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STORM DRAINAGE INSTALLATION AT ST. CAWDRA'S CHURCH, JORDANSTON, LETTERSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



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LETTERSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Gan / By

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2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 St Cawdra's Church is located at SM 91868 32519, within the small hamlet of Jordanston located c.3.6km to the North-West of Letterston, Pembrokeshire (Figure 1).

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.2.1 The following extract is taken from 'North Pembrokeshire Churches' (Ludlow 1995-6):

St Cawdra, Jordanston, Pembrokeshire (Preseli)

PRN 5024, SM 9186 3252

Grade II Listed Building No. 15197 (1998)

Phasing:

Phase 1 - Chancel and nave, 1797.

Phase 2 - West tower and vestry, 1863.

Phase 3 - West tower restored in 1880, low impact.

Phase 4 - Church restored in 1910, very low impact.

Description

St Cawdra, Jordanston, is a 3-celled church, of medium size. It was (re)built in 1797 by an unknown architect (Jones, 1994, 1), on the same location as the medieval church but no earlier fabric was retained. It was restored in 1863.

The present church consists of a 2-bayed chancel, a 3-bayed nave, a west tower, with the main entrance, and a transeptal vestry of 1 bay, against the south wall of the chancel east bay.

The chancel and nave are constructed in limestone rubble throughout, unsquared but roughly coursed and without true quoins, all of 1797. The external pointing is from 1911. The internal walls are rendered/plastered. All dressings are in oolite, from 1863 and neo-gothic, and include the chancel arch and plain 2-centred windows and doors. The external buttressing is also of 1863. The roofs are slated gables, the nave at a higher level than the chancel, from 1863?.

The 1797 church was described as a 'small, neat edifice' in 1833, but 'not distinguished by any interesting architectural details' (Lewis, 1833).

The west tower is of similar construction, but all from 1863. It has 3 storeys. The main entrance to the church occupies the ground floor, and is a plain 2-centred arch. The belfry openings are as in the chancel and nave. The corners are angle-buttressed, and the tower is pinnacled and crenellated, all with oolite dressings and all apparently from 1863, although the tower was restored in 1880. The roof was not seen. The vestry is similarly from 1883, and of the same construction including the openings. It is transeptal, with a slated gable roof at a lower level than the nave roof, from 1863? It lies over a basement that is partly below-ground; an outside doorway is reached up an external flight of steps. The floor is suspended, from 1863?.

The church underwent some low-impact restoration in 1910. It was 'put into good repair, and...the architectural peculiarities of the old building have been preserved' (Anon 1911). There is little field evidence for this restoration, which

may have been purely superficial and confined to repairs, finishes, fittings etc., but may have included the roofs. The tower underwent some further restoration, including repointing, in 1997.

There is no physical evidence for the pre-1797 church. A slight platform lies south of the church, its low scarp slope running parallel, and may represent primary made ground on the slight downhill slope in the yard. A shallow, concrete-lined external drain runs around the entire church, from 1911? The southern vestry overlies a basement below yard level. There is no evidence for internal floor level changes, but an underfloor void is present beneath the suspended floors. No vault or crypt is evident. There is no evidence for any former components beyond the present walls. Some memorials lie significantly close to the south walls.

The plain font is possibly 12th century (Dyfed SMR; RCAHM, 1925).

In the church is a monument from 1617, and one from 1675.

The church was Grade II listed in 1998.

Site History

There is some evidence for the pre-conquest use of the site – possible Celtic dedication.

St Cawrda, Jordanston, was a parish church during the post-conquest period, of the medieval Deanery of Pebidiog (Rees, 1932). The living was a rectory (Green, 1912, 213) which from the first appears to have been appendent to the Manor of Jordanston in the Lordship of Dewisland (Pebidiog). In 1291, 'Ecclesia de Villa Jorhadi' was assessed at £6 13s 4d for tenths to the king, the amount payable being £2 13s 4d (ibid.). In 1536 the annual value was £6 3s 7d, in tenths 12s 4½d (ibid.).

The annual value of the rectory of 'Jordanston alias Tre Jordan' was £20 in 1786; it was rated in the king's books at £6 3s 9d (ibid.) and in private patronage. By 1833, the discharged vicarage, of the Archdeaconry of St Davids, was endowed with £400 royal bounty (Lewis, 1833).

In 1998 St Cawrda, Jordanston, was a parish church. The living was a vicarage, held with Mathry, St Edren's, Granston and St Nicholas (Benefice 655) in the Archdeaconry of St Davids, Rural Deanery of Dewisland and Fishguard (St Davids, 1997-8).

