

## **FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS**

**Updates from Cornwall Archaeological Society's Area Representatives**

Any opinions or errors in these articles are those of the authors and must not be assumed to be those of Cornwall Archaeological Society.

# **DECEMBER 2022**

## **Issue 73**

## **THIS MONTH'S FEATURES**

- **PEARSON'S OTHER CATHEDRAL**
- **NEWQUAY'S HERITAGE THREATENED?**
- **THOUGHTS FROM A BATTLEFIELD**

## PEARSON'S OTHER CATHEDRAL

*Besides acting as Area Rep for numerous parishes in the Camborne area, Adrian Rodda's investigations stretch as far as Tasmania and Australia. On his last antipodean journey he explored a building that reminded him of Truro Cathedral:*

### **Pearson's other Cathedral.**

We are all familiar with the last Gothic Revival style cathedral to be built in Britain which incorporates St Mary's Parish Church in Truro. It was built between 1880 and 1910, designed and supervised by John Loughborough Pearson (1817-1897) and his son, Frank L. Pearson. But did you know that by 1888 J.L. Pearson had designed another cathedral which he did not live to see realised in stone? This great church is in Brisbane, Queensland. The early work was supervised by his son, Frank. The Foundation Stone was laid in 1901 and the building work carried out in 3 stages, 1906-1910; 1964-1968; 1989-2009.



Photo: Adrian Rodda

It too is in the Gothic Revival style, but has a very different impact on the eye and the mind than Truro. This is mostly due to the use of local sandstone, known as “Brisbane tuff” which gives a lavender and pink tone to the external walls and seems to absorb the daily sunshine. When we were there it was a time for local Anglican schools to be celebrating the end of term with concerts and services.

It is dwarfed by surrounding buildings but close to its impact is compelling. Across the road facing the west door is a small park.



Photo: Adrian Rodda

The inside space is light and airy, comfortably cool, but welcoming and inspiring. It has the only fully stone vaulted church roof in Australia. The most remarkable features are the stained glass windows, which are so brightly illuminated by the sunshine. The earliest ones were designed and made in England by Burlinton and Grylls. The Rose window was designed by Frank Pearson himself to record all the story of Christ's birth and the visitors to Bethlehem. It was installed in 1910.





Photo: Adrian Rodda

By 1956 the work was being done in Australia. This window by William Bustard had unconventional spelling. St Francis of Assisi has an extra S in the placename and his compatriot, St Clare becomes Clara. This conventional style for the saints and worthies continues into the 1970s when a more modern, almost cubist style was used by Australian designers, such as David Saunders in 1976.

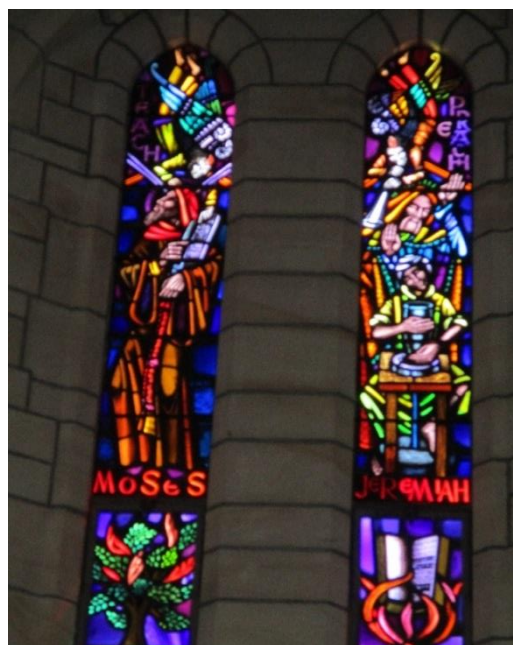


Photo: Adrian Rodda

These two lancets depicting Equality, contain the symbols for gender, water, housing, health and wealth. They are from a set of 12 lancets by Glenn Mack in 2008.

The windows celebrating Australian – American friendship are to me the most stunning in their colours. (Glenn Mack 2000) The sunshine sets them aglow.

