

SLUDGE DISPOSAL TO SEA

Liverpool Bay bed ripple survey 1984

Report No SR 92 April 1986

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#### ABSTRACT

For economical and practical reasons a significant amount of the UK's sewage sludge is disposed to British coastal waters. The consequences of this form of disposal on the marine environment and coastline are of great importance and have been the subject of intensive investigation.

Hydraulics Research has been involved for many years in studying the behaviour of sewage sludges discharged into the marine environment. Recent laboratory research concerned with the deposition and erosion of sludge on a rippled sand bed revealed a lack of suitable field data on near-bed velocities and associated movement of a sand bed. Hydraulics Research mounted a survey in Liverpool Bay, an area where sewage sludge is dumped, in order to measure these variables. Some instrument failure during the survey resulted in data loss but sufficient data was collected to provide a useful field record. This report presents the data obtained on the survey and comments on the results.



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#### 1 INTRODUCTION

Hydraulics Research (HR) has been commissioned by the Department of the Environment (DoE) to carry out a program of research into various aspects of sewage sludge disposal to sea.

Previous laboratory research conducted by HR investigated the depositional and erosional characteristics of sludge on a rippled sand bed and is reported in Reference 1. The sludge used in these experiments was obtained from Davyhulme Treatment Works, Manchester, which disposes of its sludge via sludge vessels discharging into Liverpool Bay. The tests were carried out using near-bed velocities which were typical of field values in general but were not based on actual data from a known sludge-dumping ground as the latter was unavailable. To fill this data gap (and to ensure the relevance of the laboratory tests) the report recommended that:

- (i) field velocity data should be obtained from a known sand bed area of Liverpool Bay, paying particular attention to the near-bed velocity profile.
- (ii) an attempt should be made at the same time to observe sand ripple movement, preferably during a spring tide.

HR consequently conducted a field survey to satisfy these recommendations. The survey was carried out on the spring tides of 16 and 17 February 1984 at a position where sand had been identified in other surveys (Ref 2) and where ripples were expected to exist. The location of this position, known as T10, is shown in Figure 1. This report outlines the measurement techniques adopted on the survey, presents the obtained data and comments on the results.

# 2 VELOCITY AND SUSPENDED SOLIDS MEASUREMENTS

## 2.1 Through-the-depth velocities

Velocity measurements were made using a Braystoke BFM 008 Mark III directional current meter, weighted and suspended from the survey vessel. Water depth measurements were made using a transducer fixed onto the sinker weight attached to the current meter. The records of total water depth, water speed and direction of flow observed on 16.2.84 are presented in Table 1 and those observed on 17.2.84 are presented in Table 2. It should be noted that measurements of near-surface flow directions may have been affected by the steel hull of the survey vessel and this data should be treated with a degree of caution.

The velocity data has been analysed to obtain computed best-fit velocity curves for each profile. This has been calculated assuming a curve of the form:

 $u = a + b \log_{10} h$ 

where

u = velocity (m/s)

h = depth (m)

b = slope of line

a = constant

The actual velocity data points, together with computed best-fit curves are presented in Figures 2 and 3 for measurements taken on 16.2.84 and 17.2.84 respectively. Numerical values for the coefficients (a and b) of the computed best-fit velocity curves, along with the correlation index (r) and calculated shear velocity (u\*) are presented in Table 3. Shear velocities have been determined using the equation

$$u^* = \frac{b}{5.75}$$

These values of shear velocity fall between the limits of 0.01m/s and 0.08m/s with maximum u occurring in the first half of the flood tide on 17.2.84 (Profile 18/2010-2018 GMT).

Predicted tidal information for the Port of Liverpool during the survey period, extracted from Admiralty Tide Tables for 1984, is given below:

Date	Time (GMT)	Tidal height (m)
16.2.84	0501 1040	1.3 9.3
	1736 2306	0.8 9.5
17.2.84	0550	0.8
17.2.04	1127	9.8
	1825 2353	0.3 9.8

# 2.2 Near-bed velocities

A different technique was used to measure near-bed velocities. A small Braystoke current meter was mounted to a bed frame which was lowered from the survey vessel, aligning itself with the flow on its way down to rest on the sea-bed. The current meter, a non-directional instrument, was driven by signals from the survey vessel to measure velocities at 0.1, 0.3 and 0.6m above the bed. The velocity data is presented in Tables 4 and 5. Velocity variation with time at each of the three heights for the two days of observations is shown in Figure 4. Grit in the impellor on 17 February may have distorted the flood tide measurements that day.

### 2.3 Suspended sediment

Suspended sediment measurements utilised a small water sampling intake nozzle attached alongside the current meter to the bed frame, the intake position being determined by signals from the survey vessel. Pumps on board the survey vessel drew water from the intake and up to the vessel via a plastic tube. Once on board the survey vessel a measured volume of water was extracted and passed through a filtering mechanism, the filters were then returned to the HR Sedimentology Laboratory for analysis. The quantity of sediment retained on the filter was determined using standard dry weight procedures (Ref 3) and the results are presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Particle size analyses were also carried out on the suspended sediment. Initially the retained filter material was divided into two size fractions, that > 40 microns and that < 40 microns. If the weight of the fraction > 40 microns was > 0.03g further analysis was performed on the sample to determine the proportions of the different sand fractions. The results of this analysis, where applicable, is also given in Tables 4 and 5.

