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# NPA NEWCASTLE

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## Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/283/05

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AT 40 – 40A BELL ST, NORTH SHIELDS TYNE AND WEAR



**FOR**  
**LEFT BANK DEVELOPMENTS (HANOVER SQUARE) LTD**  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In December 2005, Archaeological Services, now trading as NPA Newcastle, were commissioned by Graham Bolton Planning Partnership Ltd to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment and site visit in advance of a proposed redevelopment of 40 to 40a Bell Street, North Shields, Tyne and Wear (NGR NZ 360 863).

The study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the libraries and record offices in Newcastle and North Tyneside, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Tyne and Wear County Council based in Newcastle upon Tyne. The HER includes the locations and settings of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Parks and Gardens and other, non-designated archaeological remains. In addition, a number of published and unpublished sources were consulted to provide background information, including previous assessment reports and several relevant web sites.

A site visit was carried out in order to assess the current condition of the site as regards depth of existing foundations or disturbance and proximity to potential or known archaeological remains, and to gain an understanding of the size and character of the proposed development. Digital and colour print photographs were taken of the site at the time of the visit.

The site is centrally located with regard to the earliest medieval settlement founded by Germanus, prior of Tynemouth, in 1225, ostensibly to provide fish for the priory, although on the evidence of the many heated disputes with its powerful cousin, Newcastle, just upriver, it is likely that the priory had every intention of exploiting the settlement's estuarine position to establish its own trading post. Bell Street, which was named after a local worthy after 1828, was originally part of a single long east-west thoroughfare, which ran from the Pow Burn, just to the east of the proposed development, to the Bull Ring, at the western end of the town, which was variously known as Low Row, Low Street or Low Town Street. During medieval times the proposed development site would have been set a little back from the waterfront, though not as far back as today, since both Western quay and Union quay are 19<sup>th</sup> century developments. The site is likely to have been occupied by densely packed wooden houses, shops, inns or industrial premises such as breweries or maltings. Depending on the exact location of the medieval waterfront, timber jetties, wharves or harbours may have also stood at this point at the eastern end of Low Street. The massive oak wharf of conjectured medieval date found at the Pow Burn in 1839 more than 3.8 metres below the then ground level may give an indication of both the type of find and the state of preservation that might be expected should medieval levels be encountered in this area.

The area of the proposed development remained at the hub of North Shield's burgeoning industries throughout the Post Medieval period, which included tanning, brewing, salt panning, coal export, maritime supply, pottery manufacture, shipbuilding and repair, rope manufacture, iron founding, and of course the ever present fishing, and it is likely that at least one of these trades was in residence at some time before the Blue Bell Inn was constructed prior to 1861.

The twentieth century saw the decline of many of the flagship industries of the town, though fishing continued to be important, and remains so, albeit on a small scale, today. After 1760, the town expanded onto higher ground, which marked the beginning of a gradual shift of emphasis up towards the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century New Town away from Old Low Row. By 1935, the many ancient properties clustered along the waterfront had fallen into decay, and many buildings along the quayside were demolished, including the Blue Bell inn, and its neighbours to the east, at least one of which may have occupied this part of the proposed development site from the 18<sup>th</sup>

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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century, or possibly even earlier. The most recent occupant of the site, the 1935 warehouse of Cosalt PLC, is still in partly in existence, nine of its original fifteen bays having been demolished after 2000.

The archaeological impact of the proposed development depends to a great extent on the depth of the footings or piled foundations in the proposed design scheme. There is every possibility that the slum clearance and subsequent rebuilding of 1935 may have removed evidence of the Blue Bell Inn and adjacent properties, which, in turn may have truncated or removed earlier evidence. However, the great depth at which possible medieval remains have previously been found in the vicinity (>3.8m) suggests that there is high potential for well-preserved medieval and post-medieval remains beneath the site.

The site invites comparison with the Fish Quay at Low Street, Sunderland, where recent archaeological excavations (August 2004) in advance of a deep-piled apartment development discovered important evidence relating to the medieval fishing industry, including dense deposits of shell-rich midden material, with large quantities of 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery, and a number of cobble-built walls interpreted as components of medieval waterfront structures. Although the site had been extensively developed with cellared buildings in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, medieval archaeology was shown to have survived in good condition at many locations.

On this basis it is recommended to our client that the most effective way of mitigating damage to possible surviving medieval and post medieval archaeology would be to reduce the below ground impact of the development, in other words, to opt for raft foundations as opposed to a deep piling. It is also advised that an archaeological evaluation, comprising excavation of trial trenching of at least 5% of the development area should be undertaken before foundation design is finalised. In this way, the depth, nature and extent of any surviving archaeological remains can be assessed in advance at minimum cost and delay, and the building design can be adjusted accordingly where this is practicable. It is recommended that a suitable archaeological evaluation strategy could reasonably be accomplished with 2 trenches measuring 8 x 2 metres, positioned in the western and south eastern parts of the site, which would be excavated to the maximum impact depth likely to be required for foundations. Following submission of the results of the archaeological evaluation, the requirements of the proposed development could again be assessed in the light of precise information as to buried archaeology at the site.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The authors would like to offer thanks to Graham Bolton of Graham Bolton Planning Partnership Ltd for commissioning the project, and to the Tyne and Wear Specialist Conservation Team (TWSCT) for their assistance during consultation of the HER, to staff at North Tyneside Library Local Studies Section, Tyne and Wear Archive Service, and Newcastle Central Library. The desk-based assessment and site visit were undertaken by Richard Hewitt, The report was written by Richard Hewitt and Matthew Town, and the drawings were produced by Matthew Town. The project was managed by Richard Hewitt, NPA Newcastle (formerly Archaeological Services), and edited by Matthew Town. Overall responsibility for the project was retained by Frank Giecco, Technical Director for NPA Ltd.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 A planning application has been submitted to Tyne and Wear County Council for the demolition of a garage/lockup, walls and structures at 40 to 40a Bell Street (Figure 1), and the construction of a three to four storey development, to form fourteen apartments with car parking. The site lies within an area of considerable archaeological significance; the settlement of North Shields was established in 1225 by the Prior of Tynemouth, to provide fish for the Priory. The settlement developed west from the Pow Burn, and comprised houses built on stilts, each with its own quay. By 1292, one hundred houses were recorded. A period of decay ensued until 1390, when redevelopment began with reclamation of land below high water mark, to be covered with 200 houses. After a period of decay in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the town prospered throughout the post-medieval period. Prior to expansion onto the higher ground after 1760, the core of the town consisted of a long, narrow street parallel to the Tyne, between Low Lights, to the east, and Bull ring, to the west, called Low Town street, sometimes also called Low Row or Low Street. The site of the proposed development is situated toward the east end of this street, which has since been renamed, from west to east, Clive Street, Liddell Street, Bell St, and Union Quay.
- 1.1.2 Consequently, Tyne and Wear Specialist Conservation Team (TWSCT) advised that a programme of archaeological works would be necessary prior to the proposed development. Archaeological Services, now trading as NPA Newcastle, were commissioned by Graham Bolton Planning Partnership Ltd to carry out the work, which comprised a desk-based assessment in conjunction with site photographs.
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Historic Environment Record (HER) in Newcastle upon Tyne, in conjunction with a large number of local record offices, libraries and other archive holders. The principal objective of this assessment is to undertake sufficient work in order to identify and characterise the archaeological constraints associated with the development area, in order to assess the archaeological and historical potential of the development site.
- 1.1.4 A site visit was carried out on the site of the proposed development, in order to relate the landscape and surrounding area to the desk-based assessment.
- 1.1.5 This report sets out the results of the work in the form of a short document outlining the findings, followed by a statement of the archaeological potential of the area, an assessment of the impact of the proposed development, and recommendations for further work. This report also contains the results of the rapid identification survey carried out in conjunction with the desk-based assessment.



