

VALEPORT LTD ST. PETER'S QUAY TOTNES

Results of a Desk-Based Assessment
&
Site Inspection



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Valeport Ltd., St. Peter's Quay, Totnes

Results of a Desk-based Assessment & Site Inspection

For

Mr Neil Warren

Of

Andrew Smith Architects

By



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Summary

This report outlines the results of a desktop appraisal and site observations carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. on behalf of Andrew Smith Architects, for a site adjacent to Valeport Ltd., St. Peter's Quay, Totnes, Devon. The site lies to the east of the town on the western bank of the River Dart. No archaeological finds or records of significance could be identified, but the site does lie just to the south of the medieval town. The site survey and deposit model suggests that the site has been reclaimed from the river and levelled up, probably over at least two phases. Therefore if archaeological features are present, they will not be affected by the proposed development.

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The staff of the West Country Studies Library
Neil Warren, Andrew Smith Architects

1.0 Introduction

Location: Valeport Ltd., St. Peter's Quay
Parish: Totnes
District: South Hams
County: Devon

1.1 Background

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Mr Neil Warren of Andrew Smith Architects (the Client) to prepare an archaeological and historical appraisal of an area of St. Peter's Quay, Totnes, Devon, adjacent to the *Valeport Ltd* Depot. (Figure 1). The purpose of this appraisal is to highlight any potential heritage issues with implications for any subsequent development of the site and thereby help mitigate the impact of any such development. The work was carried out in accordance with a methodology devised in consultation with Stephen Reed, Archaeological Officer, Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES).

1.2 Site Location and Topography

The site comprises a largely open area covered in concrete, tarmac and two concrete slipways on the west bank of the River Dart at Totnes. A pumping station and electricity sub-station are also located within the area of the proposed development, but will not be affected by the work. The site occupies a low-lying and level position with largely open ground and residential developments to the west, the river to the east and industrial developments to the south and north. St. Peter's Quay runs south-east by north-west and parallel to the River Dart, with the site of St. Peter's Chapel apparently lying a short distance (180m) to the north-west of the development site.

The site lies just outside (south) of the Totnes Conservation Area within the area designated as having *archaeological potential* (South Hams District Council 2010).

1.3 Historic Background

Totnes, one of the outstanding historic towns of Devon, lies at the upper tidal limit and at the historically lowest bridging point of the River Dart. There is limited evidence to hand of prehistoric or Romano-British settlement and Totnes first emerges historically in the pre-Conquest Saxon Period. The first documentary record is the Domesday Book (1086) in which Totnes is recorded as one of four Devon boroughs (the others being Exeter, Barnstaple and Lydford). The town was already a borough before 1066, issuing coins from its own mint from the early to mid-10th century. Although it was apparently not one of the original defensive *burhs* founded during the reign of Alfred (AD 877-99), not being recorded in the Burghal Hidage, it appears to have been a defended town in the late pre-Conquest period, as the Norman castle overlies the line of earlier defences (Dyer and Allen 2004, 53).

The early town and subsequently the castle were founded on a promontory overlooking the bridging or fording point of the Dart. The defensive rampart and ditch enclosed a relatively small, oval area of land descending towards the river. Within this area 95 burgesses resided in 1086 with a further 15 burgesses living and working the land outside the borough (Thorn and Thorn 1985). It appears therefore, that by the mid-11th century settlement had already expanded beyond the defences. This extra-mural settlement may have first developed eastwards towards the river or south-westwards beyond the upper High Street towards what is now Leechwell Street. In any case, it appears that by the end of the 12th century settlement had extended downhill from the east gate along what is now

