



# Proposed Batching Plant Site St Mary's Airport, Isles of Scilly

## Archaeological recording



**Cornwall Archaeological Unit**



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We would like to thank Finbarr Murphy of Lagan Construction and Ned Rogers for their help on site.

The Project Manager was Charles Johns. The project archaeologist was Graham Britton, the soil samples were sieved by Hayley Goacher, the pottery was washed by Freya Lawson-Jones and marked and listed by Steve Hebditch; Carl Thorpe compiled the finds summary report.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the Cornwall Archaeological Unit and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

## **Freedom of Information Act**

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## **Cover illustration**

Proposed Batching Plant Site viewed from the south (photo: CAU)

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## **Abbreviations**

CAU	Cornwall Archaeological Unit
HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
HEPAO	Historic Environment Planning Advice Officer, Cornwall Council
OD	Ordnance Datum – height above mean sea level at Newlyn
OS	Ordnance Survey
UPD	Updated Project Design
URS	URS Infrastructure and Environment UK Limited

## 1 Summary

In March 2014 the Cornwall Archaeological Unit carried out archaeological recording during groundworks for the proposed temporary batching plant site at St Mary's Airport, Isles of Scilly (NGR SV 9178 1078) for by URS Infrastructure and Environment UK Limited.

An initial watching brief was undertaken during the soil strip and a concentration of prehistoric pottery was identified in layer underlying the ploughsoil. No other archaeological deposits, features or structures were revealed except for a linear stone feature in the middle of the field which was parallel to the to the existing field boundaries and interpreted as a removed early modern field boundary.

During two days of additional fieldwork to investigate the context of the pottery, 279 sherds were recovered from a layer of dark greyish brown sandy silty clay filling a shallow hollow in the natural substrate, as well as two stone muller fragments (for grinding cereal), a 'pivot' stone and a possible hammerstone.

Immediately to the south-west of the pottery spread was a shallow, sub-circular pit cut into the natural substrate. The pit was filled with medium sized stones including a muller fragment and a shaped rectangular stone with worn groove on one side. A small fragment of daub with a wattle impression was also recovered from this feature.

No other archaeological features or deposits such as postholes, hearths, occupation layers or midden deposits were identified.

The pottery has been provisionally dated to the Middle Bronze Age (c 1500 – 1100 BC) or the earlier part of the Later Bronze Age (c 1100 – 800 BC) and comprises a number of domestic vessels. Broken ceramics were often deposited near prehistoric houses in Scilly and it is likely that this pottery and worked stone indicates the presence of a settlement in the close vicinity. The worked stones and piece of daub in the pit may indicate an element of deliberate structured deposition.

The value of the finds from this site lies in the fact that the 279 sherds of pottery appear to have been broken very soon before deposition and that they have internal residues which should provide secure radiocarbon dating. The pottery, from initial examination, appears to date to a point in time within a broad period of 700 years (1500-800 cal BC), which radiocarbon dating would be able to determine. This will help further prehistoric ceramic studies in Scilly.

The associated tools indicate domestic activity. Most domestic sites on prehistoric Scilly were used over a long period of time with deposits containing intermixed artefacts which originated at different dates. The Airport Batching Plant site provides a rare opportunity to date and study a small assemblage which can be tied to a single point in time.

In addition, most known prehistoric settlements on Scilly are distributed around the coastlines of the islands where excavation has tended to be restricted to narrow strips close to the modern cliff edge. There has been comparatively little archaeological study of the interior of the islands and this site provides an opportunity to look at domestic activities from a site in a rather different environmental setting.

Because of this research potential it is considered that the results of the Airport Batching Plant site archaeological recording merit wider dissemination than just an archive level report. Therefore, in addition to this archive report, it is recommended the results should be published as a short article in an academic journal, for example, *Cornish Archaeology*, the annual journal of the Cornwall Archaeological Society.





