



# **‘Tudor Mansion House, Neath Abbey (GM006)’**

Phase 3

## **Project Specification**

“Programme of Archaeological Works (Standing Building Investigation and Recording, Watching Brief and Evaluation) prior to and during *Phase 3* of the Conservation Works on the south-eastern part of the Tudor Mansion at Neath Abbey, Swansea, Glamorgan”

**Planning Ref:**

**Scheduled Monument Consent:**

**Listed Building Consent:**

**Prepared for:**

Cadw  
Plas Carew,  
5/7 Cefn Coed,  
Parc Nantgarw,  
Cardiff  
CF15 7QQ

**On behalf of:**

**Date:**

15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 (V2)

**HRS Wales**

Egwyl,  
Llwyn-y-groes,  
Tregaron  
Ceredigion SY25 6QE

Telephone: 01570 493759

E-mail: [richard@hrswales.co.uk](mailto:richard@hrswales.co.uk)

## NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

*This project specification details the intended programme of archaeological works and mitigation to be undertaken prior to and during the third phase of conservations works on the south-eastern end of the Tudor Mansion House at Neath Abbey, Neath, Swansea.*

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Project Specification details the intended programme of archaeological works and mitigation to be undertaken prior to and during the third phase of conservations works on the south-eastern end of the Tudor Mansion House at Neath Abbey, Neath, Swansea.

### **2 Site Location & Description**

- 2.1 Neath Abbey was a former Cistercian Monastery, located near the present day town of Neath, near Swansea, in South Wales. The Abbey is centred on NGR: SS 738 974. Neath Abbey is a Scheduled Monument (SM Ref: GM006) and is managed and cared for by Cadw.
- 2.2 The Tudor Mansion House is located at the southern end of the Abbey complex. The Phase 3 conservation work in 2020 affects the south-eastern range of the Tudor Mansion House, at Neath Abbey.

### **3 Historical & Archaeological Background**

- 3.1 Neath Abbey is ranked as one of the most important monastic remains in south Wales. It was established in 1129 AD, when Richard I de Granville, one of the 12 Knights of Glamorgan, gave 8,000 acres of his estate in Glamorgan, to Savigniac monks from Normandy. The first monks arrived in 1130. Following the assumption of the Savigniac order into the Cistercian order in 1147, Neath Abbey became a Cistercian House. The Abbey was laid out to the standard Cistercian plan. On the west side of the cloisters is the oldest remaining part of the abbey, the lay brothers range, built in the second half the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. The refectory was at the southern end. The next building phase was in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> Century with the addition of the claustral buildings on the east and south sides of the cloisters. On the south side, the kitchen, refectory and warming house are represented by extremely fragmentary remains. On the east side of the cloisters are the remains of the Chapter House and the Parlour, which were incorporated into the Tudor House, which survives remarkably intact. At the southern end of the cloisters is a passageway, or slype. To its south are two narrow rooms and the monks dormitory undercroft, both abbey survivals of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. This dormitory was later incorporated into the Tudor Mansion House and became the servants hall.
- 3.2 During the Dissolution of the Monasteries by King Henry VIII, the last abbot, Lleison ap Thomas, managed to buy time through payment of a large fine in 1537, but the abbey was eventually dissolved in 1539. At this time, the abbey was then turned into a large estate.
- 3.3 In about 1500 the abbot carved a private house for himself out of the southern end of the refectory and monks dormitory. The fabric of the Abbot's House is very hard to discern now as it was overlain by the later house built in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century by either Sir Richard Williams, who purchased the property in 1542, or his son Henry. This 16<sup>th</sup> Century rebuilding is clearly distinguishable by its distinctive mullioned windows. As well as several alterations, a new wing was also built at the far northeast corner.
- 3.4 By 1730 many of the buildings within the abbey complex were being used for copper smelting and then later used as ironworks in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, when a foundry was opened near the abbey ruins by a company owned by the Price, Fox and Tregelles families. Decay continued throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it wasn't until the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the ruins were rediscovered. Extensive archaeological excavation of the abbey was undertaken between the years 1924 and 1935.

