

# BINHAMY MOATED SITE

## BUDE

## CORNWALL

Results of a Historic Visual Impact Assessment



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 160519



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# Binhamy Moated Site, Bude, Cornwall

## Results of a Historic Visual Impact Assessment

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Report Version FINAL  
18<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Work undertaken by SWARCH for Andrew Beswetherick

### Summary

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*This report presents the result of a historic visual impact assessment carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) for Binhamy Moated Site, Bude, Cornwall. This work was undertaken in order to inform potential future works in the area just north of the medieval moated manor.*

*The proposed development site is located in close proximity to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Binhamy Moated Site. This moated site is one of only a handful of similar sites in Cornwall, and appears to be the best preserved surviving example in the county. However, there are clear issues relating to the modern housing developments that encroach on all sides, and the fact that there is no active management of the site. Any proposed development provides an opportunity to enable greater public access and awareness of the monument, its function and history.*

*With this in mind, the overall impact of the proposed development can be assessed as **negative/moderate**. This level of harm has to be weighed against the possible public benefit of improving management and enabling public access. The impact of the development on any surviving buried archaeological resource would be **permanent/irreversible**.*

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May 2016

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

<b>Location:</b>	Binhamy Moated Site
<b>Parish:</b>	Bude
<b>County:</b>	Cornwall
<b>NGR:</b>	SS 21916 05762
<b>Planning no.</b>	Pre-planning
<b>SWARCH ref.</b>	BBM16

### 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

This report presents the results of a Historic Visual Impact Assessment (HVIA) carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) for Binhamy Moated Site, Bude, Cornwall (Figure 1). This work was commissioned by Andrew Beswetherick (the Client) 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*.

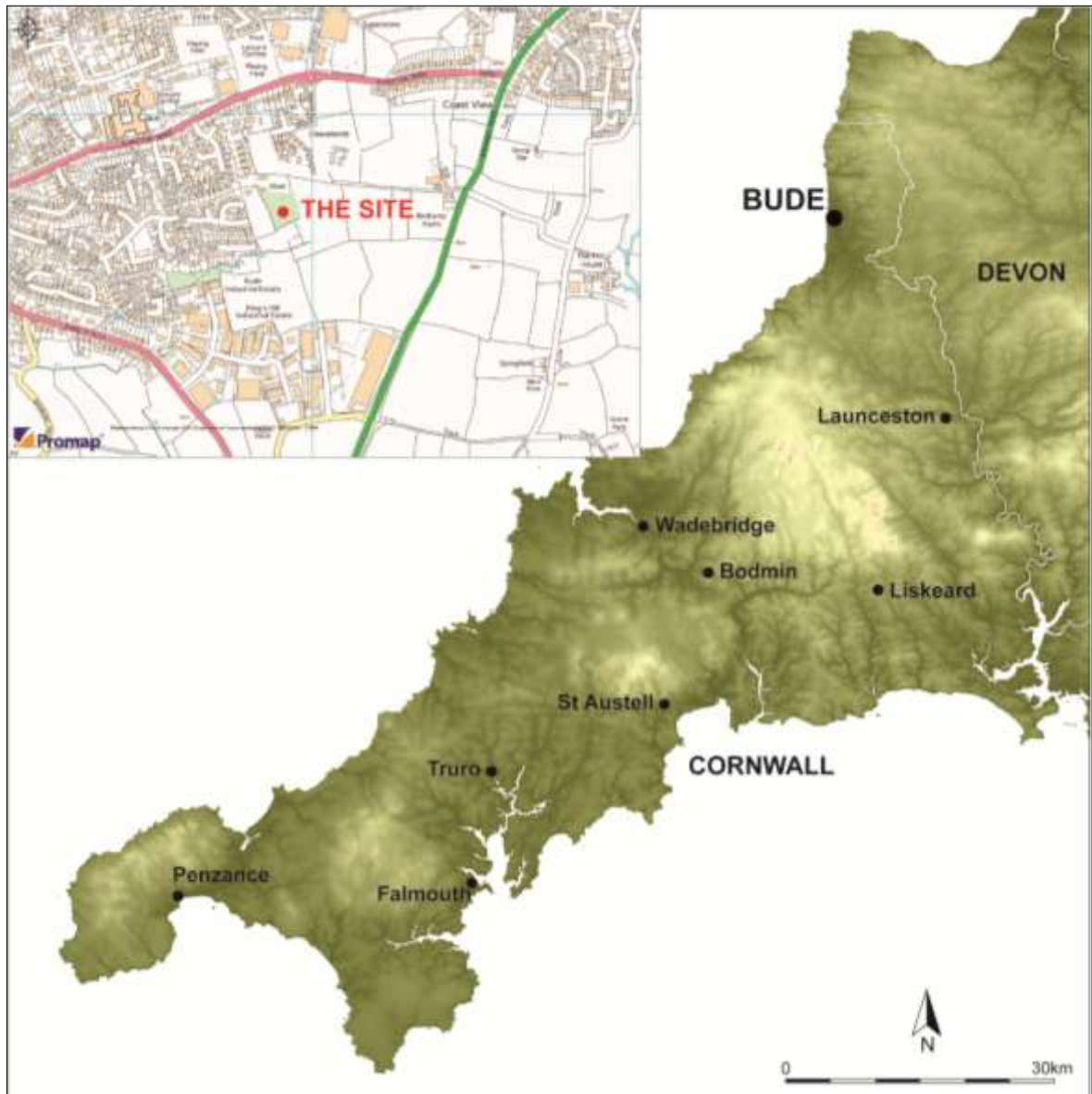


Figure 1: Site location (the proposal site is indicated).

