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**Wingletang
The Parade
Hugh Town
St. Mary's
Isles of Scilly
Cornwall**
NGR: SV 90392 10508

**A
Heritage Impact Assessment**

Text

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Summary

Proposals are being developed to refurbish and make some improvements to Wingletang, a property in a terrace on the south side of the Parade in Hugh Town, on St. Mary's in the Scilly Isles. The building is Grade II listed, adjacent to other heritage assets, and within a designated conservation area. In order to inform the decision-making process, this report was commissioned to provide a better understanding of the history, development and significance of the site and to provide a heritage impact assessment of the proposals on the listed building, the outbuilding, and any adjacent heritage assets - under the guidelines of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is not concerned with other planning matters. It concludes that the proposals are well-considered and proportionate and that whilst there would be a minor degree of change there would be no harm – either substantial or less than substantial – to the building, adjacent heritage assets, or the conservation area. Overall there would be, instead, a general enhancement. Therefore neither Sections 66 or 72 of the 1990 Planning Act nor Paragraphs 201-3 of the NPPF will be engaged.

1. Introduction

Proposals are being developed to refurbish and make improvements to Wingletang, a property on the south side of the Parade in the middle of Hugh Town, on St. Mary's in the Scilly Isles. The property is Grade II listed and is adjacent to other listed buildings and within the extensive conservation area. Consequently, this Consultancy was commissioned to produce a heritage impact assessment of the proposals under the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The remit does not extend to any other planning matters.

1.1 Report Format

The report format is quite simple. After this brief introduction, there are short sections on the requirements of NPPF (Section 2) and Heritage Impact Assessments (Section 3). These are followed by an outline of the setting and history of the site (Section 4) and an outline description of the building (Section 5). Section 6 is a discussion of the findings. Section 7 outlines the proposals and Section 8 is the heritage impact assessment. Section 9 is a short conclusion and Section 10 is a list of the references used in the report.