## 4 Development Proposals

- 4.1 Purcell has been commissioned by Cadw to deliver conservation of the Tudor Mansion at Neath Abbey. The work will take place in a series of phases, of which this is the third year.
- 4.2 The conservation work in 2020 affects the south-eastern range of the Tudor Mansion House located on the south side of the Abbey complex, encompassing part of the rear courtyard between the undercroft and the former Re-redorter / Latrine range and part of the Re-redorter itself.
- 4.3 The works are intended to conserve the building by addressing areas of active deterioration including vegetation growth, failing mortar, severe cracks in masonry and windows.
1. Cap wall tops to prevent water ingress into wall core using stone slabs and/or mortar (extent as indicated on elevations);
  2. Point and pin walls;
  3. Point and pin ashlar stone of openings and quoins;
  4. Insert chamfered stones into putlog holes;
  5. Remove vegetation and make good;
  6. Clear vegetation from ground floors;
  7. Analyse plaster on interior walls, if any;

### Archaeological Works

- i) Archaeological Building Investigation and Recording - historic building investigation & recording to an equivalent of Historic England's Level 3 standard is to be undertaken on all internal and external elevations and other architectural features affected by the conservation works, as shown within the red line area marked on the figure ground plan are to be recorded and investigated at Level 3.
  - ii) Archaeological Evaluation (Trial Pits in Latrine Range) - Prior to ground works commencing in area of Latrine Range for clearance of vegetation and ground preparation for membrane and gravel (*hoggin*), a series of four (4) small trial pits (1m x 1m) will be undertaken (locations to be confirmed following site meeting) in area of Latrine Range. These are required so as to better inform the design and depth requirement of filling material. These trial pits will only be as deep as the first significant archaeological deposit encountered. A small report will be prepared confirming the results of the trial pits which will be issued prior to any further works commencing.
  - iii) Archaeological Watching Brief – i) An archaeological watching brief will be maintained during vegetation clearance and ground preparation (levelling) for new membrane and gravel (*hoggin*) from ground floor room (Latrine Range). This will involve only minimal ground disturbance, but any features of interest will be recorded ii) An archaeological watching brief will be maintained during any removal or disturbance of masonry during conservation works.
  - iv) Archaeological Evaluation/Investigation (Trial trenches in Latrine Channel) - A series of two (2) evaluation/investigation trenches (1.5m x 1.5m) in Latrine Range channel (removal of stone fill). To be positioned in strategic locations in Latrine channel where as much information as possible can be gleaned on the depth and character of the former 13th Century Latrine channel (Reredorter). Positions to be confirmed.
- 4.4 In the event that significant archaeological remains are exposed, work will cease in that area until Cadw's Inspector has had an opportunity to visit the site and assess the significance of the

archaeological remains. It may then be necessary to review the proposed construction methodology, in order to mitigate any adverse archaeological impact.

## 5. Mitigation

- 5.1 In order to mitigate against any potential negative effects as a result of the conservation proposals, the proposed archaeological works, in accordance with a design brief supplied by Cadw, will consist of three main elements.
- 5.2 1) *Archaeological Building Investigation and Recording (ABIR)* (in accordance with the standards and guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) - Prior to and during all conservation work on the Tudor Mansion House, the building will undergo a programme of building recording equivalent to Historic England level 3. This is an analytical record, which involves three parts:

### Level 3 Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings

- i) An introductory written account of the building, an analytical description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. Use of readily available documentary sources, such as early Ordnance Survey maps and published sources, to include any useful antiquarian drawings or engravings.
  - ii) A full high resolution photographic record of the building of all internal and external elevations as well as detail photographs of any other significant internal or external features such as former doorways, windows etc.
  - iii) A drawn measured record of all elevations and significant features associated with the building. This will include the annotation of baseline elevations with all architectural features. To include:
    - Corners and profiles of all structures.
    - Window details
    - Doorway details.
    - Stone string courses showing individual stones.
    - Corbels
    - Corbel strings showing individual corbel stones and the corbel string supporting corbel stones.
    - Putlog holes and beam sockets.
    - The profile of exposed core work including recessed core work.
    - Quoin stones, lintels and voussoirs including recessed details.
    - Cracks and fissures.
    - Projecting stones and strings.
    - Spaces where individual stones or groups of stones are missing.
    - Incised graffiti, masons' marks and other markings;
    - Areas of repair and/or conservation;
    - The profile of all laterally connecting walls; and
    - All other relevant architectural details such as the survival of render, plaster, painted surfaces, the survival of window glass etc.
- 5.3 In addition, measured moulding profiles will be drawn for all accessible windows and doors at a scale appropriate to illustrate variations and/or changes in masonry used. Particular attention will be given to identifying evidence for stone re-use and re-cutting.

