

1 SPRING GARDENS SPITTAL PEMBROKESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Paratowyd gan Archaeoleg Cambria
Ar gyfer Mr Elston
Prepared by Cambria Archaeology
For Mr Elston

Rhif Yr Adroddiad / Report No. 2004/46



ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2004/46
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 50593

Ebrill 2004

April 2004

1 SPRING GARDENS, SPITTAL PEMBROKESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Gan / By

Pete Crane BA Hons MIFA

*Archaeoleg Cambria yw enw marchnata Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyfyngedig.
Cambria Archaeology is the marketing name of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited.*

Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys

The report has been prepared for the specific use of the client. The Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd can accept no responsibility for its use by any other person or persons who may read it or rely on the information it contains.

ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA
Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA19
6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Ebost: cambria@acadat.com Gwefan: www.acadat.com

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire
SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: cambria@acadat.com Website: www.acadat.com

Summary

A watching brief was undertaken on an area adjacent to the Iron Age Rath at Spittal, Pembrokeshire. Nothing of antiquity was noted except for the site of a spring within a probably recently filled in hollow.

Introduction

A watching brief was undertaken on the 30th March 2004, with a further visit on 1st April, on an area of land on the south side of Spittal Rath. Cambria Archaeology was commissioned by the developer Mr K Elston of 1 Spring Gardens, Spittal on the 25th March to undertake this work, as part of the detailed planning consent (ref. 02/0912/PA). The site (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SM97852290) is located on the edge of the village of Spittal adjacent to the road leading east from the village.

Background

The earliest antiquarian record of Spittal Rath (Primary Record Number 2471) is in 1833 in Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Wales*. The tithe map dated 1839 and Apportionment No 196 record the field name as Castle Meadow. The northeast part of the Rath bank has been disturbed; the most likely location for its entrance is considered to be on the southeastern side. There are no records of any archaeological investigations or artefacts recovered from the Rath.

A large house had been constructed within the Rath after publication of the Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1:2500 in 1909 but before the 1960s. The most likely date for this building is 1920s to 1930s when no archaeological investigations would have been required prior to its construction. At the western end of the development plot a small building is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 First Edition of 1889 (Figure 1) and is still there on the Ordnance Survey map of 1964. The more detailed Ordnance Survey map (c.1965) records this building with a small addition to its southeast corner. The developer reported that locals remember that this was a forge, which is confirmed by some of the modern debris seen during the watching brief.

The Rath is considered to be Iron Age in form. If Iron Age in origin it may well have had later use, especially as the centre of the medieval settlement of Spittal is only a short distance away. Evidence supporting this is suggested by the field name to the south, on the opposite side of the road, called Cross Meadow (PRN 7954). This may have been the site of an early medieval Christian stone cross and could indicate that there was activity at that period both there, possibly re-use within the Rath and the area immediately surrounding it.

The area under development was approximately 50m x 10m running along the road frontage (Photo 1). Prior to the watching brief the rear field boundary and/or Rath bank had been cut back and a concrete retaining wall constructed. This wall was c.2m high with the back extending another metre above.

Methodology and Results

On arrival the site had been machine levelled and roughly cleared. This area was walked over and also partly screened by a metal detector. Observed was a linear soil mark, possibly a former ditch on the north side of the roadside Pembrokeshire hedgebank that had been removed the day before. There were also a number of less distinct soil marks. Some of these soil marks are likely to have been machine spills, others could have been garden features. Some 20th century glass and china and a few pieces of the china that may date back to the 19th century were found in the soil. No artefacts of an earlier date were observed.

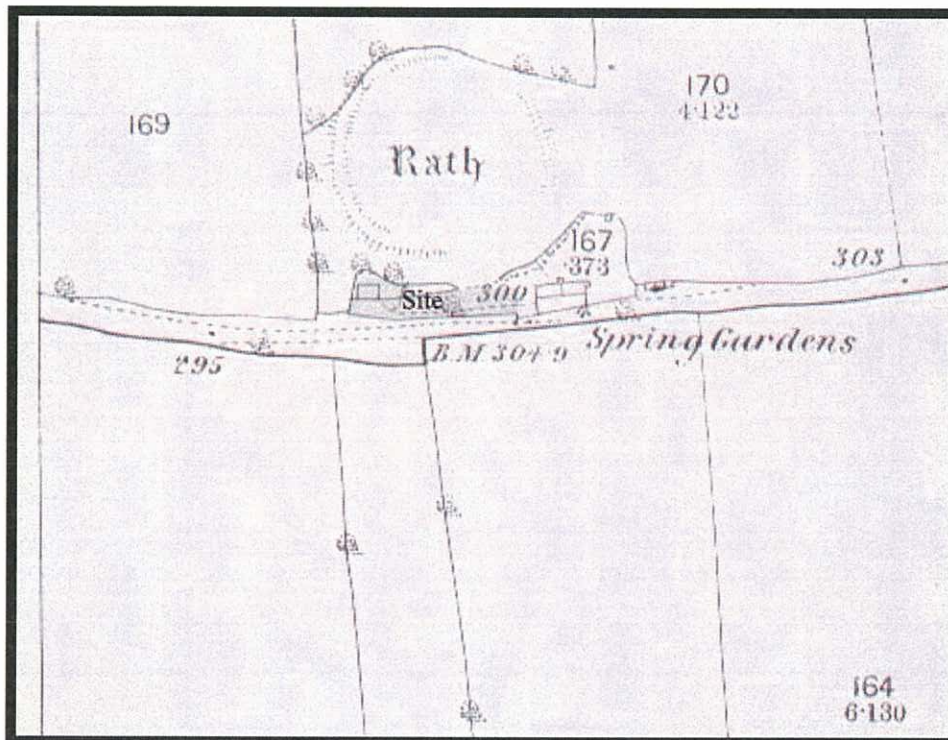
The digging of some of the footings was observed during excavation with a toothed bucket, but with lack of observed results and with agreement of the Development Control Officer it was agreed to return to the site after the footing trenches had been completed.

