

JOHNSTON HALL, JOHNSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

August 2010



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
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Developments



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Gan / By

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**LAND NORTH OF THE VILLAGE GREEN, TEMPLETON, PEMBROKESHIRE:
TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION**

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JOHNSTON HALL JOHNSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE: TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services were commissioned by Mr Merrick Evans of Hall Court Developments Ltd to carry out an archaeological evaluation in advance of proposed residential development of a parcel of land to the north-east of Johnston Hall, Johnston, Pembrokeshire (Planning Application No. 09/1005/PA; NGR SM 9333 1036). The proposed development area lies to the south-east of Johnston parish church which dates from at least the mid 13th century, and would have been a focal point for any settlement in the vicinity which has evolved into the village of Johnston as it exists today. In addition to the medieval church the proposed development area lies in close proximity to the suggested site of Johnston medieval grange. Given the site's location it was considered that there was a potential for important archaeological remains to survive within the site area that could be adversely affected by the proposed development,

The trial trench evaluation undertaken in August 2010 comprised a single trench and confirmed the presence of an archaeological feature within the northern end of the proposed development area where a plough furrow was identified. The feature is considered to be of low archaeological significance.

The scale of the evaluation was restricted due to the presence of large spoil heaps and a number of modern services within the site area. It is possible that archaeological features and deposits are present in the remainder of the site area. The lack of finds recovered from the site area may suggest that the potential for archaeology to be present is limited, although this cannot be confirmed.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

1.1.1 A planning application has been submitted for the residential development of a parcel of land to the east of Johnston Hall, Johnston, Pembrokeshire (Planning Application No. 09/1005; NGR SM 9333 1036; **Figures 1 & 2**). In response to this application and following advice from the archaeological advisors to Pembrokeshire County Council, Dyfed Archaeological Trust – Heritage Management (DAT-HM), an archaeological condition was placed upon the planning approval.

1.1.2 The condition stated: *No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This shall be in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure the recording of any items of archaeological interest to accord with Policy 84 of the Joint Unitary Development Plan for Pembrokeshire (adopted 13 July 2006).*

1.1.3 Following discussion with DAT-HM it was determined that an archaeological trial trench evaluation would be required at the site. A written scheme of investigation was prepared detailing the proposed works and approved before the work was implemented.

1.1.3 The proposed development area lies in close proximity to the medieval parish church of St Peter at Johnston which is considered to have been the nucleus for any medieval settlement. In addition the site lies near the suggested site of the medieval Johnston grange.

1.1.4 Mr Merrick Evans commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services (DAT-FS) to carry out the archaeological evaluation of the site.

1.1.5 The trial trench was located within the south-east corner of the full development site associated with the planning application, although development had started across much of the site area. It was decided that the evaluation would target the undeveloped area in the south-east part of the site, and that the information from this evaluation would give an indication of the archaeology of the area.

1.2 Scope of the Project

1.2.1 The WSI outlined a number of main objectives for the project, including:

- Stage 1: Intrusive Field Evaluation: using one trial trench to provide information on the date, character, extent, state of preservation and significance of any underlying archaeological remains which may be present;
- Stage 2: Preparation of a report and archive.

1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background, and provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological evaluation and its results.

1.4 Abbreviations

1.4.1 Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record¹ (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services – DAT-FS; Dyfed Archaeological Trust Heritage Management – DAT-HM; Scheduled Ancient Monument – SAM; Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI

1.5 Illustrations

1.5.1 Photographic images are to be found at the back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

¹ Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Shire Hall, Carmarthen St., Llandeilo, SA19 6AF.

