Storm Tower, Compass Point, Bude, Cornwall
Historic Building Record

Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Report No: 2021R077

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Client	**Donald Martin Countryside Team Cornwall Council**
Report Number	2021R077
Date	**22/07/2021**
Status	Final
Report author(s)	**Jo Sturgess**
Checked by	**Jo Sturgess**
Approved by	**Andy Jones**
Project number	147137
Data location	\\CAU\Archive\Sites\B\Bude Storm Tower Preservation by Record HBR 2021
Historic England / ADS OASIS online reference	cornwall2-426593
Planning reference	N/A

The project's documentary, digital, photographic and drawn archive is maintained by Cornwall Archaeological Unit.

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Acknowledgements

This study was commissioned by Donald Martin, Countryside Team Leader, Cornwall Council and carried out by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Jo Sturgess and Connor Motley.

The Project Manager was Jo Sturgess.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of Cornwall Archaeological Unit and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

Freedom of Information Act

As Cornwall Council is a public authority it is subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which came into effect from 1st January 2005.

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Cover illustration:

Front (east) elevation of the Storm Tower taken in June 2021.

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Abbreviations

CAU	Cornwall Archaeological Unit
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
ACSS	Archive and Cornish Studies Service, Kresen Kernow
BL	British Library
HE	Historic England
HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
MCO	Monument number in Cornwall HER
NGR	National Grid Reference
OD	Ordnance Datum – height above mean sea level at Newlyn
OS	Ordnance Survey

1 Summary

Cornwall Archaeological unit was commissioned by Donald Martin, Countryside Team Leader, Cornwall Council to carry out a historic building record of the Storm Tower at Compass Point, Bude in advance of it being dismantled and rebuilt at a new site. The tower is a Grade II Listed Building which is now in danger from cliff erosion. It is located on Efford Down, just to the west of Bude on a prominent spot overlooking the sea and historic harbour at NGR: SS 20046 06343. In order to mitigate against sudden loss of the building, a historic building record equivalent to a Historic England level 3 building survey was undertaken by CAU along with a full measured survey and topographical survey of the building and its surroundings undertaken by Mark Trewin of Datumline Surveys.

The Storm Tower was originally built in 1835 as a coastguard lookout. It was designed by George Wightwick of Plymouth for landowner Sir Thomas Dyke Acland at a time when Bude was developed as a port, canal town and watering place. Wightwick based his octagonal design on the ancient Tower of the Winds at Athens which was the inspiration for several buildings in England in the late 18th and early 19th century.

In 1881 the tower was taken down due to the threat of cliff erosion and rebuilt on a nearby spot. This tower is the one that survives today. Much of the masonry from the 1835 tower was reused to build the 1881 tower but certain changes were made with the introduction of new materials, such as perforated bricks and granite, and new design elements, such as the granite topped plinth on which it now stands.

A total of five construction phases have been identified as a result of this study. The earliest construction phase (phase 1) dates to the 1835 when the first Storm Tower was built. Although the phase 1 building no longer survives the stone masonry from it has been used to construct the phase 2 tower. In 1881 (phase 2) the earlier tower was demolished and a new tower (the present tower) was constructed on a site slightly further inland. In phase 3 (1882) the newly built tower appears to have been vandalised and it is possible that a timber roof was destroyed and replaced with the present shuttered concrete roof. It seems likely that an electric telegraph system was installed in the tower during phase 4 (in the 1890s) in order to communicate quickly with the coastguard/lifeboat station below. During phase 5, which spans the mid 20th century onwards, the tower ceased to be used as a coastguard lookout and was opened up for public enjoyment. A crazy paved stone surface was laid around the outside of the tower and the present iron cross was added to the roof.

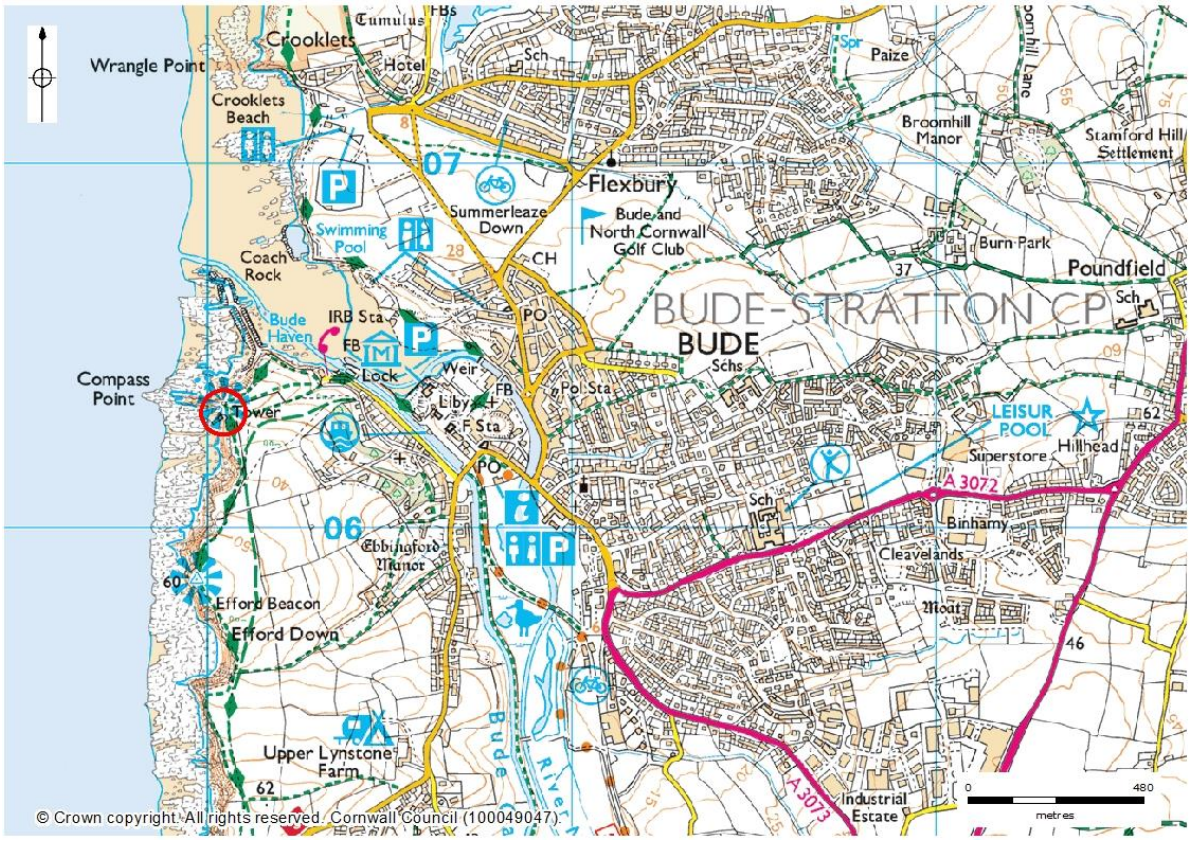

Fig 1 Location map (Storm Tower circled in red).

Fig 2 Location of Storm Tower circled in red.

2 Introduction

2.1 Project background

The Storm Tower is a Grade II Listed Building located close to an eroding cliff edge, on a prominent spot overlooking the historic harbour and coastal town of Bude (Figs 1 and 2).

This Historic Building Record was commissioned by Donald Martin, Countryside Team Leader, Cornwall Council. The work was required by Bude-Stratton Town Council (BSTC) acting in response to perceived vulnerability of the Storm Tower from ongoing coastal erosion. The historic building survey along with a full measured survey of the building and a topographic survey were undertaken to ensure a record of the tower was made in its present form and setting in case of any sudden loss or future dismantling and rebuilding of the structure on a new site.

The work was commissioned following a Relocation Feasibility Study (Pdp Green Consulting Ltd 2020) and Heritage Impact Assessment (Parkes 2020) which considered the impacts of both leaving the tower *in situ* and moving it to a new, less vulnerable, site.

A full measured survey of the building (including the measurement of all visible individual pieces of masonry) and a topographic survey was undertaken by Mark Trewin (Datumline Surveys). These drawings were used as the basis for the Historic Building Record drawings.

The Historic Building Record was designed to be equivalent to a Historic England Level 3 survey.

2.2 Aims

The principal aim of the study was to create a detailed record and gain a better understanding of the building.

The objectives were to:

- Produce an accurate record of the building along with its fabric, fixtures and fittings (to Level 3 as defined by Historic England 2016).
- Create a phased historic development for the building.
- Outline any features and fittings which are of high significance.

2.3 Methods

All recording work was undertaken according to Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) (CIfA 2014) and Historic England (2016) guidance.

2.3.1 Desk–based assessment

During the desk-based assessment historical databases and archives were consulted (as well as the existing Heritage Impact Assessment) in order to obtain further information about the structure. The main sources consulted were as follows:

- Cornwall HER; via publicly available data.
- Images of England online Listed Buildings database.
- Early maps and photographs (see Section 8.1).
- Published histories (see Section 8.2).
- Websites (see Section 8.3).

2.3.2 Fieldwork

The equivalent of a Level 3 Building Survey (as defined by Historic England 2016) was produced.

Recording included an internal and external description with architectural features and detail annotated to copies of existing measured external and internal elevations and plans supplied by the Mark Trewin (Datumline Surveys).

Analysis of the fabric was undertaken on site (recorded as notes) to allow a description to be written up at the archive report stage.

Photographic recording included colour photography using a digital SLR camera (with a resolution of 10 million pixels or higher). The images were uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) to form the archive.

CAU follows Historic England guidance on digital image capture and file storage (2014).

The photo record comprised:

- General views.
- All external elevations.
- All internal surfaces.
- Examples of structural and architectural detail.

A metric scale was included in all views, except where health and safety considerations make this impractical.

2.3.3 Post-fieldwork

All site materials were prepared for long term storage. This included:

- Finalisation of measured drawings and photograph location plan.
- Archiving of drawings, photographs, paperwork and digital files.
- Filing of digital colour photographs and limited image editing (eg, composition, lighting) where appropriate.
- Creation of an archive report.
- Completion of the Historic England OASIS record (online access to archaeological investigations).
- Preparation of CAU archive.

3 Location and setting

The Storm Tower stands on the grassy downland of Efford Down just to the west of Bude at NGR: SS 20046 06343. It is located on a headland between the sea and the River Neet at Bude Haven and lies at a height of *c*33m OD (Figs 1 and 2). The cliff edge is less than 6m away from the tower at its nearest point. A ridge runs ENE from the site towards the tidal mouth of the river Neet forming the Haven. Bedocks are 'Bude Formation' sandstones, siltstones and shales of the Carboniferous era (Bristow 1996, 84-85), and soils are the Neath series of typical brown earths (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).

The tower was moved to its present position in 1881. Having originally been built as a coastguard lookout, it was designed to be close to the cliff edge in order to have the best view of the sea and rocks below. It is an octagonal building with a single room space, narrow window openings and a single door opening to the north. The present stone-paved area surrounding the tower was added in the mid/late 20th century.

The structure has no door and is accessible to the general public. It is understood that the land is leased by Cornwall Council from a private landowner (Pdp Green 2020).

