

**GEOTECHNICAL BOREHOLES, PORTLAND HOUSE,
BELLE VUE ROAD, WEYMOUTH, DORSET
Archaeological Observations and Recording**



Report No. 53340/3/1

November 2010

**GEOTECHNICAL BOREHOLES, PORTLAND HOUSE,
BELLE VUE ROAD, WEYMOUTH, DORSET
Archaeological Observations and Recording,
November 2010**

Prepared for:

Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
Council Offices
North Quay
Weymouth
Dorset DT4 8TA

Report written by:

Peter S Bellamy BSc (Hons) MIfA

Report No. 53340/3/1

OASIS Reference: terraina1-83223

November 2010

**GEOTECHNICAL BOREHOLES, PORTLAND HOUSE,
BELLE VUE ROAD, WEYMOUTH, DORSET**

**Archaeological Observations and Recording,
November 2010**

CONTENTS

Summary	1
Introduction	1
The Site.....	1
Archaeological and Historical background	1
Aims and Objectives	2
Methods.....	2
Results	2
<i>Introduction</i>	2
<i>Borehole BH10</i>	2
<i>Borehole BH11</i>	3
<i>Borehole BH12</i>	3
<i>Finds</i>	3
Conclusion	3
Archive.....	3
References	3

Figures

1 Location map	4
2 Site plan showing location of boreholes BH10-BH12	5

Plates

1 Borehole BH10 during digging of inspection pit, looking south.....	6
2 Inspection pit for Borehole BH10, looking north. 0.5m scale.....	6
3 Location of Borehole BH11, looking south.....	6
4 Inspection pit for Borehole BH11, looking north, 0.5m scale.....	7
5 Location of Borehole BH12, looking west	7
6 Inspection pit for Borehole BH12, looking north, 0.5m scale.....	7

Front cover: *View of Portland House with Borehole BH12 in foreground.*

GEOTECHNICAL BOREHOLES, PORTLAND HOUSE, BELLE VUE ROAD, WEYMOUTH, DORSET

Archaeological Observations & Recording, November 2010

SUMMARY

An archaeological watching was carried out by Terrain Archaeology in November 2010, during the digging of the inspection pits for three boreholes in the grounds of Portland House, Belle Vue Road, Weymouth, Dorset (centred on OS NGR SY680780). No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed.

INTRODUCTION

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, to undertake a programme of archaeological observations and recording during the digging of the inspection pits for three geotechnical boreholes in the grounds of Portland House, Belle Vue Road, Weymouth, Dorset (Figure 1).

The geotechnical boreholes were drilled as part of a wider geotechnical investigation of the coast between Bincleaves and Sandsfoot as part of the Portland Harbour NW Shore Coastal Erosion Study. The purpose of the boreholes is to gain further understanding of the ground strata and is intended to inform the coastal management of this length of coastline in view of the coastal erosion threat to property and infrastructure.

Archaeological Observations and Recording, also known as an archaeological watching brief, is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists as “a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons, within a specified area or site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.” (IfA 2008).

The fieldwork was carried out on 3rd November 2010 by Peter Bellamy BSc (Hons.), MIfA.

Terrain Archaeology would like to acknowledge the help and cooperation of the following during this project: Mike Lakin (Weymouth and Portland Borough Council), Sarah Trinder (Halcrow), Andrew Pope, Gareth Pearce and Arfon Bailey (Soil Mechanics).

THE SITE

Portland House and its grounds (Figure 1, centred on OS NGR SY680780) lie on the north shore of Portland Harbour at the east end of Belle Vue Road, Weymouth. The land slopes down from north to south, from a high point of 29.9 m above OD in Belle Vue Road at the north end of the site down towards the coast at a height of about 10 m above OD at the southern boundary.

The underlying geology is Sandsfoot Clay of the Corallian Formation.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There have been no previous archaeological investigations or findspots on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (RCHME 1970).

The area was farmland until the late 19th century when Belle Vue Road was constructed and Bingleaves house and lodge were built some time between 1866 and 1902 on historic map evidence. The garden of Portland House was part of the grounds of Bingleaves in the early 20th century.

Portland House was designed by Lord Gerald Wellesley and Trenwith Wills for Geoffrey Henry Bushby and built in 1935. It is in a Spanish/Mediterranean style with two single storey ranges with terraces in front. The Listing describes it as a complete and well designed example of a 1930s Mediterranean villa style house by an eminent architectural partnership.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of the archaeological observations was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

The archaeological works aimed to observe and record all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate professional standard.

