

Former Engraver's Workshop

10a Market Place, Penzance

Historic Building & Archaeological Recording



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September 2013

Acknowledgements

The Archaeological Recording was commissioned by the owner of the property, Tom Leaper of Bodrifty, Newmill, Penzance TR20 8XT.

Jeanette Ratcliffe, Historic Environment Consultant, was responsible for overseeing all stages of the recording work and has prepared this report. The historic building photographic record was made by Eric Berry.

The authors would like to thank the following people for providing information, advice and assistance: Dilwyn Lloyd (RLT Architects); Jane Powning (Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record Officer); Nick Cahill (Cornwall Council Heritage Information Manager); and staff at Cornwall Record Office, Morrab Library and Penlee Museum.

Front cover illustration: Workshop site, looking SE, prior to removal of historic wall

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1 Summary

Historic building and archaeological recording within a small back plot in the centre of Penzance (during May and September 2013) provided information about the use of the site during the last two centuries. Originally part of a large rectangular yard, from the late 19th century it became enclosed on two sides by a warehouse and during the second half of the 20th century the site, itself, became roofed over as a workshop. Although located on the suggested southern edge of Penzance's 15th century market place, no associated evidence was found during the recording work, the general stratigraphy consisting of layers of modern and 19th/20th century debris overlying the natural sub-soil.

2 Background

This Report describes the results of Historic Building and Archaeological Recording work at the Former Engravers Workshop, 10a Market Place, Penzance, carried out during May and September 2013.

2.1 Location and setting

The site is located at NGR SW 47282 30246, in a small back plot (approximately 42m² in area) enclosed by the backs of properties fronting onto the top of Market Jew Street (Market Place) and Queen's Square (at the top of Chapel Street), from where it is accessed down a narrow alley way (Figure 1).

2.2 Planning context

Planning applications PA10/03595 (Conservation Area Consent) and PA10/03529 (Planning Permission) were submitted in June 2010 for the construction of a 4 storey dwelling with a studio and the demolition of a free standing wall.

These applications were approved subject to a condition stating that:

No work shall be undertaken until the implementation of an appropriate programme of recording and analysis has been agreed in writing by the local planning authority, to be carried out by a specialist acceptable to the local planning authority and in accordance with an agreed written brief and specification.

Reason: To record existing features of archaeological interest

A 'Brief for Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Investigation' was provided by Cornwall Council Historic Environment Planning Advise Officer (Phil Markham, 28.01.13) setting out the minimum requirements for recording to discharge the planning condition.

A Written Scheme of Investigation addressing the Brief and setting out the methodology and standards for the different phases of the recording was prepared on behalf of the owner (Tom Leaper) by Jeanette Ratcliffe (09.02.13) and approved by the HEPAO on 11.02.13.

2.3 Development works

The total ground area affected by the development was approximately 42m² and the works included the following.

1. Retention of existing concrete foundations on the north side of the site;
2. Laying foundations & drains in previously dug trenches;
3. Removal of an historic granite wall (with brick-built entrance passage) along the south side of the site;
4. Laying new foundations in the trench left by the removed wall;

5. Reducing the ground level within the site by c0.2m.

Works 3-4 were the focus of the historic building and archaeological recording (1-2 having already taken place under a previous unconditional planning permission and 5 involving the removal of modern demolition debris).

2.4 Research questions

The key research questions addressed during the recording work were as follows.

- What is the date and history of the engraver's workshop?
- What is the date and function of the surviving walling?
- What is its broad history of use (and disuse/re-use) of the site?
- What was the site's spatial and historical position/role in relationship to the historic market place and medieval town?
- Is there evidence for earlier occupation of the site?

3.0 Methodology

The recording work involved the following stages.

1. Historical research
2. Historic building photographic recording
3. Archaeological watching brief
4. Archiving
5. Report preparation
6. Dissemination & deposition

3.1 Historical research

The purpose of this stage of the work was to gain a clear picture of what is already known of the history of the site, in order to inform understanding of the standing fabric and any archaeological remains uncovered by the ground works.

It consisted of visiting Cornwall Council's Historic Environment Record, the Cornwall Record Office in Old County Hall, Truro, and Morrab Library and Penlee Museum in Penzance, in order to view and copy easily accessible, existing archaeological and historic information about the site and its immediate vicinity.

This included consulting the following types of records.

- Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey report & historic characterisation mapping for Penzance
- Records held within the Cornwall Historic Environment Record's database of archaeological sites & historic buildings
- Historic maps - 1840 Tithe Map; Ordnance Survey maps (1880, 1908, 1938, 1963); 1845 Borough of Penzance map
- Historic photograph collections (aerial and ground shots)
- Selected published accounts of Penzance
- A sample of 19th century trade directories (held at CRO)

In addition, the site owner (Tom Leaper) loaned a substantial bundle of historic documents relating to the ownership of Nos. 10, 10a and 11 Market Square, dating back to the early 19th century. Owing to time constraints only those containing plan-based information directly relating to the site were investigated for this study (Figures 11 & 14). Future detailed examination of the other documents, together with photographs previously taken by the owner and their architect, would shed further light on the history of this part of Penzance.

3.2 Historic building photographic recording

A comprehensive archive-standard photographic record was made of the historic walling prior to its removal. It involved the following.

- Photographs were taken using black and white 35mm or medium format film in order to produce archive quality contact prints and negatives
- Using a photographic scale for both general and specific photographs
- Digital colour photographs were taken to illustrate this report (Figures 13-18)

3.3 Archaeological watching brief

This involved the following.

- Trowelling clean the trench left by the removal of the E-W section of historic wall in order to identify layers and features present
- Plotting the trench location and key internal features on the architect's ground plan at 1:100 scale (Figure 11)
- Drawing the north section off the trench at 1:20 scale (Figure 12)
- Making an archive-standard black and white photographic record and digital colour photography (as in 3.2 above)

3.4 Archiving

The archiving consisted of the following.

- Developing, printing & indexing photographs (Appendices 1 & 2)
- Creating a project archive folder & index (Appendix 3)

3.5 Report preparation

The project results have been compiled into this report in accordance with the requirements set out in the HEPAO's Brief.

