



Land to the rear of Pydar Street, Truro, Cornwall

Archaeological Assessment



Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Land to the rear of Pydar Street, Truro, Cornwall

Archaeological Assessment

Client	Parkland Group Ltd
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Acknowledgements

This study was commissioned by Peter Francis and carried out by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council.
The Project Manager was Andy Jones.

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

Freedom of Information Act

As Cornwall Council is a public authority it is subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which came into effect from 1st January 2005.



Cornwall Archaeological Unit is a Registered Organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists

Cover illustration

Looking south across the site from the Peoples Palace entrance (behind the Halifax buildings), showing dense overgrowth.

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Abbreviations

CAU	Cornwall Archaeological Unit
HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
MCO	Monument number in Cornwall HER
NGR	National Grid Reference
OD	Ordnance Datum – height above mean sea level at Newlyn
OS	Ordnance Survey

1 Summary

Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council, was commissioned by Mr Peter Francis in August 2014 to undertake an archaeological assessment of a parcel of land located between Pydar Street and The Leats in central Truro.

The proposal (planning application reference PA14/01854/PREAPP) is for the construction of 12 residential apartments with on-site parking located on a small pocket of ground, which today is largely defined by a combination of post-medieval and modern buildings. The site lies within the designated Truro Conservation Area and follows the alignment of former burgage plots (part of the medieval planned settlement) which have been fossilised within urban Truro.

The assessment consisted of a rapid desk-based assessment using historic mapping and information layers on GIS, and reference to published sources and the HER and a rapid field visit.

This report recommends that a watching brief should be undertaken during site works which will involve disturbance to potential sub-surface remains.

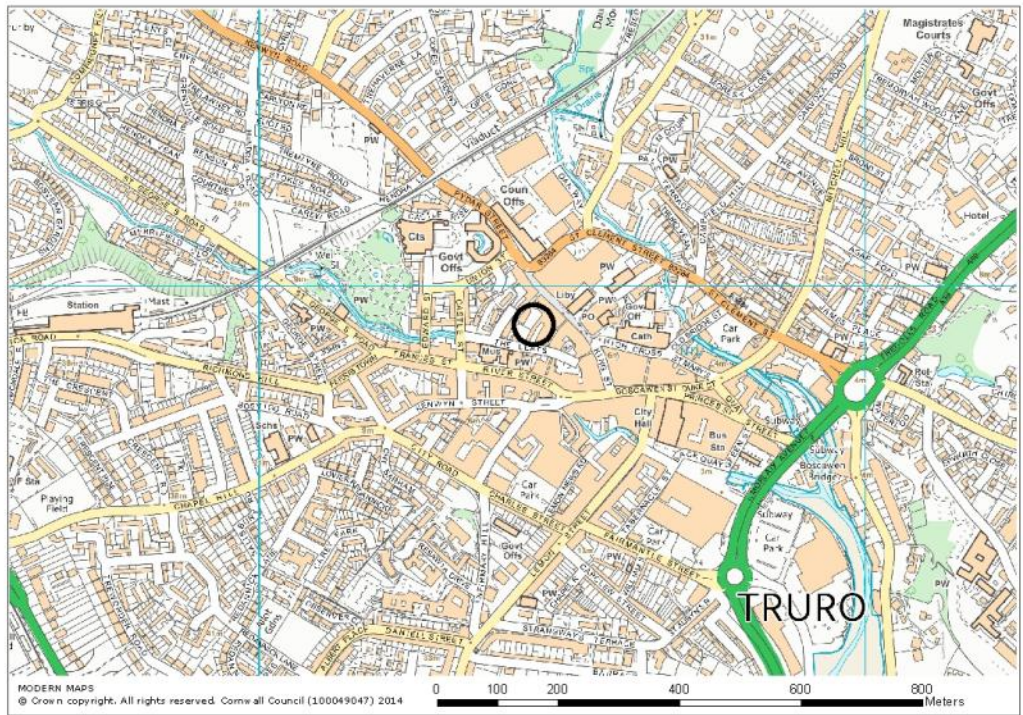


Fig 1 Location Map showing the location of the site within central Truro.

