

BINHAMY MOATED SITE

BUDE

CORNWALL

Archaeological Statement

South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 160421



www.swarch.net Tel. 01769 573555

Binhamy Moated Site, Bude, Cornwall Archaeological Statement

By B. Whitlock & S. Walls
Report Version FINAL
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Work undertaken by SWARCH for Andrew Beswetherick

Summary

South West Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by Andrew Beswetherick to undertake an archaeological statement on the Binhamy Moated Site, Bude, Cornwall. This work was undertaken in order to inform potential future works in the area just north of the moated medieval manor.

The Binhamy moated site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument of high archaeological significance, with a single northern entrance. Various archaeological works have been undertaken in the general vicinity in advance of commercial developments over the last ten years. These have in general produced relatively little significant archaeological evidence as to the medieval landscape associated with the manor house, although a 2015 resistivity survey on the moated site itself suggest the remains of the medieval hall survives.

The area north of the moated site (and in association with its entrance and metalled access track) is the most likely location for any extra-mural structures and activities to survive. Any proposed works in this area should be subject to archaeological monitoring and recording.

Whilst the manor site is a valuable heritage asset, any proposed development works can be used as an opportunity to improve access, awareness and condition of the SAM.



April 2016

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ANDREW BESWETHERICK (THE CLIENT)

PROJECT CREDITS

PROJECT DIRECTOR: DR. SAMUEL WALLS
 REPORT: BETH WHITLOCK; DR. SAMUEL WALLS
 EDITING: NATALIE BOYD; DR. BRYN MORRIS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

LOCATION: BINHAMY MOATED SITE, BUDE
COUNTY: CORNWALL
NGR: SS 21916 05762
PLANNING NO: PRE-PLANNING
SWARCH REF: BBM16

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Andrew Beswetherick (the Client) to produce an archaeological statement for the Binhamy Moated Site, Bude. This work was undertaken in order to inform potential future works on the site. The site includes the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 1004655) known as the *Moated site 415m west of Binhamy Farm*.

This rapid appraisal of existing documentary and cartographic sources, together with a short site visit and appraisal of the existing evidence gathered through geophysical survey (see below), archaeological evaluation and monitoring is intended to inform and guide subsequent archaeological work on the site.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

The site of the proposed development is located on the edge of the built-up environment of Bude, close to the north coast of Cornwall. The medieval settlement of Stratton lies to the east. The site is located on a south-south-east facing slope overlooking a narrow combe at a height of approximately 40m AOD. The soils of this area are the well-drained fine loamy soils of the Neath Association (SSEW 1983), which overlie sandstones of the Bude Formation (BGS 2016).

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A large area (c.23 hectares) immediately to the east of the proposed site is currently being developed for housing. Works in advance of this development include a desk-based assessment of Binhamy Farm (Lawson-Jones 2008), geophysical survey (GSB 2008) and evaluation trenching (Wessex Archaeology 2013). A survey of the moated site itself, together with the small field immediately to the north, has also been undertaken (Wright 2015). A narrow cable trench crossing that field was also monitored (Rainbird 2015).

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the following report is to place the proposal site in its archaeological and historical context. A brief overview of desk-based resources focusing primarily upon archaeological works within the vicinity of the site was undertaken with reference to ClfA guidelines (2014) on the preparation of historic environment desk-based assessments.

