

LAND ADJACENT TO HERON'S REST, MARTLETWY, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF (NGR SO 4050 4340)



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Mr Stuart Poole



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**LAND ADJACENT TO HERON'S REST,
MARTLETWY, PEMBROKESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Gan / By

Hubert Wilson

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SUMMARY

A planning application (Planning Ref: 08/1134/PA) was submitted to Pembrokeshire County Council for the erection of a single dwelling on land adjacent to Heron's Brook, Martletwy, Pembrokeshire (NGR SN 0352 10632). The development lies in close proximity to several sites of historical and archaeological interest. These include Martletwy Church, dedicated to St Marcellus, a Grade II Listed building with medieval origins, located 50m south of the development. It is enclosed by a sub-oval churchyard which may indicate an early medieval date for the church yard. Historical map evidence indicates that the churchyard may once have encroached into the development area. Due to the archaeological potential of the site a condition was placed upon planning permission requiring the attendance of an archaeologist during groundworks to undertake an archaeological watching brief.

The developer, Mr Stuart Poole, commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake the archaeological watching brief during groundworks. This took place on the 18th and 19th of March 2013.

During the groundworks a thin layer of topsoil was removed, becoming a little thicker towards the west. A thin mixed subsoil was then encountered, below which the natural was exposed. The natural consisted of a stiff, orangey- grey, silty-clay interspersed with pockets of soft, degraded coal. The upper reaches of the South Wales coalfield is not far below the surface in this part of Pembrokeshire. In Martletwy Woods, 140m away to the north, the remains of shallow coal workings can be seen.

Three features of archaeological interest were revealed during the groundworks. On the north side of the proposed building footprint a shallow, curvilinear ditch, approximately 30m long and 1.8m wide containing one sherd of medieval pot in its lower fill, was uncovered. The upper fill consisted of angular stone and modern building material including breeze block and brick. The ditch continued beyond the east and west sections of the footprint of the proposed building.

At the south-west corner of the trench a sharply curving, shallow gully, was revealed. It had an average a width of 0.6m and was 2m long; with a single fill containing one sherd of medieval pot. One end of the feature continued under the western edge of the trench, while its southern end was truncated by a later feature. Due to only a small area of this feature being exposed it is difficult to determine whether this was a gully or pit.

Despite the fact that the site had been compromised in the past by ploughing, backfilling and terracing, the watching brief has demonstrated that archaeological features and deposits survive below the current ground surface in this location. The curving ditch recorded crossing the site could be associated with a former larger enclosure surrounding the churchyard. The possibility that it is of earlier date (prehistoric) cannot be discounted as a larger sub-circular enclosure has been indicated as cropmarks on some aerial photographs of the area. The ditch was evidently partially backfilled or silted up perhaps during the medieval period. It was levelled in the modern period being filled with building rubble.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

1.1.1 Planning permission had been granted by Pembrokeshire County Council for the construction of a single dwelling on a plot of land adjacent to Heron's Rest, Martletwy, Pembrokeshire (Figure 1; centred on NGR SN 03252 10632).

1.1.2 A recommendation for an archaeological watching brief was placed on the development by the archaeological advisors to the local planning authority (Dyfed Archaeological Trust Planning Services), as the site had the potential of being within the extents of a former, larger churchyard enclosure (PRN 46834) and remains associated with early medieval and medieval occupation of the village could have been present.

1.1.3 There was thus the possibility that the proposed groundworks could expose, damage or destroy below ground archaeological remains associated with the church yard enclosure or from other periods, that may exist in the area.

1.1.3 Mr Stuart Poole commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake the archaeological watching brief.

1.2 Scope of the Project

1.2.1 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services prior to the commencement of the works, which was sent for approval to the archaeological advisor to the planning authority. 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.

1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report describes the location of the development works along with its summary 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 Record (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 to be found at the back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

1.6 Timeline

1.6.1 The following timeline 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 –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and historical timeline

