Archaeology Wales

# Garage Cottage, Caerwent, Monmouthshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief



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Report No: 1472

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## Non Technical Summary

This report results from work undertaken by Archaeology Wales Ltd for Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd on repairs to a main sewer at Garage Cottage, Caerwent, Monmouthshire NGR ST 47068 90493 (Fig 1-2). The report details the results of an archaeological watching brief, recommended as suitable mitigation for the required groundworks to locate and then repair the broken section of pipe of the mains sewer.

The site lies within the village of Caerwent, a large part of which is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument as it lies within the Roman town of Venta Silurum (Cadw MM001). The location of the sewer repair lies within the unscheduled part of the village, some 14m north of the east-west aligned Newnham to Caerleon Roman Road (RR60a) that divides the town. The excavated area lies approximately 12m to the south of the scheduled boundary.

The ground works were confined to a small trench measuring approximately 0.8m by 0.6m which was located on the line of the pipe trench and the broken sewer main. The disturbance of groundworks was minimal and confined to within the backfill of the mains sewer trench itself. The pipe trench backfill (001) had only the remains of the ceramic sewer pipe and other modern plastic artefacts. The depth of the groundworks proceeded to approximately 0.5m below the current ground level and stayed within the backfill (001) of the trench that contained the broken sewer main.

The site was devoid of any archaeological features or finds.

All work was carried out to the professional standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

# 1. Introduction

#### Location and scope of work

In January 2016 Archaeology Wales Ltd (Henceforth - AW) was commissioned by Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief on a mains sewer repair trench on land behind Garage Cottage, Caerwent, Monmouthshire, OS grid reference: ST 47068 90493 (Fig 1). This work relates to a break in the mains sewer pipe to the rear of Garage Cottage. A watching brief was recommended as suitable mitigation.

An approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Henceforth - WSI) was produced by AW in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CIFA 2015) and was designed to provide an approved methodology of archaeological work to be implemented during the construction works. Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Curatorial Division (Henceforth - GGAT-CD), acting as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, subsequently approved the WSI. The AW Project Number is 1472.

The watching brief commenced on the 25th of January 2016 supervised by Louis Stafford (AW).

#### Geology and topography

The site lies at 26m above sea level on flat relatively open pasture land. It is located in the centre of Caerwent where settlement is minimal and confined along the main east/west road. A short row of residential housing fronting onto the main road is located to the southeast of site. The A48 is located 200m to the north. Chepstow lies 5 miles to the east and Newport lies 10 miles to the west. The Severn River lies 3 miles to the south-east of site.

The regional geology as mapped by the British Geological Survey (1:50,000 scale) indicates that the bedrock geology is composed of the Mercia Mudstone Group - Triassic Sedimentary Bedrock (*circa* 200-251 million years ago). This deposit extends over 100m beyond the site in all directions. The superficial geology comprises river terrace deposits of sand and gravel dating to the quaternary period (British Geological Survey 2018).

#### Archaeological and Historical Background

The site lies within the walls of the Roman town of Venta Silurum (Caerwent). The town is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (MM001). Venta Silurum was established during the late 2nd century with rebuilding of the towns defences (03088g and 03089g) undertaken in the late 3rd century and during the 4th century (GGAT 2003). The Roman town lies on the main road leading from Gloucester to Caerleon (RR60a).

The first excavations at Caerwent were undertaken by the antiquarian Octavius Morgan in 1855. Since then various excavations by the Clifton Antiquarian Club of Bristol in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the National Museum of Wales and Cadw in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have revealed almost two thirds of the Roman town. The excavations provided the chronology of the defences as well as revealing the remains of the forum (03097g), basilica (03096g), temple (03098g), shops and dwellings. No structures of military character were revealed under the later town and so an origin in commerce and small market trade is more likely. A large quantity of later military paraphernalia and coinage suggests a military presence during the very end of the 4th century (Brewer 2010).

#### 2. Methodology

A watching brief complying with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2015) was undertaken during all intrusive ground work on the site.

