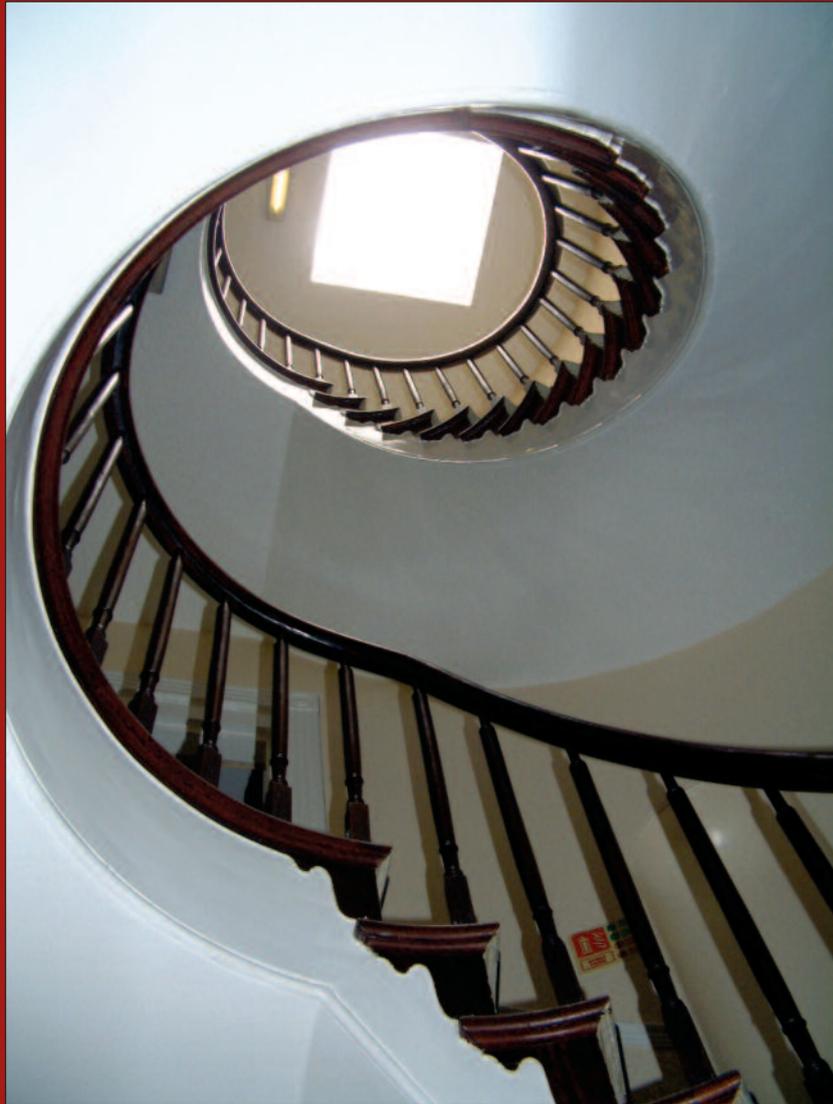


# A sense of place



Jersey's historic buildings are cultural assets that are now receiving the attention and recognition that they deserve, as Roger Hills explains.

# A sense of place

Jersey's historic buildings are a tangible part of the Island's distinctive cultural heritage. Together with a wealth of historic sites and landscapes, they reflect the history and development of the Island and make up the historic environment that is both the result of centuries of human activity and the framework within which contemporary life takes place.

Historic buildings are a unique source of information about Jersey's past and represent a considerable educational resource. People care about the historic environment – they value its familiarity and its memories – and there is an increasing awareness of the significance of history in our lives and an understanding of how old buildings and places can generate a sense of identity and stability, contributing to local character and a sense of place and enriching our quality of life. Each successive generation of Islanders inherits this rich legacy and has the responsibility to take decisions about its future.