### 3 SAND RIPPLES

### 3.1 Bed composition

To establish the grading and uniformity of the bed sediments, grab samples of the sea bed surface were taken from the survey vessel using a Van Essen clam-shell type grab sampler. A total of six samples was taken, three each day. The position from which each sample was taken varied as, depending on tidal conditions, the survey vessel swung slightly while anchored.

Particle size analyses of the grab samples were carried out in the HR Sedimentology Laboratory using a standard size grading technique (Ref 3). Size grading curves for each of the samples were found to be virtually identical and are represented by the curve for sample D in Figure 5. The median grain size (D  $_{50}$ ) of each of the six samples is given below:

Date	Time (GMT)	Sample No	D <sub>50</sub> (mm)
16.2.84	1000	A	0.37
	1715	B	0.33
	?	C	0.32
17.2.84	1406	D	0.33
	1730	E	0.33
	1900	F	0.31

All the D $_{50}$  values fall within the band 0.3 to 0.4mm diameter (medium sand). This indicates that the composition of the sea bed in the vicinity of position T10 remained consistent for the duration of the survey.

### 3.2 Sand ripple movement

Profiles of the sea bed surface at position T10 were obtained using an instrument recently developed by HR. This instrument, a precision echo sounder, was mounted on a similar but separate bed frame than that used for near-bed velocity and suspended sediment measurements. The echo sounder worked at 2 Mhz, the nominal working range was between 500mm and 1000mm with a resolution of ±1mm and beam width of approximately 25mm.

The echo sounder transducer, controlled by a drive system from the survey vessel, was moved along a trackway supported by the bed frame 800mm above the sea bed. The length of traverse was 1300mm and as the transducer moved along the trackway, the distance between it and the sea bed were reproduced graphically onto a two channel chart recorder. One channel recorded the transducer output information while the other recorded its length of traverse. During the survey period 49 separate profiles of the sea bed were obtained using this instrument, 39 recorded over two ebb tides and 10 over a single flood tide. Technical problems with the instrument forced the abandonment of work. The profiles are represented by Figures 6 and

7, each figure representing a series of profiles obtained under different tidal conditions. Figure 6 shows profiles obtained during the early ebb tide of 16 February and Figure 7 shows those obtained during the mid flood of 17 February. The lines in each figure represent the surface of the sea bed parallel to the direction of flow (ie longitudinal profiles).

Inspecting these profiles it can be seen that the trace lengths vary slightly. These variances were due to different traverse speeds caused by water leakage into a cable. Each trace, however, is still representative of 1300mm of the bed. It proved impossible to maintain the same instrument position throughout the duration of the survey but the profiles in each figure are from the same location.

The profiles presented in Figure 6 clearly show little ripple movement in the first half hour of the ebb tide but slight advancement ( $\sim 0.03 \text{mm/s}$ ) in the second half hour when u was estimated as being 0.04 m/s. Conversely the profiles presented in Figure 7 show rapid ripple movement ( $\sim 0.50 \text{mm/s}$ ) coinciding with a u of 0.07 m/s.

The following table summaries the approximate rate of ripple advancement calculated from the profiles, along with their coincident value of  $u^*$ . Ripples advancing at a rate < 0.03 mm/s were not monitored.

u* (m/s)	ripple advancement (mm/s)
0.04	0.03 - 0.05
0.05	0.08
0.06	0.20
0.07	0.50
0.08	> 0.50

# 4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

 Shear velocities (u<sup>x</sup>), calculated from through-the-depth velocity profiles, ranged from

- 0.01m/s to 0.08m/s. Maximum u was measured early in the flood tide at HW  $3\frac{3}{4}$  hours on 17.2.84
- 2. Maximum recorded velocity at the bed (+ 0.1m) was 0.45m/s, measured early in the same flood tide between HW 4 hours and HW  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours.
- 3. Mean suspended solids concentration near the bed was 0.01g/1. The concentration of sediments <  $40\,\mu m$  remained fairly constant throughout the tidal cycle but the concentration of sediments >  $40\,\mu m$  increased noticeably when  $u^*$  values reached > 0.06m/s and reached a peak of  $0.13\,g/1$  between  $HW 3\frac{1}{2}$  and HW 3 hours on 17.2.84 when  $u^*$  was 0.07 0.08m/s.
- 4. Median grain size of the bed material at T10 was 0.33mm.
- 5. Sand ripples on the sea bed at position T10 were identified and their movement recorded. Ripple advancement of between 0.03 and 0.05mm/s was measured when u was 0.04m/s, suggesting a threshold of movement when u is < 0.04m/s. Ripple advancement of > 0.50mm/s was measured when u was ~ 0.08m/s.
- 6. In the previous HR laboratory investigation, which used sand with a  $D_{50}$  of 0.19mm, the threshold of ripple movement (ie, 0.01mm/s) occurred when u was  $\sim 0.036$ m/s. This compares well with the recorded field values and indicates that the laboratory tests were representative of bed conditions in Liverpool Bay.
- 7. Despite some instrument failure during the survey resulting in incomplete records, the data collected provides a useful account of activities at the bed in Liverpool Bay; the objectives of the exercise have been achieved.

