

LAND ADJACENT TO ST CLEER CEMETERY, ST CLEER, CORNWALL

(NGR SX 25080 68435)

Results of historic building recording

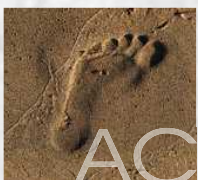
Cornwall Council planning reference PA14/05492, condition 3

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On behalf of:
Mr Bunyard

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AC archaeology

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CONTENTS

	<i>Summary</i>	
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Historical background	1
3.	Aims and methodology	2
4.	Results	3
5.	Comments	5
6.	Archive and OASIS entry	5
7.	Acknowledgements	6
8.	Sources consulted	6

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1: Site location

Fig. 2: Site plans

Fig. 3: The granite setts from the Liskeard & Caradon Railway

Fig. 4: Elevations

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: The goods shed showing its relationship to the line of the Liskeard & Caradon Railway to the left, looking southeast.

Plate 2: The track setts within the boundary, looking northwest. 1m scale

Plate 3: Masonry of the goods shed showing a copper-stained rock, looking southeast.

Plate 4: The northeast elevation, looking south. 1m scale

Plate 5: Detail of an inserted window in the northeast elevation, looking southwest.

Plate 6: The northwest elevation, looking southeast. 1 scale

Plate 7: The southwest elevation, looking northeast. 1m scale

Plate 8: The interior, looking northwest. 1m scale

Plate 9: The interior, looking southeast. 1m scale

Plate 10: Detail of an inserted window in the northeast elevation, looking northeast.

Plate 11: The roof structure, looking southeast

Summary

Historic building recording was carried out by AC archaeology in October 2014 prior to the conversion of a former railway goods shed associated with the Liskeard & Caradon Railway. It was probably constructed in the 1840s and continued to be used, latterly as a garage, following the closure of the line in 1917.

The shed is a small single-storeyed structure originally with entrances in the southeast elevation (to the railway line) and the southwest elevation (into a storage yard). After the railway closed two windows were added into the northeast elevation and the southeast opening was blocked.

At some point prior to the recent past the line of the adjacent railway was partially blocked with a new bank added adjacent to Well Lane. This incorporated two granite chairs from the original railway line.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

1.1 This document sets out the results of historic building recording carried out by AC archaeology in October 2014 prior to conversion of a former railway goods shed adjacent to St Cleer Cemetery, St Cleer, Cornwall (SX 25080 68435). The investigation was commissioned by Mr Bunyard, and was required under condition 3 of the grant of planning permission (Cornwall Council reference PA14/05492) for "alterations and extension to existing store building to form single dwelling with associated works".

1.2 The site is located to the northeast of St Cleer Cemetery, to the south of Well Lane on the northeast edge of the village of St Cleer. It comprises a short length of the former 19th-century Liskeard & Caradon Railway and an associated goods shed, along with later 20th-century garages. The site is situated at around 185m aOD. The underlying solid geology comprises Carboniferous hornfelsed slate, hornfelsed siltstone and hornfelsed sandstone of the Brendon Formation.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The railway was created through Royal Assent given to the Liskeard & Caradon Railway Act on 26 June 1843. The line was conceived to transport granite and copper down from the Minions area, whilst providing coal, iron and timber up to the mines and quarries. It was unique in Cornwall in that downward travel was operated entirely by gravity, with horses used to pull wagons back up the track. Following the passing of The Liskeard & Caradon Railway Act in 1860 steam locomotives were introduced, which seems to have taken place piecemeal over the next few years. The Liskeard & Caradon Railway was taken over by the Great Western Railway in 1909. The line was requisitioned during the First World War and closed in 1917, with its track lifted in the same year. It was legally abandoned in 1931 (history summarised from Messenger 2001; see also Sharpe 1993 which gives a brief history of the railway and describes its surviving archaeology at Minions).

