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PEMBROKE FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME NORTH QUAY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Report No. 2002/37

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CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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By

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Front Cover: Pembroke North Quay

SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken on three test trenches and a short length of pipe trench excavated in Pembroke North Quay, opposite Pembroke Castle. A few timber piles and plank, possibly for the construction of the 19th century quay were found. The underlying silt was just cut into by the excavation, although the only dating evidence for this deposit were fragments of clay pipe stems.

INTRODUCTION

Cambria Archaeology was commissioned on 17 January 2002 by Morrison Construction Ltd to undertake a watching brief on the Pembroke Flood Alleviation Scheme 5611. The archaeological project was restricted to the area of Pembroke North Quay as the rest of the scheme was in an area with no potential or known archaeology.

Pembroke North Quay is located (Ordnance Survey grid reference SM 98300168) immediately west of Mill Bridge on the north side of the Pembroke River (Figure 1), which is now controlled by a dam 200m downstream. The remains of Pembroke Castle on the opposite bank overlook the site. Many of the buildings on the quay have been recently demolished while those that remain are unused and the area is due for redevelopment. The underlying geology is Carboniferous Limestone overlain by estuarine mud.

SITE HISTORY

The history of Pembroke is long and complex, dominated by the castle and town, both of which lie to the south and lies outside of the scope of this project. An historic summary, mainly using the work of Neil Ludlow (Ludlow 1993 and 2001), is given below.

The earliest archaeological evidence from the area comprises Palaeolithic (c. 10,000 BC) stone tools from the Wogan Cavern located below the northern part of the castle (Ludlow 2001), 100m east of the quay. It is possible that there was an Iron Age Fort on the site of the castle which may have been occupied into the Roman period and beyond into the Dark Ages. A timber castle was constructed in 1093 under the Normans, and a formally laid out town was soon established adjacent to it. At this early stage a bridge with a mill was built over the Pembroke River, on the present bridge location. The castle was reconstructed in stone from c. 1204 and it is likely that the town had some form of defences at this stage, with stonewalls added in the early to mid 1300s. Probably by this period some building and garden plots were established north of the bridge. In the post-medieval period Pembroke ceased to thrive as a trading place and port due to its limited access for larger vessels, and commercial ports were constructed at Pembroke Dock and Milford Haven. During the last century housing estates were built, particularly to the north of the town.

The area around the North Quay has been known as the "The Green" since at least the 1500s, by which time a suburb had developed to the north of the bridge. Map evidence suggests that the shoreline here remained generally unchanged at this time and there is no evidence for a quay at this period. By the mid 1700s a group of buildings had been

Over the planks and surrounding the upper part of the piles there were thick layers of mixed clays with some stones (Photos 7 and 8). The top of these layers was encountered from about 0.6m down from the quay surface. These clay layers appeared to be rapidly deposited. Possibly within the lower part of these layers there was a plank on edge (Figure 3, Photo 9); this measured c. 50mm thick and 225mm high. These clay layers were partly cut by a trench for a ceramic pipe, running at an oblique angle to the quay (Photos 7 and 8), with a fall to the east.

From 200mm to 600mm below the surface there were probably two layers of soil with angular stone and brick. Above this was a small deposit of disturbed material capped with 100-150mm of stone chippings for the current quay surface, partly overgrown with grass and other weeds.

No other timbers were observed in the machined pipe trench further to the east. The layers were similar in this section to test trench 1, except for a change to a more rubble and mortar deposit from about the location of test trench 2. It is possible that this mortar and rubble could be the remains of a wall (Photos 10 and 11) but would need further hand excavation to determine this. Trench 2 was only excavated down through the clay and rubble deposits (c. 1.8m below surface) to the surface of the dark silt (estimated at c. 2m below surface). As the depth of the trench was rising above the level of the silt from the location of trench 2, and there was no indication of early deposits in the lesser depth of test trench 3 further archaeological observation was halted. The contractor was requested to call us immediately if anything of interest was encountered. No calls were received.

Test trench 3 (location on Figure 2) was excavated down to c. 1.8m below the surface. The lower deposits were all rubble and clay. Cut into this material, or possibly constructed at the same time that the rubble and clay was deposited, was a stone culvert (Photo 12). The culvert base was c. 1.20m below the surface and its cap c. 0.75m below. Internally the culvert was c. 300mm wide. This culvert can be seen exiting the quay wall (Photo 13, below white van) and appears to be contemporary with the quay wall face, although this could not be closely observed. Above the culvert was builders-type rubble, also with a surface deposit of gravel chippings 100-500mm deep.

DISCUSSION

The dark-silty clay is probably the remains of the old natural harbour bed. It is likely that this deposit was disturbed throughout the post medieval period until sealed by the quay's construction.

The timbers observed were possibly part of an earlier quay structure, but more likely to be part of the 1800s quay construction. The plank on edge in trench 1 (Figure 3) was possibly contemporary with the underlying planks and.

The clay layers are likely to have been deposited as backfill behind the quay wall as part of its construction. It is probable that the culvert cut in trench 3 is also contemporary with the 1800s quay.

