

# **CHURCHVIEW, WHITCHURCH, SOLVA, PEMBROKESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**



Prepared by DAT Archaeological Services  
For: Nigel and Jill Mengham



## DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2018/16  
RHIF Y DIGWYLLIAD / EVENT RECORD NO. 112038

Mawrth 2018  
March 2018

# CHURCHVIEW, WHITCHURCH, SOLVA PEMBROKESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Gan / By

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**CHURCHVIEW, WHITCHURCH, SOLVA, PEMBROKESHIRE**  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**CONTENTS**

	<b>SUMMARY</b>	1
<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	2
	<b>Project Proposals and Commission</b>	2
	<b>Scope of the Project</b>	2
	<b>Report Outline</b>	3
	<b>Abbreviations</b>	3
	<b>Illustrations</b>	3
	<b>Timeline</b>	3
<b>2</b>	<b>THE SITE</b>	6
	<b>2.1 Location and Topography</b>	6
	<b>2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background</b>	6
<b>3</b>	<b>WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY</b>	10
	<b>3.1 Fieldwork</b>	10
	<b>3.2 Timetabling of Fieldwork</b>	10
	<b>3.3 Post Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving</b>	10
<b>4</b>	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	12
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	14
<b>6</b>	<b>SOURCES</b>	19
<b>7</b>	<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>	19

**FIGURES**

<b>Figure 1:</b>	Site location plan showing development area	4
<b>Figure 2:</b>	Development proposals for septic tank and soakaway on land south of Churchview, Whitchurch	5
<b>Figure 3:</b>	Extract of the 1838 tithe map showing development area	7
<b>Figure 4:</b>	Extract of the 1889 OS 1 <sup>st</sup> edition map showing sites recorded on the HER within 150m of the development	9
<b>Figure 5:</b>	Extract of the OS 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition map of 1907 showing location of development	9
<b>Figure 6:</b>	Location of soakaway trenches on common land south of Churchview, Whitchurch	11
<b>Figure 7:</b>	Drainage trenches and extent of deposit (02)	13

**TABLES**

<b>Table 1:</b>	Archaeological and historical timeline for Wales	3
<b>Table 2:</b>	Known archaeological and historical sites recorded on the HER within 150m of the development	8

## PHOTOGRAPHS

<b>Photo 1:</b>	View south along Trench 1. Deposit (02) (modern track) visible in section	15
<b>Photo 2:</b>	View south along Trench 1 within common land	16
<b>Photo 3:</b>	View northeast along Trenches 2 and 3	16
<b>Photo 4:</b>	View southeast, showing Trenches 2 and 3, with St David's Church in the background	17
<b>Photo 5:</b>	View north showing deposit (02) (modern track) in section	17
<b>Photo 6:</b>	View northeast showing herringbone arrangement of trenches	18

**CHURCHVIEW, WHITCHURCH, SOLVA, PEMBROKESHIRE:  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**SUMMARY**

*DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Nigel and Jill Mengham to undertake a watching brief during the excavation of soakaway trenches on common land to the south of the property Churchview, Whitchurch, Solva, Pembrokeshire, NGR SM 79952548.*

*The requirement for a scheme of archaeological mitigation had been placed upon the development proposals (Planning Application NP/17/0456/FUL) by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority following advice from their archaeological advisors, Dyfed Archaeological Trust – Development Management.*

*The condition had been placed on the planning decision because the development area (a triangle of common land) lies in close proximity to the parish church of St David (PRN 2675). The church, which sits within a rectilinear churchyard, was heavily restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but has medieval origins. Historic mapping depicts a standing stone (PRN 2676) positioned 20m north of the church (described in the OS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1907, as 'Cross (remains of)').*

*The watching brief was undertaken on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018. A 360° excavator fitted with a toothed bucket was used to excavate the trenches.*

*Approximately 21.0m of trenches, measuring 0.7m wide and in a herringbone arrangement, were monitored during the watching brief. The soil profiles revealed in all the trenches were identical and comprised a topsoil layer sitting directly above natural ground with no intervening subsoil; apart from a modern deposit of clay and stone (02) recorded within specific areas of the trench sections between topsoil and natural ground. All the trenches were devoid of any archaeological remains or deposits.*

*It is more than likely that deposit (02) seen in section was a result of the construction of a temporary trackway when the original septic tank was installed sometime in the 1980s. The watching brief indicates that the development area contained no significant archaeological remains or deposits. Nevertheless, there is still potential that significant archaeological deposits could be present in the vicinity of this development.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Proposals and Commission**

