

**Freesia Guesthouse  
The Parade, Hugh Town  
St Mary's, Isles of Scilly  
NHLE 1219064**

**Heritage Statement**



**Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist**



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<b>Client</b>	<b>Joe Hayes</b>
<b>Report Number</b>	2022/2
<b>Date</b>	<b>28 February 2022</b>
<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Charlie Johns</b>
<b>Planning references</b>	P/21/078/LBC; P/21/077/COU

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## **Acknowledgements**

This study was commissioned by Joe Hayes and carried out by Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist.

Help with the historical research was provided by Jo Sturgess of Cornwall Archaeological Unit. Distribution maps of heritage assets were prepared by Lauren Hatt, Historic Environment Technical Assistant, Cornwall and The Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record, Cornwall Council, Kresen Kernow, Redruth.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist, and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

*Charlie Johns is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCIfA no. 381).*

Front cover: Freesia Guest house with Bordeaux to the left and Nornour to the right.

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## **Abbreviations**

CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HE	Historic England
HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Character
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MCO	Monument number in Cornwall HER
NGR	National Grid Reference
OS	Ordnance Survey

# 1 Summary

In January 2022, Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist, was commissioned by Joe Hayes to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment to support applications for planning permission and Listed Building Consent for change of use of guest house to self-contained holiday let with owner's accommodation and associated works at Freesia Guesthouse, The Parade, Hugh Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, TR21 0LP. The results are presented in this Heritage Statement.

Formerly known as Stanmore House, Freesia is a Grade II Listed Building (NHLE 1219064) and lies within the Isles of Scilly Conservation Area. The listing description describes Freesia as a two-storeyed, granite-built house of early 19th century date with a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century rear addition and late 20th century roof tiles. The interior of the building was extensively altered when it was converted into a guesthouse in 2003–4 and the only visible historic feature is an ornate staircase providing access to the first and second floors.

The HIA considered the wider historic context of Freesia but concentrated specifically on the heritage impacts of three proposals:

1. to remove the chimney stack from the western end of the building for structural / health and safety reasons;
2. to remove the corresponding chimney breasts from the first and second floors for potential structural reasons; and
3. to remove the existing period staircase because it does not comply with current building regulations.

The original chimney stack is built into the roof at the western gable. It appears that an additional chimney stack might have been added at right angles to this, along the ridgeline of the roof. The heritage impact of the proposal is assessed to be **Negative/Minor (Less than Substantial) Harm** but could be mitigated by construction of a replacement chimney in which case the impact would be **Positive/Substantial Benefit**.

The chimney breasts are concealed by stud walls so their condition is not known. It is possible that these chimney breasts are secondary and conceal an original fireplace in the thickness of the wall. This heritage impact of their removal is assessed as **Negative/Unknown**, but could be mitigated by a programme of historic building recording and preservation of the (putative) original fireplace (**Positive/Unknown**).

The staircase is said to have been purchased from another house but there is no supporting information for this. It is the right period for the house and accommodates the rise to the first and second floors in half-turns, suggesting that, on balance, it is an original feature. If it no longer seems to fit properly that is due to the extensive changes that have been made to the interior of the house. The staircase is judged to be of **Considerable Significance**. The heritage impact of removing the staircase is assessed as **Negative/Moderate (Less than Substantial) Harm** i.e., a major element of the heritage value of the asset (Freesia/Stanmore House) will be harmed whilst retaining enough value to justify its identification as a heritage asset.

Paragraph 196 of The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) states that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'.

As with the chimney breasts, it is considered the harmful impacts of removing the staircase could be mitigated by a programme of historic building recording, secured by a condition attached to Listed Building Consent and planning permission.

Relevant applications to the Local Planning Authority are P/21/060/LBC and P/21/059/HH for works including the removal of an original staircase of early 19th date, which were granted in October 2021 subject to a condition for historic building recording.

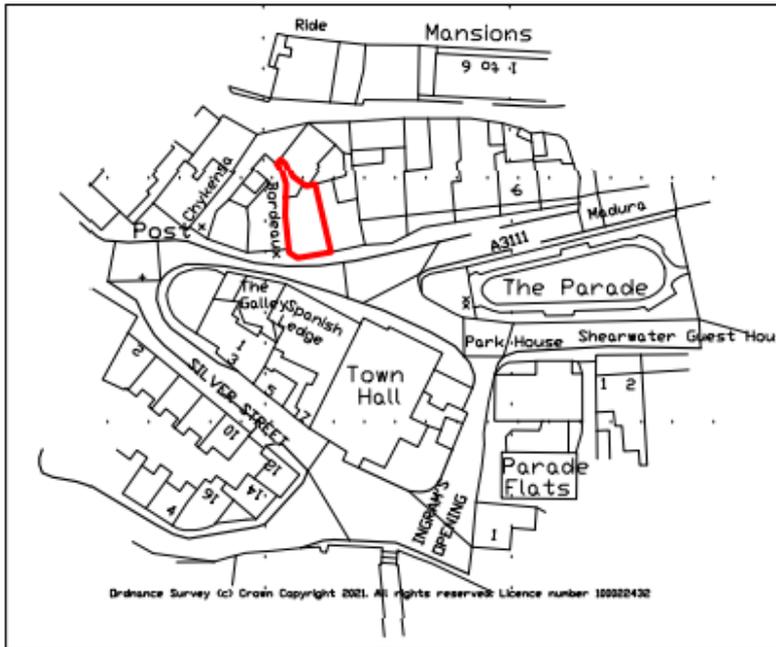
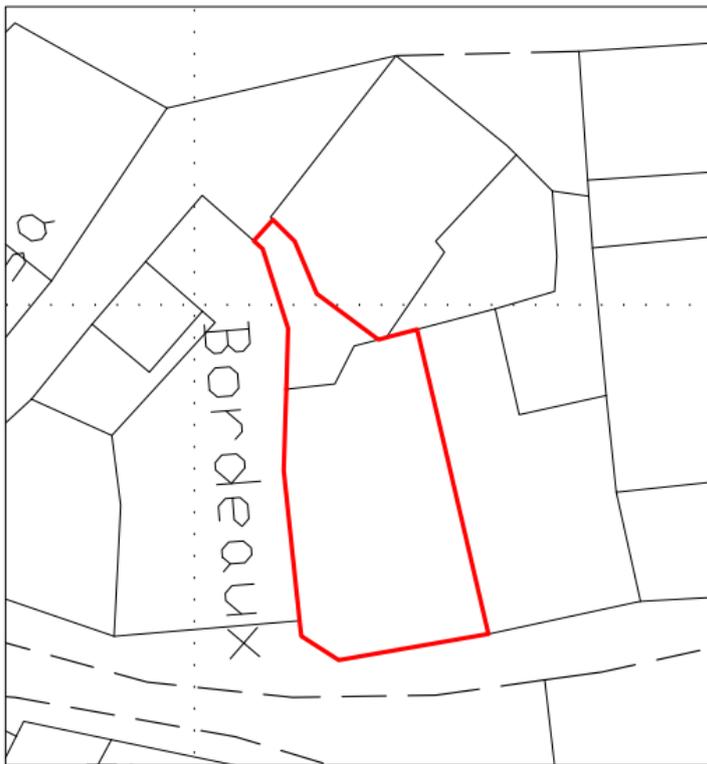


