

May 2012

**LAND AT CWRT CASTELL TEIFI, LLANDYSUL,
CEREDIGION (SN41801 40674)
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

MARCH 2012



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Mr J D Davies



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Gan / By

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SUMMARY

A planning application was submitted to Ceredigion County Council, for the erection of a small housing development on land at Cwrt Castell Teifi, Llandysul. The plot is located at SN41801 40674 in the heart of the town in an undeveloped area of back garden plots (Planning Ref: A060016). Due to the potential for archaeological remains to be present within the development area, the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authority recommended that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development. Mr J D Davies commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake the watching brief.

Due to the location of the site within the heart of the town of Llandysul, it was considered that the site had the potential to contain archaeological remains associated with early medieval, medieval and later settlement.

The lack of any finds or features recovered from within the site area and other evidence revealed by the watching brief has demonstrated that due to later land-use on the plot, no evidence of any earlier settlement has survived within the area. The development plot lies on an east facing slope and has been subject to a number of episodes of terracing and levelling, including the insertion of an access ramp leading to the rears of properties fronting King Street to the north.

Although no archaeological remains were revealed within the development area, there is still a potential that significant archaeological deposits could be present in its vicinity.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 An archaeological condition was placed upon planning permission (application number A060016) to mitigate against any impacts from a housing development that may occur to archaeological remains that might be present at the site.
- 1.1.2 The site lies fairly close to the medieval parish church of St Tysul which has medieval origins. This dedication, the shape of the cemetery and other evidence all suggest that the church may have pre-Norman origins. Robeston Manor which lies close to the east was formerly a medieval defended site. The assessed potential for archaeological remains of medieval date to be present within the proposed development area was considered to be enough to warrant the archaeological condition.
- 1.1.2 The condition on planning permission stated: *The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any groundworks in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted.*
- 1.1.3 Because the original intention to construct all the buildings at the same time was modified, the archaeological response was also modified slightly to include an element of test trenching to assess whether or not any further archaeological input would be needed as and when more buildings were constructed on the plot.
- 1.1.4 Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned to undertake the archaeological works by Mr J D Davies.

1.2 Scope of the Project

- 1.2.1 The overall scope of the project was to provide archaeological attendance and recording during groundworks associated with the construction of new dwellings and access road.
- 1.2.2 The objectives of the work were:
 - Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology by which Dyfed Archaeological Trust will undertake the watching brief.
 - To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
 - To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
 - To appropriately investigate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
 - To produce an archive and report of any results.

1.3 Report Outline

- 1.3.1 This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background before summarising the watching brief results and the conclusions based on those results.

1.4 Illustrations

- 1.4.1 Record photographs are included at back of the report. Printed map extracts are not reproduced at their original scale.

2 THE SITE

2.1 Site Location

- 2.1.1 The site is located on an east facing slope on open ground in the heart of the town of Llandysul at NGR SN41801 40674 (Figures 1 & 2). The development plot is an amalgamation of what were formerly the back gardens or yard plots of properties on Lon Wesley and Porth Terrace (see Figures 3, 4 and 5).
- 2.1.2 A large ramp of compacted earth, apparently providing access to an otherwise inaccessible yard behind properties fronting onto King Street, crosses the centre of the plot on a roughly east west alignment (see Figure 6).
- 2.1.3 The plot was formerly used to show agricultural equipment and as a farmyard store for the agricultural land to the east.