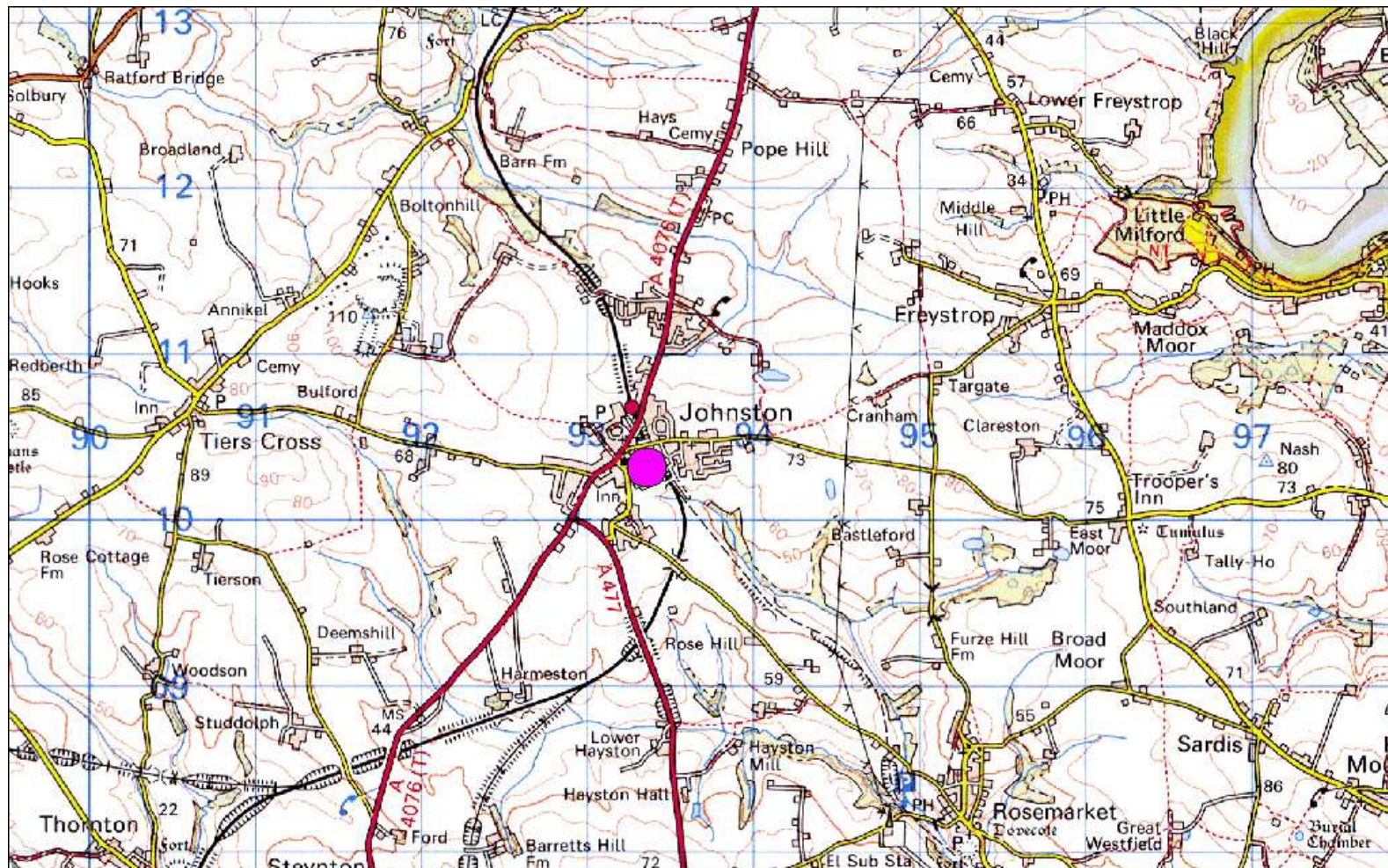


Figure 1: Location map, based on the Ordnance Survey.

