

NEW LEISURE CENTRE ST THOMAS' GREEN HAVERFORDWEST PEMBROKESHIRE

STANDING BUILDING RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Report prepared
By
Cambria Archaeology
For
Cotton Building and Civil Engineering



CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO. 2008/17
PROJECT RECORD NOS. 62496 and 62497

February 2008

NEW LEISURE CENTRE, ST THOMAS' GREEN HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE STANDING BUILDING RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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@cambria.org.uk
Gwefan: www.cambria.org.uk

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@cambria.org.uk
Website: www.cambria.org.uk

*Cwmni cyfyngedig (1198990) ynghyd ag elusen gofrestredig (504616) yw'r Ymddiriedolaeth. The Trust is both a Limited Company (No. 1198990) and a
Registered Charity (No. 504616)*

CADEIRYDD CHAIRMAN: C R MUSSON MBE B Arch FSA MIFA. CYFARWYDDWR DIRECTOR: KEN MURPHY BA MIFA

Contents

Summary	1
1. Introduction.....	2
1.5 Archive deposition.....	2
2. the site	3
2.1 Development and Location	3
2.2 History	3
3. Methodology and results.....	5
3.1 Standing building recording.....	5
3.2 Watching Brief.....	5
3.2.1 Time capsule	6
3.2.2 Wells (Locations on Figure 6)	6
3.2.3 Drain	7
3.2.4 Site Visits.....	7
3.2.5 Swimming pool area	7
4. Discussion	8
Sources	9
Acknowledgements.....	9
 Figure 1: Location of St Thomas Green Leisure development	10
Figure 2: Peter Lea's Map of 1690	11
Figure 3: Part of St Thomas Tithe map 1840	11
Figure 4: Part of Samuel Richardson's map of 1883	12
Figure 5: Ordnance Survey First Edition 1889? Detail of Infirmary Buildings ...	12
Figure 6: Photographic numbers and location of wells and drain. Part of ground floor and exterior	13
Figure 7: Photographic numbers, first and second floors	14
Figure 8: Photographic numbers ground and first floors. Earlier layout	15
Figure 9: Photographic numbers second floor. Earlier layout	16
 Plate 1: Lease of Old Lunatic Asylum 1872	17
Plate 2: Ward probably in St Thomas's Infirmary	17
Plate 3: St Thomas Green Infirmary about 1910	18
Plate 4: St Thomas Green Infirmary 2007	18
Plate 5: Modern southeast wing	19
Plate 6: Interior of room west of entrance	19
Plate 7: Interior of room west of entrance	20
Plate 8: Interior of room west of entrance, painted plaster	20
Plate 9: Interior of room west of entrance, detail of painted plaster	21
Plate 10: Fireplace from interior of room west of entrance	21
Plate 11: Stone that contained "time capsule"	22
Plate 12: Time capsule bottle, seal and contents	22
Plate 13: Time capsule seal	23
Plate 14: Well PRN 63943	23
Plate 15: Well PRN 63944	24
Plate 16: Well PRN 63945	24
Plate 17: Drain PRN 63946	25
Plate 18: Swimming pool area as reduced for construction	25

Cover photograph St Thomas' Green Old Infirmary just before demolition in 2007

**NEW LEISURE CENTRE, ST THOMAS' GREEN
HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE
STANDING BUILDING RECORDING
AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

SUMMARY

Pembrokeshire County Council are developing the site of the former Dyfed County Council offices on St Thomas' Green, Haverfordwest, as a new leisure centre. Part of these offices occupied a Victorian hospital building. The site had a fairly long history of occupation, having been the location of the Town Gaol, the buildings of which became an asylum, before they were demolished and the hospital built. Therefore, a programme of standing building recording and a watching brief were undertaken during the works to record the surviving fabric of the hospital buildings and any evidence of earlier structures.

Rapid photographic recording was undertaken of the hospital building and a watching brief was conducted after its demolition.

No features were recognisable as belonging to the gaol or asylum. Three large wells were encountered, two of which were probably Victorian.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project commission

Cambria Archaeological Field Services were asked by Cotton, Building and Civil Engineering, Maes Y Lyn, Trefine, Pembrokeshire to undertake building recording as discussed on the 11 January, due to an archaeological condition on the development. The Local Planning Authority's (LPA) numbers for this development were 06/0001/ PA and 06/0499/PA (NGR SM9530015275).

1.2 Scope of the project

The project was designed to undertake a rapid photographic record of the buildings before demolition and thereafter record any archaeological features or deposits exposed during the site clearance works and foundation trench cutting operations.

1.3 Report outline

This report describes the physical environment of the site (Section 2) before summarising the watching brief results and the conclusions based on those results (Section 3).

1.4 Abbreviations

Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR).

1.5 Archive deposition

The time capsule, archive and a copy of the report will be deposited with Scolton Manor Museum. A copy of the report will also be given the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Development and Location

This project was undertaken in advance of the construction of a leisure centre with swimming pool. This was a large development involving demolition of the former Dyfed County Council offices and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority's offices. After demolition a programme of targeted watching brief was agreed for parts of the groundworks. The site was located on the south side of St Thomas' Green (NGR SM9530015275)(Fig 1). One of the buildings to be demolished was a Victorian Hospital and this was on the site of the town gaol that later became the asylum.

2.2 History

Because of the limited results and scope of this project it is not intended to go into any detailed history of Haverfordwest. This history has been covered elsewhere (Miles 1999).

There are no known pre-medieval sites near St Thomas' Green. In the medieval period Haverfordwest grew into a walled town with St Thomas's Church and St Thomas' Green lying outside the town walls. The first record of St Thomas' Green is not until 1535 (Charles 1992, 649). It is likely that houses may have existed in the medieval period on the eastern side of St Thomas' Green as shown on Peter Lea's map of 1690 (Fig. 2), but even by this date there are no buildings on the south side of St Thomas' Green where this present development has taken place. The parish of St Thomas appears to have had only limited occupation, with 44 households in 1563, and an estimate of 60 Hearth Tax payers, with a possible reduction by 1801, when just 18 families are recorded.

The town gaol was originally adjacent to St Mary's Church but later a new town gaol was built around 1800 on St Thomas' Green, before being closed in 1822. The gaol was then modified in the same year to form the first lunatic asylum in Wales (Miles 1999, 152 and Davies 1992, 29). There is no plan of the gaol but the asylum building is clearly shown on the St Thomas (Haverfordwest) Tithe Map of c.1840 (Fig. 3), probably along with two dwellings aligned on the south side of St Thomas' Green. The asylum appears to have always been of a poor standard, even for the Victorian period (Davies 1992, 79-84). The asylum evidently had its own well as the supply was recorded as insufficient and water had to be fetched from elsewhere by the male patients. It is also recorded that there were two 'airing courts' 22 by 13 yards each with an open privy with a cesspool. The asylum was still in use in 1864 but had been removed by Christmas 1866 as the patients had been moved to Carmarthen (Davies 1992, 84).

