
Waterfronts in Southeast Wales: Phase 2, Volume 1

August 2005

**A report for Cadw by
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View of Barry Docks looking northeast

**GGAT report no. 2005/039
Project no. GGAT 76**

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Summary

The important role that the historic ports and harbours of south Wales have played in the history of the region is well known; however the nature and extent of these sites is not well understood. There is a significant potential for the survival of archaeological remains in these waterfront locations, which are increasingly under threat from a range of developments. An assessment of these ports and harbours has therefore been funded by Cadw, in order to enhance our understanding of the potential of the maritime archaeological remains so that informed decisions regarding the future conservation of this resource can be made. Phase 1 (Year 1) of this project studied the historic ports of Chepstow, Newport, Cardiff and Swansea (Howell and Dunning 2004), and Phase 2 (Year 2) considered all other small harbours and ports along the coastal fringe and estuaries and is the subject of this report.

The regional Sites and Monuments Record and National Monuments Record have been assessed and a project database compiled. This has been linked to Ordnance Survey data using MapInfo Geographical Information System. Digital historic Ordnance Survey maps were compared with modern Ordnance Survey data, and the courses of rivers were plotted. Site visits were undertaken to assess the condition of these known archaeological interests and to identify and record any previously unrecorded sites, and an assessment of the potential for the survival of maritime archaeological remains was made. This information will be available digitally in the project archive, and is summarised in this report.

Acknowledgements

The report researched and prepared by Rob Dunning BSc and J Kate Howell BSc AIFA of **GGAT Contracts**. The project was funded by Cadw.

The authors are grateful to Sue Hughes and Claire Davies of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, Curatorial Division for their help during the project. In addition the staff of the library of the University of Wales, Cardiff assisted with the research. Special thanks are also due to Roger Parmiter for his kind permission to utilise selected aerial photographs.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project background

The historic ports and harbours of Southeast Wales have been fundamental in the development of the region, playing a crucial role in its history. They have catered to both travel and trade, via rivers and sea since the prehistoric period. Evidence for early river or estuarine travel can be seen in the Bronze Age boat discovered near Caldicot (04782g) and Barland's Farm Romano-Celtic boat (04703g). Indeed, waterborne transport was the quickest method of long-distance movement of goods until the coming of the railways in the 19th century (Davidson 2002, 1). The well-documented maritime trade in the region during the medieval, early post-medieval and industrial periods has done much to shape the nature of modern patterns of settlement and industry. Despite this, their exact nature and extent are not well known; although substantial historical information has been gathered by individuals, there has been little detailed study of the potential surviving archaeological resource.

Furthermore, the historic waterfronts are increasingly under pressure from developments, as can be seen by the recent discovery of a medieval ship and associated features at Moderator Wharf, Newport. There is a significant potential for the survival of such archaeological remains at these sites, in addition to quayside features, associated buildings, industrial features and communication links. A systematic and detailed assessment of these ports and harbours would enhance our understanding of the potential of the maritime archaeological remains and inform the future conservation of this fragile resource.

1.2 Scope

The known ports and harbours can be considered as two separate categories:

- Category 1: medieval and early post-medieval ports which have subsequently developed modern docks
- Category 2: other historic ports and harbours (pre-1800)

The first category comprises Chepstow, Newport, Cardiff and Swansea and was the subject of the Phase 1 (Year 1) report (Howell and Dunning 2004). All four are documented medieval ports and continued to be major centres of trade during the post-medieval period. These sites also have developed subsequent modern quays, docks or shipbuilding areas and are currently undergoing considerable redevelopment.

Phase 2 (Year 2) of the project has examined all other known small harbours and ports along the coastal fringe and estuaries, including those mentioned in the Welsh Port Books (Lewis 1927) and others assessed during the coastal survey (Locock 1996, 1997, 1998). When considering these sites, a cut-off date of 1800 has been implemented in most instances, in order to exclude the large-scale dock developments of the industrial period, although exceptions have been made, for example to include the Briton Ferry Floating Dock, designed by Brunel, and constructed between 1858 and 1861.

1.3 Methodology

The project comprises a review of existing information about the archaeological resource within study areas centred on the 37 sites identified. These sites comprise eighteen that are mentioned in the Welsh Port Books (Lewis 1927), and a further nineteen that were identified from cartographic sources and the coastal survey (Locock 1996, 1997, 1998) and. These sites have been grouped into the four 1974-

1996 counties that the GGAT SMR is based on; that is Gwent, South Glamorgan, Mid Glamorgan and West Glamorgan. Information recorded on the regional Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and National Monuments Record (NMR) was assessed and combined into a single project database which was then filtered, with any sites that were modern or considered to have no relevance to the waterfront removed. Documentary sources were reviewed, along with relevant published information, and enhanced descriptions made.

This database was then linked to the 1:50,000 and landline Ordnance Survey (OS) map bases in MapInfo Professional 5.5 Geographical Information System (GIS). Historic OS maps, provided by Cadw, were then imported into the MapInfo workspaces and the courses of the rivers plotted.

A programme of site visits was then undertaken. Those sites identified from the SMR and NMR were visited where possible, to assess their current condition and verify their location with a Garmin 12XL Global Positioning System (GPS). In addition, any previously unknown sites were noted and recorded at this stage. A total of 49 new sites were identified during the current study. None of the sites visited are considered worthy of recommendation for scheduling, however area thought to be of particular potential and/or at greatest risk have been highlighted.

1.4 Presentation of results

1.4.1 Report

This report provides details of the Phase 2 (Year 2) work, and is presented as two volumes. In volume 1, following the introduction, the results of the assessment are described. The information is divided by 1974-1996 county from east to west (Gwent, South Glamorgan, Mid Glamorgan and West Glamorgan) and a location map of sites studied in each county is included. For each waterfront area, a detailed map is provided, showing the sites of archaeological significance and former river course, taken from the OS 1st edition map, shown in blue. Where appropriate, more detailed plans are included. The information recorded on the SMR is summarised, and comments made regarding the threats to the potential archaeological resource of each area. The overall results of this assessment are discussed in the conclusion. Volume 2 provides further information regarding each of the waterfront areas. Those archaeological interests with direct relevance to the waterfront are then presented in gazetteer form, whilst those that are simply indicators of potential past human activity are summarised in tables.

1.4.2 Archive

A digital archive of the results of the Phase 1 (Year 1) has been compiled. The Phase 2 (Year 2) results have been added to this to form a complete project archive, which is available on CD format. This includes the completed databases linked to a series of digital maps, which can be interrogated through MapInfo, and additional photographs and maps not reproduced in the two reports.

2. Gwent

By the 16th century the administration of the ports in Wales had been grouped into two Head or Legal Ports, Cardiff and Milford (with north Wales ports under the jurisdiction of the Head Port of Chester). The Head port of Cardiff catered for all the ports and creeks between Chepstow and Wormshead, with Custom Houses at Cardiff, Chepstow and Swansea (and Neath) (Lewis 1927, ix; 232). In Gwent, Chepstow and Newport are discussed in detail in the report on the first year of this project (Howell and Dunning 2004). The Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) mention the havens of Mathern and St. Pierre, Caldicot, Westhowcke Creeke (probably West Pill), Aberwaythelles (Magor Pill), Goldcliff, and Peterstone which are discussed here, along with the unlocated Ebothey (possibly Ebbw), Easterly Howcke Creeke, Traston and Gyllam Howes and Jenkyn Lewys and Wentlands Creek. In addition, the sites of Tintern, Hunger Pill, Black Rock, Portskewett, Styne Pill, Collister Pill, Harbour Pill, Caerleon and Ebbw are included in this report.

The large tidal range of the River Severn, combined with the gentle sloping topography of the foreshore, meant that the Gwent Levels were a superb location for the beaching of small vessels in ‘minor’ inlets such as Hunger Pill, Styne Pill, the Ebbw, Collister Pill and Cold Harbour Pill.

2.1 Tintern

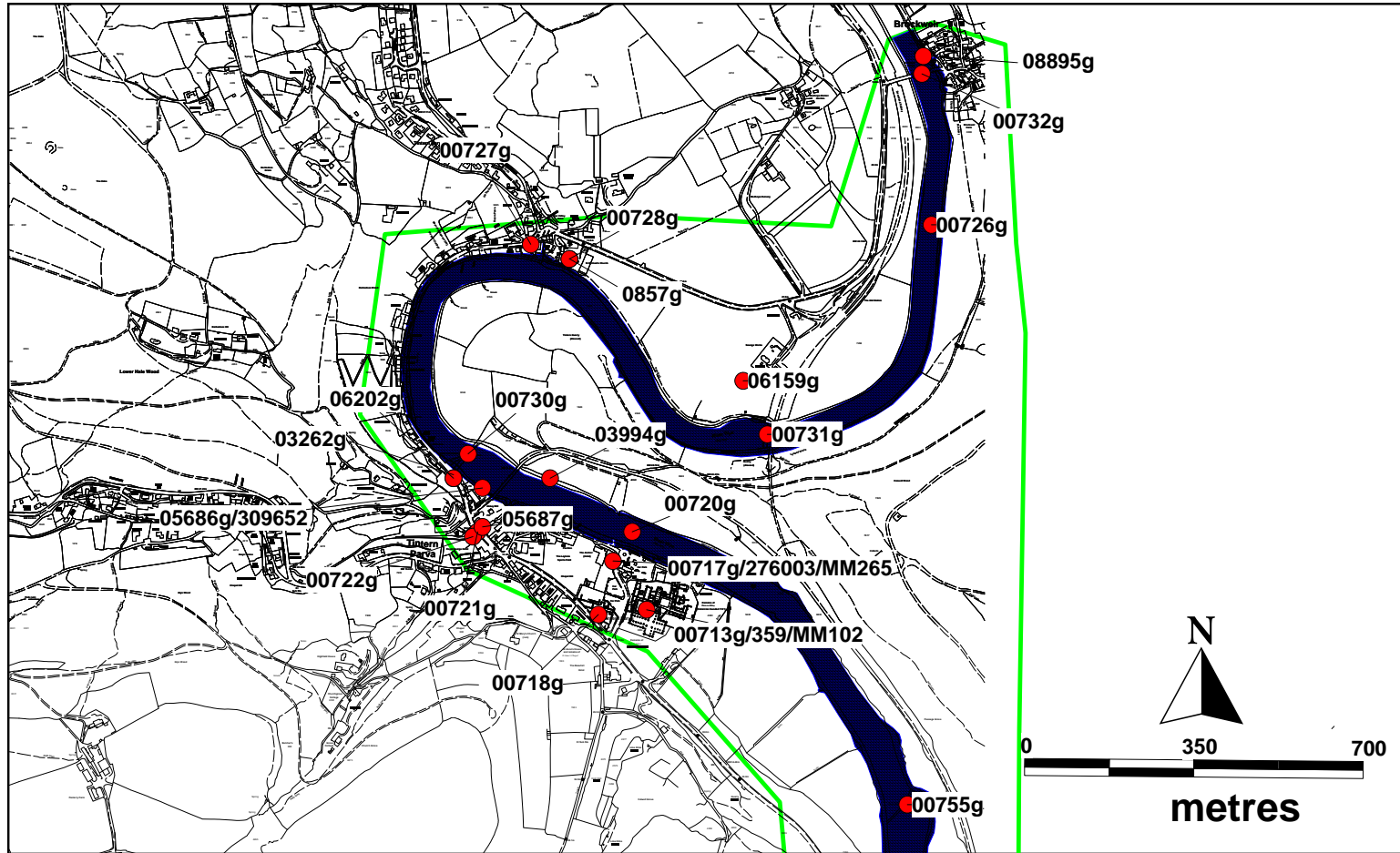
Whilst Chepstow was the major port on the River Wye in Gwent during the medieval and post-medieval periods, shipping activity also extended up river. At Tintern, where the Abbey (00713g/MM102) dominated much of the area from its founding in AD 1131 by Walter fitz Richard of Clare, the presence of a medieval Watergate (00717g/276003/MM265) and ferry (00720g) provide evidence for river-borne transport during this period. It is probable that a high proportion of goods and visitors to the Abbey arrived by boat, and there is a possibility that artefacts and structures relating to this traffic survive within and adjacent to the river channel.

From 1566 onwards, industry began to thrive in the region. An iron wire manufacturing industry was situated to the northwest of the abbey; fuel was gathered from the surrounding area, with the process being powered by local watercourses. By the end of the 17th century, the area around Tintern had been transformed by industrial activity and the need to export the finished goods resulted in significant river traffic between Chepstow and Tintern (Robinson 1995). The importance of this shipping can be seen by the presence of a post-medieval floating dock (05686g/309652), which was in-filled in 1997, prior to a flood alleviation scheme. Other structures along the river bank are threatened by continuing erosion in this area, along with any future redevelopment projects.



Plate 1 Landscape of Tintern, looking northwest

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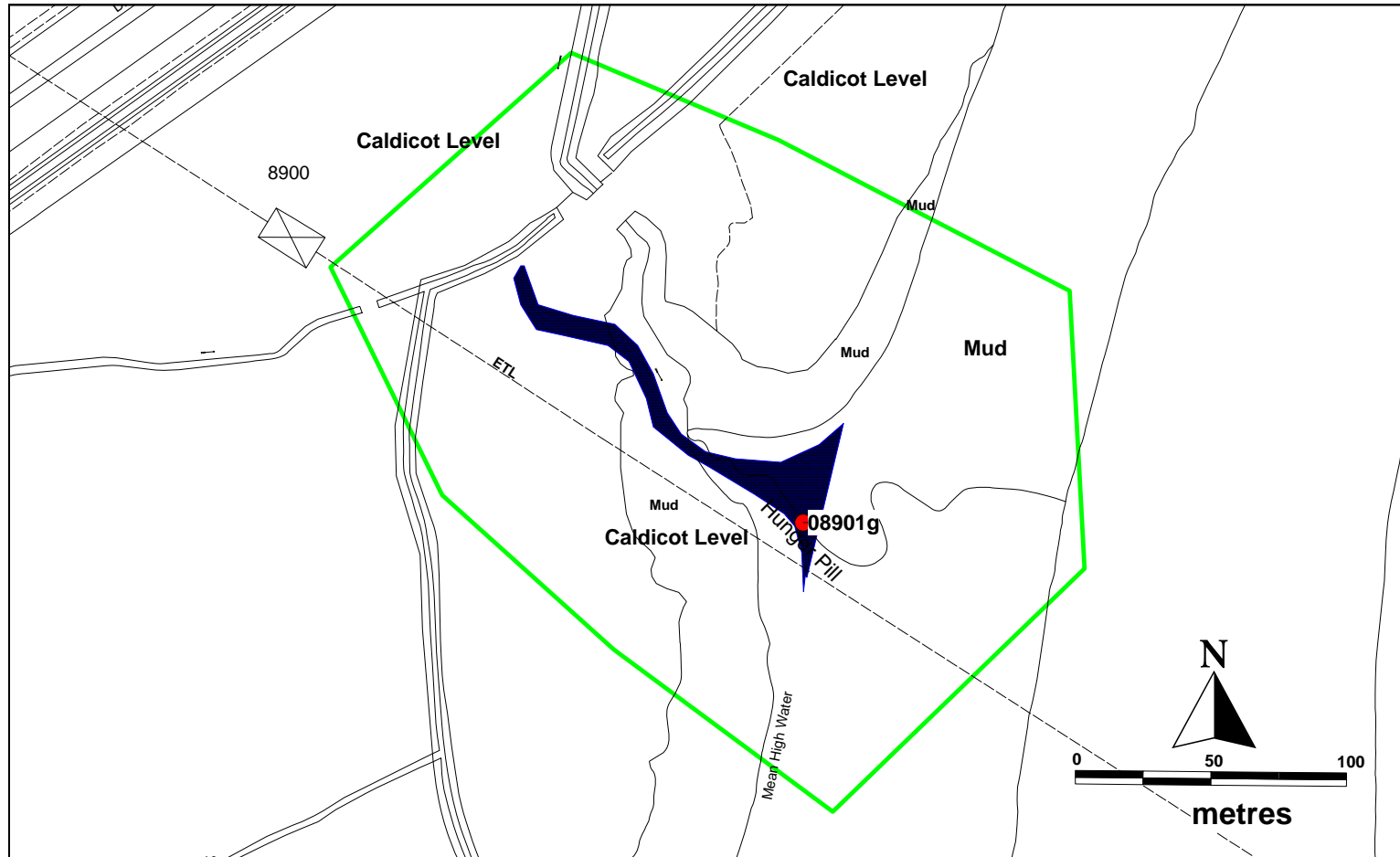
Figure 1 Sites of archaeological interest in the Tintern study area

2.2 Hunger Pill

Hunger Pill is one of several small, natural pills within the Severn Estuary which may have been utilised as a beaching point since the prehistoric period. Whilst the lack of evidence of formal waterfront features at this site does not preclude the possibility of such structures being present within the deep alluvial deposits, the greater potential for archaeologically-significant features surviving at this site is in the form of isolated boat finds. There is little pressure from development within this area, but the constant threat from natural erosion may lead to the disturbance of features at this site.



Plate 2 Landscape of Hunger Pill, looking east



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Figure 2 Sites of archaeological interest in the Hunger Pill study area

2.3 Mathern and St Pierre

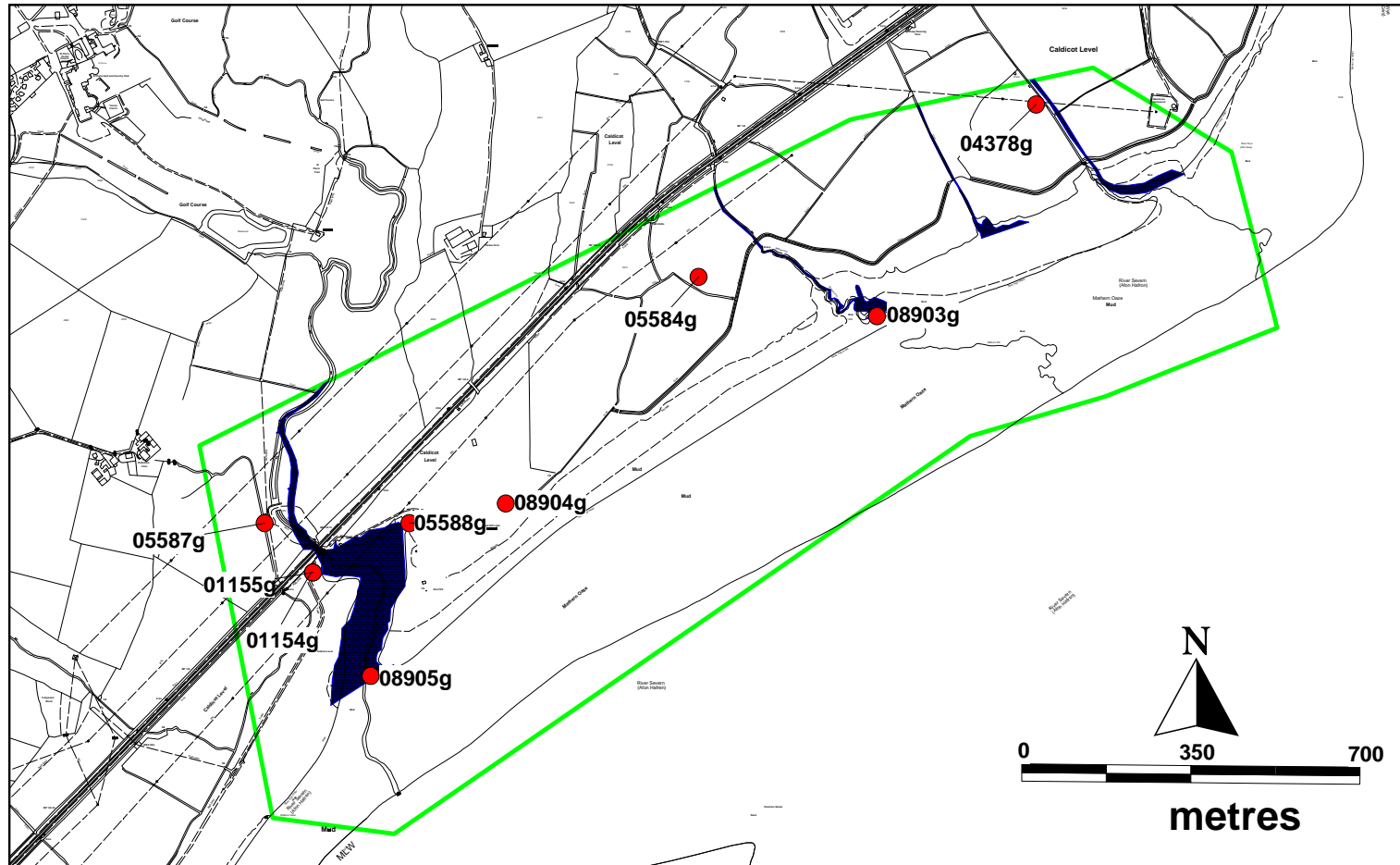
There is settlement evidence for the occupation of Mathern and St Pierre from the medieval period, for example the Lewis family have lived in the St. Pierre area since the 13th century, constructing St. Pierre House in the 15th century, and Mathern Palace in Mathern was inhabited by the bishops of Llandaff from the 15th century until 1706.

Mathern and St Pierre is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) indicating that the area was routinely used as a harbour by the 16th century, as it still is today (01154g), and documentary sources refer to a ferry in the vicinity of St Pierre as early as 1506. Although Lewis refers to the two sites together, it is evident that St Pierre Pill was the more substantial harbour in the past as in the present, with Mathern Pill simply a minor named creek. Evidence for formal structures within St Pierre Pill, such as a wooden jetty (05588g), suggest that there is a potential for additional waterside features being preserved within the pill. Indeed, such structures may be located some distance inland, as the pill itself extended much further inland prior to being narrowed by the construction of the railway across it. At Mathern Pill, however, the archaeological potential is more likely to be restricted to isolated boat finds. At both these sites, the continuing erosion of the alluvial deposits may expose archaeological features, artefacts or deposits.



Plate 3 Landscape of Mathern and St Pierre, looking southwest

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Figure 3 Sites of archaeological interest in the Mathern and St Pierre study area

2.4 Black Rock

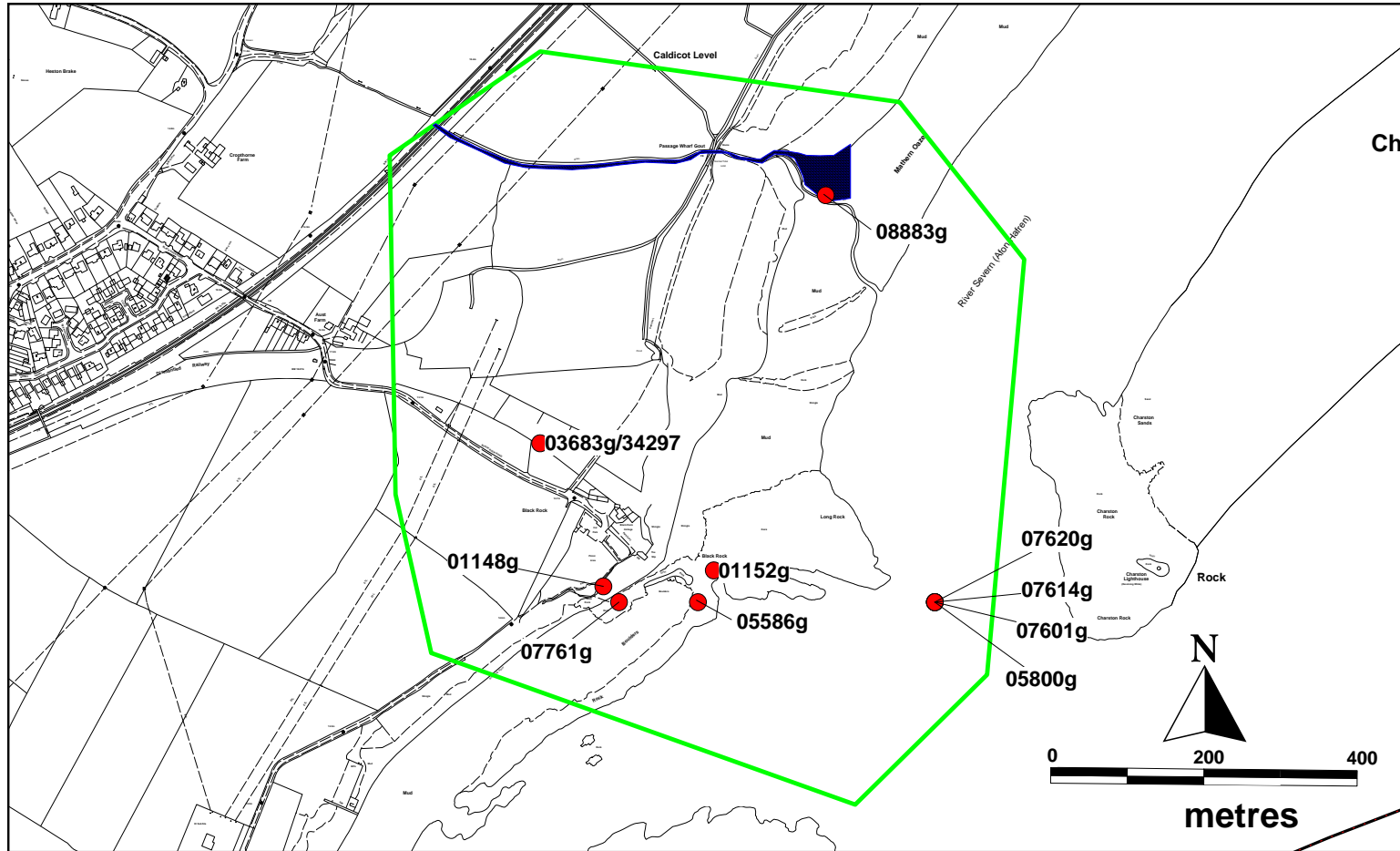
It is evident that Black Rock was considered well situated to act as a ferrying point across the Severn Estuary during the post-medieval period (01152), and almost certainly also functioned as a crossing point during the Roman period. The importance of the site for accessing the Severn Estuary continued into the post-medieval period, with a railway pier (03683g/34297) used prior to the construction of the Severn Tunnel.