The reasons for the standing building recording are:

- To seek a better understanding, compile a lasting record, analyse the findings/record, and then disseminate the results.
- 5.4 2) Archaeological Evaluation - The purpose of the small trial pits in the Latrine Range prior to ground preparation works commencing for levelling and gravel (hoggin) is to better inform the design and depth requirement of filling material. These trial pits will only be as deep as the first archaeological deposit encountered. A small interim report will be prepared confirming the results of the trial pits which will be issued prior to any further works commencing.
- 5.5 The purpose of the latrine channel evaluation will be to gain information about the archaeological resource within the given area (including presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, leading to one or more of the following:
- i) the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource.
  - ii) the formulation of a strategy to initiate a threat to the archaeological resource.
  - iii) the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.
- 5.6 The resulting interim reports on both these investigations will be to provide information which is sufficiently detailed to protect archaeological interests and allow informed decisions to be made when working toward the eventual groundwork for the proposed development.
- 5.7 The investigations will provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological deposits detailing zones of relative importance against known development proposals.
- 5.8 The archaeological investigations will determine, as far as it is reasonably possible, the nature of the archaeological resource within the specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the projects, and comply with the Code of Conduct, Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology, and other relevant by-laws of the ClfA.
- 5.9 It is currently anticipated that four small trial pits in the area of the Latrine Range will measure 1m x 1m square. These trial pits will be carefully positioned to provide information regarding the character of the existing surface and depth of first archaeological deposit with minimum disturbance. Their positions are still to be confirmed following a site meeting.
- 5.10 Regarding the proposed evaluation pits in the area of the latrine channel. These two pits will measure approximately 1.5m x 1.5m square and will solely remove fallen masonry from the channel to a depth of approximately 1 meter. The position of these trial pits and the methodology has not been agreed at this time, but this will become clearer following a site meeting.
- 5.11 3) Archaeological Watching brief – As well as the programme of standing building recording and investigative work, a strict archaeological watching brief will be maintained, firstly, during any removal or dismantling of masonry during conservation works and, secondly, whilst groundwork is undertaken by contractors at ground floor level during ground clearance of vegetation and levelling/raking of surface from Latrine range.

Reasons for this watching brief are:

- 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.

5.12 The objective of the watching brief is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on a site.

5.13 In the event that significant archaeological remains are exposed. work will cease until Cadw Inspectorate have had an opportunity to visit the site and assess the significance of the archaeological remains. It may then be necessary to review the proposed construction methodology, in order to mitigate any adverse archaeological impact.

## **6 Methodology**

### General

6.1 Presently, it is proposed that the archaeological building investigation and recording work will be undertaken by HRS Wales staff using current best practice from January 20th 2020. It is proposed that the archaeological watching brief work will begin soon after the building recording work has been completed and the contractors scaffolding has been removed. With regards to the two evaluation pits in the area of the latrine channel, the position of these and the methodology will be agreed following a site meeting when the project has progressed.

6.2 All work will be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist (Richard Scott Jones *BA, MA, MICfA*) with relevant level membership of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and will follow the CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Archaeological Watching Briefs and Archaeological Excavation (CIfA 2014).

### Detailed

6.3 All groundwork for vegetation clearance by contractors will be undertaken under close and constant strict archaeological supervision.

6.4 If archaeological features, deposits, or finds are uncovered, work will be stopped in the area of the exposed material in order that the supervising archaeologist can fully excavate, clean and identify the extent and nature of the material so that recording work can take place.

