

Cootamundra McFarland's Down St Mary's Isles of Scilly

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Heritage Impact Assessment



Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist

Cootamundra
McFarland's Down
St Mary's
Isles of Scilly
Heritage Impact Assessment

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This study was commissioned by Clive Sibley of Saltwhistle Project Management on behalf of Mr & Mrs N Miles and carried out by Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist.

Maps were prepared by Francis Shepherd, 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: *Cootamundra (photo: Clive Sibley).*

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CIaA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CAU	Cornwall Archaeological Unit
HE	Historic England
HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HLC	Historic Landscape Character
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MCO	Monument number in Cornwall HER
NGR	National Grid Reference
NHLE	National Heritage List Entry
OS	Ordnance Survey
SM	Scheduled Monument

1 Summary

In May 2023, Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist, was commissioned by Clive Sibley of Saltwhistle Project Management, acting on behalf of Mr & Mrs N Miles, to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to support an application for planning permission to demolish an existing house – 'Cootamundra' – and replace it with a new building.

Cootamundra is situated at the northern end of McFarland's Down, a linear development of houses dating to the mid and late 20th century in the north of St Mary's, the largest island of the archipelago (NGR SV 91323 12424).

The HIA is focussed on the proposed development plot, 'the proposal site', and also identifies relevant heritage assets within a wider 0.25km buffer around the proposal site and considers potential impacts upon these assets, 'the study area'.

There are no designated or undesignated heritage assets within the proposal site.

There are two scheduled monuments within the study area:

- The Long Rock prehistoric standing stone on Long Rock Down, St Mary's (NHLE 1013276), situated 0.05km east of the proposal site. It is noted that worked flints were found in the vicinity of the standing stone in the 1920s and a flint arrowhead found there was acquired by the museum in 1967.
- Entrance graves, standing stones, field systems, settlements and post-medieval breastwork, kelp pit and stone pits on Halangy and Carn Morval Downs, St Mary's (NHLE 013273), located 0.25km west of the proposal site.

There are also two undesignated heritage assets within the study area:

- A possible Neolithic or Bronze Age standing stone in the corner of a field called 'Pungies', located 206 south east of the proposal site (MCO 31175)
- A World War Two CGI radar station on Halangy Down located 160m north west of the proposal site (MCO67162).

The HIA concludes that the proposed development will not have any physical (direct) impacts on any of these heritage assets and will not have any negative visual, or other non-direct impacts, on the assets or their setting.

The footprint of the new building will be similar to that of the existing dwelling, with a modest extension in the north-east corner of the plot. The existing septic tank in the north-west corner of the plot will be removed and replaced at the same location and depth.

It is likely that the original construction works for Cootamundra will have destroyed any archaeological features and disturbed any *in situ* artefacts that may have been present. Therefore the archaeological potential of the proposal site is considered to be low, except in the area of the new extension where it is low to moderate.



Fig 1 Location map of St Mary's, the 0.25km-radius study area round Cootamundra is outlined in red.

