

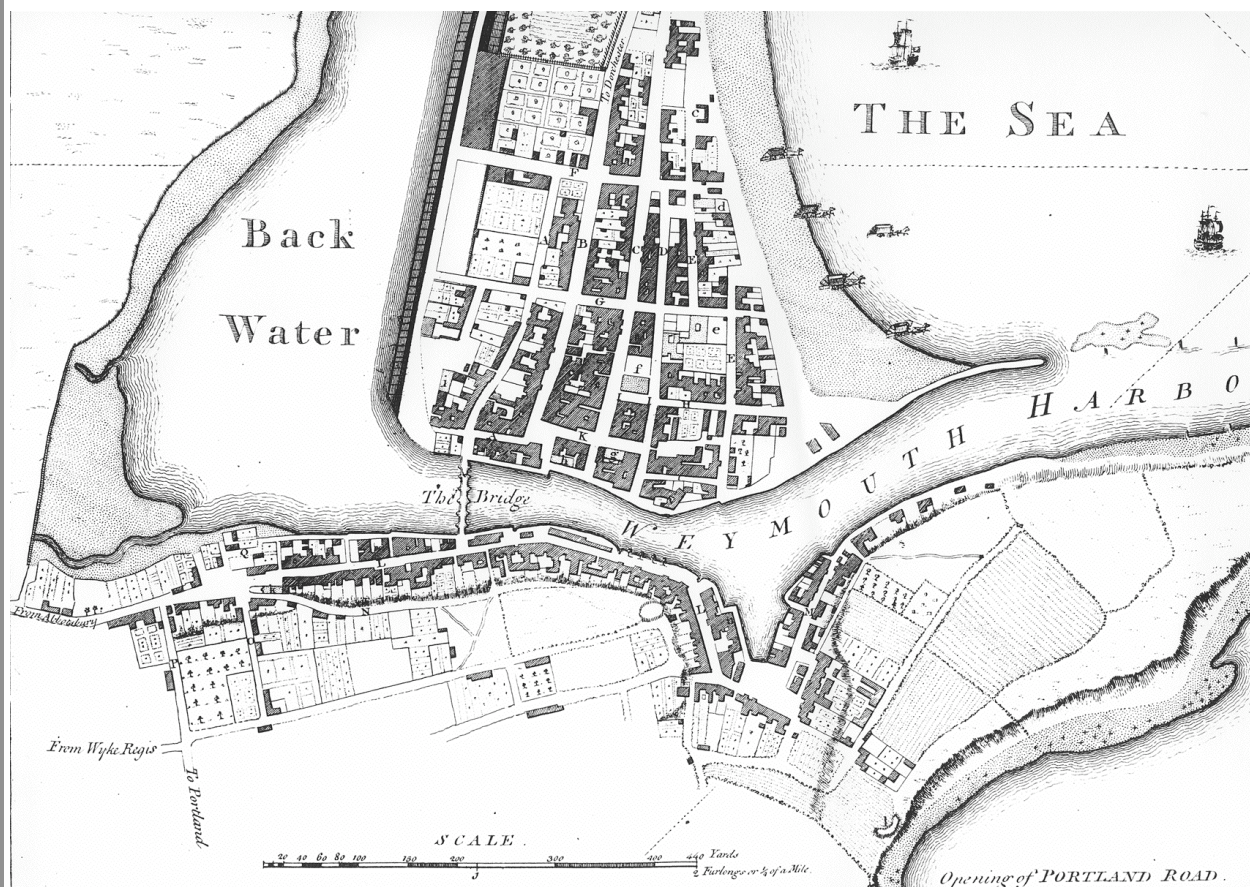


terrain
archaeology

assessment • evaluation • survey

13a COVE STREET, WEYMOUTH, DORSET

Archaeological Observations and Recording



Report No. 53111.1

December 2002

**13a Cove Street, Weymouth, Dorset
Archaeological Observations and Recording,
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13a Cove Street, Weymouth, Dorset

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at 13a Cove Street, Weymouth, (SY68057859) during the excavation of footings for a new building. Only a single small trench was excavated at the rear of the property, which revealed that much of the area had been disturbed by modern service trenches. The only feature of archaeological note was the foundation of the rear wall of the stables constructed on the site in the 1870s.

