

Archaeology Wales

123 - 129 Commercial Street Newport, Gwent

Archaeological Watching Brief



By
Dan Moore


Report No. 1671


Archaeology Wales

123 - 129 Commercial Street, Newport, Gwent

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report No. 1671

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Non-Technical Summary

This report results from work undertaken by Archaeology Wales Ltd (AW) for AB Heritage Ltd on behalf of Willis Construction Ltd, at 123-129 Commercial Street, Newport, Gwent (ST 312 877). The report details the results of an archaeological watching brief that took place to ensure the preservation by record of any archaeological remains encountered during groundworks associated with the construction of new buildings on the site, planning application number 16/0788.

The site lies within the designated Newport Medieval Town ASA, and was therefore considered to have potential remains of archaeological interest from the medieval to modern periods.

The earliest features identified within the excavated areas included stone walling along the Commercial Street frontage, and stone walling within the southwest corner of the site. These walls appeared to be 19th century in date. A series of three brick-lined cellars ran along the Commercial Street frontage, apparently built to a standard design and potentially 19th century in origin, but post-dating at least one of the 19th century stone walls. Ceramic drains and levelling deposits were recorded in association with these cellars.

Later 20th century concrete structures, foundations and demolition deposits were also identified within the site.

No finds, features or deposits pre-dating the 19th century were recorded within the excavated areas.

The watching brief complied with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2014).

1. Introduction

Location and Scope of Work

In December 2017 Archaeology Wales Ltd (AW) was commissioned by AB Heritage Ltd, on behalf of their clients Willis Construction Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the 'clearance of ground slab and foundations during the demolition of the existing buildings, and the subsequent groundworks associated with the new building on the site' (AB Heritage 2017) at 123-129 Commercial Street, Newport, Gwent. The development site is centred on NGR: ST 312 877. The associated planning number is 16/0788.

The site lies within the designated Newport Medieval Town Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA), and therefore was considered to have the potential to contain remains of archaeological interest from the medieval to modern periods. Consequently the local planning authority, Newport City Council (NCC), appended a planning condition (Condition 3) requiring an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks and a report on the findings.

Prior to works commencing an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief was produced by AB Heritage Ltd (Appendix II), which was

designed to provide an approved scheme of archaeological work to be implemented during the ground investigation works.

The watching brief was undertaken by Archaeology Wales between 14/02/2018 and 13/03/2018 under the supervision of Daniel Moore and Susan Stratton. The project was managed by Phillip Poucher MCIfA. The AW project number for the work is 2579 and the site code is CSN/17/WB. The project details are summarised on the Archive Cover Sheet (Appendix III).

Topography and Geology

The site is located at 123-129 Commercial street, a densely populated area of Newport city centre at approximately ST 312 877. The eastern boundary of the site meets Commercial Street, and the site is bounded to the north and south by three-storey red-brick structures with retail premises on their ground floors. The western boundary is formed by an entrance to an adjacent multi-storey car park, which leads from Ivor Street.

The site lies on gently sloping land within 300m to the west of the River Usk. The land rises to the southwest to a local high point, surmounted by St Woolos Cathedral around 400m from the site. To the southeast the landscape opens out into the Gwent Levels, coastal lowlands along the northern edge of the Bristol Channel.

The solid geology comprises argillaceous rocks and sandstone of the St Maughans Foundation. The superficial geology comprises clay and silt (BGS, 2018).

Archaeological and Historical Background

Prior to development the site was subject to an historic environment desk based assessment (AB Heritage 2016), detailing the archaeological and historical background to the site.

In summary, there are no current no features of prehistoric or Roman date within, or in close proximity to the development site.

Settlement in Newport would appear to have early medieval origins. Around 400m to the southwest lies the church of St Woolos, established by the 9th century. In the post-conquest period a castle had been established by the late 12th century, although at some distance (*circa* 2.2km) to the north of the site. St Woolos was heavily modified in the 12th century, and the castle and church are likely to have formed the main foci of activity during this period. The town grew through the medieval period, gaining a charter in 1314, with a thriving port on the riverside. Although the focus of settlement was likely to lie to the north and west, the development site lies within the designated Newport Medieval Town Archaeology Sensitive Area (ASA), and it is possible therefore that settlement and/or activity in this period extended into the development site.

During the later post-medieval period Newport saw very rapid expansion during the Industrial Revolution. Newport's position as a busy port for the expanding South Wales coal and iron industries, as well as the local potteries and ship building industries, saw a massive influx of

people coming to work and live. The population grew from 1000 at the beginning of the 19th century, to over 19,000 by 1851. Historic mapping indicates that Commercial Street was laid out in the early 19th century (Budgen 1811) and it is likely the site was developed in the early to mid 19th century. A continual terrace of buildings fronting Commercial Street are shown on a town plan of 1847 (Morris 1847), likely to comprise mainly commercial premises but also including a public house. In the mid-20th century Nos.127 to 129 Commercial Street were redeveloped.

2. Methodology

A watching brief complying with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014) was undertaken during all intrusive ground work on the site.

The watching brief was undertaken to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains that may be impacted by the development works, to record any such remains before they were damaged or destroyed during the development, and to prepare a report on the findings.

Following the demolition and removal of the pre-existing structures on the site, the subsequent excavation comprised two main trenches. Trench 1 measured 27m on a NE-SW alignment and 16m on a NW-SE alignment, following the line of the shop frontages of Commercial Street. Trench 2 measured 35m on a NE-SW alignment and 11m on a NW-SE alignment, again following the shop frontages. Not all areas of Trench 1 and Trench 2 were entered for recording purposes due to concerns of safety relating to their depth, stability and water encroachment. Due to space constraints each trench was only partially excavated then backfilled before the next part of the trench could be excavated.

Excavation was carried out by removing the overburden with a 20tonne digger equipped with a 1.70m wide bucket (both toothed and toothless, depending on ground deposits) and by hand. The entire process was monitored by a suitably trained archaeologist. Sections and plans of the excavation were photographed using a 12MP digital camera. All the deposits encountered were recorded by means of a continuous context numbering system and recorded on pro-forma context sheets. All features and deposits are described in accordance with CIfA conventions. A register of all contexts and photographs was also made.

3. Watching Brief Results

Trench 1

The basal deposit (**003**) was defined as a compact mid orange-red clayey-sand that measured in excess of 27m in length, 16m in width, appearing throughout the excavated area. Overlying this was deposit (**002**). This deposit was characterized as a friable mid reddish-orange clayey-silt with patches of yellow-grey throughout. The deposit measured in excess of 27m in length, 16m in width, also appearing throughout the excavated area, and was 0.50m in depth. These two layers would appear to represent natural deposition within the site area. Deposit (**002**) was cut by several features. They were as follows:

Cut [**011**] was defined as an arbitrary cut (no cut was visible) with vertical sides. This contained {**012**}, a wall comprising regularly coursed, roughly faced sub-angular stones with mortar bonding. The wall was on a NW-SE alignment (in line with the shop frontages of Commercial Street) and located 2.80m NW of the SE corner of the site. It measured at least 8.90m in length, and in excess of 0.30m in width and 1.40m in depth. Wall {**012**} was only partially revealed after the NE wall of an abutting cellar {**005**} wall was removed. The date of the wall is uncertain, but mapping evidence would suggest a 19th century date.

