

THE JUBILEE HOTEL LETTERSTON PEMBROKESHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No 2009/16



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Mr J Gwilt



ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol
DYFED
archaeological trust

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2009/16
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 94853

Gorffennaf 2009
July 2009

**The Jubilee Hotel, Letterston, Pembrokeshire
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Gan / By

PETE CRANE BA HONS MIFA

Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys

The report has been prepared for the specific use of the client. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited can accept no responsibility for its use by any other person or persons who may read it or rely on the information it contains.

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir
Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Epost: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk
Gwefan: www.archaeolegdyfed.org.uk

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo,
Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk
Website: www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

Cwmni cyfyngedig (1198990) ynghyd ag elusen gofrestredig (504616) yw'r Ymddiriedolaeth. The Trust is both a Limited Company (No. 1198990) and a Registered Charity (No. 504616)

CADEIRYDD CHAIRMAN: C R MUSSON MBE B Arch FSA MIFA. CYFARWYDDWR DIRECTOR: K MURPHY BA MIFA

The Jubilee Hotel, Letterston, Pembrokeshire
Archaeological Watching Brief

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	2
METHODOLOGY	2
RESULTS OF THE WATCHING BRIEF	3
CONCLUSION	3
ARCHIVE DEPOSITION	3
Figure 1: Location of Jubilee Hotel, Letterston	4
Figure 2: Location of development. Plan provided by J Gwilt. Not to scale	5
Photo 1: Site before topsoil stripping. View north.	6
Photo 2: Site before topsoil stripping. View south.	6
Photo 3: Footing trenches. View south.	7

Cover: Footing trenches as excavated. View North

The Jubilee Hotel, Letterston, Pembrokeshire
Archaeological Watching Brief

SUMMARY

A planning application (08/0255/PA) was submitted by Mr James Gwilt for a detached building in the garden to the rear of The Jubilee Hotel, Letterston, Pembrokeshire (NGR SM 9382 2965). The site lies within the planned medieval settlement of Letterston in close proximity to the Church of St. Giles, first documented in the early 12th century. The site area itself appears to lie within a medieval burgrave plot also.

Given the potential for the presence of buried archaeological deposits on the site, associated with medieval period, planning permission was granted with an condition for an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during all groundworks at the site that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains. The aim of the watching brief was to identify and record any such archaeological deposits.

In order to comply with the planning condition Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned to carry out the watching brief in March 2009.

Two features of probable later post-medieval or modern date were revealed during the groundworks for the development, although these were considered to be of low archaeological significance. In the northern part of the site it was evident that subsoil material had been deposited over the original topsoil that lay in the area, which is thought to have been derived from groundworks associated with the construction of the nearby Jubilee Hotel or its extension. The results do not preclude the possibility that medieval archaeological remains may still survive in the vicinity.

INTRODUCTION

A planning application (08/2555/PA) was submitted by Mr James Gwilt for the construction of a detached building within part of the garden to the rear of The Jubilee Hotel, Letterston, Pembrokeshire (NGR¹ SM 9382 2965; Figures 1 and 2). A Grampian condition was placed on the planning application by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) following advice from their archaeological advisors².

Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT) Field Services were asked by the applicant to provide specifications and costs to fulfil the condition. DAT produced a specification for a watching brief that was accepted by the LPA and DAT were subsequently commissioned to undertake this project.

The site lies within the planned medieval settlement of Letterston, the nucleus of which is the Church of St Giles (PRN 4552³), first documented c.1130. Topographically, the layout of the settlement indicates that the Jubilee Hotel may lie on the site of a medieval burgrave plot. These plots are typically long and narrow stretching back at right angles to the main road, as is the case here, although this plot appeared to have been shortened at a later date. In addition, the former site of a medieval holy well (PRN 2396) is recorded in front of this site (NGR SM 9384 2961).

Given the location of this development within an area of such archaeological potential it was recommended that an archaeological watching brief be carried out on all major episodes of earth moving or ground breaking, such as topsoil stripping or trench cutting, where there was a potential for the groundworks to expose, damage or destroy archaeological deposits. The aim of the watching brief was to adequately record any significant archaeological features that might be encountered and, if necessary, implement archaeological excavation to undertake such recording.