It is considered likely that this point has been used as a crossing since the Roman period, and possibly even earlier. Therefore there is a strong possibility of significant archaeological remains being preserved in this area from the prehistoric period onwards, including further artefacts, wrecked boats and possibly structural features, and erosion may lead to the disturbance of such archaeological interests.



Plate 4 Landscape of Black Rock, looking northeast

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Figure 4 Sites of archaeological interest in the Black Rock study area

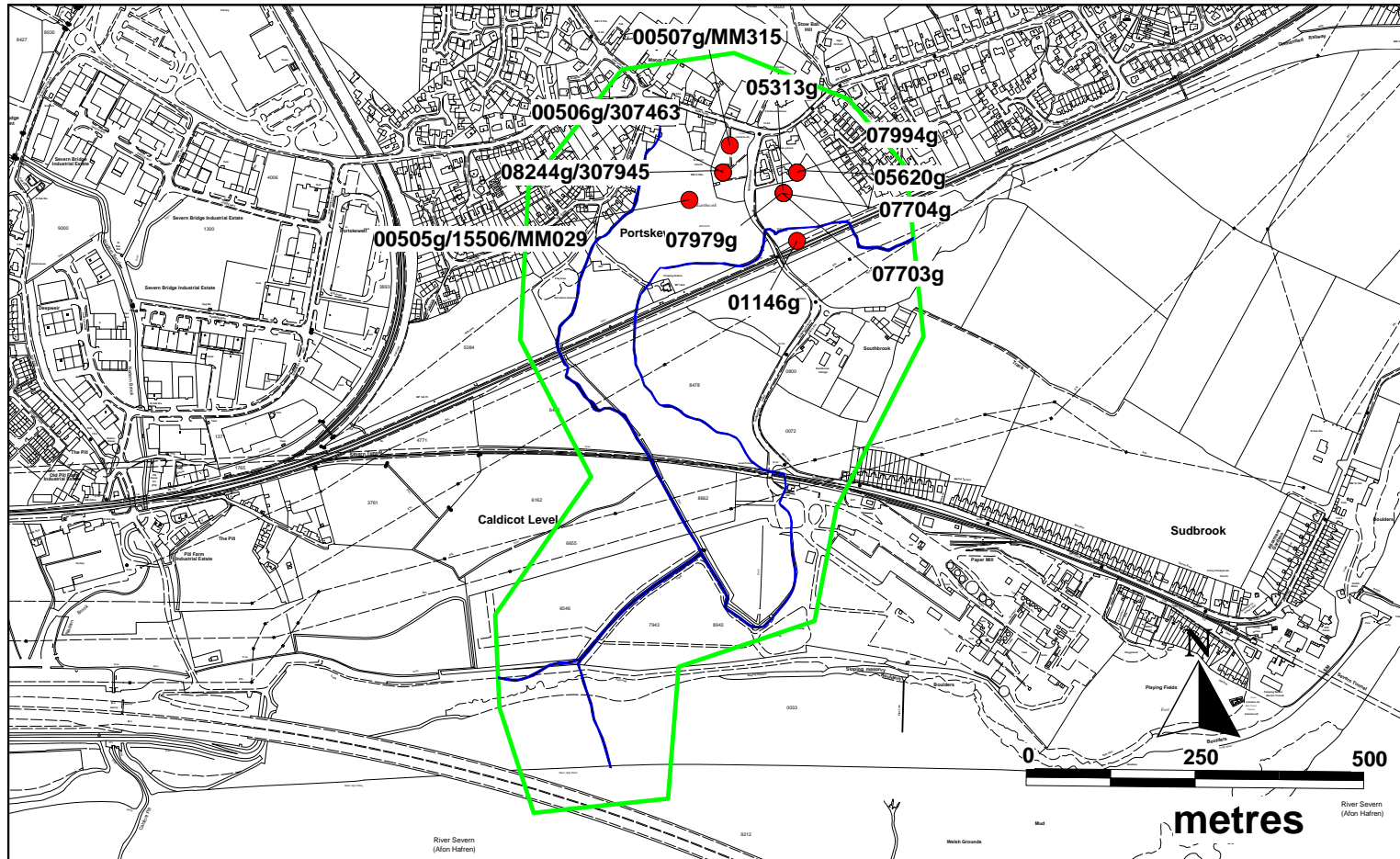
2.5 Portskewett

There is evidence of early occupation in Portskewett as recent excavations have indicated the presence of an Iron Age and Roman settlement. The area was also occupied in the early medieval period, as indicated by the presence of Harold's House (00505g/MM029) a possible Llys site which, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, was a hunting lodge built by Harold Godwinson (later Harold II of England) in 1063. The *Domesday Book* also lists Portskewett as one of the three dairy farms attached to Chepstow. The pills to the south of the main settlement may have been used as a tidal beaching point, but it is not considered likely that significant archaeological structures would be present in this area, although chance finds of maritime interest may be made, particularly due to coastal erosion.



Plate 5 Landscape of Portskewett, looking southeast

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Figure 5 Sites of archaeological interest in the Portskewett study area

2.6 Caldicot

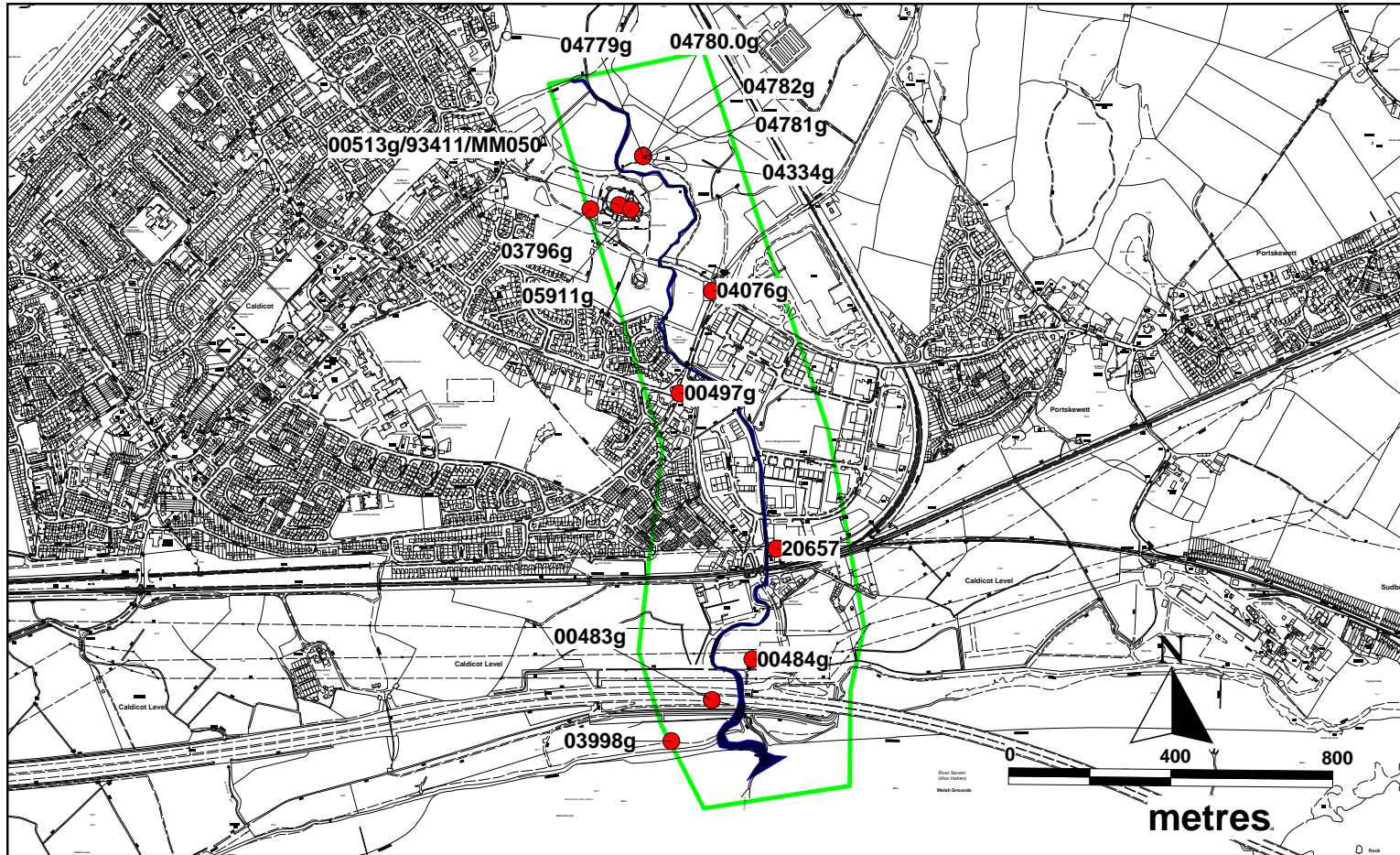
The discovery of a Bronze Age sewn-plank boat (04782g) to the north of Caldicot Castle indicates that Calidicot Pill was navigated in prehistory (Nayling and Caseldine 1996). Documentary evidence records that Brochmael son of Meyric, King of Gwent in the early 10th century, made a grant to the church at Llandaff, which included landing rights at the mouth of the Troggy, the former name of Caldicot Pill (00483g). The record states it was an old established harbour at this point, therefore the use of this area as a harbour may date back as far as the Roman period, and it has been suggested that it was the landing place for the crossing from the end of the Via Julia at Avonmouth.

It is likely that small vessels would have navigated to and from Caldicot Castle during the medieval period and Caldicot is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) indicating that the area was used by shipping during the post-medieval period. An 18th-century map illustrates that the Troggy originally meandered further to the east, and was diverted to its present course and used to float vessels from a nearby shipyard. This would imply that significant archaeological remains may survive at this site, including vessels and structures. It is probable, however, that this potential will have been significantly reduced by the construction of the M4 motorway and Pill Farm Industrial Estate. Any future developments in this area would further threaten the potential archaeological resource, as would continuing coastal erosion.



Plate 6 Landscape of Caldicot, looking south

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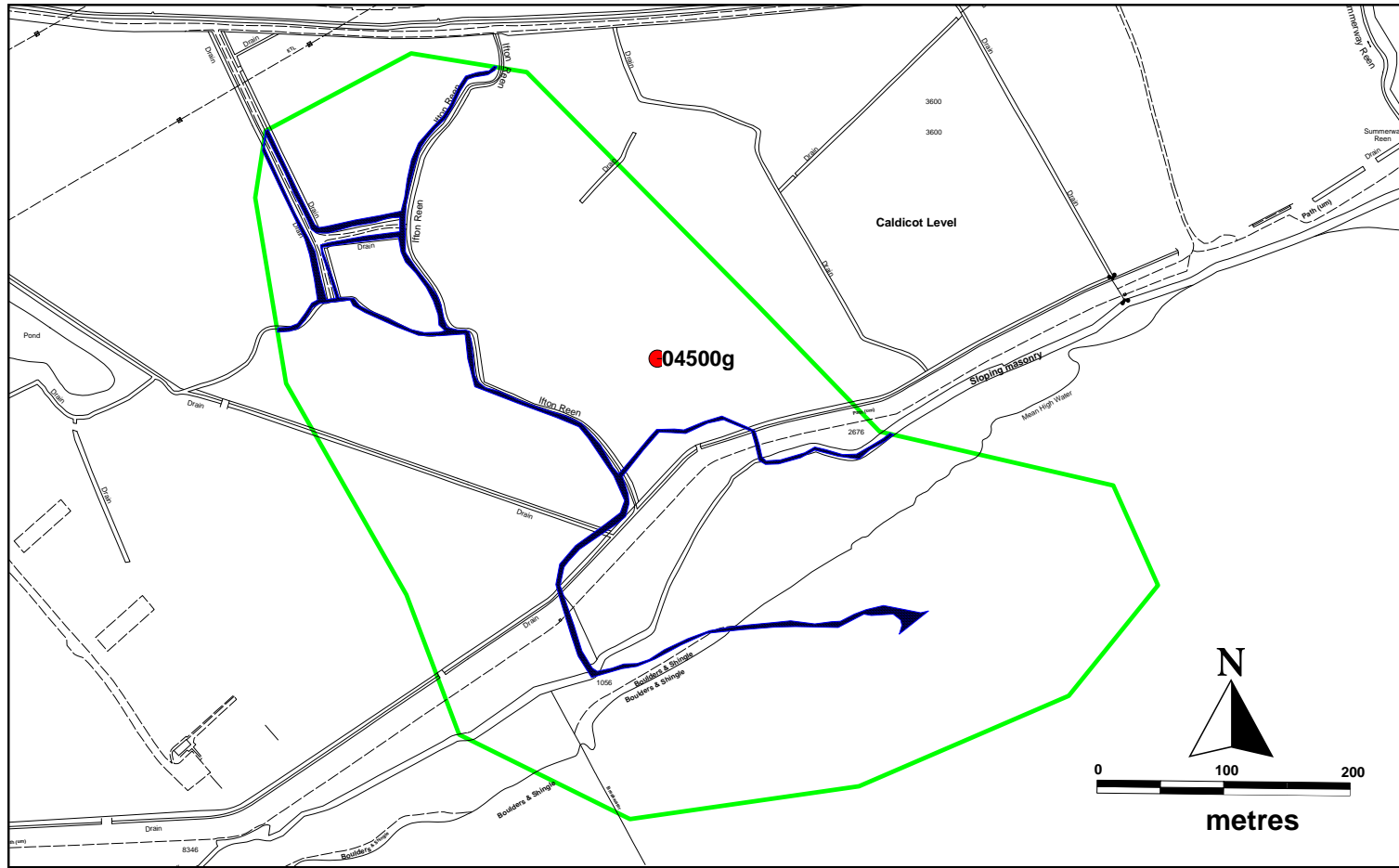
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Figure 6 Sites of archaeological interest in the Caldicot study area

2.7 Styne Pill

Styne Pill may have been used as a tidal beaching point, but there is no evidence for any waterfront structures at this site. It is possible that isolated vessels may survive within the deep alluvial deposits associated with the pill, and may be revealed by natural erosion.

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Figure 7 Sites of archaeological interest in the Styne Pill study area

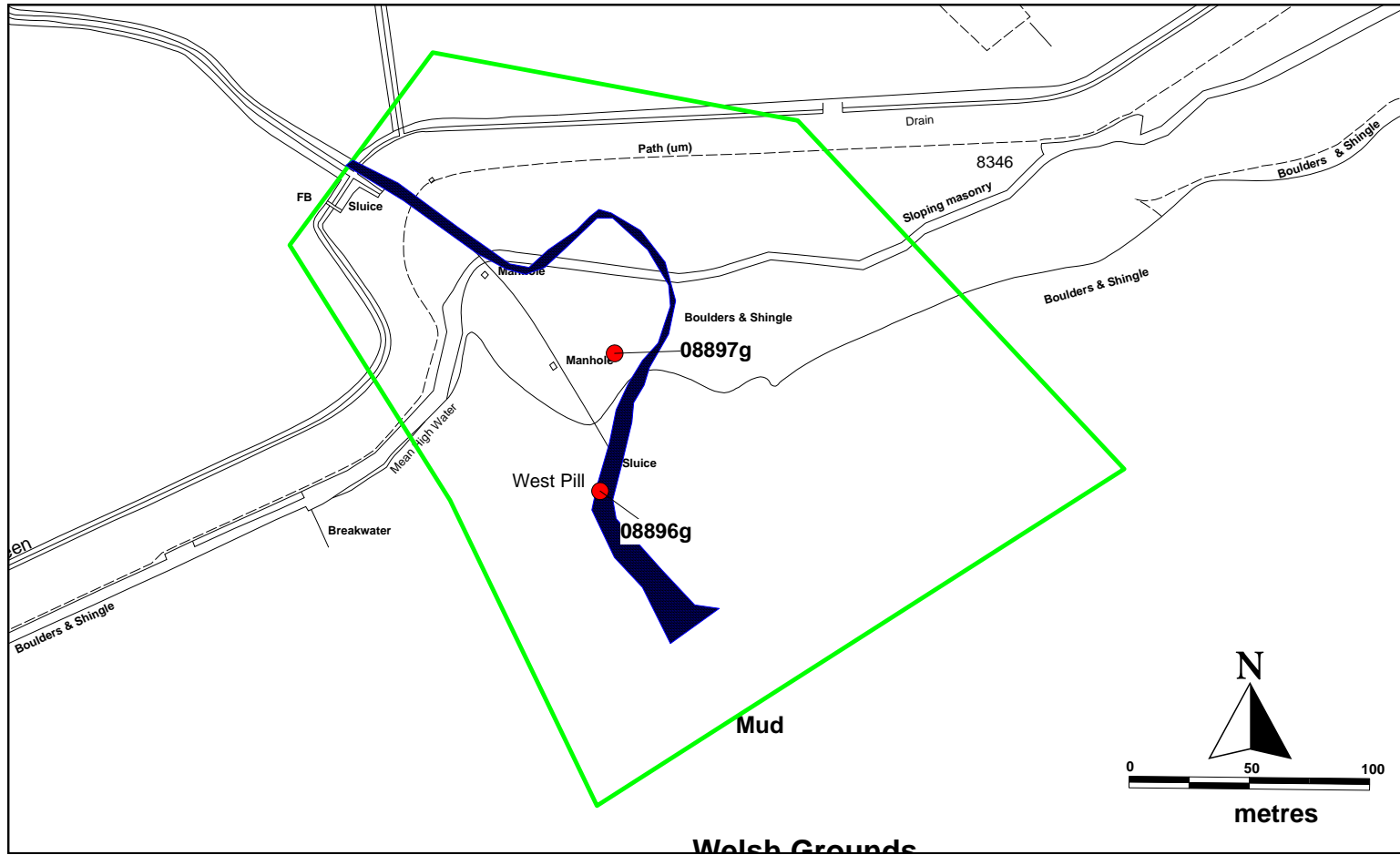
2.8 West Pill

West Pill (08896g) is probably the site of Westhowcke mentioned in the Welsh Port Books (Lewis 1927), and is natural pill within the Severn Estuary which may have been utilised in the past as a single tide beaching point. If it is the site referred to in the Welsh Port Books, this would indicate a degree of maritime use at least during the post-medieval period, and would increase the potential for archaeological features being located at the site. The identification of a line of wooden stakes (08897g) certainly illustrates the possibility of organic features surviving in the deep alluvial deposits, and may indicate the presence of further buried structures, which may be exposed by natural erosion.



Plate 7 Landscape of West Pill, looking north

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Figure 8 Sites of archaeological interest in the West Pill study area

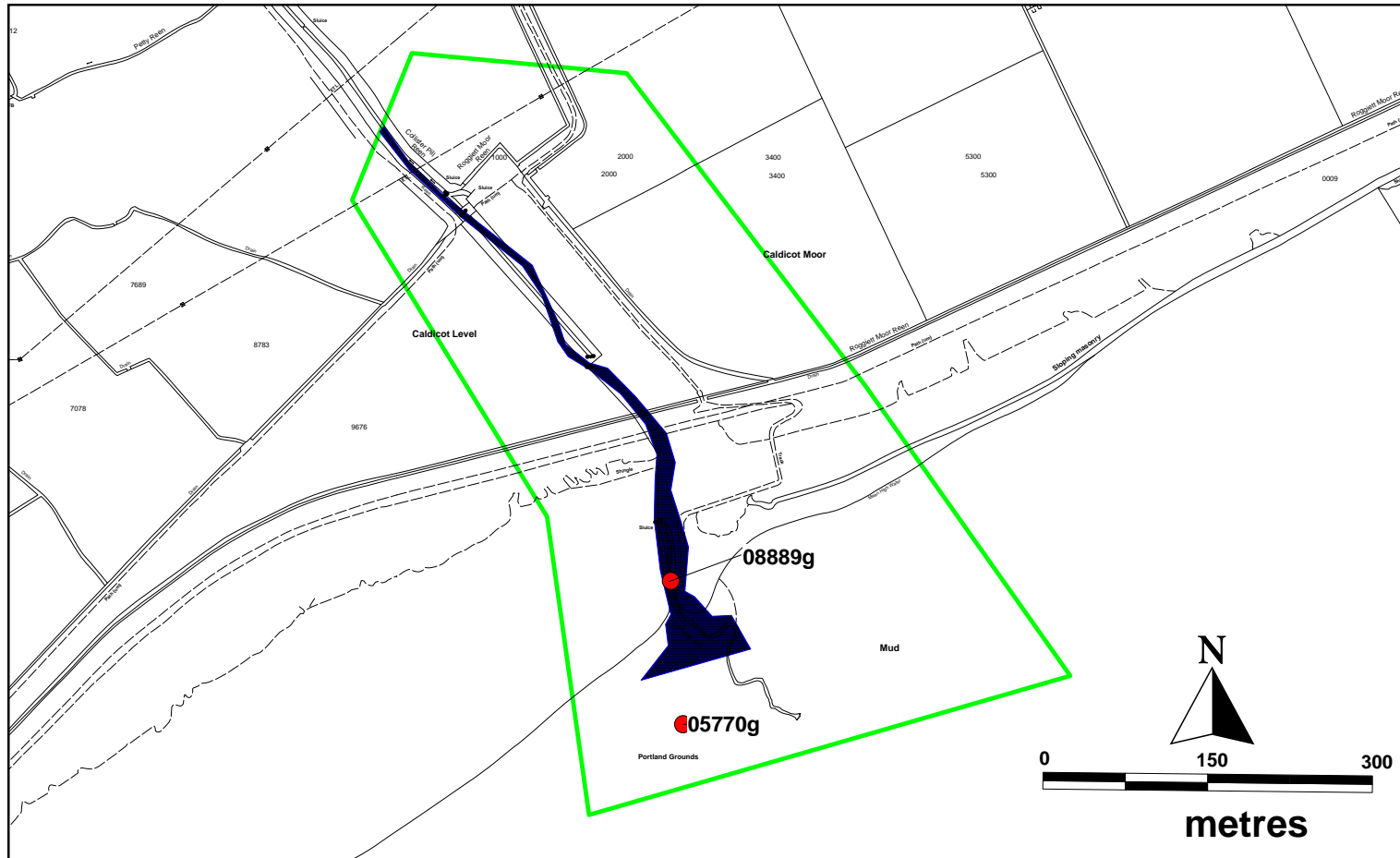
2.9 Collister Pill

Collister Pill is a small pill named on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1882, and may have been utilised as a beaching point since the prehistoric period. There is no evidence of any waterfront features at this site, although any such features may be masked due to considerable deposition of alluvium within the palaeochannel. There is little pressure from development within this area, but the natural erosion may lead to the disturbance of potential archaeological interests at this site.