4 Designations

The Storm Tower is a Grade II Listed Building. The Listed Building description (List Entry Number: 1141875) is as follows:

> *Small tower said to have been built as refuge for coastguard but also ornamental. 1835, designed by George Wightwick for Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, 10th Baronet. Roughly-dressed stone brought to course with freestone quoins. Octagonal tower described by Wightwick as "after the Temple of the Winds at Athens". Tower stands on plinth with 3 granite steps up to entrance on east side. Entrance has entablature and pediment on freestone pilasters. Each side has slit window with stone sill, those to north-east and north-west blocked. The points of the compass are carved as a frieze in sans-serif below the moulded cornice. Low pyramidal roof with moulded base to cross formerly surmounting tower. Interior has slate floor and brick dressings to slit windows. Sir Thomas Dyke Acland owned Ebbingford Manor (q.v.) in Bude and regularly stayed at Efford Cottage on the Breakwater. Sir Thomas Acland played a large part in the C19 development of Bude and the Bude Canal was partly built on Acland land. George Wightwick of Plymouth was John Foulston's partner and succeeded to Foulston's architectural practice. He designed a number of buildings in Bude for Sir Thomas Acland including the chapel of St Michael and All Angels (q.v.), East and West Cottages and a Preventative Service House on the Breakwater. Alan Pearson "George Wightwick", Old Cornwall, vol.IX, No. 7, Autumn 1982, pp.338-351; vol.IX no. 8, Spring 1983, pp.402-414. A photograph of the Storm Tower with its cross intact appears in Rennie Bere and Brian Dudley Stamp, The Book of Stratton and Bude (1980) p.107.*

The Storm Tower is located within an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area for Conservation (SAC) on Efford Down. It also overlooks the Conservation Area of Bude.

5 Site history

(adapted and altered from Parkes 2020).

5.1 Family and estate

The Storm Tower is located on Efford Down, an area of downland which lies immediately to the west of Efford or Ebbingford which was first recorded in the 12th century. Ebbingford manor with its surrounding estate passed to the Arundells of Trerice near Newquay in the 15th century; the existing manor house dates from the medieval period but was substantially rebuilt in the late 16th and 18th centuries (HER).

Following the death of the last Arundell of Trerice in 1768 the estate passed to the Wentworth family and the manor of Ebbingford was inherited with that of Trerice by the Aclands of Killerton near Exeter in 1802 (Parkes 2005, 56).

Sir Thomas Dyke Acland the 10th Baronet (1787-1871), who acquired Ebbingford, was elected as an MP in 1812 and 1820. Sir Thomas was a philanthropist and humanitarian, 'one of the most respected Tory backbenchers of his day' (History of Parliament website).

The Aclands let out the ancient Ebbingford Manor near the river but regularly visited their 'marine retreat' at Efford Cottage a short distance away beside the Breakwater (Storm Tower Listed Building description). They pursued business interests here also, promoting shipping in the Haven and the Bude Canal which was first proposed in 1818. Bude Haven, on the south west, Ebbingford side of the canal and river, was developed by the Aclands as a port and canal town and a fashionable resort or 'watering place'.

The Haven had a coastguard (or water guard) station before 1828 (Royal Cornwall Gazette, December 27th, 1828, 2). The 1842 Tithe map shows the coastguard station,

strategically positioned to control harbour activity at the mouth of the River Neet, where it occupied the plot next to the Aclands' Efford Cottage. The coastguard at this early stage of its development in England – the service was founded in 1822 – was under the control of the Board of Customs, and its purpose was to protect revenue and supress smuggling (Smith 2016, 3), although lifesaving was also part of the service. The Bude station, like other early coastguard watch houses, was sited to overlook potential landings and closely monitor passing shipping.

In the 1830s, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland commissioned George Wightwick of Plymouth (1802-1872) to design core elements of Bude Haven. Wightwick was an architect from Plymouth with a busy practice ranging from villas to vicarages to mansions to hospitals (Beacham and Pevsner 2014, 127). In 1833-1834 plans and specifications for 'cottages' at Bude – likely to be 'marine cottages' of genteel villa status of the type favoured by the Aclands – were drawn up by Wightwick (Devon Archives and Local Studies Service, ref. 1926 B/A/E/24/7).

On St Michael's Day in 1835, the Bishop of Exeter consecrated a new chapel of ease at Bude Haven, the Church of St Michael and All Angels, financed and endowed by Sir Thomas Dyke Acland and designed by George Wightwick. As noted in the Listing, the church is built of porphyry (elvan) from Trerice. Besides this yellowy grey freestone identified with Trerice, the church has other yellow stone, possibly more local.

5.2 The first Storm Tower of 1835

George Wightwick designed the Storm Tower for Sir Thomas in 1835. Drawings of his building, which he named 'Storm-tower' and noted as being 'After the Temple of the Winds, at Athens', survive in one of 5 volumes of plans of Wightwick's architectural works by his articled pupils (https://www.ribapix.com/Design-for-the-Storm-Tower-a-garden-building-Bude-for-Sir-Thomas-Dyke-Acland-plan-east-elevation-and section_RIBA82324#). The structure in the plans appears very similar to the Storm Tower standing today, although there is no plinth, granite steps or cross on top. The elevation drawing suggests that the building was originally externally rendered since no individual stones are shown. This appears to have been the case as peck marks (made to help render adhere to a surface) can be seen on the larger external masonry such as the quoin stones.

The Tower of the Winds at Athens cited by Wightwick as his inspiration is a weather observatory dating from *c*50 BC, which originally bore a statuesque weather vane (Green Templeton College website). It is much larger, and its frieze has flowing figures personifying the winds that blow from the eight directions rather than plain inscriptions of compass points as at Bude.

Several structures in England were modelled on the ancient tower following a publication of 1762 on the antiquities of Athens, these including the upper storey designed by James Wyatt (1746–1813) for the Radcliffe Observatory of 1772 at the University of Oxford (Green Templeton College website). Wightwick was an advocate of another revival of classical design in the south west region; he gave a lecture in Barnstaple where he 'fully acknowledged the superior taste and judgement of Greece' (North Devon Journal, May 16th, 1833, 4).

The design of the Storm Tower led to the naming of Compass Point and the building served as an eyecatcher, enhancing the estate and port and their owner's prestige.

However, the Storm Tower was not merely designed as an ornamental folly. It was built to serve an important role, as a lookout for coastguards who were based at the station in Bude Haven just below. The tower and signalling flagstaff originally positioned close to the cliff edge were necessary to the life-saving role. Bude coastguard lookout is recorded in 1858 (Royal Cornwall Gazette, May 7th, 1858, 3) and although the function of Storm Tower as shelter for the coastguards' work is stated rather later (Cornish and Devon Post, September 1st, 1894, 6) this is considered to have been its original purpose. This can be

appreciated at the Tower, through the provision of windows in five sides of it, and in particular, through its close association with other coastguard infrastructure.

The building of the Storm Tower may have been prompted by events of October 22nd, 1834. In a violent gale, the *Lanson Castle* of Bude, Captain Tucker, was wrecked on the Breakwater. Two men, John Gowman harbourmaster of Bude, and sailor J. Pengelly, saved mate John Marshall, who was swept overboard. They were presented with medals at a public meeting with a great attendance and impact locally; Sir Thomas Dyke Acland had been on the shore himself helping direct the rescue (Morning Post, London, October 31st, 1834, 4; Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, January 3rd, 1835, 4).

The working of the coastguard here in conjunction with the lifeboat – itself established in Bude in 1836 with funds from King William IV (Royal Cornwall Gazette, December 16th, 1836) – is recorded for example in 1858. The *Defence* of Liverpool returning from Africa was seen fast drifting on shore by 'the Coastguard at the look-out' (at the Storm Tower) in a 'thick and dirty' gale; all 16 of her crew and her pilot aboard were all rescued from under a cliff 300 feet high when she struck on Crow Rock (Royal Cornwall Gazette, May 7th, 1858, 3).

Early photographs and accounts of the Storm Tower from the 1860s record the associated coastguard signalling flagstaff, and the map of 1883 (by which time the Tower had been moved slightly) shows this as 'F.S.' just north of the Tower (Fig 4). The pole was moved a little east by the time this map was revised in 1906 (Fig 5), no doubt because of cliff erosion. The 1883 map also shows the coastguards' path running here from their station and rocket house (the rocket fired a line to ships to get a rope aboard and rescue people using a 'breeches buoy', rather like a zip line).

The small size of the interior shows the Tower was used as refuge rather than a living space. Unlike several other early lookouts on the Cornish coast, such as the simple tiny house of a Napoleonic era Naval signal station at Dodman Point east of St Austell Bay (MCO 45827), and a more ornate, hexagonal coastguard watch house on the Caerhays Estate near there (MCO 26227), it had no fireplace, probably because the coastguard's station at the Haven was close by.

Compass Point eroded fast in the mid-late 19th century, as can be seen by comparing the surveys of 1842 and 1883 (Figs 3 and 4), creating the gulf in the clifftop south west of the Storm Tower which does not appear on the 1842 map. It was noted later that 'Those persons who remember the appearance of the cliffs here fifty years ago, observe a great change. The sea has made inroads of some yards, and the whole contour of the place is altered' (Cornish and Devon Post, September 1st, 1894, 6).

Accounts of wrecks from the mid-late 19th century allude to the Storm Tower with its signalling flagstaff in operation. In 1861, two vessels were seen in the offing; as it was almost dark and there was a rough ground sea 'the usual signal for them to keep off was hoisted on the cliff near the Look-out House'. One, the *John Booth*, struck at Summerleaze, in a tremendous sea where the lifeboat could not go. The coastguard raced there and 'The rocket with its hissing scream and fiery tail sped onwards on its errand of mercy' to rescue those on board. Tragically one of the coastguards, Mr Dangar, died in service that night (Launceston Weekly News, October 12th, 1861, 8).

The Storm Tower was valued and visited as it is today; both for its views and for its design, appealingly 'curious' and known to have been inspired by the Ancient Greek Tower of the Winds (West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser, May 26th, 1870, 6). Compass Point was included in guidebooks, and noted as one of the attractions of the view from the Bude (as opposed to the Bude Haven) side of the estuary; 'the former possesses several respectable buildings….all of which, with the Bude Hotel, command full and pretty views (looking N.W., W., and S.W.) of the harbour, breakwater, church, castle, and the octagonal compass point' (Western Morning News, September 18th, 1861, 2). Local experiences of Compass Point are sometimes recorded; Captain George Moore tripped when descending to a useful timber he'd spotted on the beach below; his head was

wounded, but fortunately the injury was not serious (Cornish and Devon Post, June 15th, 1878, 5).

The site featured in paintings such as Mr JHL Ashe's '*Bude, Breakwater and Compass Point*' which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1881 (though it was unfortunately 'skied' or hung too high to attract the most notice) (Royal Cornwall Gazette, September 23rd, 1881, 6). Photography of Bude by the Thorns, the local family who practised this new art form here from the mid-19th century, includes views capturing the site from north and south, and also from the beach. Two similar photographs by Harry Thorn of *c*1850-1870 (Thorn and Thorn 2016, 91) show the Storm Tower with the coastguards' signalling flagstaff alongside (see Fig 8).

5.3 The second Storm Tower of 1881

In 1881, due to cliff erosion, the Storm Tower was completely dismantled and rebuilt on a nearby spot. This work was funded by Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, 11th Baronet, who succeeded his father in 1871 and had extended his father's church in 1878. The churchyard gateway is topped by an iron cross, as is the Tower; the crosses may have been introduced to mark this later phase of estate works.