INTRODUCTION

This project was commissioned by Mr G. Clarke to comply with Local Planning Authority conditions, as part of the planning application for the construction of a residential and retail building at 13a Cove Street, Weymouth, Dorset (Application No. 01/00348/ FUL).

The proposed redevelopment comprises the construction of a new building across the whole area of the site.

The groundworks comprised the hand-digging of a 500 mm wide L-shaped footings trench, 750 mm deep, at the rear of the property.

The site lies on the west side of Cove Street, Weymouth, between numbers 13 and 14 Cove Street, at Ordnance Survey NGR SY68057859 (Figure 1) on flat land about 2.6 m above OD. The plot is a narrow trapezoidal area about 2.9 m wide at the street frontage and narrowing to 1.3 m wide at the rear, and 9.1 m deep. At the time of the fieldwork the site had been cleared and the concrete floor, which had covered the whole of the site, had been removed.

The fieldwork was carried out on the 10th December 2002 by Steven Tatler.

Terrain Archaeology would like to acknowledge Mr G Clarke for his help and cooperation during this project.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies in the historic core of the town of Weymouth. It is situated on the waterfront of Hope Cove (a.k.a. Mc Saunders Hole), a small inlet, in front of what is now Hope Square, which may be the area of the early port (RCHME 1970, 330). The area round the cove was built up by the later 16th century. The 1539 Map of the Dorset Coast (BL, Cott., Aug, I, I, 31, 33) shows no houses around the cove and Simpson's 1626 map (National Maritime Museum, G 223: 3/3) shows houses lining Hope Cove (Penn 1980). Three houses dating from the late 16th century still survive in this area — 2 & 3 Trinity Street and 'The Old Rooms' also in Trinity Street (RCHME 1970, 345). The 1774 map in Hutchins (1806) shows the waterfront running along the eastern side of Cove Street and depicts buildings along almost the whole length of the frontage (Figure 2). The present property boundaries reflect the 18th century divisions, even though most of this area was rebuilt in the 19th century.

In 1781 permission was granted to the inhabitants near the cove to wall it up and reclaim the land at their own cost (Boddy & West 1983, 111). The reclaimed land was leased by the Corporation in the early 19th century for housing.

Most of the existing buildings along this side of Cove Street date to the 19th century. The present house at 13 Cove Street was constructed in 1879, according to the date stone set into the building. It is assumed that the attached stables on the present site were constructed at the same time. The Ordnance Survey map evidence suggests that the stables were demolished between 1929 and 1939. Prior to the present redevelopment, the site was occupied by a shop.

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 observations were carried out in compliance with the specification prepared by Terrain Archaeology (Ref No. 3089, May 2002), and in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1994, rev. 1999).

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of an L-shaped footings trench at the back of the property (Figure 3). This trench ran for 2.5 m along the northern wall and 1.45 m across the back of the site. The southern half of the western arm of the trench was not observed as a modern sewer pipe was running across it and therefore any deposits in this area would have been disturbed.

The location of the groundworks was surveyed by taped measurements from existing boundaries. All depths have been recorded as below present ground levels.

All archaeological deposits and features exposed during the works were recorded using components of the Terrain Archaeology recording system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records.

The records 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, Dorset County Museum.

RESULTS

At the base of the trench, at a depth of about 0.6 m below present ground levels, was a layer of mixed building rubble (103) containing fragments of brick, stone, tile, mortar and plaster, over 0.15 m thick (Figure 3). This layer appeared to be cut by the construction of the concrete foundations (104) for the northern boundary wall of the site. The rubble layer 103 is probably debris from the site clearance prior to the redevelopment of the site in the late 19th century.

