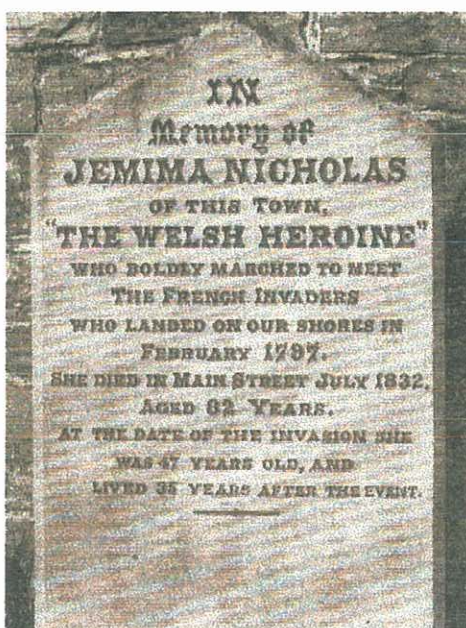


Proposed Last Invasion Centre Fishguard Pembrokeshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION Phase 1: desk-top assessment

Project Record No. 37405

April 1999



Commissioned by: Alec French Partnership, Bristol

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INTRODUCTION	1
HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND SITE HISTORY	3
SITE DESCRIPTION	5
GEOTECHNICAL DATA	6
ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF THE SITE	7
PROPOSED LOCATION OF EVALUATION TRENCHES FOR PHASE 3 OF THE EVALUATION	8
REFERENCES	9
CATALOGUE OF RESEARCH ARCHIVE	10
FIGURES 1-7	

INTRODUCTION

This report is the desk-top assessment (Phase 1) of an archaeological evaluation for the proposed development of the Last Invasion Centre, Fishguard. A brief for the evaluation was prepared by Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Heritage Management for Alec French Partnership as part of pre-planning discussions with Pembrokeshire County Council. The brief was circulated to Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Field Operations who submitted a specification for the work on 11 February 1999. The specification was accepted by Alec French Partnership with a request that the Phase 1 element of the evaluation should commence.

The scope of this report is limited to material readily available in the Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record and in Pembrokeshire County Record Office. Record numbers quoted in this report are those used by the Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record.

The proposed development site was visited on 6 April 1999. The area, which is located to the rear of the Farmer's Arms public house, was found to be in a run down condition, containing a considerable amount of rubbish and scrub. There is no easy access to the northern part of the site, except through the public house. This may cause problems when undertaking Phase 3 of the project, field evaluation.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND SITE HISTORY

The early history of the settlement of Fishguard is unclear; it has not been extensively researched. Sambrook (1997) has noted the relatively large number of finds of Roman date, in particular coin hoards, from the Fishguard and Goodwick area which he suggests indicates a densely occupied area in the Roman Period. However there are no recorded finds of Roman date close to the development area. It was considered that a carved stone found in Fishguard churchyard was a example of an Early Christian Monument (PRN 5010) and therefore demonstrated pre-Norman ecclesiastic use of the area and possible concomitant settlement. However, recent research has demonstrated that the stone is of probable 13th century date.

The main archaeological and historical interest of Fishguard is therefore the Medieval and post-Medieval town. Soulsby (1983, 134) considers that the town was founded in the late 11th-century when Martin of Tours granted 'Abergwaun' to Jordan of Cantington along with other lands in the lordship of Cemais. This foundation of a town at this date is unlikely as the Welsh soon re-conquered South Wales. However, by 1115 Cemais was in the hands of the Anglo-Norman lord Robert Fitzmartin (Murphy 1994, 57). He initially founded his castle at Nevern, and later, in the late 12th-century, he transferred it to Newport, where he also founded a town. It is unlikely that Fitzmartin would allow a second town within the lordship of Cemais to compete with his new foundation at Newport, and therefore the existence of a sizable settlement at Fishguard prior to the 13th century must be questioned.

A church was recorded at Fishguard in 1291 (Ludlow 1998), but this need not imply the presence of an adjoining settlement. It is assumed that the 13th century church was situated on the present site. The extant church dates to 1855-57. Fishguard has no charter, and therefore assumed the status and functions of a town by tradition. It is not known when a settlement developed at Fishguard or when it achieved a size sufficiently large to be considered a town. However, its status was such that by at least 1586 a portreeve was elected, and later documents record burgesses (Jones 1977, 6-7). The decline of Newport in the 16th century - hastened by plague according to tradition (Soulsby 1993, 202) - probably added to Fishguard's size and status. The better harbour facilities offered by Fishguard over Newport also did not harm the former town's growth over its near neighbour.

The first large-scale map of Fishguard, the tithe map of 1839, shows a well-developed small town. The market place to the southwest of the church which provides a focus for the town (Fig. 2) is shown surrounded by almost unbroken building development. Building plots are mostly long narrow strips with the buildings hard against the street frontage. These plots seem to be burgage plots - a type of land allocation common in Medieval towns. The arrangement of plots shown on the tithe maps suggests gradual development over several decades if not several centuries, consistent with the known history of the town, rather than a planned and laid-out settlement. To the south of the town there undoubtedly existed a strip- or open-field system. By the tithe survey this had been enclosed, but the pattern of strips was preserved, as can be seen on the tithe map (Fig. 2).