St Cawrda(f) has traditionally been the Jordanston dedication; the saint has mainly North Welsh connections and there is only one other dedication in West Wales, at Llanwrda, Carm. (Yates, 1973, 67). Rees, 1932, has the church dedicated to St Mary. (Ludlow, N. 1998-2000)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Three drains were excavated and observed, Drain 1 lay on the northwestern corner of the church running to the north-northwest. Drain 2 was positioned west of centre aligned roughly north to south. Drain 3 projected from the northeastern corner of the church running roughly to the northeast.

3.2 During the construction of the new storm drains it was observed that there was a greater depth of topsoil (context 1000) present within the northeastern part of the churchyard than there was to the northwest. The topsoil layer observed within Drains 1 and 2 measured 0.03m in depth whereas the topsoil found within Drain 3 measured 0.08m in depth and consisted of a mid-blackish brown silty clay.

3.3 Underlying the topsoil layer a made up ground deposit was encountered (1001) which was present within all three of the excavated drains. This consisted of a mid to dark brown silty clay which contained frequent flecks of lime mortar and small slate fragments. This deposit continued to the base of all three drainage channels.

3.4 The excavation of all three drainage channels exceeded depths of around 0.50m when close to the church's buttresses. Whilst undertaking these initial deep excavations a pale grey clay (1002) was revealed at the start point of each drain. The pale grey clay contained flecks of mortar and slate fragments which indicate the deposit is not of a natural origin. It is very likely that this deposit is re-deposited natural thrown back into the church foundations.

3.5 Drain 1 led from the northwestern corner of the Vestry through the grave yard for a total of 10.50m. It was excavated to a constant depth of 0.40m. During the excavation of the drain a mixed deposit of lime mortared stone and roofing slates (1004) was encountered at a point 2m from the northern terminus of the trench. It is considered that this deposit may relate to demolition of the original pre-1778 church. A pale grey clay (1003) similar to that of (1002) was also found within the mid-section of Drain 1. The origin of this deposit is questionable, but may have been produced through the landscaping of the churchyard within the Victorian period.

3.6 Drain 2 led from the northeastern corner of the Vestry heading on a northerly route through the grave yard for a total of 10.50m, excavated to a constant depth of 0.40m. Similar to Drain 1, Drain 2 also contained a large amount of building demolition (1004) located c.5m from the northern terminus of the trench and is probably again associated with demolition of the pre-1778 church or as a result of later Victorian refurbishment of the church. Two large stones were found within the mid-section of the channel and were initially thought to be part of an in-situ wall foundation [1006]. Upon further investigation this it was noted that these remains were very slight and appeared to correspond with the natural geology found within the area.

3.7 Drain 3 led from the northeastern corner of the church eastern porch leading on a northeastern route through the graveyard for a total of 7.20m at a constant depth of 0.40m. This drain seemed to contain less building demolition material than the other two. It was noted that the trench did contain occasional small flecks of lime mortar (1005) that appeared to be slightly more yellow in colour than the mortar found in the other two drains.

3.8 No deposits of archaeological significance were revealed during the watching brief, other than deposits possibly associated with demolition of the pre-1778 church. No evidence for grave cuts was revealed or any evidence for in situ building remains.

Context	Description	Dimensions
1000	Topsoil layer found throughout watching brief and consisted of a mid-blackish brown silty clay	0.08m in depth
1001	Made up ground deposit consisting of a mid to dark brown silty clay containing frequent inclusions of flecks of lime mortar and small slate fragments.	Greater than 0.40m
1002	Pale grey clay revealed only during initial excavations of the channels located around the buttress areas of the church	First viewed at depths of 0.50m
1003	Pale grey clay deposit viewed within the mid-section of Drain 1. Appears similar to (1002)	Viewed at 0.40m below ground level
1004	Building demolition containing mortared stone work and slate fragments	Seen in Drains 1 and 2
1005	Yellow lime mortar found within Drain 1	
1006	1006 Natural sub strata initially thought to be in-situ wall foundation. Revealed in Drain 2	Revealed at 0.40m below ground level

Table 2: List of contexts recorded during the watching brief

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The archaeological watching brief during drainage works at St Cawdra's Church, Jordanston demonstrated the presence of spreads of demolition material within the churchyard. These were not extensive or of any great depth. The material probably originates from the demolition of the earlier church in 1797 or refurbishment works in 1863 / 1880.