According to Lewis (1993, 43), in 1859 the Pembrokeshire and Haverfordwest Infirmary was founded on the site of the asylum (Figs. 4 and 5), but obviously this date is not compatible for that given for the last use of the asylum of 1864-6. Initially the infirmary used the old asylum building, until a new building was started in 1872. The lease for the infirmary on the site was signed in that year and this document is held in the Haverfordwest Record Office (1872 D/EE/misc/10/) (Plate. 1). The new infirmary was completed the following year, but officially opened in 1874. It was bigger than the asylum building and does not appear to have incorporated any of the former structure. The building was designed by a local architect, Mr D E Thomas (Simon Hancock pers comm), It was a well proportioned building with a symmetrically designed frontage and short crenellated towers where the wings joined the main structure (Plate 1). There

were also a good number of windows for light and ventilation (Plates 2, 3 and 4). However, the infirmary was soon moved after the First World War to the Pembroke County War Memorial Hospital on the other side of Winch Lane (Fig 1).

The Old Infirmary building later became the County Offices of Pembrokeshire County Council, an extension built in the 1960's on its southeast side, later in 1974 becoming part of Dyfed County Council. To the south, also in the development area but outside the watching brief, offices were built for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

3. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

3.1 Standing building recording

Recording of the County Council buildings took place on the 19th and 22nd January 2007. Unfortunately demolition had already commenced with some interior fittings having been removed, notably fireplaces from the earlier Victorian Infirmary building. Some rooms also had much of the internal partitioning removed. The probable former mortuary building had already been demolished.

The photographic recording was all done in digital format and the recording was done rapidly. All exterior elevations were recorded, although some only obliquely due to access limitations. All interior rooms had at least one interior photograph, although these were more limited due to restrictions of space. A few details of individual elements were also recorded.

The location and direction of each photograph was recorded on plans provided and these have been redrawn for the report (Figs. 6-9). However, there are slight distortions on copies of the older plans supplied, probably due to them being copied a number of times; in addition the modern floor plan was stylised and not an exact correlation with the older plans, or the buildings themselves. Plots of photograph locations and directions are included (Figs. 6-9) and all of the photographs are on the disc at the back of the report.

Much of the exterior of the infirmary building remained as it was when built (Plates 3 and 4), but with dormer windows added on the east and west wings, extensions on either side of the frontage and a new south wing on the rear of the east wing (Plate 5). Within the interior of the old infirmary a reasonable amount of alteration had taken place to provide council offices, possibly more so in the east wing than the west. However, many of the doors, doorframes and skirting boards appeared to be original. Also a few, but not all, fireplaces remained, although these had been boarded over.

The office to the west of the entrance was the only room that had remaining wainscot (Plates 6 and 7). Behind this was revealed painted wall plaster (Plates 8 and 9). This room also had a fine fireplace and was probably the most luxurious room in the building (Plate 10). It was below the floor in this room that a time capsule was recovered (see below).

3.2 Watching Brief

The area's Archaeological Development Control Officer had recommended that after the building had been recorded an archaeologist should be present during all groundworks in the area of the former council buildings, but not the former Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority offices to the south.

Because of the intermittent excavation of the dug-pile construction method being employed, it was later agreed that all such pile trenches need only be inspected after digging but before concrete was poured. These dug-pile trenches consisted of a number of individual trenches, either square or rectangular and up to 3m long. The depth of these pile trenches varied but was normally from 1m to 1.4m deep and all dug down into the natural bedrock. These intermittent watching briefs were by necessity at the notice of Cottons, the on-site contractor. These visits in general were programmed successfully and most of the excavations were observed. Where wells and a drain were encountered Cambria were called in immediately.

In the area that was dug for a new swimming pool a continuous watching brief was undertaken over three days.

3.2.1 Time capsule

On 9th March 2007 Cottons called Cambria to the site as a time capsule had been uncovered below the room to the west of the entrance to the infirmary. It had been discovered while levelling the demolished building with a large 360° mechanical excavator using a toothed bucket that turned over the large stone (Plate 11), in which a cork and sealed glass bottle had been placed. The site workers had removed the seal and cork prior to Cambria's arrival (Plate 12).

The stone in which the time capsule was found was roughly dressed fine-grained stone (possibly Forest of Dean) (Plate 11). It was 620mm long, 515mm wide by 250 deep. It had a finely tooled niche with a curved base in which the bottle had rested. The recess was 294mm long by 143mm wide and 124mm deep; around this there was a shallow depression suggesting that a brass plate may have been sealed over the bottle.

The contents of the bottle were sodden with water, probably quite recently following heavy rain on the site after the building had been demolished, the cork no longer sealing the bottle due to attack by woodworm. The folded paper within the bottle was said to have had writing on it by the workmen but this was no longer visible by the time of the visit. There was also the broken remains of a red wax seal from the top of the bottle, this depicts a crown and possibly has the legend "Clerk of the Peace, County of Pemb" (Rees 2008)(Plate 13). After discussion with Scolton Manor Museum, the bottle, still with the contents, was taken to Haverfordwest Record Office to be examined there by John Olive. The bottle contained a roll, possibly of parchment and within this were very fragmented remains of what was probably a newspaper cutting. It most certainly was a printed piece of paper but other than a few words or letters is indecipherable. The contents of the bottle had to some extent been affected by recent water but much more by insect attack. These contents were later investigated by Simon Hancock, manager of Haverfordwest Town Museum, who discovered a possible reference in a contemporary newspaper. "The Pembrokeshire Herald, reporting the laying of the foundation stone of a new wing for the County Infirmary in 1872, stated that a set of current silver coins, a copy of The Times and a list of committee members were put into the foundation stone by the Architect Mr D E Thomas" (Rees 2008). No evidence has come to light of the coins or the newspaper.

3.2.2 Wells (*Locations on Figure 6*)

Well PRN 63943 (SM931015288)(Plate 14): This well was discovered by the collapse of its brick vault while the site was being cleared after demolition. When its location was plotted it lay below the last-but-one east room in the old infirmary. It was 3m down to the surface of the water which was 3.3m deep. The well shaft was cut through bedrock and was c. 3m in diameter, but the lower part was squarer with straighter sides, possibly due to the nature of the bedrock. There were approximately two courses of stone springing on the top of the bedrock for the brick vault. The mortar was white/grey, probably a mixture of lime and cement with coal flecks. Whether this well was dug before the infirmary or was contemporary with it is unknown. Its capping however would appear to be of the same date as the infirmary. After checking with the Archaeological Development Control Officer, it was recommended that the well should be backfilled.

