

**A hulk assessment on the foreshore of the River Adur, Adur
Tidal Walls Reach E2, West Sussex.**

NGR: TQ 21106 05230 (Reach E2)

**ASE Project No: 160031
Site Code: ATW13**

**ASE Report No: 2017055
OASIS id: 275699**



By Damian Goodburn and Kristina Krawiec



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Revision:			

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Abstract

This report presents the results of a hulk assessment carried out by Archaeology South-East on the foreshore of the River Adur, Adur Tidal Walls Reach E2, West Sussex in January 2017. The fieldwork was commissioned by Team Van Ord in advance of flood alleviation works.

The walkover survey determined that the hulk in Reach E2 was in fairly poor condition and that further recording is required in order to better understand the nature, date and function of the vessel. The lack of comparable material from the River Adur means that close dating was not possible on this visit, although it is likely to date to the mid-19th to early 20th century. It is recommended that limited hand/machine excavation is carried out to further uncover the vessel in order that a more complete record can be made. In addition, it is also suggested that documentary research is undertaken prior to fieldwork in order to determine the level of recording that is required.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Team Van Ord to undertake an assessment of a hulk on the foreshore of the River Adur in Reach E2 of the Adur Tidal Walls Flood Alleviation Scheme (NGR: 521106 105230; Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The BGS records the underlying geology as the Newhaven Chalk Formation with overlying superficial deposits of Beach and Tidal Flat deposits (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed 08/02/17). The current character of the area surrounding the hulk is a raised area of gravelly foreshore immediately west of the current tidal walls. The area is strewn with modern building debris, fishing gear detritus and the higher areas have been colonised by sea purslane (*Haliomine portulacoides*).

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The original Desk-Based Assessment and Written Scheme of Investigation (Mott Macdonald 2015 and 2016) did not recommend work to be undertaken on the hulk due to the lack of impact by the scheme. The Environment Statement provides the following regarding wrecks on the foreshore:

7.5.23 during the foreshore walkover undertaken for baseline gathering a boat wreck was identified and is considered to have a low heritage value. The historic landscape is characterised as mudflats.

7.6.1 There has been no impact assessment for Reaches W2, W3, W4, W5, W6 and E2 as the baseline review has determined there are no/limited archaeological potential or heritage assets within these areas and the design will not affect the historic environment including the historic landscape.

7.6.8 There are not considered to be any effects upon the historic environment during the construction or operation of Reach E2. The boat wreck on the foreshore will not be impacted and protection measures will be included in the EAP (Chapter 16 of the ES).

Section 3.11 of Appendix 7 of the ES (Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (2015)) contains the following reference to the wreck.

A foreshore walkover survey was undertaken by a principal heritage consultant in November 2014. The remains of two 20th century hulks were plotted on the foreshore (Photo B.11; Photo B.12) pp.25

5.1.3.2 Reach E2

The area to the west of the 'New Shoreham' may contain remains of the 'new' harbour (anchorage) which was established after the harbour at Old Shoreham silted up. The exact location of the harbour is unknown but is assumed to have been somewhere in this area along the foreshore.

The Scheme (Reach E2) will not impact upon jetties and piles related to this anchorage. Most of the Scheme within Reach E2 will not require any works to the existing wall, which was constructed as part of the Ropetackle development (2004). The only new impact to below ground deposits will be between south of the railway line and north of the new Ropetackle development. The new floodwall will follow the line of the existing flower bed with the retaining wall to the rear. Most of the other works will be superficial landscaping works which will not impact upon archaeological deposits. Pp47 Table 5.1 ES p49 / 550.

5.1.3.3 Reach E3

It is considered that the medieval anchorage was located somewhere on the west side of the town, but there are made ground deposits across this area which will protect any potential archaeology from topsoil stripping operations. Proposed piling walls within Reach E3 have the potential to impact upon buried archaeology, but this impact will not be significant. There are two known wrecks along the east bank but these will not be impacted upon by the Scheme

6.1.2 Foreshore archaeology

There are no known wrecks recorded on the hydrographic charts within the study area, but two wooden wrecks have been seen on the foreshore along Reach E2 & E3 during a site walkover at low tide. These are considered to be perhaps early 20th century wrecks of low heritage significance and will not be impacted upon by the Scheme. The avoidance of these wrecks will be included in the construction management plan for the Scheme.

