

Camborne Shopfront Study

2004

A report for **Kerrier District Council**

by

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Camborne Shopfront Study

Introduction

Background

This report was commissioned in July 2004 by Kerrier District Council as part of a stage 2 Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) application for Camborne, Tuckingmill and Roskear (a separate report has been prepared for Tuckingmill/Roskear).

This report supplements established regeneration initiatives in Camborne, including those in the District Local Plan, the Camborne-Pool-Redruth Urban Regeneration Company's strategic plans, the Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative (CISI) report produced by The Cahill Partnership for Cornwall Archaeological Unit and the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey (CSUS) for Camborne produced in June 2004 by the County Council's Historic Environment Service.

Part of the THI Stage 2 application provides for analysis of certain aspects of the built fabric within Camborne Town Centre. The CISI report for Camborne stated that:

“There are very good shopfronts from every quarter of the nineteenth century, particularly in Cross Street, Commercial Street and Trelowarren Street and a number of very fine nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings”

A subsequent report again highlighted the importance of historic shopfronts in Camborne and suggested a detailed audit should be carried out (CSUS).

This report, as part of the Stage 2 submission, thus aims to explore the importance of the remaining shopfronts in more detail, to help form a list of target properties for the THI scheme as well as providing important historical information on the development and importance of shopfronts in Camborne.

A rapidly-assessed target list of surviving historic shopfronts was prepared as a first, separate, exercise (Camborne/Tuckingmill THI Shopfront Target List, July 2004), the shopfronts being graded as to importance and viability for THI grant aid.

Aims

The full shopfront report, together with that for Tuckingmill-Roskear, was commissioned to be compatible with a similar study carried out in 2001 in St Day for Kerrier District Council, and to provide:

- A brief history of Camborne, cross referenced to the CISI report for the area.
- Historical information on shops and development of shops in the conservation area.
- An analysis of the quality of surviving shopfronts and whether they have a distinctive character.
- SWOT analysis of remaining shopfronts.
- A strategy for treatment of remaining shopfronts in each area.
- Detailed actions required on remaining shopfronts.
- Design guidelines.
- Location plan showing historic and surviving shopfronts in each area.
- Historical shops audit to format of St Day Shopfront Study.
- Surviving Shopfronts Assessment sheets to format of St Day Shopfront Study.

Methodology

The detailed and specialised research for this report follows on from the broad-based research and characterisation done for CISI and CSUS, and was carried out in July and August 2004.

The research was based on:

- fieldwork, during which every surviving shopfront and all known sites of former commercial premises were recorded (externally only)
- easily available historical photographs and illustrations (sources given in bibliography)

- printed histories and maps and 19th and early 20th century trade directories
- archaeological and historical building data kept within the County Historic Environment Record managed by Cornwall Historic Environment Service.

The data gathered during this survey and research phase was then used as the basis for analysis of the surviving fabric, and for proposing a conservation strategy, policies and proposals for Camborne. These have been informed by discussion with Andrew Richards, Kerrier District Council's Conservation Officer together with examination of the Local Plan and statutory planning guidance, in particular Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment'.

The report has also been written with reference to relevant policy, design and best practice guidance produced by English Heritage, the English Historic Towns Forum, national amenity societies, a wide range of local authority-produced guides from across the whole country, and an extensive surf through internet sources.

The end product is in two forms:

- a printed report
- an electronic copy of the report created in Microsoft Word 2002, and of the underlying database, created in Microsoft Access 2003 (Access 2000 file format).. A copy of the database converted to Access 97 was also supplied.

The photographic record stored in the electronic database allows for detailed analysis and referencing; the smaller-scale and lower resolution photographs in the printed reports are for identification purposes only.

A Commercial history of Camborne

Camborne is usually thought of as simply an industrial town – perhaps the archetypical industrial town in Cornwall. However, it has a much more ancient and varied past, ranging through the Iron Age, the Roman and the early Christian periods. For most of that time, Camborne's main functions were as the administrative, ecclesiastical and market centre of a large parish, one in which intense and profitable tin working had developed by the 1400s. Camborne had also become part of a well-established pilgrimage circuit associated with the road to St Michael's Mount (and from thence to Santiago da Compostela); there were playing place, holy well, chapels and Mystery plays associated with St Meriasek.

The oft-quoted description by Norden of 1584 (*'A churche standinge among the barrayne hills'*) almost certainly does not reflect the economic and social importance of the churchtown, serving a wide and unusually populous district – with its feast and fairs recorded by the 16th century, held on the Fairfield by at least the 1660s, and with at least occasional markets.

Even when Camborne town began to develop with the growth of the local copper industry, first around 1700-1750, and then, on an even greater scale, in the early 19th century, what set Camborne apart from neighbouring communities was not its industrial population, but the presence of the church and chapels, services and institutions, the market and shops. A formal grant of the right to hold markets came in 1708; although the churchtown is traditionally said to have had only some 7-13 houses at this time, most surrounding settlement was in scattered cottages and even smaller hamlets. In 1794 a visitor described Camborne as *'above the common order of Cornish villages, with a tolerable inn and a good church'* (quoted in Thomas 1987, p. 91). In the 1791 British Directory little was recorded that hinted at the industrial basis of its growing wealth: the cattle market and 3 fairs are noted, while only a few inhabitants are named in the directory, including 1 gentleman, 1 clergyman, 2 surgeon

apothecaries, 3 mercers, 2 tavern keepers, 1 grocer, and Andrew Vivian & Co., maltster.

A fine new market house was built in 1802 by the Bassets, Lords of the Manor. The period between 1820 and 1840 saw the laying-out of street after street of workers' housing, and by the time of the rebuilding of the market in 1866 Camborne had been built more or less to its full extent until 20th century expansion. The two local landowning families, the Bassets of Tehidy and the Vyvyans of Trelowarren, made great efforts to create and promote a new urban centre, and this element of the town's character is as distinctive as the well-known gridiron pattern of streets with their row upon row of workers' housing.

It was commercial activity that created the physical appearance and character of the core of the settlement, alongside developing services and administrative functions. The market was rebuilt and enlarged in 1830 and again in 1866 with a new Town Hall and public rooms, and with a purpose-built row of commercial properties attached. Shops spread increasingly out from the centre, along Trelowarren Street, Basset Road and Cross Street; numbers of public houses, inns and hotels were built at the same time as industry and public facilities in the town increased (Holmans' engineering works 1802 and 1839, post office, vestry and lock-up 1820, rectory 1820, gasworks 1834, Hayle Railway & branch lines 1834-7, chapels, schools, Literary Institute and public dispensary all founded before 1840). The 1823 Pigot's Directory describes the process: *'The town has, of late years, risen into much consideration, and being situated in the heart of a mining district, its population and trade may be expected to increase in proportion to the prosperity of the mines. As a growing rival to Redruth, it is already become a post, and a market, town.'*

Despite this commercial growth, there was still something of the character of a frontier town to Camborne (well known for its pubs and drunken miners). The 1841 Census returns show over two thirds of the working population, a quarter of the whole

population of the town, depended directly on the mines. Most of Camborne's professional men, shopkeepers and traders were themselves dependent upon the miners and engineers - perhaps 70% of the population of the town depended in the end on the prosperity of the mines and the engineering works that supplied them.

The few surviving shopfronts in Camborne from this period include several in what are now the outer edges of the commercial area - these are not necessarily isolated outliers, but an indication of how large the commercial area had already become in the mid 19th century. The range of commercial services on offer in the 1840s is set out in Table 1. There were about 80 or so premises, apart from the various crafts/manufacturers without 'shops' (carpenters; blacksmiths; non-retail brewers; coopers; tinplate workers, farrier, cabinet maker; stonemasons) nor the gentry/professionals etc., many of whom would have had offices and workshops, and who included at this time men like Arthur Woolf, Engineer.

Table 1 - Analysis of Trade Directories, Camborne, 1830-44

	1791	1830	1844
Bakers			4
Bankers			1
Beer seller			3
Bookseller		2	2
Bootmaker		5	
Butcher		1	6
Dressmaker/ milliner		3	3
Earthenware			
Eating Houses		2	
Grocer/draper/ Druggist		10	
Grocer/Tea dealer/ Druggist	1		9
Inns/hotels		3*	3
Ironmonger		4	4
Linen/Wool drapers			6
Mercers	3		
Merchant		4	
Milliner/ hatter			2
Post office		1	
Saddler/Harness		4	2
Shopkeeper		12	17
Straw hat makers		2	3
Surgeon /apothecaries	2		
Tailor		3	10
Taverns/public houses	2	3	3
Watchmaker		1	3
TOTALS	8	63	81

By 1856, the numbers had increased dramatically beyond this number, and continued to develop until the heyday of both industrial and commercial prosperity in Camborne in the years just before the First World War. Indeed, the number and range of shops in Camborne in the late 19th century was so large that it requires, and deserves, a detailed analysis well beyond the scope of this general study.

The market and Market Place was the core commercial area, with the church and public buildings. The short streets that had been developed by the 18th century, that is Church Street, Cross Street, Fore Street and Bakehouse Lane (the western part of Trelowarren Street), also contained shops and commercial premises (although Fore Street was already mainly residential). Chapel Street was set up by the Vyvyans as a rival urban focus to the old market place controlled by the Bassets, and soon boasted a major chapel, literary institute, various offices and gentry/professional residences. Between Chapel Street and the Market Place was the network of old lanes marking the original churchtown, and surrounding them the ever increasing grid of miners' housing.

A major shift in focus came with the increasing development of Trelowarren Street in the late 19th century as a commercial area. Apart from its very western end (the old Bakehouse Lane, up to about Rosewarne Street), Trelowarren Street was laid out in the 1830s as a residential street - and although there were soon numerous small shops and pubs serving the local population it remained outside the primary commercial zone well into the mid 19th century: photographs as late as the 1870s show scarcely any large scale commercial activity.

