



PLANNING REF: 0388/24/FUL

DESCRIPTION: Change of use of land to surf school & siting of two storage containers (retrospective)

ADDRESS: Land at SX663 436 Bantham Kingsbridge

4th March 2024

LETTER OF OBJECTION FROM THE SOUTH HAMS SOCIETY

The South Hams Society interest

For the last 60 years, the South Hams Society has been stimulating public interest and care for the beauty, history and character of the South Hams. We encourage high standards of planning and architecture that respect the character of the area. We aim to secure the protection and improvement of the landscape, features of historic interest and public amenity and to promote the conservation of the South Hams as a living, working environment. We take the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty very seriously and work hard to increase people's knowledge and appreciation of our precious environment. We support the right development - in the right places - and oppose inappropriate development.

The South Hams Society **objects** to this planning application.

In the submission documents on the LPAs planning website, under the heading document type listed as '*Photographs & Photomontages*' is a photograph which is stated to be a '*Photograph showing area is a natural plateau*'.



Charity No 263985

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An area of land where these shipping containers have been placed was previously stated to be scraped off, but there is no record submitted that demonstrates the extent of the scraping said to have taken place. Some wind erosion is now evident around the rear of the shipping containers. They are an unsightly feature within the dunes.



But, given that ground works have taken place, it is not obvious why the area would be described as a 'natural plateau'.

As far back as the late 50's early 60's the central area of the sand dunes suffered from increasing public popularity and wind erosion.

So fencing was installed to keep people out of the eroded areas and primary school children were employed to plant grasses inside the fencing that that can be seen today.



The vegetation is important to retain the sand and form the dunes.

Google image 2015



So it is extremely disappointing to see vegetation removed in the dune area to locate two shipping containers. (Google 2022).



And when the Society visited the location on the 1st March on a windy day, we were both concerned and far from impressed by what we found.

The two shipping containers.



There were mats strewn across the area that were in a poor state and disintegrating.



Leaving the land contaminated with fragments of rubber mat scattered amongst the surrounding sand.

Fragments of rubber mat amongst the sand.



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Kayaks were left on the verge.



In another area what appeared to be a wash down area with a water supply pipe had been installed complete with garden hose.





And a generator unit had been installed next to the waste storage area. It is not obvious what this is for.



Because this development is damaging the sand dunes with degrading and environmentally damaging materials, the Society would urge the LPA take immediate action to clear up the site.

Separately, and significantly, the location of the development is within the Scheduled Monument.

Historic England:

'Reasons for Designation

The large Roman and post-Roman settlement site at Bantham Ham is an unusual and important survival where antiquarian records and archaeological excavation and survey have revealed evidence for occupation over several centuries. Of greatest significance is the evidence recovered for a trading port, with earthwork survival and the known presence of extensive and undisturbed buried remains. Together, these will provide evidence for the size and layout of the settlement area, for Roman trade, as well as for the lives and activities of those engaged in trading practice.

The recent and past discoveries of Roman and post-Roman material in quantity makes Bantham Ham a site of considerable significance in the study of settlement and trading activities of this date in Britain, while the survival of waterlogged remains in the marsh provides high potential for the recovery of organic materials. Earlier and later remains, including medieval lynchets and a World War II pillbox, provide evidence for the area's significance between at least the Neolithic period and the 20th century.'

The first part of the listing states:

'Details

This monument includes a large Roman and post-Roman settlement site with evidence for earlier and later occupation, buried by sand dunes at the mouth of the River Avon. It lies behind a popular holiday beach, and part of its car park occupies the site.'

The Society refer to the PLANNING STATEMENT paragraph 5.3

5.3 Heritage

5.3.1 In terms of the site's location within a Scheduled Ancient Monument, given the temporary nature of the containers, combined with their small scale, it is considered that its heritage significance remains undisturbed and free from harm.

The shipping containers have been in place for eight years. There has been land clearance and a water service laid in the ground. The dunes are being contaminated by modern materials. This statement cannot be supported.

The Society note the follow comment from Stephen Reed, Senior Historic Environment Officer, Historic Environment Team, Climate Change, Environment and Transportation Directorate, Devon County Council.

'Nevertheless, the Historic Environment Team would advise that Historic England are consulted with any comments they may have on the development and its impact upon

the seeing of the Scheduled Monument, and whether Scheduled Monument Consent is required for this development’.

