

ERECTION OF EXTENSION FOR TOILETS AT ST DAVID'S CHURCH, HUBBERSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF (NGR SN 89068 06233)



Prepared by DAT Archaeological Services
For: Mr. Colin Croxford of Hubberstone
Parish Community Council



DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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Gan / By

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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HUBBERSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by DAT Archaeological Services during ground works for the erection of an extension for toilets and associated drainage at St David's Church, Hubberston, Pembrokeshire. DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Mr. Colin Croxford on behalf of the Hubberstone Church parish Community Council to undertake the archaeological watching brief.

The watching brief was required as a condition of planning permission following the advice from the archaeological advisors (Dyfed Archaeological Trust – Planning Services) to Pembrokeshire County Council. The condition was placed on the works because St David's Church is a Grade I Listed Building, which dates back until at least the 13th century. Any works within church sites have a strong potential to disturb burials, and possibly structural remains associated with the development of the church. Therefore it was considered necessary to implement archaeological monitoring, as the groundworks could potentially expose, damage or even destroy archaeological remains.

The development works at St David's Church took place to the east of the vestry (which was added to the existing church between 1929–31) with an associated drainage trench being excavated along the course of the existing footpath, along the northern wall of the north transept.

The watching brief has demonstrated that the area for the toilet block foundations to the east of the vestry had already been subjected to significant ground disturbance, presumably associated with the extension added in 1929-31. The ground appeared to be made up of material consisting of crushed brick and grit to a significant depth, below that of the trenches excavated for the footings. Aside from disarticulated fragments of human bone, no in situ burials were found within this area and no earlier structural remains or significant archaeological deposits revealed. . It is probable that if any burials had previously been located here they had either been moved or disturbed during previous groundworks.

Excavations of the drainage trench along the north wall of the north transept revealed a former stone paved path directly beneath the existing tarmac path. Beneath this at a depth of approximately 0.60m at least three in-situ inhumations were encountered within the confines of the narrow drainage trench and more may have been present. The depth of the drainage trench did not exceed 0.60m and thus the burials were only exposed and not disturbed further. They will remain in-situ, buried beneath the backfill of the drainage trench.

All disarticulated human bone recovered during the works was passed to the site contractor to arrange for re-burial within the consecrated ground of the churchyard.

No archaeological evidence of previous structures was observed during this watching brief but this does not negate their potential to exist in the wider area.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Mr. Colin Croxford on behalf of Hubberstone Parish Community Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief at St David's Church, Hubberston, Pembrokeshire (SN 89068 06233; Figure 1) during erection of an extension and associated drainage for toilets located to the east of the vestry.
- 1.1.2 Planning permission for the extension had been granted by Pembrokeshire County Council (Planning Application No. 14/0205/PA) with the following condition attached:
- '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 planning authority.'*
- 1.1.3 The 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 proposed works could have potentially exposed, damaged or destroyed archaeological remains.
- 1.1.4 The condition has been placed on the development as it lies at the Grade I Listed Church, which dates back to at least the 13th century. Any works within church sites have a strong potential to disturb burials, and possibly structural remains associated with the development of the church. These could include footings for masonry walls or post-holes or similar associated with timber buildings.

1.2 Scope of the 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 outlined methodologies for:
- Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology by which the watching brief should be undertaken.
 - 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 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). Sites recorded on the National Monument Record (NMR) held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) are identified by their National Primary Record Number (NPRN). Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). Altitude is expressed to Ordnance Datum (OD). References to cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets throughout the text, with full details listed in the sources section at the rear of the report.

1.5 Illustrations

- 1.5.1 Photographic images are to be found within the report. 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.

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 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. SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site of St David's Church is located in Hubberston, Pembrokeshire (NGR SN 89068 06233; Figure 1), to the west of Milford Haven.
- 2.2 The church comprises an enclosed grave yard that sits higher than its surroundings.
- 2.3 The extension is taking place to the east of the vestry. Plans and sections available via the Pembrokeshire County Council planning website indicate the existing location of a number of burial slabs here, although it is indicated that these slabs have probably been moved from elsewhere as opposed to covering existing burials (Figure 2).

