

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST LTD



THE REDEVELOPMENT *of* 3, NORTH STREET HAVERFORDWEST

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
Project Record No. 29588
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Commissioned by: Farmers Union of Wales

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REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON THE REDEVELOPMENT
OF 3, NORTH STREET, HAVERFORDWEST, 9 NOVEMBER 1994

DAT Primary Record No. 29588

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Details of the scheme for the redevelopment of 3 North Street, Haverfordwest, were submitted by The Andrews Partnership (on behalf of the Farmers Union of Wales) to Dyfed Archaeological Trust, for comment, on 6 June 1994.

Following their acceptance of recommendations The Andrews Partnership and FUW agreed that an archaeological watching brief be carried out on the scheme during the work, as part of the mitigation strategy. An archaeological report on the results of the watching brief was also commissioned. It was also recommended that RCAHM(W) undertake a standing building survey.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Field Section were accordingly advised of the proposed schedule of works on 4 November.

1.1 Content and scope of the watching brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1993) as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during an operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons - normally a development or other construction project - within a specified area where archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive.

The watching brief will be intended to allow, subject to resources, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits in advance of their disturbance or destruction and to provide an opportunity, if necessary, for the watching archaeologist to alert all interested parties to the presence of an archaeological find for which the resources allocated to the watching brief are insufficient to support satisfactory treatment.

The watching brief is not intended as a substitute for contingent excavation.

The client will be supplied with 3 copies of an archaeological report of the results of the watching brief. The report will be fully representative of all the information recovered. Normally it should be read in conjunction with the desk-top assessment for the scheme which provides the historical framework for the watching brief. A copy of the report will also be deposited with Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record.

1.2 Purpose and methodologies of the watching brief

The purpose of the watching brief is to undertake as complete a record as possible of any archaeological features affected by the client's scheme of works. In the case of larger archaeological sites it will seldom be possible or necessary to undertake a record of the entire site; the record will be undertaken only on those areas of the site that may be affected.

The primary stage of the watching brief for any scheme normally involves consultation of the archaeological desk-top assessment normally produced for the scheme and/or consultation of Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record, which is maintained by Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Curatorial Section, for those sites affected by the scheme.

The client will then advise Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Field Section of any changes in the proposed works resulting from their consultation of the desk-top assessment, and of any sites which may still be affected by the scheme. The client will also provide the Field Section with a proposed schedule of works in order that a full field study may be performed on any affected site prior to the commencement of the works.

Work on or around those affected sites will be subject to the watching brief. The work will be closely observed by an archaeologist from the Field Section who will also undertake a full drawn, written and photographic record of any archaeological features which may be disturbed by the scheme, and any artefact or find exposed during the works. Recording will be carried out where necessary and when convenient: it is the Field Section's aim to minimise any disruption to the client's schedule. However, if archaeological features may be lost during the scheme, it may be necessary for the Field Section to request a postponement of the works in order that the archaeology may be recorded. Larger areas affected may require fuller excavation and/or survey.

2.0 3 NORTH STREET (29588)

3 North Street (DAT PRN 29588; SM 9522 1590) stands in an area that lay within the early medieval 'castle-borough' of Haverfordwest, and appeared to possibly lie astride the line of the town wall (Dyfed SMR DRF).

In addition, the building itself displayed early fabric, possibly of sub-medieval origin. The 'Pembrokeshire chimney' that was, prior to redevelopment, present at the N end of the building represents a vernacular feature of great local significance.

2.1 Site History (Fig. 1)

The town of Haverfordwest was founded during the period following the foundation of the castle in the early 12th century. It was granted a charter around 1219-31.

The early town occupied the area immediately N and W of the castle, which with St Martins Church formed one of its 2 main nuclei. The area was still known until recently as 'Castleton'. Its plan was formalised, as well as fossilised, by the erection of a defensive circuit, rebuilt in masonry after 1264. By this date at least North Street was an established thoroughfare leading from the core of the town through the North Gate, along which the majority of the early burghal development undoubtedly took place.

