

# **MOUNTAIN ROAD, PEMBREY CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**



Prepared  
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## MOUNTAIN ROAD, PEMBREY CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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**MOUNTAIN ROAD, PEMBREY, CARMARTHENSHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**

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## **MOUNTAIN ROAD, PEMBREY, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**

### **SUMMARY**

*Proposals for a large-scale residential development at Pembrey required an archaeological appraisal. The proposed development area lies at the foot of the southern slope of Mynydd Pembrey, some 200m to the north of the medieval core of the village. A late medieval or early post-medieval manor house lies c. 75m to the north of the site, therefore it was considered that an appraisal of the known archaeological resource was necessary to aid in the production of final design plans and a formal planning application.*

*Asbri Planning Ltd., on behalf of Charles Church, commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to undertake the appraisal in September 2007.*

*The appraisal revealed no known archaeological sites within the proposed development area. However, its location at the base of Mynydd Pembrey means that archaeological features and deposits may be masked by hill wash and colluvium.*

*If planning permission for the proposed development is given, the report suggests that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during any ground breaking activity.*



Plate 1: A general view southwest across the proposed development area.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Project proposals and commission**

Proposals for a residential development at Pembrey required an archaeological appraisal. An appraisal, which consists of a rapid assessment of readily available sources, was considered to be the most appropriate method of assessing the likely impacts of the proposed development.

Asbri Planning Ltd., on behalf of Charles Church, commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to undertake the appraisal in September 2007.

### **Scope of the project**

The appraisal consisted of the examination of readily available sources of information such as maps, published works and aerial photographs, and a site visit. The results are intended to inform the final design plans for the site and, if required, to outline a possible programme of further works to mitigate the archaeological impact of the proposed development. The appraisal should be seen only as the first stage of the archaeological process and does not preclude the possibility that further archaeological input may be required prior to, or during, the proposed development works.

### **Abbreviations used in this report**

All sites recorded on the county Historic Environment Record<sup>1</sup> (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). New sites have been assigned a PRN and located by their NGR. References to cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets throughout the text, with full details listed in the sources section at the rear of the report.

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<sup>1</sup> Held and managed by Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo.



## **SUMMARY OF THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT**

### **The site location**

The site occupies c.4.5ha (11.3 acres) at the base of the southern slope of Mynydd Pembrey. It comprises two pasture fields bounded on the north side by a footpath and by modern housing on the south, east and west sides.

The site slopes down from north to south.

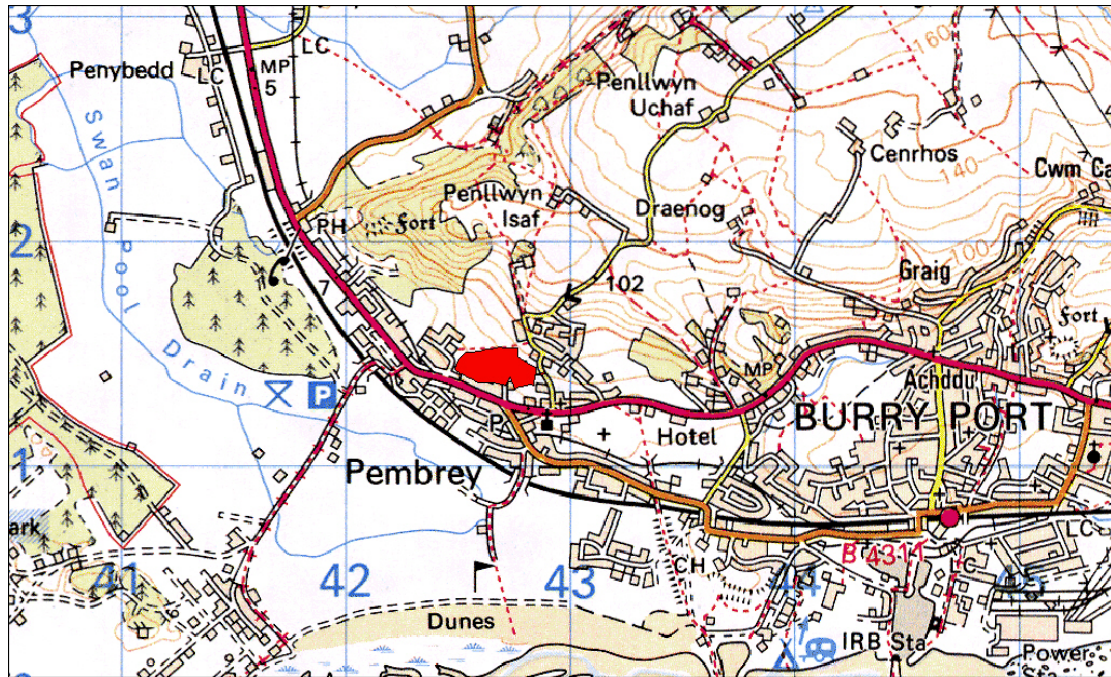


Figure 1: Location plan showing proposed development site.

Reproduced from the 1980 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale Pathfinder 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.

### **Landscape development**

The present layout of the proposed development area had been established by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The principal boundaries are all shown on the Pembrey parish tithe map produced in 1841<sup>2</sup> and the proposed development area itself has remained unchanged since then, although there has been some modern development around its boundaries. The area was formerly part of the Court Farm Estate, which has its origins in the later medieval period (Williams 1981, 5; Jones 1983, 19).

