

Works at Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm, Monmouthshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



Prepared
for

**Western Power Distribution
Cwmbran**

By



**- BLACK MOUNTAINS ARCHAEOLOGY -
- ARCHAEOLEG MYNYDD DU -**

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Summary

Comisiynwyd Archeoleg Mynydd Du Cyf gan Western Power Distribution, Ty-Coch Way, Cwmbrân, NP44 7EZ i ymgymryd briff gwyllo archeolegol yn ystod gwaith daear ar gyfer atgyfnerthiad is-orsaf yn Abaty Tyndyrn a Abbey Farm, Sir Fynwy. Roedd y gwaith daear yn cynnwys cloddio ffosydd gwasanaeth o fewn cwrtil Abbey Farm yn ogystal ag ar hyd yr A466, Chapel Hill a llwybr troed sy'n arwain at is-orsaf newydd ei gosod, pob un ohonynt wedi'u leoli ar ochr ddeheuol Abaty Tyndyrn.

Oherwydd bod gwaith cloddio wedi'i wneud yng nghyffiniau'r Heneb Gofrestredig yng Nghanolfan Fewnol Abaty Tyndyrn (SMMm102), mynnodd Cadw a chynghorwyr archeolegol yr ACLI (GGAT) y dylid defnyddio rhaglen waith ar ffurf briff gwyllo archeolegol i gymhwyso i'r holl waith daear.

Yn ystod y gwaith cloddio, dadorchuddiwyd olion wal ganoloesol bosibl, a oedd yn benderfynol o beidio â ffurfio Wal Cyntedd Abaty Tyndyrn (SMMm157), yn ogystal â phâr o gerrig jamb addurnol, a oedd naill ai'n rhan o ffenestr neu ddrws strwythur anhysbys yng Nghanolfan Fewnol Abaty Tyndyrn (SMMm102).

Mae'r adroddiad presennol yn nodi canlyniadau'r briff gwyllo archeolegol yn unol â 'Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief' gan y Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, cyhoeddwyd 2014, dywigiwyd 2020.

Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Western Power Distribution, Ty-Coch Way, Cwmbran, NP44 7EZ to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the reinforcement of a substation at Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm, Monmouthshire. Groundworks involved the excavation of service trenches within the curtilage of Abbey Farm as well as along the A466, Chapel Hill and a footpath leading to a newly installed substation, all of which are situated on the southern side of Tintern Abbey.

As excavations were conducted within the vicinity of the Scheduled Monument of Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102), Cadw and the archaeological advisers to the LPA (GGAT) required a programme of work in the form of an archaeological watching brief to be applied to all groundworks.

During excavations the heavily disturbed remains of a possible medieval wall were uncovered, which were determined not to have formed the Tintern Abbey Precinct Wall (SMMm157), as well as a pair of decorative jamb stones, which either formed part of a window or doorway of an unidentified structure within Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102).

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, revised 2020.

Acknowledgements and Copyright

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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, Ty-Coch Way, Cwmbran, NP44 7EZ to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the reinforcement of a substation at Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm, Monmouthshire. Groundworks involved the excavation of service trenches within the curtilage of Abbey Farm as well as along the A466, Chapel Hill and a footpath leading to a newly installed substation, all of which are situated on the southern side of Tintern Abbey.
- 1.1.2 As excavations were conducted within the vicinity of the Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building of Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102/LB24037) and Tintern Abbey Precinct Wall (SMMm157), Cadw and the archaeological advisers to the LPA (GGAT) requested a programme of work in the form of an archaeological watching brief to be applied to all groundworks.
- 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, revised 2020.

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, revised 2020).

1.3 Legislative Framework

- 1.3.1 Planning legislation is set out in the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. *Planning Policy Wales (PPW 11th 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 All groundworks were conducted within the vicinity of Tintern Abbey Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102/LB24037), Tintern Abbey Precinct Wall (SMMm157) and Abbey Farm and were centre on NGR ST 54439 9989 (Figure 1; Plate 1). More specifically, excavations took place within the curtilage of Abbey Farm as well as along

the A466, Chapel Hill and a footpath leading to a newly installed substation, all of which are situated on the southern side of Tintern Abbey.

- 1.4.2 Both Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm are enclosed on their northern edges by the River Wye, which runs in a broadly NW/SE direction before bending westward. To the west is the Anghidi River, which runs in an E/W direction towards the Anghidi Fawr and Anghidi Fechan at Pontysaison.
- 1.4.3 The superficial geology is defined by alluvial clays, silts, sands and gravels formed up to 2 million years ago during the Quaternary period in an environment dominated by rivers. The underlying debrock comprises interbedded Quartz Conglomerate Formation sandstone and conglomerate stone, formed up to 359–72 million years ago during the Devonian period in an environment also dominated by rivers (BGS 2021). The soils with the area comprise freely draining and slightly acidic loams (Landis 2021).

1.5 History and Archaeology

- 1.5.1 Tintern Abbey, or the Abbey Church of St Mary (LB 24037), was founded by Walter de Clare, Lord of Chepstow on the 9th May 1131 as a colony for Cistercian monks from L'Aumône in Northern France. A few years previously, in 1128, William Giffard, Bishop of Winchester, founded the first Cistercian colony in the British Isles, at Waverley Abbey in Surrey. Tintern Abbey represented the second colony to be established in Britain, and the first in Wales. The Order of Cistercians was founded 1098 by the abbots Robert of Molesme, Stephen Harding and Alberic of Cîteaux as a branch of the Benedictine Order. The order's foundation was a response to the Cluniac Reforms, which attempted to restore traditional values to the Benedictine Order, but which were viewed as having discarded the austere philosophy of the Rule of St Benedictine, written in AD516. The followers of the Cistercian Order conducted their lives according to the twin principles of prayer and physical labour. As a result of this philosophy, Cistercian colonies often comprised two communities, one of monks and the other of lay brotherhood, or uneducated workers who sought to worship God through labour (Robinson 2006, 8).
- 1.5.2 During the 12th century, Tintern Abbey comprised a Romanesque Church with an adjoining chapter house and dormitory, a refectory and kitchen, a western range and a central cloister. Very little of Tintern Abbey today incorporates structural elements that can be positively identified as belonging to the 12th century (Newman 2000, 539). During the 13th century, the abbey underwent significant rebuilding, culminated in the construction of the Great Church, by an anonymous master mason, between 1269–1301 (Robinson 1998, 189), which involved the demolition of the 12th century Romanesque Church. However, additional construction work continued into the 14th century (Newman 2000, 537). An infirmary, comprising a main hall and cloister, and the abbot's residence were also added to the side of the abbey, the latter of which was greatly enlarged during the 14th century. The Great Church was constructed in the Gothic style typical of the 13th and 14th centuries. By the end of the 15th century, a new nave and porch had been added to the western end of the Great Church. Tintern Abbey was eventually dissolved by Henry VIII during the dissolution of the monasteries between 1536–41.
- 1.5.3 Today, the extant remains of Tintern Abbey are situated within the Scheduled Monument of Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102), which originally stood to

