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**Archaeological Watching Brief
Of
Glanhelyg, Long Street,
Newport, Pembrokeshire
NGR SN 393 057^(N)^(E)**

on
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Contents

Summary and Introduction.....page 3

1. The site.....page 5

2. Summary of watching brief results.....page 8

Appendix 1: Plans and Photographs.....page 11

Bibliography.....page 18

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Summary and Introduction

Due to the position of the property of 'Glanhelyg' on Long Street in Newport, on the medieval roadway running down from Newport Castle and St Mary's Church, archaeological reconnaissance was required. Observations were made prior to the building of an extension area on the south side of the house, and replacing the single garage with a double garage.

In brief, 'Glanhelyg' is a bungalow built in the 1960's onto one of the many burgage plots on Long Street, and documentary evidence shows that it was already a built-up area during the mid 1800's when Newport was a thriving shipping port. The position of the extension to the rear of the plot area on the edge of the existing boundary to Derwen, where the proposed excavation was to take place, could have been the area used to house small domestic animals. At present no physical evidence has been found that a dwelling existed on this plot fronting onto Long street, however, it is obvious from the layout on Long street that this plot should follow the style of the ones above it with its narrow plot running down to Afon Wen stream. Therefore it is likely that a dwelling existed on the road frontage but has been lost under the new house now present there (The Natural Health Care Centre). It would have been a medieval burgage plot as were many of the plots on Long Street, Market Street, and Upper and Lower St Mary's Street. Early documents show that these roads, especially up to Market Street and the Castle, are very early medieval roads in Newport. The roads themselves date back to the 1200's when Newport Castle was re-sited from the bottom of Long Street on the Nevern estuary.

A watching brief was therefore proposed to investigate the possibility that archaeological material may extend into the application area, and that if any remains were surviving as buried archaeological features, they should not be disturbed or adversely affected by the new development. Related finds could therefore still survive below ground, and/or reveal other archaeological remains. The likelihood of archaeological material at the rear of the plot appears to be remote, due to its distance from the road frontage of Long Street and also that it is in an area where building work of Glanhelyg has already taken place.

Investigations took the form of monitoring the stripping of the concreted porch area down to a 30cm depth, and then the excavating of the three trenches for the new extension to 20-30cm below the existing house foundations. The same procedure applied to the garage area, first with the stripping of the old concrete floor and then the excavating of four new trenches to below existing foundations to a level deemed suitable for building purposes. In addition, photographic observation was made of the site, and a thorough appraisal was made ensuring that no area was left unobserved. No structural remains were found throughout the drop in levels. However, noteworthy discoloration was found in Trench 2, the north facing section of the south trench of the porch extension, where a

considerable amount of medieval pottery was observed *in situ* during cleaning.

Trench 1, the northwest trench, was the first to be excavated, and had substantial evidence of previous building work in it, extending under the decking area of the patio at Glanhelyg. It was excavated to a depth of 90cm, where the yellow clay was solid enough for building, which was 10cm below the existing house foundations. No archaeology was observed in this trench.

Trench 2 was the only area where archaeology was recorded at Glanhelyg, and it was revealed during cleaning back of the section for photographic purposes in the upper 90cm. This upper section is a much darker and looser soil than the lower and paler clay mix level. There were charcoal flecks visible but no burnt material, also some sporadic specks of orangey building clay, and it was interspersed with plant roots. This area was of particular interest as the bank was untouched on the southern boundary of the property and appeared not to have been previously landscaped. This section is 1.75m deep in total as the top of the section was the lawn boundary and therefore at a much higher level than trenches 1 and 3. The section has remained in place, as it is the boundary of the neighbouring plot, and is in fact the edge of their lawn. This plot appears not to have had any previous building work on it, as the quantity of pottery that just 'fell out' of the section demonstrated.

Trench 3 was the east trench of the extension, and was dug to a depth of 90cm, to the yellow clay level, and revealed no archaeology. Once the area had been monitored the trenches were cleaned and photographed.

Although the likelihood of archaeological material at the rear of the plot appears to be remote due to its distance from the road frontage of Long Street, investigations and a thorough appraisal was made ensuring that no area was left unobserved. No structural remains were found throughout the drop in levels, although pottery was found in the section of Trench 2.

