

**LAND AT THE FORMER RICHARD LANDER SCHOOL,
TRURO,
CORNWALL.**

NGR: SW 804 447

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

February 2013
Report No. 868

Quality Assurance

This Document has been compiled and authorised in accordance with
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CONTENTS

Summary

Glossary of Archaeological Terms and Abbreviations

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 PROJECT BACKGROUND
- 3 AIMS
- 4 METHODOLOGY
- 5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
- 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY
- 7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appendix 1: The Stratigraphic Data

FIGURE LIST

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Trench Locations

SUMMARY

On the 18th and 19th February 2013 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at the former Richard Lander School, Truro (NGR: SW 804 447). The works were commissioned by BSA Heritage on behalf of Taylor Wimpey.

The project comprised the excavation and recording of four trenches within a proposed development area. The trenches were targeted on anomalies identified in a previous geophysical survey.

The evaluation identified natural mudstone and sandstone deposits, which were situated directly beneath topsoil. No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trenches and there was no evidence for significant disturbance or truncation.

The complete lack of evidence for archaeological activity within the site indicated that the anomalies identified in the geophysical survey were of natural origin.

The evaluation works have indicated a low potential for significant archaeological deposits to be present within the study area.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between AD 1066 and AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43, traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; *Iron Age* – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 until AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in February 2013 on land at the former Richard Lander School, Truro (NGR: SW 804 447). The works were commissioned by BSA Heritage on behalf of Taylor Wimpey.
- 1.2 The project was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2013); IfA *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (2008); and MoRPHE, issued by English Heritage (2006).
- 1.3 This report constitutes an assessment of the results of the archaeological works.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 It is currently proposed to redevelop the site, which has been the subject of discussions between the Cornwall Council HEPAO and BSA Heritage. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012; para. 128), a programme of archaeological investigation was required to adequately inform the planning process.
- 2.2 The site is located to the west of the centre of Truro, immediately south of the A390. The underlying geology comprises *Porthowan Formation* – mudstone and sandstone (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). At the time of the fieldwork, the study area comprised former school playing fields.
- 2.3 The first stage of the investigation of the site was a geophysical survey (GSB 2012), which examined the playing fields to the east and west of the former school buildings. The geophysical survey did not identify any potential archaeological features or deposits in the western field and stated the following regarding the eastern field:

“No definitive archaeological anomalies have been identified. A single curving anomaly may be of archaeological interest, though this interpretation is cautious. Some weak trends seem to form curving or sub-circular patterns, but they are too weak to enable even a tentative archaeological interpretation; with natural or modern origins are equally, if not more, probable. A former field boundary, shown on early mapping, has been detected and a small area of parallel responses suggests former cultivation activity.”

- 2.4 The study area therefore contained the potential for the preservation of archaeological deposits within the eastern field.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the location, date, character, extent, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) To define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
 - ii) To attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
 - iv) To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A total of four 30m by 1.6m trenches were excavated within the eastern field (Area 2), as shown in Figure 2. The trenches were targeted upon previously identified geophysical anomalies.
- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of the archaeological deposits or the underlying natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through the use of a 360° tracked mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Spoil tips were scanned for finds.
- 4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 5.1 A detailed description of all contexts identified in the course of the project is presented in Appendix 1. A summary discussion is given below.
- 5.2 The natural substrates were encountered at an average depth of 0.36m (85.45m OD) below Modern ground; these were directly overlaid by a silt clay topsoil. Visibility was good and there was no evidence for extensive disturbance or truncation within the investigated area.

