

**CARNINNEY RISE
CARBIS BAY
ST IVES
CORNWALL**

RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING



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www.swarch.net

Tel. 01769 573555

Tel. 01872 223164

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RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

By B. Morris
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Work undertaken by SWARCH on behalf of Carninney Rise Ltd.

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of archaeological recording that took place during the construction of a residential housing estate at Carninney Rise, Carbis Bay, St Ives, Cornwall. This work was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition.

The archaeological recording work at Carninney Rise identified two ditches that corresponded with geophysical anomalies identified in an earlier survey. The ditches contained frequent to abundant poorly sorted granite stones and the fills projected up to the base of the topsoil. The geophysical survey, misled by an error on the Historic Environment Record, wrongly concluded these were the ditches of a Late Iron Age or Romano-British enclosure. The excavated evidence, correlated with the historic map evidence, demonstrates these are medieval field boundaries that were removed and rationalised in the post-medieval period but prior to 1839. There were no other finds or features.



March 2021

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CONTENTS

<i>SUMMARY</i>	2
<i>CONTENTS</i>	3
<i>LIST OF FIGURES</i>	3
<i>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</i>	3
<i>PROJECT CREDITS</i>	3
1.0 INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND	4
1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	4
1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	4
1.4 METHODOLOGY	5
2.0 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING	7
2.1 INTRODUCTION	7
2.2 DEPOSIT MODEL	7
2.3 RESULTS	7
2.4 INTERPRETATION	12
3.0 CONCLUSION	13
4.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES	13

LIST OF FIGURES

COVER PLATE: AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH FROM JULY 2020 (© GOOGLE EARTH 2021).

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION.	5
FIGURE 2: EXTRACT FROM THE 1839 UNY LELANT TITHE MAP.	6
FIGURE 3: THE RESULTS OF THE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY.	6
FIGURE 4: INTERPRETATION OF THE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS.	7
FIGURE 5: DITCH [105]; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.	8
FIGURE 6: FIELD #2; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.	8
FIGURE 7: TREE-THROW [108]; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.	9
FIGURE 8: TREE-THROW [108]; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.	9
FIGURE 9: DITCH [113]; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.	10
FIGURE 10: DITCH [113]; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.	10
FIGURE 11: SITE PLAN SHOWING THE AREAS SUBJECT TO RECORDING, WITH SECTION DRAWINGS.	11
FIGURE 12: THE INTERPRETATION OF THE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS OVERLAID ON THE 1839 TITHE MAP.	12

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE CLIENT (CARNINNEY RISE LTD.)
 THE SENIOR DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT) (SDOHE)

PROJECT CREDITS

DIRECTOR: DR. SAMUEL WALLS
 FIELDWORK: EMILY WAPSHOTT
 REPORT; GRAPHICS: DR BRYN MORRIS
 EDITING: DR. SAMUEL WALLS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

LOCATION:	CARNINNEY RISE
PARISH:	ST IVES (FORMERLY LELANT)
DISTRICT:	WEST PENWITH
COUNTY:	CORNWALL
NGR:	SW 52120 38350
PLANNING No.	PA15/05320; PA16/04674
OASIS no.	Southwes1-272233
SWARCH REF.	ICR17

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Carninney Rise Ltd. (the Client) prior to and during a residential development at Carninney Lane, St. Ives, Cornwall (Figure 1). The monitoring was undertaken in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) drawn up in consultation with the Senior Development Officer (Historic Environment) (SDOHE) (Boyd 2017). The monitoring work took place in stages over the course of 2019 with multiple site visits during that time. This work followed on from a desk-based assessment and walkover (CAU 2015), geophysical survey (Stratascan 2016) and trench evaluation (SWARCH 2017a). An initial report on the first phase of works was issued in 2018 (SWARCH 2018).

1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The development lies on the south-western edge of the Carbis Bay area, south-east of St. Ives. The site straddles three fields on an east facing slope at an altitude of 100-120m AOD. The predominant soils of this area are the well-drained gritty loamy soils with boulders and rocky conditions of the Moretonhampstead and Moor Gate Associations (SSEW 1983): these overlie the granite of the Land's End Intrusion (BGS 2021).