The watching brief was undertaken to allow the preservation by record of any archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be determined in advance of works. The watching brief also provides an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard (CIFA, 2015).

The excavation was carried by removing the modern concrete with a 360<sup>o</sup> tracked excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. Once the concrete had been removed excavation

continued by hand to locate the broken segment of sewer main. The entire process was monitored by a suitably trained archaeologist.

Sections and plans of the excavation were photographed using a 18MP digital camera. All sections and plans were drawn at 1:10 scale. The section lines were related back to an Ordnance Survey datum.

All the deposits were described in the field on pro-forma context sheets. All features or deposits are described in accordance with CIfA conventions. Drawings were produced on draught film. A register of all contexts, drawings and photographs was also made.

#### 3. Watching Brief Results (Figures 3 and 4; Plates 1–3)

The groundworks were confined to a 0.8m by 0.6m trench which was located over the predetermined break in the mains sewer. The trench located the break in the western end of the trench and was excavated just below the pipe itself. The excavation continued to just below the broken sewer pipe, at a depth of 0.5m below the current ground level. It did not extend beyond the backfill of the original pipe trench (001).

The sewer main was backfilled with a friable dark greyish black silty clay (001) exposed at an approximate depth of 0.2-0.25m below the current ground level. (001) continued beyond the maximum depth of excavation 0.5m below the current ground level. The broken sewer main was the only notable feature and all finds excavated from the trench fill were of modern plastics.

Overlying the pipe trench (001) was a modern aggregate (002) approximately 0.15m in depth. This was the base for concrete slab (003), 0.1-0.15m in depth, which formed the current ground surface to the rear of Garage Cottages.

#### 4. Conclusion

The trench location precisely targeted the broken segment of sewer main, meaning that the groundworks required were minimal. The backfill of the pipe trench (001) that the sewer main was located within was the earliest deposit encountered. The excavation only disturbed this backfill and did not locate the edge of the cut for the sewer main.

The only finds encountered were the modern 4-inch ceramic sewer main and a few modern plastics within the backfill. The excavated fill of the pipe trench was checked to see if earlier finds of Post Medieval, Medieval or Roman date had been re-deposited within it. No earlier finds or features appeared to have been disturbed in this location when the pipe trench was initially cut.

