

MAINS GAS SUPPLY INSTALLATION AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CARDIGAN, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Reverend John Bennett



ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol
DYFED
archaeological trust

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2012/72
RHIF Y DIGWILLIAD / EVENT RECORD NO. 103633

Tachwedd 2012
November 2012

**MAINS GAS SUPPLY INSTALLATION AT
ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CARDIGAN, CEREDIGION:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Gan / By

Duncan Schlee

Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys

The report has been prepared for the specific use of the client. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited can accept no responsibility for its use by any other person or persons who may read it or rely on the information it contains.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE
BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir
Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Ebost: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk
Gwefan: www.archaeolegdyfed.org.uk

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo,
Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk
Website: www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

Cwmni cyfyngedig (1198990) ynghyd ag elusen gofrestredig (504616) yw'r Ymddiriedolaeth.
The Trust is both a Limited Company (No. 1198990) and a Registered Charity (No. 504616)
CADEIRYDD CHAIRMAN: C R MUSSON MBE B Arch FSA MIFA.
CYFARWYDDWR DIRECTOR: K MURPHY BA MIFA

**MAINS GAS SUPPLY INSTALLATION AT
ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CARDIGAN, CEREDIGION:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----------|
| SUMMARY | 1 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| 1.1 Project Commission | 2 |
| 1.2 Scope of the Project | 2 |
| 1.3 Fieldwork methodology | 2 |
| 1.4 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving | 2 |
| 1.5 Report outline | 3 |
| 1.6 Abbreviations | 3 |
| 1.7 Illustrations | 3 |
| 2. THE SITE | 4 |
| 2.1 Location | 4 |
| 2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background | 4 |
| 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION | 7 |
| 4. CONCLUSIONS | 8 |
| 5. SOURCES | 8 |

FIGURES

| | | |
|------------------|---|-----------|
| Figure 1: | Site location map | 9 |
| Figure 2: | Plan showing the pipeline route and paved area | 10 |
| Figure 3: | Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891 showing St Mary's Church and its environs. | 11 |

PHOTOGRAPHS

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------|
| Photo 1: | North end of trench looking north | 12 |
| Photo 2: | Trench to west of paved area, looking northwest | 12 |
| Photo 3: | Line of trench in paved area | 13 |
| Photo 4: | Small excavation to locate services | 13 |

**MAINS GAS SUPPLY INSTALLATION AT
ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CARDIGAN, CEREDIGION:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the installation of a mains gas supply to St Mary's Church, Cardigan, Ceredigion. An archaeological watching brief was recommended on the works by the archaeological advisor to the Diocese as they had the potential to expose or damage archaeological remains associated with the church, which has early medieval origins. The work was commissioned from Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services by Reverend John Bennett.

One visit to the site was made during the excavation of a trench leading from the street to the church.

Fragments of 19/20th century ceramics, glass and clay tobacco pipe stems were present within the depth of the excavated deposits. No burials or burial cuts were revealed and only a few fragments of disarticulated bone (mostly animal bone) were encountered during the excavations.

Occasional dressed and undressed slate slabs were unearthed within the pipe trench. These may originally have been support/packing for grave stones that have been moved from their original locations.

No features relating to the early history of the church and its environs were revealed during the groundworks.

The watching brief confirms that the works have not impacted upon significant archaeological deposits, but has not clarified the potential for the survival of significant deposits at greater depth or elsewhere in the vicinity.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

1.1.1 Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned by Reverend John Bennett to undertake a watching brief on groundworks associated with the installation of a mains gas supply to St Mary's Church, Cardigan (Figures 1 & 2). at the request of the archaeological advisor to the Diocese.

1.1.2 Due to the archaeological potential of the area, the archaeological advisor to the Diocese requested that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during groundworks.

1.2 Scope of the Project

1.2.1 A generic written scheme of investigation (WSI) document for a watching brief was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services prior to the commencement of the works. The WSI outlined methodologies for:

- monitoring groundworks in order to identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- establishing the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed groundworks.
- appropriately investigating and recording any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundworks.
- producing an archive and report of any results.

1.2.2 It was not possible to have the WSI approved before work commenced.

1.3 Fieldwork Methodology

1.3.1 An archaeological 'watching brief' was undertaken on 24/9/2012 at the commencement of groundworks that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains.

3.1.2 A small tracked mechanical excavator was used to excavate a trench approximately 0.15m wide and 0.5m deep. The route of the trench is shown in Figure 2.

