

# Oystermouth Castle, Swansea

## Archaeological field evaluation

**June 2009**

A report for the City and County of Swansea  
by Andy Sherman BA

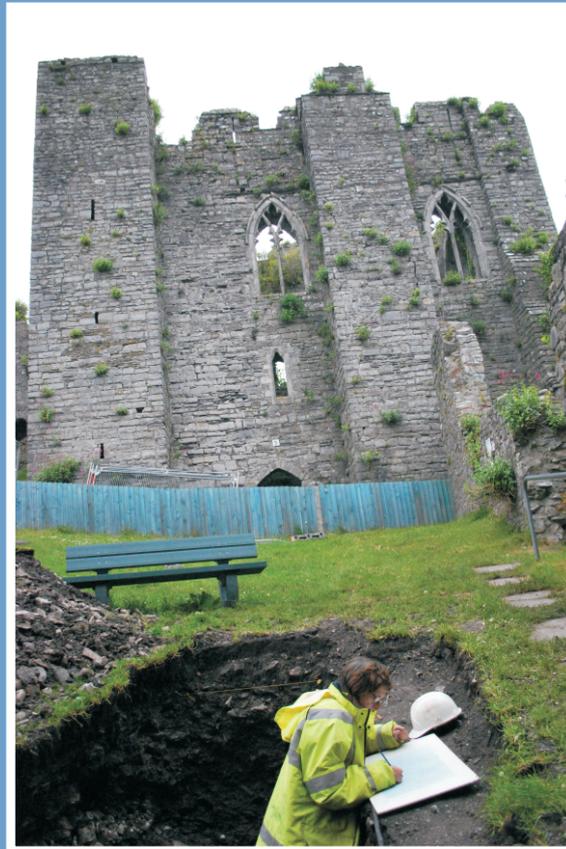
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## Summary

*The City and County of Swansea maintain Oystermouth Castle as a visitor attraction; the castle (PRN 00471w) is both a Scheduled Ancient Monument (GM007) and a Grade I Listed Building (LB1158). The castle, however, is in need of urgent repair and a scheme of works, paid for by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, has been agreed to implement the necessary repairs over a five-year period. This scheme of works also provides for the construction of a visitors centre, with appropriate access, in the basement of the chapel to replace the current temporary structure. Class 7 consent was granted by Cadw for an archaeological excavation to evaluate the nature, depth and extent of the archaeological resource, to inform on the design for a new visitors centre and associated areas.*

*In Trench A the evaluation revealed a well-laid cobbled surface (contexts **1006**, **1007** and **1009**) 0.09m below the current ground surface. The lime mortar that bonded these cobbles together was originally thought to be of medieval date but subsequent analysis proved this deposit dated from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. There is, however, scope for an earlier 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century date. It is suggested that the surface was used as bedding material for a slab or tile floor, because the mortar lacks the usual rigidity and density of lime screeds.*

*In Trench B a loosely compacted deposit of limestone fragments, roof tiles, lime mortar and masonry (**2003**) was identified and would appear to be a deposit of demolition material, which has been used to raise ground levels within the interior of the castle. This deposit has tentatively been dated to the Post-medieval period due to its loosely compacted nature; demolition deposit **2003** directly overlay the natural limestone bedrock (**2004**) and would appear to have totally removed any structural or occupation remains within this area of the castle.*

*In Trench C a rubble deposit (**3004**) contained within a matrix of light brown sandy-clay loam, 0.45m below the current ground surface, was dated to the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. This deposit contained fragments of roughly squared and well-faced blocks of masonry, along with fragments of stone and slate roof tile and probably represents an episode of demolition or repair within this area of the castle.*

## Acknowledgements

Richard Lewis BA MifA (Head of Projects) managed this project and the report was written by Andy Sherman BA (Hons) (Assistant Project Officer). Andy Sherman, Rob Dunning BSc, Rowena Hart BSc, MA, Jane Harris BA, Rachel Bowden BA, Charlotte James BA and John McQueen BA of GGAT Projects conducted the fieldwork.

The finds assemblage was processed by Steve Sell BA; Paul Jones (Senior Illustrator) prepared the illustrations.

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## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Project background and commission**

The City and County of Swansea maintain Oystermouth Castle as a visitor attraction, with visitor services being provided by the Friends of Oystermouth Castle, an extremely passionate volunteer group. The castle (PRN 00471w) is both a Scheduled Ancient Monument (GM007) and a Grade I Listed Building (LB1158). The castle, however, is in need of urgent repair and a scheme of works, paid for by a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant, has been agreed to implement the necessary repairs over a five-year period. This scheme of works also provides for the construction of a visitors centre, with appropriate access, in the basement of the chapel to replace the current temporary structure. Class 7 consent was granted by Cadw for an archaeological excavation to evaluate the nature, depth and extent of the archaeological resource, to inform on the design for a new visitors centre and associated areas.

The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, Projects Division (GGAT Projects) were commissioned by the City and County of Swansea to undertake the required archaeological evaluations and a project design was approved by Cadw. The fieldwork was undertaken between 11<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

### **1.2 Location, geology and topography**

The castle stands at NGR SS 6131 8836 on a ridge of Carboniferous Limestone overlooking Swansea Bay, but separated from the present shoreline by a further ridge of Carboniferous Limestone to the east. The Carboniferous Limestone outcrops in places, where the walls were founded directly upon it, as can be seen for example at the entrance to the central block, a short distance to the west of the chapel (Evans 1994, 5). The approach to the castle is from the south; to the north the ridge is occupied by a depression thought to have been the source of stone for much of the Castle's fabric (Sell, 1997).

The castle is open to the public as an ancient monument; most of the inner bailey is covered in grass, except towards the gate where the grass is replaced by a chipping surface. A similar chipping surface covers the ground surface of the chapel block (Evans 1994, 5).

### 1.3 Historical background

The name Oystermouth is believed to have originated as a direct translation of the Welsh Ystum Llwynarth. A derived form is usually encountered in the medieval records (eg ostrenuwe, 1141; ostremew, 1287; oystremuth, oistremutha, 1319; oystresmouth, 1369; Oystermouth, 1379), though Ystum Llwynarth figures in the *Bruts* in 1215. The medieval llwynarth has been equated with the Welsh llymarch, an oyster (RCAHMW 2000, 245).

To judge by the castle's remains, and its early association with the de Londres family, it is certain that the castle was established soon after the appropriation of Gower by Earl Henry de Beaumont of Warwick around 1107. The first evidence for the connection of the de Londres family with Oystermouth is from 1141, when Maurice de Londres: recorded as Lord of Oystermouth in a subsidiary charter, re-founded the Benedictine priory at Ewenny, first established by his father William (RCAHMW 2000, 245).

The RCAHMW considers it likely that the bailey from this phase of the castle is represented by the embanked outwork set on the lower saddle to the north of the castle, although Davies (2006, 2) thinks that this is more probably a Post-medieval quarry. He suggests that the earthwork castle is more likely to have been a ringwork, given the rocky nature of the site, and that such a ringwork might be represented by the scarp above the courtyard (Evans 2009). It is assumed that the first castle built at Oystermouth was destroyed during the Welsh incursion into Gower in 1136 (RCAHMW 2000, 246).

Oystermouth Castle first appears in the documentary record in 1215, when Maelgwn ap Rhys and Rhys Ieuanc invaded Gower and took all the castles in a swift campaign. The invaders moved against Oystermouth from Swansea, camped around it for a night, and took it the next day, burning it along with the adjacent settlement (RCAHMW 2000, 246).

The last member of the de Londres family, Thomas de Londres, is believed to have died with no heir at around that date, so the castle passed back to the lords of Gower, (the de Braose family), once Gower had been recovered from the Welsh. In 1217, Gower was subjected to a further devastating Welsh campaign led by Rhys Gryg, during which all its castles were destroyed. After the attack of 1215, there is no further record of Oystermouth for many years, but it may be assumed that it remained untenable when Gower passed to John de Braose in 1220. There are no records of works at Oystermouth during his lordship or the minority of his heir, William, who attained his majority in 1241 (RCAHMW 2000, 246).