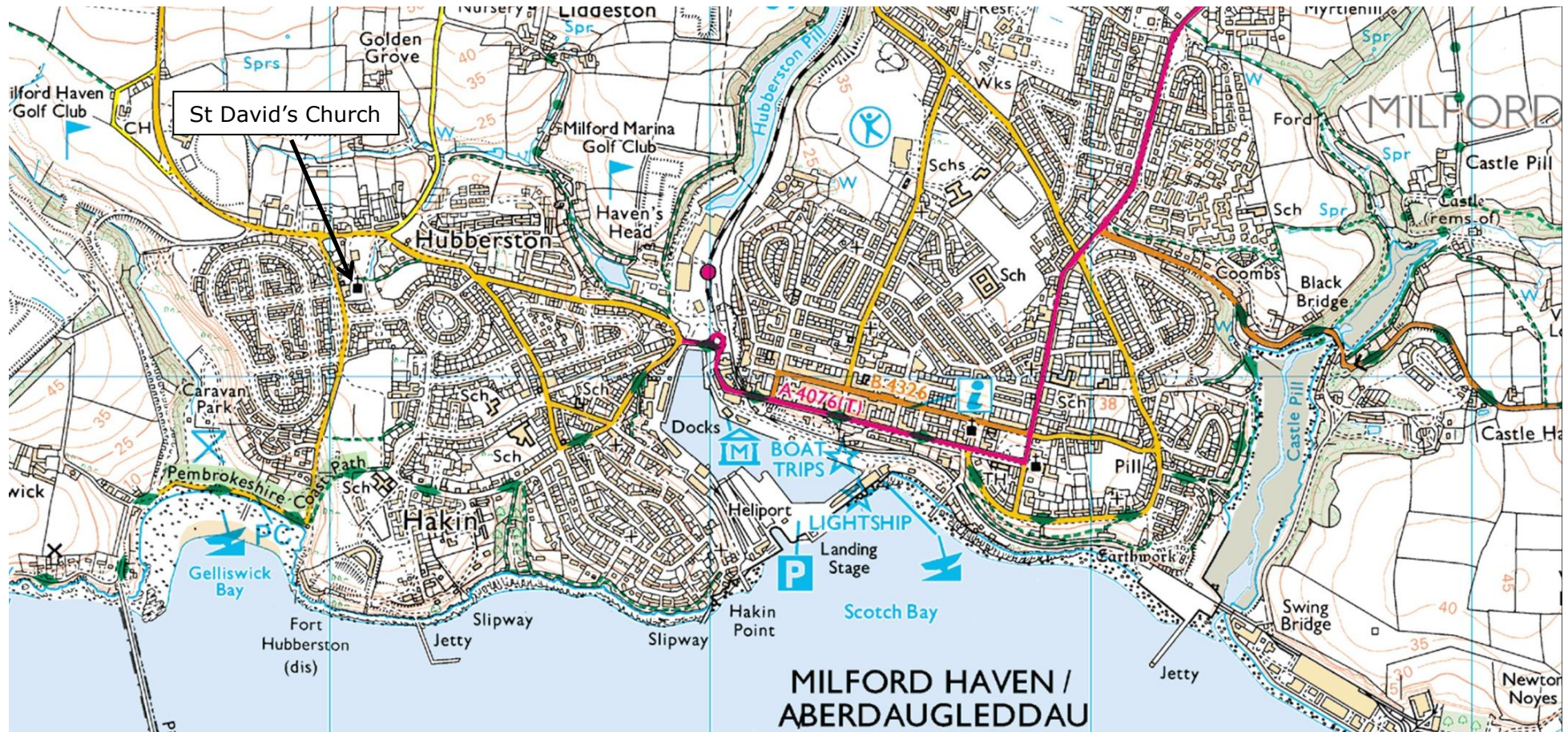


Figure 1: Site location map based on the Ordnance Survey 1:25000 scale.

