

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Proposed Biomass Plant at
Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road,
Sandwich, Kent**

**NGR: 633544 159868
(TR 33544 59868)**

Planning Ref: DOV/13/00701

**ASE Project No: 160233
Site Code: DIS 16**

**ASE Report No: 2016319
OASIS id: archaeol6-259562**

By Simon Stevens BA (Hons) MCIfA

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients BWSC and their planning consultants, Estover Energy Ltd., to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a proposed new biomass plant and storage areas at the Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent.

Observations suggest that the entire site is covered by 3m to 4.5m of reinforced concrete and modern made ground. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients BWSC and their planning consultants, Estover Energy Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground reduction associated with a proposed new biomass plant and storage areas at Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent (NGR 633544 159868, Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site is located within an industrial complex now called the Discovery Park, between Ramsgate Road, to the west and the River Stour to the east. There are upstanding industrial buildings to the north and south.

1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey (BGS 2016), the underlying geological strata at the site consists of the Thanet Formation of silts, sands and clays overlain by superficial deposits of tidal sands, silts and clays associated with the River Stour

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission was granted by Dover District Council for the construction of a biomass plant and associated infrastructure at the site (planning ref. DOV/13/00701). Following consultation between Dover District Council and Kent County Council (Dover District Council's advisers on archaeological issues) a condition (No. 13) was attached to the permission requiring that:

'No development shall take place until the applicant(s) or their agents or successors in title, has or have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written specification and timetable for the investigation, which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.'

Grounds: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.'

1.3.2 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) for the archaeological work was prepared (CgMs 2016) and approved by Kent County Council before the commencement of the work. The document outlined the methodologies to be used on-site, and during the reporting and archiving stages of the work.

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aims of the archaeological monitoring and recording given in the WSI (*ibid.*) were to:

'record and analyse any archaeological remains that are revealed in the course of all works that disturb the ground, below current ground level, during development and to ensure that these are recorded/sampled and interpreted to an acceptable standard.'

The archaeological monitoring will also ensure that any significant discoveries of artefactual/environmental evidence are recorded and analysed to an acceptable standard.

The specific aims of the fieldwork will be to establish whether any archaeological remains are present and to record them so that they may be related to other archaeological remains within the area.'

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This document reports on the results of the archaeological monitoring carried out at the site between June and August 2016. The fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist) and by Catherine Douglas and Lucy May (Archaeologists). The project was managed by Paul Mason (fieldwork) and by Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift (post-excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following information is taken from the WSI (*ibid.*) with all due acknowledgement.

2.2 Prehistoric

2.2.1 No finds of prehistoric date are recorded within 500m of the site boundary, and during the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods the site is thought to have lain within an open seaway.

2.3 Romano-British

2.3.1 The site is located to the east of the major Roman port and town of *Rvtvptiae*, now Richborough, which may have been the principal entry port into Britain throughout the Roman occupation. The date of the formation of the Stonar Bank is uncertain but it may have begun to form during the Roman period. There may have been an island with a Roman settlement to the south of the site at Stonar as a number of Roman finds are recorded in this area. Alternatively these finds may have been misidentified as Roman and actually relate to the late Medieval Town of Stonar (Simon Mason, Kent County Council, *pers comm.*).

2.3.2 Overall the archaeological potential of the study site for this period is likely to be low. The geoarchaeological evidence suggests the site was subject to the deposition of storm beach deposits and alluvial silts in this period.

2.4 Anglo-Saxon & Medieval

2.4.1 No finds of Anglo Saxon or early medieval date are recorded within 500m of the site boundary. Overall it is reasonable to conclude that the archaeological potential of the study site for this period is very low.

2.4.2 It has been suggested that the shingle Stonar Bank on which the late medieval town of Stonar was established was fully formed by the eighth century AD. Contemporary documentary evidence suggests it was certainly in existence by 1087.

