

LAND WEST OF 44 CHURCH ROAD, ROCH, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



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ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol



DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



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**LAND WEST OF 44 CHURCH ROAD, ROCH,
PEMBROKESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Gan / By

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CONTENTS

	SUMMARY	1
1.	INTRODUCTION	2
1.1	Project Commission	2
1.2	Scope of the Project	2
1.3	Report outline	3
1.4	Abbreviations	3
1.5	Illustrations	3
1.6	Timeline	4
2.	THE SITE	6
2.1	Location	6
2.2	Archaeological and Historical Background	6
3.	WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY	9
3.1	Fieldwork	9
3.2	Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving	9
3.3	Timetabling of Fieldwork	9
4.	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	10
5.	CONCLUSIONS	17
6.	SOURCES	18

FIGURES

Figure 1:	Location of development area within the village of Roch	4
Figure 2:	Map of Roch village showing the location of archaeologically significant sites based upon an extract of the Ordnance Survey 2 nd edition (1907) 1:2500 map.	5
Figure 3:	Plan showing development site and exposed ditches in relation to castle, church and modern housing estate	11
Figure 4:	Plan of excavated area showing ditches and sections	13

TABLES

Table 1:	Time line for Archaeological periods	3
Table 2:	Historic Environment Record Entries	7
Table 3:	List of archaeological contexts	16

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1:	View north: before removal of topsoil	12
Photo 2:	East facing section of ditch [104]	12
Photo 3:	View east: fill (103); before fill (105) had been exposed	14
Photo 4:	View North; fills (103), (105), (107) and (109)	14
Photo 5:	Section 2: South facing section of ditch [106]	15

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during ground works associated with the construction of a single storey dwelling on land west of 44 Church Road, Roch, Pembrokeshire (NGR SM 8788 2107) - Planning Application No. 13/0821/PA. The work was commissioned from DAT Archaeological Services by Mr Roger Wilks.

The development site lies in close proximity to two structures of medieval origin, which probably date back to at least the 13th century - Roch Castle and St Mary's Church. In view of the fact that medieval settlements often nucleated around castles and churches, an archaeological watching brief was recommended during the ground-works by the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority, as there was potential for archaeological remains associated with a former settlement, to be exposed, damaged or destroyed.

The ground-works consisted of the removal of topsoil from the site down to the subsoil.

The watching brief was undertaken on the 12th and 13th of March.

No structural remains were revealed during the removal of topsoil, but a series of linear features and a possible pit, cut into the natural subsoil were exposed. The fill of one of these ditches contained a pottery sherd of 'Dyfed Gravel-tempered ware', dating from the 12th to the 16th century. Taking into consideration both pottery sherd and the form of the complex it is reasonable to assume that these archaeological features have their origins in the medieval period and were associated with a settlement which was focused around the castle and church.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 A planning application was submitted by Mr Roger Wilks to Pembrokeshire County Planning Authority (Planning Application Number 13/0821/PA) for the erection of a single storey dwelling on land west of 44 Church Road, Roch (SM 8788 2107).
- 1.1.2 The proposed development is located close to several sites of archaeological significance. To the NW, 180m away, lies Roch Castle (PRN 2803) built in the 13th century by Adam de Rupe; St. Mary's Church (PRN 2804) with its medieval features is 220m to the west - the church occupies a possible Iron Age/early medieval enclosure (PRN 7565). 70m to the north was situated a possible stone pair (PRN 2809) of prehistoric origins, now destroyed by a modern housing estate.
- 1.1.3 Due to the archaeological and historical significance of the area, and the potential for a medieval settlement associated with the church and castle, a recommendation for a watching brief was placed as a condition on planning permission. The condition stated:
- 'No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority..'*
- 1.1.4 To comply with the planning condition, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Archaeological Services (DAT-AS) were commissioned by Mr Roger Wilks, to undertake the archaeological watching brief during ground-works associated with the proposed development.
- 1.1.5 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by DAT-AS and approved by the local planning authority prior to ground-works commencing, as required by the planning condition.

1.2 Scope of the Project

- 1.2.1 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) document for a watching brief was prepared by DAT Archaeological 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 ground works
 - appropriately investigating and recording any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works
 - producing an archive and report of any results

1.3 Report Outline

- 1.3.1 This report provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological watching brief and its results. Some archaeological background regarding Roch Castle is included.

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). Sites recorded on the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) database Coflein are identified by their National Primary Record Number (NPRN). Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management – DAT-HM; Scheduled Ancient Monument – SAM; Pembrokeshire – PE; Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI.

