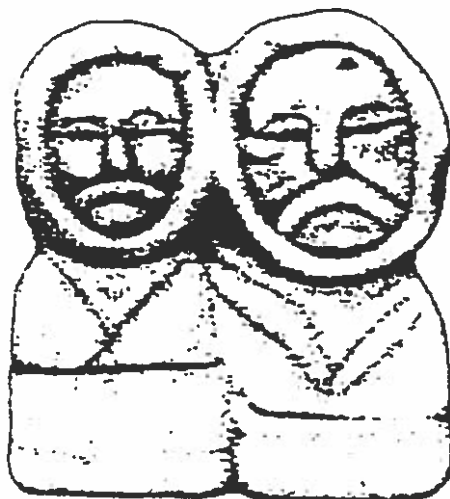


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CAMBRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECTS LTD



LAND TO REAR OF GARAGE
WEST SIDE OF
PERROT'S ROAD, HAVERFORDWEST:
Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

By Kevin Blockley, MIFA



CAP Report No. 133

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Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

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Plate 1 Aerial photograph of Havefrodwest with proposed development site indicated

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lidl UK GmbH Wales have requested this archaeological desk-top study of the proposed development site. This follows recommendations from Louise Austine (Development Control Officer with Dyfed Archaeological Trust) to Pembrokeshire County Council that a desk top assessment of the historic and archaeological interest of the site should be undertaken.

1.2 The proposed development site is centred on NGR SM 951158.

1.5 Accordingly Lidl UK GmbH Wales have commissioned Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd to undertake this research. This report details the results.

2 THE DESK TOP ASSESSMENT

Introduction

2.1 The study area is roughly rectangular in shape. It is bounded to the north by recent houses, to the east by a large garage terraced into the side of the hill, and to the south and west by a small area of open land. Slightly further south are the properties fronting onto the north side of City Road, whilst further west is an area of recent housing development.

Regional Sites and Monuments Record

2.2 The proposed development area is adjacent to a site designated as Primary Record Number (PRN) 14825 in the Regional Sites and Monuments Record. This records that the site of the garage on the west side of Perrot's Road contained possible inhumations/mass graves or plague pits, but the precise location of the pit(s) was not recorded.

Local sources

2.3 When the garage on the west side of Perrot's Road was built a possible plague pit was apparently uncovered and its contents removed. The finds were kept quite in planning and archaeological circles.

2.4 The author has been in touch with a number of local individuals and organisations for information on the garage site. These include a number of current and previous staff at Haverforwest Library, Haverfordwest Record Office, Haverfordwest Museum and the Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

2.5 Heather James of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust confirms (personal communication with author) that the Trust was not told of the findings until after the event and were misled and misinformed to prevent archaeologists delaying the development. The Trust's own records are confused and incomplete because of the lack of information obtained at the time of the discovery.

Newspaper articles

2.6 A newspaper article was published in the Western Mail on the 3rd February 1988. This confirms 2.5 above and reported:

Archaeologists fear that an opportunity to recover and study bones from an important burial site in Haverfordwest may have been lost forever.

Unknown to local authorities, workmen excavating for the site of a new garage in the town, adjoining the £4m highway being constructed, took away bones and other material from a pit where victims of the great plague of 1652 were buried.

An expert from the Dyfed Archaeological Trust at Carmarthen visited the site at Perrot's road yesterday but local museum curator Mr Robert Kennedy said that it may now be too late.

"The pit where they were buried has been exposed and most of the material taken away and dumped," he said. "We may find a few bones but it is a pity that we did not know about this beforehand."

But they could not blame the local authority as they were probably unaware of the importance of the site.

Contractors working on the site of the new garage have agreed to let the archaeologists carry out an examination of the area where it is believed that hundreds of bodies were buried following the plague.

Mr Kennedy said that records showed that a house in City Road, then called Cokey Street, was known as the Pest House and that part of the garage had been built near the pit where the dead were buried. "Sections have been exposed and we will have to consider what discoveries are left," he said. "It is important to try to find out from bones about the physical state of the people of those times. If we had known before then we may have been able to recover skeletons as well as just bone."

