



Land East of Bodmin Cornwall

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report





**LAND EAST OF BODMIN,
CORNWALL**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION REPORT**

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

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PLANNING APPLICATION REF.		NGR	436371 145704		

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* I= Internal Draft E= External Draft F= Final

**LAND EAST OF BODMIN,
CORNWALL****Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report****Contents**

	Summary	iv
	Acknowledgements.....	v
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Project Background	1
	1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology	1
2	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	1
	2.1 Introduction.....	1
	2.2 Designated sites	2
	2.3 Previous studies	2
	2.4 Archaeological and historical context	2
3	AIMS.....	4
	3.1 General.....	4
4	METHODOLOGY	4
	4.1 Health and Safety	4
	4.2 Service location	4
	4.3 Fieldwork	4
5	RESULTS	5
	5.1 Introduction.....	5
	5.2 Natural deposits and soil sequences.....	5
	5.3 Summary of the evaluation results	5
	5.4 Finds.....	6
6	DISCUSSION	6
7	ARCHIVE.....	6
8	QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES.....	6
9	REFERENCES	7
	APPENDIX 1: TRENCH TABLES	8
	APPENDIX 2: OASIS RECORD FORM	11
	8.2 Land east of Bodmin - Wessex Archaeology.....	11

**LAND EAST OF BODMIN,
CORNWALL****Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report****List of Figures and Plates**

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Figure 1 | Site location plan |
| Plate 1 | Trench 1 facing north-east |
| Plate 2 | Trench 2 looking north-east |
| Plate 3 | Trench 3 facing north-east |
| Plate 4 | Trench 4 facing east |
| Plate 5 | Trench 5 looking south-east |
| Plate 6 | Trench 6 facing west |
| Plate 7 | Trench 7 looking east |
| Plate 8 | Trench 8 facing south-east |

**LAND EAST OF BODMIN,
CORNWALL****Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Hawkstone (2002) Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land to the east of Bodmin, Cornwall, centred on NGR 436371 145704. It is proposed that a planning application will be submitted to the local planning authority for mixed-use development of the site.

In order to further inform the planning process as to the nature and condition of a number of possible archaeological features identified through geophysical survey, it was agreed with the Historic Environment Planning Advice Officer at Cornwall Council, that further archaeological works at the site would be undertaken.

A total of eight trial trenches of varying lengths were excavated within the site. No archaeological features or deposits were observed in any of the trial trenches and the targeted geophysical anomalies were found to relate to slight variations in the horizontal banding of natural substratum.

The evaluation was undertaken between 29th October and 1st November 2012.

**LAND EAST OF BODMIN,
CORNWALL****Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report****Acknowledgements**

This project was commissioned by Hawkstone (2002) Ltd and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Mark Allsop in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Phil Copleston Historic Environment Planning Officer, Cornwall Council who provided advice on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

Susan Clelland directed the fieldwork with the assistance of Mark Stewart. This report was written and compiled by Susan Clelland. The report was edited by Sue Farr. The illustrations were drawn by Kenneth Lymer. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

LAND EAST OF BODMIN, CORNWALL

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Hawkstone (2002) Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at to the east of Bodmin, Cornwall, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 436371 145704, hereafter referred to as 'the Site' (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The Site is proposed to be a mixed development comprising employment, housing and community plots, with associated infrastructure and landscaped green spaces.

1.1.3 A Heritage Statement (WA 2012a) and geophysical survey (Stratascan 2012) has been undertaken on the Site which identified a small number of anomalies of possible archaeological interest.

1.1.4 In order to further inform the planning process, it was agreed with the Historic Environment Planning Advice Officer at Cornwall Council that an exploratory trial trench evaluation should be conducted to 'ground truth' the results of the geophysical survey.

1.1.5 This report presents the results of the archaeological trial trench evaluation.

1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

1.2.1 The Site occupies two irregular plots of land measuring approximately 6.7ha and 27.9ha. The two plots are located to the north and south of Priory Road, Bodmin, Cornwall, at the eastern edge of the current settlement (**Figure 1**). The Site is bounded to the north, west and south by modern suburban and industrial development and to the east by the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Castle Canyke Iron Age hillfort. The land is currently used for agriculture.

1.2.2 From its highest elevation in the north-east, where it lies at c. 150m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), the Site falls away to the south-west to an elevation of c. 130m aOD.

1.2.3 The solid geology of the Site is predominantly Middle Devonian Slate (BGS Sheet 347, 1982).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 A Heritage Statement (WA 2012a) has been undertaken with regard to the Site, a summary of which is provided below.

