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**CAER WEN, PONTFAEN, DWR CYMRU
WATER MAIN RENEWAL SCHEME,
PEMBROKESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
(NGR SN 52340 56220)**



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
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**DWR CYMRU WATER MAIN
RENEWAL SCHEME,
FELINFACH, CEREDIGION:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Gan / By

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during ground works associated with the Water Main Renewal Scheme at Pontfaen, Pembrokeshire by Dwr Cymru following a recommendation from the archaeological advisors to the local planning authority also advising Dwr Cymru. The work was commissioned from Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services by Dwr Cymru.

Part of the new proposed line of the water main lies to the southeast of the churchyard of St Brynach's in Pontfaen. St Brynach's church has early medieval origins, as indicated by both its name (an early Christian saint) and the presence of two early-medieval inscribed crosses within the churchyard. The potential for the churchyard at St Brynach's to have originally been larger and settlement associated with the church to be present within the proposed water main renewal scheme area was highlighted.

The water main renewal took place within a stretch of the roadline to the east of the churchyard. Groundworks associated with renewal of the main were considered to have the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains.

One monitoring visit was made to the site during the excavation works. This observed the cutting of two separate trenches located to the east of the churchyard. Due to absence of archaeological features, the character of the deposits revealed and the general lie of the land, further monitoring was not undertaken as the archaeological potential for the remainder of the trenching around the churchyard was considered to be minimal.

It was evident that the existing road line had been terraced into the hill slope such that any archaeological remains that may have been present had been removed in the past. It was also clear from observing the topography of the ground from the churchyard to the proposed water main location, that it is most unlikely that the churchyard ever extended as far as the road, sitting as it does on a small high point of land.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

1.1.1 Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned by Dwr Cymru to undertake a watching brief on groundworks associated with the water main renewal scheme situated at Pontfaen, Pembrokeshire (Figure 1).

1.1.2 The requirement for an archaeological watching brief was placed on the scheme following advice from the archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, who also provide advice direct to Dwr Cymru. This advice was given as part of the line of the new water main (roughly centred on SN 02189 34022; Figure 1) lies close to the southeast of the churchyard of St Brynach's in Pontfaen. It was considered that there was the potential for early-medieval, medieval and post-medieval remains of settlement and other activities associated with the church to be present in this area.

1.2 Scope of the Project

1.2.1 The scheme involves the renewal of an existing water main at Caer Wen, Gwaun Valley, Pembrokeshire. The area of specific archaeological interest lies to the southeast of the churchyard around St Brynach's church, a church with early medieval origins and a possibility for associated settlement in its vicinity. For these reasons it was recommended to Dwr Cymru that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during groundworks within the area of identified interest centred roughly centred on SN 02189 34022. Archaeological observation was undertaken in this area only.

1.2.2 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services prior to the commencement of the works, which was approved by the archaeological advisor. The project objectives were:

- Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology by which Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services 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.

1.2.3 The overall work was summarised as: *'Archaeological attendance and recording during excavation works within the line of the new water main close to the site of St Brynach's Church in Caer Wen (Pontfaen). The proposed works may expose, damage or destroy any underlying archaeological remains, if present within the area. A report shall be prepared on the results of the watching brief, and an archive created of all finds, records, photographs and plans created by this mitigation strategy'*.

1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report describes the location of the development works along with its archaeological background, and provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological watching brief and its results.

1.4 Abbreviations

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

1.5 Illustrations

1.5.1 Photographic images are incorporated into the text. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

1.6 Timeline

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

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4400 – 2300 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.2300 – 700 BC	
Iron Age –	c.700 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1086	
Medieval Period –	1086 – 1536	
Post-Medieval Period ² –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and historical timeline for Wales

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

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

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The replacement water main was to be laid along a new route around Caer Wen, Pontfaen, Pembrokeshire (Figures 1 & 2).

2.1.2 The area of interest lay close to the southeast of the churchyard of St Brynach's Church in Caer Wen, Pontfaen roughly centred on NGR SN 02189 34022 .