Centenary Street was very similar to Trelowarren Street in this respect, and retained this character virtually up the present day; it shares that sense of transition from the simple residential grid into the commercial heart of the town, and should perhaps be considered as of the same character as the outer stretches of the current conservation area.

Commercial Square developed in the 1850s-70s as the pressure on the tightly constrained Market Place forced business into a wider

area of the town – the Commercial Hotel had already replaced the older hotels like Tyack's in the Market Place as the most important staging point for coaches and carriers. Many of the houses in Chapel Street (originally quite simple, like those surviving on the west side of the street today) were rebuilt with large, prestige 'office' buildings.

Although there was continuous rebuilding of commercial properties to an increasing scale throughout the second half of the 19th century, the major rebuilding of Camborne's centre took place around 1900, a reflection of the unusual buoyancy of the local economy, despite recession and decline elsewhere in the Cornish industrial areas. Much of Trelowarren Street, Commercial Square and Cross Street were rebuilt from 1894-1908. This commercial growth was reflected not only in the scale of new stores, but also in the new tram connection between Camborne and Redruth (1902), a new post office built in Chapel Street in 1899 and the founding of a chamber of commerce (1908).

The core shopping area expanded in line with increasing civic and public activity, particularly after the formation of a local board to run the town in 1873, and then Urban District Council status in 1895. A new civic centre was created at Camborne Cross, with the Public Rooms (1890), Library (1895), and municipal buildings and fire station (1903). Cross Street was redeveloped as it increased in importance as the link between this new centre and the old core, while Trelowarren Street saw increased redevelopment into large commercial units, reflecting the importance of this route towards Holman's main site and Dolcoath – both entering a period of recovery around the turn of the century. In the meantime, the older streets (Church Street, Fore Street, the top end of Basset Road, Gurney's Lane etc.) were becoming less important.

The scale, size and number of both public buildings and commercial buildings, and the spread of the central area in the early 20th century is one of the most marked characteristics of Camborne's historic character; it appears to buck the generally perceived idea of the failure and decline of Cornish industry in the late 19th century. The importance of remittance (money sent back by miners and engineers working overseas)

to Camborne and other similar centres has only just begun to be studied in detail, but there is evidence that it played an important part in maintaining the town, not only being invested in schools, chapels etc., but also, significantly, in clothing and luxury shops.

The shifting focus of commercial activity has remained a feature of Camborne's shopping centre up to the present day, and, continues to reflect the ebb and flow of industries and employment around the town. Scarcely any development or expansion occurred in Camborne after the first decade of the 20th century with only a few public or commercial buildings after the First World War, the cinema in Chapel Street being the most notable. The tram connection with Redruth closed in 1927. The grand building schemes of the 19th century were over, and with massive waves of unemployment, the mining industry ceased in effect to exist in Camborne. The major industrial activity in the town was now Holman's (based upon the export market, the firm did well in the mid 20th century) together with whatever remained of retail, service and public employment. The population of Camborne parish as a whole declined from a peak of 15,829 in 1911 to 13,949 in 1951; only in the late 20th century did it rise again, in 2001 the parish population stood at 20,332, with about 15,000 in Camborne Town. In the meantime large stores were built outside what had been the main commercial areas of the town (on the School of Mines site, on the site of Holman's main factory, or further afield in Pool/Illogan) – even the Aldi supermarket in Church Street was built in an area by now outside the primary shopping zone.

The result has been both a 'leap-frog' effect as new shops have opened just outside the old primary areas (Aldi, Argos, Tesco) and a shrinkage in the commercial core area, with old shops in the outer edges being closed and turned (or returned) to residential use. This is particularly so at the eastern end of Trelowarren Street, where residential conversions are markedly concentrated; lesser areas of conversion are in Fore Street (although not a major shopping street once its 18th/early 19th century heyday was passed), Church Street (where an entire, virtually redundant row of shops was demolished and replaced by the present

supermarket), and the northern end of Basset Road – although this is a special case involving a gradual conversion to office use of both former shops and former high-status domestic buildings. Even within the commercial streets, the primary shopping area has contracted, and now is concentrated within the stretch of Commercial Square and Trelowarren Street between Fore Street and Rosewarne Road. A secondary shopping zone, still with some national chains, but largely with local shops and services, extends further east along Trelowarren Street, roughly as far as the junction of Adelaide Street/North Row.

Other parts of the central area can also be approximately zoned. Commercial Square (including parts of Commercial Street and Chapel Street) is the financial centre of Camborne - here are virtually all the banks, building societies, the post office, and perhaps most importantly these days, as a result, virtually all the cash dispensers. This has undoubtedly been one of the factors involved in keeping the main shopping zone close to this area. Although recently refurbished as a public space, Commercial Square has lost its former importance as a central nodal point where buses, taxis, private cars and pedestrians all focused; this has been somewhat diffused between the bus station to the south-east, and the main car parks north of the main core shopping zone.

The area around the old Market Place and upper Basset Road has declined from being the primary commercial centre of Camborne to being a peripheral area – the shops and services here are typical of secondary shopping areas (estate agents, dentist, optician, jeweller, surf shop, florist, charity shops; scarcely any evidence of national chains). This is, however, the main focus of the out-of-hours, night-time entertainment and social life in Camborne (apart from the Bingo in Chapel Street), with nightclub, pubs, take away food shops; the ancient parish church adds another, rather contrasting out-of-hours social focus to this area. The dominance of road traffic, the lack of on-street parking and the run-down appearance of the old market/town hall complex mitigate against the improvement of the area, and yet it contains many of the best, most historically significant and most

impressive buildings and streetscapes in the whole of Camborne.

Cross Street has remained surprisingly buoyant considering it is so removed from the main shopping street – its success is largely due to its role as a link between the town centre and the library, station and Community Centre, and the larger residential areas in the south of the town. It is a particularly well-used pedestrian route, with good on-street parking, and contains many specialist shops, restaurants and service providers, although all small, local shops. The quality of the built environment here adds to its attractions – it is a genuine reason to come specifically to shop in Camborne rather than anywhere else.

The character of Camborne's shops

There are 223 identifiable commercial properties with shopfronts, or some sort of 'shop' signage or display within the Conservation Area. These include those still in use, but also those revealed through easily available historical evidence (maps/texts/photographs etc.).

There has been considerable fluidity in the distribution of commercial properties in Camborne town centre. This is particularly true of those streets on the outer edges of the central area, or in the back lanes, and of those streets currently outside the Conservation Area, but which share many of its characteristics, and should perhaps be considered for future inclusion in the conservation area designation - Centenary Street/Trevenson Street in particular.

Selection criteria

All surviving shopfronts, of whatever date, were surveyed, recorded, and given a unique number and description.

Historic shopfronts have been defined for the purpose of this study as those that survive from before the mid 20th century decline in traditional design, construction, joinery and shopfront display. The details, aesthetics, materials and methods of this period are lost as a living tradition; they are easily replicated given expertise, careful supervision and sufficient funds, but they no longer form what might be termed a 'vernacular' approach to shopfront design. The restoration, reinstatement or reproduction of historic shopfronts requires a conscious effort - although hopefully one that will not only prove of 'conservation' value, but will help to reinvigorate traditional skills and design values. Examples of mid-century Art Deco-influenced design are also considered as 'historic' for the same broad reasons.

This is not to place a negative value on more recent shopfront design or manufacture - good examples from the later period have been identified where they exist.

Separate dates have been given, where applicable, to shopfront and host building in order to give some idea of dates of alteration

to shopfronts. Virtually all the surviving shopfronts, as might be expected in a commercial centre, are either historic, or replace earlier frontages (or entire buildings); there are a few shopfronts dating from the mid-late 20th century which have been inserted into what were previously simple domestic frontages; these have been noted.

There were, in addition, many other commercial, trading or small-scale workshops or industrial buildings in Camborne (private offices, smithies, joiners' workshops, boot manufacturers, sawmills, warehouses and stable yards etc.) which never had a recognisable shopfront, and very little in terms of signage or display. Many of these businesses would have had little effect on the outside appearance of the buildings or the street scene and look now, as they always did, like simple carriageway entrances to rear yards, or like anonymous cottages. These commercial buildings and workshops are only indirectly relevant to a study of shopfronts, but they do represent an important type of building in their own right and are an important part of the historical character of the town.

Historical character

Most of the commercial businesses in Camborne did, however, rely on shops and shopfronts in which to present and sell their goods and services. To contemporary visitors Camborne was clearly a major industrial town - the engineering works and the tight grids of workers' housing were noted - but it was also esteemed as a market and commercial centre, symbolised by the fine market houses of 1830 and, even grander, 1866.

The highpoint of Camborne's commercial activity, and its architectural expression, came as the 19th century progressed into the early 20th. The trade of the town included some unusual specialist and high quality shops, and produced a correspondingly high quality, sometimes even elegant, environment in the centre. This commercial scale and display was, in the jargon of modern planning guidance, the special

architectural and historic interest of the central area – and one of the striking features of Camborne to this day remains the often abrupt change in scale and detail from the tight grid of residential streets that hems the core area on all sides, to the large, high and prominent buildings in the core.

Historical photographs show just how imposing and dominant these shopfronts could be, and just how large the host buildings could be. The loss of Vivian's Store in Commercial Street is particularly acutely felt; the replacement building, whatever its functional merits, scarcely addresses the streetscape of the town as a whole in anything like the same dramatic, positive way.

The depressions and recessions after the First World War led to population decline, lack of spending money, a decline in the area of the commercial core, closure of shops and businesses, and, with some exceptions a lack of investment in shopfronts and display. This situation continued until well into the late 20th century. Although there has in recent years been a revival in commercial and shopping activity in the town centre, the traditional approach to shopfront design and use has to large extent passed – scarcely any late 20th century shopfront in Camborne exhibits more than commonplace qualities in design or use of materials.

This increasing use of off-the-peg, ill considered or inappropriately detailed design and materials is a contributory factor to a loss of character in many town centres; in Camborne it is particularly harmful to the town's character since there was (and remains) such a distinctive local character to the shops and commercial premises of the town.

