ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT

GOSPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

English Heritage has initiated a national series of Extensive Urban Surveys. Several counties have commenced such projects including Hampshire County Council who are undertaking the survey of the small towns of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The survey is intended to provide an up-to-date view of the archaeological resource in each of the towns building on earlier surveys (e.g. Hughes, 1976; Basford, 1980) and consists of three phases: Data Collection, Data Assessment and Strategy. The first stage, Data Collection, draws together the accessible history of the town, the archaeological knowledge and historic buildings data. The Data Assessment phase of the survey leads to the production of a report which presents a brief history of the town, (this document is not intended as a definitive history) an analysis of the plan of the town, an assessment of the archaeological and buildings data and the state of modern development resulting in the identification of areas of archaeological importance. Information about the development of the town through the ages, including plan-form analysis and the identified areas of archaeological importance, is also presented in cartographic form at the end of the report. English Heritage has commissioned Wessex Archaeology to undertake an archaeological assessment of the Royal Dockyards of Portsmouth that will describe the military areas of Portsmouth and Gosport. Consequently these areas have been omitted from this project. The Strategy phase of the survey uses the information presented in the Data Assessment combined with current statutory and non-statutory constraints, and present and future planning policy to make recommendations for policies regarding the historic environment. The policies may be incorporated into Local and Unitary Development Plans, non-statutory policies, supplementary guidance and for use within development control.

2. LOCATION

The town of Gosport stands on the western side of the mouth of Portsmouth Harbour between the inlets of Forton Lake and Haslar Lake. Portsmouth is located on the opposite side of the harbour-mouth less than a kilometre to the east. Gosport is 20km south-east of Southampton and 5km south-east of Fareham. The twentieth-century expansion of Gosport and Fareham has now all but amalgamated the two settlements. The underlying geology is clay and gravel, common to the Solent.

3. BACKGROUND

ARCHAEOLOGY

Introduction

> Very little archaeological field work has been conducted in Gosport, the archaeological record being largely made up of isolated finds recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). Consequently, little archaeological information about the medieval town in particular is available.

Prehistoric

> In general terms there is little evidence for prehistoric activity around Gosport. It would however be quite probable that a natural harbour such as Portsmouth Harbour would attract human activity throughout the later prehistoric period as has been demonstrated by recent study in Langstone Harbour to the east of Portsmouth.

A1   Several isolated prehistoric flint tools have been recovered from the coastline around Gosport including two tools from Haslar Lake one of which has been identified as being Palaeolithic. A tool, identified as being of Palaeolithic date and 'Mousterian' in style was recovered from land north-west of Clayhall 1km south-west of the town.

A2   Three possible Bronze-Age barrows have been identified on playing fields in Alverstoke 1km to the west of Gosport

Romano-British

A3   The Roman fort of Portchester at the head of Portsmouth Harbour would have attracted a large amount of water traffic of both a military and civilian nature.

Roman pottery has been recovered during dredging work on Burrow Bank to the south of Burrow Island, north-east of Gosport. These isolated Roman finds could represent residual material from wreck sites or general debris associated with the loading and unloading of vessels within Portsmouth Harbour. There is, however, no direct evidence for settlement activity in Gosport in the Roman period. The area more recently known as the Market Square was referred to as 'Cold Harbour' on a mid-eighteenth century map (Maps of Portsmouth No 84a). This is a name that is often assumed to be associated with Romano-British settlement inland but here it is possible that it was meant literally.

Anglo-Saxon

No archaeological finds of an Anglo-Saxon date have been recovered from Gosport. The continued use of Portchester Castle (A3) and other local manorial sites would suggest that Portsmouth Harbour remained in use throughout the Saxon period.

A4   Alverstoke was the manorial centre for the area and was recorded in Domesday Book as a possession of St Swithun's monastery, Winchester.

Medieval

A5   On the opposite side of the mouth of the harbour is Portsmouth. There was a settlement at Portsmouth by the late twelfth century. When the estate came into the hands of the king, Richard I, he gave the town a borough charter and so founded a new town.

Post-medieval

A6   During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was repeated concern over the threat of French invasion and so forts were constructed around Portsmouth Harbour to protect it from landward attack. These forts included Forts Elson, Brockhurst, Rowner, and Grange to the west of Gosport.

