

Report



Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Report: Lydney Harbour, Gloucestershire

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Date: December 2021
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Quality Assurance

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Where field investigations have been carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives of the work.

This work has been undertaken in accordance with the quality management system of RSK ADAS Ltd.

Revision History

Revision	Date	Amendment

Summary

In October and November 2021, RSK ADAS Ltd carried out an archaeological watching brief on behalf of the Environment Agency during groundworks at Lydney Harbour, Gloucestershire. The groundworks comprised the installation of a new safety fence which involved hand digging seventy-four postholes and a stripped area, four test pits and six mooring points.

The postholes measured 0.3 m x 0.3 m x 0.3 m, the mooring points measured 0.5 m x 0.5 m x 0.5 m and the test pits measured 0.5 m x 0.5 m x 0.3 m. The stripped area was approximately 82 square metres and was no deeper than 0.27 m.

The excavation of the four test pits highlighted that these areas of Lydney Harbour is generally comprised of topsoil deposits overlaying made ground deposits. However, Test Pit 4 highlighted the presence of large stones at the pits location. Due to the partial exposure of the stones assessment of their purpose is limited however it is likely that the stones are not natural stones and were imported into the area for an undefined use.

The stripped area comprised an area of Lydney Harbour that was slightly higher than the surrounding ground. Historical evidence suggests this part of the site had modern soil dumped in the area which is supported by the dark soft topsoil like material identified in the strip and postholes dug in the area and the modern finds recovered during the strip.

Monitoring of the postholes for the new fence line did not reveal any archaeological deposits, except for the presence of stones (1005) which were also recorded in Test Pit 4.

Monitoring at Lydney Harbour of the new mooring points revealed an area of concrete along the quay wall. It has been suggested that it could have been a concrete barrier for proposed plans to import Severn sand which ultimately did not happen or the concrete is part of a retaining wall located behind the exterior wall of the quay.

The absence of archaeological features recorded during the archaeological monitoring may be attributed to the relatively limited ground impact of the groundworks.

These results indicate that the monitoring methodology used was effective in ensuring that the development resulted in no harm to the historic environment resource.

By carrying out these works, the Environment Agency has complied with the archaeological requirements outlined in the Scheduled Monument Consent (ref S00241608).

Acknowledgements

This archaeological watching brief was commissioned by The Environment Agency, and thanks are due in this regard. Fieldwork was carried out by Charlotte Barley. The report and supporting illustrations were prepared Charlotte Barley and checked by James McNicoll-Norbury. The archive was compiled by Charlotte Barley.

1 Introduction

Project Background

- 1.1 In October and November 2021 ADAS carried out an archaeological watching brief for The Environment Agency of groundworks required for a new fence and six mooring points at Lydney Harbour, Gloucestershire a Scheduled Monument (1002079). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during groundworks (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The works were carried out under Scheduled Monument Consent (Ref: S00241608). It was considered that the development had particular potential to impact upon unknown buried archaeological remains within Lydney Harbour.
- 1.3 RSK ADAS Ltd were instructed to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to carry out the required archaeological works and record any archaeological remains during the monitoring of the groundworks (ADAS, 2021).
- 1.4 The fieldwork followed the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2020), *the Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage, 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England, 2015).

2 The Site, Development and Geology

The Site

- 2.1 The Site is located on land at Lydney Harbour, Harbour Lane in Gloucestershire (SO 65064 01427). The site of Lydney Harbour is a Scheduled Monument (List Number: 1002079). The docks and harbour date from circa 1810 to 1821 and were once the main commercial port serving industry in the district. The site is currently in use as a local attraction with scenic views across the River Severn estuary.

The Development

- 2.2 The groundworks comprised the construction of a fence line approximately 150 m in length. Scheduled Monument Consent was granted for the installation of the fence, with seventy-four postholes, six mooring points and four test pits being excavated. An additional strip was carried out on the site to make the ground level.

The Geology

- 2.3 The underlying geology comprises Raglan Mudstone formations formed 419-424 million years ago. The local environment was previously dominated by rivers. Superficial tidal flat deposits are recorded on the site which were formed up to 2 million years ago. The local environment was previously dominated by shorelines (BGS, 2021).
- 2.4 The closest available borehole was dug to the west of the Site. The borehole log SO60SE2 — LYDNEY BASIN, LYDNEY shows this was dug to a depth of 11.58 m. It records soil overlaying 4.5 m of blue clay. The blue clay in turn overlay 1.2 m of peat, and deposits of sands and gravels between 0.3 and 1.2 m thick (BGS, 2021).