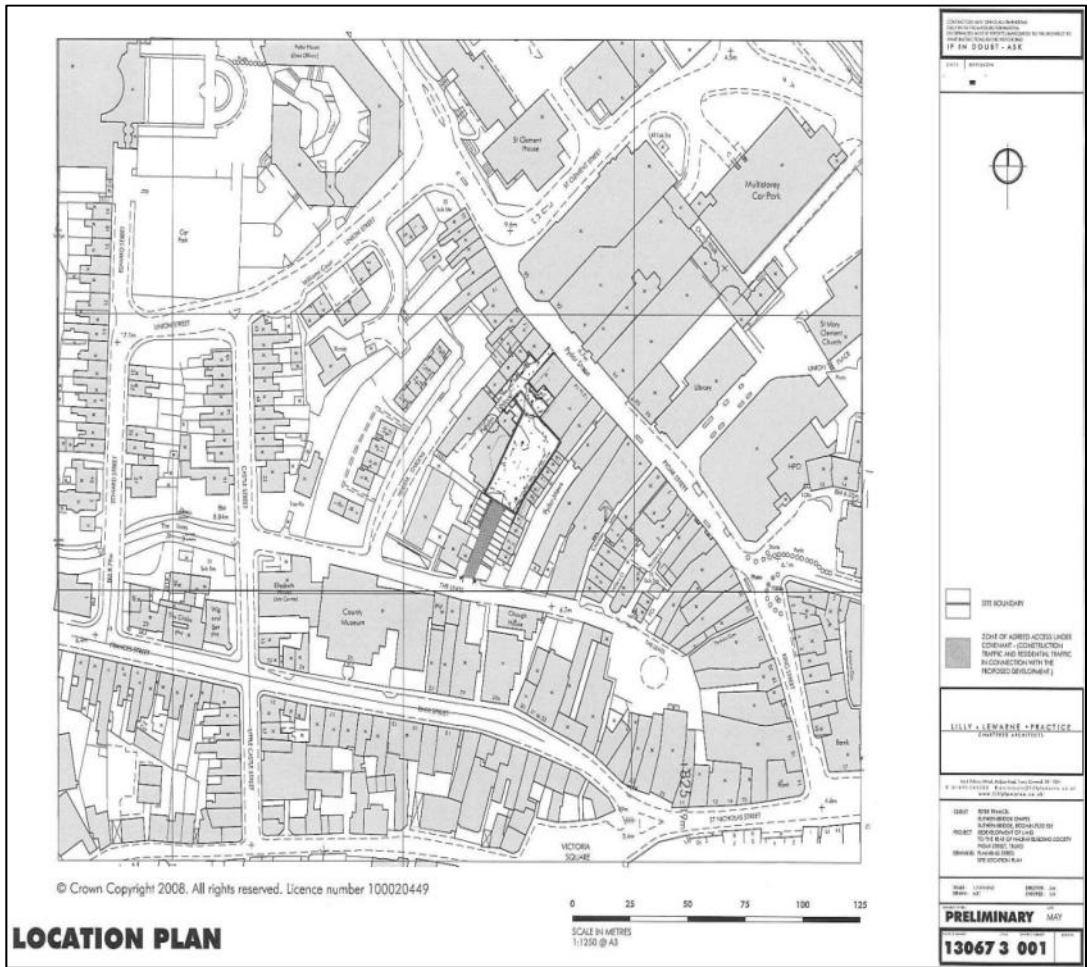


Fig 2 Site extent as provided by the client.

2 Introduction

2.1 Project background

Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU) was commissioned by Mr Peter Francis in August 2014 to undertake a rapid archaeological assessment of a small area of land located between Pydar Street and The Leats in Truro. Phil Copleston (Senior Development Officer, Cornwall Council) was consulted during the preparation of the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), which was prepared by Andy Jones (Appendix 1). The project design has guided this rapid assessment report.

The proposed development is for the construction of 12 residential apartments with on-site parking (application reference PA14/01854/PREAPP). The site is located to the rear of the Halifax Bank (11-14 Pydar Street) and adjacent to People's Palace, within the core of Truro (see Figures 1 and 2). There are no documented sites within the proposed development area, although it does lie within Truro's designated Conservation Area. The site is situated within a former medieval burgage plot, and there are a number of Listed Buildings within the vicinity.

2.2 Aims

The purpose of this project was to undertake a desk-based archaeological assessment of the proposed development area, and to make a rapid site visit to record the character of the site prior to its proposed development.

The results of the assessment are presented within this short report, which includes recommendations for appropriate further stages of archaeological recording.

An entry to the OASIS/ADS-online record has been made.

2.3 Methods

All recording has been undertaken according to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standards and Guidance*. Both the IfA's *Code of Conduct* and *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Archaeology* were followed.

2.3.1 Historic research

A detailed desk-based assessment was undertaken, based on:

- Relevant published sources.
- Relevant archaeological reports.
- Relevant historic maps (up to and including the current OS MasterMap).
- Relevant GIS layers curated by CC and Cornwall Archaeological Unit.
- The Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record (HER).

2.3.2 Site visit

A rapid visit was made (26/09/2014) to record the site prior to any works taking place. Access was not possible owing to the density of the vegetation cover. A photograph was taken to record this (see front cover).

3 Location and setting

The site is centred at SW 82451 44948, and covers an area of 633 square metres. The underlying geology is Middle Devonian Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone, and the site stands at an approximate height of 8m above sea level. Ground levels drop away to the east and south-east and can be most clearly appreciated by the walk up Pydar Street from High Cross.

The site is located within the parish of St Mary in the built up centre of Truro. It forms part of Truro's historic settlement and lies within Truro's designated Conservation Area. A number of Listed Buildings lie within the vicinity, although none lie within the confines of the site.

The site has been overgrown for some time (see Figure 11) and seen periodic bouts of clearance. It is not easily accessible and has in the past been used as a dumping ground. The site is very quiet and tucked away, despite its busy location.