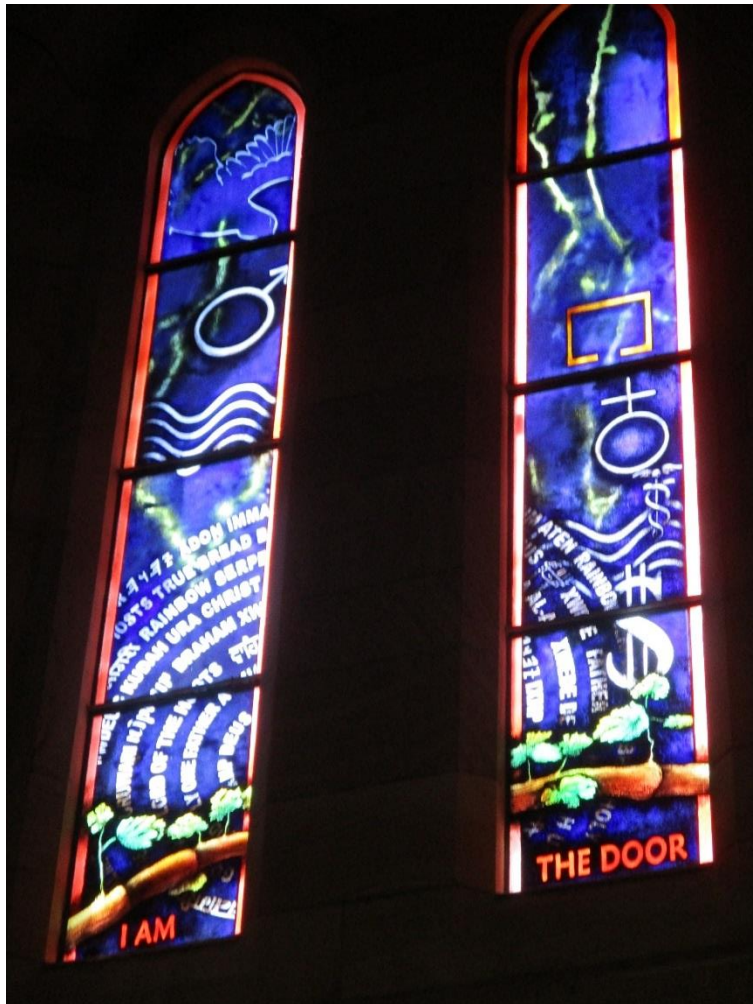


Photo: Adrian Rodda

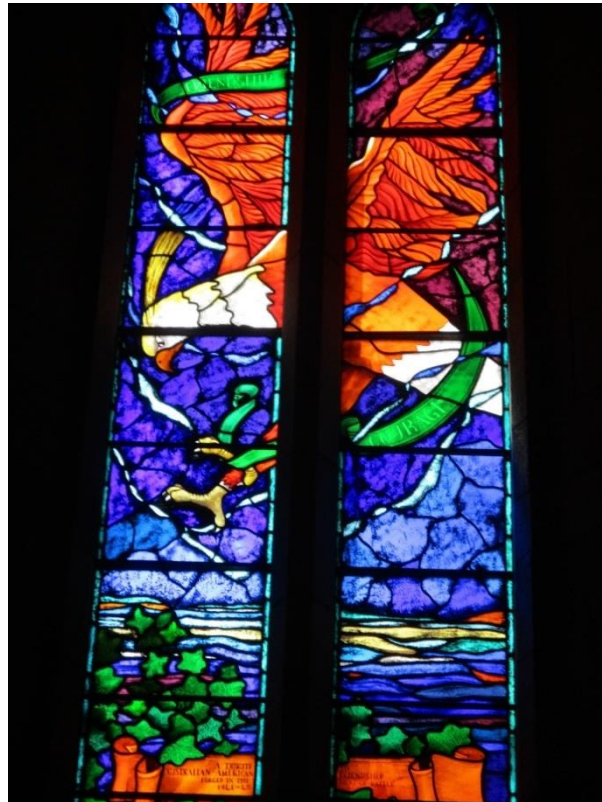


Photo: Adrian Rodda

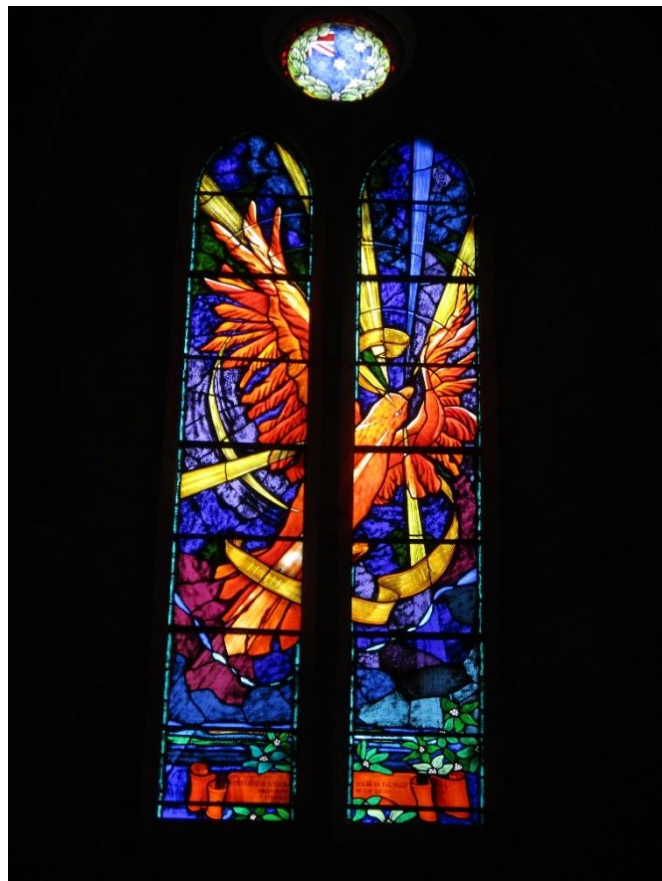


Photo: Adrian Rodda



What a difference the sunshine makes! Once Australian designers and stone masons took over the Cathedral shed its mock Gothic fashions and reminisces.

The altar stone and font were imported from Canterbury as true aspects and symbols of the Anglican denomination. One local guide resented this as an act Colonialism. But the Canon we met described it as a generous gift. I side with the attitude of the guide. There is plenty of beautiful stone in Australia that could have been used for these most sacred objects.

Report and photos: Adrian Rodda

## NEWQUAY'S HERITAGE THREATENED?

Newquay residents are used to large-scale, controversial developments, for example the sprawling, incongruous Nansledan settlement built by a well known property developer on open countryside on the edge of town. Now another planning application is arousing concern for numerous reasons. The application is:

**PA22/10572** | Full Planning Permission for residential development (Use Class C3) and hotel development (Use Class C1), car and cycle parking, landscaping; and all ancillary works including demolition of all existing buildings and structures | Land At Hotel Bristol Narrowcliff Newquay Cornwall TR7 2PQ.