METHODS

The work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Terrain Archaeology 2010, Document No 3328/0/2, September 2010), with the Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (IfA 2008).

All features and deposits, regardless of their perceived date and archaeological significance, were recorded using components of the Terrain Archaeology's system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records. These have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current UKIC guidelines and the requirements of the receiving museum.

The inspection pits were dug by hand by the geotechnical contractors and the spoil deposited immediately next to the pit. After the archaeological recording they were backfilled by hand. The location of the pits was surveyed by taped measurements.

RESULTS

Introduction

The three boreholes BH10-BH12 form a roughly N-S transect down the eastern side of the garden of Portland House (Figure 2).

Borehole BH10

Borehole BH10 was located in the northeast part of the grounds of Portland House at SY6802978026. It lay just to the south of a wooden garden shed in a garden path or track that lead down into the lower part of the garden (Plate 1). The inspection pit measured 0.3 m by 0.3 m across and 1.05 m deep. The upper 0.3 m comprised hard-packed small stone, gravel, brick fragments and clinker in a dark grey gritty clay loam matrix (1001), which formed the metalling of the track (Plate 2). This lay above yellowish-grey natural clay (1002).

Borehole BH11

Borehole BH11 was located in the northeast of the paddock that forms the lower part of the grounds of Portland House (Plate 3) at SY6804677979. It lay just to the south of a wooden fence to the west of the track in an area of rather disturbed rough grass (Plate 3). The inspection pit measured 0.4 m by 0.4 m across and 1.2 m deep. The upper 0.3 m comprised mid brown clay topsoil with sparse coal fragments (1201). It lay on top of a mid brown clay subsoil, 0.6 m thick (1202), which overlay stiff yellowish-grey natural clay (1203).

Borehole BH12

Borehole BH12 was located towards the southern edge of the grounds of Portland House in the lower paddock at SY 6805377916 (Plate 5). The inspection pit measured 0.3 m by 0.3 m across and 1.05 m deep. The upper 0.3 m comprised hard-packed small stone, gravel, brick fragments and clinker in a dark grey gritty clay loam matrix (1001), which formed the metalling of the track (Plate 2). This lay above yellowish-grey natural clay (1002).

Finds

No finds were retained from the fieldwork.

CONCLUSION

The watching brief revealed no deposits or features of archaeological significance. The only deposits observed were associated with 20th century gardening activity.

ARCHIVE

The project archive, comprising all stratigraphic, written, graphic and photographic records, along with appropriate background documentation, is currently stored by Terrain Archaeology under the project code 53340. In due course, it is anticipated that the archive will be accessioned for long-term curation and storage by the National Trust.

REFERENCES

- | | | |
|--|------|---|
| IfA (Institute for Archaeologists) | 2008 | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs.</i> (Revised Edition). |
| [RCHME] Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England) | 1970 | <i>An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Dorset, Volume 2: South East.</i> London, HMSO |
| Terrain Archaeology | 2010 | Geotechnical Investigations, Sandsfoot Castle, Weymouth. Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Observations and Recording. Terrain Archaeology Document Ref. 3328/0/1, September 2010. |