It is not expected that any additional (as yet discovered possible buried wrecks within alluvium silts) will be impacted upon by the Scheme. No jetties or piles from the Roman or medieval harbour or anchorages are known to survive, but it has been suggested that any anchorage would have been located on the west side of the town within the vicinity of Reach E2 or Reach E3.
P53 archaeology report, p.554 of combined appendix

- 1.3.2 However, changes in the scheme now require access across the area of the hulk and therefore Mott MacDonald in consultation with Historic England created a revised Marine Management Organisation Marine Licence where it states:

Revised Methodology, Table 3, Reach E2, Historic Environment
'that there is an increased impact with regards to the historic environment and that 'protection of wreck is not possible due to excavation footprint'. Could you provide some further information on this, i.e. which wreck is referred to, what is the potential impact, what activities are being undertaken near to the wreck and how close to the wreck are the works?

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The aims of the assessment are to characterise the nature, character and state of preservation of the hulk in order to provide recommendations to mitigate against the impact of the proposed works which involve moving heavy plant across the area.

- 1.4.2 The main objectives are:

- To undertake a walkover survey of the vessel with a suitably qualified specialist.
- To undertake a visual and written assessment of the hulk supplemented by digital photography.
- To make recommendations for the preservation by record of the hulk.

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report details the results of a walkover assessment undertaken in January 2017 by Damian Goodburn (Timber Specialist, MoLA) and Kristina Krawiec (Senior Archaeologist, ASE). The project was managed by Neil Griffin and the post excavation was managed by Jim Stevenson.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Hulk recording

- 2.1.1 There have been important, but very sporadic, findings of historic and even prehistoric hulked vessels on modern foreshore zones in England for over 60 years. However, systematic archaeological survey and recording of hulked vessels is a relatively recent development beginning in a few locations in the 1980's and 90's.
- 2.1.2 One of the earliest of the modern projects was carried out by Goodburn, relatively close to Shoreham, in the Chichester and Langstone Harbour area in 1983 (Goodburn 1984). Another key systematic survey was carried out in a hulk graveyard on the R Medway in Kent at Whitewall Creek ahead of the building of the Medway road tunnel in 1992 (this was supported by the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England, and Kent County Council, Milne, McKewan and Goodburn 1998). Prior to these projects, studies of abandoned watercraft, often clearly of regional origin, were carried out using only pictorial, documentary and oral history sources. Some of this work resulted in useful general publications tied to specific regions or themes, such as *Sailing Barges* by F Carr (Carr 1971) but they lacked details needed to manage the historic resource or understand the craft fully.
- 2.1.3 It is probably fair to record that Historic England and some of its forerunner bodies acknowledged the potential importance of this type of archaeological survey and sometimes targeted excavation in the mid 1990's. The remains of hulks in foreshore zones were gradually appreciated as part of the local historic environment where they occurred. Their remains can be compared to the remains of local historic standing buildings, early industrial structures and 'traditional' buried archaeological remains on land or underwater. The light such vessel remains could shine on little known local vernacular vessels such as sailing barges and fishing boats was acknowledged as was their value for illuminating other areas of historic interest such as naval activities, seagoing trading vessels, harbour craft and even historic yachts (Milne, McKewan and Goodburn 1998).
- 2.1.4 This realisation of the value of historic hulks lead to the support and encouragement of several regional survey projects and an important project to assess the survival of hulks nationally within England. These projects involved both professional and amateur archaeological teams and sometimes included wider foreshore survey covering the full range of structural remains and portable material found there (see work by the NAS at Forton lake, and the Thames Discovery Programme on the London Thames). Museum of London Archaeology was commissioned to carry out a national assessment project on historic hulks, aided by the Nautical Archaeology Society and specialists from Historic England and elsewhere.
- 2.1.5 The assessment of the national resource concentrated initially (Part1) on remains of groups of two or more hulks recorded in various local and specialist archives such as county based Sites and Monuments Records (Davis 2011). This initial assessment was reviewed and areas where there were gaps in the records of historic hulks were revealed.

