

Archaeological Investigation at Lower Tregerthen, Zennor, Cornwall

Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Report No: 2016R028

Report No

2016R028

Report Name

Archaeological Investigation at Lower Tregerthen, Zennor

Report Author

Ryan P Smith

Event Type

Investigation

Client Organisation

Client Contact

Mrs Denny Long

Monuments (MonUID)

Fieldwork dates (From)

(To)

(Created By)

(Create Date)

8/4/2016

8/4/2016

Ryan Smith

09/04/2016

Location (postal address; or general location and parish)

Lower Tregerthen, Zennor, St Ives, Cornwall

(Town - for urban sites)

(Postcode)

TR26 3BP

(Easting) X co-ord

(Northing) Y co-ord

SW46590

39124



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1 Project background

Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU), Cornwall Council were commissioned by Mrs Denny Long to carry out an investigation of a large propped granite stone built into the stone faced boundary at Lower Tregerthen, Zennor. The site is situated near to several identified archaeological sites, including prehistoric flint scatters and a farming settlement of medieval origin (Figs 1 and 2).

A previous visit to the site in March 2016, noted that the stone was approximately 1.5m long and 0.4m thick. It projected approximately 0.6m out of the field wall in which it was incorporated (Appendix 1). The stone was approximately 0.5m above the present ground level within the garden and rested upon a smaller squared stone which acted as a support column. The cavity within the boundary was measured as approximately 1.3m long and 0.75m deep.

2 Aims and objectives

The agreed aims of the project were to locate, identify and record prehistoric, medieval or post-medieval artefacts/activity in the area of the stone, thereby providing further information on its date and function.

3 Working methods

The upper face of the stone was cleared by hand and examined for any indentations or markings, such as drilling or splitting, which might indicate a date for the movement of the stone to its current site. As similar shaped stones associated with rock art are known in the wider vicinity (Jones and Kirkham 2013), it was also inspected for cup-marks to see if it had been the focus for prehistoric activity.

An area measuring 1m square was then excavated by hand beneath the west side of the stone extending into part of the lawn within the garden.

All archaeological recording was undertaken according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording. Drawings were made to scale, where appropriate, of 1:10 for sections, 1:20 for plans.

4 Location, setting and history

The site, a propped stone within a boundary bank, is located in the boundary to the rear of the garden at Lower Tregerthen, Zennor, Cornwall (SW 46590 39124) (Figs 1 and 2).

The local geology is described as Land's End Intrusion – Granite, igneous bedrock formed approximately 251 to 359 million years ago in the Permian and Carboniferous Periods (BGS 2016).

The settlement of Tregerthen is of medieval origin and the name first appears as Tregyrthyn in 1519 (Nowakowski and Herring 1987). The farm and settlement has a pre-Normal origin (Padel 1985). The name contains the Cornish place-name elements '*tre*' meaning 'farming settlement' and '*kerden*' (a likely variation of the name) which is taken to mean 'rowans' or 'mountain ashes'.

The settlement is set within land which has been characterized as being 'Anciently Enclosed Land' (Herring 1998). This is land enclosed since at least the medieval period, although it is likely to have been farmed since prehistory.

5 Results

Site description

The propped stone consists of two main elements, a large sub-rectangular shaped granite slab and a smaller supporting stone.

The exposed portion of the slab or 'capstone' measures approximately 2.2m long, by 0.7m at its widest point and up to 0.45m thick (this can only be surmised from the parts of the stone that are accessible, as the rest is embedded into the hedge bank) (Figs 6 and 7). The slab is situated about 0.7m above the ground level of the garden lawn, and rests upon by a single almost square granite block, which acts as a support.

The 'capstone' is embedded into the hedge-bank, which is faced by larger granite blocks interspersed with smaller rounded granite stones. The stones above the granite slab are angled toward the garden, and appear to have been packed onto the slab using soil. The bank is well-vegetated with ivy, grasses and small ferns established in gaps between the stones. To the east of the bank are four stones which have been placed in the side of the bank as a stile (to provide access to the adjoining field and track).