4 Site history

The site lies within an area designated as a Conservation Area (DCO167) – see figure 8, and is characterised as part of Truro's medieval planned settlement (see Kirkham 2003, Figures 3 and 4). According to the Truro Buildings Research Group (1975, 3) Pydar Street was first recorded in an Enys Deed in 1464 as 'Strete Pydar'. It represents one of the three earliest routes in to Truro. The original late medieval planned burgage plots are still partially visible as narrow parallel sided blocks of ground filling the area between Pydar Street and The Leats. The peripheral edges of the site reflect the north-north-east to south-south-west alignment of these burgage plots, and can be traced back on historic mapping (Figures 3 to 7).

The site today is largely defined by historic walls and buildings of post-medieval and modern date. None are Listed, although there are a number of Grade II Listed Buildings in the vicinity (see Figure 9). During the 19th and 20th century Pydar Street contained a mix of residential and secondary commercial activity. This is reflected in the HER (see Figure 9), and includes the following sites; a blacksmiths, a malt house, a tannery and a house.

The still extant post-medieval 19th century blacksmiths workshop (MCO9421) and malt house (MCO29259) are both recorded in the HER as being shown on the 1878 OS map of Truro. The former post-medieval house (MCO10994) was also depicted on all historic mapping until its demolition in 1982. Prior to being demolished it was described as having a 17th century frontage with 18th and 19th century additions and alterations to both the frontage and the main building behind (Johnson, ND, 1982, pers comm in HER record for MCO10994).

The 19th (probable late 18th) century tannery (MCO29258), located to the immediate west of the site was shown on the 1878 OS map as 'Tan Yard' (Figure 5). During the 19th century a large amount of timber was shipped in from Norway for use in the mines, and the bark which was used by the tanning industry, including by the tan yard and pits located behind Pydar Street, which was run by the Ferris family.

A number of the former tan yard buildings were converted and became the People's Palace. The People's Palace was opened in 1906 as a Working Men's Institute and initially included an entertainment hall, a reading room, a billiards room and non-alcoholic refreshment facilities (Acton and Acton 2002, 39). The People's Palace court is described as 'a rare survival of a type of development once widespread on Truro's back plots and 'opes' in Truro's CSUS report (Kirkham 2003, 65).

The underlying layout of the site and surrounding area is a mix of the planned medieval town and its mid 19th century urban expansion. It was not until the 1970s that the vicinity became a part of the city's core retail centre, and even then the site itself was left essentially untouched.

Historic mapping shows that there has been a lack of significant disturbance within the area of the site since c1880, although small scale alterations have occurred (compare Figures 5 to 7 and 10). A more significant re-alignment of development can be seen to

have taken place between c1840 and 1880 on the western side of the site (compare map figure 4 with 5-6).

5 Significance

The significance of this site essentially lies in its location within Truro's designated Conservation Area, which comprises the planned medieval settlement, fossilised burgage plots and post-medieval urban expansion of Truro.

Historic mapping shows that there may be some scope for remnant walling to survive below ground level, associated with the removal of buildings shown most clearly on Figures 6-7 in the northern half of the site.

In addition the long-term open character of much of the site suggests that activities prior to (and during) the 19th century expansion of Truro might survive in the form of past tan yard activities or perhaps evidence for improved garden soils associated with medieval and later domestic cultivation. Urban garden soils (created via the long-term addition of kitchen midden and other domestic household waste to improve fertility) if present, might produce an interesting range of diagnostically datable material charting Truro's development from the present back to the later medieval period.

The presence of remains of any character will provide interesting and potentially significant information with regard the development of Truro. Opportunities to investigate similar sized pockets of ground within the built-up parts of Truro are rare, and as such this proposed development offers a good opportunity to look at the developing character and growth of Truro.

6 Recommendations

It is understood that as part of the construction process piling will take place, reducing the depth of material required to be removed. Any archaeological deposits will be within the uppermost deposits, overlying the naturally formed geological layers.

The development is likely to be subject to a planning condition and the requirements for archaeological recording will need to be agreed with the Senior Development Officer (Historic Environment).

The archaeological recording is likely to consist of an archaeological monitoring in the form of a watching brief which would record any:

- Visible structural remains or scarring on the surrounding walls, such as wall stubs, former roof outlines, window or door infilling.
- Garden soils and/or midden material of diagnostically medieval or later date.
- Floor or work surfaces and/or walls of medieval or post-medieval date.
- Sub-surface features, including pits, and ditches, etc. of archaeological significance.

The results from the archaeological fieldwork would then be recorded in a report format, including plans, sections and photographs pertinent to the remains identified, plus specialist reports should any particularly significant remains be encountered.

7 References

7.1 Primary sources

Ordnance Survey, c1809. First Edition One Inch Map (licensed digital copy at CAU)

Ordnance Survey, 1878. 25 Inch Map Second Edition (licensed digital copy at CAU)

Ordnance Survey, c1907. 25 Inch Map Second Edition (licensed digital copy at CAU)

Ordnance Survey, 2007. Mastermap Digital Mapping

Symons' map of Truro, 1848

7.2 Publications

Acton, V. and Acton, B., 2002. *A History of Truro*, Vol.2, Truro

Kirkham, G, 2003. *Truro - Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey, Historic characterisation for regeneration*, Truro HE, HES Report No. 2003R077

Pydar Street and the High Cross Area, 1975. Truro Buildings Research Group in association with University of Exeter Extra Mural Department.

