

# **HERITAGE STATEMENT AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Automatic Dosing Shed**

**Vane Hill**

**Tresco**

**Isles of Scilly**

**By Dr Pip Parmenter**

**Date: 7/10/2018**

**Client: Tresco Estate**

**Planning Ref: P-18-069**

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Figure 1: Revised location of proposed shed (full plan in planning application)

Figure 2: Heritage Assets within the search area

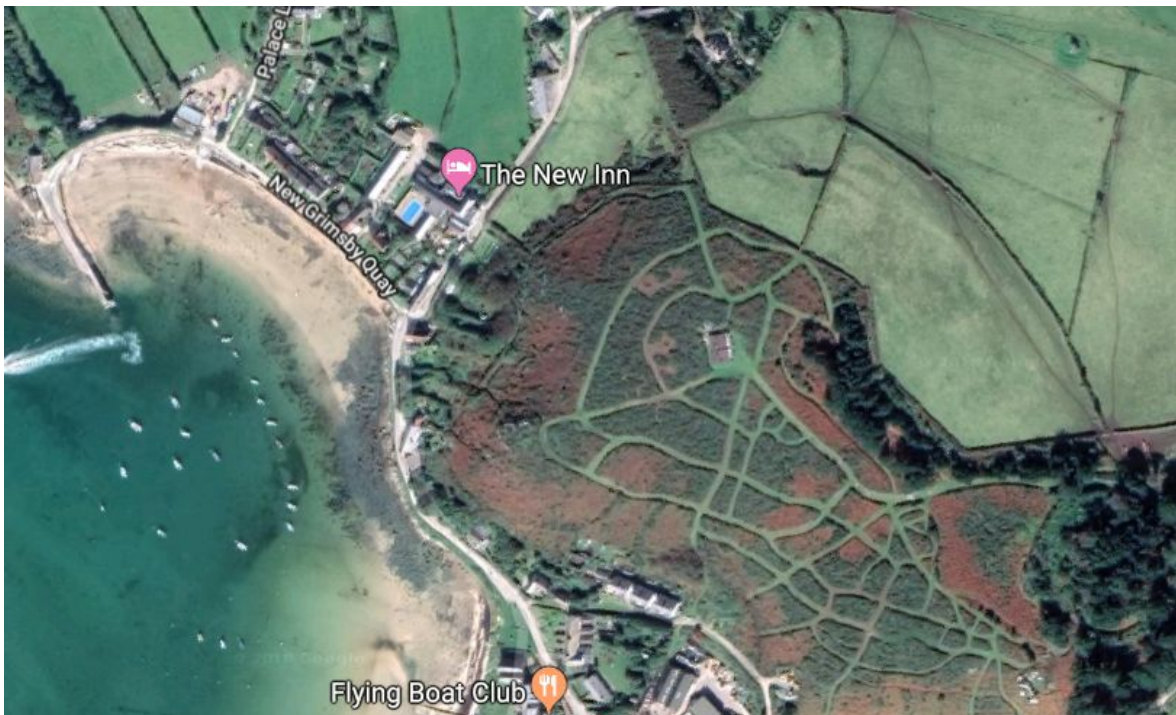
Figure 3: OS 1:25 inch (1892 - 1914)

## 1 Summary

*This Heritage Statement (HS) has been commissioned by Mrs Diana Mompoloki, on behalf of Tresco Estate and on the advice of the Council of the Isles of Scilly Planning Office, prior to the erection of an auto-water dosing shed adjacent to the existing reservoir on Vane Hill, Tresco, Isles of Scilly.*

*There are five heritage assets within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site (PDS). These include three scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs) - two individual platform cairns (1, 2) and a pair of platform cairns (3), as well as the footings of a 19th century coastguard lookout station (4). The remains of 19th century quarrying were recorded during the erection of the existing reservoir (5). The southernmost of the pair of platform cairns (3) is the closest of these assets to the PDS - it appears to have been truncated by the 19th century coastguard station. All extant assets are currently completely overgrown by gorse and bramble.*