An article in the Cornish & Devon Post, dated 12th February 1881 reported on the condition of the Storm Tower as follows:

'The tower upon Compass Point, Bude, used as a lookout place for vessels in the bay, and also as a land-mark, is reported to be in an unsafe condition. Much of the cliff underneath has given way since the late frosts, and several large cracks have appeared in the masonry of the tower, which will probably have to be taken down.'

An article in the Royal Cornwall Gazette dated September 23rd, 1881 reported on the rebuilding of the Storm Tower as follows:

'The storm-tower upon Compass Point, Bude, recently demolished in consequence of its dangerous condition, is being rebuilt at the expense of Sir T.D. Acland, M.P., on a spot as near as circumstances will permit to the original site. The new tower will not only be ornamental, but will also supply a well-known landmark to shipping in the bay' (Royal Cornwall Gazette, September 23rd, 1881, 6).

The 1881 article stating that it was being rebuilt near its former position is confirmed by photographs (Thorn and Thorn 2016, 19, 29, 69, 84, 92, Fig 8), and by a painting of Bude Haven (Art UK website, Fig 7) made before the Tower was moved. This painting is attributed to Joseph Stannard, but Joseph died in 1830 before the Storm Tower was first built. It may be mid-19th century, to judge from the costumes shown, and the depiction of pack animals and ox teams as well as horses and carts.

The Storm Tower was rebuilt close to the original design and reusing much of the original stone masonry, although a new granite topped plinth and granite steps were added as part of the new design and new perforated bricks were used for internal surround to openings. The apparent slight re-orientation of the Tower (meaning that its 'compass' is not quite accurate, the side marked East, for example, facing ENE) may either reflect the need for it to continue to face the coastguard station from its new position or more importantly the need for the windows to overlook the best views of the sea.

A metalled surface comprising small beach pebbles on the ground to the north east may relate to surfacing around the Tower indicated on the 1883 map (Fig 8).

In 1882, very soon after the new Tower had been complete, an article in Cornish & Devon Post, dated 2nd September 1882 reported:

'*that wilful damage had been done to the storm tower recently erected at Compass Point by Sir Thomas Acland. M,P. It was decided prosecute any persons found committing the damage'*.

The nature of the damage at this time is not mentioned but it is possible that the structure was rebuilt with a timber roof which was then destroyed by fire in 1882 and this was then

addressed with care by the Council who were resolved to protect it (Royal Cornwall Gazette, September 8th, 1882, 6).

In 1892 a System of Coast Communications was built under the General Post Office (G.P.O). This was installed at nearly all Coastguard Stations where Life Saving Apparatus (L.S.A.) were situated or where lifeboats were stationed. Soon a line was installed right around the coast. This scheme started after the Royal National Lifeboat Association drew the attention of 'a means of conveying information of the need for lifeboats between signal stations and lifeboat stations.' (Webb 1976). It seems likely that an electric telegraph system was installed in the Storm Tower at this time and the remaining iron fixings and wires that survive today both internally and externally are likely to date to this period.

A photograph of the tower taken in 1905 (Fig 9) shows the building with its 1881 door still *in situ*.

The OS map of 1906 (Fig 5) shows the cliff edge in the same position as that of 1881, but was a revision rather than a full new survey, and does indicate erosion indirectly, showing the coastguard signalling flagstaff moved east to its present position presumably because the ground where its stays were fixed previously was lost or under threat from erosion (compare Figs 4 and 5).

A photograph of the tower dated 1920 which is held in the Francis Frith collection shows the north side of the tower at that date (https://www.francisfrith.com/bude/bude-storm-tower-compass-point-1920_69516). The windows at this time were still *in situ* and appear to be shown with four lights; the upper light contained small diamond panes whist the lower three lights all appear to contain a single pane of glass each. The photograph also shows a narrow cobbled surface running around the base of the tower which presumably dates to 1881. This surface has either been removed or covered by mid-late 20th century crazy paving. In addition the iron cross now located on top of the roof is not shown in this photograph, indicating that the present cross was installed at a later date.

Various newspaper articles suggest that the Storm Tower was still in use as a coastguard lookout post in the early 20th century. The date when the tower was last used as a coastguard lookout is unknown, but it may have been when Bude Lifeboat Station closed in 1923 at which time the lifeboat was transferred to North Berwick (https://rnli.org/find-my-nearest/lifeboat-stations/bude-lifeboat-station/station-history-bude).

At some point after the tower became obsolete as a coastguard lookout, the structure was opened for the enjoyment of the public. The door and windows were removed, probably when they fell into disrepair. The earliest dated graffiti inside the building is 1951 suggesting that the general public were accessing the building by this time.

In the mid-late 20th century, an octagonal paved surface was built around the tower and a rectangular crazy paved concrete base added on the eastern edge, presumably for an information board which has since been removed.

6 Historic development of the building

(See phase plans and elevations Figs 45–47).

Phase 1 (1835)

The first Storm Tower was built to the design of George Wightwick in *c*1835 several metres (possibly 10m) to the west of the present tower and south of a mound (possible Bronze Age barrow – HER: MCO46298). This first tower was entirely taken down in 1881 but most of the original stonework appears to have been reused to build the present tower. Wightwick's original drawings show that this first octagonal tower was very similar to the tower that stands today with its door and portico, its five windows overlooking the sea and two blind windows either side of the door on the inland side. However, the

drawings also show that the original tower did not have a granite topped plinth running around the base of the structure and neither did it have granite steps leading up to the door; both of these elements were added during phase 2 when the tower was rebuilt. The floor of the phase 1 tower appears to have been level with the surrounding ground surface as seen in the drawings and in a photograph of the tower taken by Harry Thorn at some point between 1850-1879 (Fig 8).

Wightwick's east elevation drawing of the phase 1 tower shows no detail of stonework externally suggesting that the phase 1 tower was originally designed to have its external wall faces rendered with the exception of the portico and the frieze containing the compass points. Clear evidence for the external walls originally being rendered can be seen in the form of pecking on the external surfaces of all the quoin stones. It seems likely that the original external finish was a stucco render with incised ashlar blocks, which would be in keeping with early 19th century fashion.

Wightwick's drawings and the mid-late 19th century photograph (Fig 8) also show that the original tower did not have an iron cross on the roof; this may have been added as a new detail either during phase 2 or 3, but the present cross was added far more recently. A photograph of the Storm Tower with its phase 2 or 3 cross intact appears in Rennie Bere and Brian Dudley Stamp, *The Book of Stratton and Bude* (1980, 107). Originally the roof was almost certainly constructed from timber with eight flat faces externally and an eight sided dome internally. The material forming the external roof covering is unknown, although the smooth faces shown in Wightwick's drawings suggest that it may have been lead covered or rendered. The domed ceiling internally is likely to have been lath and plaster.

Phase 2 (1881)

In February 1881 it was reported that the phase 1 Storm Tower was in an 'unsafe condition' with much of the cliff below having collapsed causing large cracks to appear in the masonry (Cornish & Devon Post,12th February 1881). By September 1881 the phase 1 Storm Tower had been taken down and was in the process of being rebuilt on its present site (Royal Cornwall Gazette, September 23rd, 1881).

The new tower was constructed several metres inland from the earlier tower reusing as much of the original stonework as possible. However, some alterations were made to the original design and some new building materials were introduced. This is the tower that survives today.

As part of the new design a plinth was added at the base, presumably to elevate the tower in order to provide better views out to sea, since it was now located further back from the cliff edge. This new plinth was constructed from stone rubble with an ashlar granite top which could be used as seating, and new granite steps were also added leading up to the door. The internal surrounds to all the openings were rebuilt at this time using new perforated bricks and the whole structure was bonded together using a new high strength mortar (probably a mix of lime and Portland cement). The exterior wall faces were not re-rendered and instead ribbon pointing, which appears to be in the same high strength mortar, was used as a decorative finish to the external masonry. The interior wall faces were rendered and painted in a yellow ochre colour.

It is unclear whether the slate flagstone floor was salvaged from the phase 1 building or added anew at this time. It is also unclear whether the roof was reused form the original building or if a new roof was constructed. The present roof is constructed from shuttered concrete and dates either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882).

When the tower was reconstructed in 1881 the whole building was rotated slightly so that the east elevation containing the door opening was facing east-north-east rather than true east, as it appears to have been originally. It seems unlikely that this was a mistake and more likely that this was to ensure that the views out from the windows captured the best views of the sea from its new location.

Phase 3 (1882)

In 1882 an article in Cornish & Devon Post, dated 2nd September 1882 reported:

'*that wilful damage had been done to the storm tower recently erected at Compass Point by Sir Thomas Acland. M,P. It was decided prosecute any persons found committing the damage'*.

The nature of the damage at this time is not mentioned but it is possible that the 1881 structure had been rebuilt with a timber roof which was then destroyed by fire in 1882.

The present roof is constructed from shuttered concrete and dates either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882).

Phase 4 (1890s)

In 1892 a System of Coast Communications was built under the General Post Office (G.P.O), This scheme started after the Royal National Lifeboat Association drew the attention of 'a means of conveying information of the need for lifeboats between signal stations and lifeboat stations'. It seems most likely that the electric telegraph system was installed in the tower at this time, and although now removed, evidence for its existence in the form of wires and iron fittings, etc. still survive.

Phase 5 (mid 20th century onwards)

In the mid-late 20th century, a crazy paved surface was laid around the tower and a rectangular concrete base added on the eastern edge of it, presumably for an information board which has since been removed. It is possible that the present iron cross was added to the roof at this time or later. It is most likely that the door and windows were removed during this phase. Dated graffiti on the internal surfaces start from 1951 and continue into the 21st century.

7 Building description

7.1 General description

This small octagonal tower, which measures approximately 4.6m across and 6.8m high, was built in 1881 but contains masonry reused from the earlier tower of 1835. The earlier stone masonry, which is what most of the tower is built from, is almost certainly an elvan brought here from Trerice near Newquay, as it appears to be the same as that used in the Church of St Michael and All Angels in Bude Haven which was also completed in 1835 to a design by Wightwick and was documented as being built from porphyry (elvan) from Trerice.

The elvan building is set on a plinth made from stone rubble with an ashlar granite top, wide enough to be used as a seat. Granite steps lead up to door on the east elevation, and the interior floor level is set approximately 0.6m above the external ground surface. The exterior wall faces comprise roughly faced elvan rubble with dressed quoins and ribbon pointing in a hard, durable mortar. There is a single entrance on the east side with two narrow blind windows in the walls either side of it. The remaining five sides all have narrow windows. The door opening has an elvan entablature and pediment set on elvan pilasters and carved into a frieze at the top of the walls are the points of the compass. The octagonal roof and cornice are made from shuttered concrete which has been moulded on the exterior and there is an iron cross fixed at the centre of the roof.

The interior of the building is a single room which has a slate flagstone floor and shuttered concrete domed ceiling. The window surrounds and door arch are constructed from perforated bricks and elsewhere the walls are stone rubble and are bonded with a hard cement and lime mortar. There are areas of cement render and yellow ochre paint on the walls as well as modern graffiti.

7.2 Exterior East elevation

(See Figs 13, 14, 15 and 46).

The east elevation contains the entrance to the building. The wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. The doorway has an elvan entablature and pediment supported on elvan pilasters; the door itself has been removed. There are four granite steps leading up to the threshold. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'EAST'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882).

7.3 Exterior North east elevation

(See Figs 16 and 46).

The north east elevation is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. The plinth at the base was introduced as a new feature when the tower was rebuilt in 1881. It comprises randomly coursed stone rubble bonded with cement and lime mortar and is capped with ashlar granite blocks providing external seating. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'N.EAST'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882).

