

ST AGNES PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TABLE

CHARACTER AREA: ST AGNES PARISH – ST AGNES BEACON		
Character Attribute	Landscape reference guide	ST AGNES BEACON
Topography and drainage	<p>What is the shape of the land?</p> <p>What water is present?</p>	<p>The Beacon is a granite outcrop/intrusion formed in an almost a perfect dome shape, at 192 metres, with specific ridgelines difficult to define. The hill slopes more steeply on its seaward side. It is the highest point in the area.</p> <p>No water present on the Beacon.</p>
Data source	<i>OS Map; aerial photographs</i>	

Biodiversity	<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>It is predominantly heathland, not highly modified and some still regenerating.</p> <p>Areas of gorse, bracken, bramble scrub offer valuable bird cover and habitat. The same with the hedgerows and cornish hedges and heathland which also provide habitat and "green corridors" for birds, lizards, adders and small mammals.</p> <p>Montbretia on the eastern and western slopes.</p>
Data source		<i>CWT Wildlife notes and maps, and local knowledge</i>
Land cover and Land Use	<p>What is the land used for?</p> <p>What is the vegetation cover?</p>	<p>Mostly recreational and amenity, including campsites and some farming on the lower flanks of the beacon. Particularly to the south of the village. Both arable and pasture for cattle and sheep are evident. Few houses on actual Beacon hillside, only a few mineworker type cottages on the lower slopes at Goonvrea.</p> <p>Heather on the top of the Beacon, some bramble/thorn scrubland on higher slopes, bracken encroaching on the lower slopes to the east. Some improved grassland on the lower slopes.</p>
Data source		<i>OS Map; aerial photographs, local knowledge</i>

<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>Some small hawthorns and privet on the eastern side of Beacon. Taller trees on the Goonvrea side but mostly in gardens near the roadside, some Sycamore and conifer. No ancient woodland present.</p> <p>Fields are medium in size on the slopes of the hill, becoming bigger as they descend the slopes, with the exception of the Goonvrea slopes where evidence of medieval field systems are still present. Most of the bigger fields are farmed and a few hedges have been removed.</p> <p>Many earth hedgerows visible and some cornish hedges and occasional dry stone walls. The stone walls appear to be managed.</p> <p>Most hedgerow scrub, (willow, oak and occasional thorn), have been sculpted by the wind and are stunted. Very few mature trees seen, mostly in gardens on the inland slopes. Hedges are buffered by grassland and gorse predominantly.</p>
<p>Data source</p>		
		<p><i>OS Map; aerial photographs, CWT Wildlife notes and maps, Historic Environment information and visit the area to confirm details</i></p>

Settlement pattern	<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>Small ribbon development along the road at Goonvrea. A small row of cottages up on the slopes behind.</p> <p>Victorian mineworker type cottages made from local stone are present on the Goonvrea slopes. There is no other housing on the actual Beacon, but there is a small ribbon development of mixed housing along the roadside at Goonvrea.</p> <p>Older buildings made from local stone and slate roofs. Hotel is 1930's type build. Most homes have gardens and cottages at Goonvrea have the small mineworker type fields as gardens. Roofs slate and scantle.</p>
Data source		<i>OS Map; aerial photographs, Historic Environment information, and visit the area to confirm details</i>
Transport pattern	<p>What is the character of the roads?</p> <p>Describe the public rights of way – in good</p> <p>Are the roads and paths part of the historic field pattern?</p> <p>Are there bridges?</p>	<p>Minor roads circle the lower slopes of the Beacon, predominantly straight, but a few winding. No pavements or formal verges seen. The roads and paths are unlit and "dark sky" is present.</p> <p>Access to paths are good with some occasional erosion, particularly on nearing the top of the Beacon.</p> <p>Paths will have been routes to work for mineworkers and farmers historically.</p> <p>No bridges present.</p>
Data source		<i>OS Map; aerial photographs local knowledge and visit the area to confirm details</i>

Historic Features	<p>Are there features in the landscape?</p> <p>The features will have their own setting.</p>	<p>Capped mine shafts</p> <p>Remains of WW2 radar station.</p> <p>There are sites of ancient barrows and cairns on the top of the Beacon. The Beacon itself is an ancient natural marker and site of pageantry in the landscape and parish.</p> <p>There is also a Trig point on the top of the hill.</p>
Data source		
Condition	<p>In what state/appearance are the characteristics of the area?</p> <p>Are there areas where improvements could be made to enhance the character of the area?</p> <p>How is the area managed?</p>	<p>There is evidence of some erosion, caused by amenity use, particularly at the summit and on the more frequently used paths.</p> <p>Some bracken clearance to prevent dominance of species and promote heathland regeneration.</p> <p>The land is managed by the National Trust and local farmers.</p>
Data source		

<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>The Beacon is a calm, quiet area with big open sky and extended panoramic views.</p> <p>The landscape is mostly exposed, always windy, rugged and sculptural and feels remote.</p> <p>There is considerable seasonal change in colour in the landscape on the heathland areas, when heather and gorse are in flower. Wind direction is SW, sometimes fierce.</p> <p>Very little light pollution. Village lights are seen in the distance from the Beacon and an awareness of other town lighting is experienced from afar. Predominantly a feeling of "dark sky."</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>The Beacon itself stands high in the landscape and can be seen from a long way along the North coast and out to sea.</p> <p>On the top there is a water reservoir, remains of the radar station, a Trig point along with rocky outcrops, barrows and cairns.</p> <p>Elsewhere there are views of wind turbines, solar panels in fields, telegraph poles and cables in places of significant beauty.</p> <p>Industrial heritage buildings are seen in abundance in the landscape from the top of the hill.</p>
<p>Data source</p>	<p><i>Use local knowledge, Historic Environment information</i></p>	

Views	Are there any important vantage points?	Panoramic, far reaching views from the top of the Beacon, across the land ,sea and extensively along the North coast.
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.	Sense of space, light and quiet. Big sky, dark at night and extensive windy hilltop views. A general feeling of remoteness and peace.
Relationship to the adjacent assessment area(s)	There will be a transition between this landscape character area and the adjacent one. Character can not be tied to a line on a map. Make note here of how the landscape changes between the character areas, and any important relationships / links in these areas and also beyond the Parish boundary	The land shifts from the Beacon to intermediate sloping farmland, both coastal and inland. There is a buffer zone of improved grassland between the hill and the village. There is some scattered housing at the base of the Beacon on all sides.

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