

ST DAVID & CYFELACH CHURCH, LLANGYFELACH - ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



Prepared by DAT Archaeological Services
For: Emyr Davies A'I Fab Cyf



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**ST DAVID & CYFELACH CHURCH,
LLANGYFELACH -
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

By

Charlie Enright

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Client Emyr Davies A'I Fab Cyf

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ST DAVID & CYFELACH CHURCH, LLANGYFELACH – ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Emyr Davies A'I Fab Cyf to undertake an archaeological watching brief during works associated with repairing two damaged sections of walls along Heol y Geifr (Goats Lane). The works involved reducing an area of ground behind the wall within the adjacent graveyard.

Over the course of the watching brief 26 burials were excavated from a combination of individual and vertically stacked burials distributed across 17 grave shafts. Out of these burials only one individual was identifiable by a surviving coffin plate.

Generally, coffin preservation was noted as being very poor and preservation of human remains was poor to moderate. As human remains were lifted they were stored within the church until they could be reburied during construction of the new wall.

No evidence of any pre-cemetery activity was recorded.

CRYNODEB GWEITHEREDOL

Comisiynwyd Gwasanaethau Archaeolegol YAD gan Emyr Davies A'I Fab Cyf i gynnal briff gwyllo archaeolegol yn ystod gwaith sy'n gysylltiedig ag atgyweirio dwy ran o waliau sydd wedi'u difrodi ar hyd Heol y Geifr (Goats Lane). Roedd y gwaith yn cynnwys lleihau darn o dir y tu ôl i'r wal yn y fynwent gyfagos.

Yn ystod y briff gwyllo, datgladdwyd 26 o gladdedigaethau o gyfuniad o gladdedigaethau unigol a pentwr fertigol wedi'u dosranedig ar draws 17 o siafftau bedd. O'r claddedigaethau hyn dim ond un oedd canfyddadwy gan blât coffin oedd wedi goroesi.

Yn gyffredinol, nodwyd bod cadwraeth coffinau yn wael iawn a bod cadwraeth gweddillion dynol yn wael i gymedrol. Wrth i weddillion dynol gael eu codi, cawsant eu storio yn yr eglwys hyd y gellid eu hail-gladdu yn ystod adeiladu'r wal newydd.

Ni chofnodwyd unrhyw dystiolaeth o weithgaredd cyn-fynwent.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Proposals and Commission

1.1.1 Emyr Davies A'I Fab Cyr commissioned DAT Archaeological Services on behalf of their clients to provide an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at St David & Cyfelach Church, Llangyfelach, Swansea (NGR SS 6461 9897; Figures 1 and 2).

1.1.2 The groundworks involved work on the boundary wall to the churchyard and included repair to two areas of collapse on Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane), repair and buttressing to walling adjoining Church Cottages, and strengthening of the wall with ground anchors in strategic places. Faculty was granted for the work by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (Ref: 2019-003092, dated 18/09/2019), with recommendations attached.

1.1.3 As a result of the archaeological potential of the site the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) recommended that archaeological mitigation would be required. The DAC Notification of Advice (Ref.2019-003092) stated:

The work to clear and rebuild the wall should be undertaken with archaeological supervision. All archaeological work should be undertaken by either a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists accredited member or by a Registered Organisation with CIfA, to ensure the appropriate public liability and professional indemnity insurance, and will require a written scheme to agree appropriate methodology. A final report, to be submitted for approval, containing the results of the work will conclude the requirement.

1.1.4 The rationale for the watching brief was to monitor the groundworks for archaeological remains as material possibly containing archaeological deposits was removed from the churchyard.



Photo 1: Initial area of wall collapse (Excavation Area 1) along Goat Lane, looking north. 1m scale.



Photo 2: Second area of wall collapse (Excavation Area 2) along Goat Lane, looking northwest.

1.2 Scope of the Project

1.2.1 To comply with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standards and Guidance and Code of Conduct, and before the commencement of works, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a watching brief was prepared by DAT Archaeological Services and approved by the archaeological advisors to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) (Appendix I). This WSI sets out the methodology by which the watching brief was undertaken and defines the project objectives as:

- To monitor groundworks to identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed groundworks.
- To appropriately investigate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundworks.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

1.2.2 The overall work can be summarised as: *“Archaeological attendance during groundworks associated with the clearing and rebuilding of the churchyard wall on Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane) which could expose, damage or even destroy archaeological remains. Appropriate investigation and recording of any such remains will be undertaken if revealed. A report and archive of the results of the works will be prepared.*”

1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report describes the location of the development works along with its archaeological background and provides a summary and discussion of the archaeological watching brief and its results.

1.4 Abbreviations

1.4.1 Sites recorded on the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Sites recorded on the National Monument Record (NMR) held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) are identified by their National Primary Record Number (NPRN). Scheduled Monument (SM). Altitude is expressed to Ordnance Datum (OD). References to cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets throughout the text, with full details listed in the sources section at the rear of the report.

1.5 Illustrations

1.5.1 Photographic images are to be found within the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

1.6 Timeline

1.6.1 The following timeline is used within this report to give date ranges for the various archaeological periods that may be mentioned within the text.

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4400 – 2300 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.2300 – 700 BC	
Iron Age –	c.700 BC-AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1086	
medieval Period –	1086 – 1536	
post-medieval Period ¹ –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
modern –	20 th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and historical timeline for Wales

¹ The post-medieval and industrial periods are combined as the post-medieval period on the Regional Historic Environment Record as held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust

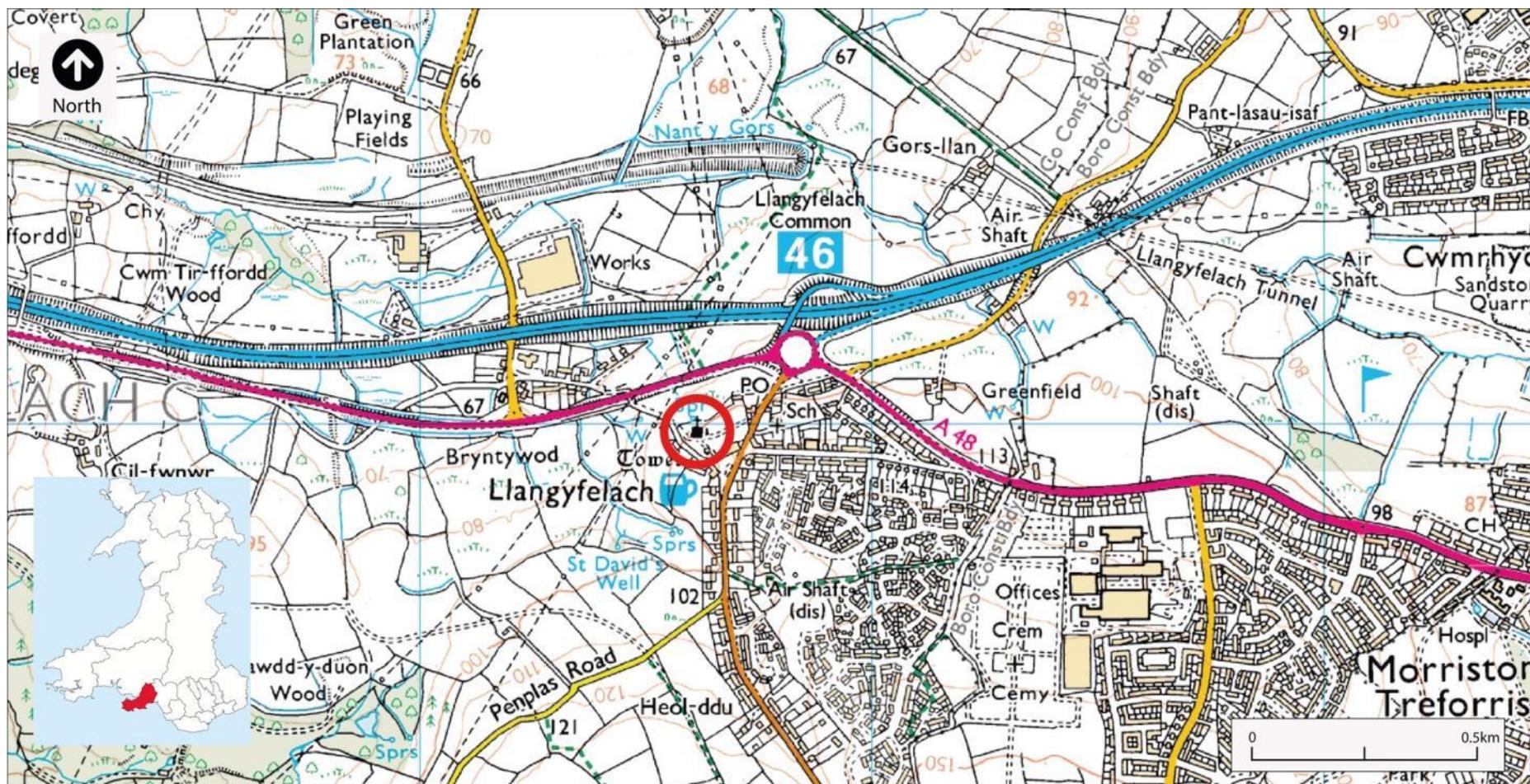


Figure 1: Site location map showing the position of the site in red.