Cut [**004**] was defined as a rectangular trench with vertical sides. It contained structure {**005**}, a redbrick-lined cellar with mortar bonding, regularly coursed in a stretcher bond. Metal pinning attached the NE wall of cellar {**005**} to stone wall {**012**}. The interior face of the cellar wall was partially covered in white plaster and paint, but was otherwise featureless. The flat floor of the cellar was concrete. Cellar {**005**} was on a NE-SW alignment and located at the southeast edge of the site, along the Commercial Street frontage. The cellar measured *circa* 10m in length, *circa* 9.60m in width and 1.90m in depth with a further rectangular space in the SW corner, measuring *circa* 3m in length and 1.7m in width. The construction cut [**004**] was also partially filled by (**006**), which was characterized as a mid black-brown silty-clay with inclusions of Ceramic Building Material (CBM) fragments. This cellar was backfilled by (**007**), which was characterized as a loose grey-black silt and coal dust-type material with inclusions of mixed building rubble. The cellar is the most southerly of three identical cellars on the site that follow the line of Commercial Street (the nearest cellar is 3.30m to the NW).

Infill material (**007**) was cut by [**013**], which was defined as a square, vertical sided pit. This was filled by structure {**014**}, a redbrick chamber with mortar bonding, regularly coursed with machine-made brick and concrete base. This chamber had been inserted into the northeast corner of the infilled cellar space. This chamber measured 2m in length, 2m in width and 1m in depth. A plastic pipe ran from this structure towards the SW and beyond the limit of excavation. [**013**] was also filled by (**015**), a loose mid brown-black mixed silt.

Natural deposit (**002**) was also cut by [**008**], a vertical sided linear feature on a SW-NE alignment in the SW corner of the trench. It measured in excess of 15m in length (a shallower limit of excavation in the SE corner of the trench meant that the feature could not be traced further), and 0.50m in width. The depth was not ascertained due to the limit of excavation. This was filled by ceramic pipe {**009**}, which had a diameter of 0.30m, and infill material (**010**), which comprised a friable mid reddish-brown sandy-clay.

Located on the western edge of the trench, cut [038] was defined as a vertical sided linear trench cutting (002). It contained {039}, a wall with around four courses still surviving, built of regularly coursed, roughly faced sub-rectangular stones in a mortar bonding. The mortar was blackened in appearance with coal dust inclusions. The wall measured 5m in length, 0.50m in width and 0.50m in height. The wall was built on a NE-SW alignment and in line with the south wall of cellar {005}. Construction cut {038} was also filled by (040), a compact dark brown-black silt. The wall was considered to be associated with, and a continuation of, stone wall {042}.

Cut [041] was defined as a linear trench cutting (002). It contained {042}, the fragmentary remains of a stone wall, which measured 3m in length, 0.18m in width and 0.10m in depth. A single course of stone was recorded, built of roughly faced and squared stone, the bonding material was uncertain. The wall was located in the SW corner of the site, on a NW-SE alignment. Construction cut [041] was also filled by (043), a friable dark brown-black silt. The wall was considered to be associated with, and a continuation of, stone wall (039).

Overlying (015), (040), and (043) was deposit (001), a modern mixed rubble layer associated with the demolition of the buildings that stood on the site prior to development. This deposit included fragments of modern CBM, wood, metal and glass. The deposit extended over the entire site and was 0.50m in depth.

Trench 2

The natural subsoil (deposit (002) within Trench 1) was identified as deposit (022) in Trench 2, and was characterized as a mid reddish-orange clayey-silt. The deposit measured in excess of 35m in length, 11m in width and was 0.50m in depth, appearing throughout the excavated area. Deposit (022) was cut by several features. They were as follows:

Cut [025] was identified as a rectangular, vertical sided trench. Along the base of the trench ran {033}, a ceramic pipe with a diameter of 0.10m, on a N-S alignment. This was overlaid by (034), a compact dark brown-black silty-clay with a high frequency of brick rubble and stone fragments. Deposit (034) measured in excess of 3.20m in length, 1.50m in width and was 0.10m in depth (the deposit was only observed in the western area of cut [025] due to the method of removing overlying deposits). This was interpreted as a hardcore levelling deposit for structure {026}, a redbrick-lined cellar. The vertical walls of the cellar were built of stone and brick, with machine-made brick in a stretcher bond used as facing, in a light grey cement mortar. The floor of the cellar was concrete. {026} was on a NE-SW alignment and located at the east edge of the site. The cellar measured *circa* 10m in length, 9.60m in width, and in excess of 1m in depth with a further rectangular space in the SW corner, measuring *circa* 3m in length and 1.7m in width. The cellar is the most northerly of three cellars on the site, each appearing to follow a standard design. The cellar was backfilled by (027), a dark grey-black clayey-silt with a high frequency of building rubble comprising brick, stone, cement and ornate ceramic moulding.

Cut [028] was defined as a vertical sided linear trench that measured in excess of 10m in length, was 0.30m in width, and 0.20m in depth. It was on a E-W alignment and located

running along the exterior south wall of cellar {026}. [028] contained ceramic drainage pipe {029}, which measured 0.10m in diameter. It was also filled by (030), a dark blue-black clayey-silt with a high frequency of coal dust and occasional brick fragments.

Cut [035] was defined as a vertical sided linear trench. [035] measured in excess of 10m in length, 0.20m in width and 0.30m in depth (the cut was only observed in western half of the trench due to the method of excavation). The cut contained {036}, a ceramic drain which measured 0.10m in diameter. The drain was located immediately west of cellar {026}, on a NE-SW alignment before it turned to the NW and extended beyond the limit of excavation. [035] was also filled by (037), a compact mid brown-yellow silt. This was overlaid by (031), a rubble deposit characterized as a dark black-brown clayey-silt with a high frequency of brick rubble. It measured 15m in length, 12 in width, and 0.20m in depth.

Cut [017] was defined as a rectangular trench cutting (022). [017] was filled by {016}, a concrete structure interpreted as an escalator sump. [016] measured 3m in length, 2m in width and in excess of 1m in depth. The structure was located along the northern limit of the trench, 10m from its NE corner. Cut [017] was also filled by deposit (018). This was a loose backfill with a high frequency of building rubble, including brick, concrete, wood, as well as coal dust.

Cut [021] was defined as a series of interconnecting trenches creating a criss-cross pattern on NE-SW and NW-SE alignments, overlying the remains of cellar {026}. Cut [021] was filled by {020}, concrete foundations associated with the modern buildings that stood on the site prior to development. The limit of excavation meant that these foundations were recorded only in the eastern half of the trench. The concrete foundations measured in excess of 11m in length, 11m in width and 0.70m in depth. A test pit was excavated against the concrete foundation to establish the depth of the structure, this test pit was 1.4m long and reached a depth of 0.7m before being abandoned.

