

CPAT Report No. 1400

1 Church Row, Llanfrynach




Desk-based assessment and watching brief



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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	ii
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	2
3 WATCHING BRIEF	4
4 CONCLUSIONS	6
5 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION STATEMENT	6
6 REFERENCES	7
7 SITE ARCHIVE.....	7
APPENDIX 1: CPAT WSI 1652	8

Summary

The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) have conducted a watching brief on behalf of Sara Skinner during the construction of a single storey extension at 1 Church Row, Llanfrynach, Brecon, Powys. The watching brief was carried out in September 2016.

The development plot is located immediately to the south of the church within the historic core of the settlement, which is centred around the junction of three roads leading into the village. Historic mapping suggests that the houses were much more densely concentrated into this area, to the north of the river crossing.

The groundworks comprised a general reduction of the footprint of the building to a depth of 0.3m, followed by the excavation of a foundation trench 0.45m deep. No finds or features of archaeological significance were encountered in the course of these groundworks.

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was invited by Sara Skinner to undertake a watching brief during the construction of a single storey extension at 1 Church Row, Llanfrynach, Brecon, Powys. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) Heritage Officer had determined that the watching brief was required to ensure the preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may have been revealed.

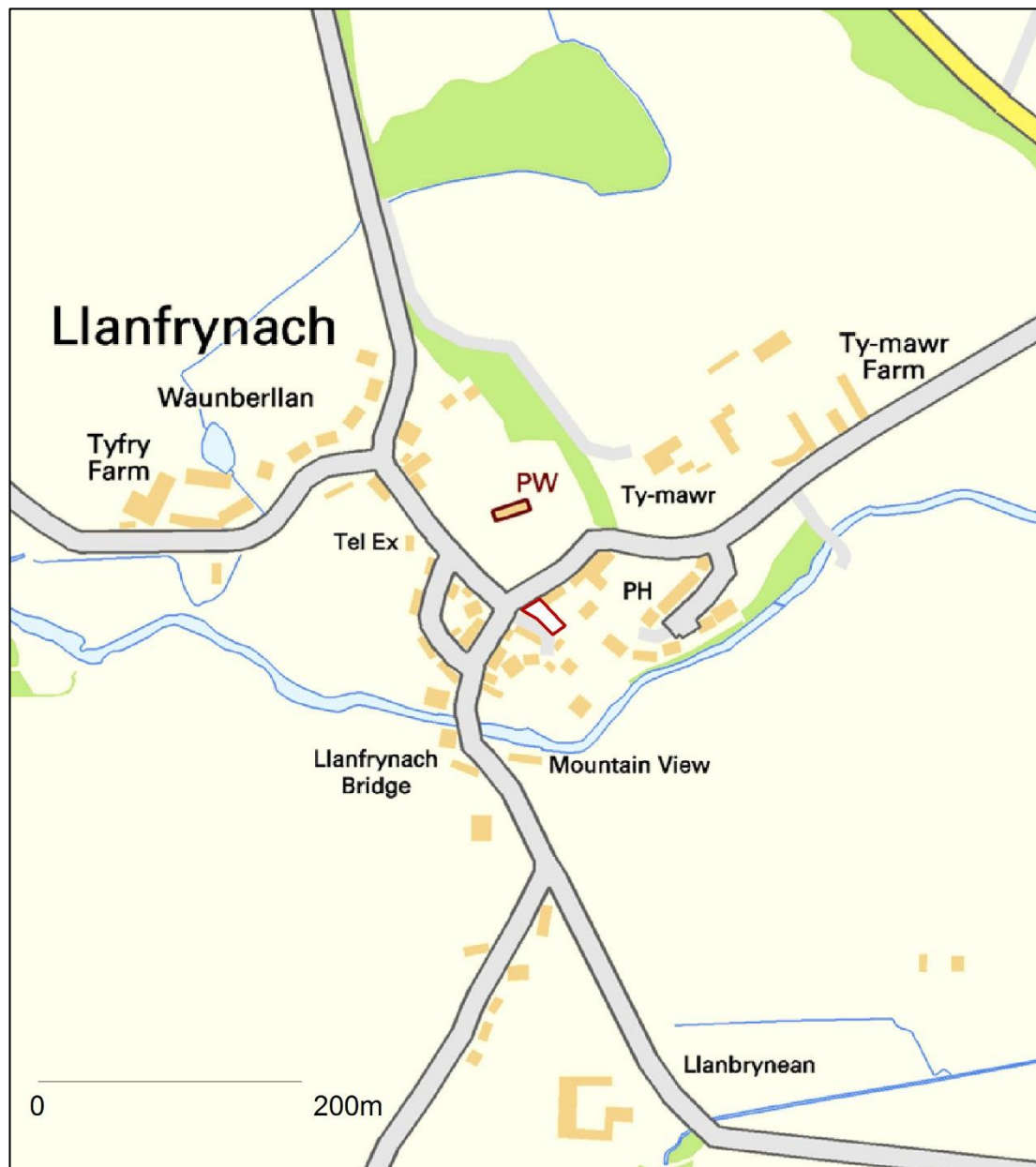


Fig. 1 Plan of Llanfrynach with the development (marked in red)

- 1.2. Full planning permission (15/12435/FUL) was granted in August 2015, with the inclusion of the following condition relating to archaeology:

4. The developer will ensure that a suitably qualified archaeological contractor is present during the undertaking of ground works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be maintained. The archaeological watching brief will be carried out in accordance with a brief issued by the local planning authority and a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority, which must meet the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in their Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief. The