The Society include the advice from Historic England for Owners and Occupiers of scheduled monuments on the following pages.

Under the heading, ‘*Offences*’ it states:

‘It is also a criminal offence to carry out or to permit others to carry out unauthorised works to a scheduled monument, i.e. works undertaken without Scheduled Monument or Class Consent’.

An application was received in 2016 for ‘*Retrospective application for change of use of land for seating area, temporary use of parking space for parking of gastrobus, re-siting of 2 storage units and provision of refuse compound with lean-to store*’ (3579/16/FUL).

The evidence from Google Satellite images clearly show that land clearance took place between August 2015 and September 2017 in preparation for the shipping containers.

A Water service pipe has been laid below ground in the dune.

We therefore believe that consent should have been obtained from the Secretary of State because the monument is below the sand dunes.

It is the Society’s understanding that where both Scheduled Monument Consent and Planning Permission are to be sought for a proposal, the SMC must have been determined first.

Historic England:

‘Obtaining Scheduled Monument Consent - Consent for works is granted by the Secretary of State and must be given in writing before works are started.

Consent cannot be given retrospectively, and undertaking works before consent has been given is a criminal offence.

We advise the Secretary of State regarding applications for Scheduled Monument Consent and administer the application process’.

It would appear Historic England should have been consulted 7 to 8 years ago.

Can the LPA confirm that this occurred?

If it did not, and as the section that follows makes clear, the LPA must first consult Historic England before giving a planning consent for this application as it is retrospective. **Without confirmation from Historic England that this proposal did not require consent from the Secretary of State, then public bodies giving retrospective planning approval could be endorsing a criminal offence.**



Scheduled Monuments

A Guide for Owners and Occupiers

This guide explains what scheduling means for you as the owner or occupier of a scheduled monument and summarizes the main provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended) ('the 1979 Act'), which is the legal framework for the protection of scheduled monuments. The guide does not attempt to be fully comprehensive and you are strongly advised to consult us, or seek independent professional advice, before carrying out any works that might affect the site of a scheduled monument.

What is scheduling?

Scheduling refers to the legal system for protecting nationally important monuments and archaeological remains in England. Its aim is to preserve the best examples of these for the benefit of current and future generations. Scheduled monuments are added to the 'Schedule' (the list of legally-protected monuments) by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, under powers contained in the 1979 Act. We take a leading role in identifying nationally important monuments and archaeological remains in England, but suggestions for scheduling are also put forward by individuals, often via local authorities. In making decisions on scheduling (and de-scheduling: the removal of monuments from the Schedule), the Secretary of State is advised by us.

Not all scheduled monuments are ancient. Monuments and archaeological remains of all dates can be given the protection of scheduling, whether they are prehistoric burial mounds, 20th-century remains of the coal industry or from World War II. Some scheduled monuments contain standing buildings or ruins. Others have no visible remains above ground: it is the buried archaeology that is of national importance. Sometimes the form and layout of monuments only becomes clear from the air or through geophysical survey.



Scheduling is carefully restricted to the most important examples of each type of monument and to those for which this type of designation provides the most appropriate protection. Scheduled monuments are registered as Local Land Charges and therefore will appear on the results of Local Land Charge Searches carried out during the sale and purchase of property. Scheduling does not affect your freehold title or other legal interests in the land. The inclusion of a monument in the Schedule does not give members of the general public any rights of access. It does give us some legal powers of entry but, in practice, we will make every attempt to obtain the owner's or occupiers' permission to inspect a monument; the legal power of entry will only ever be used as a last resort.

How does scheduling affect you?

If you wish to carry out any works that will affect a scheduled monument, whether above or below ground level, you must apply to the Secretary of State for prior written permission. This is known as Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC). 'Works' are defined by section 2(2) of the 1979 Act as:

- any works resulting in the demolition or destruction of or any damage to a scheduled monument;
- any works for the purpose of removing or repairing a scheduled monument or any part of it or of making any alterations or additions thereto; and
- any flooding or tipping operations on land in, on or under which there is a scheduled monument.

You are strongly recommended to contact your relevant Local Office at an early stage if you are planning changes that might affect a scheduled site or monument (see below for contact details). We will try to help you develop your application in a way that avoids damage to the remains and is, therefore, more likely to be successful. We can also advise you on how to prepare an application for Scheduled Monument Consent and on how best to look after your scheduled monument, whether or not you are planning any works that affect it. No fee is payable for applying for Scheduled Monument Consent and there is no charge for our advice. Grants are sometimes available to help maintain scheduled monuments.