Cut [024] was defined as a rectangular, vertical sided trench. It was filled by {023}, a concrete structure interpreted as a lift shaft. {023} measured in excess of 4m in length, 2m in width, and 1m in depth. The structure was located in the SW corner of the trench on a NE-SW alignment.

Overlying the natural subsoil (022) was deposit (019), which was characterized as a dark brown-black coal dust deposit with inclusions of CBM. This was located approximately 3m from the NW corner, along the north edge of the trench. Deposit (019) measured 4m in length, 2m in width and unknown depth due to the limit of excavation. Similar smaller deposits were identified dotted sporadically across the trench.

Overlying (018), (019), (020), (023), (027), (030), and (031) was deposit (001). This was a modern rubble layer that extended across the entire site associated with the demolition of the buildings that stood on the site prior to development, and included abundant fragments of brick, wood, metal and glass.

4. Finds

No finds of particular archaeological significance were recovered during the watching brief. The pottery sherds, CBM, glass, metal and wood recorded within individual deposits were all readily identifiable as late 19th and 20th century in date and associated with the demolition of the 19th and 20th century buildings.

5. Conclusion

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the clearance of ground slab and foundations, and the subsequent development of new buildings at 123-129 Commercial Street, Newport, Gwent (ST 312 877). The work was undertaken as part of the planning conditions for the development (Planning Application Number 16/0788).

The site lies within the designated Newport Medieval Town ASA, and was therefore considered to have potential remains of archaeological interest from the medieval to modern periods.

A natural subsoil of orange-red clayey-sand, and reddish-orange clayey-silt was identified across the site. The earliest features identified on the site included a fragment of mortar-bonded stone-built wall {012}. This wall ran for 8.9m along the Commercial Street frontage, and was only partly revealed behind a later brick-built cellar wall {005}. Fragmentary remains of stone walling {039} and {042} were recorded at the southwest corner of the site, comprising roughly faced stone in a mortar bond. Coal dust inclusions within the mortar would suggest a late post-medieval (industrial) date for these walls, which accords with historic mapping suggesting the site was first developed in the 19th century.

Cellar {005} was one of three similar cellars built along the Commercial Street frontage, all seemingly to a standard design. Cellar {005} lay at the southeast end, cellar {026} lay at the northwest end, the central cellar remained unexcavated. Both {005} and {026} were 10m by 9.6m, lined with machine-made redbrick with concrete floors, and likely associated with 19th century shops that formerly stood on the site. Ceramic pipes and levelling deposits were recorded in association with these cellars.

These cellars were infilled, overlaid and cut by a series of demolition deposits and concrete structures, likely relating to the mid-20th century structures that stood on the site prior to development works.

There were no archaeological finds, features or deposits uncovered during the watching brief that could be associated with the medieval period, all identified finds, features and deposits would appear to be later 19th century and 20th century in date.

6. Bibliography

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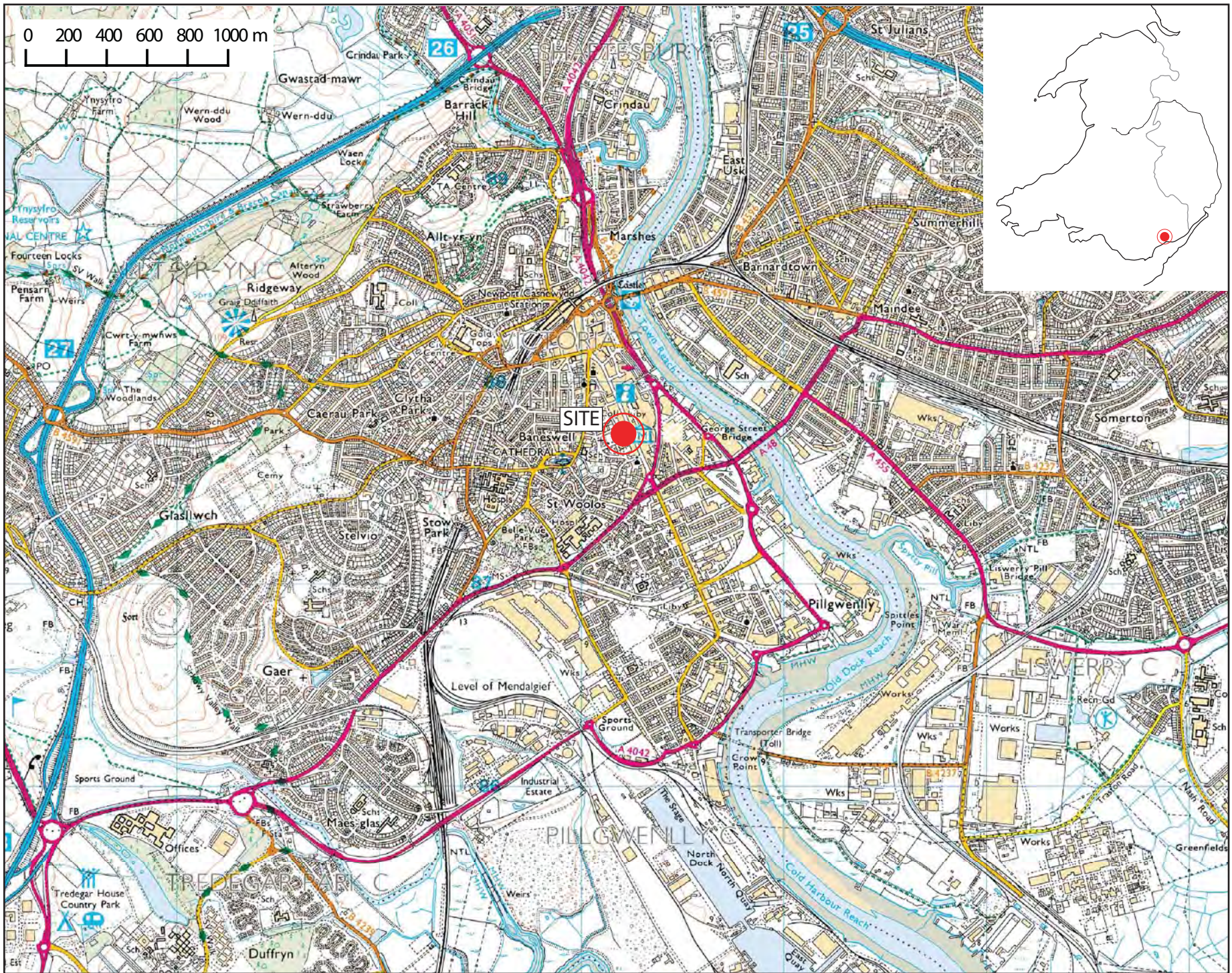


Figure 1: Location map, 1:25,000 @ A4

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Figure 2: Site plan prior to development.
1:1250 @ A4

Based on plan created by
Roberts Limbrick Ltd, 29/7/16.
drawing no: 7776 PL01.



