

Pendennis Castle Sergeants' Mess, Falmouth, Cornwall

Archaeological Watching Brief



Historic Environment Projects

Report No

2011R009

Report Name

Pendennis Castle Sergeants' Mess
Refurbishment, Falmouth Cornwall

Report Author

F Shepherd

Event Type

Watching Brief

Client Organisation

English Heritage

Client Contact

Ian Ashby

Monuments (MonUID)

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Fieldwork dates (From) (To)

20/01/2011

27/01/2011

(Created By)

Francis
Shepherd

(Create Date)

18/03/2011

Location (postal address; or general location and parish)

Pendennis Castle, Falmouth, Cornwall

(Town - for urban sites)

Falmouth

(Postcode)

TR11 4LP

(Easting) X co-ord

SW 82314

(Northing) Y co-ord

31863

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Historic Environment, Cornwall Council is a Registered Organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists

Project background

Historic Environment Projects were asked by Ian Ashby, Project Manager English Heritage, to monitor and record the results of groundworks associated with the refurbishment of the Sergeants' Mess at Pendennis Castle. The proposed groundworks included the digging of two interconnecting trenches across the garden to create a new drain run, a small trench adjacent to the building allowing a gas pipe to be rerouted and excavations for new safety railings along the perimeter wall.

Aims and objectives

- To record any archaeological features, layers or finds affected by the works.
- To establish the extent, condition, significance and character of the archaeological resource.
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains.
- To identify any artefacts relating to the occupation of the site.

Working methods

The work was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by HE Projects (Johns 2010). The excavations were carried out under archaeological supervision and were inspected and recorded by an HE Projects archaeologist. Due to the sensitive nature of the area where possible all excavations were carried out by hand. When necessary concrete was removed using a low impact breaker and a bar.

- The positions of the trenches were marked onto a scaled base map.
- Site drawings (plans and sections) were made by pencil on drafting film.
- All features and finds were accurately located.
- Finds were collected in labelled sealable plastic bags.
- Digital photography was used as the main record medium

Results

The groundworks took place between 20 and the 27 January 2011.

Trench 1 (Fig.3) (0.6m wide by 0.8m long by 1.2m deep) was within the building located against the western wall. The floor boards and concrete floor had been removed in advance revealing mid brown friable silty clay that contained as much as 65% angular stone (shillet or similar up to 0.35m long by 0.2m wide by 0.1m thick) as well as cinder and coal fragments. Modern ceramic fragments were also noted and later discarded.

Trench 2 (Fig.3) (0.4m wide by 2.4m long by 0.5m deep) was cut through a concrete path (0.2m deep) to reveal a hard packed soil. The path ran along the western side of the building. The soil was mid brown friable silty clay that contained angular stone similar to that encountered in Trench 1 along with coal, cinder and modern ceramic material that was later discarded.

Trench 3 (Fig.3) (0.4m wide by 2.6m long by 0.5m deep) was cut through the garden and intersected Trench 2 at its north eastern end. It contained a jumbled mix of angular shillet, modern ceramic, brick and glass within mid brown silty clay. At 0.5m depth a concrete pad was observed that is likely to be the gun platform referenced in the WSI (Appendix 1) and previously by Linzey (2000). The concrete underlay the full length of the trench.

Trench 4 (Fig.3) (0.4m wide by 0.9m long by 0.5m deep) was cut through the garden to the south east of Trench 3. Trench 4 also contained mid brown silty clay with inclusions similar to those observed in Trench 3. Notably this trench also overlay the concrete base discussed above.

No significant or unexpected archaeological deposits were encountered. A sewer pipe was found in close proximity to the building and it was decided that this could be utilised

to avoid further disturbance to the garden. To facilitate this Trench 2 was extended by 0.25m in length to allow a junction to be inserted. The probable 18th century gun platform was not affected.

All finds were 20th century ceramics or glass. They were kept for identification purposes and subsequently discarded.

