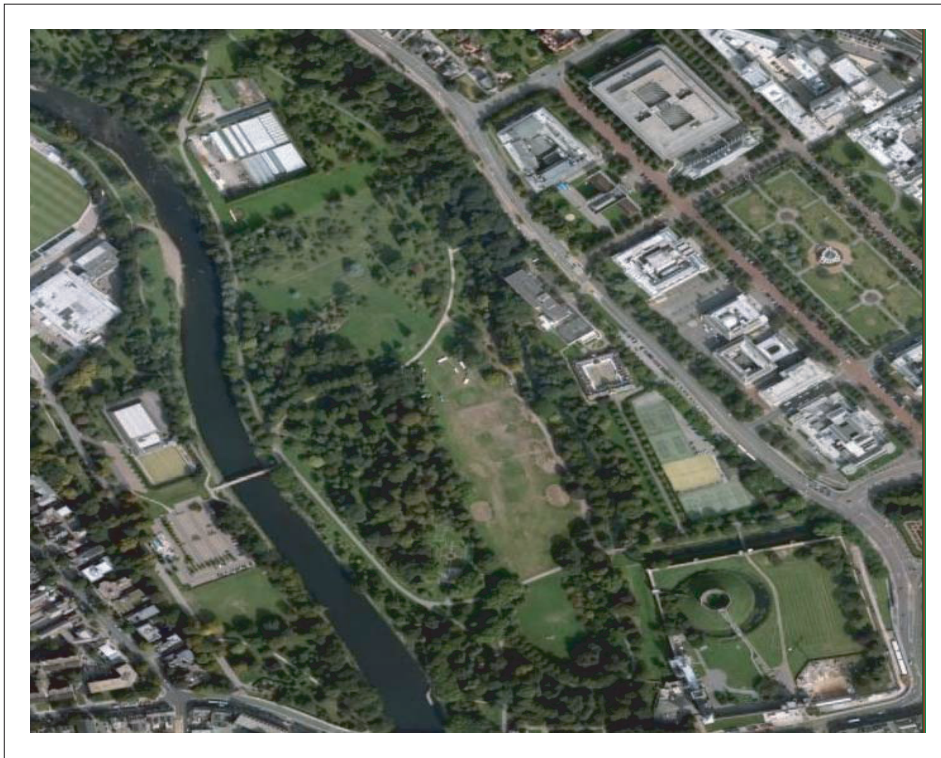




CAMBRIAN
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Bute Park Bridge, Cardiff

Archaeological Watching Brief



By
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Report No. 578

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Bute Park Bridge Cardiff

Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared For: Cardiff County Council

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Non technical summary

This report documents a watching brief undertaken by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd (CAP) for Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd at Bute Park, Cathays, Cardiff, South Glamorgan.

The report describes the observation of topsoil-stripping of an area of Bute Park, immediately west of North Road, Cardiff, carried out during the construction of a new access bridge spanning the disused Dock Feeder, between Bute Park and North Road. The groundworks were minimally intrusive and did not reveal evidence of archaeological activity.

1 Introduction

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In July 2009 CAP undertook a watching brief (CAP Specification: 1024) of the landscaping of a 13.5m x 3.5m rectangular area on the southern bank of the Dock Feeder in Bute Park, Cathays, Cardiff, at ST1776577254 (Figures 1 and 2).

1.1.2 The groundworks were carried out by the client, Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd, in accordance with the conditions specified by Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, curators of the project and archaeological advisors to the planning authority, Cardiff County Council. The Planning Application No. is 07/02649/C.

1.1.3 The Development entailed the construction of an above ground access route and bridge, supported on driven piles, with associated landscaping.

1.2 **Topology and Geology**

Cardiff lies on the mouth of the River Taff, in a flat coastal landscape with a mixed underlying geology. Bedrock in the area of Bute Park is chiefly mudstone overlain by alluvial clays.

1.3 **Archaeological and historical background**

Situated in central Cardiff, lying immediately west of Cardiff Castle and bordered in the west by the River Taff, Bute Park lies in an area of great historical and archaeological sensitivity. In 2004 the park was the subject of a full desk based assessment and field walkover survey, and a fluxgate gradiometer survey, both undertaken by CAP (Blockley, 2004). The following is an abbreviated and abridged summary of the major sites identified by this work.