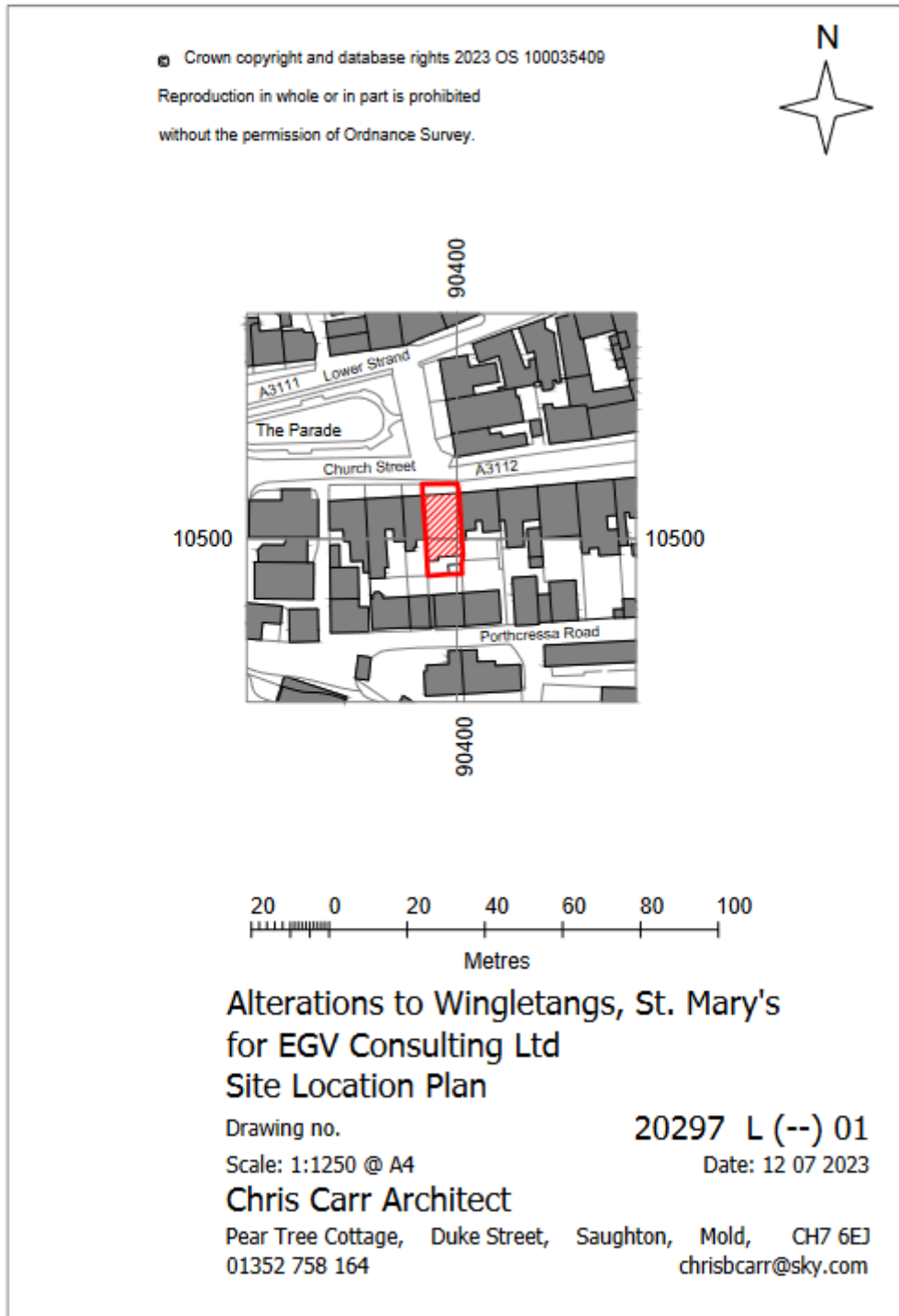


Fig.1: Location plan.
(Ordnance Survey Open Data).



2. National Planning Policy Framework Guidelines

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework

Planning law relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 of the Act deals with the responsibilities of local planning authorities – the decision makers - when dealing with planning applications that could impact on heritage assets and states that:

*‘In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’.*¹

Section 72 of the same Act states that, in relation to conservation areas:

*‘with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area’.*²

Government guidelines regarding the listed buildings and conservation areas legislation in the 1990 Planning Act changed twice in two years, resulting in the introduction of a new *précis* of planning guidance published in March 2012 – the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) – which replaced all other separate *Planning Policy Guidelines* and *Planning Policy Statements*.³ A revised version was published in July 2018, another in February 2019 and yet another in July 2021⁴. The glossary of the NPPF described ‘heritage assets’:

‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).’

The main relevant paragraph in the NPPF states that local planning authorities should require applicants:

*‘...to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance’.*⁵

¹ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 c.9 section 66 (1), 41

² *Ibid.* section 72

³ Department for Communities & Local Government, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*.

⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2021, *National Planning Policy Framework*.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, para. 189

3. Heritage Impact Assessments

3.1 General Introduction

The purpose of a heritage impact assessment (HIA) is to meet the relevant guidance given in the NPPF. This outlines the need to inform the planning decisions when considering proposals that have the potential to have some impact on the character or setting of a heritage asset. It is not concerned with other planning issues.

The nature of the heritage assets and the potential impact upon them through development are both very varied. The heritage assets include both designated heritage assets – such as listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and conservation area – and non-designated heritage assets, a rather uncomfortable and sometimes subjective category that includes locally listed buildings, field systems, buried archaeological remains and views.

The degree of impact a development could have on such assets is variable and can sometimes be positive rather than negative. The wide range of possible impacts can include loss of historic fabric, loss of historic character, damage to historic setting, and damage to significant views.

Under the requirements of the NPPF and of other useful relevant guidance, such as English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* and *Informed Conservation*, and recent material from the newly formed Historic England, the process of heritage impact assessments can be summarised as involving three parts:

1. understanding the heritage values and significance of the designated and non-designated heritage assets involved and their settings;
2. understanding the nature and extent of the proposed developments;
3. making an objective judgement on the impact that the proposals outlined in Part 2 may have on the information outlined in Part 1.⁶

3.2 Definition of Setting

Setting, as a concept, was clearly defined in PPS5 and was then restated in the NPPF which describe it as:

'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.'

⁶ English Heritage, 2008, *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*; Clark, K, 2001, *Informed Conservation*

The latest version of the Historic England guidance on what constitutes setting is virtually identical to the former English Heritage guidance:

‘Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance.’⁷

The new Historic England guidance also re-states the earlier guidance that setting is not confined entirely to visible elements and views but includes other aspects including environmental considerations and historical relationships between assets:

‘The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each. The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance’.⁸

In terms of the setting of heritage assets the approach is the same but the latest Historic England guidance - *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 (GPA3)* of 2017 - suggests a five-step approach.⁹

The steps are:

- Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
- Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
- Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
- Step 4: explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm;
- Step 5: make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

⁷ Historic England, 2017, *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd ed.)*, para.9

⁸ *Op.cit.*, Part 1, reiterating guidance in the PPG of the NPPF.

⁹ *Op.cit.*, para.19

3.3 Definition of Significance

The glossary of the *Planning Practice Guidance* (PPG) to the NPPF defines significance as:

‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.

These are further explained as:

- **Archaeological interest:** *as defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.”*
- **Architectural and artistic interest:** *These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.*
- **Historic interest:** *An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.*

The PPG also states that:

*‘Local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets. These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as ‘locally listed’.*¹⁰

but cautions that:

*‘A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage interest for their significance to be a material consideration in the planning process’.*¹¹

¹⁰ Planning Practice Guidance, 2014, paragraph 39

¹¹ *Ibid.*

3.4 Definition of Harm

Current guidance by Historic England is that ‘change’ does not equate to ‘harm’. The NPPF and its accompanying PPG effectively distinguish between two degrees of harm to heritage assets – *substantial* and *less than substantial*. Paragraph 201 of the revised NPPF states that:

‘Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable use of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use’.*¹²

Paragraph 202 of the revised NPPF states that:

‘Where a development proposal would 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 proposals including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.

