

WOODLANDS, PARSONAGE LANE, BEGELLY, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Prepared by DAT Archaeological Services
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**WOODLANDS, PARSONAGE LANE, BEGELLY,
PEMBROKESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Gan / By

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SUMMARY

DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Sarah Lewis to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works associated with the extension and refurbishment works at the property known as 'Woodlands', Parsonage Lane, Begelly, Pembrokeshire.

Previous archaeological investigations undertaken nearby at Church Close identified possible evidence of Bronze Age activity and medieval occupation. It was suggested that the remains of the medieval settlement could extend into the current development area and survive below ground as archaeological deposits.

As a consequence of this a condition was placed on planning permission for the development stating that no development should take place until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work had been implemented. It was agreed with the archaeological advisors to the planning authority that an archaeological watching brief was required to monitor ground works during the early stages of the development.

A single site visit was made to the site at the end of January 2018 to observe the ground works that had the potential to expose, damage or even destroy archaeological remains. The western side of the development area was the location of a former extension to the property of Woodlands that had been demolished prior to the watching brief commencing. The demolished remains were initially left within the footprint of the former extension.

The eastern side of the site area had been former gardens of the property. This area was machine stripped under archaeological supervision to the top of surviving archaeological remains. A series of irregular archaeological features were identified cut into the underlying natural soils. Upon excavation these appeared to represent the remains of former tree throws (root bowls of former trees). Woodland is shown across the entire site area on the first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps and is presumably from where the name of the house derives.

Following recording of the eastern side of the site the demolition rubble was moved and three east to west aligned foundation trenches were excavated for the proposed new extension. These could be seen to cut through layers of redeposited material across the western side of the proposed extension area before natural underlying subsoils were exposed. The redeposited material presumably derives from landscaping of the area when the original property of Woodlands was built in the mid-20th century. The building is constructed on a raised and levelled platform built onto the south facing slope. This platform extended over the entire area of the former extension (and thus around half of that for the new one).

No medieval remains were recorded within the development area. It is possible that medieval activity was focused to the southeast of the current development site, in the area of the 2006 - 2011 archaeological investigations and closer to St Mary's Church or along the road frontage of Parsonage Lane to the north and east.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Sarah Lewis to undertake a watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension at the property known as 'Woodlands', Parsonage Lane, Begelly, Pembrokeshire (NGR SN SN 11728 07285; Figure 1 and 2). The proposed development included the demolition of the existing extension and construction of a new larger extension to the property on its eastern side (Figure 3) as well as general refurbishment of the property. The groundworks requiring the watching brief included both ground clearance work and the excavation of foundation trenches.
- 1.1.2 Between 2006 and 2011 archaeological investigations were undertaken at the nearby site of Church Close to evaluate the potential impact of a proposed housing development upon any archaeological features. The Church Lane site lies approximately 100m southeast of the Woodlands development area and this site produced evidence of possible Bronze Age activity and possible evidence of the medieval settlement at Begelly.
- 1.1.3 It is possible that the medieval settlement extends into the current development area with remains surviving below ground. For this reason an archaeological condition was placed on the development by the archaeological advisors to the planning authority, Dyfed Archaeological Trust-Development Management, as groundworks could damage or destroy archaeological deposits associated with below ground remains of such settlement.

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 parts of the WSI not reproduced in this report are in Appendix I. 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 groundworks;
 - Appropriately investigating and recording any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundworks;
 - Producing an archive and report of any results.
- 1.2.2 The overall work was summarised as: *archaeological attendance during ground works associated with the refurbishment and extension of the property known as 'Woodlands', Parsonage Lane, Begelly, Pembrokeshire which have the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains. Appropriate investigation and recording of any such remains will be undertaken if revealed. A report and archive of the results of the works will be prepared.*

1.3 Report Outline

- 1.3.1 This report provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological watching brief and its results.

1.4 Illustrations

- 1.5.1 Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale. On maps, north is towards the top of the page unless otherwise indicated.

1.5 Timeline

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 – 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 –	20th 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

