

# Plymouth City Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Devonport, Plymouth	<b>National Grid Reference</b> SX 45221 55095	<b>Number:</b> (Leave blank for HES to fill in)
<b>Subject:</b> Archaeological Recording During Construction of Two New Units at the Riverside Business Park, Devonport, Plymouth		<b>Photo attached?</b> Y
<b>Planning Application no:</b> 10/00823/FUL	<b>Recipient museum:</b> Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> exeterar1-90325	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> AR.2010.36	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b>  EA7321	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b>  4 November and 9 December 2010	
<p><b>Description of works.</b></p> <p><i>Introduction</i></p> <p>Archaeological recording was undertaken by Exeter Archaeology during construction of two new units at the Riverside Business Park, Devonport, Plymouth. The site lies within the ditch of the Dock Lines – a series of 18th-century defences around the dockyard at Devonport discussed in depth in Pye and Woodward (1996). The defences in the area were slightly remodelled in the 19th century. An archaeological evaluation of the site in 1992 prior to the construction of a block of industrial units concluded that (a) there was at least 3m of 1950s infilling within the ditch, and (b) the counterscarp wall of the ditch survives below ground (Pye and Stead 1992) whilst the scarp wall in the area of the present site is represented by the scarp wall of Marlborough Bastion. In the light of this known survival of archaeological deposits, and the proposed piled construction technique of the development, archaeological monitoring was limited to recording exposed sections of the scarp and counterscarp walls following ground reduction (Fig. 1).</p> <p><i>Results</i></p> <p>The scarp wall (of Marlborough Bastion) survives above ground to a height of 2.5-3.0m, and is constructed of ashlar limestone bonded in lime mortar. Other than the blocked gun embrasures no features are visible (<i>ibid.</i>, 4). During the excavations the scarp wall was exposed to varying depths, of between 0.30m at the west end of the site to 1.60m at the east end of the site, below the ground level. Ashlar masonry was exposed throughout the excavation with no other structural or architectural features observed (Photo. 1).</p> <p>The counterscarp wall does not survive above ground. Excavations adjacent to the line of the wall varied in depth from 0.15m at the west end of the site to 1.40m at the east end of the site where the wall was exposed for a distance of 7m, and even here had been heavily truncated. Only a few facing stones survived, although over the whole distance of the exposure core material (limestone bonded in lime mortar) was present (Photo. 2).</p> <p>As expected, modern fill of the ditch was encountered across the main body of the site overlain by a tarmac surface and its associated make-up.</p> <p><i>Conclusion</i></p> <p>In conclusion, the scarp wall defining Marlborough Bastion survives in a good condition both above and below ground. The counterscarp wall had been heavily robbed, with most of its facing stones removed. This observation correlates with the results of the 1992 evaluation, where facing stones were only present at the west end of the Business Park. Although the archaeological investigations were limited in scope, they have provided useful observations on this section of the Dock Lines.</p> <p><i>Source Consulted</i></p> <p>Pye, A.R. and Stead, P.M. 1992 <i>Archaeological Evaluation of the Former MoD Car Park off New Passage Hill, Devonport</i>, EMAFU Report No. <b>92.57</b>.</p> <p>Pye, A. R. and Woodward F. 1996 <i>The Historic Defences of Plymouth</i>.</p>		
<b>Recorder:</b>  Andrew Passmore, Exeter Archaeology		<b>Date sent to HER:</b>  12 January 2011

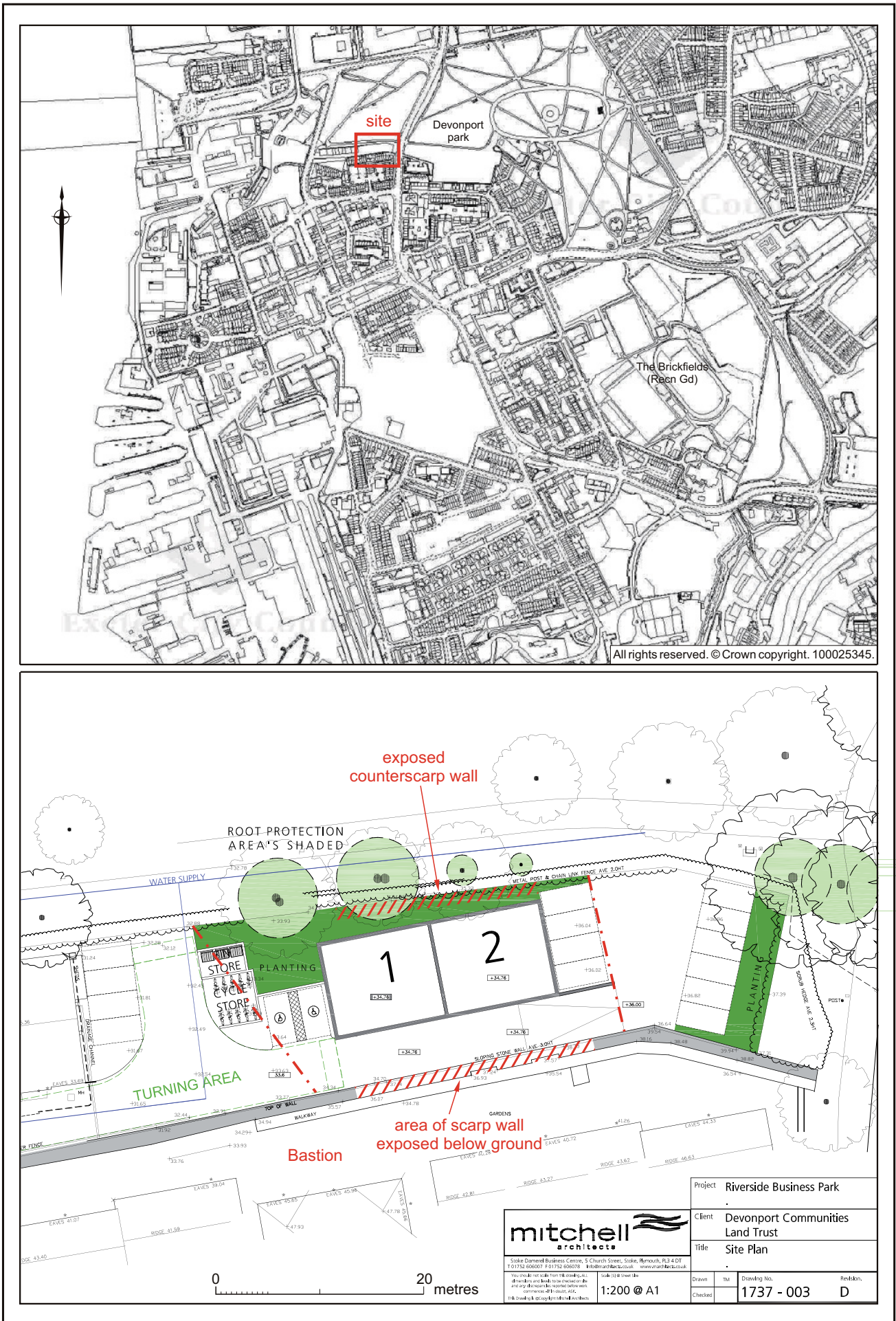


Fig. 1 Location of site.





Photo 1 The scarp wall (of Marlborough Bastion), looking southwest.



Photo 2 The remains of the counterscarp wall, looking northwest. 1m and 2m scales.