

REFURBISHMENT TO HOE PROMENADE PUBLIC CONVENIENCES, PLYMOUTH, DEVON

(NGR SX 47891 53926)

Plymouth City Council planning permission reference
20/02012/FUL

Scheduled Monument No. 1012943

Results of archaeological monitoring and recording

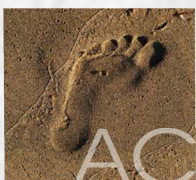
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Charlotte Coles and Naomi Payne

On behalf of:
Plymouth City Council

Report No: ACD2445/2/0

Date: September 2022



archaeology

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Client	Plymouth City Council
Report Number	ACD2445/2/0
Date	14 September 2022
Status	Version 1
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Contributor(s)	Charlotte Coles and Naomi Payne
Checked by	Simon Hughes
Approved by	John Valentin

Acknowledgements

The monitoring and recording was commissioned by Plymouth City Council and managed for AC archaeology by John Valentin. The site works were carried out by Naomi Kysh and Thomas Etheridge with the illustrations for this report prepared by Leon Cauchois. The advice of John Salvatore, Plymouth City Council Historic Environment Officer, is gratefully acknowledged.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of AC archaeology and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

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Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by AC archaeology during September 2018 and between March and September 2021 at Hoe Promenade Public Conveniences, Plymouth (NGR SX 47891 53926). The work was associated with the development of a new conveniences building. The site lies within Scheduled Monument No. 1012943, The Royal Citadel, a mid-17th century bastioned artillery defence.

The groundworks uncovered the remains of two walls that were associated with the West Ravelin, mid-18th century defences that replaced a place d'armes associated with The Royal Citadel. Several dumped clay deposits associated with the raising of the ravelin during its construction were recognised. Other deposits contained abundant stone and mortar and comprising the levelling of the ravelin after 1888 as well as structural elements associated with the previous conveniences structure were recorded. A small quantity of pottery sherds and clay tobacco pipe pieces were recovered and are of post-medieval date.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of archaeological monitoring and recording (controlled watching brief), which was undertaken by AC archaeology between March and September 2021 and associated with the refurbishment of Hoe Promenade Public Conveniences, Plymouth, Devon (NGR SX 47891 53926). The work was required by Plymouth City Council following consultation with the Plymouth City Council Historic Environment Officer. The location of the site is shown on Figure 1.
- 1.2 The public conveniences are located within the boundaries of Scheduled Monument No. 1012943, The Royal Citadel mid-17th century bastioned artillery defence, incorporating late 16th century artillery fort and 18th century statue, on the Hoe. The public conveniences are located on a raised grass-covered bank adjacent to Hoe Road in the western part of The Royal Citadel. The underlying geology comprises limestone of the Plymouth Limestone Formation - sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 372 to 393 million years ago in the Devonian Period (British Geological Survey Online Viewer 2022).

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Royal Citadel is a well understood monument that has been subject to extensive documentary and archaeological investigation over the last 40 years. This is summarized below, with particular emphasis on the outworks, where the public conveniences are located, including information taken from the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) description.
- 2.2 The Royal Citadel is situated on the eastern side of Plymouth Hoe and overlooks the strategically important entrance to the Cattewater in Plymouth Sound, as well as Sutton Harbour. It also overlooks the historic town of Plymouth situated to the north, on the west side of Sutton Harbour. The monument comprises a late 16th-century artillery fort, superseded by and partially incorporated into a mid-17th century bastioned artillery fort, with associated outworks (erected during the late 1660s and early 1670s). Strengthening of The Royal Citadel occurred in the following centuries, with major restoration undertaken in the 1890s and 1900s when many of the surviving buildings

were erected. Between 1989 and 1992 major refurbishment of the site included the addition of several new buildings.