A closer examination of the tithe map indicates that the street frontage of the development area had by then been established and is still recognizable on modern maps, and that a long, narrow building that runs the full length of the boundary on the eastern side of the plot had also been constructed. A building to the south, of the development area had also been established, and is still extant (PRN 20254 - see below). The tithe map is semi-schematic, but a similar arrangement is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map of 1889 (Fig. 3). The long, narrow building is marked as 'Market' on the 1889 map and building 20254 as 'Malthouse'. A map titled 'Town of Fishguard', dating to c. 1870 (drawn at a scale of 1:500 and therefore too large to reproduce here) shows the system of 4" drains laid out in the town. Boundaries are accurately shown - they are also shown on the tithe map - which demonstrate the original long narrow character of the 'burgage' plots and also indicate that the development will encompass more than one of the original plots. By 1907 the Ordnance Survey records ancillary buildings to the west and south of the 'Malthouse' and the removal of

part of an east-west boundary across the centre of the site (Fig. 4). By 1937 (Fig. 5), the building 20254 is not named and the demolition of some of the ancillary buildings had taken place. The market building was reorganized, perhaps rebuilt. By 1964 (Fig. 6) there had been a loss of boundaries across the northern part of the site and greenhouses and a long linear east-west building is shown. Small structures had been built against the northern wall of building 20254.

N.B. Because of the poor quality of photocopies of the 1907 and 1937 Ordnance Survey maps held with Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology, the maps reproduced here as Figures 3, 4 and 5 are taken from the report by Johnson Poole & Bloomer (1998).

Currently on display in the public bar of the Farmers Arms is a list of the lease holders of the property. The first recorded lease in 1776 to one John Vaughan. The apportionment of the tithe survey of 1839 indicates that the site was a house and garden belonging to a William Maugan and leased to a Thomas Jenkins, as was the southern plot, which was listed as a storehouse and hayguard. The plot between these (now approximating to the rear garden of the Farmers Arms), was a garden owned by Sir James Cockburn and also leased to Thomas Jenkins..

Structural examination of the older buildings close to the development site demonstrates that most date to the last two centuries (Welsh Office 1978). See Figure 6

The Farmer's Arms (PRN 20250) is a probable 18th century structure, stone-built, one storey and an attic, with two stone rear wings. Listed Grade II.

The Town Hall (PRN 20249) to the northeast of the development site is a two storey building dating to the 1830s. Listed Grade II

Building 20254, Parcyshwt, the Pop Works or the Malthouse, is of 18th- or mid 19th-century date, stone built of two stories. Probably originally a storehouse. Listed Grade II. It is referred to as 'Malthouse' on 1889 and 1907 OS maps. The shwt element of the place-name Parcyshwt probably means shoot, a channel for conveying water, but whether it refers to a natural stream or an artificial channel such as a leat is unknown (Charles 1992, 55).

The Market Hall. This building which bounds the eastern side of the site has not been examined in detail. Elements of it seem to be shown on the tithe map and it therefore may be of some antiquity.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site and its recent history has been described in a report by Johnson Poole & Bloomer (1998, 3-4); it is not intended to repeat their detailed descriptions here. For the purposes of this report the site can be divided into two main area, which for ease of description have been further sub-divided (see below). To the south of a east-west retaining wall the site consists of a car park with hard-core surface and the Listed Building 20254. To the north of the retaining wall ground levels are lower and gently slope down to the north.

In the northern area adjacent to the rear of the pub (Fig 7, area 1), there is a small area of concrete surface. Immediately to the south of the concrete, between the outhouse on the east side and a raised garden (area 2) on the west side, is a hard standing of tarmac. The raised garden to the west (area 2) is very overgrown and probably has an overburden of recent material. This area was previously occupied by an outbuilding (OS 1964). The area further south is a rear garden (area 3). Immediately to the south of the raised garden (area 2) there are brick footings for a greenhouse (OS 1964). Adjacent to the east side of these footings is a dense area of scrub which probably contains the remains of another greenhouse, indicated on the 1964 OS map. On the south side of this rear plot there is a concrete raft for outbuildings against the retaining wall at the south end. The tithe map of 1839 indicates an approximate north-south boundary crossing the rear garden, also shown on the large scale detailed Fishguard drainage plan (c. 1870) - part of this boundary is shown on Figure 7.

GEOTECHNICAL DATA

Site investigations have been carried out by Johnson Poole & Bloomer (1998). Their work demonstrated that the site has a natural gentle underlying slope down from south to north. In the southern area this natural slope had largely been obscured by a post-1964 dump of material up to 1.8m thick deposited against the southern side of the east-west dividing wall. This modern dump fades out to the south of the southern area. Within the northern area it was only possible to undertake window samples. Nevertheless, these demonstrated that there has been no build-up of modern material and that archaeological deposits are likely to survive between 0.20m and 0.80m below the present ground surface.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF THE SITE

The main archaeological potential of the site is for the discovery of archaeological deposits associated with the development of Fishguard as a settlement and later as a town from the 13th century, if not earlier, up to the present day. As the development will take place in possible burgage plots behind the street frontage occupied by buildings the most likely form of archaeological deposit encountered will be those associated with various activities that have taken place in the plots - minor industrial processes, rubbish disposal and cultivation. It is unlikely that the buried remains of major buildings will be discovered, but there is a likelihood that buildings alongside the street frontage formerly extended further back. There is the possibility for the presence of quite deep rubbish pits and deep wells. Generally the closer to the street frontage, the greater and more complex the archaeological deposits.

The surroundings of Listed building 20254 at the southern end of the site is of archaeological potential. Its original function is not known, and there is the possibility that it is the only survivor of a group of buildings.

PROPOSED LOCATION OF EVALUATION TRENCHES FOR PHASE 3 OF THE EVALUATION

The nature and date of the buried archaeology on the development site is unknown. Six hand-dug evaluation trenches are therefore proposed to examine and characterise the archaeology. Because of constraints outlined above the positioning of trenches is problematical and the exact location of the trenches may vary slightly once excavation has begun. The overall strategy is to concentrate on potentially the more archaeologically interesting northern area of the site:

Trench 1. In area 1 (Fig 7). This is to be located as close to the street frontage as possible allowing for the constraints of concrete bases. It will be necessary to lift tarmac to excavate this trench.

