



Penzance Park and Ride facility, Penzance, Cornwall
Archaeological assessment

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Acknowledgements

This study was commissioned by Tim Sullivan on behalf of CORMAC Contracting and carried out by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council.

Thanks are due to Steve Cleary of CORMAC for facilitating access to the site.

The Project Manager was Dr. Andy Jones MCIfA.

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.



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Cover illustration

The drainage channel forming the northern boundary of the proposed Park and Ride facility.

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Abbreviations

CAU	Cornwall Archaeological Unit
CIFA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HE	Historic England
HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
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 was commissioned by CORMAC Contracting to undertake an archaeological assessment of an area of land at Eastern Green, Penzance which is proposed to be developed as a Park and Ride facility. The site, which is adjacent to Jelbert Way and to the recently developed Sainsbury's supermarket, was, between May 1964 and September 2012, the site of Penzance Heliport. Prior to this the area had been used as a landfill site, this overlaying quaternary marshland which had been reclaimed to farmland during the post-medieval period.

A desk-based assessment and map regression were undertaken for the project area at Eastern Green, and were followed up with a walkover survey undertaken in late May 2016. No archaeological features were found, though the archaeological potential of the buried former marshland underlying the area was highlighted.

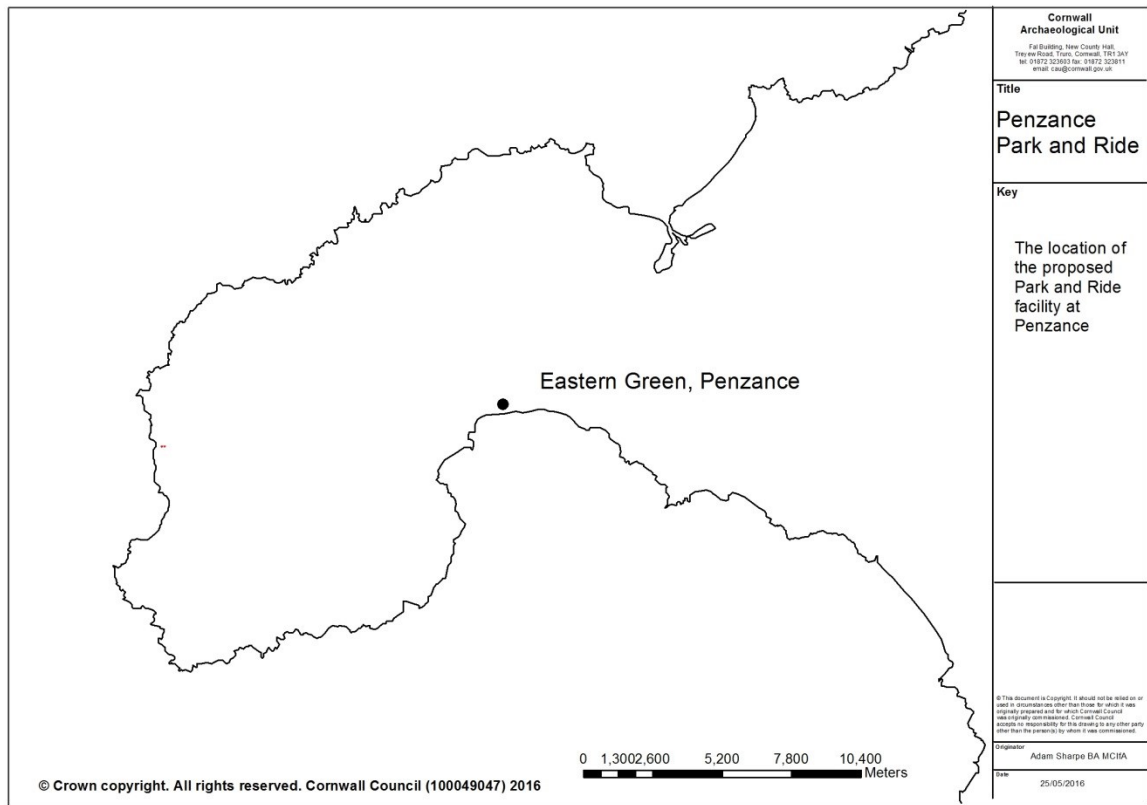


Fig 1. The location of the proposed Park and Rise facility at Eastern Green, Penzance.

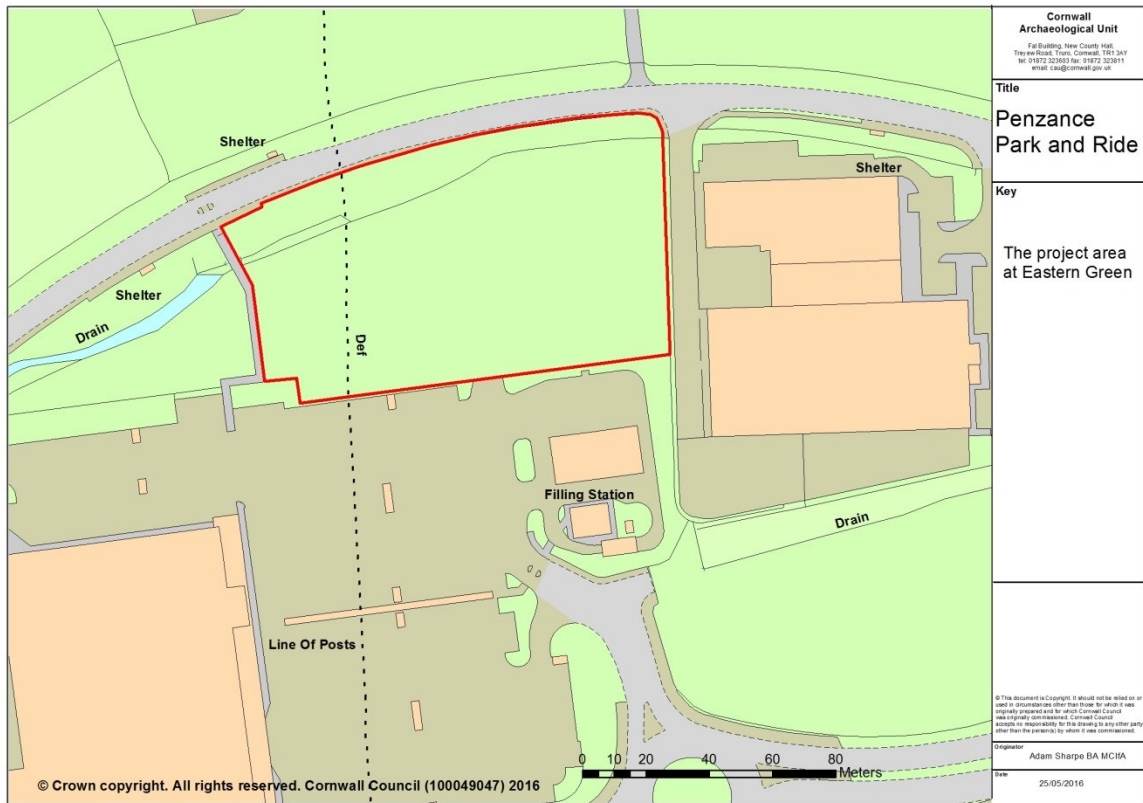


Fig 2. The extent of the project area at the proposed Penzance Park and Ride facility.