Plate 8 Landscape of Collister Pill, looking southeast

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Figure 9 Sites of archaeological interest in the Collister Pill study area

2.10 Magor Pill

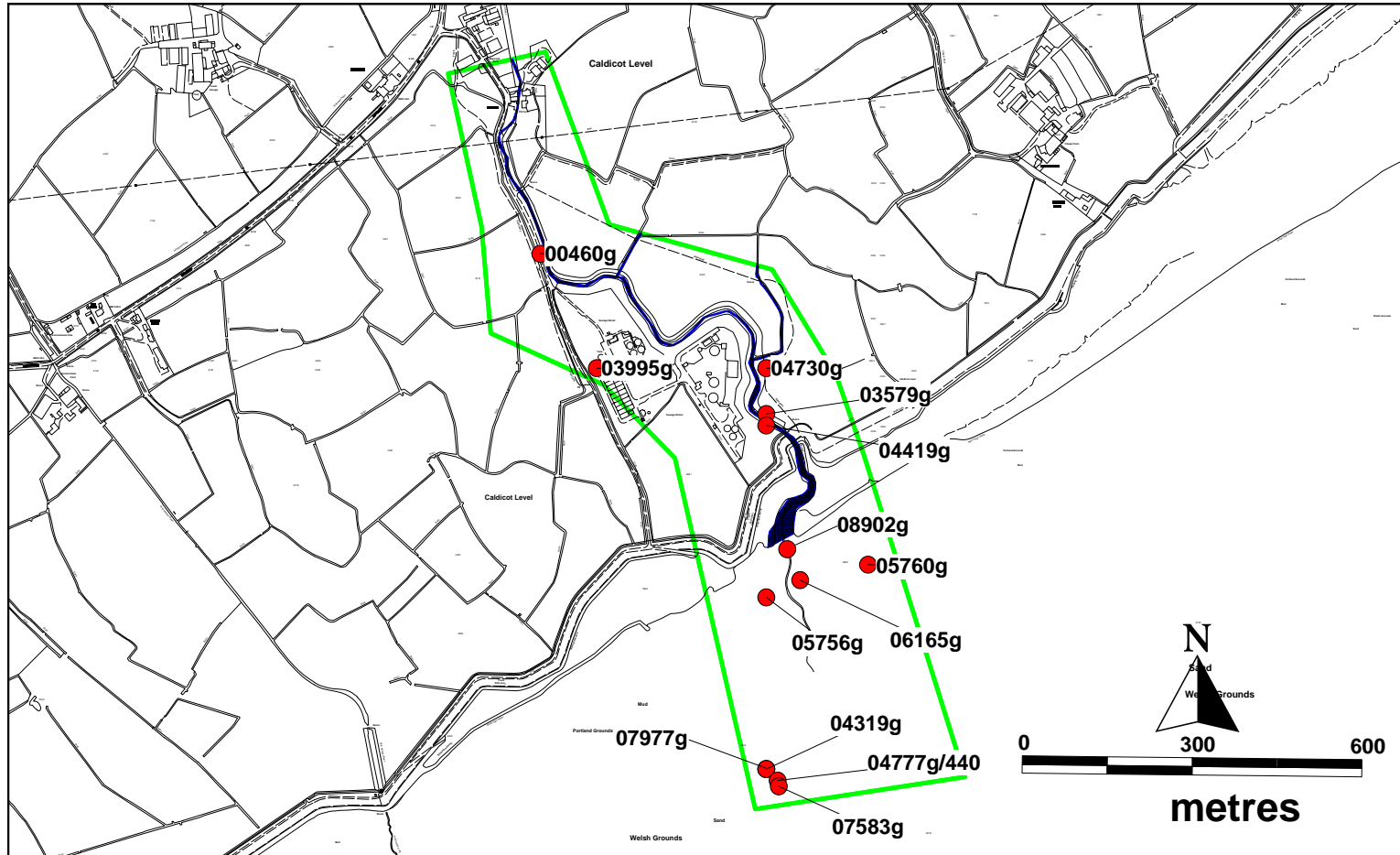
Magor Pill (08902g) has been identified as the site of Abergwitha (Aberwaythelles in Lewis 1927), a harbour during the medieval period that was abandoned in the early 14th century. Such an assertion is supported by the medieval element of the ceramic assemblage recovered from the area, with a high percentage of early and imported wares (Allen and Rippon 1994). A 13th-century clinker built boat (04777g/440) has been discovered at the site, which features a shallow draft making it perfectly suited for landing in such locations (Nayling 1998). Later medieval artefacts and significant amounts of early modern material have been recovered and these artefacts, combined with the faunal evidence, suggest that there was a flourishing sea trade in store cattle and other domestic animals across the Bristol Channel (Allen and Rippon 1994). The number of finds of Roman date also indicates that the area was used as a harbour during this period, probably as one of a number of minor ports catering for trade in Caerleon and along the Severn Estuary (Allen 1998).

It is evident that this was the site of a significant harbour during the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods and numerous deposits and artefacts from these periods may survive. However, it is clear from the location of the concentration of previous finds that the previous coastline has been lost to erosion, and so the survival of waterfront structures is unlikely. Nevertheless, this is clearly an archaeologically important location and should be protected from future redevelopment and, if possible, the effects of further coastal erosion.



Plate 9 Landscape of Magor Pill, looking south

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Figure 10 Sites of archaeological interest in the Magor Pill study area

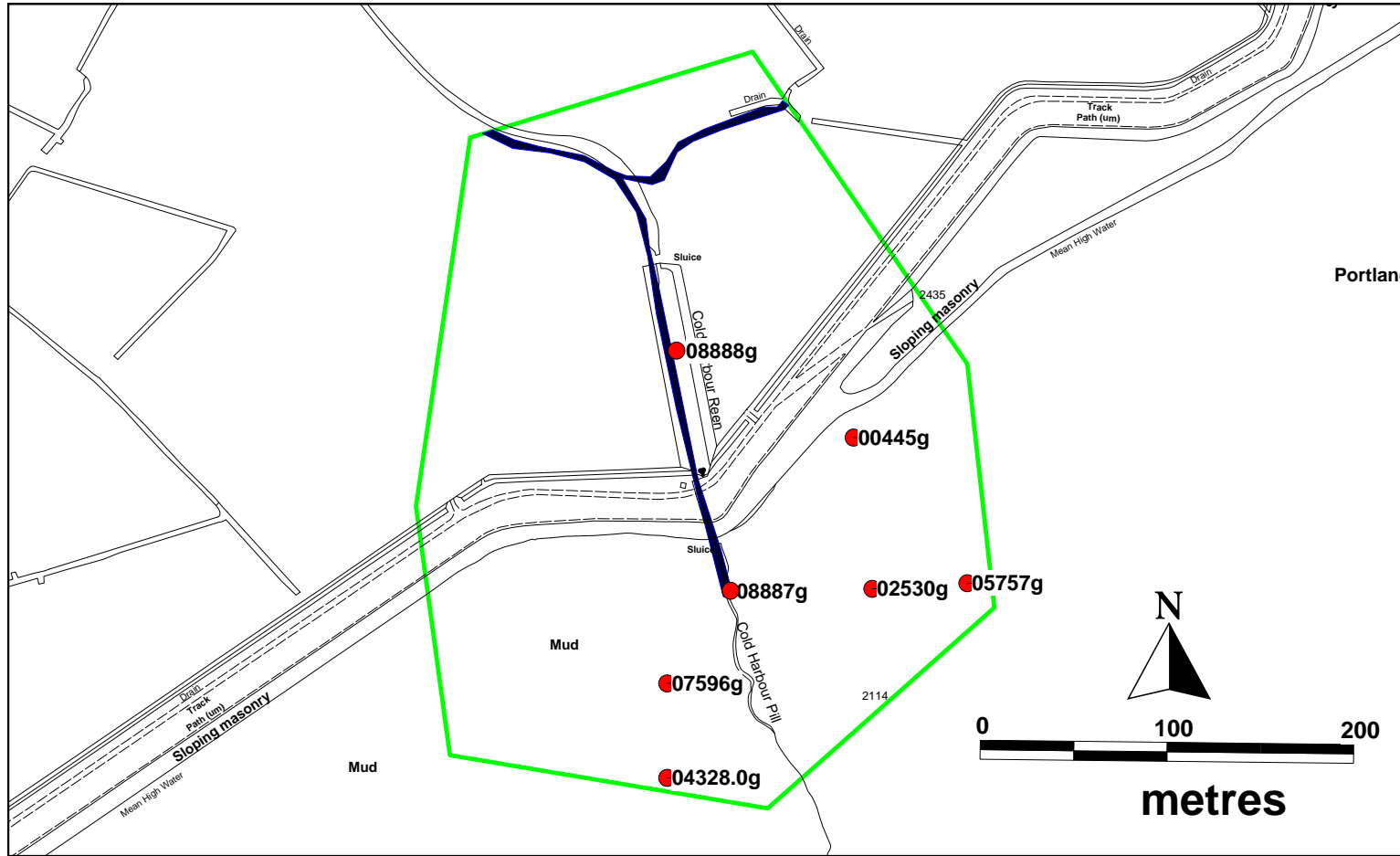
2.11 Cold Harbour Pill

Cold Harbour Pill (08887g) is a natural pill within the Severn Estuary which may have been utilised in the past for harbouring boats and ships, as suggested by its name. There is no evidence of any waterfront features at this site, although the discovery of a length of Bronze Age trackway (04328.0g) clearly illustrates that wooden structures survive in this location. There is little pressure from development within this area, but the constant threat from natural erosion could lead to the disturbance of any archaeological interests located at this site.



Plate 10 Landscape of Cold Harbour Pill, looking south

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Figure 11 Sites of archaeological interest in the Cold Harbour Pill study area

2.12 Goldcliff

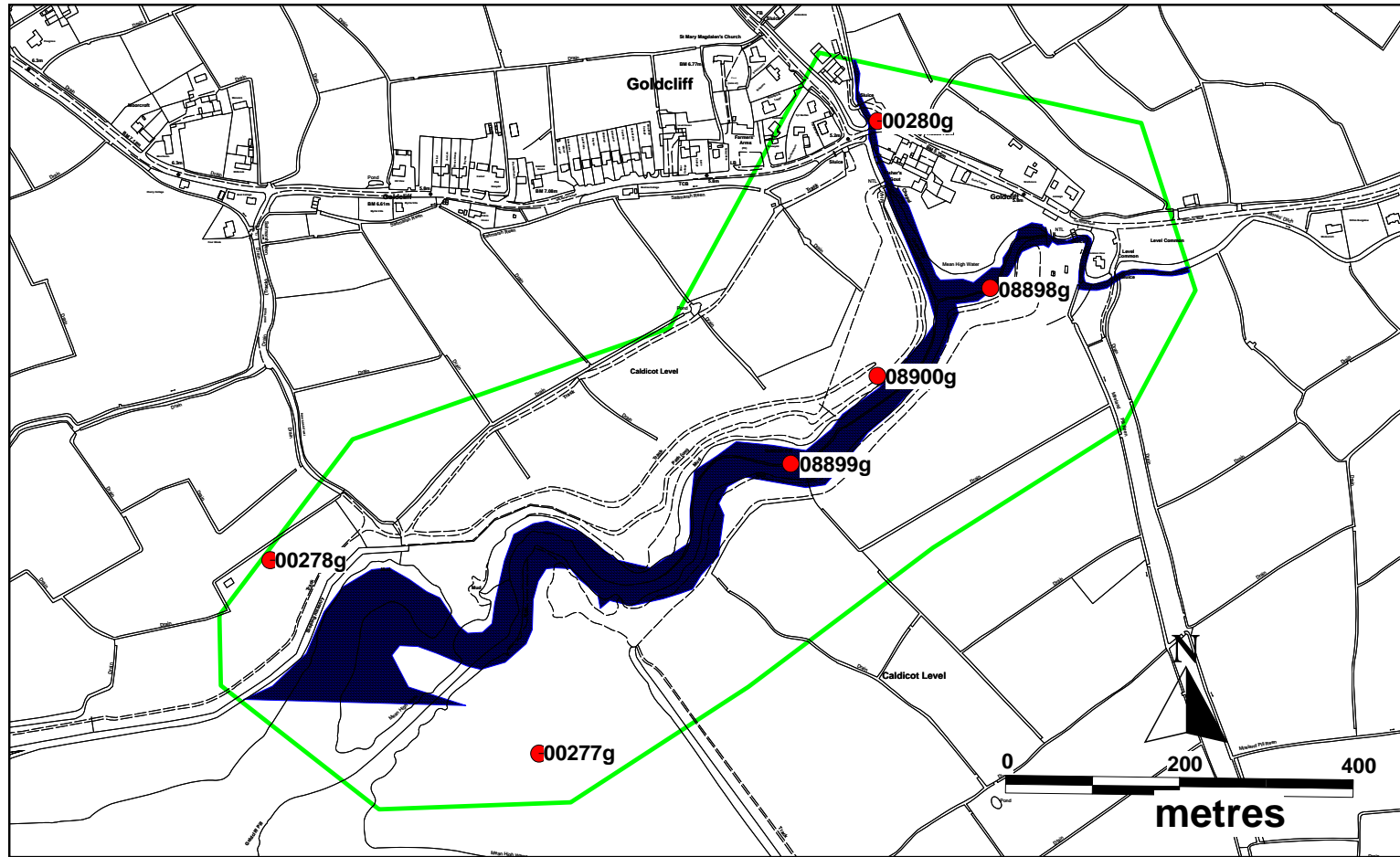
Excavations have revealed a significant degree of prehistoric activity at Goldcliff; skeletons of red deer, wolf and wild pig and numerous flint tools have been found and dated to the Mesolithic period, along with 88 human footprints dated to the same period (Scales 2002, 34). In 1992, two timbers from a Bronze Age sewn boat were recorded at Goldcliff (08922g), apparently re-used in a larger structure (Bell *et al* 2000). In addition, a series of rectangular Iron Age timber buildings have been excavated (Bell *et al* 2000) and Roman activity in the locality is evidenced by the presence of a boundary stone that probably relates to the construction of a sea wall by the Second Legion (Newman 2000). During the medieval period, a Benedictine priory was founded in 1113 by Robert de Chandos, lord of Caerleon.

Goldcliff is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) indicating that the area was routinely used by shipping in the 16th century, and as a substantial pill, was almost certainly navigated for centuries prior to this date. Whilst the two Bronze Age boat timbers had been re-used in a secondary structure, this find provides strong evidence for navigation in the Goldcliff area from this period. It is therefore considered possible that significant structural remains of waterfront features may be preserved at this site, along with other artefacts and deposits relating to maritime activity. Any future development projects would threaten this potential archaeological resource, as does the continuing coastal erosion.



Plate 11 Landscape of Goldcliff, looking south

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Figure 12 Sites of archaeological interest in the Goldcliff Pill study area

2.13 Caerleon

Caerleon functioned as a major port from at least the Roman period. The Roman legionary fortress at Caerleon has undergone numerous excavations, and fieldwork to the southwest of the fortress revealed extensive waterfront features. A stone-built quay was discovered containing a possible loading ramp, with the secondary quay comprising an 8m extension (02996g). A boat-house was also excavated, which had open sides so that vessels could be drawn in at high tide, as well as breakwaters and oak piers (Boon 1978). There is documentary evidence to suggest that the use of Caerleon as a port continued into the early medieval period, with the *Chronicle of Princes* recording that Edward, king of the Saxons gathered a huge fleet at Caerleon in AD 973 (Jones 1955).

During the medieval period, a significant river trade existed on the River Usk between Caerleon and Newport. The location of the medieval quay has not been proved, but may have been located in the area of riverbank near the Hanbury Tower (00543g/94870/MM037), where a post-medieval slipway survives (08885g). It has been postulated that Newport replaced Caerleon as the major port on the River Usk during the later medieval period, as silting of the river channel and the construction of the Newport Bridge made navigation upriver to Caerleon increasingly difficult for larger vessels.

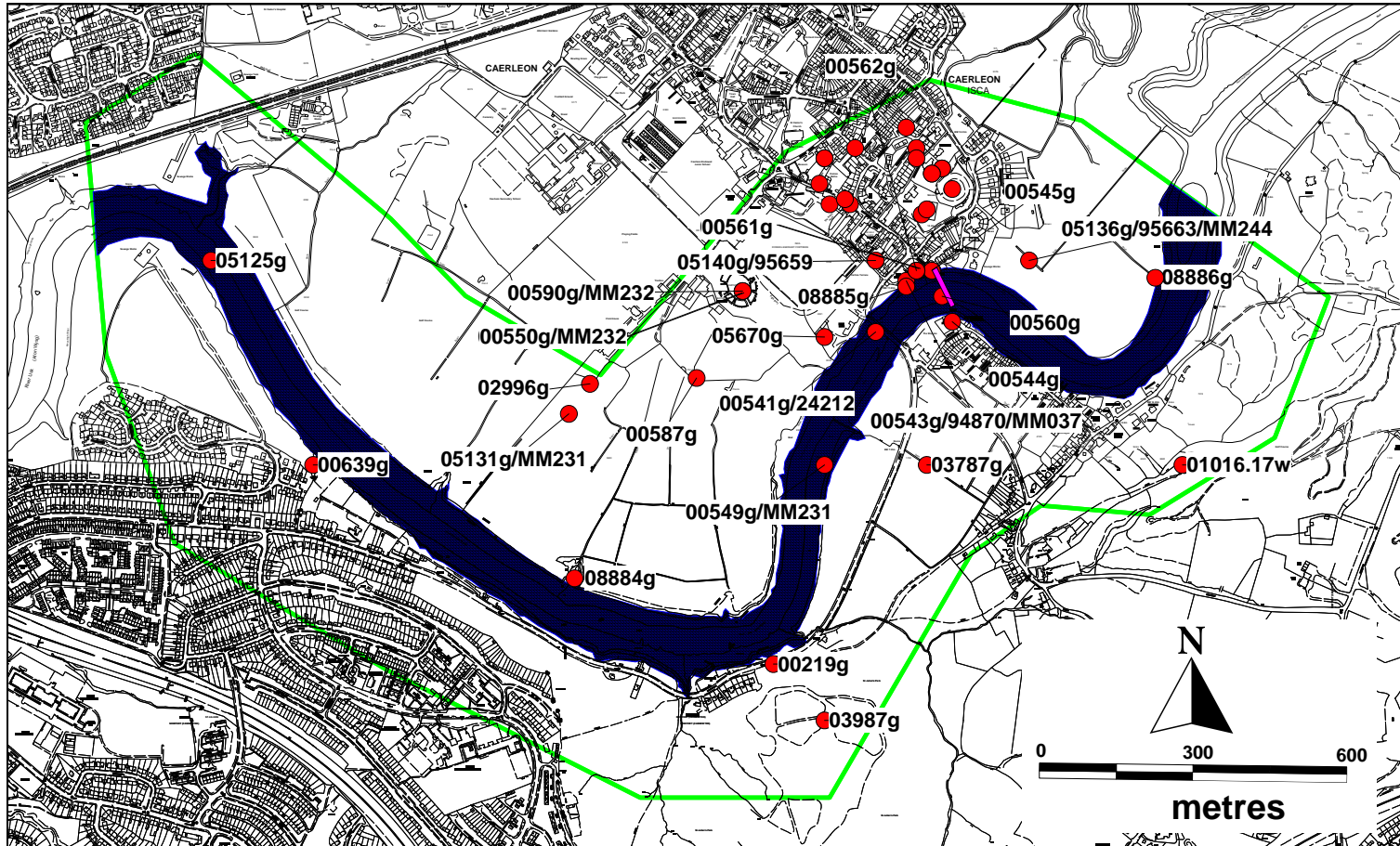


Plate 12 Landscape of Caerleon, looking southwest down slipway 08885g

However, recent investigations during flood alleviation work on the banks of the River Usk in Caerleon have uncovered multiple, large scale timber revetments and a stone mooring point, both post-medieval in date (Lewis 2005) and a timber bridge, probably also post-medieval in date but with possible medieval origins, see Figure 15 (Lewis 2004b). It therefore seems more likely that whilst Newport was the primary medieval and post-medieval port in west Gwent, Caerleon continued to function as an important secondary port throughout these periods until the 19th century.

The archaeological significance of Caerleon is well established, and it is identified as an archaeologically sensitive area (ASA) designated in the local planning authority's Unitary Development Plan (UDP). There are two main areas that are particularly important in terms of river trade, the area around the excavated Roman quay and the area of the probable medieval and post-medieval quay, near the Hanbury Tower. In addition, the various pills along the River Usk around Caerleon (e.g. 05125g; 08884g) may also have been utilised as havens for small vessels during any period. As such, any developments in these areas would threaten this potential archaeological resource, and continuing erosion may also reveal previously unrecorded features along the river bank.

