

Oldfield Grange Brief History

Neil L Isherwood

1 CONTENTS

2	INTRODUCTION.....	2
3	BACKGROUND.....	2
4	RESULT OF SURVEY	3
5	Method Statement for Recovery of the Cargo	3
6	Environmental Assessments	4
7	Historical Value of the Oldfield Grange Site	4
7.1	Appendix 1 – General Arrangement	5
7.2	Appendix 2 – Area of interest No “2A” Hold.....	6
7.3	Appendix 3 – General Area of wreck location	7
7.4	Appendix 4 – Multi-Beam of Oldfield Grange Wreck Site (more images available if required) 8	
7.5	Appendix 5 – Avadavat of CP Lane concerning the stowage of the cargo 120m ²	9

2 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this project is to recover approximately 850 tons of mass produced non-ferrous metal ingots resting on the tank tops in lower No2A hold of the British steamer Oldfield Grange which is resting on the seabed [Redacted] off the Western Isles of Scotland. (Please see general location chart in the appendix).

3 BACKGROUND

The Oldfield Grange left New York in the United States of America bound for Cardiff South Wales under command of Master William Dalziel with a general cargo including copper, lead, bagged grain and rolled oats owned by various government departments. For example, the non-ferrous metals were owned by the Ministry of Munitions the grain and rolled oats the Wheat Commission. The vessel was lagging behind the convoy on the 12th December 1917 in a given position of [Redacted] Oldfield Grange was hit by a single torpedo launched by the Imperial German Navy submarine U62 (Commander Ernst Hashagen). The crew abandoned the vessel and were picked up a British Navy trawler Vale of Lennox the next day. All the crew survived the sinking of the Oldfield Grange.

After the end of World War II, a British company called Risdon Beazley Ltd entered the business of cargo recovery, mainly targeting cargos of non-ferrous metals, and on the 5th of March 1952 entered into an agreement with the Treasury Solicitors Office to recover the metals onboard the Oldfield Grange. From the mid-1950s until 1976 they mounted 3 major attempts to locate and salvage the cargo of the Oldfield Grange at great cost, but they failed to do so. The company that it developed into, Risdon Beazley Marine Ltd, was closed down in 1980 and assets sold off and the company became dormant.

Since 1980 various companies have searched for the Oldfield Grange over the passed 39 years, indeed I myself have kept searching but the wreck site has never been identified.

The case of the Oldfield Grange has been of interest to myself for the past 15 years, indeed I purchased the hull and machinery of the Oldfield Grange on the 16th June 2017 (Copy of agreement in appendix) and much further research was conducted in archives both in America and the U.K. I personally know several former employees of Risdon Beazley who were involved in the later searches for the Oldfield Grange and they were adamant that the wreck was not where it was supposed to have been sunk. After a very diligent assessment of the extensive files and research that was built up over the last 15 years the Oldfield Grange was [Redacted] [Redacted]s from where she should have been in May 2019.

4 RESULT OF SURVEY

The wreck of the Oldfield Grange lies on the seabed with her bow heading E.N.E. The vessel has been totally collapsed and only the 3 boilers are still standing. The triple expansion engine lies on its side the tail shaft tunnel is totally exposed. The strongest parts of the ship the bow and stern have even been broken down, even the rudder can be seen lying near its original position. The highest part of the wreck is the boilers which have a height of 25ft (7.6M). There is a scour running down the side of the wreck which is approximately 1.5m deep. The cargo of interest was totally exposed lying on the tank tops in what was the former 2A lower hold as reported by the second officer of the Oldfield Grange Charles P Lane.

The appendix contains multi beam images of the Oldfield Grange showing the devastation caused by the Atlantic swell during storms. Other wrecks to the West in a similar depth have also been torn apart in this fashioned. The appendix also contains the statement of 2nd Officer C. P Lane concerning the stowage of the cargo.