7.4 Exterior North Elevation

(See Figs 17 and 46).

The north elevation is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. It has a tall, narrow window opening with an elvan sill; the window itself has been removed but a photograph in the Francis Frith collection dated 1920 shows the phase 2 windows when they were still *in situ* (www.francisfrith.com/bude). The plinth at the base was introduced as a new feature when the tower was rebuilt in 1881. It comprises randomly coursed stone rubble bonded with cement and lime mortar and is capped with ashlar granite blocks providing external seating. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'NORTH'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882). A phase 5 copper earthing wire runs down the left hand quoin to the ground and is marked 'Dawson Bristol'.

7.5 Exterior North west elevation

(See Figs 18 and 46).

The north west elevation is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. It has a tall, narrow window opening with an elvan sill; the window itself has been removed but a photograph in the Francis Frith collection dated 1920 shows the phase 2 windows when they were still *in situ* (www.francisfrith.com/bude). The plinth at the base was introduced as a new feature when the tower was rebuilt in 1881. It comprises randomly coursed stone rubble bonded with cement and lime mortar and is capped with ashlar granite blocks providing external seating. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'N.WEST'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882).

7.6 Exterior West elevation

(See Figs 19 and 46).

The west elevation is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. It has a tall, narrow window opening with an elvan sill; the window itself has been removed but a photograph in the Francis Frith collection dated 1920 shows the phase 2 windows when they were still *in situ* (www.francisfrith.com/bude). The plinth at the base was introduced as a new feature when the tower was rebuilt in 1881. It comprises randomly coursed stone rubble bonded with cement and lime mortar and is capped with ashlar granite blocks providing external seating. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'WEST'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882). Just below the frieze on the right hand quoin two iron brackets are fixed to the wall. These were added to support an incoming telegraph cable when a telegraph system was installed in the building, presumably during phase 4 (1890s). Associated with this there are cable pins just the left hand side of the bracket and also below the window opening where a telegraph wire remains *in situ*.

7.7 Exterior South west elevation

(See Figs 20 and 46).

The south west elevation is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. It has a tall, narrow window opening with an elvan sill; the window itself has been removed but a photograph in the Francis Frith collection dated 1920 shows the phase 2 windows when they were still *in situ* (www.francisfrith.com/bude). The plinth at the base was introduced as a new feature when the tower was rebuilt in 1881. It comprises randomly coursed stone rubble bonded with cement and lime mortar and is capped with ashlar granite blocks providing external seating. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'S.WEST'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882). Just below the frieze on the left hand quoin two iron brackets are fixed to the wall. These were added to support an incoming telegraph cable when a telegraph system was installed in the building, presumably during phase 4 (1890s). A phase 5 copper earthing wire runs down the right hand quoin to the ground.

7.8 Exterior South elevation

(See Figs 21 and 46).

The south elevation is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. It has a tall, narrow window opening with an elvan sill; the window itself has been removed but a photograph in the Francis Frith collection dated 1920 shows the phase 2 windows when they were still *in situ* (www.francisfrith.com/bude). The plinth at the base was introduced as a new feature when the tower was rebuilt in 1881. It comprises randomly coursed stone rubble bonded with cement and lime mortar and is capped with ashlar granite blocks providing external seating. Just above the granite seating to the right hand side there is an ordnance benchmark. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'SOUTH'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882).

7.9 Exterior South east elevation

(See Figs 22 and 46).

The south east elevation is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan with ribbon pointing in a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and dressed elvan quoins which have been pecked to take a render when previously used in the phase 1 tower. The plinth at the base was introduced as a new feature when the

tower was rebuilt in 1881. It comprises randomly coursed stone rubble bonded with cement and lime mortar and is capped with ashlar granite blocks providing external seating. The lettering in the frieze below the cornice reads 'S.EAST'. The roof and cornice above the frieze are both constructed from concrete and date either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882).

7.10 Exterior roof

(See Figs 11, 12 and 45).

The octagonal roof dates either to phase 2 (1881) or phase 3 (1882) and has a low pitch. It is constructed from concrete with each of the eight faces being flat and smooth. There is a low moulded finial in the centre of the roof which now supports a phase 5 iron cross. Around the base of the roof there is a moulded cornice which also appears to be constructed from concrete.

7.11 Exterior surfaces

(See Figs 11, 12, 23, 24 and 45).

In the mid-late 20th century during phase 5, an octagonal paved surface bonded with cement mortar was built around the tower and a rectangular crazy paved concrete base added on the eastern edge, presumably for an information board which has since been removed. Immediately to the north east of this, and below it at a lower level, is the remains of an earlier metalled surface made from small beach pebbles with larger beach pebbles set on their sides used as edging (see Figs 24 and 45).This surface may date to phase 1 or 2. A photograph in the Francis Frith collection dated 1920 (www.francisfrith.com/bude) shows the phase 2 building surrounded by a narrow beach pebble surface, now presumably overlain by the phase 5 crazy paving.

7.12 Interior room description

7.12.1 Floor and ceiling

(See Figs 25, 26 and 45).

The interior floor is a phase 2 slate flagstone floor, comprising large pieces of slate up to 1m wide. The internal part of the threshold up to the door frame is also slate, but the external part of the threshold is ashlar granite.

The ceiling (either phase 2 or 3) is an eight sided dome made from shuttered concrete (the imprint of the timber form for the shuttering can clearly be seen). There are remnants of yellow ochre paint adhering to it and in the centre, there is an iron fixing to support the iron cross on top of the roof.

7.12.2 East wall

(See Figs 27, 28 and 47).

The east wall contains the entrance to the building. The wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower except for a segmental brick arch above the door opening which is made from phase 2 perforated bricks. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2) and there are remnants of a render painted in yellow ochre. The door has been removed but its frame remains *in situ* and may have been reused from the phase 1 structure. The timber frame is pegged at the joints and has a plain chamfer externally. There are two iron pintles to support the door on the left hand side (see Fig 43) and an iron rail running along the threshold. On the right hand side of the frame initials have been carved which stylistically appear to be earlier that any of the other graffiti (see Fig 42).

7.12.3 North east wall

(See Figs 29 and 47).

The north east wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2). However, the blind window surround is constructed with a segmental brick arch and brick jambs,

whilst an ashlar granite block forms the sill/seat. The bricks are perforated and were introduced as a new material in phase 2 (1881). Across the wall and there are remnants of a render and yellow ochre paint along with late 20th century graffiti including one dated 1960 to the right of the blind window. There are also three small timber inserts in the wall to the right hand side of the blind window to secure the door frame in the east wall.

7.12.4 North wall

(See Figs 30, 31 and 47).

The north wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2). However, the window surround is constructed with a segmental brick arch and brick jambs, whilst an ashlar granite block forms the sill/seat. The bricks are perforated and were introduced as a new material in phase 2 (1881). The former windows were recessed, and the leaded panes held in an elvan frame within the reveals. Across the wall and there are remnants of a render and yellow ochre paint along with late 20th century graffiti. There is a crack in the masonry which runs from the left hand side of the window up to the concrete ceiling.

7.12.5 North west wall

(See Figs 32 and 47).

The north west wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2). However, the window surround is constructed with a segmental brick arch and brick jambs, whilst an ashlar granite block forms the sill/seat. The bricks are perforated and were introduced as a new material in phase 2 (1881). The former windows were recessed, and the leaded panes held in an elvan frame within the reveals. Across the wall and there are remnants of a render and yellow ochre paint along with late 20th century graffiti. There is a crack in the masonry which runs from the right hand side of the top of the window for a short distance.

7.12.6 West wall

(See Figs 33, 34 and 47).

The west wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2). However, the window surround is constructed with a segmental brick arch and brick jambs, whilst an ashlar granite block forms the sill/seat. The bricks are perforated and were introduced as a new material in phase 2 (1881). The former windows were recessed, and the leaded panes held in an elvan frame within the reveals. Across the wall and there are remnants of a render and yellow ochre paint along with late 20th century graffiti. The earliest dated graffiti (1951) inside the building is located on the left hand window reveal. There is a crack in the upper half of the masonry where it joins the south west wall and there are also cable pins where the telegraph wire (phase 4, 1890s) once entered the building through the upper part of the window.

7.12.7 South west wall

(See Figs 35, 36 and 47).

The south west wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2). However, the window surround is constructed with a segmental brick arch and brick jambs, whilst an ashlar granite block forms the sill/seat. The bricks are perforated and were introduced as a new material in phase 2 (1881). The former windows were recessed, and the leaded panes held in an elvan frame within the reveals. Across the wall and there are remnants of a render and yellow ochre paint along with late 20th century graffiti. There is a crack in the upper half of the masonry where it joins the west wall and continues running

horizontally at the base of the ceiling. There are also cable pins where the telegraph wire (phase 4, 1890s) once ran horizontally above the window.

7.12.8 South wall

(See Figs 37, 38 and 47).

The south wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2). However, the window surround is constructed with a segmental brick arch and brick jambs, whilst an ashlar granite block forms the sill/seat. The bricks are perforated and were introduced as a new material in phase 2 (1881). The former windows were recessed, and the leaded panes held in an elvan frame within the reveals. Across the wall and there are remnants of a render and yellow ochre paint along with late 20th century graffiti. There is a crack in the upper half of the masonry running upwards to the ceiling from the top left hand side of the window. There are also cable pins where the telegraph wire (phase 4, 1890s) once ran horizontally above the window.

7.12.9 South east wall

(See Figs 37, 38 and 47).

The south east wall is constructed from reused stone from the phase 1 (1835) tower. It is randomly coursed elvan bonded with a cement and lime mortar (phase 2). However, the blind window surround is constructed with a segmental brick arch and brick jambs, whilst an ashlar granite block forms the sill/seat. The bricks are perforated and were introduced as a new material in phase 2 (1881). Across the wall and there are remnants of a render and yellow ochre paint along with late 20th century graffiti. Within the recess of the blind window the wall has been cement rendered and painted yellow ochre except in a rectangular area with drilled holes around where the telegraph cables once led to. This presumably was the site of an electric panel for the telegraph system (phase 4, 1890s). There are also three small timber inserts in the wall to the left hand side of the blind window to secure the door frame in the east wall.

8 References

8.1 Primary sources

Note; original historic newspaper articles and notices, referenced individually in this report, were sourced through the British Newspaper Archive website, below.

