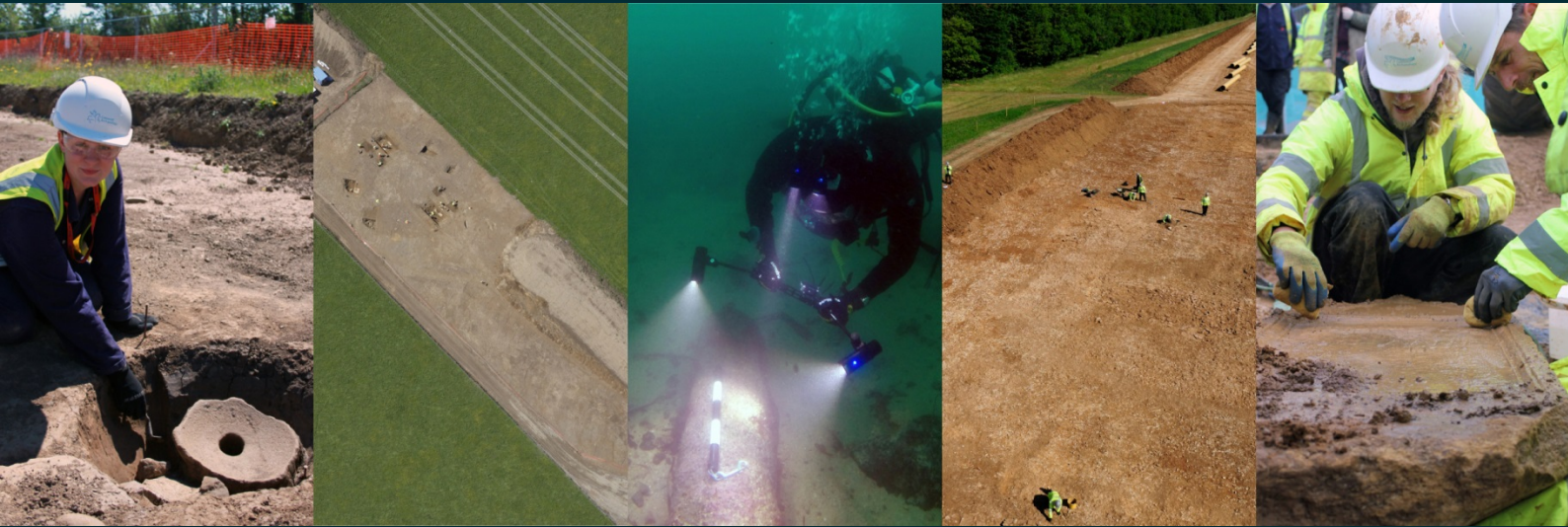


Middle Point Falmouth Cornwall

Archaeological Evaluation



for
CgMs

CA Project: 880077
CA Report: 16037

January 2016



Middle Point Falmouth Cornwall

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 880077
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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Middle Point
Location:	Falmouth, Cornwall
NGR:	SW 8245 3216
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	16–17 December 2015
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with the Royal Cornwall Museum
Site Code:	FAL 15

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in December 2015 at Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall. Two trenches were excavated.

Pendennis Castle (constructed 1540–1545) is located c. 300m south-west of the site. Historic cartographic sources suggest that additional fortifications (including a possible tower) were located in the south-eastern part of the site. The evaluation trenches were positioned to test the potential former location of the possible tower.

The evaluation recorded evidence that the ground level in the area of the evaluation trenches has been substantially built up, without significant truncation to the underlying deposits. This process presumably occurred during the installation of underground oil fuel storage tanks at the site during the Second World War.

The evaluation recorded no archaeological features at the site and there were no indications of any former structures. This suggests either that the possible fortification associated with Pendennis Castle has been completely removed, or that the fortification lay outside of the site boundary.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2015, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for CgMs at Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall (centred on NGR: SW 8245 3216; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The evaluation was undertaken to inform a planning application for residential development of the site. The scope of this evaluation was defined in discussions with Charles Johns, Senior Development Officer (Historic Environment) – Archaeologist, Cornwall Council.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2015) and approved by Charles Johns. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). It was monitored by Charles Johns, including a site visit on 16 December 2015.