References

Johns, C, 2010. *Pendennis Castle, Cornwall: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Controlled Archaeological Watching Brief during groundworks associated with the refurbishment of the Sergeants' Mess*, HE Projects, Truro

Linzey, R, 2000. *Fortress Falmouth: a Conservation Plan for the historic defences of Falmouth Haven Vol II*, English Heritage

Project archive

The HE project number is **2010122**

The project's documentary, photographic and drawn archive is housed at the offices of Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, Kennall Building, Old County Hall, Station 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 (file no 2010122).
2. Field plans and copies of historic maps stored in an A2-size plastic envelope (GRE 738).
3. Electronic drawings stored in the directory ..\CAD ARCHIVE\Sites P-Q\Pendennis Cas\Pendennis Castle Sergeants Mess 2010122
4. Digital photographs stored in the directory ..\Images\Sites.M-P\Pendennis\Pendennis Castle Sergeants Mess 2010122
5. English Heritage/ADS OASIS online reference: cornwall2-96422

This report text is held in digital form as: ...\\Projects\Sites\Sites P\PENDENNIS CASTLE\Pendennis Castle Sergeant's Mess Refurbishment 2010122\Pendennis Castle Sergeants Mess 2010122.doc

Appendix 1

Historic Environment Projects, Cornwall Council

Pendennis Castle, Cornwall: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Controlled Archaeological Watching Brief during groundwork's associated with the refurbishment of the Sergeants' Mess

Client: English Heritage
Client contact: Ian Ashby
Client tel: 0117 9750737
Client e-mail: ian.ashby@english-heritage.org.uk

Project Background

Ian Ashby, Project Manager English Heritage, has asked Historic Environment Projects (HE Projects) for an impact assessment, Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and estimate for an archaeological watching brief during groundwork's associated with the refurbishment of the Sergeants' Mess at Pendennis Castle as a holiday cottage. The work will involve the following elements:

- Excavation for a new gas pipe
- Excavation for new drain run
- Excavations for new safety railings to former embrasures in perimeter wall.

Historical Background

The Sergeants' Mess (NGR 82314 31863) was built between November 1910 and March 1911; the internal rooms comprised mess, reading room, larder, kitchens and cook's room. By the 1930 lavatories, not part of the original design had been tacked on to the north end. The building was converted to the custodian's house in the 1960s when a stone wall was built between the house and the parapet to create an enclosed garden for the occupant (Linzey 2000, 191).

The Sergeants' Mess is located in Horse Pool Bastion, part of the Elizabethan enceinte. The two embrasures on the north side of the bastion date from the 18th century, replacing four which are shown on 1600 plan by Norden. As far as is known the building does not overly any earlier structures, but the garden and south garden wall overly the gun platform inside the embrasure and this may be revealed by the drain excavation (Linzey 2000, fig 197).

During World War II a slit trench defence post known as CUNNINGHAM, to be manned by two men with rifles covering the west moat was dug in front of the embrasure into the parapet (Linzey 2000, 191, fig 197). This should not be affected by the excavations for the new safety railings.

Assessment of impact

The excavations will be between 0.5 and 0.6m deep and have the potential to reveal finds associated with the 20th century occupation of the building and also to reveal structures features and finds associated with earlier phases of the castle such as the 18th century gun platform.

Proposal for archaeological monitoring and recording

An archaeologist will be present during all the excavations. If any *in situ* archaeological remains are encountered work will halt and these will be excavated and recorded by the archaeologist.

If significant archaeological deposits are exposed, all works will cease and a meeting convened with English Heritage Project Manager and Inspector of Ancient Monuments to discuss the most appropriate way forwards.

The excavated spoil will be carefully inspected for artefacts. A written/scaled drawing/photographic record will be made as appropriate. The methodology and timetable for recording, archiving and reporting will be similar to that described in full in

the WSI for an archaeological watching brief during drainage works at St Mawes Castle submitted by HE Projects to EH in August 2005.

The final report will be submitted within six months, with copies supplied to English Heritage (two), Cornwall Council Historic Environment Record and the Royal Cornwall Museum. A draft will initially be submitted to the Inspector of Ancient Monuments for comment.

The project will be managed by Senior Archaeologist Charlie Johns (BA, MIFA) and the fieldwork will be carried out by a suitably qualified HE Projects archaeologist.

Standards

Historic Environment is a registered organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists. All recording work will be undertaken according to the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Site staff will be expected to follow the IfA *Code of Conduct* and *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.

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

HE Projects follows the Council's *Statement of Safety Policy*. Prior to carrying out on-site work HE will carry out a Risk Assessment.