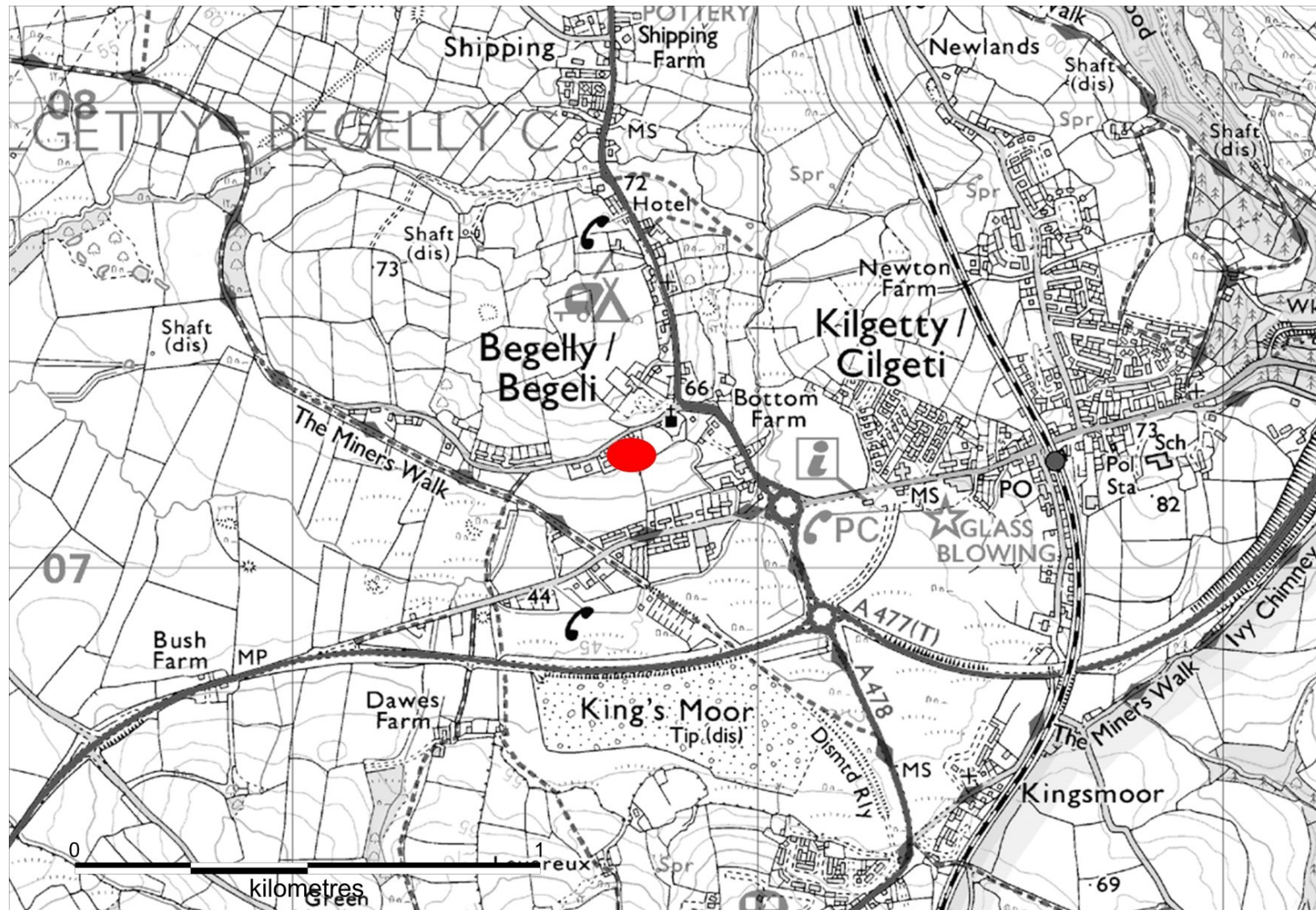


Figure 1: Location map

2003 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Corner House, 6 Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AE. Licence No 100020930

