

# **PARK COTTAGE, CRESSELY, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF 2013**



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust  
For: Acanthus Holden



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# PARK COTTAGE, CRESSELY, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Gan / By

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## **PARK COTTAGE, CRESSELLY, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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**PARK COTTAGE, CRESSELLY, PEMBROKESHIRE:  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**SUMMARY**

*Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned by Acanthus Holden to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works associated with the development of a garage workshop (Planning Application No 11/0447/PA) on land adjacent to Park Cottage, near Cresselly, Pembrokeshire (SN 0631 0491).*

*The development area is located approximately 50m to the north of Park Rath (PRN 3522), the site of an Iron Age defended enclosure, which is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No. PE261). Although Park Rath is un-investigated archaeologically, such sites are generally considered to be Iron Age in date and to represent small defended settlements. This site would appear to be part of a small cluster of similar sites in this area, 500m to the northeast lies Greenway (PRN 3472), a similarly sized Iron Age enclosure (also with a later cottage built into its northern bank), whilst c.600m to the south lies Rath Meadow (PRN 4427), a name indicative of a possible third Iron Age enclosure. Together these sites would suggest a strong Iron Age presence in the local area.*

*There is considered to be potential for archaeological remains of Iron Age activity to be present around the enclosure, such as associated enclosures, settlement features or track ways. As the development area lies in such close proximity to Park Rath enclosure there was the likelihood that such archaeological features lay within it and could be destroyed during ground works. Due to this potential an archaeological condition was placed upon the planning permission (Planning ref 11/0447/PA) requiring an archaeological watching brief during all ground works that would disturb the sub-surface.*

*The watching brief was undertaken in April 2013 during excavations of the building footprint down to formation levels. Topsoil containing early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century finds was recorded, overlying naturally occurring subsoils. No deposits, features or finds of archaeological significance were recorded during the course of the ground works. However, due to the proximity of the Iron Age defended enclosure there still remains the potential for features or deposits of archaeological significance to exist within the near vicinity.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Commission**

- 1.1.1 The development of a garage workshop at Park Cottage, near Cresselly in Pembrokeshire (NGR SN 0631 0491) involved site clearance and ground works within a garden area to the north of the cottage (Planning Application 11/0447/PA).
- 1.1.2 The site lies 50m to the north of a well-preserved Iron Age defended enclosure, known as Park Rath, or Park Camp (PRN 3522). This site is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Cadw SAM No. PE261). Due to the potential for archaeological remains associated with this site to be present within this development area, the archaeological advisors to the local planning authority requested an archaeological watching brief be undertaken on any groundwork associated with the development.
- 1.1.3 The condition states: *The developer shall ensure that a professionally qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any ground works within the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be carried out. The archaeological watching brief will be undertaken to the standards laid down by the Institute for Archaeologists. The planning Authority will be informed, in writing at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeologist.*
- 1.1.4 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services which was approved by the local planning authority prior to the works commencing.
- 1.1.5 Acanthus Holden, on behalf of their client, commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services (DAT-FS) to undertake the archaeological watching brief during groundworks at the site. This work was undertaken in April 2013.

### **1.2 Scope of the Project**

- 1.2.1 The project objectives as laid out in the WSI were:
  - *To monitor groundworks in order 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 groundworks.*
  - *To appropriately investigate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundworks.*
  - *To produce an archive and report of any results.*
- 1.2.2 Site visits were undertaken on 29/04/13 and 30/04/13.

### **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 Abbreviations

- 1.4.1 Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record<sup>1</sup> (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services – DAT-FS; Scheduled Ancient Monument – SAM; Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI.

## 1.5 Illustrations

- 1.5.1 Record photographs are included at back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale and are illustrative only.

## 1.6 Timeline

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

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 – 1899	
Modern –	20th century onwards	

**Table 1:** Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales

<sup>1</sup> Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Shire Hall, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6AF.