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

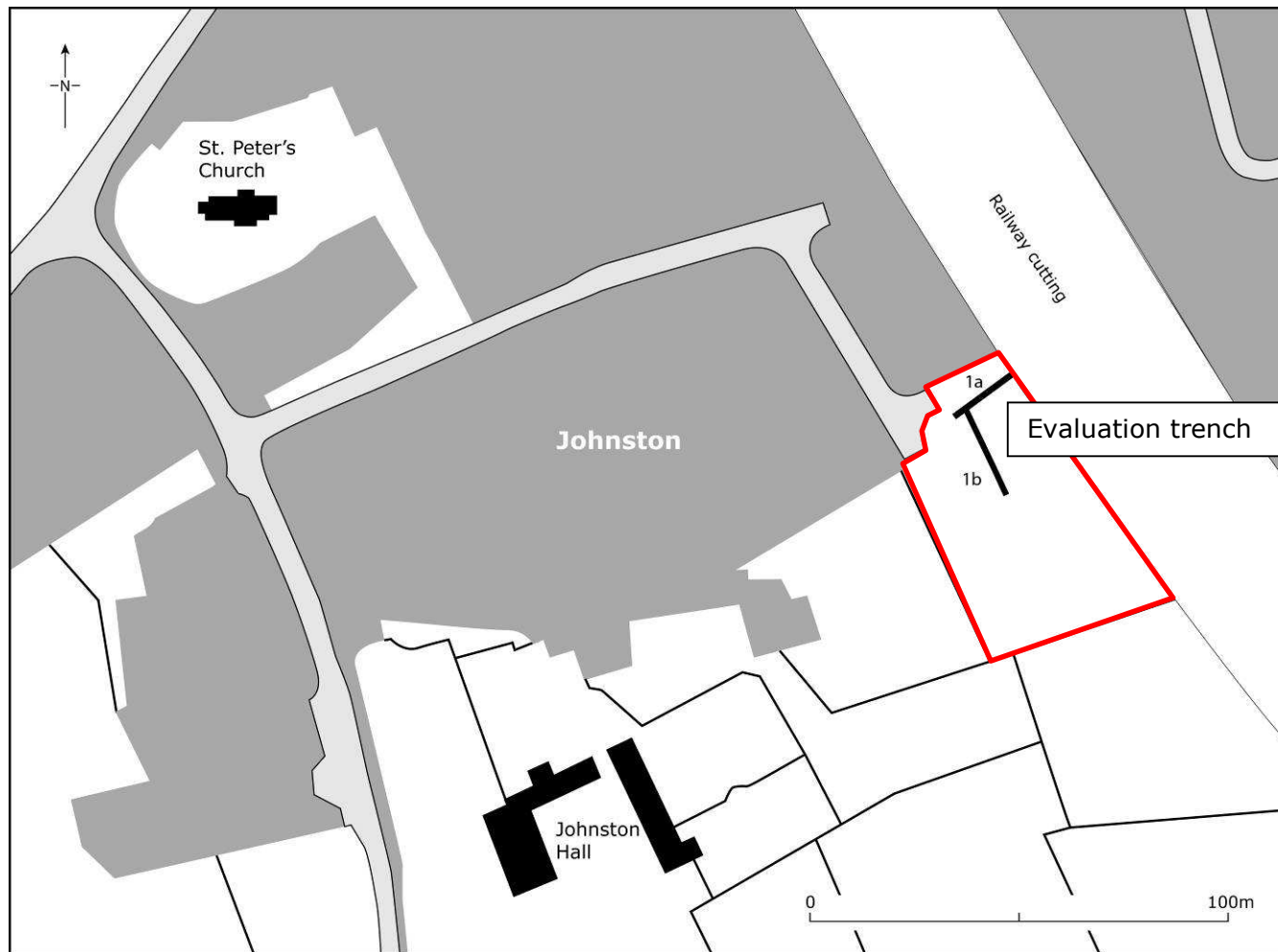


Figure 2: Location plan of evaluation trench.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location and Topography

2.1.1 The site is located on a gentle south-eastward sloping area of undeveloped land at the south-eastern end of the centre of Johnston, Pembrokeshire (NGR SN 9340 1033; **Figure 1**). The site area lies at the southern end of a new housing development a short distance from the eastern side of Church Road. The available part of the site area is bounded, by modern residential development to the north; pasture to the south; Johnston Hall Home Farm to the west; with the railway cutting carrying the Haverfordwest – Milford line to the east.

2.1.2 The site covers an area of c.0.20ha.

2.2 Archaeological Background

2.2.1 A search of the Regional Historic Environment Record shows no recorded archaeological sites within the boundaries of the proposed development. However, three recorded archaeological sites lie in close proximity to the proposed development area.

2.2.2 The proposed development area lies to the southeast of the medieval parish church of Johnston, dedicated to St Peter, (PRN 3352), which continues to serve the parish. The church is believed to have been constructed by Thomas de Rupe in the early 13th century (Salter, 2004, 56). The patronage of the church in the medieval period was held by Pill Priory and on its dissolution passed to the Crown. The settlement at Johnston takes its name from John de Rupe a 12th century knight and the church would have formed the nucleus for any extended settlement in the area.

2.2.3 To the immediate south of the proposed development area lies the suggested site of Johnston medieval grange (PRN 12494). A grange was the centre of an agricultural estate, akin to a secular manor, that could consist of a substantial complex of buildings with dwelling, refectory, chapel and agricultural buildings such as barns and stables. The monastic grange was not only an agricultural centre but also functioned as an administrative centre where business transactions were undertaken and hospitality was provided (Williams, 2001, 192).

2.2.4 It is known that two carucates of land and one bovaté known as 'Muncketon' in Johnston, along with the right of patronage of Johnston church was granted to Pill Priory in c.1294 by Thomas de Roche (Rupe) (Pritchard, 1907, 125). By 1517 the property is recorded as 'Le Monckton' and comprised 2½ carucates of land with warren and was leased to Maurice Bolton by Prior John of Pill for the term of 40 years at a rent of 40 shillings per annum. The Prior retaining the right to hunt in the warren three times a year and to a rick of rushes each year which were to be cut and carted at the Priors expense (*ibid*, 147).

2.2.5 The 1535 *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, a survey of church finances and property produced by Henry VIII indicates that 'Monckton' along with Johnston church were still properties of Pill Priory (*ibid*. 145). By 1536 'Le Monckton' is recorded as in the possession of Maurice Bolton (*ibid*, 180).

