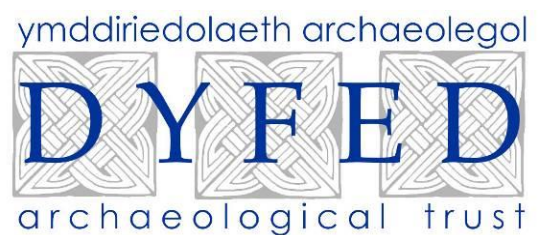


GAS MAIN RENEWAL SCHEME 2014 ABERYSTWYTH, CEREDIGION: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

(SN 5822 8162)



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Wales & West Utilities



RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2014/46
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 107516

Ionawr 2015
January 2015



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Gan / By
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**GAS MAIN RENEWAL SCHEME 2014, ABERYSTWYTH, CEREDIGION:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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**GAS MAIN RENEWAL SCHEME 2014, ABERYSTWYTH, CEREDIGION:
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SUMMARY

DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Wales and West Utilities to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works associated with a gas main renewal scheme located along Bridge Street and Great Darkgate Street, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion.

Bridge Street and Great Darkgate Street are located in what was the medieval centre of Aberystwyth and for this reason the Regional Archaeological Curator believed that the development had the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains associated with the medieval town of Aberystwyth and that in order that these could be recorded and a report and archive prepared, an archaeological watching brief condition was imposed on the development proposal.

More recent discussions with the Regional Curator, and with the benefit of additional detailed plans, led to the recommendation that a watching brief was only required in the area where the gas main was replaced at the junction of Bridge Street, Great Darkgate Street and Pier Street. The majority of trenches excavated were along the middle of the road along the old line of the gas main and involved the replacement of old metal pipework with new plastic pipework, and caused little cutting into new ground. However, at the junction of Bridge Street, Great Darkgate Street and Pier Street more substantial excavations were undertaken to replace the gas main pipework, and it is at this location that there was potential to damage archaeological deposits.

A watching brief was carried out on the 14th October 2014 during trench excavations at the junction of Great Darkgate, Bridge and Pier Street. During the watching brief no features, finds or deposits of archaeological significance were observed. It was evident that the area had been heavily disturbed by modern services to a depth of roughly 1.0m and any archaeological remains that may have existed had already been severely compromised. The results of the watching brief have demonstrated that the gas main renewal scheme has not significantly impacted upon any identifiable archaeological deposits or remains.

Although no evidence of surviving archaeological remains associated with the medieval settlement were observed the site lies within an area of known archaeological activity and the potential for associated structures and features to survive within the wider area still exists.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Wales and West Utilities to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the renewal of the gas main along Bridge Street and Great Darkgate Street, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The requirement for an archaeological watching brief was placed on the works following advice from the Regional Archaeological Curator as the proposed works had the potential to expose damage or destroy archaeological remains associated with the former medieval fortified town of Aberystwyth.
- 1.1.3 More recent discussions with the Regional Curator, and with the benefit of additional detailed plans, led to the recommendation that a watching brief was only required in the area where the gas main will be replaced at the junction of Bridge Street, Great Darkgate Street and Pier Street (Figure 1). The majority of trenches to be excavated are along the middle of the road along the old line of the gas main and involved the replacement of old metal pipework with new plastic pipework, and caused little cutting into new ground. However, at the junction of Bridge Street, Great Darkgate Street and Pier Street more substantial excavations were needed to replace the gas main pipework, and it is at this location that there was a potential to damage archaeological deposits.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of a watching brief, as laid down in the Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance: for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA S&G: AWB) is:
- To allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.
 - To provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment.

1.2 Scope of Project

- 1.2.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a watching brief was prepared by DAT Archaeological Services prior to the commencement of works. The WSI was commissioned by Wales and West Utilities and was drawn up following consultation with the Regional Curator.
- 1.2.2 The WSI outlined methodologies for:
- monitoring ground works 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

1.2.3 The proposed scheme of work was summarised in the WSI as:

Archaeological attendance and recording during ground works associated with the gas main renewal scheme in the area of the junction between Bridge Street, Great Darkgate Street and Pier Street, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, where these works may expose, damage or destroy any underlying archaeological remains, if present. There is considered to be potential for archaeological remains of medieval activity to be present in the development area. Remains of other periods could also be present. The archaeological works will also involve the preparation of a report and archive on the results of the watching brief.

1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report 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 Printed map extracts are not necessarily produced to their original scale.