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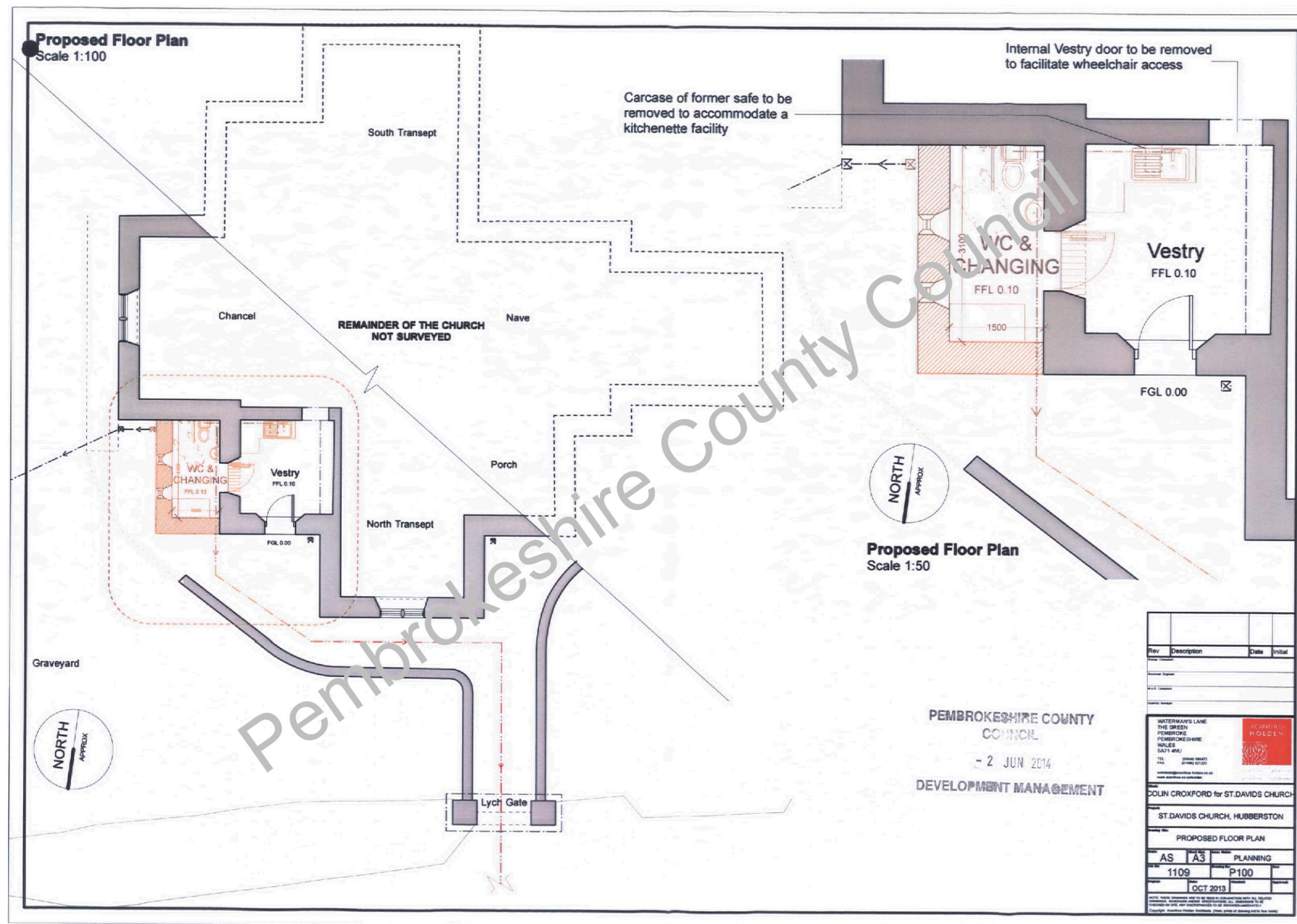


Figure 2: Proposed floor plan showing extension for toilet facilities to the east of the vestry and the associated drainage to the north of the church building and exiting the graveyard at the Lych Gate (taken from Pembrokeshire County Council Planning website).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The following information has been extracted from the Historic Environment Record (HER) held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust and Coflein database.
- 3.2 The Dyfed HER records only six sites within a 250m radius of the Church. The distribution of these sites is illustrated in Figure 3 and a summary of the HER database is included in Table 1. Record numbers PRN 3034 and 59080 both relate to St David's Church itself, a grade I Listed Building. The Listing description for the church (reference 12925) describes the following:

Interior:

Plastered pointed vaults, fine square C13 font with scalloped lower edge and incised line above scalloping, Circular plain shaft. Chancel has N tomb recess and very fine C15 triple sedilia with octagonal shafts, no capitals but carved masks on two front faces of shafts under elaborately moulded triple-arched hoodmould. Low pointed N door to vestry. Early C18 tomb slabs to Allen family of Gelliswick under altar.