Fig 1 Location map.



EXISTING SITE PLAN 1:200

1-200

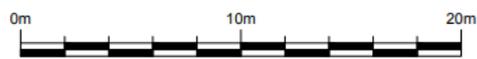


Fig 2 Block plan.

## **2 Introduction**

### **2.1 Project background**

This Heritage Statement presents the results of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) commissioned by Joe Hayes to support applications P/21/078/LBC and P/21/077/COU for Listed Building Consent and planning permission change of use of guest house to self-contained holiday let with owner's accommodation and associated works at Freesia Guesthouse, The Parade, Hugh Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, TR21 0LP.

### **2.2 Methodology**

#### **2.2.1 Policy and guidance**

This report takes account of various relevant aspects of national and local planning policies and guidance including:

- Government guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment;
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018) – specifically policies for 'conserving and enhancing the historic environment' (paragraphs 184-202) (see Appendix 1);
- The Isles of Scilly Local Plan (2015–2030) – specifically Policies SS1 Principles of Sustainable Development, SS2 Sustainable Quality Design and Place-Making and SS3 Re-use of Buildings (see Appendix 1);
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979); and
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).

#### **2.2.2 Scope**

This assessment is focussed on heritage assets identified within the proposal area itself (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The assessment also identifies relevant heritage assets within a wider 0.1km radius buffer around the site (Figs 3 and 4) and considers potential impacts upon designated heritage assets over a wider area (hereafter referred to as the 'study area').

#### **2.2.3 Aims**

The primary aims of this study are to assess the following:

- The resource of identified heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, within the study area that are relevant to the site;
- The significance of the identified and potential heritage assets and resource within the site;
- The impacts of the proposal upon the significance of heritage assets and the settings of designated heritage assets within the study area;
- Appropriate measures for mitigating impacts upon the heritage assets and resource within the study area.

#### **2.2.4 Desk-based assessment**

This study was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's (CIfA) guidance on undertaking desk-based assessment (CIfA 2017).

#### **Significance**

In determining the significance of heritage assets CAU have followed guidance issued by English Heritage (now Historic England) in 2008. The following criteria have been used to measure significance:

- Evidential – 'the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity';
- Historical – 'derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present';
- Aesthetic – 'derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place';
- Communal- 'derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory'.

### **Settings**

In evaluating aspects of the settings of heritage assets the assessment followed Historic England's guidance on the subject (2017).

### **Sources**

During the desk-based assessment historical databases and archives were consulted in order to obtain information about the history of the site and study area and the structures and features that were likely to survive. The main sources consulted were as follows:

- Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record (HER);
- the National Heritage List for England (a searchable database of designated heritage assets, excluding conservation areas);
- Cornwall Council's mapping service for Conservation Areas;
- Accessible GIS data;
- early maps, records, and photographs (see Section 7.1).
- published histories (see Section 7.2).

#### **2.2.5 Site visit**

A site visit was undertaken on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022 by Charlie Johns BA MCIFA. A basic photographic record was made of the building elements affected by works and notes on the recent history of the building taken during conversation with Joe Hayes.

## **3 Heritage resource**

This section presents a summary of the historical development of the study area, provides detail of designated and non-designated heritage assets that have been identified, identifies potential heritage assets that may lie within the site, and reports on previous archaeological and historical work in the study area.

### **3.1 Location**

Freesia Guesthouse is located on the north side of The Parade, Hugh Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly (NGR SV 90300 10541 (Figs 1 and 2). This location is just beyond the south-east end of Hugh Street, where the road branches to the east and narrows. This road, which is marked as the 'A3111' on the OS Landline mapping passes along the north side of The Parade gardens and then becomes 'Lower Strand' (see below Section 3.5 Undesignated heritage assets).

### **3.2 Historic Landscape Character**

The study area is characterised as 'Settlement' in the Isles of Scilly Historic Landscape Assessment (Land Use Consultants 1996) – see Section 3.6 below for a summary of the development of Hugh Town.