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development area encloses c. 1.8ha and comprises the former site of an oil storage depot on the western shoreline of Carrick Roads. The site is bounded by the shoreline to the north and east, a cottage and existing oil depot to the west and the South West Coast Path and woodland to the south-west. The site has been artificially levelled and landscaped, with the trenches of the trenches laying on an area of high ground at the south-eastern site boundary.
- 1.5 The underlying geology of the site is mapped as Sandstone and Argillaceous Rocks of the Portscatho Formation, overlain in places by superficial head deposits (BGS 2015).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The following text is summarised from a previous cultural heritage desk-based assessment of the site (CgMs 2015).



Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval (pre-1539)

- 2.2 There is no known evidence for activity at the site pre-dating the early post-medieval period, although the nearby harbour is thought to have been active during the Roman period (AD 43–AD 410) and it has been suggested that the future site of Pendennis Castle would have provided a favourable location from which to monitor the harbour.

Post-medieval (1540–1800) and modern (1800–present)

- 2.3 Pendennis Castle (Scheduled Monument NHL 1012134) was constructed between 1540 and 1545 under Henry VIII's maritime defence programme. Development of the fortifications continued over the subsequent four centuries, including use during the Second World War.
- 2.4 The castle is located c. 314m south-west of the site; however, historic cartographic sources suggest that additional fortifications (including a possible tower) were located in the south-eastern part of the site (Fig. 4).
- 2.5 Underground oil fuel storage tanks were built at the site during the Second World War to refuel Royal Navy vessels (Cornwall HER Ref. 166127).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. The information gathered will enable Cornwall Council to identify and assess the particular heritage significance of the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance, and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches (Fig. 2). Trench 1 was 2m long and 1.2m wide; Trench 2 was 16m long and 1.8m wide. The positions and dimensions of both trenches varied from those specified in the WSI (CA 2015), due to the presence of an access track and potential live services in the original trench locations. Variations to the trench plan were made with the approval of Charles Johns.
- 4.2 Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual*. All trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate. Trenches were investigated and recorded in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.4 The project archive is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. CA will make arrangements with the Royal Cornwall Museum for the deposition of the archive. A summary of information from this project, as set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are presented in Appendix A.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3, Section AA)

- 5.2 Natural substrate 104 comprised orange-brown clay with slate inclusions. It was exposed at a depth of 1.25m below the present ground level (bgl) and was sealed by 0.4m of silty sand 103, which possibly represents a buried soil horizon.

- 5.3 Layer 103 was overlain by made ground deposits 102 and 101, which had a combined thickness of 0.7m. The sequence in Trench 1 was sealed by 0.15m of topsoil 100.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3, Section BB)

- 5.4 Two natural substrate layers were exposed in T2: layer 205 (yellow-brown clay with slate inclusions) was overlain by layer 204 (brown-orange clay with slate inclusions). Layer 204 was exposed in the south-eastern end of the trench at a minimum depth of 0.46m bgl, but this dropped away sharply to the north-west; the north-western end of the trench was excavated to a depth of 1.4m bgl without the natural being reached.
- 5.5 The natural substrate was sealed by possible buried soil layers 203 (0.28m thick; in the south-eastern end of the trench only) and 202 (0.24m thick). The buried soils were covered by made ground deposit 201, which was a maximum of 0.9m thick in the north-western end of the trench. The sequence was sealed by 0.1m of topsoil 200.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The presence of possible buried soil horizons below deep made ground layers suggests that the ground level in the area of the evaluation trenches has been substantially built up, without significant truncation to the underlying deposits. This process presumably occurred during the installation of underground oil fuel storage tanks at the site during the Second World War.
- 6.2 Despite the apparent lack of truncation, the evaluation recorded no archaeological features at the site and there were no indications of any former structures (such as stone/brickwork or robber trenches). This suggests either that the possible fortification associated with Pendennis Castle shown on historic mapping (see *Archaeological background*, above) has been completely removed, or that the fortification lay outside of the site boundary.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by George Gandham, assisted by Victoria Parsons. This report was written by George Gandham. The illustrations were prepared by Leo Heatley. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

8. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer* Online resource at http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html (accessed 10 September 2015)

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall, Cornwall: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

CgMs 2015 *Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall: Cultural Heritage Desk Based Assessment*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1	100	Layer	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.15
1	101	Layer	Made ground	Light blue-grey clay	0.2
1	102	Layer	Made ground	Light brown-orange silty clay	0.5
1	103	Layer	Buried soil?	Mid orange-brown silty sand	0.4
1	104	Layer	Natural substrate	Light orange-brown clay with slate inclusions	
2	200	Layer	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.1
2	201	Layer	Made ground	Light blue-grey clay	0.9 max
2	202	Layer	Buried soil	Mid grey-brown silty sand	0.24
2	203	Layer	Buried soil	Light grey-brown silty clay	0.28
2	204	Layer	Natural substrate	Brown-orange clay with slate inclusions	0.28
2	205	Layer	Natural substrate	Light yellow-brown clay with slate inclusions	

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall: archaeological evaluation	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in December 2015 at Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall. Two trenches were excavated.</p> <p>Pendennis Castle (constructed 1540–1545) is located c. 300m south-west of the site. Historic cartographic sources suggest that additional fortifications (including a possible tower) were located in the south-eastern part of the site. The evaluation trenches were positioned to test the potential former location of the possible tower.</p> <p>The evaluation recorded evidence that the ground level in the area of the evaluation trenches has been substantially built up, without significant truncation to the underlying deposits. This process presumably occurred during the installation of underground oil fuel storage tanks at the site during the Second World War.</p> <p>The evaluation recorded no archaeological features at the site and there were no indications of any former structures. This suggests either that the possible fortification associated with Pendennis Castle has been completely removed, or that the fortification lay outside of the site boundary.</p>	
Project dates	16–17 December 2015	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Field evaluation	
Previous work	Cultural Heritage Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2015)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall	
Study area (M ² /ha)	c. 1.8ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SW 8245 3216	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Cornwall Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	George Gandham	
MONUMENT TYPE		
None		
SIGNIFICANT FINDS		
None		
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	The Royal Cornwall Museum	Ceramics
Paper		Trench sheets, registers, drawings
Digital		Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2016 <i>Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall: archaeological evaluation</i> CA typescript report 16037		



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PROJECT TITLE
Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall

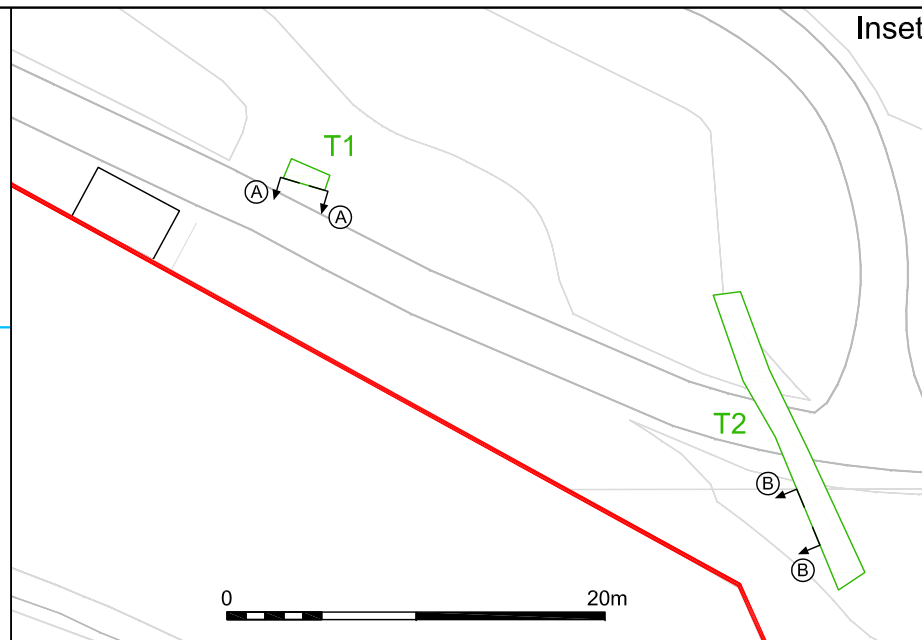
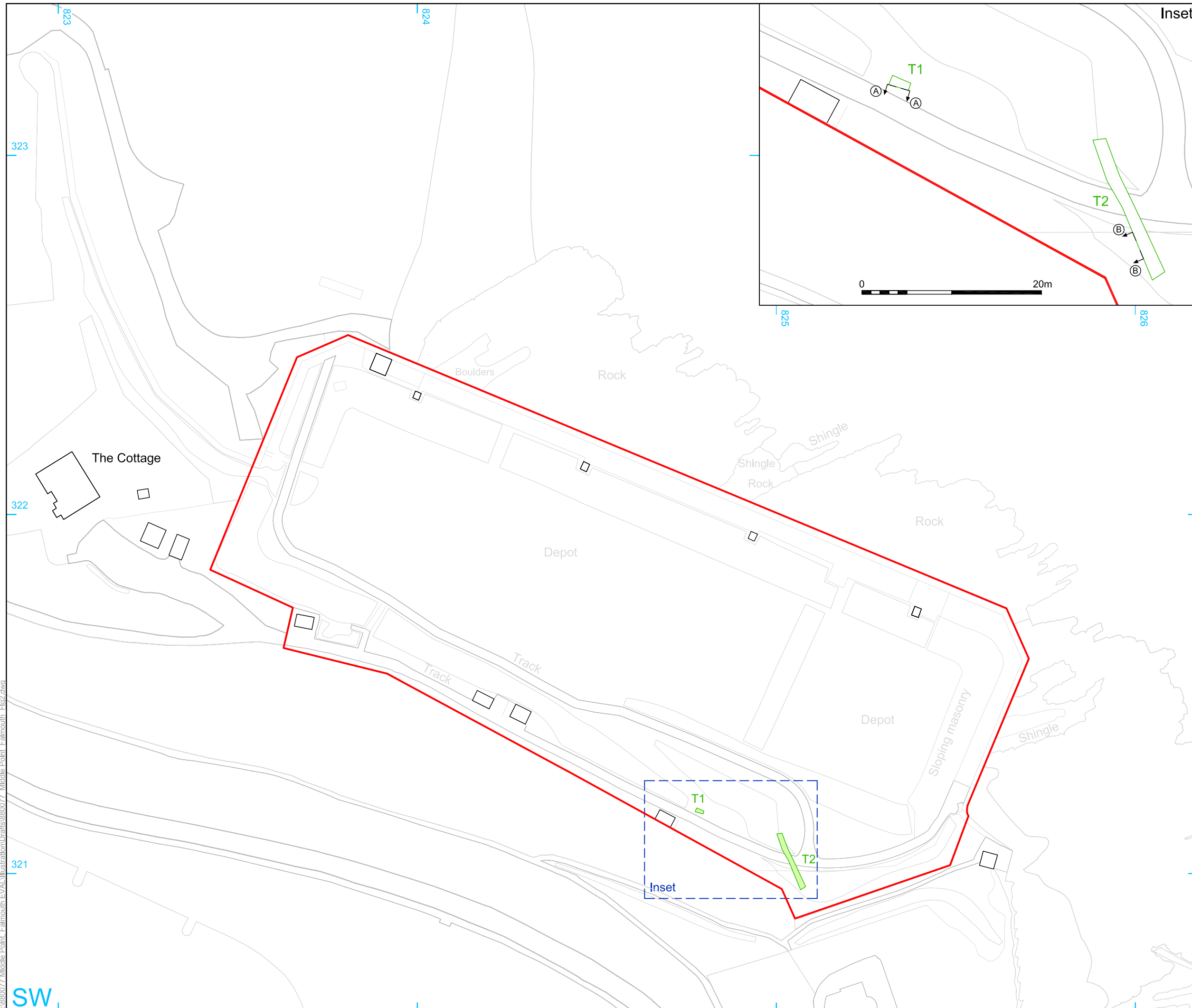
FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan



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 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 15/01/16
 APPROVED BY DE SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.
1



