

PLOT ADJACENT TO ARFRYN WALTON EAST, PEMBROKESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Prepared
By
Cambria Archaeology
For
Mr and Mrs N Phillips



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By

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**PLOT ADJACENT TO ARFRYN, WALTON EAST, PEMBROKESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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SUMMARY

A planning application (07/0262/PA) was submitted by Mr and Mrs N Phillips to develop a plot of land adjacent to Arfryn, Walton East, Pembrokeshire (NGR SN02352331). The site lies a short distance to the south east of the church of St Mary, which is known to have medieval origins and possibly within the core of medieval Walton East. Given the potential for archaeological remains and deposits to be present on the site planning permission was granted with a condition that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during all major episodes of earth moving or ground breaking, such as topsoil stripping and deep cutting.

The watching brief condition was placed on the application for the site, following a recommendation by the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) archaeological advisors¹

In order to comply with this planning condition Mr and Mrs Phillips, commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the archaeological watching brief in January 2008.

No archaeological features or deposits were noted.

¹Cambria Archaeology Heritage Management.

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

Plans to develop a plot of land (Planning application 07/0262/PA) adjacent to Arfryn, Walton East, Pembrokeshire (NGR SN02352331) required an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken. The construction area does not contain any known archaeological features or deposits. However, the close proximity of the site to a number of known archaeological sites of probable Iron Age date along with the Parish church which has medieval origins suggests the possibility of encountering archaeological remains and deposits within the development plot is relatively high. Given this high possibility an archaeological watching brief condition was suggested to be placed on the planning application on recommendation of the LPAs Archaeological Advisors

Mr and Mrs Phillips commissioned Cambria Archaeology Field Services to carry out the watching brief in line with the planning condition. The watching brief subsequently being carried out in January 2008.

1.2 Scope of the Project

The project was designed to record any archaeological features or deposits exposed by top stripping across the site.

1.3 Report Outline

This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background (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 (HER²) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR).

² Held and managed by Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo

2.THE SITE

2.1 Location

The site is located at NGR SN02352331 and consists of a broadly square plot fronting on to an unclassified road to the east of the centre of the village of Walton East. Topographically the site is situated on a gently north facing slope at a height of c.130m above Ordnance Datum.

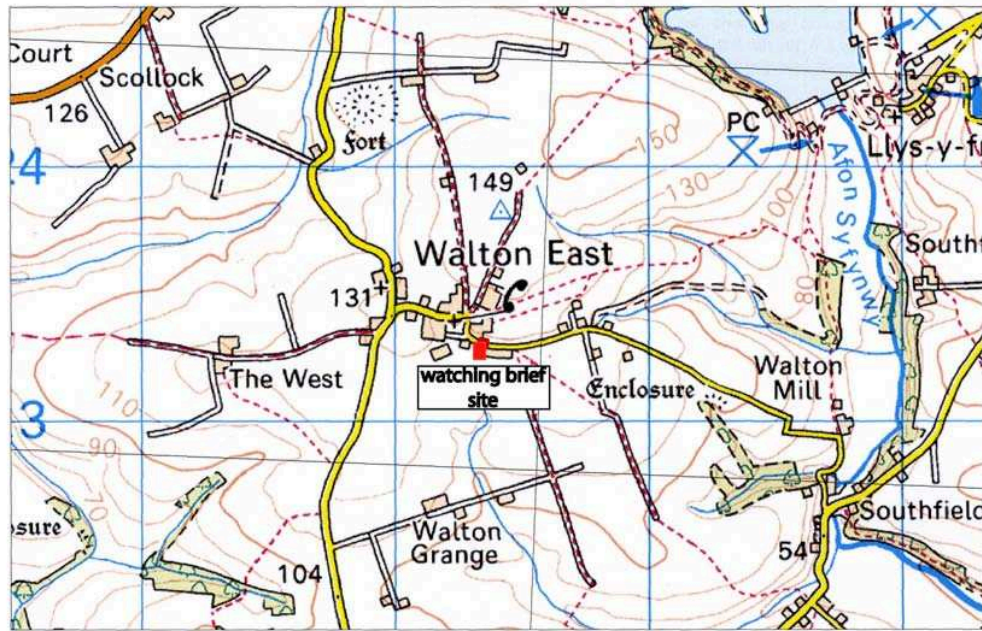


Figure 1: Location map of site. Development site shown in red.