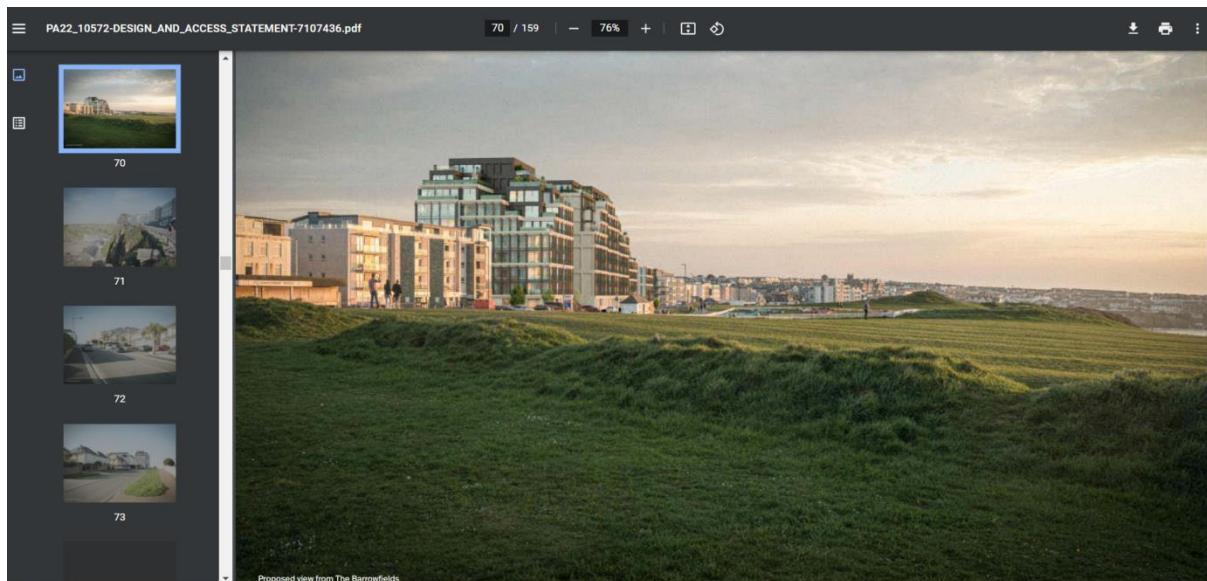
Full details, including comments by consultees and the public can be found on Cornwall Council's planning portal (<https://planning.cornwall.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RM3TKBFG0CQ00> ). Put simply, plans to replace the Hotel Bristol (HER MCO67789; SW 8192 6200; Newquay parish) concern those who feel it is a significant local building that should be preserved not demolished. Additionally, the proposed replacement building will have an impact on the setting of nearby barrows (HER 4666; Scheduled Monuments including CO619; SW 8192 6214; Newquay parish) which have Scheduled Monument status.



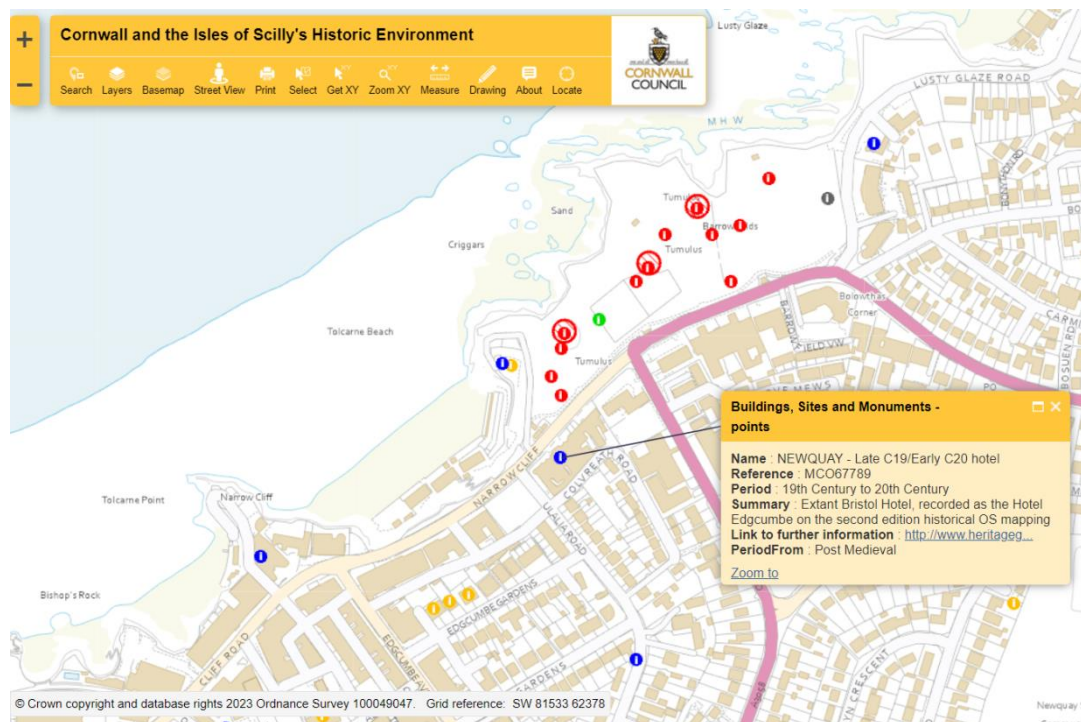
Hotel Bristol, Narrowcliff, Newquay

Copyright: Google Earth 2023

This is a computer generated image of how the development might look from the Barrowfields. It can be found, along with many other illustrations, in the applicants' design and access statement, on the planning portal.



What can we learn about the area from the Historic Environment Record (<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/conservation-and-environment-protection/strategic-historic-environment-service/cornwall-and-isles-of-scilly-historic-environment-record/>)?