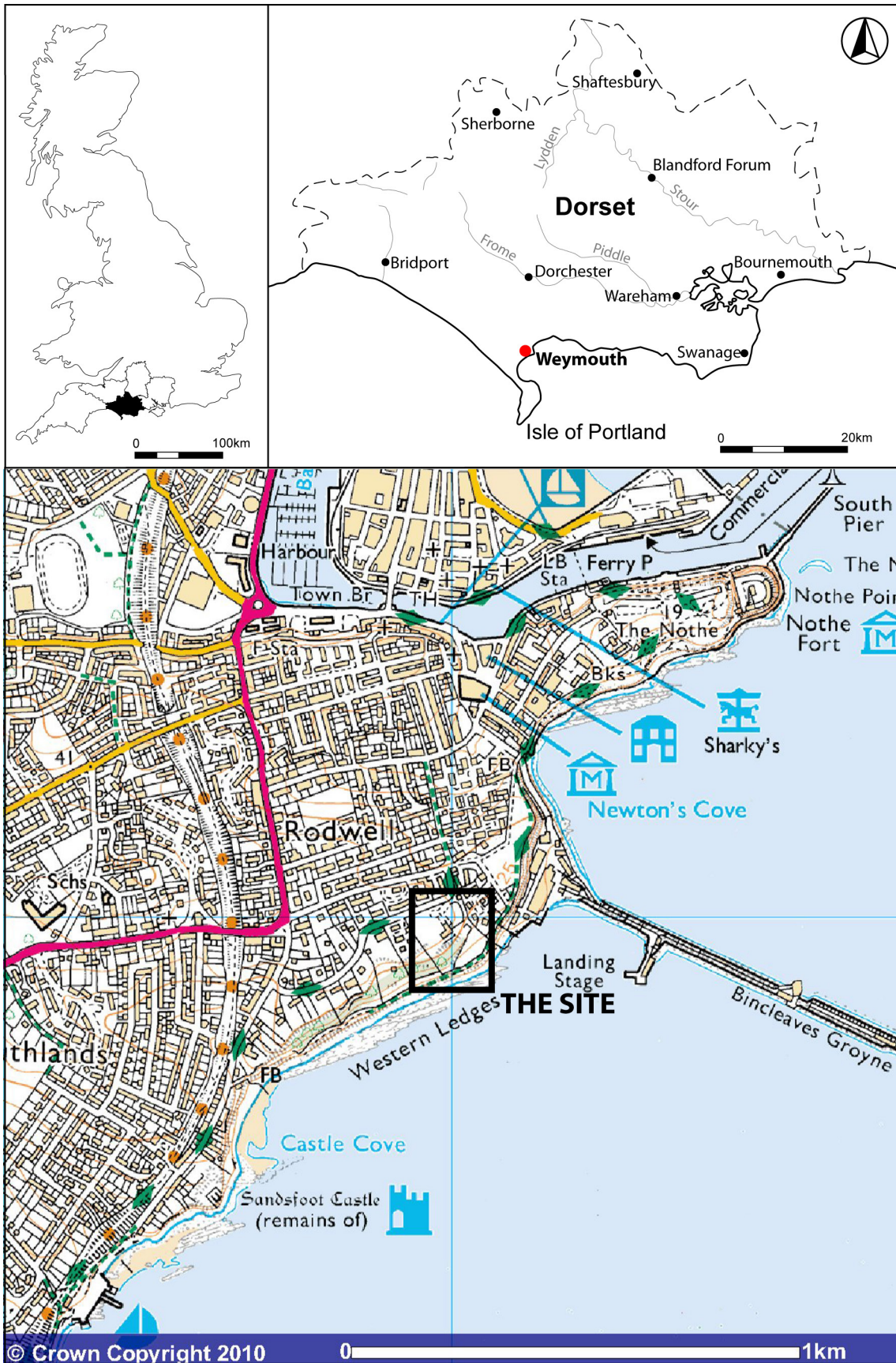


Figure 1: Location map.