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2.2 Historic landscape development

A search of the regional HER revealed no known archaeological sites within the area covered by the watching brief. However, a number of archaeological sites are known to exist within the vicinity of the development plot suggests the possibility of archaeological features or deposits being present is high.

To the southwest is located Vicarage Rath (PRN 1345; NGR SN02252313) Iron Age (c.700BC-43AD) defended enclosure along with a possible further defended enclosure in close proximity (PRN 35761; NGR SN02192308). The presence of these two sites indicates a long period of human activity within the vicinity of the development plot.

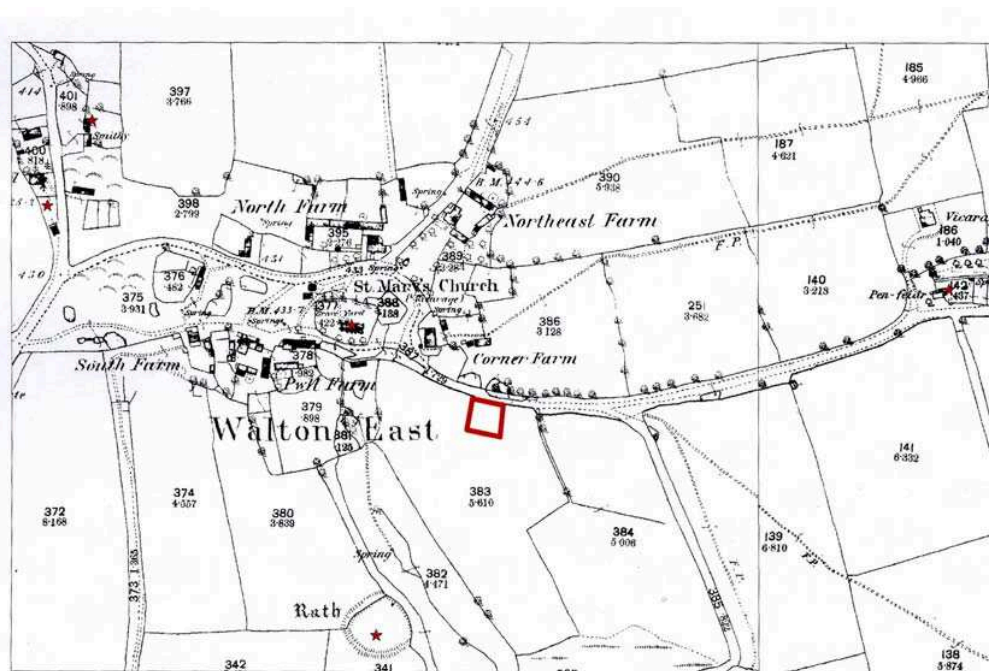


Figure 2: Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:2500 map showing area of watching brief in red.

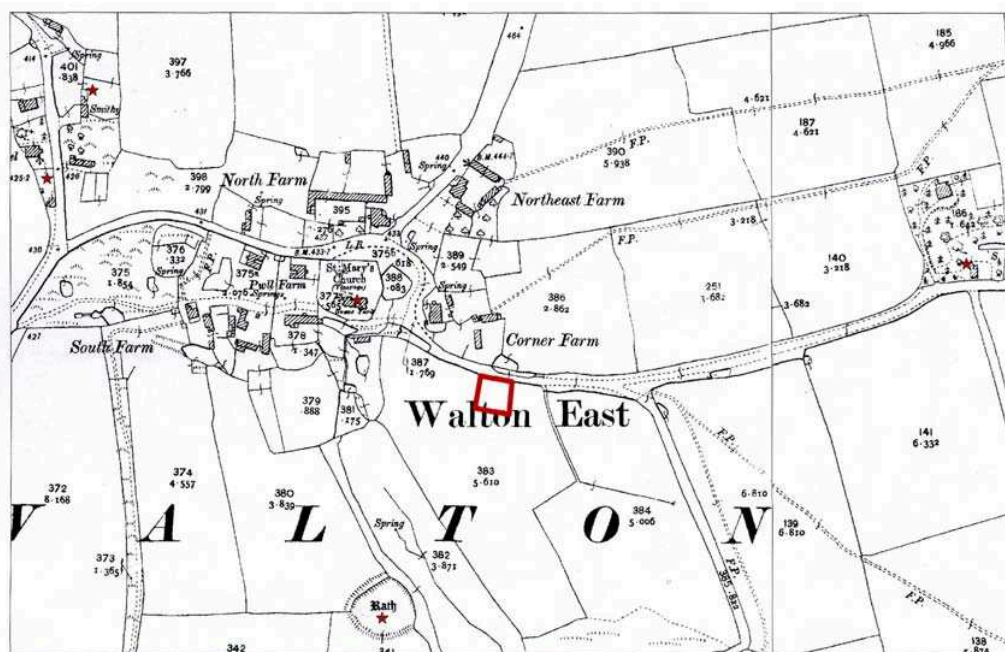


Figure 3: Extract from Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 1:2500 map showing area of watching brief in red.