Local Planning Authority must be informed at least 2 weeks prior to the commencement of the development of the name of the archaeological contractor appointed to undertake the Watching Brief. A copy of the Watching Brief report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, to the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales for inclusion in the National Monument Record, and to Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the Regional Historic Environment Record (HER) within two months of the fieldwork being completed.

Reason: To ensure that any remains of archaeological significance disturbed in the course of the development are excavated, recorded and reported.

2 Historical Background

- 2.1. Llanfrynach is located on the Nant Menasgin, an east-flowing tributary of the Usk in an area of rolling countryside within the Middle Usk Valley, 4.5km south-east of Brecon. The River Usk runs approximately 1.3km to the north-east.

Prehistoric

- 2.2. Although no finds or features of prehistoric date have been identified within Llanfrynach, there is evidence for occupation of the Usk Valley since the Neolithic period. A Bronze Age barrow (PRN 2388) is located approximately 0.9m to the north-east at Cae Gwin. Evidence for later prehistoric occupation is represented by the univallate Iron Age hillfort (PRN 142927) located at Cross Oak to the north of Talybont-on-Usk 4km to the south-east.

Roman

- 2.3. Roman archaeological features within the wider area of Llanfrynach include the line of the Roman road (PRN 306000) between Abergavenny and Brecon Gaer, which is assumed to fall along either the A40 or the B4558 roads to the north of the River Usk.
- 2.4. A high-status late Roman civilian complex with bathhouse and mausoleum, was discovered at Maesderwen, 0.6km to the west of Llanfrynach (PRN 17808/610) during the 18th century. There is also evidence for possible iron working in the vicinity of this site during the Romano-British period.

Medieval

- 2.5. It is believed that there was an ecclesiastical presence at Llanfrynach prior to the Norman Conquest. The primary evidence for this comes from the discovery of three 'sculptured' stones (PRN613) during rebuilding work at Llanfrynach Church during the 1880s, which are believed to be 10th or 11th century in date. It is unclear whether the settlement itself was established during the medieval period. The church was largely rebuilt during the 19th century but the tower and possibly the font are 14th century.

