

CPAT Report No. 1666




Flint Castle Proposed Visitor Centre, Ground Investigations

Archaeological Watching Brief



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Client name: Donald Insall Associates
 CPAT Project No: 2386
 Project Name: Flint Castle GI
 Grid Reference: SJ 24776 73205
 County/LPA: Flintshire
 Planning Application: N/A
 CPAT Report No: 1666
 HER Enquiry No: N/A
 Event PRN: 140296
 Report status: Final
 Confidential until: 30 June 2020

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11 June 2019	12 June 2019	12 June 2019

Bibliographic reference:

Grant, I., 2019. *Flint Castle Proposed Visitor Centre, Ground Investigations: Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished report. CPAT Report 1666.



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Summary

In June 2019 the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust conducted a watching brief on behalf of Donald Insall Associates during a programme of ground investigations adjacent to Flint Castle on the site of a proposed new visitor centre.

The results demonstrated that the area had been levelled by the deposition of 1.9m to 3.4m of material on top of the naturally occurring estuarine silts. No artefacts were recovered from the samples, although it is possible that archaeologically significant remains are present within the lower estuarine deposits.

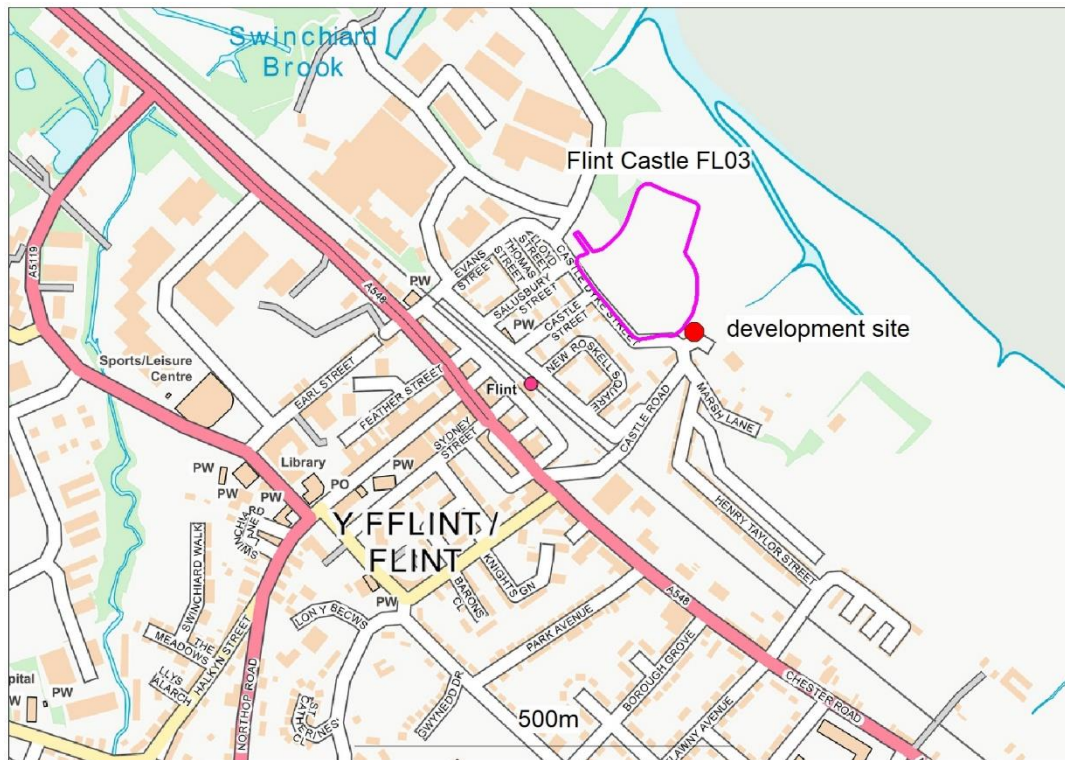
Crynodeb

Ym mis Mehefin 2019, bu Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd-Powys yn cynnal briff gwyllo ar ran Donald Insall Associates yn ystod rhaglen o ymchwiliad tir ger Castell y Fflint ar safle canolfan ymwelwyr newydd arfaethedig.