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

3.1.4 The excavation through tarmac concrete and paved surfaces at the east end of the pipe trench were not monitored, since small excavations to locate live services, coupled with the results of the rest of the watching brief strongly suggested that no significant features or deposits would be revealed.

1.4 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

1.4.1 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.

1.4.2 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.

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

1.5 Report Outline

1.5.1 This report provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological watching brief and its results. Some archaeological background to the church is included.

1.6 Abbreviations

1.6.1 Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record¹ (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services – DAT-FS; Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management – DAT-HM; Scheduled Ancient Monument – SAM; Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI.

1.7 Illustrations

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

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

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 St Mary's Church is located at SN 18101 46044, on the north side of the River Teifi, on the east side of the town of Cardigan, and on the south side of the Pont-y-cleifion road (Figures 1 and 3).

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.2.1 The HER description (PRN 5302) of St Mary's is as follows:

A parish church with medieval origins. The church was extensively rebuilt in 1711 and 1748 but some medieval stonework survives. It is a Grade II* Listed Building.

St Mary's is a large church, but has been largely rebuilt. Only the 14th century chancel, with 'Decorated' openings including a wave-moulded chancel arch, survives from the medieval building. The nave and west tower were rebuilt during the early-mid 18th century, while the 17th century south porch was retained. The vestry and organ chamber are late 19th century. The church was listed in the 'Taxatio' of 1291 and was probably purpose-built to serve the priory, which was granted to Llanbadarn Fawr and established in c.1115. The rectangular churchyard is 12th-14th century in present form, nuclear to and integrated with post-Conquest borough suburb. There is currently no evidence that the site might have had early medieval origins.

2.2.2 The chancel of St Mary's church was originally attached to a medieval Benedictine Priory, which was on land adjacent to the eastern side of the church on a site now occupied by the Cardigan and District hospital. The HER description for the Priory (PRN 6602) is as follows:

The beginnings of Cardigan Priory are obscure, and the exact time of its foundation cannot be known with certainty. It is first heard of after Rhys ap Gruffudd, Prince of South Wales, had recovered Cardigan from the Normans in 1165. A charter given by him, probably soon after that date, grants and confirms to the great Benedictine abbey of St Peter, Chertsey, Surrey "the cell of Cardigan with all its appurtenances." The priory, with its church of St. Mary of Cardigan, and the chapel of St. Peter in the castle, were already in existence at that time.

Cardigan was always a very small priory and it probably never housed more than a few monks.

On the eve of the Dissolution the priory was a centre of pilgrimage, famed for the Burning Taper of Our Lady. However, the Dissolution of the Monasteries saw Chertsey forced to "surrender" its possessions to the king on July 6th, 1537. A brief respite ensued when Henry VIII re-founded Bisham as a Benedictine Abbey on December 18th, 1537, and the abbot of Chertsey and his monks were established there. This meant that the priory of Cardigan also continued under the new house. In the following year both Bisham and Cardigan had to be "surrendered" anew on June 19th, 1538. Just a week later an order was issued to remove the prior and to confiscate the priory and its belongings.

The priory subsequently fell into private hands and a succession of large houses were built on the site. An earlier 17th century house

was the residence of Catherine Phillips 1631-1664. In 1805 a large country house was designed by John Nash and built by John Bowes. This building was essentially rectangular in shape and was enlarged in 1922 when it became Cardigan hospital that stands today in 2012. The site is now occupied by Cardigan hospital. No remains of the former Benedictine priory are visible above ground.

2.2.3 The Listed Building description (Grade 11* Listed Building No. 10476) for St Mary's is as follows:

History: C12 origins, C15, C18 and C19 parish church in blue lias stone, ashlar for west tower, chancel and organ chamber, rubble for nave. Slate roofs, hipped to chancel east end. West tower, broad aisleless nave with south porch and embattled chancel with north organ chamber and low vestry. Nave is medieval but substantially rebuilt according to plaque in porch in 1702-3. Windows, much renewed in later restorations, are of flat-headed mullioned type with arch-headed lights typical of C17 and south door has post Reformation segmental-pointed head. Another plaque in porch of 1639 may refer to alterations or to a new porch. Present porch is early C20, Gothic, with carved heads of Archbishop Davidson and Bishop Owen. Tower fell in 1705, was rebuilt up to 40 ft in 1711 and completed in 1748, and is large with minimal Gothic detail, single bell-openings and low west door. Big diagonal stepped buttresses to front angles. North east stair tower. Chancel is of exceptional quality for West Wales, C15, Perp. style, with ashlar traceried 3-light windows, 3-bay, buttressed, embattled and pinnacled (most of pinnacles taken down) with north east corner stair. North side has High Victorian organ chamber of 1877, extensively dressed in red brick and low flat-roofed vestry probably of ca 1926. One original window is lost to organ chamber.

