

# Sharing the Heritage of the Wish Tower

The History, Significance and Conservation  
of Martello Tower 73, Eastbourne



Revision 1  
May 2017



This project was completed by The Wish Tower Friends, in association with ExtraVerte Community Projects CIC and funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.



# Section I

## Executive Summary

### The Wish Tower

The Wish Tower is a 19th Century Martello Tower, in a moat setting on Eastbourne's seafront. It's one of 103 built on the south and east coasts to defend against the threat of invasion by Napoleon Bonaparte. The Wish Tower is one of a dwindling number of Martello towers which it is possible for the public to see and visit.

### Intended Audience

This document has been prepared to inform the preservation of the Wish Tower from the point of view of the physical remediation and The Tower's ongoing future as a visitor attraction.

With this in mind, the audience is

- Eastbourne Borough Council as both local authority responsible for planning and economic development of the area and as the long-term lessee of The Tower, which is owned by the Cavendish Estates.
- Historic England as the authority responsible for considering and granting Scheduled Monument Consent.
- The design team for the planned new cafe/restaurant building on the site of the current Western View Cafe.
- Local residents and anyone else interested in the history and future of The Tower.

### Summary of Findings

- As one of only two towers which are in near original condition and in public hands, the Wish Tower represents a rare opportunity for the general public to see and better understand the history and engineering of England's Napoleonic defence systems.
- The extraordinary strength of construction of The Tower and its surrounding Moat Wall mean that both are currently structurally safe despite many years without routine maintenance.
- Lack of maintenance has, instead, led to a slow degradation of many structural features of both tower and Moat Wall, with the most obvious result being that the wooden floor at the accommodation level of The Tower is now in some danger of damage due to wet rot.
- Capital expenditure of over £200,000 is needed in order to repair both tower and moat to prevent further degradation and the possibility that The Tower or moat will become unsafe.
- There is definitely appetite for visitors and local residents to visit The Tower, appreciate its story and enjoy the view from the top.
- Financial sustainability will be a challenge but the space could be harnessed as an occasional event space with a unique atmosphere.
- With the regeneration of the Devonshire Park complex and the plan to build an iconic restaurant/cafe in the space next to The Tower, it does not seem sensible to leave The Tower in its current state to detract from the other improvements.



Aerial view of Wish Tower Slopes today (image & map data: Google) and in 1949 (Copyright Historic England, Licensor canmore.org.uk)



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# Section 2

## Introduction

### 2.1 Background, Scope and Intended Purpose of this Report

In 2013 ExtraVerte Community Projects CIC secured a lease, on behalf of The Wish Tower Friends, to reopen the Wish Tower on Eastbourne's seafront to the public for the first time in over a decade.

Once initial clearance work had been completed and visitors returned to the Tower, it became clear that a plan would be needed to ensure the Tower could continue to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Funding was sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under their "Sharing Our Heritage" programme for a project to complete a community-led conservation and management plan. This grant is match-funded by donations the Wish Tower Friends have secured from various fundraising activities. The HLF grant was made in December 2014, the project being completed by the end of March 2016.

As well as a conservation plan, the project includes some legacy elements: an exhibition; interim interpretation panels and information held publicly on the website.

This report is the culmination of the work by the group, and their professional advisers to understand the history; the significance; and the current condition of the Wish Tower and to suggest the means by which its future can be secured.

The structure of the report follows the "Kerr" Model\* but, as one of the purposes of this project has been to widen engagement in issues surrounding the management and preservation of heritage buildings, the model has been adapted to make the document suitable for a wider audience.

A large part of the area known locally as The Wish Tower Slopes has Scheduled Monument status (*please see definitions under the site glossary at section 2.2*). This report, however, is more limited in scope being restricted to the Wish Tower itself; the surrounding moat bounded by (and including) the inner Moat Wall where it exists; and that area of exposed glaciis which is visible on the seaward side.

It is recommended that a wider study be made of the entire site – possibly as part of the archaeological investigations that will inevitably be required in order to redevelop the Wish Tower Café site.



From top: accommodation floor interior showing puppet museum partition before clearance; sheet material being removed outside and inside.

\* Influential conservation Plan model devised by Australian, James Semple Kerr in 1982.

## 2.2 The Site

The Wish Tower (as described in the scheduling entry) is found on Eastbourne's seafront, approximately half a mile to the southwest of the pier. Colloquially, the Martello Tower sits in an area known as the "The Western Lawns".

From the Devonshire Park tennis and theatre area, there is a straight view down a Victorian residential square – Wilmington Square – and The Tower is centrally placed in this view suggesting, perhaps, that in the design of the housing of this area, there was a desire to frame the Wish Tower in the view.

For the avoidance of doubt the following definitions should be assumed in this document when referring to the Wish Tower and the area surrounding it:

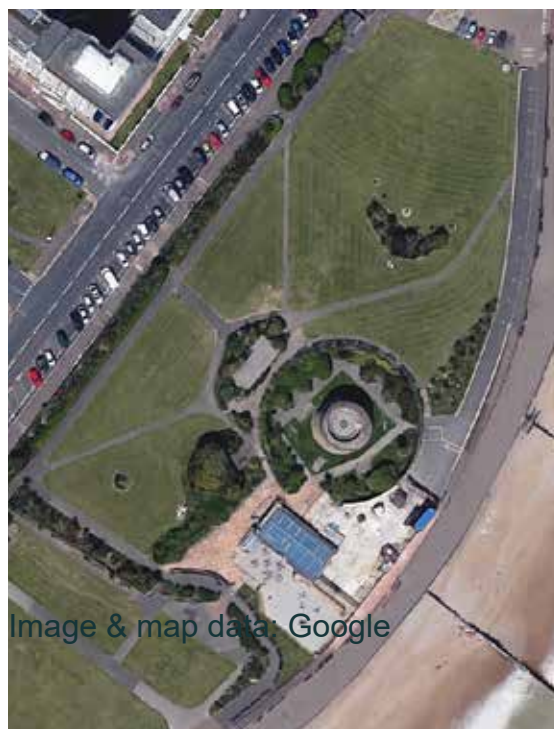
**"The Tower"** or **"Wish Tower"** refers to Martello Tower 73, known as the Wish Tower. This includes the building, its internal fittings and external surfaces and the steps leading from The Moat up to it.

**"The Moat"** refers to the area immediately surrounding The Tower including The Moat Wall. This is bounded by The Moat Wall both where it exists and where it existed prior to removal of part of it. It extends below the existing level of the ground at its modern level.

**"The Glacis"** refers to the mound of earth constructed around The Tower during its construction. This area is bounded by the outside (and generally unexposed) surface of The Moat Wall and the boundary of the Scheduled Monument Site as defined in the Historic England listing.

**"The Site"** refers to the entire site listed by Historic England as a Scheduled Monument. This incorporates the Tower, the Moat and the Glacis and is bounded as in that listing. In the listing, the site is known only as "The Wish Tower".

**"The Wider Site"** refers to the Site and the area immediately surrounding it including the Cafe site, the Western Lawns, the Seafront and any unlisted part of the Wish Tower slopes.



From top: view from Devonshire park down Wilmington Square to the Wish Tower Slopes; aerial view of Wish Tower Slopes

## 2.3 The Wish Tower Friends

The Wish Tower Friends group is a community group which was initially formed partly in response to the demolition of the old Wish Tower Café and the considerations of its replacement. In addition, the group expressed its disappointment that the Wish Tower itself was so neglected and apparently undervalued.

Although a 'Design Day' workshop was held to discuss what the community would like to see by way of replacement café building, this element of the work was not taken much further forward than an initial discussion with Eastbourne Borough Council and delivering the ideas from the workshop. Events overtook this element as a temporary café was put in place.

Meanwhile, a smaller group of residents took a more active interest in the potential for showing visitors the Wish Tower itself. In reality, the Wish Tower Friends is now more directly concerned with the preservation of the Martello Tower but retains its interest in the Wider Site and is delighted to be on the consultation panel for the longer term replacement café building.

## 2.4 Advisers

As an informally constituted group, The Wish Tower Friends is assisted by ExtraVerte Community Projects CIC to secure the current lease and to enter into contractual obligations (such as insurance arrangements). ExtraVerte is remunerated for a small amount of its work, completing the rest under its community interest obligations.

In order to complete the technical elements of this report, the Wish Tower Friends have engaged two subject matter experts:

**Roger Bunney**, IEng AMIStruct E, a Structural Engineer specialising in the analysis and repair of historic structures and a Director of EAR Sheppard, an Eastbourne-based independent practice of Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers.

**Alan Dickinson**, MRICS, Chartered Building Surveyor and Historic Buildings Consultant, based in Rye

In addition, during the period of the project to date, ExtraVerte has had a number of very helpful exchanges with Paul Roberts, the Historic England (previously English Heritage) Monuments Inspector for the South East Region and a number of Eastbourne Borough Council Officers from different departments.



From top: Some of the Wish Tower Friends; Study Day discussion of glacia construction; Roger Bunney inspecting the cistern; Alan Dickinson on Study Day; Study Day students discussing the render



# Section 3

## Understanding the Site

### 3.1 Martello Towers & Redoubt Fortresses

The full story of the English Martello Towers and Redoubt Fortresses can easily be found in a number of publications (see bibliography for some selected volumes) but it would be fair to say that some of the fine detail in their history is lost in the mists of time. As a result some elements of it are lacking or, where present, at risk of being a little speculative in places.

For anyone unfamiliar with the history, a broad summary is included here by way of context.

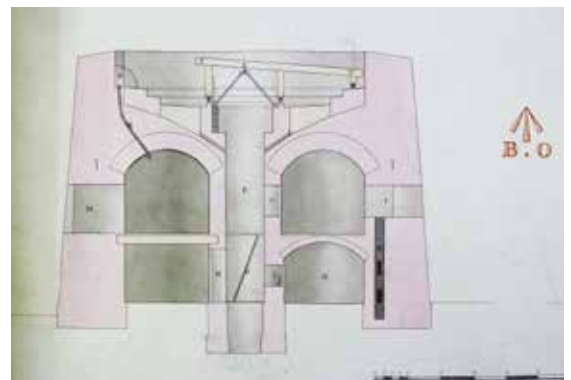
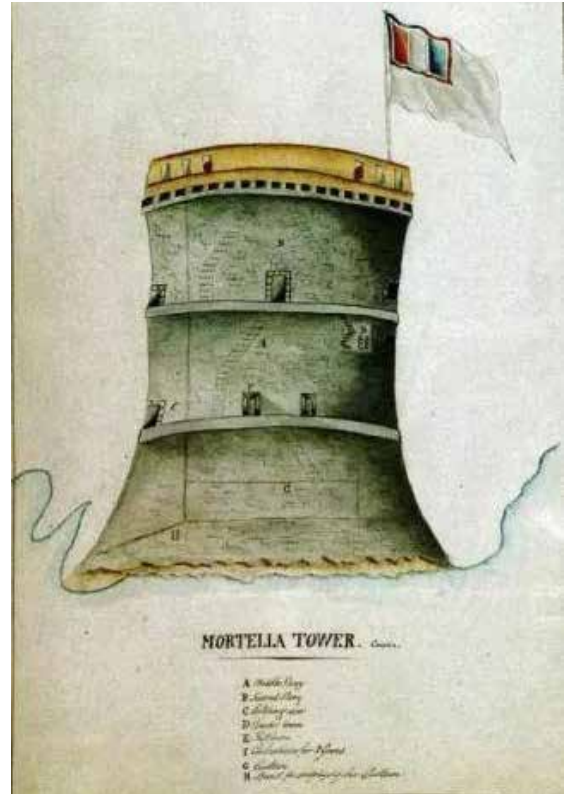
In 1794 the English Navy was blockading Corsica and attacked a tower at Mortella Point in the Bay of San Fiorenzo. Two ships bombarded The Tower for more than two hours and although The Tower was much more lightly armed than the ships, it not only resisted the attack but caused the ships to withdraw. Only after additional bombardment from the landward side was The Tower captured.

The incident at Mortella Point appears to have been the inspiration (Hansard, 16th Dec 1803 second reading of the Volunteer Exemption Bill) for the commission of a series of defensive towers by the government based on the design of that tower to repel the threat of invasion by the fleet of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Quite how The Towers came to be known as Martello Towers is a matter of some debate but the most common explanation seems to be a simple mispronunciation of the name Mortella.

By the time The Towers were commissioned, it is arguable whether any real threat of invasion remained, but for whatever reason, they were still built.

The first chain was built on the Kent and Sussex coasts: 74 towers and three Redoubt Fortresses. It appears that all these towers were built between 1805 and 1810. The National Archive holds some drawings of an approximate (perhaps, suggested) tower design but the Sussex and Kent towers have considerable variations on that design.



From top: illustration of the Mortella Point tower; Mortella Point Tower today; sectional view of suggested tower design (National Archives)

In the event, they all have a similar structure as each other being elliptical in external plan and approximately circular in internal plan. They have a gun platform on the roof; a suspended wooden floor as an accommodation level; a basement level for stores; and an under-basement arched cistern for the storage of water. The details of the design are more fully explained in section 3.3: Wish Tower Design Details.

Eastbourne's and Pevensey Bay's beaches were the site of some 17 Martellos, the beaches here, presumably, being the most at risk of action. Where towers were isolated (like the Wish Tower, and Tower 74, at Seaford) they were more likely to be in a moat setting for additional defensive capacity.

To support the Kent/Sussex towers, three larger structures – Redoubt Fortresses – were built at Harwich, Dymchurch and Eastbourne.

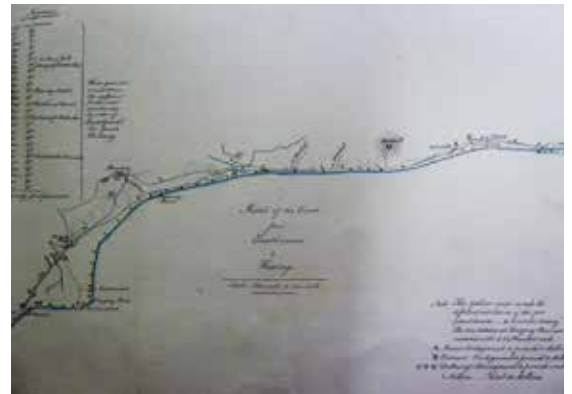
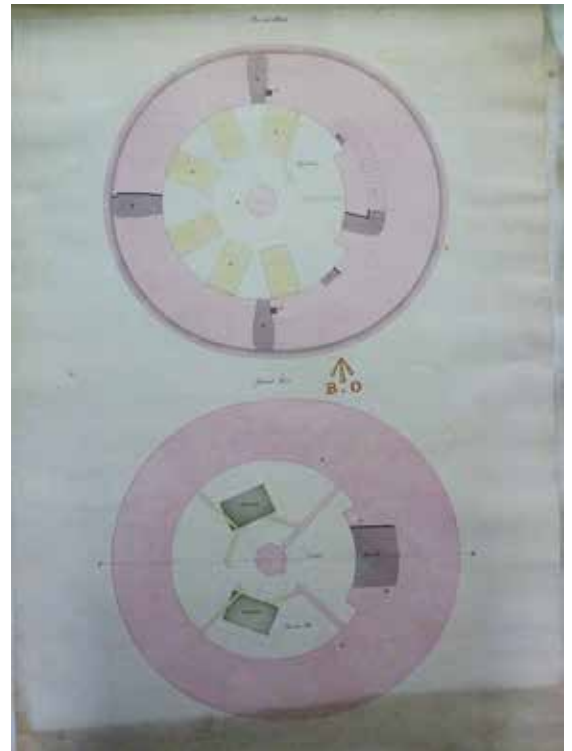
In addition to the 74 Kent/Sussex towers, a further series of 29 towers were built on the Suffolk and Essex coasts a few years later, these towers are a little larger and are of slightly different design.

