

DANCLAWDD, MAENCLOCHOG, PEMBROKESHIRE:

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological
Trust Ltd.
For Mrs Terry McDonnell



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By

R Ramsey

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Position: Project Manager

Signature Date

This report has been checked and approved by

on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position:

Signature Date

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have on the content or presentation of this report

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SUMMARY

A planning application (05/0135/PA) was submitted by Mrs Terry McDonnell to redevelop a former agricultural building situated immediately to the west of Danclawdd, Maenclochog, Pembrokeshire at NGR SN08182858. The development lies within a landscape rich in prehistoric archaeological sites and complexes of monuments, some of which are scheduled ancient monuments.

Given the potential for the presence of buried archaeological features or deposits on the site, 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 Mrs McDonnell commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to carry out the watching brief in October 2008.

No archaeologically significant features or deposits were encountered during the groundworks for the development.

INTRODUCTION

Project Background

A planning application (No. 05/0135/PA) was submitted by Mrs Terry McDonnell to convert a former agricultural building into a dwelling. The building lies adjacent to the west side of Danclawdd, Maenclochog, Pembrokeshire at NGR SN 08182858.

The development is situated within a landscape containing important archaeological sites from the prehistoric period. Close by to the west is the Neolithic chambered tomb cemetery of Eithbed West (PRN 48356) centred on NGR SN0802028669, comprising a complex of three Neolithic chambered tombs with scheduled ancient monument status (SAM PE119). To the south, at NGR SN 08002200, is located an Iron Age defended enclosure cropmark site (PRN 4448) and further south again, around NGR SN08162797, a scheduled pair of Bronze Age standing stones (PRNs 1332 and 1333) lie some 40m apart (SAM PE286).

Given the potential for the presence of buried archaeological features or deposits on the site Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management, as archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authority¹ (LPA), recommended that an archaeological watching brief be carried out in order to protect the archaeological interests. In granting planning consent, an obligation to undertake an archaeological watching brief was placed on the application by the LPA.

In order to comply with the planning condition, Terry McDonnell commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake the watching brief in October 2008.

The property undergoing conversion is a stone-built, single storey, detached outbuilding measuring 4.8m wide by 14.25m long. At the time of the watching brief the building was roofless and its concrete floor had recently been removed. Most of the topsoil surrounding the building had been cleared, removed by machine down to the top of the subsoil.

In addition, an approximately 1m wide trench had been excavated outside the north gable end of the building that continued to the east as far as the main farmhouse (Danclawdd). Inspection of the trench showed that no archaeologically significant deposits or features had been revealed. The trench had been excavated to renew services for Danclawdd.

The watching brief methodology and scope of the report

The watching brief consisted of the attendance on site of an archaeologist during the excavation of the floor of the building and the excavation of the footings for a new porch on the west side of the building. 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

¹ Pembrokeshire County Council Planning Department

is housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust at its offices in Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire.

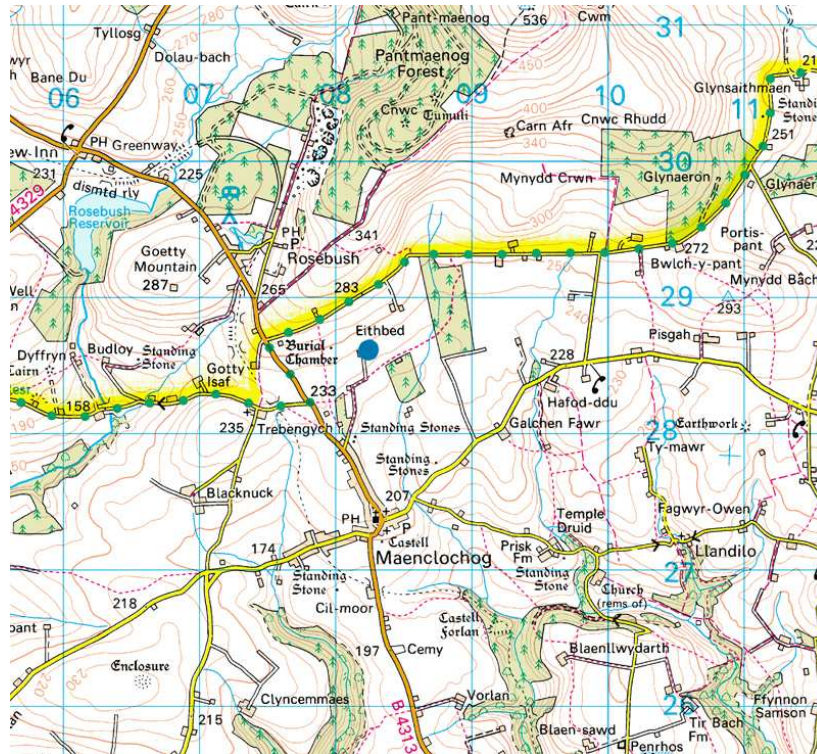


Figure 1. Location map. Site marked by blue dot, due north of Maenclochog. Reproduced from the 1995 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd., The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street,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