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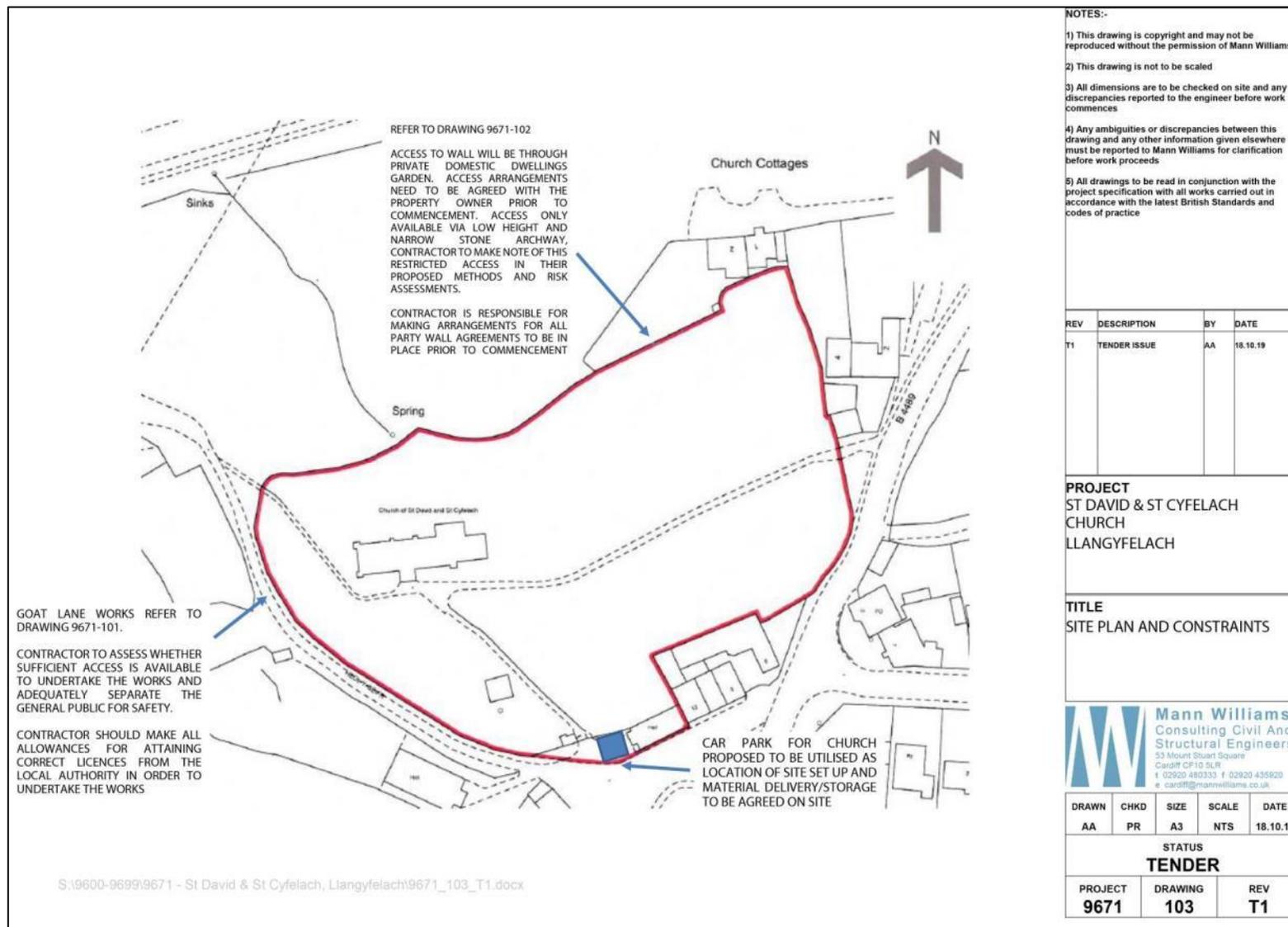


Figure 2: Detailed site plan and constraints (provided by the client). Not reproduced to the original scale.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

- 2.1 The GGAT HER records Llangyfelach churchyard (PRN 05235w) as the site of an early medieval monastic enclosure (GGAT PRN 05208w). A late 11th-century account of the life of St David attributes the foundation of 'Monasterium Langemelach' to the 6th century St David. Three early Christian Monuments are known from the churchyard; two dating to the 9th century, and the third dating to the 9th to early 10th centuries. A medieval parish church (PRN 0383w) was later established on the site. The church was ruined during a gale in the early 19th century, although the medieval tower still stands within the churchyard. The tower itself may be largely 13th century in date, raised in height in the 16th or 17th century, and subsequently refaced. Evidence of the former church to the east has been uncovered during digging of graves in the late 19th century. A new church (GGAT PRN 00384w) was built to the north, potentially originally utilising a tithe barn, although little evidence of a barn structure is visible in the current church building, which was largely rebuilt at various points throughout the 19th and early 20th century.
- 2.2 The date of the surrounding churchyard wall is unestablished. Still, there is clearly potential for activity associated with the early medieval monastic centre and medieval church. The cross markers indicate the site was being used for burial from at least to 9th century onwards, and the burial ground has seen continued use until the early 20th century. Goat Lane/Heol-y-geifr is likely a route of longstanding, marked on historic maps from the early 19th century onward, but likely much older, accessing the medieval market in Llangyfelach.
- 2.3 The churchyard occupies a site on the northwest edge of Llangyfelach, on high ground overlooking falling ground to the north and west into the Llan valley. The churchyard itself falls away to the north, and Goat Lane/Heol-y-geifr follows a downhill route into the valley. The modern A48 road, M4 motorway and mainline railway now run along this valley. Urban settlement extends to the southeast, former industrial sites lie on the opposite side of the valley, otherwise the area comprises enclosed pasture and wooded slopes. The underlying geology comprises sandstone of the Swansea Member, overlain by diamicton (BGS viewer).

3 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken following the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014).
- 3.1.2 A written scheme of investigation prepared by DAT Archaeological Services, and detailing the proposed archaeological works (Appendix I), was approved by the archaeological advisors to the DAC prior to the commencement of works.
- 3.1.3 Recording of all archaeological features or deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out following the Recording Manual² used by DAT Archaeological Services. A written, drawn and

² DAT Archaeological Services have adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available on-site for inspection if required.

photographic record was maintained throughout this watching brief. All contexts encountered during this watching brief were recorded and assigned a unique context number. These numbers are enclosed in brackets in the following text.

- 3.1.4 The development works were designed to:
- Repair an area of collapsed wall on Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane).
 - Build a buttress on the wall adjoining Church Cottages and repair where necessary.
 - Strengthen the wall with ground anchors where necessary.
- 3.1.5 The monitored works were subsequently undertaken in two stages. The first stage (December 2020) included work on the initial area of churchyard wall collapse on Heol y Geifr, the most northerly of the two sections marked on Figure 3. Following damage to a further section of walling further to the south along Heol y Geifr the second stage (May 2021) was undertaken to repair this damaged section.
- 3.1.6 In order to rebuild the sections of collapsed wall on Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane) it was necessary to clear an area of spoil and loose material from inside the graveyard and create a safe working area prior to rebuilding. As these groundworks had the potential to expose archaeological deposits within the churchyard they were monitored as part of the archaeological watching brief. It was anticipated the remaining works would not expose sub-surface deposits so these were not monitored.
- 3.1.7 The excavation of material from behind the graveyard wall was undertaken by tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. All archaeological deposits revealed during the groundworks were examined and recorded to an appropriate level.
- 3.1.8 Where human remains were found *in-situ* and needed to be excavated they were recorded, boxed and stored appropriately on-site to be reburied during the construction of the wall. An appropriate licence was obtained from the Coroners Office at the Department of Justice (Licence number 20-0237, issued 02/11/20).
- 3.1.9 All disarticulated human remains within the areas of excavation were collected and stored appropriately for later reburial within the churchyard.

3.2 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

- 3.2.1 All data recovered during the fieldwork will be collated into a site archive structured following specifications in *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2011), and the procedures recommended by the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth.
- 3.2.2 The results of the fieldwork have been assessed in local, regional and wider contexts. The report includes a brief desk-based research element to ensure that the site is placed within its wider archaeological context.

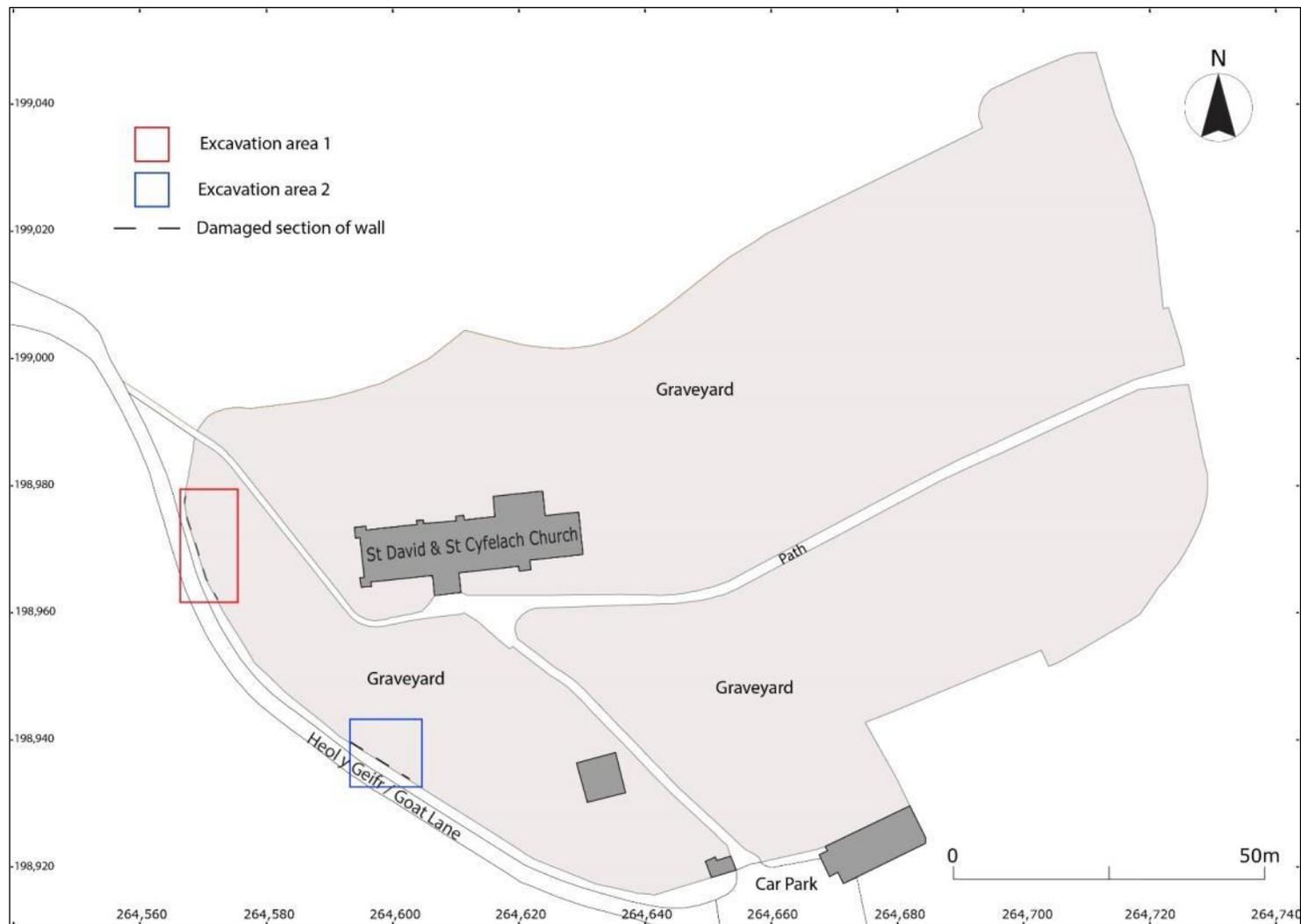


Figure 3: Overall plan of Llangyfelach Church showing archaeological watching brief areas.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Grave Markers