The towers and fortresses were never used for their intended purpose, but many have served in defensive capacities such as gun batteries; look outs; and coastguard stations. More recently several have been repurposed as civic or residential buildings or claimed by dereliction or the action of the sea.

Today, excluding the Wish Tower, only 42 of the 102 towers of the south and east coasts remain: 11 are dwellings; three are museums; one is (or was) a restaurant; one is owned by The Landmark Trust and let as a holiday home; and one is owned by English Heritage and restored to illustrate its original usage but is only open by appointment.

25 towers remain empty, unused and in various states of repair.

The Wish Tower is in a state of flux it having been treated as something of a storage area and unrepaired for a number of years, but since cleared of debris and occasionally opened to the public by the Wish Tower Friends.



From top: Plan view of suggested design (National Archive); map of tower positions local to Eastbourne (National Archive); accommodation level stored materials; basement with cabinets.

### 3.2 Overall Site description

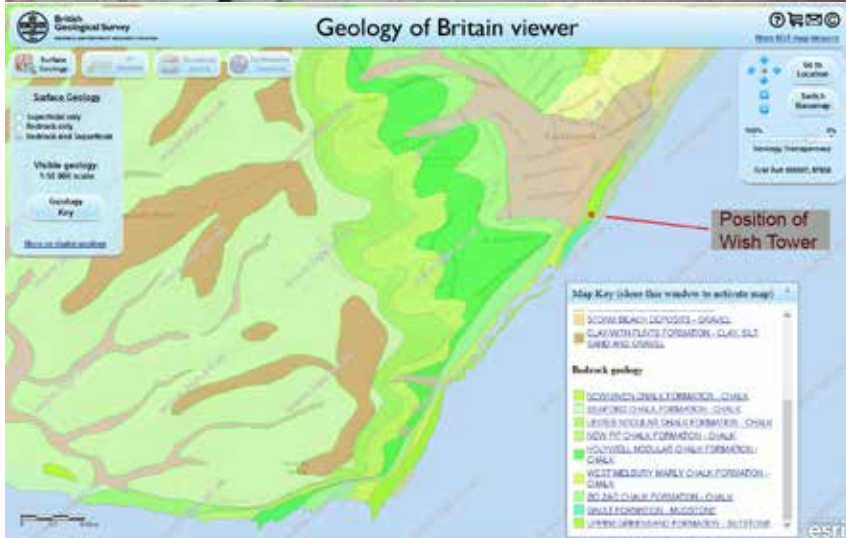
The site is shown on the maps below. In the Scheduled Monument Listings it is referred to as “The Wish Tower”.

Now locally known as “The Wish Tower Slopes” or “The Western Lawns” this area lies immediately inland from the sea on a greensand outcrop which caused a natural mound surrounded by a lower-lying marshy area known as “The Wish” (or variations such as “The Whish). The name is thought to derive, much as The Wash in Lincolnshire, from a Saxon word for marsh.

As it sat isolated about one mile south west of the Redoubt Fortress, the Tower is set in a moat with a glacis surround for additional protection.

The scheduled area describes the larger part of the original glacis, moat and tower setting – the removed section of glacis and Moat Wall being omitted.

Despite not being scheduled, the remaining part of the Wider Site certainly has its part to play in preserving the sense and story of the Wish Tower and its surround.



Left column: Map of Eastbourne shortly after towers built (National Archive); Geological map of the area (contains British Geological Survey Materials, copyright NERC 2016); Map of Eastbourne shortly after towers built (National Archive). Right column: illustration of Wish Tower from beach c1810; Victorian illustration of Wish Tower from Wish Tower Slopes; Map of Wish Tower position 1925 (National Archive); contemporary map of coast showing Wish Tower (Contains Ordnance Survey Data Crown Copyright 2016)



Aerial view of Wish Tower Slopes today (image & map data: Google) and in 1933 (Copyright Historic England, Licensor canmore.org.uk)



### 3.3 Wish Tower Design Details

In common with other South Coast Martellos, the Wish Tower is slightly ovoid or elliptical on plan. At this point we have not completed a full measured survey but have a copy of the Borough Council's 1969 drawing which we believe to be sufficiently accurate for the purposes of this exercise.

This plan is available from the Compton Estate office and is reproduced in section 2 of the structural engineering report found in the appendices.

The Tower is set in a circular dry moat with a retaining wall set against a glacis which is made of the spoil from The Moat, augmenting a natural rise in the landscape at this point.

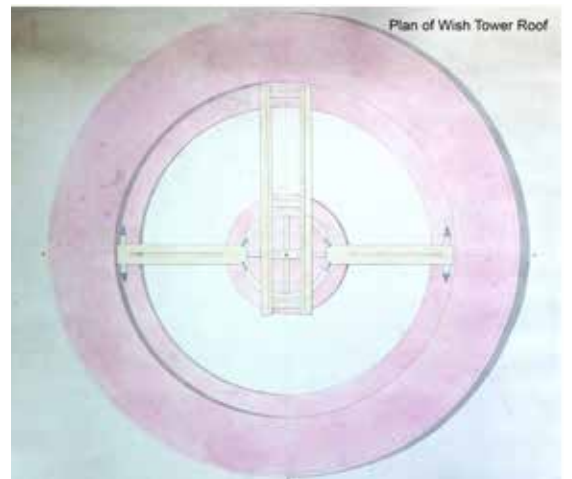
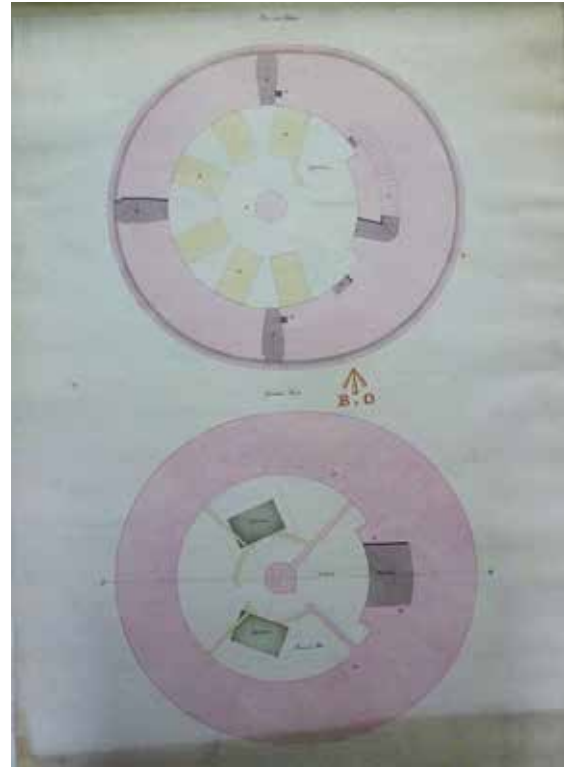
Originally The Moat was completely enclosed but later changes in the site removed most of the seaward glacis; cut an entranceway into The Moat from this seaward area; removed a sizeable length of The Moat's retaining wall, and raised The Moat floor level by approximately 1.5m. These amendments have revealed a number of features which allow a glimpse into some of the structure of The Site.

The northeast-southwest axis of The Tower at ground level is approximately 12.5m, with the north-south axis being some 13.5m. The walls are of solid brickwork, of the order of 3.5m thick on the seaward side (encompassing the staircase up to the roof) with part of the magazine also intruding into this wall at the basement level. The wall on the north, east and west sides of the Tower is approximately 2.2m thick and the Tower tapers inwards towards the top by around 3.5°.

The top of the Tower is roughly 8.0m from the current moat floor level and the top of the Tower rises above the top of The Moat Wall by a couple of metres. It can be seen at least one-mile away to both the northeast and southwest, making it an obvious landmark in the seafront landscape.

Mr. William Hobson (supplier of bricks to the War Office) and Captains Cunningham (Kent) and Gosset (Sussex) Royal Engineers in July 1810 estimate that the Wish Tower and Moat wall contain 37,379 and 23,777 cubic feet of masonry, (1,060 and 673 cubic metres) respectively. These reported estimates appear to be based on the overall design of all similar towers and similar moats, rather than something estimated specifically for the Wish Tower.

The exterior face of The Tower is currently rendered with cementitious render but at the construction phase, or at some point after (possibly as late as 1873), we believe that the Wish Tower would have had a stucco render coating, possibly containing beach-dredged aggregate.



From top: plan view of site (National Archives); plan view of suggested tower design - accommodation level; basement; roof (showing gun carriage).

A glimpse of the core of The Tower's wall can be seen at the accommodation (middle) level window opening (which was once converted to a door). Here it can be seen that the core is of solid, coursed, rubble brickwork rather than loose material. This makes an immensely strong structure, commensurate with the intended use of The Tower.

Entry to The Tower is by a door raised above The Moat level and this door would have originally been accessed via a drawbridge from The Moat Wall.

In the centre of The Tower is a supporting pillar which rises from a splayed base, in the cistern under the basement level, to a complementary arch at roof level to support the weight of the roof and the gunning emplacement and transmit these forces to the ground. This design ensures that The Tower is very resistant to external bombardment, such as cannon-fire.

The internal upper brick archway is fully visible at the accommodation level of The Tower and is a feature much remarked upon by visitors.

At basement level there is a brick floor over a vaulted cistern which is approximately 1.2m deep at the maximum points. One-quarter of the basement level is partitioned off with brick walls and what would have been a copper clad door and frame. This area is the magazine (or powder room) and would have been used to store explosive materials. It extends a little into the seaward walls and contains a number of ventilation shafts to keep the area as dry as possible. The floor would have been a suspended wooden affair to prevent damp rising into the materials stored here.

The cistern does not continue under the magazine.

An internal oriel window would have been in place on one wall of the magazine to allow lighting of the magazine by candle or lamp from the stores area. However, at some point, the original window aperture has been greatly enlarged.

The remainder of the basement area would have been used for storage.

Access from basement to cistern is via two hatchways with wooden covers.

Part way up the internal height of The Tower, there is a wooden floor suspended by radial joists on a number of stone corbels set in the wall of The Tower and into a supporting ledge on the central column. The current floor is a reproduction believed to date from about 1970; it's a very near copy of the original, but the padding of some of the corbels which are set lower indicates that some of the original joists were larger than the replacement. Originally, this floor would have completely filled the area of The Tower at this level, having only a hatchway to allow access into the basement level.



From top: exterior view of Wish Tower door; internal supporting pillar & arched roof; magazine/powder room; under-basement cistern with inverted arch.

In its current state, one-quarter of the suspended floor has been removed (or, more likely, never installed) to allow for the placement of two modern (c1970) metal spiral staircases and (according to a description in the pamphlet from the military museum at the time) appreciation of the construction of The Tower.

This level would have acted as the accommodation area for up to 24 men and one officer. The accommodation would have been partitioned into three distinct areas by use of wooden partitions: an officer's area, an area for the men, and a separate office area for the quartermaster-sergeant.

There are two fireplaces set into the wall, although there is no longer any indication of where the partitions were affixed to the walls. However, it's possible to extrapolate this from the position of the fireplaces, from the Eastbourne Borough drawings made in 1969 and from the set-up at one of the Martello Towers in Dymchurch, Kent.

On the northeast and southwest sides of The Tower there are small windows which are currently unglazed but partially protected by railings. The north-eastern window was enlarged in the past for use as a doorway but the south-western window aperture appears to be of the original design. In the archway of the window apertures are ventilation holes to help disperse the smoke from musket fire.

There are further vents just above floor level which communicate directly with the basement level to ensure good air circulation from the enclosed basement.

Inside The Tower, above the main doorway, are holes to allow ropes or chains from the drawbridge to pass through. On one side is a pulley wheel and set into the holes (still visible in the right light from the corresponding holes outside) are smaller metal rollers.

Between the two fireplaces and in the thickest part of the seaward tower wall lies an enclosed stone stairwell which rises to the gun platform of The Tower being vaulted for strength and having a further ventilation hole.

At the top of the stairs there would have been a hatchway protected by a door with a hole to allow the passing of cannonballs whilst protecting the man inside from potential blast. The external hatchway which is now in evidence is a recent addition in an attempt to make the exit more waterproof and easy to use for members of the public. There is, in addition, a reproduction of a half-door with a passing hole.



From top: internal view showing double-height space; vaulted stairs to roof prior to clearance work; detail over front door showing drawbridge rope holes.

The gun platform comprises a raised stone cill about 1m from a parapet wall. The cill drops down to an asphalted roof covering. At the centre of the roof area is a raised circular stone platform. Both platform and cill have metal rails set into them to support the wheels of a traversing gun carriage. This carriage would initially have carried a 24lb gun which could have been, in theory, able to aim through 360-degrees.

The top of the parapet wall would originally have had chimneys set into the brickwork communicating with the fireplaces below but these appear to have been infilled, or capped.

There are a number of inset spaces in the parapet wall itself to accommodate an immediate supply of ammunition/powder. There are also tethering rings through which gun aiming ropes would have run.

The roof area also contains a number of vents and drainage holes, some of which have been closed over in an attempt to prevent water ingress. At least one of the drainage holes appears to communicate with a downpipe which runs down the inside of The Tower's wall slightly to the east of the front door and running vertically down towards the basement level. As things stand, this pipe is currently diverted out through the wall close to the current ground level but may have been originally designed to fill the cistern, although the evidence of this in the cistern is not conclusive.



From top: access hatchway to gun platform; gun platform showing damaged asphalt; gun rail with drainage channel; examining roof vents.

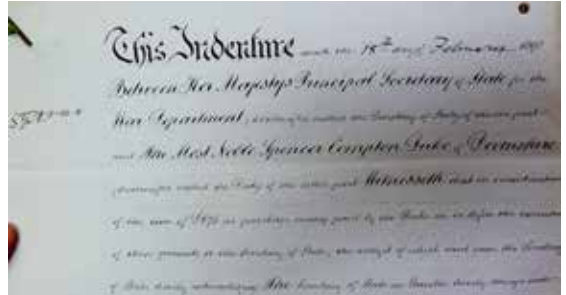


### 3.4 A Potted History of the Wish Tower to Date

Precise details of the Wish Tower's construction and use over the years are somewhat sketchy. We have used various sources to piece together its various incarnations over time.

We're indebted to local Martello Tower enthusiast, Peter Hibbs, for sharing some of his research of The Towers at large and in helping to detail some of the earliest events from his research at the National Archives.

- 31st May 1806      Official reports state that the "WhishTower" (sic) near Eastbourne "not yet begun"
  
- Late 1806/Early 1807      Construction of the Wish Tower was begun, this makes it one of the later South Coast towers to be commenced.
  
- May 1808      Reports of construction being "almost complete"
  
- 1810      All south coast towers "finished"
  
- 1812-1860      Tower used as a Coastguard Station
  
- 1830      24 Pound gun replaced with 32 Pounder  
             Fate of the 24lb gun unknown.
  
- 1873      Tower decommissioned. Gun removed.  
             Stucco render possibly added at this stage.
  