2.2 The historic structure at St Cleer is the only surviving goods shed on the original line of the former railway. (A late 19th- or early 20th-century goods shed on the Kilmar Junction Railway branch survives and has been converted into the dwellings 'Hillside' and 'Panorama'; Messenger 2001, 114). The building was assessed in 2012 for designation as a Listed Building of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (National

Heritage List reference 1421564). The following history of the building was presented in the decision notice:

The goods shed at St. Cleer was one of a series of goods depots which provided access for the movement of goods at the trackside and also provided level access for carts. Other goods depots on the LCR have been demolished and this is the last surviving roofed building associated with this line. The shed is part of the first phase of construction on the railway line and is understood to be the work of Robert Coad, the principal engineer for the Liskeard & Looe Union Canal, with assistance from Silvanus Jenkins. By 1846 Jenkins took over responsibility as principal engineer of the LCR line, and this is the last surviving building by these two engineers.

- 2.3** The building was not designated. However, the adjacent trackbed of the railway, but not the building itself, forms a component of area A9, the Caradon Mining District of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.
- 2.4** In the vicinity of the site, the railway was constructed in farmland to the northeast of the village of St Cleer (that was situated on a hill top, some 250m to the west). Historic maps indicate that the goods shed was situated with its long axis parallel to the railway within a narrow plot that tapered to the southeast. Behind this to the southwest was an associated larger open plot (a goods yard), with a thin strip close to the railway. This plot was bounded by the cemetery on its south and east sides. Until the second half of the 20th century no further structures or features were depicted within the site. In the post-Second World War period the cemetery expanded into the field to the south, as well as into the narrow tapering areas of land between the cemetery and the railway.

3. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The aims of and methodology for the recording were set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Passmore 2014) that was approved by the Cornwall Council Senior Development Officer (Historic Environment).
- 3.2** The development had the potential to remove or obscure archaeological evidence relating to the architectural history of the site. The principal aim of the investigation therefore was to prepare a record of the goods shed to an appropriate level before works commenced.
- 3.3** The archaeological investigations had the potential to contribute to the following research aims set out in SWARF (Webster 2007):
- Research Aim 38: Widen our understanding of the extraction, processing and transportation of minerals, stone and aggregates.
 - Research Aim 48: Widen our understanding of Post-Medieval and Modern transport and communications.
- 3.4** The recording was carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2008 edition then applicable). It was carried out to levels 2/3 as set out in the then applicable English Heritage 2006 document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*.

3.5 The following methodology was employed:

- A full written description of the goods shed;
- Annotation and updating of the architect's as existing drawings (site plan, floor plan and elevations) to show the survival of historic fixtures and fittings and breaks in build; and
- A photographic record to include the overall character and setting of the building, as well as detailed views of the internal and external elevations, and significant fixtures, fittings and architectural details. Where appropriate, all photographs included a photographic scale. Details of photographs taken were made on *pro forma* record sheets.

3.6 All elements of the recording considered the following:

- Site layout and organisation, and relationship of the goods shed to the railway,
- Function,
- Materials and method of construction,
- Fenestration,
- Internal arrangements,
- Original fixtures and fittings,
- Subsequent fixtures and fittings,
- Ephemeral evidence of occupation and use for instance any evidence of historic graffiti, and
- Date/period of initial build and subsequent alterations.

4. RESULTS (Figs 2-4; Plates 1-11)

The site

4.1 The goods shed is located towards the eastern side of the site, to the west of the line of the railway, and to the northeast of its contemporary yard (Plate 1). The whole of the site has a concrete surface, which contains scars of a demolished group of late 20th-century garages. Prior to works commencing a second block of pre-cast concrete late 20th-century garages was located to the south of the goods shed. A ceramic drain is set within the concrete surface along the southwest side of the building, and empties into the yard at the central entrance.