Well PRN 63944 (SM9529415283)(Plate 15): This well was again discovered by the collapse of its brick vault while the site was being cleared after demolition. When its location was plotted it lay in the centre of the infirmary or gaol/asylum buildings. It was 3.3m down to the surface of the water which was 4.3m deep. The well shaft was square and cut into bedrock, the upper 1.2m was lined with stone and there were the remains of a brick capping re-enforced with an iron bar. Again the date of the well's construction is unknown but the capping would appear to be contemporary with the infirmary.

Well PRN 63945 (SM9529415300)(Plate 16): This feature is not necessarily a well and could be a cesspit, but is considered more likely to have at least started as a well due to the effort expended digging deep into the bedrock. This feature was in front of the Infirmary or earlier asylum/town gaol buildings but within their precinct walls.

It was encountered during a watching brief visit and its machine excavation with a toothed bucket was observed: however it was judged too dangerous to enter. The feature was filled with soil but no artefacts were seen. The bottom of the cut appeared to be about 4.0m deep, with water encountered at 3.5m. The sides, except at the bottom, lay outside the trench. The lower fills were quite stony. Above there were a series of darker deposits that continued between two mortared stone walls (Plate 16). It is probable that these walls were part of the well construction but they did not appear to extend down to the bedrock. However, it is possible that these walls were for a later feature and their location was coincidental.

3.2.3 Drain

Drain PRN 63946 (SM9531715280)(Plate 17). This drain was located running west to east (water was still flowing) approximately in a line with the road on the south side of St Thomas' Green. The stone capping for the well was 1.8m below the modern pavement. Internally the drain was 0.25m wide by 0.3m with 0.01m of silt in the bottom. It was constructed in stone with a hard ashy purple grey mix mortar. Other than the type of mortar there was no other dating evidence but it is considered likely that this drain is of Victorian date.

3.2.4 Site Visits

In observing the pile footings other than the drain and one probable well (above), a few sections of stone walls were seen. These all appeared to be from the infirmary or an adjacent cottage, with nothing earlier. There were also later features: manholes, ceramic drains and cable trenches that were from more recent activity, probably to do with the Council buildings and conversion of the existing Infirmary building.

3.2.5 Swimming pool area

(Plate 18) This was located in the northeast area of the new building. A machine using a toothed bucket (not ideal for observing any archaeological features) did all of the excavation. In the southwestern corner there were parts of the footings of the cottage to the rear of the infirmary. About 5m north of the remains of the cottage there was a trench running approximately east-west which could be the cut for drain PRN 63946 continuing across the site. Parallel to the probable drain cut and a further 11m to the north there were the remains of a stone wall or wall footings, probably the rear (south) wall of the old infirmary building.

4. DISCUSSION

There was no evidence found for any medieval or earlier activity, although the probable filled-in well (PRN 63945) towards the frontage is undated; the lack of dating material suggests that this may have been a well on St Thomas's Green pre-dating the construction of the gaol.

Given Peter Lea's map of 1690 (Fig. 2) does not show any buildings on this area, it would appear that all development was later, probably not until the beginning of the 1800's when the town gaol was built on St Thomas' Green. This building probably had little alteration to change it into the first asylum in Wales, and was therefore soon found to be unsuitable. It was roughly square in plan, with sides just under 20m long with a slight protrusion on its north side (Fig. 3) with exercise yards on either side. No evidence was found for the gaol and asylum building. This may be due to modern construction methods used. Possibly traces of this earlier building could have been recovered if it had been archaeologically excavated. However, it would appear that there was little, if anything remaining and the added expense would not have been justified. It would seem that the site had been cleared before construction of the Victorian infirmary. However, the well (PRN 63944) in the centre of the complex would make more sense in the centre of a gaol than in the middle of a hospital reception area.

The building of the Pembrokeshire and Haverfordwest Infirmary showed civic pride with its fine frontage and crenellated turrets (Plates 1 and 4). The lease for the site (Plate 3), possibly the time capsule, and the more elaborate room to the west, would also support this suggestion of a building of some consequence. Very little of the structure of this building was destroyed when it was incorporated into the later council buildings. As a result of this project there are records indicating how it would have appeared.

The well (PRN 63944) located in the east wing of the infirmary suggests that the kitchen may have been in this part of the building, but this area in particular had been altered or the walls boarded over when converted to accommodate the council, so any interpretation is uncertain.

The depth of the drain (PRN 63946) suggests that it is leading from further west than the infirmary and although again there was no dating evidence for its construction it is likely to be Victorian.

It is recommended that consideration is given to production of an information panel in the new leisure centre outlining the previous usages and the importance of the site are worth highlighting.

SOURCES

Charles B G 1992 *The Place-Names of Pembrokeshire*. Vol. II. Aberystwyth: The National Library of Wales

Davies T G 1992 'of All the Maladies': Episodes in the History Of Psychiatry in nineteenth-century Pembrokeshire. *Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society*. Vol. 5 (1992-3, 75-90)

Dyfed Cultural Services Department 1992 *Haverfordwest in Old Photographs*. Avon: Bath Press

Miles D 1999 *A History of Haverfordwest*. Llandysul: Gomer Press

Lewis R 1992 *The Towns of Pembrokeshire*, in Pembrokeshire County History ed Howells D. The Pembrokeshire Historical Society

Rees D 2008 "136-year-old time capsule found on site" *Western Telegraph* 20/02/2008

Peter Leas Map of 1690
St Thomas Haverfordwest Tithe Map c1840
Samuel Richardson 1883
Ordnance Survey first and second editions
Ordnance Survey 1971

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The staff of Cottons, in particular Ian Walter and Mervyn Palmer for their co-operation and for calling us in when unexpected things turned up. John Olive of Haverfordwest Record Office for looking at the contents of the time capsule.

