

**DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST LTD**



06/08/96

**PICTON RISING MAIN  
PRIORY TRIAL PITS  
HAVERFORDWEST**



**AUGUST 1996**  
**Project No. PRN 33206**

**Commissioned by: ACER**

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*of*  
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## **Summary**

Archaeological evaluation of a section of a proposed pipeline did not reveal any features of significance in the five trenches excavated; there is, therefore, no evidence to indicate that re-routing is necessary. However, due to the proximity to the prime medieval archaeological site of Haverfordwest Priory, the proposed route being within an area designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and with the likelihood of medieval/post medieval trackways crossing this line, an archaeological watching brief with access for recording is deemed desirable, and should be allowed for in the proposed construction programme. Scheduled Monument Consent for this route must be obtained from Cadw.

## **Purpose**

To evaluate the archaeological implications on a limited length of proposed pipeline to assess what, if any, action will be required, should the proposal proceed.

## **Location**

The proposed length of pipeline (SM 957152) evaluated lay in the edge of a field adjacent to the ruins of Haverfordwest Priory, parallel to the fence and embankment for Freeman's Way road (figure 1). The northern part of this pipeline is on flat wetland and peat bog but starts to rise towards the southern end.

## **Site History**

The adjacent Augustinian Priory was founded c1200 by Robert fitz Richard, lord of Haverfordwest. Its construction entailed digging into the base of the hill slope and depositing this material around the middle and eastern area of the church footings to form a raised platform out onto the, then tidal, salt marsh. On part of the edge of this reclaimed land a precinct wall was constructed (figure 1), probably overlooking a creek (figure 2), which may have been a landing area for vessels visiting the Priory or adjacent settlement. The Priory was of modest status. Outside the inner precinct there would have been a number of ancillary buildings, including in this case a mill (SM 959149), the site of which is now cut off from the Priory by Freeman's Way and the railway line. Around this religious enclave there grew a secular settlement of Haverford Parva (Little Haverford), before this was absorbed, at a much later date, by the expansion of the main town.

Closed by Henry VIII in 1536, the Priory's roofs, windows and finer stone were soon removed. After this the ruins appear to have steadily declined, during which time several antiquarians made drawings of the remains (figure 2). Some walls were probably demolished to provide building stone. From recent excavations by Cadw, there is evidence of a trackway across the site, possibly going to the former mill. There is also evidence for light industrial use and simple dwellings, probably extending into the 19th Century. This industrial activity was possibly, but not conclusively, associated with ship repairs.

After, or during this period the area appears to have been rough farmland. The present river bed position was probably not established until the construction of the railway embankment and bridge (figure 1). At this point the area between the embankment and the Priory became peat bog and wetland and rapidly silted. By the earlier part of this century the ruins had become very overgrown.

Neither during the later construction of the bypass road (Freemen's Way), nor the excavation for the gas main (adjacent to the proposed pipe line and the field fence) were any archaeological records made.

The first archaeological investigations of the Priory were undertaken during the 1920's. In the early 1980's Cadw took the site into guardianship and have been implementing a programme of excavations and consolidation to enable the site to be put on full public display. The whole of the field adjacent to the ruins, and in which lies the section of proposed pipeline under evaluation, was included in a revision of the Scheduled Ancient Monument area in the later 1980's.

## **Methodologies and Results**

This entailed a watching brief on five trial pits excavated by a mechanical (JCB) digger, records being made as necessary. Only limited historical documents were consulted as we are familiar with the adjacent site and area.

There was some confusion between the on-site agent Neil Margeston for Acer, Peter Moss from Thyssen Geotechnical and ourselves as to who was overseeing and positioning the trenches, other than two trial pits 3 and 4 (figure 1). It is evident that DAT had not been given the same brief as that for Thyssen in this matter. However it was decided on-site that in addition to the two test pits three minor trial trenches A, B and C (figure 1) would be undertaken under the responsibility of Acer and Thyssen, with the positions agreed with ourselves. The location of all these trenches differed from those originally laid out (TP1-5) in the DAT brief plan (figure 1) due to the undertakings of the Thyssen brief and practical considerations.

### **Trial Trench A**

This trench was aligned E-W. Dimensions approximately 2000mm long by 1500mm wide and 2200mm deep.

