

**13 St Ann Street
Chepstow
Monmouthshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Sweco UK Ltd

on behalf of
Wales and West Utilities

CA Project: CR0185
CA Report: CR0185_1

September 2019



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Chepstow
Monmouthshire

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SUMMARY

Project Name: 13 St Ann Street
Location: Chepstow, Monmouthshire
NGR: 353668 194217
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 10 September 2019
Location of Archive: To be deposited with the National Museum Wales
Site Code: SASC19

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in September 2019 during groundworks associated with the installation of a new gas main at 13 St Ann Street, Chepstow, Monmouthshire.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.

Roedd Cotswold Archaeology wedi cynnal gorchwyl gwyllo archaeolegol ym mis Medi 2019 yn ystod gwaith paratoi'r pridd a oedd yn gysylltiedig â gosod prif beipen nwy newydd yn 13 St Ann Street, Cas-gwent, Sir Fynwy.

Ni welwyd unrhyw nodweddion na darnau o ddiddordeb archaeolegol yn ystod gwaith paratoi'r pridd, ac ni ddaethpwyd o hyd i unrhyw arteffactau.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In September 2019 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Sweco UK Ltd on behalf of Wales and West Utilities at 13 St Ann Street, Chepstow, Monmouthshire (centred at NGR: 353668 194217; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken following recommendations made by Hannah Bowden, Archaeological Planning Officer, Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT).

1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2019) and approved by GGAT. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014).

The site

1.3 The site comprised of a domestic dwelling and garden located alongside St Ann Street. The new gas main was located largely within the boundary of 13 St Ann Street, with a connection trench extending to the existing gas main along St Ann Street. The site lay at approximately 10m AOD and was broadly level.

1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as argillaceous limestone, cementstone and calcilutite of the Llanelly Formation, formed during the Carboniferous Period (BGS 2019). The natural substrate was not observed during the watching brief due to the limited depth of groundworks or due to the level of modern truncation encountered.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 No previous archaeological surveys have been undertaken within the site, which lies within the Lower Wye Valley Registered Historic Landscape. The medieval town of Chepstow is also an archaeologically sensitive area, with archaeological remains ranging from the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods.

2.2 Evidence of Roman occupation within Chepstow is sparse, with three Roman cremation urns identified at the Cattle Market, c. 300m to the south of site (Evans 2001), two coin hoards found in the Chepstow area and limited occupation evidence was identified during a watching brief at 21 Bridge Street, 100m west of the current

site (*ibid.*). It is suggested that the Chepstow promontory may have been the location of an early Roman fort guarding a ferry crossing over the River Wye (Shoesmith 1991), although there is no current direct archaeological evidence to support this (ADAS 2014).

- 2.3 There is no further evidence for occupation in the town area between the Roman and Norman periods, although it has been suggested that the area centred on the High Street (c. 400m to the south-west of site) has elements of a pre-Norman layout. In the years following the Norman Conquest the construction of the castle is recorded (located c. 250m to the west of the current site), followed by the founding of a Priory (*ibid.*). The area between the castle and the Priory, connected by Upper Church Street, would be the most obvious location for settlement, and the grid of roads running at right angles to Upper Church Street may have supported this early town development. An archaeological evaluation undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology at 4 Church Road (CA 2004), c. 80m to the south of the current site, identified structural remains of 13th century date, supporting this hypothesis.
- 2.4 The town expanded rapidly in the 11th century and continued to increase in wealth and size up to the time of the Black Death. By the 14th century the town had a thriving market and port, growing in size until expansion slowed considerably in the post-medieval period; the town has sustained only minor expansion since the earliest surviving town plan was drawn by Millerd in 1685.
- 2.5 The current building of 13 St Ann Street is Grade II Listed (CADW ref: 2578) and is of late 18th century date. It was originally built as a tavern and was later converted into a filterworks and then into its current use as a block of flats.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;



- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2019). An archaeologist was present during all intrusive groundworks, which consisted of the hand-excavation of five trenches along the line of the proposed new gas main, broadly following the course of a foul water service (see Fig 2 for the location and extent of observed groundworks).
- 4.2 The site archive will be deposited with the National Museum Wales. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW) maintained by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) in accordance with RCAHMW guidelines. This will include the upload of a digital (PDF) copy of the final report which will appear on the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) website once the NMRW record has been verified.