3 Objectives

Aims and Scope

- 3.1 The aims of this watching brief were:

- a. To assess the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features and deposits that may be present on the site*
 - b. intended to ensure that any archaeological features/deposits exposed during ground works associated with the development are identified, recorded and interpreted to an acceptable standard*
 - c. to ensure that any significant discoveries of artefactual evidence are recorded and analysed to an acceptable standard*
 - d. to inform a strategy to avoid or mitigate the impacts of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains identified.*
 - e. to disseminate the results through appropriate reporting, which will also include a summary report and wider publication if the results merit it, and the production of a site archive for deposition with the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, in line with paragraph 205 of NPPF 2021*
- *The specific aims of the test pit evaluation and archaeological monitoring were:*
- a. to identify and record any unknown buried archaeological remains, structures, artefacts or earthworks dating form the 19th and 20th century associated with the Scheduled Monument of Lydney Harbour*
 - b. to identify and record any unknown buried archaeological remains, artefacts or earthworks associated with the prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval buried archaeological remains*

identified by previous archaeological investigations on the Site and in the surrounding landscape

The fieldwork takes place within, and will contribute to the goals of the regional frameworks set out in the South West Archaeological Research Framework (SWARF, 2017). Particular research aims that this project has the potential to address include:

- *Research Aim 4 – Encourage wide involvement in archaeological research and present modern accounts of the past to the public.*

i. Industrial heritage is important in the public perception of the South West, from rural heritage in the form of farming and rural life museums to mining remains on the uplands and should be capitalised on

- *Research Aim 17: Improve the quality and quantity of environmental data and our understanding of what it represents*

a. We need to improve consistency in sampling, assessment and analysis for all types of palaeoenvironmental evidence. This requires agreement of details such as sample size, mesh size, methods of recording etc.

We should maximise sample size by targeting areas where preservation of animal bones (including micro vertebrates) is good. However this needs to be balanced to make sure that context related variation is also understood

- *Research Aim 46: Assess the information for Roman ports.*

Ports are poorly known in Britain, yet the South West has many potential sites both on the Channel coast (Hamworthy, Seaton, Topsham, Plymouth) and on the banks of the Bristol Channel (Oldbury-on-Severn, Sea Mills, Clevedon, Crandon Bridge, Comwich and Padstow). Despite the obvious importance of the sea in the region, very few of these sites have been studied. Work on sea level change may also be of value in understanding the Roman coastline. There has been some work on this topic in Poole harbour but little elsewhere.

- *Research Aim 48: Widen our understanding of Post-medieval and modern transport and communications*

a. Minor, less glamorous but essential features of early road, rail, inland and coastal transport have been neglected in the literature and need to be studied along with the viaducts, stations, etc

- *To report the results as appropriate.*

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5 Archaeological and Historical Context

Introduction

- 5.1 The archaeological significance of the site was established in correspondence between the Client and Ms Melanie Barge, the Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Historic England in April 2021 and in a heritage statement prepared by the Client (Environment Agency, 2021).
- 5.2 Lydney Harbour was the main commercial port for the Forest of Dean (1002079). The silting up of the Lydney Pill confluence of the River Lyd and Severn Estuary in the 18th century led to the closure of the old harbour. Therefore between 1810 and 1813 a new canal and wharf were constructed at Lydney Harbour and it remained in commercial use till 1977. The main commodity shipped from the harbour was coal and remnants of the coal tips and railway lines are still evident on the southern side of the site. The last delivery of coal was made in 1960 (Historic England, 2021; Environment Agency, 2021).
- 5.3 The harbour comprises a canal basin, watercraft, dockyard, swing-bridge, buildings, lime kiln and a canal lock. These all date to the post-medieval period (Knowyourplace, 2021).
- 5.4 A tramway (5701) that ran from Lydney Harbour to Lydbrook with various branch-lines is also recorded within the Scheduled Monument (Knowyourplace, 2021).
- 5.5 Between 2003 and 2004 a watching brief was undertaken during groundworks to remove the temporary dam, replace lock gates and dredge the harbour. This investigation revealed details relating to the construction of the harbour and evidence for demolished dockside structures, such as floors associated with the Lock Keeper's Cottage and the Clay Warehouse. Remnants the tram tracks and quays were also observed (Environment Agency, 2021).
- 5.6 In 2014 two test pits were excavated to a depth of 80 cm on the north side and 30 cm on the south side of the sea gates ahead of works to replace the operating mechanism. Evidence for mid to late-19th and early 20th century alterations to the original harbour walls was identified. However, no buried archaeological horizons were encountered due to the minimally intrusive nature of the works (Environment Agency, 2021).

- 5.7 Previous archaeological investigation at Lydney Harbour has demonstrated that in many cases the remains of structures and buildings relating to the 19th century harbour remain relatively close to the surface. The site has not always had such an open aspect, and the remains of buildings and walls located within close proximity of the dock were observed during archaeological monitoring. Previous investigation demonstrates that some structures are likely to have only been demolished to ground level with floor surfaces still largely intact (Environment Agency, 2021).

6 Methodology

Introduction

- 6.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation (ADAS, 2021). An archaeologist was present during all intrusive groundworks to excavate the postholes for a new fence line, mooring points, and test pits.
- 6.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic, and photographic records were compiled in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological watching brief 2020*.

Artefacts, Human Remains, Treasure and Environmental Sampling

- 6.3 No significant artefacts or human remains were encountered during the watching brief. No archaeologically significant deposits were disturbed by the groundworks, so no environmental sampling was undertaken.