Trench 2. Again in area 1. The exact position to be determined following the results from Trench 1.

Trench 3. The is to be excavated across the former (burgage?) plot boundary in area 3 as recorded on the tithe map and c. 1870 map.

Trench 4. Trench 4 is to be excavated against the market boundary wall.

Trench 5. The exact location of this trench within area 3 will depend on the results of Trenches 3 and 4.

Trench 6. Against the external wall of building 20254 to examine the character of any deposits associated with this structure, to examine the footings of the structure and to ascertain if there are early buried elements of the structure. Excavation may be difficult owing to the possible compact nature of the ground and the electricity supply to lighting around the car park may mean that the trench will have to be relocated.

REFERENCES

Maps

Ordnance Survey, 1889 1:2500 Pembrokeshire 1st Edition, IV.15 and IX.3

Ordnance Survey, 1907 1:2500 Pembrokeshire 2nd Edition, IV.15 and IX.3

Ordnance Survey, 1937 1:2500 Pembrokeshire IV.15 and IX.3

Ordnance Survey, 1964 1:2500 SM9436 and SM9536

Ordnance Survey, 1975 1:10,000 SM93NE, SM94SE

Tithe map and Apportionment 1839 (copies of the map held at both Pembrokeshire Record Office and Dyfed Archaeological Trust are poor and many plot numbers are not legible)

Town of Fishguard c.1870. Showing System of Drainage. Scale 44 feet to 1 inch (held at Pembrokeshire Record Office)

Documentary sources

Charles B G, 1992 *The Place-names of Pembrokeshire*

Johnson Poole & Bloomer, 1998 'Site investigations for the Last Invasion Centre Fishguard Pembrokeshire'

Jones F, 1977 'Fishguard and Goodwick', in *A tribute on the occasion of Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee from the people of Fishguard and Goodwick*

Ludlow N, 1998 'The Welsh Historic Churches Project: Preseli District', Unpublished report by Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology

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Sambrook P, 1997 Fishguard and Goodwick Community File 'Preseli Pembrokeshire Historic Assets Survey', p45-49. Unpublished report by Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology

Soulsby I, 1983 *The Towns of Medieval Wales*

Welsh Office, 1978 *Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest: Fishguard and Goodwick*

CATALOGUE OF RESEARCH ARCHIVE

The project archive has been indexed and catalogued according to National Monument Record (NMR) categories and contains the following:

A. Copy of the report.

G. Documentary data, including primary and published sources.

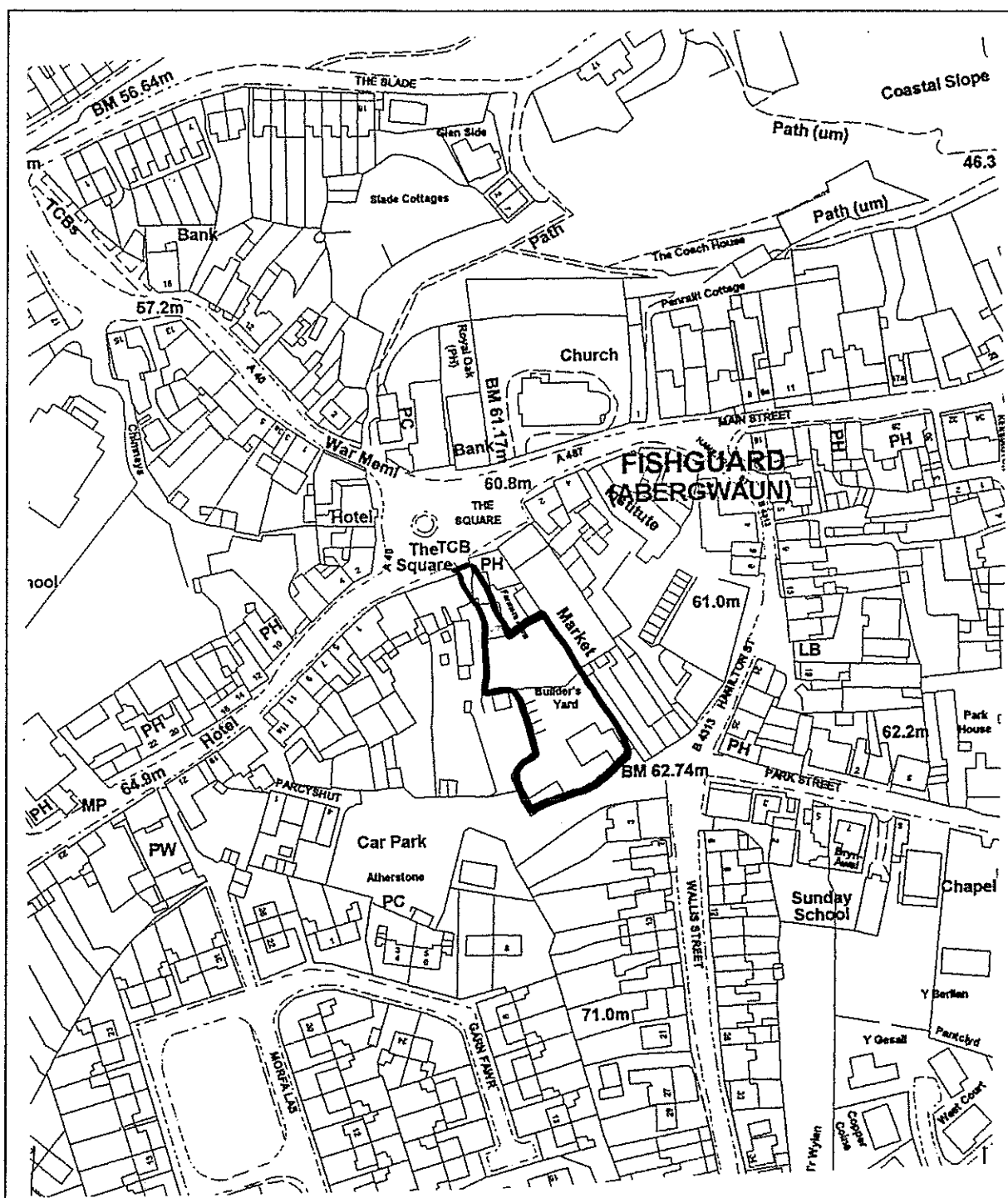
J. Publication drawings.