- 1874      Leased to the council
  
- 1884-1930      Rented to the Hollobon family and used as a Geological Museum
  
- 1897      Sold to the Duke of Devonshire by the War Office
  
- 1919      East window enlarged and made into door.  
             Additional drawbridge built. Steps built from main door down into moat.



From top: view of Martello Towers Pevensey Bay to Eastbourne; illustration of Wish Tower when built; Hollobon family outside their lapidary shop; document transferring ownership to Duke of Devonshire; roof showing the gun (date unknown)

1939-1945 Gun Battery during WWII. Observation post built on roof (since removed). Access door to lower floor cut – now referred to as the “intake room”. Ironwork possibly added to magazine



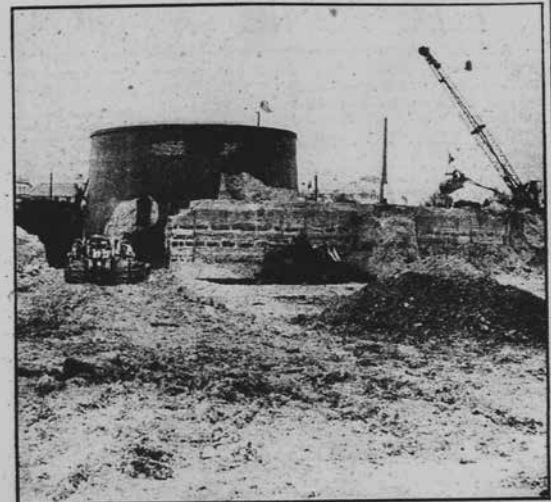
1958-1959 Part of Moat Wall and glacis removed as a move towards demolition of The Tower.

Local campaign to save The Tower.

Designated a “Scheduled Ancient Monument” and, therefore, protected from further demolition

Drawbridges removed.

**THE WORK PROGRESSES**



THE HISTORIC WISH TOWER MOUND on the sea front is the scene of great activity as excavations are carried out for the foundations of the projected Wish Tower cafe. Despite an element of local opposition the scheme is now irrevocably under way.

*Ships that*

1960 Wish Tower Cafe built. Moat filled in to a depth of approximately 1.5m.

Archway cut through the seaward side of The Moat Wall to allow a walkway between the seafront and the Western Lawns.

1970 Tower ‘restored’. Replacement wooden floor and spiral staircases built. 68 Pound gun placed on roof.

Tower operated by Towner/Eastbourne Council as a military museum. Presumably, electricity supply installed at this point.



1990 Cannon removed again.

1995-2001 Becomes a Puppet museum.

Fitted out with display cabinets, etc and some surfaces painted with modern paints.



2001-2013 Used as storeroom by Council.

Also as a viewing platform for Eastbourne Airbourne.

2014 Emptied and reopened by Wish Tower Friends.



From top: Wish Tower as a WWII Battery; news clipping of Wish Tower Cafe being built; Puppet Museum sign; interior prior to clearance; first tours after clearance.

### 3.5 Further Detail of the Most Recent Uses of the Tower

The use of The Tower as a puppet museum appears to have been extraordinarily popular with residents and visitors alike. There is relatively little detail of this use of The Tower, but local visitors are often at pains to say how much they enjoyed it as an attraction when they were children.

The Puppet Museum closed when the proprietor, Mel Myland, moved away from Eastbourne.

After the departure of the Puppet Museum in about 2001 the Wish Tower was closed to the public and only used by the council as a viewing/control platform for Eastbourne Airbourne and, very sadly, a glorified storage shed – it being filled with an assortment of sheet materials, plan chests and shelving components.

During the period when The Tower was empty, some initial interest in The Tower's potential as a museum to house local history artefacts was expressed. These discussions didn't get very far, in part because The Tower would be too damp to house a humidity-sensitive collection.

The Wish Tower Friends, in association with ExtraVerte Community Projects spent some two years in discussion with Eastbourne Borough Council with a view to getting The Tower open to the public again. A lease was finally granted in 2013 for two years, there being concerns that if a replacement building for the café were started, the area may become a no-go area during the construction phase. This possible restriction seems somewhat less likely now but the Friends have renewed the lease for a further two years with a three-month notice clause.

Since taking on the lease, the Friends/ExtraVerte have run many visitor events at The Tower; from drop-in tours, to Heritage Open Day events; to theatrical and musical performances. All have been very well received and it would appear that there remains an appetite to continue to welcome visitors to The Tower on this basis.

We estimate that hundreds of hours of volunteer time has yielded over 2000 visitors to The Tower, the vast majority of whom had never been to a Martello Tower before.



From top: patrons enjoying the Puppet Museum; accumulated sheet material prior to clearance; a tour taking place; performance of The Flood by Badac Theatre Company.

### 3.6 Wish Tower Friends' Discovery Days & Study Day

The initial part of this project was to engage the public of Eastbourne in an event to highlight The Tower and its history. We also needed to find out from the public what they valued about the monument and what their aspirations were for it. We called this event 'Wish Tower Discovery Days'.

This event took place over two days in January 2015 in the ground floor gallery at Towner. The Wish Tower Friends welcomed over 400 people to see an exhibition of the history of The Tower; an artwork illustrating the fate of other local Martello towers; a life-size floor plan of The Tower to fully appreciate its size; and a selection of maps and books to browse.

We invited people to share their views and it's clear from the feedback that the whole area is a place of immense significance to residents of the town and is loved as a landmark. They also expressed views on the soon to be commissioned replacement café building.

We followed up the Discovery Days with a study day. It was designed as a collaboration between our structural engineer; our historic buildings specialist and some of the Wish Tower Friends, including a local Martello Tower enthusiast.

The study day allowed the Wish Tower Friends to learn more about how to identify even small historical features which reveal missing design details; how to recognise facets of structural damage caused by inappropriate repairs and how these features might affect the historical significance.

The subject matter experts were also afforded the chance to pool their knowledge and learn from each other - an opportunity both found very valuable.

In addition to all this, everyone present had the opportunity to learn about both traditional and laser surveying techniques and how they could both open opportunities for developing a future interpretation strategy.

All in all, this set of activities has allowed both the Wish Tower Friends, and a wider circle of interested people to gain a better understanding of what it means to protect and improve a Scheduled Monument.



From top: Wish Tower Discovery Days - art installation; exhibition; maps books and other materials; feedback; study day with laser surveying

# Section 4

## Significance of the Site

We engaged historic building specialist, Alan Dickinson to carry out a significance assessment of the site on our behalf. This took place partly as a component of our study day, attended by some of the Wish Tower Friends, and partly from Alan's follow-up work. Alan's full assessment is included in the appendices but a summary and some extracts are included below together with some of the research carried out by Wish Tower Friends and including local Martello Tower enthusiast, Peter Hibbs.

### 4.1 Introduction

The Site is listed by English Heritage as a Scheduled Monument (listing no. 1017357). The listing includes The Tower, The Moat and Moat Wall and The Glacis surrounding it. Modern additions to the site and building are not included in the listing but the parts of the site to which these features are attached are included. This means that consent must be obtained for almost any work on any part of the site, and on any adjoining area because the visual amenity of the Wish Tower site is considered protected from encroachment by potential nearby development.

Furthermore, the site should be considered as a whole, encompassing all its elements: The Tower, The Moat and The Glacis. A change to any one part of the site that diminishes the significance of that part consequently diminishes the significance of the other listed parts of the site.

### 4.2 Cultural & Aesthetic Perspective

The Wish Tower is a well-known and loved landmark on the seafront, familiar to almost all residents of the town.

Images of the Wish Tower abound, from paintings and somewhat artistically exaggerated drawings from its earliest time, through the era of photography, to the present day. You could say that the heritage of the Tower is almost synonymous with the history of the town itself.

Two particular aspects of The Tower are especially significant in terms of its association with the town in the eyes of visitors and residents alike. These are:

The view of The Tower and glacis as seen from the seafront between the pier and The Tower. This is an instantly recognisable image of Eastbourne as a seaside resort.

The view of The Tower and glacis, framed by Wilmington Square, when approaching the seafront from Devonshire Park. The location and design of the Square were clearly chosen with this in mind.



From top: Wish Tower in art - illustration c1867; painting of towers on the beach; photo showing bathing machines; Edwardian postcard.

The tower's relative accessibility means that a wide variety of people from all backgrounds and of all ages can appreciate the part that Eastbourne as a whole played in coastal defence over 200 years ago.

Its elevated position at a prominent place on the seafront of a popular holiday resort (5m+ visitors per year) makes it accessible to a large number of people. Many of these potential visitors would not otherwise have been exposed to sites of this kind.

The Wish Tower Friends' experience is that being able to visit The Tower brings to life elements of the history, not only of the town, but of the nation.

The Tower is in public hands and in the public realm whereas very many of the other standing towers are on private land or are otherwise inaccessible. It is relatively unmodified from its original presentation and despite lack of recent maintenance, it is safe to enter which means it may be visited and understood by members of the public without recourse to onerous health and safety precautions.

Along with the Redoubt and two the remaining towers at Sovereign harbour (in private hands and inaccessible to the public) it represents some of the few remaining buildings from the pre-Victorian era in the vicinity of the coast near Eastbourne. This makes it important to our understanding of that time and how the town subsequently evolved.

Whilst The Tower has not always been fully supported by the town (there were many requests to have The Tower demolished prior to its rescue and scheduling) these days it is clearly a much-loved town icon. The evidence for this was clear in the Wish Tower Friends' Discovery Days findings where people came to find out more about The Tower and its history and we were swamped with requests to make our timeline information more widely available.

Whilst not 100% connected, the controversy that raged (and, to some extent still rages) over the matter of the Wish Tower Café is evidence that residents of Eastbourne have great affection for the Wish Tower area and it is important to take this into account with future plans.

### 4.3 Historical Perspective & Rarity

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries the coast from Eastbourne eastwards along Pevensey Bay was heavily defended against potential invasion from continental Europe. There was a significant military presence including the Redoubt Fortress and associated barracks, two further smaller fortresses at Langney Point and a chain of 35 Martello towers stretching all the way along the coast to Hastings.

Within the town, all that remains of these are two endangered Martello towers at Sovereign Harbour, the Wish Tower and the Redoubt Fortress. Only these latter two survive in reasonable condition and open to the public so they play an important role in the understanding of the military history of the area from a time before it grew into a fashionable seaside resort.



From top: view of The Tower from Wilmington Gardens; visitors enjoying the roof; newspaper article concerning the Wish Tower Café; Wish Tower Café; interior view illustrating construction elements.

The Wish Tower, together with the Redoubt Fortress, being the only surviving fortifications from this period directly in Eastbourne, provide a significant understanding of the design of coastal fortifications at this period.

The presence of Georgian features in an otherwise mostly Victorian landscape helps to remind visitors and residents alike that Eastbourne did not begin at the arrival of the railway. It has to be said that Wish Tower is not unique in being a surviving example of a Martello tower: there are 26 towers on the South Coast and 10 of these lie within East Sussex.

Nevertheless, since the listing and scheduling of the site more Martello Towers have been redeveloped and so each unspoiled tower could be said to be of increasing significance in the story of the towers as a whole.

#### 4.4 Features of Historical Significance

Alan Dickinson's full report into the Wish Tower's significance is included in full in the appendices of this report but a summary of the main findings of the significance of individual features follows.

##### Original and unmodified features

There are many individual features within The Tower which are original and in relatively good condition. These features are documented in full in Alan Dickinson's report but a selection of the more evocative features are detailed below:

Front door – a substantial, cross-boarded door with strap and pintle hinges gives every appearance of being original, albeit with a number of fairly aggressive 20th century intrusions and clumsy repairs.

Above the door are the holes, pulleys and rollers which operated ropes or chains for the drawbridge.

Sub-basement cistern - this is in good condition and clearly shows the construction and appears to have more waterproof mortar to better hold water in the area. It is also relatively simple to gain safe access to the cistern to appreciate the construction. It is considered to be of high significance.

Doorway to the magazine - whilst very damaged by wood rot to the original timbers, it is clad with the original anti-sparking copper sheet and nails. This aids the interpretation of the space not only with regards to construction but engineering and science backgrounds.

Gun platform level features - many of the original features speak to the use of the traversing gun and offer the viewer an easy insight into the intended use of The Tower.

##### Modified features of Significance

It should be said that many of the features and their contexts have been changed or damaged in the course of the change of use over The Tower's history. Some of these tell a story in their own right and so do not, of themselves, diminish the interest or significance of The Tower and its features but speak to the colourful history of the site.



From top: Tower 25 in Dymchurch (not open to the public); interior arched roof (unmodified); copper cladding to the frame of the doorway of the magazine/powder room (unmodified)

Those modifications are:

The enlarging of the north-eastern window aperture by, we believe, the Hollobon family in 1919 by way of improvement of their geological museum and lapidary business. Indeed, this enlargement has revealed, quite neatly, the construction method of the walls.

The creation of a moat-level intake room to the basement – this presumably occurred in the time of The Tower’s use as a battery during WWII.

Enlargement of the window between the magazine and the basement storage area. Although the date is unknown, it seems most likely this was as a result of a change in usage – probably during The Tower’s use as a WWII battery.

### Modifications of interest

The remaining gross changes in the whole of the site are as a result of the 1959/60 work which nearly led to the loss of The Tower in its entirety. However, some positives can be gleaned from this apparent vandalism:

The removal of The Glacis and The Moat Wall to the west of The Tower reveals a contextual view of The Tower in its setting to much of its full height. This is a view that simply couldn’t be appreciated in quite the same way from within The Moat itself were it still fully enclosed.

The revealing of the seaward face of The Glacis demonstrates the internal structure of the wall with its alternating brick and greensand courses. It also engages the viewer in the construction process itself by illustrating the use of very local materials, and the engineering process of resisting a spoil heap with outward batter to the wall and its vertical brick piers.

The Moat Wall itself, notwithstanding the missing parts, is a rarity since only approximately 6 other remaining south coast towers appear to be in a moat setting and none of the others appear to be either as accessible or in as good condition.

The replacement of the suspended floor with a close replica but leaving one-quarter un-floored allows an unparalleled view of the architecture of The Tower’s construction in this double-height space whilst keeping the remainder much as the original space would have felt to the occupants.



From top: enlarged powder room window in basement; revealed Moat Wall construction on the seaward side; Moat Wall showing courses of brick and greensand on the seaward side; suspended floor structure



## Detrimental modifications

Other changes are not so sympathetic and their reversal would improve the significance, or at least the current aesthetics of The Tower:

The moat infill – filling in The Moat to a depth of approximately 1.5m has reduced the significance of The Moat itself and also of The Tower itself by denying the opportunity to appreciate its full height.

The removal of the drawbridge was considered necessary given its poor condition and its reduced height above the newly-raised ground level. However, this removed some visual clues as to the usage of The Tower and its original design features, thereby reducing the significance of the site

The replacement of stucco render with cementitious render is most definitely to the detriment of The Tower an historical context but also from the very present problem that it is exacerbating the damp in The Tower which is causing slow but inexorable decay to the reproduction floor.

Similarly, the use of cementitious mortars when repairing The Moat Wall has caused additional damage by spalling.



From top: current condition of cementitious render to exterior of the Wish Tower; spalling of bricks in The Moat Wall due to pointing repairs with inappropriate mortar.

# Section 5

## Issues & Vulnerability

The entire Wider Site is owned by the Cavendish Estate but leased to Eastbourne Borough Council on a long lease with many years left to run. This lease confers an obligation to maintain The Tower, and this is coupled with obligations on the Council conferred by The Tower's status of a Scheduled Monument and as a Grade II listed building.