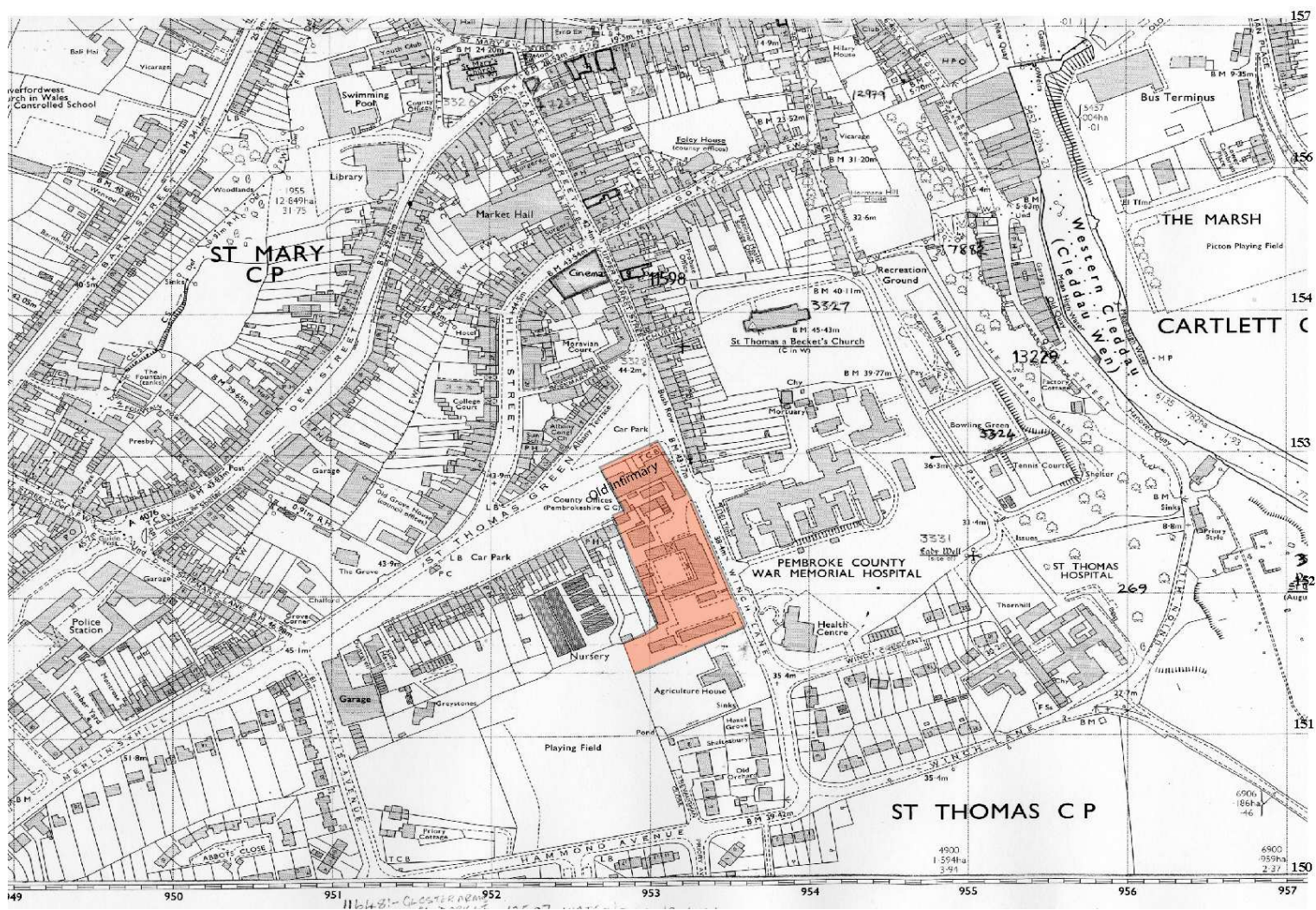


Figure 1: Location of St Thomas Green Leisure development, based on the Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 1971 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