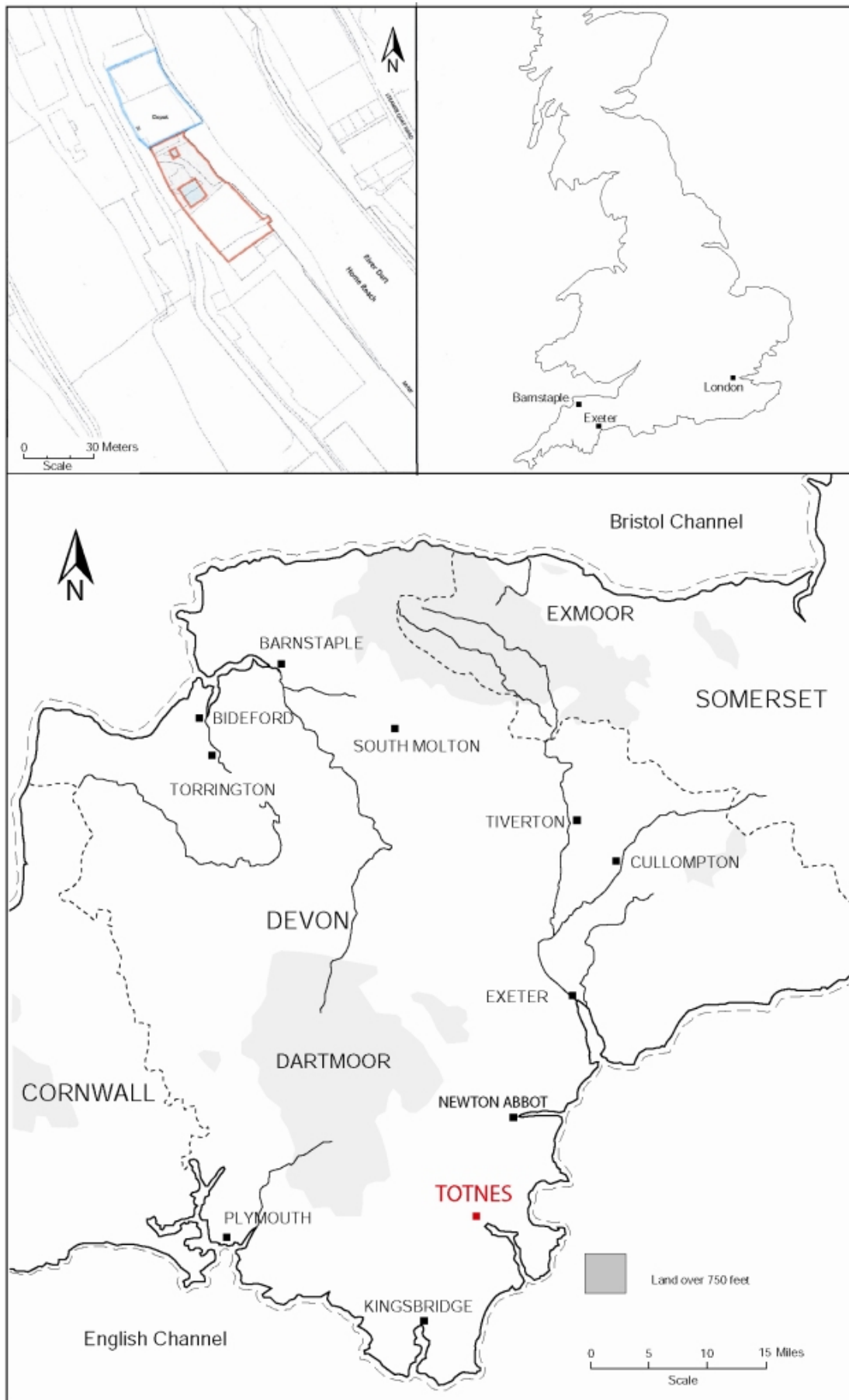


Figure 1: Regional and site location. The location of the present Valeport Ltd site is shown in blue with the proposed development area in red. The two areas outlined within the red area are an existing sub-station and pumping station which are not included within this development.