2.2 Archaeological Background

- 2.2.1 No archaeological investigations have previously been undertaken in Llandysul, nor has the town been subject to a detailed study of its morphological development.
- 2.2.2 A search of the Regional Historic Environment Record for a 150m radius centred on the development site returns 18 known sites of archaeological or historical importance (Table 1). The majority of these are associated with later post-medieval development (1800 and later). These include the Vicarage to the northeast of the development site (PRN 6562) a grade II listed building; two chapels (PRNs 16699 and 16701), located to the west on Graig Road and directly south of the development site on Lon Wesley; a school (PRN 22677) located to the east; a warehouse at No 5 Barley Mow (PRN 57418), a grade II listed building to the west; The Port Hotel and two adjoining ranges on Church Street to the northeast (PRNs 57427, 57428 & 57429) all of which are grade II listed buildings; the grade II listed lychgate to St Tysul's Church (PRN 57430) to the northeast; the grade II listed semi detached Nos 1 & 2 Richmond House on King Street (PRNs 57431 & 57432) to the west; the grade II listed house No 3 Lincoln Street (PRN 57432) to the southwest; Carreg Lllys a grade II listed house on Lon Wesley (PRN 57435) directly to the south; and a grade II listed warehouse on Lon Wesley (PRN 57436) again directly to the south.
- 2.2.3 The church of St Tysul is a grade II * listed building comprising both post-medieval and medieval fabric (PRN 5643), which lies close to the east of the development site. The shape of the churchyard and its saint dedication would clearly suggest that it has early-medieval (pre-1200) origins (PRN 50137). This is supported by the presence of two early-medieval features, the inscribed Velvoria Stone (PRN 1826) and the remains of a carved stone cross inside the church (PRN 50138).
- 2.2.4 The Parish church dedicated to St Tysul, has a high probability of 6th century early-medieval origins, based on the presence of the Velvoria Stone. The church could have been a focus for settlement at this time. It would certainly have been a focus for settlement by the medieval period. Thus, due to the proximity of the development site to the church there was considered to be a potential for settlement remains of these dates to be present.
- 2.2.5 The church appears to have remained in Welsh hands for most of the 12th and 13th centuries and was rebuilt in the 13th century. The settlement itself, like much of Ceredigion, also remained in Welsh hands. Fairs and

markets were established in the town during the medieval period indicating its importance as a settlement and trading centre within the region. Again this also suggests that as the development site lies close to the heart of the town, that evidence for later medieval settlement and other activity could have been present within the development site.

2.2.6 The 1841 Tithe map of Llandysul shows that the site area was undeveloped (Figure 3). By the 1889 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4) a number of structures had been erected within the site boundary, including a large building in the southern part, a smaller structure to the southwest and a row of buildings fronting Porth Terrace. The 1905 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 5) shows the same layout as that for 1889.

PRN	Site Name	Description	Period	Grid Reference
1826	Velvoria Stone, inscribed stone	Fragmentary Group I ECM (Latin-inscribed stone), of probable 6th century date, inside Llandysul parish church PRNs 5643, built into the north wall of the west tower. It was first noted in c.1700, in its present fragmentary state, in the churchyard.	Early Medieval	SN 4190 4068
5643	St Tysul's; St Tysillo's	Grade II* listed building Medieval parish church, large, multicelled and symmetrically aisled. It consists of a chancel, nave, north and south aisles and a west tower. The organ chamber is from 1847 while the blower house is from 1924.	Post-medieval, Medieval	SN 41903 40692
6562	The Vicarage	II listed building	Post-medieval	SN 41862 40720
16699	Chapel	Post-medieval Chapel	Post-medieval	SN 4173 4073
16701	Chapel	Post-medieval Chapel	Post-medieval	SN 4179 4064
22677	Llandysul School	Llandysul School	Post-medieval	SN 4184 4066
50137	St Tysul's	Early medieval B site, ie. high probability early medieval origins. Churchyard occupied by the medieval Llandysul parish church PRN 5643. It was probably a Welsh foundation, Ceredigion remaining in Welsh hands during most of the 12th and 13th centuries.	Early Medieval	SN 41900 40650
50138	Cross	Incomplete cross-carved stone, of 7th - 11th century date, inside parish church PRN 5643, set into the top of the north aisle altar. First noted in 1918 when it was standing in the churchyard.	Early Medieval	SN 4190 4068
57418	No.5 Barley Mow	Grade II listed warehouse	Post-medieval	SN 41730 40689
57427	The Porth Hotel	Grade II listed hotel Church Street	Post-medieval	SN 41869 40749
57428	Range	Grade II listed hotel range attached To Left Of The Porth Hotel, Church Street	Post-medieval	SN 41871 40773
57429	Ranges	Grade II listed hotel ranges to Rear Of The Porth Hotel, Church S	Post-medieval	SN 41885 40780
57430	Lychgate	Grade II listed lychgate to Churchyard Of St.Tysul Church, Church Street	Post-medieval	SN 41875 40722
57431	No.1 Richmond House	Grade II listed villa, King Street	Post-medieval	SN 41718 40678
57432	No.2 Richmond House	Grade II listed villa, King Street	Post-medieval	SN 41716 40671
57433	No.3 Lincoln Street	Grade II listed house	Post-medieval	SN 41695 40577
57435	Carreg Llys	Grade II listed house Wesley Hill/Lon Wesley	Post-medieval	SN 41781 40632
57436	Shop	Grade II listed warehouse/shop adjoining Carreg Llys, Wesley Hill/Lon Wesley	Post-medieval	SN 41788 40631