Recent High Court rulings have emphasised the primacy of the 1990 Planning Act – and the fact that it is up to the decision makers in the planning system to *‘have special regard to the desirability of preserving the [listed] building or its setting’*. As stated by HH Judge David Cooke in a judgment of 22 September 2015 regarding impact on the setting of a listed building:

‘It is still plainly the case that it is for the decision taker to assess the nature and degree of harm caused, and in the case of harm to setting rather than directly to a listed building itself, the degree to which the impact on the setting affects the reasons why it is listed.’

The judgment was endorsed by Lord Justice Lewison at the Court of Appeal, who stated that:

*‘It is also clear as a matter both of law and planning policy that harm (if it exists) is to be measured against both the scale of the harm and the significance of the heritage asset. Although the statutory duty requires special regard to be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a listed building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require planning permission to be refused’.*¹³

¹² Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, *op. cit.*, para.201

¹³ Court of Appeal (PALMER and HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL & ANR) in 2016 (Case No: C1/2015/3383)

4. Setting & Outline History

4.1 Hugh Town

Hugh Town on St. Mary's is the *de facto* capital of the Scilly Isles, an archipelago of many islands off the south-western extremity of Cornwall. There is evidence of settlement of the islands in prehistoric times and some evidence of contact with early classical civilisations prior to the conquest of most of the rest of Britain by the Romans in the 1st century CE.

Writing in the early-16th century, probably in the 1530's, the occasionally eccentric antiquary John Leland noted that St. Mary's was the largest of the Scilly Isles and that '*in it is a poore town and a neatly strong pile; but the roves [roofs] of the buildings in it be sore defaced and worn*'. He was presumably describing the original main settlement on the island, now the small village of Old Town on its south-eastern coast with the remnants of an ancient chapel.

Towards the end of the century, and after the establishment of Star Castle on the Heugh on the western side of St. Mary's as part of improved defences in light of Spanish aggression, a new settlement developed on the low spit of land between the main island and the new fortress which became Hugh Town. Initially serving the needs of the new garrison it became, and remains, the only town in the Islands. According to one writer at the end of the 18th century:

'Heugh Town is the capital of this island.....it is situated upon the low land of the isthmus, which joins the main part of the island to the high land of the garrison above the town.....The town consists of one long street, and two cross ones, of strong stone-built houses, where are shopkeepers, innkeepers and all sorts of trades-people required in the islands'.¹⁴

The 'town' was still, however, small and fairly insignificant and seemed to be in danger of decline after the main garrison left the islands after the threat of the Napoleonic Wars was over. Then, in 1834, the Crown lands on Scilly were leased by Augustus Smith who seemed to have a better attitude to the sub-tenants and encouraged growth. By the end of the decade the quay at Hugh Town had been extended and a new church had been built at the east end. The improvements were noted by visitors, including, for example, the Rev. North who 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 Porcrass, he will be impressed with a widely different feeling. He will find himself surrounded by houses with every token of cheerfulness and comfort.....'*¹⁵

According to *The Galaxy* magazine in 1868 there was on St. Mary's '*....a flourishing city consisting of one street and about two hundred houses, known to the Scillyian world as Hugh Town*'.

¹⁴ Troutbeck, J, 1796, *A Survey of the Ancient and Present State of the Scilly Islands*'

¹⁵ North, I W, 1850, *A Week in the Isles of Scilly*, 50

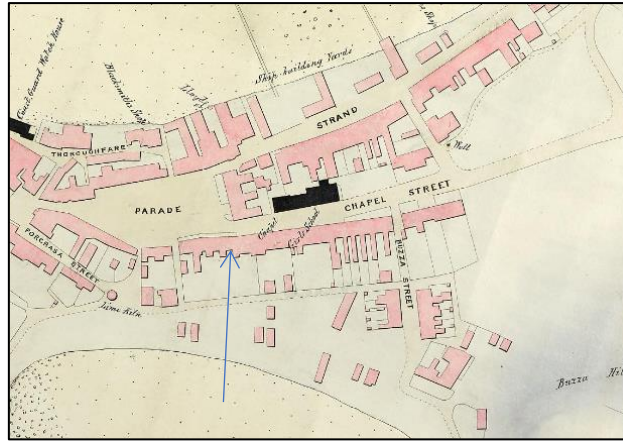


Fig.2: Extract from the 1862 plan of Hugh Town for the Hydrographic Office (site arrowed).



Fig.3: Extract from the 1906 revision of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map.



Pl.1: Mid-20th century aerial view of Hugh Town from the south.

4.2 Wingletang

Wingletang lies on the south side of the Parade and at its eastern end, close to where this side becomes a part of Church Street (the A3112). The archaeological evidence of the façade and the clear vertical construction breaks between it and its neighbours to either side show that it was not built as part of a planned terrace but was one of several properties built to maximise the available widths of their plots – becoming parts of an *ad hoc* terrace in the process.