2 Introduction

2.1 Project background

Cornwall Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Tim Sullivan of CORMAC Contracting in May 2016 to undertake an archaeological assessment of an area of land at Eastern Green, Penzance which had been proposed for the development of a Park and Ride facility (Fig 16). The study area had been used as a carpark for Penzance Heliport between 1964 and 2012, when this facility was closed down (Fig 10).

The study covers a proposed park and ride scheme for up to 250 cars, which is part of a planning condition (PA10/08714).

The project comprises a desk based assessment, walk-over survey and summary report.

2.2 Aims

The purpose of the project is to undertake an archaeological assessment of the project area, and to produce a report containing recommendations for appropriate further stages of archaeological assessment and / or recording.

The keys aims of the assessment are:

- To identify and describe the archaeological resource.
- To assess the significance of the resource.
- To assess the impact of the proposal on the importance and integrity of the resource.
- To identify ways of minimising the impact upon the archaeological resource.
- To make recommendations for archaeological recording during the development and construction of the scheme.

A further objective of the project is to produce an entry to the Historic England OASIS/Ads-online database of archaeological projects.

2.3 Methods

All work has been undertaken according to the appropriate Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance*. Staff followed the *CIfA Code of Conduct* and *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Archaeology*. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists is the professional body for archaeologists working in the UK.

2.3.1 Desk-based assessment

During the desk-based assessment historical databases and archives were consulted in order to obtain information about the history of the site and the structures and features that were likely to survive. The main sources consulted were as follows:

- Cornwall HER;
- Early 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;
- Published histories;
- 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.

2.3.2 Fieldwork

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

The field visit was intended to inform the following:

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

2.3.3 Post-fieldwork

All project materials and data have been archived according to CAU standards.

The findings of the assessment have been summarised in this report.

3 Location and setting

See Figs 1 and 2.

The project area forms a rectangular shape, reflecting the shape of the former field in which it was developed, extends to approximately 0.8 Hectares and is centred at SW 48703 31401. It is in the ecclesiastical parish of Gulval; its western section is in the civil parish of Penzance, whilst its eastern section falls within in the civil parish of Ludgvan. The site is almost completely level and at an average elevation of 4.8m OD. The area proposed for the development for the Park and Ride facility is bounded to the west and south by fencelines defining Sainsbury's carpark, to the east by a fenceline and service roadway to the rear of Halfords and the former B&Q store and to the north by an open service drain. The principal vehicle entrance to the Park and Ride is to be created at the midpoint of the northern edge of the facility, accessing Jelbert Way via a new road bridge over the drain.

The underlying bedrock consists of the Upper Devonian Mylor series slates (whose upper parts have been shown through investigations undertaken in 2013 to have degraded to gravelly clays). These are overlain by clays, gravels, silts and sand across much of the site; over substantial parts of former heliport these have been further overlain by landfill deposits between 1m and 4m deep, which in turn have been covered with a layer of gravelly hardcore.

Rising sea levels in the period following the last ice age 12,000 years ago (the Quaternary) reached their current levels about 6,000 years ago during the Flandrian Marine Transgression. The fossilised tree trunks, branches and other material which is occasionally exposed on the beaches at Wherrytown, Chyandour and Marazion provide evidence for the effects of these rising sea levels, and were part of a far larger forest which would have extended out under much of Mounts Bay, as well as some way inland. The marshy land which initially formed in its stead allowed deposits of peat to be laid down, but these were gradually overlain with sands and gravels, and the lower lying parts were eventually submerged beneath Mounts Bay.

The development site occupies very low-lying land backing Mounts Bay, much of which was reclaimed from this former marshland during the 19th century following the construction of the shoreline causeway on which the West Cornwall Railway connection between Truro and Penzance was laid in 1852. The Historic Landscape Character of the project area is Recently Enclosed Land (farmland post-medieval) reflecting this process of gradual reclamation of the former marshes (Fig 13). The gently sloping land to the north is recorded as Anciently Enclosed Land (farmland medieval), associated with the medieval settlements of Lanisey (first recorded in 1086 and now renamed Gulval), Poniuou (first recorded in 1327) and Pleming (first recorded in 1346).

A geotechnical investigation of the wider Sainsbury's site was undertaken in 2013 by Tweedie Evans Consulting utilising a combination of boreholes and test pits. This programme of investigation confirmed the presence of peats, clays, sands and silts overlying degraded bedrock. In turn this material was found to be covered by a layer of landfill material of variable depth topped with a relatively thin layer of imported hardcore.

4 Designations

4.1 National

No national designations apply to the project area.

4.2 Regional/county

No regional or county designations apply to the project area.

There are no public Rights of Way across the project area.

5 Site history

The proposed development area is situated close to land that has been classified as 'Anciently Enclosed Land' (Cornwall Council 1996). 'This is land which has been settled since at least the medieval period and which often contains buried archaeological remains dating to prehistoric and medieval times. To the south of the development area is Mounts Bay, where a nationally important submerged forest and peat deposits of Neolithic date have been identified.

The proposed development is located on land which would have been worked from the medieval settlement of Lanisey (or Lanisley). This was first recorded in 1086 within the Domesday survey, which records that it was held by Roland from the Bishop of Exeter and had '*land for 12 ploughs, meadow 2 acres, pasture 2 leagues long and 1 league wide*'. The name Lanisey is Cornish and contains the element *lann* meaning 'enclosed cemetery', indicating the presence of an early Christian site in the vicinity. Gulval holy well and chapel were sited immediately to the south-east of the present village and may well indicate the site of this early Christian establishment.

Known archaeological sites

The project area is situated in an area with significant archaeological potential, which contains evidence of prehistoric, medieval and later activity. The sites which have been identified in the vicinity and which are included in the Cornwall and Scilly HER include:

- Submerged prehistoric forest and peat deposits extending between Penzance Harbour and Long Rock located to the south of the development area (MCO55163), but possibly extending northwards under the low-lying former marshland backing Mounts Bay.
- A Neolithic axe-hammer was found to the west of the site (MCO576).
- Cropmark boundaries within the proposed development area are visible on aerial photographs. They may be associated with ridge and furrow or be drainage ditches of medieval date (MCO51201). See Figures 11 and 12.

- The proposed development area is set within an area of former field systems of medieval origin.
- The proposed development area is located to the south of the medieval settlement of Lanisey (MCO15284).
- A post-medieval milestone is located to the south of the proposed development area (MCO54230).

Potential sites

There is some potential for below-ground prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval sites and artefacts to survive within the project area and for the survival of unrecorded buried archaeological remains and artefacts of all periods.

Map regression

Map regression analysis has been undertaken for the project area.

The earliest county-wide mapping available for this area was drawn up by John Norden *circa* 1597, the results of which were presented to King James I in 1604 as his *Description of Cornwall*. His mapping was large scale, showing the coastline, principal streams and rivers, some indications of topography (in the form of stylised hills, lakes and beaches), principal settlements, churches and the houses of the gentry. He depicted an extensive area of sandy beach at the head of Mounts Bay together with several streams or small rivers flowing into it, including two between Gulval and Ludgvan. Gulval and Ludgvan were shown as churchtowns, whilst 'Taluer' (Tolverth) was depicted as a house or large farm between the two, this lying 1km to the east of the project area which is now subsumed within Longrock Industrial Estate.

