



Jersey Heritage & The States of Jersey



Esplanade, St Helier, Jersey
Archaeological and Historic Appraisal

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Introduction

Dr Peter Chowne and Dr Aylin Orbasli have prepared this report in October/November 2012 at the request of Jersey Heritage and the States of Jersey. The remit of this appraisal is to carry out an assessment of the archaeological and architectural significance of the Esplanade area of St Helier which is an area that has been partially regenerated and is likely to be a focus for redevelopment in the future. There are two parts to this study: an analysis of the potential for the survival of archaeological remains and palaeoenvironmental deposits below ground and an assessment of the standing buildings. These are linked by a review of the urban topography.

The site

The study area (centre) is approximately 200 metres inland from the harbour partially on reclaimed land. It is underlain by granite capped with windblown sand. To the west the granite is covered by alluvium probably deposited by watercourses which discharged into the sea through three streams, two to the east of the study area and one to the west. North-east of the site is a peat deposit that formed in marshy conditions. This is discussed in more detail below. The site is bounded by the Esplanade to the south-west, Castle Street to the north-west, Conway Street to the south-east and the rear boundaries of properties fronting Broad Street and Charing Cross to the north-east. The area is bisected by Commercial Street which was formerly named New Wharf Road.

The area south of Commercial Street has been fully developed with no open spaces. Buildings range in date from c.1850-60 to the twentieth century. Later buildings have basements and/or underground car parks. To the north the area is less developed with some open spaces used as car parks. It is these areas that are most likely to be developed. A number of buildings both north and south of Commercial Street are listed and these have been surveyed as part of the Historic Environment Resurvey Project. Several properties have had heritage statements and assessments carried out as part of the planning process for example 22 & 23 Esplanade with 38 & 40 Commercial Street (Burton 2012) and 8-10 Commercial Street (Aubin 2004). No recorded archaeological investigations have been carried out within the study area.

Methodology

The primary method used in this assessment is map regression analysis supported by a review of published and unpublished literature. Maps, aerial photographs, periodicals and books have been consulted at Jersey Archive, the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London and the University of Kent. The site was visited in June and July 2012 and a photographic record made but not all parts were accessible. Data collected as part of the resurvey of the Historic Environment was also used in this assessment.

The starting point for the map regression analysis was the digital map of Jersey which was used as a base layer for the listed building boundary of significance mapping. Digital images of historic maps used in the analysis were provided by Jersey Archive or created using a high specification digital camera. These were then imported to MapInfo 10 as raster files and where possible registered to the digital base map. Inevitably with the pre-nineteenth century maps there is distortion resulting from changes in the paper and variations in the quality of the cartography. Some maps were only available as photocopies.

The architectural assessment is based on the listing descriptions and assessment of those buildings that are listed, as carried out in Phase I of the Historic Environment Review, and published historic information relating to the period this area was developed in St Helier. The existing information was supported by interior visits to as many as the properties as proved

possible. The townscape analysis was conducted as a streetscape surveys and evaluations of the Esplanade and Commercial Street. Interior visits, additionally sought to gather information and evidence on earlier periods that could be recognised in the building's fabric, including external areas and yards.