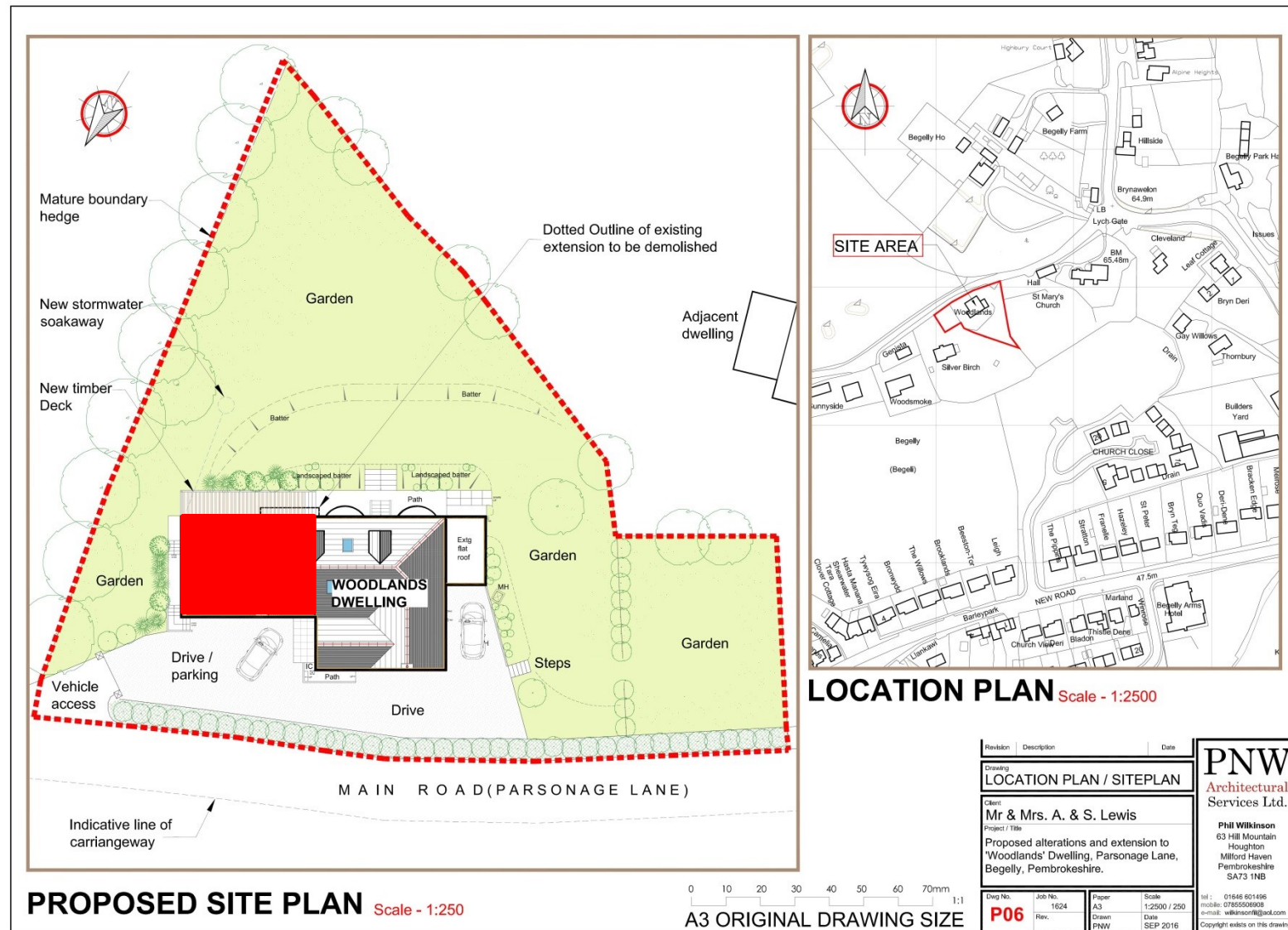


Figure 2: Location plan showing the proposed development (plan supplied by client) with new extension area highlighted in red
Note that north is pointing roughly south-southwest on the main plan.