Fine C20 triple arch timber chancel screen with delicate cresting and tracery, the side bays being canted-fronted pulpit and reading desk. Early C20 reedos panelling and faded E window glass of c1881. Stained glass of 1980 in S transept and c1960 in nave S window.

Exterior:

C15, possibly with earlier core, repaired 1866-7 and restored and enlarged 1929-31 by J B Fletcher of Cardiff. Anglican parish Church in rubble stone with ashlar tracery and slate roofs. Small scale with Pembs type C15 W tower and low medieval nave and chancel, all stone vaulted. Of 1930 the two transepts, that to the N with symmetrical flanking porch and vestry, that to S with organ chamber to E. Tower has 1930 tracery to small W window, NW stair projection, corbelled parapet and pyramid recessed cap. Small unchamfered 2-light bell-openings. Nave has N and S 2-light with 1930 flush tracery. S blocked door, unchamfered pointed, and 1930 additions have coped shouldered gables and flush traceried 2-light transept windows and plain chamfered pointed doors to porch and vestry. Chancel has C15 perpendicular style S window and 3-light E window, pointed with hoodmould and carved head stops.

- 3.3 Much of the exterior fabric is of 15th century date, but it is believed the church may date back to at least the 13th century. Records show that the church underwent repairs in 1866 and was restored and enlarged in 1929-31 (which included the addition of the vestry). The church consists of a nave, chancel, west tower, and north and south transepts.
- 3.4 HER references PRN's 3037 and 11805 lie approximately 250m south west of St David's Church and refers to two Roman find spots, but unfortunately no further details are given. The find spots are not accurately located and cannot be used to determine if significant Roman activity was present within the area.
- 3.5 Finally PRN's 15821 and 15823 relate to two structures located nearby (a dwelling and rectory) but no further information is provided on these two structures. These would have been identified from early Ordnance Survey maps, indicating the structures were present at the end of the 19th century, although does not provide any more information on their date of construction.

- 3.6 The proposed toilet extension will be located on the eastern side of the vestry and will be a small addition to the existing building. The listing description indicates that the Vestry dates to around 1930 and is part of the enlargement of the church described above. The construction of the vestry will have presumably involved some disturbance to earlier archaeological remains if any were present. The plans and sections available via the Pembrokeshire County Council planning website indicate the existing location of a number of burial slabs on the eastern side of the vestry, although it is also indicated that these slabs have been moved from elsewhere as opposed to covering existing burials. These may have been moved when the vestry was built in around 1930.
- 3.7 The proposed area of the extension does have a high archaeological potential for burials to be present. It is quite often the case that burials are found close to the existing walls of churches, and they are often medieval in date. This occurs as the burials may have been associated with earlier phases of the church building, when its footprint was smaller than exists today. St David's is known to have 13th century origins at least, although the main part of the surviving church dates to the 15th century. Therefore an earlier, smaller church may have been located at the site which would have had associated burials. It was considered most likely that disarticulated human bone (disturbed from grave digging and alterations/renovations to the existing church) would be present within the extension area. The site also had the potential to contain archaeological remains associated with earlier phases of church building or associated structures on the site.