- ▭ site boundary
- ▭ evaluation trench
- ⓐ section location



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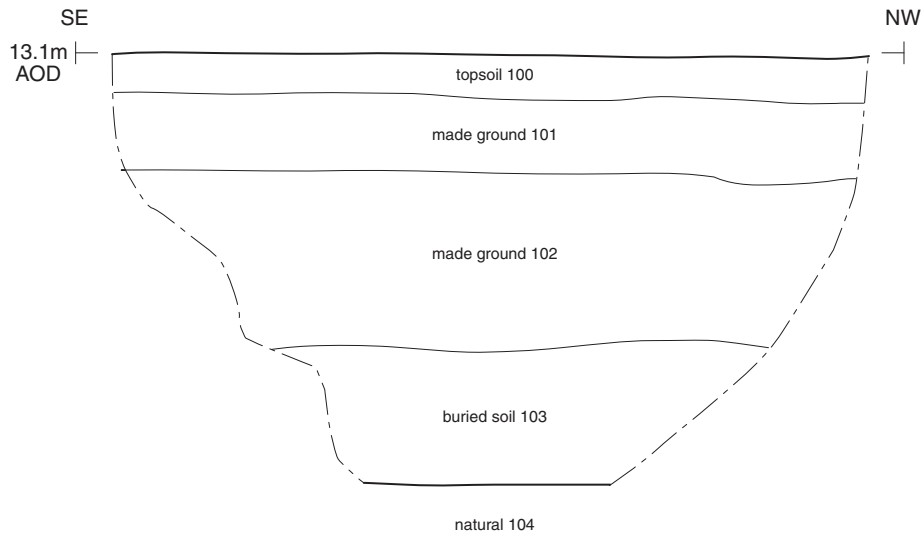
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Trench location plan

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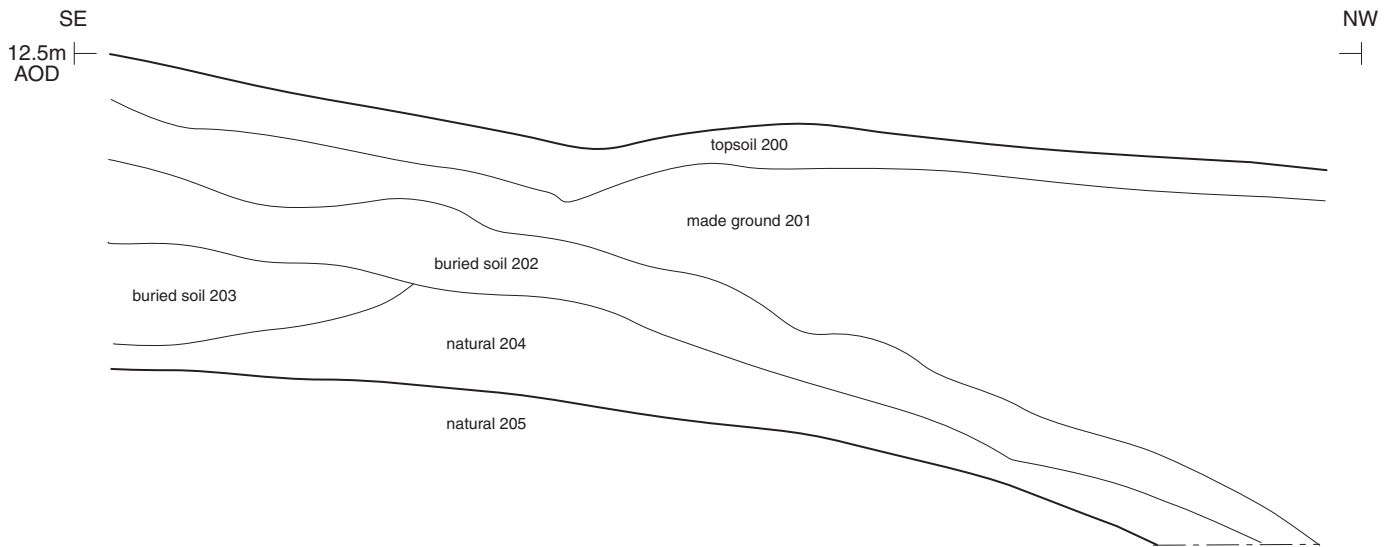
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SW