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https://www.ribapix.com/Design-for-the-Storm-Tower-a-garden-building-Bude-for-Sir-Thomas-Dyke-Acland-plan-east-elevation-and-section_RIBA82324#

Art UK (digital images of art in public collections)

British Newspaper Archive (historic newspapers)

Heritage Gateway (database of Sites and Monuments Records, and Listed Buildings)

History of Parliament

Royal Institute of British Architects

Green Templeton College website

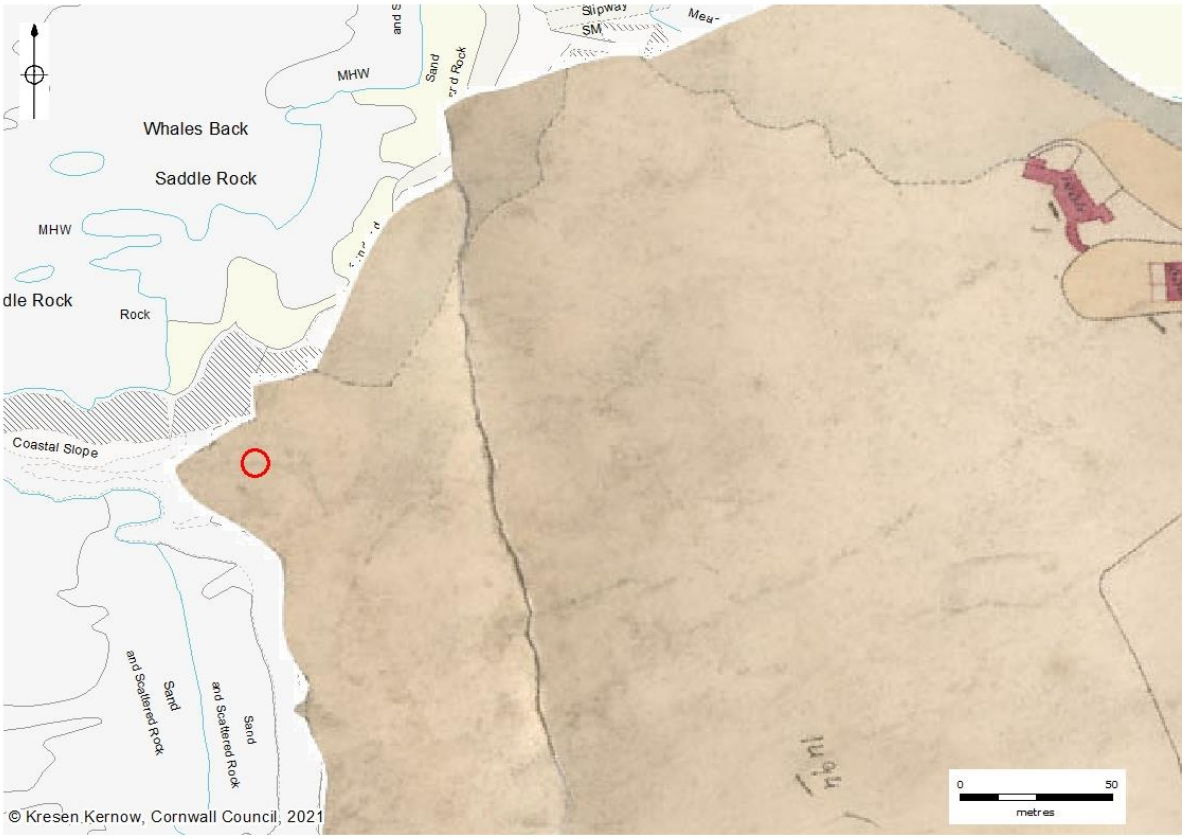


Fig 3 Tithe Map, c1840. Present location of Storm Tower circled in red.

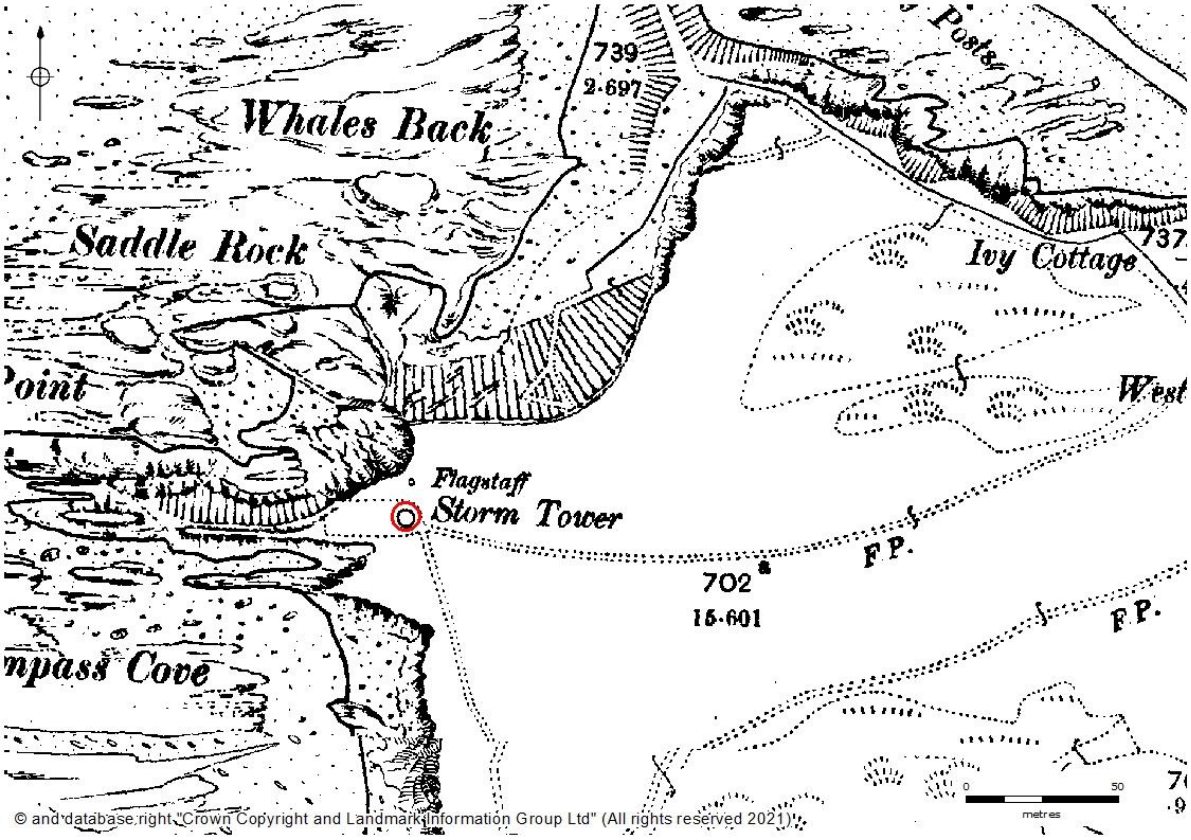


Fig 4 First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, c1880 (Storm Tower circled in red).

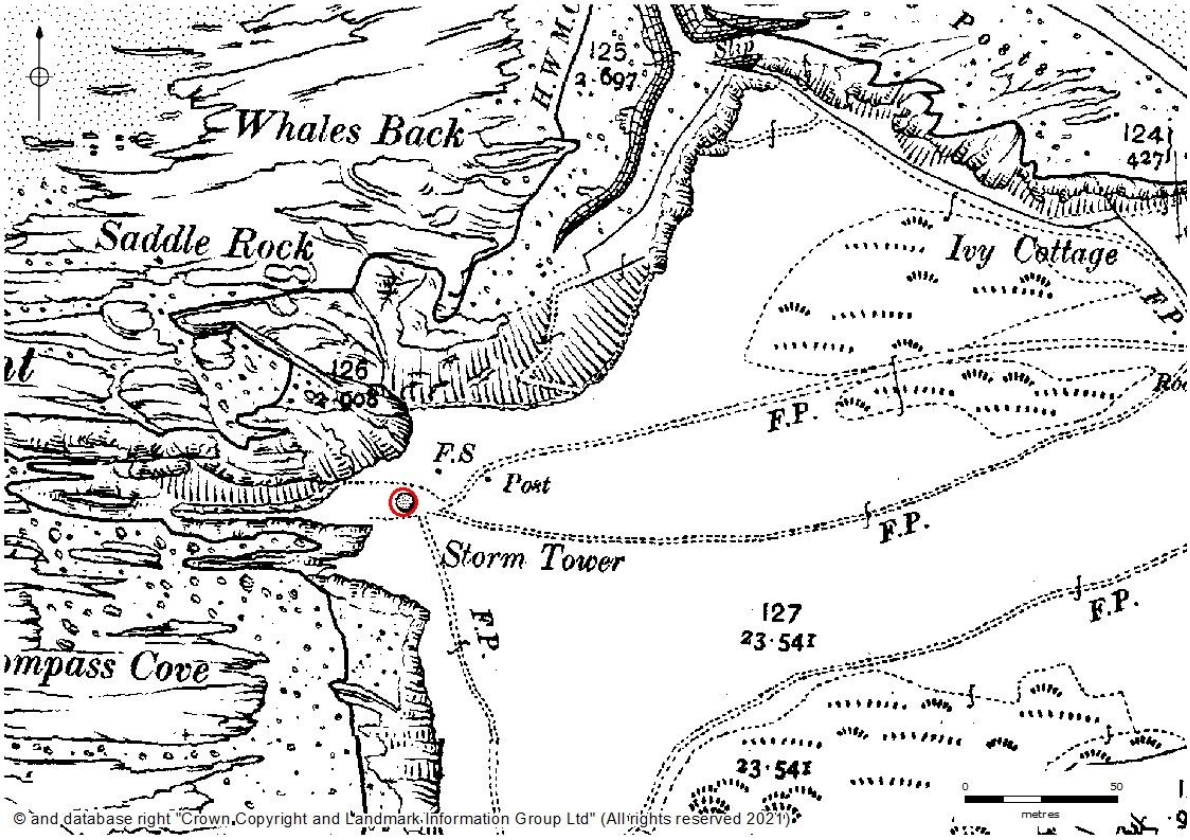


Fig 5 Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, c1907 (Storm Tower circled in red).

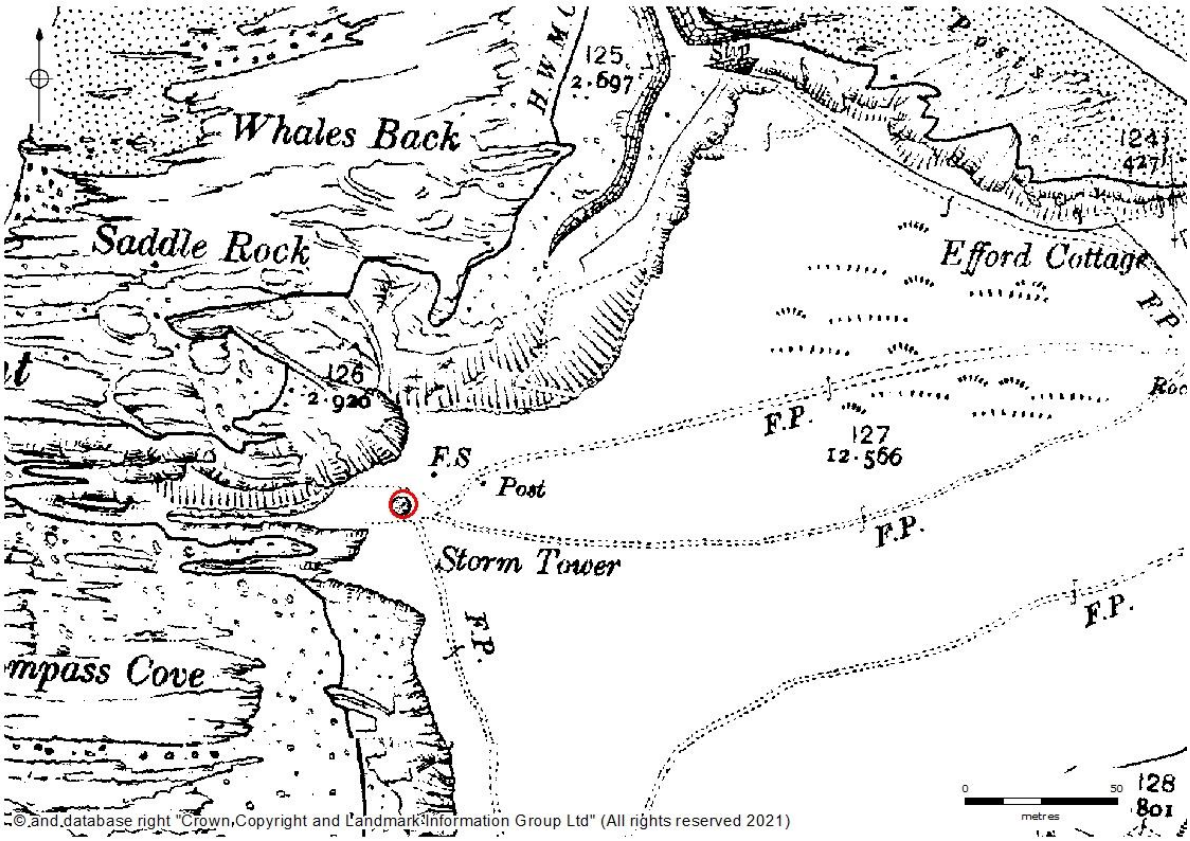


Fig 6 c1935 Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map (Storm Tower circled in red).