2.4.3 The late medieval port of Stonar lay to the south of the site on a shingle bank on the north bank of the River Stour opposite the port of Sandwich. Stonar seems to have been established by 1087 when the church of St. Nicholas was recorded, and flourished in the 12th and 13th centuries. The port was largely destroyed in a large storm in the winter of 1365-6 and the much diminished settlement was subsequently burnt during a French raid in 1385.

2.4.4 The bulk of the site would have comprised farmland in this period and can be defined as having a very low archaeological potential. Archaeological assets of medieval date, if present, are likely to comprise evidence of agricultural activity and land division and are of local interest only.

2.5 Post-Medieval & Modern

- 2.5.1 By the time of Cotton's map of 1548 (not reproduced in this report), the study site lay within *Sandwiche Mershe*, the town of Stonar had disappeared, and the role of Sandwich as a seaport had gone into sharp decline.
- 2.5.2 Between 1896 and 1905 over 80% of the site has been raised using ballast. Some of this material may be derived from by-products from gravel extraction in Stonar Pit immediately to the south. However, the raised land levels might be due to St Augustines Links Ltd protecting the site from flooding for construction of a 'coal port' and much of the raised area supports light railway tracks linking the gravel pit to the wharf.
- 2.5.3 A shaft adjacent to the site's north-west boundary, with another to the north-west, is undoubtedly where Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate (a subsidiary of St Augustines Links Ltd) undertook borings but found the coal seams too deep and too thin. A ballast wharf was established alongside the Stour serviced by light railway tracks. Elsewhere the site was unchanged from 1896.
- 2.5.4 During the First World War of 1914-1918 the Ballast Wharf established in 1896-1905 was developed as a military port, barge construction shipyard, Military Camp (*Kitchener Camp*), collectively known as Stonar Camp, Stores Depot, and base for the Queen Mary Army Auxiliary Corps. Although converted to a salvage processing facility after the First World War, the base was reactivated as a refugee camp in the late 1930's and as a military base *HMS Robertson* in World War II during 1939-45.
- 2.5.5 Facilities at the site are shown in a plan of 1919 (Figure 3). The monitored areas include the location of the Machine, Smith and Coal stores, as well as extensive areas of railway sidings. The Ordnance Survey map of 1938/46 (Figure 4) shows little change. The coal yard slipway is located to the south-east of the current site
- 2.5.6 The military port at Richborough is believed to have been established in 1916 and formed an essential element of the British supply chain to the western front and formed a complete military industrial complex. The port was noteworthy for the use of roll on roll off ferries and sea going barges, which were built on site. Visual inspection of the site and its surroundings on the 11 October 2013 indicated that no military structures from 1914- 1918, or from 1939-1945 survive within the site boundary.
- 2.5.7 In 1953 Pfizer Ltd. purchased the site and by 1960 all previous buildings had been replaced. These modern buildings were all demolished prior to 2013.

2.6 Potential

- 2.6.1 The potential of the study site for the post-medieval and modern periods can be identified as low. Any remnants of World War I and II military structures have been completely removed by subsequent sequences of development, demolition and redevelopment.

2.6.2 Based on the available evidence, the site is considered to have a low/moderate potential for as yet to be discovered archaeological assets of Palaeolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British date.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 Mechanical ground reduction/demolition across the site was monitored by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist during visits to the site between June and August 2016.

3.1.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the WSI (CgMs 2016) and with the relevant standards and guidelines (ClfA 2014a; 2014b) using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. A digital photographic record of the on-site works was kept.

3.2 The Site Archive

3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be offered to Dover Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Tables 1 and 2).

Context sheets	5
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	c.250 images
Context register	1
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	20
Trench Record forms	0

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

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

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

4.0 RESULTS (Figure 2)

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks on the proposed main biomass plant area and in the proposed storage areas.

4.2 The Stratigraphic Sequence – ‘Power Island’ Area

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness (m)
001	Layer	Concrete	c.4.5
002	Layer	Made Ground	c.4.0
003	Layer	Gravel	-

Table 3: Recorded Contexts – ‘Power Island’ Area

4.2.1 Monitoring in this part of the site revealed extensive evidence of the construction and utilisation of the Pfizer chemical works. Extremely thick deposits of reinforced concrete, [001] were encountered and were broken up and removed by mechanical excavator. There were also some areas of a highly mixed modern made ground, [002] that contained brick and concrete rubble, timber and plastic.