2.2 Designated sites

- 2.2.1 Castle Canyke, a large bivallate Iron Age hillfort enclosing an area of c. 8ha, lies directly to the east of the Site. The Schedule boundary falls partially within the Site.
- 2.2.2 To the east of Castle Canyke, 450m from the Site boundary, an early medieval cross known as Carminow Cross has been set up on a modern shaft and base at the centre of a roundabout linking the A30 and A38. Carminow Cross is designated as both a Scheduled Monument and a Grade II* Listed Building.
- 2.2.3 There are thirteen Listed Buildings within the wider study area, the largest concentration of which are situated in the Victoria Square area, also part of the Bodmin Town Conservation Area, related to the 19th century barracks.
- 2.2.4 The Bodmin Town Conservation Area, designated in 1991, lies to the west of the Site.

2.3 Previous studies

- 2.3.1 Although no intrusive archaeological work has been undertaken within the Site itself, a small number of archaeological investigations have been carried out in the immediate area and include a small excavation/watching brief undertaken during the construction of the Bodmin Bypass to the north-east of the Site and a geophysical survey focused on Castle Canyke itself.

2.4 Archaeological and historical context

Early Prehistoric

- 2.4.1 There is a general absence of recorded evidence for activity dating to this period within the Site and immediate area, although one piece of undated flint was recovered from a cutting close to Castle Canyke during construction of the Bodmin Bypass, and an unconfirmed Mesolithic flint scatter is suggested within the hillfort itself.
- 2.4.2 There are a number of proposed Bronze Age barrow sites within the vicinity, as indicated by aerial photographs, field names, and historic mapping none of these have been confirmed through investigation.

Iron Age and Romano-British

- 2.4.3 The extant remains of Castle Canyke (**Figure 1**), an Iron Age hillfort, attest to activity within the immediate environs of the Site during this period. The hillfort occupies approximately 8ha and consists of a sub-oval rampart, outer ditch and inner 'quarry' ditch occupying a low knoll. The role and development of Castle Canyke is not well understood, although a geophysical survey within the ramparts suggests settlement activity within its interior (Wessex Archaeology 2004, 10).
- 2.4.4 There is no evidence to suggest Romano-British period activity in the Site or immediate area. Evidence dating to the Roman occupation of Cornwall is uncommon.

- 2.4.5 It has been proposed that the route of the modern A30, which curves around the east and south of Bodmin, was used as a major thoroughfare in the Roman period, and represented a continuation of pre-existing ancient trackways (Margary 1973). This suggests that some degree of archaeological activity of this period would be expected in the area, despite the lack of recorded finds and features recorded.

Saxon and medieval

- 2.4.6 Bodmin (*Bodmine*) is recorded at the time of the Domesday survey of 1086 as an established settlement, with its likely origins in at least the later Saxon period. Throughout the medieval period, the town of Bodmin formed the geographical and religious centre of Cornwall.
- 2.4.7 One site of probable medieval date is recorded to the north-east of the Site and comprises a chapel dedicated to St. Margaret. The chapel was recorded at Newton's Margate in 1284, 1302 and 1337, with local tradition suggesting the building was located in a field east of Newton's Margate Farm. During the watching brief undertaken during the construction of the Bodmin Bypass in 1975, fifty two pieces of cut granite were recovered. As granite is not the local building stone, it has been suggested that these fragments may represent the remains of the former chapel (Irwin 1975).
- 2.4.8 The fields to the west of the Site have been recorded as containing preserved element of medieval field system, indicating that land use has not changed dramatically since their inception, particularly with regards to large scale field boundary removal and destructive post-medieval and modern ploughing techniques. No evidence for fossilised field systems has been recorded within the Site itself.

Post-medieval to modern

- 2.4.9 Throughout the post-medieval period the Site remained situated within agricultural land, away from the settlement focus of Bodmin to the west and the small dispersed farming settlements of the surrounding area.
- 2.4.10 A number of linear features, most likely ditches, are recorded as cropmarks within the wider area and are all thought to be post-medieval in origin relating to former agricultural boundaries no longer extant.
- 2.4.11 The pattern of land division within the Site and the surrounding area depicted by the 1841 Tithe map has remained virtually unchanged to the present day. Subsequent Ordnance Survey maps of the Site published from the later 19th and throughout the 20th century depict only minor rationalising of field boundaries and no development within the Site.