6.5 All archaeological deposits or features that are identified during the watching brief will be cleaned, recorded and fully excavated. The contractor will provide a safe working area and sufficient time to record and excavate all features to the satisfaction of the regional Cadw Inspector. Full excavation and recording of identified features will not be compromised by the conservation programme.

### Contingency Arrangements

- 6.6 In the event of significant archaeological features being discovered all activities in this area of the site will be temporarily suspended. This will allow a period of consultation with the regional Cadw inspector, the property manager, the site contract manager, the Architect and any potential specialists that may be required.
- 6.7 Following such consultation, recommendations will be presented to all interested parties.
- 6.8 The methodology and timescale of additional archaeological work to investigate such features will be presented and included in the conservation program, the feature/s will be made secure thus allowing the site programme to continue.

### Recording

- 6.9 Recording will be carried out using HRS Wales recording systems (pro-forma context sheets etc), using a continuous number sequence for all contexts.
- 6.10 With regards to the building recording work, all generated plans, sections, profiles and drawings will be drawn to a scale of 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 as required and cross referenced to each individual existing elevation plan (laser scan survey drawings).
- 6.11 With regards to the evaluation and watching brief, all plans and section drawings will be drawn to a scale of 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 as required. Any ground plans created will be geo-referenced to Ordnance Survey datum and published boundaries where appropriate.
- 6.12 All features identified will be tied in to the both the OS National Grid and all local site and ground plans.
- 6.13 Photographs will be taken in digital format, using either an 18 mega-pixel or 24 mega-pixel DSLR camera, with photographs stored in RAW format. All RAW formats will be exported into TIFF files in preparation for archiving. Should significant remains be identified that require comprehensive excavation, photographs may also be appropriated in black and white 35mm film if required.

### Artefacts

- 6.14 All artefacts will be treated in accordance with UKIC guidelines, First Aid for Finds (Watkinson and Neal 2001: D Watkinson and V Neal, First Aid for Finds, Rescue/UKICAS 2001). All finds will be bagged and labelled according to the individual deposit from which they were recovered, ready for cleaning and analysis. All registered finds will be processed and packaged according to standards of good practice.
- 6.15 The artefacts will be stored appropriately until they are deposited with a suitable local museum.
- 6.16 All finds of gold and silver will be removed to a safe place and the Natural Resources Wales, the Cadw regional inspector and the local coroner informed, within the guidelines of the Treasure Act 1996.
- 6.17 Any finds which are considered to be in need of immediate conservation will be referred to a UKIC qualified conservator.

### Human remains

- 6.18 In the event of burials or cremations being found during ground work, all work will be halted in the area of the burial/s and their extent and nature established. The Cadw Regional Inspector of Ancient Monuments and the Ministry of Justice will be informed and a methodology for excavation agreed, which will adhere to Ministry of Justice Guidelines.

### Environmental and technological samples

- 6.19 Palaeo-environmental samples will be taken where necessary if significant deposits are located and these samples will be assessed and analysed by a suitable specialist, if deemed necessary.

### Specialists

- 6.20 In the event of certain finds/features etc. being discovered, the site archaeologist may have to seek specialist opinion for assistance. Such specialists will be accessed either internally within HRS Wales itself or from an external source.

## **7 Post-Fieldwork Programme**

### Conservation

- 7.1 After agreement with Cadw, arrangements will be made for the long term conservation and storage of all artefacts in an appropriate local or county museum.

### Archive

- 7.2 The site archive will be prepared in accordance with MORPHE (Historic England 2015). It will comprise all the data recovered during the fieldwork and shall be quantified, ordered and indexed and will be internally consistent. The paper archive will be deposited with the RCAHMW and all digital data will be archived in accordance with the RCAHMW *Guidelines for Digital Archives* (2015). All of the finds recovered during the groundwork will be deposited with a suitable local museum.