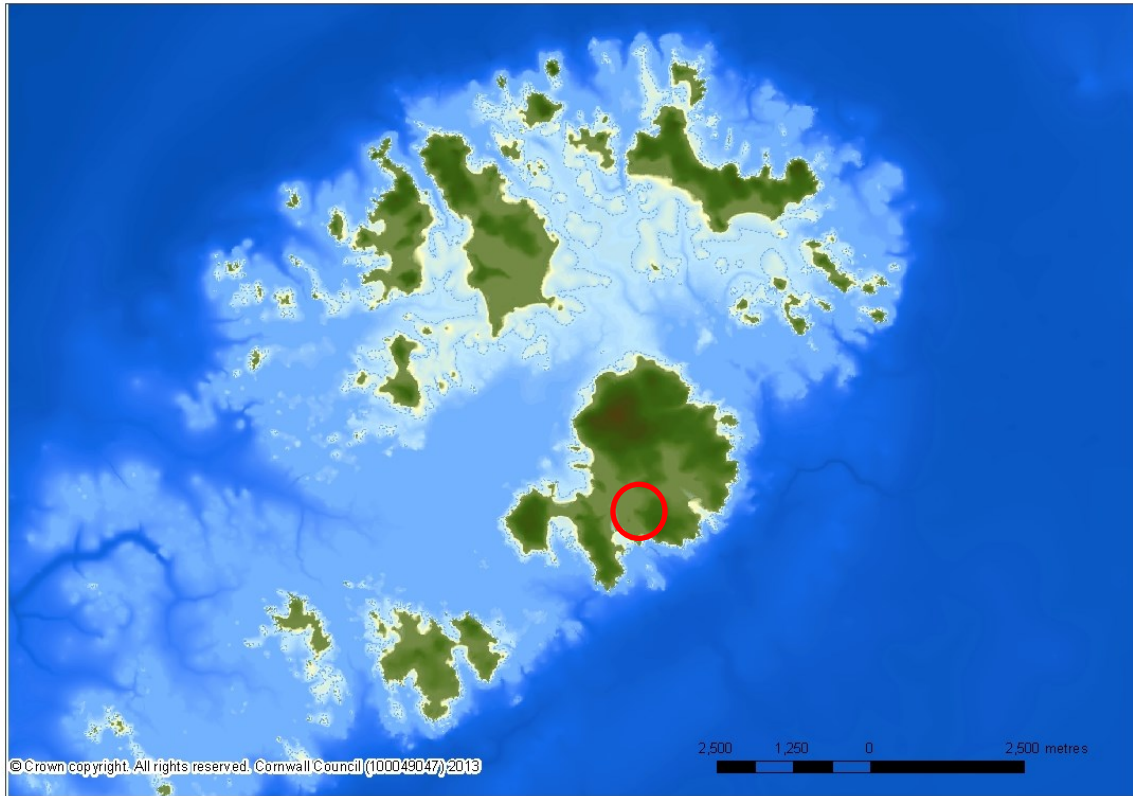


Fig 1 Location map

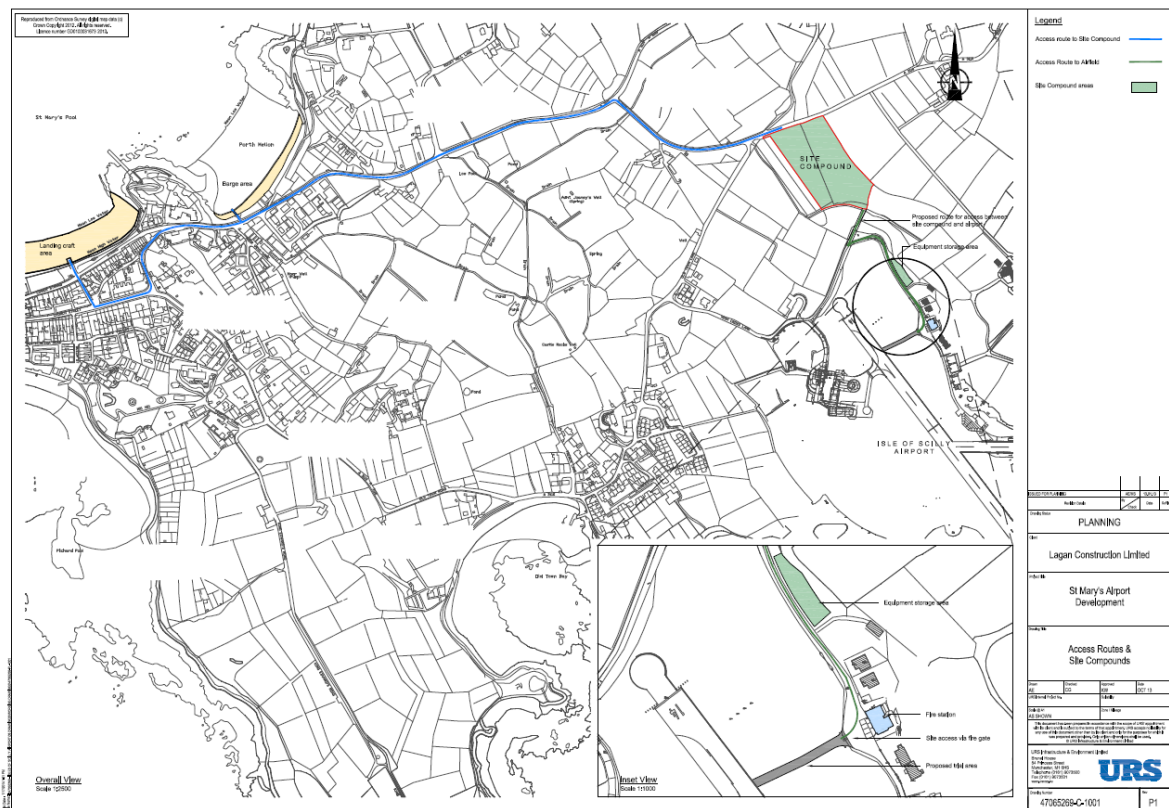


Fig 2 Site extent

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Project background

In March 2014 the Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU—formerly Historic Environment Projects, Cornwall Council) were commissioned by URS Infrastructure and Environment UK Limited (URS) to carry out archaeological recording during groundworks at the proposed temporary batching plant site at St Mary's Airport, Isles of Scilly (Figs 1 and 2) in order to fulfil an archaeological planning condition that had been placed upon the site

### 2.2 Objectives

The principal objective of the archaeological fieldwork was to satisfy the archaeological planning condition and ensure that any archaeological deposits that were encountered were recorded.

The specific objectives were to:

- identify and record any archaeological deposits features and artefacts which were present within the development;
- characterise and date any anomalies or finds recovered;
- and produce a report on the findings of the works.

### 2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the methodology set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Nick Finch, Senior Archaeological Consultant for URS (see Appendix 4).

#### 2.3.1 Fieldwork

An initial watching brief was carried out during soil stripping over an area of approximately 0.8ha between 10 and 12 March 2014.

Two days of additional fieldwork were undertaken on 24 and 25 March to investigate the context of a marked concentration of prehistoric pottery in a small area of the site

#### 2.3.2 Post-fieldwork

The finds were washed, where appropriate, and marked and catalogued.

One bulk soil sample was taken (sample <1>. This was sieved and the residue collected on a 500-micron mesh and the float on a 250-micron mesh. The float has been retained for further assessment and analysis.

## 3 Location and setting

### 3.1 Site description

The site is located to the north of the airport in agricultural land between Old Town and Higher Moors at NGR SV 9178 1078 (Fig 2).

### 3.2 Geology and soils

As elsewhere in Scilly, the underlying geology is made up of granite, the natural substrate is weathered periglacial head, known locally as *ram* which is typically overlain on St Mary's by dark and peaty soils.

## 4 Archaeological and historical background

The Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record (HER) records three Scheduled Monuments within 500m of the airport batching plant site and numerous HER record sites in the vicinity.

The archaeology of Scilly is of international importance with evidence on land and below the present high water mark indicating that Scilly has been settled for at least four thousand years.

There are 238 Scheduled Monuments in the islands. Many of these Scheduled sites cover extensive areas on the islands, containing over 900 individual monuments, representing different periods. There are concentrations of prehistoric ritual and burial monuments, field systems and houses, cist grave cemeteries and Romano-British settlements and shrines.

Over the last 400 years a series of military installations has developed from Tudor forts and castles, Civil War batteries, eighteenth century and late nineteenth century defences, to World War II pillboxes and airfield installations.

The Historic Landscape Assessment for Scilly defined the farmland within which the site lies as Anciently Enclosed Land, that is land that was enclosed before prior to the nineteenth century, which includes field systems which are as early as the Bronze Age in origin or, theoretically, as late as the eighteenth century (Land Use Consultants 1996). The c1880 and 1907 OS maps indicate that the application site had been subdivided into smaller enclosures - bulb strips - for the cultivation of flowers.

## 5 Archaeological results

The ploughsoil (1) was mechanically stripped to a depth of 0.5m across the site, this meant that in some places the natural *ram* was exposed but in other the base of the ploughsoil remained. A number of rectangular foundation pits for concrete bases were cut into the *ram*, these were observed and did not contain any archaeological features, finds or deposits.

A concentration of prehistoric pottery was identified at SV 91806 10736 underlying the ploughsoil (1) at a depth of 0.5m, although no other archaeological deposits, features or structures were revealed except for pit [5] (see below) and a linear north-south aligned stone feature in the middle of the field. This was parallel to the existing field boundaries and interpreted as a removed early modern field boundary, although it is not shown on the c 1880 or 1907 OS maps.

