



Site Name: Penrice Academy, Charlestown Road, Charlestown, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 3NR	
Grid ref (10-fig): SX 02780 52165	Report No: 2018R061
Parish: St Austell	PA & Condition No: 171012-610-PA18/03007
Site Type: Not applicable	
Period: Not applicable	Form: Not applicable
Description:	
<p>CAU carried out a watching brief in 2018 at Penrice Academy, St Austell, for Peninsula Learning Trust (Figs 1 and 2). Watching brief was required by a Local Planning Authority planning condition for a scheme to provide a new single-storey school building. It followed a separate geophysical survey, which recorded no clear archaeological features, but found high ferrous levels (Jones 2008). The school is on a ridge at c72m OD, above the coast c1km to the south east (Fig 1). The project site was on the south west of the school complex, with existing buildings on three sides (Fig 2). On the south the site was open to a playing field, containing a prehistoric standing stone, the Longstone, c35m south of the works (Figs 2 and 3).</p> <p>A brief desktop assessment indicates that the school complex was laid out in the later 20th century on farmland enclosed in post-medieval times. The OS map of c1810 shows the area enclosed with the Longstone standing within. Several Bronze Age round barrows are recorded nearby. The Tithe map of c1840 depicts a field system here in course of laying out or adaptation, with some boundaries represented by dashed lines, including one incorporating the Longstone. By the time of the OS map of c1880 this boundary was a built hedge bank. As shown on the 19th century maps, several industrial sites operated in the vicinity, including mills and naptha (oil processing) works.</p> <p>Watching brief conditions were good with fine weather throughout. Site fencing ensured the standing stone (13m outside the fence) was not inadvertently damaged (Figs 3, 5 and 10). The site, rectangular in plan, measured c32m north east-south west by 12.8m. The only features within were shallow concrete rafts for cycle sheds or similar (Fig 4). The groundworks involved stripping the site to a depth of 0.3m using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, and digging foundation trenches down from this around the edges of the building footprint and across its width (Figs 5 and 8).</p> <p>No early or otherwise significant artefacts, features or deposits were found. Because of this it was not considered necessary to extend the watching brief to cover associated service trenches (Fig 2). The works revealed, instead, that the ground was made up systematically with large quantities of stony earth (Figs 5- 8). The various trench sides exposed very similar stratigraphy, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To 0.1m deep from surface, grass roots and fine grey-brown silt. Few, small pieces of shillet (local slaty stone). Turf, 0.1m thick. 2. 0.1m-0.4m deep. Grey-brown silty earth, mostly free of stones; occasional broken plastic and glass. Topsoil, 0.3m thick. 3. 0.4m-0.5m deep. Darker grey-brown clayier silty soil, few stones, occasional flecks of charcoal. Topsoil, 0.1m thick. 4. 0.5m-0.7m deep. Pinkish- or yellowy-grey (colours both mixed, and varying across site), small shillet and occasionally quartz, compacted, some modern glass and potsherds, traces of tip lines falling to seaward (south east). Made ground, 0.2m thick. 5. 0.7m-1.1m deep. Dark grey-brown friable silty clay, with charcoal up to c2cm across; few stones. Some yellow or grey lenses c0.1m across. Occasional modern finds including glass, a willow pattern china sherd and a brass handle. Made ground, 0.4m thick. 6. 1.1m deep, continuing down below excavation. Yellowy- or orangey-grey shillet and clayey matrix. Subsoil, probably natural. <p>The redeposited layers 3, 4 and 5 differed from one another and so were derived from different places or sources, but held only modern artefacts and were spread successively across the site so probably relate to a single school ground landscaping scheme (Figs 6 and 7). Layer 5, mixed, and dark with charcoal, and perhaps the upper Layer 3, may have been derived from nearby disused industrial works. Layer 4, reddish in colour, may be from mine spoil. Inclusion of mining or industrial waste may explain the ferrous response recorded by the magnetometer survey (Jones 2008). The lower Layer 5, above basal shillet which appeared natural, contained a sherd of blue-and-white china, and a handle of brass or similar alloy, demonstrating that the ground was made up relatively recently (Fig 9).</p> <p>The development therefore had no impact on buried prehistoric remains. However, it is possible that such features survive beyond or beneath the made ground in other parts of the field. It is not known how far the made ground extends towards the Longstone.</p> <p>Reference: Jones, A, 2008. <i>Penrice Community College, St Austell Geophysical Survey: Statement of Archaeological Implications</i> CAU Report No. 2008R078</p> <p>The CAU project number PR146810. 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. This archive contains:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Projects file containing site records and notes, project correspondence and administration. 2. Digital report and photographs stored in the directory: X:\Live Projects\Penrice Academy Watching Brief PR146810 	
Land Use (Area): School grounds	Land Use (Site): Margin of school playing field
OASIS No. cornwall2-329499	Date of Site Visits: July 30 th , August 1 st , and August 2 nd 2018
Catherine Parkes, Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council, Fal Building, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro. TR1 3AY.	