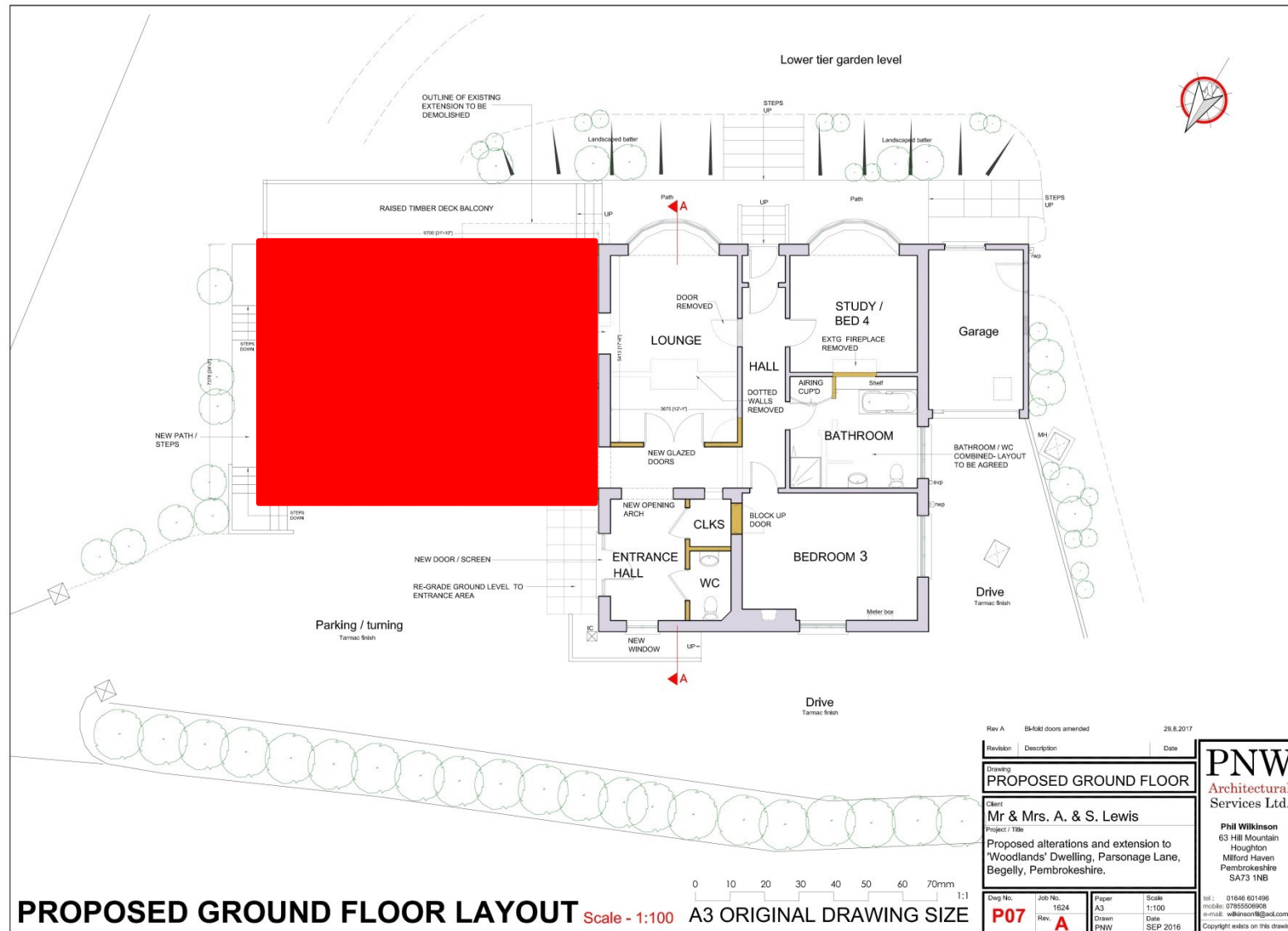


Figure 3: Proposed ground floor layout showing area of planned extension outlined in red (plan supplied by client).

2 THE SITE

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 Begelly is a small village located some 7km to the north of Tenby in Pembrokeshire, and close to the larger village of Kilgetty to the east. It lies alongside the A478 between Tenby and Narberth to the north, this road is one of the main north – south routes through Pembrokeshire. Part of the village has developed around the crossroads of the A478 with a former turnpike road linking Carmarthen to the east and Pembroke to the west. This east – west road has since been superseded by the A477 (T) bypass a short distance to the south (Schlee 2011).
- 2.1.2 Woodlands House lies on the southern side of Parsonage Lane which runs to the southwest from the A478. The site area lies on a parcel of land approximately 100m southwest of St Mary's Church, which also lies on the south side of Parsonage Lane (Figures 1 and 2).
- 2.1.3 The proposed new extension lies on the eastern side of the property known as Woodlands and will replace a previous extension which had been demolished prior to the watching brief commencing. The former extension was situated on the western part of the footprint of the new extension, with a garden area on a south facing slope on its western side.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 2.2.1 The information described below is taken from the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER) held by the Dyfed Archaeological Trust and includes a summary of known archaeological and historical sites of importance nearby (Figure 4 and Table 2).
- 2.2.2 The proposed development site lies in close vicinity to the medieval parish church of St Marys (PRN 3641) and a medieval motte (PRN 3640) (Figure 4). It is likely that these sites would have formed the focus for settlement during the medieval period although the extent of any such settlement is uncertain.
- 2.2.3 The parish church is not included in any of surviving Episcopal acts issued by the Bishops of St David's between 1087 and 1280 (Barrow 1998). It is first recorded in Taxatio of 1291 as Ecclesia de Urgely cum Capella with an assessed value of £12 0s 0d. The nave, chancel and south transept of the present structure date from the 13th century; the north chapel from the 14th century; and the tower from the 16th century.
- 2.2.4 The motte at Bottom Farm (PRN 3640) lies in close proximity to the church, perhaps indicating a focus for medieval settlement. In 1925 it was described by the Royal Commission as '...close to the churchyard is a round camp 60 paces in diameter, a bank 5 feet high inside with a ditch round and a bailey on the NW side' (Davis 2000, 27). This also notes that it is a possible ringwork as opposed to motte (ibid). Nothing now survives above ground, with the last remains being cleared in 1955 (Hull 2005, 47). There is also an indication that the castle formed the centre of the former Manor of Begelly (Hull 2005, 47).
- 2.2.5 An archaeological desk-based assessment of a proposed development area to the southwest of Woodlands summarised the archaeological potential of the Begelly area as follows:

"The archaeological assessment has demonstrated that Begelly lies within a landscape with a long and continuous history of human activity, including activity during the Bronze Age and possibly Neolithic periods, but

concentrating from the Early Medieval period onwards. At least one Bronze Age feature was recorded on a site close to the east of this development area, and possible Neolithic finds were also recovered.

Early Medieval activity has been indicated on the Church Close site to the east; although most likely concentrated in the northeastern part closest to the Church.

During the medieval period the area would have primarily been used for agricultural purposes. It is also possible that the site area was used for coal mining, as it has been recorded in Begelly from as early as 1330, and the site area does lie within the exploited area of the coal measures.