M. Miscellaneous correspondence.

There is no material for classes B, C, D, E, F, H, I, J, K, L and N.

The project archive is currently held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Operations, Llandeilo, Dyfed.
Project number PRN 37405

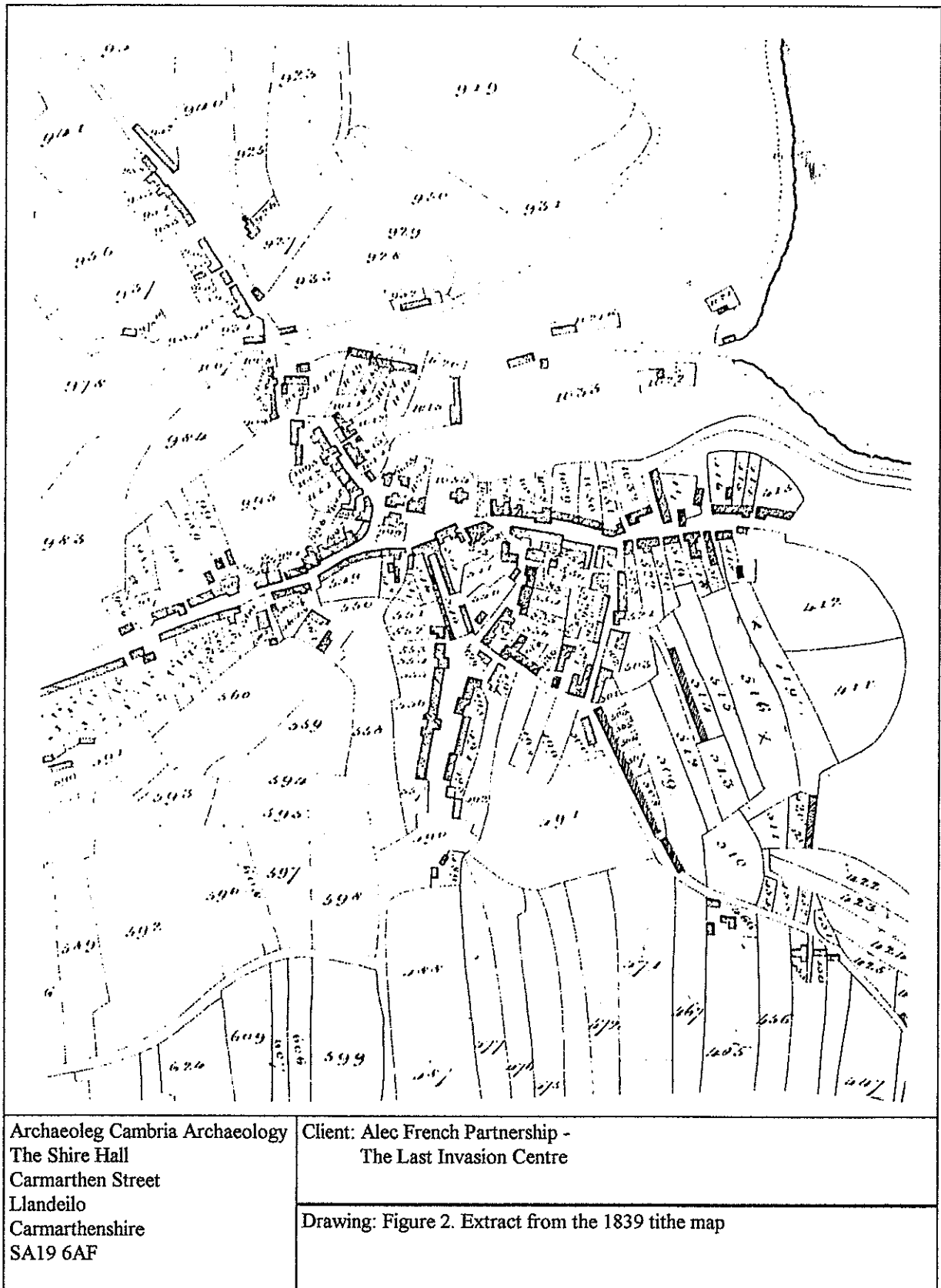
FIGURES 1-7

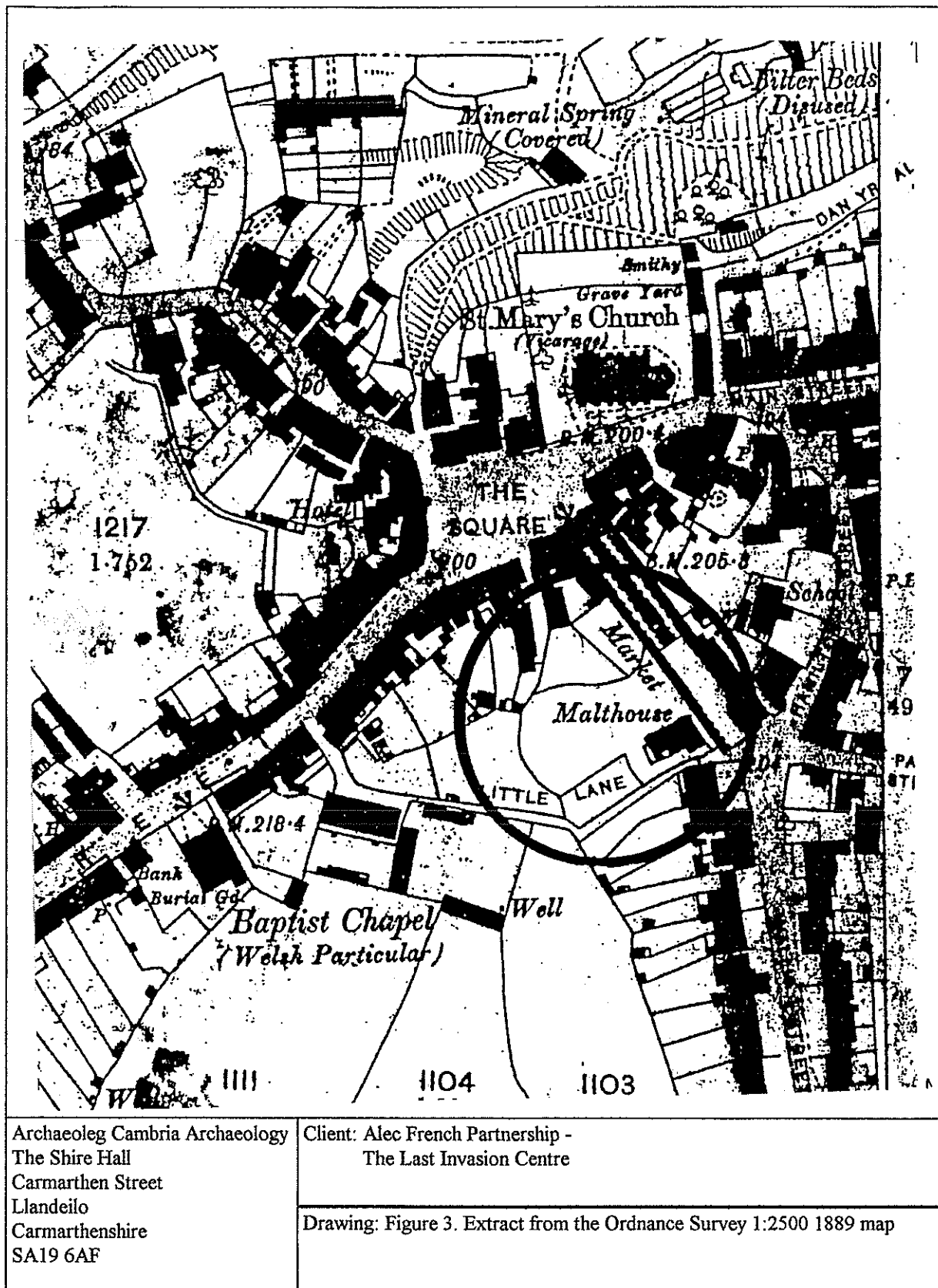


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Drawing: Figure 1. Site location

