 The trench through the centre of the tower was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.20m. Loose garden soils were removed which contained quantities of late 18<sup>th</sup>, early 19<sup>th</sup> century and later ceramics. No tower floor level was exposed. A small void in front of the northeastern wall allowed a glimpse of the internal face of the tower wall, which continued to a depth of beyond 0.50m from the excavated area. No indications of a floor level were seen.

7.1.14 Running through the width of the tower walls to the northeast and southwest were two narrow stair cases (Photos 53 & 54). These had corbelled roofs, which were bonded into the walls (as could be seen at the surviving ends of the stairs). The steps led down through the tower to a garderobe at the southeastern end. On the southwestern outer facade of the tower an arrow loop is present of around 0.9m height (Photo 55). It was noted that this lay above the roof of the stairs, a light for these stairs being partially visible to the northwest (photo 55). A void behind the slit went back around 1.5m to a wall at the rear.



**Photo 51:** Interior of tower following excavation, with plinths to the southeast and northwest, viewing southeast, 1m and 0.2m scales



**Photo 52:** Southeastern plinth showing slumped stones and method of construction, 1m and 0.2m scales



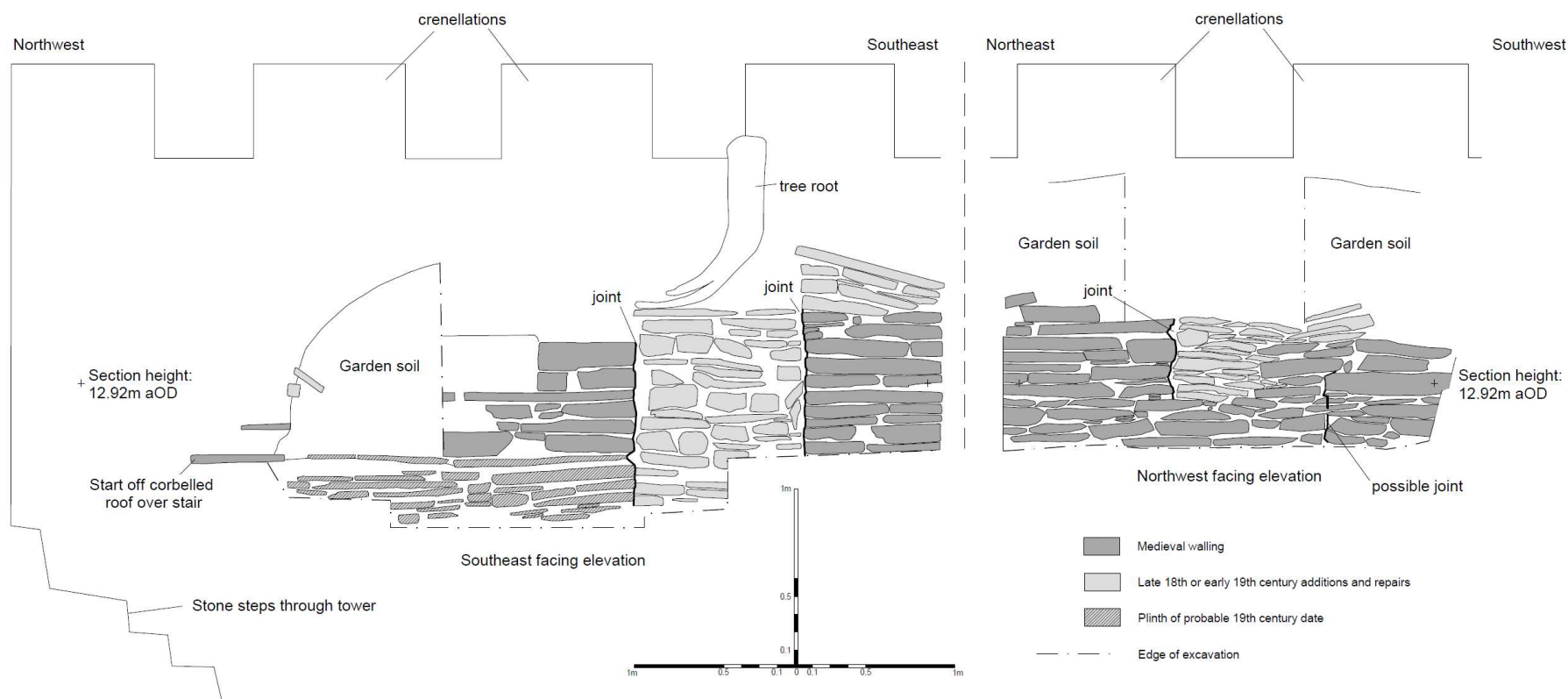
**Photo 53:** Northeastern steps through tower wall, 1m scale