The assemblage of 279 pottery sherds was recovered from a layer of dark greyish brown sandy silty clay (2) some 3m long by 2m wide 0.12m deep which filled a shallow hollow in the *ram* [3] (Figs 3, 4 and 7). The edges of this hollow were very poorly-defined and it was not possible to determine whether it was natural or man-made feature. Context (2) also contained a number of loose stones including two stone muller fragments (for grinding cereals), a 'pivot' stone, flints and a possible pebble hammerstone.

Immediately to the south-west of the pottery spread was a shallow, sub-circular pit [5] measuring 0.9m by 0.7m by 0.1m deep cut into the *ram* (Figs 4, 6 and 10). The pit was packed with medium sized stones (4), mainly rubble but including a muller fragment (Fig 12) and a shaped rectangular stone with worn groove on one side (Figs 9 and 11). A small fragment of daub with a wattle impression was also recovered from this feature.

No other archaeological features or deposits such as postholes, hearths or occupation layers were identified. Layer (2) only contained pottery and stones and did not include any other occupation debris such as limpet shells or animal bone although a small bag

of charcoal/charred macrofossils was recovered as a flot during sieving of bulk soil samples from this context.

## **6 Finds summary report**

By Carl Thorpe

A total of 308 artefacts were recovered. Pottery is the largest group, 284 sherds in total, some 92% of the collection. There is also stone, flint and daub within the assemblage.

Six artefacts were unstratified coming from topsoil stripping or recovered from the spoil heaps. The majority of the artefacts were collected as tray finds by context. The total number of finds from each context are summarised in Appendix 3.

The earliest identifiable artefacts recovered are the four flints from context (2): a single core, two retouched flint flakes, and a burnt flake. All are derived from beach pebbles and could be Neolithic or Bronze Age in date.

Bronze Age ceramics (281 sherds) recovered from contexts u/s and (2) form the largest proportion of the finds assemblage; 279 sherds coming from context (2). The sherds are fresh with sharp edges and little evidence for abrasion suggesting that they have not been disturbed much by later activity, and are within the area they were deposited. The fabric granitic fabric is typical of Scillonian pottery and suggests local manufacture.

Seventeen rim sherds are present, coming possibly from three vessels, two being thick walled, with one with much thinner walls and distinctive rim shape. It is just possible that allowing for the variability in manufacture of hand-made pots, that the two thick walled vessels may actually just be parts of the same vessel. The exteriors of the vessels have been smoothed to provide a nice finish, however there is no decoration. One of the thick walled vessels also had domed lugs, one of which was recovered. At this stage it is not possible to determine the shape of the vessels, though the thick walled one certainly had a thick, flat base, or if even the proportion of each vessel represented in the assemblage, though initial examination suggests they are incomplete. An unusual feature on the thick walled vessels is the presence of small perforations through the thickness of the pot that appear to have been done pre-firing. Six sherds showed evidence for perforations. It is at this stage uncertain what these are. They may be decorative, or a method to thread cord to allow the vessel to be suspended, or a lid to be firmly secured. Sooting on the exterior and residues on the interior suggests probable use as cooking vessels.

The plain undecorated nature of the vessels favours a Scillonian Middle Bronze Age date (c 1500 – 1100 BC), though it is just possible that they may date to the Late Bronze Age (c 1100 – 800 BC).

The stonework suggests various activities, the large mullers indicate grinding on saddle querns (possibly grain) (e.g. Fig 12) while there is one distinct hammerstone utilised for pounding. A whetstone indicates the sharpening of tools probably blades, or needles of some kind. There is one large flattened stone with a groove like depression running across its surface (Figs 9 and 11). Unfortunately this surface has been damaged, there is a possibility though that this may be a mould stone, although there is no evidence for it having been heat affected, so this remains tentative. Finally there is a block of granite with an hour glass perforation. This could be a pivot stone, or just possible a broken weight of some kind. All of this stonework is likely to be of the same date as the pottery.

The fragments of daub from contexts (2) and (4) hint at a structure of some kind made of this material, perhaps associated with a roundhouse or perhaps an oven or a windbreak?

The sherds from the medieval and modern periods come from topsoil deposits and just indicate use of the field at that time, perhaps with some midden material being scattered across it to improve fertility.

## **7 Conclusions/discussion**

The pottery has been provisionally dated to the Middle Bronze Age (c 1500 – 1100 BC) or Later Bronze Age (1100 – 800 BC) and comprises a number of domestic vessels. Broken ceramics were often deposited near prehistoric houses in Scilly and it is possible that this pottery and worked stone indicates the presence of a settlement in the close vicinity. The worked stones and piece of daub in pit [5] may indicate an element of deliberate structured deposition.

A possible parallel for hollow [3] may be feature [392] from Trenowah, St Austell (Johns 2008, 44). This slight hollow did not possess the structural attributes of a house or contain the material remains of a working area and because of its character, the quantity of decorated potsherds associated with it and white quartz fragments in the basal fill of one of the two pits cut through its floor, it was interpreted a 'ritual' hollow, located at the point on the hill slope where the sea first becomes visible. Broadly comparable with the Trenowah example are two ritual hollows, [136] / [2021] and [2765] from Trethellan Farm, Newquay, which are of comparable date although deeper and with a more complex stratigraphy (Nowakowski 1991, 86-96).

However hollow [3] was not as well-defined as those at Trenowah or Trethellan and it is possible that layer (2) simply represents a residual Bronze Age land surface in a natural dip in the *ram*. Certainly hollow [3] and pit [5] appeared very truncated.

The digging of pits and burying of pottery and other artefacts and deposits is a well-attested phenomenon in the British Isles during the later prehistoric period (*cf* Richards and Thomas 1984; Bradley 1990; Bradley 2007; Cole and Jones 2002-3; Jones and Reed 2006; Anderson-Whymark and Thomas 2011) and extensive archaeological evidence has been discovered in Cornwall for the curation and 'structured deposition' of broken potsherds, worked stone and other artefacts (e.g. Gossip and Jones 2007).

Pit [5] from the batching plant site is an important addition to the growing number of prehistoric pits which have been identified in Scilly. Two pits excavated at East Porth, Sampson, in 1971 contained the largest assemblage of Neolithic pottery so far found in Scilly as well as some carefully selected stones and a fragment of pumice (Neal forthcoming), Neolithic pottery and quartz fragments were recovered from a pit at Old Quay, St Martin's in 2012 (Garrow and Sturt, pers comm) and two isolated pits from Kallimay Point St Agnes each contained nested Bronze Age vessels (Johns and Quinnell, forthcoming).