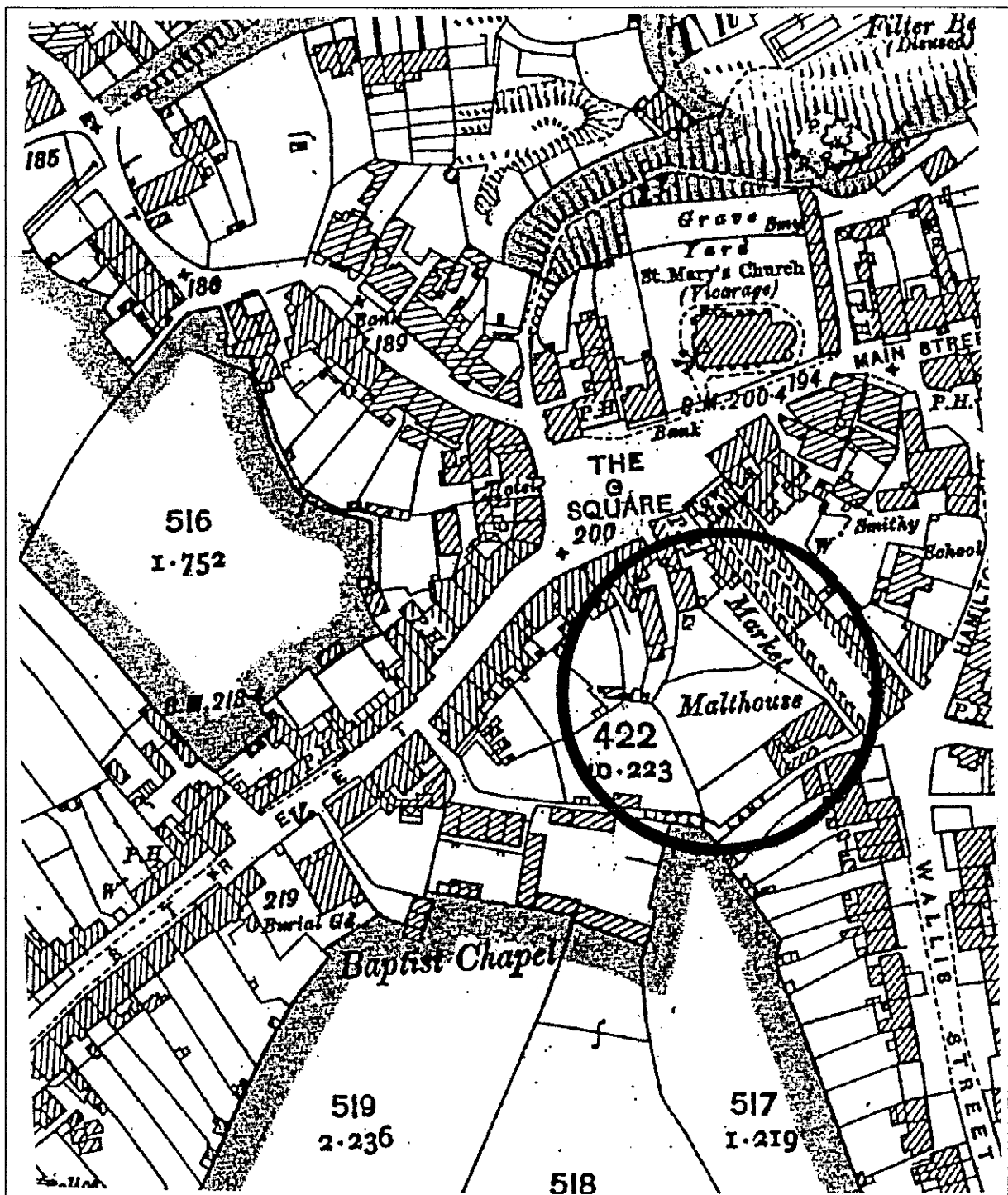




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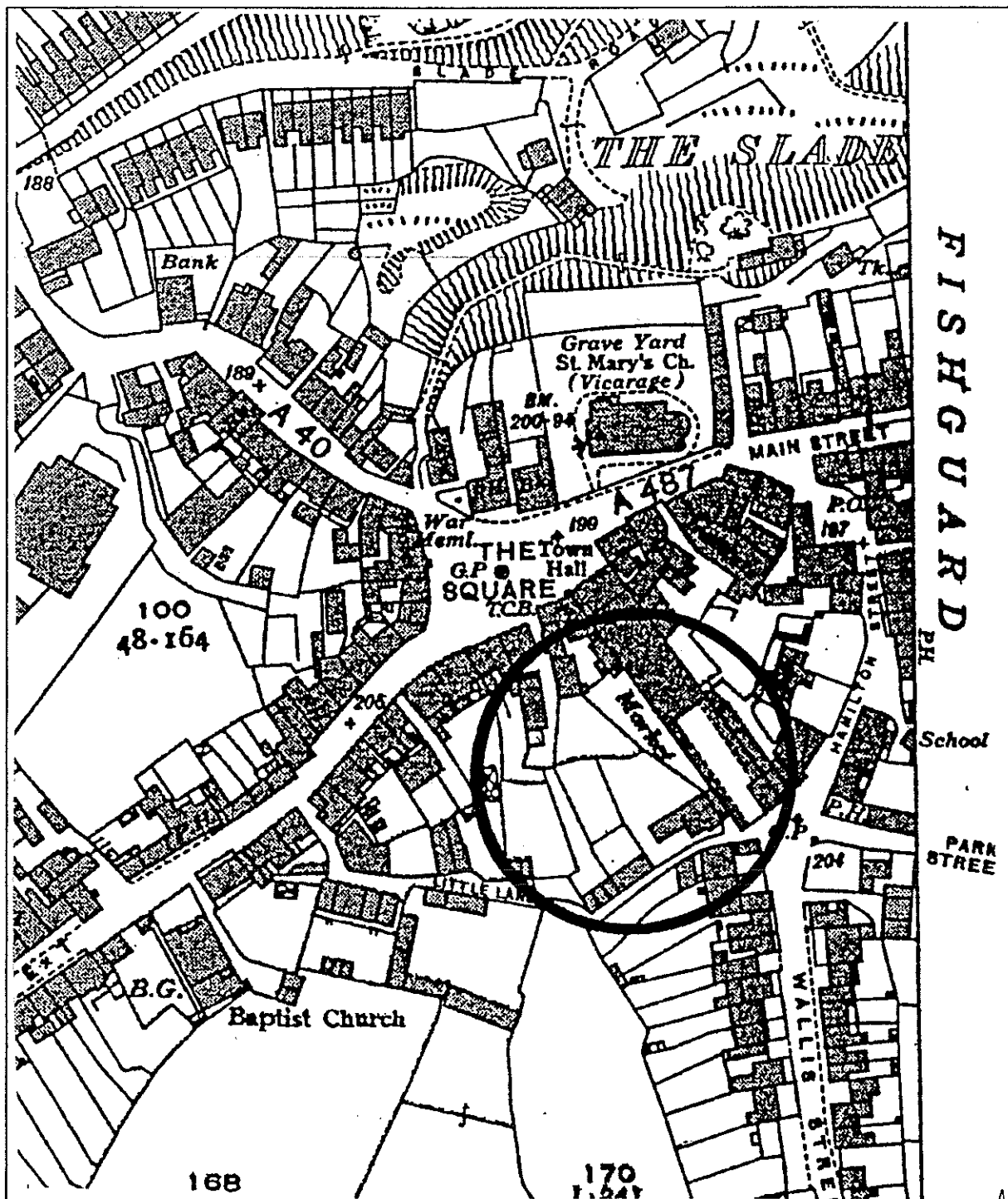
Drawing: Figure 3. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1889 map



