



## **Cornish Buildings Group 'Buildings at Risk' Project**

# **Newsletter No.6**

April 2021

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A three-year project led by the Cornish Buildings Group and supported by Historic England and the Cornwall Heritage Trust commenced in September 2020. The funding supports a case officer in order to help identify and monitor buildings at risk and seek solutions for neglected, redundant or derelict listed buildings and unlisted buildings.





## **In the news**

Listing application for 2 Boscawen Road, Falmouth, not successful

Our application for listing, as featured in Newsletter No.5, was not successful. Historic England's assessment of our application was as follows

The Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings (DCMS, November 2018) states that buildings will be listed for their architectural and historic special interest. Age and rarity are key determinants of special interest. Historic England's Listing Selection Guides for Domestic 4: Modern Houses and Housing (December 2017) provide context for this type of building and considerations for assessment. It notes that Historic England Reject at Initial Assessment the relative date or innovation of design, quality of the composition, plan and detailing are key considerations.

Early C20 housing survives in considerable quantities, requiring that only examples of architectural distinction are designated. By the interwar period, features of Arts and Crafts architecture had entered the vocabulary of the mainstream and, while Eastbury House survives well and has some simple, but good quality architectural features, the house represents a more conventional variant of this style, lacking the thoughtfulness in the design of the plan, composition and detailing seen in more accomplished examples of this type.

Judged against the criteria, the considerations in our supplementary guidance and the information available, Eastbury House, 2 Boscawen Road, Falmouth is not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons:

Degree of architectural interest:

\* Although the house survives well and has some good quality architectural features, it represents a more conventional variant of Arts and Crafts influenced domestic architecture of comparatively late date, which fails to meet the high threshold required for listing.

Degree of historical interest:

\* While it is not known for certain if the house was designed by Alfred Cornelius, it does not display the architectural flair and attention to detail of his other listed works.

The report concluded 'While certainly of local interest, Eastbury House, 2 Boscawen Road, Falmouth is not considered to be of sufficient special architectural and historic interest to merit listing in the national context'.

Our application to get the building protected was based on the risk posed by planning application PA20/10855. Of the 21 comments on the Cornwall Council planning portal, all are objections to the alterations. The Cornish Buildings Group response can be read in full on the Cornwall Council Planning Portal.

### **The Shelters, Newquay**

The infill of these historic coastal shelters at Newquay has been completed by Cornwall Council. The consequence being that there is little noticeable change in the actual fabric of the structure as infill walls have been added to the upper shelters and aerated concrete poured in behind the walls (below). We have been assured that the work could be reversed if the need ever arises.



The Shelters at Newquay after the back-filling exercise

To ensure a similar situation does not arise in the future local interest groups are looking to clarify listing protection for the South Pier which was extended in the early 1930s in order to protect the land end of the cliff face and form the base for the Harbour Heights.

### **Meledor Farmhouse**

Our blog post on Meledor farmhouse (Grade 2\*) received a great deal of interest and comment. Our enquiries to the owners did generate a response. An agent of behalf of IMERYYS re-enforced the main problem in that the farmhouse is 'situated in the middle of an active China Clay mine'. They reassured us that 'mining activity would not have any adverse effect upon the Grade II\* listed building'. As importantly, IMERYYS '...intends to keep the property wind and weather tight so that it is structurally maintained. In due course, as and when mining operations come to an end, the intention is that the house will be reinstated to its listed condition'.

It is clear from the buildings position within the active mining landscape it is currently inappropriate for the house to be occupied. We will continue to keep an eye on this important building.

### **Polwithen House, Penzance**

Our application for listing this building subject to a threat from development is still undetermined.

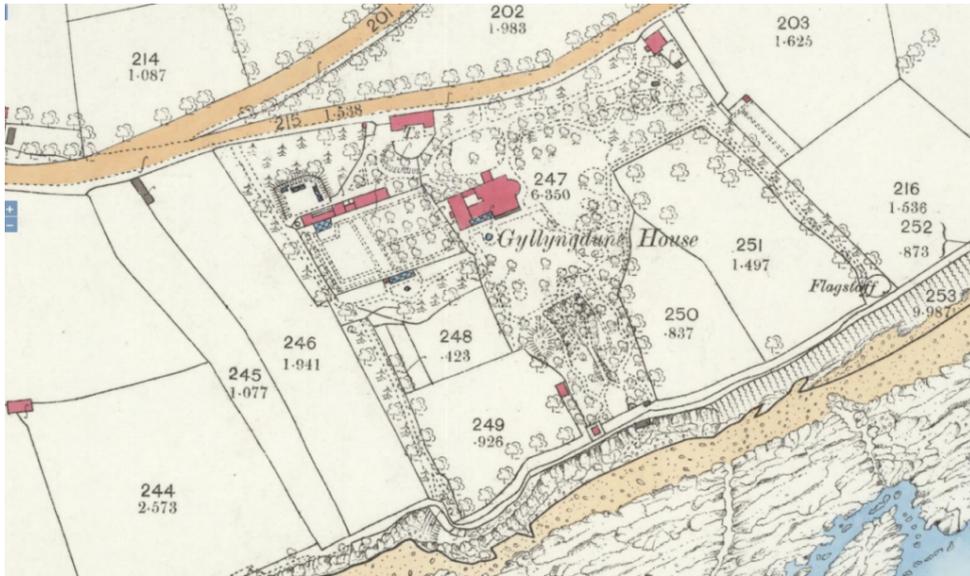
## New Concerns



The Trevemper Railway sidings (above) and goods shed have been brought to this project's attention. These buildings may date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when, as Martyn's warehouses, goods were offloaded in the Gannel and then rowed up the river to the stores. Being situated on the old trading route (now the A392, Trevemper pack bridge still exists) these buildings were adapted to be part of the railway and a coal store area. A contemporary newspaper report refers to a 'Counting House'. Only small scale mining operated in the area, so early industrial/ commercial buildings in the Newquay area are rare. The picture above tells the full story of the buildings condition.