HISTORY

Saxon

No historic documents of Saxon date relating to Gosport have been found.

Medieval

Gosport is not recorded in the Domesday Book. The area now occupied by the town was probably recorded within the manor of Alverstoke which was described as having been 'always in the (lands of the) Monastery' (St Swithun's, Winchester). The estate, formerly taxed at 16 hides but only taxed at 10 hides in 1086, had a recorded population of 48 and the villagers were said to have 'held and hold it'. A man-at-arms held ½ hide where there were two small holders (Munby 1982, fol 41c). It is not clear how the villagers came to have had such control over the estate.

The earliest reference to Gosport by name dates from 1241 when 'Goseport' was recorded in the *Curia Regis Rolls* but there may be an earlier, indirect, reference dating from 1204. A grant of that date confirmed some of the profits from St Giles' Fair in Winchester and all the 'profits from the newly constructed vill adjoining the port on the manor of Alverstoke except the bishop's house, his chapel and the rector's house' to the prior of St Swithun (Franklin 1993, 198). The document confirmed two earlier grants dated between 1154 and 1171 and between 1179 and 1182, neither of which mentioned the 'newly constructed vill'. This would appear to

suggest that a relatively new settlement had been created adjoining an existing port. Gosport is the most likely site for 'new vill'. The document of 1204 has been taken to refer to the creation of a new town complete with the grid of streets that forms the framework of the historic town centre today (Eley 1998). During the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries the Bishop of Winchester and several lay magnates were active in the creation of new towns, some, but not all of which were granted borough status at their foundation. It is, therefore, possible that Gosport was also intended as a new town although it was not conferred with borough status and in a list of manors granted to the bishop in 1284 it was described as *Alverstoke cum Goseport et Uptune* whereas other manors with new towns attached were described as … *and town* (Deedes 1924, 1284).

Generally, it appears that the manor of Alverstoke in which Gosport lay enjoyed unusual privileges for a rural manor. The men of the manor were practically free tenants who held a common seal (Page 1908, 203). As has been already noted, the villeins of Alverstoke were 'farming' or renting the manor at the time of the Domesday Survey. In the mid-thirteenth century an agreement was made between the monks of St Swithun's and the men of Alverstoke regarding the amount of rent payable for the manor. It was agreed that 4d an acre was due on the lands of Alverstoke but 6d an acre on the lands between Forton Lake and Stoke Lake. This is the area where Gosport lies and the premium payable on land in this area may indicate that greater returns could be expected due to the presence of the new settlement. There is very little information available about early Gosport, its inhabitants or the trades and industries carried out there. One of the few pieces of information dates from the Bishopric Pipe Roll of 1301-2 when 15½ property plots were inundated by the sea and their tenants were in default of their rent. One woman was described as being the widow of a cobbler (Page 1996, 233).

Gosport, together with Portsmouth, was called upon by Edward I to provide a ship for his campaign against the Scots in 1302 (Page 1908, 205). This demand was usually made on recognised ports and included places such as Southampton, Hamble and St Helens, the port to Brading on the Isle of Wight, and suggests that there was an established maritime tradition at Gosport by that date at least. An inquiry made into the manor of Alverstoke in 1341 recorded that 'formerly there were fifteen ships great and small which paid tithe to the rector' (White n.d., 47). The inquiry also noted that there were no traders and all the inhabitants of the manor were employed in agriculture or were labourers. The fact that there were 'formerly' fifteen ships but none recorded at that date, suggests that there had been some decline in the fortunes of at least the maritime aspects of the settlement. Also, the absence of traders or craftsmen would either tend to confirm that there had been decline or suggest that the settlement at Gosport essentially had a rural rather than urban nature.

There is no surviving charter of incorporation and it does not appear that the bishop granted any special privileges above those granted by the Priory of St Swithun. The first indication that Gosport may have been conferred with borough status comes from 1462 when an inhabitant of the town did homage to the bishop for two burgages and some arable land in the borough of Gosport (Page 1908, 205). A charter of 1284 transferring the manor to the bishop of Winchester referred to the election of the 'borough reeve or bailiff' (White n.d., 37).