2.1.6 The project threw up the lack of systematic archaeological records of historic hulks and local craft in general from all the Sussex rivers, estuaries and harbours. This implies that the remains of hulked vessels in this region, including on the Adur estuary are of particular importance as there are no records of similar vessels in the same waterway, as is largely true for some other estuary zones such as the Thames and Medway. The second stage of the national hulks assessment attempted to find records filling in perceived regional gaps in data and included the trial of relatively widely available initial survey tools such as Google Earth to test whether they could be used in blank areas to find hulks, particularly those of difficult access (Pett 2013). The remains of hulked vessels in foreshore zones are seen as intrinsic parts of the historic environment of the region and possibly beyond. It must also be noted that decaying wooden hulks in particular, like those on the east bank of the Adur estuary, are both heritage assets and important environmentally as colonised locations for plants, animals and birds.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The walkover survey was carried out at low tide (10.30am) to ensure a safe working area. The hulk was visually inspected and in one small area the vegetation was gently lifted to allow better access to the timbers. This was then placed back over the area when the inspection was completed. The timber specialist made notes as to the character, nature and state of preservation of the hulk. This was supplemented by a sketch plan and digital photography.
- 3.1.2 The outline of the wreck was located using a Leica RTK GPS which provided national grid coordinates and ordnance datum heights.

3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

- 3.2.1 The site was freely accessible for the duration of the survey and it is likely that only the western portion of the hulk is fully submerged during Spring High Tides.

3.3 The Site Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Shoreham (Marlipins) museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Tables 1 and 2).

Context sheets	0
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	1
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	63
Context register	1
Drawing register	1
Watching brief forms	1
Trench Record forms	0

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box)	0
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Deliberately abandoned vessels, mostly situated in foreshore zones are generally termed 'hulks' rather than 'wrecks' as the latter term implies the dramatic accidental loss of a vessel. Wrecks are commonly found at the lowest foreshore level, or below, whilst hulks commonly occur on the upper foreshore close to, and sometimes incorporated into, seawalls etc (For examples of this situation see Parker 1998). Clearly both may also be found at depth behind, and under recent seawalls in land reclaimed in the past from water channels, and also buried just beneath the current foreshore surfaces, particularly in saltmarsh.

4.2 The hulk at Reach E2

- 4.2.1 The E2 hulk was easily accessed via a small existing slipway on the seawall just north west of the railway bridge (Figures 1 and 2). The foreshore was moderately hard underfoot through a thin covering of estuary clay silt around the perimeter and north west end of the hulk, however c. 2/3rds of the interior of the wooden hull was obscured by saltmarsh vegetation and relatively recently dumped masonry rubble (Figure 3). The downstream south east end, was also partially obscured by a crude reinforced concrete lining added to the inside of the hull before its abandonment. As the hulk is close to the upper limit of the foreshore any further recording work would be limited perhaps 2 hours either side of High Water on spring tides.
- 4.2.2 As the vessel lies only c. 2m from the base of the recently refaced seawall, adjacent to a slight indentation in its line and adjacent to crude c. mid 20th century concrete repairs, it may well be that the craft was abandoned there to reduce erosion of the wall base. English Nature placed close restrictions on the disturbance of vegetation during the fieldwork due to the presence of important flora and fauna at the site. This means that access was limited and some key structural features bearing on the function and use of the vessel were heavily obscured.
- 4.2.3 Whilst it is clear that the south east end of the hulk is partially intact and visually up-standing at least 0.8m, the north west end is flattened out, eroded and much more dismantled. Both ends have spread as the hull framing has decayed and fallen outwards. Currently it is not certain which end was the bow and which the stern, though the relatively pointed form of the south east end indicates it was probably the bow (although pointed sterns are also known in some craft).
- 4.2.4 As some lower hull plank fragments at the north west end had relatively square ends and the keelson (see below) tapers upward it may be close to the original extent of the vessel, but again this is not totally clear. Thus, we can currently suggest that the original length of the craft would have been in the region of 14m (c. 45ft) or a little more though the length of visible remains is c. 13.4m. The maximum width or 'beam' of the hulk which has clearly lost most of its sides and nowhere approaches its original upper level, is c. 3.7m (c.12ft4"). These proportions and the robust construction indicate the hull was not a narrow, high speed launch.