The lowest layer was a natural, geological deposit of orange brown clay with weathered sandstone?: from 800mm to 2200mm+ down.

Above was a naturally deposited grey clay layer: from 500mm to 800mm.

Above was a grey podsol clay layer: from 150mm to 500mm.



The surface layer was a very dark grey peat layer with surface vegetation: down to 150mm.

There was nothing of apparent archaeological significance and all layers appear to be naturally deposited.

### **Trial Trench B**

This trench was aligned N-S. Dimensions approximately 3500mm long by 1250mm wide and 1000mm deep. Located on rising ground.

The lowest layer encountered was a natural geological deposit of orange, slightly grey clay: from 540mm to 1000mm+ down.

Above was a grey podsol clay layer: from 450mm to 500mm.

Above was a very dark grey peat layer: from 300mm to 450mm.

Above was a brown clay layer and stone rubble, probably hardcore associated with the construction of Freeman's Way: from 100mm to 300mm.

The surface layer was of thin topsoil and turf: down to 100mm.

There was nothing of archaeological importance apparent within this trench.

### **Trial Trench C**

This trench was aligned WNW-ESE. Dimensions approximately 2900mm long by 1200mm wide and 2500mm deep.

The lowest layer encountered was a natural geological deposit of grey-blue clay-bonded gravel: from 2300mm to 2500mm down.

Above was a podsol grey clay, possibly former peat layer; possibly the silting up of the creek adjacent to the precinct wall: from 100mm to 2300mm.

Above was a very dark grey peat layer, possibly starting to build up in the post medieval/monastic period, on or near the surface of which were modern glass bottle fragments: from 700mm to 1000mm.

Above was a layer probably associated with the construction of Freeman's Way, of hard gravel and rubble: from 50mm to 700mm.

The surface layer was a thin layer of turf and topsoil: down to 50mm.

### **Test Pit 3**

This trench was aligned E-W. Dimensions approximately 4000mm long by 1250 wide and 3500mm+ deep. The probable water table was found at 3400mm.

The lowest layer encountered was a natural geological deposit of mixed grey-brown clay and sandy gravel with rare small rounded quartz? and/or sandstone, possibly river deposited and not considered to be manmade: from 1900mm to 3400mm+ down.

Above was a layer, of grey-brown silty clay with rare sub- angular gravel and some organic matter, possibly derived from silting of a creek. Two flint flakes were recovered, one of which appears manmade, the other awaits expert opinion; both are likely to be prehistoric stray finds (Primary Record Number for these flints 33209). A few flints have been found on the Priory excavation. Layer from 1100mm to 1900mm.

Above was a layer, possibly post medieval, of very dark grey peat with many large angular stone and a few pieces of horizontal timber. These stones may have formed a surface within the peat but this could not be ascertained due to rapid machine excavation. These stones appear to be deliberately deposited; possibly the peat has formed above them or the stones have sunk into the peat, as the upper 150mm of this layer appears to be mostly stone free. Neither their extent, function or date could be ascertained. Layer from 500mm to 1100mm

Above was a layer probably associated with the construction of Freeman's Way, composed of brown clay and rubble, including a length of electricity cable which later proved to be dead. Layer from 100mm to 500mm.

The surface layer was a turf topsoil layer: down to 100mm.

#### **Test Pit 4**

This trench was aligned E-W. Dimensions approximately 2400mm long by 1200 wide and 4000mm.

The lowest layer encountered was a natural geological deposit of orange-brown gravel with rounded, probably river worn, stones of sandstone and possibly dolerite. This layer was from 2700mm to 4000mm+ down.

Above was a natural geological deposit of bluish clay-bonded gravel. From 1750mm to 2700mm.

Above was a naturally deposited blue silty clay mixed with some gravel patches. This could be lower salt marsh deposit? From 1000mm to 1750mm.

Above was a dark humic band blending into a grey podsol below. This band would appear to represent a change in the local conditions. Combined material was from 700mm to 1000mm.

Above was a grey podsol clay. From 300mm to 700mm.

Above was a layer of very dark grey peat with a large amount of humic material. From approximately 100mm to 300mm.

Above this, but only at the eastern end of the pit, there was a hardcore rubble layer, probably from the construction of Freeman's Way.

