

# Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries Ponsharden Falmouth Cornwall

*Archaeological Evaluation*



*for:*  
Tim Kellet Urban Design

*on behalf of:*  
Falmouth Art Gallery and Library

CA Project: EX0090  
CA Report: EX0090\_1

March 2020



# Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries Ponsharden Falmouth Cornwall

## *Archaeological Evaluation*

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Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 Trench location plan (1:250)

Fig. 3 Photographs



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## SUMMARY

<b>Project name:</b>	Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries
<b>Location:</b>	Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall
<b>NGR:</b>	179458 033841
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	3–4 February 2020
<b>SMC:</b>	S00231904
<b>Location of archive:</b>	Digital archive to be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS); paper archive TBC
<b>Site code:</b>	JCCM 19

In February 2020, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation within the Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries, Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall.

It is proposed to create a new footpath at the site, the proposed route of which will cross a low earthen mound. The evaluation was undertaken in order to provide more data on this mound.

A total of three trenches/test pits were excavated within the earthen mound. These established that the mound consists of a single dump of earth. This material contains modern artefacts and sits on top of a buried topsoil layer corresponding to the existing cemetery topsoil. It is highly probable that the mound represents upcast from works to the adjacent roadside cutting/hedgebank.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In February 2020, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation within the Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries, Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall (centred at NGR: 179458 033841; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for Tim Kellet Urban Design, who were acting on behalf of Falmouth Art Gallery and Library.
- 1.2. The cemetery site is a Scheduled Monument (National Heritage List for England No. 1020815). It is proposed to create a new footpath at the site, the proposed route of which will cross a low earthen mound. The evaluation was undertaken in order to provide more data on this mound, in order to inform the footpath proposals and the accompanying application for Scheduled Monument Consent.
- 1.3. The evaluation itself also required Scheduled Monument Consent. This was obtained from Historic England (ref: S00231904).
- 1.4. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2019) and approved by Historic England and the Cornwall Council Strategic Historic Environment Service.
- 1.5. The evaluation was also in line with *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (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: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).

### The site

- 1.6. The cemetery site occupies approximately 0.19ha. It is located on the southern side of the A39 (Falmouth Road) in Ponsharden, on the northern fringes of Falmouth. It is divided into the Jewish Cemetery (to the north-west) and the Congregationalist Cemetery (to the east and south; Fig. 2). The mound which was the subject of this evaluation lies in the northern part of the site, adjacent to the boundary between the two cemeteries (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3, Photo A). The ground level slopes away sharply to the north of the mound, down towards the A39.
- 1.7. The cemetery is located on the steeply graded north and north-west facing valley slope of the Penryn River. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as

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Mylor Slate Formation hornfelsed slate and siltstone, which formed in the Devonian Period. No superficial deposits are recorded at the site (BGS 2019).

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The cemetery site has been the subject of an archaeological assessment (Parkes 2010) and a conservation management plan (CA 2018). The following text is summarised briefly from these sources, which should be referred to for a full archaeological/historic background to the site.
- 2.2. There are no recorded prehistoric, Roman or early medieval sites within a 500m radius of the cemetery site. Possible medieval field boundaries have been identified c. 120m north-east of the cemetery site and the site itself is likely to have been in agricultural use at this time. The site appears to have remained under arable cultivation until the cemeteries were established in the late 18th/early 19th century.
- 2.3. The earthen mound which was the subject of this evaluation is sub-rectangular in plan. It measures c. 4m–5m across and c. 1m in height (Fig. 3, Photo A). The mound has been interpreted as a possible Bronze Age barrow (Parkes 2010), although this interpretation was considered unlikely; the mound's location does not fit the normal criteria for Bronze Age barrows and it is improbable that a prehistoric monument would have survived the density of grave digging at the cemetery. A more likely postulated origin for the mound was that it represents upcast from grave digging, or from works to the adjacent roadside cutting and hedgebank.

## 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation was to investigate and characterise the earthen mound which is to be impacted by the proposed development. This information will enable an assessment of the mound's heritage significance so that an assessment of the impact of the development proposals can be made, in line with *Preserving archaeological remains: Decision-taking for sites under development* (Historic England 2016) and the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

## 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of three trenches/test pits within the earthen mound (Fig. 2). Tr1 measured 2m x 1m in plan; Tr2 and Tr3 each

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measured 1m x 1m in plan. The trenches were located in order to provide a representative sample of the earthen mound. The trench locations were determined on site by the CA Project Leader and were recorded on OS National Grid coordinates using Leica GPS.

- 4.2. All three trenches were excavated and backfilled by hand.
- 4.3. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.4. 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.
- 4.5. The evaluation archive will be held by CA until such time as all archaeological works at the site have been confirmed as completed. CA will then prepare a combined project archive. As there is presently no archive repository active in Cornwall, CA will hold the project archive until such time as a suitable repository is established. A digital archive will also be prepared and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).
- 4.6. A summary of information from this project, as set out in 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 given in Appendix A. Fig. 3 shows the mound and trenches as excavated (Photos B–D).
- 5.2. The same stratigraphic sequence was recorded in all three test pits. The natural geological substrate comprised greyish shillet and brown silty clay. It was exposed in Tr2 and Tr3 at a depth of 0.75m–0.85m below the top of the mound. The natural substrate was sealed by a 0.1m-thick buried topsoil layer which contained several fragments of modern pottery (not retained). Tr1 was excavated to the top of this buried soil layer only.

