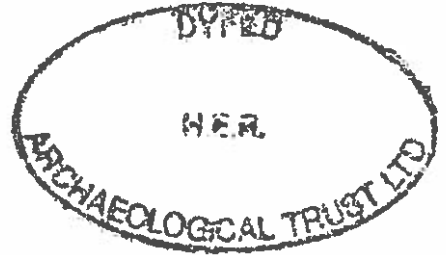


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**Archaeological Watching Brief
Of
The foundations of a proposed extension
At The Green Cottage, Long Street,
Newport, Pembrokeshire
NGR SM 03/13, 0588 3912**

on
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Summary and Introduction

Due to the position of the property the 'Green Cottage' on Long Street in Newport, one of the medieval roads running down from Newport Castle and St Mary's Church, archaeological reconnaissance was required prior to the building of an extension to the rear of the property. In brief, the original walls of the 'Green Cottage' could be early 19th C, 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 house would possibly have been sited on an older building, and if it existed at a very early stage 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 this area, 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. There is a likelihood of finding archaeological material as firstly, dwellings on the roadside would have represented the frontages of burgage plots from the ca.13th Century; and secondly, later material dated to the 19th Century period of the original house structure could be revealed.

Special Note: Archaeological investigations on site post-dated the JCB excavation work, which had taken place prior to any archaeological observations or photographic record was made. On visiting the site on November 29th 2007, three foundation trenches had been excavated to a depth of ca. 0.70m from an already excavated surface level, and ca.1.0-1.5m below the original ground surface of the house floor and garden level. This was the highest level suitable for building purposes, and therefore archaeology had to be ascertained down to this depth. Once the area had been monitored, foundation trenches were cleaned.

Photographic observation was made of the site, and three sections were cleaned within the trenched area. The ground was of a consistent clay layering throughout the application area, with a corner above the north section showing an area of burnt soil and refuse including broken slate and old building debris in the form of a grey rubble soil mixture already extremely disturbed.

The photographic evidence shows how uniform this clay was throughout the area and how undisturbed the ground was below this level. This investigation showed no structural remains, and no archaeological finds throughout the drop in levels.

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. However, the client and owner of Green Cottage Mr Peter Walker, researched the history of Green Cottage house and its maritime owners from ca.1834 onwards, when it may still have been a single storey cottage. 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 which medieval burgage 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 foundation trenches for the extension, to a depth considered adequate for building purposes and revealing potential archaeological deposits. These levels were reached at 'Green Cottage' and no archaeology was found on the site.

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1. The site of the proposed extension

1.1 'Green Cottage' in Newport - Background History

The proposed extension onto 'Green Cottage', and replacing the lean-to kitchen and upstairs bathroom, is accessed directly from the bottom of Long Street, positioned three properties below the Post Office on Newport Square; it lies in the parish of Newport.

The position of 'The Green Cottage' 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 Burgage 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 importance of maritime trade, (and we know from the owners history that this house was owned by a mariners family); unusually for a town, a Neolithic chambered tomb, 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 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).

'The green Cottage' 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 new extension

The new extension will be built directly onto the ~~west~~ wall of the 'The Green Cottage' situated on Long Street. The site is on a southwest-to-northeast slope

and is the fourth property on the north side going down Long Street, with a small garden fronting onto the road.

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 within the area opened; facing west, south and north
- Photographic reconnaissance of the work done over a 1-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; as well as the possibility of 19th Century physical evidence of the structure. The possibility that related archaeological finds could still survive 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.

Note: There are two crucial factors to be noted; extensive building work on the plot from the 19th Century structure; and that the application area was worked on and foundation trenches dug prior to the archaeologist being present on site.



2. Summary of Watching Brief Results

2.1 Location

The proposed site of the new extension occupies the plot NGR SN 03/13, 0588 3912 on a southwest-northeast downward facing slope towards Nevern Estuary, at a height of ca.29.5m above Ordnance Datum.

The new extension is being constructed onto the north wall of the house called 'The Green Cottage' 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 the 19th Century, or earlier, structure.

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 possibly present on the 1595 Rental Map of Newport (Bignall 1991), 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 area to the rear of the 'Green Cottage' revealed deposits typical for Newport, with underlying yellow boulder clay. 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 three foundation trenches at 'The Green Cottage' the underlying clay level was consistent throughout the application area, and yielded no archaeological deposits.

2.3 Methodology

The foundation trenches reached depths of between 0.80-1.10m to the point where the clay level was reached, and the area was visually examined and notes were taken on soil type and any evidence. Three sections were cleaned; North trench, South trench and West trench. One 24 print photographic film was 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

The soil sequences exposed by the excavation of the trenches were consistent throughout the excavated area, and in general terms consisted of a sticky boulder clay.