SITE LOCATION AND BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Location

Danclawdd is marked as Eithbed (Figure 1) or Eithbed West on Ordnance Survey maps but has relatively recently reverted to using the name Danclawdd, the name that was used for the property at the time of the Census of 1901. In the 1851 Census the property was referred to as Danylau, which was the name used on the property deeds of 1839.

The house and the former agricultural building adjacent to the west (Figure 2) lie on the 238m contour on a gentle south facing slope overlooked by the Preseli peaks of Foel Cymcerwyn and Cnwc from the north. The centre of the village of Maenclochog is located about a mile away to the south.



Figure 2. Red arrow indicates location of building undergoing conversion. Map extract from 2nd edition 6" Ordnance Survey map published 1908.

Historical Background

The history of the Maenclochog area is well outlined in the Maenclochog parish section of a Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Landscape report for Cadw (Murphy and Ludlow 2003), this is reprinted in full below:

The Historic Landscape Area of Maenclochog:

A small area of modern Pembrokeshire, on the southern edge of Mynydd Preseli, within the medieval Cantref Cemaes. Cemaes was brought under Anglo-Norman control in c.1100 by the Fitzmartins who retained it, as the Barony of Cemaes, until 1326 when they were succeeded by the Audleys. The Barony was conterminous with the later Hundred of Cemaes, which was created in 1536, but many feudal rights and obligations persisted, some until as late as 1922. The Maenclochog character area belonged to the mesne lordship or manor of Maenclochog, held from the Barony of Cemaes by the Roche lords of Llangwm in the 13th- and 14th-century, when it was assessed at one knight's fee, but unlike most of the manor, this character area - which comprises the settlement at Maenclochog itself - was held under Anglo-Norman manorial tenure. The medieval history of the manor is known only in outline. It had been obtained by the Roche lords of Llangwm by the mid 13th-century, along with knight's fees at Monington and Llanychaer, and their tenure continued into the 14th century. In a later Extent, from 1594, the manor of Maenclochog was, like others in Cemaes, held on an annual lease from the Barony, this one being assessed at 3s 8d. A castle had been founded by 1215 when it is mentioned in the Chronicles as having been destroyed in a Welsh raid. It was 'destroyed' again in 1257 while a reference in an Inquisition of 1376 may imply that it was still in use. The location of the castle

has yet to be demonstrably proved, but the rocky knoll with its accompanying enclosure at the southern end of the village is a strong candidate. North of the site is a large, square green containing the church, which leads into an axial main street - now the B4313 - which is lined by tofts. All are classic features of Anglo-Norman planted settlement in Pembrokeshire and Maenclochog forms part of a chain of such plantations along the southern foothills of Mynydd Preseli (cf. New Moat, Henry's Moat, Hayscastle etc.). However, there is no evidence that Maenclochog ever achieved, or aspired to borough status. The church has been entirely rebuilt but it was a medieval foundation, with a 'Mary' dedication which may imply that it has post-Conquest origins. The vicarage, with its chapelries of Llandeilo Llwydarth and Llangolman, were granted to St Dogmael's Abbey by David de la Roche in c.1320. The long, narrow fields that surround the village are characteristic of the enclosure of medieval field-strips, probably divided along Anglo-Norman manorial lines, but the later history of the village has, in contrast, been predominantly Welsh, and pastoral. It was also comparatively poor, no holding being assessed for more than two hearths in 1670. By the 19th century, it was a drovers' centre and a large annual cattle fair was being held on the green. A map of 1773 shows the green with 15 dwellings around it, while the remainder of the landscape was much as today. The area was crossed by the Maenclochog Railway which was opened in 1876 to serve the quarries at Rosebush in Mynydd Bach character area. It was later extended to Fishguard, but closed in 1949.