- 4.1.1 Prior to their removal from the areas of potential excavation a survey of *in-situ* grave markers was undertaken (Figures 4 and 5). The survey was limited only to graves that were likely to be impacted upon by the groundworks. A total of twelve grave markers were surveyed, plus one possible footstone with no other obvious associated marker. Each grave marker surveyed was given a unique letter to identify it. Grave markers A – D were in Excavation Area 1 and grave markers G – N were in Excavation Area 2. Unique identifiers E and F were not used.
- 4.1.2 In Excavation Area 1 the grave markers A, B and D were predominantly defined by “kerb stones” slightly protruding from the ground, only visible with some cleaning of the area (Photos 3, 4 & 5). These grave markers had no associated headstones, but these may have been removed previously. Observation of the surrounding graveyard showed that it is predominantly filled with headstones, ledger slabs, tomb chests and small mausoleums. This might suggest that grave markers A, B and D are of relatively low status individuals, in comparison to the other burials within this area.
- 4.1.3 Grave marker C, also located in Excavation Area 1, was a cast-iron headstone and footstone joined by an iron kerb (Photo 5). There were no visible inscriptions on the headstone, having likely eroded away. The grave marker was freestanding, i.e., not cut into the ground, and as such is likely to have been moved in the past. It is likely that despite being unmarked the graves located in Excavation Area 1 are no later than the 19th century, as the cemetery closed in 1907 (with the exception of family plots).
- 4.1.4 Excavation Area 2 was more crowded with grave markers (G – N) than Area 1 and the markers were general more substantial in scale, including large headstones suggesting multiple burials interred within each plot (Photo 7), and potentially burials of a higher status than the burials in Area 1. The grave markers were neatly aligned in rows.
- 4.1.5 Before being removed each grave marker was individually photographed and a note taken of the individuals named on the headstone, the date they died and their age. This information is recorded in Table 2.
- 4.1.6 Where dates were legible on the headstones, they suggest a date range of burials from 1801 to 1926. However the individual interred in 1926, George Richards, appears to have been buried in the USA, with his name inscribed at Llangyfelach as a memorial. The latest burial prior to this is 1923, but most of the burials appear to have taken place between 1858 and 1892.
- 4.1.7 Out of the twelve grave markers, five had no associated headstone (A, B, D, L and M), two had headstones but no surviving or legible inscription (C and I), one grave marker had a single name (N), one grave marker had three names (G), one grave marker had four names (H), and two grave markers had five names (J and K), although the latter (K) included the memorial to George Richards. All of the graves with multiple names were family graves. Two grave markers were written in Welsh (H and J), three in English (G, K and N).
- 4.1.8 Between the twelve grave markers a total of sixteen individuals were named (all within Excavation Area 2). Of those named (with the exception

of George Richards), 6 were male, 6 were female, and 7 were adults, 5 were children.

Grave marker unique ID.	Name of individuals interred, age and date of death.	Burials Grave cut in [], followed by skeletal remains in order of burial (oldest first)
A	No headstone.	[001] - 003
B	No headstone.	No identified remains
C	No surviving inscription on headstone.	[005] - 007
D	No headstone.	[012] - 010
G	Catherine Williams, 1858, 51(?)yrs old, William Williams, 1860, 54yrs old. John Williams (son of above), 1856, 24yrs old	[139] - 140, 137
H	Mary Williams, 1892, 53(?)yrs old. William Williams, 1873, 30(?) yrs old. Sarah Williams (daughter of above), 1869, 3mth old. Sarah Williams (daughter of above), 1873(?), 6mth old.	[135] - 142, 132
I	Collapsed headstone, no surviving inscription.	[126] - 129, 127 [122] - 123
J	Isaac Hughes, 1869, 37yrs old Margaret Hughes, 1901, 69yrs old Thomas Hughes (son of above), 1861(?), 13yrs old Ann Hughes (daughter of above), 1865, 3yrs old Isaac Hughes (son of above), 1923, 65(?)yrs old	[116] - 148, 120, 118
K	Hannah Richards, 1890, 43yrs old Thomas Richards (son of above),, 6mths old Robert Richards (son of above), 1889, 13mths old Catherine Richards (daughter of above), 1891, 19yrs old	[110] - 150, 114, 112

Grave marker unique ID.	Name of individuals interred, age and date of death.	Burials Grave cut in [], followed by skeletal remains in order of burial (oldest first)
	George W Richards (son of above), 1926, 42yrs old*	
L	No headstone.	[155] - 153
M	No headstone.	[163] - 161
N	Mark Lloyd, 1885, 12mths old	[175] - 173/no skeletal remains
Footstone		[106] - 108
Unmarked		[102] - 146, 144, 104
Unmarked		[159] - 157
Unmarked		[167] - 165
Unmarked		[171] - 169

Table 2: Information collected from headstones in excavation areas. **NB:** "....." denotes illegible text, (?) denotes uncertainty, combined with identified graves and skeletal remains.

*Individual possibly not buried here, as died in Haworth USA and buried at Danmore(?)

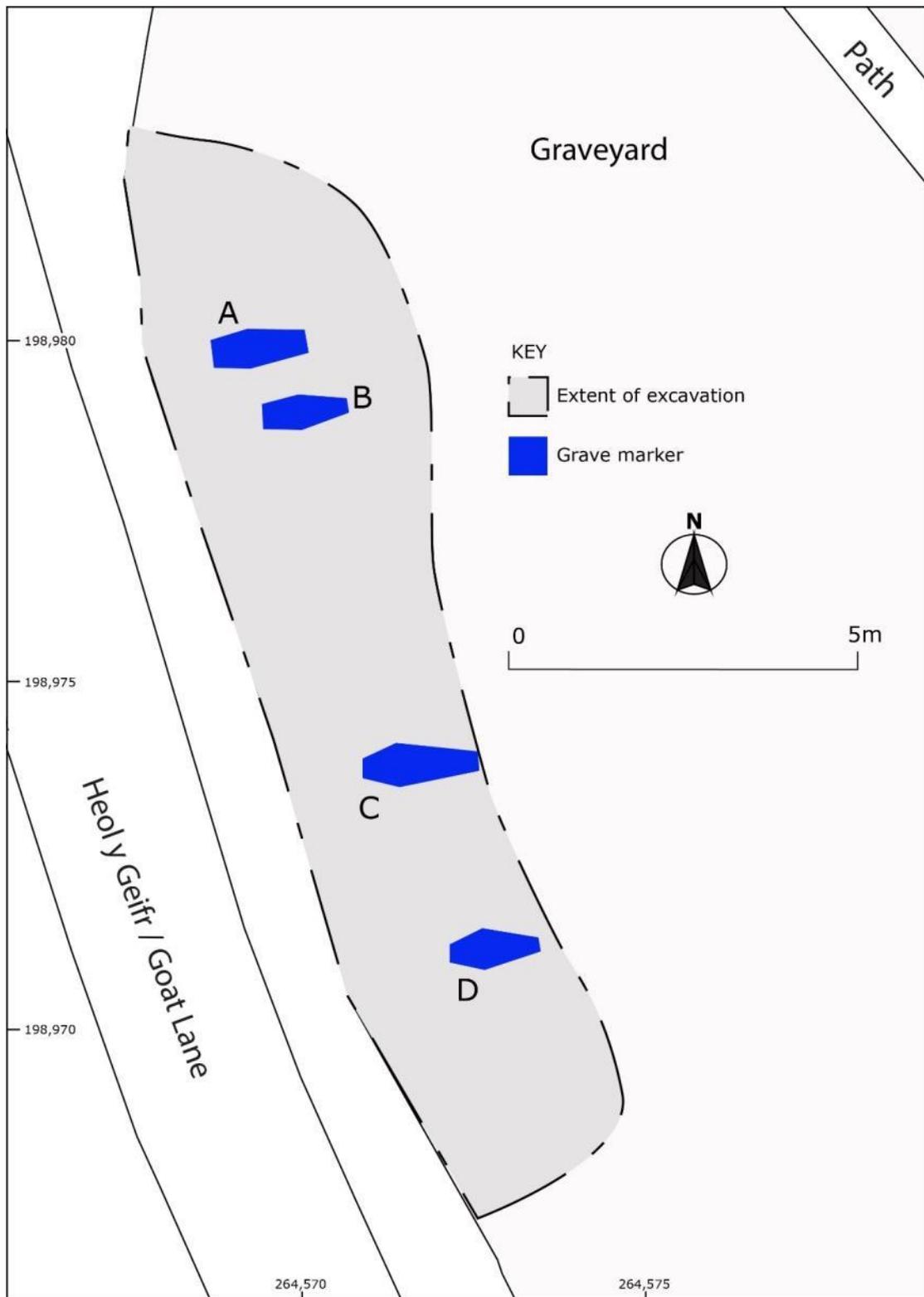


Figure 4: Grave marker survey of Excavation Area 1.