Post-Excavation Analysis

- 6.4 No significant archaeological artefacts or deposits were encountered during the watching brief, and therefore no post-excavation analysis was required.

Archives and Deposition

- 6.5 The archive is currently held by ADAS at their offices in Milton Park. No artefacts were recovered during the monitoring and therefore no artefacts will need to be deposited with an approved local museum. A paper archive will be deposited with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery within six months of the completion of the fieldwork under an accession number which will be issued upon deposition. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS database of archaeological projects in Britain. An OASIS form, ID reference adasuklt1-502965 has been provisionally completed and will be submitted at the time of completion.

ADAS Project Team

- 6.6 Fieldwork was undertaken by Charlotte Barley. The report was written by Charlotte Barley. The illustrations were prepared by Charlotte Barley. The archive was compiled and prepared for deposition by Charlotte Barley. The project was managed for ADAS by James McNicoll-Norbury.

7 Results

- 7.1 This section provides an overview of the monitoring results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendix A.
- 7.2 The watching brief area followed the fence line, test pits and mooring points (Figure 2; Plates 1-23). The ground works consisted of hand digging all seventy-four post holes, four test pits and six mooring points. A mechanical excavator with a flat bladed bucket was used to strip to a maximum depth of 0.27 m within the raised area to level this out under constant archaeological supervision. The works were completed over eighteen days (Tuesday 19th October to Monday 15th November 2021). The weather generally consisted of bright sunny weather with occasional cloudy, dull days (Plates 1 - 23).

Test Pits

- 7.3 Four test pits were dug at Lydney Harbour. All test pits measured 0.5 m x 0.5 m with a maximum depth of 0.3 m.

Test Pit 1

- 7.4 Test pit one comprised a mid brown sandy clayey topsoil (1001) with stone inclusions which measured 0.2 m in depth and overlay a red brown clayey gravel deposit at base of pit which has been interpreted as made ground (1003) and measured 0.10 m in depth (Plate 1; Figure 2). No archaeological finds or features were encountered.

Test Pit 2

- 7.5 Test pit two comprised a mid brown sandy clayey topsoil (1001) with stone inclusions which extended to the base of the pit which was 0.3 m in depth (Plate 2; Figure 2). No archaeological finds or features were encountered.

Test Pit 3

- 7.6 Test pit three was located within the raised area that was later stripped. The stratigraphy comprised a dark brown soft sandy clayey soil with some stone inclusions (1004) (Plate 3; Figure

2) measuring 0.30 m thick. No archaeological features were encountered. Finds including a piece of metal and modern ceramic material was recovered from the excavated test pit.

Test Pit 4

- 7.7 During the excavation of Posthole [28] stone deposits (1005) were identified at the base of the posthole. Test pit four was dug to assess the extent of the stone so that the fence line could be moved. The topsoil comprised a mid brown sandy clay (1001) measuring 0.05 m thick which overlay stone (1005) that covered the base of the test pit (Plate 4; Figure 2). The stones were photographed and left in situ. The fence line was moved to avoid the stones. No artefacts were recovered from this test pit.

Mooring Points

- 7.8 Six mooring points were hand-dug along the northern quay wall (Figure 2). The mooring points measured 0.5 m x 0.5 m x 0.5 m. The stratigraphy of Mooring points 1-3 and 5-6 comprised a mid brown sandy clayey topsoil (1001) which measured between 0.15 m and 0.25 m in depth overlying concrete (1006) measuring between 0.25 and 0.35 m in depth.
- 7.9 Mooring point 4 was dug next to the stripped area and the stratigraphy comprised a comprised a dark brown soft sandy clayey soil with some stone inclusions (1004) measuring 0.15 m in depth. This overlay concrete (1006) measuring 0.35 m in depth.

Stripped Area

- 7.10 The stripped area measured 82 square metres and was no deeper than 0.27 m. The area was slightly higher than the rest of the fence line and the strip was necessary to ensure a level fence. The topsoil was comprised of a dark brown soft sandy clayey soil with some stone inclusions (1004) measuring 0.27 m thick.
- 7.11 Several topsoil artefacts were recovered from the strip including shards of modern glass, ceramic nails and bolts. Due to their low significance, these have not been retained.

Fence Line

- 7.12 The fence line comprised hand-excavating seventy-four postholes along the quayside measuring 0.3 m wide and 0.3 m deep. The fence line is 5 m away from the quay wall and measured 154 m in length with the postholes evenly spaced along the line.
- 7.13 The majority of the postholes were dug through topsoil comprised of a mid brown compact sandy clay (1001). This was recorded to overlay either deposits of gravel and netting (1002) or red brown clayey gravels (1003). The deposits of gravel with netting were only present in those postholes near existing footpaths.

- 7.14 Twelve postholes (59-70) were dug following the removal of topsoil from the stripped area. The general stratigraphy of these postholes was recorded as 0.30 m of a dark brown soft sandy clayey soil (1004). A single piece of clay pipe and some modern ceramic material were recovered from posthole [60].