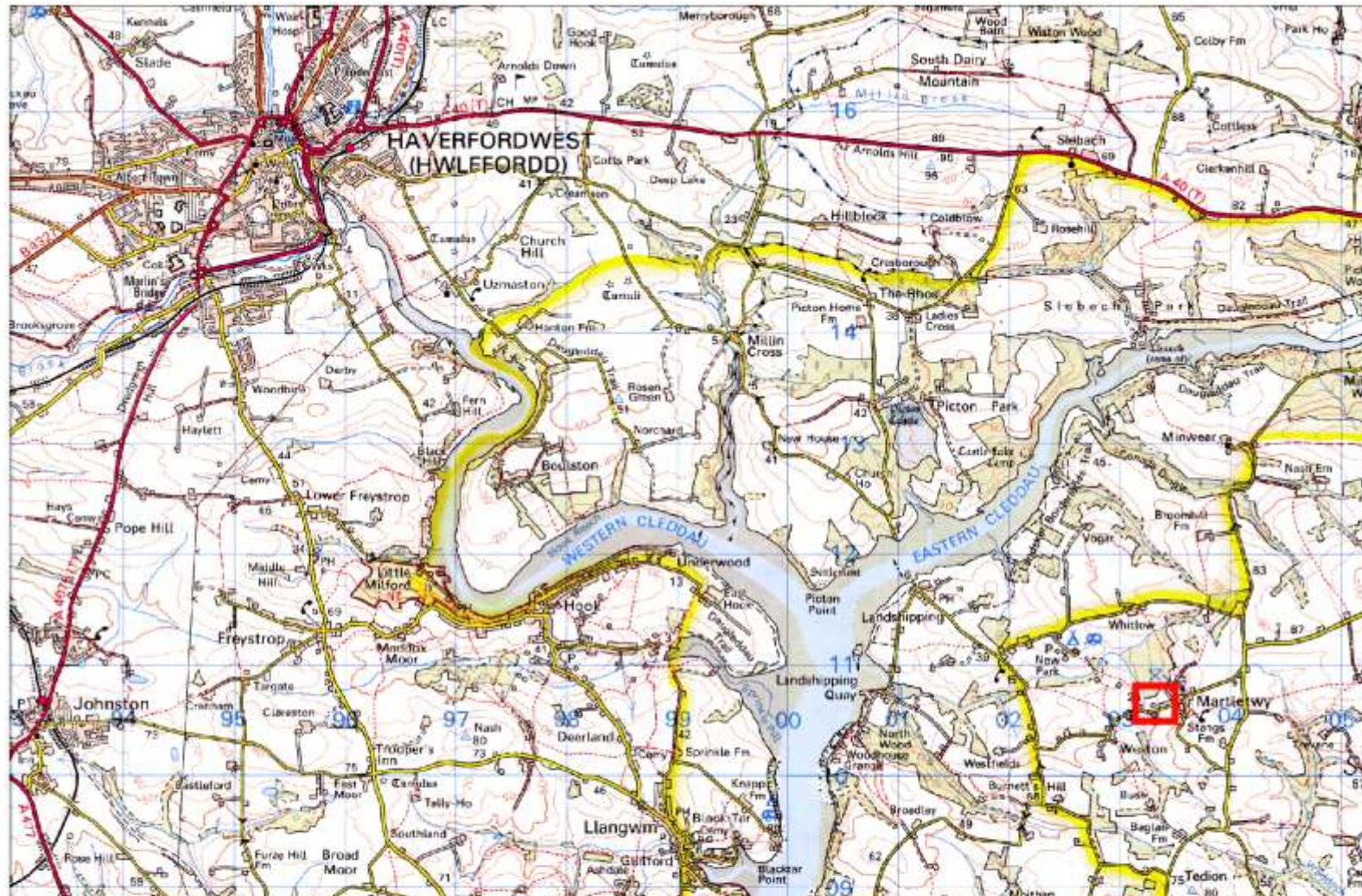


Figure 1: Site location map based upon the Ordnance Survey, with red box showing the area of the watching brief

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2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The proposed development site is centred on NGR (SN 03252 10632) and lies on the 25m contour line. It is situated on the western edge of the village of Martletwy, which is located 9.5km southeast of Haverfordwest, 8.5km southwest of Narberth and 2.5km east of the River Daugleddau.

2.1.2 The development site is bounded on its north side by a modern bank and large pond, beyond which is Martletwy Woods.

2.1.3 On the south side a minor road skirts the proposed development site, 50m to the south beyond this and in a slightly elevated position, is St Marcellus' Church (PRN 3598) and the surrounding churchyard (PRN 46834).

2.1.4 A terraced bank over 1m high encloses the east side of the development, alongside which a modern trackway leads towards the pond. Above the terraced bank is the lawned area of the adjacent property. The terracing and trackway were probably constructed during the period when the pond was excavated.

2.1.5 The western edge of the site is bounded by a stream which eventually runs into the Daugleddau at Landshipping, 2.5km away. This stream might possibly be the 'Rouce', mentioned in the deed of gift by Raymond fitz Martin to the Knights Hospitaller in their re-grant of the Church of Martletwy in the early 13th century. The document also confirms their right to the manor of *Benegerdune* whose land extended between Minwear and Martletwy. It is quoted in Fenton's 'Tour through Pembrokeshire' (1811) and William Rees' 'History of the Order of St John of Jerusalem'. The original is kept in the Cardiff City Library.

'Grant from Riemund fitz Martin of Martletwy to Maurice son of Cradoc of a curucate and a bovat of land in Martletwy situate at the ford Minevet and lying between the land Minwear and the land Martletwy up to the middle of the little valley on the west part of the wood of Woodhac and the bank of the valley on the east up to the Mocellus and from thence towards the south up to the source of the Rouce and from the Rouce on the S. up to the highway leading to the church and along the said highway on the west up to the boundary of Blakedon and from the said boundary up to the river which runs to the said ford and along the said river to the said ford on the east.'