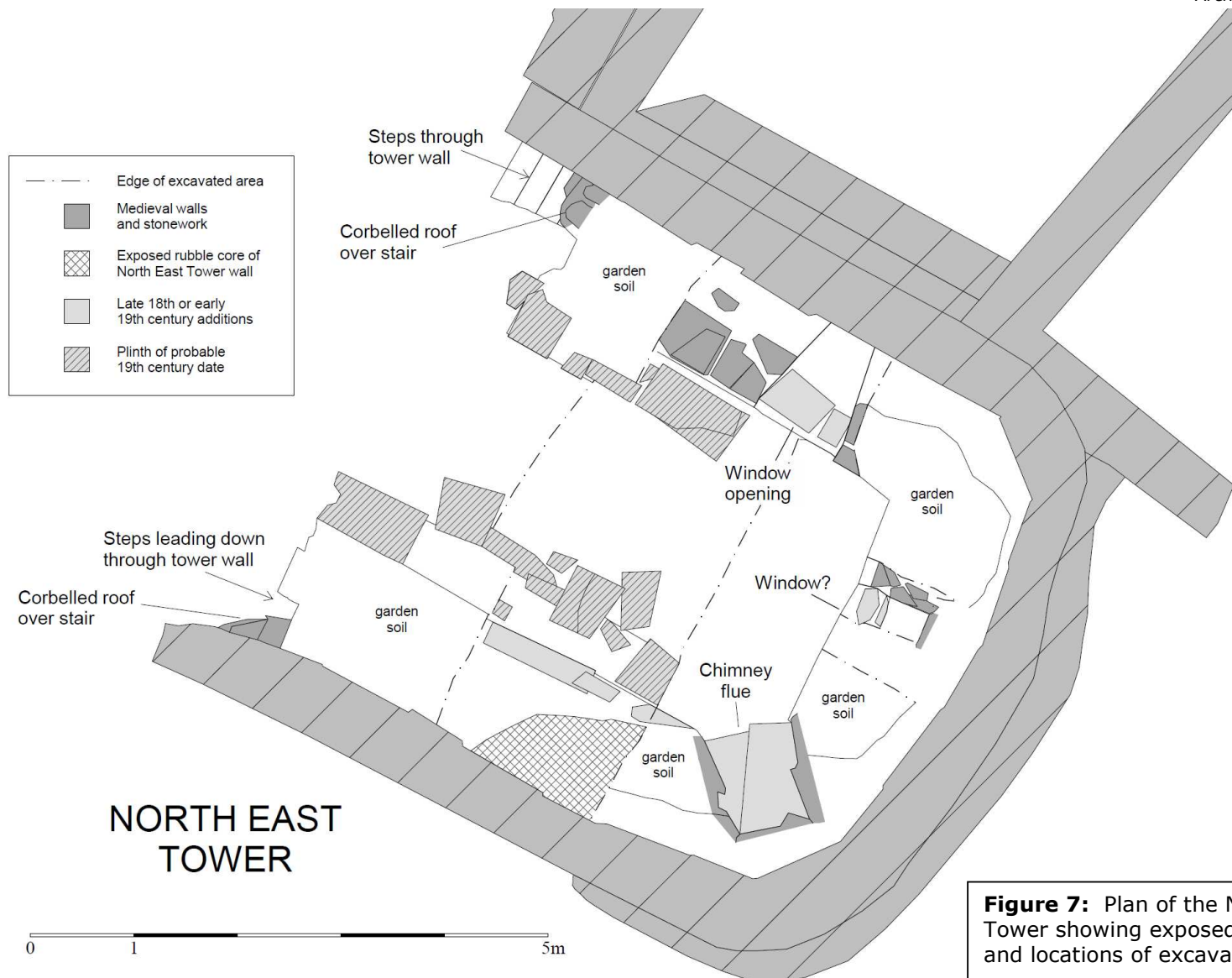
**Photo 54:** Entrance to southwestern steps through tower wall, 1m scale