## 1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located on the edge of the modern edge 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 the sandstones of the Bude Formation (BGS 2016).

## 1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The proposed development site is located within *Anciently Enclosed Land* (medieval farmland, Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Characterisation); this land forms the agricultural heartland of Cornwall, with the settlements and field systems typically having clear medieval (or earlier) antecedents.

The Binhamy moated site (see Appendix 1 for Listing text), to the south of the proposed development site, consists of a sub-rectangular enclosure 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 remnants of walling. The site is thought to be the site of 'Bynnamy' or 'Binamy Castle', built in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century by Ralph de Blanchminster, Lord of the Manor of Stratton, with a license to crenellate 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; the farmstead contains a mixture of historic and modern farm buildings (17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century) and a probable late medieval farmhouse.

## 1.4 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 included a desk-based assessment of Binhamy Farm (Lawson-Jones 2008), geophysical survey (GSB 2008) and evaluation trenching (Wessex Archaeology 2013). A geophysical survey of the moated site itself, together with the small field immediately to the north (the proposed site), has also been undertaken (Wright 2015). A narrow cable trench crossing that field was also monitored (Rainbird 2015).

## 1.5 METHODOLOGY

The historic visual impact assessment follows the guidance outlined in: *Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment* (English Heritage 2008), *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England 2015), *Seeing History in the View* (English Heritage 2011), *Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting* (Historic Scotland 2010), and with reference to *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (Landscape Institute 2013).

## 2.0 WALKOVER SURVEY

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The site was visited in May 2016 by E. Wapshott, accompanied by the client (Mr Beswetherick). A photographic and written record was made, and a historic visual impact assessment (HVIA) was undertaken for the adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument, *Binhamy Moated Site*.

The site of the proposed development is a rectangular strip of former amenity land with a long axis orientated east-west. 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estates, observed to consist largely of bungalows, lie to the west. Agricultural fields lie to the north, east and south-east; these are currently being developed as a large mixed-use housing development. Immediately south-west of the site is a large detached late 20<sup>th</sup> century house, with overgrown mature gardens. Immediately to the south is the moated enclosure, now largely concealed beneath trees and mature shrubs. The site is accessed via a metalled track, in poor condition, which passes three new houses (Lanveans 1-3) and leads off a cul-de-sac named Cleavelands.

The proposed site is enclosed by mature hedges to the north, east and west. The northern hedge features a line of mature trees, while the overgrowth western hedge features is flanked by a tall fence. The south-western bank and hedge, dividing the site from the private house Trelowarth, is more sparse. There are significant gaps in the hedge to the east, which allow wider views out of the site. Between the site and the Scheduled Monument there is no marked boundary, merely an area of scrub and brambles along a woodland fringe.



Figure 2: View across the site from the west; the SAM lies within the trees to the right.

The metalled track crosses the site north-south, and this area is slightly raised with the ground dropping away to both the east and west ends. The site is currently laid to lawn, with scrub growing out from the hedges. In the north-west corner immediately to the east of the track there is a timber former poultry shed. Concrete pads from other agricultural buildings occupy the northern strip along the boundary hedge, an area now dominated by brambles and nettles. Next

to the surviving building are some semi-ruined sheds covered in ivy and a small caravan. A Western Power breaker box is fitted on poles to the centre of the site, towards the southern side, and the narrow service trench (see Rainbird 2015) that crosses the site can be detected as a parchmark. There are some hollows and possible slight earthworks within the large lawned area towards its eastern end.

Intervisibility between the proposed site and the large new development underway to the north and east was confirmed. Both aural and visual impacts were noted during the site visit. The garden and house site for Trelowarth, south-west of the site, also has an active planning application for fourteen dwellings.



## 3.0 HISTORIC VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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### 3.1 NATIONAL POLICY

General policy and guidance for the conservation of the historic environment are now contained within the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012). The relevant guidance is reproduced below:

**Paragraph 128**

*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require the applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, **including the contribution made by their setting**. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should be consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which a development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

**Paragraph 129**

*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (**including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset**) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

### 3.2 SETTING AND VIEWS

The principle guidance on this topic is contained within two EH publications: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011a) and *Seeing History in the View* (2011b). *The Setting of Heritage Assets* has been superseded by the *Good Practice Advice Note 3* (2015), but remains relevant. While interlinked and complementary, it is useful to consider the following sites in terms of their *setting* i.e. their immediate landscape context and the environment within which they are seen and experienced, and their *views* i.e. designed or fortuitous vistas experienced by the visitor when at the heritage asset itself, or that include the heritage asset.

