

APPENDIX 4. 4 – ST AGNES LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TABLE – CLIFFS AND BEACHES

Character Area: Cliffs and Beaches			
Character Attribute	Ward - Mithian	Ward - Porthtowan	Ward – St Agnes
Topography and drainage			
What is the shape of the land?	High shaley unstable cliffs with plateau top. The cliffs increase quickly in height from the beach and are highest where they meet the plateau. From the midpoint of the plateau onwards towards Hanover Cove the cliffs are lower but surmounted by a heather clad very steep slope. The cliff top path runs along the top of this slope but dips down in the shallow cliff top valley and mine workings to near the top of the lower cliffs at Hanover Cove The beach is at the end of Jericho valley. Sand and shingle are largely covered at high tide with exposed rock at low tide. Separated from Trevaunance Cove by a jumble of large rocks.	High, dramatic cliffs, South West Coast Path along entire coastline, SSSI land, Sandy beach (bedrock in winter), small sand dune area top of beach.	Undulating, varying between the edge of the elevated plateau and dropping down into valleys. The cliffs themselves tend to be precipitous to the North of Newdowns and less steep to the South Beaches, generally level and either mix of sand and gravel (Trevaunance Cove) or shingle (Star Beach)
What water is present?	Stream from Jericho valley runs across the beach	Stream at valley bottom, runs down beach into sea.	The Sea. Streams and adits discharge water onto the beaches.
Data source	<i>OS Map; aerial photographs</i>		
Biodiversity			
Does the area contain areas of 'semi natural habitat?	Mine spoil mainly towards Hanover Cove is partially recolonised on the cliff top. WWII airfield installations in the transitional zone are covered in vegetation. The cliff top area is a designated site of Special Scientific Interest and a Statutory Nature Conservation Area. Spoil immediately adjacent to the beach has minimal growth associated with traffic. NT car park.	Natural habitat, gorse, thrift heather & bramble. Small areas of short grass with badger Setts. Land windswept, generally bereft of trees. Some stunted trees in gardens West of beach, some patches of montbretia. Godrevy to St Agnes SAC runs from north-western cliff edge of Porthtowan beach. Designated under article 4 (4) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) for the following Annex 1 habitats: Temperate Atlantic wet heaths with Erica ciliaris and Erica tetralix; and European dry heaths and Annex 11 plant species Early Genitian Gentianella anglica. SSSI encompasses a large portion of Porthtowan beach and is nationally designated for its extensive maritime heathland & grassland scattered scrub and rare plants.	Cliff tops and slopes generally covered by Gorse and Heather with some areas of Bracken. This, along with numerous area of mine waste could be expected to provide cover for various species of birds, snakes and lizards Peregrine Falcons are believed to inhabit parts of the cliffs. The cliffs provide nesting sites for many sea birds.
What elements of the character could support protected species?	Sea bird nesting sites on cliffs and rocky outcrops at the base. Away from coast path there is little human interference. Common spotted orchid favoured by cliff top mine waste areas	All of above elements could support protected species. The cliffs and off shore rocks at Porthtowan are also designated for the large breeding seabird colonies.	In some areas where the bases of cliffs are tidal numerous rock pools and their associated sea life. Also mink are commonly spotted between Trevellas and St Agnes.
Are there any invasive species?	No invasive species seen	There are no invasive species.	There are no invasive species.
Data source	<i>CWT Wildlife notes and maps, and local knowledge</i>		

