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# Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire, LL18 5AG

September 2020  
V 1.0



Archaeological Watching Brief  
Project Code: A0209.1  
Report no. 0203

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# Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire LL18 5AG

## September 2020

Report no. 0203 v1.0

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Project Code: A0209.1

Date: 30/09/2020

Client: Mr. Jonathan Francis

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# Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire LL18 5AG

## September 2020

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## 1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

*Comisiynwyd Aeon Archaeology gan Mr Jonathan Francis, i gynnal briff gwylio archaeolegol yn ystod gwaith daear a gysylltir â chodi un estyniad daulawr newydd ar dir tyn ôl i Plas Llewelyn, Lôn Hylas, Rhuddlan, Sir Ddynbich, LL18 5AG.*

*Roedd canlyniadau'r briff gwylio yn ymwneud â chloddio ffosydd sylfaen ar gyfer yr estyniad deulawr i gefn Plas Llewelyn. Ni welwyd unrhyw nodweddion archeolegol yn ystod y briff gwylio gan fod y pridd wedi'i dynnu o'r ardal o'r blaen i y dywod naturiol.*

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Jonathan Francis to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the erection of a new two-storey extension and store to the rear of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire, LL18 5AG.

The results of the watching brief concerned the excavation of foundation trenches for the two-storey extension to the rear of Plas Llewelyn. No archaeological features were observed during the watching brief due to the areas having been previously stripped to the natural sand layer.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Jonathan Francis, hereafter the Client, to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the erection of a new two-storey extension and store to the rear of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire (NGR SJ 02749 77930).

An outline planning application for the erection of the new store was granted in 2016 (44/2016/0628/PF) with a separate application being made for the two-storey extension in 2018 (44/2018/0598/PF) and the following condition with regards to archaeology was assigned to the full planning permission:

### Condition 3

*The developer shall ensure that a suitable qualified archaeological contractor is present during the undertaking of any ground works in the development area so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief must meet the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs, The Local Planning Authority must be informed in writing at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development of the name of the said archaeological contractor. A copy of the resulting report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust. (41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR Email: markwalters@cpat.org.uk Tel: 01938 553670). After approval by the Local Planning Authority, a copy of the report and resulting archive should also be sent to the Historic Environment Record Officer, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the regional Historic Environment Record.*