William de Braose II (1241-90) ruled over Gower during a time when castle-building in Wales proliferated, and there is no doubt that much of the surviving fabric at Oystermouth may be attributed to him (RCAHMW 2000, 246), although it does not contain any characteristic features (Evans pers comm). By 1284, William appears to have regarded the castle as his most impressive residence, because it was at Oystermouth, rather his *caput* at Swansea, that he entertained Edward I on the nights of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December as he passed through Gower towards the end of his tour of Wales (RCAHMW 2000, 246).

In 1287, Oystermouth Castle was again taken and mostly destroyed during the rebellion of Rhys ap Iaredudd, who fired Swansea town before taking and burning Oystermouth, the castle probably was not restored until after the revolt was put down in 1288 (RCAHMW 2000, 247).

In 1302, during the tenure of William de Braose III (1290-1326), William de Langton was coerced at Oystermouth Castle into withdrawing charges against his lord in the king's court, and was subsequently confined there when he sought to revoke this enforced remission. In 1322, Edward II granted Gower to Hugh Despenser, who disposed fourteen citizens of

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Swansea for supporting John Mowbray in the baronial uprising of 1321, and imprisoned them in Swansea and Oystermouth Castles. Despenser immediately obtained a royal license to exchange Gower and its castles with Elizabeth de Burgh for her lordships of Caerleon, Usk and Trelech, and instructed his sheriff to plunder Gower's castles and manors before delivering them to her (RCAHMW 2000, 247).

Alina de Braose (1327-31) daughter of William de Braose III and widow of John de Mowbray recovered her inheritance and briefly held Gower with her second husband, Sir Richard de Peshall. Despite the brevity of her tenure she is reported to have added the chapel that constitutes the upper storey of the large rectangular tower abutting the eastern side of the central block and the traceried windows of the chapel are not inconsistent with this tradition. In 1335, her son John Mowbray was ordered by the king to strengthen and provision his castles (including Oystermouth and Swansea) and maintain a watch on the coasts for a feared invasion by the Scots (RCAHMW 2000, 247).

Apart from a hiatus in the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century when the Beauchamp Earls of Warwick were lords of Glamorgan, the descendants of John Mowbray held Oystermouth Castle for the remainder of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. All the Mowbrays and Beachamps were absentee lords, as is reflected in the minimal additions to the fabric of the Castle after the construction of the chapel block (Evans 2009).

In the Post-medieval period the castle was still held as part of the demesne of the lords of Gower, by the Earls of Worcester (later the Dukes of Beaufort), apart from the period of the Commonwealth when Oliver Cromwell held it (Evans 2009). Cromwell's brief tenure of the castle led to the assumption that he demolished the fronts of the great drum-towers flanking the gatehouse, but there is no record of any military action at Oystermouth in his time (RCAHMW 2000, 248) and it is not certain if these towers were ever built.

Clearance and restoration work was undertaken in the 1840s and 1870s by the antiquary George Grant Francis, including the clearing out of the chapel block and the careful restoration of its windows from fallen tracery (Evans 2009). The blocking removed from the windows of the chapel was said to have incorporate musket-loops, which may indicate Civil War activity (RCAHMW 2000, 253). The Dukes of Beaufort continued to hold the castle until 1927 when it was sold to Swansea Borough Council.

Approximately 67m to the east of the castle is a D-shaped earthwork/platform of unknown purpose (NPRN 401005) that measures c12m in length. The straight edge of the feature forms part of a boundary shown on the Ordnance Surveys County series (Glamorgan, XXXII.3, 1878), which extends c30m to the northwest and c80m to the southeast and south of the feature. The platform is set at the base of a west-facing slope, facing the castle.

A short distance to the northeast of the castle is the proposed location of a dovecote (01845w/302001), identified via documentary research by Bernard Morris in 1968. A drawing by local artist William Butler, dated 1849 and entitled 'the pigeon house at Oystermouth Castle', shows the building to be a circular stone structure roofed with stone tiles.

Approximately 135m east of the castle is a limestone quarry (01892w) labelled as Sunnybank Quarry on the first edition (1878) Ordnance Survey map.

A temporary barrack block in use during the Second World War was alleged constructed a short distance to the north of the castle, although no evidence of this structure survives (Davies 2006, 4).

To the northeast of the Castle's gateway are a series of three terraced banks, the lowest of which was constructed as a festival stage in the 1970's (pers comm Andrea Clenton).

#### 1.4 Recent Archaeological Work

In 1994 Evans excavated two narrow trenches (0.30m wide) within the inner ward of the castle.

Trench A was excavated largely through rubble, although what appeared to be a crude wall was found running north – south, on nearly the same line as the east wall of the staircase leading from the inner wall to the wall-walk. This wall was constructed on top of a possible yard surface. Trench B, excavated in the chapel block, revealed a stone surface in the west end of the trench; unfortunately it was not possible to establish whether this was a deliberately laid surface or bedrock.

Two cable trenches dug by the on-site contractors with a mechanical excavator, were monitored outside of the castle. Trench D was dug along the line of the moat to the west of the castle and did not go deeper than the base of the topsoil, although lenses of oyster shell and rubble were noted within it. At the eastern end of Trench C (which again did not fully penetrate the topsoil) was a mass of masonry, which may have formed the foundations to the castle's vanished eastern tower (Evans 1994, 6).

Evans and Marvell monitored the re-opening of cable trenches in 1996 and recorded fragments of rubble throughout the topsoil. At the point where the trench turned to enter the castle, an offset of mortared sandstone rubble, 0.26m wide on the east and tapering to a width of 0.10m on the west was noted, 0.10m below the present ground surface. This feature was on a slightly different alignment to the castle wall that stands on it (Marvell 1996, 4).

The council conducted an extensive programme of consolidation and restoration in 1997, which was recorded by Sell (Sell 1997).

## 2 Methodology

The archaeological specification (Sherman 2009) specified that three trenches would be excavated within the interior of the castle:

- A northeast – southwest orientated trench (Trench A) across the footprint of the new visitor centre, located in the ground floor of the chapel, with a maximum size of 6.00m x 2.00m (see Figure 2).
- A trench with a maximum size of 6.00m x 1.20m (Trench B), excavated across the location of the ‘holding area’ and retaining wall to the northwest of the castles’ entrance (see Figure 2).
- A trench with a maximum size of 1.00m x 2.00m (Trench C), excavated in the area immediately to the south of the ‘holding area’, behind the existing stone ‘internal’ wall (see Figure 2).

Trench C had to be repositioned a short distance to the northeast of its original location, in order to avoid the presence of high voltage electricity cables identified during pre-excavation safety checks.

The specification stated that a trench was to be excavated within the mounds externally to the south of the castle; this was not dug as the exact location of the trench has yet to be supplied by the client.

Trenches B and C were mechanically excavated using a 1.20m wide toothless grading bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Trench A was dug by hand. Sufficient excavation of archaeological features and deposits were undertaken to establish the nature and extent of archaeological remains, including the nature and depth of the natural horizons. The archaeological works were carried out to the professional standards laid out in the Institute for Archaeologists’ *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation Specifications* (1994, revised 1999).

A written and photographic record was made of all archaeological features and deposits in accordance with the *GGAT Manual of Excavation Recording Techniques*. Contexts were recorded using a continuous numbering system, and are summarised in Appendix I. All significant contexts were photographed using a digital camera (with a minimum resolution of 8mp). The excavated area was located in relation to standing buildings and/or published boundaries and the site datum related to Ordnance Survey (OS) datum. Levels are related to the OS benchmark (BM 29.93m) located on the Tabernacle Independent Chapel, on the corner of Newton Road and Chapel Street. All context depths were measured from the present ground surface.

