

**Developments in Marine Archaeological Resource Management Relevant to the Revision of the Eastern Counties Research Framework** by Ian Oxley**Introduction**

Despite their radically different environmental circumstances, marine and terrestrial archaeological remains provide a seamless physical and intellectual continuum (Roberts & Trow 2002). As a result of coastal change, some originally terrestrial sites are now submerged and some marine sites are now on land; some sites have ambivalent settings, being situated in the inter-tidal zone and enjoying marine and dry land environments sequentially; and others extend from dry land into the sea. Even wholly submerged and discrete sites, such as shipwrecks, can be considered part of wider maritime cultural landscapes that also embrace the yards where they were constructed, the ports they served and the defences erected against them.

In terms of historical significance, information potential and contribution to our cultural identity, it is clear that marine archaeological sites should enjoy parity of esteem and treatment with their terrestrial counterparts. However, they do not currently enjoy that parity and the lack of appropriate maritime archaeological research frameworks is one of the most serious issues. *Taking to the Water: English Heritage's Interim Policy on Maritime Archaeology* (Roberts & Trow 2002) identified the inclusion of the maritime landscape in regional research frameworks sponsored by English Heritage as a priority. *An Archaeological Research Framework for the Greater Thames Estuary* (Williams & Brown 1999), part-sponsored by English Heritage and produced in association with Essex and Kent County Councils and the Thames Estuary Partnership, was seen to provide a good example of an integrated research framework.

Many questions need to be addressed before appropriate maritime archaeological research frameworks can be developed. Should they be assessed chronologically, thematically, or geographically? What is the optimum integration with existing and planned terrestrial research framework initiatives? This paper attempts to summarise some of the more recent developments in maritime archaeology subsequent to the extension to English Heritage's remit to include the Territorial Seabed of England and broader issues in England's maritime archaeology.

**The lack of existing maritime archaeological research frameworks**

In March 1995 a report was produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Maritime Affairs Group (Firth 1995), intended as a starting point for a discussion about maritime archaeology research frameworks, prompted by English Heritage's review, *Frameworks for Our Past* (Olivier 1996). It is notable that of the 121 national and 268 regional research framework documents submitted to English Heritage, only one national and two regional documents were specifically dedicated to maritime archaeology and reference to maritime archaeology was omitted from virtually all of the remainder.

The Maritime Affairs Group report intimated that many of the difficulties affecting research within maritime archaeology stemmed from the separation of maritime/ underwater from terrestrial archaeology – the former being institutionalised from 1973

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onwards by The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 (POW). This legislation cut off maritime/underwater from the important developments that took place in terrestrial archaeology through the 1970s and 1980s. This led to:

- most investigations of maritime/underwater sites being directed towards shipwrecks, and particularly post-medieval warships that constitute the bulk of the wrecks designated under POW;
- archaeologist's interests have been limited to those sites;
- fieldwork carried out in other periods or themes (e.g. earlier boats and ships, submerged prehistoric land surfaces, maritime industries) have been carried out on land or on inter-tidal areas within the framework of terrestrial archaeology;
- maritime/underwater work was characterised by official disinterest in results, and an accompanying lack of support for research;
- controls placed on investigations were not sufficient to ensure that results were properly disseminated, or that fieldwork was to an adequate standard;
- this resulted little post-excavation analysis, failure to publish substantive reports, inadequate provision for duplicating and curating archives, dispersal of excavated and recovered material (often by sale), and a difficulty in maintaining and developing investigation teams.

Maritime/underwater archaeology has slowly developed against a culture of dispute that ancient material could survive beneath the sea, and the suspicion that investigations underwater could not be carried out to the same standard as on land. These structural problems led to a concentration of research into site formation studies and work on technical aspects of methodology (e.g. geophysics for site location and characterisation).

The research infrastructure for maritime/underwater archaeology was regarded as severely underdeveloped despite the existence of many museums with maritime/underwater holdings and an increasing number of universities with interests in the area. There was no form of overall collaboration.

Firth (1995) further concluded that whilst maritime/underwater archaeology had benefited from growing *recognition* with terrestrial archaeology, it had yet to achieve *acceptance* such that land archaeologists would take account of these aspects of their work without prompting, probably because of differences in training, work experience, qualifications, and modes of dissemination and popular perceptions.