Communities worldwide are becoming increasingly sensitive to these issues and demand that their governments safeguard important heritage assets. The value of historic buildings and places is recognised in Jersey legislation and in the Island being a signatory to various international conventions, such as the Granada Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe and the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta).

The obligations set out in these conventions are, to a large extent, met by the inclusion of our cultural heritage assets on the Register of Buildings and Sites of Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Importance in Jersey – a complete list of individual sites, buildings and places identified as being of cultural heritage value, accessible on-line at [www.gov.je](http://www.gov.je) or via [www.jerseyheritagetrust.org](http://www.jerseyheritagetrust.org).

The prerequisite for good decision-making about the future of an historic building or place is knowledge. We cannot care for the historic environment unless we understand what it is – without understanding what exists today, we cannot take sound decisions about its future. With this in mind, the management of the register and the assessment of buildings and places of cultural interest in Jersey were transferred from the Planning Department to the Jersey Heritage Trust in January 2005.

The Trust makes recommendations to the Minister for Planning and Environment on heritage protection, working in partnership with other local heritage organisations and individuals, including the Société Jersiaise, the National Trust and the Association of Jersey Architects, who sit on the Ministerial Registration and Listing Advisory Group – an invaluable forum for discussion and advice that provides an unrivalled source of specialist knowledge and detailed local scrutiny. The Trust also calls on the expert opinion of national organisations such as English Heritage and the Twentieth Century Society, as the case demands.

For the past two years, the Trust has undertaken research and investigation into more than a hundred historic buildings, providing knowledge to ensure that decisions about the designation, protection and management of the historic environment are soundly based. The Trust, in partnership with the Planning and

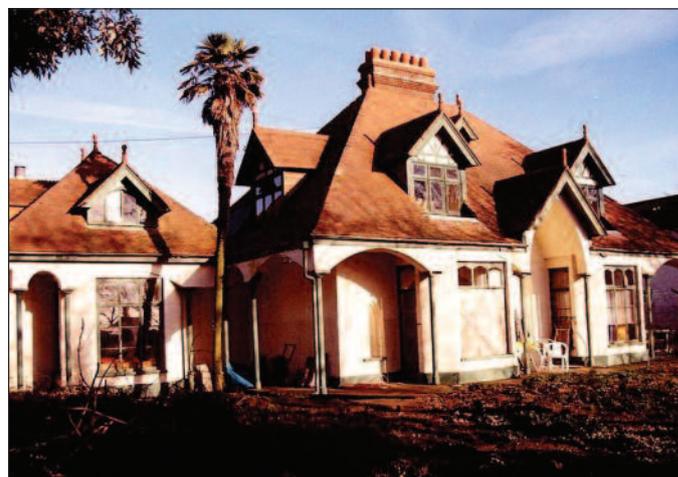
Environment Department, is also continuing to commission and manage detailed research into particular aspects of the built heritage – such as farmsteads and Methodist chapels. Each of these character studies deepens our understanding of the character of the wider historic built environment of the Island.

The range of buildings and sites researched by the Trust reflects Jersey's long history, and therefore includes archaeological sites, vernacular farmsteads, defensive forts and towers, Victorian town houses and 1960s social housing – each reflecting something important about Jersey's continuing evolution.

The following are examples of recent research and listing projects.

## La Fantaisie, St Saviour

The most significant buildings and archaeological sites included in the buildings register, such as La Fantaisie, are listed as Sites of Special Interest (SSI). La Fantaisie sits in an elevated position on Belvedere Hill, overlooking Howard Davis Park. It was built in 1819 and is a rare example of a house in the Cottage Ornée style, an architectural fashion that became popular in England at the end of the 18th century as part of the wider interest in Romanticism and the Picturesque. The house has unusual features, including vaulted corridors and gothic windows. It was the home of Victorian Bailiff John Hammond, whose portrait hangs in the Royal Court.