Geophysical Survey

- 2.4.12 A detailed gradiometer survey was undertaken across the Site (Stratascan 2012).
- 2.4.13 The survey identified several anomalies considered to be possible archaeological origin. In Fields 1, 2, 6 and 10, these were thought likely to be represent former field boundaries (**Figure 1**). A circular anomaly in Field 11 and a small complex of cut features in Field 10 were considered to be of possible archaeological origin. Broad areas of magnetic variation were

deemed likely to be of geological or pedological origin (Fields 4-6 and 8-11) and two short linear anomalies were also noted in Field 9.

3 AIMS

3.1 General

3.1.1 The aims of the archaeological field evaluation were to:

- Clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the Site that may be impacted by development.
- Identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character and condition of any surviving remains within the Site.
- Assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.
- Target trenches on anomalies identified as a result of the geophysical survey in order to clarify the nature and presence/absence of underlying archaeological remains.
- Produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the Site's archaeological potential.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Health and Safety

4.1.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time. The project Risk Assessment was read and understood by all staff attending the Site before any groundworks commenced.

4.2 Service location

4.2.1 Before excavation began the Site was walked over and inspected to visually identify, where possible, the location of any above and below ground services.

4.2.2 All evaluation trench locations were scanned before and during excavation with a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) in order to verify the absence of any live underground services.

4.3 Fieldwork

4.3.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the standards set out within the *Written Scheme of Investigation* approved prior to the commencement of work (WA 2012).

4.3.2 All works were conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (IfA 2008).

- 4.3.3 A total of 8 machine excavated trial trenches of varying lengths (2no. 10m x 1.8m & 2no.30m x 1.8m & 2no. 40m x 1.8m wide & 2no 50m x 1.8m) were excavated as indicated on **Figure 1**. All trenches were targeted on geophysical anomalies.
- 4.3.4 All trenches were laid out using GPS in general accordance with the pattern given in **Figure 1**. And the trench locations tied in to the Ordnance Survey.
- 4.3.5 The trial trenches were excavated using a JCB type excavator equipped with a toothless bucket and under constant supervision by Wessex Archaeology. Machine excavation proceeded to a depth at which the top of archaeological levels, or the top of natural deposits, were exposed, whichever was the higher.
- 4.3.6 The trenches were backfilled using the excavated material in the approximate stratigraphic sequence in which they were excavated. They were left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The following sections provide a summary of the information held in the Site archive. Details of individually excavated contexts and features are retained in the Site archive and a detailed tabulated version of these can be found in **Appendix 1**.

5.2 Natural deposits and soil sequences

- 5.2.1 The natural stratigraphic sequence encountered within the evaluation trenches was generally uniform across the Site and comprised mid brown silty clay topsoil becoming more clayey towards the base of the deposit. The depth of the topsoil ranged from 0.25m to 0.4m in depth and was largely dependent on land use. Topsoil was generally shallower in the pasture fields in the south of the Site.

Orange brown subsoil was recorded below the topsoil in all eight trenches though its depth varied slightly between 0.05m and 0.25m and was dependent on the extent of ploughing, position on the slope and the durability of the underlying parent geology. The natural geology encountered was soft schist like pulverulent rock lain in slightly silty linear bands. It was grey buff to grey with a reddish tinge and a soapy feel. Within each trench extremely localised variations in the extent of weathering of this parent material was observed and is likely to account for the geophysical responses.

5.3 Summary of the evaluation results

- 5.3.1 Trenches 1 and 2 located to the north of the Site were targeted on two similar positive linear anomalies indicative of former field boundaries. Within Trench 1, the anomaly corresponded with a band of more solid bedrock, and although there was no clear indication of the anomaly in Trench 2, it is likely to be the result of variations in the natural geology.

- 5.3.2 Trenches 3, 4 and 8 were positioned within the central area of the Site. Trenches 3 and 8 were targeted on a linear anomaly and Trench 4 was positioned over an area of magnetic variation. No indication of the anomalies was visible within the trenches and it is assumed the responses are the result of variations in the underlying stratigraphy.
- 5.3.3 Trench 5 was located in the south-west corner of the Site and targeted on a circular feature indicative of a ploughed out barrow. The trench was positioned in a hollow on the side of the hill and the bedrock present at either end of the trench was firmer, with a lower silt component which may have resulted in the geophysical response.
- 5.3.4 Trench 6 was positioned over a positive linear anomaly and Trench 7 targeted on pit like responses in the geophysical survey. Both trenches were located in the south-east corner of the Site, to the west of Canyke Castle. No indication of the geophysical anomalies within Trench 6 or 7 was noted.