### Reason

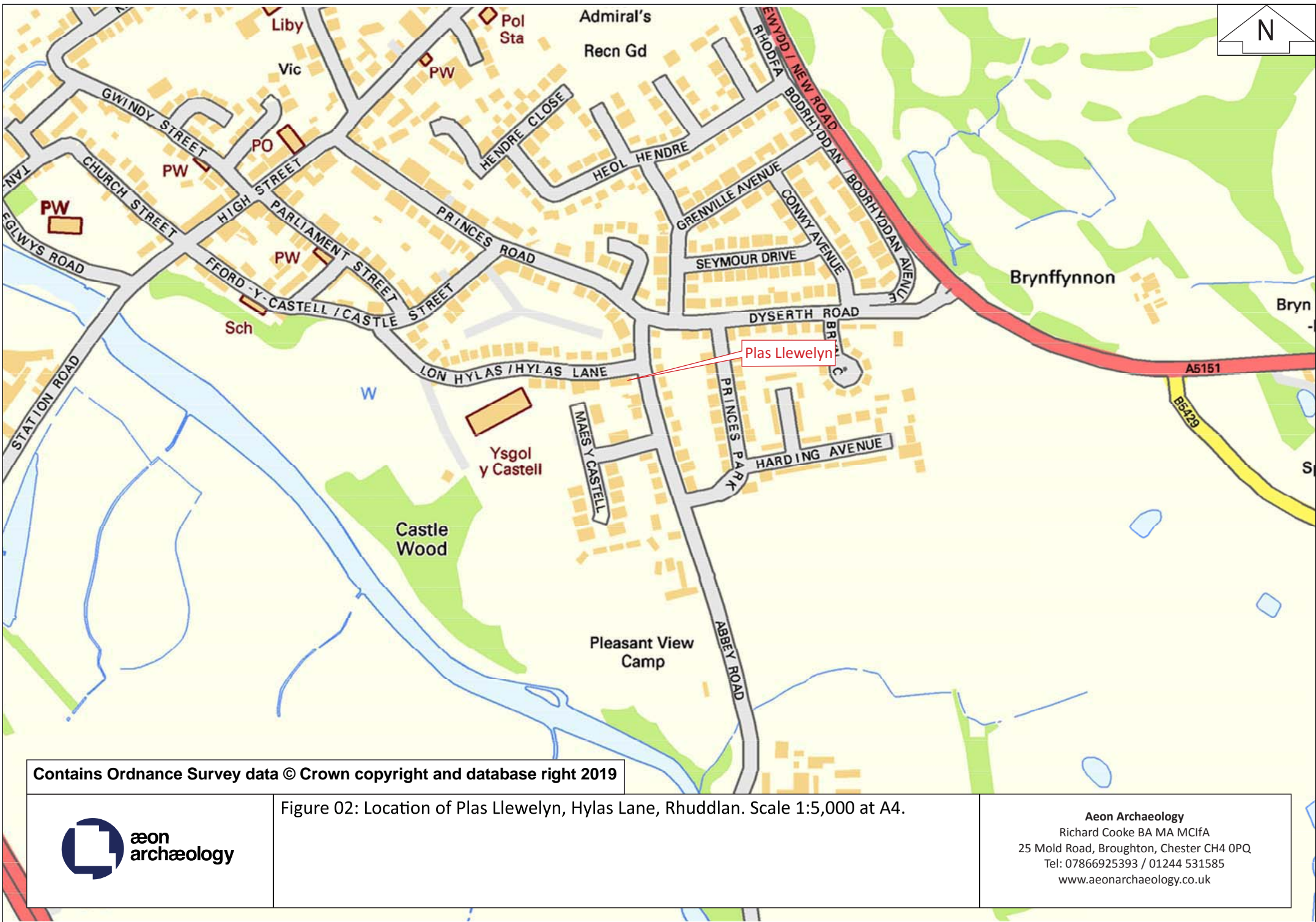
*To secure preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may be revealed during ground excavations for the consented development and in compliance with Policy HE2 of the adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan.*

A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was produced by Aeon Archaeology in May 2019 (appendix I) which outlined the principle historic interest of the site, the aims and objectives of the project, and methods by which they would be met.

The watching brief was undertaken as Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) event Primary reference number (PRN) 152313.

The work will adhere to the guidelines specified in Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014).

The watching brief for the groundworks associated with the erection of the two-storey extension and store (44/2018/0598/PF) was undertaken on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019 and the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and its findings provide the subject for this report.



