



**Halghton Hall, Whitchurch Road,
Bangor-On-Dee, Wrexham.
February 2016
V 1.0**



aeon archaeology



Archaeological Watching Brief
Project Code: A0076.1
Report no. 0080



aeon archaeology

Halghton Hall, Whitchurch Road, Bangor-On-Dee, Wrexham. February 2016

Report no. 0080 v1.0

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Project Code: A0076.1

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1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Architectural Design Services (ADS) to carry out a programme of archaeological watching brief during the installation of a heating system and associated alteration works at the 17th Century grade I Listed Building of Halghton Hall, Whitchurch Road, Bangor-On-Dee.

The archaeological watching brief at Halghton Hall, Bangor-On-Dee uncovered a former tiled floor surface of post-medieval date in the Dining Room as well as post-medieval red-brick and stone foundation remains in the Office/Utility Room.

The works also uncovered a series of four hearths representing low-level industrial smithing or farrying within the Kitchen. These were associated with sandstone blocks, probably utilised as rudimentary anvils or possibly working surfaces, one of which had a notch cut into it showing that it had been reused from an earlier structure, probably having held a wooden post or beam.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Architectural Design Services (ADS) to carry out a programme of archaeological watching brief during the installation of a heating system and associated alteration works at the 17th Century grade I Listed Building of Halghton Hall, Whitchurch Road, Bangor-On-Dee, Wrexham (**Planning Permission HAN P/2014/0204, Listed Building Consent HAN P/2014/ 0205 & Listed Building Consent HAN P/2014/0325**) (NGR: 341566 342431) (figures 1 and 2).

A design specification had not been produced by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) Development Control Archaeologist (Mr. Mark Walters), but the following statement had been made a condition of full planning permission:

Condition 2

No development/ works shall commence has secured the maintenance of an on-site watching brief by a suitably qualified archaeologist during construction works in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In the event of discovery of important archaeological features outside of the scope of the watching brief, all works shall cease until otherwise advised in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

The site contains archaeological remains which it is essential should be protected from damage.

The use of such a condition is in line with the guidance set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012). A written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (appendix II) was undertaken by Aeon Archaeology in January 2015 which outlined the principle aims of the watching brief and the methods by which they would be met. This formed the basis of a method statement submitted for the work. The archaeological work was undertaken in accordance with this document.

The archaeological watching brief was maintained during the reduction of the existing floor level within the Dining Room, Office/Utility Room, and the Kitchen (figure 3).

The work undertaken adhered to the guidelines specified in Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014).

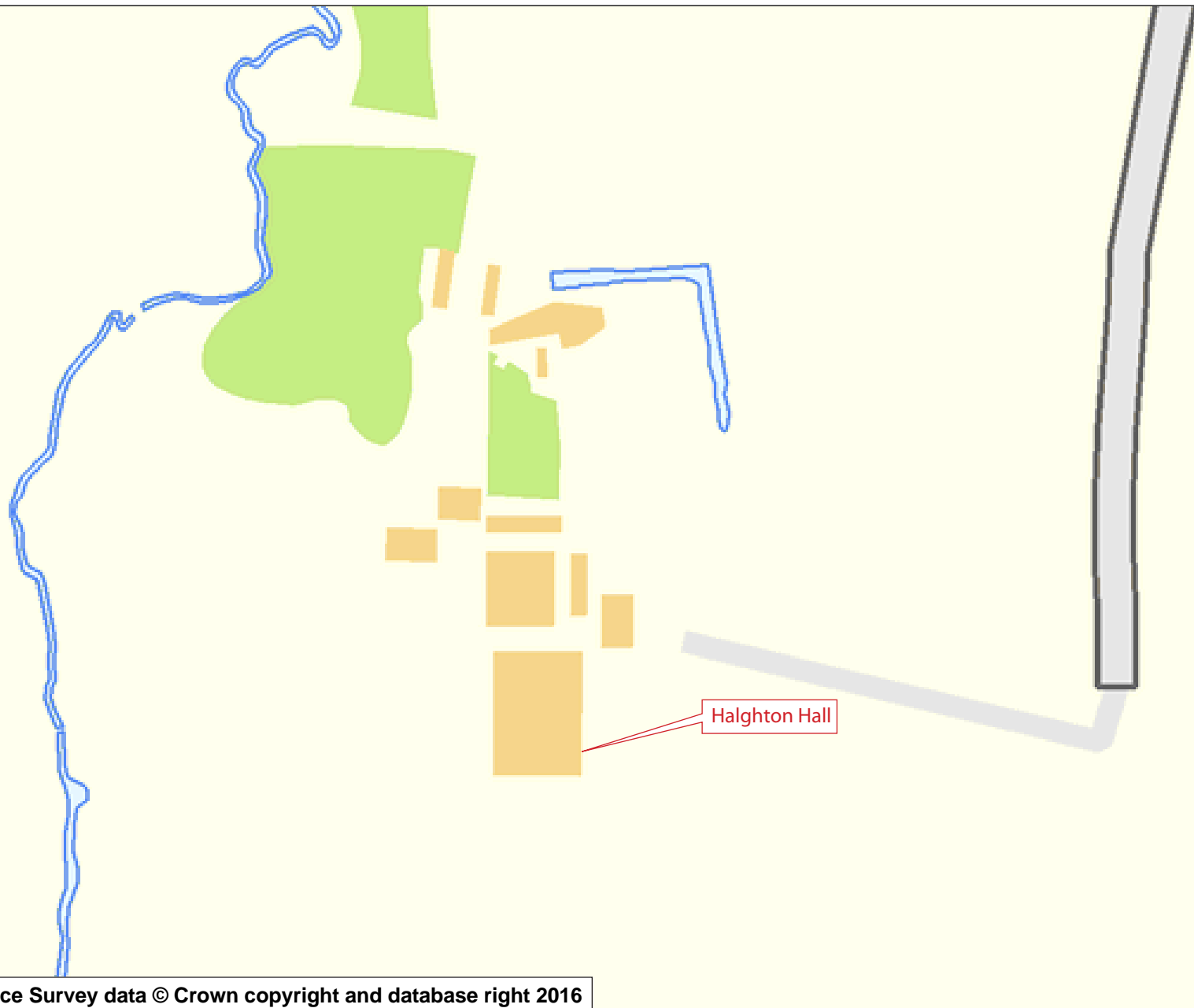


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Figure 01: Location of Halghton Hall, Bangor-On-Dee. Scale 1:25,000 at A4.



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Figure 02: Location of Halghton Hall, Bangor-On-Dee. Scale 1:2,500 at A4.

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3.0 PROJECT AIMS

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Cifa) maintains a standard for archaeological watching brief which states that:

An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of Cifa.