Setting is the primary consideration of any HVIA. It is a somewhat nebulous and subjective assessment of what does, should, could or did constitute the lived experience of a monument or structure. The following extracts are from the English Heritage publication *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011a, 4 & 7):

*Setting embraces all of the surroundings (land, sea, structures, features and skyline) from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset.*

*Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. This depends on a wide range of physical elements within, as well as perceptual and associational attributes, pertaining to the heritage asset's surroundings... In some instances the contribution made by setting to the asset's significance is negligible; in others it may be the greatest contribution to significance.*

The HVIA below sets out to determine the magnitude of the effect and the sensitivity of the heritage asset to that effect. The fundamental issue is that proximity and visual and/or aural relationships may affect the experience of a heritage asset, but if setting is tangential to the significance of that monument or structure, then the impact assessment will reflect this.

Historic and significant views are the associated and complementary element to setting, but can be considered separately as developments may appear in a designed view without necessarily falling within the setting of a heritage asset *per se*. As such, significant views fall within the aesthetic value of a heritage asset, and may be *designed* (i.e. deliberately conceived and arranged, such as within parkland or an urban environment) or *fortuitous* (i.e. the graduated development of a landscape 'naturally' brings forth something considered aesthetically pleasing, or at least impressive, as with particular rural landscapes or seascapes), or a combination of both (i.e. the *patina of age*, see below). The following extract is from the English Heritage publication *Seeing History in the View* (2011b, 3):

*Views play an important part in shaping our appreciation and understanding of England's historic environment, whether in towns or cities or in the countryside. Some of those views were deliberately designed to be seen as a unity. Much more commonly, a significant view is a historical composite, the cumulative result of a long process of development.*

On a landscape scale, views, taken in the broadest sense, are possible from anywhere to anything, and each may be accorded an aesthetic value according to subjective taste. Given that terrain, the biological and built environment, and public access restrict our theoretical ability to see anything from anywhere, in this assessment the term *principal view* is employed to denote both the deliberate views created within designed landscapes, and those fortuitous views that may be considered of aesthetic value and worth preserving. It should be noted, however, that there are distance thresholds beyond which perception and recognition fail, and this is directly related to the scale, height, massing and nature of the heritage asset in question. For instance, beyond 2km the Grade II cottage comprises a single indistinct component within the wider historic landscape, whereas at 5km or even 10km a large stately home or castle may still be recognisable. By extension, where assets cannot be seen or recognised i.e. entirely concealed within woodland, or too distant to be distinguished, then visual harm to setting is moot. To reflect this emphasis on recognition, the term *landmark asset* is employed to denote those sites where the structure (e.g. church tower), remains (e.g. earthwork ramparts) or – in some instances – the physical character of the immediate landscape (e.g. a distinctive landform like a tall domed hill) make them visible on a landscape scale. In some cases, these landmark assets may exert landscape *primacy*, where they are the tallest or most obvious man-made structure within line-of-sight. However, this is not always the case, typically where there are numerous similar monuments (multiple engine houses in mining areas, for instance) or where modern developments have overtaken the heritage asset in height and/or massing.

In making an assessment, this document adopts the conservation values laid out in *Conservation Principles* (English Heritage 2008), and as recommended in the Setting of Heritage Assets (page 17 and appendix 5). This is in order to determine the relative importance of *setting* to the significance of a given heritage asset. These values are: *evidential*, *historical*, *aesthetic* and *communal*.

### 3.2.1 EVIDENTIAL VALUE

*Evidential value* is derived from the potential of a structure or site to provide physical evidence about past human activity, and may not be readily recognised or even visible. This is the primary form of data for periods without adequate written documentation. It is the least equivocal value: evidential value is absolute; all other ascribed values (see below) are subjective.

### 3.2.2 HISTORICAL VALUE

*Historical value* is derived from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected via a place to the present; it can be *illustrative* or *associative*.

*Illustrative value* is the visible expression of evidential value; it has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with, and providing insights into, past communities and their activities through a shared experience of place. Illustrative value tends to be greater if a place features the first or only surviving example of a particular innovation of design or technology.

*Associative value* arises from a connection to a notable person, family, event or historical movement. It can intensify understanding by linking the historical past to the physical present, always assuming the place bears any resemblance to its appearance at the time. Associational value can also be derived from known or suspected links with other monuments (e.g. barrow cemeteries, church towers) or cultural affiliations (e.g. Methodism).

Buildings and landscapes can also be associated with literature, art, music or film, and this association can inform and guide responses to those places.

Historical value depends on sound identification and the direct experience of physical remains or landscapes. Authenticity can be strengthened by change, being a living building or landscape, and historical values are harmed only where adaptation obliterates or conceals them. The appropriate use of a place – e.g. a working mill, or a church for worship – illustrates the relationship between design and function and may make a major contribution to historical value. Conversely, cessation of that activity – e.g. conversion of farm buildings to holiday homes – may essentially destroy it.

### 3.2.3 AESTHETIC VALUE

*Aesthetic value* is derived from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place or landscape. Value can be the result of *conscious design*, or the *fortuitous outcome* of landscape evolution; many places combine both aspects, often enhanced by the passage of time.

*Design value* relates primarily to the aesthetic qualities generated by the conscious design of a building, structure or landscape; it incorporates composition, materials, philosophy and the role of patronage. It may have associational value, if undertaken by a known architect or landscape gardener, and its importance is enhanced if it is seen as innovative, influential or a good surviving example. Landscape parks, country houses and model farms all have design value. The landscape is not static, and a designed feature can develop and mature, resulting in the ‘patina of age’.