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## 2. METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 2.1.1 Several sources of information were consulted, in accordance with the project specification. Due to the very large numbers of records for cultural heritage sites in the vicinity of North Shields quayside, the boundaries of the Fish Quay conservation area were used to define the area of wider study. Records pertaining to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century New Town were not included in the study area, though discussion of this aspect of the historical development of the town has been included as part of the historical background (Section 3.2, below). The principal sources of information were the Historic Environment Record (HER), maps and secondary sources.
- 2.1.2 ***Historic Environment Record (HER):*** the HER at Jesmond Old Cemetery, Jesmond Rd, Newcastle upon Tyne was consulted in order to obtain information on the location of all designated sites and areas of historic interest and any other, non-designated sites within the study area, which included monuments, findspots, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. A brief record including grid reference and description was obtained for the various sites within the study area, and was examined in depth.
- 2.1.3 ***Tyne and Wear Archives Service (TWAS):*** The TWAS, at the Discovery Museum, Westmorland Rd, Newcastle upon Tyne was visited to consult documents specific to the study area. Historic maps of the study area, including surveys, Tithe and Enclosure Maps, Acts of Parliament and early Ordnance Survey maps, were examined. A search was made for any relevant historical documentation, particularly regarding the use of the area, drawing on the knowledge of the archivists.
- 2.1.4 ***North Tyneside Library Local Studies Section (NTL):*** The Local studies section, on the first floor of North Tyneside Library, Northumberland Square, North Shields, was also consulted for cartographic, documentary and pictorial sources.
- 2.1.5 ***Newcastle City Library Local Studies Section (NCL):*** The Local Studies section of Newcastle City Library, as Princess Square, Newcastle upon Tyne was also consulted for further cartographic, documentary and pictorial sources.
- 2.1.6 ***National Monuments Record (NMR):*** The National Monuments Record, which is located at Swindon, Wiltshire, could not be consulted directly at reasonable timescale and cost, and postal enquiries are rarely processed within a feasible timescale. However, Site and Monument data held by this office can be consulted online through the website of the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). A site centred 0.5 km search for NMR and other records was carried out using this resource.

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- 2.1.7 ***Archaeological Services (AS)***: various publications and unpublished reports on archaeological excavations, assessments, building surveys and other work in the region are held by Archaeological Services, now NPA Newcastle. Some use of these was made in order to enhance and augment the data obtained from a search of the appropriate repositories.
- 2.1.8 ***Northumberland Record Office (NRO)***: though this office contains a wealth of information pertaining to North Tyneside, it could not be consulted, as it was closed due to relocation at the time the archive searches were undertaken.

## **2.2 SITE VISIT AND PHOTOGRAPHY**

- 2.2.1 The site was visited in order to investigate the present condition of the area proposed for development, and to carry out site photography as specified in the brief issued by Tyne and Wear Specialist Conservation Team (TWSCT). Photographs were undertaken in digital and colour print format, and an A4 ring-binder containing colour prints will be submitted to the HER along with a copy of this report. The results of the site visit and photography are discussed in Section 5 (below).

## **2.3 ARCHIVE**

- 2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project specification, and in accordance with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited with whichever of the numerous applicable regional archives (above) are able to take it.

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## 3. BACKGROUND

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### 3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The proposed development site is situated at nos. 40 and 40a Bell St, in the heart of the old town of North Shields. To the west the site is bounded by a two-storey, six-bay building now occupied by the Fox and Hounds marine suppliers, and to the east of the site is the Sambuca 2 Italian restaurant. The site faces south out into the River Tyne, overlooking the western Fish Quays. North Shields fish market is situated to the southeast of the site, on the opposite side of the Pow Burn, which is now enclosed by a culvert. The High Light lighthouse occupies the top of the bank above the development site. Directly behind the site to the north, the bank itself is steeply sloping (ca. 45°) and presently tree covered.
- 3.1.2 North Shields owes its development to its strategically important position at the mouth of the river Tyne. Settlement first developed at the confluence of the Pow burn and the river Tyne, as the Peninsula of clay and sandy land later occupied by Clifford's Fort provided a sheltered harbour. The Pow Burn was culverted in the nineteenth century, and is consequently no longer evident. The earliest settlement at North Shields is likely to occupied a narrow strip along the river frontage in the vicinity of the proposed development, at what is now union and western quay, and may have continued westwards along the waterfront as far as the Bull Ring. Development to the north in the area of the present day town centre occurred in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, following the release of land for development by local landowners such as the Earl of Carlisle.
- 3.1.3 The proposed development site covers an area of approximately 610 m<sup>2</sup>, or 0.061 ha. The site is presently undeveloped except at its far eastern extent, which is the site of a single storey lock-up garage, with a corrugated steel roof pitched down to the west. The lock-up garage is of no architectural, historical, or archaeological interest and is proposed for demolition. The site is discussed in further detail in Section 5, site visit and photographs.
- 3.1.4 Both drift and solid geological mapping was consulted at Newcastle University Library. The 1:50,000 scale British Geological Survey map of 1975 shows that North Shields is situated entirely on Middle Coal Measures of Carboniferous age. Within this formation, the solid geology of the fish quay itself and the proposed development site is mapped as sandstones. Above the Fish Quay to the north of the site, beneath the nineteenth century North Shields new town, the coal seam known as the "Five Quarter" crops out against the older Bensham seam.
- 3.1.5 Superficial deposits of Quaternary age directly overlie the Carboniferous bedrock. In the vicinity of the proposed development site, these deposits comprise boulder clay of glacial origin. The British Geological Survey (1998) records that the boulder clay is in general a "tough, over-consolidated, dark brown, greyish brown, or dull yellowish-brown silty, locally sandy clay, which generally contains abundant clasts."(Speak, in Simon, 2005: 7).