Nevertheless, the current challenges in the economic climate including extensive cuts in funding to local authorities means that those obligations are extremely hard to honour, especially as The Tower is only one of many important buildings for which the council has such obligations.

The impending development on both the Devonshire Park site and the current cafe site obviously will open the condition and use of The Tower to further scrutiny since it will be such a noticeable feature in the plans.

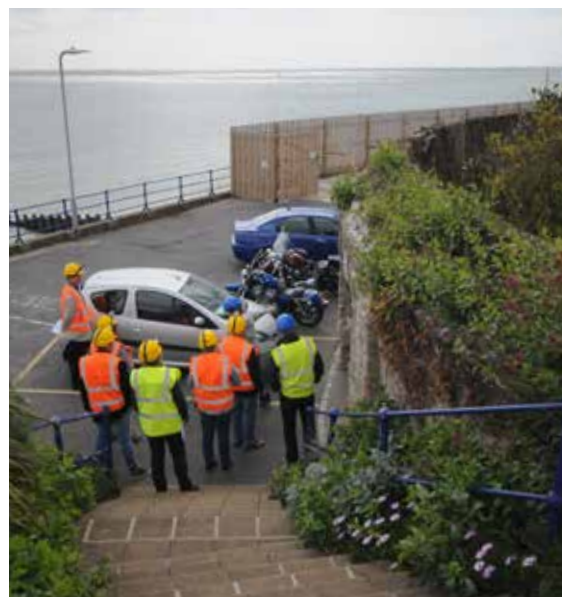
The Wish Tower Friends were granted an initial two year lease as something of an experiment for both lessor and lessee and not without, it has to be said, some initial resistance to the idea by council officers. It has tested the appetite for visitors to the building and the logistics for a volunteer-led organization to manage The Tower from a position of little or no experience in the field.

Relatively simple issues take on a more complex air when considering the scheduled status of the building. Nevertheless, the experience gained over the last two years would probably be described as positive by everyone involved.

The Wish Tower Friends have recently agreed to renew the lease with the same terms as before: the lease is for The Tower alone and not any part of The Moat, Moat Wall or Glacis whilst the council retain exclusive use for the Eastbourne Airbourne event in August each year.

Currently, there is a requirement that public tours the Friends carry out must be free, but with encouragement to donate to the group's fund. Other events may attract a charge, and any tours which are specially arranged for an exclusive group may be charged for, at the discretion of the Friend making the arrangements. This does allow the Friends to cover the costs associated with tours etc, but is never likely to extend to major renovations or repairs.

The responsibility, here, would lie with the Council who could apply for financing in a way that the Friends could not.



From top: The tower in its moat setting; visitors discussing construction of the interior of The Moat Wall; visitors enjoying Airbourne on the Slopes.

# Section 6

## Conservation

### 6.1 Current condition – major problems

The structural engineer's report on The Tower and The Moat Wall can be found in the appendices and should be read in full to understand the extent and context of the suggested repairs.

The report suggests that some aspects of the structure and its condition would benefit from further investigation. Nevertheless, the findings are clear that the major problems are water ingress to The Tower through damaged and poorly maintained roof fabric, and use of inappropriate materials in previous repairs to both tower and Moat Wall fabric.

There is no suggestion that any major structural defects exist in either tower or Moat Wall but the slow degradation will obviously continue if not arrested and this will likely push up remediation costs as the extent of repairs increases over time.

It is important to appreciate that the indicative cost of repairs have been supplied, as requested, on an approximate basis to allow an overall approach to repairs to be developed. In considering more detailed plans, more accurate cost estimates must be sought.

The problem most likely to impact current and any planned future uses of The Tower is the degradation of the wooden floor which is starting to show signs of wet rot due to the continued contact with water. We estimate that something approaching 6 – 9 litres of water a week is being caught in buckets during the winter months.

We removed the accumulated material from The Tower's period of use as a storage facility and this has greatly improved the overall ventilation situation. We also catch a lot of the incoming water with buckets but this is insufficient to completely prevent the floor from regularly coming into contact with water. There are patches of wet rot forming on the floorboards and it's important that this doesn't spread to the structural joists, which are currently in safe condition. It appears that the rate of water ingress is starting to increase, presumably as the asphalt roof covering continues to degrade.

Clearly, the most important work which would allow continued and, hopefully much increased, use of The Tower is to arrest the ingress of water as a matter of some urgency.



From top: Gun platform showing damaged asphalt; detail of cracked asphalt and failing mortar joint; buckets catching the resulting water ingress.

The cementitious render to the exterior of The Tower is not only an inappropriate material but is now in poor and rapidly degrading condition. Large patches of the top coat of the render break off on a regular basis which aggravates the dampness inside and is the most obvious manifestation of The Tower not being cared for. The relatively secluded nature of The Moat setting means that, especially at night, The Tower does become a target for minor acts of antisocial behaviour which we could hope would decrease if The Tower were repaired and properly maintained. The “broken window effect” of deterring vandalism by keeping the outside of buildings maintained is well documented.

The Moat Wall is extremely important in terms of significance and proper understanding of the site and this shouldn't be underestimated simply because the wall will not fall down in the absence of immediate action. However, the inappropriate pointing and repair material will lead to further damage to the brick and stonework and the cost of those repairs will only increase with time. The more immediate source of damage is likely to be the extensive ingrowth of vegetation, especially buddleia bushes. As the existing bushes get larger they are likely to cause major and quite sudden breakdown of the masonry joints they are currently infiltrating.

## 6.2 Current Condition – Minor Problems

In addition to the major problems in The Tower, the presence of the puppet museum introduced another set of inappropriate materials – such as paints which exacerbate the damp caused by the major issues.

Intrusions of inappropriate fixings, electrical wiring, sockets and lights are now an eyesore and, even if power were restored to The Tower, would need complete removal and replacement.

The two modern spiral staircases have been damaged by long exposure to damp and although one is in usable condition the presence of brightly-coloured paint (of unknown type) is detrimental to the appearance of The Tower and feels very distracting.



From top: detail of delaminating cementitious render; plant ingrowth to The Moat Wall; garish paint finishes; original copper clad door frame

## 6.3 Interpretation

One very important part of any heritage building is the ability for visitors to understand the building, its context and importance. This allows people not only to engage with that particular building but with the wider heritage perspectives to which it relates.

This is particularly important for buildings like the Wish Tower which has a distinctive but fairly blank shape. There is currently no formal signage on or around the Wish Tower other than temporary notices on the gate at the bottom of the access stairs indicating what The Tower or the Wider Site represents.

Since putting it on Trip Advisor to raise awareness of The Wish Tower to visitors the main theme of any negative comments is that, when The Tower isn't open to visitors, there's nothing around to give any indication of what it is.

Once the new café/restaurant building is in place, and aims to draw even more people to the site, the lack of explanation of the context the restaurant is placed in will become even more obvious.

## 6.4 Policy

There needs to be an agreed policy in place as a framework for current and future repairs and modifications.

The view of the Wish Tower Friends is that, ideally, The Tower would be best used for tours and events. The rationale, here, is that the Wish Tower may be the only tower where access is easily gained and the structure of the building itself is largely easy to see and understand, not normally being obscured by exhibits or other structures.

We believe, therefore, that the policy framework should aim to allow only those repairs and modifications that enhance the significance of the building and/or supports the use of The Tower as a tour and events space.

In any event, there is an overriding requirement that any work which impacts physically on The Tower must be approved by Historic England via conservation consent and any work on the wider site (viz, the planned café replacement) will also have to seek appropriate approvals from local planning authorities, from Cavendish Estates and from Historic England.



From top: Tours are probably the best form of interpretation but signage is helpful when The Tower is closed; front door showing many alterations; assessing the condition of the drawbridge pulley.

# Section 7

## Policy

### 7.1 Introduction

Guidelines for implementing Conservation Policies suggest that they should be formulated with the following aims, and these are as appropriate for the Wish Tower as any other:

- To retain or reveal significance
- To identify feasible and compatible uses
- To meet statutory requirements
- To work within procurable resources
- To anticipate opportunities and threats

### 7.2 Consents

There is an overriding requirement that any work which impacts physically on The Tower must be approved by Historic England via conservation consent and any work on the Wider Site (viz, the planned café replacement) will also have to seek appropriate approvals from local planning authorities, from Cavendish Estates and from Historic England.

### 7.3 Types of Modification

Any alterations, repairs or modifications to The Tower and its surrounds must necessarily fall into the following categories:

- a) Work necessary to help enhance the physical long term survivability of The Tower in the form of maintenance or repair.
- b) Modifications or repair intended to enhance or reveal the significance of The Tower as set out in Section 4
- c) Modifications considered necessary as part of any strategy to secure the long term future of The Tower by enabling alternative uses.
- d) Work on or around The Wider Site which may impact on the cultural or historical significance of both The Tower and the Wider site.

Work falling into category d) above need not necessarily have a negative impact on the significance of the site but, where carefully considered and planned, may indeed enhance it.



From top: ceiling block and tackle (reproduction but of appropriate style); damaged Moat Wall brick around archway to sea front.

## 7.4 Policy Framework

When reviewing proposed current and future repairs and modifications it would be helpful for the Council and the Friends to have a policy in place which will allow any proposed work to be assessed before approval from regulatory bodies is sought. The purpose would not be to rigidly define future developments, but to evaluate how a proposal is likely to be viewed in the context of section 7.1 of this CMP. It is suggested that the policy should embrace the following guidelines:

1. Where a modification reflects the original design and use of the structure, is affordable and falls into any of the categories a), b) or c) above. It is likely to be considered positively.
2. Where an essential modification falls into category a), above but does not reflect the original design and use of the structure then it would be advisable to justify it by first considering whether a more sympathetic scheme is affordable.
3. Any proposed work falling into categories b), c) or d) above but having a negative impact on the long term survivability of The Tower is likely to be strongly opposed by the regulatory authorities.
4. Any proposed modification falling into categories b), c) or d) but having conflicting impacts within these categories should be carefully considered and justified before approval is sought. A careful examination of alternative strategies should be carried out and documented as part of this process.



From top: Section through Moat Wall where it was removed which illustrates construction; steel insertion in basement to support spiral staircase; sump of unknown purpose in basement, and intrusion of C20 electrical wiring.

# Section 8

## The Future

### 8.1 Introduction

The two main issues presenting themselves when considering the present and future of The Tower are:

- 1) Implementation of the urgent repairs required to halt the slow deterioration of The Tower (and The Moat Wall).

The tower is not in immediate danger of being lost completely: these structures were built to be solid and will last accordingly. However it won't be long before the deterioration will result in The Tower becoming, once again, an unusable, ugly and unloved eyesore.

The tower's inevitable association with any proposed development of the site (by proximity if nothing else) will mean that development suffering accordingly.

- 2) Securing the long term future of The Tower physically, and financially.

This is no mean feat since The Tower itself is very unlikely to be financially self-sustaining as a standalone attraction in the short term relying, as it does, on purely volunteer effort to arrange tours and other events.

Even once the current physical damage to The Tower is remedied there will, as with all buildings, be an ongoing maintenance burden to ensure that slow degradation doesn't simply begin again.

In all practicality, without some enthusiasm in the council to make the most of The Tower it will be extremely difficult to achieve either of these aims.

It seems that the most like means to success is an alliance of the council and the Wish Tower Friends with agreed roles for each party and a willingness to consider wider possibilities for The Tower's use in future.



From top: water damage to brick roof arch and C20 intrusion from puppet museum; tower as visitor attraction with rudimentary temporary signage.



## 8.2 Urgent Repairs

The urgent repairs fall into two broad categories: those that will allow The Tower to be used more effectively and those that will fulfil the council's obligations to the maintenance of the monumental status of the site.

We have asked our structural engineer for approximate costs for the various pieces of work needed, and these estimates are purely indicative to allow for a funding-raising strategy to be developed. They should not, at this stage, be seen as a scheme of work nor be a total cost solution as they only represent the cost of physical remediation based on other jobs on similar buildings.

It should also be noted that The Tower was probably never designed to be completely 'dry' in the modern sense. In buildings of this era it was accepted that some water would likely be present in the fabric of the building but appropriate "breathing" materials (such as lime-based mortars and paints) together with good ventilation would allow good evaporation and not make the atmosphere inside unduly damp-feeling. That said, interiors of this nature would be wholly unsuited to uses such as a museum where hygroscopically sensitive materials, like paper or cloth artefacts, were to be stored and displayed.

Whilst repairs are being carried out, the process should be documented photographically especially where usually hidden features are revealed during repair.

## 8.3 Cost of Work required to make the Tower broadly weatherproof and therefore more readily usable.

Replacement of current cementitious render with lime render of appropriate formulation	£105,000
Replacement of asphalt roof covering with new asphalt covering with improved upstand and detailing	£25,000
Inner wall surfaces remove paint and repair damaged bricks and pointing	£12,000
Remove render on parapet coping, repair stone and reinstate chimneys for ventilation	£11,000
Repair damaged bricks and pointing on parapet wall	£7,000
Repair internal damaged brickwork	£5,000
<b>Approximate total cost of this block of repairs</b>	<b>£165,000</b>



From top: Cracks to the coping of the parapet wall; brick damage and greenery infiltrating brickwork; stalactites from water ingress; damp to fireplace.

## 8.4 Additional high priority work to secure longer term condition and improve The Tower's & Glacis' significance

Remove plant ingrowth, repoint with appropriate materials, cut out and replace eroded bricks using appropriate materials, reform cobbled wall capping	£52,000
Assess ventilation shafts, drainage pipes and flue with CCTV survey	£1,000
Repair door frame to magazine, reuse existing copper cladding	£1,200
<b>Approximate total cost of this block of repairs</b>	<b>£54,200</b>



## 8.5 Other repairs

The major defects are not the only issues with The Tower, though obviously are of most urgent concern. There are other considerations which need to be included in a complete assessment of the current condition of the site.

The 1970 spiral staircases are clearly a pragmatic solution to allowing safe passage between the accommodation and basement levels at the time. They do nothing, however, to assist accessibility: spiral staircases being notoriously difficult to negotiation for anyone with mobility issues. One solution would be to restore a step ladder from the hatch but, whilst this might improve the significance of the layout, it would be to the further detriment of accessibility. A preferable alternative would be, in the fullness of time, to replace the two existing stairs with a single, wider, less tightly wound staircase following the line of the wall.

The current intrusions of the electrical system, 20th century paints and remaining fixtures from the puppet museum bring nothing to understanding of The Tower and only serve to distract the eye and exacerbate the problems of damp. These should simply be removed, taking due care not to cause further damage.



From top: extensive greenery infiltrating Moat Wall; ventilation shaft suspected to be blocked; rotten door surround in magazine/powder room; damp damage to spiral staircase (disused).

## 8.6 Lower priority repairs to improve security, significance and usage of The Tower

Replace internal spiral stairs with something more appropriate	£3,000
Investigate and reform magazine wooden floor	£2,100
Window joinery and repairs to front door	£1,100
Cut out and repair damaged bricks to basement store floor	£750
<b>Approximate total cost of this block of repairs</b>	<b>£6,950</b>



## 8.7 Additional Work

Finally there are a number of small jobs that will need to be priced and considered in order to make the job complete: removing 20th century intrusions, repair or replacement of number tablet over the front door, improved weatherproofing of the roof hatch. We have not yet estimated the costs of these but it seems likely that, subject to the required approvals, this might be something the Wish Tower Friends could commission in small pieces.