approximately 3m in height. During the medieval period the inner precinct was accessed from the north by the Tintern Abbey Watergate (SMMm265) and from the south where another possible gatehouse was situated. An inner gatehouse was also located within the precinct itself, attached to St Anne's Chapel. A 1536 record of the abbey also makes reference to a 'Great Gate'. Although long since demolished, it is possible that part of this gate still survives within the fabric of St Anne's Chapel (in addition to the inner gate). Immediately west of the possible southern gatehouse is St Mary's Church, situated on Chapel Hill, which may have been used by those local lay people who were not permitted access to the precinct of Tintern Abbey. On the western edge of the Great Church was the inner court, of which various ruins still survive today, some of which demonstrably extend beneath the present A466 road (Plate 1). These ruins comprise a vaulted undercroft, which may have formed part of a high-status guesthouse; a 13th century aisled building with a central open hearth, which likely formed a communal guest hall; and the gable end of a medieval block of unknown function. All buildings within the abbey's inner precinct were surrounded by the Tintern Abbey Precinct Wall (SMMm157), which enclosed an area measuring 27 acres.

- 1.5.4 Tintern and its immediate surroundings in the Wye Valley are also characterised by the presence of significant industrial remains. The Coldwell Grove Lime Kiln and Quarry (SMMm290) are situated immediately south of Tintern Abbey, which date to the early 19th century. To the west of Tintern Abbey is the site of the Lower or Abbey Wireworks (SMMm266), established in 1566 as the first wire drawing works in Britain. These wireworks were in use for over three centuries, before being abandoned in around 1900. The wireworks comprised at least seven buildings including a scouring mill, a rolling mill and a wire drawing mill, all of which were powered by water redirected from the Anghidi River via three separate mill races. Also associated with these mills is the mill pond dam (LB24038), constructed during the mid-18th century. To the west of the Lower or Abbey Wireworks is the Abbey Tintern Furnace (SMMm197), which was producing iron for the wireworks between 1650–1826. The furnace was constructed against a bank, meaning that a split-level could be formed between the charge house, from which charcoal and iron ore was loaded, and the furnace itself.
- 1.5.5 Abbey Farm comprises a ribbon of buildings running approximately NE/SW along the eastern edge of Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102), with large areas of arable and pasture stretching westward along the southern banks of the River Wye. The main farmhouse is situated to the north, while the buildings to the south are barns and other ancillary buildings. The age of the farm is unknown, although it first appears on the 1st edition 1887 Ordnance Survey (OS) map of the area (*Gloucestershire XLVI.SW*) in the same form it takes today. By the time of the publication of the 2nd edition OS map in 1903, a square-shaped barn, formed mostly of steel, had been constructed within the farm's curtilage, to the south of the main farmhouse. The 3rd edition OS map of 1922 shows that a further two barns were added to the farm by this time. Overall, it appears that the form of Abbey Farm has altered little since 1922.

2 Methodology

- 2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief observed the excavation of a series of service trenches in connection with the reinforcement of a substation within the vicinity of Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm, Monmouthshire (Figure 1). Although excavations were continuous, they covered four distinct areas, including the curtilage of Abbey Farm; the A466 road running along the southern edge of Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm; a stretch of road running in a northwest direction up Chapel Hill; and a small stretch of pathway immediately south of Abbey Farm, leading up to the newly installed substation. Excavations were conducted using a 0.3m wide bucket, although some sections of the trench were excavated beyond this width where joint bays were being installed. Contextual information has been provided in Appendix III.
- 2.1.2 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 and are summarised in Appendix III. 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.
- 2.1.3 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*, published 2014, revised 2020. Ownership of finds will be transferred to Cadw for permanent curation. No deposits with palaeoenvironmental potential were encountered.
- 2.1.4 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).
- 2.1.5 The two pieces of medieval masonry (SF1 and SF2) were recovered of archaeological significance as they probably derived from either extant or demolished structures within the Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102). In order to ensure that recording of these pieces were of the highest possible detail, both were subjected to photogrammetric 3D modelling, the results of which can be found here:
- SF1 - <https://p3d.in/Dnri7>
 - SF2 - <https://p3d.in/ODsNW>
- 2.1.6 All 3D models were produced using proprietary photogrammetry software and aligned using known control points. Dimensional control was then applied to each model and then reprocessed using the new parameters and optimised cameras to create dense point clouds and high face count meshes exported to OBJ format. The photogrammetric 3D recording was implemented according to the standards set out in *Historic England's Photogrammetric Applications for Cultural Heritage Guidance for Good Practice* (Published 2017).

2.1.7 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, revised 2020.