The site measured approximately 50m north-south, by 15m east-west. The plot was fairly level and covered with rough grass on which there was a small breeze-block constructed garage (Photos 1 and 2). The surfaces of the fields to the west and north were lower than that within the plot. The general slope of land outside the plot is rising from the west to the east.

METHODOLOGY

The watching brief comprised the on-site attendance, over a number of days, of an archaeologist during all groundworks at the site which had the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains.

All excavation was undertaken by the backhoe of a JCB type machine using a toothed bucket. The removal of the topsoil took longer than anticipated due to the journey times to take soil from the site.

Records were made of all excavated deposits and digital photographs were taken.

Printed map extracts included in this report are for illustrative purposes only and are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

¹ NGR – National Grid Reference

² Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Service

³ PRN – Primary Record Number, as used to identify the site on the regional Historic Environment Record held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust

RESULTS OF THE WATCHING BRIEF

The watching brief was started on the morning of 2nd March 2009 and continued into the following day while the topsoil was removed from the site. The weather on the first day was fine to start but drizzle later, the next day was more overcast, cold and windy followed by rain. Two return visits were made on 16th March as the foundation trenches were dug, when the weather was fine.

The bedrock was very light brown shale, known locally as Rab. The footing trenches (Photo 3) were dug c.0.6m wide by 0.8m deep into the bedrock, where there were no signs of any archaeological features.

While stripping off the subsoil the base of a feature was seen cutting diagonally, southwest to northeast, across the site. This feature only just penetrated into the subsoil/bedrock. It contained a few brick fragments along with a number of larger stones. Possibly this was the edge of a garden path or garden feature. A heat affected area c.2.5m west of the breeze-block garage was also recorded that contained coal and fragments of window glass. Due to the brick and glass found within these features they are considered to be of later post-medieval date or modern, and of low archaeological significance.

In the rear (north) third of the plot there was a 0.3m re-deposit of subsoil over a former topsoil layer. This soil was possibly derived from construction of The Jubilee Hotel, or its rear extension.

Towards the front of the plot the topsoil, of c.0.25m deep, directly overlay the Rab bedrock. At the front of the plot the topsoil was very dark, possibly containing the detritus from a smithy which was nearby on the street frontage.

The vegetation on the hedge banks, on three sides of the site, did not indicate that they were of any great age. These banks were not cut during the development, but further material derived from the groundworks was deposited on the north and west banks.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development site lay within the medieval planned village of Letterston, close to the Church of St. Giles (first documented in 1130) and apparently within part of a medieval burgage plot. The proposed development site was therefore considered to have the potential to contain associated archaeological remains.

The archaeological watching brief was required, by way of a condition on the planning permission, in order to create a record of any archaeological remains that may have been exposed, damaged or destroyed by the proposed works.

Despite the potential for the presence of important archaeological deposits associated with the medieval period to be located within the development site, only natural deposits were revealed by the groundworks. The site appears to have been made up and levelled in late post-medieval times, possibly when The Jubilee Hotel was built. The archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that no archaeological remains were impacted upon by the development proposals. These results do not preclude the possibility for other archaeological features to lie buried elsewhere in the vicinity of the development site.

ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

DAT HER will initially hold the archive.



Figure 1: Location of Jubilee Hotel, Letterston

Reproduced from the 1997 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger 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.