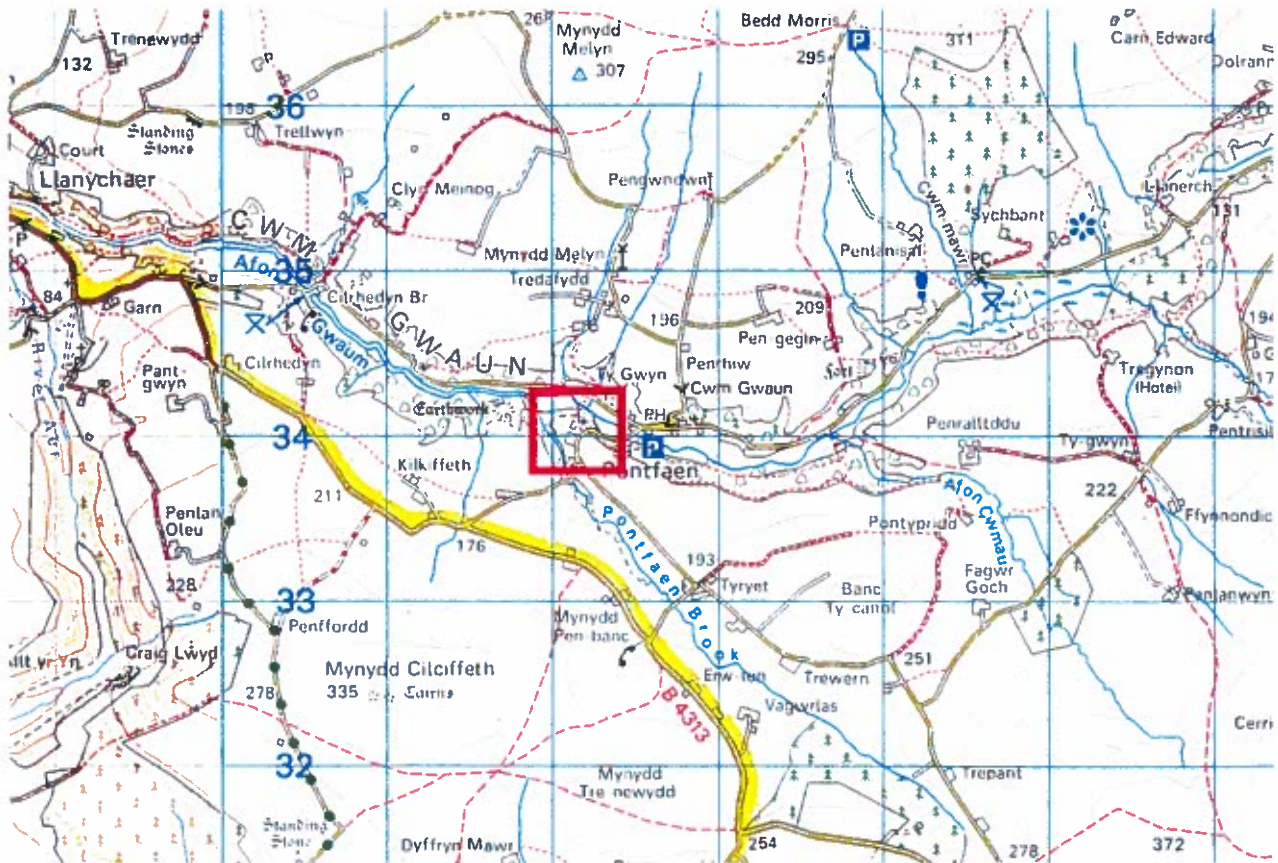


Figure 1: Site location map based upon the Ordnance Survey,
with red box showing the area of the watching brief