3 Results

- 3.1.1 The excavations comprised a series of service trenches in connection with the reinforcement of a substation within the vicinity of Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm, Monmouthshire (Figure 1). Although continuous, these service trenches covered four distinct areas. These areas included: the curtilage of Abbey Farm, the A466 road, the roadway leading up towards the top of Chapel Hill, and the narrow trackway leading to the newly installed substation immediately south of Abbey Farm. These areas were defined primarily for the distinctive stratigraphy encountered within them.
- 3.1.2 **Abbey Farm** (Figure 1, Plates 2 and 3)
- 3.1.3 Excavations within the curtilage of Abbey Farm extended from an area to the south of the main farmhouse towards the top of the trackway leading into the farm from the A466. The level of present ground surface was 17mOD. The level at the base of excavation was 16.4mOD. The average depth of excavations was 0.7m.
- 3.1.4 The uppermost deposit encountered within Abbey Farm was a modern trackway (001), 0–0.25–3m deep, which consisted of compressed stones and fragments of brick within a dark brown loam matrix. Immediately below trackway (001) was a light brown loam deposit (002), 0.25–0.7m+ deep, with occasional fragments of small angular stone and brick throughout. This deposit represented built-up material associated with activity within the farm and was either modern or Post-medieval in date. Although only partially observed, deposit (003) was seen to underlie (002), 0.55–0.7m deep, which comprised homogenous mid-brown loam, very clean and free of inclusions. This deposit likely represented a natural subsoil. Also observed during the excavations within Abbey Farm was a broadly N/S running BT cable, which was situated within cut [004] and surrounded by fill (006). It was observed that [004] cut through deposits (001) and (002).
- 3.1.5 Overall, no deposits, features or artefacts of archaeological interest were encountered during excavations within the curtilage of Abbey Farm.
- 3.1.6 **A466 Road** (Figure 1, Plates 4–9)
- 3.1.7 The greater proportion of groundworks were conducted over the A466 main road. Most of these excavations cut through the pavement running along the northern edge of the road. Excavations were mainly conducted along the northern pavement. However, excavations of the main road itself were also observed where the service trench extended towards the newly built substation immediately south of Abbey Farm (on the opposite side of the A466) and towards the base of Chapel Hill. The level of present ground surface was 30mOD. The level at base of excavation was 29.3mOD. The average depth of excavations was 0.7m.
- 3.1.8 Immediately beyond the southern edge of the trackway leading into Abbey Farm, the uppermost deposit encountered was a layer of tarmac (007), 0–0.11m deep. The deposit was seen to overlie a deposit of angular stones and gravel within a mid-brown loam matrix (008), recorded at 0.11–0.6m in depth. This deposit comprised made-up ground associated with the construction of the A466 road. Underlying deposit (008) was an additional deposit of tarmac (009), 0.3–0.7m+ deep. It appeared as if this tarmac demarcated a now disused roadway. However, the varying thickness of this deposit and the fact that it was undulated diminishes this suggestion. Continuing westward, a

deposit of dark-brown silty clay with frequent angular stones throughout (020) was encountered below tarmac (009), 0.3–0.6m deep. Due mainly to the undulations throughout tarmac (009), deposit (020) was observed only partially and intermittently.

3.1.9 The uppermost deposit encountered during excavations along the pavement defining the northern edge of the A466 was a layer of tarmac (010), 0–0.09m deep. This tarmac was situated directly above a deposit of coarse concrete (011), 0.09–0.44m deep. Below this concrete deposit was a layer of made-up ground (012), 0.44–0.75m+ deep, comprising angular stones and gravel in a mid-brown loam matrix. Tarmac (009) was also encountered underlying this stretch of pavement as well as deposit (008), which underlay concrete (011). Below tarmac (009) was a mixture of red clay and stone (022), 0.3–0.7m+ deep. Another deposit of tarmac (023) was also encountered at this same level further west, 0.7–0.75m deep, which was possibly the same of (009). This tarmac was seen to overlie a deposit of stone rubble, 0.75m+ deep, comprising large, unfaced fragments of sandstone. At around 50m west of Abbey Farm's entrance, deposit (025) began, which extended westward towards the limit of excavation. This deposit was situated below (011) and comprised a mass of demolition material, including, most notably, modern and Post-medieval bricks and some fragments of medieval masonry. Two pieces of medieval masonry were retained (SF1 and SF2). Although difficult to interpret precisely, both pieces comprised jamb stones derived from either the window or a doorway of a building within Tintern Abbey (see Section 3.2). Also discovered within this deposit was a sherd of Post-medieval stoneware (SF4) (see again Section 3.2). Once excavations reached an area around 70m beyond Abbey Farm's entrance, a black bituminous clay layer (026), 0.7m+ deep, was encountered beneath deposit (008). This layer possibly demarcated the top of a culvert or other such service. Around 86m west of Abbey Farm's entrance, a bus stop [031] was excavated, which comprised concrete floor slabs [027], 0–0.06m deep, with an underlying concrete foundation (028), 0.06–0.4m deep (see Plate 9). In addition, concrete kerbs [029] and [030] defined the bus stop on its eastern and western edges respectively, both of which measured 0–0.1m deep, while a series of concrete kerbs [032], 0–0.3m deep, and an underlying concrete foundation (033), 0.3–0.6m deep, defined the front of the bus stop.

3.1.10 Excavations extended from the entrance to Abbey Farm and across the centre of A466 in order to reach the newly installed substation on the other side of the road, which was located along a narrow trackway. During these excavations, the uppermost deposit encountered was a layer of tarmac (014), 0–0.1m deep, which formed the upper road surface. Tarmac (014) was separated from tarmac (010) (which defined the pavement to the north) via a series of sandstone kerbs [018], 0–0.09m deep, which were set in place with an underlying deposit of coarse concrete (019), 0.09–0.4m deep. Below this tarmac, towards the centre of the road, was another deposit of coarse concrete (015), 0.1–0.4m deep. This concrete was seen to overlie deposit (012) (see section 3.1.9). However, at this point deposit (012) terminated, and was abutted by deposit (013), 0.4–0.7m+ deep, which consisted of mid-reddish brown loam. The juncture between deposit (012) and (013) towards the centre of the road probably demarcated the point at which the A466 was widened southwards. Underlying deposit (013) was a layer of sandstone rubble (017), 0.5–0.7m deep, some of which appeared faced, within a matrix of friable, sandy, yellow lime mortar. This deposit possibly

represented demolished medieval masonry derived from possible wall [021] (see Section 3.1.11). Beneath this deposit, towards the southern edge of the road, a concrete culvert (016) was observed, 0.7m+ deep, which was connected to a modern inspection chamber.

3.1.11 Possible medieval wall (Plates 5 and 6)

3.1.12 When excavations reached an area approximately 40m west of Abbey Farm's entrance, were the possible remains of a possible medieval wall [021], measuring 0.6–0.7m+ deep and situated beneath deposit (020). These remains were only partially observed and were heavily disturbed. They comprised a mass of sandstone rubble, some of which was demonstrably faced, within a matrix of yellow, sandy, non-hydraulic mortar. Three of stones appeared *in-situ*, forming a discrete line of masonry measuring approximately 3m E/W, suggesting that it ran in a N/S direction. If real, it is unlikely that this wall formed part of the Tintern Abbey Precinct Wall, in consideration of its position within the confines of the precinct.

