



Cornwall & Scilly Historic Environment Record

Historic Environment Record, Historic Environment Service,
Environment & Heritage, Cornwall Council

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Site Name: Land off Old Mine Lane, St. Ann's Chapel, Calstock

Grid ref (10-fig): 40932 71175

OS Map No: SX 40932 71175

Parish: Calstock

Site Type: (Major) Residential Development

Period: Post-medieval - modern

Form:

Description:

Archaeological evaluation trenching was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) on land off Old Mine Lane, St. Ann's Chapel, Calstock, Cornwall (Figure 1) at the request of Ivan Tomlin of Planning for Results Ltd. (the Agent), as part of a pre-planning assessment. This work was undertaken by P. Webb on 2nd June 2016 in accordance with a project design (Boyd 2016) drawn up in consultation with Sean Taylor of Cornwall Council (SDOHE). Three 30m evaluation trenches c.1.60m wide were excavated (see Figure 2). This work followed on – and avoided – extensive geotechnical investigations carried out in 2015 (JGP 2015).

The site comprises a field c.1ha in extent on the northern edge of the historic settlement of St. Ann's Chapel, north of All Saints Park and immediately west of Old Mine Land. The field is located on the upper south-facing slopes of Hingston Down at an altitude of c.240m AOD. The soils of this area are the slowly-permeable seasonally-waterlogged fine loamy soils of the Sportsmans Association (SSEW 1983) overlying hornfeld slates of the Tavy Formation (BGS 2016). The Down was unenclosed until the 1850s, and forms part of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS). Hingston Down Mine lies just to the north of the site; this copper mine was active from 1850-80, and intermittently thereafter until the 1920s. The area in which the site is situated is classified as *post-medieval enclosed land* on the Cornwall and Scilly HLC (Cornwall Council 2016). Detailed study and survey work has previously been carried out in the area by CAU (CAU 2004; 2005; 2007) and SWARCH (2015).

Historic OS maps show a curving linear earthwork located to the eastern side; other C19 maps indicate mineralised lodes crossing north-east to south-west and lode-back pits extending to the north-east. Investigations immediately to the west indicate the presence of mining remains here, and modern aerial photographs appear to indicate topsoil has been spread across the site from an adjacent housing development. However, the archaeological trenching demonstrated the survival of a soft-friable mid-brown clay-silt topsoil 0.10-0.15m thick, which overlay a soft-friable mid greyish-brown clay-silt subsoil 0.08-0.13m thick, in trenches #1 and #2 and across the northern part of trench #3. In trench #3 the topsoil graded into layer (311). These soil layers overlaid the natural, an orange-brown soft silt-clay.

Four features were identified: a tree throw in Trench #1, a modern geotechnical trench [303], and two large pits [305] [308] in Trench #3. These pits were carefully excavated by machine in accordance with the RAMS for the site. Pit [305] was located centrally within Trench #3 and appears to correlate with the linear earthwork shown on historic OS maps. It was c.6.5m wide with a moderately steep west side and was excavated to a depth of 1.6m; it sloped to the east, but was nearly bottomed in the trench. The sides of the feature were lined with (306) a soft brown clay – presumably a stabilisation layer – but the bulk of the feature was backfilled with a dump (307) of loose/unstable greyish-brown silt-clay containing frequent angular stone. Pit [308] was located at the southern end of Trench #3. It was 3m wide with a near-vertical western side and was excavated to a depth of 1.15m. Like pit [305], it was lined with a soft brown clay (309) and backfilled with a loose/unstable deposit (310) of heterogeneous yellow-grey-white-brown silt-clay with frequent angular stone. Both of these pits cut a soft black clayey layer (312) c.0.15m thick, and were sealed by a mixed spread (311) of yellow/grey/white silt mixed with topsoil. To the east, geotechnical investigation TP01 explored a similar pit to a depth of 4.8m.

Two sherds of C19-C20 century stoneware (68g) were recovered from the upper layers of [305].

The size and character of the two pits in Trench #3, together with the results of the geotechnical investigation, indicate the presence of exploratory lode-back pits up to 5m deep associated with the two lodes crossing the field; the linear earthwork shown on the historic OS maps may indicate the linear extent of these features. The fills of these features would suggest they remained open for some time, but were backfilled in one episode, presumably when the mine was closed and/or the field restored to agricultural use. Layer (311) probably corresponds with the levelling of the linear earthwork. It does not appear that topsoil has been brought to the site; in fact, it is possible topsoil has been removed.

References

British Geological Survey 2015: *Geology of Britain Viewer*

http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html

Boyd, N. 2016: *Land off Old Mine Lane, St. Ann's Chapel, Calstock, Cornwall: Project Design*. SWARCH report.