Finally the report outlined a series of requirements:

- A series of period and theme reviews that have a maritime/underwater focus but are integrated with the research frameworks of terrestrial archaeologists;
- An overview of work carried out under the auspices of The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, to discover the current location of archives and ancient material removed, to review such analyses as have been made available, and to make recommendations concerning the consolidation and publication of this work;
- A overview of archaeological work into site formation and stabilisation, materials conservation and marine sciences;

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- A overview of the application of investigative methodologies, including the use of marine geophysics;
- An overview of maritime/underwater holdings in museums and their potential analysis;
- An overview of university and other research interests;
- An overview of the broader mechanisms that have caused and sustained divisions between maritime/underwater archaeology and terrestrial archaeology;
- An overview of the structure of the “population” involved in maritime/ underwater archaeology and of measures that will encourage development;
- An overview of National Monuments Record, and Sites and Monument Record enhancements that will contribute to maritime/underwater research;
- An appraisal of field projects that may be appropriate for implementing recommendations arising from the overviews listed above.

### **The character of the submerged historic environment**

The character of maritime archaeological resource is complex and diverse, incorporating sites and landscapes that were submerged by sea-level rise; the remains of vessels (ships and aircraft); scattered material relating to ships and shipping (e.g. lost cargoes, anchors, and debris); remains related to coastal activity (e.g. projectiles from coastal batteries and dumped rubbish); the sub-tidal elements of coastal features (usually relating to exploitation of, or defence from, the sea); and sea-bed emplacements (such as trans-oceanic communication cables and pipelines) (Roberts & Trow 2002).

However, it must be recognised that due to the physical environment in which marine archaeological remains are situated, dealing with them poses significant practical challenges that cannot be ignored. In particular, marine archaeological sites have the following characteristics:

- They are not easily accessed and managed without specialist skills, techniques and equipment, and consequently, access to the resource is comparatively expensive;
- They are situated in a hazardous environment, subject to continuous and sometimes rapid change;
- In general terms they are poorly understood;
- The density of shipwreck remains in English territorial waters likely to be amongst the highest in the world;
- The professional framework for maritime archaeology is very poorly developed and supported – amateur archaeologists have a more central role than they do in terrestrial archaeology;
- The number of sports dives is probably among the highest in the world; and;
- The management of marine archaeological remains and the dispersal of portable antiquities takes place within a wholly different legislative framework.

In the National Monuments Record of England there are over 42,500 maritime records comprising around 33,000 wrecks, of which only 5,200 have reasonable positions. There are over 1,100 records of crashed British aircraft and references to 7,400 fisherman’s net snags, of which nothing else is known as to their importance, vulnerability or potential for research, amenity or education.

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This snapshot only provides an indication of the nature of the existing resource, and it should be qualified by a critical appraisal of the nature of the origin, completeness and accuracy of the source data of the records. In addition opportunities for developing the linkages between the NMR and those local Historic Environment Records that record maritime sites have yet to be investigated. It is likely that estimates of how many maritime sites of all types exist could be in the region of many 100,000s.

### **Extension to English Heritage's remit**

The expansion of English Heritage's remit to include the seabed off our coast to the 12 nautical mile Territorial Limit, through the passing of The National Heritage Act 2002, represents one of the most significant challenges the organisation has faced since its establishment. In spatial terms the increase approximates to three-quarters as much again as the land area of England but, more importantly, the seabed contains an immense wealth of archaeological sites and remains, potentially without equal elsewhere in the world in terms of their number and diversity, including extensive inundated prehistoric landscapes as well as evidence of the exploitation of the sea in more recent times.

English Heritage has been given these new responsibilities at the same time as the interests of the wider public, and specific stakeholders in the marine and underwater heritage, have risen to unprecedented heights - evidenced by the popularity of television programmes and the media generally. This new role for English Heritage offers a unique opportunity for making a very significant element of the nation's historic and archaeological resource accessible to the wider community of our historically "maritime" nation.

Twenty days after the passing of the National Heritage Act 2002, a Head of Maritime Archaeology was appointed and in the last two and a half years the Maritime Archaeology Team has gradually expanded to include two more archaeologists and an Administrative Assistant. *Taking to the Water, English Heritage's interim policy on maritime archaeology* (Roberts, P. & S. Trow, 2002) and English Heritage's corporate objectives form the framework for the Team's work.

### **English Heritage's new responsibilities**

The National Heritage Act 2002 harmonised the roles of the UK heritage agencies by extending English Heritage's remit into the marine zone below the low-water line, modifying the organisation's functions to include:

- securing the preservation of ancient monuments in, on, or under the seabed; and
- promoting the public's enjoyment of, and advancing their knowledge of ancient monuments in, on, or under the seabed.