The precise line of the town defences is not known. The modern plan and topography suggest that the noticeable curving alignment of North Street was dictated by the presence of defences to the W, between it and Perrot's road, and a series of N-S property boundaries may perpetuate the defensive line (see section 3, below). To the S and E the line is even more vague. Documentary evidence confirms the presence of at least two gates - North Gate, and a West Gate near St Martin's.

Subsequent medieval development led to wholesale urban expansion to the S, and the area around St Mary's took over as the economic core of the town. However, Haverfordwest remained one of the largest and most economically viable towns in West Wales until the last century. The Castleton, and North Street, remained situations of no small status, as the presence of a number of 18th century 'gentry houses' testifies.

2.2 The Standing Building (Fig. 2)

A full description of 3 North Street as it stood prior to redevelopment, by A J Parkinson (RCAHMW), comprises Appendix I of this report and shown in fig. 2.

In summary, 3 North Street was a much-altered house of sub-medieval origin. In plan it forms a N-S block comprising 2 chambers on each floor divided by a masonry wall. The S chamber is square and consists of a single bay, that to the N (rear) is a four-bay ?former hall with a massive square gable-end chimney

stack. The chamber to the W, forming an L-shape with the rest of the house, is an addition.

The chimney stack suggests a sub-medieval date for the bulk of the fabric, possibly 16th-17th century, with a roof of c.1700.

3.0 RESULTS OF THE WATCHING BRIEF (Fig. 3)

The watching brief examined an area of great archaeological sensitivity, an area located within the medieval town and with the potential survival of medieval deposits.

In particular, the presumed line of the medieval town defences, as suggested by the series of N-S property boundaries behind North Street (2.1, above), runs through the 3 North Street building. In fact, the dividing wall between the front and rear chambers was thought to possibly represent the line and perhaps even incorporate medieval town wall masonry.

In the event, the below-ground archaeological evidence was negative.

3.1 The Partial Demolition

The redevelopment involved the partial demolition of 3 North Street. The 2 chambers fronting North Street were retained, but the N half of the property, including the chimney, was lost. Demolition was complete prior to Trust presence on the site.

However, the process of demolition permitted the fabric of the remaining section of the house to be more fully examined. The first floor was inaccessible but ground floor evidence for at least four building phases was present:-

I. The E chamber, the S end of the N-S building that probably constitutes the core of the original house, all in limestone and perhaps contemporary with the chimney, ie 16th-17th century.

II. A ?window opening in the W wall of the Phase I chamber was blocked, and a new doorway inserted further S, when a new chamber was constructed in limestone to the W of the Phase I house, the whole now forming an L-shaped building. The insertion of the door was a rather rough affair with some brick present in the surround. 18th-19th century.

III. A brick-lined fireplace was inserted into the W wall of the latter W chamber, later 19th century.

IV. The entire North Street facade has been rebuilt in breeze-block and brick, and new openings inserted, within the last 20 years.

The limestone dividing wall between the S and N chambers was seen to be rather slender (less than 1m thick) and probably in shallow foundations; at any rate it certainly did not contain or represent medieval town wall fabric.

3.2 Below-ground Evidence

Excavation for the redevelopment of 3 North Street was in the main minimal, the only area being subject to any significant intrusive work being the yard at the rear and to the W of the

building, the ground level of which lay 0.5m above the internal level. This area was excavated first by minidigger then by JCB. Within the house the concrete floor slabs were removed but otherwise the existing level was maintained.

Excavation of the yard eventually necessitated the removal of 1-1.5m of material. In the main this comprised dumps of make-up largely of 20th century date.

Natural fluvio-glacial gravels were exposed at a depth of 1-1.5m from the surface at both the N and the S ends of the yard. The central section, however, was occupied by a large masonry lined cellar, apparently not relating to the existing property but rather to a former outbuilding, perhaps the one shown in later 19th century maps (Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 First Edition, Sheet XXVII.8, 1888).

The excavated portion of the cellar measured 2.60 x 2.80m. Its depth is unknown, being only excavated to a depth of 0.5m. The masonry lining bore a layer of mortar rendering throughout. The cellar void was occupied by a fill of very mixed, loose, predominantly 20th century debris - brick, slate, ash and cinders.

