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# Tearing Ledge, Western Rocks, Isles of Scilly: Conservation Statement and Management Plan

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Discovery, Innovation and Science in the Historic Environment





Historic England



Tearing Ledge, Western Rocks, Isles of Scilly  
Conservation Statement & Management Plan

Cornwall Archaeological Unit

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## Tearing Ledge

Western Rocks, Isles of Scilly

### **Conservation Statement & Management Plan**

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Cover photo: Bishop Rock lighthouse (photo: CAU)

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# Executive Summary

Tearing Ledge is a rock pinnacle which breaks surface at low tide and lies 350m to the south-east of the Bishop Rock lighthouse in the Western Rocks, Isles of Scilly. The wreck at Tearing Ledge was first discovered by divers working for Roland Morris in 1969. The wreck lies within some of the most spectacular submarine topography in the British Isles.

Originally identified as the *Romney*, the wreck is now believed to be the *Eagle*. Both of these were lost in the same night on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1707 when Sir Cloudesley Shovell's fleet, returning from the Mediterranean, foundered on the Western Rocks. The *Eagle* was a 70-gun third-rate of 1053 tons built at Portsmouth in 1679. She was rebuilt at Chatham in 1699 and was 1099 tons when rebuilt.

Tearing Ledge, the seventh site to be designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, was designated on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1975 position 49° 52.200' N, 06° 26.483'W and within 200m of this point.

The site lies within the Isles of Scilly Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Bishop to Crim Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), part of the Isles of Scilly MCZ.

This Conservation Statement and Management Plan has been produced to enable local and regional stakeholder involvement in our aspirations for the conservation management of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site, so as to balance protection with economic and social needs. The principle aim of the Plan is to identify a shared vision of how the values and features of Tearing Ledge can be conserved, maintained and enhanced.

The following management policies have therefore been formulated in accordance with achieving our principle aim:

### *Management Policy 1*

*We will seek to develop appropriate visitor access to the monument, including virtual access, as a mechanism to develop the value of the site. However, visitor access to the site needs to be considered in the light of the difficult environmental conditions and the high value and portability of the artefacts previously recovered from this site.*

### *Management Policy 2*

*We will encourage the recording and expert appraisal of the artefact assemblage recovered from the site.*

### *Management Policy 3*

*We will seek to facilitate interpretive material for the site. This should be locally displayed, ideally to accompany some of the artefacts from the site. One possible location for this display would be the Isles of Scilly Museum.*

*Management Policy 4*

*Through web-based initiatives, we will continue to develop the accessibility of related material and support appropriate links. A virtual dive trail may be developed for this site. This is particularly important as physical access to the site is difficult.*

*Management Policy 5*

*Mechanisms will be identified and implemented so as to develop shared ownership and partnership working.*

*Management Policy 6*

*Key gaps in understanding the significance of the monument's component parts should be identified, prioritised and addressed so that these significances can contribute to informing the future conservation management of the place.*

*Management Policy 7*

*We will seek to commission a staged programme of assessment and research to contribute towards a fuller understanding of the site in its entirety. Perhaps the best way of achieving these aims would be the production of a desk-based assessment for the site.*

*Management Policy 8*

*We will encourage the investigation and survey of the area around the known remains to establish the full extent of the site.*

*Management Policy 9*

*Unnecessary disturbance of the seabed within the restricted area should be avoided wherever possible in order to minimise the risk of damage to buried archaeological material.*

*Management Policy 10*

*The sale of artefacts recovered from the site should be monitored as far as possible. The UK has adopted 'The Rules', an annex to the 2001 UNESCO convention which includes the principle that underwater cultural heritage should not be commercially exploited.*

*Management Policy 11*

*This management plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis so that it continues to reflect the conditions and state of knowledge pertaining to the site.*

# Tearing Ledge

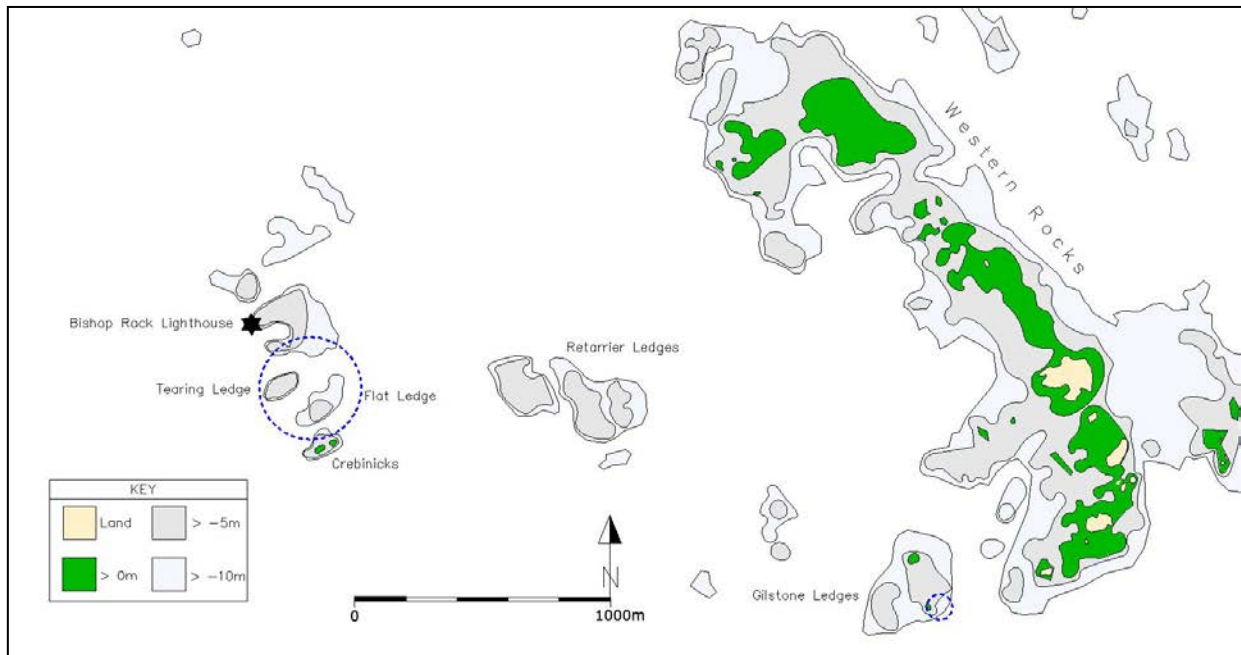
## Conservation Statement & Management Plan

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background and Purpose

- 1.1.1 Wreck sites may contain the remains of vessels, their fittings, armaments, cargo and other associated objects or deposits and they may merit legal protection if they contribute significantly to our understanding of our maritime past. The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 (PWA) allows the UK Government to designate, in territorial waters, an important wreck site to prevent uncontrolled disturbance. Although the National Heritage Act 2002 enabled English Heritage (now Historic England) to assist in costs relating to works under the PWA, the responsibilities of Historic England for the physical management of designated wreck sites must align with our strategic and research priorities.
- 1.1.2 This document seeks to set out a Conservation Statement and Management Plan for Tearing Ledge, an archaeological site designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act (1973), lying 350m to the south-east of the Bishop Rock lighthouse in the Western Rocks, Isles of Scilly (Fig 1). The site was the first to be designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 1975 position 49° 52.200' N, 06° 26.483'W and within 200m of this point.
- 1.1.3 Tearing Ledge is attributed the National Heritage List for England (NHLE); the List Entry Number is 1000063.
- 1.1.4 Historic England has published a set of *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* for the sustainable management of the historic environment, designed to strengthen our credibility and the consistency of decisions taken and advice given (English Heritage 2008). These *Conservation Principles* are intended to support the quality of our decision-making, with the ultimate objective of creating a management regime for all aspects of the historic environment that is clear and transparent in its purpose and sustainable in its application. As such, *Conservation* is taken to be the process of managing change in ways that will best sustain the values of a place in its contexts, and which recognises opportunities to reveal and reinforce those values (English Heritage 2008).
- 1.1.5 This Conservation Statement and Management Plan has therefore been produced to enable local and regional stakeholder involvement in our aspirations for the conservation management of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site.