### **3.3 Designated heritage assets**

#### **3.3.1 Scheduled monuments (SM)**

There are no scheduled monuments within the study area. The nearest scheduled monuments to the site are the 'post-medieval breastwork, curtain wall and associated defensive structures on the periphery of The Garrison' (NHLE 1018370) located approximately 200m to the west and the 'round cairn with funerary chamber on Buzza Hill, 45m west of Buzza Tower' (NHLE 1010174) located approximately 300m to the south-east.

#### **3.3.2 Listed buildings (LB)**

There are no Grade I or Grade II\* listed buildings within the study area.

In addition to Freesia, there are 25 Grade II listed buildings within the study area (Fig 3). Immediately to the west, 'Bordeaux' (NHLE 1328848) shares a party wall with Freesia, next to Bordeaux is 'Parade House' (NHLE 1141193); both these houses are of similar date to Freesia.

Further to the west the 'South West Electricity Board' building (NHLE 219011), the 'House top the west of the South West Electricity Board (NHLE 1141191), the ten listed buildings on the south-west side of Hugh Street – the Richardson and Gill terrace of c1926 (with Mumford's on the end) and Post Office of 1897 (NHLE 1328825 and NHLE 1328825) are hidden from view of Freesia by Bordeaux, Parade House and a bend in the road. The Old Wesleyan Chapel (NHLE 1141217) is, in turn hidden by these buildings.

To the east the seven listed buildings along the north side of the A3111: 'Evergreen Cottage and Pelistry Cottage' (NHLE 1291708); 'Parkside' (NHLE 1141190); 'Madura and Parkview' (NHLE 1328842); and the Custom House and Strand House' [the Scillonian Club] (NHLE 1141180) are hidden from view of Freesia by the house named 'Nornour' and the continuing bend of the road.

Directly opposite Freesia is 'Spanish Ledge Guest House and House attached at west' (NHLE 1141195), next to these are the 'Town Hall' (NHLE 1219066), 'Parade Cottage' (NHLE 1141192) and the 'Outbuilding approximately 2 metres south of Parade Cottage' (NHLE 1291695). The last two are screened from view of Freesia by the Town Hall, which in turn is partially screened by Spanish Ledge Guest House.

Approximately 30m to the south west of the site is the Bishop and Wolf public house (1328843) which was formerly the Godolphin steward's house.

On the east side of the public gardens is the 18<sup>th</sup> century Rivera House (1219007).



Fig 3 Map showing listed buildings within the study area of 0.1km around Freesia.

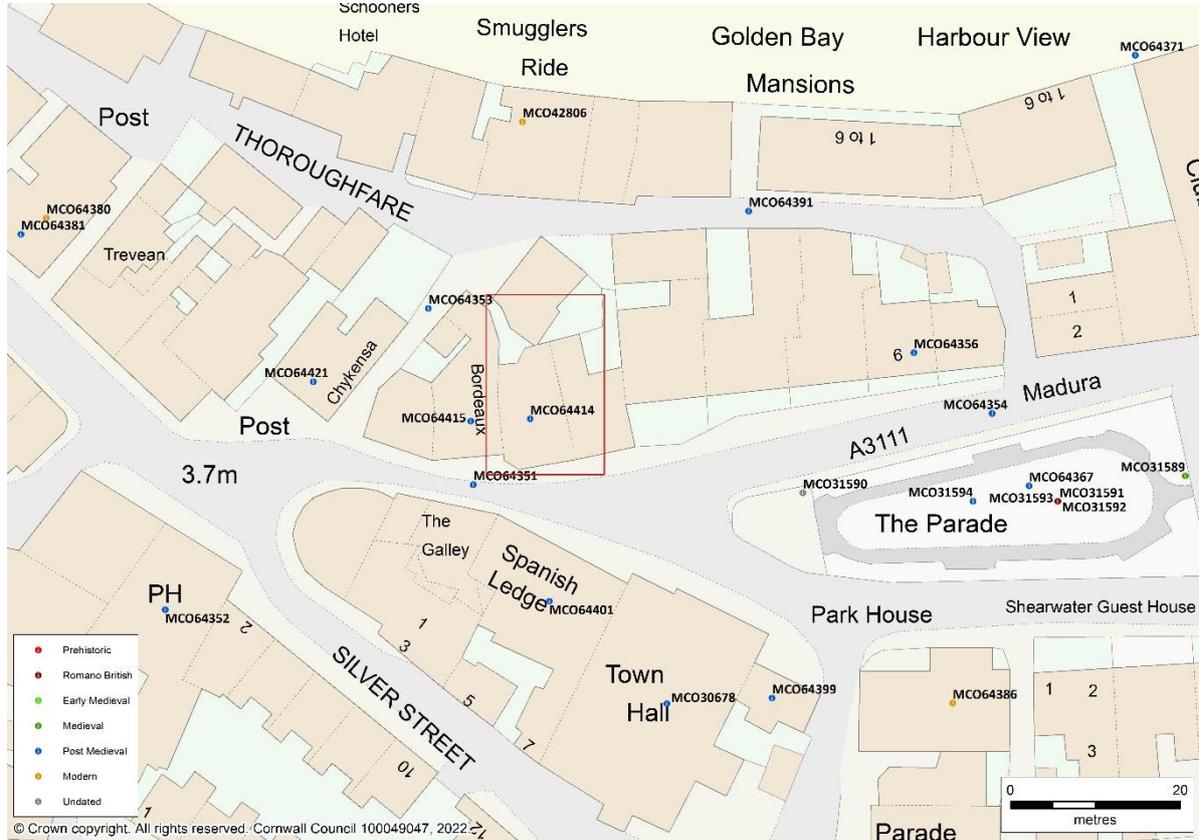


Fig 4 Map showing undesignated heritage assets within the study area of 0.1km around Freesia.

