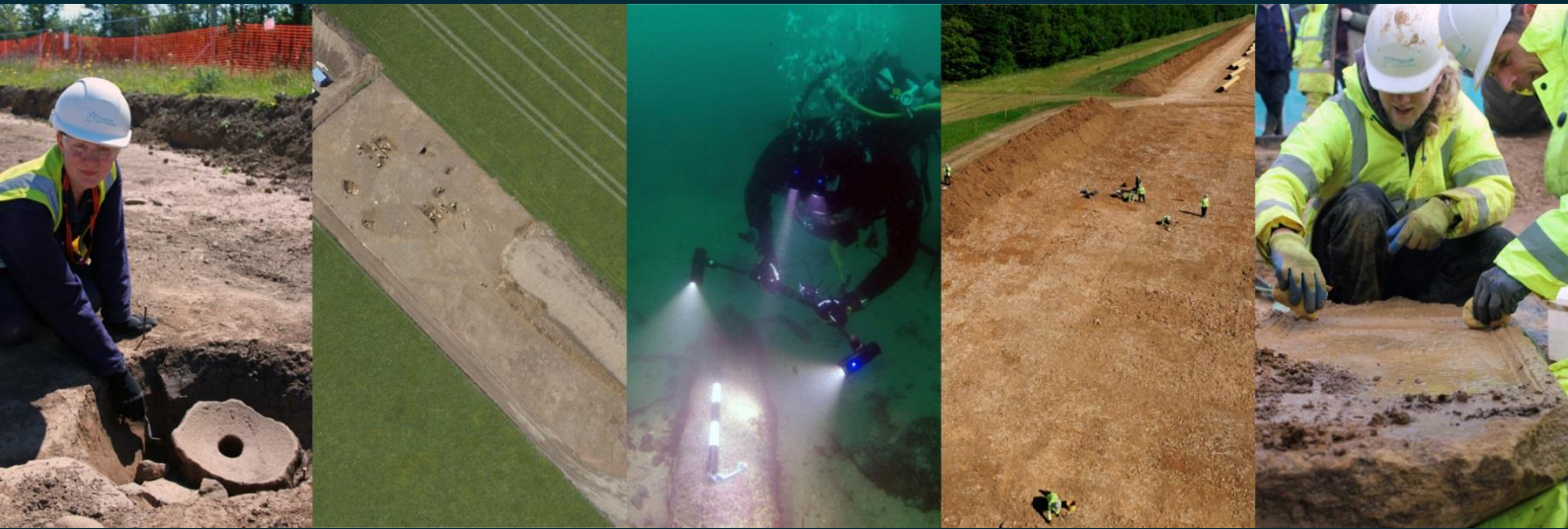


# 9-11 Coinagehall Street Helston Cornwall

## *Archaeological Watching Brief*



*for*

Absolute

CA Project: 880001

CA Report: 15780

October 2015



9-11 Coinagehall Street  
Helston  
Cornwall

## Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 880001  
CA Report: 15780



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Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	26 October 2015	George Gandham and Greg Crees	Laurent Coleman	Internal review		Laurent Coleman

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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** 9-11 Coinagehall Street  
**Location:** Helston, Cornwall  
**NGR:** SW 6587 2744  
**Type:** Watching Brief  
**Date:** 19 June to 10 July 2015  
**Planning Reference:** PA15/00843  
**Location of Archive:** Royal Cornwall Museum  
**Site Code:** JDW 15

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of 9-11 Coinagehall Street, Helston, Cornwall.

The watching brief recorded structural elements of post-medieval buildings comprising brick and stone walls, sealed by later made ground deposits. No structural remains or deposits of an earlier date were identified.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June and July 2015 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Absolute at 9-11 Coinagehall Street, Helston, Cornwall (centred on NGR: SW 6587 2744; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition (no 6) attached to a planning consent, Cornwall Council (CC) ref. PA15/00843), for the demolition, extension, refurbishment and change of use to ground and first floors of the existing building.

1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2015) and also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

### ***The site***

1.3 The development area is approximately 0.06ha and it is located in the centre of Helston. It comprises an existing building currently occupied by shop premises, bounded to the south by Coinagehall Street and to the east, west and north by shops and houses. The site lies at approximately 34-36m AOD, with the ground level dropping downward to the south-west.

1.5 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Upper Devonian Rocks, Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone, sedimentary rock formed in the Devonian Period (BGS 2015).

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Little archaeological work has been undertaken within the historic core of Helston and few chance finds have been reported (CAU 2002).