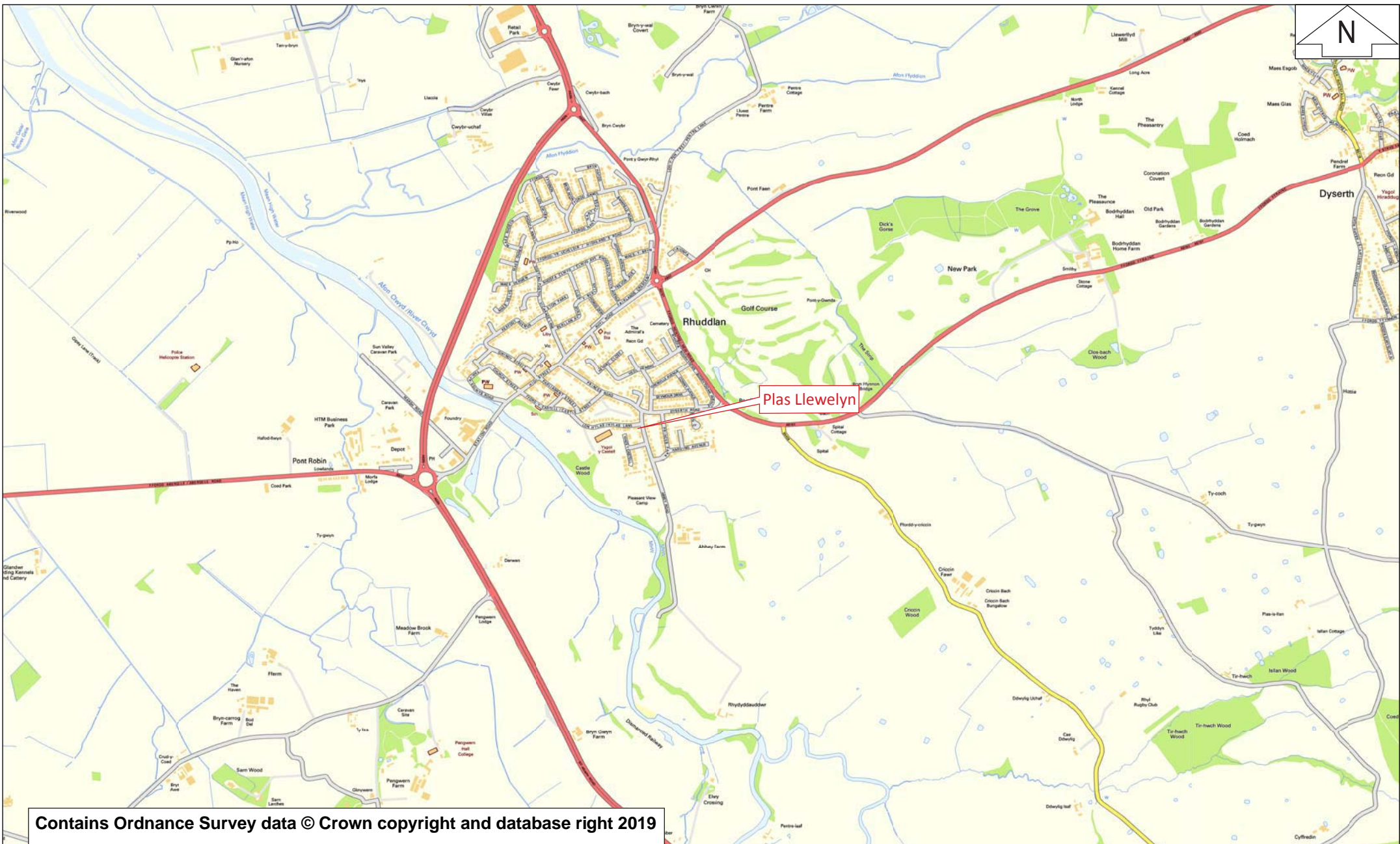
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Figure 02: Location of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan. Scale 1:5,000 at A4.



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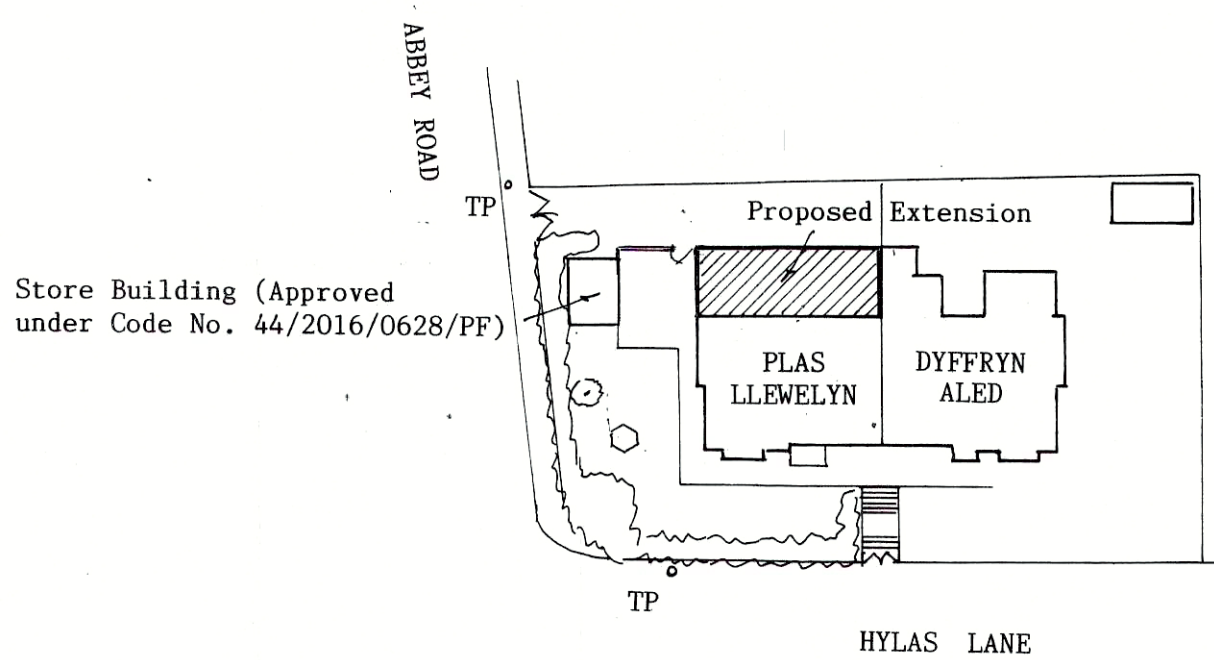


