

PENDENNIS SHIPYARD WET BASIN, FALMOUTH DOCKS, FALMOUTH, CORNWALL

(NGR SW 82111 32557)

Results of an archaeological watching brief

Marine Management Organisation licence reference
MLA/2013/00406

Prepared by:
Abigail brown

On behalf of:
Ward Williams Associates

Document No: ACD927/2/0

Date: July 2015



AC archaeology

Cornwall Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Falmouth	National Grid Reference SW 82111 32557	Number:
Subject: Pendennis Shipyard Wet Basin, Falmouth Docks, Falmouth, Cornwall: results of an archaeological watching brief		Photo attached? Yes
Planning Application no:	Recipient museum: Truro Record Office	
OASIS ID: 219251	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD927	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 11 July & 18 August 2014 and 2 April 2015	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p><i>Introduction (Fig. 2)</i> An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the construction of a new wet basin at Pendennis Shipyard, Falmouth Docks, Falmouth, Cornwall. The scheme involved the relining of the existing wharf wall, and the construction of caisson arms incorporating a gateway to form the new wet basin. The archaeological investigations were required under the grant of a licence (no. MLA/2013/00406) issued by the Marine Management Organisation, and were commissioned by Ward Williams Associates on behalf of Pendennis Shipyard Ltd. The works were undertaken in accordance with a <i>Written Scheme of Investigation</i> prepared by AC archaeology (Passmore 2014).</p> <p>The site is located at the east end of Falmouth Docks overlooking Carricks Road where the Penryn River meets the River Fal. It lies on flat ground recorded on Ordnance Survey maps as being between 0m and 10m aOD. The underlying geology is interbedded sandstone and argillaceous rocks of the Portscatho formation, overlain on the east side of the site by beach deposits of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey online mapping). To the south of the site is a large vertical scarp in the bedrock that was created when the docks were extended in the 1950s.</p> <p>An <i>Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Assessment</i> of the wider scheme, which also included expansion of the shipyard facilities, was prepared by AC archaeology in 2012 (Passmore 2012). This noted that the docks were constructed between 1859 and 1862, with the eastern breakwater, which forms the western edge of the development site, completed in 1863. The assessment recommended historic building recording of the dock wall – Gridiron Wharf – along with buildings on the wharf. This was carried out in 2012 and 2013 (Stanier 2013). The assessment concluded that the potential for below-ground deposits to survive or be present within the foreshore was low.</p> <p><i>Results (Fig. 2; Plates 1-3)</i> The monitored groundworks comprised dredging of the new wet dock, which involved the removal of the soft seabed material using a mechanical excavator. Where necessary the underlying bedrock was broken up using an excavator fitted with a mechanical breaker.</p> <p>The deposit sequence comprised an upper layer of foreshore silts overlying the natural bedrock. The upper deposit measured up to 3m thick and comprised dark greyish brown sandy silt with common small to very large sub-angular and angular stones, rare tyres, wooden planks and metal pipes and other iron objects including chains, and very rare glass bottles and modern bricks. The underlying geology was exposed in most areas of the drained dock except along the east and south side where the formation levels did not require the full removal of the overlying silt deposit.</p> <p><i>Summary</i> No archaeological deposits or features were identified. The foreshore deposit within the dock contained modern refuse, probably derived both from dumping activity and being washed in from the surrounding coast. The results of the watching brief confirmed the conclusions of the <i>Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Assessment</i> in that palaeoenvironmental deposits would not be present within the development area.</p>		

Cornwall Council Historic Environment Record

Sources Consulted

Passmore, A., 2012, *Pendennis Shipyard, Falmouth Docks, Falmouth, Cornwall, (NGR SW 82111 32557), results of a desk-based assessment*, AC archaeology document number **ACD439/1/1**.

Passmore, A., 2014, *Pendennis Shipyard wet Basin, Falmouth Docks, Falmouth, Cornwall, (NGR SW 82111 32557), Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief, Marine Management Organisation licence reference MLA/2013/00406*, AC archaeology document number **ACD927/1/0**.

Stanier, P., 2013, *Pendennis Shipyard, Falmouth Docks, Falmouth, Cornwall, (NGR SW 82111 32557), results of historic building recording*, AC archaeology document number **ACD585/1/0**.

A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.