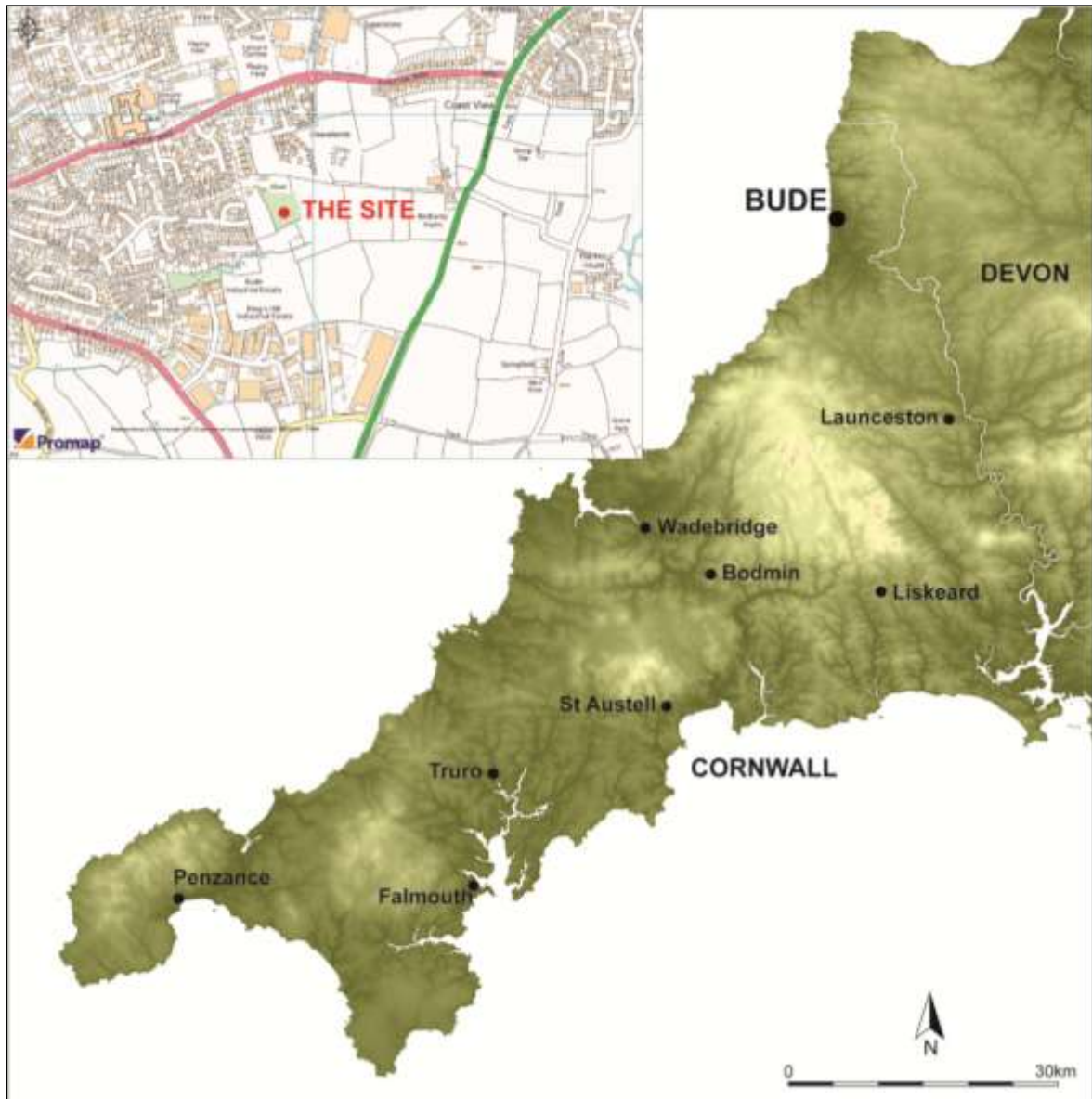


Figure 1: Location map.

2.0 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 SITE HISTORY

The proposed development site is located within *Anciently Enclosed Land* (medieval farmland, Cornwall and Scilly Historic Landscape Characterisation). *Anciently Enclosed Land* (AEL) formed the agricultural heartland of Cornwall, with the settlements and field systems typically having clear medieval antecedents. AEL has also been demonstrated to indicate areas first settled, enclosed and farmed during late Prehistory i.e. the Middle Bronze Age (c. 1500-1000 BC) until the Roman period (AD 43-410) and continuing into the early medieval period (AD 410-1066). It is considered highly likely that buried archaeology dating to the Prehistoric and Romano-British periods generally survives within areas of AEL.

The site is situated within an area of high archaeological potential. The Binhamy moated site (see Appendix 1 for the full scheduling text) consists of a sub-rectangular c.0.3ha in extent defined by a mostly dry moat c.10m wide and c.2.2m deep. The moat has a partial inner bank, and there are outer banks formed of up-cast material on three sides. The interior contains mounds, hollows and some fragmentary walling. The site is thought to be the site of 'Bynnamy' or 'Binamy Castle', built in the early 14th century by Ralph de Blanchminster, Lord of the Manor of Stratton, with a license to crenellate in acquired in January 1335. In the post-medieval period the site was used as an orchard, and listed as *Blawmangers Orchard* in the 1840 tithe apportionment; the field to the north was listed as *Blawmangers Plot*.