8 Discussion and Conclusions

- 8.1 The excavation of the four test pits highlighted that the area of Lydney Harbour is generally comprised of topsoil deposits overlaying made ground deposits. However, Test Pit 4 highlighted the presence of large stones at the pits location. Due to the partial exposure of the stones assessment of their purpose is limited however it is likely that the stones are not natural stones and were imported into the area for an undefined use.
- 8.2 The stripped area comprised an area of Lydney Harbour that was slightly higher than the surrounding ground. Historical evidence suggests this part of the site had modern soil dumped in the area which is supported by the dark soft topsoil like material identified in the strip and postholes dug in the area and the modern finds recovered during the strip.
- 8.3 Monitoring of the postholes for the new fence line did not reveal any archaeological deposits, except for the presence of stones (1005) which were also recorded in Test Pit 4.
- 8.4 Monitoring at Lydney Harbour of the new mooring points revealed an area of concrete along the quay wall. It has been suggested that it could have been a concrete barrier for proposed plans to import Severn sand which ultimately did not happen or the concrete is part of a retaining wall located behind the exterior wall of the quay.
- 8.5 The absence of archaeological features recorded during the archaeological monitoring may be attributed to the relatively limited ground impact of the groundworks.
- 8.6 These results indicate that the monitoring methodology used was effective in ensuring that the development resulted in no harm to the historic environment resource.

9 References

ADAS 2021 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring and Test Pitting: Lydney Harbour, Gloucestershire*. Unpublished internal document. Reference: 1051433-ART69105-818-1 (03)

CIfA 2020 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.

English Heritage 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects 2*.

English Heritage 2006 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide*.

Environment Agency (2021) *Heritage Impact Statement Lydney Harbour*. Environment Agency.

Forest of Dean (2021) *Forest of Dean and Wye Valley local website listing for Lydney Harbour*. Available at: <https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/lydney-harbour-p1312571> [accessed November 2021]

South West Archaeological Research Framework (2017), Available at: <https://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/swarf/publications.html>

Online Resources

BGS 2021 *British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer*. Available at: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html> [accessed November 2021].

Google Maps 2021. Available at: <https://www.google.co.uk> [accessed November 2021].

Appendix A: Context Descriptions

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)
1001	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown compact sandy clay	0.3-0.5 m	0.3 -0.5 m	0.3 m
1002	Deposit	Made Ground – gravel within the footpath	0.3 -0.5 m	0.3-0.5	0.15-0.20 m
1003	Deposit	Made Ground – red brown clayey gravel	0.3-0.5 m	0.3 – 0.5 m	0.15 – 0.20 m
1004	Deposit	Mound material – dark brown soft sandy clay	0.3-0.5 m	0.3-0.5 m	0.05-0.3 m
1005	Deposit	Stones located within Test Pit 4	0.5 m	0.5 m	-
1006	Deposit	Made Ground - Concrete	0.5 m	0.5 m	0.15-0.35 m

Appendix B: The Finds

Some modern artefacts were encountered during the archaeological monitoring; however these were of low archaeological significance and were not retained for further analysis.

Appendix C: Oasis Report Form

OASIS ID (UID): adasuklt1-502965

Project Name: Archaeological Intervention at Lydney Harbour

Activity type: Archaeological Intervention

Project Identifier(s): Lydney Harbour

Reason for Investigation: Scheduled monument consent

Organisation Responsible for work: RSK ADAS Ltd

Project Dates: 19-Oct-2021 - 15-Nov-2021

HER: City of Gloucester and Gloucestershire HER

Project Methodology: Archaeological watching brief of a new fence installation. Monitoring of 6 new mooring points.

Project Results: There were no archaeological features encountered. An area of concrete was encountered beneath the mooring points. Along the stripped there were several modern topsoil finds.

Archive:

Documentary Archive, Digital Archive

Plates



Plate 1: North facing view of Test Pit 1.



Plate 2: North facing view of Test Pit 2.



Plate 3: East facing view of Test Pit 3.



Plate 4: East facing view of Test Pit 4.



Plate 5: South facing view of Mooring Point 1.



Plate 6: South facing view of Mooring Point 2.



Plate 7: South facing view of Mooring Point 3.



Plate 8: South facing view of Mooring Point 4.



Plate 9: South facing view of Mooring Point 5.



Plate 10: West facing view of Mooring Point 6.



Plate 11: East facing view of proposed fence line.



Plate 12: South facing view of proposed fence line.



Plate 13: North facing view of postholes at eastern end of the fence.



Plate 14: East facing view of a posthole located near footpath at eastern end of the fence.



Plate 15: North facing view of posthole 22.



Plate 16: East facing view of central part of the fence line.



Plate 17: East facing view of posthole located along the central part of the fence.



Plate 18: West facing view of fence line from central part of the fence.



Plate 19: North facing view of posthole from central part of the fence.