Joel Gascoyne produced a high quality and remarkably accurate map of Cornwall in 1699 (Fig 3). Again, his mapping was fairly large scale, this showing 'Gulvall' and Ludgvan churchtowns, together with 'Tolver' (Tolverth) and 'Plemming' (Pleming) farms. The road from Penzance eastwards led from Chyandour through Gulval to Crowlas at the time.

Thomas Martyn's map of Cornwall (Fig 4) was published in 1748. This shows a road along a causeway backing the beach at Longrock as well as the old road through Chyandour, Gulval and Crowlas. As well as Gulval and Ludgvan churchtowns, it also marked 'Chyandower', 'Punjo' (Poniou) and 'Long Rock'.

The first Edition of the OS 1" to a mile map (Fig 5) represents the first reasonably accurate and detailed mapping of Cornwall. The landscape surrounding the project area was, at the time, clearly still under reclamation from marshland, as a large area of open water was depicted immediately to the south-east of the project area. The mapping also shows the causeway along the head of the beach near between Chyandour and Longrock.

The 1840 Gulval Tithe Map (Fig 6) and its apportionment provide useful detail for the project area. Whilst the mapping includes no topographical detail, field names do provide some insight into the nature of the landscape. The project area includes the whole of plot 2369 and part of 2368. Both were owned by Sir Henry Onslow Baronet and the Reverend Richard Onslow (vicar of Gulval) as part of Gulval Churchtown and 'Ponju', were leased, together with much other local land to William Bolitho, esquire, and were occupied by Thomas Matthews. Both were named 'Marsh Moor' and were described as 'pasture'. The place names strongly suggest that whilst the process of reclamation from marshland was underway, these fields were probably seasonally wet grassland.

This process is evident from the *circa* 1877 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 25" to the mile mapping (Fig 7). Whilst plot 1791 is depicted as a field, many of its neighbours to the north and west are depicted as marshland. Also evident are the system of drainage channels which had been excavated speed up the drying out this area, as well as a

series of trackways and paths which would have allowed the tenants to access their plots (Figs 7 and 14). Orchards had been laid out on the higher land to the north-west, reflecting its fertility and southerly aspect. The main line railway runs along the causeway at the head of the beach, which at this date sited a volunteer carbine range.

The OS 25" mapping was revised in 1907 and this map (Fig 8) shows how the process of gradual drainage had progressed over the intervening two decades, plot 1787 being shown as free of marshland vegetation by this date. Again, a network of ditches was depicted, suggesting that this had been instrumental in draining this low-lying former marshland. When the mapping was again revised *circa* 1932 (Fig 9), no marshland symbols were included in the surrounding landscape, suggesting that the process of reclamation had by then been successfully completed.

The reclaimed land closest to Mounts' Bay must have remained rather boggy, however, and seems to have been identified as being suitable for development during the post-war period. The ground levels in parts of this area were raised through the dumping of local landfill material prior to hardcore being spread over the top of the dump. The land was subsequently sold off for the development of industrial estates and retail parks. This process is not well documented online, and the original size of the landfill site is uncertain, though is thought to have extended from Ponsandane in the west to Longrock in the east. The northern edge of the landfill site is likely to be represented by Jelbert Way. Most ground investigations within this zone have revealed a relatively shallow layer of landfill material overlying the original marshland, much of which remains significantly waterlogged.

A county-wide series of aerial photographs commissioned by Cornwall County Council in 2005 (Fig 10) provide a useful overview of recent changes to the landscape of the County. By this date the heliport had been operational for four decades and a large carpark had been developed on its northern side, adjacent to the retail park to the east, whilst between the heliport and the railway, the road leading to Penzance had been dualled. British International Helicopters ceased their service to the Isles of Scilly in October 2012 and the heliport buildings were demolished in 2013 to make way for a Sainsbury's supermarket, together with its associated carpark and filling station.

6 Archaeological walkover survey results

See Figures 17 to 20.

An archaeological walkover survey of the site was undertaken on 27 May 2016. The weather was cloudy but there were no impediments to survey.

The site proposed for the Penzance Park and Ride facility consists of the eastern section of the former Penzance Heliport carpark. As mentioned above, this was developed over a former shallow landfill site which had been created on low-lying partly-reclaimed agricultural land on the site of former marshland. The processes which contributed to the present landform within the project area have largely consisted of the building up of the land surface and the cutting of open drains.

This section of the former Heliport carpark is enclosed to the south and west by 2m high shiplap timber fences defining the boundary of the Sainsbury store customer carpark; to the north, an open drain is accompanied by a rather decrepit chainlink and barbed wire fence on cranked-top concrete posts (gaps in this fence have, in places, been patched with Heras fence panels), and to the east by chainlink and barbed wire fencing on concrete posts. The ground surface between the former carpark and the Sainsbury's fenceline along the edge of its customer carpark to the south and west has been ramped up to a height of approximately 1.5m given the differences in height between the two areas.

The former heliport carpark is accessed from the south via a tarmac ramp which gives onto an area which is, to the west, surfaced in a mixture of coarse gravel and tarmac. This incorporates the concrete strip foundations for a possible building (Fig 19) and a

possible associated path, together with the 4m x 2m surface level concrete pad for a further demolished structure.

To the east, the ground surface consists of levelled stony aggregate of a range of sizes from cobbles down to fine gravel; this is mixed with a certain amount of soil, and also incorporates broken crockery, glass, brick, concrete, metal, plastics and other man-made materials, possibly representing the compacted and levelled upper surface of the landfill site. This has developed some surface vegetation consisting of abundant low buddleia bushes intermixed with rosebay willowherb, some gorse and a range of vascular plants.

The northern boundary of the site along the line of the drainage channel has developed more substantial vegetation including semi-mature sycamore and willows, together with stands of rushes, dropwort water hemlock and other vascular plants (Fig 20). The trees form an effective visual screen for the site from the north.

Running from north to south across the centre of the site in its northern section is a 1m wide strip of coarsely-crushed concrete; this approximately aligns with an extension of one of the historic drains (See Fig 14) and may represent the recent infill to a former drainage channel.

No signs could be seen of the historic field drainage channels documented within the project area, and it is assumed that they have either been infilled, culverted or were diverted when the landfill site was established. Some sections of the drainage system are still in use in the surrounding landscape to the north, whilst other re-aligned or new channels are mapped within this general area (Fig 15). Open channels accompany Jelbert Way on its northern and southern sides (that on this road's southern side defines the northern edge of the proposed Park and Ride facility), The southern drainage ditch extends to the western end of the Sainsbury's site, then turns south towards the sea. Another section of the original drainage system has been realigned around the southern side of the KFC site next to the northern A30 road carriageway, whilst a further open drainage channel runs along the southern boundary of the former B&Q site and then turns to the south to join that adjacent to the A30.

No archaeological features were recorded within the project area.

7 Archaeological potential

It is clear from the investigative geotechnical work undertaken on the site in 2013, coupled with evidence from the map regression, that the reclamation of this formerly marshy area at Eastern Green has been undertaken over well over a century, starting with the cutting of a system of drainage channels and culminating in the use of the area as a landfill site, followed by blanketing with hardcore so that it could be used as a carpark.