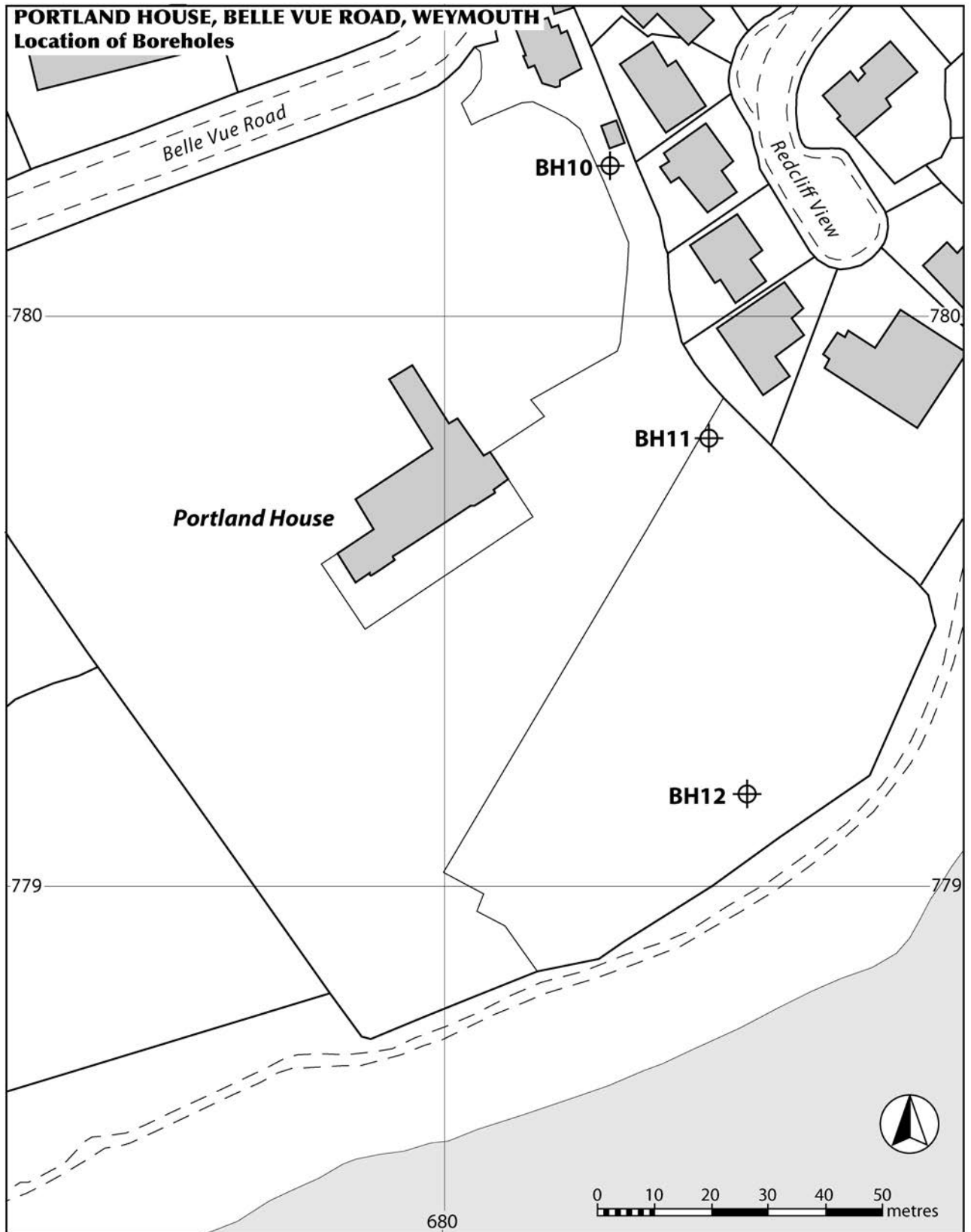


Figure 2: Site plan showing location of Boreholes BH10-BH12 (from a plan provided by the Client)



Plate 1: Borehole BH10 during digging of inspection pit, looking south.



Plate 2: Inspection pit for Borehole BH10, looking north. 0.5m scale.



Plate 3: Location of Borehole BH11, looking south.



Plate 4: Inspection pit for Borehole BH11, looking north, 0.5m scale.



Plate 5: Location of Borehole BH12, looking west.

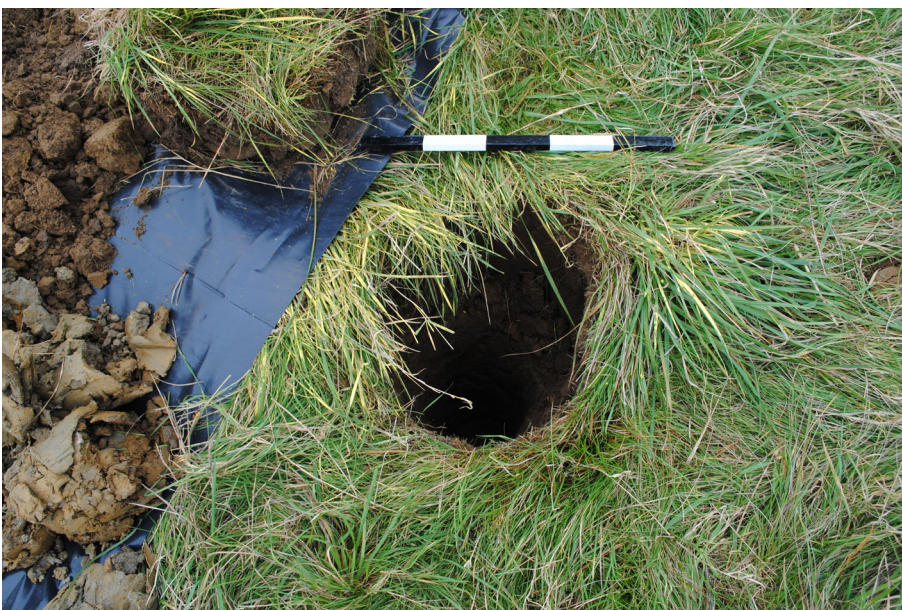


Plate 6: Inspection pit for Borehole BH12, looking north, 0.5m scale.