*Fig 1 The Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site is located 350m to the south-east of the Bishop Rock lighthouse, Isles of Scilly. Depths are in metres below chart datum, the blue dashed circles mark the designated areas of Tearing Ledge and the Association.*

## 1.2 Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 The principle aim of this Conservation Statement and Management Plan is to identify a shared vision of how the values and features of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site can be conserved, maintained and enhanced.

1.2.2 This has been achieved through the following objectives:

- Understanding the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site.
- Assessing the significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site.
- Identifying where the significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site is vulnerable.
- Identifying policies for conserving the significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site.
- Realising the public value of conservation.

## **1.3 Scope**

- 1.3.1 In 1995, the Archaeological Diving Unit sought to determine factors affecting the stability of Protected Wreck sites (report ref. 95/30). This assessment considered the exposure of archaeological material, the probability of active degradation, site dynamics (energy) and sediment covering. It concluded that many of the sites designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act (1973) are actively deteriorating.
- 1.3.2 This assessment was subsequently reconsidered by Historic England, which sought to place an understanding of the physical stability of (and therefore risk to) each designated wreck site against ongoing investigations (through incumbent licensees), ease of access for visitors and potential for wider awareness (publication, signage, etc.). Practical measures that can conserve, maintain and enhance the values and features of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site identified as being at risk will be delivered through this Conservation Statement and Management Plan.
- 1.3.3 Access to England's 52 Protected Wreck sites is managed through a licensing scheme and authorisation by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Of the 52 protected sites in England, five are in the Isles of Scilly.

## **1.4 Authorship**

- 1.4.1 Contributions to this Conservation Statement and Management Plan will be sought through stakeholder involvement. Seventeen individuals and organisations will be consulted (listed in section 9.2).
- 1.4.2 This document is based on the Historic England Standard for Conservation Statements for English Heritage Sites and draws on generic plans for shipwreck sites (e.g., Cederlund 2004).
- 1.4.3 This Conservation Statement and Management Plan was prepared between June and November 2016 for Historic England by Kevin Camidge and Charles Johns.

## **1.5 Status**

- 1.5.1 The final version of this report was adopted in January 2017. Notes on its status (in terms of revision) will be maintained.

## 2 Understanding Tearing Ledge

### 2.1 Historical Development of the Designated Site

- 2.1.1 The wreck at Tearing Ledge was originally identified as the *Romney*, but it is now believed to be the *Eagle*. Both of these were lost in the same night on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1707 (McBride and Larn 1999). The *Romney* was a 54-gun fourth-rate of 683 tons, built at Blackwall in 1694. The *Eagle* was a 70-gun third-rate of 1053 tons built at Portsmouth in 1679. The *Eagle* was rebuilt at Chatham in 1699 and was 1099 tons when rebuilt (Lyon 1993).
- 2.1.2 In 1707 Sir Cloudesley Shovell's fleet was in the Mediterranean at the siege of Toulon. As winter approached, Sir Cloudesley left a squadron in the Mediterranean and set off for England with the rest of his fleet. This fleet consisted of 21 ships. Having miscalculated their position, the fleet ran into the Western Rocks off Scilly on the night of 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1707. Three ships, *Eagle*, *Romney* and Sir Cloudesley's flagship *Association*, were lost with only a single survivor (from the *Romney*) between them (Larn 1971). The fireship *Phoenix* struck a rock and was eventually beached at New Grimsby (Tresco), where she remained for three and a half months undergoing repairs (Johns *et al* 2004). Another fireship — the *Firebrand* — also struck the rocks but managed to get off again. Leaking badly, she made for the beacon of St Agnes lighthouse, but foundered in Smith Sound close to the island of St Agnes. Of *Firebrand's* complement of 50 crew members, 25 — including Captain Percy — managed to reach the safety of St Agnes (Camidge 2011). About 1400 men perished in this incident, making it one of the worst disasters in British naval history (Larn 2006). These events probably contributed to the Longitude Act of 1714 where £20,000 was offered to anyone who could solve the navigation problem of accurately determining longitude at sea (Sobell 1995).
- 2.1.3 The site was first discovered by divers working for Roland Morris in 1969 (Morris 1969). Excavation was undertaken by them in 1969 and 1970. They recovered a number of artefacts including a large (2 cwt) bronze bell marked '1701' and with a broad arrow. Other finds included gold and silver coins, gold rings and a navigation slate. The bell is now in the Isles of Scilly Museum but the current location of the other items is not known. Morris also noted 'some 40 cannon lying around the site' (Licensee Report 1970) and (Daily Telegraph 12.06.69). The date of this material and the location of the *Romney* shown on the Gostelo Chart (Fig 2) led Morris to identify this as the *Romney* (McBride and Larn 1999).
- 2.1.4 Bob Rogers from the Blue Sea Divers is reported to have removed iron guns from the site, probably in 1970. The number of guns removed is stated to be two (Licensee Report 1975) or five (McBride and Larn 1999).
- 2.1.5 In 1971 the Naval Air Command Sub Aqua Club (NACSAC) carried out a 'preliminary survey' of the Tearing Ledge site. A sketch plan and short report were made. The plan shows 35 guns, a large anchor and basic topographic detail (NACSAC 1971).

- 2.1.6 In 1975 the site was designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act. The statutory instrument states that 'the wreck is believed to be that of the *Romney*'.
- 2.1.7 Between 1975 and 1989 the site was investigated by a team led by Rex Cowan. This began with a survey of the site. A site plan was produced and the guns exposed on the seabed were measured. This plan has been published along with the gun lengths and identifications in (McBride and Larn 1999). The plan was developed over time and five different versions were submitted as part of the annual licensee report between 1975 and 1985. The team also undertook excavation on the site and a number of artefacts were recovered. Rex Cowan has argued that this is the wreck of the *Eagle* rather than the *Romney* as previously thought (Licensee Report 1977).
- 2.1.8 The original identification of the wreck as the *Romney*, made by Roland Morris in 1969, was based on recovered artefact dates and a chart drawn shortly after 1707 by Edmund Gostelo (Fig 2; National Archives, MPH 1/368). This shows the *Romney* on or about the Tearing Ledge (recorded as 'Rumney Lost'). This chart also shows the *Eagle* wrecked on the Crim, an area of rocks some 3.2km to the north of the Tearing Ledge. However, the number of guns surviving on the seabed suggests a ship larger than the *Romney*. The survey of the guns undertaken by Peter McBride for Rex Cowan (Licensee Report 1975) has identified guns which are consistent with the known armament of the *Eagle*, but are too large for the *Romney*. Finally, amongst the artefacts recovered by Rex Cowan's diving team was a silver spoon marked with the initials 'HRM' (with the H over the RM). This object can be attributed to the Captain of the *Eagle*, given the 17<sup>th</sup> century practice of placing husband and wife's first initial under the surname initial on cutlery: Captain **R**obert **H**ancock and his wife **M**ary (Licensee Report 1977).
- 2.1.9 An extensive coverage of the 1707 wrecking event is presented in 'Sir Cloudesley Shovell: Stuart Admiral' (Harris 2001). The archaeological history of the site is summarised in Appendix 1 below.
- 2.1.10 Cooke's (1883) account of the event from 'Original and Contemporary Sources Hitherto Unpublished' includes information from the notes of Edmund Herbert that; 'the *Rumney* [sic] also struck immediately and stav'd on the Guilstone. The *Eagle* was lost on ye Gunnar or thereabouts, by wt of ye wreck floated to St Just and other places at ye Land's & up ye North Channel'. Otherwise the account is peripheral to the Tearing Ledge site; 'The night was dark, and the wind had increased to a gale with squalls and rain. What passed on board the *Association*, *Eagle* and *Rumney*, can never now be known. That which befell the others can best be told in a few words from some of the log-books which remain'.
- 2.1.11 The historical development of the site is outlined in *in 'Historic Shipwrecks Discovered, Protected and Investigated'* (Fenwick and Gale 1998). An account of the 1707 disaster is reproduced, along with the site plan and gun survey, in '*Admiral Shovell's Treasure*' (McBride and Larn, 1999). There are also accounts in '*Poor England has Lost so many Men*' (Larn 2006), the '*Designated Site Assessment*' (Wessex Archaeology 2008) and '*The Wrecks of Scilly*' (Larn 2010). The site is also mentioned in the '*Shipwreck Index of the British Isles*'

