

## Heritage Impact Assessment – Shearwater House: Rebuilding of Right Chimney Stack

### Background: Shearwater House and historical significance:



(N.B. Reference to brick chimney stacks is highlighted)

Shearwater is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century, mid terrace house, listed under entry number 1141194. The property is described as in the listing as follows:

*“House. Early C19. Roughly coursed granite rubble with pebbledash render front; gabled slate roof; brick end stacks. Double-depth plan with central entry and staircase. 2 storeys with attics; symmetrical 3-window range. Trellis work porch to front of C20 door with overhead. Ground floor has 2 slightly-bowed tripartite sashes with glazing bars, of c1900; first-floor 6/6-pane sashes; 2 hipped attic dormers with similar sashes and slate-hung cheeks. Interior: panelled dados to bay windows, with reeded cornices and moulded wood architraves; ovolo-moulded joists to first floor; iron-bolted A-frame trusses, typical of C19 Scillonian construction. Subsidiary features: mid C19 decorative cast-iron railings to front. “*

For many years the property has been used as a guest house for seasonal holiday visitors to the islands, with self-contained owner's accommodation at the rear in a mid 1990's timber-framed extension. Now in new ownership, the property is occupied as a private dwelling and for self-catering holiday accommodation as a single unit.

The house has been extensively altered internally over the years, consistent with its use as guest house accommodation. This includes the conversion of one of the reception rooms into a ground floor bedroom with en-suite facilities, and the addition of dado rails, skirting boards, architraves & fireplace inconsistent with its original period. Probably as a result of its use as commercial (guest house) premises, many of the

alterations carried out at Shearwater over the years have been out of character and completed to a poor standard.

The current owners are currently working to sympathetically renovate and improve the accommodation, to provide family accommodation suitable for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, whilst retaining the character of the property. As part of this programme, in late 2017 permission was sought, and granted, to make internal alterations and improvements, including those required to bring the property back into use as a private domestic dwelling. This work is currently in its final stages (completion scheduled for March 2018).

The chimney stacks are of brick construction. We are not aware of any work that has been carried out on the chimneys in the past (having checked the planning and LBC files back as far as they are available).

#### **Background: State of Chimney Stack:**

In the course of the current work, the removal of internal decorative panels in the attic room exposed the current condition of the wall supporting the right hand (as viewed from the park on The Parade at the front of the property) chimney stack. This chimney stack is on top of a party wall with the adjoining property on The Parade, "Hamewith". The adjoining property is managed by the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association.

After consultation on site with Building Control, the managers of the adjacent adjoining property, and contractors, it was agreed that the condition of the top of the gable wall underneath the stack is vulnerable to collapse, and is therefore not satisfactory. The photos below shows the current condition of the supporting wall, indicating the loose or missing stonework/bricks, leaving the ridge and upper purlins not properly supported.







It was concluded that in order to ensure that the stack remains secure, it requires rebuilding as soon as is practical, along with the stack itself (as this would be required if the wall below is rebuilt).

This work is required in order to make the stack and the party wall safe, and also to safeguard the rest of the property and the chimney itself, as considerable damage would be caused should the stack collapse.

### **Proposals:**

- Based on advice from Building Control and experienced contractors, and also the Ian Sibley, the Chartered Surveyor acting as our local agent, we are proposing that there is an immediate need to rebuild the right hand chimney stack, along with the supporting wall immediately underneath it, in order to ensure the stack remains secure and safe, and that the rest of the listed property is appropriately protected from damage should the stack collapse.
- We would propose to rebuild the stack to its current design.
- Where possible, existing materials will be reused, and where they are found to be too damaged to be reused safely, they will be replaced with materials very closely matched to the original brick.
- Once completed, we would not anticipate that it would be apparent from the street level external view of the property that a rebuild of the stack had taken place. We would also therefore not expect there to be any visible difference from street level between the right stack and the remaining left stack.

### **Heritage Statement**

We consider the changes detailed are necessary for reasons of both safety, and also for the safeguarding of the stack and the rest of the listed building from damage in the future should the stack collapse. We also consider they will have no detrimental effect on the character of the property as a listed building.