



**A.P.A.C. Ltd.**

Archaeological Perspectives Analysis Consultancy

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**REPORT**

**WB/CAE/14**

**45 ST TATHAN'S PLACE, CAERWENT**



**Monmouthshire County Council**

**Planning Application No: DC/2014/00014**

Prepared for:

**Mr & Mrs K Harford**

By:

**Dr N Phillips.**



## Summary

*This document comprises the report of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during ground work at a site identified as having potential archaeological resources that may be impacted by any development.*

*The development of concern is the construction of an extension to an existing residential dwelling.*

*A planning application was submitted to Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) and as part of the planning process, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) advised the planning department that the proposed work at the site could likely impact on archaeological resources.*

*(MCC), in accordance with the guidance from GGAT imposed a condition requiring a program of archaeological work in accordance with a design brief.*

*This document details an archaeological programme of work, specifically a watching brief to be undertaken during any ground disturbing works.*

*The work had revealed an absence of archaeological resources within the area excavated.*

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## Appendices

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Appendix I   | Context sheet                           |
| Appendix II  | Digital Photograph list & contact sheet |
| Appendix III | Finds Index & assemblage photographs    |



## Introduction

This document is the report produced from the watching brief, undertaken A.P.A.C. Ltd, at 45 St Tathan's Place Caerwent. NP26 5AL on 16th July 2014.

The watching brief was commissioned in response to a proposed programme of works, to demolish an existing conservatory, shed and porch in order to make way for the construction of a two storey rear extension.

The clients, Mr & Mrs Harford, having submitted a planning application to Monmouth County Council (MCC) Council; (pl.app.no DC/2014/00014); were granted Approval of Planning Permission, with conditions; one of which required that:

*The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any ground disturbing works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief shall be undertaken to the standards of the Institute for Archaeologists. The Local Planning Authority shall be informed, in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development of the name of the said archaeologist and no work shall begin until the Local Planning Authority has confirmed, in writing, that the proposed archaeologist is suitable. A copy of the watching brief report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within two months of the fieldwork being completed by the archaeologist.*

(pl.app.no DC/2014/00014)

The program of archaeological work involved a watching brief during all ground disturbance work.

## Site Location and Description

The location of the site NGR: 347116 190238, can be gained from the A48, Newport to Chepstow Rd, on the northern bypass of Caerwent. fig 01.

When travelling westerly along the A48, turn left into Caerwent, along Roman Road and left again at the old east gate of the town.

Number 46 is on the left just beyond the southern wall of the town.

## Geology and Topography

The town of Caerwent lies on the low land at the northern part of the Gwent Levels.

The underlying solid geology of Caerwent is predominantly made up of the Mercia Mudstone Group with River Terrace Deposits of sand and gravel (<http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>).

## Brief archaeological and historical background

Caerwent; Scheduled Ancient Monument, Cadw MM001, is rich in archaeological resources, details of which are easily accessed online at <http://archwilio.org.uk>

Caerwent, (Venta Silurum) described as 'The Market Town of the Silures' was founded by the Romans at around the same time as their Fortress at Caerleon; in AD 75, (Howell 1988).

There is evidence that Early Christian occupation, associated with a monastery linked to St Tatheus, continued in the area until at least the 12<sup>th</sup> century, (Knight p273. 2004).



Tradition has it that St Tatheus came to Caerwent in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and after being party to a miracle, was granted land by Caradog, King of Gwent to erect a church, on 'a field near the city, from the high road even to the river' (Wade-Evans *in* Campbell & Macdonald p89. 1973).

St Tathans Monastery, HER. GGAT 01066g, NGR: ST47169045, (Archwilio).

The present site, 45 St. Tathans Rd, is of interest in that it lies east of the Roman Town of Caerwent, where there have been a number of archaeological excavations and observations of building work in the vicinity; perhaps the most significant appear to have unearthed archaeological resources of post-Roman date.

A large number of burials were discovered in two cemeteries located around the town's East Gate in 1910 and 1973 (ibid.).

The 1910 excavation revealed a stone cist the contents of which were assigned the status of St Tatheus himself by local antiquarians, (ibid.).