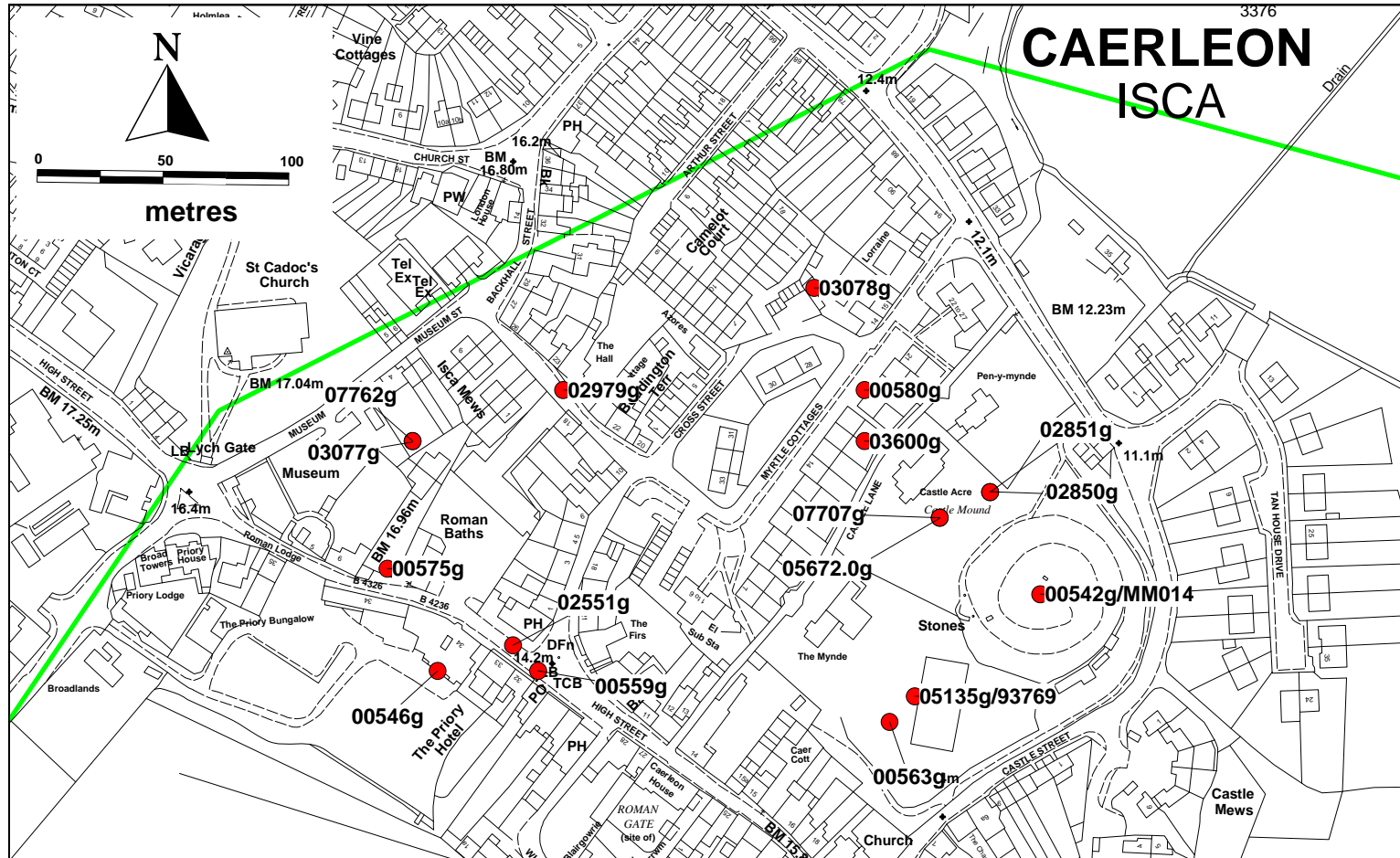
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Figure 13 Sites of archaeological interest in the Caerleon wider study area

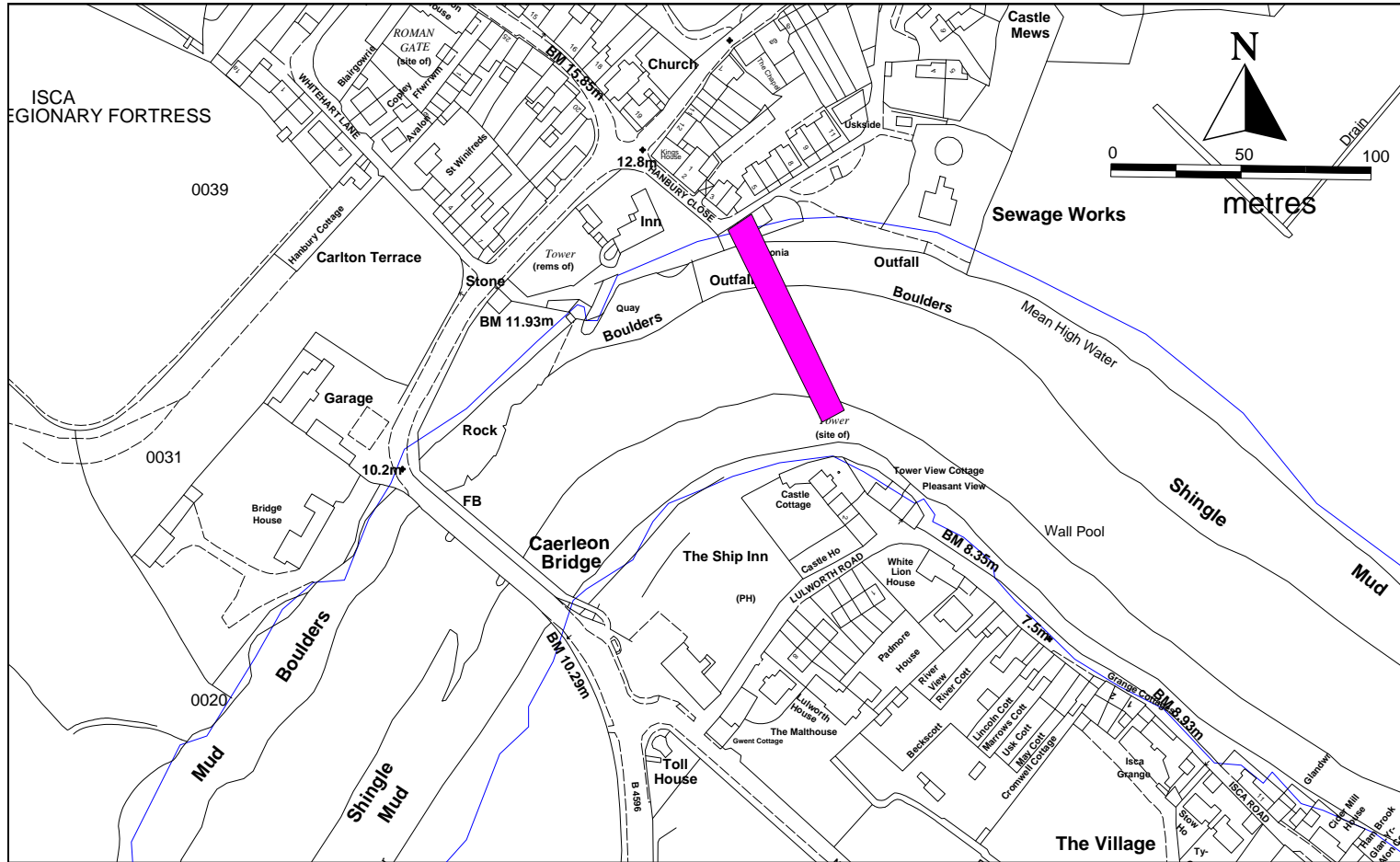
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Figure 14 Sites of archaeological interest in Caerleon village

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Figure 15 Projected line of timber bridge (after Lewis 2004b)

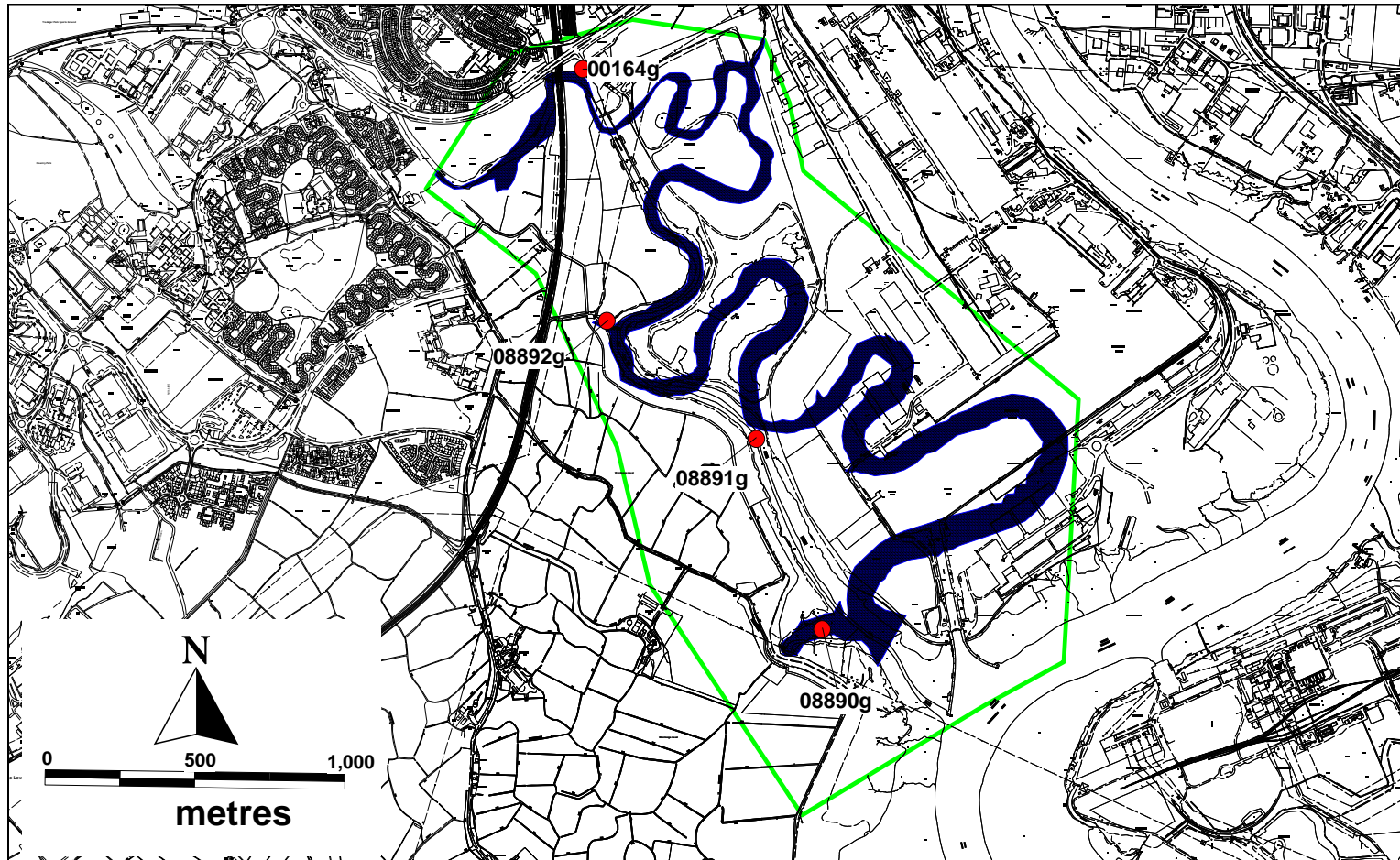
2.14 Ebbw

The River Ebbw is a tributary of the River Usk, although its present course has been substantially modified in recent times. During the construction of the Alexandra Docks in 1878, part of a clinker-built boat (05157g) was discovered in this area, apparently re-used as a revetment. The timbers returned a radiocarbon date centred on the 10th century AD, although the felling date of the timber may have been later (Hutchinson 1984). This find has traditionally been associated with the River Usk, but map regression has demonstrated that the River Ebbw used to flow close to the docks area, and it is more likely that it had been placed along the bank of the River Ebbw, rather than the River Usk. Additionally, this find clearly demonstrates the potential for organic material surviving in the alluvial deposits in this locality.

The natural meandering course of the River Ebbw, as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1883, may have rendered it uninviting for navigation, but the mouth of the river may well have been used as a haven for vessels travelling up and down the River Usk. Whilst there is no evidence for any riverside structures at this site, there remains a potential for isolated boat finds, although this potential is much decreased by the extensive realignment of the river channel in the past.



Plate 13 Landscape of the Ebbw, looking north



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Figure 16 Sites of archaeological interest in the Ebbw study area

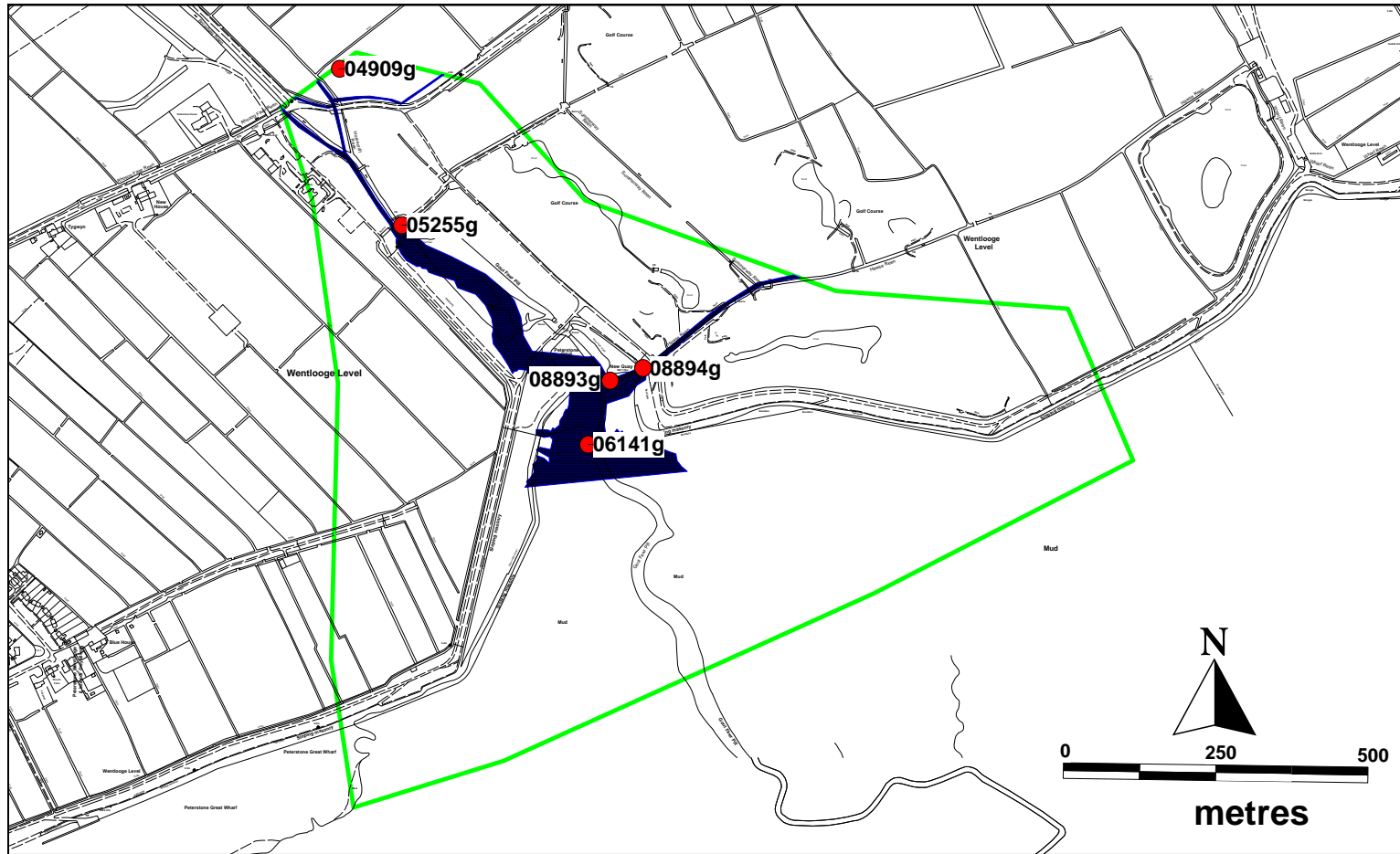
2.15 Peterstone

The site of Peterstone is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) suggesting that the area was used as a harbour by the 16th century, although there is no visible evidence for this surviving. It has been suggested that a timber post dredged from Broadway reen (04909g), comprising splinters from one of three baulks, may have formed part of the timber wharfing for a medieval anchorage. Gout Fawr Pill at Peterstone is shown as a substantial waterway on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1883, and would certainly have been navigable in the past. There is a possibility that further structural remains may survive inland at this site, although any early coastline features have probably been lost through erosion. Any future development or dredging work close to the former river channel could damage further buried archaeological remains.



Plate 14 Landscape of Peterstone, looking southeast

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Figure 17 Sites of archaeological interest in the Peterstone study area

3. South Glamorgan

As noted previously, all landing points between Chepstow and Wormshead were technically under the jurisdiction of the Head port of Cardiff, which is discussed in more detail in the report on the first year of this project (Howell and Dunning 2004). In South Glamorgan, the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) also mention the havens of Rumney, Penarth, Sully, Barry and Aberthaw. In addition, the site of Col-hugh and Llantwit Major is included here.

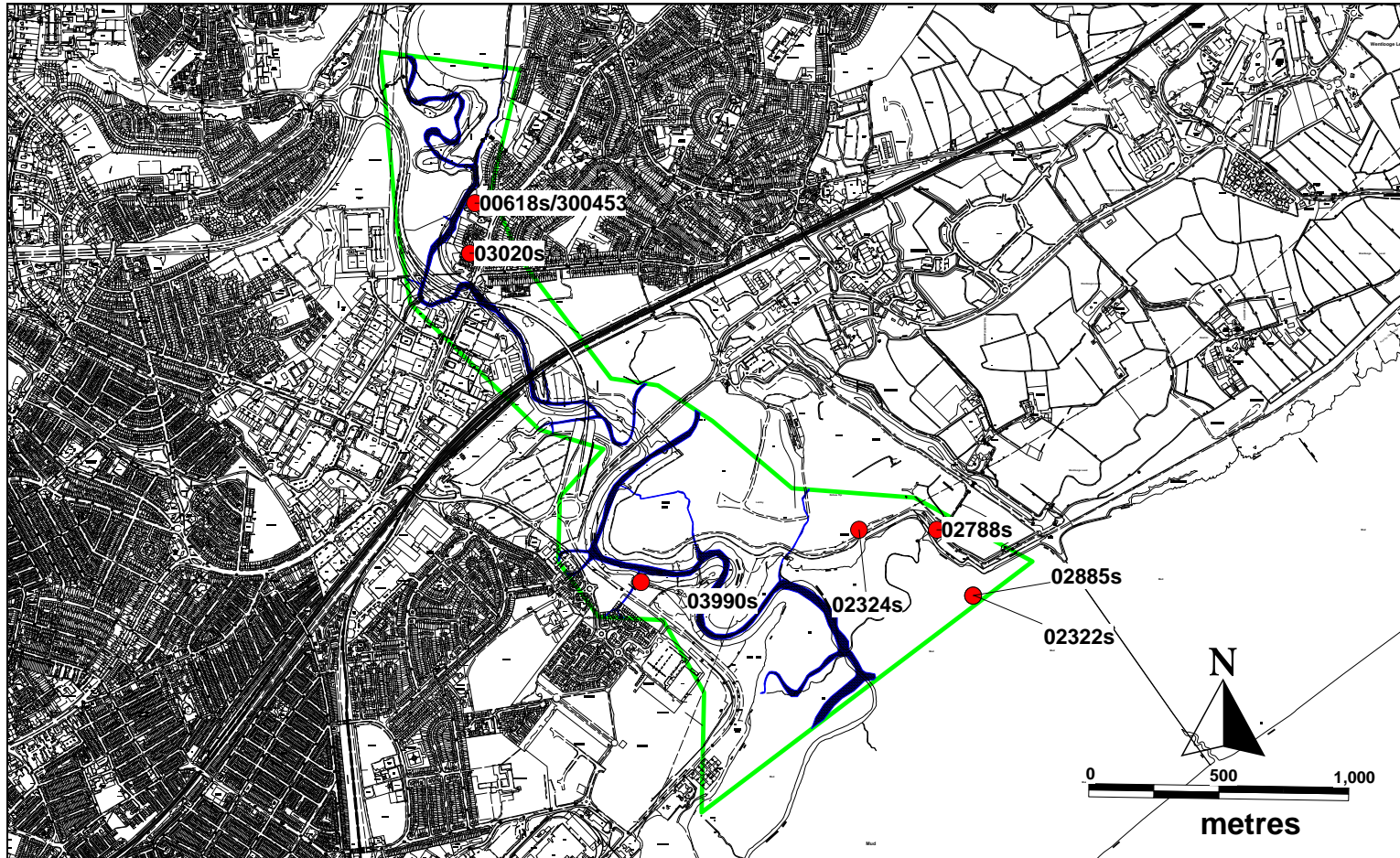
3.1 Rumney

The landscape and topography surrounding the River Rumney is similar to the Gwent Levels, and appears to have been exploited since the prehistoric period. Bronze Age timber circles have been recorded just to the east of the river mouth (Allen 1996), along with post settings, flint scatters and numerous pottery sherds. Although there is no evidence for medieval navigation of the river, Rumney is listed in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927), and is still used by small boats today. Whilst no significant above-ground remains survive, it is particularly in the form of artefacts or smaller structures. The archaeological potential of this area is particularly threatened by encroaching development from the expansion of nearby Cardiff and continuing coastal erosion.



Plate 15 Landscape of the Rumney, looking north

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Figure 18 Sites of archaeological interest in the Rumney study area

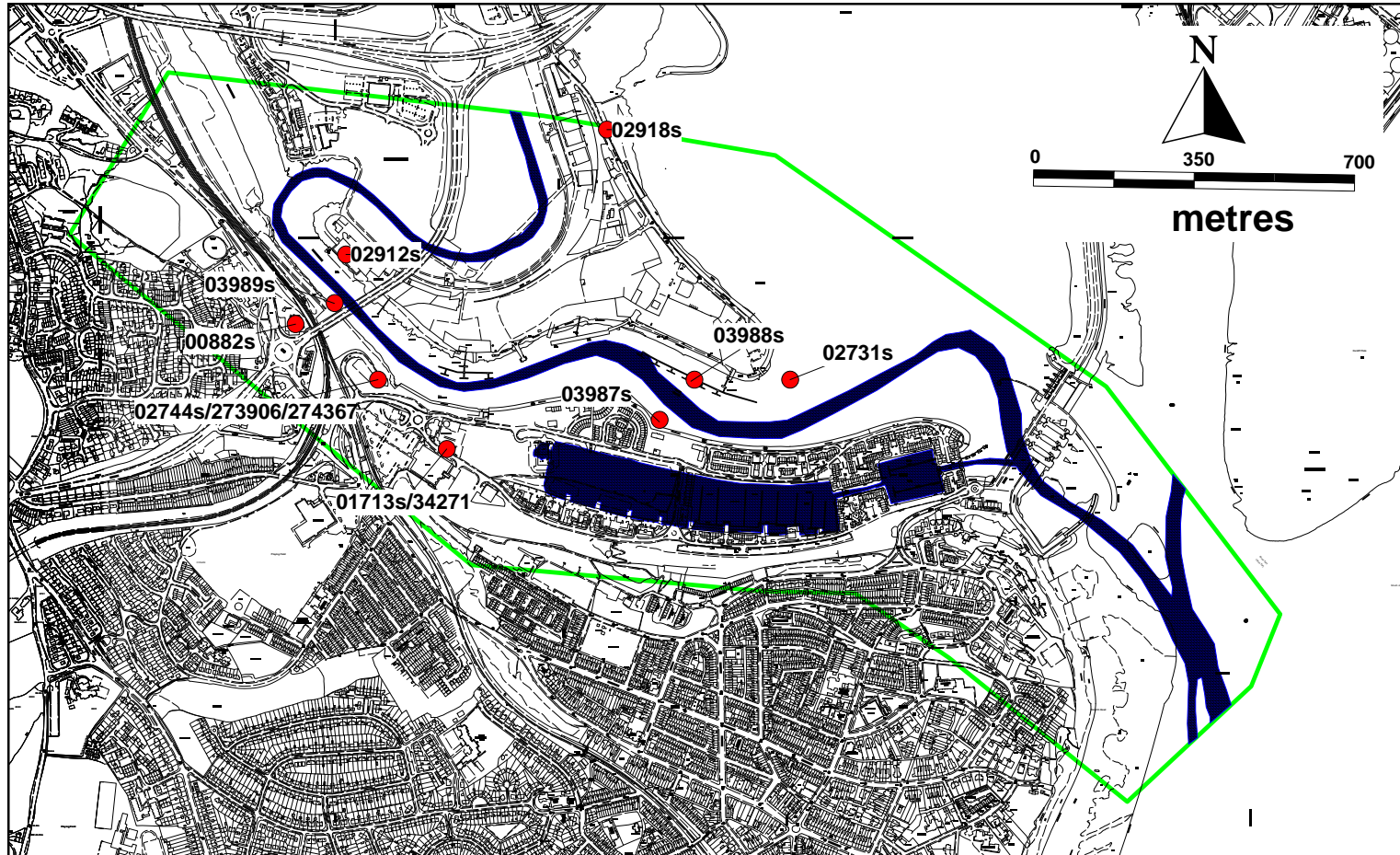
3.2 Penarth

Penarth is listed in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) and so was clearly in use as a harbour by the 16th century. In the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution transformed nearby Cardiff into a major port, and this increased in pace after the construction of Penarth Docks (01713s/34271) in 1865. There are many remains of maritime structures from this period, including wharfs, jetties and a scheduled coal staithe (03988s/GM553). The area has recently been transformed by the creation of the Cardiff Bay Barrage and major regeneration, which has seen the industrial landscape transformed into a primarily residential area. Whilst attempts have been made to incorporate historic features within redevelopment programmes, the overall character of the area has been altered, and future redevelopment should strive to maintain and enhance existing maritime features within the area.