## 8.8 Possibility for future enhancement

The lack of the drawbridge does not cause structural issues with The Tower as it stands, however, replacing some form of walkway between The Moat Wall and the door would restore, to some extent, the context but also allow for a certain amount of access for people with mobility difficulties for whom the current steps are a barrier.

The current moat level, being as it is some 1.5 or so metres infilled from the original level, reduces the significance of The Moat setting. Re-lowering the level would increase the significance of the site but this would come at high cost and may be difficult to manage with the other levels and features at moat level. We should give consideration, though, to a scheme whereby a small portion of the original moat level is revealed to aid the understanding of the site.



From top: magazine/powder room floor showing original joist position; hatchway to roof which requires additional weatherproofing; brightly painted spiral staircases and C20th electrical intrusions.

## 8.9 Developing the Use of the Tower

The Martello Towers which remain standing fall into two camps – those which have been repurposed and those that lie empty and, frequently, derelict.

Repurposing buildings has, to some extent, been to the detriment of the significance of them since many have adapted the structure of the building, added gun platform level lanterns, etc. Naturally, those which are decaying (and many of The Towers are on the Heritage at Risk Register) are suffering reduction in significance as they slip into dereliction.

Even those buildings which maintain broadly the original structure, such as The Tower at Jaywick and Tower 24 at Dymchurch by necessity cover up some of the structure of the building in order to fulfil the new purpose.

Thus there is a superb opportunity to exploit the largely unspoiled nature of the Wish Tower and retain it as an exemplar of the style and methods of construction of the time.

At present, the principal of the use of the building, is for visitors to see the inside of a Martello Tower, hear its story and to enjoy the view from the top. The repairs required to ensure the long term future of The Tower, also afford the opportunity to extend and expand the use.

With the site's position at the juncture of the seafront and the Devonshire Park ('cultural quarter') development, adjacent to the proposed Wish Tower Cafe site development, it would seem that there exists the opportunity to embrace The Tower's location.

Visitors to The Tower could appreciate it, not just in a historical context via casual visits; guided tours or even historical recreations; but also through any cultural events or entertainment to which The Tower and the spaces around it may be suited. Events are regularly staged on the Wish Tower slopes and the Western Lawns but only rarely is The Tower itself incorporated in these at present. The proximity of the Towner art gallery; the Birley Centre and two theatres suggests there may be potential for The Tower to be used as an occasional 'quirky' arts venue or performance space. Our pilot events to date have also help demonstrate the practicality of this.

## 8.10 Expanding Interpretation

One of the Heritage Lottery desired outcomes for projects they fund is to ensure that heritage assets are better interpreted. As part of the wider work on the site consideration must be given to proper and engaging interpretation of the whole of the Wish Tower Slopes but in the short term, this project will fund some interim interpretation panels to be mounted on the stairs. These are expected to have a life of about three years to allow a wider interpretation strategy to be developed and delivered.



From top: view from top of The Tower towards Beachy Head; view from tower towards the Pier; view to the Wish Tower from planned public realm improvements near Devonshire Park; visitors enjoying a tour with a Wish Tower Friends tour-guide.

# Section 9

## Next Steps

### 9.1 This Report

The aim of this report is not to dictate future developments at the Wish Tower but to inform the decision making process which must necessarily be undertaken when those developments are proposed.

It has been agreed by the Wish Tower Friends and Eastbourne Borough Council that the contents are a fair representation of the current situation and sets out a suitable framework around which the future of the tower can be planned.

An important role of this document is to attempt to help anyone involved in planning the future of the tower to understand how any proposed developments are likely to be viewed by Historic England which is the final arbiter in such matters.

It is also hoped that this report can be used to further engage other interested parties such as any developer of the wider site, as well as the general public so that they have a deeper understanding of the significance of the building and its location

### 9.2 Strategy

A strategy for the future of the tower, agreed between Eastbourne Borough Council and the Wish Tower friends, is suggested to have the following aims:

- To strive to make the most of The Tower's status as a familiar landmark in the town in presenting it to the public, making the best use of it and securing its future.
- As the long leaseholder for the site, only the Council is permitted to apply for funding to allow capital works to be undertaken. However, the Wish Tower Friends agree to assist with any such applications as well as to undertake fund-raising events of their own with the following aims:
- To allow major repairs to be carried out thus halting the slow decline in The Tower's condition.
- To implement a regime of regular inspection, maintenance and repair to reduce the future likelihood of expensive emergency repairs especially where this has the effect of reducing costs in the long term.
- In particular the Wish Tower Friends undertake to enhance the appreciation of the historical and cultural significance of The Tower for visitors by:
  - Conserving those elements of The Tower considered to be of historical significance.
  - Removal of 'intrusive elements' from The Tower which do not contribute to the above.
  - Otherwise maintain The Tower in a state which is clean, dry and free of unnecessary clutter.
- With the assistance of the Council, the Friends would like the Tower to contribute to the cultural development within the town by becoming a significant part of the development of the Wider Site as well as the Devonshire Park redevelopment and any future plans for the seafront.

The view of the Wish Tower Friends is that, ideally, The Tower would be best used for tours and events. The rationale, here, is that the Wish Tower may be the only tower where access is easily gained and the structure of the building itself is largely easy to see and understand, not normally being obscured by exhibits or other structures.

In the short term, The Wish Tower Friends will continue to fulfil its obligations under the terms of the lease by offering tours of The Tower and staging occasional events. It will also undertake to keep The Tower clean and (as far as currently possible) dry in line with the strategy above.

In addition, further small-scale fundraising will allow the Friends to organise and pay for minor repairs and modifications in line with any agreed policy and subject to the usual approvals. In line with the above strategy, this may include the removal of 'intrusive elements': any 20th century additions that do not add to the historical significance of the space or contribute to any of its current uses.

## Section 10

# Reference Sources, Bibliography & Further Reading

The following is a list of sources of information used in the preparation of this report by the Wish Tower Friends, Roger Bunney and Alan Dickinson.

### Books

- 'Martello Towers' by Sheila Sutcliffe (ISBN 978-0715356074)
- 'Martello Towers' by Michael Foley (ISBN 978-1445615226)
- 'Martello Towers Worldwide' by Bill Clements (ISBN 978-1848845350)

### Pamphlets & Leaflets

- 'Eastbourne's East End' by John Hollands & Peter Stoner (publication date unknown)
- Editions of 'Eastbourne Local Historian' by The Eastbourne Local History Society
- 'Some Eastbourne Folk of Bygone Days' by A Gautry (1978)
- 'The Wish Tower Eastbourne, History and Guide' by D E Hughes PhD (1986)
- 'Local Martello Towers' by H D Spears (1974)
- 'Tower 73' - Eastbourne Borough Council Museum Guide (after 1970)

### Other Sources

- Website: Geograph - [www.geograph.org.uk](http://www.geograph.org.uk)
- Website: Historic England (formerly English Heritage) - [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing)
- National Archive, Kew
- Hansard
- Peter Hibbs (@sussexPillbox)

If we have unintentionally failed to acknowledge anyone's research or pictures in this document, please let us know and accept our apologies

# Section I I

## Appendices

### Appendix A

Structural engineering report, in full - Roger Bunney

### Appendix B

Historic building report, in full - Alan Dickinson

### Appendix C

Output notes and photographs from Wish Tower Friends "Discovery Days"

# REPORT

Upon The Structural Condition of

The Wish Tower  
King Edward's Parade  
Eastbourne  
BN21 4EE



E.A.R.  
**Sheppard**  
CONSULTING CIVIL AND  
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS



# REPORT

**UPON STRUCTURAL CONDITION OF:**

The Wish Tower  
King Edward's Parade  
Eastbourne  
BN21 4EE

**FOR:**

The Wish Tower Friends

## E.A.R.SHEPPARD

Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers  
5 Chiswick Place  
EASTBOURNE  
BN21 4NH

Tel: 01323 410478

Email: [rjb@earsheppard.co.uk](mailto:rjb@earsheppard.co.uk)

REF: E9046/RJB

DATE: December 2015

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*ACCOMMODATION LEVEL*

*GUN PLATFORM (ROOF)*

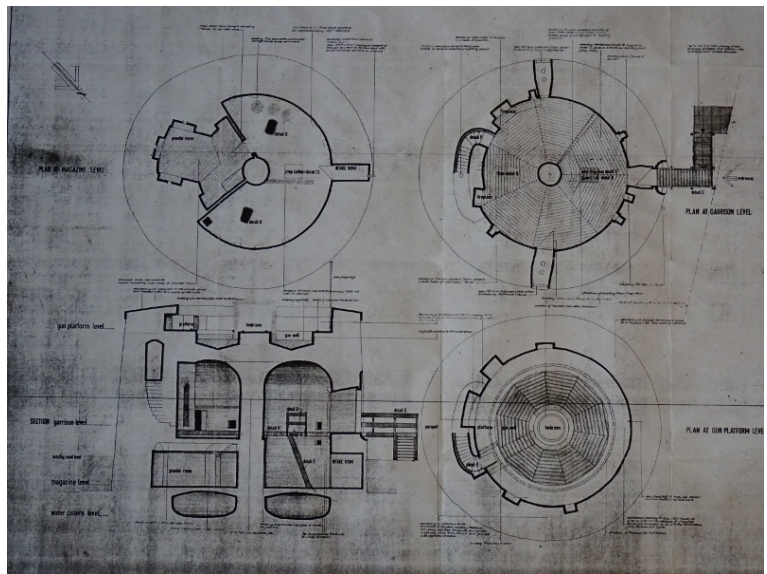
## 1.00 BRIEF

1.01 Instructions were received from Liz Crew of Extraverte Community Projects CIC, acting on behalf of The Wish Tower Friends, to inspect and report upon the structural condition of the Tower. It is intended for the report to contribute towards a Conservation Plan, produced by Extraverte, as a first stage towards implementing essential repairs to secure the long-term future of the Tower.

1.02 This report has been prepared by Roger Bunney IEng AMIStruct E, a Structural Engineer specialising in the analysis and repair of historic structures and a Director of EAR Sheppard, an independent practice of Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers.

## 2.00 INTRODUCTION

2.01 In producing this report, the writer has worked closely With Alan Dickinson, a Chartered Building Surveyor and Historic Buildings Consultant, who has produced a separate archaeological assessment of the Tower, to include its development history and assessment of its significance



*Eastbourne Borough Architect's Drawing*

as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The archaeological assessment provides a detailed description of the Tower and, as such, is not reproduced here. However, a copy of Eastbourne Borough Architect's drawing relating to some repair and alteration works, dated July 1969, kindly provided by the Compton Estate Office, is included herewith as a layout reference.

2.02 All of the photographs inserted within the text of this report are provided separately as digital images.

2.03 This condition survey should be read in conjunction with Alan Dickinson's assessment and for ease of reference, the headings set out in section 3.0 of that assessment have been adopted within the Findings section of this report.

- 2.04 The subject of this report comprises the primary structure of the Tower itself and its perimeter (Glacis) wall.
- 2.05 The survey was confined to the visible areas of structure only. No intrusive investigations were carried out to gain access to woodwork or other parts of the structures, which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible. It is therefore not possible to report that any such parts are free from defect.

### 3.00 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Sutcliffe, Sheila 1972: '*Martello Towers*' David & Charles - Newton Abbot ISBN 07153 5607 0
- Clements, Bill 2011: '*Martello Towers Worldwide*' Pen & Sword Books Ltd ISBN 978 1 84884 535 0

### 4.00 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Grateful thanks to the following for their cooperation, and provision of documents to assist with the survey of the Tower:

- Liz Crew of Extroverte Community Projects CIC
- The Wish Tower Friends and in particular Peter Hibbs for sharing his expertise and research material.
- The Compton Estate Office

## 5.00 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The inspection of this building and its perimeter structure did not reveal evidence of structural failures to give immediate cause for concern with regard to overall, or local stability.
- There has been no significant maintenance undertaken to the Tower for a good number of years and by far the most serious issue affecting the structure is water ingress, resulting in salt and frost erosion, together with general dampness.
- Deterioration of some of the weathering surfaces has been hastened by the use of incompatible cementitious material in previous repairs that has 'blown' from underlying construction, thereby trapping moisture and exacerbating erosion of stone and bricks in contact with it.
- Any scheme of repair should be concentrated on addressing the problems of damp ingress into the Tower itself through the defective roof covering and external render, along with the extensive damage to the Glacis retaining wall.
- This report provides an appended spreadsheet schedule of the most significant repairs, along with suggested priorities and very approximate indications of the likely costs for dealing with the various elements.

## 6.00 FINDINGS

### ***THE GLACIS AND GLACIS RETAINING WALL***

6.01 The south side of the perimeter glacis, or mound, forming a protective surround to the Tower has been removed, exposing the back of the retaining wall that was once supporting it. It is noted from Alan Dickinson's report that this was carried out in 1959. Given that the material forming the glacis is effectively excavated earth, it is anticipated that sulphates will have leached from the earth into the wall.



*South (external) face of southern glacis wall*

6.02 The retaining wall is constructed largely of yellow London stock clay bricks, laid to Flemish bond on the inside and, interestingly, laid to English bond on the outside. The outer face of the wall is interspersed with courses of Greensand, with intermittent piers. The piers are effectively vertical, whilst the wall itself has an outward batter to give enhanced resistance to lateral pressure from the soil behind. The wall is approximately 1100mm thick and where the south western end has been removed adjacent to the Wish Tower restaurant, it can be seen that the wall is of solidly laid bricks for its full thickness, rather than having loose rubble fill. It is therefore of substantial construction.



*North (internal) face of southern glacis wall showing brickwork erosion*



*South (internal) face of northern glacis wall showing brickwork erosion*

6.03 There is currently no concern with the overall structural stability of the retaining wall but its brickwork is suffering as a result of long-term erosion, particularly on its inside face, due to salts being washed through the wall and frost action, which has been hastened by the past use of cement based mortar pointing. This is far too hard for the relatively soft bricks that were originally laid in a lime mortar. There is further discussion on lime mortars/renders in relation to the external wall of the Tower but essentially, the use of hard cementitious mortar will prevent moisture from evaporating through the brickwork joints, trapping it within the bricks themselves, which will remain constantly damp and more susceptible to frost and salt erosion. The bricks were originally laid in lime mortar, which largely remains intact behind the cementitious pointing.



*Cobbled capping to glacis wall*

6.04 There is a full brick on edge coping on top of the inside face of the wall and behind that, the top of the wall batters downwards, where it was originally below ground level. The now exposed outside top edge of the wall has been capped with cobbles from the beach. The capping is in a poor condition, being badly cracked with much vegetation growing into it. Water soaking into the top of the wall will be adding to its deterioration.



*Exposed section through glacis wall showing solid bonding*



*Previously repaired section of glacis wall at south-west end*

- 6.05 There is a section of the glacis wall at its south-west end that has been repaired in the relatively recent past. The workmanship to this repair is quite good but unfortunately it appears that cement mortar has been used instead of lime.
- 6.06 Although there has been some erosion of brickwork and Greensand on the now exposed south face of the glacis wall, the lime mortared joints are generally intact and this face of the wall has fared much better. Local repairs will be required but these will be nowhere near as substantial to those on the inner face of the wall.
- 6.07 A basic brick arched opening has been provided through the south glacis wall, with the bricks set in cement mortar.