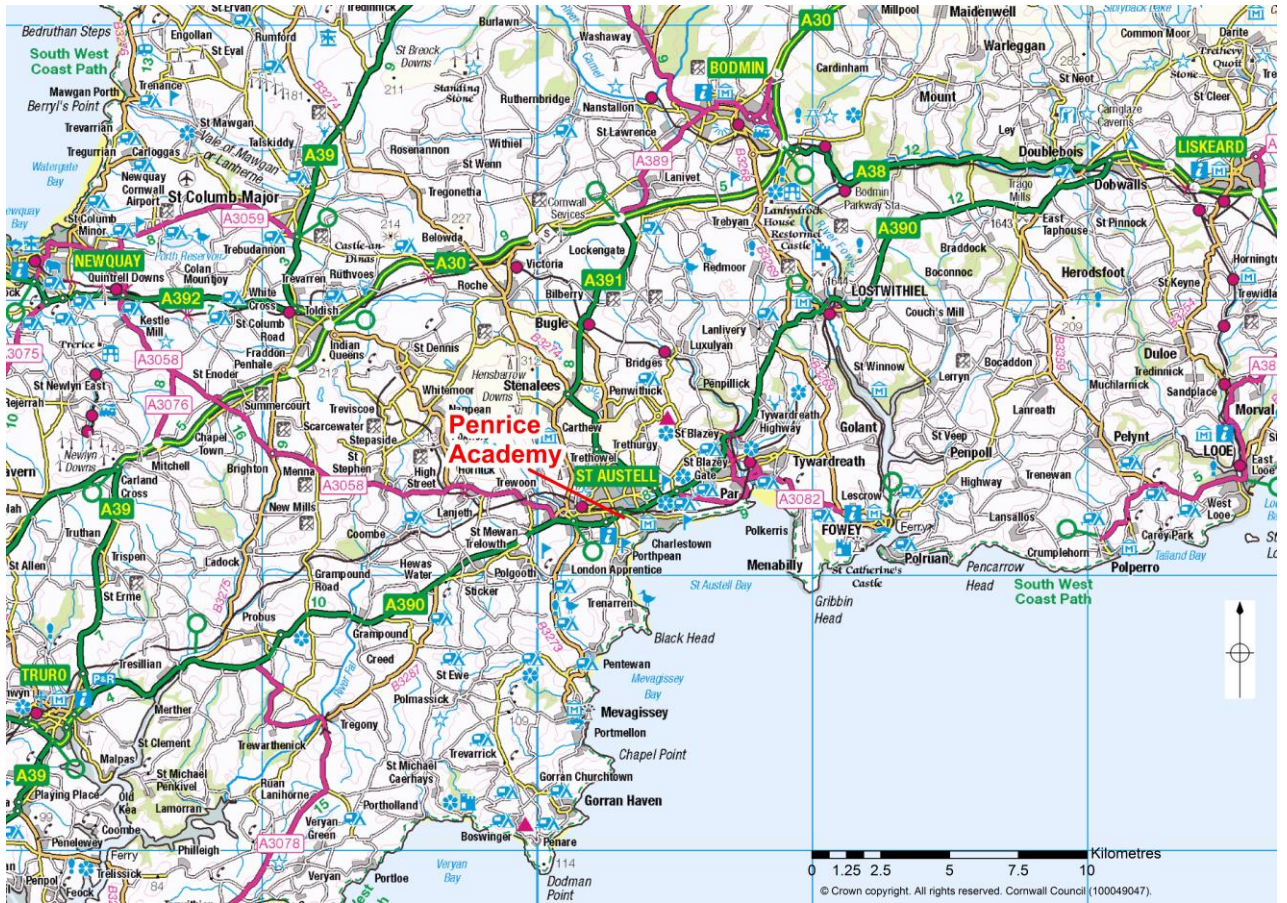


Fig 1 Location map with Penrice Academy marked in red.