The garage area was then excavated, once photographs had been taken of the level under the old concrete flooring, and four trenches were excavated.

Trenches 4, 5, 6 and 7 were dug to a depth of 1.40m due to the yellow clay being too soft and wet for building purposes. The upper darker 40cm were disturbed due to the previous building work done and no archaeology was found.

The photographic evidence clearly showed that despite the low level of the trenches, no archaeology was revealed. The upper 60cm was of a darker looser soil, similar to that of Trench 2, whereas the lower 60cm was of a pale yellow clay. This investigation showed no structural remains, and no archaeological finds throughout the drop in levels in the garage area.

A note to be made here is that on inspection of the 1844 Tithe Map of Newport, all the plots on Upper and Lower St Mary's Street, Market Street and Long Street are represented by a chaffred/shaded area, therefore it is difficult to say what sort of dwelling was present or whether anything structural was in evidence at the rear of the burgage plots. The foundations can undoubtedly be dated earlier than this and it will possibly be on the 1595 Rental Map of Newport (Bignall 1991). Returning to an earlier period however, this would have been one of the lanes on

Returning to an earlier period however, this would have been one of the lanes on which medieval burgrave plots were laid by the Fitzmartins in the early 13th Century, or after the re-siting of Newport Castle after 1257 and therefore a potential site for medieval archaeology
(<http://www.acadat.com/HLC/newportandcarningli/newport.htm>).

The main objective of the watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence during the excavation of the porch extension and garage extension to a depth considered adequate for building purposes and revealing potential archaeological deposits. These levels were reached at 'Glanhelyg' and no structural archaeology was found on the site, however, the pottery evidence on the boundary to 'Derwen' implies that archaeology could still be found on this neighbouring plot.

1. The site of the proposed extension

1.1 'Glanhelyg' in Newport - Background History

The proposed work at 'Glanhelyg', is accessed from Long Street, and the entrance is below the Natural Health Care Centre; it lies in the parish of Newport. The position of 'Glanhelyg' in relation to archaeological evidence in Newport is central, positioned as it is on Long Street, which runs down from Market Street and Newport Castle, straight down to Nevers estuary. This street, along with the parallel Upper and Lower St Mary's Streets was built up in the early medieval period when Newport was first established as a town.

William Fitzmartin founded Nevers Castle, and after its capture in 1191, the Normans moved to Newport. The Motte and Bailey site here is possibly the early castle in Newport, and the beginning of the medieval foundations of the town. The excavation of 3 Burgrave plots prior to the building of the Primary School at the bottom of Long Street in 1991, can be dated to the late 1190's, and they appear to have been abandoned after a short period around 1210 coinciding with the sack of Newport by Llewellyn the Great. Over 7000 medieval rough temper pottery sherds were found on this site, as well as evidence from a much earlier period (150 flints and a Mesolithic axe 7000B.C. - Ken Murphy 1991).

Newport is representative of an area steeped in archaeology, with several scheduled sites, as well as many listed buildings (Cambria Archaeology Archive). This increases the interest and potential of archaeological finds being unearthed on the proposed new extension site.

The 'Historic Landscape Characterisation' of Newport, is a report produced by Cambria Archaeology and provides information on the extent of these sites. "Most of the recorded archaeology is related to components of the town – the castle and church – or to other standing buildings such as a late 18th century mill. Other sites such as several 19th century limekilns testify to the former

Carreg Coetan Authur, is a prominent historic component", with the Town overlooked by Carningli Mountain and the imposing Iron/Bronze Age fort. (www.cambria.org.uk/HLC/newportandcarningli/newport.htm)

The present castle was constructed early 13th C. The Town Charter was given to the town by William Martin's son ca.1210, giving the townspeople the right to elect a mayor and to establish markets and fairs. It is possible that the capture of Newport by Llewellyn resulted in the end of this early castle and the lower medieval town around Long Street around 1210-1215. Newport became the seat of the Lords of Cemais and a new castle was built at the top of Market Street.

Long Street is an extension of Market Street, which starts just below the Castle and down passed the Church; and the first written evidence of St Mary's Church is from the Life of St Brynach in the 12th Century, although we know that William Martin built a Church after he had built the castle in the 13th Century. It is therefore possible that a Church stood here before the Normans built, but the oldest structural remains of the Church today is the 15th-16th Century West Tower. The "late 12th-13th C. layout of the town still exerts a strong influence over modern topography, with many houses located hard against the street frontage within medieval burgage plots"

(www.cambria.org.uk/HLC/newportandcarningli/newport.htm).