The northern side of the hedge bank measures, from the lawn surface to the top, 1.7m high, whereas the southern (field side) of the bank by contrast is only 0.7m high. The top the bank is approximately 1.6m wide.

The second main element, a small squared block of granite, which acts as a support, measures 0.53m high on its west side and 0.45m on the east. The sides measured; west side 0.25m, east 0.18m, north 0.23m and south, 0.2m (Figs 8 and 9). The top of the stone was not flat but had a protrusion on the west side which was touching the slab above. The lower section of the north face of the supporting stone showed evidence of erosion in the form of a groove running down from west to east.

Excavation

The top of the propped stone was first cleared by hand to assess its condition and to identify any markings on its surface, such as drill marks, evidence for splitting or cup-marks. The examination only revealed that the stone has weathered to such an extent that a section on the surface of the west side had sheared off leaving an indentation in the surface 0.1m deep which continued into the north face of the stone. The edges of the upward facing area of the surface were rounded and displayed evidence of extensive erosion through exposure to the elements.

A closer examination of the east and west sides of the stone revealed that only small sections appeared to be embedded in or supported by the hedge bank, but this could not be examined more thoroughly due to the possibility that the removal of material from under these sections could undermine or destabilise the stone.

Examination of the underside of the slab revealed that some stones to the east appeared to be part of the bank upon which the slab was resting, the remaining area was covered with small plants, but due to the possibility of destabilising the stone these were not removed.

The supporting stone was not investigated and was left *in situ*, after a close examination revealed that any investigation could destabilise it.

A 1m square pit (Figs 10 and 11) was excavated by hand beneath the north west side of the slab. This excavation revealed a sequence of deposits, which from top to bottom were as follows.

The topsoil (101) was a 0.1m thick layer of dark brown loose silty loam with sparse stone inclusions (small particles of decayed granite). The topsoil was not present beneath the stone and within this area was (102), a layer of dark brown silty grit, 0.22m thick. This was loose to trowel, but beyond the edge of the stone it contained a

concentration of decayed granite, pieces of flower pot and polythene. Underneath this deposit at the north end of the test pit were layers (107) and (108), which were a mixture of deposits (102) and (103). They were possibly formed as a result of animal burrowing. Underneath these deposits was (103) a mid yellowish brown compact clay containing decayed granite, with some large stone inclusions. This layer appeared to slope upwards to the south and may be redeposited subsoil which was part of the hedge-bank.

The natural (108) was evident at the north end of the excavation. It was a compact layer of mid yellowish brown clay with decayed granite, which is probably the natural granitic subsoil, known locally as rab. This deposit was no more than 0.3m below the surface of the lawn.

The excavation (Fig 11) revealed the natural subsoil was less than 1.1m below the level of the bottom of the stone. The propped stone itself is partially embanked with a stone faced bank which behind the granite facing appears to be largely composed of redeposited subsoil (103).

6 Conclusion

The investigation of the propped stone in the hedge bank did not by itself reveal the date of this feature, and finds recovered from the test pit were modern. An examination of historic Tithe Map and OS mapping, however, revealed that the farm buildings and field boundaries in the immediate area had been reorganised between 1841 and 1907, with very significant changes being made between 1880 and 1907 (Figs 3-5). The results from the excavation and inspection of the stones make it seem very likely that the propped stone was built into the stone-faced bank during this period and that it was part of the boundary.

There was no definite evidence to confirm that this feature was a shelter or 'crow', but the presence of others within the local landscape could support this probability. Crows were constructed and used in Cornwall (Nicholas 1967) as animal shelters. Larger examples were used to hold pigs but smaller structures were used to hold hens, geese or bees (known as 'beeboles'). The example at Lower Tregerthen is near the farmstead and given its relatively small size could have been used as a shelter for chickens or geese.