Previous discoveries

2.7 Mr Robert Kennedy has discussed the original finds (personal communication with author). He mentioned that before the garage was built the ground sloped steeply up to a ridge extending from City Road through to North Gate. This ridge was partly removed by the construction of the garage on the west side of Perrot's Road, since the garage was terraced into the hillside to provide a level site for the development. Mr Kennedy also noted that records were made previously of bones all along the ridge behind the garage, and that when house was built to the west and south of the proposed development site further burials were found. Mr Kennedy could not quote any published references to the above, but his extensive knowledge of Haverfordwest and the fact that he was Curator of the Haverfordwest Museum at the time of the 1988 discoveries, lends weight to his information.

Maps

2.8 The maps were identified in Haverfordwest Record Office, where regulations precluded their being copied. Figures 2-4 are, therefore, pencil tracings of the originals.

2.9 The 1842 Tithe Map of Haverfordwest shows the development area as part of plot 383. This is in the inventory as a garden owned and occupied by Charles Prust.

The adjacent plot, 384, is the site of the 1988 garage and is also noted as a garden owned and occupied by Charles Prust. No buildings are shown in plot 383. Plots 339, 340 and 344 are now occupied by a housing estate.

2.10 The 1888 1st edition O.S. Map of Haverfordwest shows that plot 383 remains the same, save for the construction, on the north side of the plot, of a glass house and small building. A row of buildings has been built along the east side of the adjacent plot 340. Plot 383 is clearly walled on the north and west sides.

2.11 The 2nd edition O.S. Map of 1906, revised in 1911, shows few significant changes to the previous two maps. The glass house and adjacent building are not shown, although a small building is indicated on the north side of plot 634 (perhaps the same building as on the 1888 map). Plot 631 (same as plot 384 in 1842) is in the inventory as owned by C.B. Prust and occupied by Ada & Ethel James. Plot 634 (same as plot 383 in 1842) is owned by C.B. Prust and occupied by Mary Allen. Both areas are still designated as gardens.

2.12 It is clear from the above study that the area of the proposed development has not been built on since 1842. The site also lies outside the medieval town and has remained an undeveloped site.

Photographs

2.13 An aerial photograph taken by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales after the garage was built in 1988 is shown as Plate 1. This shows that the site of the proposed development remains undeveloped and is surrounded to the north by walls (perhaps those shown on the 1888 map). The photograph also shows a row of small structures along the north side of the plot, perhaps the buildings shown on the 1888 map.

Publications

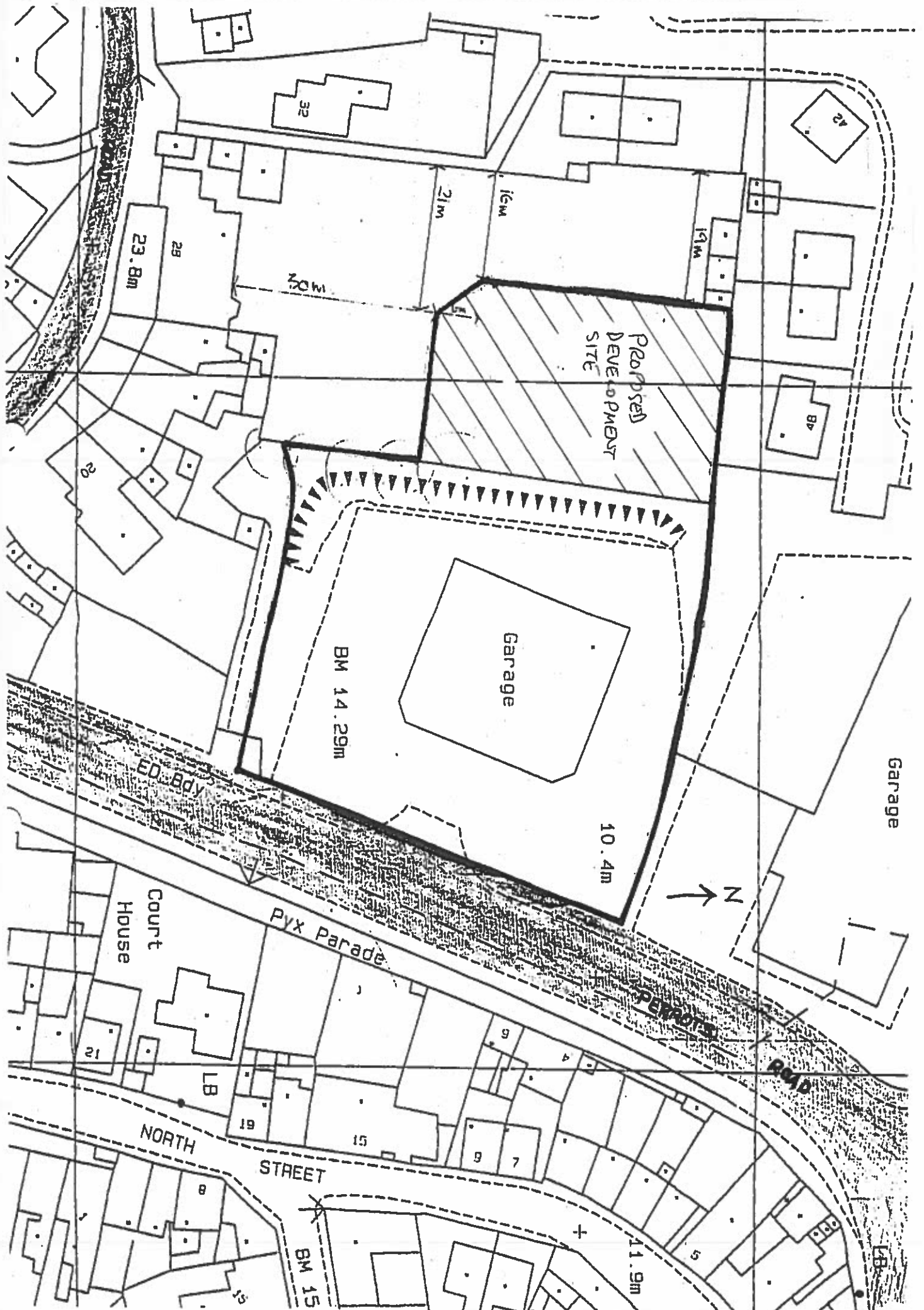
2.14 Three publications discuss the plague of 1651-2, details of which are given below.