Post-medieval

John Leland, writing in the first half of the sixteenth century, described Gosport as a small fishing village. He referred to a small, ruinous, chapel which stood close to the shore of Portsmouth Harbour, barely half a mile from its actual mouth (Chandler 1993, 207). This may have been the bishop's chapel referred to in 1204 (Franklin 1993, 198).

The growth of Portsmouth as a naval base from the sixteenth century improved the economic fortunes of Gosport as well and in 1627 the possibility that the dockyards could be moved from Portsmouth to Gosport was examined. Although the transfer did not take place, strong links with the dockyards were created. An iron works was founded in the town, ship-building increased and Gosport became home to many of the Portsmouth dockyard workers. Other industries such as rope-making developed and the town became an important victualling station (Page 1908, 206).

The strategic importance of Gosport in the defence of Portsmouth Harbour was recognised as early as the fifteenth century when a pair of towers, one either side of the harbour mouth, were built in 1418 (Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 390). A block house and bulwark were built on the Gosport side of the harbour in 1540 and an iron chain that could be raised across the harbour mouth to prevent entry by enemy ships stretched between the towers. Landward defences encircling the town were added in the seventeenth century and consisted of several phases of construction. Several maps of the period showing the new defences as proposed by Sir Bernard de Gomme survive (Maps of Portsmouth No 78). The ramparts were extended as the victualling and armaments manufacturing role of the town grew to the north of the town centre. A purpose built victualling station, Royal Clarence Yard, was completed in 1831 and remained in service until the 1980's.

4. ANALYSIS

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF GOSPORT

<u>Introduction</u>

Due to the military importance of the town there are several early maps of Gosport which give some detail of the layout of the town and the extent of the built-up areas. The earliest map consulted which gives some detail of the layout of the town dates from *c.*1665 (DC/PM2/8A) and covers Portsmouth Harbour. Gosport is shown without its defences and the rows of houses drawn suggest that the grid of streets was in place by the mid-seventeenth century. A more detailed map of 1668 by de Gomme shows the grid of streets but no property plots (DC/PM/2/10). This map also shows Middle or High Street and South Street with the line of the proposed defences cutting across them. Another map by de Gomme drawn ten years later shows the defences in place interrupting the line of these two streets (Maps of Portsmouth No 78). These maps show a slightly irregular grid formed by three principal east-west streets (North Street, High Street or Middle Street and South Street) linked by several small lanes and passages.

If the grid plan of the town does have its origins in the medieval period, as has been suggested (Eley, 1998), it would be unusual for Hampshire. Most of the small medieval town foundations in the county consisted of a main street which functioned as a market area lined with burgage plots which may have been provided with back-lanes. Only in Winchester, Southampton and Portsmouth are grid plans found and at Portsmouth it is likely that only part of the grid was ever fully settled in the medieval period. However, on the Isle of Wight, the three medieval new town foundations at Newtown, Newport and Yarmouth were provided with a grid of streets but as at Portsmouth, the evidence suggests that the grids were not fully built up. The development of the street plan in one of the main questions about the early origins of the town that could be answered through archaeological work. If the grid plan was to be shown to be a medieval creation, then either the town did not develop as expected or hoped, or there was a decline which reduced it to no more than the 'fishing village' encountered by Leland (Chandler 1993, 207). Alternatively, the plan was created in the early seventeenth century as Gosport grew in tandem with Portsmouth which rapidly expanded due to the development of the Royal Naval dockyards.

<u>Market, roads, streets, and bridges</u>

Market B1
There are several areas in the town that could have functioned as market areas. Middle Street is wide enough to accommodate a market and is still used today as a market area. It is likely that the harbour end of High Street where there was an open area to the waterfront and a hard was the main focus of market activity in the town. De Gomme's map of 1678 shows a building in the middle of High Street at its eastern end that is described on later maps as the market house. It was probably this building that was demolished in 1802 (White n.d.) to be replaced by another market building in 1812.

Two other open areas in the town may have also served as market areas. To the north of the town centre was an open area that was called Cold Harbour from the eighteenth century at least,

and at the eastern end of North Street was another possible market site. It may be that these areas were used for the sale of particular goods or as livestock market areas.

Roads and streets
Gosport was served by two roads, the principal one from the north-west which linked the town with Fareham, and the second leading to Alverstoke, the medieval manorial centre. Both these routes appear to have been diverted by the construction of the town's defences in the seventeenth century. The route to Fareham has subsequently been changed as the route depicted by de Gomme (Maps of Portsmouth No 78) crossed the area that is now the site of St George's Barracks.