2.2.6 The surviving documentary sources refer to a rabbit warren on the property but make no reference of any other structures associated with the holding such as a dwelling suggesting that a formal grange may not have existed at Johnston.

2.2.7 Johnston Hall (PRN 17814) lies to the south west of the proposed development area. A dwelling has existed on this site since at least the 15th century when it is recorded as the home of the Tancred family (Jones, 1996, 96). In the latter part of the 17th century the house formed the centre of a 200 acre manor and is assessed as having ten hearths suggesting a considerable sized

structure. By the early 19th century the house is recorded as in use as a farm house. The present house consists of a double pile structure with rear wing with nearby coach house and other outbuildings. It is considered that some of the outbuildings may incorporate fabric from the earlier dwellings on the site (*ibid*).

2.2.8 Immediately to the east of the proposed development area runs a c.38m wide railway cutting which carries the section of line between Haverfordwest and Milford Haven. The line was opened on 15th April 1856 as the final part of the South Wales Railway and originally ran from Gloucester to Neyland. The South Wales Railway became part of the Great Western Railway in 1862 with Milford Haven station opening the following year. The Great Western Railway was nationalised in 1948 and the line became part of British Railways (Western) until privatisation in 1997.

2.2.9 Construction of the railway would have involved a large labour force that would have been housed in 'navvy camps' located close to the route of the line. Given the presence of the cutting adjacent to the proposed development area it is possible that such a camp would be located in the vicinity. Spoil from railway cuttings was usually transported ahead to areas where embankments were needed, however, in some cases spoil was removed using barrow runs set on the batter of the cutting where barrows were hauled up by a horse or donkey with a man behind helping to push and keep the barrow stable. The spoil would then be dumped in heaps on the adjacent land or carted away for use elsewhere.

2.2.10 Cartographic sources indicate the proposed development area has been undeveloped land since at least the late 19th century (**see figures 3 – 6**).

| Period | Approximate Date |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Palaeolithic | c.225,000 BC – 10,000 BC |
| Mesolithic | c.10,000 BC – c.3500 BC |
| Neolithic | c.3500 BC – c.2000 BC |
| Bronze Age | c.2000 BC – c.600 BC |
| Iron Age | c.600 BC – 43 AD |
| Roman | 43 AD – 410 AD |
| Early Medieval | 410 AD - 1066 |
| Medieval | 1066 - 1485 |
| Post Medieval | 1485 – c.1750 |
| Industrial ² | 1750 – c.1900 |
| Modern | c.1900 onwards |

Table 1: Archaeological and historical timeline for Wales.

² The post-medieval and industrial periods are combined as the post-medieval period on the Regional HER.

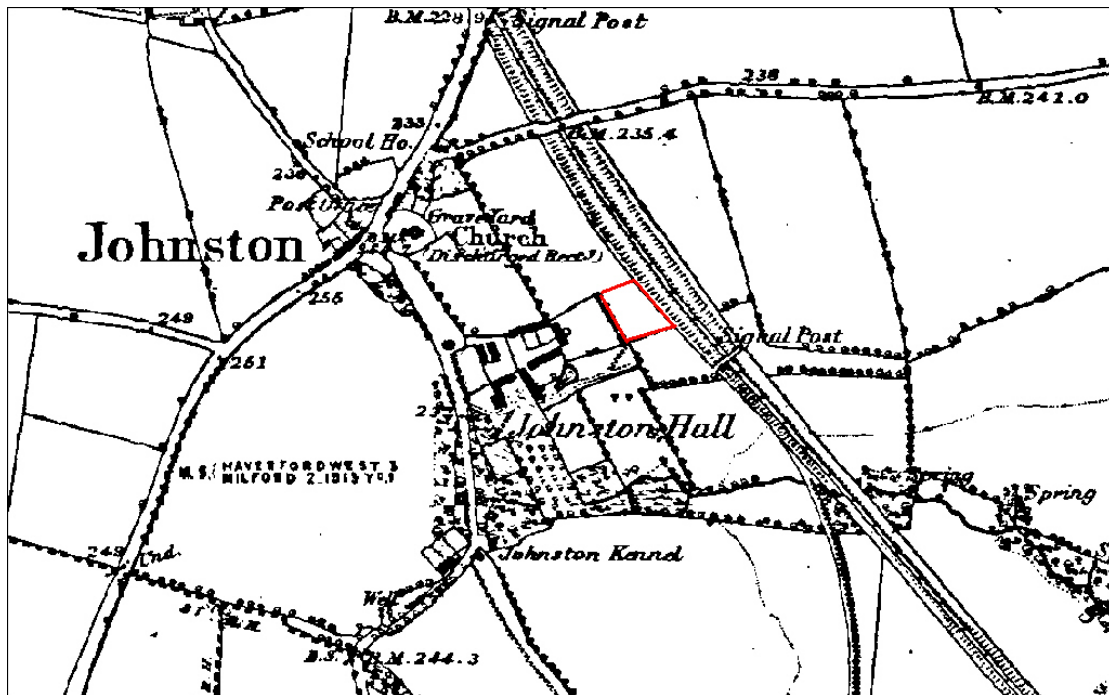


Figure 3: Extract of 1:10568 scale map of the area for 1868, showing the evaluation area