1.6 Timeline

1.6.1 The following timeline (Table 1) 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 – 4000 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4000 – 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 ¹ –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20 th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales.

¹ 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 (Figure 1)

- 2.1.1 The proposed works involved the renewal of the gas main pipework along Bridge Street and Darkgate Street that are located within the urban centre of Aberystwyth town. To reveal the old pipework trenches were excavated along the middle of the road along the line of the old gas main and involved replacing old metal pipework with new plastic pipework; causing little cutting into new ground.
- 2.1.2 However, at the busy junction of Bridge Street, Great Darkgate Street and Pier Street more substantial excavations were required to replace the gas main pipework. Figure 2 illustrates the layout of the trench at the junction of Great Darkgate Street, Bridge Street and Pier Street.

2.2 Archaeological Background

- 2.2.1 The information described below is taken from the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER) held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust. Table 1 summarises the results of the HER search, listing sites found within close proximity to the gas mains renewal scheme
- 2.2.2 The gas main renewal scheme lies within the area of the medieval fortified town that was built at the same time or just after the castle whose ruins are still visible today (Figure 3). The construction of the castle began in 1277 under the instructions of King Edward I (1272-1307), following Edward I's defeat of Llywelyn Gruffydd, and took twelve years to complete. Between 1404 and 1407 the castle was captured by Owain Glyndwr and became a stronghold for the Welsh Government, before being recaptured in 1408. In 1649, the castle was destroyed as part of Oliver Cromwell's policy of slighting castles following the Civil War.
- 2.2.3 The castle ruins are the only standing structures to survive from this early period, but the pattern of streets laid down when the town was first created is intact. Although the walls have disappeared, their line can still be clearly traced; the medieval street layout is intact, and the original plot structure set out in the late thirteenth century survives in some areas. The main streets were: Bridge Street–Pier Street, Great Darkgate Street and Eastgate. The junction of the two main streets was traditionally the site of the market, and it is possible that the area between upper Great Darkgate Street and Princess Street was originally open as a market space. There is no clear surviving plot structure in this area, which may be an indication that it was built up through encroachment onto hitherto open space.
- 2.2.4 At the foot of Great Darkgate Street and Bridge Street were the two main gates into the walled town, and there was a secondary gate at the foot of Eastgate. The walls themselves ran approximately on the line now taken by South Road, Baker Street, Chalybeate Street and Mill Street (Figure 3).
- 2.2.5 Overall the archaeological potential for the site is highest for exposing remains associated with the medieval town of Aberystwyth.

HER PRN	Site Name	Summary	Period	NGR
6809	Queens Street No.44; Bridge Street No.12; Commerce House	Shop, Dwelling, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN58258156
6810	Black Lion Hotel; Bridge Street No.16; Old Black Lion Hotel	Hotel, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN58258155
6811	Bridge Street No.14; Ystwyth	Dwelling, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5824481552
6812	Bridge Street Nos.17 and 19	Shop	Post Medieval	SN58238155
6823	Padarn Hall; Lion Royal Hotel; Gogerddan Arms	Public House, Hotel, Dwelling, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5824981610
6829	Princess Street Nos.8 10 12	Terrace	Post Medieval	SN58208155
6830	Princess Street Nos.4 6	Cottage	Post Medieval	SN58208156
6833	Pier Street	Dwelling	Post Medieval	SN58248164
7372	Princess Street	Midden	Post Medieval	SN58208155
8846	Town Clock	Clock Tower	Post Medieval	SN58228163
10060	Bridge Street No.13; White Lion	Dwelling	Post Medieval	SN58228158
17889	Guildhall	Guildhall	Post Medieval	SN58228163
20734	Aberystwyth Town Hall	Town Hall	Post Medieval	SN58228163
20735		Market	Post Medieval	SN58178157
20743	Eglwys St.Paul; St.Paul's Welsh Wesleyan Methodist Church	Chapel, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN58198158
25139	Bridge Street Nos.1 and 3	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5821881606
25140	Bridge Street No.15	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5822881558
25157	Great Darkgate	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5826081653