- 2.3 The walls of The Royal Citadel enclose an area measuring approximately 280m east-west by 270m north-south and survive as an almost complete circuit meeting either side of the northern main entrance. The walls incorporate six bastions and one demi-bastion linked by sections of curtain wall. The fort was designed by Sir Bernard de Gomme, and the original main gateway, which is a good example of Baroque architecture and is particularly unusual in southwest England, was designed by an associate of Sir Christopher Wren.
- 2.4 Originally there were probably five entrance ways through the walls and ramparts. The outworks of The Royal Citadel included the Lower Fort, the North Ravelin within the ditch, a counterscarp, and the glacis. On the east and west sides of the fort the covered way outside the ditch was enlarged to create two *place d'armes* – assembly points for troops. The western *place d'armes* was later replaced by a ravelin, and The Hoe Promenade Public Conveniences are located within part of this ravelin.
- 2.5 Within The Royal Citadel, several buildings – including the guardhouse, great store and the Governor's and Lieutenant-Governor's houses – survive from the original 17th-century internal layout, or incorporate the remains of 17th-century features. Other former original internal buildings are known from documentary sources and early depictions of The Royal Citadel only, with no surviving above-ground remains.
- 2.6 The Royal Citadel was upgraded several times during the 18th century, and it was during this period that the western *place d'armes* was converted into a ravelin (a triangular detached work for added defence). This ravelin originally had a wall with embrasures and guns on its outer sides, but now survives as a low triangular mound with part of the covered way to the north.
- 2.7 Further alterations took place during the early 19th century, but by the end of that century The Royal Citadel had become outdated in terms of firepower and design. In 1888 the outworks beyond the Citadel wall, and the lower fort, were sold to Plymouth City Council. The walling of the lower fort and the two ravelins were demolished, and the outer gateway's arched surround on the North Ravelin was re-erected over the entrance to the West Sallyport. The ditch was filled in and a road built around the North Ravelin. Another road was constructed along the west side of the Citadel along the line of the ditch. Madeira Road was built – in two phases – along the south side of The Royal Citadel and around Fisher's Nose. Following demolition, public conveniences and a lodge were then constructed on the site of the West Ravelin

3. AIMS

- 3.1 Archaeological excavations of the North Ravelin in 2010 (Aaronson and Salvatore 2010; Steinmetzer 2010) identified *in situ* remains of the rampart wall, construction-related deposits, an internal building and surfaces. Although the West Ravelin may have been disturbed by the construction of the public conveniences, the excavations of the North Ravelin suggested the archaeological potential of the area.
- 3.2 The main aim of the archaeological watching brief was to preserve by record any features, deposits or finds that will be impacted upon by the scheme. More specific aims were:
 - To identify, excavate and record any buried archaeological deposits, remains/structures and finds, if exposed, relating to The Royal Citadel, in

particular the 17th-century *place d'armes* and the 18th-century West Ravelin; and,

- To analyse and report on the most significant results and finds, placing them into the context of The Royal Citadel.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The monitoring and recording was undertaken in accordance with a project design prepared by AC archaeology (Valentin 2021) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' document *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (revised 2020).

4.2 All features and deposits revealed were recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's General Site Recording Manual, Version 2 (revised August 2012). Detailed sections and plans were produced at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Introduction (Plan Fig 2; Plate 1)

The groundworks comprised the removal of the original public convenience foundations and several trenches for services within and outside of the footprint of the building. The new building was constructed on the same outer footprint of the original building and in part reused the original foundation trenches of the previous structure (F105). The groundworks exposed deposits and structures associated with the West Ravelin, subsequent demolition, and structural remains of the previous public conveniences. These were overlain by a series of modern demolition of levelling deposits (101, 117, 118, 119, 125, 139, 140, 143, 144 and 145).

5.2 West Ravelin construction deposits and structures (*Plan Fig. 2 and sections Figs 3a-d; Plates 2-3*)

The earliest exposed deposits were likely to have represented construction layers consistent with the raising of the ravelin previously recorded elsewhere on the site of the North Ravelin (Aaronson and Salvatore 2010). These consisted of compacted clay deposits (107, 116, and 148, and possibly also 112). No finds were recovered from these deposits. The deposits were cut by construction cuts (F151 and F152) for approximately east to west aligned walls (S114 and S130).

5.3 Wall S114

Wall S114 measured a maximum of 2.4m wide, was recorded as at least 0.51m deep. Within the monitored groundworks it was traced intermittently over a length of approximately 7m. It was constructed from roughly faced and rubble lime mortar bonded limestone within construction cut F151.

5.4 Wall S130

Wall S130 measured a maximum of 1.2m wide by 0.32m deep and within the groundworks was traced over a length of approximately 6m. The wall was constructed from roughly faced and rubble limestone and bonded with lime mortar within construction cut F152.

5.5 West Ravelin demolition deposits (Plan Fig. 2 and Section Fig. 3e)
 Several demolition and levelling deposits containing stone and mortar of the type used in walls S114 and S130 were exposed (102, 103, 104, 106, 111, 120, 123, 131, 133, 146 and 147). They represented the levelling of the ravelin and the transformation of the area into the Hoe Park during the late 19th century. Deposit 111 contained a sherd of 18th to 19th century pottery and fragments of clay tobacco pipe.