2.2 Coinagehall Street represents the major axis of the planned medieval town and there was the potential for medieval and/or post-medieval structural remains to survive. The rear portions of the plots of the properties along the street may retain



the remains of outhouses, workshops, rubbish pits, property divisions, and other archaeological remains (ibid).

2.3 The Bowling Green at the western end of the street is reputed to have been occupied by a castle or fortified house. Remains of a medieval chapel, part of which may have been re-used as a coinage hall, may survive below the metalled road surface in the vicinity of the junction between Coinagehall Street and Almshouse Hill (ibid).

2.4 A Heritage Impact Assessment has been compiled (Berry 2015). This identified that 9-11 Coinagehall Street is listed Grade II and dates to the early 19th century. Some original features survive but the building was substantially remodelled/rebuilt during the 20th century.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2015). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising 8 trenches excavated within the backyard area and within the existing building. Trenches 5 and 7 related to areas of ground reduction, Trench 6 comprised a lift shaft and the remainder comprised excavations for Geotechnical Investigations. Trench 1 occupied part of the same area as Trench 7 (Fig. 2)



- 4.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 The archive and artefacts from the watching brief are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the finds will be deposited with the Royal Cornwall Museum along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 5. RESULTS (FIG 2)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the watching brief results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B.
- 5.2 The natural geological substrate, consisting of mudstone, siltstone and sandstone, was revealed in all trenches, at depths ranging between 0.45m to 0.8m below present ground level (bpgl). The natural substrate and subsoil were cut into and overlain by structural elements and made ground deposits and structures which were in turn sealed by the modern surface deposits comprising tarmac and concrete hard standing.

### ***Trenches 1, 2, 5 & 7 (excavated in yard area)***

- 5.3 A similar sequence was observed in each trench. The natural substrate was cut into by remnants of former buildings comprising three east/west orientated walls 703 (brick) and 707 and 709 (stone and brick). Post-medieval pottery was recovered from the backfill, 711, within construction cut, 710, for wall 709. Wall 707 was overlain by rubble deposit 106, which probably represented the demolished remains of that wall. The walls and demolition material within Trenches 1 and 7 were overlain by a modern levelling or demolition event, discernible in places as irregular shaped truncation 104/710 containing garden soil and rubble fill 105/711. Finds dating to the modern period were recovered from this deposit which was covered by modern surfaces and structures 101, 107 and 701



- 5.4 In Trench 2, east/west orientated wall 200 cut the natural substrate is probably a continuation of wall 707. It contained pottery fragments dating to the late 18th to mid-19th centuries.
- 5.5 In Trench 5, no structural remains were exposed but the natural substrate was overlain by rubble soil deposit 501, very similar to and probably contemporary with 105/711, and may be part of the same levelling/demolition event. The archaeological deposits in Trenches 2 and 5 were sealed by modern made ground deposits and surfaces.

***Trenches 3, 4, 6 & 8 (excavated within existing building)***

- 5.6 A similar sequence was observed within these trenches. The natural substrate was generally overlain by modern deposits indicating that it had been previously disturbed during construction. The truncated remains of a stone-built north/south orientated wall, 803, were identified cutting the natural substrate in Trench 8. The wall, and the natural substrate in the other trenches, was in turn overlain by modern made ground deposits and modern floors and structures. No datable artefacts were retrieved from any deposits within these trenches.

**6. THE FINDS**

- 6.1 Artefactual material was hand-recovered from five deposits; the fill of a modern truncation, a make-up dump deposit, the fill of a construction cut and two walls. The recovered material dates to the post-medieval/modern period. Quantities of the artefact types recovered are given in Appendix B. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric.

*Pottery: post-medieval/modern*

- 6.2 Pottery from this period totals five sherds (383g), all of which are in very good condition. A large bodysherd of glazed earthenware (GLEW), which dates to the mid-16th to 18th centuries, was recorded from the fill, 105, of modern truncation 104,
- 6.3 Wall 200 produced a base sherd, probably from a bowl, in Pearlware (PEARL) (manufactured from the late 18th to mid-19th centuries). Rimsherd from porcelain (PORC) vessels of, mid 18th to 19th century date, were recovered from wall 200 and



fill 711 of construction cut 710. A sherd of refined whiteware with transfer-printed decoration in black, dateable to the late 18th to 19th centuries, was also recorded in fill 711.

#### *Ceramic building material*

- 6.4 A total of five brick fragments of post-medieval/modern date were recovered from the fill, 105, of modern truncation 104, wall 709 and construction cut 711. Cement mortar, which has been in use from c. 1830, adhered to fragments from all three deposits.