In this case at Glanhelyg, the medieval pottery kiln found below the Memorial Hall is of special interest, due to the quantity of pottery found in the Trench 2 section, as it is an exciting possibility that the ceramic found could have been produced in Newport.

'Glanhelyg' is therefore in an important position archaeologically, as early evidence could have come to light associated with this initial period of building when the street first came into existence in the medieval period.

1.2 The proposed porch extension and double garage

The new porch extension will be built directly onto the main entrance area of the house on the south side, therefore excavation will go down to foundation levels previously reached to the rear of the property.

The old site of the garage will be re-used for the new double garage but the area will be extended, and foundation levels will be reached depending on the quality of the yellow base clay. The site is on the flat and appears to have been landscaped or terraced prior to the original building of the bungalow as the steep slope from Long Street shows, with a possible 3m incline. To the north of 'Glanhelyg' is the public car park, which is ca.1.5m below the ground level of the dwelling. Also the lawn of 'Derwen' Bordering on Trench 2 is ca.1.2m above the ground level of the new porch slab. All this demonstrates that 'Glanhelyg' has

been substantially landscaped as original ground levels are no longer discernable.

1.3 The Field Evaluation

Archaeological works on the site included:

- Observation and recording of any differences within subsoil levels
- Section cleaning of the three foundation trenches for the porch within the area opened; Trench 1 facing southeast, Trench 2 facing northeast, and Trench 3 facing northwest.
- Section cleaning (where possible due to collapse) of the double garage foundation trenches, Trenches 4, 5, 6 and 7.
- Photographic reconnaissance of the work done over a 3-day period

There are three main reasons for archaeological observation of this plot:

- The position of the proposed new development next to the medieval road Long Street, and the possibility of an underlying burgage plot. The site could potentially have related archaeological finds surviving below ground, and/or reveal other archaeological remains that would need to be recorded.
- To allow, within resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence of which could not be established sufficiently or accurately prior to any development or building disturbance.
- To give the watching archaeologist an opportunity, if required, to inform all interested parties that an archaeological find has been made, before the disturbance or destruction of any such material occurs, at which point the watching brief will no longer be sufficient to deal with the situation to a satisfactory and proper standard.

2. Summary of Watching Brief Results

2.1 Location

The proposed site of the new extension occupies the plot NGR SN 393 / 057, on a terraced flat area lying on Long street, on the southwest-northeast downward facing slope towards Nevern Estuary, at a height of 25m above Ordnance Datum. The new porch extension and double garage are being constructed on the property of 'Glanhelyg' on Long Street, Newport Pembrokeshire. Archaeology on the site was hoped for based on the proximity of the site with the medieval roadway, as well as the possibility of discovering finds related to domestic garden use, or an earlier structure for housing animals.

The 1844 Tithe Map of Newport shows this block of housing on Long Street and Upper St Mary's Street as a chaffred/shaded area, which suggests that it was all estate owned or at least all the property's had one owner only, possibly the Barony of Cemaes or even the Llwyngwair Manor estate. The plot is present on the 1595 Rental Map of Newport (Bignall 1991), however it is unclear whether there was a dwelling at the front of it fronting onto Long Street as the plot is chaffred. Therefore archaeology associated with either period within the area could have appeared on this plot, despite a mixture of observations during excavation work on other sites in Newport.

Archaeological watching briefs on Lower St Mary's Street and Market Street in the 1996 produced no artefactual evidence, despite both being situated on the oldest medieval roads in the town, possibly due to later building disturbance. Rescue excavation in 1985 by Dyfed Archaeological Trust just north of Long Street, however, did reveal substantial masonry walls (Stenger 1985) and some local medieval pottery. Two Archaeological Watching Briefs were reported on at the bottom of Long Street in 2002 and 2006 respectively (Manley Jones), both of which were opposite the Primary School; however no archaeological remains were discovered on these sites. Ystrad Fflur, however, on the road frontage opposite and just below the school produced medieval pottery sherds during the building of the structure in 1986 (Steadman pers.comm.). The basement of the Memorial Hall is also the site of the medieval pottery kiln (Dilwyn Miles 1995), pointing to the potential of ceramic evidence anywhere within the peripheries of Newport town.