	Street Nos.33 35; Howell's			
25158	Talbot Inn	Public House	Post Medieval	SN58268165
25159	Great Darkgate Street No.37	Bank (financial)	Post Medieval	SN5825081649
25160	Great Darkgate Street Nos.39 and 41; Miners Arms	Shop, Public House, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5824581646
25161	Great Darkgate Street No.51	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5818881612
25163	Great Darkgate Street No.36	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5826881632
25164	St Paul's Welsh Wesleyan Methodist Church	School, Chapel, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5819681589
25189	Market Street Nos.4, 6, 8	Terrace, Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5826181664
25201	Pier Street Nos.9 and 11; Compton House	Shop, Library, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5822181656
25202	Pier Street No.17; The Windsor	Building, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5821281674
25203	Pier Street No.19 The Welsh Cellar	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5821081681
25204	Pier Street No.8 Penguin Cafe	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5821181635
25205	Pier Street Nos.10, 12, 14	Terrace, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5820681640
25206	Pier Street Nos.16 18; New Street Nos.2 and 4	Terrace, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5819381666
25251	Princess Street.No.9	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5819281558
57219	No.3 Bridge Street (Hardware)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5821981599
57220	Nos.17 and 19 Bridge Street (Connexion)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5822881547
57224	No.12 Brideg Street	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5824481560

	(Hairdresser's Salon)			
57225	No.44 Queen Street	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5825081560
57241	No.38 Eastgate	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5821581683
57244	No.41 Great Darkgate Street (County Juniors)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5824281639
57245	Schoolroom to St Paul's Welsh Wesleyan Methodist Church	Schoolroom, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5818881584
57277	No.6 Market Street (Dudes and Dames)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5825381670
57278	No.8 Market Street (A.T.Mays, Travel Agent)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5825381677
57285	No.6 New Street	House, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5817481662
57302	No.11 Pier Street (Pizza Two Four)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5822081661
57303	No.12 Pier Street (Kwik Save)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5820181646
57304	No.14 Pier Street (Cardigan House)	Shop, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5819981656
57305	Nos.2 and 4 New Street	Shops, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5818581670
6809	Queens Street No.44; Bridge Street NO.12; Commerce House	Shop, Dwelling, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN58258156
6810	Old Black Lion Hotel; Bridge Street No.16; Old Black Lion Hotel	Hotel, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN58258155
6811	Bridge Street No.14; Ystwyth	Dwelling, Grade 2 Listed Building	Post Medieval	SN5824481552

Table 2: Summary of HER data within close proximity to the gas main renewal scheme.