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Figure 01: Location of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan. Scale 1:20,000 at A4.



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Store Building (Approved under Code No. 44/2016/0628/PF)

SITE PLAN SCALE - 1:500



Figure 03: Location of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan. Scale 1:500 at A4.

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### 3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

At an international level there are two principal agreements concerning the protection of the cultural heritage and archaeological resource – the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, commonly known as the Valetta Convention. The latter was agreed by the Member States of the Council of Europe in 1992, and also became law in 1992. It has been ratified by the UK, and responsibility for its implementation rests with Department for Culture Media and Sport.

The management and protection of the historic environment in Wales is set out within the following legislation:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (As amended)
- The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (As amended)

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act is the most recent legislation for the management of the Historic Environment and amends two pieces of UK legislation – the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The new Act has three main aims:

- to give more effective protection to listed buildings and scheduled monuments;
- to improve the sustainable management of the historic environment; and
- to introduce greater transparency and accountability into decisions taken on the historic environment.

With respect to the cultural heritage of the built environment the Planning (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) Act 1990 applies. The Act sets out the legislative framework within which works and development affecting listed buildings and conservation areas must be considered. This states that:-

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses” (s66(1))

Other known sites of cultural heritage/archaeological significance can be entered onto county-based Historic Environment Records under the Town and Country Planning 1995.

Planning Policy Wales sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. Chapter 6 covers the historic environment and emphasises that the positive management of change in the

historic environment is based on a full understanding of the nature and significance of historic assets and the recognition of the benefits that they can deliver in a vibrant culture and economy.

Various principles and policies related to cultural heritage and archaeology are set out in the Planning Policy Wales which guide local planning authorities with respect to the wider historic environment.

The following paragraphs from Planning Policy Wales are particularly relevant and are quoted in full:

Paragraph 6.1.5 concerns planning applications:

*The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations. The historic environment is a finite, non-renewable and shared resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales. It contributes to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life. The historic environment can only be maintained as a resource for future generations if the individual historic assets are protected and conserved. Cadw's published Conservation Principles highlights the need to base decisions on an understanding of the impact a proposal may have on the significance of an historic asset.*

Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TAN). Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment contains detailed guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan, preparation and decision making on planning and listed building consent applications. TAN 24 replaces the following Welsh Office Circulars:

- 60/96 Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology
- 61/96 Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas
- 1/98 Planning and the Historic Environment: Directions by the Secretary of State for Wales

#### 4.0 PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the watching brief works was to characterise the known, or potential archaeological remains uncovered during groundworks associated with the initial topsoiling and excavation of foundation trenches in advance of the erection of a new two-storey extension and store to the rear and east (respectively) of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire. The broad aims of the archaeological watching brief were to:

- To allow, within the resources available, the opportunity to gain information about and record the presence/absence, nature and date of archaeological remains on the Site affected by excavations and groundworks, the presence and nature of which could not be established with sufficient confidence in advance of works which may disturb them.
- To provide the facility to signal to the relevant authorities, before irreversible impact to remains that an archaeological and/or historic find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are inadequate to support their treatment to an adequate and satisfactory standard.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to:

- To observe and recover any artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To record the location, dimensions and nature of any deposits, features, structures or artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To recover samples of any deposits considered to have potential for analysis for palaeoenvironmental data should the opportunity arise.

