

1, QUAY HILL, TENBY, PEMBROKESHIRE:

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF and BUILDING RECORDING

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Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.
For Mr Mike Baratt



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SUMMARY

A planning application (NP/08/180) was submitted by Mr Mike Baratt to make alterations to the basement of No. 1 Quay Hill, Tenby, which is adjacent to and abutting the north side of the well-known historic site of the Tudor Merchant's House, at NGR SN 1353 0044. The house is a Grade II Listed Building and is located within the medieval core of Tenby.

Given the potential for the presence of archaeological features or deposits and architectural details on the site of possible medieval date, planning permission was granted with a condition that building recording and an archaeological watching brief be undertaken ahead of and during the groundworks for the development. The aim of the building recording and watching brief was to identify and record any architectural features or archaeological deposits that were encountered.

In order to comply with the planning condition Mr Baratt commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to carry out the building recording and watching brief in September 2008.

A full overlapping digital photographic record of the basement walls was undertaken and elevations of the south and west walls and a floor plan were drawn to a scale of 1:20. During the building recording a c.2m high by 1m wide rectangular stone-blocked opening was noted at the north end of the west wall of the basement.

The watching brief carried out during the lowering of the basement floor revealed only limestone bedrock and no architectural or archaeological features. A thin compact mixed deposit of coal dust, mortar and clay was removed from the floor and shown to directly overlie the uneven fissured natural limestone bedrock and natural clay.

The archaeological watching brief demonstrated that no significant archaeological remains were impacted upon by the development. The results of the building recording and the watching brief were unable to provide a date of construction for the basement, however it is still considered possible that the basement may date to the later medieval period.

INTRODUCTION

Project Background

A planning application (NP/08/180) was submitted by Mr M Baratt to make alterations to the basement of No. 1 Quay Hill, Tenby, which is adjacent to and abutting the north side of the well-known historic site of the Tudor Merchant's House at NGR¹ SN 13530044 (Figure 1). This location is within the medieval core of the town.

No. 1 Quay Hill (PRN² 20614) is a Grade II Listed Building and has been recorded by CADW (Number 6225) as retaining components of medieval fabric associated with the Tudor Merchant's house which formerly extended both to the north and south of its present location; blocked openings and other architectural details have previously been noted between the Tudor Merchant's House and Platagenet House to the south and No. 1 Quay Hill on its northern side (Lloyd, T *et al*, 2004). The façade of No. 1 Quay Hill would appear to be of 18th or 19th century date, but this may have been added to an earlier structure. The basement beneath the building could predate the above ground structure, and could potentially be of medieval date. Consequently, there was considerable potential that any groundworks undertaken in the basement during the development at No. 1 could expose, damage or destroy late medieval architectural or archaeological features.

With these facts in mind Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management, as advisors to the Planning Department of Pembrokeshire County Council, recommended that a building recording and watching brief 'Grampian' condition should be attached to the planning application in order to protect potential archaeological interests.

Planning permission was granted by the local planning authority with a condition that building recording and an archaeological watching brief be undertaken ahead of and during the groundworks for the development. The aim of the archaeological works was to provide a record of the existing fabric of the cellar and record any archaeological features revealed during groundworks to an appropriate level.

In order to comply with the planning condition, Mr Barratt commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to prepare a written scheme of investigation and to carry out the building recording and watching brief.

The building recording and watching brief took place on September 17th 2008.

Building Recording and Watching Brief Methodology, and Scope of this Report

The building recording comprised measured elevation drawings of two walls and a floor plan of the basement, drawn at a scale of 1:20. Additionally, a photographic survey consisting of overlapping scaled digital images (at a resolution of 8 million pixels) of the basement walls and steps was carried out. The images amount to a seamless record of the elevation of each of the four interior walls. Oblique photographs only of the basement floor were possible due to space and lighting restrictions. The stone steps down to the basement were also photographed obliquely and in plan as well as being included in the scale drawings.

The watching brief comprised the attendance on the site of an archaeologist during the excavation of the floor of the basement. All deposits removed from the

¹ National Grid Reference

² Primary Record Number

floor were recorded and photographed. This report summarises and discusses the results of the building recording and watching brief.

Any archaeological sites mentioned in the text that are recorded in the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER) are identified, for reference and location, by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and National Grid Reference (NGR). The HER is housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust at its offices in Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire. Printed map extracts included in this report are for illustrative purposes only and are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.