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the Cifa as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (Cifa 2014a). The watching brief will take place within a specified area within the Site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

The Cifa further identifies the purpose of a watching brief as allowing, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works. It is also important to note that a watching brief provides an opportunity, if needed, for a signal to be made to all interested parties, before the destruction of the archaeological materials, 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.

A watching brief is, therefore, not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

The aims of the watching brief at Halghton Hall were:

- To allow, within the resources available, the opportunity to gain information about and record the presence/absence, nature and date of archaeological remains on the Site affected by excavations and groundworks for the refurbishment, the presence and nature of which could not be established with sufficient confidence in advance of works which may disturb them.
- To provide the facility to signal to the relevant authorities, before irreversible impact to remains that an archaeological and/or historic find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are inadequate to support their treatment to an adequate and satisfactory standard.

The specific objectives of the watching brief were:

- To observe and recover any artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To record the location, dimensions and nature of any deposits, features, structures or artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To recover samples of any deposits considered to have potential for analysis for palaeoenvironmental data should the opportunity arise.

The management of this project has followed the procedures laid out in the standard professional guidance *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006), and in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Archaeological Watching Brief* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014). Five stages are specified:

Phase 1: project planning

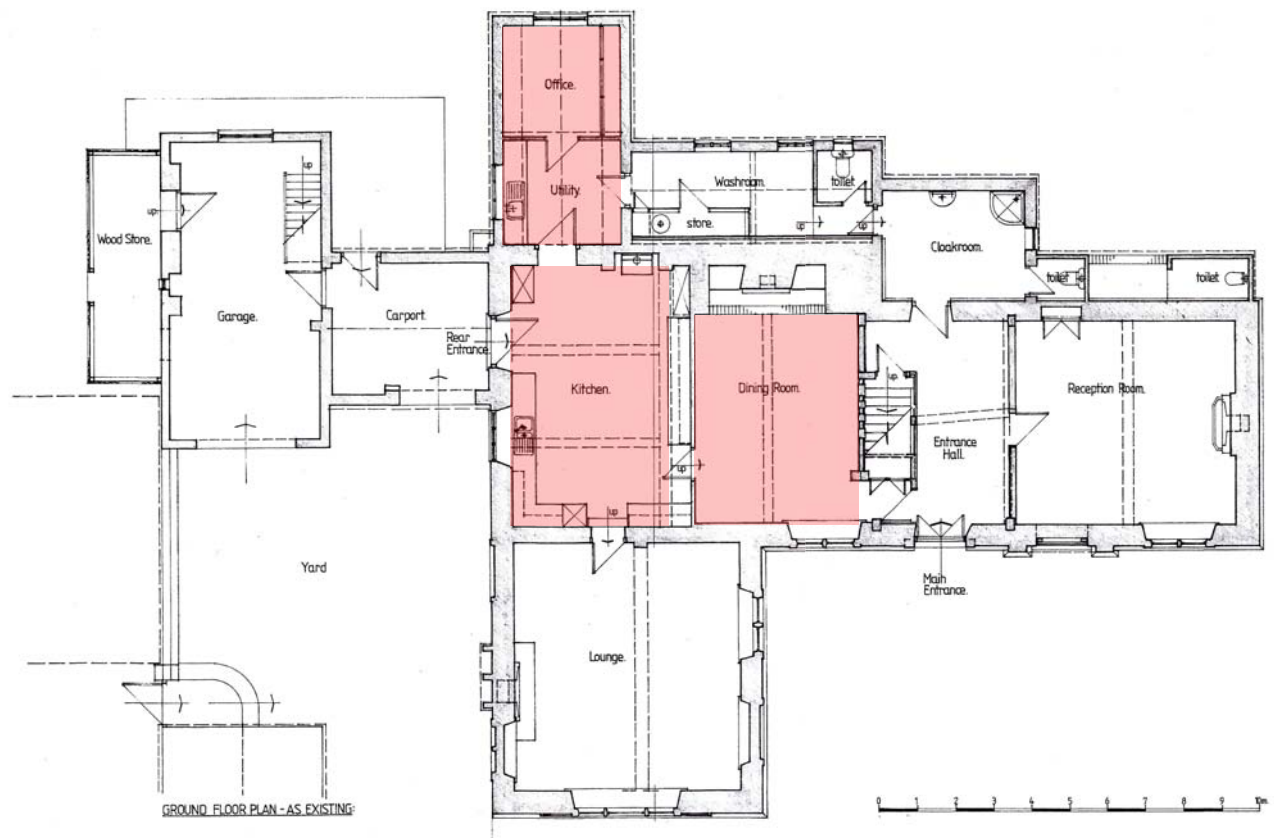
Phase 2: fieldwork

Phase 3: assessment of potential for analysis and revised project design

Phase 4: analysis and report preparation

Phase 5: dissemination

The current document reports on the phase 4 analysis and states the means to be used to disseminate the results. The purpose of this phase is to carry out the analysis identified in phase 3 (the assessment of potential phase), to amalgamate the results of the specialist studies, if required, with the detailed site narrative and provide both specific and overall interpretations. The site is to be set in its landscape context so that its full character and importance can be understood. All the information is to be presented in a report that will be held by the CPAT Historic Environment Record, the OASIS database, and The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales (RCAHMW) so that it can be accessible to the public and future researchers. This phase of work also includes archiving the material and documentary records from the project.



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Figure 03: Existing ground floor of Halghton Hall; shaded rooms monitored by archaeological watching brief. Scale 1:200 at A4.

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4.0 METHODOLOGY – ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

4.1 Watching Brief

All soil removal was undertaken by hand using mattocks and shovels. A photographic record was maintained throughout, using a digital SLR camera (Canon 550D) set to maximum resolution and any subsurface remains were to be recorded photographically, with detailed notations and measured drawings being undertaken if required.

In the event of archaeological discovery features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded using Aeon Archaeology pro-formas, digital photographs, and plan and section drawings taken at a suitable scale (usually 1:20 for plan drawings and 1:10 for section drawings).

The archive produced is held at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0076.1**.

4.2 Data Collection from Site Records

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and precisely cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that the CPAT Historic Environment Record (HER) can curate them in their active digital storage facility.

4.3 Artefact Methodology

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. They would be bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the archaeological watching brief. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Client and the CPAT Development Control Archaeologist. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

4.4 Environmental Samples Methodology

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

4.5 Report and dissemination

A full archive including photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced, and will be lodged within a suitable repository to be agreed with the archaeological curator within six months of the completion of the project.

A draft copy of the report has been sent to the client and upon written approval from them paper and digital copies of the report will be sent to the regional HER, the CPAT Development Control Archaeologist, the RCAHMW, and will be logged with the online OASIS database. Copies of all notes, plans, and photographs arising from the watching brief will be stored at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0076.1** with the originals being lodged in a suitable repository to be agreed with the archaeological curator.

