

LAND ADJACENT TO CROSS INN VILLA, CROSS INN, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF 2012



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For: Mr Julian Dobson



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LAND ADJACENT TO CROSS INN VILLA, CROSS INN, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Gan / By

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SUMMARY

A planning application was submitted to Carmarthenshire County Council, for the erection of a single dwelling to the northwest of Cross Inn Villa, Cross Inn, Laugharne, Carmarthenshire (Planning Ref: W/25666). Due to the potential for archaeological remains to be present within the development area, the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authority recommended that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development. Mr Julian Dobson commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake the watching brief.

The watching brief was undertaken on the 7th February 2012 during the main topsoil strip and ground reduction within the footprint of the proposed new dwelling, associated garage and driveway. The watching brief indicated that the majority of the site comprised a thin layer of topsoil overlying undisturbed natural ground.

An indication of a possible earthen bank along the northeastern edge of the site (between the site and the road) was noted, due to the increased depth of topsoil in this part of the site. A modern electric cable was also present within this part of the site area.

The lack of any finds or features within the site area is considered to indicate that the field was used for pasture as opposed to being used for an earlier dwelling or for cultivation. It is possible that a structure could have formerly been present at the northwestern end of the site, although this area was overgrown and no evidence for this could be seen.

Although no significant archaeological remains were revealed within the development area, there is still a potential that significant archaeological deposits could be present in its vicinity.

INTRODUCTION

Project Commission

In response to a request from Mr Julian Dobson, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services provided an archaeological watching brief during initial groundworks and topsoil stripping prior to the construction of a single new dwelling on land directly to the northwest of Cross Inn Villa, Cross Inn, Laugharne, Carmarthenshire (Figure 1; centred on NGR SN 2916 1249).

An archaeological condition has been attached to planning permission for the development (planning application ref W/25666) which states:

'The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any further ground works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief will be undertaken to the standards laid down by the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeologist, unless otherwise agreed in writing'.

Unfortunately the watching brief was undertaken at short notice and it was not possible to give the two weeks notice to Carmarthenshire County Council. The archaeological advisors to the planning authority were informed that the works were due to start and a basic Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI or specification) was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services and supplied to them. No works commenced on the site until an archaeologist was present.

Scope of the Project

The main scope of the project was laid out within the WSI as 'An archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a single dwelling at Cross Inn, Laugharne, Carmarthenshire. The proposed works will include ground reduction across the footprint of the new build which may expose, damage or destroy any underlying archaeological remains, if present'.

The WSI also stated that the project objectives were:

- Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology by which Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services will undertake the watching brief.
- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To appropriately investigate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Report Outline

This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background before summarising the watching brief results and the conclusions based on those results.

Abbreviations

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; Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI

Illustrations

Record photographs are included at back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale and are illustrative only.

Timeline

The following timeline is used within this report to give date ranges for the various archaeological periods that may be mentioned within the text (Table 1).

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4400 – 2300 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.2300 – 700 BC	
Iron Age –	c.700 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1066	
Medieval Period –	1066 – 1536	
Post-Medieval Period –	1536 – 1899	
Modern –	20th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales

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

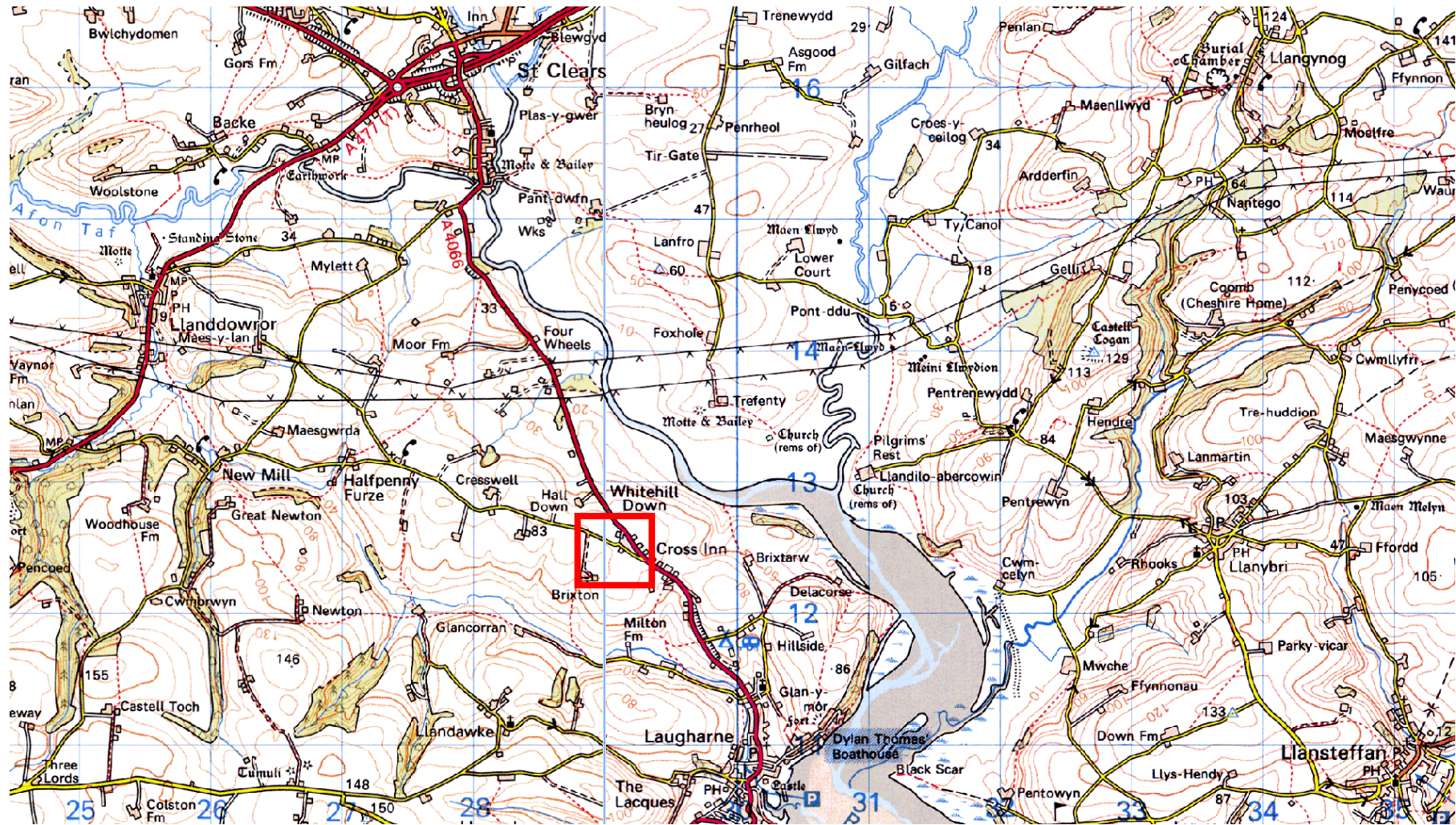
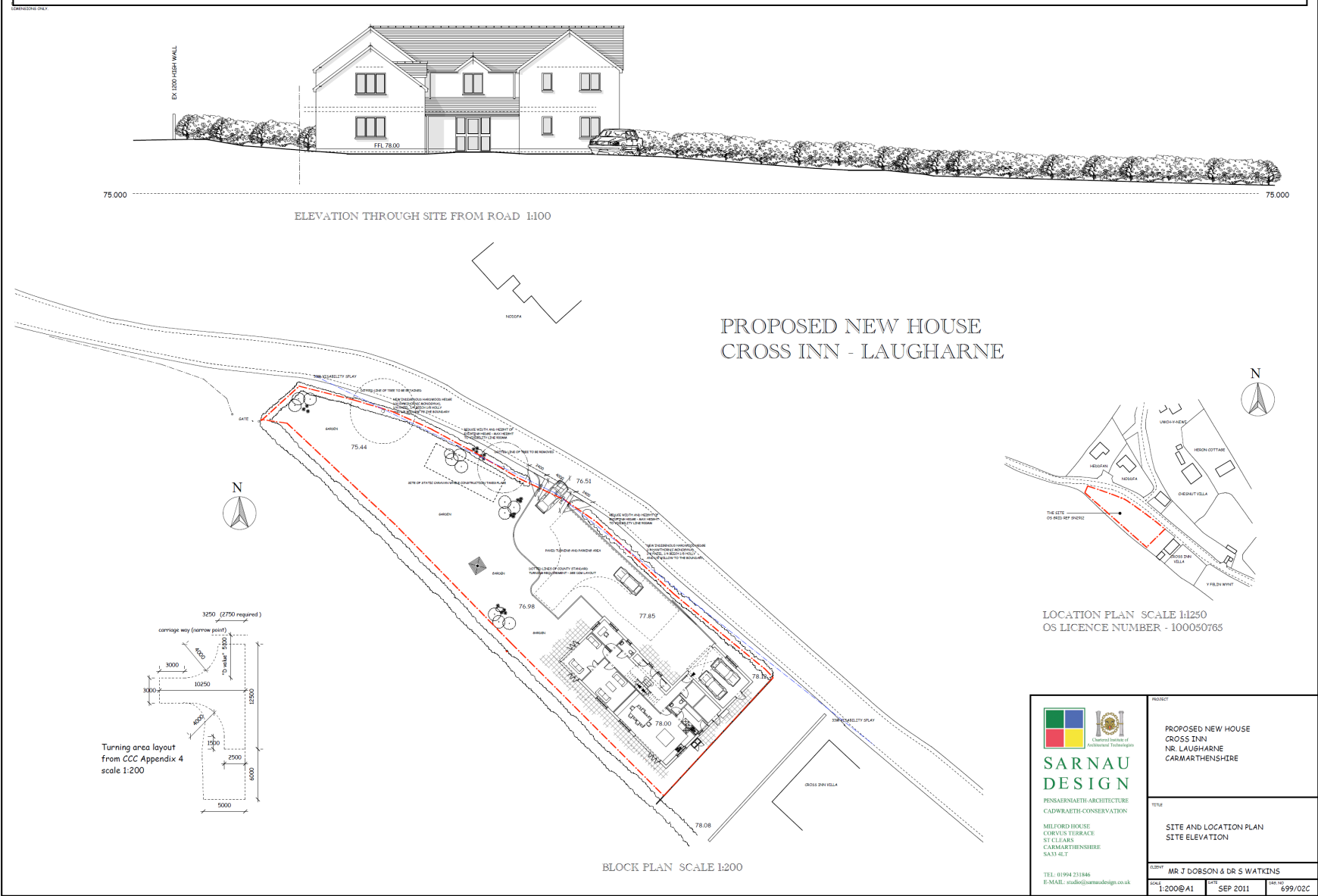