Figure 1. Location map of Tenby, based on Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 1995 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd., The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Quay Hill is a narrow sloping street that slopes down northwards from Tudor Square to Crackwell Street thereby connecting the main shopping centre of Tenby with access to the harbour and fine views down to the north beach. Around halfway along Quay Hill a set of steps lead down to the Tudor Merchant's house, on the left, and the junction of Bridge Street opposite. Number 1 Quay Hill is the next house on the left-hand side, adjoining both the Tudor Merchant's house and another property fronting onto Crackwell Street to the north (Figures 2 and 3).

Number 1 Quay Hill (Photo 1) is a two storey dwelling of stone construction, with a natural slate gabled roof, painted rough cast render on the upper storey front elevation and painted smooth scribed render below. The building is two bayed with timber sash windows and a centrally located door opening. A new timber window was added to the basement front elevation during the current building alterations.

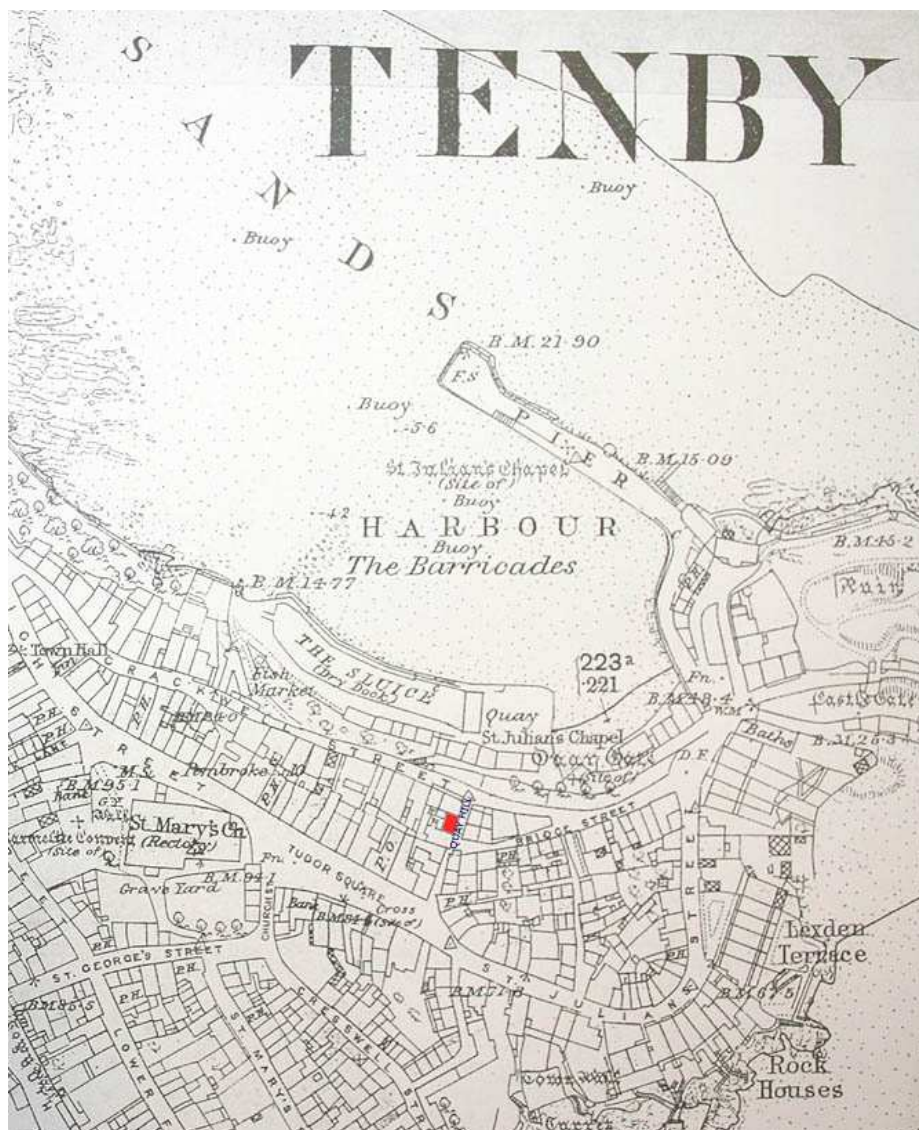


Figure 2. Map extract from 1st edition 25" Ordnance Survey 1881.
No.1 Quay Hill is marked in red.