1.5 Illustrations

- 1.5.1 Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

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 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

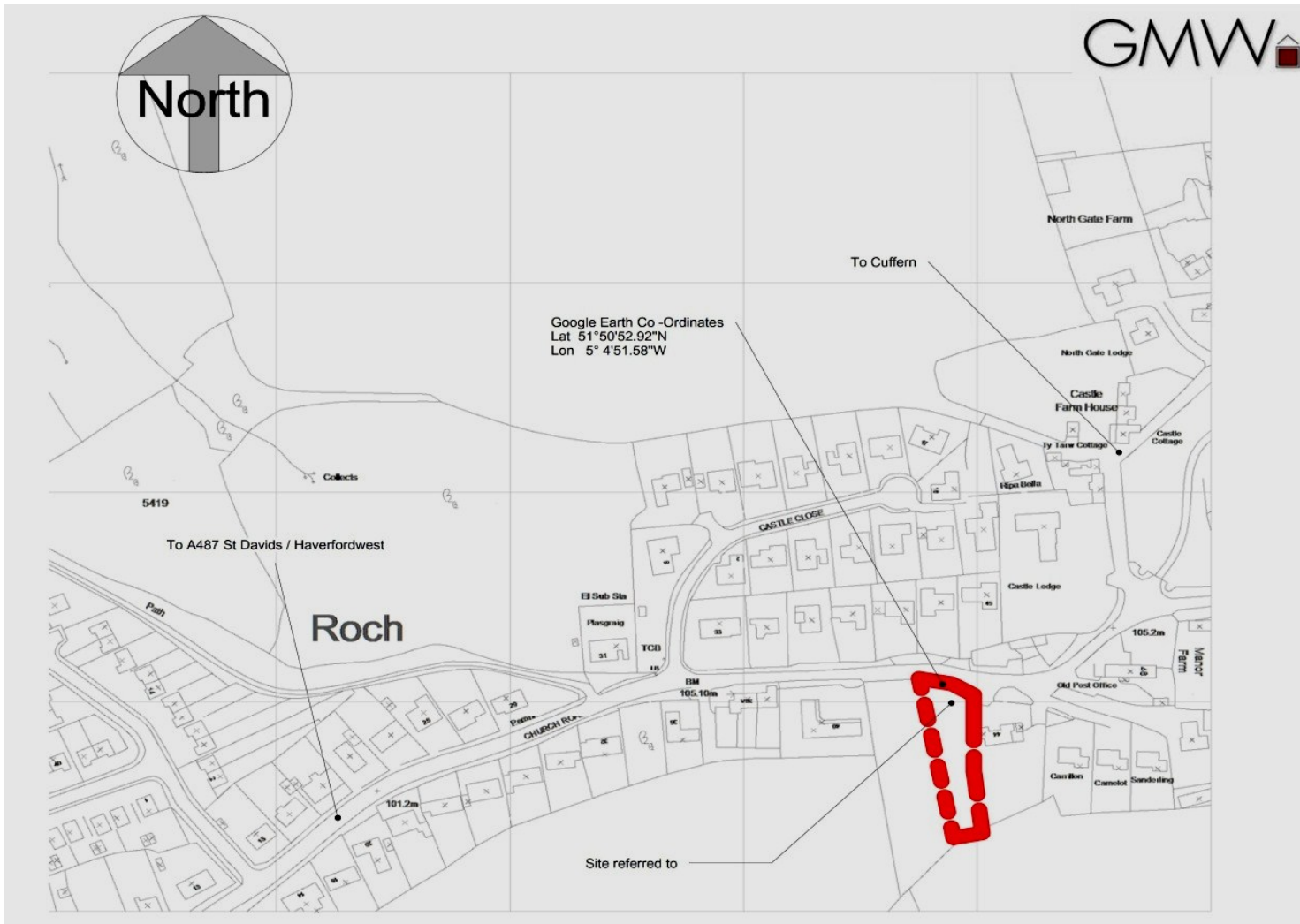


Figure 1: Location of development area within the village of Roch (plan supplied by client).