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## 3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 **Introduction:** this historical background is compiled mostly from secondary sources, and is intended only as a brief summary of historical developments around the study area.
- 3.2.2 **Palaeolithic Period:** There are no known sites belonging to the Palaeolithic period (c. 500,000 BC – c. 12,000 BC) within either the development area or the whole of Tyne and Wear County. Although it is certainly possible that hunter-gatherer populations did not settle this landscape at this time, Quaternary deposits of pre-Devensian age are markedly lacking within the county. A more plausible explanation for the lack of evidence for Palaeolithic occupation in this region is that the passage of the most recent ice sheets pre 12,000 BC, which laid down the boulder clay drift deposits on which the site is located, have removed any earlier evidence of occupation.
- 3.2.3 **Mesolithic Period:** By the Mesolithic period (c. 12,000 BC – c. 4000 BC) it is likely that small hunting, fishing and foraging communities were active along this stretch of the North Sea Coastline. Recent work at Brown's Bay, Cullercoats, by Spikins (*pers.com.*) revealed flint artefacts of probable Mesolithic date, eroding from what may be a submerged Mesolithic landsurface, and Mesolithic finds are also known from the vicinity of St Mary's Island (NZ 348753), near to Whitley Bay (The Archaeological Practice, 2003). A flint core of possible Mesolithic date was recovered during geophysical survey work at Backworth (NZ 308712), which indicates that Mesolithic settlement in this area is not entirely restricted to the coast. However, no sites of Mesolithic date are yet known from the study area or its vicinity. It should be noted that prolific shipping activity in the mouth of the Tyne over several hundred years has resulted in the accumulation of large quantities of ballast both on and offshore, which may have concealed evidence of earlier activity.
- 3.2.4 **Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age:** There are no known sites dating to the Neolithic, Bronze age, or Iron Age (c. 4000 BC – c. AD 70) in the vicinity of the proposed development. However, given the evidence for earlier prehistoric occupation nearby, it seems unlikely that the area was uninhabited during later prehistoric times.
- 3.2.5 **Romano-British:** There are no sites of Romano-British date (c. AD 70 – AD 410) in the vicinity of the proposed development, though Tomlinson (1888: 45) records the existence of a reputed Roman fortlet at Blake Chesters at the western edge of North Shields. Nolan (2003: 11) notes that Romano-British settlement is known to have existed on the headland later occupied by Tynemouth Priory. Roman artefacts discovered on the Herd sand and at Trow rocks, on the coast at South Shields, may be derived from shipwrecks. The Roman fort at Arbeia, constructed around AD122 is situated on a steep promontory known as the Lawe, overlooking the south bank of the Tyne.
- 3.2.6 **Early Medieval:** There is no evidence for settlement in the area of the proposed development during the Early medieval period (AD 410 – AD 1080). However,

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Tomlinson (1888: 45) records that salt pans were working as early as AD 800 on the sand and clay peninsula to the east of the Pow Burn at the site of the later Clifford's Fort. This reference indicates that the Priory of Tynemouth may have held interests at North Shields from the time of its earliest foundation.

### 3.2.7

**Later Medieval:** The earliest recorded settlement at North Shields dates to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and was probably situated alongside the mouth of the Pow Burn, at the place marked as The Gut on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map (TWSCT, 2000: 7). At this time lands at North Shields belonged to the Priory of Tynemouth, and it is recorded that in 1225 the prior founded a settlement here to provide fish for the priory. According to Simpson (1988) 27 properties stood on the waterfront between the Pow Burn to the east, and a stream known as Dogger Letch. Hollar's 1654 map of the Tyne (Figure 3) clearly shows this stream, which appears to join the Tyne where the river turns southward at approximately the junction of present day Liddell St and Clive St. To the west of Dogger Letch stood twenty more properties, and though the western extent of the 13<sup>th</sup> century settlement cannot be accurately defined, though topographical considerations mean that it unlikely to have extended further west than the Bull Ring (Figure 2a, 2b).

The proposed development is therefore centrally sited with regard to the supposed location of the early town, which is likely to have comprised tightly clustered timber houses raised on piles 2-5 metres above the high water mark. Boats could be moored, and fish sold, from timber quays built up against the piles (TWSCT, 2000: 8).

From its earliest foundations, both North Shields, and its sister settlement of South Shields across the Tyne were the focus of bitter dispute over trading rights with the recently self-governing town of Newcastle. Although the burgesses of Newcastle, who repeatedly petitioned the crown on the basis that goods were being sold at the mouth of the Tyne instead of further upriver "to the great injury of the whole borough", were certainly self-interested, it does seem clear that the prior of Tynemouth intended to establish a trading port (Tomlinson, 1888: 45) Despite the judgment of Parliament in favour of Newcastle in 1290, at which the prior was ordered to demolish wharves below the high water mark, and cease loading and unloading of ships at North Shields, the port continued to develop.

In the late 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> century North Shields was substantially expanded following reclamation of around 4 acres of land below the high water mark. 200 new properties were built, including inns, stables, butchers, bakers, brewers and fish houses. A market was established, and in 1410, the prior began construction of staiths along the shore from around 1410 (TWSCT, 2000: 10). Further objections from the burgesses of Newcastle followed in 1401, 1417 and 1429. These objections met with little success, for in 1510 the prior was granted the right to sell goods to sailors, to set up premises for baking and brewing, and to trade unhindered in coal and salt. By the sixteenth century, however, North Shields had fallen badly into decline, perhaps as a result of further restrictions imposed at the behest of the burgesses of Newcastle in 1530, and the dissolution of Tynemouth Priory in 1539.

## 3.2.8

**Post-Medieval:** Following the dissolution of the priory, most of the lands that it formerly owned at North Shields were acquired by the Earl of Northumberland. A period of decline seems to have followed, perhaps largely due to the absence of the Priory, which had previously held responsibility for repairs to properties in the town, and had in general maintained a firm proprietorial interest. Despite these disadvantages, the port remained significant enough for two lighthouses, said to have taken the form of embattled stone towers to have been constructed at North Shields by c. 1545. It is unclear whether these were constructed in the interests of the town, rather than merely at its expense, as throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries the burgesses of Newcastle continued to attempt to restrict the town's development.