# 5. Bibliography

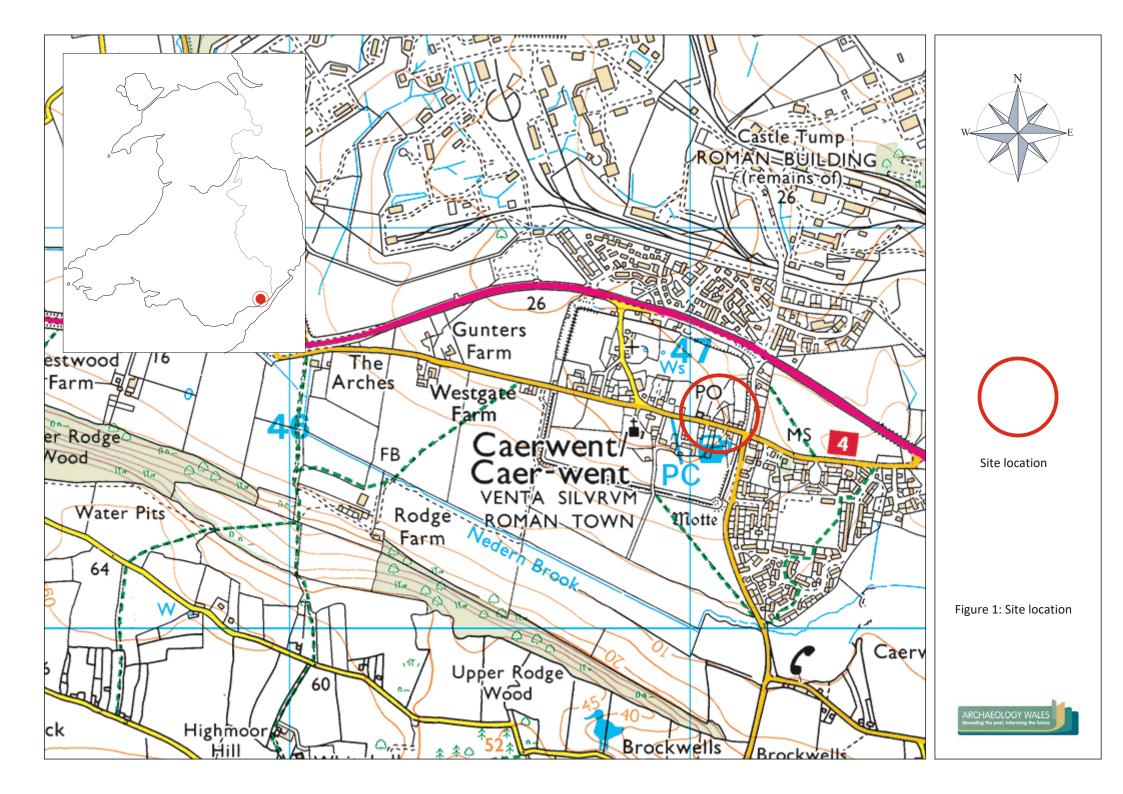
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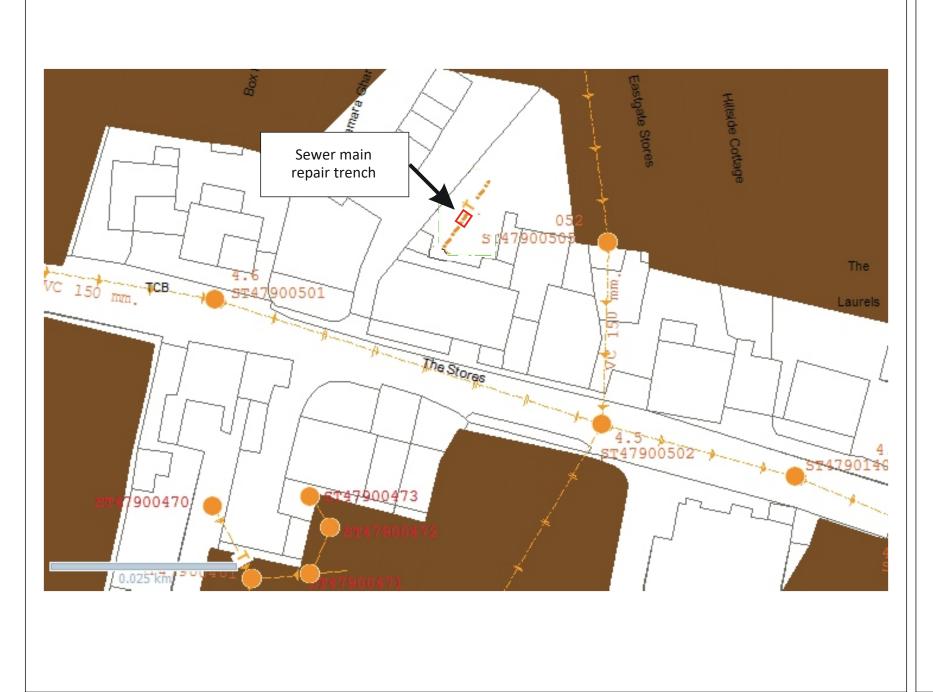
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Wessex Archaeology. (2009) *Caerwent Roman Town, Monmouthshire, South Wales. Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results.* Salisbury: Wessex Archaeology.





