

# **Excavation of Existing Power Cable and Trenching at Caerleon House Nursing Home, Goldcroft Common, Caerleon, Newport**

## **Archaeological Watching Brief**



Prepared  
for

**Western Power Distribution**

By



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<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Summary .....	1
1 Introduction .....	5
1.1 Project Background and Proposals.....	5
1.2 Objectives.....	5
1.3 Legislative Framework.....	6
1.4 Location, Topography and Geology.....	6
1.5 History and Archaeology .....	7
2 Methodology.....	10
3 Results.....	11
3.2 Stratigraphic Evidence (Figure 1, Plates 1–7) .....	11
3.3 Finds (Plate 8).....	12
4 Conclusion.....	13
5 Bibliography .....	14
6 Appendices.....	16
6.1 Appendix I: Figures.....	16
6.2 Appendix II: Plates.....	18
6.3 Appendix III: Context Inventory .....	22
6.4 Appendix IV: Finds Inventory .....	23

## **Figures**

Figure 1. Plan showing location of excavation area .....	17
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## **Plates**

Plate 1. northeast facing section towards north-western end of trench, showing deposit (001), (002), (003) and (004) .....	18
Plate 2. East-facing section towards western end of trench, showing cut [006], power cable [005] and fill (007).....	18
Plate 3. Oblique shot of inspection chamber [008] within the west-facing section of trench	19
Plate 4. South-facing section of northern end of trench, showing concrete (010) below topsoil (001) .....	19
Plate 5. West-facing section towards east end of trench, showing wall foundation [011] and gully pot [009] .....	20
Plate 6. Plan view of centre of excavation trench (view north) .....	20
Plate 7. Plan view of excavation trench (view northeast).....	21

Plate 8. Fragment of Roman *imbrex* tile collected from deposit (004) (S/F1)..... 21

## **Summary**

*Comisiynwyd Archeoleg Mynydd Du Cyf gan Western Power Distribution i gwblhau briff gwyllo archeolegol yn ystod gwaith daear yn gysylltiedig â'r cloddiad bae asiad gyda'r bwriad o ddatgelu cebl pŵer sy'n bodoli eisoes ynghyd â ffosio ychwanegol yn rhedeg i fyny at ymyl orllewinol yr adeilad mwyaf deheuol at Cartref Nyrso Caerleon House, Goldcroft Common, Caerllion, Casnewydd, NP18 1BE.*

*Mae'r gwaith daear arfaethedig wedi'i leoli'n uniongyrchol o fewn ffiniau Heneb Hynafol Gofrestredig (SAMMm246), sy'n cynnwys olion sy'n gysylltiedig â barics gogledd-orllewinol Caer Llang Rufeinig Caerllion. Rhoddwyd caniatâd heneb gofrestredig gan Cadw ar yr amod bod briff gwyllo archeolegol yn digwydd yn ystod y gwaith daear hwn.*

*Roedd mwyafrif yr adneuoedd a'r nodweddion y daethpwyd ar eu traws yn ystod y briff gwyllo yn fodern ac yn deillio o osod gwasanaethau sy'n rhedeg i mewn i adeiladau presennol Cartref Nyrso Caerleon House. Fodd bynnag, gwelwyd blaendal dymchwel sy'n gysylltiedig â gweithgaredd Ôl-Rufeinig dros safle'r Gaer Llang Rufeinig ar waelod y ffos gloddio, a daethpwyd o hyd i ddarn o deilsen imbrex Rufeinig hefyd.*

*Mae'r adroddiad presennol yn nodi canlyniadau'r briff gwyllo archeolegol yn unol â Safon a Chanllawiau ar gyfer Briff Gwyllo Archeolegol gan y Sefydliad Siartredig Archeolegwyr, cyhoeddwyd 2014.*

*Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Western Power Distribution to carry out an archaeological watching brief during ground works associated with the excavation of a joint bay intended to expose an existing power cable along with additional trenching running up to the western edge of the southernmost building at Caerleon House Nursing Home, Goldcroft Common, Caerleon, Newport, NP18 1BE.*