#### ***THE DRY MOAT***

- 6.08 It is noted that the current ground level of the dry moat is substantially higher than the original, possibly by as much as 1.8 m, according to the Borough Council 1969 drawing. It is not known whether raising of the moat level included the provision of any waterproofing or drainage works but notwithstanding this, there was no evidence to suggest that this has had any particularly detrimental effect on the Tower.

#### ***TOWER EXTERNAL WALL***

- 6.09 In common with other South Coast Martellos, the Wish Tower is slightly ovoid or elliptical on plan. This condition survey did not include for provision of a measured survey. However assuming the Borough Council's 1969 drawing to be reasonably accurate, the east-west axis at ground level is approximately 12.7m, with the north-south axis being some 13.7m. The walls are of solid brickwork, of the order of 3.5m thick on the seaward side (encompassing the staircase up to the roof) with part of the magazine also intruding into the wall. The wall on the north, east and west sides of the Tower is approximately 2.2m thick and the Tower tapers inwards towards the top by around 3.5°. The height of the Tower is roughly 8.0m from its current moat level.



6.10 A glimpse of the core of the wall can be seen at the accommodation level window opening (which was once converted to a door) on the east side where, in much the same way as the glacis wall, the core is of solid coursed rubble brickwork rather than loose material, making an immensely strong structure, commensurate with the intended use of the Tower.

6.11 The most significant defect affecting the external wall of the Tower is the very poor condition of the cementitious external render. There are numerous areas where it has 'blown' from its backing coat and others where the whole thickness has parted

company with the brickwork behind. The render is crazed and cracked over most of its surface, as a result of frost action, salt erosion and spalling. Furthermore, moisture has become trapped behind the render.

6.12 It is clear that this is not the original render and Sheila Sutcliffe, in her book *Martello Towers*, describes how the Wish Tower was saved from final demolition in 1959 when the Minister of Public Building and Works declared it an Ancient Monument. However, she also describes that by that time, demolition work had already begun and the original stucco render had been stripped from the walls.

6.13 Sheila Sutcliffe refers to the high strength of the original stucco coating and how it was tested for strength by firing cannon balls against it! She goes on to say that the bricks were laid in a hot lime mortar. She does not say this but it is considered probable that the mortar will contain beach dredged aggregate and was also used/adapted as a render.



*Condition of render from the north-west*



*Condition of render from the north-east*

6.14 There has been interest and research by Historic England, Building Limes Forum and others, over recent years into the use of hot lime mortars and renders in the repair of historic buildings such as this, where analysis is often showing that this was the material widely used in the original construction. Hot lime mortar is essentially the slaking of quicklime with aggregate (and sometimes other pozzolan additives) and using it still hot. It has been demonstrated that this process produces a mortar of superior workability, adhesion and strength versus porosity. The latter property being very important in allowing moisture to evaporate more freely from the masonry, commonly referred to as 'breathing'.



*Condition of render from the south-east*

6.15 A lot more research, testing of original mortar and experimentation would be required to establish whether a hot slaked lime approach would be appropriate for repairs to this building but it is the writer's opinion that the condition of the render has deteriorated beyond the point where patch repairs would suffice and if the whole of the external render is to be replaced, the use of hot slaked lime stucco would be well worth considering.

6.16 The perimeter wall contains various ventilation shafts, drainage pipes and flues to the two fireplaces serving the accommodation level. All of these will require CCTV surveying to confirm condition.

#### ***SUB BASEMENT CISTERN***

6.17 The cistern extends beneath the store (but not the magazine). Its brick vaulted ceiling forms the floor to the store and its reverse vaulted brick floor serves as a spread foundation to the central circular brick column. There are two access hatches through the floor into the cistern to serve the east and west sides of the store and presumably there was once a



*Western access into cistern, with trap hatch removed*

partition dividing the store, hence the need for two separate accesses into the same cistern. The hatch on the east side is in a sound condition, whereas the west hatch is decayed and will need to be replaced.



*Eastern sump into cistern,*

6.18 There are two sumps through the floor into the cistern below, that abut the perimeter walls to the magazine. The present timber covers to the sumps are of makeshift modern timber and will need to be replaced.

6.19 The brickwork forming the cistern vaulting is in a remarkably good condition, as is the brickwork forming its perimeter wall. No structural repairs are considered necessary within the cistern.



*Cistern vaulting*

6.20 Sheila Sutcliffe refers to the possibility that Martello cisterns were replenished from either nearby wells, or from drainage pipes leading from the roof. It was observed within this cistern that, notwithstanding shallow puddles of water on the floor, no significant water had collected, despite recent heavy rainfall. Only one, fairly crudely formed opening in the perimeter brickwork was noted within the cistern, that could possibly lead to drainage from the roof but further investigation will be required to establish if and how this might work and whether it would be worth restoring.



*Point of potential water discharge from roof into cistern*

6.21 There is some modern steel strutting within the cistern beneath a steel spiral staircase between the store and the accommodation level. Whether this is structurally necessary will need to be determined.



*Modern steel strutting*

## **BASEMENT STORES**

6.22 There is no evidence of a particular structural defects to the original fabric in this area. However, the two present modern steel spiral staircases, leading from the accommodation level, are in a poor condition and alternative means of access will need to be considered.

6.23 It was noted that there is a patch of surface damage to the brick floor in front of the inserted intake room. This will need repair but is considered to be generally cosmetic.

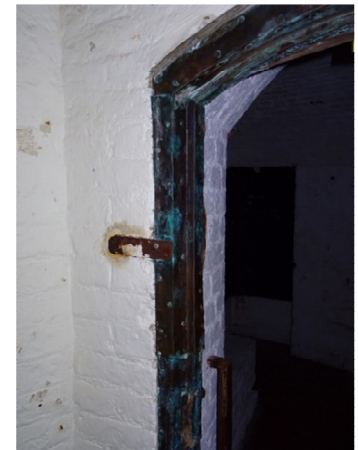


*Damaged area of brick floor,*

## **MAGAZINE**

6.24 Again, the perimeter walls to the Magazine are in a sound structural condition.

6.25 The most notable defect here is the condition of the door frame between the Magazine and the Store, which has almost completely disintegrated due to decay. The frame is clad with sheet copper, which is resistant to sparking. This feature is important in the describing the function of the building and must be retained. The timber frame, which appears to be of oak, is beyond repair and although a section of it could be retained for display, it will need to be replaced. Very careful attention will be required to ensure that its copper cladding is not damaged and will be retained on the new frame.



*Copper cladding to Magazine door frame*

6.26 The floor to the Magazine has been replaced with softwood boarding but the evidence of previous heavier joisting can be seen by pockets within the external brickwork. The softwood boarding is cupping slightly as a result of dampness and whilst it remains serviceable for the time being, consideration could be given to reinstating the floor in its original form. The condition of the sub floor construction is currently unknown and will require further investigation.



*Decayed condition of Magazine door frame*

## ACCOMMODATION LEVEL

6.27 The most striking feature in this area is the central circular brick column, rising from below and flaring out to form the vaulted support to the roof above. Structurally, there is no concern with regard to the stability of this element and generally speaking, the column, vaulting and perimeter walling is in a sound structural condition, with the exception of a few local areas of spalling brickwork where affected bricks will require replacement. This said, it is important that the masonry should not be 'over restored' and of view will need to be taken on a brick by brick basis as to the form and extent of repairs.



*Roof vaulting to accommodation level towards the east. Note stalactites*

6.28 As with the fabric elsewhere, the obvious defect affecting this level is one of water ingress, particularly through the roof vaulting.



*Roof vaulting with stalactites*

6.29 The need for weathering to the roof is discussed below but the effect of long term water ingress can be seen very clearly by the circular line of dripping stalactites from the vaulting, where water has washed free lime deposits through the brickwork over many years. Looking at the section on the 1969 Borough Council drawing, the profile of the gun well above provides a 'gutter' to hold water, which coincides with the ring of stalactites below.



*Western chimney breast*

6.30 Further effects of damp were noted on the chimney breasts to both fireplaces, along with typical tar staining produced as a product of combustion. Dampness to these areas has

probably been exacerbated by the lack of ventilation through the blocked off flues and also from hygroscopic salts, absorbing moisture from the atmosphere.

- 6.31 The joinery to both windows, which does not appear to be original will need to be repaired or replaced, along with improved weathering to prevent water ingress through the openings. It is thought that parts of the entrance door on the north side could be original ??? but the need for repair is evident.



*Present drainage system!*

- 6.32 The stone staircase rising from the accommodation level up to the roof is in a sound condition.
- 6.33 The floor to the accommodation level has been replaced in a somewhat revised manner to the original. This is identified on the 1969 Borough Council drawing and is in a sound structural condition. Furthermore, it is fit for purpose to accommodate visiting public to the building.
- 6.34 As referred to in the Store, the two spiral staircases leading down from the accommodation level are in a poor condition.
- 6.35 The modern paint that has been applied to the perimeter wall and central column throughout (including the lower level) will not be helping with the effects of damp ingress. Bubbling of the paint can be seen in areas where water vapour has been unable to evaporate. Consideration should be given to removing the paint but great care will need to be taken to avoid damage to the brickwork behind. Under no circumstances should abrasive grit blasting be undertaken and specialist advice will need to be sought in this regard.

## **GUN PLATFORM (ROOF)**

6.36 The parapet that surrounds the roof is of solid brickwork and an extension of the perimeter walls below. It has coping that appears to be of millstone grit, which has been subject to various cementitious render patching to its upper surface over the years, not least of which have been the result of covering over of the flue terminals. There is much cracking and spalling affecting the rendered areas and although it is difficult to see from the view point of the roof, it is suspected that some of the cracking will extend through the coping itself. The application of render over the stone has resulted in various changes in level and this, together with the fractures themselves have provided access for water ingress, adding to the problems referred to previously.



*Cracking to parapet render/stone*

6.37 The need for repair, including the possible piecing in of new sections of stone, is evident and consideration should be given to reinstating chimney cappings, with appropriate cowling to improve the ventilation from the fireplaces below.

6.38 The internal face of the parapet brickwork is of yellow London stocks, laid to Flemish bond and at first sight appears to have been affected by significant erosion. However, the 1969 Borough Council drawing makes reference to render being 'stripped off' from the inside face of the parapet and the likelihood is that the brickwork has been damaged during the course of render removal.



*Damaged parapet brickwork*

The drawing also refers to the brickwork being made good but this does not appear to have been carried out, or at least only partially. It is apparent that the parapet brickwork will require repair.

6.39 The inner and outer wrought iron rails that carried the cannon slide are bedded in lead, set into granite blocks, with intermittent provision for drainage beneath the rails. The rails, bedding and granite are all in a sound structural condition.

6.40 The problem at this level is with the condition of the asphalt covering within the gun well itself and around the perimeter. The asphalt contains many fractures and the condition of the drainage outlets is suspect. The upstand skirts to the asphalt are inadequate and have been supplemented with cement fillets in the past, which are also inadequate. Cracking and the growth of vegetation has added to the problems. There is no doubt that the poorly weathered roof covering has resulted in the majority of the water ingress through the brick vaulting below.



*General view of gun platform roof*

6.41 Sheila Sutcliffe describes the original roof covering as being of lead and consideration will need to be given as to whether a better detailed asphalt covering is provided, or if reinstating a new lead covering would provide a more appropriate and long-standing solution. Whichever is decided upon, it is essential that a new covering is provided. The present asphalt has deteriorated beyond the point where further patching would be feasible.



*Poor upstand skirt and cement fillet to asphalt*

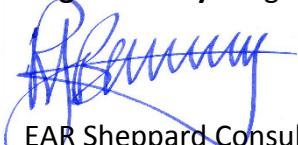


6.42 The modern wooden door at the top of the staircase, leading on to the roof provides a reasonable access but is not particularly weatherproof. During a meeting with The Wish Tower Friends, there was much discussion as to how this might be addressed to prevent water ingress onto the stairs. However, having given this further thought and also having visited during heavy rainfall, the actual amount of water entering at this point is relatively minor and it is the writer's view that a better fitting door with some simple neoprene weather seals and bar would probably improve the situation sufficiently, rather than attempting some of the more complex solutions that were discussed.



*Typical splitting to asphalt*

**Roger Bunney** IEng AMIStruct E



EAR Sheppard Consulting  
Civil & Structural Engineers Limited

**Alan Dickinson** MRICS

Chartered Building Surveyor  
Historic Buildings Consultant

1 The Grove, Rye  
East Sussex TN31 7ND  
Tel: 01797 225139  
Fax: 01797 227956  
email: [info@alandickinson.com](mailto:info@alandickinson.com)  
web: [www.alandickinson.com](http://www.alandickinson.com)

**ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**OF**

**THE WISH TOWER  
KING EDWARD'S PARADE,  
EASTBOURNE, EAST SUSSEX,  
BN21 4EE**



**Made under the instructions  
of**

**The Wish Tower Friends**



Structural Surveys • Valuations • Building Conservations • Design • Planning  
Alterations • Land Surveys • Archeological Analysis • Historical Research

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#### **5.0 Bibliography**

#### **APPENDIX - Photographs**

**BRIEF**

Instructions were received from Liz Crew from Extraverte Community Projects CIC on behalf of the Wish Tower Friends to report on the archaeological development and significance of the Tower, the report formed part of a Conservation Plan to be produced by Extraverte in conjunction with a condition report by Roger Bunney, structural engineer.

The writer is grateful to attendees at the Wish Tower study day on 17 July 2015 including Roger Hibbs who made information available from his extensive research on Martello towers.

**1.0 MARTELLO TOWER DESIGN**

The Martello Towers in England formed a chain of 103 towers along the Kent, Sussex and Suffolk coasts constructed during the Napoleonic wars as a means of protecting vulnerable coasts from invasion by the French.

The lead in the project was taken by Brigadier-General William Twiss who inspected the relevant coasts in the summer of 1804 and organised a conference to discuss the

formation of bomb proof towers described as follows

(Sutcliffe 1973 p56):

“The interior circle of the tower has a diameter of 26ft and 33ftd and the area at the top is calculated to receive one 24-pounder Gun, and two Carronades of the same calibre, wall mounted on traversing platforms, to fire over a high parapet, the crest of which is about 33ft above the foundation, the ground floor to contain a powder magazine and cistern with room for provisions, fuel and other stores, the middle floor to lodge a garrison of one officer and 24 men, having an entrance placed 10ft above the exterior ground. In this Project the centre Pillar is solid, and a stone staircase is contrived in the exterior wall which at that part is so increased in thickness as to render it everywhere equally strong.”

The design described in this succinct description was adopted in two versions. In both cases the entrance was located at the first floor level, the first type having a ladder capable of being lowered and raised to provide access to a free-standing tower, the second was surrounded by a dry moat (some with narrow water defence next to the tower)

with substantial retaining wall beyond and a glacis or slope surrounding the circular dry moat providing additional defence and deflection of ammunition. In general it has been noted that isolated or cliff top towers were provided with the additional defence while those towers which form part of the chain or line were generally of the isolated type without moat.

The towers were of very substantial brick construction, experiments being carried out by the Royal Engineers to determine the strongest material for bonding the bricks and for stucco rendering. A composition of lime, ash and hot tallow was used as the mortar to bind the bricks.

The formula adopted for the rendering was not recorded in the sources consulted but would have been a lime based (the construction of the towers being before the widespread introduction of cement in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century).