- Development Area
- Excavated/Observed Area

Figure 3: Plan of excavated area, showing identified features described in the main text. 1:200 @ A3

Based on development plan drawn by Roberts Librick Ltd (29/7/16), drawing no. 7776 PL02.





Photo 1: Initial clearance and excavation work in the area of Trench 1. View facing NE.



Photo 2: As above, view facing SW.



Photo 3: Initial excavation and clearance work in the area of Trench 2. View facing north.



Photo 4: As above, view facing NE.



Photo 5: Representative section through natural deposits (003) and (002). View facing south, 1m scale.



Photo 6: Stone wall 012 revealed behind brick-built cellar wall 005. View facing northeast.



Photo 7: Remains of Cellar 005. View facing northwest, 1m scale.



Photo 8: Brick Chamber 014, view facing north. 1m scale.



Photo 9: Wall 039, view facing north. 1m scale.



Photo 10: Wall 039 (to the right) and natural deposit 002. View facing southwest. 1m scales.



Photo 11: Wall 042. View facing southwest. 1m scale.



Photo 12: Escalator sump 016, view facing west.



Photo 13: Concrete foundations 020, view facing south. 1m & 2m scales.



Photo 14: Concrete foundations 020, view facing northeast.



Photo 15: Cellar 026 during excavation, view facing southwest.



Photo 16: Extension to cellar 026, view facing southwest.

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APPENDIX I: Context List

Appendix 1 – Context List

Context	Description	
001	Deposit - layer	Demolition layer – loose, mixed grey & orange rubble. Included abundant crushed brick & concrete fragments. In excess of 27m by 16m. 20 th /21 st century glass, metal, CBM & wood.
002	Deposit - layer	Possible natural subsoil - Soft, mid reddish-orange clayey-silt. In excess of 27m long, 16m wide, 0.5m thick. No finds.
003	Deposit - layer	Possible natural subsoil - Firm, mid orange-red clayey-sand In excess of 27m long by 16m wide, 1.5m thick. No finds.
004	Cut	Cellar construction cut – sub-rectangular in plan. Steep sides, flat base. c.10m long by c.8.9m wide, c.1.8m deep. Contains 005.
005	Structure	Cellar – Brick built walls, concrete base. Regularly coursed red brick vertical walls, mortar bonded. Bricks machine-made, with internal white paint/plaster. Within 004.
006	Deposit - Fill	Infill of cellar 005 - Loose, mid black-brown silty-clay. Included moderate medium-large CBM. 19 th /20 th century brick
007	Deposit - Fill	Infill of cellar 005 - Loose, black possible coal dust. Included moderate small CBM fragments. c.10m long, 8.9m wide. 1.7m thick. 19 th /20 th century brick
008	Cut	Service trench cut - Linear, steep sides, flat base. In excess of 15m long, c.0.5m wide. c.1m deep.
009	Structure	Ceramic drainage pipe. In excess of 15m long, 0.3m diameter. Lies within 008.
010	Deposit - Fill	Fill of 008 - Friable, mid reddish-brown sandy-clay. In excess of 15m long, 0.5m wide. 20 th century CBM.
011	Cut	Wall construction cut – Linear, steep sides, flat base. c.8.9m long, c.1.8m deep. In excess of 0.3m thick. Contains wall 012.
012	Structure	Stone wall – Linear. Built of regularly coursed, roughly faced but otherwise unworked stone (large/very large), mortar bonded. Wall 005 pinned to it. c.8.9m long, c.1.8m deep. In excess of 0.3m thick.
013	Cut	Cut for chamber 014 – Square in plan, steep sides, flat base. c.2m long, 2m wide. c.1m deep.
014	Structure	Brick chamber – vertical, regularly coursed, machine-made brick walls in mortar. Flat concrete base.
015	Deposit - Fill	Infill of chamber 014 – Loose, mid brown-black mixed material. 2m long, 2m wide, 1m thick. No finds.

016	Structure	Escalator sump – Concrete built 3m long, 2m wide. In excess of 1m deep.
017	Cut	Cut for structure 016 – linear in plan, steep sides. 3m long, 2m wide. Contains 016
018	Deposit - Fill	Backfill of sump 016 - Loose, mixed deposit. Abundant CBM, brick and concrete fragments. Abundant coal dust. Common wood fragments. 3m long, 2m wide. 20 th century brick & concrete
019	Deposit - layer	Loose, dark brown-black coal dust. Abundant coal dust and CBM fragments. 19 th /20 th century brick.
020	Structure	Concrete foundations for 1960s building. In excess of 11m long & 11m wide.
021	Cut	Foundation cut for 020 - Linear (NE-SW & NW-SE), steep sides, uncertain base.
022	Deposit	Possible natural subsoil - Friable, mid reddish-orange clayey-silt. In excess of 11m long, 11m wide, 0.5m thick. No finds.
023	Structure	Lift Shaft – Rectangular in plan, concrete built. 3m long, 2m wide. In excess of 1m deep
024	Cut	Cut for lift shaft 023. – Rectangular in plan. Steep sides, flat base. 3m long, 2m wide. In excess of 1m deep.
025	Cut	Construction cut for cellar 026 – Rectangular in plan. Vertical sides, flat base
026	Structure	Cellar (mid/late 19 th century) – Built of brick (60%) and stone (40%). Stone & brick vertical walls, faced by machine-made brick, random stretcher coursing, light grey cement mortar bonding. Demolished & backfilled with 027. 10m long, 9.6m wide, with a 3.2m by 1.7m addition on southwest edge.
027	Deposit - fill	Backfill of cellar 026 – Loose, dark grey-black clay-silt. Abundant medium-large building rubble fragments (brick, stone, ceramic mouldings, cement & mortar). 13m long by 10m wide. Depth unrecorded. 19 th /20 th century brick.
028	Cut	Cut for drainage pipe 029 – Linear (E-W), steep to vertical sides, flat base. In excess of 10m long, 0.3m wide. 0.2m deep
029	Structure	Ceramic drainage pipe – within cut 028, 19 th century. 0.1m diameter.
030	Deposit - fill	Backfill of service trench 028 – Loose, dark blue-black clayey-silt. Abundant coal dust, occasional medium brick and stone fragment. In excess of 10m long, 0.3m wide. 0.2m thick. 19 th /20 th century brick.
031	Deposit - layer	Rubble levelling deposit – Friable, dark black-brown clay-silt Abundant medium-large brick rubble inclusions. 15m long by 12m wide. 0.2m thick.

