

PEMBROKE POWER STATION SOCIAL CLUB EXTENSION PEMBROKE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Prepared by Cambria Archaeology
For
**Pembroke Power Station Social
Club**



ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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PEMBROKE POWER STATION SOCIAL CLUB EXTENSION PEMBROKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Gan / By

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Cover photo. View of site above location of town wall. View N

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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

SUMMARY

Three site visits were made during foundation work for an extension to the rear of Pembroke Power Station Sports and Social Club, Pembroke, Pembrokeshire, in order to record revealed archaeological deposits. A large pit or deposit was seen, but no further information could be gained due to the deep and unstable sides of the trench and the need to rapidly pour concrete.

INTRODUCTION

Cambria Archaeology-Heritage Management, as advisors to Pembrokeshire County Council Planning Department, identified potential impacts on the archaeological resource of a proposed club extension at Pembroke Power Station Sports and Social Club, behind F B Mason and Co, Main Street, Pembroke, Pembrokeshire (national grid reference SM98500141, planning application no 04/0117/PA).

The site itself lies between the main road running through the centre of the town and the line of the south town wall. It was a narrow development on part of a small tarmac car parking area. This area for parking had been raised by about 1m to 3m above the sloping ground to a level similar to that of the Main Street (Photo. 1), probably in the 1960s–1970s. This narrow plot of land within a town is typically a medieval burgage, normally with a dwelling, possibly including a shop at the street frontage, while the area behind may have held outbuildings for storage or manufacture. Often there were cesspits, which also accumulate other rubbish that may indicate the trade, wealth and health of the owners.

Because of the limited size and results of this project, no detailed history of the immediate area and Pembroke Town has been included. The most recent work on Pembroke is the Pembrokeshire Town Walls Project (Pembroke Design Limited/Cambria Archaeology 2004); this report contains a bibliography for earlier works and has been used for the summary below.

There is some evidence of prehistoric activity within Pembroke going back to the last ice age, c. 12000 years ago, as indicated by the finds from Wogan's Cavern beneath the Castle. This cave was used intermittently in the Mesolithic Period (10000-4400BC). It has been suggested that the castle stood on the site of an Iron Age fort (Ludlow 2001) and a few coins of Roman date found within the castle suggest that the fort's usage continued into the Romano-British period at least. The ridge on which Pembroke stands, with marsh or water on all but the western end would have been attractive whenever an element of defence was required. It was probably this strategic location that caused the Normans to establish the castle here in 1093 AD.

The town grew up around the castle in the early 1100s, but probably did not extend to the area of the current development until c.1200 to 1250. The dates of the town defences are far from certain. It is likely that there was a timber defence around the town possibly as early as the earlier half of the 1200s, but certainly in place by the 1280s. The replacement by a masonry town wall was most likely completed between 1295-1324.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the watching brief were to characterise and record the extent, chronology and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits identified during the groundworks.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

A mini tracked digger was used during all excavation using a toothed bucket. The use of a toothed bucket was unavoidable given the large modern rubble deposits

below the tarmac car park surface. Due to the large and loose overburden of the site and the use of a toothed bucket, detailed archaeological recording could not be made.

The first visit was on 5th December 2007 when a test pit was dug against the eastern edge of the car park. This revealed that below the car park surface there was a considerable modern make up of soil with stones, paving slabs, china fragments and other modern material. This test pit was dug to a depth of 0.85m, the base of which was still about 1m higher than the ground surface in the adjacent property. Because of the depth of modern deposits, and the proposed depth of footings it was agreed with the area's Archaeological Development Officer that the footing trenches would only need inspecting after they were dug rather than an archaeological presence being there all the time.

However, when the footing trenches were commenced on 9th January 2007 it was found that the trenches needed to be deeper than anticipated to encounter solid ground and because the loose sides were collapsing they needed filling with concrete as soon as possible. Therefore the contractor contacted Cambria for immediate presence while the all the footing trenches were excavated, which continued the following day.

Footing trenches were dug for the exterior walls of the extension with a further north-south trench in the interior (Photo. 2). The trenches were all 0.6m wide and a maximum of 9m long, and all were dug just down into bedrock. Because of the slope of the bedrock the westernmost trench was the shallowest being just under 1m deep at its northern end and 1.5m deep at its southern corner. The middle, north-south, trench was about 1.5m deep throughout, and possibly contained a gully crossing its northern half. The eastern trench was excavated down to about 2m deep for the whole of its length. In the northern half of this eastern trench there was a probable pit edge going down to 1.6m deep below the car park surface (Photos. 3 and 4). No modern material was observed coming from the fill of this feature. Nothing was observed in the southern trench, which was from 1.5m to 1.95m deep.

Future developments if not raised will need to be area stripped to understand archaeological activity in the rear of similar properties in the old town of Pembroke

CONCLUSIONS

The footing trenches do appear to have encountered some potential archaeology, but of uncertain date. The practical and safety difficulties curtailed investigation. This site is one of the few areas back from the Main Street that have been levelled up. Elsewhere, it is recommended that the footprint of any new build be area stripped and cleaned under archaeological supervision and any features investigated, so that necessary recording can take place. Pembroke has an incredible potential of archaeological information to give, but to date little has been done except on the castle or the town walls.