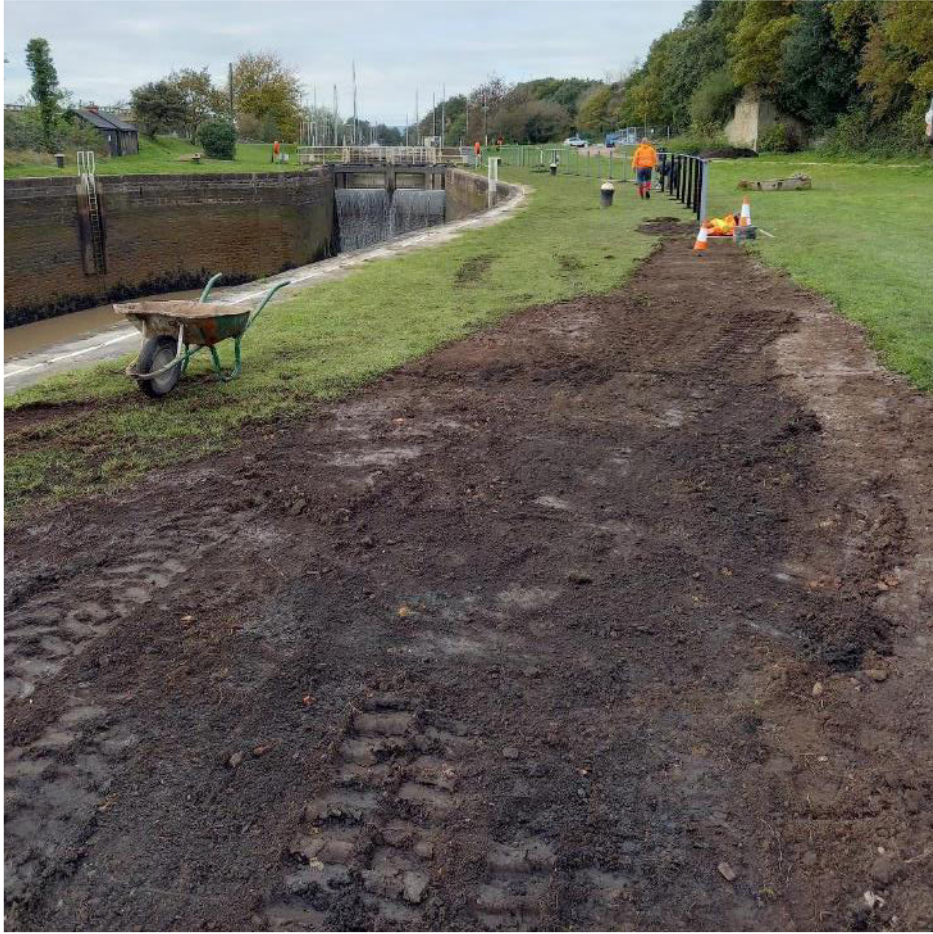


Plate 20: West facing view of stripped area.