Maenclochog historic landscape area lies on gentle south-facing, southern slopes of Mynydd Preseli between 200m and 260m. It is centred on Maenclochog village. Agricultural land comprises a system of long narrow fields; this is clearly an open field system which has been enclosed. The enclosed strips are best preserved to the east and north of the village. Field boundaries consist of earth banks and stony banks topped with hedges. Apart from alongside roads and tracks, hedges are not generally well maintained. Many have gaps in them and others are overgrown. Other than a small 20th century coniferous plantation and trees in some of the overgrown hedges, woods do not form a characteristic element of this landscape. Maenclochog retains the character of a working agricultural village with farms, a church, chapels, garage, village hall, public houses, workshops, houses and shops. The village is planned around a rectangular green on which the parish church is located. Houses and other buildings are located around the outside edge of this green. Dwellings are in a variety of styles and materials. The older examples date to the early- to mid- 19th-century, with both detached farmhouses, other detached houses and terraces present. All are stone-built (cement rendered and bare stone) and most are two storey with three bays. Examples in the vernacular and polite Georgian tradition are present. Mid 20th-century construction includes houses, bungalows and cottages, including a good single storey timber-framed corrugated-iron example. Later 20th-century linear development is present alongside the roads to the north, west and east. There is a small, 21st century housing estate on the northern fringes of the village. Dispersed settlement outside the village comprises farms, the houses of which are generally 19th century in the vernacular tradition. Farm buildings of the village- and dispersed-farms are a mixture consisting of: one or two ranges of 19th century stone-built structures; mid 20th-century corrugated tin barns and other buildings; and late 20th-century steel, concrete and brick structures. The only listed building is St Mary's Church, which was entirely rebuilt in c.1790, in the same location as its predecessor but retaining none of the earlier fabric. Other buildings include the early 19th-century Hen Gapel in the centre of the village, and Tabernacle, built as an independent chapel in the mid 19th-century after a dispute between the congregation at Hen Gapel. Transport elements of the historic landscape comprise the B4313 which runs north-south through the village, minor roads and lanes, and an abandoned railway line.

There is a wealth of prehistoric archaeology within this small area, including a neolithic/bronze age ritual complex at Eithbed, with a number of chambered tombs and possible standing stones, another group of two standing stones and two more isolated standing stones. The context of the 'bell-stones' mentioned by Fenton in 1810 - two stones said to ring like a bell when struck - is unknown and they are now gone. There is an iron age hillfort and a smaller defended enclosure.

The Early Christian Monuments in St Mary's Church are from Llandeilo Llwydarth, but there is a holy well site. The location of the castle has yet to be demonstrably proved, but the rocky knoll with its accompanying enclosure at the southern end of the village is a strong candidate. Maenclochog is a distinctive historic landscape character area. It contrasts with Mynydd Bach Parliamentary enclosure to the east and with the undefined areas of larger, more regularly enclosed land to the south and west (Murphy and Ludlow 2001).

Since the above was written an archaeological excavation has been undertaken by the Dyfed Archaeological Trust in the car park at the southern end of the village. This established that the castle was definitely in that location and evidence of a pre-Norman settlement and the wall of a manorial pound were also revealed (Schlee 2008).

WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

The removal of the concrete floor in the interior of the building had revealed a layer of loose stone, which probably represented a sub-base layer prior to the pouring of the concrete. The stone sub-base was removed using a mini-digger, revealing a layer of orange brown silty clay containing 60% small and medium size angular fragments of shattered shale. This layer was naturally derived and did not, therefore, represent part of the original foundation make-up of the building. A small service pipe trench was revealed at the north end of the building located centrally and aligned north to south, following the long axis of the building. No other features were identified at this stage of the groundworks.

A trench was excavated around the periphery of the interior of the building and only natural orange brown silty clay soils containing a high percentage of small and medium size angular shale fragments were revealed. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

On the western side of the exterior of the building a foundation trench for a new porch was excavated in front of an existing door opening. The trench cut was 0.70m wide and machine excavated to a depth of 0.6m (see Photo.3 for the extent of the trench). The excavations revealed only natural orange brown silty clay deposits containing about 30% small angular fragments of shale. Again, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were revealed.

CONCLUSION

The groundworks for the conversion of the former agricultural building had no impact on the archaeological resource. Despite the potential for the presence of important archaeological features or deposits only natural deposits were revealed.

Photographs



Photo 1. View of building during groundworks. Looking northwest, 1m scale centrally located.



Photo 2. Cleaning the natural natural soil within the building after removal of the concrete floor. View south.



Photo 3. Footing excavation for porch on west side of the building. View east, 2 x 1m scale and 0.5m scale.



Photo 4. View of building looking southeast. Service trench in foreground. Scales are 1m.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Database

The Regional Historic Environment Record, housed with Dyfed Archaeological Trust

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