Fig 7 Bude Haven (Newport Museum and Art Gallery), attributed to Joseph Stannard.

This view from Nanny Moore's Bridge appears to show the Storm Tower at its original site close to that of today (so was painted after 1835, not by Joseph who died in 1830).

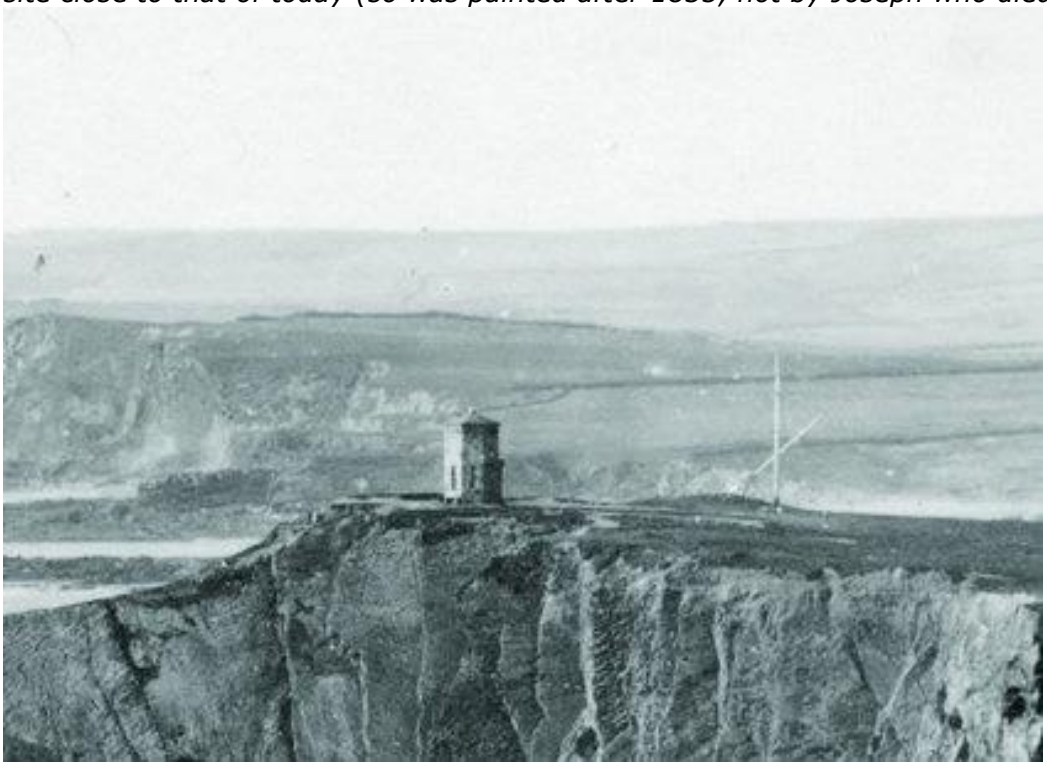


Fig 8 Cropped photograph of the first Storm Tower, taken between 1850-1879 by local photographer Harry Thorn, © Thorn and Thorn. It shows the tower without a plinth at the base or a cross on the roof but does show the signalling flagstaff close by.

Fig 9 Photograph of photographers (centre J C Burrow right H Hughes) taken in 1905 in the doorway of the tower (© Kresen Kernow Ref: corn03883). It shows the door still in situ.

Fig 10 Storm tower looking north east.

Fig 11 Storm tower during measured survey looking north (supplied by Mark Trewin).

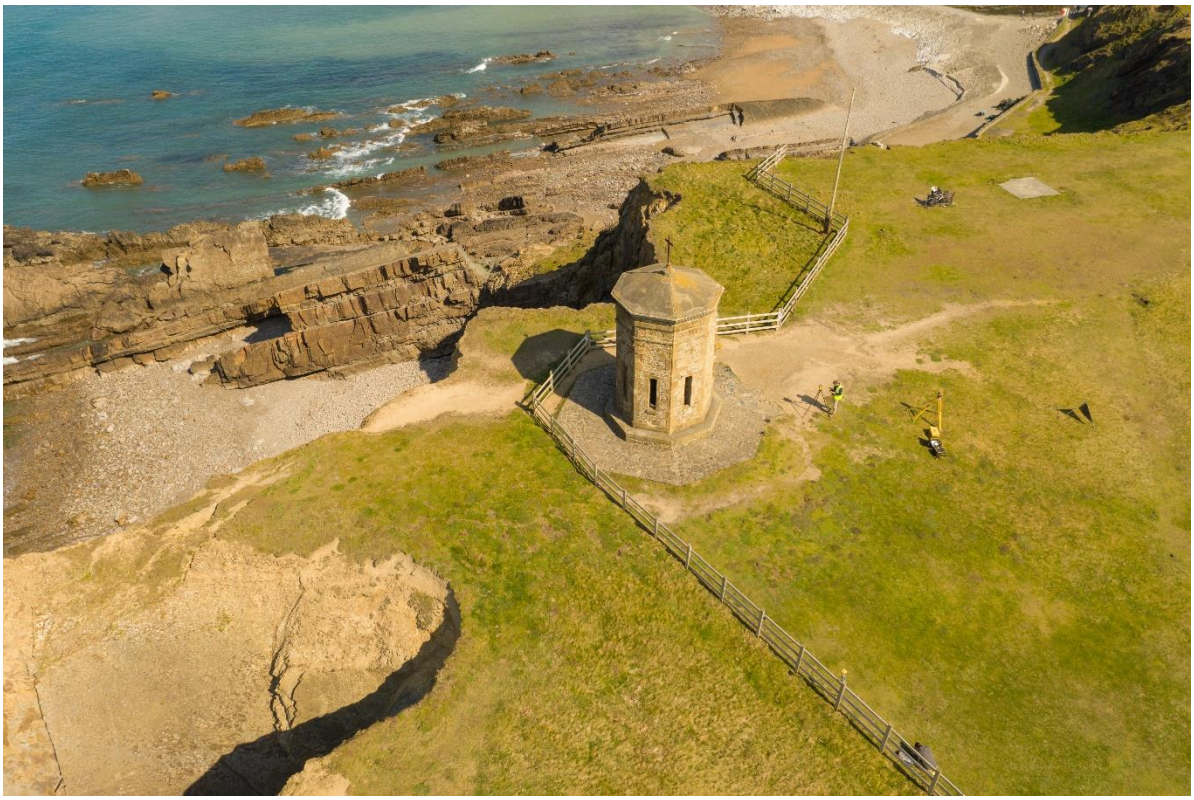


Fig 12 Aerial view of Storm Tower showing concrete roof (supplied by Mark Trewin).

Fig 13 Storm tower during measured survey looking south west (supplied by Mark Trewin).

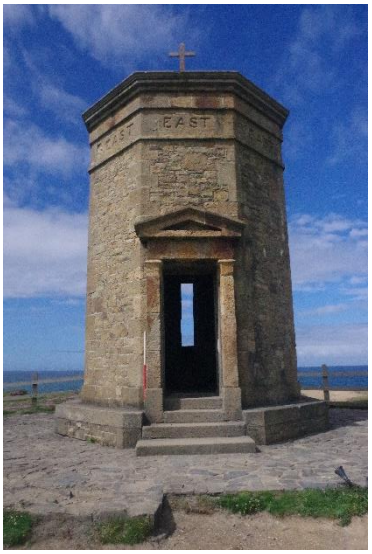


Fig 14 East elevation.

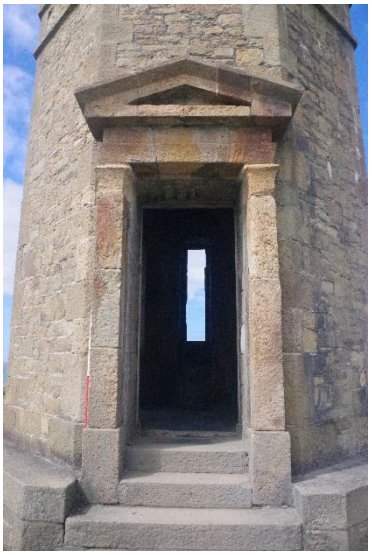


Fig 15 Detail of doorway in east elevation.

Fig 16 North east elevation.

Fig 17 North elevation.

Fig 18 North west elevation.

Fig 19 West elevation.

Fig 20 South west elevation.

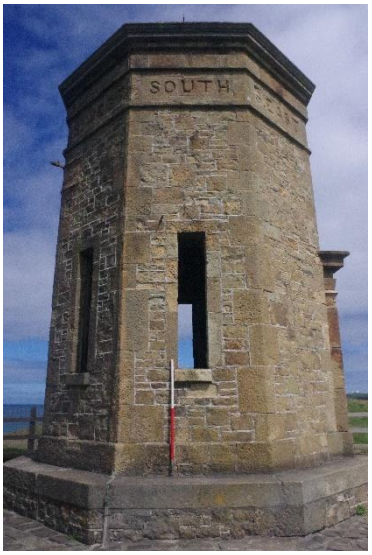


Fig 21 South elevation.

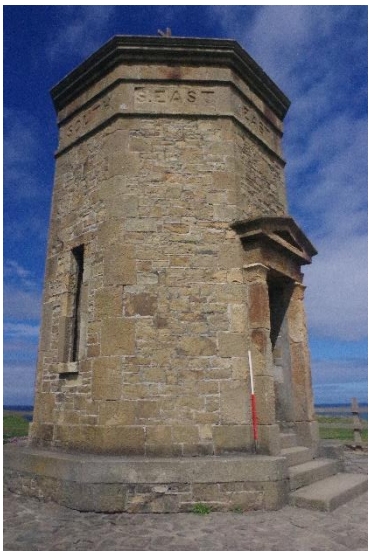


Fig 22 South east elevation.

Fig 23 Detail of phase 5 paved surface.

Fig 24 Detail of phase 1 or 2 pebble metalled surface and edging.

Fig 25 Interior slate flagstone floor looking west.

Fig 26 Interior shuttered concrete domed ceiling.

Fig 27 Interior east wall and door frame.

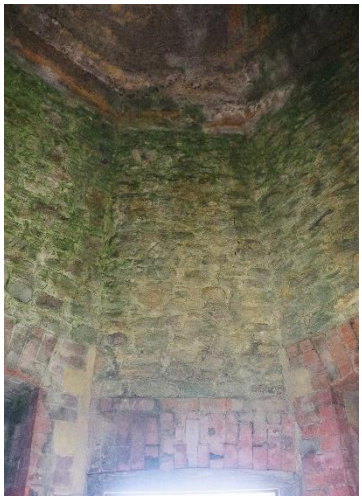


Fig 28 Interior east wall above door.