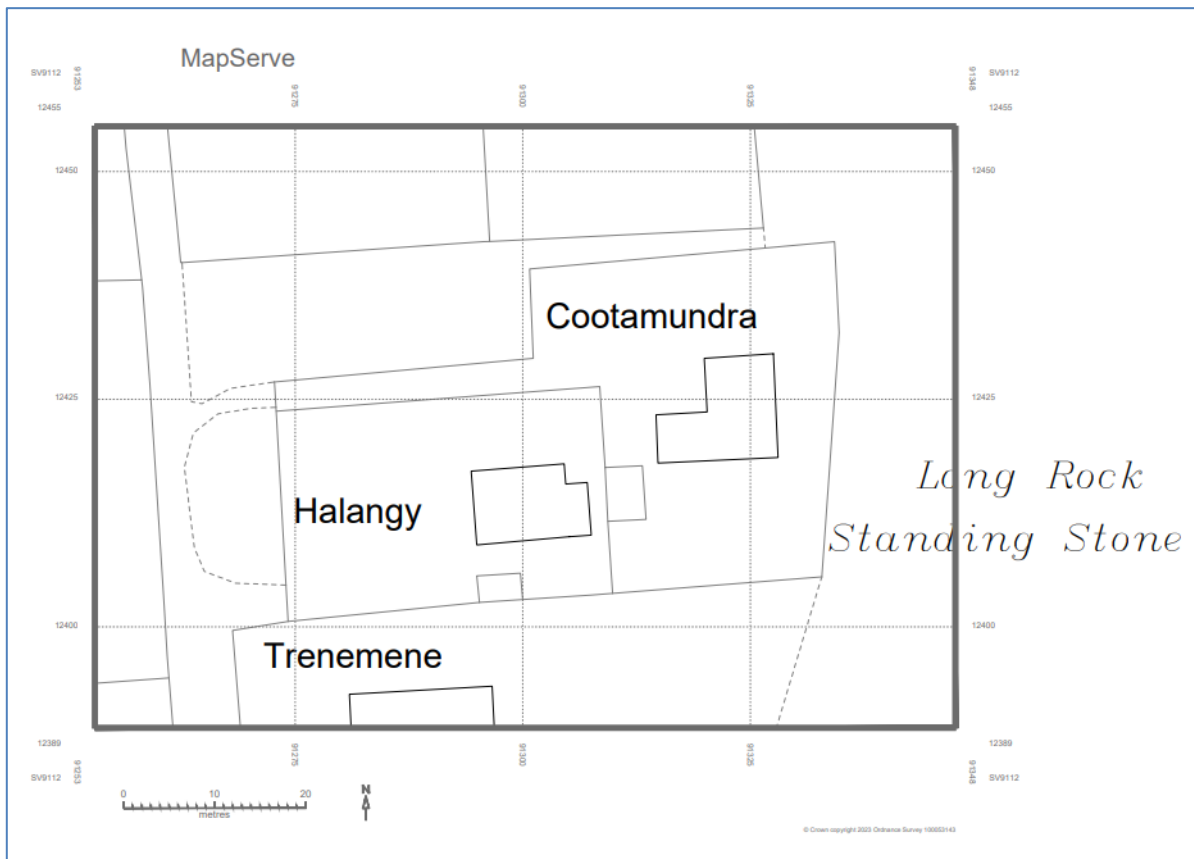


Fig 2 Block plan for the Cootamundra (Saltwhistle Project Management).

2 Introduction

2.1 Project background

In May 2023, Charlie Johns, Heritage Specialist, was commissioned by Clive Sibley of Saltwhistle Project Management, acting on behalf of Mr & Mrs N Miles, to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to support a proposed application for planning permission.

Cootamundra is a two storey, four bedroom property, currently in a dilapidated state of repair following a long period of neglect and substantial water leak (Figs 9–11). It is intended to demolish the entire dwelling and garage and replace with a fully insulated and sustainable house with integrated parking. The new footprint will remain basically as it is, with a modest extension in the north-east corner of the plot. There is an existing septic tank in the north-west corner of the plot which will be removed and replaced. This will be in the same location and positioned at the same depth.

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:

- Guidance for Scheduled Monument Consent applications
- Government guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment;
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) — specifically policies for 'conserving and enhancing the historic environment' (paragraphs 184-202) (see Appendix 1);
- The Isles of Scilly Local Plan (2015–2030);
- 'A Heritage and Cultural Strategy for the Isles of Scilly' (2004) and 'Historic Environment Historic Topic Paper: Enhancing the historic environment of the Isles of Scilly' (2017)', this supports the Local Plan 2015-2030 and sets out a positive strategy for the protection of the islands important historic environment.
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979); and
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).

2.2.2 Scope

This HIA is focussed on potential heritage assets identified within the proposed development plot (hereafter referred to as the 'proposal site') (Fig 2). The HIA also identifies relevant heritage assets within a wider 0.25km buffer around the proposal site and considers potential impacts upon the assets within this wider area (hereafter referred to as the 'study area') (Fig 4).

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 proposal site;
- the significance of the identified and potential heritage assets and resource within the proposal site;
- the impacts of the proposal upon the significance of heritage assets and the settings of designated heritage assets within the study area; and
- 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

Determination of the significance of heritage assets has 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
- 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'; and
- 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);
- Accessible GIS data;
- early maps, records, and photographs (see Section 7.1).
- published histories (see Section 7.2).