However, boring and test-pitting has also demonstrated the survival of peat and other waterlogged marsh deposits beneath the modern ground-raising and levelling materials, effectively sealing them and preventing them from drying out further. These buried deposits began to be laid down *circa* 6000 years ago, and have been shown elsewhere in Mounts Bay to preserve not only organic materials with considerable potential for sampling for preserved wood and nuts, but also for palynological material (pollen, seeds and spores) which can inform us about past climates and habitats. Such well-preserved organic material can also provide material suitable for high precision scientific dating. These deposits have also, on occasions, occasionally provided evidence for human activities during prehistory. These former marshes and areas of standing water would have provided important areas where wading birds and fish could be hunted, and we might expect evidence for human activity here from the Mesolithic period onwards.

8 Conclusions/recommendations

The site contains no known archaeological sites. However, the archaeological potential of this ancient former marshland has been demonstrated elsewhere around Mounts Bay, and for this reason an archaeological watching brief is recommended should any ground breaking activities (including the excavation of service trenches and drains, etc) be proposed as part of the development of the park and ride facility. Whilst this is unlikely to take place over much of the site given that this area is within a flood zone and the Environment Agency will require that the development does not affect existing water courses, there may be some potential for the exposure of early deposits during the construction of the access bridge in the northern edge of the site as well as during works associated with this feature.

9 References

9.1 Primary sources

Ordnance Survey, c1810, 1 inch Map First Edition (licensed digital copy at CAU)

Ordnance Survey, 1924, 1 inch Map for Lands End and the Lizard, Revised Edition

Ordnance Survey, c1880. 25 Inch Map First 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

Tithe Map and Apportionment, c1840. Parish of Gulval (licensed digital copy at CRO)

Bartholomew's New Reduced Survey, 1906, 1932, 1959, Cornwall Sheet 37, 2 inches to the mile

Michelin Map of the British Isles, *circa* 1930, Plymouth to Penzance Sheet 22, 2 inches to the mile

9.2 Publications

Tweedie Evans Consulting Ltd 2013, *Penzance Heliport, Eastern Green, Penzance: foundation risk assessment*

9.3 Websites

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

10 Project archive

The CAU project number is **146957**

The project's documentary, digital, photographic and drawn archive is maintained by Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Electronic data is stored in the following locations:

Project admin: \\Sites\Sites P\Penzance park and ride assessment 2016\project background

Digital photographs: \\Historic Environment (Images)\Penzance park and ride assessment

Communications: \\Sites\Sites P\Penzance park and ride assessment 2016\communications

Report: \\Sites\Sites P\Penzance park and ride assessment 2016\report

Historic England/ADS OASIS online reference: cornwall2-253352

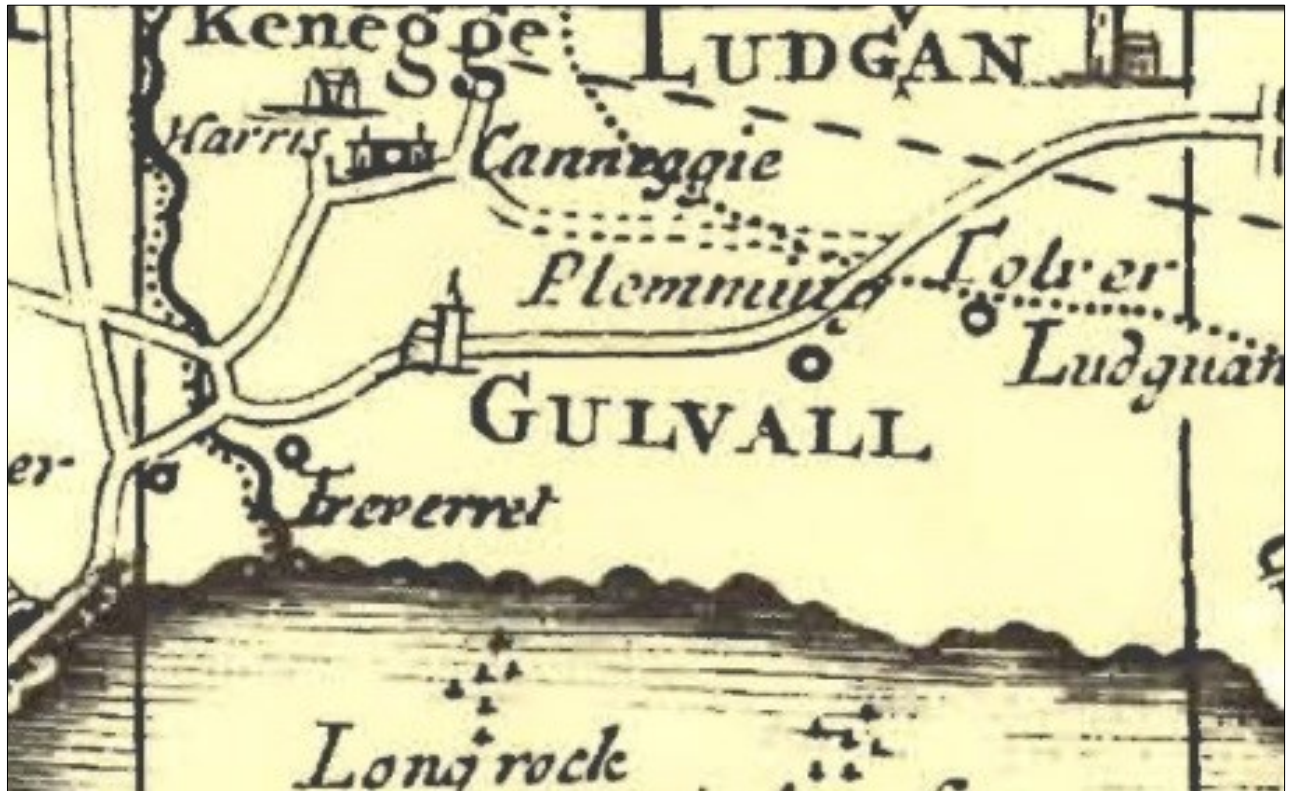


Fig 3. An extract from Joel Gascoyne's 1699 map of Cornwall.



Fig 4. An extract from Thomas Martyn's map of Cornwall.



Fig 5. An extract from the circa 1810 OS 1st Edition 1" mapping. The project area is shown in red.