**Photo 55:** Arrow slit in southwest wall of tower,  
and lower light to northwest for stairs through wall, 1m scales



**Figure 6:** Northwest and Southeast facing sections of North East Tower showing steps and possible joints in the stonework



**Figure 7:** Plan of the North East Tower showing exposed stonework and locations of excavated areas

## **7.2 Discussion of North East Tower Investigation** (Figures 6 & 7)

7.2.1 The investigation of the North East Tower has demonstrated that a substantial amount of medieval fabric survives within the tower walls. Only in one patch on the southeastern side of the tower is there an absence of the full width of the wall (this absence is discussed below). The full width of the wall from outer facade to internal face ranges from 1.75m to 2.00m in thickness.

7.2.2 No floor for the tower was revealed, with indications that it lies over 0.50m below the present ground surface. This indicates a significant amount of archaeology and structural evidence would still survive here.

7.2.3 The joints in the masonry to the northeast and southeast are presumably for former windows. The line of the window could be followed through the width of visible wall on the northeastern side. The joint to the southeast followed the side of the small rectangular hole recorded in plan, the edging stonework being well built and similar to that seen in the North East Bastion window opening. At the back of this hole solid, well-built stonework was again present, perhaps indicating part of a chamfered cill, again akin to that seen in the North East Bastion. No evidence could be seen for either opening on the outer facades of the tower, probably as a result of more recent re-facing and repair. Alternatively the reduction in height of the wall may have removed the level of any actual window apertures, assuming the theory of a chamfered cill rising up to the window opening is correct. The tapered recess in the southern corner has the characteristics of a chimney flue for a fireplace presumably at tower floor level over 0.5m below the present ground surface.

7.2.4 The existing entrances for the two stairs through the walls of the tower lie at present ground level. This does not correspond with any conjectured floor level for the tower or castle, and must have been accessed at a higher level. The arrow slit seen in the exterior facade of the southwestern tower had a wall behind it (at a depth of 1.5m from the front of the tower). It is conceivable that this is associated with another stair leading through the tower wall at a higher level. Although no clear evidence for another staircase was recorded, if this theory is correct the stairwell would have passed through the area where there was an absence of wall fabric in the southwestern side of the tower. This would imply that the tower had at least two floor levels (that associated with the windows and fireplace, and a level above from which the two stairs were accessed). The function of this conjectured lower stair well is unclear, possibly for defence (arrow slits) or to access a second level of garderobe).

7.2.5 During the layout of the original gardens in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the curtain wall between the North East Tower and South Tower was removed to open a vista across the Teifi. The vista was framed by the two towers which were made into important features within the garden. Presumably at this time the ruins of the medieval tower walls were adapted, with the upper parts removed to a certain level and window openings etc infilled and adapted to create features.

7.2.6 The southwestern side of the tower a flower bed retained behind a small stone wall built to emulate the remainder of the walls on the inside of the tower in this area where no wall was present. The area of the chimney recess in the southern corner has been partially infilled to create two steps leading up to the level of the surviving stonework on the southeastern side of the tower. From here views could be had across the Teifi.

7.2.7 The probable window opening on the southeastern side of the tower was infilled to create a small rectangular soil filled hole behind. It is possible that this was a planter for a specific shrub or tree.

7.2.8 The wall on the northeastern side of the tower has been adapted to again create a series of steps leading up to the southeastern end of the tower. The wall

has been reduced in height and the steps fashioned from the original fabric. The window opening has been infilled to another level to create a further step, and then the final step has been made by slightly increasing the height of the wall with a small construction on top.