The monument has lent its name to Binhamy Farm, which itself is formed from a mixture of historic and modern farm buildings (17th -21st century) focused upon the probably late medieval farmhouse.

There are antiquarian references to Romano-British coins is associated with Binhamy Castle (MCO200), and a further site, identified on the HER as a double circuit of ditches (MCO38817), is located to the east of the proposed development. These ostensibly appear to represent a Prehistoric or Romano-British enclosure, but the evaluation carried out indicates it was a quarry pit (Wessex Archaeology 2013).

Further archaeological features identified in the surrounding area include various removed field boundaries and tracks, which are all indicative of a medieval farming landscape. Two further enclosure sites are located to the north, one of prehistoric/Romano-British date, and one of post-medieval date. A summary of the historical and archaeological background is outlined in depth in the archaeological assessment undertaken for Binhamy by Lawson-Jones (CAU 2008).

Much of the area has been subject to geophysical survey and, evaluation trenching and monitoring over the last five years (see below).

2.2 PREVIOUS GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

A geophysical (resistivity) survey undertaken within the area of the SAM in early 2015 (Wright 2015) presents evidence for the remains of below-ground walls of a substantial building, with a large hall measuring approximately 15×10m, and a number of ancillary rooms. Limited survey undertaken outside of the area of the scheduled monument at the same time suggested that the entrance track ran north-west from the sole northern entrance into the moat. This was subsequently exposed in a programme of archaeological monitoring in this area (Rainbird 2015).

A geophysical (gradiometry) survey was undertaken by GSB Prospection Ltd. in 2008 (report ref. 2008/37) prior to the development of the land immediately to the east of the proposal area. This supported the suggested existence of a double-ditched enclosure noted on aerial photographs c.200m east-north-east of the SAM as being of prehistoric/Romano-British date. Subsequent evaluation trenching demonstrated that these features actually represented the remains of post-medieval quarrying (Wessex Archaeology 2013). The GSB survey identified several further anomalies of possible archaeological interest, including a ring ditch (c.150m north-north-east of the SAM). The outer bank and ditch of the eastern side of moated site were also identified during the GSB survey, although no further outworks or structures were apparent. Other possible archaeological responses include potential enclosures, possible fishponds, curvilinear features, field systems, ditches, pits and evidence of ridge and furrow. Some of these (e.g. the Fish Ponds) are likely associated with the moated manor, others from subsequent and earlier activity.

2.3 PREVIOUS EXCAVATION AND MONITORING

Evaluation trenching has been undertaken by Wessex Archaeology (2013) across the area to the east of the moated site, targeting the geophysical anomalies identified in the GSB survey. This evaluation confirmed the presence of a potential ring ditch, but found that the majority of archaeological features revealed appear to correspond to post-medieval field boundaries and concluded that the archaeological potential of the area to the east of the site was *low*, and no further work appears to have taken place. A small rectangular enclosure to the south of the moated site, although undated, produced a small quantity of pegged slate, suggestive of activity contemporary with the medieval manor.

A cable trench was subject to archaeological monitoring, crossing the field to the north of the SAM (Rainbird 2015). This identified a metalled trackway that aligned with the entrance to the moated site, a demolition layer and several undated ditches and pits. Finds recovered included medieval ridge tile, some early post-medieval pottery and a lead shot. The findings from this monitoring suggest that medieval activity (associated with the moated manor) certainly occurred to the north of the area of the SAM and its sole entrance. The evidence recovered suggests that any such structures may have been subject to complete demolition, although the existence of a number of ditches and pits of unknown date, suggest potential for archaeological deposits and features surviving in this area.

Further archaeological monitoring (e.g. Thorpe 2011) and geophysical survey (Johnson 2007) have occurred to the south for the proposed extensions to the Bude and Stratton Business Park (c.200m south of the SAM). These uncovered very little of note, with post-medieval finds during the monitoring and primarily removed boundaries and field drains visible in the geophysics results.