The walls were thickest on the seaside containing the stairs to the gun platform. The basement magazine was constructed with great care for strength including vaulted ceiling and to prevent dampness and fire, ventilation,

suspended floors and copper clad doors were provided. Lighting was formed in an adjoining space with glass screen between.

In addition to the Wish Tower, the writer has visited other example towers at Dymchurch, Kent which has been the subject of a restoration based on a well preserved tower 23 in the same village and at Seaford currently used as a museum.

## **2.0 SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT**

### Phase 1 (1806-1808)

The building understood to have been completed in 1808 was of a standard layout for the dry moat design type. The building was entered by a timber bridge from the landward side across the dry moat terminating in a drawbridge at the first floor entrance level. Beneath, approached by a ladder was the storage level including magazine, the storage constructed over a sub-basement vaulted cistern to provide drinking. The accommodation level contained the standard two fireplaces, two windows and access to the gun platform. The latter contained an outer track and inner

central pivot position and a parapet within which the traversing cannon was located.

#### Phase 2 (late 19<sup>th</sup> - early 20<sup>th</sup> century)

It is recorded that the building was decommissioned as a military installation in 1873 and the cannon removed from the gun platform. The building was occupied by the Coastguard Service for a few years and was run by the Hollobon family as a geological museum between 1886 and the 1930's. It was this period in 1919 that the officers' accommodation window was enlarged to form a second entrance door into the building served by a second drawbridge and steps to the moat.

#### Phase 3 (1939-1945)

At this period the building was reinstated to military use staffed by the Home Guard having two 6 inch guns mounted at the gun platform and a two storey observation post constructed at the centre above the pivot area. Subsequently a tank room was constructed in this location.



#### Phase 4 (1958-1959)

At this time major works were undertaken in the immediate surrounding of the tower to form a café and solarium adjoining the cliff. The moat was filled to approximately two metres above its original level in order to provide a public garden level with the surroundings of the café. The western part of the glacis retaining wall was removed together with the glacis beyond to provide access between the café and tower areas. Similarly at the seaward side much of the glacis was removed and a gateway formed in the outer wall to provide access from the seaward side to the dry moat landscaped garden.

#### Phase 5 (1969)

Works carried out to the tower at this time include repairs to asphalt and parapet rendering, the provision of external access steps and a new internal ladder and first floor. The tank room was removed and the building used as a museum underneath.

#### Phase 6 (1995)

At this time the building became used as a puppet museum and was redecorated internally and two spiral

stairs provided as part of access to displays within the internal space. This use ceased in 2001.

### **3.0 DETAILED ARCHEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION**

NOTE. THE DESCRIPTION WHICH FOLLOWS SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SCHEDULE OF ELEMENTS WHICH SETS OUT THE RELATIVE SIGNIFICANCE CONSIDERED TO APPLY TO VARIOUS PARTS OF THE BUILDING AND WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHS REPRODUCED AT THE APPENDIX.

#### 3.1 Glacis

The glacis consisted of a sloping mound applied to the outside of the retaining wall and formed from material excavated to form the foundation and moat. Substantial areas of the glacis have been removed and it now only exists at the landward side. The significance of the glacis is considered high where it survives.

#### 3.2 Glacis Retaining Wall

The glacis was supported by a substantial retaining wall consisting of inner faced brickwork laid in English Bond

and consisting of alternate bands of brickwork and greensand blocks on the outer side now partially exposed to view and to the weather following removal of the seaward part of the glacis in 1959. The greensand is likely to have been quarried in the immediate area, there being a small outcrop apparent on the British Geological Survey of the area.

Features of note within the wall construction include the bridge abutment from the former entrance to the tower now marked by a gap in the masonry and part of a steel gate and the inserted gateway at the seaward side dating from the 1959 works surmounted by a brick rough arch.

Significance was reduced by removal of the western part of the wall in 1959 but is considered high overall.

### 3.3 Dry Moat

The dry moat is now substantially altered by the raising of its paving and soil level and by its conversion to municipal garden having demarcated paths and grass with shrub planting. Any original features of paving are obscured by the overburden of fill material.

It is understood from Liz Crew that there will be a below – ground archaeological investigation at the western edge of the moat in relation to a proposed war memorial.

The bridge and drawbridge are now represented only by possible remains of an iron pivot bar for the drawbridge incorporated in the timber access stairs with quarter landing (replaced in 2013) and providing access to the entrance level doorway.

Due to these alterations the dry moat is considered to have low to moderate significance.

#### 3.4 Tower External Wall

The external appearance of the tower has been substantially changed by the partial filling of the dry moat, the building presenting less imposing height and appearance than the original design. The wall currently has a cement rendered surface having cracking and crazing. It is not known when this material was applied. The 1969 drawings do not include any indication that the works were carried out at that time.

The entrance door is of substantial cross-boarded type having pintle hinges clasping the door construction and boarding. The door gives every appearance of being original.

The door surround incorporates projecting rendering and contains holes through which the pulley ropes or chains were passed into the interior for the operation of the drawbridge. The bottom of the door surround is shaped as a curve to allow the hinged end of the drawbridge to rotate.

The other external features of the outer walls are the two small windows at the accommodation level, one originally serving the men's quarters, the other the officers. The window reveals are rendered back to steel bars, the assumed wood sash windows having been removed. A wood frame apparently for a replacement fixed wood window survives at the west opening.

In view of the modern alterations to the exterior the wall's relative significance is considered moderate.

### 3.5 Sub-basement Cistern

The sub-structure of the tower included an impressive elegant, curved chamber, vaulted at the ceiling and reverse vaulted at the floor, constructed around the central column but absent beneath the magazine.

Features include the two access openings formed in the vaulted ceiling near the magazine walls and having tapering shaped openings to prevent accidental dropping of the hatch into the cistern.

Other features include two sump shafts recorded and noted in interpretation material at the Dymchurch Tower, in both cases located adjoining the magazine walls and presumably intended to allow drainage of any water which might form or fall onto the store floor.

Both sumps have a brick shaft beneath widening at the base to form a rectangular raised plinth constructed in brickwork. There was no communication between the cistern and the shaft. The brickwork of the shafts appear to be a later insertion or possibly second stage fit (the brick courses not matching).

The disposal arrangements of any water passing into the sumps from the stores level is not clear. There appears to have been an intention to prevent water from passing from the sump into the cistern intended for drinking water.

Other features in this space include a former water inlet position currently formed as an internal downpipe shaft within the wall thickness and diverted out to the dry moat immediately above the raised paving level. Interpretation material at the Dymchurch Tower indicates that the method of filling the cistern is likely to have been from rainwater from the roof although there is a record of a tower having water supplies imported directly from outside. The only opening found into the system is a small crudely formed gap at the edge of the vault at the landward side.

Display material at Dymchurch also indicates that there is likely to have been an overflow arrangement from the cistern in the form of a horizontal pipe outlet above the dry moat level. No details were noted of these arrangements within the cistern area.

The cistern has been adapted by the insertion of steel supports taken through the brick vaulting to provide support to modern stairs.

The cistern survives in good condition and is considered of high significance.

### 3.6 Basement Stores

The majority of the floor space at the basement level, approached by a ladder opening in the original ceiling was used for storage of provisions and other non-explosive material. It consisted of a segmental shaped space around the central column with a timber floor over. There was no window provision in the outside walls.

The space had a brick floor formed over the vaulted cistern. The two access openings were provided with timber hatches since replaced.

Nearby both openings were the sumps now represented at the east by openings in the floor with dirt and rubble infill.

Vents were provided as standard between this floor level and the accommodation level. The shafts approximately



400mm. sq. being located at high level and extending within the wall thickness to open out into the accommodation level to allow the basement level to be used.

The external walls of the space were faced brickwork currently with modern masonry paint applied during the most recent puppet museum phase.

The first floor over this space and the adjoining magazine was reinstated in the 1969 works generally following the pattern of examples elsewhere consisting of radial timber joists bearing onto the centre column. The construction is not identical to the original which incorporated more substantial beams beneath the joist level spanning between the outer wall from stone corbels set into the outer masonry and into slots in stone padstones at the centre column. The general floor joists were set at a higher level originally and supported by an outer bearing plate on a table of regularly spaced stone corbels set at a slightly higher level than the beam supports.

The floor as reconstructed in 1969 included a trimmed opening for the access to a reinstated ladder superseded now by two steel spiral stairs which together with partial removal of the first floor now constitute a large opening in the floor obscuring the recognition of the original design of the space.

A modern intake room has been formed within the wall thickness on the landward side. This predated the 1969 drawings and probably dates from World War II.

This area survives substantially complete and is considered of high significance.

### 3.7 Magazine

The magazine or powder room was located in the remainder of the basement storey level and is enclosed by brick walls spanning between the outer wall and the centre column. In order to isolate the barrels of gun powder from dampness, these spaces were provided with suspended timber floors. The original joist locations are apparent in the space in the form of slots in the brickwork set at an angle indicating the direction of the parallel joists. The

floor has since been reinstated at a lower level and dates from the 1960s repairs.

Due to the greater thickness of the walls on the seaward side generally, the magazine is substantially constructed in brickwork on that side and a vaulted recess was incorporated in the design. The remainder of the ceiling was also being of vaulted construction.

Two recesses under brick rough arches are provided at the sides and one at the seaward end of the magazine space. These are provided with air vents in the form of openings from shafts approximately 400mm<sup>2</sup> communicating to vents at higher levels understood to be the vents at windows.

An opening in the floor adjoining the eastern partition wall is surmounted by a brick flat topped enclosure. It is understood from other examples, including interpretation material at Dymchurch, that this represents a sump presumably to ensure that any water split in the space drained away.

Above this feature a square window opening represents a modern adaptation of a former opening which formed the surround for an oriel borrowed light window projecting into the magazine space having canted sides allowing a candle to be placed within the space but isolated from the magazine and its powder contents by glazing. An example of an unaltered design reinstated at the Dymchurch Tower based on a nearby example is included in the photographs in the appendix.

The entrance door to the magazine is missing but retains the wood frame lined with copper sheet using copper fixings to prevent fire hazard, copper being less likely to generate sparks than other metals.

A steel framework from a later date is set on the inside presumably a barrier to allow the public to view the magazine area without stepping inside the space at a previous phase of the use of the building as a museum.

The magazine retaining many original features is considered of high significance.

### 3.8 Accommodation Level

The entrance or first floor level consisted of the spaces described in Twiss's description. Comparison of the reinstated accommodation at Dymchurch and the drawings of the Wish Tower alterations in 1969 show that the division between the entrance lobby containing the hatch to the basement and the men's quarters at the west was set out at an almost identical position suggesting that the remainder of the layout at Dymchurch may have been present at The Wish Tower as part of a standard design.

If so, the area immediately inside the entrance door was a large lobby area containing a hoist arrangement over the access hatch to the basement. There would have been a door to a lobby on the east with quartermaster's room and officers' room off. The partition wall between the lobby and men's quarters shown in the 1969 drawing provided access to a larger room occupied by the men (up to 24 in number). This space gave access to the stone steps formed within the thick seaward wall.

Both the men's and officers' rooms were provided with external window openings (vertical sliding sashes at

Dymchurch) and with fireplaces having flues taken up within the wall thickness to discharge at parapet level.

Following painting of the interior, any ephemeral traces of the former partition positions are not now apparent. There are sawn off timbers at various locations at high level at the centre column but these are considered likely to relate to displays dating from the puppet museum stage of the building's occupation.

The replacement timber floor was inserted in 1969 and as previously noted large sections of this floor have been removed to accommodate the two steels spiral stairs relating to the circulation within the building during the puppet museum stage.

The external walls are faced brickwork inner skin laid in English Bond with modern paint finish.

The walls contain four vent shafts at low level communicating with the basement and having grilles to prevent accidental dropping of objects down the shaft.

The downpipe shaft is now evidenced by a wood plate lining the shaft on the internal side.

The entrance doorway is provided with original stone blocks containing holes and pulley mechanisms relating to the operation of the drawbridge.

The two windows remain, the east having been converted back to a window from a doorway inserted in 1919. The widened splayed opening is apparent revealing the inner construction of the external walls to be a coursed core of brick rubble set in mortar. The windows have been removed and the openings secured by steel bars.. Both openings have a pair of vents in the brick vaulted ceilings to ventilate musket fire in combat conditions.

The two fireplace openings differ in size. That in the men's room being wider to allow for cooking. No grates or other fireplace apparatus remain.

On the seaward side the walls contain a brick arched opening to the stone steps formed within the wall thickness to give access to the gun platform. The vaulted ceiling over

the stairway incorporates a ventilation opening. There is an added steel handrail.

The ceiling is brick vaulting supported at the perimeter walls and at the centre column. The vaulting has modern masonry paint finish.

The ceiling incorporates a stone block from which is mounted a wood pulley containing two wheels. A copper plate appears to record loading ratings and patent details.

This space has lost its original floor and partition evidence and is rated of moderate-high significance.

### 3.9 Gun Platform

The top outside level of the tower consists of a 360 degree traversing gun platform. This consisted of a raised stone covered circular centre pivot platform with lower level paved surface surrounding and an outer trackway at the same level as the pivot platform, the track being supported by granite slabs. The surrounding parapet incorporated a faced brickwork inner surface containing fixing rings for hauling the traversing canon around the pivot and five x



arched recesses forming shot lockers containing the ammunition required by the gunners.

At the head of the stairway the parapet contained a door opening set below the level of the traversing perimeter platform through which a shaft containing steps was formed. Details noted at The Wish Tower and at other examples indicate that for weathering purposes this stairway recess was covered by a wood hatch having a substantial ledge beneath the boarded hatch, the ledge being housed in recesses formed in the side walls of the steps recess.

Below the level of the hatch grooves in the sides of the steps recess suggest that there was some form of thin plate passed over the opening to form a surface over which cannon balls loaded through a circular hole in the door from the stairs could be handled. Fixing eyes beneath were noted presumably relating to this arrangement. A new hatch enclosure was constructed over the steps in 2013.

The door itself is of double boarded construction having clasping hinges hung on pintles set within the wall. The

current door is a modern reproduction at the upper level only half height.

The parapet coping is millstone grit with rendered repairs. One vent outlet remains over the stairway. Other outlets and flue chimneys have been removed and rendered over.

A flagpole mounting is present at the landward side.

Although there is substantial survival of original features the traversing canon has been removed. This level of the building is assessed as moderate – high significance.

#### 4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

##### 4.1 Historical, Architectural and Archaeological

The Wish Tower is one of a chain of 74 Napoleonic War gun towers on the Kent and Sussex coast of which only 26 survive. The town centre retains the Wish Tower, the only survivor of six towers on the beach at Eastbourne and the Redoubt, the command and garrison centre for the towers in the immediate area and one of three such centres in Kent and Sussex. The two monuments together provide a

significant contribution towards understanding of the design of coastal fortifications at this period.

As one of relatively few surviving towers the Wish Tower is considered of high significance viewed under a number of headings:

#### Rarity

Of the 74 towers on the south coast 27 were located in Kent and 47 in Sussex. The greater number and the greater length of coast protected therefore lay in Sussex. Many have been lost including due to coastal erosion and the Wish Tower is now one of only ten surviving in the County.

#### Survival of Fabric.

Being inherently strong to withstand military bombardment those towers which survive generally do so relatively complete even if individual fittings and internal features have been removed. In the case of the Wish Tower substantial areas of the Glacis and the western part of the Glacis retaining wall have been removed. As the outer

structures are not complete the tower is graded of moderate/high significance in relation to this aspect. The removal of the glacis does however reveal the construction of the retaining wall which is visible both sides via a modern inserted doorway resulting in a high significance of this area from an interpretation point of view.