7.2.9 It is most likely that these stepped garden features and flower bed are associated with the earliest garden phase of the castle. It is unclear what the upper part of the tower looked like at this point. It could be inferred that the parapet level would have been higher than exists at present, as the steps lead up to a level with only a low height of wall as a barrier from the substantial drop beyond.

7.2.10 The two plinths on either side of the tower are of uncertain date. They could well be associated with the main garden phase, representing areas for plant pots. Both plinths could equally be well the first step leading up to those fashioned from the tower walls. The slumping of the southwestern plinth may indicate the presence of a void below the ground surface.

7.2.11 The crenellated parapet is of a 19<sup>th</sup> century date after 1836, contemporary with the remainder of the crenellations around the castle grounds. They have been built in the same style as described for the North East Bastion. Here the walls have been made flush with the tower walls below.

## 8. THE FERNERY INVESTIGATIONS

8.1 A small scale evaluation was undertaken of the location of the Fernery in August 2010. The project has been previously reported upon (Wilson, Ramsey & Meek 2010).

8.2 Part of the aim of the evaluation was to determine the nature, depth and state of preservation of the remains of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Fernery structure, which is recognised as an integral part of the Grade II Listed Gardens of Cardigan Castle.

8.3 A trench was excavated over the footprint of the Fernery building, the location identified from earlier mapping sources. The results of the trench were summarised as follows: *'The northeast and southwest walls of The Fernery were revealed, which were of fairly substantial construction, of local stone and mortar. A slate slab floor was also recorded between the walls of the structure, although these may have been a later addition associated with the creation of a yard area or patio following demolition of the superstructure of the Fernery.'*

8.4 As part of the proposed renovation and redevelopment of Cardigan Castle, it is intended to convert the ground floor of Ty Castell into a restaurant, with an extension being built over the site of the Fernery. Due to the archaeological sensitivity of this important garden feature, further information was required on its layout and depth to assist with the application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) for future development.

8.5 During the watching brief a brief further investigation was undertaken of the Fernery site. This involved minimal shovel scraping of the upper surface of the ground to reveal the extent of the Fernery walls, which survived very close to the present ground surface. The site was then accurately surveyed and the information provided to assist with the design of the restaurant and for SMC.

8.6 The investigation uncovered the southeast, northwest and southwest walls of the Fernery (Figure 8; Photos 56 & 57). The probable return of the northeastern wall was also identified in the northern corner of the structure (Photo 58). The building measured c.4.5m northeast to southwest and c.3.7m northwest to southeast.

8.7 All were built of local stone and mortar, the construction combining: thin facing slabs with mortar and stone infill; layers of mortar with brick infill; and larger slabs crossing the full width of the wall. Brick seems to have been used more in the footings of the northeastern and southwestern sides of the building (Photos 58 & 59). These would have been the most visible sides of the building, and assuming brick was used in its superstructure, this may indicate that brick was a favoured building material for outward appearance (perhaps indicating wealth or status).

8.8 The northeastern part of the structure appears to have been truncated or robbed out in the past, perhaps reclaiming the brick for use elsewhere (Photo 58 & 59).

8.9 To the southwest of the Fernery two of slate slabs were revealed, with a suggestion that a flagged floor continued beyond the edge of the investigation area (Photo 60).

8.10 This phase of investigation did not excavate to a depth where any earlier archaeological deposits were revealed. The previous evaluation indicated that medieval deposits may survive at a depth of 1.45m below the present ground surface. The deposits above this would be associated with the garden phase of development of Cardigan Castle.