CAU 2004: *Hingston Down Mine: archaeological assessment*. CAU report 2004R051.

CAU 2005: *Hingston Down site investigation*. CAU report 2005R066.

CAU 2007: *Hingston Down Mine, Cornwall: mitigation recording during land reclamation funded works*. CAU report 2007R010.

John Grimes Partnership (JGP) 2015: *Phase II Ground Investigation Report for the Proposed Residential Development at Field to the North of Petroc Court, St Ann's Chapel, Gunnislake, Cornwall*. Job no.12265.

Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*.

SWARCH 2015: *Land at St Ann's Chapel, Calstock, Cornwall: results of a desk-based assessment, walkover survey and historic visual impact assessment*. SWARCH report 151202.

Cornwall Record Office:

Surface plan 1864×80 MRO LCXII/7; 1848 Tavistock District mining map ME 2462

Land Use (Area): Farmland on edge of settlement

Land Use (Site): Residential

Date of Site Visit: 02/06/2016

Recorder's name, address and phone number: P. Webb, South West Archaeology Ltd, The Old Dairy, Hacche Lane Business Park, Pathfields Business Park, South Molton Devon, EX36 3HL; 01769 573555

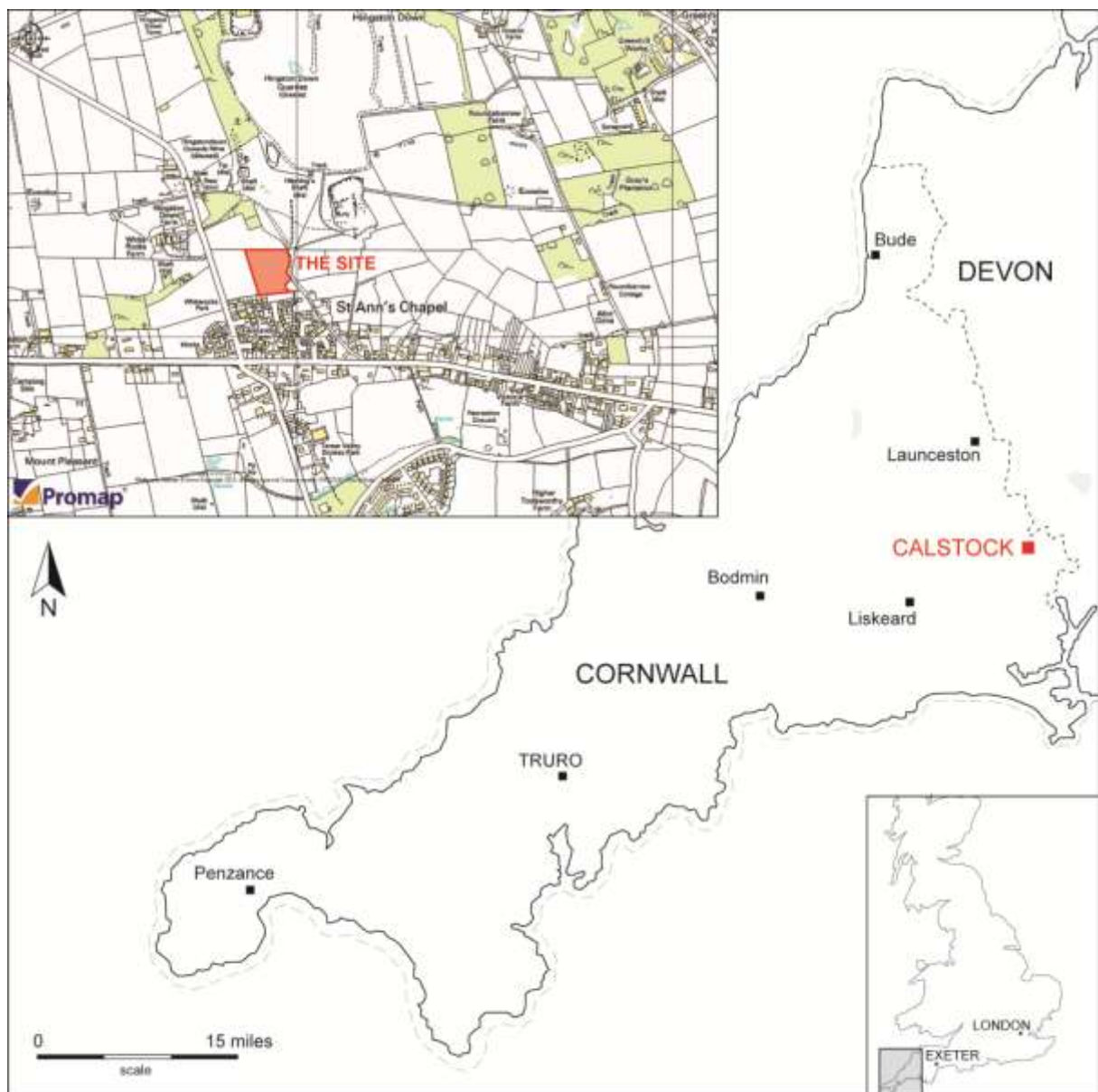


Figure 1: Site location (the site is indicated in red).