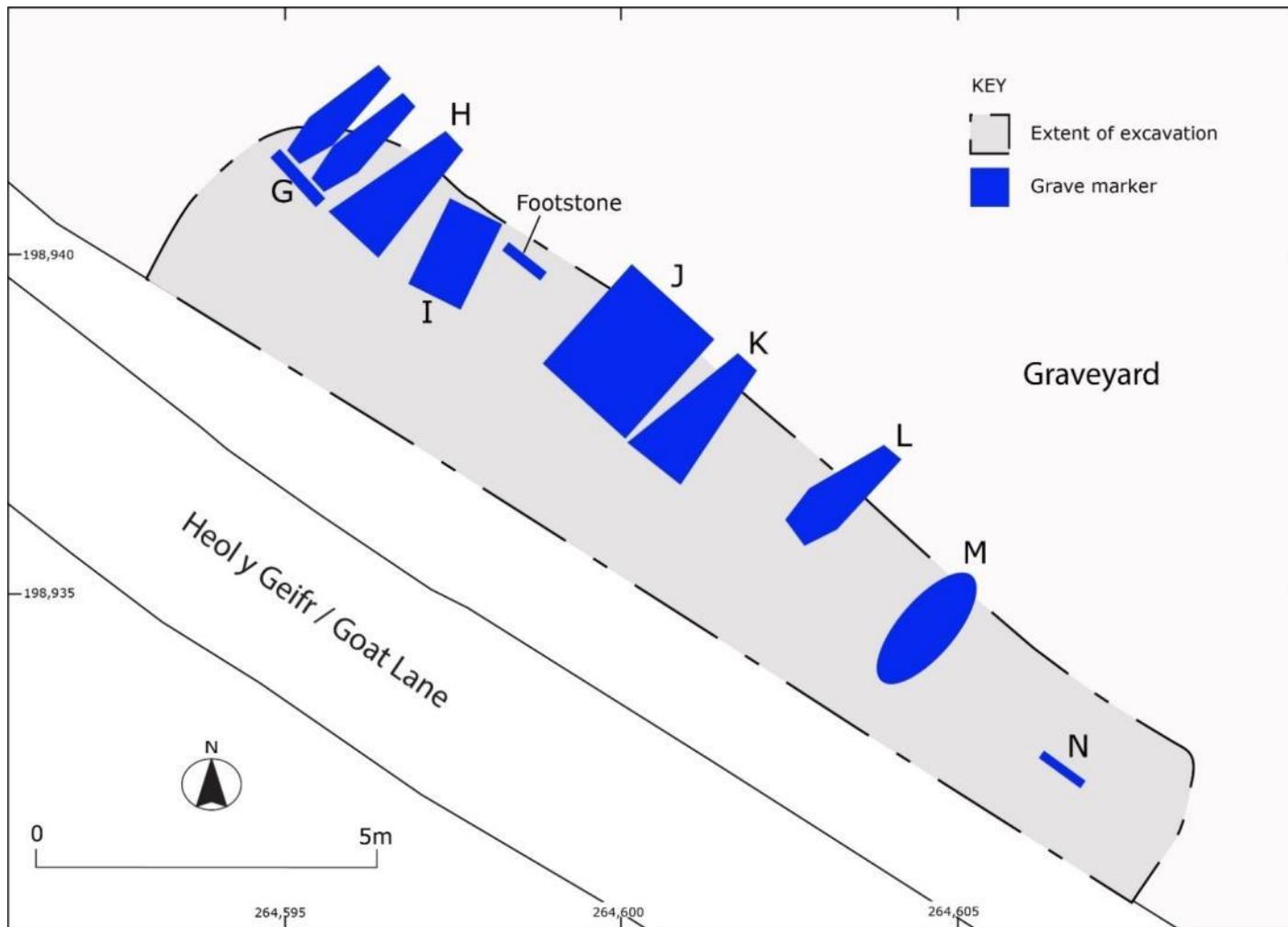


Figure 5: Grave marker survey of Excavation Area 2.



Photo 3: Grave marker A. View west. 1.0m scale.



Photo 4: Grave marker B. Grave marker A can be seen to the south (left). View west. 1.0m scale.



Photo 5: Grave marker C. View west. 1.0m scale.



Photo 6: Grave marker D. View west. 1.0m scale.



Photo 7: Grave markers in Area 2 to prior to removal.



Photo 8: From right to left, grave markers G, H and I. View west. 1.0m scale.



Photo 9: From right to left, grave markers J and K. View west. 1.0m scale.



Photo 10: Grave marker L. View southwest. 1.0m scale.



Photo 11: Grave marker M. View west. 1.0m scale.

4.2 Stratigraphy

- 4.2.1 Both Excavation Area 1 and Excavation Area 2 displayed a similar stratigraphic profile which is summarised below. The results are discussed in chronological order of events, with the oldest deposit recorded first (typically natural deposits) moving forward to the most recent (present ground surface).
- 4.2.2 In each Excavation Area the earliest deposit observed was the natural horizon, consisting of a compact grey silty clay. It was very stony and hard and had evidence of graves cutting into its upper levels. The natural horizon undulated throughout the excavation area but was seen at an average depth of 1.10m below current ground level.
- 4.2.3 Overlying the natural horizon was a 0.40m thick layer of compact orange silty clay, referred to as the natural subsoil. This deposit seemed largely undisturbed, aside from the grave cuts that truncated it from the deposit above. Grave cuts were clearly discernible within this deposit due to the contrasting fills, and these are described individually below. This subsoil deposit was overlain by a friable mid-brown, silty clay, approximately 0.55m deep and referred to as the cemetery layer. This is a generally disturbed layer, and would appear to be the active ground level from which the burials are cut.
- 4.2.4 Both Excavation Areas were overlain by a 0.15m thick layer of topsoil and turf, consisting of a very loose dark silt. Photos 12 and 13 illustrate the soil profiles seen in each Excavation Area.



Photo 12: Representative section of the soil profile in Excavation Area 1. Showing the light grey natural ground, overlaid by an orange subsoil, with darker siltier cemetery soil and topsoil above. Note also the grave cut visible towards the centre. View east, 1.0m scale.



Photo 13: Representative section of soil profile in Excavation Area 2. The natural ground is visible at the base, overlaid by orange subsoil midway up, with the darker cemetery soil and topsoil above. View southeast, 1.0m scale.

4.3 Burials

- 4.3.1 A total of seventeen graves, containing twenty-six burials, were excavated during the works. Some were individual graves, while others contained vertically stacked burials. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate the distribution of the excavated burials. A Harris matrix has also been created to demonstrate the sequence of depositions observed during the groundworks and can be seen in Figure 8. The coffins, burial structures and skeletal remains are discussed in more detail in sections 4.4 and 4.5.
- 4.3.2 A total of twelve graves were found in association with a surviving grave marker (graves [001], [005], [012], [110], [116], [122], [126], [135], [139], [155], [163], and [175]). Grave [106] was found in association with a footstone. Graves [122] and [126] were found beneath a collapsed headstone (I), so it was difficult to determine which was associated with this grave marker. There were four graves that were not associated with any grave marker ([102], [159], [167] and [171]).
- 4.3.3 Three of the grave cuts contained three stacked burials (graves [110], [116] and [102]), three contained two stacked burials (graves [126], [135] and [139]) and eleven of the grave cuts contained a single burial. The cemetery appeared well-organised, with little evidence for intercutting graves, suggesting they were broadly contemporary and that all were marked out in some manner, even if no surface grave markers are currently visible.
- 4.3.4 Each coffin was found to contain one individual, except coffin (174) where no surviving skeletal remains were identified. This however was an infant burial, and therefore remains are more likely to have fully decomposed.
- 4.3.5 Of the named individuals identified on the grave markers (see Section 4.1 and Table 2), only one grave contains skeletal remains that can be attributed to a named individual with confidence. Grave [135] contained two identified individuals (skeletal remains (142) and (132)), associated with grave marker H. The marker names four individuals, but skeletal remains (142) are likely associated with William Williams, remains (132) with his wife Mary Williams who was buried later. This latter identification was also confirmed by the survival of a coffin plate, see section 4.4. The two other named individuals within the grave are both infants, and remains are likely to have fully decomposed.
- 4.3.6 Grave [110] contained three identified individuals (skeletal remains (150), (114) and (112)), associated with grave marker K. The marker suggests four individuals are buried here at different times, including two adults, one adolescent and one infant. Grave [116] contained three identified individuals (skeletal remains (148), (120) and (118)), associated with grave marker J. The grave marker suggests five individuals were buried here at different times, including three adults, one adolescent and an infant. Grave [139] contained two identified individuals (skeletal remains (137) and (140)), however three adult individuals are named on the above marker (G), John, William and Catherine Williams. The individuals within these graves cannot therefore be accurately matched with the names on the grave markers.
- 4.3.7 Each burial encountered was approximately oriented west-east with the head to the west. However, the graves in Area 2 were on a northeast-southwest alignment; this appears to follow the curvature of the churchyard wall in this area and was possibly done to save space. Almost all of the graves were truncated by the limits of the excavation, resulting in the exposure of only the upper half of the inhumations within.