In 1608 James I ordered that two lighthouses should be constructed at North Shields, but the shifting nature of the sandbars at the mouth of the river meant that the new lights were quickly rendered obsolete. By the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the fortunes of the town had been revived, and hearth tax returns 1664-1674 show an increase from 180 to 305 households in that time (TWSCT, 2000: 15). Development of the town during this period continued to be restricted to the quayside and its immediate surrounds along a single stretch of road parallel to the waterfront which became known as Low St, and probably incorporated what is now Clive street, Liddell St and Bell St as far as Union Quay, which was not constructed until 1823. Though the quayside became increasingly crowded, development did not extend to the plateau of land above Low St, known as Bank Head, until 1760.

A fort was constructed on, or near to, the sand and clay peninsula projecting to the south of the Pow Burn in 1642, but was destroyed in action in 1644 (HER 151, Appendix III). Clifford's Fort, which survives to this day in a ruinous state (HER 149, SAM No.44) was constructed in 1672 at the beginning of the Third Dutch War, and continued in use as an artillery fort until 1881.

Despite the continued protestations of the burgesses of Newcastle, the town continued to grow, and in 1714 two new quays were constructed, one by the present day Low Light, and another at the western end of the town near the ferry boat landing (TWSCT, 2000: 17). Principal industries of the earlier post medieval period included salt making, which declined significantly from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, shipbuilding, which evolved out of the ship-repair industry and flourished throughout into the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and fishing. Tanneries, breweries and works associated with shipping, such as roperies and iron works, were in existence by the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1727, new, fixed lighthouses were constructed to replace the inefficient timber structures that had served as leading lights previously. The Old High Beacon, which still exists today (HER 4456), but is no longer in use as a lighthouse, stood at the southwest corner of Toll Square on Beacon St. The Old Low Light (HER 4557) stood inside the walls of Clifford's Fort, and was converted to the Trinity Alms House when the new Low Light was built. The continuing movement of sediment in the channel rendered both of these lighthouses obsolete, and in 1807

they were replaced by the New High and Low Lights in existence today (HER 2129, HER 2627).

From the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards the overcrowded old town was expanded up onto the higher ground overlooking the riverside. Dockwray Square was certainly in existence by 1773, as it appears on John Fryer's map of this date (Figure 4). At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the New Quay was constructed at the western end of the town. Passage between the developing New Town on the higher ground and the old town below was achieved by means of steep stairs such as Ropery Stairs, Dales Bank Stairs, and High Lighthouse stairs, which all appear on the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition map of 1861.

The nineteenth century saw rapid expansion of the both the New Town and the Low Street and quayside area, as North Shields continued to prosper through its burgeoning shipping, shipbuilding, and coal mining industries. Union Quay, built in 1823, connected Old Low St with the ancient bridge over the Pow Burn, and Western Quay, which the proposed development site overlooks, extended the fish market further out into the river (TWST, 2000: 25). By the middle part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, North Shields was at the forefront of marine engineering in the north east, specialising mostly in the manufacture of small steam vessels. The shipbuilding industry was mainly concentrated to the west of the town, and many new premises were constructed to accommodate this burgeoning industry. The North Shields Shipbuilding Yard (HER 2132) was built after 1858, and the area of the Lime Kiln Shore was developed as docks by the end of the nineteenth century, and associated timber yards, iron works and roperies contributed to the increasingly heavy industrialisation of the town.

Coal was also shipped from North Shields, and a waggonway was constructed between Whitley colliery and the quayside area so coal could be loaded into brigs from staiths at the Low Light. The railway arrived in 1857, though the early line was abandoned following construction of the Tynemouth and Newcastle Branch of the North Eastern Railway.

The fishing industry remained prosperous, but was mostly concentrated at the eastern end of the town, in the vicinity of the proposed development area. A new Fish Market (HER 4585) was constructed in 1820, and can be seen on Wood's map of 1827 (HER, 2000: 29). In the vicinity of Low Street, in which the proposed development site is situated, a great number of inns and public houses grew up.

- 3.2.9 **Modern:** The modern period is very little considered in the historical literature, which seems surprising, since North Shields continued to prosper until the second half of the twentieth century, with the original industry of the town, fishing, regaining its importance as heavy industry fell into decline. The Fish Quay was extended to the east in the 1930's, and after 1915, much of the area of the original Low Street was redeveloped with warehouses, fish processing sheds and marine suppliers premises. Shipbuilding left the town with the closure of Smith's Dock in 1909, though the yard continued to carry out repairs, and was, for a time,

probably the biggest ship repairing yard in the world (The Archaeological Practice, 2000).



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## 4. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The assessment results are based on primary documents, most notably maps, and on the secondary sources used in *Section 3.2*. The results are presented according to the archive from which they were consulted.

### 4.2 THE EXISTING STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The following section is compiled from the Tyne and Wear Historic Towns Survey for North Shields (TWSCT, 2000: 36).

- 4.2.1 The management of archaeological sites and deposits are achieved through a number of different legislative measures, concerning both archaeological monuments and planning law (TWSCT, 2000: 36). Sites regarded as of national importance are protected by law at a national level (Scheduled Ancient Monuments), and those of lesser (local or regional) importance are protected through a combination of planning law and policy guidance notes.
- 4.2.2 Archaeological monuments which incorporate substantial above-ground fabric and are deemed to contribute to the quality of the built environment can be listed under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. These enhance the powers of the Local Planning Authority and can indirectly preserve buried deposits by preventing development which would be permitted elsewhere. The Fish Quay itself is a recently designated conservation area (Figure 2a), something that is likely to have implications for development.

### 4.3 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER)

- 4.3.1 **HER:** There are no records within the Tyne and Wear Historic Environment Record (HER) for the proposed development site itself. There are 39 listings in the HER within the Fish Quay conservation area. A full list of these sites is given in the Gazetteer in *Appendix II*. This gazetteer includes sites under statutory protection such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) and Listed Buildings (LBs)
- 4.3.2 **Listed Buildings and Conservation areas:** 12 of the 39 HER records were for Listed Buildings, all at Grade II, except for Clifford's Fort, which is Listed Grade II\*, and additionally protected as a SAM. As already mentioned, the Fish Quay, (see Figure 2) is recently designated conservation area, and the proposed development site lies inside its boundaries.
- 4.3.3 **Scheduled Ancient Monuments:** 3 of the 39 HER records were listed as SAMs. All of these related to Clifford's Fort and its defences.

