





PLC Architects has been actively working on the project since the **first site visit** took place in November 2009. The second phase of the project has been on site since May 2011 and completion is due in January 2012.

This presentation is a compilation of available information obtained from web sites, published books and National Archive documents and also includes an explanation of our role as the Project Architect, shedding light on the work process involved.

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LOCATION

OTHER FORTS IN THE SOLENT

OWNERSHIP HISTORY

FORT HISTORICAL FACTS

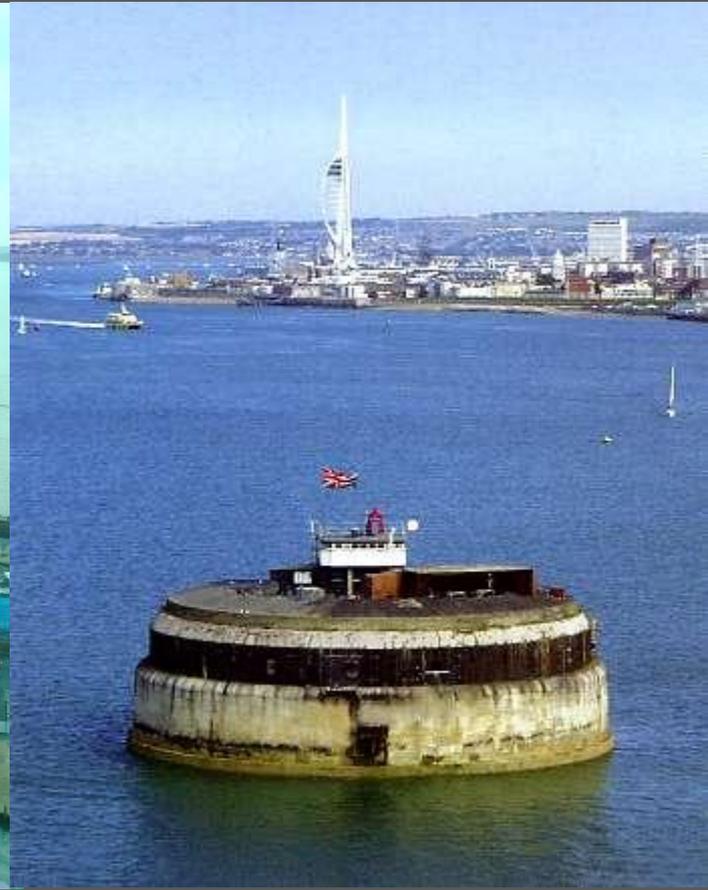
PLC ARCHITECTS INVOLVEMENT

EH CONSULTATION

UNUSUAL PROJECT
CONSERVATION
DESIGN
RESTORATION

FUTURE





Spitbank Fort is the nearest fort to the mainland; the **1km distance**; it is about a **15min boat journey** from Gunwharf Quays.



Spitbank Fort is one of a series of three forts in the Solent and smaller than the other two. **No Mans Land Fort**, which has been reported on in the press many times, is now used as private accommodation. **Horse Sand Fort** which is identical in size to No Mans Land is derelict. **St Helen's Fort**, is currently in the process of being renovated for private dwelling.

Clarenco (run by Mike Clare, former owner of Dreams bed company) bought the fort just days before it was due to be auctioned with a guide price of £750K in 2009.



Previous owner Neale
Brickwood bought the fort in
2005

Prior to this, it was opened in
the mid **1980's** as a
museum; and continued to be
used as a popular location for
venues.

Originally the fort was sold into
private ownership in 1982
following being declared surplus
to requirements by the Ministry
of Defence in the **1960's**.