Figure 1: Location plan of Cross Inn, Carmarthenshire

(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: Detailed location and proposals taken from planning application (Carmarthenshire County Council website)



THE SITE

Location and Topography

The proposed new dwelling lies on the western side of Cross Inn, directly to the northwest of Cross Inn Villa (Figures 1 & 2; centred on NGR SN 2916 1249). It is located to the west of the road to halfpenny Furze, a spur leading to the northwest from the A4066 between St Clears and Laugharne. The development site was level at its southeastern end, with a slight rise up from the adjacent road and a gentle slope down to the northwest. The majority of the area was laid to grass.

Archaeological and Historical Background

No archaeological sites are known to exist directly within the proposed development area; however a search of the Regional Historic Environment Record database revealed that a total of twenty two sites of archaeological and historic interest are located within a c.500m radius centred on the development. These are listed in Table 2 below.

The majority of these sites are associated with the Brixton Farm complex (PRN 21365) which lies some 380m to the west of the site. The farm comprises a number of Grade II Listed buildings, including the farmhouse (PRNs 16144 & 61946), the cowhouse, corn store and range (PRNs 16145 & 61947), the combination farm (PRN 16145), the wheel house (PRNs 16146 & 61948) and a stable (PRNs 16148 & 61949). The buildings are all of post-medieval date.