Although the present parish church, dedicated to St Mary (PRN 4460; NGR SN02242339) is a structure dating from the 19th century it is known a church, dedicated to St Peter existed at Walton East prior to this. The church formed part of a grant of property by Wizo the Fleming (founder of Wiston) to Gloucester Abbey sometime before 1115 (Rees, 1947, 27). Sometime between 1151-58 this grant was subject to a dispute between Gloucester Abbey and Worcester Priory

which resulted in all the properties transferring into the ownership of Worcester Priory. However, this was not viewed to be a satisfactory outcome by either Walter, son of Wizo, or Walter's son, also named Walter, who withdrew the grant of property and transferred it to The Knights of St John (also known as Knights Hospitaller) of Slebech Commandery. The Knights of St John being a religious order committed to the care of the sick and military defence of Christendom. Bishop Peter de Leia of St David's confirming the transfer sometime between 1176 and 1198 the church being described as '*ecclesiam beati Petri de Waletuna*' (Barrow, 1998, 70). The church at Walton East along with the many other churches held by Slebech Commandery would have supplied a substantial income for the Knights of St John (Thomas, 2002, 53). A financial report of 1338 produced by Prior Philip de Thame detailing the income and expenditure of Slebech Commandery lists '*Waleton*' church as providing an income of £10 13s 1d (Parry, 1998, 44). The church remained a possession of Slebech Commandery until the dissolution of the Knights of St John in Britain in 1540 (Rees, 1947, 87). There is the suggestion that Walton East is named after the son or grandson of Wizo Walter who is listed as *Wale* in some documents, Walton meaning 'Wale's Farm' (Charles, 1992, 454).

Map regression has revealed the site was formerly used as agricultural land (Ordnance Survey 1889 and 1907) and the site sits on the edge of what appear to be former medieval strip fields.

Developments such as the construction of the non-conformist chapel, school and more recent developments such as houses attest to the continuing development of Walton East.

3.SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

3.1 Watching Brief Methodology

The watching brief methodology consisted of a site visit during the groundworks being undertaken at the development site. As the site had been stripped and covered in stone prior to the visit being made the groundworks monitored were the excavation of foundation trenches.

3.2 Results

A visit was made to the site to monitor the topsoil stripping of the development. The groundworks monitored being the excavation of foundation trenches. The stratigraphical sequence was consistent across the site. Where it remained around edges of the already stripped site, the dark reddish brown topsoil had a depth of 0.34m, overlying a mid greyish brown subsoil of 0.22m depth which in turn overlay a mid greyish brown clay silt containing a relatively high proportion of shattered shale.



Plate 1: Overall view of site showing stone covering.

No archaeological features or deposits of interest were observed during the course of the groundworks monitoring. However two pieces of abraded medieval pottery were recovered from the spoil heaps, these were considered to be residual.



Plate 2: Excavation of foundation trenches in progress

3.3 Conclusion

The prior stripping of the site and its subsequent covering in stone gave a very limited scope to assess the site fully, however, the fact that no archaeological features were visible in the sides of any of the foundation trenches suggests that this area was not developed during the medieval period. It is likely that it remained open land at the edge of the strip fields and alongside the road.



Plate 3: Post excavation shot of foundation trench looking east.



Plate 4: Post excavation shot of foundation trench looking north.

SOURCES

Maps

Ordnance Survey 1889 Pembrokeshire Sheet XXIII NW 1st edition 1:2500
Ordnance Survey 1907 Pembrokeshire Sheet XXII NW 2nd edition. 1:2500
Ordnance Survey 2002 Landranger Tenby and Pembroke. Sheet 158. 1:50000

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This report has been prepared by Simon Ratty

Position: Archaeologist

Signature Date

This report has been checked and approved, on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd., by Nigel Page

Position: Head of Field Services

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