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies within an area characterized by the Cornwall and Scilly HLC as *Anciently Enclosed Land*. Immediately to the north of the site is a housing estate built on the remains of Providence Mine. The area is noted for its Prehistoric archaeology, with barrows and settlements to the north, south and west. The farm is first documented in 1327. Monitoring in and around the farm in 2017 indicated the extant farm buildings were probably 18th century in date, with a 17th century and much modified farmhouse. A possible Middle Bronze Age sunken-featured roundhouse was partially uncovered just to the west of the farmyard (SWARCH 2017b; 2017c). However, the posited round at Carninney (HER no.31043), arising from the tithe field name, is a misreading of the word *Pound*. The place-name element *carn* refers to a 'rock pile, a tor' but in the Redruth-Camborne area also 'a hill' (Padel 1985, 38).

The geophysical survey identified what its authors considered to be a round: the enclosure of Late Iron Age or Roman date referenced by the (erroneous) HER entry (Stratascan 2016, 2-3). However, during the evaluation the anomaly proved to be a line of granite rocks and boulders sitting on top of the weathered granite gravel natural and within the subsoil. At the time these were considered to be natural. However, subsequent fieldwork adjacent to Menhyr Drive c.300m to the north (SWARCH *forthcoming*) uncovered shallow field ditches or perhaps linear mineral prospection trenches of medieval or post-medieval date that contained similarly stony fills.



FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION; THE SITE IS INDICATED.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; Boyd 2017) drawn up in consultation with the Cornwall and Scilly SDOHE and in accordance with ClfA guidelines (2014) and best practice.

In the event, and *contra* the best efforts of SWARCH, nearly all the initial groundwork was undertaken without supervision. For Phase 1 (Field #3) of the development, the site was dug out to formation levels that were well below the level of the natural (this phase was reported on in SWARCH 2018). For Phases 2 and 3 (Fields #1 and #2) the bulk of the topsoil and subsoil was stripped without supervision, and formation levels were probably at or below the level of the natural across the eastern parts of each area. For the areas which had not been over-stripped, the distinction between the fills of archaeological features and the natural was sufficiently distinct to determine the lack of features was genuine, though some limited areas were re-stripped to confirm. Site visits took place in February, March, and August 2019.