At the eastern end of the trench, several large limestone blocks (105), about 300 mm x 300 mm across, were exposed at a depth of 0.25 m below ground level. These blocks were roughly squared and aligned north-south, in line with the back walls of the adjacent properties (Figure 2). These blocks were not apparently bonded together and only one course of stones was exposed. It

is likely that these stones are the remains of the footings for the late 19th century stables for 13 Cove Street.

The rubble layer 103 was sealed below a layer of mixed yellow and yellowish-brown silty clay (102) with occasional patches of building rubble (brick, mortar, tile, slate), up to 0.35 m thick. This deposit appeared to butt against the footings 104 and 105 of the northern wall of the site and the former stables respectively. It is unclear whether this deposit represents a levelling layer or is simply the backfill after the construction of the numerous services that cross almost the whole area of the trench.

All the contexts described above were sealed beneath 50 mm thick concrete floor (100) on a 200 mm thick bedding of cinders and scalplings (101), which originally covered the whole of the site.

No finds were recovered from the watching brief.

CONCLUSIONS

The site has been heavily disturbed by services. All the archaeology observed can be related to the redevelopment of the site in the 1870s and the construction of the stables on the site. The groundworks were not sufficiently extensive or penetrate to a sufficient depth to determine whether there are surviving remains of earlier buildings on the site.

PROJECT ARCHIVE

The archive (Terrain Archaeology Project No. 53111) will be deposited with Dorset County Museum, which has agreed in principle to accept the archive, subject to fulfilment of the Museum's requirements of the preparation of archaeological archives. A copy of the microfilmed archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record.

REFERENCES

- Hutchins, J., 1806 *The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset* **2**, 2nd edition.
- Boddy, M. & West, J., 1983 *Weymouth: An Illustrated History*, The Dovecote Press.
- Penn, K. J., 1980 *Historic Towns in Dorset* Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Monograph No. 1.
- RCHME 1970 Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England 1970 *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the county of Dorset 2, South-east*.