Most known prehistoric settlements on Scilly are distributed around the coastlines of the islands, where excavation has been restricted to narrow strips close to the modern cliff edge. There has been comparatively little archaeological study of the interior of the islands although an evaluation of geophysical anomalies revealed evidence of Late Bronze Age settlement activity at Normandy Farm, St Mary's (Mulville *et al* 2007, 26-35) while excavations in 2009-10 revealed a Late Bronze Age settlement near Higher Town, St Agnes (Taylor and Johns in prep).

## **8 Recommendations**

This section outlines recommendations for a programme of further work on the archive produced by the archaeological recording carried out at the Airport Batching Plant site. Firstly, a review of relevant research aims within the Scilly Historic Environment Research Framework (SHERF) is presented. This is followed by specific recommendations to carry the project forward.

### **8.1 Research aims**

This section will deal with the research potential of results of the archaeological recording with particular reference to SHERF research aims (Johns (ed) 2012).

#### **Research Aim 8: 'Address our lack of understanding of key transitional periods'**

'Key transitional periods include:

- The Middle/Late Bronze Age transition.
- The Late Bronze Age/Iron Age transition.

#### **Research Aim 12: 'Widen our understanding of Scillonian material culture of all periods'**

*Prehistoric and Romano-British Ceramics*

9. 'Any sequence of types in Scillonian Bronze Age pottery from settlements is currently unclear, largely because the largest and most important site, Nornour, appears to have much material redeposited in structured contexts. Any future opportunities of examining, with supporting dates and petrology, pottery from settlement sites with short phases of occupation will be very important.'
11. 'Material from the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age is currently sparse on the Islands. Full investigation and publication of any sites found with material of these dates is important.'

#### **Research Aim 14: 'Increase the use and improve the targeting of scientific dating'**

4. 'The Late Bronze Age is poorly defined chronologically for several reasons. Burials with accompanying grave goods are very rare, in contrast to the situation in the Early and Middle Bronze Age, perhaps because excarnation was practised increasingly frequently. Pottery styles become less distinctive, and pottery use may have been less common. There is a lack of radiocarbon dates and a lack of a systematic collation of those that do exist for this period.'

The value of the finds from the Airport Batching Plant site in helping to address **Research Aims 8, 12 and 14** lies in the fact that the 279 sherds of pottery from context (2) appear to have been broken very soon before deposition and that they have internal residues which should provide secure radiocarbon dating. The pottery, from initial examination appears to belong either within the Middle Bronze Age or within the earlier part of the Late Bronze Age, a broad period between c 1500 and 800 BC. It was deposited at a single point in time which radiocarbon dating will determine. This will help further prehistoric ceramic studies in Scilly.

The associated tools indicate domestic activity. Most domestic sites on prehistoric Scilly were used over a long period of time with deposits containing a mixture of artefacts which originated at different dates: on such sites radiocarbon dating for a context may involve material of different dates. The Airport Batching Plant site provides a rare opportunity to date and study a small assemblage which can be tied to a single point in time. This will allow the date to be transferred with confidence to the artefacts within the context and will be important in helping to understand the Bronze Age ceramic

sequence for Scilly and the development of settlement in the interior of the islands during this period.

Another research consideration is that known Scillonian Bronze Age sites are situated in low lying positions close to the modern coast line. The Airport Batching Plant site lies towards the bottom of a hillslope in an inland location and thus provides an opportunity to look at domestic activities within a contrasting setting.

**Research Aim 20: 'Improve our understanding of prehistoric and Romano-British settlements, monuments and landscapes'**

12. 'Structured deposition – structured deposition and 'middening' (the ritualistic re-working and re-deposition of midden deposits) have scarcely been considered in regard to prehistoric settlement in Scilly and would be rewarding subjects for future work'.

The stonework in pit [4] is likely to have been deposited deliberately and there may be evidence for re-deposition of layer (2) which contains most of the pottery and some of the stonework. Further study of the artefacts, deposits and features will help address this research question.

**Research Aim 31: 'Improve our understanding of agricultural intensification and diversification in later prehistory, including establishment of a chronology for prehistoric field systems'**

1. 'There is a need to better understand the chronology and regionality of crop diversification and intensification of production, which appears to take place from around the Middle Bronze Age onwards. Well-dated assemblages from a range of settlement contexts are required to examine introductions of new crops and associated wild species.'

Further study of the environmental data from the Airport Batching Plant site (plant macrofossils and charcoal), tied into the radiocarbon dates from the pottery residues, will improve our understanding of the environment and, potentially, agriculture in Bronze Age Scilly.

## **8.2 Further work**

Because of this research potential of the data it is considered that the results of the Airport Batching Plant site archaeological recording merit wider dissemination than just an archive level report. Therefore, in addition to this archive report, it is recommended the results should be published as a short article in an academic journal, e.g. *Cornish Archaeology*, the annual journal of the Cornwall Archaeological Society, following a programme of targeted Analysis.

### **8.2.1 Analyses**

Following the production of an updated project design (UPD), significant classes of material (artefacts, and environmental samples) will be sent to specialists for analyses. This will involve the analysis of stratigraphic data, artefacts, and environmental samples, and a programme of scientific dating, to be governed by the UPD agreed with the client URS and the Historic Environment Planning Advice Officer (HEPAO), Cornwall Council.

### **8.2.2 Final publication**

The results will be published as a short article in *Cornish Archaeology* the annual journal of the Cornwall Archaeological Society.

## 9 References

### 9.1 Primary sources

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### 9.2 Publications

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## **10 Project archive**

The HE project number is **146357**

The project's documentary, photographic and drawn archive is housed at the offices of Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, Fal Building, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY. The contents of this archive are as listed below:

1. A project file containing site records and notes, project correspondence and administration and copies of documentary/cartographic source material (file no 145357).
2. Digital photographs stored in the directory ..\Images\Sites\Scilly\St Mary's\Airport Batching Plant Site Recording 146357
3. English Heritage/ADS OASIS online reference: cornwall2-178377

This report text is held in digital form as: ..\HE Projects\Sites\Scilly\St Mary's Airport Batching Plant Site Recording 145357

Artefacts and environmental material retrieved during the project are stored temporarily at the HE Projects Finds Archive Store, Cardrew Industrial Estate, Redruth. The site code is PC 14.