5.0 SITE LOCATION AND HISTORY

A house of medieval origin, evidence for which is the base cruck or arched-brace truss retained in an internal partition. The present house is said to have been built in 1662, probably by a member of the Hanmer family. It was probably intended to have an H-plan, which would have required building an additional bay on the right side of the main range and another cross wing, to make a symmetrical elevation. Although the present owners have reported evidence of foundations, there is no evidence that this plan was ever completed. The main alteration to the 1662 house was the subsequent insertion of a mezzanine floor and the rebuilding of the stair, using salvaged pieces of the original stair, to accommodate it. This alteration was probably made in the 18th Century as it has vernacular detail.

An engraving dated 1794 shows the building much as it is today, at which time it was owned by Philip Lloyd Fletcher but was already a tenant farm. It subsequently became a part of the Gredington estate of successive Lords Kenyon, until it was sold in the mid 20th Century. Major restoration was carried out in the 1970s.

Listed grade I for its special architectural interest as a substantial 17th Century gentry house retaining high-quality external and internal detail, including substantial evidence of an earlier medieval house.

6.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS

6.1 The Documentary Archive

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological watching brief:

Watching brief day record sheets	2
Digital photographs	58
Context sheets	12
Drawings	2 on 1 sheet

6.2 Environmental Samples

No environmental samples were taken as part of the archaeological watching brief as no suitable deposits or fills were encountered.

6.3 Artefacts

No artefacts were recovered during the archaeological watching brief.

7.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

The archaeological watching was maintained between 4th and 5th February 2016 during the reduction of the existing floor level in the Dining Room, Utility/Office Room, and the Kitchen. Archaeological contexts have been assigned where relevant and are shown in brackets. Details of contexts are presented in appendix I.

Dining Room (figures 3 and 7; Plates 1 and 2)

Description

The Dining Room is a rectangular room orientated north to south and measuring 6.0m in length by 4.25m in width. Upon arrival by the archaeologist the existing floor surface had already been removed revealing a former surface of laid red/orange post-medieval tiles. These were hand-made, mostly square in shape and quite irregular in size, averaging 0.22m in length by 0.22m in width by 0.07m in depth.

The tiles covered the entirety of the Dining Room floor however a later rectangular intrusion measuring 1.05m in length by 0.48m in width had been cut through the tiled surface in the northeast corner of the room. It is not clear what this later intrusion had originally been intended for however it did reveal that the tiles had been laid upon a light yellow bedding sand.

The tiles continued beneath the internal partition walls to the west and east, and also beneath a tiled fireplace against the northern elevation, thus predating all three.

No other archaeological features were observed and no artefacts recovered.

Discussion

The tiled floor was almost certainly post-medieval in origin although the hand-made form of the tiles would suggest a date of possibly the first half of the 19th Century. As the required depth had been achieved the surface was retained in-situ.



Plate 01: Dining Room showing tiled floor, from the northeast. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 02: Dining Room showing tiled floor, from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.

Utility/Office Room (figures 4, 6 and 7; Plates 3-5)

The Utility/Office Room had formally been two separate and roughly square rooms in which the central partition had been removed, creating a rectangular room orientated north to south and measuring 6.0m in length by 3.0m in width.

Upon arrival by the archaeologist the existing floor surface had already been removed revealing a general in-fill deposit of mid/dark grey-brown clay-silt with occasional brick and stone inclusions (1011). The archaeological watching brief was maintained while the contractor reduced the floor level by hand by approximately 0.25m to the required depth, the limit of deposit (1011) not being reached.

The ground reduction revealed an L-shaped wall (1008) located in the southern half of the room and lying directly beneath the location of the former partition on its east-west axis, which had separated the Office and the Utility. This wall measured 3.08m in length (north-south) by 2.65m in length (east-west) and 0.46m in width by 0.25m in height, and was constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and standing two-courses high on its interior face (south and west facing) with sandstone blocks bonded by lime mortar used on the exterior face (north and east facing). The base of the wall was not revealed due to the required depth level having been reached. The bricks utilised in its construction measured 0.24m in length by 0.12m in width by 0.08m in depth.

To the immediate north of wall (1008) and projecting at a slight angle from it, was a double-skin wall (1009) constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and standing two-courses high. This wall measured 1.2m in length by 0.3m in width by 0.25m in height although the base of it was not revealed. The bricks utilised in its construction measured 0.24m in length by 0.12m in width by 0.08m in depth.

Situated in the northern half of the room a small L-shaped section of wall (1010) was uncovered, measuring 1.0m in length (north to south), 0.8m in length (east to west), 0.3m in width and standing to a height of 0.25m (two courses). This wall was again constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar utilising bricks that measured 0.24m in length by 0.12m in width by 0.08m in depth. The wall appeared to have originally been rectangular in shape with perhaps a later truncation having created its existing L-shape in plan.

At the southern end of the room a small square section of wall (1007) measuring 0.4m in length by 0.25m in height was located. This feature was also constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and measuring 0.24m in length by 0.12m in width by 0.08m in depth. This feature also stood two courses high although the base had not been revealed by the ground reduction. The wall did not appear to have been truncated suggesting that in fact it functioned as a pier of some sort.

No other archaeological features were observed and no artefacts recovered.

Discussion

Although the L-shaped wall (1008) follows the same alignment on its east-west axis as that of the former Office and Utility partition, the wall is clearly of an earlier date and had merely been utilised as a foundation for the partition wall. It is however likely that this wall represents an earlier version of the room division and the use of sandstone and brick suggests a post-medieval date.

The remaining red-brick foundations were too fragmentary to provide a clear interpretation of their function, however it is likely that they represent only fragmentary elements of a phase of post-medieval activity within the room.



Plate 03: Office and Utility Room showing post-medieval foundations, from the southeast.



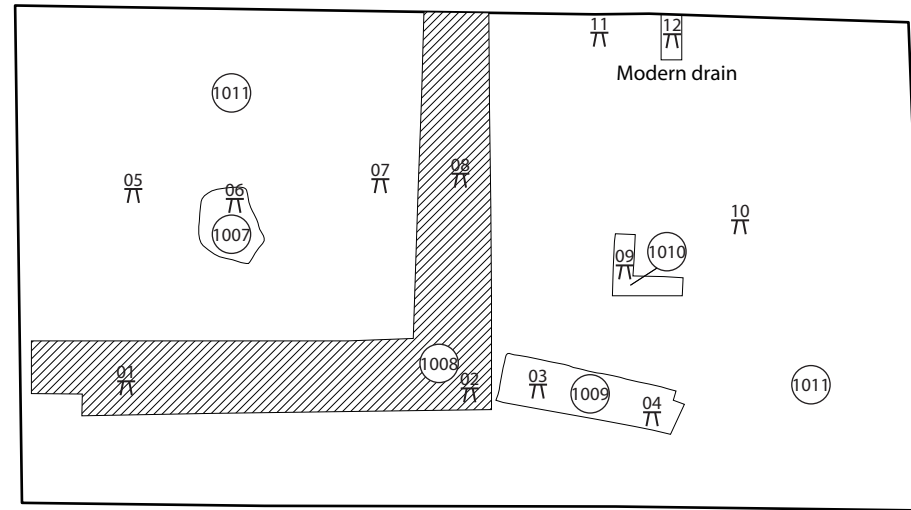
Plate 04: Office and Utility Room showing post-medieval foundations, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 05: Office and Utility Room showing post-medieval foundations, from the west. Scale 1.0m.