- 4.2.5 Most of the framing and planking of the vessel is heavily eroded as are the metal fastenings.
- 4.2.6 The hull is 'carvel built', that is with planking set edge to edge secured to close-fitting framing (Figure 4). The cross-wise framing is made from sawn slabs of oak fastened overlapping so as to form doubled frames. The visible bottom of the boat in the central area was relatively flat but with well-rounded bilges where the bottom turns into the sides.
- 4.2.7 The lower framing ('floor' timbers) are c. 120-140mm 'sided' (wide for and aft) and c. 120mm deep ('moulded'). The side framing or 'futtocks' overlap the floor timbers greatly to which they appear to be iron bolted. The centre of the vessel has a large conifer timber (probably American Douglas fir?) beam or 'keelson' up to c.250mm wide and 120mm deep running along its length, which is partially visible at the north west end. The external hull planking is of coniferous timber, again probably American Douglas Fir, c. 35mm thick and the plank to frame fastenings are ferrous spikes and what look like some form of bolt or clench bolt. The bolts are much corroded and it is uncertain whether they were threaded or not. Elements of a close-set lining or 'ceiling' of coniferous timber planking also survives in places of varied thickness.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Possible function of the craft

5.1.1 The walkover survey was able to make some preliminary observation with regard to the nature of the hulk. There are still several possible functional types of craft that she might have been. It may be worth noting what she is very unlikely to have been. She was very unlikely to be an expensively built yacht where the use of more expensive non-ferrous fastenings and lighter framing and ceiling planking would be expected. Neither does she appear to have been a lifeboat of any form, as she was too robustly built. At the other extreme it can be noted that she was not a heavily-built, flat-bottomed ('Hard chined') barge or lighter as the hulk at reach E3 clearly was. Thus, the choice of the vessel's function falls somewhere in the 'middle' that is a craft such as a harbour launch, small but robustly-built naval craft or fishing boats designed to operate from a harbour rather than beach as many traditional Sussex inshore craft did in the 20th century and earlier.

5.1.2 However, it is also important to note that there is some evidence for the use of a few, small, round-hulled barges not far to the west in Chichester harbour before the simply built, flat-bottomed tradition took over at some point in the 19th century. These craft appear to have resembled the small, round-hulled barges used in some Devon and Cornwall estuaries. It is also the case that after the 2nd World War some craft not built as barges, such as large ship's lifeboats, were used as small barges to move small amounts of building materials around the Chichester Harbour area. Finally, the local evidence of a variety of houseboats moored on the western banks of the Adur estuary shows graphically that the function a vessel was put to could vary greatly though its life with a number of craft ending their days as crudely maintained houseboats, storage hulks, or breakwaters. The crude reinforced concrete lining of the best preserved end of the vessel might just be evidence of its unintelligent reinforcement for just such a static use.

5.1.3 The vessel in its current position was probably used as a basic form of flood defence to possibly protect the area from erosion (Figure 4). This is a common practice where derelict vessels are readily available and examples of this can be seen along the south coast in areas such as the Hamble.

5.2 Possible date of the vessel

5.2.1 The form of the oak framing used in the carvel-built hull, the frequent use of iron fastenings and imported coniferous timber for the hull and ceiling planking cannot provide close dating on technological grounds. However, it clearly does suggest a mid-19th to mid-20th century date for the building of the vessel.