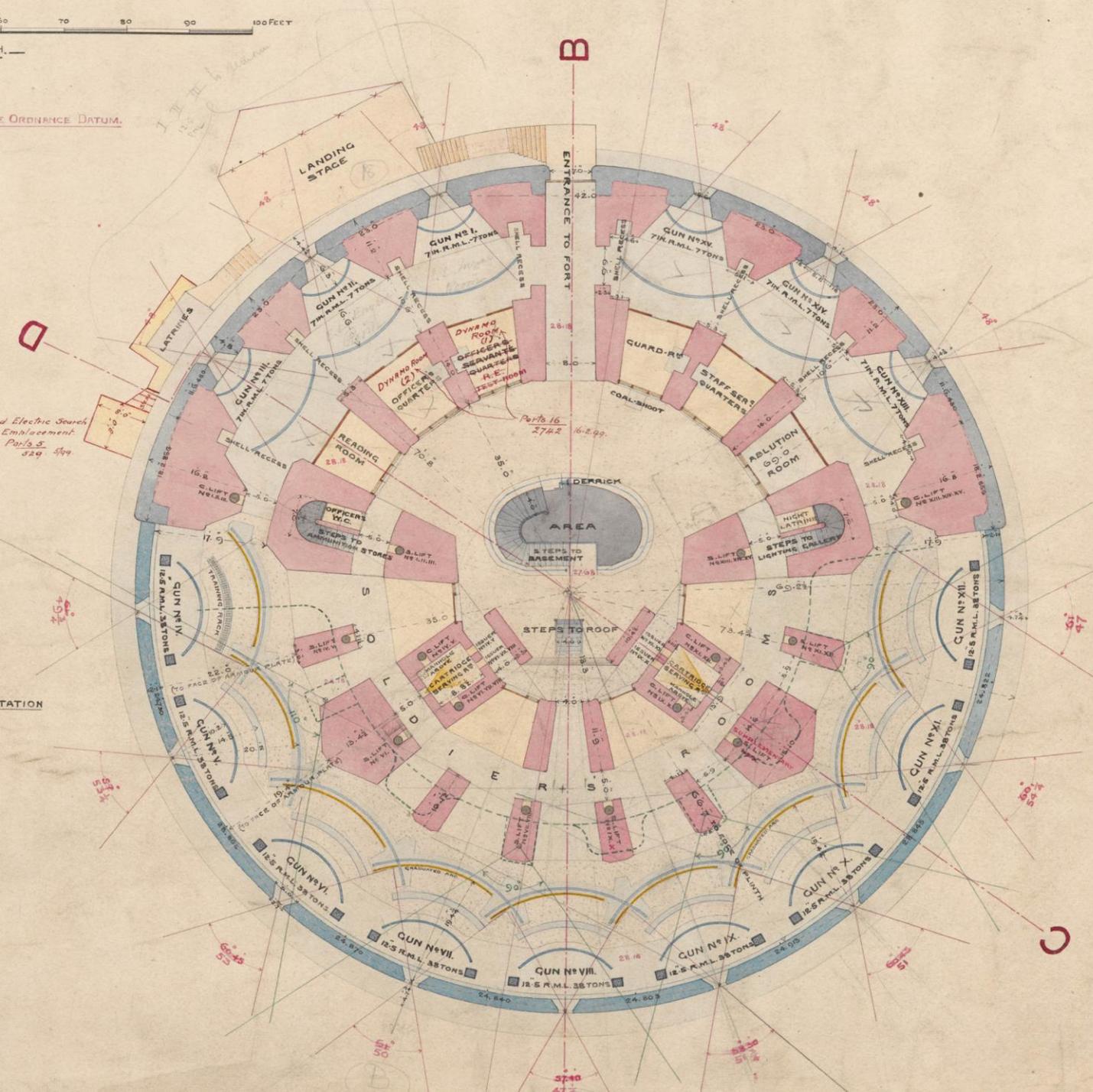


By the end of the **19th Century** the perceived naval threat To Portsmouth had changed, so fort has some changes.

Originally built in the **1860's** as part of a chain of land and sea forts to defend Portsmouth and it's dockyard against the French invasion.

The original cost of construction of Spitbank was £120K.





The Upper Level (Gun level) seaward (outer) blast walls 635mm (25") thick and composed of concrete, iron plate and teak laminate sandwiched in layers. The Harbour facing (inner) rooms are relatively less protected with brick-vaulted interiors and granite walls.





Two barrack rooms were located behind the guns for peacetime accommodation but there was only room for hammocks for the full compliment wartime garrison.

The monument was on English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' register as a priority Category D case but wasn't grant-aided by English Heritage.

The concrete roof was in a particularly bad state of

disrepair after years of water ingress due to failure of the asphalt surface.