5. RESULTS (FIG. 2)

- 5.1 The five observed trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m below present ground level (bpgl). The following is a summary of the results of the watching brief; detailed context descriptions can be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The general stratigraphic sequence encountered consisted of the footings of the adjacent upstanding walls (103, 303 and 403) which were butted by levelling, bedding or service trench backfill deposits, which measured between 0.4 and 0.8m in thickness. These were sealed by modern surfaces, which typically measured 0.15m in thickness.
- 5.3 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the course of the groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see Archaeological Background above) the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits is probably due to the limited depth of groundworks; archaeological features identified cutting the natural at 21 Bridge Street to the west, for example, were sealed by up to 2m of mixed made ground and levelling material, of post-Roman to modern date. The lack of archaeology may also be due to modern truncation from the installation of existing services.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Anthony Beechey. The report was written by Anthony Beechey. The illustrations were prepared by Rosanna Price. The archive has been compiled by Anthony Beechey and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Alex Thomson.

8. REFERENCES

ADAS 2014 *Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment: Fairfield Mabey Site, Chepstow, Monmouthshire*

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 11 September 2019

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004 4 *Church Road, Chepstow, Monmouthshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, CA typescript report **04121**

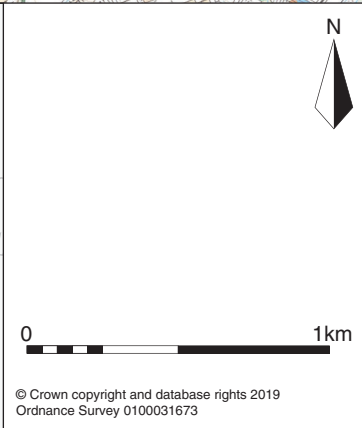
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2019 *13 St Ann Street, Chepstow, Monmouthshire: Written Scheme of investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Evans, E. M. 2001 *Romano-British southeast Wales settlement survey: Final report*

Shoosmith, R. 1991 *Excavations at Chepstow 1973-74*. Cambrian Archaeological Society, Bangor

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)
1	100	Surface		Pathway	Modern concrete slabs and gravel bedding	>2.3	>0.35	0.15
1	101	Deposit		Make-up	Mixed Demo and redeposited garden soil; dark grey brown, sandy silt	>2.3	>0.35	>0.4
1	103	Structure		Wall	Main external property wall; limestone and red brick	>2.3	n/a	>0.55
2	200	Surface		Ornamental garden surface	Modern graded gravel and membrane	>1.5	>0.35	0.15
2	201	Deposit		Make-up	Same as 101; Mixed Demo and redeposited garden soil; dark grey brown, sandy silt	>1.5	>0.35	>0.4
2	202	Structure		Drain/culvert	Red brick-built sewer including ceramic pipe	1.1	n/a	>0.4
3	300	Surface		Ornamental garden surface	Same as 200; modern graded gravel and membrane	>1.5	>1.1	0.14
3	301	Deposit		Make-up	Same as 101; mixed Demo and redeposited garden soil; dark grey brown, sandy silt	>1.5	>1.1	>0.46
3	302	Structure		Drain/culvert	Same as 202; Red brick-built sewer including ceramic pipe	>0.4	n/a	>0.6
3	303	Structure		Wall	External rear wall of building and footings; roughly hewn limestone blocks with mid yellow lime mortar	>1.1	n/a	>0.6
4	400	Surface		Ornamental garden surface	Same as 200; Modern graded gravel and membrane	>1.4	>1	0.14
4	401	Deposit		Make-up	Same as 101; mixed Demo and redeposited garden soil; dark grey brown, sandy silt	>1.4	>1	>0.46
4	402	Drain		Sewer Pipe	Modern ceramic sewer pipe	>1.1	n/a	0.4
4	403	Structure		Wall	Red brick wall and footings for building extension	>1.4	n/a	>0.4
5	500	Surface		Road	Tarmac road surface	>2	>0.8	0.12
5	501	Deposit		Make-up	Levelling deposit for road; mixed rubble hardcore and type 1 stone chippings	>2	>0.8	>0.8
5	502	Fill	503	Fill	Type 1 stone chippings and main gas pipe	>0.8	>0.75	>0.68
5	503	Cut		Cut	Cut of gas main; E/W aligned, vertical sided	>0.8	>0.75	>0.68





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PROJECT TITLE
 13 St Ann Street, Chepstow,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	RP	PROJECT NO.	CR0185	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	12.09.19	
APPROVED BY	ADT	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	1



- site boundary
- observed groundworks
- structure
- modern



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PROJECT TITLE
13 St Ann Street, Chepstow, Monmouthshire

FIGURE TITLE
Location of observed groundworks

DRAWN BY	RP	PROJECT NO.	CR0185	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	12.09.19	2
APPROVED BY	ADT	SCALE@A3	1:150	

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