Plate 16 Landscape of Penarth, looking southeast

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Figure 19 Sites of archaeological interest in the Penarth study area

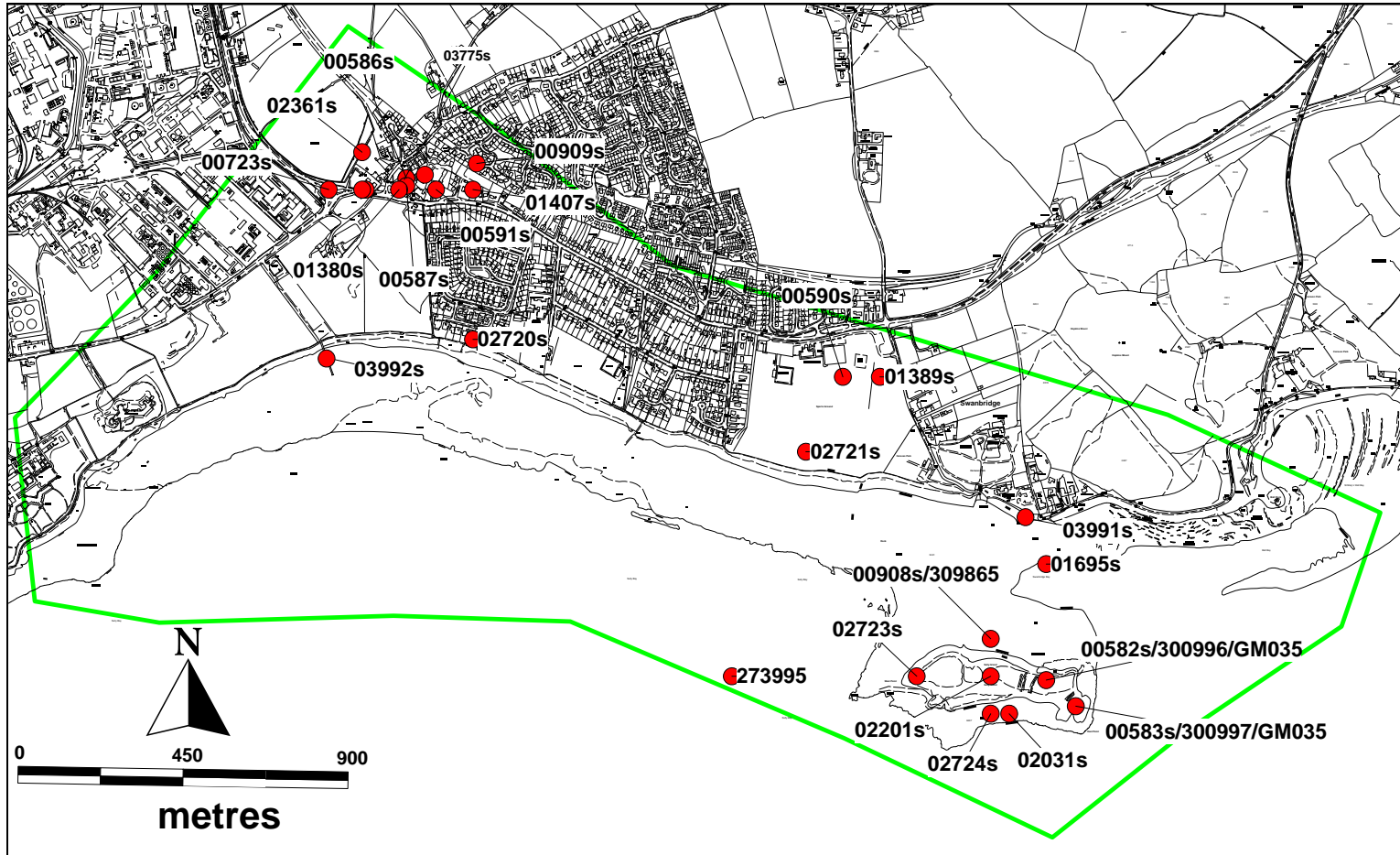
3.3 Sully

There is evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the Sully area, and the deserted rural settlement of Sully Village attests to medieval settlement (00723s). Sully is listed in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) and so was clearly in use as a harbour by the 16th century, and Swanbridge Port (01695s) is recorded to the north of Sully Island, and a boat containing sherds of post-medieval pottery (00908s/309865) is recorded nearby. Modern slipways (03991s; 03992s) indicate the area is still used by boats. There is the potential for the survival of further structures and wrecked boats and ships of post-medieval or earlier date in the area, although the construction of the sea wall defences may have already removed some significant deposits. This potential archaeological resource is particularly at risk from the pressures of development, and to a lesser extent, natural erosion.



Plate 17 Landscape of Sully, looking west

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Figure 20 Sites of archaeological interest in the Sully study area

3.4 Barry

Like Sully, there is significant evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the Barry area. A late Roman building excavated at Cold Knap (00539ss/GM419) (Evans *et al* 1985) was located adjacent to an area that was a protected inlet during the Roman period and it is possible that the building was associated with this natural landing point, and so is evidence for use of the area as a harbour during this period (Moore 1984, 46-48).

There are also numerous surviving medieval features in the area, such as the medieval abbey (00554s) and pilgrimage chapel on Barry Island (00549s). Barry is listed in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) but, in a similar manner to Penarth, did not expand significantly until the development of the docks in the 1880s by the renowned Welsh engineer David Davies of Llandinam. Whilst any archaeological features present in the vicinity would have been destroyed by the construction of Barry Docks, elsewhere structural remains of an earlier date may survive, and are at risk due to increasing redevelopment of the area, and to a lesser extent, natural erosion.



Plate 18 Landscape of Barry, looking southwest

3.5 Aberthaw

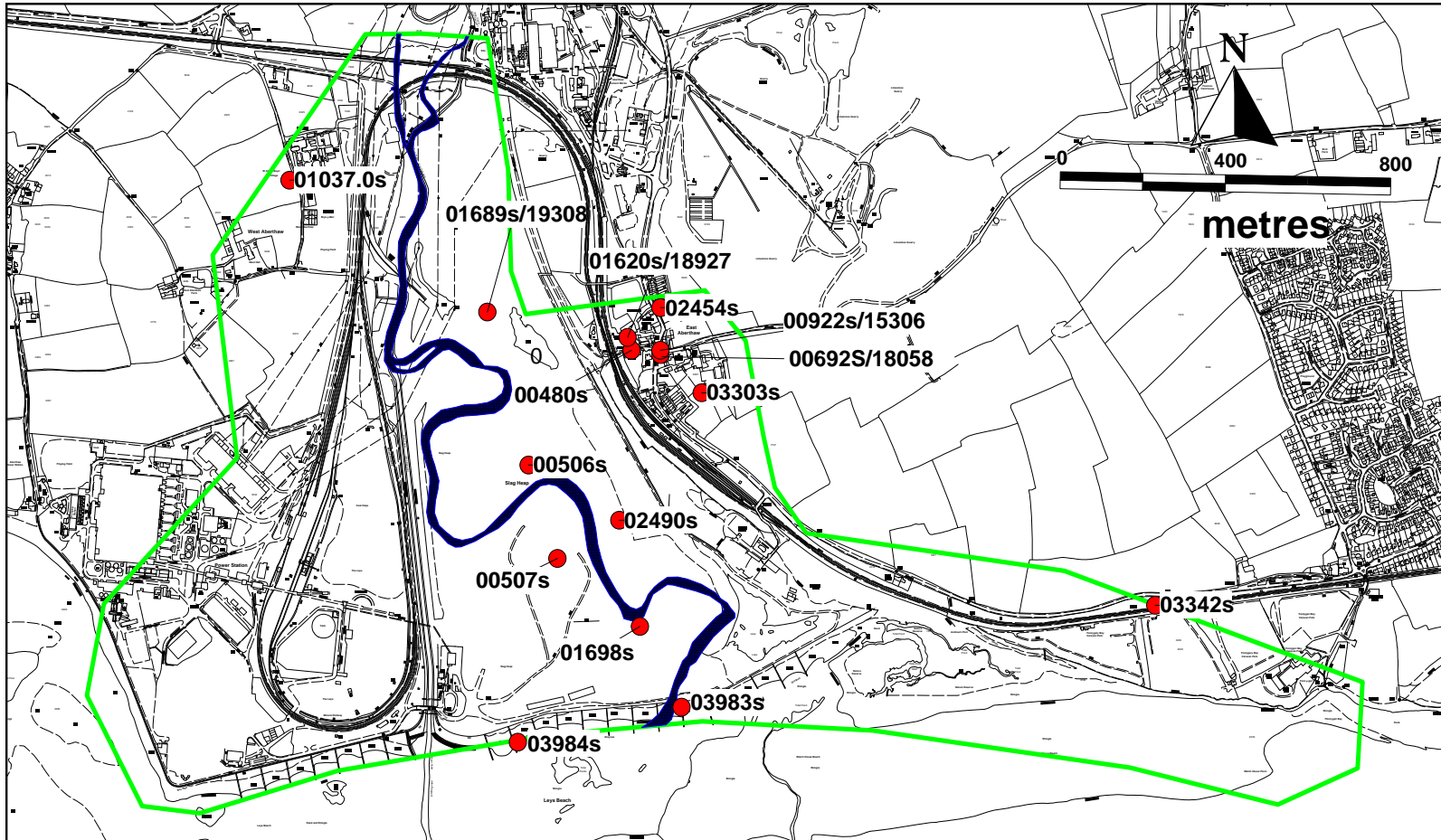
There is evidence for both Roman and medieval settlement activity at Aberthaw, and it is likely that the River Thaw was used to transport people and goods to and from the area during these periods. Two medieval earthworks situated on either side of the River Thaw (00506s and 00507s) may have marked the entrance to a medieval harbour (Evans 2001), but the former will have been heavily damaged by the construction of a new channel for the River Thaw and the latter buried beneath earth and rubble tipped from the nearby power station.

The site is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927), and it is recorded that Marsh House (01689s/19308) was used as a fortified tobacco store in the 17th century and both a dwelling and boat-building yard during the 18th century. This suggests a significant amount of trade during the post-medieval period, which would imply formal structures were situated in the area. The development of the nearby Aberthaw Power Station may have damaged potential features in this area. Coastal erosion, as evidenced by the series of groynes (03983s), may also have damaged potential features along the seafront, but there is the potential for timber structures to survive within the area, as shown by the wooden stakes recorded at the site (03984s).



Plate 19 Landscape of Aberthaw, looking southwest

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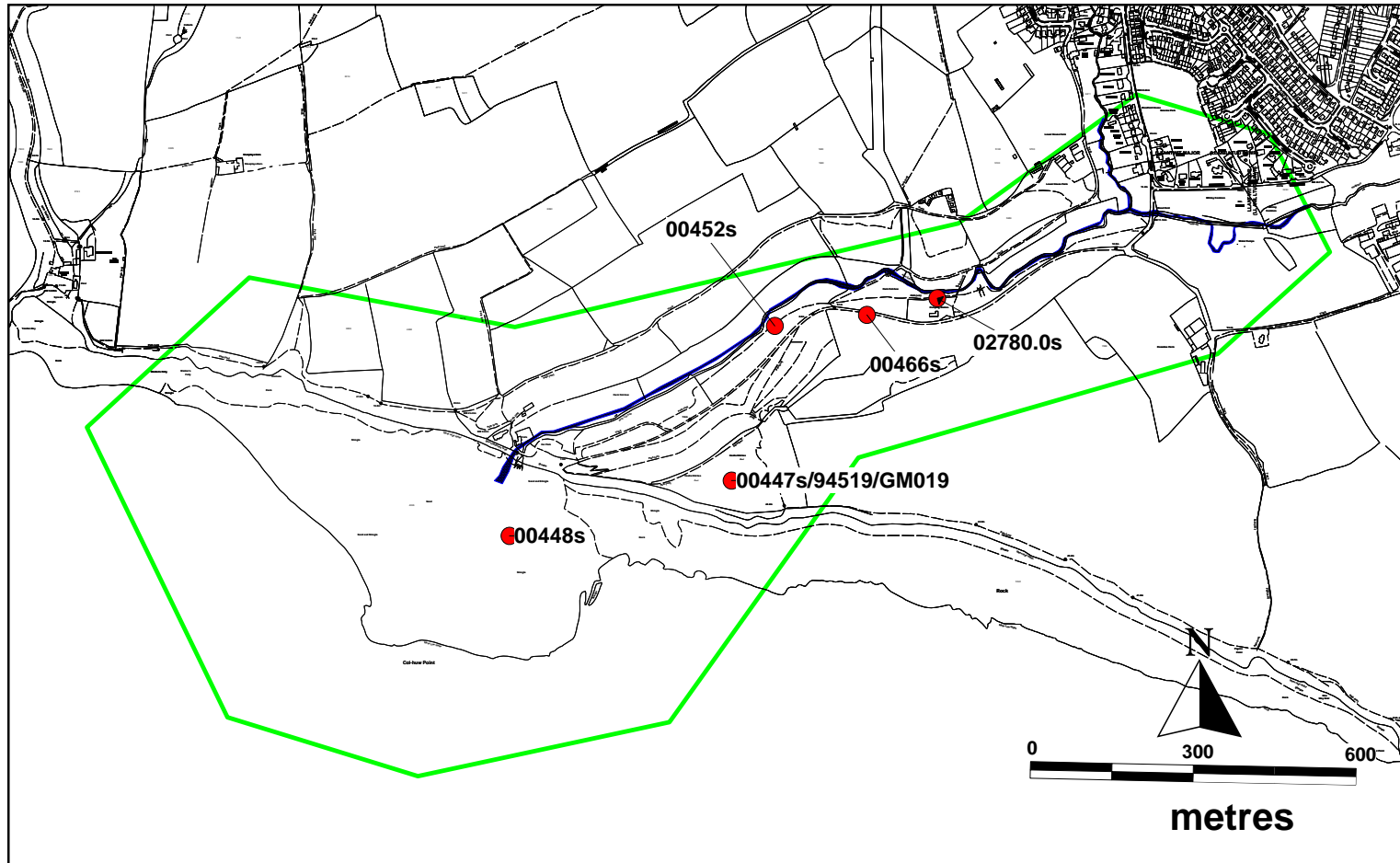
Figure 22 Sites of archaeological interest in the Aberthaw study area

3.6 Col-hugh and Llantwit Major

It is recorded that there is ‘an ancient port or harbour entrance’ at Colhugh Point, and there are the remains of medieval timbers known locally as ‘The Black Man’ or ‘Black Boys’ (00448s). Furthermore it has been suggested that a line of stone blocks may represent a protective harbour wall. Given the proximity of Colhugh Point to the settlement of Llantwit Major, which was an important centre from the early medieval period onwards, it is quite probable that a harbour of some significance was once situated at this site. Whilst no structures could be observed during the site visit, it is possible that remains survive off-shore. These potential structures are at risk from further coastal erosion.



Plate 20 Landscape of Col-hugh and Llantwit Major, looking west



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Figure 23 Sites of archaeological interest in the Col-hugh and Llantwit Major study area

4. Mid Glamorgan

The coastline of Mid Glamorgan is relatively short and the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) only mention the haven of Ogmore. The site of Porthcawl is also considered in this study.

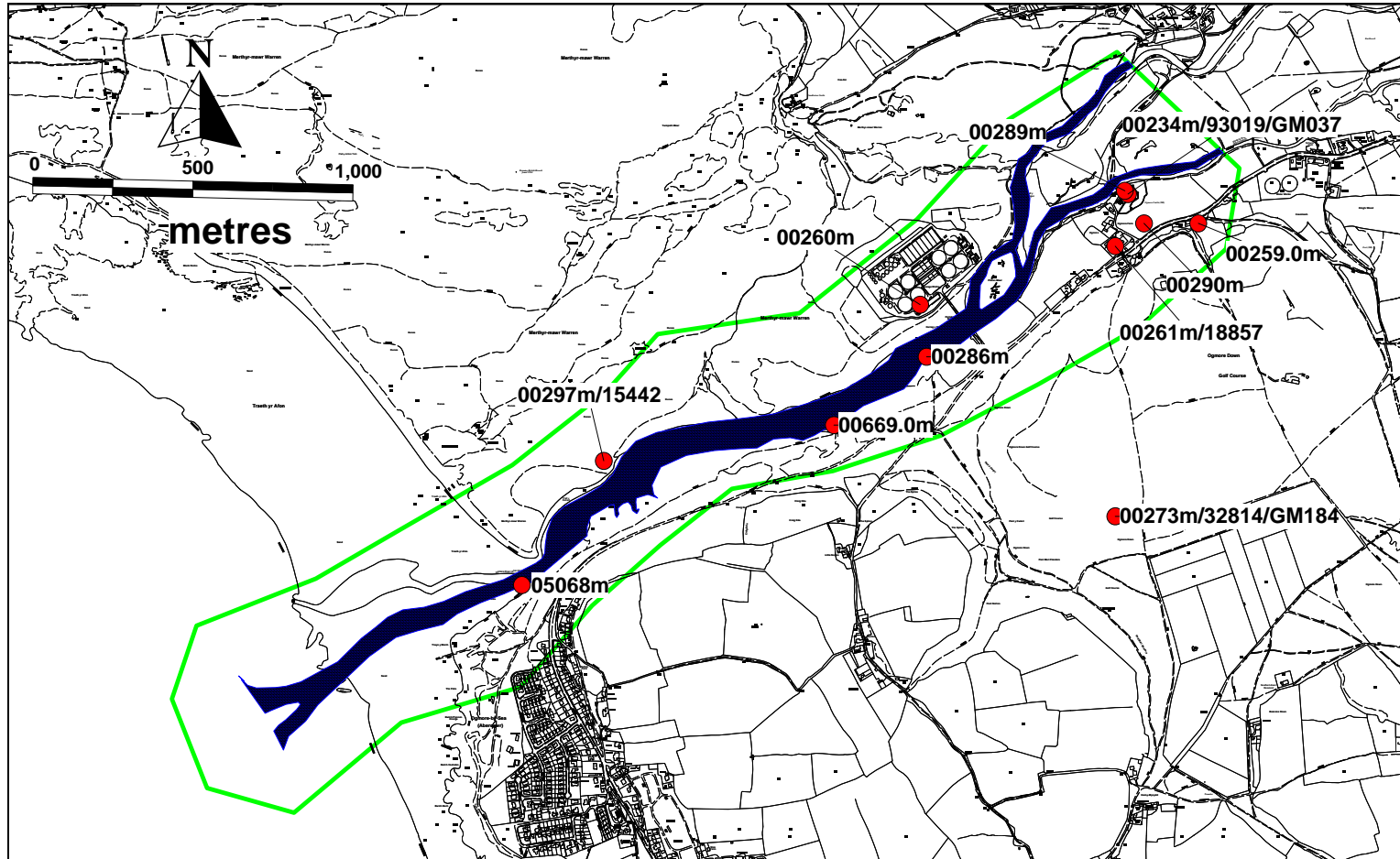
4.1 Ogmore

The village of Ogmore developed around the 12th-century castle built by William de Londres' family as early as 1116, using the River Ogmore as a natural moat and defending the two river fords. The course of the river is unlikely to have changed significantly since this period, as the castle is set back a distance from the coast and the river still flows alongside the fortification. Indeed, the course of the river has not altered at all since the publication of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map in 1877. Whilst there is no physical evidence for the navigation of the River Ogmore, it is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927), indicating that it was in use by the 16th century and, given the location of the 12-century castle, was almost certainly used before this date. Therefore any development alongside the current waterways has the potential to disturb significant archaeological features, particularly of medieval or later date.



Plate 21 Landscape of Ogmore, looking southwest

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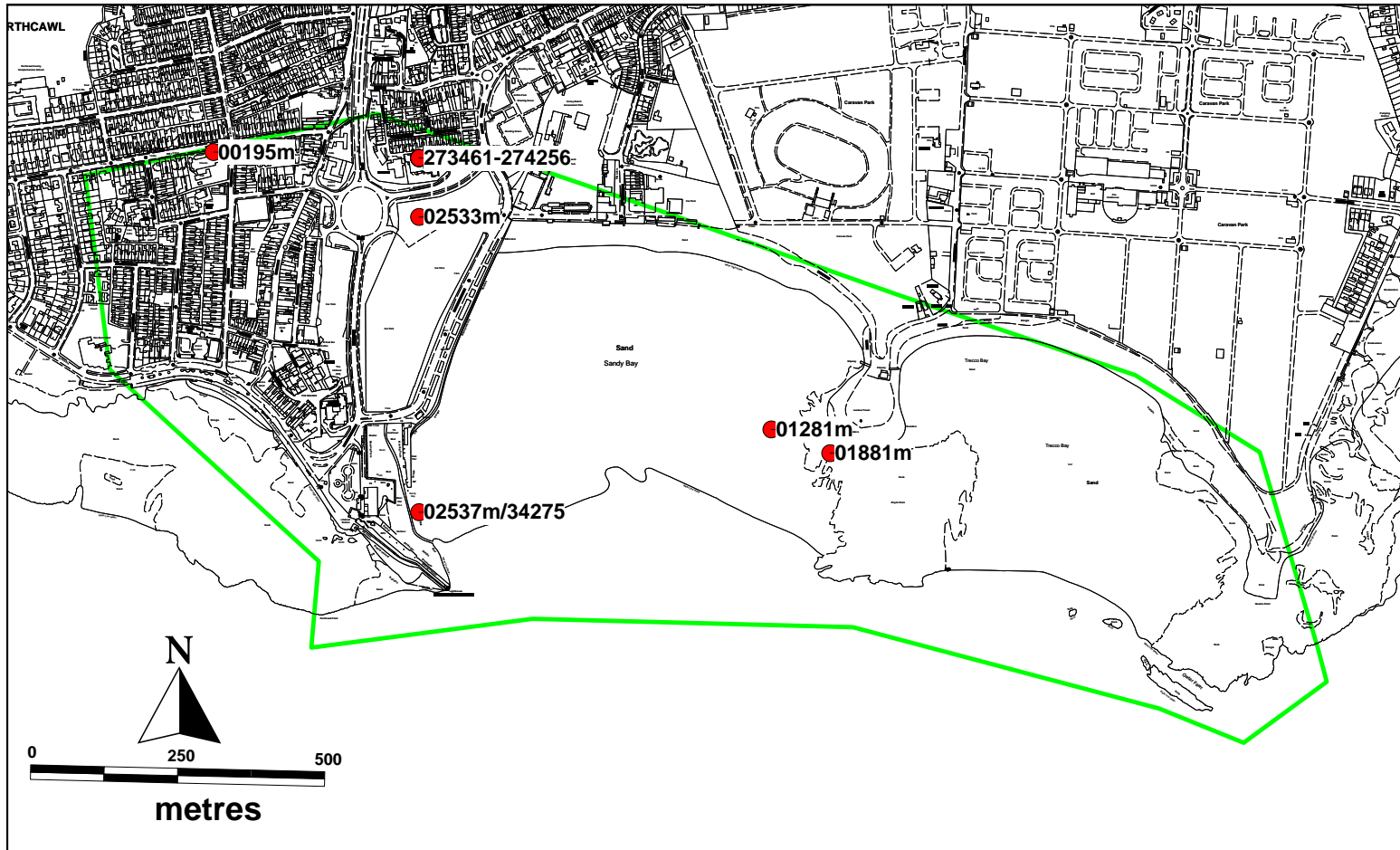
Figure 24 Sites of archaeological interest in the Ogmore study area

4.2 Porthcawl

The modern town of Porthcawl has its origins in an Act of Parliament of 1825, which authorised the construction of a dock and associated tramway to facilitate the export of iron and coal from Maesteg and Tondy. However, a medieval port has been recorded as being located at Rhych Point between Sandy Bay and Trecco Bay, and there is some evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the area. Therefore, whilst no waterfront features of any great antiquity remain, there is evidence for the long-term use of the area as a harbour or haven, and archaeological features or deposits may be present in the vicinity. Any future developments within this area could damage this potential archaeological resource.



Plate 22 Landscape of Porthcawl, looking east



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Figure 25 Sites of archaeological interest in the Porthcawl study area

5. West Glamorgan

As discussed previously, by the 16th century, the ports and creeks between Chepstow and Wormshead were under the jurisdiction of the Head port of Cardiff. Customs Houses existed at Swansea and Neath. The latter port is considered in this chapter alongside Briton Ferry and Baglan Bay, the former was studied in the first year of the project (Howell and Dunning 2004). Those ports from Wormshead (exclusive) to Barmouth in North Wales were administered from the Head port of Milford, with Custom Houses at Pembroke and Carmarthen (Lewis 1927). The Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) also mention havens in West Glamorgan at Oystermouth, Oxwich, Port Eynon, Wormshead and Loughor. In addition, the sites of Aberavon and Port Talbot, Black Pill, Pennard Pill, Nicholston and Great Pill, Burry Pill, Llanrhidian Pill, Salthouse Pill and Penclawdd are included here.