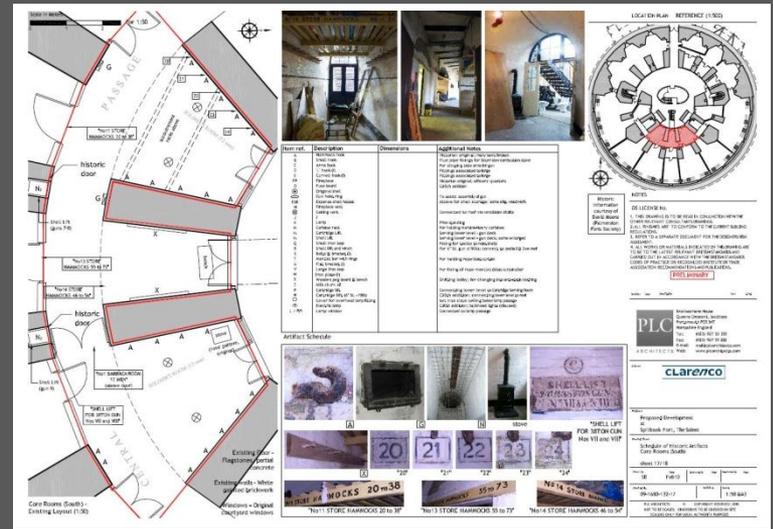
were commissioned to develop a scheme for a new use (place for a luxury venue). We co-ordinated with design work from other consultants as the Historic structure had very limited services available.

negotiated with the planning authority for **Change of Use application**, unravelling of complex Scheduled Ancient Monument, and planning issues.

Liaised with Palmerston Fort Society and the Local Conservation Officer for **all available information** relevant to the structure.

worked closely with an expert from English Heritage for **SMC application**, Preparing **Tender** documents, dealing with the main contractor for the duration of the project. The client managed the project , the **inspection** of some of the works being carried out by us.





English Heritage requested two separate SMC (Schedule Monument Consent) applications:

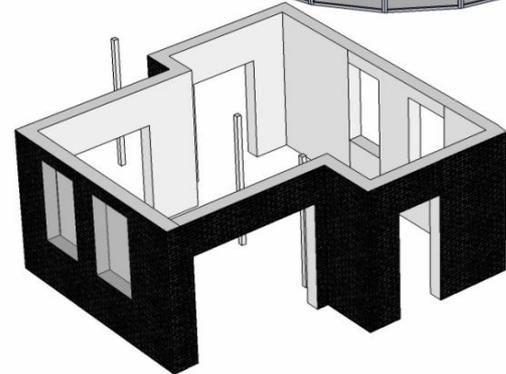
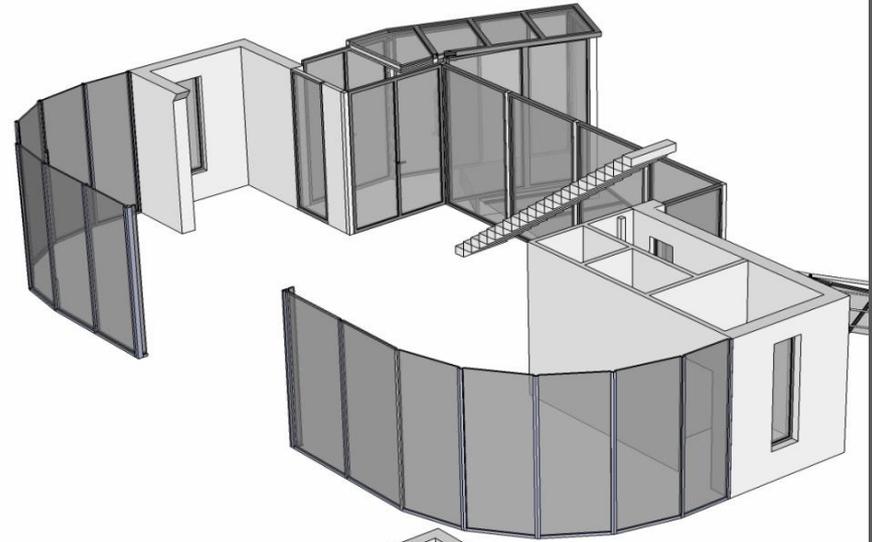
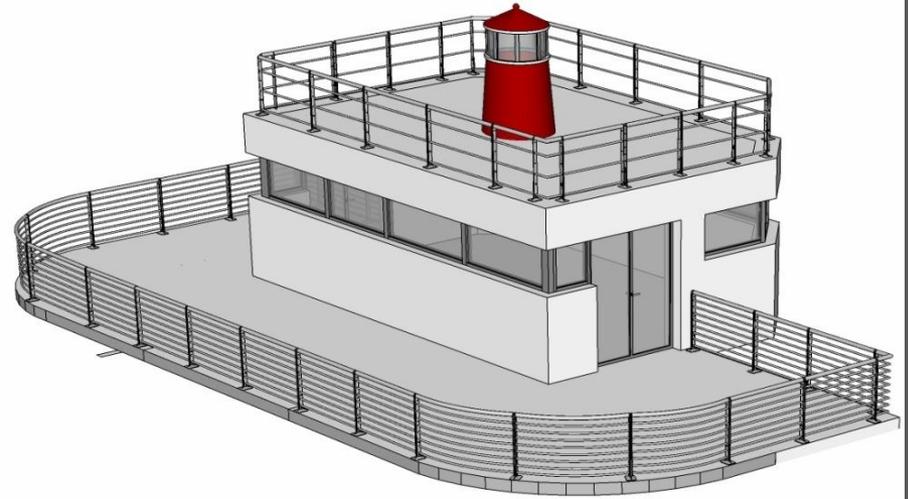
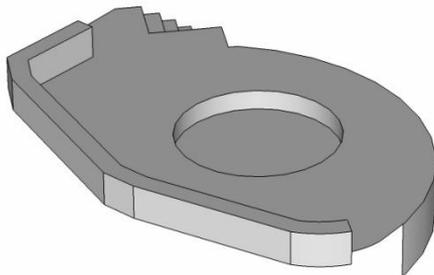
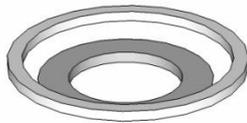
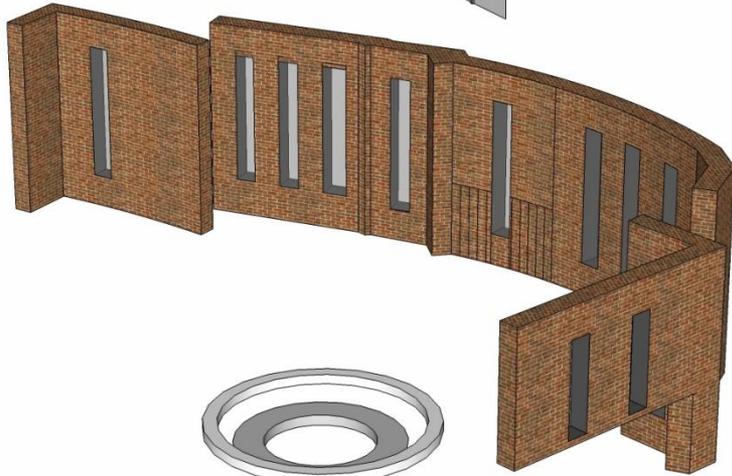
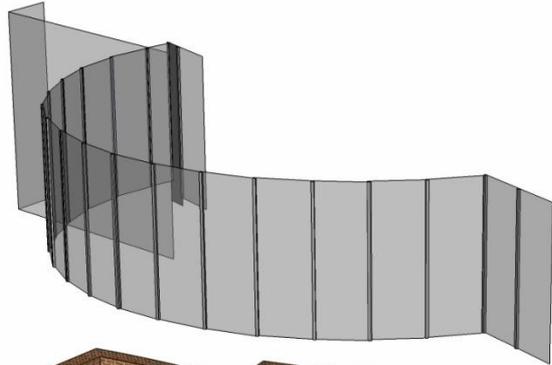
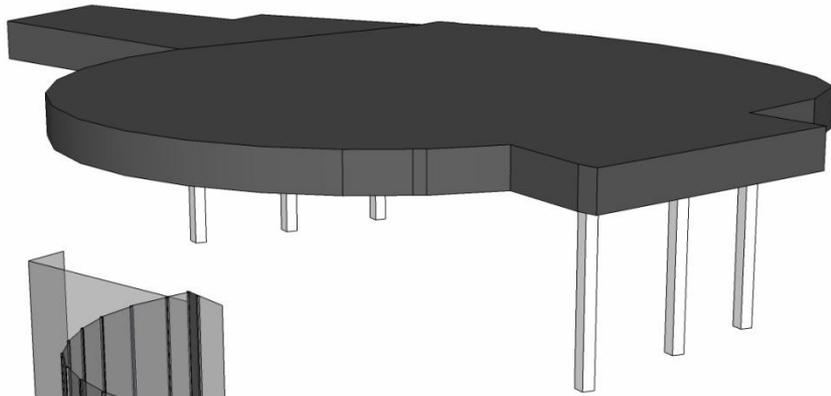
one for the initial project for roof repairs; and one for the rest of the refurbishment.

