

TI CARA, COSHESTON, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
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For Jon & Ginny Moore



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Gan / By

Richard Ramsey

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**TI CARA, COSHESTON, PEMBROKESHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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TI CARA, COSHESTON, PEMBROKESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SUMMARY

A planning application (08/0353/PA) was submitted by Jon and Ginny Moore to extend their property, Ti Cara, in the village of Cosheston, Pembrokeshire at NGR SN 0007 0370. The property lies within the historic medieval core of the village in close proximity to several known sites of historic and archaeological interest, which include the medieval graveyard and parish church of St. Michael's, and a medieval rectory.

Given the potential for the presence of archaeological features or deposits on the site (especially in terms of potential for medieval deposits associated with the medieval church and rectory), planning permission was granted with a condition that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the groundworks for the development, which had the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains.

In order to comply with the planning condition Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned to carry out the watching brief in October 2008.

A modern garden retaining wall and part of an earlier stone boundary wall were removed from just beyond the north side of the house during groundwork preparation for the new extension. An area measuring 7.3m by 14m was cleared by terracing into sloping ground behind the removed boundary wall to a depth of 1.6m.

A dump of Victorian and later domestic rubbish was revealed behind the west end of the boundary wall during the groundworks but elsewhere only natural deposits and garden soil were encountered.

Despite its location in an area of potential archaeological significance the development did not reveal any significant archaeological features or finds. Although the potential for medieval remains associated with the church and rectory was highlighted, the development had no impact on the medieval archaeological resource.

INTRODUCTION

Project background

A planning application (08/0353/PA) was submitted by Jon and Ginny Moore to build an extension on the north side of their house, Ti Cara, in the village of Cosheston, Pembrokeshire at NGR¹ SN 0007 0370 (Figure 1). The property is situated on Point Street opposite the medieval church (PRN² 3520 at NGR SN 0007 0366) and graveyard (PRN 46786) of St. Michael's, an area that is considered to be the likely historic medieval core of the village. The potential for encountering archaeologically significant features or deposits of medieval date in a location such as this is high and therefore groundworks for the proposed development had the potential to expose, damage or destroy any such remains.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management, as advisors to the Planning Department of Pembrokeshire County Council, recommended that a watching brief condition should be attached to the planning application in order to protect potential archaeological interests.

Planning permission was granted with a condition that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the groundworks for the development.

In order to comply with the planning condition Jon and Ginny Moore commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to carry out the watching brief in October 2008.

Watching brief methodology and scope of the report

The watching brief comprised the attendance on site of an archaeologist during the groundworks for the foundations of the extension, where these had the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological deposits. Notes were made of all excavated deposits and digital photographs were taken.

This report summarises the historical background to the site and discusses the results of the 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 not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