The management of this project has followed the procedures laid out in the standard professional guidance *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006; rev 2015), and in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Archaeological Watching Brief* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014). Five stages are specified:

Phase 1: project planning

Phase 2: fieldwork

Phase 3: assessment of potential for analysis and revised project design

Phase 4: analysis and report preparation

Phase 5: dissemination

The current document reports on the phase 4 analysis and states the means to be used to disseminate the results. In this instance it was not necessary to prepare a revised project design as alluded to in Phase 3; as there was a paucity of evidence recovered in Phase 2 in terms of archaeological features and therefore did not warrant any alteration to the initial project design.

The site is to be set in its landscape context so that its full character and importance can be understood. All the information is to be presented in a report that will be held by the Clwyd-Powys

Archaeological Trust (CPAT) Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Monument Record of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) for long term archiving so that it can be accessible to the public and future researchers. This phase of work also includes archiving the material and documentary records from the project.

## 5.0 METHODOLOGY – ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

### 5.1 Watching Brief

The ClfA maintains a standard for archaeological watching brief which states that:

*An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of ClfA.*

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the ClfA as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (ClfA 2014a). The watching brief will take place within a specified area within the Site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

The ClfA further identifies the purpose of a watching brief as allowing, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.

It is also important to note that a watching brief provides an opportunity, if needed, for a signal to be made to all interested parties, before the destruction of the archaeological materials, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

A watching brief is, therefore, not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

All excavations were undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. A photographic record was maintained throughout, using a digital SLR camera (Canon 6000D) set to maximum resolution and any subsurface remains were to be recorded photographically, with detailed notations and measured drawings being undertaken if required.

In the event of archaeological discovery features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded using Aeon Archaeology pro-formas, digital photographs, and plan and section drawings taken at a suitable scale (usually 1:20 for plan drawings and 1:10 for section drawings).

The archive produced is held at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0209.1**.

### 5.2 Data Collection from Site Records

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and precisely cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that the Clwyd-Powys

Archaeological Trust (CPAT) Historic Environment Record (HER) can curate them in their active digital storage facility.

### **5.3 Artefact Methodology**

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. They would be bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the archaeological watching brief. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Client and the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) Development Control Archaeologist. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

### **5.4 Environmental Samples Methodology**

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

### **5.5 Report and dissemination**

A full archive including plans, photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced, and will be lodged within a suitable repository to be agreed with the archaeological curator within six months of the completion of the project.

A draft copy of the report has been sent to the client and upon written approval from them digital copies of the report will be sent to the regional HER, the CPAT Development Control Archaeologist, and will be logged with the RCAHMW. Copies of all notes, plans, and photographs arising from the watching brief will be stored at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0209.1** with the originals being lodged with the RCAHMW.



## **6.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

Information retained within the Regional Historic Environment Record indicates that the development was located within the medieval historic core of Rhuddlan. At the suggested location for the extension the plot fell within 40 meters of the Norman Borough settlement which is a scheduled monument.

Archaeology spanning the periods from the Bronze Age through to the medieval period were located during investigations at the former Abbey Nurseries development site just 30 meters to the southwest. Consequently it was considered that there would be a high potential for sub-surface archaeology in this area.

## **7.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS**

### **7.1 The Documentary Archive**

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological watching brief:

Watching brief day sheets	2
Context Sheets	0
Digital photographs	32

### **7.2 Environmental Samples**

No environmental samples were taken as part of the watching brief as no suitable archaeological deposits were encountered.

### **7.3 Artefacts**

No archaeological artefacts were collected during the watching brief.

## **8.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

### **Overview**

The initial phase of watching brief was maintained by Catherine Jones BSc MSc, archaeological contractor at Aeon Archaeology. This site day was attended on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019 and the weather conditions were overcast. The second phase of archaeological watching brief was maintained by Josh Dean BA, archaeological contractor at Aeon Archaeology. This site day was attended on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and the weather conditions were once more overcast.