Table 1: Historic Environment Record information within 150m radius of the site

3 METHODOLOGY

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

3.1 Fieldwork

3.1.1 A 'watching brief' was undertaken during initial ground works within the proposed development site that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains.

3.1.2 To avoid the need to return to the site as and when the different housing plots are developed in future, the watching brief undertaken on the initial groundworks to prepare an access road into the site, was extended to include four evaluation trenches to ascertain the presence or absence of archaeologically significant features in various parts of the development plot (see Figure 5).

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

3.1.4 Recording of all archaeological features or deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual¹ used by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services.

3.2 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

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

3.2.2 The results of the fieldwork have been assessed in local, regional and wider contexts. The report includes a desk-based research element to ensure that the site is placed within its wider archaeological context.

3.2.3 A report fully representative of the results of the fieldwork has been prepared.

3.3 Timetabling of Fieldwork

3.3.1 The watching brief involved monitoring of groundworks during a single day on 21st March 2012.

¹ Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services have adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Test excavation 1 (Photo 1)

- 4.1.1 This test excavation was approximately 5m long and 1.6m wide and 0.05m deep. It lay in the southwestern part of the development site. The entire area to the south of the access ramp running across the site appears to have been reduced in height to create a level area behind the Lon Wesley street front properties.
- 4.1.2 Directly below a 0.05m thick layer of stone chippings, the top of a natural yellow clay silt containing shale and gravel fragments was revealed.
- 4.1.3 No features or deposits of archaeological significance were present.

4.2 Test excavation 2 (Photo 2)

- 4.2.1 This test excavation was approximately 5m long and 1.6m wide and 0.7m deep. It was located in the northwestern part of the development site.
- 4.2.2 A c.0.2m thick deposit of crushed shale had been deposited on top of the former ground surface. This sealed a 0.5m thick homogenous topsoil deposit containing occasional charcoal and 19/20th century pottery fragments. No cut features cut into the natural geology or buried deposits were present below the topsoil.
- 4.2.3 This part of the development site appears to have been undeveloped garden or allotment land.

4.3 Test excavation 3 (Photo 3)

- 4.3.1 This test excavation was approximately 4m long and 3m wide. It was located in the southeastern part of the development site south of the pre-existing access ramp.
- 4.3.2 The majority of this area was backfilled with a crushed shale deposit behind a breezeblock parking bay wall. Along the western edge, topsoil similar to that revealed in Trench 2 was present.

4.4 Test excavation 4 (Photo 4)

- 4.4. A small area approximately 1.6m by 1.6m was opened up in the street level terraced area. This was located on the eastern side of the development site.
- 4.4.1 The excavation revealed solid shale bedrock immediately beneath the turf cover. It appears that this area has been completely terraced into the shale bedrock and that any structural remains relating to former buildings on the plot that are depicted on historic mapping of the site have been previously removed (Figures 3,4 and 5).