This assessment identified over fifty extant and below ground sites of interest, including the remains of the Dominican Priory (a scheduled ancient monument), traces of post medieval boundary banks, and a mill leat, associated with two twelfth century corn mills (much of this leat was later re-used as the Dock Feeder).

Also noted were a number of Roman fort sites at the southern end of the park, with associated approach roads, which are likely to have attracted external settlements. A medieval road also runs from West Gate through the southern end of the park. These and other features are largely concentrated at the south end of the park, the nearest to the site of the watching brief being an early fourteenth century fulling mill approximately 220m south east of the site, on the line of the Dock Feeder.

Cartographic evidence showed that major re-routing of the River Taff had taken

place in the west. Therefore, most of the northern section of the park was identified as land reclaimed from the river.

The park in its current form was created in the nineteenth century as part of the Cardiff Castle pleasure gardens and is registered as a Grade 1 historic landscape on the Cadw/ICOMOS register of historic parks and gardens.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 To monitor all intrusive topsoiling in the area of development.

2.1.1 To record, and if necessary, to preserve by record, any archaeological remains exposed by the groundworks.

3 Watching brief methodology

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

3.1.1 The groundworks observed comprised the topsoil-stripping of a roughly rectangular area, measuring 47 square metres, aligned NW-SE along the southern bank of the Dock Feeder.

These works were carried out by Alun Griffiths (contractors) Ltd, using a mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth edged, 1.8m ditching bucket.

All work was supervised by K.W.Collins for CAP Ltd.

3.1.2 The depth of intrusion did not exceed 0.1m and at no point was subsoil revealed.

3.1.3 All works were carried out in accordance with the IFA's *Standards and Guidance: for an archaeological watching brief* and current Health and Safety legislation.

4 Watching brief results

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

4.1.1 Conditions during the watching brief were dry and warm. The ground was well drained and easily worked.

4.1.2 The watching brief impinged on the topsoil only. The depth removed did not exceed 0.1m.

4.2 Distribution of deposits

4.2.1 The topsoil comprised a dark brown/grey sandy clay silt, which extended to an unknown depth on either side of the gravel base of the towpath; the towpath was in the centre of the stripped area.

No archaeological features or artefacts were observed or recovered.

5 Discussion and Interpretation

5.1 Reliability of field investigation

5.1.1 The watching brief showed there to be no archaeological remains within the limited depth of the excavation (0.1m).

5.2 Interpretation and mitigation

5.2.1 As mentioned above, the depth of excavation was limited, making it impossible to draw firm conclusions as to the presence, or otherwise, of archaeological remains.

- 5.2.2 It should be stressed that, with the sole exception of pile-driving process, any and all sub-surface excavations carried out as part of the current development must be subject to full archaeological supervision. (CAP 2009). This represents a condition of the planning consent (Application No: 07/02649/C).
- 5.2.3 For the purposes of future mitigation it must be emphasised that the archaeological potential of this area remains unassessed. All future proposals for invasive development should be considered accordingly.

6 Acknowledgements

Thanks to Chris Smith for help and advice regarding the history of the area.

7 Bibliography

Blockley K, 2004 *Bute Park, Cardiff Archaeological Assessment*, CAP Report No 343.

CAP 2009, *Method Statement for an Archaeological Watching Brief: Cathays, Cardiff: Project 1024*, CAP International Report, April 2009.