2.15 J Phillips article "The Plague at Haverfordwest 1651-2" published in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* for 1895 notes that the plague started on the 4 October 1651 and ended on the 5 July 1652 (Phillips 1895, 81). He mentions that records show that of a population of around 3000 in Haverfordwest 213 people died of the plague (Phillips 1895, 84). Two pesthouses are recorded in the parish of St Martin's, and two convalescent homes the 'great house' and 'Edward Lloyds' house' both on Cokey Street (now City Road) (Phillips 1895, 86-7).

2.16 D.F. Charles *Calendar of the Records of the Borough of Haverfordwest 1539-1660*, published in 1967. This book notes the outbreak of pestilence in 1652 (Charles 1967, 15) and that a cleansing house was situated in Cokey Street (now City Road) as an overflow for the pesthouse (Charles 1967, 16).

2.17 D Miles *The Town and County of Haverfordwest*, published in 1999 has a chapter by J Howells on "Haverfordwest and the plague". This goes into detail of the possible population of the town and that Haverfordwest was the principal town of

Fig. 1 Location plan of proposed development area
(Supplied by Lidl GmbH UK Wales)



TRACING OF 1842 TITHE MAP

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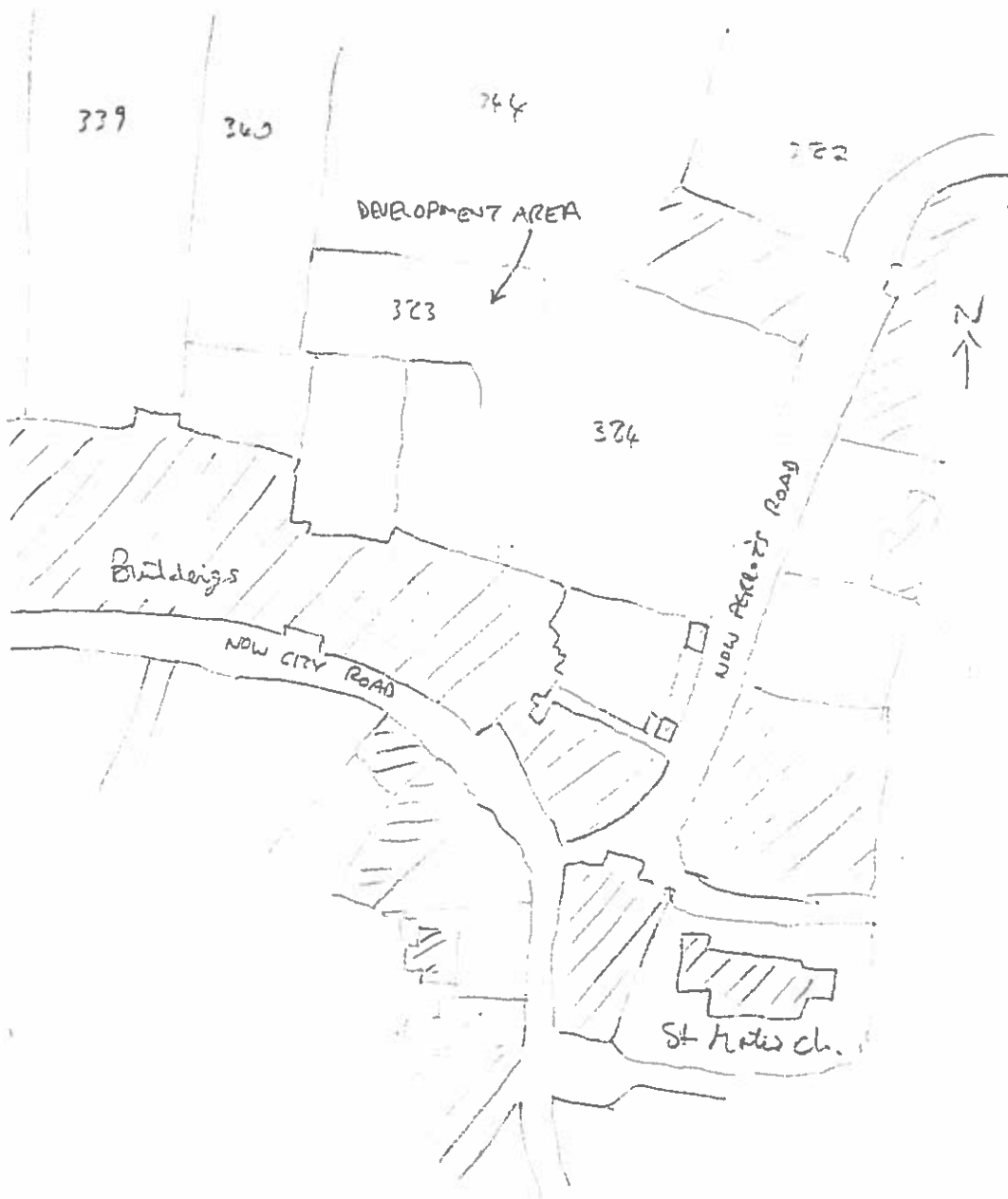