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- 5.3. The buried topsoil was sealed by a 0.6m–0.95m-thick deposit of silty sand, which formed the mound. This deposit contained fragments of modern brick, pottery and glass (not retained). A 0.05m-thick turf layer covered the mound.
- 5.4. No archaeological features or deposits were identified and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was present.

## 6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1. The evaluation established that the mound consists of a single dump of earth. This material contains modern artefacts and sits on top of a buried topsoil layer corresponding to the existing cemetery topsoil. It is highly probable that the mound represents upcast from works to the adjacent roadside cutting/hedgebank. The modern origin of the mound means that disturbance of the mound material would not in itself have a significant heritage impact.

## 7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. Fieldwork was supervised by Jonathan Orellana. The project was staffed by volunteers from the Friends of Ponsharden Cemetery and students from the University of Exeter. This report was written by Jonathan Orellana. The report illustrations were prepared by Krissy Moore. The project 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 2019 *Geology of Britain*

Viewer <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html> Accessed 28 November 2019

Cotswold Archaeology 2019 *Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries at Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

Cotswold Archaeology 2018 *Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries at Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall: Conservation Management Plan CA*  
Report No.: **17200**

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2019 *National Planning Policy Framework*

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Parkes, C. 2010 *Falmouth Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries, Cornwall: Archaeological Assessment Historic Environment Cornwall Council*  
unpublished report

## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer	turf	dark brown sandy silt	0.05	
1	101	Layer	made ground	Mixed light grey and yellowish brown silty sand	0.95	modern
1	102	Layer	buried topsoil	dark brown sandy silt		
2	200	Layer	turf	dark brown sandy silt	0.05	
2	201	Layer	made ground	light grey silty sand	0.7	modern
2	202	Layer	buried topsoil	dark brown sandy silt	0.1	modern
2	203	Layer	natural substrate	mid grey shillet and brown silty clay		
3	300	Layer	turf	dark brown silty sand	0.05	
3	301	Layer	made ground	mixed light grey and brown silty sand	0.6	modern
3	302	Layer	buried topsoil	dark brown silty sand	0.1	
3	303	Layer	natural substrate	mid grey shillet		



## APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project name	Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries, Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall	
Short description	<p>In February 2020, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation at the Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries, Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall</p> <p>It is proposed to create a new footpath at the site, the route of which will cross a low earthen mound. The evaluation was undertaken in order to provide more data on this mound.</p> <p>A total of three trenches/test pits were excavated within the earthen mound. These established that the mound consists of a single dump of earth. This material contains modern artefacts and sits on top of a buried topsoil layer corresponding to the existing cemetery topsoil. It is highly probable that the mound represents upcast from works to the adjacent roadside cutting/hedgebank.</p>	
Project dates	3–4 February 2020	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Conservation Management Plan (Cotswold Archaeology 2018) Archaeological Assessment (Cornwall Council 2010)	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site location	Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall	
Study area (m <sup>2</sup> /ha)	c. 0.19ha	
Site co-ordinates	179458 033841	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Jonathan Orellana	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	Scheduled Monument (National Heritage List for England No. 1020815)	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	<b>Intended final location of archive</b>	<b>Content</b>
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	TBC	Trench sheets, photo register
Digital	Archaeology Data Service (ADS)	Digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Cotswold Archaeology 2020 <i>Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries, Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report <b>EX0090_1</b>		





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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries,  
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**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan



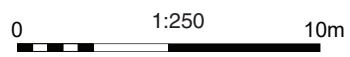
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<b>DRAWN BY</b>	<b>KM</b>	<b>PROJECT NO.</b>	<b>EX0090</b>	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b>	<b>DJB</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>14/02/2020</b>	
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>SCALE@A4</b>	<b>1:25,000</b>	<b>1</b>






- Site boundary
- Trench



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Jewish and Congregationalist Cemeteries, Ponsharden, Falmouth, Cornwall

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**FIGURE TITLE**  
**Trench location plan**

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DRAWN BY	KM	PROJECT NO.	EX0090	<i>FIGURE NO.</i>
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	13/3/2020	
APPROVED BY	JS	SCALE@A4	1:250	<b>2</b>





A

Pre-excavation view of the earthen mound, looking north



B

General view of the earthen mound showing the excavated trenches, looking north (1m scale)



C

Excavated trenches, looking north-east (1m scale)



D

Trench 2, looking north-east (0.4m scale)


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PROJECT TITLE  
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FIGURE TITLE  
**Photographs**

DRAWN BY	KM	PROJECT NO.	EX0090	FIGURE NO.
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