W E

Figure 2: Trench location and limits of Scheduled Ancient Monument (brown)



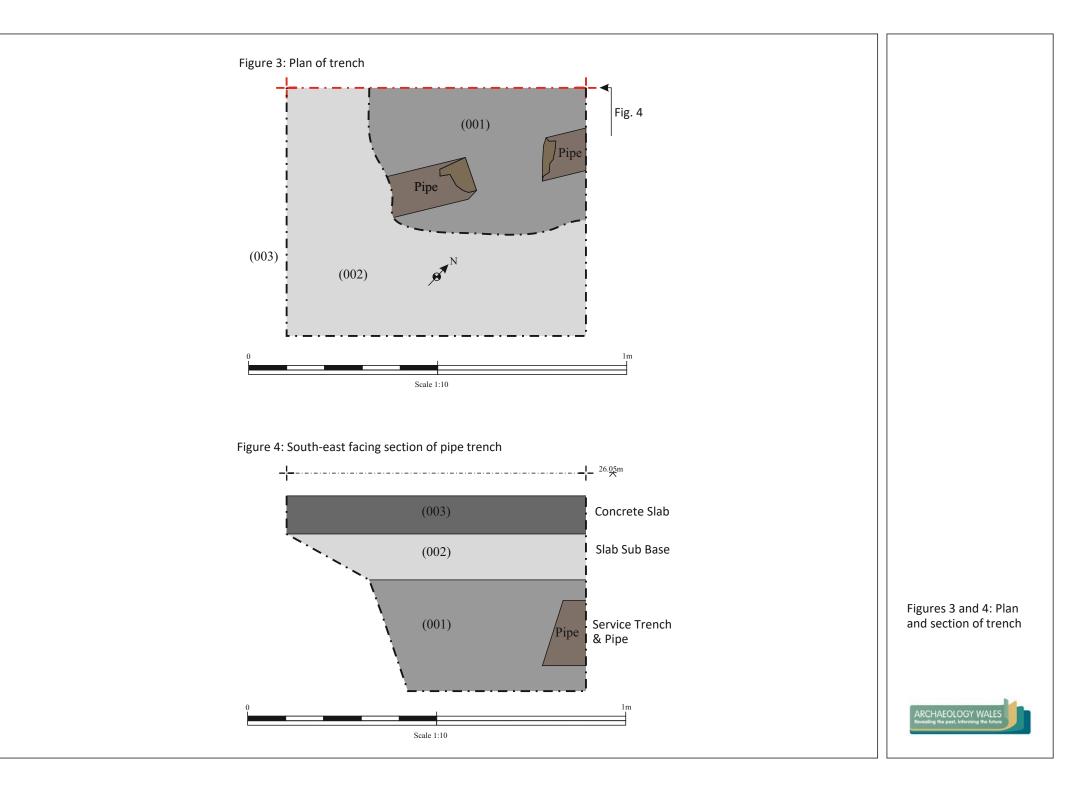




Plate 1: View north-west, showing trench and break in service pipe



Plate 2: View north-west, showing the south-east facing section



Plate 3: View north-east, showing the south-west facing section

# Appendix I: Context Register

Context	Description	Relationship
number		
001	Friable dark greyish black silty clay. Exceeds 0.25m in depth.	Overlain by (002).
002	Aggregate – compact light brownish yellow silt with	Overlies (001),
	frequent small angular limestone	overlain by (003).
003	Concrete Slab	Overlies (002).

**Appendix II: Written Scheme of Investigation** 

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## SPECIFICATION FOR AN

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

AT

# Garage Cottage, Caerwent Monmouthshire

Prepared for:

Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd

January 2016

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# Summary

This Specification details the methodology for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the ground works associated the repair of a mains sewer at Garage Cottage, Caerwent NGR ST 47068 90493.

The objective of the watching brief is to safeguard the potential archaeological resource through observation and recording during the course of the intrusive ground works associated with the scheme. The site lies within the village of Caerwent which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument as it is the Roman town of Venta Silurum. The location of the sewer repair lies within the unscheduled part of the town, some 14m north of the east-west aligned road that divides the town. The northern end of the required excavation lies closest to the scheduled area, being only approximately 12m to the south of the scheduled boundary.

This Specification document has been prepared by Rowena Hart (Project Manager) of Archaeology Wales Limited for Alun Griffiths (Contrators) Ltd.