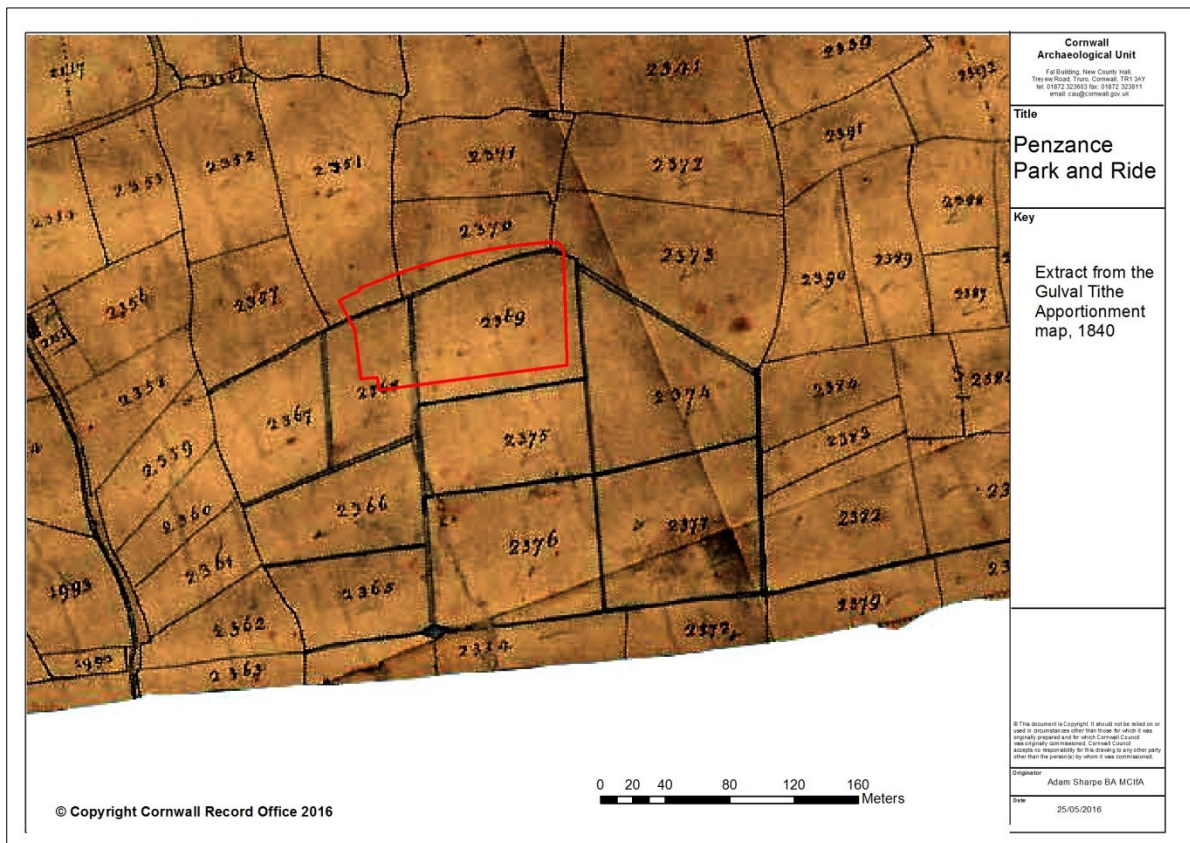


Fig 6. An extract from the 1840 Gulval Tithe Map.

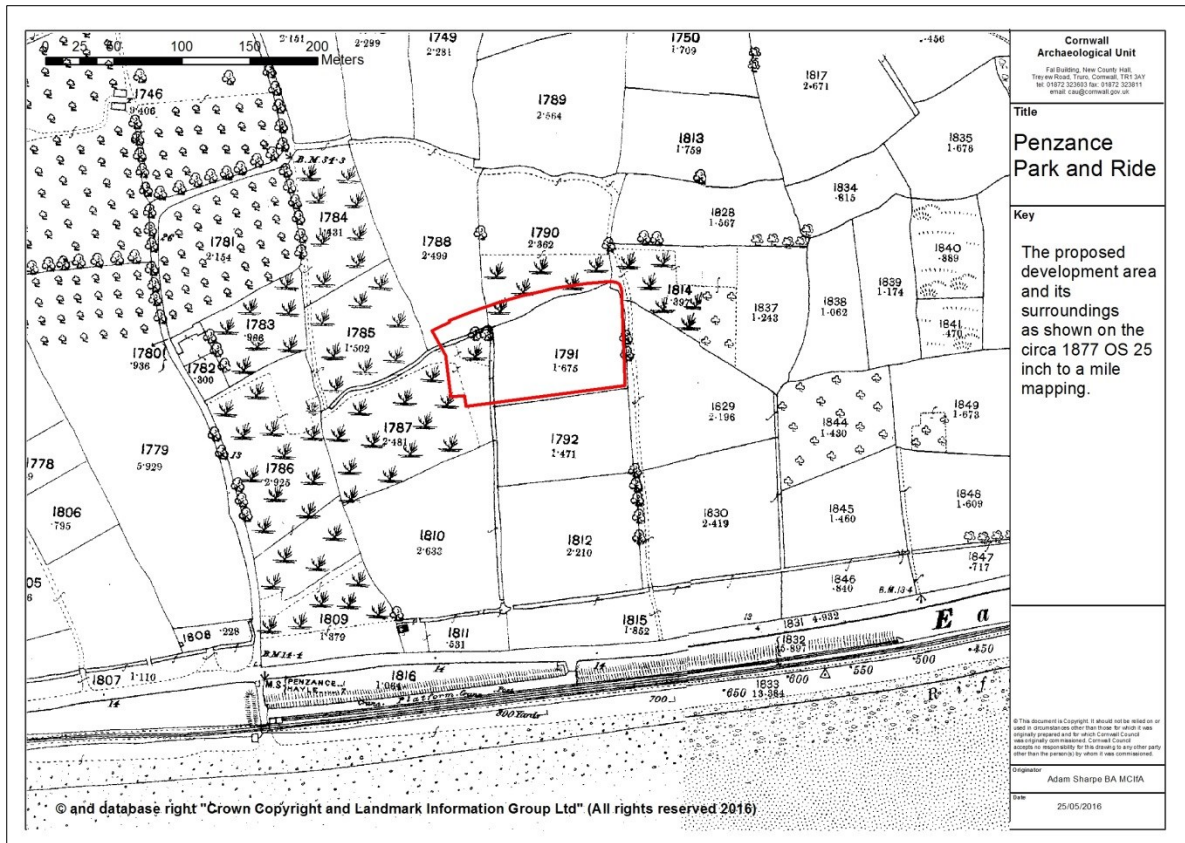


Fig 7. The project area as shown on the 1877 1st Edition OS 25" mapping.