4.2.2 There was limited exposure of the surface of the underlying yellowish orange sandy gravels, [003] at a depth of more than 4m below the current ground surface. Any examination of this material was impossible on grounds of safety and it remains uncertain if the material was natural river gravel or an element of material known to have been imported to raise the level of the site in the late 19th/early 20th century (see section 2.5 above).

4.2.3 No archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed

4.3 The Stratigraphic Sequence – Storage Areas

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness (m)
004	Layer	Concrete	c.3.0
005	Layer	Made Ground	c.3.0

Table 4: Recorded Contexts – Storage Areas

4.3.1 The only deposits encountered in this area were reinforced concrete [004] and modern made ground [005], which were both extremely similar in character to those seen on the ‘Power island’ area. The surface of the underlying sandy gravel was not seen during the monitoring.

4.3.2 No archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Clearly the extent of the construction work for the post-war Pfizer plant would have removed any but the most extensive buried remains of the First World War depot. Although it remains unclear if the gravel seen at depth in the 'Power island' area was natural or imported, the level at which its surface was revealed suggests extensive truncation.
- 5.2 Observation in the 'Power Island' area revealed concrete and made ground extending to over 4m with only minimal exposure of the surviving surface level of the underlying sandy gravel. Excavations to a depth of c.3m in the designated storage areas did not reveal the surface of the gravel.
- 5.3 Based on these observations, it can be said with confidence that no archaeological deposits were disturbed during this phase of groundworks. Given the level of truncation, it is suggested, based on currently available evidence, that no below ground elements of the First World War camp complex, or on balance from any other period, survive at the current site.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ClfA 2014a. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. University of Reading

ClfA 2014b. *Code of Conduct*. University of Reading

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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HER Summary

Site Code	DIS 16					
Identification Name and Address	Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich					
County, District &/or Borough	Dover District, Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	633544 159868					
Geology	Thanet Formation overlain by tidal deposits					
Arch. South-East Project Number	160233					
Type of Fieldwork			Watching Brief			
Type of Site				<i>Former Industrial Buildings</i>		
Dates of Fieldwork			08.06.2016 – 05.08.2016			
Sponsor/Client	CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients BWSC					
Project Manager	Paul Mason					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary						
				<i>None</i>		
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients BWSC and their planning consultants, Estover Energy Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a proposed new biomass plant and storage areas at the Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent.</i></p> <p><i>Observations suggest that the entire site is covered by 3m to 4.5m of reinforced concrete and modern made ground. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-259562

Project details

Project name	Archaeological Watching Brief Report Proposed Biomass Plant at Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients BWSC and their planning consultants, Estover Energy Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a proposed new biomass plant and storage areas at the Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent. Observations suggest that the entire site is covered by 3m to 4.5m of reinforced concrete and modern made ground. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed.
Project dates	Start: 08-06-2016 End: 05-08-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	160233 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	DIS 16 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	DOV/13/00701 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country England

Site location KENT DOVER SANDWICH Discovery Park, Sandwich

Postcode CT13 9FL

Study area 5 Hectares

Site coordinates TR 33544 59868 51.289316684327 1.349900581529 51 17 21
N 001 20 59 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator CgMs Consulting

Project design originator CgMs Consulting

Project director/manager Paul Mason

Project supervisor Simon Stevens

Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Name of sponsor/funding body CgMs Consulting