All work will be undertaken to the standards and guidance set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

# **Specification**

# 1. Planning background

This Specification details the methodology for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the ground works associated with the repairs to the main sewer at Garage Cottage, Caerwent centred on NGR ST 47068 90493 (Figure 1). GGAT – Curatorial Division provided advice to Dwr Cymru Welsh Water stating that the ground work associated with the scheme should be subject to an archaeological watching brief. This advice goes on to state that the repair site is located in the wellpreserved scheduled Roman town of Caerwent (MM001) and falls within the Monmouth Archaeologically Sensitive Area and Caerwent Conservation Area. The repair area also falls approximately 14m to the north of the line of the Gloucester to Caerleon Roman road (RR60a) and a Roman altar stone was found some 25m to the north-east of the site.

The location of the sewer repair lies within the unscheduled part of the town, some 14m north of the east-west aligned road that divides the town. The northern end of the required excavation lies closest to the scheduled area, being only approximately 12m to the south of the scheduled boundary (Figure 1).

All work will be undertaken to the standards and guidance set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

# 2. Archaeological background

The repair site lies within the walls of the Roman town of Venta Silurum (Caerwent). The town is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (MM001). The town was established

during the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century with re-builds of the towns defences (03088g and 03089g) undertaken in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century and during the 4<sup>th</sup> century (GGAT 2003). The Roman town lies on the main road leading from Gloucester to Caerleon (RR60a). Excavations undertaken during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were extensive and revealed almost two thirds of the town. The excavations provided the chronology of the defences as well as revealing the remains of the forum (03097g), basilica (03096g), temple (03098g), shops and dwellings. No structures of military character were revealed under the later town and so an origin in commerce and small market trade is more likely. A large quantity of later military paraphernalia and coinage suggests a military presence during the very end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Brewer 2010).

# 3. Specification objectives

This specification document sets out a program of works to ensure that the archaeological watching brief will meet the standard required by *The Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's Standard and Guidance For Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

The objective of the watching brief is to safeguard the potential archaeological resource through observation and recording during the course of the intrusive ground works associated with the ground investigation scheme.

A written report will be compiled following the fieldwork and an archive of all collected data will be produced and deposited with an appropriate receiving institution.

# 4. Timetable of works

#### 4.1. Fieldwork

The fieldwork will be undertaken at the convenience of the client and to coincide with the main site contractor's programme. The work is proposed to start on 25/01/2016. Archaeology Wales will update Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust - Curatorial Division (GGAT-CD) with variations to this date.

#### 4.2. Report delivery

The watching brief report will be submitted to Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd and to Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Curatorial Division (advisors to the Local Planning Authority, henceforth GGAT-CD) within three months of the completion of the fieldwork. A copy of the report will also be sent to the regional HER.

# 5. Fieldwork

#### 5.1. Scope of development

An archaeological watching brief will be undertaken during all intrusive ground works. This will include, but not be limited to:

- New excavation
- Excavation of existing sewer pipe trench
- Ground levelling
- Trench widening
- All other ground work

#### 5.2. Methodology and contingency

All intrusive groundwork will be subject to an archaeological watching brief conducted to meet the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2008).

The site archaeologist undertaking the watching brief must be afforded the required access by the main contractor in order to observe and where necessary to record any archaeological remains revealed. Groundwork shall not be undertaken without the presence of the site archaeologist. The site archaeologist will record finds and less significant archaeological deposits and features without significant delay to the work program.

Where significant or complex archaeological deposits or features are encountered there will be a requirement for those areas to be fenced off and highlighted to all contractors employed on the site. Machines or contractors shall not enter this area until archaeological recording has been completed. If significant archaeological features are revealed during the work a meeting between the client, their agent, main contractor, GGAT-CD and Archaeology Wales should be called at the earliest convenience.

To comply with professional guidelines, a contingency for a maximum of three days' uninterrupted access to each such area and for a team of up to two further archaeologists to be employed should be provided. Contingency costs will be agreed in advance before any extension to the programme commences and will follow a site meeting between Archaeology Wales, the client (of their agent) and GGAT Curatorial Division.

#### 5.3. Recording

Archaeological recording will be undertaken to best current professional practice. Archaeological deposits, features and structures will be recorded by means of a continuous context numbering system. Where necessary site drawings will be made at a suitable scale usually 1:20 in plan, and 1:10 in section. All significant contexts will be photographed in digital at a minimum of 12mp.