Finally, there are a number of listed buildings on the south side of Church Street: 'Homeleigh and attached railings' (NHLE 1291690); 'Shearwater and attached railings' (NHLE 1141194); 'Shalom, Treveffa and Wingletang' (NHLE 1141197); 'Crebinnick House adjoining to east, Hazeldene, Thurleigh and Raveen' (NHLE 1218655) all of which have an oblique view across The Parade garden to Freesia

### **3.4 Conservation Area**

The whole of the Isles of Scilly is a Conservation Area. A conservation area is an area which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) requires that 'no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character of a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised'.

### **3.5 Undesignated heritage assets**

The HER records 16 undesignated heritage assets within the study area (Fig 4). Five of these are unlisted buildings: the Co-Operative Store (MCO64420); Barclays Bank (MCO64379); the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company office (MCO64380/ MCO64381); and Park House residential accommodation (MCO64386)

Undesignated heritage assets also include the narrow road in front of Freesia (MCO64351; see below Section 4.6 Site history). There is also the post-medieval alley linking Thoroughfare to the area in front of the Bishop and Wolf pub; the curtilage of Freesia back onto this alley (MCO64353). There is also Thoroughfare itself which passes to the rear of Freesia. Also known as Blood Alley, Thoroughfare represents a former post-medieval back lane that also provided access to working buildings along the waterfront (MCO64391). To the north west, on Town Beach, is a post-medieval slipway (MCO58046).

Approximately 25m north of the site is the site of a World War II pillbox within one of the buildings fronting the bay (MCO42806); the site of another World War II pillbox lies 100m to the north west at the rear of Hugh Street, also within one of the buildings fronting the bay (MCO42805). Approximately 50m south east of Freesia is The Parade (MCO). Now an enclosed public garden this was formerly a 19<sup>th</sup> century parade ground (MCO31594; MCO64367). There are a number of querns and perforated and grooved boulders found on St Mary's, but otherwise unprovenanced, which now lies in the gardens (The Parade) adjacent to the Town Hall in Hugh Town. In 1978, the OS field worker found the following stones around the edge of the park: one half of a quern, the remains of a saddle quern, a cup-marked stone, the remains of two probable bowl querns; and one or two fragments of possible querns (MCO31592). At the eastern end of the gardens are the remains of three medieval cross shafts – not *in situ* (MCO31589). In the north-west corner of the Park gardens at Hugh Town is said to be a smooth rounded stone of uncertain date, 0.4m high and 0.5m diameter with a hole in the top, somewhat resembling a small barrel (MCO31590).

### **3.6 Site history**

Hugh Town, on the largest island of St Mary's, is the only proper 'town' in Scilly. The present town owes its origins to the construction of Star Castle and associated structures in the 1590s and in c1601 of a quay on the sheltered northern side of the island directly below the gateway to the military complex (Cox and Thorp 1993; Bowden and Brodie 2011).

By the mid-18th century Hugh Town had developed beyond its early primary role as a service centre for the Garrison to become a central place for the whole of Scilly. It was the Customs port and profited from servicing vessels sheltering in the Pool from bad weather or adverse winds. The quay was refurbished in 1740 and in 1749–51.

A 1756 engraving of Hugh Town and St Mary's Road by William Borlase shows two roads leading eastwards from the town. One of these would later become Church Steet and the

other The Strand, while the triangular area formed by the fork in the road would become The Parade (Fig 4).

The extent of Hugh Town in the 1790s is depicted on a water colour painting (Fig 5). The town remained small — the population in 1800 was only 350 — until the 19th century when, under the proprietorship of Augustus Smith, a new phase of building expanded the settlement considerably. The economy diversified to include shipbuilding and maritime trade and, towards the end of the century, tourism and the export of flowers and bulbs (Kirkham 2003, 1).

The lease of Scilly taken up in 1834 by Augustus Smith required completion of a new church and a large extension to Hugh Town quay. Both were achieved before the end of the 1830s, the New Quay being extended out to Rat Island with a monumental entranceway built on Old Quay, and marked the beginning of a significant period of change. The curved corner to left (west) of the Freesia and the coursed granite blocks of the front elevation are somewhat reminiscent of the architecture of these monumental piers.

The St Mary's stonemason and poet Robert Maybee, born in 1810, recalled the period following Smith's arrival in Scilly: *'It was the time the new pier was building . . . and the new church . . . and most of the big houses were being built at the same time'* (Maybee 1884, 15). Freesia, previously called 'Stanmore House', presumably after a person, family or a place, and is likely to have been built at this time.

In 1850 the Revd I W North wrote: *'The houses in Hugh Street are very old and many of them certainly wear a somewhat forlorn and dreary aspect; but as the visitor advances towards the church and sees those more recently built on the Parade and in Buzza Street, towards Porcrasa (sic), he will be impressed with a widely different feeling. He will find himself surrounded by every token of cheerfulness and comfort and when he learns that they have been built by the inhabitants themselves, and are in the majority of instances held of the Proprietor at a trifling ground rent, for forty years, he will draw the conclusion, which longer acquaintance with the place will strengthen and confirm, that the Isles of Scilly have been favoured with an unusual measure of prosperity'* (North 1850, 71-2).

Unlike the Cornish tithe maps, the c1840 Tithe Map for St Mary's does not show anything on the island in detail because of the monopolistic landownership of Scilly's two main islands. The Parade is, perhaps, first mapped on an 1862 Admiralty plan of Hugh Town (Fig 5).

The mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century census returns for St Mary's do not give house names or numbers but from 1851 they do give the name of the street or area, starting with The Garrison and working eastwards (the 1841 census return only gives St Mary's as the place of residence).