3.6 Dissemination & deposition (of report & archive)

- A project summary has been added to the OASIS (the English Heritage/ADS online index of archaeological investigations).
- The report has copied to Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record and the National Monuments Record (NMR) via the OASIS website.
- The indexed project archive, including a printed & digital copy of the report, has been deposited at Cornwall Record Office.
- A digital copy of the report has been will be supplied to the applicant/client
- A digital copy of the report has been will be supplied to the HEPAO, together with a summary of the contents of the archive.

4 Results

4.1 Historical development of the site

The site lies within the medieval core of Penzance, on the southern edge of an area considered to have been the original extent of the town's later medieval (15th century) market place (Figures 3-4). A wide, three-cornered plot at the upper end of Chapel Street and Market Jew Street, this was originally a much bigger open area

than it is today, including not only the present Market Place, but also parts of Queens Square and Green Market (Cahill & Newell 2003, 22).

Encroachment and infill (re)development over subsequent centuries reduced the size of the market area and produced the tightly packed block of varied buildings (surrounded by Market Place, Queen Square, Prince's Street and New Street) within which the site is located. Figure 5 shows buildings and sites of historic and archaeological interest in the vicinity, including the former Market House and Guildhall (Lloyds Bank building) to the north, the old telephone exchange (now art gallery) on the site of the 19th century fish market to the south, and a line of Listed shop fronts to the west. The site was historically part of an area of back yards, workshops and warehouse associated with businesses fronting onto Market Place.

Although the 1840 Tithe Map (Figure 6) shows no detail, the 1845 Borough of Penzance map clearly depicts the site as being part of a large, rectangular, open yard (Figure 7). On the 1880, 1907 and 1930s OS mapping (Figures 8-10) the yard area is shown as completely built over, yet a larger scale plan forming part of a 1933 conveyance shows the site, itself, as still unroofed (Figures 11). The plan relates to the sale of the warehouse (now a modern block of flats and access way) that previously enclosed the east and south side of the site – the vendor was William Bennetts Michell (the Jeweller at 10 Market Place) and the purchaser Joseph Walter Meek (the Furnisher at 14 Market Place). The site - named as 'Mr Michell's Yard' - was not part of the sale, and continued to be associated with the jewellery shop until 1987, when it was sold to the Engraver, Malcolm Pilcher.

The plan that relates to this sale indicates that by then the site had become built over, apart from a narrow strip along its east side (Figure 14). This must have happened some time after 1963, since the OS mapping of that date shows a still completely open area (Figure 12). Figure 13 is a 1960s aerial view showing rebuilding in progress of the frontage along the top of Market Jew Street (Nos. 4-8 Market Place), now occupied by Weatherspoon's pub. Behind this, the site, itself, is difficult to make out, but Meek's warehouse is clearly visible.

The 1987 conveyance document describes the premises as a 'workshop (formerly a warehouse or store) and yard'. Malcolm Pilcher's use of the site continued the tradition of Market Place being a focus for engraving and lithographic printing, which dated back to at least the 1820s, when John Pope Vibert was an engraver and copper plate printer here (Pigott Directory 1823-4, 193), followed by Francis Treleaven Vibert (Slater's Directory 1852-3, 41). He continued to use the building as his workshop until selling the site to Sculptural Artist and Designer, Tom Leaper, a few of years ago.

4.2 Historic walling

By the time of the historic building photographic recording in May 2013, the only building remains on the site were an L-shaped length of granite wall running 5.5m along the south side and making a short (1.5m) return along the east, with an (1.5m long by 0.9m wide) brick-built entrance passage attached to the west end (Figure 2 & 17-22).

This walling survived only at ground-floor level (to a height of 2.5-3.0m), the roof and upper walling of the workshop having already been removed. First-floor beam slots survived in the north face of the remnant wall and in the site's northern boundary wall, and the scar of the workshop's roof (continuing the line of the north pitch of the warehouse) was visible in the wall face of the historic building (part of No. 11 Market Place) bordering on the west (Figure 17 & 18).

Meek's warehouse had been pulled down some years previously, with the area adjoining the east side of the former engraver's site having been developed into flats and the part to the south left open as an access way (Figure 19 & 20).

The remnant granite walling was originally constructed in the late 19th century as the north wall of warehouse, the brick-built wall forming its west wall (beside the doorway into the building) and the east side of a passageway providing independent access into what was then still an open yard (Figure 11).

The remnant granite walling was double-faced, 0.5m wide and included a 1.3m wide doorway and 1.0m wide window opening, with cut quoin stones and traces of lime wash and later cement mortar. The doorway is depicted on the 1933 plan (Figure 11) as providing access from the warehouse into the yard and presumably continued in use until the ownership of the two became detached (as a result of the 1933 sale), from which point the only entrance into the yard for its owner would have presumably been via the passageway.

The passageway was formed on the west by the back wall of No. 11 Market Place and on the east by a 1.4m length of single-brick-width wall, with a sliding wooden-planked external door at its southern end (Figure 22). At the northern (yard/workshop) end of the passageway, there was a brick arch over wooden lintels (Figure 18). Two large wooden beams (originally supporting part of the floor of the adjacent warehouse) extended along the top of the passage, back into the wall bordering the site to the south (Figure 20 & 22).

According to the present owner, the workshop floor was previously surfaced with granite paving stones, which had been lifted and re-laid in front of the Humphrey Davey statue at the top of Market Jew Street, as part of the Penzance Townscape Heritage Initiative.

4.3 Below-ground remains

No evidence for earlier (pre-19th century) use of the site was found during the archaeological watching brief. Removal of the remnant walling had left an east-west trench averaging 0.4m deep (Figure 15-16 & 23).

At its east end the trench sloped down a further 0.2m into the north-south cut for the return wall, with remains of the base of that wall still visible on the bottom and in the east section, where it granite stones were overlaid by the modern concrete surface associated with Meek's flats (Figure 16 & 25). The northern extent of the north-south 'robber' trench had already been backfilled.

Towards the west end of the trench a ceramic drain pipe ran across it, having originally entered the site beneath the brick-built entrance passage, presumably sometime during the later 20th century, with a more recent alkathene water pipe beside it (Figure 23-24). This end of the trench had already been disturbed by modern ground works.