2.3 Author

The author of this report is Charlie Johns BA (Hons), MCIfA. Formerly a Senior Archaeologist with Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Charlie was the Unit's archaeologist for the Scilly from 2002 to 2018. Notable projects include the Bryher sword and mirror burial in 1999 (Johns 2002-3); the Lyonesse Project, a study of ancient sea level rise in the islands (Charman *et al* 2016); and compilation of the Scilly Historic Environment Research Framework (Johns 2019).

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 proposal site, and reports on previous archaeological and historical work in the study area.

3.1 Location, setting and geology

St Mary's, the largest of the Isles of Scilly, is located in the centre of the archipelago. The main part of the island is roughly circular, measuring approximately 3km north to south and 2.5km east to west, with promontories extending from this at Peninnis in the south and the Garrison in the south-west. It rises to a maximum height of 49m above sea level at Telegraph.

The island has a varied topography with the main settlement at Hugh Town on a low-lying sandy isthmus between the main part of the island and the Garrison. The interior is mainly undulating agricultural land with two areas of pools and marshland; the coast includes both rocky stretches with heathland above and sandy areas with dunes.

McFarland's Down is located near the coast in the north of the island and the site is at approximately 40m above sea level. It is a linear development of houses, on either side of an unsurfaced road, dating to the mid and late 20th century. Cootamundra is located at the northern end of the linear development (NGR SV 91323 12424) and set back from the road behind another property named 'Halangy' (Figs 1 and 2).

The geology of St Mary's is granite, with weathered periglacial head, known locally as *ram*, covering the lower hill slopes and valley floors; the geology supports soils suitable for cultivation and pasture (Geological Survey of Great Britain, 1975, Isles of Scilly, Sheets 357 and 358).

3.2 Historic Landscape Character

The study area is characterised as 'Settlements' in the Isles of Scilly Historic Landscape Assessment (Fig 4; Land Use Consultants 1996).

3.3 Designations

3.3.1 Conservation Area

In 1975 the islands were designated as a Conservation Area, under Section 277(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on Local Authorities to designate as conservation areas "any areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". This duty extends to publishing proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. Since its designation in 1975 no comprehensive appraisal of the Isles of Scilly Conservation Area has been undertaken. In 2015 the Local Planning Authority consulted on a Draft Conservation Area Character Statement for the Isles of Scilly as a Supplementary Planning Document.

3.3.2 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coast

Since 1976 the islands have been designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and defined as a Heritage Coast. The quality of the environment of Scilly for designation as an AONB was first recognised in a report of the National Parks Committee in July 1947 (the Hobhouse Report).

The Heritage Coast definition protects 64 km² of coastline around the islands which is 23 km² of foreshore, cliff and dune environments. The management of the heritage coast was originally undertaken by a non-governmental organisation: The Isles of Scilly Environmental Trust. It is now managed by the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust through the AONB Partnership and Management Plan, which is updated every five years. The Conservation Area, AONB and Heritage Coast all overlap and cover all of the islands and the heritage coast occupies a substantial portion of the AONB.

3.3.3 Archaeological Constraint Areas

The Isles of Scilly Archaeological Constraint Maps were compiled during February and March 1995 by Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU) with funding from English Heritage and the Council of the Isles of Scilly. The maps were drawn to indicate the location of recorded archaeological and historic sites and structures in order to make an initial assessment of the impact of any proposed development on these remains, and if necessary, archaeological consultation carried out prior to any planning decision being made. They are non-statutory were intended to serve as a graphic aid to planning officers and others dealing with the management of the environment.

The proposal site borders the Pendrathen /Long Rock Down Archaeological Constraint Area.

3.4 Scheduled Monuments (SM)

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the proposal site but there are two Scheduled Monuments within the study area:

- The Long Rock prehistoric standing stone on Long Rock Down, St Mary's (NHLE 1013276) located approximately 50m east of the proposal site; and
- Entrance graves, standing stones, field systems, settlements and post-medieval breastwork, kelp pit and stone pits on Halangy and Carn Morval Downs, St Mary's (NHLE 013273), located approximately 250m west of the proposal site) (Fig 5).