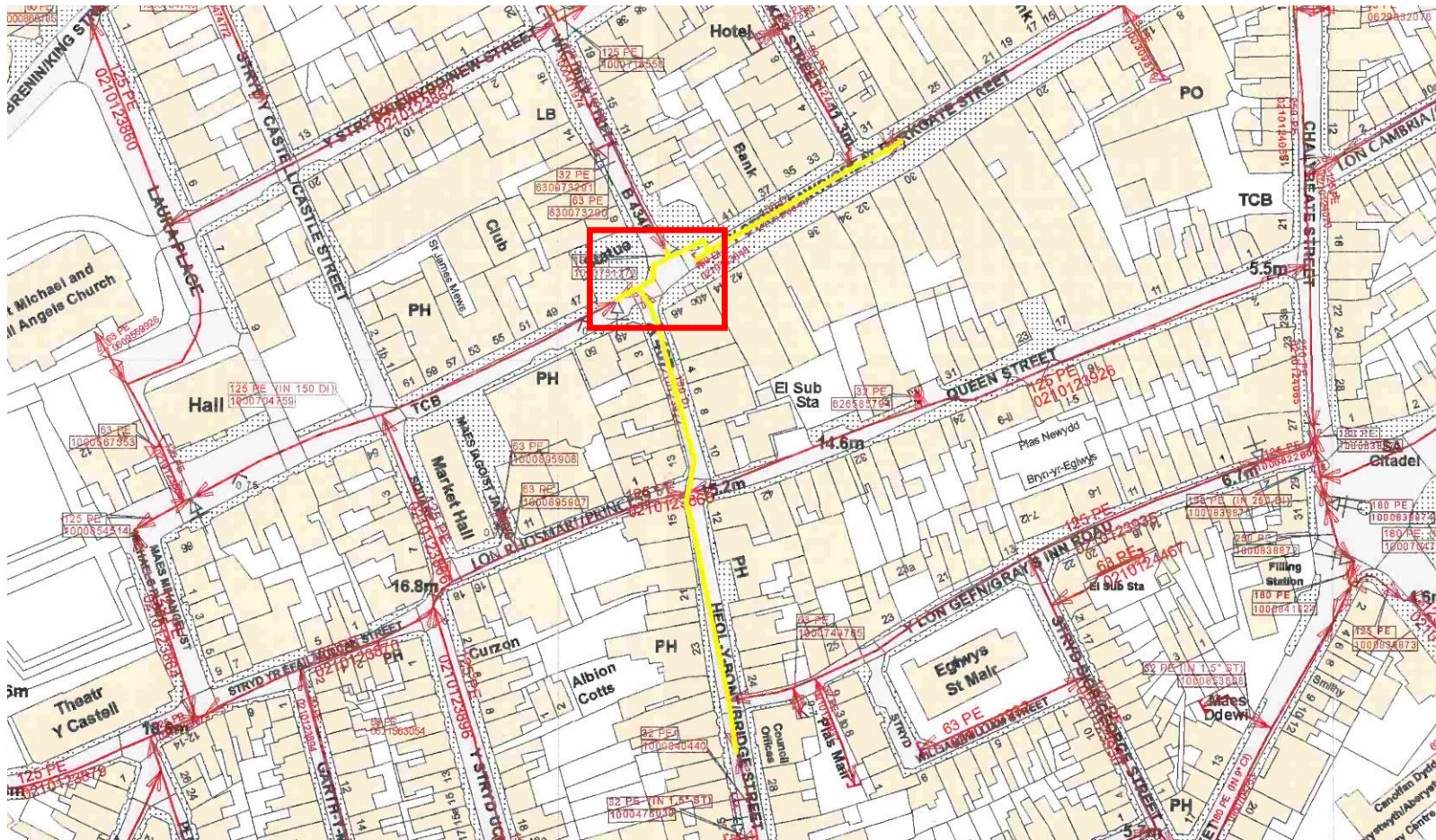


Figure 1: Location plan showing the gas main renewal scheme along Bridge Street and Great Darkgate Street, Aberystwyth. The junction of Great Darkgate Street, Bridge Street and Pier Street lies within the box outlined in red. The line of the proposed gas main renewal is shown in yellow. Plan supplied by client.