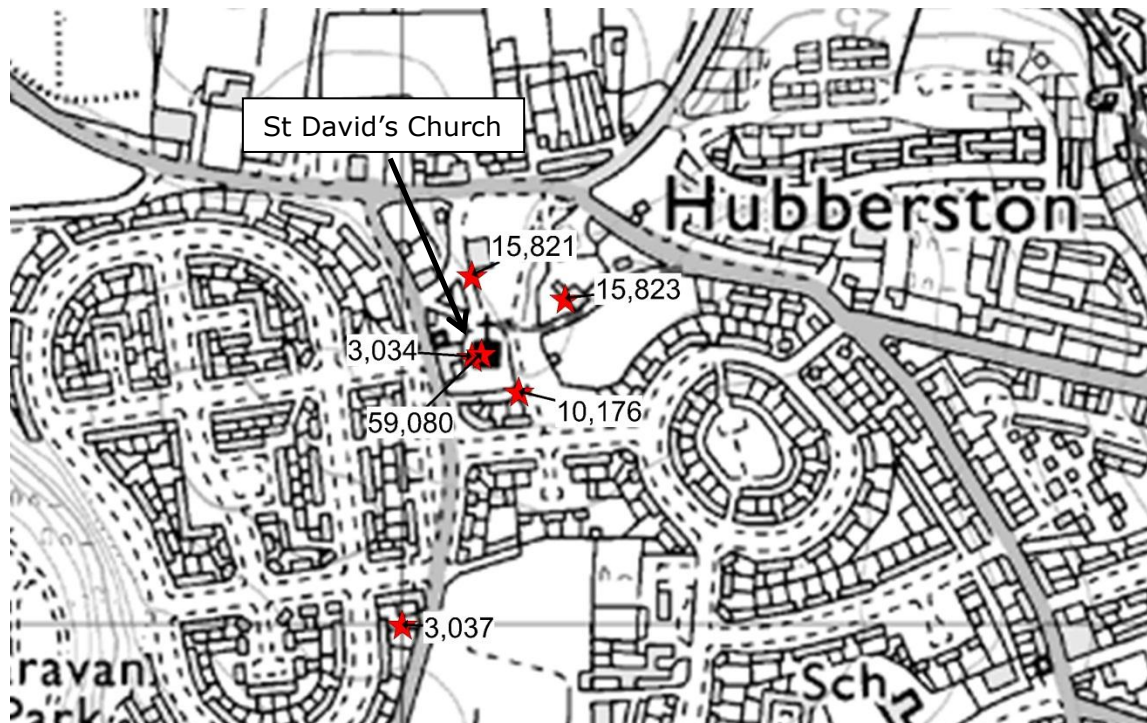


Figure 3: Distribution of Sites recorded on the HER within 250m of St David's Church.

PRN	Name	Summary	Period	NGR
3034	Hubberston Parish Church; St David's	Medieval parish church, listed in the Taxatio of 1291. Churchyard originally square, small. 'Celtic' dedication. At least 1 former chapelry in parish (PRN 12464). No current evidence for early medieval date.	Post-Medieval, Medieval	SM 8906 0623
3037	Haven's Head	Findspot – exact location not known	Roman	SM 89 06
10176	St Davids Dedication	The St David's dedication could indicate that an early medieval (pre-1086) church was present at the site	Early Medieval	SM 8906 0623
11805	Golden Grove Farm	Findspot – exact location not known	Roman	SM 89 06
15821	<i>None given</i>	Dwelling – seen on early OS map	Post-Medieval	SM 8906 0630
15823	<i>None given</i>	Rectory – seen on early OS map	Post-Medieval	SM 8914 0628
59080	Church Of St David	Grade I listed church	Post-Medieval	SM 89068 06233

Table 1: HER summary of sites shown in Figure 3.

4. WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

4.1 Fieldwork

- 4.1.1 A watching brief was undertaken during ground level reduction works and excavating of the footings for foundations to the east of the vestry.
- 4.1.2 In addition to this, the excavation of the associated drainage trench along the north wall of the north transept was also observed. Figure 2 shows the plan of the proposed works showing the location of the toilets and the drainage trench.
- 4.1.3 Excavation work was conducted by flat-bladed mini diggers. All archaeological deposits revealed during the groundworks were examined and recorded to an appropriate level.
- 4.1.4 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 DAT Archaeological Services.

4.2 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

- 4.2.1 All data recovered during the fieldwork have been 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.
- 4.2.2 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.
- 4.2.3 A report fully representative of the results of the fieldwork has been prepared.

² DAT Archaeological Services have adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available on-site for inspection if required.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Footprint of Toilet Extension

- 5.1.1 On the 7th July 2015 the attending archaeologist visited the site to observe the reduction of ground level within the footprint of the proposed toilet extension and excavation of its footings.
- 5.1.2 The ground level to the east of the vestry was reduced by approximately 0.30m. No features or grave cuts were identified at this level and the ground consisted of crushed brick and grit, indicating made ground. Some disarticulated bone fragments were retrieved from this material but no in-situ burials were found (Photos 1 and 2).
- 5.1.3 The footing trench was approximately 1.0m wide and excavated to a depth of 0.60m. Again, no archaeological features were identifiable and it appears that the depth of made ground containing grit and crushed brick was still visible at the lower levels of the footing trench (Photo 3). More disarticulated human bone fragments were retrieved, but no in-situ burials were located.
- 5.1.4 No evidence of structural remains associated with earlier phases of the church was observed during the course of this watching brief.