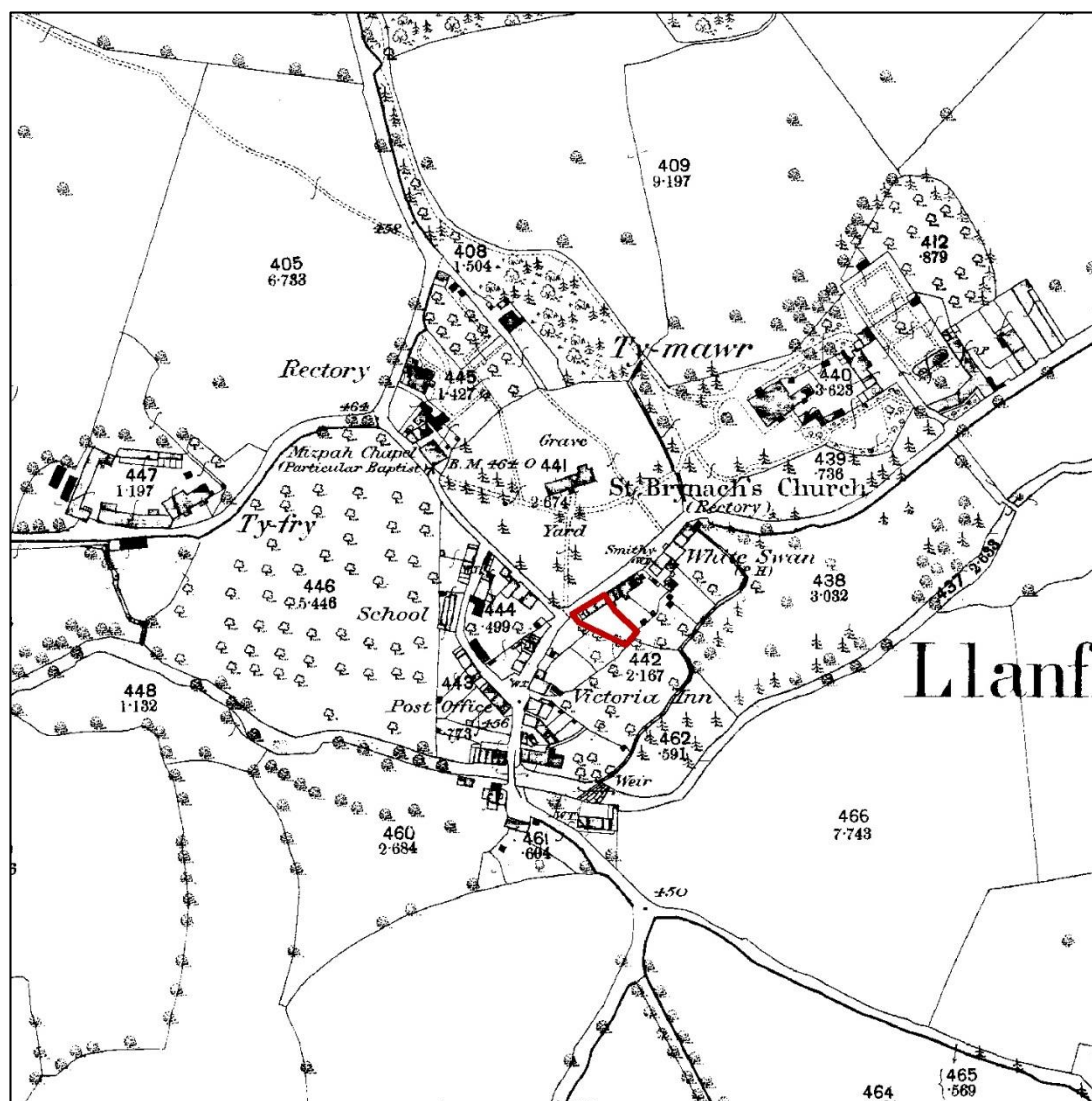


Fig. 2 1887 Ordnance Survey County Series Map of Llanfrynach with the development area (marked in red).

