Archaeology Wales

Goldcliff Road, Goldcliff Newport

Archaeological Watching Brief



By Siân Thomas

Report No. 1539



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Archaeology Wales

Goldcliff Road, Goldcliff Newport

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report No. 1539

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Non Technical Summary

This report results from work undertaken by Archaeology Wales Ltd (AW) for Mr and Mrs Edwards on land at Four Winds, Boat Road, Goldcliff, Newport. The report details the results of an archaeological watching brief that took place to ensure the preservation by record of any archaeological remains encountered during the excavation of footings for a new garage.

The site lies within the Gwent Levels, which have been designated as an Outstanding Historic Landscape (HLW (Gt) 2). The designated area is the largest and most significant example of a manmade landscape in Wales. The landscape of the Levels has been inundated and reclaimed from the sea for at least the last two thousand years. Although there are no known remains of archaeological significance within the site boundary, a settlement is shown on land adjacent to the site on maps that date to between 1756-1880.

No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the works and no finds were recovered, however, a thick deposit of alluvial clay was encountered towards the base of the excavated area.

All work was undertaken to the Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief as set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2015).

1. Introduction

Location and scope of work

In January 2017 Archaeology Wales Ltd (AW) was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Edwards to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land at Four Winds, Boat Road, Goldcliff, the site is centred on OS grid reference: ST 35946 82970 (Fig 1). This work relates to the excavation of footings for a new garage, Planning Application Number 16/1142.

Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Curatorial Division (GGAT-CD), acting as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, stipulated that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during all ground works associated with the development.

An approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by AW in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CIfA 2015) and was designed to provide an approved methodology of archaeological work to be implemented during the construction works.

The watching brief took place on 7th January 2017 under the supervision of Siân Thomas.

Topography and Geology

The site is formed of a roughly triangular piece of land, bounded on all three sides by reens, with Boat Road beyond the reen to the east of the site. Due to the nature of the Levels, the land is low lying, with the site being only approximately 6 metres AOD.

The underlying geology is comprised of the Mercia Mudstone Group, which is comprised of mudstones and siltstones, dominantly red in colour although green-grey mudstone is also present. This is overlain by tidal flat deposits, which are soft silty clays with layers of sand, gravel and peat (Waters, 2011; NERC, 2016).

Archaeological and Historical Background

Goldcliff lies on the Gwent Levels which have been designated an Outstanding Historic Landscape (HLW (Gt) 2). This area represents the largest and most significant example of a man made landscape in Wales. The Levels represent a landscape inundated by, and reclaimed from the sea for at least the last two thousand years. The area has distinctive drainage systems devised over successive periods of use. The Levels have known, and the potential for further extensive, well-preserved, buried, waterlogged, archaeological and palaeoenvironmental deposits surviving from earlier landscapes (Cadw and ICOMOS 1998, GGAT 2005, GGAT 2013).

In close proximity to the development is the site of abandoned occupation as outlined on maps dating between 1756-1880. The development is also surrounded by reens, many of which are medieval in date. The small village of Goldcliff itself has medieval origins including a church dating to 1113AD.

No Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings or PRN sites lie within the boundary of the development area.

2. Methodology

The excavation was carried out by removing the overburden with a 360° tracked excavator equipped with a toothed ditching bucket. The entire process was monitored by a suitably trained archaeologist. The area excavated for the footings consisted of three conjoining trenches. The western section of trenching measured 4.5 metres in length, 1.5m in width and 1 metre in depth. The southern section measured 8.5 metres in length, 1.5 metres in width and 1.5 metres in depth. The eastern section measured 2 metres in length, 1.5 metres in width and 1 metre in depth. The area within the footings was excavated to a depth of 0.10 metres maximum in order to lower the ground enough for the pouring of a concrete slab.

Sections and plans of the excavation were photographed using a 12MP digital camera. All the deposits encountered were recorded by means of a continuous context numbering system and recorded on pro-forma context sheets. All features and deposits are described in accordance with CIfA conventions. A register of all contexts and photographs was also made.