SOURCES

Ludlow N 2001 Pembroke Castle guidebook

Pembroke Design Limited in Association with Cambria Archaeology 2004
Pembroke Town Walls Project and Condition Survey. Un published report for
Pembrokeshire County Council. Copy held at DAT HER

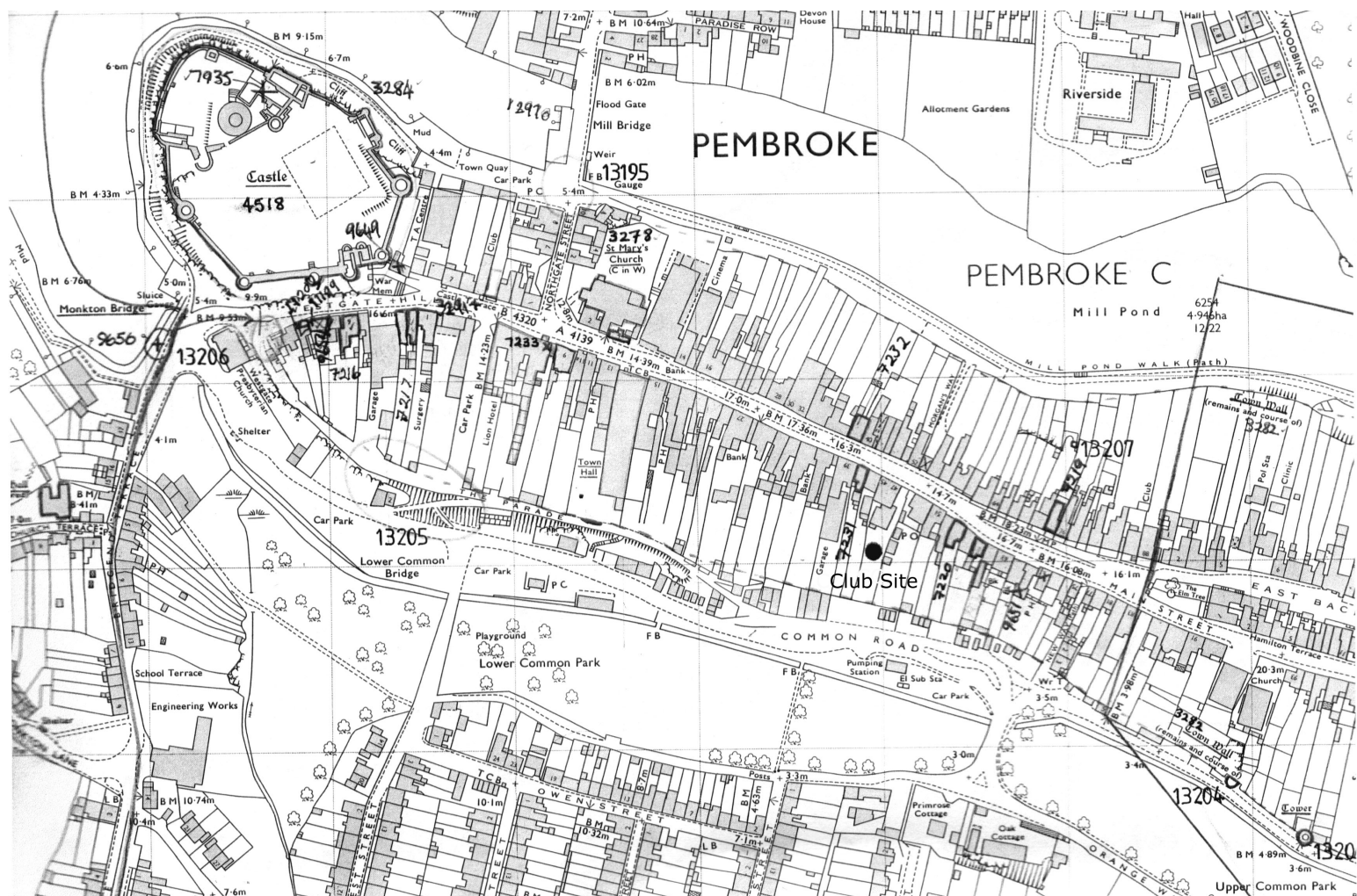


Figure 1. Location of Pembroke Power Station Social Club Site.

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office

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Photo 1: Raised car park area before digging test pit in grass. View N



Photo. 2: Footing trenches under excavation. Eastern trench yet to be dug. View N



Photo. 3: East trench. Possible pit. Trench 2m deep. View E



Photo. 4: East Trench. Possible pit. Trench 2m deep. Pit view W



Photo 1: Raised car park area before digging test pit in grass. View N



Photo. 2: Footing trenches under excavation. Eastern trench yet to be dug. View N



Photo. 3: Possible pit. Trench 2m deep. View E



Photo. 4: Possible pit. Trench 2m deep. Pit view W