The 2002 Act amended the definition of "ancient monuments" in the National Heritage Act (1983) and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) to include sites in, on or under the seabed (including those comprising the

remains of vehicles, vessels, aircraft or movable structures) within the seaward limits of the UK territorial waters adjacent to England.

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Another significant change allowed administrative responsibilities in support of The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, on a UK-wide basis, to be transferred from the Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) to English Heritage. English Heritage now administers the DCMS Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites (ACHWS) and manages the UK Government's contract for archaeological services in support of the 1973, currently held by Wessex Archaeology.

### **England's existing statutorily protected submerged sites**

English Heritage has assumed responsibilities for the physical management of the 41 historic wreck sites in England's waters designated under The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 prior to the passing of the National Heritage Act 2002. The aspiration is to promote a plan-based approach to taking forward management objectives for these sites, taking into account the interests of a broad range of stakeholders, and including a competent assessment of the marine environmental processes that cause change.

### **English Heritage Initiatives and the Wider Issues of the Maritime Archaeology of England**

The future protection of the marine historic environment resource must involve central and local government, industry and all the other stakeholders ranging out to the wider public, so a considerable amount of time has been invested in building the required frameworks and relationships with other Government Departments and agencies. Development control and wider consultation duties are steadily increasing in parallel to the Government's promotion of broader Marine Stewardship initiatives. English Heritage now receives, and comments on, approximately 25 consultations per month relating to all areas of the English marine zone ranging from large scale marine aggregate extraction, offshore wind-farm installations, gas pipelines, electric cables, coastal defence, to port and coast edge constructions.

English Heritage now participates in various local and regional organisations with interests in the marine historic environment such as the Dorset Coastal Forum, the North East Forum on Maritime Archaeology and the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology.

Commissioned work has been specifically targeted according to strategic priorities such as promoting under-studied or vulnerable areas. For example, basic site evaluation work has been commissioned on the Bouldnor Cliff site, off the Isle of Wight, on a submerged prehistoric landscape that includes worked flints dating to approximately 7,000 years before present. Similarly, a significant effort is being made to raise the awareness and capacity of all the Groups and teams of English Heritage by: strengthening links with officers with coastal responsibilities in the Regional Offices and the centre; providing training, desk instructions, information and a source of specialist advice; and factoring the marine historic environment and maritime heritage generally in major English Heritage strategic and policy initiatives (e.g. *State of the Historic Environment Report* and the *Modern Military Framework Strategy*).

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### **Isles of Scilly Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment**

The Isles of Scilly survey was an experimental project, being the first to be commissioned by English Heritage since the National Heritage Act 2002 extended its remit to include the historic environment out to the 12-mile nautical limit. As well as coastal and inter-tidal sites the project considered the marine resource and assimilated maritime data into the report and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record. The Historic Environment Service of Cornwall County Council carried out the project for English Heritage between May 2003 and April 2004 and was also asked to carry out an appraisal of the implications of extending the survey below the low water mark.

### **Increased understanding of the importance of submerged prehistoric archaeology**

In 2003 a workshop on the Submerged Prehistory of the North Sea was held, designed to bring together people with an interest in North Sea environmental management, North Sea archaeology and submarine prehistory in other parts of the world, to come together to discuss their mutual interests and share their experience. The proceedings are in press, (Flemming 2004).

### **Maritime archaeology capacity building**

English Heritage commissioned the Institute of Field Archaeologists to survey of all those involved in maritime archaeology in the UK, focussing on skills, experience and training. The report, *Identifying Skills and Needs in Maritime Archaeology* (Edwards & Aitchison 2004), listed the following general and strategic conclusions:

- A consistent management and research policy is needed from the heritage bodies;
- Formal structures are needed to focus effort;
- A research agenda is needed, to allow priorities to be established and maintained;
- European partnerships and cross-border research and cooperation would be a significant contribution;
- Improved protection of underwater cultural heritage is needed;
- There should be greater integration with archaeology on land;
- Over-regulation of recreational diving sector should be avoided;
- Core funding is needed;
- More professional maritime archaeologists are needed;
- There are too few employers;
- Career and employment prospects are poor;
- The avocational sector is important, and needs more assistance (need more professional maritime archaeologists);
- Opportunities, training and encouragement are needed for professional non-divers in maritime specialisms;
- Formal standards for underwater work are needed to improve quality of training and practices;
- Assessment of currency of knowledge and competency in skills is difficult, but this can be addressed by IFA membership and through CPD;