*The PDS was originally within the boundary of the SAM comprising the pair of cairns, however it has subsequently been moved slightly to the south so now sits outside of this boundary. It remains within a known cairn cemetery and in close proximity to three SAMs so it is likely for there to be a requirement for archaeological work (probably a watching brief) during groundworks, however the PDS is now further from the SAM than the north-eastern corner of the reservoir itself (constructed in 2003), and will be dwarfed by this existing structure. This, and the fact that foundations are very shallow, limits the impact (physical and visual) of the development.*



Imagery@2018 Digital Globe, Map data@2018 Google

Plate 1: Aerial view of PDS

## 2 Introduction

This is a Heritage Assessment (HA) of the archaeological remains around a proposed development site adjacent to the reservoir on Vane Hill, Tresco, Isles of Scilly (Figure 1). It was commissioned by Mrs Diana Mompoloki on behalf of Tresco Estate and was researched and written by Dr Pip Parmenter in October 2018.

The search area used for this is 100m centered on point SV 8909 1518. Local geology is characterised by Igneous Intrusion, Carboniferous to Permian-Felsic Rock over an Igneous bedrock, with local intrusions of silica-rich (granitic) magma (BGS 2007).

This report follows the standards set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (CIfA 2014).

It should be noted that the survival of archaeological remains is difficult to predict. This assessment is based on *available evidence*. However, without further below-ground investigation of the site, there can be no absolute certainty as the presence/absence, form, date or condition of any archaeological remains discussed here.

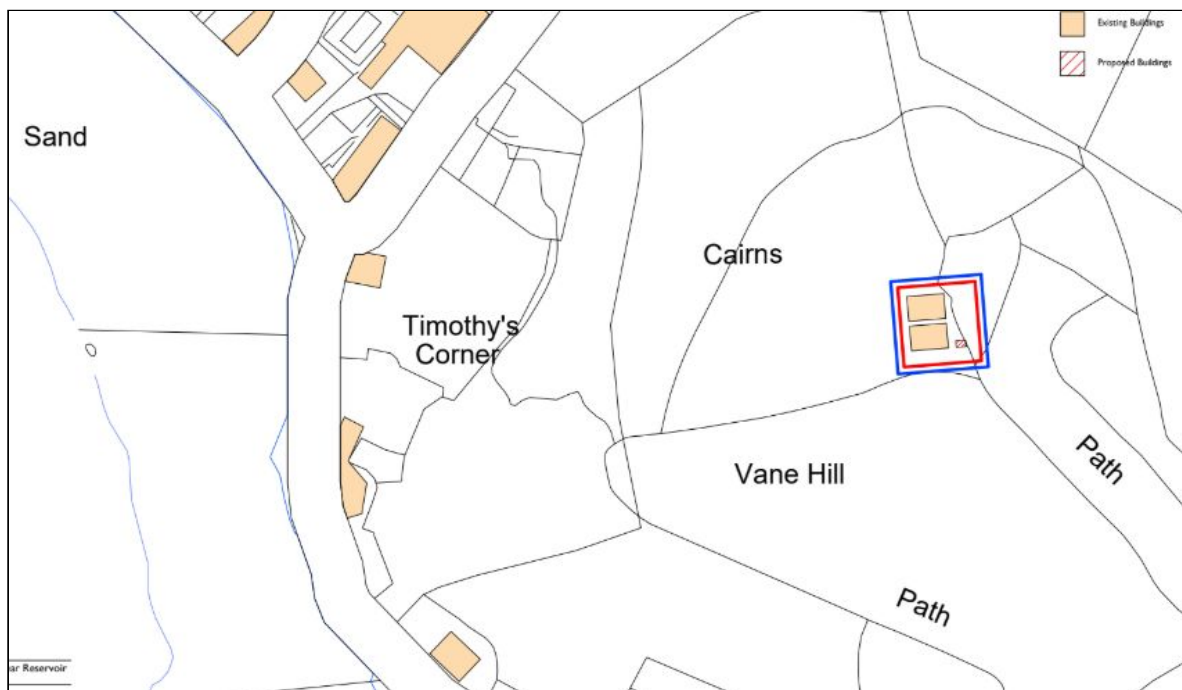


Figure 1: Revised location of proposed shed (full plan in planning application).