- 5.3 No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within the trenches. The complete lack of evidence for archaeological activity within the site indicated that the anomalies identified in the geophysical survey were of natural origin.
- 5.4 The evaluation works have indicated a low potential for significant archaeological deposits to be present within the study area.
- 5.5 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited with the Royal Cornwall Museum in due course. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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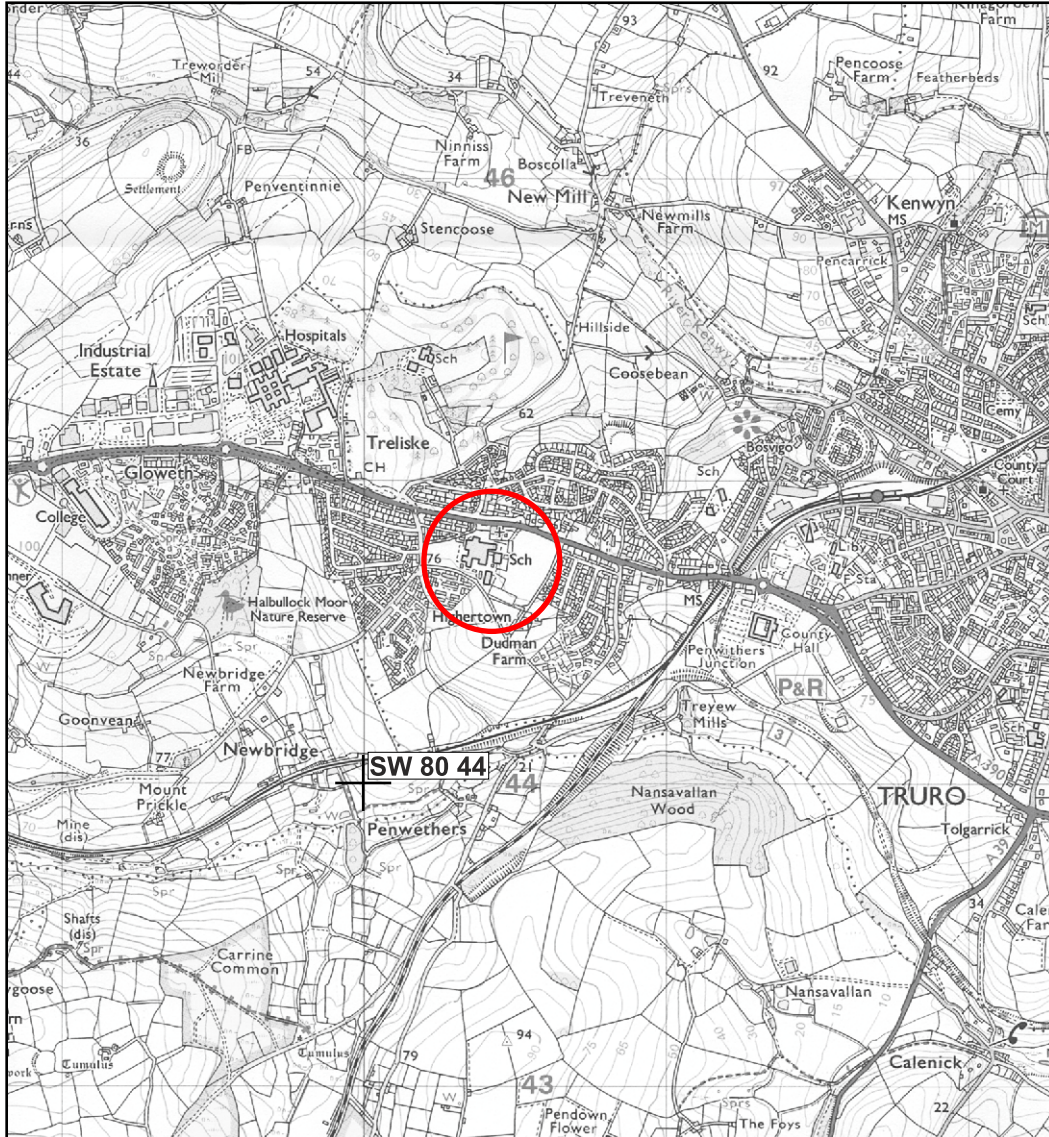
7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Dan Ratcliffe of Cornwall Council, Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage and Spencer Searle of Taylor Wimpey for their help during the course of the project.