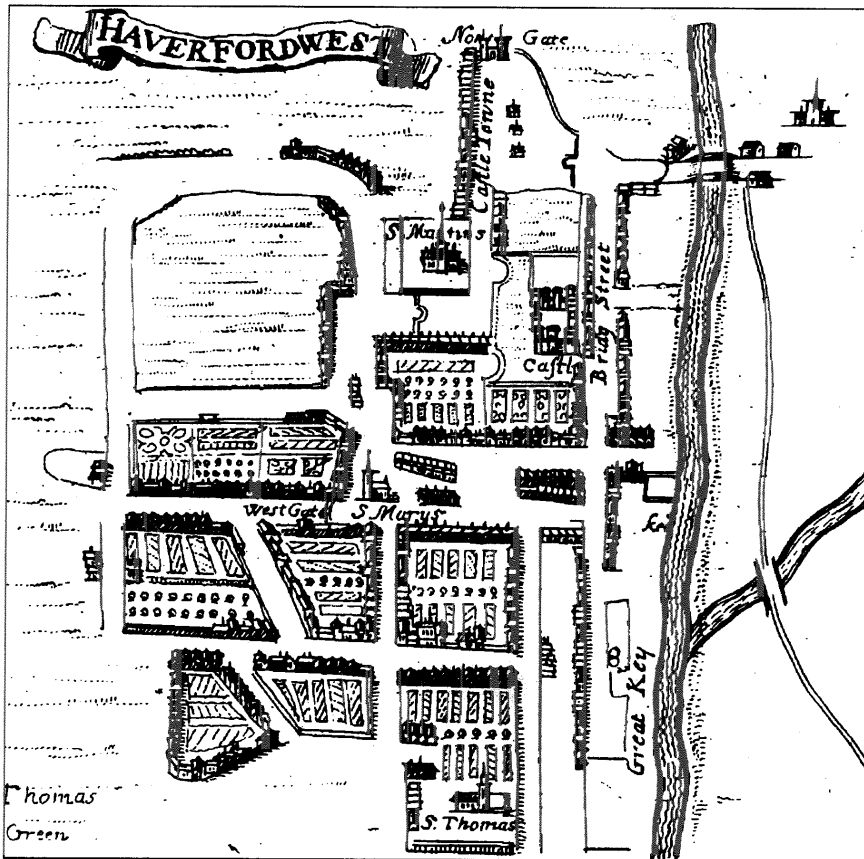


Figure 2: Peter Lea's Map of 1690



Figure 3: Part of St Thomas Tithe map 1840. Asylum in lower centre

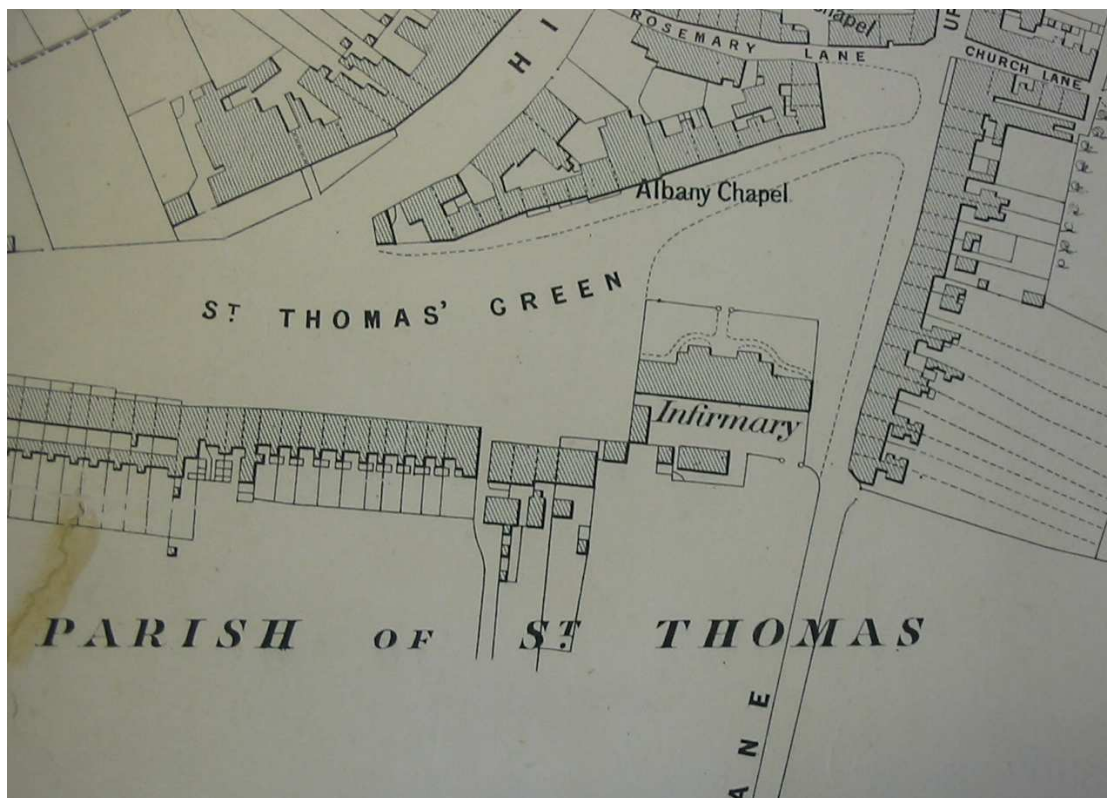


Figure 4: Part of Samuel Richardson's map of 1883

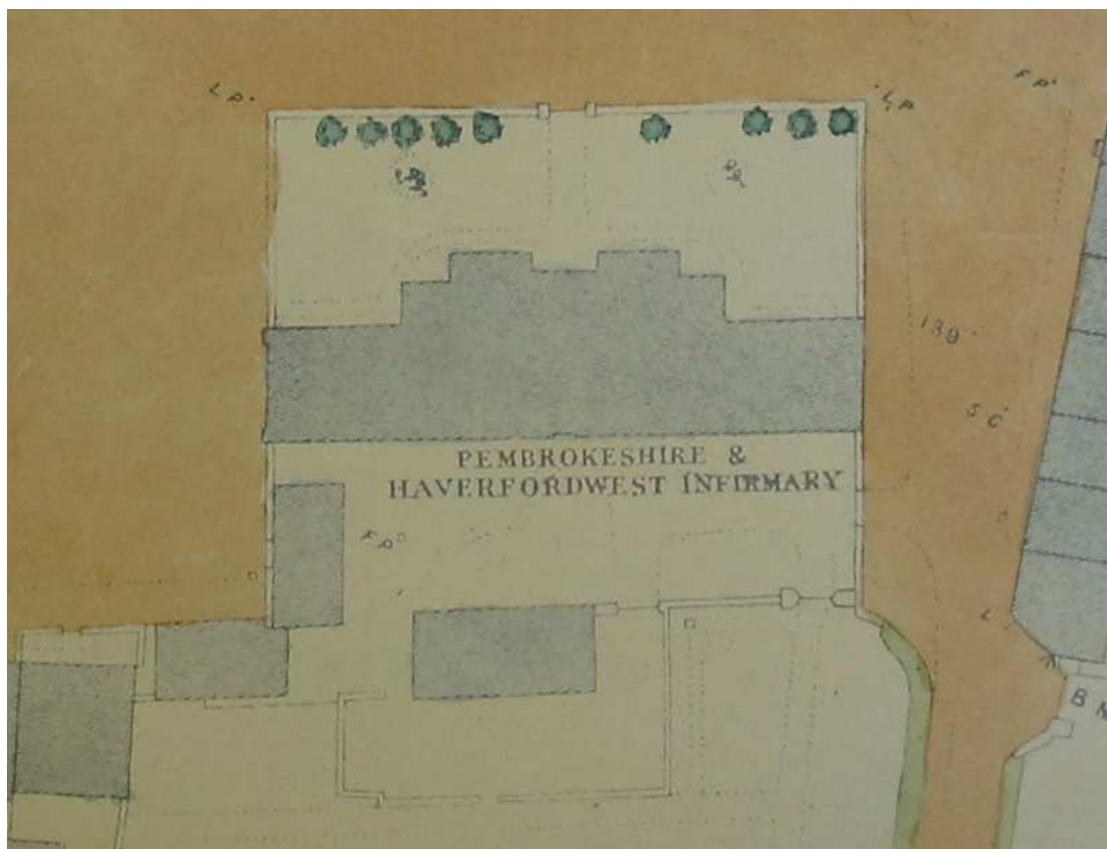