(Larn and Larn 1995) and *The Wreck Detectives* (McDonald 1972). Further details have been extracted from the surviving licensee reports held at the Historic England Archive (Swindon), although the reports for 1982–4, 1986, and 1989 were not available.

2.1.12 There are two references to the Tearing Ledge site in the International Journal of Nautical Archaeology (IJNA). One is a letter to the editor from Peter McBride about de-concreting guns on the seabed for identification, most of it is couched in general terms and the Tearing Ledge site is only mentioned in passing (McBride 1977). The other, by Richard Larn, concerns a collection of mystery artefacts from shipwrecks one of which is a lead object (UA0001C) from Tearing Ledge (Larn 1984).

## **2.2 Description of Surviving Features**

2.2.1 The Tearing Ledge is a rock pinnacle which breaks surface at low tide. It is situated some 350m to the south-east of the Bishop Rock lighthouse in the Isles of Scilly. Underwater, the Tearing Ledge is surrounded by very large rock gullies with some patches of sandy sediment, and in one of these gullies — which slopes from 20m down to over 40m in depth — the majority of the wreck remains lie. The site is largely free from kelp but is subject to very strong tides and swell-generated surge.

2.2.2 What survives on the seabed now are two large iron anchors, over 60 iron guns and a number of iron objects, including iron shot. To date, no evidence of ship's structure has been located. Current thinking suggests that the remains are probably those of the *Eagle* which was wrecked in Scilly in 1707.

2.2.3 The bronze bell recovered by Roland Morris in 1969 is now in the Isles of Scilly Museum. The location of the other artefacts recovered by him (2.1.3 above) is not known. Similarly the objects recovered from the site by the NACSAC expedition (2.1.5 above) now appear to be lost.

2.2.4 The team led by Rex Cowan excavated on the site between 1975 and 1986 and recovered a considerable quantity of artefacts. These are summarised in the archaeological history (Appendix 1). Some finds drawings were reproduced in the licensee reports; these are listed in the index of finds drawings (Appendix 2). The 1977 licensee report states that 'to date over 300 items have been catalogued'. Conservation of the recovered objects was undertaken by Howard Pell. It is believed that some of the objects recovered were sold at public auction, others being retained by Rex Cowan (Licensee Report 1978).

2.2.5 The most secure dating for the site is currently the material recovered by Rex Cowan's team. This included at least 70 coins, the latest recorded coin date being 1707 (Licensee Report 1976). The hallmarks on the silver spoon and one of the silver forks date them to 1697 and 1701 respectively (Licensee Report 1978).



Fig 2 Detail from Edmund Gostelo's c 1708 chart (The National Archives MPH1/368).

2.2.6 Rex Cowan reports five different artefacts which were marked with the owner's initials (Licensee Report 1977). Of these, three have been correlated with the initials of crew members of the *Eagle*, including the captain's initials on a silver spoon (2.1.8 above).

2.2.7 Other objects recovered from the site include pottery, lead and iron shot, pewter and silver cutlery, navigation instruments, a bronze bell, coins, bone, glass and a number of unidentified metal objects. There have been no reports of ship structure surviving on site.

### 2.3 Ownership, Management and Current Use

2.3.1 As a former warship, the *Eagle* remains the property of the Crown (MoD) as there is no evidence that the wreck has been disposed of. The seabed is owned by The Crown Estate.

2.3.2 The Archaeological Diving Unit (ADU) visited the site on four separate occasions (1986, 1993, 1995 and 1998). Their first visit in 1986 was extensive and they undertook 13 dives over five days. This visit took place while Rex Cowan's team were excavating on site. The ADU report concluded that 'None of the ship's structure appears to have survived', 'Recovered finds indicate that the wreck is, beyond reasonable doubt, one of Shovel's fleet lost in 1707' and that 'The work taking place during the ADU's visit was not to acceptable archaeological standards'. They also visited the site in 1993 and 1995, but were unable to dive due to sea conditions. A final visit in 1998 resulted in a single dive on site in difficult sea conditions. The ADU reports are ADU 007, ADU 93/16, ADU 95/26 and ADU 98/07.

- 2.3.3 The site was scheduled for assessment by the Archaeological Contractor for Services in Relation to the Protection of Wrecks Act (1973) in 2004 and 2007. Diving on site was not possible on either occasion because of the sea conditions (Wessex Archaeology 2005; 2008).
- 2.3.4 As physical access to the protected section of the site is restricted to licensed divers, the recovery of artefactual material can in theory be managed and controlled. Historically-recovered material is largely in private ownership and the current whereabouts of much of it is unknown. The bell recovered from the site by Roland Morris is currently on display in the Isles of Scilly Museum.
- 2.3.5 Public access to the site is achieved by licence under the Protection of Wrecks Act. This licensing is currently administered by Historic England. The three dive charter boats operating in Scilly have annual licences to visit for the protected wreck sites of *HMS Colossus*, the *Association*, Tearing Ledge and Bartholomew Ledges. The scheme has been very popular with visiting divers; over 2300 visits have been made to *Colossus* in the last ten years. The Tearing Ledge site is also very popular but requires good weather and sea conditions for diving to take place there. Between 2006 and 2015 there were 746 diver visits recorded for the Tearing Ledge site.
- 2.3.6 There has been no formal publication of any of the archaeological work undertaken on this site. The main general publications covering this site were listed in 2.1.10 above. The work undertaken by Morris in 1969/70 was never published (Roland Morris died in 1992). Similarly the NACSAC work on this site is unlikely to ever be published. However, Rex Cowan and Peter McBride have hinted that a future publication of their work is at least possible (lecture delivered at the International Shipwreck Conference in Plymouth, 2016).
- 2.3.7 Two objects recovered from the Tearing Ledge site were on display in the Charlestown Shipwreck and Heritage Museum in 2006 (a lead vessel and part of a copper-alloy spoon).
- 2.3.8 A summary of the archaeological work undertaken on the site to date appears in Appendix 1.

## **2.4 Gaps in Existing Knowledge**

- 2.4.1 Although current thinking is that this site is that of the *Eagle* the evidence for this identification needs to be collated and published. The original identification of the site as the *Romney* by Roland Morris has resonated to this day, bolstered by the Gostelo Chart which marks the *Romney* as wrecked on the Tearing Ledge and the *Eagle* on the Crim Rocks to the north (Fig 2). Most recently, this was reinforced by Wessex Archaeology who claimed that the site was most probably the *Romney* — an identification based solely on the Gostelo chart (Wessex Archaeology 2008). Rex Cowan, however, is convinced that this wreck was the *Eagle*. His assertion that the site had too many guns of too great a calibre for it to be the *Romney* is compelling. There are over 60 guns recorded on his site plan — the *Eagle* had 70 while the *Romney* only carried 56. The largest guns carried by the *Romney* were 12lb, while there are 23 guns recorded on the site of 24lb or greater; the *Eagle* carried 22 24lb guns (Lyon 1993). Finally, the lengths of the guns recorded on board the *Eagle* in Colonel

Brown's great gun survey of 1696 (Caruana1994) accords remarkably well with the lengths recorded in Peter McBride's record of the guns on the site. The large anchor present on the site, reported as 15' 8" long, is probably too large to be the anchor of the *Romney* (McBride and Larn 1999, 106). The evidence of the initials on objects recovered from the site is also persuasive (2.1.8 and 2.2.6 above), but clearly needs further research.