- 1.1.1 DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Nigel and Jill Mengham to provide an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the excavation of soakaway trenches for a drainage field on a small, triangular parcel of common land adjacent to the southern boundary of the property known as Churchview, Whitchurch, Solva, Pembrokeshire centred on NGR SN 79952548 (Figures 1 and 2).
- 1.1.2 The proposed development lies within close proximity to the parish church of St David (PRN 2675) – a building with medieval origins. Historic mapping depicts a standing stone (PRN 2676), 20m east of the development site that might have been the remains of a stone cross that no longer survives today.
- 1.1.3 Due to the potential for medieval archaeological remains to be present at the development site the archaeological advisors (Dyfed Archaeological Trust – Development Management (DAT-DM)) to the planning authority (Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority) recommended an archaeological watching brief be attached to planning permission for the development (NP/17/0456/FUL).
- 1.1.4 Discussions with DAT-DM concluded that the watching brief would only be required where the proposed groundworks were carried out in the area of undisturbed common land. The re-siting of the septic tank within the curtilage of the property Churchview did not require a watching brief.

### **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 the works, which was approved by the archaeological advisor to the planning authority prior to the commencement of the works. The project objectives were:
- Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology by which DAT Archaeological Services will undertake the archaeological watching brief.
  - To monitor ground works in order to identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
  - To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed 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.
- 1.2.2 The overall work was summarised as: *"Archaeological attendance during ground works associated the installation of a new septic tank, drainage and soakaway at the property known as Churchview, Whitchurch, Solva, 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."*
- 1.2.3 The archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and their codes of conduct (CIfA 2014).

### 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). 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 <sup>1</sup> –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20 <sup>th</sup> century onwards	

**Table 1:** Archaeological and historical timeline for Wales

<sup>1</sup> 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:** Site location of development showing Whitchurch in red circle.

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No. 100020930



**Figure 2:** Development proposals for Septic tank and soakaway on land south of Churchview, Whitchurch, Solva.



## **2. THE SITE**

### **2.1 Location and Topography**

- 2.1.1 Whitchurch is a small settlement approximately 1km north of the village of Solva and 4kms east of the city of St David's (Figure1).
- 2.1.2 The site is located on a triangular, grassy area of common land measuring approximately 14m x 16m x 20m. To the east it is bounded by a public highway leading north to Caerfallteg; to the west by a hedge bank and to the north by a hedge bank that separates the common land from the property Churchview (Figures 2 & 6). The site is level, with an average elevation of 82.5m OD.
- 2.1.3 The underlying bedrock is the Solva Group of Sandstone and Agrillaceous rocks formed during the Cambrian Period.

### **2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 2.2.1 The 1838 tithe map (Figure 3) for Whitchurch shows the development area to be an open space, free of boundaries and buildings (Figure 5). The accompanying apportionment describes that north of the proposed development Field number 150 as a cottage and garden, occupied by Thomas Jenkins and owned by James Thomas, and Field number 151 as a cottage and garden occupied by John Williams and owned by the Rev. George Harries.
- 2.2.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> (1889) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (1907) editions OS maps show (apart from boundary additions) show very little difference in the settlement between 1907 and the 1838 tithe map (Figures 4 & 5).
- 2.2.3 The Dyfed Historic Environment Record (HER) records 3 sites within 150m of the development area (Figure 4).
- 2.2.4 Approximately 20m to the southeast of the development site lies St David's Church (PRN 2675) a Grade II listed Building. It has medieval origins (first noted in a document dated 1291) but was heavily restored 1872-4.
- 2.2.5 The 1<sup>st</sup> (1889) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (1907) edition OS maps depict a standing stone (PRN 2676) approximately 20m east of the development site. A visit to the church in 1921 noted the presence of 'an erect stone 22 inches above the soil and 19 inches in breadth; said with much probability to be the stump of a cross or calvary'. No remains of the stone are now visible on the ground.



**Figure 3:** Extract from the 1838 tithe map showing approximate location of development site (outlined in red).

PRN	Site Name	Summary	Period	Grid reference
2675	St David's Church	<p>Medieval parish church, small, comprising chancel, nave, and north transept with skew-passage, situated within a rectilinear churchyard, bounded by roads on its north and west sides. Historic Ordnance Survey mapping depicts a square churchyard, whose western boundary did not extend as far as the road. It also depicts a standing stone some 20m north (across the road) of the church building. The church was a parish church in the medieval period and was first noted in documents of 1291, when it belonged to the Cistercian Order.</p> <p>It is dedicated to the 'Celtic' St David and occupies a hilltop location but there is no current evidence for an early medieval site.</p> <p>The Church was heavily restored in 1872-1874, to the designs of C.E. Buckeridge. The chapel roof is nineteenth century in date, as is the pulpit. All openings are nineteenth century in date and framed in purple stone. The east stained glass windows dates to 1903.</p> <p><b>Grade II listed Building Ref No 12474</b></p>	Medieval/ Post medieval	SM79992544
2676	Maen Dewi Stone	<p>The RCAHM described, after a visit in 1921 to the parish church of St David in Whitchurch the presence, 'immediately in front of the churchyard gate....an erect stone 22 inches above the soil and 19 inches in breadth; said with much probability to be the stump of a cross, or part of a calvary'. The Ordnance Survey carried out a field visit to the site in 1966 but the relevant OS card is missing from the DAT HER, however the site is recorded on early edition OS maps as 'Cross remains'. The stone is also recorded as being a possible Earl Medieval inscribed monolith. Other authorities have proposed that it may be a natural feature. A field visit at the end of November 2010 to the given NGR failed to locate the stone. R Ramsey 2011.</p>	Early medieval/ medieval	SM79972547
13999	Whitchurch	Common Land	Medieval/ Post- medieval	SM79982549