Spot Heights (reduced level generic)

- 1 = 99.73m
- 2 = 99.82m
- 3 = 99.75m
- 4 = 99.75m
- 5 = 99.54m
- 6 = 99.71m
- 7 = 99.57m
- 8 = 99.79m
- 9 = 99.80m
- 10 = 99.57m
- 11 = 99.65m
- 12 = 99.66m



1:50 at A4 



Figure 04: Plan of utility and farm office. Scale 1:50 at A4 (located on figure 6).

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Kitchen (figures 5, 6 and 7; Plates 6-12)

Description

The Kitchen is a rectangular room measuring 5.5m in length by 4.0m in width orientated north to south. Upon arrival by the archaeologist the existing floor surface had already been removed revealing a general in-fill deposit of mid/dark grey-brown clay-silt with occasional brick and stone inclusions (1012). The archaeological watching brief was maintained while the contractor reduced the floor level by hand by approximately 0.25m to the required depth, the limit of deposit (1012) not being reached.

The reduction of the floor level revealed a series of four red-brick built hearths located around the perimeter of the room. Two of these features (1001) and (1002) were located in close proximity of one another (1.0m apart) in the northeast corner of the room.

Feature (1001) was rectangular in shape orientated north to south and measured 1.16m in length by 0.82m in width by 0.26m in height. It was constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and stood two courses in height constructed from bricks measuring 0.23m in length by 0.11m in width by 0.06m in depth. The southern elevation had been deliberately constructed to slope downward into the hearth and the central aperture measured 0.83m in length by 0.25m in width, being filled with a dark black ashy-clinker.

Feature (1002) was also rectangular in shape orientated north to south and measured slightly larger than (1001) at 1.19m in length by 0.84m in width by 0.33m in height. It was also constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and stood two courses in height constructed from bricks measuring 0.23m in length by 0.11m in width by 0.06m in depth. The southern elevation had again been deliberately constructed to slope downward into the hearth and the central aperture measured 1.1m in length by 0.4m in width, being filled with a dark black ashy-clinker.

The third hearth (1003) was located at the western edge of the room and was also rectangular in shape, measuring 0.97m in length by 0.74m in width by 0.24m in depth, orientated east to west. It was also constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and stood two courses in height constructed from bricks measuring 0.23m in length by 0.11m in width by 0.06m in depth. The eastern elevation had been deliberately constructed to slope downward into the hearth and the central aperture measured 1.1m in length by 0.3m in width, also being filled with a dark black ashy-clinker.

The fourth and last hearth (1004) was located in the south-western corner and like the others was rectangular in shape, orientated east to west and measuring 1.03m in length by 0.74m in width by 0.24m in depth. This hearth was also constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and stood two courses in height constructed from bricks measuring 0.23m in length by 0.11m in width by 0.06m in depth. The eastern elevation had again been deliberately constructed to slope downward into the hearth and the central aperture measured 0.9m in length by 0.35m in width, also being filled with a dark black ashy-clinker. This hearth appeared to have the remains of an associated structure of floor surface surrounding it and also constructed from red-brick bonded by mortar, however it had been heavily truncated and did not appear to form a clear structure.

Towards the centre of the room a series of three dressed sandstone blocks (1005) were uncovered that had been deliberately laid to form a rectangular structure measuring 1.82m in length by 0.42m in width by >0.18m in height, orientated north to south. The northernmost block had a definite rectangular notch measuring 0.25m by 0.1m cut into its eastern face, clearly indicating that it had been reused from a former structure elsewhere, perhaps having once supported a beam.

Towards the southern part of the room a single rectangular slab of dressed sandstone (1006) had been laid, measuring 0.88m in length by 0.48m in width by >0.1m in depth orientated north to south.

Discussion

The brick-built hearths uncovered within the Kitchen almost certainly represent a phase of post-medieval low-level industrial forging or farrying. This suggests that the room had either fallen out of use as part of the main dwelling or had always been used as a workshop.

The manual forming of iron and other ferrous metals to make finished artefacts, or to repair existing ones, is known as secondary smithing or, more commonly, as blacksmithing. Primary smithing is the working of raw blooms into usable iron.

A forge or smithy will most commonly contain a hearth with its bellows, an anvil and a water container together with places to store fuel and stock iron. Smithies may be a workplace for a single smith, but can also be industrial buildings in which many smiths work, each with their own facilities. The four hearths uncovered appear to have been constructed using the same bricks and mortar type suggesting that they were contemporary in date and all in use at the same time. This would hint at a level of production that outweighed the requirements of the Hall estate itself, perhaps functioning as a smithy to the local community as well.

High temperature is attained through combustion of the fuel (charcoal, coke or coal) using a strong blast of air from the bellows, and it is probable that these were situated at a lower level to which the floor was reduced, pumping air into the heart of each hearth. Raised hearths at waist-level height were in use during the Roman period and again from the Middle Ages onwards, and it is probable that the sloping end to each hearth was intended to increase accessibility and ease of handling of high-temperature items.

The anvil forms the focus of the smith's activity in the forge and it is likely that the three sandstone blocks towards the centre of the room functioned as either a rudimentary anvil or possibly as a working surface (Young, T. 2012).



Plate 06: Kitchen showing post-medieval foundations, from the southeast.



Plate 07: Kitchen showing post-medieval foundations, from the northeast.



Plate 08: Kitchen showing sandstone blocks (1005), from the east. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 09: Kitchen showing post-medieval hearths (1001) and (1002), from the south. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 10: Kitchen showing post-medieval hearth (1003), from the east. Scale 1.0m.