The map above shows many red dots, signifying the barrows on the town's Barrowfields, with three clusters designated as Scheduled Monuments. Historic England's official List Entry notes:

*The barrows formed part of an extensive linear round barrow cemetery of at least fifteen barrows at Barrowfields, the largest of which had been used as sea marks. Three barrows were destroyed between 1819 and 1821 and produced numerous cremation urns; one single barrow contained at least five arrow heads, an inhumation in a cist, further cists containing burnt bone and various internal stone built structures. The remaining barrows in the group were due to be removed later and the events were recorded in the West Briton newspaper of 1819 and 1821 and also extensively recorded by Borlase in 1872 although no further details are known.*

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1004369?section=official-list-entry>

Cornwall Buildings Group (<https://sites.google.com/site/cornishbuildingsgroup/home?pli=1>) has tried without success to have the Hotel Bristol listed. Heritage Gateway says this about the building:

*Extant Bristol Hotel, recorded as the Hotel Edgcumbe on the second edition historical OS mapping. In the Young family since 1927. Remodelled and extended by builders John Knox Hine in 1933. The ballroom has four large, etched deco mirrors and a recessed curved ceiling. The staircase has original chevron Crittall windows on every floor. The foyer has stepped architraves which although not original are in-keeping. Original fireplaces are also present...*

Source:

[https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\\_Single.aspx?uid=MCO67789&resourceID=1020](https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCO67789&resourceID=1020)

Readers will make up their own minds about what ought to happen, no doubt balancing the considerations of upgrading tourist accommodation and local facilities against commitments in various planning policies (national as well as Cornwall's Local Plan) to conserve and protect important heritage features. The views of the public are pretty clear, with 687 of the 698 comments received on the planning portal objecting to the proposal and only 8 in favour (as shown on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023).

The reasons for members of the public opposing the plans are numerous but two important reasons for objection from heritage experts are worth noting here. The first relates to the impact of the new buildings on the nearby barrows. Former Area Rep and heritage professional Dan Ratcliffe has noted that the National Planning Policy Framework: 'requires that 'great weight' should be given to the conservation of the significance of heritage assets 'and the more important the asset the greater the weight should be' and that Scheduled Monuments are 'assets of the highest significance'. Therefore 'substantial harm' to such assets 'should be wholly exceptional' and that in such cases 'local authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss... '

In planning matters like this archaeological and Heritage Impact Assessments are carried out but there are concerns that in this case they may not have fully appreciated the importance of the landscape setting of the barrows, which would be lost if a huge building was put up close by. Dan Ratcliffe explains that the view expressed in the assessment:

*'... entirely ignores that coastal settings are inherently viewed both from the land and from other high points along the coast (ie across inlets and bays) and from the sea – and I would note in this respect that the Scheduling Description notes these barrows have been used in the historic period as sea-marks.*

*'As with other later prehistoric monumental traditions the significance of the setting of barrows of the Bronze Age in Cornwall is closely related to their visibility within the physical form of the landscape, to and from related monuments and to settled and worked landscapes from where they, and the ancestors sometimes deposited within, could be seen. As such barrows are often found on ridges, hilltops, headlands and breaks of slope – appearing as features often breaking skylines.'*

Paul Holden is a very well known historic buildings expert who runs the Cornwall Buildings Group 'Buildings at Risk' project. His concern relates to the demolition of the Hotel Bristol. In his blog he explains his reasons in detail:

<https://buildingsatrisk.wordpress.com/2023/01/15/hotel-bristol-newquay-too-good-to-be-demolished/> . The Bristol is one of 5 historically significant hotels left in the town and attempts were made to have it Listed. Unfortunately, Historic England rejected this. The Buildings at Risk project has made this objection to the application:

*'The Buildings at Risk Project (Cornish Buildings Group) object in the strongest terms towards the potential demolition of this non-designated heritage asset. The volume of public concern noted on the portal speaks for itself, and shows how valued this heritage asset is to the townscape and setting of the historic holiday resort. Furthermore, its design contributes to the local distinctiveness and sense of place of the town and, with its wider grouping of Victorian/ Edwardian hotels tells a story of growth, fashion, and urbanisation of Newquay. Repurposing this building will have a positive environmental effect. This project fully supports Newquay Town Council's comments regarding the significance of this historic building and shares its wider concerns over loss and design quality, scale and mass of the proposed replacement.'*

The consultation period has come to an end so Cornwall Council's Planning Committee will have to make the decision, weighing up the merits of all the various factors – economic, environmental and heritage. No doubt all councillors making their decisions will have at hand, or committed to memory, the first paragraph of Policy 24 of the Cornwall Local Plan:

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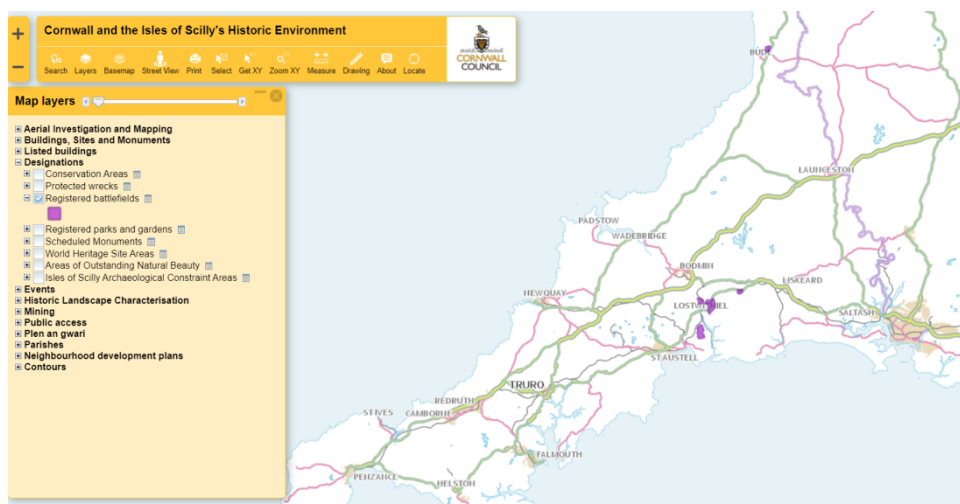
## Policy 24: Historic environment

Development proposals will be permitted where they would sustain the cultural distinctiveness and significance of Cornwall's historic rural, urban and coastal environment by protecting, conserving and where appropriate enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated assets and their settings.