Post Medieval

- 2.6. There are at least two buildings within Llanfrynach thought to date to the early post medieval period. Ty Mawr (PRN 20762) to the north-east, is of 19th century date, but

is believed to be located on the site of an earlier 15th century house, possibly a fortified manor, based on the dating of an earlier archway incorporated into the later fabric.

- 2.7. Ty Fry (PRN 6905), to the west is an early 17th century longhouse, with later 17th century additions.
- 2.8. The Tithe map of 1840 depicts St Brynach's Church at the centre of a confluence of roads, with a ribbon development to the south to the bridge over the Nant Menasgin, a block of properties to the north-west of the church and a row facing the church to the south-east (Church Row), Ty Mawr is slightly removed from the settlement to the east, although the grounds do abut the churchyard. Ty Fry is also slightly removed from the setting of the village, being located to the west of a large area of pasture/orchard. The historic core of the settlement is believed to lie to the south of the church, where the houses are more densely concentrated.
- 2.9. The 1887 Ordnance Survey map indicates that there was little expansion of the settlement of the intervening fifty years.

3 Watching Brief

- 3.1. The footprint of the development area (extending 4m by 3m) was reduced by 0.3m, revealing a soft dark brown slightly clayey sandy silt (001) containing pottery of late post medieval date. It was much disturbed by tree root activity and modern services and extended to 0.5m in thickness within the foundation trenches. Underlying the garden soil was a clean, moderate to firmly compacted, reddish, slightly clayey silty sand deposit (002) containing frequent pebbles and sub angular stones extending to >0.2m in thickness.