4.5 Watching brief

- 4.5.1 Ground reduction to create a sloping vehicular access to the upper parts of the plot was observed. This was located in the northeastern part of the site area running along the rear of the gardens of properties fronting Porth Terrace.
- 4.5.2 The stratigraphic sequence was the same as for Trench 2. No archaeological features or deposits were present within this area.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The majority of the development area has been back garden or yard plots for the entirety of the mapped history of the site (Figures 3, 4 and 5). The most recent structures on the south side of the plot were a shed and an agricultural building. No evidence of the former building on the Porth Terrace street frontage represented on historic mapping (Figures 3, 4 and 5) appears to have survived within the development area.
- 5.2 The development site slopes significantly down to the east. Former properties along on Porth Terrace on the eastern edge of the development site were terraced into the slope at street level. The western limit of the development site was also terraced into the slope at some time in the past. The back yard plots of properties along Lon Wesley are also likely to have been levelled off to varying degrees in the past. Current ground levels to the south of the ramp running through the site also appear to have been reduced to a level cut into natural clay silt geology.
- 5.3 To the north of the ramp, crushed shale has been deposited over much of the site area. Below this, a depth of garden/agricultural soil survives, overlying natural clay silt geology. No archaeological features were revealed within these areas.
- 5.4 Cartographic evidence and test trenching indicate that no archaeology survives over the majority of the site. Likewise, the watching brief undertaken on the reduction of ground levels for the construction of the access road onto the plot did not reveal any evidence of archaeological features or deposits.
- 5.5 Cartographic evidence suggests that there have previously been buildings along approximately half of the Porth Terrace street frontage of the plot. When these were demolished is uncertain, but it does not appear to have been in the recent past.
- 5.6 The existing wall between the north edge of the development site and the neighbouring house is clearly the result of several phases of construction and repair (Photo 5). Examination of the stonework of this wall did not suggest it was a remnant of a former building. A trial trench in the vicinity came down directly on to natural shale bedrock.
- 5.7 Considering the more recent land use on the street frontage of the development plot it seems unlikely that significant archaeological deposits survive in the street frontage area in the location of the proposed dwelling. Elsewhere on the development site, there is no surviving evidence that the area was ever anything more than undeveloped garden or yard plots.
- 5.8 Due to the lack of previous archaeological investigation in the town, its development is still little understood. As a result of past episodes of terracing and landscaping within the development site the archaeological watching brief has unfortunately not been able to add to our knowledge of the early development of Llandysul.
- 5.9 Although the archaeological condition was for a watching brief to be undertaken during development, since only part of the site was initially to be developed a series of evaluation test trenches were also dug across the rest of the site to establish whether return visits would be necessary when the rest of the site was developed. The results of the watching brief and test trenching are such that no further archaeological mitigation is considered necessary at this site, although there is still the potential for significant archaeological evidence relating to the early development of the town to be present in the vicinity.