### 5 REFERENCES

- 1. BURT, T N and TURNER K A. Deposition of sewage sludge on a rippled sand bed. Hydraulics Research Report No IT 248, June 1983.
- 2. "Out of sight out of mind". Report of a Working Party on sludge disposal in Liverpool Bay, Vol 4, HMSO, 1976.
- 3. KIFF, P R. Sedimentation Methods Manual. Hydraulics Research, August 1978.

TABLES

Direction (° True)	288 297 290 293 281	287 291 294 281 297 298	282 283 283 303 297 293	263 278 298 277 293 273
Velocity (m/s)	0.51 0.48 0.75 0.72 0.74	0.45 0.60 0.61 0.65 0.33	0.52 0.52 0.23 0.29	0.40 0.31 0.10 0.14 0.15 0.15
Instrument height above bed (m)	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0	1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0 0.5	7.6 7.6 0.5 1.0	6.8 0.5 1.0 4.0 6.8
Total depth (m)	9.6	0.8	7.8	7.3
Time (GMT)	1435 1437 1440 1443 1445	1507 1511 1512 1514 1542 1544	1549 1552 1609 1612 1614	1618 1622 1651 1653 1655 1657 1702
Profile No	ın vo	2	ω	6
Direction (° True)	264 274 267 267 273 277 262	267 264 278 278 273 271	284 284 283 287 281 273	293 297 288 294 277 277
Velocity (m/s)	0.20 0.22 0.27 0.28 0.38 0.46	0.38 0.40 0.43 0.60 0.66 0.65	0.52 0.46 0.66 0.66 0.75	0.60 0.38 0.70 0.75 0.79
Instrument height above bed (m)	0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 4.0 8.0	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0 13.1	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 6.0 11.9	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0 10.3
Total depth (m)	14.8	14.1	12.9	11.3
Time (GMT)	1122 1125 1127 1130 1138 1140	1159 1201 1203 1205 1209 1211	1239 1242 1244 1247 1250 1254	1336 1338 1341 1344 1350
Profile No	г <b>.</b>	7	m	4



Direction (° True)	298 294 293 287 282	128 128 121 144 173	123 124 128 171 171 -	114 147 177 116 117 113 138	117 107 114 117 134	117 114 113 117 113
Velocity (m/s)	0.28 0.31 0.32 0.46 0.56	0.51 0.53 0.63 0.78 0.93	0.65 0.90 0.97 1.11 0.60 0.65 0.86	0.97 1.06 1.13 0.64 0.77 0.88 0.88	0.49 0.59 0.55 0.58 0.59	0.38 0.43 0.38 0.45 0.49
Instrument height above bed (m)	0.5 2.0 6.6	0.5 2.0 8 4.0	0.9 8 4.0 0.0 2.0 2.0 0.5	4.0 1.3 1.0 2.0 6.5 6.0 6.0	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0
Total depth (m)	7.1	8.7	10.6	13.0	14.1	15.3
Time (GMT)	1715 1716 1718 1720 1723	1925 1929 1932 1934 1937	2010 2013 2015 2018 2018 2036 2039 2042	2045 2047 2049 2111 2113 2116 2118	2138 2142 2144 2144 2152 2152	2210 2213 2215 2218 2228 2225
Profile No	16	11	18	20	21	22
Direction (° True)	293 287 288 288 281 277	288 288 284 291 278	313 297 294 288 277 278	298 303 298 287 297 294	288 278 303 293 287 278	
Velocity (m/s)	0.53 0.59 0.67 0.77 0.85	0.48 0.69 0.79 0.90 0.97	0.41 0.62 0.66 0.75 0.91	0.53 0.64 0.69 0.77 0.84 0.47	0.63 0.70 0.70 0.41 0.38 0.48 0.53	
Instrument height above bed (m)	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0	0.5 1.0 2.0 4.0 8.0 9.5	0.5 2.0 4.0 8.0 9.1	0.5 1.0 2.0 8 8.0 0.5 1.0	7.3 0.5 1.0 7.2	
Total depth (m)	11.4	10.5	9.6	8.7	7.7	
Time Tota (GMT) dept (m)	1413 11.4 1417 1422 1424 1426 1429	1444 10.5 1448 1449 1451 1453 1456	1512 9.6 1514 1517 1520 1522 1523		1627 1628 1647 7.7 1648 1651 1655 1655	