**Table 2:** Archaeological and historical sites recorded on the Dyfed HER within 150m of the proposed development; shown in Figure 4.



### **3. WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork**

- 3.1.1 A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at the site which had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains. This comprised a series of investigation trenches opened across the northern half of the development site (Figure 6; Photos 1-6).
- 3.1.2 Ground reduction work was undertaken by the site contractors using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket.
- 3.1.3 All archaeological deposits revealed during the groundworks were examined and recorded to an appropriate level.
- 3.1.4 Recording of all archaeological features or deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual<sup>2</sup> used by DAT Archaeological Services.
- 3.1.5 The work followed the Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief as laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014) and adhered to their code of conduct (CIfA 2014).

#### **3.2 Timetabling of Fieldwork**

- 3.2.1 The watching brief took place on the 7th March 2018. The weather during the day was fine and dry.

#### **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.

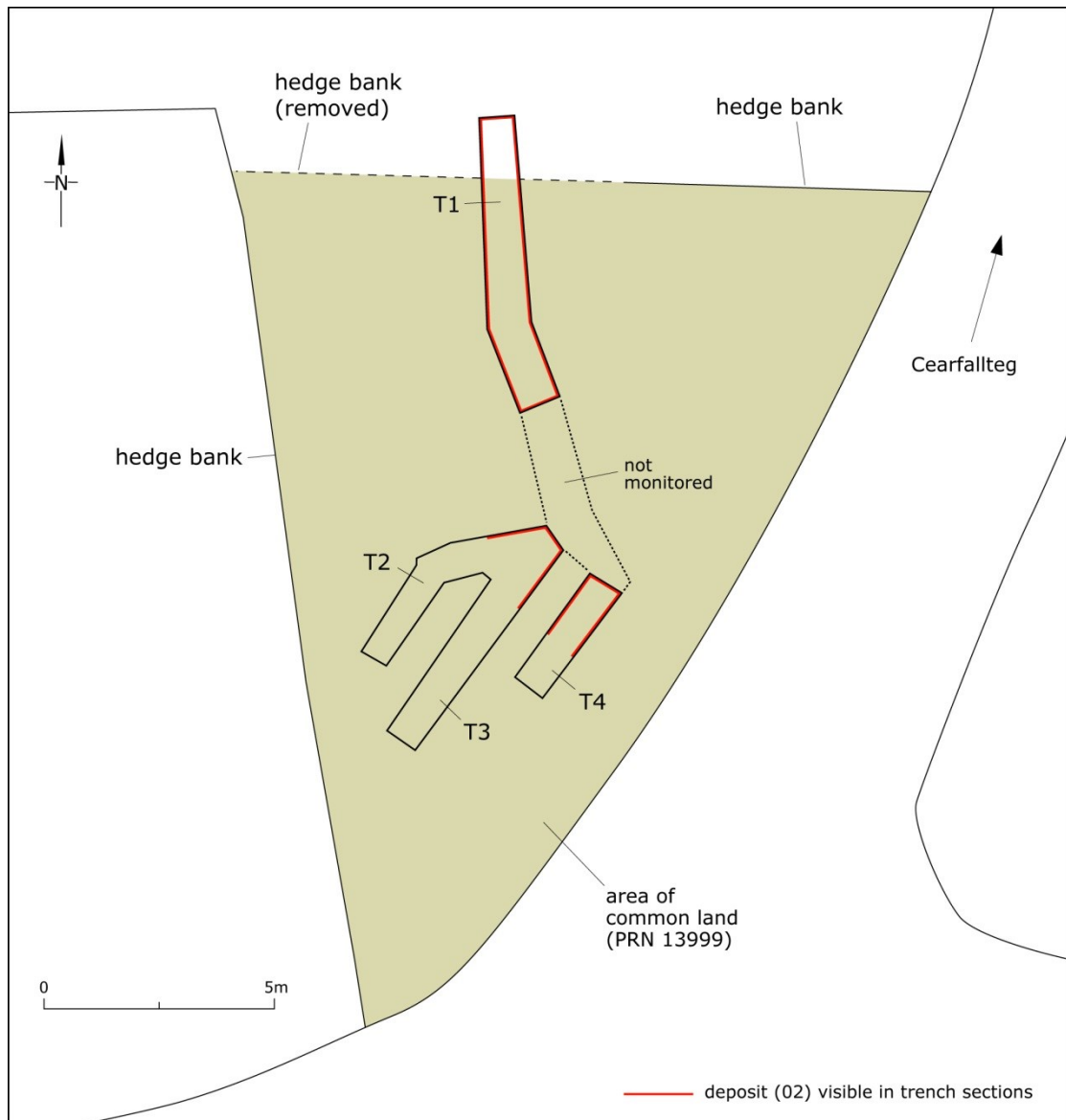


**Figure 6:** Location of soakaway trenches on common land south of Churchview, Whitchurch.



#### **4. RESULTS**

- 4.1 Four drainage trenches were excavated and monitored. It was deemed unnecessary to monitor the final trench cut that connected Trench 1 to the other trenches (Figure 7).
- 4.2 Trench 1 was 6.3m long and 0.7m wide and at least 1.6m deep. The topsoil (01) was a medium brown, silty-clay and 0.3m deep. Below this stood a 0.2m thick layer of mixed sandy-clay (02), with small to medium stone inclusions. The natural geology (03), which stood 0.5m below the surface, consisted of an orange-brown, sandy-clay with the odd stone inclusion (Photos 1 and 2).
- 4.3 Trench 2 was approximately 5.2m long, 0.7m wide and 2.3m deep. The soil profile consisted of a medium brown, silty-clay (01) below which stood the natural geology (03). At the northern end of the trench the deposit (02) was visible between (01) and (03) (Photos 3, 4, 5 and 6).
- 4.4 Trench 3 was 5.2m long 0.7m wide and 2.2m deep. The soil profile consisted of topsoil (01), a medium brown, silty-clay below which stood the natural geology (03). At the north end of the trench the modern deposit (02) was visible between (01) and (03) (Photos 3, 4 and 6).
- 4.5 Trench 4 was 2.9m long, 0.7m wide and 2m deep. The soil profile consisted of topsoil (01) which stood directly upon the natural geology (03). The deposit (02) was visible in the northern half of the trench section situated between (01) and (02) (Photo 6).