Reproduced from the 2003 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of
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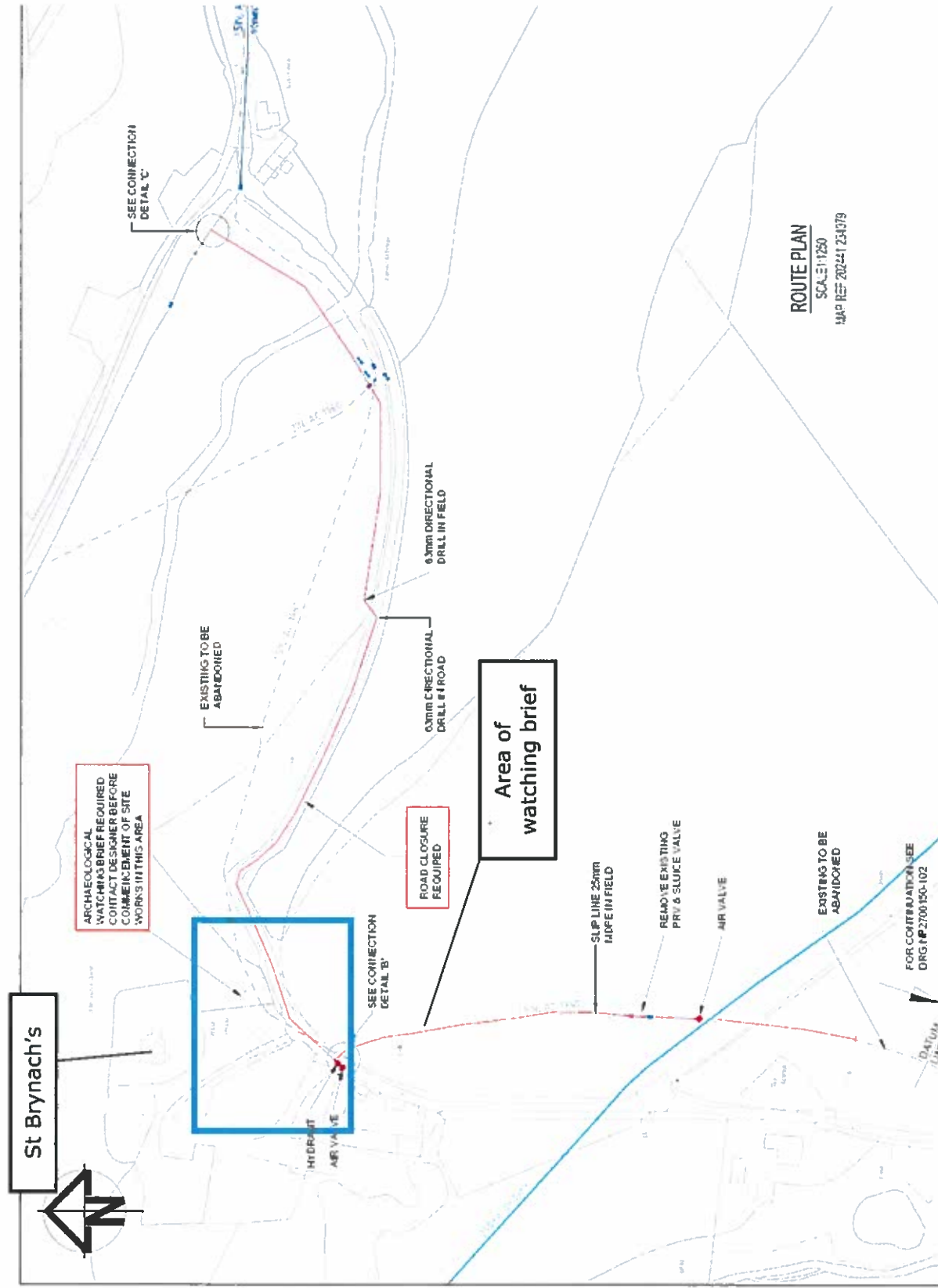


Figure 2: Scheme Layout as supplied by Dwr Cymru. The area of the watching brief is shown within the blue box

