SUMMARY
This report summarises the work undertaken on the *Coronation* Offshore and *Coronation* Inshore designated wreck sites (located off Penlee Point, Plymouth) during the period 1st November 2008 to 31st October 2009.

Further work is required to establish the extent of the debris trail in order to produce a complete site plan, to understand the level of seabed erosion, and act accordingly.

The license was authorised by the Secretary of State, under the Protection of Wrecks Act (1973). The assistance provided by Ian Oxley, Mark Dunkley, Monika Schneider and Alison Hamer of the English Heritage Maritime Team is gratefully acknowledged.

The continued support of the current survey team and the NAS is also appreciated.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Coronation was a second rate 90 gun, British warship built in 1685 at the Naval Dockyard in Portsmouth. The vessel took part in the Battle of Beachy Head in 1690 and was lost a year later (1691) in a gale off Penlee Point, near Plymouth, Devon. The exact reasons for her loss are unclear.

In two primary locations, Coronation is thought to lie Offshore at Latitude 50o 18.57' North, Longitude 004o 11.98' West and Inshore at Latitude 50o 18.96' North and Longitude 004o 11.57' West. These coordinates are that of the designated positions and have been supplied by the Department of Culture Media and Sport.

On 24th November 2008 a survey license was granted to the author (for both sites) to continue the work commenced under the previous Licensee Miss Sarah Ward.

2.0 SITE IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT

2.1 Diving Logistics

The *Coronation* Offshore site is located directly in the path of one of the main sailing routes in and out of the Port of Plymouth (located in Plymouth Sound), and lies within waters controlled by the Queens Harbour Master (QHM) / Ministry of Defence (MoD). The net effect is that there are a multitude of small and medium sized pleasure craft and police boats travelling over the site – particularly on weekends – with the attendant risk to divers. Extra vigilance and a suitably trained boat skipper is required on this site.

The Penlee Point area is subject to relatively strong tidal currents particularly on Spring tides. Although the two sites are approximately 800 metres apart, the Offshore site is approximately 684 metres south west of the Inshore site, with the result that the periods of slack water are considerably shorter on the Offshore site.

Due to the large geographical spread of the original survey team and the difficulties in coordinating tides, weather, and divers' availability this has resulted in less work on the site being conducted than anticipated for the 2009 season. The total survey dives undertaken in this reporting period is 36 with a total underwater time of 1384 minutes.

2.2 Condition of Site

Until recently it was thought that all that remains of the *Coronation* at the Offshore site is a scattering of guns and two large intact anchors, identified as Anchors A and B on the site plan prepared by Peter Holt in 1997, a broken anchor (Anchor C) and a large quantity of guns scattered across the Inshore site.

Observations made in 2006/2007 were that that several (if not all) of the guns are not stable, and appear to be actively corroding. This has been re-confirmed during this reporting period with several “fins” and “fizzing” of the guns being observed.

3.0 GEOLOGY, TOPOLOGRAPHY & FLORA

The seabed in the survey area is composed of undulating natural rock (with some steep pinnacles) with small pockets (gullies) of sand. A variety of seaweeds are attached to the rocks on the site but in the licensee’s opinion this does not obstruct the artefacts from view.

The 2007 & 2009 multibeam survey data show that the Offshore site lies upon a raised area of rocky seabed that is separated from the Inshore site by a deeper ‘channel’ that is in places covered in sand.

3.1 Seabed Erosion

The movement of sand from the site reported in 2007 has been visually confirmed this year and it is still an objective to install an accurate sediment monitoring system at the Offshore site before the end of 2009.

4.0 PUBLIC OUTREACH, EDUCATION & DISSEMINATION

The recommendation (Ward, S. 2008, *Coronation Inshore and Offshore Licensee’s Site Report)* to commence a broader outreach programme in the local area has been developed and it is hoped that a “Diver Trail” of the Offshore site can be produced for the diving season of 2010. Initial support for other outreach programmes has been received from a range of local organisations. It is expected that this would be a great benefit to both the site, the local community and visiting divers.