¹ NGR – National Grid Reference

² PRN – Primary Record Number

SITE LOCATION AND BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

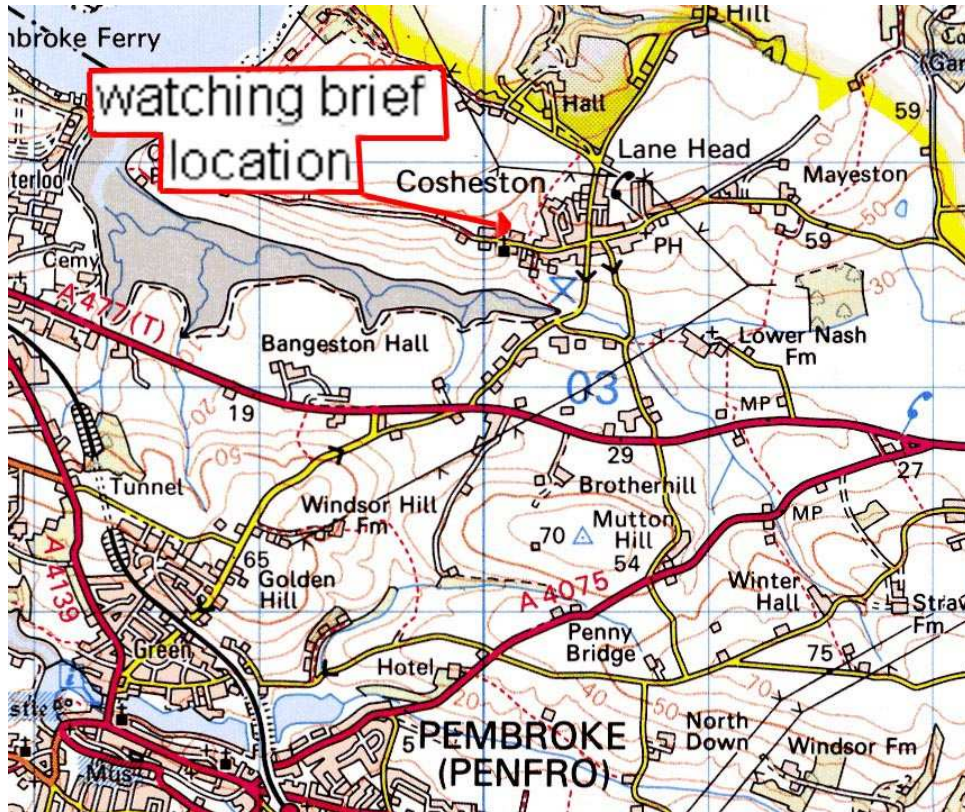


Figure 1. Location map.

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Location

The village of Cosheston is situated in south Pembrokeshire some 3km to the northeast of Pembroke and 1km north of the A477 trunk road between Pembroke Dock and St. Clears. Topographically the village lies on a south facing hillslope between approximately 45m and 25m above sea level (Ordnance Datum) at the eastern end of Cosheston Pill, an inlet of the Milford Haven (Daugleddau) Waterway. The development site, Ti Cara, is located at the western edge of the village at NGR SN 0007 0370 (Figures 1 & 2).

Historical Background

The history of the Cosheston area is well outlined in the Cosheston parish section of a Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Landscape Character report for Cadw Welsh Historic Monuments (Murphy and Ludlow 2003). The appropriate section is reprinted in full below with relevant Primary Record Numbers (PRN) added for reference.