3.1.13 **Discussion**

3.1.14 The possible medieval wall [021] uncovered during excavations along the A466 road are difficult to interpret, primarily due to the fact that it had sustained significant damage prior to excavation, probably during the construction of the A466. What can be stated is that, if real, its apparent N/S alignment means that it may not have originally constitute the Tintern Abbey Precinct Wall, which would have been E/W aligned and set further back to the south. In considering this, it can also be stated that possible wall [021] may have originally occupied a position within the inner precinct of the Abbey and may have related to an unknown building or boundary wall in use prior to the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII between 1536–41.

3.1.15 The pair of jamb stones SF1 and SF2 (see also Section 3.2) were of archaeological significance. Although they were discovered within a thick deposit of modern demolition material and were therefore out of context, it was nonetheless clear, due to their intricate designs and gothic style, that they were associated with Tintern Abbey. However, determining which structures these stones originally belonged to may prove impossible.

3.1.16 **Chapel Hill** (Figure 1, Plates 10–12)

3.1.17 Excavations were conducted along narrow roadway leading towards the top of Chapel Hill, on the southern side of the A466. Towards the base of Chapel Hill, the present ground surface is 32mOD, while towards its summit the present ground surface was 50mOD. The level of the surface at base of excavation towards bottom of Chapel Hill was 0.25mOD. The level of the surface at base of excavation towards top of Chapel Hill was 43mOD. The average depth of excavations was 0.7m.

3.1.18 Towards the base of Chapel Hill, on the southern edge of the A466 roadway, excavations were conducted wholly on the road leading up the hillslope. Sandstone kerbs [034] were encountered first, 0–0.3m deep, which were secured in place with concrete deposit (035), 0.3–0.5m deep. Below this concrete deposit was a layer of angular stones and gravel in mid-brown loam matrix (036), 0.5–0.7m deep, which was probably the same as (008). Beyond the line of kerbs [034] the remainder of the roadway was defined by tarmac deposit (047), 0–0.1m deep, which directly overlay

(036). Along the northern edge of the roadway, abutting tarmac (047), was a thick topsoil deposit (037), 0–0.75m+, comprising dark brown loam with frequent angular stones throughout, some of which were boulder-sized. These stones probably derived from the underlying bedrock, which was not encountered. Topsoil (037) was also defined by frequent rooting caused by tree growth along this northern side of the roadway. Within deposit (037) a vertically set electric cable [038] was encountered, 0–0.7m+ deep, which had been severed and was therefore unconnected to anything. This cable ran into an E/W running ceramic duct. In terms of function, it may have originally powered a streetlight. Topsoil (037) was heavily undulated, and in places it was observed that it was underlain by a deposit of mid-brown loamy subsoil (039), 0.7–0.74m+ deep, which was possibly natural. Towards the middle of the hillslope a ceramic storm drain [048] was encountered, 0.5–0.7m deep, situated within cut [049], which cut through deposits (037) and (039). Cut [049] was also filled with deposit (050), which was identical to topsoil (037). Storm drain [048] was also seen to be connected to a brick-lined manhole [051], 0–0.7m+ deep. After further investigation, it became clear that storm drain [048] extended for a considerable length, and as excavations were being conducted directly in line with the cut of this drain, it was deemed necessary to abandon the watching brief at this point. The watching brief was continued as soon as excavations reached to the top of Chapel Hill. However, it was revealed that storm drain [048] continued up to this point on the hill.

3.1.19 Overall, no deposits, features or artefacts of archaeological interest were encountered during excavations along Chapel Hill.

3.1.20 **Trackway South of Abbey Farm** (Figure 1, Plate 13)

3.1.21 Excavations were conducted on the southern side of the A466, immediately opposite the entrance to Abbey Farm, towards the newly installed substation. This substation was situated along a narrow trackway that led upslope in a broadly SE/NW direction. The present ground surface along the line of excavation rises from 30mOD to 42mOD. The level at the base of excavations varied from 23mOD to 35mOD. The average depth of excavations was 0.7m.

3.1.22 Initially, tarmac (040) was encountered towards the southern edge of the A466, 0–0.07m deep, which constituted the same deposit as (014) (see Section 3.1.10). Below tarmac (040) was a layer of Type 1 stones (041), 0.07–0.2m deep, and below this was a natural deposit of mid-brown loam (042), 0.2–0.7m+ deep, which was highly compacted and contained occasional angular stone fragments throughout with some larger fragments of highly friable grey sandstone. Towards the base of the hill, tarmac (040) and stone deposit (041) terminated, meaning that deposit (042) defined much of the surface along the trackway. Marginally beyond the southern edge of the A466 deposit (042) was cut by [044], 0–0.7m+ deep, within which BT cable [043] was situated. Cut [044] was also filled with a deposit of sandstone fragments within a mid-brown loam matrix. Towards the western edge of the newly installed substation, the underlying bedrock was seen to rise significantly. This bedrock deposit (046), 0.7m+ deep, was partially observed and comprised greenish grey sandstone.

3.1.23 Overall, no deposits, features or artefacts of archaeological interest were encountered during excavations along the trackway to the south of Abbey Farm.