Some aesthetic value developed *fortuitously* over time as the result of a succession of responses within a particular cultural framework e.g. the seemingly organic form of an urban or rural landscape or the relationship of vernacular buildings and their materials to the landscape.

Aesthetic values are where a proposed development would have its principle or most pronounced impact. The indirect effects of most developments are predominantly visual, and their reflective nature ensures they draw attention within vistas, where local blocking does not prevail. In most instances the impact is incongruous; however, that is itself an aesthetic response, conditioned by prevailing cultural attitudes to what the historic landscape should look like.

### 3.2.4 COMMUNAL VALUE

*Communal value* is derived from the meaning a place holds for people, and may be closely bound up with historical/associative and aesthetic values; it can be *commemorative/symbolic, social or spiritual*.

*Commemorative and symbolic value* reflects the meanings of a place to those who draw part of their identity from it, or who have emotional links to it e.g. war memorials. Some buildings or places (e.g. the Palace of Westminster) can symbolise wider values. Other places (e.g. Porton Down Chemical Testing Facility) have negative or uncomfortable associations that nonetheless have meaning and significance to some and should not be forgotten.

*Social value* need not have any relationship to surviving fabric, as it is the continuity of function that is important.

*Spiritual value* is attached to places and can arise from the beliefs of a particular religion or past or contemporary perceptions of the spirit of place. Spiritual value can be ascribed to places sanctified by hundreds of years of veneration or worship, or wild places with few signs of modern life. Value is dependent on the perceived survival of historic fabric or character, and can be very sensitive to change.

### 3.2.5 SUMMARY

As indicated, individual developments have a minimal or tangential effect on most of the heritage values outlined above, largely because almost all effects are indirect. The principle values in contention are aesthetic/designed and, to a lesser degree aesthetic/fortuitous. There are also clear implications for other value elements (particularly historical/associational and communal/spiritual), where views or sensory experience is important.

## 3.3 LIKELY IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 3.3.1 TYPES AND SCALE OF IMPACT

Four types of archaeological impact associated with developments of this nature have been identified, as follows:

#### *Construction phase*

The proposed construction will have direct, physical impacts on the buried archaeology of the site through the excavation of the foundations, the undergrounding of cables, and the provision of any permanent or temporary vehicle access ways into and within the site. Such impacts would be permanent and irreversible.

#### *Operational phase*

The proposed might be expected to have a visual impact on the settings of some key heritage assets within its setting during the operational phase. Such factors also make it likely that any large development would have an impact on Historic Landscape Character. The operational phase impacts are temporary and reversible.

#### *Cumulative Impact*

A single development will have a physical and a visual impact, but a second and a third site in the same area will have a synergistic and cumulative impact above and beyond that of a single site. The cumulative impact of a proposed development is particularly difficult to estimate, given the assessment must take into consideration operational, consented and proposals in planning.

### *Aggregate Impact*

A single development will usually affect multiple individual heritage assets. In this assessment, the term aggregate impact is used to distinguish this from cumulative impact. In essence, this is the impact on the designated parts of the historic environment as a whole.

### 3.3.2 SCALE AND DURATION OF IMPACT

The effect of development and associated infrastructure on the historic environment can include positive as well as negative outcomes. However, developments of this nature are generally large and inescapably modern intrusive visual actors in the historic landscape. Therefore the impact of such a development will almost always be **neutral** (i.e. no impact) or **negative** i.e. it will have a **detrimental impact** on the setting of ancient monuments and protected historic buildings.

For the purposes of this assessment, these impacts are evaluated on a six-point scale:

#### **Impact Assessment**

<i>Neutral</i>	No impact on the heritage asset.
<i>Negligible</i>	Where the developments may be visible but will not impact upon the setting of the heritage asset, due to the nature of the asset, distance, topography, or local blocking.
<i>Negative/unknown</i>	Where an adverse impact is anticipated, but where access cannot be gained or the degree of impact is otherwise impossible to assess.
<i>Negative/minor</i>	Where the developments impact upon the setting of a heritage asset, but the impact is restricted due to the nature of the asset, distance, or local blocking.
<i>Negative/moderate</i>	Where the development would have a pronounced impact on the setting of a heritage asset, due to the sensitivity of the asset and proximity; it may be ameliorated by local blocking or mitigation.
<i>Negative/substantial</i>	Where the development would have a severe impact on the setting of a heritage asset, due to the particular sensitivity of the asset and/or close physical proximity; it is unlikely local blocking or mitigation could ameliorate the impact of the development in these instances.
<i>Group Value</i>	Where a series of similar or complementary monuments or structures occur in close proximity their overall significance is greater than the sum of the individual parts (e.g. Conservation Areas). This can influence the overall assessment.
<i>Permanent/irreversible</i>	Where the impact of the development is direct and irreversible e.g. on potential buried archaeology.
<i>Temporary/reversible</i>	Where the impact is indirect.

In addition, the significance of a monument or structure is often predicated on the condition of its upstanding remains, so a rapid subjective appraisal was also undertaken.