#### 5.4. Finds

The professional standards set in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and

research of archaeological materials (2001) will form the basis of finds collection, processing and recording.

All manner of finds regardless of category and date will be retained.

Finds recovered that are regarded as Treasure under *The Treasure Act 1996* will be reported to HM Coroner for the local area.

#### 5.5. Environmental sampling strategy

Deposits with a significant potential for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental material will be sampled, by means of the most appropriate method (bulk, column etc). Where sampling will provide a significant contribution to the understanding of the site AW will draw up a site-specific sampling strategy alongside a specialist environmental archaeologist. All environmental sampling and recording and will follow English Heritage's *Guidelines for Environmental Archaeology* (2002).

#### 5.6. Human remains

In the event that human remains are encountered, their nature and extent will be established and the coroner informed. All human remains will be left *in situ* and protected during backfilling. Where preservation *in situ* is not possible the human remains will be fully recorded and removed under conditions that comply with all current legislation and include acquisition of licenses and provision for reburial following all analytical work. Human remains will be excavated in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's *Excavation and Post-Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains: Technical Paper Number 13* (1993).

A meeting with GGAT Curatorial, the client (or their agent) and AW will be called if the human remains uncovered are of such complexity or significance that the contingency arrangement (3.1 above) would not be of sufficient scope.

#### 5.7. Specialist advisers

In the event of certain finds, features or sites being discovered, AW will seek specialist opinion and advice. A list of specialists is given in the table below although this list is not exhaustive.

Artefact type	Specialist
Flint	Kate Pitt (Archaeology Wales)
Animal bone	Richard Madgwick (Cardiff University)
CBM, heat affected clay, Daub etc.	Rachael Hall (APS)
Clay pipe	Hilary Major (Freelance)

Glass	Rowena Hart (Archaeology Wales)
Cremated and non- cremated human bone	Malin Holst (University of York)/Richard Madgwick (Cardiff University)
Metalwork	Kevin Leahy (University of Leicester)/ Quita Mold (Freelance)
Metal work and metallurgical residues	Dr Tim Young (GeoArch)
Neo/BA pottery	Dr Alex Gibson (Bradford University)
IA/Roman pottery	Jane Timby (Freelance)
Roman Pottery	Rowena Hart (Archaeology Wales)/ Peter Webster (Freelance)
Post Roman pottery	Stephen Clarke (Monmouthshire Archaeology)
Charcoal (wood ID)	John Carrot (Freelance)
Waterlogged wood	Nigel Nayling (University of Wales – Lampeter)
Molluscs and pollen	Dr James Rackham
Charred and waterlogged plant remains	Wendy Carruthers (Freelance)

#### 5.7.1. Specialist reports

Specialist finds and palaeoenvironmental reports will be written by AW specialists, or sub-contracted to external specialists when required.

# 6. Monitoring

AW will make its fieldwork available for monitoring by the client (and their appointed agents) and the Local Planning Authority. In both instances advance notice should be given. All site attendants should follow Health and Safety requirements. If site visit reports are made AW would be grateful to receive copies.

# 7. Post-fieldwork programme

#### 7.1. Archive assessment

#### 7.1.1. Site archive

An archive of archaeological site records will be prepared in accordance with *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991) Appendix 3.

The site archive (including artefacts and samples) will be deposited with an appropriate receiving organisation, in compliance with the ICON and IFA Guidelines (*Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (2007*). The legal landowners consent will be gained for deposition of finds. Copies of the report and archive index will be deposited with the *National Monuments Record*, RCAHMW, Aberystwyth and the *Regional HER*.

In addition, an archive of records made during the post-fieldwork phase will be prepared to the specifications in *Management of Archaeological Projects*, (English Heritage, 1991) Appendix 6.