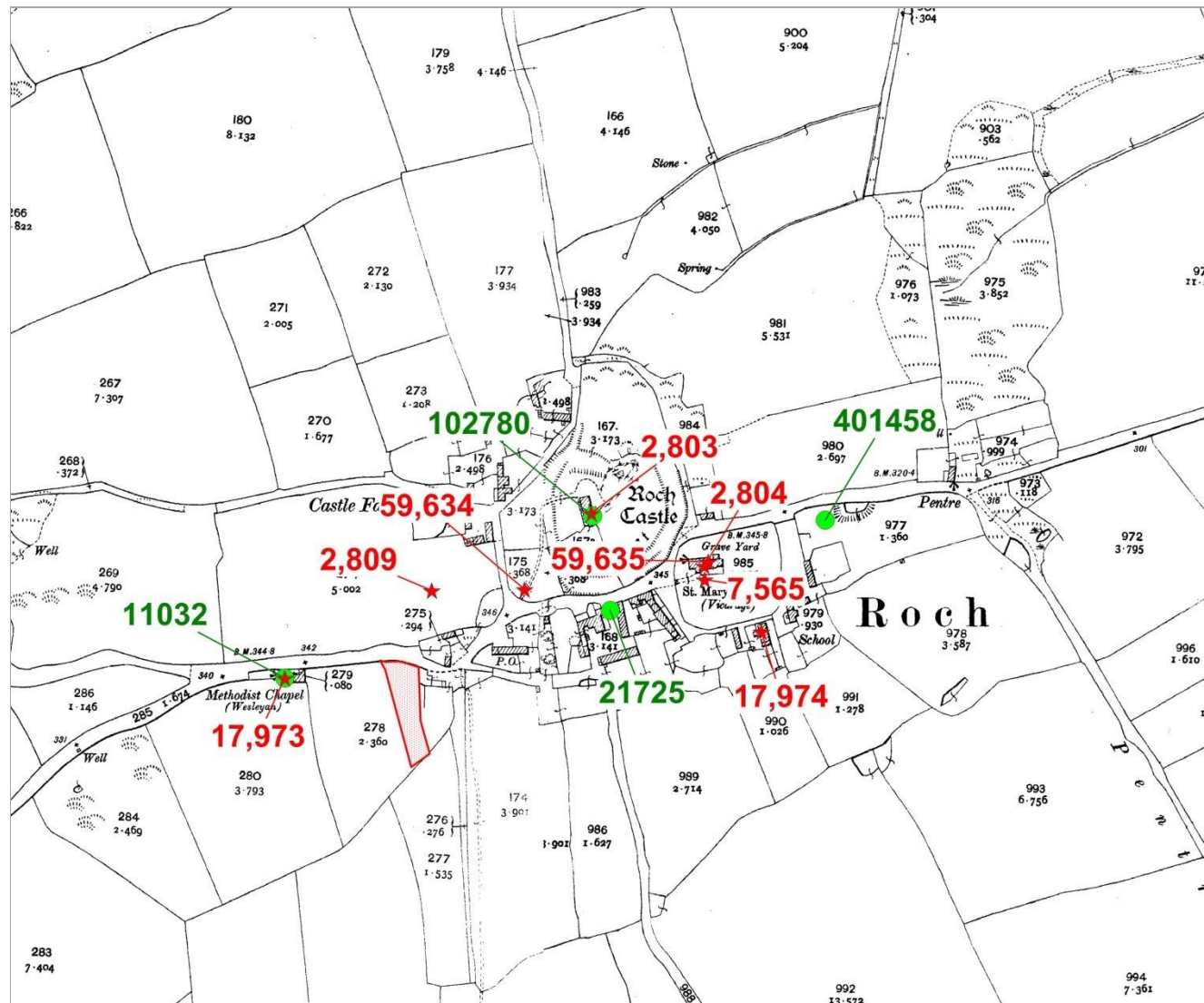


Figure 2: Map of Roch village showing the location of archaeologically significant sites based upon an extract of the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition (1907) 1:2500 map. The development area is outlined in red. The sites shown are listed in Table 2.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The development is located at NGR SM 87880 21070 in a semi-rural setting (Figure 1). It is a relatively flat, grassed area, bounded by a hedge on the north side that runs alongside Church Road, and a garden fence and concrete wall on the other three sides (Photo 1). The faint outline of a grassed-over ditch runs parallel with the hedge bank. Roch Castle (PRN 2804) and St Mary's Church (PRN 2803) are situated 180m and 220m respectively to the NW and West respectively. (Figure 3, Photo 1).
- 2.1.2 Prior to development the site formed part of the gardens for an adjacent property and contained no structures.
- 2.1.3 The underlying geology of the area is the Treffgarne Volcanic Formation. An igneous bedrock formed during the Ordovician Period.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 2.2.1 The original part of Roch Castle (PRN 2804) substantially dates from the later 13th century, having been constructed by Thomas de Rupe, possibly as a replacement to an earlier earthwork and timber castle (Figures 2 & 3). It was originally built as a defensive structure but would later have been converted to a more high status domestic residence.
- 2.2.2 The castle was inhabited during the medieval period, and evidence suggests sporadically inhabited during the post medieval period. Royalist soldiers were garrisoned at the castle during the Civil War but it was taken by the Parliamentarians before changing hands twice more before 1645. The castle was badly damaged during the civil war and does not appear to have been inhabited thereafter until 1901.
- 2.2.3 The castle changed hands a number of times between 1645 and 1899 when it was purchased by Viscount St David's and a programme of restoration work was carried out in 1901 to convert it back to a residence (including the addition of a northern extension). Further improvement works were carried out throughout the 20th century.
- 2.2.4 Cartographic evidence indicates the enclosing boundaries to the south, east and north have been in place since at least the mid-19th century. A wide ditch encircles the castle to the west, south and east, labelled as a moat on the 1st (1899) and 2nd (1907) edition 1:25000 Ordnance Survey maps. The inner edge of the moat is still visible as an earthwork to the south and southeast of the castle.
- 2.2.5 The location of the medieval settlement that would have grown up around such a castle and its neighbouring parish church (PRN 2804) is not currently known but the close proximity of the development site to the castle means it is possible that the buried remains of such a settlement could remain exist in this area (Figures 2 & 3).
- 2.2.6 Other sites listed on the DAT HER of archaeological or historical significance that lie within the vicinity of the development include the site of a stone pair of prehistoric origin (PRN 2809) destroyed by a modern housing estate, and the church enclosure (PRN 7565) which possibly dates from the Iron Age to the early medieval (Figure 2).