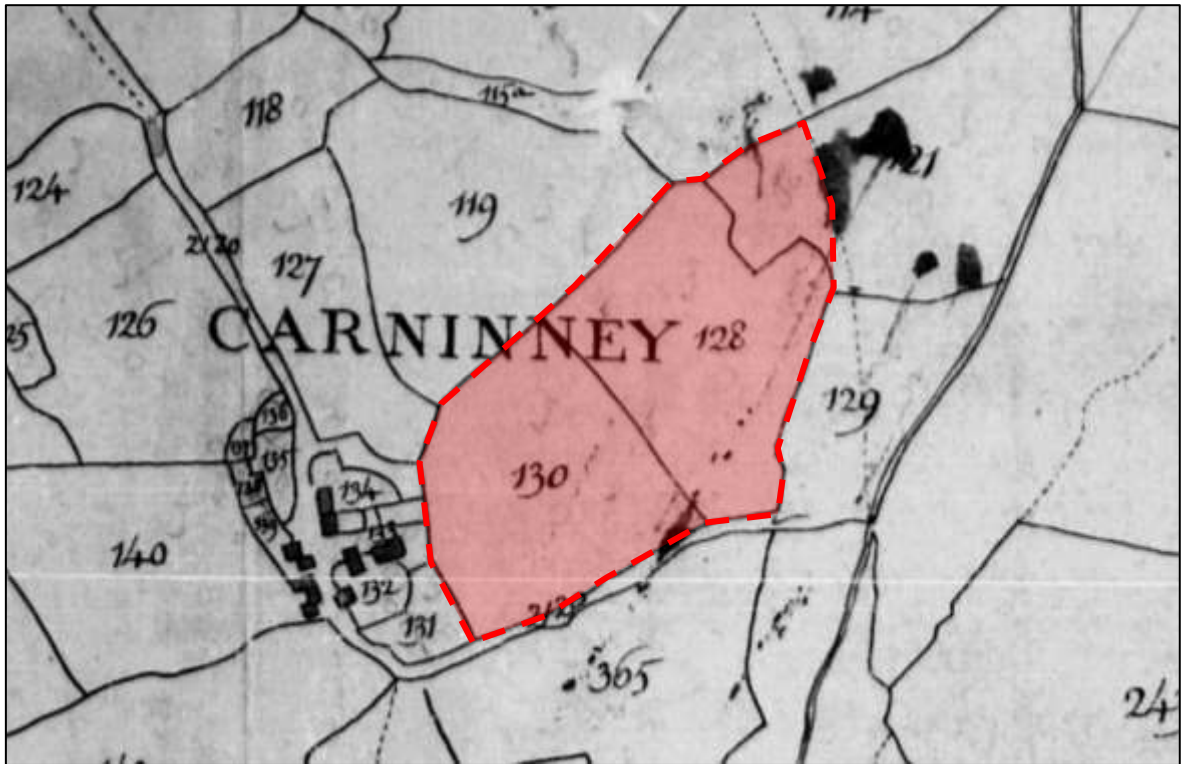


FIGURE 2: EXTRACT FROM THE 1839 UNY LEANT TITHE MAP; THE SITE IS INDICATED (PRO).

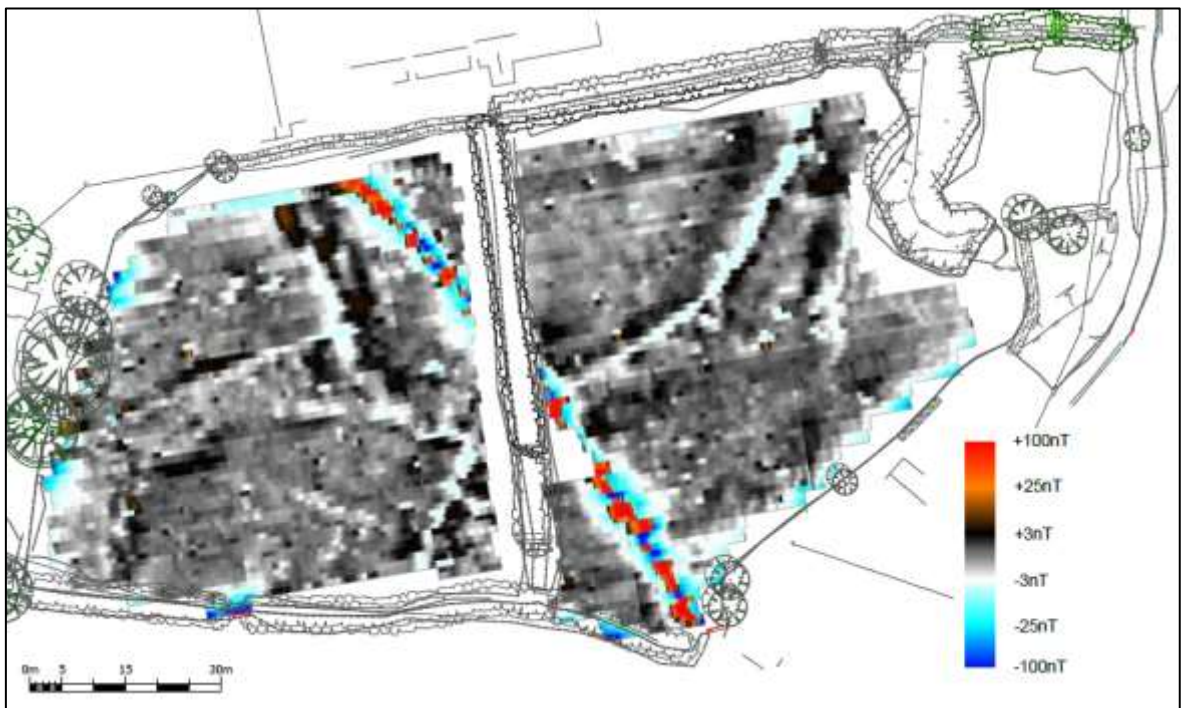


FIGURE 3: THE RESULTS OF THE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY (STRATASCAN 2016, FIG.3).