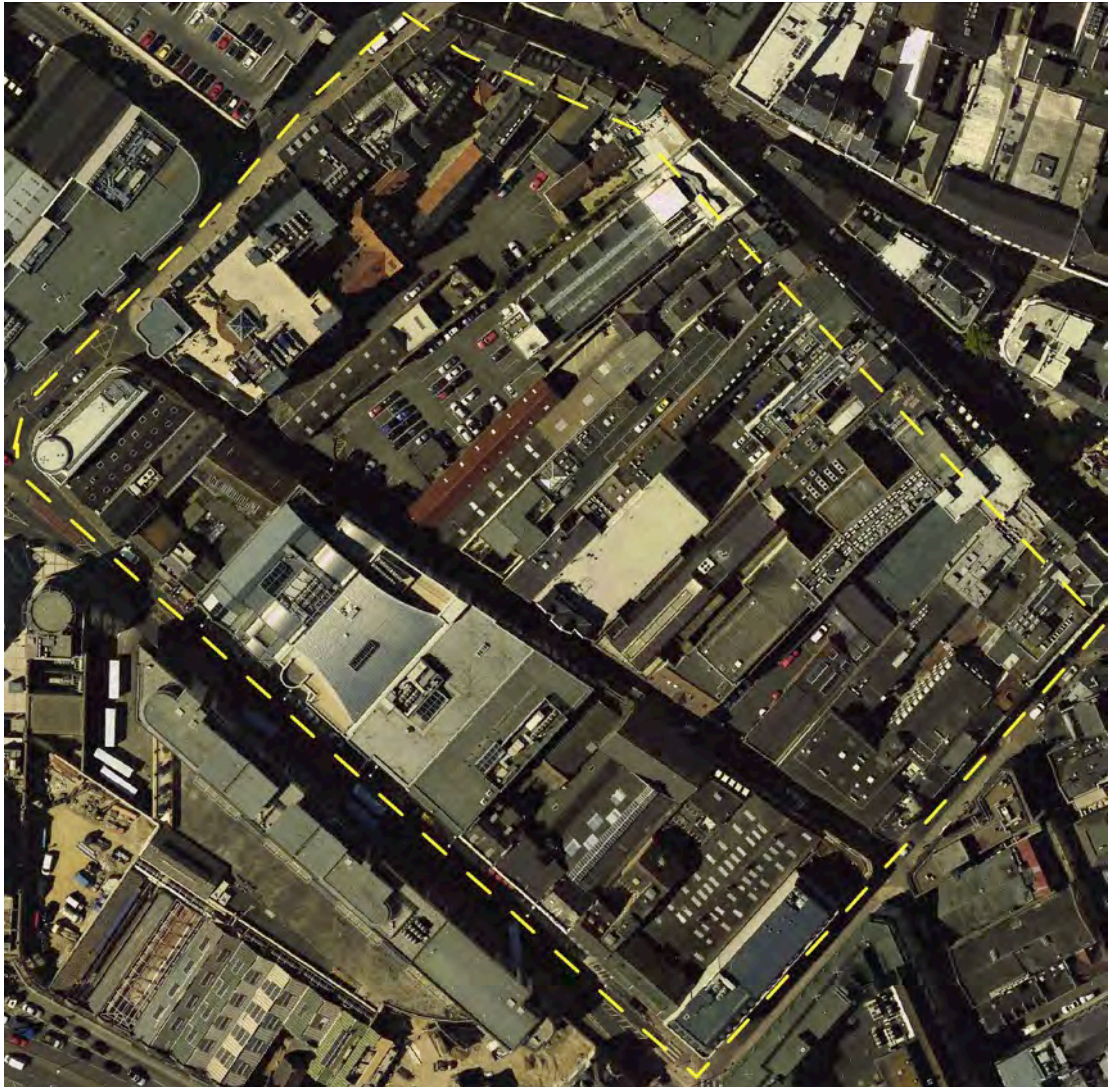


Figure 1: Aerial view of study area

1 Archaeological Appraisal

1.1 Introduction and overview

Although the map regression analysis was the main method used in this study it is necessary to consider the archaeological and palaeoenvironmental potential for the area from earliest times.

1.2 Early Prehistory

The earliest evidence of human activity in the island dates to about 250,000 years ago when bands of hunters used the caves at La Cotte de St Brelade as a base for hunting mammoth (Callow and Cornford 1986). Lithic material has also been found at La Cotte à la Chèvre with technological differences representing different periods of activity. Although Lower and Middle Palaeolithic material has been found in Jersey over many years Upper Palaeolithic material has only recently been confirmed by investigations at Les Varines 1.6km east of the study area (Pope, Bates et al. 2012).

Early in Holocene time, the sea level around Jersey was rising rapidly. Nonetheless, an enlarged land area, almost certainly still connected to mainland France, continued to exist. Such a landscape would have afforded access to Jersey for succeeding Mesolithic people, and a considerable expanse of plant and animal resources to support their primarily hunter-gatherer culture (Jones, Keen et al. 1990).

Archaeological evidence of a Mesolithic presence in Jersey is slight. Microliths recovered from flint scatters at La Corbière, Le Canal du Squez and Les Blanches Banques may be Mesolithic (Patton and Finlaison 2001). As Mesolithic people often favoured coastal occupation some sites may have been submerged by the rising sea level. Sea level change and recently discovered evidence for Mesolithic and early Neolithic activity in the Channel Islands has recently been published (Sebire and Renouf 2010). It seems likely that the Channel Islands were able to support a successful Mesolithic population, who very likely were exploiting marine resources as a major contribution to their food requirements in a variety of landscapes which developed at different periods as the Flandrian sea level rose.

The more open loessic landscapes of the low coastal plains may have been the attraction for the Early Neolithic arrivals in the islands. Pottery found at Le Pinnacle and Mont Orgueil Castle and from Neolithic peat beds in St Ouen's Bay show affinities with the Early Neolithic pottery of Brittany and the Paris Basin (Patton and Finlaison 2001).

During the Middle Neolithic period the economy supported enough people to raise the huge communal monument, the passage grave La Hougue Bie (Patton, Rodwell et al. 1999). Other types of megalithic tombs to be found are *allees couvertes* such as Dolmen du Couperon and dolmens simples such as Dolmen de Ville és Nouaux. Standing stones exist but many have been removed or damaged by agricultural activity for example The Broken Menhir (Hibbs 1983; Hibbs 1986). For a detailed discussion of the Neolithic in the Channel Islands see (Patton 1995).

The transition from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age, around 4500-4000 BP was a time of copper artefacts, beakers and late forms of Jersey bowls. A number of Bronze Age settlement sites have been discovered, Les Blanches Banques (Patton and Finlaison 2001). La Moye, Le Pinnacle, Le Petit Port and La Pulente also have evidence of Bronze Age occupation, while Les Hougues de Millais, Les Cinq Pierres and La Hougue de Vinde were important tombs in this period. Late Bronze Age hoards have been found at La Blanche Pierre, St Lawrence, Mainlands, St Lawrence, and Town Mills, St Helier (Patton 1987). More recently hoards have

been discovered at St Ouen¹ and Trinity². In the Later Bronze Age burial practice changed from inhumation to cremation for example at the late phase of the gallery grave at Villes-ès-Nouaux (Sebire 2005).

Between the eighth and sixth centuries BC, there was a considerable amount of social and economic contact between Jersey, north-western France and southern Britain. Settlements at this time included Icho, Petit Port and Le Pinnacle (Hawkes 1938) and possibly le Agois (Holdsworth 1986). Between the fifth and second centuries BC, Jersey appears to have had less contact with France and Britain. Mont Orgeuil, Belcroute Bay (where salt-working took place), Le Pinnacle, Fremont, Le Catel and Le Catel de Lecq were also occupied, with a number of these sites appearing to have been promontory forts. Île Agois may also have been occupied at this time (Cunliffe 1986).

1.3 St Helier in Early Prehistory

The study area is situated in the St Helier basin a low lying area composed of Flandrian deposits of silty-sands, clays and peat. The earliest deposits appear to be silty-sands 4-5m thick, which lie beneath coastal peat beds dated to pollen zones VIc or VII. In St Quen's Bay early Neolithic ceramics have been found in the peat and ceramic typology suggests as date in the Early Neolithic between 4850 and 4000 cal BC (Patton and Finlaison 2001). Keen considers it likely that the main peat recorded by Mourant in the St Helier basin is comparable to that in St Quen's bay based on similarity in the recorded pollen profiles (Keen 1981). Mourant discusses a number of sections and boreholes that have been made in St Helier for example at Tunnel Street, Fish Market and the Harbour (Mourant 1952). Godwin's analysis of pollen from the boreholes enabled him to propose a sequence of deposition (Godwin and Godwin 1952).