Restoration: Restoration history is unclear, 1702-3 plaque says that 'body of the church' was rebuilt. Engraving in Meyrick (1810) shows nave south windows of early C19 type, yet existing mullion windows look earlier. The C15 chancel roof was already removed by 1810. In 1847 easternmost nave south window was enlarged to design of Mr Waugh; alterations including reseating are recorded in 1855 by H Woodyer, architect; the organ chamber dates from 1877; small ICBS grants are recorded for 1882-6; a restoration occurred in 1904-6 by L Lewis of Cardigan. Then from 1924-7 a further restoration was undertaken under W D Caroe when chancel ceiling was replaced and progressively the chancel was refurnished (reredos and pulpit 1926, lectern 1931).

Interior: Plastered nave with C18 5-sided plastered ceiling. Two sections of corbelling in nave walls and moulded pointed niche, possibly a door-head in north wall. North east rood stair door. Chancel arch C15, blue lias with chamfered piers and moulded arch. Chancel has 2 surviving finely carved stone roof corbels (of 8 illustrated by Meyrick 1810) and 1926 panelled timber ceiling. Fine ogee-headed crocketed piscina. Extensive early to mid C20 pale oak furnishing and 2 stained glass windows, east and south of 1924-5 by Walter Wilkinson. East window preserves some fine fragments of C15 glass, sole survivors of the outstanding medieval glass removed by T Johnes to Hafod and burnt in the 1807 fire. Three 1906 stained glass chancel windows with floral plaques and one nave stained glass window of 1910. Chancel north window of ca 1950. C15 panelled font.

Some marble plaques of late C18 to mid C19 by Wood of Bristol, Phillips of Haverfordwest and W Behnes of London.

Church was founded after 1110 by Gilbert de Clare as Benedictine priory, under Chertsey Abbey, Surrey, first unequivocally recorded in charter of the Lord Rhys ca 1165.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION (Photos 1 to 4)

3.1 No deposits of archaeological significance were revealed during the watching brief. No evidence for grave cuts was revealed

3.2 The uppermost deposit (Layer 1) consisted of a loose dark grey-brown humic clay silt approximately 0.20m thick. Within this deposit were occasional apparently natural irregular slate fragments of varying shape and size.

3.3 Beneath Layer 1 was a 0.2m thick deposit of pale grey-brown clay silt (Layer 2) with widespread mortar fragments and small to medium (up to 0.10m) slate fragments. Within this layer (and extending into Layer 1), were occasional larger dressed slates measuring up to approximately 0.30m x 0.40m x 0.02m. Two of these appeared to be intentionally placed vertically. These slabs may once have propped up gravestones that have since been removed. There was no evidence of associated grave cuts, and it seems likely that many of the gravestones had been moved from their original locations, before they were removed completely (several gravestones are now leant up against walls on the perimeter of the graveyard). A few fragments of 19th/20th century ceramics were noted in this deposit.

3.4 Beneath Layer 2 was an approximately 0.05m thick deposit of variably sized flat lying slate fragments within a mixed yellow-brown clayey silt matrix (Layer 3). This layer contained mortar fragments and occasional charcoal fragments along with 19th/20th century ceramics, glass and clay tobacco pipe stem fragments.

3.5 Where the excavated trench went through Layer 3, a clean mid yellow silty-clay containing slate fragments was revealed (Layer 4). It was uncertain whether this was the top of a natural deposit, or an intentionally deposited make-up layer.

3.6 Beneath the paved areas surrounding the church, two small excavations to locate live services indicated there was no topsoil (equivalent to Layer 1). Below the slabs was a 0.30m thick deposit of mid grey mixed clay silt, gravel and mortar (Layer 5). This is presumed to be a make-up layer similar to Layer 2, but which has been subject to much more disturbance.

3.7 Two fragments of possible human bone were identified, along with several animal bones including part of the jawbone of a horse or cow. No finds were retained, but were reburied in the pipe trench.

3.8 Layer 3 probably represents a layer of construction debris associated with one or more of the rebuilds and alterations of the church. Layer 2 probably represents a makeup layer to landscape the graveyard following alterations to the church. Layer 4 may represent the top of earlier deposits, or a natural layer through which features such as graves might be cut.