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APPENDIX I:

Figures

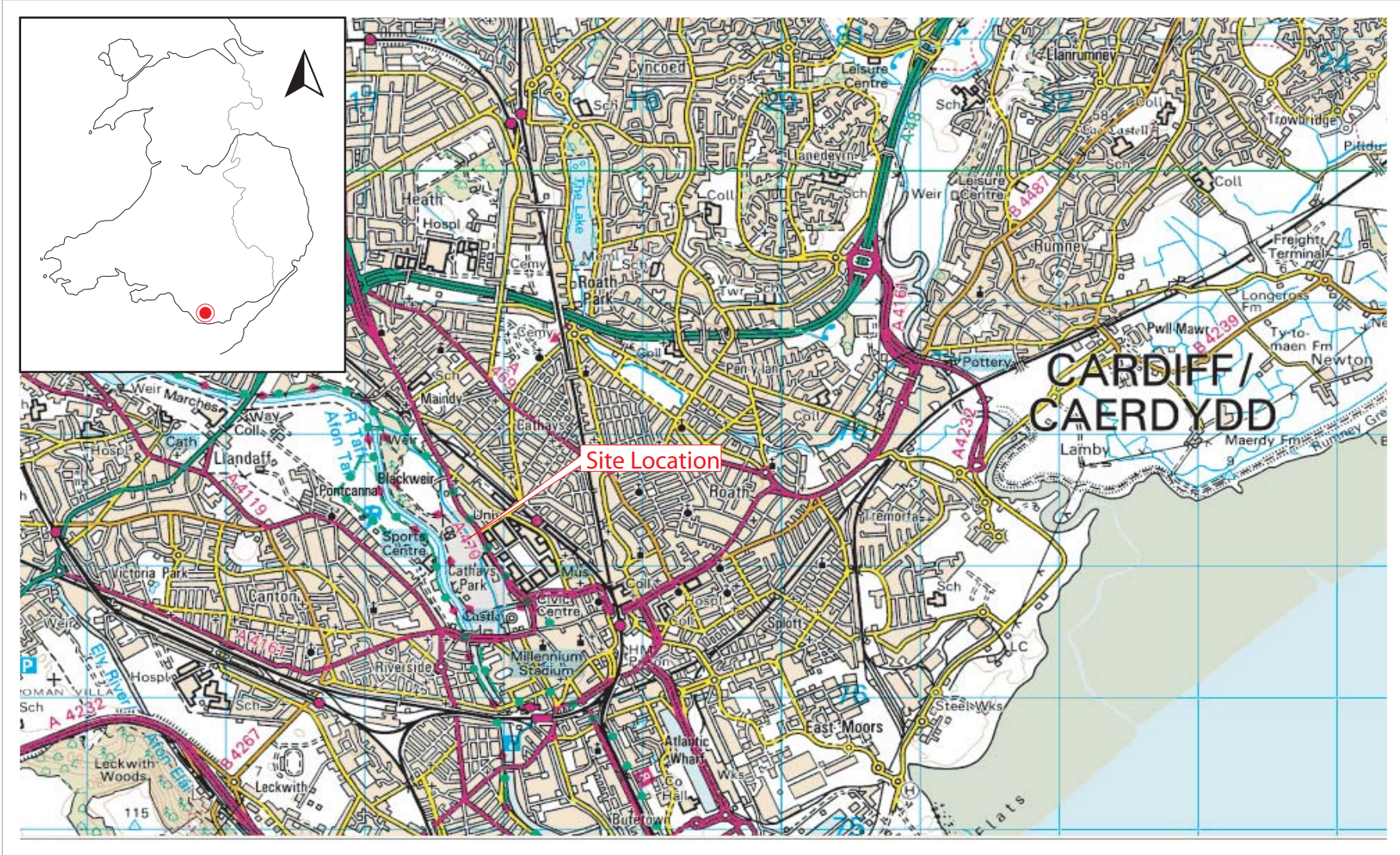


Fig. 01: Bute Park Bridge General Site Location Plan

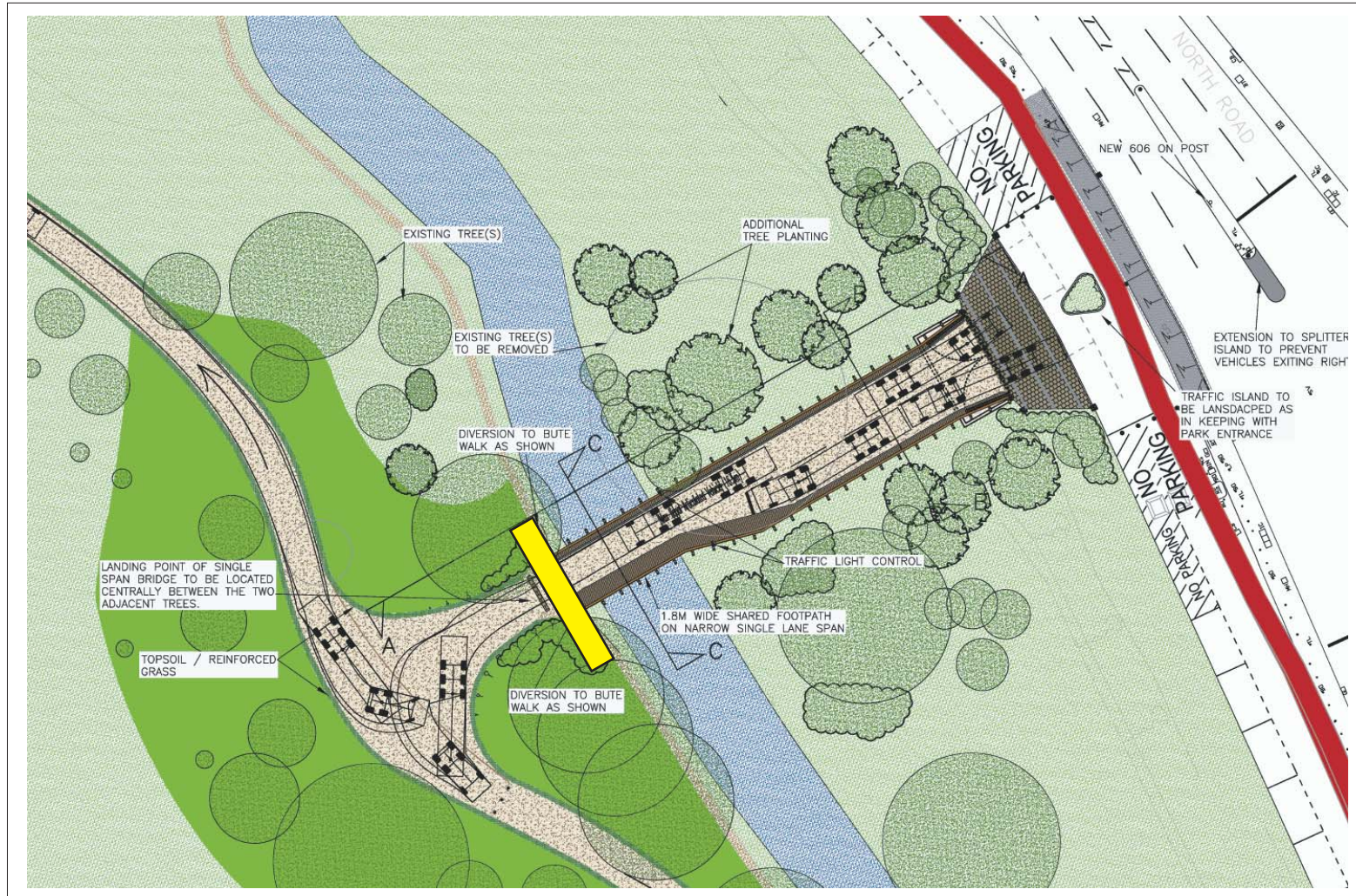


Figure 2: Proposed Bridge at Bute Park.. Area of Excavation 3.5m x 13.5m marked in yellow. Scale 1.500



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APPENDIX II:

Plates



Plate 1: Excavated area, Bute Park Bridge, facing west. Width 3.5m, Length 13.5m



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APPENDIX III:

Archive Cover Sheet

ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

Bute Park Bridge, Cathays, Cardiff

Site Name:	Bute Park Bridge
Site Code:	BPB/09/SPEC
PRN:	N/A
NPRN :	N/A
SAM:	N/A
Other Ref No:	NA
NGR:	ST17765 77254
Site Type:	Urban
Project Type:	Watching Brief
Project Officer:	Kev Collins
Project Dates:	July 2009
CAP report number:	578
Categories Present:	N/A
Location of Original Archive:	RCAHMW
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