#### **Condition Assessment**

<i>Excellent</i>	The monument or structure survives intact with minimal modern damage or interference.
<i>Good</i>	The monument or structure survives substantially intact, or with restricted damage/interference; a ruinous but stable structure.
<i>Fair</i>	The monument or structure survives in a reasonable state, or a structure that has seen unsympathetic restoration/improvement.
<i>Poor</i>	The monument survives in a poor condition, ploughed down or otherwise slighted, or a structure that has lost most of its historic features.

<i>Trace</i>	The monument survives only where it has influenced other surviving elements within the landscape e.g. curving hedgebanks around a cropmark enclosure.
<i>Not applicable</i>	There is no visible surface trace of the monument.

Note: this assessment covers the survival of upstanding remains; it is not a risk assessment and does not factor in potential threats posed by vegetation – e.g. bracken or scrub – or current farming practices.

### 3.3.3 STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS

The majority of the heritage assets considered as part of the Visual Impact Assessment have already had their significance assessed by their statutory designations; which are outlined below:

#### *Scheduled Monuments*

In the United Kingdom, a Scheduled Monument is considered an historic building, structure (ruin) or archaeological site of '**national importance**'. Various pieces of legislation, under planning, conservation, etc., are used for legally protecting heritage assets given this title from damage and destruction; such legislation is grouped together under the term 'designation', that is, having statutory protection under the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*. A heritage asset is a part of the historic environment that is valued because of its historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest; those of national importance have extra legal protection through designation.

Important sites have been recognised as requiring protection since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the first 'schedule' or list of monuments was compiled in 1882. The conservation and preservation of these monuments was given statutory priority over other land uses under this first schedule. County Lists of the monuments are kept and updated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. In the later 20<sup>th</sup> century sites are identified by English Heritage (one of the Government's advisory bodies) of being of national importance and included in the schedule. Under the current statutory protection any works required on or to a designated monument can only be undertaken with a successful application for Scheduled Monument Consent. There are 19,000-20,000 Scheduled Monuments in England.

#### *Listed Buildings*

A Listed building is an occupied dwelling or standing structure which is of special architectural or historical interest. These structures are found on the *Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest*. The status of Listed buildings is applied to 300,000-400,000 buildings across the United Kingdom. Recognition of the need to protect historic buildings began after the Second World War, where significant numbers of buildings had been damaged in the county towns and capitals of the United Kingdom. Buildings that were considered to be of 'architectural merit' were included. The Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments supervised the collation of the list, drawn up by members of two societies: The Royal Institute of British Architects and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. Initially the lists were only used to assess which buildings should receive government grants to be repaired and conserved if damaged by bombing. The *Town and Country Planning Act 1947* formalised the process within England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland following different procedures. Under the 1979 *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* a structure cannot be considered a Scheduled Monument if it is occupied as a dwelling, making a clear distinction in the treatment of the two forms of heritage asset. Any alterations or works intended to a Listed Building must first acquire Listed Building Consent, as well as planning permission. Further phases of 'listing' were rolled out in the 1960s, 1980s and 2000s; English Heritage advise on the listing process and administer the procedure, in England, as with the Scheduled Monuments.

Some exemption is given to buildings used for worship where institutions or religious organisations have their own permissions and regulatory procedures (such as the Church of England). Some structures, such as bridges, monuments, military structures and some ancient structures may have Scheduled Monument status as well as Listed Building status. War memorials, milestones and other structures are included in the list and buildings from the first and middle half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are also now included as the 21<sup>st</sup> century progresses and the need to protect these buildings or structures becomes clear. Buildings are split into various levels of significance; Grade I, being most important; Grade II\* the next; with Grade II status being the most widespread. English Heritage Classifies the Grades as:

- Grade I* buildings of exceptional interest, sometimes considered to be **internationally important** (forming only 2.5% of Listed buildings).
- Grade II\** buildings of particular importance, **nationally important**, possibly with some particular architectural element or features of increased historical importance; more than mere special interest (forming only 5.5% of Listed buildings).
- Grade II* buildings that are also **nationally important**, of special interest (92% of all Listed buildings).

Other buildings can be Listed as part of a group, if the group is said to have ‘group value’ or if they provide a historic context to a Listed building, such as a farmyard of barns, complexes of historic industrial buildings, service buildings to stately homes etc. Larger areas and groups of buildings which may contain individually Listed buildings and other historic homes which are not Listed may be protected under the designation of ‘conservation area’, which imposes further regulations and restrictions to development and alterations, focusing on the general character and appearance of the group.

#### *Parks and Gardens*

Culturally and historically important ‘man-made’ or ‘designed’ landscapes, such as parks and gardens are currently “listed” on a non-statutory basis, included on the ‘Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England’ which was established in 1983 and is, like Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments, administered by English Heritage. Sites included on this register are of **national importance** and there are currently 1,600 sites on the list, many associated with stately homes of Grade II\* or Grade I status. Emphasis is laid on ‘designed’ landscapes, not the value of botanical planting; sites can include town squares and private gardens, city parks, cemeteries and gardens around institutions such as hospitals and government buildings. Planned elements and changing fashions in landscaping and forms are a main focus of the assessment.

### 3.4 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this document is based on that outlined in *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (English Heritage 2011 and 2015 Guidance Note), with reference to other guidance. The assessment of visual impact at this stage of the development is an essentially subjective one, and is based on the experience and professional judgement of the authors.