La Fantaisie



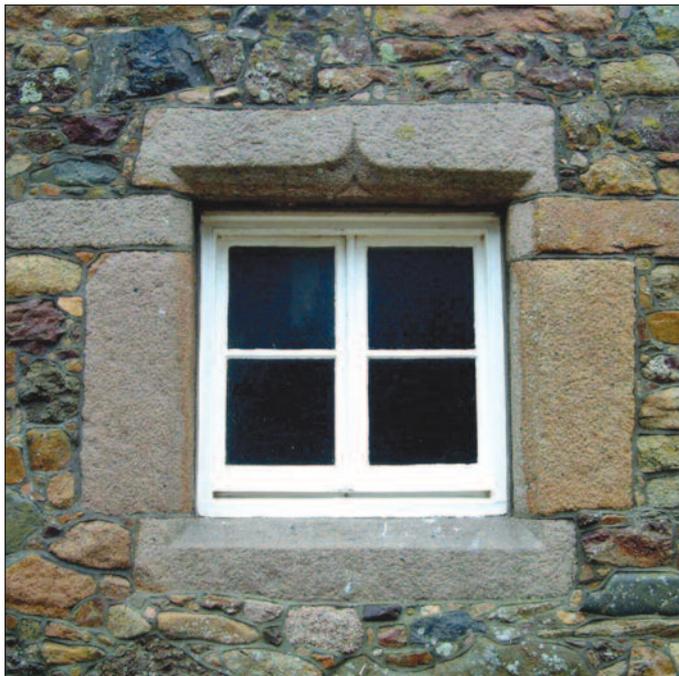
Gothic features

### Le Vouest, St Martin

Le Vouest was listed as a Site of Special Interest in May 2007, for its historical, archaeological and architectural quality. The farmstead has evolved on the site since the 15th century and this history is reflected in a vernacular architecture that uses indigenous building styles, local materials and traditional methods of construction. There is a significant survival of historic fabric and features, including a remarkable collection of chamfered windows with accoladed decoration cut into the lintels, ceilings with chamfered oak beams and decorative moulded joists and integral granite fireplaces. The house is also unusual in being visibly founded on rhyolite bedrock and containing more than 50% Écréhous gneiss in its construction, as well as an extensive use of Rozel puddingstone.



La Vouest farmstead



An early chamfered window with accoladed lintel

### St Mannelier, St Saviour

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in January 2007, the buildings visible today comprise a 1758 schoolroom and adjoining 1830s house. These are built on the site of the first formal school to be founded in Jersey in 1477. There is further archaeological interest of the site in that the school buildings are set on the edge of a circular field within which are the remains of an early chapel dedicated to St Mannelier – the circular field pattern being the historic enclosure of the chapel grounds. Although the character of the buildings was hidden under a layer of unsympathetic cement render in the 1950s, local residents recalled memories of the historic school, and research further revealed the special interest of the site.