5.4 Finds

- 5.4.1 Only modern pottery sherds and brick fragments were noted within the topsoil, none of which were retained.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1.1 The evaluation was successful in its stated aims of providing evidence of the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of the buried archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- 6.1.2 Despite the archaeological potential and geophysical survey results, no archaeological features were recorded during the course of the evaluation. All geophysical anomalies are assumed to be the result of variations in the underlying natural geology.

7 ARCHIVE

- 7.1.1 The primary archive, comprises eight trench record sheets including hand drawn representative trench sections and two photographic record sheets. It is intended that the project archive, which is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology under the project code **84311**, will be deposited with the Cornwall Museums Service under Museum Accession Code TRURI: 2012.34, no later than six months after completion of the work.
- 7.1.2 This project archive has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990).

8 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

- 8.1.1 Wessex Archaeology operates a Project Management system. Projects are assigned to individual managers who monitor their progress and quality, and control budgets from inception to completion, in all aspects including Health and Safety etc. Projects are managed in accordance with English Heritage guidelines outlined in the document *Management of Research Projects in*

the Historic Environment (MoRPHE, English Heritage 2006). At all stages the manager will carefully assess and monitor performance of staff and adherence to objectives, timetables and budgets, while the manager's performance is monitored in turn by the Director of Heritage & Archaeology who will ensure that the project meets Wessex Archaeology's quality standards and is adequately programmed and resourced within Wessex Archaeology's portfolio of project commitments. A formal written report is made to the Executive Management Group once a month by the Director of Heritage & Archaeology.

- 8.1.2 The work will be directed in the field by an appropriately experienced archaeologist who will normally be a member of the Institute for Archaeologists and a core member of Wessex Archaeology's staff. Overall project supervision and monitoring will be undertaken by a Project Manager based in Salisbury who will undertake monitoring visits if and when appropriate. Monitoring visits may also be undertaken by Wessex Archaeology's Health and Safety Co-ordinator in conjunction with a representative of Cornwall's Historic Environment team where required..
- 8.1.3 The Wessex Archaeology is registered as an archaeological organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists. Wessex Archaeology endorses the *Code of Practice and the Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* of the Institute for Archaeologists.

9 REFERENCES

Margary, I, 1973. *Roman Roads in Britain*. London: John Baker.

Stratascan 2012, Geophysical Survey Report, Land South of Prior Road, Bodmin, Cornwall

Wessex Archaeology 2004. *Land Between Coldharbour Farm and Castle Canyke, Bodmin, Cornwall: Archaeological Desk-based Assessment*. Unpublished client report ref. 57640.01.

Wessex Archaeology 2012a, Land to the east of Bodmin Cornwall Heritage Statement.

Wessex Archaeology 2012b, Land east of Bodmin Cornwall Written Scheme of Investigation; Method Statement for an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation.

APPENDIX 1: TRENCH TABLES

Trench 1	Dimensions: 40m x 1.8m x 0.55m		
	Land use: Arable		
	Coordinates: (N) 208278.803, 66660.188, 146.323m aOD (S) 208264.702, 66623.338, 142.806m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
100	Topsoil	Mid brown silt becoming more clayey towards base of layer. Compact matted upper 0.1m turf horizon. Small to medium angular slate pieces well sorted throughout.	0-0.35m
101	Subsoil	Colluvial subsoil. Mid brown orange friable silt. Abundant medium to small angular weathered parent material.	0.35-0.55m
102	Natural	Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel. Bedrock bedded in ENE-WSW aligned bands.	0.55m+
Geophysical anomaly corresponded to a band of more solid bedrock			

Trench 2	Dimensions: 40m x 1.8m x 0.55m		
	Land use: Arable		
	Coordinates: (N) 208161.584, 66604.398, 131.545m aOD (S) 208146.368, 66567.633, 128.648m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
200	Topsoil	Mid brown silt becoming more clayey towards base of layer. Compact matted upper 0.1m turf horizon. Small to medium angular slate pieces well sorted throughout.	0-0.3m
201	Subsoil	Colluvial subsoil. Mid brown orange friable silt. Abundant medium to small angular weathered parent material.	0.3-0.55m
202	Natural	Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel. Bedrock bedded in SE-NW aligned bands.	0.55m+
No obvious geological variations evident in the trench. Geophysical response may have resulted from differences in underlying natural strata			