3.5 Listed Buildings (LB)

There are no Listed Buildings within the proposal site or the study area.

3.6 Undesignated heritage assets

There are no undesignated heritage assets within the proposal site. The HER records two undesignated heritage assets within the study area (Fig 5).

- A possible Neolithic or Bronze Age standing stone in the corner of a field called 'Pungies', located approximately 206m south east of the proposal site (MCO 31175) – although this has not been found by recent researchers.
- A World War Two CGI radar station on Halangy Down, located approximately 160m north west of the proposal site (MCO67162).

3.7 Chronological summary

3.7.1 Prehistoric (c10,000 BC–AD 43) and Roman (AD 43-410)

In the Late Bronze Age (c2000-1500 BC) the study area would have been part of a 'ceremonial landscape' which would have included the Long Rock standing stone, the possible standing stones at Bant's Carn and Pungies and Bant's Carn entrance grave and Halangy Down.

The Long Rock standing stone has survived well with no recorded disturbance from its present location (Fig 3). A concentration of flint artefacts recorded near this stone provides evidence for this site having formed a focus for prehistoric activity (see below section 3.8). The relatively close grouping of standing stones known on this part of the island is also unusual, while the wider relationship between the monument, its topographical setting and the settlements and field systems on the slopes of Halangy Down demonstrates the organisation and development of ritual and settlement activity among prehistoric communities.

During the Romano-British period the study area would have been close to the courtyard house settlement at Halangy Down.

3.7.2 Medieval and post-medieval (AD 410-present)

The Isles of Scilly Historic Landscape Character Assessment (Land Use Consultants 1996) indicates that the area of McFarland's Down is bordered by anciently enclosed land and late post-medieval enclosure to the east, south and west and by heathland to the north.

The place-name 'McFarland's Down' is shown on both the 1890 and 1908 OS maps. The area is depicted as unenclosed rough grassland or heathland criss-crossed by tracks including the north-south track which formed the focus of the later housing development (Figs 5 and 6).

The CGI radar station was built during World War Two; the HER does not provide any further details. The linear development of houses known as McFarland's Down dates to the mid and late 20th century.

3.8 Previous archaeological and historical work

The HER records that worked flints were found in the vicinity at Long Rock by Roy Thompson in 1925 and Alfred Guy in 1927. Amongst these were the three thumbnail scrapers found at the 'Longstone' [=Long Rock], one in 1925 and two in 1927, illustrated by Mackenzie (1967), which are now in the Isles of Scilly museum. These scrapers are probably those mentioned by Ashbee (1974, 151, 313, 324). A flint arrowhead found at Long Rock was acquired by the museum in 1967.

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks for an extension to High Pines, McFarland's Down, in 2014/15 (Johns and Sawyer 2015), approximately 130m to the south of Cootamundra. No structures, features or finds of archaeological interest were observed during the monitoring.

3.9 Archaeological potential

It is likely that the original construction works for Cootamundra will have destroyed any archaeological features and disturbed any *in situ* artefacts that may have been present. Therefore the archaeological potential of the site is considered to be low, except in the area of the new extension where it is low to moderate.

4 Statement of significance

The cultural value relevant to this HIA is 'Evidential' (which includes archaeological value). This is the potential of a place to yield primary information about past human activity and what it could contribute to our understanding of the early history and landscape character of the area. e.g., below ground archaeology before it is excavated.

The evidential value of the proposal site is considered to be low to moderate. Any finds or features that might be revealed which are associated with the Bronze Age ceremonial landscape or the Romano-British settlement are potentially of National significance, any other features or finds are more likely to be of Local significance.



Fig 3 The Long Rock standing stone.

Photo: Clive Sibley

5 Assessment of potential impacts

5.1 Details of the proposed development

It is intended to demolish the existing dwelling and garage and replace with a fully insulated and sustainable house with integrated parking. The new footprint will remain basically as it is, with a modest extension in the north-east corner of the plot. There is an existing septic tank in the north-west corner of the plot which will be removed and replaced in the same location and positioned at the same depth.