TABLE 3 Values of computed best-fit velocity curves

Date	Profile	Profile time	Constant	Slope	Correlation	* u
	No	(GMT)	(a)	(b)	(r)	(m/s)
16.2.84	1	1122 - 1140	0.24	0.23	0.98	0.04
	2	1159 - 1211	0.42	0.23	0.95	0.04
	3	1239 - 1254	0.55	0.23	0.91	0.04
	4	1336 - 1350	0.56	0.23	0.74	0.04
	5	1435 - 1445	0.57	0.23	0.83	0.04
	6	1504 - 1514	0.48	0.21	0.95	0.04
	7	1542 - 1552	0.42	0.12	0.69	0.02
	8	1609 - 1622	0.28	0.09	0.72	0.02
	9	1651 - 1702	0.12	0.03	0.61	0.01
17.2.84	10	1413 - 1429	0.60	0.28	0.99	0.05
	11	1444 - 1456	0.61	0.25	0.96	0.04
	12	1512 - 1523	0.56	0.35	.0.97	0.06
	13	1541 - 1553	0.62	0.25	0.99	0.06
	14	1616 - 1628	0.52	0.21	0.99	0.04
	15	1647 - 1657	0.43	0.18	0.94	0.03
	16	1715 - 1723	0.32	0.25	0.93	0.05
	17	1925 - 1937	0.57	0.37	0.97	0.06
	18	2010 - 2018	0.70	0.46	0.98	0.08
	19	2036 - 2049	0.70	0.42	0.99	0.07
	20	2109 - 2123	0.72	0.21	0.98	0.04
	21	2138 - 2154	0.54	0.11	0.81	0.02
	22	2210 - 2227	0.40	0.09	0.88	0.02

Based on equations ;  $u = a + b \log_{10} h$ 

 $u^* = b/5.75$ 



TABLE 4 Near-bed measurements at Position T10 on 16.2.84 (ebb tide only)

			0.008	900.0	0.006	0.004	0.002	0.003
			0.032	0.032	0.021	0.014	0.005	0.003
			900.0	0.008	0.014	0.007	0.003	0.002 0.001 0.004
			0.018	0.018	0.033	0.040	0.018	0.025 0.011 0.018
			0.003	0.12	0.017	0.030	0.019	0.046 0.022 0.037
0.017	0.041 0.027 0.046	0.067 0.006 0.027	0.014 0.046	0.11 0.05 0.10	0.09 0.10 0.09	0.12	0.14 0.05 0.10	0.047 0.083 0.113
0.004 0.003 0.009	0.013 0.003 0.014	0.030 0.001 0.011	0.067 0.020 0.028	0.184 0.004 0.026	0.091 0.019 0.052	0.095	0.047 0.020 0.041	0.079 0.036 0.065
8 5 00 6 50	8 01 4 30 5 52	8 11 4 50 5 51	8 47 5 20 6 10	9 26 4 17 6 14	6 35 4 48 3 56	7 29 4 31 -	7 42 2 59 6 21	6 41 5 02 6 00
20.04 20.07 20.05	20.01 20.06 20.04	20.03 20.07 20.06	20.01 20.06 20.05	20.03 20.06 20.05	14.57 20.06 20.10	20.04	20.54 13.08 20.04	20.03 20.05 20.03
0.08 0.10 0.12	0.20 0.25 0.29	0.28 0.36 0.40	0.41 0.49 0.53	0.38 0.46 0.53	0.06	0.22 0.28 0.32	0.20 0.24 0.27	0.14 0.16 0.18
0.1 0.3	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1	0.3	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1 0.3	0.1	0.1 0.3 0.6
1100	1148	1227	1322	1356	1449	1531	1556	1648
H	8	<b>m</b>	4	Ŋ	9	7	œ	6
	1100 0.1 0.08 20.04 8 00 0.004 0.3 0.10 20.07 5 00 0.003 0.6 0.12 20.05 6 50 0.009	1100 0.1 0.08 20.04 8 00 0.004 0.3 0.10 20.07 5 00 0.003 0.6 0.12 20.05 6 50 0.009 1148 0.1 0.20 20.01 8 01 0.013 0.5 20.06 4 30 0.003 0.6 0.29 20.04 5 52 0.014	1100 0.1 0.08 20.04 8 00 0.004 0.3 0.10 20.07 5 00 0.003 0.6 0.12 20.05 6 50 0.009 1148 0.1 0.20 20.01 8 01 0.013 0.6 0.29 20.04 5 52 0.014 1227 0.1 0.28 20.03 8 11 0.030 0.6 0.40 20.06 5 51 0.011	$\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$ \begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	1100   0.1   0.008   20.014   8 00   0.0004   0.017   0.017   0.10   0.10   20.07   0.003   0.007	1100   0.1   0.08   20.04   8 00   0.0004   0.017   0.017   0.05   0.007   0