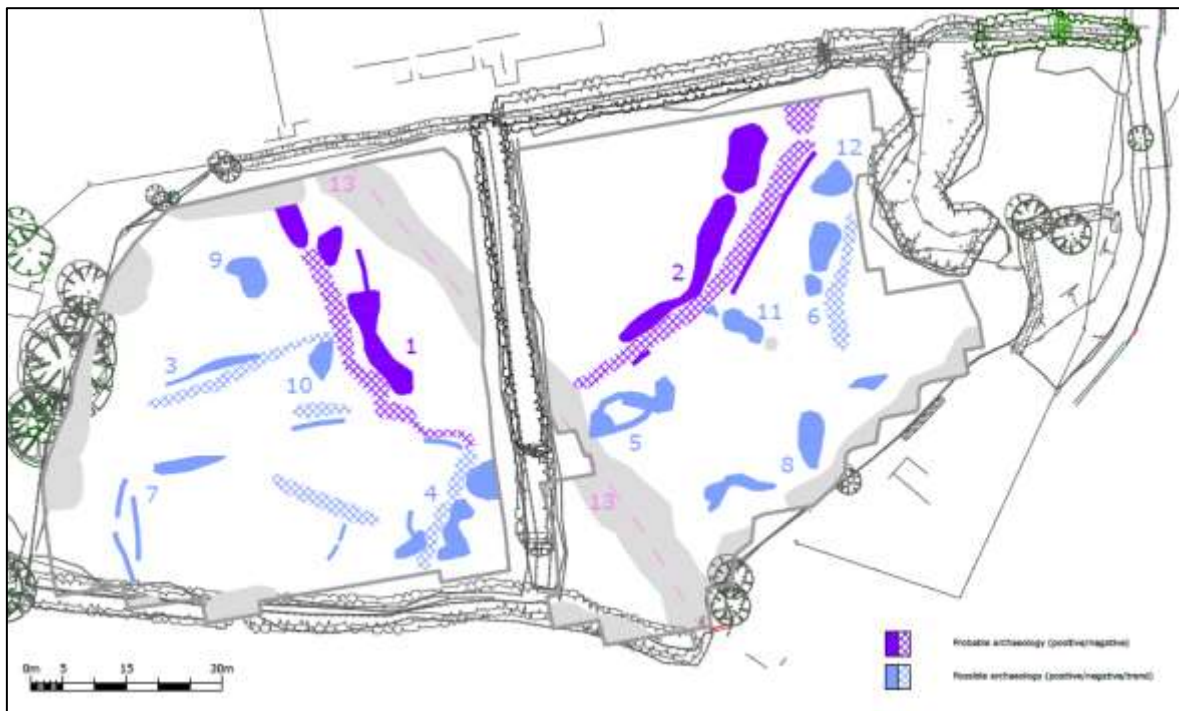


FIGURE 4: INTERPRETATION OF THE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS (STRATASCAN 2016, FIG.5).

2.0 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Several episodes of recording took place, on April 11th 2017, February 12th-13th 2019, March 8th 2019 and August 19th 2019. This work was undertaken by B. Morris and E. Wapshott. The weather in each case was variable, mainly dry but wet and windy on February 13th. As noted, much of the work of stripping the site had been undertaken prior to being contacted; only the strip on August 19th took place under supervision. The works had been undertaken by excavators with toothless grading buckets, but the exposed surfaces had been subsequently tracked over and weathered. The site was stripped in blocks, and not all the areas were exposed and visible for recording. Three features were identified: two ditches and a tree-throw. These features are described below.