Land cover and Land Use			
What is the land used for?	Disused mine workings. World Heritage site. WWII airfield with scheduled historical monuments- Aircraft dispersal protection shelters and pill boxes in transitional zone Airfield has current civil aviation use.	Developed land to beach, shops, food outlets, holiday lets, engine house (now holiday let), car parks. play park and public house. Dense development top of cliff to East, sporadic development along cliff side to West. Very popular surfing/bathing beach, popular coastal walks.	Used for leisure – contains sections of the S.W.C.P. Evidence of some footpath erosion by mountain bikes? Beaches used for leisure purposes. Buildings related to fishing and tourism industry.
What is the vegetation cover?	Heather and stunted gorse with patches of stunted scrub and bracken. Rough grassland is transitional between cliff top heath and the airfield and Cross Coombe medieval fields.	Land cover East, heathland, small areas of short grassy banks West, Some stunted, windswept trees in gardens and large patches of montbretia Beach area – small area of sand dune, Atlantic wet heaths with Erica ciliaris and Erica tetralix; dry heaths of early Gentian (Gentianella anglica). Maritime heathland & grassland, scrub communities with rare plants.	Large areas of Heather and Gorse as well as some Bracken interspersed with mine tips and spoil ground
Data source	<i>OS Map; aerial photographs, local knowledge</i>		
Field and woodland pattern			
Where is the woodland located?	No woodland.	There is no woodland in this location.	Very little woodland due to the very exposed nature of the cliffs and the salt air? One small section of stunted oaks and may trees in a sheltered low lying portion of the cliff.
What size are the fields	No fields on immediate cliff top.	Land to East along coast path is undulating, going from heathland to improved fields, back to heathland. One field, large with no hedges, other fields on hinterland, medium and small. Land to West, small improved fields, some grazed.	None close to cliff edge.
What are the hedges made of?		Mixture of banked and Cornish Stone hedges, generally overgrown, some broken.	Very few hedges located on cliff edge. One dry stone wall (stone from mining waste?) running down to the cliff edge near Tubby's Head. Thought to be a mineral boundary?
What is the character of the hedge?	Hedges only on margin of Cross Coombe field system. Low Cornish hedges with grass and occasional brambles as only vegetation. Post and wire on inside of hedges.	Hedges are sculpted by exposure, no trees, hedges overgrown with bramble, thrift, etc. with buffer of vegetation to either side, generally bramble, thrift, gorse. To the West, some large patches of montbretia. Hedges not fenced.	Typical dry stone wall with very little vegetation.
Data source	<i>OS Map; aerial photographs, CWT Wildlife notes, and visit the area to confirm details</i>	Environmental Mapping (Trees and Woodland)	

<p>Settlement pattern</p> <p>How is the development distributed?</p> <p>Age and type of buildings and their relationship with the landscape are they</p> <p>What are the distinctive elements of the buildings?</p>	<p>No settlement or development on cliff margin or adjacent to the beach</p>	<p>Development surrounding beach is generally linear. Dense development top of cliff East, intermittent development cliff side West. Surf Life Saving Club Hut top of beach. Wheal Lushington Engine House at the entrance to beach.</p> <p>SLSC 1960s, in poor condition. Wheal Lushington Engine House from mining industry. Public House, probably 19th century other properties at beach level 20th Century. Properties top of cliff East 20th /21st century, some extensions and new builds over recent years. To West, some properties date from 19th century to 2015. Roofs of all properties slate or tile, large green spaces between each property on the West side of the cove.</p> <p>Only distinctive property in this location is Engine House, unfortunately, it has lost its chimney stack.</p>	<p>Individual, scattered houses on cliff edge above ruined harbour at Trevaunance Cove. Commercial premises and beach chalets also at Trevaunance Cove.</p> <p>Cliff edge buildings dating from 19c although some have been redeveloped in last twenty years. Individual properties and terraces.</p> <p>Generally local stone / slate roofs.</p>
<p>Data source</p>	<p><i>OS Map; aerial photographs, Historic Environment information, and visit the area to confirm details</i></p>		
<p>Transport pattern</p> <p>What is the character of the roads?</p> <p>Describe the public rights of way</p> <p>Are the roads and paths part of the historic field pattern?</p> <p>Are there bridges?</p>	<p>Minor access roads to the beach are narrow steep and winding.</p> <p>There is a road on the airfield perimeter. No public motorized access.</p> <p>Coast path. Steep path up from beach improved with wooden risers. Further up the slope is deeply rutted from foot traffic and water erosion. Erosion also towards Hanover cove.</p> <p>There is a solid stone footbridge across the stream over the beach.</p>	<p>All roads minor. East side, a straight road to car park changes to private, potholed track to beach, properties etc. there is a pavement. West side of cove, minor road to properties, SLSC and beach. Pavement intermittent. Steep minor, single track winding lane up Westcliffe to properties and coastal path. There are no pavements or verges.</p> <p>Public rights of way regularly used, can become muddy after rain generally good condition. Signage by coloured arrows and footpath signs. There are no stiles.</p> <p>Roads at beach level, not part of the historic field pattern. Numerous mine workings to West, paths could be part of the mining industry.</p> <p>There are no bridges.</p>	<p>Private Road serving properties on the "Point" at Trevaunance Cove. No pavements or verges.</p> <p>This area contains a section of the South West Coast Path (SWCP). Generally in good condition, with some management – e.g. steps but majority is unmanaged with some light erosion. Regularly used. Way markers, direction signs and warning signs (e.g. dangerous cliff edge) in evidence.</p> <p>Yes, one in Trevellas Coombe. Stone, arch bridge crossing stream.</p>
<p>Data source</p>	<p><i>OS Map; aerial photographs local knowledge and visit the area to confirm details</i></p>	<p>Environmental Mapping (Access and Rights of Way)</p>	