ned on	300 µm	0.020	0.038 0.007 0.002	0.024 0.004 0.001	0.042 0.006 0.005	0.008	0.002	0.003	0.005	0.017	0.565 0.056 0.019	0.347 0.046 0.025	0.074 0.018 0.012	0.003
- 3	(3) 180 µm	0.089 0.011 0.010	0.090 0.016 0.012	0.064 0.020 0.008	0.082 0.024 0.012	0.021 0.007 0.003	0.009 0.003 0.002	0.003	0.070	0.038 0.014 0.020	1.588 0.244 0.126	0.878 0.238 0.162	0.264 0.101 0.067	0.005
	sieves 106 µm	0.024 0.008 0.014	0.023 0.019 0.012	0.016 0.018 0.013	0.023 0.023 0.024	0.015	0.005	0.003	0.042	0.024 0.014 0.025	0.145 0.087 0.076	0.138 0.113 0.119	0.084 0.081 0.082	0.002 0.010 0.025
of	63 µm	0.053 0.018 0.032	0.040	0.034 0.048 0.052	0.060 0.077 0.081	0.058 0.071 0.085	0.045 0.051 0.056	0.035	0.031	0.085 0.047 0.091	0.238 0.169 0.188	0.173 0.173 0.226	0.120 0.150 0.154	0.017 0.015 0.002
Weight	< 63 µm	0.018	0.006 0.010 0.017	0.006 0.017 0.029	0.022	0.019 0.039 0.050	0.018 0.037 0.042	0.039	0.021	0.043 0.031 0.061	0.113 0.066 0.094	0.046 0.048 0.075	0.014	0.003 0.005 0.071
ਰ	m (8)	0.063 0.045 0.052	0.038 0.067 0.164	0.066 0.037	0.067 0.060 0.070	0.085 0.147 0.165	0.159 0.167 0.241	0.239 0.295 0.078	0.123 0.170	0.155 0.107 0.220	0.094 0.179 0.146	0.068 0.106 0.111	0.160 0.130 0.101	0.120
Weight of	on illers > 40 pm	0.204 0.046 0.069	0.197 0.096 0.197	0.144 0.086 0.103	0.229 0.160 0.164	0.121 0.136 0.155	0.077 0.098 0.106	0.083 0.123 0.022	0.169	0.594 0.110 0.199	2.649 0.622 0.503	1.582 0.618 0.607	0.556 0.390 0.348	0.030 0.036 0.108
Sample	duration (min:secs)	6 03 4 14 4 56	6 52 5 20 6 04	4 24 6 03 5 04	4 28 5 07 6 11	4 31 6 39 5 21	4 47 6 42 6 08	5 15 6 56 1 25	4 33 5 09 -	5 09 2 34 5 49	5 17 6 39 7 53	5 07 5 45 7 47	4 57 5 49 7 00	0 50 1 25 7 07
Sample		20.03 20.06 20.05	20.05 20.06 20.03	20.08 20.06 20.06	20.06 20.06 20.00	20.05 20.03 20.05	20.04 20.04 20.03	20.04 18.52 5.00	17.38 14.14	20.16 6.87 14.81	20.05 20.03 20.04	20.55 20.04 20.05	20.06 19.97 20.05	2.85 2.98 20.05
Velocity	(s/#)	0.13 0.52 0.58	0.05 0.46 0.52	0.18 0.53 0.58	0.31 0.39 0.44	0.40 0.45 0.48	0.28 0.33 0.37	0.17 0.21 0.26	0.27 0.34 0.38	0.45 0.50 0.52	0.04 0.60 0.21	0.05	0.08 0.53 0.56	0.18 0.36 0.37
Instrument		0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.3	0.1 0.3 0.6	0.1 0.3 0.6
Time	( deat )	1412	1440	1512	1541	1614	1643	1714	1922	1957	20 23	2056	2122	2152
rofile	2	10	n	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	70	21	22