Fig 3 Location of pottery spread

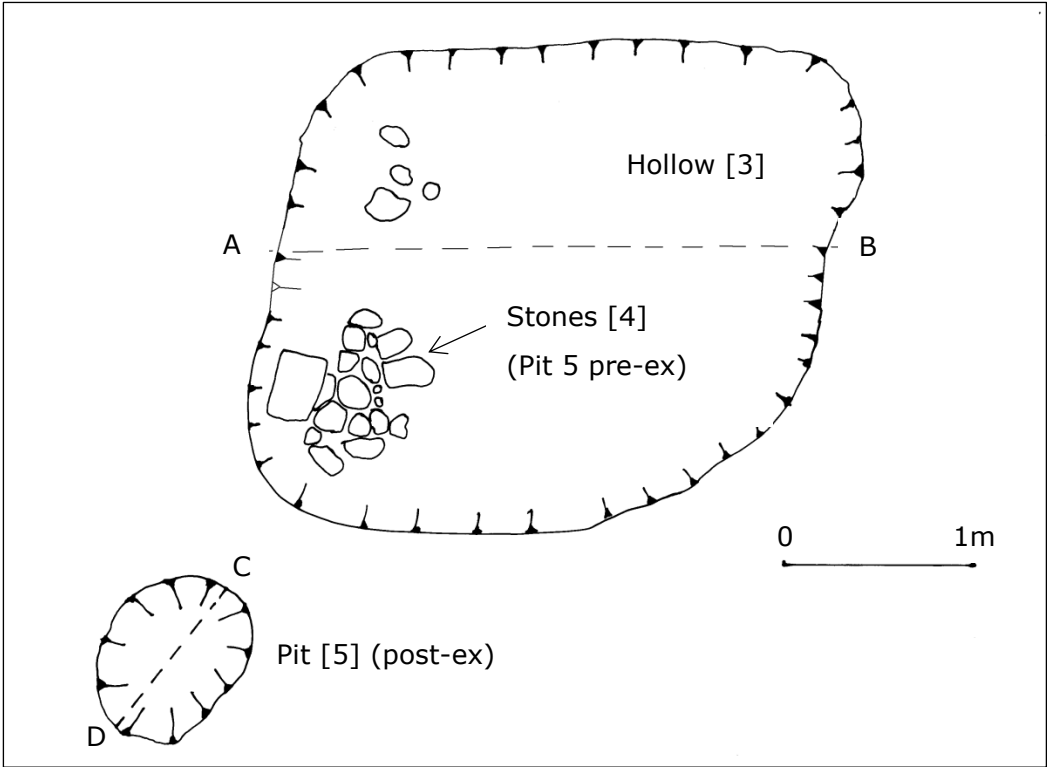


Fig 4 Plan of features [3] and [5] (north is at the top of the page)

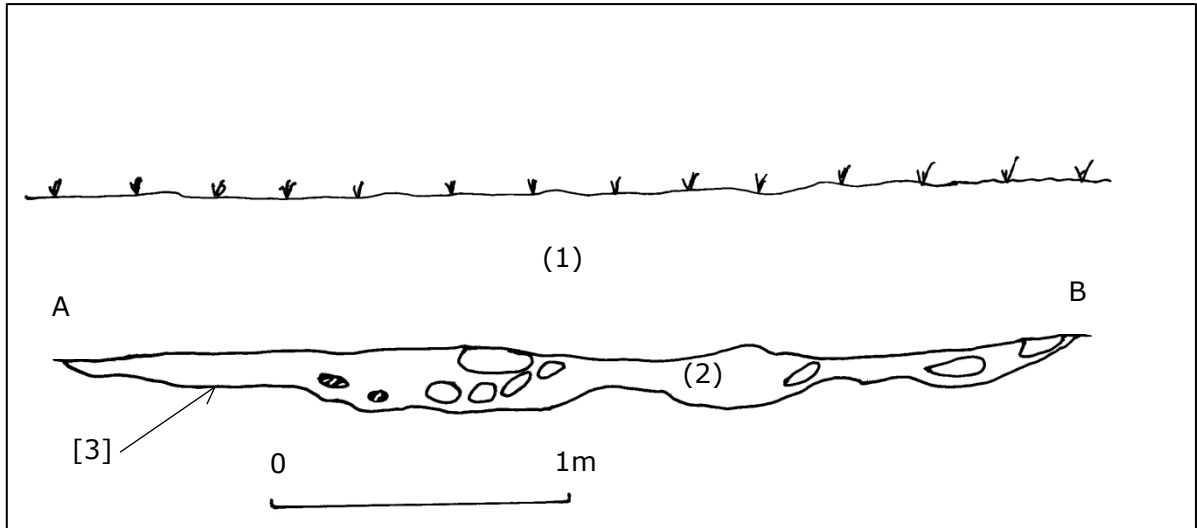


Fig 5 South facing section through hollow [3]

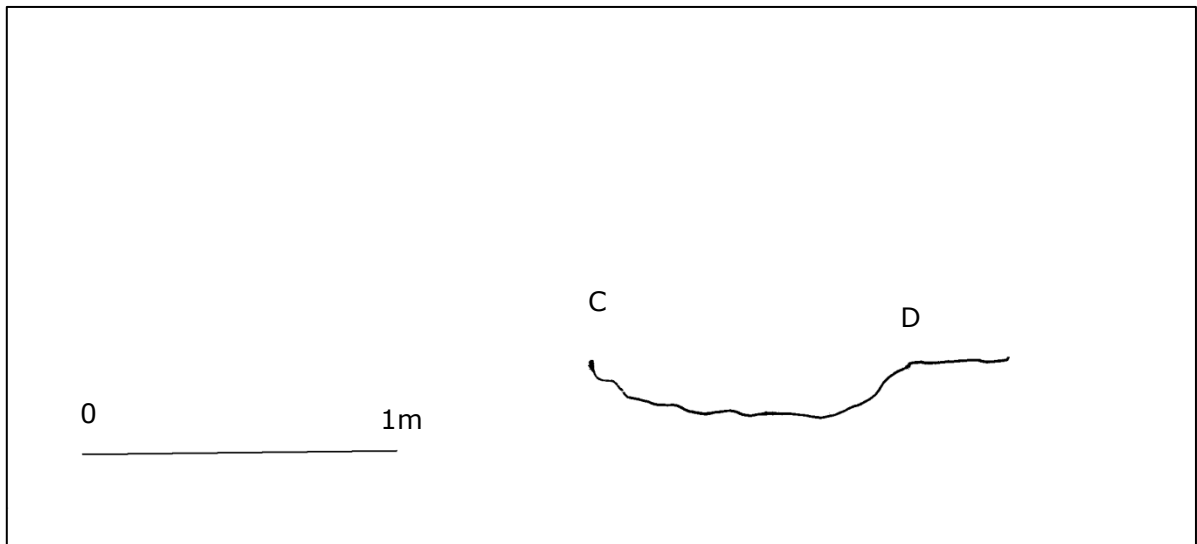


Fig 6 north-east to south-west profile across pit [5]