### 2.1 Requirement for the development

Tresco Estate supplies potable water to all the properties on Tresco from a reservoir located on the summit of Vane Hill. It is on the advice of the drinking water inspectorate that the Estate requires permission to erect a shed, adjacent to the reservoir, to house apparatus which will automatically check the water and decide on the chlorine dosing required.

### 3 Planning

The conservation of archaeological remains is of paramount importance in both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018) and the Isles of Scilly Local Plan (2005).

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”.

Paragraph 193 goes on to say “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.” Paragraph 196 states the following “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.”

Isles of Scilly Local Plan Policy 1 of the Isles of Scilly Local Plan states, ‘To ensure that all relevant development proposals respect and protect the recognised quality of the islands’ natural, archaeological, historic and built environment, they will be permitted only where, as applicable, they: b) Preserve nationally important archaeological remains and their settings’.

### 4 Aim and content

This Heritage Assessment includes a summaries of the historic landscape characterisation and archaeological and conservation designations to which the site is subject. It then briefly describes the sites present within the search area around the PDS, before assessing the significance of these assets and the likely impact the PDS will have on them. It finishes by recommending strategies for mitigating the impact of the shed on the historic environment.

The primary sources for the HA are:

- The *Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record* (HER) - which is the primary source for a survey of this type, listing all recorded find-spots of archaeological material in Essex, whether excavated sites or loose finds.

- The *Heritage Gateway* - which is the national database that gives lists of Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs), Listed Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, Listed Buildings, and other resources.
- The *Historic England* database - which provides detailed descriptions of heritage assets
- Cornwall Council Interactive Mapping - which is an interactive online map graphically illustrating heritage assets (including SAMs and undesignated assets).

As well as desk-based research, the PDS has been walked over and observed from height using a cherry-picker.

For the purposes of the HA, the 'search area' is defined as a 100m circle with the PDS at its centre.

## **5 Historic Landscape Characterisation**

In 1996 a Historic Landscape Assessment and Management Plan for Scilly was produced which contained a Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) of the islands. The HLC of the search area is mapped as being 'Rough Ground: Heathland' with 'Farmland: Anciently Enclosed Land' to the north, small areas of 'Farmland: Late Post-Medieval Enclosures' to the west and south-west and a swathe of 'Woodland: Conifer' to the east.

## **6 Archaeological Constraint Areas**

The PDS lies within an Archaeological Constraint Area (ACA). These are non-statutory designations which were introduced to Scilly in 1995 and defined by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit. It was intended that they would delineate areas of recorded archaeological and historical assets, in order to facilitate the impact of development within these areas (Cornwall Archaeological Unit 1995).

## **7 Conservation Designations**

The PDS, and the Isles of Scilly more generally, fall within three conservation designations; Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Conservation Area and Heritage Coast. The PDS is not designated as being a SSSI.

## **8 Heritage Assets in the search area**

There follows a list of all archaeological sites and finds, and other historical sites within the Search Area (shown on Figure 2). There are no Listed buildings, battlefields or Registered Parks or Gardens in the search area.