This area was part of the early-19th extension eastwards of the core of Hugh Town, with the new church at its eastern extremity. This was one of the ‘*houses with every token of cheerfulness and comfort...*’ mentioned by the Rev. North in 1850.

It was presumably built in the second quarter of the century; a continuous row of houses – which must include Wingletang - is shown on the south side of the Parade and Church Street on the 1862 map of the town (*see* Fig.2).

The origin or date of the present name of the house name is unclear, but it may have been taken from Wingletang Down, now a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the south side of the nearby isle of St. Agnes. Little specific is known of the history of the house or its occupants, and identifying specific properties from the census returns is very difficult.

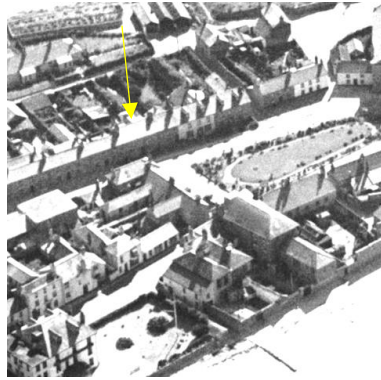
The 1st editions of the 6” Ordnance Survey map are of little use in understanding the development of the property. The 1:2500 mapping is more detailed and the 1906 revision shows a virtually square front range with a rear extension (*see* Fig.3).

Photographs of the late-1930’s, and particularly a series of aerial views of Hugh Town taken in 1938 reproduced in the Britainfromabove © project, show that at that time there were no dormers on the front, or north, slope of the roof and that there was a quite different dormer to the present one on the rear slope (*see* Pls.2-3).

They also show that there was a single-storey flat-roofed extension to the rear, centrally located, along with other outbuildings occupying virtually all of the rear garden area. At this stage all three of the rear windows on the first floor was still in use.

A later aerial view from the south, probably of the mid-1960’s, shows that the same dormer was in place, but that the attached extension seems to have been rebuilt as a two-storey range, still with a flat roof; this may be the core of the existing central section of the outbuildings (*see* Pl.4).

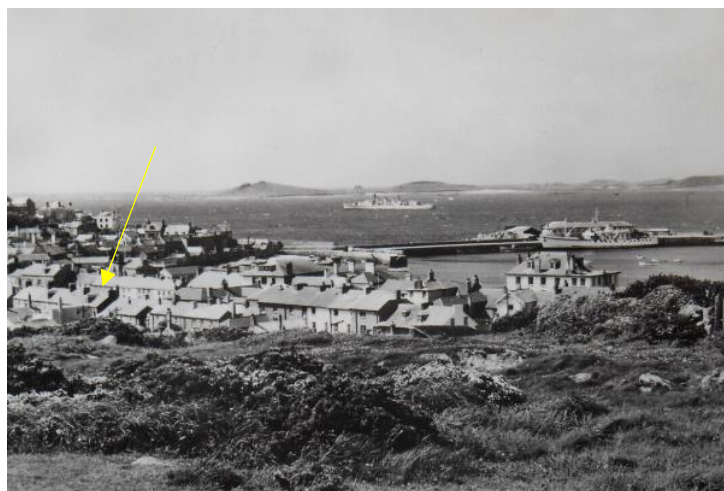
It is not clear exactly when the two mid-20th century dormers were added to the front roof slope, but these were presumably associated with changes identifiable in the present attic space that led to its incorporation into the overall domestic accommodation.



Pl.2: Extract from a rather poor quality 1938 aerial view of Hugh Town from the north-east. Nevertheless it is clear that Wingletang (arrowed) has no front dormers at this date.



Pl.3: 1938 aerial view of Hugh Town from the south-east; Wingletang, arrowed, now has a rear dormer and a single-storey flat-roofed extension with more buildings in the grounds.



Pl.4: View of Hugh Town from the south-east in the mid-1960's.¹⁶ By this time Wingletang (arrowed) has a two-storey flat-roofed rear extension.

¹⁶ The date range can be inferred from the inclusion in the background of what appears to be HMS Manxman, a WW2 minelayer but as rebuilt in this form as a support vessel between 1963 and 1969.



Pl.5: The Parade, looking east; Wingletang is arrowed.



Pl.6: Wingletang from the north-east, in context.

5. Description

The structural evidence and the available photographic and map evidence indicate that the property was originally a two-storey single-pile structure built parallel to the street and that the present southern half is of much later date – though also the result of a somewhat *ad hoc* development.

5.1 The Original House

5.1.1 The Exterior

5.1.1.01 The Front, or North, Elevation

Set back slightly behind a narrow forecourt with a low stone wall topped with railings of uncertain date, the front elevation is the only original elevation still external; the side ends were always abutted by other buildings and the original rear elevation is now largely hidden externally by the later outbuildings to the south.