Fig 29 Interior north east wall with blind window.

Fig 30 Interior north wall.

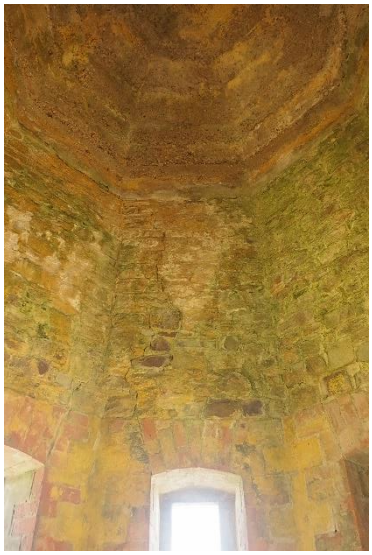


Fig 31 Interior north wall above window.

Fig 32 Interior north west wall.

Fig 33 Interior west wall.

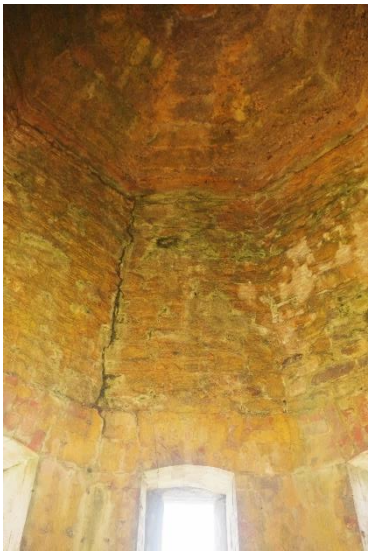


Fig 34 Interior west wall above window.

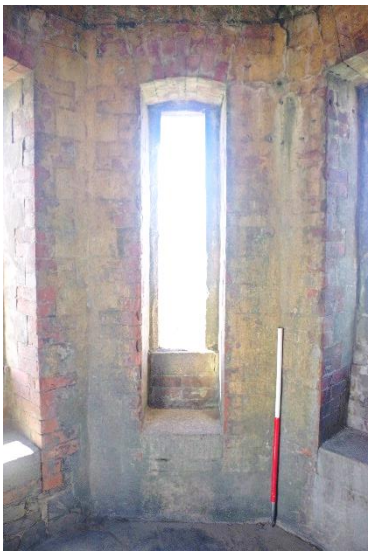


Fig 35 Interior south west wall.

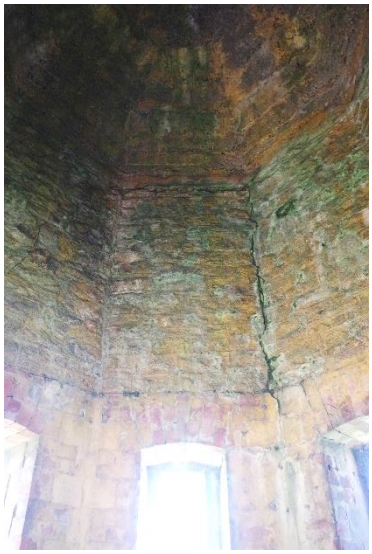


Fig 36 Interior south west wall above window.

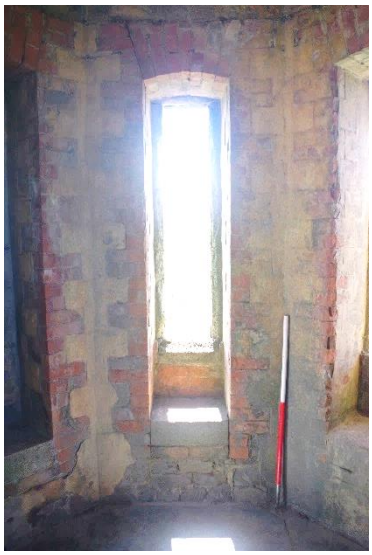


Fig 37 Interior south wall.

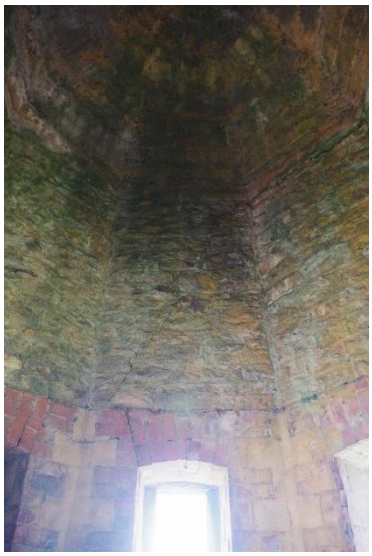


Fig 38 Interior south wall above window.

Fig 39 Interior south east wall.

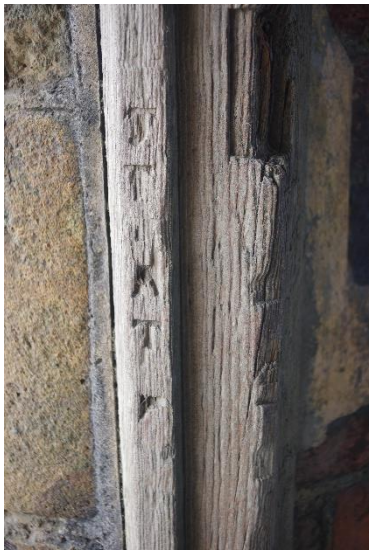


Fig 42 Detail of graffiti on door frame.

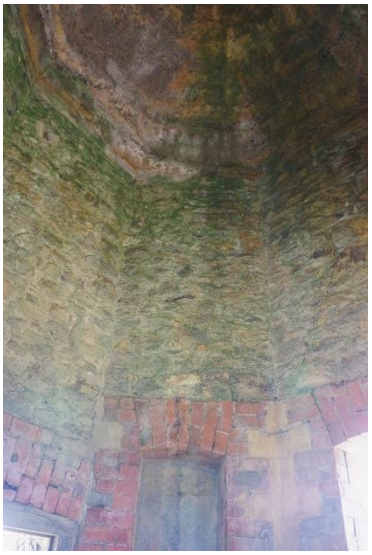


Fig 40 Interior south east wall above blind window.

Fig 43 Detail of iron pintle on door frame.

Fig 41 Detail of window reveal and elvan frame showing scars where the windows have been removed.

Fig 44 Detail of general graffiti on internal walls.

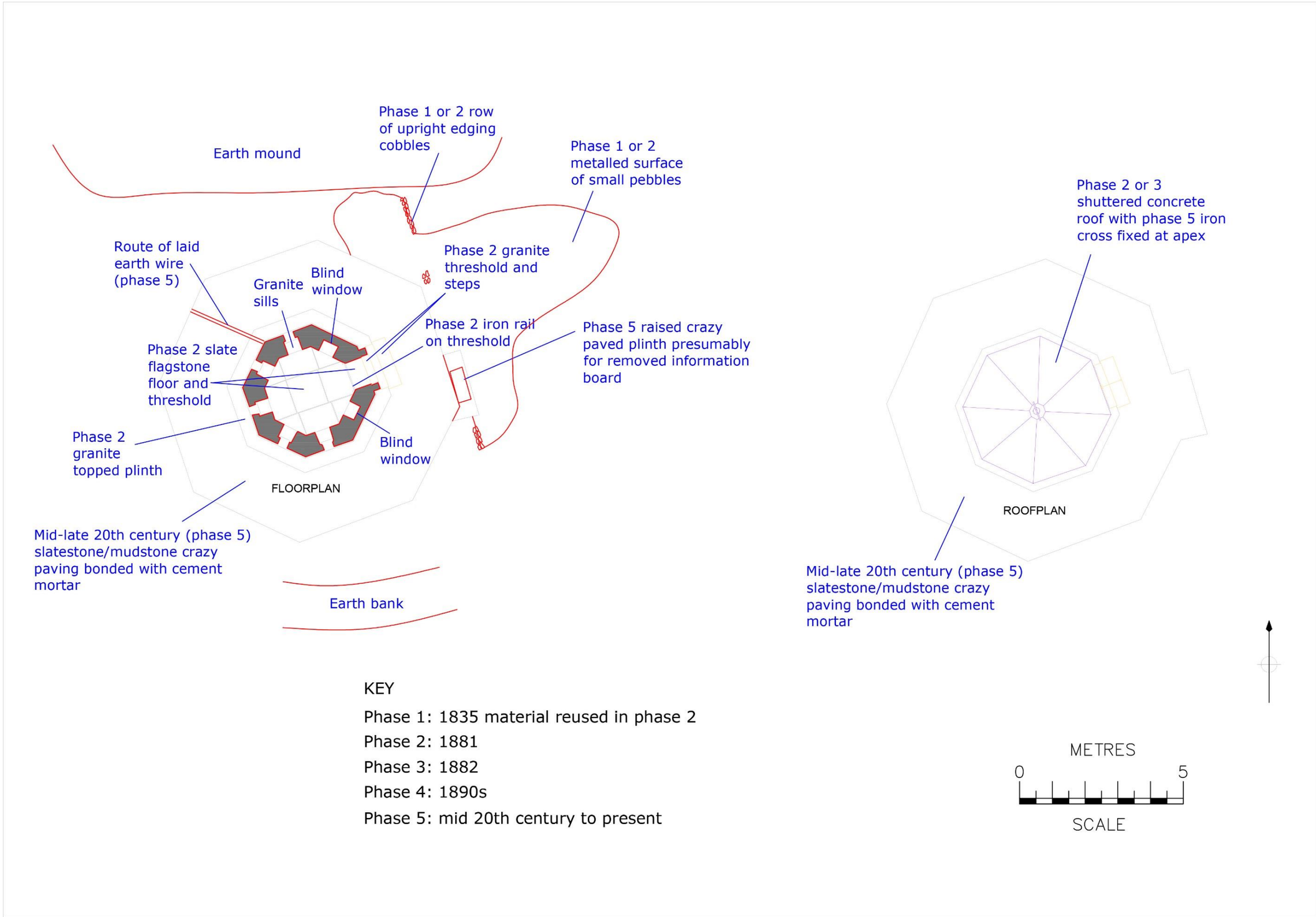
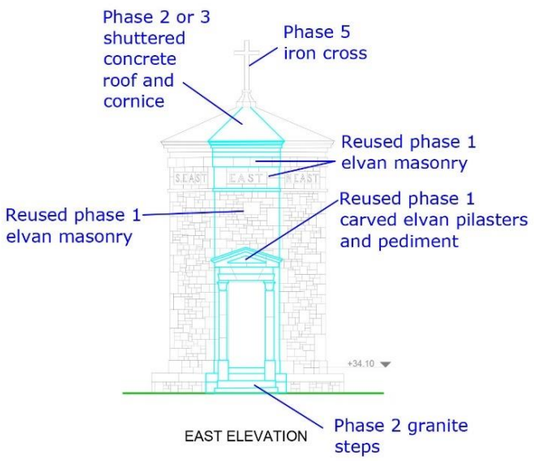
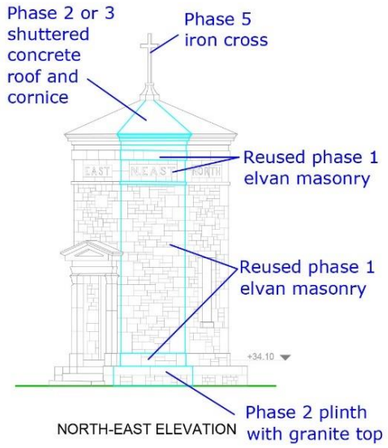
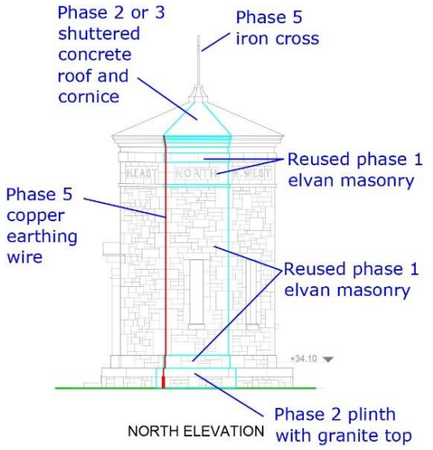
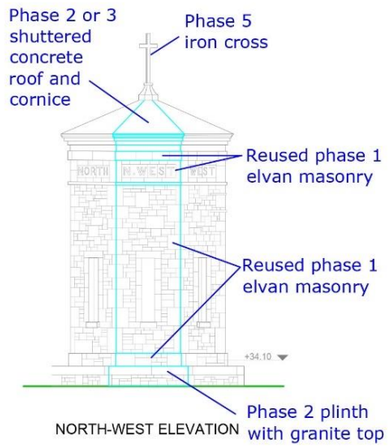