4.2 The plot is bounded by stone-faced hedgebanks to Well Lane and the cemetery, and to the east by a wooden fence to the house Fairfield; this continues across the line of the former railway at the southeast corner of the site. The boundary to Well Lane is formed by two banks. The majority is a wide, tall bank faced with rows of granite blocks on the Well Lane side, and topped with grass. The western section is doglegged and extends partially over the course of the former railway. This is constructed of roughly coursed rows of granite blocks and is partially turf capped. At its west end, on the interior side the wall incorporates two granite setts from the track of the Liskeard & Caradon Railway (Plate 2). These display holes for the attachment, and rust stains, of chairs into which the rails were attached.

The goods shed

4.3 The building is constructed almost entirely of rubble granite with some larger squared-off blocks used for the quoins and around the openings. Many of the larger blocks display feather-and-tare marks from their extraction and subsequent splitting. A small quantity of quartz and mudstone, with some of the latter containing traces of

copper ore, has also been used (Plate 3). The masonry is bonded in hard lime mortar with granitic inclusions with some later cement repointing.

The northeast external elevation

- 4.4** This elevation faces the former railway and incorporates two inserted window openings (Plate 4). These have large flush granite cills supporting projecting slate cills, and wooden lintels. The jambs are formed from granite and dark red bricks bonded in a soft pale yellow-grey lime mortar with granitic inclusions (Plate 5). The windows have wooden frames but the bases and mullions (indicating they were formerly of two lights) have been removed. On this outer face iron handles are attached to the undersides of the lintels.

The southeast external elevation

- 4.5** This elevation is almost entirely obscured by a late 20th-century garage extension. Stone masonry is only visible at the southwest corner. Above the garage the masonry is a rebuild (see below) and is externally rendered.

The northwest external elevation

- 4.6** This elevation incorporates a high-level central window with a slate cill and granite jambs (Plate 6). It appears to be an original feature; historic mortar around the window is obscured by modern cement. The opening has been infilled using concrete blocks. The exterior face of the gable apex has been rebuilt, also in concrete blocks. To the west of the window, within the lower part of the gable, the stonework is smaller and more ragged than the primary masonry representing a repair that is visible on late 20th-century photographs of the building. The roof battens on the gable are protected by a row of slates, forming a primitive barge board.

The southwest external elevation

- 4.7** This elevation incorporates a large central opening under a long primary wooden lintel (Plate 7). The masonry of the wall is carried over the opening on the lintel. In the adjacent masonry there are two (surviving) pintles for a pair of outward-opening doors.

The interior

- 4.8** Internally, the goods shed comprises a single open space, which is, and was always, open to the apex of the roof (Plates 8 and 9). The building has a concrete floor.
- 4.9** The walls below the two openings in the northeast elevation have been chopped back to form light splays, which are finished smooth in grey cement (Plate 10). The inner faces of the window openings have been repaired using small granite stones and red bricks stamped with the name "Copp" (of Maufant, Jersey), bonded in grey cement. The walls above the windows have collapsed along with the inner of three lintels that were present above each opening.
- 4.10** The southeast elevation incorporates a wide, tall (to eaves level) opening, blocked in granite bonded with soft cream lime mortar. The masonry above is the narrower later 20th-century rebuild in granite and brick (Plate 9).
- 4.11** Two wooden lintels are visible above the high-level window in the northwest elevation, above which is the primary stone masonry behind the external refacing.
- 4.12** The wall top of the southwest elevation has been rebuilt. This wall supports a fusebox for the incoming electricity supply.

The roof

- 4.13** The roof is supported on four queen post trusses (Plate 11). The rafters rise as far as the top of the queen posts (rather than the ridge) and are supported by struts. The top of the struts are braced by a high-level collar. Most of the timbers appear to have mortice and tenon joints with additional iron bolts used to attach the base of the queen posts. Some modern supports have been added, and two of the collars replaced. The trusses support two pairs of back purlins, on which closely-set battens are laid. The roof finish is large slates that have a tar covering, capped with plain ceramic ridge tiles (Plate 4).