Within the central area of Camborne, a fairly restricted range of distinct types of historic shopfronts and details can be identified:

1. Grand architectural statements

The shopfronts form part of the overall architecture of the host building - typical shopfront elements like pilasters, cornices, doorways etc. are all part of the structural grid of the main elevation, and are inevitably masonry-built rather than with fully-framed timber constructed attached shopfronts such as is usually associated with traditional

shopfront designs; first floors often consist of large display windows. The whole building is in effect designed as an ebullient display advertising the commercial activity, on both purely commercial buildings and when partly residential (as many of them were and are, certainly in Commercial Street).

2. Faience/terracotta

A distinct sub-type found in Camborne is the faience/terracotta-fronted building of the early 20th century (perhaps all by the same designer), with richly ornamented frontages, upper floor display windows and architectural details. Sadly none has a surviving original shopfront. Three examples in particular stand out not only in the street scene, but because their height and soaring proportions are also highly visible from the outer parts of Camborne – even from the surrounding countryside - and particularly from the rising ground towards Camborne Beacon to the south of the town centre. There were formerly other examples in the town.

3. Simple architectural elevations

The 'architectural' frame is also found on many less grand buildings. It is, like the grander buildings, part of the structural or decorative grid of the whole elevation; however, the details are more likely to be constructed out of stucco and moulded plasterwork rather than the masonry typical of the grander examples, although granite rusticated quoins are typical. These are more likely to have timber shopfronts within the frame.

4. Cornice and bay-window

Linked to the architectural-framed style, and a very particular type of shopfront predominant in Camborne, is the cornice and bay-window style, seen most obviously in Cross Street. Here the cornice of the shopfront is run across the whole building and over the base of a first floor projecting bay window (sometimes two). It is a simple detail that sometimes unites short terraces of two-four shops in a single block. There are some variations in the details and style, and it is also a detail which can be found on residential buildings or those that combine a residential frontage with a shopfront in semi-detached pairs. It is the most common type of shopfront and elevation detail in the town centre, and may be thought of as a typically

Camborne detail. The hand of a single influential designer may be suspected in at least the first examples and in the opportunity to re-build whole blocks of certain streets in the later 19th century in this style, particularly Cross Street, Chapel Street and Trelowarren Street, suggesting an architect working for the Trelowarren estate.

5. Traditional awnings

A typical shopfront detail in Camborne often associated with the cornice and bay window style, but not exclusively so, is the very narrow fascia taken up by the housing for a traditional awning. Again, these are best seen in Cross Street, with some other surviving examples in Trelowarren Street.

6. Purpose-built office buildings

Although not strictly speaking 'shopfronts', included in the survey are purpose-built office buildings (and a few converted domestic buildings where signage has become a major issue). Those in Chapel Street in particular show the influence of the cornice and bay window style; they stand side by side with the earlier, simpler domestic-style buildings, and are clearly 'commercial' in comparison, forming an important sub-set lending distinctive qualities to the streetscene.

7. Pubs and hotels

Another small sub-group of importance are pubs and inns. Apart from the important (listed) 18th century pair of inns that now make up Tyack's, Camborne had an outstanding collection of small pubs, most dating from the early-mid 19th century expansion of the town. These were less altered than many of the shops, since their functions and scale changed less with fashion over the years. Others survive in the streets adjoining the core, but the small group in the central area are an important element in the character of the streets, and all retain a more-or less traditional approach to signage and display.

8. Parlour shops

The pubs of Camborne are related to the final distinct group. There are many instances in Camborne of a type of shop front, fairly common in west Cornwall, the so-called 'parlour shops.' In these, rather than an attached timber shopfront, an enlarged, but still domestic-looking window in the ground-

floor was used as the shopfront, sometimes with an ornamented window frame, occasionally with a rendered surround. Historic photographs suggest that some of these small openings, especially those that have no cill and went right down to the ground, may have had small attached timber shopfronts to them; this has not always been indicated in the index sheets as evidence is lacking. This type of shopfront was formerly more common in Camborne; virtually the whole of Trelowarren Street and Cross Street would have been of this type as the simple miners' cottages were adapted for shops. Their wholesale disappearance was a result of later 19th century rebuilding as larger shops and purpose-built commercial buildings.

This last point introduces another characteristic of Camborne's historic shopfronts: they have been under continuous change as the central commercial district has ebbed and flowed. Trelowarren Street is a good example. When built in the 1830s it was simply another street of long rows of workers' cottages, with just occasional pubs and simple parlour-shops. As the shopping centre expanded, more and more were rebuilt to provide purpose-built shops, many still with residential use, the process culminating in the fine terracotta and stone buildings at the eastern end of the street built in the first decade of the 20th century. These stand cheek-by-jowl with humble cottages, saved from re-development only by the recession after World War One. The shopfronts are now themselves in danger as the street returns to simple residential use. At the other end of the town, in Commercial Street/Market Place, once the richest, most exclusive and grandest part of Camborne, the grandest of all commercial buildings (Vivian's Stores) was demolished in the 1980s, the grand set-piece architecture of the Market House/Town Hall complex slowly decays, and few business have sufficient funds or perhaps understanding to match the fading grandeur of the tall, richly decorated buildings in which they are set.

There appears to have been a rather greater mix of types of shops and commercial activities throughout the town centre in the past than is the case today. Market Place, for instance, contained in the late 19th century not only some of the most prestigious shops and

financial institutions, but also fairly humble uses (boot makers/grocers/pawnbrokers). Today there is more distinct grouping of the different commercial functions and uses distributed around the town, in sometimes very clear-cut zones – a contrast to some other Cornish towns where uses seem randomly distributed throughout the town centres.

Current character

As in many historic town centres, traditional timber shopfronts in Camborne have survived poorly; since many of them in Camborne were actually only built in the early 20th century, this is unlikely to be a simple matter of natural decay. It is an unavoidable conclusion that they have not been appreciated, and have perhaps been thought of (incorrectly) as being not only old-fashioned, but difficult and expensive to maintain. Nor have they generally been replaced with modern designs of high quality. Poorly detailed shopfronts with aluminium or off-the-peg timber detailing of crude mouldings and cross-sections, oversized Perspex fascias, Dutch Blinds or roller-shutters are all too-frequent elements in the modern shopfronts of Camborne, yet do little to engender a sense of quality or vibrancy to the town centre.

There was a particular penchant in the later 20th century to recess shop fronts well back from the pavement – some entire building fronts have been pushed back in the crudest manner. Not only is this harmful to the appearance of the host buildings (including those that are not historic in themselves), but it is also harmful to the character and appearance of the street and the conservation area. It must be questioned how effective it is from the traders' point of view; few shops these days rely on external displays of goods (presumably the reason for carrying out such drastic alterations in the first place), and all that has been achieved is a reduction in shop floor space.

There are, despite this, some very fine examples of historic shopfronts surviving; some are of types repeated frequently (the narrow-fascia type incorporating an awning for instance); some are one-offs; the RSPCA

shop in Basset Road an exceptional example. There are even one or two examples of cast-iron work in Camborne's shopfronts; that there are not many more may seem at first surprising, given the importance of engineering and metalworking to the town. However, this is probably a reflection of the preponderance of the masonry-built architectural surround in Camborne – neither ornate cast iron work, nor ornate joinery work was called for in most of the shops in the late 19th century/early 20th century heyday.

More seriously, given that the overwhelming style of shopfront in Camborne is that related to the architecture of the host building, modern alterations have tended to divorce shopfront from architecture. This not only leads to a loss of architectural quality and character, but also deprives the shop of the biggest and most extravagant piece of advertising available – not a bright aluminium shopfront, not a gaudy Dutch Blind or an over-sized reflective Perspex fascia, but the whole of the building elevation itself. Related to this is a comment seen too frequently in the descriptions of the shopfronts 'inappropriate alterations to fenestration on upper floors'; the two issues are inseparable.

In contrast to such places as St Day, or Chacewater, or Helston, Camborne does not have an outstanding legacy of large numbers of good timber shopfronts (with honourable exceptions); but it does have an outstanding legacy of architecturally – designed shopfronts integrated with the host building – creating both problems (difficult to separately target shopfronts from the rest of the building) and opportunities (restoring details such as cornices or pilasters on the main building in effect restores the shopfront).

Despite major losses to historic shopfronts in Camborne, therefore, it still retains an important, and locally very distinctive, character, based on its history and surviving historic fabric.

Table 2 - Analysis of historic shopfronts in Camborne

There are a total of 223 identified 'shopfronts' in Camborne; this number is unlikely to be significantly added to by future research, although many more exist just outside the present boundaries of the conservation area.		
Historic shopfronts		
Intact	In use	36
	vacant	2
	residential	3
Partial survival	In use	16
	vacant	2
	residential	2
total		61
Historic host buildings		
total		209
listed		5
Selected styles of shopfront		
Shopfronts integrated with architectural surround		46
	In use	37
	vacant	8
	residential	1
Cornice & bay window		100
Parlour shops		12
Shopfronts in residential use		11
	Cross street	1
	Fore street	1
	North Row	1
	Trelowarren Street	7
	Vyvyan street	1
Commercial buildings without shopfronts		32
pubs		8
Purpose-built Banks/post office	Commercial Square	4
Purpose-built offices	Chapel Street	4
Converted/extended houses	Basset Road/chapel Street	9
others	Cinema/chapel market etc	7

The Issues

Introduction

The central and critical place that Camborne's shops hold in defining the special historic character of the town centre and its conservation area must be fully recognised. Alongside the exceptionally interesting group of public and ecclesiastical buildings which adorn the town, the historic shops and shopfronts of Camborne are a significant part of the cultural heritage of the area, irreplaceable elements in the history and memories of the community.

They not only contribute to, but are essential to the valuable and vulnerable sense of local distinctiveness and to the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.

Restoring and maintaining the historic shops and shopfronts in Camborne would not only bring cultural benefits; bringing underused buildings back into full use would also result in visual benefit and be a major source of regeneration - decaying buildings are a wasted asset, and no one enjoys living with dereliction.