Three main layers were revealed in the main part of the trench section (Figure 24).

1. An upper, 10-20cm deep, layer of orange-brown clayey soil (earth mortar) with fragments of brick and other building material.
2. An underlying, 30cm deep, layer of mixed orange-brown and grey clayey soil, containing pieces of natural slate shillet as well as pieces of brick and roofing slate.
3. Natural yellow/orange-brown clayey shillet (slate-derived) subsoil

Layer 1 is debris from the recent wall demolition. Layer 2 appears to be re-deposited material; the grey staining perhaps representing organic waste. It may represent levelling associated with the laying of the granite paving which previously covered the site. Layer 3 is the natural, undisturbed sub-soil.

The east-west wall was built on top of the natural sub-soil, while the north-south walling was constructed within a shallow foundation trench dug down into it. This suggests the possibility of phasing, with the north-south wall perhaps being of slightly earlier date. It was unclear whether foundation trenches for both or either walls were dug down through Layer 2 or whether the latter accumulated / was deposited after they had been built. At any rate, it is unlikely to be earlier than 19th century in date, and may be much more recent.

Bibliography

Cahill, N. & Russell, S., 2003. *Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey. Historic characterisation for regeneration. Penzance*

Pool, P. A. S., 1974. *The History of the Town and Borough of Penzance*

**Appendix 1: Register of black & white photographs – historic wall recording
(by Eric Berry 02.05.2013)**

Photo No.	Subject / direction
1	Historic walling, from NW
2	The site, looking E, historic wall on right
3	The site, looking E, flats on former Meek's workshop site
4	The site, looking towards NW corner
5	The site, looking towards NE corner
6	The site, looking W, wall of adjacent building
7	The site, looking NW, boundary wall with Weatherspoons
8	Historic walling, looking N
9	Alley adjacent to the site, looking E, with historic walling on left
10	Historic walling, looking NW
11	Alley adjacent to the site, looking SW, with historic walling on right
12	Alley adjacent to site, looking SW
13	Corner section of historic walling, looking NW
14	Corner section of historic walling, looking NW
15	Corner section of historic walling, looking S
16	Alley adjacent to site, next to Meek's flats
17	Alley adjacent to site, looking SW
18	Alley adjacent to site, looking SW
19	Alley adjacent to site, looking SW
20	Alley/building wall to S of site, looking E
21	Alley/building wall to S of site, looking SE
22	Historic walling, looking W
23	Historic walling, looking W
24	Entrance passage into site, looking S
25	Entrance passage into site, looking S
26	Entrance passage into site, looking S
27	Corner of alleyway entrance, looking S
28	Corner of alleyway entrance, looking S
29	Long shot up alley way towards site, from SW
30	Long shot up alley way towards site, from SW
31	Long shot up alley way towards site, from SW
32	Long shot up alley way towards site, from SW
33	Alley/building wall to S of site, looking SE

34	Alley way into site, looking SW
35	Alley way into site, looking SW
36	Alley way into site, looking NE, historic walling on left

Appendix 2: Register of black & white photographs - taken after removal of historic walling (by J. Ratcliffe 04.09.2013)

Photo No.	Subject / direction
1	Wall of building to W of site, looking S
2	The site, from S
3	NW corner of the site, from S
4	The site, from E
5	Wall of building to W of site, looking SW
6	Wall of building to W of site, looking SW
7	N section of wall trench (W end)
8	N section of wall trench (W end)
9	N section of wall trench (middle part)
10	N section of wall trench (middle part)
11	S section of wall trench
12	S section of wall trench
13	Wall trench and the site, from SE
14	W end of wall trench, from NE
15	W end of wall trench, from NE
16	Wall trench, from NE
17	Wall trench, from NE
18	Wall trench, from NE
19	E end of wall trench (with exposed base of return wall), from NW
20	Wall trench, from NW
21	E end of wall trench, (with exposed base of return wall), from NW
22	E end of wall trench, (with exposed base of return wall), from NW
23	Wall trench, from NW
24	Wall trench, from NW

Appendix 3: Contents of project archive

1. Project report (printed in black and white; colour version copied to CD)
2. Brief for Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Investigation, Cornwall Council Historic Environment Planning Advice Officer (28.01.13)
3. Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building and Archaeological Recording, Jeanette Ratcliffe (09.02.13)
4. Architect's plans, with overlay marked up with wall trench location and archaeological field notes
5. Drawing of wall trench section (1:20 scale)
6. Inked-up versions of trench plan and section drawing (used in report)
7. 2 x black and white photograph contact sheet & negatives (with indexes)
8. CDs (x2) containing scanned black and white photo prints
9. CD of colour digital photographs