There were a minimum of 136 graves discovered in the 1973 excavations of which 77 were east-west orientated, Christian graves, dated from between the 4th and 9th centuries, (ibid p 85.).

This was a burial ground with sections for both adults and the young, and some graves were stone-lined.

Another cemetery (of 150 graves) was situated around the present Parish Church of St. Stephen which according to Imrie was originally dedicated to St. Tathyw, (Imrie, 2004).

## **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the watching brief was to preserve by record, within the resources available, any archaeological deposits uncovered during groundwork.

The watching brief also ensured that: in the event of archaeological resources of significance, being discovered and requiring treatment beyond the remit of the watching brief, that steps would be implemented to ensure that their treatment would be undertaken within the standards recommended by the IFA.

## **Watching Brief**

Ground work for the watching brief was undertaken and completed on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

All excavation was undertaken by hand due to lack of access for a mechanical digger.

The ground was quite stable and with the exception of two service pipes contained no features of any kind..

The sequence of excavation is shown in fig 02

### Initial recording

A record of the stratigraphy of each trench was made during excavation.

The work was recorded digitally throughout using a Sony DSC F828 Camera set to 8mp Jpeg & RAW format.

All finds recovered were recorded to context and sealed in bags numbered with finds sequence and context.

### Post Ex

Following the watching brief, the field notes and photographs were digitised to produce the context record of the stratigraphy and an annotated list of the photographs.



All finds were then individually processed (washed, dried, catalogued and re-bagged) allowing the three appendices to be cross referenced ready for inclusion in the report.

A basic search was undertaken into the readily available history and back ground of the site as required for a watching brief.

This report was produced for the client, MCC Planning and GGAT as well as archive copies for Gwent Archive.

## Watching Brief Results

### Presentation Notes:

*All contexts are denoted [#] in the text, listed in Appendix I, cross referenced in Appendix II, to the plates section*

*Photographs used in the text are listed Pl #, A complete list of photographs can be found in appendix II.*

*All finds denoted {#} in the text and are listed in Appendix III.*

The trench positions are shown in Fig 02 the assigned TR numbers related to the digging sequence.

### Trench 1

Excavation of trench 1 began against the wall of the main house; reaching a depth of around 800mm through a single context of red sandy clay, [101], PL01.

The trench was extended some 3m to the east where a salt glazed pipe [102] was uncovered some 350mm beneath the surface, [100].

The pipe was left undisturbed and the trench deepened to 1.1m allowing access beneath it in order to continue the foundation to around 4m in length.

The new 1.1 depth was then cleared back to the main house, PL02 continuing through the single context, producing no finds.

### Trench 2

Trench 2, PL03, running north from the end of trench had a similar deposition of [101] although there was a lens of coal granules with bits of modern debris: plastic items, a few bits of metal window frame and tile fragments [105].

The lens was restricted to the west side of the trench, towards the centre, just under [100] and was probably the remains of a small garden fire.

Three sherds of ceramic fabric were recovered which turned out to be modern flower pot.

A large sandstone boulder was removed from the bottom of the trench, towards the northern end; the subsequent hole revealed a deposit of rounded pebbles consistent with a river deposit.

### Trench 3

The third trench returned the foundation west towards the main house; again predominantly the single context [101] but cut by two separate pipes, PL04.

The lower one at 940mm at the east end was salt glazed [107] whilst the upper was plastic at around 150mm.

The ground around the upper pipe was very disturbed.

## Interpretation

The lack of finds; and with the exception of modern drainage, the lack of features, identifies that the building work had no impact upon any archaeological resources.



### **Staff**

Dr. Neil Phillips, AIFA.

Post ex  
Mr A. O. Phillips.

### **Archive:**

The original archive for this project will remain with APAC Ltd.

A copy of the archive will be deposited with Powys County Archive.

### **Acknowledgements:**

Thanks to Mr & Mrs Pickering for access to the site. My appreciation also to his site team for their expertise and professionalism. Thanks also to Steve Clarke for his specialist ceramic advice and to Adam Phillips for processing the finds.