Fore Street (Hoskins 1992, 504). The defensive walls did not outlast the medieval period and when Leland visited Totnes in 1542 he reported the walls to be entirely gone, although their foundations were still visible.

In 1130 a fair was granted and throughout the medieval period Totnes grew in prosperity. This derived principally from the burgeoning wool and cloth trade and by the time of Henry VIII Totnes was second only to Exeter in wealth in Devon and ranked 15th among all English provincial towns (Pevsner & Cherry 1991, 866). A century later, however, Totnes was in decline and by the middle of the 17th century the town's industrial prosperity was a thing of the past. Some of the finest houses in Totnes date from the period just before the decline, and the fact that the town enjoyed a "soft landing", reverting to a sound local market function, resulted in the preservation of this building stock, together with good examples from the 18th and 19th centuries, to the present day. By the end of the 19th century Totnes had hardly expanded at all beyond its late medieval borders and the town did not begin to grow appreciably until after the Second World War.

1.4 Methodology

The desk-based assessment was undertaken by Dr. Samuel Walls and Dr. Bryn Morris, with reference to the IfA guidelines on the preparation of Archaeological Desk-based Assessments (2008). Printed and unpublished material in the Devon HER (DCHER), the Devon Record Office, the West Country Studies Library and internet resources were consulted as part of this work

The site inspection was undertaken on 12th April 2012 by Dr. Bryn Morris.

2.0 Results of the Desk-based Assessment

2.1 Cartographic History

The earliest available detailed cartographic representation of Totnes is the Ordnance Survey 'Old Series' map produced in 1809 (Figure 2). This clearly shows the start of the road which forms St. Peter's Quay with buildings indicated to the east of this short stub of highway. No buildings are shown further south of these, although an enclosure (?) is indicated to the south-east of the development area, suggesting that some reclamation of the river shore was underway by this date.



Figure 2: Extract from the 'Old Series' Ordnance Survey map at one inch to the mile, published 1809. The approximate location of the site is arrowed.

The next available cartographic source is an 1830 map detailing ownerships and tithes within the town (Figure 3). The 1830 map indicates that the development site was a single enclosure titheable to the Duke of Somerset but that the road was still only a short stub. Two buildings are shown to the north of this enclosure, which may correspond with the structure(s) indicated on the Old Series map (Figure 2). This stylised map is surpassed in detail by the next available cartographic source, the 1832 Navigation Map of Totnes (Figure 4).



Figure 3: Map of 1830 detailing ownership of tithes in and around Totnes. The blue fields were titheable to the Duke of Somerset. The location of the development site is arrowed (DRO 867B/P21).

The 1832 map indicates a broadly similar arrangement on St. Peter's Quay, with a short stub of roadway and with buildings along its north-east side (Figure 4). The map indicates however that the large enclosure shown at the southern end of this road had begun to be divided by this date, with numbers 22 and the adjacent enclosure 23 seemingly corresponding to the present Valeport Limited site. The proposed development site is also numbered 23 but the only further division indicated at this date is a small square in the south-west corner. The corresponding map schedule indicates that number 22 was a *coal yard* owned and occupied by John Fogwill Jnr. Number 23 was a *landing place for timber, coal yard and marsh* owned by the executors of Mary Tooley and occupied by Phillips and Searle. Phillips and Searle and John Fogwill Jnr. seemed to have rented or owned much of the land along the west bank of the Dart at this time and are listed as Wharfingers, Coal, Culm, and Timber Merchants in Pigot's 1830 directory of Devonshire.

The Totnes tithe map of 1842 (Figure 5) shows clearly that a similar situation persisted at that date. The development site is located in the southern part of the field numbered 222 and also incorporates a smaller enclosure 223 situated within field 222. The rest of field 222 (northern part) corresponds with the present Valeport Ltd site. It is also of note that the field to the west is still depicted encroaching into the south-west corner of the site. The buildings and road to the north of the site are similar to the layout indicated in 1832 (Figure 4).