FIGURES



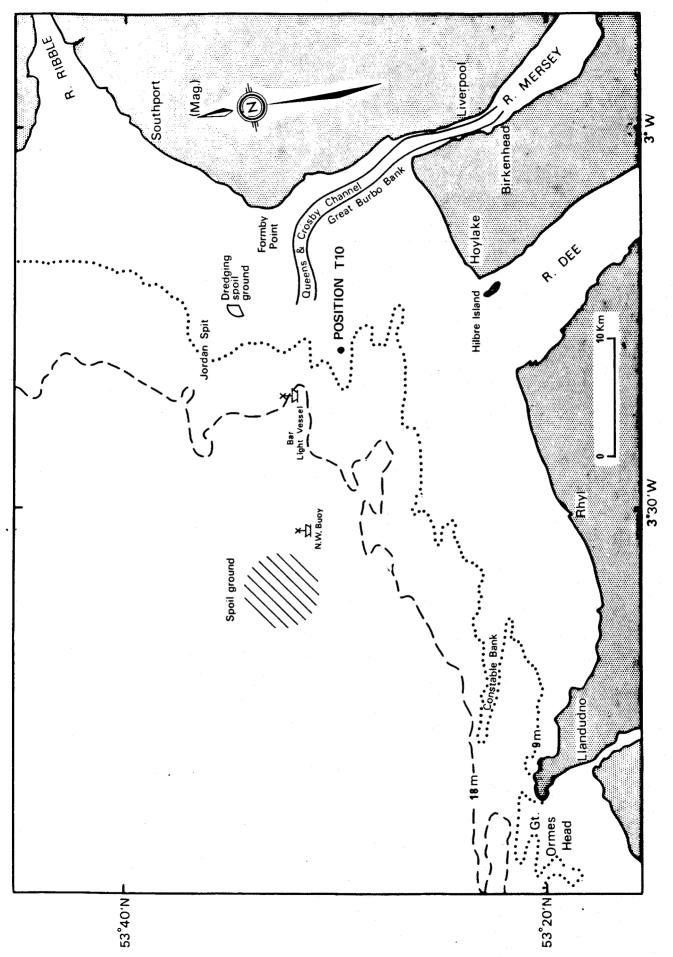


Fig 1 Location map of survey position



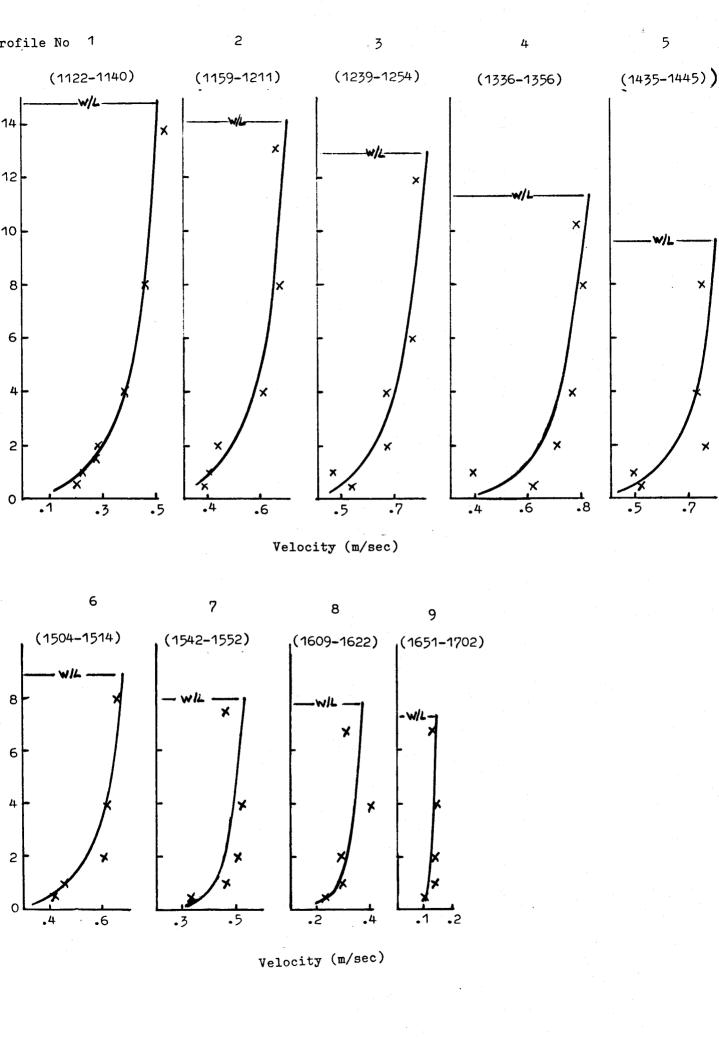


Fig 2 Through-the-depth velocity profiles at Position T10 on 16.2.1984