7.3 Websites

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/> English Heritage's online database of Sites and Monuments Records, and Listed Buildings

8 Project archive

The CAU project number is **146422**

The project's documentary, digital, photographic and drawn archive is maintained by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council, Fal Building, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY.

English Heritage/ADS OASIS online reference: cornwall2-191048

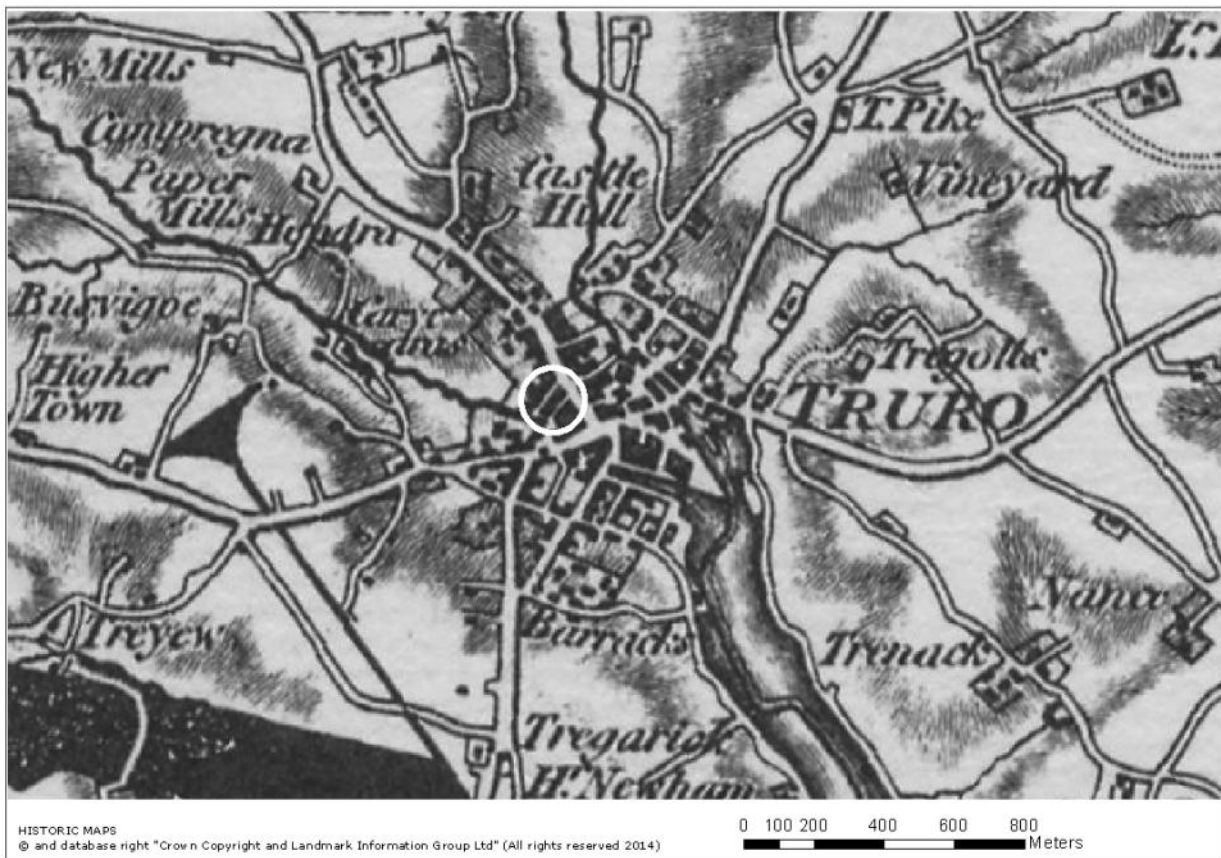


Fig 3 Extract from the OS First Edition One Inch Map c1809 showing the area of the site.



Fig 4 Symons' 1848 map showing the area of the site.



Fig 5 First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, 1878 showing the site.

