

**CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY  
FIELD OPERATIONS**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
NEW FLOODLIGHTING  
AT  
KIDWELLY CASTLE  
KIDWELLY,  
Carmarthenshire**

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Prepared  
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## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF KIDWELLY CASTLE FLOODLIGHTING**

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## SUMMARY

The Kidwelly Trade and Tourism Association devised and implemented a floodlighting scheme for Kidwelly Castle (PRN 1622: SAM Carm002), Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire. The castle is located on the north bank of the river Gwendraeth towards the north end of the town at NGR SN40890704. Because the castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument extensive discussions took place between the Kidwelly Trade and Tourism Association and Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments regarding the siting of the lights and the level of archaeological mitigation required during the scheme. An archaeological watching brief on all the groundworks for the cables and the floodlight bases was recommended and the Trade and Tourism Association commissioned Cambria Archaeology to undertake the work in July 2000.

The watching brief took place over several visits and revealed little new archaeological information. A length of masonry wall, an extension of the wall flanking the south side of the gatehouse, was exposed in the cable trench at the front of the castle and one of the floodlight bases in the outer ward exposed some flat stones and burnt clay. All the deposits exposed by the groundworks are likely to have been deposited when the interior of the castle was turfed as part of modern internal landscaping works.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PROJECT COMMISSION**

Plans proposed by the Kidwelly Trade and Tourism Association to install floodlighting at Kidwelly Castle (PRN 1622: SAM Carm002), Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire required scheduled monument consent. The consent was granted by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments with the condition that an archaeological watching brief be carried out on all groundworks. The Kidwelly Trade and Tourism Association commissioned Cambria Archaeology to carry out the watching brief.

### **1.2 SCOPE OF PROJECT**

The project was intended to monitor all ground disturbance operations and to record all deposits and features exposed by the works.

### **1.3 REPORT OUTLINE**

This report describes the physical environment of the site (Section 2) before summarising the watching brief results and conclusions (Section 3).