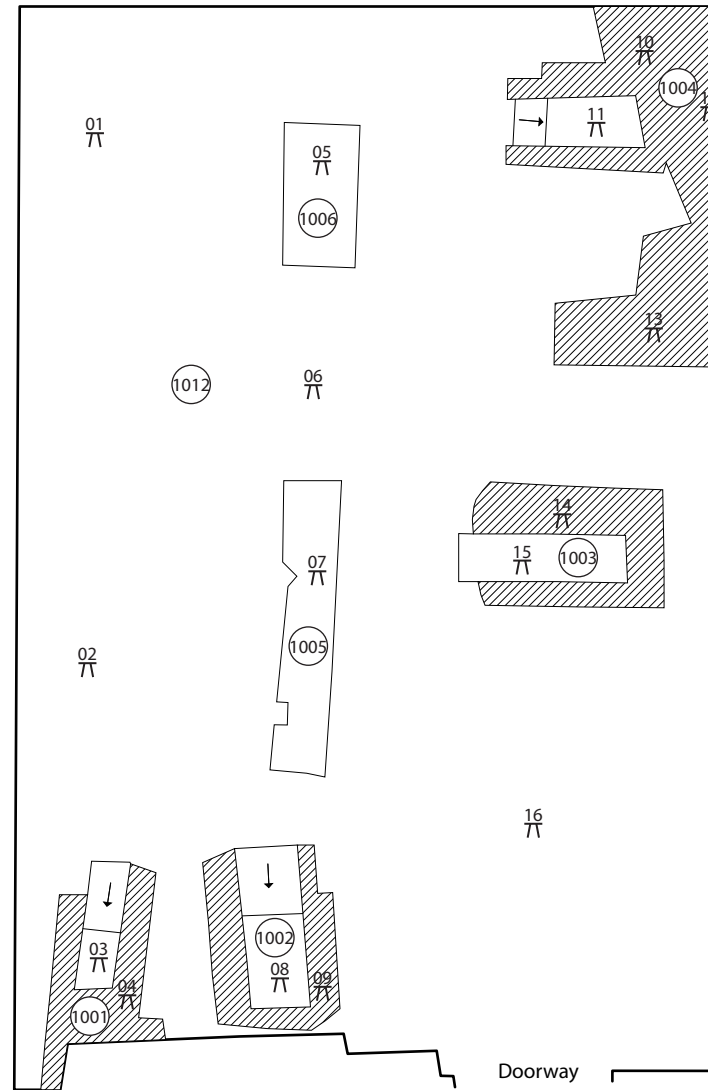
Plate 11: Kitchen showing post-medieval hearth (1004), from the east. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 12: Kitchen showing post-medieval hearth (1004), from the north. Scale 1.0m.

Spot Heights (reduced level generic)

- 1 = 100.02m
- 2 = 100.03m
- 3 = 99.98m
- 4 = 100.03m
- 5 = 100.1m
- 6 = 99.99m
- 7 = 100.21m
- 8 = 99.95m
- 9 = 100.29m
- 10 = 100.25m
- 11 = 100.15m
- 12 = 100.03m
- 13 = 100.19m
- 14 = 100.24m
- 15 = 100.13m
- 16 = 100.04m

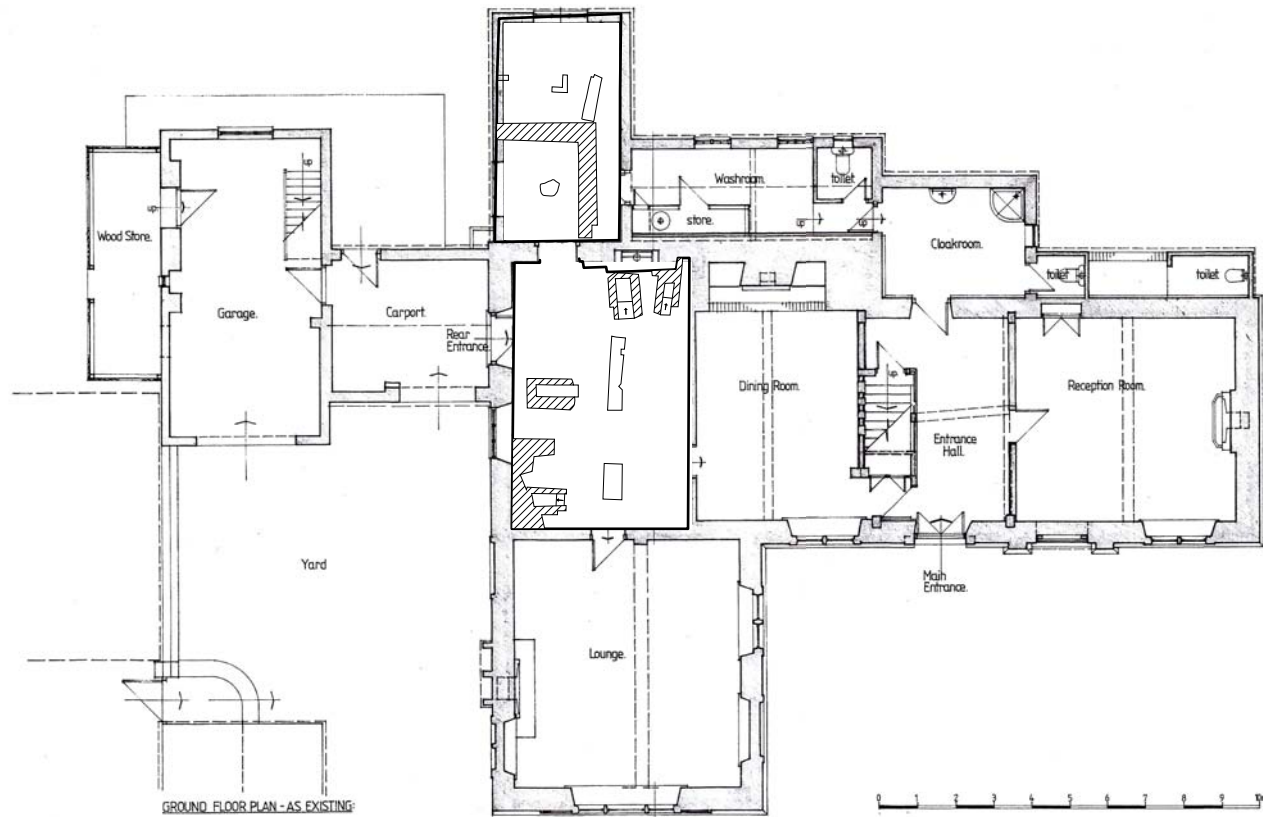


1:50 at A4 



Figure 05: Plan of kitchen. Scale 1:50 at A4 (located on figure 6).