		19 th century brick - derived from demolished 19 th century structures.
032	Void	
033	Structure	Ceramic pipe – Lies within cut 025, under the floor of cellar 026. 0.1m diameter
034	Deposit - layer	Levelling deposit for cellar 026 – Compact, dark brown-black silty-clay. Abundant medium brick & stone rubble fragments 3.2m long, 1.5m wide. 0.1m thick. 19 th /20 th century brick
035	Cut	Construction cut for storm drain 036 – linear (E-W, with N-S turn), vertical sides, flat base. In excess of 10m long, 0.2m wide. 0.3m deep.
036	Structure	Ceramic storm drain – Within cut 035. 0.1m diameter
037	Deposit - fill	Backfill of cut 035 – Compact, mid brown-yellow silt. In excess of 10m long, 0.2m wide. 0.3m thick. No finds.
038	Cut	Construction cut for 029 – Linear (NE-SW), vertical sides, flat base. 5m long, 0.5m wide. 0.5m deep.
039	Structure	Stone wall – Linear (NE-SW). Built of roughly-faced and squared stone in regular courses. Mortar bonding. 5m long, 0.5m wide. 0.5m high. Associated with 19 th century building. Continuation of 043.
040	Deposit - fill	Backfill of construction cut 038 – Compact, dark brown-black silt. 5m long, 0.5m wide. 0.5m deep. No finds.
041	Cut	Construction cut for wall 042 – linear (NW – SE), vertical sides, flattish base. 3m long, 0.5m wide. 0.1m deep.
042	Structure	Stone wall – Linear (NW – SE), vertical wall of roughly faced and squared stone. Only a single course remains, bonding material uncertain. 3m long, 0.5m wide. 0.1m high. Associated with 19 th century building, continuation of 039.
043	Deposit - fill	Backfill of construction cut 041 – Friable, dark brown-black silt. 3m long, 0.5m wide. 0.1m deep. No finds.

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APPENDIX II
Written Scheme of Investigation

**123-129 Commercial
Street, Newport**

**Written Scheme of
Investigation for a
Watching Brief**

Client: WILLIS CONSTRUCTION LTD

AB Heritage Project No:50100

Date:03/02/2017

123-129 Commercial Street, Newport

Archaeological Watching Brief

Written Scheme of Investigation

Client Willis Construction Ltd
Project Number 50100
Prepared By Daniel Dodds
Illustrated By Zoe Edwards
Approved By Andy Buckley

Rev Number	Description	Undertaken	Approved	Date
1.0	Final	DD	AB	03/02/2017

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FIGURES

- Figure 1 Site Location
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared by AB Heritage Limited on behalf of Willis Construction Ltd, for the provision of an archaeological watching brief at 123-129 Commercial Street, Newport. The watching brief has been requested during the clearance of ground slab and foundations during the demolition of the existing buildings, and the subsequent groundworks associated with the new building on the site.
- 1.1.2 The existing buildings face on to Commercial Street which occupies a position within the designated Newport Medieval Town Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA), therefore, it has been concluded that the site has the potential to contain remains of archaeological interest from the medieval to the modern periods.
- 1.1.3 Because of the potential for the development to damage or disturb archaeological deposits, the Newport City Council have appended a planning condition (condition 3) to the planning permission (16/0788), requiring an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks and report of the findings. This is in line with the requirements of NPPF and Planning Policy Wales (9th edition).

1.2 Site Location & Description

- 1.2.1 The proposed development site is centred at NGR: ST 312 877 in the densely-populated area of Newport city centre, Wales. The eastern boundary of the site meets Commercial Street, while the site is bounded immediately to the north and south by three storey red brick structures with retail premises within their ground floors. The west is bounded by an entrance to an adjacent multi-storey car park which leads from Ivor Street.
- 1.2.2 The proposed development site is presently occupied by four three storey red brick structures within the south of the site (nos. 123-26), the northern of which is a public house (no.126) while south of this is retail premises (no. 125). An entrance to a multi-storey car park which lies to the south-west of the proposed development site occupies the ground floor of the second structure from the south (no. 124). The most southerly structure is similarly constructed of red brick, and is disused with boarded up windows (no. 123). A disused, three storey concrete structure lies in the north of the site (nos. 127-129). All five structures face onto Commercial Street.

1.3 Geology and Topography

- 1.3.1 The solid underlying geology consists of argillaceous rocks and sandstone of the St Maughans Foundation with superficial deposits of clay and silt (BGS, 2016).
- 1.3.2 The proposed development site lies on sloping land west of the River Usk (c.340m to the north-east of the proposed development site), ranging from 18m AOD in the west to 16m in the east of the site.

1.4 Overview of Proposed Development & Planning Background

- 1.4.1 Planning Application 16/0788 for the proposed development pertains to the demolition of the existing buildings of 123-129 Commercial Street and for the change of use (in part) and the construction of a mixed-use development comprising a ground floor retail unit, reconfigured pedestrian access to existing car park and 38 no. Apartments for over 55 year olds. In line with Planning Policy Wales (9th Edition), an archaeological condition (Condition 3) was placed on the planning permission, this states that:

"No excavation works shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured agreement for a written scheme of historic environment mitigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the programme of work will be fully carried out in accordance with the requirements and standards of the written scheme.

Reason: To identify and record features of archaeological interest discovered during the works, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource."

1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.5.1 A historic environment desk based assessment was produced for this development in 2016 (AB Heritage 2016), which details the archaeological and historical background to the development site. The brief background presented in this WSI is taken from that work.

Prehistoric & Roman

- 1.5.2 There are no known features of prehistoric or Roman date within the development site or the near vicinity.

Medieval

- 1.5.3 The site lies within the designated Newport Medieval Town Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA). This ASA has been so designated as it is likely that the area contains yet unknown medieval remains associated with the development of Newport since that period. A brief description follows.
- 1.5.4 The church of St Woolos had been established by the 9th century, on the site of the present-day Newport Cathedral c.400 south-west of the proposed development site.
- 1.5.5 Post-conquest developments in Newport included the construction of a castle in the late 12th century, c.2.2km north of the proposed development site. The church of St Woolos was heavily modified in the 12th century to reflect Norman traditions of architecture and worship.
- 1.5.6 The town of Newport continued to grow throughout the period, gaining its first charter in 1314. Evidence for trade at the port during the later medieval period includes a complete timber sea going vessel excavated in 2002.
- 1.5.7 During the welsh revolt in 1402 Newport Castle was captured, and the town was partially burned.

Post Medieval

- 1.5.8 During the industrial period, Newport saw very rapid expansion. Newport's position as a busy port for the expanding South Wales coal and iron industries as well as the local potteries and ship building industries, saw a massive influx of people for work. The population of Newport boomed from 1000 in at the beginning of the 19th century to over 19,000 by 1851.
- 1.5.9 By the 19th century Commercial Street was fully developed with some of the present buildings already established by the time of the 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey in the 1880s.

2 AIMS & METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims of Works

2.1.1 The proposed investigation is designed to identify and to investigate and record any archaeological features or deposits disturbed during the development groundworks. The aims will be to:

- Establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains that may be impacted by the redevelopment of the site;
- To record any remains before they are damaged or destroyed during the development.
- To prepare a report of the findings complete with any associated analysis of finds or samples retrieved during the project.