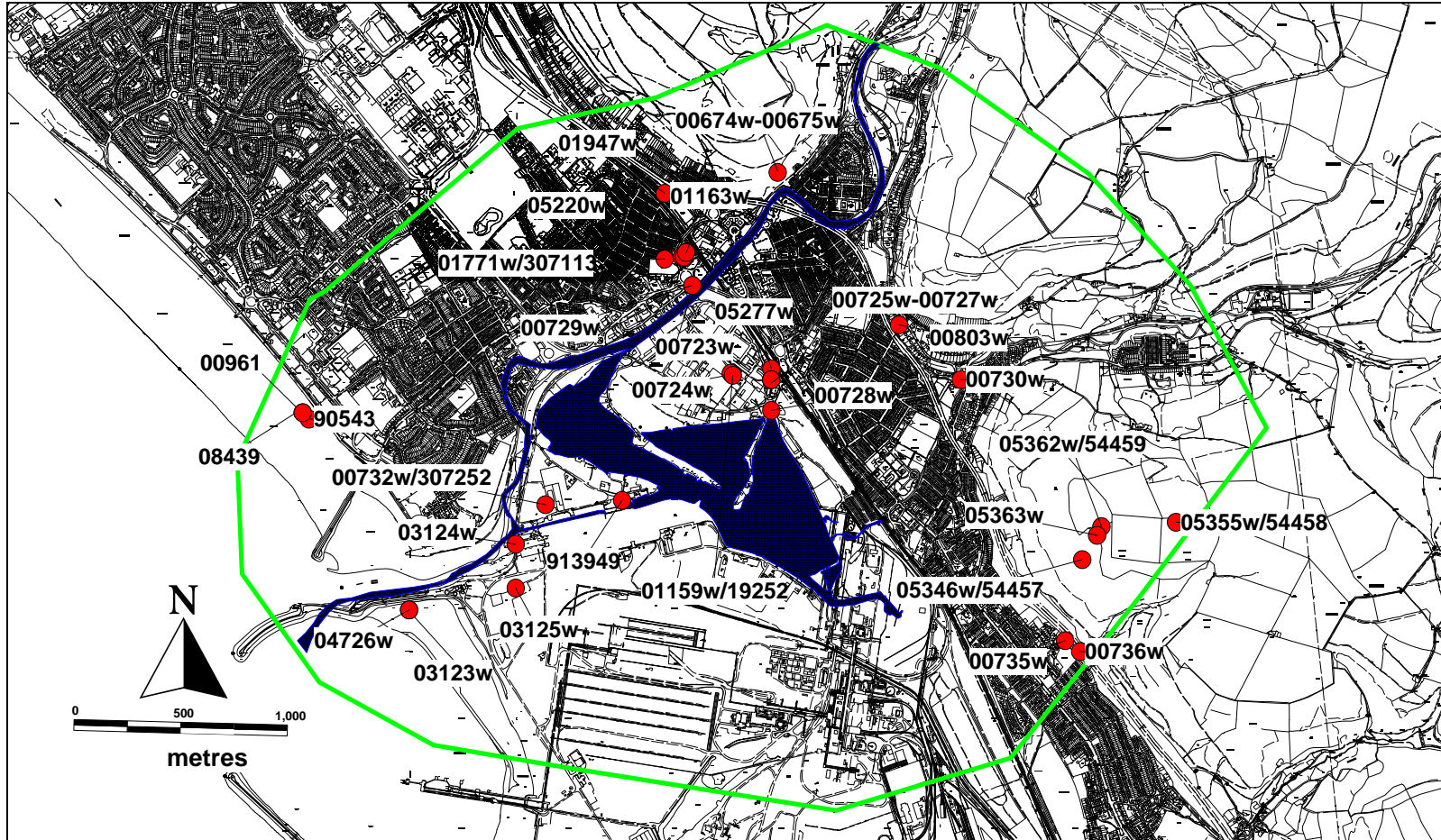
Similarly no structures were visible at Pennard Pill, Nicholston, Oxwich, Burry Pill and Great Pill, Llanrhidian Pill or Salthouse Pill. Nevertheless, the gentle topography of the coastline in these areas facilitates the landing of small vessels, and whilst the nature and extent of the archaeological resource is difficult to assess, it is possible that previously unknown features or deposits may be uncovered during any developments in these areas.

5.1 Aberavon and Port Talbot

The historic hub of the Port Talbot area is located at Aberavon, centred around a 12th-century castle (now destroyed) and St Mary's Church. However, the name 'Port Talbot' was first used to describe the area where tinplate works were constructed to the south of Aberavon, developed by the Talbot family resident at Margam. The River Avon originally entered the sea to the east of the present steelworks. The modern docks were built in 1898 to replace previous docks opened in 1839 that had become silted and unusable. The course of the river was diverted to form the entrance channel for the new docks and any archaeological deposits or structures once present will have been severely disturbed by the construction of the numerous industrial complexes, as well as the docks themselves. Nevertheless, outside this heavily developed area it is possible that significant deposits may survive, for example, peat layers have been recorded on Margam Beach, and these potential features are threatened by further development and coastal erosion.



Plate 23 Landscape of Aberavon and Port Talbot, looking west



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Figure 26 Sites of archaeological interest in the Aberavon and Port Talbot study area

5.2 Neath, Briton Ferry and Baglan Bay

Nidum, the Roman Auxiliary Fort located west of the River Neath, was first constructed in the mid AD 70s, before being replaced in stone in the early AD 120s. Evidence for a civilian settlement, or *vicus* (03579w), has been observed on the north, east and south sides of the fort (Pearson 2002), suggesting that a large-scale occupation site had developed. The medieval settlement of Neath originated in the early 12th century, with the construction of the castle and borough town, as well as the founding of the abbey in AD 1130.

It is almost certain that the river would have been utilised extensively from the Roman period, when it was probably used to supply the fort and *vicus*. This was certainly the case by the 16th century, as Neath is mentioned in the Welsh Port Books (Lewis 1927). It is likely that formal waterfront features were situated close to the Roman and medieval settlements, in the area where both a medieval ford (00631w) and chapel (00599w) are recorded, and where the post-medieval Town Quay was later situated (34478). This area has seen the construction of both road and rail links, and such developments will have damaged any potential archaeological sites in those areas. The possibility remains, however, for the survival of features in this area, and these potential features are at risk from the pressures of continuing developments in the Neath area.



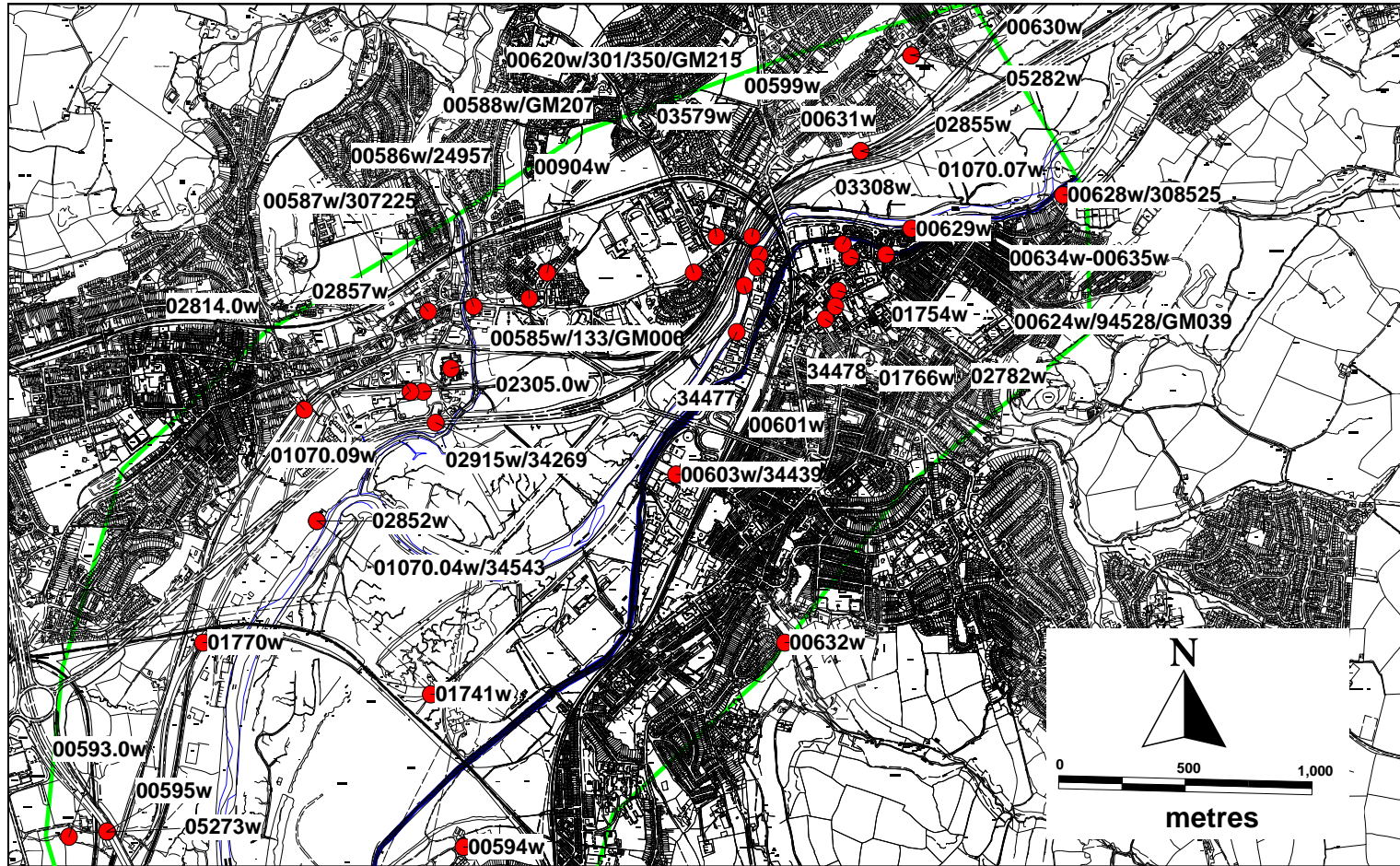
Plate 24 Landscape of Neath, Briton Ferry and Baglan Bay, looking northeast

Industry has played an important role in the area, with coal extraction occurring as early as the 13th century. By the 17th century, significant industrial operations had been established, such as the copper works at Neath Abbey, and post-medieval shipbuilding is also attested in the area (01741w). The course of the River Neath has not altered since the production of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map in 1881 and, despite the construction of numerous surviving post-medieval waterfront structures, there remains the possibility that previously unknown earlier features may be discovered, particularly away from the large industrial complexes.

It was the construction of the Neath canal (01027.0w/34444/GM394) in 1791 that enabled a significant expansion of industry, allowing the exploitation of much larger coal reserves. A large number of features associated with the canal survive, including bridges, locks, quays and docks, although the river is no longer utilised as a major transport corridor (Lawler 2001). There is a significant potential for further importance features being located, particularly in key 'nodal' areas, where the canal system interchanged with the river and sea-borne transport.

Despite the likely use of the River Neath since the Roman period, the need for deep-water anchorages resulted in the construction of Briton Ferry Dock (01972w/34237/GM445) between 1858-61, which was designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel and his assistant R P Brereton. This important feature is a scheduled ancient monument, and although damaged by the construction of the M4 motorway and substantially in-filled, it should be protected during any future development in the area.

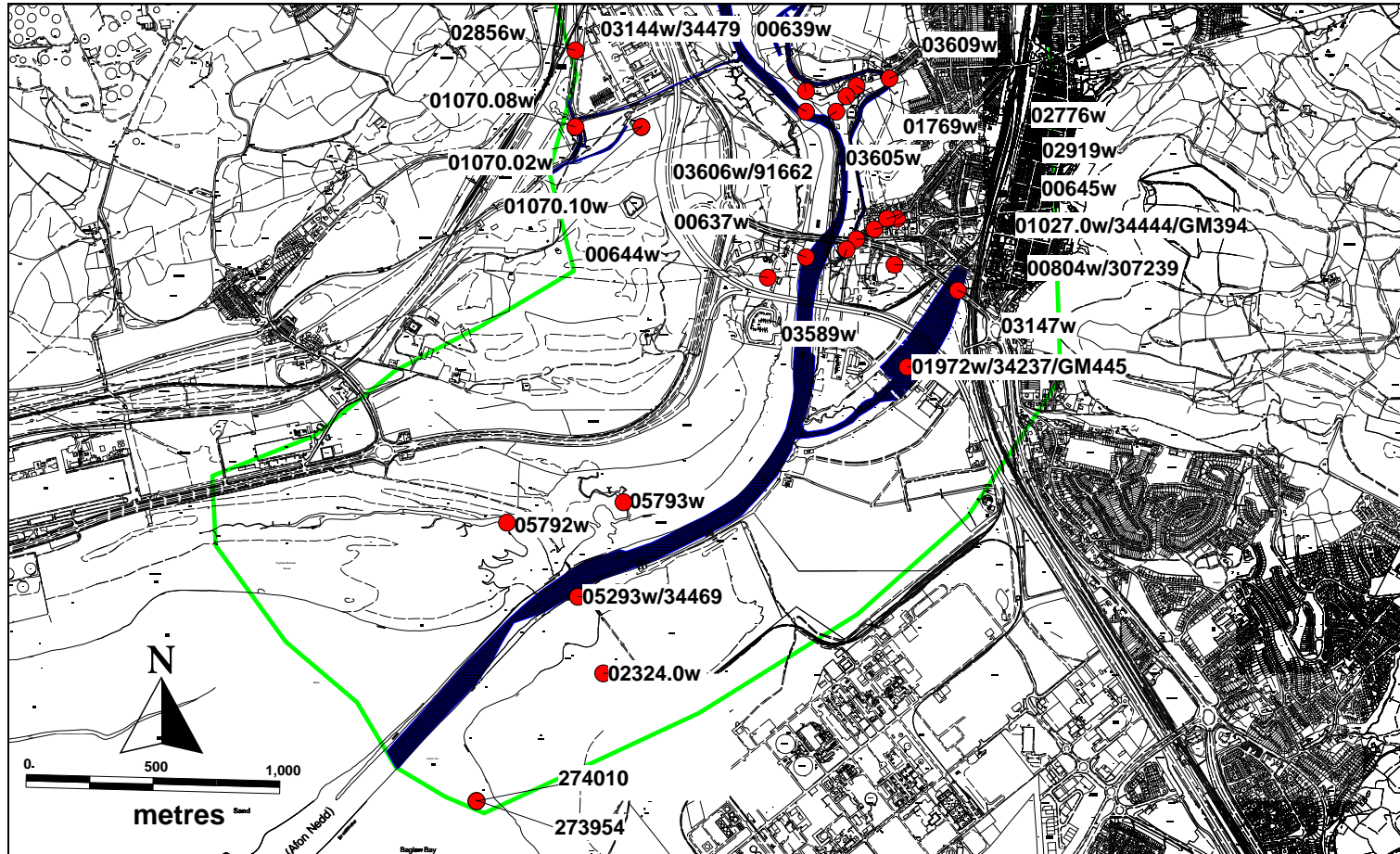
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Figure 27 Sites of archaeological interest in the north of the Neath study area

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Figure 28 Sites of archaeological interest in the south of the Neath study area

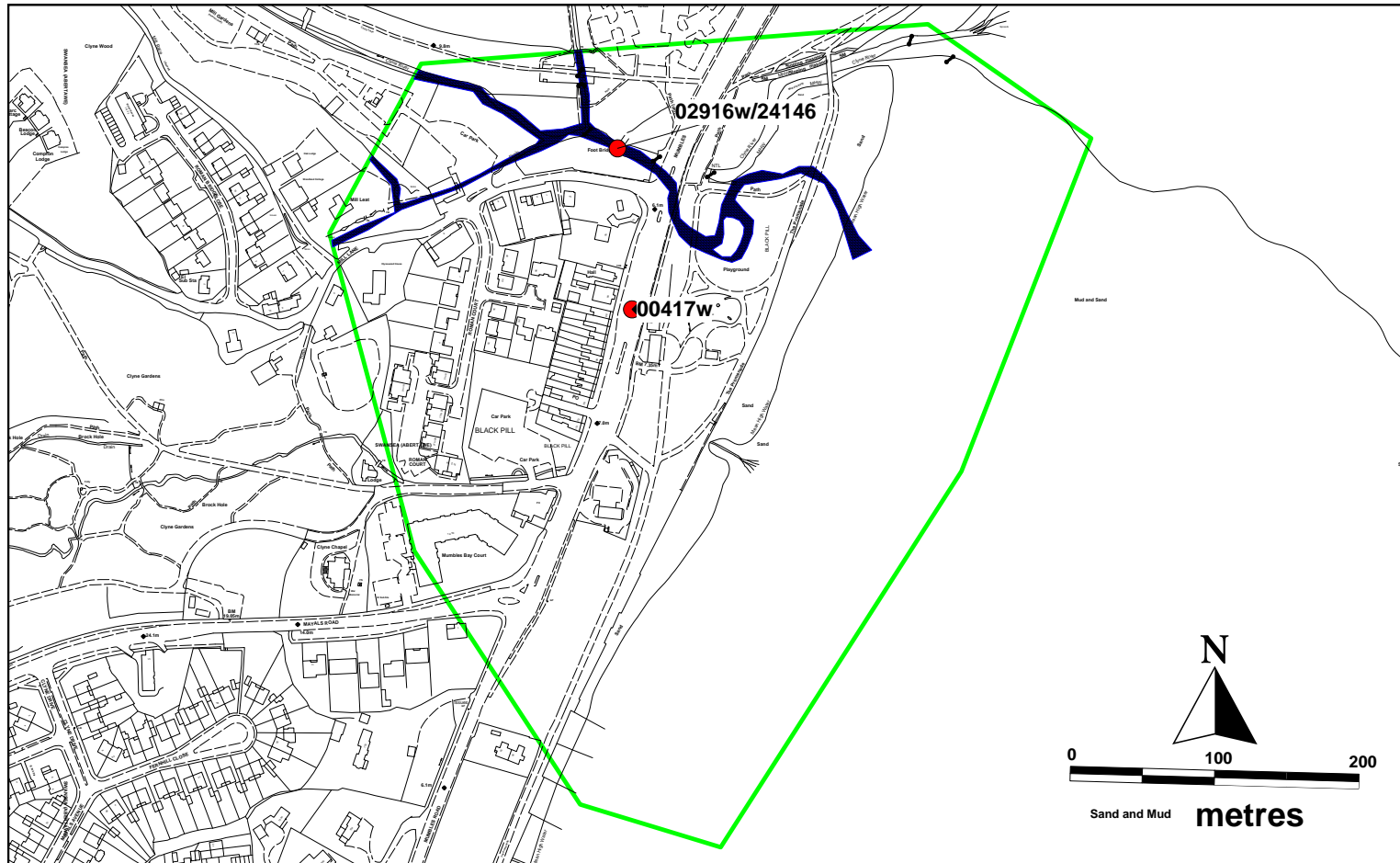
5.3 Black Pill

Black Pill, situated within Swansea Bay, is mentioned in the early post-medieval period as being an outlying creek of Swansea, and the name certainly corroborates this, although no structural evidence for maritime activity has been noted. A post-medieval bridge, known as Roman Bridge, crosses the pill, and would have prevented all but the smallest boats sailing further upstream. Any structures would therefore have been located seaward of this bridge, in an area where the construction of Oystermouth Road, Mumbles Railway and subsequently Black Pill Lido would have damaged or destroyed possible features. It is possible that archaeological interests are present further out in the bay, where continuing coastal erosion is affecting the peat deposits that have elsewhere in the bay preserved wooden features, such as fish traps (Nayling 1999). Additionally, this area is under particular risk from redevelopment activities that are both proposed and planned for this area.



Plate 25 Landscape of Blackpill, looking northeast

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Figure 29 Sites of archaeological interest in the Black Pill study area

5.4 Oystermouth

There is evidence that Oystermouth has been occupied since the Roman period, with a probable Roman villa located on the site of the current church. Oystermouth's castle and church were both constructed in the 12th century and it is likely that the area has been in use as a haven since at least this period. It was certainly established as a port by the 16th century, as confirmed by the references in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927), and there are 16th- and 17th-century references to the presence of fishing weirs in Swansea Bay (Nayling 1999). The quarrying of limestone is documented as early as 1650 (Gabb 1986, 27) and both lime and limestone was transported by boat at least as far as the west of England during this period.

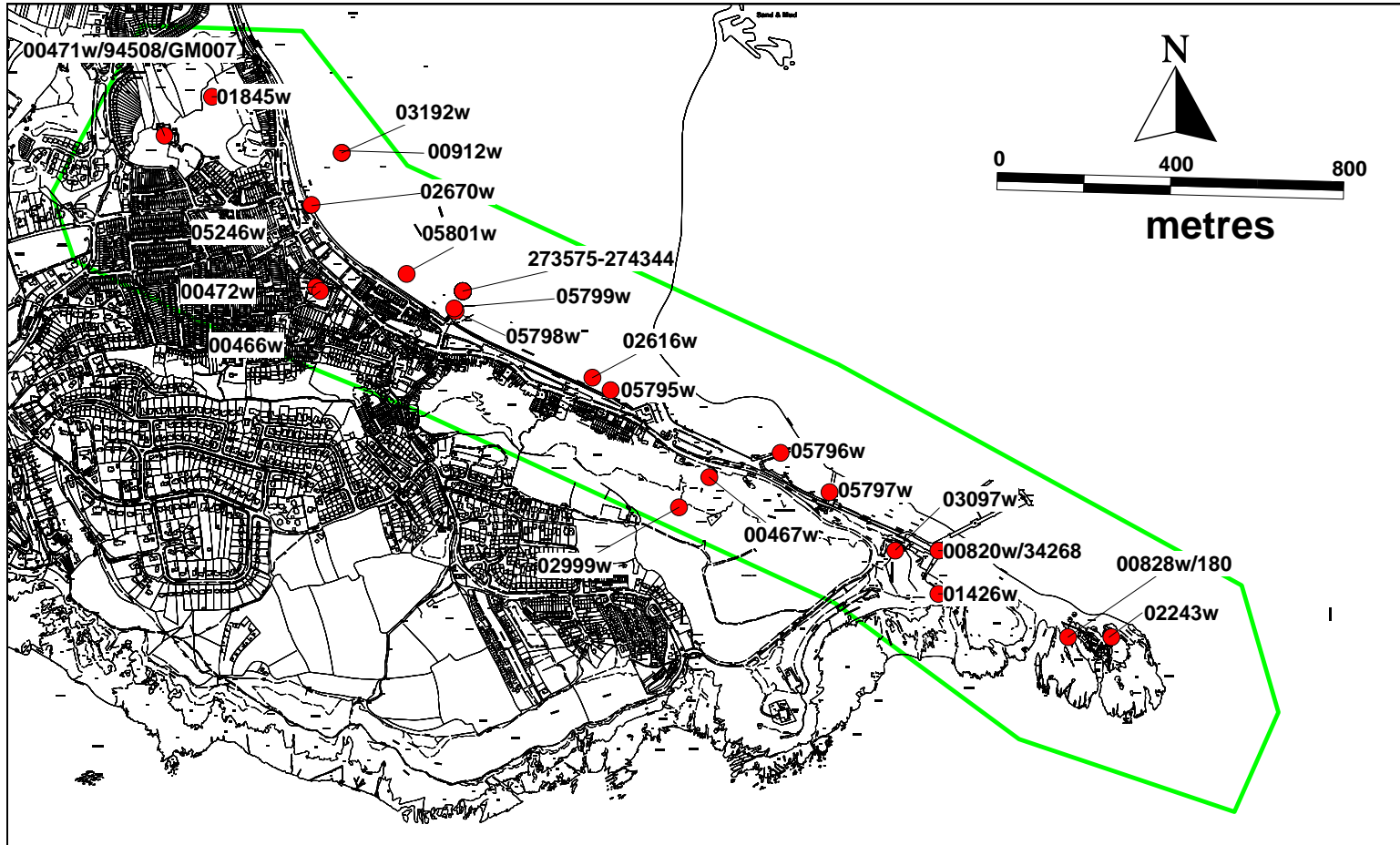


Plate 26 Landscape of Oystermouth, looking northwest

The lighthouse on Mumbles Head was built in 1793 with the warning light helping navigation in the bay, which was relatively treacherous as illustrated by the large number of wrecks documented in the area (273575-274344). The presence of the 17th-century fortified Dunn's Mansion (02670w), defended by a battery of five guns, along with later gun batteries (02243w and 03097w) illustrate the importance of defending the area. Oystermouth has accommodated several centuries of occupation and still has many waterfront features that are currently utilised; indeed the village remains a centre for maritime activity. The presence of peat layers in the bay (05801w) in particular mean that any ground disturbances may impact upon this fragile deposit and numerous structures may also be affected by future developments, such as the remains of a groyne (05799w) noted during the field visit.