The watching brief complied with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance For Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2015) was undertaken during all intrusive ground work on the site.

3. Watching Brief Results (Fig 2; Plates 1-3)

Excavation began with the western section of trench for the garage footings before moving on to the southern and eastern sections, which when excavated formed a continuous trench, 15 metres in length, with a maximum depth of 1.5 metres. The basal deposit encountered along the entire length of the trench was an alluvial clay (105). This was encountered at a depth of 0.90m below current ground level and consisted of firm, mid brown grey sandy clay.

Overlying this across the entire excavation was a mid yellow brown sandy clay soil, (104). This deposit was 0.60m thick with no inclusions. The lack of inclusions or any form of mixing of the soil suggests it accumulated slowly and is likely associated with inundation events. Overlying this was a mixed mid brown grey clay deposit, (103). This deposit had lenses of the brown grey alluvial clay within it. It appeared to have been deliberately deposited across the site, most likely when the house was originally constructed, in order to level or raise the ground surface around the house. It was overlain by a further deliberately laid deposit, (100), which likely served the same purpose. This consisted of a dark grey brown silty clay, with occasional medium sized angular stones and fragments of brick.

This was cut by [101] at the northern end of the western trench. The cut was steep sided and ran south-west to north-east along the side of the house. It was filled by (106) a mid blue grey silty clay, which was in excess of 0.40m thick. This was overlain by fill (102), a red gravel, which was 0.60m in thickness. The base of cut [101] was not reached during the course of excavation. The cut formed part of the foundation cut for the extension of the current house, which was immediately to the north of the excavation area.

At the eastern edge of the excavation area deposit (107) was encountered, which overlay (100). This deposit was formed a blue grey slate fragments which formed part of the surface of the current driveway.

4. Conclusion

No archaeological features or finds were discovered during the course of works on the site despite the moderately high potential due to the setting of the site within the Gwent Levels.

5. Bibliography

CIfA. (2015) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (Unpublished Guidance accessible at www.archaeologists.net)

NERC. (2016) British Geological Survey Maps (accessed at www.bgs.ac.uk)

Waters, C.N., 2011. A revised correlation of Carboniferous rocks in the British Isles. Bath: Geological Society of London.



Figure 1. Site location



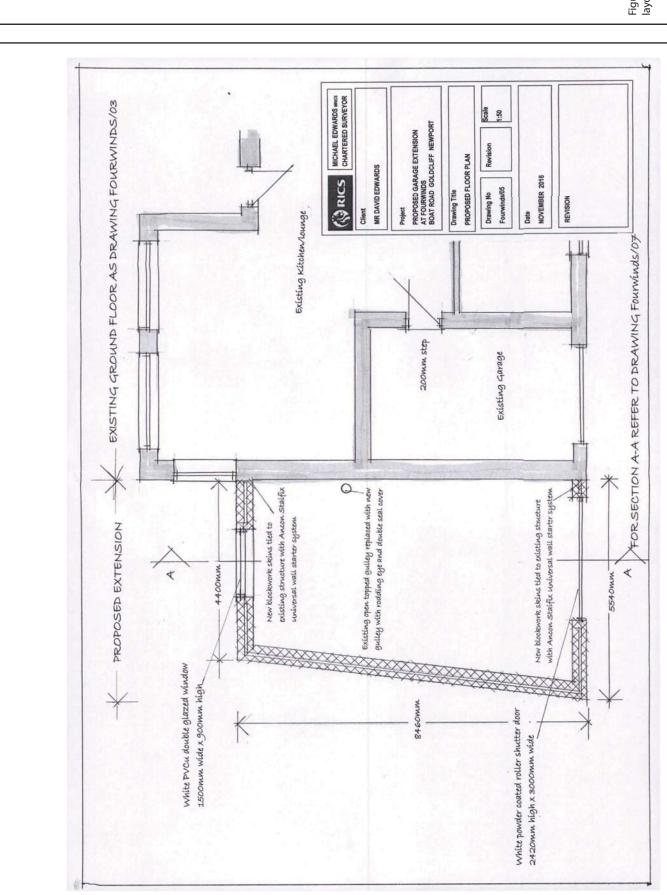


Figure 2. Wall foundation trench layout. West to top of page.