All classes of finds were retained, cleaned, and catalogued and remain in temporary store until arrangements for final deposition are agreed, in line with the requirements of the Institute for Archaeologists’ *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2001).

The project archive will be deposited with an appropriate receiving organisation, in accordance with the UKIC and IfA Guidelines. A copy of the archive index will be deposited with the National Monuments Record, Royal Commission on the Archaeological and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW), Aberystwyth.

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Figure 1. Location of site

Oystermouth Castle, Swansea: archaeological field evaluation

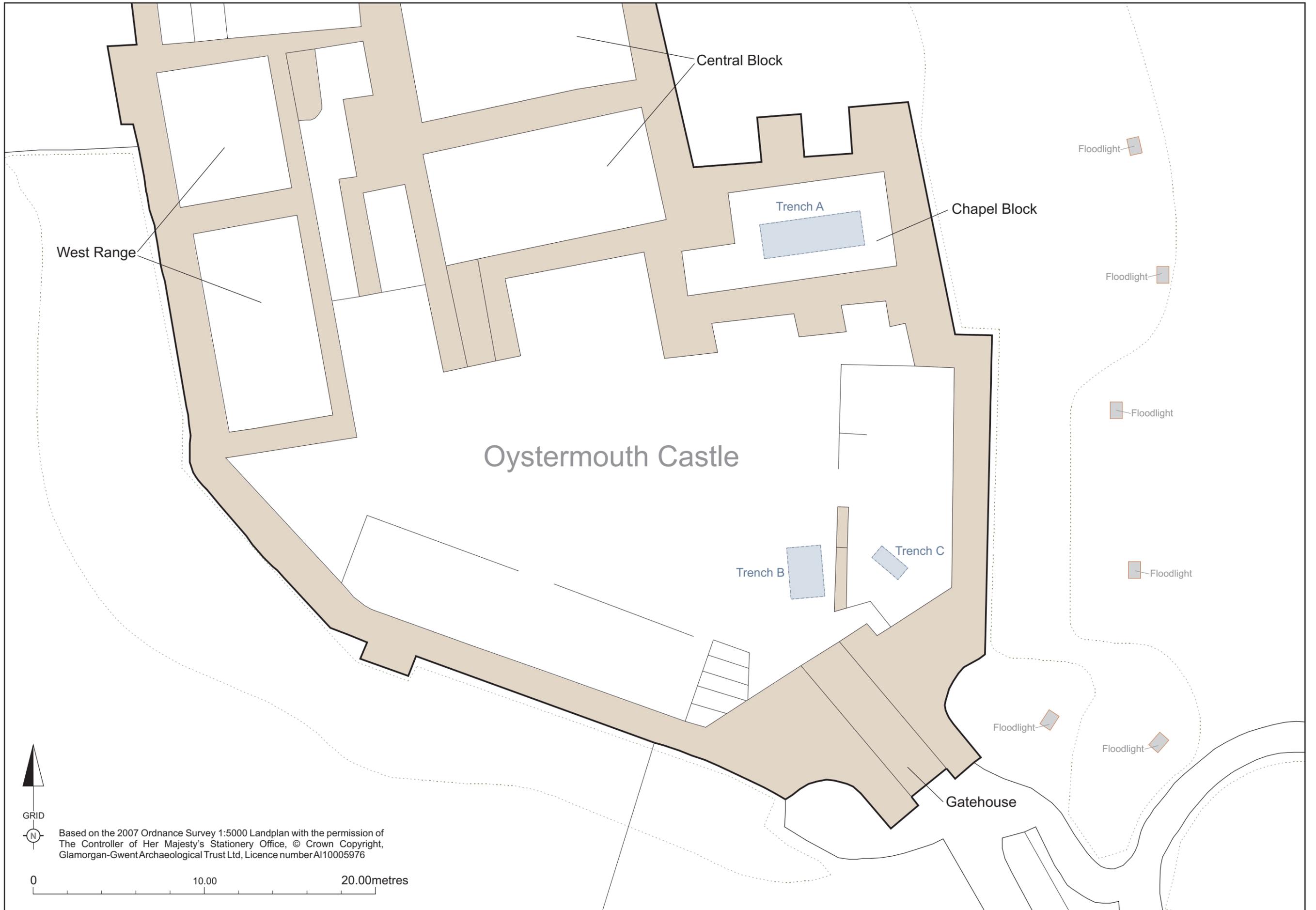


Figure 2. Location of evaluation trenches (blue)

### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Trench A (Figures 3 and 4; Plates 1 and 2)

Trench A measured 5.90m by 2.00m, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 119mm. The modern overburden (see context numbers **1001** and **1002** below) was removed across the entirety of the trench and sondages measuring 2.00m x 0.50m were dug at the western and eastern end.

A series of unauthorised holes were excavated over multiple nights across Trench A by person or persons unknown (see Figure 3).

##### Western Sondage

The basal layer within the western sondage was a natural, undulating, greyish-black limestone bedrock (**1005**) with a minimum depth of 88mm below the current ground-surface. Overlying the limestone bedrock **1005** and filling the undulations within it, was a light brown sandy clay (**1008**) levelling or construction deposit. This deposit contained small fragments of limestone with a maximum diameter of 5mm, fragments of lime mortar and charcoal up to 10mm in length, undiagnostic fragments of bone, and broken oyster and mussel shell. Deposit **1008** was partially overlain by a well-compacted surface of sub-angular limestone cobbles (**1009**), which varied in length between 189mm and 36mm. The cobbles were bonded together with a yellowish-white lime mortar (see Appendix III). In places the cobbled surface **1009** had been eroded or removed and the light brown sandy clay **1008** was overlain by a deposit of yellowish-white lime mortar (**1004**), which had a maximum depth of 55mm. Above contexts **1004** and **1009** was a dark brown sandy-silt clay (**1003**) that contained occasional small fragments of limestone, animal bone and shell along with flecks of charcoal. Overlying context **1003** was a hard, pinkish-grey cement (**1002**) that in turn was overlain by a deposit sub-angular gravel (**1001**).

##### Eastern sondage

The lowest excavated deposit within the eastern sondage of Trench A was a well-compacted cobbled floor (**1006**) with a flat, even upper surface. This floor was composed of sub-angular limestone cobbles, isolated sub-angular sandstone cobbles and a single water-rounded limestone pebble. The limestone cobbles varied in length between 35mm and 121mm, the sandstone cobbles varied in length between 42mm and 66mm, whilst the water-rounded pebble measured 94mm in length. The cobbled floor was bonded by a yellowish-white lime mortar. Overlying floor **1006** was a dark brown sandy-silt clay (**1003**), that was overlain by a hard, pinkish-grey cement (**1002**). Above context **1002** was a deposit sub-angular gravel (**1001**).

Protruding through the dark brown sandy-silt clay (**1003**) in the centre of the trench was a partially exposed cobbled surface (**1007**) constructed from sub-angular limestone cobbles that varied between 29mm and 101mm in length.