Project archives

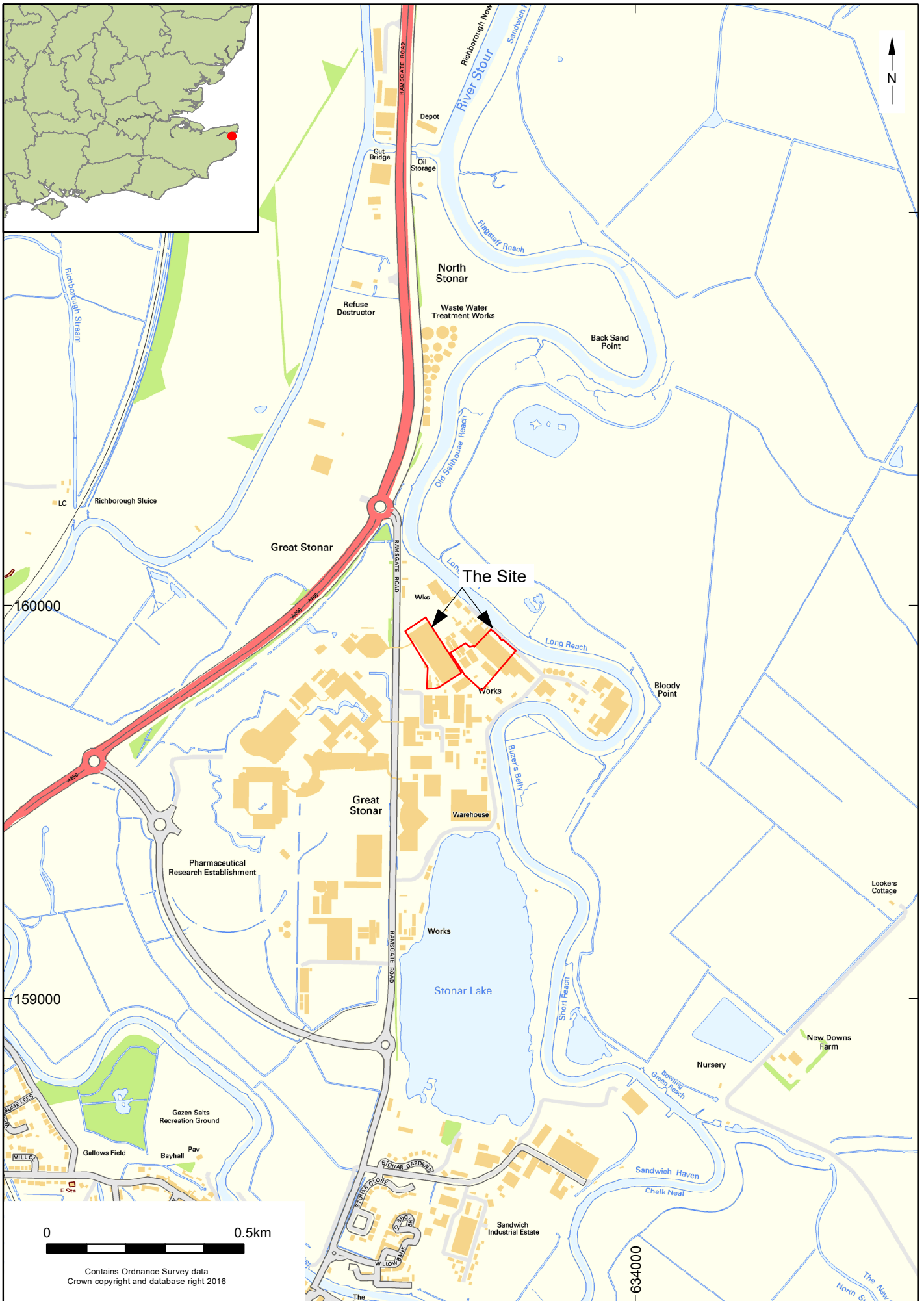
Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Dover Museum

Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Dover Museum
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Notebook - Excavation"," Research"," General Notes","Unpublished Text"