7 References

Primary sources

Ordnance Survey, c1880. *25 Inch Map* First Edition (licensed digital copy at Cornwall Archaeological Unit)

Ordnance Survey, c1907, *25 Inch Map* Second Edition (licensed copy at Cornwall Archaeological Unit)

Ordnance Survey, 2007. Mastermap Digital Mapping

Tithe Map and Apportionment, c1841. *Parish of Zennor* (digital copy held at Cornwall Archaeological Unit)

Publications

Herring, P, 1998. *Cornwall Historic Landscape Character*, Cornwall County Council

Jones A M, and Kirkham G 2013. From landscape to portable art: the changing settings of simple rock art in south-west Britain and its wider context, *Journal of European Archaeology* **16**, 636-59

Nicholas E.M. 1968, 'Crows' in *Cornish Hedges in the Pendeen Area*, *Cornish Archaeology* **7**, 68-72

Nowakowski, J.A. & Herring, P., 1987. *Tregerthen Farm. National Trust West Penwith Archaeological Survey, Tregerthen Farm, Zennor, West Penwith*. Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Padel, O.J. 1985. *Cornish Place-Name elements*, English Place Name Society

Websites

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/mapViewers/home.html> British Geological Survey (BGS).

8 Project archive

The CAU project number is **146582**

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.

Electronic data is stored in the following locations:

Project admin: \\Sites\Sites L\Lower Tregerthen, Zennor

Digital photographs: \\Historic Environment (Images)\SITES.I-L\Sites L\Lower Tregerthen Zennor

Electronic drawings: \\Historic Environment (CAD)\CAD Archive\Sites L\Lower Tregerthen Zennor

Historic England/ADS OASIS online reference: cornwall2-248166



Figure 3: Tithe Map c1841, showing buildings and field boundary, note the trackway to the south.