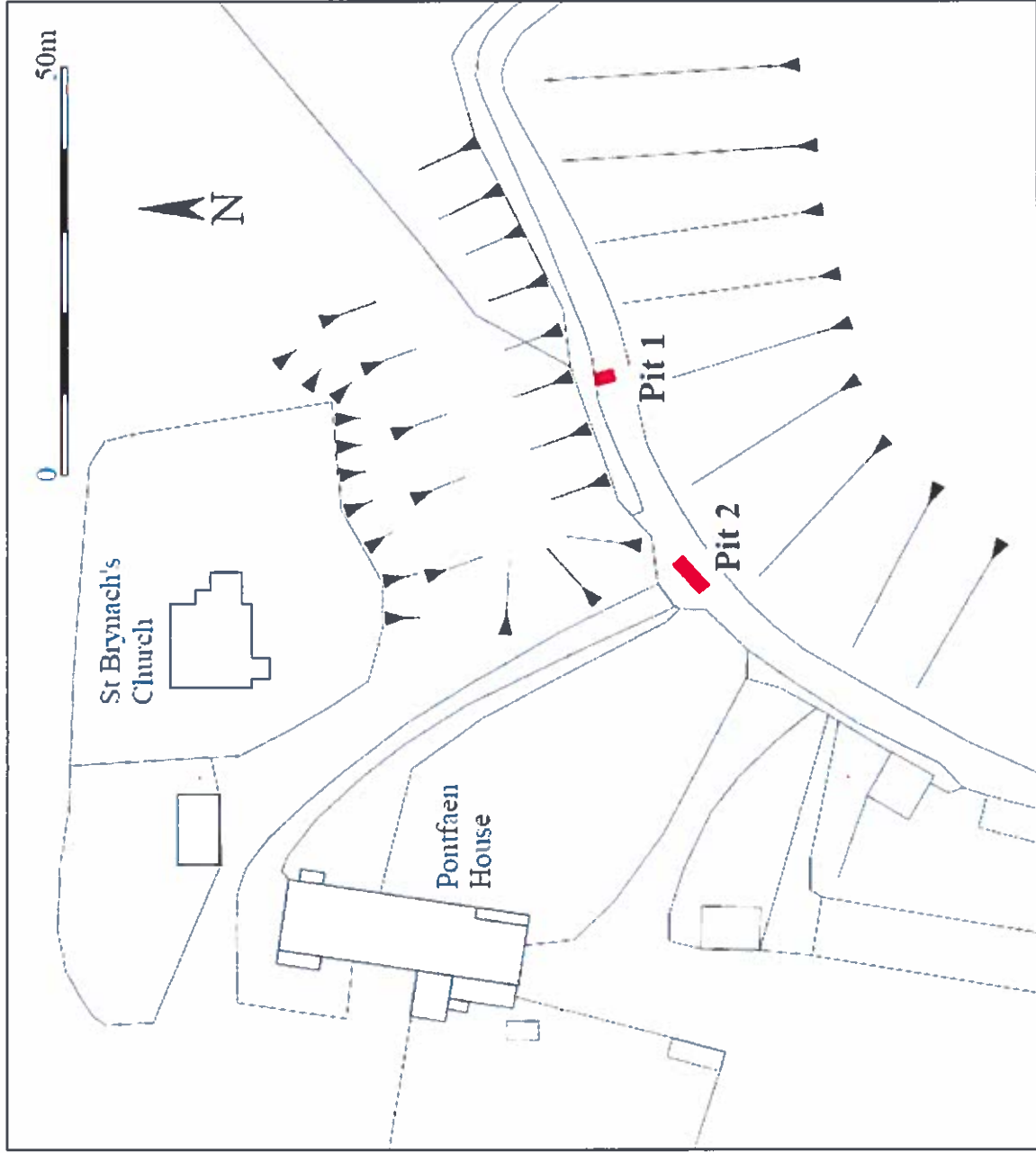


Figure 3: Detailed location plan of Pits 1 and 2 and church, with topography

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.2.1 A brief review of the Regional Historic Environment Record held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT HER) has been carried out to place the site in its archaeological context. The proposed line of the new water main lies to the east of St Brynach's Church at Pontfaen (PRN 1546; Photo 1). The church is likely to have early medieval origins (pre-1086AD; PRN 46849), as is clearly suggested by the location of two early Christian inscribed stones within the churchyard (of probable 9th – 11th century date; PRNs 1544 & 1545, Scheduled Ancient Monument PE 226; Photo 2). This is also corroborated by its dedication to St Brynach, an early Christian saint.

2.2.2 The church was definitely in existence throughout the medieval period, the earliest surviving fabric of probable 13th century date (PRN 1546; Photo 1). It is designated as a Grade II Listed Building (PRN 59978).



Photo 1: View of St Brynach's church and church yard from southeast.

2.2.3 Other sites of archaeological interest recorded on the HER include the Grade II Listed Pontfaen House (PRN 6675) which lies directly to the southwest of the church and its Grade II Listed associated outbuildings (PRN 58415).