Source: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/ozhj5k0z/adopted-local-plan-strategic-policies-2016.pdf>

## THOUGHTS FROM A BATTLEFIELD

Sadly, we receive distressing news and images from battlefields around the world every day, from the widely covered warzones such as Ukraine to those less well reported like Yemen. There is a common thread, namely suffering, misery and destruction. Happily, Britain has not been afflicted by fighting since the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 ended the conflict in Northern Ireland. But it was not always so. Cornwall has been a war zone, as is reflected by the 3 Registered Battlefields in the county (see the purple areas in the map below).

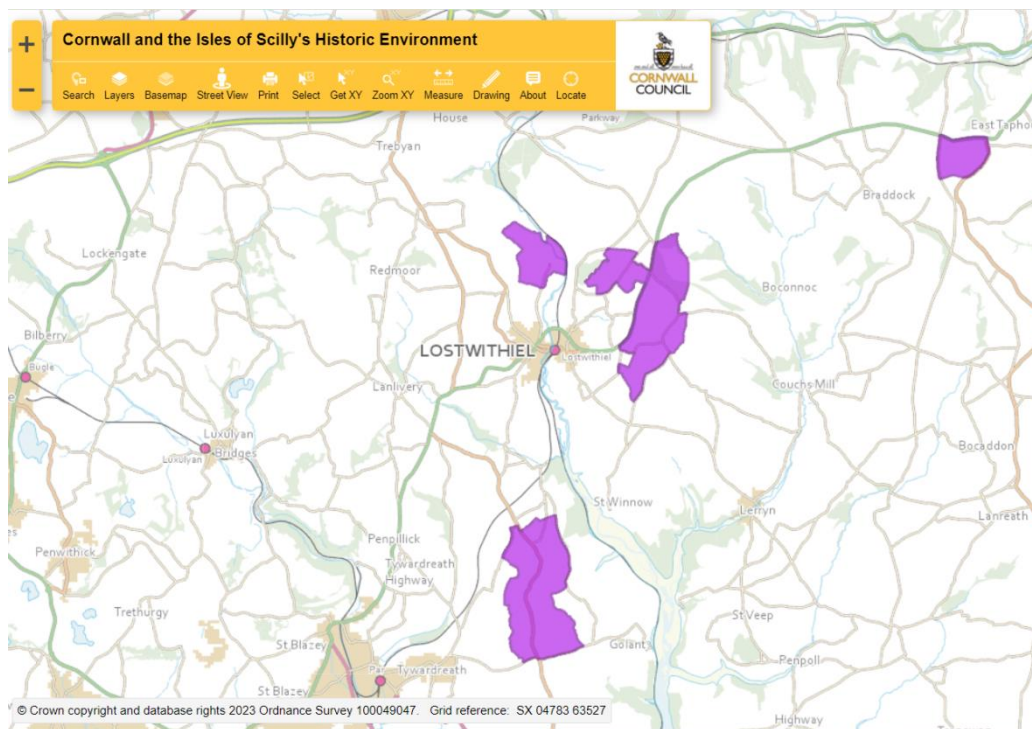


Source: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/conservation-and-environment-protection/strategic-historic-environment-service/cornwall-and-isles-of-scilly-historic-environment-record/>



These battlefields relate to 3 campaigns from the British Civil Wars (1642-51): the Battle of Braddock Down, 1643; the Battle of Stratton, 1643; and the Lostwithiel Campaign of 1644. The latter is the most recently designated and was granted this status by Historic England because of the national importance of the encounter, the survival of the landscape and the potential for archaeological research.

The purple area in the top right of the map below relates to the 1643 Battle of Braddock Down but this area would have been within the area of military activity in 1644 as well.



Source: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/conservation-and-environment-protection/strategic-historic-environment-service/cornwall-and-isles-of-scilly-historic-environment-record/>