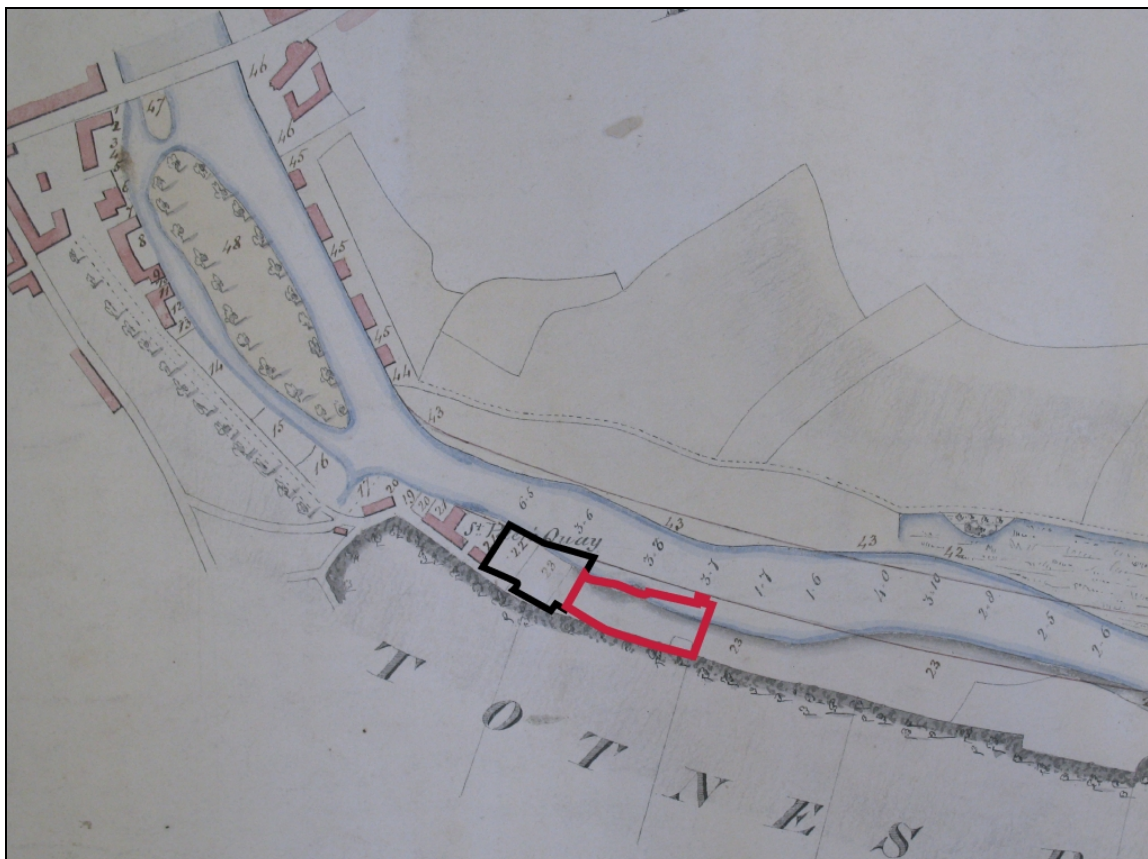


Figure 4: Extract from the Totnes Navigation Map of 1832. The approximate location of the present Valeport Ltd site is shown in black with the proposed development area shown in red (DRO).



Figure 5: Extract from the Totnes tithe map of 1842. The approximate location of the present Valeport Ltd site is shown in black with the proposed development area shown in red (DRO).

The next available cartographic source available is the Ordnance Survey First Edition map, surveyed in 1885/6 (Figure 6). This provides a much more detailed map and clear evidence of the continued development of the waterfront. The most notable change is that the small enclosure numbered 223 on the tithe map is indicated as a building with adjoining lean-to. It also appears that by this date the road accessing St. Peter's Quay has become more formalised, although still only extending to the entrance of this building. The majority of the development area south of this building is depicted as being below the high water mark, which suggests that extensive build-up has occurred on the site within the 20th century.