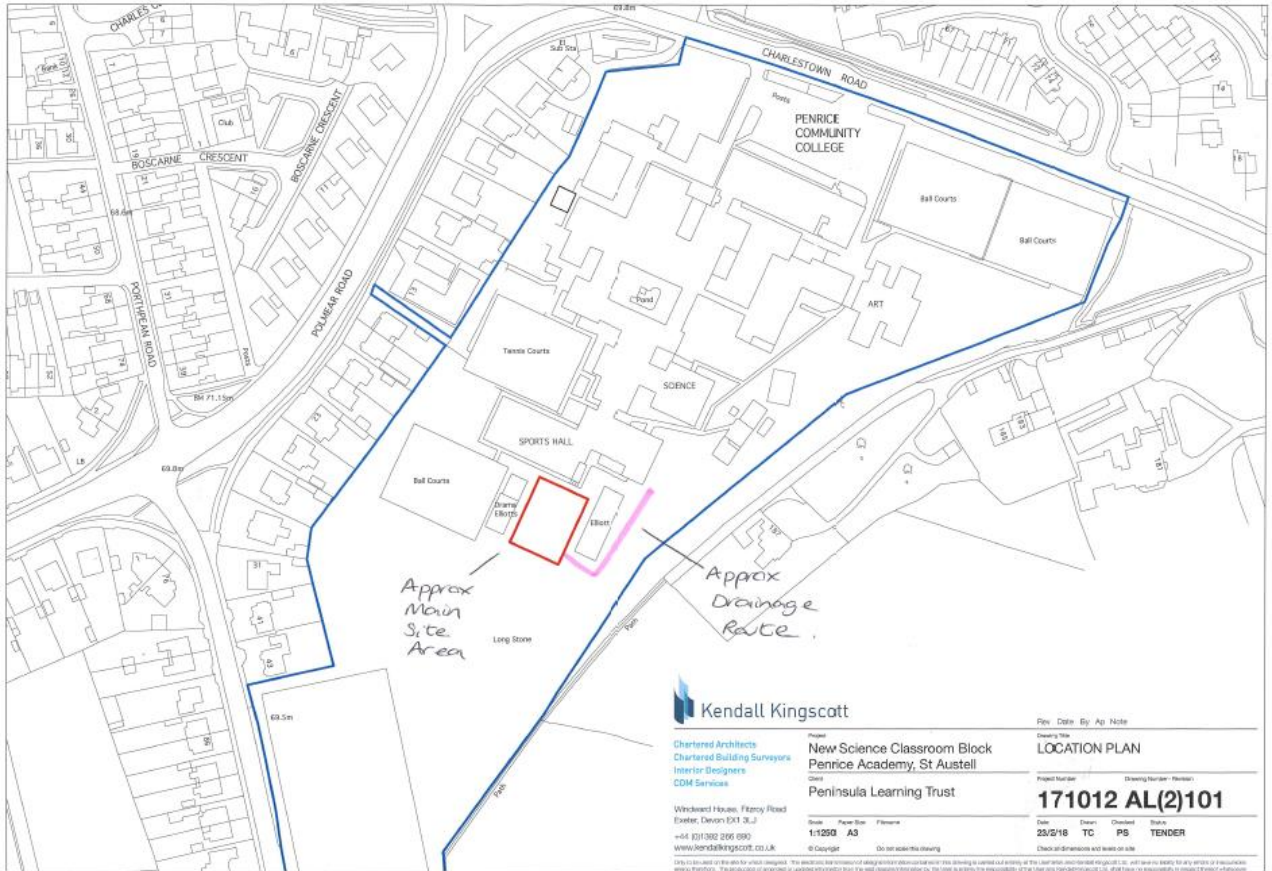


Fig 2 Client's site plan showing extent of works covered by watching brief outlined in red.



Fig 3 View across fenced site from near Longstone on SSW, with Penrice Academy buildings beyond, prior to groundworks (1m scale).



Fig 4 North west side of site at start of works, showing existing concrete standings, looking west.



Fig 5 Site following topsoil strip, looking SSW. The Longstone is visible in the rear ground on the left, beyond the site fence.



Fig 6 Trench on south east side of site, towards north east end, showing typical section through distinct layers of modern made ground. The yellowy grey layer exposed in the base of the trench here, resembling the natural subsoil, also proved to be redeposited.



Fig 7 North east trench, looking NW, showing uniformity of make-up of ground with distinct stony layers extending across the site.



Fig 8 Site with foundation trenches excavated, seen from the southernmost corner.



Fig 9 Finds from Layer 5 indicating that the material was re-deposited relatively recently.



Fig 10 Spoil heap south of site at the conclusion of the watching brief, showing the Longstone protected from any direct impact.