2.2.7 Sites of archaeological and historical significance that lie in close vicinity to the development area are shown in Figure 2 and listed in Table 2 below.

PRN	RCAHMW (NPRN)	Site Type	Description	Period	Grid Reference
2803	102780	Castle	Roch Castle was built in the thirteenth century by Adam de Rupe, founder of Pill Priory. It is a fortified tower with a bailey. In 1992 the castle was described as being sited "on an isolated rock with extensive views", and a view of the castle by Fenton c1811, illustrates this very well. Today the castle is less isolated, as the settlement has expanded considerably to the north and west Grade I Listed No 11982	Medieval	SM88022121
2804		Church	Anglican parish church, probably founded in the thirteenth century by Adam de Rupe or de la Roche of Roch castle. St Mary's medieval parish church comprising chancel, nave south porch and former south isle. Remains of a medieval arcade. High quality glass by Morris and Co. Grade II Listed No 19080	Medieval/ Post medieval	SM88112117
2809		Stone pair	Original site of a possible stone pair, now eradicated by a modern housing estate	Prehistoric	SM87912116
7565		Church enclosure	Early medieval C site, ie low-probability early medieval origins. Raised, sub-oval churchyard occupied by the medieval Roch parish church (PRN 2804), which is possibly an Iron Age defended enclosure. It adjoins a post-conquest masonry castle (PRN 2803)	Iron Age/ Early Medieval	SM88112116
17973	11032	Chapel	Roch Methodist Chapel was built in 1834 and converted for	Post-	SM878211

			use as a private dwelling during the late twentieth century	medieval	
17974		School		Post-medieval	SM88152112
59634		Entrance walls and gate piers to Roch Castle	Grade II Listed No 19079	Post-medieval	SM87972115
59635		Church	Grade II Listed church – PRN refers to the listing	Post-medieval	SM88112117
	21725	Castle Farm	Post-medieval farmhouse	Post-medieval	SM879721775
	401458	Rectilinear feature	Identified during aerial photography by RCAHMW	Unknown	SM882212

Table 2: Historic Environment Record entries shown in Figure 2

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 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the 12th and 13th of March 2014 during ground works in advance of the erection of a single storey dwelling that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains. This involved removing the topsoil and underlying deposits down to the subsoil.
- 3.1.2 Using a mechanical excavator with a grading bucket, a trench approximately 37.5m long aligned on a N-S axis was excavated. It was 18.5m wide on the north side and tapered to 12.5m at the south side.
- 3.1.3 The archaeological features exposed during the topsoil stripping were surveyed using a Trimble Total Station Theodolite (TST) in robotic mode.
- 3.1.3 Due to the very limited amount of space available, the topsoil was taken off site by tractor/trailer, and in order to minimise the amount of soil deposited on the road surface by tyres, stone hardcore was spread onto the excavated surface up to a distance of 15m southwards. It was not possible therefore to take a photograph of the excavated surface in its totality.
- 3.1.4 The excavated trench did not exceed 1.0m in depth.
- 3.1.5 All archaeological deposits revealed during the ground works were examined and recorded to an appropriate level.