There is uncertainty over the development of the plan of the town (see Introduction, above). However it is known that the grid of streets was in existence by the mid-sixteenth century as maps of *c.*1665 (DC/PM2/8A and Maps of Portsmouth No 3a) show rows of houses on the correct alignments although the streets and roads into the town are not shown

Bridges B2
The raising of the seventeenth-century defences around the town necessitated the construction of bridges across the moats that formed part of the defences. The seventeenth-century map of the town indicates that at that time a single crossing point existed to the west of North Street. The series of bridges shown on the map appear to be of timber construction and were accessed from the town via a tunnel through the steep inner rampart of the defences. However, a map of the town of 1748 (Maps of Portsmouth No 84a) appears to show a causeway and a cutting through the rampart rather than a bridge and a tunnel. The site of this bridge is within the area of the St George's Barracks The 1748 map also showed a road crossing the defences and leading to the south-west and Alverstoke. Although this route is still in use it appears that there has been a slight change in the precise alignment where the route (now Clarence Road and Ordnance Road) meets Walpole Road. By 1870 a bridge led to Haslar Hospital to the south of the town.

Property plots

Seventeenth century extent B3
De Gomme's 1678 map of the town (Maps of Portsmouth No 78) is the earliest detailed representation of the property plots in the town. It shows that the majority of the property boundaries lay parallel to each other which may indicate that they were created as a result of deliberate planning although by the seventeenth century variations in plot width and length had developed. This was probably due to division and amalgamation of plots and the building up of the frontages of some of the small cross streets and lanes and the resultant provision of the new properties with some land behind the building line. It is possible that the plots are the result of medieval planning but such a relatively large settlement does not readily accord with the historical sources. Medieval Gosport is only referred to as a vill and it would appear that there was a decline in the fortunes of the settlement in the fourteenth century (see above).

Nineteenth-century development B4
In the nineteenth century Gosport began to expand beyond the limits of the defences with the construction of areas such as Newtown alongside the road to Alverstoke.

Buildings

The 1678 map includes oblique images of individual buildings within the town (Maps of Portsmouth No 78). The accuracy of these images has been questioned (R. Harper pers comm). The map depicts the buildings as being orientated both gable on and side on to the street. The latter would indicate that space within the town at this time was not at a premium. The densest areas of buildings were along the eastern water front on Little Beach Street and along Middle Street. Virtually all the houses are shown standing directly on the street frontage and there are few outbuildings shown in the plots behind the main building line.

Extensive bombing of the town during the Second World War damaged or destroyed many of the older buildings in the town. Post war clearance would have also been responsible for the

destruction of many historic buildings. Older buildings survive in some locations, particularly along the central section of the High Street. These buildings largely date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries although it is possible that some contain earlier structural elements.

Chapels and churches

Medieval chapel (site unlocated)
The early thirteenth-century reference which suggests that Gosport was newly created also mentioned a chapel associated with the settlement (Franklin 1993, 198). When John Leland, the Tudor antiquarian, visited Gosport he described a chapel that was in a derelict condition that stood 'scant half a mile from the very mouth of the haven' (Chandler 1993, 207). It is probable that the chapel described by Leland was the medieval chapel but its exact location is not known.

Holy Trinity B5
Gosport was provided with a new chapel in 1696 when the bishop of Winchester gave some common land for the building of a new chapel. Holy Trinity remained a chapelry of St Mary's, Alverstoke until 1860 when Gosport was separated from Alverstoke parish. The church underwent substantial remodelling during the nineteenth century. The west end of the church was rebuilt in 1887 and the tower was added in 1889.

St Matthews B6
St Matthew's church was built in 1846 in the Early English style of architecture (Page 1908, 207). The church was demolished during redevelopment of the area in the 1950's.

Hospitals

Forton Hospital, a Naval Hospital built by Nathanial Jackson in the eighteenth century, stood to the north-west of Gosport to the east of Forton. The hospital appears on the map of Forton produced in 1716. By 1777 it had become Forton Prison housing American and later French prisoners of war.