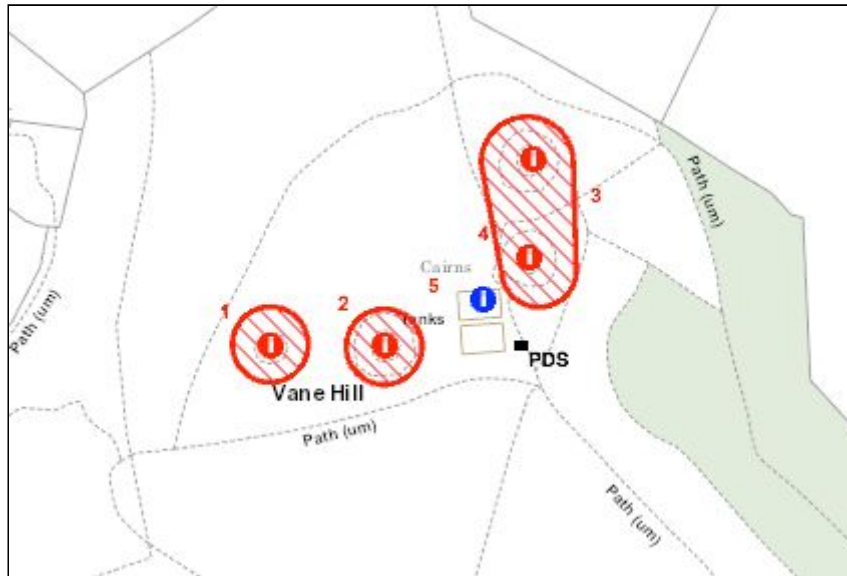


Figure 2: Heritage Assets within the search area

## 8.1 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

### **1. Scheduled Monument 15427: ROUND CAIRN 50M WSW OF VANE HILL SUMMIT, TRESCO NGR: SV 89029 15175**

**HER No: 7373.04**

**Historic England: 1013798**

The monument includes a prehistoric funerary round cairn (Cairn 'D') situated 50m WSW of the summit of Vane Hill, a prominent rounded hill south east of New Grimsby on central Tresco in the Isles of Scilly. This is the westernmost cairn in a dispersed group of four cairns spaced around the hill's summit. The round cairn survives as a circular mound of heaped rubble and earth, 8m in diameter and rising 0.7m high from the underlying westerly slope. The cairn shows no evidence for any previous disturbance. Beyond this monument, the other three cairns around the summit of Vane Hill form a curved linear group extending north eastwards from the nearest cairn, 20m to the east.

Sources:

Ordnance Survey, 1900s, *2nd Edition 1:2500 Map* (Cartographic materials). SCO4050.

Ordnance Survey, 1970s, *1:10,000 OS Map* (Cartographic materials). SCO4045.

Ashbee, P, 1974, *Ancient Scilly*, 310 (Bibliographic reference). SCO2739.

Russell, V, 1980, *Isles of Scilly Survey*, 39 (Bibliographic reference). SCO4312.

### **2. Scheduled Monument 15428: ROUND CAIRN 25M SW OF VANE HILL SUMMIT, TRESCO NGR: SV 89059 15174**

**HER No: 7373.03**

**Historic England: 1014777**

The monument includes a prehistoric funerary round cairn (Cairn 'C') situated 25m south west of the summit of Vane Hill, a prominent rounded hill south east of New Grimsby on central Tresco in the Isles of Scilly. This cairn is located west of centre in a dispersed group of four cairns spaced around the hill's summit. The round cairn survives as a shallow-domed circular mound of heaped rubble and earth, 13m in diameter and rising 1m high. The southern periphery of the mound



incorporates a large exposed slab, 2.9m long, north east-south west, by 0.75m wide and 0.5m high. The upper surface of the slab has a prominent frost- weathered hollow. Near the centre of the mound is a shallow hollow, 2m long, east-west, by 0.8m wide and generally 0.2m deep, almost certainly the result of an unrecorded antiquarian excavation. On the north side of the hollow is a slab, 1.3m long, 0.5m wide and 0.5m high; a smaller slab, 0.4m long by 0.2m wide, is visible as a surface exposure on the south west of the hollow. Both of these slabs are considered to derive from a central slab-built funerary structure. Beyond this monument, the other three cairns around the summit of Vane Hill form a curved linear group extending from a small cairn 20m to the west to two larger cairns from 30m to the north east.

**3. Scheduled Monument 15429: TWO PLATFORM CAIRNS NE OF VANE HILL SUMMIT, TRESCO**

**NGR: SV 89097 15210**

**HER No: 7373.01/2**

**Historic England: 1013799**



Plate 2: The southern of the pair of cairns within SAM 15429.



Plate 3: The northern of the pair of cairns within SAM 15429.