Figure 5: Ordnance Survey First Edition 1889? Detail of Infirmary Buildings

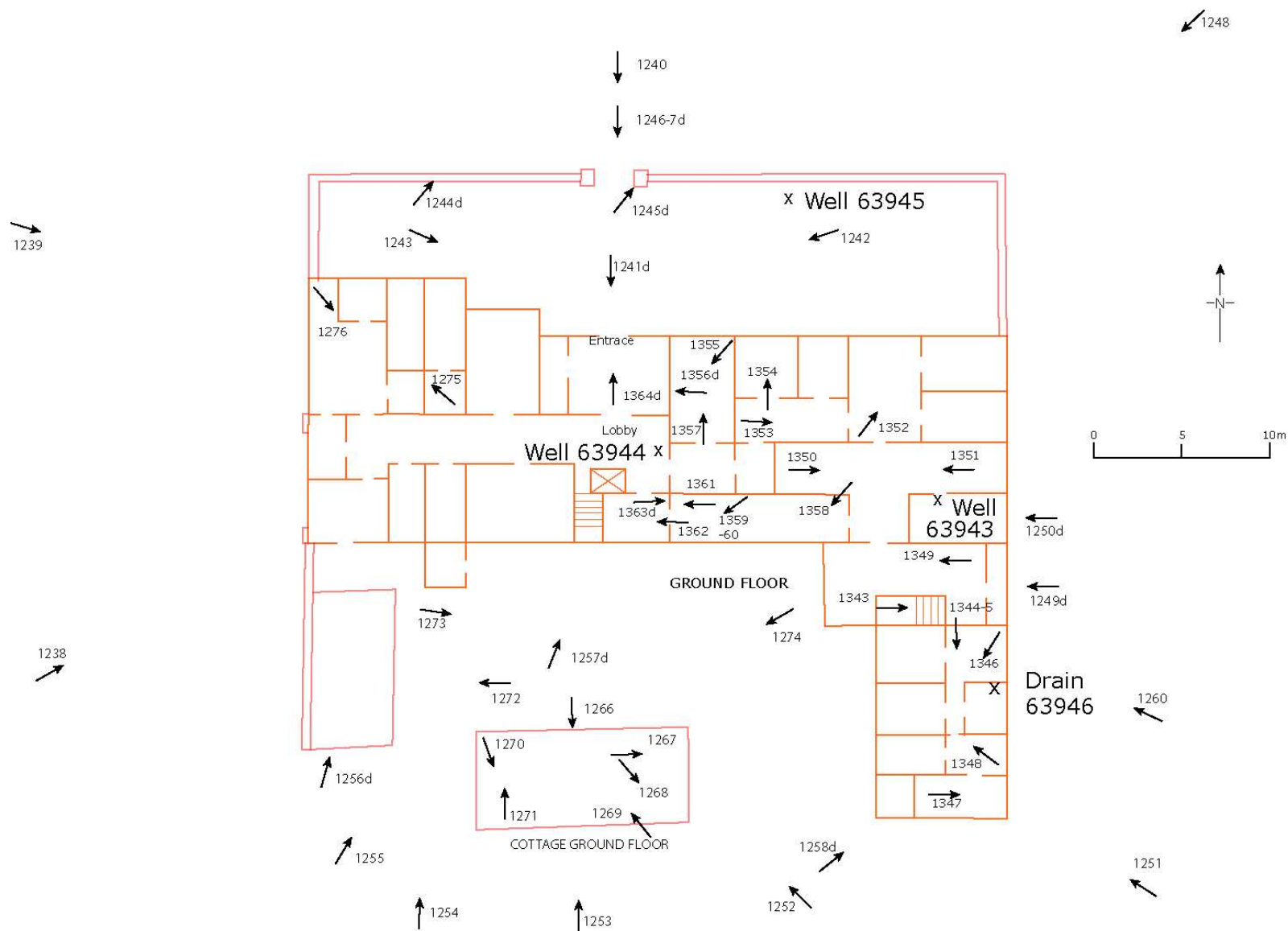


Figure 6: Photographic numbers and location of wells and drain. Part of ground floor and exterior. Schematic modern layout