3.2 Finds (Plates 14–19)

- 3.2.1 A total of three finds were retrieved during the watching brief, all of which derived from context (025), which comprised modern demolition material situated below the pavement running along the northern edge of the A466. Two of these finds (SF1 and 2) were archaeologically significant and comprised pieces of masonry that originally belonged to the architecture of Tintern Abbey. The third find (SF3) comprised a sherd of Post-medieval stoneware. A finds inventory can be found in Appendix IV.
- 3.2.2 SF1 comprised a single jamb stone. It is composed of grey sandstone with some purple mottling throughout. Its top, base and non-moulded sides were only rudimentarily dressed. A single side of the stone had been pecked to a smooth and even surface, probably a chamfer edge. The moulded front of the stone has a carved angle roll. The remaining sides were internal to the structure of the building and not meant to be seen. The moulded stone may have originally formed the inside of a window or door jamb. Traces of stucco are also seen on the worked sides of the piece.
- 3.2.3 SF1 was subjected to detailed photogrammetric 3D modelling. The annotated high face count 3D triangular mesh (model) can be viewed here: <https://p3d.in/Dnri7>.
- 3.2.4 SF2 comprised a single jamb stone of grey sandstone. Its top, base and non-moulded sides were only rudimentarily dressed. The moulded front of the stone has a carved angle roll and dressed flat edge. The interior (to the wall) edge has a carved square notch or anchor point (40mm x 40mm) that contained lead solder complete with a circular depression from a wall tie bar. The remaining sides were internal to the structure of the building and not meant to be seen. The moulded stone may have originally formed the inside of a window or door jamb. Traces of stucco are also seen on the worked sides of the piece. The moulded side of the stone is slightly curved and could have formed part the outer part of a double arch. The curve of the stone is only marginal, suggesting it was situated fairly low down, possibly towards the springer or base of the doorway or window it once belonged to.
- 3.2.5 SF2 was subjected to detailed photogrammetric 3D modelling. The annotated high face count 3D triangular mesh (model) can be viewed here: <https://p3d.in/ODsNW>.
- 3.2.6 The moulded stones (SF1 and SF2) almost certainly belong to Tintern Abbey and the survival of stucco is significant. Very little of the extant buildings at Tintern Abbey have stucco or limewash applied to their exteriors, therefore it is likely that these worked stones formed the interior, rather than exterior, part of a building. In consideration of its gothic style, these moulded stones are of medieval date and could coincide with the rebuilding of Tintern Abbey during the 13th century, during which time the abbey takes on its familiar gothic character.
- 3.2.7 SF3 comprised a single sherd of a Bristol glazed stoneware jar. The sherd comprised part of the wall and shoulder of the vessel, both of which are rounded in form. Decoration was also applied to the sherd, seen in the form of rouletted dots around the base of the shoulder. The fabric of the sherd is a buff-coloured stoneware, very well fired. The sherd also has a characteristic two-tone glaze, with white salt glaze on the wall and honey coloured 'Bristol' salt glaze on the shoulder. Bristol glaze stoneware was first developed in 1835 and was produced throughout the 19th century.

The slightly mottled effect on the Bristol glaze, which is more characteristic of earlier salt glazes, may suggest that this sherd is fairly early in date.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The investigation comprised an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the reinforcement of a substation at Tintern Abbey and Abbey Farm, Monmouthshire. Groundworks involved the excavation of service trenches within the curtilage of Abbey Farm as well as along the A466, Chapel Hill and a footpath leading to a newly installed substation, all of which are situated on the southern side of Tintern Abbey.
- 4.1.2 The excavations were largely devoid of archaeological features, deposits and artefacts. As shown in Plate 1, significant parts of Tintern Abbey are situated beneath the A466, although little of these remains were encountered during the watching brief. However, excavations of deposits situated below the pavement running along the northern edge of the A466 did uncover a medieval feature [021], which possibly constituted a N/S running wall situated directly within the confines of the Tintern Abbey Inner Precinct (SMMm102). In consideration of its alignment and position, this wall could not have formed part of the Precinct Wall (SMMm157). Rather, it may have belonged to an unidentified building or boundary wall. The fact that this possible wall was medieval in date is suggested by the mortar applied to it, which was observed partially between those few stones that remained *in-situ*. This mortar comprised a yellow, sandy, non-hydraulic lime mortar, which is entirely consistent with the mortar observed on the extant architecture within the confines of Tintern Abbey's inner precinct. Moreover, in addition to a single sherd of 19th century stoneware, two elaborately dressed pieces of masonry were discovered within this demolition deposit, the latter likely comprised jamb stones for windows or doors. The identity of the building (or buildings) to which these stones belonged could not be determined. However, the intricate carving and stucco applied to these stones, along with the locality within which they were discovered, serves as an indication that they derived from architecture associated with Tintern Abbey.

5 Bibliography

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5.1 Appendix I – Figures

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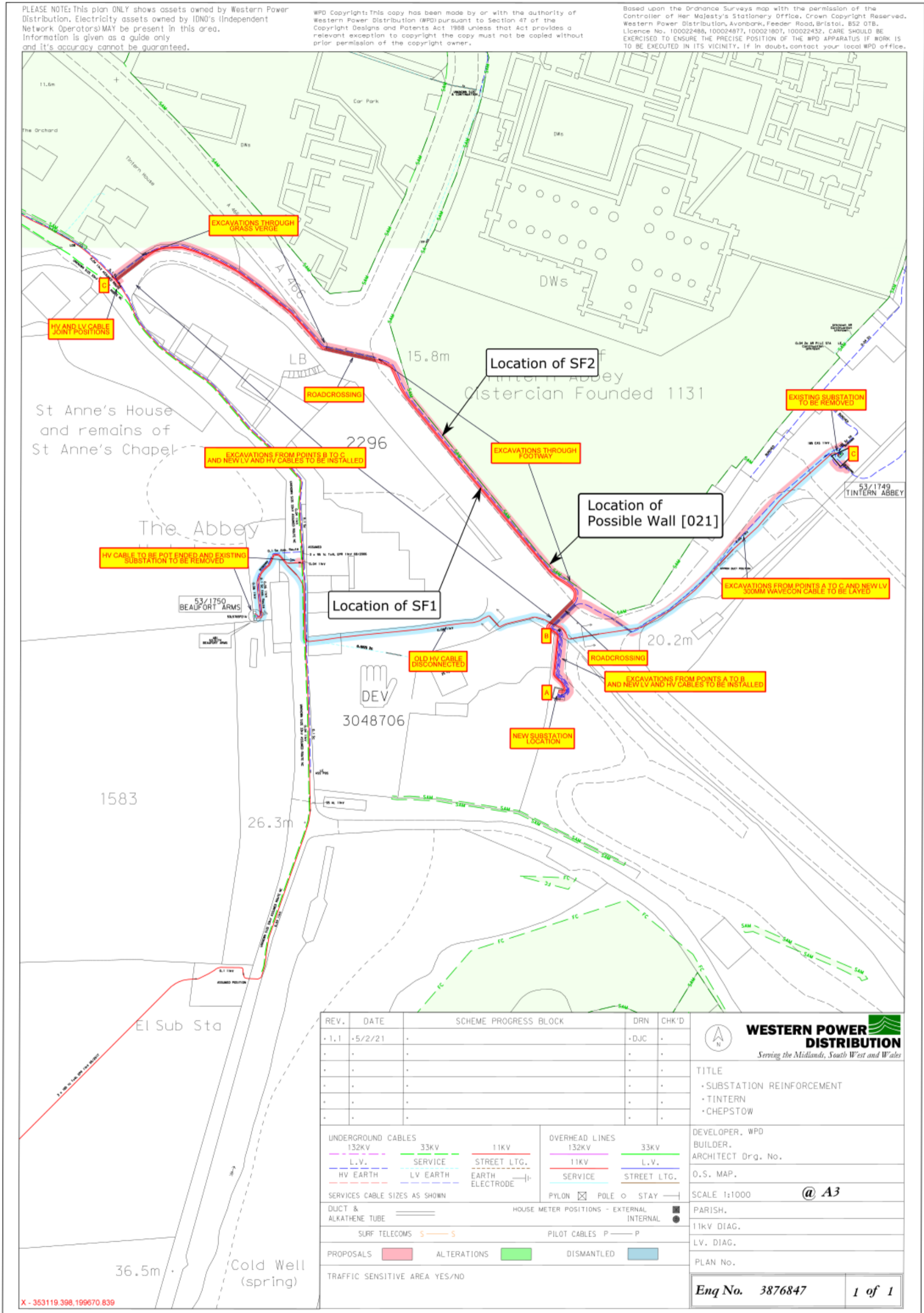