Freesia is the fifth building along the north side of The Parade from the west. The family in the fifth entry for The Parade in the 1851 census was: Francis T Hicks, Master Mariner, aged 34, his wife Julia, aged 29 and their three children Julia, 6, Eliza 4 and Francis, 2. The occupants in the fifth entry for The Parade in the 1861 census is: Elizabeth Taylor, Head, Independent, aged 85; and Elizabeth Bosanko, an unmarried visitor from Penryn, Cornwall, aged 26. In 1871 it was Francis C Collett, Head, aged 68, a superannuated coastguard originally from Pilleigh, Cornwall; his wife Sarah Collett aged 58, originally from Polperro; and their son Richard who was bootmaker on Tresco. The entry for 1881 was Constance Dawes, 68, widow of a schoolmaster, St Mary's and her sister Elizabeth Bluett, 59. In 1891 it was Susanna Rogers, widow, 48, Lodging House Keeper from Faversham in Kent; Elizabeth Rogers daughter 23, Lodging House Assistant, Clara C Rogers, daughter, 20, Lodging House Assistant and Joseph I Rogers, son, 19.

While we cannot be absolutely sure that these were the occupants of Stanmore House, it provides a valuable snapshot of the demographic of The Parade in the second half of the 19th century. It is interesting to note that Robert Maybee, described as unmarried, aged 48 and labourer was a lodger in another house on The Parade in 1861.

Stanmore House is shown on a Gibson photograph of c1887 looking north west across the Parade when it was still an open space (Over 1993, fig 142). Two other photographs

show Stanmore House in the early 20th century after the Parade had been enclosed as a garden (Fig 9; Over 1993, fig 128).

Advertisements in the Scillonian magazine from the mid-1960s show that the building was occupied by 'Your Island Decorators Metcalfe and Molyneux, 16 Sally Port & Stanmore House – phone Scillonia 249 for the Most Up-to-Date 1966-7 Wallpaper Patterns; Sandersons, Crown and John Lines. Agents for Dulux & Paints if the Leading Firms'.

More recently it provided accommodation for staff from St Mary's Hall Hotel and was converted into a guesthouse in the winter of 2002-3 (Joe Hayes, pers comm).

### **3.7 Previous archaeological and historical work**

Scilly's architectural heritage has been summarised by Laws (1980), Madden (1996), and most recently by Berry (2012) for the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Research Framework (Johns 2019). Perhaps the most salient study is the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey report for Hugh Town (Kirkham 2003) which considers the potential for heritage-led regeneration of the town.

### **3.8 Freesia – summary of heritage assets**

Freesia was listed Grade II on 12 February 1975 as Stanmore House, The Parade (NHLE 1219064). The listing description reads:

'House. Early C19. Coursed granite blocks; late C20 interlocking tiles to half-hipped roof; rendered end stack. Double-depth plan with central entrance hall. 2 storeys; 3-window first-floor range. Semi-circular arch with voussoirs over mid C20 door with plain fanlight. Granite lintels over 8/8-pane sashes. Curved corner to left (west). Mid C20 rear addition. Interior not inspected.'

A central arched window, with dressed granite voussoirs and jambstones, lighting the staircase on the first floor of the rear elevation has been converted into a doorway opening on to an area of decking laid on the roof of the ground floor extension (Fig 14). Inside are three steps leading up this doorway which are a modification of the window sill.

At the front are 6/6-pane horned sash windows and on the first floor 2/2-pane horned sash windows; the dormer windows are smaller 6/6-pane horned sash windows. All in good condition and dating to the 2002-3 refurbishment (Fig 11).

Dormer windows were added to the second-floor front and rear elevations during the 2002-3 guesthouse conversion. These are clad with white-painted wood panelling.

The interior was inspected on 11 February 2022 as part of this assessment. All of the interior rooms have early 21st century plastered stud walls and modern flooring. The ceilings are standard plaster finish on foil-back plasterboard with insulation behind. The mid-20th century ground floor extension to the rear of the building is currently the owners' living accommodation.

The only visible period feature is the ornate staircase (Figs 15-20). The staircase is white-painted with varnished handrail. Moulded side panels. Moulded newel posts. Moulded balusters, two per tread, but plain stick balusters on the final half-turn leading up to the second floor (quite possibly once the servants' quarters) which terminates in a moulded pendant. On each flight the smooth varnished handrail ends in a ramped-rail which is secured to the straight part of the handrail with a joint and a screw and to the top of the newel post with a screw. Ramped-rails date from the late 18th and continue through the first half of 19th century (Jo Sturgess pers comm). The staircase has been repaired on occasion, one of the moulded balusters has been replaced with a plain stick and there is a metal brace on the ramped rail at ground floor level.

## **4 Statement of Significance**

Freesia lies within the St Mary's Conservation Area and is a Grade II Listed Building, i.e., a building which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest and is by definition a heritage asset of national importance.

At Freesia, however, that significance has been largely compromised by the modern renovations which have removed or covered all original interior features except for the period staircase.

The staircase is said to have been purchased from another house, where building works were being carried out, more than 20 years ago (Joe Hayes, pers comm). However there is no further information about the provenance or supporting documentation so this account may be apocryphal. The staircase is the right period for the house and accommodates the rise to the first and second storeys in half-turns, so on balance it is more likely to be original than not. If the staircase does not appear to fit properly now or is bodged in places that is because of all the recent changes to the interior of the house. It is somewhat ironic that, within a listed building, the only surviving period feature now appears to be out of context.

When Historic England's guidance on measuring the significance of heritage assets is applied to the staircase it is judged to be of **Considerable Significance**: it a good and representative example of an early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century staircase from a big house, of which there can only be a finite number in Scilly. As the only apparent surviving interior historic feature it makes a major contribution to the overall significance of Freesia.