*The proposed ground works are situated directly within the confines of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAMMm246), which comprises remains connected with the north-western barracks of the Roman Legionary Fortress of Caerleon. Scheduled monument consent was granted by Cadw on the condition that an archaeological watching brief takes place during these ground works.*

*The majority of deposits and features encountered during the watching brief were modern and derived from the laying of services running into the current buildings of the Caerleon House Nursing Home. However, a demolition deposit associated with Post-Roman activity over the site of the Roman Legionary Fortress was observed at the base of the excavation area, and a fragment of a Roman imbrex tile was also recovered.*

*The present report sets out the results of the archaeological watching brief in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief, published 2014.*

## **Acknowledgments and Copyright**

The project was managed by Richard Lewis BA MCIfA. The fieldwork was undertaken by Dr Rhys Morgan PhD. The report was prepared by Dr Rhys Morgan. The Welsh translation and illustrations were prepared by Dr Rhys Morgan. Copyright for this report is held by Black

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Project Background and Proposals

- 1.1.1 Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd/Archeoleg Mynydd Du Cyf were commissioned by Western Power Distribution to carry out an archaeological watching brief during ground works at Caerleon House Nursing Home, Goldcroft Common, Caerleon, Newport, NP18 1BE (Figure 1). The proposed ground works consisted of the excavation of a joint bay intended to expose an existing power cable along with additional trenching running up to the western edge of the southernmost building at Caerleon House Nursing Home.
- 1.1.2 The proposed ground works are situated directly within the confines of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAMMm246) and scheduled monument consent was granted by Cadw on the condition that an archaeological watching brief takes place during these ground works. This Scheduled Ancient Monument covers the entire area immediately south of Caerleon House Nursing Home and comprises buried features and earthworks representing part of the Roman Legionary Fortress of *Isca Augusta*, particularly the barrack blocks situated east of the fortress' northern gate are located.
- 1.1.3 The present report sets out the results of the archaeological watching brief in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, published 2014.

## 1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The *definition* of an archaeological Watching Brief as set out by the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists* (CIfA) is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive.
- 1.2.2 The *purpose* of an archaeological watching brief (as defined CIfA 2014) is:
- To allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.
  - To provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, 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 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.
  - The objective of a watching brief is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on a site.

- (*Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, published 2014).

### 1.3 Legislative Framework

- 1.3.1 Planning legislation is set out in the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. *Planning Policy Wales (PPW 11<sup>th</sup> Edition)* sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. Chapter 6 sets out the Welsh Government's policy towards the historic environment. It states "*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.*" (PPW 2021, 126).
- 1.3.2 Underpinning PPW are a series of legislative powers and TANs. *The Planning (Wales) Act 2015* sets out a series of legislative changes to deliver reform of the planning system in Wales, to ensure that it is fair, resilient and enables development. The 2015 Act also introduces a mandatory requirement to undertake pre-application consultation for certain types of development. *The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016* defines in Schedule 4(l) the parameters and definitions for the requirement of pre-application consultation by Welsh Ministers, particularly in response to the effect of statutory designated monuments, buildings, and parks and gardens.
- 1.3.3 Any works affecting an ancient monument and its setting are protected through implementation of the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. In Wales the 1979 Act has been strengthened by The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The 2016 Act makes important improvements for the protection and management of the Welsh historic environment. It also stands at the centre of an integrated package of secondary legislation (Annexes 1-6), new and updated planning policy and advice, and best-practice guidance on a wide range of topics (TAN 24 Historic Environment). Taken together, these support and promote the careful management of change in the historic environment in accordance with current conservation philosophy and practice.
- 1.3.4 The Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets out a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ concerning sites and monuments of national importance (scheduled/listed), and there exists in the current Planning Policy Wales (Chapter 6) a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ of all types of heritage assets.

### 1.4 Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.4.1 The proposed works are centred on NGR ST 3388 9084 and are situated within the grounds of Caerleon House Nursing Home, Goldcroft Common, Caerleon, Newport,

NP18 1BE. The grounds of the nursing home comprise a series of interconnected buildings to the north and a carpark to the south. These grounds are bounded to the west by High Street (B4236) and Church Street to the west and south respectively and defined to the north by Goldcroft Common, which represents a thoroughfare running eastward from High Street before turning northward onto Mill Street. The nearest church is St Cadoc's, situated approximately 0.19km to the southeast.