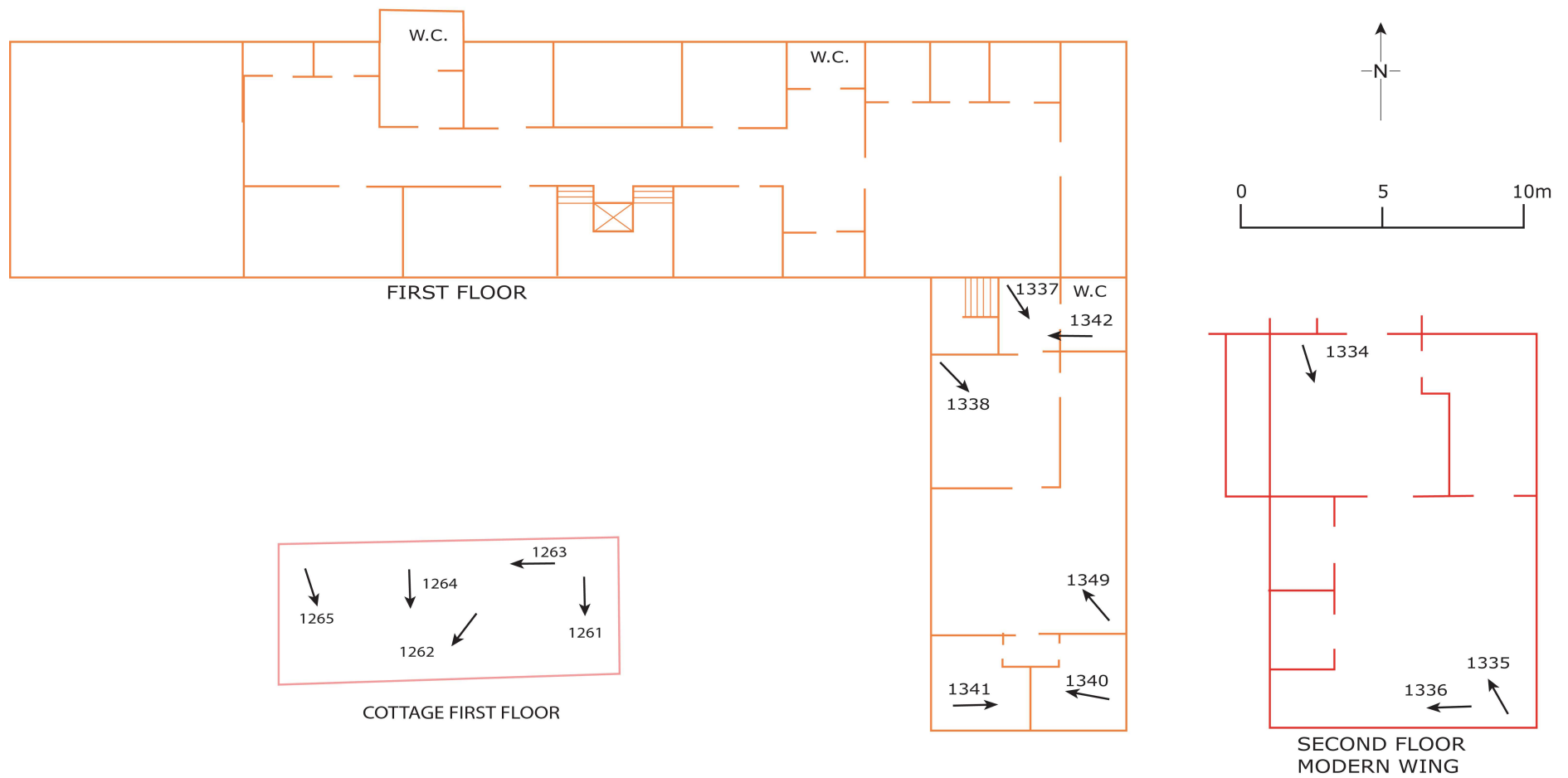


Figure 7: Photographic numbers, first and second floors. Schematic modern layout

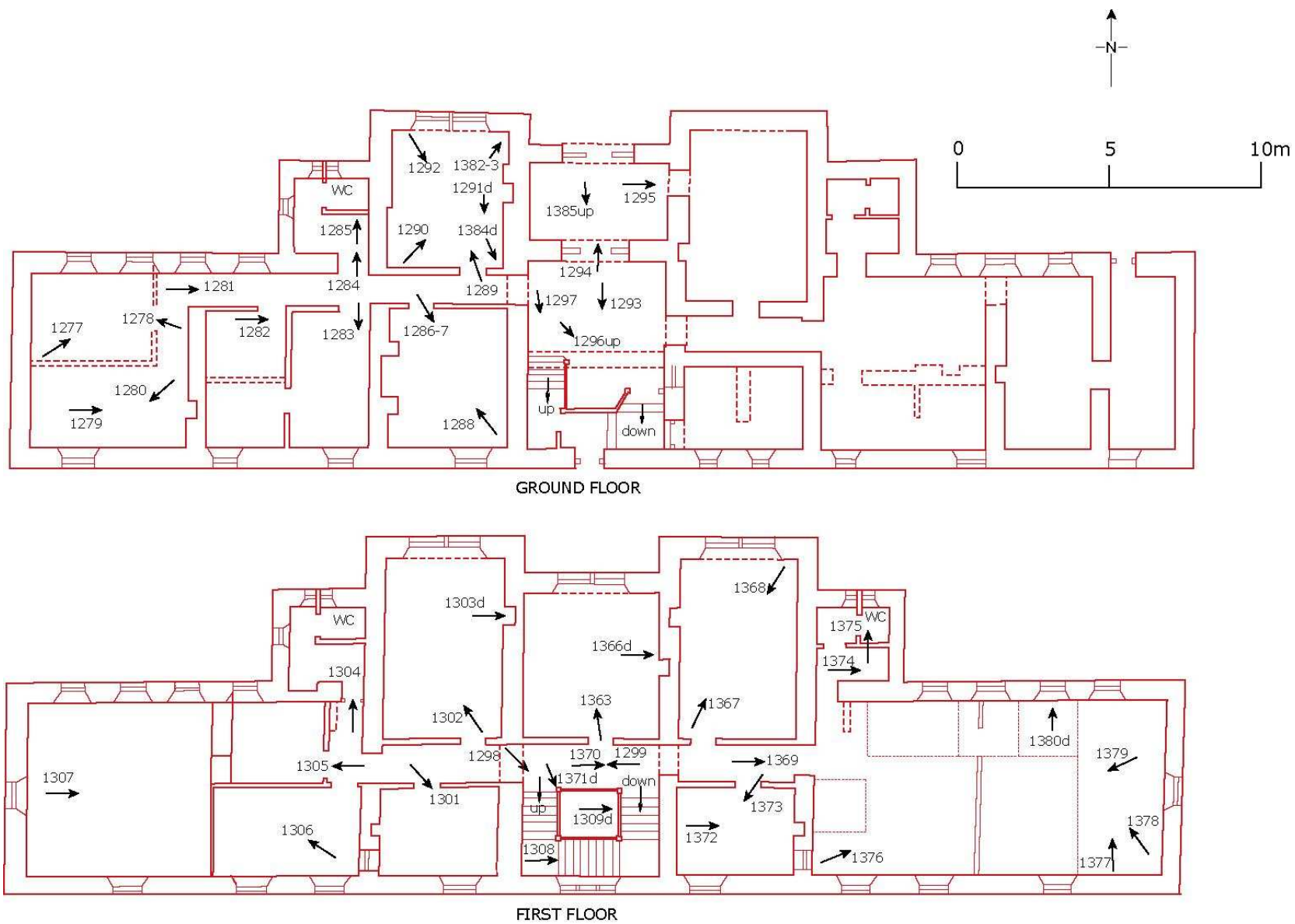


Figure 8: Photographic numbers ground and first floors. Earlier layout

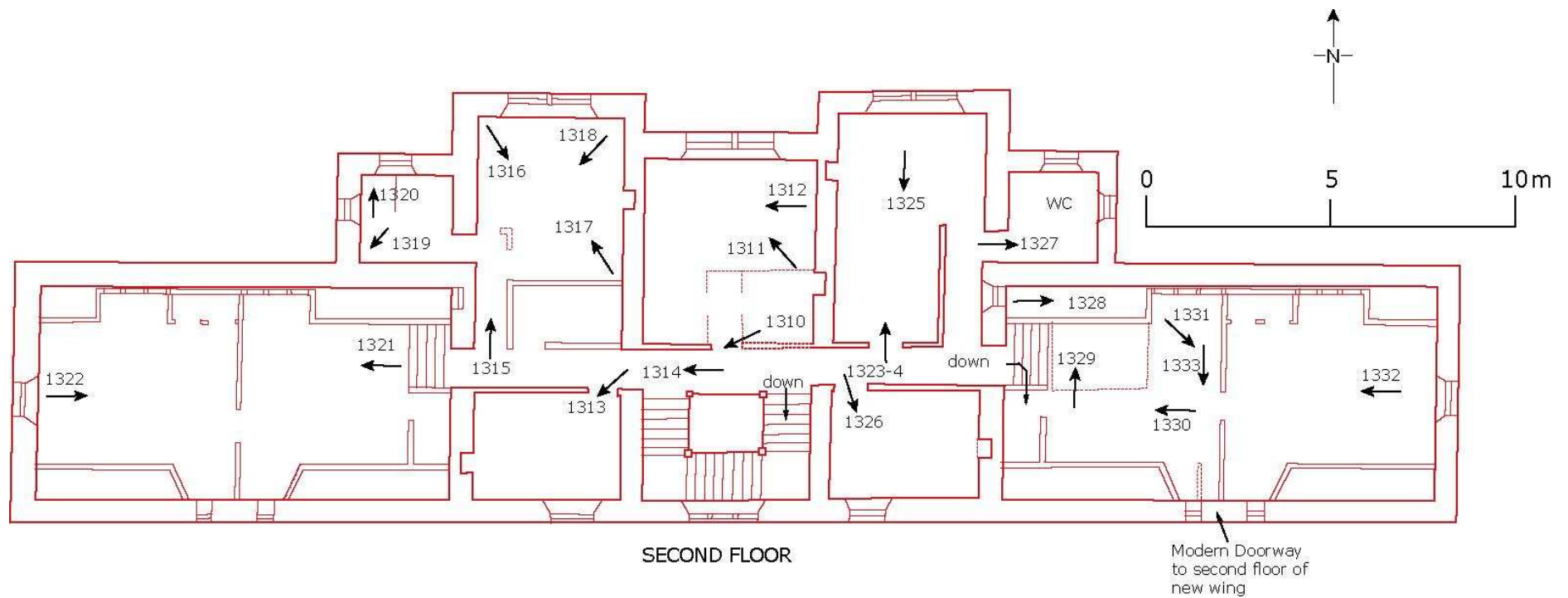


Figure 9: Photographic numbers second floor. Earlier layout

PLATES

Numbers in brackets are photograph numbers for building survey, suffix d is for detail