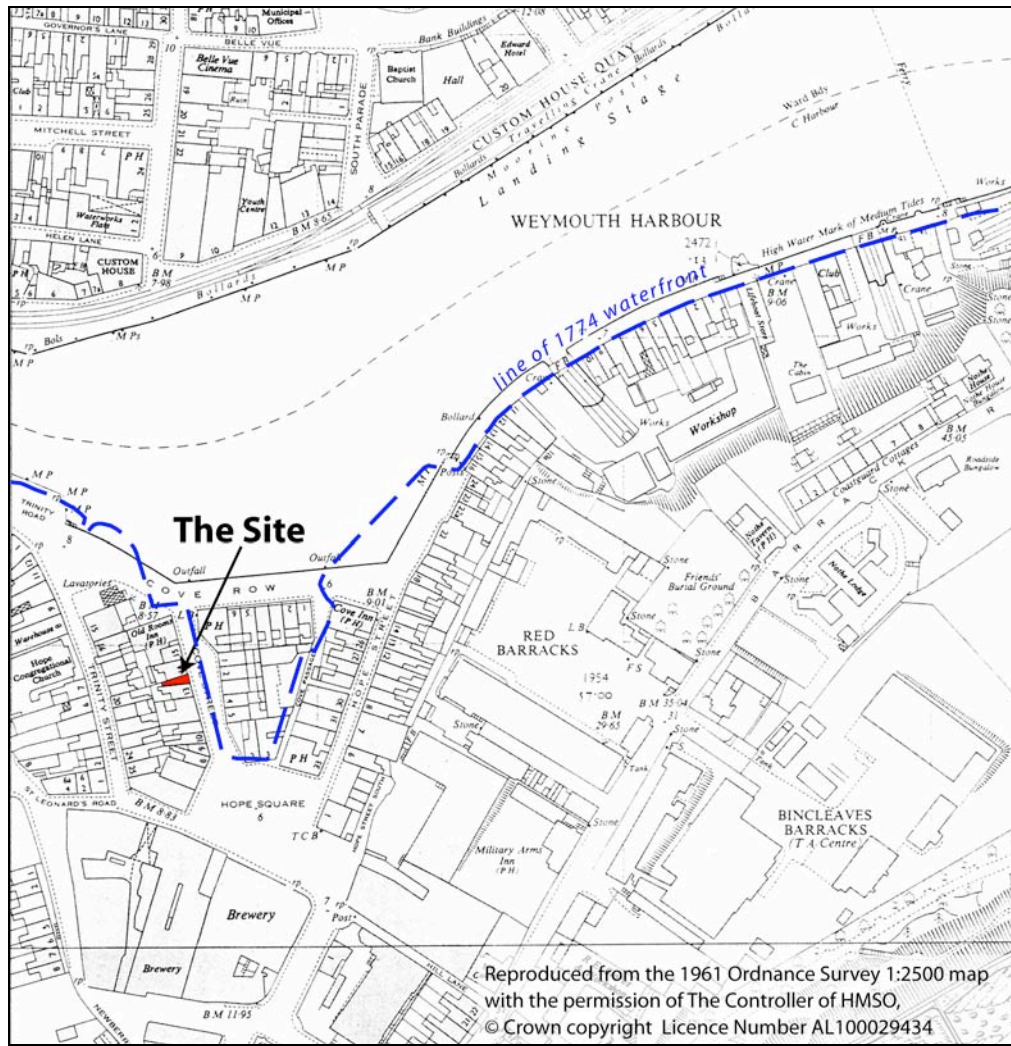


Figure 1: Location map

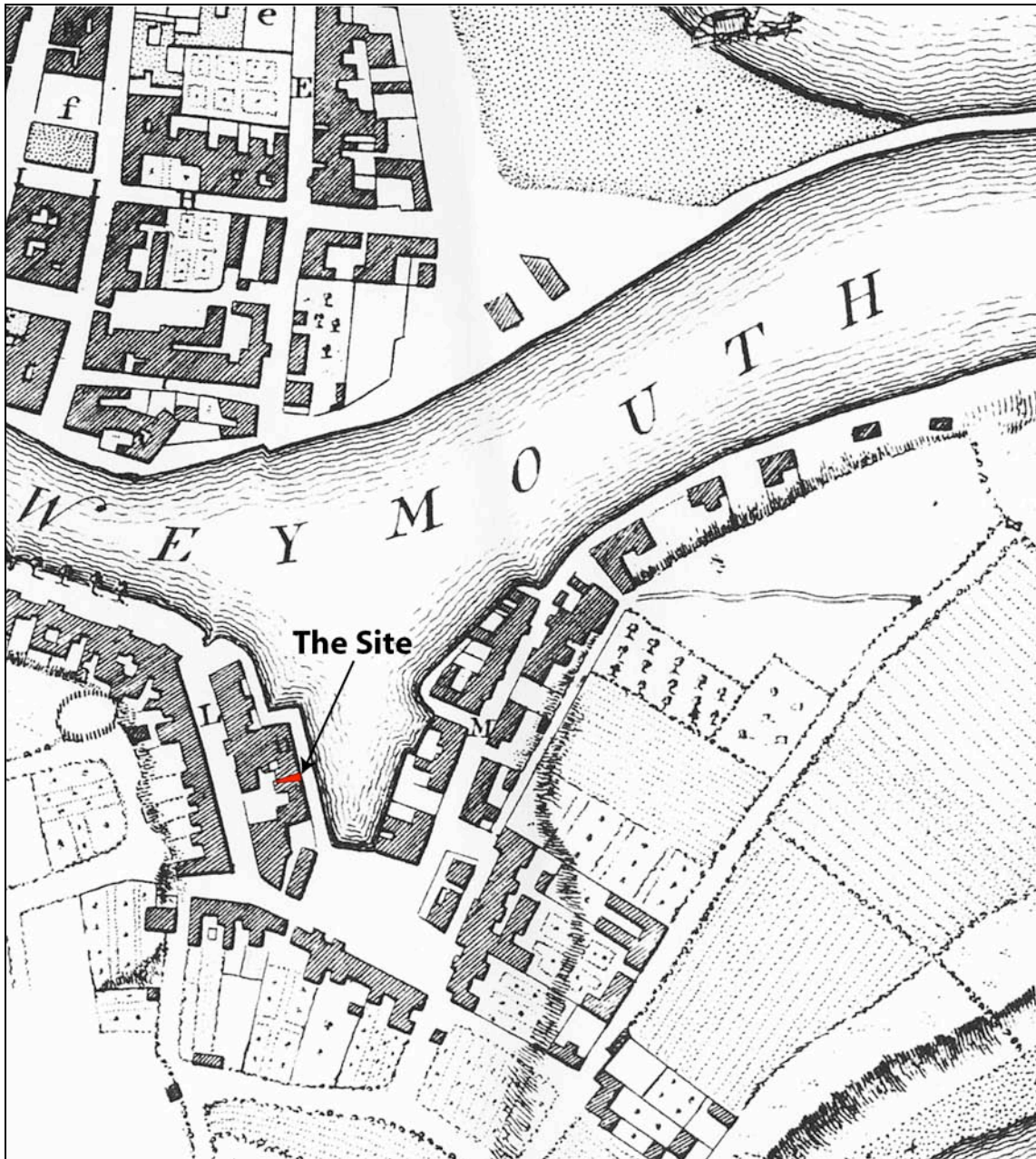
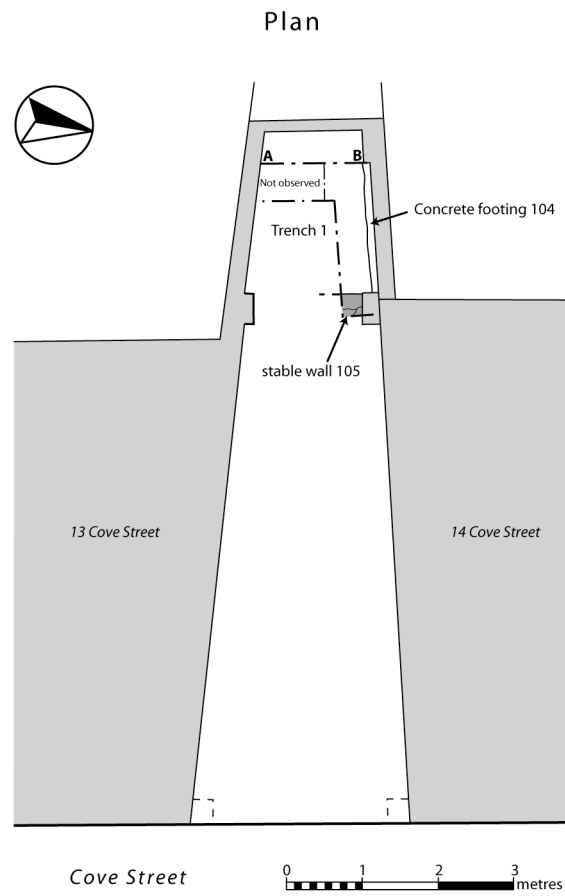


Figure 2: Extract from 1774 map in Hutchins (1806) showing location of site



East-facing section

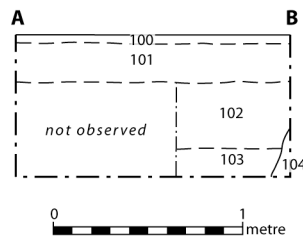


Figure 3: Trench location plan and east-facing section