#### 3.2 Trench B (Figures 5 and 6; Plates 3 and 4)

Trench B measured 2.00m by 3.00m, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.45m. The lowest deposit recorded in this trench was that of a natural, greyish-black limestone bedrock (**2004**) sloping towards the east-northeast at an angle of approximately 40°, with a minimum depth of 0.20m. Overlying the natural bedrock was a loosely compacted deposit of sub-angular limestone fragments (**2003**) with minimum dimensions of 48mm x 26mm x 8mm and maximum dimensions of 229mm x 122mm x 94mm. Approximately 40% of the deposit

appeared to be damaged, rough-faced masonry, whilst approximately 50% of the limestone fragments appear to have been intensively heated. Deposit **2003** contained isolated sub-rounded, sandstone pebbles with a maximum dimension of 75mm x 38mm x 62mm, isolated flint pebbles with a maximum length of 20mm and frequent small fragments of lime mortar. Contained within context **2003** were two discreet deposits of a light brown, sandy clay with a distinct cess-like character (**2005** and **2006**). Context **2005** was an irregular shaped deposit with a maximum length of 0.95m and a maximum depth of 0.45m, which contained isolated water rolled pebbles up to 60mm in length and isolated fragments of sub-angular limestone up to 80mm in length; context **2006** was an irregular shaped deposit with a maximum length of 0.95m and a maximum depth of 0.30m that contained occasional small, rounded pebbles up to 60mm in length and occasional small fragments of oyster shell. Overlying context **2003** was a dark brown sandy-clay loam (**2002**), contained within this deposit was a moderate amount of sub-angular and tabular limestone, broken roofing slate, yellowish-white coloured lime mortar with occasional coal inclusions, fragments of bone and marine shell, occasional fragments of charcoal less than 10mm in length and isolated sub-angular fragments of sandstone. Running through this deposit was a mains power-cable, and although no cut was visible context **2002** would appear to be the back-fill of a modern cable trench. Above context **2002** was a thin deposit of turf and topsoil (**2001**).

### 3.3 Trench C (Figures 7 and 8; Plate5)

Trench C measured 2.00m by 0.90m, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.50m. The earliest excavated layer within Trench C was a deposit of tabular and sub-angular fragments of limestone (**3004**), contained within a matrix of light brown sandy-clay loam. The two largest blocks recorded within deposit **3004** were, roughly squared and well-faced blocks of masonry that measured 170mm x 80mm and 120mm x 100mm in size, the remaining fragments of limestone measured between 80mm and 30mm in length. The matrix of deposit **3004** contained occasional fragments of oyster, mussel and cockle shell; isolated animal bone; slate and stone roof tiles. Overlying context **3004** at the western end of Trench C was a loosely compacted shell midden (**3003**) in a light brown sandy-clay loam matrix that contained occasional small fragments of charcoal (see Appendix IV). Midden **3003** had an exposed length of 1.20m, an exposed width of 0.90m and a maximum depth of 0.28m. Overlying both deposits **3003** and **3004** was a sandy-clay loam subsoil (**3002**), with a dark greyish-brown colour. The subsoil **3002** contained moderate amounts of angular and sub-angular limestone fragments and isolated fragments of mussel and oyster shell, along with modern plastics, ceramics, glass and metal. Above the subsoil **3002** was a thin deposit of turf and topsoil (**3001**), with a maximum depth of 0.08m.

#### 4 The Finds by Steve Sell BA

The assemblage was small, with finds from eleven contexts in three trenches being examined. Much of the artefactual assemblage was small and fragmentary, making identification problematical in some areas. The assemblage consisted mostly of ceramics and glass of relatively modern date (context numbers **1002, 3001, 3002**) and animal bone, mostly of the larger domesticates, including cow and sheep (context numbers **2002, 2003, 3002, 3003, 3004**) but also including possible dog and red deer, probable bird bone fragments and two vertebrae from a small fish (context numbers **2003, 2006**). Shell was present in large quantity only in context **3003**; elsewhere oyster and cockle occasionally occurred, and there were two whelks in context **2003**.

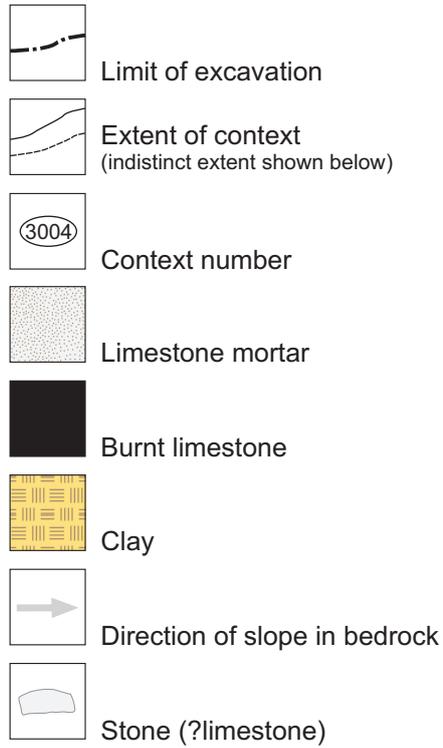
Apart from late Post-medieval and Modern ceramics (probably all post-1850) there was a small quantity of local red earthenwares (**1002, 3002**) that could belong to an earlier date, but could equally be contemporary with the white earthenwares with which they were found. There was a single sherd of North Devon Gravel-tempered ware, from **3002** of likely 17<sup>th</sup> century date. Four fragments of colourless/opaque glass, possibly from a thin-walled flask, recovered from context **1003**, could also belong to the Post-medieval period, unless of much more recent date.

A highly micaceous sherd, perhaps an Iberian product, from **2001**, and a redware fragment from **3002** do not fit easily with an earlier or later date, and could both belong to the early Post-medieval period, although identification is hampered by the small size and condition of both sherds.

Pottery of medieval date was recovered from five contexts. The group from context **2003** was largest, with four small coarseware sherds recovered, together with part of the body of a glazed jug with concentric lines of slip decoration. Small undiagnostic fragments of medieval pottery were also noted in contexts **1003** and **2006**; the latter may be from a glazed jug. The base of a Bristol Redcliff jug was recovered from context **3004**, together with a sherd from an unglazed vessel of similar date (13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century). This context also produced a small iron spatulate object, perhaps a hook, which could well be contemporary.

Unfortunately the assemblage is too small to make any reasonable judgments on dating, but on the basis of the material recovered a medieval date may be postulated for contexts **2003** and **3004** and perhaps also **2006**.

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**Figure 3.** Key to conventions used in plans and sections

Oystermouth Castle, Swansea: archaeological field evaluation

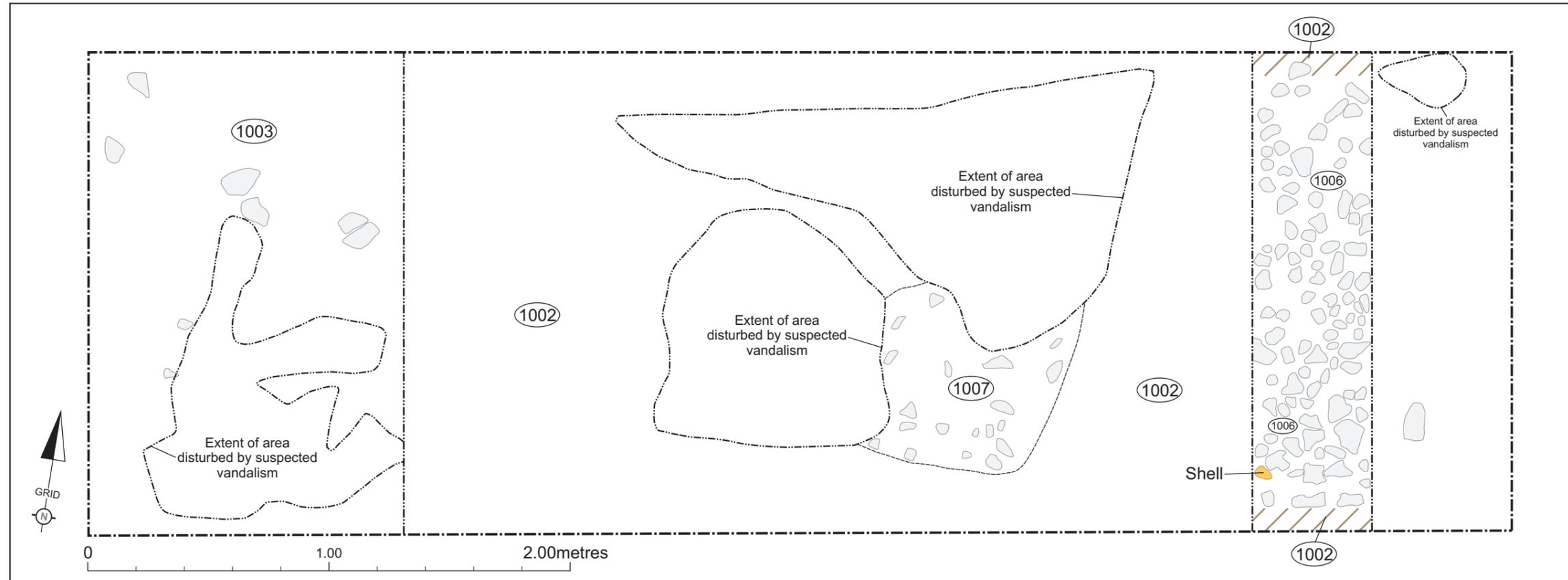


Figure 4. Plan of Trench A showing abandonment area 1003 and the extent of area disturbed by suspected vandalism