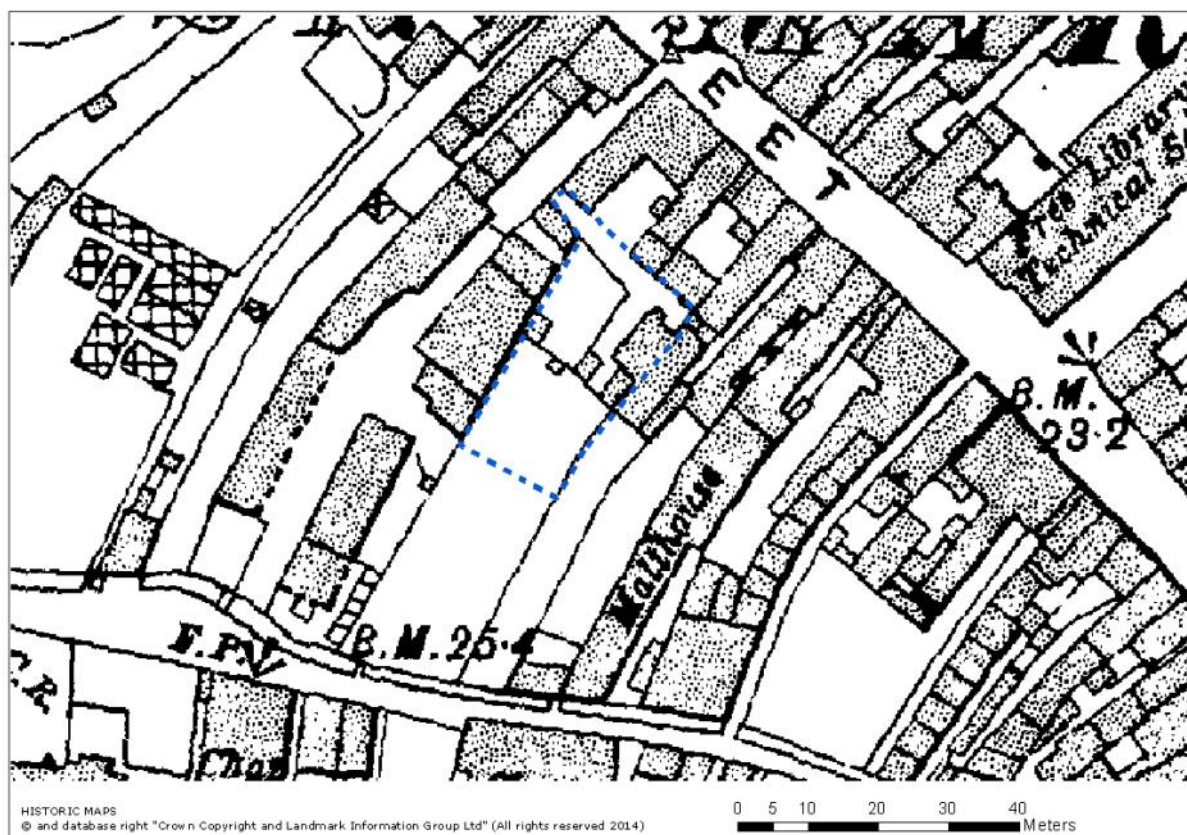


Fig 6 Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, c1907 showing the site.

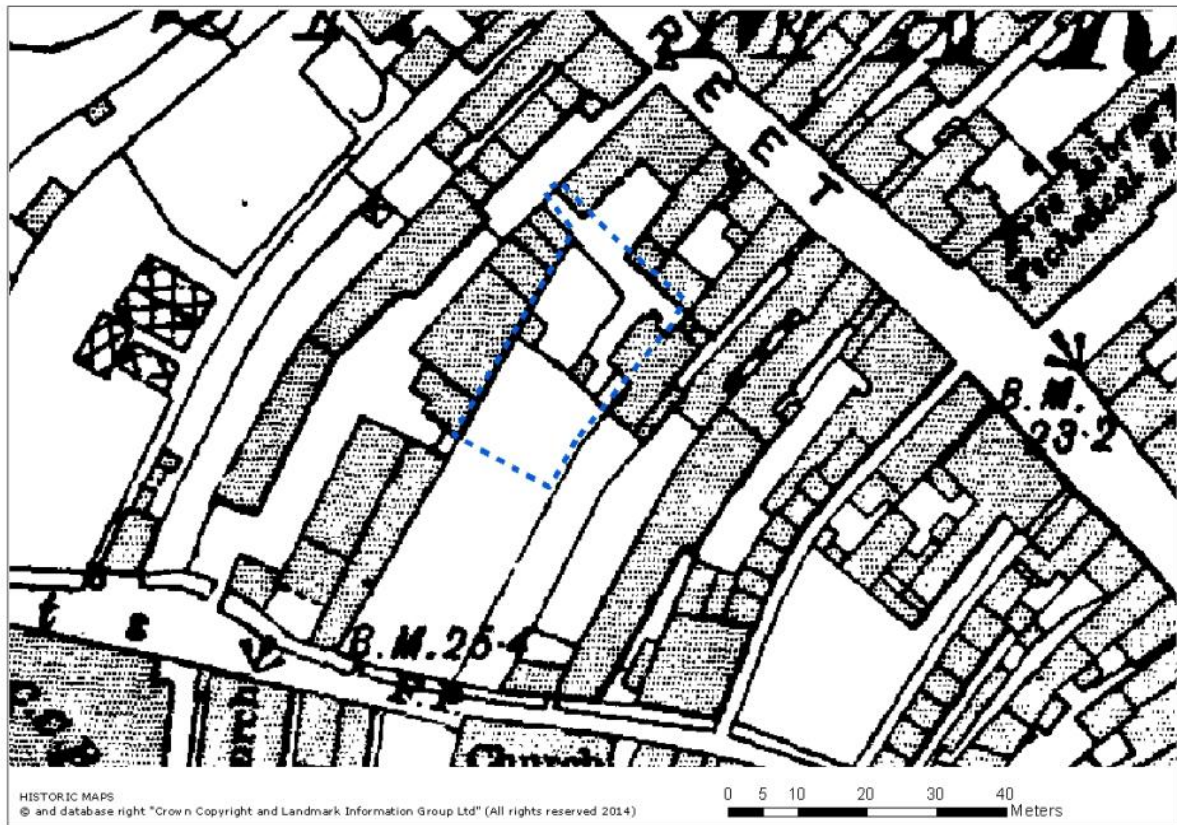


Fig 7 Ordnance Survey 1932-1939 Revision Map showing the site.