2.2 Scope and Methodology of Works

2.2.1 The proposed archaeological works will comprise the archaeological monitoring of the demolition of the existing buildings. The monitoring will include the removal of the ground slab and any associated intrusions such as drains and soak-aways. The monitoring will encompass the required grubbing out of any extant foundations as well as services and utilities.

2.2.2 Working shots shall be taken at the key stages of the demolition.

2.2.3 All exposed archaeological features and deposits will be planned at an appropriate scale and photographed before investigation commences.

2.2.4 All identified features and deposits will be investigated stratigraphically, using a system, adapted from that used by Museum of London Archaeology, with sufficient pictorial record to identify and illustrate individual features. It should be noted that, where possible, data will be collected and stored digitally and in a format suitable for long term storage by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.

2.2.5 All work will be carried out the standards laid down in the ClfA *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014).

2.2.6 The excavation, sampling and recording will include, as a minimum:

- The location of the identified features/deposits on the site, tied to OS
- The recording of individual contexts on appropriate pro-formas
- Excavation plans at 1:50 scale; planning and section drawing of appropriate single contexts and features (usually at 1:20 scale for plans and 1:10 scale for inhumations and sections)
- Photographs; and other appropriate drawn and written records
- Ground Markers (PGM's), any temporary benchmarks and approved OS benchmarks shall be indicated on the relevant plans.

2.2.7 The survey and recording works will meet the following requirements:

- All levels will be recorded and reduced to OS datum
- All feature locations will be electronically surveyed with National Grid references
- The locations of features shall be plotted on appropriate scale plans related to the National Grid and labelled with six figure eastings and northings
- The electronic survey record shall be retained with the project archive.

2.2.8 The following general strategy for the sampling of features will be adopted - Linear features will be sampled at 100% along their length where practicable. In addition, the deposits at junctions or interruptions in linear features will be sufficiently excavated for the relationship between components to be established and then fully excavated.

2.2.9 Discrete features will be half-sectioned in the first instance, to understand fill sequences and profile etc. Discrete features will then be fully excavated to retrieve the maximum data possible. Please note that it may not be desirable on safety grounds to excavate fully deep features. Where deep features such as wells or cess pits are encountered, it will be the discretion of the archaeologist that governs the extent of the excavation within the constraints of Health and Safety policy. Where deeper features are not fully excavated, this will be properly recorded and the reasons provided.

2.2.10 Any human remains which are revealed must initially be left in situ and, if removal is necessary, this must comply with the relevant Ministry of Justice, Diocesan and other regulations, as appropriate.

2.2.11 Site photography will be by digital photography utilising a camera of not less than 7 megapixels. Photography will include general site shots, and shots of individual features. All photographs will include a suitable photographic scale and will be recorded on a photographic register detailing as a minimum the subject, feature number, location and direction of each shot.

Finds Recording / Processing

2.2.12 All retained finds and archaeo-environmental samples are to be treated and conserved in accordance with the English Heritage guidance document A Strategy for the Care and Investigation of Finds (English Heritage, 1995) and the UKIC's document Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC, 1990). Assessment and analysis of finds and archaeo-environmental samples will be undertaken, as necessary.

2.2.13 Finds will be treated in the following way:

- All finds, where appropriate, will be retained from each archaeological context excavated.
- All finds, where appropriate, shall be washed.
- All Pottery, and other finds, where appropriate, shall be marked with the site code and context number.

- Finds work will be undertaken in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Guidelines for Finds Work.
- Environmental Sampling will be guided by English Heritage's Environmental Archaeology. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition), 2011.

2.2.14 Arrangements for the deposition of any finds and site archive will be made with the National Museum Wales.

2.2.15 On completion of the assessment or analysis phase the museum will be contacted to discuss retention/ discard of material prior to the preparation of the site archive.

Environmental Sampling

2.2.16 Where appropriate contexts will be sampled in accordance with the guidelines provided by English Heritage's Environmental Archaeology. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition), 2011.

2.2.17 In the event of substantial cultivation horizons being encountered, particularly those constituting a 'dark earth', monolith and bulk samples will be taken from sealed samples, which will be assessed for pollen and plant macrofossils. It is proposed that the floatation of suitable samples be undertaken off site following completion of the fieldwork.

2.2.18 Any bone recovered from stratified deposits will also be subject to assessment; analysis will be limited to material that can provide metrical, ageing or sex information.

Reporting & Archiving

2.2.19 Within four weeks of completion of the site works a typescript report will be produced.

2.2.20 The preparation of the report will follow the guidelines published by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014). Details of style and format will be determined by AB Heritage Limited but will include:

- A non-technical summary.
- The site location.
- Aims and purpose of the archaeological work.
- The methodology of works.
- Recommendations for further assessment/publication.
- A description of the project results.
- Site layout plans on an OS base, with the location of the trench.
- Sections and feature sections (with OD heights).
- Site photographs, including key features, and an index to the full photographic archive.
- A summary table and descriptive text showing the features, classes and numbers of artefacts located, and soil profiles, with interpretation.

- An archive statement, which will summarise the contents, location, and projected deposition date of the archive, if required.
- Supporting illustrations & plans, suitably captioned, at appropriate scales. These will include a location map and site plan; copies of historic map & historic photographs where relevant.

2.2.21 Appropriate specialists will be used to undertake post-excavation assessment and/ or analysis of material recovered. The results will be included in a final report.

2.2.22 Illustrations will include: a detailed location map, a detailed site plan, detailed plans and sections of features, select artefact illustrations and a selection of scanned photographs; an overall site plan showing all (phased) archaeological features recorded will also be included.

2.2.23 The results of the archaeological work will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage, 2006a), and compiled in line with ADS digital records guidance.

2.2.24 The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the ClfA in that organisation's Code of Conduct ClfA, (2014a). The final deposition of the archive will be placed with the National Museum Wales.

2.2.25 **OASIS: Wales** Once the report has been accepted by the National Museum Wales, AB Heritage Limited will complete an OASIS: Wales fieldwork summary form and submit it to the Archaeology Data Service. The form and related guidance can be found at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/first.html>.

3 UNFORESEEN ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

3.1 Unforeseen Archaeological Remains of Significance

3.1.1 In the event of archaeological remains of unexpected or exceptional (i.e. of regional or national) importance that requires further investigation being encountered, during either archaeological or non-archaeological works on site, the following will be undertaken:

- The stripping of soil, ground reduction or ground disturbance will cease in that area.
- The archaeologist will examine the remains as soon as is practically possible, and certainly within 24 hours of the find.
- The Project Archaeologist will inform the Archaeological Planning Officer (Rob Dunning) of the finds and arrange a site meeting at the earliest possible convenience to all parties.
- The Project Archaeologist will, if necessary, erect temporary fencing around the area of possible archaeological remains until such a meeting.
- The impact on archaeological remains will be mitigated in a manner appropriate to their importance.