Please note the wreck in this position was previously thought to be Redacted
, but research carried out by ourselves indicates this vessel was sunk further North in the Minch.

5 METHOD STATEMENT FOR RECOVERY OF THE CARGO

The cargo will be recovered by the M.V Constructor (I.M.O 7347342) a U.K registered Scottish vessel with a Scottish crew using a mechanical grab, a technique developed with regards to cargo recovery in the 1920s. The process will be as follows.

The recovery vessel will be held in position above the working area of 120m square by a 3-point mooring which consist of 3 anchors, three shots of chain and dynema rope which is stowed on a winch. This will allow for accurate positioning of the grab, which is fitted with cameras and lights. Since the cargo is fully exposed there will be no need to remove steel structure of the wreck itself. The grab and its contents are then brought to the surface the grab discharge and the process repeated.

Once the vessel is down to her marks the ship will then proceed to Glasgow to discharge the cargo at the metal recycling plant which will save on road transport.

When the constructor is on site lights and shapes will be displayed as set out in the Collision Regulations. There will also be a N.E.M.A put out by the Maritime Coast Guard Agency.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

The work on recovering the cargo on the Oldfield Grange will not impact on fish farms, inshore fishing vessels and it will not affect local shipping. The use of a Scottish recovery vessel, crew, recycling plant and port fits with the Marine Scotland Plan.

The Oldfield Grange was a steam ship powered by coal. Any oil lubricants onboard for example the engine would have been dispersed decades ago by the breakup of the wreck in its high energy environment. We have obtained a full manifest for the vessel from the United States which confirms no pollutants were loaded on the vessel.

The company has a policy of reporting the sighting of marine mammals to the relevant organizations.

7 HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE OLDFIELD GRANGE SITE

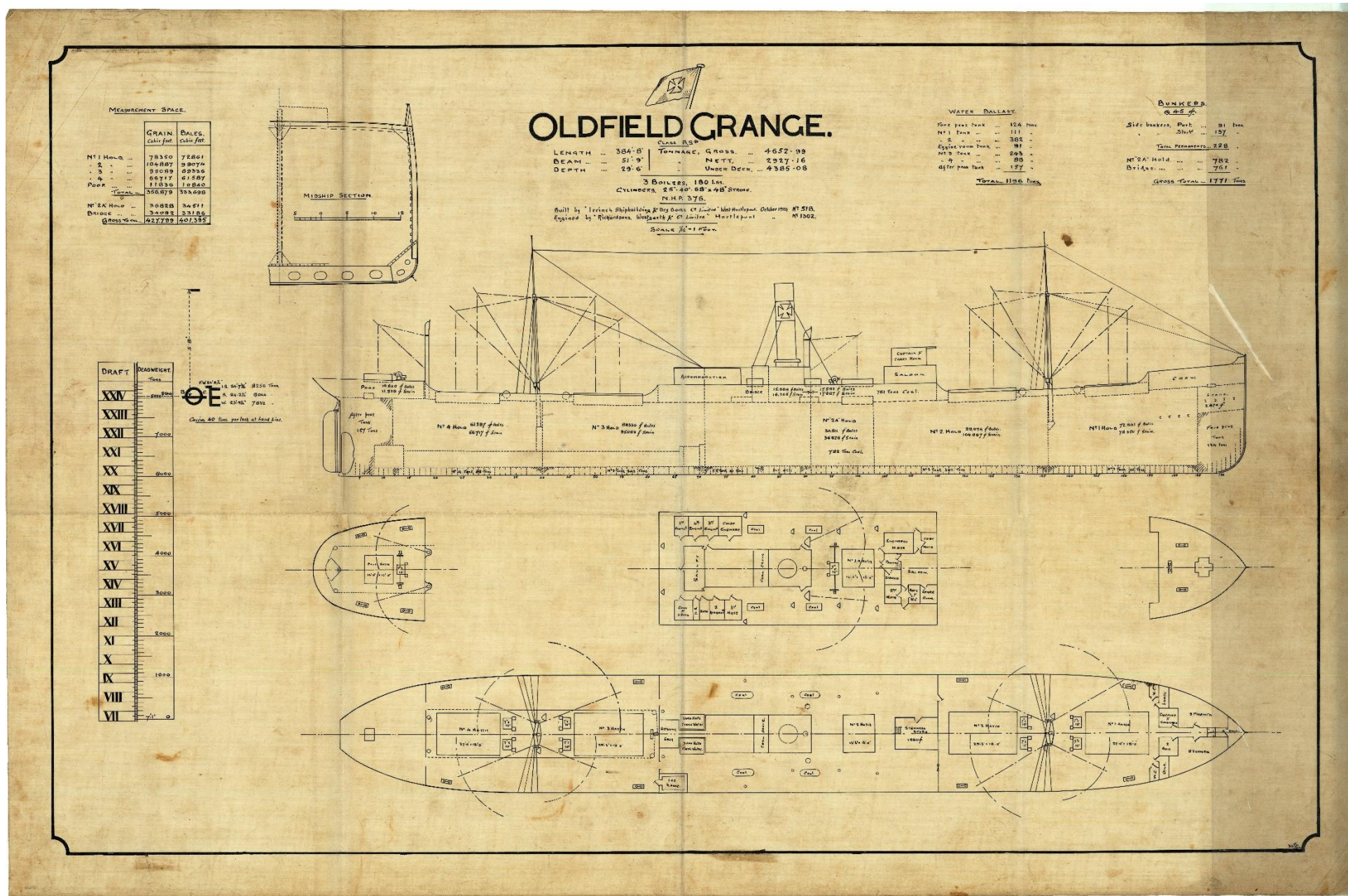
The Oldfield Grange was built in 1913 by the Irvine Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Company Ltd Hartlepool and the engines by Richardson, Westgarth & Co Ltd Hartlepool Yard Number 518