Plate 1. View to the west along the east-west aligned part of the foundation trench.

Plate 2. View to the north along the eastern north-south aligned part of the foundation trench





Plate 3. Showing representative section of trench excavation.



Appendix I: Context Inventory

Context	Description		Relationship
100	Deposit	Comprised of a dark grey brown silty clay.	Cut through by [101] and
		Thickness of 0.10m.	overlain by (107). Overlies
			(103).
101	Cut	Linear cut for house foundations. Not fully	Contains (102) and (106).
		excavated. Measured in excess of 1.5m by	
		0.30m by 1m. Steep sides.	
102	Fill	Mid orange red gravel, 0.60m thick.	Upper fill of [101].
103	Deposit	Firm, mid brown grey silty clay. Mixed lenses	Overlay (104) and overlain by
		of brown grey alluvial clay. 0.20m thick.	(100).
104	Deposit	Firm, mid yellow brown, sandy clay. 0.60m	Overlays (105) and overlain by
		thick. Most likely lain down by water action.	(103).
105	Deposit	Mid brown grey alluvial clay, in excess of	Overlain by (104).
		0.60m thick.	
106	Fill	Mid blueish grey silty clay, 0.40m thick at its	Fill of [101].
		greatest observed extent.	
107	Deposit	Dark blue grey slate fragments. Part of the	Overlay (100).
		gravel driveway surface.	



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WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION (WSI) FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT

Four Winds, Boat Road, Goldcliff
Newport

Prepared for:

Mr and Mrs Edwards

January 2017



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Figure 1. Site location

Figure 2. Plan of new garage

Summary

This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) details the archaeological watching brief to be undertaken by Archaeology Wales at the request of Mr and Mrs Edwards. The archaeological watching brief will be undertaken during ground works associated with the foundations for a new garage to be built at Four Winds, Goldcliff, Newport (centred on ST 35946 82970). The associated Planning Application No. is 16/1142.

The proposed development works will comprise the excavation of the foundations and slab associated with a new garage. The excavation for the wall foundation will have a depth of approximately 1m and the internal excavation for the slab will be approximately 0.5m.

The development lies within the archaeologically sensitive area of the Gwent Levels which have been designated an Outstanding Historic Landscape (HLW (Gt) 2). This area represents the largest and most significant example of a man made landscape in Wales. The Levels represent a landscape inundated by, and reclaimed from the sea for at least the last two thousand years. A settlement adjacent to the development area is noted on maps dating between 1756-1880.

All work will be undertaken in accordance with the standards and guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

1. Introduction and planning background

This WSI details the methodology for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the ground works/ associated with the construction of a new garage at Four Winds, Boat Road, Goldcliff, Newport (centred on ST 35946 82970). (Figure 1). The associated Planning Application No. is 16/1142.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust – Archaeological Planning (GGAT_AP) acting as archaeological advisors to Newport City Council recommended that an archaeological condition be placed on the planning consent. Part of the consultee response stated that:

The project area lies within the Archaeologically Sensitive Area of Newport and the Gwent Levels, an area of reclaimed marshland that has been exploited by humans for at least 6000 years. The Historic Environment Record indicates that settlement in the immediate vicinity of the property is known to date to at least the Post-Medieval period, while the settlement of Goldcliff further to the east was established in the Medieval period, with St Mary Magdalene's Church dating back to at least 1113. As a result, it is possible that significant archaeological material exists within the project area.