2.1.6 The underlying geology of the area is the South Wales Lower and Middle Coal Measures Formation, formed approximately 308 to 316 million years ago in the Carboniferous Period. Martletwy lies on its northern edge.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.2.1 A search of the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER – held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust) records seven known archaeological sites within a 250m radius of the development area. These are shown in Table 2.

2.2.2 The main site of archaeological interest is that of the Church of St Marcellus (PRN 3598) which lies 50m south of the proposed dwelling and the churchyard enclosure (PRN 46834), its northern edge being only 40m away from the development.

2.2.3 The church is a Grade II Listed Building and may have early medieval origins, being located within a sub-oval enclosure (PRN 46834). It consists of a chancel, nave, north aisle and south porch. The chancel arch is Norman with a later (possibly 15th century) north aisle. The south porch may be an early 17th century build or possibly Norman. It has a medieval foundation and was first mentioned in a charter written by Bishop Peter de Leia of St David's (1176-1198). We learn from this charter that by the second half of the 12th century the church

of Martletwy had been acquired by the Order of St John (Hospitallers) whose headquarters for the region was based in Slebech and whose land and influence stretched from here to Jerusalem. The church was heavily restored in 1897 which would have replaced or hidden much of the medieval fabric of the church. It is worthwhile noting that possibly part of the original medieval structure is still visible on the north-west corner of the church, manifesting itself as an out-of-alignment 'bulge' in the wall masonry.

2.2.4 The churchyard enclosure is sub-oval in shape, which is often indicative of early medieval origins and *'possibly lies within a sub-oval (double) enclosure defined by cropmarks'* (Ludlow 2003). There is also the potential for the churchyard enclosure to have previously been larger, having been truncated by the existing road line in the past, and it may have extended into the proposed development site. This possibility would also include the outer cropmark enclosure.

Primary Record No. (PRN)	Description	Grid Reference	Period
3598	Martletwy Parish Church; St Marcellus': Medieval parish church, medium sized. Consists of a chance, nave, and north aisle. South porch, earlier 17th century. See churchyard. A medieval foundation, first mentioned in 1231. Grade II Listed Building	SN 0328 1058	Post Medieval, Medieval
3599	Hallwalls; Land Of Green Ginger: Remains of a large, rectangular building on a terraced platform also later ruined cottages were noted on a DAT site visit in 1981 when clearance and landscaping was taking place.	SN 0332 1051	Post-medieval
7985	Upper And Lower Castle: Names in the 1841 Martletwy Tithe Schedule of fields adjacent to Martletwy church; Upper castle contained barrows 3600 and 3601, now ploughed out.	SN 031 107	Unknown
17046	Vicarage: Designed to an interesting asymmetrical plan by Rommilly Allen in 1882, following requests since the 1840s for a vicarage at Martletwy to counteract dissenters and drinkers. Sold in the 1980s and renamed Glebe House.	SN 0339 1083	Post-medieval
17047	Church Bridge	SN 0321 1064	Post-medieval
17048	School House: A 'National School' schoolroom and master's house built in 1844 and closed in 1952. Now converted to a restaurant. HJ after Davies and Nelson. March 2000	SN 0330 1054	Post-medieval
46834	Churchyard of St Marcellus' Church: Early medieval B site, ie. medium-probability early medieval origins. Churchyard occupied by the medieval Martletwy parish church. 'Martletwy' may be derived from 'Merthyr Tyfei', which would denote early post-Roman origins. The large, sub-oval churchyard enclosure may also indicate early medieval origins.	SN 0328 1058	Medieval; post-medieval

Table 2: Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record within a 250m radius of the proposed development site

2.2.5 Martletwy may derive its name from 'Merthyr Tyfei', which would denote early post-Roman origins (Ludlow 2003).

2.2.6 The 1841 Tithe Schedule records two fields located 220m to the west of Martletwy Church called Upper and Lower Castle (PRN7985) (Figure 2). These

may refer to earlier sites of prehistoric date (the sites of former Bronze Age barrows were recorded in Upper Castle, but have since been ploughed away).



Figure 2: Tithe Map of Martletwy showing watching brief location in red

2.2.7 Martletwy and its surroundings are featured in the 'Historic Landscape Characterisation' project. A summary of the relevant passages follows:

Martletwy lies within the medieval Barony of Carew. The parish church may be a pre-conquest ecclesiastical foundation. It was granted, with a significant tract of land in the north of the parish, to the Knights Hospitaller at Slebech by the Lord of the Manor John FitzRaymond de Martletwy, during the 12th century. The remainder of the manor comprised one knight's fee in 1362 when it was held of the barony. Place-name evidence may indicate the presence of a motte castle. However, by the late 16th century Landshipping appears to have succeeded Martletwy as the caput.