3.3 Conclusions

3 North Street is a submedieval house displaying no features earlier than the 16th-17th century. It straddles the presumed line of the medieval defensive wall around 'Castleton', Haverfordwest. However, no features observed during the watching brief relate to any medieval defences.

The dividing wall within the building does not incorporate any medieval fabric. Moreover, the building in its earliest phase straddles the presumed line of the defences, which from comparison with other sites would probably still be standing, or at least represent a clear line of demarcation, into the 16th-17th century.

The excavated evidence revealed nothing suggestive of a town defence (unless the site for the cellar was chosen for its being a 'robbed-out' section of former town wall and thus an area of looser soil).

In summary, it appears that the line of the former town wall should be sought in an area W of the site, probably alongside Perrot's Road. The properties on the W side of North Street probably run for their full medieval E-W length towards this line.

4.0 THE FINDS

No finds earlier than the 20th century were recovered during the watching brief.

5.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The full watching brief archive will be deposited at the National Monuments Record, housed with the RCAHM, Aberystwyth.

6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements to:- Terry James, RCAHM(W) and formerly of DAT for his unpublished work on the development of Haverfordwest; Tony Parkinson of RCAHM(W); Mark, site engineer, and Paul, site contractor; FUW for commissioning the watching brief.

7.0 LIST OF SOURCES CONSULTED

unpublished

Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record and Detailed Record Files (DRF).
RCAHM(W), National Monuments Record.

published

Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 First Edition, Pembrokeshire, Sheet XXVII.8, 1888.

Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 Second Edition, Pembrokeshire, Sheet XXVII.8, 1907.

Soulsby, I., 1983, *The Towns of Medieval Wales*.

NORTH STREET NO.3, HAVERFORDWEST ST MARTIN, PEMBS (SM 9522 1590)

A much-altered house of sub-mediaeval origin, with a massive gable-end chimney stack.

The North Street elevation has been modernised, with rendered walls and modern sash windows: the frontage to the left has been brought forward with a modern lean-to extension. The elevations to the two sides have rubble masonry walls, limewashed; the windows have been adapted, some with brick surrounds and concrete sills. One window to the lower (NE) side has a reused wooden lintel, and there is a blocked opening by the chimney. The gable chimney projects, with a squat square shouldered stack and a pyramidal cap above a slate top. To the right is a blocked slit to the attic level.

The interior has had considerable alteration. The front block has two rooms. The smaller room, in the cross-wing, has rubble walls, modern joists and a concrete floor. The fireplace is blocked, and has a brick head. The main room has rubble walls and a modern window. A modern beam carries the old wall-line above the extended front, and there is a cupboard recess alongside. The main entrance doorway is modern, but there is a stone arched head over. The fireplace is modern; two doorways lead into the rear room and a former passage. The passage, leading to the stairs, has plastered walls; the stone partition to the left (which supports a main cross-beam) has been partly removed, but retains a blocked doorway. The main rear room has altered windows (one a former doorway) in the side wall, a blocked fireplace and some old joists at irregular spacing. The room beyond has inserted modern partitions. The windows have been altered; that by the fireplace has a stone lintel, the others are of wood. The ceiling beam is roughly squared, and some of the flat rectangular joists have been reused. The gable fireplace is very deep, with a post-1900 box-grate and oven set into the back wall. A straight joint to the left suggests that it may antedate the present side-wall. The wooden lintel is very high, with its left end on a modern stone pier. It is square in section with a simple chamfer and stop, and the stonework above appears to have been rebuilt below a possible relieving arch which supports the tapered stone flue.

The stair leads off the passage; it appears to be modern. The first floor has modern partitions and ceilings. The cross-wing has modern trusses. The main block has three trusses. The blades are halved, the collars lapped with notched joints, and the foot of one truss (by the stair) has a scarfed wall-post. The rafters are set on two through purlins.

The date of the house is difficult to determine, since it has been so thoroughly altered. The huge chimney stack suggests a submediaeval date, perhaps 16th-17th C. The combination of the scarfed wall-post (an 18th C feature) and the notched lapped collars (more like late 17th C) suggests a date of c.1700 for the roof: this might also accord with the alteration of the main chimney.