Figure 1. Plan of works within the vicinity of Tintern Abbey, including excavation at Abbey Farm (northeast), the A466, Chapel Hill (northwest) and along a trackway leading the new substation, as well as locations of SF1 and 2 and possible medieval wall [021]

5.2 Appendix II – Plates

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Plate 1. Southwest facing view of structural remains associated with Tintern Abbey's inner precinct running beneath the A466 roadway



Plate 2. Representative west-facing section of excavations within Abbey Farm



Plate 3. North-facing view of excavations within Abbey Farm



Plate 4. Excavations through pavement on north side of A466 (view east)



Plate 5. Revealing of demolition material (masonry and mortar) associated with possible wall [021] (view west)



Plate 6. Discrete spread of mortar associated with possible wall [021] (north-facing section)



Plate 7. Excavations through pavement on north side of A466 (view northwest)



Plate 8. Representative section of excavations through pavement on north side of A466 (south-facing section)



Plate 9. Excavation through bus stop on northern side of A466 (south-facing section).



Plate 10. Excavations towards base of Chapel Hill (view southwest)



Plate 11. Excavations towards middle of roadway leading up Chapel Hill (view southwest)



Plate 12. Representative section of excavations along roadway leading up Chapel Hill (south-facing section)



Plate 13. Excavations along trackway leading to newly installed substation (view southeast)



Plate 14. Medieval jamb stone from Tintern Abbey (SF1)



Plate 15. Medieval jamb stone from Tintern Abbey (SF1)



Plate 16. Medieval jamb stone from Tintern Abbey (SF2)



Plate 17. Medieval jamb stone from Tintern Abbey (SF2)



Plate 18. Solidified lead discovered within notch of SF2

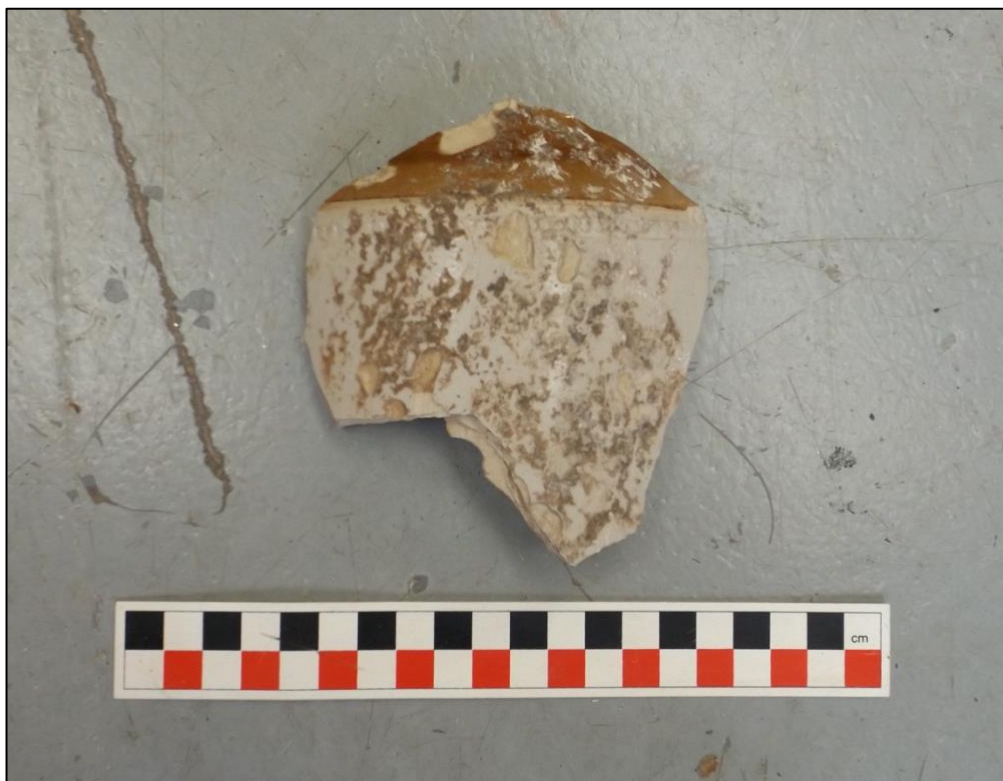


Plate 19. Sherd of Bristol glazed stoneware jar (SF3)

5.3 Appendix III – Context Inventory

Abbey Farm

Excavations extended from an area to the south of the main farmhouse towards the top of the trackway leading into the farm from the A466. Level of present ground surface = 17mOD. Level at base of excavation = 16.4mOD. Average depth of excavations = 0.7m.