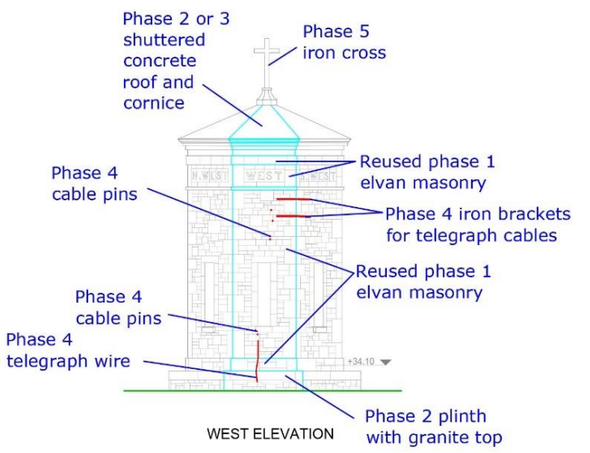
Fig 45 Floor plan and roof plan.

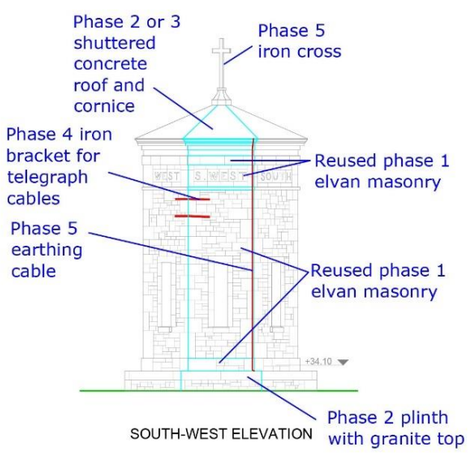


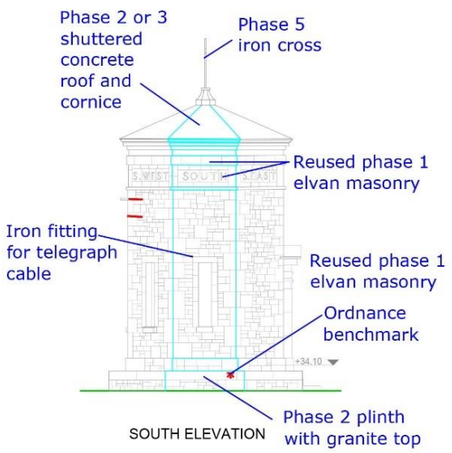


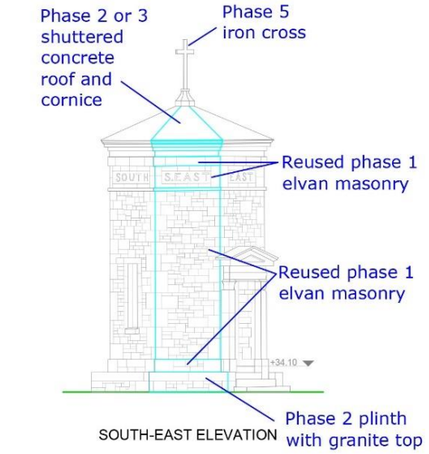












KEY

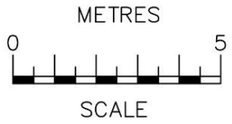
Phase 1: 1835 material reused in phase 2

Phase 2: 1881

Phase 3: 1882

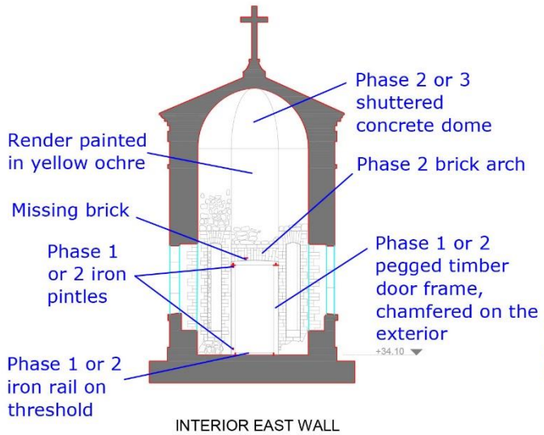
Phase 4: 1890s

Phase 5: mid 20th century to present

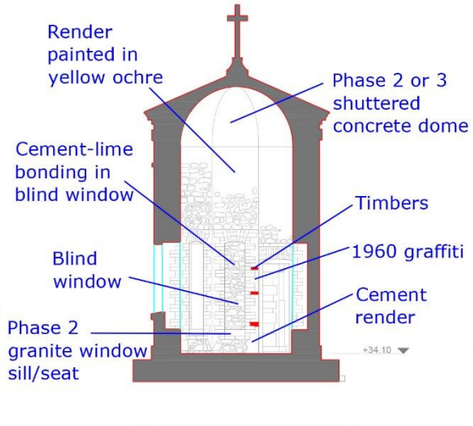


NB. All individual pieces of masonry have been accurately measured

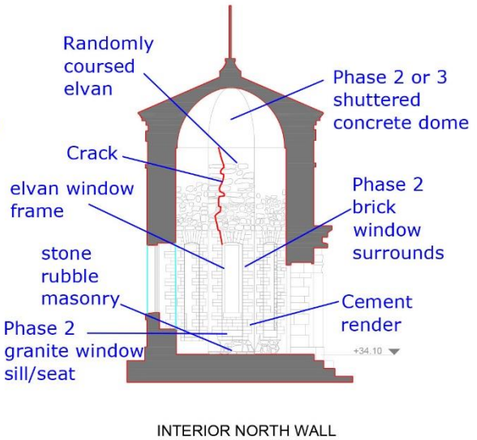
Fig 46 Exterior elevation drawings.



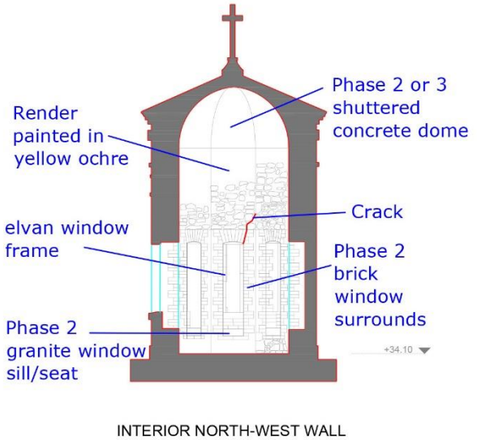
INTERIOR EAST WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION



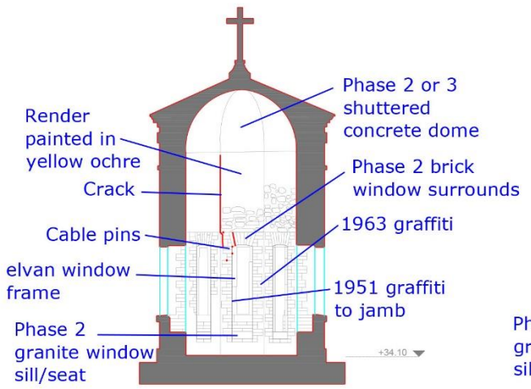
INTERIOR NORTH-EAST WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION



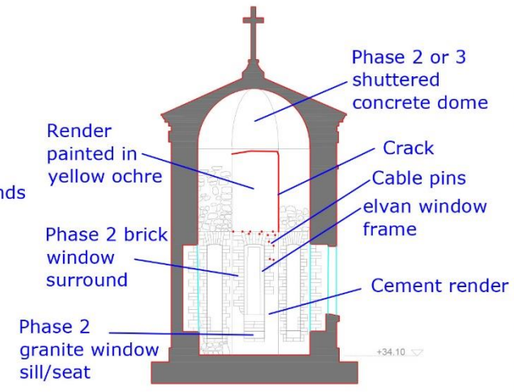
INTERIOR NORTH WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION



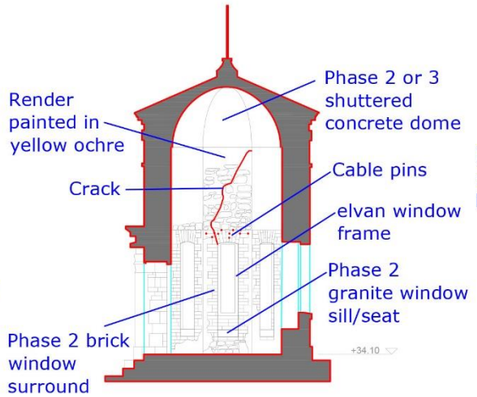
INTERIOR NORTH-WEST WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION



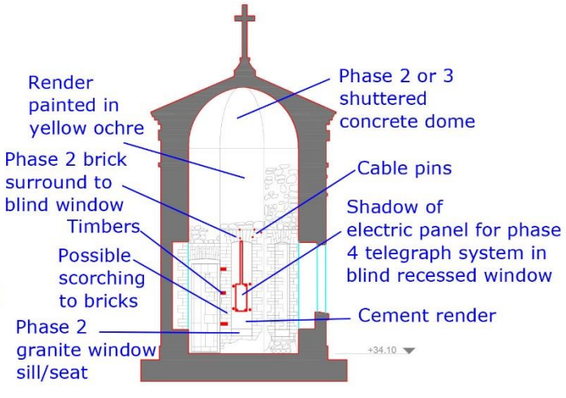
INTERIOR WEST WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION



INTERIOR SOUTH-WEST WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION



INTERIOR SOUTH WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION



INTERIOR SOUTH-EAST WALL
AND INTERNAL SECTION

KEY

Phase 1: 1835 material reused in phase 2

Phase 2: 1881

Phase 3: 1882

Phase 4: 1890s

Phase 5: mid 20th century to present

METRES
0 5
SCALE

NB. All individual pieces of masonry have been accurately measured except where not clearly visible higher up.

Fig 47 Interior elevations and section drawings.

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