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

References

Linzey, R, 2000. *Fortress Falmouth: a Conservation Plan for the historic defences of Falmouth Haven Vol II*, English Heritage

*Charles Johns,
Senior Archaeologist
05/11/2010*

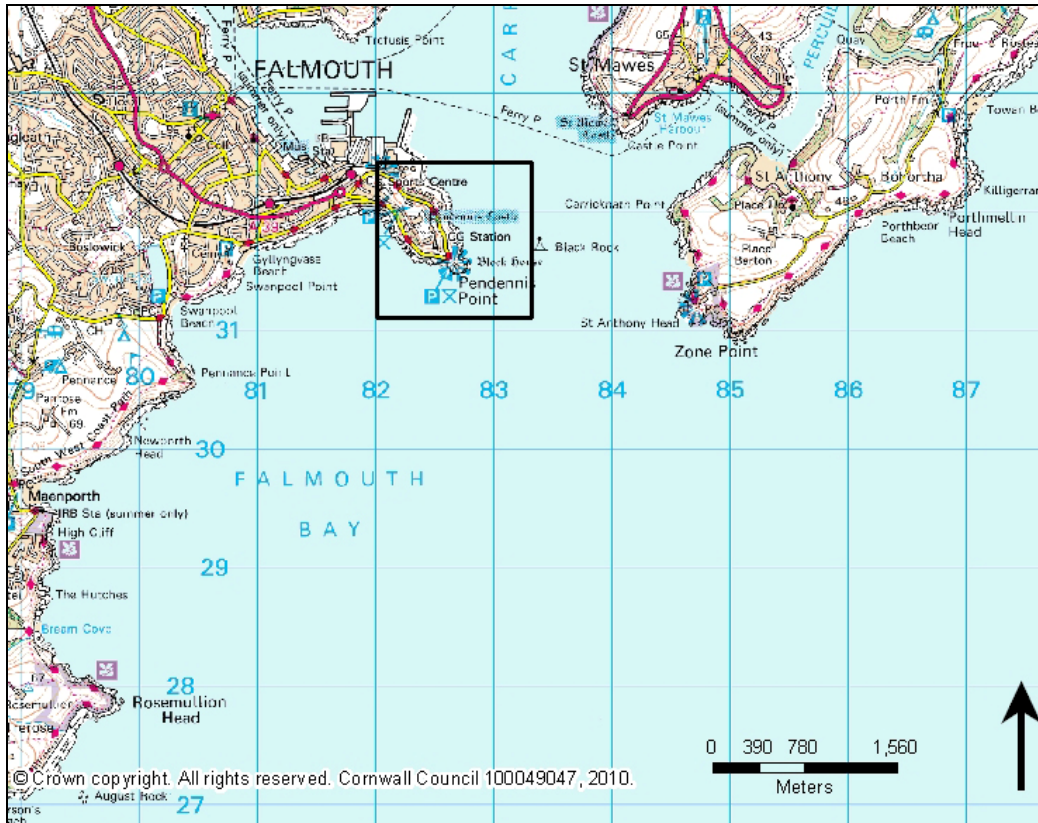


Fig 1 Location of survey area

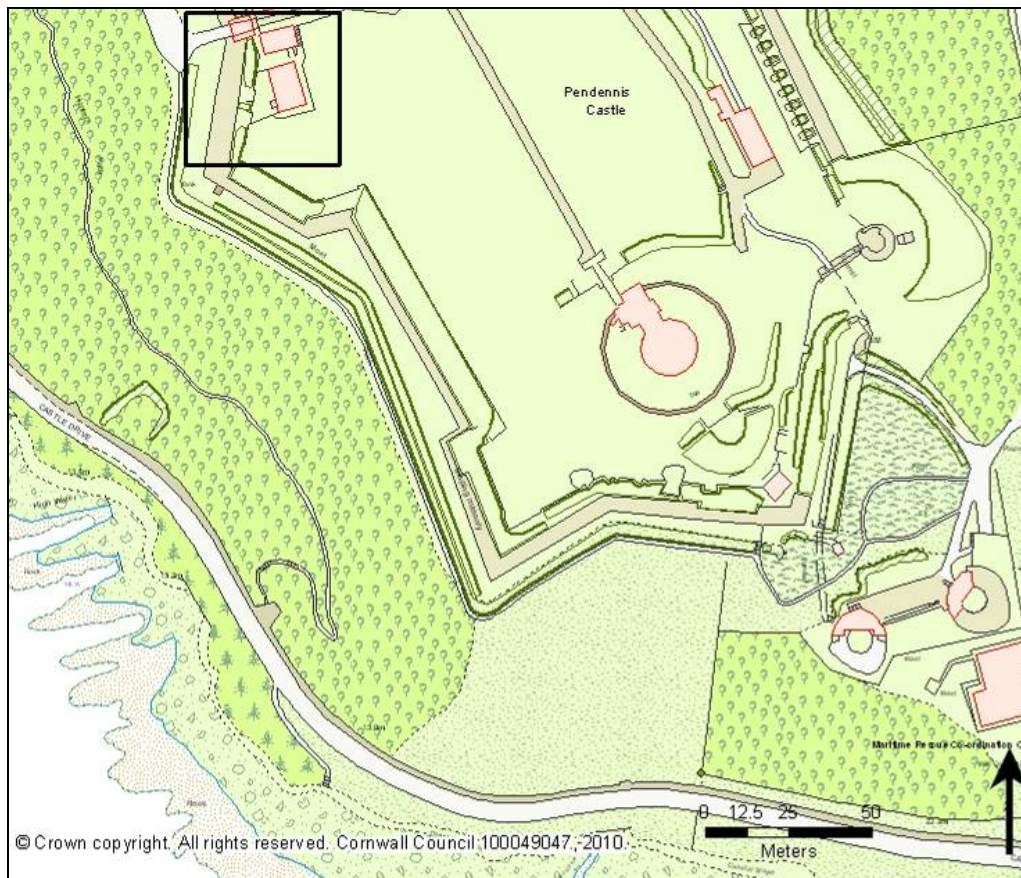


Fig 2 Plan of Pendennis Castle

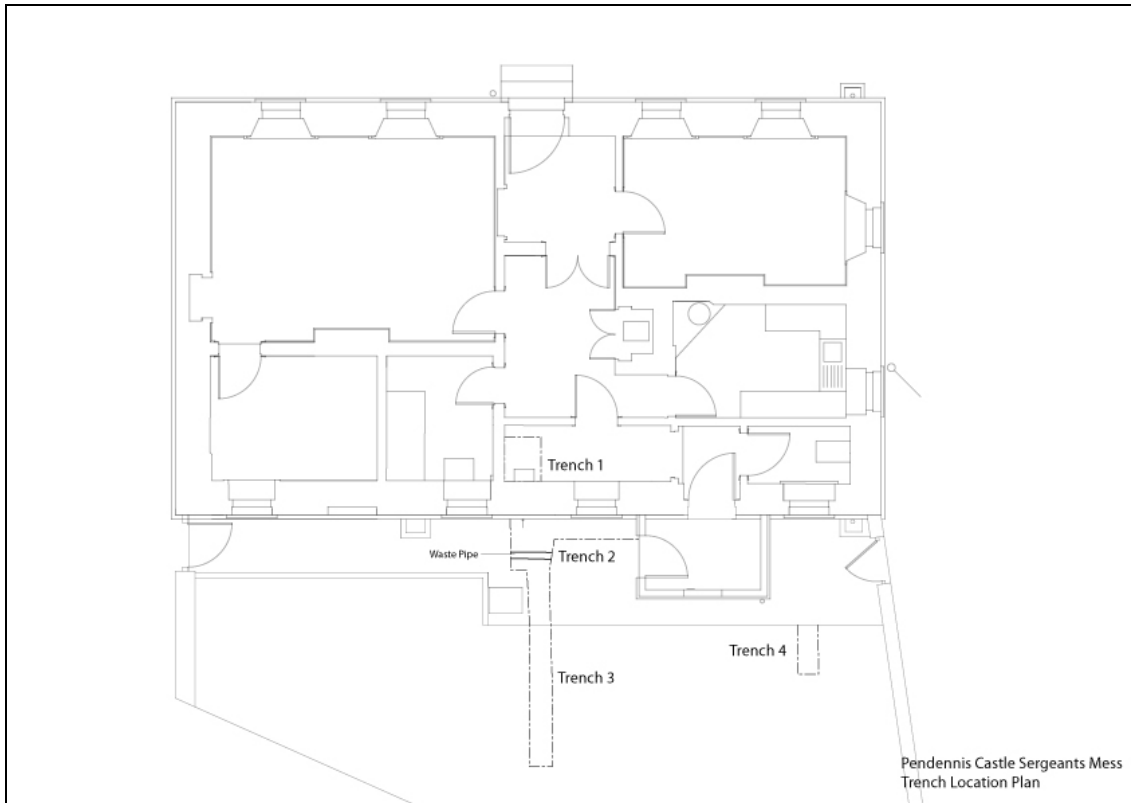


Fig 3 Trench location plan



Fig 4 Sergeants Mess rear elevation