### 4.4 ARCHAEOLOGY DATA SERVICE (ADS)

- 4.4.1 **ADS:** There is 1 record held by the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) for the proposed development site itself. The ADS also holds 19 listings within the Fish Quay conservation area. A full list of these sites is given in the Gazetteer in *Appendix III*. All of the listings are records held by the National Monuments Record (NMR).
- 4.4.2 **NMR\_NATINV-955355, Warehouse, Union Quay:** The Cosalt PLC building, which occupied the development site between 1935 and c. 2000, is listed by the Archaeology Data Service as NMR\_NATINV-955355, record 15 in Appendix III (Figure 2b). Note that the confusion as to where Bell St ends and Union Quay begins is understandable, the western end of the building bears the street name, Union Quay, though the street here is clearly labelled “Bell St” on the most recent edition of the Ordnance Survey map.

Though unlisted, this building is of sufficient importance to merit an entry on the National Monuments Record. At the present time, only 6 of the 15 bays remain. The building’s primary historical interest is the record it provides of the clearance and rebuilding programme in the vicinity of the Fish Quay in the 1930’s, when a large number of very ancient houses, inns and workshops (Plate 2, 3, 4) were demolished and replaced with commercial premises such as warehouses and Marine suppliers. Quayside Court, to the west of the Cosalt PLC building, also dates to this period.

## 4.5 DISCUSSION OF SITES AND MONUMENTS IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.5.1 Although there are no records listed by the Tyne and Wear HER, and only one listing (described above) held by the ADS, a number of records near to the site are likely to have implications for the proposed development. These are listed, in period order, as follows:
- 4.5.2 **HER 1952: North Shields First Medieval Settlement:** The area to the west of the Pow Burn, and east of Dogger Letch (HER 4559) is recorded as having been settled in 1225 by Germanus, Prior of Tynemouth. The early settlement at North Shields is likely to have comprised tightly clustered timber houses raised on piles 2-5 metres above the high water mark. Boats could be moored, and fish sold, (See HER 4586) from timber quays built up against the piles (TWSCT, 2000: 8). The proposed development site, which is situated between the Pow Burn and Dogger Letch therefore falls within the recorded extent of this early settlement.
- 4.5.3 In 1839, in the vicinity of the Low Light, to the east of the proposed development site, workmen digging the foundations for gas tanks came across what is believed to be a quay or harbour of possible medieval date (HER 4550) The find is described by Tomlinson (1888: 45) in some detail, as follows:
- “in a place called Salt Marsh in Pow Dean, at a depth of twelve feet six inches [3.8m] from the surface, the workmen came to a framing of large oak beams, black as ebony, pinned together with wooden pins or tree nails, the whole resembling a pier whither ships drawing nine or ten feet of water had come”

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This discovery is of significance to the proposed development in that it indicates that medieval timbers may still be preserved within the boundaries of the medieval town as much as 3.8m below the surface. The implication is that, where post-medieval buildings along the waterfront were not deeply founded or cellared, there is potential for well-preserved timbers relating to the former medieval quayside.

4.5.4 **HER 183: North Shields Second Medieval Settlement:** The second major phase of development at North Shields occurred in 1390, when a plot of land approximately 4 acres in area was drained and settled with around 200 properties, which included houses, inns and premises for a wide variety of trades. The exact location of the second medieval town is unknown, but medieval and all subsequent developments prior to c. 1760 occupied the strip of land along the river frontage known as Low Street between the Pow Burn and the Bull Ring. The area of the proposed development is situated at the eastern end of Old Low Street, and is likely to have occupied a central location in the medieval settlement at the time of the expansion of 1390.

4.5.5 **HER 4551: Possible Medieval Road:** An “ancient roadway” of possible medieval date was discovered at a depth of 6 feet from the surface (TWSCT, 2000: 11, citing Craster, 1907: 285). The given location of “Pow Burn” would place this finding near to the proposed development site, but the precise location remains uncertain.

The given depth of 6 feet (1.83m) places this road much closer to the modern ground surface than the timbers described under HER 152, and hence there is a greater likelihood that such remains have since been destroyed by development around the Pow Burn subsequent to its discovery. Precise details of nineteenth and twentieth century development in the area of the Pow Burn are difficult to quantify without a more accurate location, and hence the likelihood of similar archaeological remains surviving cannot be usefully assessed.

4.5.6 **HER 4558-9: Pow Burn bridge and Dogger Letch bridge :** A bridge was built in 1648 over the Pow Burn connecting the eastern end of the town with the main street (Low street). At the western end of Low street, it is recorded that a wooden bridge was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to cross the swampy ground at Dogger Letch, which had previously been a spring running into the Tyne (HER 4559). This indicates that the 17<sup>th</sup> century town continued to occupy the area of the proposed development, and thus it is likely that there is some, though presently unquantifiable, potential for post-medieval, as well as medieval archaeology exists at the site.

4.5.7 **HER 4552: Salt Pans:** salt may have been worked in the area of the later Clifford’s Fort as early as ca. AD 800. It is also recorded that salt was still worked in the vicinity of the Pow Burn in the time of Elizabeth I (1556-1603). Thus some potential exists in the vicinity of the proposed development are for archaeological remains relating to the medieval and earlier post-medieval salt industry. It should be noted, however, that salt manufacture was a pollutive industry, and would most likely have been carried out away from habitation where

possible. It is probable, therefore that salt works would have been located to the east of the presumed Medieval and Post Medieval town, over the Pow Burn, and not within the area of the proposed development.

- 4.5.8 **HER 4554: C18 Quay:** Despite the protestations of the burgesses against any expansion of port facilities at North Shields, by 1714 a quay was in existence at the Low Lights. The fish market constructed midway along Low St a century later (HER 4585) further testifies to the impression of Low St between Low Lights and The Bull Ring as a busy main thoroughfare. This would have bearing on the proposed development only in that it provides evidence that the development site remained within the core of the town throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## 4.6 ARCHIVE SOURCES

- 4.6.1 A number of archives (listed in section 2.1) were consulted to collate maps for regression analysis of the study area. Information from primary and secondary sources, including archaeological or historical journals, has been incorporated into the historic background (*Section 3.2*). Even without visiting the Northumberland Record Office (NRO), which was closed for the duration of the period of work, a vast quantity of documents, records, maps and photographs were available. Although the information collated from these sources does not represent an exhaustive study of all available material, all the requirements of the specification have been met, and is considered unlikely that further searches would additional information relevant to the proposed development.

