

FOLEY HOUSE GOAT STREET HAVERFORDWEST

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



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**FOLEY HOUSE, GOAT STREET
HAVERFORDWEST
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

By

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FOLEY HOUSE, GOAT STREET, HAVERFORDWEST ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

REPORT NUMBER 2004/94

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have on the content or presentation of this report

**FOLEY HOUSE, HAVERFORDWEST
GEOTECHNICAL TEST-PITTING
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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SUMMARY

A series of geotechnical test-pits were monitored in the garden of Foley House and a number of adjacent properties along High Street, Haverfordwest. The test-pitting was part of the on-going assessment of the feasibility of providing additional parking spaces in the area between Goat Street and High Street, Haverfordwest. A desk-based assessment carried out on the proposals highlighted the medieval origins for this part of Haverfordwest and recommended that the test-pitting should be monitored to provide information on the underlying deposits across the site and their potential to contain archaeological material. Atkins commissioned Cambria Archaeology to undertake the monitoring in October 2004.

Monitoring revealed deep deposits of garden soil and made ground across the site, with the subsoil only encountered in one area. The depth of the overlying deposits suggests that the original, medieval, ground surface and any features and material it might contain, may survive in some areas. These are likely to be so the south of the two retaining walls, where the ground levels have been raised.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT COMMISSION

There are proposals to extend the car park at Foley House (PRN 6501), Goat Street, Haverfordwest, (SM 9533 1552). An earlier desk-based assessment of the likely implications of the proposals on the historic and archaeological resource highlighted the potential of the area and recommended a programme of further archaeological recording and evaluation (Page 2004). The recording was required on a series of geotechnical test pits and Atkins commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Operations to undertake the recording in September 2004.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

This part of the project was designed to retrieve information relating to the underlying deposits across the site and their potential to contain archaeological material. The results of this recording have been used to position two archaeological evaluation trenches.

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) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR).

Archaeological features and contexts will be referred to using the continuous three-figure numbering system (e.g. *001*; *010*; *100*) employed by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations.

2. THE SITE

2.1 TOPOGRAPHY

The assessment covers an area of c.0.3ha (c.0.8 acre) and is made up of Foley House and its garden (PRN 6501) and parts of the rear gardens of a number of the properties along High Street (Fig.1). Foley House garden is now a car park and the areas of High Street gardens included in the proposals have been largely neglected and are now very overgrown. Foley House garden is between 3m-5m higher than the rear gardens of the properties on High Street, which are in places up to c.8m higher than the level of High Street. There is an overall drop of approximately 10m-14m from Goat Street to High Street over a linear distance of roughly 100m

A series of terraces have been created to manage and utilise this sloping ground. Foley House garden occupies a large terrace, which drops to the rear of the gardens of the High Street properties that occupy a second terrace. Large masonry retaining walls support the terraces (Plate 1).