**Photo 56:** View northeast across exposed area of the Fernery



**Photo 57:** View south across exposed area of the Fernery



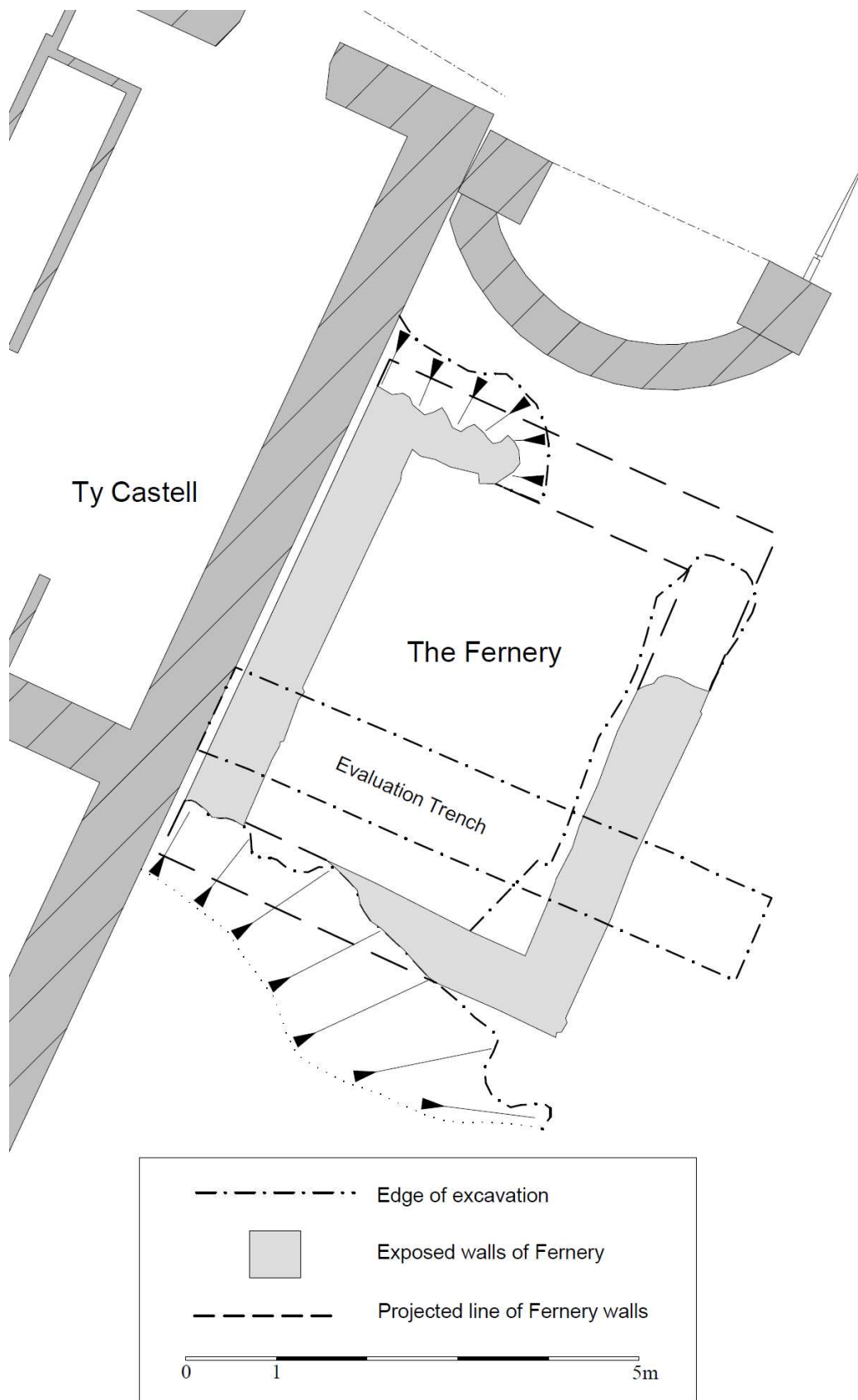
**Photo 58:** Northwestern corner of Fernery showing probable return built of brick



**Photo 59:** Northeastern corner of Fernery showing partly brick built wall and its truncated end



**Photo 60:** Southwestern corner of Fernery flag stones to the south



**Figure 8:** The Fernery

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

9.1 Overall the photographic survey and watching brief on the Eastern Curtain Wall, Stables and North East Bastion and the investigations of the North East Tower and Fernery have all demonstrated a good and perhaps surprising survival of significant archaeological deposits.

9.2 The results of the photographic survey suggest that the curtain wall is substantially comprised of medieval fabric, with medieval and later patches and repairs on much of the facade. An area within Room 1 of the Stables contains a well faced and coursed part of the Eastern Curtain Wall, and due to other areas of original medieval stonework revealed during the watching brief displaying good quality stonework, it is suggested this may be a patch of surviving medieval facade. The base of the curtain wall has been built directly in front of the bedrock outcrop in this area.