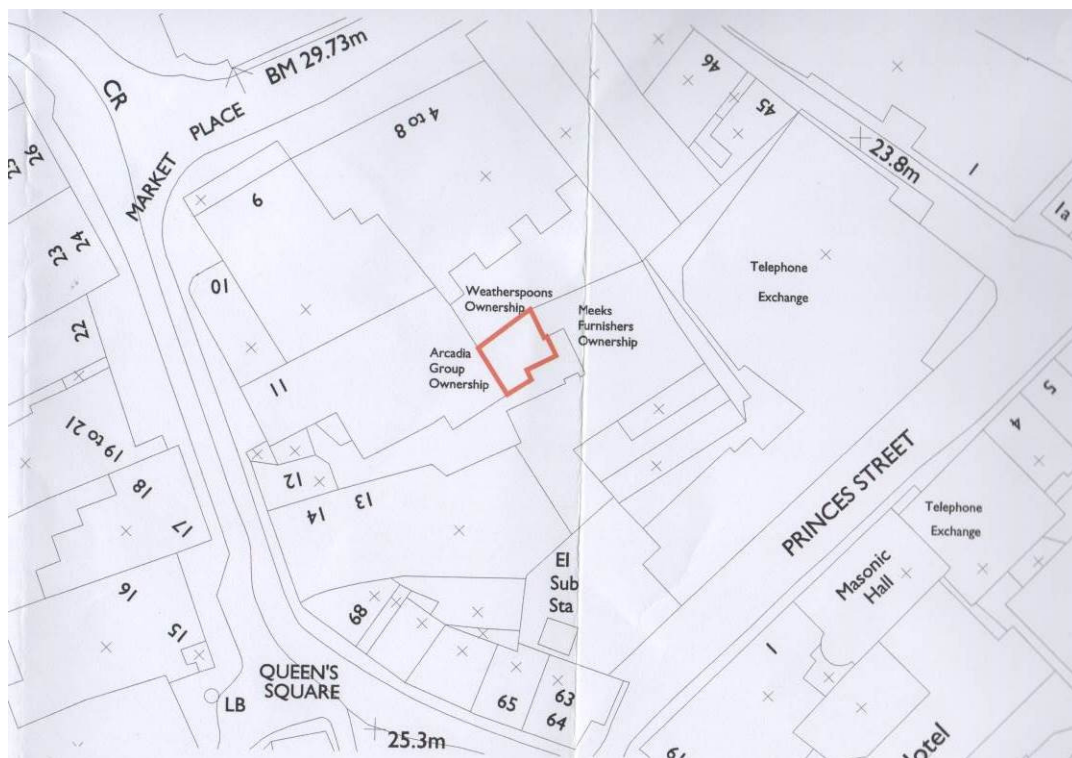


Figure 1. Site location map (RLT Architects)

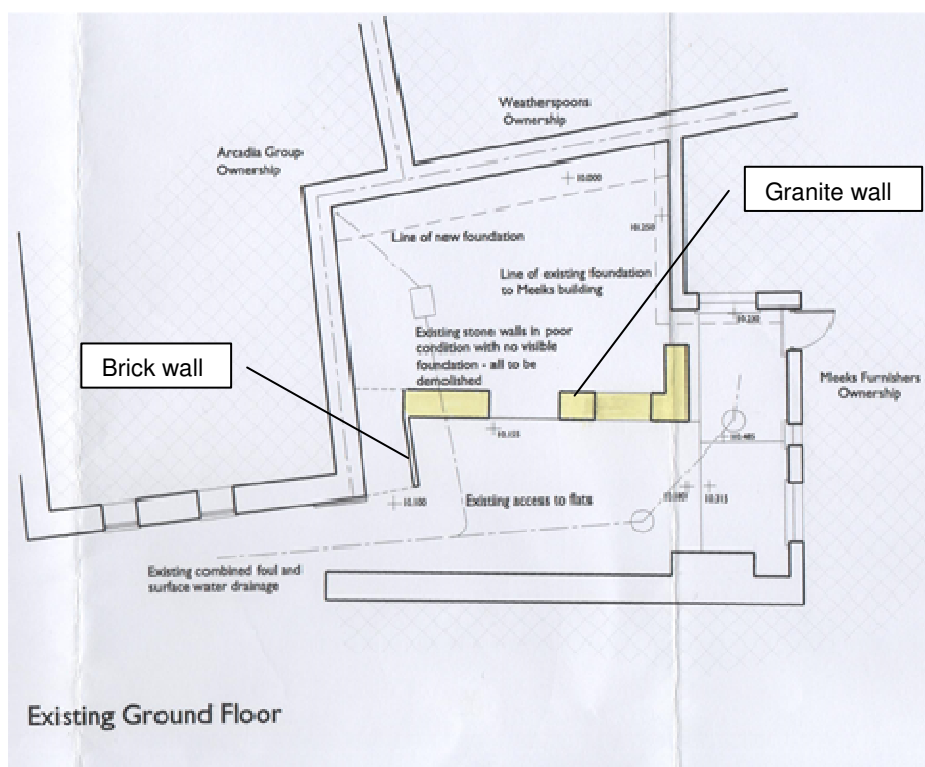


Figure 2. Site plan – existing (RLT Architects), with remnant historic wall highlighted

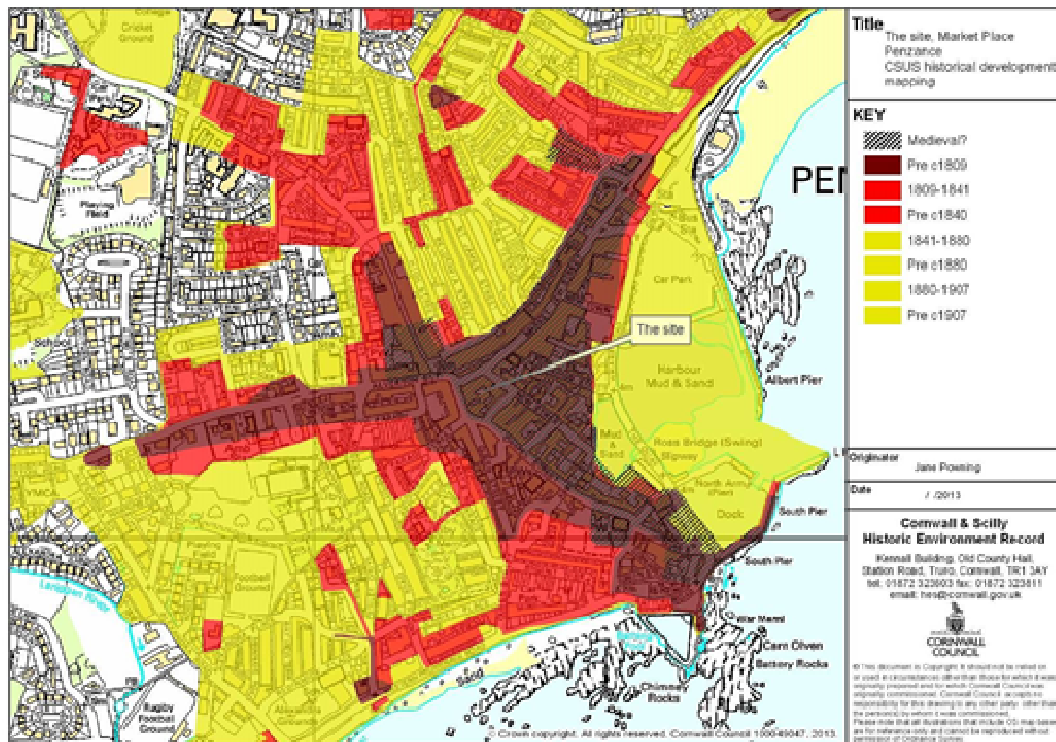


Figure 3. Historical development of Penzance, with site location shown (Cornwall & Scilly HER, Cornwall Council)