5.6 19th century public convenience structures (Plan Fig. 2; Plate4)
 A bulk reduced area in the west portion of the site exposed former structural elements associated with the 19th century toilet block and lodge. These consisted of the former west wall of the public conveniences (S135) and two east to west abutting walls that linked to The Lodge (S137 and S138). These walls and construction cut F105 correspond with original footprint as shown on the 1893 1:500 Ordnance Survey town plan, which show the public convenience block, with a link to the lodge corresponding with walls S137 and S138. One sherd of residual 17th/18th century pottery was recovered from wall foundation S135.

6. THE FINDS by Naomi Payne and Charlotte Coles

6.1 All finds recovered on site during the watching brief have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. They have been quantified according to material type within each context and the assemblage examined to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. The small collection of finds is summarised in Table 1, below. Finds were hand-excavated. All are post-medieval to modern in date and, although they are useful for dating the archaeological deposits encountered, they are not of great significance. A Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Level 1 type (descriptive) report as per their online guidance *Toolkit for Specialist Reporting* is therefore considered appropriate.

Table 1: Summary of finds by context

Context	Context Description	Post-medieval pottery		Clay tobacco pipe	
		No.	Wt (g)	No.	Wt (g)
111	Ravelin demolition deposit	1	35	4	27
S135	Public convenience wall foundation	1	13	3	19
Totals		1	48	7	46

6.2 Post-medieval pottery by Naomi Payne
 Two sherds (48g) of post-medieval pottery were recovered. Context 111 produced a base angle sherd from a redware vessel of 18th to 19th century date. The probable scar of the base of a handle suggests this was a jug. S135 contained a residual body sherd of 17th/18th century North Devon Gravel-tempered ware.

6.3 Clay tobacco pipe by Charlotte Coles
 Seven fragments (46g) of clay tobacco pipe were recovered from two contexts. Context 111 contained three stems and an 18th century bowl with a heel and a cut top. It is burnished and unsmoked. One of the stems has milling decoration on the mid stem. The other fragments were residual in former conveniences foundation cut F135. They include a piece of stem, a piece of heel and stem, and part of a bowl. The bowl from this context has milling and a bottered rim, and is therefore likely to date to the early 18th century or earlier.

7. COMMENTS

- 7.1 The archaeological monitoring and recording of the foundation trenches and infrastructure groundworks for the replacement public conveniences revealed some survival of structures related to the outworks for The Royal Citadel which were levelled in the late 19th century. The depth and extent of the groundworks meant that these could not be explored in detail.
- 7.2 Walls S114 and S130 were parallel and being made of the same materials and bonding methods, were probably contemporary. It was clear that only the very bases of the walls survived, and a great deal of the height had been removed. S114 was in the position of the north part of the West Ravelin wall parapet, which would have been formed by four embrasures above. The slighter wall, S130, probably represented structural support in the form of a revetment behind the former gun platform. It was the same width and construction as the inner revetment walls of the North Ravelin (contexts 1006 and 1007) exposed in 2010 (Aaronson and Salvatore 2010); the outer North Ravelin wall was not exposed during the 2010 works.
- 7.3 The width of the parapet from the inside of S130 to the outside of S114 was approximately 7m which matches the width of the parapet as shown on the 1856 1:500 Plymouth town plan (Fig. 4). It is interesting to note that the parapet is wider than the west side parapet of the Royal Citadel which was approximately 5m wide and is itself wider than the surviving parapets facing north and south, which supports the fact that the west side facing the Hoe was the most vulnerable to attack and required more substantial defences. Several clean clay deposits associated with the raising of the ravelin were recognised.
- 7.4 The walls (S114 and S130) represent part of the 1750s strengthening of The Royal Citadel defences, in which the West Ravelin protected the potentially vulnerable approach to The Royal Citadel from the Hoe (Woodward 1987, 66). It was accessed via the West Sallyport. This was to be the final phase of strengthening as in the next few decades improvements in the power of the Navy meant that Plymouth became much less vulnerable to attack from the sea.

8. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 8.1 The finds, paper and digital archive is currently stored at the offices of AC archaeology in Bradninch, under the unique project coded **ACD2445**. The contents of the archive will be reviewed by the Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, Plymouth museum and, if considered worthy of retention, they will be transferred to them under an allocated accession number. Material not retained by the Plymouth City Museum will be discarded at the same time, after three months of acceptance of the final report. The digital archive will be deposited with the ADS.
- 8.2 An online OASIS entry has been completed using the unique identifier **508259**, which includes a digital copy of this report.