2.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The archaeological importance of the site is long established and has been recognised through its designation as a SAM. Binhamy is of note as one of only four identified medieval moated sites in Cornwall, and appears to be the best surviving example. Moated manorial sites did not, however, exist in isolation and it is highly likely that a range of contemporary buildings and activities occurred in association, outside of the moated area. These will have included, but are not be restricted to: fish ponds (most likely to the south-west), roads, gatehouses/drawbridges (to the north), gardens, orchards, service buildings, and parkland (in all directions). The evaluation trenching to the east of the site suggests that much of the activity in this direction, e.g. field boundaries, field drains, etc. is post-medieval in origin. It is likely that some areas to the south would have been too wet for

conventional agricultural exploitation, but features related to water management e.g. fish ponds, leats, etc. might be present. Immediately to the south of the moat is an apparent enclosure that could be associated with the SAM. The area to the north of the moated site has the highest potential for encountering features associated with the manor; the results of archaeological monitoring in this area (Rainbird 2015), and to a degree the geophysical survey work undertaken, indicates archaeological features and deposits clearly survive.



Figure 2: The location of the trenching undertaken in 2015 (Rainbird 2015, figure 1).

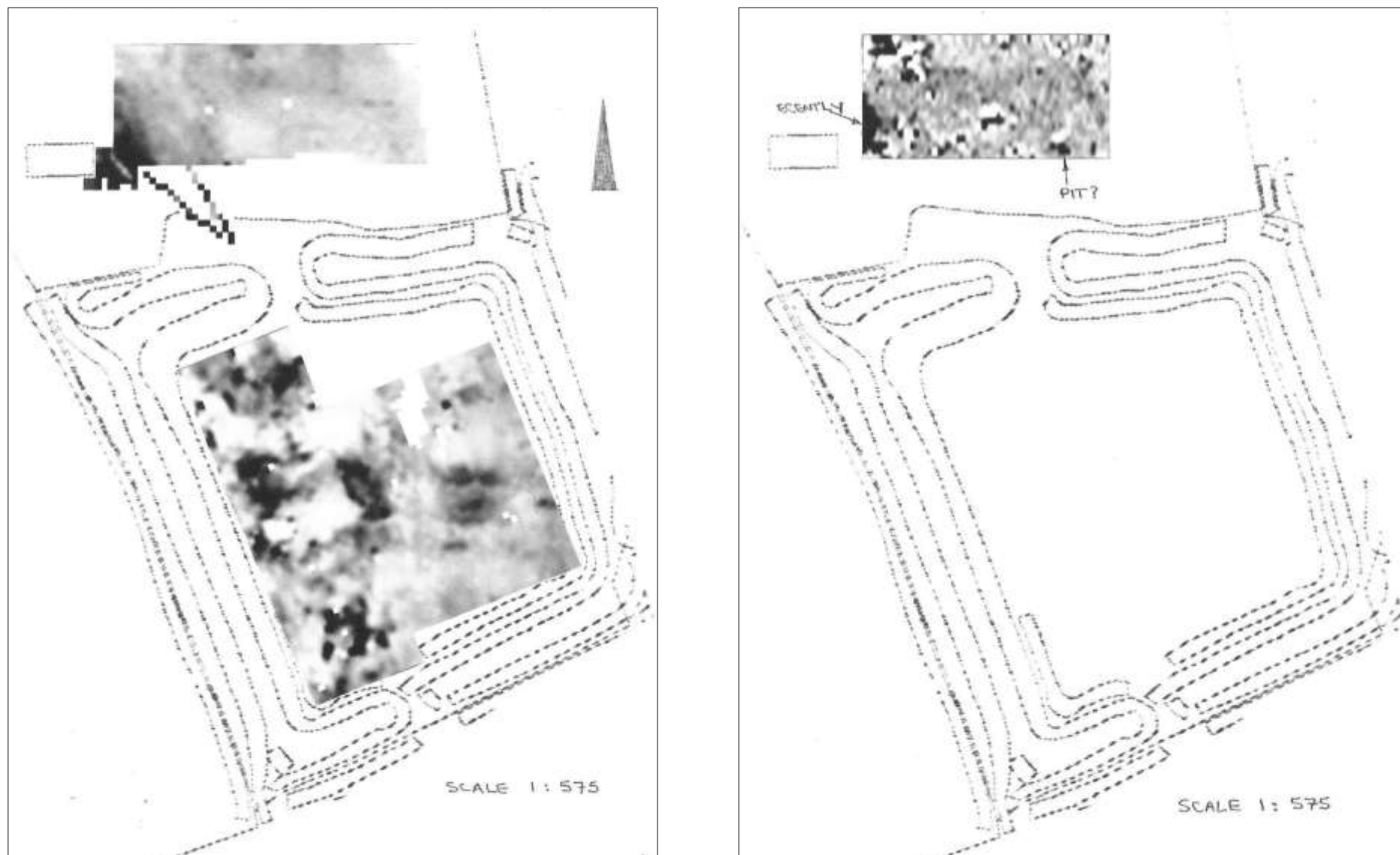


Figure 4: Resistance (left) and gradiometer (right) survey results for the moated site and area to the north (Wright 2015, figures 13 and 14).

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the known archaeological data and significance of the moated site and wider area.

It is clear that although the previous archaeological works in the vicinity of the site have had limited success in encountering significant medieval archaeological deposits, structures or features, they hint that the manor site was not located in isolation, but that extramural activity did occur. On the balance of evidence, it appears most likely this occurred to the north, in association with the main point of access to the moated complex. The results of monitoring in this area (Rainbird 2015) would indicate archaeological monitoring in advance of any development is appropriate. This could be achieved through area excavation, or via targeted evaluation trenching within the footprint of any proposed development, with further targeted monitoring and recording as required.

Any proposed development would need to be of a suitable scale and massing, carefully conceived, in order to respect and enhance the setting of the SAM.