The Ordnance Survey Second Edition map of 1907 suggests a similar arrangement of the site and neighbouring area to that of 1885/6, with the single addition of a small square building/enclosure just south-west (and maybe within) the centre of the development site. This may correspond with the location of the pumping-station.

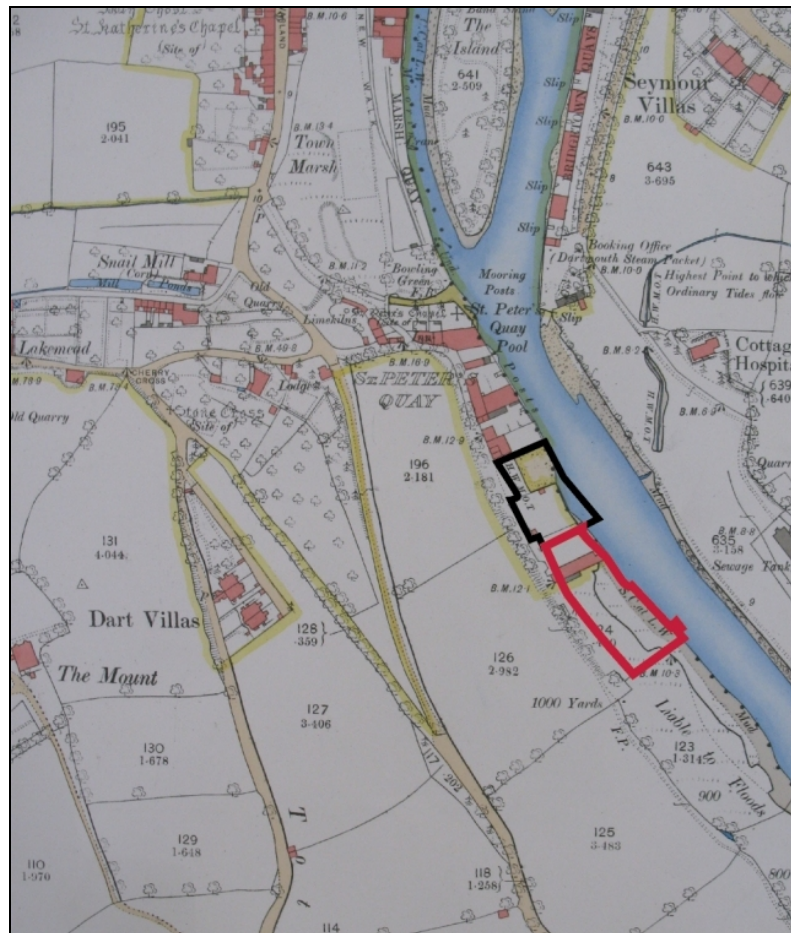


Figure 6: Extract from the Ordnance Survey First Edition Revision map at 1:2500, published 1900. The approximate location of the present Valeport Ltd site is shown in black with the proposed development area shown in red (DRO).