- 1.4.2 Caerleon is located towards the base of the Usk Valley which extends from Usk, approximately 10.8km to the northeast, to the Usk Estuary at Uskmouth, Newport approximately 7.7km to the southwest. The River Usk also meanders past the eastern edge of Caerleon, which runs from the base of the Black Mountains in the north and into the Severn Estuary via Uskmouth. Enclosing Caerleon to the southeast is a northeast/southwest running ridge, relatively low-lying, on top of which the village of Christchurch lies, as well as Mount St Albans. Directly northeast of this ridge is the forest and hills of Wentwood. Situated northwest of Caerleon are two smaller valleys, which run into the Usk Valley bottom from this direction. The village of Ponthir lies within the westernmost of these valleys, while the easternmost is both respected and bounded by Usk Road.
- 1.4.3 The superficial geology within the development area is defined by undifferentiated river deposits, comprising mainly sands and gravels. These formed up to 3 million years ago during the Quaternary period within a local environment dominated by rivers. These deposits are detrital, ranging from coarse- to fine-grained in size and form beds and lenses reflecting the channels, floodplains and levees of the river. The bedrock within the development area comprises interbedded argillaceous rocks and sandstone of the St Maughans Formation, which formed approximately 393 million years ago during the Devonian period in a fluvial environment similar to that in which the superficial geology was formed (BGS 2021).

## 1.5 History and Archaeology

- 1.5.1 The proposed excavation area is situated directly within the confines of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAMMm246), which is characterised for its inclusion of buried features and earthworks associated with the barrack blocks situated to the east of the northern gate of *Isca Augusta*, the Roman Legionary Fortress of Caerleon. These barrack blocks are a continuation of those discovered within the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Goldcroft Common (SMMm233) located on the opposite side of present-day High Street. Stratigraphically, these barracks comprised five distinct phases of occupation and refurbishment, which extended from the founding of the fortress in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. According to previous excavations conducted within the area of Caerleon House Nursing Home, the remains of these barrack blocks along with other related Roman features, deposits and artefacts may be situated anywhere between 0.45–1.2m below to modern topsoil (Evans 2003).
- 1.5.2 The proposed excavation area is also situated within a significant landscape of historic value (Newport LandMap NWPRTL015, NWPRTL024 and NWPRTL025), characterised primarily for the outstanding and well-preserved Roman remains within its confines. These remains relate mainly to settlement and industrial activity associated with *Isca Augusta*, likely founded in either 74 or 75 AD (Grant 2007, 66;



Nash-Williams 1954, 29). Occupation of the fortress lasted until the fourth century AD (Boon 1972). A pair of sizeable barracks defined this eastern area of the fortress, the northernmost of which being situated within the vicinity of the proposed excavation area. Excavations of the southernmost barracks (NPRN 402679) revealed both latrines and bread ovens defined by a rear rampart. These barracks were also associated with sizeable baths, which included a *frigidarium*, *tepidarium*, *caldarium* and even an open-air swimming pool (*natatio*) (Brewer 2000, 34). This *natatio* was of very large proportion, measuring 41m in length. It was therefore larger than the Great Baths at Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) in nearby Somerset (Knight 2003, 22). Much of these baths were constructed using an early form of concrete (or *opus caementicium*) (Hilling 2018, 11). Another pair of barracks also defined the western edge of the fortress, and a further two were originally situated towards the centre, on either side of the central headquarters (*praetorium*), which comprised long colonnades and gardens (Alcock 2006, 55). Running along the western edge of the *praetorium* was a series of granaries and workshops (Boon 1987, 14), as well as a military store building, located directly underneath present-day Priory Field (Gardner and Guest 2013; Guest and Young 2009). Excavations of these buildings revealed that a huge number of extensively sourced animals were being kept within them during their use (Madgwick *et al.* 2019). Situated directly on the western edge of the *praetorium* was the Legate's residence, excavated in the 1930s (Grimes 1935). Between the late 3<sup>rd</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD major parts (if not all) of the fortress were demolished. These episodes of demolition are normally interpreted as being triggered by the withdrawal of *Legio II Augusta* from southeast Wales, roughly one hundred years prior to the collapse of *Britannia* (the Roman province of Britain) in 410 AD. However, it has also been put forward that this demolition activity was instead related to the downgrading of the military by the emperor Diocletian (Burnham and Davies 2010, 166).