4.2 A number of faced pieces of building stone were recovered from amongst this demolition deposit (1004). The facing of the stone was considered to be of a different type to that which is found within the present day church. This would indicate that the material probably originates from the earlier stone church, demolished and rebuilt in 1797 as opposed to later refurbishments.

4.3 The shallow depth of the majority of the drainage works did not expose any buried archaeological features of significance. It is most likely that grave cuts would be present beneath the level of the drains, but these were not exposed within the scope of the works.

4.4 No in-situ structural remains of buildings pre-dating the existing church were recorded within the churchyard.

4.5 Overall the archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that the drainage works have not impacted upon any archaeologically significant deposits or features.

5. SOURCES

Regional Historic Environment Record held at the Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

Non Published sources

Ludlow, N. 1998-2000, '*Cadw Welsh Historic Church's Project- North Pembrokeshire churches*'. Cambria Archaeology. Project No. DAT 48.

Cartographic sources

Ordnance Survey 1889 1:2500 Pembrokeshire Sheet IX.14

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

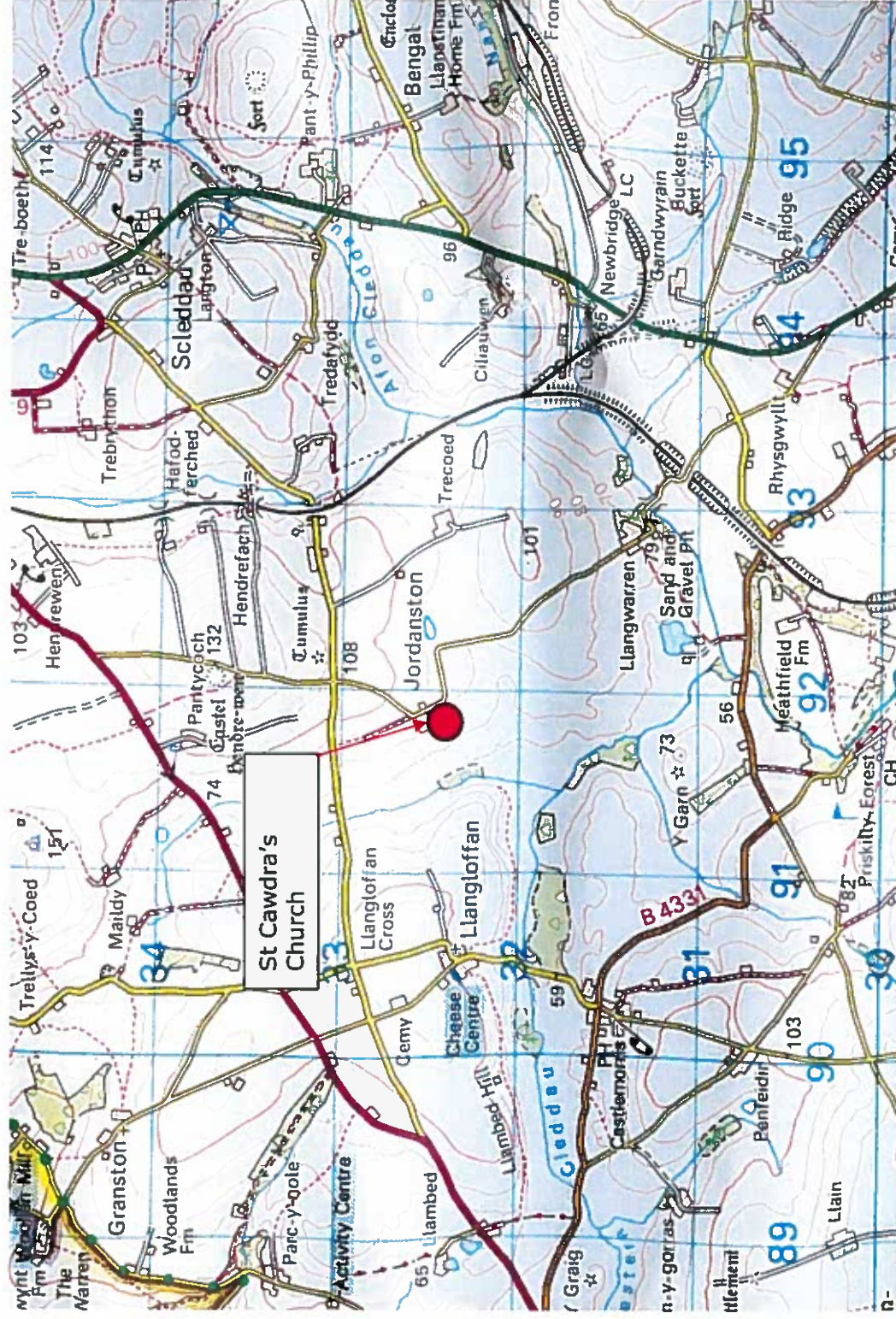


Figure 1: Site location map based upon the Ordnance Survey, with red circle showing the area of the watching brief