The front elevation is faced in well-wrought and well-coursed granite blocks, probably as close to an ashlar finish that this stone is capable of. The course heights are even and the coursing continues to the ends of the elevation - at which points there are clear vertical construction breaks between the property and its neighbours. The property was thus quite independent to the adjacent properties despite being superficially part of a long terrace to the street.

The symmetrical façade is of two storeys and three bays; the central doorway has a semi-circular head of worked granite voussoirs with the merest hint of a central keystone. The door is of six panels, the upper two tiers now glazed; its date is uncertain. Above the doorway is a semi-circular fanlight with ‘bat’s wing’ pattern glazing.

To either side are broad but shallow bay windows with canted sides; these have projecting stone sills. Their cornices do not exactly match, indicating a degree of alteration or repair. Each has horned balanced sashes – of 5x2 pattern in the main windows and 1x2 in the returns. It is unclear if these bays are original.

The three first-floor windows have flat and flush lintels coursed into the facing masonry and projecting stone sills. They contain almost flush balanced sashes of 3x2 pattern set in timber surrounds; those in the centre and to the left are un-horned, but the sashes of the right-hand one are horned and thus probably replacements. The horned sashes of that window are similar to the balanced sashes in the pair of dormer gables in the front roof slope – though these are of 4x2 pattern. The dormers have stone tiled cheeks and hipped roofs and are known not to have existed before the mid-20th century.

5.1.1.02 The Gable Ends

As noted above the building abutted others to either side so that the gable ends were never external. They are both topped by brick-built ridge chimneys.



Pl.7: The front, or north, elevation of Wingletang.



Pl.8: The attic of Wingletang, showing altered trusses.

5.1.1.03 The Rear, or South, Elevation

Most of the rear elevation is abutted by the much later additions on this side of the house, but there is sufficient evidence in the fabric and in old photographs to show that this was originally a three-bay elevation with a central doorway on the ground floor. This survives, stripped out, and provides the main access between the original and later elements of the property.

The eastern windows on the ground and first-floor survive, although altered; on the west side the ground-floor window has been converted into a connecting doorway into the rear wing but its splayed reveal demonstrates that it was originally a window opening. The window opening on the first-floor above survives, in an altered fashion. On this elevation there is a central dormer lighting the attic level; this may be the reworking of the dormer shown on aerial photographs of 1938.

5.1.2 The Roof

The roof is plain gabled and covered in Delabole slate. Structurally it is of five bays with altered trusses. The trusses originally consisted of principal rafters with scissored top junctions supporting butt purlins. Given the relatively shallow pitch of the roof it is assumed that the trusses originally had collars.

However, the present collars set just below the apex are not original and are bolted in place on one face of the principals. Additionally, several purlins have been cut through to make room for the dormers. It is assumed that these changes were made when the attic floor was fully incorporated into the domestic accommodation of the property – probably in the mid-20th century.

5.1.3 The Interior

5.1.3.01 The Ground Floor

The interior accommodation was presumably just on the ground and first floor levels and has been altered. The central entrance hall and the location of the stairs to the rear of it are probably primary.

The only decorative feature is the arched opening through the thin spine wall between the entrance hall and stair halls and the doorcase – but not the glazed door – from the hall into the front west room or lounge. The ceiling cove, papered ceiling and papered dado all look modern.

It appears that there were originally front and rear rooms on either side of this central core. The present dining room to the east of the hallway now stretches from the front wall to the original rear wall – and a window looking into the modern lightwell. However, its size is the result on the intervening section of the spine wall being removed, leaving a down-stand in the ceiling.



Pl.9: The entrance hall, looking south to the stairs.



Pl.10: The dining room, looking south.

This room is accessed through another modern glazed door from the stair hall but there is surviving evidence for the blocked doorway from the hallway into the original front room. That opening is covered in modern match-boarding incorporating shelving and similar match-boarding is used on the slightly projecting chimney breast (with no fireplace or chimneypiece) on the east side and in the reveal of the northern bay window.

The western front room is lit by the second bay in the street front, its reveal treated with the same modern match-boarding as that used in the dining room. The plain sections of skirting and the dado rail in this room could be primary but there are no other features of note and the décor is mainly modern; there are no indications of any primary cornice. Projecting from the west wall the chimney-breast has been stripped back to the bare worked granite blocks and there is no chimney-piece.

The heavily modernised western rear room is no longer accessed off the stair hall but has become part of the owner's apartment – most of which is within the modern rear extension. Access between the room and the rest of the apartment is through a doorway formed from the original rear window. The room has no fixtures or features of note.



Pl.11: The western front room on the ground-floor.

5.1.3.02 The Stairs

The stairs within the Original House are probably in their primary location and the basic carcass of the treads and risers up to the first-floor could be original. However, they have been much altered.

The match-boarding beneath the solid string of the first flight and the infill beneath that flight to the rear are not original – and nor is the odd horizontal match-boarding of the west side of the stair hall or the clumsy skirting on the wall side of the stairs. The basal columnar timber newel could be original, as could parts of the moulded hand-rail – but the balusters clearly are not. These are round and irregularly spaced and are probably quite modern – possibly associated with the necessary changes made to the stairs as a whole once the rear extensions had been raised to a full two storeys in the mid-20th century.