3.2 Human Remains

3.2.1 Any discovered human remains will be left in situ, covered and protected.

3.2.2 If removal is necessary the Project Archaeologist will inform the Archaeological Planning Officer, the Client, and the local Coroner as appropriate. Advice will be sought from the Ministry of Justice by the Project Archaeologist as to whether a licence may be required to exhume any or all remains.

3.2.3 A strategy for the excavation, analysis, retention and/or reburial of a) disarticulated and b) articulated human remains will need to be developed and specified in a discussion with the Archaeological Planning Officer covering the identified human remains. The cataloguing and analysis of all human remains will be undertaken by a suitably qualified osteoarchaeologist. All treatment of remains will follow industry-standard procedures (McKinley and Roberts, 1993).

3.3 Treasure

3.3.1 The 1996 Treasure Act defines "Treasure" as:

- Any object at least 300 years old when found which is: not a coin, but has metallic content of which at least 10% is precious metal, or one of at least two coins with at least 10% precious metal content.
- One of at least 10 coins.
- Any object at least 200 years old designated as treasure by the Secretary of State.

- Any object which would have been 'Treasure Trove' before the 1996 Act but which is not covered above.
- Any object found with any of the above.

3.3.2 The Treasure (Designation) Order 2002 extends the definition of treasure to include:

- Finds of at least two base metal objects (other than coins) of prehistoric date; and
- Any object (other than a coin) of prehistoric date with any precious metal content.

3.3.3 Any finds made that are identified under this Act shall immediately be reported to the local coroner as appropriate.

3.3.4 To protect the finds from theft, AB Heritage will record the finds and remove them to a safe place. Where recording and removal is not feasible or appropriate on the day of discovery we shall ensure, on liaison with the Project Archaeologist, the Client and the curator, that adequate site security is provided.

3.3.5 Subject to the Provisions of the Treasure Act 1996, all material that is defined as Treasure is vested in the franchisee or, if none, the Crown.

3.3.6 With respect to Treasure finds, a reward may be payable to the finder, the landowner and/or the occupier. The Crown usually offers finds to a museum.

4 PROGRAMME & MONITORING

4.1 Provisional Programme

- 4.1.1 It is intended that the work shall commence in spring 2017, following approval of this WSI.
- 4.1.2 The Archaeological Planning Officer will be notified at least one week prior to commencement of the on-site archaeological works by AB Heritage Limited.
- 4.1.3 The initial report will be completed within 4 weeks of the completion of fieldwork. This will identify the programme of further analysis and assessment if required. Any further works will form part of a further WSI.

4.2 Monitoring Responsibilities

- 4.2.1 AB Heritage Limited will keep the Archaeological Planning Officer informed on the progress of works.
- 4.2.2 Reasonable access to the site is to be arranged at all times for the Archaeological Planning Officer, should he request to make a site inspection to ensure that the archaeological works are progressing satisfactorily.
- 4.2.3 Any variations to the WSI shall be agreed with the Archaeological Planning Officer, in writing, prior to them being carried out.

5 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5.1 Health & Safety

- 5.1.1 A risk assessment for the archaeological works will be produced by AB Heritage and submitted to the client for review and approval prior to the progression of archaeological site works.
- 5.1.2 The following statutory provisions and codes of practice will be adhered to where relevant:
- All statutory provisions and by-laws relating to the work in question, especially the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
 - The Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct (ClfA, 2014)

5.2 Personnel

- 5.2.1 The overall responsibility for the conduct and management of the project will be held by Daniel Dodds (MCIfA) for AB Heritage Limited as Project Archaeologist, who will oversee the programme of works. The works will be monitored on behalf of AB Heritage Kerry Kerr-Peterson.

5.3 Copyright

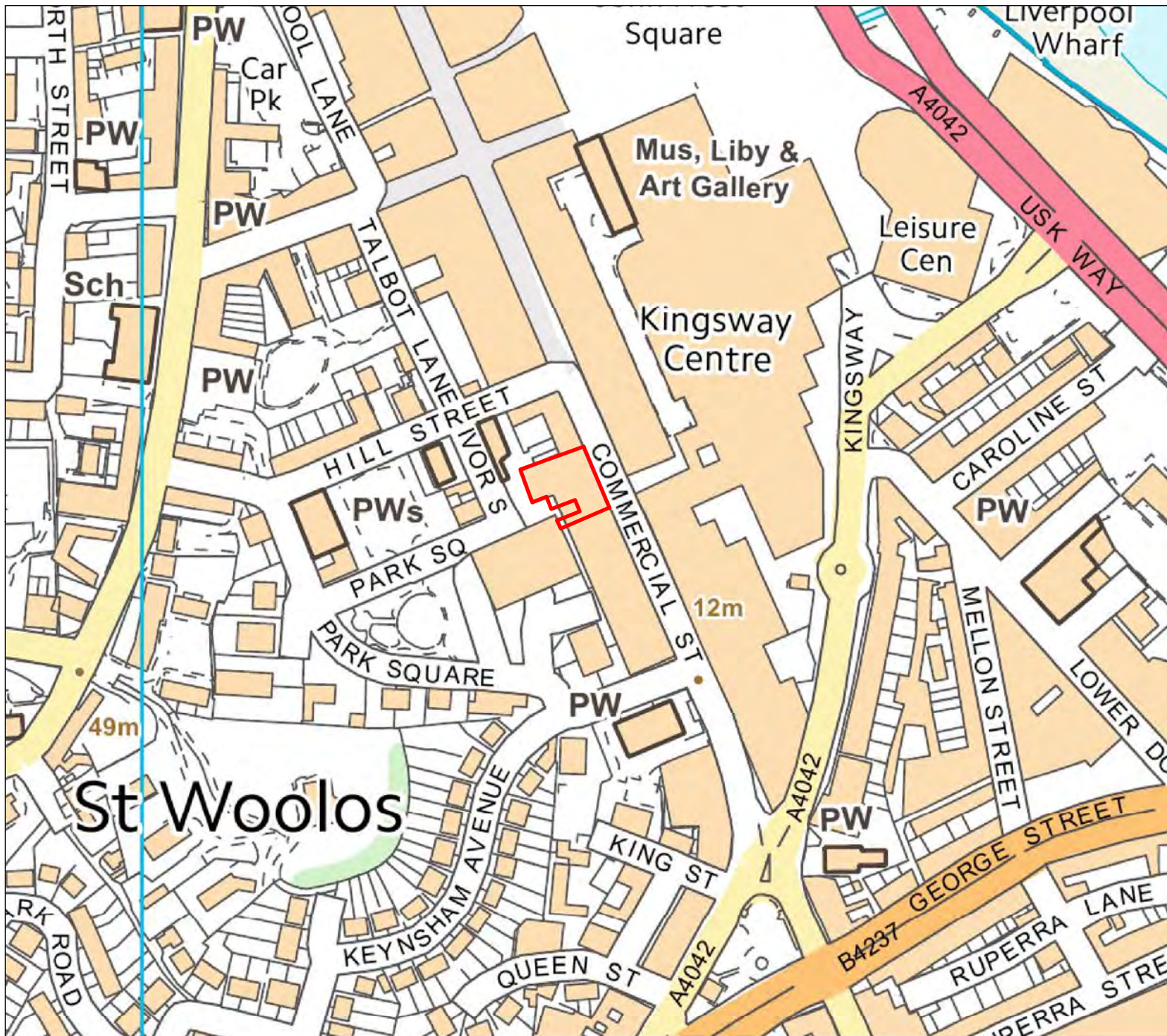
- 5.4.1 It is recognised that the copyright of written, graphic and photographic records of the works undertaken rests with the originating body under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1998 with all rights reserved.
- 5.4.2 However, AB Heritage Limited will hereby provide the client will an exclusive licence for the use of such information and to facilitate the copying and use of any or all materials resulting from the project.