Visibility alone is not a clear guide to visual impact. People perceive size, shape and distance using many cues, so context is critically important. For instance, research on electricity pylons (Hull & Bishop 1988) has indicated scenic impact is influenced by landscape complexity: the visual impact of pylons is less pronounced within complex scenes, especially at longer distances, presumably because they are less of a focal point and the attention of the observer is diverted. There are

many qualifiers that serve to increase or decrease the visual impact of a proposed development some of which are seasonal or weather-related.

The principal consideration of this assessment is not visual impact *per se*. It is an assessment of the likely magnitude of effect, the importance of setting to the significance of heritage assets, and the sensitivity of that setting to the visual intrusion of the proposed development.

#### 3.4.1 ASSESSMENT AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

The determination of *landscape context* is an important part of the assessment process. This is the physical space within which any given heritage asset is perceived and experienced. The experience of this physical space is related to the scale of the landform, and modified by cultural and biological factors like field boundaries, settlements, trees and woodland.

Landscape context is based on topography, and can vary in scale from the very small – e.g. a narrow valley where views and vistas are restricted – to the very large – e.g. wide valleys or extensive upland moors with 360° views. Where very large landforms are concerned, a distinction can be drawn between the immediate context of an asset (this can be limited to a few hundred metres or less, where cultural and biological factors impede visibility and/or experience), and the wider context (i.e. the wider landscape within which the asset sits).

When new developments are introduced into a landscape, proximity alone is not a guide to magnitude of effect. Dependant on the nature and sensitivity of the heritage asset, the magnitude of effect is potentially much greater where the proposed development is to be located within the landscape context of a given heritage asset. Likewise, where the proposed development would be located outside the landscape context of a given heritage asset, the magnitude of effect would usually be lower. Each case is judged on its individual merits, and in some instances the significance of an asset is actually greater outside of its immediate landscape context, for example, where church towers function as landmarks in the wider landscape.

### 3.5 ASSESSMENT

The scheduled monument at Binhamy is a moated site, also known colloquially as ‘Binhamy Castle’; it occupies a sub-rectangular area of approximately 0.3ha. The site has a ditch with inner banks and an outer bank formed by upcast from the ditch. The ditch measures between 2.2-2.5m deep in places, and is up to 10m wide.

#### 3.5.1 CONDITION

The moated site is covered in hazel and hawthorn scrub, with brambles, nettles, ivy and wild garlic. There are numerous mature trees growing within the enclosure and along the outer walls and banks, the most dominant species being sycamore. This natural woodland growth has created both a mature canopy and a dense undergrowth, with some more open areas noted primarily where the remains of buildings are best preserved, possibly due to below-ground structures restricting the growth of vegetation.

#### 3.5.2 SETTING

The monument was intended to be enclosed. As a former moated manor site, it would have had a defensive element to its function, but would primarily have served as an expression of status and as the administrative centre of an estate. Although the monument may well have had some additional structures north of the main entrance, along the road, it was designed to stand alone,



making a statement of ownership in the landscape. This setting was inherently preserved in the agricultural fields; the monument was separated from the modern urban landscape of Bude, within a rural aural soundscape.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, small-scale development stretched down Cleavelands towards the site from the north-west, and along the A3072. Within the last two years, a large development has begun in the fields to the north, east and south-east of the monument. This development physically encloses the monument, and is of a uniform style of brick or rendered house, modern and non-West Country in appearance. This has already removed the monument ostensibly from its regional cultural context – while onsite, the monument could be almost anywhere in the country as key regional signifiers are no longer visible. The setting of the monument is now suburban in character, disconnected from its formerly more open and primarily agricultural landscape. The proposed development would cumulatively add to this effect, with further modern dwellings in close proximity. The proposed site, together with the gardens of the derelict house next door, currently provide a narrow ‘green zone’ around the site, and it is understood that the current housing development to the east features linear green spaces adjacent to the monument. The soundscape of the site is now complicated by noise from the building site, which would also increase, at least temporarily, with the proposed development.

### 3.5.3 LANDSCAPE PRESENCE

The monument has been left largely untouched during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, preserving its remains but allowing trees and shrubs to mature, so that it is now almost entirely shrouded from view. It appears in landscape views as a straight-sided block of woodland, within fields. This regular shape does draw the eye, but the impressive banks and ditches of the site itself are not visible. The monument was designed to be visible, and the licence to crenellation indicates a desire to insert a visually-dominant structure into the landscape. Should the site to be cleared, the scale and preservation of the banks and ditches would once more be evident.

The large housing development currently being built in fields north, east and south-east of the monument both physically enclose it and create a disconnect between the site and the wider landscape. This is compounded by the Bude Business Park to the south, which encloses the southern and western sides of the valley that frames views south of the monument. The monument is now physically cut off from the landscape it managed, and the social relevance of the site – the role of the manorial centre in shaping its landscape – is therefore negatively impacted. The proposed development would make little further difference to this, as the proposed site is itself enclosed from wider views by the monument.

### 3.5.4 PRINCIPAL VIEWS

The site is moated, of defensive function and a statement of status/ownership. Views to and from the central enclosure across the landscape are likely to have been central to the design of the site. Views on the approach to the site, from its surroundings, would also have been significant, as the monument would have stood alone, visually dominant, as the social and economic hub of the local area.