Fig 8 Ordnance Survey digital mapping (2014) showing the site within Truro's designated Conservation Area.

Fig 9 Ordnance Survey digital mapping (2014) showing the site within Truro's Historic Settlement.



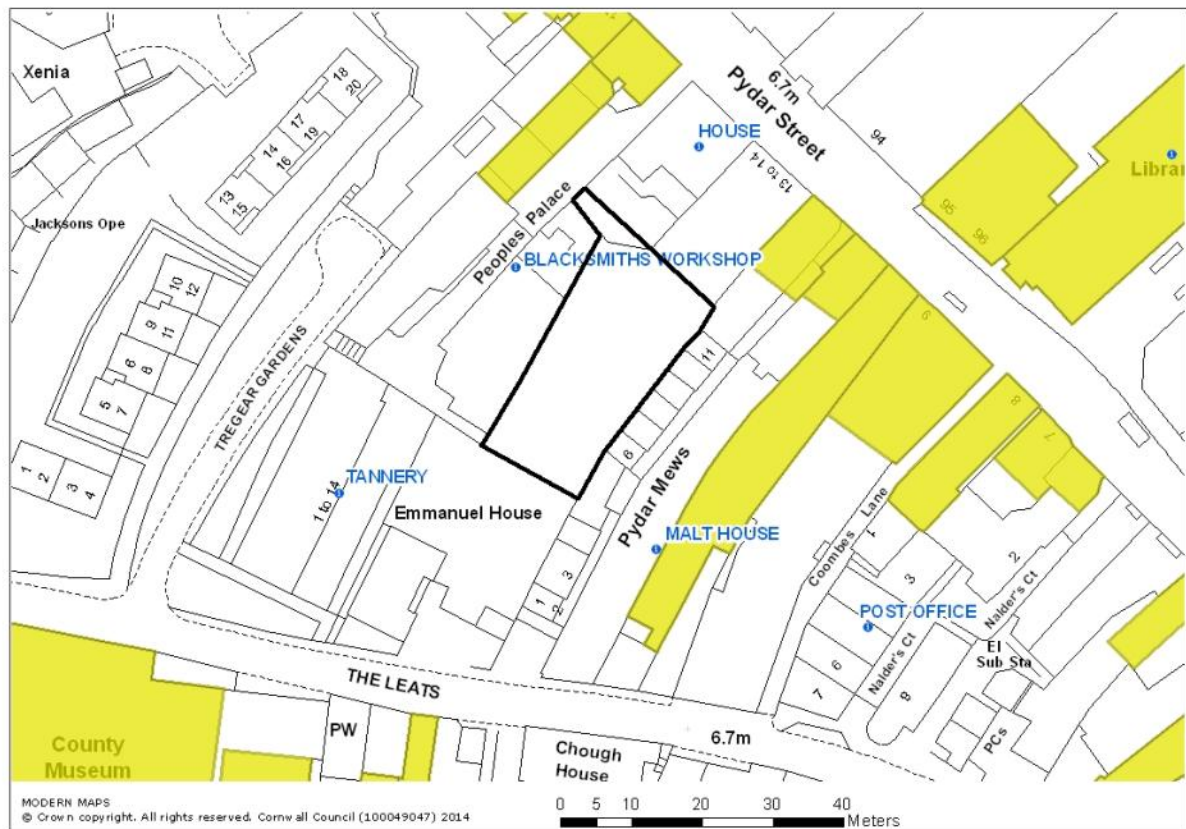


Fig 10 Ordnance Survey digital mapping (2014) showing the site, surrounding Listed Buildings and HER sites.