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, Llandello, Carmarthenhire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

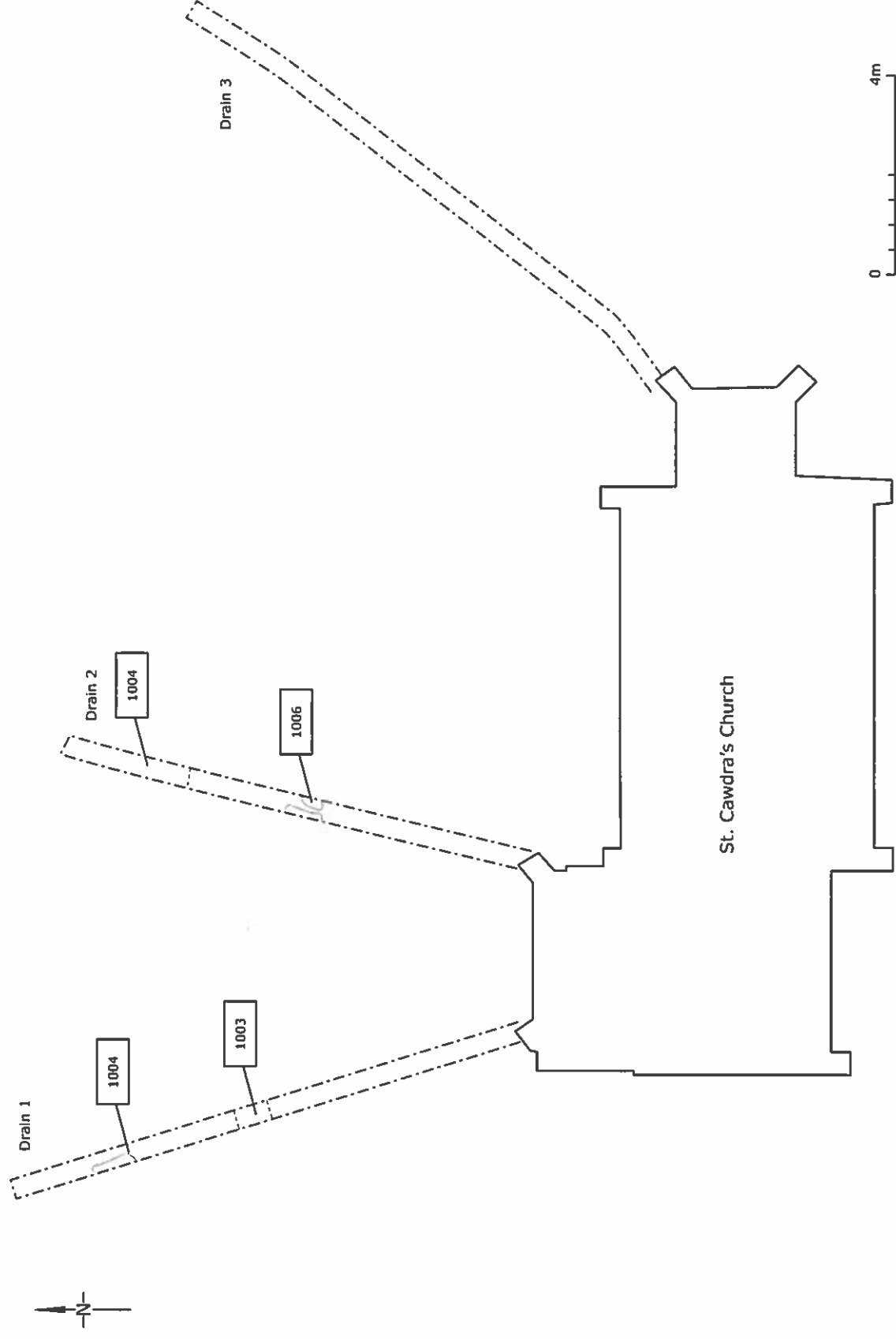


Figure 2: Plan showing locations of the drains and areas of grey clays with mortar (1003), exposed building rubble (1004), and natural stone area (1006)