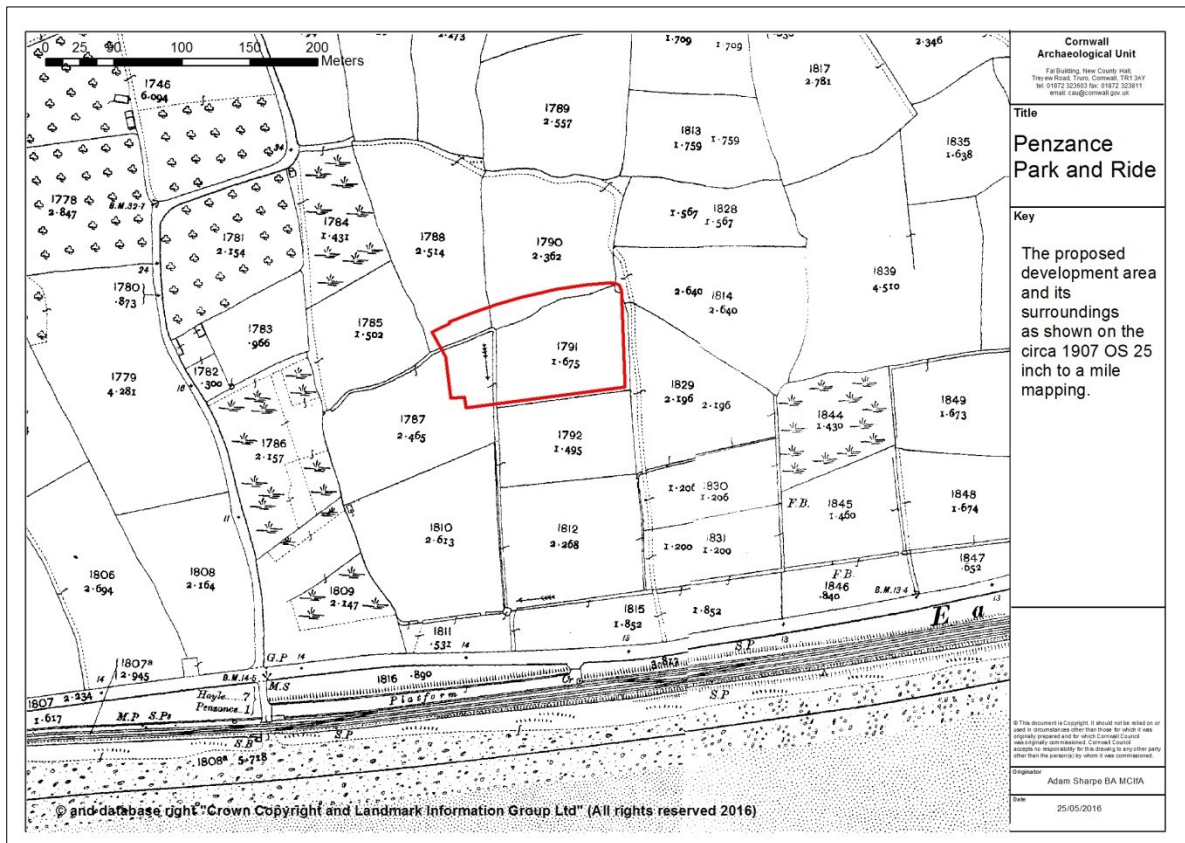


Fig 8. The project area as shown on the 1907 2nd Edition OS 25" mapping.

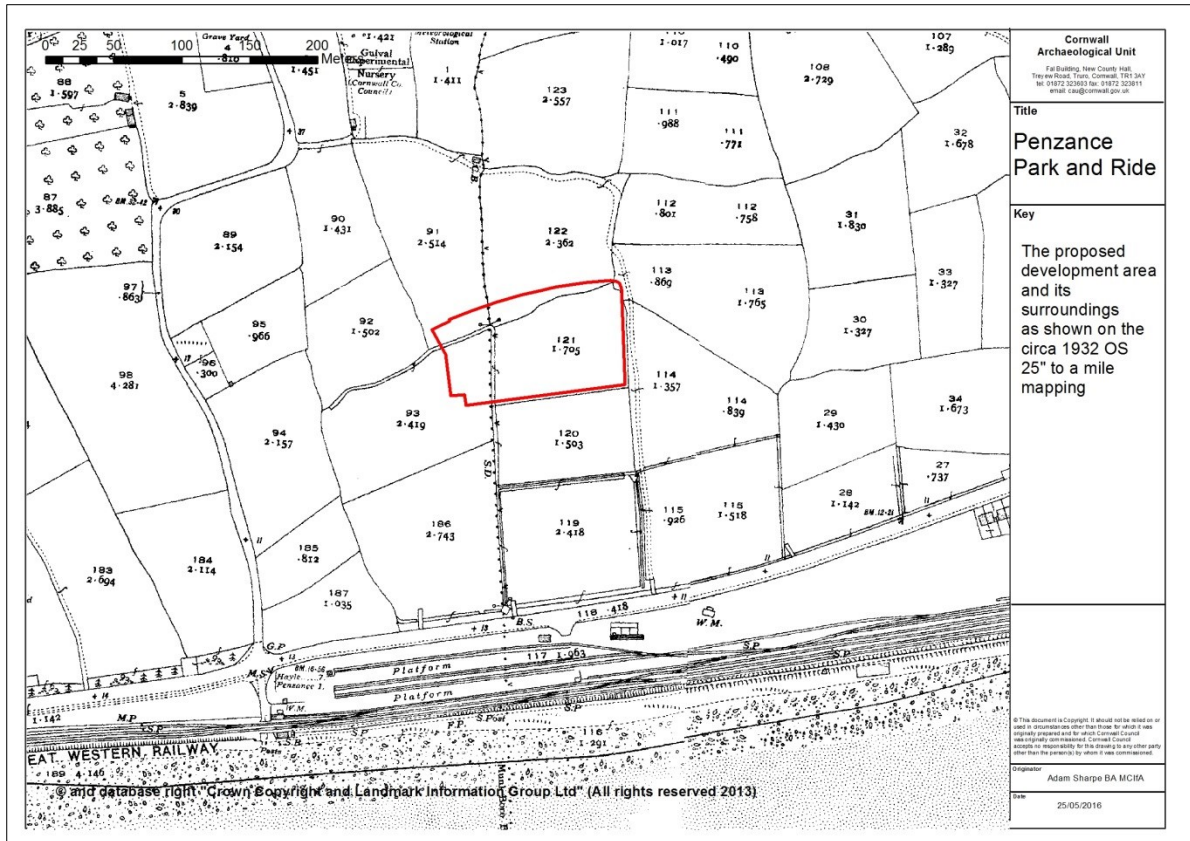


Fig 9. The project area as shown on the circa 1932 OS 25" mapping.



Fig 10. The project area as shown on 2005 CCC aerial photographs.