Principal views could be considered to have been from the north along the former routeway towards the main (and only) entrance, as well as outwards on this side from the banks and causeway. The planned development would be built on the northern side of the monument. The new houses would be clearly visible from the northern part of the moated site, in close proximity, and would block any approaching views, thus both enclosing the monument and limiting its visual presence. However, the new housing estate is already visible in the outward views from the monument.

### 3.5.5 SENSITIVITY

Once the central enclosure has been accessed via the narrow causeway, the vegetation reduces the outward noise and restricts views both across and out from the banks of the monument, fostering an inward-looking and strongly rural/woodland character. Interestingly, the enclosure of the monument within the woodland may mimic the same sense of containment as the original walls may once have done.

If active management is not instigated, and the monument remains in its current state, then the visual impact from the proposed development would be fairly limited, and would only be expected to affect the northern banks and ditch/causeway. There are no views, for example, to the proposed site from the area of the best preserved building remains, located towards the south-west side of the monument. If vegetation were to be cleared, then the sensitivity of the site would be increased, both to the proposed site and the other ongoing developments in the immediate vicinity.

### 3.5.6 MAGNITUDE

*Cumulative impacts affecting the setting of a heritage asset can derive from the combination of different environmental impacts (such as visual intrusion, noise, dust and vibration) arising from a single development or from the overall effect of a series of discrete developments. In the latter case, the cumulative visual impact may be the result of different developments within a single view, the effect of developments seen when looking in different directions from a single viewpoint, of the sequential viewing of several developments when moving through the setting of one or more heritage assets.*

The Setting of Heritage Assets 2011a, 25

*The key for all cumulative impact assessments is to focus on the **likely significant** effects and in particular those likely to influence decision-making.*

GLVIA 2013, 123

The visual impact of a single development can be significant, but the cumulative impact can undoubtedly eclipse this. An assessment of cumulative impact is, however, very difficult to gauge, as it must take into account existing developments, those with planning consent, and those still in the planning process. The threshold of acceptability has not, however, been established, and landscape capacity would inevitably vary according to landscape character.

The proposed development would impose an aural impact on the monument during its constructional phase and a longer term visual impact, both on setting and views. On its own, the impact of the development is probably **negative/minor** to **negative/moderate**. However, there are significant issues relating to cumulative impact, taking into consideration the current housing development to the north, east and south-east and the business park to the south-west. The setting and landscape presence of the site has already been irrevocably altered and negatively affected by these developments.

The cumulative impact on setting is likely to be further compounded, as the house and garden to the west of the site are also the subject of a planning application for further housing. This would essentially bring the site wholly within the suburban area of Bude, in a setting dominated by modern dwellings, with limited open space and wholly-enclosed views.

### 3.5.7 OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The overall impact of the development can therefore be assessed as **negative/moderate**, when considering all of the relevant factors.

### 3.5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS & MITIGATION

If the proposed development leaves a woodland fringe as a buffer to the monument, and the site is maintained but managed as woodland, then the visual impact of the development can be mitigated.

As part of the development, it has been proposed that the monument be given into the care of a heritage group, in order to improve management of the site and to provide access, signage and information on the site. The site is currently disconnected from its social and cultural context, and these plans would once again link the site to the wider community, allowing the site to be visited and appreciated [currently, there is no public access to the monument].

The impact on setting, and how this affects our understanding of the site within the wider landscape, is the element subject to the greatest negative effect. Visual interpretation boards and maps or plans that show the manor, previous landscape and setting of the monument, may help visitors to understand how and why the monument functioned in the wider landscape.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

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The proposed development site is located in close proximity to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Binhamy Moated Site. This moated site is one of only a handful of similar sites in Cornwall, and appears to be the best preserved surviving example in the county. However, there are clear issues relating to the modern housing developments that encroach on all sides, and the fact that there is no active management of the site. Any proposed development provides an opportunity to enable greater public access and awareness of the monument, its function and history.

With this in mind, the overall impact of the proposed development can be assessed as **negative/moderate**. This level of harm has to be weighed against the possible public benefit of improving management and enabling public access. The impact of the development on any surviving buried archaeological resource would be **permanent/irreversible**.

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## APPENDIX 1: SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT TEXT

**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 'Bynnamy' 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 'Ruyned aunient seate of the Grenviles' 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

APPENDIX 2: SUPPORTING PHOTOGRAPHS

*Walkover Survey*



View along the track leading to the site off Cleavelands, past Lanveans 1-3 (the nearest houses to the west); viewed from the south looking north.



The remains of the bank and hedge to the north-west of the site; viewed from the south-east.



The western boundary, a mature hedge with trees with a fence beyond, enclosing a development of 20<sup>th</sup> century bungalows; viewed from the east.



The track bisects the site and to access Trelowarth, the private property to the south-west, which lies within a large overgrown garden that borders the Scheduled Monument to the west; viewed from the north.





View east across the lawned area of the site, showing the mature if scrappy and ragged eastern boundary hedge; viewed from the west.



The wooden agricultural building, a former poultry shed, that occupied the centre of the northern boundary of the site, just east of the access track; viewed from the south-east.



The ruined agricultural sheds and caravan, just on the edge of the scrub woodland, on the southern side of the site; viewed from the north.