- 2.4.2 We need to understand more about the recovered artefacts from the site. In particular the current whereabouts of the objects needs to be established. The surviving artefacts should be assessed by an appropriate specialist.
- 2.4.3 An archive should be compiled covering all the existing site records and artefacts. This is probably best achieved by undertaking a Desk-based Assessment for the site.
- 2.4.4 We need to establish the full extent of the site. For example, in 2005 the licensee noted a scatter of 'window glass, onion bottles and pots' in deep water to the south west of the main site (Licensee Report 2005).
- 2.4.5 We need to understand the topography of the site. A complete bathymetric survey of the area would be useful to map the terrain of the seabed. It would certainly be useful to have high quality multibeam sonar data of the ledge and the area around it. This could help with georeferencing the existing site plans, as well as forming the basis for any future virtual dive trail of the site.
- 2.4.6 A formal programme of staged assessment and research is required to contribute towards a fuller understanding of the site in its entirety.



## **3 Assessment of Significance**

### **3.1 Basis for Assessment of Significance**

- 3.1.1 *Significance* means *the sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place* (English Heritage 2008). Cultural heritage value has many aspects, including the potential of a place to yield primary information about past human activity (evidential value, which includes archaeological value), the ways in which it can provide direct links to past people, events and aspects of life (historical value), the ways in which people respond to a place through sensory and intellectual experience of it (aesthetic value, which includes architectural value) and the meanings of a place for the people who identify with it, and communities for whom it is part of their collective memory (communal value).
- 3.1.2 In addition, the historic environment is a cultural and natural heritage resource shared by communities characterised not just by geographical location but also by common interests and values. As such, emphasis may be placed upon important consequential benefits or potential, for example as an educational, recreational, or economic resource, which the historic environment provides. The seamless cultural and natural strands of the historic environment are a vital part of everyone's heritage, held in stewardship for the benefit of future generations.
- 3.1.3 The basis for assessing significance therefore enables consideration of the varying degrees of significance of different elements of the site. By identifying those elements which are vital to its significance and so must not be lost or compromised, we are able to identify elements which are of lesser value, and elements which have little value or detract from the significance of the site.

### **3.2 Statement of Significance**

- 3.2.1 The evidential significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site lies in the array of artefacts surviving on the seabed comprising over 60 iron guns, two anchors, cannon balls and some iron concretions. This material is distributed over an area roughly 80m by 35m. A scatter of small objects (glass, bottles and pottery) is recorded noted to the south-west of the main site. In addition, a considerable number of artefacts have been recovered from the site (over 300 had been catalogued by Rex Cowan in 1977).
- 3.2.2 Whether identified as the *Eagle* or the *Romney*, the historical significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site lies in its connection with the calamity which befell Sir Cloudesley Shovel's fleet amongst the Western Rocks on the night of the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1707. The extent of this tragedy was exceeded only by the 'Great Storm' of 1703, in which 13 warships and 2000 seamen were lost, as the worst peacetime disaster that the Royal Navy has ever suffered (McBride and Larn 1999).

- 3.2.3 Some 17 years later the catastrophe was recalled by Daniel Defoe in '*A Tour Through the Whole island of Great Britain*': 'One can hardly mention the Bishop and his Clerks, as they are called, or the Rocks of Scilly. Without letting fall a tear to the memory of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, and all the gallant spirits that were with him at one blow. And without a moment's warning, dashed to a state of immortality; the admiral with three men of war, and all their men (running upon these Rocks, right before the wind, and in a dark night) being lost there and not man saved. But all our annals and histories are full of this, so I need say no more' (Defoe 1724–26).
- 3.2.4 At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century there was no accurate way of determining a ship's longitude. On that night in October 1707, Sir Cloudesley had thought his fleet to be in the latitude of Ushant off Brittany rather than heading for the Western Rocks. The loss of a Rear Admiral of England, along with four warships and at least 1400 men brought the question of longitude to the forefront of national affairs and precipitated the Longitude Act of 1714 in which parliament promised a prize for the solution of the longitude problem – the Longitude Prize — which was eventually won by John Harrison's invention of the chronometer in c 1736 (Sobell 1995).
- 3.2.5 Aesthetically, Tearing Ledge is one of the most memorable wreck sites a diver will ever encounter. After their visit in 1986 the ADU observed that 'The wreck lies within what must be some of the most spectacular submarine topography in the British Isles' (ADU 1986). It is located within the Bishop to Crim Marine Conservation Zone, Isles of Scilly MCZ and the Isles of Scilly Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 3.2.6 Of the countless shipwrecks that have occurred in Scilly, the loss of Sir Cloudesley Shovel and much of his fleet was one of the two worst disasters — the other being the wreck of the SS *Schiller* in 1875 (Over 1993). The story of the 1707 calamity is part of Scillonian collective memory and folklore.
- 3.2.7 The Tearing Ledge site was discovered by local divers and the local community retains a keen interest in the site and may be viewed as 'unofficial 'custodians''. Some members of the community have published their own interpretations of the site. In this capacity, the community investigates and to some extent monitors the site and self-regulates visiting divers. In addition Tearing Ledge may be seen to provide recreational (and therefore economic) resource by virtue of diving tourism. Local educational value may be viewed in relation to the display in the Isles of Scilly Museum.
- 3.2.8 Whereas historical and communal values contribute to the assessment of significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected wreck site, these values cannot stand alone. Without the continued enhancement of certain values, interest in the Tearing Ledge site would be diminished. As such, extant material remains on the seabed are vital to the significance of the site and must therefore not be lost or compromised.

3.2.9 The following table seeks to summarise these values of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site as a whole, by noting how those values relate to the surviving fabric and its constituent parts:

<p><b>Evidential</b></p>	<p><i>Relating to the potential of Tearing Ledge to yield primary information about past human activity.</i></p> <p>The evidential significance of the Tearing Ledge site lies in the array of artefacts surviving on the seabed: over 60 iron guns, two anchors, cannon balls and iron concretions. A scatter of small objects (glass, bottles and pottery) is recorded noted to the south-west of the main site. In addition, over 300 other artefacts have been recovered from the site.</p>
<p><b>Historical</b></p>	<p><i>Relating to the ways in which Tearing Ledge can provide direct links to past people, events and aspects of life.</i></p> <p>Whether identified as the <i>Eagle</i> or the <i>Romney</i>, the historical significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site lies in its connection with the catastrophe which befell Sir Cloudesley Shovel's fleet amongst the Western Rocks on the night of the 22nd October 1707. This was the second worst peacetime disaster that the Royal Navy has ever suffered. It brought the question of longitude to the forefront of national affairs and precipitated the Longitude Act of 1714 in which parliament promised a prize for the solution of the longitude problem eventually won by John Harrison's invention of the chronometer in c 1736.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic</b></p>	<p><i>Relating to the ways in which people respond to Tearing Ledge through sensory and intellectual experience of it.</i></p> <p>Tearing Ledge is one of the most memorable wreck sites a diver will ever encounter. 'The wreck lies within what must be some of the most spectacular submarine topography in the British Isles' (ADU report 007, 1986). Located a Marine Conservation Zone and the Isles of Scilly Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The land mass of Scilly down to Lowest Astronomical Tide is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</p>
<p><b>Communal</b></p>	<p><i>Relating to the meanings of Tearing Ledge the people who identify with it, and whose collective memory it holds.</i></p> <p>Of the countless shipwrecks that have occurred in Scilly, the loss of Sir Cloudesley Shovel and much of his fleet was one of the two worst disasters — the other being the wreck of the SS Schiller in 1875 (Over 1993). The story of 1707 calamity is part of Scillonian collective memory and folklore.</p> <p>Designation of Tearing Ledge under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973) is, in itself, an expression of communal value.</p>

### **3.3 Gaps in Understanding Significance**

3.3.1 Despite the acknowledged need for a formal programme of staged assessment and research, the assessment of significance has not been acutely hindered by any gaps in knowledge identified in Section 2.4 above. However, certain key gaps in our understanding of the significance of the component parts of the site may need to be filled so that these significances can contribute to informing its future conservation management. Most notable among these, would be to establish the full extent of the site and to identify any surviving structural remains (contributing to our understanding of the evidential value of remaining components).

