

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

**MATHERN PALACE, MATHERN,
CHEPSTOW**

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION
FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS**

August 2010

Specification prepared by
Dyfed Archaeological Trust
for Christopher Thomas Architects



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**MATHERN PALACE, MATHERN, CHEPSTOW
WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION
FOR BUILDING RECORDING**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This specification or written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services in response to a request from Christopher Thomas Architects for a methodology for historic building recording during the implementation of fire safety measures at Mathern Palace.
- 1.2 The WSI provides an indication of how the archaeological works will fit in with the renovation works, defines lines of communication and presents contact details. The WSI highlights the responsibilities of the archaeologists and fire safety work contractors alike, as to how the process of building recording should be undertaken and the obligations of all contractors working on a Grade I Listed Building.
- 1.4 The WSI is in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Building Recording* (Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), 1994, revised 2001). Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services has considerable experience of this type of project and always operates to best professional practice. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field 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.
- 1.5 Dyfed Archaeological Trust is an IfA Registered Archaeological Organisation.
- 1.6 All Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services staff are CSCS¹ registered.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SUMMARY

- 2.1 Mathern Palace is a Grade I listed building, situated in the village of Mathern a mile south-west of Chepstow (map ref. ST 523 909). Bishop John de la Zouche (1408 - 1423) is thought to be responsible for the construction of the original buildings and for 200 years it was the main home of the Bishops of Llandaff. Visitors during the eighteenth century remarked on the poor condition of the Palace since its conversion into a farmhouse. It was partially dismantled between 1769-82. The tithe map of Mathern c.1844 clearly shows the existence of the Palace in the mid nineteenth century. The 1901 Ordnance Survey map also shows the site, which is marked only as 'the remains of the Palace of the Bishops of Llandaff', indicating the ruinous condition of the standing buildings. In the late nineteenth century, it was passed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners then sold in 1889 and again in 1894, to the historian, Mr H. Avary Tipping.
- 2.2 By 1910, Tipping had undertaken extensive refurbishments both externally and internally, but preserving many earlier features. He added new accommodation for offices, etc on the east side of the Palace. After Tipping vacated the property in 1913, it temporarily housed Belgian and Flemish refugees. After the First World War, in 1923, a Colonel and Mrs McNabb purchased the Palace until it was sold in 1957 to Richard, Thomas & Baldwins (formerly British Steel Corporation, now Corus UK Limited).

¹ Construction Skills Certification Scheme (Health and Safety Tested)

- 2.3 By 1997, extensive refurbishment had transformed the interior of the buildings from Tipping's country home to the private residential guesthouse it is today.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND PROPOSED WORKS

- 3.1 A planning application 2010/00459 and Listed Building Consent has been granted, subject to an archaeological condition suggested by the archaeological advisors to the planning authority, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) that

'No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the planning authority. Reason: To identify and record any features of archaeological interest discovered during the works, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource.'

- 3.2 The condition was placed in order to ensure that any existing or exposed fabric affected by the works and with the potential to inform understanding of the history and development of the building is subject to appropriate archaeological recording.
- 3.3 The proposals comprise a range of alterations and additions to the interior and exterior of the building, to improve fire safety. The measures requiring archaeological recording include the provision of fire escapes and the addition of fire retardant materials beneath floors in some parts of the building.
- 3.4 The proposed renovation works will include the lifting of internal floorboards in several rooms to allow fire suppressant materials to be placed in sub-floor voids.
- 3.5 Implementation of the proposed fire safety measures will not include any works requiring the disturbance of any sub-surface archaeological deposits or features.

4 HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The building recording survey would comply with the standards as defined in the English Heritage *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good practice* 2006 publication. The work would also comply with the relevant standards and guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA).

Photographic record

- 4.2 A photographic record of the locations requiring archaeological intervention will be made prior to commencement, during and after implementation of the fire safety works.

Scale drawing record

- 4.3 Some features may require hand measuring and drawing (typically at 1:10 or 1:20 scale) where architectural detail or evidence of construction phasing is apparent or newly exposed.

Written record

- 4.4 Written descriptions of the fabric of the building and features will also be carried out during this process.

- 4.5 The attending archaeologist will need to have the authority to stop site contractors in the event that any exposed significant remains will be damaged, destroyed or covered up by the works, in order that an appropriate record of the said remains can be made.