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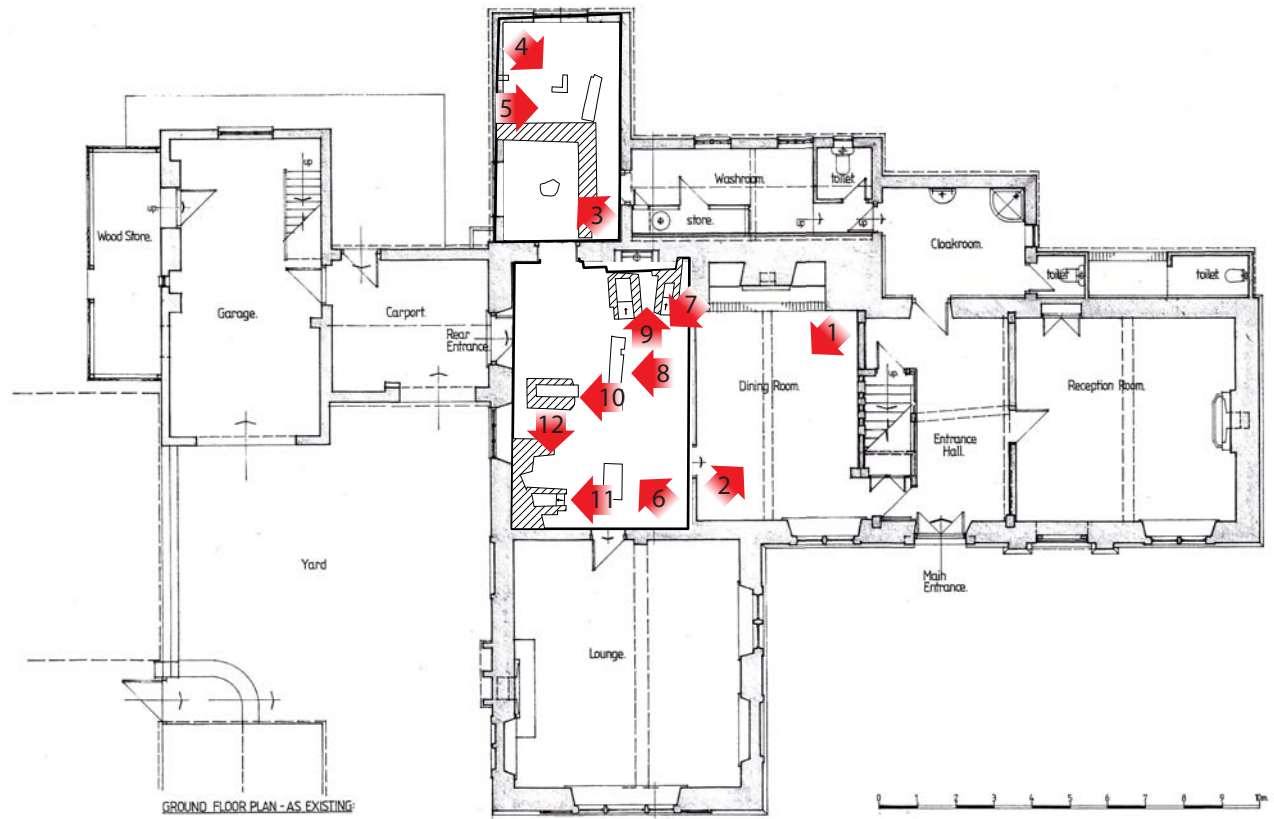


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Figure 06: Location of archaeological features at Halghton Hall. Scale 1:200 at A4.

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GROUND FLOOR PLAN - AS EXISTING

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Figure 07: Location and orientation of photographs at Halghton Hall. Scale 1:200 at A4.



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8.0 CONCLUSION

The archaeological watching brief at Halghton Hall, Bangor-On-Dee uncovered a former tiled floor surface of post-medieval date in the Dining Room as well as post-medieval red-brick and stone foundation remains in the Office/Utility Room.

The works also uncovered a series of four hearths representing low-level industrial smithing or farrying within the Kitchen. These were associated with sandstone blocks, probably utilised as rudimentary anvils or possibly working surfaces, one of which had a notch cut into it showing that it had been reused from an earlier structure, probably having held a wooden post or beam.

9.0 SOURCES

OS Maps

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APPENDIX I – DETAILS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXTS

Context	Description
1001	Rectangular red-brick smithy hearth, NE corner Kitchen, 1.16m L x 0.82m W x 0.26m D
1002	Rectangular red-brick smithy hearth, NE corner Kitchen, 1.19m L x 0.84m W x 0.33m D.
1003	Rectangular red-brick smithy hearth, W edge Kitchen, 0.97m L x 0.74m W x 0.24m D .
1004	Rectangular red-brick smithy hearth, SW corner Kitchen, 1.03m L x 0.74m W x 0.24m D.
1005	Three dressed sandstone blocks in centre of Kitchen forming N-S structure measuring 1.82m L x 0.42m W x 0.18m D. Northernmost block has notch cut into western face showing reuse.
1006	Single rectangular dressed sandstone block measuring 0.88m L x 0.48m W x 0.1m D orientated N-S.
1007	Small square section of wall measuring 0.4m in length by 0.25m in height.
1008	L-shaped wall located in the southern half of the Office/Utility room and lying directly beneath the location of the former partition on its east-west axis, which had separated the Office and the Utility. This wall measured 3.08m in length (north-south) by 2.65m in length (east-west) and 0.46m in width by 0.25m in height
1009	Double-skin wall constructed from unfrogged red-brick bonded by mortar and standing two-courses high. This wall measured 1.2m in length by 0.3m in width by 0.25m in height.
1010	Small L-shaped section of wall measuring 1.0m in length (north to south), 0.8m in length (east to west), 0.3m in width and standing to a height of 0.25m (two courses).
1011	In-fill deposit of mid/dark grey-brown clay-silt with occasional brick and stone inclusions, >0.25m depth.
1012	In-fill deposit of mid/dark grey-brown clay-silt with occasional brick and stone inclusions, >0.25m depth.

**APPENDIX II – WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF**



**Halghton Hall, Whitchurch Road,
Bangor-On-Dee, Wrexham LL13 0BW.
Written Scheme of Investigation
for Archaeological Watching Brief**

aeon archaeology



Archaeological WSI
Project Code: A0076.1

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Planning permission has been secured by Architectural Design Services (ADS) for the installation of a heating system and associated alteration works at the 17th Century grade I Listed Building of Halghton Hall, Whitchurch Road, Bangor-On-Dee (**Planning Permission HAN P/2014/0204, Listed Building Consent HAN P/2014/ 0205 & Listed Building Consent HAN P/2014/0325**) (NGR: 341566 342431) .

The following has been made a condition of full planning permission and Listed Building consent:

Condition 2

No development/ works shall commence has secured the maintenance of an on-site watching brief by a suitably qualified archaeologist during construction works in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In the event of discovery of important archaeological features outside of the scope of the watching brief, all works shall cease until otherwise advised in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

The site contains archaeological remains which it is essential should be protected from damage.

The watching brief will be maintained during intrusive groundworks, as detailed below.

This WSI states the aims, objectives and methodology for implementing the archaeological watching brief so as to meet the spirit and intent of the archaeological condition.