On the Haslar Peninsula stands Haslar Naval Hospital. The hospital was established on the site of Haslar Farm and was opened in 1756 but was not completed until 1760. The building, designed by Theodore Jacobson, was at the time the largest brick building in Europe. The hospital was originally intended for sailors and marines and was capable of accommodating 1,800 patients. The building survives and still functions as a hospital.

Defences and Naval sites B7, B8 and outline of defences

English Heritage has commissioned an archaeological assessment of the Royal Dockyards of Portsmouth that will deal in detail with naval sites of Priddy's Hard and Royal Clarence Yard (within area B7). Therefore, these sites are not included within this project. The development of the defences that surrounded the town are briefly outlined below but a detailed analysis of the potential for survival of elements of the defences or their likely importance if not already regarded as being of national importance as Scheduled Ancient Monuments will require further, specialist, study. Other Naval establishment areas such as St George's Barracks (within B7) were not accessible to this survey. In general these areas lie outside the historic core of the town and so their archaeological importance will mainly be linked with their military functions and so, as with the defences, will require specialist attention. The development of the defences of Gosport (Williams 1979), published in the Portsmouth Papers series, has been used to inform the brief summary below.

The increasing recognition of the importance of the military significance of Portsmouth and Portsmouth Harbour, especially from the fifteenth century, led to the development of fortifications around the harbour. In 1417 a reference was made to 'the king's towers' at the entrance of the port of Portsmouth, one of which would have been on the site of Fort Blockhouse.

During the Civil War Gosport was held by Parliament whilst Portsmouth was in Royalist hands. The Parliamentarian troops constructed two gun platforms from which to bombard Portsmouth

and it is thought that the platforms were in the area of Ferry Gardens close to the shore. One of the platforms was described as lying behind a barn. The fact that the platform only became visible to the Governor of Portsmouth on the morning after Southsea Castle had been captured by the Parliamentarians suggests that the barn was demolished to reveal the strength of the forces ranged against the.

After the Restoration attention was paid to the defences of Portsmouth and Gosport and Charles II commissioned Sir Bernard de Gomme to design defences for both towns. Various plans exist of the proposed works, some of which show elaborate defences but the works actually carried out were relatively simple with an earth rampart and a moat. Also built at the same time was Fort Charles on the site of Camper and Nicholson's main building and Fort James on Burrow Island. However, in the early years of the eighteenth century, just over forth years after the start of construction, a report on the defences was highly critical and described Fort Charles as being so decayed as to be unable to bear guns on the gun platforms. It would appear that there was uncertainty over the quality of the works during their construction and when de Gomme died in 1685 the works petered out.

Despite the reservation voiced about the adequacy of the fortifications after de Gomme's death and the reports detailing their poor condition and shortcomings, it was not until 1748 that the rebuilding of the Gosport Lines commenced. Works included enlarging the moat and rampart and modifications to the defences such as the removal of one of de Gomme's bastions to the west of Holy Trinity church. Further works began in about 1757 when the defensive line was extended to the north to protect the brewery site that developed into Royal Clarence Victualling Yard and the area that became the armaments depot at Priddy's Hard in 1770.

During the nineteenth century further modifications and repairs were undertaken but after the gradual erosion of their defensibility through the penetration of the defences by the railway and roads, and eventually the demolition of the gates, the defences have been spasmodically levelled leaving only a short section near Holy Trinity church, a section of the original line to the north of the town, and the later extension around Royal Clarence Yard and Priddy's Hard.

Industrial

There is little evidence for industry in Gosport in the medieval period, the only reference being to a cobbler's widow, mentioned in 1301 (Page 1996, p233). A mid-thirteenth-century document exempting the residents of the manor of Alverstoke from paying salt-rent indicates that salt production was undertaken along this part of the coast but it is not possible to determine the scale or importance of the industry to the manor or specifically to Gosport, or to precisely locate the site of the medieval salterns.