The monument includes two prehistoric funerary platform cairns situated close to the north east of the summit of Vane Hill, a prominent rounded hill south east of New Grimsby on central Tresco in the Isles of Scilly. These cairns form the north east part of a dispersed group of four cairns spaced around the hill's summit. The southern cairn (Cairn 'B') in this monument (Plate 2) contains the largely dismantled remains of a post-medieval coastguard lookout. The two platform cairns in this monument are spaced 12m apart on a north-south axis. The northern cairn (Cairn 'A', Plate 3) survives as a circular mound of heaped rubble and earth, 14.5m in diameter, with fairly steep sides rising 1.2m high to a flattened upper platform 8m in diameter. The platform surface contains some irregularities, many due to rabbit burrowing, but the eastern side contains a larger hollow, 5.5m long, north-south, by 2.5m wide and up to 0.4m deep, considered to be the result of relatively recent stone robbing. The southern cairn in the monument also survives with a circular mound of heaped rubble and earth, 13m in diameter and up to 1.7m high, rising to a small flattened platform, 5m in diameter. The northern and south eastern sides of the mound contain several hollows resulting from relatively recent stone robbing. One hollow, up to 0.7m deep, in the south west edge of the cairn corresponds with the northern corner of a post-medieval coastguard lookout whose dismantled walls are visible as slight grassy banks, generally 0.9m wide and 0.3m high, delineating an internal area 3m square, its sides facing north west-south east and north east-south west. The south east side appears to have been left open. Some irregular stone slabs from the walls' facing are visible in the vicinity. Also visible immediately north west of the lookout's remains is the debris of a much more recent and mostly demolished structure; one corner of this structure's north and east walls, built of mortared concrete blocks, survives in situ on the lower south west slope of the cairn. Beyond this monument, the other two cairns near the summit of Vane Hill form an east-west pair from 30m to the south west.

## 8.2 Non-Designated Sites

### 8.2.1 *Archaeological excavation, survey, or observation*

#### **4. POST-MEDIEVAL COASTGUARD LOOKOUT STATION**

**NGR: SV 8908 1518**

**HER No: 7377**



Plate 4: The ruined remains of the 19th century coastguard lookout station

A coastguard lookout station is cut into the side of cairn 'B' on Vane Hill (7373.02). The site was visited by CAU in 1988 and a structure, 3.0m square internally, with walls approx 0.9m wide and 3.0m high, was found. No coursing was visible, but large irregular blocks of stone appear to have

been used as facing. The SE end was open, presumably an entrance. The structure appeared to have been cut into the SW edge of the adjacent cairn to a depth of 0.5m to 0.7m.

## 5. POST-MEDIEVAL QUARRY ACTIVITY

NGR: SV 9080 5180

CAU project No: 2003039

Monitoring of the construction of a new water tank on the top of Vane Hill recorded 19th century quarrying only. Funded by the Tresco Estate.

## 9 Discussion of the Heritage Issues

There are five heritage assets within the search area. Three of these are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, comprising four platform cairns. The fourth is an undesignated site of the remains of a post-medieval coastguard station, which appears to have been cut into the side of one of the platform cairns and the fifth is 19th century quarrying activity, identified during the construction of the existing reservoir.

The four platform cairns on Vane Hill form a small cemetery group. They are funerary monuments dating to the early Bronze Age (c. 2000 - 1600 BC). They are low, flat-topped, rubble mounds, constructed over single or multiple burials. Some were as large as 40m in diameter (Field 2011), though the ones with which this report is concerned were significantly smaller than this, at between 8m and 14.5m in diameter. All of the cairns on Vane Hill survive as rubble mounds, only one (Cairn 'B' - to the west of the reservoir) has any large structural stones surviving. Cairn C has suffered from the impingement of a post-medieval coastguard lookout station on its south west edge.

The presence of four, extant platform cairns on Vane Hill makes it unlikely that any further cairns are present that are as yet unknown. The cairns have been recorded since at least the late 1800s (Figure 3). When the existing large reservoir was erected on the top of Vane Hill in 2003 the only archaeological remains encountered pertained to 19th century quarrying on the hilltop (Taylor 2004), possibly in advance of the construction of the coastguard's lookout.