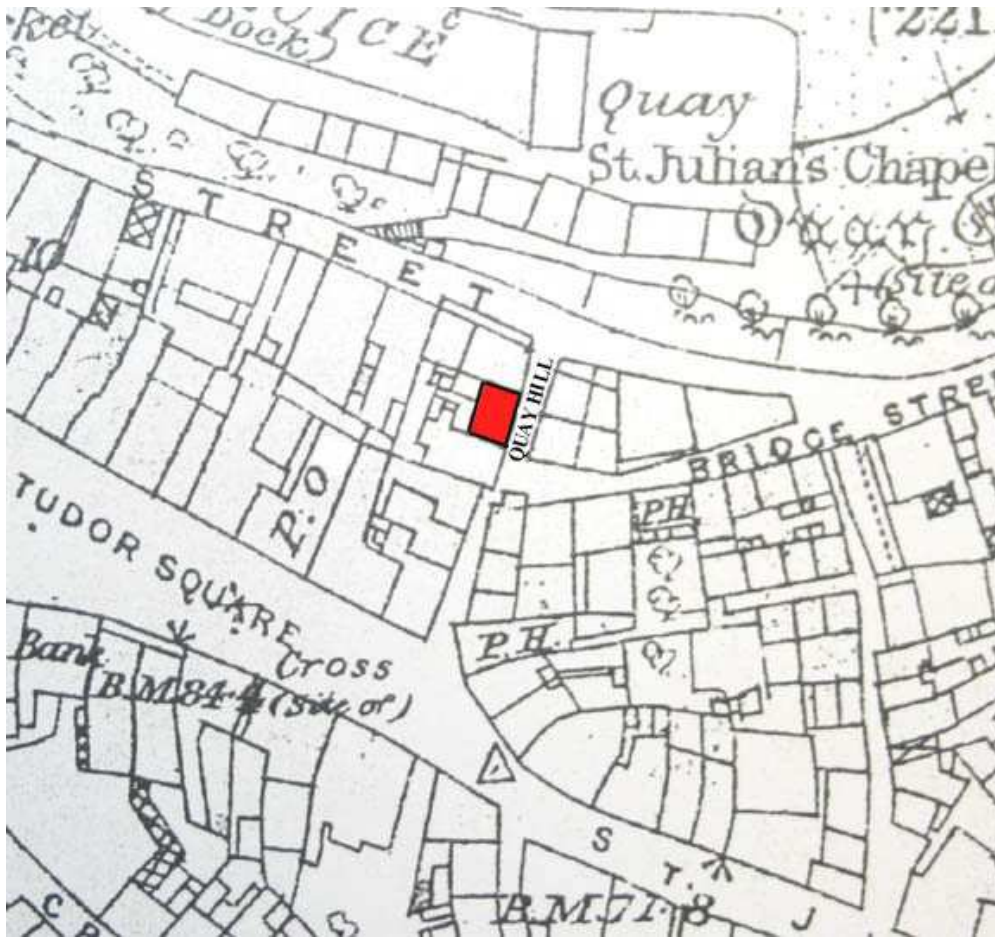


Figure 3. Detail of 25" Ordnance Survey 1st edition map.
No.1 Quay Hill is marked in red.

BUILDING RECORDING RESULTS

For the purposes of this project, only the basement was recorded as the development works made no impact on the fabric of the building elsewhere.

The basement floor was to be reduced in level to allow a minimum head room of 2.1m from the new finished floor level; this would require excavation of the floor to a depth of c.0.5m to allow for the various sub-base, damp proof course, and concrete slab layers to be laid.

The fabric of the basement walls were to be battened and then plasterboard finished, so this would entail minimal damage limited to the impact of the battens being attached to the walls, although the original wall fabric would be totally obscured. A new window had been punched through the existing masonry of the east wall prior to the building recording taking place.

The overlapping photographs of the basement walls and stone steps are presented in the Appendix at the back of this report. The floor and step plans, and the elevation drawings of the west and south walls are illustrated in Figure 4. There were no architectural features of any note on the north or east wall elevations, hence they were only photographed and not drawn during the recording.

The basement measured 4.5m by 3.1m with an average height from ceiling to floor of 1.9m. The floor plan, however, was not rectangular because of *in situ* natural limestone bedrock projecting into the basement in the northeast corner

and at the west end (see Figure 4). The walls were seen to be constructed directly on the limestone bedrock and all were white limewashed and of coursed rubble build. Remnants of plaster were evident on all walls, with a distinct plaster line centrally located about 1m above the original floor level on the west wall.