The wreck site of the Oldfield Grange is classed as low historic value not only due to condition of the remains but also this period being well recorded in the archives such as the Mitchell Collection (Glasgow University), Teesside Archives, Liverpool Maritime Museum Greenwich Maritime Museum and various other smaller archives.

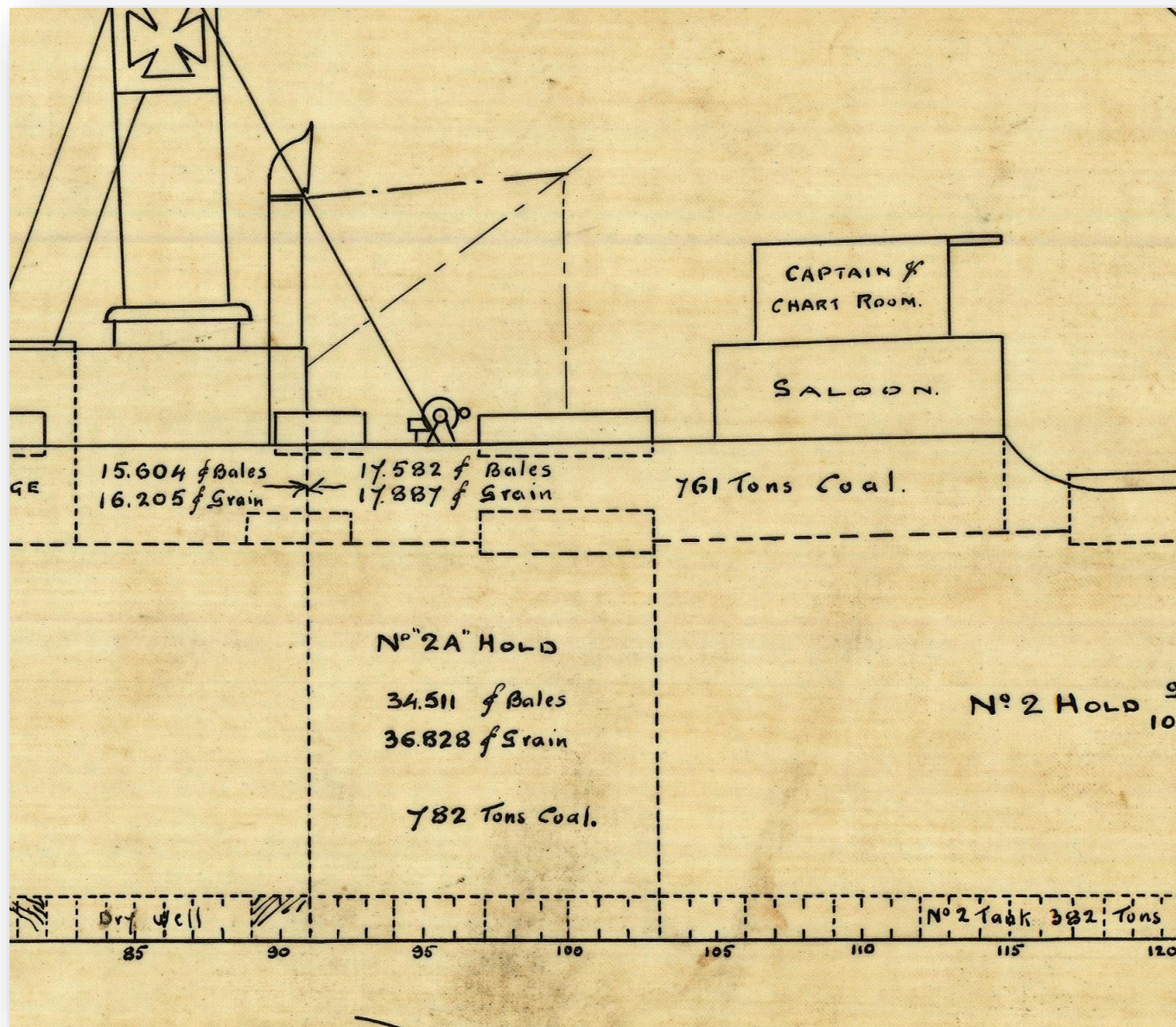
The file and information gathered on the Oldfield Grange over the last 15 plus years includes the following: G.A. Plans, British Corporation survey books for Hull and equipment as well as Machinery. These 2 books tell us how the ship was built size of steel used while the machinery book describes the engine and Boiler pumping systems, so we know pretty much everything and how this ship was built. I doubt these books will be in any archive now but once the operation is finished copies will be made and donated to the Michell Collection.

Samples of the recovered mass-produced cargo will be offered to any Scottish Museums interested in samples as well as the Natural History Museum who I know like to add samples to their collections.