The first flight leads to a quarter landing from which steps of differing risings and goings lead to the first-floor of the Original Range and – through a doorway created out of the original landing window – into the Extensions. All of this work is clearly of the 20th century, including the partial boxing in of the original first-floor landing and the continuation of the stairs up to the present attic level.



Pl.12: The base of the main stairs; note odd balusters and boxing.

5.1.3.03 The First Floor

The stairs would have led up originally to a first-floor landing, presumably with a short section of balustrade – but all of that was altered when the additional boxed flight of stairs up to the attic floor was created in the mid-20th century. The rest of the original layout of the first floor has been altered and some of the partitions at this level appear to be of plaster-board on stud, indicating significant changes. At present there are two rooms to the front – of different sizes – and two to the rear, flanking the stairs; all have modern *en suites* formed by plaster-boarded partitions.

The rear rooms are accessed off the landing and are lit by windows in the rear wall looking into light-wells. Neither have any fixtures or features of note but it is evident that both were once heated – as there are projecting chimney breasts from the gable ends. The two modernised front rooms are presently accessed off a small central lobby reached through a doorway off the landing. However, the walls of the lobby, the western section of the spine wall, and the dividing wall between the two front rooms all seem to be of plasterboard on stud.

The eastern front room is slightly larger than the other – being lit by two, instead of three, windows in the façade. Its eastern window has a full-height reveal with primary plainly moulded architrave; the other does not. The window to the western room also has a full-height reveal with architrave. This could imply that there were originally two heated front bedrooms – each lit by the windows with the full architraves – with an unheated closet with plainer window in between them.



Pl.13: The eastern front first-floor bedroom; note architrave only to the right-hand window.

5.1.3.04 The Attic

The stairs up to the attics are evidently quite modern, as is the present arrangement of the attic and the manner in which they are lit by dormer gables in the front and rear roof slopes. Apart from a single bathroom at the eastern end, the attic level is a single open space – made possible as living space by the changes to the original trusses and the introduction of the dormers. There are no fixtures or features of note at this level.

5.2 The Rear Extensions

The Rear Extensions date to the mid-20th century, with later alterations. They consist of a main two-storey central section abutting the rear wall of the Original House; this is rendered sand painted under a flat roof with modern uPVC casement windows.

To the west is another two-storey block of similar detailing; this projects slightly further to the south of the main section but, at its northern end, has a single storey portion, also flat-roofed, abutting the rear of the Original House to create a light-well at first-floor level. To the east of the central main range is a probably later single-storey range under a lean-to roof; this is faced in plastic or timber horizontal match-boarding and there is a gap between its northern end and the rear elevation of the Original House to create another light-well.

The interiors of these extensions are all modern and the partitions within them mostly of plaster-board on stud – apart from those walls formed by the original outline of the central section, which appears to have predated the rest. There are no fixtures or features of note.



Pl.14: The southern elevations of the Rear Extensions.

6. Discussion & Heritage Statement

Wingletang is a much altered and extended property in the heart of Hugh Town, and has been considered to be of sufficient heritage value to warrant a Grade II listing. It appears to have originally been built in the second quarter of the 19th century and although of a completely separate build, formed part of an irregular terrace of properties along the south side of the Parade and Church Street.

It would originally been of two storeys and two rooms deep with a three-bay elevation to both front and rear elevations. The front elevation is faced with presumably locally quarried granite, extremely well worked and carefully coursed and almost achieving the quality of ashlar so difficult to reach in such an unyielding material. In this respect, whilst of similar size to its neighbours, its masonry was superior.

In terms of status it was probably just over the threshold for a lower middle class of the period in the Islands and, in terms of its date, represents part of the improvements and growth of Hugh Town following Augustus Smith leasing the Crown lands on St. Mary's.

Alterations and extensions to the rear had begun by the 1930's, initially with a single-storey flat-roofed extension. That had been raised by the 1960's and other additions were subsequently made and the attic level colonised as part of the domestic accommodation. It is also the case that the southern ends of the grounds of the property were, like those of its neighbours, lost to new development of the small parallel lane created between these properties and the beach to the south.

Evidently the house has been further modernised in the fairly recent past and as a result of this long period of cumulative change there are now very few fixtures or fittings of note within the building and the character of the original rear elevation had been obscured and lost. The façade to the street, however, except for the mid-20th century dormers in the roof, remains almost intact.

It is suggested that, in heritage terms, it is that façade that retains most of the intrinsic architectural and historical value of the building – along with the forecourt wall and railings. It represents a good exemplar of the type of terraced town house property in Hugh Town of its date and respects its immediate neighbouring properties – most of which appear to be of a broadly similar date.

This façade, in its scale, massing and material palette, makes a very positive contribution to the character of the all-pervading conservation area and of the significance of the settings of its neighbours.