**Figure 1:** Location map based on the Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 1987 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A



## **2. THE SITE**

### **2.1 Location and Topography**

- 2.1.1 The proposed development site is located at NGR SN 0631 0491, within the grounds of Park Cottage, near Cresselly in Pembrokeshire (Figure 1 & 2). This property sits within an undulating, mainly agricultural, landscape dotted with areas of woodland. The site is situated close to the summit of high ground that lies a short distance to the north. Two streams flow along small valleys to both the east and west of the site, feeding the Carew River 1.3km to the south. Big Wood lies c.100m to the north, within which lie streams feeding the Cresswell River 2.2km to the northwest. The small village of Cresselly, clustered around its mansion house, lies 1.3km to the north, with the more recent settlement of Whitehill 800m to the west, otherwise the settlement pattern in the immediate area is one of dispersed farmsteads and cottages.
- 2.1.2 Park Cottage is a single dwelling with some small outbuildings, including a former pigsty, set within 0.7 hectares of land (Photo 1). This includes Park Rath, an Iron Age defended enclosure and Scheduled Ancient Monument, which lies immediately to the south of the house, the house itself lying on the line of the former outer defensive bank of the defended enclosure. The proposed development area lies to the north of the house, 50m from the defended enclosure, in a relatively level square enclosed field or paddock surrounded by earth banks topped by a denuded and grown-out hedgerow.



**Photo 1:** Park Cottage, near Cresselly.

- 2.1.3 Prior to development this square enclosed field formed part of the gardens, being largely grassed over and containing one small garden shed and a mobile home/static caravan.
- 2.1.4 The site lies on a band of sandstone, part of a Millstone Grit group, surrounded by mudstones, sandstones and siltstones of the South Wales Lower Coal Measures.

## 2.2 Archaeological Background

- 2.2.1. No archaeological work has previously occurred in this location or the immediate surrounding area.
- 2.2.2 Park Rath is described within the Historic Environment Record (PRN 3522) thus:

*Park Rath is a circular, earthwork defended enclosure lying on a gentle south-facing slope at 60m above sea level. To the northeast the land rises by c. 10m onto a rounded summit 250m distant. The slightly dished internal area is c. 60m in diameter and is defined by a bank, ditch and bank. The internal bank rises 0.3m to 0.6m above the interior and 0.6m to 1.0m above the ditch. A boundary bank runs along the outer bank, which is 0.3m to 0.6m high. This outer bank may be a counterscarp, but a slight depression outside indicates that the site may be bivallate. The outer bank is interrupted by Park House on the north side. A simple gap on the south side marks a simple entrance. There are two modern cuts through the defences on the north side, although the one on the northwest side may be also be original. The defences are covered with trees and scrub. The internal area is under pasture.*



**Photo 2:** General shot looking north across Park Rath Iron Age defended enclosure (PRN 3522) with Park Cottage in the background.

- 2.2.3 Although Park Rath is un-investigated archaeologically, such sites are generally considered to be Iron Age in date and to represent small defended settlements. This site would appear to be part of a small cluster of similar sites in this area, 500m to the northeast lies Greenway (PRN 3472), a similarly sized Iron Age enclosure (also with a later cottage built into its northern bank), whilst c.600m to the south lies Rath Meadow (PRN