5.2 Summary of potential impacts

5.2.1 Physical (direct) impacts

There will be no direct impacts on any of the heritage assets identified in this assessment.

5.2.2 Visual and other non-direct impacts

The Long Rock prehistoric standing stone on Long Rock Down, St Mary's (NHLE 1013276) is situated approximately 50m to the east of Cootamundra. It is hidden from Cootamundra by a hedge (Fig 12) and a belt of pine trees (see front cover picture). The building line will remain unchanged to the rear and will be no closer to the Long Stone, than the existing property and even when the hedge has been trimmed the standing stone will not be visible.

The proposed development will have no visual or other non-direct impacts on this scheduled monument or its setting.

The scheduled entrance graves, standing stones, field systems, settlements and post-medieval breastwork, kelp pit and stone pits on Halangy and Carn Morval Downs, St Mary's (NHLE 013273), are located approximately 250m west of the proposal site. Cootamundra is partly screened by the property named 'Halangy' and a 35m long hedged track (Fig 13).

The proposed development will have no visual or other non-direct impacts on this scheduled monument or its setting.

The possible Neolithic or Bronze Age standing stone in the corner of a field called 'Pungies' (MCO 31175) is located approximately 206m south east of the proposal site. There is the shelter belt of trees and several hedges between the asset and Cootamundra.

The proposed development will have no visual or other non-direct impacts on this undesignated heritage asset or its setting.

The World War Two CGI radar station on Halangy Down (MCO67162) is located approximately 160m north west of Cootamundra.

The radar mast is visible from the proposal site but it is considered that visual or other non-direct impacts on this undesignated heritage asset and its setting will be Neutral.

6 References

6.1 Primary sources (in chronological order)

Ordnance Survey, c1880. 25 Inch Map First Edition

Ordnance Survey, c1907. 25 Inch Map Second Edition

Ordnance Survey, MasterMap Topography

6.2 Publications

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Land Use Consultants, 1996. *Isles of Scilly landscape assessment and management strategy*, Truro

Ratcliffe, J, and Straker, V, 1996. *The Early Environment of Scilly*, Truro (Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall County Council)

Sawyer, K, and Johns, C, 2015. *High Pines, McFarland's Down, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly; archaeological recording*, St Mary's (Katharine Sawyer)

6.3 Websites

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/> Online database of Sites and Monuments Records, and Listed Buildings