#### *Glass*

- 6.5 Fill 105 of modern truncation 104 produced a fragment from the base of a dark green coloured glass wine/spirits bottle, of post-medieval date. A complete, modern bottle was recorded in construction cut fill 711.

#### *Clay tobacco pipe*

- 6.6 Single fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem, dateable to the late 16th to late 19th centuries, were recorded in wall 200 and make-up deposit 705.

## **7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE**

#### *Animal Bone*

- 7.1 Three fragments (8g) of animal bone were recovered from deposit 105 (fill of modern truncation 104) in association with finds dating to the latter half of the 19th century. The bone was highly fragmented, but very well preserved making possible the identification of a femur and two mandibles. Each of these bones were identified as cat (*Felis silvestris*) and due to their similar size, they are likely to be from the same animal.
- 7.2 There is little useful interpretative data to be gained from such a small assemblage; while this species is a common domestic animal in this period, it is more than likely that the assemblage is residual in nature.



## 8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 The watching brief recorded structural elements of post-medieval and modern buildings comprising modern brick and stone walls, sealed by later made ground deposits within the existing building and the yard to the rear (although truncated in the former). The Heritage Impact Assessment (Berry 2015) identified a number of building alteration episodes within the property boundary and these are represented by the remains identified during the watching brief. No structural remains or deposits (or finds) of earlier date were identified. The absence of earlier archaeological deposits indicates that structural remains associated with the former medieval buildings that may have existed within the site either did not extend within the trench areas or have been removed during post-medieval and modern development.

## 9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by George Gandham. The report was written by George Gandham and Greg Crees. The finds and biological evidence reports were written by Jacky Somerville and Andy Clarke respectively. The illustrations were prepared by Lucy Martin and Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled by George Gandham, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Laurent Coleman.

## 10. REFERENCES

Berry, E. 2015 *9-11 Coinagehall Street, Helston: Heritage Impact Assessment*

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer*  
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## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No	Ctx	Type	Fill of	Ctx Interpretation	Ctx Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness (m)	Spot-Date
1	100	Layer		Concrete Floor	Concrete		>0.55	0.15	
1	101	Deposit		Made ground	Mixed rubble hardcore	1.1	0.65	0.2	
1	102	Natural		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				
1	103	Masonry		Wall	Sandstone and brick wall				
1	104	Cut		Part of linear feature (associated with possible levelling/ landscaping event). Same as 710	Irregular/linear in plan with moderate concave side	>1.1	0.27	0.4	
1	105	Fill/Deposit	104	Backfill within 104	Mixed mid grey brown to dark brown and black silt, sand and clay with stone and slate inclusion	>1.1	0.27	0.4	
1	106	Deposit		Made ground	Rubble hardcore and mudstone	>1	0.65	0.35	
1	107	Masonry/Deposit		Wall, partially demolished remains, possibly followed N-S orientation	Roughly hewn stone rubble/concrete		0.27	0.24	
2	200	Masonry		Wall, partially demolished remains, possibly followed N-S orientation	Squared and roughly squared stone set in random courses	>0.5	>0.5	0.5	
2	201	Deposit		Tarmac floor	Tarmac	0.42	0.55	0.11	
2	202	Cut		Construction cut for east facing concrete wall footing	Vertical sided cut exposed in NE corner of trench	>0.55	0.48	0.65	
2	203	Fill	202	Wall footing	Concrete	0.21	0.35	>0.2	
2	204	Fill	202	Backfill associated with construction cut	Mid yellow brown gravel stone	>0.55	0.48	0.65	
2	205	Layer		Floor surface, same as 100	Concrete			0.15	
2	206	Layer		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				
3	300	Layer		Floor surface, same as 100	Concrete and modern concrete breeze block			0.2	
3	301	Masonry		Part of modern floor beam	Modern concrete breeze blocks	>1.1	>0.1	0.26	
3	302	Deposit		Construction base layer (blinding for floor beam?)	Concrete			0.05	
3	303	Deposit		Bedding for 301	Concrete			0.04 - 0.2	
3	304	Natural		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				
4	400	Layer		Floor surface, same as 100	Concrete and modern concrete breeze block			0.2	
4	401	Masonry		Part of modern floor beam	Modern concrete breeze blocks	1.1	0.1	0.26	
4	402	Deposit		Construction base layer (blinding for floor beam?)	Concrete			0.05	
4	403	Deposit		Bedding for 401	Concrete			0.05	
4	404	Natural		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				
5	500	Masonry		Foundation of EW oriented wall of current showroom		1.2	0.35		
5	501	Deposit		Made ground	Mixed rubble hardcore and garden soil			0.8	
5	502	Natural		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				
6	600	Layer		Floor surface, same as 100	Concrete and modern concrete breeze block			0.2	
6	601	Masonry		Part of modern floor beam	Modern concrete breeze blocks			0.2	
6	602	Deposit		Construction base layer (blinding for floor beam?)	Concrete	1	0.3	0.1	
6	603	Masonry		Demolished wall/ make up deposit	Stone and brick capped with concrete				