Historic buildings also represent a significant investment in resources and embodied energy which we cannot afford to lose. The repair and reuse of these buildings makes a significant contribution to the wider objectives of environmental conservation and sustainability.

To achieve this will require more than simply treating the problem as one of repairing decaying fabric. There needs to be an integrated approach. Above all, adequate time, financial, and manpower resources need to be applied by the Local Authority.

The following broad SWOT analysis considers some of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in Camborne from a conservation and urban design viewpoint, in particular relation to its shopfront heritage. It is not a retail analysis.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Vibrant town centre, already with many High Street nationals to act as attractors, but also with a good mix of local and specialist shops
- Late 19th/early 20th century redevelopment has provided a good mix of small, medium and large units
- Good range of specialist shops and services supplying a much wider area than just Camborne town
- Attractive specialist quarter (Cross Street/Basset Road)
- Good quality buildings and townscape - the built fabric of the town is robust, and survives to a good degree - there has been much less intrusion into the historic fabric from redevelopment /road schemes than many other Cornish towns (including Redruth)
- Good sources of historic evidence of former appearance
- Locally available specialist contractors used to working in historic buildings
- good vehicle access; on-street parking in main shopping area; convenient car parking on edge of centre
- highly permeable central area - pedestrian access is extremely good
- level access to railway station on edge of central zone; nearby bus-station
- level, easy pedestrian access to surrounding residential areas
- refurbished public square with seating and recreation area
- recent public realm improvements
- evidence of recovery in town centre and wider community in recent years
- still relatively low property values attract buyers
- good range of community facilities - shops, doctor, school, sports centre, church/chapels, community centres

- high levels of external investment (THI; Objective 1 funded Town centre improvement scheme; CPR URC Urban Framework/ Action Plans)
- Camborne Regeneration Group has been established to champion future proposals for the town
- Kerrier District Council has a proven track record in obtaining and effectively managing heritage-based grant schemes (for instance in Redruth where such schemes have proven the most effective catalyst for regeneration)

Weaknesses

- low property values conversely make for poor investment potential and indicate marginal economic activity
- low income base for restoration, or for match-funding for grant aid
- sources of employment/spending power within Camborne are still below average levels
- long-term deprivation and recession has left a legacy of under-investment and lack of repair/restoration in many properties
- long-term under-appreciation of quality and value of commercial properties did not engender a high level of quality in materials or design in late 20th century work
- central area typified by ‘hard’ enclosed streetscape, poor modern shopfronts, limited open spaces, lack of green areas or ‘breathing spaces’ and recreational areas; lack of reasons to linger in town centre
- the easy parking encourages quick-visit and collection, but conversely could mitigate against longer stays
- although a good range of High Street shops, and particularly of specialist shops, there is a lack of a key store sufficient to draw shoppers from alternative centres
- in periphery areas (the approach roads to the centre, and through-routes), boarded up older shopfronts, poorly maintained buildings and the

dominant presence of vehicle traffic management ephemera in the streetscape do not encourage entry to the core.

- One of key problem areas is around the Market Place; a key historic and civic space, now given over to traffic; the setting of major buildings compromised by poor streetscape (traffic management, loss of urban fabric in Church Street); inappropriate appearance of important shop frontages, commercial buildings and major listed buildings (The old market house complex)

Opportunities

- identified redevelopment schemes could have major beneficial impact
- heritage-led regeneration schemes involving a relatively high level of grant aid and public funding (THI/Hers)
- designation of CA will open funding, policy and management opportunities not available so far
- Living Over the Shop eligibility; upgrading of existing housing stock
- promotion and interpretation of the heritage of the town and area
- initiatives to make the best use of those special features of the town that survive to create a sense of place and local distinctiveness, perhaps especially the stock of unused or underused shops
- the Market House complex
- the quality and robustness of the historic fabric in Camborne means that opportunities for exciting new designs are as possible as simple reinstatement/restoration
- a particular opportunity in this respect is with those shopfronts where the whole ground floor of the building has been removed; these clearly offer remarkable opportunities for interesting new designs.

Threats

- these are most likely to result from failure of development, and even regeneration schemes, to recognise or refer to Camborne's special and locally distinctive character.
- this particularly relates to identified redevelopment schemes which could conversely have major negative impact
- lack of appreciation of full range of services, and particularly the important role specialist shops play in Camborne (Camborne actually has a more significant role in this respect than is indicated, for instance, in the CPR URC Urban Framework/ Action Plans)
- edge of town developments - pulling commercial activity away from traditional core zones, and requiring intrusive car-parking/loss of streetscape, sense of attractive place.
- out-of town developments - Pool in particular - exacerbate marginalisation of Camborne in the larger conurbation
- at the same time, uncoordinated, small-scale and piecemeal proposals could seriously affect the historic character and current quality of environment
- public realm schemes, such as Commercial Square, have had converse effect of breaking up townscapes and vistas, and of limiting direct access and continuity of streetscape and access to core areas.
- the streetscape improvements have gone a long way to making the town centre pedestrian-priority, but should be extended (in less intrusive and self-consciously designed manner) to rest of core - particularly the Market Place
- demolition - some of the most important buildings and streetscapes in Camborne were demolished in the late 20th century (Vivian's Store, the School of Mines, the row of buildings in Church Street). Similar destruction on this scale should never be allowed again
- the market house Complex
- loss of historic shopfronts by conversion to residential use. This is not as severe as in some other former historic market centres (St. Day has a particularly acute problem with this issue) it is nonetheless a severe problem in certain areas on the edge of the conservation area - the upper end of Trelowarren Street in particular
- unguided application of existing Town Centre Shopping Opportunity Area and town centre shopping core area (Local plan policies S1 and S2). While the overall aims are to be supported, both proposals applied without due understanding of the conservation, urban design and townscape issues involved could potentially create much damage that would outweigh any economic benefits that might accrue.

The issues highlighted in this SWOT analysis have been used as the basis of formulating the Shopfront Strategy set out below, and are analysed and responded to in greater detail in the individual principles and policy proposals.

Shopfront Strategy

Introduction

Reference should always be made to *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs*, Kerrier District Council, 2001.

The overriding concern of a shopfront strategy for Camborne must be to fulfil first the statutory requirements of conservation area designation – in other words, to ensure that it preserves or enhances the special architectural or historic interest, character or appearance of the conservation area. The importance of the conservation and management of the town's unique heritage and inheritance will be thrown further into the spotlight by the developing UNESCO bid for World Heritage Site status for Cornish Mining.

Any wider regeneration and policy framework must work toward the same overall aims, as well as clearly addressing the need to redress the levels of deprivation, low incomes and poor image from which Camborne has suffered for many years (with the collapse by the late 20th century of its traditional mining and engineering employment bases).

There is a considerable and already well-established policy and regeneration context for Camborne as a whole, much of which will impact upon a shopfront strategy.

The policy context

The immediate context is the existing statutory and Local Plan designations and policies. The Camborne Conservation Area is, for the most part, a designation covering the commercial core of the town. Although there are streets of 19th century middle-class housing, most of the streets and buildings in the conservation area consist of purpose-built shops and other commercial premises, such as pubs, offices and banks, which have signage and some element of display, but not traditional 'shopfronts'. Even many of the architecturally polite domestic buildings in the Basset Road area have been converted to office/professional uses with associated advertisements and signs. A shopfront strategy thus gets to the very heart of the

regeneration context for the whole conservation area.

There are a few listed buildings within the conservation area, although not primarily affecting the shopfront strategy itself (only the former market hall complex has 'shopfronts' – but other premises are affected where signage and display may be an issue – such as Tyack's Hotel, or some of the offices in Basset Road).

The relevant statutory framework lies in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, together with subsequent amendments, clarifications and relevant case law.

In practice, the policies and guidance set out in those statutory documents have been adopted by the Local Planning Authority. The Kerrier Local Plan has a good raft of relevant policies (see Table 3):

- listed building and conservation area policies and controls
- specific policies concerned with shopfront and advertisement design and regulation within conservation areas
- general policies concerned with the quality of shopfront design and advertisement control throughout the District that are cross-referenced to the need to respect, preserve and enhance where appropriate historic buildings and areas
- designations and associated policies that define the town centre shopping cores and fringe commercial areas.

The range of these measures means that the principles and strategy set out here can be effectively extended outside the conservation area itself.

Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs, Kerrier District Council, 2001, incorporates these policies and principles, and has been adopted and put into practice as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Table 3 – summary of relevant local plan policies

All areas	B.EN9	Listed Buildings - Preservation, alteration, extension and change of use
All areas	B.EN10	Listed Buildings - Demolition
Conservation Areas	B.EN11	Conservation Areas - Preservation or enhancement
Conservation Areas	B.EN12	Conservation Areas - Demolition
All areas	B.EN13	Enhancement schemes in town and village centres
All areas	B.EN14	Building design
All areas	B.EN16	Shopfront design
All areas	B.EN17	Advertisements - Siting and design
Conservation Areas	B.EN18	Advertisements in Conservation Areas - Siting and design
All areas	B.EN19	Design for crime reduction, building security and environmental safety
All areas	SI	Town centres and new shops
Town Centre Shopping Cores	S2	Ground floor uses in town centre shopping core areas
Town Centres	S3	Non-retail uses in town centres
Town Centres	S5	Town centre shopping opportunity sites
All areas	S6	Large shops and other key town centre, edge-of-centre and out-of-centre uses
Towns	S7	Design and layout of new urban shops
All areas	SPG	Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs, Kerrier District Council, 2001

The regeneration context

The Kerrier Local Plan promotes Camborne as an employment and service centre and as a focus for housing development. The town has also been targeted as a strategically important employment growth centre in Objective One programmes; it is one of five strategic locations for support identified in the south west by the Regional Development Agency, and is part of the Camborne, Pool, Redruth Urban Regeneration Company's (URC) area.