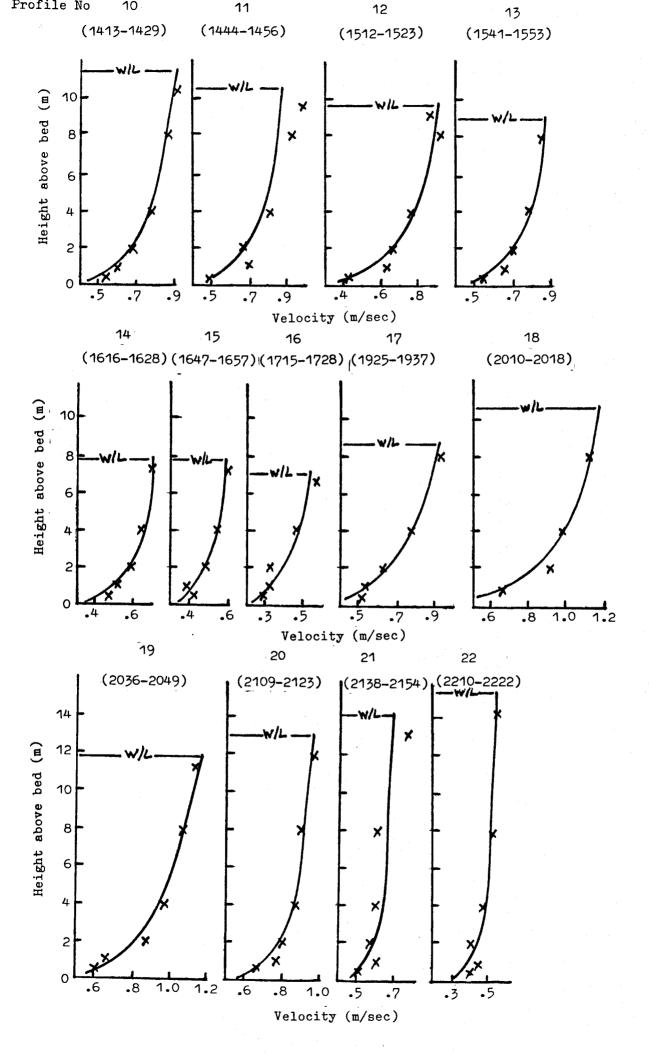


Fig 3 Through-the-depth velocity profiles at Position T10 on 17.2.1984



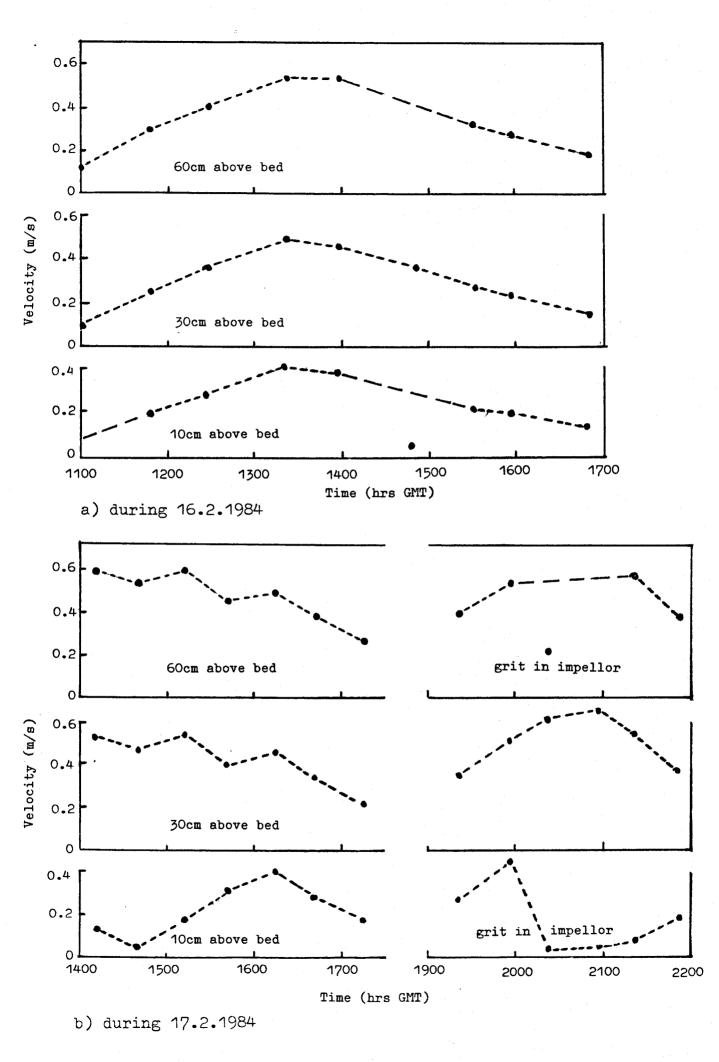


Fig 4 Near-bed velocity variation with time



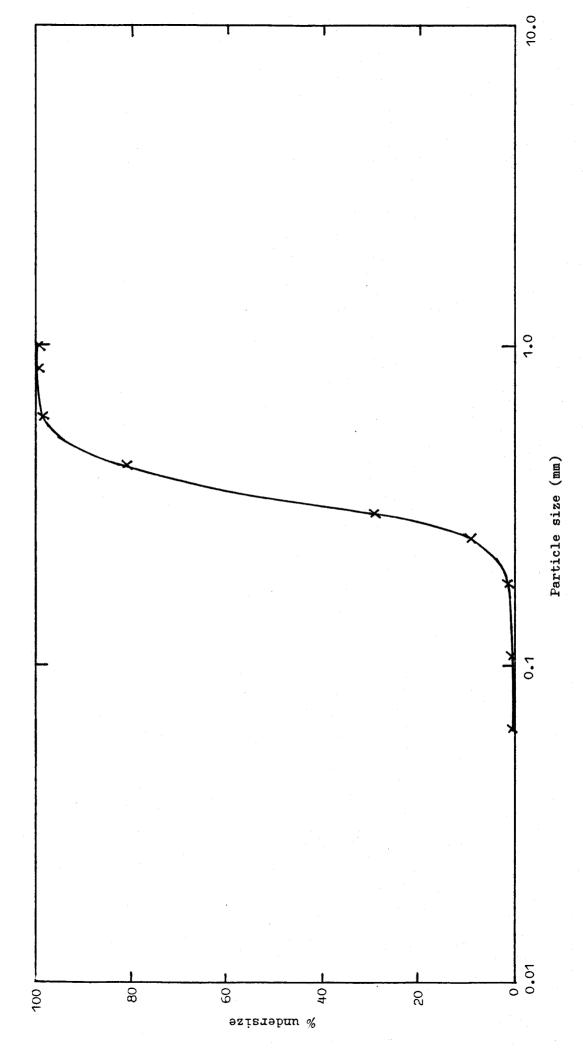