the historical condition survey was prepared with photographic records of the in situ fittings and artefacts,



The WWII structure and Lighthouse were subjected to various changes over the years and although initially we were asked to retain all elements, the detailed structural survey had discovered that the structures had **weathered badly** and were considered **unsafe**. Permissions then were granted to remove the worn out concrete deck and supporting steelwork from the WWII Structure and the entire second floor from the Lighthouse building.

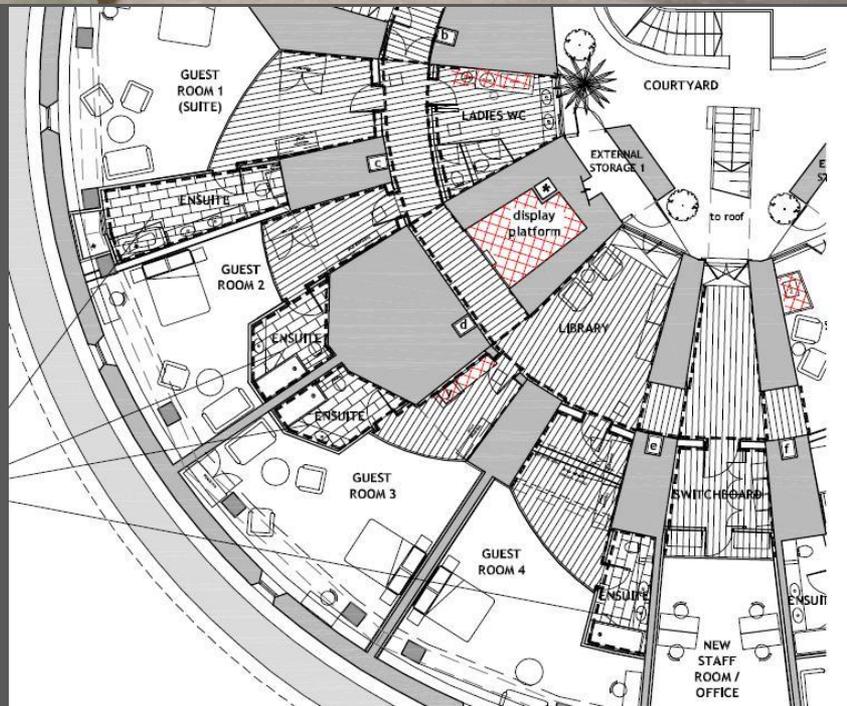




High quality, modern but discrete design additions were encouraged.



The Upper floor service distribution problem solved by mainly surface fixing under a new **raised floor** which was following the route of the circular corridor, then entering the guest rooms as a step feature.





English Heritage supported for the continued use of the original historic kitchen and pantry as historical display areas.

The final finishes and colours have been **approved** by English Heritage



Spitbank Fort
- very unusual project

Conservation,
Design,
Refurbishment.

Conservation

concrete roof areas repaired and the existing **asphalt** roof was replaced.

iron cladding cleaned, repaired and repainted.

the shelter concrete roof beams removed and a new concrete ring beam was added

the gun emplacements weatherproofed.