5. COMMENTS

- 5.1** The building is a small goods shed, and now the only survivor of such a building on the Liskeard & Caradon Railway. It is thought to date to the mid 1840s. The survey has identified that it is constructed of quarried rubble masonry and mineral-bearing rocks. It therefore seems likely that it was constructed early in the life of the railway using waste materials brought along the line down from the quarries and mines at Minions. The building was originally a simple, single-storeyed open storage shed, open to the roof, with wide goods entrances in its south and west elevations.
- 5.2** Historic maps clearly show how these entrances related to the associated yard and the building's position in relation to the railway. The opening in the southwest elevation gave access to/from the main yard, whilst the doorway in the southeast elevation led to a narrow tapering plot of land adjacent to the railway. Due to the close proximity of the goods shed to Mill Lane this long 'platform' area was necessary to allow goods traffic to stop away from (and not block) the highway when loading and unloading was taking place.
- 5.3** Various repairs and alterations have been identified, all probably of 20th-century date, and almost certainly post-dating the closure of the railway. The blocking of the southeast entrance (in stone) may well have occurred in 1917, whilst the insertion of windows probably also took place in the first half of the 20th century when a new use for the building was found. Later 20th-century repairs have also taken place.
- 5.4** The two recorded setts form part of around 120,000 granite setts that Sharpe (1993, 102) estimates were made for the lines above Moorswater. The distance between the holes and diameter of the holes differs indicating that they represent one each of Sharpe's Type A and Type B (*ibid.*, 102-104 including fig. 33). The third hole on the Type A sett is not in a position recorded elsewhere by Sharpe, and would not easily work with the design of the known chairs. It therefore may not be associated with the primary use of the sett, or may be a rejected spike hole.

6. ARCHIVE AND OASIS ENTRY

- 6.1** The paper and digital archive is currently stored under controlled conditions at the offices of AC Archaeology in Bradninch, but will be deposited at the Cornwall Record Office once a decision has been made on the future acceptance of archives by the Cornwall Record Office.
- 6.2** An OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) entry has been created using the unique identifier 264782, and includes a digital copy of this report.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1 The project was commissioned by Mr Bunyard, and managed for AC archaeology by Andrew Passmore. The fieldwork was carried out by Andrew Passmore, who also wrote the report; the illustrations were prepared by Sarnia Blackmore.

8. SOURCES CONSULTED

Messenger, M., 2011, *Caradon & Looe, The canal, railways and mines.*

Passmore, A., 2014, *Land Adjacent to St Cleer Cemetery, St Cleer, Cornwall, (SX 25080 68435), Written Scheme of Investigation for historic building recording and an archaeological watching brief, Cornwall Council Planning reference PA14/05492, condition 3, AC archaeology document no. ACD1006/1/1.*

Sharpe, A., 1993, *Minions: An archaeological survey of the Caradon Mining District.*

Webster, C.J., (ed), 2007, *The Archaeology of South West England, South West Archaeological Research Framework Resource Assessment and Research Agenda.*

National Heritage List for England website
<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>