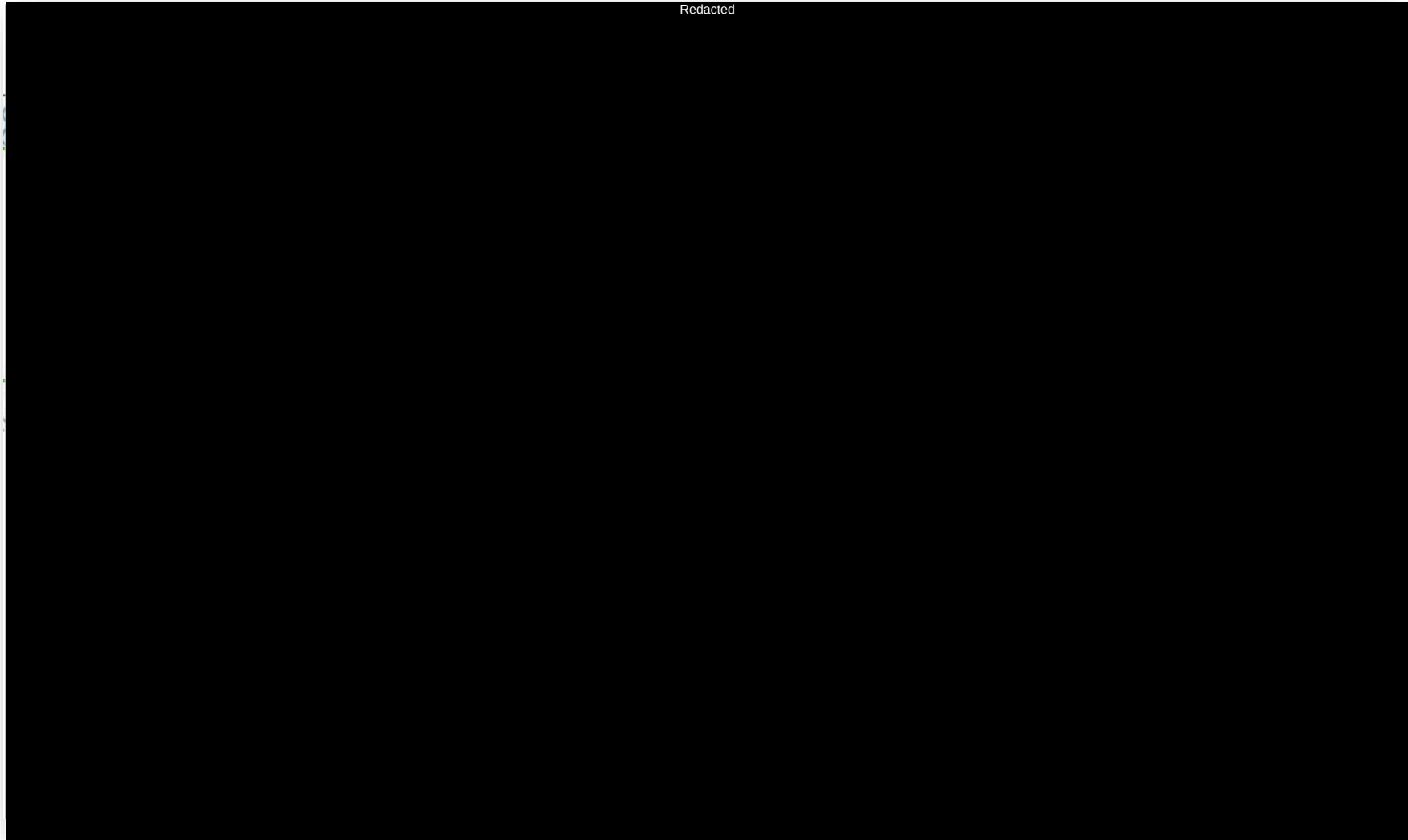
7.1 APPENDIX 1 – GENERAL ARRANGEMENT



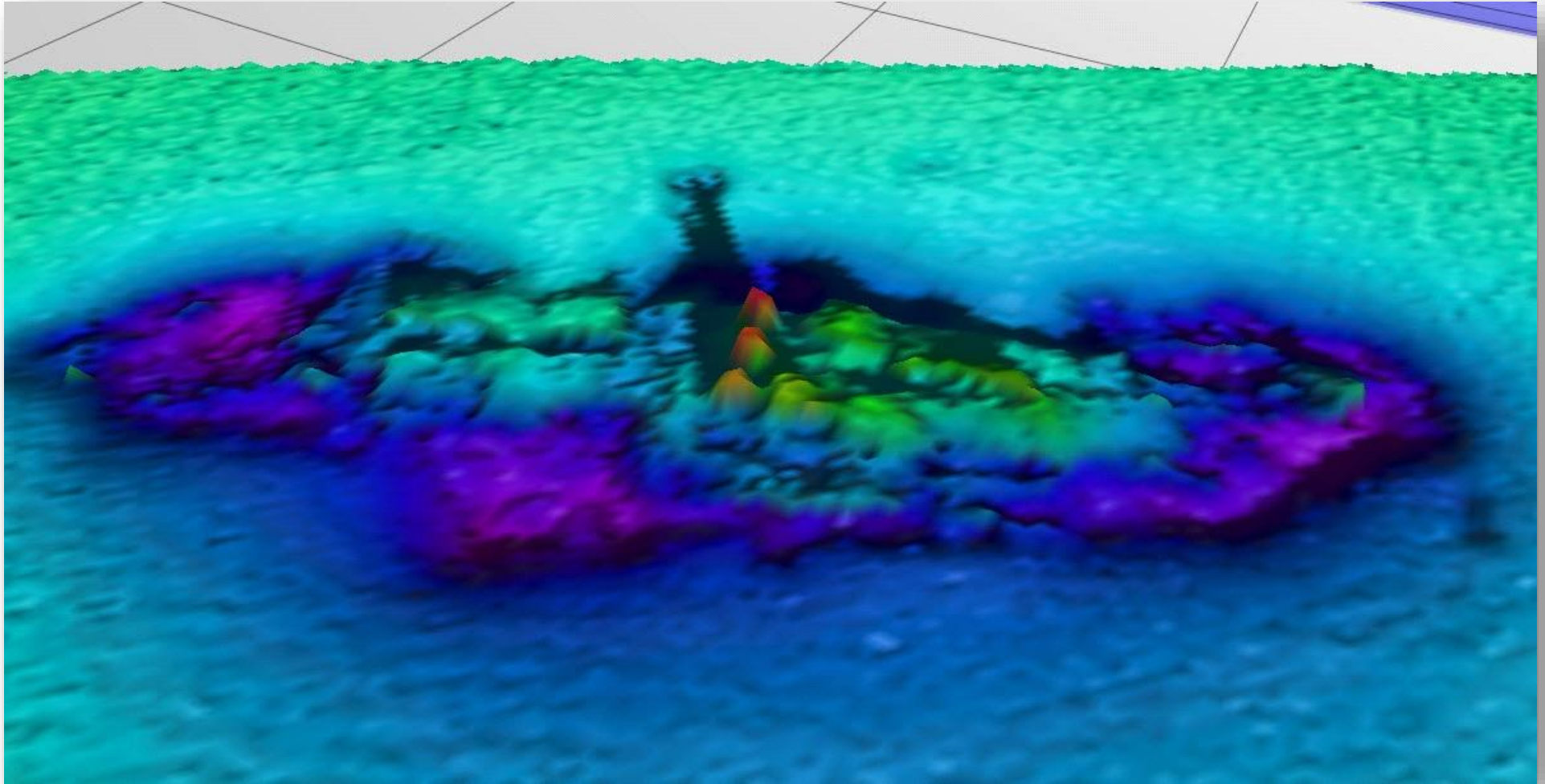
7.2 APPENDIX 2 — AREA OF INTEREST No "2A" HOLD



7.3 APPENDIX 3 – GENERAL AREA OF WRECK LOCATION



7.4 APPENDIX 4 – MULTI-BEAM OF OLDFIELD GRANGE WRECK SITE (MORE IMAGES AVAILABLE IF REQUIRED)



C.P. Lane.

STOWAGE.

As regards stowage of metal cargo, I am pretty sure this was distributed in No 1, 2, 3, and 4 holds, and was first cargo loaded and if I remember rightly was heavy steel ingots. I am not sure, if any of this steel was loaded in hold No 2 A (or cross Bunker? but I believe the consignments of copper and Spelter (probably means Lead) was loaded into this space and then topped up with tobacco, also a quantity of engineering tools I believe was loaded into No 1 Hold.

*1100lb. anchored
paul tobacco in*