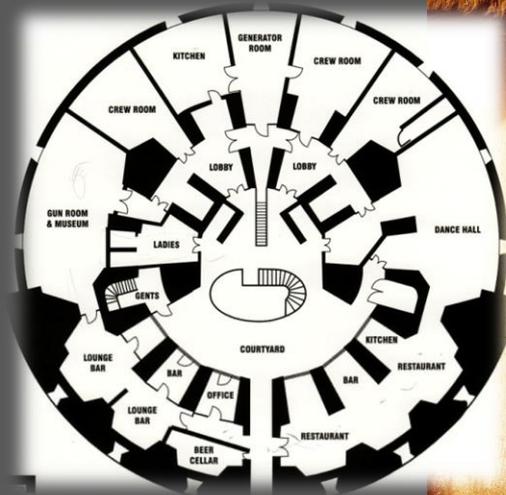


layers of previous paintwork removed from
internal brick walls

render removed from the original slate
ceilings to the Lower Level corridors and

rusting steel supports were treated

built up sand removed from the well



Design

The existing gun emplacements converted to be **external recreation** areas,

The shelter area to be a new 'well being / health center' with the addition of a **fully glazed frontage** to the Southern elevation,

A self-supporting **helipad** structure over the shelter area



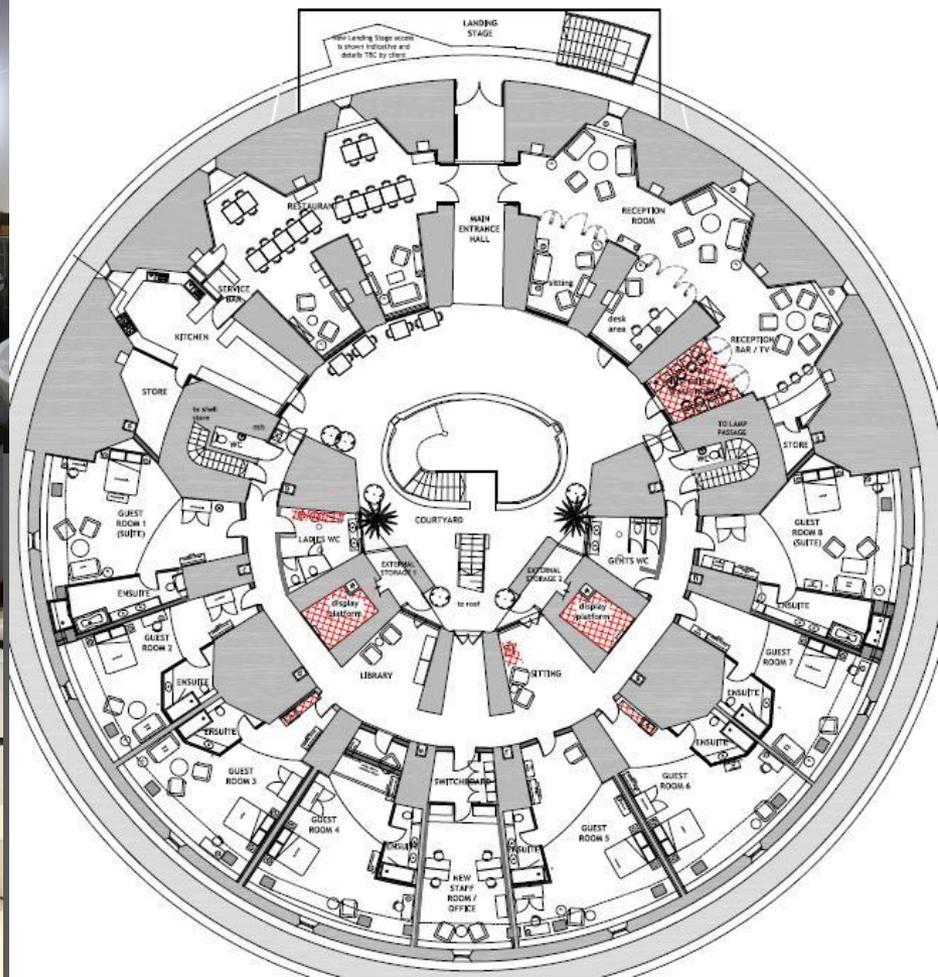
A new multi-use addition to the existing lighthouse formed as fully glazed extensions .The terrace above would consist of a large terrace surrounding the 'look out' section on the upper floor.