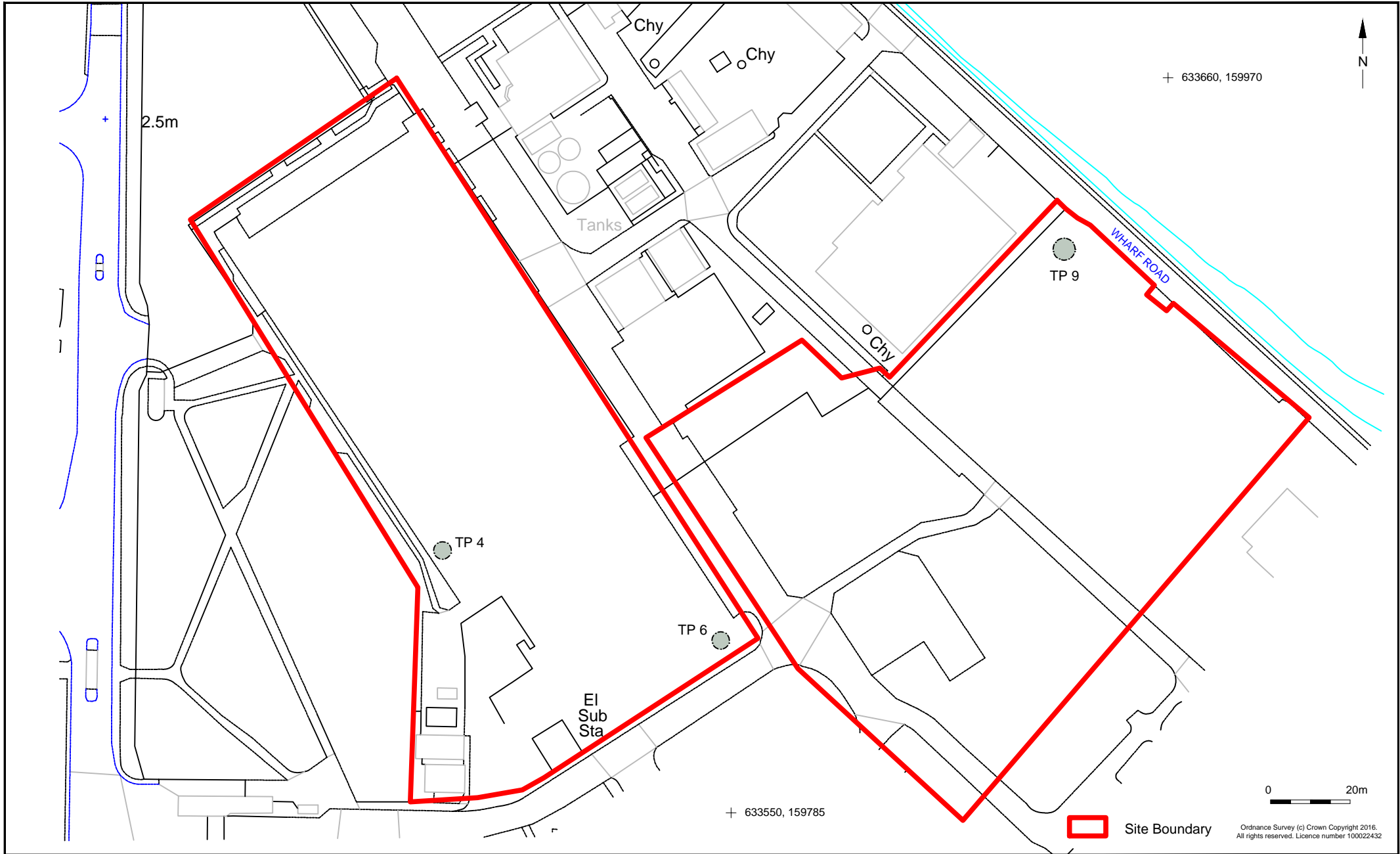
Project bibliography 1