A stone-blocked opening, c.1m wide, was recorded at the north end of the west wall. The opening was recessed beyond the northern corner of the wall to a depth of 0.12m and continued up to an unverified extent beyond the line of the ceiling (see west wall elevation in Figure 4 and Photographs H and I in the Appendix). This feature clearly represents either a blocked passage or doorway to another part of the basement area or an in-filled alcove; however, access beyond the basement was not gained to enable further investigation.

The stone steps, which enter the basement at its south side from the ground floor, comprise nine dressed rectangular limestone blocks (see Figure 4 and photographs A, B, C and J in the Appendix). Eight of the blocks measure 0.8m by 0.2m by 0.25m with one smaller block measuring c.0.25m by 0.2m by 0.25m being added to the southeast end of the step that commences the angled turn into the basement. The steps are in very good condition and appear to be an original feature. In order to accommodate the lower level of the new basement floor an additional step is to be added during the building programme.

No other architectural features beyond those outlined above were noted within the fabric of the basement walls. All the walls appeared to have been constructed in one phase, with no evidence of repair or re-build other than the stone blocking at the north end of the west wall.



WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

The basement floor, as seen, comprised an undulating compact concretion of mortar, plaster, coal, and ash with occasional patches of compacted building rubble and clay. This mixed layer was quite thin, average depth 0.15m, and followed fissures in the natural limestone bedrock which outcropped at the base of the west and north walls as well as discretely through the floor surface (See Appendix Photographs and Photo 2). Amongst the building rubble some brown glazed 19th century pottery sherds and fragments of red brick were found that had been compacted into the underlying natural reddish brown clay present in the limestone fissures.

The floor layer and limestone were excavated both by hand and using an electrically powered jackhammer to the required level. No archaeological or architectural features were revealed during the excavation.

A solid, compact dump of mortar, to a height of 0.8m was present piled up against the wall in the southeast corner of the basement (see Photo 2 and Figure 4 for the full extent of this deposit) and on removal was seen to lie directly on both the limestone bedrock and natural clay. No architectural or archaeological features were revealed.

The watching brief ceased once it was established that only natural bedrock and clay would be revealed during the remaining excavation.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

No. 1 Quay Hill, Tenby is a Grade II Listed Building located adjacent to the Tudor Merchant's House. Blocked openings and other architectural details have previously been noted between the Tudor Merchant's House and No. 1 Quay Hill on its northern side (Lloyd, T *et al*, 2004). There was thus considered to be a high potential for late medieval architectural or archaeological features to be exposed, damaged or destroyed by the proposed development in the basement of No. 1 Quay Hill.

The watching brief undertaken during groundworks associated with the reduction in the floor level of the building did not reveal any significant archaeological finds or features. A layer of coal dust and other detritus was noted across the top of the basement floor, which comprised bedrock and hard natural clays. Some 19th century pottery was recovered from this material where it had accumulated in fissures in the bedrock. The pottery cannot be used to provide a date for the cellar construction, but merely indicate that it was in use during the 19th century. Cleaning of the cellar floor over time is likely to have removed any dating material that may have been used to provide a date for the first use of the cellar. It is possible that any features or finds may have also been removed when the works were undertaken to block the opening in the west wall.

During the building recording no readily datable architectural features were observed within the fabric of the basement walls, it being constructed of rubble stone that had subsequently been limewashed. However, the fact that the structure of the basement appeared to be of one phase of build suggests that it is at least complete and uncompromised structurally. Were it possible to show structural inclusion between the basement of No. 1 Quay Hill and any datable fabric of the Tudor Merchant's house then this would lend more credence to any hypothesis that they are contemporaneous, unfortunately it was not possible to demonstrate this during this project. The blocked opening recorded on the western wall may possibly have provided access to another room within the basement, or a former alcove, but it was not possible to investigate this feature

further. The top of the opening was situated above the roof of the cellar and was not visible during the building recording.

The archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that no significant archaeological remains were impacted upon by the development. The results of the work have not been able to provide a date of construction for the basement. It was certainly in use in the 19th century, and must be at least contemporary with the above ground structure (considered to be of 18th or 19th century date). It is still considered possible that the basement may date to the later medieval period.