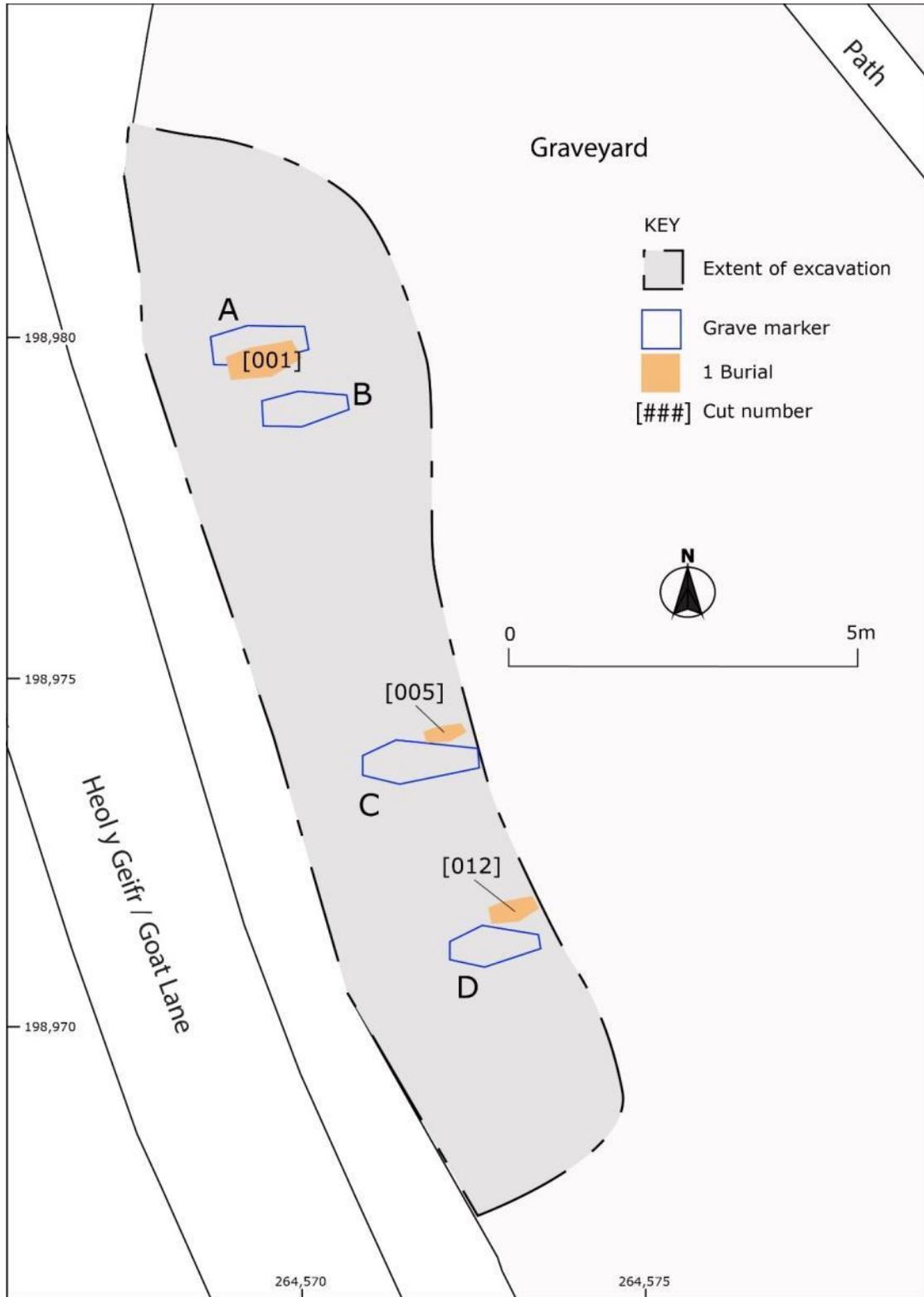


Figure 6: Distribution of burials excavated in Area 1.

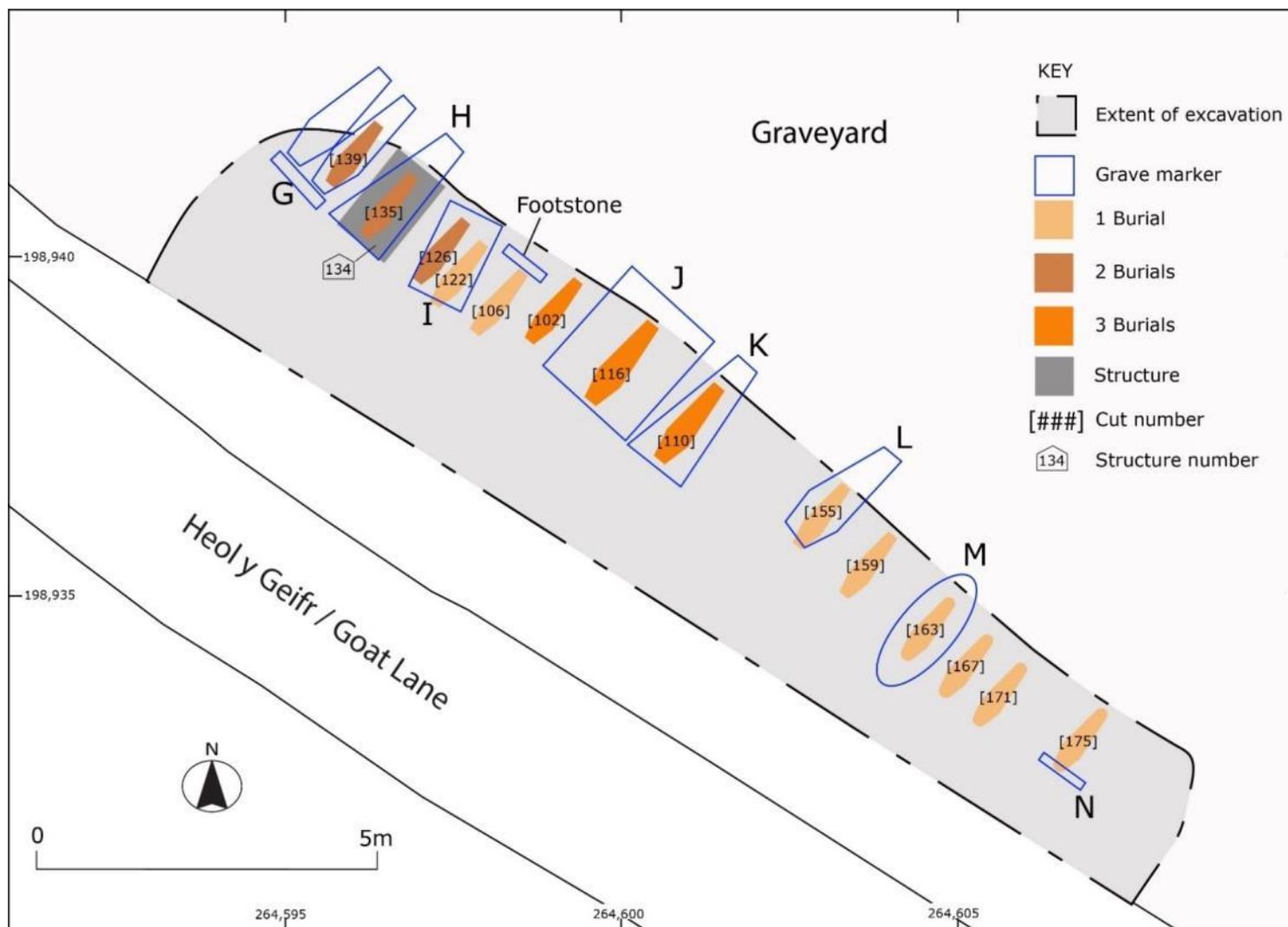


Figure 7: Distribution of burials excavated in Area 2.

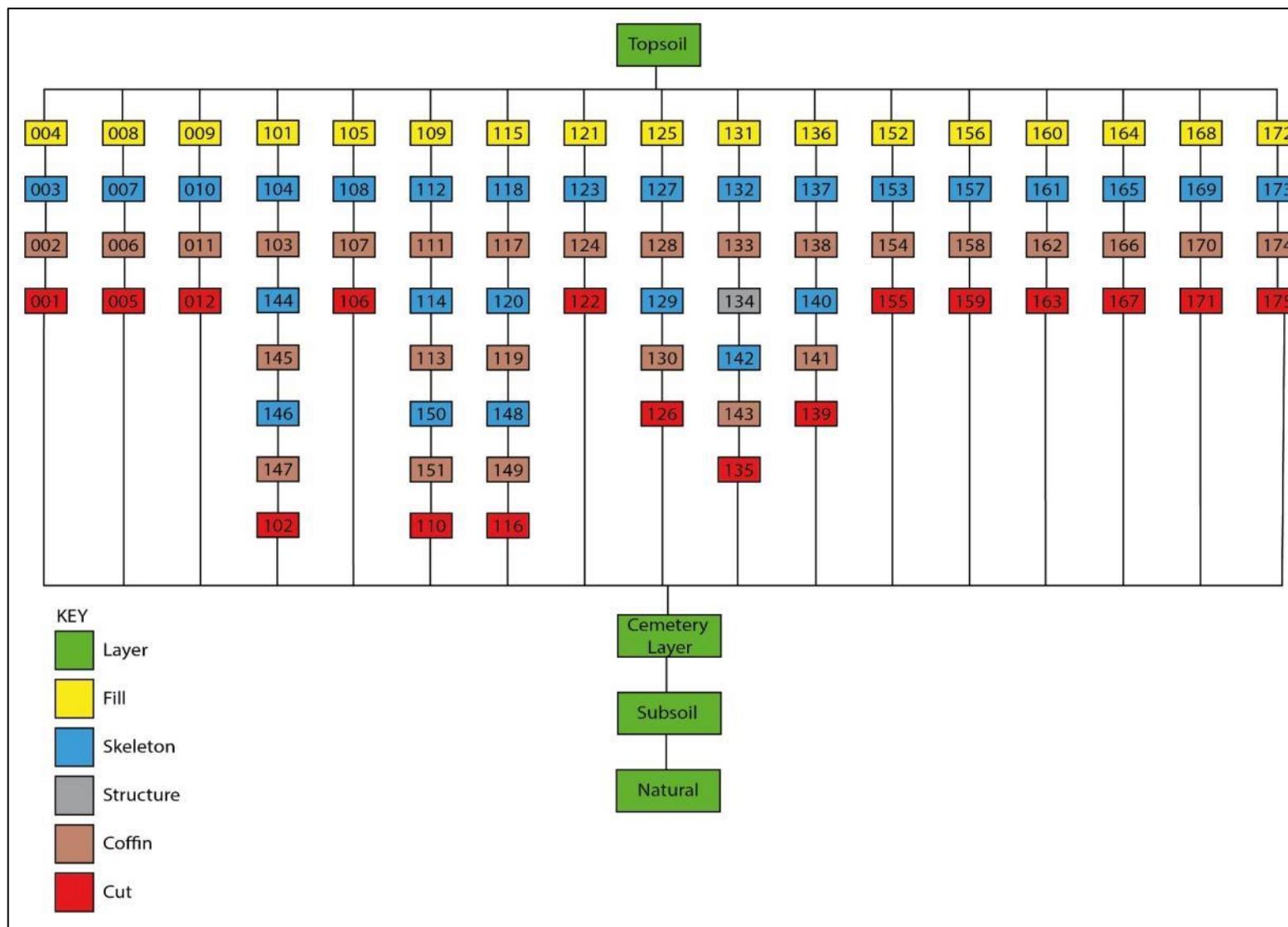


Figure 8: Harris matrix showing sequence of deposition.