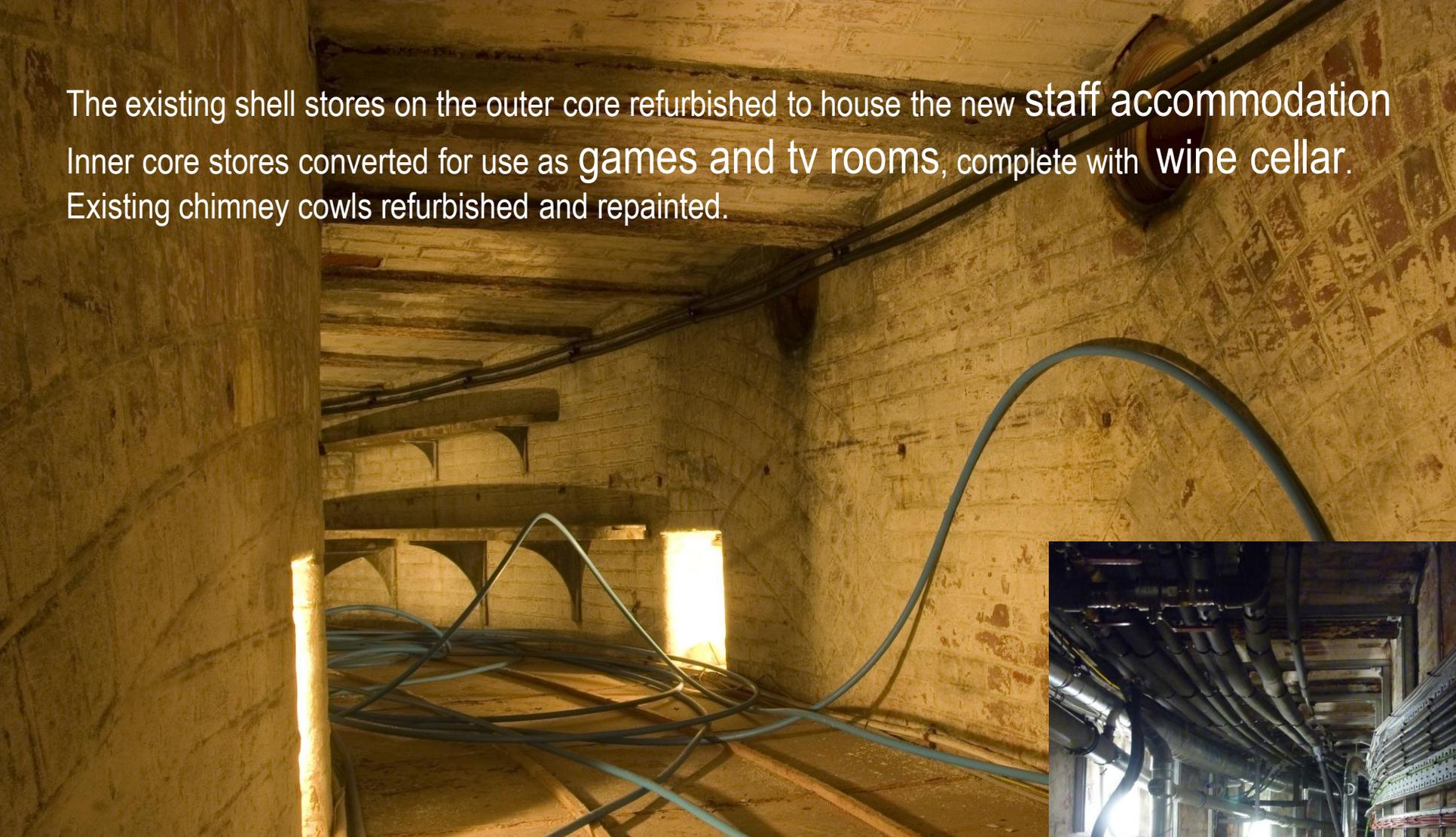
Refurbishment

The reinstatement of the original circular corridor has enabled free-flowing circulation . Original features like the officer's stove, the hot water storage and the hooks where the soldier's hammocks were hung are all refurbished and retained.

The eight guestrooms are located each with a small centrally located window.



The existing shell stores on the outer core refurbished to house the new staff accommodation
Inner core stores converted for use as games and tv rooms, complete with wine cellar.
Existing chimney cowls refurbished and repainted.