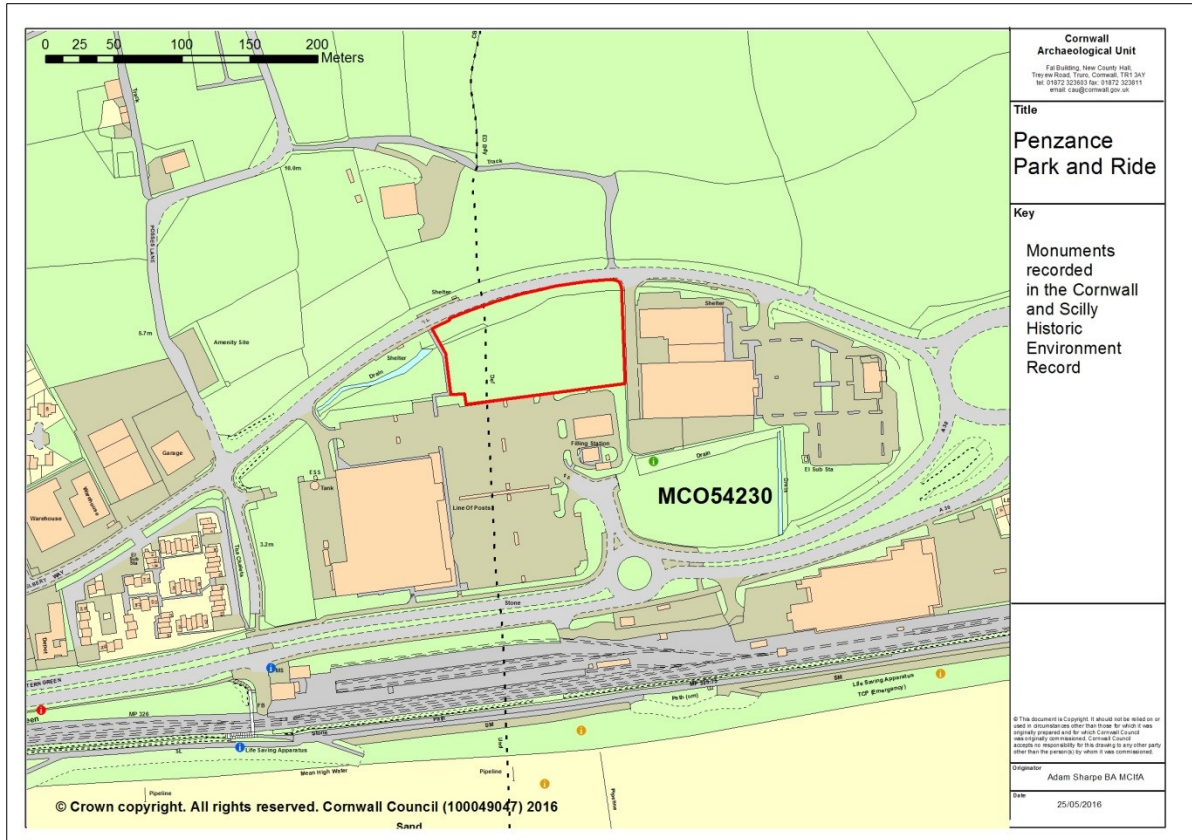


Fig 11. The only site recorded adjacent to the project area in the Cornwall and Scilly HER.

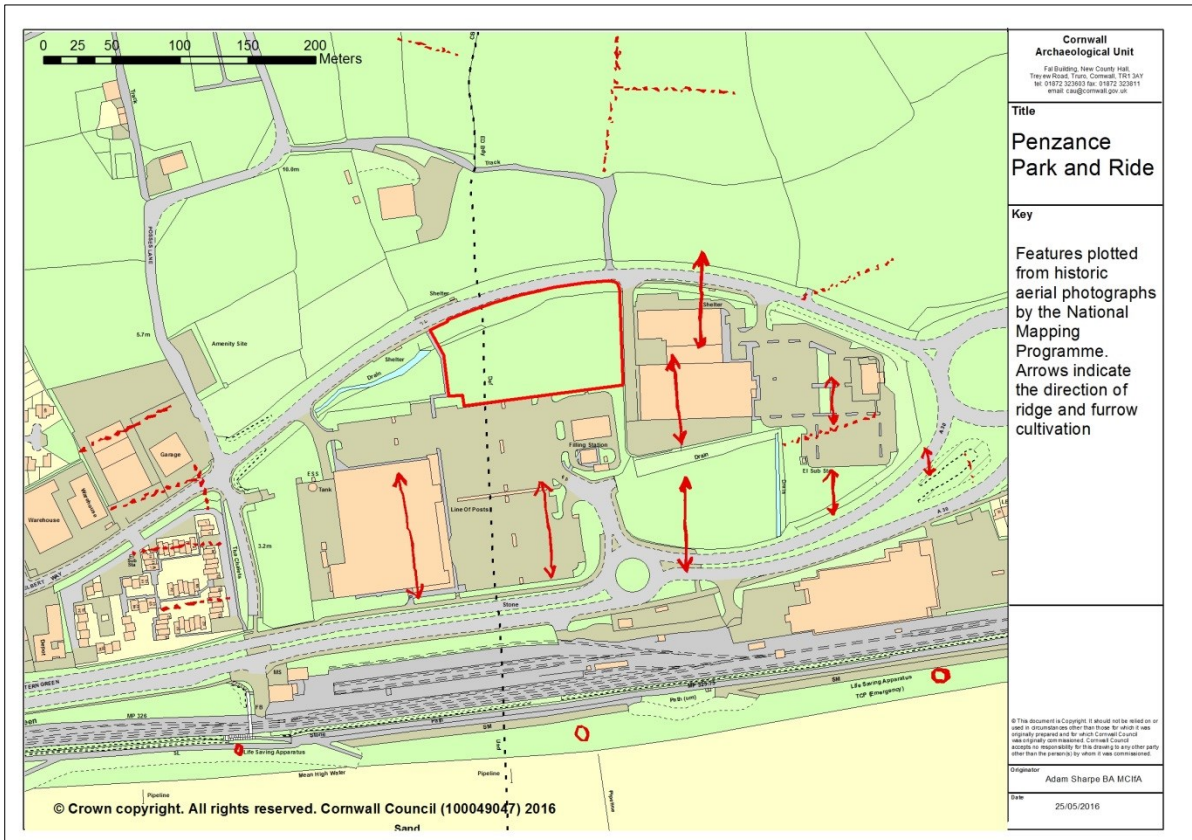


Fig 12. Sites recorded by the NMP in and surrounding the project area.

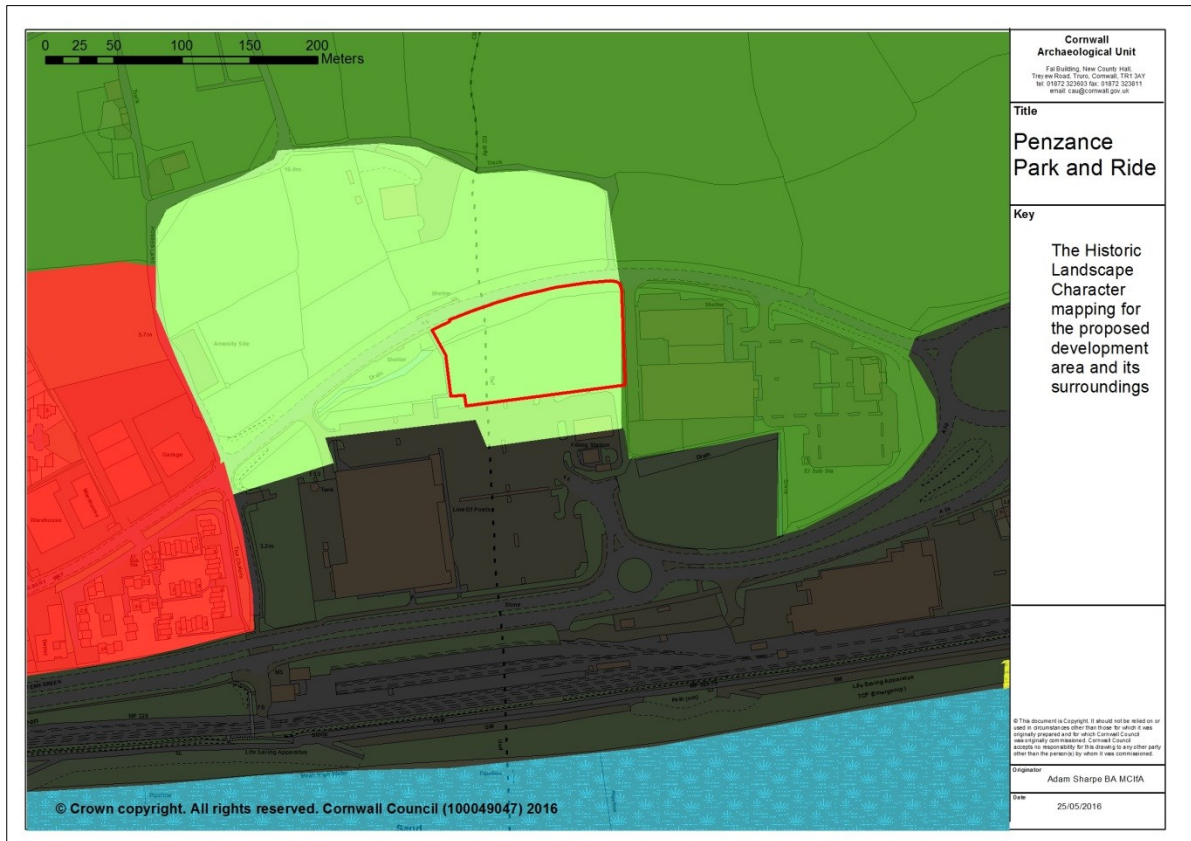


Fig 13. The Historic Landscape Character of the project area and its surroundings.