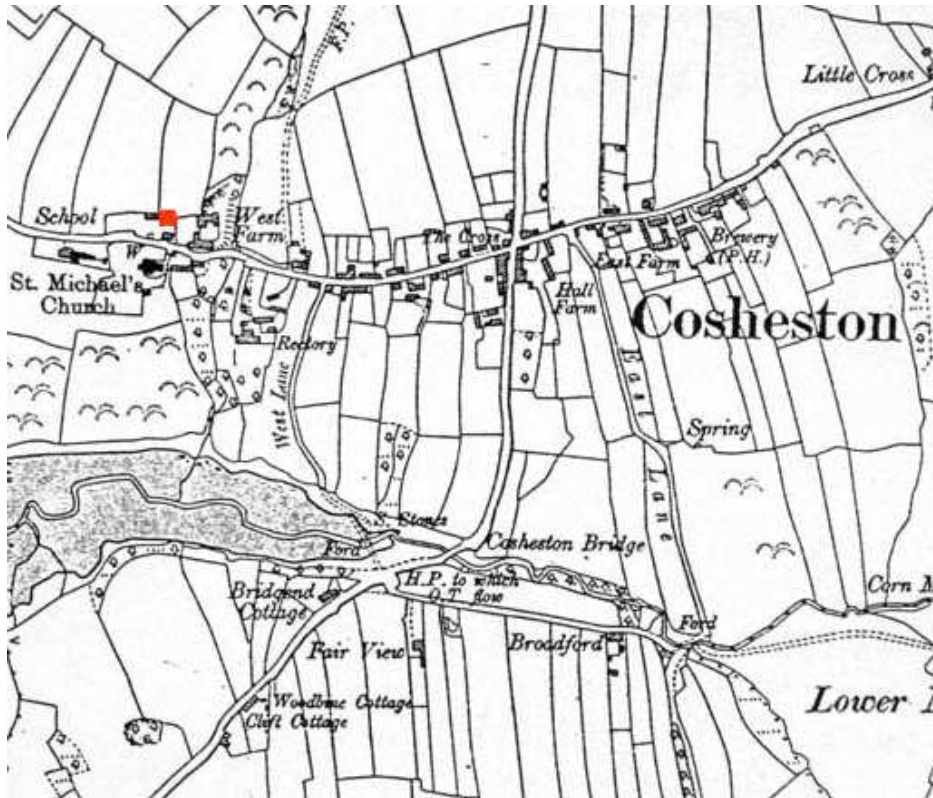


Figure 2. Map extract from 2nd edition 6" Ordnance Survey map published 1909. Red square indicates location of the development. Note strip fields.

Historic Background

This small character area, comprising the settlement and enclosed strip-field system of Cosheston, lies at the head of Cosheston Pill. It is within the parish, and medieval manor, of Cosheston. Cosheston manor, recorded in the 13th century, was a castle-guard fee of the Lordship of Pembroke, the ward-rent being assessed at 8s in 1307. It comprised 2 knight's fees, held by Walter Benegar and others, in 1247, and by the Wogans of Picton and Boulston in 1324. A 'tenement called the Hall of Cosheston' was acquired by the Rossant family in 1556 and was assessed for two hearths in 1670. The hall was not on the present Cosheston Hall, which was established in a neighbouring character area in the 19th century under the Allens of Cresselly. The enclosed strips of the former open field system associated with the medieval vill surround the settlement of Cosheston, (see Figure 2 above) which now stretches east of the parish church. When the tithe map for Cosheston parish was surveyed in 1840 all the main elements of the present historic landscape were in place. The village is shown as a linear nucleation surrounded by an extensive, enclosed strip field system. Over the past 160 years the strip fields outside this character area have been converted to large, regular fields. This process is still continuing.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This is a small historic landscape character area centred on the village of Cosheston, and situated on the upper reaches of Cosheston Pill on undulating land that varies in height from sea level to over 60m. The village consists of a clustering of dwellings spread along an east – west aligned street, rather than a tight nucleation. There is a mixture of house styles in the village. Older houses

are 19th century, stone-built, generally quite small, of two storeys and in the Georgian vernacular tradition, but with a few larger examples in the polite Georgian style. Three of the houses are Grade II listed. Most are detached, but short terraces are also present. Individual late 20th century houses lie intermixed with the older dwellings. Small modern housing developments are located in, and on the fringes, of the village. The former agricultural function of the village has been substituted by a residential function. This is exemplified by 19th century stone built farm outbuildings that have been converted to dwellings. The Grade II listed medieval church (PRN 3520) of St Michael's (with a Grade II listed cross), the rectory (PRN 6639) and the school are situated at the western end of the village and probably indicate its historic core. A dense scatter of 20th century houses, with a few older but modernised dwellings lies to the south of the village on the opposite side of Coshaston Pill. A landscape of narrow strip fields surrounds the village. Hedges on banks are the main boundary type. In the southern section the hedges are very overgrown, but elsewhere they are well maintained. Most of the fields are under improved pasture. Archaeological sites are few and do not form an important component of the historic landscape.

The village of Coshaston and its enclosed strip field system provides a distinctive historic landscape character area, but one that has rather vague borders. Therefore, there is a zone of change between this area and its neighbours, rather than a hard-edged boundary. (Murphy and Ludlow 2003).



Figure 3. Extract from the tithe map of 1840. Ti Cara is marked in solid blue with the new extension shown in broken blue lines. The red broken lines indicate the modern property boundary.

Ti Cara is a modern building. At the time of the 1840 Tithe survey and map the land on which it is located is shown (Figure 3) as plot number 514 and described in the apportionment as a 'Cottage and Garden' occupied by one John Phillips and owned by Abraham Leach Esq. The cottage projected out onto Point Street at that time but appears to have shrunk back a little on later maps. The original cottage has now gone and Ti Cara was built further north on the eastern half of the plot and does not front directly onto Point Street. The newly acquired land, bought by the present owners to accommodate the new extension to Ti Cara, is part of the

field shown as plot number 515 on the tithe map. The tithe apportionment records that field 515 was named 'Haggard Park', was occupied by one John John and owned by Nicholas Roach Esq.