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PROJECT

Land adjacent to St Cleer Cemetery, St Cleer, Cornwall

TITLE

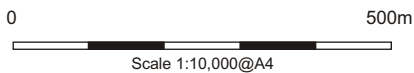
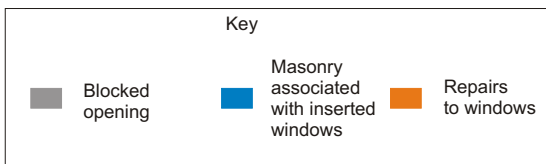
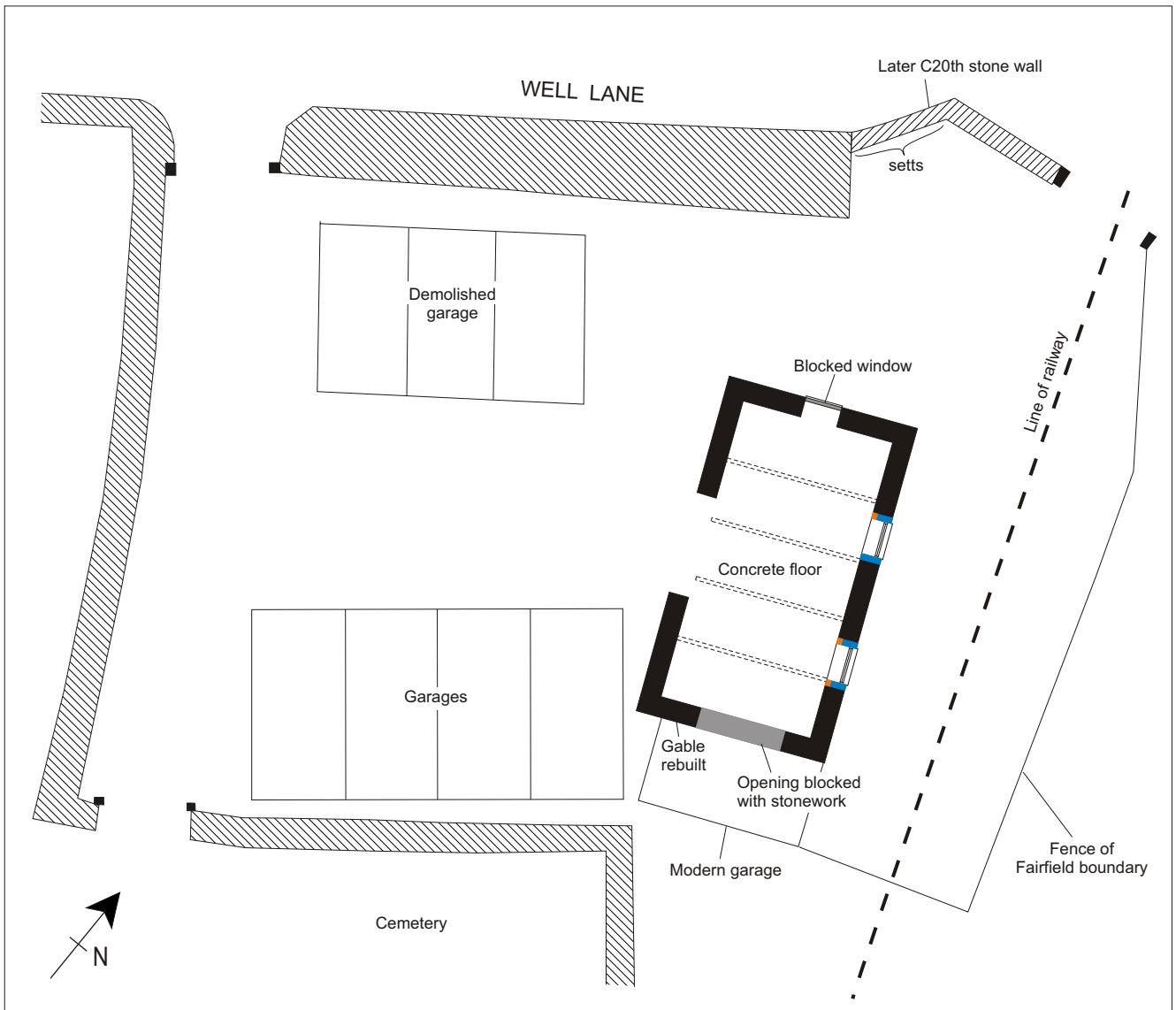
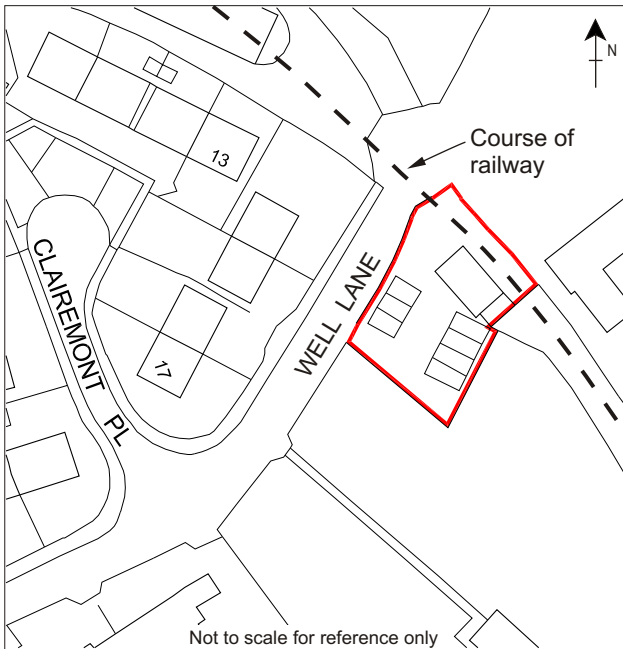