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

- 3.3.1 The watching brief involved two site visits on 12th and 13th of March 2014 to monitor the excavation works in the area of archaeological interest.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 4.1 A single trench, measuring 37.5m long, aligned N – S, was excavated by mechanical digger. The trench was 18.5m wide at its northern end, tapering to 12.5 and had an average depth of 0.6m (Figure 4).
- 4.2 All archaeological deposits revealed during the ground works are listed in Table 3.
- 4.3 During the removal of topsoil, one sub-circular fill (108) and four linear fills (103), (105), (107), (109) were exposed. These were interpreted as a pit or ditch terminus (108), ditches (103), (105), (109) and a gully (107).
- 4.2 Deposit (102) was observed in section. It consisted of a mix of topsoil and subsoil. This is possibly the slumped remains of an earth bank associated with ditch [104]. It might have been further spread by later ploughing, when these individual plots (defined by the ditches) were abandoned and turned over to agriculture. (Photo 2)
- 4.3 Aligned ENE – WSW, and approximately 9.5m long, ditch fill (103) varied in width from 1.7m to 0.8m. It consisted of a compact, grey-brown, silty-clay and joined (105) at almost a right angle. A narrow slot was excavated across the fill adjacent to the west side of the trench. In section the cut [104] had a shallow, rounded profile (Photo 2). One pottery sherd of Dyfed Gravel-tempered ware, dated to the 13th to 15th century was recovered from the fill. At the interface between (103) and the subsoil, a few fragments of ferrous metal, suggestive of corroded nails were present. (Photo 3; Figure 4).
- 4.4 Ditch fill (105) was 15m long, 1.7 wide and 0.2 deep with parallel sides, and was aligned NNW – SSE for approximately 10m before turning north for 5m and joining ditch fill (109). It consisted of a compact, grey-brown, silty-clay. A narrow slot trench across the fill revealed that the profile might have had a re-cut. (Photo 4; Figure 4)
- 4.5 Gully fill (107) ran alongside (105) for 8.7m, merging with it slightly for a short distance. It terminated in a roughly square butt-end with a slight return towards the east. It was approximately 8.6m long and 0.55m wide. (Photo 4; Figure 4).
- 4.6 Extending from beneath the east side the trench was a soil mark (108). This dark brown, silty-clay fill was noticeably damper than other fills on site. In plan it was approximately 5m wide and extended 3m into the trench. This could be an irregular terminus to a ditch or a large pit. (Photo 5)
- 4.7 At the northern end of the trench, the southern edge of linear feature (109) was visible. It ran roughly in line with Church Road. Its northern edge was unclear. The linear fill (105) joins (109) at a right angle. (Figure 4).
- 4.8 All the features were cut into the natural subsoil. This was a stiff, buff-yellow, silty-clay.