St Mannelier façade



The rear of the eighteenth century building

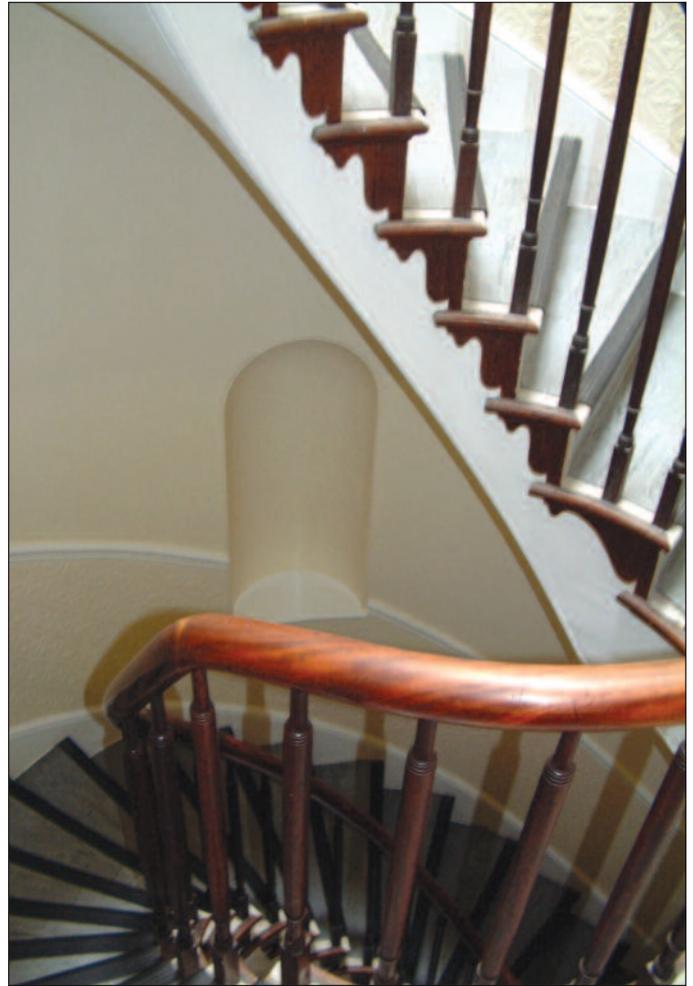


St Mannelier in 2006

## 12 Commercial Buildings, St Helier

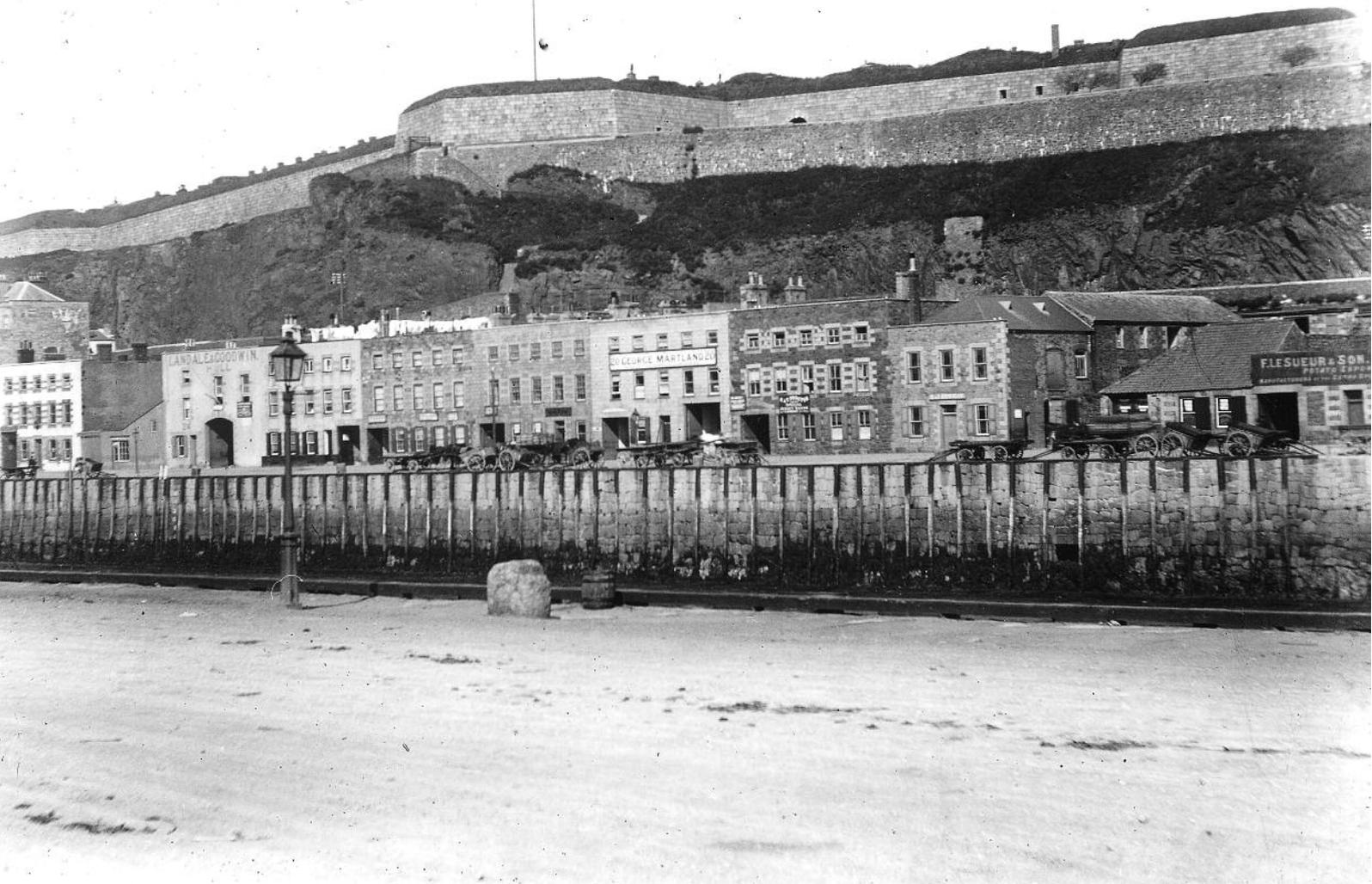
Listed as a Site of Special Interest in April 2007, this merchant's building was built in 1821 as part of Le Quai des Marchands – more commonly known as Commercial Buildings. Historically, the building combined offices on the ground floor with a residence on the upper floors – with a through passage leading to warehouses and yards behind. The granite façade rises to a parapet that masks a pair of hipped roofs, the height and style of the roof constrained so that it did not interfere with the line of fire from Fort Regent that had recently been completed on the hill above. The elegant interior includes a stair hall with a floor of chequered white and grey marble squares, a very fine geometrical mahogany staircase, panelled mahogany doors and fitted cupboards. Occupants of No.12 included F C Clarke, whose shipyard was located on the beach at West Park between 1844 and 1867, during which time he built 62 vessels.