Tree-pollen type	Deposits	Conditions
Oak and alder co-dominant	Upper peat of St Helier coastal plain (Amusement Arcade)	Return of freshwater conditions
	Marine shells on St Helier coastal plain	Submergence
Dominant alder and low hazel	Lower peat of St Helier coastal plain (Fish Market series). Grouville series. Upper part of Harbour series	Wetter conditions
Dominant oak and high hazel	Lower part of Harbour series	Submerged forest

More recent research has been carried out in St Helier including a review of the earlier work noted above so we now have a more comprehensive understanding of the palaeoenvironment (Jones, Keen et al. 1990).

In 1977 investigations were carried out at the gasworks to study the stratigraphy recorded by Dunlop and Mourant in close vicinity to a possible megalithic structure reported by Wedgwood and Mourant. Dunlop's 1896 section revealed a layer of clay underlain by peat then a further layer of clay which merged into peat containing wood, a Neolithic axe, teeth possibly from cattle and Neolithic pottery (Dunlop 1897). Mourant's borings revealed organic silty-clays and gravel but no peat. The megalithic structure was found 4.5m below the ground surface and

¹ <http://www.societe-jersiaise.org/archaeology/bronze-age-hoard-spring-2002.html>

² <http://www.jerseyheritage.org/news/late-bronze-age-hoard-discovered-in-jersey->

appears to have been a cist or dolmen. Flints and animal bone were recovered in silt on which the cist was found (Wedgwood and Mourant 1954). The site, Le Dolmen du Pré des Lumières, has been tentatively interpreted as a Neolithic cist and stone avenue (Finlaison and Hibbs 1985). The stratigraphy recorded in the 1977 investigations was similar to that described by Wedgwood and Mourant from their nearby exploration. There was considerable variation when compared with the other boreholes and sections which were up to 200m away. The palaeobotanical record suggests open-habitat away from the site with evidence for arable farming. Evidence for marine influence was also recorded (Jones, Keen et al. 1990).

Close to the Gasworks but some 1.5m lower, at Providence Street/Ann Street a boring was made in 1978, which revealed a similar stratigraphy of peat underlain by gravel to that recorded by Green in 1891 (Jones, Keen et al. 1990).

Green also recorded peat overlying clay and gravel in a borehole in Don Street. In the same area at Burrard Place a borehole sunk in 1984 located a peat layer 2m thick over 1.5m peaty silt underlain by silt, clay and gravel. A nearby borehole found variation in the sedimentation and thickness of the layers perhaps reflecting the undulating nature of the bedrock. Palaeobotanical analysis suggests that the site was riverine or lagoonal. Beyond the wetland the landscape was open with some pasture but little evidence for arable farming. A radiocarbon date of 2660 ± 70 bp was obtained from peat suggesting the possibility of pastoral farming in the vicinity during the Early Iron Age (Jones, Keen et al. 1990).

Borings and observations carried out on the Trustee Savings Bank site at New Street in 1984 and 1986 revealed a sequence of clays and silts and two peat layers similar to that exposed in excavations for the foundations of St Paul's church in New Street. Palaeobotanical analysis of samples from the 1984 section lower peat and radiocarbon dates suggest that a marine incursion took place c.4500 BP leading to freshwater swamp and fen around 4200 BP with brackish and saline marsh developing in lower elevations towards the sea. Farther afield on higher ground an open-habitat environment with some evidence for arable farming was indicated by cereal-type pollen. The lower peat appears to have formed between the Late Neolithic and Early Iron Age (Jones, Keen et al. 1990). A range of environments: freshwater, brackish and saline were present in the vicinity of New Street.

Archaeological evidence for Iron Age activity was discovered during investigations at 29 Broad Street. Remains of a building at least 3 x 2.4m containing a hearth were observed. This appears to have been built on beach sand, flooded by sea-water and subsequently buried beneath shingle and sand. Cereal grains were recovered providing further evidence for arable farming in the area during the Iron Age. Pottery suggests a date between the 3rd - 1st centuries BC (Finlaison 1972).

Peat was also observed during archaeological investigations at 15 King Street and struck flint possibly of Bronze Age was found during investigations at 46-48 La Colomberie (Backhurst 2008).

The research outlined in this report indicates that although the general sequence identified by Godwin is sound there are considerable local variations resulting from variations on the bedrock, sea-level change, marine incursions, freshwater flooding and sedimentation some of which was the result of human activity most notably in the Iron Age. The landscape would have been utilised for the collection of natural resources, as pasture, and when conditions were suitable for arable farming.

1.4 Study Area

The history and development of the town was described by Nicolle in 1931 (Nicolle 1972) and in less detail in Balleines History of Jersey first published in 1959 (Syvret and Stevens 1998). Since the publication of these two books our understanding of St Helier has been enhanced by archaeological excavations, architectural recording and further historical research which is regularly published in the Bulletin Annuel de la Société Jersiaise. It is not our intention in this report to describe in detail the history of the town and we will focus on the study area and the immediate surroundings. An accessible account of the early development of St Helier can be found in the St Helier Urban Character Appraisal¹. We have also been selective in choosing maps for discussion and a full list of those consulted can be found in the appendices.