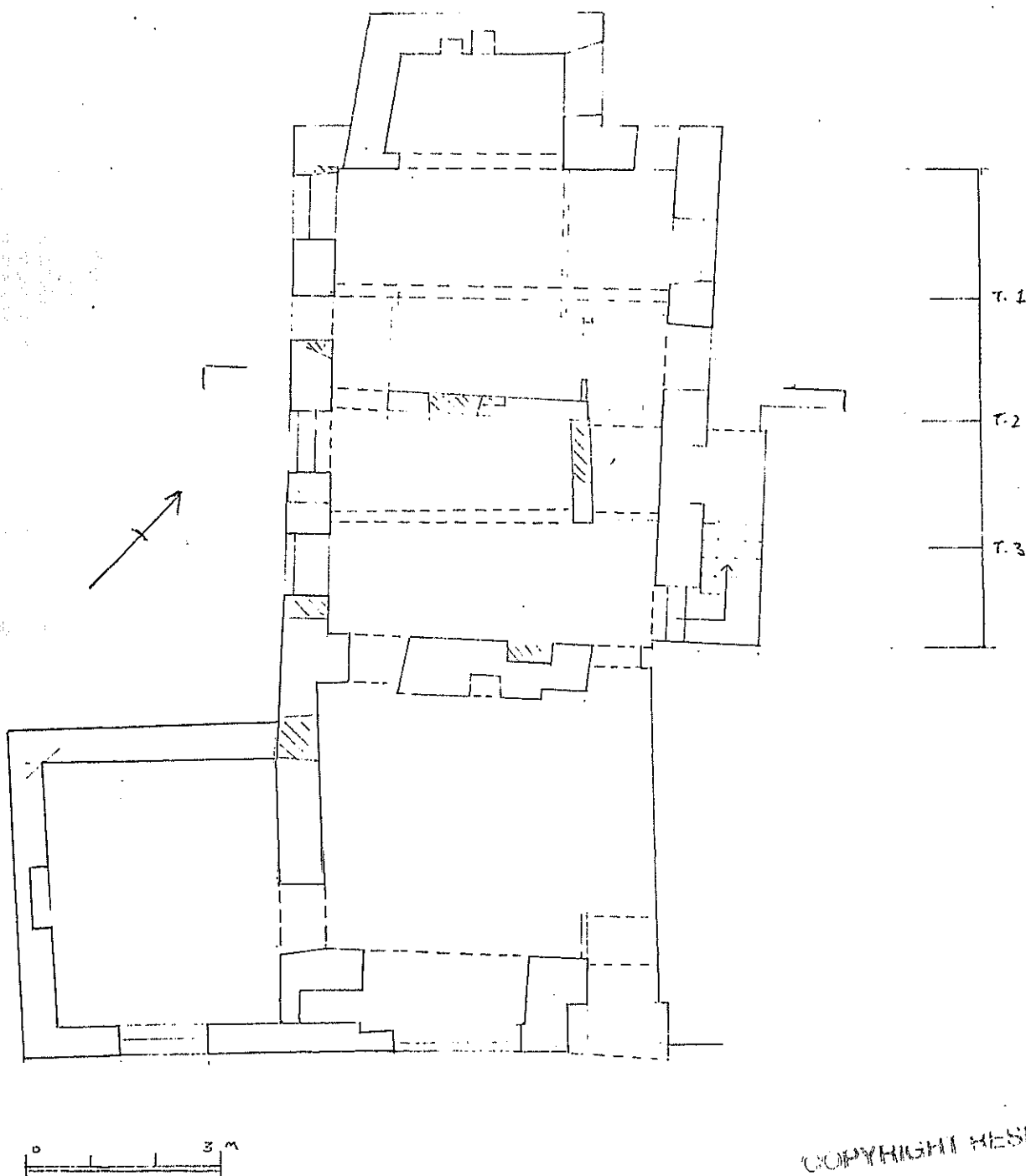
AJP

24 January 1995

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9.2 3 North Street:
Plan before redevelopment (RCAHMW)



9.3 3 North Street: Plan during redevelopment showing building phases, excavated area and cellar.