PRN	Site Name and Description	Grid Reference	Period
1544	Inscribed Stone Pontfaen Parish Churchyard Group II-III ECM, of probable 9th-11th century date, standing in Pontfaen parish churchyard (PRN 46849) S of the church PRN 1546, next to ECM PRN 1545. It was first recorded in 1861 when it stood in the middle of the churchyard, leaning heavily, SAM PE226	SN02183406	Early Medieval
1545	Pontfaen Parish Churchyard Inscribed Stone Group II-III ECM, of probable 9th-11th century date, standing in Pontfaen parish churchyard (PRN 46849) S of the church PRN 1546, next to ECM 1544. It was first recorded in 1861 when it was in use as a gatepost to the churchyard. SAM PE226	SN02183406	Early Medieval
1546	Pontfaen Parish Church; St Brynach's; St Bernard's Medieval parish church, small. Consists of chancel, nave, and north transept with skew passage. South porch added 1901-4. See churchyard PRN 46849 for site description and management recommendations. The	SN02173408	Post-medieval, Medieval

	earliest fabric may be 13th century; Grade II Listed		
6675	Pontfaen House Occupied country house alongside Pontfaen parish church. One time residence of the Laugharne family. Grade II Listed	SN0214034057	Post-medieval
46849	Pontfaen Parish Church; St Brynach's; St Bernard's Early medieval B site, ie. medium-probability early medieval origins. Small, polygonal churchyard occupied by the medieval Pontfaen parish church (PRN 1546). Two Group II/III ECMs standing in the churchyard (PRNs 1544 & 1545), both probably +/- in situ.	SN02173408	Early Medieval
58415	Outbuildings At Pontfaen Grade II listed outbuildings	SN0213933994	Post-medieval
59978	Church Of St Brynach Grade II listed church	SN0217634080	Post-medieval

Table1: HER information within close proximity of the proposed water main works



Photo 2: View east of early Christian standing stones (PRN 1,545 and PRN 1544)

2.2.4 The first edition Ordnance survey map of 1889 depicts St Brynach's church and its environs located to the immediate north east of Pont Faen House (PRN 6675); Figure 3). The church at this time appears to be depicted as St Bernard's which may be due to Anglicisation of the Welsh Early Medieval Saint name 'Brynach'.