This WSI has been prepared by Rowena Hart MCIfA Project Manager, Archaeology Wales Ltd (henceforth - AW) at the request of Mr and Mrs Edwards.

The methodology set out in this WSI will be agreed with the GGAT-AP, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, prior to the commencement of any intrusive archaeological investigations on the site. GGAT-AP recommended that an intrusive archaeological evaluation of the development area should be undertaken prior to the determination of the planning application. The recommendations made by GGAT-AP are set out in a letter to the local planning authority dated 16th November 2016.

All work will be undertaken to the standards and guidance set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

2. Site Description

The site occupies a flat, triangular parcel of land adjoining Boat Lane on the east. To the north is a neighbouring residential property. To the west and south are fields.

The underlying geology is comprised of sedimentary mudstone of the Mercia Mudstone Group. The superficial deposits comprise tidal Flat deposits of clay and silt.

3. Archaeological background

Goldcliff lies on the Gwent Levels which have been designated an Outstanding Historic Landscape (HLW (Gt) 2). This area represents the largest and most significant example of a man made landscape in Wales. The Levels represent a landscape inundated by, and reclaimed from the sea for at least the last two thousand years. The area has distinctive drainage systems devised over successive periods of use. The Levels have known, and the potential for further extensive, well-preserved, buried, waterlogged, archaeological and palaeoenvironmental deposits surviving from earlier landscapes (Cadw and ICOMOS 1998, GGAT 2005, GGAT 2013).

In close proximity to the development is the site of abandoned occupation as outlined on maps dating between 1756-1880. The development is also surrounded by reens, many of which are medieval in date. The small village of Goldcliff itself has medieval origins including a church dating to 1113AD.

No Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings or PRN sites lie within the boundary of the development area.

4. Objectives

This WSI sets out a program of works to ensure that the archaeological watching brief will meet the standard required by *The Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's Standard and Guidance For Archaeological Watching Briefs (2014)*.

The objective of the watching brief is to safeguard the potential archaeological resource through observation and recording during the course of the intrusive ground works associated with the ground investigation scheme.

A written report will be compiled following the fieldwork and an archive of all collected data will be produced and deposited with an appropriate receiving institution.

5. Timetable of works

5.1. Fieldwork

The fieldwork will be undertaken at the convenience of the client. The work is proposed to start on 7 January 2017. Archaeology Wales will update GGAT-AP with the exact date.

5.2. Report delivery

The report will be submitted to the client and to GGAT-AP within three months of the completion of the fieldwork. A copy of the report will also be sent to the regional HER.

6. Fieldwork

6.1. Scope of development

An archaeological watching brief will be undertaken during all intrusive ground works. Figure 1 shows the location of the development site. Figure 2 gives more detail of the area where the work is to be carried out. The watching brief will monitor the following excavation activities:

- New excavation
- Foundation excavation
- Drainage and other services
- Landscaping
- All other ground work

The excavation depth is expected to reach 1m for the wall foundation and 0.5m for the slab.

6.2. Watching Brief Methodology and contingency

All intrusive groundworks will be subject to an archaeological watching brief conducted to meet the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2014).

The site archaeologist undertaking the watching brief will be afforded the required access by the main contractor in order to observe and where necessary to record any archaeological remains revealed. Groundwork will not be undertaken without the presence of the site archaeologist. The site archaeologist will record finds and less significant archaeological deposits and features without significant delay to the work program.

Where significant or complex archaeological deposits or features are encountered there will be a requirement for those areas to be fenced off and highlighted to all contractors employed on the site. Machines or contractors shall not enter this area until archaeological recording has been completed. If significant archaeological features are revealed during the work a meeting between the client, their agent, main contractor, GGAT-AP and Archaeology Wales will be called at the earliest convenience.

To comply with professional guidelines, a contingency for a maximum of three days' uninterrupted access to each such area and for a team of up to two further archaeologists to be employed should be provided. Contingency costs will be agreed in advance before any extension to the programme commences and will follow a site meeting between Archaeology Wales, the client (or their agent) and GGAT-AP.