- Evidential – The staircase has the potential inform about early 19<sup>th</sup> century carpentry, construction techniques and aesthetic styles.
- Historical – The staircase holds historic illustrative value of the period 1835-8. This was an exciting and prosperous time in Scilly's history, shortly after Augustus Smith became Lord Proprietor, the new pier and church and the big houses on The Parade were being built and the economy diversifying to include shipbuilding and maritime trade.
- Aesthetic – The staircase is of its period, functional but quite ornate and visually pleasing, with ramped rails, moulded panels, newel posts and balusters.
- Communal – The staircase is a communal space within the house and will feature in the collective experience of many people to have lived or stayed there. The fact that care has been taken to repair it shows that people have valued it in the past.

## **5 Assessment of potential impacts**

### **5.1 Summary of proposed works**

The scope of the proposed building works are set out in the 'Heritage Assessment, Design and Access Statement' by NB Architectural Services Ltd which was submitted with the applications.

#### **5.1.1 Proposed exterior works**

The proposed exterior works entail removal of ground floor bedroom window and installation of door to new kitchen and to provide access and construction of new staircase from ground level to existing balcony giving access to owner's accommodation.

It is also proposed to remove the chimney from the western end of the property. Although this is not mentioned in the 'Heritage Assessment, Design and Access Statement' by NB Architectural Services Ltd, it is outlined in the Preliminary Roost Assessment (Faulconbridge 2021).

There are chimneys at either gable end of the building. The chimney to the front right (east) of the building will be retained and kept as it is. The chimney to the left-hand (west) side of building would be removed.

The original chimney is built into the roof at the western gable and it appears that an additional chimney might have been added at right angles to this, along ridgeline of the roof. The original chimney passes through the roof of the adjoining property (Bordeaux) which is one-storey lower in pitch. The chimney itself is of brick-built construction with concrete render – this render covers all external aspects and is in good condition. There are three chimney pots – two of which are capped whilst the western-most (on the original chimney) appeared to be uncapped.

It is necessary to remove the chimney because cracks have appeared in the chimney stack which year by year are worsening, it is inevitable that eventually the chimney will collapse or debris will fall onto the roof of Bordeaux and roll off this roof and directly onto the pavement. It is a very busy street and there are concerns for the health and safety of passers-by.

#### **5.1.2 Proposed interior works**

The ground floor alterations entail: removal of non-original studwork between existing lavatory and ensuite; upgrading existing balcony ceiling to provide fire resistance and sound insulation; removal of staircase and installation of replacement to first and second floor.

The first floor alterations entail: removal of cupboard between ensuite and bedroom; ensuite to become family bathroom; removal of stud wall between bedrooms and removal of masonry (i.e. chimney breast) between existing ensuite and bedroom to form an open plan lounge, kitchen and dining room.

The second floor alterations entail removal of masonry (i.e. chimney breast) between bedroom and bathroom to provide increased bedroom area.

There is a considerable amount of penetrating damp through the chimney breast, and there is concern that any condensation or a possible leak will cause damage to the structural integrity of the external wall.

### **5.2 Criteria for grading of harm**

The impacts of development on the historic environment may include positive as well as adverse effects. For the purposes of assessment these are evaluated on an eight-point scale:

**Positive/Substantial Benefit**

**Positive/Moderate Benefit**

**Positive/Minor Benefit**

**Neutral**

**Negative/Negligible (Less than Substantial) Harm**

**Negative/Minor (Less than Substantial) Harm**

**Negative/Moderate (Less than Substantial) Harm**

**Negative/Substantial Harm**

with the additional **Negative/Unknown** used where an adverse impact is predicted or **Positive/Unknown** where a beneficial impact is predicted but where, at the present state of knowledge, its degree cannot be evaluated satisfactorily.

The assessment also distinguishes where possible between permanent and temporary effects, or between those that are reversible or irreversible, as appropriate, in the application of the scale of impacts.

To ensure that the judgements given in this report are as clear as possible this assessment uses the following definitions to develop a four step grading of harm.

Substantial Harm	The change seriously affects a key element contributing to the significance of the asset, going to the heart of its significance.
Moderate (Less than Substantial) Harm	A major element of the heritage value of the asset is harmed whilst retaining enough value to justify identification as a heritage asset.
Minor (Less than Substantial) Harm	Some heritage values are harmed but these do not contribute a major element of the significance of its asset, and/or the change is offset by enhancement or revelation of other heritage values.
Negligible (Less than Substantial Harm)	Minor negative harm to the heritage values of a place that are neither substantive or primary to its overall significance.

**5.3 Summary of potential impacts**

**5.3.1 Exterior works to the rear of the property**

The works to the rear of the property only concern the modern ground floor extension. The rear of the property is effectively screened from Thoroughfare by a gate and restricted alleyway access (Fig 11). The heritage impact on the setting of identified heritage assets and the Conservation Area is assessed as **Neutral**.

**5.3.2 Removal of chimneys at the western end of the building**

The proposed works will entail the removal of the chimneys at the western end of the building (Fig 13). This will impact upon the visual appearance of the front (south) and rear (north) elevations and the gable end of the building and consequently upon the roofscape of the Conservation Area. The heritage impact is assessed to be irreversible **Negative/Minor (Less than Substantial) Harm** but could be mitigated by construction of a replacement chimney in which case the impact would be **Positive/Substantial Benefit** (see below Section 6.1).

**5.3.3 Removal of chimney breasts on the first and second floors**

The proposed works would entail the removal of chimney breasts on the first and second floors (this is the masonry between existing ensuite and bedroom on the first floor and between bedroom and bathroom on the second floor mentioned the 'Heritage Assessment, Design and Access Statement' by NB Architectural Services Ltd (2021).