Trench 3	Dimensions: 10m x 1.8m x 0.55m		
	Land use: Arable		
	Coordinates: (NE) 208202.191, 66234.909, 129.022m aOD (SW) 208193,827, 66226,768, 129.465m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
300	Topsoil	Mid brown silt becoming more clayey towards base of layer. Small to medium angular slate pieces throughout. Larger fragments towards base of layer. An intermittent thin band of concreted iron noted at interface with underlying layer.	0-0.4m
301	Subsoil	Mid brown orange friable silt. Abundant medium to small angular weathered parent	0.4-0.5m

		material.	
302	Natural	Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel. Bedrock bedded in SE-NW aligned bands.	0.5m+
No obvious geological variations evident in the trench. Geophysical response may have resulted from differences in underlying natural strata			

Trench 4	Dimensions: 40m x 1.8m x 0.55m		
	Land use: Arable		
	Coordinates: (W) 208303.348, 66178.068, 136.682m aOD (E) 208353.143, 66177.686, 138.824m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
400	Topsoil	Mid brown silt becoming more clayey towards base of layer. Compact matted upper 0.1m turf horizon. Small to medium angular slate pieces well sorted throughout.	0-0.3
401	Subsoil	Colluvial subsoil. Mid brown orange friable silt. Abundant medium to small angular weathered parent material.	0.3-0.45m
402	Natural	Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel. Bedrock bedded in SE-NW aligned bands.	0.45m

Trench 5	Dimensions: 50m x 1.8m x 0.55m		
	Land use: Pasture		
	Coordinates: (NW) 208038.253, 66141.177, 137.962m aOD (SE) 208075.095, 66110.309, 139.365m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
500	Topsoil	Mid brown silt becoming more clayey towards base of layer. Compact matted upper 0.1m turf horizon. Small to medium angular slate pieces well sorted throughout.	0.0.25m
501	Subsoil	Colluvial subsoil. Mid brown orange friable silt. Abundant medium to small angular weathered parent material.	0.25-0.45m
502	Natural	Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel. Bedrock bedded in SE-NW aligned bands.	0.45m
Trench was located in a hollow on the side of the hill with the bedrock present at either end of the trench appearing slightly harder with a lower silt component then along the remainder of its length			

Trench 6	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m x 0.55m		
	Land use: Pasture		
	Coordinates: (W) 208151.846, 65927.734, 153.489m aOD (E) 208171.757, 65930.278, 153.604m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
600	Topsoil	Mid brown silt becoming more clayey towards base of layer. Compact matted upper 0.1m turf horizon. Small to medium	0-0.25m

		angular slate pieces well sorted throughout.	
601	Subsoil	Colluvial subsoil. Mid brown orange friable silt. Abundant medium to small angular weathered parent material.	0.25-0.4m
602	Natural	Western end of the trench revealed a slightly harder and partially raised NW-SE aligned band of Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel. Bedrock bedded in SE-NW aligned bands.	0.4m+

Trench 7	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m x 0.4m		
	Land use: Pasture		
	Coordinates: (W) 208152.239, 65891.651, 154.374m aOD (E) 208172.671, 65893.046, 153.912m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
700	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey brown silt with frequent small-medium angular slate fragments. Compact matted turf 0-0.1m increase of inclusions below this. Sharp lower horizon	0-0.35
701	Subsoil	Subsoil comprises degraded upper surface of underlying parent geology. Loose angular slate pieces in a mid orange brown silt.	0.35-0.4
702	Natural	Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel.	0.4m+

Trench 8	Dimensions: 10m x 1.8m x 0.55m		
	Land use: Arable		
	Coordinates: (NE) 208184.823, 66256.155, 127.152m aOD (SW) 208177.392, 66249.029, 127.445m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
800	Topsoil	Mid brown silt becoming more clayey towards base of layer. Small to medium angular slate pieces mixed throughout. An intermittent thin band of concreted iron noted at interface with underlying layer	0-0.4m
801	Subsoil	Colluvial subsoil. Mid brown orange friable silt. Abundant medium to small angular weathered parent material.	0.4-0.6m
802	Natural	Soft schist like linear silty banded pulverulent rock. Grey buff to grey with reddish tinge and soapy feel. Bedrock bedded in SE-NW aligned bands.	0.6m+

APPENDIX 2: OASIS RECORD FORM
8.2 Land east of Bodmin - Wessex Archaeology
OASIS ID - wessexar1-138026
Versions

View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	Sue Farr	s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk	22 November 2012