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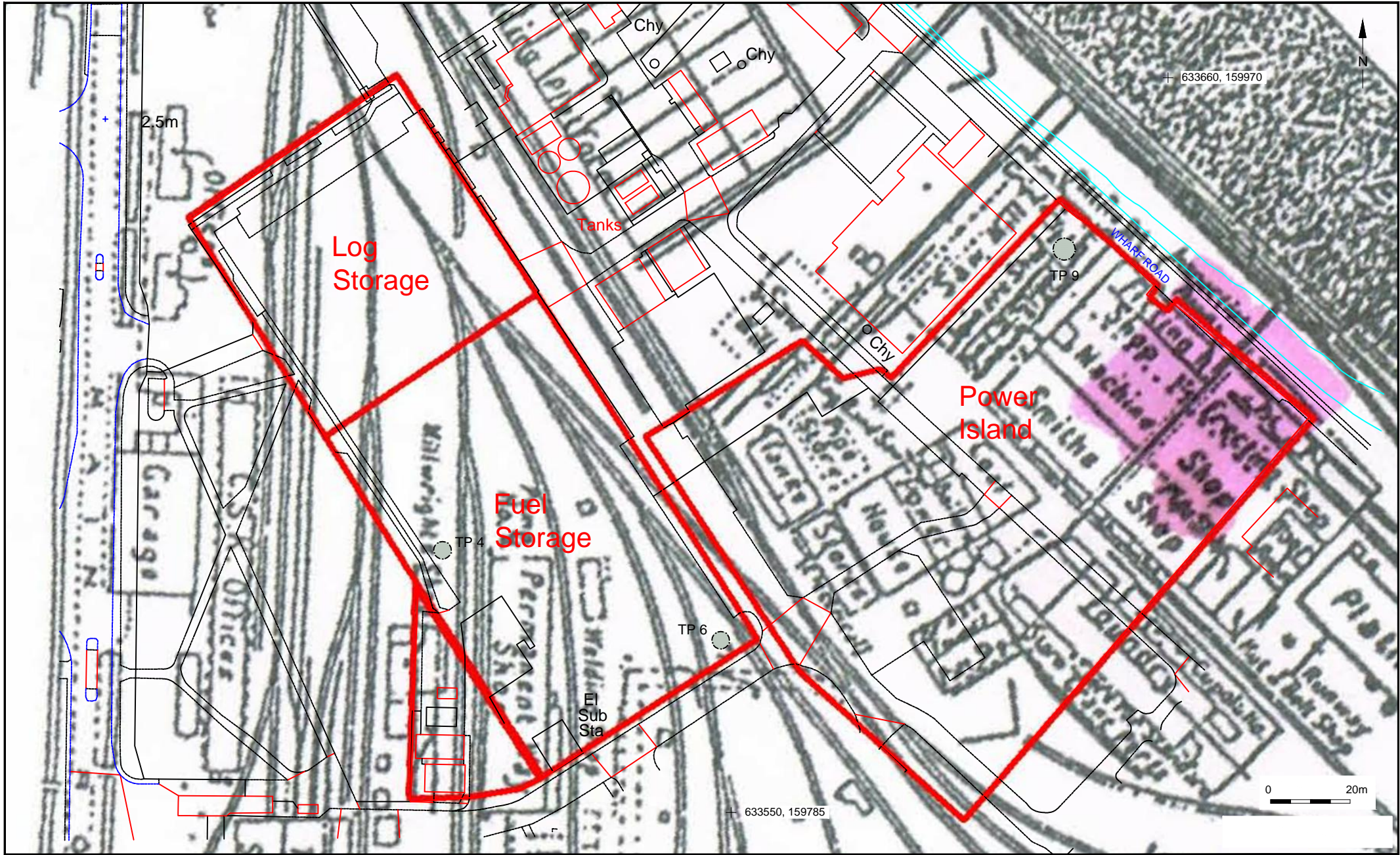