Fig.1: Site location



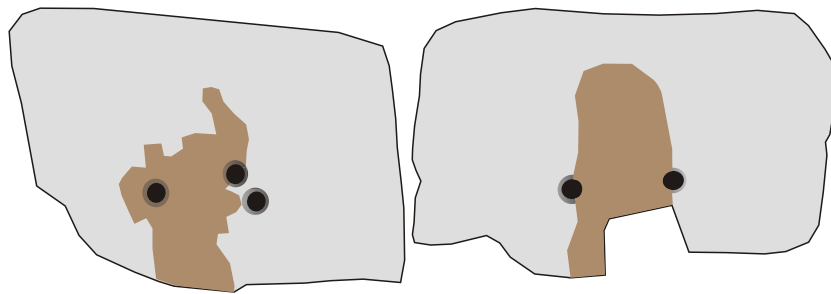


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TITLE

Fig. 2: Site plans



Key

 Iron staining

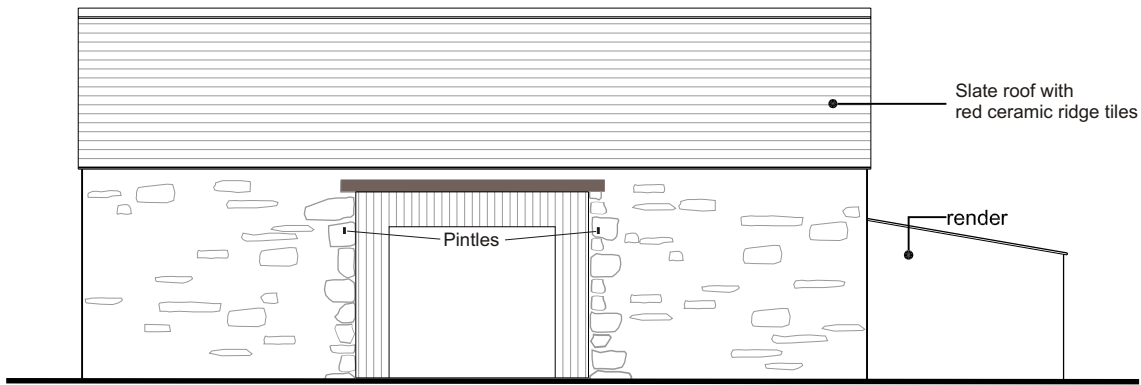
PROJECT

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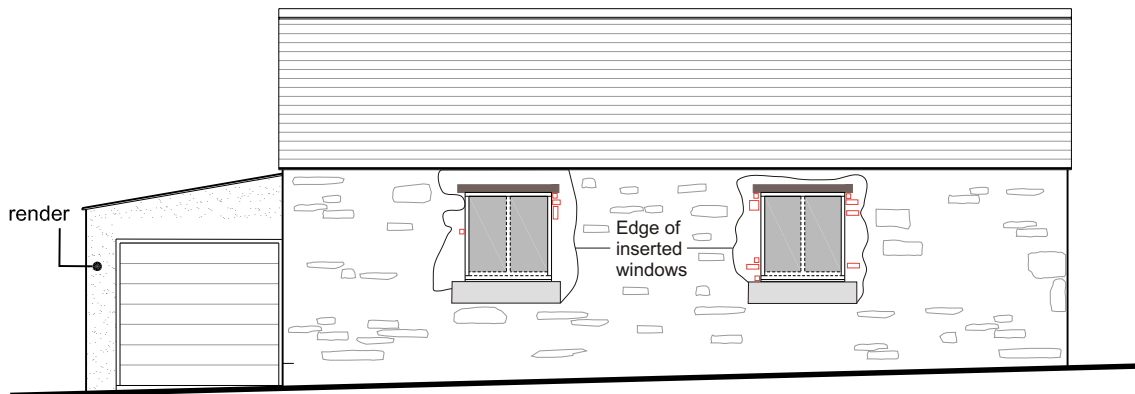
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Fig. 3: The granite setts from the
Liskeard and Caradon Railway

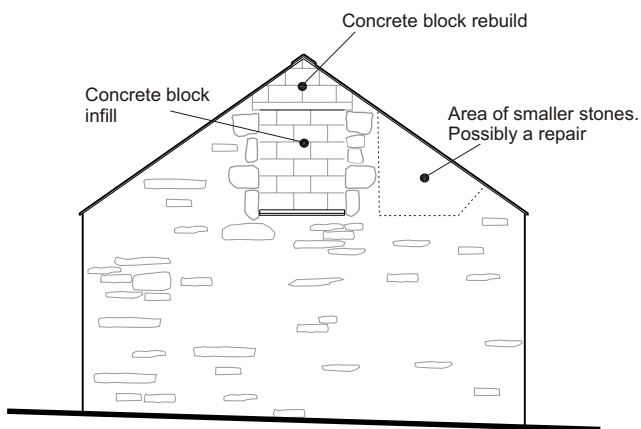




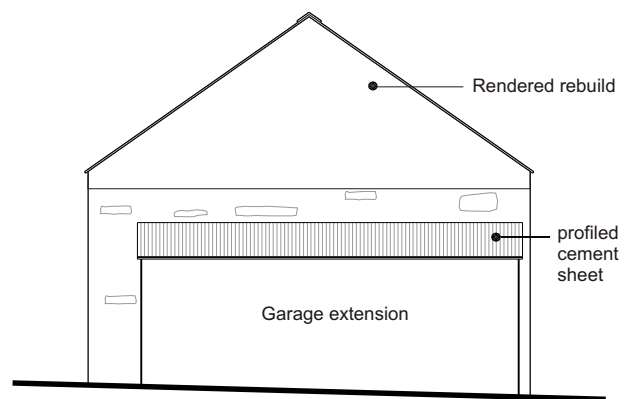
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



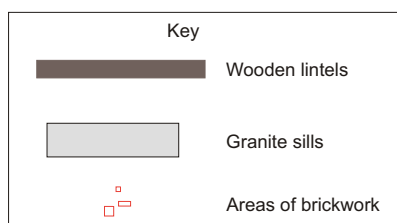
NORTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



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Land adjacent to St Cleer Cemetery, St Cleer, Cornwall

TITLE

Fig. 4: Elevations



Plate 1: The goods shed showing its relationship to the line of the Liskeard & Caradon Railway to the left, looking southeast



Plate 2: The track setts within the boundary, looking northwest. 1m scale



Plate 3: Masonry of the goods shed showing a copper-stained rock, looking southeast



Plate 4: The northeast elevation, looking south. 1m scale



Plate 5: Detail of an inserted window in the northeast elevation, looking southwest



Plate 6: The northwest elevation, looking southeast. 1m scale



Plate 7: The southwest elevation, looking northeast. 1m scale



Plate 8: The interior, looking northwest. 1m scale



Plate 9: The interior, looking southeast. 1m scale



Plate 10: Detail of an inserted window in the northeast elevation, looking northeast



Plate 11: The roof structure, looking southeast

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