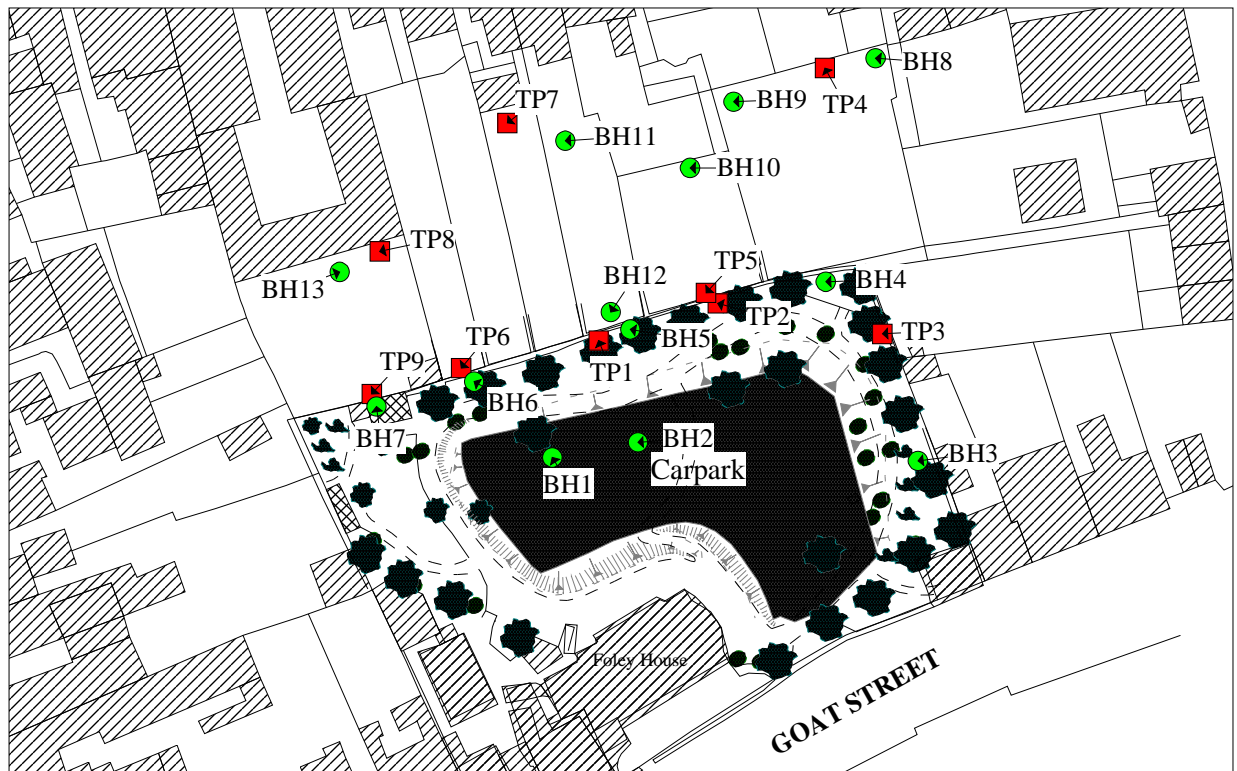


Figure 1: Location map of hand-dug geotechnical test pits (TP1-TP9) and boreholes (BH1-BH13).

3. SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The watching brief consisted of the monitoring of 8 hand-dug geotechnical test-pits (TP1-TP7 and TP9ⁱ) located to investigate the condition of existing retaining walls between Foley House and the High Street gardens and at the rear of the High Street properties. Each test-pit was excavated to a depth of 1.2m – or in the case of TP9, to the subsoil – using shovels and post-hole diggers. Following excavation the sides of the pits were examined and recorded by site context record sheet, notes and digital photographs.



Plate 1: The retaining wall between Foley House (behind wall) and the gardens of the High Street Properties.

3.2 RESULTS

3.2.1 TP1 and TP2

These two test-pits were excavated against the south face of the north boundary wall of Foley House garden. The deposits encountered in both pits were similar and consisted of fairly undifferentiated sandy garden soil for their entire depth. There were mortar-rich lenses within the soil profile, but no identifiable buried surfaces.

ⁱ TP8 was not observed.

3.2.2 TP3

TP3 was positioned against the west face of the eastern boundary wall. The deposits, as with TP1 and TP2, consisted of a sandy garden soil with mortar-rich patches. The boundary wall had a narrow ledge at c.80cm below the present ground level (2.2m from the top of the wall). The soil was particularly mortar-rich at roughly the depth of the ledge.

3.2.3 TP4

This test pit was positioned at the rear (south) side of the c.8m high retaining wall at the rear of the High Street properties. This pit exhibited some stratigraphy, with 75cm of soft dark brown unconsolidated garden soil (007) overlying a 20cm thick layer of crushed mortar (008). This in turn overlay a layer of loose mortar and stones (009). Layers 008 and 009 appeared to be some form of make up layers - possibly derived from building waste during a rebuilding episode on the retaining wall

Artefacts recovered the garden soil included two large joining sherds of round-shouldered glazed stoneware jug and two sherds of blue and white transfer printed ware. The most likely date range of the artefacts is between the 18th and early 20th century.



Plate 2: TP4 viewed to the west, with the mortar layer (008) clearly visible as a light stripe towards the base of the pit.

3.2.4 TP5

TP5 was positioned against the base of the north side of the retaining wall between Foley House and the High Street properties, at the highest point of the wall – where it was c.4-5m high (see Plate 1). The pit was c.1m deep and dug entirely through a damp, sandy garden soil. A well-established root mat occupied the upper 50cm, below which the soil contained slightly more small stones. This was probably due to the sorting action of the roots and worms.

3.2.5 TP6

This test pit was located against the exposed base of the retaining wall between Foley House and the High Street properties. It was positioned in an area that had been disturbed in the past and which had possibly been built up slightly by dumping.

The test pit was excavated to a depth of c.1.2m through a largely undifferentiated dark brown/black sandy garden soil. The upper 50cm contained an extensive root mat, below which the soil became stonier and small mortar and coal fragments became more frequent.

3.2.6 TP7

TP7 was located to investigate an area to the rear (south) of the high retaining wall behind the High Street Properties. It was excavated to a depth of c.1.3m through a loose dry brown/black sandy garden soil, which contained an accumulation of domestic food refuse, animal bones and oyster shells approximately 1m below the present ground surface (Plate 3).