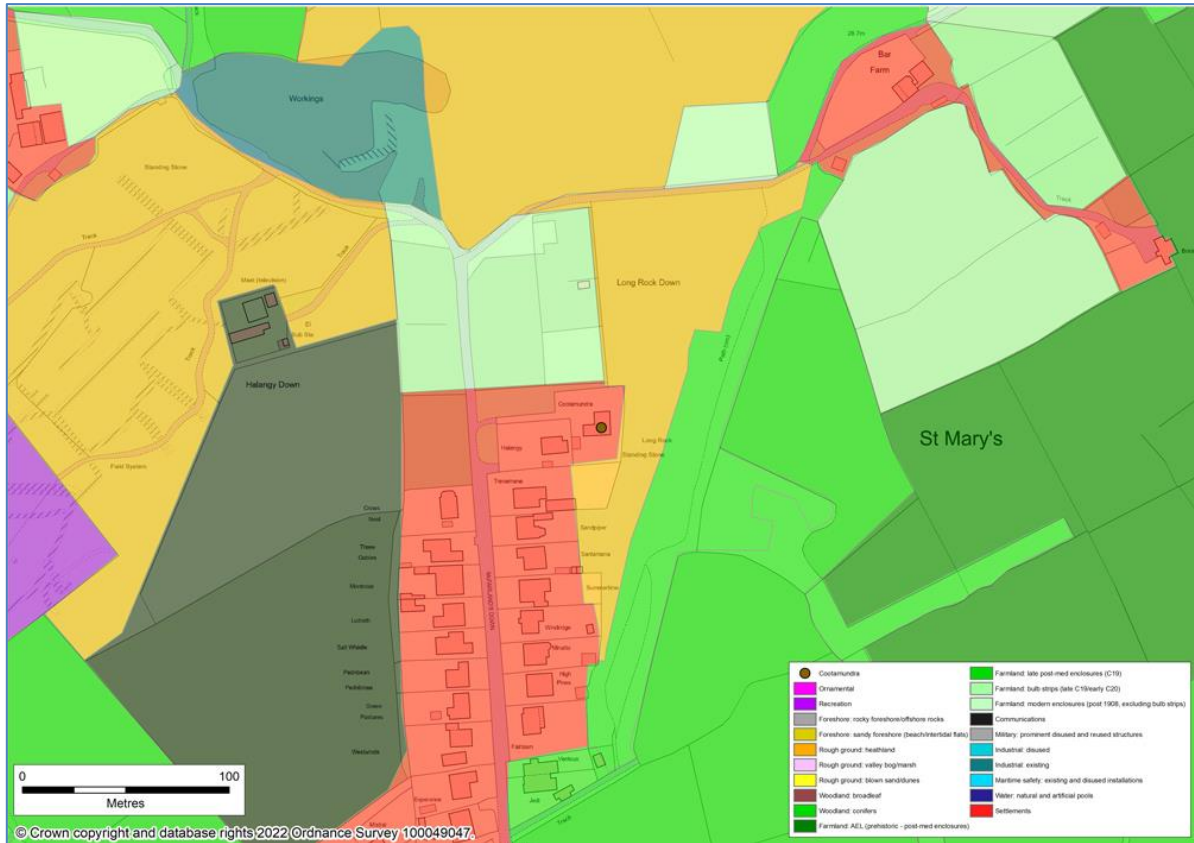


Fig 4 Historic Landscape Characterisation of the study area.