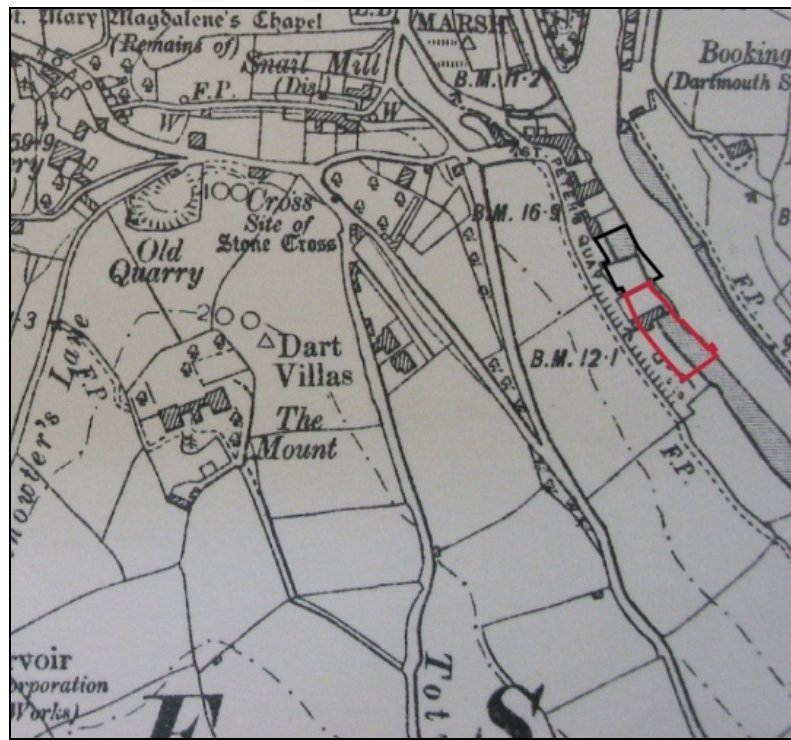


Figure 7: Extract from the Ordnance Second Edition Map at 1:2500, published 1907. The approximate location of the present Valeport Ltd site is shown in black with the proposed development area shown in red (DRO).

Later cartographic sources show that by 1954 the main building located within the development area had been demolished (Figure 8). Instead a small lean-to structure abuts the northern boundary to the site, which corresponds closely to the location of the present 'store'. The central sub-square building within the development plot probably corresponds with the current pumping-station, while the buildings indicated to the south of the site have subsequently been demolished. The 1954 map provides the first evidence for any slipways in the development area with the southern of the two slipways marked, and the northern one likely to also be present given the pathway seeming to lead to it on the map (Figure 8). It is also worth noting that the area south of the development zone had been constructed on by this time, and that the access road to St. Peter's Quay was extended to its present layout by 1954. By 1954 a large unit had also been constructed to the north of the development area in the location of the present Valeport Ltd depot.

3.0 Results of the Site Inspection

3.1 General Description

The site is slightly irregular in plan but basically rectangular and orientated north north-east by south south-west and covering an area of approximately 2800m². The area contains a number of small buildings; wooden sheds and storage containers of mid and late 20th century date. All extant level surfaces are sealed by concrete, tarmac or gravel. To the north-west the development area is bounded by a 20th century stone and brick building with a timber shuttered upper and a corrugated metal roof. This building is the Valeport Limited depot and has at least two phases of construction with an extension added into the river in the mid-late 20th century (Figure 9). To the south-east the site is bounded by timber and concrete warehouses and buildings of mid/late-20th century date (Figure 10).



Figure 9: Building and slipway to the north-west of the site, viewed from the south, (scale 2m). Note the change of build to the left of the scale.

The eastern edge of the site is bounded by the River Dart, and the scrub covered embankment to the river appears to be constructed from a range of rubble, including large sub-angular stones, concrete fragments, occasional bricks (some of which are stamped *Torbay Co* and *Torbay Brick Co*) and rare scaffolding posts. There is no obvious build, but the area is heavily covered in vegetation (see Figure 11). The only features of note are the presence of two concrete slipways at either end of the development site. Both of these slipways seem to have been extended/repared at some stage as they have two phases. The southern slipway is accessed by a tarmac road, while the northern example is no longer accessible, except from the river (Figure 9).



Figure 10: Buildings to the south-east of the proposed development area, viewed from the north (scale 2m).



Figure 11: The southern slipway (foreground) and present shoreline, viewed from the south-east (scale 2m).