Context	Type	Depth	Description	Period
001	Deposit	0–0.25– 0.3m	Modern trackway within farm, composed of compressed stones and fragments of brick within a dark brown loam matrix. Overlies (002). Cut by [004].	Modern
002	Deposit	0.25– 0.7m+	Light brown loam with some small angular fragments of stone and brick. Underlies (001). Overlies (003). Cut by [004].	Modern/Post-medieval
003	Deposit	0.55– 0.7m+	Mid-brown loam, very clean and homogenous. Only partially observed in placed running below made-up ground (002). Possible natural subsoil. Cut by [004].	Natural?
004	Cut	0–0.6m	Cut for BT cable [005]. Runs in a NE/SW direction. Cuts (001), (002) and (003). Filled with [005] and (006)].	Modern
005	Structure		BT cable within cut [004].	Modern
006	Deposit	0–0.6m	Fill of cut [004] surrounding cable [005]. Same as (002).	Modern

A466 Road

Excavation extended from top of trackway leading into Abbey Farm towards the base of the road leading up Chapel Hill to the southwest of the Great Church. Excavations were mainly conducted along the northern pavement. However, excavations of the main road were also observed where the service trench extended towards the newly built substation immediately south of Abbey Farm (on the opposite side of the A466) and towards the base of Chapel Hill. Level of present ground surface = 30mOD. Level at base of excavation = 29.3mOD. Average depth of excavations = 0.7m.

Context	Type	Depth	Description	Period
007	Deposit	0–0.11m	Tarmac immediately beyond the southern edge of the trackway leading into Abbey Farm. Overlies (008).	Modern
008	Deposit	0.11–0.6m	Deposit of angular stones and gravel in a mid-brown loam matrix. Same	Modern

			as (012) and (036). Underlies (007). Overlies (009) and (026).	
009	Deposit	0.3–0.7m+	Deposit of tarmac encountered towards base of trench. Encountered at variable depths. Only observed intermittently beneath northern pavement of A466. Possible disused roadway. Underlies (008). Overlies (020).	Modern
010	Deposit	0–0.09m	Tarmac defining pavement running along northern edge of A466. Overlies (011). Abutted by (018). Cut by [031].	Modern
011	Deposit	0.09–0.44m	Deposit of coarse concrete below (010). Overlies (012) and (025). Cut by [031].	Modern
012	Deposit	0.44–0.75m+	Deposit of angular stones and gravel in a mid-brown loam matrix. Same as (008) and (036). Underlies (011) and (033). Abutted by (013). Cut by [031].	Modern
013	Deposit	0.4–0.7m+	Mid-reddish brown loam abutting (012) on its southern edge. Situated beyond the southern edge of the pavement towards centre of road. Possibly demarcates where the A466 was extended (widened) northwards. Underlies (015). Overlies (017).	Modern
014	Deposit	0 – 0.1m	Tarmac defining centre of road. Overlies (015). Abutted by (018). Same as (040).	Modern
015	Deposit	0.1–0.4m	Coarse concrete below (014). Overlies (013).	Modern
016	Structure	0.7m+	Culvert, concrete. Runs in a NE/SW direction through centre of A466/ Only top of the culvert was visible. Underlies (017).	Modern
017	Deposit	0.5–0.7m	Deposit of stone rubble overlying culvert [016]. Comprises sandstone fragments as well as sandstone flag, of which some yellow sandy lime mortar was attached (possibly medieval in date). This deposit appears to comprise some demolished masonry associated with	Modern

			a medieval structure, possibly wall [021].	
018	Structure	0–0.09m	Kerbstones between tarmac deposits (010) and (014), separating the northern pavement from the roadway proper. Composed of hand-shaped sandstone. Abuts (010) and (014). Overlies (019). Cut by [031].	Modern
019	Deposit	0.09–0.4m	Deposit of coarse concrete immediately below kerbstones (018). Discretely deposited. Respects line of (019).	Modern
020	Deposit	0.3–0.6m	Dark brown silty clay with frequent angular stones throughout. Observed beneath pavement only. Underlies (009). Overlies (021). Abutted by (022).	Modern
021	Deposit	0.6–0.7m+	Mass of sandstone rubble, some of which faced, with coarse yellow sandy non-hydraulic lime mortar throughout. Some of these stones appeared <i>in-situ</i> , but were heavily disturbed. Observed beneath pavement only. Encountered in discrete area 40m to the west of the entrance to Abbey Farm. Width of deposit was approximately 3m. Possible remains of heavily disturbed medieval wall. The fact that its distribution was confined to a discrete area measuring 3m wide suggests that its alignment was N/S. Underlies (020).	Medieval?
022	Deposit	0.3–0.7m+	Red clay and stones. Levelling material. Observed beneath pavement only. Abuts western edge of (020). Underlies (009).	Modern
023	Deposit	0.7–0.75m	Tarmac below (022). Possibly same as (009). Overlies (024).	Modern
024	Deposit	0.75m+	Stone rubble immediately below (023). All fragments were large and unfaced.	Modern
025	Deposit	0.3–0.6m	Demolition material below (011). Encountered immediately south of Great Church. Comprises modern/Post-medieval demolition material (mostly brick) but also	Modern

			fragments of medieval masonry. SF1 and SF2 discovered within, as well as sherd of Post-medieval stoneware.	
026	Deposit	0.7m+	Black bituminous clay. Observed towards SW of Great Church in discrete area beneath pavement. Possibly demarcates top of culvert or other service. Underlies (008).	Modern
027	Structure	0–0.06m	Concrete slabs forming floor of bus stop approximately 90m from entrance to Abbey Farm. Overlies (028). Abutted by [029] and [030].	Modern
028	Deposit	0.06–0.4m	Coarse concrete below [027]. Abutted by [029] and [030].	Modern
029	Structure	0–0.1m	Concrete kerbs defining east edge of bus stop. Abuts (027) and (028).	Modern
030	Structure	0–0.1m	Concrete kerbs defining west edge of bus stop. Abuts (027) and (028).	Modern
031	Cut	0–0.6m+	Cut for bus stop. Cuts (010), (011), (012) and [018]. Contains [027], (028), [029], [030], [032] and (033).	Modern
032	Structure	0–0.3m	Concrete kerbs on south side of bus stop. Overlies (033).	Modern
033	Deposit	0.3 – 0.6m	Concrete deposit directly below [032]. Underlies [032]. Overlies (012).	Modern

Chapel Hill

Excavations were conducted along narrow roadway leading towards top of Chapel Hill. Towards the base of Chapel Hill, the present ground surface is 32mOD, while towards its summit the present ground surface was 50mOD. Level of surface at base of excavation towards bottom of Chapel Hill = 0.25mOD. Level of surface at base of excavation towards top of Chapel Hill = 43mOD. Average depth of excavations = 0.7m.