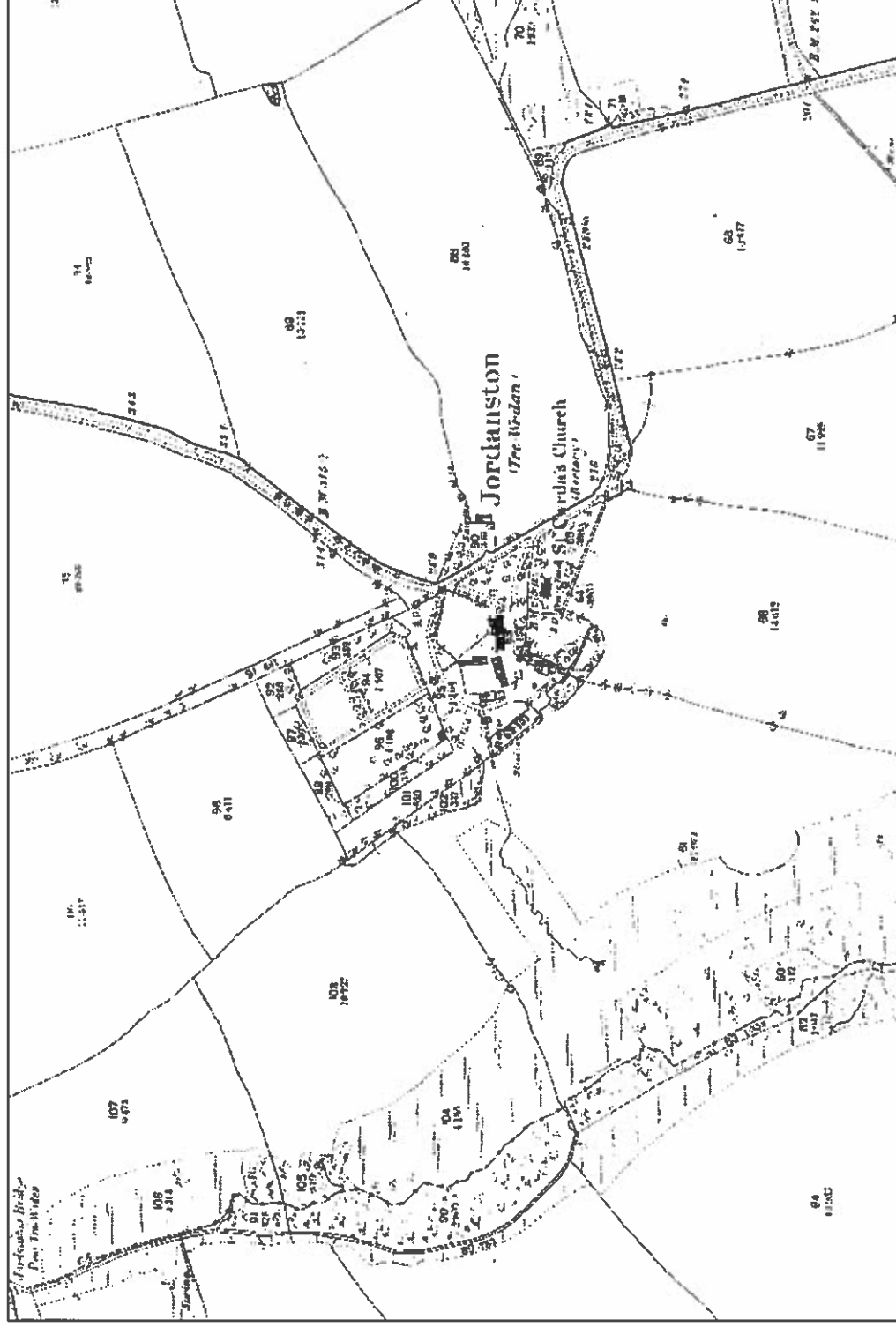


Figure 3: Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889 showing St Cawdra's Church and its environs.



Photo 1: View of grey clay deposit (1002), located in Drain 1 near buttress



Photo 2: View of rubble deposit (1004) found within Drain 1



Photo 3: View of natural stone (1006) found in Drain 2.



Photo 4: View of Drain 3 following excavation

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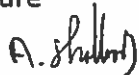
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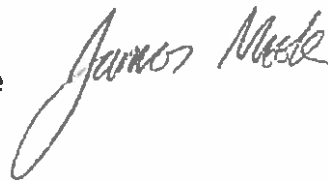


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This report has been checked and approved by

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on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

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Llofnod / Signature



Date 18.04.13

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