Reference will be made to the guidelines specified in Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014).

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A house of medieval origin, evidence for which is the base cruck or arched-brace truss retained in an internal partition. The present house is said to have been built in 1662, probably by a member of the Hanmer family. It was probably intended to have an H-plan, which would have required building an additional bay on the right side of the main range and another cross wing, to make a symmetrical elevation. Although the present owners have reported evidence of foundations, there is no evidence that this plan was ever completed. The main alteration to the 1662 house was the subsequent insertion of a mezzanine floor and the rebuilding of the stair, using salvaged pieces of the original stair, to accommodate it. This alteration was probably made in the 18th Century as it has vernacular detail.

An engraving dated 1794 shows the building much as it is today, at which time it was owned by Philip Lloyd Fletcher but was already a tenant farm. It subsequently became a part of the Gredington estate of successive Lords Kenyon, until it was sold in the mid 20th Century. Major restoration was carried out in the 1970s.

Listed grade I for its special architectural interest as a substantial 17th Century gentry house retaining high-quality external and internal detail, including substantial evidence of an earlier medieval house.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The watching brief entails a presence on site during:

1. The removal of existing floors & sub-fill to accommodate new floors to the Kitchen, Dining Room, Utility & Farm Office.

The CIfA maintains a standard for archaeological watching brief which states that:

An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of CIfA.

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the CIfA as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (CIfA 2014a). The watching brief will take place within a specified area within the Site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

The CIfA further identifies the purpose of a watching brief as allowing, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.

It is also important to note that a watching brief provides an opportunity, if needed, for a signal to be made to all interested parties, before the destruction of the archaeological materials, 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.

A watching brief is, therefore, not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

The aims of the watching brief are:

- To allow, within the resources available, the opportunity to gain information about and record the presence/absence, nature and date of archaeological remains on the Site affected by excavations and groundworks for the refurbishment, the presence and nature of which could not be established with sufficient confidence in advance of works which may disturb them.
- To provide the facility to signal to the relevant authorities, before irreversible impact to remains that an archaeological and/or historic find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are inadequate to support their treatment to an adequate and satisfactory standard.

The specific objectives of the watching brief are:

- To observe and recover any artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To record the location, dimensions and nature of any deposits, features, structures or artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To recover samples of any deposits considered to have potential for analysis for palaeoenvironmental data should the opportunity arise.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Archaeological Watching Brief

The methodology for the watching brief has been prepared with reference to the CIfA's document Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (2014a) and will be kept under constant review during the project, in order to see how far it is meeting the terms of the aims and objectives, and in order to adopt any new questions which may arise.

Curatorial monitoring of the archaeological work on behalf of the Council will be carried out by an officer(s) of the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT). To facilitate the curatorial monitoring, the officer shall be provided with a minimum of two weeks' notice of the start of the archaeological work.

A suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist(s) from Aeon Archaeology will be commissioned for the maintenance of the watching brief. On arrival on site, the archaeologist(s) will report to the site manager and conform to the arrangements for notification of entering and leaving site. The archaeologist(s) will keep a record of the date, time and duration of all attendances at site, the names and numbers of archaeologists deployed and any actions taken. The archaeologist will be provided with a Health & Safety Induction by the construction contractor and wear a safety helmet, safety footwear and high visibility jacket/vest at all times.

If deposits and or artefacts are exposed during excavations for the development which require recording and recovery, it may be necessary to delay works whilst the proper investigation and recording takes place. Watching brief recording can often be undertaken without delay to groundworks, depending upon the specific circumstances and flexibility of all the staff on site.

Within the constraints of the terms of the watching brief work, the archaeologist will not cause unreasonable disruption to the maintenance of the work schedules of other contractors on site. In the event of archaeological discoveries the treatment of which (either arising from the volume/quantity of material and/or the complexity/importance of the material) is beyond the resources deployed ADS will be notified and a site meeting/telephone consultation arranged with the development control archaeologist from CPAT. The aim of the meeting will be to confirm 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 and identify measures which would be sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard prior to destruction of the material in question.

Any archaeological deposits, features and structures identified which can be investigated and recorded under the terms of the watching brief will be excavated manually in a controlled and stratigraphic manner sufficient to address the aims and objectives of the project – subject to the limitations on site access.

It may not be necessary to excavate the complete stratigraphic sequence to geologically lain deposits but the inter-relationships between archaeological deposits, features and structures will be investigated sufficient to address the aims and objectives of the project and the complete stratigraphic sequence to geologically lain deposits will be investigated where practicable.

The method of recording will follow the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation and the stratigraphy will be recorded in written descriptions even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. The archaeologist will record archaeological deposits using proformae recording forms and locate them on a large-scale site plan related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum references.

The drawn record will comprise plans at scale 1:20 and sections at scale 1:10; proprietary electronic hardware and software to prepare site drawings may be used as appropriate.

A photographic record will be maintained throughout, using a digital SLR camera (Canon 550D) set to maximum resolution and any subsurface remains will be recorded photographically, with detailed notations and measured drawings being undertaken if required.

The archive produced will be held at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0076.1**.

4.2 Watching brief report

A report on the results of the watching brief, in accordance with the recommendations in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006), and in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (2014) will be required to be produced upon conclusion of the archaeological fieldwork. The report will be completed within a maximum of two months of completion of work on site and may include examination and quantification leading to the identification of function, form, date, method of manufacture, material/fabric type, source, parallels, attributes and condition of artefacts; of the exploitation of wild or domesticated resources; the reconstruction of environments; and the nature of human populations.

Full analysis of the results of the project, including: dating and interpretation of excavated features; pottery and other finds analysis; analysis of industrial residues by an appropriate specialist or specialists; analysis of samples for environmental data (including pollen, plant macrofossils and beetles) by an appropriate specialist or specialists; radiocarbon dating; discussion of the results in their local, regional and national context, including relating the excavated features and palaeoenvironmental data to evidence from nearby sites, and discussion of the results in their local, regional and national context may be required.

4.3 Archive

A full archive including plans, photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project will be prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions will be labelled and cross-referenced, and lodged in an appropriate place (to be decided in consultation with the regional Historic Environment Record) within six months of the completion of the project. The report will also be lodged with the online OASIS database and the RCAHMW.

5.0 FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

The identification of significant archaeological features during the watching brief stage may necessitate further archaeological works. This will require the submission of new cost estimates to the contractor and may be subject to a separate WSI, to be agreed with CPAT prior to implementation.