6	604	Natural		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				
7	700	Layer		Floor surface, same as 100	Concrete and modern concrete breeze block			0.1	
7	701	Deposit		Tarmac floor	Tarmac			0.05	
7	702	Deposit		Made ground/ demolition deposit	Mixed rubble hardcore			0.2	
7	703	Masonry		Wall	Brick	2	2.5		
7	704	Deposit		Concrete surface				0.1	
7	705	Deposit		Dump deposit/ make up	Ashey/mortar deposit			0.6	
7	706	Fill	708	Backfill of construction cut	Mid brown grey gravel sand clay		0.3	0.4	
7	707	Masonry/ Deposit	708	Partially demolished/possible wall remains	Roughly hewn stone rubble/concrete			>0.38	
7	708	Cut		Construction cut for wall	Vertical/steep sided, tapers to base		0.32	>0.4	
7	709	Masonry		Possible wall/ structural feature	Granite/sandstone and brick		0.78	0.5	
7	710	Cut		Part of linear feature (associated with possible levelling/ landscaping event).	Irregular/linear in plan with moderate concave side			0.4	
7	711	Fill/Deposit	710	Backfill within 710	Mixed dark brown to black silt, sand and clay with stone and slate inclusion			0.8	
7	712	Deposit		Possible subsoil (or made ground?)	Mid brown silt sand	1.2		0.2	
7	713	Deposit		Demolition/ made ground deposit	Rubble			0.35	
7	714	Natural		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				
8	800	Layer		Floor surface, same as 100	Concrete and modern concrete breeze block			0.2	
8	801	Deposit		Demolition/ made ground deposit	Mid brown silt sand and rubble	1.2		0.2	
8	802	Deposit		Made ground deposit	Dark brown to black silt sand with ashy inclusions	1.2		0.2	
8	803	Masonry		Possible wall, NS orientation	Granite/sandstone	1.1		0.15	
8	804	Fill	805	Backfill of construction cut	Light brown silty gravel clay	1.1		0.15	
8	805	Cut		Construction cut for wall	Vertical/steep sided	1.1		0.15	
8	806	Natural		Natural geological substrate	Clay mudstone				

## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

**Table 1:** Finds concordance

Context	Category	Description	Fabric code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
105	Post-medieval pottery	Glazed earthenware	GLEW	1	330	MC19+
	Modern ceramic building material	Brick		1	55	
	Post-medieval glass	Bottle		1	97	
200	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Pearlware	PEARL	1	29	LC18-C19
	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Porcelain	PORC	1	6	
	Post-medieval/modern ceramic building material	Brick		2	3117	
	Clay tobacco pipe	Stem		1	3	
705	Clay tobacco pipe	Stem		1	5	LC16-LC19
709	Post-medieval/modern ceramic building material	Brick	2	1487		MC19+
711	Post-medieval pottery	Porcelain	PORC	1	14	C20
	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Transfer-printed refined whiteware	TRP	1	4	
	Modern glass	Bottle		1	198	

**Table 2:** Identified animal species by fragment count (NISP) and weight and context.

Context	Felis	Total	Weight (g)
105	3	3	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Weight</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	

Felis = cat

**APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	9-11 Coinage Hall Street, Helston, Cornwall	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of 9-11 Coinagehall Street, Helston, Cornwall.</p> <p>The watching brief recorded structural elements of post-medieval buildings comprising brick and stone walls, sealed by later made ground deposits. No structural remains or deposits of an earlier date were identified.</p>	
Project dates	19 June to 10 July 2015	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	Heritage Impact Assessment	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location		
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)		
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SW 6587 2744	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator		
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Laurent Coleman	
Project Supervisor	George Gandham	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	If none, say none, otherwise use NMR Thesaurus at <a href="http://thesaurus.english-heritage.org.uk/frequentuser.htm">http://thesaurus.english-heritage.org.uk/frequentuser.htm</a>	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	If none, say none, otherwise use MDA Archaeological Objects Thesaurus at <a href="http://thesaurus.english-heritage.org.uk/frequentuser.htm">http://thesaurus.english-heritage.org.uk/frequentuser.htm</a>	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Royal Cornwall Museum	For example ceramics, animal bone etc
Paper	Royal Cornwall Museum	Context sheets, matrices etc
Digital	Royal Cornwall Museum	Database, digital photos etc
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 9-11 Coinagehall Street, Helston Cornwall: Archaeological Watching Brief. CA typescript report **15780**