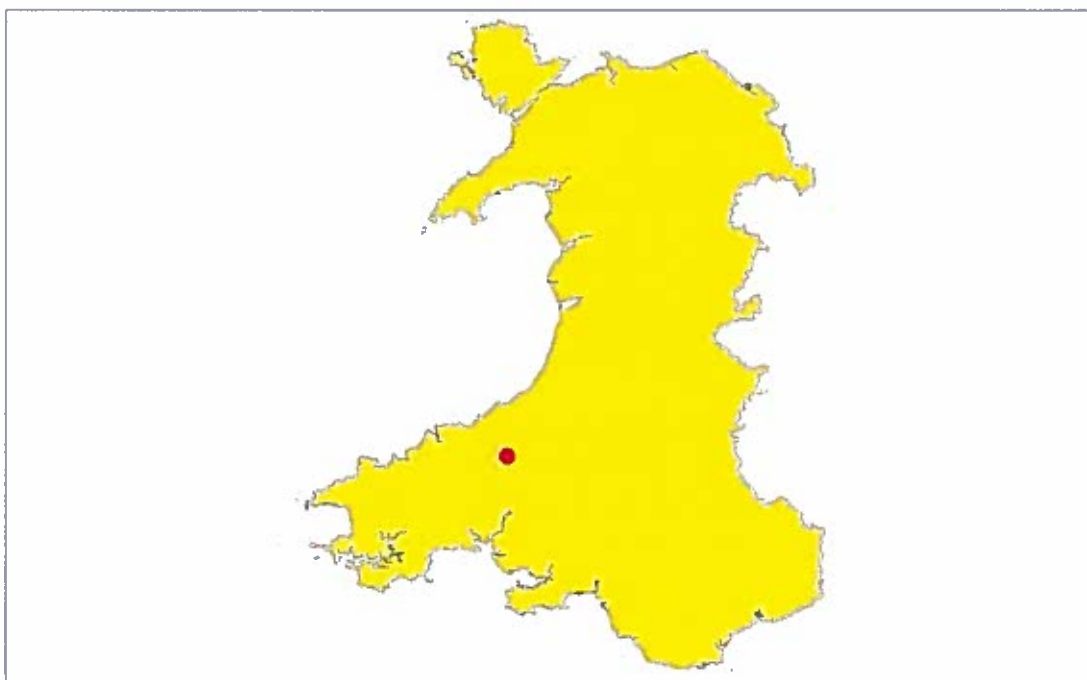


Figure 1: Location of Llandysul

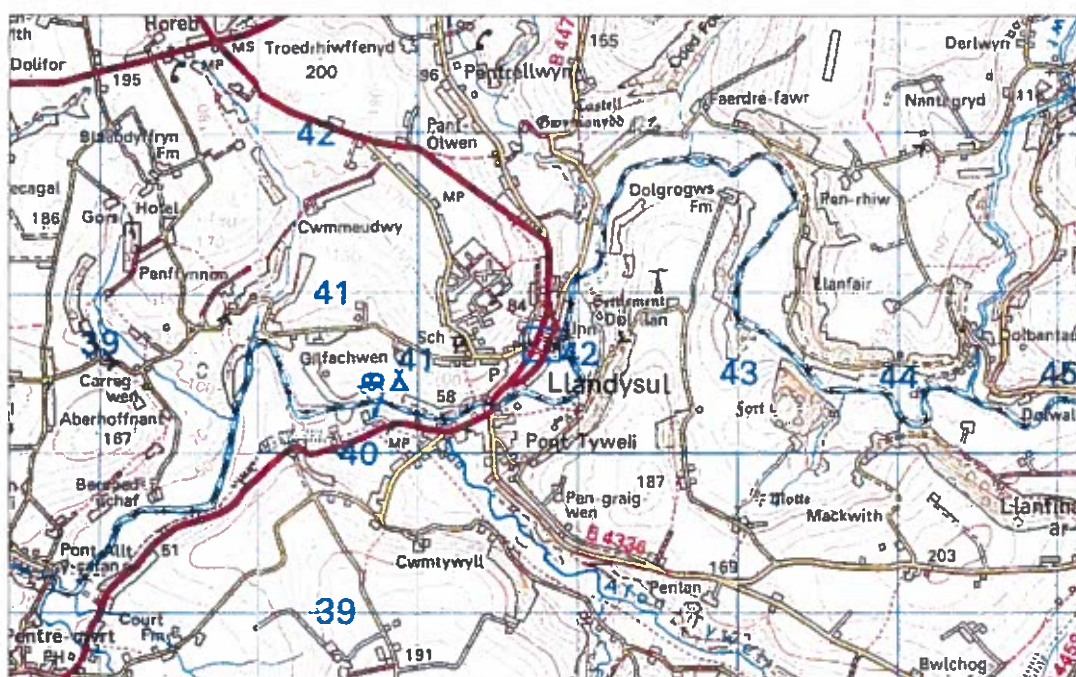


Figure 2: Site location map

Reproduced from the 1995 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A



Figure 3: Extract from the Llandysul Parish Tithe map c. 1844