## 4.7 CARTOGRAPHIC AND PICTORIAL SOURCES

- 4.7.1 A wealth of historical maps exist for North Shields within the record offices and local studies libraries. In the Tyne and Wear Historic Towns Survey for North Shields (TWSCT 2000, 5), the maps by Cecil (1576), Speed (1611) and Saxton (1637) are all stated as showing the river Tyne, with settlements on each bank marked "Sheales", but these could not be verified by this assessment. Nevertheless, cartographic coverage dating from 1654 to 1976 was obtained and is discussed below. Where relevant, the plates will also be discussed with reference to the maps.
- 4.7.2 **Hollar's "Exact map of the harbour of Newcastle, near Tinmouth", 1654 (Figure 3):** the map is not a true representation of the settlement, but is in effect a schematic panorama, so much so that Edmund Curtis in 1673 accused Hollar of drawing from his imagination to produce a map of limited topographical value (TWSCT 2000, 5). The map shows the settlement of 'North Sheels' as a double row of housing extending along the edge of the Tyne, which is depicted as full of ships. The High and Low Lights are shown; these are presumably the timber versions of the current lighthouses, built in 1608. Clifford's Fort is not shown, as it was not rebuilt until 1672. Despite the simplicity of the map, it is interesting to note that the double-rowed housing does not extend east beyond the High Light, which suggests it is similar to that depicted in later maps; the housing almost

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certainly corresponds to the medieval settlement established in 1225, which is known to have expanded repeatedly through to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

- 4.7.3 ***Fryer's Map of Newcastle, 1773 (Figure 4):*** this map was the first detailed mapping available for the assessment. The map is also fairly schematic, but is more accurate than Hollar's map of 120 years previous. The settlement is not named, but is depicted as identical in layout to the earlier maps. Clifford's Fort is shown adjacent to the Pow Burn, and west of the burn, the 'Light House' (the Old High Beacon, built in 1727 – HER 4456) is shown on the top of the cliff. North of the light-house, 'The Reverend Dr Dockwray's Ground' is shown as a series of large fields, and just south of this is Dockwray's Square, which shows the beginnings of housing around its edges; the square survives to this day. West of the square are two long rectangular parcels of land, belonging to a Mr Stephenson and a Mr Pearson respectively; these are interesting as they are both described as 'Roperys', and show long rectangular buildings along the east and west sides of the plots which are almost certainly rope-walks. The settlement itself is mapped fairly close to its real form; the 'kink' in the road, which survives today, is clearly visible, and, though detail is not given of the housing, a northwards projecting spur of housing between Bell Street and Dockwray Square is almost certainly the buildings called Lighthouse or Smith's Bank at a later date.
- 4.7.4 ***Rook's Map of Newcastle, 1827 (Figure 5):*** Rook's map depicts the settlement in greater detail than Fryer's map, but even at this date the details of the housing are limited to block depictions. Nevertheless, the housing is almost identical to that shown previously, and on the 1860 map (Figure 6). The map shows the Lighthouse Bank housing, the High Lighthouse stairs, and the new High Light (built in 1807 and surviving today). Dockwray Square is named, and depicted as it is today, with its surrounding Georgian housing, which has now been replaced by modern flats. Bell Street is shown on an etching dated 1835 (Plate 1), which shows the street from the sands adjacent. Little clear detail is visible, as a house in the foreground (adjacent to the kink) obscures the development area, but the High and Low Lights are visible, and the housing in the background probably relates to the housing in the development area.
- 4.7.5 ***First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 10 Feet to 1 Mile, 1860 (Figure 6):*** this map is the first highly-detailed map of the development area. As mentioned, the map shows the Lighthouse Bank housing, the High Lighthouse Stairs, and the High Lighthouse. At the base of the steps is the Blue Bell Public House, here named for the first time, but almost certainly established since the early 19th century at least. The Blue Bell and the Lighthouse Bank housing lie within the development area. Between the kink in the road to the west, and the public house, are nine buildings, with passages between every second or third building. To the rear of the buildings are extensions or outhouses, extending as far back as the base of the bank. None of these buildings are named; seven of the buildings lie within the development area. The buildings are probably medieval in origin. On the opposite side of the road are a series of named buildings, and these include: a 'Chain and Anchor Manufactory'; a 'Forge' with a crane adjacent; 'The Ship Inn'; 'The Royal Oak' public house; and a 'Block and Mast Manufactory'. The

map depicts a typical fishing settlement of inns, warehouses, factories of trades associated with fishing, and low quality housing, which appears to have changed little since at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and probably earlier.

- 4.7.6 ***Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 10 Feet to 1 Mile, 1894 (Figure 7):*** as for the First Edition map of 1860, this map is also highly-detailed. The building layouts have changed little, if at all, on this map, and still show the outhouses and extensions to the rear as before. The High Lighthouse, Lighthouse Stairs, and Blue Bell Inn are all named; Lighthouse Bank is now named as Smith's Bank (this row is shown on a photograph dated 1898 – Plate 2). On the opposite side of the road, the 'Ship Inn' has expanded westwards into an adjoining building. The forge, factories and 'The Royal Oak' public house are no longer shown. A series of tanks are shown to the rear of The Ship Inn, and the quay adjacent is described as 'The Harbour Engine Works'.
- 4.7.7 ***Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 6 Inches to 1 Mile, 1915 (Figure 8):*** though this map is depicted at a lesser scale than previous maps, the layout of the buildings clearly has not changed at this stage. A plate from 1920 shows the buildings at the western corner of the development area, one of which is a brick building which has Dutch Gables of seventeenth century date (Plate 3). The lighthouse is named as 'High Lighthouse (Fixed White)' and the Blue Bell Inn is depicted as 'P.H.' (public house). The greatest change to the area lies in the ground on the opposite side of Bell Street; the housing, inns and warehouses have been entirely cleared, and an 'Ice Factory' built (this is the two-storey building shown on the aerial photograph taken between 1935 and 1941 – Plate 4).
- 4.7.8 ***Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 6 Inches to 1 Mile, 1941 (Figure 9):*** by 1941, the entire north side of the street has been cleared of its housing, and a new rectangular building has been constructed. This building corresponds with the Cosalt PLC buildings, parts of which survive to the present day. The ice factory has been demolished by this time. The aerial photograph of 1935-41 shows the buildings half built, with the remaining half of the plot still occupied by the earlier housing (Plate 4). By 1941, this housing is entirely cleared, and the building has been extended further east (see Plates 5 and 6). Today, only the western third of this building survives (Plates 7 and 8), with the rest of the ground visible as car parking.