The basic carcass and roof of the Original House is also important historically because of the date of the house but little of the surviving fixtures or fittings of the interior have a great deal of merit and the basic plan form has been altered. There are a few surviving primary moulded architraves to doorways or window reveals, some fragments of original skirting board, a decorative plastered arch between hall and stairs, and some sections of original balustrade to the stairs. Otherwise there is little surviving – no primary doors, no cornices (if any existed), no chimneypieces, etc. Consequently the interior is rather disappointing in heritage terms.

7. The Proposals

Proposals have been developed to repair and refurbish the property as well as for improvements the interior – and in particular to the staircase. This has, as outlined above, been subjected to change to its fabric and to its overall design and character, especially when extended up from the first-floor to the attics in the mid-late 20th century. As a result of those changes it now has variable height risers and goings – the former varying from between 100 to 240mm and clearly contrary to building regulations. A better and simpler stair is proposed with associated changes to the access arrangements.

The only major external changes – and difficult if not impossible to see from the public domain – is the creation of larger glazed openings with integral glazed doors in the south gable ends of the two two-storey flat-roofed sections of the Rear Extensions and in the removal of the northern part of the single-storey portion of the western part of the Rear Extensions abutting the Original House in order to create a full light-well. Associated with this the present ground-floor access from the Original House into this section will be restored back into a window – as it was originally – and the adjacent flank of the central section of the Rear Extensions will be glazed and fitted with a doorway.

As part of the proposed new stair the present adapted openings between the Original House and the Rear Extensions will be slightly widened. On the ground-floor the present doorway from the hallway into the front western room will be slightly widened as part of the creation of an assisted bedroom facility; in addition a new doorway will be inserted between this room through the spine wall into an *en suite* formed in the western part of the rear room – separated from a WC by an inserted partition.

On the first-floor in the Original House the modern *en suites* will be removed. A new *en suite* will be formed between the two front rooms – in the possible location of an original close (*see above*) – with new partitions and serve the eastern room. The western room will be served by a new *en suite* in the western part of the adjacent rear room – with a new door needed through the spine wall. A small section of original rear wall will be removed to allow for a doorway between the south-eastern bedroom and a new *en suite* in the Rear Extensions. The attics will be refurbished and all other changes are within the Rear Extensions.

8. Heritage Impact Assessment

8.1 Impact on the Listed Building

Wingletang is a Grade II listed building. As noted above (in Section 6) its main significance is considered to be historical and architectural but confined to the Original House and, especially, to the principal façade. That façade is of intrinsic architectural merit and an important contributor to the character of the conservation area and the settings of adjacent heritage assets. The rear elevations are dominated by the Rear Extensions, which are of no architectural merit or historical significance. The interior of the Original Range has limited heritage value, with few fixtures or fittings of note surviving and a much-altered plan form.

The proposals will result in no change or harm to the principal elevation of the property or to its external scale and massing and the internal changes for the Original House are relatively minor and to an already altered layout.

Whilst there will be a degree of change to the interior, such change is not considered to equate to harm – substantial or less than substantial – due to the already altered nature of the interior and the absence of significant fixtures or fittings.

Superficially it may seem that the loss of the stairs and their replacement could result in a degree of less than substantial harm because of the loss of fabric and an historic feature of the listed building – but as outlined above, little of the stair is original and the whole design has been much altered to create access up to the attics. Even the one section of partly original balustrade is only partly original and has been significantly altered.

Overall it is considered that the remnants of the stair are of insufficient heritage value to warrant retention given the inherent danger of the stair access as a whole. Even should any harm be inferred there is a clear benefit in providing a safer stair that meets building regulations and enhances the optimum viable use of the building as a dwelling; enhancing that use in turn helps to ensure the long-term future of the listed building.

Other proposed changes to the interior of the older Original House are considered to be relatively minor in their impact and can be seen as part of the continuous changes made to the interior over the past century or so. None of the changes to the interior or exterior of the Rear Extensions are considered to result in any harm to the character or significance of the listed building.

8.2 Impact on Adjacent Heritage Assets

There are many listed buildings close to Wingletang and others that could be considered as non-designated heritage assets. However, as is clear from the proposals, there will be no changes, other refurbishment, to the public elevations of the building and therefore no change to its relationship with these adjacent heritage assets. There will therefore be no change to the significance of the settings of these assets and consequently, no harm could ensue – substantial or less than substantial. Consequently, neither Section 66 of the 1990 Planning Act nor Sections 201-203 of the National Planning Policy Framework would be engaged.

8.3 Impact on the Conservation Area

Uniquely, all of the Scilly Isles are a designated conservation area. Wingletang's façade makes a positive contribution to the character and significance of the conservation area – but will not be changes as a result of these proposals. None of the other changes to the exterior of the Rear Extensions will be visible from the public domain.

Given these facts it is clear that the proposals will result in no change, or harm, to the character or significance of the conservation area and that therefore Section 72 of the 1990 Planning Act would not be engaged.

8.4 Archaeological Issues

All of the proposals are for the standing buildings will no need of any significant groundworks. Therefore it is considered that there would be no archaeological implications as a result of these proposals.