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APPENDIX 1: SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT

Name: MOATED SITE 415m WEST OF BINHAMY FARM

List entry Number: 1004655

County: Cornwall

Parish: Bude-Stratton

Grade: SAM

UID: CO 847

Around 6,000 moated sites are known in England. They consist of wide ditches, often or seasonally water-filled, partly or completely enclosing one or more islands of dry ground on which stood domestic or religious buildings. In some cases the islands were used for horticulture. The majority of moated sites served as prestigious aristocratic and seigneurial residences with the provision of a moat intended as a status symbol rather than a practical military defence. The peak period during which moated sites were built was between about 1250 and 1350 and by far the greatest concentration lies in central and eastern parts of England. However, moated sites were built throughout the medieval period, are widely scattered throughout England and exhibit a high level of diversity in their forms and sizes. They form a significant class of medieval monument and are important for the understanding of the distribution of wealth and status in the countryside. Many examples provide conditions favourable to the survival of organic remains. The moated site 415m west of Binhamy Farm survives comparatively well and will contain archaeological and environmental evidence relating to its construction, longevity, social organisation, domestic arrangements, re-use, abandonment and overall landscape context.

The monument includes a moated site, situated on a low coastal ridge to the east of the settlement of Bude, between the River Neet and the coast. The moat defines a roughly-rectangular interior of approximately 0.15 ha. It is mostly dry and up to 2.2m deep with a partial inner bank of up to 3m wide and 0.3m high. There are surrounding outer banks of up-cast material on three sides, two of which have been re-used as field boundaries. The interior contains a series of mounds, hollows and some fragmentary walling.

The moated site is thought to be the site of 'Bynny' or 'Binamy Castle', built in around 1335 by Ralph de Blanchminster, Lord of the Manor of Stratton, who had been granted a license to castellate his mansion at Binhamy. It was later spoken of as the seat of Sir J Colshill by William Worcester and subsequently described as 'Ruined ancient seat of the Grenvilles' by Norden in around 1600. Borlase identified it as a Roman camp in around 1750 but by 1814 Lysons, and later Gilbert (1820), identified it as the mansion house of the Blanchminsters. In use as an orchard by 1750 it remained so until the late 19th century.

Listing NGR: SS 21921 05758



The Old Dairy
Hacche Lane Business Park
Pathfields Business Park
South Molton
Devon
EX36 3LH

Tel: 01769 573555
Email: mail@swarch.net