The chimney breasts are concealed by stud walls and their condition is unknown (Figs 15 and 16). They may be secondary features and conceal original fireplaces built into the thickness of the wall (which could be preserved). This heritage impact of their removal is

assessed as irreversible **Negative/ Unknown** if the (putative) original fireplaces could be preserved it would be **(Positive/Unknown)**.

#### **5.3.4 Removal of period staircase**

Ordinarily the presumption would be in favour of retaining the period staircase (Figs 17–20) and incorporating it in the new design. However, this is not possible because it does not comply with current building regulations and there are some very awkward areas with restricted headroom. The landing is not square and has a skewed step. The junction of the stairs and the first floor door (originally a window) is particularly awkward and dangerous, when the door is opened and one is immediately faced with three steps.

Therefore, the proposed works entail the removal of the staircase. The heritage impact of this is assessed as irreversible **Negative/Moderate (Less than Substantial) Harm**.

Paragraph 196 of The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) states that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

## **6 Concluding remarks**

This section offers options to reduce or mitigate adverse impacts on the historic resource expected to result from the proposed development. These options are provided for guidance and the actual requirements for archaeological recording will be set by the Local Planning Authority.

### **6.1 Mitigation by design**

A replacement west chimney can be built if the LPA considers that this is required to mitigate against impacts of the proposed to the visual appearance of the building and the roofscape of the Conservation Area.

If original fireplaces are revealed when the chimney breasts are removed they should be preserved and incorporated in the new design.

### **6.2 Mitigation by record**

It is considered that harmful impacts of the removal of the chimney breasts and staircase could be mitigated by programme of historic building recording, to an Historic England level 2/3 standard, secured by a condition attached to planning permission.

Relevant recent applications to the LPA are P/21/060/LBC and P/21/059/HH for works which included the removal of an original staircase of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date from a listed building and were granted in October 2021 subject to a condition for historic building recording.

## **7 References**

### **7.1 Primary sources (in chronological order)**

Graeme Spence's chart of St Mary's Pool, 1792 (sourced from the UK Hydrographic Office, Taunton, [www.ukho.gov.uk](http://www.ukho.gov.uk)).

An original water colour in naïve style annotated 'A view of St Mary's Island (Scilly)', (discovered bound into a copy of Troutbeck's 'Survey of the ancient and present state of the Scilly Isles (published c1794) held at Kresen Kernow, Redruth.

Plan of Hugh Town by Captain George Williams and Mr S J Wells, 1862 (Sourced from the UK Hydrographic Office, Taunton, [www.ukho.gov.uk](http://www.ukho.gov.uk)).

Ordnance Survey, c1880. 25 Inch Map First Edition

Ordnance Survey, c1907. 25 Inch Map Second Edition

Ordnance Survey, MasterMap Topography

### **7.2 Planning documents**

Faulconbridge, J, 2021. *Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA); chimney removal at Freesia Guesthouse, Hugh Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly*

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### **7.3 Publications**

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Fig 7 Plan of Hugh Town by Captain George Williams and Mr S J Wells, 1862 (Sourced from the UK Hydrographic Office, Taunton, [www.ukho.gov.uk](http://www.ukho.gov.uk)).

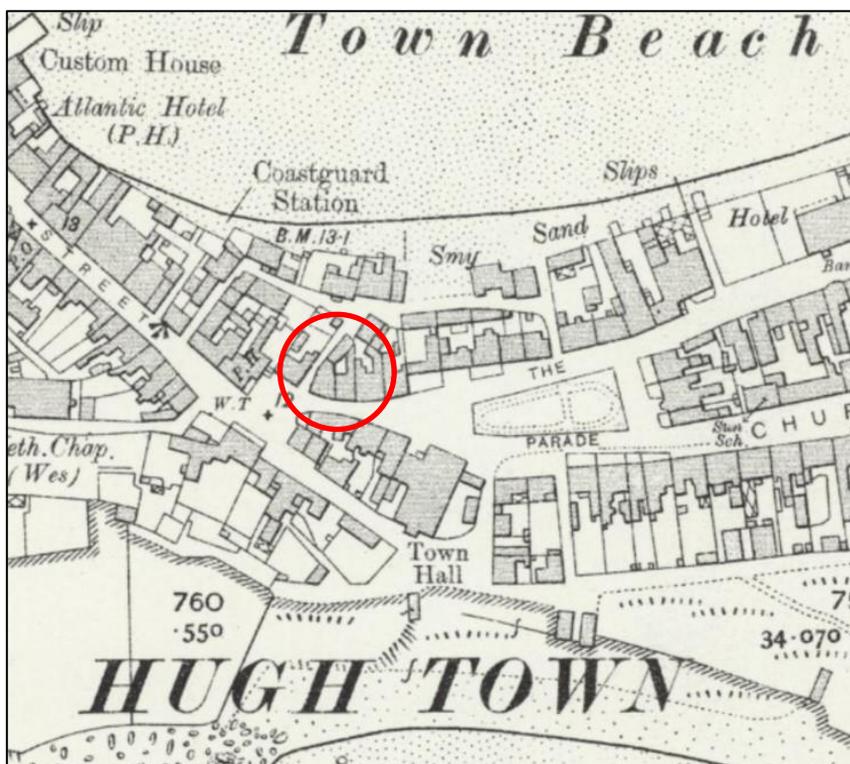


Fig 8 Detail from the OS map, revised in 1906 and published in 1908, sheet Cornwall LXXXVII.11 (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).