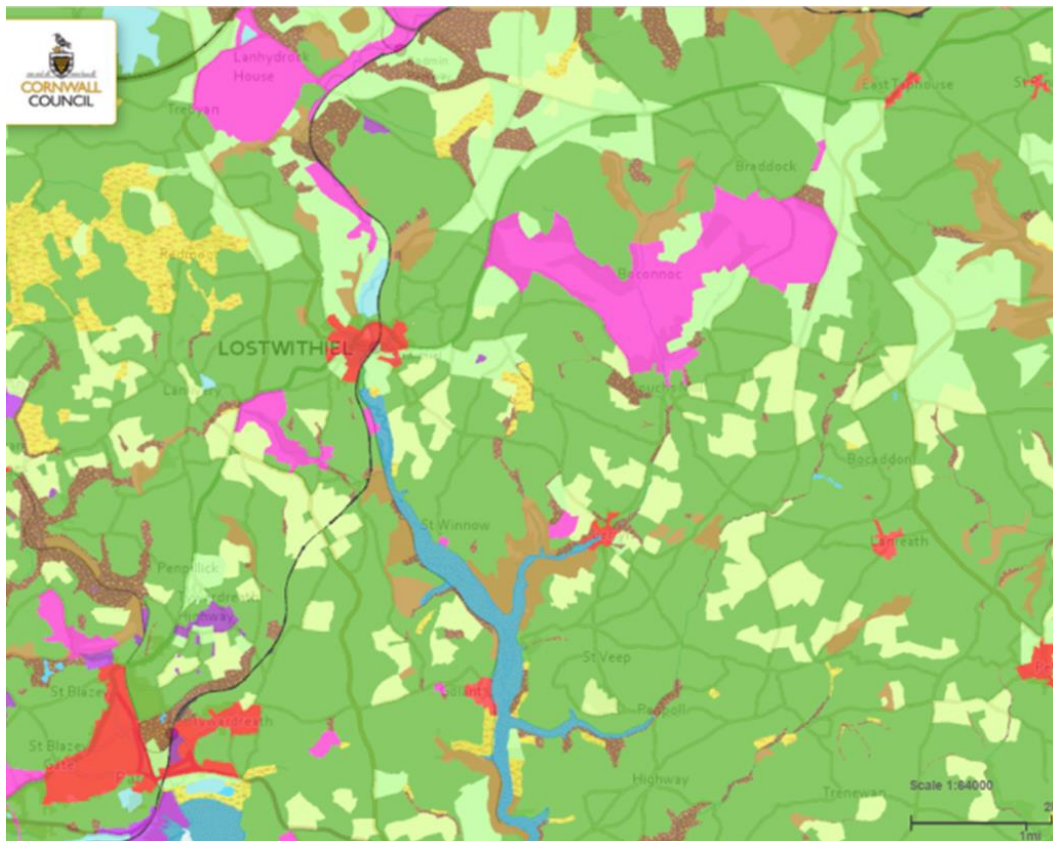
Although the technology of killing becomes ever more deadly, we would be wrong to downplay the seriousness of conflict in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Forget TV costume dramas and historical romances that suggest the Civil War was a series of jolly jousts between dashing Cavaliers and dour Roundheads: it was not like that. Like any civil war it turned neighbour against neighbour and split families. Reliable figures are hard to come by but historians estimate that 868,000 people died in Britain during this conflict, about 11.6% of the pre-war population. Much of this is accounted by a catastrophic loss of life in Ireland (41% population loss) but even in England the figure was 3.7%. This compares with a population loss in Britain from the First World War and post-war influenza of 2.61%. These losses include combatants and civilians resulting from fighting and the hunger and disease it brought in its wake. (Source: *Going to the Wars. The Experience of the English Civil Wars, 1638-1651*, Charles Carlton, 1992, Routledge.)

The story of the Lostwithiel Campaign (July to September 1644) is told elsewhere, with the definitive account being: *Lostwithiel 1644-The Campaign and the Battles*, Stephen Ede-Borrett (The Pike and Shot Society, 2004). Put simply, a Parliamentary army of about 10,000 men, led by the Earl of Essex, entered Cornwall only to be trapped by 3 Royalist armies totalling about 20,000, led by King Charles I. Although Daphne du Maurier's novel, *The King's General*, is a highly imaginative telling of events, she summed up the plight of the Parliamentarians succinctly: '...the three Royalist armies squeezing the rebels tighter hour by hour, the strip of country left to them becoming daily more bare and devastated, and a steady sweeping rain turning all the roads to mud' (*The King's General*, Daphne du Maurier, 1946, Virago Press).

The Parliamentary army based itself at Lostwithiel and was trapped in 'a strip of country' by the armies of the King and Prince Maurice, to the north and west, and Sir Richard Grenville's to the west. Essex's hope was that the Parliamentary navy would come to Fowey to rescue him; however, he did not protect the east bank of the River Fowey, so once the Royalists captured Polruan blockhouse, the port was useless to him. Worse still, the appalling weather prevented the navy from getting anywhere near Fowey. Any supplies that were landed would have had to come in at a convenient place on the Par estuary, such as Polkerris (which may have been just a sandy cove), Polmear, Par (not Treffry's harbour of 1829) or even St Blazey (sailing ships of 80 tons could still reach Pontois Mill as late as 1720). Essex was placed in what someone described as 'the Cornish mousetrap'.

Once the situation had become hopeless, the Parliamentary cavalry slipped through Royalist lines on a foggy night and made it to safety, leaving 6,000 or so infantry to pull back towards Fowey in the forlorn hope of being evacuated by sea, an achievement that would have been a mini-Dunkirk. The last stand was at Castle Dore. The Earl of Essex and Lord Robartes escaped by sea leaving junior officers to negotiate surrender. Although the terms were relatively kind the Royalist soldiers took their revenge, as did local people. One Parliamentarian who survived the ordeal wrote: 'We were inhumanly dealt with, abused, reviled, scorn, torn, kickt, pillaged and many stripped of all they had quite contrary to the articles...for even in the presence of the King and their General they took away our cloaks, coats and hats.' Another wrote: 'Sir, no tongue can express the barbarous usage of our men by the Enemy. They stripped many stark naked, and pillaged most of their money, coats and hats.' Civilians also got their own back with the scene at Lostwithiel Bridge being particularly unpleasant according to an eye-witness: 'I saw them strip a woman, she had laid in but three days before. They took her by the hair of her head and threw her into the river, and there almost drowned her. The woman died within 12 hours.' Only 1,000 made it to the rendezvous in Dorset, although this may be accounted for by desertions as well as deaths. This severe defeat was one factor leading to the formation of the New Model Army which went on to defeat the Royalists.

Historic England registered the battlefield partly because the present day topography is so similar that it is possible to understand what happened in 1644. The Historic Landscape Characterisation map below shows this. The darker green, which is the dominant colour, shows Anciently Enclosed Land, in other words the hedged fields that we see today. Indeed, this campaign was more a series of skirmishes than a set-piece battle except at the end and was in the words of those who were there often fought 'hedge to hedge'. The lighter green is more recently enclosed land including former heathland in the Druids Hill area, some of which is now covered by conifer plantations. The two large purple areas at the top are Lanhydrock and Boconnoc, which were very much affected by events.