#### 7.1.2. Analysis

Following a rapid review of the potential of the site archive, a programme of analysis and reporting will be undertaken. This will result in the following inclusions in the final report:

- Non-technical summary
- Location plan showing the area/s covered by the watching brief, all artefacts, structures and features found
- Plan and section drawings (if features are encountered) with ground level, ordnance datum and vertical and horizontal scales.
- Written description and interpretation of all deposits identified, including their character, function, potential dating and relationship to adjacent features. Specialist descriptions and illustrations of all artefacts and soil samples will be included as appropriate.
- An indication of the potential of archaeological deposits which have not been disturbed by the development
- A statement of the local, regional and national context of the remains
- A detailed archive list at the rear listing all contexts recorded, all samples finds and find types, drawings and photographs taken. This will include a statement of the intent to deposit, and location of deposition, of the archive.

#### 7.2. Reports and archive deposition

#### 7.2.1. Report to client

A report, comprising a synthesis of data gathered, will be submitted upon completion of the watching brief, together with inclusion of supporting evidence in appendices as appropriate, together with photographs and illustrations.

#### 7.2.2. Additional reports

After an appropriate period has elapsed, copies of the report will be deposited with the relevant county Historical Environment Record, the National Monuments Record and, if appropriate, Cadw, English Heritage or Historic Scotland.

#### 7.2.3. Summary reports for publication

Short archaeological reports will be submitted for publication in relevant journals; as a minimum, a report will be submitted to the annual publication of the regional CBA group or equivalent journal.

#### 7.2.4. Notification of important remains

Where it is considered that remains have been revealed that may satisfy the criteria for statutory protection, AW will submit preliminary notification of the remains to the relevant national archaeological agency (Cadw, English Heritage or Historic Scotland).

#### 7.2.5. Archive deposition

The research archive will, whenever appropriate, be deposited with a suitable receiving institution, usually the relevant Local Authority museums service. The site archive will be deposited with an appropriate institution.

#### 7.2.6. Finds deposition

The finds, including artefacts and ecofacts, excepting those which may be subject to the Treasure Act, will be deposited with the same institution, subject to the agreement of the legal land owners.

A copy of the archive index will be deposited with the National Monuments Record, RCAHMW, Aberystwyth.

# 8. Staff

The project will be managed by Rowena Hart (AW Project Manager) and the fieldwork undertaken by Louis Stafford (Archaeology Wales). Any alteration to staffing before or during the work will be brought to the attention of GGAT Curatorial and Alun Griffiths (Construction) Ltd.

# Additional Considerations

#### 9. Health and Safety

#### 9.1. Risk assessment

Prior to the commencement of work AW will carry out and produce a formal Health and Safety Risk Assessment in accordance with *The Management of Health and Safety Regulations* 1992. A copy of the risk assessment will be kept on site and be available for inspection on request. A copy will be sent to the client (or their agent as necessary) for their information. All members of AW staff will adhere to the content of this document.

#### 9.2. Other guidelines

AW will adhere to best practice with regard to Health and Safety in Archaeology as set out in the FAME (Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers) health and safety manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology (2002)*.

## 10. Insurance

AW is fully insured for this type of work, and holds Insurance with Aviva Insurance Ltd and Hiscox Insurance Company Limited through Towergate Insurance. Full details of these and other relevant policies can be supplied on request.

# **11. Quality Control**

#### 11.1. Professional standards

AW works to the standards and guidance provided by the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists*. AW fully recognise and endorse the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology and the Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs currently in force. All employees of AW, whether corporate members of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists or not, are expected to adhere to these Codes and Standards during their employment.

#### 11.2. Project tracking

The designated AW manager will monitor all projects in order to ensure that agreed targets are met without reduction in quality of service.

# 12. Arbitration

Disputes or differences arising in relation to this work shall be referred for a decision in accordance with the Rules of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators' *Arbitration Scheme for the Institute for Archaeologists* applying at the date of the agreement.

# 13. References

- Brewer, R, 2010, *69. Caerwent*. In. Burnham, B. and Davies J. 2010. Roman Frontiers in Wales and the Marches. RCAHMW
- Burnham, B. and Davies J. 2010. Roman Frontiers in Wales and the Marches. RCAHMW

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