Completed sections in current version

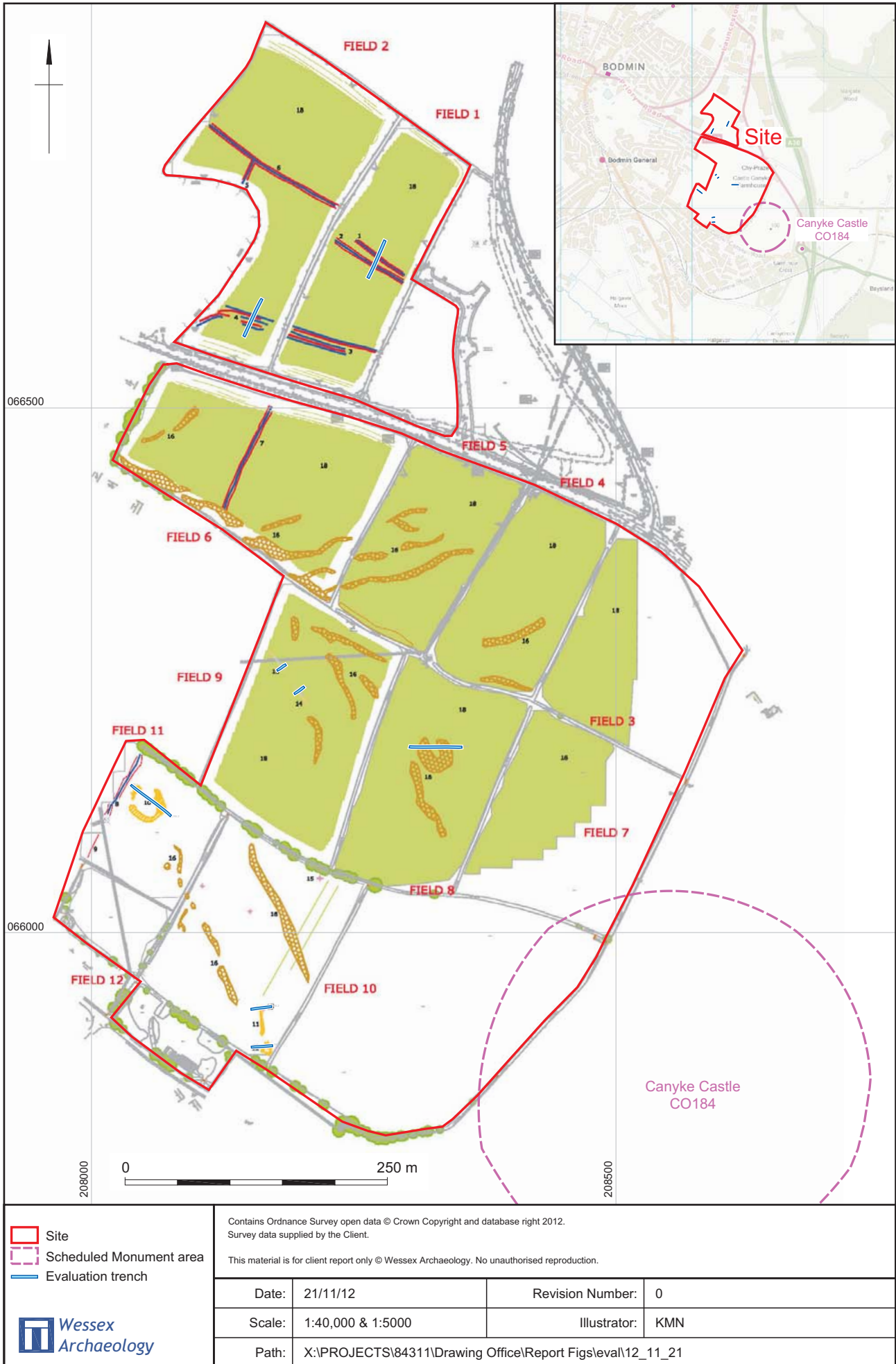
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1

Validated sections in current version

Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
No	No	No	No	0/1

File submission and form progress

Grey literature report submitted?	No	Grey literature report filename/s
Images submitted?	No	Image filename/s
Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?



Site location plan

Figure 1



Plate 1: Trench 1 facing north-east



Plate 2: Trench 2 looking north-east

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Plate 3: Trench 3 facing north-east



Plate 4: Trench 4 facing east

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Plate 5: Trench 5 looking south-east



Plate 6: Trench 6 facing west

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Plate 7: Trench 7 looking east



Plate 8: Trench 8 facing south-west

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