During the post-medieval period, the land would have again been mostly used for agricultural purposes, but could also have been used for mineral extraction.” (Meek and Ratty 2011)

- 2.2.6 The area of the proposed extension is indicated as woodland on the 1889 Ordnance Survey (OS) 25” map (Figure 4) and is presumably from where the house gets its name. It is also shown as an area of woodland on the 1907 OS 25” map. By the 1936 OS map the area appears to have been cleared of trees and the rough property boundary of the house is shown. The area may have been cleared and readied for development by this time. The house is shown on the 1953 OS 6” map onwards. It was thus presumable built between 1936 and 1953.
- 2.2.7 The Woodlands property is located on a fairly steep south facing slope. It is evident that significant landscaping was carried out prior to the construction of Woodlands as the building stands on a raised platform (Photo 1). The extent of this landscaped platform covered half of the eastern side of the proposed new extension.
- 2.2.8 The property was extended to the east, possibly in the 1970s. This extension was demolished prior to the start of the watching brief.



Photo 1: View north showing the original property of Woodlands and the raised landscaped platform on which it stands. The proposed extension lies to the right.

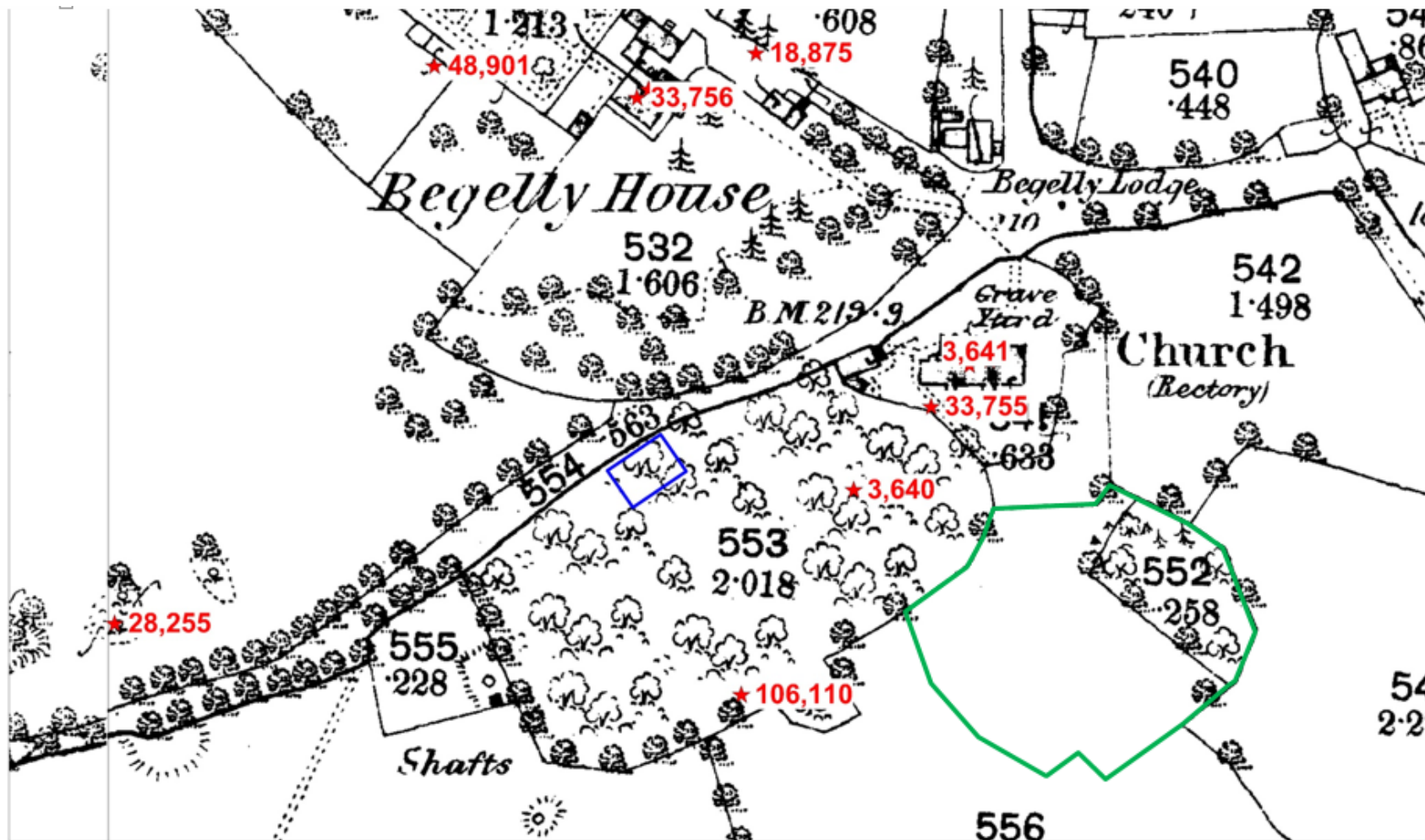


Figure 4: Extract of the 1889 1st edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map showing the development area outlined in blue. Historical and archaeological sites recorded on the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) are labelled in red and listed in Table 1 below. The archaeological evaluation undertaken in 2007 is outlined in green.