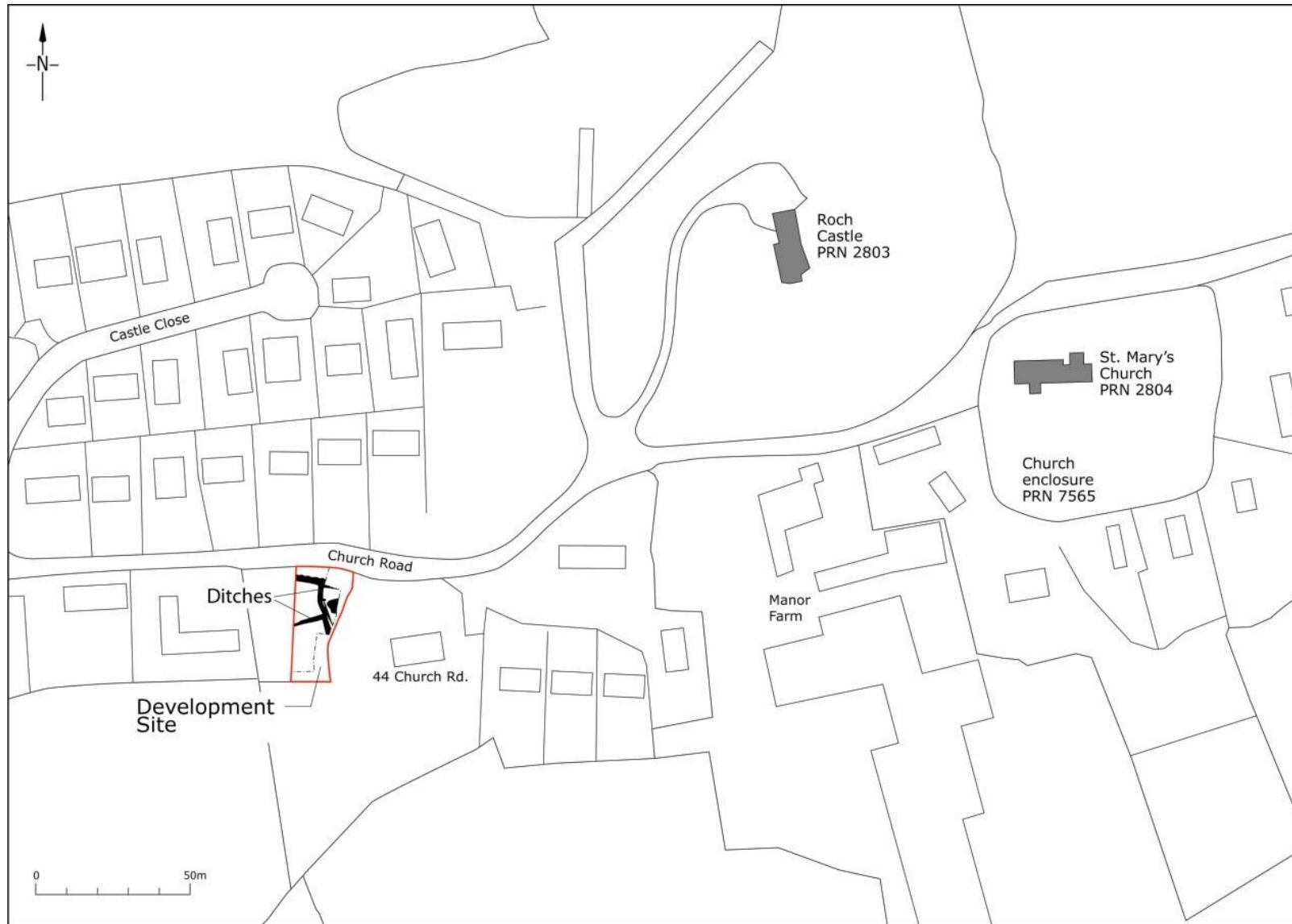


Figure 3: Plan showing development site and exposed ditches in relation to castle, church and modern housing estate.



Photo 1: View north: before removal of topsoil.

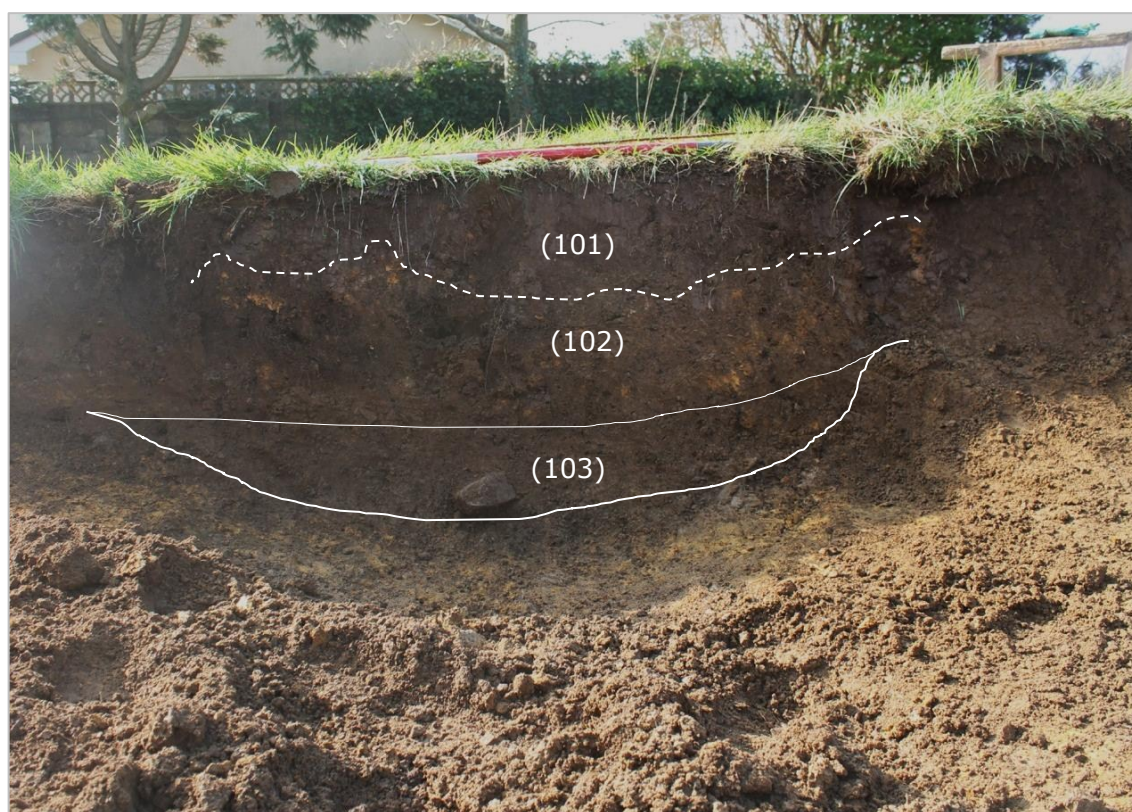


Photo 2: Section 1: east facing section of ditch cut [104]