Certain works to your property may also require planning permission from the local planning authority, or permissions from other bodies (such as those from Natural England covering protected wildlife species). However, obtaining such permissions does not remove the need for Scheduled Monument Consent. If your scheme needs planning permission or other permissions as well as Scheduled Monument Consent, it is helpful if you can make all the necessary applications at the same time, so that the various issues can be considered together.

Obtaining Scheduled Monument Consent

Consent for works is granted by the Secretary of State and must be given in writing before works are started. Consent cannot be given retrospectively, and undertaking works before consent has been given is a criminal offence. We advise the Secretary of State regarding applications for Scheduled Monument Consent and administer the application process.

An application for Scheduled Monument Consent must be made on a standard form (AM112). This can be downloaded, together with guidance on filling in the form and details of the supporting documentation needed, from our website: www.HistoricEngland.org.uk Alternatively, you can request a form and guidance notes from your relevant Local Office.

In the great majority of cases, Scheduled Monument Consent applications are successful. You are strongly advised to contact your Local Office to discuss your plans at an early stage and certainly before sending in an application. This will help to identify whether a proposed scheme is likely to be acceptable in principle before any detailed design is undertaken. It is usually possible, following discussion with us, to agree on a scheme that both preserves the significance of the monument and meets your needs. If, however, following a formal application for Scheduled Monument Consent, we and the applicant are not able to reach agreement on the suitability of a scheme, the applicant has a right to a hearing before a decision is made on their application. In practice, this should rarely be necessary.



When Scheduled Monument Consent is granted, it is usually subject to certain conditions that may specify methods of working, or arrangements for prior archaeological investigation and recording. These conditions are listed in the consent letter and are applied in order to safeguard the scheduled remains. Please note that breach of the conditions listed in the consent letter is an offence.

Class Consents: works for which consent has been granted by Order

Some works are covered by a Class Consents Order (i.e. an Order made by the Secretary of State). Where the proposed works are of the types specified in the Order, there is no need to apply for Scheduled Monument Consent, regardless of the monument or site they take place on. It must be noted, however, that the classes of works to which the Order applies are very narrowly and precisely defined and are subject to specified conditions, limitations and/or exclusions. Undertaking works that are not covered by the Order, without obtaining Scheduled Monument Consent first, is an offence. It is recommended that you seek professional or legal advice, or contact us, before undertaking any works that you believe may benefit from a Class Consent. The activities most commonly covered by Class Consent are agriculture, gardening and works urgently needed in the interests of safety and health.

Agricultural works under Class 1 Consent

The Class Consent for agriculture permits some existing agricultural operations, which already benefit from this Class Consent, to continue. Certain operations that may be particularly damaging to the buried archaeological remains are excluded from the Class Consent: for example, ploughing where this does not already have Class Consent; ploughing to a greater depth than that previously carried out lawfully; subsoiling; drainage works; planting or uprooting trees, hedges or shrubs; the stripping of top soil; tipping operations; or the commercial cutting and removal of turf. Building work, including demolition, is also excluded from this Class Consent. It should be noted that, where the activities have been carried out under Class 1 Consent, the Class Consent is lost after the activity concerned has ceased for a period of six years or longer. Scheduled Monument Consent would be needed before the activity could be resumed.



We want to encourage farmers to consider ways of minimizing the risk to scheduled monuments under cultivation. Ploughing gradually erodes earthworks and breaks up undisturbed archaeological remains. We have worked with Natural England to make alternative land-uses more achievable through support from the Entry Level and Higher Level environmental stewardship schemes. Further information on the options available can be obtained by contacting Natural England

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming> or your Local Office.

Gardening under Class 1 Consent

Class Consent 1 also covers horticulture. This means that, where part or all of a scheduled monument is already in use as a garden, many ordinary gardening activities, which are already taking place, can continue in the same location as before without the need to apply for Scheduled Monument Consent. Works specifically excluded from Class Consent 1 for gardening include any works likely to disturb the soil below the depth of 30cm and, as with agricultural works, any sub-soiling, drainage, the planting or uprooting of trees, hedges or shrubs, the stripping of top soil or tipping operations.