PRN	NAME	SITE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PERIOD	GRID REF
3640	Bottom Farm	Motte	The motte at Bottom Farm lies in close proximity to the medieval church, perhaps indicating a focus for medieval settlement. It is described by RCAHMW as a round camp up to 2.4m high and 50m across, with a bailey on the NW side (Davis 2000, 27). This also notes that it is a possible ringwork as opposed to motte (ibid). Nothing now survives above ground, with the last remains being cleared in 1955 (Hull 2005, 47). The motte may have been an outlying stronghold of Manorbier lordship (Davis 2007, 27). There is also an indication that the castle formed the centre of the former Manor of Begelly (Hull 2005, 47). F Murphy 2018	Medieval	SN11780728
3641	Begelly Parish Church; St Mary's	Church	Medieval parish church, first mentioned in 1291 Taxatio. Polygonal churchyard. Adjacent to former motte. Original dedication uncertain. At least 2 former dependent chapelries (PRNs 3521 and 46768). No current evidence of early medieval date. NDL 2002 <i>Grade II* listed building Ref No 6045</i>	Medieval	SN11810731
18875	Begelly	School	19th century school building located in the centre of Begelly, identified from cartographic sources.	Post medieval	SN11760739
28255	Begelly	Mine Shaft	19th century coal workings	Post medieval	SN1159507254
33755	Begelly	Almshouse	Almshouses have been recorded to the west of Begelly parish church on old maps. No remains survive. Exact location unknown.	Post medieval	SN118073
33756	Begelly House	Mansion	The Cadw listing describes it as: 'An early C19 gentleman's mansion, first mentioned as the address of J M Child in a legal case of 1838. It was probably built by Child (b.1794). The Child family were landowners and coal owners in Begelly'. Historic mapping shows that the house once had formal gardens to the north. The house still stands and is in private ownership. F Murphy 2018 <i>Grade II listed building Ref No 18275</i>	Post medieval	SN11730738
48901	Begelly House	Building	Rectangular building identified from historic mapping situated on the south side of the formal gardens of Begelly House.	Post medieval	SN1168007390
106110	Begelly	Mine Shaft	Marked as 'Old Shaft' on the 1921 Geological Survey map, with 'Trench' marked close by.	Post medieval	SN11750723

Table 2: Known archaeological sites recorded in the vicinity of Woodlands on the HER.

2.3 Previous Archaeological Investigations

2.3.1 Between 2006 and 2011 archaeological investigations were undertaken at Church Lane close, approximately 100m southeast of the current development site (Location shown on Figure 3) to evaluate the potential impact of a proposed housing development upon any archaeological features (Schlee 2006; Poucher and Schlee 2015).

2.3.2 The results of the archaeological investigations has been summarised as:

".....identified evidence of activity on the site from the Bronze Age through to the present day. Evidence of possible Neolithic tree clearance and flint artefacts recovered in the 2006 evaluation are now considered more likely to be of early Bronze Age date following a radiocarbon date from charcoal recovered from within one of the excavated tree throws. Another feature suggestive of possible settlement activity excavated during the 2006 evaluation was radiocarbon dated to the early medieval period (mid 10th to early 11th century).

A series of medieval phases of activity were identified on the site during the investigations. A large ditch appears to be a defensive feature defining an enclosure around the former castle motte. A drainage ditch also appears to be associated with this castle site. Some light structural remains were identified in between the castle ditch and the drainage ditch; these were subsequently overlain by parallel boundary ditches. The castle is little-documented but is believed to be an Anglo-Norman castle, presumably established therefore at some point in the late 11th or 12th century. Ceramic evidence suggests that it was likely these phases of activity were abandoned in the 13th century, possibly corresponding with the establishment of the nearby Parish Church. From the excavated evidence and surrounding topographical features the projected outline of the castle site is suggested.

The final phase of activity appears to be agricultural in character, the pottery indicating a late 17th to 19th century date. One post medieval field boundary was recorded on site" (Schlee 2015).

3 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014).
- 3.1.2 A written scheme of investigation was prepared by DAT Archaeological Services detailing the proposed archaeological works, which was approved by DAT-DM in their capacity as advisors to the local planning authority prior to the works commencing.
- 3.1.3 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. A written, drawn and photographic record was maintained throughout this watching brief. All contexts encountered during this watching brief were recorded.
- 3.1.4 A single site visit was made on 31st January 2018 to undertake the archaeological watching brief during ground works that had the potential to expose, damage or even destroy underlying archaeological remains. This included the mechanical stripping of the proposed footprint of the extension and excavation of three east-west aligned foundation trenches.
- 3.1.5 The machining was undertaken by the site contractors, Dorian Phillips and Partners Ltd, using a large 360 excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide flat bladed bucket for initial stripping and a 0.60m wide toothed bucket for foundation excavation.

