

# Former Carpenters Workshop, Hayguard Lane, Haverfordwest Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No 2008/99



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust  
For: Mr and Mrs H James



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RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2008/99  
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 64379

Hydref 2008  
October 2008

**Former Carpenters Workshop, Hayguard Lane, Haverfordwest  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Gan / By

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**FORMER CARPENTERS WORKSHOP, HAYGUARD LANE,  
HAVERFORDWEST  
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As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may  
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*Cover Photo.: Site in front of tower. View SW*

## **SUMMARY**

*A short watching brief was undertaken on a single housing development on a plot of land immediately outside a small north tower on the curtain wall of Haverfordwest Castle. Evidence was found that this part of the surrounding castle ditch that had been deliberately backfilled. There were no other archaeological deposits.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT) Field Services were asked by Mr and Mrs Hayden James to provide specifications and costs to fulfil a Grampian condition on a planning application, Local Planning Authority (LPA) number 05/0362/PA, for a single development on a plot of land (SM21131696) on the north side of the outer ward of Haverfordwest Castle and adjacent to a castle tower. DAT produced specifications for a watching brief that was accepted by the LPA and then commissioned by Mr and Mrs Hayden James to undertake this work.

The history of Haverfordwest and its castle are covered elsewhere (Miles 1999), and due to the limited scope and results of this work it is not appropriate to report in any detail on the history of this area. The Castle was probably founded around 1110. Queen Eleanor (died 1290), probably remodelled the castle and certainly ordered the construction of the curtain wall and towers (Cathcart King 1999, 36). It is likely that the castle ditch was also dug during the remodelling. This ditch made the site unsuitable for any other purpose except defence of the castle until the site was levelled, probably in the early 1700s (Crane 2004). A cottage, the former carpenter's workshop, occupied the site prior to its demolition to enable this development.

## **METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS**

The watching brief was undertaken on 17 April 2008 and continued into the following day. The weather was fine but cool, becoming overcast. The building on the site had been demolished, with the concrete floor remaining, and one test pit, in the location of the rear footings for the new building, had been dug before arrival (Photo. 1).

A mini digger using a toothed bucket dug all front and rear footing trenches, along with trenches for a rear utility extension. The trenches were nominally 0.6 to 0.7m wide, although much larger around the area of the rear extension due to collapse of the remaining interior block of soil. All excavation of the footing trenches was observed, with the rear trench being up to 2m deep below the level of the concrete floor. The front trench was dug to a depth of 1m. Sections of parts of the rear extension trenches were rapidly drawn (due to the necessity of pouring the concrete footing as soon as possible), and all of the trench sections were photographed. These drawings and all photographs are with the site archive.

The only archaeological feature encountered was the inner edge of the castle ditch, found in the area of the rear extension, and part of the bottom of the ditch, seen in the rear footing trench. Most of the rear extension trenches were cut down to, or into, the bedrock as also was nearly all of the rear wall footing trench, except for a small part of its eastern end. Here the bottom of the ditch

was below the 2m depth of the trench (Photo. 2) and was therefore not encountered. The inner edge of the ditch was cut at a slope of roughly 45° in the mudstone bedrock. However, in the rear wall footing trench, in front of the tower, the side of the ditch was only 1.3m below the bottom of the concrete floor (Photo 3), indicating that the profile of the ditch is not uniform, possibly with the inner edge of the ditch bowing out around the tower.

The lowest ditch fill seen in the rear of the site was shaley stone with little soil that lay directly on the side of the ditch. Above this there was a thick layer, or layers, of very dark grey silty soil with angular shale. On this layer there was a limited deposit comprising mostly of small angular stones, and above this there was another layer, almost as deep, of dark brown grey loam clay, possibly old topsoil. Above this there was a similar soil, but disturbed, containing brick, slate, oyster shells and one fragment of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery. Cut into this disturbed layer was the footing trench for the former cottage (Photo. 2), and above it make up for the cement floor.

The cottage walls were constructed of roughly coursed and faced local stone with a random rubble core, bonded with soil containing some lime flecks.

In the front footing trench there was a small deposit of dark silty soil at the western end of the trench, below a layer of shaley stone very similar to that against the inner side of the castle ditch. Above this there were layers of clay and soil and above 0.4m deep there were more mixed modern deposits.

## **DISCUSSION**

This is the first time that the castle ditch has been subject to any archaeological observation, other than when a very small part of its outer lip may have been exposed in the archaeological evaluation for new buildings on the north side of Hayguard Lane. It is obvious that the inner edge is cut into bedrock from a considerable height; however the outer lip of the ditch was not seen in this project and may lie at a lower level, as the castle defences make use of the natural defensive promontory. There is some apparent bowing of the inner edge of the ditch around the tower, indicating that it is either later than the tower or contemporaneous with the tower and the period of castle remodelling.

Only in the extreme west end of the front trench was a layer seen below the clean shaley deposit occupying the lowest observed ditch deposits. This shaley layer was so similar to that seen in the rear trenches on the inner side of the ditch; it is possible that they are all part of the same deposit and would appear to represent deliberate infilling, possibly in the 1700s. It was also very similar to that seen in the Hayguard Lane excavation of 2003 that was interpreted as part of the levelling of this period. The very dark soil layer above is less likely to be deliberate infilling and was partly derived from silting up of the hollow left after infilling along with more "casual" deposits. Above this deposits would appear to be old topsoil or garden soil; this was below further deposits probably relating to the period just before the cottage was built.

The former cottage on the site was probably built during the 19th century. Unfortunately the c.1842 tithe map lacked individual building detail at this location. A building can be seen on the site on the Ordnance Survey First Edition (1891).

## **CONCLUSION**

This watching brief confirmed that the castle ditch was contemporaneous with or later than the adjacent tower and that it was deliberately backfilled. Unfortunately, most of the footing trenches excavated were along rather than across the line of the ditch, neither did these excavations go down to the bottom of the ditch. Therefore the results were not as informative as they could otherwise have been.

## **ARCHIVE DEPOSITION**

DAT HER will initially hold the archive.

## **SOURCES**

Cathcart King DJ 1999 *Haverfordwest Castle c1100-1577* in Miles D 1999

Crane P 2004 Excavation at Hayguard Lane, Haverfordwest, 1978 and 2003.  
*Archaeology in Wales* Vol 44

Miles D (ed) 1999 *A History of Haverfordwest*, Llandysul: Gomer Press

Ordnance Survey 1891 First edition 6 inch. Pemb XXVII NE

St Martins Tithe Map c. 1842



Former Carpenters Workshop, Hayguard Lane, Haverfordwest  
Archaeological Watching Brief



Figure 1: Location of Former Carpenters' Workshop site Hayguard Lane, 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



Photo. 1: Site at commencement of watching brief. View S





Photo. 2: Rear extension footing trenches and the east end (left) of the rear wall footing trench. View E. Scales 2m and 1m



Photo. 3: Rear wall footing trench in front of the tower. Note that natural is at a shallower depth than in photo. 2. View W. Scales 1m and 1m





Photo. 4: Front wall footing trench, note clean shaley stone deposit in the bottom  
View E. Scale 1m