The earliest plan showing detail of the study area dates to 1691. The section presented below shows Le Grand Douet and Le Faux Bie two of the three watercourses that drained St Helier basin discharging through streams across sand dunes (Les Mielles) into the sea. Rue de Derriere later became King Street and Grand Rue, Broad Street. Between Rue de Derriere and Grand Rue blocks of buildings are shown and these still exist in a developed form. West of these the Prison (9) is marked adjacent to what is now Charing Cross. From the Prison a sea-wall is indicated running south-east to Le Moulin à Foulon (11) located near the corner of Bond Street and Conway Street at the north-east corner of the study area (Nicolle 1972).



Figure 1.1: Map of 1691

Extracts from three eighteenth century maps have been grouped together in figure 3 for easy comparison. These show the rapid development seawards from Grand Rue. Le Grand Douet, Le Faux Bie and a third stream passing down what is now Conway Street are drawn on the

Meade and Momonier maps. All three portray the buildings along Rue de Derriere (King Street) with buildings and garden plots extending north of Le Grand Douet. There is development down Sand Street and south of Grand Rue. Between 1737 and 1787 buildings were constructed on the shore side of Sand Street replacing or absorbing the individual properties shown by Meade. Development is illustrated South of Grand Rue (Broad Street) on all three maps. Buildings, probably warehouses, extend towards the sea with the Richmond map showing this most clearly. Richmond also shows a gap between the buildings along Broad Street, which may have been shops and houses, and the warehouses. It is possible that the watercourse shown as an open ditch on the Le Gros map of 1834 and culverted on the 1907 map of sewers passed through this gap in the buildings. Meade shows it running through Broad Street.

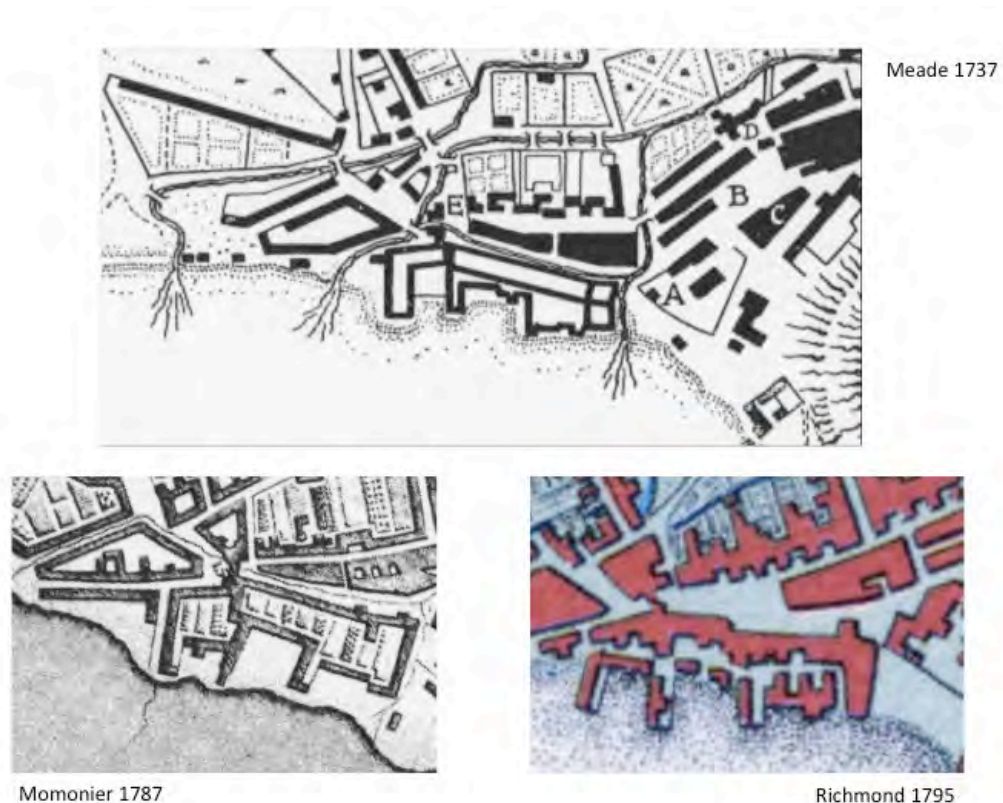


Figure 1.2: Meade 1737, Momonier 1787, Richmond 1795

Richmond's map has been overlain on Le Gros's map to see if any of the structures can be located or property boundaries identified. Richmond's style of illustration makes it impossible to identify individual buildings with accuracy although the shape of some plots does match up with Le Gros. This interpretation must be used with caution and requires testing through fieldwork. The granite wall alongside 35 Commercial Road (Figure 1.7: HE0951) is listed as remains of an 18th century harbour structure and this may be the building projected from Richmond in figure 1.3. The Le Gros map is important in recording a transitional stage of development where it is possible to tentatively identify buildings that survive today and the fabric of earlier structures incorporated within later buildings.



Figure 1.3: Richmond 1795 projected on to Le Gros 1834



Figure 1.4: Le Gros 1834 with with surviving granite property boundary walls in red

Apart from one building Le Gros shows the land between New Wharf Street (Commercial Street) and Esplanade as being undeveloped but possibly divided into plots. On the north side of New Wharf Street a number of granite walls have survived. These are at 35, 29, 27, 23 and the Post Office. These appear to be surviving parts of earlier buildings that are on the property boundary alignments shown by Le Gros. It is possible that these boundaries were in existence in the eighteenth century but this cannot be deduced from the Richmond or earlier maps. Construction of the Esplanade and Commercial Street started in 1829 on what was the sandy shore which was no doubt utilised but not built on apart from one structure on Castle Street (Cox and Garthwaite 1983).

The 1907 map of sewers is included in this study as it shows realigned watercourses and what appears to be an alley running north off Commercial Street. This now appears to be absorbed into Barclay's car park.

