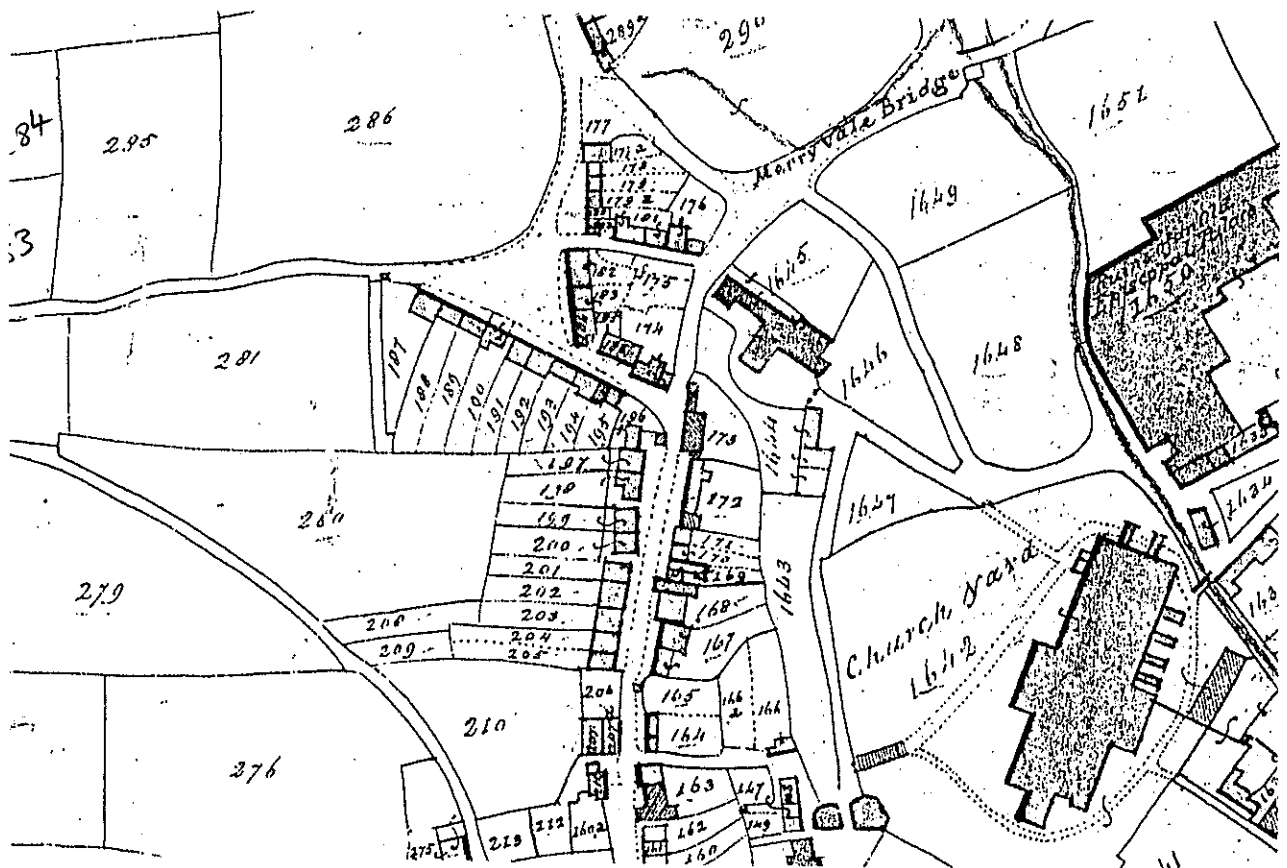




**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON THE WATER MAIN RENEWAL AT ST NONS,
ST DAVIDS, PEMBROKESHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
JANUARY 1999**

01/01/2000

Project Record No. 39944
JANUARY 2000



Commissioned by:
Dwr Cymry / Welsh Water

Report by:
P Crane BA (Hons) MIFA of
Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology
The Shire Hall
8 Carmarthen Street
Llandeilo
Carmarthenshire
SA19 6AF