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- Responsible fieldwork should be encouraged and results published, in order to enhance core database, and establish firm basis for future research and development;
- Long-term core-funded projects are needed, to provide training and career development opportunities;
- Overall publication backlog needs addressing;
- Need to encourage use of basic survey skills and reduce reliance on technological tools c.f. terrestrial survey;

### **Reform of Marine Historic Environment Heritage Protection**

In November 2002, Tessa Jowell (Secretary of State, Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)) announced the need for “..a designation system that sustains the historic environment as a whole rather than relating in a piecemeal way to its constituent parts” adding that “we all know about the problems which can arise from some of the current procedures.....We need to reform these, make them work better for everyone, while maintaining the same level of protection for the historic environment”.

The DCMS Review of Heritage Protection marine consultation was developed to:

- Seek the closest practical integration of marine and terrestrial historic environment protection;
- Define the term “marine historic asset”;
- Create a new unified designation for marine heritage assets;
- Establish appropriate criteria for designating marine sites;
- Debate the proper management and control for marine protected historic assets;
- Propose the development and publication of statements of significance;
- Debate the determination of site boundaries;
- Discuss the appropriate levels of openness and interim protection for marine historic sites.

On 26 March in Ramsgate Maritime Museum, David Miles, then Chief Archaeologist for English Heritage, launched the DCMS’s marine consultation entitled *Protecting our Marine Historic Environment: Making the System Work Better* (DCMS 2004). The paper set out the key issues and questions in relation to marine historic environment designation and sought to provide:

- a positive approach to managing the marine historic environment, which will be transparent, inclusive, effective and sustainable and central to social, environmental and economic agendas at a local as well as national level; and;
- a legislative framework that protects the marine historic environment but enables appropriate management techniques to be applied and to evolve.

The consultation period ended on 31 July 2004 and DCMS is currently reviewing the responses prior to issuing recommendations to Ministers.

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### **Promoting considered use of seabed resources**

Since 2002, English Heritage has sought to develop appropriate guidance for developers on how to incorporate best practice in ensuring that historic environment issues are given proper attention in the regulation of marine developments. English Heritage and the British Marine Aggregates Producers Association jointly produced *Marine Aggregate Dredging and the Historic Environment: assessing, evaluating, mitigating and monitoring the archaeological effects of marine aggregate dredging* (BMAPA & English Heritage 2003) which is designed to provide all stakeholders including developers, regulators, consultants and heritage professionals with a well-defined approach and clear statement of policy with respect to marine archaeology and marine aggregate extraction. This guidance has been further enhanced by a draft protocol for the proper reporting of finds of archaeological interest generated by aggregates extraction.

### **Developments in the UK Marine Sector**

Clearly the addition of agreed research priorities into management and conservation plans enhances the credibility of the development control process and, therefore, research frameworks should provide an infrastructure and means of validating the decision-making inherent within the planning process, assist in the formulation of priorities for the distribution of resources (on a national scale), and couple curation to research. Significant recent developments in the marine sector generally show that this requirement is becoming of great importance.

In terms of wider context, multiple use of the sea is the norm, with a wide range of activities frequently taking place in the sea or seabed. New activities, notably most recently the development of offshore wind energy, are constantly being proposed and encouraged. There is a widespread recognition that the current management of the marine and coastal environment is complex and fragmented, and that there is currently no holistic, plan-led approach to look at the wider picture.

Current trends strongly favour improving the compatibility of the various sectoral datasets, with clear emphases on map-based data retrieval to inform the rapidly increasing role for spatial planning in the marine environment. It is thought that marine spatial planning can:

- Offer a means of managing potentially conflicting uses of the sea and cumulative effects of human activities;
- Provide an opportunity to deliver greater integration, better management and regulation (i.e. proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent, targeted).

### **Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (ALSF)**

The introduction of the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), essentially a levy on minerals extraction, including marine aggregates, provided the opportunity for a timely boost to English Heritage's ability to fund essential research into the marine historic environment

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affected by aggregate extraction. Projects, totalling around £1.5m over the financial years 2002/3, 2003/4, supported by the ALSF included:

- Surveys of archaeological finds from southern North Sea and eastern English Channel with particular emphasis on enhancing understanding and characterisation of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology at risk from marine aggregate extraction;
- Characterisation of the historic environment resource under threat from marine aggregate extraction: enhancement of available records of wrecks, hazards and casualties to improve understanding of likely maritime remains on seabed;
- Research into innovative, assessment protocols (such as multi-beam sonar) on historic wrecks;
- Understanding depositional processes of marine aggregate deposits;
- Determining the geomorphology of submerged and buried landscapes on the northern English Channel shelf to assess the archaeological significance of offshore fluvial systems in their Palaeo-environmental contexts prior to aggregate extraction.