Photo 1: Excavation of the ground to the east of the vestry



Photo 2: Reduced ground level within the footprint of the new toilet extension showing made-ground material



Photo 3: East facing section of footing trench.
The trench was excavated to a depth of approx. 0.60m and appears to consist of the same made ground with grit and crushed brick

5.2 Drainage Trench

- 5.2.1 On the 9th and 13th of July 2015, the archaeologist attended the site again to observe excavations of the drainage trench.
- 5.2.2 The drainage trench was to be excavated through the existing footpath on an east-west orientation along the north wall of the north transept (Photo 4). At the footpath junction it would change direction and head north towards the lych gate (still following the existing footpath) and exit the graveyard.
- 5.2.3 As the existing footpath surface was removed it became apparent that it was overlaid directly on top of a former stone slabbed pathway (Photo 5).
- 5.2.4 The trench was excavated to a width of approximately 0.30m and a maximum depth of 0.60m. At this depth in-situ human remains were partially exposed at the base of the trench, the burials orientated east-west (Photo 6). At least three in-situ inhumations were observed along the north wall of the north transept. It is possible that more burials may have been present, but due to the constraints of the trench size it was difficult to determine an exact number. Bone preservation of the inhumations was good. A number of wood fragments were identified, but it is uncertain if these were associated with coffins for the burials or later material disturbed in the upper ground levels.
- 5.2.5 As the drainage trench changed direction and headed north towards the lych gate further disarticulated fragments of human bones were recovered, but no obvious signs of in-situ burials were encountered.
- 5.2.6 Generally the ground beneath the former footpath consisted of a mix of a reddish clay loam with an abundance of grit and large angular stones.
- 5.2.7 The drainage trench was not observed beyond the limits of the churchyard where it is presumed it met up with existing service trenches and sewers, where the ground would have already been disturbed.



Photo 4: The existing footpath along the north wall of the north transept before excavation.



Photo 5: Removal of the existing tarmac path revealed the former stone paved path beneath. Viewing West along the north wall of the north transept.



Photo 6: In situ human remains (femur and tibia) partially exposed at the base of the trench along the north wall of the north transept.



Photo 7: Example section of drainage trench. Viewing north

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The results of the archaeological watching brief have demonstrated that the area to the east of the vestry had previously been significantly disturbed, presumably when the church was enlarged between 1929 – 31. As a result of these works the a made ground was present containing crushed red brick and grit to a significant depth. This was present below the level of that excavated for both the footprint and foundation trench for the proposed toilet extension.
- 6.2 Some disarticulated human bone fragments were retrieved from the footprint of the proposed toilet block, from within this made ground, but no in-situ burials were identified. It is probable that any burials had previously been moved or disturbed during past groundworks (1929 – 31). Alternatively they lie at a level below that which was disturbed for the proposed toilet extension.
- 6.3 Excavation of the drainage trench leading from the toilet extension revealed that the existing path had been laid directly over an earlier stone slab path.
- 6.4 At a depth of approximately 0.60m beneath the existing ground surface in-situ burials were observed along the north wall of the north transept. At least three in-situ burials were located, but it is possible (probable) that more existed but it was not possible to confirm this within the confines of the narrow drainage trench. The drainage trench did not exceed the 0.60m depth and thus the identified burials were only exposed, but not disturbed further. They would remain buried beneath the backfill material for the drainage trench on completion.
- 6.5 Based on known examples it is likely that these burials are of medieval date as it was quite often the case for medieval burials to be placed against existing walls of churches and at a shallower depth than would be allowed in modern times.
- 6.6 The disarticulated bone located during the watching brief would be the result of disturbances from continuous excavation of the graveyard over the years for new burials and alterations and renovations of the church building.
- 6.7 There was no evidence of earlier structures identified during the course of this watching brief, however, this does not negate the potential for them to exist in the wider area.
- 6.8 All human remains that were collected were handed back to the site contractors so that they could be re-interred in another location within the consecrated graveyard.

7. SOURCES

Published

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

Database

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. 2003. *1:25 000. Pembrokeshire.*

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Llofnod / Signature  Date: 25/09/15

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
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sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn*

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