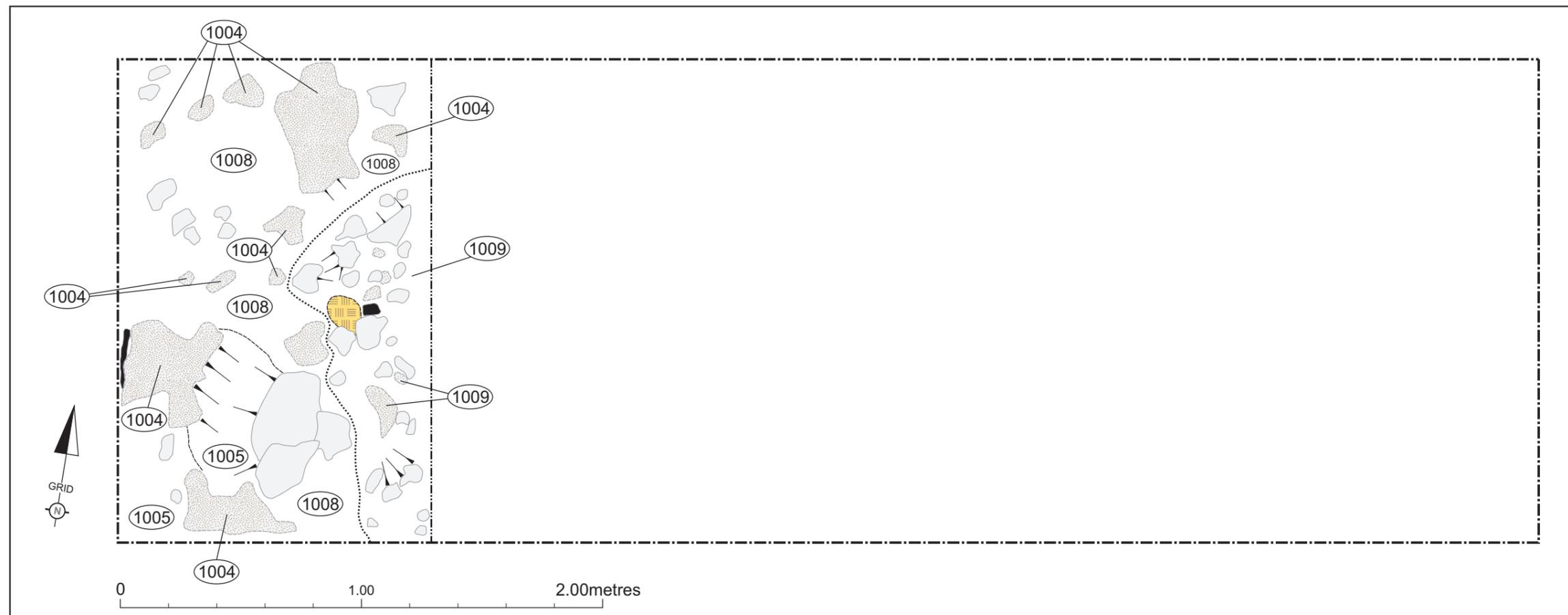


Figure 5. Plan of Trench A showing lime mortar deposit 1004

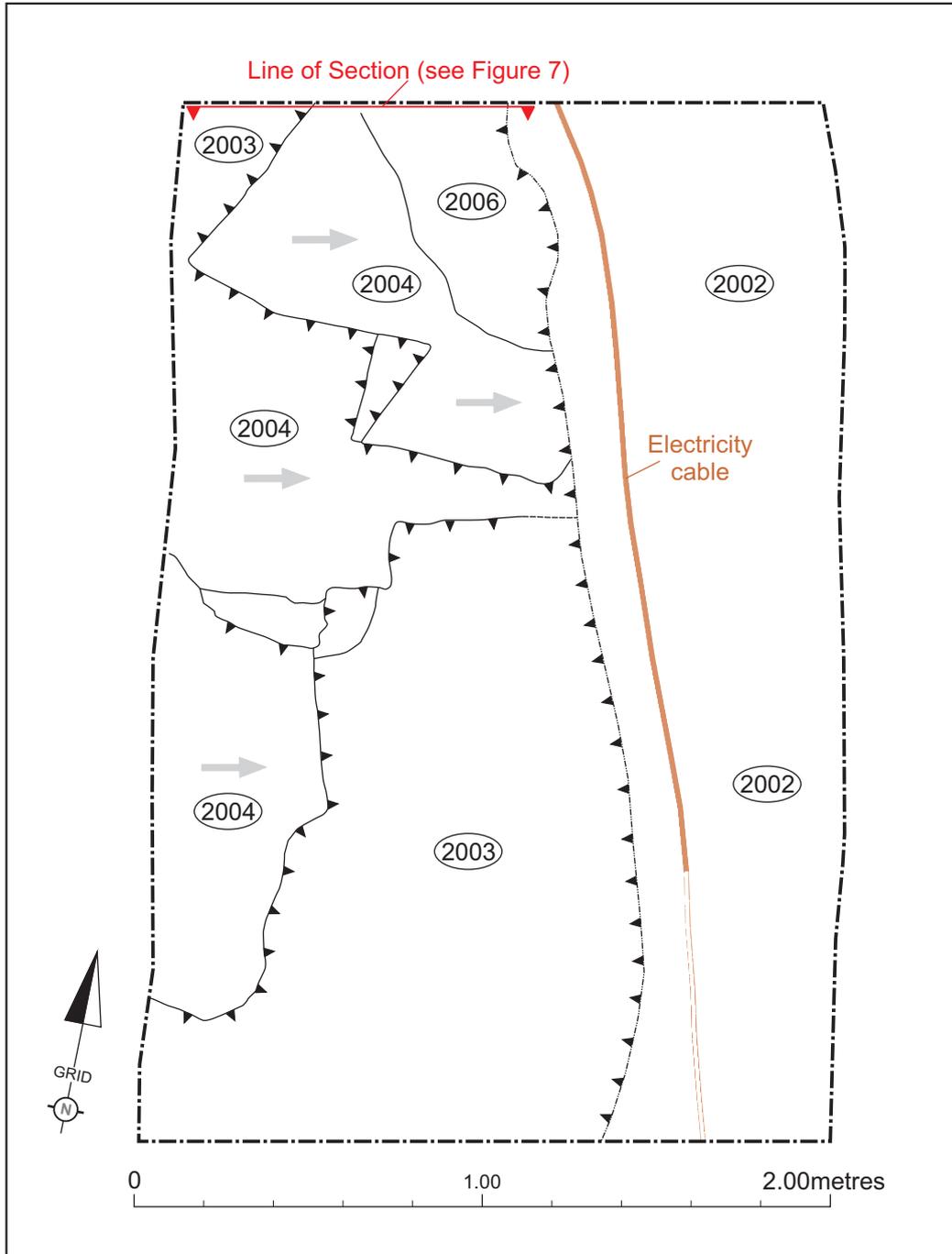


Figure 6. Plan of Trench B showing bedrock 2004

