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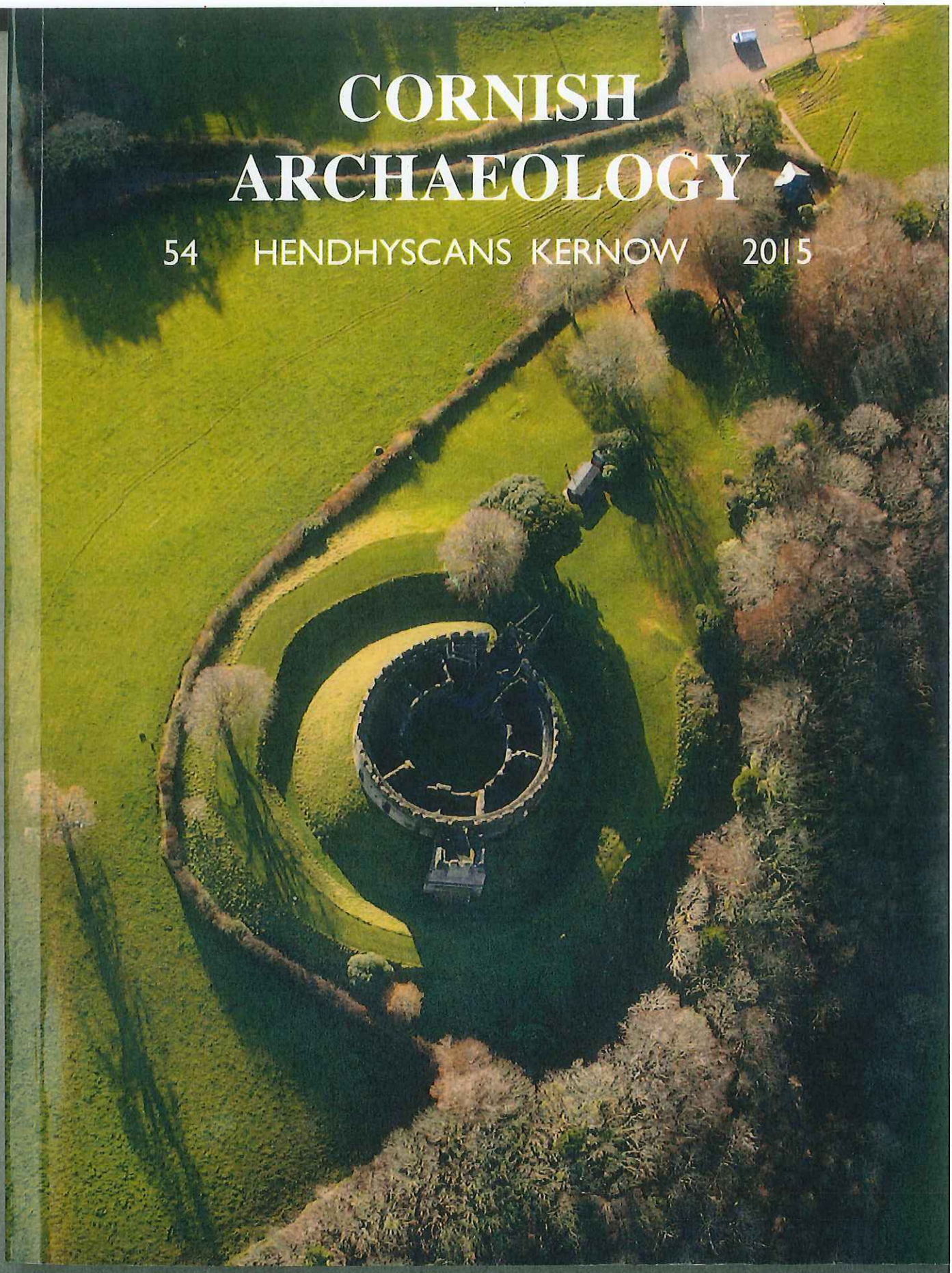

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Archaeological investigations of Late Iron Age settlement at Sir James Smith's Community School, Camelford, Cornwall, 2008–9

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Archaeological investigations in advance of the construction of new playing fields at Sir James Smith's Community School Camelford, focused on a group of ceremonial enclosures and settlement-related structures which have been dated by radiocarbon determinations and pottery to the Late Iron Age. Evidence for Early Bronze Age and Middle Bronze Age activity was also found.

In 2008 Historic Environment Projects (now Cornwall Archaeological Unit), Cornwall Council, was commissioned by Planning Transportation and Estates, Cornwall Council, to undertake a programme of archaeological excavations in advance of the construction of playing fields at Sir James Smith's Community School, Camelford. The school site lies on the western edge of a broad ridge of high ground (215–230m OD) above the market town of Camelford (SX 1023 8384) (Fig 1). It has a south-facing aspect and uninterrupted views of Rough Tor and the edge of Bodmin Moor 4 km to the south east. Six kilometres to the west is the Atlantic coastline of north Cornwall. The project area is underlain by the slate of the Tredorn formation which supports soils of the Denbigh 2 classification, well-drained loamy soils over slate or slate rubble with some associated very fine loamy soils affected by groundwater.

The potential for the proposed development to contain buried archaeological remains had been shown by a geophysical survey and archaeological assessment. The geophysical survey (Fig 2; GSB Prospection 2007) identified a number of anomalies potentially of prehistoric date, including a rectangular ditched enclosure ('enclosure 3' on Fig 4), two smaller circular enclosures (enclosures 1 and 2), two ring-gullied anomalies (structures 4 and 5, interpreted as possible roundhouses) and elements of a field system ('field system north'). These components were thought to be associated with a potential prehistoric settlement and field system identified by an earlier geophysical survey (GSB Prospection 2003) on the western side of the B3266 Boscastle road, which forms the west side of the school site. The 2007 geophysical survey had also indicated that comparable archaeological features were located within an area referred to as the 'northern fields' (Figs 2 and 4); however, no significant remains were subsequently identified in this area. Geophysical survey to the south of the school indicated another field system of potentially prehistoric or Roman date ('field system south').