Staircase in 12 Commercial buildings



Below: Sailing ship moored in front of no 12 Commercial Buildings





Above: Commercial buildings c.1810



### Warehouses at 21 Commercial Buildings, St Helier

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in April 2007, for their special historical and architectural value, a pair of granite warehouses and yards to the rear of 21 Commercial Buildings provide rare examples of early 19th-century warehousing surviving in the heart of St Helier's old harbour area. Built around 1840, the warehouses have granite façades and sturdily joisted timber flooring designed to take heavy loads. The original staircases with continuous newel-posts also survive, with some historic hoisting machinery.

21 Commercial building, interior



Lavoir in Le Blinerie, St Clement

### Lavoir, St Clement

The 19th-century lavoir at La Blinerie is a communal washing-place formed by the enclosing of a section of La Baudrette stream with granite walls, with a set of stone platforms leading down to the water's edge. Features such as the lavoir are characteristic of Jersey and combine with the Island's natural landscape to give a very strong sense of place. They also give us a glimpse into the Island's social and cultural history. The lavoir was listed as a Site of Special Interest for its historical, architectural and traditional interest in April 2007.

### Rosière Quarry

The Trust has carried out research on Rosière Quarry in order to inform future building conservation work and interpretation of the site. The quarry opened in the early 19th century, supplying high-class pink granite for building and ornamentation – including for the construction of the Victoria Embankment in London in the 1860s and the plinth for the statue of Queen Victoria in People's Park, unveiled in 1890. The powder magazine for the quarry works and other structures survive on the site, but most visible is the shell of the stone crusher shed – within which rocks were mechanically crushed and sifted and loaded into railway wagons. The quarry buildings are proposed as Sites of Special Interest.