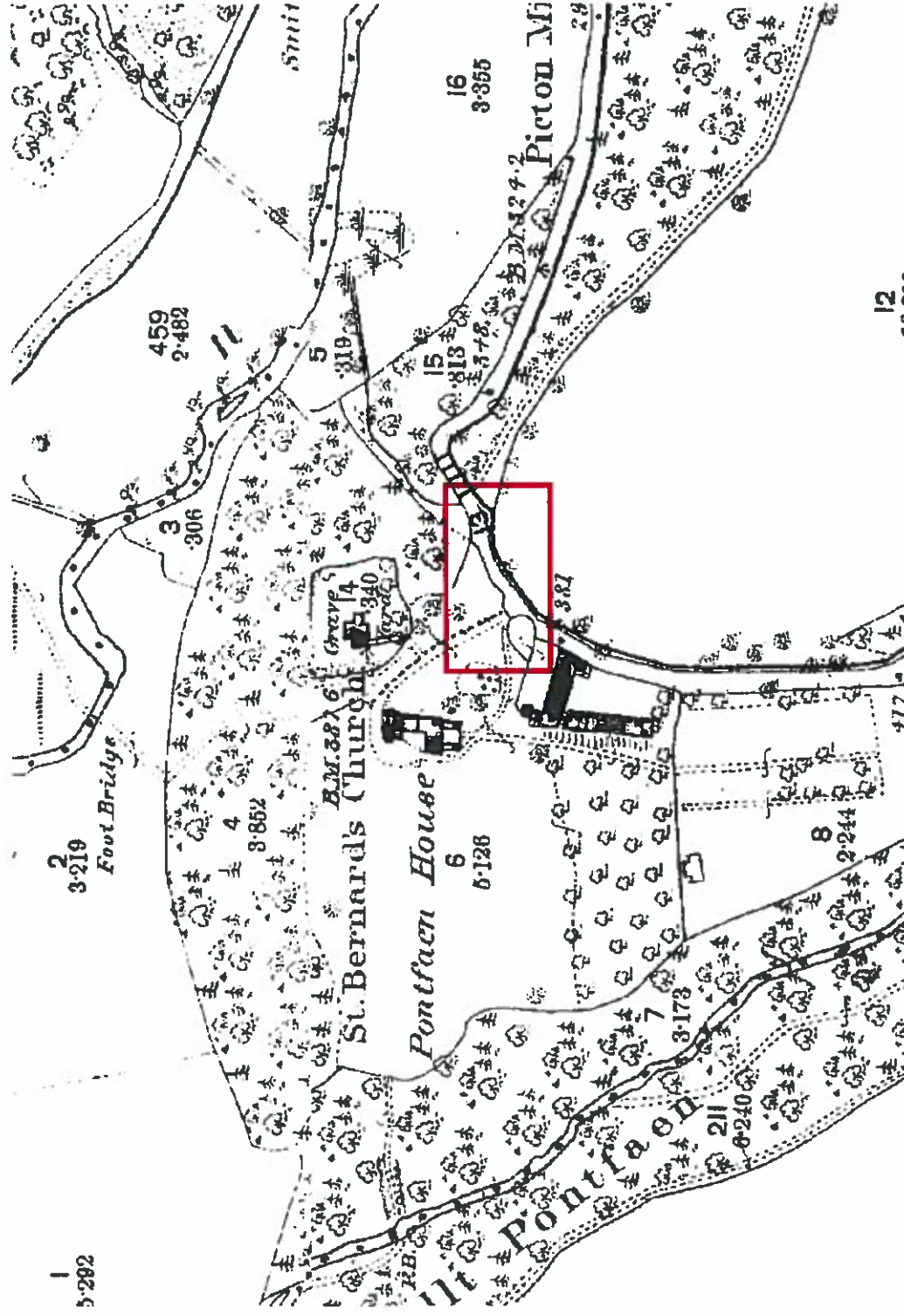


Figure 3: Extract from 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map showing St Brynach's Church depicted as St Bernard's church in 1889. Watching Brief area within red rectangle.

3. WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

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

3.1 Fieldwork

3.1.1 A 'watching brief' was undertaken during the excavation of two directorial drilling pits (Pit 1 and Pit 2) along the water main renewal scheme route that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains.

3.1.2 The directional drilling pits were excavated by a small tracked 360 degree excavator using a toothed bucket. Pit 1 was excavated 1.2m in length, 0.6m in width with a maximum depth of 0.55m. Pit 2 was 1.8m in length, 0.45m wide and 0.8m maximum depth.

3.1.3 All 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 Manual³ used by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services.

3.2 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

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

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

3.2.7 The watching brief methodology involved one site visit on 31st October 2012 to monitor excavation works in the area of archaeological interest.

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

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1.1 During the watching brief two separate investigation pits were excavated located within the area of archaeological interest (Figure 3).

Investigation Pit 1 (SN 02209 34031 approximately)

4.1.2 Pit 1 was located along the road situated c.32m to the southeast of the present boundary of the church. The pit measured 1.2m in length by 0.6m in width and continued to a maximum depth of 0.55m.

4.1.3 The present road/tarmac surface accounted for the main uppermost deposit found within Pit 1 and had a maximum depth of 0.20m, layer (1000). Underlying the road surface a layer of light brown degrading shale bedrock was encountered, layer (1001). This deposit gradually gave way to a harder grey shale bedrock (1002) which continued to the base of the excavation at 0.55m below ground level.

4.1.4 During the excavation of Pit 1 only modern road make up deposits and natural bedrocks were encountered (photo 3). No deposits or features of archaeological significance were encountered.



Photo 3: View of north east facing section of investigation Pit 1.

Directional Drilling Pit 2 (SN 02182 34019 approximately)

4.1.5 Pit 2 was located outside the lane leading to Pontfaen House and the adjacent St Brynach's Church. The pit measured 0.40m wide by 1.8m in length and continued to a maximum depth of 0.8m.

4.1.6 During the excavation of the second pit the upper layers were found to compose of only modern road deposits (layer 2000) of a maximum 0.20m depth. The natural soil horizon was first viewed at 0.20m below the top of the modern road surface and consisted of light brown shale bedrock, layer (2001).

4.1.7 A modern service was revealed near the base of the pit. A vertical straight edged cut was visible within the pit section which related to the modern service.

4.1.8 Only natural soil horizons below modern road make-up were revealed within Pit 2. A single modern service and associated cut were also revealed (photos 4-5). No deposits or features of archaeological significance were encountered.