The surface layer was turf and active peat and vegetation down to 100mm.

## **Discussion**

From the topographical and excavation evidence it is extremely likely that medieval and post medieval trackways ran between the Priory and the Priory mill sites. These paths should cross the southern end of this proposed pipe trench, and are likely to be on the area of rising ground. Here, should the pipeline proceed, an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken as the trench is cut. There is also the possibility of other structures coming to light on this higher ground.

From **Trial Trench C** it is apparent that there was a very steep fall from the monastic platform, built c1200, on which the precinct wall stood, into what is probably a former creek. The base of this creek is probably represented by the surface of the grey-blue bonded gravel. It should be anticipated that the remains of revetment for the platform, collapsed precinct wall and just possibly a landing-stage or quay could be located in the immediate vicinity. This area adjacent to the predicted precinct wall is therefore of particular archaeological importance and, should the pipeline proposal proceed, then this area of archaeological interest and the platform should be avoided.

The possible stone surface, encountered in **Test Pit 3** within the peat layer, was not found in any other trenches. Although a post medieval date would appear more likely, a medieval date association with the Priory cannot be ruled out. Therefore this area would be of archaeological interest should the pipe trench proceed.

The total length of the trial trenches represented approximately 6.5% of the length of pipeline to be evaluated. This exceeds slightly the normal 5% minimum recommendation. However, it is considered possible that the results from the southern end could easily differ from those observed in **Trial Trenches A and B** as the terrain is changing.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the pipe trench should keep as far away as possible from the east end of the church, the projected precinct wall and the platform on which it stands. When there is a detailed proposal for the cutting of this section of pipe trench, with construction methods and dimensions, which may affect on-site recording, both Cadw and the Curatorial branch of DAT should be approached for comments and recommendations.

Although outside our brief, we would recommend that you contact the Countryside Council for Wales, 40 High Street Haverfordwest, and Dyfed Wildlife Trust, 7 Market Street, Haverfordwest, as both bodies have shown interest in this field in the past.

## **Conclusion**

There is no apparent archaeological reason why the proposed pipeline should not proceed along the route evaluated, as long as a detailed proposal and method statement is put forward to Cadw and the Curatorial branch of DAT for comment, so that a detailed archaeological brief can be made. However, Scheduled Monument Consent must be obtained from Cadw for this part of the pipeline route. If SMC is given it will probably be conditional. The restrictions are likely to be for an archaeological watching brief with limited access recording time, with the most sensitive sections being those at the northern and southern ends.