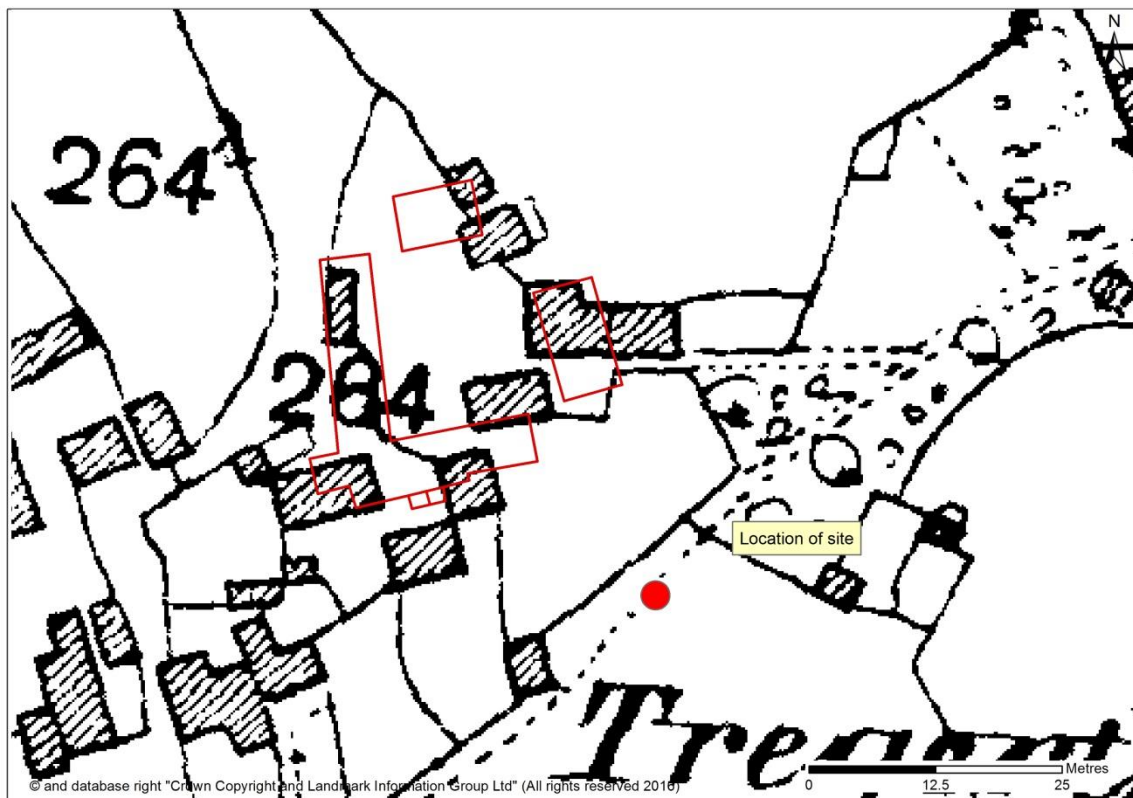


Figure 4: First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, c1880 (location of current farm buildings outlined in red).

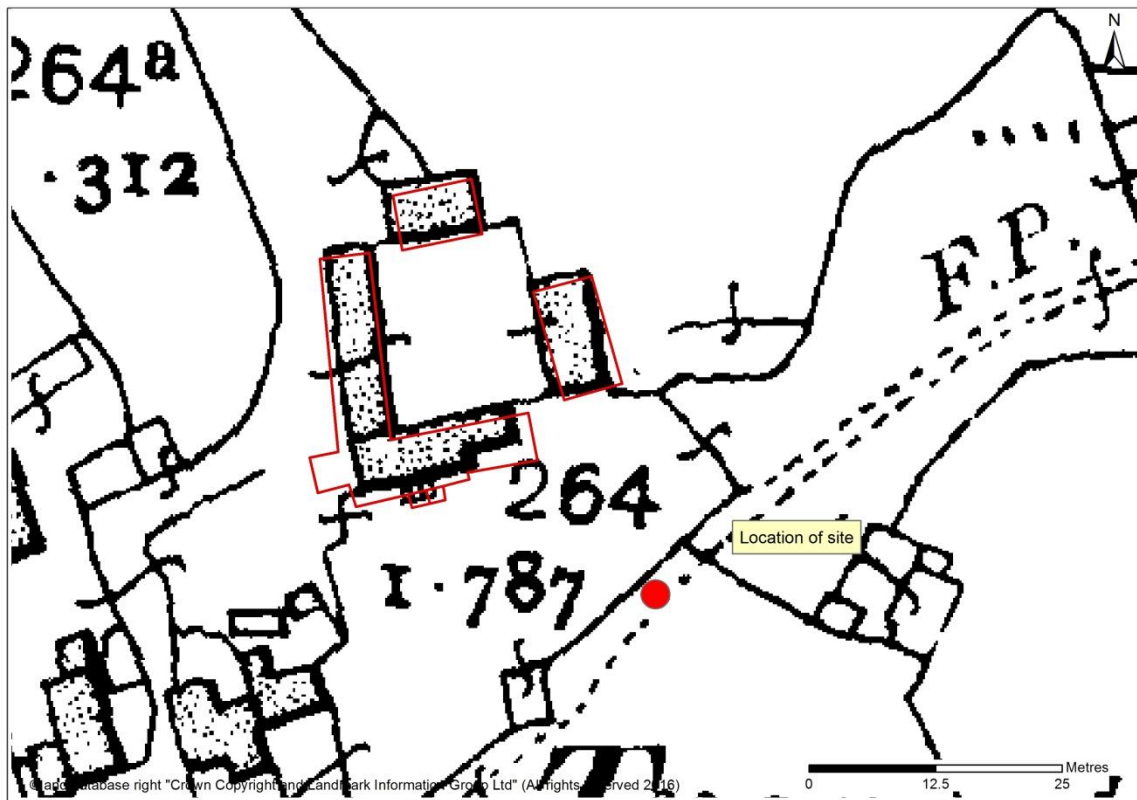


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Figure 7: Close up of the propped stone, 1m scale.