Much of the remaining land within this area is of fairly poor quality and probably lay under woodland or pasture during the medieval period, as no other vills or townships can be identified. The present landscape is post-medieval in origin.

The area lies in the Pembrokeshire coalfield and waterborne activity increased with the rise of the local mining industry. Mining began in the late medieval period, but was a low-key affair and probably only worked on a seasonal basis by farmers and farm labourers up to the end of the 18th century. In 1880, Sir Hugh Owen installed the first steam engine in the Pembrokeshire coalfield at Landshipping. Quays at Landshipping Ferry and Landshipping Quay were constructed to serve the coal industry, while the need for workers in the coal industry undoubtedly created the distinctive pattern of small fields and numerous dispersed dwellings that is such an important characteristic of this area. The settlement pattern and field pattern had been established by the tithe survey of c.1840. Since then Martletwy village has grown considerably, blurring its medieval pattern. Mining continued in the area until 1947 when the industry was nationalised and all the Pembrokeshire pits were declared uneconomic and closed.

3. WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

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

3.1 Fieldwork

3.1.1 A 'watching brief' was undertaken during ground reductions across the footprint of the proposed dwelling that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains. This involved initial topsoil clearance followed by the reduction of ground levels down to the top of the natural, in order to create a level and compact platform for building.

3.1.2 The building footprint (Figure 3) measured approximately 28m long on an east-west axis by 7m wide. On either end of the footprint were two diametrically opposed bays, the eastern one measuring 8.8m x 4.5m, the western one measuring approximately 3.7m by 7m.

3.1.3 The footprint was excavated by a large tracked 360 degree excavator using a toothless grading bucket and was approximately 0.25m deep at the east end and up to 0.5m deep on the west end.

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

3.2.7 The watching brief methodology involved two site visits on 18th and 19th of March 2013 to monitor and survey the excavation works in the area of archaeological interest. The survey was undertaken using a Trimble 5600 Total Station.

¹ 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.