## **Archive Deposition**

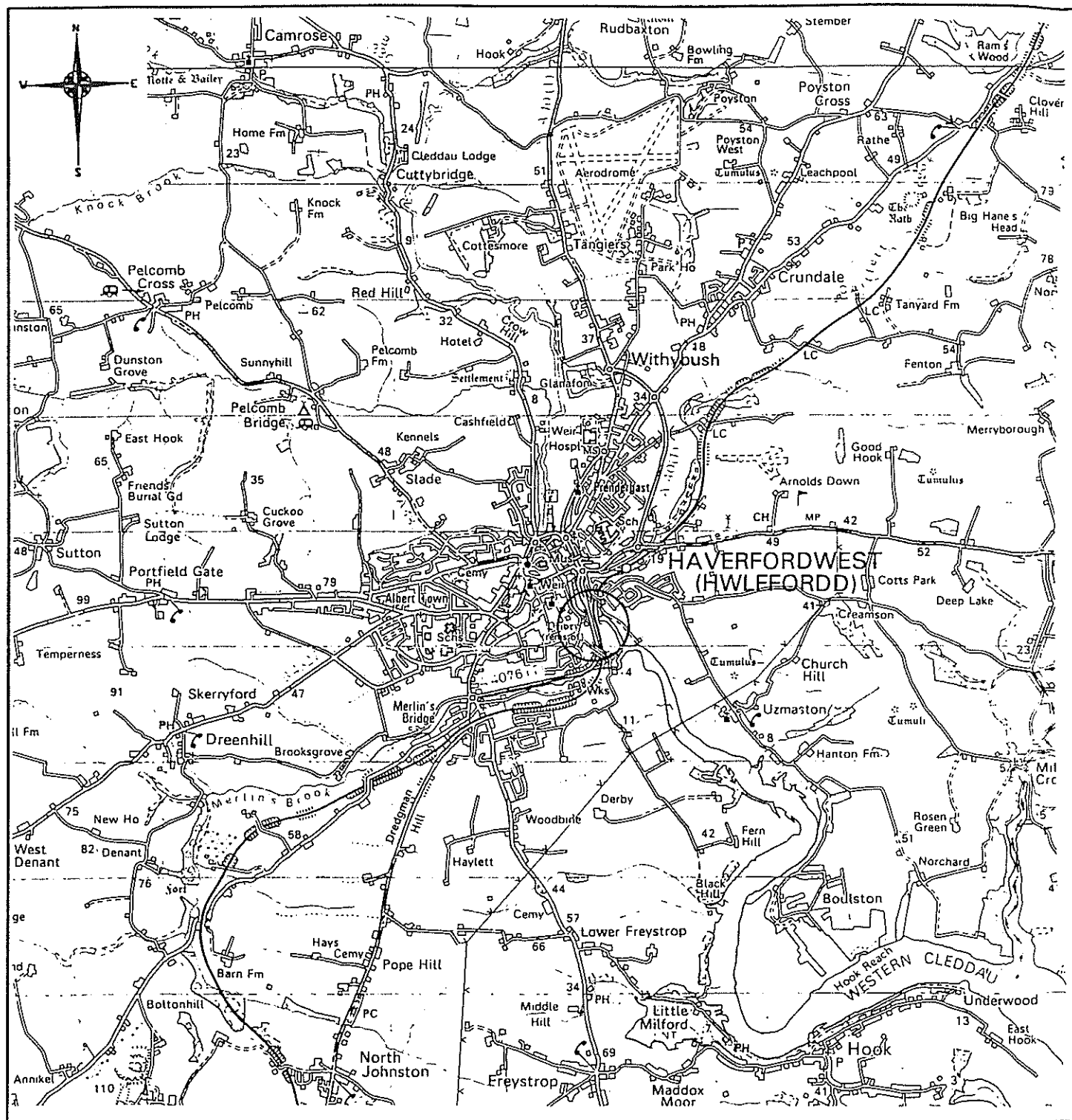
Final deposition with finds is likely to be Scolton Manor Museum, Haverfordwest. A copy of this report will also be sent to RCAHMW, Aberystwyth.