*Fig 7 Section through layer (2)/hollow [3] viewed from the north-east*



*Fig 8 In situ pottery sherds*



*Fig 9 Stone infill [4], note the shaped rectangular stone in the foreground*



*Fig 10 Pit [5] after excavation*



*Fig 11 Shaped rectangular stone with groove from pit [5]*



*Fig 12 Granite muller from pit [5]*

## Appendix 1: List of contexts

Context Number	Description
(1)	Ploughsoil – very dark brown sandy clay 0.5m deep.
(2)	Dark greyish brown sandy silty clay containing a large quantity of prehistoric pottery and stones.
[3]	Shallow, irregular hollow, 3m long x 2m wide x 0.12m deep filled by (2)
(4)	Stone infill of pit [5].
[5]	Shallow, sub-circular pit 0.8m long x 0.7m deep x 0.1m deep.
Natural substrate	Hard dark yellowish brown sandy clay (ram).

## Appendix 2: List of samples

Sample Number	Sampled Context	Quantity (litres)	Description
<1>	(2)	10	Dark greyish brown sandy silty clay containing a large quantity of prehistoric pottery and stones

## Appendix 3: Finds catalogue

### Context No: Unstratified

MATERIAL	WEIGHT (g)	NO OF ITEMS	OBJECT NO	INTERIM BOX NO
Pottery				
Bronze Age	120g	2		1
Medieval	4g	1		1
Modern	49g	2		1
Stonework				
Pebble	18g	1		2

2 sherds Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. Thick walled. Middle Bronze Age?

1 bodysherd Cornish medieval Coarseware. Twelfth / thirteenth century.

1 sherd Modern terracotta (possibly land drain). Nineteenth / twentieth century.

1 sherd Modern Glazed Stoneware. Nineteenth / twentieth century.

1 water rounded pebble.

### Context No: (2)

MATERIAL	WEIGHT (g)	NO OF ITEMS	OBJECT NO	INTERIM BOX NO
Pottery				
Bronze Age	8915g	279		1-3
Stonework				
Flint	62g	4		2
Granite	9642g	4		2, 4-5
Pebble	39g	2		2

Clay				
Daub	22g	7		1
Charcoal	1g	2		

17 rim sherds Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. Possibly 3 vessels, two thick walled, one thin walled. Middle Bronze Age?

1 sherd Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. Thick walled with groove on interior. Middle Bronze Age?

1 sherd Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. Thick walled with dome shaped lug. Middle Bronze Age?

6 sherds Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. Thick walled with evidence for pre-firing perforation. Middle Bronze Age?

11 sherds Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. All have internal residue. Middle Bronze Age?

17 basal angle and basal sherds. Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. Middle Bronze Age?

226 sherds Prehistoric pottery. Granitic fabric. Most thick walled though some came from a thinner walled vessel. Middle Bronze Age?

7 daub fragments. Granitic fabric. Prehistoric?

2 small charcoal fragments.

4 flints. These include 1 core, 2 retouched flint flakes, and 1 burnt flake). Prehistoric.

1 flattened elongated micro-granitic cobble (broken) utilised as a muller with two distinct wear facets on larger flatter surfaces.

1 granitic cobble (broken) utilised as a muller with one distinct convex wear surface.

1 micro-granitic cobble utilised as a hammerstone, with percussion marks on flattened surface, and pecked finger grips.

1 elongated quartz pebble (broken) utilised as a whetstone.

1 flattened sub rectangular water rounded tourmalinised granitic block (broken) with bi-conical (hour glass) shaped perforation. Broken pivot stone?

2 small water rounded pebbles (1 of quartz).

**Context No: (4)**

MATERIAL	WEIGHT (g)	NO OF ITEMS	OBJECT NO	INTERIM BOX NO
Stonework				
Granite	12000g	1		6
Pebble	4000g	1		7
Clay				
Daub	37g	1		1

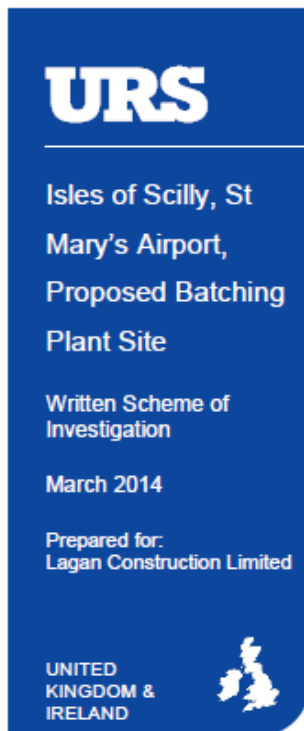
1 daub fragment. Granitic fabric. With distinct lath impression. Prehistoric?

1 granitic cobble (broken) utilised as a muller with one distinct convex wear surface.

1 large granitic block, flattened, sub rectangular in shape with a shallow groove running across one of the larger flat surfaces. Unfortunately this face has been partially spalled so determining the full shape of this depression is not possible. Possibly a mould though there is no evidence for it having been affected.



## **Appendix 4: Written Scheme of Investigation**





Isles of Scilly, St Mary's Airport, Proposed Batching Plant Site

REVISION SCHEDULE					
Rev	Date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	2014	Issue 1	Nick Finch Senior Archaeological Consultant	Andrew Copp Senior Heritage Consultant	Annette Roe Technical Director

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WRITTEN SCHEME OF  
INVESTIGATION  
March 2014



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The conclusions and recommendations contained in this Report are based upon information provided by others and upon the assumption that all relevant information has been provided by those parties from whom it has been requested and that such information is accurate. Information obtained by URS has not been independently verified by URS, unless otherwise stated in the Report.

The methodology adopted and the sources of information used by URS in providing its services are outlined in this Report. The work described in this Report was undertaken in March 2014 and is based on the conditions encountered and the information available during the said period of time. The scope of this Report and the services are accordingly factually limited by these circumstances.

Where assessments of works or costs identified in this Report are made, such assessments are based upon the information available at the time and where appropriate are subject to further investigations or information which may become available.

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Where field investigations are carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to meet the stated objectives of the services. The results of any measurements taken may vary spatially or with time and further confirmatory measurements should be made after any significant delay in issuing this Report.

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**Figure 1 – Site Location**



## 1 INTRODUCTION

URS have been commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological works required prior to the development of a batching plant site at St. Mary's Airport, Isles of Scilly. The archaeological fieldwork will comprise a watching brief to be undertaken prior to the main works associated with the proposed development.