1.5.3 *Isca Augusta* was surrounded by a large civilian settlement (*canabae*) (Evans 2000). This *canabae* (NPRN 301891) included the amphitheatre (NPRN 95647), situated directly beyond the fortress' southern wall, the remains of which comprise the bases of seating banks encompassing a central oval arena. According to excavations conducted by Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler in the 1920s (Wheeler and Wheeler 1928), this amphitheatre was remodelled several times during its history of use before being abandoned entirely in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (or later). Based primarily on the writings of Gildas (Knight 2001, 38), this amphitheatre is also historically significant due it being the site on which the Christian saints Julius and Aaron were executed and martyred, possibly during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (Petts 2003, 31). Although extensive in size, the *canabae* at Caerleon failed to develop into a full township (or *colonia*) (Brewer 2002, 7). It is thought that Isca Road was the main route into the Roman fortress from the earlier fortresses of Usk and Kingsholm (Gloucester), which likely crossed the River Usk on the same alignment as the *via praetoria* (the street leading to the main gate of the fortress) (Manning 2004, 178–204).

1.5.4 Significant Roman remains have also been discovered beyond the limits of the *canabae*, including several marching camps and smaller garrison forts. A Roman roadside settlement is known at Great Bulmore nearby, which was constructed along an irregular axial street. This settlement is surrounded by a sizeable collection of cemeteries, particularly along the stretch of road leading to Caerleon. These

cemeteries formed part of a far wider cluster, all built along a northeast/southwest aligned ridge on top of which the present-day village of Christchurch lies. These cemeteries include the Chepstow Hill cremation cemetery, established prior to 250 AD; the cremation cemetery at Ultra Pontem, comprising several cremation urns; and the Caerleon Usk cemetery, comprising six or seven stone sarcophagi (Pannett 2014).

- 1.5.5 The prehistoric remains within the local area are fairly extensive. Gray Hill, located to the north of Caerleon and slightly east of Wentwood Reservoir, contains several Bronze Age features, including a stone row, a stone circle, a cairn field, field boundaries as well as an additional D-shaped enclosure of either Bronze Age or Neolithic date. Priory Wood Camp is located c560m to the northeast, which is of potential later prehistoric date. The site comprises the faint remains of a roughly square earthwork enclosing a smaller earthwork of the same form. The Iron Age hillfort of Lodge Wood Camp (Scheduled Monument SAMMm023) is located on the western edge of Caerleon, which was constructed on a hill overlooking the town centre and features a series of three concentric ramparts and ditches with entrances on its western and eastern sides.
- 1.5.6 A fairly dense quantity of medieval activity characterises the local area. Newport Castle, constructed sometime during the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Pettifer 2000, 134), is situated nearby, which presently survives as the partial remains of a rectangular bailey. The Newport Medieval Ship, discovered in 2002 in Newport's city centre on the west bank of the River Usk, is of major historical significance, mainly due to its exceptional preservation. Dendrochronology of the ship's timbers provided a *terminus post quem* of 1449 for its construction (Nayling and Jones 2018). Several important medieval churches are situated within the local vicinity, including the 12<sup>th</sup> century St Mary's Church in Malpas and the 14<sup>th</sup> century St David's Church in Bettws, both of which have pre-Norman foundations (Brook 1988). The area is also characterised by small-scale medieval industry. The site of a rudimentary forge comprising a charcoal filled pit and associated duct have been discovered within Caerleon, dating between the 7<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Several medieval mills are also located within the immediate vicinity. These include a corn mill in Caerleon, first mentioned in 1314 (Mayland 1991), and a water mill (known as Milton's Mill) in Llanwern, constructed prior to 1319.
- 1.5.7 Directly within the confines of Caerleon itself, Post-Roman settlement is suggested by occupation activity and metal working (Evans 2000, 170–3). A Norman castle was established by 1086 AD on the south-eastern corner of the fortress close to the location of the Roman and medieval river crossing (*Ultra-pontem*) (Lewis 2004). Only the large motte, comparable in size with Cardiff Castle, and the tower attached to the Hanbury Arms survive. The barbican tower on the southern approaches to the medieval bridge was recently identified surviving just below the tarmac of the *Ultra-pontem* at Castle Cottage (Tuck 2015, 57). The medieval castle is presumed to have been built by the then Lord of Caerleon Caradoc ap Gruffydd or his son Owain ap Caradoc.
- 1.5.8 The post-medieval archaeology within the vicinity is plentiful and includes several manor houses. These include Beechwood House, Redwick Country House and Raglan House, all built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as Tredegar House, constructed in 1672 by William Morgan and possibly designed by the renowned architect Inigo Jones (Morgan