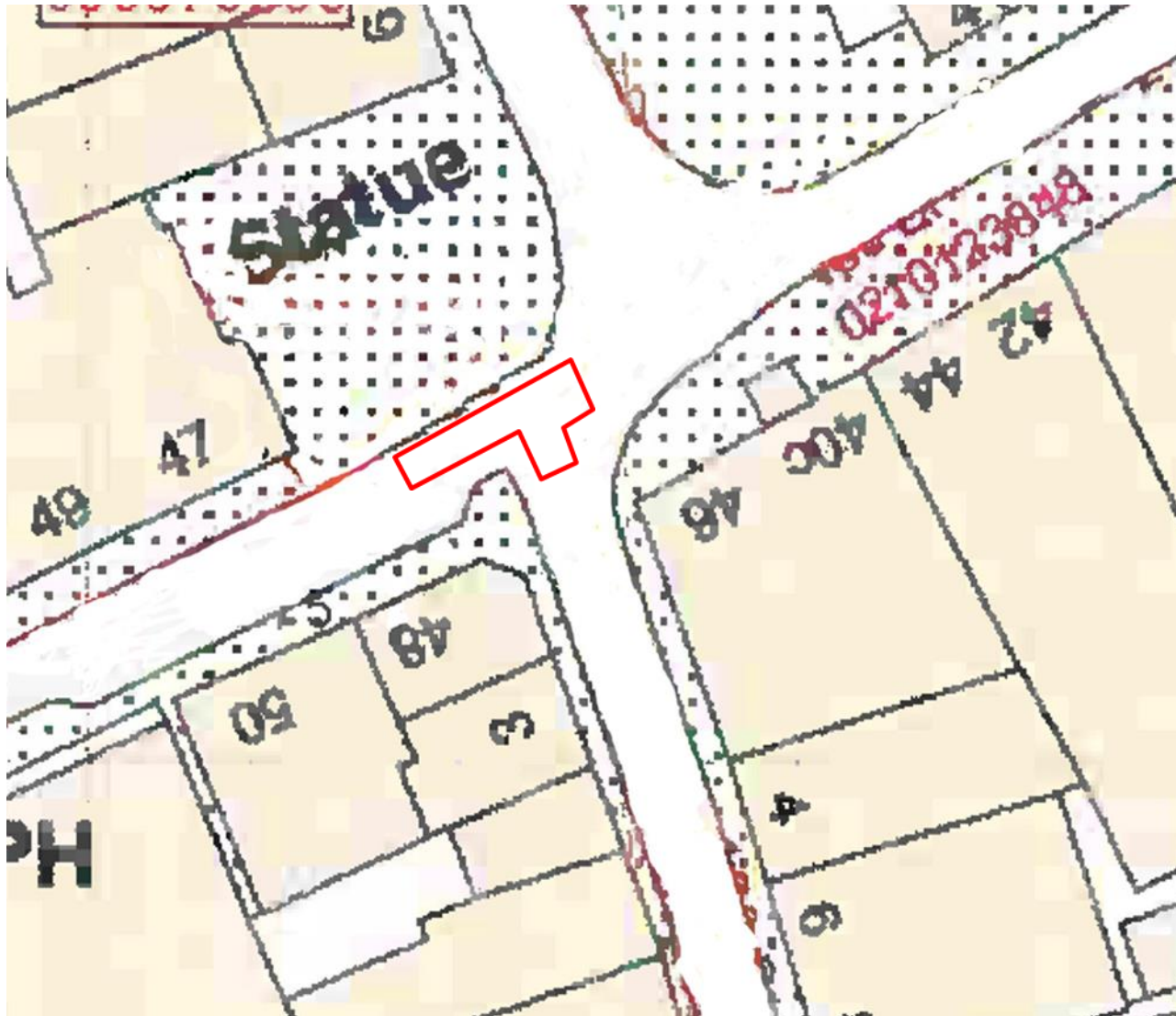


Figure 2: Layout of trench at junction of Great Darkgate Street, Bridge Street and Pier Street. Plan supplied by client.