3.2 Timetabling of Fieldwork

- 3.2.1 The former house extension had been demolished to ground level prior to the watching brief commencing, as agreed with the developers.
- 3.2.2 The watching brief took place on 31st January 2018 during mostly fine weather conditions with occasional showers.

3.3 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

- 3.3.1 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 2011), and the procedures recommended by the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth.
- 3.3.2 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.
- 3.3.3 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.

4. RESULTS

- 4.1 Prior to the arrival of the archaeologist, the previous extension had been demolished and the resultant material stockpiled on the concrete slab for the extension (Photo 2; Figure 5).



Photo 2: View northwest across development area towards Woodlands, showing demolition material for former extension on western side of site.



Photo 3: Area of the previous garden of Woodlands. The area had been de-vegetated and tracked over prior to the arrival of the archaeologist.

- 4.2 The eastern half of the development site (previously the garden for Woodlands) had been stripped of vegetation and partially tracked over by machinery (Photo 3; Figure 5).
- 4.3 The eastern (former garden) side of the proposed extension was machine stripped under archaeological supervision to the level of the top of archaeology (Figure 5). A series of irregular shaped features were identified cut into the underlying natural geology, which comprised a mix of orange and grey clay / stony rab (Photos 4 and 5).



Photo 4: View south across the stripped and hand cleaned area showing natural soils and irregular shaped features.

- 4.4 Sample excavation of these irregular shaped features indicated that the fills comprised very friable dark grey brown silt clay soils with humic material and lots of roots (Photos 4 and 5). The edges and bases of the features were discernible, but they were irregular shaped and contained roots running into the natural soils. The features would appear to have been caused by vegetation and most likely tree throws (root bowls of former trees that stood in the area).
- 4.5 Fragments of 18th century Devon Gravel Tempered ware pottery were found during hand cleaning of the area, but it was definite which deposit or feature they originated from.



Photo 5: View east across the stripped and hand cleaned area on the eastern side of the development area showing irregular features and roots.

- 4.6 Following recording of the eastern side of the development area, the rubble from the former extension and its floor was moved onto it by the machine to form a levelled area. Three foundation trenches were then excavated along the northern and southern edges of the proposed extension (Figure 5), with a third trench through the middle. These were aligned roughly east to west and were excavated by a 0.60m wide toothed bucket (necessary for the width of foundations and in order that rubble could be removed).
- 4.7 Each of the three observed foundation trenches were excavated through made ground associated with the former extension and landscaping associated with the original building of Woodlands (Photos 6 and 7). At the base of each trench natural ground was exposed, consisting of a mix of grey and orange clay/rab with distinct bands of fine coal material, believed to be natural as opposed to redeposited (coal deposits are known in the area).
- 4.8 Unfortunately due to the use of a toothed bucket it was not possible to discern if the possible tree throws seen to the east extended into this area.
- 4.9 The three trenches were excavated deeper to the east to compensate for the sloping ground level on this side of the site and the softer nature of the underlying natural subsoils. The rubble from the former extension was gradually moved eastwards as the foundation trenches were excavated (Photo 7). The final foundation trench that would have run north to south at the eastern end of the three foundation trenches was not observed as it lay within the area previously stripped and recorded (Photo 8).



Photo 6: Northern foundation trench excavated along the length of the extension showing layers of redeposited material above natural subsoils.



Photo 7: View roughly west-southwest across the footprint of the proposed extension following the excavation of the three foundation trenches.



Photo 8: View south at eastern end of the three foundation trenches along the area where the eastern foundation trench was to be located.