A shopfront strategy will take its place in a series of measures, some still on-going, that have already achieved a significant level of positive improvements:

- phase 1 of a Town Centre Improvement scheme has been completed including the creation of a formal town square in Commercial Square and traffic management and streetscape works in Trelowarren Street
- more pertinently, a Shop Bright scheme was also undertaken involving the redecoration of retail premises along Trelowarren Street

Camborne's 'unique selling point' 'in the URC's strategic vision is as an 'in-town shopping centre', distinguishing it from the 'visitor economy and cultural and creative industry quarter' at Redruth and 'working heart' at Pool.

While this seems to ignore the substantial contribution made to the town's shops and economy by specialist retailers, especially in Cross Street and upper Trelowarren Street, who actually serve a much wider area than just Camborne town itself, it does, at least, place shops and shopfronts at the heart of the regeneration vision.

The principal opportunities to achieve environmental improvements identified in the URC (and Kerrier District Council's) strategy include conservation, renewal and restoration of the historic built environment, including shopfront improvements, and diversification of the town centre, bringing back housing, employment and community life, including offices and non-retail uses on new sites and within existing premises.

Key issues highlighted by the proposals include:

- flagship retail-led development project within the conservation area at the Gas Street Bus Station
- primacy of Trelowarren Street to be reinforced by environmental and historic building upgrading
- second phase of the Town Centre Improvements Scheme will improve shop fronts and aim to create residential space above shops.

Finally, a THI bid is (October 2004) being submitted the Heritage Lottery Fund and, if approved, will prioritize:

- quality traditional repairs, utilizing local materials and building techniques on targeted historic buildings within the town centre.
- bringing buildings and vacant or underused floor space back into use, providing a long-term solution to bringing derelict and underused properties back into more economic use.
- repair of quality surviving historic shopfronts and reinstatement of lost architectural details.

To this end, the current study has been commissioned, while a target list of historic shopfronts has already been prepared as a companion to this report (the targeted premises are highlighted in the accompanying tables and indices)..

Objectives

The overall aim of all the existing strategies, no less of this study itself, should echo that of the Camborne Regeneration Group, established to champion future proposals for the town. Its mission is *'to make Camborne parish a more desirable place in which to live, work and invest'*.

A shopfront strategy should be based on the identification of new economic roles, or the intensification of existing ones. Such a strategy should be both achievable and compatible with the conservation of the area's historic fabric, the inherent quality of

which will often be a major asset in attracting new investment.

List of general Objectives:

- Preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area
- Increase economic activity and reduce vacant premises numbers
- Encourage greater investment in repair and maintenance of buildings
- Improve environment so Camborne is perceived as an historic location of high quality and local distinctiveness
- Encourage use of traditional and local materials, and foster traditional and locally based craft skills (e.g. in quality joinery, masonry and glazier's work)
- Increase diversification of the town centre, bringing back housing, employment and community life
- Raise volume of visits and spending by local resident and visitors

General principles and policies

Consistent general principles should underlie all the actions, aims, strategies and programmes of work within the target area, and should form the basis of extending the approach beyond the current boundaries. These principles apply to all surviving historic shopfronts in the Conservation Area, and indeed all surviving historic frontages which can be regarded as commercial display (including the architectural context of existing or recoverable historic shopfronts).

List of general principles and policies:

- Apply all relevant Statutory and Local policies
- Retain old shopfronts of merit as a fundamental principle
- Repair and maintain the existing stock of historic shopfronts in Camborne
- Establish and promote grant schemes and investment initiatives to repair and re-use vacant buildings
- Integrate shopfront scheme into a wider framework of regeneration measures
- Review extent and effectiveness of town centre designations and associated policies
- Plan programme of managed retreat in fringe commercial areas
- Celebrate, interpret and present historic buildings etc.
- Extend strategy beyond current conservation area/review conservation area
- Local authority to effectively exercise statutory controls as well as enabling role

The principles and policies in detail

Apply all relevant Statutory and Local policies

A self-explanatory requirement; this is a statutory duty. See 'Policy context' above and Table 3.

Retain old shopfronts of merit as a fundamental principle

Wherever old shopfronts of merit survive every effort should be made to retain them in their entirety, because:

- there is a statutory duty to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area/listed buildings
- when the buildings are listed or in some other way make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area (as do all the surviving historic shopfronts and buildings in Camborne), applications to remove or alter them will have to be carefully justified. Proposals to remove or alter historic detail will need to show *'the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community, in particular by contributing to the economic regeneration of the area or the enhancement of its environment'* – [PPG15, 3.5 (iv)]
- *'...the destruction of historic buildings isvery seldom necessary for reasons of good planning, more often it is the result of neglect or the failure to make imaginative efforts to find new uses for them.....'* [PPG15, 3.16]
- such buildings give a strong sense of place, they are landmarks of local history and memories and give continuity and stability in the changing streetscene: they represent the 'familiar and cherished local scene'
- they are a reservoir and showcase of locally traditional materials, details and skills
- this applies to preserving details as well as whole shopfronts - it is virtually impossible to find a contemporary building with the depth of interest, in terms of materials and

craftsmanship, to be found in such historic buildings

Table 4: surviving historic shopfronts in Camborne (database reference numbers)

112	125	157	162	187	207
113	152	158	170	195	210
114	153	159	172	199	219
116	154	160	173	200	
120	156	161	183	204	

Repair and maintain the existing stock of historic shopfronts in Camborne

Regular maintenance and repair are the keys to the preservation of historic buildings. Modest expenditure on repairs keeps a building weather-tight, and routine maintenance can prevent much more expensive work becoming necessary at a later date:

- appearances can be deceptive; a run-down and vacant building may look so far gone as to completely obscure its possibilities, but there is often a 'credibility gap' between this appearance and what is actually possible - the most alarming defects can sometimes turn out to be easily remedied
- repairs should usually be low-key, and new work should be fitted to the old to ensure the survival of as much historic fabric as is practical. Old work should not be sacrificed merely to accommodate the new.

Policies and guidance on repair of historic buildings can be found in a number of comprehensive guides, e.g.:-

- *Buildings At Risk – A New Strategy*, English Heritage, 1998
- *The Repair of Historic Buildings – Advice on Principles and Methods*, English Heritage, 1995
- Guides on repair of woodwork, doors, windows, shops etc. produced by English Heritage, The Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings, The Georgian Group, The Victorian Society etc.
- *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs*, Kerrier District Council, 2001

Architectural and surveyors' practices are experienced in establishing and supervising regular planned maintenance programmes – the Church Of England's quinquennial inspection system is one of the most universally applied and successful (now used by other denominations and institutional property holders), and could be easily adapted to a wide range of buildings. See *Inspection and Repair – A Guide to Church Quinquennial Surveys*, Council for the Care of Churches.

The local authority has a role to play:

- in giving general planning and conservation advice
- in the exercise of statutory controls; much is summarised in Environment Circular 02/98 – *Prevention of Dereliction through the Planning Process*
- in investigating new ways of sponsoring maintenance rather than crisis management through often wasteful and destructive capital repair programmes, through advice and grant aid programmes or partnership agreements or direct labour
- legislation allows for grant aid for maintenance; in other countries (such as the Netherlands) teams of trained maintenance workers visit historic properties once or twice a year to do basic chores such as cleaning gutters and down pipes, fixing missing slates and tiles, replacing perished lead or zinc in the valley gutters and inspecting the roof voids for outbreaks of rot and woodworm.

Integrate shopfront scheme into a wider framework of regeneration measures

There are many existing initiatives which may be relevant, whether national, regional or local: these have been summarised above (see Policy Context).

There are other, sometimes less formal or less immediately obvious avenues which can be explored. Again the Local Authority is likely to play a leading role:

- economic regeneration, small business, social development schemes etc. should all be considered in addition to

buildings-based regeneration schemes (e.g. Kerrier Empty Homes schemes)

- the impact of traffic management, environmental enhancement schemes and allocation for car parking will have an impact on viability of individual streets and shops
- positively targeting local businesses or those making enquiries in the area and encouraging them to relocate to Camborne by means of financial, administrative or planning concessions should be pursued, perhaps by co-ordination with organisations and agencies outside both the District and Cornwall (SWERDA, small business confederations, etc.)

Establish and promote grant schemes and investment initiatives to repair and re-use vacant buildings

This study is one of a series of studies and surveys undertaken as part of a Stage 2 THI bid. The local authority is best placed to co-ordinate, through conservation/planning, economic development and housing sections, a complex package of grants such as is likely to be required; there is a well-established experience at Kerrier District Council of putting together funding sources for heritage-based regeneration packages, which could bring in funding from some surprising quarters.

This report is based on a broad, area-based Buildings at Risk style survey - this will need to be followed by a more detailed assessment of the major structural and external elements of some or all of the buildings concerned to provide a realistic indication of the level of expenditure necessary to bring the physical fabric back into good repair. This will supplement existing Housing Surveys and Condition surveys undertaken as part of the THI bid.

Additional funding sources should investigate different ways of funding, especially those that will provide revenue funds, both to make new business viable, and for a new approach to maintenance grants.

Table 5: 'Camborne/Tuckingmill THI Shopfront Target List 2004'

5	44	67	93	106	125	157	171	204
6	45	70	94	109	140	158	172	207
7	47	73	95	110	143	159	173	208
8	49	82	96	112	145	160	183	210
9	57	84	98	113	146	161	185	211
10	58	86	99	114	150	169	187	212
11	59	87	100	115	152	170	191	204
18	63	89	101	116	153	157	195	207
26	64	90	103	120	154	158	199	208
42	66	92	104	124	156	159	200	210

Table 5 shows the shopfronts identified in the 'quick-hit' survey to prioritise THI grant aid. Out of those identified, some 20 or so highest-priority shopfronts will be targeted. THI funding should be seen as a first stage in the process; the 20 highest-priority shopfronts are clearly only a first stage; there are 223 identified sites in the conservation area, nearly all of which could benefit from some sort of input, many of which should be regarded as high priority targets for improvement, even if they have not met the right criteria to be selected as priority THI sites (which necessarily weighted sites with a good degree of survival of historic shopfront details).