A large proportion of the industries conducted in post-medieval Gosport related to maritime activity. The reference of 1341 recording that there had formerly been fifteen ships at Gosport (White n.d., 47) might suggest that industrial activities supporting the shipping were undertaken in the settlement but there is no direct evidence for such activities. Sail making and boat building have both been carried out in the town, from the post-medieval period at least. Three sail makers were recorded in the town in 1793. Francis Amos established a small ship building company in the town in 1782 and the famous boat builders Camper and Nicholson established their business in Gosport in the 1860's. Additionally, iron founders and anchor smiths were also present in the post-medieval period. Henry Cort who invented the iron 'puddling' process had a forge in the town in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Rope making B9
De Gomme's map of 1678 shows a long, low, range of buildings annotated as 'Roap Rows' in the open fields on the north-western edge of the town (Maps of Portsmouth No 78). Based on the length and width of the building shown, it is likely that it represents a purpose built rope production building. In the seventeenth century rope spinning was usually carried out in the open air but by the beginning of the eighteenth century most of this type of production was conducted in long, purpose built, spinning houses such as the one depicted. A single bay of this building may survive at the northern end of King Street adjoining a public house.

Wind Mill (Not located)

De Gomme's map of the town names the area that became the site of St George's Barracks as 'East Field or Windmill Field' which suggests that there had been a windmill somewhere in the vicinity. It is possible that the mill was demolished to make way for the ramparts constructed in the seventeenth century.

Railway B10

The London and South-Western Railway Company extended the London-Southampton line from Eastleigh to Gosport in 1842 terminating at Gosport Station, an architecturally striking building designed by Sir William Tite (Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 253). The line was extended into Royal Clarence Yard 1845 so that trains carrying Queen Victoria on her way to Osborne House on the Isle of Wight could have access to the waterfront where she boarded a boat to take her to the Island.

Gas Works B11

Gas for street lighting was provided by the Gosport Gas and Coke Company in 1834. The gas works were located to the south-west of the town to the south of Newtown.

The Second World War

During the Second World War Gosport sustained heavy bomb damage from enemy air raids. The parts of the town that sustained direct hits during the air raids may have had their archaeological deposits destroyed or at least compromised by blast craters.

Civilian boat building industries, for example the Camper and Nicholson yard, produced Naval vessels and landing craft for the Normandy D-Day landings in June 1944, and Gosport was one of the embarkation points for the D-Day landings.

5. RECENT DEVELOPMENT

The townscape of Gosport changed considerably after the Second World War when large blocks of buildings, many extensively bomb damaged, were demolished and several new roads have been driven through the previously built up areas. Areas particularly affected by the 1950's and 1960's remodelling are located immediately to the south and north of the high street properties. To the south of the high street the construction of blocks of flats, a shopping precinct and a series of car parks has taken the space of more than two blocks of properties to the south of South Street. The re-alignment of North Street was carried out after the war, which allowed the construction of a series of complexes of flats in the north-west corner of the town.

6. IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL

CRITERIA FOR THE AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL

Introduction

The primary aim of the Data Collection and Data Assessment phases of the project is to enable the identification of areas of archaeological importance within each town to inform the Strategy phase of the project. Five such areas of importance have been defined, and the criteria for these are briefly described below. Although they are all described in this introduction, not all towns will have areas within each of these categories.

Levels of Archaeological Importance

The levels of importance are Areas comprising Nationally Important Remains; Areas of High Archaeological Importance; Areas of Archaeological Importance; Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance and Areas of No Archaeological Importance.

As additional archaeological information becomes available, and a greater understanding of the archaeological resource of the town is achieved, it is possible that some areas will be re-assigned to different levels of importance.

Areas Comprising Nationally Important Remains
Areas of identified nationally important archaeological remains, whose location, character and importance have been demonstrably established. These remains merit physical preservation *in situ.* The criteria used to assess national importance are set out in Annex 4 of the Secretary of State's non-statutory guidance note PPG16, and are briefly noted below.

- Period
- Rarity
- Documentation
- Group Value
- Survival/Condition
- Fragility/Vulnerability
- Diversity
- Potential

This category will include Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Areas of High Archaeological Importance
Areas considered to include other important archaeological remains, whose location, character and importance are inferred from observation, research and interpretation. Those remains are likely to merit preservation *in situ.* Where preservation is not justified appropriate archaeological recording will be required.