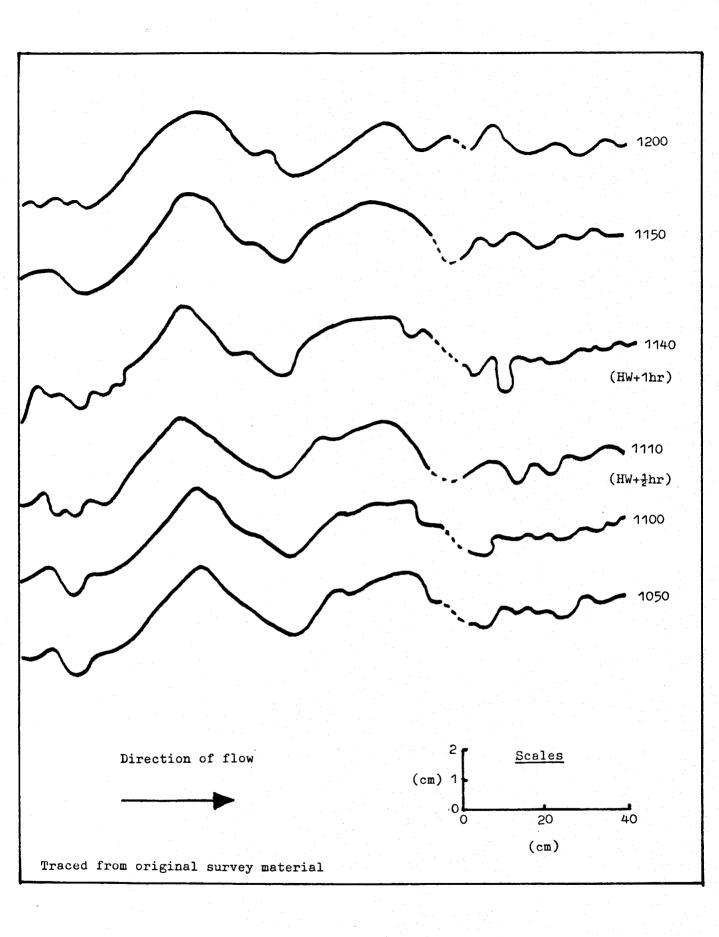


Fig 5 Particle size distribution of grab sample D







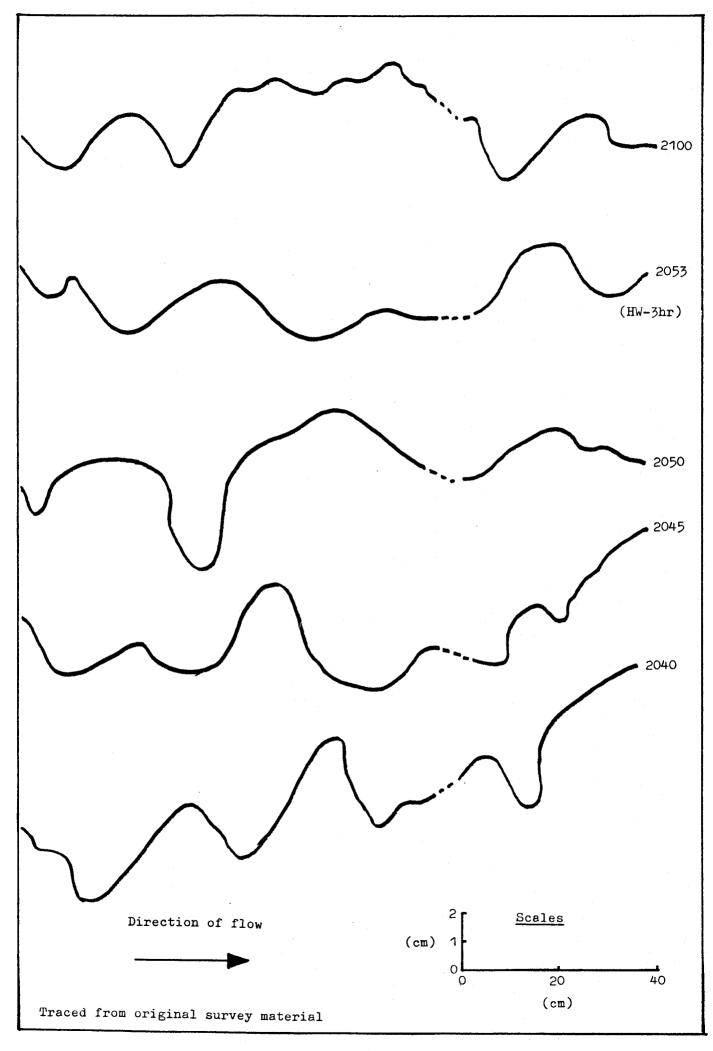


Fig 7 Sand waves at Position T10 on 17.2.1984 : Mid flood tide