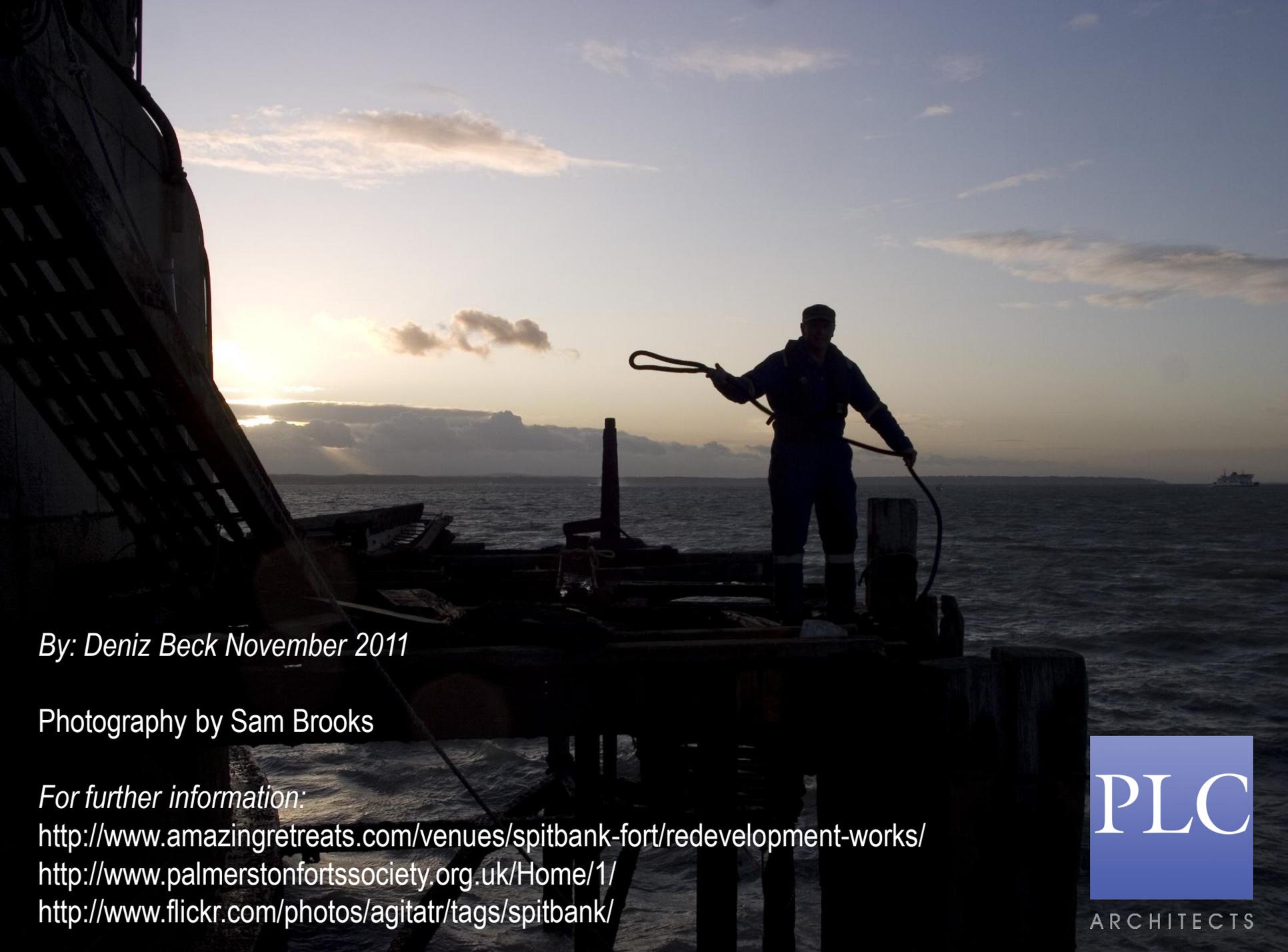


The Future

The refurbished monument will provide exclusive accommodation for 16 people, and function space for up to 50, and will be available for exclusive hire, special events and corporate use from Amazing Retreats which is owned by Clarenco.

The web site explains the newly restored Spitbank Fort as an *'iconic destination, truly unique and like no where you have ever stayed before. You will never forget your first visit to Spitbank Fort.'*





By: Deniz Beck November 2011

Photography by Sam Brooks

For further information:

<http://www.amazingretreats.com/venues/spitbank-fort/redevelopment-works/>

<http://www.palmerstonfortssociety.org.uk/Home/1/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/agitatr/tags/spitbank/>



ARCHITECTS