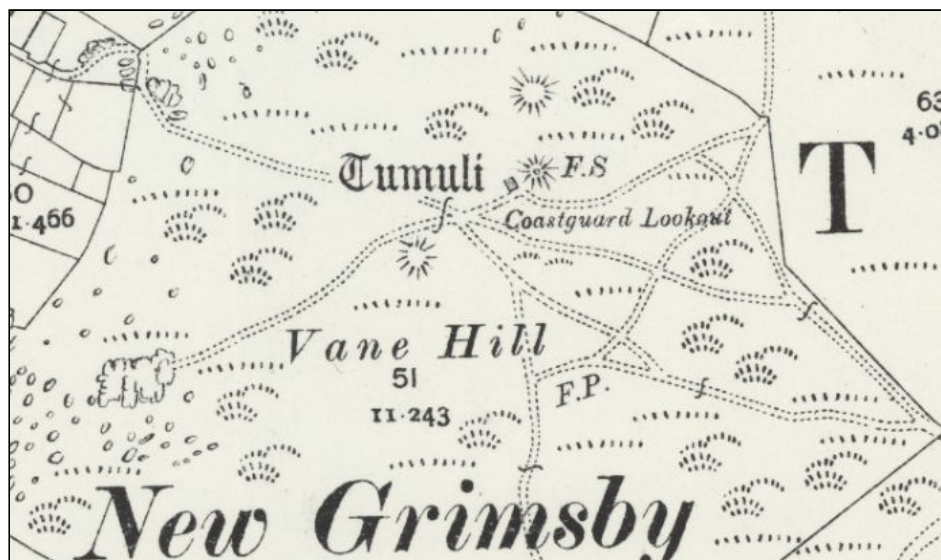


Figure 3: OS 1:25 inch (1892 - 1914)

## **10 Statement of Significance**

Scheduled Ancient Monuments are heritage assets of national significance, and according to National Planning Policy (2018) ‘any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.’. The PDS is located in close proximity to the three SAMs however is no longer within the bounds of any of them (Figure 2). The undesignated heritage assets in the vicinity of the PDS are both 19th century in origin. The coastguard station is almost entirely demolished, while the evidence of quarrying activity was removed by the construction of the reservoir in 2003. As such, these are deemed to be of negligible to low importance. The potential for the proposed development site to contain buried archaeological remains is considered low to moderate given it’s shallow foundation, though should any remains be encountered that are thought to be associated with the cairn cemetery, they would be of some importance.

## **11 Impact of the Proposed Development**

The impact of the proposed auto-dosing shed on the heritage landscape of Vane Hill, and in particular on the scheduled ancient monuments which occupy the summit of the hill can be judged with reference to Historic England’s good practice guide “The Setting of Heritage Assets” (Historic England 2017). Step 3 of this guide provides a checklist for considering the effect of proposed developments on heritage assets.

### **11.1 Form and appearance of development**

The client intends to erect a wooden shed on the PDS. This will be constructed on a concrete base, roughly 2m by 3m in size. It will have a pent roof and will be stained a brownish green colour in order that it be as inconspicuous as possible. It is anticipated that the bramble which currently covers the PDS will rapidly grow up at the sides of the shed. The shed will stand less than 3m tall, and will be dwarfed by the existing reservoir, and though it will be clearly visible from the top of the hill, it will be hidden from view from two of the four platform cairns present on the hill, and it will be partially obscured from another due to the topography of the summit. The only cairn from which it will be in full view is the one nearest the existing reservoir.

### **11.2 Location and siting of development**

As this Heritage Assessment has already outlined, the PDS sits in an area occupied by three scheduled ancient monuments. Two of these are around 50m to the west of the PDS and therefore will not be physically disturbed by the erection of the proposed structure. They are also obscured from view from the PDS by the large double-tanked reservoir which occupies the summit of Vane Hill (Plates 5 & 6), so it cannot be argued that they will be impacted visually by the development.