9. SOURCES CONSULTED

Aaronson, J. and Salvatore J.P., 2010, *Archaeological Watching Brief on the Site of a Proposed Memorial at the Mound, Royal Citadel, Plymouth*. Unpublished Exeter Archaeology report no. **10.88**.

British Geological Survey, 2022, online viewer, www.bgs.ac.uk.

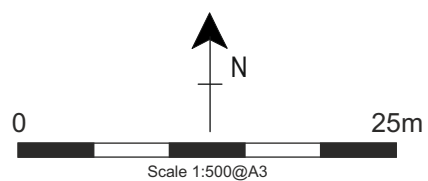
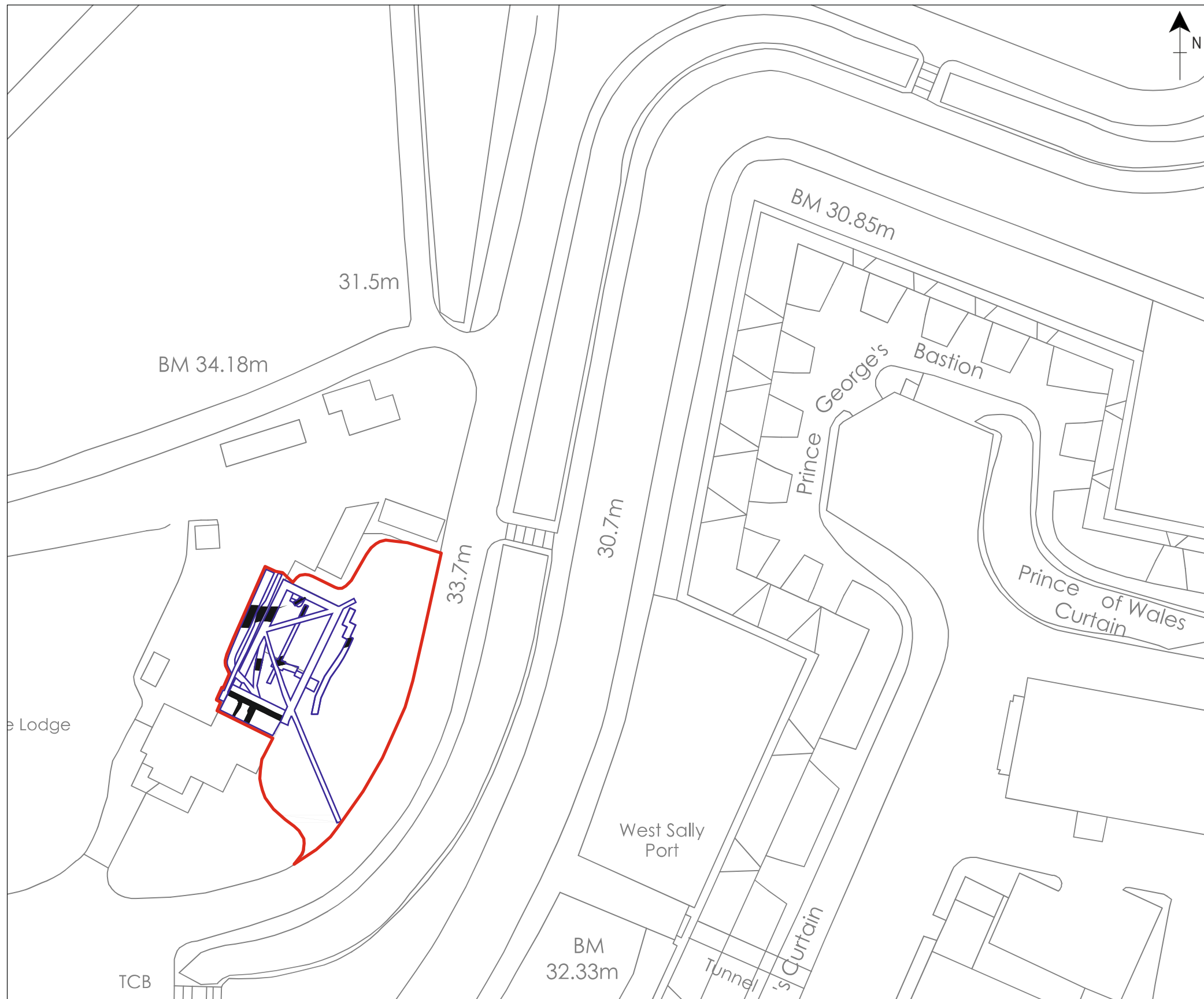
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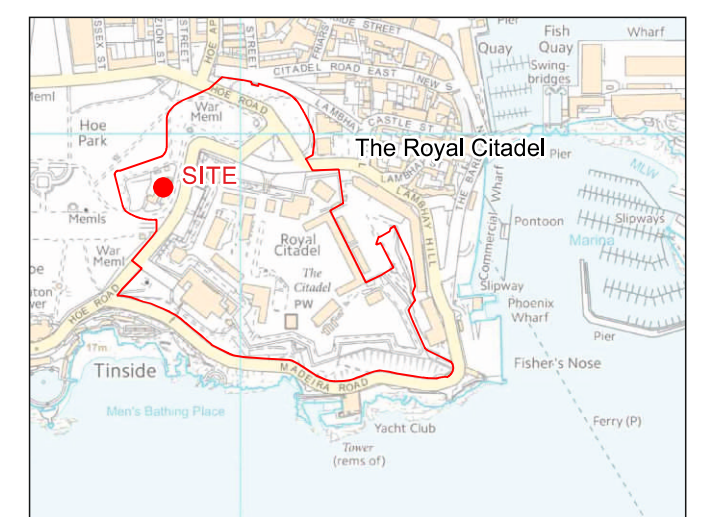
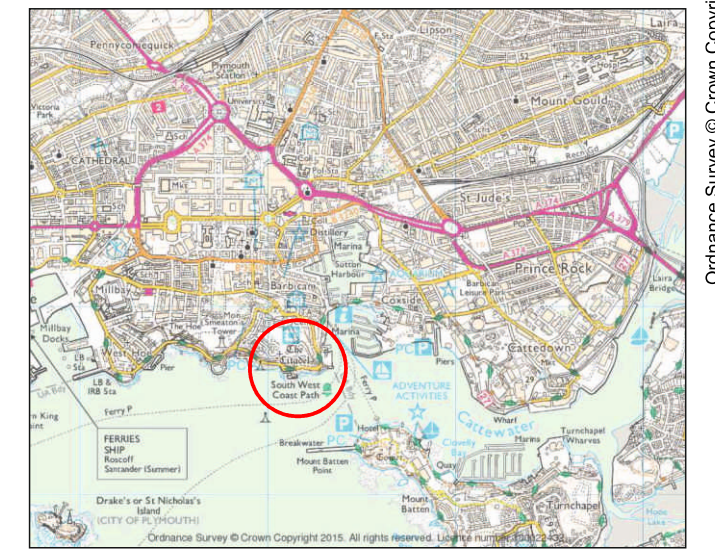
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Woodward, F.W., 1987, *Citadel: The Story of the Royal Citadel, Plymouth* (Devon Books).