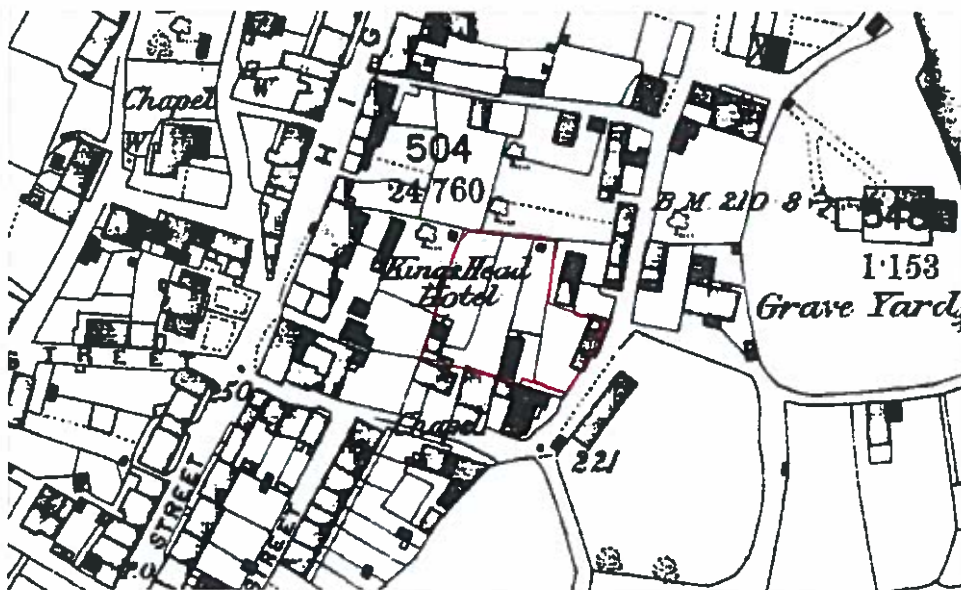


Figure 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1889 1st Edition 1:25,000 map

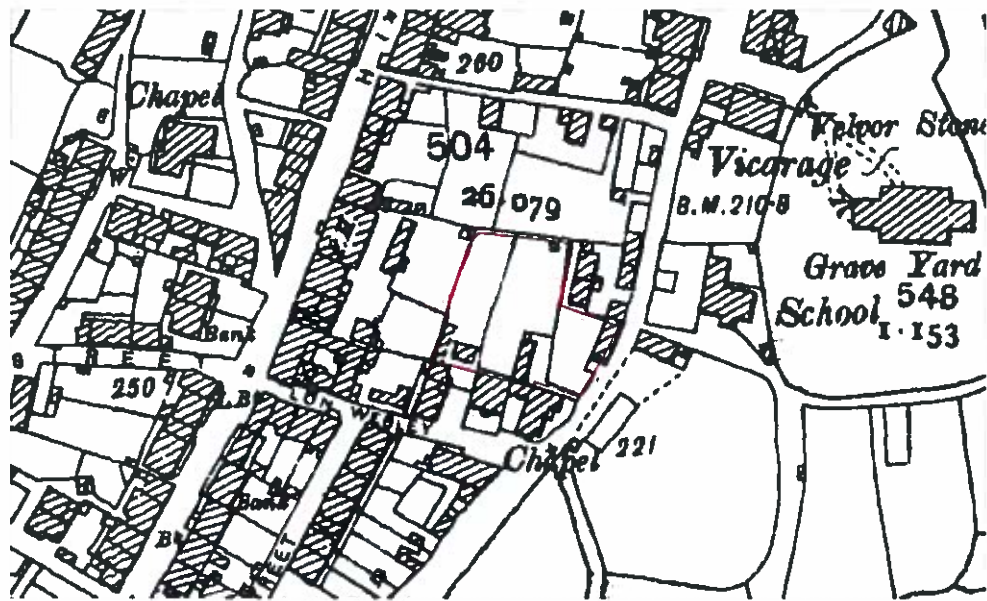


Figure 5: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1905 2nd Edition 1:25,000 map