2020, 110). Many of these manor houses are attached to grand parks and gardens, although public gardens do exist from this period, including Shaftesbury Park, opened at some point prior to 1901. Post-medieval Industrial remains are also known within the area, including the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Fourteen Locks Canal, associated with the larger Monmouthshire Canal. The Civil War earthwork of Penrhos Camp (Scheduled Monument MM011) is also situated on the northern outskirts of Caerleon, which was built on a promontory overlooking the Afon Llwyd.

#### 1.5.9 Previous Investigations

- 1.5.10 2003, Event E006203 – a field evaluation was conducted by GGAT at Caerleon House Nursing Home, during which Roman and post-medieval deposits and artefacts were recorded.
- 1.5.11 2004, Event E0055076 – a watching brief was conducted by GGAT during ground works associated with the construction of a new porch at Caerleon House Nursing Home, during which part of two barrack blocks and a passageway were recorded.
- 1.5.12 2011, Event E003748 – a watching brief was conducted by Cardiff Archaeological Consultants at the grounds of St Cadoc's House, 11a Norman Street in advance of the installation of a new electricity supply, during which no archaeological remains were uncovered.

## 2 Methodology

- 2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief observed the machine excavation of an irregularly shaped area covering an area of 5.2m x 2m, which was dug in order to expose an existing power cable and to direct a new power cable into the southernmost building at Caerleon House Nursing Home. The excavation area was positioned directly against the western wall of this southernmost building. Excavations were conducted using a 0.3m wide bucket, however large sections of the excavation area were excavated beyond this width in order to provide sufficient space for the new power cable to be installed. The archaeological watching brief took place on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 in fair conditions. Contextual information has been provided within Appendix III.
- 2.1.2 The majority of deposits and features encountered during the watching brief were modern and derived from the laying of services running into the current buildings of the Caerleon House Nursing Home. However, at the base of the excavation area a demolition deposit dating to the post-Roman period, either being associated with the demolition of the legionary fortress or later medieval activity within the town of Caerleon, was revealed. From this deposit, a fragment of Roman *imbrex* (roof tile) was collected.
- 2.1.3 The archaeological recording techniques conformed to the best industry standard and all deposits were recorded using a single continuous context numbering system *pro forma*. All contexts were recorded with the trench number prefix (e.g. context 02 in TP1 = 102) and are summarised in Appendix III. Contexts were schematically drawn in section. All excavations and contexts were photographed in digital using a Fujifilm FinePix S4800 super wide (30x) 24-720mm camera at 16mp and a Digital Lens, 18mp camera. In all excavations, natural deposits were encountered and recorded.

- 2.1.4 All classes of finds were retained, cleaned and catalogued and arrangements for final deposition have been agreed, as set out in the requirements of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials* (2014b). With the permission of the landowner Mrs Danielle Fry, ownership will be transferred to The Legionary Museum, Caerleon for permanent curation. No deposits with palaeoenvironmental potential were encountered.
- 2.1.5 The archaeological watching brief was carried out to the standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, published 2014.
- 2.1.6 A digital copy of the report and archive will be supplied to the regional HER, the LPA and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. All data will be submitted to the relevant archives in accordance with the RCAHMW's *Guidance for Digital Archaeological Archives* (2015) and the regional HER's *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs)* (2018).