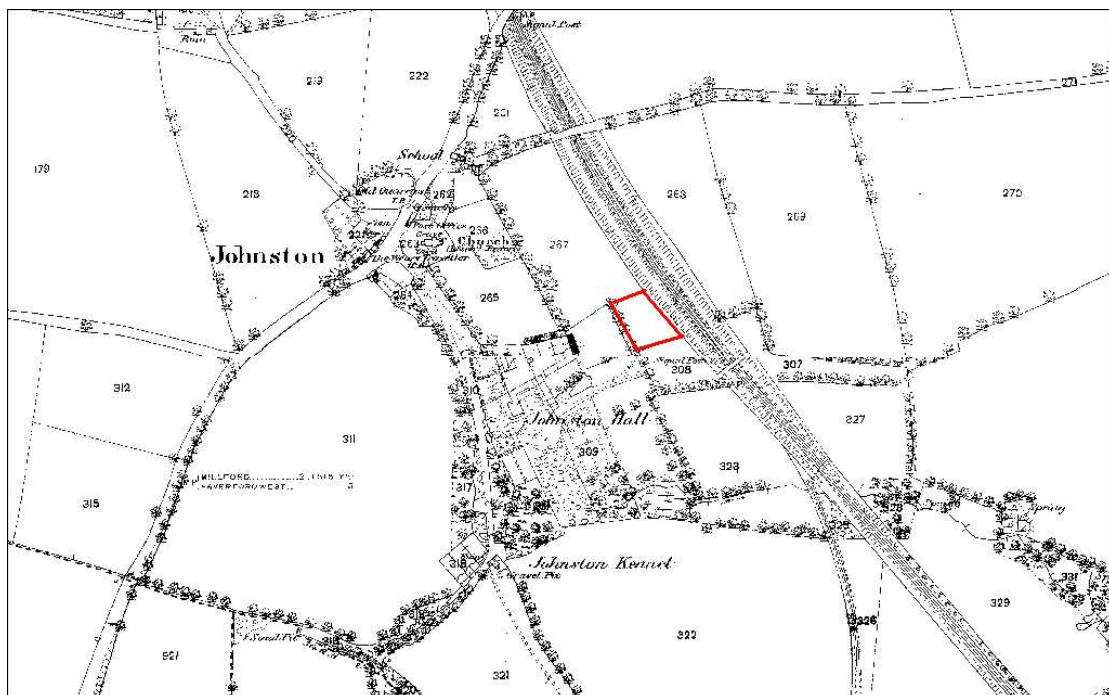


Figure 4: Extract of 1:2500 scale map of the area for 1876, showing the evaluation area

