

Madeira Hotel Cliff Road, Falmouth Cornwall

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
AECOM

on behalf of
PegasusLife Ltd

CA Project: 880122
CA Report: 17545

September 2017



Madeira Hotel
Cliff Road
Falmouth
Cornwall

Archaeological Watching Brief

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A	19 September 2017	George Gandham	Derek Evans	Internal review	–	Derek Evans

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Madeira Hotel
Location: Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall
NGR: 181582 032034
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 18–25 October 2016, 21 February 2017 and 6–8 March 2017
Planning Reference: PA15/10456
Location of Archive: To be deposited with the Royal Cornwall Museum and the Archaeological Data Service (ADS)
Site Code: MHCR16

Between October 2016 and March 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief at the site of the Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the watching brief, supporting the conclusion of a previous desk-based assessment that the development site remained in agricultural use until the construction of the Madeira Hotel in the 1890s/early 20th century.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between October 2016 and March 2017, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for AECOM, on behalf of PegasusLife Ltd, at the site of the Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall (centred at NGR: 181582 032034; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 Planning permission for the demolition of the existing hotel building and the erection of residential apartments was granted by Cornwall Council, conditional on a programme of archaeological work (planning ref: PA15/10456, condition 6). The scope of this watching brief was defined in subsequent discussions with the Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service (CCHES).
- 1.3 This watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2016). It was also in line with *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development site is c. 0.6ha in extent and lies on the northern side of Cliff Road, which runs along the Falmouth Bay seafront. The Pendennis Peninsula lies to the east. The site was occupied by the Madeira Hotel, which was demolished as part of the present development. An area of car parking and a garden lay to the front (south) of the building and further areas of hardstanding lay to the rear (north).
- 1.5 The underlying geology of the site is mapped as Portscatho Formation sandstone and argillaceous rocks, which formed in the Devonian Period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2016).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site has been the previous subject of a desk-based heritage assessment (CA 2015), from which the following section is summarised.

Prehistoric (pre-AD 43) and Roman (AD 43–AD 410)

- 2.2 No evidence of prehistoric activity has been identified within the site or its immediate environs, although the Fal estuary and the associated network of rivers provided a means of communication and trade, as well as a source of food and other resources, from the Mesolithic period (10,000 BC–4,000 BC) onwards.
- 2.3 The Cornish element *dinas* (fort) in the place name Pendennis suggests that the headland may have been an Iron Age ‘cliff castle.’ While no standing or buried remains associated with such a feature have been identified to date, they may have been incorporated into the post-medieval fortifications (see below).
- 2.4 Numerous examples of later Iron Age and Roman defended farmsteads or small estate centres are known from around the Fal estuary, indicating that the landscape was well settled and extensively exploited during these periods. There are, however, no known archaeological remains associated with these periods at the proposed development site or in its immediate vicinity.

Early medieval (AD 410–AD 1066) and medieval (AD 1066– 1539)

- 2.5 No early medieval activity is recorded within the site or its immediate environs.
- 2.6 The settlement of Falmouth originated from the medieval manorial estate of Arwenack, first recorded in 1206. Early post-medieval cartographic sources indicate that during the medieval period the site formed part of the wider agricultural hinterland associated with the Arwenack Estate.

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

- 2.7 Pendennis Castle and its associated fortifications were established on Pendennis Peninsula in the 1540s. The castle remained in active military use until the 1950s and the extent of the fortifications varied across the centuries. Although the main fortifications lie some 500m east of the proposed development site, English Heritage/Historic England’s Fortress Falmouth conservation plan (Linzey 2000) records that Pendennis Road (which lies immediately east of the proposed development site) follows the line of Civil War Parliamentary siegeworks associated with the siege of Pendennis Castle in 1647. There are also unconfirmed reports of sections of the Civil War rampart surviving in gardens along Pendennis Road.