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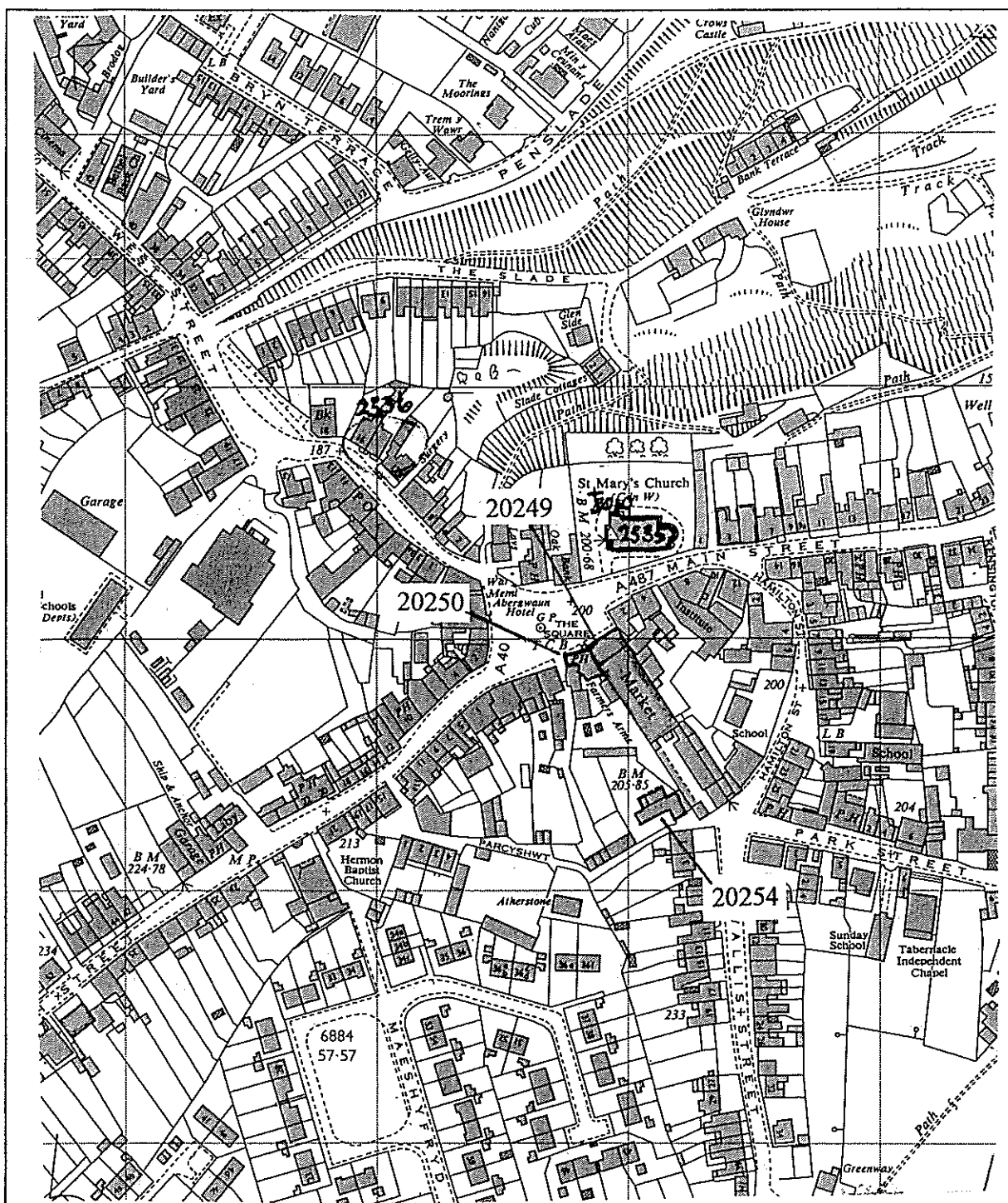
Drawing: Figure 4. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1907 map



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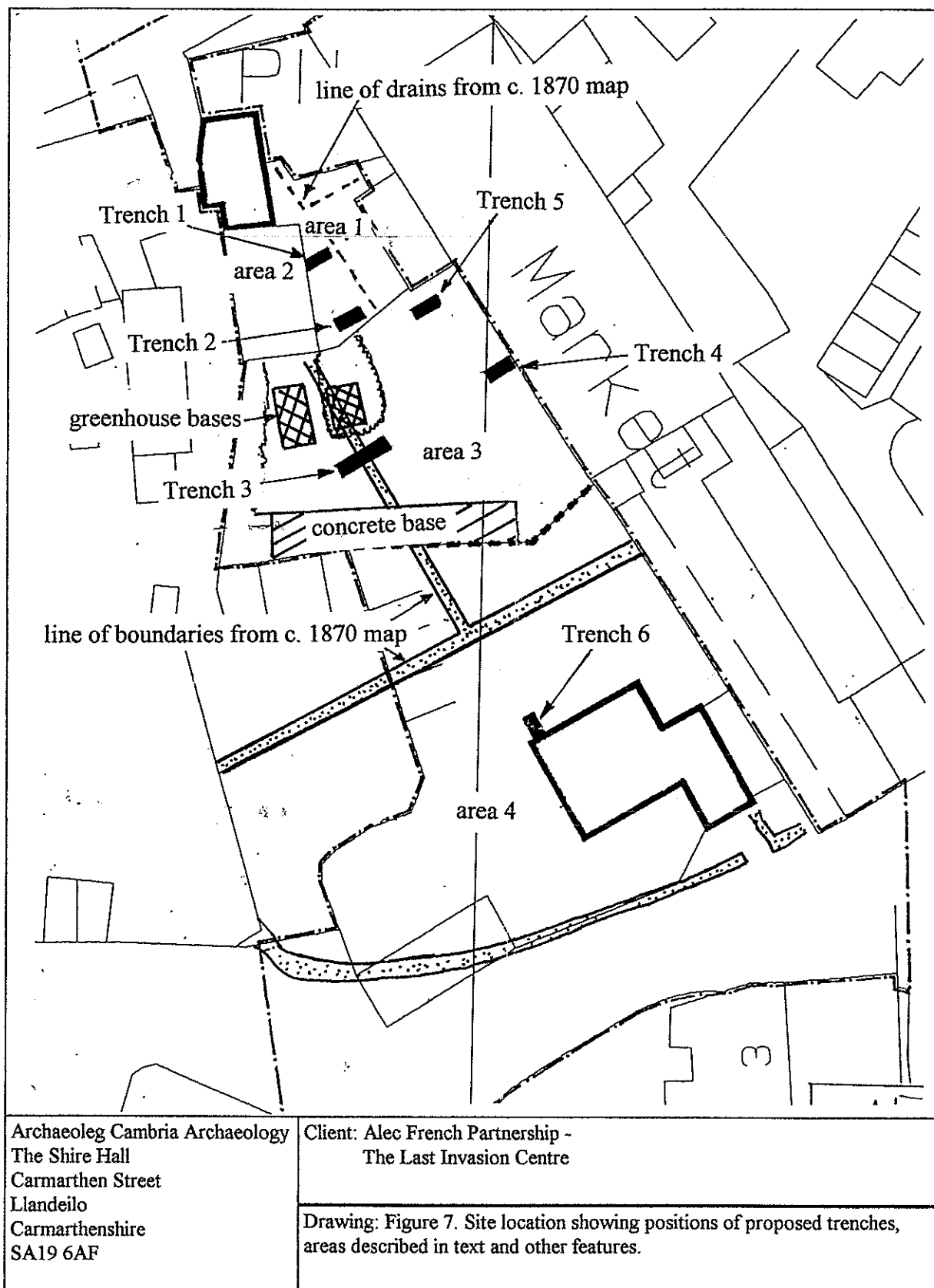
Drawing: Figure 5. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1937 map