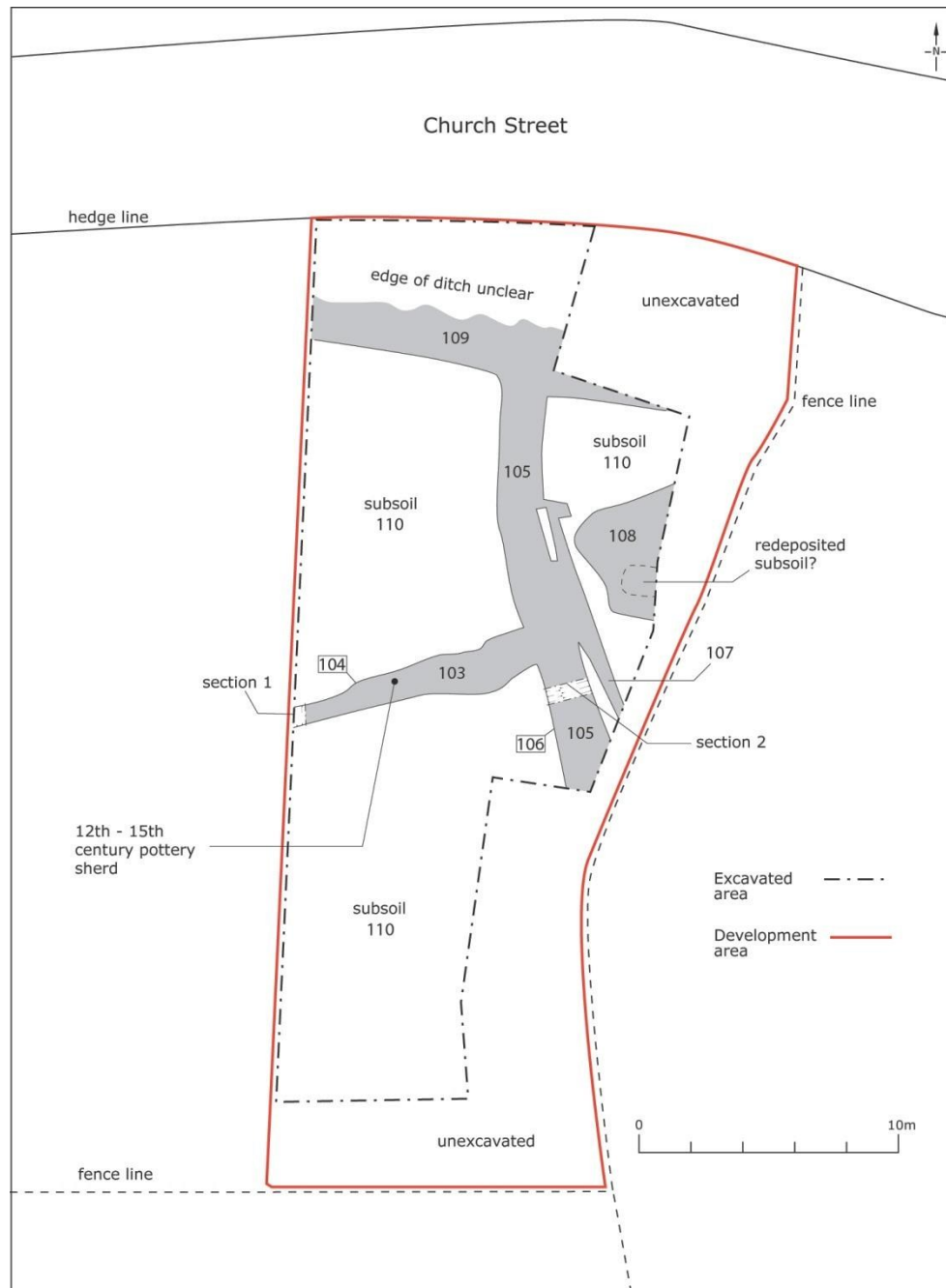


Figure 4: Plan of excavated area showing ditches and sections.



Photo 3: View east: fill (103); before fill (105) had been exposed.



Photo 4: View north: fills (103), (105), (107) and (108).