Context	Type	Depth	Description	Period
034	Structure	0–0.3m	Kerbstones. Composed of hand-shaped sandstone. Defines pavement on south side of A466, leading towards roadway on Chapel Hill. Overlies (035). Abutted by (037).	Modern
035	Deposit	0.3–0.5m	Concrete below kerbs [034]. Abutted by (037). Underlies (034). Overlies (036).	Modern
036	Deposit	0.5–0.7m+	Deposit of angular stones and gravel in a mid-brown loam matrix. Same	Modern

			as (008) and (012). Underlies (035) and (047).	
037	Deposit	0–0.75m+	Dark brown loam topsoil defining northern verge of roadway running up Chapel Hill. Abuts [034] and (035). Frequent angular stones throughout, some of which large and boulder-sized. Very thick rooting throughout caused by trees. Abuts (047). Cut by [049]/	Modern
038	Structure	0–0.7m+	Electric cable, not live. Runs into E/W running ceramic duct. Possibly originally powered streetlight.	Modern
039	Deposit	0.7–0.74m+	Mid-light brown loam subsoil beneath topsoil (037). Possibly natural. Cut by [049].	Natural?
047	Deposit	0–0.1m	Tarmac defining road leading up Chapel Hill. Overlies (036). Abutted by (037).	Modern
048	Structure	0.5–0.7m	Ceramic storm drain. Live.	Modern
049	Cut	0–0.7m	Cut for drain (048). Cuts (037) and (039).	Modern
050	Deposit	0–0.7m	Fill of cut [049]. Same as (037).	Modern
051	Structure	0–0.7m+	Manhole. Connected to drain [048].	Modern

Trackway South of Abbey Farm

Excavations extended from beginning of trackway, situated immediately in line with and on opposite side of A466 to the trackway leading into Abbey Farm. These excavations extended towards newly installed substation. Present ground surface rises from 30mOD to 42mOD. Average depth of excavations = 0.7m.

Context	Type	Depth	Description	Period
040	Deposit	0–0.07m	Tarmac. Same as (014). Overlies (041). Abuts by (042).	Modern
041	Deposit	0.07–0.2m	Type 1 stones below (040). Overlies (042). Also abuts (042).	Modern
042	Deposit	0.2–0.7m+	Mid-brown loam. Highly compacted. Occasional angular stone fragments throughout with some larger fragments of highly friable grey sandstone derived from underlying bedrock. Natural subsoil. Underlies (041). Also abutted by southern edge of (040) and (041). Cut by [044]. Overlies (046).	Natural
043	Structure	0.6–0.7m	BT cable within plastic duct. Contained by [044].	Modern

044	Cut	0–0.7m+	Cut for BT cable [043]. Cuts (042).	Modern
045	Deposit	0–0.7m+	Fill of cut [044]. Comprises sandstone fragments in a mid-brown loam matrix.	Modern
046	Deposit	0.7m+	Bedrock. Greenish grey sandstone. Underlies (042).	Natural

5.4 Appendix IV – Finds Inventory

The finds collected during excavations all derived from modern demolition deposit (025), which encountered below the pavement running along the northern edge of the A466.

Context	Area	SF number	Description	Weight	Dimensions	Minimum count	Period
025	A466	1	SF1 comprised a single jamb stone. It is composed of grey sandstone with some purple mottling throughout. Its top, base and non-moulded sides were only rudimentarily dressed. A single side of the stone had been pecked to a smooth and even surface, probably a chamfer edge. The moulded front of the stone has a carved angle roll. The remaining sides were internal to the structure of the building and not meant to be seen. The moulded stone may have originally formed the inside of a window or door jamb. Traces of stucco are also seen on the worked sides of the piece.		0.15m long x 0.19m wide. Profile of base 0.15m x 0.19m. Profile of tope 0.24m x 0.17m.	1	Medieval
025	A466	2	SF2 comprised a single jamb stone of grey sandstone. Its top, base and non-moulded sides were only rudimentarily dressed. The moulded front of the stone has a carved angle roll and dressed flat edge. The interior (to the wall) edge has a carved square notch or anchor point (40mm x 40mm) that contained lead solder complete with a		0.28m long x 0.16m wide. Profile of base 0.16m x 0.22m. Profile of tope 0.20m (at its widest) x 0.16m. Hole for iron tie bar	1	Medieval

			<p>circular depression from a wall tie bar. The remaining sides were internal to the structure of the building and not meant to be seen. The moulded stone may have originally formed the inside of a window or door jamb. Traces of stucco are also seen on the worked sides of the piece. The moulded side of the stone is slightly curved and could have formed part the outer part of a double arch. The curve of the stone is only marginal, suggesting it was situated fairly low down, possibly towards the springer or base of the doorway or window it once belonged to.</p>		0.04m x 0.03m x 0.03m deep.		
025	A466	3	<p>Single sherd of a Bristol glazed stoneware jar. Sherd comprises part of wall and shoulder of vessel, both of which are rounded in form. Decoration seen in the form of rouletted dots around the base of the shoulder. Fabric is a buff-coloured stoneware, very well fired. Sherd also has characteristic two-tone glaze, with white glaze on wall and honey coloured 'Bristol' glaze on shoulder. Bristol glaze stoneware was first developed in 1835 and was produced throughout the 19th century. The slightly mottled effect on the</p>		115mm x 105mm. Thickness of body 7.4mm.	1	Post-medieval

			Bristol glaze, which is more characteristic of earlier salt glazes, may suggest that it is fairly early in date.				
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