

# Heritage Statement

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## 1.1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework, Para. 128 requires “*applicant(s) 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 proposal on their significance*”.
- 1.1.2 This Heritage Statement assesses the impact of the proposed works at the former Secondary school, Carn Thomas, St Mary’s. The works proposed involve the demolition of the existing school and the erection of hoarding along part of the site facing the coast. The building is located on the western side of Hugh Town and is sited within close proximity of a number of listed buildings. This proposed demolition could have the potential to impact upon the significance of these heritage assets. Consideration also needs to be given to the impact on the conservation area which covers the entirety of the Isles of Scilly.
- 1.1.3 Para 137 states that “*Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas... and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance*”. As such any proposal that better reveals or makes a positive contribution to heritage assets should be treated favourably.

## 1.2. Significance of the Heritage Assets

### Conservation Area

- 1.2.1 In 1975, the whole of the Isles of Scilly was designated as a Conservation Area. In 2015, the Isles of Scilly Council published a Conservation Area Character Appraisal (Supplementary Planning Document) Draft. This document included an analysis of the most important buildings and areas of St Mary’s.
- 1.2.2 Consideration of the marine and maritime context of the islands provides important background to the physical and historic environment. The architecture of the islands are noted as being “varied”. The buildings are predominantly two storey double fronted with traditional sliding sash windows, central doors and internal chimneys. The roofs are often of slate, including wet laid scantle, which is a traditional roof covering in Scilly.
- 1.2.3 The Character Appraisal comments that the use of unsympathetic materials, including uPVC instead of timber for windows and doors, has been harmful to the character of the conservation area, and particularly, but not exclusively, when used in traditional buildings.

- 1.2.4 The Harbour and Town Beach are the main views on arrival. As such this should be an important consideration in conjunction with any alterations to this vista. Views from the airport and from the harbour are key to first impressions of visitors (See Image 1).

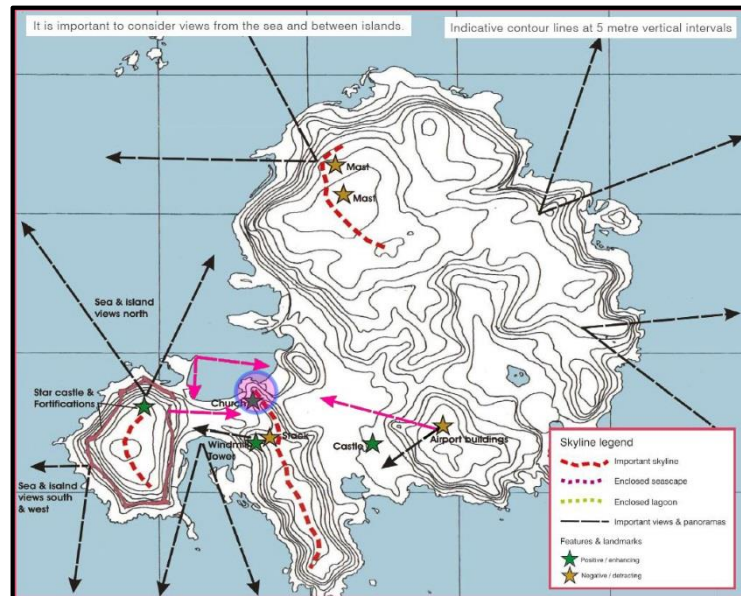


Image 1 - Image to Illustrate Key Views (Pink) Affecting the Site

- 1.2.5 The Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey project (2002-2005) provided a framework for sustainable regeneration in 19 historic towns. One of these key areas included St Mary's and made reference to the secondary school and SWEB power station. It noted that any redevelopment of these sites will need to enhance the character of the area. This can be achieved through appropriate scale, height and incorporation of strong landscaping and plant elements to reinforce the green natural component of the character area.

#### Listed Buildings

- 1.2.6 The former Carn Thomas Secondary School is situated along Telegraph Road, close to the centre of Hugh Town. The buildings are not listed and are not adjoined to any listed buildings. However, the site does lie in close proximity to a number of buildings that are listed, all within a 150m radius (See Image 2).