This WSI does not include a methodology or cost for examination of, conservation of, or archiving of finds discovered during the watching brief, nor of any radiocarbon dates required, nor of examination of palaeoenvironmental samples associated with any peat deposits. The need for these will be identified in the post-fieldwork programme (if required), and a new WSI will be issued for approval by CPAT prior to implementation.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

If necessary, relevant archaeological deposits will be sampled by taking bulk samples (a minimum of 10.0 litres and maximum of 30.0 litres) for flotation of charred plant remains. Bulk samples will be taken from waterlogged deposits for macroscopic plant remains. Other bulk samples, for example from middens, may be taken for small animal bones and small artefacts.

Bulk environmental samples will also be taken from any fills, deposits or structures which yield archaeological artefacts, charcoal flecks/ fragments, bone, or any other historic remains.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs will be obtained from Oxford Archaeology.

For guidance purposes the following volume criteria represent the minimum feature sampling requirements:

- 50% of each discrete feature (e.g. pits and postholes)
- 25% of the exposed areas of each liner feature and all terminals/intersections
- 50% of structural features (e.g. beamslots, ring-ditches)
- 50%-100% of domestic/industrial working features (e.g. hearths and ovens)

7.0 HUMAN REMAINS

Any finds of human remains will be left *in-situ*, covered and protected, and both the coroner and the CPAT planning archaeologist. If removal is necessary it will take place under appropriate regulations and with due regard for health and safety issues. In order to excavate human remains, a licence is required under Section 25 of the Burials Act 1857 for the removal of any body or remains of any body from any place of burial. This will be applied for should human remains need to be investigated or moved.

8.0 SMALL FINDS

The vast majority of finds recovered from archaeological excavations comprise pottery fragments, bone, environmental and charcoal samples, and non-valuable metal items such as nails. Often many of these finds become unstable (i.e. they begin to disintegrate) when removed from the ground. All finds are the property of the landowner; however, it is recommended that all finds are donated to an appropriate museum where they can receive specialist treatment and study. Access to finds must be granted to Aeon Archaeology for a reasonable period to allow for analysis and for study and publication as necessary. All finds would be treated according to advice provided within *First Aid for Finds* (Rescue 1999). Aeon Archaeology staff will undertake initial identification, but any additional advice would be sought from a wide range of consultants.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds will be kept under review throughout the fieldwork phase. Any changes in recovery priorities will be under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with CPAT. There will be a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds with the exception of unstratified items dating to the twentieth or twenty-first centuries AD which will be recorded by material, type, form, identification and weight, and discarded.

All finds will be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. Their location will be recorded; finds numbers attributed, bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification

taking place on site. Where specialist advice is required provision will be made to do so at the earliest possible convenience.

After processing, artefacts which are suitable will be cleaned and conserved in-house. Artefacts requiring specialist cleaning and conservation will be sent to the relevant specialist. All finds will then be sent to a specialist for analysis, the results of which will then be assessed to ascertain the potential of the finds assemblage to meet the research aims of the project. The value of the finds will also be assessed in terms of the wider educational and academic contributions.

9.0 UNEXPECTED DISCOVERIES: TREASURE TROVE

Treasure Trove law has been amended by the Treasure Act 1996. The following are Treasure under the Act:

- *Objects other than coins* any object other than a coin provided that it contains at least 10% gold or silver and is at least 300 years old when found.
- *Coins* all coins from the same find provided they are at least 300 years old when found (if the coins contain less than 10% gold or silver there must be at least 10). Any object or coin is part of the same find as another object or coin, if it is found in the same place as, or had previously been left together with, the other object. Finds may have become scattered since they were originally deposited in the ground. Single coin finds of gold or silver are not classed as treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act.
- *Associated objects* any object whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or that had previously been together with, another object that is treasure.
- *Objects that would have been treasure trove* any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. These objects have to be made substantially of gold or silver, they have to be buried with the intention of recovery and their owner or his heirs cannot be traced.

The following types of finds are not treasure:

- Objects whose owners can be traced.
- Unworked natural objects, including human and animal remains, even if they are found in association with treasure.
- Objects from the foreshore which are not wreck.

All finds of treasure must be reported to the coroner for the district within fourteen days of discovery or identification of the items. Items declared Treasure Trove become the property of the Crown.

The British Museum will decide whether they or any other museum may wish to acquire the object. If no museum wishes to acquire the object, then the Secretary of State will be able to disclaim it. When this happens, the coroner will notify the occupier and landowner that he intends to return the object to the finder after 28 days unless he receives no objection. If the coroner receives an objection, the find will be retained until the dispute has been settled.

10.0 STAFF & TIMETABLE

10.1 Staff

The work will be managed and undertaken by Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA, Archaeological Contractor and Consultant at Aeon Archaeology.

10.2 Timetable

The evaluation work can currently be undertaken from February 2016, although the client is encouraged to give as much notice as possible to Aeon Archaeology as project commitments are currently high.

11.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Aeon Archaeology has a Health and Safety Policy Statement which can be supplied upon request. Furthermore, site-specific Risk Assessments and Method Statements are compiled and distributed to every member of staff involved with the project prior to the commencement of works.

12.0 INSURANCE

Liability Insurance – Insignia Underwriting Policy 347002

- Employers' Liability: Limit of Indemnity £10m in any one occurrence
- Public Liability: Limit of Indemnity £2m in any one occurrence
- Legal Defence Costs (Health and Safety at Work Act): £250,000

The current period expires 07/09/16

Professional Indemnity Insurance – Insignia Underwriting Policy 347002

- Limit of Indemnity £500,000 any one claim

The current period expires 07/09/16

13.0 GENERAL

All project staff will adhere to the *Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists*.

The project will follow the requirements set down in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* prepared by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

A Method Statement and Risk Assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork and circulated to all staff concerned.

Please note the following:

Aeon Archaeology will not be held responsible for any delays to the work programme resulting from the discovery of archaeological sites or finds.

The cost quoted does not include examination of, conservation of or archiving of finds discovered during the archaeological programme, nor of any radiocarbon dates required, nor of examination of palaeoenvironmental samples.

SPECIALISTS

Specialist advice required will be sought from the following list if required:

- Bone: Nora Bermingham
- Glass: Hilary Cool, Barbican Research Associates.
- Metal artefacts: Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services, Cardiff.
- Slag, burnt clay, hammerscale: Dr. Tim Young, Geoarch, Cardiff.
- Stone artefacts: Oxford Archaeology
- Wood artefacts: Jane Foley, Foley Conservation, Builth Wells.
- Leather: Quita Mould, Barbican Research Associates.
- Waterlogged environmental: Dr Mike Allen, Allen Environmental Archaeology.
- Environmental samples: Oxford Archaeology
- Numismatics: Peter Guest, Barbican Research Associates.
- Pottery (all periods): Oxford Archaeology
- Clay pipe: Oxford Archaeology

Depending upon the material of the remains the following experts will be consulted regarding the conservation of waterlogged material:

- Organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)
- Non-organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)