6.3. Recording

Archaeological recording will be undertaken to best current professional practice. Archaeological deposits, features and structures will be recorded by means of a continuous context numbering system. Where necessary site drawings will be made at a suitable scale usually 1:20 in plan, and 1:10 in section. All significant contexts will be photographed in digital at a minimum of 12mp.

6.4. Finds

The professional standards set in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological (2014) will form the basis of finds collection, processing and recording.

All manner of finds regardless of category and date will be retained.

Finds recovered that are regarded as Treasure under *The Treasure Act 1996* will be reported to HM Coroner for the local area.

6.5. Environmental sampling strategy

Deposits with a significant potential for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental material will be sampled, by means of the most appropriate method (bulk, column etc). Where sampling will provide a significant contribution to the understanding of the site AW will draw up a site-specific sampling strategy alongside a specialist environmental archaeologist. All environmental sampling and recording and will follow English Heritage's *Guidelines for Environmental Archaeology* (2002).

6.6. Human remains

In the event that human remains are encountered, their nature and extent will be established and the coroner informed. All human remains will be left *in situ* and protected during backfilling. Where preservation *in situ* is not possible the human remains will be fully recorded and removed under conditions that comply with all current legislation and include acquisition of licenses and provision for reburial following all analytical work. Human remains will be excavated in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's *Excavation and Post-Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains: Technical Paper Number 13* (1993).

A meeting with GGAT-AP, the client (or their agent) and AW will be called if the human remains uncovered are of such complexity or significance that the contingency arrangement (3.1 above) would not be of sufficient scope.

6.7. Specialist advisers

In the event of certain finds, features or sites being discovered, AW will seek specialist opinion and advice. A list of specialists is given in the table below although this list is not exhaustive.

Artefact type	Specialist
Flint	Kate Pitt (Archaeology Wales)
Animal bone	Richard Madgwick (Cardiff University)
CBM, heat affected clay, Daub etc.	Rachael Hall (APS)
Clay pipe	Hilary Major (Freelance)
Glass	Rowena Hart (Archaeology Wales)
Cremated and non- cremated human bone	Malin Holst (University of York)/Richard Madgwick (Cardiff University)
Metalwork	Kevin Leahy (University of Leicester)/ Quita Mold (Freelance)
Metal work and metallurgical residues	Dr Tim Young (GeoArch)
Neo/BA pottery	Dr Alex Gibson (Bradford University)
IA/Roman pottery	Jane Timby (Freelance)
Roman Pottery	Rowena Hart (Archaeology Wales)/ Peter

	Webster (Freelance)
Post Roman pottery	Stephen Clarke (Monmouthshire Archaeology)
Charcoal (wood ID)	John Carrot (Freelance)
Waterlogged wood	Nigel Nayling (University of Wales – Lampeter)
Molluscs and pollen	Dr James Rackham
Charred and waterlogged plant remains	Wendy Carruthers (Freelance)

6.7.1. Specialist reports

Specialist finds and palaeoenvironmental reports will be written by AW specialists, or sub-contracted to external specialists when required.

7. Monitoring

AW will make its fieldwork available for monitoring by the client (and their appointed agents) and the Local Planning Authority. In both instances advance notice should be given. All site attendants should follow Health and Safety requirements. If site visit reports are made AW would be grateful to receive copies.

8. Post-fieldwork programme

8.1. Archive assessment

8.1.1. Site archive

An archive of archaeological site records will be prepared in accordance with *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991) Appendix 3.

The site archive (including artefacts and samples) will be deposited with an appropriate receiving organisation, in compliance with the ICON and CIfA Guidelines (*Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (2007*). The legal landowners consent will be gained for deposition of finds. Copies of the report and archive index will be deposited with the *National Monuments Record*, RCAHMW, Aberystwyth and the *Regional HER*.