5.3 Significance of the vessel

5.3.1 There is a need of some more key information that could not be obtained on the first walkover survey outlined here, but it is possible to note the following; the vessel was a large boat c.14 m long of relatively robust carvel build and dating to the last 100 years or so (Not older than c.150 years at the outside). We do not yet know whether it was a powered craft or not. Thus, it can be suggested that the vessel is likely to be of local or possibly regional historical

significance and worthy of more targeted investigation but probably not full excavation.

- 5.3.2 The hulk at E2 contrasts with the hulk visible at Reach E3 to the north west which was very briefly visited after the hulk at Reach E2 and found to be the remains of a heavily-built, flat-bottomed barge of a very distinctive local type. The construction of the E3 hulk is very similar to that of the barges of Chichester/ Langstone harbour and may represent a regional east Hampshire-West Sussex type of vernacular vessel still relatively little known. The vessel at E2 is very much part of the local estuarine harbour history and as it lies only c. 2.5 m west of the base of the sea wall it will be impacted during the flood defence works.

5.4 Preservation

- 5.4.1 The hulk is in a fairly poor condition, the north western end in particular is more exposed and only the futtocks remain. The vessel is unlikely to survive attempts to move it and will certainly be heavily impacted upon during the works

5.4 Recommendations

- 5.4.1 In order to mitigate the impact of the proposed works it is recommended that more detailed recording is carried out. This is likely to involve the removal of the vegetation from the hulk, limited hand or machine excavation of the south-eastern end in order to better characterise the shape of the vessel and removal of the rubble from inside the vessel to determine the presence or absence of mast or engine fittings. It is also recommended that documentary research is undertaken, prior to fieldwork commencing, with particular reference to local collections (i.e. Marlipins museum) and aerial photography in order to determine the level of recording necessary.
- 5.4.2 The hulk is unlikely to survive intact should attempts be made to remove it and therefore preservation by record is suggested subject to approval by Historic England.

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HER Summary

HER enquiry no.						
Site code	ATW13					
Project code	160031					
Planning reference						
Site address	Reach E2 Adur Tidal Walls, Shoreham by Sea					
District/Borough	West Sussex					
NGR (12 figures)	TQ 21106 05230 (Reach E2)					
Geology	Newhaven Chalk Formation: Beach and Tidal Flat Deposits					
Fieldwork type	Eval	Excav	WB	HBR	Survey	Other
Date of fieldwork	January 2017					
Sponsor/client	Team Van Ord					
Project manager	Neil Griffin					
Project supervisor	Kristina Krawiec					
Period summary	Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age	Iron Age	
	Roman	Anglo-Saxon	Medieval	Post-Medieval	Other	
Project summary (100 word max)	An assessment was carried out on a hulk on the foreshore of the River Adur, Adur Tidal Walls Reach E2, West Sussex. The hulk was examined by a timber specialist and a brief record made of the nature, date and state of preservation of the vessel. Recommendations were made for further work to better characterize and date the vessel.					
Museum/Accession No.						

OASIS Form

275699

Project details

Project name	Hulk assessment, Adur Tidal Walls, West Sussex
Short description of the project	An assessment was carried out on a hulk on the foreshore of the River Adur, Adur Tidal Walls Reach E2, West Sussex. The hulk was examined by a timber specialist and a brief record made of the nature, date and state of preservation of the vessel. Recommendations were made for further work to better characterize and date the vessel.
Project dates	Start: 27-01-2017 End: 08-02-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Maritime designations
Current Land use	Coastland 2 - Inter-tidal
Methods & techniques	"Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure"
Development type	Service infrastructure (e.g. sewage works, reservoir, pumping station, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX ADUR SHOREHAM BY SEA Adur Tidal Walls
Site coordinates	TQ 21106 05230 50.833345893997 -0.280031593306 50 50 00 N 000 16 48 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Historic England
Project design originator	ASE
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin

Project supervisor Kristina Krawiec

Type of
sponsor/funding
body Contractor

Name of
sponsor/funding
body TEAM VAN ORD

Project archives

Digital Archive
recipient Marlipins

Digital Media
available "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

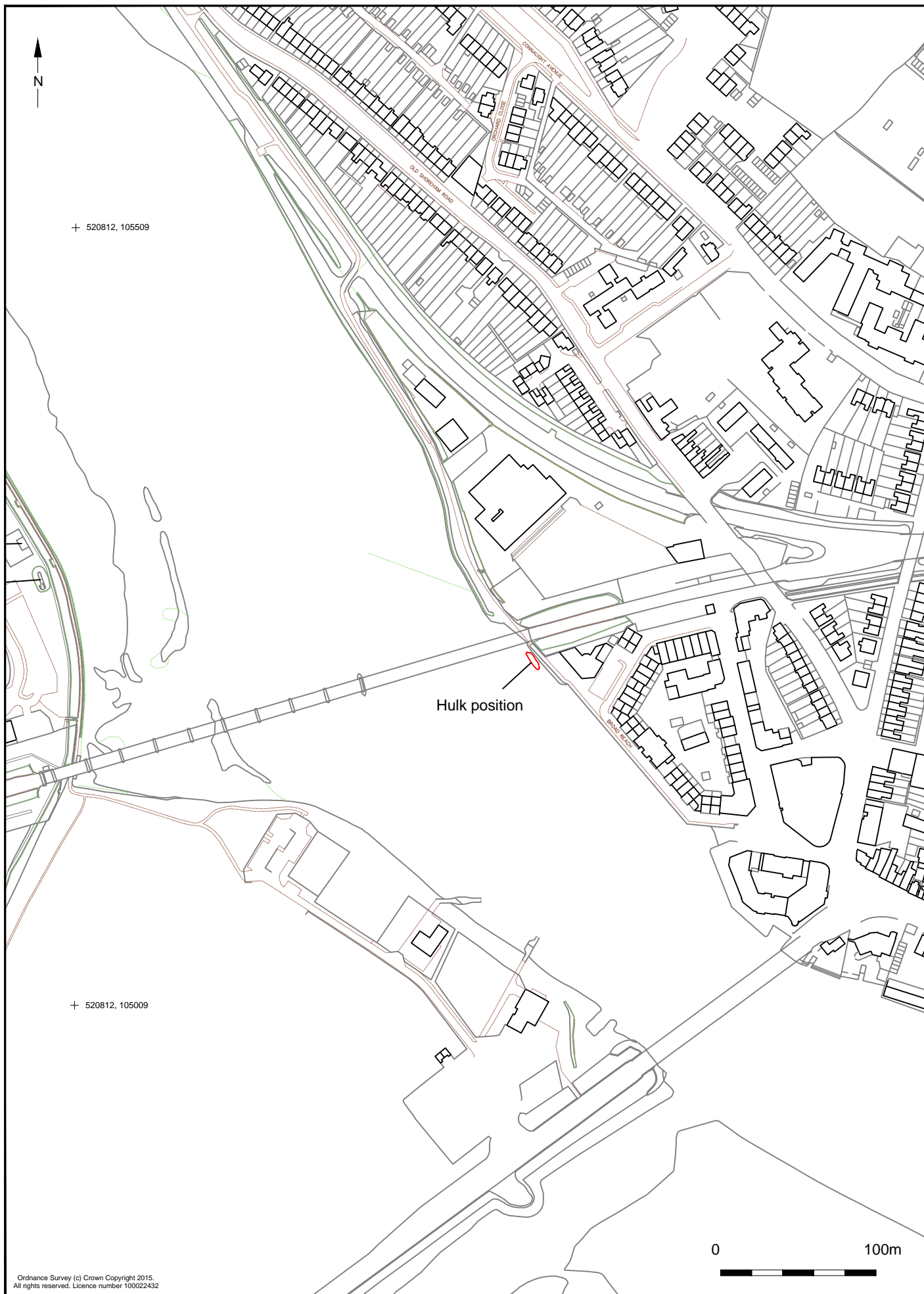
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© Archaeology South-East		Adur Tidal Walls, Shoreham	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 160031	Feb 2017	Hulk location	
Report Ref: 2017055	Drawn by: AR		



Hulk location, looking south east



Rubble in southern end of hulk



Double framing of the hulk



Current position of the hulk looking north

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