### **3.4 Statutory and Other Designations**

3.4.1 The site was the seventh to be designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 1975 position 49° 52.200' N, 06° 26.483'W and within 200m of this point.

3.4.2 The Isles of Scilly were designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1975 while the Isles of Scilly Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was designated on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 under SI No. 2716 Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations (1994), pursuant to the EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (1992). The Isles of Scilly inshore Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) was designated in November 2013 and Tearing Ledge lies within the Bishop to Crim area of the MCZ.

3.4.3 In addition, Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) places a duty on all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity. Guidance for this duty is contained in 'Biodiversity duty: public authority duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity' by Natural England and DEFRA published in October 2014.

## **4 Issues and Vulnerability**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 This section summarises the main conservation and management issues that specifically affect, or may affect, the significance of the monument and its component parts and elements. The ways in which the significance of the site may be vulnerable will also be identified.

4.1.2 Vulnerability (and therefore risk) may be assessed against environmental factors (such as natural processes) and human impact on the site, including the setting. Commissioned research is being undertaken to assess site specific marine environments to provide a better understanding of the level of risk to assets or whether a site is in a stable condition. Current assessment may indicate that such sites are at medium or high risk, unless they are completely buried below bed level during successive tidal cycles.

4.1.3 It is accepted that all wreck sites are vulnerable simply because of the nature of their environment, though sites will be considered to be at risk when there is a threat of damage, decay or loss of the monument. However, damage, deterioration or loss of the monument through natural or other impacts will not necessarily be considered to put the monument at risk if there is a programme of positive management. Practical measures that affect site stability, preservation *in situ* and increased visitor access will be addressed here, while the necessity to address the sites' post-excavation back-log is recognised.

4.1.4 Issues relate specifically to the values identified in Section 3.2 above and are presented here thematically rather than in order of severity or priority for remedial action. Relevant issues cover a wide range, including - but not restricted to:

- The physical condition of the site and its setting;
- Conservation and presentation philosophy;
- Visitor and other legal/ownership requirements;
- The existence (or lack) of appropriate uses;
- Resources, including financial constraints and availability of skills;
- Lack of information or understanding about aspects of the site; and
- Conflicts between different types of significance.

### **4.2 The Physical Condition of the Site and its Setting**

4.2.1 Tearing Ledge is situated to the west of the Isles of Scilly; it is a rock pinnacle which breaks surface at low tide. It lies some 350m to the south-east of the Bishop Rock lighthouse and 1km to the west of Retarrier Ledges. It should be noted that there is another Tearing Ledge (part of the Crim rocks) which is some 2.7km to the north of the site.

- 4.2.2 Underwater the Tearing Ledge is surrounded by very large rock gullies with some patches of sandy sediment, and in one of these gullies — which slopes from 20m down to over 40m in depth — the majority of the wreck remains lie. The site is largely free from kelp but is subject to very strong tides and swell-generated surge.
- 4.2.3 The only visible remains on the site are iron objects comprising over 60 iron guns, two anchors, cannon balls and some iron concretions. This material is distributed over an area of roughly 80m by 35m. A scatter of small objects (glass, bottles and pottery) was noted to the south-west of the main site in 2005 (2.4.4 above).
- 4.2.4 A considerable number of artefacts have been recovered from the site (over 300 had been catalogued by Rex Cowan in 1977). The only finds from this site on display are the bell (Isles of Scilly Museum) and a spoon and lead vessel (Charlestown Shipwreck Museum). Some items were sold at public auction and the location of the remainder has not been established.
- 4.2.5 The site is subject to tide and swell and requires settled conditions for diving to take place. The site is also fairly deep, extending down to 45m in depth. There was a diving fatality on this site in 2013.

### **4.3 Conservation and Presentation Philosophy**

- 4.3.1 The site was designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1975. The position designated was 49° 52'12" N, 06° 26' 29"W, with a radius of 200m. The Statutory Instrument states that this is 'the site where the vessel believed to be the *Romney* lies wrecked'.
- 4.3.2 There is some limited interpretive information available for the site online. Material is currently available on the Historic England and Wikipedia web sites (Appendix 4). There is also a small display relating to the 1707 wrecks in the Isles of Scilly Museum.
- 4.3.3 The artefacts recovered from the site are mainly in private ownership. Many of the objects recovered are no longer available for study; the location of many of them is not known.

#### **4.4 Visitor and other Occupancy Requirements**

- 4.4.1 Public access to the site is achieved by licence under the Protection of Wrecks act. This licensing is currently administered by Historic England. The three dive charter boats operating in Scilly have annual licences to visit for the protected wreck sites of *HMS Colossus*, the *Association*, Tearing Ledge and Bartholomew Ledges. The Tearing Ledge site is very popular but requires good weather and sea conditions for diving to take place there. Between 2006 and 2015 there have been 746 diver visits recorded for the site.
- 4.4.2 There is currently no dive trail on the site, and it is doubtful whether a physical dive trail is appropriate. There is currently no interpretive material to assist divers visiting the site — the production of such material would enhance the visitor experience. A small site guide leaflet with site plan which could be consulted prior to diving on the site would seem an obvious way to achieve this. Similar material produced for *HMS Colossus* is kept on board the dive boats and in the Isles of Scilly Museum.
- 4.4.3 A virtual dive trail similar to that recently commissioned by Historic England for the nearby *HMS Colossus* site could be produced for this site. This would allow virtual site visits and would provide some access to the site for non-divers.

#### **4.5 The Existence (or lack) of Appropriate Uses**

- 4.5.1 Although unlicensed activity on the site has been reported in the past, recent local self-regulation has served to ensure that illegal diving on the site has been significantly reduced (if not completely removed).
- 4.5.2 Regular and consistent information relating to the condition of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site will be necessary to monitor the existence (or lack) of appropriate uses of the site.

#### **4.6 Resources, including Financial Constraints and Availability of Skills**

- 4.6.1 There is no doubt that the recovery of archaeological material to date indicates the evidential value of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site and that interaction with archaeological material relates to both aesthetic and historical value. However, given the limited local capacity for professional conservation of material recovered from the date and Historic England's research priorities there shall be presumption against further excavation and recovery.
- 4.6.2 In line with developing Government policy for designated marine historic assets, we will seek to develop provision for flexible voluntary management agreements. The latter should enable greater partnership, better planning, a reduction in individual licence applications and a more holistic approach to the needs of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site.
- 4.6.3 Opportunities for funding interpretative and display works relating to Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site should be discussed with the Isles of Scilly Museum and the Council of the Isles of Scilly.