3.2 Deposit Model

The site is almost completely level and based on the historical maps and borehole data provided by the Client, together with readings and observations taken onsite, it is clear that a greater part of the site has been built up to provide a level area less prone to flooding. This is most readily apparent to the north-east, where the ground level has been raised over 3m. This would suggest that no archaeological deposits are likely to be affected by the proposed development (see Figure 12).

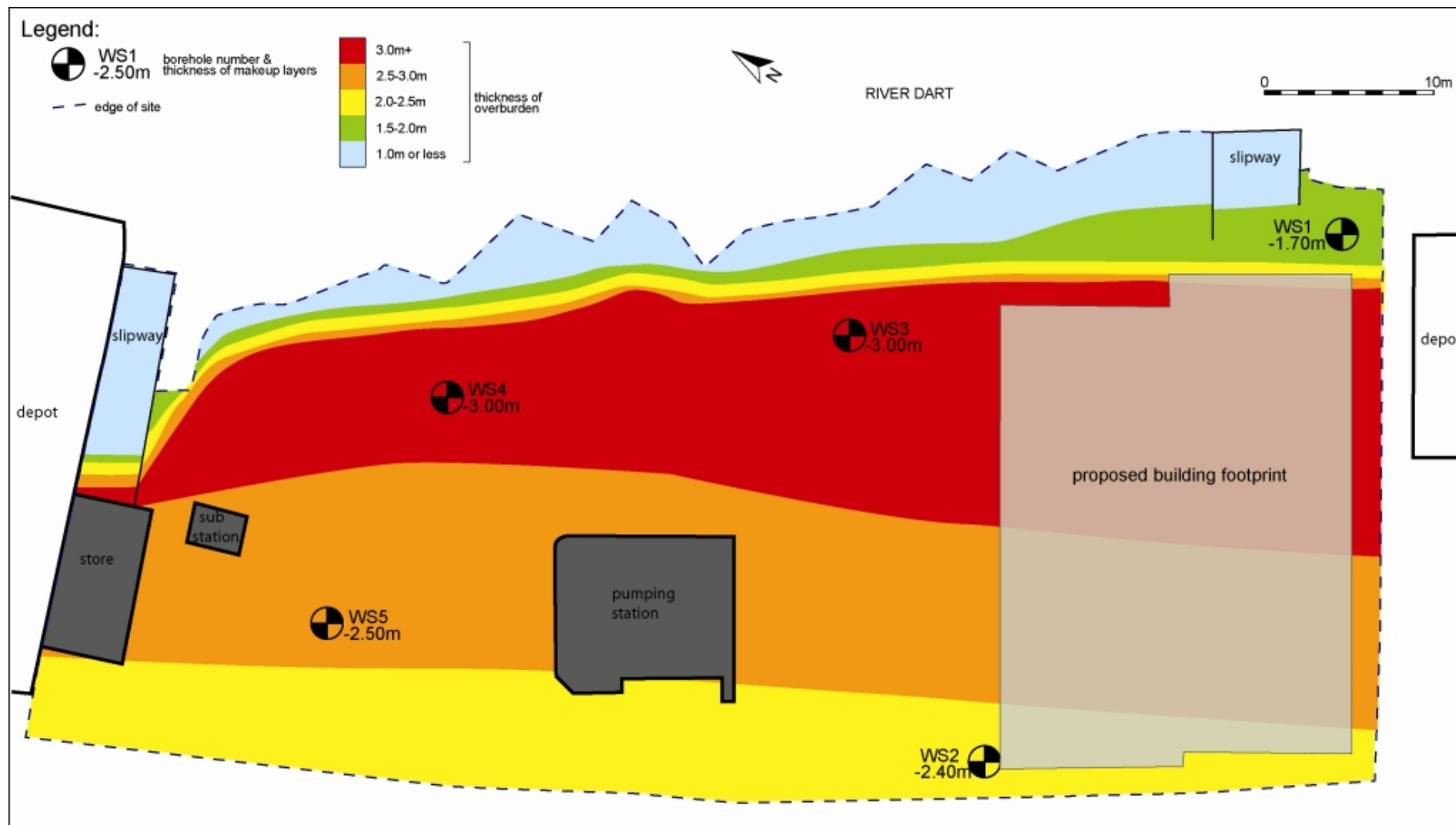


Figure 12: Deposit model for the development site.