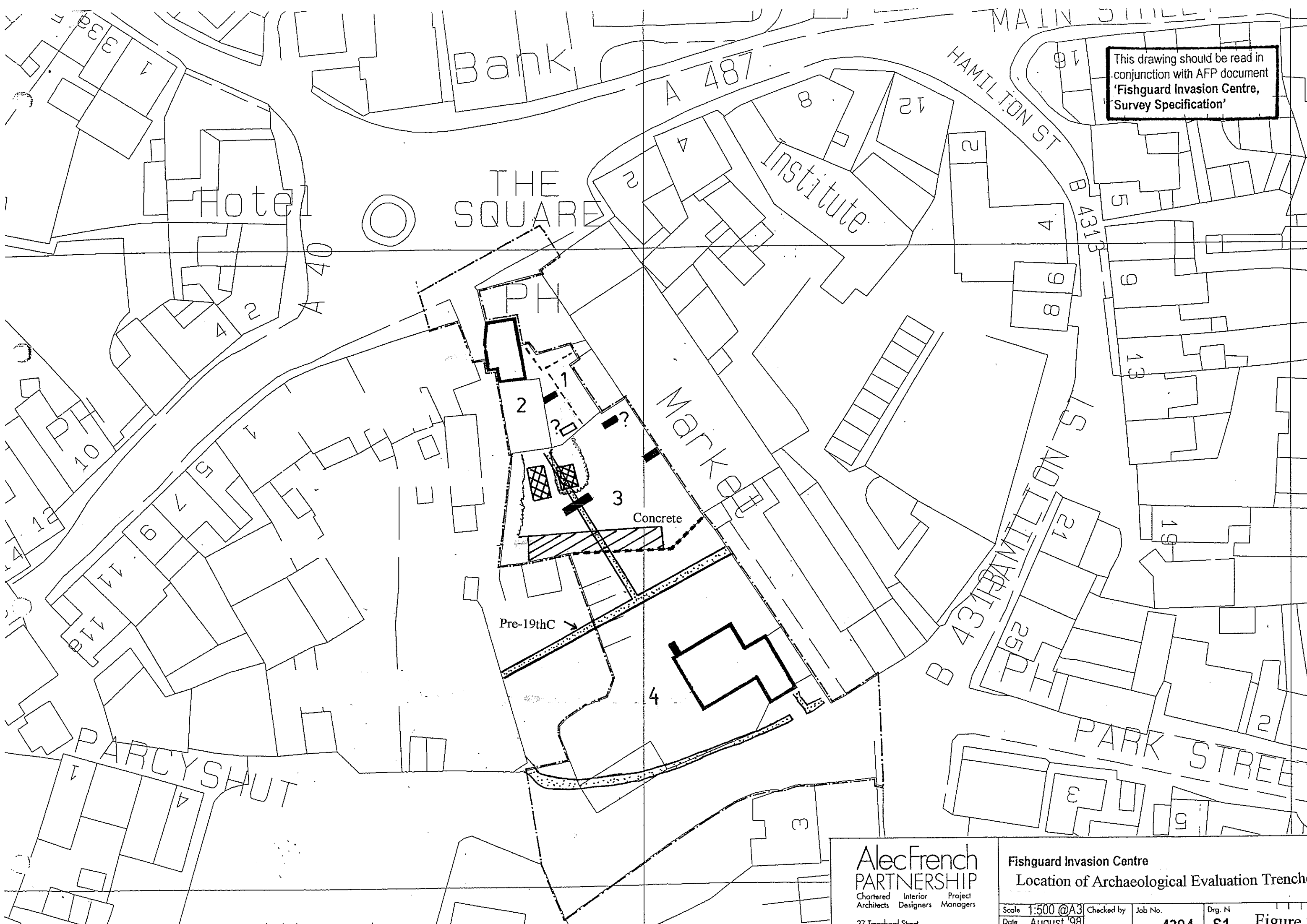
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Drawing: Figure 6. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1964 map
showing the location of buildings referred to in the report



This drawing should be read in conjunction with AFP document 'Fishguard Invasion Centre, Survey Specification'



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Location of Archaeological Evaluation Trench
Scale 1:500 @A3
Date August '98
Checked by
Job No.
Drg. N
17004
S1
Figure 2

Figure 3