Section AA



Section BB



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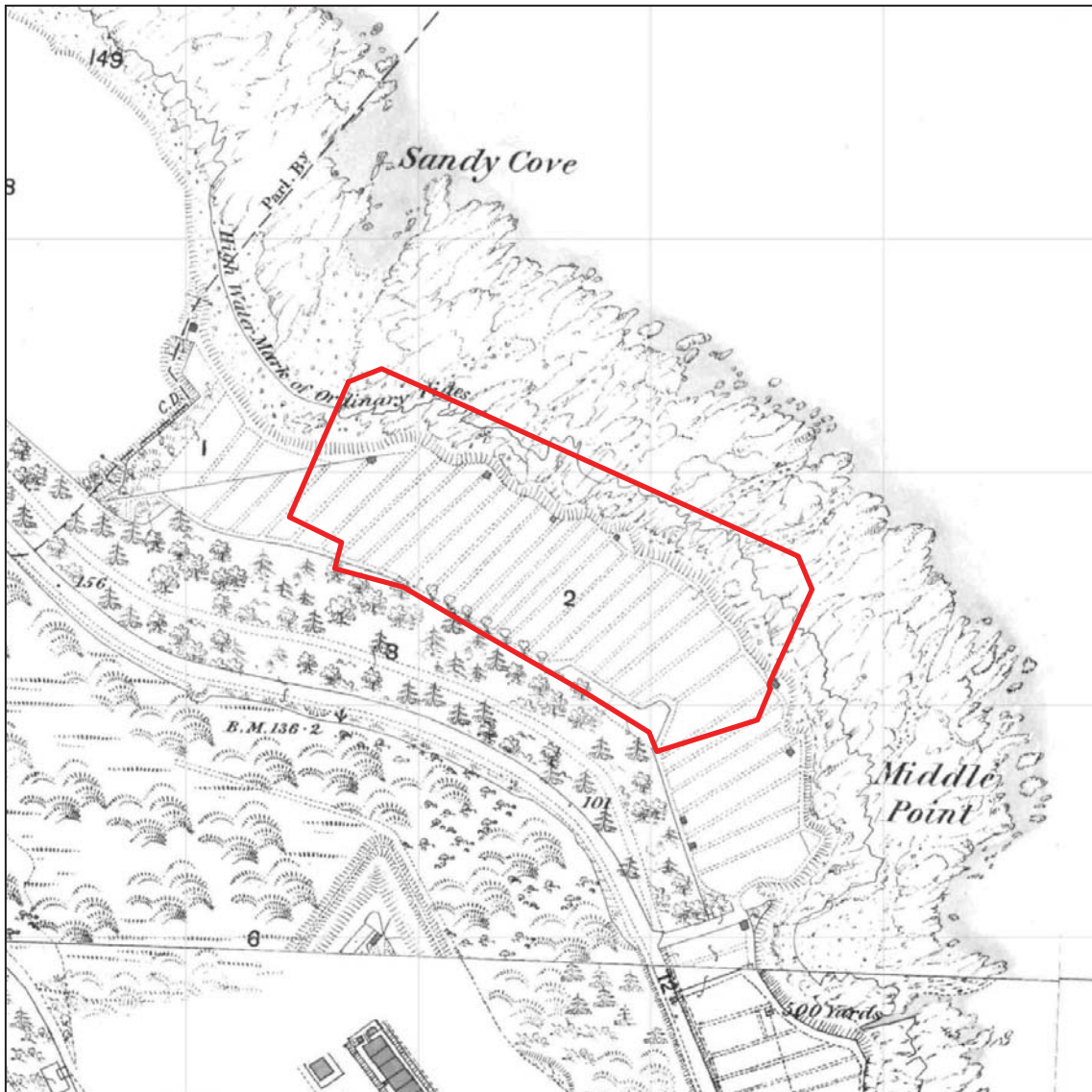
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Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall

FIGURE TITLE

Trenches 1 & 2: sections

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APPROVED BY	DE	SCALE@A4	1:20	



4

4 Site location shown on 1880 Ordnance Survey map



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PROJECT TITLE

Middle Point, Falmouth, Cornwall

FIGURE TITLE

Historic map

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