### **The Extension**

The initial watching brief was maintained during the excavation of a foundation trench for the erection of a two-storey extension to the rear of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire. This foundation trench was excavated in three parts, labelled here as Trench A, Trench B and Trench C. There were no archaeological features or artefacts encountered during the watching brief.

### **Trench A**

This trench was orientated north to south running perpendicular to the house and measured 2.70m long by 0.80m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.90m. The trench was excavated through 0.90m of soft, dark grey-brown, sand-silt (102) topsoil layer which had frequent red brick, mortar and stone tile inclusions, onto the mid orange-yellow natural glacial sand substrata (101). No in-situ archaeological remains were encountered during the excavation of this trench and no archaeological artefacts were encountered, excluding the fragments of modern frogged red bricks. The friable nature of the topsoil deposit (102) resulted in the collapse of the east facing section which was situated beneath an unsupported modern brick wall of an adjacent outbuilding. This wall was deemed unstable and in accordance with health and safety protocol it was decided that Trench A would not be entered for recording purposes.

### **Trench B**

This trench was orientated west to east running parallel to the house and measured 8m long by 0.80m wide, though a section collapse between 2m and 3m created a max width of 1.30m. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.60m. It cut through 0.50m of soft, dark grey-brown, sand-silt (102) topsoil layer which had frequent red brick, mortar and stone tile inclusions. Beneath this the trench cut through 1.1m of the mid orange-yellow natural glacial sand substrata (101). No in situ archaeological remains were encountered during the excavation of this trench and no archaeological artefacts were encountered excluding the fragments of modern frogged red bricks. The depth of Trench B (1.6m) and the friable nature of both the topsoil (102) and natural sand substrata (101) meant that it was not possible to enter Trench B for recording purposes.

### **Trench C**

This trench was orientated north to south running perpendicular to the house and measured 2.70m long by 0.80m wide. Following discussion with the Development Control Archaeologist at CPAT, and given the poor potential for archaeological remains evidenced through the excavations in Trench A

and Trench B, it was decided that the excavation of Trench C would not be monitored as part of the archaeological watching brief.

### **The Store**

The second phase of watching brief was maintained during the excavation of the foundation trenches for a store located to the east of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire. This foundation trench was excavated in four parts, labelled here as Trench D, Trench E, Trench F and Trench G. There were no archaeological features or artefacts encountered during the watching brief.

### **Trenches D, E, F & G**

Trenches D & F were orientated north to south and measured 4.20m long by 0.80m wide, whereas Trenches G & E were orientated east to west and measured 3.90m long by 0.80m wide – all the trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.20m. The trench was excavated through 0.45m of soft, dark grey-brown, silt-clay imported topsoil layer which had frequent red brick, mortar and stone tile inclusions, onto a 0.73m deep deposit of mid-grey-brown silt-clay-sand, buried topsoil with occasional post-medieval ceramic fragments and abundant root action. This lay above a >0.02m mid orange-yellow natural glacial sand substrata. No in-situ archaeological remains were encountered during the excavation of this trench and no archaeological artefacts were encountered.



**Plate 01:** Pre excavation shot of extension area at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the east - scale 1m



**Plate 02:** Trench A (showing section collapse) at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the south - scale 1m



**Plate 03:** Trench B at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the east - scale 1m



**Plate 04:** Section of Trench A (showing collapsing section) at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the east - no scale





**Plate 05:** Section of Trench B at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the south - scale 1m



**Plate 06:** Pre excavation shot of store area at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the west - scale 1m