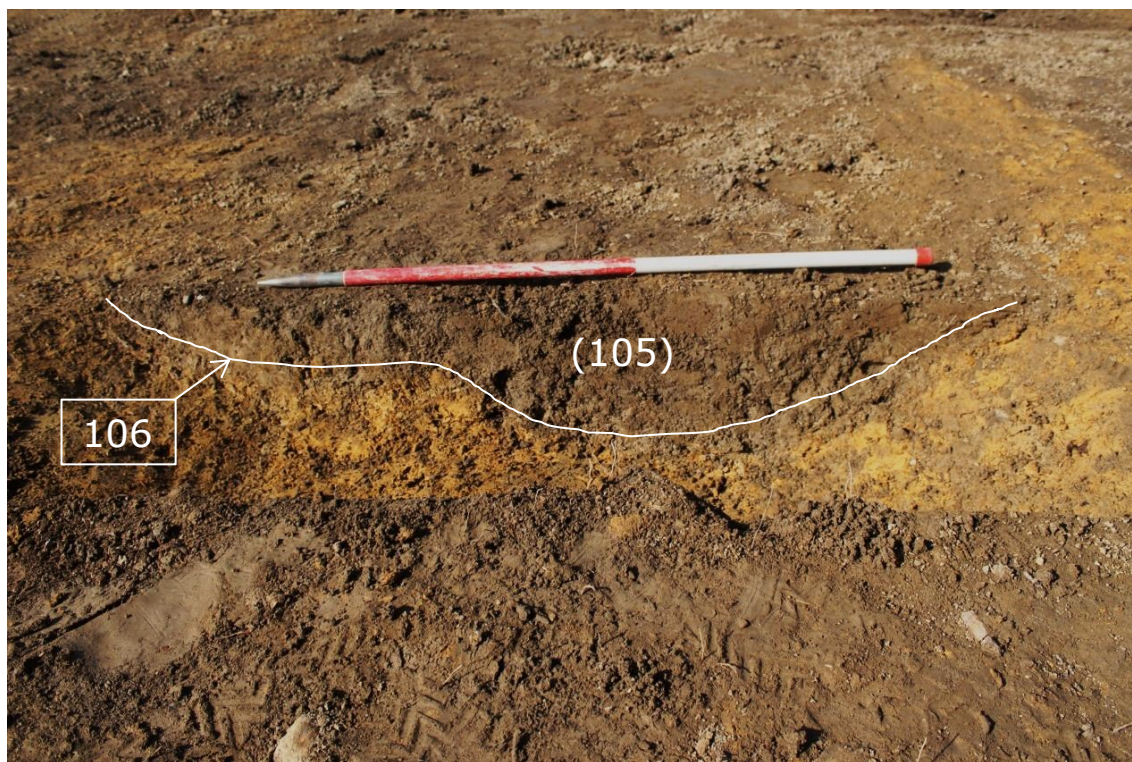


Photo 5: Section 2: south facing section of ditch cut [106].

Context	Type	Comment
101	Deposit	Topsoil – med. brown loam; up to 0.6m deep.
102	Deposit	Similar to 101, but contains broken pieces of subsoil and coal fragments, c. 0.25m deep; possibly the ploughed remnants of the bank associated with ditch [104].
103	Fill	Grey-brown, compact, silty clay, 20% small shale fragments; c.0.17 deep. Contained one sherd of Dyfed Gravel-tempered ware. Fill of 104.
104	Cut	Ditch of varying width; shallow, rounded profile; joins 106. Filled by 103.
105	Fill	Grey-brown, compact, silty clay; c. 0.18m deep; northern end joins (111). Fill of 106.
106	Cut	Shallow ditch. Possibly has been recut. Filled by 105.
107	Fill	Grey-brown, friable silty clay, occasional small stone. Fill of a gully.
108	Fill	Dark brown, silty clay, occasional small/medium stone. Fill contains large lump of re-deposited subsoil on surface. Damper than other fills. Ditch terminus/pit?
109	Fill	Grey-brown, compact silty clay, occasional fragments of subsoil mixed with 10% small stones. Fill of ditch.
110	Deposit	Subsoil. Very compact, dirty yellow silty clay.

Table 3: List of archaeological contexts

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Two of the linear features (103) and (105) are likely to be the fills of former ditches that once served as property boundaries, with ditch fill (109) serving both as property boundary - delineating the northern edge of the plot - and roadside ditch, respecting, as it does, the south side of Church Road.
- 5.2 Not enough of gully-fill (107) or the former property in which it was located was exposed to enable its function to become clear. It might represent a later phase of activity, after the individual properties had been abandoned and the land turned over to agricultural farming methods.
- 5.3 Similarly unless a larger area was exposed, it was difficult to know whether fill (108) represents a ditch terminus or large pit.
- 5.4 The depth of topsoil (approx.0.6m) is possible evidence of continued agricultural use after an initial phase of cultivation
- 5.5 The archaeological watching brief undertaken during the course of the ground works in advance of the erection of a single storey dwelling on land west of 44 Church Street, Roch (NGR SM 8788 2107) identified five previously unknown archaeological features.
- 5.6 These archaeological features are consistent with a medieval settlement; whether they belong to the initial settlement around the castle, existing in order to serve a garrison, or are part of a later development during which settlements became more autonomous is speculative. But one thing is certain; there was once a medieval community in Roch that no map or document bears witness to; and one that is possibly larger than first estimated, considering the distance from the church and castle to where these archaeological remains are located. More evidence of settlement surely lies beneath the gardens of the modern urban spread, and the very few undeveloped areas in the village.

6. SOURCES

Regional Historic Environment Record held at the Dyfed Archaeological Trust

Coflein database held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW)

Cartographic sources

Ordnance Survey 1907 2nd edition 1:2500 map of Pembrokeshire

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

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Date 08/05/14

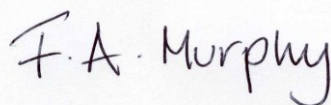
Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by

FRANCES MURPHY

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

Swydd / Position: PROJECT MANAGER DAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Llofnod / Signature



Date 12/05/14

*Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn*

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