Figure 8: Point of contact between the supporting stone and the underside of the covering slab.



Figure 9: Image looking SW showing the supporting stone.

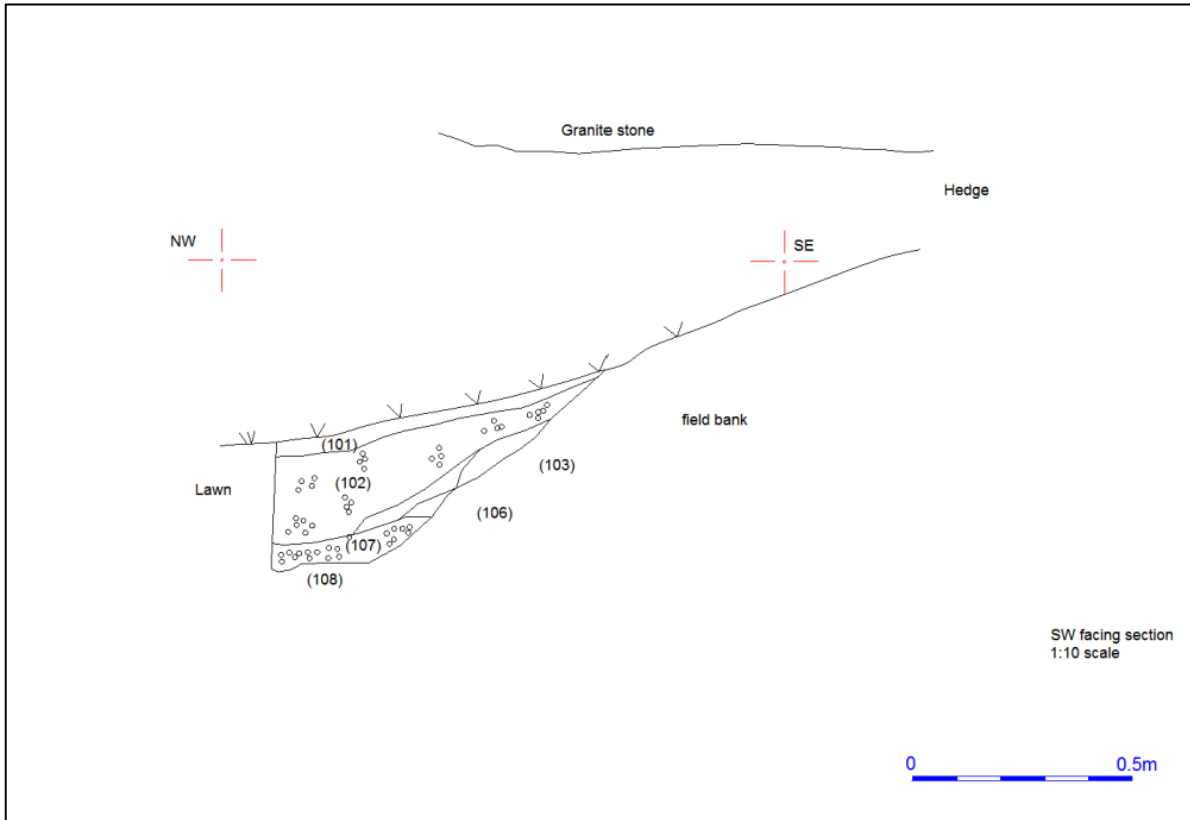


Figure 10: South west facing section showing location of stone above excavation and the field bank.



Figure 11: Post excavation view of test pit.

Appendix 1: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Investigation at Lower Tregerthen, Zennor.

Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Written Scheme of investigation for an Archaeological investigation at Lower Tregerthen, Zennor

Introduction

Background

Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU), Cornwall Council have been requested by Denny Long to provide a project design and estimate to investigate a large propped granite stone which is built into a hedge boundary at Lower Tregerthen, Zennor. The site is located near to several identified archaeological sites including prehistoric flint scatters and a farming settlement of medieval origin.

A visit to the site in March 2016 noted that the stone is approximately 1.5m long and 0.4m thick. It projects approximately 0.6m out of the field wall on which it is incorporated. The stone is roughly 9.5m above current ground level and rests upon a smaller squared stone which acts as a supporting column. The cavity in the hedge below the stone currently measures approximately 1.3m long by 0.75m deep.

This project design is for an archaeological project to investigate the stone, and the cavity beneath to help establish a date for when the stone was propped up.

Historical background

The settlement of Tregerthen is of early medieval origin and it is first documented in 1361. The settlement is set within land which has been characterized as being 'Anciently Enclosed Land' (Cornwall County Council 1996). This is land enclosed since at least the medieval period, although it is likely to have been farmed since prehistory.

The historic mapping reveals that the settlement has been considerably remodelled since the 1840 Tithe map, which significant changes being made between the time of the 1880 OS map and the 1908 OS edition. The boundary into which the stone is set was located to the north of a footpath shown on the historic mapping and it is possible that it has been rebuilt during the post-medieval period.

The propped stone may have earlier origins and it could have been incorporated into the boundary because it was too heavy to move. However, it is also possible that it was a later feature that was deliberately built into the hedge bank during a period of boundary modification. It could perhaps have been a small 'crow' constructed to hold smaller animals such as geese.

A number of potential archaeological sites have been identified near vicinity from the Historic Environment Record. They include:

- Prehistoric flints and a hammerstone (MC01531) have been found at Tregerthen Farm.
- Tregerthen Farm is of early medieval origin (MC017277).
- Many of the field boundaries in the surrounding area of medieval or earlier origin.
- A post-medieval farm building shown on the 1840 Tithe map and 1880 OS map was located a few metres to the west of the propped stone (MC028506), and is built into the same field wall.

Aims and objectives

- To locate and identify and record prehistoric, medieval or post-medieval artefacts/activity in the area of the stone, thereby providing further information on its date and function.

Methodology

The archaeological programme will follow two stages: fieldwork and the production of an archive with a short report.

Fieldwork

Archaeological Recording

The archaeologist will hand-dig an area measuring 1m square beneath the stone and extending down into the garden area

During the archaeological recording the archaeologist will:

- Identify and record any archaeological features that are revealed in the excavated area; the level of recording will be appropriate to the character/importance of the archaeological remains.

If complex and/or significant archaeological deposits are encountered then the archaeological requirements should be reviewed with the client. In the event that significant archaeological deposits are uncovered then these may be left *in situ*.

Where necessary the detailed archaeological recording may include:

- Excavation of archaeological features and plotting them onto a base map.
- Production of plans and section drawings of the excavated features and recording of features using a continuous numbering system.
- Retrieval of artefacts.

Recording - general

- Site drawings (plans, sections, locations of finds) will be made by pencil (4H) on drafting film; all plans will be linked to the Ordnance Survey Landline (electronic) map; all drawings will include standard information: site details, personnel, date, scale, north-point.
- All features and finds will be accurately located at an appropriate scale. Sections will normally be drawn at 1:10 and plans at 1:20.
- All archaeological contexts will be described to a standard format linked to a continuous numbering sequence.
- Photography: Colour digital images will be taken. This will include both general and site specific photographs. Photographs should have a scale and detailed ones should include a north arrow.
- Drawings and photographs will be recorded in a register giving details of feature number and location.
- Sealed/undisturbed archaeological contexts in the form of buried soils, layers or deposits within significant archaeological features (pits, etc) will be sampled for environmental evidence and dating material. In the event that significant organic remains are encountered, advice may be needed from Vanessa Straker (Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science).
- If human remains are discovered on the site Public Health, Cornwall Council will be informed. All recording will conform to best practice and legal requirements.