Fig. 3 North-east-facing section of foundation trench. Photo CPAT 4227-0004



Fig. 4 View of the development plot from the east. Photo CPAT 4227-0009

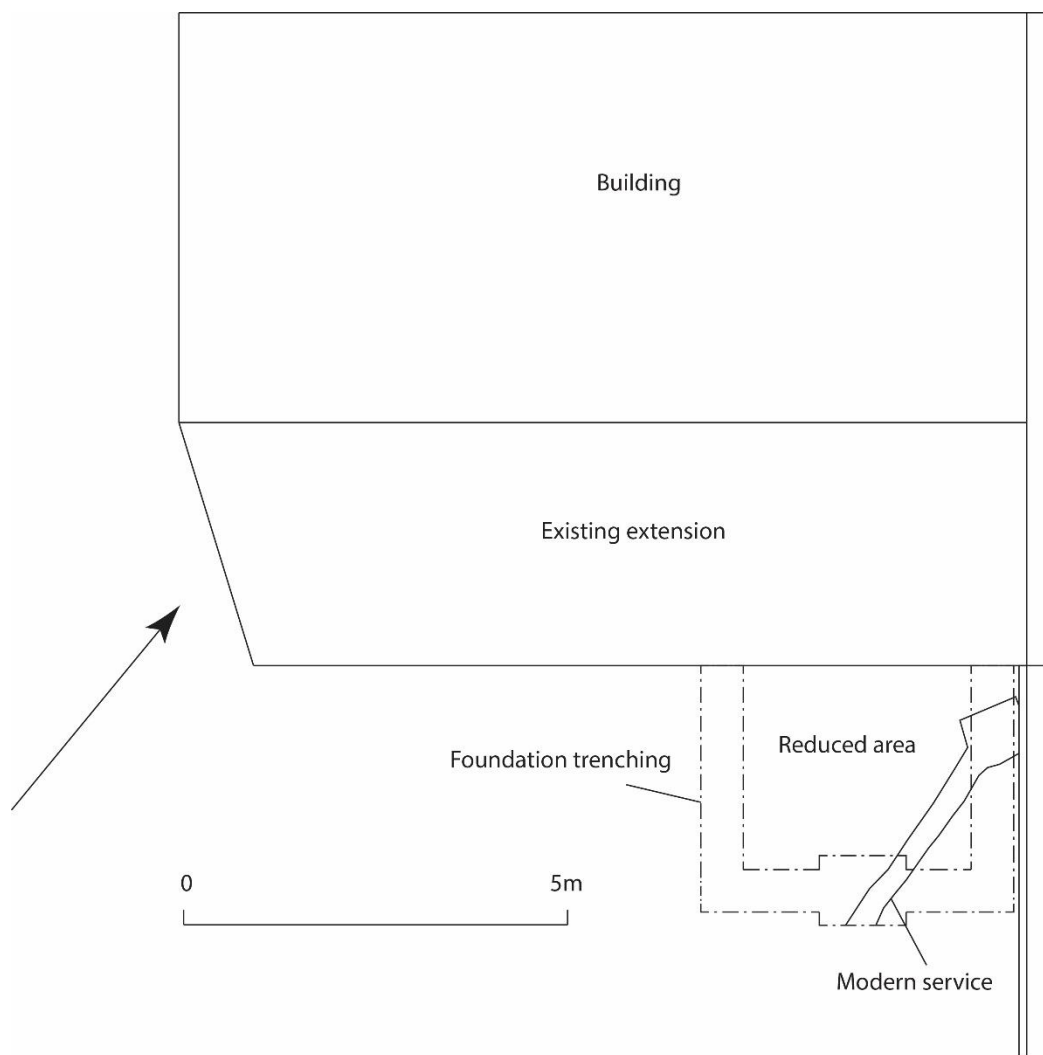


Fig. 5 Trench location plan

4 Conclusions

- 4.1. No finds or features of archaeological significance were revealed during the course of the watching brief. The artefactual assemblage was entirely 19th-century or modern in date, and was not retained following identification.

5 Archive deposition Statement

- 5.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The archive will be deposited with the regional Historic Environment Record, maintained by CPAT in Welshpool. A summary of the archive is provided in Appendix 1.

6 References

Silvester R, Martin C, Watson S., 2013. *Historic Settlements in the Brecon Beacons National Park, Llanfrynach*. Report for Cadw. Unpublished report. CPAT Report No. 1388

Historic Landscape Characterisation, Middle Usk Valley, Brecon and Llangorse. HLCA 1175

1840 Tithe Map *Llanfrynach*

1887 Ordnance Survey County Series 34.02

7 Site Archive

CPAT Event PRN: 140129

1 Watching brief visit form

9 Digital photographs, CPAT Film 4227

Appendix 1: CPAT WSI 1652

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) have been invited by Sara Skinner to prepare a specification for undertaking a watching brief during the construction of a single storey extension at 1 Church Row, Llanfrynach, Brecon, Powys (planning application 15/12435/Ful). The archaeologist for the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) has determined that the watching brief is required to ensure the preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may be revealed.
- 1.2. The development plot (SO 07542 25730) is located within the core of the village of Llanfrynach to the south of the churchyard of St Brynach's Church. The village of Llanfrynach is nestled below the lower slopes of the mountains of the Central Beacons, c. 1.4km south of the River Usk, within the Usk Valley. Llanfrynach is located to the south of the B4558 road, c. 4km south east of Brecon. The site is at an altitude of c. 139m above sea level. The underlying geology within the area is known to be St Maughans Formation, interbedded argillaceous rocks and subequal/subordinate sandstone, with overlying Devensian glaciofluvial fan deposits of sands and gravels (BGS 2016). The development plot is to the rear of 1 Church Row, Llanfrynach and is currently is use as a garden and patio area.
- 1.3. The site of the development has been identified as an area of archaeological sensitivity. The site is located within the historic core of Llanfrynach, and less than 10m away from the very archaeologically sensitive area of the churchyard. Llanfrynach is a settlement that may have its origins in the medieval period. Documentary evidence puts a church in the village in the 13th century, and the presence of 3 early medieval inscribed stone slabs, as well as the Church's dedication to an early medieval Saint, and the shape of the churchyard which may have originally been more circular, all suggest that the site may have a much longer history, and may have been a pre-conquest foundation (Silvester et al. 2013 Historic Settlement in the Brecon Beacons National Park). Currently, the extent to which a nuclear settlement of Llanfrynach developed around the medieval church and grew over the medieval period is currently unknown. The earliest development of the village is likely to lie to the south of the Church, and it is possible that Church Row may represent the site of some of the earliest development of the village, with development on the south of the churchyard. Being within the village core, along on of the principal roads and so close to the churchyard, it is possible that that below ground archaeological remains relating occupation and development of Llanfrynach from the medieval period onwards survive at this site, and these may be encountered during the course of the development.
- 1.4. The ground works associated with the construction of the proposed extension have the potential to damage or destroy any surviving archaeological remains relating to the early development of the village within the area of the development. Consequently, a condition has been attached to the planning consent that requires an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken to monitor the ground works