In addition, an archive of records made during the post-fieldwork phase will be prepared to the specifications in *Management of Archaeological Projects*, (English Heritage, 1991) Appendix 6.

8.1.2. Analysis

Following a rapid review of the potential of the site archive, a programme of analysis and reporting will be undertaken. This will result in the following inclusions in the final report:

- Non-technical summary
- Location plan showing the area/s covered by the watching brief, all artefacts, structures and features found
- Plan and section drawings (if features are encountered) with ground level, ordnance datum and vertical and horizontal scales.
- Written description and interpretation of all deposits identified, including their character, function, potential dating and relationship to adjacent features.
 Specialist descriptions and illustrations of all artefacts and soil samples will be included as appropriate.
- An indication of the potential of archaeological deposits which have not been disturbed by the development
- A discussion of the local, regional and national context of the remains by means of reviewing published reports, unpublished reports, historical maps, documents from local archives and the regional HER as appropriate.
- A detailed archive list at the rear listing all contexts recorded, all samples finds and find types, drawings and photographs taken. This will include a statement of the intent to deposit, and location of deposition, of the archive.

8.2. Reports and archive deposition

8.2.1. Report to client

A report, comprising a synthesis of data gathered, will be submitted upon completion of the watching brief, together with inclusion of supporting evidence in appendices as appropriate, together with photographs and illustrations.

8.2.2. Additional reports

After an appropriate period has elapsed, copies of the report will be deposited with the relevant county Historical Environment Record, the National Monuments Record and, if appropriate, Cadw.

8.2.3. Summary reports for publication

Short archaeological reports will be submitted for publication in relevant journals; as a minimum, a report will be submitted to the annual publication of the regional CBA group or equivalent journal.

8.2.4. Notification of important remains

Where it is considered that remains have been revealed that may satisfy the criteria for statutory protection, AW will submit preliminary notification of the remains to Cadw.

8.2.5. Archive deposition

The research archive will, whenever appropriate, be deposited with a suitable receiving institution, usually the relevant Local Authority museums service. The site archive will be deposited with an appropriate institution. A digital copy of the archive will be deposited with the RCAHMW.

8.2.6. Finds deposition

The finds, including artefacts and ecofacts, excepting those which may be subject to the Treasure Act, will be deposited with the same institution, subject to the agreement of the legal land owners.

A copy of the archive index will be deposited with the National Monuments Record, RCAHMW, Aberystwyth.

9. Staff

The project will be managed by Rowena Hart MCIfA (AW Project Manager) and the fieldwork undertaken by Sian Thomas (Archaeology Wales). Any alteration to staffing before or during the work will be brought to the attention of GGAT-AP and the client.

Additional Considerations

10. Health and Safety

10.1. Risk assessment

Prior to the commencement of work AW will carry out and produce a formal Health and Safety Risk Assessment in accordance with *The Management of Health and Safety Regulations* 1992. A copy of the risk assessment will be kept on site and be available for inspection on request. A copy will be sent to the client (or their agent as necessary) for their information. All members of AW staff will adhere to the content of this document.

10.2. Other guidelines

AW will adhere to best practice with regard to Health and Safety in Archaeology as set out in the FAME (Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers) health and safety manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology (2002)*.

11. Insurance

AW is fully insured for this type of work, and holds Insurance with Aviva Insurance Ltd and Hiscox Insurance Company Limited through Towergate Insurance. Full details of these and other relevant policies can be supplied on request.

12. Quality Control

12.1. Professional standards

AW works to the standards and guidance provided by the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists*. AW fully recognise and endorse the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* and the *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs* currently in force. All employees of AW, whether corporate members of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists or not, are expected to adhere to these Codes and Standards during their employment.

12.2. Project tracking

The designated AW manager will monitor all projects in order to ensure that agreed targets are met without reduction in quality of service.

13. Arbitration

Disputes or differences arising in relation to this work shall be referred for a decision in accordance with the Rules of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators' *Arbitration Scheme for the Institute for Archaeologists* applying at the date of the agreement.