9. Conclusions

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the proposals for Wingletang are well-designed and proportionate and will result in no harm to the character, setting or significance of the building, or to adjacent designated or non-designated heritage assets, or to the conservation area. Overall it is considered that, instead, the proposals would result in a general enhancement of the listed building and its existing optimum viable use – helping to ensure its long-term future.

In the recent past, planning guidance has recognised that change to historic buildings and their settings is part of their history and that buildings are not and should not be fossilised. The prospect of change, even to listed buildings, is anticipated in the government's *National Planning Policy Framework*, but was more clearly expressed in earlier guidance from 1996, *Planning Policy Guideline No.15* (PPG 15).

That document stated – in relation to listed buildings that:

'Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses. Indeed, cumulative changes reflecting the history of use and ownership are themselves an aspect of the special interest of some buildings, and the merit of some new alterations or additions, especially where they are generated within a secure and committed long-term ownership, should not be discounted.'

This echoes the statement in the pioneering 2008 document, *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* that: *'Change in the historic environment is inevitable, caused by natural processes, the wear and tear of use, and people's responses to social, economic and technological change'*.

Furthermore, conservation areas are not designed to stifle development but to guide development so that it does not impact adversely on the area's special character. This is echoed in the foreword to the current Historic England guidance which states that:

'Change is inevitable. This guidance sets out ways to manage change in a way that conserves and enhances historic areas through conservation area designation, appraisal and management'.¹⁷

The guidance of the revised National Planning Policy Framework also states that:

'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably'.

That change to conservation areas does not equate to harm in law was also made clear in one of the key High Court judgements related to conservation areas by Lord Bridge, related to developments within conservation areas, *South Lakeland District Council vs. Secretary of State for the Environment*.

He stated that whilst all developments within a conservation area *'must give a high priority to the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area'*, where a development would not have any adverse impact and met other planning requirements:

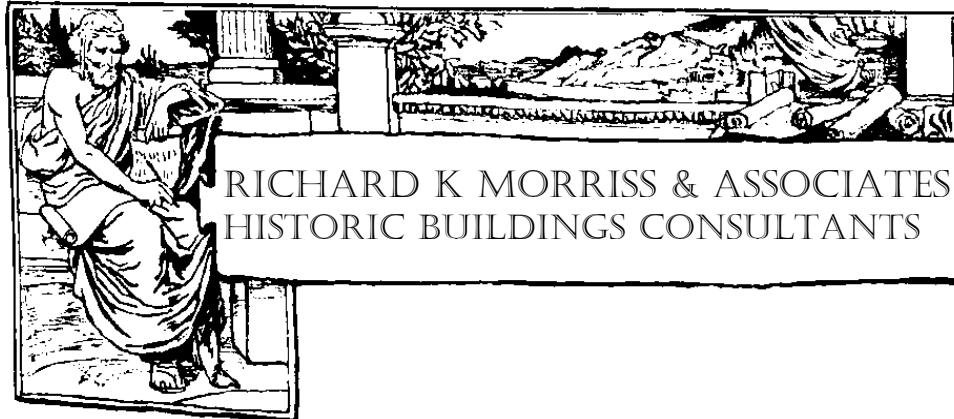
'.... One may ask rhetorically what possible planning reason there can be for refusing to allow it. All building development must involve change and if the objective of Section 277(8) [of the 1971 Planning Act, substantially the same as Section 72(1) of the 1990 Act] were to inhibit any building development in a conservation area which was not either a development by way of reinstatement or restoration on the one hand ('positive preservation') or a development which positively enhanced the character or appearance of the area on the other hand, it would surely have been expressed in very different language...'.¹⁸

¹⁷ EH

¹⁸ 1992, *South Lakeland District Council vs. Secretary of State for the Environment*

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The Consultancy

Richard K Morriss founded this Consultancy in 1995 after previously working for English Heritage and the Ironbridge Institute of the University of Birmingham and spending eight years as Assistant Director of the Hereford Archaeology Unit. Although Shropshire-based the Consultancy works throughout the UK on a wide variety of historic buildings for clients that include the National Trust, the Landmark Trust, English Heritage, the Crown Estates, owners, architects, local authorities, planning consultants and developers. It specialises in the archaeological and architectural analysis of historic buildings of all periods and planning advice related to them. It also undertakes heritage impact assessments and broader area appraisals and Conservation Management Plans.

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He was a member of the project teams responsible for the restoration of Astley Castle, Warwickshire, winner of the 2013 RIBA Stirling Prize; the restoration of the Old Market House, Shrewsbury, winner of a 2004 RIBA Conservation Award; and Llwyn Celyn, Monmouthshire, winner of the RICS Conservation Project of the Year 2019. He has also been involved in several projects that have won, or been short-listed for, other awards including those of the Georgian Group for Mostyn House, Denbigh; St. Helen's House, Derby; Radbourne Hall, Derbyshire and Cusgarne Manor, Cornwall.



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