Other post-medieval structures include the Grade II Listed Parsons Lodge (PRN 15032) some 350m to the southeast of the proposed development and Windmill Cottage 100m to the north (PRN 22781). A post-medieval boundary stone is present at Cross Inn (PRN 21675) 210m to the southeast. A post-medieval sheep fold is indicated by the field name of Parc Y Ffald (PRN 22331) which lies 300m to the east. The site of a former farmstead is also suggested by the field name of Parc Yr Hen Dy (PRN 22332) which can be roughly translated as 'the old house field' which lies 370m to the southeast.

The medieval boundary marker known as The Horestone (PRN 5062) lies 80m to the northwest of the development area. A possible medieval cross site may also be indicated by the nearby field-name of Parc Y Groes (the Cross Field) lying some 270m to the southeast (PRN 12067) although no further details about the possible cross are known. The same location is recorded for the discovery of a number of Roman finds (PRN 3918).

The remaining sites recorded on the HER are the sites of existing or former standing stones in the fields around Cross Inn. These stones may be post-medieval rubbing stones placed in the fields for cattle to scratch themselves on, or alternatively they could be of Bronze Age date. None of the stones have been excavated to provide any information on their provenance. The fact that they are located roughly centrally within the fields may suggest post-medieval rubbing stones, but the quantity of them within such a small area is unusual. The stones lie in land at Brixton Farm (PRNs 8037 & 8045), near Parson's Lodge (PRNs 8039 & 8040) and near Cross Inn (PRN 8038).

The development area boundary is indicated on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of the 1880s (Figure 3), although no structures are shown within this area. The name of Cross Inn is shown on the map and represents the houses around the road junction to the southeast of the development area. Windmills is the name given to the area in which the proposed development lies (within which lies Windmill Cottage).

PRN	Site Name	Description	Grid Reference	Period
3918	Parc Y Groes	Finds	SN 289 124	Roman
5062	The Horestone	Boundary Stone	SN 2909 1254	Medieval
8037	Brixton Farm	Standing Stone, Rubbing Stone Destroyed	SN 2909 1242	Bronze Age; post-medieval
8038	Cross Inn	Standing Stone, Rubbing Stone Moved	SN 293 123	Bronze Age; post-medieval
8039	Parson's Lodge	Standing Stone, Rubbing Stone Intact	SN 2944 1216	Bronze Age; post-medieval
8040	Parson's Lodge	Standing Stone, Rubbing Stone. Moved	SN 293 121	Bronze Age; post-medieval
8045	Brixton Farm	Standing Stone, Rubbing Stone Destroyed	SN 2889 1247	Bronze Age; Post-medieval
12067	Parc Y Groes	Cross Place-name only. May not refer to an antiquity.	SN 289 124	Unknown, Medieval
15032	Parson's Lodge	Lodge Intact. Grade II Listed Building	SN 2938 1220	Post-medieval
16144	Brixton	Farmhouse. Intact Grade II Listed Building	SN 288 122	Post-medieval
16145	Brixton	Combination Farm, Intact. Grade II Listed Building	SN 288 122	Post-medieval
16146	Brixton	Wheel House, Intact. Grade II Listed Building	SN 288 122	Post-medieval
16148	Brixton	Stable, Intact. Grade II Listed Building	SN 2882 1228	Post-medieval
21365	Brixton	Working farmstead complex when visited in 1985. Building Intact	SN 2882 1228	Post-medieval
21675	Cross Inn	Boundary Stone, Intact	SN 2936 1241	Post-medieval
22331	Parc Y Ffald	Sheep Fold, Pound Place-name	SN 2945 1256	Post-medieval
22332	Parc Yr Hen Dy	Farmstead Record seems to refer to a "hendy" placename	SN 2951 1237	Post-medieval
22781	Windmill Cottage	Cottage shown on 1907 6" OS map. Present condition not known.	SN 2915 1260	Post-medieval
61946	Brixton Farm, Cross Inn	Building Grade II listed farmhouse	SN 288101230	Post-medieval
61947	Brixton Farm, Cross Inn	Building Grade II listed cowhouse, corn store & range	SN 2884 1229	Post-medieval
61948	Brixton Farm, Cross Inn	Building Grade II listed horse engine house	SN 2884 1230	Post-medieval
61949	Brixton Farm, Cross Inn	Building Grade II listed cart shed and stable	SN 2886 1229	Post-medieval