Defra recently announced an extension of the two-year ALSF pilot for a further three years. Marine projects are now segregated from terrestrial and discretionary funds are shared between English Nature, English Heritage and the Defra Centre for Fisheries, Environmental and Aquaculture agency. English Heritage can expect to be able to disburse £800k in 2004/5 followed by £1m in 2005/6 and £1m in 2006/7. The following summaries show ALSF projects that have particular relevance to the development of maritime research frameworks:

### **England's Historic Seascapes (Wessex Archaeology)**

The Seascapes project aims to adapt the methodology of Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) to England's inter-tidal and marine zone. Anticipating a key role in framing responses to aggregates extraction, the adaptation will be trialled through an initial pilot in NW England.

Effective and coordinated management of the marine historic environment requires the ability to take a strategic level overview, whether the concern is to plan the future direction of conservation activity and funding, to provide sustainable responses to development and other pressures for change, or to prioritise research funding.

Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned to trial the project methodology in Liverpool Bay, drawing together a range of marine cultural and natural environment datasets to understand and map the historic dimension of the wider environment, beyond the unevenly distributed and variable data from previous archaeological work. This project's GIS database will enable the marine historic environment to participate fully in partnership with our fellow agencies for the natural environment in the Government's development of an integrated marine spatial planning system.

This will inform four further, separate, pilots to confirm the method's validity in other main types of coastal context, ensuring a robust characterisation methodology to inform the assessment of aggregates extraction licence applications. Seascapes will complement the current national programme of County-based HLC projects which,

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through desk-based GIS mapping and analysis, seek an archaeological understanding of the historical and cultural development of the present landscape.

The intention is to provide overviews of the historic dimension of environment, giving understanding at a scale capable of effectively informing strategic level conservation planning and research prioritisation. Scale and full coverage within their project areas and themes enables them to give context to the presently, point-based, individual site records, and provide predictive assessments of areas outside those records.

### **The Importance of Shipwrecks (Wessex Archaeology) and Enhancing our Understanding: Shipwreck Importance (Bournemouth University)**

These two linked projects address the fundamental issue of the absence of the adequate tools to assess the value of shipwreck sites. Managing change, for example ensuring that the impact of marine aggregate extraction is minimised, requires that decisions are informed and that they are driven by an understanding of what is valued and as full a knowledge of the archaeological resource as possible.

There are trans-national issues involved in estimating importance and value as submerged heritage assets can be located outside the territory of their state of origin or beyond the territory of any nation state (ie in international waters), and can be unattributable to any single state (ie built, flagged, crewed, victualled or cargoed by more than one country).

The aim of these projects is to develop and trial a framework for ascribing importance to shipwrecks suitable for use in the environmental assessment of marine aggregate dredging proposals.

### **Wrecks on the Seabed (Wessex Archaeology)**

This project comprises the refinement and development of methodologies related to area survey methods and the survey of ephemeral sites through the acquisition of substantial and purposely collected geophysical datasets that represent relevant and independent 'compare and contrast' scenarios for side scan sonar surveys. Such scenarios will enable clear 'demonstrable' guidance on the most appropriate geophysical survey specification to meet archaeological objectives. Specifically, the module is intended to standardise the approach to reviewing typical geophysical datasets and when defining whether an acoustic signal is anomalous or not.

### **Enhancing our Understanding: Navigational Hazards (Bournemouth University)**

The overall aim of the project will be to assess the suitability of historical and scientific data relating to specific aspects of the marine historic environment surrounding navigational hazards for use in the environmental assessment of marine aggregate dredging proposals. Source analysis is likely to assist in the greater

understanding and detection of hitherto unknown sites. The project will also test the creation of an indicative predictive map of pro-active management strategies through linkages formed with other ALSF projects.

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### **England's Shipping (Wessex Archaeology)**

This project seeks to improve the conservation, understanding and wider appreciation of the marine historic environment affected by dredging. Specifically, the project seeks to collate documentary information about shipping patterns to facilitate the assessment of maritime archaeological potential in the course of preparing marine aggregate environmental statements. The collation and GIS presentation of historical data used during this project will assist the effective assessment of archaeological potential within areas of proposed aggregate extraction.