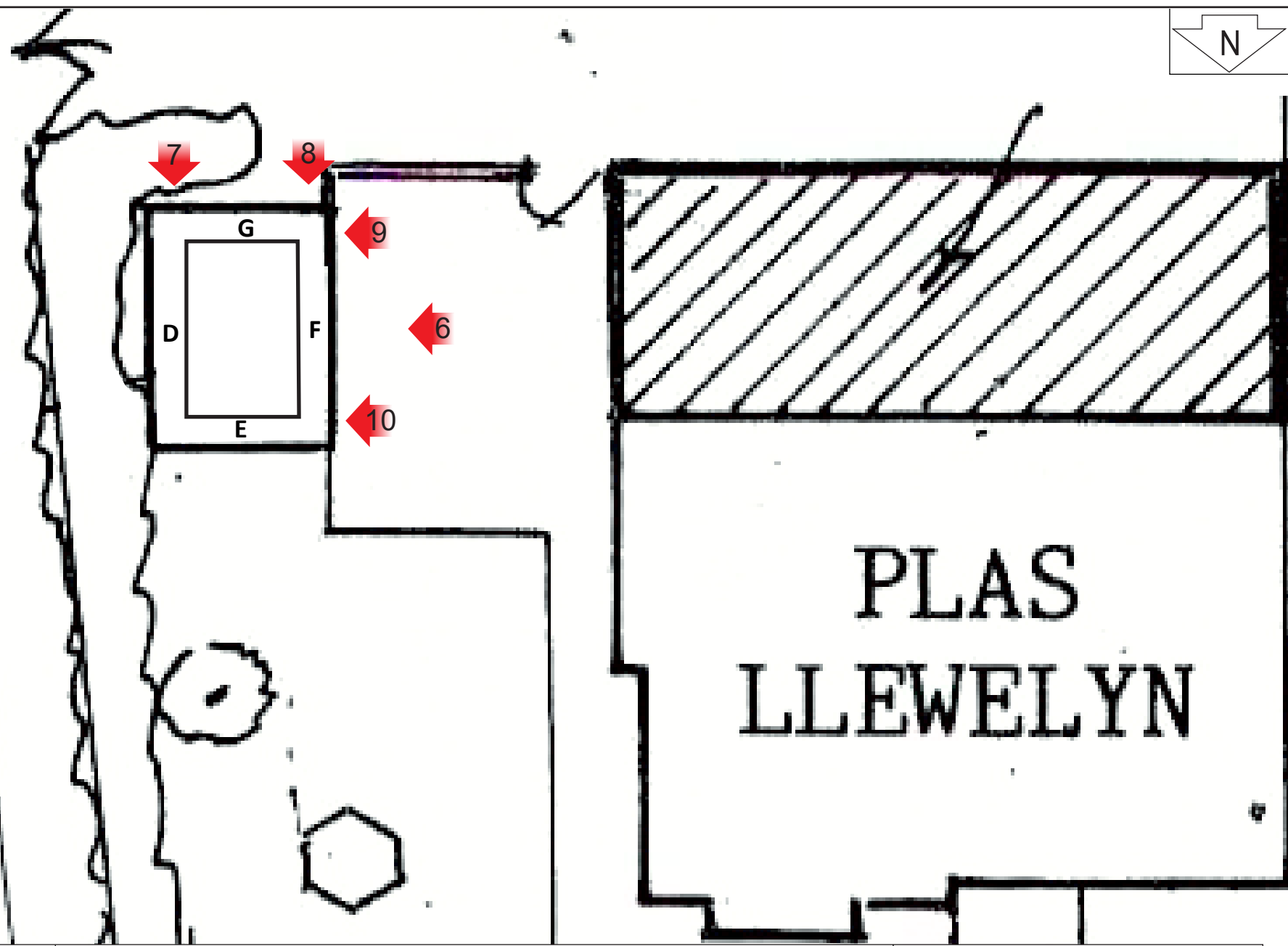
**Plate 07:** Pre excavation shot of Trench D at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the west - scale 1m




**Plate 08:** Pre excavation shot of Trench D at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the west - scale 1m



**Plate 09:** Pre excavation shot of Trench D at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire - from the west - scale 1m