4.1 GIS Development & Display

The licensee has been working with Peter Holt (3H Consulting Ltd) to reverse engineer data contained in the site archive and develop a full 4D GIS of the site. It is expected that this will provide an alternative platform for publishing site data in its entirety making it more accessible, and more easily able to disseminate, particularly in a museum setting. Upon completion, a copy of this data will be made available to English Heritage for archiving purposes.

4.2 Illegal Diving Education Campaign

Rumours, but little evidence of illegal diving on both sites continue. The case brought to the attention of English Heritage and ACHWS in 2007 has now been closed. The MoD Police continue to support the Licensee and have contacted local “Pot” Fisherman to remind them that it is illegal to interfere with the sites and this is inclusive of the laying of pots. This has not been a problem at the Offshore site However the Inshore site has been subjected to potting on several occasions.

Local diving operators continue to advertise 'HMS *Coronation*' as a local dive site. Plymouth Diving (http://www.plymouthdiving.co.uk/index.aspx) for example appears to advertise the site as one of four accessible sites under 20m depths, without mentioning the site's protected status (http://www.plymouthdiving.co.uk/Content/DiveSites/Coronation.aspx) or licensing requirements.

The location of the current Licensees place of work has permitted effective monitoring of the site and with the cooperation of the QHM and the Coastwatch Station staff at Rame Head no diving has been reported on the two sites this year. Although diving is continuing in the area between the two designated sites. This is an area of concern as several artefacts lie within this corridor. It may, after further investigation be prudent to reclassify the area into one all encompassing site.

The production of a "Diver Trail" with an underwater guide may alleviate some of this problem by encouraging divers to visit this impressive site under a Visitors Licence and within guidelines.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned in the 2003 Wessex report (Black 2003), the site has been thoroughly acoustically surveyed, and subject to diver survey over many years. Despite this, both the geophysical and survey data remains incomplete. Although the Plymouth University survey covers the required area, as reported in 2007 (Ward 2007) the resolution is not sufficient for it to be useful, while the previous NetSurvey multibeam in conjunction with the magnetometer data recorded in 1996 does not cover the whole of either designation zone, debris trail (intermediate site) or the surrounding area. The 2008 RN survey has been incorporated into the GIS database and has enhanced the previous work significantly.

The uncertainty of the contents of the intermediate site gives great opportunity to develop the knowledge of these sites and the following work is recommended:

1. Continued diver survey of the Offshore site to complete the 1997 plan and enlarge it to include exposing artefacts. This must also include detailed recording of those artefacts in line with Wessex Archaeology's 2003 recommendation (Black 2003).

2. Diver survey of the intermediate and corridor between the two designated sites to ascertain the extent and nature of the debris linking the two sites.

3. Subject to curation support and advice (and a repository for the artefacts found) surface recovery of exposing artefacts in Recommendation 1 above. An experienced professional conservationist is now a member of the current survey team and subject to appropriate licensing and advice this could be an achievable objective.

4. A sediment monitoring system is installed on the site to accurately monitor seabed erosion, and confirm the depth of sediment in the gullies. (This is estimated to be achieved prior to the end of 2009).

5. A corrosion monitoring system be investigated and to be installed to determine the exact nature and extent of corrosion of the guns and anchors on the site, and monitor accordingly.

6. Cataloguing of the existing material and documentary archive. As specified in Wessex's 2003 report (Black 2003), most of the archive currently resides with a previous licensee Peter McBride. It is thought that this would follow the protocols and procedures developed by Kevin Camidge on the Charlestown project, funded by English Heritage. This work is ongoing and being driven forward by Mr Jon Parlour.

7. Prepare interpretative material for the site for the diving and non-diving public to assist development of the aforementioned outreach projects.

8. Liaise with Plymouth University to combine their training requirements for survey techniques with the requirements of the team to record the intermediate site area.

6.0 REFERENCES

Black, J. 2003, *Coronation Offshore, Penlee Point, Plymouth: Designated Site Assessment: Full Report*. Wessex Archaeology, Salisbury (unpublished).

Ward, S. 2006, *Coronation Inshore and Offshore Licensee's Site Report*, Nautical Archaeology Society, Portsmouth (unpublished).

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