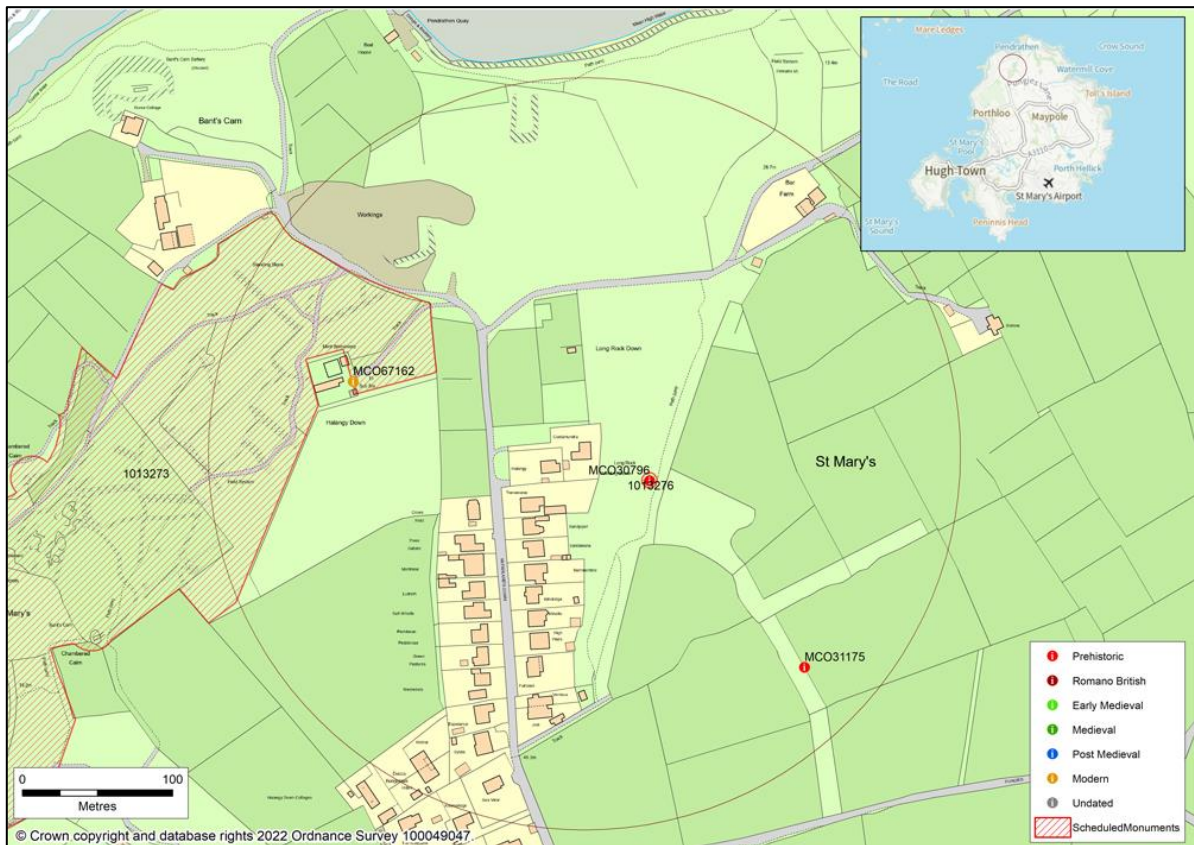


Fig 5 Designated and undesignated heritage assets within the study area.

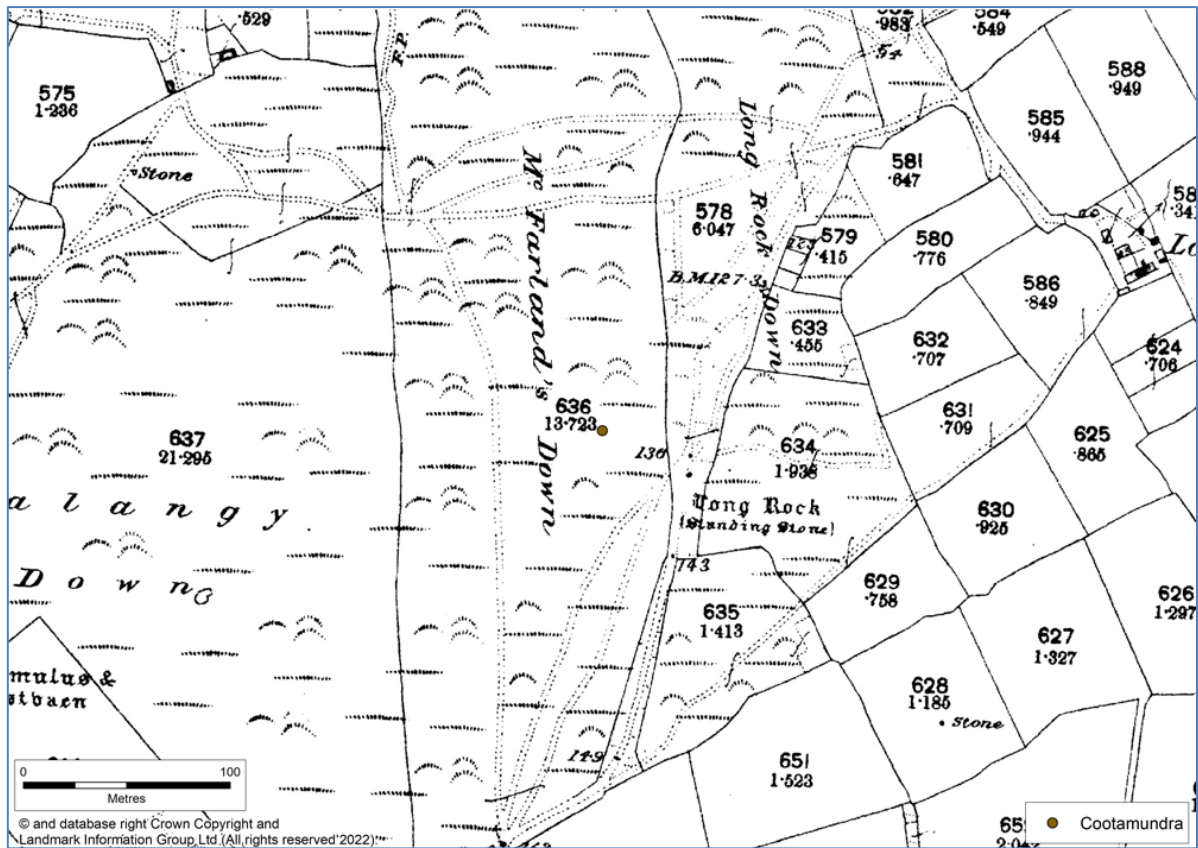


Fig 6 Extract from the c1890 OS map.