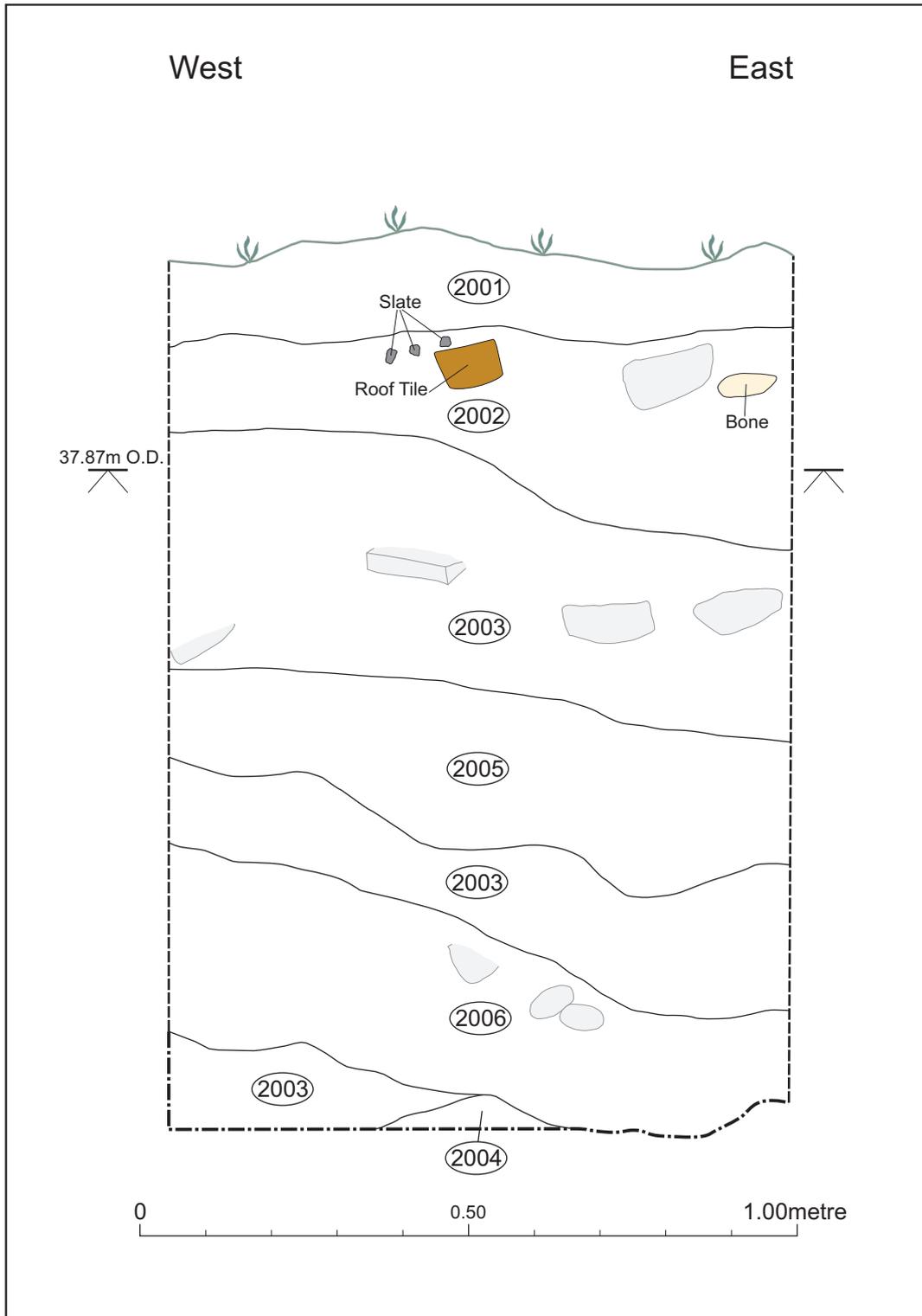


Figure 7. South facing section of Trench B

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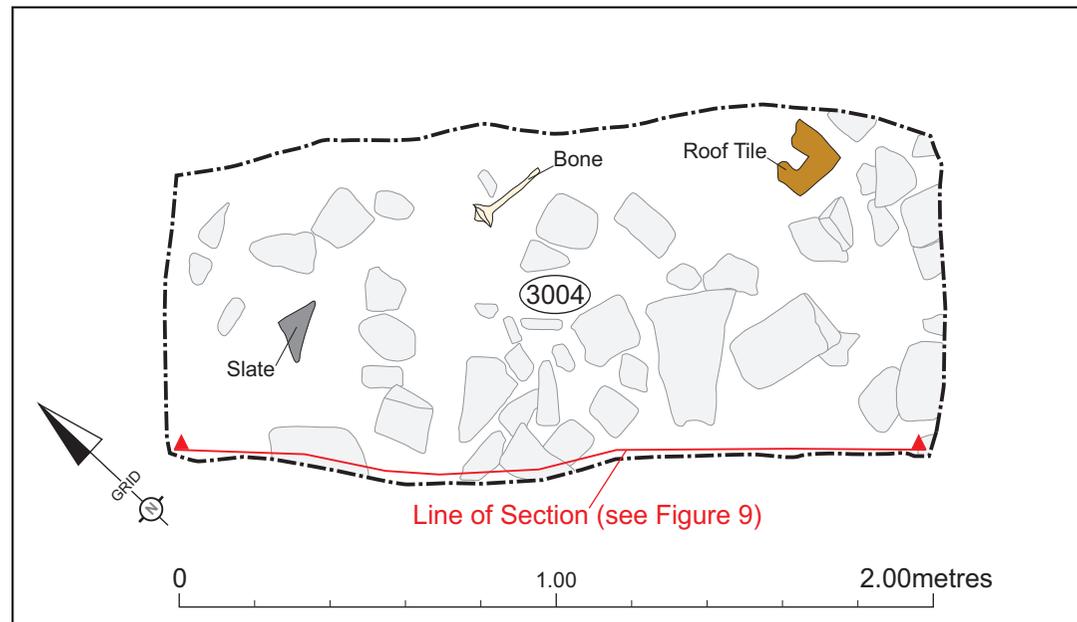