Funding should be sought within the lifetime of the THI scheme for a continuation or extension of any strategy and programme. The most likely fund schemes to be relevant are:

- public/governmental grant aid
- County, District and Parish Council funding
- historic buildings and areas grants under section 57 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 allow for grants or loans for both repair and maintenance
- housing improvement grants
- regional government sources (SWERDA)
- Objective One. This programme can fund not only physical fabric, but also small businesses, diversification and conversion of vacant/redundant buildings etc. for special uses

- Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes (English Heritage). HERS concentrate on neighbourhood businesses, high streets and corner shops - employment-generating activities which form the focus for community life and prosperity, and where area-based assistance with building repairs and enhancement will help to maintain local employment, provide new homes and encourage inward investment
- Building Preservation Trusts. The Cornish Buildings Preservation Trust is already established, but others could be set up for specific projects; quite a number of endangered buildings have been saved by local people who have set up building preservation trusts, acquired buildings, restored and sometimes resold them. Such trusts can obtain special low interest loans from the Architectural Heritage Fund, and grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage. The AHF now also offers a range of other financial packages to help BPTs, such as feasibility study grants
- LOTS (Living Over the Shop)

It is estimated by the Living Over the Shop Project (a national programme based in York) that at least half a million and possibly up to one million new homes could be created in empty or underused upper floors above or behind shops. This accommodation suits the smaller one or two person households that will make up the bulk of the predicted extra 4 million homes needed by 2016 and is located by its very nature in the centre of settlements, reducing reliance on road transport.

Kerrier has experience elsewhere of successful LOTS schemes, and it would be appropriate in Camborne where there is evident under-occupation of upper floors throughout the central commercial zone.

- Private sector finance

Nearly all the grant schemes outlined above assume a varying level of private money in partnership with grant aid. Sometimes matching funds can come from other grant sources, and grant aid can

sometimes fund up to 100% of certain types of projects. Although there has been a greater willingness on the part of lenders in recent years to fund restoration of empty and dilapidated buildings (particularly in Europe), there remain very few mortgages especially aimed at this market. Two well-established schemes are offered by the Ecology Building Society and Norwich and Peterborough Building Society:

Ecology Building Society

18 Station Road, Cross Hills, Near Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 7EH

0845 674 5566 (local rate)
<http://www.ecology.co.uk/>

Norwich and Peterborough Building Society Principal Office: Peterborough Business Park, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6WZ

01733 372372
<http://www.norwichandpeterborough.co.uk/>

Review extent and effectiveness of town centre designations and associated policies

Camborne conservation area is, broadly speaking, the commercial core of the town (with some areas of substantial 19th century town houses). There are two specific designations relating to shops, town centres and retail provision in the Kerrier District Local Plan relating to this area.

The first is the designation of a Town Centre Shopping Opportunity Area. Based on the bus station, this also includes buildings of real quality and part of the important townscape of Chapel Street, and any future development of the area should preserve these frontage buildings. Policy (S5) allows the 'comprehensive redevelopment' of the site - this proposal is potentially destructive of the streetscape and could be mitigated by excluding the frontage buildings from the site; this would affect no current or immediately likely proposals. The maintenance of high density street frontages that suitably reflect the quality of the adjoining historic and commercial buildings in one of the finest 19th century streets in Cornwall (Chapel Street) should be a priority. The problems of access and traffic management and the

demands for car-parking in the central area should the envisaged shopping developments take place must be resolved with these issues in mind. The negative impact of car-parking requirements on historic fabric and townscape are already to be seen at the two supermarkets that frame the town at the east and the west ends of the conservation area.

Second is the town centre shopping core area (Local plan policies S1 and S2, designation SC751). This aims, principally, to maintain ground floors of units as retail; other uses have to be justified according to a relatively narrow set of criteria (the only practicable means of keeping an important historic/listed building; an extension to an existing use; a non-retail use that maintains high activity levels or requires shop windows, is not harmful to vitality and viability of core zone and causes no harm to context/historic environment). There can be little argument against such a policy in Commercial Street (including the old Market Hall complex), Commercial Square (including the north end of Chapel Street) and the lower section of Trelowarren Street.

However, while the policies controlling design and alteration to historic shopfronts and buildings are good, in the area of shopping development allocation, the existing local plan policies actually pose a threat in some cases to the historic fabric and appearance and individual character of Camborne. The core shopping area, where 'a vibrant ground floor level shopping frontage' is encouraged, includes the area to the rear of the inns and on the former site of the School of Mines and the current car-park, an area that was not historically core shopping (notwithstanding the brief presence here for a few years of a supermarket). Given the loss of the most sensitive streetscape in front of the church, and one of the most important buildings in Camborne (the School of Mines), the application of such policies threatens the archaeological and historical setting of what remains. Insensitive future application of the policy could result in the destruction of the important Josiah Thomas Memorial and the former public dispensary building (both recommended for listing in the Camborne CISI report) as well as the

interesting and vital mix of uses that the central core of an historic town should have. This would be in conflict with statutory conservation guidance that should seek to preserve or enhance character, including the historic pattern and variety of uses.

Moreover, Commercial Street/Market Place, although notionally within the central zone, is in fact very much a secondary shopping area in its current character and uses and much of the area around the School of Mines site has been developed or has permission for residential use, calling into question the validity of the existing designation.

A useful addendum to policy S2 would be to add a positive encouragement towards good design and reinstatement to shopfronts. The whole area is now within a conservation area, so that the tighter controls and higher standards associated with conservation, as reflected in Local Plan policies B.En16, 17 & 18, now apply. These conservation-based policies should be more tightly integrated into the shopping policy sections of the Local Plan, and a single, coherent raft of policies drafted, or policy guidance presented, to guide future work in this central area. The conservation policies, the need to preserve or enhance, should be paramount.

Standardised design solutions - the application of a typical or in-house style, whether proposed by shop owners, by a grant-funding body, or from within the local authority itself are never appropriate in this situation, and could be harmful to the character of the conservation area.

Fringe commercial area: programme of managed retreat

A similar co-ordinated approach to policies should be developed for the third local plan designation - the Fringe commercial areas (Policy S3), which includes the rest of Trelowarren Street up to its junction with Centenary Street, Cross Street and Chapel Street south of the post office. In these areas (and in upper floors in the core area), other, non-retail commercial uses are permitted and encouraged. Paradoxically, it is in these secondary areas where most, in fact

nearly all, of Camborne's surviving historic shopfronts are to be found. Although Policy S3 clearly states that non-retail uses will only be allowed providing they cause no harm to amenity or character, such secondary uses often do not require shopfronts as such, and the pressures for removal will be great. This is also the area where pressure for conversion to residential use is at its greatest, especially in Trelowarren Street.

The fringe commercial areas also need a co-ordinated raft of policies, not divided between different sections of the local plan (and potentially operated on by different sections within the controlling authority). The conservation polices, the statutory duty to preserve or enhance, should be paramount.

Moreover, there has been a long history of ebb and flow in Camborne's commercial core - Commercial Street/Market Place, is in now a secondary shopping area. As the town regains prosperity, as proposed major redevelopments and new investment takes effect (for instance the bus-station site), further shifts may be expected. Existing historic shopfronts and shop units should be valued as a potential resource, not just as an interesting, but expensive to maintain relic. Their retention in conversion to any use, including residential, should be mandatory; loss of retail and/or commercial use should be resisted, or at least controlled through a programme of managed retreat, which emphasises the importance of retaining units the closer they are to the core area, or to potential development sites.

It is not the case that shops currently out of use are unlikely to find a future commercial use; allowing conversion to residential use may be an acceptable short-term expedient, losing the resource of an existing good quality commercial frontage for future use could be much less acceptable.

Celebrate interpret and present historic buildings etc.

The purpose of the THI and the conservation area designation is, in some measure, to celebrate the character and appearance of Camborne; to promote its

historic qualities, and its present attractions. More specifically, there are interesting, exciting, completely bizarre and unique buildings in the town centre, particularly those associated with some of the extremes of commercial architecture from the early 20th century, as well as the elegant and polite buildings of an earlier age. These should be celebrated; their presence should be highlighted; they should be regarded as target buildings for restoration and appropriate re-use. Their role in the history of Camborne and in forming the character of the conservation area should be celebrated as much as the chapels, the town halls, the civic buildings and the houses of the great and the good. They probably saw as many, if not more, people through their doors as all these other places, and represent the Camborne that most locals remember and still think of. Revisions to the good Town Trail and Town Guide documents could, and should, celebrate Camborne's commercial heritage as much as other aspects of its past.

Local authority to effectively exercise statutory controls as well as enabling role

The success of any strategy depends entirely on the local community agreeing and adopting these proposals, while the local authority must play a continuing role in enabling action by:

- regular monitoring to identify vulnerable buildings before they become at risk by means of simple, regularly updated condition surveys
- prioritising action
- running grant schemes to underwrite a significant proportion of irrecoverable costs; programme of grant aided works to repair and re-use vacant buildings
- grant aided repair and restoration projects should be carefully conditioned to encourage sustainable sources and practices and develop local skills and the use of local materials, suppliers and craftsmen
- produce detailed technical step by step guide to re-use/conversion/repair (there have already been moves to publicise housing repair/maintenance)

- effective use of statutory powers as well as enabling role to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the special character of the conservation area, listed buildings, and the historic built environment in general and to ensure owners maintain buildings adequately:
 - normal exercise of planning controls; the emphasis on controlled and positive management of change
 - special planning controls in conservation areas, including control of partial demolition and use of Article 4 Directions (although this is unlikely to be much of an issue given the lack of permitted development rights on commercial buildings)
 - listed building controls
 - designation of 'local list' and appropriate policies
 - urgent works/repairs notices
 - amenity notices - Section 215 of Town and Country Planning Act 1990 aimed at removing eyesores and untidy land, including buildings in need of repair
 - new or additional planning policies may be required, which may initially take the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance, but which should be incorporated into the statutory local plan at the next possible opportunity. (See also Environment Circular 02/98 - *Prevention of Dereliction through the Planning System*).