- 2.8 The proposed development site itself appears to have remained in agricultural use until the 1860s. Pendennis Road was created to the immediate east of the site in 1868 and Cliff Road was established in the 1890s/early 20th century. The Madeira Hotel appears to have been constructed soon after Cliff Road and initially comprised five individual dwellings built as a single villa. These dwellings were converted into a single property in the late 1910s/1920s and the Madeira Hotel was operating by 1929. The hotel building was expanded and altered throughout 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 any significant buried archaeological deposits thus revealed; and
- to produce an integrated project archive and a report setting out the project results and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out in the WSI (CA 2016). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks (Fig. 2), which comprised:

- geotechnical investigation works: 18 test pits (TP1–TP14 and TP21–TP24) and five boreholes (TP25–T29). The test pits were generally from 0.3m to 0.6m in width and length, and were excavated to a max depth of 0.3m–1.2m below present ground level.
- ground reduction works in five larger areas (T1–T5).

- 4.2 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

- 4.3 A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix A, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

- 4.4 CA will make arrangements with the Royal Cornwall Museum for the deposition of the site archive. The digital archive will be submitted to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 The natural substrate comprised yellow-brown clayey silt with inclusions of shillet and stone. It was revealed in all areas at a depth of 0.8m–1m below the present ground level (bpgl) and was sealed by 0.2m–0.5m of orange-brown silty clay subsoil. T1–T4 contained modern wall footings, a track and services, all of which were cut into the subsoil. The sequence was sealed by topsoil/garden soil. T5 was stripped to 0.17m bpgl only and did not penetrate beyond the bedding layer for the tarmac surface present in this area.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the watching brief.
- 6.2 The watching brief recorded no evidence that Civil War Parliamentary siegeworks associated with the siege of Pendennis Castle in 1647 extended into the development site (see Section 2, above). The watching brief results support the conclusion that the development site remained in agricultural use until the construction of the Madeira Hotel in the 1890s/early 20th century.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The watching brief fieldwork was undertaken by Martin Gillard. This report was written by George Gandham. The report illustrations were prepared by Charlotte Patman. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer*

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Accessed 23 May 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth Cornwall:*
Heritage Desk-Based Assessment CA Report No. **15779**

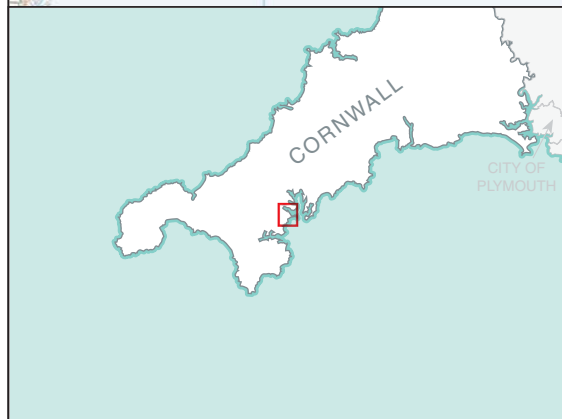
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall:*
Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological watching brief

Linzey, R, 2000 *Fortress Falmouth: a conservation plan for the historic defences of Falmouth Haven* (2 vols), English Heritage



APPENDIX A: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall	
Short description	<p>Between October 2016 and March 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief at the site of the Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the watching brief, supporting the conclusion of a previous desk-based assessment that the development site remained in agricultural use until the construction of the Madeira Hotel in the 1890s/early 20th century.</p>	
Project dates	18–25 October 2016, 21 February 2017 and 6–8 March 2017	
Project type	Watching brief	
Previous work	Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (Cotswold Archaeology 2015)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall	
Study area (m ² /ha)		
Site co-ordinates	181582 032034	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Martin Gillard	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	Royal Cornwall Museum	Pro-forma site sheets
Digital	N/A Archaeology Data Service (ADS).	Born-digital data
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2017 <i>Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth Cornwall: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA Report No. 17545		



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PROJECT TITLE

Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

0 1km

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DRAWN BY CP
 CHECKED BY DJB
 APPROVED BY DE

PROJECT NO. 880122
 DATE 07/07/2017
 SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1



-  site boundary
-  ground reduction area (trench)
-  test pit



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PROJECT TITLE
Madeira Hotel, Cliff Road, Falmouth, Cornwall

FIGURE TITLE
The site, showing monitored groundworks

DRAWN BY	CP	PROJECT NO.	880122	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	07/07/2017	2
APPROVED BY	DE	SCALE@A3	1:250	



Working shot, trench 1



Working shot, trench 2



Test pit 4, looking south-west (scale 0.5m)



Test pit 22, looking west (scale 0.5m)

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