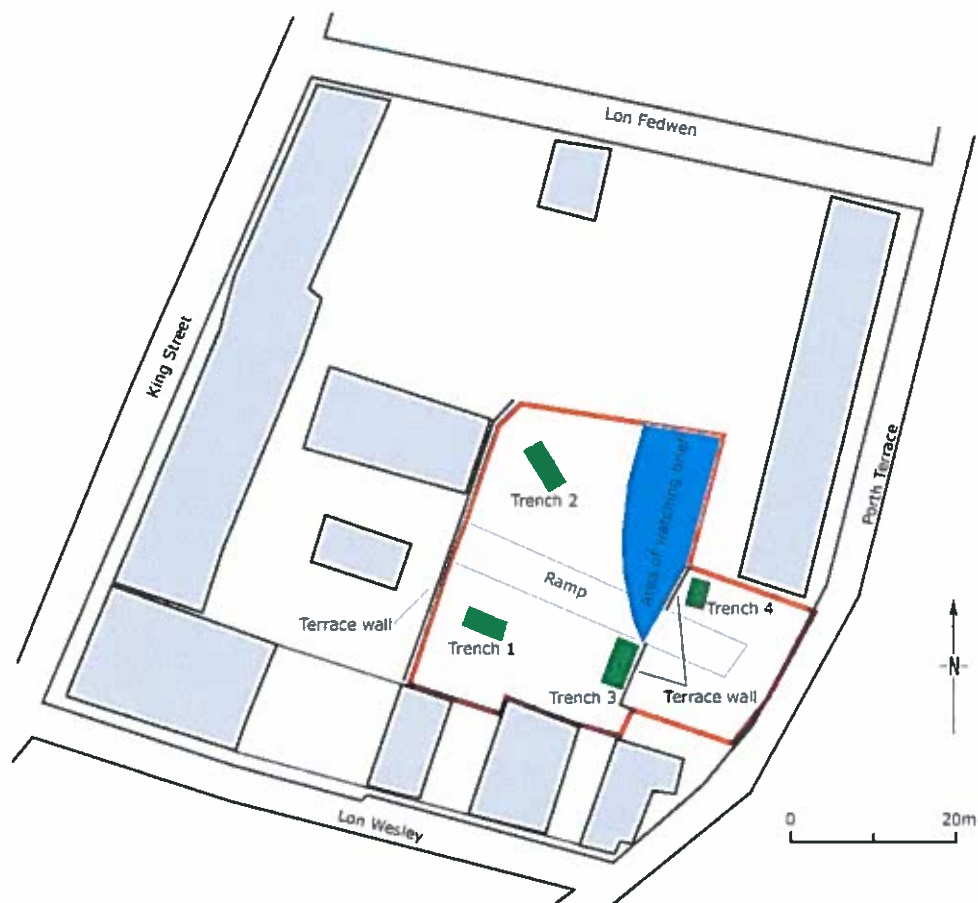


Figure 6: Plan of development area and archaeological investigations



Photo 1: Trench 1 looking southeast from the top of the ramp



Photo 2: Trench 2 looking south



Photo 3: Trench 3 looking north



Photo 4: Trench 4 looking west



Photo 5: Part of the property boundary wall looking north

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Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan /
This report has been prepared by: **Duncan Schlee**

Swydd / Position: **Field Services Project Manager**

Llofnod / Signature



Dyddiad / Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith /
This report has been checked and approved by: **James Meek**

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

Swydd / Position: **Head of Field Services**

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*

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