

**Method Statement for Archaeological Monitoring of repair of part of Upper Lighthouse
Roadway wall, Skellig Michael, Co. Kerry 2023.**

Ministerial Consent C0000819, Excavation license no. E004885, detection license no. R000463.

Alan Hayden

Archaeological Projects Ltd,

May 2023.



Skellig Michael, first ed. OS map showing the location of the section of the upper lighthouse roadway wall to be repaired.

The proposed works

A c.25m length of the parapet wall of the upper lighthouse roadway was damaged by stones fallen over the winter of 2021/2022 and is to be repaired. Much of the wall and roadway in this area was previously removed by a significant rockfall in 1951 and some of the wall to be repaired was only built in 2018. This length of the roadway was fully excavated, recorded and refilled in 2017-2018.

The repair of the wall will be undertaken by the OPW masons and crew following the usual method used on the lighthouse walls on Skellig. Local stone, matching that in the wall in size and character will be used for repairs. Lime mortar will be used as bonding, as in the original work, but the faces of the wall will not be pointed and gaps and small chambers will be left to allow birds utilise them for nesting. The parapet wall will be capped with Valentia slate slabs, as again previously used on the lighthouse roadway walls on Skellig.



Photographs of the damaged section of the wall.

The archaeologist will monitor the repair of the wall which is likely to require the taking down of much of its length but nothing new is expected to turn up, as to date, no earlier cultural material has been found in the lighthouse walls as they were built from the stone blasted from the rock at the start of the lighthouse construction process. Part of the wall is also a recent rebuild and this area of the roadway has also been fully excavated and recorded previously.

The OPW have allocated sufficient time and resources to facilitate the archaeological monitoring and an ornithologist will be on hand to monitor the works.

Should anything of significance be uncovered during the works the archaeologist will inform the OPW and NMS archaeologist and will adhere to any recommendations made.

Sampling strategy

It is not envisaged that any samples will be taken by the archaeologist.

Finds retrieval strategy

Given its location it is highly unlikely that any of the stone in the wall will come from an earlier cultural context. To date no earlier cultural material has been found in the lighthouse walls as they were built from the stone blasted from the rock at the start of the lighthouse construction process.

Timescale

The date of the start and the duration of the proposed works are in the control of the OPW. They will also be dependent on weather and other factors and are unknown to the archaeologist at this stage.

Reporting

After the completion of works the archaeologist submit a report on the monitoring of the works.