### Reporting

- 7.3 Within 4 - 6 weeks of project completion a draft report will be produced and will be forwarded to the Cadw Inspectorate for comments/approval. This draft report will provide an overview of the works that have been undertaken. The report will include sufficient historical research on the monument to enable the significance of the monument to be appreciated and understood within a local and national context. The draft report will include the following material:

- A non-technical summary;
- a copy of the design brief and agreed specification;
- Details of the methodology used;
- Location maps of the scheduled areas including the locations of the study areas, based on current OS mapping at an appropriate scale;
- Appropriately scaled drawn plans and sections accompanied by relevant illustrative photographic record shots;
- sufficient historical and archaeological detail to allow interpretation of the results;



- A description of the monument and assessment of the features and phasing recorded;
- all identified features, deposits and finds plotted on appropriately scaled site plans;
- Annotated elevations;
- Illustrations of each window and door within the study area – appropriately numbered and linked to the elevations;
- Supporting drawn and photographic illustrations as appropriate;
- A full bibliography of sources consulted;
- an archive compact disc/s;
- Archive location
- References

7.4 Appended to the report should be all relevant documentation – plans, photographic archive, archaeological report, works specification and any amendments etc. Copies of the final report will be deposited with the National Monuments Record Wales (NMRW) and the Historic Environment Record (HER) at Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT).

### **DIGITAL DATA**

- 7.5 Survey data will be supplied as exported AutoCad files in 2D and PDF's on a Cadw approved external portable hard drive compatible with windows XP and windows 7.
- 7.6 Two CAD drawings will be supplied, one set in colour showing the various CAD layers, and one in monochrome.
- 7.7 PDF's of both the colour and monochrome plots will be supplied.
- 7.8 The allocation of layers to colours to be agreed. Yellow will not to be used.
- 7.9 Separate files will be supplied for each drawing sheet.
- 7.10 Annotations, title blocks, other text, levels etc. will be shown in layout/paper space.
- 7.11 Final CAD survey drawings will be individually presented/set up in paper space layouts at the correct drawn scale(s) and sheet size(s) to facilitate direct monochrome / colour print output to a KIP 3000 and HP Design Jet PS printers or similar models. Individual drawings to include all necessary title blocks, borders, north points, scale bars etc.

### Monitoring

- 7.12 Any changes to this project specification that the contractor may wish to make after approval will be communicated to the Cadw Inspectorate for approval.
- 7.13 Representatives of Cadw will be given access to the site so that they may monitor the progress of the work. The regional inspector at Cadw will be kept regularly informed about developments, both during the site works and subsequently during any potential post-excavation.

### Archive Format & Deposition

- 7.14 The full site archive will be deposited within six weeks of the completion and approval of the final report.
- 7.15 The paper/drawing/digital archive will be deposited with the RCAHMW at Aberystwyth, with the finds being deposited with the appropriate local museum.

- 7.16 The archive will include all site notes, finds, documents, drawings, photographs, digital data and a copy of the final report. All of these items will be clearly quantified in tabular form in an 'archive deposition statement' located at the rear of the clients report, and their ultimate location and proposed date of deposition stated.

## **8 Resources and timetable**

### Standards

- 8.1 The archaeological work will be undertaken by HRS Wales staff using current best practice.
- 8.2 All work will be undertaken to the standards and guidelines of the CIfA.

### Staff

- 8.3 The project will be undertaken by suitably qualified HRS Wales staff. In this instance Richard Scott Jones (*BA, MA, MCIfA*) will be managing the project.

### Equipment

- 8.4 The project will use existing HRS Wales equipment.

### Timetable of archaeological works

- 8.5 It is anticipated that the building investigation and recording work will commence from January 20th 2020, with the watching brief being undertaken soon afterward once the scaffolding has been removed. It is hoped that the conservation works will be completed by March/April 2020.

### Health and safety

- 8.6 All members of staff will adhere to the requirements of the *Health & Safety at Work Act, 1974*, and the Health and Safety Policy Statement of HRS Wales.

### Insurance

- 8.8 HRS Wales presently holds Public Liability Insurance up to £5,000,000 and Professional Indemnity Insurance up to £1,000,000.



Richard Scott Jones (*BA, MA, MCIfA*)

Date: 15th January 2020