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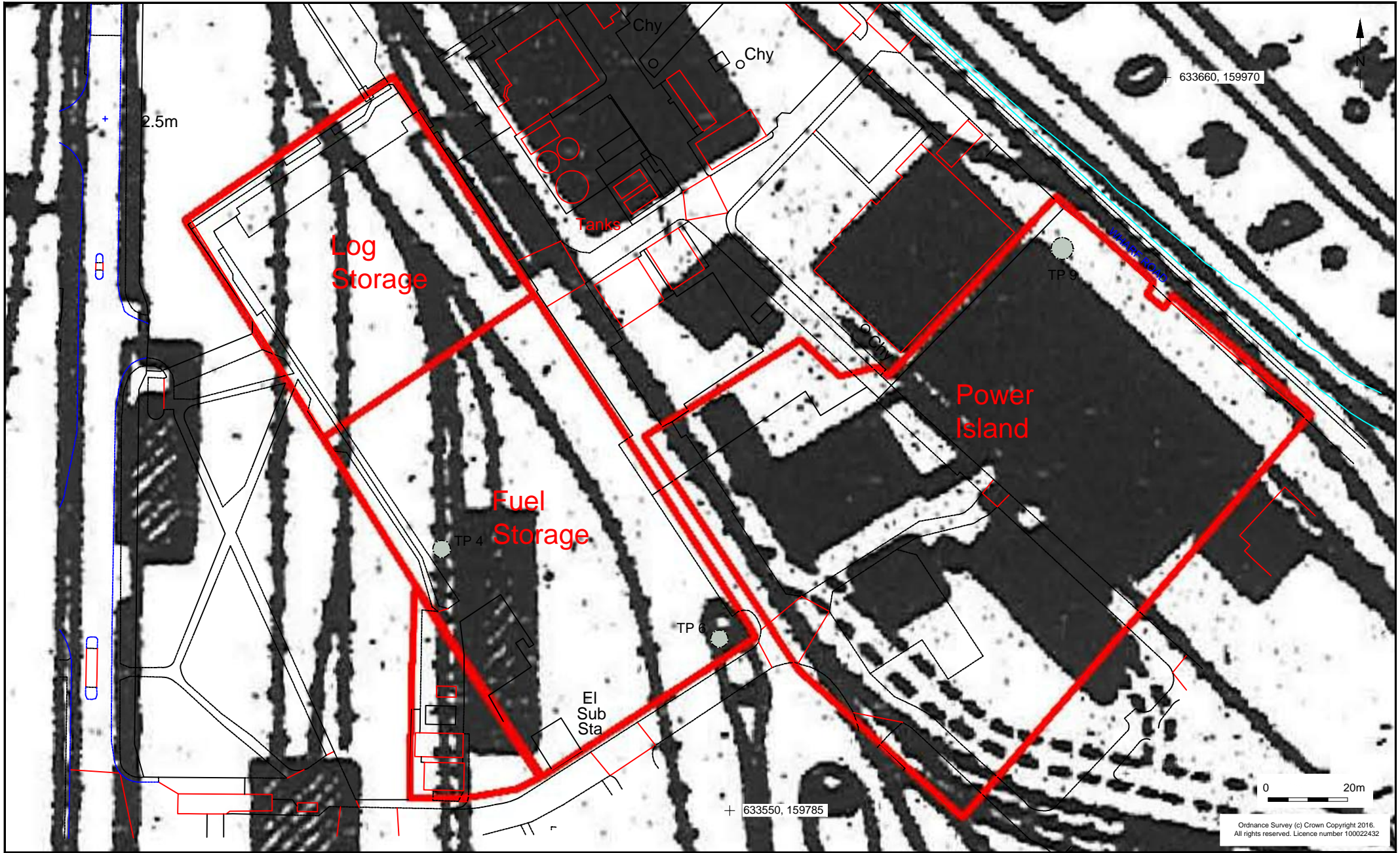
© Archaeology South-East		Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 160233	09 - 2016	Site location	
Report Ref: 2016319	Drawn by: NG		



© Archaeology South-East		Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent	Fig.2
Project Ref: 160233	09 - 2016	Site plan	
Report Ref: 2016319	Drawn by: NG		



© Archaeology South-East		Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent	Fig.3
Project Ref: 160233	09 - 2016	Site plan with map of Richborough Port 1919	
Report Ref: 2016319	Drawn by: NG		



© Archaeology South-East		Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent	Fig.4
Project Ref: 160233	09 - 2016	Site plan with Ordnance Survey Map 1938-48	
Report Ref: 2016319	Drawn by: NG		

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