## Bibliography and References:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Barclay Millar

Drawing: 1301 01 A. Existing Plans & Elevations. Proposed Extension. 45 St Tathan's Place Caerwent, Monmouthshire NP26 5AL.

Drawing: 1301 02 A. Proposed Plans & Elevations. Proposed Extension. 45 St Tathan's Place Caerwent, Monmouthshire NP26 5AL.

Drawing: 1301 03 A. Site Plan. Proposed Extension. 45 St Tathan's Place Caerwent, Monmouthshire NP26 5AL.

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MCC

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Websites

Historic Environment Record:

<http://archwilio.org.uk>

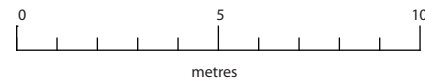
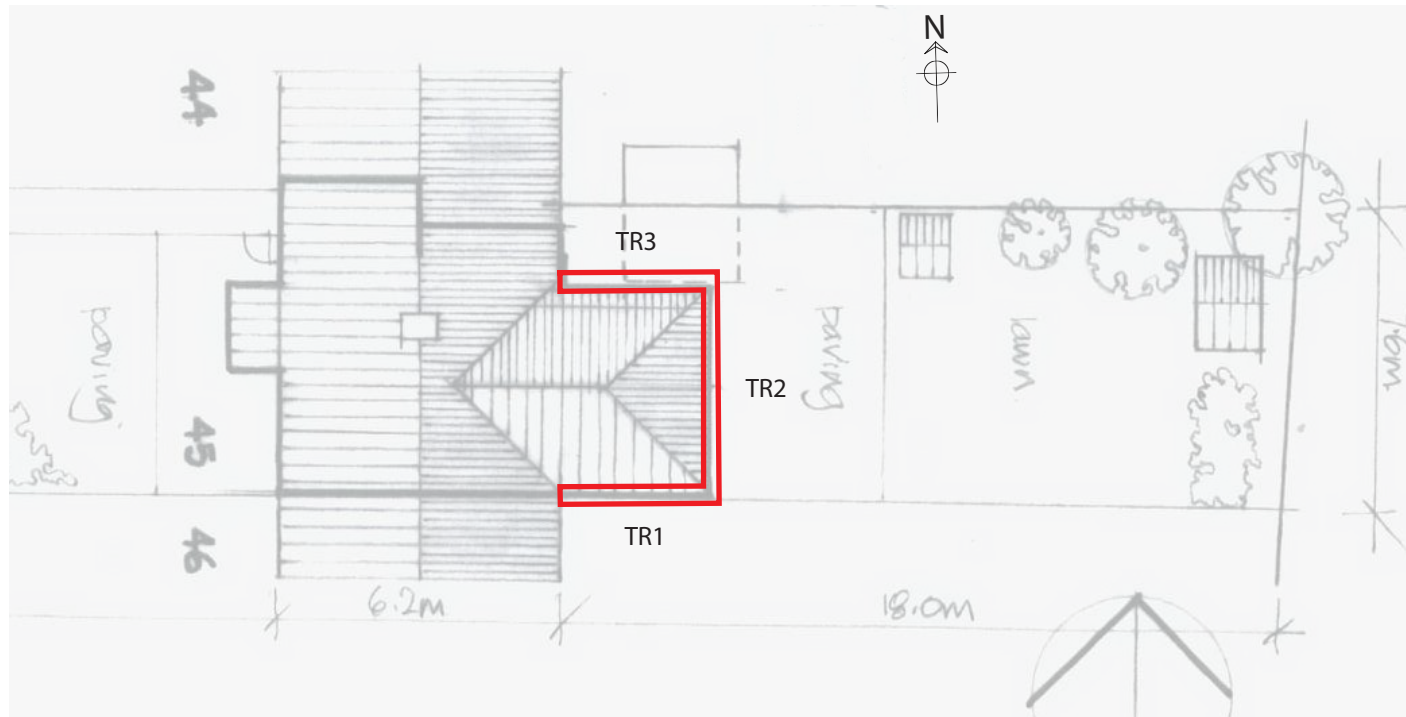
British Geological survey