Image 2 - Image Indicating Listed Buildings (Blue) & the Sites Boundary (Red)

1.2.7 The proposed works comprise the demolition of the existing Secondary School. As such an analysis of the effect of this upon the listed buildings in close proximity is required. The buildings potentially affected are as follows:

- Church of St Mary's (Church Road) (See Appendix A);
- Wall and gateway to west of church of St Mary's (Church Road) (See Appendix B);
- Lead cistern to north of west door of the Church of St Mary's (Church Road) (See Appendix C);
- Lead cistern to south of west door of Church of St Mary's (Church Road) (See Appendix D);
- The Chaplaincy (Church Road) (See Appendix E);
- Gateway to west of The Chaplaincy (Church Road) (See Appendix F); and
- Church Of St Mary (Methodist) (Church Street) (See Appendix G).

1.2.8 The **Church of St Mary** (See Image 3) occupies a site on the north-western side of Church Road at the end of Church Street. The church's construction began in 1836 and was completed in 1838. The church has been Grade II listed since February 1975.



Image 3 - St Marys Church, Church Road



- 1.2.9 The church contains a number of significant features. It exhibits coursed granite ashlar and a stone-coped gabled slate roof. The list description further notes the chancel, nave and bell tower of heritage merit. The windows that make up the entrance, the length of the nave, and the chancel are also noted as important features.
- 1.2.10 Other items, that can be classed as ancillary to the Church of St Mary, include the lead water cisterns (See Image 4), to north of west door of the Church of St Mary's and the cistern to south of west door of Church of St Mary's, both dated back to 1727. They provide an important insight into the history of the area, however, it must be noted they were originally located at Star Castle.



*Image 4 - Lead Cisterns at the Church of St Mary's*

- 1.2.11 Additionally, the wall and gateway fronting the church of St Mary (See Image 5), featuring coursed and dressed granite wall with flat coping and the original wrought iron gates, have been included for group value.



*Image 5 - Gates at the front of St Mary's Church*

- 1.2.12 To the south-west of St Mary's Church (Church Road), lies The Chaplaincy (Rectory), which was built in circa 1830. Its notable features include: rendered granite, hipped slate roof, 4 window range, pilaster surround in between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> bays, pilastered porch with 6 panelled door and a variety of sash windows (See image 6).



*Image 6 - The Chaplaincy & Listed Gateway*

- 1.2.13 Separately listed from the Chaplaincy is the gateway, leading to its west facing façade, which similar to the Church of St Mary's gates has been listed for inclusive value. It features most notably 2 (no.) dressed granite piers with pyramidal caps and a decorative wrought-iron gate.
- 1.2.14 A few metres south-east, opposite the Church of St Mary's (Church Road), lies the **Methodist Church of St Mary** (Church Street). This church is of very similar materials and style as seen in image 7.



*Image 7 - St Mary's Methodist Church (Church Street)*

- 1.2.15 The Methodist church presents square coursed granite and has a slate roof. These features seem common in the ecclesiastical building types in the area. Above the central tripartite lancet is an inscription and above that a trefoil cast-iron ventilator. The length of the façade fronting Church Street has 4 lancets.



- 1.2.16 Finally, facing the coast are a set of early/mid-19th Century terraced cottages (See image 8). They all use coursed granite rubble with gabled slate roofs. The individuality of the cottages are created through differing styles of windows.



*Image 8 - Cottages 1 to 10, High Strand*

### 1.3. Impact Assessment

#### Impact on the Conservation Area

- 1.3.1 The modern look of the larger west building creates a clear divide from the existing historic assets in the area. These assets contribute to an historic settlement.
- 1.3.2 The current buildings proposed for demolition are prominent in the street, alien to the traditional form and scale of buildings and can be considered as detrimental to the character of the surrounding area. The school's location on the eastern edge of Hugh Town is prominent, especially given it is visible from 3 separate key viewpoints of the island. The majority of buildings in Hugh Town are predominantly two storey double fronted with traditional roofs (See image 9).



*Image 9 - Image to Illustrate Detriment to the Conservation Area*

- 1.3.3 It is for this reason that the demolition of the school should be seen as beneficial to the character of the conservation area as a whole. The building, whilst serving an important function over the years, is now vacant and whilst it provides an example of 1960's buildings which is not a style that benefits the locality.

### **Impact on the Listed Buildings**

- 1.3.4 There is little intervisibility between the listed buildings identified within 150 metres of the site, so the impact of the demolition of the school on the setting of these historic assets will not be significant. The school provides no historic merit or character, worth preserving. Its demolition will therefore have no significant impact on the surrounding listed buildings.