## **Bibliography**

Knowles D and Hadcock R N 1953 *Medieval Religious Houses of England and Wales*

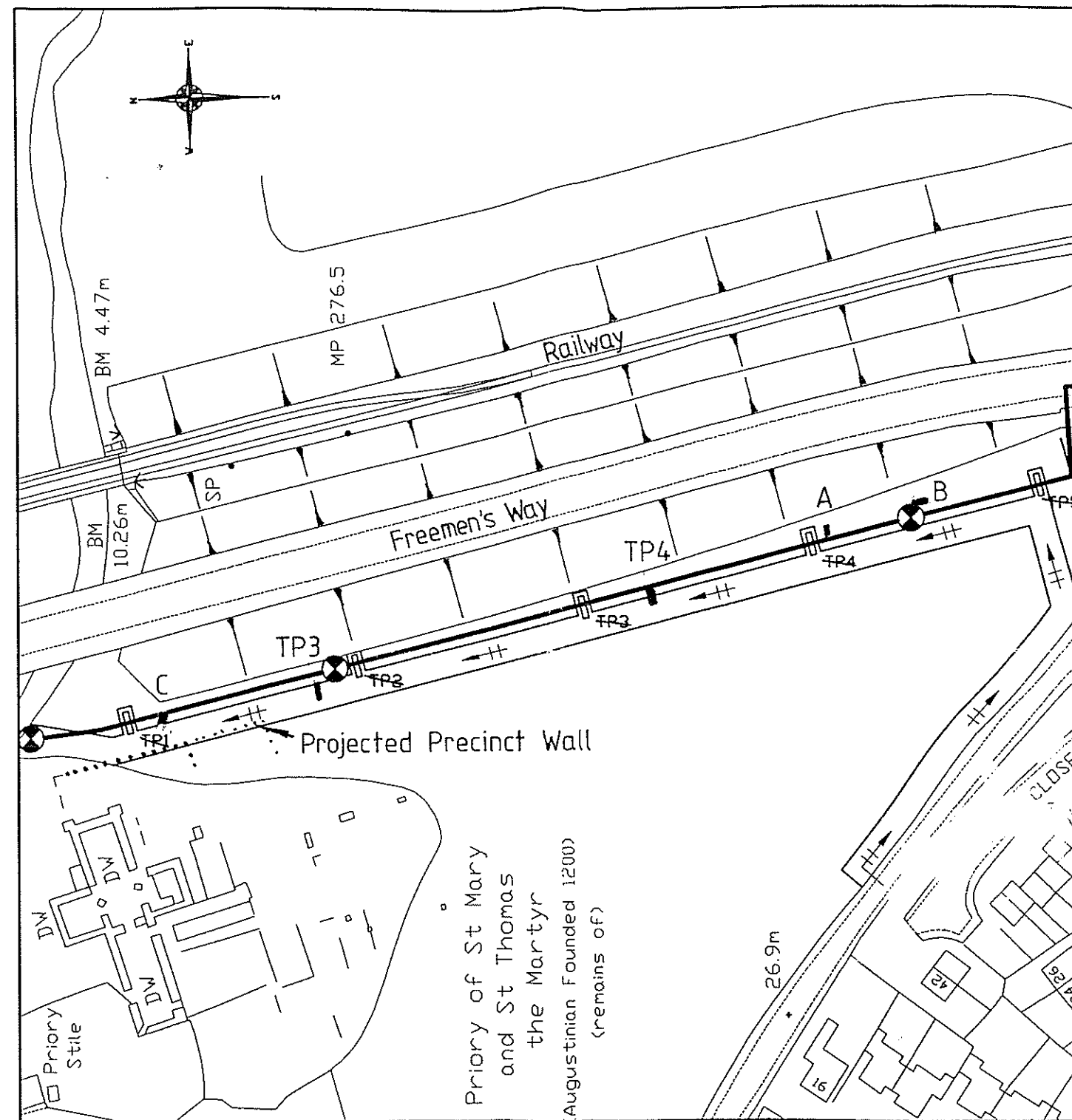
Rees S 1992 *Dyfed: A Guide to Ancient and Historic Wales*

Owner	Occupier As Owner	Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey map with the sanction of the controller of Her Majesty's stationery office. Crown Copyright reserved.	S.V.  Sluice Valve A.V.  Air Valve W.O.  Washout	F.H.  Fire Hydrant H.W.O.  Hydrant Washout M.H.  Manhole Chamber Uninterrupted Access	Main Pipeline 400 mm n.b. Red line indicates  line. Blue line indicates extent of 6 m Working width Contractors Access
		D.S. Sheet No. SM 95 15			