3.9 It seems probable that the hospital buildings (built upon gardens at some time after 1953) to the east and north of the church will have resulted in the removal of the majority of evidence for buildings relating to the priory, or later buildings on the same site.

3.10 First and Second Edition Ordnance Survey mapping of the area indicate that there was previously housing on the south side street frontage of Pont-y-cleifion. It has not been possible to ascertain when these properties were demolished, but this is likely to have been when the graveyard was last remodelled.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that the gas supply installation has not impacted upon any archaeologically significant deposits or features.

4.2 The area surrounding the church still has the potential for archaeological remains of potentially national significance to be present (if the remains of the priory were located). The installation of the gas supply has not provided an opportunity for the presence or absence of surviving elements of the priory to be ascertained, due to the minimal area excavated for the narrow and shallow service trench.

4.3 Although the construction of the adjacent hospital buildings are likely to have resulted in the destruction of archaeological deposits, and the potential for the survival of features within the graveyard of St Mary's remains unknown, overall there is still a high potential for remains of the medieval priory to survive within the area.

5. SOURCES

Regional Historic Environment Record held at the Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

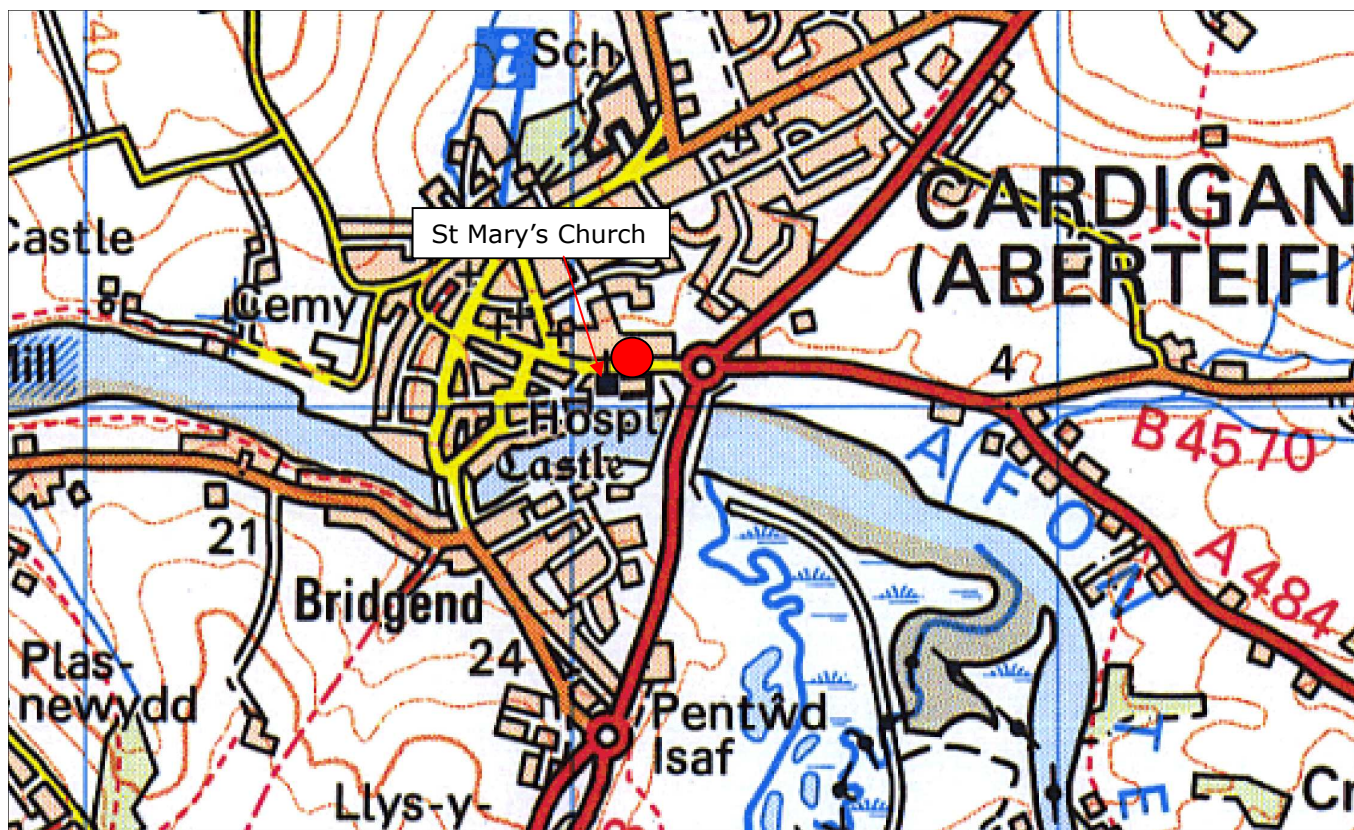


Figure 1: Site location map based upon the Ordnance Survey, with red box showing the area of the watching brief