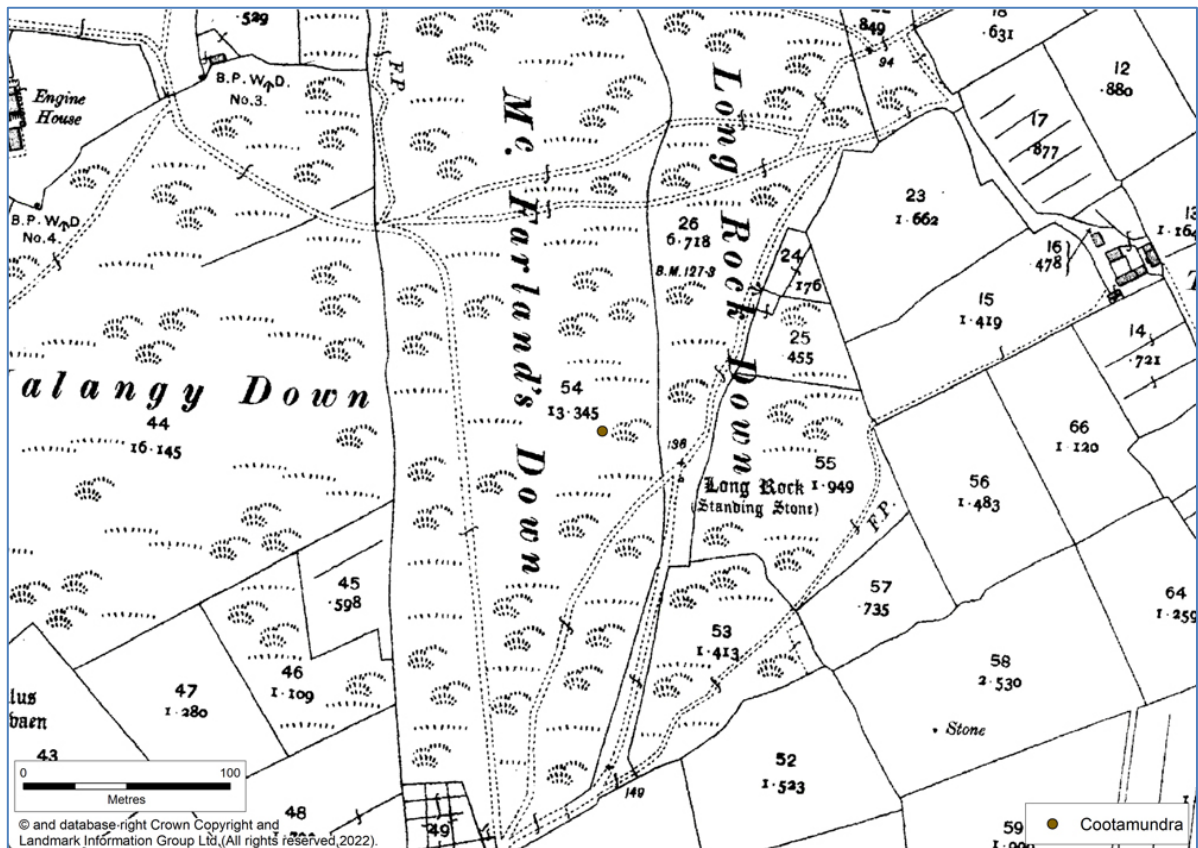


Fig 7 Extract from the c1908 OS map.



Fig 8 Cootamundra viewed from the road.



Fig 9 Cootamundra frontage.

(photos: Clive Sibley)



Fig 10 North end of Cootamundra.



Fig 11 East end and garage

(photos: Clive Sibley)



Fig 12 Looking towards the Long Rock standing stone from the rear of Cootamundra.

(photo: Clive Sibley)



Fig 13 Looking towards the Halangy Down ancient village and the CGI radar station from the front of Cootamundra.

(photo: Clive Sibley)



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