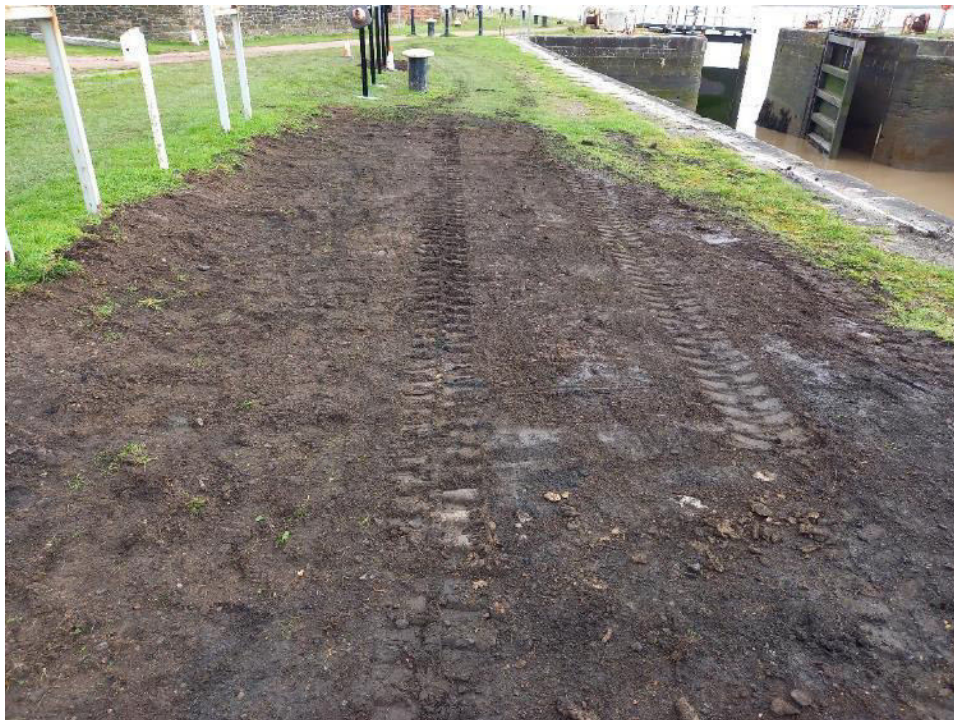


Plate 21: East facing view of stripped area

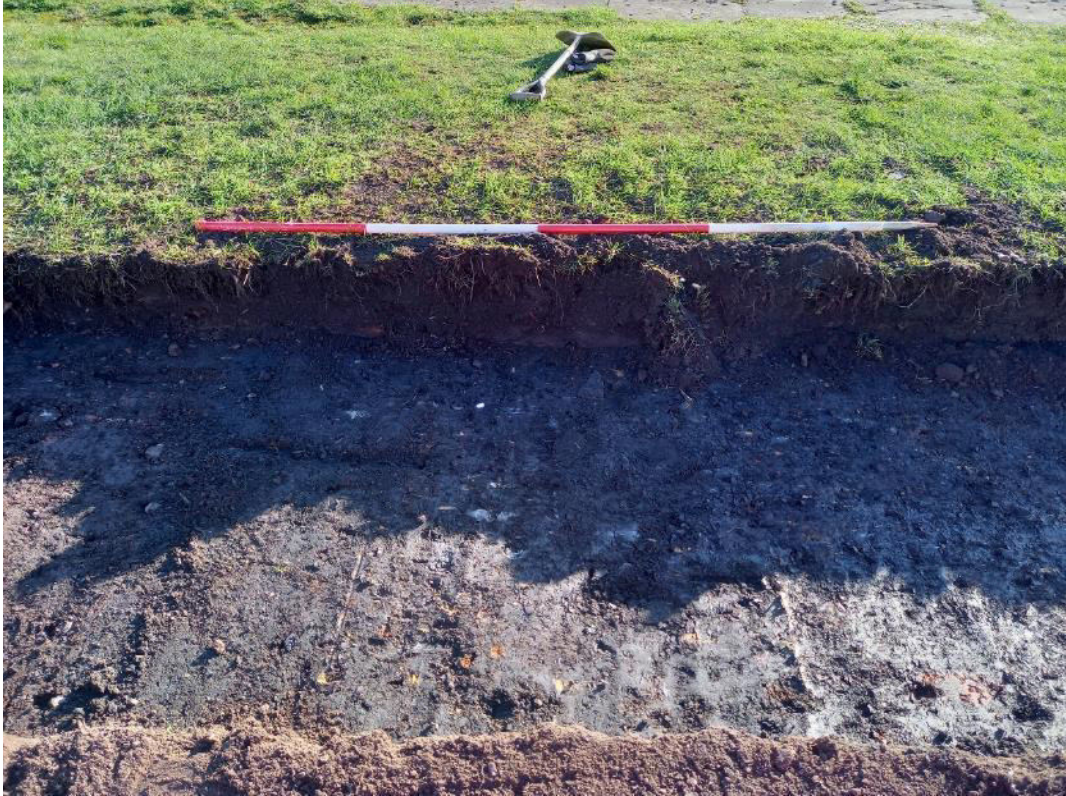


Plate 22: South facing view of stripped area



Plate 23: North facing view of stripped area



Environment Agency

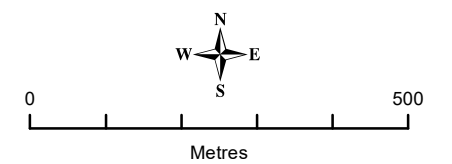
Lydney Harbour

Figure 1. Site Location

■ Site Location

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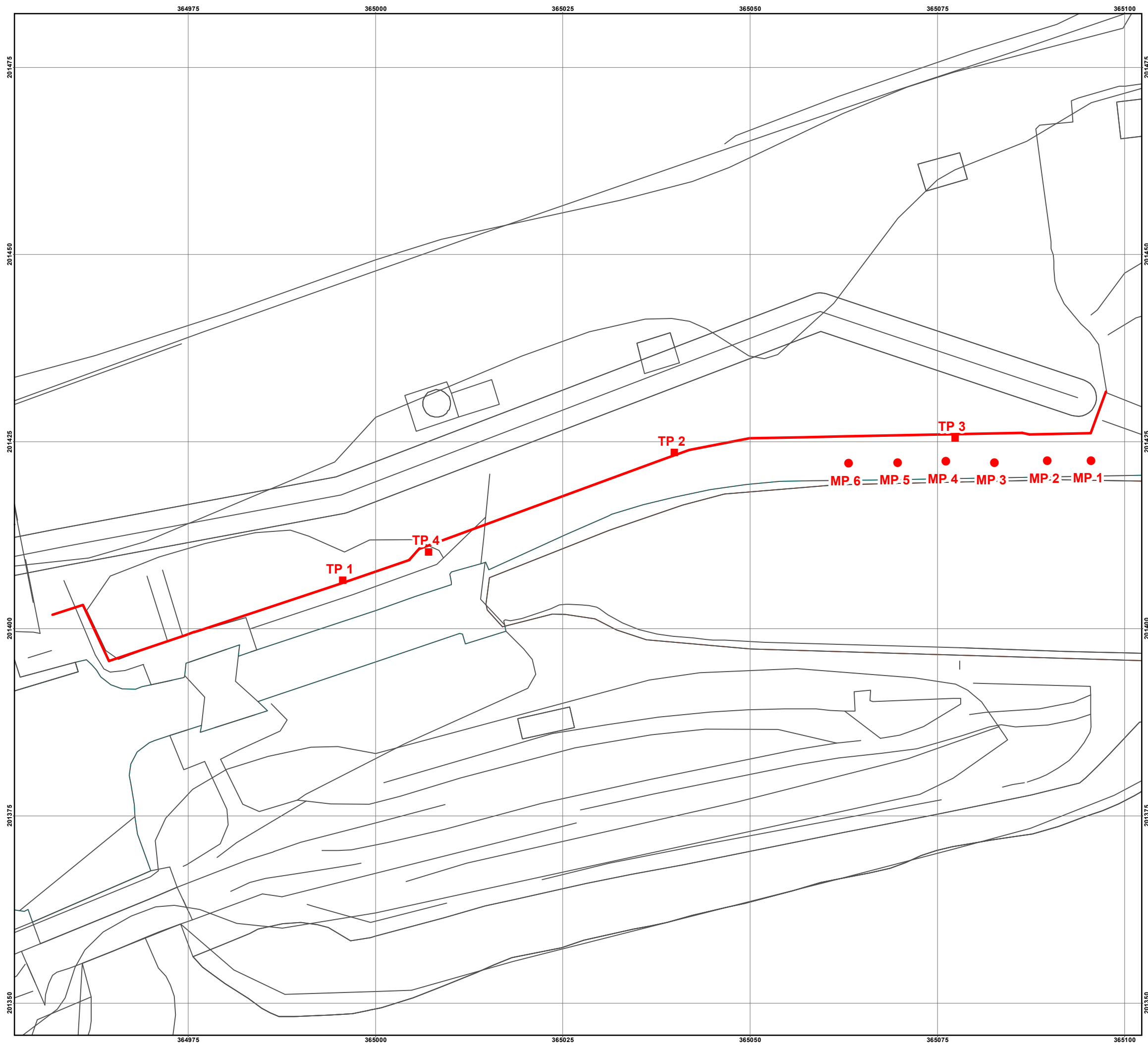