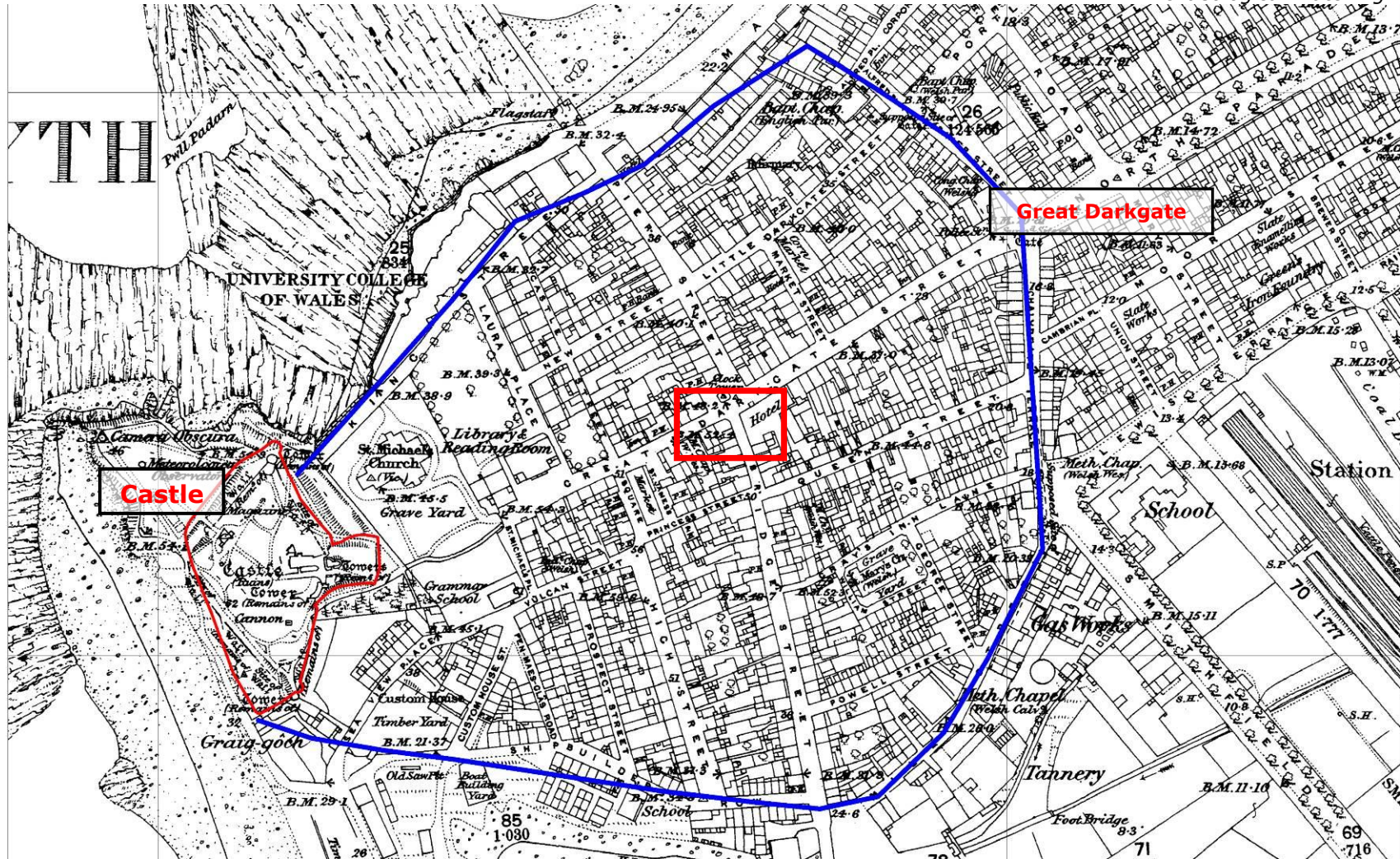


Figure 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1889 1st edition 1:2500 map showing the location of the medieval castle, the projected line of the walls of the medieval fortified town (blue line). The archaeological watching brief took place at the junction of Great Darkgate Street, Bridge Street and Pier Street; delineated by the box outlined in red.

3. WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the 14th October, 2014, during ground works at the junction of Great Darkgate Street, Bridge Street and Pier Street that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains.
- 3.1.2 Recording of all archaeological features or deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual² 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 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.
- 3.2.3 The report includes a desk-based research element to ensure that the site is placed within its wider archaeological context. This is largely taken from the Historic Environment Appraisal.

² 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

- 4.1 A site meeting was held on 12th September with Wales and West Utilities to discuss the proposed scheme of works. Works had commenced towards the southern end of Bridge Street and a number of sections of trench had been excavated.
- 4.2 These trenches were examined and Photo 1 is a representative photograph of the deposits exposed within such a trench. The trenches were no deeper than 0.45m and the stratigraphy clearly shows fragments of concrete situated in a commingled matrix that has resulted from successive episodes of disturbance due to modern services.
- 4.3 On 14th October the watching brief was carried out during ground works at the junction of Great Darkgate, Bridge and Pier Street (Photos 2 & 3). The works excavated an irregular shaped trench to a maximum depth of nearly 1.00m. Within the sides and the bottom of the trench was clear evidence of how badly the ground had been disturbed by modern services over the years (Photos 4 & 5).
- 4.4 No significant archaeological deposits or remains were recorded within the excavated trench.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The results of the archaeological watching brief have demonstrated that the gas main renewal scheme did not impact upon any significant archaeological deposits or remains. It is evident that the ground through which the trench was excavated at the junction of Bridge, Darkgate and Pier Street had already been heavily disturbed by earlier modern services, that would have severely impacted upon any archaeological remains in this area if they existed.
- 5.2 No evidence of surviving structural remains associated with the medieval settlement of Aberystwyth was observed within the constraints of this watching brief. However, the site lies in an area of known archaeological activity and the potential for associated archaeological structures and features to survive within the wider area still remains.

6. PHOTOGRAPHS



Left - Photo 1: Representative photograph of one of the trenches opened in Bridge Street; facing north.

Right – Photo 2: General view of excavated trench at junction of Great Darkgate, Bridge and Pier Street; facing east.





Photo 3: General view of trench at junction of Great Darkgate, Bridge and Pier Street; facing west. 1m scale



Photo 4: Detail of the south facing section of trench showing the disturbed nature of the below ground deposits. 1m scale



Photo 5: Detail of the south arm of the excavated trench showing the disturbed nature of the below ground deposits; facing south. 1m scale

7. SOURCES

Published

Brown, D.H., 2007. *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Institute of Field Archaeologists.

Databases

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record, housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust in The Shire Hall, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6AF

RCAHMW Coflein Database <http://www.coflein.gov.uk/>

Cartographic

Ordnance Survey 1889 1:2500 1st edition Cardiganshire

Ordnance Survey 2003 1:25 000 Ceredigion

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**Ionawr 2015
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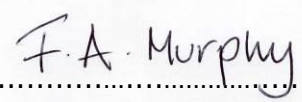
Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 08/01/2015

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

FRAN MURPHY

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

Swydd / Position: Project Manager DAT Archaeological Services

Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 09/01/2015

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