Roedd y canlyniadau'n dangos bod yr ardal wedi'i gwastatáu trwy ddyddodi 1.9m i 3.4m o ddeunydd ar ben y siltiau aberol a oedd wedi'u ffurfio'n naturiol. Ni ddatgelwyd unrhyw arteffactau o'r samplau, er ei bod yn bosibl bod yna weddillion archaeolegol arwyddocaol o fewn y dyddodion aberol isaf.

1 Introduction

- 1.1. In May 2019 the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was invited by Donald Insall Associates to undertake a watching brief during a programme of ground investigations associated with a proposed for a new visitor centre adjacent to Flint Castle.
- 1.2. The site of the proposed development lies immediately south-east of the scheduled area for Flint Castle (FL03), occupying a carpark adjacent to the lifeboat station (Fig. 1; SJ 24776 73205).



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Fig. 1 Location of the proposed development

- 1.3. The ground investigations were undertaken at the pre-planning stage in order to inform the design of the proposed building. The investigations comprised a number of window samples, to be recorded as part of the watching brief, together with a small number of shell and auger boreholes which it was agreed would not provide an opportunity for archaeological recording. The watching brief was requested by the regional Development Control Archaeologist owing to the potential for the site to contain significance buried archaeological deposits.



Fig. 2 The site of the ground investigations in the area around the lifeboat station

2 Historical Background

- 2.1. Flint Castle was the first of a series of masonry castles built during Edward I's campaign to conquer Wales. Building work began in 1277 and was completed in 1286. The castle comprised an inner ward and an outer bailey separated by a tidal moat, crossed by a drawbridge. The inner ward had three large towers and a detached keep, or donjon. A planned and fortified town, or bastide, was laid out to the south. Both the castle and the town had their own quays
- 2.2. The castle was besieged by Dafydd ap Gruffydd, brother of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd in 1282 and by Madog ap Llywelyn in 1294.

3 Watching Brief

- 3.1. The watching brief was conducted on 4 and 5 June 2019 in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) (2014) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.
- 3.2. The watching brief monitored the results from two boreholes and eight window samples. Window samples WS2 and WS4 were abandoned at 0.7m when brick and rubble was encountered, WS9 was abandoned as a result of water ingress and WS12 was not monitored owing to its proximity to BH1.
- 3.3. The ground investigations were undertaken in and around a surfaced carpark adjacent to the lifeboat station. A significant depth of modern overburden was identified in all of the samples, comprising a sequence of deposits including rubble, clays and sandy silts beneath either the carpark make-up or topsoil. Estuarine deposits were identified beneath the modern overburden, with some samples including traces of organic material.



Fig. 3 Part of window sample WS 6. Photo CPAT

3.4. The results are summarised below.

Table 1 Summary of Ground Investigations

Sample no.	Depth	Base of made ground (below ground level)	Notes
WS1	4.1m	2.9m	
WS2	0.7m		Abandoned
WS3	4.5m	3.1m	Organic material noted in underlying estuarine deposits
WS4	0.7m		Abandoned
WS5	4.5m	3.4m	Charcoal noted in underlying clays
WS6	3.3m	2.4m	Organic material noted in underlying estuarine deposits
WS7	3.3m	2.7m	Estuarine deposits noted
WS8	3.0m	2.2m	
WS9			Not monitored owing to water ingress

WS10	3.2m	2.8m	Organic material noted in underlying estuarine deposits
WS11	3.2m	2.0m	Organic material noted in underlying estuarine deposits
WS12			Not monitored owing to proximity to BH1
BH1	8.4m	3.0m	Organic material noted in underlying estuarine deposits
BH2	>7.5m	2.8m	Organic material noted in underlying estuarine deposits