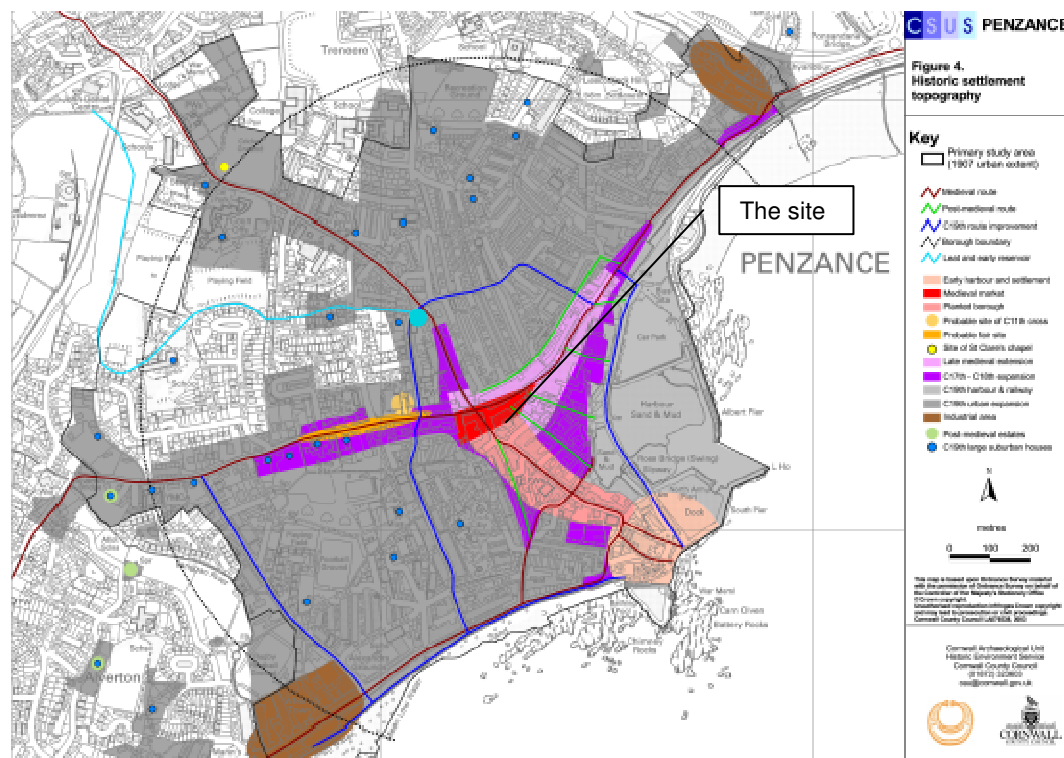


Figure 4. Penzance historic settlement topography, with the later medieval market place in red, and site location shown (extract from Cahill & Newell 2003)





Figure 7. 1845 Borough of Penzance (CRO RH/9/5/21/1)

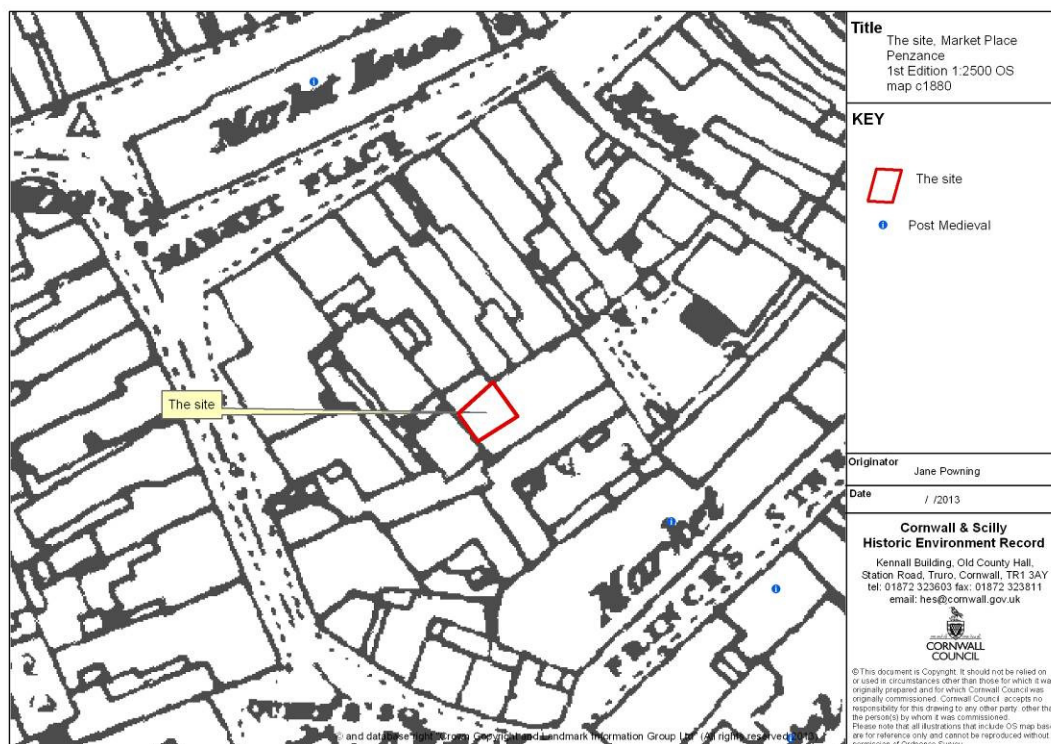


Figure 8. 1880 OS 1st Edition 25 inch map (Cornwall & Scilly HER, Cornwall Council)