Location Plan  
Scale 1 : 50,000

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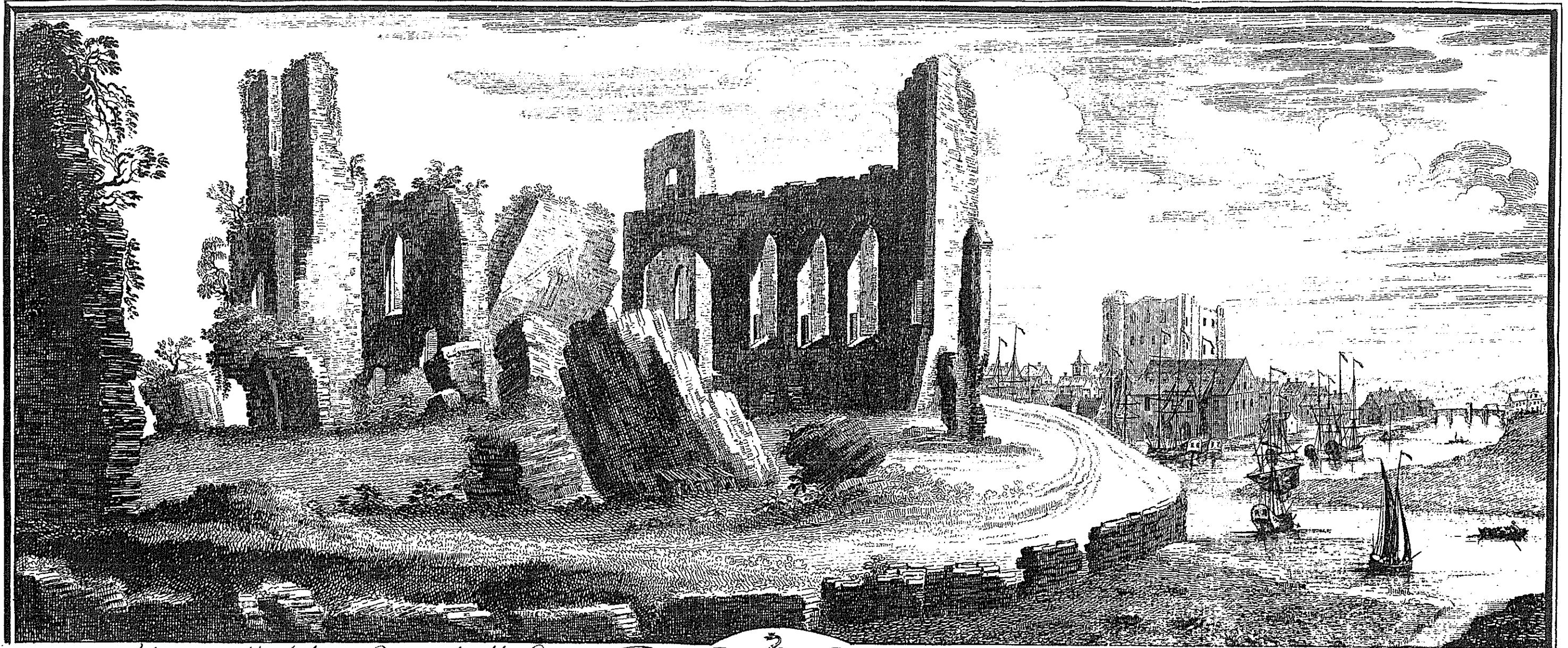
Route Plan  
Scale 1 : 1250

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Rev	Description of Issue / Revision	Drn.	Ckd.	Appd.	Date	Notes	Client	Project	acer/CONSULTANTS Flynnon Menter, Swansea Ind. Est., Swansea. SA7 9HW TEL: 01792 771188 FAX: 01792 701905	
1						1. Trial pits to be machine excavated 4x1x2m deep.	DWR-CYMRU WELSH WATER	PICTON RISING MAIN	Scale A3 1:1250 Date APR 1996	
2						2. Bore hole expository work to be 10m deep.		PIPELINE ROUTE PLAN LAND ENTRY PLAN	© Copyright Reserved	
Designed CCM Drawn R.G.A. Checked									Org No F0298022 Rev	
Document No Approved										



THE SOUTH-EAST VIEW OF HAVERFORD-WEST-PRIORY, IN THE COUNTY OF PEMBROKE.



To the Hon<sup>ble</sup> John Campbell Esq<sup>r</sup>  
one of the Lords of the Admiralty & Knight of the Shire  
for the County of Pembroke.

This Prospect is humbly Inscrib'd by  
his most Oblig'd Servants  
Sam<sup>l</sup> & Nath<sup>l</sup> Buck.



THIS Priory of Black Canons was founded by Robert de Haverford, he gave to it divers Churches & Tithes, in his Barony of Haverford, all which King Edward 3<sup>d</sup> in y<sup>e</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> Year of his Reign confirmed to them. About 70 Years ago, an Effigie was dug up, which seem'd to represent a Bishop, & is suppos'd to be that of David Cherbury, Bishop of Exeter in Ireland, & Arch-Deacon of Brecknock, who by his last Will, dated November 9<sup>th</sup> 1456. order'd himself to be Bury'd here, & left a Legacy towards y<sup>e</sup> rebuilding of y<sup>e</sup> Cloysters of this Priory. It is at present the Property of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> John Campbell Esq<sup>r</sup>. Ann<sup>o</sup> Val<sup>o</sup> 1739. 11:1  
Sam<sup>l</sup> & Nath<sup>l</sup> Buck. delin<sup>o</sup> et Sculp<sup>o</sup>. Publish'd according to Act of Parliament, April 5. 1740. *Speed. 155: 6: 1*

Figure 2