Key

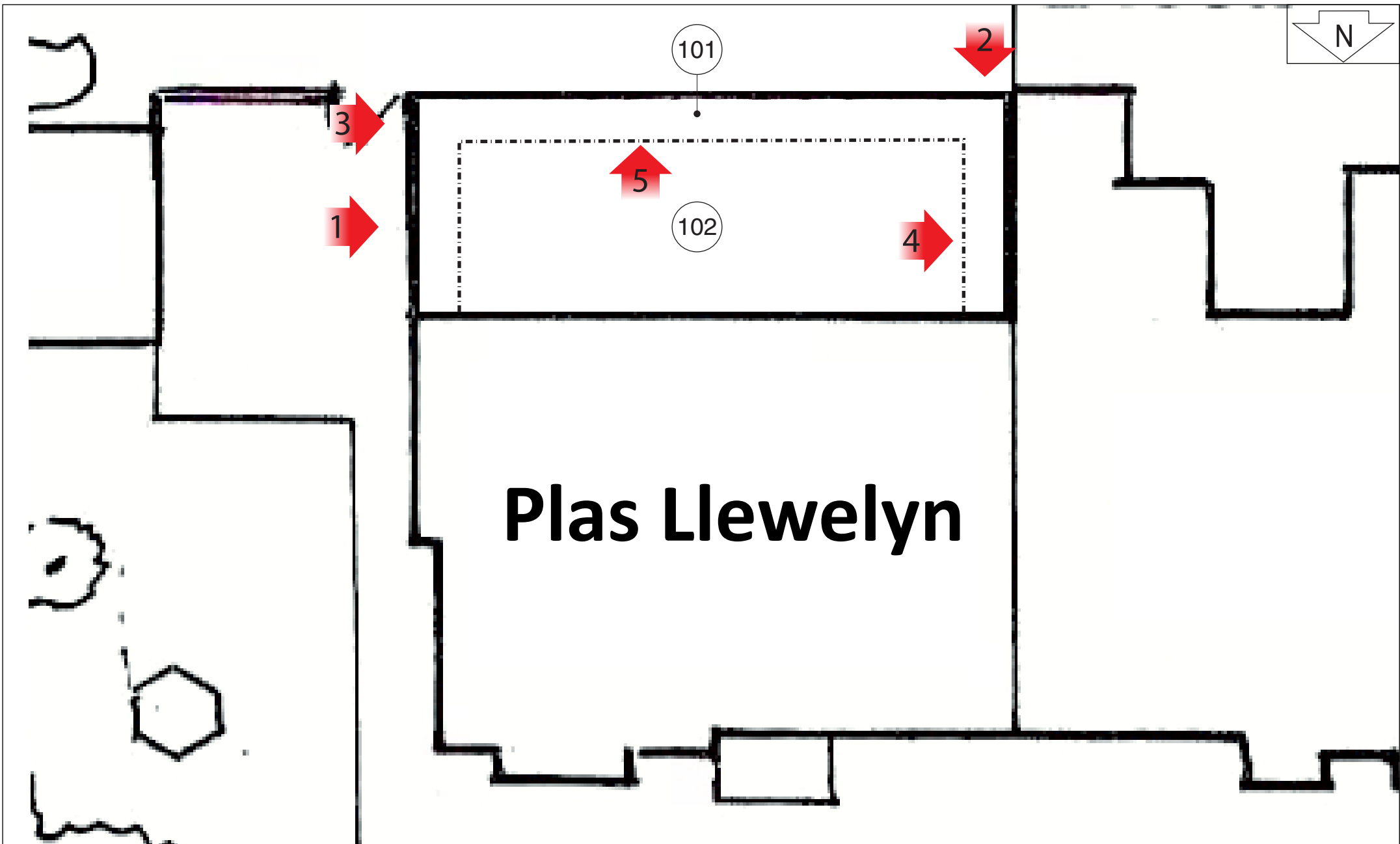


Direction of Photograph

**Figure 05:** Location of photographic plates (2) at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire. Scale 1:100 at A4.



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**Figure 04:** Location of photographic plates at Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire.  
Scale 1:100 at A4.

## **9.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the erection of a new two-storey extension and new store to the rear and east of Plas Llewelyn, Hylas Lane, Rhuddlan, Denbighshire revealed no in-situ archaeological features or artefacts aside from fragments of modern frogged red brick.

The stratigraphy revealed in the foundation trenches showed that the area had been previously stripped onto the natural glacial substrata thus removing any potential for preserved archaeological remains in immediate proximity of Plas Llewelyn.



## 10.0 SOURCES

British Geological Survey website. [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk).

British Ordnance survey maps; SJ07NE, SJ07NW, SJ07SE and SJ07SW.

English Heritage, (2006, rev 2015). Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE).

**APPENDIX I: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