14. References

- CCW, Cadw & ICOMOS UK, 1998, The Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales. Part 2.1: Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales. Cadw
- GGAT, 2005, Rumney Great Wharf II, Cardiff: archaeological watching brief, Interim report, GGAT Report No. **2005/040**
- GGAT, 2013, Portland Grounds, Caldicot, Monmouth: an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. GGAT Unpublished Report No.**2013/011**



(RICS

MICHAEL EDWARDS MRICS CHARTERED SURVEYOR

MR DAVID EDWARDS

PROPOSED GARAGE EXTENSION AT FOURWINDS BOAT ROAD GOLDCLIFF NEWPORT

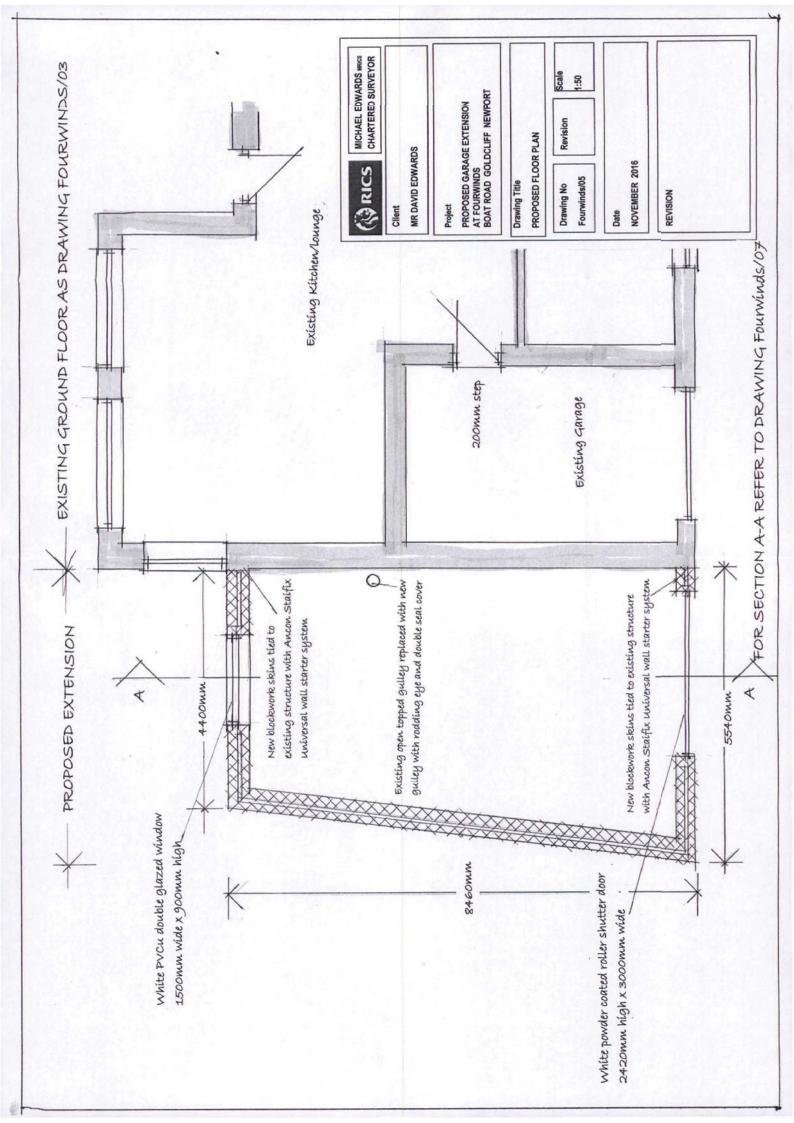
LOCATION PLAN **Drawing Title**

Revision Fourwinds/01 **Drawing No**

Scale 1:1250

NOVEMBER 2016 Date

REVISION



Archaeology Wales