<sup>2</sup> The tithe map has not been reproduced here as the relevant section is in poor condition.

## THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

### Known archaeological sites

There are no known archaeological sites within the proposed development area. The closest known sites are a former late medieval or early post-medieval manor house (PRN 1642; NGR SN42770160) at Court Farm *c.*75m to the north of the site and a number of buildings in the centre of the village, *c.*250m to the south.

The boundaries of the site could be termed important under the Historic Hedgerows Regulations 1997 as part of a field system in place before the Inclosure Award, which for Pembrey parish was 1854.

### Archaeological potential

The buried archaeological resource is unknown and frequently unpredictable. With a site of this size, and given its location, there is the potential for buried remains to be present across the site. The location of the site at the foot of Mynydd Pembrey offers the possibility that archaeological remains could be masked by hill wash and colluvium.

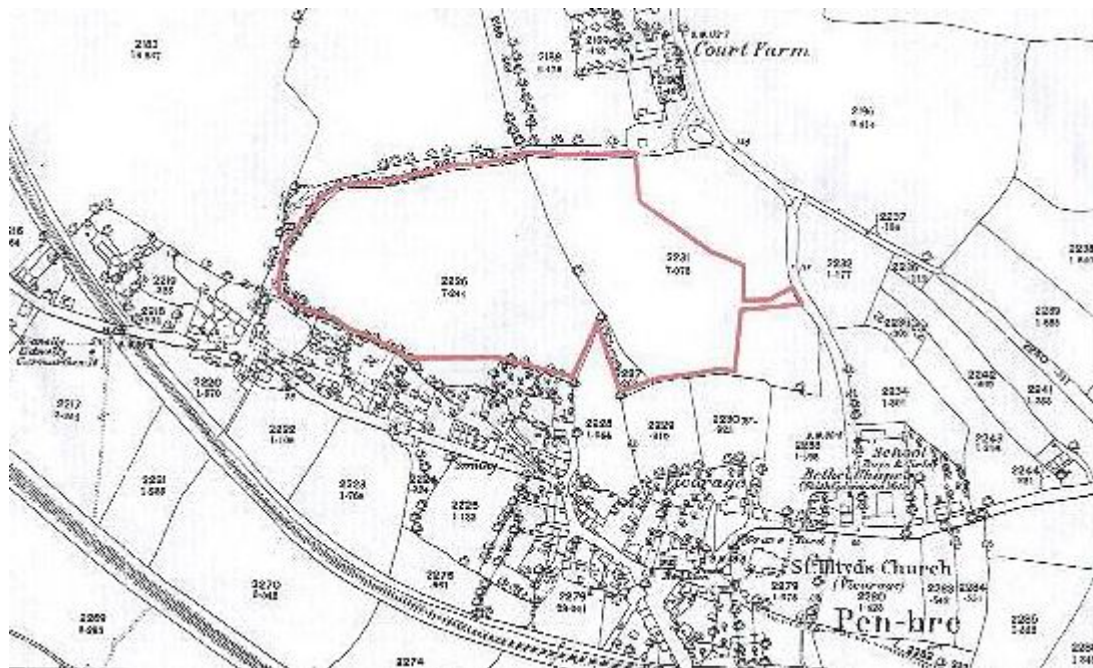


Figure 2: Extract from Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1:2500 map (1891) with proposed development site.

## **POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT**

Without specific design plans it is not possible to be definitive about the impact of development on the archaeological resource within the proposed development area. However, the processes of construction are well enough known to be able to make general statements that can be used to inform the final design plans.

New building involves a range of processes that have immediate and obvious archaeological implications. The main processes are:

1. Site Clearance
2. Demolition of standing remains.
3. Excavations for new foundations and service trenches.
4. Construction of new roads.
5. Landscaping.
6. Heavy machinery moving across the site.

Although it is not intended to discuss all of the above processes it is worth expanding on a few of them in order to highlight the potential negative implications for the archaeological resource that such developments may have.

All building works require physical intervention, from site clearance works, to topsoil stripping, levelling, through to the excavation of foundation and service trenches prior to construction. All of these have the potential to damage or remove previously unknown buried archaeological features or deposits.

### **Potential impacts on the historic landscape**

Any development of this type will fundamentally alter the existing rural agricultural character of the site, although as urban expansion has already been established around much of the site development is not without precedent.

The existing boundaries that form the proposed development area have been in place as field boundaries for at least 150 years and they should be retained. One boundary that crosses the site from north to south may be lost, or at least partially removed.

### **Potential impacts on the buried archaeological resource**

The nature and extent of any underlying archaeological deposits is at present unknown.



## **SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Archaeological potential**

The extent of the buried archaeological resource is unknown. Therefore, it is suggested that a watching brief be maintained on all ground breaking operations carried out during the development.

## **SOURCES**

### **Published sources**

- |            |      |  |
|------------|------|--|
| Jones F    | 1983 | 'Pembrey Court: an old Carmarthenshire manor house'.<br><i>Carmarthenshire Antiquary</i> vol.XIX, 17-31. |
| Williams G | 1981 | 'Survey and excavation on Pembrey Mountain'.<br><i>Carmarthenshire Antiquary</i> vol.XVII, 3-33.         |