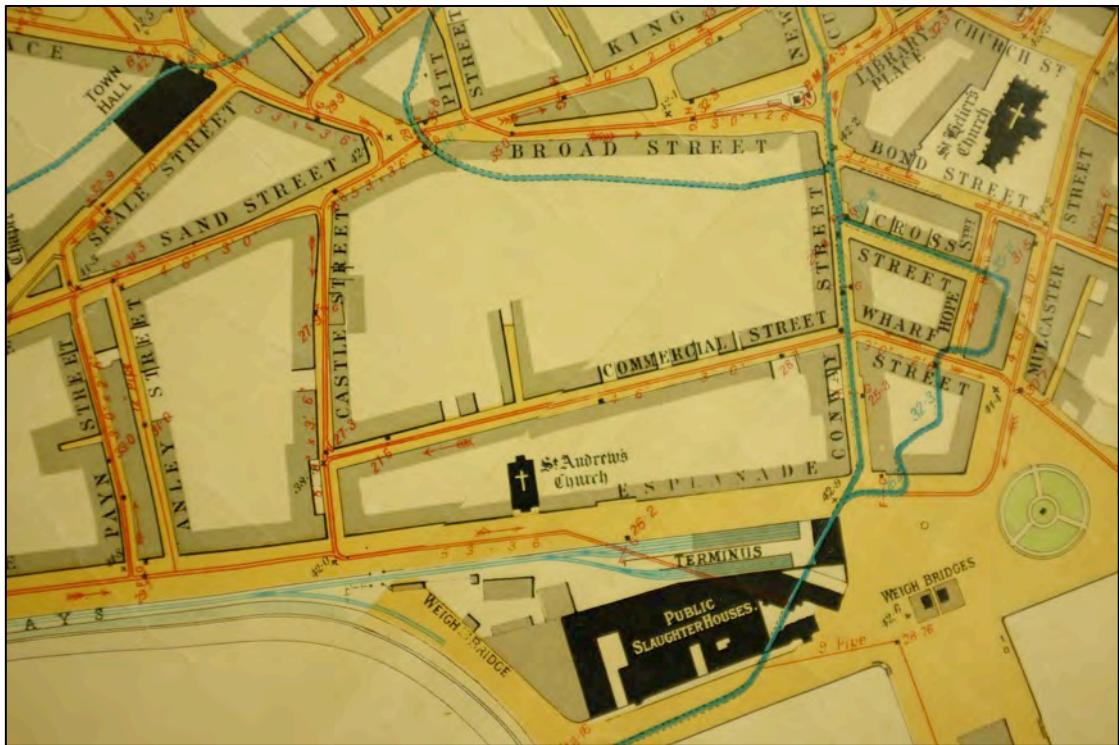


Figure 1.5: Map of Sewers and Drains 1907

The extant property boundary walls noted above can be identified on the Ordnance Survey map of 1935 which shows the study area in a similar form to today.



Figure 1.6: Ordnance Survey 1935

The final map used in this analysis is a 2010 digital plan with buildings recorded as part of the Historic Environment Resurvey. Surviving granite property boundary walls are indicated and it should be noted that some of the listed buildings shown also feature granite in their construction.