Photo 4: View of northwest facing section of Pit 2 section

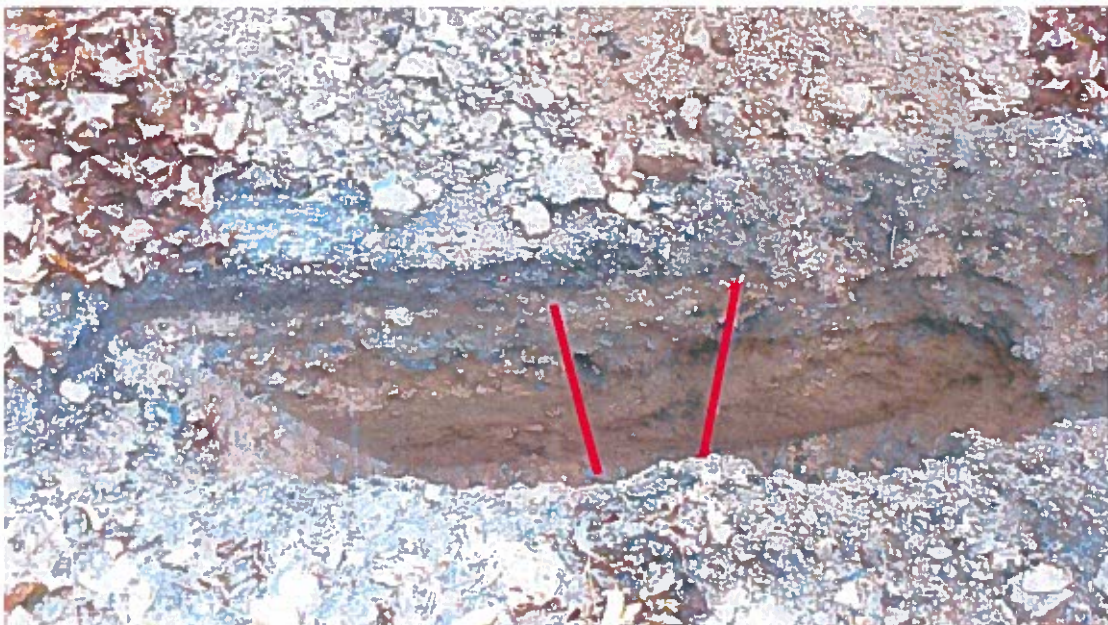


Photo 5: View of northwest facing section of Pit 2 section with red lines denoting edges of modern service.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The archaeological watching brief undertaken during the installation of the replacement water main at Caer Wen, Pontfaen, Pembrokeshire did not reveal any archaeological deposits, finds or features.

5.2 The two investigation pits have demonstrated that the road which is located to the southeast of St Brynach's Church has been terraced into the hillside. This may have removed any earlier archaeological remains that may have been present.

5.3 This terracing of the roadline could also clearly be seen in the general topography of the area. On the southern/southeastern edge of the road, a near vertical edge rose up to the level of the adjacent field exceeding depths of 1.8m in places. On the western/northwestern side of the road there was a further 1m rise to the ground surface beyond the road. This indicates that the original ground slope would have actually been well above the existing level of the road, but had been terraced when the road was formed. The date of this terracing is uncertain, but the evidence from the test pits would suggest that modern resurfacing of the road has further reduced the ground level. The extent of the terracing would have destroyed any archaeological remains that may have formerly been present within the roadline.



Photo 6: View along roadline towards Pontfaen House showing difference in ground level on either side of road, viewing west

5.4 Observation of the southern boundary of St Brynach's churchyard indicated it was surrounded by an earth bank (Photo 6). On the southern side of this bank, towards the water main renewal area, there was a natural drop in the ground level, indicating that the churchyard had been constructed on a high point of land. The natural topography of the area between the churchyard and the roadline dropped into a small valley heading in a northeasterly direction. It is considered most unlikely that the churchyard would have extended southwards and that any associated settlement would have been in this area. The land to the west of the church, including the area of Pontfaen House, seems far more level and a much more likely candidate for associated archaeological activity to be located.



Photo 7: View of southern boundary of church on top of natural rise in the ground, viewing north

5.5 Overall the archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that the water main renewal works have not impacted upon any archaeologically significant deposits or features.

5.6 Due to the presence of bedrock in the investigation trenches, directional drilling of the water main would not be possible, and open-cut trenches would be needed. As the watching brief demonstrated that as the area of archaeological interest had been significantly terraced, there was considered no further need for any monitoring works during the water main renewal.

6. SOURCES

Regional Historic Environment Record held at the Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

Cartographic sources

Ordnance Survey 1889 1:2500 Pembrokeshire Sheet I.10

Ordnance Survey 2003 1:50 St David's & Haverfordwest/ Tŷ Ddewi a Hwlfordd.
Sheet 157.

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Llofnod / Signature  Date 30/08/13

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  Date 30/08/13

*Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
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comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report.*



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