9.3 The Stables buildings represent three phases of development, indicating the increase in the wealth and status of the occupiers of the castle during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The initial stable buildings are the northwestern range (Rooms 1 and 2) comprising two stables and a possible tack room or groom quarters, with hay loft and storage over. This may have been built at the same time that Castle Green House was constructed.

9.4 Sometime after 1836 the southwestern range of the Stables comprising Rooms 5 and 6 is built. This increases the amount of stabling with 5 stalls added within Room 5. More storage and accommodation may have been provided at first floor level. The earlier stable block is also slightly altered, with a former fireplace and a doorway being blocked and windows added. The perimeter wall may have been added at this stage, as well as the pigsty (Room 4). A drainage run is added around the courtyard built in front of the stable block.

9.5 The corner formed by the two ranges of buildings of the Stables is then converted to another building (Room 3), with the addition of roof and first floor level, fireplace, door and window. Beam slots for joists and roofing beams are cut into the North East Tower facade.

9.6 The work within the North East Bastion has shown that during the late 18<sup>th</sup> / early 19<sup>th</sup> century garden phase of the development of the Castle, the bastion and curtain walls were reduced in height to a specific level, with a rebuilt and lower parapet built on top. A crenellated parapet was then added after 1836.

9.7 The northeast wall of the North East Bastion was substantially altered during the garden phase, being significantly lowered and possibly removed in the area where the inclined roadway from the Stables runs. The southwestern wall of the bastion had been substantially reduced in height and buried. This wall had not been seen since it had been buried.

9.8 Excavation of the garden soil behind the parapet identified the presence of two former window openings in the southeast and northeast walls of the bastion. These were both of the same construction with chamfered reveals and chamfered cill. The actual window openings themselves had been truncated when the wall had been reduced in height as part of the garden phase of development. The windows indicate a room was present in the bastion, the floor level of which lies below the excavated level. This demonstrates that a good depth of archaeological material must still lie in this part of the castle grounds, buried during the establishment of the gardens in the late 18<sup>th</sup> / early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Turkey Oak, which lies to the south of the bastion, was planted at a lower level than the present ground surface,

indicating the increased depth of soil that has been built up in this area over the years.

9.9 The North East Tower has also been shown to have substantial amounts of medieval masonry surviving. The tower was again substantially altered during the garden phase of the castle's development, presumably with much of any surviving superstructure being lowered. Unlike the North East Bastion, the medieval features of the tower walls were utilised as garden features. Steps have been created in the walls to provide view points across the Teifi, with the addition of stonework within recessed in the walls (including two probable windows and a chimney flue). The late 18<sup>th</sup> century / early 19<sup>th</sup> century masonry survives well in this area, with only one of the two identified plinths having suffered significant damage from subsidence.

9.10 The medieval floor level of the tower lies at least 0.5m below the present ground level. There is thus a good potential for significant archaeological remains to survive, both dating to the medieval period and associated with the garden landscaping.

9.11 Stairs on either side of the North East Tower would have originally been accessed from a level higher than present, indicating the tower had at least two floors. A suggestion of a further stair within the tower wall above the extant southwest stairwell may indicate a third floor.

9.12 The investigation of the Fernery, a structure that had been demolished to ground level, has also shown good survival of the building. Further archaeological information regarding its structure, reuse and demolition are still present below ground. Along with the North East Tower, South Tower and former heated glass house to the north, this demonstrates the good survival of the structural elements of the landscaped gardens and subsequent development and change.

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# **CARDIGAN CASTLE, CEREDIGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY, & EVALUATION**

## **RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2011-50**

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY - RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 102421

WATCHING BRIEF - RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 102422

NORTHEAST TOWER INVESTIGATION -

RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 102423

FERNERY INVESTIGATION - RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 102424

**Rhagfyr 2011  
December 2011**

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**JAMES MEEK**

Swydd / Position: **HEAD OF FIELD SERVICES**

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith  
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Swydd / Position: **TRUST DIRECTOR**

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

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

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