At the western end of the site in the footing trenches for the new house a hollow was observed approximately 4m north of the road edge. The lower fill of this hollow was of softer brown silty clay with gravel and notably very clean and appeared to run below the rab subsoil. Therefore, a geological origin is considered more likely than an artificial construction. Several modern disturbances were noted, probably relating to the forge. A possible more recent feature was noted around the footing area of the new-build chimney footings. The footing trenches were all c. 0.6m wide. Owing to the slight slope of the cleared site the rear (northern) trench was about 0.8m deep and the front (southern) was 0.4m deep. Where softer soils were located these had been dug to 0.8m below the surface.

A garage site was located at the eastern end of the plot. The footing trenches were of a similar width to those of the house and formed a rectangle c.5m x 6m. The northern trench and the northern ends of the western and eastern trenches were dug to about 0.6m below the cleared surface. The remainder of these latter two trenches and the southern trench were dug to about 1.2m deep. The eastern trench cut a septic tank trench. The deeper part of the eastern trench and part of the southern trench cut a filled in hollow (Photo 2). This hollow would appear to be the location of a spring probably deliberately backfilled. Although there was no dating evidence the spring may have been filled in during the 19th century when the adjacent cottages are likely to have been constructed. Given the landform it is unlikely that this spring hollow is entirely natural and probably extends under the existing garages to the east.

Conclusion

While this site had potential for archaeological features nothing was seen except for the hedgebank ditch and the site of the spring. The spring location may be significant as it is likely to be adjacent to the Rath entrance.



Ordnance Survey 1889 first edition



Photo 1: Site as cleared and footing trenches excavated. Garage footings in foreground. View W

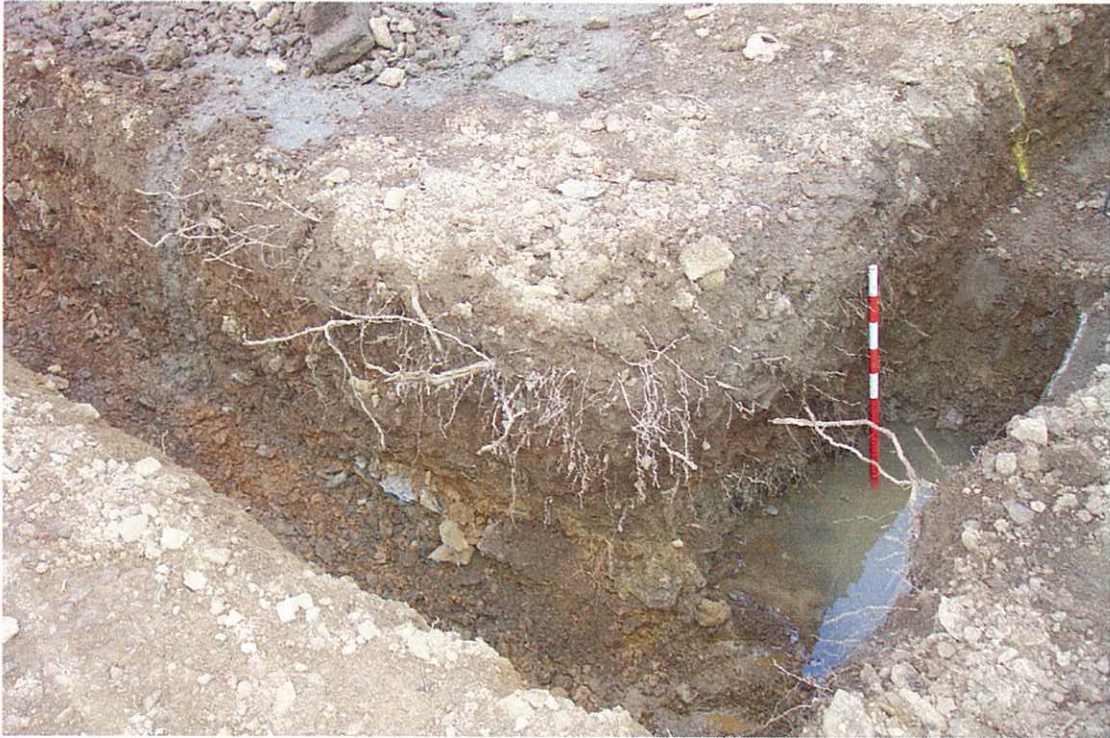


Photo 2. Spring in SE corner of garage footings. View NW. Scale 1m

**1 SPRING GARDENS, SPITTAL
PEMBROKESHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2004/46

Ebrill 2004

April 2004

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by Pete Crane

Swydd / Position: Senior Archaeologist

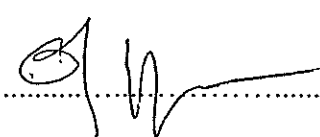
Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 13/04/2004

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by

Gwilym Hughes

ar ran Archaeoleg Cambria, Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Trust Director

Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 13/04/2004

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau sydd gennych ar
gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have
on the content or presentation of this report