

ST AGNES PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TABLE

CHARACTER AREA: ST AGNES PARISH – Cliffs and beaches		
Character Attribute	Landscape reference guide	ST AGNES PARISH
Topography and drainage	What is the shape of the land?	Frequently high, dramatic cliffs increasing rapidly in height from beaches to high points coinciding with plateau in Mithian ward. Around St Agnes village, cliffs more precipitous to the north, less steep to the south. Sandy beach with small dune at Porthtowan. Sand and gravel beach at Trevaunance Cove, shingle at Star Beach. All covered at high tide, exposed rock at low tide especially near Trevaunance.
	What water is present?	Mithian, Porthtowan and St Agnes wards have streams in valley bottoms discharging into the sea.
Data source	<i>OS Map; aerial photographs</i>	

<p>Biodiversity</p>	<p>Does the area contain areas of 'semi natural habitat?</p> <p>What elements of the character could support protected species?</p> <p>Are there any invasive species?</p>	<p>Cliff tops and heathland behind provide habitats of heather, grassland and scattered scrub (gorse, heather, bramble, bracken). Mine spoil offers habitats for birds, snakes, lizards and butterflies.</p> <p>Cliffs and rocky outcrops support nesting birds; there are large breeding colonies in the Porthtowan ward. Rock pools within the inter-tide zone are rich in life. Mine waste areas support unusual species assemblage.</p> <p>No invasive species noted. Although mink are commonly seen in St Agnes ward.</p>
<p>Data source</p>		<p><i>CWT Wildlife notes and maps, and local knowledge</i></p>

<p>Field and woodland pattern</p>	<p>Where is the woodland located</p> <p>What size are the fields</p> <p>What are the hedges made of?</p> <p>What is the character of the hedge?</p>	<p>No woodland within this character area, except for a very small section of stunted Oak and Hawthorn in sheltered lower cliff at St Agnes.</p> <p>No fields, although remnant patterns can be seen immediately above cliffs behind Newdowns Head, and north of West Towan House.</p> <p>Very few hedges on cliff edge; an exception being near Tubby's Head.</p> <p>Typically dry stone, lacking vegetation.</p>
<p>Data source <i>OS Map; aerial photographs, CWT Wildlife notes and maps, Historic Environment information and visit the area to confirm details</i></p>		

Historic Features	<p>Are there features in the landscape?</p> <p>The features will have their own setting.</p>	<p>Mine spoil and shafts especially near Hanover Cove and WWII airfield relics. At Porthtowan, engine house at entrance to beach, cliff-face adits and further west mine dumps and capped shafts.</p> <p>Wheal Coates and Towanroath engine houses and open-cast copper mine (Wheal Luna 1528), ruined harbour and adits at Trevaunance Cove. Wheal Coates is particularly emblematic.</p>
Data source	<p><i>Use local knowledge, Historic Environment information; aerial photographs and visit the area to confirm details</i></p>	

Condition

In what state/appearance are the characteristics of the area?

Cliff faces subject to erosion and cliff falls. Mine spoil heaps have partial vegetation cover, Engine houses restored and preserved in sympathetic way.

Are there areas where improvements could be made to enhance the character of the area?

Management of paths and control of invasive species necessary to further stabilise coastal path. The placing of power lines underground to the west of Porthtowan Beach would be an improvement, as would the refusal of further unsympathetic developments.

How is the area managed

National Trust manages much of the area but parts "left to nature" which is appropriate.

Data source

Use local knowledge and visit the area to confirm details

Aesthetic and sensory

Describe the level of tranquillity

Little "artificial" noise, tranquil, calming sounds of sea birds, waves breaking and the wind. However, Porthtowan village and beach are noisy in summer, less so in winter.

How is the landscape experienced?

Real sense of remoteness in many locations.

How will the experience of the area change through the seasons?

Changes little other than wind direction and intensity through the seasons. Strong winter gales can be intense experience. Heathland changes colour through flowering and die back of bracken.

What is the level of light pollution at night?

Very little light pollution except for street and security lighting in immediate vicinity of Porthtowan.

Data source

Use local knowledge and visit the area to confirm details

Distinctive features	Specific Features. The features will have their own setting.	See also Historic Features where following are mentioned; Wheal Coates, WWII airfield, Engine House (minus stack) at Porthtowan. Incredible views along coastline and out to sea; panoramic. Evidence of past mining activity; spoil heaps on land, adits on cliff face.
Data source <i>Use local knowledge, Historic Environment information</i>		
Views	Are there any important vantage points?	Vantage points and panoramic views along the whole of the cliff top. Views inland from some locations e.g. Jericho Valley.
Data source <i>OS Map; Use local knowledge</i>		

Key characteristics	What features stand out from completing the assessment sheet as being a key characteristic of the area.	<p>Stunning views from coastal path, the drama of the sea in all seasons and relative lack of human interference. Coves with steep winding paths. Bird life including nesting locations. Mining history; engines houses, adits and spoil.</p>
Relationship to the adjacent assessment area(s)	The transition between this landscape character area and the adjacent one.	<p>Transition from coarse grasses and heathland to improved grassland is often quite immediate as field enclosures become a feature of adjacent areas (particularly Intermediate sloping), which is generally lacking on this Character Area.</p>

List existing evidence base documents used to complete this assessment:

- Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment 2007 – Character Area CA11: Redruth, Camborne and Gwenap
Character Area CA12: St Agnes
Character Area CA14: Newlyn Downs