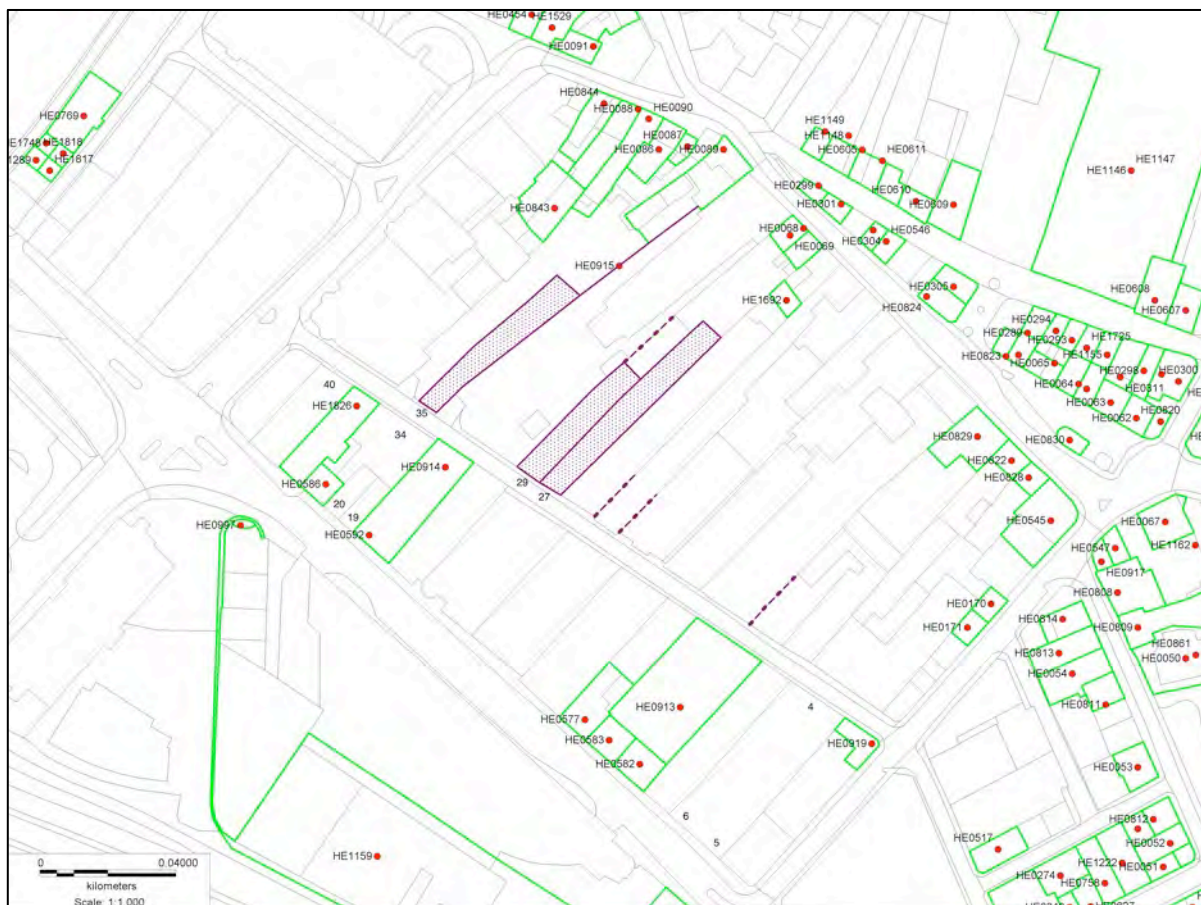


Figure 1.7: Digital map 2010 with listed buildings and surviving granite property boundary walls

1.4 Archaeological Significance

Whilst there is no direct evidence for prehistoric activity in the study area the close proximity of the sites at King Street and Broad Street suggest that there is potential between Broad Street and Commercial Street for the survival of ancient remains. Palaeoenvironmental investigations have demonstrated the potential for the survival of botanical remains such as pollen and wood. Soil micromorphology can also be used to study patterns of natural and human induced sedimentations. Faunal remains have also been found within peat layers which also add to our understanding of the environment and potentially farming.

Investigation of buried deposits in St Helier helps us to understand past environments as the research described in *Past Landscapes of Jersey: environmental changes during the last ten thousand years* demonstrated. Since this important work was published in 1990 scientific analytical and dating techniques have advanced considerably and as more dated sequences become available we will be able to build a predictive map of where prehistoric activity may survive in St Helier.

It should also be noted that wetlands were often the focus for the ritual deposition of individual artefacts and hoards of metalwork (Bradley 2002).

Inspection of surviving granite walls was not carried out in the detail required to make a full analysis of the stratigraphy which is evident in the fabric. Permission to enter some properties could not be obtained and interpretation is based on maps and digital photographs. The walls contain evidence for different phases of construction and repair and remnants of adjoining structures that do not survive. Detailed recording of the walls by measured survey or

photogrammetry would enable more precise interpretation and the possible identification of early stages of construction which might be represented on the Richmond map. It is also likely that archaeological remains survive below the current ground surface and if these can be linked by stratigraphy to extant walls the possibility of obtaining a detailed archaeological record by excavation is enhanced.

35 Commercial Street (HE0915)

The boundary walls of this structure, which predate the current building, appear to match a property shown on the Le Gros map. The southern wall continues north projecting beyond the current building but is masked/replaced by rendering. The presence of walls from demolished buildings can be seen and these probably relate to structures shown on the Le Gros map. These may be the remains of the structure marked on the Richmond map but distortion of perspective on the 1795 map does not permit an exact match of boundaries. This could be determined by further on-site inspection and surveying.



35 Commercial Street facing south-east (north wall)



35 Commercial Street facing north-west (south wall)

29/27 Commercial Street

These boundary walls also appear to be on the same alignment as boundaries marked on the Le Gros map but they cannot be related to the Richmond map on current evidence. Stratigraphy is visible within the fabric which is rendered and painted in part. The current buildings post-date the walls.



29 Commercial Street facing south-east (north wall)



23 Commercial Street

Short lengths of granite wall are visible in the structure of this twentieth century building. A wrought iron gate incorporates a date of 1816 but it is not clear if this derives from an earlier structure or is based on historic evidence. A date of 1816 would not be inconsistent with the map evidence.

8? Commercial Street (Post Office)

Granite courses can be seen in one boundary wall, painted and possibly rendered, in places. Again this appears to match a boundary on the Le Gros map.

Summary

The entire study area is significant for the probable survival of buried sediments, particularly peat, that contain indicators of past environments, climatic and sea-level change, and the impact of prehistoric farmers on the landscape. Understanding these in the St Helier basin deposits is significant to the wider research in Jersey on the earliest human occupation of the island (<http://quaternaryjersey.wordpress.com/la-cotte-de-st-brelade/>) and is of international importance. There is also potential for the discovery for palaeoenvironmental and archaeological remains of later prehistoric and early historic date in the northern part of the study area adjoining Broad Street.

The study area between Commercial Street contains extant walls that can be identified with boundaries shown on the Le Gros map of 1834 and in one instance the Richmond map of 1795. These form the last remaining links with the early development and expansion of the waterfront surviving above ground and are therefore significant in providing a physical link between the historical record and the 21st century. Whilst the condition of the walls is poor in places the open spaces between them provides an excellent opportunity for further study. It is

probable that archaeological remains from the eighteenth century survive below ground. The possibility of linking extant walls with floor/foundation levels adds to their significance.

2 Architectural Appraisal

This part of the report specifically considers the architectural significance of the above ground remains and buildings on the site lying between Commercial Street and the Esplanade. The first section is a brief overview of architectural developments in this part of St Helier in the nineteenth century and its subsequent renewal during the course of the twentieth century.

2.1 Historic overview

The Esplanade block considered here was not built on until the middle of the nineteenth century. The only building appearing on 1834 Le Gros map on the northwest corner of the block facing Castle Street has since been replaced by a new building (Figure 1.4). The earliest buildings on the site are thought to be built sometime between 1850 and 1860. Since construction began in the 1850s the area has served residential and commercial uses, and typically warehouse and storage uses on the Commercial Street side.