An aerial photograph taken in 1955 shows that little had changed in the field layout and building arrangements over the previous 115 years (Figure 4) since the 1840 Tithe map.

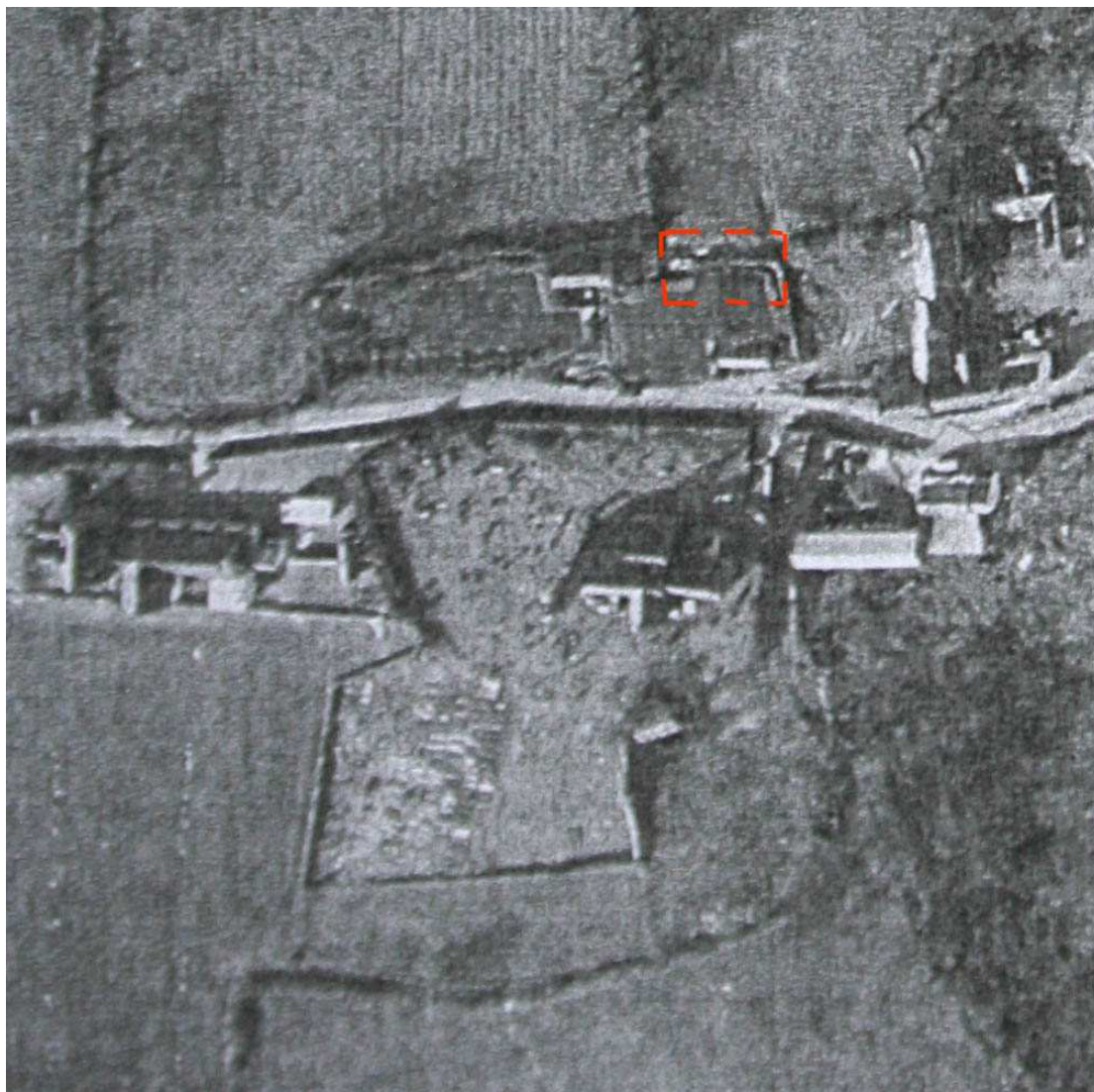


Figure 4. Detail of development area, marked in red, and immediate vicinity, from an aerial photograph taken in 1955 (Meridian Airmaps).

WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

In order to prepare the ground to the rear of Ti Cara for the building of the extension, a rectangular area measuring 7.3m north to south by 14m east to west was excavated using a 360 degree tracked mechanical excavator. Ti Cara itself had been built by terracing into ground that slopes gently down from north to south and this resulted in the ground to the north of the house being between 1.2m to 1.6m higher than the ground level of the house threshold. A raised garden bed with a low stone retaining wall had been constructed between the house and a stone boundary wall of the adjoining property to the north as a way of dealing with this level differential. The raised garden bed retaining wall and part of the boundary wall had to be demolished during the ground works to achieve a level surface for the new house extension. In addition, part of the recently purchased plot of land beyond the former boundary wall had to be lowered by 1.6m.

Using a toothless grading bucket, the turf and topsoil to the north of the boundary wall was machine excavated to an average depth of 0.75m. The topsoil comprised a homogeneous reddish brown sandy clay deposit containing occasional small angular fragments of stone. A raised mound of topsoil mixed with large and medium sized angular stones was removed from the western end of the northern side of the stone boundary wall revealing an approximately 2m by 2m domestic rubbish dump, of c.0.5m depth. The rubbish consisted of numerous glass bottles of late Victorian and early 20th century date mixed with tin cans, broken ceramic pot, fragments of timber and discrete deposits of coal and ash. The stones found within the topsoil overlying the rubbish dump probably represent tumble cleared from the base of the boundary wall.

Other than the rubbish dump, removal of the topsoil revealed only a compact natural yellowish brown sandy clay subsoil containing discrete strata of purple clay and 50% medium and small fragments of stone. The maximum depth of the excavation was 1.6m. No significant archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

Demolition of the low modern garden wall revealed a homogeneous dark brown humic silty clay garden soil to depth of c. 0.6m, which lay directly on the natural subsoil.

The demolished section of the stone boundary wall was built directly onto the natural subsoil, with no foundation. The wall, of mortared random rubble construction, was 0.6m wide by c.1.4m high. No dating evidence for the wall was observed during its demolition although we know from map evidence that a boundary has existed in that location since at least 1840.

CONCLUSION

Despite its location in an area with archaeological potential, especially relating to medieval activity, the groundwork excavations for the new extension to Ti Cara revealed no archaeologically significant features or deposits, either relating to the medieval settlement of Cosheston or any other periods. However, these results do not preclude the possibility that medieval archaeological features lie buried elsewhere in the vicinity of Ti Cara.

Photographs



Photo 1: View south across the site during the topsoil strip.



Photo 2: View north, showing the revealed topsoil and subsoil horizons.



Photo 3: View northwest during demolition of the walls, Ti Cara is on the left.



Photo 4: View northwest after demolition of the walls and further excavation of the subsoil



Photo 5: View north-northwest of part of the finished construction level.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Database

The Regional Historic Environment Record, housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust

Bibliographic

Murphy, K & Ludlow, N, 2002 *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales: Milford Haven Waterway*. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Report for CADW: Welsh Historic Monuments

Cartographic

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

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Ordnance Survey, 1:10560 1st Edition Pembrokeshire Sheet XL NW 1881

Ordnance Survey, 1:10560 2nd Edition Pembrokeshire Sheet XL NW 1909

Soil Survey of England & Wales, 1:250000 Soils of England & Wales Sheet 2 Wales 1983

Tithe Map and Apportionment for the Parish of Cosheston 1840

Aerial Photograph

Meridian Airmap SN00SW 200/200 frame number 17920 1955