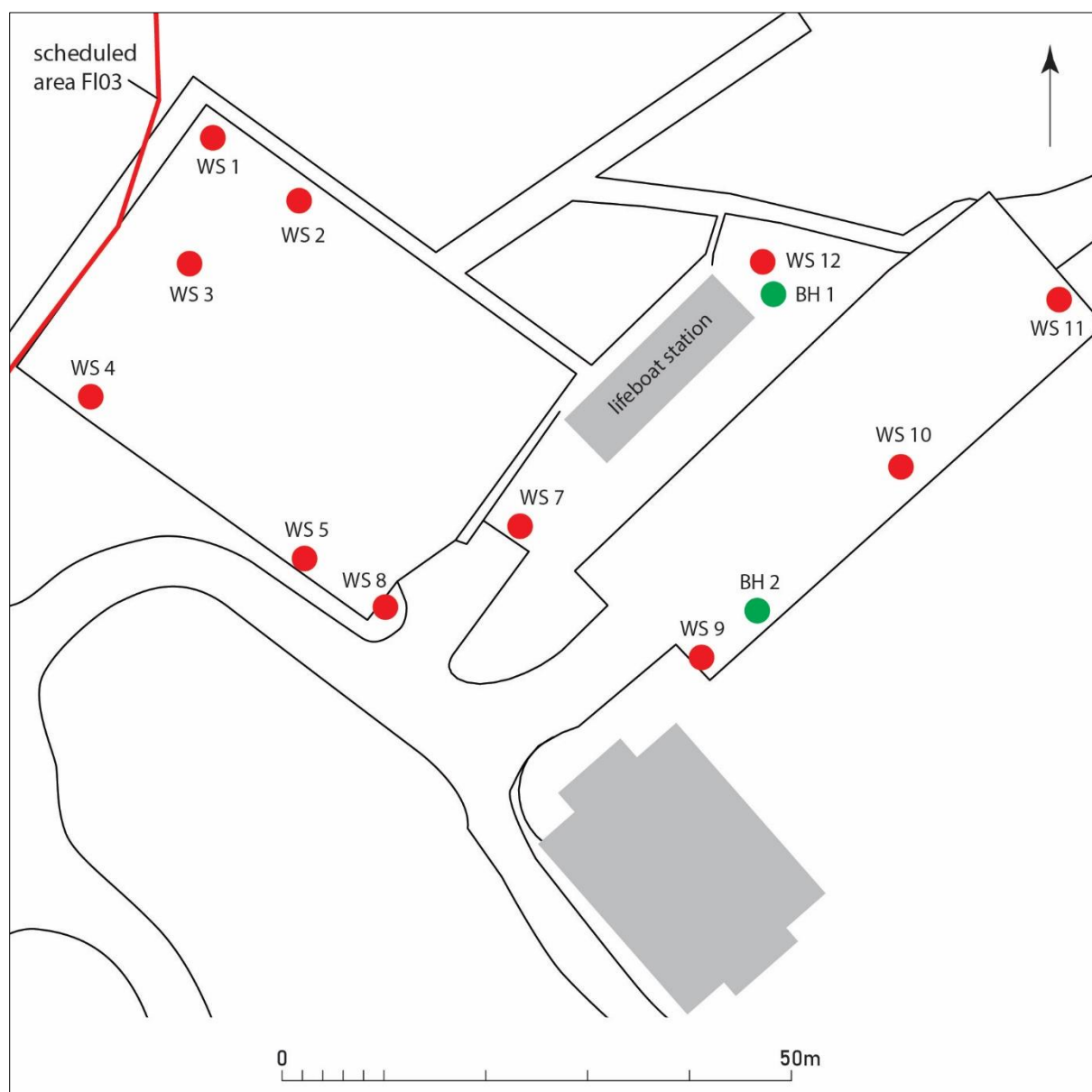


Fig. 2 The location of ground investigations

4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The watching brief monitored a programme of ground investigations adjacent to Flint Castle on the site of a proposed new visitor centre. The results demonstrated that the area had been levelled by the deposition of 1.9m to 3.4m of material on top of the naturally occurring estuarine silts. No artefacts were recovered from the samples, although traces of organic material were noted in the underlying estuarine silts, suggesting that they have the potential contain archaeological and palaeoenvironmental information, although within the study area these lie at some depth.

5 Archive deposition Statement

- 5.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The archive is entirely digital and will be deposited jointly with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the National Monuments Record (RCAHMW).

Archive summary

CPAT Event PRN: 140296

14 digital photographs, CPAT film no 4654

1 watching brief form

12 sample record forms

1 photographic register