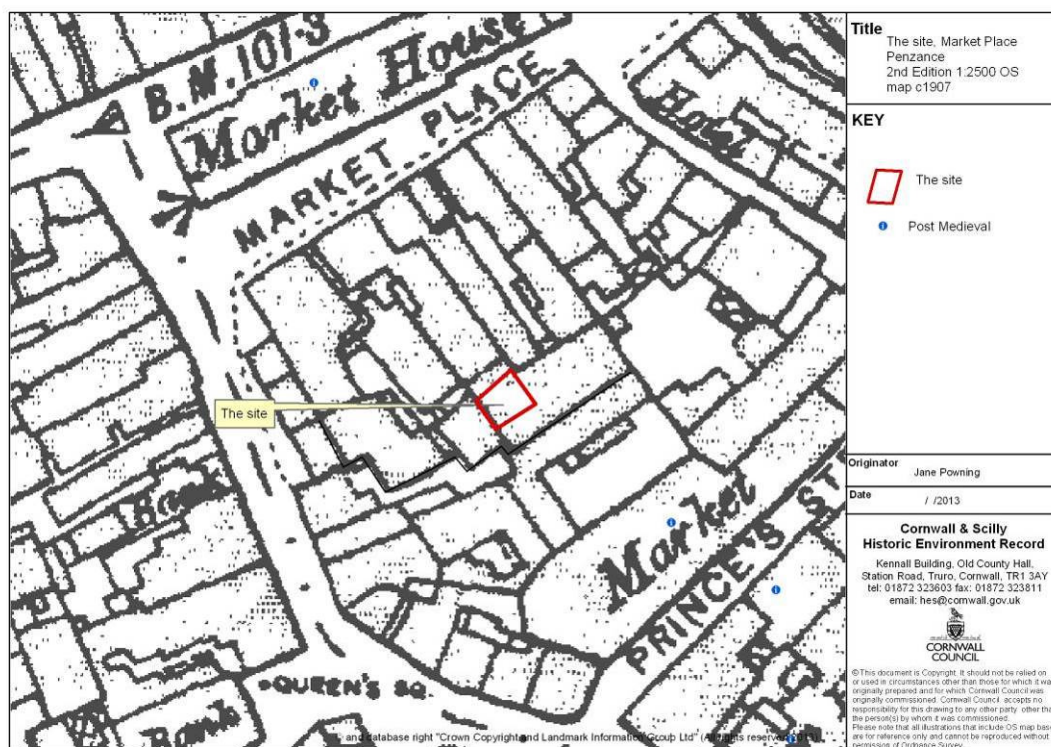


Figure 9. 1907 OS 2nd Edition 25 inch map (Cornwall & Scilly HER, Cornwall Council)

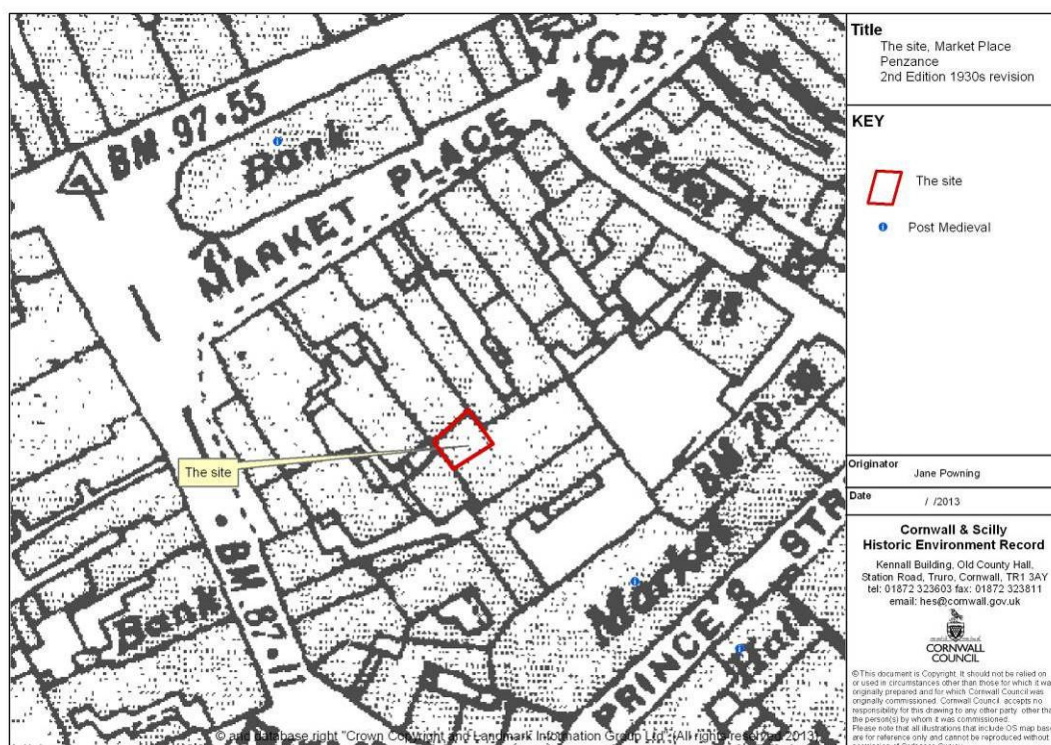


Figure 10. 1930s OS 2nd Edition revision, (Cornwall & Scilly HER, Cornwall Council)