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

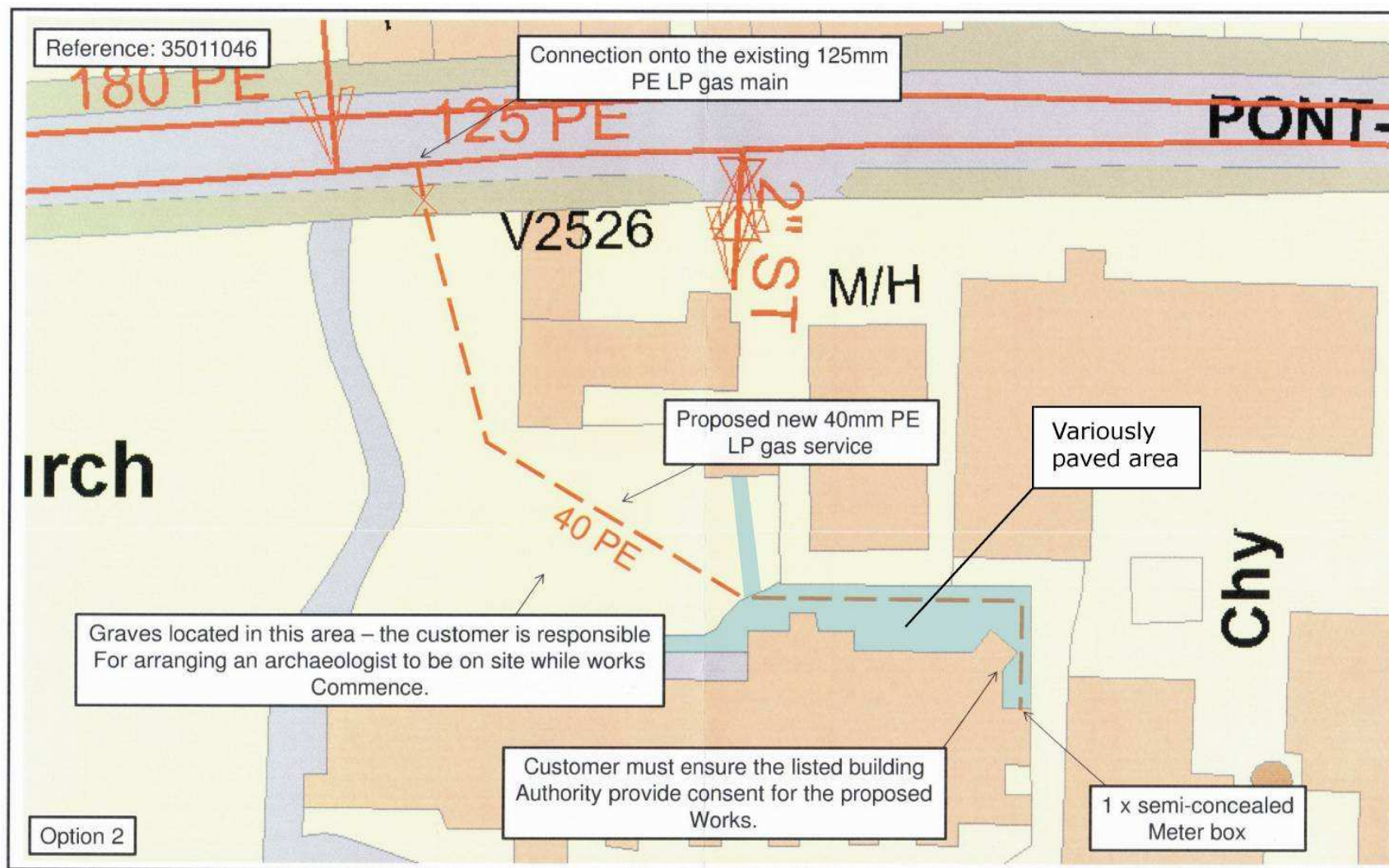


Figure 2: Plan showing the pipeline route and paved area (based on West and Wales Utilities plan provided by the client)