This WSI and accompanying drawings detail the requirements and detailed methodology for the watching brief within the proposed batching plant site which will be undertaken by an archaeological contractor (the 'Contractor'). The archaeological fieldwork, post-survey assessment, archiving, analysis and preparation of the fieldwork report text will be undertaken by the 'Contractor', unless otherwise specified in this WSI.

This WSI outlines the methodology to be used for the watching brief and has been approved by Cornwall County Council (Phil Markam).

### 1.1 Site Description

The site is located at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SV 9178 1078 and is located to the north of the airport in agricultural land between Old Town and Higher Moors (Figure 1).

### 1.2 Planning Background

Planning application P-14-004 was submitted on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and was for the temporary use of agricultural land for use as a mobile batching plant and construction compound with temporary residential accommodation for works associated with the upgrade of St Mary's Airport. The archaeological condition is below:

(1) No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- A. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
- B. The programme for post investigation assessment
- C. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- D. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- E. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- F. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

(2) No demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (1).

(3) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (1) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.



The applicant, their agents and any subcontractors should note that where there are conditions requiring satisfaction in advance of the commencement of works on site; it is the responsibility of the applicant to liaise with the planning officer concerned to ensure that the timetabling of these works is managed.

### 1.3 Archaeological & Historical Background

The Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record (HER) records that the application site has three Scheduled monuments within 500m and numerous HER record sites in the vicinity.

The archaeology of Scilly is of international importance with evidence on land and below the present high water mark indicating that Scilly has been settled for at least four thousand years.

There are 238 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Many of these scheduled sites cover extensive areas on the islands, containing over 900 individual monuments, representing different periods. There are concentrations of prehistoric ritual and burial monuments, field systems and houses, cist grave cemeteries and Romano-British settlements and shrines.

Over the last four hundred years a series of military installations has developed from Tudor forts and castles, Civil War batteries, 18th century and late 19th century defences, to World War II pillboxes and airfield installations.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

The principal objective of the archaeological fieldwork is to satisfy the archaeological planning condition that has been placed upon this site and ensure that any archaeological deposits that are encountered are recorded.

The specific objectives of the watching brief are:

- to identify and record any archaeological deposits features and artefacts which may be present within the development;
- characterise and date any anomalies or finds recovered; and to produce a report on the findings of the works.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Watching Brief

The watching brief will involve the observation of any groundworks associated with the development including topsoil stripping, the excavation of foundation and service trenches and any other ground disturbance.

All groundworks associated within the confines of the proposed batching plant site (Figure 2) will be carried out under archaeological supervision and the working method between the 'Contractor' and the principal contractor on site will be agreed prior to commencement of the groundworks.

The archaeological watching brief will be carried out in accordance with this Specification (and any further instructions from URS). This specification has regard to guidance issued by the Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2008) and the Code of Conduct (2012) along with other best practise guidance (Appendix 1).

A 'Contractor' will be present on site as necessary from the first day of the groundworks. The 'Contractor' will undertake any necessary health and safety training or inductions given by the Principal Contractor on site prior to starting on the watching brief. Once the groundworks have



been undertaken and all archaeological deposits, features and artefacts encountered have been recorded fully the archaeological watching brief will be complete.

Groundworks will be undertaken using suitable mechanical equipment such as a 360 degree tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. A toothed bucket or breaker may only be used temporarily if concrete, tarmac or other hard standing are encountered. A toothless bucket is to be used at all other times.

If archaeological deposits are identified, during the groundworks the 'Contractor' will be given sufficient time to clean and record the remains as appropriate. The watching brief should not cause any undue delay to the works.

If extensive or significant archaeological deposits and/or features are identified the 'Contractor' will notify URS immediately. Additional archaeologists may be deployed, subject to agreement from the Principal Archaeologist, URS.

The 'Contractor' shall not excavate any area beyond those scheduled for the proposed works.

The areas affected by the groundworks (even if it revealed no archaeological features) will be recorded on a suitable base map/ development plan and the stratigraphy and depth of excavation will be recorded. Details on recording procedures where significant archaeology is recovered, are detailed in the section below.

All non-modern artefacts will be retained. If appropriate all 'small' finds will be recorded three dimensionally. If artefact scatters are encountered these should be also recorded three dimensionally. Bulk finds will be collected by context. Finds will be stored in controlled conditions where appropriate. All artefacts will be retained, cleaned, labelled and stored as detailed in the guidelines of the UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservators). Should any complex or significant discoveries be encountered URS should be contacted immediately to discuss the situation in consultation with the county archaeologist.

#### *Environmental Sampling*

The English Heritage Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science will be notified of the commencement of the project and will be consulted regarding the sampling strategy to be employed at the site. Provision will also be made for the recovery of material suitable for scientific dating.

Any samples taken must come from appropriately cleaned surfaces, be collected with clean tools and be placed in clean containers. They will be adequately recorded and labelled and a register of all samples will be kept. Once the samples have been obtained they should be stored appropriately in a secure location prior to being sent to the appropriate specialist.

Should human remains be discovered during the course of the watching brief the remains will be covered, protected, and left in situ in the first instance. The removal of human remains will take place in accordance with a Ministry of Justice licence and under the appropriate Environmental Health regulations and the Burial Act 1857 Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857 – The regulation of the exhumation of human remains. In such an event the 'Contractor' will notify URS immediately who will inform the H. M. Coroner for the district.

### **3.2 Recording**

A full graphic, photographic and written record of the findings will be made. Individual contexts will be recorded on separate contexts sheets within a context register. Plans shall be drawn to



a 1:50 or 1:20 scale and section drawings to a scale of 1:20 or 1:10 as appropriate. Drawn records will be related to Ordnance Survey datum and published boundaries where appropriate.

Photography (colour transparency and monochrome negative photographs) will be taken using a minimum format of 35 mm. In addition to records of archaeological features, a number of general site photographs will also be taken to give an overview of the site. Particular attention should be paid to obtaining shots suitable for displays, exhibitions and other publicity. The photographer of the general shots taken for this purpose should ensure that all members of staff included in the photographs are wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Digital photography may be used to supplement the formal photographic record, for example to produce images to illustrate the report or for publicity.

Digital images should be captured on a SLR camera at a minimum resolution of 10 mega-pixels. The camera must be set at the largest file size and highest picture quality. Images are acceptable as high quality .jpg files or camera .raw files. If the .raw setting is used the archive must include a set of images saved as .tiff files as manufacturer specific specialist software may be required to open the .raw files.

## 4 REPORTING & ARCHIVE

### 4.1 Reporting Requirements

Immediately after completion of the watching brief any finds will be processed. Each category of find or environmental material will be examined by a suitably qualified 'Contractor' or specialist, if necessary.