Photographs



Photo 1: View of No. 1 Quay Hill, looking north. The Tudor Merchant's house is in the foreground.



Photo 2: A view southeast across the basement floor during the groundworks. Showing mortar dump just behind the jackhammer, the reddish brown natural clay and the limestone bedrock by the 1m scale.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Database

The Regional Historic Environment Record, housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust

Bibliographic

Lloyd, T, Orbach, J & Scourfield, R, 2004 *Pembrokeshire: Pevsner Architectural Guide*

Cartographic

Ordnance Survey, 1:10560 Quarter Sheet SN10SW 1970

Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 Pembrokeshire Sheet XLI.II 1st Edition 1888

Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 Pembrokeshire Sheet XLI.II 2nd Edition 1907

British Geological Survey, 1:250000 Geological Map of Wales 1st Edition Solid 1994

APPENDIX

Photographs of basement walls and steps

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF BASEMENT WALLS & STEPS³



Photo A. Southwest end of south wall, showing stone steps (8861).



Photo B. Central section of south wall, showing steps obliquely (8862).

³ Archive digital image reference number noted in brackets

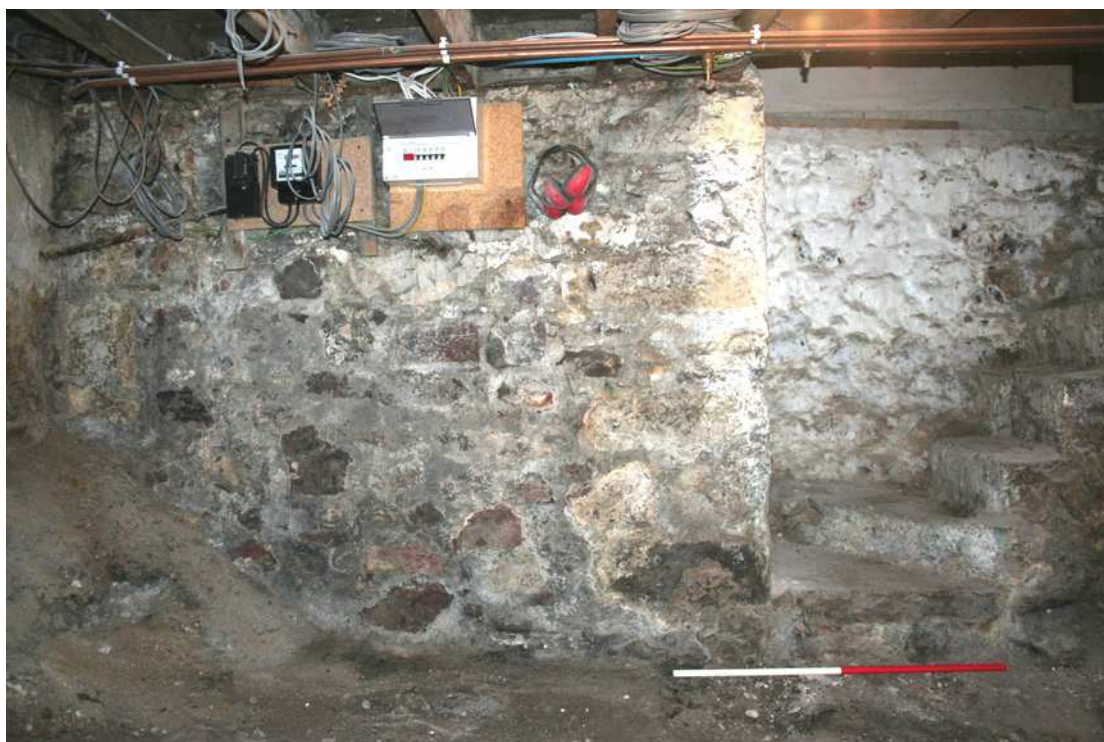


Photo C. Southeast end of south wall (8863).



Photo D. East wall, with new window opening inserted (8866).



Photo E. East end of north wall (8867).



Photo F. Central section of north wall (8869).



Photo G. West end of north wall (8871).



Photo H. West wall, note the vertical line of the blocked opening marked by the scale (8874).



Photo I. Detail of blocked opening at the northern end of the west wall, the 1m scale is horizontal (8875).



Photo J. Plan view of stone steps (8879).



Photo K: Detail view of basement floor looking southwest (8889).

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sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn*

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comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report*