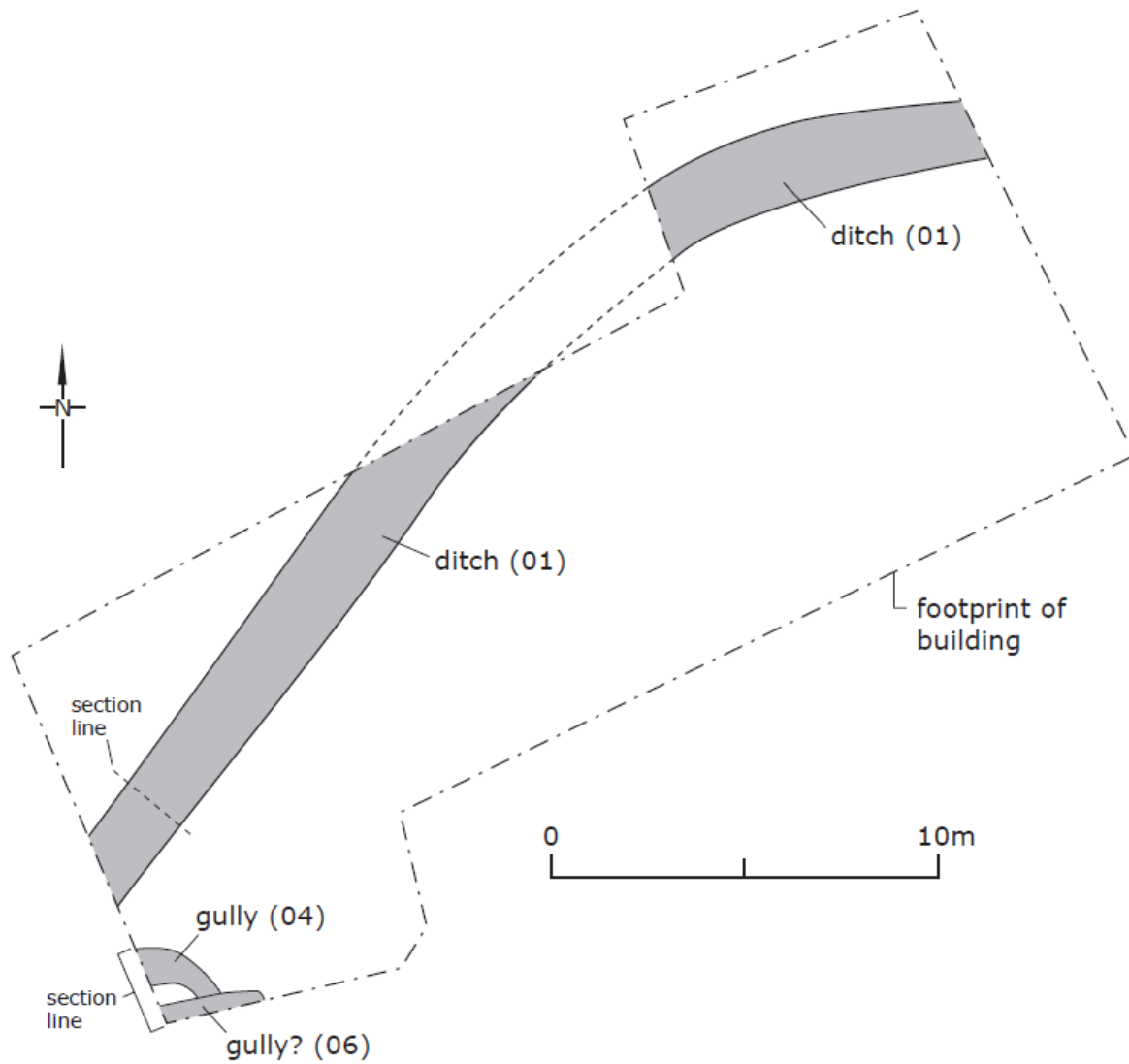


Figure 3: Plan of excavated house footprint showing identified features

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Following the removal of the topsoil and subsoil, the top of the underlying natural geological levels was exposed which comprised a stiff, orangey-grey, silty-clay interspersed with pockets of soft, degraded coal. Three archaeological features were identified within the area of the footprint of the building.



Photo 1: Topsoil stripping of the building footprint facing southwest

4.2 The largest of these features was a curvilinear ditch (01) measuring 31m long and 1.8m wide (Figures 3 and 4). It emerged from the middle of the western side of the development site, crossing the stripped area in a northeasterly direction for 12.5m where it continued under the north edge of the trench. It re-emerged in the east bay of the building footprint where it headed in an easterly direction for 9m where it passed beneath the eastern side of the stripped area. The western half of the ditch was visible on the surface as an arc of disturbed ground containing a large quantities of stone and occasional brick, breeze block and root action, within a soil matrix of grey-brown, silty clay.

4.3 A section 0.35m wide was excavated across the ditch to determine its profile and stratigraphy (Figure 4). This revealed a shallow round-bottomed ditch with a well-defined break of slope on the southern side. The northern edge in contrast was difficult to discern and might have been truncated or suffered from erosion in the past. The lower of the two fills visible in section, (03), was a dark-grey, silty-clay with traces of orangey-brown silty-clay. A small percentage of coal fragments and small stones were present in the fill. A single pot sherd, tentatively identified as Dyfed gravel tempered ware, a pot with medieval provenance, was recovered from the fill. The upper fill (02) consisted of modern debris; mainly large and small angular stone with occasional brick and breeze block within a light grey, silty-clay matrix. This was mixed with the subsoil and may indicate a later refilling of a sunken hollow above the ditch.



Photo 2: View northeast along the line of ditch (01)
in the western part of the site area



Photo 3: View northeast along the line of ditch (01)
in the eastern part of the site area

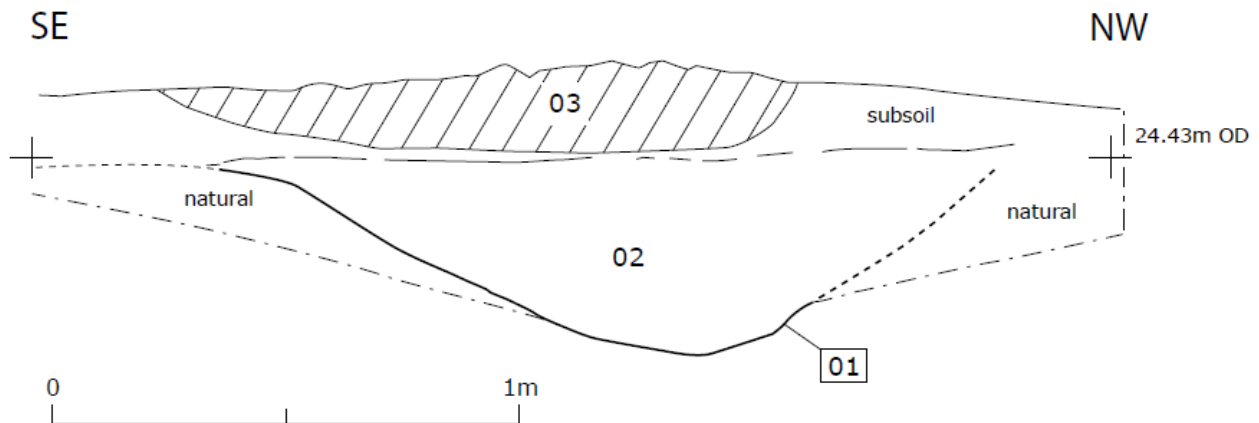


Figure 4: Section through ditch (01)



Photo 4: Northeastern facing section through ditch (01)

4.4 Once the surveyed location of the ditch was superimposed onto the 1st Edition OS map of 1864, which containing the possible original line of the cemetery enclosure (Figure 4), it was evident (even taking into account errors that might have occurred in registering the survey), that ditch (01) was not the boundary line depicted on the map, being 10m further north, however, it did follow a similar curve.