### Spotlight on two Historic Stables

The Gyllyndune Estate, Falmouth, was built in c.1838 for the Rev. W.J. Coope. The estate stretched from Melvill Road to the seafront where a handsome 'chapel' was erected on the seafront (recently restored by Cornwall Council). The estate was sold in 1863 and then resold several times, much of the estate was later lost to development. The main house was pulled down and rebuilt as 25 apartments in c.2010. Part of the original grounds are now Gyllyndune gardens, a public space with a Grade II listed bandstand.



The historic stables face the road on this 1880 map

Today the stable element of this complex, situated along the road, as shown on the 1880s map above, is in a poor state of repair with graffiti and walls covered in sacking/netting (below). It appears to be used as a store by the parks and gardens team.



At Penrice at St Austell (below) the old stables are in a similarly poor condition.



Penrice house was built in 1596 on the site of an earlier building. At the time of the 1620 visitations Nicolas Swale and his wife Alice Rashleigh were resident. The stables situated to the north of the house has a datestone carved 'OS 1646' which denotes the tenure of Oliver Swale (d.1669) – although this stone appears not to be contemporary with the present structure.

Penrice continued to be passed through the family first, to the John (1695-1715), then to Joseph's second son also Joseph (d.1737), later MP for Tregony, and third to Joseph's only son John (d.1783) who inherited at the age of thirteen. After his sister's death in 1803 the house passed to her distant cousin Sir Joseph Sawle Graves Salwe (1793-1865) Baronet who much altered the stable buildings. In 1971, when the Mrs Rosemary Cobbold-Swale died, Penrice became a rest home for the elderly supported with an endowment of £270,000.

The killas rubble and dressed Pentewan stone stable block was part converted to domestic accommodation. However, now much of the dry Delabole slate roof structure has fallen. The courtyard style building is in several 19<sup>th</sup> century phases and features a wide central round-arched carriage doorway, stabling with loose-box partitions, tack rooms, coach houses and a basement smithy. The spoked fanlights are nice features. The interiors have been badly affected by the incoming weather. The listing notes "These stables are a good example of an evolved group designed to give the effect of a planned group with continuity of structural and architectural detail, presumably extended as more stabling and carriage space was needed but with a courtyard plan in mind".

## **Heritage Crime**

In writing this newsletter I was planning to add something on heritage crime, something that has a huge potential to create buildings at risk or add to their decline. To my delight I was usurped by issue 52 of 'From your Own Correspondents' the Area Representatives

update newsletter the from Cornwall Archaeological Society (March 2021). The piece is worth quoting in full.

Devon and Cornwall Police force is giving heritage crime a much higher priority. The change came in 2018 when the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) announced a new Rural Strategy to tackle wildlife and rural crime across the UK. While the named priorities (theft of farm machinery; livestock offences; fuel theft; equine offences; fly tipping; and poaching) do not specifically mention heritage, it has been found that there is a crossover between the perpetrators of those crimes and those who are a threat to heritage. Consequently, Devon and Cornwall Police have developed a Heritage Crime policy. This has allocated defined roles to the Rural Affairs team, which has 2 officers in Devon and 2 in Cornwall. PC Julian Fry provides the lead for both counties. Nationally, there has been a move to appoint Heritage Crime Liaison Officers, with such crimes being defined as 'Any offence involving damage or loss to the historic environment, including all such offences involving cultural property'. According to Historic England: 'Unlawful works, theft, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour can be devastating to individual historic buildings or sites and have an attritional effect on our heritage generally. Around 20% of listed buildings are harmed by crime every year and the figure is near double for listed places of worship.'

More information can be found here:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/heritage-crime/>

So, what should we do if we suspect heritage crime?

How to contact Devon and Cornwall police: Do you need help and advice? Not sure where to look or who to speak to? Why not AskNED – Devon and Cornwall Police's non-emergency directory. AskNED combines the most commonly asked questions with contact details of those who can help.

If you do need to contact Devon and Cornwall Police about a non-emergency, you can contact them via:

Online webchat at [dc.police.uk](https://dc.police.uk)

Online crime reporting form

Phone: 101

Email: [101@dc.police.uk](mailto:101@dc.police.uk)

More information

In an emergency situation, always dial 999

You can also report crime anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or via their

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

## **How can you follow the project?**

Our WordPress blog <https://buildingsatrisk.wordpress.com/> has proved successful and up until mid- January has received over 3,000 views. Our website has been updated as the project progresses

<https://sites.google.com/site/cornishbuildingsgroup/home>

Updates and alerts will be shared via our Twitter feed @CbgCornwall

To keep up-to-date on the project please follow our blog; when we have something to say you will receive an alert. Or you can follow us on Twitter.

## **Please support us**

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of the project and its aims.

You can play your part in this work by volunteering to support our aims. You can do this by reporting your concerns about historic buildings or valued heritage assets in your area which are either derelict or not being properly looked after. Please contact Paul Holden at [cbgcasework@gmail.com](mailto:cbgcasework@gmail.com)

A form that will help us with some background local knowledge is available on our website

<https://sites.google.com/site/cornishbuildingsgroup/buildings-at-risk-register/buildings-at-risk-project-2020-2023>

## **And finally...**

St Paul's, Truro

Our e-petition <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-st-paul-s-church-truro> has received a welcome boost since the last newsletter, thanks largely to Barry West who has given it some much needed promotion. As a result the petition is running with 2,500 signatures. Furthermore we have received local press coverage which will boost the petition even further,

Thank you for your support Paul Holden, FSA.