Recorder:

Abigail Brown, AC archaeology

Date sent to HER:

30 July 2014

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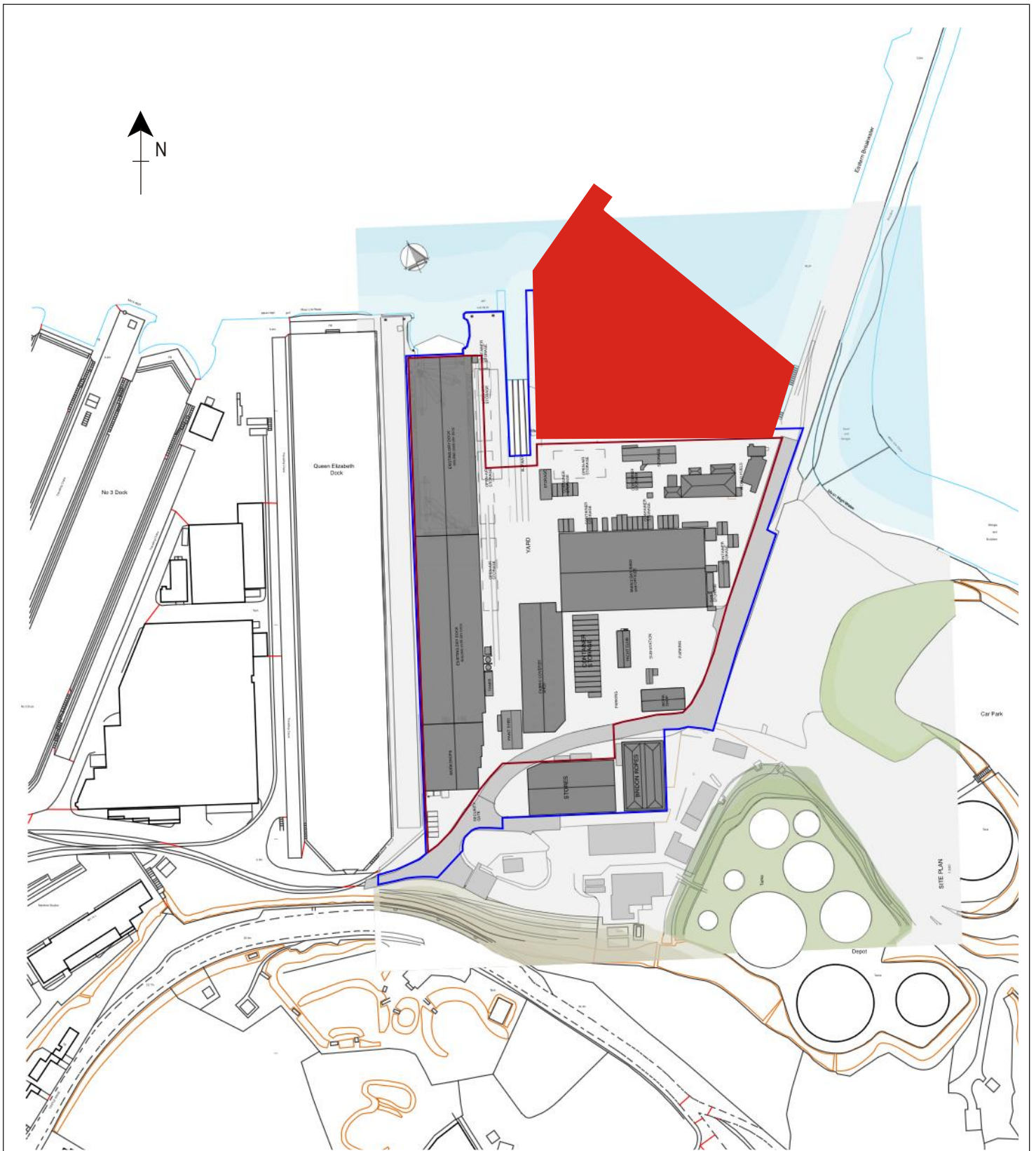


PROJECT

Penderennis Shipyard Wet Basin, Falmouth Docks, Falmouth, Cornwall

TITLE

Fig. 1: Location of site



 Site boundary

0 100m
Scale 1:2500@A4

PROJECT
Pendennis Shipyard Wet Basin, Falmouth
Docks, Falmouth, Cornwall

TITLE
Fig. 2: Location of observations,
based on a plan supplied by
Ward Williams Associates





Plate 1: General shot of initial removal of foreshore silts, viewed from the southeast



Plate 2: The drained wet basin during removal of foreshore silts, viewed from east



Plate 3: The drained wet basin showing exposed solid bedrock below foreshore silts, view from west (1m scale)

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