Plate 3: TP7, showing the domestic refuse. The small white objects visible towards the base are fragments of oyster shells.

3.2.7 TP9

TP9 was located against the north face of the retaining wall between Foley House and the High Street properties. It was excavated to a depth of c.1.1m. The upper 1m consisted of a loose dark brown sandy garden soil, which overlay a deposit of light brown/orange silty clay. The clay was the upper level of the siltstone bedrock, which was also encountered in all the boreholes. It is likely that a palaeosurface survives in this area.



Plate 4: TP9 with the orange brown clay visible at the base of the pit.

3.3 BOREHOLE LOGS

Thirteen boreholes were sunk by Southern Ground Testing to test the depth and stability of the deposits across the site (Fig. 1). The borehole logs have revealed some useful archaeological information, which was not available from the test-pits.

The siltstone bedrock was encountered in all of the boreholes at depths ranging between 1m (BH1) and 3.7m (BH13), again reflecting the south-north slope from Goat Street to High Street, with a slope from southwest to northeast also evident.

A deposit of stiff brown clay containing charcoal flecks in BH11 at a depth of 2m was interpreted by the company undertaking the boreholes as an 'old topsoil', which indicates that buried palaeosurfaces survive across the site. This was supported by the sequences recorded in BH1 and BH2 which showed that the Foley House carpark was built on a terrace of rubble, 40-50cm thick that had been laid over a deposit of grey/brown slightly peaty sandy clay containing brick and charcoal fragments. This deposit appears to represent a palaeosurface, possibly associated with the construction of Foley house and the laying out of its garden.

Two boreholes along the eastern edge of the Foley House garden, BH3 and BH4, revealed considerable depths of made ground, presumably deposited when the house and garden were constructed in the late 18th century. The eastern edge of the Foley House garden is *c.*2.5m above the neighbouring garden.

3.4 CONCLUSIONS

The results from monitoring the hand dug test pits and the boreholes have revealed substantial depths of garden soil overlying the sloping original ground surface. They also reveal that palaeosurfaces may survive in some places across the site at depths ranging from 80cm (BH1 and BH2) to 2m (BH11). This has archaeological implications for the proposals, as excavation to these depths will affect the buried surfaces, which may occur anywhere across the site, and may remove any archaeological evidence they contain.

The few artefacts recovered from the test-pits are typical of post-medieval domestic contexts, consisting of a few sherds of food preparation and serving vessels and food waste – fragments of animal bones and oyster shells. The artefacts were, with one exception recovered from the test-pits closest to the rear of the High Street properties, reflecting the typical practice of disposing of refuse in the rear gardens. No identifiable surfaces or features, such as pits, were noted in association with this material and it is not certain from the limited space available for inspection if the material was *in situ*, or whether it was imported with the soil as the ground level across this area was raised. In either case it is clear that the levels of the gardens were being raised during the post-medieval period.

The street frontage along Goat Street was not investigated and the archaeological potential of this area remains unknown.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

The results of the desk-based assessment (Page 2004) and this watching brief have shown that the site has the potential to contain archaeological evidence of the medieval and post-medieval development of Goat Street and High Street. Therefore, further archaeological evaluation is required to investigate specific areas of the site and to provide information that can be fed into the final design plans.

4.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

The evaluation should consist of two hand-excavated trenches: T1 close to the location of TP9 to investigate the possibility of a surviving palaeosurface; and T2 positioned to investigate the Goat Street frontage.

4.2.1 T1 (close to TP9)

This trench will measure 2.5m x 1.5m and be excavated to the top of any archaeological deposits or undisturbed subsoil, or a maximum depth of 1.5mⁱⁱ. The intention of this trench is to investigate, through sample excavation, the possibility of a surviving and buried land surface and to assess the extent, character and condition of any archaeological evidence it may contain.

4.2.2 T2 (Goat Street frontage)

This trench will measure 4m x 1.5m and be excavated to the top of any archaeological deposits or undisturbed subsoil. The intention of this trench is to investigate, through sample excavation, the presence, extent, character and condition of any surviving archaeological evidence associated with the development of Goat Street.

4.3 METHODOLOGY

A full specification will be prepared and approved by the regional archaeological curator prior to the evaluation being carried out.

ⁱⁱ This may be reduced if the nature of the deposits is such that the trench sides become unstable.

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 of digital images.
- I.** Archive report and draft copies of final report.
- M.** Miscellaneous correspondence.

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

The archive is currently held by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, as project number 52316.

SOURCES

Page N 2004 *Foley House, Goat Street, Haverfordwest: archaeological desk-based assessment*. Llandeilo. Cambria Archaeology report No.2004/86.

Southern Ground Testing – Borehole logs