#### Reversibility of alterations

Although substantially altered by the removal of part of the outer defences, the partial infill of the dry moat and by the removal of a substantial part of the modern reinstated first floor to accommodate spiral stairs, these alterations would be reversible subject to a very high cost. Given the cost of such works a moderate/high significance is proposed.

The potential significance which might be achieved by the reversal of modifications is considered in the schedule having regard to the encouragement in the National Planning Policy Framework for '*sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*' (NPPF p30) and for

new development within the setting of heritage assets ‘*to enhance or better reveal their significance*’ (NPPF p32).

Unmodified.

Having never been required for defence in the Napoleonic period or later due to changes in artillery relatively little modification has been carried out. In common with many towers, the timber first floor and basement suspended floor in the magazine were lost, the former being reinstated in 1969. Many features of the original design including window openings, ventilation shafts, gun platform pivot and tracks, parapet shot lockers and hauling rings and loading pulley and drawbridge mechanisms survive. A high significance is proposed for this aspect.

Overall despite some modification in the past the rarity of the tower as a surviving Napoleonic war fortification is considered to merit a high significance as a heritage asset.

This significance is enhanced by the building’s setting in a prominent position on the seafront in a tourist resort and its potential as a military history resource as set out further below.

## 4.2 Seafront Setting

Development after the Napoleonic period has left the tower in a prominent position on the seafront in a major tourist and retirement resort having a long sea promenade and pier built in 1869. The town itself has a good shopping, sports and arts facilities including a theatre and art galleries.

In 1959 the tower outer defences were altered to complement a large café and solarium built on the seaward side. This has now been cleared restoring the tower to the dominant position in a largely open setting.

The proposed redevelopment of the café site provides a major opportunity for the tower to gain enhanced significance as a historical feature and as part of a tourist attraction, both benefiting from proximity to the other.

## 4.3 Significance as a military Museum

The extent of its survival and its position on the seafront of a tourist town enables the tower to have the potential to

form a significant opportunity for the display and interpretation of military history.

While damaging to the significance of the monument, it is suggested that the partial removal of the outer defences and the first floor has the effect of opening up the structure and the design for viewing and interpretation in the manner of a cut away diagram.

The tower is currently leased to The Friends of the Wish Tower who have been offering tours subject to volunteer availability.

Two comparable towers open to the public at restricted times have been visited. At Dymchurch the tower is opened by a custodian by prior special appointment made with English Heritage at Dover Castle.

The interior provides an excellent recreation of the internal arrangements and function of a Martello Tower. While located in a tourist village the immediate environs include private gardens, parking and amusement arcades. Despite the restricted access arrangements and unpromising

surroundings, when opened for our visit the tower was soon filled with passers by including families with children all displaying strong interest in the interpretation.

At Seaford the tower is part of a general local museum opened at relatively restricted times by volunteers and very busy with visitors when seen in August 2015.

It is therefore suggested that the building has considerable scope for development as a military museum and for other cultural events and that limited availability of volunteer staffing need not be a barrier to its success.

## 5.0 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Alan Dickinson MRICS GradDiplCons(AA)

Chartered Building Surveyor

Historic Buildings Consultant

15 December 2015

APPENDIX

PHOTOGRAPHS

Wish Tower Schedule.						
No	Element	Sub element	Brief Description and History	Features of Interest	Condition	Assessment of relative significance
1.00	Glacis		Outer bank defence to moat. Largely removed.			High where survives, moderate taking account of removal.
2.00	Glacis retaining wall.		Substantial wall retaining remaining parts of the glacis beyond the moat, the inner face brickwork and the outer face revealed by removal of glacis to be alternate rows of brickwork and greensand blocks.	Following removal of the glacis on the seaward side the stone outer construction is exposed to view.	Greensand delaminating, aggravated by hard cement repointing.	Significance reduced by infill of much of the moat and removal of much of the glacis but enhanced by demonstrating construction. Overall assessed moderate-high significance.
2.01		Bridge abutment	The former position of the bridge is marked by a gap in the retaining wall and part of an iron gate.		Overgrown	High significance as evidence for original access
2.02		Inserted seaward gateway	Pedestrian gateway inserted in 1950's.			Low significance as a modification but provides access between areas.
3.00	Dry moat		Dry moat provided in original design due to position of the tower remote from other towers. Moat partially filled in 20th Cent and laid out as a public garden.			As currently configured and presented of low-moderate significance.
3.01		Bridge	Entirely removed			N/A
3.02		Drawbridge	Pivot bar remains			High significance
4.00	Tower external walls					
4.01		Walls surfaces	Currently cement rendered.	Reposited outlet for downpipe just above raised ground level.	Hard cement rendering falling off in sheets. Areas hollow when tapped.	Replacement rendering moderate significance.
4.02		Entrance door	Appears original boarded			High significance
4.03		Entrance door surround		Pulley holes and drawbridge pivot housing.		High significance
4.04		Soldier's room window	Currently unglazed and secured by vertical iron bars. Assumed wood sash windows lost.			Opening High significance, replacement iron bars low significance.
4.05		Officer's room window	Currently unglazed and secured by vertical iron bars. Assumed wood sash windows lost.			Opening High significance, replacement iron bars low significance.
5.00	Sub basement Cistern		Brick water storage cistern, vaulted at ceiling and reverse vaulted at floor, the vaults shallow and curved enough to be stable. Constructed around central column absent beneath magazine.		Good condition no degradation of brickwork. Condition damp not wet or flooded at time of inspection.	Largely unaltered good survival and condition. High significance.
5.01		East access Opening	Brick lined access opening constructed with tapered shape to prevent accidental dropping of hatch into cistern.			Good survival. High significance.
5.02		West access Opening	See west access above.			See above
5.03		East sump shaft	Square brick shaft underneath basement stores sump. The shaft widens at base with flat ledge surface. No opening between shaft and cistern. Brickwork appears to be a modification (courses not level)			Appears to be modification early in the life of the building. Moderate significance.
5.04		West sump shaft	Square brick shaft underneath basement stores sump. The shaft widens at base with flat ledge surface. No opening between shaft and cistern. Brickwork appears to be a modification (courses not level)			Appears to be modification early in the life of the building. Moderate significance.
5.05		Water inlet	Rainwater from roof taken down a pipe within the outer wall thickness in the vicinity of the main entrance at higher level.			Small rough gap apparent at edge of vault inside system. If on investigation this proves to be the inlet. High significance.
5.06		Overflow water outlet	No outlet noted during inspection			Not apparent inside cistern.
5.07		Modern steel support				Modern intrusion. Low significance.

Wish Tower Schedule.						
No	Element	Sub element	Brief Description and History	Features of Interest	Condition	Assessment of relative significance
6.00	Basement Stores		Storage area below the entrance level originally approached by ladder.			Good survival. High significance.
6.01		Floor	Brick floor			Good survival. High significance.
6.02		East access hatch	Hatches retained (replacement)			Moderate significance
6.03		West access hatch	Hatches retained (replacement)			Moderate significance
6.04		East Sump	One of two sumps apparently draining the stores floor both located in the angles between the outer walls and magazine partitions. Both sumps filled with debris			Survival original feature. High significance.
6.05		West Sump	See East sump above			See East sump above.
6.06		Vent shafts x 4	High level in perimeter walls			Original feature. High significance.
6.07		External walls	Brick walls with modern paint			Moderate significance.
6.08		1st floor corbel supports x 14		2 corbels at different lower height.		Survival of original design. High significance.
6.09		Central column	Brickwork column			Original survival. High significance.
6.10		1st floor beam padstones in central column	There are deep beam bearing slots in stone pads both sides of the column. These align with 2 lower corbels in inner outer wall.			Original survival. High significance.
6.11		intake room	Modern insertion within wall thickness.			Modification - Low significance.
6.12		Ladder from 1st floor	Lost due to removal of 1st floor now incorporating large opening incorporating modern stairs x 2			N/A
7.00	Magazine		Ammunition store part of original design. Protected from damp by suspended timber floor, sump and vent shafts. From artillery impact by thick seaward walls and vaults and sparks by copper lining to door and frame and lantern window.			Good survival. High significance.
7.01		Suspended timber floor	Current floor dates from 1960's	Original floor evidenced by sockets in brickwork for embedded joist ends.		Evidence. High significance.
7.02		Floor sump housing	Square sump shaft within brick flat topped housing.			High significance
7.03		Walls and vault	Magazine entirely surrounded by brick built walls with vaulted ceiling over.			Good survival. High significance.
7.04		Wall recesses and vents x 5	2 side wall recesses and one back wall recess each with its own vent.	Vents are understood to communicate with window vents at higher level. The vents between floors being separate.		Original survival. High significance.
7.05		Doorway	Copper fixings	Door missing, frame lined with copper sheet and copper screws		Door missing. Moderate significance.
7.06		Ironwork for later gate	Viewing barrier for public into magazine area			Modern. Low significance.
7.07		Magazine lantern window	Former borrowed light projecting oriel window with shelf to allow lighting source to be separate from magazine now represented by modified opening in brick partition.			Modification. Moderate- high significance.
8.00	Accommodation level		The accommodation area contained soldiers, quartermaster's and officer's rooms served by 2x windows and 2x fireplaces. Evidence for subdivisions now represented by indication of one partition on drawing of 1969. Floor replaced.			Modified and evidence lost. Moderate - high significance.

Wish Tower Schedule.						
No	Element	Sub element	Brief Description and History	Features of Interest	Condition	Assessment of relative significance
8.01		Replacement floor	Inserted in 1969	The floor construction contains an opening for a former ladder hatch superceeded by the current stair arrangement.		Moderate significance.
8.02		External walls	Faced brickwork inner skin laid in English Bond with modern paint finish.			Modern paint. Moderate-high significance.
8.03		Vent shafts x 4	Vent shafts between basement and accomodation floor. Evidence for grills to prevent accidental dropping of objects down shaft.			Original feature. High significance.
8.04		Upper vent shafts	Nil			N/A
8.05		Downpipe shaft		Concealed by plywood cover.		Concealed. Moderate significance.
8.06		Entrance Doorway		Possible original door and ironwork, pulley rope holes and mechanism.		Original feature. High significance.
8.07		Soldier's room fireplace	No grate			Modified. Moderate - high significance.
8.08		Soldier's room window	Window replaced by iron bars in original opening	2 x musket vents in ceiling		Modified. Moderate - high significance.
8.09		Stairway to gun platform	Stone steps within vaulted brickwork passage	Include ceiling vent		Good survival. High significance.
8.10		Officer's room fireplace	No grate			Modified. Moderate - high significance.
8.11		Officer's room window	Alteration to form later doorway now reinstated to a window. Now revealing rubble core. Window replaced by iron bars in reinstated opening.	2 x musket vents in ceiling		Modified. Moderate - high significance.
8.12		Evidence for partitions	Drawing of 1969 shows a partition in the same position as the lobby/soldier's room partition at the Dymchurch tower.			No evidence at the building, no significance.
8.13		Ceiling	Brick vaulted construction incorporating brick column with padstone at top	Block pulley attached to stone block with patent no plate in front of entrance. For use with trapway to basement store.	Modern paint peeling at column. Line of stalagtites caused by water penetration.	Good survival. High significance.
9.00	Gun Platform		The top outside level of the tower consisted of a 360 degree traversing gun platform consisting of a raised outer trackway, center raised pivot platform with surrounding inner well, the whole surrounded by a parapet. Originally built to house a 24pdr gun.			Many elements survived from original design - gun removed. Modified. Moderate-high significance.
9.01		Gun well			Asphalt patched, for upstand detailing.	Modern asphalt. Moderate=high significance.
9.02		Central pivot platform				Good survival. High significance.
9.03		Perimeter platform	Granite headstones.			Good survival. High significance.
9.04		Doorway steps recess		Sides incorporate recesses for the rail beneath the boarded hatch with groove for weathering or containment plate .		Good evidence. High significance.
9.05		Parapet inner face		Fixing rings for hauling cannon and shot lockers x 5.		Original survival. High significance.
9.06		Doorway	Modern reproduction door, half height incorporating round hole for passing through ammunition and preventing flashback into stairway.	Pintle recessed in door jamb.		Evidence for original features removed. Moderate-high significance.
9.07		Parapet		Parapet coping part rendered over millstone grit coping stones. One vent outlet remains over stairway.		Part obscured by modern rendering. Moderate significance.
9.08		Flagpole mounting	Reinstated in 1969 flagpole now missing (sunstitute now at central pivot			Modern reinstatement of mounting only, Moderate significance.

## Wish Tower Discovery Day – Outputs

### On the memorial for the civilian victims of Eastbourne WWII bombings

- Built for war, used in peace
- The new walk is a good memorial
- A water feature memorial would be very restful, peaceful
- The Tower garden would be an excellent location for a memorial to the bombing victims. The loss of life needs to be acknowledged.
- I think it should be used as a memorial for all the people and animals lost in the wars and all lives lost at sea.

### Wish Tower Memories

- Remember visiting the puppet museum with our children – great fun! There were also puppet shows at certain times.

### On the future use for the Tower (and by extension, the café/restaurant?)

- I would like it to be a place where you can have a cup of tea and look at pictures on the wall (Lillian, aged 3½)
- To a tea house with art exhibitions permanent with a mix of music, puppets, books, authors visit, etc
- A multicultural centre, also for certain functions on hire, eg celebrations
- Retain the historical aspect with an exhibition of old photos etc but have a temporary arts space that local artists can use and exhibit.
- Open in the evenings with live music from local bands.
- Big milkshakes with cream. Music. Coastal theme. Good views – sea
- Live music venue
- Love the idea of solar panels. Something high-tech to contrast and complement history. High-tec – art and science.
- To see what happened in history
- New bridge for increased access is a good idea. The new café needs to be modern but unobtrusive.
- A temporary arts space for unique happenings and experiences. Towner gigs and talks?
- Keep as a celebration that we no longer need a gun on it.
- Nice and clean with big milk shake

### On the exhibition and the Wish Tower Friends

- The tower needs you – well done
- Please retain the display boards for future printing and for sale
- Excellent. A lot of interesting information. Well done & I am sure you will continue to get a lot of local support.
- Loved the exhibition here – well done and good luck!
- Very interesting and enlightening exhibition especially the timelines of significant events both in Eastbourne and worldwide
- Excellent exhibition, very informative

- Amazing. Lots of hard work, well done
- I'm so pleased I came down to find this here today. It has given me an amazing insight into the history of the Tower. Well done, good luck. Amazing job.
- Keep it as a historical building with information about its history. You've already made a start with the panels on display here. It would not be suited acoustically or operationally as a music venue inside – possibly outside in the gardens.
- Spend some money on it first make it water-tight and structurally sound before getting carried away with schemes.
- Grass roof? Maybe a few solar panels
- A space for shows, gallery, children's activities & the outside space would be a great area for picnics & seating, gardens
- I love the wish tower
- A most informative and interesting exhibition it just shows how we overlook important parts of recent history

## Wish Tower Discovery Days - Recording Visitors



## Wish Tower Discovery Days - Layout of the floorplan in tape





## Wish Tower Discovery Days - exhibition



## Wish Tower Discovery Days - Artwork - towers and their fates



## Wish Tower Discovery Days - making paper towers



## Wish Tower Discovery Days - maps and books



## Wish Tower Discovery Days - feedback and ideas