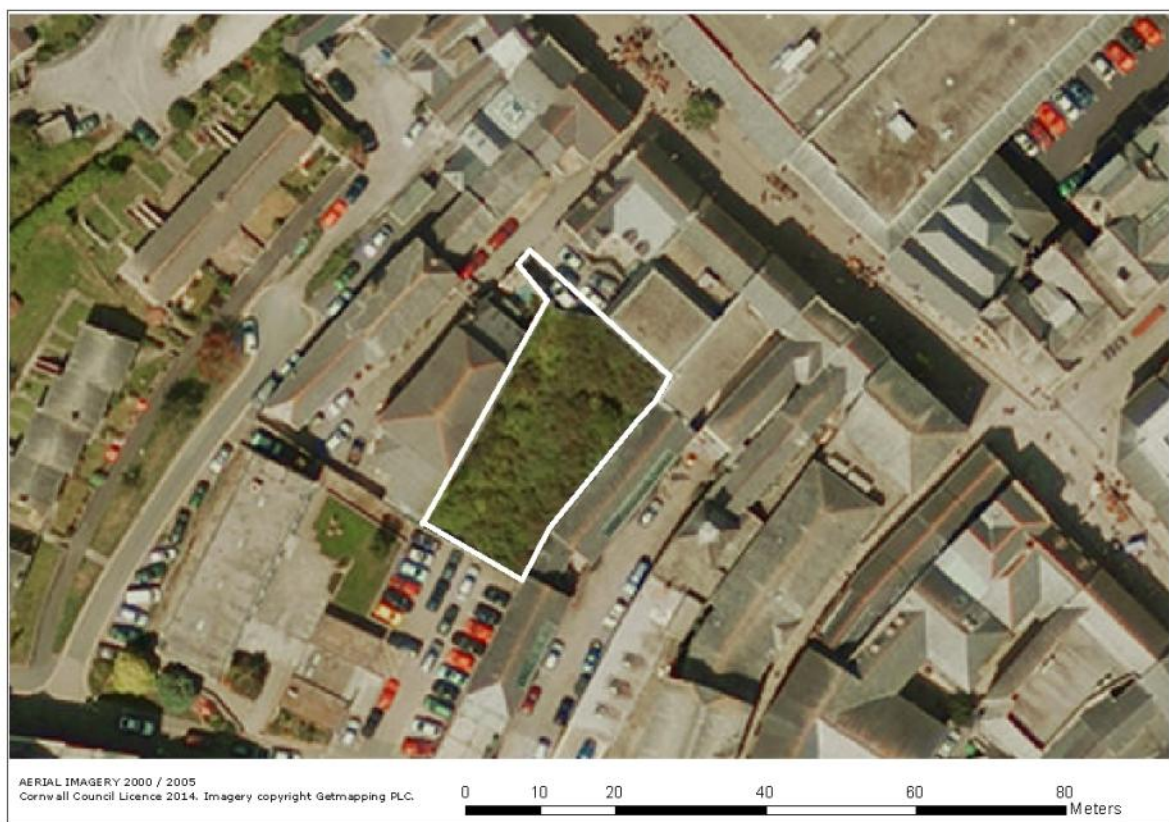


Fig 11 Aerial photograph (2005) showing the site as an isolated green patch within Truro's built environment.

Appendix 1: Written Scheme of Investigation

Project proposal: Truro Land to the rear of Pydar Street, Cornwall
Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Project proposal: Land to the rear of Pydar Street, Truro

Authors	
Derivation	Proposal requested from Mr. P. Copleston
Origination date	18 August 2014
Revisers	
Date of last revision	
Version	Rev 01
Status	Final
Summary of changes	
Circulation	Mr Peter Francis
Required action	
File name/location	Environment\Projects\Sites\Sites Truro\Truro Land to the rear of Pydar Street Assessment
Approval	

Introduction

Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU) was requested by Mr Peter Francis, on 14th August 2014 to provide a written scheme of investigation and cost schedule for the archaeological assessment of a proposal for a development of residential apartments at land to the rear of Halifax 11-14, Pydar Street, Truro. The development will consist of 12 apartments.

Phil Copleston (Senior Development Officer (Historic Environment), Cornwall Council) has written to the client to inform him that he would require the development to have a desk based archaeological assessment with a report which makes appropriate recommendations for further archaeological recording. He has been consulted in the preparation of this project design and his requirements for archaeological recording have guided this project design and estimate.

This proposal is based on information supplied by Mr Peter Francis and utilising information lodged on the Cornwall Council planning portal as part of application reference PA14/01854/PREAPP.

Background

The site that is the focus of this programme of archaeological assessment comprises an area within the core of Truro, a historic settlement of medieval origin.

No documented sites fall within the development area, however, it is surrounded by Listed Buildings, and several post-medieval buildings (including a blacksmiths, a tannery and malt house) are recorded in the Historic Environment Record. The site is also situated within a former medieval burghage plot, and is inside the boundary of a designated Conservation Area.

In light of its location there is the potential for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval sites to survive within the project area and there is the scope for the survival of unrecorded buried archaeological remains and artefacts of all periods.

The programme of work comprises a desk-based assessment and a site walkover. These surveys will enable a clearer understanding of the archaeological resource and allow informed management and conservation recommendations to be made.

Objectives/scope of work

The purpose of the project is to undertake a desk based archaeological assessment of the project area, and to produce a report containing recommendations for appropriate further stages of archaeological recording

The resulting report will outline the fieldwork. An entry to the OASIS/ADS-online record will also be made.

Method statement

All recording work will be undertaken according to the appropriate Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance*. Staff will follow the *IfA Code of Conduct* and *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Archaeology*. The Institute for Archaeologists is the professional body for archaeologists working in the UK.