### 3 Results

- 3.1.1 The archaeological watching brief observed the machine excavation of an irregularly shaped area covering an area of 5.2m x 2m (Figure 1). The excavation area was dug to an average depth of 0.90m. Excavations were conducted using a 0.3m wide bucket, however large sections of the area were excavated beyond this width in order to provide sufficient space for the new power cable to be installed. The present ground surface at the top of the excavation area is 17.682mOD.
- 3.1.2 During excavations, four modern deposits were uncovered, which were associated with the laying of services running to the Caerleon House Nursing Home. Beneath these modern deposits a post-Roman demolition deposit was encountered at the base of the excavation area, which was either related to the demolition of the legionary fortress or later medieval activity within the town of Caerleon. From this deposit, a fragment of Roman *imbrex* (roof tile) was collected. The services uncovered during excavations included a power cable, an inspection chamber and a gully pot. The foundation of the southernmost building at Caerleon House Nursing Home was also encountered and recorded.
- 3.1.3 The results of the excavation are detailed below. Contextual information can be found in Appendix III and information regarding finds can be found in Appendix IV.

#### 3.2 Stratigraphic Evidence (Figure 1, Plates 1–7)

- 3.2.1 The uppermost deposit encountered during the archaeological watching brief comprised mid–dark brown sandy loam topsoil with frequent rooting throughout (001), 0–0.17m deep. Directly beneath this topsoil was a shallow made-up ground deposit (002) comprising yellow sand and stone fragments, 0.17–0.36m deep. However, towards the western end of the excavation area a levelling deposit (010) was encountered sandwiched between deposits (001) and (002), comprising coarse blueish grey concrete, 0.17–0.29m deep. Situated directly below deposit (002) was a layer of black waste material (003), comprising grit and small fragments of slag, 0.36–0.50m deep. Below (003) was demolition deposit (004), 0.50–0.90m+ deep. This

deposit was not bottomed and was encountered at the base of the excavation area. It comprised mid-brown silty loam with frequent CBM fragments throughout, all of diminutive size, along with fragmentary pieces of stone and masonry. From this deposit a fragment of Roman *imbrex* (roof tile) was collected.

3.2.2 Modern services were also discovered during the watching brief. The excavation area was dug in order to reveal an existing power cable, which was encountered immediately below waste deposit (003). This power cable [005] ran in an approximately NW/SE direction along the northern edge of the excavation area. This power cable was contained within cut [006], 0.62–0.80m deep, which cut through deposit (004). Also contained within cut [006] and surrounding power cable [005] was fill (007), which comprised light brown grit. Towards the eastern end of the excavation area, abutting the western wall of the southernmost building of Caerleon House Nursing Home, was an inspection chamber [008], which gave access to power cable [005]. This inspection chamber was square in form. It was not bottomed but was recorded at 0.80m+ in depth. Its upper half comprised coarse grey concrete deep, while its lower half was brick-built. To the south of this inspection chamber was a concrete gully pot [009], 0–0.10m deep. The foundation of the building's western wall [011] was also observed during the watching brief, which was abutted by topsoil deposit (001). This foundation was composed of red bricks in cement mortar, forming a stretcher bond.

### 3.2.3 Discussion

3.2.4 The majority of deposits and features encountered during the watching brief were modern and derived from the laying of services running into the current buildings of the Caerleon House Nursing Home. The deposit uncovered at the base of the excavation area was of archaeological interest. This deposit is likely the same as that uncovered during the field evaluation conducted within the curtilage of Caerleon House in 2003, which was interpreted as a Roman rubble deposit overlying the barracks of the Roman Legionary Fortress (Evans 2003). The material from this deposit appeared Roman in date, which included the Roman *imbrex* tile detailed below. However, as this deposit seals the archaeological remains associated with the fortress it could also be of medieval date. Certainly, this deposit is associated with demolition activity that occurred after the abandonment of the barrack blocks within the Scheduled Ancient Monument, if not the fortress in its entirety.