4.0 Conclusions

1. The site occupies an area of reclaimed shoreline along the River Dart.
2. The change in build evident in the Valeport Limited building to the north of the site suggests that there is probably a two phase extension of the wharf.
3. The seemingly random rubble make-up of the wharf, and its irregular shoreline suggest that the reclamation of this area was probably not very well co-ordinated and carried out on an ad-hoc basis.
4. The existing structures are of little interest. All buildings date to the 20th century.
5. The deposit model suggests that no archaeological features are likely to be affected by any subsequent developments across the site.

5.0 Bibliography and References

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867B/P21

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<http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/Totnes/Totnes1830.html>

Appendix 1

List of Jpegs on CD Rom to the rear of the report

No.	Description	From	Scale
1	Site entrance, looking through into the site, from the road.	NW	2m
2	Site entrance, looking just through gates	NW	2m
3	Site entrance, looking just through gates	NNW	2m
4	The Veleport building, viewed from the South-East	SE	2m
5	The Veleport building, viewed from the South-East.	S	2m
6	Timber buildings adjacent to the Veleport building.	SE	2m
7	The Veleport building, viewed from the South-South-East.	SSE	2m
8	The Veleport building, detail of the upper slipway.	SE	2m
9	Break in build of the Veleport building, looking North-West.	SE	2m
10	As above. Showing the building projecting into the river.	SW	2m
11	View down the slipway adjacent to the Veleport building.	WSW	2m
12	View along the waterfront, from the North-West.	NW	2m
13	View along the waterfront, from the North-West.	NW	2m
14	View along the waterfront, from the North-West.	NW	2m
15	View along the waterfront, detail of brick stamps used in construction.	NW	2m
16	View along the top of the river's edge.	NW	2m
17	View along the top of the river's edge.	NW	2m
18	View along the top of the river's edge, detail of an Ivy covered structure.	SW	2m
19	View along the river's edge, from the South-East.	SE	2m
20	Detail of Southern slipway, from the North-West.	NW	2m
21	Detail of the "repaired" section of Southern slipway.	SE	2m
22	Detail of concreted – in pipes on Wall adjacent to Southern slipway.	NW	2m
23	Sectional view of detailing on Wall adjacent to Southern slipway.	N	2m
24	Detail of concrete? Mooring stuff adjacent to Southern property wall.	NW	2m
25	Southern part of the plot, with timber-framed shop beyond.	N	2m
26	Southern part of the plot, with timber-framed shop beyond.	NE	2m
27	The "sand pit" in the South-West corner, looking West.	E	2m
28	Detail of signage on boundary fence.	E	2m
29	South-West water facility in site.	SE	2m
30	South-West water facility in site, detail of metal case and signage.	SE	2m
31	South-West water facility in site, detail of metal case and signage.	SE	2m
32	South-West water facility in site, detail of metal case and signage.	N	2m
33	South-West water facility in site, detail of warning signage.	N	2m
34	Panoramic. Whole site, viewed from the South/South- East.	S	2m
35	Panoramic. Whole site, viewed from the South/South- East.	SSW	2m
36	Panoramic. Whole site, viewed from the South/South- East.	SSW	2m
37	Panoramic. Whole site, viewed from the South/South- East.	SW	2m
38	Panoramic, whole site, viewed from the river.	NW	2m
39	Panoramic, whole site, viewed from the river.	NW	2m
40	Panoramic, whole site, viewed from the river.	NWW	2m
41	Panoramic, whole site, viewed from the river.	N	2m



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