<http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>

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Fig 01: Location



adapted from Barclay Millar Site Plan 1301 03A

Fig 02: Trench Plan



Plate 01



Plate 02n



Plate 03



Plate 04

Site: 45 St.Tathans Place, Caerwent		Grid Ref: 347116 190238	Site No: WB/CAE/14	Alternate No:	1
CONTEXT	AREA	FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	FINDS	PHOTOGRAPHS
100		Floor	Concrete/ bedding/ polythene sheet		
101	Trs 1/2/3	Deposit	Red sandy clay with occasional small flint nodules		
102	Tr 1	6" Pipe	Salt glazed service pipe. Depth 400mm		
103	Tr 1	Fill	Concrete cap		
104	Tr 1	Cut	Cut for [102] into [101]		
105	Tr 2	Lens	Small lens of coal and modern debris		
106	Tr 2	Deposit	Loosely packed, water rolled pebbles 100/150mm Diameter. 1 large sandstone boulder		
107	Tr 3	6" Pipe	Salt glazed service pipe. Depth 780mm		
108	Tr 3	Fill	Indiscernible		
109	Tr 3	Cut	Cut for [107] into [101]		
110	Tr 3	6" Pipe	Plastic service pipe. Depth 780mm		
111	Tr 3	Fill	Disturbed		
112	Tr 3	Cut	Cut for [109] into [101]		

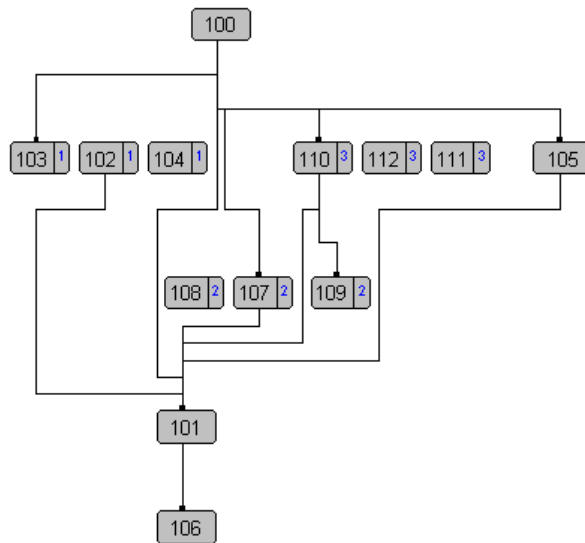


Photo no	Date	Camera	Size	View	Description	Plate
DSC06704	16/07/2014	DSC F828	3264x2448	W	Start of job, concrete, bedding and polythene removed around proposed trench [100]	
DSC06705	16/07/2014	DSC F828	2448x3264	W	South trench complete. Concrete and bedding [100] over, [101] red sandy clay with occasional small flint nodules. Salt glazed pipe in foreground at a depth of 350mm [102] with concrete cap [103], cut [104] into [101].	PL 01
DSC06706	16/07/2014	DSC F828	2448x3264	W	Detail of south trench showing final depth against wall at 110mm	PL 02
DSC06707	16/07/2014	DSC F828	2448x3264	S	Eastern trench with the same sequence of deposit [100] over sandy clay [101]. A small lens of coal granules [105] was located towards the central south section of the trench under [100] which produced finds assemblage {1}. Finds assemblage 2 was retrieved from [101] at a depth of around 94mm. A layer of rounded stone ( <i>river tumbled</i> ) [106] was encountered at 1.5m towards the northern end.	PL 03
DSC06708	16/07/2014	DSC F828	3264x2448	W	Northern trench, sequence [100] over [101]. At a depth of 780mm was [107] a salt glaze pipe bottom right, cut [108] into [101]. Fill indiscernible. At 150mm a plastic pipe [110] in a cut [112] with a disturbed fill [111]	PL04



Find no	Area	Context	Description	Period	Date
1	Top spoil	105	3 sherds earthenware, patchy green glaze	20 <sup>th</sup>	16/07/14
2	Bottom of trench	101	2 shells		16/07/14