Where Class Consent does not apply to gardening works that you propose to carry out, then an application for Scheduled Monument Consent must be made to the Secretary of State. We are aware of the need of many owners and occupiers to carry out domestic gardening on their scheduled monuments and aim to consider applications for Scheduled Monument Consent sympathetically so long as the work will not harm the monument. If you are in any doubt about whether what you are doing, or propose to do, is covered by Class 1 Consent, you are strongly advised to seek our advice and/or ask your own professional or legal adviser.

Works urgently necessary in the interests of safety or health (Class 5 Consent)

Works to a scheduled monument may be needed as a matter of urgency in the interests of safety or health. In this instance, the minimum work that is immediately required in the interests of safety and health may be carried out under Class 5 Consent. When the need to carry out such works is realized, you should write to us as soon as is reasonably practicable.



You will need to detail the works proposed or undertaken and present a full justification of why they are or were necessary.

Managing a scheduled monument

A good general rule for scheduled monuments that contain buried archaeological remains is: the less disturbance of the ground the better. Monuments which consist of, or include, built structures can be particularly vulnerable to decay, especially if the structure is already ruinous and may need more proactive maintenance of the structural parts. Monuments that include earthworks often require nothing more than ordinary good land management, such as the control of vegetation growth, burrowing animals, prevention of erosion and ensuring that sites under pasture are not over-grazed. Scheduling does not imply that monuments are being poorly managed or that they are under threat; nor does it impose any legal obligation to undertake any additional management of the monument. However, we encourage owners and occupiers to maintain their scheduled monuments in good condition so that the remains survive for future generations

Advice

You can get free expert advice on the good management of your monument by contacting your Local Office. From time to time we may wish to visit your monument to check on its condition. Your permission will always be sought first if we need access to private land. We will be able to advise you on management measures and answer questions about the monument's archaeology, history and importance. Detailed information on the archaeology of your area is also available via the local Historic Environment Record (for contact details, see www.heritagegateway.org.uk).

Financial assistance

We may be able to offer grants for the repair or management of scheduled monuments. Further information can be obtained from your Local Office. In some circumstances, grants may form part of a Management Agreement with you to support the good maintenance and management of a scheduled monument over a number of years. We can provide information on management payments that may be available for farmers via environmental stewardship schemes, as can Natural England. Built structures (including ruins) may be eligible for our historic buildings grants to assist with repair or consolidation work.



Offences

It is a criminal offence to destroy or damage a scheduled monument either intentionally or through recklessness. It is also a criminal offence to carry out or to permit others to carry out unauthorised works to a scheduled monument, i.e. works undertaken without Scheduled Monument or Class Consent. As noted above, where Scheduled Monument Consent has been granted subject to conditions, it is an offence to fail to comply with those conditions when implementing that consent.

The use of metal detecting equipment on a scheduled site is illegal without our written consent, as is the removal of objects found by detection equipment.

Where a criminal offence is suspected, we may choose to investigate with a view to prosecution or to refer the matter to the police and to the Crown Prosecution Service. A conviction for any of these offences can lead to a fine and, in respect of intentional or reckless damage or destruction of a monument, a fine and/or imprisonment.



Contact details for our Local Offices

London & South East (covering Greater London, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, West Sussex)

4th Floor

Cannon Bridge House

25 Dowgate Hill

London

EC4R 2YA

Telephone: 020 7973 3700

E-mail: londonseast@HistoricEngland.org.uk

South West (covering Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Isles of Scilly, Somerset, Wiltshire)

Fermentation North (1st Floor)

Finzels Reach

Hawkins Lane

Bristol

BS1 6JQ

Telephone: 0117 975 1308

E-mail: southwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk

East of England (covering Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk):

Brooklands

24 Brooklands Avenue

Cambridge

CB2 8BU

Telephone: 01223 582749

E-mail: eastofengland@HistoricEngland.org.uk



Midlands (covering Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire):

The Foundry
82 Granville Street
Birmingham
B1 2LH
Telephone: 0121 625 6888
E-mail: midlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North West (covering Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside):

3rd Floor
Canada House
3 Chepstow Street
Manchester
M1 5FW
Telephone: 0161 242 1416
E-mail: northwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Yorkshire (covering East Riding of Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire)