### **Modelling Exclusion Zones for Marine Aggregate Dredging (University of Southampton)**

This project aims to make a preliminary assessment of dredging on archaeological materials, focussing particularly on wreck material. The work will bring together expertise across archaeology, oceanography and marine engineering with the potential to impact on not only archaeological science but also marine science.

### **Rapid Archaeological Site Surveying & Evaluation in the Marine Environment and Transitional Zones (University of St Andrews)**

The principal aim of this project is to exploit the potential of geophysical, remote survey equipment to allow rapid detailed investigation of submerged archaeological sites and their immediate surroundings. A secondary aim is establish the optimum configuration of acoustic instruments to obtain the maximum resolution necessary for high quality archaeological work.

### **Seabed in Prehistory (Wessex Archaeology)**

The aim of this project is to inform best practice for the assessment and evaluation of prehistoric deposits, on or beneath the seabed, in the course of the aggregate dredging license application process, and to provide baseline data on the prehistoric archaeological potential of dredging areas around the coast of England. The intention is to carry out two fieldwork elements: geophysical survey off Great Yarmouth; and extensive grab sampling in the Palaeo-Arun off Sussex.

### **Re-assessment of the archaeological potential of Continental Shelves (University of Southampton)**

This project reviewed the archaeological potential of the UK continental shelf to enable a greater understanding of the relationship between marine aggregate deposits and past-landforms. This project highlighted the realisation that the approaches necessary to locate, identify and understand the distribution of archaeological remains in particular offshore areas must take into account past landforms. Literature from research disciplines relating to the reconstruction of submerged landscapes and pre-submerged archaeological deposits was reviewed that will assist in offshore regulation and licensing.

## **Dorset Coast Historic Environment Research Framework**

The Dorset Coast Historic Environment Research Framework exists as a draft (Wessex Archaeology 2004b), prepared as part of a Project Design for the Dorset Phase 1 Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment (RCZA) Survey (Wessex Archaeology

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2004a), expanding the Poole Harbour Heritage Project Limited *List of potential projects and research agenda* to a Dorset-wide framework.

Taking the accepted composition of a research framework (Resource Assessment, Research Agenda, Research Strategy as per Olivier 1996) as a model, the Dorset draft sought to address all three elements. For the Research Agenda, the Dorset Coast RCZA Steering Group adopted a thematic approach to developing the draft framework, following Williams & Brown (1999) and Nixon *et al.* (2002), identifying themes such as:

- Prehistoric development of the Dorset Coast
- Inhabitation and Settlement
  - Settlement patterns and buildings
  - Infrastructure
  - Defence (civic and military)
  - Coastal Defences (seawalls and flood defences)
- Coastal Communities
  - Demography
  - Ideology and Religion
  - Recreation
- Economy
  - Agriculture and fisheries
  - Production
  - Distribution and Consumption

Where applicable, themes could be split into three zones corresponding to the relevant landscape: marine, inter-tidal or above High Water. The document then identifies the Framework Objective for each theme and recommends specific areas that future research might address.

## **Conclusions**

Subsequent to the passing of the National Heritage Act 2002, English Heritage has begun to address the wider issues related to maritime archaeology in England, including the development of appropriate research agendas. A number of related initiatives have been described, including those being taken forward under the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund. Many other areas still require attention including:

- Clarification of what actually comprises the maritime archaeological resource and its relationship to other assets such as historic ships, maritime museums and coastal properties;
- Issues of jurisdiction, management and administration (national, regional and local) which cross the environmental divide of the Low Water Mark;
- Raising the capacity of the maritime archaeological sector whether in academia, contract archaeology or Local Authorities;
- The promotion of best practice in the existing maritime archaeology sector;

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- Increasing our understanding of the nature of the maritime historic environment and relative preservation in different marine burial environments;
- Understanding the numbers, potential, nature, and threats to, existing sites, particularly drowned prehistoric landscapes.

At present English Heritage is limited by resource limitations but recent restructuring of the former Archaeology and Historic Buildings Departments within English Heritage has offered the opportunity of enabling a more strategic approach to be taken to addressing marine historic environment and maritime heritage objectives and the sharing of tasks with teams other than Maritime Archaeology. One of these key objectives remains the development of an agreed research framework for maritime archaeology is seen as a vital tool for guiding, facilitating and integrating research by the range of individuals and groups that will actively contribute in the future to a deeper understanding and more economical use of England's marine and maritime heritage.

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