5.5 Variations

- 5.6.1 Any variations to this Written Scheme of Investigation that may be needed as a result of the emerging results of works must be approved in advance by Daniel Dodds with the Archaeological Planning Officer.

REFERENCES

- AB Heritage 2016 123-129 Commercial Street, Newport Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment
- Campbell, G, Moffett, L and Straker, V 2011 *Environmental Archaeology. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition)*. Portsmouth: English Heritage
- CIfAa 2014 *Code of Conduct*
- CIfAb 2014 *Standards and guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*
- CIfAc 2014 *Standards and guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*
- DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*
- EH 1996 *A Strategy for the Care and Investigation of Finds*
- EH 2011 *A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (2nd edition)*
- McKinley J & Roberts C 1993 *Excavation and post-excavation treatment of cremated and inhumed human remains*
- MOLA, 1994 *Archaeological Site Manual (3rd Ed.)*
- UKIC 1990 *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage*
- Welsh Government 2016 *Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9)*



Legend
 Site, Boundary



Figure, G, Site, Location

Project: G23029, Commercial, Street J
Newport

Date: 29/07/06 Job, Number: 11023

Drawn, by: ZE Approved, by: DD





Legend

 Site Boundary

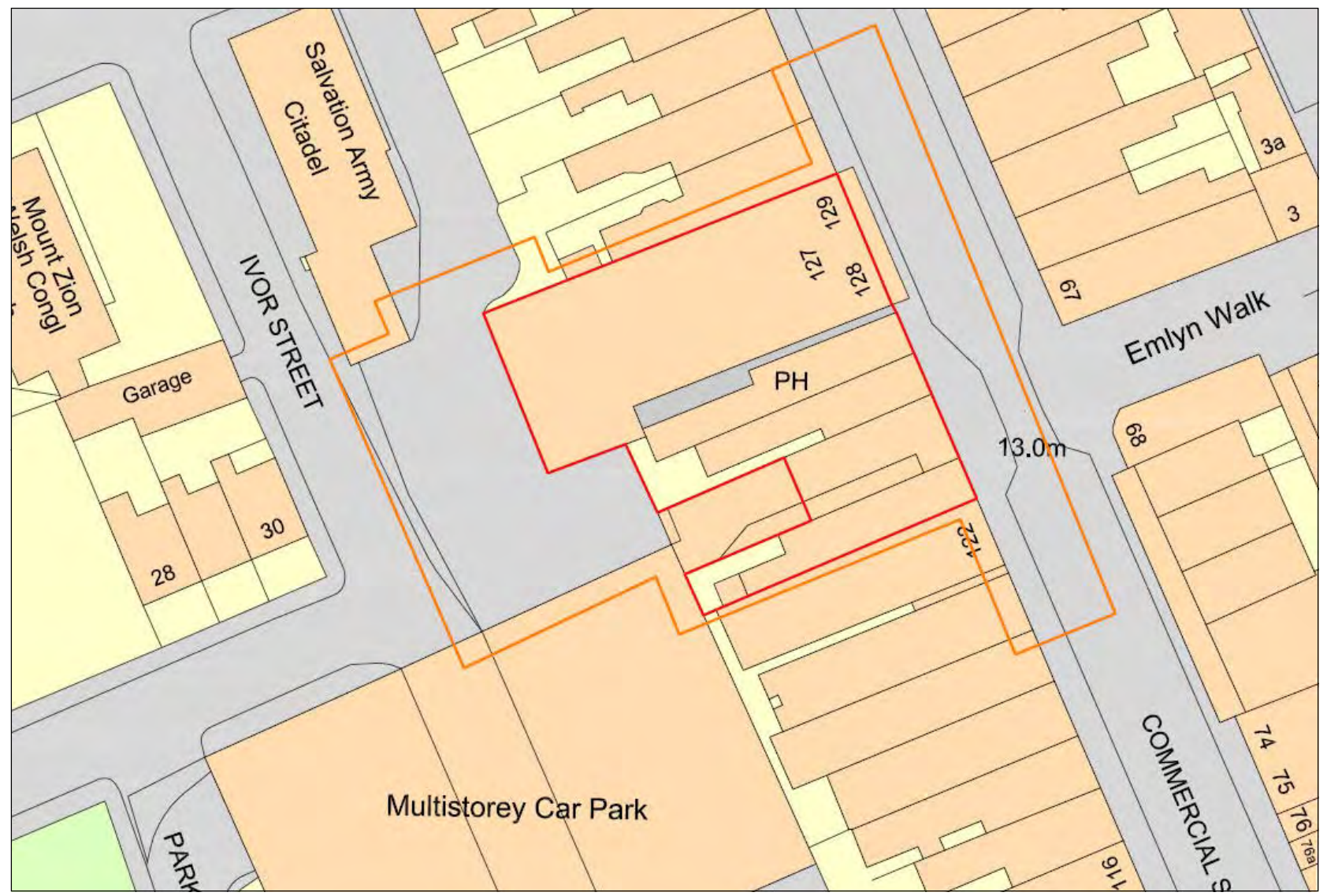


Figure 2: Detailed Site Location

Project: 123-129 Commercial Street, Newport

Date: 30/01/17 Job Number: 11023

Drawn by: ZE Approved by: DD





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Archaeology
Wales

APPENDIX III:
Archive Cover Sheet

ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

123-129 Commercial Street, Newport

Site Name:	123-129 Commercial Street, Newport
Site Code:	CSN/17/WB
PRN:	-
NPRN:	-
Listed Building:	-
Other Ref No:	-
NGR:	NGR ST 312 877
Site Type:	Demolition and redevelopment of adjoining city centre commercial premises.
Project Type:	Watching Brief
Project Manager:	Philip Poucher
Project Dates:	December 2017 – April 2018
Categories Present:	-
Location of Original Archive:	AW
Location of duplicate Archives:	RCAHMW, Aberystwyth
Number of Finds Boxes:	-
Location of Finds:	-
Museum Reference:	-
Copyright:	AW
Restrictions to access:	None

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