## 3.3 Finds (Plate 8)

3.3.1 A single find was collected during the archaeological watching brief from demolition deposit (004), which comprised a fragment of Roman *imbrex* (roof tile) (S/F1). The tile is of characteristic semi-circular profile and was formed of terracotta. Originally, this tile would have sealed the joint between two *tegulae* (flat roof tiles with raised edges). This *imbrex* was probably formed using the traditional method of pressing clay into a trapezoidal mould before shaping it by running a length of wire across its base (Warry 2006, 36). As this tile fragment derived from a demolition deposit, the process of determining what kind of building it was attached to and from where it originally came is rendered impossible. However, it is more than likely that it was associated with a building situated within the confines of the Roman Legionary Fortress.

## 4 Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The investigation comprised an archaeological watching brief during ground works associated with installation of a new power cable leading into Caerleon House Nursing Home.
- 4.1.2 The majority of deposits and features encountered during the watching brief were modern and derived from the laying of services running into the current buildings of the Caerleon House Nursing Home. However, the lowermost deposit encountered within the excavation area was of archaeological interest, as it comprised demolition material likely derived from *Isca Augusta*, the Roman Legionary Fortress of Caerleon. As this deposit seals the *in situ* remains of the fortress, it was formed during the post-Roman period, a time after which the fortress in its entirety was abandoned and demolished.

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## **6 Appendices**

### **6.1 Appendix I: Figures**



Figure 1. Plan showing location of excavation area

## 6.2 Appendix II: Plates



Plate 1. Northeast facing section towards north-western end of excavation area, showing deposit (001), (002), (003) and (004)



Plate 2. East-facing section towards western end of excavation area, showing cut [006], power cable [005] and fill (007)





Plate 3. Oblique shot of inspection chamber [008] within the west-facing section of excavation area



Plate 4. South-facing section of northern end of excavation area, showing concrete (010) below topsoil (001)





Plate 5. West-facing section towards east end of excavation area, showing wall foundation [011] and gully pot [009]



Plate 6. Plan view of centre of excavation area (view north)





Plate 7. Plan view of excavation area (view northeast)



Plate 8. Fragment of Roman *imbrex* tile collected from deposit (004) (S/F1)

### 6.3 Appendix III: Context Inventory

Context	Type	Depth	Description	Period
001	Deposit	0–0.17m	Topsoil. Mid–dark brown sandy loam with frequent rooting throughout. Overlies (002). Abuts [011].	Modern
002	Deposit	0.17–0.36m	Made-up ground. Yellow sand and stone fragments. Underlies (001).	Modern
003	Deposit	0.36–0.50m	Black waste. Grit and small fragments of slag. Underlies (002). Overlies (004).	Modern
004	Deposit	0.50–0.90m+	Demolition deposit. CBM and stone/masonry fragments in mid-brown silty loam matrix. Either derived from demolition of Legionary fortress or activity associated with the medieval town of Caerleon. Underlies (003). Cut by [006].	Roman/medieval
005	Structure		Power cable. Runs NW/SE along northern end of excavation area. Contained by [006]. Surrounded by (007).	Modern
006	Cut	0.62–0.80m	Cut for power cable [005]. Also contains deposit (007). Cuts (004).	Modern
007	Deposit	0.62–0.80m	Fill of cut [006]. Light brown grit. Surrounds power cable [005].	Modern
008	Structure	0–0.80m+	Inspection chamber constructed from concrete and brick.	Modern
009	Structure	0–0.10m	Concrete gully pot.	Modern
010	Deposit	0.17–0.29m	Levelling deposit. Coarse blueish grey concrete. Underlies (001). Overlies (002).	Modern
011	Structure		Wall foundation. Composed of red bricks in cement mortar forming a stretcher bond. Abutted by (001).	Modern

#### 6.4 Appendix IV: Finds Inventory

Context	S/F number	Type	Description	Weight	Dimensions	Minimum count	Period
004	1	CBM	Fragment of Roman <i>imbres</i> . Comprised of terracotta. Fabric is mid-reddish brown in colour and is homogenous in terms of colour and texture from core to margin. Fabric also contains infrequent grit inclusions, which likely occur naturally within the clay from which this tile was formed. Its form is semi-circular and shallow.	526g	106.5mm long x 122.6mm wide x 15.3mm thick	1	Roman





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