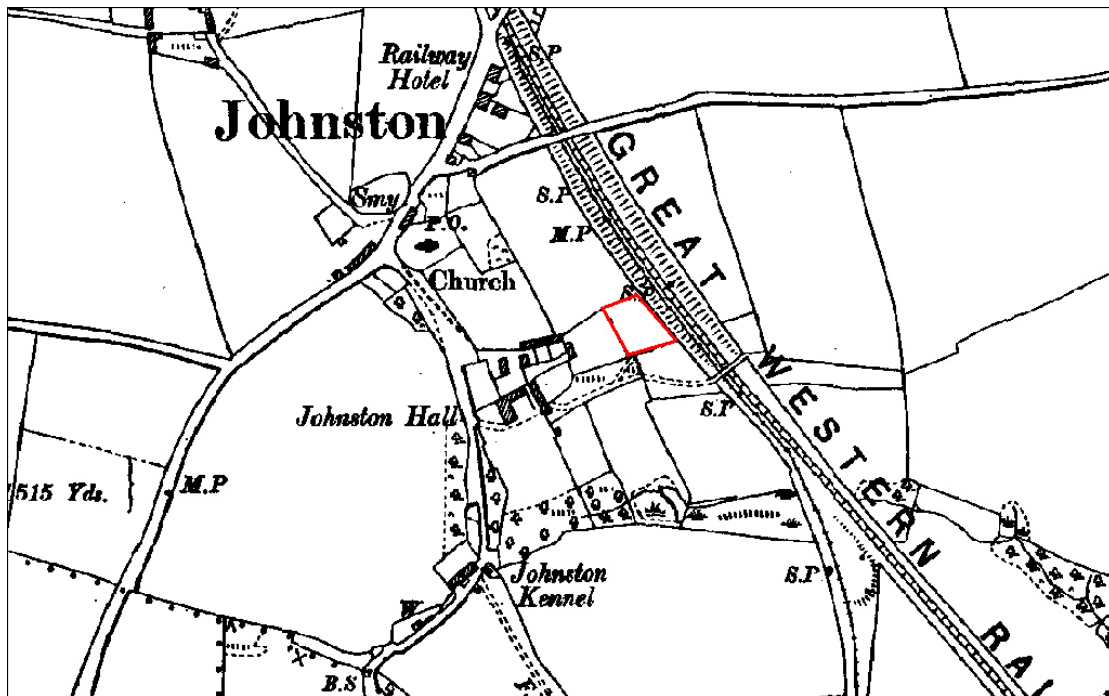


Figure 5: Extract of 1:10568 scale map of the area for 1908, showing the evaluation area

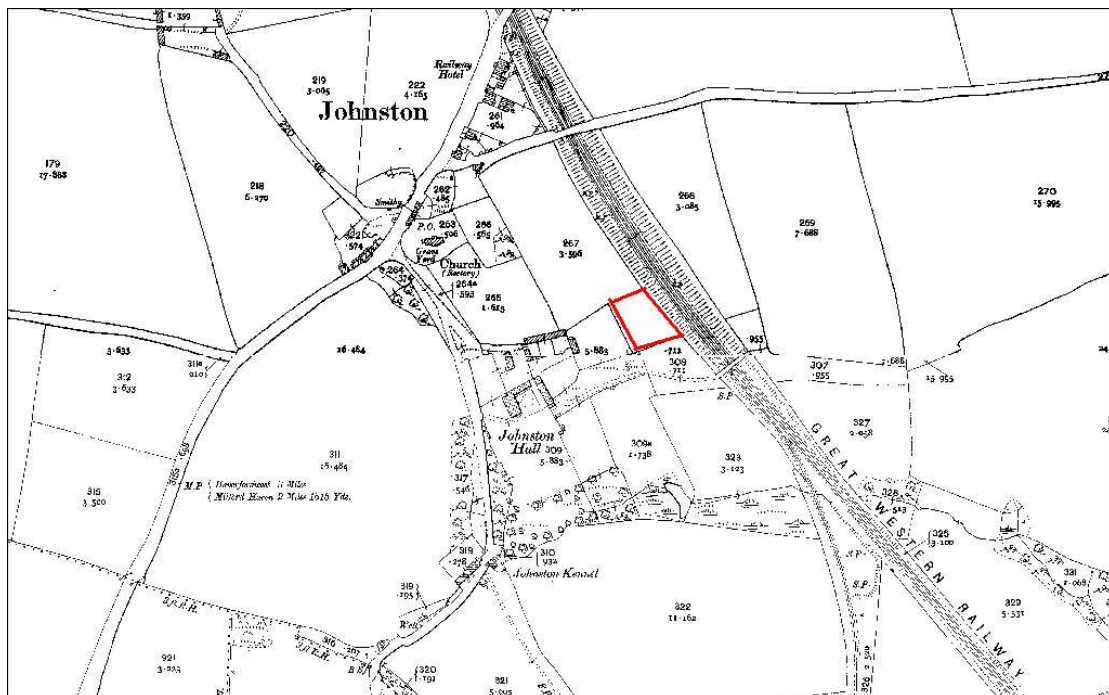


Figure 6: Extract of 1:2500 scale map of the area for 1908, showing the evaluation area

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Trial Trenching

3.1.1 It was agreed with DAT-HM that a single 50m x 2m trench was to be excavated across the available part of the proposed development area. However, this was not possible as much of the area was covered in large spoil heaps. Also it was noted during the opening of the trenches that a modern drain ran through the area, as evidenced by man hole covers. Due to the constraints, the trench was excavated in two parts, one crossing the site roughly north to south and the second part aligned roughly east to west in an area in the north of the site which was free of any spoil and services. In total only a 37m length of trench was able to be opened. Following discussions with DAT-HM it was agreed that for the purpose of the trial trenching this would be sufficient given the constraints of the proposed development area.

3.1.2 The two parts of the trench were excavated by machine fitted with a c.1.2m wide toothless ditching bucket to the top of any archaeological deposits, or to the top of the undisturbed natural subsoil, in shallow spits under constant archaeological supervision. The trenches were then hand cleaned using trowels in order to determine the presence and extent of archaeological deposits.