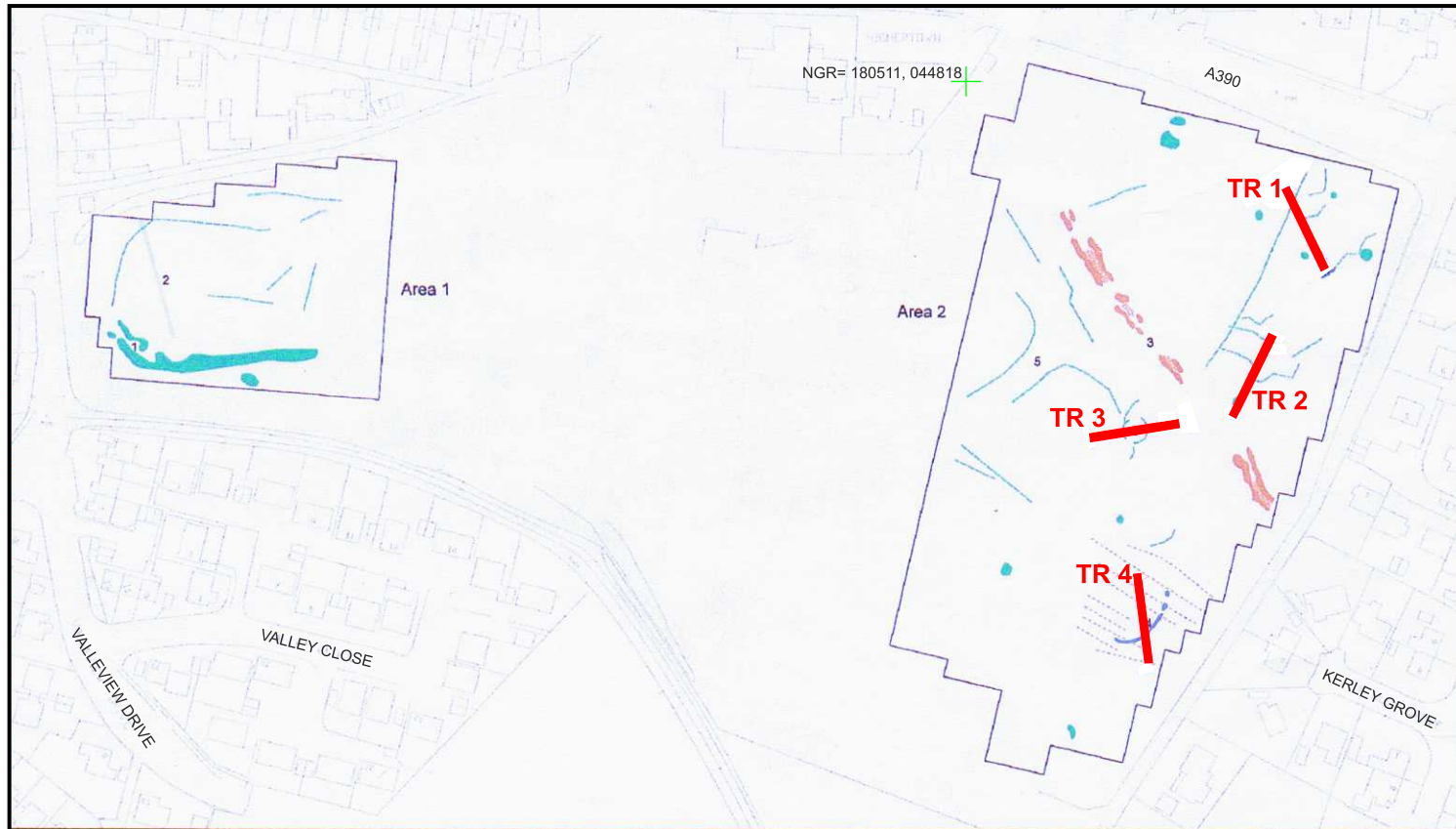
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APPENDIX 1: The Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				Trench 1: 30m by 1.6m; natural (at average 84.67m OD) = variable pink and orange mudstone shillets with bands and patches of brown-beige sand/sandstone.		
101	n/a	n/a	0.37	Topsoil; light brown grey friable silt clay.	nat.	n/a
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits present within the trench.		
				Trench 2: 30m by 1.6m; natural (at average 85.22m OD) = variable pink and orange mudstone shillets with bands and patches of brown-beige sand/sandstone.		
201	n/a	n/a	0.35	Topsoil; light brown grey friable silt clay.	nat.	n/a
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits present within the trench.		
				Trench 3: 30m by 1.6m; natural (at average 86.07m OD) = variable pink and orange mudstone shillets with bands and patches of brown-beige sand/sandstone.		
301	n/a	n/a	0.36	Topsoil; light brown grey friable silt clay, which contained a single, abraded fragment of CBM.	nat.	n/a
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits present within the trench.		
				Trench 4: 30m by 1.6m; natural (at average 85.82m OD) = variable pink and orange mudstone shillets with bands and patches of brown-beige sand/sandstone.		
401	n/a	n/a	0.34	Topsoil; light brown grey friable silt clay.	nat.	n/a
				No archaeological features, finds or deposits present within the trench.		



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FIGURE 1: Site Location



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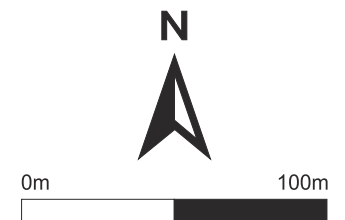


FIGURE 2: Trench Locations