- If human remains are uncovered, which require excavation, they will be will be excavated with due reverence. The site will be adequately screened from public view. Once excavated, human remains must not be exposed to public view.
- If human remains are not to be removed their physical security will be ensured, by back filling as soon as possible after recording.

3.2 Treatment of finds

The archaeological fieldwork may produce artefactual material.

- All finds in significant stratified contexts predating 1900 AD (eg, settlement features) should be collected by context and described. Post-medieval or modern finds will be offered to the client or disposed of at the cataloguing stage. This process will be reviewed ahead of its implementation.
- All finds will be collected in sealable plastic bags which will be labelled immediately with the context number or other identifier.

Archiving

Following review with the CAU Project Manager the results from the fieldwork will be collated as an archive. This will involve washing and cataloguing of finds, the indexing and cross-referencing of photographs, drawings and context records.

All finds, etc will be stored in a proper manner (being clearly labelled and marked and stored according to CAU guidelines).

- All records (context sheets, photographs, etc) will be ordered, catalogued and stored in an appropriate manner (according to CAU guidelines).
- The site archive and finds will initially be stored at CAU premises and transferred to the Royal Cornwall Museum and the RCM conditions for archives will be followed. The RCM will be notified of the commencement of the project and included in discussions for sampling and disposal as appropriate.
- In the event that there are no finds or they are retained by the owner, the documentary archive in due course shall be deposited with the Cornwall Record Office, but in the medium term will be stored at Pound and Co. All digital records will be filed on the Cornwall Council network.

Archive report

The results from the fieldwork will be presented in a concise report.

Copies of the report will be distributed to the Client and the local and main archaeological record libraries. A PDF copy of the report will be produced and deposited with the Historic Environment Record.

This will involve:

- producing a descriptive text;
- producing maps and line drawings;
- selecting photographs;
- report design;
- report editing;
- dissemination of the finished report;
- Deposition of archive and finds in the Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro.

The report will have the following contents:

- Summary - Concise non-technical summary.

- Introduction - Background, objectives, aims and methods.
- Results - Factual description of the results of the various aspects of the project, with separate sections as necessary for discussion/interpretation and potential for further analysis.
- Discussion - Discussion of the interpretation of the results, highlighting information gained on a chronological or thematic basis
Recommendations for further analysis and publication.
- Archive - A brief summary and index to the project archive.
- Illustrations - General location plan.
Detailed location plans to link fieldwork results to OS map.
Selected plans and section drawings (as appropriate).
Photographs (if appropriate).

A Historic England/ADS online access to the index of archaeological investigations (OASIS) record will be made.

Project Staff

An experienced archaeologist employed by CAU will carry out the archaeological fieldwork and reporting.

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

- Take responsibility for the overall direction of the project.
- Discuss and agree the objectives and programme of each stage of the project with project staff, including arrangements for Health and Safety.
- Monitor progress and results for each stage.
- Edit the project report.

Timetable

The archiving and archive report will be completed within 12 months of the ending of the excavations.

Health and safety during the fieldwork

Health and safety statement

Cornwall Archaeological Unit is within the Economy, Enterprise and Environment Directorate of Cornwall Council. The CAU team follows Cornwall Council's Statement of Safety Policy.

Prior to carrying out any fieldwork CAU will carry out a risk assessment.

Insurance

As part of Cornwall Council, CAU is covered by Public Liability and Employers Liability Insurance.

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Standards

The CAU follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Code of Conduct and is a Registered Archaeological Organization.

Copyright

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

This project design and estimate is the copyright of Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council.

Use of the material will be granted to the client.

Freedom of Information

All information gathered during the implementation of the project will be subject to the rules and regulations of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Dr Andy Jones 31/3/16
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