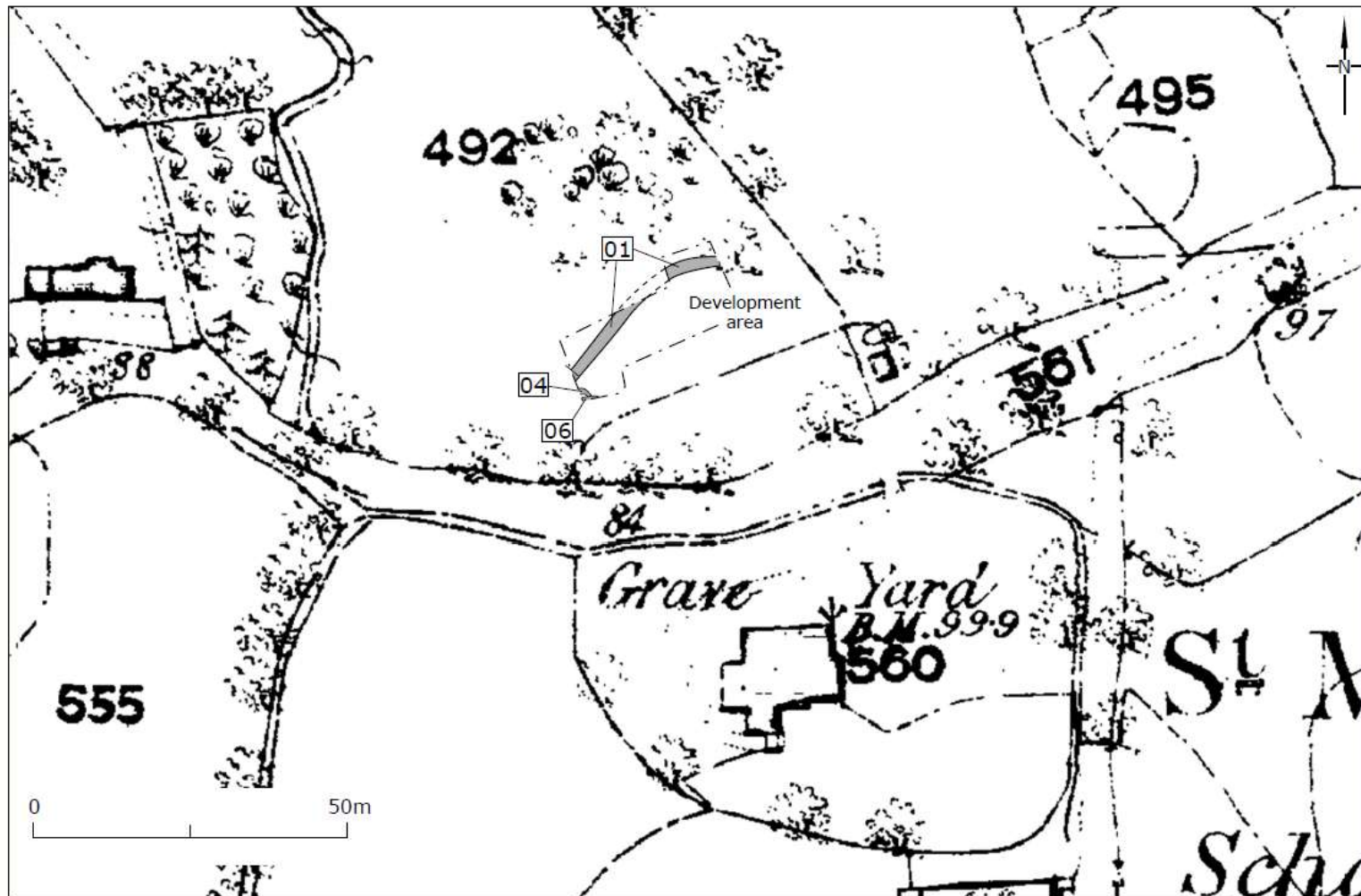


Figure 5: Plan of site area showing ditch (01) and other features superimposed on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1864

4.5 In the southwestern corner of the proposed footprint of the building two cut features were partially uncovered (Photo 5). Unfortunately not enough was revealed of the cuts to ascertain their function or form. The earliest was a 2m long, 0.6m wide, flat-bottomed, shallow gully (04). It entered the trench on the west side and continued in an easterly direction for 1m then turned sharply to the south for 1m before being truncated by cut feature (06).