2.2 DEPOSIT MODEL

The site was overlain by a considerable depth of topsoil and subsoil. This was thinnest to the top (north-west) of the site and thickest towards the mid slopes. The topsoil consisted of a friable mid-to-dark brownish-grey sandy-silt up to c.0.43m thick. This overlay a subsoil that was a soft mid-to-light brownish-grey clay-silt loam 0.10-0.40m thick that contained moderate small-to-medium sub-angular stones. The natural was a firm-compact light orange-yellow or mid brownish orange weathered granite rock (gravel) with occasional stony bands and boulders.

2.3 RESULTS

Three features were identified, two of which correlate with geophysical anomalies identified by the earlier survey. Ditch [105] was identified in Field #2. This was a wide curving linear feature on the line of geophysical anomaly 2. The ditch was up to 2m wide and cut up to 0.75m deep; however, it was cut through the subsoil and its stony fill (117) projected up into the base of the topsoil, and across the stripped part of the site only the very base survived. The ditch had shallow,

irregular sloping sides and a concave base. Its lower fill (106) was a heterogeneous and poorly sorted mass of shattered and whole rounded and sub-rounded granite rocks 0.1-0.8m across in a soft dark humic silty matrix 0.45m thick. The upper fill (117) was c.0.25m thick; it was also very stony, but in a matrix of firmer mid-grey gritty clayey silt. Charcoal was present in both layers, with a suggestion some of the stone had been heat affected.



FIGURE 5: DITCH [105]; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (SCALE 2M). THE LINE OF THE DITCH IS INDICATED.



FIGURE 6: FIELD #2; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

Also in Field #2 was a large tree-throw [108]. This was c.2m in diameter, with a band of dark, stony, humic silty loam (110) surrounding a central plug of redeposited natural (109).



FIGURE 7: TREE-THROW [108]; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.



FIGURE 8: TREE-THROW [108]; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (SCALES 1M & 2M).

Ditch [113] was identified in Field #1. This was a wide curving linear feature on the line of anomaly 3. Following the removal of a spoil heap, it also appeared to follow the line of upper (north) part of anomaly 1. This feature was similar to ditch [105], in that it was c.2m wide and perhaps originally as much as 0.8m deep with moderately sloping sides and a broad concave base. It contained similar fills, with a soft dark humic silty matrix with frequent to abundant shattered and

whole rounded and sub-rounded poorly sorted granite rocks 0.1-0.8m across. Ditch [113] was surrounded by a wide band of heat-affected or disturbed natural (115). Again, where the site had been stripped this feature survived as a wide but relatively shallow band; its stony fill projected up at least as far as base of the topsoil, as observed in the evaluation.



FIGURE 9: DITCH [113]; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (SCALE 2M).



FIGURE 10: DITCH [113]; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (SCALE 2M).

No finds were observed in any of the features.