Environment Agency

Lydney Harbour

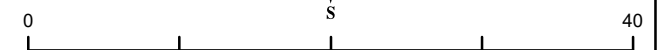
Figure 2. Location of the Test Pits and Mooring Points

-  Fence line
-  Mooring Points
-  Test Pits



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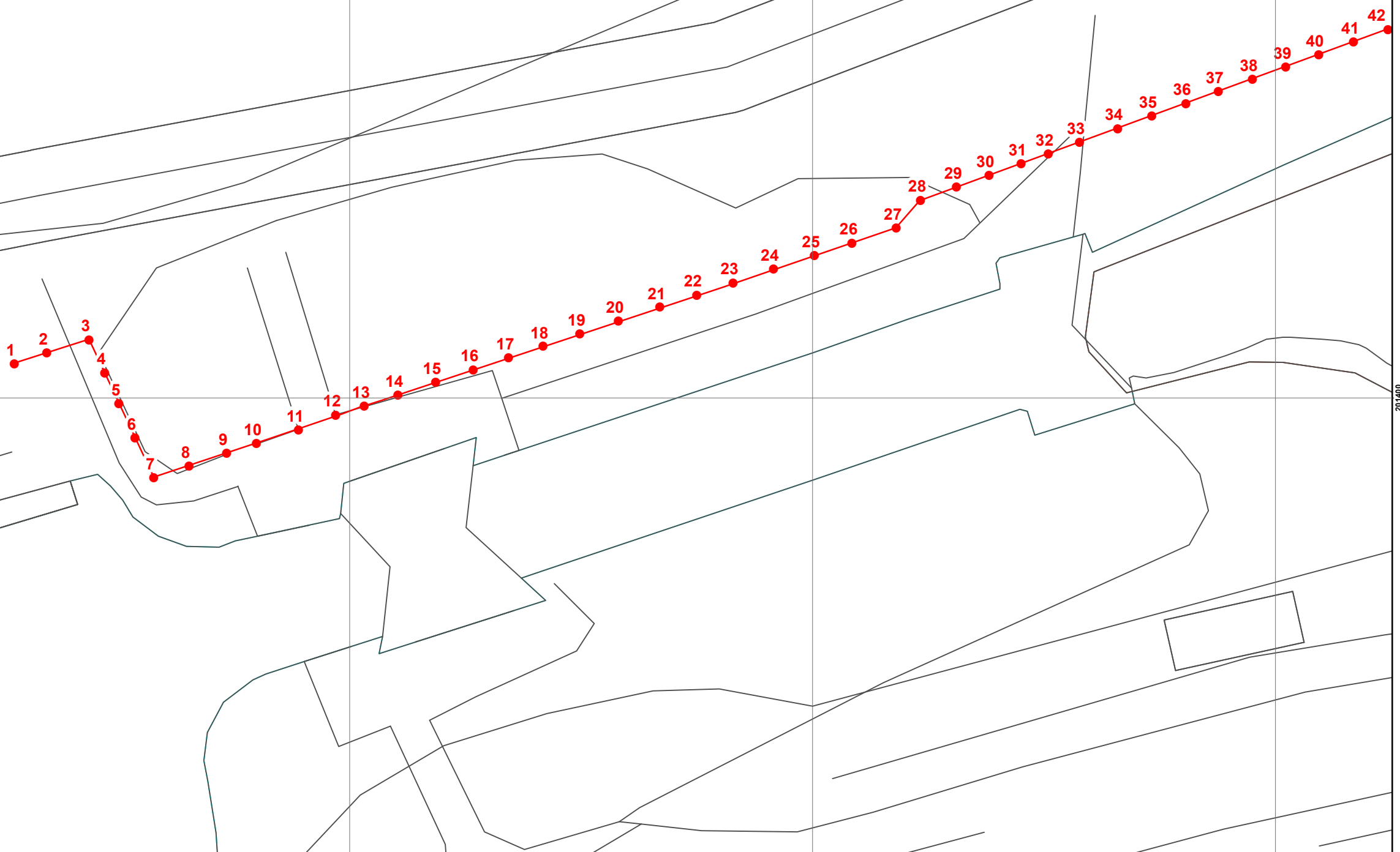
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Environment Agency