4.6 The fill of (04) was a medium grey-brown, silty-clay with occasional small stones and gravel and was 0.08m thick (05) (Figure 6; Photo 6). Within this fill one potsherd of Dyfed gravel tempered ware was recovered.

4.7 Feature (06) protruded into the south side of the building footprint for a distance of 0.3m and ran parallel with that edge for 2m, truncating (04) in the process (Figure 6; Photo 7). The last 0.25m at the eastern end was slightly curved as if about to turn southward. The fill was a very soft, grey-blue, admixture of clays, shale and coal with a very 'buttery' texture. Since only a portion of the north edge of this feature was revealed it was not possible to ascertain its true extents.



Photo 5: Features (04) and (06) in southwestern corner, view north-northwest

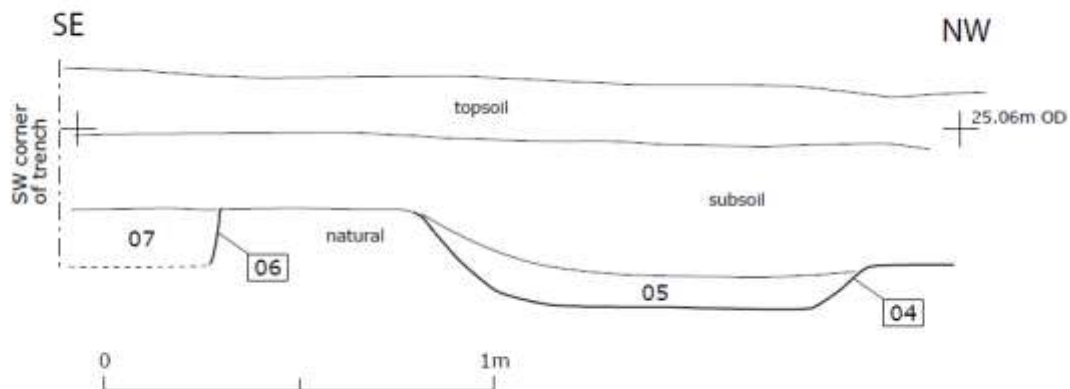


Figure 6: Section through features (04) and (06), facing east



Photo 6: East facing section in southwestern corner of proposed building footprint following excavation of (04)

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The archaeological watching brief undertaken during the excavation of the footprint of the proposed new dwelling at Heron's Rest, Martletwy, Pembrokeshire has revealed interesting archaeological remains possibly associated with an earlier enclosure surrounding St Marcellus Church. Other features of uncertain origin were also recovered.

5.2 It is thought possible that the development site has been subject to previous ground levelling associated with construction of a pond on its northern side. This is evidenced by the shallow depth of topsoil across the development area, in an area where hill wash and alluvial accumulation of soils would have been expected. Further terracing may have also occurred with the construction of a gravel track on the eastern side of the site area. The pond and surrounding bank are 40m from the development site and were allegedly created in the past 35–40 years, it seems reasonable to assume that its creation must have had some impact on the development site. It is possible that the bank material did not only come from the excavation of the pond, but also from the field in which the development lies. The gravel track lies at around 1m below the adjacent properties garden level and it is also possible that the bank also used material from this levelling. It may have been during this period that the last traces of ditch (01) were backfilled.

5.3 The building footprint for the proposed dwelling lies approximately 15m north of the 'truncated churchyard enclosure' shown on the First Edition OS map of 1864 (Figure 5). The uncovering of ditch (01) was unexpected, and was initially thought to be the continuation of the former churchyard enclosure into the southern part of the field (curving boundary within the development field on Figure 5). The 1864 map shows no other internal boundary feature in the proposed development field which would correspond with ditch (01), which lies between 18m to 25m beyond the boundary shown on the 1864 OS map (Figure 5).

5.4 Ditch (01) could represent part of the outer enclosure mentioned by N Ludlow in his description of the churchyard at Martletwy in which he states: 'possibly lies within a sub-oval (double) enclosure defined by cropmarks' (Ludlow 2003, Medieval Churches, CADW report). The cropmarks recorded can be projected to some extent to follow the existing hedgebank that lies to the west of the churchyard and curves around to join with the curving ditch seen within the building footprint (Figure 7).

5.5 The fact that a medieval potsherd was found in the lower fill (03) or (01) doesn't necessarily imply that ditch (01) is of medieval origin. It merely suggests that the ditch was either partially backfilled or silted up during this period. A curvilinear enclosure of the size indicated by the cropmarks and shown on Figure 7 is more akin to enclosures of prehistoric date (Bronze Age or Iron Age). This may suggest the enclosure was still visible as a ditch or depression during the medieval period. The fact that the upper fill of the ditch contained breeze block and brick indicates that the feature was probably still visible in the 20th century, although was not distinct enough to be included on the Ordnance Survey maps of the site area, perhaps being an indistinct or boggy feature a boggy feature in the landscape which was eventually filled with hardcore, possibly during the excavation of the pond.