## **4.7 Lack of Information or Understanding about Aspects of the Site**

- 4.7.1 *Taking to the Water* (English Heritage's Initial Policy for the Management of Maritime Archaeology in England) addressed the protected wreck site post-excavation backlog. Here, it is recognised that over the last thirty years many licences have been issued for survey and excavation work within areas designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act. Few of the licences issued required the academic reporting of fieldwork results and, as the vast majority of this work took place on a voluntary basis and lacked adequate financial support for subsequent analysis and dissemination of the results, very little of this work has been formally published (Roberts and Trow 2002, 25). This problem is, however, not unique to maritime archaeology.
- 4.7.2 A number of excavations have been undertaken on the site. These took place in 1969, 1970 and 1971 (prior to designation), and 1975 to at least 1986. There has been no formal publication of any of this work. There are brief accounts of parts of this work in the annual licensee reports but no single narrative. We need to understand the extent and location of the areas which have been excavated.
- 4.7.3 We need to better understand the date and origin of the material on and from the site. The best way to achieve these aims is to undertake a specialist appraisal of all the extant artefacts from the site.
- 4.7.4 We do not understand the full extent of the site. It has been suggested that the area to the south-west of the main site may contain further remains (Licensee Report 2005). See also 2.4.4 above.



## 5 Conservation Management Policies

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section of the Conservation Statement and Management Plan builds on the Assessment of Significance and the issues identified in Issues and Vulnerability to develop conservation policies which will retain or reveal the site's significance, and which provide a framework for decision-making in the future management and development of the site or reveal the site's significance and also:

- Meet statutory requirements.
- Comply with Historic England's standards and guidance.

5.1.2 It is intended that the policies will create a framework for managing change on the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site that is clear in purpose, and transparent and sustainable in its application. Our aim is to achieve implementation through the principles of shared ownership and partnership working so as to balance protection with economic and social needs.

5.1.3 Policies are also compatible with, and reflect, Historic England's *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* and its published policies and guidelines, as well as the wider statutory framework.

### 5.2 Tearing Ledge is a Shared Resource

5.2.1 The Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site forms a unique record of past human activity which reflects the aspirations, ingenuity and investment of resources of previous generations. In addition, it is an economic asset, and provides a resource for education and enjoyment.

5.2.2 In addition, the conflict between the desire for access to the site and the restrictions imposed by conservation needs and legislative limitations will be reconciled through continued flexible and appropriate visitor management.

5.2.3 Therefore, we should sustain and use the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site in ways that allow people to enjoy and benefit from it, but which do not compromise the ability of future generations to do the same.

#### *Management Policy 1*

*We will seek to develop appropriate visitor access to the monument, including virtual access, as a mechanism to develop the value of the site. However, visitor access to the site needs to be considered in the light of the difficult environmental conditions and the high value and portability of the artefacts previously recovered from this site.*

#### *Management Policy 2*

*We will encourage the recording and expert appraisal of the artefact assemblage recovered from the site.*

### *Management Policy 3*

*We will seek to facilitate new interpretive material for the site. This should be displayed locally ideally to accompany some of the artefacts from the site in the Isles of Scilly Museum.*

## **5.3 Everyone can Participate in Sustaining Tearing Ledge**

- 5.3.1 Stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to understanding and sustaining the Tearing Ledge protected Wreck site. Judgements about its values and decisions about its future will be made in ways that are accessible, inclusive and transparent.
- 5.3.2 Practitioners should use their knowledge, skills and experience to encourage others to understand, value and care for their heritage. They play a crucial role in communicating and sustaining the established values of the wreck, and in helping people to articulate the values they attach to it.
- 5.3.3 Education at all stages should help to raise awareness and understanding of such values, including the varied ways in which these values are perceived by different generations and communities. It should also help people to develop, maintain and pass on their knowledge and skills. Where appropriate we will encourage the use of the site as a training resource.
- 5.3.4 In acknowledging the communal value of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site recent local self-regulation (involving licensees, the harbour authority and constabulary) has served to ensure that unauthorised activity on the site has been significantly reduced (if not completely removed).
- 5.3.5 Building on this success, we will develop provision for a flexible voluntary management agreement for the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site. This will enable greater partnership, better planning, a reduction in individual license applications and a more holistic approach to the needs of Tearing Ledge.

### *Management Policy 4*

*Through web-based initiatives, we will continue to develop the accessibility of related material and support appropriate links, as well as do more to enlist effective local support.*

### *Management Policy 5*

*Mechanisms will be identified and implemented so as to develop shared ownership and partnership working.*

## **5.4 Understanding the Value of Tearing Ledge is Vital**

- 5.4.1 The significance of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site embraces all the interdependent cultural and natural heritage values that are associated with it. To identify and appreciate those values, it is essential first to understand the structure and ecology of the place, how and why that has changed over time, and its present character.

- 5.4.2 Judgements about values are necessarily specific to the time they are made. As understanding develops, and as people's perceptions evolve and places change, so assessments of significance will alter, and tend to grow more complex.
- 5.4.3 We acknowledge that records of previous activities on the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site form an irreplaceable resource to identify previous values and assist with maintaining a cumulative account of what has happened to the site, and with understanding how its significance may have been altered.
- 5.4.4 Further, a formal programme of staged assessment and research is required, to contribute towards a fuller understanding of the site in its entirety. Such work will conform to the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015) and is likely to comprise the following stages;
- Collation of the site archive
  - Assessment to determine academic potential of the archive
  - Determination of further work to fulfil this academic potential
  - Preparation of a research archive
  - Report text for publication, and finally
  - Publication

*Management Policy 6*

*Key gaps in understanding the significance of the monument's component parts should be identified, prioritised and addressed so that these significances can contribute to informing the future conservation management of the place.*

*Management Policy 7*

*We will seek to commission a staged programme of assessment and research to contribute towards a fuller understanding of the site in its entirety.*

*Management Policy 8*

*We will encourage the investigation and survey of the area around the known remains to establish the full extent of the site.*

## **5.5 Tearing Ledge will be Managed to Sustain its Values**

- 5.5.1 Conservation is the process of managing change in ways that will best sustain the values of a place in its contexts, and which recognises opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values.
- 5.5.2 Changes in the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site underwater are inevitable and it is acknowledged that all wreck sites are vulnerable simply because of the nature of their environment. It is therefore justifiable to use law and public policy to regulate the management of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site as a place of established heritage value.

- 5.5.3 However, measures taken to counter the effects of natural change will be proportionate to the identified risks, and sustainable in the long term. The stern site, for example, is usually covered by weed during the summer months which restricts observation of visible remains. However, seasonal weed growth has not prevented the continued diminution of the sediment levels on the site. Historic England shall develop specific guidance on weed clearance. Any proposal for clearance of weed on the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site would need to be assessed in terms of potential impact on the SAC and MCZ.
- 5.5.4 Other changes will be devised so as to avoid material harm. Irreversible intervention on the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site may nonetheless be justified if it provides new information about the past, reveals or reinforces the values of a place or helps sustain those values for future generations – so long as the impact is demonstrably proportionate to the predicted benefits.
- 5.5.5 The effects of changes to the condition of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site will be monitored and evaluated, and the results used to inform subsequent action.
- 5.5.6 If retaining any significant part of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site is not reasonably practicable, its potential to inform us about the past will be exploited. This involves the recovery of information through prior investigation, followed by analysis, archiving and dissemination of the results at a standard appropriate to its significance.
- 5.5.7 Where such loss is deliberate, the costs of this work should normally be borne by those who initiate the change.