Extend strategy beyond current conservation area

The long term aim should be to review the areas and localities designated as conservation areas and the boundaries, policies and condition of existing conservation areas (and indeed the Local Authority is under a statutory duty to do just this). Much more than the current conservation area of Camborne is historic; much more of it has special, indeed unique, architectural and historic character, and

there are historic, and continuing shops and shopfronts, and regeneration issues linked to them, beyond the current boundaries.

There are existing policies aimed at improving shopfront preservation, design and signage outside conservation areas in Kerrier; there is case law and precedent to back these policies (see for instance the example given at:

http://www.ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/63/poole/localplan.html)

There should be both an immediate impulse to apply the policies and strategies on the borders of the conservation as part of the regeneration programme for the whole town, and as part of a raft of measures aimed at protecting and improving the setting of the conservation area (another statutory requirement).

The follow-on should be to review the boundaries of the conservation area. Without prejudicing the qualities of the surrounding areas which have their own distinctive characteristics, the primary aim in this case should be to ensure that the true extent of the 'commercial core' of Camborne is indeed represented in the conservation area. The status of Centenary Street/Trevenson Street in particular should be reviewed, since it has so much in common with the current conservation area.

Detailed and site-specific actions

General List

- Encourage the re-use of historic shopfronts in Camborne by promoting their suitability for a variety of new uses.
- Target key buildings and reinstate missing elements of shopfronts as part of townscape and streetscape improvements.
- Ensure the most appropriate schemes when change of use and/or loss of existing shopfronts become inevitable.
- Encourage the replacement of inappropriate modern shopfronts with either traditionally detailed shopfronts based on historic evidence or with appropriately and well-detailed modern shopfronts.
- Restore whole buildings/shopfronts as part of overall building repair.
- Review application of advertisement controls.
- Review application of town centre/shopfront/personal security.

The actions in detail and as applied to individual properties

Encourage the re-use of historic shopfronts in Camborne by promoting their suitability for a variety of new uses

'Each historic building has its own characteristics which are usually related to an original or subsequent function. These should as far as possible be respected when proposals for alterations are put forward....Local planning authorities should attempt to retain the characteristics of distinct types of building, especially those that are particular to their area.' [PPG15, Annex C2].

The best way of securing historic buildings is to keep them in use; new or continuing uses will often entail some alteration or adaptation, so that the range of acceptable uses is a consideration. Judging best use is

difficult, it requires balancing the economic viability of possible uses against the effect of any changes to the special architectural and historic interest of the building or area and it is necessary to assess the elements that make up special character (decorative facade, internal features, layout, archaeological or technological interest).

In principle the aim should be to identify the optimum viable use that is compatible with the fabric, interior, and setting of the historic building; the best use will very often be the use for which the building was originally designed and the continuation or reinstatement of that use should certainly be the first option when the future of a building is considered.

Achieving the proper balance can be done if reasonable flexibility and imagination are shown by all parties and local authorities apply planning/building control legislation flexibly, or if an applicant is willing to exploit unorthodox spaces rather than set a standardised requirement – building regulations, fire safety and disabled access provision should be enforced sympathetically to the requirements of the historic fabric.

Apply to:

1	70	128
23	106	162
31	109	172
44	124	183
69	125	209

Target key buildings and reinstate missing elements of shopfronts as part of townscape and streetscape improvements

Restoration/enhancement schemes should locate and focus on some of the important focal points. These include the closing buildings to vistas, as along Chapel Street, Fore Street, North Row or Adelaide Street where they meet Trelowarren Street or Cross Street. Buildings around focal points

like the Market Place or Commercial square should be targeted, as should imposing buildings on corner sites (Market Place, Commercial Square) and important groups of buildings in the streetscape (Cross Street, Market Place, upper Trelowarren Street). Shopfronts should be restored or improved where they have this extra townscape character.

It is important to preserve the best surviving examples of the shopfronts themselves, not only as quality artefacts in their own right, but as a vital element of Camborne's history. In some cases, restoration of a lost shopfront could have considerable visual benefits for the whole centre. Number 1 Commercial Street, facing Basset Road, for instance, is so important to the streetscape that a good case could be made for creating a facsimile shopfront. This is even truer of the ground floor of the old Town Hall complex. This would in many ways lift the whole of the street scene, the whole of the town indeed, and re-create some element of that sense of its role as the grand architectural heart of the town.

This strategy underpins the THI (and HERS) approach of targeting specific, prominent and important buildings in order to create a knock-on effect and general improvement to the whole townscape.

Apply to:

1	34	49	64	106	172
6	35	50	65	116	175
8	37	51	66	117	176
10	40	52	67	120	177
11	42	53	68	124	183
12	44	54	69	125	198
16	45	59	70	126	204
30	46	61	79	128	205
31	47	62	80	142	219
32	48	63	94	162	198

Ensure the most appropriate schemes when change of use and/or loss of existing shopfronts become inevitable

Although the loss of shopfronts is a problem only in relatively limited areas of the town centre, at the upper end of Trelowarren Street in particular, it is

nevertheless a severe problem facing the conservation area. There is very little available guidance on how to deal with redundant shopfronts, either from statutory bodies, Cornish local authorities, or indeed nationally. Virtually all published shopfront guides deal with repairs, alterations or designs of new shopfronts, not why or how to keep redundant shopfronts beyond general statements.

Even initiatives like Living Over The Shop (LOTS) are more concerned with using underused parts of existing commercial premises rather than preserving unused shopfronts.

Useful guidance is given in the *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs* guide, and this should be supplemented by specific advice and design input by specialists (notably the Local Authority's conservation and design officer). It will often be necessary, however, to design each case as a unique, one-off solution, and to go back to basic principals, and particularly the statutory guidance produced by the Government (PPG 15), as well as such guides as *Conservation Area Practice*, produced by English Heritage. These suggest the following broad principles:

- changes of use generally will be permitted only where they are consistent with maintaining the viability and historic character or appearance of the area
- proposals must take account of the significance of the building type, and give substantial weight to this in Camborne because of the importance of shops to the town's historic character.
- retention of old buildings should not be a slavish exercise in preservation for its own sake – those with architectural quality in the facades should be adapted; where replacements must be made, they should be carried out in harmony with the rest of the building
- don't overlook the contribution buildings make to their neighbours, a group or the streetscape, the building's setting and its contribution to the local

scene where it shares particular architectural forms or details with other buildings nearby

Camborne is fortunate that there are relatively few redundant shops, and most are relatively easy to adapt to residential use with the minimum of alteration. This is partly because of the number of former 'parlour-shops' where the difference between the shop and its domestic neighbours is negligible, or of the cornice and bay-window types, a style which was from the outset also adapted for purely domestic facades. In both cases, there are plenty of good exemplars within the conservation area and wider town to show how conversion should be achieved to make further instances of poor conversions unnecessary.

This has particular resonance when seen in the context of proposed 'managed retreat' of shop use in the outer parts of the shopping centre.

Apply to:

1	13	21	44	120	142	213
2	14	22	69	121	143	183
3	15	23	70	124	162	201
4	16	24	91	125	172	220
6	17	25	106	126	175	221
8	19	26	109	128	183	
12	20	31	118	129	201	

Encourage the replacement of inappropriate modern shopfronts with traditionally detailed shopfronts based on historical evidence or with appropriately and well-detailed modern shopfronts

'The designs and appearance of shopfronts and of their projecting blinds can have particular impact and should be related to the character of the building and to their locationUnsympathetically designed shopfronts are likely to detract from the appearance of areas of character. The use of standardised company-type shopfronts with large areas of plate glass, plastic, metallic or tile finishes are unlikely to harmonise with their surroundings and would certainly be unacceptable on listed buildings or within areas of character and visual amenity.'
Kerrier Local Plan, p. 87.

Extensive guidance on the principles of shopfront design are to be found in the *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs*, Kerrier District Council, 2001, to which reference should always be made.

A particular problem in this respect is with those shopfronts where the whole ground floor of the building has been removed; these clearly offer remarkable opportunities for interesting new designs.

This programme should be integrated with targeting key buildings and streetscape elements.

Apply to:

1	43	69	102	134	157	183	206
6	44	70	105	135	158	185	208
8	45	72	107	136	159	186	209
10	46	73	108	137	161	187	210
11	47	74	109	138	163	188	211
15	48	75	111	139	164	189	212
18	50	76	113	140	165	190	213
23	51	77	115	141	167	191	215
30	52	78	116	142	169	192	216
31	53	79	117	143	170	193	217
32	54	80	118	144	171	194	218
34	57	82	121	145	172	196	220
35	58	83	124	146	175	197	222
36	60	88	125	147	176	198	223
37	61	89	126	148	177	199	
38	62	91	128	149	178	201	
39	63	93	130	150	179	202	
40	66	94	131	151	180	203	
41	67	98	132	154	181	204	
42	68	99	133	155	182	205	

Restore whole buildings/shopfront as part of overall building repair

Many, perhaps most, of Camborne's shops are set in buildings of great architectural interest. Commercial buildings in the town centre were designed with an overall concept of display, with big, deeply undercut and projecting mouldings, and shopfronts conceived of as part of the overall architectural expression of the building. This was not just a case of upper floor display windows - although there are some good examples of this in the town - but of treating the whole building as a form of advertising, a theatrical, bravura display to attract customers, and to give a sense of quality, showmanship and 'go' (a favourite

19th century term). In some cases, the working shopfront is reduced almost to a simple arrangement of plate glass windows and door; the pilasters, brackets, cornice, even the fascia and door surrounds are actually part of the architecture of the building, and should be treated as such, not simply regarded as a shopfront to be altered with each successive occupier.

Reinstatement and restoration schemes should not be considered in isolation from the host buildings, nor just in terms of being vaguely appropriate to the date and style of the building, but they should properly be regarded as part of the restoration of the building elevation itself. Conversely, any independent schemes to restore the building elevations should be regarded as being incomplete without tackling the shopfront.