Plate 27 Aerial photograph of Oystermouth, looking south, courtesy of Roger Parmiter



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Figure 30 Sites of archaeological interest in the Oystermouth study area

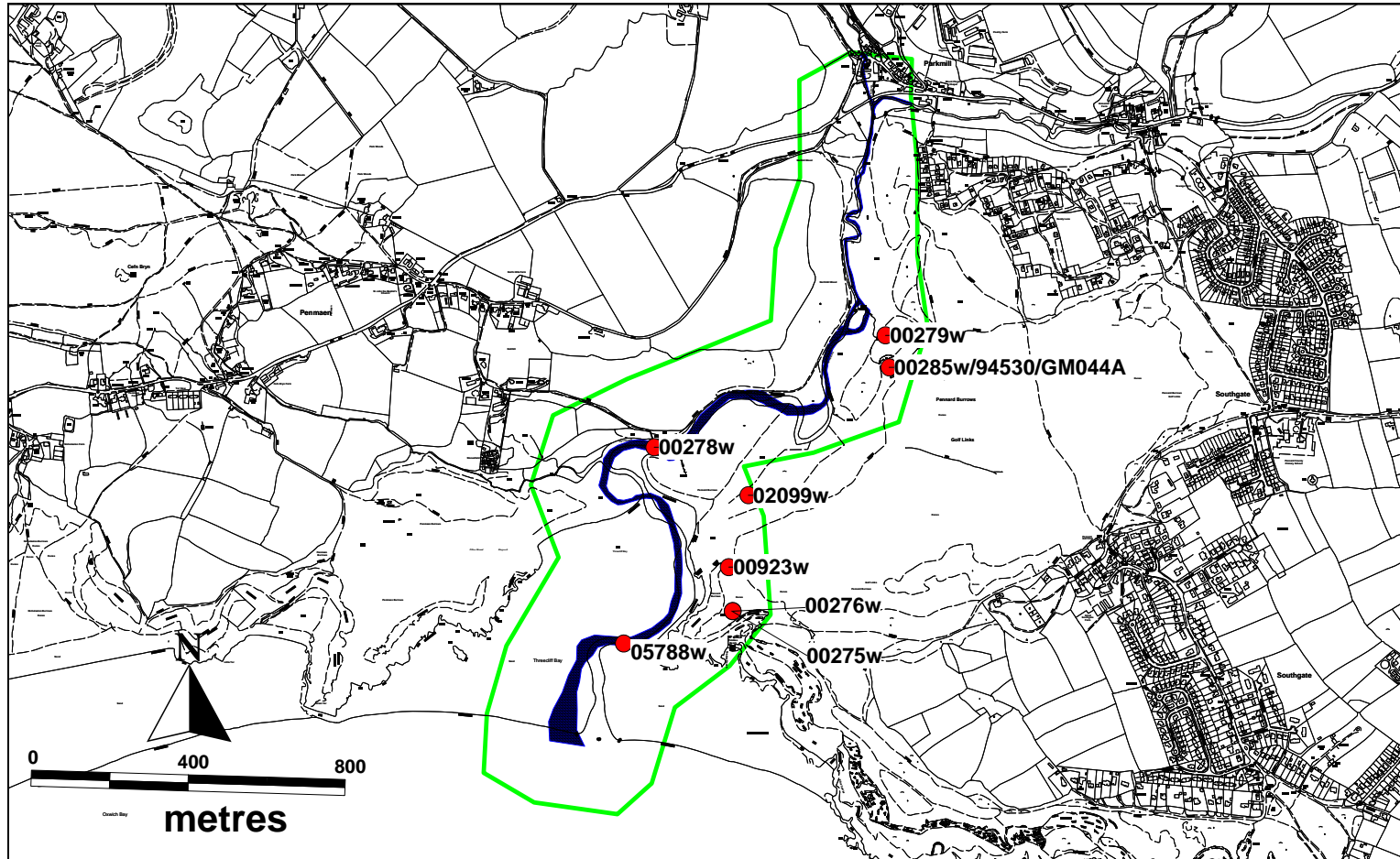
5.5 Pennard Pill

A small river, known as the Killy Willy, flows past the site of Pennard Castle (00285w/94539/GM044A) and the nearby besanded medieval village before it meanders as Pennard Pill across the sandy expanse of Threecliff Bay and opens into the Bristol Channel. Small boats almost certainly used the area as a haven during storms, although there is no evidence for any structures at this site. There remains, however, the potential for archaeologically-significant features surviving at this site in the form of isolated boat finds and artefacts. There is little pressure from development within this area, but the continuing threat from natural erosion may lead to the disturbance of any such features.



Plate 28 Aerial photograph of Pennard Pill (05788w), looking north, courtesy of Roger Parmiter

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Figure 31 Sites of archaeological interest in the Pennard Pill study area

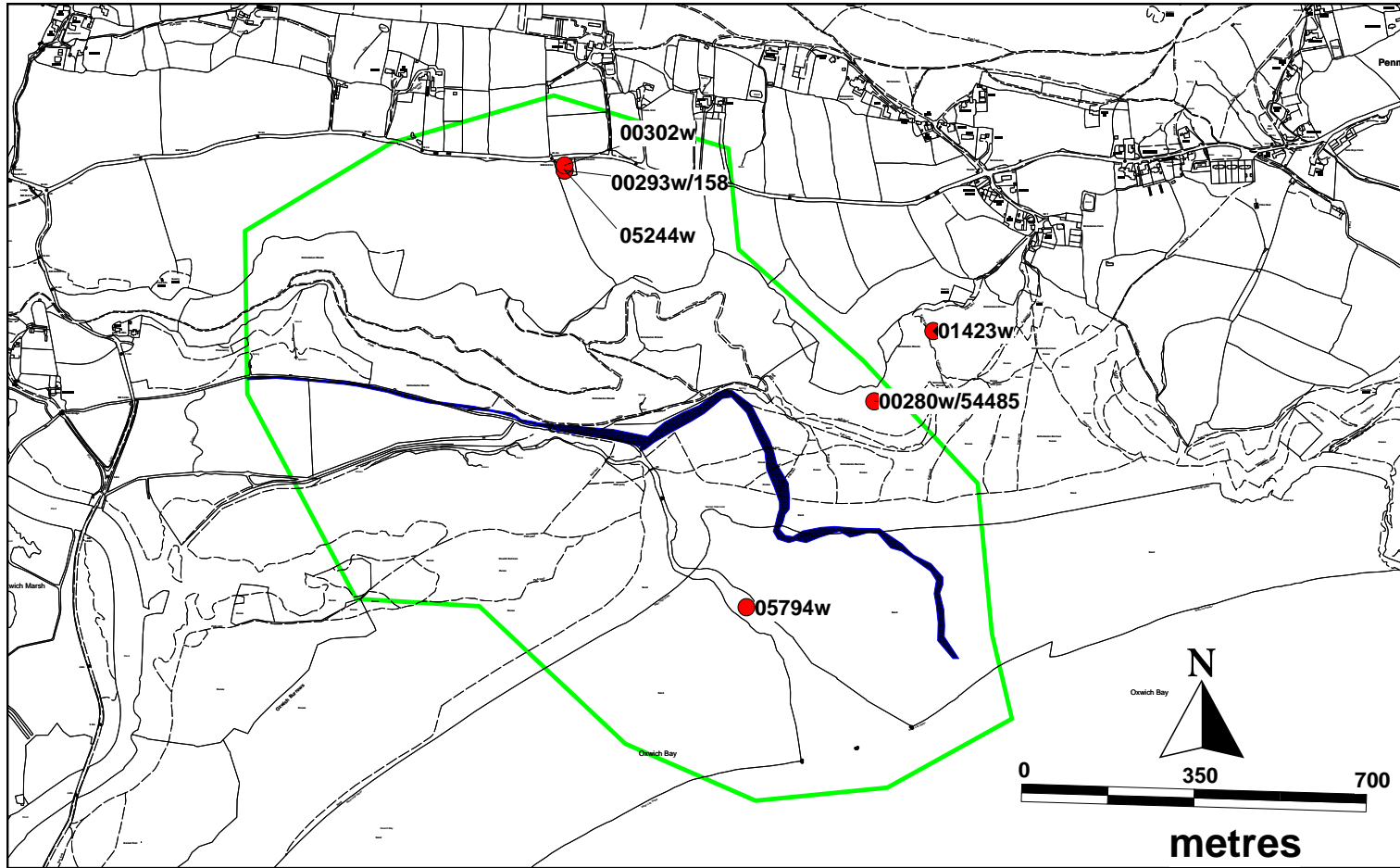
5.6 Nicholston

Nicholston Pill crosses Oxwich Bay and opens into the Bristol Channel. Its course has clearly changed from that shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879. There is no evidence for any structures at Nicholston, although like Pennard Pill, it may have been used as a haven during storms, and so there is the potential for archaeologically-significant features surviving at this site in the form of isolated boat finds and artefacts. It is also possible that this area was the focus for activity recorded as taking place at Oxwich (see below). There is little pressure from development within this area, but the continuing threat from natural erosion may lead to the disturbance of any such features.



Plate 29 Landscape of Nicholston, looking north

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Figure 32 Sites of archaeological interest in the Nicholston study area

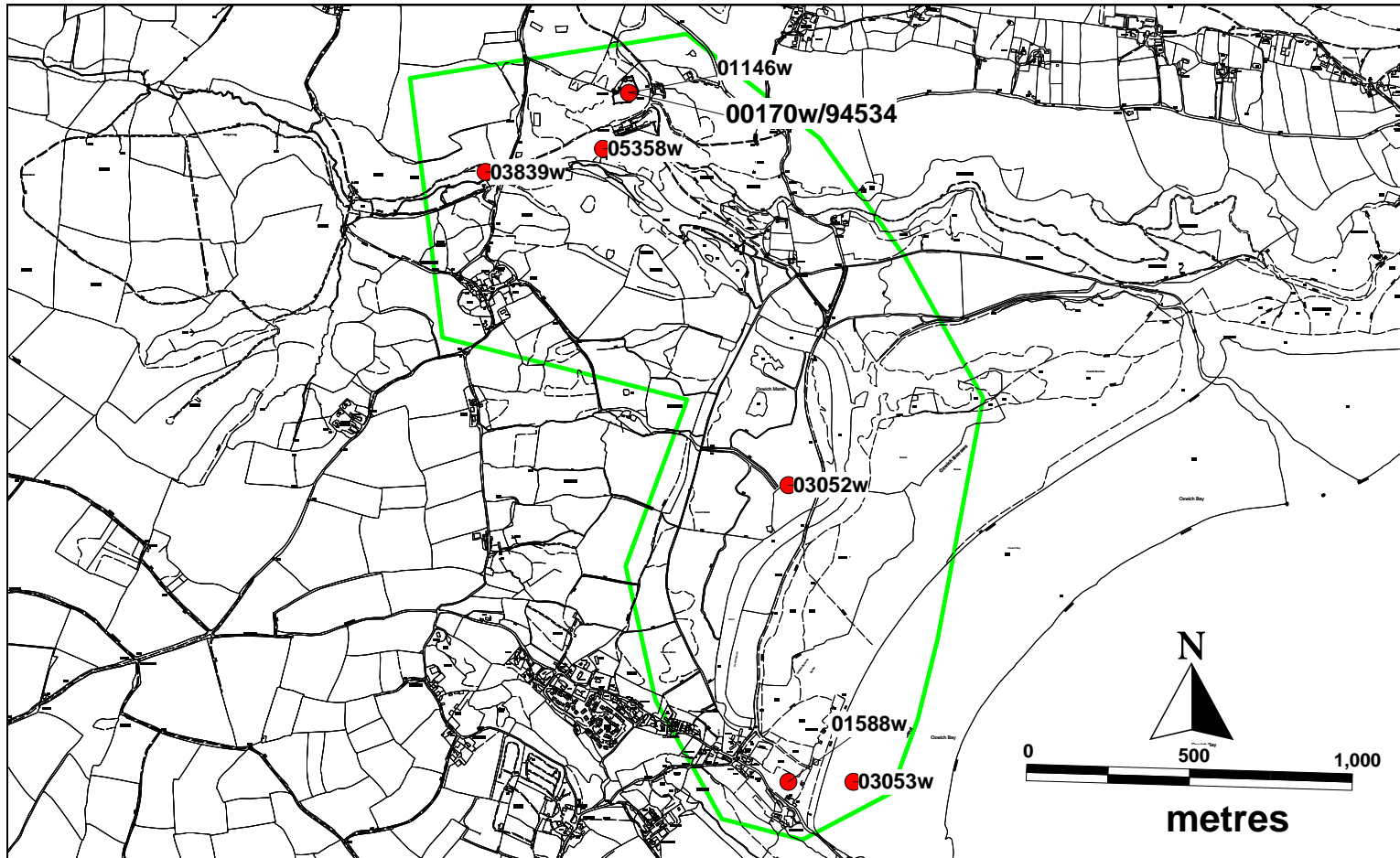
5.7 Oxwich

The presence of the medieval Penrice Castle at Oxwich (00170w/94534) indicates that this area has been inhabited since at least the medieval period, and the sandy Oxwich Bay was almost certainly used as a beaching point from this period onwards. Oxwich is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927) indicating it was in use by this period. With no evidence for structures, it may be that the beach itself was simply used, or that the focus of this activity was around Nicholston Pill, which crosses Oxwich Bay to the east. Either way, it is unlikely that significant structural remains exist at Oxwich, but the potential for the survival of small structures, isolated boat finds and artefacts remains. There has been a degree of development at Oxwich, and any further development, along with coastal erosion, may reveal such archaeological interests.



Plate 30 Landscape of Oxwich, looking northeast

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Figure 33 Sites of archaeological interest in the Oxwich study area

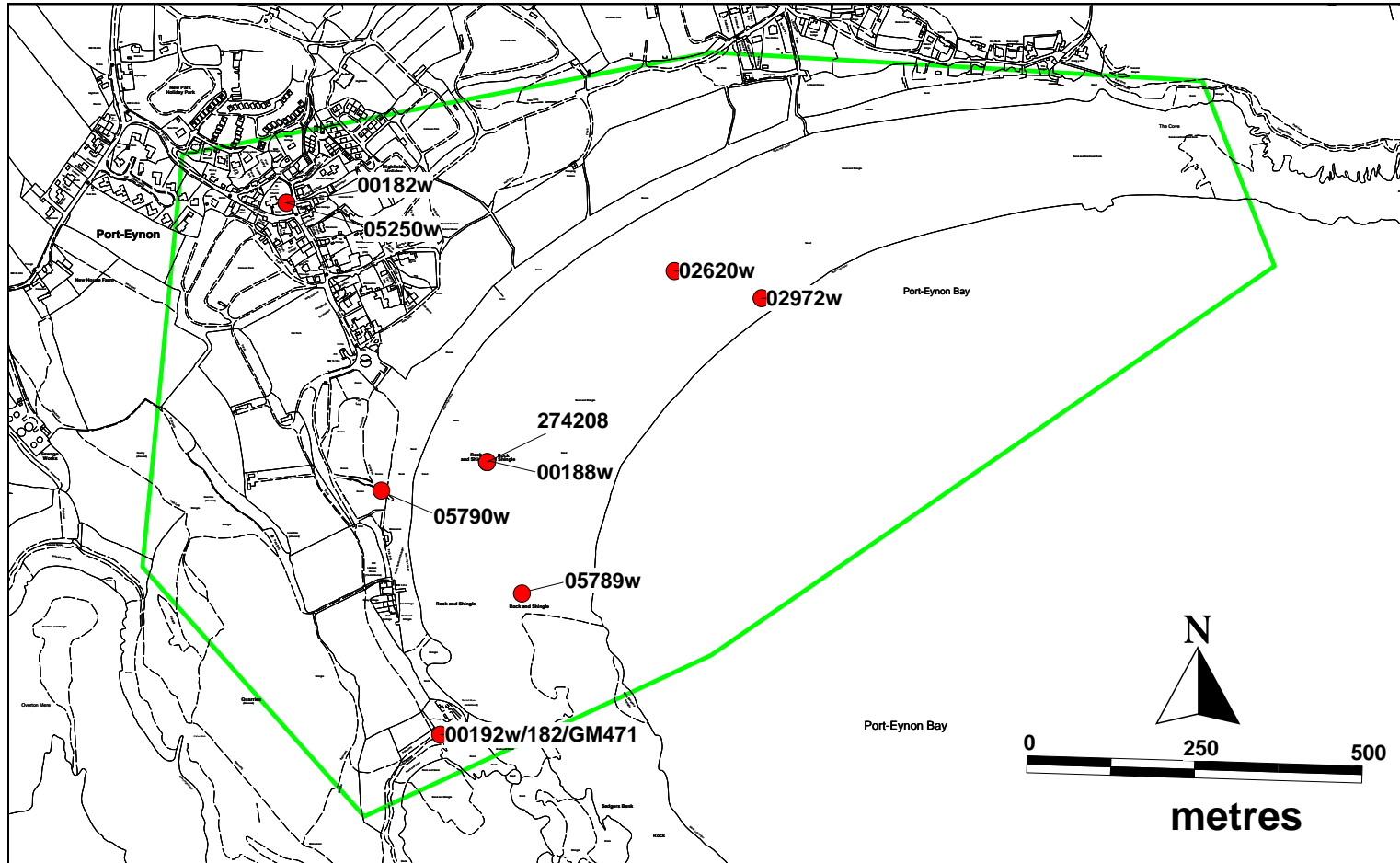
5.8 Port Eynon

The presence of St Cattwg's church (00182w) at Port Eynon clearly indicates medieval activity at the site and, as suggested by its name, it is likely that this well-protected bay was used as a haven or small port since this period, and strong local legend attaches piracy and smuggling to this part of the Gower coast. It was clearly used by boats and ships in the 16th century, as evidenced by references in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927). In addition, the 16th-century salthouse (00192w/182/GM471) located on Port Eynon Point will almost certainly have shipped out much of the salt it produced by sea. It has been suggested that the majority of Port Eynon's trade is likely to have been industrial in nature and continued through to the 19th century (Locock 1996, 14). There is clearly the potential for formal structures being located at this site, and the possible survival of such features is attested by the two lines of timber posts recorded at the site (05789w). Any further developments and continuing coastal erosion threatens the maritime archaeological potential of this site.



Plate 31 Aerial photograph of Port Eynon Bay looking northeast, courtesy of Roger Parmiter

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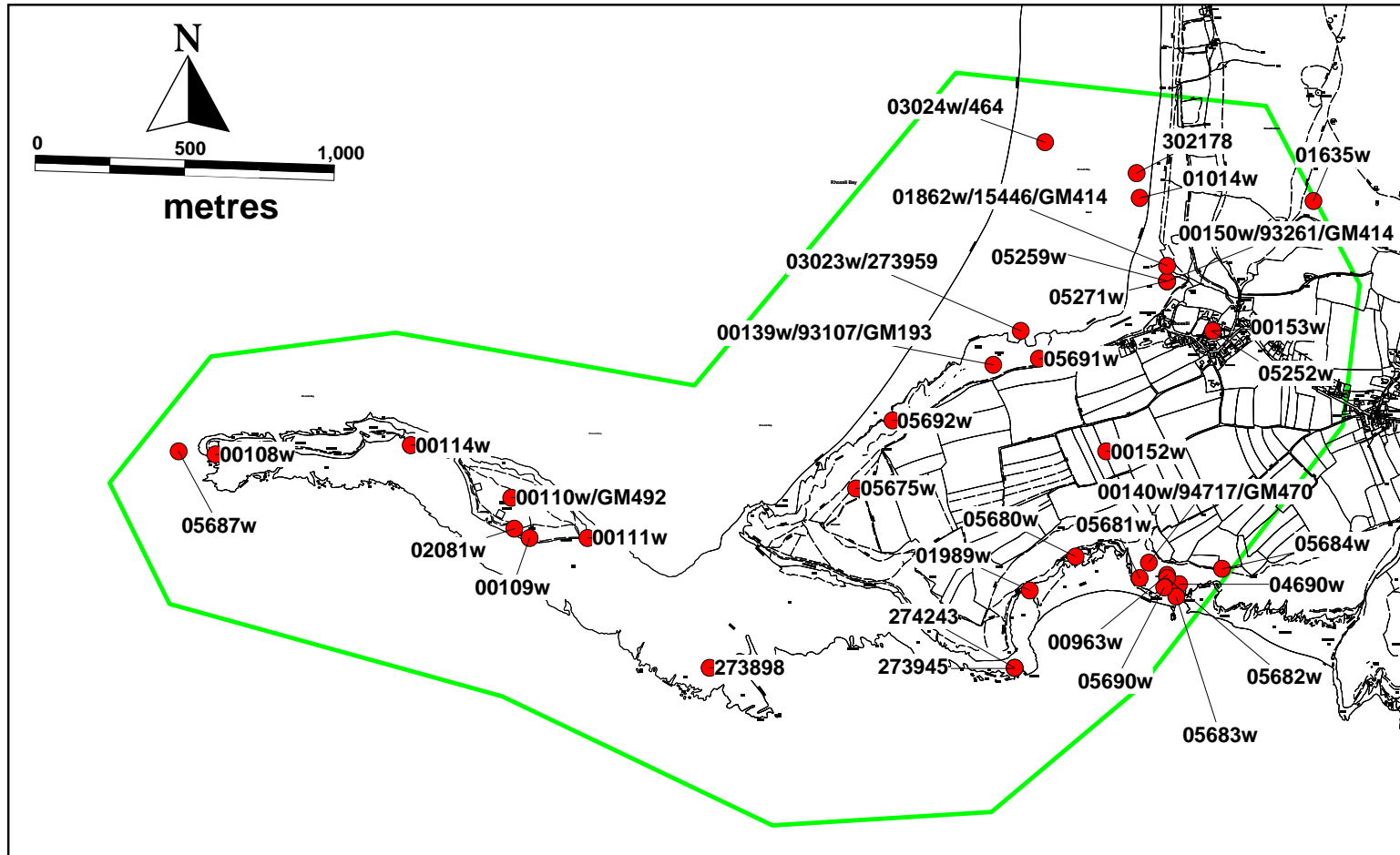
Figure 34 Sites of archaeological interest in the Port Eynon study area

5.9 Wormshead

There is much evidence for prehistoric activity around Wormshead and whilst there is a paucity of Roman material from the area, Rhossili may have been the site of an early medieval monastery (05259w). The original village of Rhossili (01862w/15446/GM414), abandoned in the 12th or 13th century, was located to the northwest of the modern settlement and at a much lower altitude, closer to the sea. As with other sandy Gower beaches, the area was almost certainly used as a beaching point from at least the medieval period, and was certainly used as such by the 16th century, as it is included in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927). The potential for the discovery of archaeological features in the area is particularly high, due to the long settlement history of the area and relative lack of intrusive development, and although coastal erosion may have damaged some possible features, others may lie preserved under besanded areas.