The location of the plot is therefore crucial and could have provided evidence to add to the increasingly detailed map of historic Newport.

2.2 Soil and Geology

The geological map of North Pembrokeshire is complex as it comprises coastal and mountain range outcrops. The area is underlain by Ordovician sedimentary rock and shales, and Newport therefore comes into Ordovician rock formation range (www.pembrokeshire-online.co.uk/geolmap.htm) with Carningli in the Volcanic Ordovician range.

The areas under excavation at 'Glanhelyg' showed underlying pale brown/yellow boulder clay, which represents the lowest building levels typical for Newport. This depth was reached without any obstruction to a 1.2m depth for the first three trenches of the porch extension. The initial 50cm was very disturbed and a mix of packed rubble and old building deposit from the original house, and the new trenches were taken to a 10cm depth below those existing foundation walls well within the yellow clay level required. However the Trenches 4, 5, 6 and 7 had to be excavated to a deeper level of ca. 1.35m, as they were too wet to be suitable for building. This underlying clay retains water extremely well and the whole area becomes saturated even after a minimum of rainfall due to its oily and sticky consistency (noted in other areas of Newport).

In the seven foundation trenches at 'Glanhelyg' the underlying yellow clay was reached for building purposes throughout the application area, and yielded no archaeological deposits. However, the upper 90cm of the section in Trench 2 produced ca.30 sherds of pottery that could be allocated to medieval local ware.

2.3 Methodology

The stripping of the topsoil was worked using a JCB with a standard narrow-bladed scoop measuring 1.8m wide by ca. 60cm deep. The depth of the initial stripping of the topsoil was between 0.30-0.50m, the depths varied slightly according to the drop in ground level. Once work began on the foundation trenches, they reached depths of between 1.0 -1.35m and the area was visually examined and notes were taken on soil type and any evidence. Several sections were cleaned, and Trench 2 has clear evidence of some sherds in situ. Two 24 print film of photographs were taken using colour print and monochrome 35mm film (see Appendix I).

2.4 Objectives

To identify and record any archaeological features and deposits of interest exposed after the opening of the areas for the foundation trenches of the extension.

2.5 Fieldwork Results

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The soil sequences exposed by the excavation of the trenches were of a consistent pale brown/yellow clay mix, throughout the excavated area, except the northeast facing section in Trench 2, which consisted of a darker loose and loamy soil. The garage trenches 4,5,6 and 7 had accumulated building debris in the top 40cm, with the underlying yellow/grey boulder clay, which was much wetter than the extension trenches 1,2 and 3. All the trenches were predominantly a yellow/grey clay mix, which got paler at deeper levels.

No archaeological features were recorded in any areas of the proposed new extension or the garage area.

2.6 Conclusions

The information gained by this observation work over 3 days showed that although the area potentially held archaeological deposits, lack of any structural evidence meant that this interpretation could not be extended into either of the proposed development sites at Glanhelyg. The pottery evidence in Trench 2 should be made a note of for any future development in the neighbouring plot of 'Derwen', but this was restricted to the boundary of Glanhelyg and was not in evidence elsewhere.

No other archaeology was found on the site to be built on and it is likely that a zone with more archaeological potential could be on the neighbouring plot. Although the ground was disturbed by debris and earlier building activity, the depth of the foundation trenches went below these recent intrusions down to a layer that would have remained intact archaeologically. Despite this no features or finds were observed.

Therefore, a recommendation can be given that building work on the new extension and garage can go ahead without jeopardising any potential archaeological deposits in the plot.

Appendix 1: Plans and Photographs

1.1 Plan of the proposed site



I.2 Photographs of the site



Extension area (Top) and Trench 1 (Bottom) from the south





Foundation Trench 2 (Top) and 3 (Bottom) from the southeast





Top/Bottom: Close ups of Trench 2 showing ceramic *in situ*





**Top: Garage development area from southwest.
Bottom: Trench 4 from southeast**





Trench 5 (Top) and Trench 7 (Bottom)





Top: Garage foundation trenches. Bottom: Trench 6





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