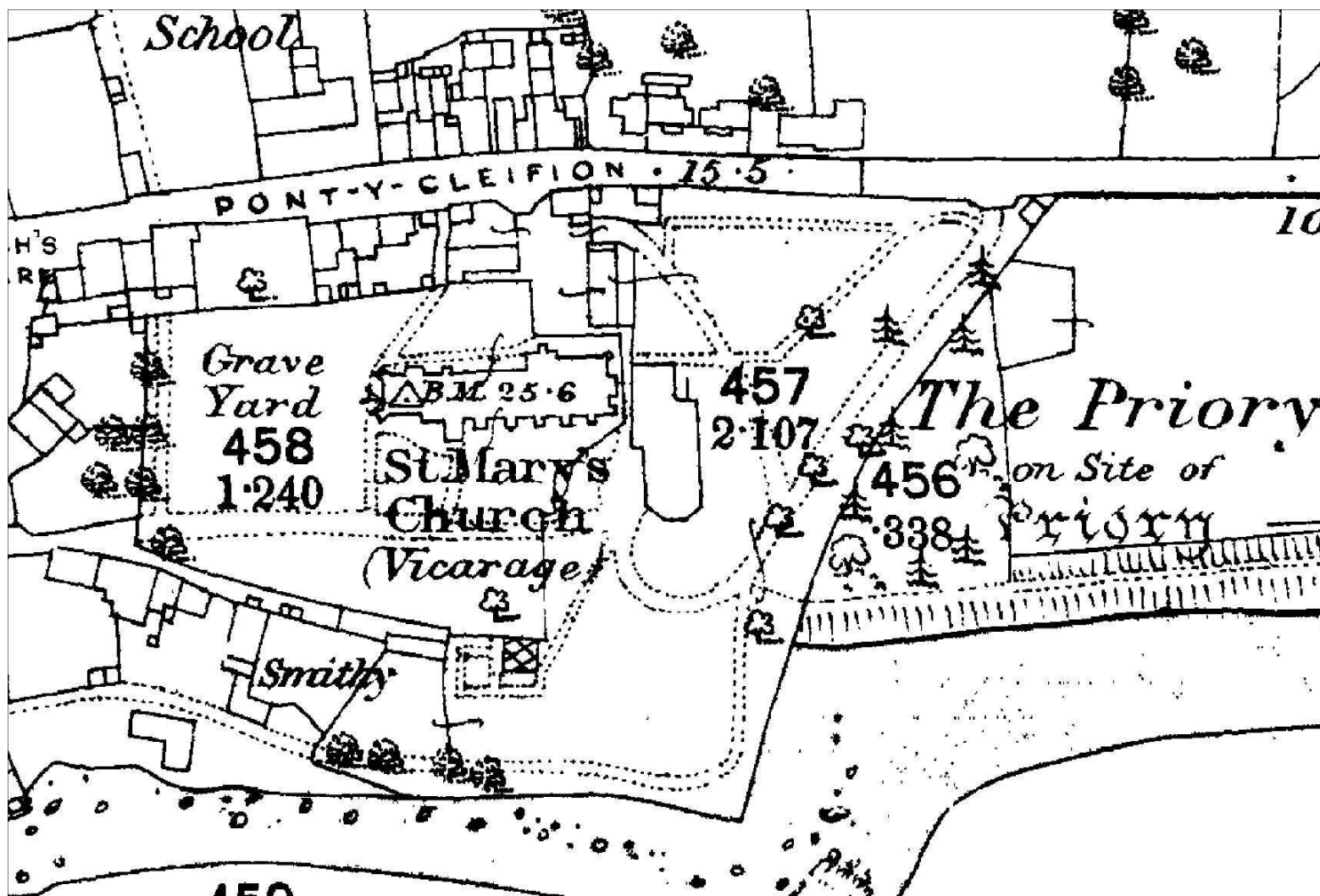


Figure 3: Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891 showing St Mary's Church and its environs.



Photo 1: North end of trench looking north



Photo 2: Trench to west of paved area, looking northwest



Photo 3: Line of trench (not excavated) in paved area (marked by red line)



Photo 4: Small excavation to locate services

MAINS GAS SUPPLY INSTALLATION AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CARDIGAN, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2012/72
RHIF Y DIGWILLIAD / EVENT RECORD NO. 103633

Tachwedd 2012
November 2012

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by

JAMES MEEK

Swydd / Position: FIELD SERVICES PROJECT MANAGER

Llofnod / Signature



Date 22/11/12

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

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

Swydd / Position: HEAD OF FIELD SERVICES

Llofnod / Signature



Date 22/11/12

*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.*