3.1.3 Sample excavation of identified features was undertaken.

3.1.4 All deposits were recorded by archaeological context record sheet, scale drawing, photography and site notebooks. All deposits were numbered using the open-ended numbering system in accordance with Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services' Recording Manual³. Drawn plans were related to Ordnance Datum. A photographic record was maintained using digital formats.

3.1.5 All archaeologically significant artefacts, ecofacts and samples were retained and related to the contexts from which they derived.

³ Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services use the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available for inspection if required.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Trench 1a (Figures 7 & 9)

| Trial Trench Summary Sheet | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Site Name Johnston Hall, Johnston, Pembs. | | | PRN 99915 | | Trench No 1a |
| Length 17.10m | | Width 1.40m | Max Depth 0.87m | | Orientation WSW - NNE |
| Depths below ground level | | | | | Direction of measurement WSW - NNE |
| 0m 0.50m | | 5m 0.58m | 10m 0.82m | | 15m 0.87m |
| 17m 0.51m | | | | | |
| Context No | Context Type | Description | | | Height/ Depth |
| 100a | Layer | Topsoil. Dark red brown clay silt of moderate compaction containing occasional small angular stone. | | | 0.52m |
| 101a | Layer | Subsoil. Mid orange brown clay silt of moderate compaction containing occasional small to medium angular stone. | | | 0.35m |
| 102a | Layer | Natural. Firm mid yellow brown clay silt containing common small angular stone. | | | 0.05m visible |
| 103a | Fill of [104a] | Firm mid red brown clay silt containing rare small sub-angular stone. | | | 0.10m |
| 104a | Cut | NW-SE aligned linear feature 0.23m wide with visible length of 1.90m. Moderately sloping sides with concave irregular base | | | 0.10m |
| Finds | | | | | |
| Context No | Material | | Period | | Qty |
| 100a | Pottery | | Post medieval/ Industrial period | | 1 sherd |
| 100a | Roofing slate | | Industrial period (?) | | 1 fragment |

Figure 7: Trial trench summary sheet for trench 1a

4.1.1 The trench was located in the north-eastern part of the available development area. The trench was aligned west-south-west to north-north-east with an extension on its north western side.

4.1.2 A single east to west aligned irregular linear feature [104] was identified at west south-western end of the trench. The feature was considered to be a plough furrow and thus of low archaeological significance.

4.1.3 The topsoil (100a) lay on top of a subsoil of moderate depth (101a), with underlying natural deposits beneath (102a). A single sherd of post medieval pottery and piece of roofing slate was recovered from the trench during machining.

4.1.4 No archaeologically significant features were revealed within the trench.

4.2 Trench 1b (Figures 8 & 9)

| Trial Trench Summary Sheet | | | | | |
|--|--------------|---|--------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Site Name Johnston Hall, Johnston, Pembs. | | | PRN 99915 | | Trench No 1b |
| Length 22.0m | | Width 1.40m | Max Depth 0.56m | | Orientation NW - SE |
| Depths below ground level | | | | | Direction of measurement NW - SE |
| 0m 0.27m | | 5m 0.55m | 10m 0.48m | | 15m 0.47m |
| 22m 0.44m | | | | | |
| Context No | Context Type | Description | | | Height/ Depth |
| 100b | Layer | Topsoil. Dark red brown clay silt of moderate compaction containing occasional small angular stone. | | | 0.27m |
| 101b | Layer | Subsoil. Mid orange brown clay silt of moderate compaction containing occasional small to medium angular stone. | | | 0.12m |
| 102b | Layer | Natural. Firm mid yellow brown clay silt containing common small angular stone. | | | 0.03m visible |
| Finds | | | | | |
| Context No | Material | | Period | | Qty |
| N/A | N/A | | N/A | | N/A |

Figure 8: Trial trench summary sheet for trench 1b.