Fig. 2 Tracing of 1842 Tithe Map showing area of proposed development

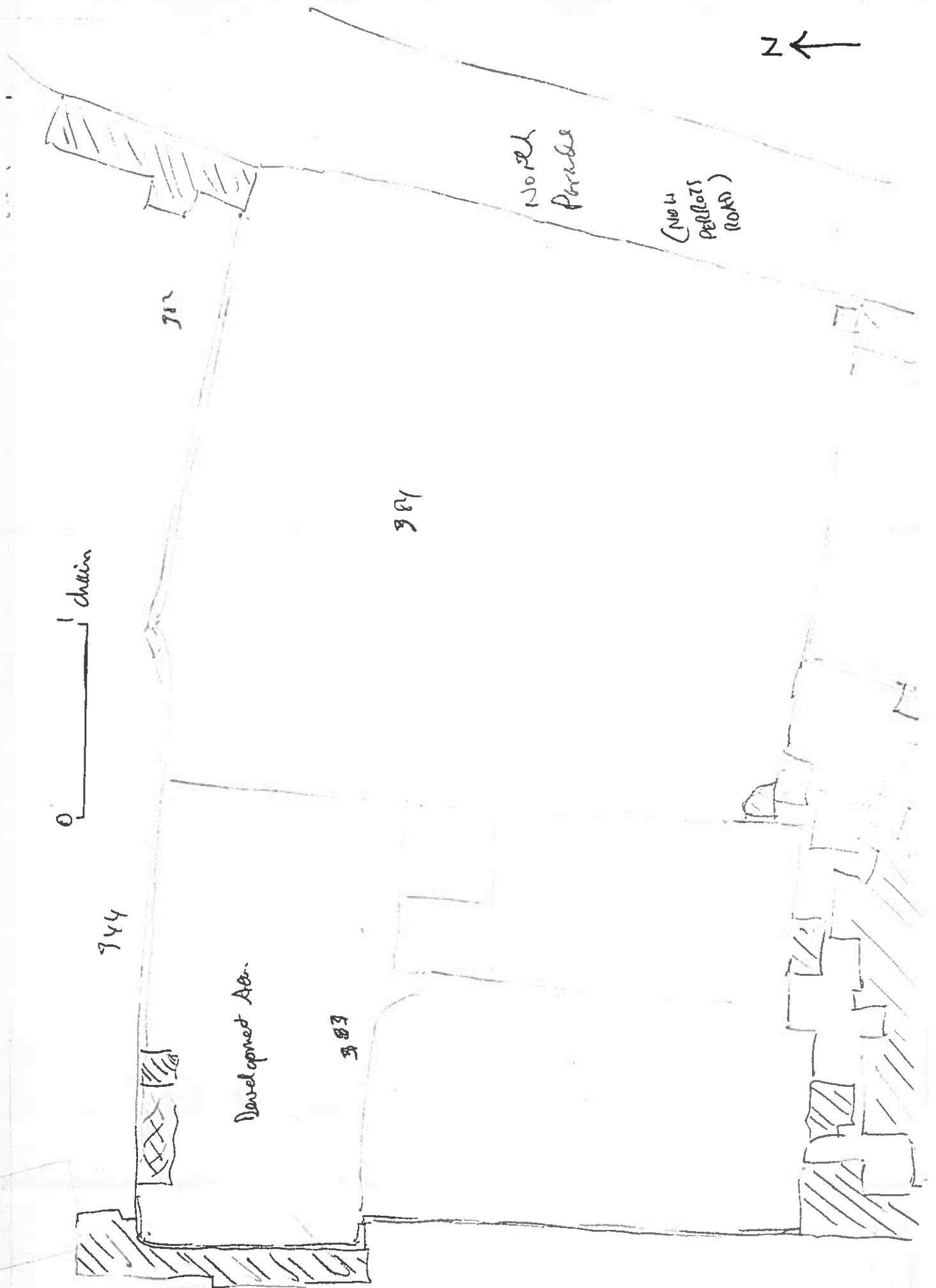
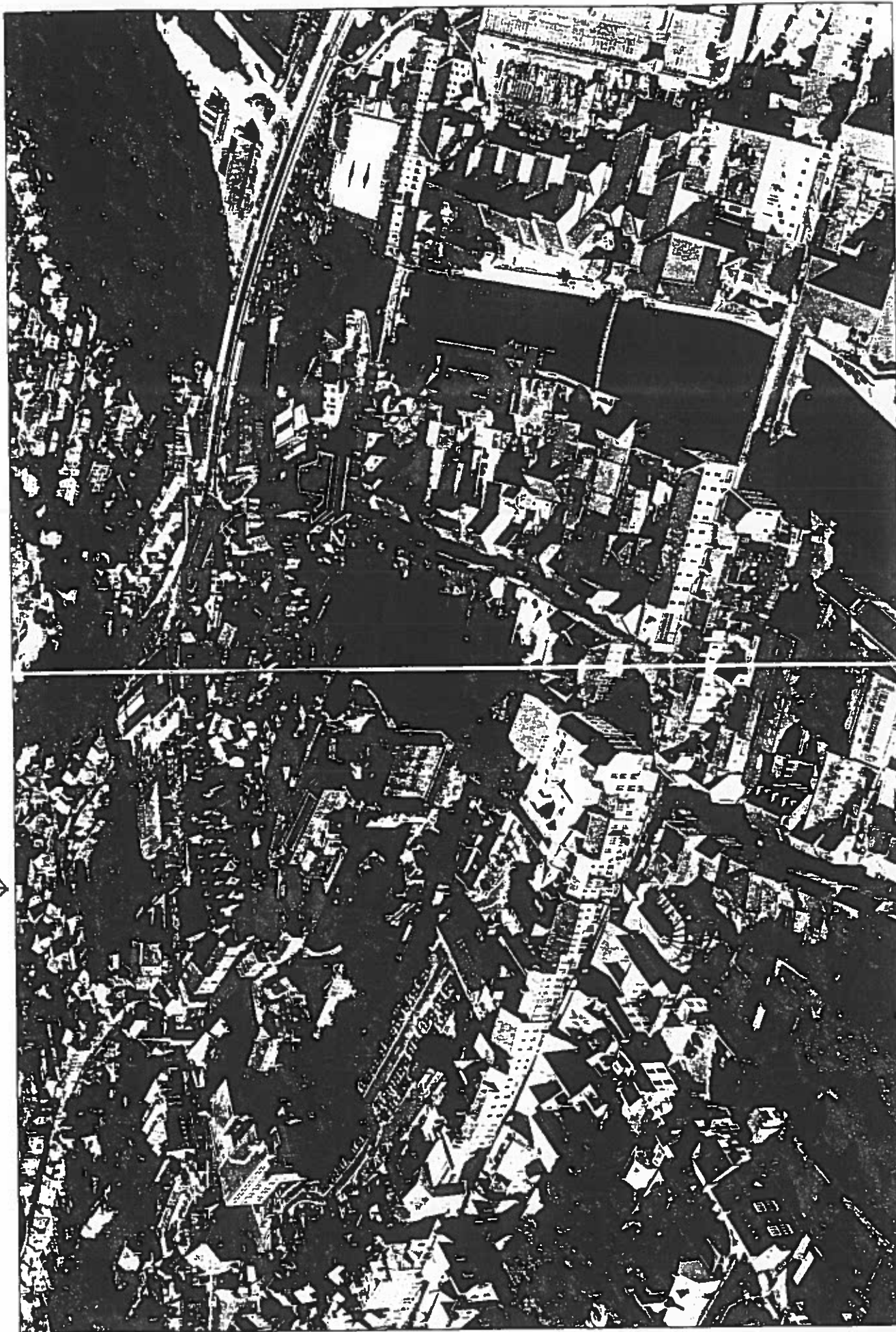