Historic Features			
Are there features in the landscape?	Mine spoil heaps and shafts especially towards Hanover Cove. WWII airfield relics recorded in Land use Hanover Cove is the protected site of the wreck of the Hanover.	West side of beach, cliff face several adits from mining industry. Engine House at entrance to beach. WW2 Pill Box, back of sand dunes, covered with sand pile. Mine dumps and capped mine shafts to West along coastal path. There are no trees, railway, bridges etc.	The restored / preserved Engine Houses of Wheal Coates and Towanroath. Open cast copper mine (Wheal Luna) dating from at least 1528! 19 th century ore bins. Ruined harbour and mining adits at Trevaunance Cove. Various mine adits visible on the cliff faces (Photo 10). Mine dumps in evidence. Cameron Estate – former WW2 Anti-Aircraft Training establishment borders the cliffs. Concrete bases for AA guns clearly visible.
The features will have their own setting.	No tree cover in exposed setting. Relatively level cliff top allows appreciation of features from a distance.	The capped mine shafts at cliff top and associated adits on the cliff face are a magnificent feature from the mining era and should be protected, managed and retained.	Wheal Coates, especially, is set in an especially isolated, barren landscape surrounded by its own mine waste. Desolate but beautiful!
Data source	<i>OS Map; Use local knowledge</i>		
Condition			
In what state/appearance are the characteristics of the area?	Mine spoil heaps have only partial vegetation cover	WW2 Pill Box degraded and covered with sand pile. Engine House now holiday let. In good condition but chimney stack missing.	Typical cliff faces, subject to erosion and occasional cliff falls caused by weathering and wave action. Engine Houses at Wheal Coates have been restored / preserved in a sympathetic way.
Are there areas where improvements could be made to enhance the character of the area?	Further stabilization of coast path. Information stations near the old airfield monuments for the benefit of those using the cliff path.	Mixed property styles surrounding engine house, no local stone and nothing in character with engine house, this is totally inappropriate development, surrounding such an historic feature. Power lines to properties West of beach placed underground. This is the coastal path (original path very dangerous) and the power lines are unsightly.	No enhancements appropriate; management of paths and evasive species are the only activities considered necessary.
How is the area managed?	The immediately adjacent valley floor is owned by the National Trust. It maintains the car park, mining buildings and features and heathland.	Sand dunes destroyed, new plantings on dune area by Cornwall Council in an attempt to re-introduce the dunes, providing protection from windblown sand and sea defence.	Very much unmanaged apart from some footpath signage and maintenance of damaged / eroded footpaths. Area is left to nature. Very little fencing apart from one section of wire fencing at Trevellas.
Data source	<i>Use local knowledge and visit the area to confirm details</i>		