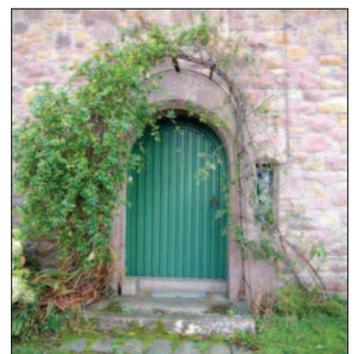
Quarry Building, Rosière Quarry, La Moye



Furze Cottage, St John

### Furze Cottage, St John

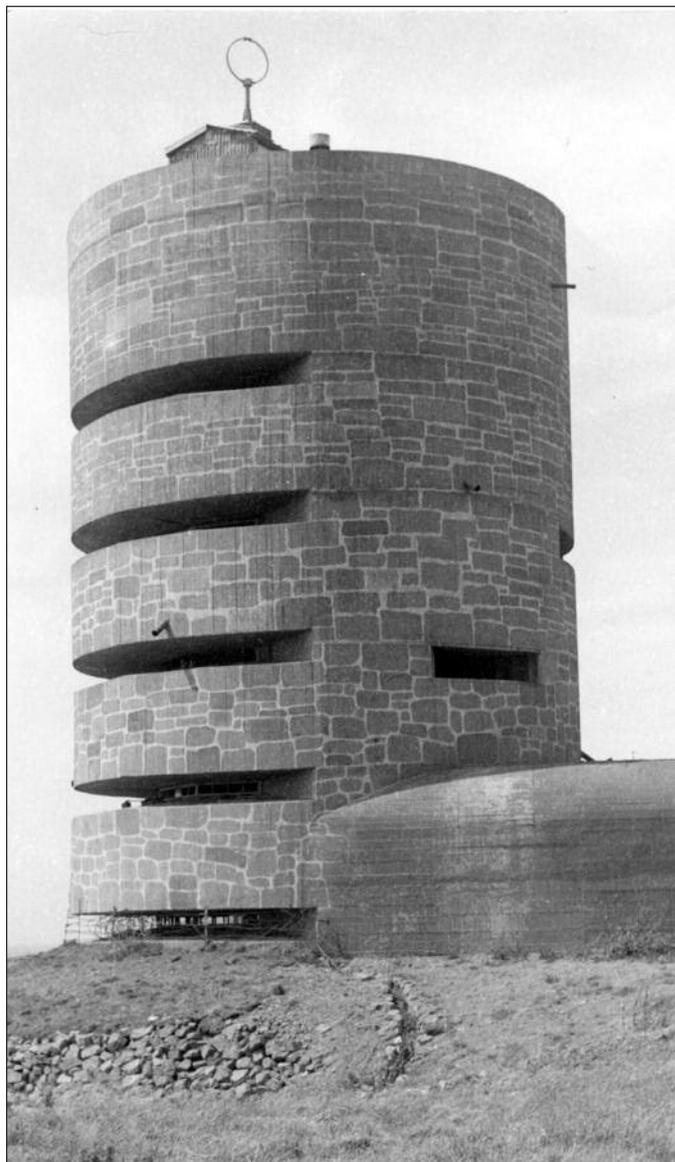
Listed as a Site of Special Interest in December 2006, the cottage was built circa 1903 in an architectural style inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement and by vernacular Jersey buildings. The building displays high-quality craftsmanship, composition and use of materials. Sir William Henry Venables Vernon (Bailiff 1899-1931) purchased a ruined house on the site in 1902 and built the cottage a year later as a summer retreat.



Doorway, Furze Cottage



The tower was used by Jersey's Marine Radio station until 2005



The tower carrying its Occupation camouflage

#### **MP2 Tower, St Brelade**

Listed as a Site of Special Interest in November 2006, the Naval artillery direction and range-finding tower MP2 (Marine Peilstände und Meßstellen) was constructed by the German occupying forces circa 1942. It is built of reinforced concrete, but was originally painted to resemble an 18th-century Jersey granite round tower. MP towers are unique to the Channel Islands, not being found anywhere else on the Atlantic Wall. The Jersey Heritage Trust produced a conservation statement for the tower ahead of its repair and refurbishment as a holiday let in 2006.

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