Pre-fieldwork/historic research

A detailed desk-based assessment will be undertaken, based on:

- Published sources.
- Relevant archaeological reports
- Historic maps, including:
 - Early county maps (Norden, Gascoyne, Martyn, *circa* 1810 1st Edition OS 1:1760 mapping;
 - *Circa* 1840 Tithe Map;
 - The *circa* 1877 and 1907 1st and 2nd Editions of the Ordnance Survey 25" to a mile mapping;
 - The current OS MasterMap;
- Relevant GIS layers curated by Cornwall Council and Cornwall Archaeological Unit;
- Aerial photograph cover dating from 1946 to the present day, including transcripts of archaeological detail produced by the National Mapping Programme;
- The Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record.

Rapid site visit

A rapid visit will be made to the site to help provide a good descriptive record of the development area. It will record information about any sites identified in the desk study and identify and describe any additional 'new' sites.

The field visit will achieve the following:

- Description of the study area.
- Assessment of condition and survival (to include identifying existing or previous land use that may affect the survival or condition of the archaeological resource).
- Identify archaeological sites and make recommendations for their recording.
- Identify areas which are likely to contain buried archaeological remains.
- Identify areas that require further archaeological mitigation (excavation/watching brief, palaeoenvironmental sampling, etc).

Report

A concise report will be produced summarising the results of the assessment. The report will also include a brief gazetteer of identified sites/components. A statement of significance and recommendations for further archaeological recording will be included in the report.

The report will have the following contents:

- Summary: description of resource, importance, impact, initial recommendations.
- Introduction: background; objectives; methods; the area/geology.
- Description of the resource:
 - Historic character: note on the historic landscape character types.
 - Identified sites: general description of the resource.
 - Other archaeological potential.
- Assessment of importance:
 - Designations, policies and guidance; of the proposed development and the adjoining landscapes.
 - Other sites
- Recommendations, eg:
 - Further archaeological recording (eg, watching brief).
- CAU Archive
- References
- Appendices: Inventories of Sites.

Illustrations:

- General Location map.
- Detailed location map showing Historic Landscape Character types.
- Historic maps if appropriate (showing study area).
- Map showing zones of archaeological potential.
- Detailed colour A3 map showing location of gazetteer sites and adjacent features.

- ***Gazetteer of sites***

The sites should be numbered sequentially from the north to south.

Deliverables/outputs

Will include:

- The cataloguing of digital colour photographs.
- Completion of archive form and project record form.
- Completion of the English Heritage OASIS record (online access to archaeological investigations).
- A concise report (see above).

Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Cornwall Archaeological Unit is part of Cornwall Council. CAU employs some 20 project staff with a broad range of expertise, undertaking around 120 projects each year.

CAU is committed to conserving and enhancing the distinctiveness of the historic environment and heritage of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by providing clients with a number of services including:

- Conservation works to sites and monuments
- Conservation surveys and management plans
- Historic landscape characterisation
- Town surveys for conservation and regeneration
- Historic building surveys and analysis
- Maritime and coastal zone assessments
- Air photo mapping
- Excavations and watching briefs
- Assessments and evaluations

- Post-excavation analysis and publication
- Outreach: exhibitions, publication, presentations

Standards



CAU is a Registered Organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists and follows their Standards and Code of Conduct.

As part of Cornwall Council, CAU has certification in BS9001 (Quality Management), BS14001 (Environmental Management), OHSAS18001 (Health, Safety and Welfare) and Investors in People.

Terms and conditions

Contract

CAU is part of Cornwall Council. If accepted, the contract for this work will be between the client and Cornwall Council.

The views and recommendations expressed will be those of CAU and will be presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

Project staff

The project will be managed by a nominated manager who is a Member of the Institute for Archaeologists:

- Discuss and agree the detailed objectives and programme of each stage of the project with the client and the field officers, including arrangements for health and safety.
- Monitor progress and results for each stage.
- Edit the project report.
- Liaise with the client regarding the budget and related issues.

Work will be carried out by CAU field staff, with assistance from qualified specialists and sub-contractors where appropriate.

Report distribution

Paper copies of the report will be distributed to the client, to local archives and national archaeological record centres. A digital copy of the report, illustrations and any other files will be held in the Cornwall HER and also supplied to the client on CD or other suitable media.

Copyright

Copyright of all material gathered as a result of the project will be reserved to Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council. Existing copyrights of external sources will be acknowledged where required. Use of the material will be granted to the client.

Freedom of Information Act

As Cornwall Council is a public authority it is subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which came into effect from 1st January 2005.

CAU will ensure that all information arising from the project shall be held in strict confidence to the extent permitted under the Act. However, the Act permits information to be released under a public right of access (a "Request"). If such a Request is received CAU may need to disclose any information it holds, unless it is excluded from disclosure under the Act.

Health and safety statement

CAU follows the Council's *Statement of Safety Policy*.

Prior to carrying out on-site work CAU will carry out a Risk Assessment.

Insurance

CAU is covered by Cornwall Council's Public and Employers Liability Insurance, with a policy value of £50m. The Council also has Professional Negligence insurance with a policy value of £10m.