Fig. 3 Tracing of 1888 1st edition O.S. Map showing area of proposed development

2nd ed O.S. Map 1906 rev. 1911.



Fig. 4 Tracing of 1911 revision of 1906 2nd edition O.S. Map showing area of proposed development



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Aerial view of Haverfordwest.

Plate. 1 Aerial photograph of Haverfordwest looking north-west with proposed development site indicated (copyright RCAHMW)

↑
SITE

5 REFERENCES AND OTHER SOURCES

References

Phillips J 1895 "The Plague at Haverfordwest 1651-2," *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, XII, XLVI, 81-95.

Charles D F 1967 *Calendar of the Records of the Borough of Haverfordwest 1539-1660*.

Miles D 1999 *The Town and County of Haverfordwest*.

Other sources

1842 Tithe Map of Haverfordwest

1882 1st edition O.S. Map

1911 revision of 1906 2nd edition O.S. Map

Pembrokeshire (Miles 1999, 191). Details of the plague need not be repeated here save to say that records do not show convincingly that it reached Haverfordwest until February 1652. When the plague took hold a house was rented for use as a pesthouse (from Alderman William Williams) and another building used by the 'tarcoats' who cared for the sick and buried the dead. In May 1652 another pesthouse was opened in Cokey Street (now City Road) and Mr Bateman's stables used as a 'cleansing house' for convalescence. Howells reports that no reliable indicator of deaths by plague can be established. The convalescence home had one sick person in residence in November 1652.

3 CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 It can be seen from the above research that a possible plague pit was uncovered during the construction of the garage and that further burials may also have been situated further west and north of the proposed development area during construction of the housing estate.

3.2 The proposed development site lies in the core of the reputed burial area north of City Road, and as such may well yield burial pits of the 1652 plague.

3.3 Given the likelihood of burials being found in the development area this should be tested in the first instance by evaluation excavations.

4 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The text and illustrations for this report were prepared by the author. The author is grateful to Steve Gibbins of Lidl UK GmbH Wales for his help. The staff of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust (Louise Austin, and Heather James in particular) were particularly helpful as was Robert Kennedy for information on the burials found in 1988. Thanks also go to staff of Haverfordwest Museum, Haverfordwest Record Office and Haverfordwest Library.