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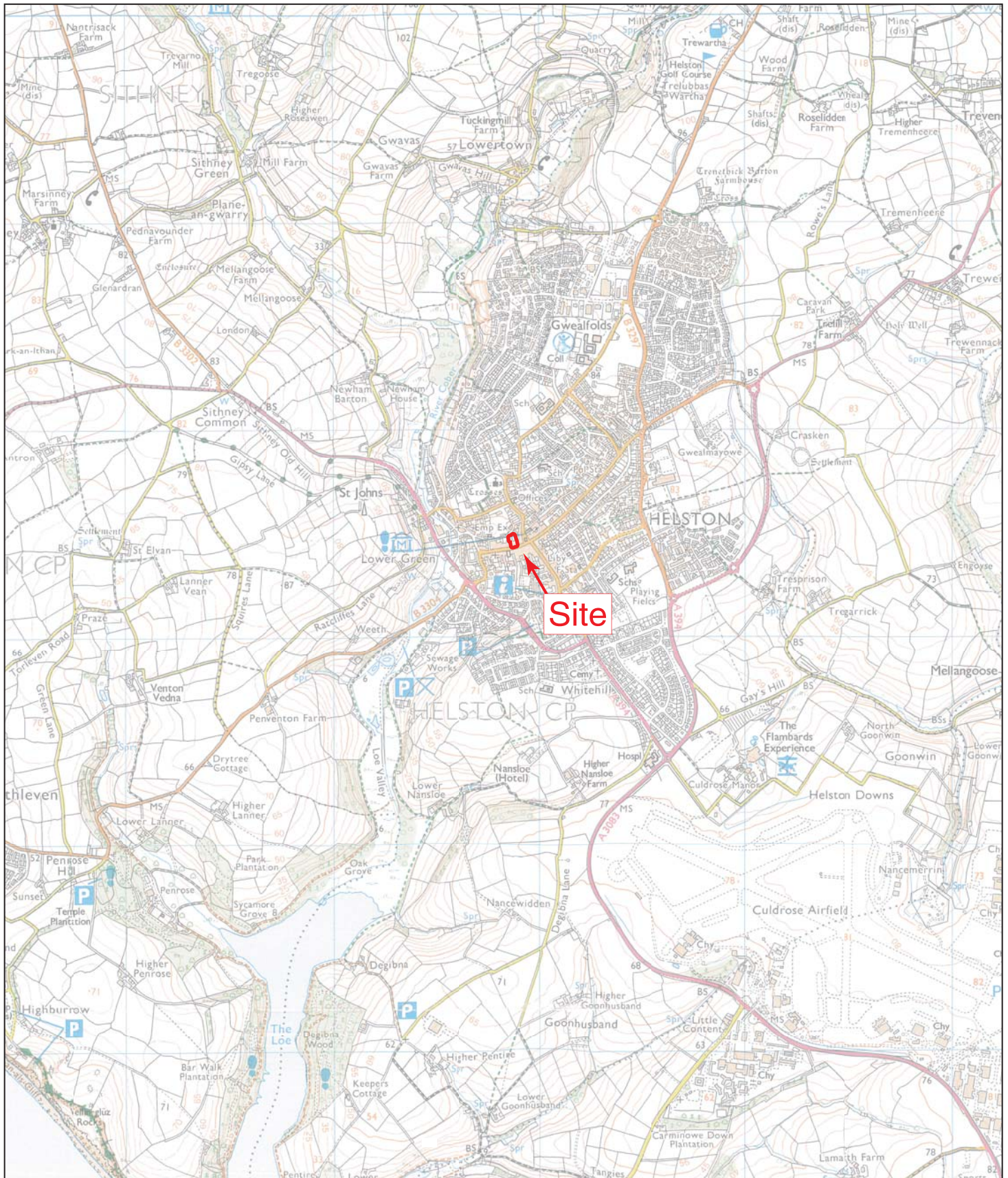
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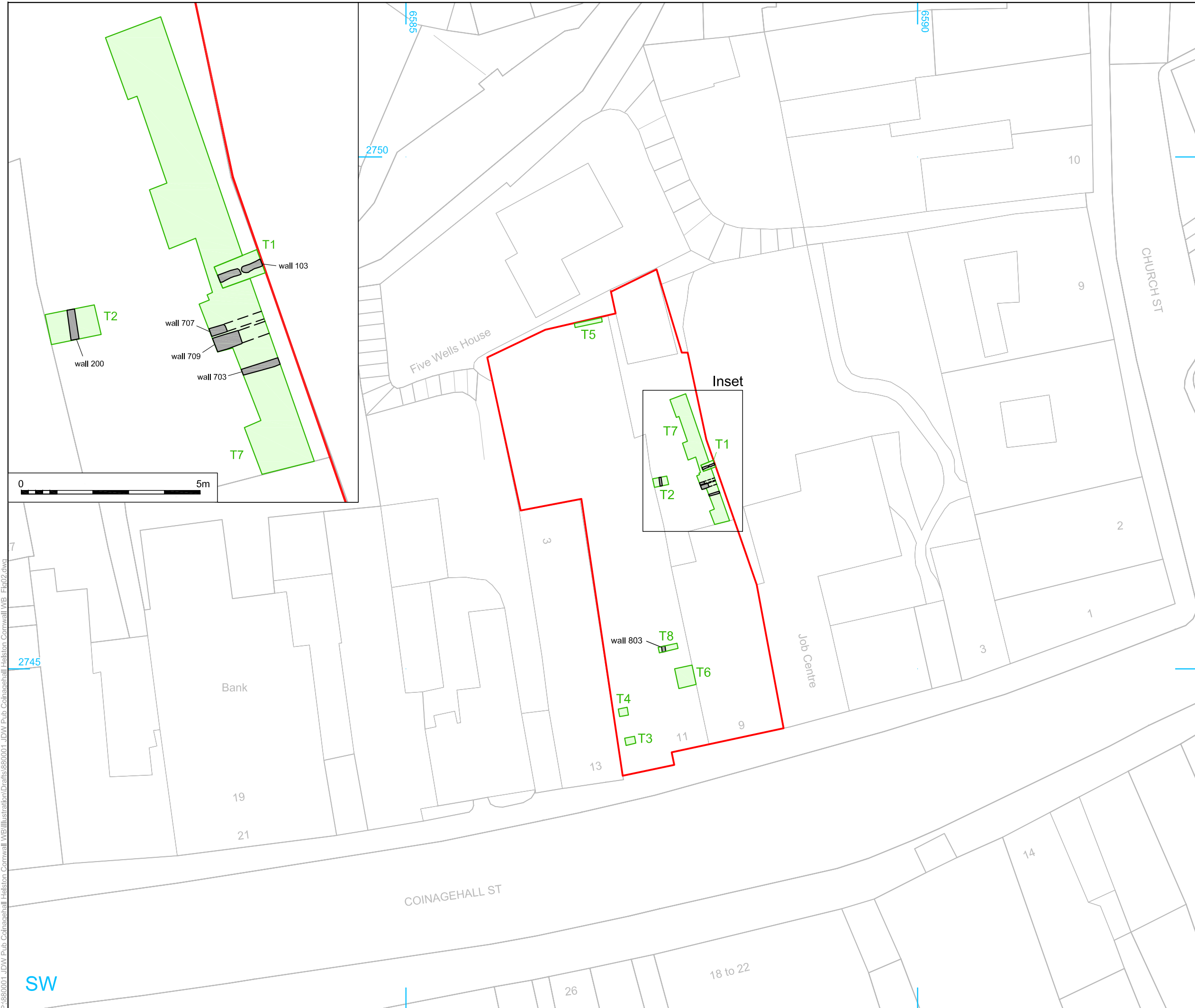
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 Cornwall

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

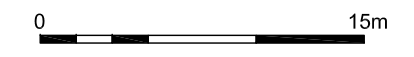


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<b>APPROVED BY</b>	<b>LECC</b>	<b>SCALE@A4</b>	<b>1:25,000</b>	<b>1</b>



- site boundary
- area of observed groundworks
- archaeological feature



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 9-11 Coinagehall Street, Helston Cornwall

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site plan, showing areas of observed groundworks and archaeological features

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<b>CHECKED BY</b>	LM/DJB	<b>DATE</b>	26/08/2015		
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