Figure 8. Plan of Trench C showing the probable medieval rubble deposit 3004

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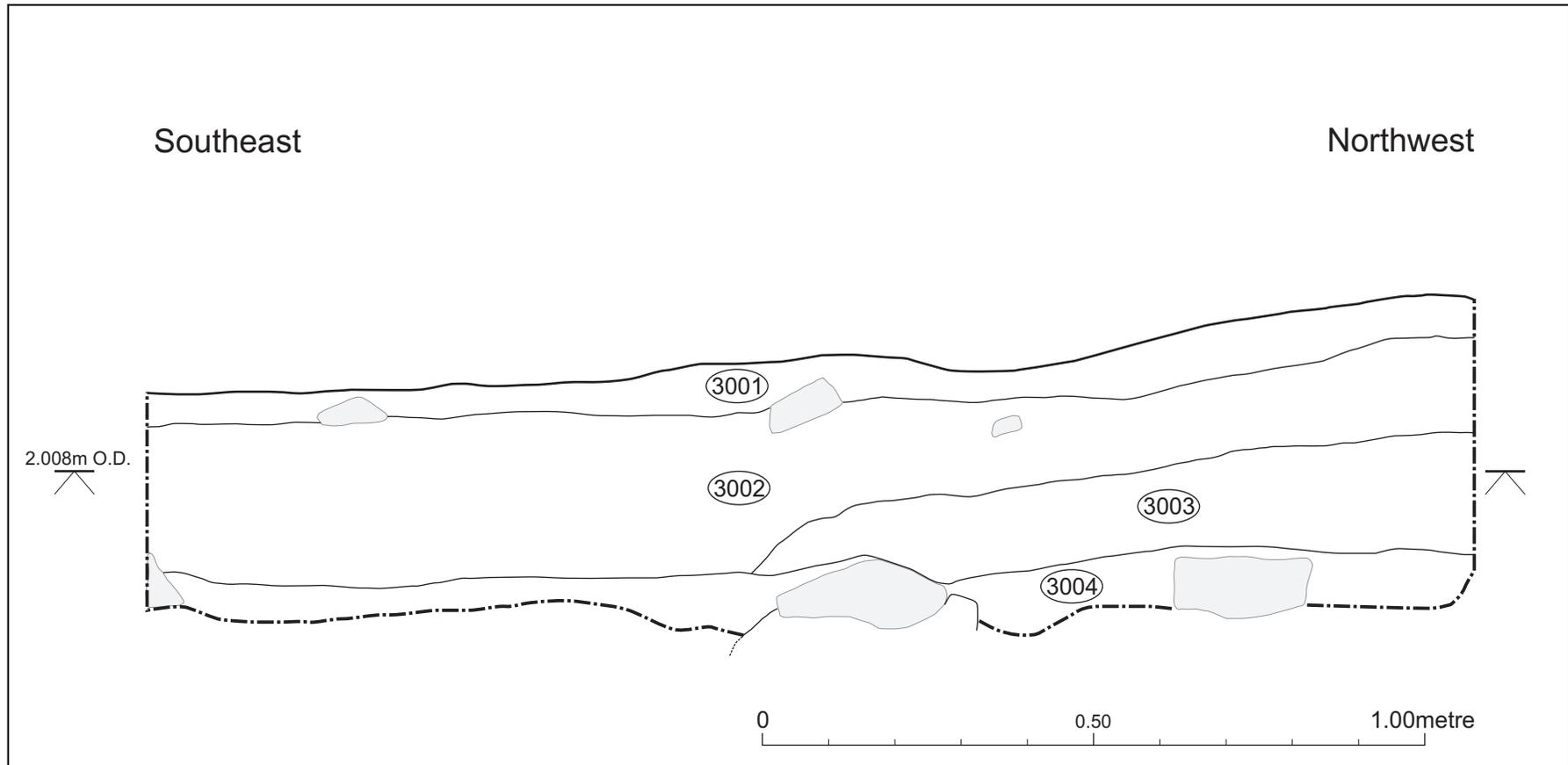


Figure 9. Northeast facing section of Trench C



Plate 1: Cobbled surface (1006). View to north.



Plate 2: Lime mortar foundation (1004). View to north.

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**Plate 3: Trench B showing loosely compacted limestone fragments (2003) and bedrock 2004. View to west.**



**Plate 4: Trench B showing redeposited contexts 2005 and 2006 in south facing section. View to north.**



**Plate 5: Trench C showing rubble deposit (3004). View to southwest.**

## 5 Conclusions

The Oystermouth Castle evaluation has shown that stratified archaeological remains of a probable medieval date exist at least 0.47m below the current ground surface.

The only structural remains uncovered by the evaluation were a well-laid cobbled surface (contexts **1006**, **1007** and **1009**) 0.09m below the current ground surface within Trench A. The lime mortar that bonded these cobbles together was originally thought to be of medieval date but subsequent analysis (see Appendix III) proved this deposit dated from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. There is scope for an earlier date (15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century); however at that time stone and soil would make up most of the mixture and the use of large quantities of lime would have been more unusual. It is suggested that the surface was used as bedding material for a slab or tile floor, because the mortar lacks the usual rigidity and density of lime screeds.

In Trench B a loosely compacted deposit of limestone fragments, roof tiles, lime mortar and masonry (**2003**) would appear to be a deposit of demolition material, which has been used to raise ground levels within the interior of the castle. Context **2003** contained five sherds of medieval pottery and was tentatively dated to the medieval period on this evidence, however the deposit also contained two pockets of a redeposited light brown sandy clay (**2005** and **2006**), which maybe the original source of the medieval pottery. The loosely compacted nature of context **2003**, suggests that the deposit is of no great antiquity and a Post-medieval date is tentatively suggested for it. This layer directly overlay the natural limestone bedrock (**2004**) and would appear to have totally removed any structural or occupation remains within this area of the castle.

A rubble deposit (**3004**) contained within a matrix of light brown sandy-clay loam, 0.45m below the current ground surface was dated to the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century in Trench C. This deposit contained fragments of roughly squared and well-faced blocks of masonry, along with fragments of stone and slate roof tile and probably represents an episode of castle demolition or repair. Overlying the western end of the rubble deposit **3004** was a loosely compacted shell midden (**3003**) dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> century or later, which contained fragments of blue mussel, edible cockle, common limpet, common whelk, oyster, periwinkle and pod razor, which were contained in a matrix of light brown sandy-clay loam.

Environmental samples from contexts **3003** (sample number **004**) and **3004** (sample number **006**) were taken and the shell content assessed. The variety of species present in the sample **004** compared with the single species recovered from sample **\*006** perhaps suggests that the local periwinkle population had been over-fished during the medieval period. This theory is supported by a comparison of the size of periwinkle recovered from both samples. In sample **006** the size of periwinkle is reasonably constant and close to the species' maximum length (30mm), whilst the periwinkles recovered from sample **\*004** vary greatly size, perhaps suggesting an overall decrease in the available population.

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## Appendix I

### Inventory of contexts

Context	Type	Average Depth (mm)	Description
1001	D	0mm – 110mm	Chipping floor
1002	D	110mm – 120mm	Pinkish-grey cement
1003	D	120mm – 160mm	Dark brown sandy-silt clay
1004	D	160mm – 182mm	Yellowish-white lime mortar foundation
1005	N	187mm – 197mm n.b.	Limestone bedrock
1006	S	-	Cobbled surface
1007	S	-	Cobbled surface
1008	D	182mm – 187mm	Light brown sandy clay
1009	S	-	Cobbled Surface

Context	Type	Average Depth (m)	Description
2001	D	0m - 0.12m	Turf and Topsoil
2002	D	0.12m – 0.47m	Dark brown sandy-clay loam
2003	D	0.47m – 1.09m	Loosely compact deposit of limestone fragments and CBM
2004	N	1.09m – 1.29m	Limestone bedrock
2005	D	-	Light brown sandy clay, possible redeposited cess-like material
2006	D	-	Light brown sandy clay, possible redeposited cess-like material

Context	Type	Average Depth (m)	Description
3001	D	0m – 0.06m	Turf and Topsoil
3002	D	0.06m – 0.30m	Dark greyish-brown sandy-clay subsoil
3003	D	0.30m – 0.45m	Shell midden in a light brown sandy-clay matrix
3004	D	0.45m – 0.54m n.b.	Rubble deposit in a light brown sandy-clay matrix

Note:

D = Deposit

N = Natural

S = Structure

n.b. = Context not bottomed

CMB = Ceramic building material

## Appendix II

### Inventory of finds by context and fabric

#### Historical period definition:

Medieval	AD 1066 – AD 1485
Post-medieval	AD 1485 – AD 1901
Modern	AD 1901 – Present day