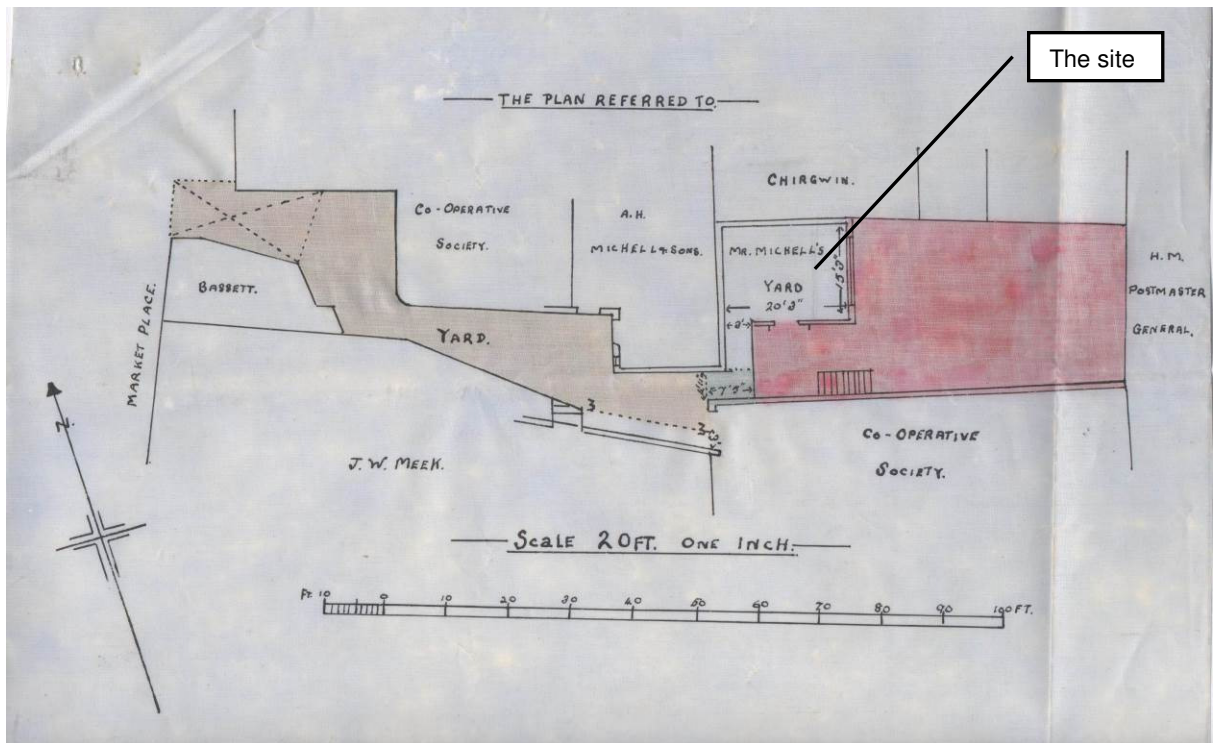


Figure 11. 1933 plan of the site (part of conveyance document held by the present owner, Tom Leaper)



Figure 12. 1963 OS 1:2500 map (CRO AD1227/7)

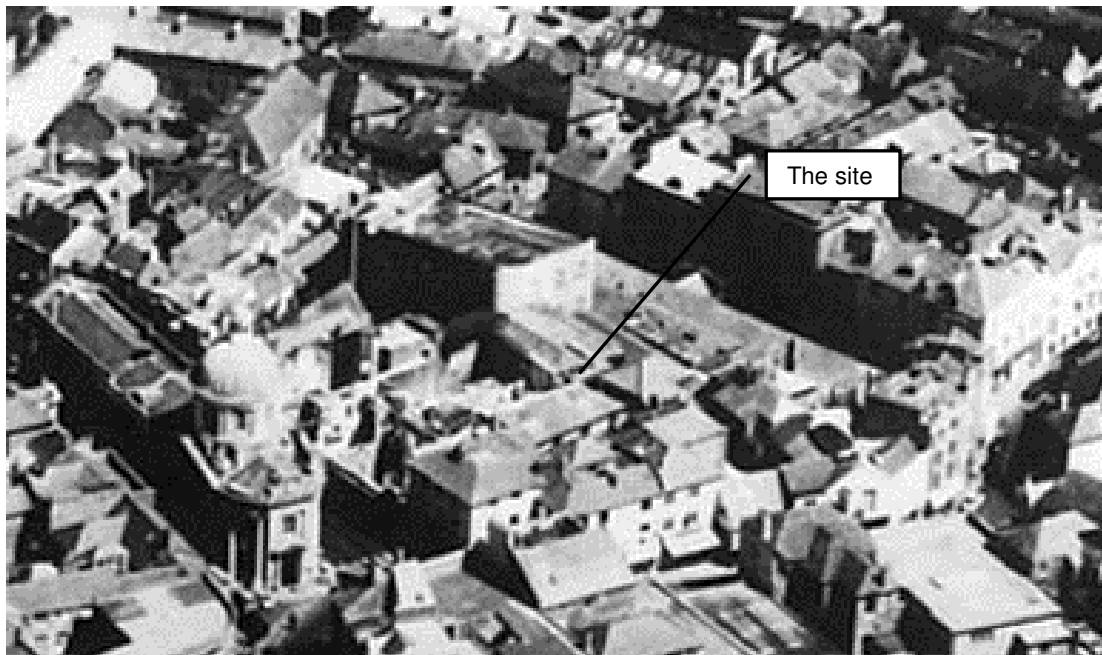


Figure 13. Enlarged portion of 1960s air photo held at Morrab Library (MO188)