Table 2: Archaeological and Historical Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record within 500m of the centre of the proposed development

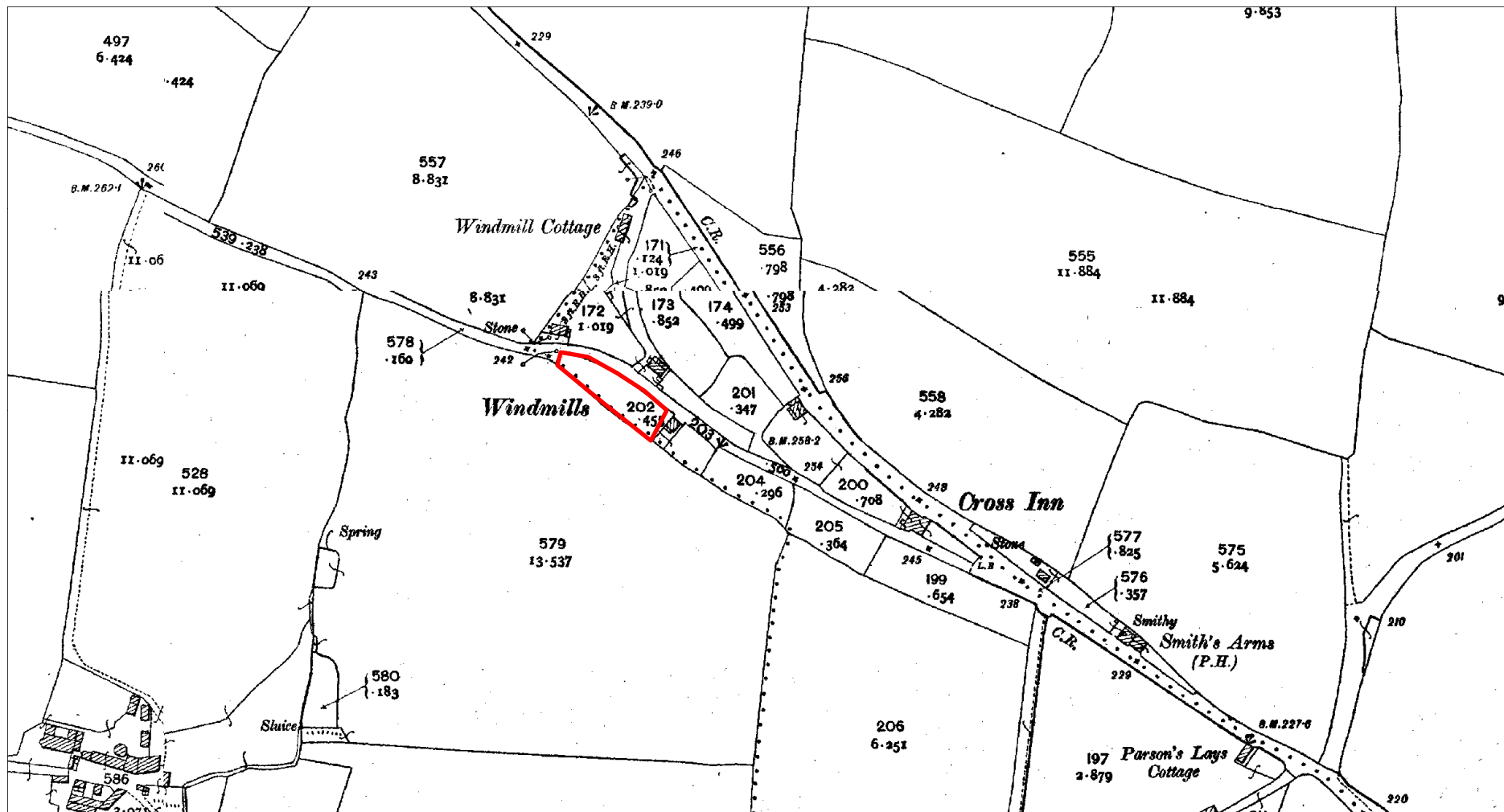


Figure 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1880s and approximate location of development area

WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

The detailed methodology for the watching brief was laid out within the WSI. The relevant methodology can be summarised as follows.