Figure 2.1: The scale, density and rhythm of the Esplanade in the late nineteenth century can be seen in these two historic photographs (SJPA/007746 and SJPA/000082)

2.2 Buildings of historic and architectural significance

2.2.1 Esplanade

No 5-6

3 storey, 4 bay and 3 bay town houses. Plain buildings, much altered with new dormers, new sash windows and new shop fronts at ground floor level. Interior much altered and modernised and knocked through to No 4 Commercial Street as part of a nightclub development.

Significance: Modest buildings retaining the rhythm of the original mid-late nineteenth century street elevation and contributing to streetscape character.

No 8

Listed HE0582, Grade 3. 3 bay, 3 storey townhouse. Painted render walls, rusticated quoins. Modern office frontage to ground floor, 16 pane (8/8) sashes above. Brett refers to a disappeared pedimented doorcase. Interior side passage plan, mahogany open well stair with turned newels from first floor (Brett 1977).

This building corresponds with No 8-9 Commercial Street and forms a group as a single property, with the Esplanade side being described as the 'house' and the Commercial Street side as the 'yard' with outbuildings (Aubin, 2004). The first buildings on the site appear to

have been built c. 1860-66. No 8 is described as the house with lean-to on the west side, which was later developed as No 9 completed between 1901-05 (Aubin, 2004).

Significance: A rare group of commercial/industrial buildings comprising house, office and stores with imposing and dignified frontage.

No 9

Listed HE0583, Grade 3. 3 bay, 3 storey offices with attic; continuous frontage with No 8. Painted render walls, rusticated quoins, moulded cornice and parapet. Vehicular opening to ground floor. Windows are replacements set in moulded architraves. Interior side passage plan, much altered staircase. Brett (1977) refers to original Georgian style glazing being intact.

This building corresponds with No 8-9 Commercial Street and forms a group as a single property, with the Commercial Street side being the 'yard' with outbuildings (Aubin, 2004). Originally a lean-to, the property known as No 9 was developed between 1901-05 (Aubin, 2004).

Significance: A rare group of commercial/industrial buildings comprising house, office and stores with imposing and dignified frontage.

No 10 (The Customs)

Listed HE0577, Grade 3, c. 1860s. A 3 storey, 4 bay townhouse with attic and ground floor shop front. Slate roof, ashlar effect render, 4 Pane (2/2) sash windows. Modern shopfront (Jaipur) to ground floor. Restaurant fit out on ground floor with no original features remaining. Residential use above, modest interior with no features of note apart from survival of 2 pane (1/1) timber sash windows.

Significance: An imposing building of mid-late nineteenth century retaining some good original exterior features.

No 18

Listed HE0592, Grade 4. Corresponds with No 32 Commercial Street. 7 bay, 3 storey warehouse that has been re-developed. Granite random rubble with brick dressings.

Significance: A good survival of a late nineteenth century warehouse frontage.

No 19-20

Two mid terrace 3 storey modest townhouses, used for commercial purposes on the ground floor. Ground floor much altered for commercial use (restaurant and travel agent). Modest nineteenth century interior, much altered with no features of historic significance noted.

Significance: Modest buildings retaining the rhythm of the original mid-late nineteenth century street elevation and contributing to streetscape character.

No 21 (Sabrina)

Listed HE0586, Grade 3. A 2 storey, 3 bay mid terrace townhouse. Slate roof, rendered walls with bark decoration in cement render. Recessed door to side, 2 pane (1/1) sash windows. Interior retains some original features including staircase with turned newel post. Original timber sash windows and panelled doors throughout. Small yard at back with single storey outbuildings to either side.

Significance: A rare example of a mid to late nineteenth century Victorian style townhouse with unusual (if not eccentric) decoration.

No 22

Listed HE0914 with No 38 Commercial Street, Grade 4. Former house or business premises, demolished in 2000, now contemporary office development.

Significance: With its glazed frontage this is the more contemporary side of the No 38 Commercial Street warehouse which has been built into the shell of a late nineteenth century warehouse.

No 23

A 1950s commercial building replacing an earlier structure from 1851-61.

2.2.2 Commercial Street, south side

No 4

Corresponds with No 5-6 Esplanade.

No 8-10 (Zebra)

Listed HE0913, Grade 3. This building corresponds with No 8-9 Esplanade and forms a group as a single property and forms a group as a single property, with the Esplanade side being described as the 'house' and the Commercial Street side as the 'yard' with outbuildings (Aubin, 2004). The first buildings on the site appear to have been built c. 1860. The property was in various ownership and divided into two separate properties at times, thus extended and altered into the early part of the twentieth century (Aubin, 2004). Based on the evidence of property transactions the northern section may have been constructed between 1901 and 1906.

The property consists of a 6 bay, 3 storey store (magasin) on the Commercial Street frontage and a covered yard between it and Nos 8 and 9 Esplanade. The store is described in some detail, including measurements in a report produced for the Planning Department by C N Aubin (2004). Many of the interior details remain inconsistent and according to Aubin possibly re-used from a previous property.

Significance: This is a rare survival of a c.1900 warehouse in St Helier, and though much altered around an interior and later glazed yard, has a good survival of various building components, including a partially cobbled granite passage.

No 32

Listed HE1826, Grade 4. Corresponds with No 18 Esplanade. 7 bay, 3 storey warehouse that has been re-developed. Granite random rubble with brick dressings.

Significance: A good survival of a late nineteenth century warehouse frontage.

No 34

A warehouse building straddling two or three plots (as marked on the Le Gros map). Much altered granite rubble ground floor with dressed granite quoins and brick jambs. New concrete structure above the openings.

Significance: A much altered warehouse, retaining original nineteenth century fabric and character at the ground floor level.

No 38

Listed HE0941, Grade 4, c.1880. 3 bay, 3 storey former warehouse (now garage). Random granite with brick dressing. Later date timber sliding door on ground floor. Central loading bay with tall casement windows on either side. Metal gantry beam. Inside brick piers support RSJs. Interior rebuilt maintaining original frontage and party walls, and several beams (Architectural Heritage Practice, 2012).