APPENDIX 1: CATALOGUE OF WATCHING BRIEF ARCHIVE

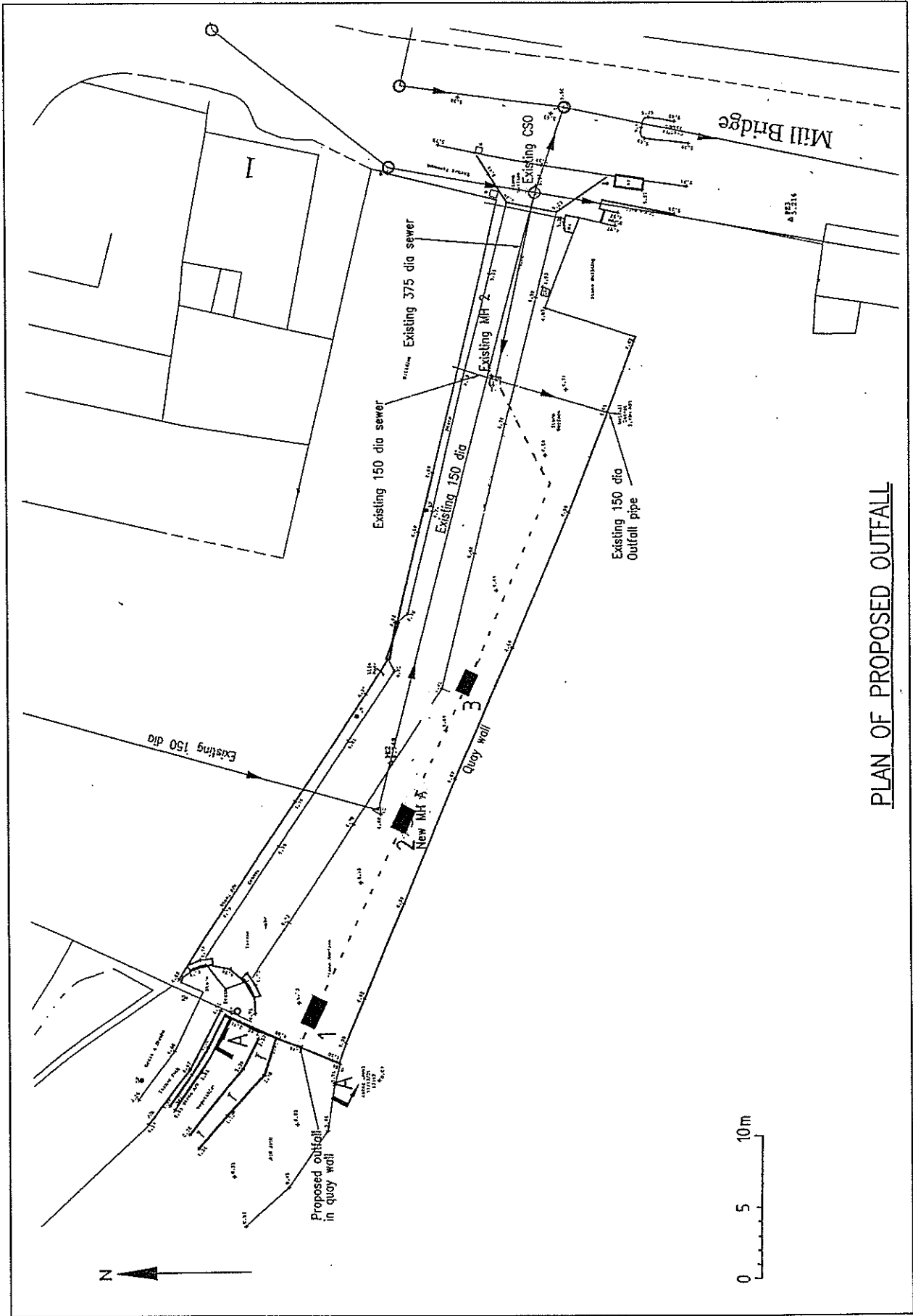
The project archive has been indexed and catalogued according to National Monument Record (NMR) categories and contains the following:

- A. Copy of final report.
- B. Site records, including context record sheets and site notebook.
- D. Site photographs - catalogue, colour slide and B/W contact sheets.
- I. Archive report and draft copies of final report.
- J. Publication drawings.
- M. Miscellaneous correspondence.

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

The archive is currently held by **Cambria** Archaeology Field Operations, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, as project number 44304.

FIGURE 2: Pembroke North Quay Location of Trenches



PHOTOS



Photo 1. North Quay, view NW



Photo 2. North Quay west end, view E



Photo 3. Trench 1 timbers at west end, view W, scale 0.5m



Photo 4. Trench 1 piles at east end, view E, scale 1m



Photo 5. Timber 402



Photo 6. Timber 401



Photo 7. Trench 1, view SW, scale 1m



Photo 8. Trench 1 extended, view NE, scale 1m



Photo 9. Trench 1, view NE



Photo 10. Wall? View NE



Photo 11. Wall? View SE



Photo 12 Trench 3 culvert, view S, scale 0.5m



Photo 13. North Quay view NE


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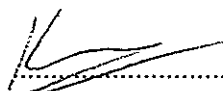
This report has been prepared by Pete Crane

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Signature  Date 23 APRIL 2002

This report has been checked and approved by Ken Murphy on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position Contract Manager

Signature  Date 22.04.02

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