**Figure 7:** Drainage trenches and extent of deposit (02) (outlined in red).

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 A watching brief was carried out during groundworks associated with the excavation of a number of soak away trenches for a drainage field on common land south of Churchview, Whitchurch, Solva Pembrokeshire. The development site lies in an area with an identified potential for archaeological remains of possible medieval date to be present. Thus a condition was placed on planning permission for the development requiring an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during groundworks.
- 5.2 The main groundworks for the project involved excavating 21.0m of trenches to accommodate the perforated pipework necessary for the drainage field. The trenches were excavated using a mechanical digger fitted with a toothed bucket.
- 5.3 The watching brief identified a 0.2m thick deposit of mixed clay and stone (02) directly below the topsoil. This layer was visible in all of the trenches. The deposit is modern in date and is possibly material used to construct a temporary track when the first septic tank was installed sometime in the 1980s.
- 5.4 No further significant archaeological deposits were identified within the development site. However, it is still possible that significant archaeological remains could still lie within the vicinity of the development area.



**Photo 1:** View south along Trench 1. Deposit (02) (modern track) visible in facing section. 1m scale.





**Photo 2:** View south along Trench 1 excavated within common land.



**Photo 3:** View northeast along Trenches 2 and 3. 1m scale





**Photo 4:** View southeast showing Trenches 2 and 3 and St David's Church.  
1m scale



**Photo 5:** View north showing deposit (02) (modern track) in section. 1m scale





**Photo 6:** View northeast showing herringbone arrangement of trenches.  
1m scale

## 6. SOURCES

### 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/>

Cof Cymru - National Historic Assets of Wales

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

### Bibliography

Brown, D, 2011, *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum

CIfA 2014, *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, December 2014

CIfA 2014, *Code of Conduct*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, December 2014

### Websites

British Geological Survey: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>  
- accessed 27/01/2016

## 7. PROJECT ARCHIVE

Project Number: FS17\_071

ERN: 112038

16 x digital photographs; Film Number 112038

1x photo catalogue



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PEMBROKESHIRE**

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Mawrth 2018  
March 2018

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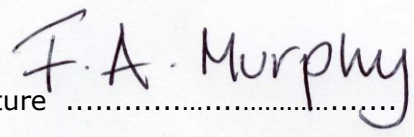
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Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith  
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