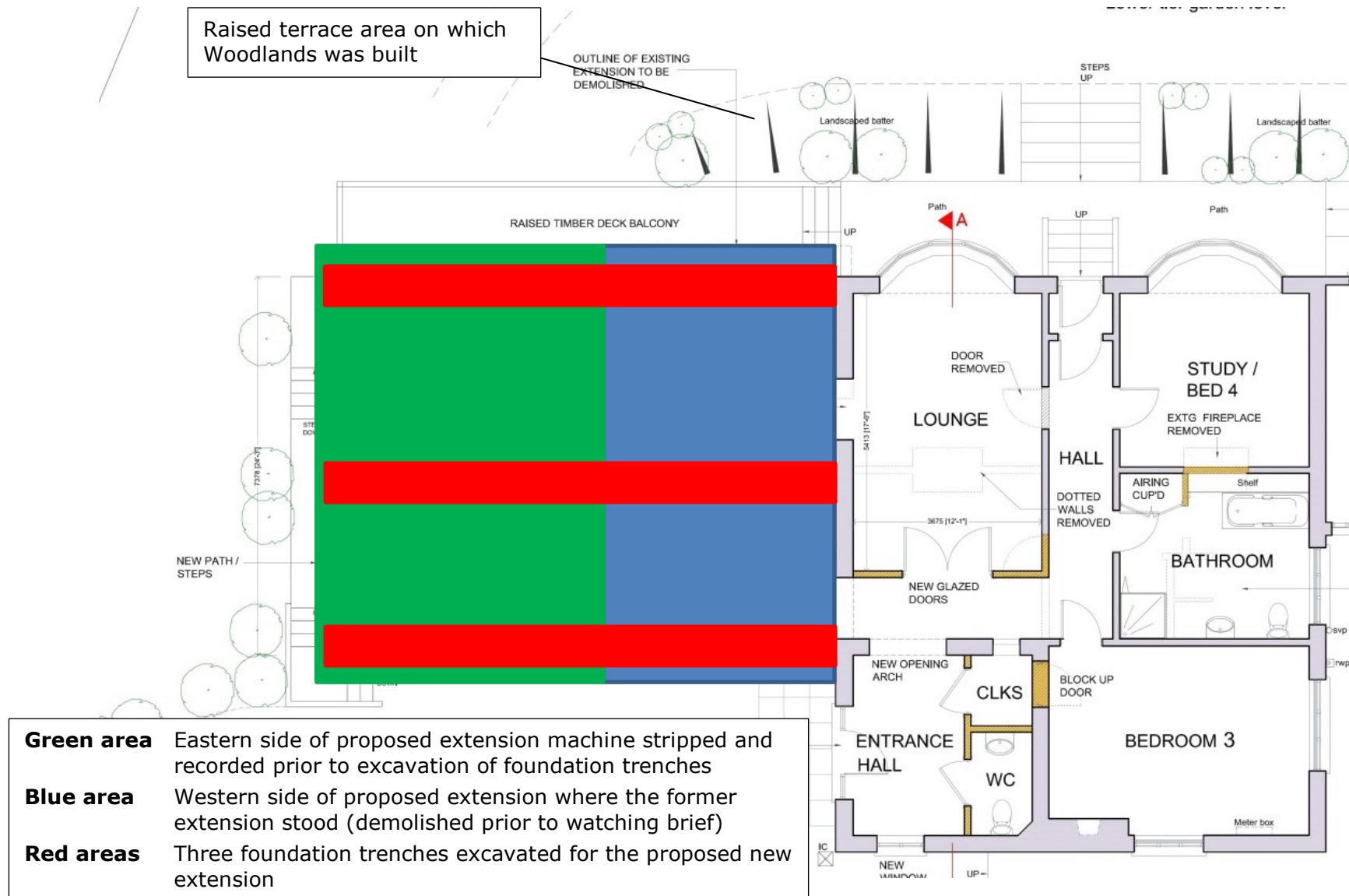


Figure 5: Watching brief areas discussed in text overlain on proposed ground floor layout of the extension (plan supplied by client).

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Results of the archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks for the new proposed new extension at Woodlands, Begelly have demonstrated that they did not impact upon any significant archaeological remains or deposits.
- 5.2 On the eastern side of the proposed extension, it was possible to strip the site to the top of archaeology and observe a series of archaeological features cutting into the natural soils. These were irregular areas of very friable and dark material similar to the topsoil. The irregular edges and bases of these features and with numerous root holes would suggest that they are the remains of former vegetation, such as tree throws (the root bowls of former trees). The area is marked as woodland on the 1889 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4) and is presumably the reason the house obtained its name of 'Woodlands'. The features appear to relate to former trees removed from the site before the house was built.
- 5.3 Landscaping associated with the original construction of Woodlands was such that the western side of the proposed extension comprised many layers of redeposited soils lying below the former concrete floor of the extension and the underlying natural soils. These were associated with the platform which had been constructed on the south facing slope on which the original property of Woodlands was built in the mid-20th century. The ground level dropped to the east beyond the former extension onto a slope which presumably represented the original ground level of the south facing hillslope.
- 5.4 No evidence for medieval (or earlier) archaeology was found within the site area. This could indicate that medieval activity was focused to the southeast of the current development site, perhaps closer to St Mary's Church and within the area of the 2006 - 2011 archaeological investigations.

6 SOURCES

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Database

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record, housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust at Corner House, 6 Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6AE

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

Cof Cymru - National Historic Assets of

Wales <http://cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/recordsv1/cof-cymru/?lang=en>

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Mawrth 2018
March 2018

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

JAMES MEEK

Swydd / Position: **HEAD OF DAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES**

Llofnod / Signature



Date 13/03/2018

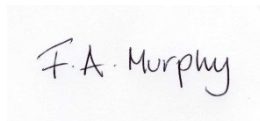
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/ This report has been checked and approved by

FRAN MURPHY

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

Swydd / Position: **PROJECT MANAGER, DAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES**

Llofnod / Signature



Date 14/03/2018

*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.*