Site
 Excavations with archaeological features shown

Plan supplied by Plymouth City Council

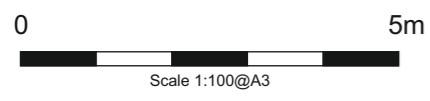
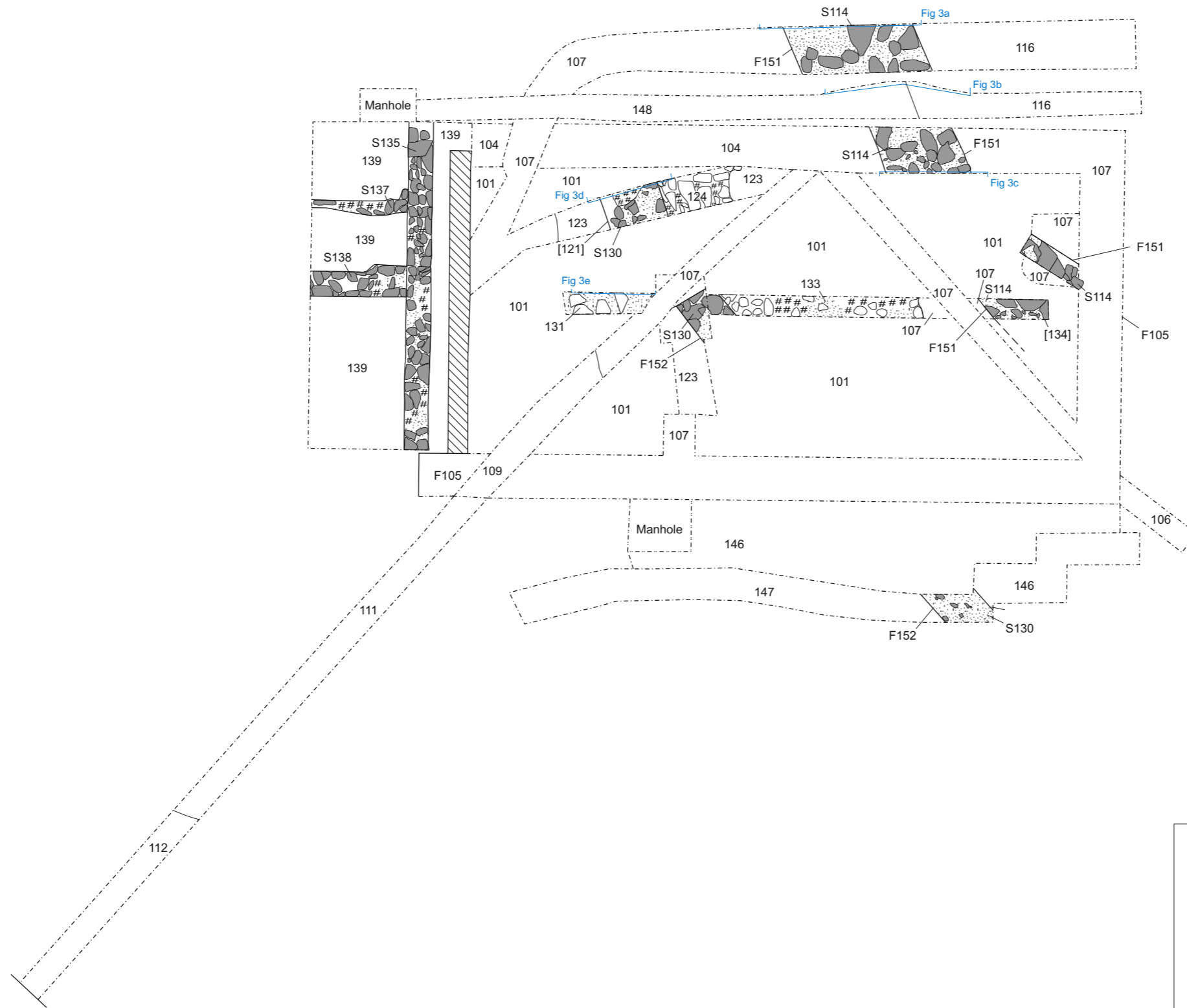


PROJECT
 Refurbishment to Hoe Promenade Public Conveniences,
 Plymouth

TITLE
 Fig. 1: Location of site and monitored groundworks



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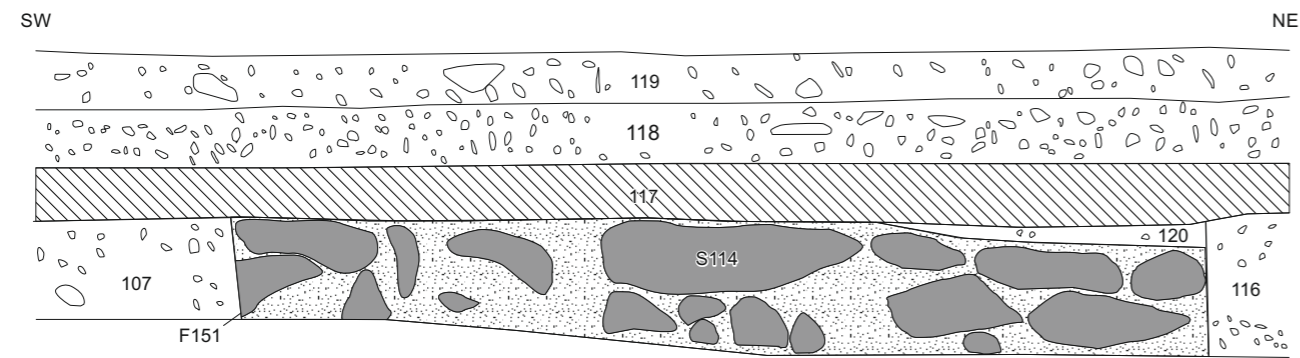
Key	
	Structural stones
	Mortar
	Stones
	Charcoal
	Concrete