An interim report detailing the findings of each phase of works will be submitted within 1 week of the completion of fieldwork. Following this a full report detailing each phase of the works will be produced which will include the following:

- a non-technical summary;
- site location;
- archaeological and historical background;
- aims and objectives;
- methodology;
- results;
- discussion;
- general location and detailed plans showing the areas of excavation/ground disturbance (to a known scale);
- detailed plans and sections if appropriate (to a known scale);
- a cross-referenced index of the project archive; and
- general and detailed photographs, as appropriate.

One copy of the complete report will be submitted to URS as a draft. In finalising the report the comments of URS and the Principal Archaeologist will be taken into account.





Two bound copies, one unbound copy and a digital version of the report will be required within one week of the receipt of URS comments on the draft report.

Electronic files will be provided in Word for Windows and pdf format.

URS will submit one bound copy and a digital (pdf) copy on CD to the County Historic Environments Record.

#### 4.2 Archiving

The 'Contractor' will deposit the archive with an appropriate depository which must be identified in advance of the project. It is the responsibility of the 'Contractor' to adhere to any clauses the said depository may have.

The Historic Environment Record (HER) is currently participating in the OASIS scheme (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigation scheme). As part of this the 'Contractor' is required to fill in an OASIS data capture form on completion of each the project, and on deposition of the final archive. Details of the progress, copies of the form and guidelines for its completion can be found at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>. Failing this, the 'Contractor' shall contact the Archaeology Data Service directly for further advice.

#### 4.3 Copyright

The 'Contractor' shall assign copyright in all reports and documentation/ images produced as part of this project to URS. The 'Contractor' retains the right to be identified as the author/ originator of the material. This applies to all aspects of the project. It is the responsibility of the 'Contractor' to obtain such rights from sub-contracted specialists.

The 'Contractor' may apply in writing to use/ disseminate any of the project archive or documentation (including images). Such permission will not be unreasonably withheld.

URS and the client own all Intellectual Property Rights in documents and photographs prepared for this contract by or on behalf of the 'Contractor'.

### 5 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The archaeological works will be subject to regular monitoring visits by URS and the Principal Archaeologist, dependant on the length of the archaeological works. At the minimum, there will be one visit per week. The work will be inspected to ensure that it is being carried out to the required standard and that it will achieve the desired aims and objectives of the specification. URS and the Principal Archaeologist will be provided with a site tour and an overview of the site by the senior archaeologist present and will be afforded the opportunity to view all archaeological remains on site. Any observed deficiencies identified during the site visit are to be made good to the satisfaction of URS and the Principal Archaeologist by the next agreed site meeting. All meetings will be agreed in advance but URS reserve the right to visit the site without prior arrangement.

Verbal progress reports will be provided to URS if requested. URS will liaise with the Principal Archaeologist to inform them of the commencement of archaeological works.

The HEPAO will monitor the work and should be kept regularly informed of progress.

Notification of the start of work shall be given preferably in writing to the HEPAO at least one week in advance of its commencement.



**6 RESOURCES AND TIMETABLE**

All personnel involved in the project should be suitably qualified and experienced professionals.

The commencement date of the works is as yet unknown but will be confirmed by URS at the earliest opportunity.

URS will provide the archaeological sub-contractor with at least one weeks notice prior to the commencement of the works.

A brief summary/ interim report will be made available to URS one week after the completion of the fieldwork. This will include an overview, features, date and a rapid overview of the finds assemblage. It will also include a preliminary interpretation of the archaeology encountered.

**7 ADHERENCE TO WSI**

Prior to the commencement of the work, the archaeological sub-contractor must confirm adherence to this specification in writing via email to URS. Should the archaeological sub-contractor wish to alter the specification, a justification should be put forward in writing. Written confirmation is required from URS confirming acceptance of any variations. The variation will also need agreement from Cornwall HER / County Archaeologist. Unauthorised variations implemented during the course of the project constitute a breach of contract.

Any variations to the WSI shall be agreed with the HEPAO, preferably in writing, prior to them being carried out.

**8 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND WELFARE**

Access to the site is restricted to authorised personnel only.

URS will liaise with Cornwall County Council and/or the Principal Contractor to obtain details regarding access. The archaeological contractor will ensure that all personnel conform to the access arrangements set by the Principal Contractor.

The Principal Contractor will provide all welfare and storage facilities.

The Principal Contractor will provide plant and suitable secure fencing for the site.

**9 CONFIDENTIALITY & PUBLICITY**

Information regarding the development is in the public domain and the archaeological works may attract interest. Due to the extensive and protracted planning history of this site, it has been extensively reported within the local press. It is possible there may be some members of the public who still do not approve of the scheme. If the archaeological sub-contractor attracts any unwanted or negative attention, in the first instance the archaeological sub-contractor will ensure that they can retreat to a place of safety if threatened. The archaeological contractor will not discuss the project with any members of the public and refer all enquiries back to URS

All communication regarding the archaeological works is to be directed through URS and the sub-contractor is to give no unauthorised comments or statements.

The archaeological sub-contractor will not disseminate information or images associated with the project for publicity or information purposes without the prior written consent of URS.



**10 INSURANCES & HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The sub-contractor will provide URS with details of public and professional indemnity insurance.

The archaeological sub-contractor will have their own Health & Safety policies compiled using national guidelines and which conform to all relevant Health & Safety legislation.

The archaeological sub-contractor will undertake a risk assessment detailing project specific Health & Safety requirements. The risk assessment shall be submitted to URS for approval prior to the commencement of site work. Health & Safety will take priority over archaeological issues.

The supervisor will keep a record of staff site attendance.

All site personnel will require a Health & Safety and site induction prior to commencement of on site works by the principal contractor. Similarly they will conform to the principal contractors health and safety plan.

All site personnel will familiarise themselves with the following:

- site emergency and evacuation procedures;
- the principal contractors site's health and safety coordinator;
- the first aider; and
- the location of the nearest hospital and doctors surgery.

All site personnel will wear full P.P.E consisting of hard hat, steel toe-capped boots and high-visibility vest or jacket at all times. Additional P.P.E will be issued by the sub-contractor as required, i.e. goggles, ear defenders, masks, gloves etc. In addition, site personnel will ensure that any visitors to the site are equipped with suitable P.P.E prior to entry.

The site will be left in a tidy and workman-like condition and the archaeological sub-contractor will ensure they remove all materials brought onto site.

**11 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Any technical queries arising from the specification detailed above will be addressed to URS without delay.

All communications on archaeological matters will be directed through URS.

This specification is valid for a period of 12 months from date of issue. After that time it may need to be revised to take account of new discoveries, changes in policy or the introduction of new working practises or techniques.



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## Standards and Guidelines



## Standards and Guidelines

### Methodological guidelines

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