Areas of High Archaeological Importance may:

- Contain well preserved, archaeological deposits which may not be of national importance, but which are of importance to the understanding of the origins and development of the town;
- Be areas where the destruction, without archaeological record, of well preserved archaeological deposits means that the last surviving elements have an increased value for the understanding of the origins and development of the town;
- Have been identified as having significant water-logged deposits;
- Have a high number of existing medieval buildings. The survival of medieval buildings may also indicate that there is well preserved stratigraphy beneath the building;
- Be areas which are thought to have High Archaeological Importance due to their proximity to other, recognised, plan elements even though there is little direct evidence to indicate high importance. For example, the area around an isolated church which may have been the focus for earlier settlement may be defined as an Area of High Archaeological Importance.

It is possible that areas that areas of High Archaeological Importance may, through further archaeological or documentary work, be shown to include Nationally Important Remains.

Areas of Archaeological Importance
Areas considered to contain archaeological remains of some importance. Where these remains cannot be preserved *in situ,* they are likely to require appropriate archaeological recording.
Such areas:

- Are significant elements in the plan but where there has been a moderate level of modern development or cellaring;
- Have had little archaeological work undertaken within them but cartographic or documentary sources suggest that they may have been within the historic core of the town or areas of important suburban development.

Surviving archaeological deposits in Areas of Archaeological Importance will probably have a relatively high density but, due to pressures of development over many centuries, there may be a high level of fragmentation.

Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance
Areas considered to include archaeological remains of a character unlikely to provide significant information, or archaeological remains whose integrity has been severely compromised by development. These remains may require appropriate archaeological recording if threatened by development.

Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance may:

- Have a good survival of archaeological deposits, but where there is likely to be a low density of archaeological features;
- Be areas with significant modern development resulting in limited archaeological importance, either due to the scale of development or due to the limited nature of the archaeological resource before development;
- Be areas where the current hypothesis supports only a limited possibility of encountering archaeological remains.

THE POTENTIAL OF GOSPORT

Introduction

The uncertain origins of settlement at Gosport, and the almost total lack of archaeological investigation in the town means that it is difficult to begin to predict the likely importance of any surviving archaeological deposits in the town centre. Also, the large scale of redevelopment experienced in the town, much of it due to bomb damage, will have greatly reduced the archaeological potential. However, the fact that there are fewer areas likely to contain archaeological deposits means that those areas have a greater value as they may represent some of the last opportunities to explore the origins and development of the settlement.

Areas of Archaeological Importance

Defences

The location and approximate extent of the defences of the town are shown on Maps B and D. The discussion provided is sufficient to describe the impact of the development of the defences on the historic core of the town. Other than those elements that have already been recognised as being of national importance, the archaeological importance and potential of the defences has not been explored as part of this study. Where a proposed development affects an area of the defences it may be necessary to seek specialist advice.

Areas Comprising Nationally Important Archaeological Remains

There are several elements of the military sites and defences associated with the town of Gosport are scheduled monuments. However, there is only one surviving section of the defences of the town itself that is currently a scheduled monument (Hampshire 460). This is a length of the southern defences of Gosport, consisting of a high flat-topped earthen mound in the form of a four-sided salient. Part of the outer moat survives, as well as the lock gate that controls the connection to the harbour.

Areas of High Archaeological Importance

Along High Street there are three areas that have escaped major bomb damage and redevelopment and so retain a high degree of archaeological importance. High Street was the main street of the town in the post-medieval period at least and, if the origins of the plan of the settlement can be pushed back into the medieval period, it would have probably been the main, if not only street then. Therefore, there is potential to discover more about the foundation and planning of the town within these relatively small areas and their importance is enhanced by the limited opportunities remaining to shed light on the history of Gosport. Information about the layout of properties, the buildings, trades and industries undertaken and the lives and lifestyles of the inhabitants of the town may survive.

Areas of Archaeological Importance

Holy Trinity church and churchyard. Holy Trinity was built on an area of common land in the late seventeenth century. As Holy Trinity remained a chapel of Alverstoke until 1860 it may be that burials before that date were made at Alverstoke although given the size of the developing town it is likely that burials were made at Gosport from the date of the foundation of the chapel. The churchyard may contain burials that could hold important information about the post-medieval inhabitants of Gosport, and certainly contains burials of the nineteenth-century. There is historical evidence for a chapel at Gosport from the thirteenth century although the location of the medieval foundation is not known. The possibility that the chapel was in this area cannot be entirely discounted. There is no evidence for the use of the common before the second half the seventeenth century. Its peripheral location in relation to the main streets of the town might suggest that it had always been an area of common but common land was often used for some industrial activities such as pottery and tile making and so there is a possibility that evidence for such trades and industries may survive.

Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance

It is probable that the waterfront areas of the town were major areas of activity. Given the uncertainty over the size, form and location of the medieval settlement, waterfront areas could be seen as primary locations for a small, fishing community before the development of the existing grid of streets was developed. After the development of the grid pattern of streets these areas would have continued to serve as quays, and certain industrial activities such as boat building would have been located there. It is also possible that areas of quay may have developed out into the harbour as has been demonstrated archaeologically at several other medieval and later ports. There have been some major re-developments in these areas that will have significantly compromised any archaeological deposits so the area should be regarded as having Limited Archaeological Importance. Fragmented evidence for some of the quay-side activities and buildings may be encountered which could add to the existing knowledge of the development and past economy of Gosport. It is possible that water-logged deposits may survive which could include organic artefacts and remains not normally encountered in dry archaeological deposits. If water-logged deposits were to be encountered the areas could be assigned a higher level of archaeological importance.

To the north and south of some of the street frontage of High Street there are small Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance. Seventeenth-century maps indicate that the High Street was developed at that date but there is little surviving evidence in the form of historic buildings to be able to understand the nature or density of settlement prior to that date, particularly for the areas behind the street frontages where, for example, evidence for small scale industries and rubbish disposal might be encountered.

The site of the rope works to the north-west of the town centre has Limited Archaeological Importance. It is possible that part of the rope works building is incorporated into the existing buildings (E Wilson pers comm) which adds to the interest of this site.

Research Framework

- Origins and development of the street plan

  Historic documents suggest that Gosport has its origins in the medieval period but it is not possible to be certain that the grid of streets that make up the plan of the town today are the result of medieval town planning. It is possible that Gosport was developed as a port and market centre without granting borough status and that street and property layout was planned. Nearby, Fareham appears to present a similar example of a bishopric manor that was possibly reorganised in the thirteenth century but without becoming a 'new town'. However, at present there is no archaeological evidence to support the suggestion that the grid is a medieval development. Another alternative is that the plan was created during the period of rapid expansion in the seventeenth century when Portsmouth was experiencing growth due to the development of the naval dockyards.

- Location of the medieval chapel

  It is known that there was a chapel at Gosport by the thirteenth century and that there was ruinous a ruinous chapel there in the sixteenth century. Although Leland described the chapel as being 'scant half a mile from the very mouth of the haven', its exact location is not known. If a fledgling town was provided with a chapel, it would be expected that the chapel stood in a prominent position in the

new settlement, for example, new towns at Newport and Newtown, Isle of Wight had chapels at the heart of their plans. Therefore, finding the site of the medieval chapel could provide important evidence for the layout of the settlement at or near the time of its foundation.

7. SOURCES

DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

During the medieval period the manor of Alverstoke was in the possession of the monks of St Swithun's Winchester and later the bishop of Winchester and so it is probable that records relating to the manor survive in account rolls and rentals. There are extensive archives relating the land holdings of the monks and the bishop but only a fraction of the documents have been transcribed or published. Therefore there remains plenty of scope for learning more about Gosport from documentary sources.

MAPS AND PLANS

*c.*1665   Plan of Portsmouth Harbour John Burston (DC/PM2/8A)
*c.*1665   Portsea Island etc. De la Fabviolliere (Maps of Portsmouth No 3a)
1668   Portsmouth, the docks, Gosport town and Gosport Point. Sir Bernard de Gomme (DC/PM/2/10)
1678   Plans of the fortifications of Gosport. Sir Bernard de Gomme (Maps of Portsmouth No 78)
1751   Plan of the Town of Gosport with the new Fortifications begun in the year 1748. Desmartez (Maps of Portsmouth No 84a)
1870   Ordnance Survey 6" map Sheet 83
1933   Ordnance Survey 25" map Sheet 83.11
1947   Ordnance Survey 25" map Sheet 83.7 (Surveyed 1937)

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8. ABBREVIATIONS

c.	*circa,* about
Ed	Editor
nd	No date of publication given
NGR	National Grid Reference
OD	Ordnance Datum
OE	Old English
OS	Ordnance Survey

PPG   Planning Policy Guidance
SMR   Sites and Monuments Record