Analysis of Results and Report Preparation

- 4.6 Following the completion of the on-site renovation works that have the potential to expose or affect the fabric of the building, a stage of analysis of the results and report preparation will be undertaken.
- a) Photographs will be indexed and manipulated into TIFF format.
 - b) Photographs will be located on plans of the building.
 - c) Hand drawings will be collated and digitised where required.
 - d) Final drawings will be produced using Adobe illustrator.
 - e) Written descriptions will be collated.
 - f) A report on the results of the archaeological works will be prepared to include details of the chronology of the fabric of relevant parts of the building (areas of original fabric; areas of repair; descriptions of significant features) and any evidence of the fabric and development of the building revealed by the removal of floorboards. Plans, photographs and illustrations will be included as appropriate.
 - g) All records will be collated into an archive using appropriate systems. The deposition of the archive is yet to be ascertained. It is likely that it will be with the National Monuments Record housed with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monument for Wales in Aberystwyth. If this is so, then the archive will be prepared according to NMR guidelines.

5 SPECIFIC TASKS

- 5.1 The main aims of the historic building recording are:
- to fulfil the archaeological condition placed on the planning permission.
 - to provide a record of the existing fabric of those parts of the building that are affected by the works, and to record any additional features that may be revealed during the work;
 - to produce a project archive and reports on the building recording;

Primary tasks

- 5.2 In view of its Grade 1 Listed Building status, the necessary fire safety measures being undertaken at Mathern Palace have been designed to be minimally visually intrusive and of minimal physical impact to the fabric of the building. As such, and with reference to the Fire Safety Report April 2010, the following specific tasks requiring archaeological recording have been identified:
- DE 9 (and D130). Open former door opening and remove window.
 - DE 8 (and D005). Former doorway (or chapel window?) now blocked to lower part but with modern casement above.
 - The dimensions and any significant detail of existing doors or windows that are to be replaced, will be recorded.

- Windows and doors that will remain but will be repaired or upgraded, will not be recorded (unless this would result in the loss of significant detail).
- The attending archaeologist will be present to observe and record any evidence of historic fabric such as old or re-used timbers, evidence of blocking, repairs or construction details in masonry or graffiti that may be revealed when floorboards are lifted and which may aid understanding of how the building has been developed and altered throughout its history.

Other recording

5.3 Although it is not intended to undertake a comprehensive record of the interior and exterior of the building, and fixtures and fittings that may be affected by the fire safety measures, if the need for recording arises during the works, this can be undertaken on request or as the need is identified.

Project Management

5.4 Liaison and meetings with the client and archaeological curator are likely to be required, although timetabling and quantity of such meetings is not as yet known.

6 PROVISIONAL PHASING OF WORKS PROGRAMME AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

6.1 The fire safety improvements are programmed to take place in two phases. The first phase is intended to bring the building up to a sufficient fire safety standard to allow its use at the end of September in time for the Ryder Cup. The second phase will commence in mid October.

6.2 The following table presents a basic breakdown of the main tasks which have the potential to expose elements of the historic fabric of the building. Any photographs taken, drawn records or other recording will be located with reference to plans of the building provided by the architects.

6.3 The exact methodology and programme of works for inspection and recording of significant archaeological features on a room-by-room basis, will be established through discussion with the works contractors

Phase	Fire Safety Action	Archaeological Recording Task
Phase 1	DE 8 (and D005)	Photographic, drawn and written record
Phase 1	DE 9 (and D130)	Photographic, drawn and written record
Phase 1	Internal door upgrades	Photographic record if required
Phase 1	Addition of fire safety doors	Photographic record if required
Phase 2	Lifting of floorboards to insert fire safety materials	Attendance to record any archaeologically significant features revealed by removal of floorboards.

The work programme will be finalised and undertaken in collaboration with the on-site contractors undertaking the works (Midland Conservation Ltd.) to ensure that wherever possible the needs of both programmes can be accommodated and will not lead to delay or unnecessary on-site archaeological attendance.

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 6.1 A full risk assessment will be prepared if Dyfed Archaeological Trust. All site works and the risk assessment will comply with the Dyfed Archaeological Trust Health and Safety Policy. The risk assessment will be updated and amended as necessary throughout the duration of the works.
- 6.2 During the works it is assumed that there will be site-specific Health and Safety plans put in place by the main contractor, and these will be complied with and followed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services staff, and any necessary inductions attended.
- 6.3 All of the above tasks will be dependant on them being achievable safely. Where there are concerns or issues that pose a risk to site staff then personal safety will take precedence over any archaeological objectives. Where such instances occur, all relevant parties will be notified to see if mitigation measures can be implemented to enable a record to be made.

7 CONTACTS

During the fire safety works all site contractors should be made aware of the Grade 1 Listed status of the building and their obligations and responsibilities because of this.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services should be made aware of the construction programme and any changes thereof. The archaeological works will be factored in to the fire safety works programme.

The archaeological curator and CADW and the RCAHMW may wish to visit the site and monitor the renovation and archaeological works, and they should be afforded access to the site to allow this.

Archaeological contractors Main Contact:

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The archaeological curator for the area is:

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