5.6 It is difficult also to determine the specific function of the gully (04) as so little of it was visible within the building footprint. It is possible that it was connected to coal mining in the late medieval period, or alternatively it could be associated with settlement activity or a former building. Together with the possible gully (06), also of uncertain origin, the watching brief has provided evidence that archaeological features associated with the development of

Martletwy do exist within the village in the area of the church. This development site does appear to have been subject to previous ground disturbance or levelling, which would also suggest that other parts of the village in this area which have remained undisturbed could contain significant archaeological remains. The pasture field to the west of the church is one such area within which cropmarks of a large enclosure are known to exist.

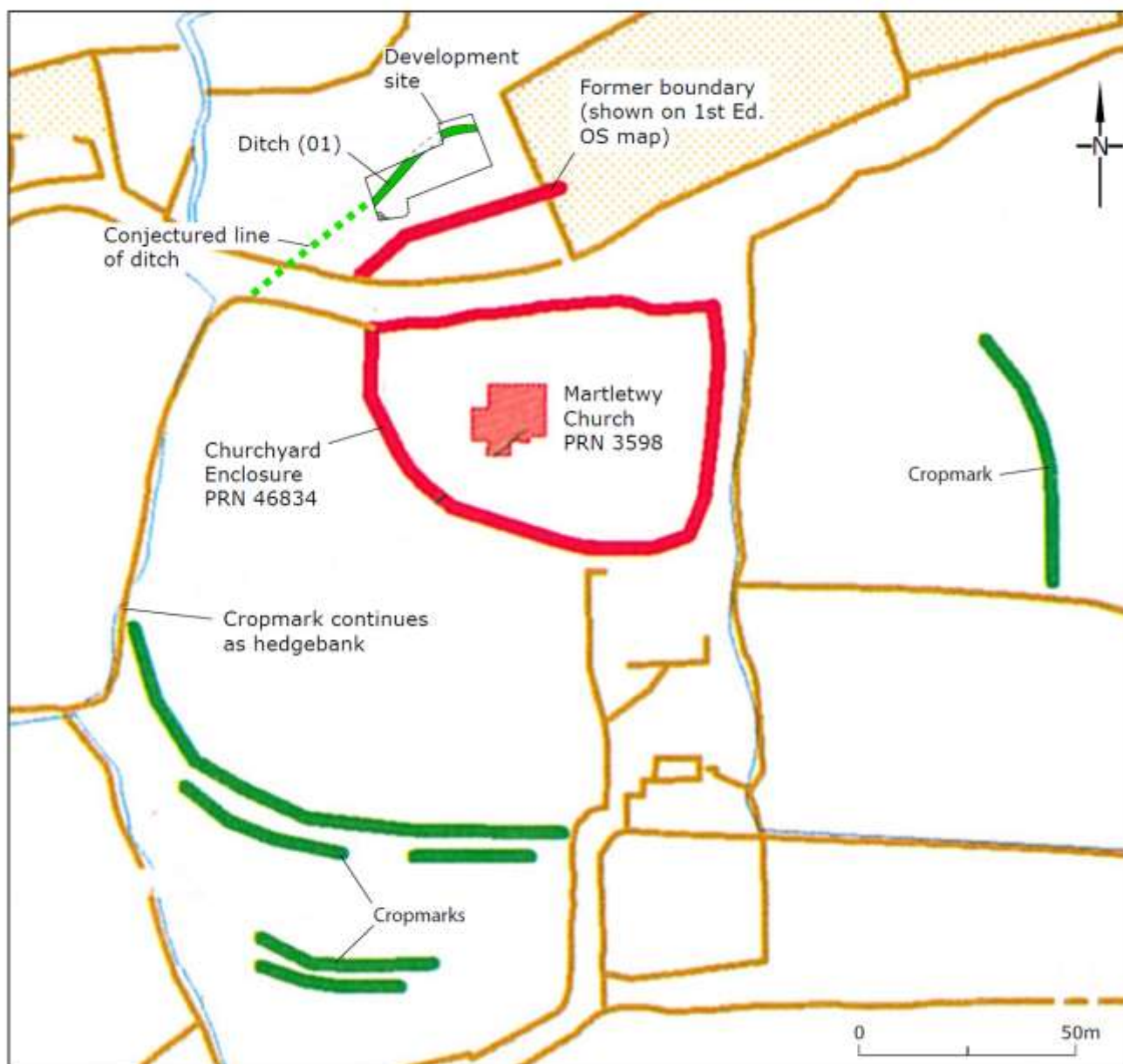


Figure 7: Development area with plan of surrounding cropmark features showing potential earlier prehistoric enclosure

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Ebril 2013
April 2013

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

Swydd / Position: ARCHAEOLOGIST

Llofnod / Signature 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  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.*