The scrub woodland that abuts the southern side of the proposed site and which contains the moated Scheduled Monument; viewed from the north-west.



View of adjacent abandoned property, Trelowarth, the subject of an active planning application for 14 dwellings to be built on its site and garden; viewed from the east.



The hedge and wire fence boundary along the western side of the Scheduled Monument; viewed from the north-west.

*Scheduled monument*



View of the deep ditch on the northern side of the monument; viewed from the south-west.



View from the north-west corner of the moated site across to the south-east corner of the enclosure, showing scrub and tree coverage; viewed from the north-west.



View of some of the standing walls within the site, located towards the south-western part of the central enclosure; here the walls of a small square structure rises through the foliage; viewed from the east.

*Historic Visual Impact Assessment*



View from the site showing clear intervisibility with the new houses of the development to the east, through the hedgebank boundary; viewed from the west.



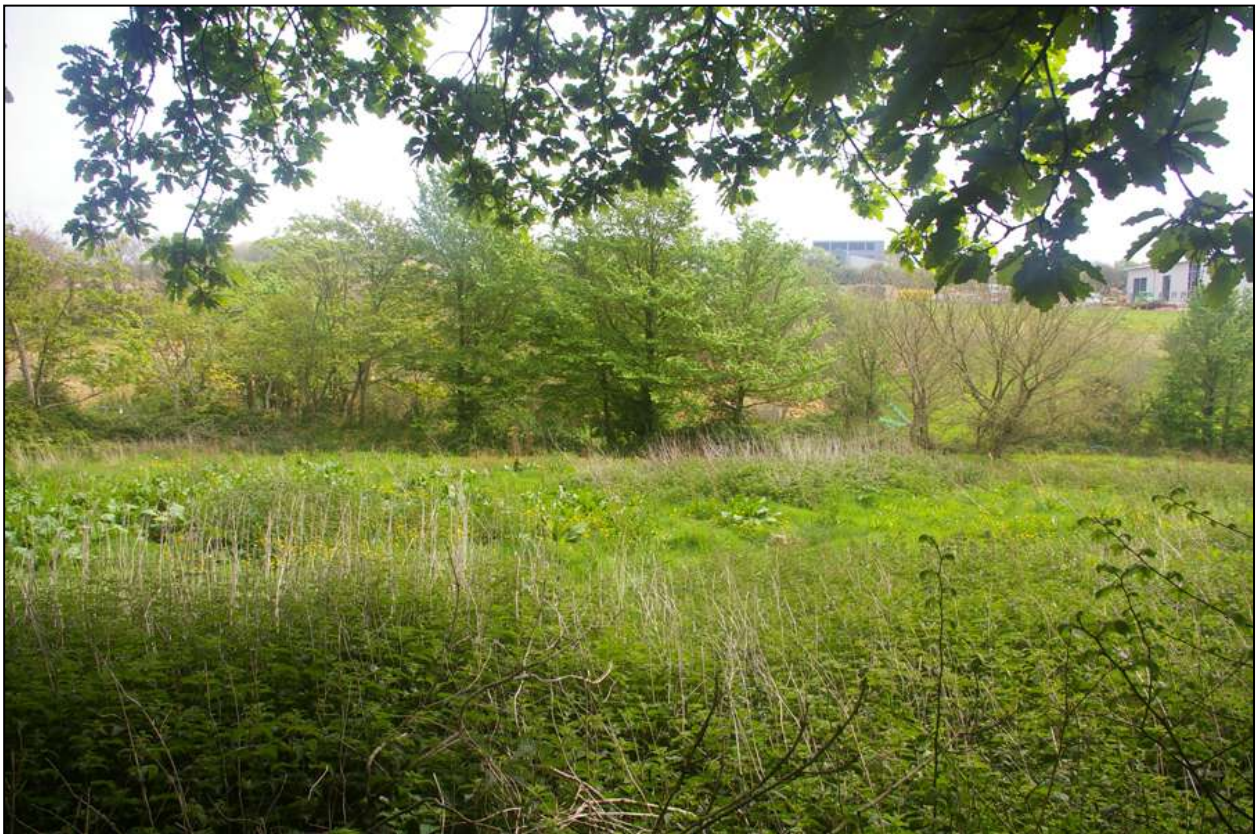
View from the site showing intervisibility through the line of mature trees to the first phase (already occupied) of the new houses to the north; viewed from the south.



View from the northern part of the central enclosure of the monument, showing intervisibility with the newly built houses to the north of the site and views to the site itself, through the trees; viewed from the south.



View from the southern bank of the moated site, looking south across the fields of the valley, showing the next phase of the development, which will wrap around the monument on its southern side and south-east corner; viewed from the north-west.



View south from the monument across the fields that still survive here, which contain earthworks and undulations suggestive of farming, fish ponds or activities associated with the Scheduled Monument; viewed from the north.



View across the valley to the large modern industrial estate that is being developed to the south and south-west of the site; viewed from the north.



View from the south-east corner of the site, showing how the adjacent development extends right up to the edge of the Scheduled Monument, with intervisibility, aural intrusion and physical effects on the monument; viewed from the west.





View from the north-east corner of the monument, showing intervisibility with the adjacent houses of the new development; viewed from the west.



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