37 Tanner Row
York
YO1 6WP
Telephone: 01904 601948
E-mail: yorkshire@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North East (covering Co. Durham, Northumberland, Tees Valley, Tyne and Wear):

Bessie Surtees
House 41 – 44
Sandhill
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 3JF
Telephone: 0191 269 1255
E-mail: northeast@HistoricEngland.org.uk



Other useful information

For contact details for your local Historic Environment Record:

www.heritagegateway.org.uk

For the Department for Culture, Media and Sport:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-culture-media-sport>

Appendix 1

Class Consents

Class Consents are granted by an Order of the Secretary of State. They give consent for works of a particular kind (or ‘class’) to be carried out on any scheduled monument to which they apply. Class Consents are carefully defined legal consents and are subject to specified conditions, limitations and/or exclusions. You are therefore strongly advised to contact us and your own legal adviser before any works are undertaken in reliance on a Class Consent. This will help to ensure that you are fully aware of the conditions and restrictions of these consents and that you do not inadvertently undertake unauthorised works.

The current Class Consents can be found in the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1994 (Statutory Instrument No. 1994/ 1381). A brief outline of each Class is provided here but it should be noted that the conditions, limitations and exclusions are not included, and for these you are advised to consult the 1994 Order:

- Class 1: This covers certain ‘agricultural, horticultural and forestry works of the same kind as those previously carried out lawfully in the same location and on the same spot within that location during the previous six years’. “Carried out lawfully” means ‘carried out in accordance with the terms of a consent granted by order under section 3 of the Act or which would have been so carried out if during the period in question the monument had been a scheduled monument’ (quoted from the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1994).
- The previous Class Consent 1 for agricultural, horticultural and forestry works was under the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1981. The 1981 Order provided that agricultural, horticultural or forestry works could only be lawfully carried out if works of the same kind had previously been executed in the same field or location during the period 9th October 1976 to 8th October 1981, subject to certain exclusions including sub-soiling, drainage works, the planting or uprooting of trees, hedges or shrubs or any other works likely to disturb the soil below the maximum depth affected by normal ploughing.



The 1994 Order replaced the 1981 Order but permits those rights to undertake agricultural, horticultural and forestry works acquired under Class 1 of the 1981 Order to continue so long as they are executed at least once in every six year period. The 1994 Order defines further and extends those works excluded from Class 1.

Therefore, Class Consent 1 under the 1994 Order does not provide Class Consent for agricultural, horticultural and forestry works to be extended, either within the same area or to another area of the scheduled monument; it merely permits those rights acquired under the 1981 Order to be continued under the 1994 Order subject to further limitation and the six year qualifying period.

Before relying on Class Consent 1, you are strongly advised to consult the 1994 Order and seek advice from us or your own professional adviser to establish what activities on your scheduled monument currently benefit from Class Consent 1.

- Class 2: Works executed more than 10m below ground level by the British Coal Corporation or their licensees.
- Class 3: Certain works executed by the British Waterways Board.
- Class 4: Certain works for the repair or maintenance of machinery.
- Class 5: Works urgently necessary in the interests of safety or health, being the minimum measures necessary and subject to giving notice in writing as soon as reasonably practicable to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will be satisfied that notice has been given if it is sent to our relevant Local Office.
- Class 6: Works executed by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, known as Historic England.
- Class 7: Certain works of archaeological evaluation carried out by or on behalf of an applicant for Scheduled Monument Consent.
- Class 8: Certain works carried out in accordance with agreements made between the occupier of a scheduled monument and the Secretary of State or Historic England under section 17 of the 1979 Act (i.e. where Management Agreements are in place).
- Class 9: Certain works in respect of which the Secretary of State or Historic England pay a grant under section 24 of the 1979 Act.



Historic England

Freedom of Information

We are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 which provide a general right of access to information we hold or are responsible for.