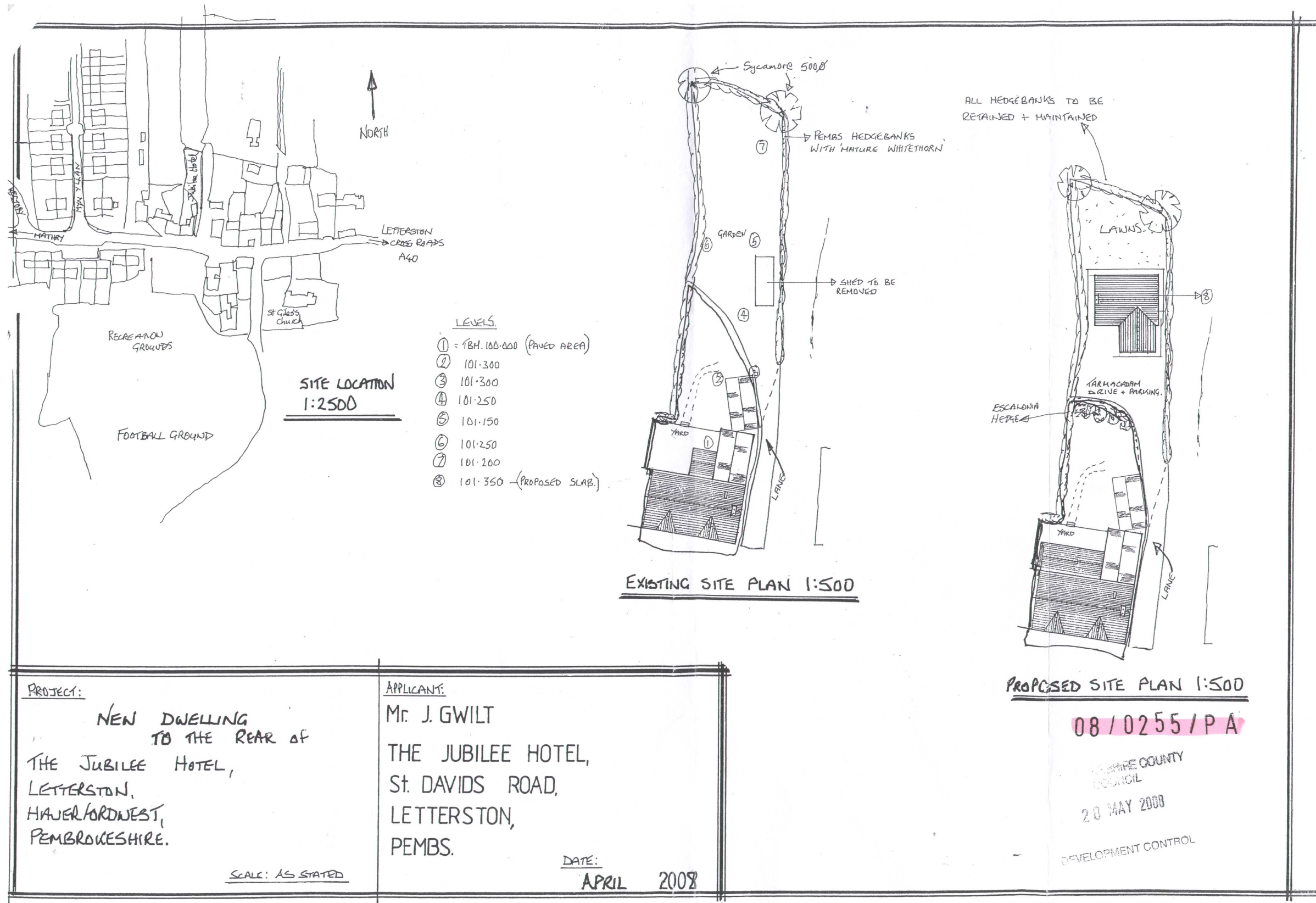


Figure 2: Location of development. Plan provided by J Gwilt. Not to scale



Photo 1: Site before topsoil stripping. View north.



Photo 2: Site before topsoil stripping. View south.



Photo 3: Footing trenches. View south.

The Jubilee Hotel, Letterston, Pembrokeshire Archaeological Watching Brief

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2009/16

**Gorffennaf 2009
July 2009**

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan /
This report has been prepared by : **Pete Crane**

Swydd / Position: **Senior Archaeologist**

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith /
This report has been checked and approved by: **James Meek**

ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf. /
on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: **Head of Field Services**

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

*Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn*

*As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any
comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report*