A related problem in this respect is with those shopfronts where the whole ground floor of the building has been removed; the restoration of the original building line in these instances is of primary importance to the integrity of the historic streetscape.

Apply to:

6	47	89	124	155	193
8	48	91	125	156	194
10	49	92	126	158	195
11	50	93	117	159	198
14	51	94	130	160	199
16	52	95	131	161	200
18	53	102	132	162	201
20	54	103	133	163	202
24	58	104	134	164	203
27	59	105	135	166	205
30	60	107	136	168	206
31	61	108	137	169	207
32	62	109	139	170	208
33	63	110	140	171	209
35	64	111	141	172	210
36	65	113	142	175	211
38	66	114	143	176	212
39	67	115	145	177	213
40	68	116	146	181	215
41	69	117	147	182	216
42	70	118	148	183	217
43	85	119	150	187	218
44	86	120	152	190	219
45	87	121	153	191	221
46	88	122	154	192	222

Review application of advertisement controls

Although there are existing policies in the local plan controlling advertisements, signs, fascia boards etc. (particularly *Policy B.En18: Advertisements in Conservation Areas - Siting and Design*), the effectiveness of the policy should be monitored, and the stricter requirements for conservation areas rigidly applied. The policy is rightly phrased so as to allow considerable flexibility, but many, if not most adverts/fascia boards etc. in Camborne Conservation Area would fail to meet the acid test of the duty to preserve or enhance.

Possible limitation of deemed consent and other Advert Regulations criteria should be investigated.

A campaign of collaboration, information and dissemination of information may well be required to make sure that retailers know that they have entered into a new legislative and policy framework. This will require proactive role by the Local Authority - at the very least by dissemination of available guidance (such as the *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs* handbook).

For the most part, commercial premises in Camborne without shopfronts (pubs, office buildings in Chapel Street, converted domestic properties in Basset Road) are admirably modestly signed with appropriate fixings, name plaques, painted window signs etc. This should be continued and improved - the *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs* handbook provides guidance, stressing the use of name plaques, painted window signs, applied lettering.... 'a subtle and sensitive combination of ... various options should provide sufficient advertising for any business'.

Apply to:

2	19	29	40	56	78	122	214
3	20	31	41	60	79	123	
4	21	32	42	66	80	126	
7	22	33	46	67	81	127	
10	23	34	47	68	96	128	
11	24	35	50	69	97	159	
12	25	36	51	70	102	161	
14	27	37	52	71	116	174	
16	28	38	53	75	117	184	
17	24	39	54	77	118	210	

Review application of town centre/shopfront/personal security

One of the most intrusive features in any town centre is the welter of security shutters; particularly metal roller-shutters applied to the exterior of the shopfront. While solid and perforated shutters are obviously attractive to the security conscious retailer, they can actually be counter-productive. There have been instances, for example, of burglars peeling back solid shutters and, once inside the shop, being hidden from outside view and remaining undetected.

Secondly, the widespread use of solid and perforated shutters leads to a 'fortress environment', attracting graffiti and becoming less attractive for shoppers. This in turn leads to reduced opportunities for natural surveillance from passers by and the development of a 'down-at-heel' atmosphere. There is also the visual problem that shutter housings usually obscure existing interesting features on shopfronts.

Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs outlines the issues and some suggested remedies.

An associated problem lies with security cameras. These can be both privately owned and operated and attached to the relevant building, or part of the public system - that in Camborne utilises cameras fixed on buildings and free-standing poles.

The combined effect is not just to mutilate fine architectural detail, it also gives an air of dereliction, a feeling of a lack of security (just the opposite to what is intended), and a lack of welcome. There are alternative design solutions (see *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs*). Removal of existing units and prevention of future installations should be a priority, unless there is a clearly defined and justified reasoning behind each individual case. In practice, this is rarely the case.

Co-ordination of security camera coverage should be a priority avoiding needless doubling-up on cameras, and a reduction in the size, number and prominence of existing cameras should be sought (and is eminently achievable with improved technology). The argument that the

visibility of the camera unit is in itself a deterrent needs to be balanced against the impact on the character of the conservation area, and on the downgraded, unwelcoming and insecure impression it gives of the town centre - the balance should be in favour of discreet coverage and installations.

The Local Authorities have a clear role to play, not only in applying statutory controls and in giving design advice, but in coordinating the activities of a wide range of departments, policies and interests. Initiatives not immediately thought of as linked to conservation can have immense conservation benefits - such as the use of auxiliary/community police, promoting residential use in central shopping streets, even increasing 24 hour town centre use rather than limiting it.

Apply to:

32	36	46	49	52
53	54	57	63	68
69	75	96	135	145
150	159	161	194	203

Design Guidelines

Shopfront design

See also *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs*, Kerrier District Council, 2001

By the later 18th century shopfronts were executed largely in good quality joinery giving a rich overall texture of fine details, and relied on classical design traditions, fundamental principles of proportion and the classical orders. These were adopted to form a framework for the shopfronts, which were also often designed as an integral and unified part of the complete building.

By the later 19th century, new influences in design led to more inventive shopfront design, matched by increasing levels in craftsmanship and skill in the use of cast and machined materials. Overall proportions were not so strictly governed by classical rules and detailing changed to become bolder and more ornamental, and often larger.

Increasingly seen in the late 19th/ early 20th centuries were shopfronts forming part of the overall architecture of the host building. Typical shopfront elements like pilasters, cornices, doorways etc. are all part of the structural grid of the main elevation, and are inevitably masonry-built rather than attached fully-framed timber shopfronts such as are usually associated with traditional shopfront designs. First floors often consist of large display windows. The whole building is in effect designed as an ebullient display advertising the commercial activity, on both purely commercial buildings and when partly residential.

Shopfront and advert design

Reference should be made to local plan policies, general guidance and above all *Kerrier Shopfronts and Signs*, Kerrier District Council, 2001 for all aspects of design guidance.

Change of Use and Redundant Shopfronts

The question of conversion to residential use is particularly difficult to resolve in terms of design and workmanship, so some additional advice is appropriate here.

Despite policy controls and the best efforts of local communities to resist it, shops do sometimes close down. Where a change to other uses is permitted, for instance offices or residential use, careful thought has to be given as to what happens to the shopfront.

- The general presumption will be in favour of retaining the shopfront where possible. This is especially so if it is a good example in itself, or is on a listed building or in a conservation area and even more so if the building was designed from the outset to incorporate a shopfront.
- Where a building has retained the overall integrity of its design, reinstatement of missing elements could be considered.

Having a well-lit room and attractive frontage for the new office or home can be very beneficial – a typical alteration to many traditional buildings has been the enlargement of domestic-scale windows or the insertion of bay windows, often inappropriate to the host building, but clearly desirable to householders, and perhaps seen as increasing the property value. The existence of an old shop front can provide just exactly this sort of feature, and yet all too often its possibilities in this respect are ignored.

If the glazed area is felt to be too great for comfort, it is possible to screen off parts of the interior of a converted shop:

- by the use of curtains and blinds
- by internal secondary glazed screens or solid screens disguised externally by curtains/obscured or etched glass (in small areas only)
- and/or by placing ornamental objects and displays in the window itself

- the use of curtains and screening in this way has a long tradition of its own, and is seen to good effect in places such as Penryn, or more locally, Chacewater, where the shops face directly onto a busy road, and are subject to high levels of noise, fumes and pedestrian traffic.

In other cases an appropriate and sympathetic alternative might be possible:

- while leaving the timber frame of the shopfront unaltered, it may be possible to make alterations to the glazed areas to create sash windows rather than plate glass, rather like a traditional butcher's shop (but not by filling-in most of the glazed area with masonry or render)
- in extreme cases, it may prove acceptable to carefully reconstruct the ground floor to match the rest of the building
- although many shops are themselves later insertions into earlier buildings, and proposals to remove a modern shopfront to restore an elevation to its previous designed appearance matching the rest of a terrace can sometimes be encouraged, these should be viewed with caution in cases where the shopfront is of interest in itself
- don't overlook the contribution buildings make to their neighbours, a group or the streetscape, i.e. the building's setting and its contribution to the local scene where it shares particular architectural forms or details with other buildings nearby
- loss of shopfront and replacement with masonry may mean the increased use of render, which is already inappropriately dominant in many streets - it has been used to hide a number of conversions, and in consequence texture and detailing on whole buildings and streetscene has suffered, not just the shopfront.

Useful Addresses

The first point of contact will usually be Kerrier District Council:

Kerrier District Council

Dolcoath Avenue,
Tuckingmill TR14 8SX
01209 614000

The Council's conservation officer is in the Planning Department.

Other local and regional agencies can be reached through Kerrier District Council (including the County Council, English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund etc.):

Cornwall County Council

County Hall,
Truro, TR1 3AY

English Heritage, Central Office

23 Savile Row, London, W1X 2ET
Tel: 020 7973 3000 Fax: 020 7973 3001
Website: www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage, Southwest Regional Office

29, Queen Square, Bristol
BS1 4ND
Tel: 0117 975 0700

Lottery Heritage Fund (Townscape Heritage Initiative)

020 7591 6042/3/4/5

Other useful contacts include:

The Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF)

Clareville House,
26/27 Oxendon St,
London SW1Y 4EL
Tel 0171 925 0199
Fax: 020 7930 0295
Website: <http://www.ahfund.org.uk/>
Email: <mailto:ahf@ahfund.org.uk>

The Association of Building Preservation Trusts (APT)

Clareville House, 26/27 Oxendon St, London
SW1Y 4EL
Tel 0171 930 1629

Development Trusts Association (DTA)

20 Conduit Place, London, W2 1HZ
Tel: 020 7706 4951
Website: <http://www.dta.org.uk/>

The Prince's Foundation

19-22 Charlotte Road
London
EC2A 3SG
Telephone: (+44) (0) 20 7613 8500
Fax: (+44) (0) 20 7613 8599
Website: <http://www.princes-foundation.org/>
Email: enquiry@princes-foundation.org

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