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Heritage Category: Scheduled Monument

List Entry Number: 1019322

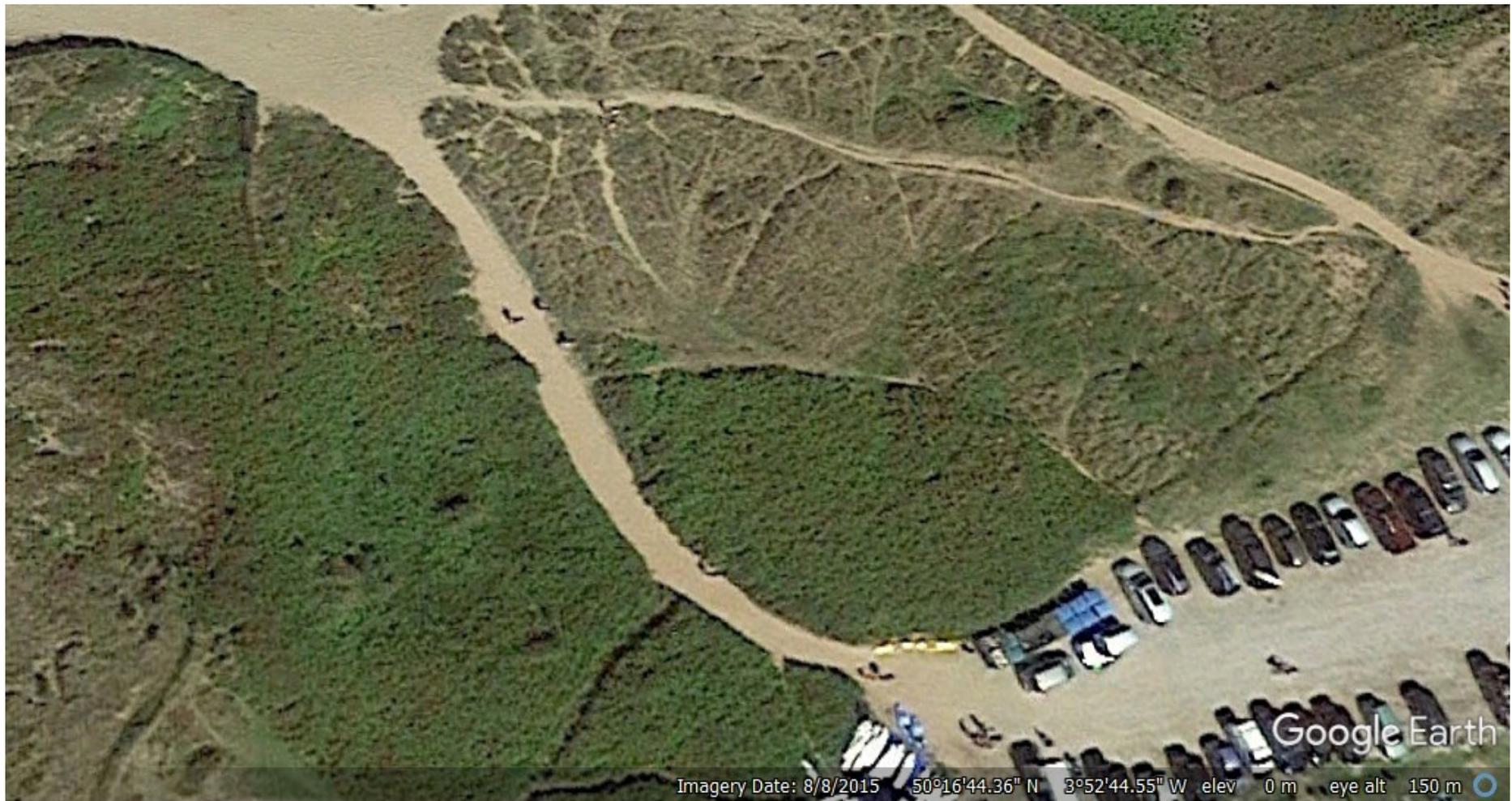
Date first listed: 29-Aug-1922

Location

Location of this list entry and nearby places that are also listed. Use our [map search](#) to find more listed places.



The Google image below dated 8/8/2015 and the image that follows offer further visual evidence.



Google image dated 23/9/2017



The site lies within South Devon National Landscape, and South Devon Heritage Coast, making this a very sensitive location, set within a highly valued landscape.

The Devon Landscape Character Area is the 'Bigbury Bay Coastal Plateau'.

To conclude, the Society is of the opinion that the location of the shipping containers fails to either conserve or enhance the South Devon National Landscape and their presence is causing material harm to both the sand dunes and the environment.

Consequently we object to this planning application as a result of the environmental harm that has been done and is continuing to be done to the dunes and due to the need to consult Historic England before the LPA can consider granting retrospective consent when a criminal offence may have taken place.

For and on behalf of the South Hams Society.

Richard Howell,
Chairman

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