

CPAT WSI 1734

# Plas Uchaf, Whitford

BUILDING RECORDING AND WATCHING BRIEF

Written Scheme of Investigation

submitted by

Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

On behalf of

Mostyn Estates Ltd

Mostyn Court

2 Mostyn Street

Llandudno

LL30 2PS



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS

CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

# CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION .....	2
2	OBJECTIVES .....	4
3	METHODOLOGY .....	5
4	RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING .....	7



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS  
CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 1938 553 670

[trust@cpat.org.uk](mailto:trust@cpat.org.uk)

[www.cpat.org.uk](http://www.cpat.org.uk)

©CPAT 2016



The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust is a Registered Organisation  
with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

### **Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust**

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT works to protect, record and interpret all aspects of the historic environment. We advise developers and local authorities on archaeology and planning, undertake archaeological projects for public- and private-sector clients, and have wide-ranging programmes of community archaeology events and activities.

The CPAT Field Services team is the leading archaeological practice in mid- and north-east Wales, and one of the longest-established commercial archaeology contractors in Europe.

CPAT is one of four archaeological trusts established in Wales in the mid-1970s to provide an archaeological service across the whole of the Principality. It is both a registered charity and a limited company, and its activities are managed by a board of Trustees. It is also Registered Organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). Further information regarding the Trust, including summary reports of some of the more significant recent projects can be found on its website at [www.cpat.org.uk](http://www.cpat.org.uk)

### **Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd-Powys**

Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd-Powys (CPAT) yn gweithio i warchod, cofnodi a dehongli pob agwedd ar yr amgylchedd hanesyddol. Rydym yn cynghori datblygwyr ac awdurdodau lleol ar archaeoleg a chynllunio ac yn ymgymryd â phrosiectau archaeolegol ar ran cleientiaid yn y sectorau cyhoeddus a phreifat, ac mae gennym raglenni eang eu hystod o ddiwyddiadau a gweithgareddau archaeolegol cymunedol.

Tîm Gwasanaethau Maes CPAT yw'r prif bractis archaeolegol yng nghanolbarth a gogledd-ddwyrain Cymru, ac mae'n un o'r contractwyr archaeoleg masnachol mwyaf hirsefydlog yn Ewrop.

Mae CPAT yn un o bedair ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol a sefydlwyd yng Nghymru yng nghanol y 1970au i ddarparu gwasanaeth archaeolegol ledled Cymru. Mae'r Ymddiriedolaeth yn elusen gofrestredig a hefyd yn gwmni cyfyngedig, ac mae ei gweithgareddau'n cael eu rheoli gan fwrdd Ymddiriedolwyr. Mae hefyd yn Registered Organisation (RO) gyda'r Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). Mae mwy o wybodaeth am yr Ymddiriedolaeth, gan gynnwys adroddiadau cryno ar rai o'r prosiectau diweddar mwyaf arwyddocaol hefyd i'w gweld ar ei gwefan yn [www.cpat.org.uk](http://www.cpat.org.uk)

---

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust has been invited Mostyn Estates Ltd to undertake a programme of building recording and a watching brief in connection with an application (No 054261) for retrospective listed building consent for refurbishments to Plas Uchaf, near Whitford (SJ 13904 79243).
- 1.2. Consent has been granted for the works with the inclusion of the following conditions which relate to archaeology and built heritage:

5. No development of any kind shall commence until the applicant has secured the implementation of a Level 2 (English Heritage Specification - Understanding Historic Buildings, 2006) archaeological study in accordance with an approved written scheme of investigation. A copy of the report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, 41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR tel: 01938 553670.

REASON: In order to afford the opportunity for the recording the historical/architectural interest of the building, in accordance with policy HE8 of the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

13. The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeological contractor is present during any new works to the walls on the top floor on an intermittent watching brief basis to make sure newly revealed historic fabric is recorded. The archaeological watching brief must meet the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeological contractor. A copy of the resulting report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR Email: markwalters@cpat.org.uk Tel: 01938 553670). After approval by the Local Planning Authority, a copy of the report and resulting archives should also be sent to the Historic Environment Record Officer, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the regional Historic Environment Record.

REASON: To safeguard the identification and recording of features of historic and/or archaeological interest associated with the fabric of the building and so comply with policy HE8 of the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan.

15. The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeological contractor is present if at any stage in the future the current internal ground floors, either wood, tile or concrete, are to be taken up in order to determine whether any of the 16th - 18th century floors and ground plan survive so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief must meet the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said

---

archaeological contractor. A copy of the resulting report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR Email: markwalters@cpat.org.uk Tel: 01938 553670). After approval by the Local Planning Authority, a copy of the report and resulting archive should also be sent to the Historic Environment Record.

REASON: To secure preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may be revealed during ground excavations for the consented development and so comply with policy HE8 of the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan.

16. The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeological contractor is present during the undertaking of any ground works in the development area so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief must meet the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeological contractor. A copy of the resulting report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR Email: markwalters@cpat.org.uk Tel: 01938 553670). After approval by the Local Planning Authority, a copy of the report and resulting archive should also be sent to the Historic Environment Record Officer, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the regional Historic Environment Record.

REASON: To secure preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may be revealed during ground excavations for the consented development and so comply with policy HE2 of the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan.