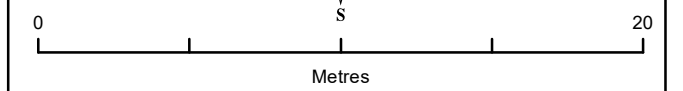
Lydney Harbour

Figure 3a. Location of the Fenceline - Postholes 1-41

- Fence line
- Postholes



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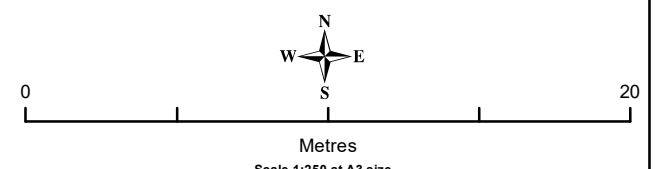
Environment Agency

Lydney Harbour

Figure 3b. Location of the Fence line - Postholes 41-78

- Fence line
- Postholes
- Stripped Area

Drawn by: Charlotte Barley Date: 13.12.2021
 Verified by: James McNicoll-Norbury Date: 13.12.2021



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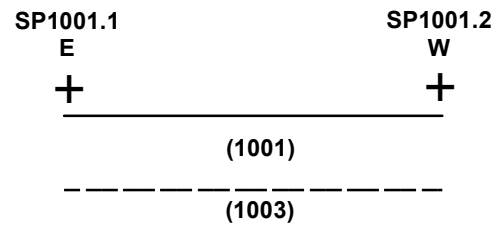
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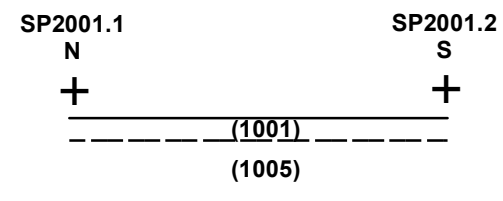
Figure 4. Representative Section of Test Pit 1, Test Pit 4 and Mooring Point 3



Section 1: North facing view of Test Pit 1.



Plate 1: North facing view of Test Pit 1.



Section 2: East facing view of Test Pit 4



Plate 4: East facing view of Test Pit 4.



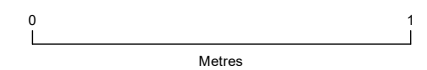
Section 3: South facing view of Mooring Point 3.



Plate 7: South facing view of Mooring Point 3.

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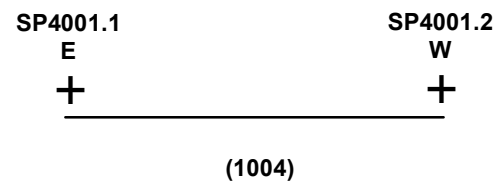


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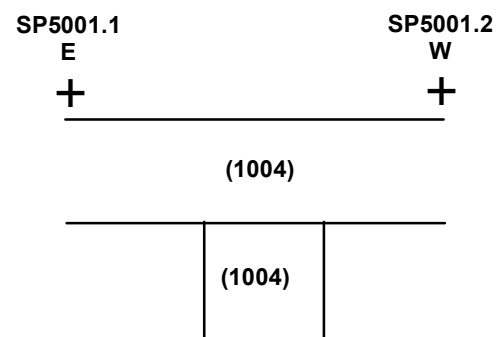
Figure 5. Representative Section of the Stripped Area and Posthole 60 and posthole 22



Section 4: South facing view of Stripped Area



Plate 22: South facing view of Stripped Area.



Section 5: South facing view of Stripped Area and Posthole 60



Section 5: South facing view of Stripped Area and Posthole 60



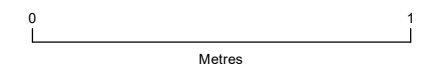
Section 6: North facing view of posthole 22.



Plate 15: North facing view of posthole 22.

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