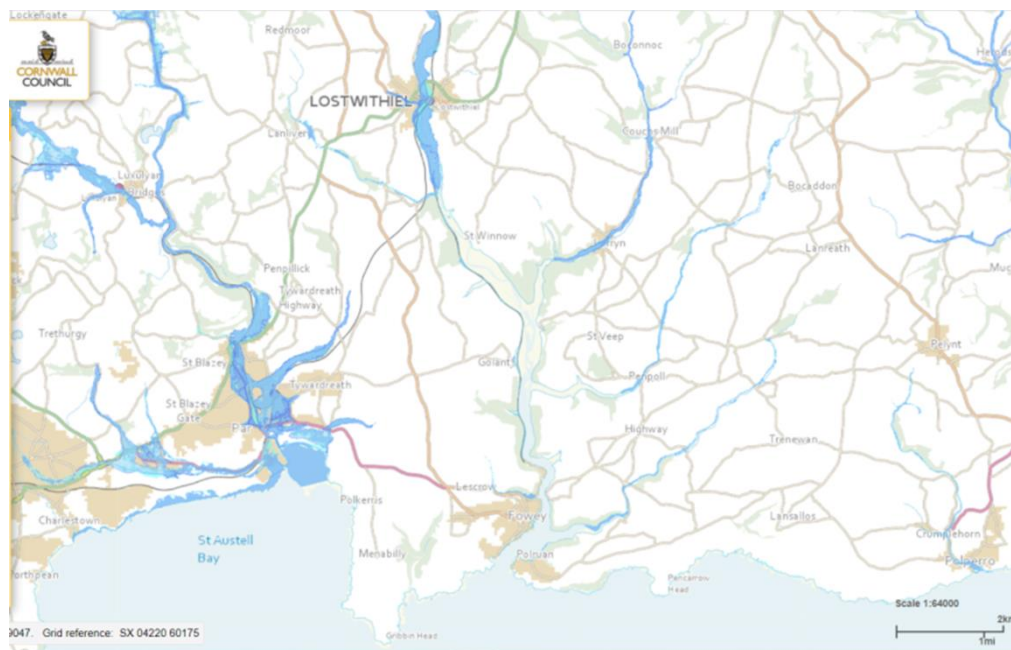
But there is one big difference in the landscape of today compared with that of 1644 and this is the area immediately to the west of the finger of land between Lostwithiel and Fowey. Strangely, many modern accounts of the battle don't recognise this and use modern maps. The major change is that the once huge estuary of the Par (or Luxulyan) River to the west is now silted up and largely built upon. But at the time it could only be crossed by ferry (between Tywardreath and the original settlement of Par) or by using the bridges at St Blazey or Pontois Mill. Once the Royalists controlled the eastern bank of the River Fowey the Parliamentarians could not use the port or river to bring in supplies. However, they continued to use the Par estuary and to take supplies over St Blazey Bridge to their forces. That changed when the Royalists captured St Blazey Bridge, where there was fierce fighting, or 'much bickering', as one contemporary described it. This greatly reduced chances to bring in supplies or escape.





**The site of St Blazey Bridge taken by the Royalists to stop the Parliamentarians bringing in supplies from 'Milly-Billy' (St Austell) Bay.**

To understand the predicament of the Parliamentarian army, hemmed in by a larger army, with rivers to the west and east, and the sea to the south it is necessary to use old maps – or even a modern flood risk map:



Besides the field systems that have survived, what else is there to see that relates to the campaign? Actually, there is quite a lot. But there is only space for a few examples.

The King's main base was Boconnoc House but he also used Joseph Jane's house in Liskeard, now known as Stuart House, now an arts and heritage centre open to the public (<http://www.stuarthouse.org.uk/>) that is well worth visiting.



Lanhydrock House was the home of the Parliamentarian Lord Robartes, who had told the Earl of Essex that the Cornish, being sick of war, would switch sides if he brought his army into Cornwall. The house was different then, being built four-sided around a quadrangle, but one wing survives:





Once the Royalists captured nearby Respryn Bridge all sections of the army were connected allowing them to move south in a coordinated way.



The only time Restormel Castle has seen military action was when Sir Richard Grenville's army (he was Daphne du Maurier's *King's General* but a much darker character than the book suggests) captured it, along with 30 Parliamentarians and 'divers barrels of beefe'.





The artillery of the 17<sup>th</sup> century may seem puny compared with the horrific weapons of our world, yet those suffering bombardments at the time would have been physically endangered and traumatised mentally. In late August the Parliamentarians ensconced in Lostwithiel, and the inhabitants suffering from their occupation, were astonished to see through the mist and rain an artillery earthwork that had been swiftly built by the Royalists on nearby Beacon Hill (HER 26968; SX 1233 5972; St Winnow parish). This was a key position and artillery exchanges ensued. Interestingly, this redoubt was still shown on Victorian OS maps. (There is no public access and the mine workings may have obliterated the earthwork.)



Source: Historical maps. Epoch 1 (1875-1901). <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/conservation-and-environment-protection/strategic-historic-environment-service/cornwall-and-isles-of-scilly-historic-environment-record/>

A little to the east of Beacon Hill is St Nectan's Chapel (HER 29011; Listed Building (II\*) 60628; SX 1283 5998; St Winnow parish), nowadays one of the most peaceful places you could ever hope to visit. But in the wet, bloody summer of 1644 it was under heavy artillery bombardment, the results of which are still evident today.



The lovely chapel of St Nectan's once had a tower but it was destroyed by Parliamentary artillery in August 1644.

The Royalists captured key sites on the east bank of the River Fowey, including the medieval blockhouse at Polruan and Hall Walk. The next photo is taken from the position where the King inspected his artillery batteries and the enemy's positions across the river in Fowey.



But as the plaque below shows, events almost took an unexpected turn:



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A Royalist infiltrator nearly ignited a gunpowder wagon but the lit fuse was extinguished at the last moment. The Duchy Palace was damaged and the church (where soldiers had baptised a horse at the font) underwent fire and an explosion when soldiers attempted to remove Royalist prisoners from the tower. It is interesting that various date stones around the town are from the later 17<sup>th</sup> century.