Fieldwork

A 'watching brief' was undertaken during initial ground works within the proposed development site that had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains.

All archaeological deposits revealed during the groundworks were examined and recorded to an appropriate level.

Recording of all archaeological features or deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual² used by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services.

Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

All data recovered during the fieldwork will be collated into a site archive structured in accordance with the specifications in *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2007), and the procedures recommended by the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth.

The results of the fieldwork have been assessed in local, regional and wider contexts. The report includes a desk-based research element to ensure that the site is placed within its wider archaeological context.

A report fully representative of the results of the fieldwork has been prepared.

Timetabling of Fieldwork

The watching brief involved monitoring of groundworks during a single day on 7th February 2012. The weather was clear and dry. The topsoil was stripped with a mini digger.

² Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services have adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

The development area had already been cleared of upper vegetation over the footprint of the proposed house, garage and driveway prior to an archaeologist being present on site. This machining depth was minimal and removed only the upper part of the topsoil.

The topsoil comprised a dark brown silty soil and contained only a few fragments of modern ceramic material and glass. None of this material was retained. Topsoil depth was quite thin, mostly between 0.15m and 0.20m in depth, except in the southeastern corner where a depth of nearer 0.50m was encountered adjacent to the road, although this did not continue very far into the site area where the depth of natural ground rose.

Following the topsoil strip (Photo 1) the area was observed for any sign of archaeological features, although none were found. The base of the topsoil sat directly upon the underlying 'rab' like subsoils.



Photo 1: Overview of the topsoil stripped area from the southeastern corner viewing northwest

Due to the gentle slope of the site, following the topsoil strip the footprint area of the proposed building, driveway and garage were reduced in height to a maximum of 0.80m depth in the southeastern corner (Photos 2 and 3). Less ground reduction was needed towards the northwestern end of the plot, till eventually no further ground reduction was needed. This ground reduction was observed to ensure that the exposed surface represented undisturbed geological levels as opposed to redeposited material which could have hidden archaeological remains below.

In the southeastern corner an electric cable trench was exposed which crossed the proposed driveway entrance from the road (Photo 3). This trench was cut through undisturbed natural ground.



Photo 2: View towards the southeastern corner of the building footprint showing the depth of required ground reduction



Photo 3: Detail of depth of ground reduction in southeastern corner of site and exposed cable trench

CONCLUSIONS

The watching brief within the development area of the new dwelling at Cross Inn, Laugharne has indicated that the majority of the site comprised a thin layer of topsoil overlying undisturbed natural ground.

The increased topsoil depth in the southeastern corner of the site, adjacent to the road, may indicate the line of a former hedgebank /raised bank along the inside of the plot against the road. As noted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Figure 3), the site boundary was indicated at that time and suggests it had been used as a defined small paddock or field. Presumably some form of boundary would have been present, likely to have been an embankment of earth.

The lack of any finds or features within the site area would likely suggest that the area was formerly used as a paddock for livestock. If it had been subject to ploughing or used as gardens, then a greater depth of topsoil and more finds would be expected. The finds would be present as the result of manuring of the field, where middens (piles of rubbish and organic matter) were spread across cultivated areas as fertiliser.

No indications of the area having been used for occupation or any structural remains were revealed within the stripped area of the development plot. It is possible that a structure could have formerly been present at the northwestern end of the site, although this area was overgrown and no evidence for this could be seen.

Although no significant archaeological remains were revealed within the development area, there is still a potential that significant archaeological deposits could be present in its vicinity.

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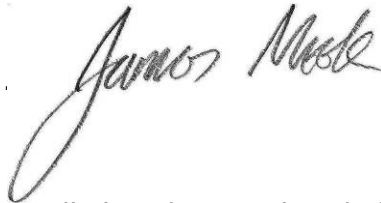
**Ebrill 2012
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JAMES MEEK

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Llofnod / Signature ..



Dyddiad / Date: 26/04/12

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

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Llofnod / Signature.....

Dyddiad / Date 26/04/12

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