ARCHAEOLOG
CAMBRIA
ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON THE WATER MAIN RENEWAL AT ST NONS, ST DAVID'S,
PEMBROKESHIRE

CONTENTS	PAGE
Summary	1
Acknowledgements	1
1. Introduction	2
2. The site	2
3. Summary of watching brief results	3
4. Conclusions	4
Appendix One: Detailed records of watching brief	5
Appendix Two: Catalogue of watching brief archive	5
Bibliography	6
Figure One: Location plan	7

Water main renewal at St Nons, St David's: Archaeological Watching Brief

SUMMARY

A partial watching brief was carried out on the excavation of a pipe trench at the rear of the St Non's Hotel, St David's. The whole section to the south of the Hotel was observed and no archaeological features were encountered. The northern part of the pipe trench was mostly disturbed by an earlier pipe trench. After consultation with the Archaeological Development Control Officer it was agreed that no further watching brief need be undertaken on the northern. The contractor should, however, be instructed to call in archaeological advice if anything was found.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fieldwork was carried out and this report prepared by P Crane, Project Manager, Archaeolog **Cambria** Archaeology Field Operations.

1. INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was carried out in January 1999 on the excavation of a trench for a water main at St Non's, St David's, Pembrokeshire. The route of the pipeline passed alongside a Scheduled Ancient Monument containing an ancient well to which a chapel and hospital were added in the medieval period. A watching brief was therefore considered desirable.

1.1 Project commission

This project was commissioned by Dwr Cymru / Welsh Water.

1.2 Scope of project

This was restricted to the area immediately adjacent to the pipe trench route and given the limited nature of this work, the City of St David's as a whole has been left out of the scope of this report.

1.3 Report outline

This report describes the physical environment of the site (Section 2) before summarising the watching brief results (Section 3) and the conclusions (Section 4), based on the results of Sections 2 and 3. Supporting data, including detailed records of the watching brief (Appendix One), are given in a series of appendices.

1.4 Abbreviations

Sites recorded on the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) will be identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Any new sites discovered during the course of the project will be allocated a new PRN and identified by their NGR.

Archaeological features and contexts will be referred to using the continuous three-figure numbering system (e.g. 001) employed by Archaeoleg **Cambria** Archaeology Field Section.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location (figure 1)

The length of the pipeline under consideration was approximately 200m, starting 100m (SM 7508225090) south-south-east of the St Non's Hotel and finishing 70m (SM 7508525278) north-east of the hotel. The southern part of the pipeline ran along the west side of the road until the bend by the hotel where it cut gradually across the road before following a route mostly on the eastern half of the road.

2.2 History

The site of Whitewell or Whitwell is one of a number of holy wells in and around the Cathedral Close. It is thought that some holy wells or springs were important ritual sites in pre-Christian times (Jones 1954) although there is no evidence for such a function at St Non's. It may be significant that the site of St David's Cathedral is adjacent to a well and it is a distinct probability that this was of pre-Christian importance and possibly why St David moved his religious community to the site from Whitesands (pers comm The Very Reverend Dean of St David's, J W Evans).

The name of Whitewell was given to the medieval chapel constructed near the well, possibly due to the white-washed structure covering the well. A hospital was founded here by Bishop Bek (1280-1293) (Knowles and Hadcock 1953, p.303), to care for sick or infirm clergy and provide hospitality to others, probably including pilgrims to St David's. The partial excavation of the hospital at Llawhaden, Pembrokeshire (Crane 1995, p.283-286), also founded, or re-founded, by Bishop Bek in 1287, demonstrated that there is likely to be an extensive complex of structures around such a site.

The hospital at Whitewell probably ceased to function as such c.1377 when it was annexed to St Mary's College, St David's (Knowles and Hadcock 1953, p.303). In the post-medieval period the well supplied the Deanery with water (James 1981, p.24; Fenton 1903, p.36). In the early 1800s traces of a impressive building could still be seen and the well still retained an arched covering (Fenton 1903, p.64). The site was ploughed in 1977 and subsequently a survey and field-walking were undertaken by Dyfed Archaeological Trust. This work revealed building platforms and debris, ridge tiles, window glass and medieval finds concentrated in the south-west of the site (Turner 1996, SAM file PE482 held by DAT). Part of the well structure, made of roughly dressed blocks of local stone, was found to have survived. A small modern dam has been created along a stream running from the well to the north-west corner of the field to provide drinking water for livestock. The area around the well became a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM PE482) in February 1997 (figure 1).

3. SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

3.1 Fieldwork

A number of visits were made to the site during the excavation of the pipe trench from the southern end of the route. Initially excavation was observed but subsequently visits were targeted to periods when lengths of the trench would be fully open. There were however some wasted visits due un-notified delays caused by breakdown of the contractor's vehicle. The weather conditions were very wet and caused some flooding of the trench. The nature of the subsoil, however, would have made any cut features readily visible. After observing the open trench immediately behind the St Non's Hotel, a modern pipe trench was encountered running along the proposed route for the rest of the pipeline. The Archaeological Development Control Officer, from the Heritage Management section of Archaeoleg **Cambria** Archaeology was contacted and it was agreed that no further watching brief was necessary unless the contractor excavating the trench found anything possibly archaeological. The Dwr Cymru / Welsh Water

officer in charge was to contact Archaeologist **Cambria** Archaeology when the groundwork was completed.

3.2 Observation

The pipe trench was approximately 500mm wide and up to 1m deep. Geological orange clay with stones (003) was encountered from c350mm below the road surface. Above this there was a layer of large rounded stones with smaller stones with a clay loam soil (002): this was probably an earlier road metalling, but could in part be makeup for the present road surface. The road surface is tarmac and c75mm thick. The only features seen cutting the geological orange clay (003) were towards the back of the Hotel. These features consisted of a sewer manhole and two small cuts for one inch pipes (one plastic and one lead).

3.3 Sources

Along with the works mentioned in the bibliography a number of maps were consulted. Most of the early maps are either of too small a scale, or were details of the Cathedral Close. The tithe map c 1838 shows the adjacent layout much as it appears today except for the St Non's Hotel which had not been constructed.

3.3 Interpretation

It would appear that the present road lies on a well established route, possibly in a slight hollow. It would appear that the medieval hospital of Whitewell did not encroach on this roadway, suggesting that this route was probably established at an early period and may be contemporaneous with this medieval phase.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The line of the pipe trench was adjacent to a prime medieval archaeological site. This watching brief suggested that this archaeological site does not appear to extend below the current road and that this route may be medieval in origin. Given that little ground disturbance was required a watching brief was the appropriate response, and the discontinuing of the archaeological input once later disturbance was encountered was a sensible decision.

APPENDIX ONE: DETAILED RECORDS OF WATCHING BRIEF

Site notes only.

APPENDIX TWO: CATALOGUE OF WATCHING BRIEF ARCHIVE

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

- A. Copy of final report.
- B. Site records, including context record sheets and site notebook.
- M. Miscellaneous correspondence.

There is no material in categories C, D, E, G, I, J, F, H, K, L and N.

The archive is currently held by Archaeoleg **Cambria** Archaeology Field Operations, Llandeilo, Dyfed as project number PRN 39944.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Crane P 1995 Llawhaden Medieval Hospital, *Medieval Archaeology*, **39**, 283-286

Knowles D and Hadcock R N 1953 *Medieval Religious Houses of England and Wales*, London: Longmans

James D W 1981 *St David's and Dewisland, A Social History*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press

