Site Diary for archaeological works at Victoria Dock Portal; week ending Friday 17th January 2014

Monday 13th

Watching brief on bulk reduction within portal observed the removal of gravel risings from deeper excavations to west between chainage 85930 and 85935, ie where Jason Stewart had previously recorded alluvial sequence.

Tuesday 14th

Watching brief on bulk reduction within portal observed modern disturbance (pre-present development) between chainage 85935 and 85940.

Wednesday 15th

Watching brief on bulk reduction within portal observed, to limit of excavation at 97m site datum, up 500mm of fine dark brown peat sealed by 1.5m of blue grey alluvial clay, between chainage 85940 and 85945. Peat did not continue to east of 85945 on north of side, but may have continued east to south.

Thursday 16th

Watching brief on bulk reduction within portal observed coarse gravel in base of excavation. The level of the gravels was seen rising from 97m site datum at chainage 85945 to 98m site datum at 85956; at point archaeological trench 3 will be excavated.

Friday 17th

No further observations as part of the watching brief were recorded as bulk excavation had reached point where archaeological trench 3 will be excavated.

Isca Howell
Senior Archaeologist
MOLA
17th January 2014

Site Diary for archaeological works at Victoria Dock Portal; week ending Friday 24th January 2014

Monday 20th

The process of obtaining and implementing the permit to dig meant that the works to enable archaeological trench 3 did not commence until 3pm. This consisted of the layout of the trench and the removal of the disturbed ground over the area of the trench. By the end of the working day (6pm) the mechanical excavation of the first step down in the trench was complete.

Tuesday 22nd

Allowing for the time to create safe access to the trench the archaeological team entered the trench at 11am to conduct a programme of recording and sampling. In practice the section recorded was between chainage 85955 and 85966 because of the restrictions on the manoeuvreability of the mechanical excavator. Two mono tin samples were used to obtain a profile through the deposits and eight 10l bulk samples. The profile of deposits appeared to reflect an increasingly dry seasonal floodplain between 99m ATD and 100m ATD. The upper alluvial deposits had been damaged by the present use of the site as a haul route. This stage of recording and sampling was completed at 2pm. Works to enable the second step down in the trench was completed by the end of the working day (6pm).

Wednesday 23rd

Allowing for the time to create safe access to the trench the archaeological team re-entered the trench at 9am. Three mono tin samples were used to obtain a profile through the deposits and five 10l bulk samples. The second step down took the trench to the top of the gravels at *c* 98m ATD. The profile of deposits between 98m ATD and 99m ATD was unusual because the alluvial clays had an irregular band of large peat and gravel clasts mixed in with the alluvial clay. This was interpreted as the result of fluvial scouring, possibly the discharge of flood water on higher ground to north, and a C14 sample was taken from the base of the possible scour deposits. This stage of recording and sampling was completed at 11pm, and all the site equipment, samples and records was removed from site by 1pm. This completed the archaeological works on Victoria Dock Portal.

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24th January 2014