The Duchy Palace: An engraving made 90 years later by the Buck brothers shows it in a ruinous state.



The photo below shows the font in St Bartholomew's parish church in Lostwithiel at which a horse was christened 'Charles'. Such actions by Puritan soldiers were not unusual. Religious divisions ran deep. Although Cornwall was largely Royalist and Anglican, not everyone shared these views. Indeed the firebrand Puritan preacher Hugh Peters, later Cromwell's chaplain, came from nearby Fowey.



The retreat of the Parliamentarians from Lostwithiel would have been exhausting and dangerous. Even driving out of the town, on tarmac roads, it is impossible not to notice the steepness of the hills. But in late August 1644, in heavy rain, with the roads churned up, and the enemy taking pot shots, it would have been a nightmare. The next photo is of a lane near Fowey but it gives an idea of roads at the time. The Earl of Essex complained later that: 'The wayes were so extreme foule with excessive rain...'



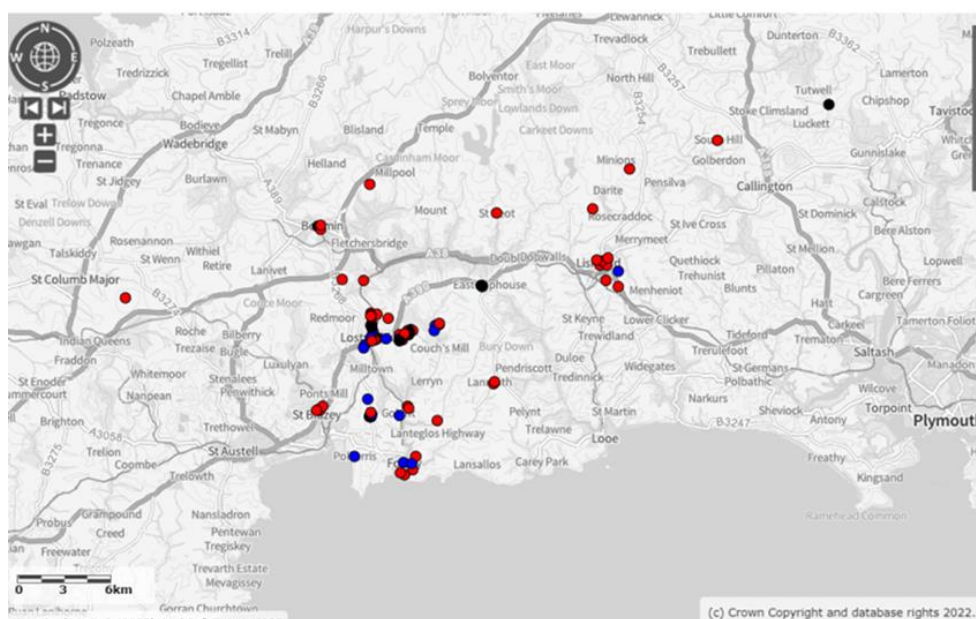
And so the chase continued, as far as the Iron Age earthwork of Castle Dore (HER 26690.01; Scheduled Monument 100669; SX 1034 5482; St Sampson parish) where the last stand was fought at the end of August and the Parliamentarians were defeated.



Copyright: Google Earth

Castle Dore is one of 40 Scheduled Monuments in the Cornwall AONB that will be examined and conserved as part of the Monumental Improvements Project (<https://www.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk/monumental-improvement> ). It will be interesting to see if anything is discovered about the short-lived military engagement that took place.

The whole story of this tragic campaign has not yet been told. It is surprising that Historic England did not register a larger area. The map below plots places named in contemporary accounts, most of which do not fall into the registered areas.



Sound archaeological evidence for extensive fighting in areas that are not registered was provided by metal detectorist John Andrews who ran the Tywardreath Battlefield Project. His focus was in fields near Tywardreath and he worked with Natasha Ferguson, then of the Centre for Battlefield Studies at Glasgow University. Musket balls, buckles and other metal objects were found in great quantities and meticulously plotted and analysed by John. Clusters next to hedges showed how useful these would have been as shelter. Scope for properly authorised further research in and beyond the registered areas definitely exists.

Historic England's decision to register part of the battlefield represents official recognition of the importance of the event and its landscape. For those interested, it is possible to read about the events and to get a good idea of the landscape in which it was fought. Many will do so because of an interest in military history. But what happened in the Lostwithiel area in the miserable, wet summer of 1644 cannot be distilled into dry details of tactics, manoeuvres and weaponry. This was a human disaster and one from which local society would not have recovered for many years, especially since hunger and disease followed on from the fighting. Besides the inhabitants of Lostwithiel and Fowey, every household in a wide area would have been subjected to plunder and often violence, from the humblest cottage or farmhouse through to great houses like Menabilly. Little wonder that some locals took revenge when the opportunity arose. So perhaps the greatest lesson we can draw from this and other registered battlefields is what can happen when government and civil society breaks down\*.

\*For more on the subject of how civil wars start, the work of Barbara F. Walter, Rohr Professor of International affairs at the School of Global Policy and Strategy at the University of California, San Diego, may be instructive. Her talks can be found on YouTube, for example: *How Civil Wars Start and How to Stop Them* ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dynl-71hN1M> ).

Area Representatives would love to hear from fellow CAS members, and the general public, about any feature of the historic environment in their parishes, whether a new discovery, something causing concern, or even just to answer queries. If you have any concerns, or new information, about any archaeological feature, please contact the Area Representative for the parish. If you do not know who that is, just look at the inside back cover of the latest journal, *Cornish Archaeology* 59, or send an email to [arearep@cornisharchaeology.org.uk](mailto:arearep@cornisharchaeology.org.uk).

Roger Smith, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023