## **4.8 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- 4.8.1 A large number of aerial photographs are available for the study area, and were consulted; however, these proved of limited value in comparison to the cartographic sources, as most show the development area as it is today, and provide little further detail. The only relevant photograph is that shown in Plate 4, which is discussed in *Section 4.4*.

## **4.9 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS**

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A number of archaeological investigations have taken place which are likely to have implications for planning applications in the vicinity of the proposed development area. These are considered as follows:

4.9.1 An archaeological assessment in advance of proposed new fish park development by Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council was undertaken in 2003. The development site was situated in the Low Lights area of North Shields approximately 400m northeast of the proposed development site considered by this report (Nolan, 2003)

The assessment identified no significant development in this area prior to the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as the core of the medieval and early post-medieval town lay to the south and west in the area known as Low Street, which provides the focus for the current report. The assessment identified the potential for survival of industrial remains relating to early North Shields industries such as tanning and salt-making. It was also considered that potential existed for preservation of organic materials such as wood and leather in the deeply buried waterlogged silts within the Pow Burn channel, as identified in boreholes and test pits. Given that the Pow Burn remained an open channel until the nineteenth century, virtually any archaeological remains from domestic rubbish dumped into the channel to shallow draught vessels, jetties and revetment structures might have survived. It was considered that the remains of industrial structures, such as the lime works, the pottery or iron foundry might also survive. The recommendations resulting from this work are summarised in the following section.

4.9.2 An archaeological assessment was undertaken in February 2005 in advance of proposed remodelling of the Chain Locker public house at Duke St, at the western end of the New Quay, approximately 1km southwest of the present area of study (ASUD, 2005) It was considered that medieval or post-medieval archaeological remains might survive to the rear of the building, including the remains of the old brewery and maltings, on which the existing public house is known to have been built. An archaeological evaluation comprising a single trench was excavated, revealing post-medieval and modern features of little archaeological significance.

4.9.3 On Bell St itself, an archaeological assessment was undertaken in advance of proposed development approximately 100m to the west of the present site, at the Bilton Buildings, which were in existence prior to 1902 (Simon, 2004) It was considered that this part of Bell St may have been laid out after 1390, following the land reclamation for the second medieval town of North Shields. However, this part of the town lies to the east of the Pow Burn and to the west of Dogger Letch, if indeed this is the stream shown on Hollar's map of 1654, and so would fall within the described bounds of the prior of Tynemouth's original 1225 foundation.

The assessment was unable to determine the use of the development area prior to 1895, when the Coble Inn occupied part of the site, though buildings are clearly in evidence on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century mapping. The depth of the foundations of the

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Bilton Buildings themselves could not be determined. As the site fell within the known extent of the medieval town, remains of which may survive at a depth of up to 3.8 m, it was considered that the potential for medieval archaeological remains to survive at the site was high.

#### **4.10 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS**

- 4.10.1 On the basis of the results of the archaeological assessment undertaken for the Low Lights area (Nolan, 2003: 26), archaeological evaluation was recommended. The evaluation was to take the form of two trenches, A and B, measuring 5 x 25 m and 4 x 25 m respectively. Trench A was to be located in order to assess the degree of survival of features associated with the tannery in 1766. Trench B was to be located to investigate the course of the Pow Burn and waterlogged deposits within the channel. This trench was also to be situated to allow investigation of a crushing mill belonging to the lime works and a boundary line appearing on early 19<sup>th</sup> century maps.
- 4.10.2 It was also recommended that a photographic record should be made of Old Maltings, Building A, in the event that this should be proposed for demolition, and that limited archaeological investigation should take place in advance of any groundworks in the area of the building footprint. It was also recommended that geotechnical trial hole excavations undertaken at the site should also be monitored as an archaeological watching brief.
- 4.10.3 At the Chain Locker public house, archaeological evaluation comprising a single trench measuring 2 x 10m was recommended (ASUD, 2003: 7). The trench was to be excavated at the rear of the property to investigate the possibility of surviving medieval or post-medieval remains, particularly relating to the old brewery and maltings, which were thought to survive at the site.
- 4.10.4 At the Bilton Buildings, on Bell St, it was considered that significant deposits relating to the medieval town might survive beneath the foundations of the existing buildings (Simon, 2005:15). It was therefore proposed that archaeological evaluation in the form of three 3x3m test pits should be carried out prior to determination of the planning application.



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## 5. SITE VISIT AND PHOTOGRAPHS

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### 5.1 DISCUSSION

- 5.1.1 The site is set back from the waterfront overlooking the Western Quay, which was constructed early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. To the west is the attractive two-storey brick building with sandstone lintels and coping, which represents the surviving remnant of the 16 bay warehouse of Cosalt Ltd, demolished after 2000. This building appears from the outside to be structurally sound. To the rear there is evidence of many phases of bank revetment during the last century, including brick walling, to the west of the site. To the east, no doubt in response to the greater weight of the high lighthouse above, the bank has been cut back for insertion of a massive concrete revetment with supporting buttresses every few metres (Plate 7).
- 5.1.2 Two areas, one in the south east corner of the site, adjacent to the lock-up store that is proposed for demolition, and another larger area occupying approximately the western third of the site are at current street level, though a concrete floor exists at this point. No part of the development site is set down from current street level, but a series of massive concrete platforms or steps occupy the centre of the site. It is considered likely that a programme of groundworks would need to entirely remove all existing concrete.
- 5.1.3 A number of photographs were taken in order to demonstrate the current condition of the development site. These are included as appendices in the present report, and as colour prints for the copy to be deposited at the HER.

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## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 6.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

- 6.1.1 The potential for Prehistoric archaeology within the area of the proposed development is considered to be low, as there are no known sites of prehistoric date within the vicinity of the site.
- 6.1.2 The potential for Roman archaeology within the area of the proposed development is considered to be low. Although the Tyne was certainly an important commercial and military waterway in the Roman period, there is scant evidence for settlement at North Shields
- 6.1.3 The potential for Early Medieval archaeology within the area of the proposed development is considered low, as the only reference to settlement in this area is related to salt working in the vicinity of the Pow Burn around AD 800 (Tomlinson, 1888: 45), and there is no reliable indication that a settlement existed here at this time.
- 6.1.4 The potential for Later Medieval archaeology within the area of the proposed development is considered high. Documentary evidence suggests that the site is located at the heart of the first medieval settlement at North Shields, founded by Prior Germanus in 1225. The settlement at this time comprised “27 rudimentary houses, the ‘shiels’ of the later town name...beside the river at the mouth of the Pow Burn where this stream entered the Tyne” (Simpson, 1988) and is believed to have extended at far west at the Dogger Letch, a stream, now dry, which ran into the Tyne at the junction of Liddell St and Clive St.
- 6.1.5 The proposed development is therefore centrally sited with regard to the location of the early town, which is likely to have comprised tightly clustered timber houses raised on piles 2-5 metres above the high water mark, against which timber quays, wharves and jetties were erected (TWSCT, 2000: 8). The timbers discovered by workmen digging near the Pow Burn in 1839 may be one such structure. The great depth of the timber (3.8 metres below ground level) in conjunction with Tomlinson’s description: “a framing of large oak beams, black as ebony, pinned together with wooden pins or tree nails” (1888: 45) is in keeping with a medieval date. The exact location of the medieval waterfront is unknown, but the Western Quays, constructed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably represent only the latest of a series of phases of expansion of the waterfront south into the Tyne.
- 6.1.6 Later Medieval archaeological remains within the development area may comprise some or all of the following:
- Timber structures relating to wharves or jetties
  - Timber structures relating to harbours or quays
  - The remains of timber fishing vessels