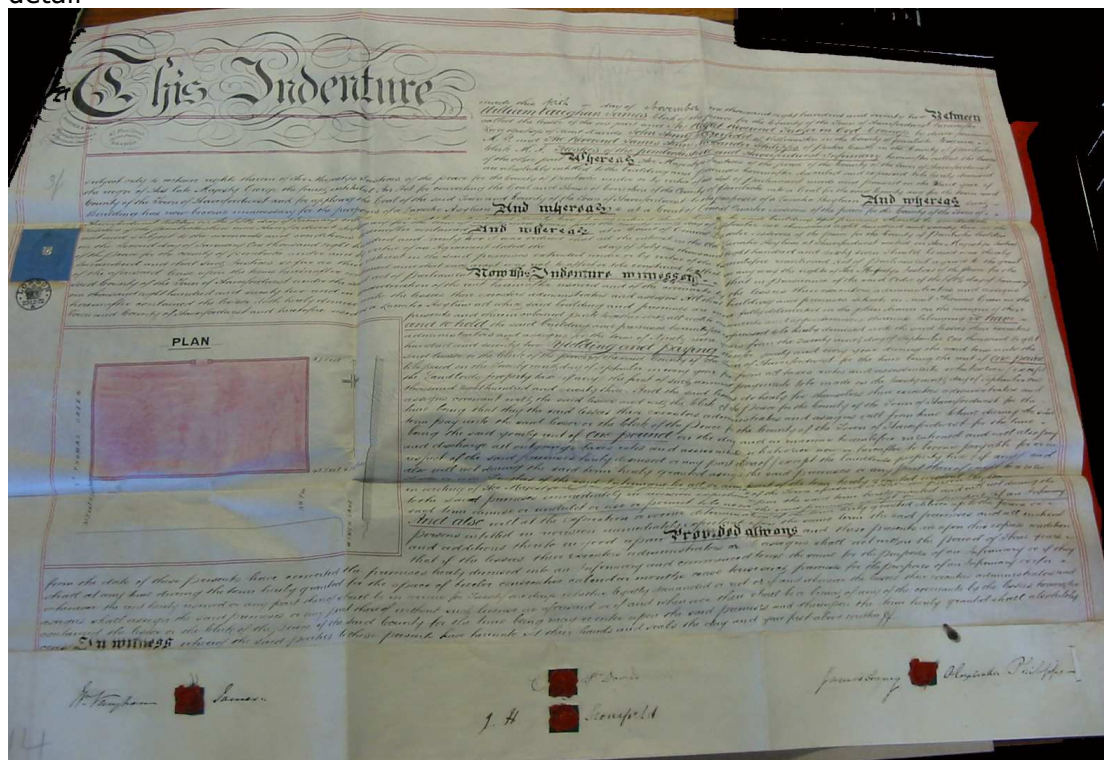


Plate 1: Lease of Old Lunatic Asylum 1872 (Hwest Record Office D/EE/Misc/10)



Plate 2: Ward probably in St Thomas's Infirmary (©Dyfed Cultural Services Department 1992)

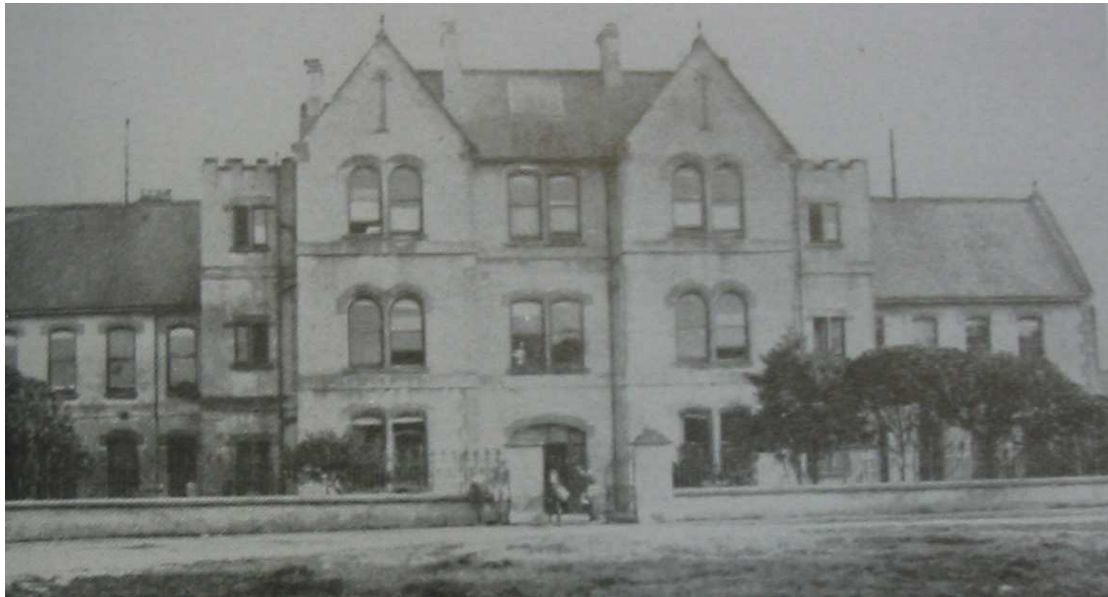


Plate 3: St Thomas Green Infirmary about 1910. Note second story on wings not built. View S (© Dyfed Cultural Services Department 1992)



Plate 4: St Thomas Green Infirmary 2007 (1240) With little change from 1910 except the dormer windows on either wings and modern ground floor extensions on either side, just visible behind the fence and trees



Plate 5: (1251) Modern southeast wing. View NW



Plate 6: (1289) Interior of room west of entrance. View N. Scale 1m



Plate 7: (1292) Interior of room west of entrance. View SE.



Plate 8: (1383) Interior of room west of entrance, painted plaster behind wainscot. View NE. Scale 1m



Plate 9: (1384d) Interior of room west of entrance, detail of painted plaster behind wainscot. View NE. Scale 1m



Plate 10: (1291d) Fireplace from interior of room west of entrance. Scale 1m



Plate 11: Stone that contained "time capsule". Scale 0.5m



Plate 12: Time capsule bottle, seal and contents. Scale 1cm squares

Plate 13: Time capsule seal. Scale 1cm squares

Plate 14: Well PRN 63943 View NE. Scale 1m

Plate 15: Well PRN 63944 View S. Scale 1m

Plate 16: Well PRN 63945 View E, Scale 1m

Plate 17: Drain PRN 63946, View E. Scales 1m x 1m

Plate 18: Swimming pool area as reduced for construction. View N

**NEW LEISURE CENTRE, ST THOMAS' GREEN
HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE
STANDING BUILDING RECORDING AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

REPORT NUMBER 2008/17

February 2008

This report has been prepared by Pete Crane

Position: Senior Archaeologist

Signature Date

This report has been checked and approved by Nigel Page

on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position: Head of Field Services

Signature Date

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