### **Background**

- 1.3. Plas Uchaf is a large, complex house which is listed grade II\* (listing no. 337; PRN 25043). The phasing is not clear but the house consists of two main ranges at right angles, running N-S and E-W. These are either contemporary or the E-W range is earlier, perhaps originally continuing to the west. There are two service ranges which appear to be later, one to the west of the E-W range, and a long range running north which contains a back-kitchen with attic above, probably a granary originally but latterly for servants' sleeping accommodation.
- 1.4. There has been a building on the site of Plas Ucha from at least as early as the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. From this time to the present day Plas Ucha has formed an integral part of the Mostyn family's Flintshire estate. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Mostyns had emerged as one of the most prominent gentry families in the region, with considerable landholdings situated right across north Wales. The family's primary powerbase was Mostyn Hall in the parish of Whitford, Flintshire. All indications point to Plas Ucha being established as a dower house in the early-mid 16<sup>th</sup> century. Situated within the township of Mostyn, along the road heading south from Mostyn Hall, it is likely that

---

Plas Ucha ('upper mansion') was named in geographical relation to the family's primary residence.

- 1.5. Over the generations the building's initial function as a dower house was lost, but as the family continued to exert a profound influence on life in the region – in cultural, industrial, military, social and political terms – Plas Ucha remained an important component in their patrimony. In the N-S range is a coat of arms in an upper storey bedroom, dated 1603 and bearing the letters RM and MM, referring to Roger and Mary Mostyn. They lived here temporarily in place of Mostyn Hall, and the house was probably built or remodelled for them.
- 1.6. The presence of the family's coat-of-arms within the building provides material evidence of the enduring link between family and site. Plas Ucha forms part of a dynastic landscape; all of the surrounding lands belong to the Mostyn estate. It may be significant that a direct view of the early 17<sup>th</sup>-century watchtower at Garreg – erected by the Mostyns as part of their official responsibilities for defending the county's coastline – is provided from the upper storey rooms on the south side of the house. From an early period the adjoining farmyard (which retains a listed cart shed and barn) was developed into one of the most vibrant agricultural centres on the estate; a status which continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1.7. The earliest known reference to Plas Ucha dates to 1541 when it was mentioned (as 'le hier place' and 'the hyer place') in documents relating to the marriage settlement of William Mostyn (c.1521-76), son and heir apparent to Thomas Mostyn (c.1490-1558), the head of the family.<sup>s</sup> William married Margaret, daughter of Robert ap Hywel of Oswestry, and Plas Ucha was identified as forming part of her dower or jointure. It was mentioned again in 1563 (as 'heyr place'), this time in relation to the jointure or dower of Ursula (d.1576), the wife of Sir Thomas Mostyn (c.1542-1618), son and heir apparent to the abovementioned William.
- 1.8. Sir Thomas' son and heir, Sir Roger Mostyn (c.1568-1642) and his wife Mary (c.1582-1653), daughter of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, utilised Plas Ucha as one of their residences between their marriage in 1596 and the death of Sir Thomas in 1618. It was Sir Roger Mostyn and his wife Mary who were responsible for undertaking considerable alterations to the structure in c.1603 and it is their initials ('RM' and 'MM') and conjoined coats-of-arms which can be seen above the first floor fireplace

## 2 OBJECTIVES

2.1. The objectives of the survey are:

- to describe and record all of the key internal and external components of the surviving outbuilding complex so that a permanent record survives prior to alterations commencing. This will be completed by means of a desktop study and English Heritage Level 2 building survey;
- to conduct a watching brief to recover all information relating to earlier phases of the development of the main house which may be revealed;
- to prepare a report outlining the results of the survey;
- to prepare a final publication of the results in an appropriate regional or national journal, depending on the nature and significance of any archaeology.

---

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological works will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CifA) *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2014), *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment* (2014) and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014).

#### **Building Survey**

3.1. The survey will take the form of a Level 2 building survey as defined by Historic England 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*. This level of survey is intended to create a descriptive record of the building, and will include:

- Description and photographic record of the exterior and the interior
- conclusions regarding the building's development and use, but without discussing in detail the evidence on which these conclusions are based
- A plan and sometimes other drawings but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive.

3.2. The drawn record will be created which it has been assumed can be based on existing drawings. These will be checked and annotated/amended as appropriate using conventional measured survey. The end result will include:

- Ground floor plan, including the position of structural or architectural detail and fixtures and fittings
- Phase plans showing the development of the structure

3.3. The photographic survey will be conducted using digital photography with a minimum resolution of 12 mega pixels to include:

- general views
- external appearance
- internal views
- elevations and structural detail
- overall appearance
- fixtures, fittings etc

#### **Watching brief**

3.4. A watching brief will be maintained during any external groundworks likely to reveal evidence for buried archaeological deposits as well as any internal works which have potential for revealing additional detail relating to the structure and phasing of the house.

3.5. 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 12 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.

3.6. 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.

### **Report**

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

- Non-technical summary
- Location and NGR
- Statutory designations
- Date of record, recorder and archive deposition
- Introduction
- Site location
- Topography and Geology
- Methodology
- Summary of the form, function, date and development of the building



- 
- Desk-based study, including copies of historic maps and photographs where permitted
  - Summary description of the building
  - Past and present usage
  - Evidence for former existence of demolished structures, removed fittings etc
  - Conclusions
  - References
- 3.8. 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). The digital archive only will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the paper/drawn/digital archive with the National Monuments Record (RCAHMW).

#### **4 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING**

- 4.1. The assessment will be undertaken by a team of skilled archaeologists 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).
- 4.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the fieldwork.
- 4.3. Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 4.4. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance.

N W Jones

25 October 2016