Plate 5: The existing reservoir with PDS opposite. Cairn 'B' is visible as the rise to the rear of the plate.

The closest asset to the PDS is the SAM immediately to the north-east of the existing reservoir, which comprises the pair of platform cairns. The northern of these cairns (Plate 3) is c. 50m away from, and completely out of sight of the PDS. The southern cairn in pair is around 15m from the PDS, which in turn is around 10m outside of the boundary of the SAM. As the PDS no longer sits within the SAM, the ancient monument itself will remain physically undisturbed by the development. The existing reservoir is far larger than the proposed development and its northern of the two tanks is considerably closer to the SAM than the PDS, so any visual impact on the cairn affected by the shed will be minimal in comparison to the visual impact already affected by the reservoir.



Plate 6: The reservoir on the summit of vane hill. Cairn 'B' is visible as the slight mound on the right of the image and the boundary of the SAM (3) within which it sits extends to roughly half-way along the right-hand water tank. Cairns 'C' and 'D' (1 & 2) are on the far side of the reservoir.



### 11.3 Wider effects of the development

It is not thought that the development will have any effects wider than for its immediate surroundings. It will not be visible from anywhere other than the summit of vane hill, and will not affect the skyline from the rest of the island. Once erected, effects of noise and lighting from the development will be negligible, and limited to when personnel are present on site.

## 12 Recommendations for Mitigation

The PDS has already been relocated to outside the boundaries of the SAM, so no longer poses a physical threat to any nationally significant heritage asset. As it is a wooden structure, it can be painted an incongruous colour, and if the bramble and gorse thicket which currently covers the site can be allowed to grow up the sides of the structure, it further camouflage it within the landscape.

It is thought to be unlikely that any archaeological remains will be encountered during the excavation of the relatively shallow foundations that will be required for the concrete footing on which the shed will sit. Having said this, given the proximity of the site to the platform cairns on Vane Hill it is possible that if any archaeological remains are found they would be associated with Bronze Age funerary activity and would be of relative significance. It is therefore suggested that a watching brief would be appropriate during all phases of invasive groundwork.

## 13 Conclusions

There is no question that the PDS is located in an archaeologically sensitive area, however, it is no longer within the area of a scheduled ancient monument and as such no destruction of a nationally significant asset will be occurring. The auto-dosing system is required to ensure a fresh and safe drinking water supply for Tresco, and has to be situated on level ground in the immediate vicinity of the reservoir. The PDS is as far from any of the scheduled ancient monuments as it is possible to be given that requirement. The current double-tank reservoir, which is far larger than the proposed development, and with far more potential to both physically and visually impact surrounding heritage assets, was constructed in 2003 under the condition that a watching brief be carried out during groundworks. It is thought that as long similar steps are taken to mitigate against the destruction of below ground archaeological assets, the actual impact of the development on the heritage assets in the vicinity would be negligible and the benefits of an auto-dosing system for the Tresco's drinking water supply would be significant.

## 14 References

- |      |      |   |
|------|------|---|
| BGS  | 2007 | <i>Bedrock Geology UK South. 1:625 000 scale (Keyworth, Nottingham: British Geological Survey).</i>         |
| CAU  | 1995 | <i>Isles of Scilly Archaeological Constraint Maps: Vol. 1 Introduction and Gazetteer, Truro.</i>            |
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Council of the Isles of Scilly	2017	<i>Historic Environment Topic Paper - The Local Plan 2015 - 2030</i>
Field, D	2011	<i>Prehistoric Barrows and Burial Mounds. English Heritage.</i>
Historic England	2015	<i>The Setting of Heritage Assets</i>
Land Use Consultants	1996	<i>Isles of Scilly Historic Landscape Assessment and Management Strategy, Truro (Cornwall County Council)</i>
NPPF	2018	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
Taylor, S R	2004	<i>Vane Hill, Tresco, Isles of Scilly - archaeological watching brief. CAU Report No: 04R034</i>

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