associated with the development, including ground reduction, foundation trenches, landscaping or service trenches etc.

METHODOLOGY

- 2.1. Prior to the commencement of the watching brief a rapid desk-based assessment will be undertaken comprising consultation of the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) and readily available historic mapping.
- 2.2. The watching brief will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (Cifa) Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2014). The watching brief will be undertaken to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of the new extension which may impact on potential buried archaeological deposits. This will be comprehensive, consisting of the direct supervision of all ground works and disturbance that may affect archaeological remains, including during the removal of topsoil, modern overburden, subsoils and other non-archaeologically significant horizons; and the excavation of building foundations, services and access routes, and ground reduction and landscaping works within the development area.
- 2.3. The excavation of any archaeological features or deposits will be undertaken by hand using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation:
 - The presence or absence of archaeological features encountered during the ground works will be noted.
 - Where features of archaeological interest are identified during the ground works they will be systematically investigated by hand with sufficient work being undertaken to determine their date, character and function, using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation and in accordance with Cifa Standard and Guidance.
 - All features will be located as accurately as possible on an overall plan of the development at an appropriate scale, showing boundaries depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping.
 - Contexts will be recorded on individual record forms, using a continuous numbering system, and be drawn and photographed as appropriate.
 - Plans will be drawn on permatrace to a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate.
 - All photography will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a minimum resolution of 8 mega pixels, including a metric scale in each view, with views logged in a photographic register.
 - In the event of human burials being discovered the Ministry of Justice will be informed. The remains will initially be left in situ, and if removal is required, a MoJ licences will be applied for under the Burial Act 1857.
 - In the event of finding any artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasures Act 1996, the appropriate procedures under this legislation will be followed.
- 2.4. All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:
 - All stratified finds will be collected by context, or where appropriate, individually recorded in three dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be

collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.

- All finds and samples will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance.
- arrangements to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples.
- Any artefacts recovered during the evaluation will be deposited with an appropriate museum, subject to the permission of the owner.

2.5. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:

- Non-technical summary
- Introduction
- Site location
- Topography and Geology
- Archaeological Background
- Desk-based assessment
- Watching brief
- Conclusions
- References
- Appropriate appendices on archives and finds

2.6. The site archive will be prepared to specifications in English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) system and the CifA Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives (2014), to be deposited with the regional Historic Environment Record (HER).

RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

3.1. The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Nigel Jones, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA). CPAT is also a CifA Registered Organisation (RAO No 6) and as such agrees to abide by their Code of Conduct (2014) and the Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology (2014).

3.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the site work. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client and the regional Historic Environment Record within one month of the completion of on-site works. If appropriate, a short report will be published in Archaeology in Wales.

3.3. The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services. Any further work over and above the original watching brief and report would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing.

- 3.4. Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 3.5. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance.

N W Jones

15 February 2016