No archaeological features were recorded in any areas of the proposed new extension or adjacent to it.

2.6 Conclusions

The information gained by this observation work over 1 day left no doubt that although the area potentially held archaeological deposits, lack of any evidence meant that this interpretation could not be extended into the proposed development site at 'The Green Cottage'.

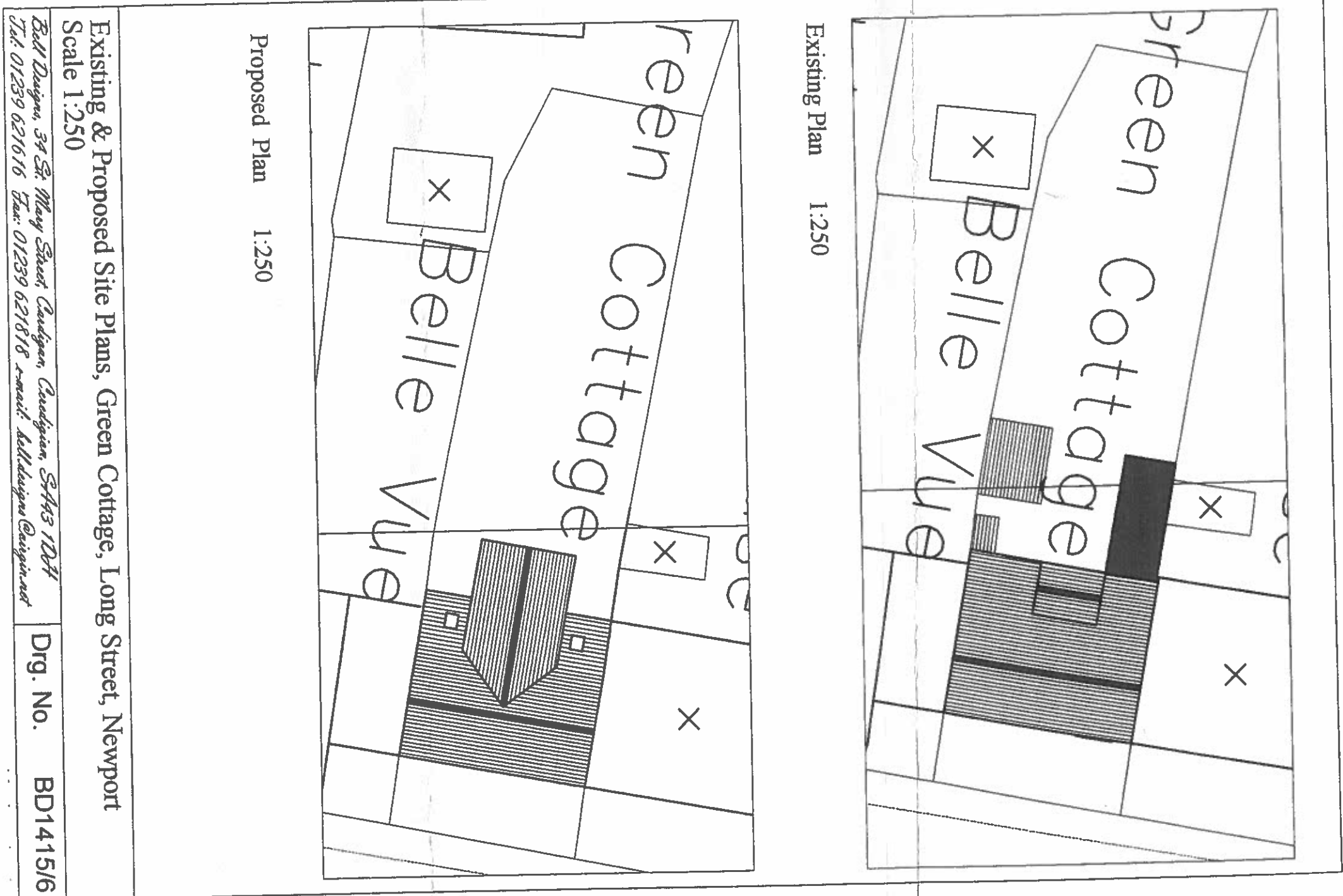
No archaeology was found on the site to be built on and it is likely that a zone with more archaeological potential could be to the rear of the house in the garden area where there has been less ground disturbance. Although the ground was disturbed by building activity in the lean-to shed area, the depth 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 dwelling can go ahead without jeopardising any potential archaeological deposits in the plot.

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Appendix 1: Plans and Photographs

I.1 Plan of the site of proposed new extension



1.2 Photographs of the site



Foundation trenches for the extension from the west





Top: North trench, note building debris below concrete floor
Bottom: Northeast corner of foundation trenches





Top: South trench showing house floor levels
Bottom: Southern face of South section showing dense clay consistency





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