*Management Policy 9*

*Unnecessary disturbance of the seabed within the restricted area should be avoided wherever possible in order to minimise the risk of damage to buried archaeological material.*

*Management Policy 10*

*The sale of artefacts recovered from the site should be monitored as far as possible. The UK has adopted 'The Rules', an annex to the 2001 UNESCO convention which includes the principle that underwater cultural heritage should not be commercially exploited.*

*Management Policy 11*

*This management plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis so that it continues to reflect the conditions and state of knowledge pertaining to the site.*

## **6 Forward Plan**

### **6.1 Introduction**

6.1.1 In order to commence the implementation of the proposed Management Policies outlined in Section 5, Historic England is seeking to initiate a range of projects that will increase our understanding of the value and setting of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site. These projects are outlined below.

### **6.2 Proposed Projects in Relation to Tearing Ledge**

6.2.1 A review and appraisal of all the surviving artefacts recovered from the site should be undertaken by a finds specialist. This should include a detailed study of the items with initials in conjunction with the pay and muster lists from the *Eagle* and *Romney* to establish beyond all doubt the identification of the wreck.

6.2.2 There is a need to collate all the surviving records, list all the known finds and their current location and to reconcile the various site plans which exist. The simplest way to achieve these aims would be to produce a desk based assessment for the site.

6.2.3 As the site is difficult to access physically, we propose to enhance our virtual (web based) site presentation. The finds assemblage assessment proposed above could also contribute to the enhancement of the virtual resource.

6.2.4 When resources are available we will seek to initiate a survey of the area around the known remains to establish the full extent of the site.

6.2.5 Produce a small guide book including a site plan for the site. This would be available on board the visiting dive charter boats to inform visiting divers about the site.

6.2.6 A virtual dive trail should be produced for this site. This could consist of a topographic model of the seabed produced from bathymetric data with the seabed artefacts superimposed in 3D. The recently produced *HMS Colossus* virtual dive trail had 500 unique visits in its first month – demonstrating the popularity of virtual access to a site.

## **7 Implementation**

### **7.1 Consultation**

7.1.1 An agreed draft of the *Conservation Statement and Management Plan* for the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site was internally reviewed by Historic England.

7.1.2 The *Conservation Statement and Management Plan* for the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site will be circulated for a four-week stakeholder consultation to refine how the values and features of the Tearing Ledge Protected Wreck site can be conserved, maintained and enhanced. Responses to the consultation were considered and the *Plan* revised as appropriate.

### **7.2 Adoption of Policies**

7.2.1 The original *Management Plan* will be adopted in January 2017.

7.2.2 A programme that identifies a realistic timescale for implementing the updated plan - taking into account those areas which need immediate action, those which can be implemented in the medium or long term, and those which are ongoing - will be devised.

7.2.3 Responsibilities for implementation of the *Management Plan* lie with Historic England, though consultation with stakeholders will be maintained throughout. In addition, provision will be made for periodic review and updating of the *Plan*.

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Ministry of Defence  
Natural England  
Nautical Archaeology Society  
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Maritime Archaeological Society (CISMAS)

## Appendix 1: Archaeological History

Date	Activity	Source
July 1969	The site was discovered by divers working for Roland Morris.	Lic Rep 1975 Daily Telegraph 21.7.69
1969-1970	Excavation was undertaken by the Morris team at Tearing Ledge. A number of artefacts were recovered including gold coins, pieces of eight, a bronze bell marked '1701' and weighing two hundredweight, two gold rings and a 'master's slate' The bell is now in the Isles of Scilly Museum – the location of the other finds is not known. Morris identified the wreck as the <i>Romney</i> – mainly on the evidence of the Gostelo chart. This is probably the work attributed to 'local divers' and dated 1967 by (Wessex Archaeology, 2008). Morris also found wreckage at the Crim which he identified as the <i>Eagle</i> .	Lic Rep 1975  (Wessex Archaeology 2008)  Daily Telegraph 21.7.69  (Morris 1970)
1970	At least two iron guns were removed from the site (allegedly by Bob Rogers / Blue Sea Divers) – The current location of these guns is not known.	Lic Rep 1975 (McBride & Larn 1999) Daily Telegraph 12.6.70
1970-1974	Items were removed from the site – possibly by 'holiday divers'. Items mentioned are coins, musket shot and cannon balls. Also T.Pike (RAF diver) believed that a large anchor had disappeared from the area around guns 1 and 38 since 1970.	Roy Graham appendix 1 in Lic Rep 1975
1971	Naval Air Command Sub Aqua Club (NACSAC) carried out a 'preliminary survey' of the Tearing Ledge site – the plan shows 35 cannon, a large anchor and basic topographic information. They undertook some excavation (locations marked on the sketch plan). Finds included musket shot, lead sheet, iron concretion, small timber fragments, a rib bone, glass fragments and a clay tobacco pipe. The report states that the finds were 'left at the Isles of Scilly Museum'.	Lic Rep 1975  (McBride & Larn 1999)  NACSAC Report 1971
Apr 1971	The site was 'briefly inspected' by divers working for Rex Cowan while searching for the <i>Hollandia</i> and <i>Princess Maria</i> .	Lic Rep 1975
1975	Survey and excavation was undertaken by a team led by Rex Cowan. Artefacts recovered included coins and cutlery. The site plan shows 62 cannon and 2 anchors with contours drawn at 5m intervals. A gun survey undertaken by Peter McBride lists 62 guns, which are numbered and measured (36 & 37 are those removed by Bob Rogers). Two areas were excavated (near 'anchor A' and 'top of upper gulley' using an airlift. Diving: 65 days – 139 hours underwater	Lic Rep 1975  (McBride & Larn 1999)
13 <sup>th</sup> March 1975	Site designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act. Position: 49° 52' 12"N, 6° 26' 29"W. The radius of the designation is 200m The designation identifies the wreck as 'believed to be that of the <i>Romney</i> '.	Statutory Instrument

Date	Activity	Source
1976	<p>Rex Cowan's team continued survey and excavation. Lt Roy Graham and Terry Hiron were joint dive leaders in charge of the survey and excavation. Updated site plan produced: 'Although this site plan has only been given the status of a sketch almost 3/5 of the area has been surveyed by triangulation'. The plan now had extra topographic information including more contours.</p> <p>Excavation undertaken around/under cannons 3, 9, 35, 36, 43, 47, 53 and 54. Debris found in deep water (130') to the west of the main site (including window glass and high status ceramics) was thought to be indicative of the stern of the vessel. Finds recovered included 53 silver coins, silver forks, ceramics, cannon tampions and 'tampings' and one gold coin. The finds were processed and recorded on board <i>HMS Belfast</i>.</p> <p>Diving: 40 days – 99 hours underwater</p>	Lic Rep 1976
1977	<p>Work continued under the direction of Rex Cowan. Unable to 'finish work on the site plan'. Excavation undertaken near/under cannons 15, 22, 24, 25, 33, 45, 49 and 50. Finds processing aboard <i>HMS Belfast</i>, photography, drawing and a finds catalogue are mentioned in the report: 'to date over 300 items have been catalogued'. A number of objects recovered including coins and silver cutlery. Five objects marked with the owner's initials are discussed. Silver spoon marked 'HRM' probably represents the initials of Captain Hancock (the <i>Eagle</i>) and his wife Mary.</p> <p>Diving: 26 days – 76hr underwater</p>	Lic Rep 1977
1978	<p>The triangulated survey of the main part of the site was now complete. Excavation in central area E13, E14 and F15 (grid squares marked on the 1978 plan). ½ ton of concretion recovered, contained 'handful of silver coins', navigation dividers, sword guard and knife handle as well as 'miscellaneous metal items'. Report states that many of the important objects recovered were sold at public auction but there was no interest shown by museums.</p> <p>Last known update to the Cowan site plan dated 'May-Nov 1978'. The plan now had grid squares (drawn finds reference the grid square where the object was found). The plan also had some finds locations marked and extra contour lines (they were now drawn approximately every metre).</p>	<p>HE Archive</p> <p>Lic Rep 1978</p>
1979	<p>Sand found deposited over much of the site at the start of the season. Excavation in grid squares F16 and H18 – very little discovered. The cannon survey was yet to be completed.</p> <p>Diving 9 days</p>	Lic Rep 1979
1981	<p>Excavation in grid squares E14 and G19. Recoveries included 3 iron cannon balls, pewter spoon and a copper coin.</p> <p>Diving: 3 days – 7hr 45 minutes underwater</p>	Lic Rep 1981
1985	<p>Excavated in grid square F18. Finds included a lead weight, 2 lead shot and 3 silver coins. Extract from site plan (?)</p> <p>Diving: 8 days</p>	Lic Rep 1985