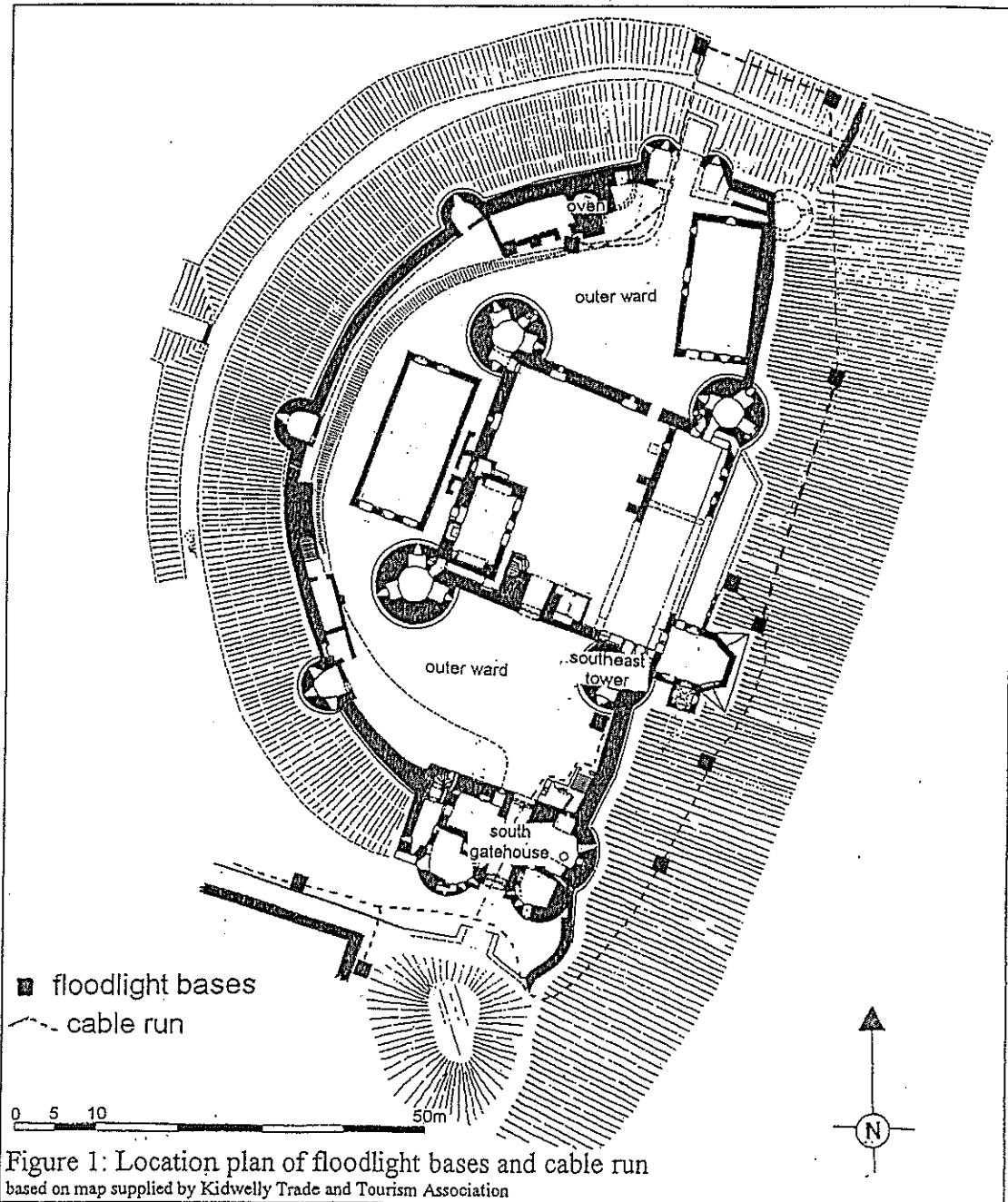
### **1.4 ABBREVIATIONS**

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).

## 2. THE SITE

### 2.1 LOCATION

Kidwelly Castle sits on a ridge overlooking the River Gwendraeth. The castle occupies a D-shaped area defined on its south, west and north sides by a ditch constructed when the first castle was established by Roger of Salisbury about 1106 (Kenyon 1986,7) and on the east side by a steep scarp down to the river. The floodlights were to be located at several points around the exterior and two specific locations within the outer ward (fig 1).



### 3. SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

#### 3.1 METHODOLOGY

A number of site visits were made to the castle during the cable laying and excavation of the floodlight bases to record any archaeological features or deposits exposed in the cable trench or light bases. Three principal areas (T1-T3) were examined: the area outside the gatehouse; the cable run from the north gate to the floodlight near the oven in the north inner ward, and the floodlight base; the floodlight base outside the southeast tower of the inner ward.

#### 3.2 THE CABLE TRENCH

The cable trench was a narrow, v-shaped trench measuring on average 12cm wide at the top, 5cm wide at the bottom and 10cm-15cm deep. Where the trench passed the southern end of the spur wall that extends south across the ditch from the corner of the gatehouse it was slightly bigger, 19cm wide at the top x 12cm at the bottom x 15cm deep. This was the only section of trench that exposed any archaeological features. A continuation of the spur wall, which dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Kenyon 1986), and consisted of a layer of mortared stones was exposed in the base of the trench (Plate 1). The exposed section of wall was 84cm wide, which accords well with the width of the surviving spur wall which is 90cm wide. The trench stopped at the top of the stones.



Plate 1: continuation of 14<sup>th</sup> century spur wall exposed in cable trench

### 3.3 THE FLOODLIGHT BASE NEAR THE OVEN

The excavation for the floodlight base measured 87cm x 53cm x 15cm. Two stones exhibiting mortar patches were recorded in this area, although neither was *in situ*, nor associated with other stones. They were laying on a layer of burnt red/brown loamy clay that contained charcoal flecks and it appeared to be a burnt deposit (Plate 2). Like the stones this deposit did not appear to be *in situ*, rather it is more likely to have been redeposited when the interior of the castle was turfed, although it may have been redeposited from close by.



Plate 2: Floodlight base near oven after excavation.

### 3.4 THE FLOODLIGHT BASE NEAR THE SOUTHEAST TOWER OF THE INNER WARD

The excavation for this base measured 80cm x 60cm x 24cm. The only features of potential archaeological interest in the trench were a patch of mortar in the northeast corner and a small patch of shellfish shells in the southeast corner (Plate 3), although neither appear to have been *in situ*. Both were laying on a light brown loam soil which contained mortar patches and flecks of charcoal and like the deposits in the other floodlight base they were most likely redeposited during turf laying, or when the concrete edging around the interior was laid.

### 3.5 CONCLUSIONS

The only identifiable archaeological structure was the continuation of the spur wall outside the gatehouse. It was not possible to determine the true character of the deposits recorded in the light bases in the inner ward, but they all appear to have been

redeposited when the interior was turfed, or when the concrete edging was inserted around the base of the interior of the walls.



Plate 3: Floodlight base near southeast tower after excavation.



## **APPENDIX ONE: 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.
- D.** Site photographs - catalogue, colour slide and B/W prints.
- I.** Archive report and draft copies of final report.
- J.** Publication drawings.
- M.** Miscellaneous correspondence.

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

The archive is currently held by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, as project number 41473.

## REFERENCES

Kenyon R 1986 *Kidwelly Castle*. Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments guidebook.  
Cardiff.