*Fig 9 Early 20<sup>th</sup> century Gibson photo of The Parade.*



*Fig 10 The Parade today with Freesia hidden behind a tree.*



*Fig 11 Frontage of Freesia with Bordeaux to the left and Nornour to the right.*



*Fig 12 The view of the rear elevation of Freesia from Thoroughfare.*



*Fig 13 The chimneys at western end of Freesia.*



*Fig 14 The central window of the first floor rear elevation has been converted into a doorway leading on to a decking surface on the roof of the ground floor extension.*



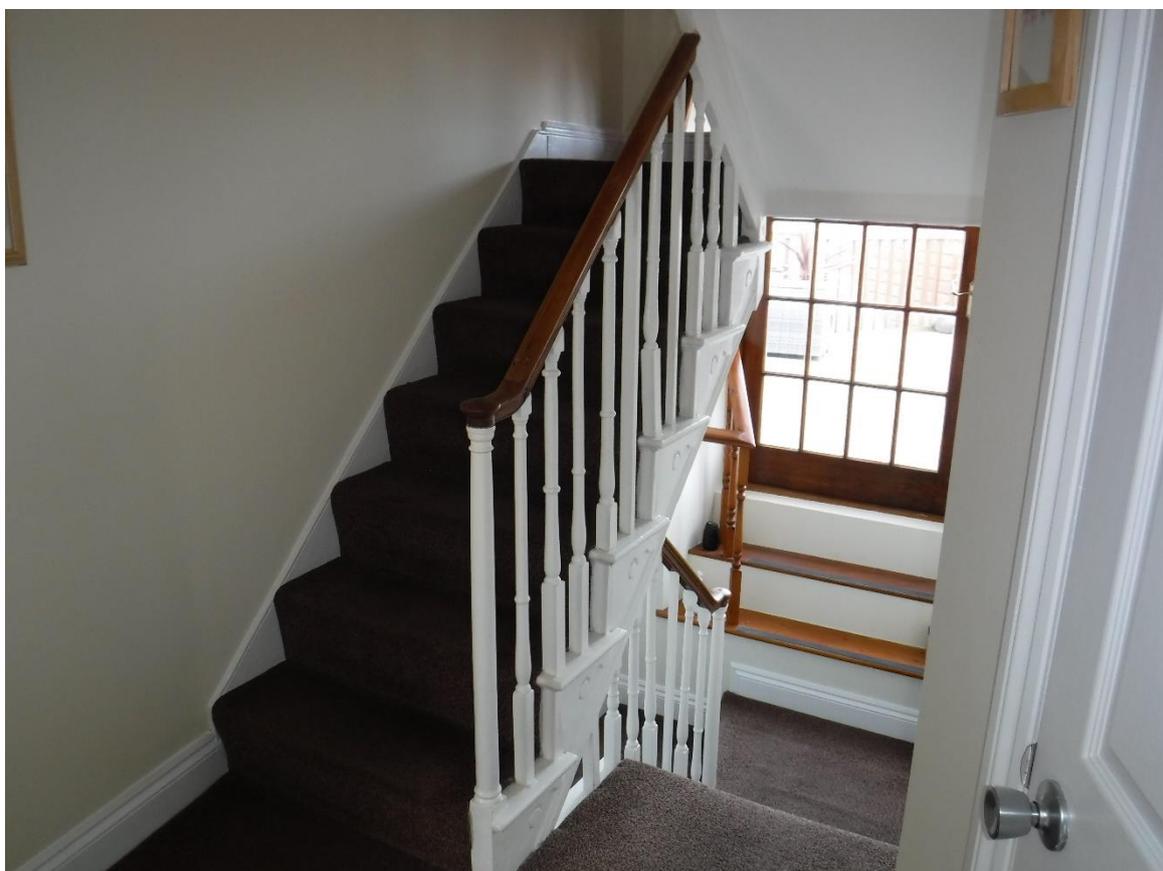
*Fig 15 Stud wall concealing chimney breast on first floor.*



*Fig 16 Stud wall concealing chimney breast on second floor.*



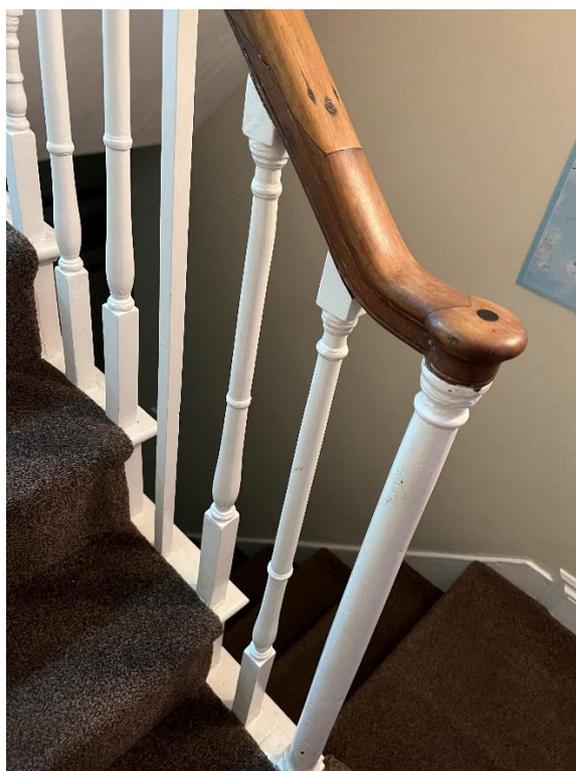
*Fig 17 Ground floor staircase.*



*Fig 18 Half-turn in the staircase to the first floor.*



*Fig 19 Staircase on first floor showing decorative moulded panels (photo: Joe Hayes).*



*Fig 20 Detail of newel post and ramped rail on first floor (photo: Joe Hayes).*



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