Date	Activity	Source
1986	<p>Site dived by the ADU who reported excavation in progress. They spent some time checking the veracity of the site plan: 'after some enquiry it transpired that the original survey was based on triangulation of 3 or 4 outer cannons, the rest drawn in by eye by a diver hovering in mid-water'. The ADU report makes the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation facilities are good</li> <li>• Work on site is not to acceptable archaeological standards</li> <li>• The site plan is not as accurate as its presentation suggests.</li> </ul> <p>Diving: 5 days – 5 hours 48 minutes underwater.</p>	<p>ADU 007</p> <p>(Wessex Archaeology 2008)</p>
1987	<p>Some ground lines laid but these were removed by storms. The report states 'This year's aims were to improve the underwater recording and excavation techniques, taking on board some of the ADU's remarks and criticisms...'</p>	Lic Rep 1987
1988	<p>Mooring and datum lines were laid but these were removed by storms. Work was 'suspended until next year'.</p>	Lic Rep 1988
1990	<p>Mr Cowan had surrendered the licence as 'he was unable to ensure a proper standard of work on this difficult site'.</p>	HE Archive
1993	<p>ADU visit – no diving possible due to strong currents.</p>	ADU 93/18
1994	<p>Reports of illegal diving on the site.</p>	ADU 94/25
1995	<p>ADU visit – no diving possible due to heavy ground seas. The report also states that illegal diving continues on the site.</p>	ADU 95/26
1997	<p>Licence (visit?) issued to Rugby Sub-aqua Club (Rugby Divers) but they were unable to dive due to the weather.</p>	Lic Rep 1997
1998	<p>ADU visit – one dive of 24 minutes in 'difficult conditions'. Rugby Divers had licence but did not manage to dive the site due to a ground swell.</p>	<p>ADU 98/07</p> <p>Lic Rep 1998</p>
1999	<p>Rugby divers again had a licence but did not manage to dive. Jim Heslin had a licence and dived twice on the site.</p>	Lic Rep 1999
2003	<p>Tim Allsop (IoS charter boats) 11 visits – 100 divers</p>	Lic Rep 2003
2004	<p>WA visited the site – no diving possible due to weather. Tim Allsop 14 visited – 92 divers. Jason Rosevear visited the site and claimed there was evidence of recent disturbance.</p>	<p>(Wessex Archaeology 2005)</p> <p>Lic Repts 2004</p>
2005	<p>Tim Allsop 25 visited – 215 divers Dave McBride Survey Licence. Survey confirmed that many cannons and the anchor were no longer where they are shown on the original site plan. He also saw onion bottles and window glass on the south west part of the site (see 1976 report). The report confirms that there are two different cannon numbering systems – the one on the original site plans (up to 1978) and another shown in (McBride &amp; Larn 1999). The licensee report has some very good site photographs.</p>	<p>Lic Repts 2005</p> <p>(McBride and Larn, 1999)</p>
2007	<p>WA visited the site – no diving possible due to weather. An appraisal of the Gostelo Chart led them to suggest that the site is that of the <i>Romney</i>. Dave McBride fixed 4 new survey control points on site but poor weather prevented further work.</p>	<p>(Wessex Archaeology 2008)</p> <p>Lic Rep 2007</p>
2008	<p>Dave McBride – 2 inspection dives. Tim Allsop 15 visits</p>	Lic Rep 2008
2009	<p>Tim Allsop (IoS Charter Boats) 4 visits – 38 divers</p>	Lic Rep 2009

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Source</b>
2010	Dave McBride – Some inspection dives Tim Allsop 7 visits 48 divers	Lic Rep 2010
2011	Tim Allsop - 9 visits 81 divers	Lic Rep 2011
2012	Dave McBride gave up his survey license Tim Allsop – Visits 12 90 divers	Lic Rep 2012
2013	Tim Allsop – 15 visits 110 divers	Lic Rep 2013
2014	Clidive visited the site Tim Allsop – 18 visits 140 divers	Lic Rep 2014
2015	Tim Allsop – 14 visits 114 divers	

## Appendix 2: Index of Plans

Date	Source	Details
1971 June	1975 Lic Rep	Title: Survey of wreck site of HMS Romney on Tearing Ledge Author: NACSAC – Richard Larn Scale: Not to scale (Sketch) Shows 35 numbered guns, 1 anchor. Some topographic detail and notes
1975 4 July	1975 Lic Rep	Title: Tearing Ledge rough sketch Author: R. Graham, P. McBride and T. Pike Scale: approx. 1inch =10m Stylistic guns (numbered 1-62), 2 anchors some contours (5m intervals)
1976	1976 Lic Rep	Title: Tearing Ledge Wreck Site – Pre disturbance sketch plan Author: R Graham & T Hiron Guns represented as cannon (numbered 1-62). 2 anchors, some topographic annotations. Contours roughly every 2m. Scale and north pointer
1976 April	Terry Hiron	Title: Title: Tearing Ledge Wreck Site – Pre disturbance sketch plan Author: R Graham & T Hiron Scale: 1.125 + north pointer Grid: 5m squares y=A-L: x=01-20 Guns 1-62, 2 anchors, contours, depths and shading. Topographic annotations and some finds positions
1978 Nov	EH Archive	Title: Pre disturbance site layout Author: R Graham & T Hiron Scale: 1.125 + north pointer Grid: 5m squares y=A-L: x=01-20 Guns 1-62, 2 anchors, contours and some depths. Topographic annotations and some finds positions
1985	1985 Lic Rep	Title: No title Grid: 5m squares y=D-K: x=16-29 This sheet appears to show an extension to the north west of main site plan (main plans only extend to square 20, this runs from 16 to 29). It appears to cover the areas of excavation discussed in the 1985 licensee report. Shows 6 guns and 1 anchor.

### Appendix 3: Index of Finds Drawings

Object	Detail	Source
Grenade	Scale 1:1	1976 Lic rep
Sword Fitting	Find No 52, Scale 1:1	1976 Lic rep
Bronze Pulley wheel	Scale 1:2, Grid ref 14E	1976 Lic rep
Brass Dividers	Find No 45, Scale 1:1, Grid E7	1976 Lic rep
Silver Fork	Find No 63, Scale 1:1	1976 Lic rep
Brass Tap	Find No 46, Scale 1:1	1976 Lic rep
Wood Object	Find No 934, Scale 1:1	1976 Lic rep
Tompson (wood with knotted rope)	Find No P14, Scale 1:1	1976 Lic rep
Lead Vessel	Find No 210, Grid 12E	1977 Lic Rep
Lead Weight	Find No 137, Scale 1:1, Grid J2	1977 Lic Rep
Lead Weight	Find No 136, Scale 1:1, Grid J2	1977 Lic Rep
William III Mug (Ceramic)	Find No 188, Grid Ref 'west of TL'	1977 Lic Rep
Silver Spoon	Find No 201, Scale 1:1, Grid J4	1977 Lic Rep

## **Appendix 4: Links to web-based resources**

Historic England Tearing Ledge page:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/protected-wreck-sites/wreck/Tearing-Ledge/>

CISMAS Home page:

<http://www.cismas.org.uk/index.php>

Links last verified 01/11/2016







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