4.4 Coffins and grave structures

- 4.4.1 Evidence for coffins was observed with every identified burial, but in general, coffin preservation was very poor across both Excavation Areas. The depth at which coffins were encountered ranged from 1.25m to 1.75m below current ground level. In most instances, remnants of the coffin only survived as black staining around the skeletal remains (Photo 14). In a few cases the coffin wood had survived in a petrified state but showed evidence of collapse prior to excavation. Photos 15 and 16 show the state of coffin (117); one of the "better" preserved coffins that was observed.
- 4.4.2 Aside from coffin handles no coffin furniture was observed. Where coffin handles were present, they were typically found loose in the grave fill. Coffin nails, in a corroded state, were also observed in the grave fills.
- 4.4.3 Only one surviving coffin plate was retrieved during the ground works. This was associated with coffin (133) (discussed below), with coffin handles also found *in situ*. Both had been preserved by the presence of a grave structure. In most instances evidence for a coffin plate survived only as a rust staining, as illustrated in Photo 17.



Photo 14: Coffin (011) survives as a black staining around the skeletal remains of (010). View west. 0.5m scale.



Photo 15: Exposing coffin (117), associated with grave [116], one of the better-preserved coffins found on the site. View east. Scale 0.5m.



Photo 16: Coffin (117) after removal of the lid. View west. Scale 0.5m.



Photo 17: Evidence for a coffin plate survives as staining present on coffin (006), with grave [005]. View east. 0.5m scale.

4.4.4 Only one built grave structure was encountered. Within grave cut [135] a brick-built structure {134} was encountered at a depth of 0.90m and was associated with grave marker H. This structure was shouldered and tapered in form, built of machine-made frogged brick bonded in a dark mortar with ash inclusions, and was capped with large slate slabs (Photos 18 - 20). Contained within the structure were coffin (133) and skeleton (132). The coffin and skeletal remains within were in a poor state of preservation but the coffin handles and a coffin plate survived, making this the only definitively identifiable burial. The plate was inscribed with the name Mary Williams, who was born in c.1839 and had died in 1892. This was consistent with information present on the grave marker (H). The grave marker indicates a further three burials present within the grave, those of Mary's husband and two daughters, all of whom died at an earlier date. Only one further individual was encountered (skeletal remains 142), likely those of her husband William Williams who died in 1873. The remaining two burials are likely to have been fully decomposed.



Photo 18: Grave structure {134}. View southeast. 0.50m scale.



Photo 19: Grave structure {134} with capping stones removed exposing skeleton (132) within. View northeast. 0.50m scale.



Photo 20: Structure {134} following removal of capping stones and interred remains. View northeast. 0.50m scale.

4.5 Skeletal Remains

- 4.5.1 No detailed recording and analysis of the skeletal remains was undertaken within the confines of the watching brief. The focus of the watching brief was to identify and collect associated skeletal remains so they could be kept together for later reinterment within the cemetery. All human remains recovered during the excavation were stored within the church for reburial during construction of the new wall. No human remains were removed from the cemetery.
- 4.5.2 Where human remains were encountered, attempts were made to expose as much of the skeleton as possible within the constraints of the excavated area. This was to ensure that all exposed skeletal elements could be retrieved. In virtually all cases only the upper portion of the skeleton was exposed; where remains extended beyond the limit of the excavation they were left *in-situ*.
- 4.5.3 The human remains encountered were in a poor to moderate state of preservation. In most of the burials observed the smaller bones were not present, with only the longer bones and vertebrae surviving, although rib bones were recorded with skeletal remains (118) (Photo 16). Skulls were generally in fragmentary conditions, the better preserved examples being skeletal remains (132) (Photo 19), which had been preserved by the surrounding grave structure (although other than long bones bone preservation was otherwise poor), and skeletal remains (140) (Photo 22). Many of the remains appeared to be those of juveniles, but corresponding grave marker inscriptions would suggest at least some of these are likely to have been adult burials. Named infant burials appear not to have survived, although one infant burial, skeletal remains (003), was exposed within Excavation Area 1 (Photo 21).



Photo 21. Skeletal remains (003) of an infant, in unmarked grave [001]. View west. Scale in 0.5m intervals.



Photo 22: Skeleton (140), within grave [139], partially exposed within the excavation area. View east. 0.5m scale.

4.6 Non-burial features

- 4.6.1 Along the western length of Excavation Area 1, and directly behind the wall was a much darker – almost black – very loose silt containing fragments of disarticulated bone, broken glass and modern pottery. When the area was hand-cleaned, a linear cut was seen aligned roughly north – south. This appears to run parallel with the existing wall, with the loose soil described above contained within the cut. This was presumably a cut associated with the existing graveyard wall (Photo 23).



Photo 23: A linear cut aligned north-south parallel with the existing wall likely represents an associated construction cut. View south, 1.0m scale.

- 4.6.2 To create a safe working area it was necessary to batter the edges to create a receding slope. In doing so a number of medium-large stones were observed within the mid brown silty clay cemetery soil, beneath the topsoil, in the west-facing section of Excavation Area 1 (Photo 24 - 25). Although frequent stones had already been noted throughout this deposit, the siting of these examples appeared more organised. At the base were two large stones, potentially faced on their western edges, with a collection of medium-sized stones placed over them. As these were situated on the edge of the excavation area they were left *in-situ* and it was not possible to examine the feature any further to determine if it represented a built structure, such as a linear wall foundation, or part of a grave structure.
- 4.6.3 No evidence of any pre-cemetery activity was observed during the watching brief.



Photo 24: Collection of stones in the east facing section. View east, 1.0m scale.



Photo 25: The excavated area at the end of the excavation of area I. View south.
Note the collection of stones in the west facing section.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Over the course of the watching brief the attending archaeologist monitored the groundworks associated with repairing two damaged sections of churchyard wall at St David & Cyfelach Church, Llangyfelach, Swansea (NGR SS 6461 9897). These groundworks included the excavation of material from behind the existing wall, within the churchyard, in an area of marked graves. The site itself has a long history, with an ecclesiastical centre established here during the early medieval period.
- 5.2 During the works twenty-six burials were recovered from a combination of individual and vertically stacked burials distributed among seventeen grave cuts.
- 5.3 Of the seventeen grave cuts twelve were associated with grave markers, although only seven of those had headstones, and only five of those were legible. These five named sixteen individuals, with groups representing family plots of parents and children. Among the excavated burials only one was identifiable by a surviving coffin plate: this was that of Mary Williams, who had died in 1892, although an earlier burial in the same plot is likely to be that of her husband William Williams, who died in 1873. Although a number of grave cuts were found to be closely associated with a grave marker (i.e. underlying) caution is necessary when attempting to identify the individuals who are named. In almost all instances, the number of individuals listed on the grave marker did not correspond with the number of burials found. In many cases this could be due to the full decomposition of the remains, although in at least one case a name had been added to the grave marker to memorialise an individual, with the body interred in the USA.
- 5.4 The distribution of the graves suggest they are all broadly contemporary. Grave markers in Excavation Area 2 indicate the burials likely date from the early 19th to early 20th century. No inscription was legible in Excavation Area 1, but the presence of a cast iron headstone suggests a mid to late 19th century date. No earlier disturbed burials, or earlier cemetery features were uncovered.
- 5.5 Detailed osteological analysis did not form part of the scope of works, a primary aim of which was to identify and collect associated skeletal remains for later reinternment within the cemetery. A rapid visual assessment of the skeletal remains indicated a varied state of preservation, although generally only the larger bones survived. An apparent higher proportion of juvenile burials were noted, although not within the graves associated with inscriptions. No spatial patterning was noted associated with age or gender, although grave markers within Excavation Area 1 suggested this area may have comprised generally lower status, or less affluent, individuals.
- 5.6 The watching brief has met the overall aims and objectives set out in the WSI by monitoring the groundworks associated with rebuilding the collapsed sections of wall along Heol y Geifr (Goats Lane). All human remains encountered were collected and stored appropriately and have been left in the care of the contractors, to be reburied as the wall is rebuilt.

6 SOURCES

Published

Brown, D.H., 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

CIfA. 2014. *Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief*

APPENDIX I: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

ST DAVID & CYFELACH, LLANGYFELACH, ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF 2020 WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI or specification) has been prepared by DAT Archaeological Services (the contracting arm of Dyfed Archaeological Trust) to provide a methodology for an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at St David & St Cyfelach Church, Llangyfelach, Swansea (SS 6461 9897, Figures 1 and 2). The WSI and archaeological works have been commissioned by Emyr Davies A'i Fab Cyf on behalf of their clients.
- 1.2 The proposals involve work on the boundary wall to the churchyard, and include repair to an area of collapse on Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane), repair and buttress walling adjoining Church Cottages and strengthening the wall with ground anchors in strategic places. Faculty has been granted for the work by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (Ref: 2019-003092, dated 18/09/2019) with recommendations.
- 1.3 Llangyfelach churchyard is believed to be the site of an early medieval monastic enclosure. A late 11th century account of the life of St David attributes the foundation of 'Monasterium Langemelach' to the 6th century St David. Three early Christian Monuments are known from the churchyard, two dating to the 9th century, the third late 9th to early 10th century. A medieval parish church was established on the site. The church itself was ruined in a gale in the early 19th century, although the medieval tower still stands within the churchyard. A new church was built to the north, potentially originally utilising a tithe barn, although little evidence of a barn structure is visible in the current church building.
- 1.4 The date of the surrounding churchyard wall is unestablished, but there is clearly potential for activity associated with the early medieval monastic centre and medieval church, along with contemporary settlement and activity within the churchyard enclosure.
- 1.5 As a result of the archaeological potential of the site the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) have recommended that archaeological mitigation would be required. A DAC Notification of Advice (Ref.2019-003092) states:

The work to clear and rebuild the wall.....should be undertaken with archaeological supervision. All archaeological work should be undertaken by either a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists accredited member or by a Registered Organisation with CIfA, to ensure the appropriate public liability and professional indemnity insurance, and will require a written scheme to agree appropriate methodology. A final report, to be submitted for approval, containing the results of the work will conclude the requirement.
- 1.6 This written scheme of investigation (WSI) details the methodology for an archaeological watching brief during groundworks with the potential to

expose archaeological deposits, which will be undertaken by DAT Archaeological Services and has been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CIfA 2014). A copy will be sent to the archaeological advisors to the DAC for their approval. The aim of the watching brief is to provide information on the character and significance of any archaeological remains that may be revealed during groundworks.