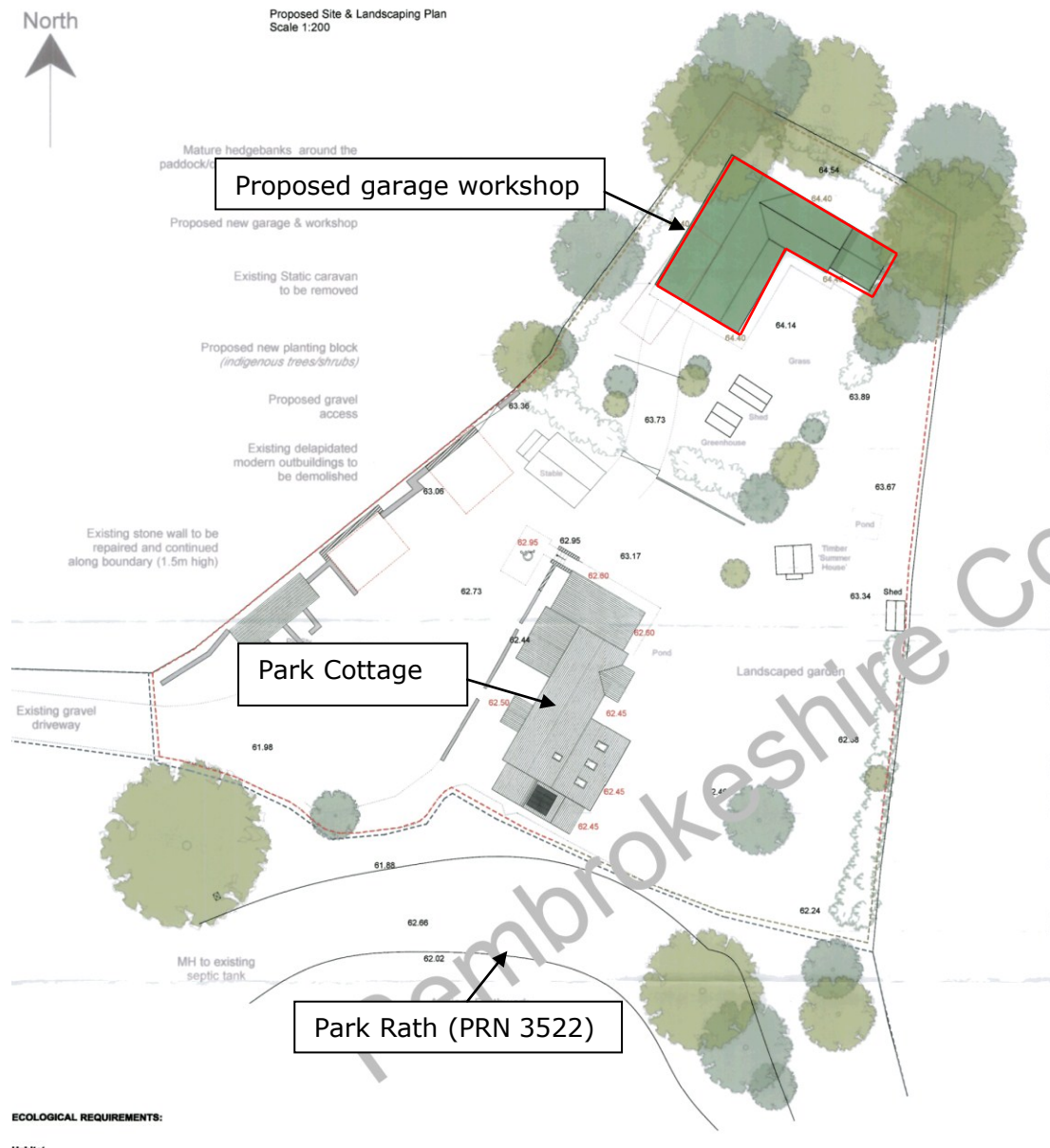


4427), a name indicative of a possible third Iron Age enclosure. Together these sites would suggest a strong Iron Age presence in the local area.

- 2.2.4 The history of Park Cottage (Photos 1 & 3) itself has not been researched in detail, but the current house appears to have developed from a pair of adjoining 19<sup>th</sup> century single-storey cottages. It appears on an Ordnance Survey map of 1865 as a range of attached buildings, possibly representing the two cottages with attached animal sheds. An outbuilding lies to the west, now used as an open garage and wood store. At some point in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century a small stone-built pigsty was added. A small enclosure, or paddock, lay to the north of the house, with an orchard to the east of the house. The house has been modified during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a 2<sup>nd</sup> storey and additions around the southern end added in the 1920s/1930s. The formerly attached northern building has also been removed and in the 1980s a two-storey north wing was also added. The enclosed field to the north remains, but the orchard has since been redesigned as a garden area.