PROJECT
Refurbishment to Hoe
Promenade Public
Conveniences, Plymouth

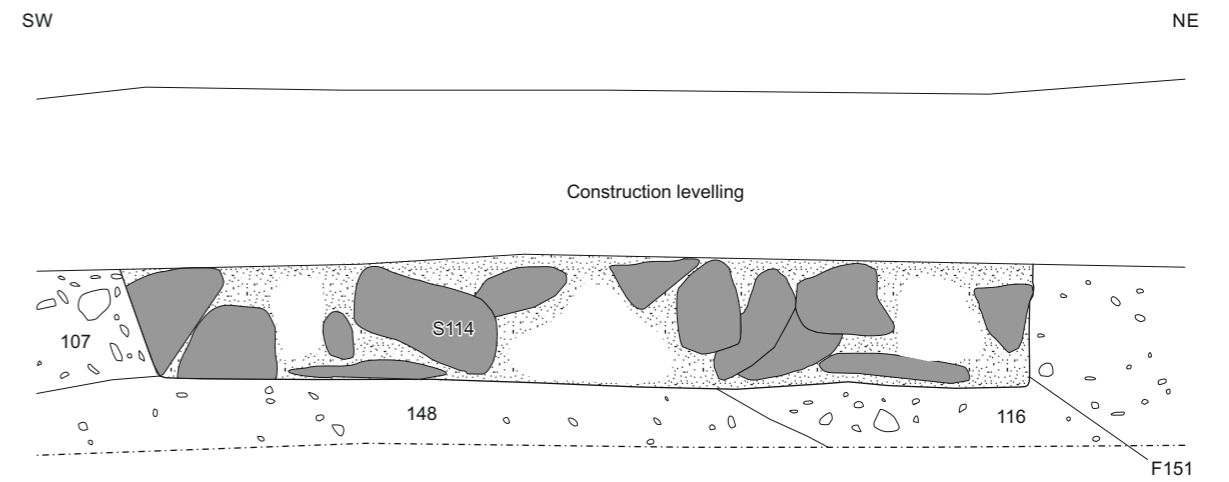
TITLE
Fig. 2: Site plan



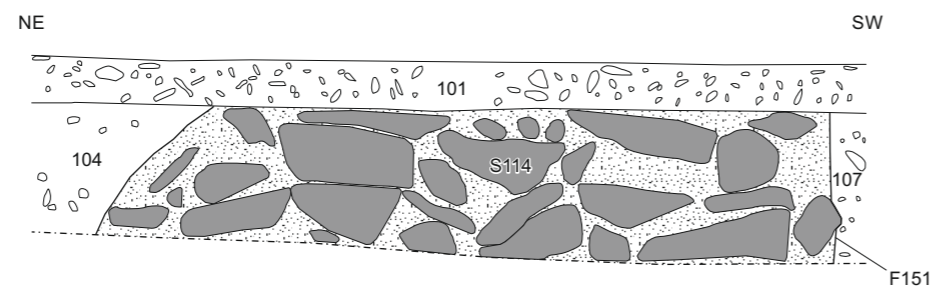
a) Section of wall S114



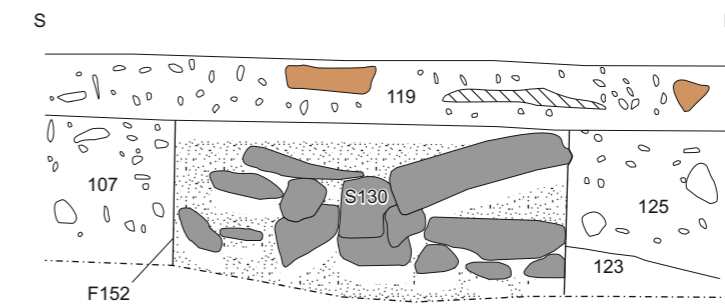
b) Section of wall S114



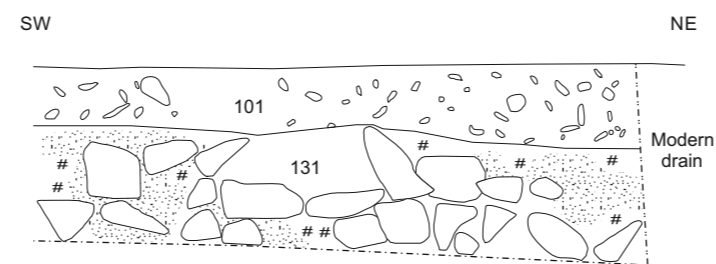
c) Section of wall S114



d) Section of wall S130

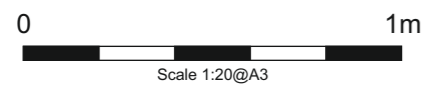


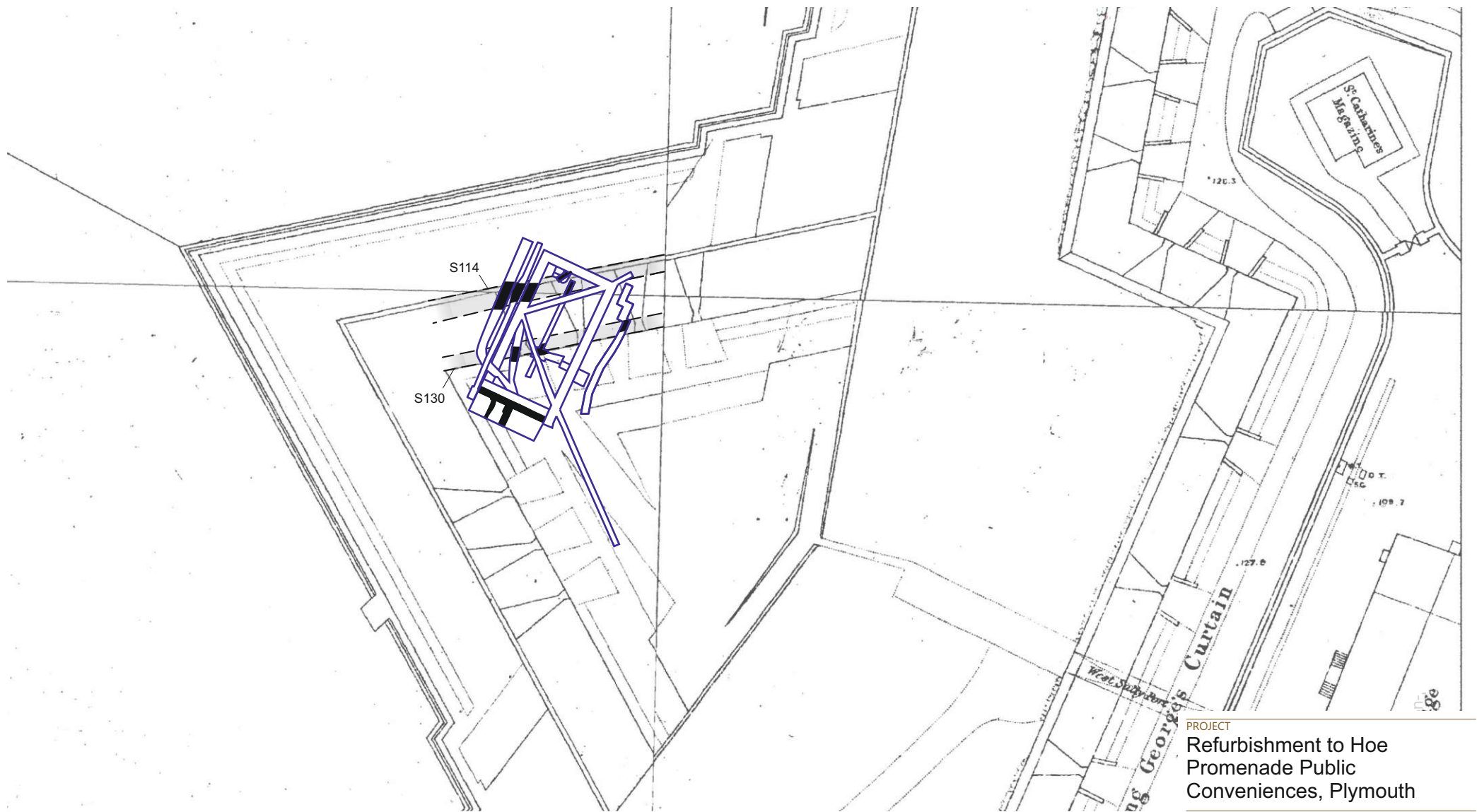
e) Section of demolition deposit 131



Key	
	Stones
	Charcoal
	Structural stones
	Mortar
	Brick/CBM
	Concrete

PROJECT
Refurbishment to Hoe Promenade Public Conveniences, Plymouth
 TITLE
Fig. 3: Sections





PROJECT
Refurbishment to Hoe
Promenade Public
Conveniences, Plymouth

TITLE
Fig. 4: Extract of the 1856
1:500 1st edition town plan,
showing walls S114 and S130
in relation to the West Ravelin

0 25m
Scale 1:500@A4



Plate 1: General view of the site looking southeast towards the Royal Citadel with The Lodge to the right



Plate 2: Wall S114, view to east (scale 1m)



Plate 3: Wall S130, view to west
(scale 1m)



Plate 4: 19th century
foundations S135, S137 and
S138, view to northwest
(scale 1m)

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