- 1.7 DAT Archaeological Services has considerable experience of this type of project and always operates to best professional practice. DAT Archaeological Services has its own Health and Safety Policy, and all works are covered by appropriate Employer's Liability and Public Liability Insurances. Copies of all are available on request.
- 1.8 Dyfed Archaeological Trust is a CIFA Registered Archaeological Organisation.
- 1.9 All permanent DAT Archaeological Services staff are CSCS certified to work on construction sites.
- 1.10 **Dyfed Archaeological Trust is a Cifa Registered Organisation and all permanent staff are CSCS registered.**

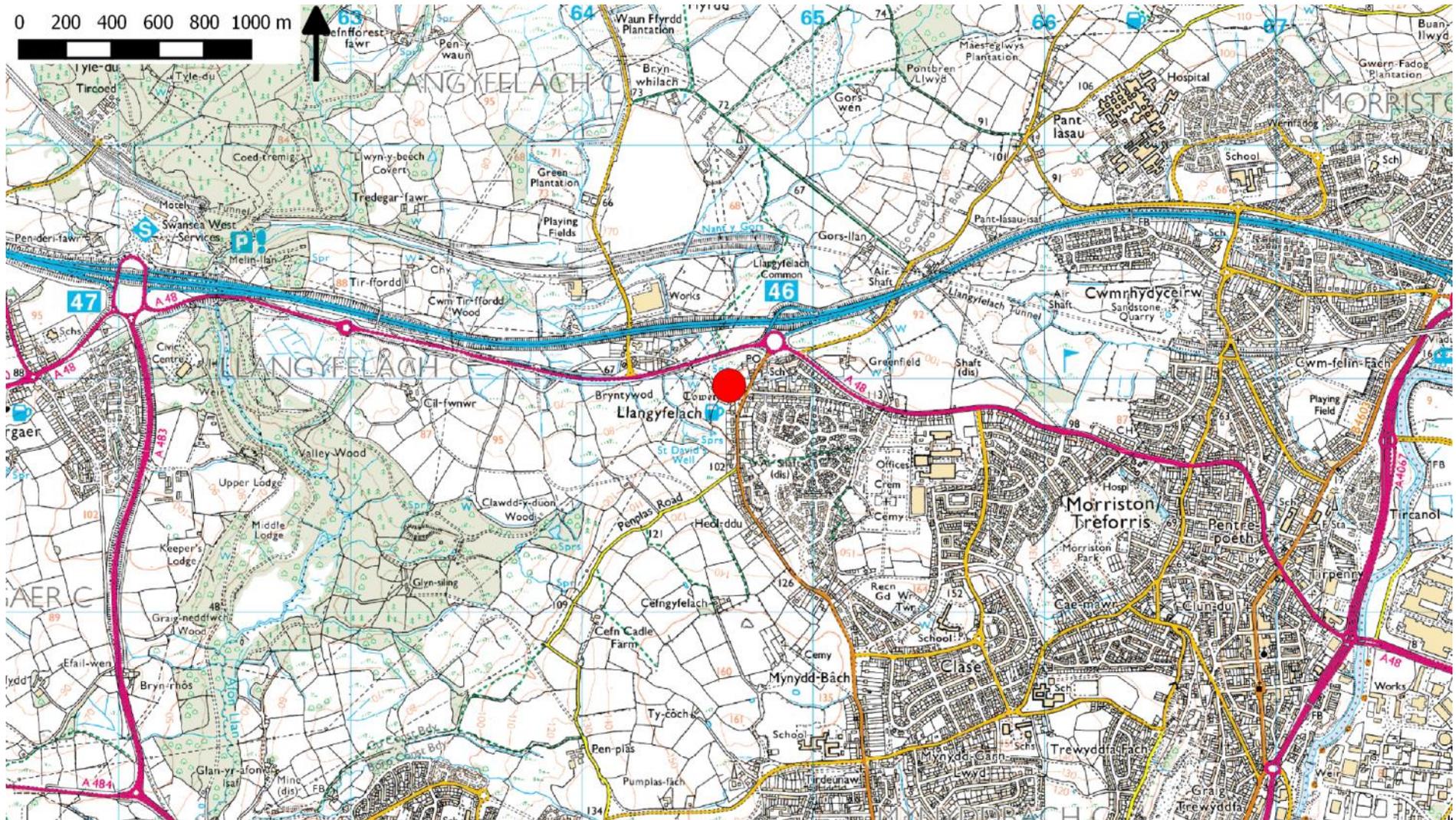


Figure 1: Site location map showing the position of the site in red.

Reproduced from the 2012 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A.

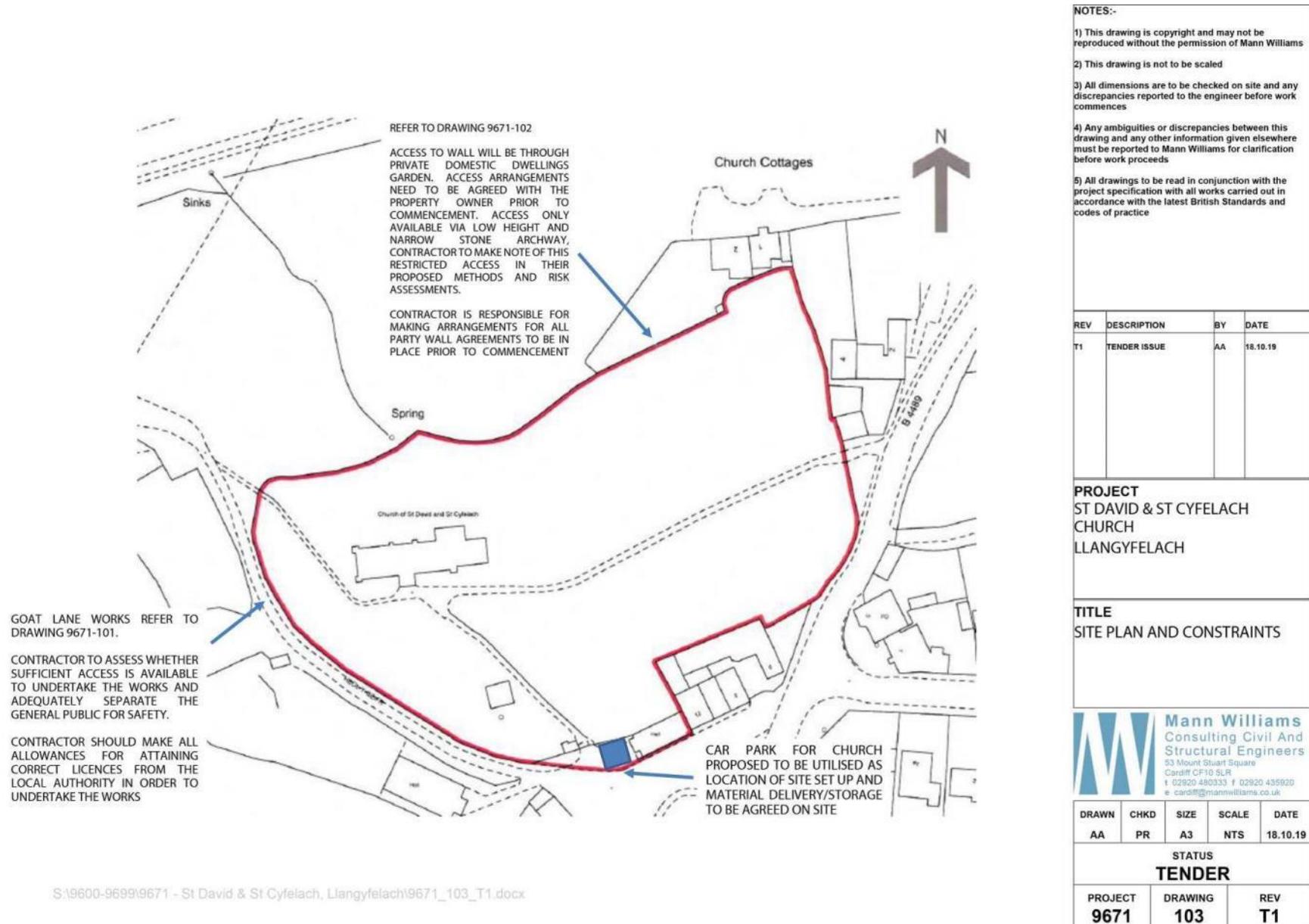


Figure 2: Detailed site plan and constraints. Not reproduced to original scale.