4.2.1 Trench 1b was a north-west to south-east aligned extension to trench 1a

4.2.2 The topsoil (101b) lay on top of a shallow subsoil (102a) with underlying natural deposits beneath. .

4.2.3 No archaeological features were revealed within the trench.

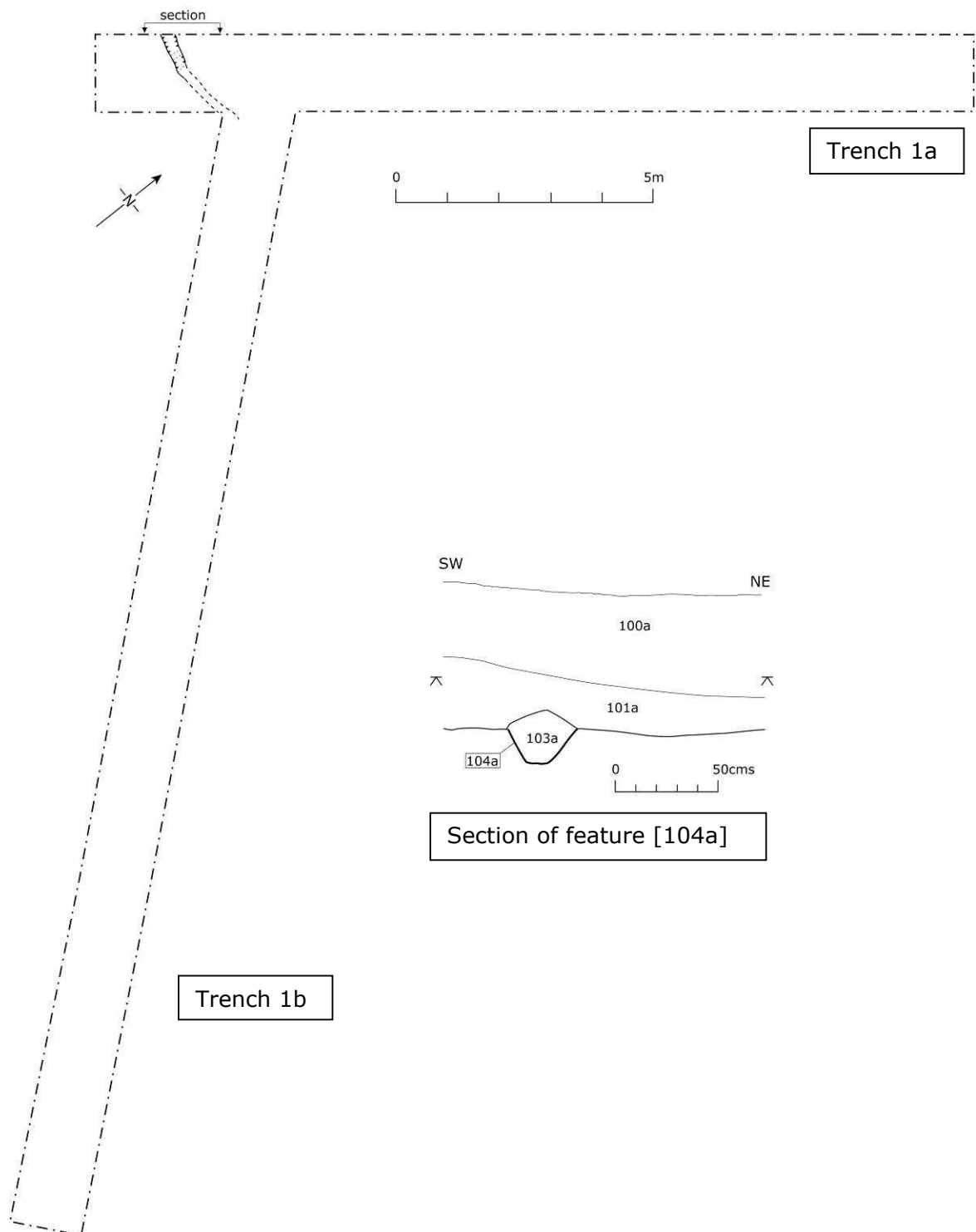


Figure 9: Overall plan of trial trenches and section of plough furrow [104a]

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Although the extent of the archaeological evaluation was limited due to the presence of spoil heaps and a modern service within the available investigation area, the trial trench did reveal a single feature. Although the feature was a plough furrow and considered to be of low archaeological significance, it does show that if archaeological features were present they would have been identified.

5.2 The presence of a plough furrow would also indicate that much of the evaluation area had not been previously disturbed. The feature did not continue into Trench 1b, which may either be indicative of the slope on which the ground lies or alternatively suggest more disturbance towards the southern end of the trench.

5.3 The potential for archaeological remains to be present beyond the boundaries of the evaluation trenches cannot be discounted.

5.4 The archaeological evaluation has not demonstrated the presence of any archaeological features of enough significance to warrant preservation in situ or further investigation. No artefacts of significance were recovered from the excavated soils which could indicate the presence of significant archaeological in the vicinity.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cartographic

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Photo 1: View west-south-west along Trench 1a.



Photo 2: Pre-excavation view of linear feature [104a].



Photo 3: North-west post excavation view of linear feature [104a]



Photo 4: South-east facing section of linear feature [104a]



Photo 5: South-east view of trench 1b.



Photo 6: North-west view of trench 1b

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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*

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