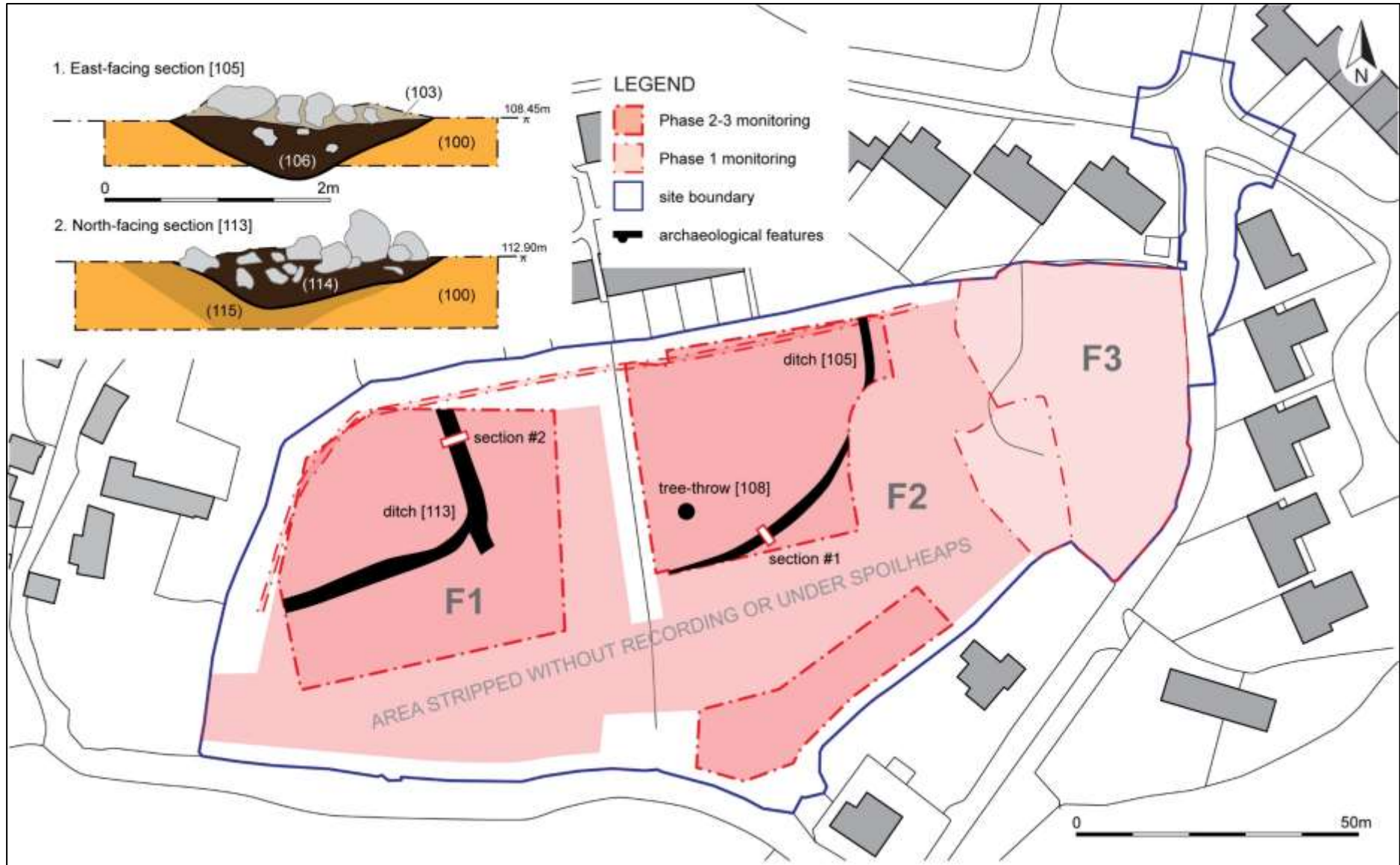


FIGURE 11: SITE PLAN SHOWING THE AREAS SUBJECT TO RECORDING, WITH SECTION DRAWINGS.

2.4 INTERPRETATION

The geophysical survey report interpreted anomalies 1 and 2 as part of the circuit of an enclosure ('round') of Iron Age or Romano-British date. Leaving aside the excavated evidence, this was erroneous for two reasons. Firstly, the place-name evidence for a round at Carninney is incorrect. The tithe field name is 'The Pound', not 'The Round', and the element *Carn* is derived from *Carn* 'rock, tor or hill'. Secondly, the survey itself identified a continuous band of negative responses flanked on the *inside* by a discontinuous band of positive responses. That would lend itself to interpretation as a hengiform monument rather than a settlement enclosure.

In the event, anomalies 1, 2 and 3 were found to correlate with wide, relatively deep but gently sloping curving ditches cut from below the topsoil and containing fills with abundant shattered and whole poorly sorted granite stones, with dark soft humic lower fills capped (for ditch [105]) with a firm grey clayey fill. The character of the fills would suggest these are not Prehistoric features and that they were backfilled with stone *relatively* recently. Monitoring works c.300m to the north at Menhyr Drive have uncovered very similar features which either relate to some form of mineral prospection (perhaps hushing) or – more likely – a medieval fieldsystem. At Carninney, projecting the results of the geophysical survey onto the 1839 tithe map (Figure 12) demonstrates that the 'enclosure ditch' is actually a continuation of the field boundaries around field no.199 (*Middle Close*), and that the excavated ditches are therefore casualties of a post-medieval reorganisation of the farmstead. In 1839 Carninney was a hamlet comprised of two tenements, and the fields wither side of the hedge between fields no.119 and 128/130 belonged to the two different tenements.