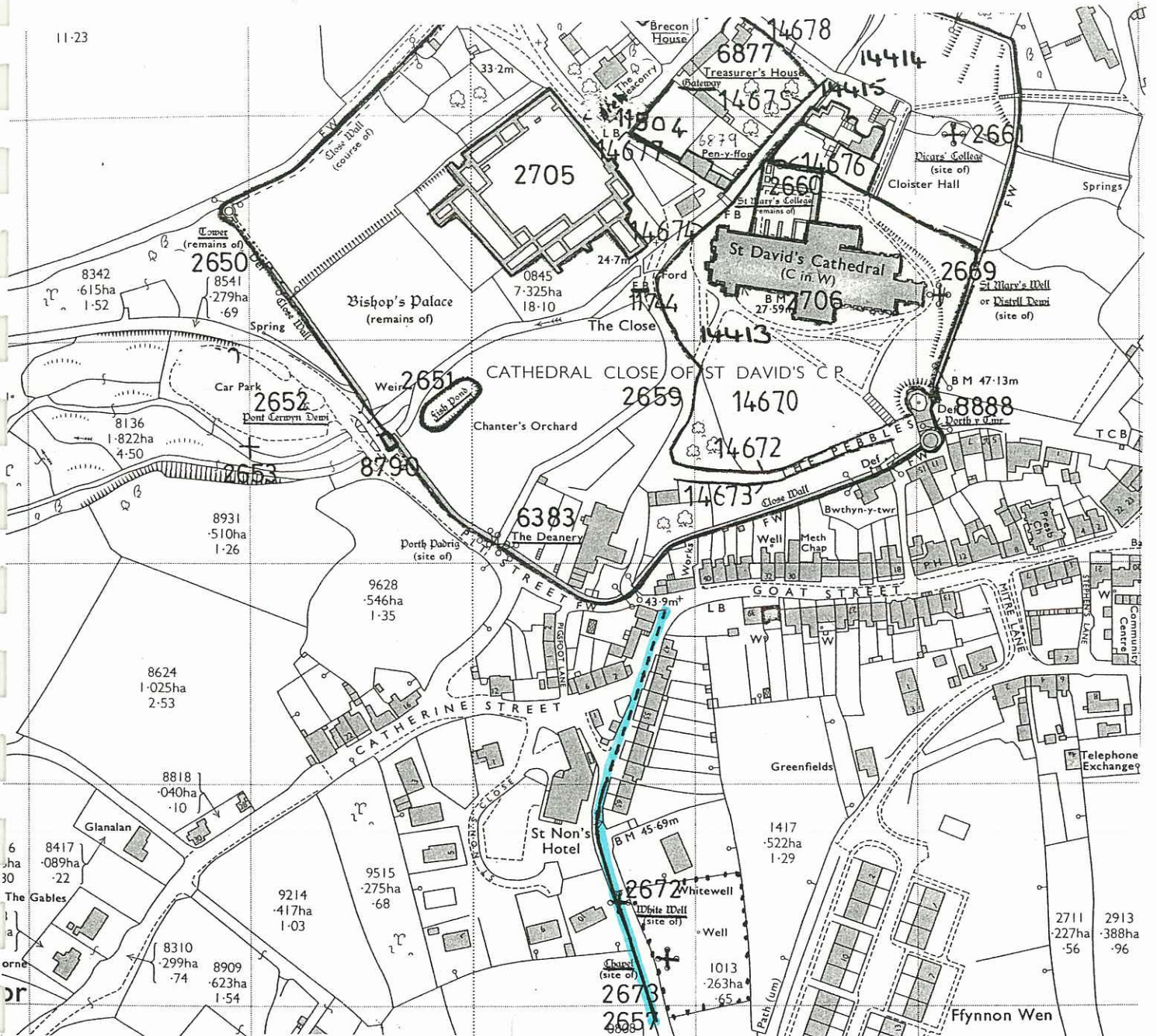
Fenton R 1903 *A Historical Tour Through Pembrokeshire*, Haverfordwest: Dyfed County Council [1994]

Jones F 1954 *The Holy Wells of Wales*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, [1992]

Jones W B and Freeman E A 1856 *The History and Antiquities of St Davids*, Haverfordwest: Pembrokeshire County Council [1998]

Turner R 1996 Unpublished SAM file PE482 held by DAT

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON THE WATER MAIN RENEWAL AT ST NONS, ST DAVIDS, PEMBROKESHIRE.



- Pipe trench observed
- - - Pipe trench unobserved
- Schedule Ancient Monument (PE482) boundary
- Numbers are archaeological Primary Record Numbers

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500
with permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary office
© Crown Copyright
Archaeolog Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall
Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthen SA19 6AF
Licence No. AL 51842A

Figure 1