#### Trench A

Context No	Material type	Description	Qty	Weight (kg)	Period
1002	Bone	Tooth (?dog)	1	0.001	Undiagnostic
	Stone	Burnt fragment	1	0.008	Undiagnostic
	Aluminium	Ring pull from drinks can	1	<0.001	Modern
	Plastic	Miscellaneous	2	0.002	Modern
	Iron	Nails	4	0.020	P-m/Modern
	Glass	Bottle/vessel miscellaneous	8	0.043	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	Local red earthenwares	2	0.013	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	Misc white earthenwares	3	0.024	P-m/Modern
1003	Iron	Nails	2	0.013	Undiagnostic
	Bone	Animal/bird, small	3	0.003	Undiagnostic
	Glass	Fragment of colourless flask/light bulb	4	<0.001	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	Unglazed cooking/storage vessel fragments (one with mortar adhering)	2	0.009	Medieval
1008	Stone	Burnt fragments	3	<0.001	Undiagnostic
	Bone	Animal/bird, small	2	<0.001	Undiagnostic

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**Trench B**

Context No	Material type	Description	Qty	Weight (kg)	Period
2001	Bone	Animal, large	6	0.031	Undiagnostic
	Pottery	Micaceous ?storage jar fragment, ?Iberian/Cornish	1	<0.001	?Early Post-medieval
2002	Bone	Animal, large (possibly including red deer and teeth of cow and dog)	32	0.458	Undiagnostic
	Shell	Oyster	2	0.050	Undiagnostic
	Tile	Ceramic roof-tile, plain	3	0.084	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	White earthenware, transfer printed	1	0.007	P-m/Modern
2003	Iron	Nail concretions	3	0.026	Undiagnostic
	Bone	Animal, mostly large (including ?dog /pig tooth)	37	0.355	Undiagnostic
(2003)	Bone	Fish, vertebra	1	<0.001	Undiagnostic
	Shell	Whelk	2	0.013	Undiagnostic
	Stone/tile	Plain/mortared fragments, burnt	3	0.005	Undiagnostic
	Stone	Natural flint gravel fragment	1	<0.001	Undiagnostic
	?Fired clay	Fragment	1	<0.001	Undiagnostic
	Clinker	Fragment	1	<0.001	Undiagnostic
	Pottery	Glazed jug with concentric bands of slip decoration	1	0.009	Medieval
	Pottery	Unglazed cooking/storage	4	0.013	Medieval
2006	Bone	Animal, large	8	0.065	Undiagnostic
	Bone	Fish, vertebra	1	<0.001	Undiagnostic
	Stone	Sandstone fragment	1	<0.001	Undiagnostic
	Pottery	Fragment probably from glazed jug	1	<0.001	Medieval

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**Trench C**

Context No	Material type	Description	Qty	Weight (kg)	Period
3001	Iron/stone	Concretion	1	0.012	Undiagnostic
	Bone	Fragments	7	0.007	Undiagnostic
	Stone / clinker	Burnt fragments	3	0.006	Undiagnostic
	Glass	Bottle/vessel	9	0.139	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	White earthenware, transfer printed	5	0.017	P-m/Modern
3002	Bone	Animal, many fragments, various	26	0.107	Undiagnostic
	Shell	Oyster, cockle	2	0.024	Undiagnostic
	?stone	?Calcareous fragment/petrified bone	1	0.002	Undiagnostic
	Stone	Burnt fragments	3	0.004	Undiagnostic
	Coke		1	0.021	Undiagnostic
	Iron	Nails	3	0.030	P-m/Modern
	Glass	Bottle	7	0.259	P-m/Modern
	Brick/tile	Undiagnostic fragments	2	0.029	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	Local red earthenware	3	0.077	P-m/Modern
(3002)	Pottery	Modern stoneware	11	0.684	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	White earthenwares miscellaneous /transfer printed	6	0.096	P-m/Modern
	Pottery	North Devon Gravel-tempered wares	1	0.020	Post-medieval
	Pottery	Undiagnostic redware fragment	1	<0.001	?Early Post-medieval
3003	Bone	Large/fragments (including sheep tooth)	7	0.015	Undiagnostic
	Stone	Slate fragments	1	0.126	Undiagnostic
3004	Iron	?hook	1	0.005	Undiagnostic
	Bone	Animal, large/fragments (most ?cow scapula)	13	0.162	Undiagnostic
	Pottery	Glazed jug base, Bristol Redcliff	1	0.031	Medieval
	Pottery	Unglazed cooking/storage vessel	1	0.014	Medieval

Note:

P-m = Post-medieval

Early Post-medieval = This is a finds only period finishing in approximately AD 1650, with the introduction of port books

## Appendix III

### Mortar analysis by Martin Locock MA, MifA

One sample of a mortar floor recovered from the excavation within the chapel in Trench A was submitted for analysis. It was examined visually and tested for hardness. Dates were assigned on the basis of the established chronology of mortar usage.

### Catalogue

Sample	Context	Hardness	Colour	Type	Inclusions	Suggested date
*005	1004	Moderately hard	Pale grey/brown	Earthen mortar	Coal, lime lumps	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> century

### Discussion

The mortar sample was recovered from beneath a presumed slab floor. In general it would be characteristic of late 18<sup>th</sup> century mortar mixes, since it has a relatively high lime content, bulked out by ash and charcoal, and also containing lumps of unslaked lime. It is possible that the mortar is earlier (15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century), although the use of large quantities of lime would be unusual at that time, when soil and stone would normally make up most of the mixture.

The mortar lacks the rigidity and density of lime screeds usually used as a floor surface, suggesting that it was used as the bedding material for a slab or tile floor.

## Appendix IV

### Shell analysis

#### Introduction

Two samples of shell were recovered for the site for analysis; the first, sample **004**, was recovered from a shell midden (context number **3003**) of probable Post-medieval date, the second, sample **006**, was recovered from a rubble deposit of probable medieval date.

Each sample was collected by hand and was less than 1 litre in volume; both samples represented approximately 10% of the overall shell content of the parent deposit.

#### Analysis

##### Sample 004

A total of 1.375kg of marine shell was recovered from context **3003**, including mussel, cockle, limpet, whelk, oyster, periwinkle and pod razor (see Table 1 for full details). All seven of these species are commonly found in estuarine environments around the United Kingdom and where heavily exploited during the Post-medieval period as a food source.

A single specimen of *Anisus leucostoma* was also recovered from this context. *Anisus leucostoma* is a small (1.5mm in height and between 5 – 7mm in length) snail commonly found in streams and ditches that dry out in the summer, and in marshes all over the United Kingdom (Millet 1813).

**Table 1: marine shell species by weight and total within sample 004**

Name	Total number	Total weight (kg)	Length (mm / min – max)
Blue mussel ( <i>Mytilus edulis</i> )	Fragments	0.030	Fragments
Common edible cockle ( <i>Cerastoderma edulis</i> )	5	0.025	24 - 28
Common limpet ( <i>Patella vulgata</i> )	2	0.020	33 – 38
Common whelk ( <i>Buccinum undatum</i> )	1	0.035	63
Oyster ( <i>Ostrea edulis</i> )	36	1.000	40 - 97
Periwinkle ( <i>Littorina littorea</i> )	53	0.260	15 – 30
Pod razor ( <i>Ensis siliqua</i> )	1	0.005	27

##### Sample 006

A total of 22 periwinkles were recovered from context **3004**. The periwinkle is found in the intertidal zone of rocky coasts around the United Kingdom and was a common food source throughout history.

**Table 2: marine shell species by weight and total within sample 006**

Name	Total number	Total weight (kg)	Length (mm / min – max)
Periwinkle ( <i>Littorina littorea</i> )	22	0.075	21 - 28

## Conclusion

Marine molluscs have been a staple food source for coastal community throughout history; however the variety of species present in the sample recovered from the Post-medieval deposit (**004**) compared with the single species recovered from the medieval deposit (**006**) perhaps suggests that the local periwinkle population had been over-fished during the medieval period. This theory is supported by a comparison of the size of periwinkle recovered from both samples. In sample **006** the size of periwinkle is reasonably constant and close to the species' maximum length (30mm), whilst the periwinkles recovered from sample **004** vary greatly size, perhaps suggesting an overall decrease in the available population.