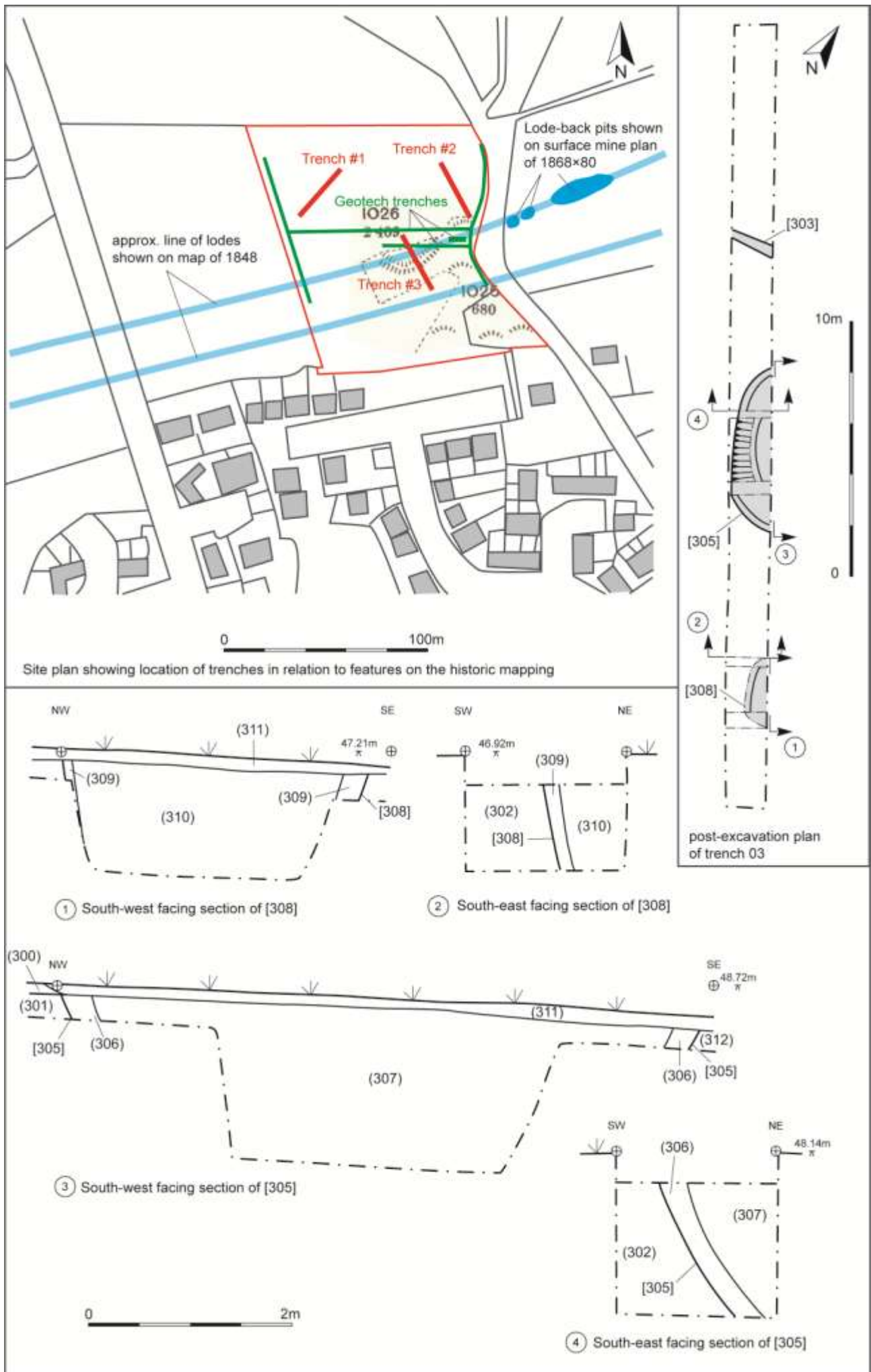


Figure 2: Site plan and sections. Levels based on arbitrary TBM of 50m AOD.



Figure 3: Post-excitation view of Trench #1; viewed from the south-west (1m and 2m scales).



Figure 4: Post-excitation view of Trench #2; viewed from the south-east (1m and 2m scales).



Figure 5: South-east facing profile through pit [305]; viewed from the south-east (1m scale).