Plate 32 Aerial photograph of Rhossili Bay with Wormshead in the distance, looking south, courtesy of Roger Parmiter



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Figure 35 Sites of archaeological interest in the Wormshead study area

5.10 Burry Pill and Great Pill

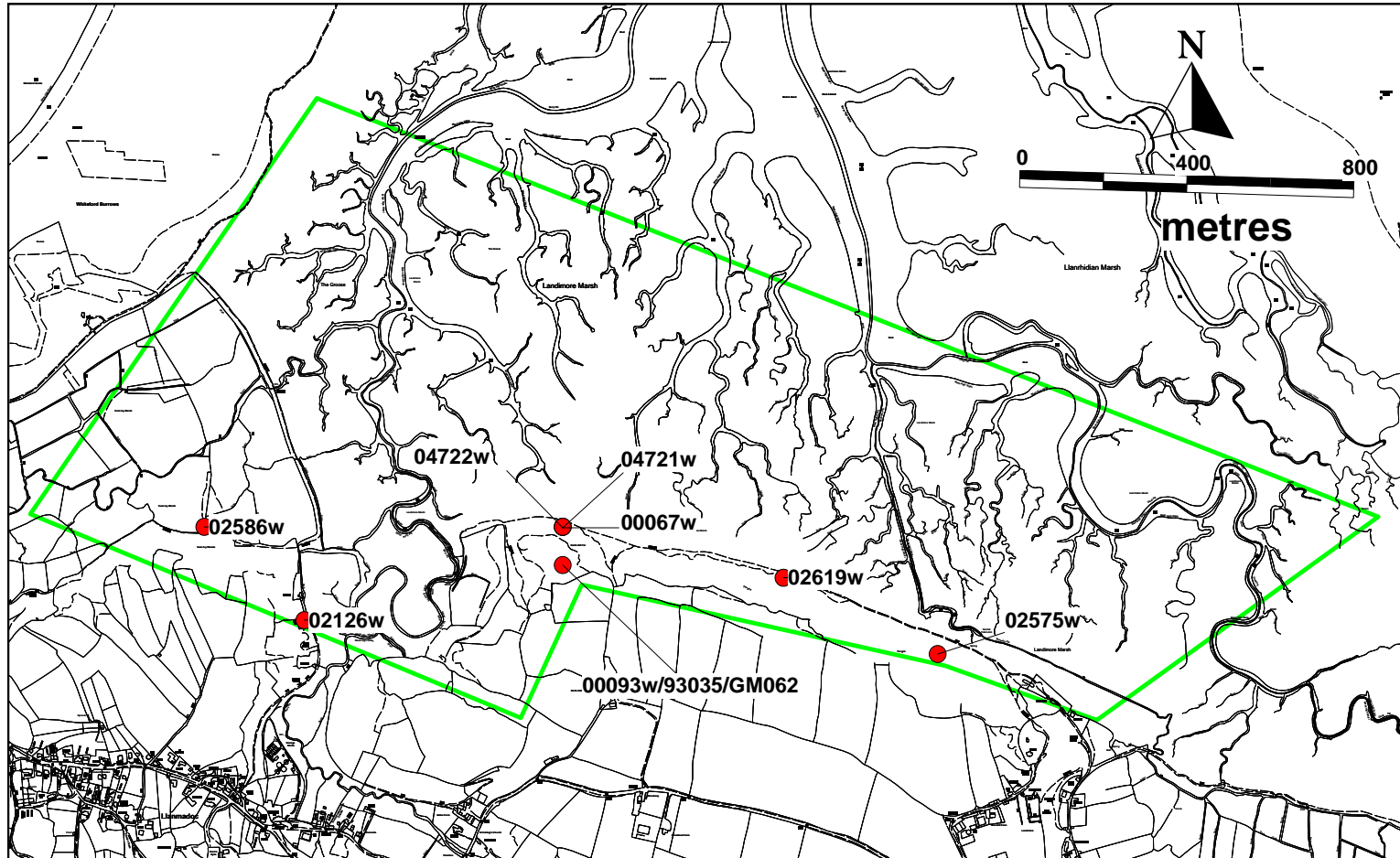
The area of saltmarsh to the north of Llanmadoc, Cheriton and Landimore is crossed by numerous small watercourses which combine to form Burry Pill and Great Pill, which in turn empty into the Loughor Estuary. Whilst there is no evidence for any waterfront features in this area, the settlements of Llanmadoc (which has early medieval origins) and Landimore in particular may well have had maritime links. The build up of alluvial deposits in this area would have both masked and protected any waterfront features present, and therefore there is a potential for uncovering such remains in future developments of the area.



Plate 33 Aerial photograph of Burry Pill and Great Pill, looking east, courtesy of Roger Parmiter



Plate 34 Landscape of Burry Pill and Great Pill, looking southwest



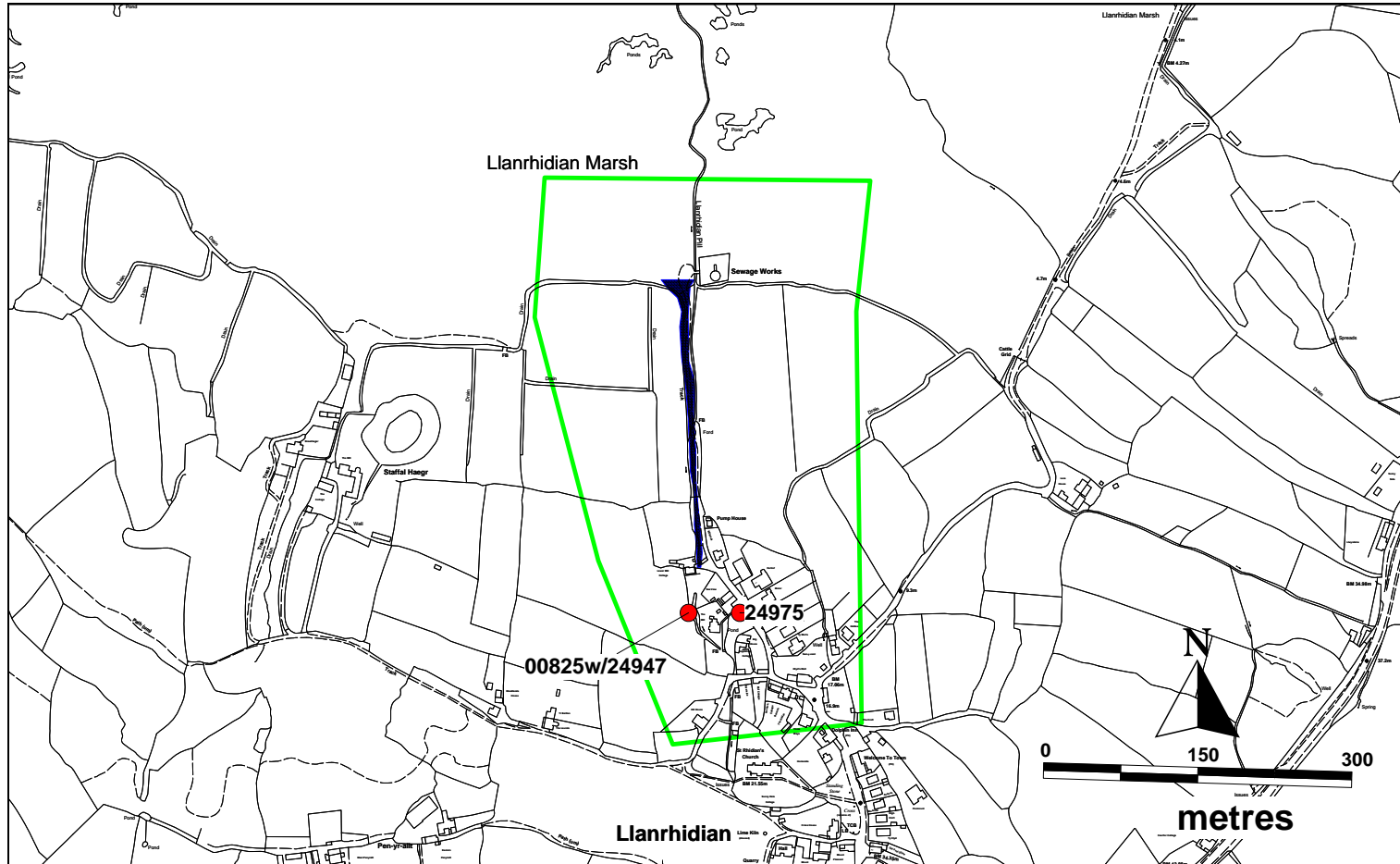
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Figure 36 Sites of archaeological interest in the Burry Pill and Great Pill study area

5.11 Llanrhidian Pill

Llanrhidian Pill extends due north across Llanrhidian Marsh, itself to the north of the settlement of Llanrhidian, before joining Leason Pill and entering the Loughor Estuary. Whilst there is no evidence for any waterfront features in this area, like the Llanmadoc and Landimore, the inhabitants of Llanrhidian may well have utilised sea travel. There is a potential for uncovering structures and artefacts beneath the alluvial deposits that have built up in this area, and any such remains could be damaged by future developments.

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Figure 37 Sites of archaeological interest in the Llanrhidian Pill study area

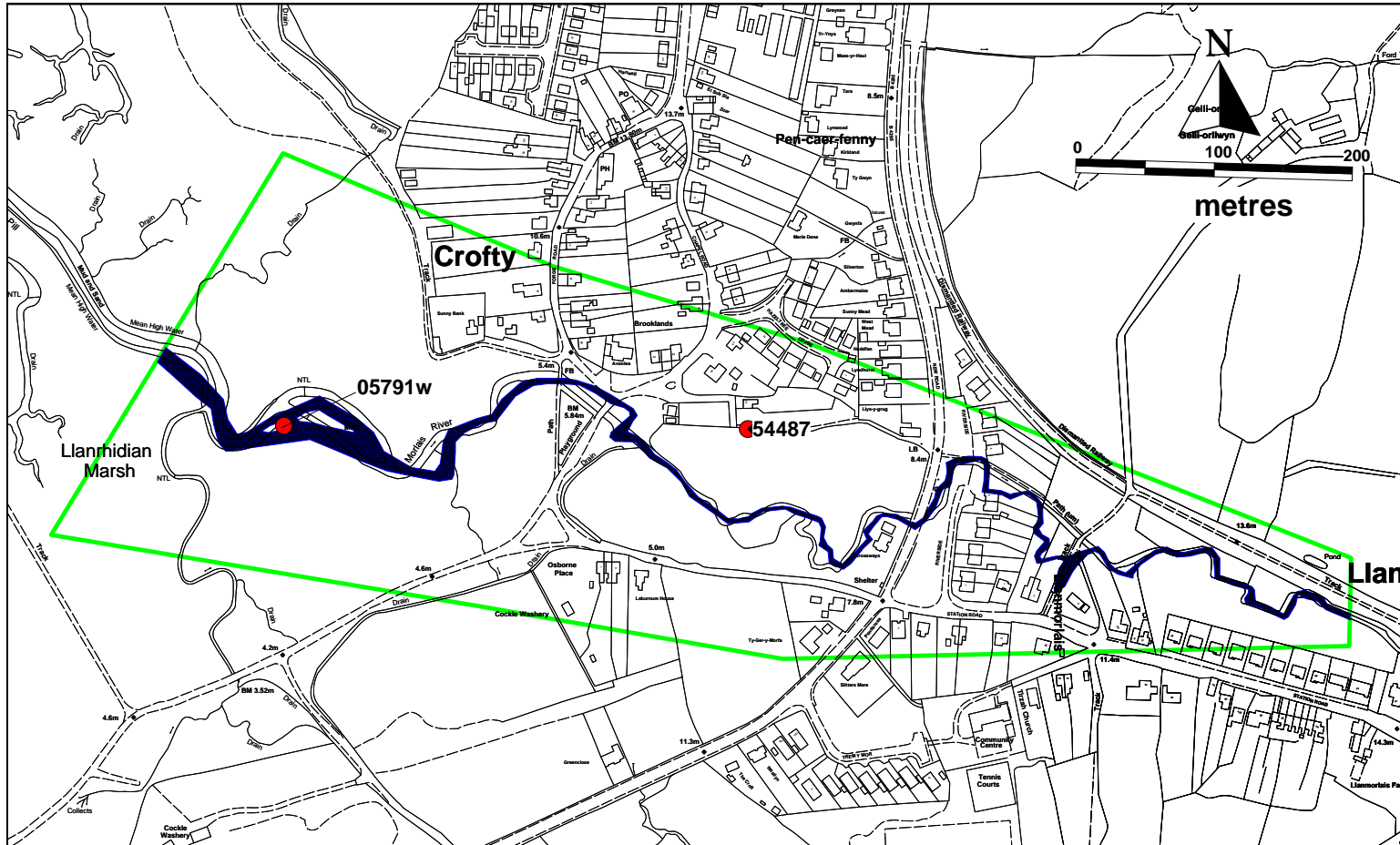
5.12 Salthouse Pill

Salthouse Pill extends roughly northwest from the settlements of Crofty and Llanmorlais before joining entering the Loughor Estuary. Whilst again there is no evidence for any waterfront features in this area, it may have been navigable in the past, and the name suggests salt-making in the area, which may have utilised the pill for transport. There is a potential for uncovering waterfront structures at this site, and they may be well preserved beneath the alluvial deposits in this area, and any such remains could be damaged by future developments.



Plate 35 Landscape of Salthouse Pill, looking west

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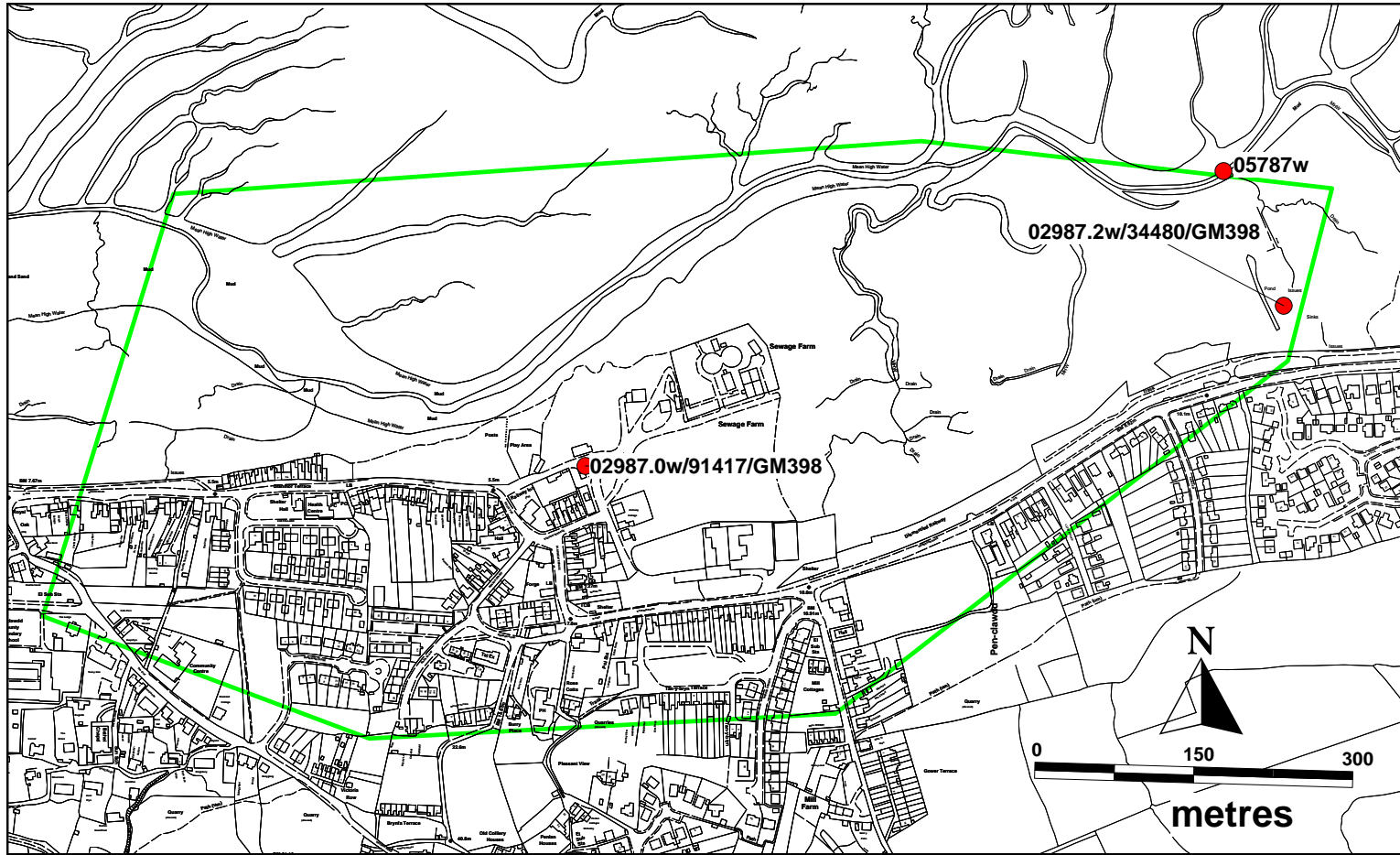
Figure 38 Sites of archaeological interest in the Salthouse Pill study area

5.13 Penclawdd

The village of Penclawdd is currently renowned for its association with cockling, but the coming of industry to the area, in the form of coal mining and copper-smelting, was the driving force behind developments, and saw the development of a significant harbour. The Penclawdd Canal (02987.0w/91417/GM398) and associated Penclawdd Sea Dock (02987.2w/34480/GM398) were constructed in 1814 to cater for the collieries and metalworks of the North Gower coast, and also as a purpose-built dock at Vivian's copperworks in Penclawdd, which was built in 1840. Whilst it is possible that pre-19th century waterfront features survive at this site buried in the accumulating alluvium, the major maritime archaeological potential at Penclawdd is for 19th-century sites. These potential sites may be damaged by any further developments in this area.



Plate 36 Landscape of Penclawdd, looking west



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Figure 39 Sites of archaeological interest in the Penclawdd study area

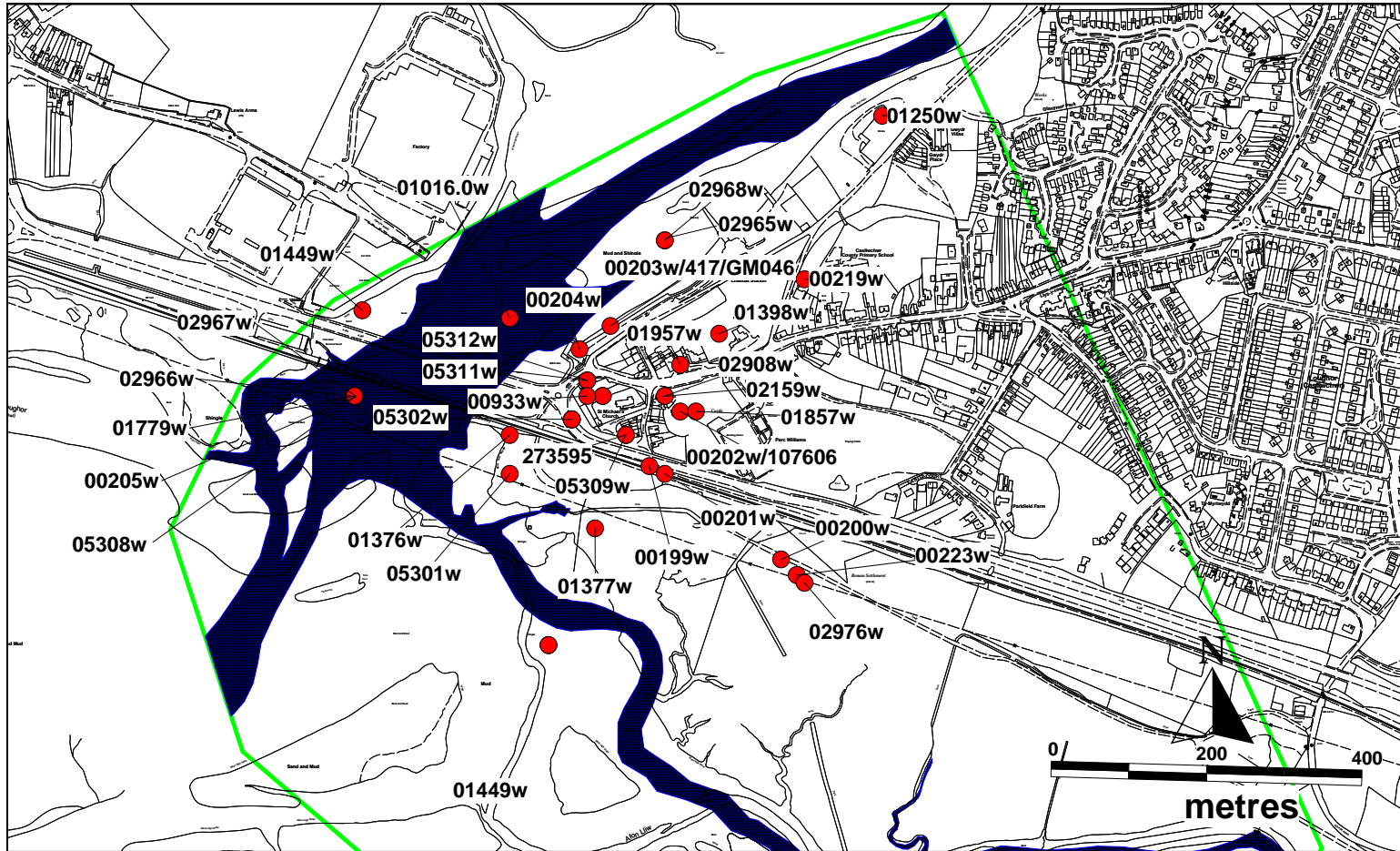
5.14 Loughor

Loughor was the site of a Roman fort (00202w/107606) and a medieval castle (00203w/417/GM046) and church (00201w), and the river was almost certainly used to transport both goods and people during these periods. It is clear that the area was used by boats and ships by the 16th century, as it is mentioned in the Welsh Port books (Lewis 1927). However, it never developed into a major port, with the maritime focus in the area being to the west at Llanelli, and Loughor's importance was more associated with land travel as it was the lowest river crossing point for road and rail (Locock 1996). During the post-medieval period, there was some limited industrial development at Loughor and its estuary was used as a haven or docking point, as can be seen by the record of several wharves (01376w, 01377w, 01398w). The course of the River Loughor has changed little since the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879, development has not been significant in the area and neither has erosion. It is therefore considered possible that waterfront structures may survive at Loughor dating from the Roman to post-medieval periods. This potential is clearly demonstrated by the timber revetment (05813w) exposed on the east bank of the river at low tide. Any future developments in this area would threaten this potential maritime archaeological resource.



Plate 37 Landscape of Loughor, looking northeast

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Figure 40 Sites of archaeological interest in the Loughor study area

6. Conclusions

Having assessed the four major ports in Phase 1 of this assessment, and a further 37 minor harbours and creeks in Phase 2, it has been possible to classify these 41 sites into four main categories, depending on the nature of past maritime activity at each, and therefore the potential for the survival of archaeologically significant remains. These four categories are summarised below.

6.1 Major ports

- Chepstow
- Newport
- Cardiff
- Swansea

The potential of these four major ports has already been discussed in detail in the Phase 1 report (Howell and Dunning 2004), and clearly includes the possibility of sizable structures and associated artefacts and deposits being located in these areas which, due to economic factors, are currently undergoing major programmes of redevelopment.

6.2 Subsidiary ports

- Caerleon
- Neath
- Loughor

These locations are considered to have been significant subsidiary ports in pre-modern periods. It may be significant that all three were the sites of Roman forts, possibly due to their strategic locations on navigable rivers. These locations clearly continued as important military and maritime sites during the medieval period, and shipping activity developed into the post-medieval period, when they acted as foci for trade and possibly transshipment sites. As such, they have significant potential for the survival of major structures of Roman to post-medieval date, if not earlier, although some earlier features may have been removed by later developments. Situated close to the conurbations of Newport and Swansea, these areas are under considerable pressure from redevelopment, often focussed on riverside locations, and consideration to these important remains should be afforded during the planning process.

6.3 Major pills and havens

- Tintern
- Goldcliff
- Mathern and St Pierre
- Magor
- Black Rock
- West Pill
- Caldicot
- Peterstone
- Rumney
- Aberthaw
- Col-hugh and Llantwit Major
- Aberavon and Port Talbot
- Oystermouth
- Port Eynon
- Penclawdd

These sites are considered to have been major pills or havens, and as such are likely to have had some formal waterside structures in the past. Although there not have been the larger structures likely to have been found at the subsidiary ports, a range of timber and stone features from the prehistoric period onwards may survive in these areas. The pressures of development and erosion vary between these sites, but their archaeological maritime potential should be protected as far as possible.

6.4 Minor pills and havens

- Hunger Pill
- Portskewett
- Styne Pill
- Collister Pill
- Cold Harbour Pill
- Ebbw
- Penarth
- Sully
- Barry
- Ogmere
- Porthcawl
- Black Pill
- Pennard Pill
- Nicholston Pill
- Oxwich
- Wormshead
- Burry Pill and Great Pill
- Llanrhidian Pill
- Salthouse Pill

It is considered unlikely that these sites were important for maritime activity in the pre-1800 period, although evidently some, such as Penarth and Barry, rapidly developed major ports during the Industrial period. Whereas large scale features may not be present at these minor pills and havens, some have evidently been in use since prehistory and therefore there remains the possibility that vessels, artefacts and smaller scale structures may yet be disturbed by continuing erosion or future developments in these locations.

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