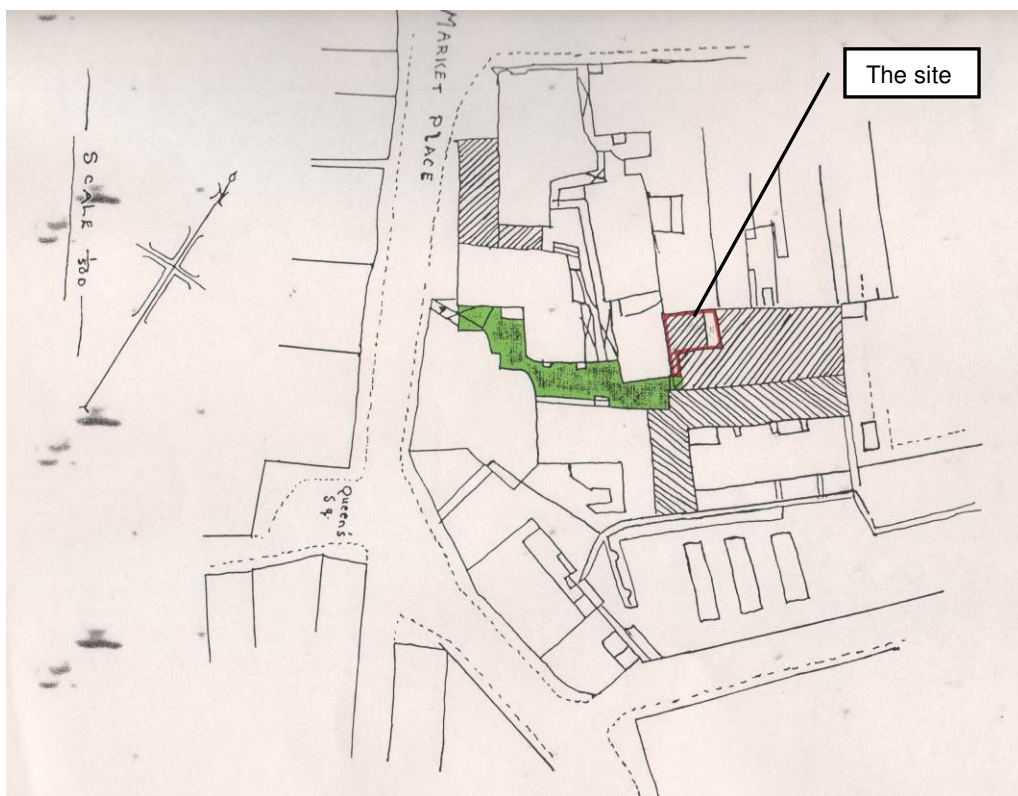


Figure 14. 1987 plan of the site (part of conveyance document held by the present owner, Tom Leaper)

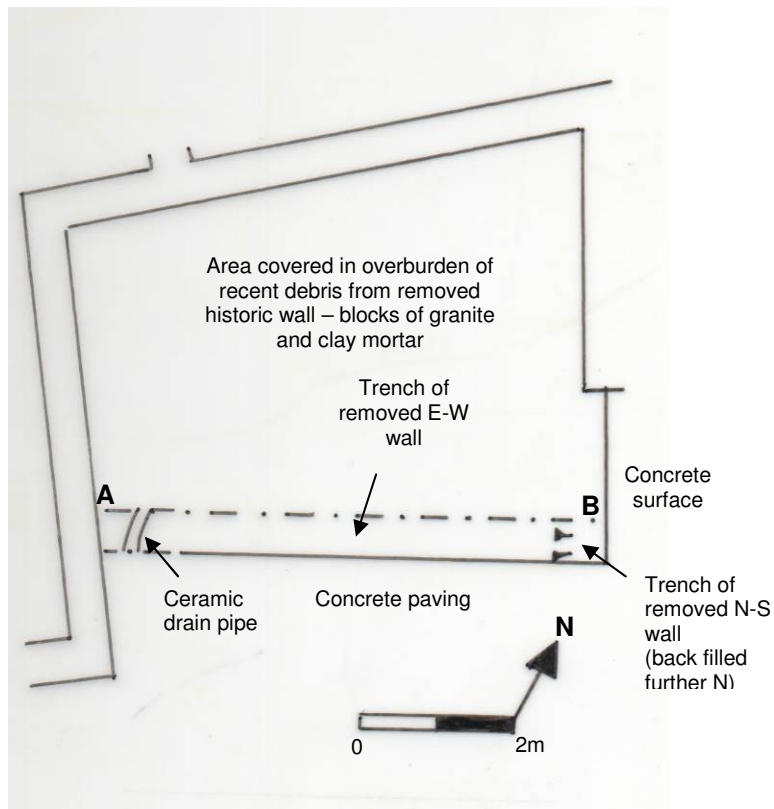


Figure 15. Plan of site showing trench of removed wall and drawn section, A-B (Sept 2013)

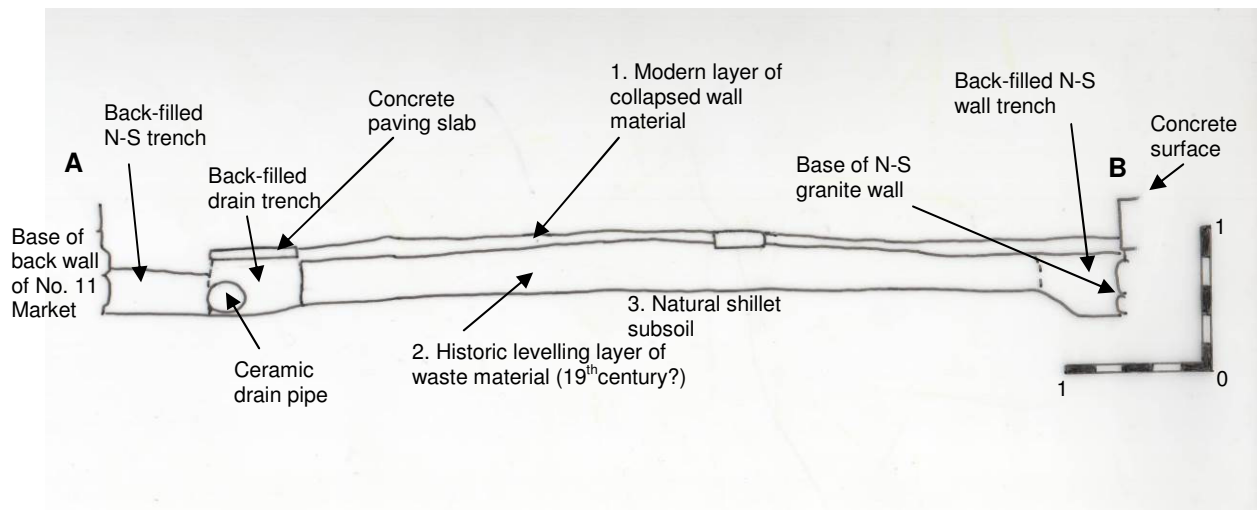


Figure 16. North section of wall trench (Sept 2013)



Figure 17. The site viewed from N corner, prior to removal of historic walling



Figure 18. Historic walling from NW



Figure 19. Site on left, prior to removal of historic wall, from SW



Figure 20. Looking W, with the site/historic wall on the right



Figure 21. Historic wall, from SE



Figure 22. Brick-built passageway into the site, from E



Figure 23. Trench left by of removal of historic wall, from E



Figure 24. North section of wall trench



Figure 25. Wall trench, from NW, with base of return wall