<p>Aesthetic and sensory</p> <p>Describe the level of tranquillity,</p> <p>How is the landscape experienced?</p> <p>How will the experience of the area change through the seasons?</p> <p>What is the level of light pollution at night?</p>	<p>Sky lark song and sea bird calls and very occasional noise from small aircraft. In the holiday season the path is well used by walkers.</p> <p>Cliffs exposed to all winds. The beach is sheltered from South and Easterly winds. Prevailing wind is south westerly</p> <p>No adjacent light source.</p>	<p>Coast paths in both directions, numerous bird song sea bird sounds. Sea on this North Coast roars in to shore, waves crashing on cliffs below. No artificial noise, very calming. Village & beach noisy hustle & bustle in summer, quiet in winter.</p> <p>Cliff paths, rugged, windswept, sculptured by strong winds, feeling of remoteness. Beach level, (Summer) noise of families on beach/in sea, Lifeguard instructions, music, traffic, car alarms.</p> <p>Winter, strong winds/gales, Spring, generally much calmer. Heathland colour changes, yellow gorse to pink thrift to purple heather, plants, Very calming. Summer -The village is noisy hustle & bustle with South Westerly gentle winds. Winter – very quiet, extremely strong North/Westerly winds.</p> <p>Some downward street lighting on road leading to West side of beach. Security lighting from most properties. New development on Westcliffe extensive outside lighting.</p>	<p>Mostly unaffected by man-made noise apart from some aircraft noise from Trevellas Airfield. Birdsong / Gull noise. Sound of waves breaking on foot of cliffs.</p> <p>Exposed, often windswept by prevailing SW winds. Real sense of remoteness and untouched in most areas by modern development.</p> <p>Very little other than through prevailing weather conditions.</p> <p>Very low light pollution.</p>
<p>Data source</p>	<p><i>Use local knowledge and visit the area to confirm details</i></p>		
<p>Distinctive features</p> <p>Specific features.</p> <p>The features will have their own setting.</p>	<p>WWII airfield installations, largely overgrown easily seen on level cliff top. The coastal panorama is from St Agnes head to Penhale point with Carter's (Gull) Rocks off Penhale Point. There are many opening of mine galleries and mineral stains on the cliff face at Cligga Head. This is clearly seen from the path at the other side of Hanover Cove but otherwise can only be seen from the sea.</p>	<p>Listed engine house, power lines to all properties. Building types mixed, with exception of engine house, no local stone for construction. Adits on cliff face, capped mine shafts on cliff tops (West of beach) No stiles on coastal path, some granite gateposts, many gates broken or none existent.</p>	<p>Historic buildings – Wheal Coates, ruined harbour. Incredible views, both of the sea and up and down the coast. Very little evidence of man-made development, especially modern.</p>
<p>Data source</p>	<p><i>Use local knowledge, Historic Environment information</i></p>	<p>Environmental Mapping (Heritage Designations and Biodiversity and Geodiversity)</p>	
<p>Views</p> <p>Are there any important vantage points?</p>	<p>There are vantage points and panoramas along the whole of the cliff top. Near the top of the stepped slope from the beach towards the cliff top there is a view of Trevaunance Cove and St Agnes village with the Beacon behind. The panorama includes the cliffs at Blue Hills Trevellas Porth beach and up Jericho Valley. On a small spoil heap near a capped mine shaft at the highest point of the cliff as well as the coastal perspective from St Agnes Head to Penhale Point the wind Farm at Carland Cross and Mithian Church at Chiverton Cross can be seen in a 360degree sweep. Also in the distance the Bassett monument at Carn Brea.</p>	<p>Magnificent, far reaching sea and coastal views from coast paths. Vantage points from entire length of coast paths. Value of the countryside, wild, windswept landscape, coastline and sea together, watching birds, sea, waves, surfer's</p>	<p>This entire character area provides incredible vantage points from the cliff path. Of great importance since this is one of the few areas anywhere in the Parish you can enjoy such beauty, solitude and incredible views with very little evidence of man's recent interference!</p>
<p>Data source</p>	<p><i>OS Map; Use local knowledge</i></p>		

<p>Key characteristics</p> <p>What features stand out from completing the assessment sheet as being a key characteristic of the area?</p>	<p>Exposed high unstable cliffs typical of North Cornwall coast. No adjacent settlement.</p> <p>In Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Mining Heritage Area. No adjacent settlement.</p> <p>Small cove with steep winding narrow access roads and small NT car park.</p>	<p>Stunning views from coastal paths, the historic adits on the high dramatic cliff face, Habitat Directives for various plant species. Designated for large breeding seabird colonies on cliffs and off shore rocks. Engine house entrance to beach, magnificent surfing beach.</p>	<p>Expansive views, drama of the sea in all seasons, beauty, solitude and its relative unspoiltness!</p>
<p>Relationship to the adjacent assessment area(s)</p>	<p>Coarse grassland transitional between cliff top herbiage and improved grassland on inland areas (airfield and Cross Coombe medieval field system).</p>	<p>This character area is of very limited extent and grades imperceptibly into steeply sloping land before shallowing slightly where intermediate sloping land is encountered. Beach merges into valley bottom.</p>	<p>Transition between the cliff area and surrounding landscape is quite immediate since once the cliff edge is left, the intermediate sloping land which is the constant adjacent character type presents a totally different character.</p>