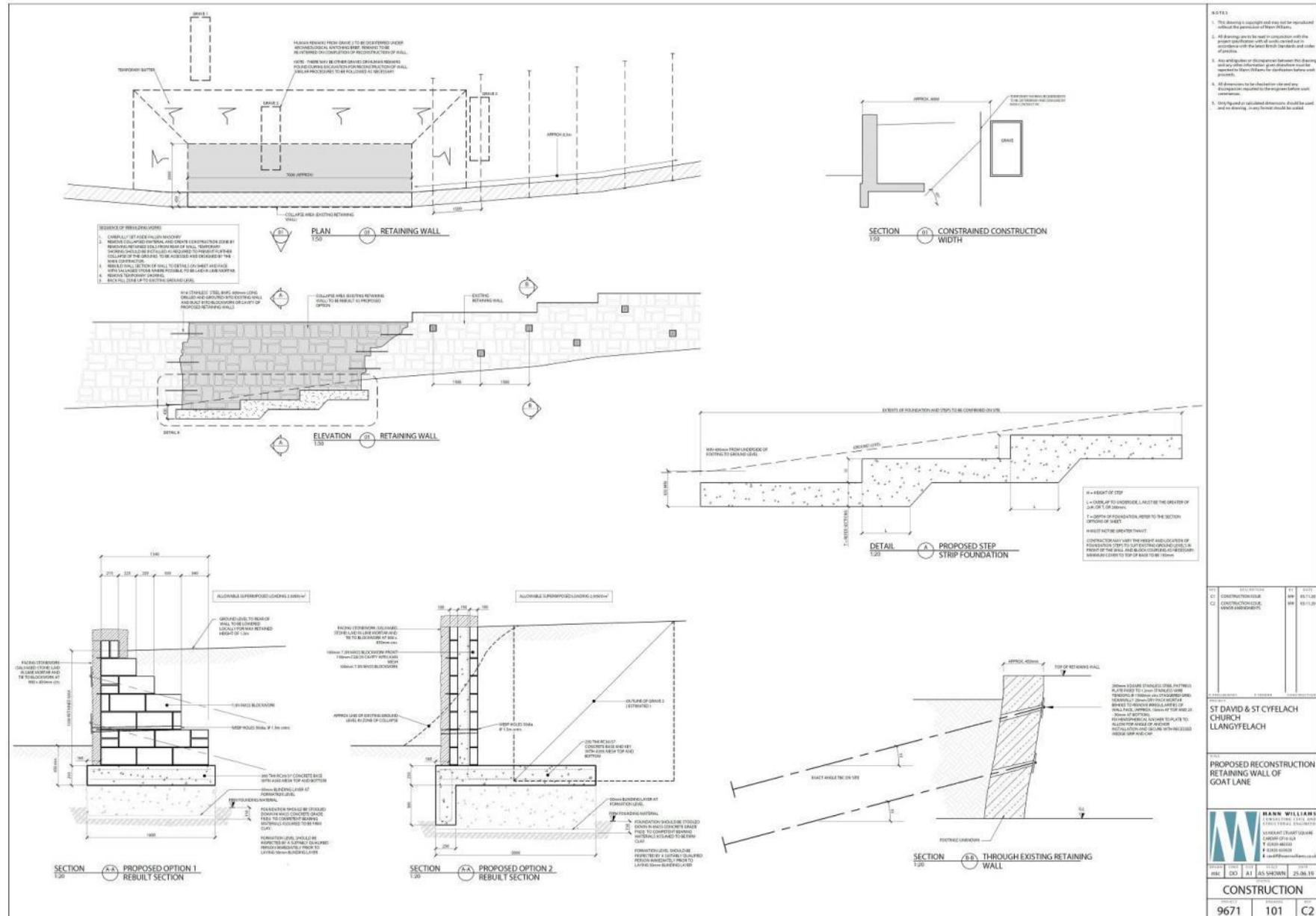


Figure 3: Details of proposed wall reconstruction. Not reproduced to scale.

2. WATCHING BRIEF

2.1 *The definition of archaeological watching brief, taken from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CifA S&G: AWB 2014) is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive.*

2.2 *The purpose of a watching brief, as laid down in the CifA S&G AWB is:*

to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works;

to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment.

2.3 *This document provides a scheme of works for:*

Archaeological attendance and recording during groundworks associated with repair and consolidation works on the churchyard wall at St David & St Cyfelach Church, Llangyfelach.

3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Provision of a written scheme of investigation to outline the methodology by which DAT Archaeological Services will undertake the archaeological watching brief.

3.2 *To monitor groundworks in order to identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.*

3.3 *To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed groundworks.*

3.4 *To appropriately investigate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundworks.*

3.5 *To produce an archive and report of any results.*

4. FIELDWORK

4.1 The proposed development works can be summarised as follows:

- Repair an area of collapse on Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane).
- Build a buttress on the wall adjoining Church Cottages, and repair where necessary.
- Strengthen the wall with ground anchors where necessary.

4.2 The work to clear and rebuild sections of the wall on Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane) will require spoil and loose material to be removed and a safe working surface created prior to rebuilding (Figure 3). These groundworks have the potential to expose archaeological deposits within the churchyard

and associated with the existing wall. The remaining required works are not anticipated to expose sub-surface deposits.

- 4.3 A 'watching brief' is to be undertaken during groundworks at the site that have the potential to expose, damage or destroy archaeological remains. This will require the presence of an archaeologist during the groundworks being undertaken on the wall repair along Heol y Geifr (Goat Lane).
- 4.4 Any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the groundworks will be examined and recorded to an appropriate level.



Photo 1: Grave marked by a small headstone within the area of ground reduction works.

- 4.5 One east-west grave has been identified within the area where ground reduction works are due to take place (Photo 1, Figure 3). It is probable that this burial no later than 19th century in date as the cemetery closed in 1907.
- 4.6 There is potential for more unmarked burials to lie within the area where ground reduction works are taking place. If any articulated (complete) inhumations are encountered, then every attempt shall be made to leave these intact and in-situ.
- 4.7 If human skeletal remains have to be exhumed/removed then they will be recorded before lifting, boxing and storing appropriately on site for later, if not immediate, re-burial within the churchyard. Such remains will not require further analysis. The appropriate licence has been obtained from the Coroners Office at the Department of Justice (Licence number 20-0237, issued 02/11/20)
- 4.8 Being located within a church it is very likely that disarticulated human bone may be uncovered during the works. All human remains will, where possible, be left in situ. If necessary disarticulated bone will be removed and retained appropriately for reburial within the churchyard. Such remains will not require further analysis.

- 4.9 Recording of all archaeological features or deposits will conform to best current professional practice and be carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual³ used by DAT Archaeological Services. Significant archaeological features or deposits will be drawn at a suitable scale (no less than 1:20) and photographed in an appropriate format.
- 4.10 All archaeologically significant finds will be retained and, where possible, related to the contexts from which they derived. Finds will be temporarily stored by DAT Archaeological Services in stable conditions. All finds, except those deemed to be Treasure Trove, will remain the property of the landowner. It is assumed that permission will be granted for any finds recovered to be stored within the site archive for the project or within a local museum or other suitable repository.
- 4.11 In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the development, or that archaeological remains of high significance are exposed, DAT Archaeological Services shall have the power to halt any ground works and shall inform the site agent/project manager and the curatorial officer, and prepare a written statement with plan detailing the archaeological evidence. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the curatorial officer, DAT Archaeological Services shall, if required, implement on behalf of the Client a contingency scheme for salvage excavation of affected archaeological features. In these instances it would be necessary to employ extra resources to record such features to an appropriate standard.

5. POST-FIELDWORK REPORTING AND ARCHIVING

- 5.1 All data recovered during the fieldwork will be collated into a site archive structured in accordance with the specifications in *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2007), and the procedures recommended by the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth.
- 5.2 The results of the fieldwork will be assessed in local, regional and wider contexts.
- 5.3 A report that is fully representative of the results of the fieldwork will be prepared and four copies will be sent to the client for dissemination to all relevant parties.
- 5.4 A summary of the project results, excluding any confidential information, may be prepared for wider dissemination (e.g. Archaeology in Wales and special interest and period-specific journals).
- 5.5 The project archive, including all artefacts and ecofacts (excepting those which may be deemed to be Treasure Trove) will be deposited with an appropriate body following agreement with the landowner.
- 5.6 A copy of the final report will be deposited with the regional HER at Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust within six months of the completion of the project.

6. STAFF

- 6.1 This project will be managed by Fran Murphy, Head of DAT Archaeological Services.

³ DAT Archaeological Services has adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available on-site for inspection if required.

- 6.2 Archaeological attendance during the watching brief will be undertaken by staff drawn from the team of archaeologists employed by DAT Archaeological Services.

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 7.1 DAT Archaeological Services has considerable experience of undertaking all categories of archaeological fieldwork and always operates to best professional practice; adhering to CIfA guidelines where appropriate. The Trust is a Registered Organisation with CIfA and all staff abide by their code of conduct and adhere to their relevant standards and guidance.
- 7.2 DAT Archaeological Services operate robust internal monitoring procedures that ensure that the standard of each project is maintained from commencement to completion.

8. MONITORING

- 8.1 The fieldwork may need to be monitored by Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Curatorial Division in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the DAC, who should be provided access to the site at any time during the archaeological works. However, during the current Covid-19 pandemic a different method of monitoring may be used via regular photographic updates of the work and by telephone. The Head of DAT Archaeological Services may also monitor the on-site works intermittently.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 9.1 All DAT Archaeological Services staff are CSCS⁴ registered.
- 9.2 *DAT Archaeological Services will carry out a health and safety risk assessment to ensure that all potential risks are minimised.*
- 9.3 *All known health and safety risk and the presence of any services etc must be made known to the attending archaeologist at the start of any groundworks by the client/site contractor.*
- 9.4 *All relevant health and safety regulations must be followed, including compliance with Welsh Government guidelines on working practices during the current Covid-19 Pandemic, and guidance issued by CIfA.*
- 9.5 *CIfA advise that Registered Organisations should ensure they are familiar with the latest Site Operating Procedures, published by the Construction Leadership Council (Version 4, updated 18th May 2020) and the latest Covid-19 Working Advice Ver.1.1, published by Prospect (5th May 2020), which addresses potential issues relating to archaeological site work. These procedures will be attached to the project risk assessment. If the site cannot operate in line with this guidance then the project archaeologist will not be allowed to attend.*
- 9.6 *The project risk assessment details the precautions put in place to reduce the spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus during fieldwork.*
- 9.7 *All site inductions, H&S procedures and site rules of the site contractor will be made known to DAT Archaeological Services staff prior to them commencing work on-site.*

⁴ Construction Skills Certification Scheme (Health and Safety Tested)

- 9.8 *Safety helmets, high visibility vests and boots are to be used by all site personnel as necessary. The site contractors will make all archaeological staff aware of any other PPE⁵ that may be required and provide them. Archaeological staff must not enter any area where there is a considered to be a health and safety risk that has not or is not being appropriately mitigated against.*
- 9.9 *DAT Archaeological Services staff must ensure that their presence on site is communicated to all relevant site staff, especially machine operators.*

⁵ *Personal Protection Equipment*