Significance: A good survival of a late nineteenth century warehouse frontage contributing to streetscape character.

No 40 (West End Garage)

New building used as garage, incorporating several elements of an earlier structure on its front elevation, notably a quoined doorway. There is also reference to some timber roof beams possibly having been reused from an earlier building (Architectural Heritage Practice, 2012).

Significance: A twentieth century warehouse building retaining some original nineteenth century features.

2.2.3 Commercial Street, north side

No 27

1½ storey single bay industrial unit, with gable end onto street spanning two stone walls marking the boundary of the plot, and are likely to predate the shed. The plot boundaries are those marked on the 1834 Le Gros map, but the buildings themselves are not evident at this time.

Significance: A good survival of early nineteenth century plot boundary walls. One of a few buildings retaining the industrial character of the area and contributing to streetscape character.

No 29

1½ storey single bay industrial unit, with gable end onto street spanning two stone walls marking the boundary of the plot, and are likely to predate the shed. The plot boundaries are those marked on the 1834 Le Gros map, but the buildings themselves are not evident at this time.

Significance: A good survival of early nineteenth century plot boundary walls. One of a few buildings retaining the industrial character of the area and contributing to streetscape character.

No 35

1½ storey single bay industrial unit, with gable end onto street spanning two stone walls marking the boundary of the plot, and are likely to predate the shed. The plot boundaries are those marked on the 1834 Le Gros map, but the buildings themselves are not evident at this time.

Significance: A good survival of early nineteenth century plot boundary walls. One of a few buildings retaining the industrial character of the area and contributing to streetscape character.

2.3 Overview of architectural and townscape significance

2.3.1 Morphology

Historic maps (Richmond 1795 and Le Gros 1834) clearly identify a pattern of long and narrow plots generated from the Charing Cross and Broad Street frontages that were carried across to the Esplanade block when it was developed in the mid nineteenth century.

An aerial view of the area (Figure 1) shows that while this morphology is partially retained and legible in the block between Commercial Street and Bond Street, it has been largely taken over by large blocks. This is particularly the case in the central section of the Esplanade – Commercial Street block, where new buildings not only take up 2-3 plots front to back, but are also taller than the remaining original buildings.

2.3.2 Esplanade

Remaining evidence and the 1935 OS map (Figure 1.6) indicate a pattern of 2-3 storey 'houses' on the Esplanade frontage, often fronting larger warehouse buildings behind them which opened onto Commercial Street.

The original frontage of the Esplanade, would therefore have been a modest commercial street of townhouses, with some having commercial premises on the ground floor. This character has been moderately eroded through the ground floor treatments of the surviving buildings, and significantly changed where new buildings have been inserted with little consideration for the scale, rhythm and material qualities of the original streetscape character.



Figure 2.2 Esplanade, east side, where some original proportion has been retained

2.3.3 Commercial Street south side

Following this pattern, Commercial Street can be characterised by three storey, plus attic in some cases, warehouse buildings. In most cases with gable ends onto the street and large openings on the ground floor. Originally known as New Wharf Street, this would originally have been a working street of industrial character, developed over time as the Esplanade block expanded south in the mid nineteenth century.

Like the Esplanade, Commercial Street, has also been significantly altered in the twentieth century. Three new buildings at the centre of the block detract from the scale, rhythm and character of the street, while the industrial character, rhythm and characteristics have been maintained to a degree with original and some more recent buildings on the east and west ends of the street.



Figure 2.3 Commercial Street south side, characterised by industrial units with large ground floor openings and gable ends onto the road.

On the north side too, narrow frontages reflecting shape of original plot boundaries are also being eroded by new developments combining plots.



Figure 2.4 Commercial Street north side

Summary

Overall, most of the surviving buildings of historic interest on the block are mid to late nineteenth century in date. There have been significant replacements on the block since the 1990s, eroding the character of both the modest but formal Esplanade frontage and the working warehouse character of Commercial Street. The buildings that survive have also been altered with various levels of intervention, from small shop front changes to the retention of the external envelope only. They do, however, contribute to the rhythm and character of this area, a rare reminder of the trades and harbour activities that took place in this part of town in the nineteenth century.

3 Recommendations

Protection

It is recommended that the current Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP) boundary is extended to include the block to the south of Commercial Street. This ensures that areas up to the historic shoreline are similarly protected.

We recommend that some level of protection is afforded to extant granite walls to the north of Commercial Street, at least until they have been fully recorded and analysed.

Research and recording

Although this report has identified the historic significance of evident and potential archaeological materials, this has been the outcome of a desk-based assessment. We recommend that the following investigations are undertaken prior to and as part of any development process:

1. Photogrammetric/measured survey of all granite walls - this could be done as a project in advance of development and there is scope for community involvement which may or may not be desirable.
2. Borehole investigation - possibly linked to geotechnical investigation in advance of planning determination.
3. Archaeological evaluation - normally required to support a planning application.
4. Excavation and recording of archaeology - a condition of planning consent.

Townscape

This study has not identified any further buildings on the site that would merit listing. However, the townscape character has been evaluated. We would recommend that all new development recognizes the urban morphological character of thin plots and the elevational rhythm this creates on the Esplanade and Commercial Street frontages.

Appendix 1: Bibliography of sources

Maps

Digital Base Map, 2010
Ordnance Survey, 1935
Sewer Map, 1907
Richards, 1867
Godfray, 1849
Le Gros, 1834
Double map of 1806 & 1800
Richmond Map, 1795
Momonier, 1787
Faden, 1783
Meade, 1737
Map of 1691

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Société Jersiaise Photographic Archive

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ⁱ St Helier Urban Character Appraisal
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