**Photo 3:** General shot looking south past Park Cottage on the left with Park Rath (PRN 3522) visible as the grassed area in the background.



**Figure 2:** Development Area showing location of Park Cottage, Park Rath and proposed garage/workshop (in red). Plan provided by Acanthus Holden.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 A 'watching brief' was undertaken during initial ground works within the proposed development site (Figure 2) that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains. Any archaeological features or deposits that would be revealed during the ground works were to be examined and recorded to best current professional practice and carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual<sup>2</sup> used by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services.
- 3.2 The watching brief commenced with the initial removal of topsoil and continued as the ground level was reduced to formation levels within the building footprint in order to ascertain the presence or absence of archaeologically significant features within the development.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 The results of the fieldwork have been assessed in local, regional and wider contexts and a report fully representative of the results of the fieldwork has been prepared.
- 3.5 The ground works were undertaken on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2013 with an archaeologist in attendance. The work was carried out largely by a 360° mechanical excavator (c.8 tons) using a toothed bucket due to the stony nature of the subsoil. Topsoil was stored on site, subsoil was removed from the site. The weather was dry with bright sunshine.

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<sup>2</sup> Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services have adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology.



#### 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

- 4.1 The ground works involved the excavation of material across the L-shaped building platform, c.6m to 8m wide, and c.20m east – west and c.15m north – south. Due to a gradual slope in ground levels this involved excavation to a depth of 0.8m at the northern end, to just 0.3m at the southern end.



**Photo 4:** Looking north-east across the development site during the topsoil removal.

- 4.2 The topsoil consisted of a dark-grey clayey-silt, 0.3m thick, containing fragments of early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century pottery and glassware.
- 4.3 At the northern end of the site the topsoil overlay a deposit of mid orange-brown clay, at most 0.5m thick (Photo 5). This extended approximately 2.0m to 3.0m into the development area from the north and appeared to represent naturally occurring fluvial deposits. Boggy ground is visible in the field immediately to the north of the development area and this clay deposit is likely to be a former extension of that wet ground.
- 4.4 Elsewhere the topsoil overlay naturally deposited fragmented stony subsoil, with bands of broken bedrock visible within it (Photo 6).
- 4.5 The development area lay within a small square enclosed field or paddock surrounded by banks. Where the groundwork exposed parts of these banks they were shown to consist largely of former topsoil, intermixed with some stone and fragments of brick and coal.
- 4.6 No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were noted during the ground works.





**Photo 5:** View, looking northwest, of deposits revealed at the northern end of the site. Below the topsoil lies a band of naturally-occurring fluvial clays with the stony subsoil/fragmented bedrock at the base. 1m scale



**Photo 6:** Looking southwest across the development site during the excavation to formation levels. A naturally-occurring stony subsoil/fragmented bedrock is visible throughout. Park Cottage can be seen in the background.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The watching brief recorded no features or deposits of archaeological significance within the area of the garage/workshop development.
- 5.2 The character of the earthen banks that surround the enclosed field or paddock within which the development is situated suggests this area may have been partially stripped in the past to provide the material for the banks. The brick and coal fragments and the topsoil used to construct the banks suggest that this is likely to have occurred during the 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5.2 Although little of archaeological significance was recorded within the garage workshop development area there still remains the potential for significant archaeological features or deposits to survive in the vicinity, particularly nearer to the site of the Iron Age defended enclosure (PRN 3522) a short distance to the south.

## **6. SOURCES**

- |                 |      |   |
|-----------------|------|---|
| Acanthus Holden | 2011 | <i>Park Cottage, Cresselly: Design and Access Statement</i>   |
| Ordnance Survey | 1865 | <i>1<sup>st</sup> edition 1;2500 map, Pembrokeshire XL.04</i> |
| Ordnance Survey | 1907 | <i>2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1;2500 map, Pembrokeshire XL.04</i> |

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