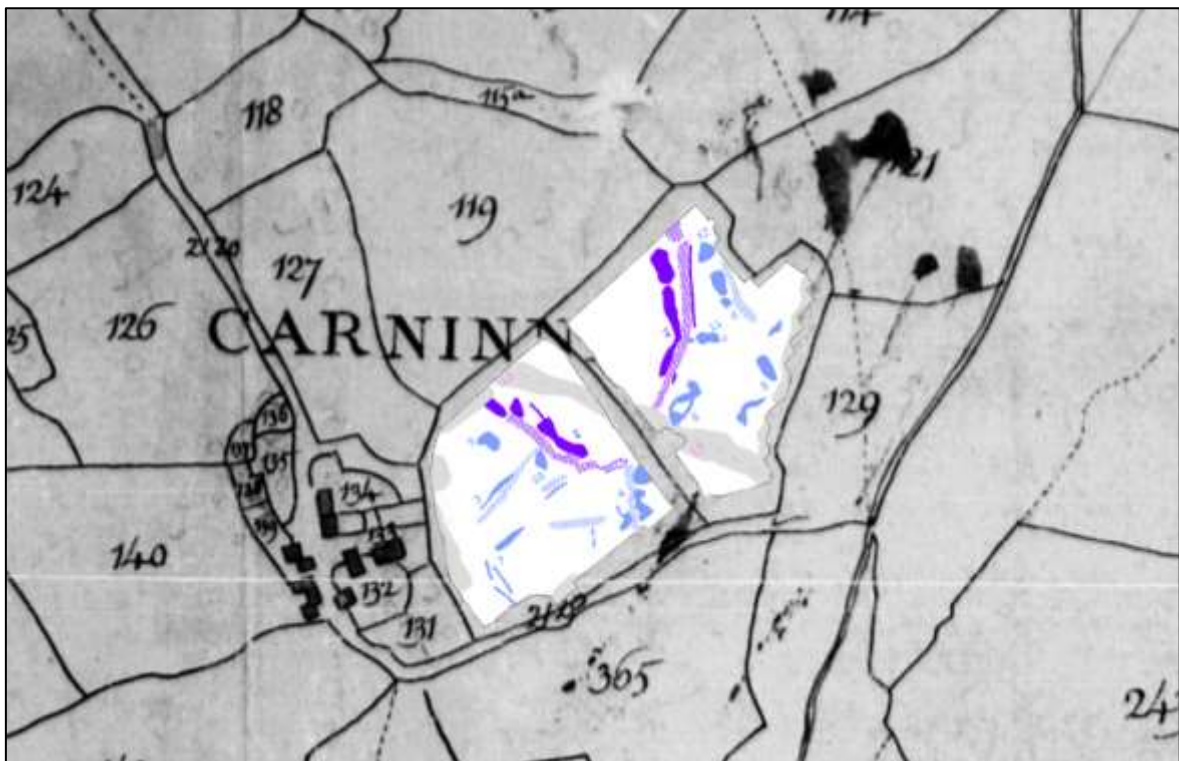


FIGURE 12: THE INTERPRETATION OF THE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS OVERLAID ON THE 1839 TITHE MAP.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The archaeological recording work at Carninney Rise identified two ditches that corresponded with geophysical anomalies identified in an earlier survey. The ditches contained frequent to abundant poorly sorted granite stones and the fills projected up to the base of the topsoil. The geophysical survey, misled by an error on the Historic Environment Record, wrongly concluded these were the ditches of a Late Iron Age or Romano-British enclosure. The excavated evidence, correlated with the historic map evidence, demonstrates these are medieval field boundaries that were removed and rationalised in the post-medieval period but prior to 1839. There were no other finds or features.

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THE OLD DAIRY
HACCHE LANE BUSINESS PARK
PATHFIELDS BUSINESS PARK
SOUTH MOLTON
DEVON
EX36 3LH

DEVON: 01769 573555
CORNWALL: 01872 223164
EMAIL: MAIL@SWARCH.NET