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- Remains of medieval buildings, either in stone or wood
  - Evidence of medieval industry, such as tanning, brewing, or saltworking
  - Evidence of medieval boatbuilding and repair
  - Remains of medieval shoring, revetment, or land reclamation measures
  - Evidence of former plot/property boundaries such as burgage plots relating to original medieval town layout
  - Remains of medieval roads or streets
  - Evidence for, and remains relating to, the medieval fishing industry

It is presently unknown at what depth such remains may survive. Given the great depth (3.8m below ground surface) of the presumed timber wharf found in 1839, there is a significant possibility that medieval archaeological remains would have survived later development at the site intact. However, if these remains survive at a greater depth than that impacted by the foundations of the proposed development, they would be preserved in-situ beneath the development and archaeological mitigation is unlikely to be required. However, no precise information is available as to the likely depth at which such remains might be found. As a result, it is advised (see recommendations, below) that the local authority's planning archaeologist (Jennifer Morrison) is likely to request that the presence, absence, form and extent of any such remains be determined in advance of development by a programme of archaeological fieldwork such evaluation trenching.

6.1.7 The potential for Post Medieval archaeology within the area of the proposed development is considered high. It was not until the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries that the town began to expand up onto the higher ground to the north of Old Low Street, which comprised modern day Clive St, Liddell St, Bell St and Union Quay as far as the Pow Burn. The site of the proposed development was situated at the heart of the town for the whole of this period, and only with the decline of waterfront heavy industry such as shipbuilding and ship repair in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and later, the decline of the fishing industry did the focus of the town shift northwards onto the higher ground. Potential exists at the site for discovery of the following:

- The remains of former buildings known to have existed at the site prior to the construction of the 15 bay warehouse finally occupied by Cosalt PLC, in particular, the former Blue Bell public house, demolished in 1935, and any adjacent buildings (see plate 4). Old photographs (plate 2, plate 3) suggest that these are likely to have been at the latest, of 18<sup>th</sup> century date, and some may perhaps have originated in the medieval period.
- Remains of industries and occupations as listed for the medieval period, which continued through into the post-medieval period, for example, tanneries, malt houses, breweries, or salt works, and of course, fishing and fish-processing. The use of the premises on the site prior to the Blue Bell

public house, which can be dated before 1861, are unknown, and it is possible that a range of post-medieval industries may have been carried out at the site.

- It is possible, however, that the regeneration of this area in 1935, at which time many of the buildings along Bell St were demolished, may have truncated or removed evidence for these earlier remains. In view of the fact that the depth of foundations, basements, or cellars for the demolished buildings could not be ascertained, it is considered likely that a programme of evaluation would be required to establish the presence, absence, nature and extent of any such remains prior to development of the site.

6.1.8 The potential for discovery of archaeological remains belonging to the modern period is considered low. Both Western Quay and Union Quay were in existence by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the buildings in existence on Bell St in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, such as the Blue Bell public house and adjacent properties, some of which may be 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier in date stood until 1935, when they were demolished for the construction of Quayside Court and the Cosalt PLC warehouse.

6.1.9 The only potential impact on archaeological remains relating to the modern period would be if it is proposed to demolish the remaining six bays of the 1935 Cosalt PLC building, presently occupied by Fox and Hounds Marine. Although this building is of comparatively recent date, it is of historical interest in that it relates to the history of the rapidly vanishing industrial use of this part of North Shields, and it is likely that the local authority planning archaeologist would require a programme of archaeological recording work prior to demolition. However, it is understood that demolition of this building is not to take place as part of the present scheme of works, and clearly, in this event, no such work would be required.

## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.2.1 On the evidence presented above, there is considered to be a high potential for discovery of remains relating to industrial and residential use of the core of the old medieval town at the development site. The potential for discovery of post-medieval archaeological remains at the site is also considered to be high, though with the caveat that deep excavations at the time of the 1935 redevelopment may have destroyed or removed much of the evidence from later post-medieval periods.

It is therefore recommended that a programme of evaluation trenching, to cover at least 5% of the development site, should be implemented. In view of the fact that medieval deposits, and perhaps even earlier post-medieval deposits are likely to be preserved at considerable depth, a foundation design which has minimal impact below current street level is likely to be the most effective way of mitigating archaeological impact. However, it is thought that some below ground impact would be unavoidable. In this instance, once the maximum necessary

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impact depth of the development is known, trial trenching can then be undertaken to this depth and no further.

It is recommended that evaluation should comprise excavation of two trial trenches, each measuring 8 x 2 m (total area 32m<sup>2</sup>) by an experienced and qualified archaeological contractor. The only parts of the site not substantially built up with concrete are the southeast corner, and the western third of the site, where an apparently shallow concrete floor exists at modern street level. Both evaluation trenches could be accommodated within these two areas.

In the event that evaluation trenching does reveal significant archaeological remains (at the discretion of the local authority planning archaeologist), it is likely that a further programme of works would need to be agreed, such as small scale open area excavation. Evaluation trenching comprises the beginning of a staged process, which, if significant archaeological remains were to be impacted by the development, could potentially lead to through excavation, post excavation assessment, specialist reporting, conservation of sensitive material, and publication. At all stages of the process, the developer would be required to meet fully the costs of the archaeological work, after the recommendations of the Department of The Environment (Planning and Policy Guidance Note 16, DOE, November 1990).

However, it is likely that the upper part of the site may have been subject to considerable truncation and disturbance, and may therefore contain no significant archaeology. On this basis, it is recommended that a foundation design scheme with minimal below ground impact, coupled with a programme of archaeological trial trenching to the specified foundation depth would constitute the most effective way to proceed.

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