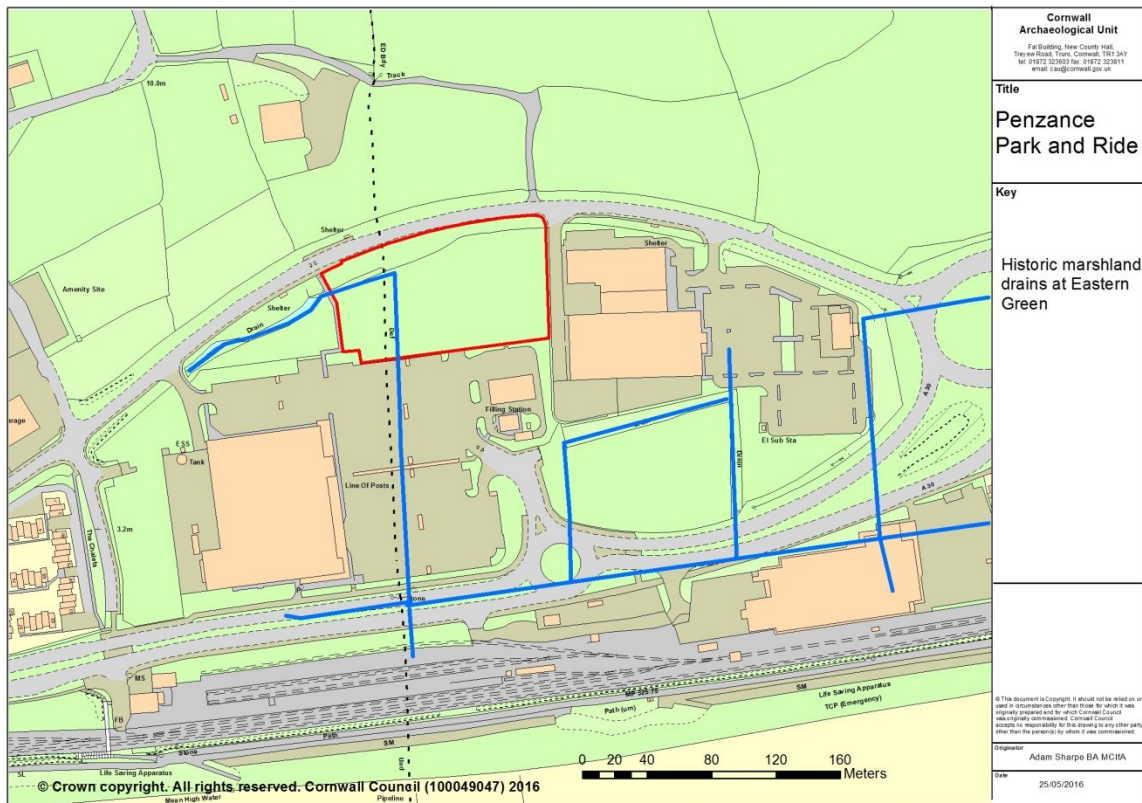


Fig 14. The layout of the marsh drainage system at Eastern Green.

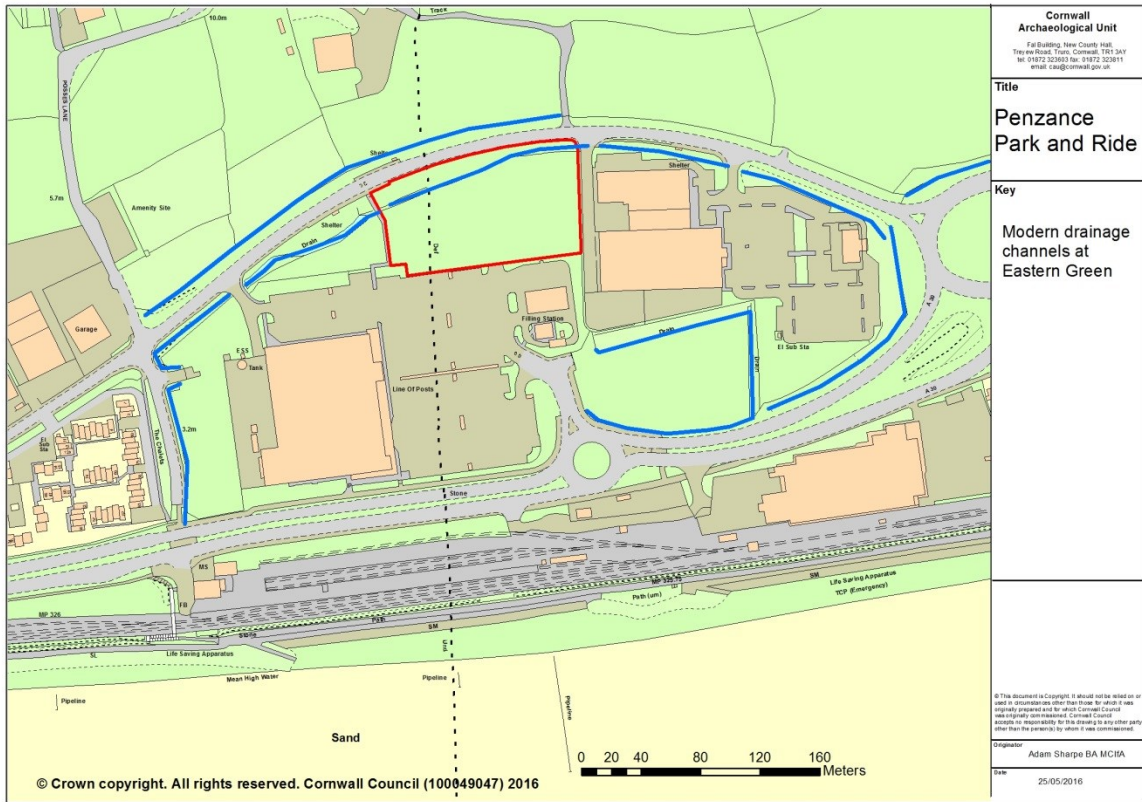


Fig 15. The modern drainage channel layout at Eastern Green.



Fig 16. The proposed layout for the Penzance Park and Ride facility.



Fig 17. Looking westwards across the project area towards the Sainsbury's supermarket.



Fig 18. Looking eastwards across the project area towards the Halfords and former B&Q retail units.



Fig 19. The concrete strip foundations at the western end of the project area.



Fig 20. The active drainage ditch which will form the northern boundary of the proposed Park and Ride facility.

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